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A

CRITICAL

COMMENTARY AND PARAPHRASE

ON THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

AND THE

APOCRYPHA.

BY

PATRICK, LOWTH, ARNALD, WHITBY, AND LOWMAN.

A NEW EDITION:

CORRECTED BY THE

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ALTERNATE EVENING PREACHER AT THE FOUNDLING AND MAGDALEN HOSPITALS.

IN SIX VOLUMES,
VOL. I.

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GENESIS,	LEVITICUS,	DEUTERONOMY,
EXODUS,	NUMBERS,	To Chap. XXVII.

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND

WILLIAM,

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON,

&c. &c. &c.

THIS EDITION OF

A COMMENTARY AND PARAPHRASE

ON THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES,

IS

(with Permission)

MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.



Bishop Patrick.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In reprinting these volumes, considerable care has been taken to select the best copies of the respective commentators, and to make every other improvement calculated to render the present edition superior to former impressions of the work. While the sheets were passing through the press, my attention was occupied, principally, in examining the learned quotations; and, I may confidently affirm, that numerous errors have been removed: those which have escaped observation, will, I trust, prove of an unimportant description, and obtain that indulgence usually afforded by those, who are aware of the difficulties always incident to the mechanism of the press.—I avail myself of this opportunity to express my favourable opinion of the general execution of the publication, which, from typographical neatness and accuracy, will, I am persuaded, be entitled to approbation.—It is a matter of pious congratulation, that, while writings of the most pernicious tendency are circulated with a lamentable and alarming industry, there exists a disposition to encourage others admirably adapted to counteract their contagious influence:—among those of the latter description, the excellent Commentary and Paraphrase, now presented to the public, will not fail, it is hoped, to maintain their long-established pre-eminence.

J. R. PITMAN, M. A.

YOUNG STREET, KENSINGTON,
November, 1821.

A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY THE

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

DR. SYMON PATRICK,

LORD BISHOP OF ELY.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A COMPLETE ALPHABETICAL TABLE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

PREFACE.

HAVING been persuaded to put together some scattered notes, which I long ago made upon several places of Holy Scripture, I began the last year to consider some texts in the Book of Genesis. Where I soon found there would be a necessity of making an entire commentary, upon a good part of it: and therefore I resolved to go through the whole, in the same manner as I had done the three first chapters.

After I had finished the better half of my work, I was informed that Mons. le Clerc had published a Critical Commentary upon the same Book: but whether I have concurred in any thing with him, or contradicted him, I am not able to say; having wanted leisure to peruse his work, by reason of the public business, which came upon me in the end of the year: when I likewise understood, that a very learned friend and brother had put into the press, Annotations upon all the five books of Moses. But by communicating some of our papers to each other, we found there would be no reason that either of us should lay aside our design; but go on, in our several ways, to make the Scriptures better understood, by all sorts of persons: for all helps are little enough in this age; which seems to take pleasure in being ignorant of the most important truths.

In which we are so particularly instructed by Moses, as by no other author, nor by all the authors that are, or have been known to be, extant in the world. For to him we owe the knowledge of the beginning of the world; of the first parents of mankind; the inventors of arts; the original of nations; the founders of kingdoms and empires; the institution of laws; the fountain of religious rites; yea, of all the ancient mythology; and, which is most considerable, the means of propagating that sense of God and of religion, which mankind brought into the world with them; and how it came to be corrupted.

There have been those who have taken the liberty to say, that it is impossible to give any tolerable account of the creation of the world, in six days; of the situation of Paradise; the fall of our first parents, by the seduction of a serpent, &c. But I hope I have made it appear, there is no ground for such presumptuous words: but very good reason to believe every thing that Moses hath related: without forsaking the literal sense, and betaking ourselves to, I know not what, allegorical interpretations. Particularly, I find the truth of what I have noted concerning Paradise very much confirmed by a learned and judicious discourse of Mons. Huetius; which I did not meet withal till I had made an end of these Commentaries: but then took a review of what I had written, and found cause to correct what I had noted out of Mr. Carver, concerning the spring of Tigris and Euphrates. I might also have given a clearer account of the deluge, if I had observed some things which are come to my notice since these papers went to the press: but I hope I have said enough to evince that it is not so incredible, as some have pretended. For, having made the largest concessions concerning the height of the highest mountains, which, according to the old opinion, I have allowed may be thirty miles high, Gen. vii. 19. (whereas if, instead of thirty, I had said not above three perpendicular, I had had the best of the modern philosophers to defend me), it appears there might be water enough to cover the loftiest of them; as Moses hath related.

Whose account of the families by whom the earth was peopled after the flood, is so surprisingly agreeable to all the records that remain in any language, of the several nations of the earth; that it carries with it an uncontrollable evidence of his sincerity and truth, as well as of his admirable universal knowledge. For, as there is no writer that hath given us an account of so many nations, and so remote, as he hath done: so he hath not satisfied himself with naming them; but acquainted us with their original; and told us at what time, and from what place, and on what occasion, they were dispersed into far distant countries. And this with such brevity, that he hath informed us of more in one chapter, than we can find in the great volumes of all other authors: having shewn us from whom all those people descended, who are spread over the face of the earth, from the Caspian and Persian sea, to Hercules' pillars (as the ancients speak); that is, all the world over.

In short, whatsoever is most ancient in those countries, which are farthest from all commerce with his own, is clearly explained by Moses: whose writings therefore cannot but be highly valued, by all

those who will apply their minds seriously to the study of them. For if they, who now have no regard to him, would but compare what he hath written on the forenamed subject, with what they find in those heathen writers, whom they have in the greatest veneration, they would be forced to confess him to be a man of wonderful understanding; and could not reasonably doubt he had an exact knowledge of the truth of those things whereof he wrote. To this purpose, I remember, the famous Bochartus speaks; who hath given the greatest light to the tenth of Genesis, wherein these things are delivered.

And truly, it is some wonder, that they who so much cry up the Egyptian learning, should not easily grant (unless they will believe all historians but only those whom we account sacred), that Moses must needs be qualified, even without the help of Divine revelation (which he certainly had), to write both of their original, and of all those who were related to them: being bred up in their country; nay, in their court, till he was forty years old; and well versed in all the wisdom that was to be found among them, Acts vii. 22. Which wisdom of theirs, I doubt not, was much augmented by Abraham's living among them, (as I have observed upon xiii. 2.) but especially by Joseph's long government of that country, for the space of eight years: who was endued with such an incomparable spirit, that the wisest men among them learnt of him; for he *taught their senators wisdom*, Psal. cv. 22. And, in like manner, Moses lived forty years more among the Midianites, where, it appears by Jethro, there wanted not persons of great knowledge. And from thence he might easily be instructed in all that the Arabians knew: who were no mean people (it appears by the story of Job and his three friends, and Elihu, who is supposed by some to have wrote that admirable book), and were near neighbours to the most famous nations of the eastern countries: from whom, it is evident by this history, all learning, arts, and sciences, originally came.

I could add a great deal more to this purpose; but the reader, I hope, will find enough to satisfy him in the Commentary itself. And therefore I shall only make this one request to him—that he would take his Bible, and read every verse entirely along with this Commentary: for I have not set down every word of the text, for fear of swelling this work to too great a bulk.

April 10, 1694.

TABLE OF AUTHORS

CITED AND REFERRED TO IN THIS COMMENTARY.

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ABARBINEL
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BESIDES THE PARAPHRASE AND COMMENTARY, THIS WORK CONTAINS,

First, A PREFACE to the Reader, being a discourse concerning the genealogy of St. Luke, and the Cainan mentioned in it.

Secondly, A General Preface, proving the truth and Divine authority of the Scriptures of the New Testament, and the certainty of the Christian faith.

Thirdly, A Preface to the Four Gospels, proving that they only ought to be received, and that they have been handed down to us uncorrupted; and inquiring, whether the Gospel of St. Matthew was originally written in Hebrew or in Greek.

Fourthly, A General Preface to the Epistles, proving the truth and certainty of the Christian faith.

With Nine other Prefaces, *viz.*

I. To the Gospel of St. Mark,

II. To the Gospel of St. Luke,

Asserting their authority, and Divine assistance in the writing of them.

III. To the Gospel of St. John, shewing, that the apostle was the true author of that Gospel, and when he writ it: with a Postscript, proving,

First, That the descent of the Holy Ghost on our Saviour, mentioned John i. 33. was the same with the descent of the Holy Ghost on him at his baptism.

Secondly, That he did not begin his private ministry as to preaching, baptizing, and working miracles, long before his own baptism.

Thirdly, That the Passovers during his ministry were only four.

IV. To the Acts of the Apostles, shewing, that they contain an evident demonstration of the truth of the Christian faith.

V. To the First Epistle to the Corinthians, asserting the resurrection of the same body that dieth, and answering the objections against it.

VI. To the Epistle to the Galatians, concerning the nature of faith, and touching justification by faith.

VII. To the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, concerning the man of sin.

VIII. To the Epistle to Titus, concerning the episcopal jurisdiction of Timothy and Titus, and the succession of bishops in all Christian churches.

IX. To the Epistle of St. John, inquiring, whether this proposition, That Jesus is the Christ, be all that is necessary to be believed to justification, or to make a member of Christ's church and body.

And Seventeen Appendixes, *viz.*

I. An Appendix to the second chapter of St. Matthew, concerning the import of that phrase, *ἵνα πληρωθῇ, that it might be fulfilled.*

II. To the fifth chapter, inquiring, Whether Christ there added to the moral law, or only corrected the false glosses of the scribes and pharisees concerning it.

III. To chap. vi. 16. inquiring, Whether fasting be a duty incumbent upon Christians, and a part of Divine worship.

IV. To chap. xii. concerning the nature of the sin against the Holy Ghost.

V. To chap. xxiv. concerning the time of which Christ speaks in that chapter.

VI. To chap. xxvi. answering an objection of Crellius against Christ's satisfaction.

VII. To the second chapter of St. Mark, ver. 19. concerning the baptism of infants.

VIII. To chap. xiv. concerning the day on which our Lord did eat the passover with his disciples.

IX. A Sermon on John vii. 47—49. in answer to the Guide of Controversies.

X. To Acts ii. 26, 27. concerning Christ's descent into hell.

XI. To the eleventh chapter to the Romans, proving, that there will be a general conversion of the Jewish nation to the Christian faith.

XII. To 1 Cor. i. 30. concerning the imputation of Christ's perfect righteousness to us for justification.

XIII. To the sixth chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, touching the necessity of Divine assistance for the due performance of our duty, and explaining the reason and the manner of it.

XIV. An Advertisement, relating to the Preface to the Epistle to the Galatians.

XV. To the first chapter of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, proving that the eternal punishment of those who die in their sins, is well consistent both with the justice and the goodness of God.

XVI. A Discourse by way of inquiry, Whether the apostles in their writings spake as conceiving the day of judgment might be in their days?

XVII. A Parallel betwixt the Jewish and the Roman antichrist.

A

COMMENTARY

UPON

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

GENESIS.

THAT Moses wrote this and the four following books hath been so constantly believed, both by Jews, Christians, and heathens, that none, I think, denied it, till Aben Ezra (a Jewish doctor, who lived not much above five hundred years ago) raised some doubts about it, in his Notes upon the First of Deuteronomy, out of twelve passages in these books themselves: which he pretended could not be his, but the words of a later author. But when I meet with those places, I shall make it appear, that all such exceptions are very frivolous, and ought not to shake our belief of this truth, that these five books were penned by Moses, and nobody else.

The first is called Genesis, because it contains the history of the creation of the world, with which it begins; and the genealogy of the patriarchs, down to the death of Joseph, where it ends. It comprehends a history of two thousand three hundred and sixty-nine years, or thereabouts: the truth of all which it was not difficult for Moses to know, because it came down to his time through but a very few hands. For from Adam to Noah, there was one man (Methuselah) who lived so long as to see them both. And so it was from Noah to Abraham: Shem conversed with both. As Isaac did with Abraham and Joseph; from whom these things might easily be conveyed to Moses, by Amram, who lived long enough with Joseph. In short, Moses might have been confuted, if he had written any thing but the truth, by learned men of other nations, who sprang from the same root, and had the like means of being acquainted with the great things here reported by tradition from their forefathers; who lived so long in the beginning of the world, that they more certainly transmitted things to their posterity. Besides, it is not reasonable to think, they had not the use of writing as we have, whereby they conveyed the knowledge of times foregoing to those that came after.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *IN the beginning.*] The world is not eternal, but had a beginning, as all philosophers acknowledged before Aristotle. So he himself informs us, (lib. i. de Cœlo, cap. 2. speaking of the ancient opinions concerning the original of the world) Γενόμενον μὲν οὖν ἅπαντες εἶναι φασίν, *they all say it had a beginning:* but some thought it might have no end; others judged it to be corruptible.

God created.] He who is eternal gave a being to this great fabric of heaven and earth, out of nothing. It is observed by Eusebius, (in the beginning of his book De Præpar. Evang. p. 21. 25. Edit. Paris.) that neither the ancient historians, nor the philosophers, do so much as mention God, οὐδὲ μέχρι ὀνόματος; no, not so far as to name him, when they write of the beginning of the world. But this Divine lawgiver, designing to hang the whole frame of his polity upon piety towards God, and to make the Creator of all the founder of his laws, begins with him. Not after the manner of the Egyptians and Phœnicians, who bestowed this adorable name upon a great multitude: but he puts in the front of his work the name of the sole Cause of all things, the Maker of whatsoever is seen or unseen. As if he had told the Hebrew nation, that he who gave them the law contained in these books was the King and Lawgiver of the whole world; which was, like a great city, governed by him. Whom therefore he would have them look upon, not only as the enacter of their laws; but of those also which all nature obeys. See lib. vii. de Præpar. Evang. cap. 9, 10; and lib. xii. cap. 16.

The heaven and the earth.] The Hebrew particle *eth* put before both heaven and earth, signifies as much as *with*, if Maimonides understood it aright; and makes the sense to be this: *He created the heavens with all things in the heavens*, and the earth with all *things in the earth;* as his words are in More Nevochim, p. ii. cap. 30. Certain it is, these two words, *heaven* and *earth*, comprehend the whole visible world. Some would have the angels comprehended in the word *heaven;* as particularly Epiphanius, (Hæres. lxv. n. 45.) ἅμα οὐρανῷ καὶ γῇ Ἄγγελοι ἐκτίσθησαν. But others of the fathers are of a different opinion, as Petavius observes. It is a pretty conceit of Theophilus Antiochenus, (lib. ii. ad Autolycum) that the *heavens* are mentioned before the *earth*, to shew that God's works are not like our's: for he begins at the top, we at the bottom: that is,

he first made the fixed stars and all beyond them, (so I take the word heaven here to signify) for they had a beginning, as well as this lower world, though they do not seem to be comprehended in the six days' work, which relates only to this planetary world, as I may call it, which hath the sun for its centre. And thus Philo understood the first word *bereschith, in the beginning,* to respect the order wherein things were created. God began his creation with the *heavens,* as the most noble body, and then proceeded to the *earth;* an account of which follows.

Ver. 2. *And the earth was without form,* &c.] Some connect this verse with the foregoing, by translating the first verse in this manner: *When God first created,* or began to create, *the heaven and the earth,* the earth was without form, &c. That is, at first he only created a rude matter of those things, which afterwards were fashioned as we now see them.

Without form.] A confused, indigested heap, without any order or shape.

And void.] Having no beasts, nor trees, nor herbs, nor any thing else, wherewith we now behold it adorned.

So these two words, *tohu vabohu,* are used in Scripture, where we meet with them (which is not often) for confusion and emptiness, (Isa. xxxiv. 11; Jerem. iv. 23.) being a description of that which the ancients called the Chaos (of which the Barbarians had a notion, no less than the Greeks), wherein the seeds and principles of all things were blended together. This is called, in the pagan language, by Epicharmus, πρῶτον Θεῶν, *the first of the gods:* because all things sprang out of this; which was indeed the first of the works of God, who, as Moses shews in the sequel, produced this beautiful world out of this chaos.

And darkness was upon the face of the deep.] Nothing was to be seen, for want of light; which lay buried, as all things else did, in that great abyss, or vast confused heap of matter, beforementioned. So the Hebrew word *tehom* signifies (which we translate *deep*) tumult and turbid confusion: the first matter being very heterogeneous, as they speak, *i. e.* of various sorts and kinds, huddled together without distinction.

And the Spirit of God moved.] Men have been extremely fanciful in the exposition of these plain words: some understanding, by the *Spirit of God,* the sun, which gives spirit and life to all things upon earth; others, the air, or the wind; when as yet there was no sun in the firmament, nor any wind that could stir, without the power of the Almighty to excite it. This therefore we are to understand to be here meant: the infinite wisdom and power of God, which made a vehement commotion, and mighty fermentation (by raising, perhaps, a great wind) *upon the face of the waters:* that is, on that fluid matter beforementioned, to separate the parts of it one from the other.

Waters.] That which Moses before called the *deep,* he now calls *the waters;* which plainly shews that some parts of the confused mass were fluid and light, as other parts were solid and heavy. The heavy naturally sunk, which he calls the *earth;* and the lighter parts got above them, which he calls the *waters:* for it is clearly intimated the *waters* were uppermost.

The word we here translate *moved,* signifies literally *brooded* upon the waters, as a hen doth upon her eggs. So the ancient and modern interpreters have observed: and Morinus, who opposes it, hath said nothing to make us doubt of this sense of the phrase. From whence some have, not unhappily, conjectured, the ancients took their notion of a πρωτόγονον ὠόν, *a first-laid egg,* out of which all things were formed: that is, the chaos (out of which all the old philosophers, before Aristotle, thought the world was produced) consisting of earth and water, of thicker and thinner parts, as an egg doth of the yolk and white.

Now the *Spirit of God* thus *moved* upon the waters, that by its incubation (as we may call it) it might not only separate, as I said, those parts which were jumbled together; but give a vivific virtue to them, to produce what was contained in them. The souls and spirits, that is, of all living creatures, were produced by the *Spirit of God,* as Porphyry saith Numenius understood it. For his opinion, he tells us, was, that all things came out of the water, θεοπνόῳ ὄντι, *being divinely inspired:* for which he quoted these words of the prophet, as he called Moses. See Porphyry περὶ τοῦ Νυμφ. Ἄντρου, on those words of Homer:

——Ἱερὸν Νυμφαίων, καὶ Νηϊάδες καλέονται.

Which gives us to understand, that the spirits of all living creatures (which we call their active forms) did not arise out of matter, for that is stupid; but proceeded from this other principle, the powerful *Spirit of God,* which moved upon the face of the waters, by a vital energy (as St. Chrysostom speaks), so that they were no longer *standing* waters, but *moving,* having ζωτικήν τινα δύναμιν, a certain living power in them. From whence we may also gather, that the spirits of living creatures are distinct things from matter, which of itself cannot move at all, and much less produce a principle of motion.

And thus indeed all the ancient philosophers apprehended this matter: and some of them have most lively expressed it. For Laertius in the Life of Anaxagoras tells us, that he taught, among other things, Πάντα χρήματα ἦν ὁμοῦ· εἶτα Νοῦς ἐλθὼν αὐτὰ διεκόσμησε, *all things were huddled together: and then the Mind came and set them in order.* And Thales before him (as Tully informs us, lib. i. de Nat. Deor.) "Aquam dixit esse initium rerum; Deum autem eam mentem quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret," said, *Water was the beginning of things; and God that Mind, who formed all things out of the water.*

By the *Spirit of God* some of the ancient Jews have understood the *Spirit of the Messiah* (as Hackspan observes in his Cabala Judaica, n. lxvi. out of Baal Hatturim, the Hierusalem Targum, &c.) which explains the evangelist, St. John, who in the beginning of his Gospel says, all things were made by the eternal ΛΟΓΟΣ, or *Word of God* (the same with the Νοῦς of the ancient philosophers), whose almighty Spirit agitated the vast confused mass of matter, and put it into form.

Ver. 3. *And God said.*] These words are taken notice of by Longinus, περὶ ὕψους, as a truly lofty expression, wherein appears the wisdom of Moses, who represents God, like himself, commanding things into being by his word; that is, by his will: for wheresoever we read these words in the history of the creation, *He said,* the meaning must be understood to be *he willed,* as Maimonides interprets it. (More Nev. p. i. cap. 65.) This Justin Martyr demonstrates Orpheus had learnt out of Moses's books, when he swears by the heaven, the work of the great and wise God, and

by the "word of the Father, which he spake at first," when he established all the world by his counsels. So his words are in Παραινετ. εἰς Ἕλληνας.—P. 16.

And as there is nothing more famous in antiquity than the τὸ Ὀρφικὸν ὠόν, *Orpheus's egg*, which I before mentioned; so it is remarkable, that the Egyptians (among whom Orpheus travelled) described their God Kneph, with an egg coming out of his mouth, which was a lively representation of this world (noted by the egg) produced by God's omnipotent Word: for how richly soever the chaos was furnished with materials, it could have brought forth nothing, without his powerful motion, and wise contrivance, by whom it was created. So Anaxagoras himself resolved, νοῦν μὲν ἀρχὴν κινήσεως· that *Mind was the principle of motion* (as Laertius tells us in his Life), by which Mind he understood God, as others have reported his opinion more largely in these admirable words: "The beginning of all things is ὁ Νοῦς, the Mind, who is the Cause and the Lord of the whole world, and gave τάξιν τοῖς ἀτάκτοις, καὶ κίνησιν τοῖς ἀκινήτοις, &c. order to things in disorder, and motion to things immoveable, and distinction to things confused, and beauty to things deformed."

Let there be light.] Having spoken of the creation of all things, now follows an account of their formation out of that rude matter which was at first created. And the first thing produced was light, which Greg. Nazianzen (Orat. xliii. p. 699. a.) calls ἀσώματον καὶ ἀνήλιον, because it was not yet collected into a body, as it is now in the sun. Others think it to have been a dimmer sort of light from the sun, not yet perfectly formed. Abarbinel (upon the xlth of Exodus) takes this to be the Schechinah, the most excellent of all created things, called, in Holy Scripture, *the glory of the Lord;* which God, saith he, sealed up in his treasures, after the luminaries were created, to serve him upon special occasions (for instance, to lead the Israelites in the wilderness, by a cloudy pillar of fire), when he would make himself appear extraordinarily present. And because of the perfection of this *light* he fancies it is that Moses says in the next verse, that "God saw the light (repeating the word light) that it was good:" whereas, in all the rest of the six days' work, he only says, "He saw it was good," without naming again the thing he had made.

But it seems to me most rational by this *light*, to understand those particles of matter, which we call fire (whose two properties, every one knows, are light and heat), which the almighty Spirit, that formed all things, produced as the great instrument for the preparation and digestion of the rest of the matter; which was still more vigorously moved and agitated, from the top to the bottom, by this restless element, till the purer and more shining parts of it, being separated from the grosser, and united in a body fit to retain them, became *light*.

Ver. 4. *And God saw the light, that it was good.*] He was pleased in this work of his, as agreeable to his design: which for the present was (we may conceive) to influence the upper parts of the chaos, and to be the instrument of rarefaction, separation, and all the rest of the operations, which were necessary to mould it into such creatures, as were afterwards made out of it.

And God divided the light from the darkness.] Appointed that they should constantly succeed one another; as we see they do *now*, that this light is embodied in the sun; and as they did *then*, by the circular motion of this first light of fire, round about the chaos, in the space of twenty-four hours: which made it day to those parts where it shined; and night, where it did not. It is remarkable how Moses ascribes every thing to God, the former of all things; who, by making this light move round about the chaos, still more prepared and exalted the remaining indigested parts of matter for their several uses.

Ver. 5. *And God called the light day; and the darkness he called night.*] He settled them (that is) in such a constant course, that it gave them these distinct names.

And the evening and the morning were the first day.] In the Hebrew language, evening and morning signify a whole day; which the motion of this light made, if we conceive it to have been formed about noon, and to have gone round the forementioned heap of matter in twenty-four hours.

How long all things continued in mere confusion, after the chaos was created, before this light was extracted out of it, we are not told. It might be (for any thing that is here revealed) a great while; and all that time the mighty Spirit was making such motions in it, as prepared, disposed, and ripened every part of it, for such productions as were to appear successively in such spaces of time, as are here and afterward mentioned by Moses; who informs us, that after things were so digested, and made ready (by long fermentations, perhaps,) to be wrought into form, God produced every day, for six days together, some creature or other, till all was finished; of which light was the very first. This Maimonides hath very happily illustrated, in his More Nevochim, p. ii. c. 30; where, observing that all things were created at once, and then were afterwards separated one from another successively, he says, their wise men resemble this proceeding to that of a husbandman, who sows several seeds in the earth at the same moment; some of which are to come up after one day, others after two, and others not till three days be past; though the whole sowing was in one and the same moment. Thus God made all things at the first, which did not appear together; but, in the space of six days, were formed and put in order one after another: *light* being the work of the first day.

Ver. 6. *And God said, Let there be a firmament.*] The next thing that God commanded to come forth of the chaos, was the *air;* particularly that region next to us, wherein the fowls fly, as it is expounded afterwards. (Ver. 20.) The Hebrew word *rachia*, properly signifies *a body expanded*, or spread forth, (as may be seen in Exod. xxxix. 3; Isai. xl. 19; Jer. x. 9; where it can have no other meaning) but it is by the LXX. translated στερέωμα, and from thence by us, *firmament;* because the air, though vastly extended and fluid, yet continues firm and stable in its place.

In the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.] This region of the air manifestly parts the waters above it in the clouds from those below it here upon earth; the one of which *waters* bears a good proportion, and is in some measure equal unto the other: for there are vast treasures of water in the clouds; from whence the *waters* here below, in springs and rivers, are supplied. This appeared afterwards in the deluge, which was partly made by continued rains for many days. The great objection against this exposition is, that now there

were no clouds, neither had it, after this, rained on the earth. (Gen. ii. 6.) But it must be considered, that neither were the *waters* below as yet gathered into one place: and therefore Moses here speaks of the air, as a body intended to be stretched between the *waters* above and beneath, when they should be formed.

That the clouds above are called *waters* in the Scripture language, is plain enough from Psalm civ. 3; Jer. x. 13; and other places.

Ver. 7. *And God made the firmament, and divided,* &c.] What his Divine will ordered, his power effected, by that light which rolled about the chaos, and that heat which was excited within it; whereby such exhalations were raised, as made the *firmament:* that is, the thicker parts of them made this region of the air, which is the *lower firmament;* (Ver. 20.) and the thinner parts of them made the ether, or *higher firmament,* wherein the sun and the planets are seated. Ver. 14, 15.

Ver. 8. *And God called the firmament heaven.*] Made it so different from the rest of the mass, called *earth,* that it had the name of *heaven,* to distinguish it from the other. So all above the earth is called, as appears by the following part of the chapter, in the verses now mentioned. And that is the very import of the word *schamaim,* which in the Arabic language (as Aben Ezra observes) signifies *height,* or *altitude.*

And the evening and the morning were the second day.] This was the work of another whole day. Concerning which it is commonly noted, that it is not said of this, as of all the works of the other five days, "God saw that it was good." What the reason of this should be, is inquired by all interpreters; and the most solid account that I can find of it is this:—that the waters, mentioned upon this day, were not yet separated and distinguished from the earth; and, therefore, in the next day's work, when he did gather the waters together, (ver. 10.) and when he commanded the earth (which was become dry) to bring forth, (ver. 12.) these words, "God saw that it was good," are twice repeated. Which made Picherellus and Ger. Vossius think the two next verses (9, 10.) belonged to the second day's work; and that the first words of the ninth verse should be thus translated, "And God had said, Let the waters under the heaven," &c. And so the words in the end of the tenth verse, "God saw that it was good," relate to the second day. Lib. ii. de Orig. Idolol. c. 67.

Ver. 9. *And God said, Let the waters under the heaven.*] All the *waters,* which continued mixed with the earth, and covered the surface of it.

Be gathered together, &c.] Collected into one body by themselves.

And let the dry land appear.] Distinct and separate from the waters.

There being such large portions of matter drawn out of the chaos, as made the body of fire and air beforementioned, there remained, in a great body, only water and earth; but they were so jumbled together, that they could not be distinguished. It was the work therefore of the third day to make a separation between them, by compacting together all the particles which make the earth, which before was mud and dirt; and then, by raising it above the waters, which covered its superficies (as the Psalmist also describes this work, Psalm civ. 6.); and, lastly, by making such caverns in it, as were sufficient to receive the waters into them. Now this we may conceive to have been done by such particles of fire as were left in the bowels of the earth, whereby such nitro-sulphureous vapours were kindled, as made an earthquake; which both lifted up the earth, and also made receptacles for the waters to run into; as the Psalmist (otherwise I should not venture to mention this) seems in the forementioned place to illustrate it, (Psalm civ. 7.) where he says, "At thy rebuke they (*i. e.* the waters) fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away." And so God himself speaks, (Job xxxviii. 10.) "I brake up for it (*i. e.* for the sea) my decreed place, and set bars and doors." Histories also tell us, of mountains that have been, in several ages, lifted up by earthquakes; nay, islands in the midst of the sea: which confirms this conjecture, that possibly the waters were, at the first, separated by this means; and so separated, that they should not return to cover the earth: for the word, in the beginning of this verse, which we translate *gathered,* comes from *kav,* which signifies *a square, a rule,* or *perpendicular line;* and therefore denotes they were most exactly collected, and so poised in such just proportions, that they should not again overflow the dry land.

This work of God (whereby the waters were sent down into their proper channels, and the earth made dry, and fitted for the habitation of such creatures as were afterwards created) is observed by Strabo in his Geography as an act of Divine Providence. (lib. xvii.) Because, says he, the water covered the earth, and man is not ἔννδρον ζῶον, a creature that can live in the water, God made ἐξοχὰς ἐν τῇ γῇ πολλὰς καὶ ἐνοχάς, &c. many cavities and receptacles in the earth for the water; and raised the earth above it, that it might be fit for man's habitation.

Ver. 10. *And called the dry land,* &c.] This is sufficiently explained, by what has been said upon verses 5 and 8; only this may be added, that the word *eretz, earth,* in Arabic, signifies any thing that is low and sunk beneath, opposite to *schamaim, heavens,* which, in that language, as I noted before, signifies *high* and *lifted up.*

Ver. 11. *And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding,* &c.] Or, rather, it should be translated, *and the herb yielding,* &c. though the copula be omitted, which is usual in Scripture; particularly in Habak. iii. 11, "the sun, moon," *i. e.* the sun and moon.

Moses having shewn how the first matter, (ver. 2.) and then the elements of things, as we call them, (ver. 3. 6. 9, 10.) were produced, he proceeds to the production of more compounded bodies. And here an account is given of all sorts of vegetables, which are ranged under three heads; *grass,* which comes up every year without sowing; *herbs,* bearing a seed, which comprehends (as Abarbinel here notes) all sort of corn, and whatsoever is sown; and *trees,* which also bear fruit. There are several kinds of all these; which some have cast into eighteen, others into six-and-thirty classes; none of which could at the first spring out of the earth, of itself, by the power of external and internal heat, and of the water mixed with it, (no, not so much as one single pile of grass) without the almighty power and wisdom of God; who brought together those parts of matter, which were fitted to produce them; and then formed every one of them, and determined their several species; and also provided for their continuance, by

bringing forth seed to propagate their species to the end of all things. And here it is very remarkable, how God had secured the seeds of all plants with singular care: some of them being defended by a double, nay, a treble inclosure.

Ver. 12. *And the earth brought forth grass, and the herb,* &c.] These things did not grow up out of seed, by such a long process, as is now required to bring them to maturity; but they sprung up in their perfection, in the space of a day, with their seeds in them, completely formed, to produce the like throughout all generations. Thus Moses gives a plain account of the first production of things, according to the natural method: for supposing they had a beginning, the herb and the tree must naturally be before the seed they bear; as the hen is before the egg she lays. And to make a question, which was first (as some of the philosophers did) is very frivolous; because that Power which alone could produce the seeds of all things, could as easily make the things themselves, with a power to propagate their kind by seed.

It is therefore most judiciously noted by Abarbinel, a learned Jew, that the production of plants, in the beginning, differed from their production ever since in these two things: *first,* That they have sprung ever since out of seed, either sown by us, or falling from the plants themselves; but, at the beginning, were brought out of the earth, with their seed in them, to propagate them ever after. And, *secondly,* They need now, as they have done since the first creation, the influence of the sun, to make them sprout; but then they came forth by the power of God, before there was any sun, which was not formed till the next day. Of this last Theophilus Antiochenus, long before Abarbinel, took notice (lib. ii. ad Autolycum) where he says, God produced things in this order; foreseeing the vanity of philosophers, who, saying nothing of Him, made all things to be produced by the sun, ἀπὸ τῶν στοιχείων, *out of the elements.* Porphyry himself, also, (lib. ii. περὶ ἀποχῆς) could observe out of Theophrastus, that the earth brought forth trees and herbs before beasts, δένδρα μὲν γὰρ ἔδη πρὸ ζώων ἀνέδωκε ἡ γή, &c. which Eusebius remembers in his Præp. Evang. lib. i. cap. 9. p. 28.

Ver. 14. *Let there be lights.*] This is a different word from what we had, ver. 3; signifying, as Paulus Fagius observes, that which is made out of light; *luminous bodies,* whereby light is communicated to us: the Hebrew particle, *mem,* before a word, being used to express the instrument of an action. And so now we are to conceive, that the light produced at first, having for three days circulated about the earth, and that near unto it, to further the production of the things beforementioned, was on this fourth day distributed into several luminaries, at a great distance from the earth. So it follows—*in the firmament of heaven,* in the upper region, which we call the ether, or sky, where the sun and the planets are placed.

To divide the day from the night.] By a continued circular motion, finished in four-and-twenty hours; in one part of which, by the presence of the sun, the day is made: and, in the other part, by the sun's absence, night is made, in a constant succession.

And let them be for signs and for seasons.] That is, for signs of the times or seasons; as Ger. Vossius expounds it, by the figure of ἓν διὰ δυοῖν. And by *times* are meant, the spring, summer, autumn, and winter; and, by consequence, the *seasons* for ploughing, sowing, planting, pruning, reaping, vintage, sailing, &c.—L. de Scientiis Mathemat. cap. 38.

And for days, and years.] By a speedy swift motion round, in twenty-four hours, to make *days;* and by a slower, longer motion, to make *years;* and a grateful variety of seasons, in the several parts of the earth, which by this annual motion are all visited by the sun's beams.

Ver. 15. *And let them be for light,* &c.] *i. e.* Let them there continue to give constant light and warmth to the earth: and so they do immoveably.

Ver. 16. *And God made two great lights.*] It is observable that nothing is said to have been created, since the first matter, out of which all things were made or formed. And the *two great lights,* or luminaries, *enlighteners* (as the word signifies), are the sun, which enlightens by day; and the moon, which enlightens us by night. The moon, indeed, is not so great as the rest of the planets (for it is the least of all, except Mercury), but it affords the greatest light to us, by reflecting the beams of the sun to us in its absence; and thereby very much abating the disconsolate darkness of the night.

He made the stars also.] That is, the rest of the planets, and their attendants.

Ver. 17. *And God set them in the firmament of heaven,* &c.] By the repetition of this so often, Moses intended to fix in the people's mind this notion—that though the heavenly bodies be very glorious, yet they are but creatures, made by God, and set or appointed by his order to give us light; and, therefore, He alone is to be worshipped, not they.

It is commonly taken notice of, that there is no mention of the creation of angels in all this history; nor was there any need of it. For the ancient idolatry, consisting in the worship of the sun, moon, and stars (as appears from the very names of the most ancient idols in the Old Testament, such as Moloch, Ashtaroth, and the like), which they believed to be eternal beings, the great design of Moses was to confute this opinion, by representing them over and over as the work of the eternal God, which struck at the very root of idolatry. The worship of angels was a later invention.

Ver. 18. *And to rule over the day, and over the night.*] Some have fancied that the ancient idolatry sprung from this word *rule;* men looking upon these glorious lights as having a dominion over them. Whence the sun was called Baal, that is, *lord* or *governor,* by the eastern people; and Moloch, that is, *king,* by the Egyptians. But one word sure was not the ground of so foul an error, when the scope of Moses was to shew, that these things were made by a higher Being, and made not to rule over men, but over the day and the night, which the sun makes when it rises and sets, by the order and appointment of God.

And God saw that it was good.] He was pleased with this work, as suitable to the ends for which he intended it. The first light *was good* (ver. 4.) for the purpose to which it served; which was, by its heat, to agitate, rarefy, and separate the matter of the chaos, for the making of air, and gathering together the waters, and drying the earth, and producing grass, herbs, and trees, which made it necessary it should continue some days near to the earth, that it might powerfully penetrate into the matter it was to digest; but, if it should have continued longer so near to

the earth, it would not have been good for it; because it would have burnt up all the plants that the earth had brought forth; and, by its too scorching heat, have hindered the production of those living creatures, which were ready on the next day to be made, or, at least, made the earth unfit for their habitation. For the air, which all living things, even fishes themselves, need (nay, the plants also, which have vessels for conveying air to all their parts), would have been so very hot, that it would have afforded no refreshment to them: therefore *it was good* that it should be advanced into the firmament of the heaven, and there embodied in those luminaries, which, being removed further from us, give such a moderate heat, as is necessary for the preservation of us and of all things living that dwell upon the earth.

Ver. 19. *And the evening*, &c.] Thus the fourth day concluded.

Ver. 20. *And God said, Let the waters*, &c.] Now God proceeded to form the lower sort of animals, or living creatures, viz. the fish, and the fowl, which are in many respects inferior to beasts. And the fishes are called *moving* (in the Hebrew, *creeping*) creatures; because their bellies touch the water, as creeping things do the earth. Both fishes and fowls were made out of the *waters*; that is, out of such matter as was mixed with the *waters*, which contained in them many things besides simple water; for the sea and rivers are still very richly furnished with various compounds, for the nourishment of an innumerable multitude of fishes. The great congruity that there is between fish and fowl, in many particulars, will not let us doubt they had the same original: for they are both oviparous, which makes them more fruitful than the beasts of the earth; neither of them have any teats: they both direct (and, as I may say, steer) their course by their tail, &c. See Ger. Vossius de Orig. et Progr. Idolol. lib. iii. cap. 78.

Bring forth abundantly.] That is, various sorts of both kinds, there being many hundred kinds of fishes, and birds, or fowls; many of the latter of which live in the water (which shews their original to have been from thence), and others of them live both in the air and water. The formation of these creatures is, in every part of them, very wonderful, especially in those parts whereby they are fitted to swim, and to fly. Which demonstrate a most wise Agent, by whose infinite power they were so contrived, as to be able also to propagate their kind.

Ver. 21. *And God created great whales.*] The vastness of these creatures, perhaps, made Moses again use the word *create* (which he had not done since the beginning of the chapter); not because they were made as the chaos was, out of nothing; but because it required a greater power to make out of the precedent matter moving things of so huge a bulk, and of such great agility, than to make any other thing hitherto formed.

The Hebrew word *tanim*, which we translate *whales*, comprehends several sorts of great fishes, as Bocharius observes in his Hierozoic. p. i. lib. i. cap. 7. where he shews the prodigious bigness of some of them. But he should have added, that this word also signifies *crocodiles*, which he himself shews are set forth in Job xli. as the most astonishing work of God. For Job Ludolphus, I think, hath demonstrated, that nothing but the crocodile can be meant by this word *tanim*, in Ezek. xxix. 3. and xxxii. 2. and some other places. Vid. lib. i. Comment. in Histor. Ethiop. cap. xi. n. 86.

And God saw that it was good.] Was pleased with the structure of these several creatures: of the *birds*, who were furnished with wings to fly in the air; and of the *fishes*, whose fins serve them to swim in the water; and of *water-fowl*, whose feet are formed so, as to serve for the same use; and some of them (such as dive under water), covered so thick with feathers, and those so smooth and slippery (as the learned and pious Mr. Ray hath observed), that their bodies are thereby defended from the cold of the water, which cannot penetrate or moisten them. See Wisdom of God in the Creation, pt. i. p. 135.

Ver. 22. *And God blessed them*, &c.] His blessing them, was giving them a power to multiply and increase, till they had filled the water with fish, and the air with fowl, which required a particular care of Divine Providence, as Abarbinel observes: because they do not bring forth young ones perfectly formed, as the beasts do, but lay their eggs in which they are formed, when they are out of their bodies. This, saith he, is a wonderful thing, that when the womb, as we may call it, is separate from the genitor, a living creature like itself should be produced, which is the reason, he fancies, that a blessing is here pronounced upon them, and not on the beasts, that were made the next day. The ancient fathers are wont to observe, that the *first* blessing was given to the waters, as a type of baptism. Theophilus ad Autolyc. lib. ii. and Tertullian. de Baptismo, cap. 3.

And let fowl multiply in the earth.] There, for the most part, they have their habitation and their food; though some live upon the water.

Ver. 23. See verse 19.

Ver. 24. *And God said, Let the earth bring forth.*] Thus, by a gradual process, the Divine Power produced creatures still more noble: the matter being more digested and prepared in five days time than it was at first. I do not know whether there be any weight in the note of Abarbinel, who observes that Moses here uses a new word, which we translate *bring forth*, to shew the difference between plants and animals. The former of which spring out of the earth indeed, but continue fixed in it, and perish if they be separated from it: whereas animals, though made out of the earth, and living upon it, have a separate existence, and do not still adhere to it.

After his kind.] Three sorts of living creatures are immediately mentioned, which were formed out of such matter as the earth afforded (not simple earth, we must understand, no more than before simple water; for it was impregnated with many other principles); the first of which, *behemah*, which we translate *cattle*, always signifies the flocks and herds of tame beasts, when it is distinguished from *chaja*, which we translate, in the end of the verse, *beasts of the earth*, that is, wild beasts: between which two, he mentions a third kind of living creatures on the earth, which he calls *remesh—creeping things;* because, whatever feet they have, they are so short and small, that they seem to the naked eye to have none at all; but to crawl on their bellies upon the ground. Of all these three kinds there are various sorts wherewith God hath replenished the earth: and of every kind, some vastly great, and others very little; as Abarbinel notes even among

reptiles, there being serpents of a prodigious length, and other creeping things far smaller than ants.

Ver. 25. *And God made,* &c.] The earth did not bring them forth, by virtue of the influence of heaven upon prepared matter: but God framed them out of the matter so prepared, and produced them in their full perfection after their several kinds.

And God saw it was good.] Was pleased with the great variety of these creatures, and their complete structure, fitting them for their several uses.

Ver. 26. *Let us make man.*] God not only reserved man for the last of his works; but doth, as it were, advise and consult about his production. Not to signify any deliberation within himself, or any difficulty in the work; but to represent to us the dignity of man, and that he was made (as Abarbinel glosses) with admirable wisdom and great prudence. To the same purpose St. Chrysostom here speaks. And see Greg. Nyssen. de Opificio Hominis, cap. 3. and Orat. i. on these words; with Greg. Nazianzen. Orat. xliii. p. 699; who observes, that God brought him into this world, as into a noble palace, ready furnished with all manner of things; which is the notion also of Methodius: see Epiphanius Hæres. lxiv. n. 18. It is to be observed also, that God doth not say, "Let the earth bring forth man," as he saith before (ver. 24.) of other animals; for the same reason: to represent man as a far more noble work, than any other upon earth: for though he was made (as we read in the next chapter) *of the dust of the ground;* yet a greater power and skill was employed in producing a creature of such beauty and majesty.

Let us.] The ancient Christian looked upon this as a plain intimation of a plurality of persons in the Godhead: insomuch, that Epiphanius says, "This is the language of God to his Word and only Begotten, as all the faithful believe." See Hæres. xxiii. n. 2; and xliv. n. 4; and xlvi. n. 3, where he says, Adam was πεπλασμένος ἐν χειρὶ Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ, καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος, *formed by the hand of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.* To which one cannot but incline, who considers how poorly the Jews expound this place: who fancy a kind of senate or council of angels, without whom God doth nothing; (which they ground upon Dan. iv. 14.) whereas, there is not the least signification as yet of any such beings; much less, that they had any hand in the making man, who was not made in their image, but in the image of God. Yet thus Saturnilus foolishly expounded these words, as Epiphanius informs us, in the forenamed Hæres. p. 62. Edit. Paris. And Moses Gerundensis still more foolishly imagines God spake to the earth, that it should bring forth man, as it had done other creatures: but Maimonides, who magnifies that saying of their masters (that God doth nothing without his council), is forced to acknowledge, (More Nevoch. p. ii. cap. 6.) that it is not to be understood, as if he asked their advice, or was assisted by their judgment, but only that he used them as instruments in the producing of every thing, which is directly contrary to the very words, which are not in the form of a *command,* but of a *consultation* before execution. Others therefore think God speaks after the manner of kings, who advise with their council, but do things themselves; and are wont to speak in the plural number, when they declare their pleasure. But I take this to be a custom much later than the days of Moses, when they spake as the King of Egypt doth to Joseph: (Gen. xli. 41. 44.) "I am Pharaoh, and see I have set thee (not we have set thee) over the land of Egypt." In which style the King of Persia writes long after this: (Ezra vi. 8.) "I Darius make a decree."

All these poor shifts are a plain confession, that they found it very hard (as the Socinians do at this day) to give any account of this way of speaking, without granting a plurality of persons in the Godhead. And therefore Menasseh Ben Israel, in his Conciliator, mentions one of their doctors, who, in Bereschith Rabba, says, that when Moses by God's direction was about to write these words, "Let us make man," he cried out, "O Lord of the world, why wilt thou give men occasion to err about thy most simple unity?" To which he received this answer, "Write as I bid thee; and if any man love to err, let him err." The same story is told by Joseph Albo; which shews, that their doctors have been long puzzled with this manner of speech, which unavoidably suggested to their thoughts more than one person in the Deity: which, till they believe, they are at a loss what to say about it.

In our image, after our likeness.] Two words (some think) to express the same thing: with this difference only, as Abarbinel explains it, that the last words, *after our likeness,* give us to understand that man was not created properly and perfectly in the image of God; but in a resemblance of him. For he doth not say, *in our likeness* (says that author) as he had said *in our image,* but *after* our likeness: where the *caph* of similitude (as they call it) abates something of the sense of what follows; and makes it signify only an approach to the Divine likeness, in understanding, freedom of choice, spirituality, immortality, &c. Thus Tertullian explains it, "Habent illas ubique lineas Dei, qua immortalis anima, qua libera et sui arbitrii, qua præscia plerumque, quà rationalis, capax intellectus et scientiæ." Lib. ii. contra Marcion. cap. 9. And so Gregor. Nyssen. cap. 16. De Opific. Hom. Πάντες τοῦ διανοεῖσθαι καὶ προβουλεύειν δύναμιν ἔχουσιν, &c. *All have a power of considering and designing, of consulting and fore-appointing, what we intend to do.* Purity and holiness likewise seem to be comprehended in this: as may be gathered from the apostle: (Coloss. iii. 10.) "For the new man consists in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. iv. 24.) But though he was created with a faculty to judge aright, and with a power to govern his appetite, which he could control more easily than we can do now; yet he was not made immediately good (*quia hoc soli Deo cedit,* which belongs to God alone, as Tertullian excellently discourses in that place) but might, without due care, be induced to do evil, as we see he did. For an habituated, confirmed estate of goodness, was even then to have been acquired by watchfulness and exercise: whereby, in process of time, he might have become so steadfast, that he could not have been prevailed upon, by any temptation, to do contrary to his duty.

And let them have dominion, &c.] Some have thought the image of God consisted in this alone. (See Greg. Nyssen. cap. 4. De Opific. Hom. p. 143.) Which rather follows upon man's being made in God's image, viz. an intelligent being; which gave him dominion over other things, that are not endued with such understanding. I conclude this note with a very pertinent observation of his

in that book: (cap. 16.) That Moses speaks more magnificently of man, than any philosopher ever did: for they could say nothing of him beyond this, that he was μικρὸς κόσμος, *a little world;* but, according to the church's account, his greatness consists not in his likeness to the created world, but in his being made κατ' εἰκόνα τῆς τοῦ κτίσαντος φύσεως, *after the image of the nature of the Creator of all things.*

Over all the earth.] Over all four-footed creatures in the earth, though never so wild; as Bochartus observes.

Ver. 27. *And God created man in his own image.*] From these words Origen gathers there is a great deal of difference between Εικών, *image*, and Ὁμοίωμα, *likeness;* because, though God said, (ver. 26.) "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness," yet here he is said to have made him only *in his own image;* and not, for the present, *after his likeness.* For that, saith he, (lib. iv. contra Celsum) is reserved to the other world; when, as St. John says, (1 Epist. iii. 2.) ὅμοιοι αὐτῷ ἐσόμεθα, *we shall be like him.* But this seems too curious. No doubt God made man just as he designed, in such a complete resemblance of himself, that there is no creature like to man, no more than God hath any equal to himself: as some of the Hebrew doctors explain this matter. And therefore Moses repeats it again, "in the image of God created he him:" to imprint upon the minds of men, a sense of the great dignity of human nature; which was foully debased by worshipping any creature.

Male and female created he them.] He made woman the same day he made man; as he did both sexes of all other living creatures, and as he made herbs and plants with seed in them, to propagate their species on the same day they were produced. It is plain by this, also, that woman, as well as man, was made in the image of God. And it seems to be pertinently observed by Abarbinel, that Moses here again uses the word *create* (and that three times) to denote the original of human souls; which are not *made* out of pre-existent matter, as our bodies are; but by the power of God, when they had no being at all.

Ver. 28. *And God blessed them,* &c.] The former part of this blessing, "be fruitful and multiply," God hath bestowed before (ver. 22.) upon other creatures: unto which he adds two things here, "replenish the earth, and subdue it." He gives them the whole earth for their possession, with a power to *subdue it:* that is, to make it fit for their habitation, by bringing under or driving away wild beasts. For, secondly, he gives them the dominion (unto which he designed them in their creation) over all other creatures; whether in the water, air, or earth. And he speaks to them in the plural number; which is a demonstration, that man and woman were both created, and received his blessing, on the same day.

Ver. 29. *Behold I have given you,* &c.] Here he assigns them their food; and makes no mention at all of beasts, but only of plants and fruits of the earth. For beasts being made by pairs, in their several species (we may well suppose) as man and woman were, and not being yet multiplied, the killing of beasts, birds, and fishes, would have been the destruction of the kind: whereas, there were plants innumerable and great variety of fruit for their sustenance. And therefore here being no grant made to them of animals for their food, though no prohibition neither, it is very probable they abstained from eating flesh, till after the flood, (when God expressly gave them every living thing for meat, as much as the herbs, ch. ix. 2.) unless it were upon some special occasions; as, perhaps, when they sacrificed living creatures; which they did in process of time, (iv. 4.) though not at the first.

Ver. 30. *And to every beast,* &c.] Here he gives to the beasts, and fowl, and creeping things, all herbs for their food, but saith nothing of fruit; from which we cannot well think the birds would abstain; and therefore they are included in the phrase, *of every green herb.*

Ver. 31. *Very good.*] From these words Epiphanius confutes the Manichees, Hæres. lxvi. n. 18. where there is an explanation of this phrase, "God saw that it was good," throughout this whole chapter. Where it being said at the end of every day's work, "God saw it was good;" and particularly here on the sixth day, before he had quite ended the work of it, he saith so of the formation of the beasts, (Ver. 25.) Abarbinel will have this to relate peculiarly to the creation of man and woman. But the beginning of the verse plainly shews that he speaks of every thing that he had made: and therefore their doctors in Bereschith Rabba (whom he mentions) say a great deal better, that man is meant in the first and principal place, when Moses says, "God saw every thing that he had made; and behold, it was very good."

CHAP. II.

MOSES having given a short account of the orderly production of all things, from the meanest to the noblest, explains more largely in this chapter some things, which were delivered briefly in the foregoing, because he would not too much interrupt the coherence of his discourse about the works of the six days. Particularly he relates how Eve was made; and also further illustrates the production of Adam, &c.

Ver. 1. *Thus the heavens, and the earth.*] *i. e.* The visible world.

Were finished.] Brought to that perfection wherein we see them.

And all the hosts of them.] That is, all creatures in heaven and in earth; which are called *host,* or army, because of their vast variety, and excellent order.

Ver. 2. *And on the seventh day, God ended his work.*] Or rather, *had ended* (as it may be translated), for he did not work on the seventh day: but, *rested from all his work which he had made;* having so completely finished it, that there remained no more to be done. An emblem of the rest that we shall have, when we have done our work faithfully, and left none undone, as Origen's words are, lib. vi. contra Celsum.

Ver. 3. *And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.*] As God sanctified Jeremiah in aftertimes from his mother's womb, (Jer. i. 5.) by ordaining him to be a prophet; so he now determined and appointed the seventh day, from the very beginning of the world, to be observed in memory of its creation. And this setting it apart, and consecrating it to that holy use, was his *blessing* it, or recommending it to be observed, as a day of blessing and praising him, in all his works of wonder; and (I know not why I should not add) of his bestowing blessings upon all his pious worshippers.

There is no mention, indeed, made of Adam's, or Abel's, &c. observing this day; which hath inclined many to conclude these words to have been written by way of anticipation: this day being set apart in aftertimes by the law of Moses for God's service; but, in their opinion, not till then. To which I cannot agree; because it seems to me far more reasonable to think, that God took care to preserve the memory of the creation in the minds of mankind; and the worship of him, the one only God, by whom it was created: which could not be done by any means more effectually, than by setting apart this day for that purpose. Which if he had not appointed, yet men being made religious creatures, I cannot but think they would have agreed upon some set time for the exercise of their religion, as well as some set place (though that be not mentioned neither) where to meet for Divine service: and what time more proper, wherein to honour their Creator, with their sacrifices, praises, and thanksgivings, than this day? Which Philo well styles τοῦ κόσμου γενέσιον, *the birthday of the world:* which was so much observed all the world over (though they forgot the reason), that the seventh day, he observes, may be truly called ἑορτὴ πάνδημος, *the universal festival,* kept by all people. Josephus speaks to the same purpose; and there is a great deal more said by Aristobulus, a peripatetic philosopher, out of Hesiod, Homer, and others, in Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. xiii. cap. 12. concerning the sacredness of the seventh day. Which, though Mr. Selden (lib. iii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 17, &c.) endeavours to prove is meant of the seventh day of the month, not of the seventh day of the week; yet we may look upon that as a remain of this ancient tradition. Which, in time, men forgot, as they did the most natural duties; having so corrupted their ways (as we read Gen. vi. 10, 11.) that there was nothing good among the generality of them. And therefore no wonder if they did not regard the service of God every seventh day: to which I shall shew, in due place, Noah, the only righteous man among them, had some regard. Which continued in the family of Abraham after the flood: Moses speaking of it, not long after their coming out of Egypt (where it is likely they were not suffered to observe it, having no time free from their intolerable labours), as a day known to them before the giving of the law at Mount Sinai, Exod. xvi. 23. 25, 26.

Which is not to be understood, as if the patriarchs, before and after the flood, kept such a rest as God enjoined the Israelites by Moses: for that was proper to them, for a peculiar reason—because they had been slaves in Egypt; and therefore were commanded to keep the sabbath, without doing *any manner of work* upon that day. (Deut. v. 15.) Which is all the Christian fathers mean, when they say the patriarchs did not *Sabbatizare,* keep the sabbath as the Jews did. (See Tertullian adv. Judæos, cap. 2, et 4. Irenæus, and others.) For in religious offices I doubt not they observed the seventh day; as a proper time for that sacred hymn, which Galen himself (lib. iii. de usu partium) says, we should all sing to the Creator of all; "If we ourselves first know, and then tell others, οἷος μέν ἐστι τὴν σοφίαν, &c. how wonderful he is in wisdom, how great in power, and how rich in goodness."

Because that in it he had rested from all his work.] This is the reason why this day was distinguished from the other six; that a remembrance of God's resting from all his works on this day, might be preserved; by men's laying aside their other employments so long as to praise Him solemnly, by whom this great world was made.

Which God created, and made.] Or, as the Hebrew phrase is, *created to make, i. e.* rested from all the six days' work. For he created something at the first, out of which to make all the rest, in six days' space; and now he ceased from all.

Ver. 4. *These are the generations,* &c.] That is, this is a faithful account of the original of the world. Which Moses here repeats, more deeply to imprint on the people's minds, that the world was not a god, but *the work of God:* which they were to acknowledge every seventh day.

In the day (i. e. At that time, so *day* often signifies) *when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.*] It is observed by Tertullian, that *exinde Dominus qui retro Deus tantum,* &c. from henceforward (ver. 7, 8, 9. 15, &c.) he is called Lord, who hitherto was called only God: of which he endeavours to give a reason. (L. adv. Hermog. cap. 3.) The Hebrew doctors observe, that Jehovah Elohim (Lord God) joined together, is *the full and perfect name of God:* and therefore fitly reserved till this place, when the works of God were perfected, and not before.

Ver. 5. *And every plant in the field before it was in the earth,* &c.] That is, before there was any seed to produce them, God made them to spring up with their seed in them; as was said before, in the first chapter. And Moses here mentions these alone, because they were the first productions out of the earth; without which there had been no food for living creatures.

For the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.] Here are two reasons to confirm, that plants were not produced in the way they are now: for, there had been no showers of rain; nor was there any man to prepare the earth to receive the seed (if there had been any); both which are necessary in the ordinary method of Divine providence, ever since the world was made. From hence some collect there were no Præadamites (people before Adam), for then Moses could not have said, "There was no man to till the earth."

Ver. 6. *But there went up a mist,* &c.] Many think this will best cohere with what went before by translating it, *nor did there* (taking the particle אל *not,* from the foregoing verse, as is usual) *a mist go up from the earth.* (See Drusius in Levit. x. 6. and Hottinger in Hexapl. Paris. p. 89.) But I see no necessity of this; and think it more likely, there did go up a vapour or steam out of the earth, when it came reeking out of the waters, (as was said upon verse 9. of chap. 1.) to moisten the superficies of it; before any clouds were raised, by the power of the sun, to give rain.

Ver. 7. *Out of the dust of the ground.*] Not dry, but moist dust, as the LXX. have it, τὸν ἄνθρωπον, χοῦν ἀπὸ γῆς. From whence the apostle calls him ἄνθρωπον χοϊκόν, (1 Corinth. xv. 47.) which teaches us this dust was mixed with water: for so χοῦς signifies; *limus,* as the Vulgar Latin hath it. Which agrees with the Hebrew *jatzar, formed;* which is used concerning potters, who make their vessels of clay, not of dry earth. Diodorus Siculus seems to have had some notion of this, when he saith, man was made out of "the slime or mud of Nile." Upon which original of man's body the ancient fathers make many pious reflections: but

none better or shorter than that of Nazianzen's, who says, it is to teach us, ἵν' ὅταν ἐπαιρώμεθα διὰ τὴν εἰκόνα, διὰ τὸν χοῦν συστελλώμεθα, *that when we are apt to be lifted up because we are made* after God's image, *the thoughts* of the dirt *out of which we were taken, may humble and lay us low.*

And God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.] This being said of no other creature, leads us to conceive, not only that the soul of man is a distinct thing, of a different original from his body; but that a more excellent spirit was put into him by God (as appears by its operations) than into other animals. For though the simple speech of inspiring him with "the breath of life," would not prove this; yet Moses speaking in the plural number, that God breathed into him *nischmath chajim*, the *breath* or *spirit of lives*, it plainly denotes, not only that spirit which makes man breathe and move; but think also, reason, and discourse.

And he became a living soul.] This is the immediate result of the union of the soul with the body. Which Eusebius thus explains: (lib. vii. Præpar. Evang. cap. 10.) Moses having laid the foundations of religion beforementioned, viz. The knowledge of God, and of the creation of the world, proceeds to another point of doctrine most necessary to be understood; which is the knowledge of a man's self; to which he leads him by shewing the difference between his soul and the body: his soul being an intelligent substance, made after the image of God; his body, only an earthly covering of the soul. To which Moses adds a third, πνοὴν ζωῆς ἐνωτικήν τινα, καὶ συναπτικὴν δύναμιν, &c. *A certain vital breath, whereby the other two are united and linked together by a powerful bond, or strong tie.* His soul, it is manifest, did not come out of the earth, or any power of matter; but from the power of God, who infused it into him by his Divine inspiration.

And this was the original of Eve's soul also, though it be not mentioned: for if her soul had been made out of Adam, as her body was, he would have said, not only, She is bone of my bone, but soul of my soul; which would have mightily strengthened the bond of marriage, and exceedingly heightened conjugal affection.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord God planted.*] Or, *had planted;* for it doth not seem to be a new thing.

A garden.] A most pleasant part of the earth.

Eastward.] Or, as others translate it, *before, in the beginning*, viz. On the third day, when he made all vegetables. And it cannot be denied, that *mikkedem* may signify *time* as well as *place:* but as the greatest part of interpreters, ancient and modern, take it here to signify place; so Moses himself uses it in the following part of this book, iii. 24. xi. 2. xii. 8. xiii. 11.

In Eden.] A country (as most understand it) so called, perhaps, from its pleasure: Τόπον διάφορον φωτὶ, διαυγὲς ἄερι λαμπροτέρῳ, φυτοῖς παγκάλοις, as Theophilus de Autolyc. speaks. (lib. ii.) Where Eden was, there are two or three places of Scripture that give some direction to our search; (2 Kings xix. 12. Isa. xxxvii. 12. Ezek. xxvii. 23.) which shew there was a country, that, for many ages after this, retained the name of Eden: and that eastward, as Moses here tells us, it was situated; that is, eastward of Judea, or of the desert of the Amorites, where he wrote these books. For the Scripture calls those people "The children of the east," who dwelt in Arabia, Mesopotamia, and Persia. But in what country of the east Eden was, will be best understood from ver. 10.

And there he put the man, whom he had formed.] He was formed we must suppose in some other place; and conducted hither by God, in token of his singular kindness to him. Where he declared him, saith a Syriac writer mentioned by Hottinger, (in his Dissert. de Hexaplis, Paris. p. 115.) an heir of paradise, and made him נביא *a king, a priest,* and *a prophet.* מלכא וכהנא

Ver. 9. *And out of the ground.*] Of that garden beforementioned.

Made the Lord God to grow every tree, &c.] The greatest variety of the choicest plants, flowers, and fruits: for *tree* comprehends every thing that grows out of the earth.

Pleasant to the sight.] He gratified man's eye, as well as his taste, and his smell.

The tree of life.] So called, because there was a virtue in it, as several of the ancient fathers think, not only to repair the animal spirits, as other nourishment doth; but also to preserve and maintain them, and all the organs of the body, in the same equal temper and state wherein they were created, without any decay: until man should have been fit to be translated into another world. To this purpose Irenæus, St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, but especially Greg. Nazianzen speak, Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐμείναμεν, &c. "If therefore we had continued what we were, and kept the commandment, we should have been what we were not by coming to the tree of life, ἀπαθανατισθέντες καὶ Θεῷ πλησιάσαντες, being made immortal, and approaching nigh to God." (Orat. xliii. p. 699. D.) And why we should think it impossible or unlikely, that God should make such a fruit, I do not see. Nay, it seems necessary there should have been such a kind of food; unless we will suppose God would have preserved Adam (had he continued innocent) from dying, by a continual miracle: which is a harder supposition than the other.

But this garden being also a type of heaven, perhaps God intended by this tree to represent that immortal life, which he meant to bestow upon man with himself. (Rev. xxii. 2.) And so St. Austin in that famous saying of his: "Erat ei in cæteris lignis alimentum, in isto autem sacramentum:" (lib. viii. de Gen. ad Lit. cap. 4.) *In other trees there was nourishment for man; but in this also a sacrament.* For it was both a symbol of that life which God had already bestowed upon man (who was hereby put in mind, that God was the author of his being, and all his enjoyments), and of that life he was to hope for in another world, if he proved obedient.

In the midst of the garden.] This signifies either its situation, or its excellence: for that which is most eminent in any place, the Hebrews say is "in the midst," xxiii. 10.

The tree of knowledge of good and evil.] So called, as I take it, because God intended by this tree to prove Adam and Eve, whether they would be good or bad: which was to be made known, by their abstaining from its fruit, or eating of it. It is generally thought indeed by interpreters (of which I leave the reader to judge), that it had this name afterwards; either because the tempter pretended it would make them so wise, as to know all things, (for so *good and evil* may be expounded, chap. iii. 5. to signify as much as *all things whatsoever*) or because, in the event, upon the eating of this fruit, they did actually know, by

miserable experience (which they would not learn without it), the great difference between obeying and disobeying God's commands. That is, they who did not sufficiently attend to their duty, nor consider what it was to sin, and what the effect of it would be; presently, upon the eating of this fruit, reflected upon both. For they saw how grievous it was to incur God's displeasure, by believing a creature rather than him; and by being so ungrateful, as not to acknowledge his bounty in all the blessings they enjoyed; without thinking him envious in denying them one, as a proof of their obedience.

Some think it was so called, as a caveat to them, not to study craft and subtilty; but to content themselves in a simple, plain way of life (wherein God made them), without any curiosity to know more than was needful for them. Which they think is confirmed by chap. iii. 6. "She saw it was good to make one wise," *i. e.* cunning and wily.

Ver. 10. *And a river went out of Eden*, &c.] These words afford us such a key to open to us the place where this garden was planted, that one can scarce doubt whereabout it was; though the precise spot of ground be not marked out in this description of it. For it lay in the country of Eden; and we are directed to find that out by this remarkable circumstance, that *a river went out of it*: which doth not signify, that the spring of the river was in Eden; but that the river run through that country into the garden, *to water it*. The garden, therefore, it is probable, was a part of the province of Eden; and was watered by that river which came from it. The only difficulty is, to find what river this was. Our countryman Mr. Carver, in his learned discourse of the Terrestrial Paradise, (chap. vii.) endeavours to prove, that the two great rivers, Euphrates and Tigris, having but one and the same fountain in Armenia the Greater, run along for some time in one stream, called Tigris: upon which he thinks this garden was seated, before this river parted into two streams, Euphrates and Tigris. This he confirms out of the two Epistles of the Nestorian Christians written to Rome 1552, and translated by Masius; where they call Tigris the River of Eden. And there are indeed some ancient authors, particularly Lucan and Boetius, who say that these two rivers come out of the same spring: but their mistake arose, it is likely, from hence, that they sprung (as Strabo tells us) out of one and the same mountain, viz. Niphates, which is a part of Taurus: and Euphrates sprung out of the northern side of it, and Tigris out of the southern; as Salmasius observes upon Solinus, (p. 621, &c.) Certain it is, that the best authors, both ancient and modern, make them to have different springs, from whence they hold different courses, Euphrates towards the west, and Tigris towards the east: and do not make one river, till (after they have run through many countries) they meet and join together about Apamia, according to Ptolemy. And then indeed they make, for a long way, but one great stream: which I take to be the river here mentioned by Moses, that run through the country of Eden, which perhaps lay on both sides of the river; as the garden, it is plain, by ver. 8. did on the eastern side of it; extending itself to the place where these united rivers parted again. For so it follows:

And from thence.] *i. e.* Below the garden.

It parted.] Or, was divided again, as it had been before into two other streams. By which words we seem to have found the place where the garden ended; but being not told where it began, nor how far it spread itself eastward from the river side, I will not presume to say what country or countries it included. Certain it is, there was a country, as I observed before, called Eden in aftertimes, which was part of the kingdom of Assyria, (2 Kings xix. 12.) And that kingdom then comprehended not only the country anciently called Ashur, but Mesopotamia and Babylonia, &c. In some part of which last province it is probable this garden was seated.

And became into four heads.] He doth not say *was parted* into four heads, but *became into* four heads (whose names here follow); two before they united, viz. Tigris and Euphrates; and two after they again parted, viz. Pison and Gihon.

These he calls *heads*, or principal rivers, as David Chytræus, I think, rightly understands it; *quatuor illustria et magna flumina efficiebant*, made four famous and great rivers. For all divisions from the main stream are called the *heads* of a water; as Sir W. Raleigh observes out of Ulpianus. And it is indifferent, whether the water come out of a fountain, or out of a river, or a lake: for that part of the river (suppose) where the branch forsakes the main stream, is called the *head* of that branch; which becomes a new river. In like manner may Euphrates and Tigris be called the *heads* of that river which they made at their meeting: as where they part again, the *beginnings* (as the LXX. translate the word) of the other two rivers, Pison and Gihon, are properly called the *heads* of them.

Ver. 11. *The name of the first is Pison*, or Phison.] This is that branch which runs westerly; and being nearest to the place where Moses wrote, on the other side of Jordan, is first mentioned by him. It is a long time since both this river and Gihon have lost these names: the Greek and Roman writers calling them still, after their parting, by the names they had before they met, Euphrates and Tigris. But there was a remainder of the name of Pison preserved in the easterly river, called Pasitigris, which is the same with Oroatis, as Salmasius observes in his Exerc. Plinianæ in Solin. p. 701, 702: and is called (as Mr. Carver notes) by Xenophon simply Physcus; in which the name of Phison is plainly enough retained. Which continued till the time of Alexander the Great; for Q. Curtius, as he further notes, commonly calls Tigris itself by the name of Phasis, and says it was so called by the inhabitants thereabout. Which, in all probability, was at first the name of this other river Phison; but lost by the many alterations which were made, for a long time, in the course of it, as Pliny tells us. For he says, the Orcheni, and other neighbouring nations, made great and deep cuts or canals to carry the water of Euphrates (meaning this river) into their fields; and so it lost its course, and run through Tigris and the marshes into the sea. Strabo saith the same, that from these διώρυγαι, as he calls them, *deep trenches*, which carried the water of Euphrates into Tigris, came the name of Pasitigris; that is, Pison mixed with Tigris. See Salmasius in the forenamed Exercitations, page 703. where he shews this river was not perfectly restored to its course till the times of Alexander the Great.

That is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah.] By finding where this country was, we certainly find the river Phison. Now Moses makes mention of two Havi-

lahs; one descended from Cush, (Gen. x. 7.) and the other from Jocktan, (ver. 29.) The latter of these cannot be here meant, for his posterity were planted eastward; but the former, who were a more western people, in that part of Arabia Felix, which bordered upon this stream. For the Ishmaelites (who inhabited Arabia Deserta) are described by Moses, (xxv. 18.) as bounded by Shur towards Egypt, and by Havilah in the way to Assyria. And Saul found Havilah in aftertimes in the very same situation. (1 Sam. xv. 7.) And still, much later, Strabo mentions the Χαυλοταῖοι (which are certainly the posterity of Chavilah) among the people of Arabia. See Bochart's Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 11.

Where there is gold.] Nothing is more famous than the gold of Arabia: where Diodorus Siculus says it is digged up in great lumps, as big as a chesnut; lib. ii. p. 93. Edit. H. Steph.

Ver. 12. *And the gold of that land is good.*] *i. e.* Is excellent: for the forenamed author says, it is of such a flaming colour, that it adds much to the lustre of precious stones, that are set in it.

There is bdellium.] The Hebrew word being *bedolach*, some have thought *bdellium* to come from thence, which is an aromatic gum. Others think *bedolach* to be *crystal*, others *amber;* but Bochart rather thinks it signifies *pearl:* which he proves (in his Hierozoic. pt. ii. lib. v. cap. 25.) from the country itself here mentioned, viz. Havilah, which he looks upon as that part of Arabia which lies upon the Persian Gulph: at Catipha, there is a great pearl-fishing. The manna also, wherewith the Israelites were fed in the wilderness, is described (Numb. xi. 7.) to be round like coriander seed, and of the colour of *bedolach*. Now, in his former description, Moses says it was white, (Exod. xvi. 14.) which agrees to pearls, as also doth roundness, but not to the sweet gum called *bdellium:* of which see Salmasius in his Exerc. Plin. p. 1150.

And the onyx stone.] This country also was famous for precious stones; as appears by the report which Nearchus (Alexander's admiral) made of the western coast of the Persian Gulph, in Strabo, lib. xvi. But Braunius (lib. ii. de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr. cap. 18.) thinks *schoham* should rather be translated the *sardonyx*. Whichsoever it be, Arabia was famous both for the onyx and sardonyx, as Salmasius observes out of Pliny; ib. p. 562, 563.

Ver. 13. *The name of the second river is Gihon.*] There are no footsteps of this name remaining that I can find; but we are directed, by the country it is said to compass, to take it to be the eastern stream that arose from the parting of Euphrates and Tigris; as Pison, I said, was the western.

Compasseth, or, *runneth along by the whole land of Ethiopia.*] Or Cush: who was seated more eastward than his sons, Havilah, Seba, and the rest, (mentioned Gen. x. 6, 7.) upon the borders of this river. For when people first began to spread themselves, they kept as near to great rivers as they could; for the better communication one with another, and affording mutual succour and assistance. It is probable that he gave name to the country of Susiana; which the Greeks called Κίσσια, and is now called by the Persians, Chuzestan; *i. e.* the province of Chus. And when his posterity multiplied, they went more westward, toward the Arabian sea: from whence his brother Mitzraim passed into Egypt. Our translators follow the LXX. in rendering the Hebrew name Cush, by Ethiopia: not meaning that in Africa, but this in Asia. For the ancients frequently mention a double Ethiopia, as many have observed; particularly Job Ludolphus, who herein justifies the LXX. in great part; lib. ii. Comment. in Histor. Ethiop. cap. iii. n. 16.

Ver. 14. *The name of the third is Hiddekel.*] Which river, being called by Daniel (x. 4.) *the great river;* cannot be, as many have fancied, Naharmalcha: for that was but a cut, made by Trajan to waft his army out of Euphrates into Tigris (as Ammianus Marcellinus tells us), and therefore Hiddekel is Tigris itself. Which, as Pliny says, was called Diglito in those parts where its course was slow; and where it began to be rapid, it took the name of Tigris. And so the Arabians call this river Deglat, and Degela, from the Hebrew word *Hiddekel*. Which Salmasius derives from *Hadda*, or *Chadda*, sharp pointed; and *Kal*, swift; because of its very quick and hasty motion: and thence the Greeks, he observes, derive the name of Tigris, ἀπὸ τῆς ὀξύτητος. (Exerc. in Solin. p. 691.) Rauwolff, in his Travels, (pt. ii. cap. 9.) says, that when he was at Caruch, on the confines of Media (which was about a hundred years ago), Tigris was still called in their language Hidekel.

Which goeth toward the east of Assyria.] If it make a great bend northward (as Pliny saith it doth about Apamia), it must needs run towards the east of Assyria, for some time. But this is not the course of the river; and therefore the LXX. translate the word *kidmath*, which we English *towards the east*, simply *toward:* and it is certain Tigris did run by Assyria; for Nineveh, the chief city of Assyria, stood upon the east side of this river, as Bochart hath demonstrated in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 20.

The fourth river is Euphrates.] None doubt that the river called here in the Hebrew Perath, or Phrath, is the same that hath been called for many ages Euphrates. The course of which was so well known in those days, that Moses gives no description of it.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord God took the man.*] After such a manner as he took David from the sheepfolds, (Psal. lxxviii. 70.) by an extraordinary motion. For as a prophet was sent from God to anoint him; so God himself, I suppose, appeared to Adam, in a visible glorious majesty, which the Jews call the Schechinah; (as was noted before, i. 3.) because it was a token of God's special presence, and by it he dwelt among his people. It seems to have been a *very shining flame*, or *amazing splendour of light*, breaking out of a thick cloud: of which we afterward read very often, under the name of "the glory the Lord;" which at first appeared to Moses, as "a *flame of fire* out of the midst of a bush." (Exod. iii. 2.) To this I cannot think our first parents to have been strangers; but look upon it as highly probable, that this Divine Majesty conducted Adam from the place where he was formed into the garden of Eden.

And put him.] Or, placed him there.

To dress it, and to keep it.] To preserve it, by his care and labour, in the condition wherein he found it. Theophilus Antiochenus thinks it is not without a mystery, that God's putting man into paradise is twice mentioned, (here, and ver. 8.) to signify, that after man was cast out of one paradise, he should still have a right to another: "By

being well instructed in his banishment, and prepared for a restitution, at the general resurrection and new creation." Lib. ii. ad Autolycum.

Ver. 16. *And the Lord God commanded the man.*] This is a farther indication, that the Divine Majesty appeared to Adam and spake to him, as he did to Moses out of the flame in the bush, saying,

Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat.] A very liberal concession; which was abundantly sufficient to demonstrate that it was not envy (of which the Divine nature is not capable) which moved their Creator to abridge our first parents' liberty in one particular.

Ver. 17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,* (why so called, see ver. 9.) *thou shalt not eat of it.*] This small restraint it was fit to lay upon Adam, to make him sensible, that though he had dominion over all things, yet he was not their lord; but a servant of the Most High: who required this abstinence in token of his subjection, and to prove his obedience to him. This account many of the fathers give of it; particularly Tertullian, who calls this the *primordial law:* which was, *quasi matrix omnium præceptorum Dei,* (adv. Judæos, cap. 2.) including, as it were, in its womb, all the natural laws of God. For as, in observing this law, he had testified his unspotted love and obedience to God; so, in violating it, he threw off the Divine government, and opposed his own will to God's. But still some ask, why should his obedience be tried in such an instance as this? Not considering, that an experiment of it could scarce have been made in any of the moral precepts; which there was no occasion to violate. For what should tempt him to idolatry, or to take God's name in vain, or to murder his wife? How was it possible to commit adultery, when there was nobody but he and she in the world? How could he steal, or what room was there then for coveting, when God had put him in possession of all things? It had been in vain to forbid that which could not be done; and it had not been virtue to abstain from that to which there was no temptation, but from that which invited them to transgress. I speak in the plural number; because it must be remembered, that this prohibition was given, not only to Adam, but to Eve also, (iii. 1, 2.) an account of whose production immediately follows.

Theoph. Antiochenus, in the place beforenamed, hath several pretty reflections upon this prohibition; and this among the rest: That Adam and Eve, being but newly brought into the world, were in simplicity, to be wholly ordered and governed by the will and pleasure of their heavenly Parent; and not affect much knowledge (as not agreeable to their infant state), but to grow up in it by degrees, and not ὑπὲρ τὴν ἡλικίαν φρονεῖν, *to aim at wisdom above their age.* To which purpose Greg. Nazianzen also discourses in many places. (Orat. xxxviii. p. 619; Orat. xlii. p. 681; and Carm. Arcan. vii. p. 162.) And indeed many excellent meditations may be raised from hence; particularly, that Christians new-born should not be so greedy of knowledge, as careful and solicitous of well-doing: for many have been ruined by early speculations. Which, if one could pick any good sense out of such stuff as the Valentinians uttered, I should think they intended to represent, when they said, the last of their Æons, whom they called Wisdom, labouring to comprehend the βύθος, or *depth (i. e.* the Father of all), had like to have lost itself, till it was helped by ὅρος, or *limit.* That is, we are preserved by setting some bounds to our desires after knowledge.

Thou shalt surely die.] In the Hebrew, *dying thou shalt die;* to shew the certainty of it, as we rightly translate it. Which doth not signify, as appears by the event, that he should instantly die; but become mortal; lose the immortality wherewith he was invested. (Gen. iii. 19.). And, as Athanasius thinks, the doubting the expression denotes, μὴ μόνον ἀποθνήσκειν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῇ τοῦ θανάτου φθορᾷ διαμένειν, (lib. de Incarn. Verbi) he should *Not only die, but remain in the corruption of death;* as we should all have done, had not the second Adam obtained for us a happy resurrection.

I need not add, that diseases, sicknesses, and pains, the forerunners of death, are included in this threatening.

Ver. 18. *And the Lord God said.*] Or, *had said,* as it is by some translated; the better to shew that the foregoing precept was given to both. And to *say* in this place, is as much as to *resolve* and decree: as Melancthon well explains it, in one of his Epistles: "*Dicere,* hoc loco significat, miranda sapientia sancire, et nobis hoc decretum tradere:" To say *here signifies to establish with wonderful wisdom, and to deliver this decree to us.* (lib. i. Epist. 126.) Where he again repeats it, "The Lord said;" that is, by his wise counsel and immutable decree, he established this order.

It is not good that man should be alone.] Uncomfortable to want society, and unfit there should not be an increase of mankind. Concerning which Plato hath left these wonderful words: (lib. vi. De Legibus:) This is the encouragement to marriage—not only that the human race may be perpetuated; but a man may, παῖδας παίδων ἀεὶ τῷ Θεῷ ὑπηρέτας ἀνθ' αὑτοῦ παραδιδόναι, *leave children's children behind him when he is gone, to serve God in his stead.*

I will make him an help.] For all the necessities and uses of life.

Meet for him.] In whose company he shall take delight; so the Hebrew phrase, *as before him,* imports; being as much as, answerable to him, every way fitted for him; not only in likeness of body, but of mind, disposition, and affection: which laid the foundation of perpetual familiarity and friendship. Or, as the author of Cether Shem Tobh, mentioned by Hackspan, interprets it, "She shall always be ready to observe and serve him." For to *stand before* any one, in the Hebrew language, signifies readiness to do what is desired. See more on ver. 25.

Ver. 19. *And out of the ground the Lord God formed.*] Or, *had formed;* i. 20. 24.

Every beast of the field, &c.] The *ground* here must be understood to comprehend the water also; out of which the fowl were made.

And brought them unto Adam.] It is commonly thought that this name of Adam, given to the first man, signifies as much as *red earth.* But Job Ludolphus hath made it far more probable that it imports *elegant,* or *beautiful.* (See his Histor. Ethiop. lib. i. cap. 15. n. 17, 18. and his commentaries upon that chapter, n. 107.) How the beasts and birds were brought to him we are not told: but it is likely by the ministry of angels; who were perpetual attendants upon the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty.

To see what he would call them.] To exercise and improve his understanding.

And whatever Adam called, &c.] God approved of it.

Ver. 20. *And Adam gave names*, &c.] Or, *though Adam gave names* to all creatures; yet, among them all, when they were brought before him, there was not a fit companion found for him. It doth not follow, from his *giving names*, that he knew the *nature* of all those creatures: for the names of them in Scripture (which they who are of this opinion generally suppose were the names given by Adam) are taken from their voice, their colour, their magnitude, or some such external difference, and not from their nature. Therefore, this imposing names upon them, denotes rather his dominion than his knowledge. The anonymous author of the Chron. Excerpta before Joh. Antiochenus Malala, says, That Adam imposed names upon all creatures, κατὰ κέλευσιν Θεοῦ, *by the commandment of God*, τὸ δ' αὐτοῦ ὄνομα καὶ της γυναῖκος αὐτου Ἄγγελος Κυρίου εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, *but his own name and his wife's were told him by an angel of the Lord.*

Ver. 21. *And the Lord God caused a deep sleep*, &c.] Whereby he was made less sensible of the pain, which otherwise he would have felt in the opening his side, if his mind had not been wholly intent upon something else. As it was in this *sleep;* which was accompanied with an *extasy*, (so the LXX. translate this word, and it is agreeable to what we read Job iv. 13.) wherein was represented to his mind, both what was done to him, and the mystery of it; as appears by ver. 23, 24. Vid. Epiphan. Hæres. xlviii. n. 4, 5, 6.

And he took one of his ribs.] Tho. Bartholinus, a late famous physician, thinks it probable that Adam had thirteen ribs on each side, and that God took away one pair, with the musculous parts that adhere to them; and out of them made Eve. For commonly men have but twelve ribs, though sometimes there have been found (as Galen and Riolanus upon him testify) those who have had thirteen, and, very rarely, some who have had but eleven: as Bartholin himself observed in a lusty strong man whom he dissected, anno 1657, who had but eleven on one side, and a small appearance of a twelfth on the other. (Histor. Anatom. et Medic. Centur. v. cap. 1.) It is fit here to be observed, that God did not form Eve out of the ground, as he had done Adam; but out of his side: that he might breed the greater love between him and her, as parts of the same whole. Whereby he also effectually recommended marriage to all mankind, as founded in nature; and as the re-union of man and woman. It is likewise observable, that there is no mention here of his breathing a soul into her, as into him: for Moses only explains what was peculiar to Eve (which was her being made out of his side); the rest is supposed in those words, (ver. 19.) "I will make him an help *meet for him;*" which the Vulgar Latin rightly translates *simile ei*, like unto him. For so the Hebrew word *kenegdo* is used by the Jewish writers, particularly by Benjamin in his Itinerary; where, speaking of the Jews at Germuda, and naming several, he says, there were many more *kenegdem*, like unto them. And so the word ἀντὶ among the Greeks denotes *likeness* and *similitude*, as well as contrary. Of which see Const. L'Empereur, Annot. in Benj. Tudel. p. 138. The woman therefore was in all things like him: only he made out of the earth, she out of him: that he might cleave to her with the dearest love and affection. It was also said before this, (i. 27.) that both man and woman were made "in the likeness of God."

And closed up the flesh, instead thereof.] Made the flesh as firm as it was before.

Ver. 22. *And the rib*, &c. *made he woman.*] Which was as easy for the Divine power to do, as to make the man himself out of the earth.

And brought her to him.] Not merely by conducting her to the same place where he was; but the Divine Majesty (which now appeared to Eve) presented and gave her to him, to be his wife. God himself made the espousals (if I may so speak) between them, and joined them together in marriage.

Ver. 23. *And Adam said*, &c.] Now indeed I have found, what I could not see before among all God's creatures, *another self.*

She shall be called woman, &c.] Partake of my name, as she doth of my nature. For he called her Isscha, as he was called Issch. From whence Sepher Cosri and Abarbinel endeavour (in a very long discourse) to prove the Hebrew to be the primitive language. And Abarbinel observes the Christians to be of the same opinion, quoting, for a proof of it, St. Austin's book, De Civitate Dei.

Ver. 24. *Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife.*] Cohabit with her, rather than with his parents (if they cannot all dwell together), and be joined to her in the closest and most inseparable affection: as if they were but one person, and had but one soul and one body. That is the meaning of the next words,

And they shall be one flesh.] Most intimately conjoined in entire and inseparable love. Which arose from the singular union of the flesh of our first parents; one of them being taken out of the other. From whence Maimonides and other Hebrew doctors infer all mixture with beasts to be contrary to nature; who are neither one flesh with us, nor one with another. For in this our bodies, as well as our souls, have a pre-eminence above theirs; which were not made one flesh after such a manner as man and woman were. They hence also conclude all incestuous marriages, &c. to be unlawful, as may be seen in Mr. Selden. (De Jure N. et G. lib. v. cap. 2.) Their observation is more pertinent, who take notice, that God, creating and joining together but one man and one woman in the beginning, intended mankind should be so propagated, and not by polygamy. Which in process of time indeed became the general practice; but "from the beginning it was not so," as our Saviour speaks in the case of divorces. Which he concludes, from these very words, were against the Divine institution, which made "two to be one flesh;" (Matt. xix. 5, 6. 8.) so he interprets these words, (and St. Paul doth the same, 1 Cor. vi. 16.) "they shall be one flesh:" and so doth Jonathan's Paraphrase, and the Samaritan Code, as Mr. Selden observes, in the place now named.

Ver. 25. *And they were both naked, the man and his wife.*] They did not yet find any necessity for clothes.

And they were not ashamed.] Did not blush; no more than little children do, when they behold one another naked, and embrace with an innocent affection. Besides, there was nobody but they two (who in effect were as one) to behold them: and therefore they had no more reason to blush, than a man doth when he is naked alone by himself.

CHAP. III.

EUSEBIUS observes, (lib. vii. Præpar. Evang. cap. 9, 10.) that Moses, having settled the great doctrines of the

creation of the world, and the *dignity of man,* made in the image of God; proceeds very wisely to instruct the Israelites, that there are none so happy, but, without due care and watchfulness, may become most miserable: there being πονηρὸς δαίμων (as his words are), *a wicked demon* at every man's elbow, βάσκανος καὶ μισόκαλος καὶ τῆς ἀνθρώπων ἀρχῆθεν ἐπίβουλος σωτερίας, *envious, a hater of those that are good, and from the beginning a wily underminer of men's salvation.*

Now this following immediately after the relation of the formation of Eve, hath made some fancy, that our very first parents fell the very same day they were made. And thus much, I think, must be supposed—that they did not continue very long in their happy state: for if they had persisted steadfastly in their duty for a considerable time, they would have acquired such a habit of well-doing, as would not have been so easily lost. But that they continued longer than a day, there are many circumstances to induce us to believe. For it required some time for Adam to be acquainted with all other creatures, and to impose names upon them: and there being none of them a meet help for him, he slept some time, till Eve had taken her beginning out of him. Whom, when he saw, he received, and owned her for his wife; and no doubt made more reflections upon God's wisdom, power, and goodness, than are set down in this sacred story. They both also received a command from God, not to eat of one tree in the garden: into which, when they were brought, we cannot but think they walked about it, and took such a view of it, as to be convinced, by the bountiful provision God had made for them, they had no reason to complain of the small restraint he laid upon them. All which could not be performed so speedily as some have imagined: for though God can do what he pleases in an instant, yet man cannot; and God himself did not in one day create the world. And, besides that, some time was necessary for transacting all these things; it is not likely the devil would immediately set upon Eve, as soon as the command was laid upon them; but rather let it be a little forgotten. And if the time be observed when he assaulted her, it will much confirm this opinion, which was in the absence of her husband; for that we cannot easily believe to have been upon the same day they were created. The extraordinary kindness they had one for the other, will scarce allow us to think it possible, they should be so soon separated. It is plain also, God "sanctified the seventh day" before their fall; which it is highly probable they spent in admiring and praising the almighty goodness.

Ver. 1. *Now the serpent.*] Or, *that serpent* (as some think it should be translated) which the tempter made use of, as his instrument to deceive.

Was more subtil.] The whole species of serpents is noted by Aristotle (lib. i. Histor. Animal. cap. 1.) to be μάλιστα ἐπίβουλος, *extremely insidious;* but this was extraordinary wily. What sort it was is not here expressed: but all agree there is now none like it; the curse of God having degraded it. St. Basil in his Book of Paradise (p. 627.) saith, it was not a frightful creature, as it is now, ἀλλὰ προσηνὴς καὶ ἥμερος, but *mild and gentle:* not crawling and winding about, in a terrible manner, upon the ground, ἀλλ' ὑψηλὸς ἐπὶ πόδων βεβηκώς, *but lofty, and going upright upon its feet.* Several of the Jews have been of this opinion; and our famous Mr. Mede inclines to it. (Discourse xxxviii. p. 291, &c.) But I take the conjecture of another very learned person, now a bishop of our church, to be far more probable: which I shall endeavour to strengthen. There were (and still are in the eastern and southern parts of the world) serpents having wings, and shining very brightly, like to fire. So we read (Isa. xiv. 29.) of "a flying fiery serpent." Which *fiery serpents* are called *seraphims,* in Numb. xxi. 6. 8. and termed *fiery,* not merely with respect to their venom, which made sore inflammations in the bodies of those who were bitten by them, but because they appeared shining like fire when they flew in the air.

Whence *seraphim* is the name also of the highest sort of angels, (called the "angels of the presence," Isa. vi. 2. 6.) who appeared, I suppose, in some such form with flaming wings. For otherwise, I cannot think serpents would have been honoured as sacred things in so many countries, as we find they anciently were, unless they had been the symbols of angels. The devil, therefore, I conceive, made use of some such serpent (but of a more surpassing brightness than any now extant), that he might resemble one of the most illustrious angels, who appeared sometimes in the like shape. Which moved Eve the more readily to hearken unto the voice of the serpent; taking it to be one of the heavenly seraphims, which she had seen sometime, in such a splendid form, attend upon the Divine glory, or majesty: for the angels always made a part of the Schechinah. And thus, one would think, Tertullian understood this matter, when he said, (in his book De Præscript. Hæret. cap. xlvii.) "Istum fuisse serpentem, cui Eva, ut filio Dei, crediderat;" *this was the serpent to whom Eve gave credit as to the Son of God.* Which, if any one take to be the words of the heretics he is there speaking of; yet those are not which we find in his book against the Valentinians, (cap. 2.) where he saith the serpent was "à primordio Divinæ imaginis prædo," *an usurper of the Divine image from the beginning.* (See Dr. Tenison of Idolatry, p. 356.) To which that passage in Epiphanius may be added, who mentions some heretics (who might have some truth among them) that said, the woman listened to the serpent, καὶ ἐπείθη ὡς υἱοῦ Θεοῦ, and *believed him,* or was persuaded by him, *as the Son of God.* (Hæres. xxxvii. n. 25.) And, one would think, Rabbi Bechai had this notion in his mind, when he said (upon the 14th verse of this chapter,) "This is the secret (or mystery, of the holy language), that a serpent is called Saraph, as an angel is called Saraph." For which he quotes the forenamed place, (Numb. xxi. 6.) and then adds, The Scripture calls serpents seraphim, because they were *toledoth hanacash hakadmoni, the offspring of this old serpent: understand this,* (so he concludes, as our Saviour speaks in another case, "Whoso readeth, let him understand,") as a matter of great concernment. Which can have no other meaning, I think, but this; that the devil, (whom St. John also calls the "old serpent," Rev. xii. 9.) in this serpent here spoken of, counterfeited a glorious seraphim, and thereby seduced Eve to give credit to him.

However this be, it is most reasonable to suppose, it was some beautiful creature; by whom Eve thought an angel, who wished them well, discoursed with her: for she was not so simple as to think that beasts could speak;

much less, that they knew more of God's mind than herself. Nor doth it seem at all credible to me, that she could have been otherways deceived, but by some creature which appeared so gloriously, that she took it for an heavenly minister; who, she thought, came to explain to them the meaning of the Divine command.

Yea, hath God said.] This doth not look like the beginning of a discourse, but the conclusion: as the Jews themselves have observed. And it is not improbable, that the tempter, before he spake these words, represented himself as one of the heavenly court; who came, or was sent, to congratulate the happiness that God hath bestowed upon them in paradise: which was so great, that he could not easily believe he had denied them any of the fruit of the garden. He desired therefore to be satisfied, from her own mouth, of the truth of what he pretended to have heard; or to know how they understood the command of God: for so these words may be translated, "Is it true indeed, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree," &c. Which is a very ancient interpretation, and more probable than theirs, who would have the Hebrew particles, *aph ki*, signify as much as *ut ut:* "Although God hath said, Ye shall not eat, notwithstanding ye shall not die." So they suppose he was going to add; but, before he had spoken the latter part of the sentence, Eve interrupted him, saying, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden." This had been too gross, flatly to contradict what God had said: whereas the beginning of the verse tells us, he went more subtilly to work.

Ver. 2. *And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden.*] She seems to have understood him, as if he thought God had forbid them to eat of any fruit in the garden. And indeed the foregoing question is ambiguous; like those oracles of his which made him be called Λοξίας (oblique or crooked), by the ancient heathen; because they had two meanings. She truly therefore reports the sense of God's prohibition, in this and the following verse. Though there are those who think she pronounced these words, "We may eat of the fruit," &c. with some admiration, that they should be restrained from one fruit, when God had most liberally granted them all the rest. The reason of which she did not know, and shewed her desire perhaps to understand it.

Ver. 3. *But of the fruit of the tree, which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, nor touch it, lest ye die.*] Some fancy the woman here began to prevaricate in two things: First, In saying they might not *touch it:* Secondly, In saying only there was danger if they meddled with it, and not an absolute threatening. Of which the devil, they think, took advantage; and immediately assured her, there was no danger at all. This last they grounded upon the Hebrew particle *pen*, which we translate *lest*, and expresses a doubting. But I do not think either of these observations are solid: for that particle does not always imply a doubt, as we may learn from the second psalm, the last verse, and many other places: and the *touching* of the fruit, signifies the plucking it off from the tree, in order to eat it: which was expressly forbidden.

Ver. 4. *Ye shall not surely die.*] You are under a mistake: death will not be the certain consequence of your eating this fruit: for God is too good to inflict such a heavy punishment for so small a fault.

Ver. 5. *For God,* &c.] The particle *ki*, which we translate *for*, signifies here as much as *but* (as Abarbinel and others observe), just as in Psalm cxv. 1. So the meaning is, you shall be in no danger, but quite contrary, be great gainers by tasting of this fruit: as God himself knows, who only keeps you in awe by his threatening, but will not be so severe as to execute it; when he sees you much improved, not impaired by eating of it.

Then your eyes shall be open.] For you will immediately discover abundance of things, whereof you are now ignorant.

And ye shall be as gods.] Like unto us, the angels of God: who are frequently called Elohim, *i.e.* gods, in Scripture. Thus Maimonides understands it, (More Nev. pars i. cap. 2.) and Onkelos, who translates it *princes*, meaning angels, who are called Ἀρχαί *principalities*, and *powers*, &c.

Knowing good and evil.] *i. e.* All manner of things. Or, as some of the Hebrews understand it, "Know what is fit for you to do, without any advice or instruction, and without any restriction, being subject to none; but enjoy freely what you please." For to *know* is sometimes as much as to *enjoy*, in the scripture language. So that according to this interpretation, he promises them likeness to God himself; who is absolutely free, and subject to none.

But in this suggestion the devil proved, what our Saviour says of him, that he was "a liar from the beginning:" for there are no less than four lies (as some reckon them) in these two verses. Which makes it seem strange that Eve should give credit to these suggestions, which were very foolish: it being incredible that God should envy them any thing, who had given them their beings, and innumerable blessings. I can give no account of it but this: that when we are searching after the reason of things as she, I suppose, was of this prohibition) and cannot find it; if one be suggested to us, which never came into our mind before, though in itself unlikely, we are ready to catch at it, and to be pleased with it: for when the mind is weary with inquiring, it is satisfied with a false reason rather than have none. The promise also of knowledge was very tempting; especially of such knowledge as he gave her hope would raise and advance her to a more noble condition. And it is likely she thought an heavenly minister (as she took him to be) might understand God's meaning better than herself.

Ver. 6. *And when the woman saw the tree was good,* &c.] This verse gives a further account of that which seems very strange, the disobedience of our first parents. She looked so long upon the forbidden fruit, till she not only had an appetite to it, as excellent food, but was taken with its beautiful colour; and was also strongly possessed, by the persuasion of the old serpent, that her mind would be no less pleased than her palate by an increase in knowledge and wisdom. These were powerful temptations, (expressed in these words, "Good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and to be desired to make one wise,") and she could see no evil in the thing itself; it being the mere pleasure of God, of which she did not apprehend the reason, that made the eating of it a crime. This fruit also was planted, not in an obscure place, but "in the midst of the garden," (ver. 3.) near to the tree of life: which made it the more

inviting; by its being always in her eye, as well as very beautiful; and raised, perhaps, the greater wonder in her, that God should forbid a thing which he had made so eminent for its beauty. Hereupon she yielded, and (as it follows) "took of the fruit thereof and did eat."

And gave unto her husband with her.] Who returned to her, it is likely, as she was eating the fruit; and was soon persuaded to bear her company; for it immediately follows, "and he did eat."

It is a question, whether he debated the matter with her, till he was satisfied with the arguments that moved her to eat; or his great affection to her drew him in, to do as she did: without any other consideration, perhaps, than this; that he chose rather to die, than out-live one, whom he loved most passionately. To this last, the apostle's words seem to incline, (1 Tim. ii. 14.) "Adam was not deceived:" though they do not necessarily signify, it must be confessed, that he was not seduced by the tempter's arguments; but only that Eve was first seduced, and then helped to seduce him. So that he might be wrought upon, both by those arguments, and by his affection also to his wife: but could have been deceived by neither, had he not been first guilty of a great ἀπροσεξία and ῥαθυμία, (as St. Chrysostom calls it) *heedlessness* and *non-attention*, arising from *sloth* and *negligence*. The reflection which Gregor. Nazianzen. makes upon her gazing upon the beautiful fruit is this; Φεύγωμεν τὰς εὐχροίας· εἰς ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς βλέπωμεν, &c. (Orat. xlvii. p. 700. D.)

Ver. 7. *And the eyes of them both were opened.*] Not in the sense the serpent promised, but a very much different: for they soon saw their folly, and made sad reflections upon what they had done.

And they knew (or felt) *that they were naked.*] A cold shivering seized on them; and they perceived also that they were stripped of their intellectual ornaments, (as Athanasius expounds it, contra Gentes, p. 4.) and blushed also at their bodily nakedness, of which they were not before at all ashamed.

And they sewed fig-leaves together.] Or, *twisted the young twigs of the fig-tree, with the leaves on them:* which are very broad in the eastern countries. Pliny reckons this among the trees that have the largest leaves, (lib. xvi. cap. 24. and cap. 26.) where he saith, it hath "folium maximum, umbrosissimumque," *the greatest and most shady leaf of all other.*

And made themselves aprons.] A covering, which they girt about them.

Ver. 8. *And they heard the voice of the Lord walking in the garden.*] The sound of the *majestic presence*, or the *glory of the Lord*, approaching nearer and nearer unto the place where they were. For the *walking* may be referred to *voice*, as well as to the Lord: signifying that the *sound*, as I said (for so *voice* is often used in Scripture) of the Divine Majesty's approach, came still nearer, and made a louder noise, to terrify them. For thus the word *walk* is applied to the *voice* (*i. e.* sound) *of the trumpet* at the giving of the law, when Moses says of it, (Exod. xix. 19.) הולך והזק *it walked*, or *increased, and grew stronger.*

Just so, I conceive, the sound, which the motion of the Schechinah made, did at this time. And that,

In the cool of the day.] When the wind began to rise (so it is in the Hebrew, *in the wind of day*); that is, towards the evening, as most understand it: for then there was wont to be a gentle breath of wind; as Aristotle observes of his country, τὸν Ζέφυρον πρὸς τὴν δείλην πνεῖν, *the west wind was wont to blow towards the close of the day.* Which being a soft and gentle gale, the sound they heard was the more astonishing, which seemed to threaten a dreadful storm.

Onkelos thus paraphrases the first words, "they heard the voice of the Word of the Lord:" that is, of the Son of God; who appeared in very glorious clouds, or rather in flaming fire, of such an amazing brightness, that they were not able to endure the sight of it. For so it follows:

Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, &c.] It is plain by this there was the appearance of an extraordinary presence; which affrighted them, and made them run "among the trees of the garden," *i. e.* into the thickets, or closest places they could find there.

I cannot but think the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, appeared quite otherwise than formerly; that is, not in so mild a lustre as when they were first acquainted with him; but in a more terrible burning light, as if it would consume them. For so we read in after-times, that the same Lord, who appeared unto Moses "in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush," (Exod. iii. 2.) came down in a more dreadful manner, at the giving of the law, from Mount Sinai: when the mountain was "altogether on a smoke, (Exod. xix. 18.) because the Lord descended upon it in fire:" and that fire so great, that it flamed "unto the midst of heaven, (Deut. iv. 11.) with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness."

Ver. 9. *And the Lord God called unto Adam.*] As he did to Moses out of the bush, (Exod. iii. 4.) and to Israel out of the midst of the fire, (Deut. iv. 12.)

And said unto him.] With a majestic voice, against which he could not stop his ears.

Where art thou?] Why dost thou run into covers, like the wild beasts? Such questions do not argue innocence in him that asks them; but are intended to awaken the guilty to a confession of their crimes: as appears from (iv. 10.) "Where is Abel thy brother?" Of whom Cain stubbornly refusing to give an account, the Lord said immediately (to shew he needed not to be informed), "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

Ver. 10. *And he said, I heard thy voice, and I was afraid, because I was naked,* &c.] The very sound of the approach of thy presence so affrighted me, because I found I had lost my innocency, that I hid myself from thee. This was a foolish and vain attempt; but as guilt makes men fearful, so that bereaves them of all consideration.

Ver. 11. *And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked?*] Divested of those noble endowments, which I bestowed on thee?

Hast thou eaten? &c.] Transgressed my commandment?

Ver. 12. *And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest,* &c.] I confess my guilt; into which I was drawn by her whom thou gavest me for an help. Thus we are apt to excuse and palliate our faults; by laying that load upon others, with which we ought to charge ourselves.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord God said unto the woman,* &c.] What moved thee to violate my command?

And she said, The serpent beguiled me.] My weakness was deceived by the cunning of the devil. Thus she also threw the blame upon another. But God, no doubt, convinced them both of the greatness of their guilt, and the miserable condition into which they were fallen by their transgression, before he ended this discourse with them. Which shews the infinite mercy of the Creator of all, who would not abandon them; but sought after them to save them, when they had lost themselves.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord said unto the serpent, Thou art cursed,* &c.] It is observed by Tertullian, that though God inflicted punishments on Adam and Eve, yet he did not *curse* them, as he did the serpent, *ut restitutionis candidatos,* they standing far for a restitution to his favour, (lib. ii. adv. Marcion. cap. 25.) And I may add, God did not begin with them; but first sentences the serpent, before he proceeds to judgment upon them: which denotes that he (the old serpent) was the great offender, being the first mover to sin; which made his crime more grievous than theirs.

Now, to be *cursed,* is to be deprived of what was before enjoyed, and doomed to a miserable wretched condition of life: the particulars of which follow. The only difficulty is, why the serpent (literally so called) should be cursed, as it manifestly is, (though the devil also, I shall shew, is intended) being but an instrument which the evil spirit used; and had neither will to sin, nor yet understanding or knowledge of what the devil did. It is commonly answered, that this is no more than the curse which God inflicted upon the earth (which was not capable of sinning) for Adam's sake, (ver. 17.) But still the reason of that curse is inquired; which is evident enough: man himself being punished by the curse upon the earth: which did not yield its fruit so plentifully and so easily, as it had done before his transgression. And the reason of this curse upon the serpent may be the better discerned, by another instance which we find Exod. xxi. 28. where an ox, which gored a man or woman that they died, is ordered to be stoned, and his flesh not to be eaten. This sure was to shew the great value God set upon man's life: which he secured also by this punishment; which moved all owners to look well to their beasts that might endanger it. Even so was the serpent condemned, in mercy to Adam and his wife (whom, it is manifest by what follows, God intended to restore into his favour), that they might be ever mindful of the foulness of their guilt, and excited to repentance; by seeing a noble creature (who was but the instrument of it) so extremely debased into a most vile condition.

Upon thy belly shalt thou go.] This shews the serpent was a more noble creature before this fact: but changed after it, from a flying seraph (as the word is, Numb. xxi. 6.) into a foul creeping serpent; not moving aloft in the air, but crawling upon the earth, and licking the dust. So it follows:

And dust shalt thou eat, all the days of thy life.] There is no viler food than this: which doth not signify the serpent should feed upon nothing else; but that creeping on the ground it cannot but lick up much dust together with its food, whatsoever that be.

All this is, literally, the curse of the serpent: but as the devil lay hidden under the covert of the serpent, though he be not named; so his curse is intended in this curse of the serpent, though it be not separately mentioned: as appears by the following verse, which has a peculiar respect to the devil under the name of the serpent. And the devil's curse in general was this: to be thrust down further than before, from his ancient heavenly habitation; and condemned to live in the lower smoky region of the air: where he hath lost all relish of celestial enjoyments, and pleases himself only in his vile endeavours to make mankind as wicked as himself.

Ver. 15. *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.*] An irreconcilable feud, throughout all generations. Which is true of the serpent, literally understood, between whom and mankind there is such an antipathy, that it discovers itself both in the *natural* and *sensitive* faculties of them both: their humours being poison to each other; and man being astonished at the sight of a serpent more than any other creature: and the serpent in like manner at the sight of a man, especially (if naturalists say true) of a *naked* man. Thus, Mr. Mede, (Discourse xxxix. p. 295.) But this is far more true and certain of the *spiritual serpent,* the devil and his angels (who joined with him in his apostacy), and the woman and her seed, in whom these words are more literally fulfilled. For Maimonides justly admires, that the seed of the woman should be only mentioned, and not of Adam, (without whom *she* could have no seed; which therefore must be *his* seed) and that it should be said of *her* seed, not of *his,* that it bruised the serpent's head (More Nevochim, pt. ii. cap. 30.) "This," saith he, "is one of the passages in Scripture which is most wonderful, and not to be understood, according to the letter; but contains great wisdom in it." In which words he wrote more truth than he was aware; but was not able to unfold this hidden wisdom, as we Christians, blessed be God, are able to do. For this *seed* here spoken of is Christ, as both the Targums (that ascribed to Jonathan, and that called the Hierusalem) expound it; and as we are taught to understand it, by God's words to Abraham, when he renewed this promise: "In thy seed (that is Christ, saith the apostle) shall all nations be blessed," (Gen. xxii. 18. Gal. iii. 8. 16.) For he vanquished the devil, who had now vanquished mankind. So here it follows,

It shall bruise thy head.] *i. e. That seed* of the woman shall despoil thee of thy power (meaning the devil), and abolish thy tyranny. For in the head of the serpent (to which there is here an allusion) lies his strength: as Epaminondas represented to the Thebans, when he exhorted them to set upon a band of Lacedemonians, by shewing them the head of a vast snake, which he had crushed (*τὴν κεφαλὴν τοῦ θηρίου συντρίψας*), saying, "Look ye, the body can do no hurt now the head is gone:" meaning, that, if they routed the Lacedemonians, the rest of the confederates would signify nothing. (Polæn. lib. ii. Strateg.) And therefore Mr. Mede has rightly interpreted the *serpent's head,* to signify the *devil's sovereignty,* (Discourse xxv. p. 143. and xxxix. p. 298.) and that sovereignty is the power of death: which headship of the devil, the *seed of the woman* (that is, *Christ the Lord*) hath broken in pieces, and, at last, will utterly destroy. (1 Cor. xv. 25, 26.)

There is a notable example of this enmity in the struggle between Christ and the devil for empire, in Rev. xii. 7, 8. where Christ destroyed the sovereignty of the serpent in the Roman empire so effectually, that there was "no

more place found for the dragon and his angels in heaven;" *i. e.* the devil utterly lost his sovereignty in that state; as Mr. Mede interprets it.

And thou shalt bruise his heel.] This victory over the devil was not to be gotten without blood: for the devil did all that he was able to destroy *this seed*. But that was impossible to be done; he could only assault his lower part, (called here the *heel*,) viz. *his body or flesh:* which, by his instruments, he persecuted, despitefully used, and at last crucified. By which very means (so admirable was the wisdom and goodness of God) the *seed of the woman* conquered the devil, as the apostle shews, Heb. ii. 14, 15. For it must be here noted, that Christ was properly and literally *the seed of the woman*, and not at all of the man: being born, without him, of a pure virgin. The tender mercy of God also must here be acknowledged; which gave our first parents hope of a recovery, as soon as they were fallen: by making them this most gracious promise. Which, though here something obscurely delivered, grew clearer and clearer, in every age, till Christ came.

It cannot be denied, likewise, but that by *seed* may be understood (collectively) all the faithful, who, by the power of their Lord, vanquish all the power of their spiritual enemy, (see Luke x. 19.) Yet so, that we must confess, there was *one eminent seed* here primarily intended, by whom they overcome. Unto whom another *seed* is not here opposed in this last part of the verse, (as in the former part,) but the serpent himself: which points out a single combat (as I may call it) between this promised *seed* and the devil. But if we will take in the other sense also, understanding by *seed*, Christ with all his members, then the *bruising their heel* signifies (as Mede expounds it) the devil's deceit and guile in assaulting us unawares; as they do who come behind others, when they do not observe them, and catch hold of their heel. For that this is an emblem of guile and deceitful dealing, appears from the story of Esau and Jacob; the latter of which had his name from catching his brother by the heel at his birth, which Esau took for an indication of his beguiling him, as he did two times. See Discourse xxxvii. p. 184.

It is fit, I think, here to note further, (what the learned Mr. Allix hath observed,) that God in this promise did a particular kindness to our father, Adam. Who having been seduced by his wife to eat the forbidden fruit, it might have occasioned a breach between them; had not God taken care to prevent it, by making this gracious promise of a Redeemer, to depend upon his union with his wife: from whom, he assures them, One should descend that should repair their losses.

The time likewise when this promise was made is remarkable: which was, before God had rejected Cain and preferred Seth to him; and long before any restriction made to Noah's family, or Sem's (who derived from him), that all the world might look upon the Messiah as a common benefit to all the sons of Adam.

Ver. 16. *Unto the woman he said.*] Next to the serpent, *the woman* receives her sentence (as Mr. Mede well notes), because she was more in the fault than Adam: being guilty, as his words are, (Discourse xxxviii. p. 287.) both of her own personal sin and of her husband's also. Whence it is, that he, who had only sinned himself and not caused others to sin, had his judgment last of all. This should be a little more considered than it is, by all those who not only do evil themselves, but draw others into the same guilt.

I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and conception.] *i. e.* Thy sorrow in thy conception: which includes all the time of women's going with child; when they frequently nauseate all their food, or have troublesome longings, and endure many other things which are very grievous to them; especially when they are in danger to miscarry of their burden.

In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children.] Brute creatures are observed to bring forth their young, with far less pain, and difficulty, and danger, than women commonly have in their labour. Who, after they are delivered of their children, are still in danger, by many accidents: especially when that stays behind which should follow the birth, (as it sometimes doth from various causes, noted by Bartholinus, in his Hist. Anatom. et Medic. Cent. v. Hist. xxxii. n. 3.) which occasions sore torments, and puts their lives in the greatest hazard.

And thy desire shall be to thy husband.] That is, it shall be subject to him; as the Vulgar Latin and Aben Ezra expound this phrase: which is so used, iv. 7.

And he shall rule over thee.] Have power to control thy desire. This looks like putting her more under the will of her husband, than was intended in her first formation: because she had not given a due regard to him; but eaten the forbidden fruit, without staying to consult him and ask his advice.

Ver. 17. *And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife,* &c.] Been so weak, as to mind her more than me.

Cursed shall the ground be.] It shall not bring forth so plentifully, nor so easily as it did.

For thy sake.] Because of thy sin; which shall be punished partly by its barrenness.

In sorrow shalt thou eat of it.] It shall cost thee a great deal of labour and toil, before thou reapest the fruits of it.

All the days of thy life.] Every part of the year shall bring along with it new wearisome labours.

Ver. 18. *Thorns and thistles,* &c.] It shall cost thee abundance of pains to root up the thorns, thistles, and unprofitable weeds; which shall come up instead of better plants.

And thou shalt eat the herb of the field.] Be content with such things as the common field produces; instead of the delicious fruits of paradise. Here the Rabbins cry out, "Mensura pro mensura;" *behold the justice of God, who served man in his kind!* He was not satisfied with the choice fruits of the garden in which God put him; and therefore he took them from him, and sent him to eat the ordinary food of beasts; and that not without hard labour. (Maimon. More Nevoch. pt. i. cap. 2.)

Ver. 19. *In the sweat of thy face,* &c.] Some conclude from hence, that the earth brought forth before the fall without any pains to cultivate it. And indeed there needed none; all things being produced at the first, by the Divine power, in full perfection. But what labour would have been necessary in time, if man had continued innocent, we do not know: only these words signify, that less toil would have served than man must now take for their sustenance.

Some of the Jews reckon up nine punishments, besides death, which God inflicted upon Adam; and as many upon Eve. (See Pirke Eliezer, cap. xiv. and Vorstius upon him.)

Till thou return to the ground.] *i. e.* Till thou diest, and moulderest into dust.

For out of it thou wast taken.] From whence thou wast taken, as it is explained, ver. 23. which shews the particle *ki* is not always to be translated *for;* but sometime *whence*, or *whom*, as (iv. 25.) "God hath given me another seed instead of Abel, כי הרגו whom Cain slew."

The rest of this verse needs no explication.

Ver. 20. *Called her name Eve.*] Some think she was called Isscha before, and now he changed her name into Eve: in belief that God would make her the mother of all mankind, and of the promised seed particularly; by whom (as D. Chytræus adds) he hoped to be raised from the dead to immortal life.

Mother of all living.] Of all men that should live hereafter, or of Him that should give life to mankind. So Havah may be interpreted, *vivà* or *vivificatrix:* because she was the mother of all mankind, or because mankind, now sentenced to death, were by her *seed* to be made alive.

Ver. 21. *Unto Adam and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins,* &c.] The first clothes of mankind were of the leaves of trees, which they made themselves; being ready at hand, woven by Divine art. The next were of the skins of beasts; which were much warmer, and better able to defend them from the injury of cold and weather: and these were made by God's direction. Who having made a most gracious covenant with our first parents, (ver. 15.) it seems not unreasonable to suppose, that he also signified to them, they should, for the confirmation of it, offer to him sacrifices: by the blood of which, covenants were ratified, in after-times, from this example. For it is not likely, that the beasts, of whose skins these coats were made, died of themselves; or that they were killed merely for this use, or for their food. And, therefore, what is so probable as that, by God's order, they were slain for a sacrifice to him, (the better to represent to them their guilt, and that the promised seed should vanquish the devil, and redeem them, by shedding his blood) and that of the skins of those beasts God directed coats to be made to clothe them? But whether by dressing them and making leather of them, or only by drying them, and letting the hair still continue on them, we cannot tell: certain it is, that this was a very ancient sort of clothing; as we learn, not only from profane authors, but from the sacred; particularly Heb. xi. 37. The Jewish doctors have carried this matter so far, as to say, that Adam being a priest, these ere his priestly garments. The skin, indeed, of the burnt-offering, under the law, is given to the priest, (Lev. vii. 8.) but not to make him clothes: and Eve, if this were true, must have been a priest also; for she had a coat made of skins, no less than Adam; who, they fancy, left this coat to his posterity. So that Noah, Abraham, and all the rest of the patriarchs (as Abel they say did) sacrificed in the very same coat; till Aaron was made high-priest, and had special garments appointed him by God. Among which, one being called by this very name of כתנת (Exod. xxviii.) it gave ground to this idle conceit.

Ver. 22. *Behold, the man is become,* &c.] Man, in this place, includes woman: and these words are generally thought to be spoken sarcastically; to approve their great folly, in thinking to increase their knowledge, whether God would or no.

Like one of us.] These words plainly insinuate a plurality of persons in the Godhead; and all other explications of them seem forced and unnatural: that of Mr. Calvin's being as disagreeable to the Hebrew phrase, as that of Socinus to the excellency of the Divine nature. This, I think, is well proved by Theodorick Hackspan, Disput. iv. De Locut. Sacris, n. 15, &c.

And now, lest he put forth his hand, &c.] This seems an abrupt kind of speech; something being kept back: as, let us turn him out (or some such-like words), "Lest he take also of the tree of life, and live for ever." Which many of the ancient fathers look upon as a merciful dispensation that man might not be perpetuated in a state of sin. So Irenæus, (lib. iii. cap. 37. and Greg. Nazianz. Orat. xxxviii. p. 619.) God thus ordered, Ἵνα μὴ ἀθάνατον ᾖ τὸ κακὸν, καὶ γίνεται φιλανθρωπία ἡ τιμωρία, &c. *that sin might not be immortal, and the punishment might be a kindness.* Which he repeats, Orat. xlii. p. 681. So Epiphanius also, (Hæres. xxxvii. n. 1.) "When man had spoiled himself, God unmade him, that he might make him better." And Methodius in him, (Hæres. xliv. n. 24, 25, &c. and 29.) where he proceeds so far as to say, that death was not sent upon man, ἐπὶ κακῷ τινί, *out of any evil design to him,* but as a mercy.

Ver. 23. *Therefore God sent him forth,* &c.] Or, *cast him out:* and that with reproach and disgrace; as Aben Ezra observes the Hebrew word, in this form, to signify. And so cast him out, that he should not return again.

To till the ground from whence he was taken.] This confirms what I said upon the second chapter: (ver. 8.) That Adam was made in another place, and thence brought into paradise: from whence, being now expelled, he was sent back to the place where he was first formed; there to labour in all the toils of husbandry. Though, it must be confessed, these words may signify no more, than those ver. 19. of this chapter, that he had his original from the earth: by the tilling of which he was put in mind of his return thither.

Ver. 24. *So he drove out the man.*] (With his wife) or, as Aben Ezra translates it, *after he had driven him out, he placed,* &c. This word גרש is that which the Hebrews properly use in divorces; and therefore denotes, they think, that the Lord put him away from his presence, as a man did his wife, to whom he gave a bill of divorce: or, as a prince banishes a subject that hath rebelled against him, whom he sends into exile out of his own country.

And he placed at the east of the garden.] This shews the entrance into paradise was from the east: at which entrance Adam being cast out, it is likely he afterward inhabited some of the eastern countries. Eutychius, patriarch of Alexandria, saith a mountain in India; which the Mahometans commonly call Sarandib, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. i. De Synedr. cap. ii. p. 452, &c.) But Aben Ezra's conjecture seems more reasonable, that he dwelt in some country not far from paradise.

Cherubims.] Some of the heavenly ministers, that waited upon the Divine Majesty: who were called by this name in Moses's time, when he wrote this history in the wil-

derness, after the giving of the law. For the glory of the Lord, I take it, here appeared, at the expulsion of Adam and Eve, in a most dreadful manner; to deter them from attempting to come near this place again for fear of being consumed.

And a flaming sword.] Or, *flame of a sword.* Concerning which Maimonides thus discourses: (p. i. More Nevoch. cap. 4.) Our wise men understand by *lahat (flame)* an angel: according to the psalmist, "He maketh his angels spirits; his ministers *(lohet) a flaming fire.*" (Psal. civ. 4.) That is, one of the seraphims, or a flaming angel, in the form of a flying fiery seraph (or serpent), whose body moving in the air resembled the vibration of a sword, was appointed, with the cherubims, to guard the entrance of the garden. For the cherubims and seraphims, are frequently mentioned in Scripture as attendants upon the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty: which appeared here in great glory, at the passage into the garden of Eden; as it did in aftertimes at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation of Israel, to their great astonishment.

Which turned every way.] "Angels," says Maimonides, in the forenamed place, "can turn themselves into all forms and shapes: some of which strike greater terror into those that behold them than others do." But I take this expression, not to signify mutation of shapes, but the motion of the angel: which was so very swift and glittering, that devouring flames seemed to come streaming out on every side.

To keep the way of the tree of life.] To secure the passage into the garden of Eden, where this tree was; that none should dare to attempt a re-entrance. But Adam was so far from thinking of this, that, if the eastern traditions were to be credited, I should add, he plunged himself into the deepest sorrow for a long time; bewailing his sin, begging pardon, &c. till God dispatched an angel to comfort him, and further assure him of his favour: which being but probable conjectures, I say no more of such matters. Nor can I assert, with any degree of confidence, what our great primate of Ireland says, in his Annals, that it seems to have been the tenth day of the world's age, when Adam was cast out of paradise: in memory of which calamity, the solemn day of expiation, and the great fast, was instituted in aftertimes, wherein all were to afflict their souls, (Lev. xvi. 29.) This indeed is the doctrine of the Jews, who say, "The great day of expiation (which was on the tenth of September) was appointed and sanctified from the creation of the world:" but there is no other authority for it.

It will be more useful, I think, to observe what footsteps there are of these things remaining in the gentile world. I will mention but two. One of which is noted by Eusebius, who shews (lib. xii. Præpar. Evang. cap. 11.) that Plato, in his Symposium, hath preserved the memory of Paradise: his κῆπος Διὸς, *garden of Jupiter*, being the same with this *garden of God*, in which man was at first placed. The other by St. Austin, who says, Pherecydes, the scholar of Pythagoras, called the beginner of evil, Ὀφιονέα: that is, a demon in the shape of a serpent. So Heideggerus observes out of him, Exercit. iv. De Adamo et Eva, n. 82.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *AND Adam knew Eve his wife,* &c.] After they were thrown out of paradise; not before (whatsoever some of the Jewish doctors fancy to the contrary); nay, as some will have it, after they had spent some time in acts of repentance, which is not an improbable opinion.

I have gotten a man from the Lord.] *i. e.* The promised Messiah; which she imagined would have been her firstborn. For the words of the promise (iii. 15.) might as well be expounded of the first *seed* the woman had, as of any of his posterity.

Ver. 2. *She bare his brother Abel.*] But gives no reason of his name, which signifies *vanity;* as she did of Cain's, which signifies *acquisition,* or *possession.* Nor is it said who gave this second son the name of Abel: but it seems they made no account of him, in comparison with the firstborn. "Quod non posuerunt in eo spem factæ promissionis de semine, ut in Kain," (as Joh. Forsterus judiciously speaks, in his Lexicon, on the word Hevel,) *Because they did not place in him their hope of the promised seed, as they did in Cain.*

And Abel was a keeper of sheep, &c.] The younger son was a shepherd; and the elder an husbandman and planter. For this last seems to have been Adam's chief employment, both before and after his fall, (Gen. ii. 15. iii. 23.) and therefore either chosen by Cain, in imitation of his father, or put upon him by his direction, as the more noble of the two.

Whence the eastern people gave him the name of Abdalcariths; which some mistook for another son of Adam: but in truth was another name of Cain, signifying *a tiller of the field,* as Mr. Selden shews, lib. v. De Jure N. et G. cap. 8.

The patriarchs indeed after the flood, at least in Abraham's family, chose to feed cattle: but that was because it was less laborious, and more suitable to that unsettled condition wherein they lived for many years, removing, like the ancient Nomades, from one country to another.

Ver. 3. *In process of time.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *in the end of days:* that is, in the conclusion of the year, or after harvest. So *days* signify in many other places, particularly Judg. xi. 4. where *after days* is *after a year.* This was a very seasonable time to make their grateful acknowledgments to God; who had given them a fruitful year, and blessed them with increase. Accordingly God ordained, in future times, that the Israelites should keep a solemn feast, in the year's end, to thank him for the ingathering of their fruits. (Exod. xxiii. 16. xxxiv. 22.) But in what year of the world it was that Cain and Abel brought these sacrifices, we have no means to know. It was, no doubt, when they were grown men; and perhaps had more brothers and sisters besides themselves. See ver. 17.

Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.] These were the most ancient sacrifices among the gentiles, both Greek and Roman, as their authors tell us; and therefore it is most likely that Adam began with these oblations, of herbs, flowers, frankincense, meal, &c. in which Cain followed him; being of the same profession, and provided with store of such things. Now, as there

were solemn times of making their devout acknowledgments to God: so, I doubt not, there were some set places where they met for that purpose. For the word in Hebrew for *brought*, is never used about domestic or private sacrifices; but always about those public sacrifices, which were brought to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to be offered by the priest. As (Lev. iv. 4.) "He shall bring the bullock to the door," &c. Which occurs all along, especially in the ninth chapter of that book.

And therefore, I suppose, they *brought* these sacrifices, here mentioned, to some fixed place; looking towards the Schechinah, or glorious presence of God, at the entrance of the garden of Eden, from which Adam had been expelled. For there being, no doubt, some settled place where they performed sacred offices, it is most reasonable to think it had respect to the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty. Wheresoever that appeared, there they appeared (as the Scripture speaks) before God: because there he manifested his special presence, which moved them to go thither to worship him, to give him thanks, or to inquire of him, as we read Rebecca did, xxv. 22.

What kind of sacrifices these were, is a question among learned men. The Talmudists are of opinion they were *whole burnt-offerings*, and that there were no other before the law was given, (which I shall not now examine,) nor would the Jews, after the giving of the law, permit the Gentiles to offer any other at their temple.

It is their opinion also, that Cain and Abel brought these sacrifices to Adam, to be offered by him: for which I see no convincing reason; but, rather, they themselves seem to have offered them. And then this place effectually confutes their opinion, who say the first-born were separated to the office of priesthood: for, by these words, it is plain, the youngest sacrificed, as well as the eldest. And so they did in following ages; when we find Jacob performing the office of a priest, (Gen. xxviii. 18. xlvi. 1.) Which proves their opinion rather to be true, who say, that every man anciently had the power, in his own family, to do the office of a priest, as Job did, (i. 5.) But when families combined together, under one head, prince, or governor, he had the sole right of sacrificing devolved to him, as their common father. Thus Melchizedeck was both king of Salem and priest of the most high God. All which was taken away by the law of Moses, which permitted none to officiate among the Israelites, but the family of Aaron; and no sacrifices to be offered, but at the tabernacle of the congregation, Lev. xvii. 3, 4, 5.

It is a much harder question, how they came to sacrifice at all, either meal or beasts: since we read of no command from God requiring them to bring him such oblations: which hath led some to conclude, that men did this out of a grateful inclination, to return him some of his own blessings; though they had no directions from him about it. But, if this were true, how came Abel to believe that his sacrifice of a beast would be so acceptable to God, as the apostle says it was by faith? (Heb. xi. 4.) That faith had something else to warrant it, than barely his own reason. Adam, in all likelihood, had received some order concerning it; and began to sacrifice (as I noted before, iii. 21.) by direction from the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty: from whence a voice spake to him upon several occasions, (ii. 16, 17. iii. 8, 9, &c.) This order, indeed, is not recorded, no more than many other things which Moses in his short history omitted, (as Enoch's prophecy, Noah's preaching, the peopling of the world, &c. see ver. 15.) but it doth not seem probable that Adam would have presumed to invent a way of worship, by killing beasts and burning their fat: especially, since one cannot perceive any inclination of it in nature. And therefore Eusebius very judiciously resolves, in my opinion, that this way of worship was not taken up by chance, or by a human motion, κατὰ θείαν δ' ἐπίνοιαν ὑποβεβλημένον, *but suggested to them by a Divine intimation*, (lib. i. Demonstr. Evang. cap. 10.) Of which Plato one would think had some notion, when he forbids his law-maker (in his Epinomis) to make any alteration in the rites of sacrificing, because, οὐ ἐνατὸν εἰδέναι τῇ ἀνητῇ τῶν τοιούτων περί, *it is not possible for our mortal nature to know any thing about such matters.*

Ver. 4. *And Abel, he also brought of the firstling of his flock*, &c.] Many have fancied, from hence, that Cain's guilt lay in this, that he did not bring the *first of his fruit*, as he ought to have done, and as the heathens ever did, or were bound to do by their pontifical laws, (as Mr. Selden observes, chap. i. of his Hist. of Tithes) in their Præmessum, *i. e.* the first-fruits of their corn, or their Calpar, which was the richest of their wine. For it is only said, he brought *of the fruit of his ground*, when Abel brought *of the firstlings of his flock*. And Moses also adding, that Abel brought *of the fat thereof*, that is, the very best; they think Cain's fault was, that he brought not the fullest ears of corn (which he kept for himself), but the lankest, or brought them with a niggardly hand, or a grudging mind. Thus Palladius, in the Life of St. Chrysostom, says, "He was the first that tasted the first-fruits, and kept the best things for his own belly." Τῶν ἀπερχῶν ἀπεγεύσαρο πρῶτος, τῇ ἑαυτοῦ λαιμεργίᾳ τὰ πρωτεῖα φυλάξας, p. 108. But there is no certainty of this; and the apostle to the Hebrews hath directed us to a better account, (xi. 4.) Abel offered with a pious mind; Cain without a due sense of God, and sincere affection to him. He offered the fruit of his ground; but did not devote himself to God. Therefore it follows,

The Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering.] He graciously accepted them: and his offering was accepted, because he himself was accepted. It is a metaphor from those who, when a present is made to them, look kindly upon the person that brings it, if they like him and his present; or turn away their faces, if they disdain them.

How God testified his acceptance of Abel's sacrifice is the only difficulty: which the Jews say was by fire coming from heaven (or rather, I think, by a stream of light, or a flame from the Schechinah, or glorious presence of God, to whom it was offered) which burnt up his sacrifice. Thus, Theodotion of old translated these words: Ἀπέβλεψεν ἐπὶ τὰς θυσίας Ἀβὲλ, καὶ ἀνέπρησε: *He looked upon Abel's sacrifices, and set them on fire.* Which St. Hierom, and other ancient writers approve. The footsteps of which we meet withal, in Gen. xv. 17. and examples of it very many in future times: when Moses offered the first great burnt-offering according to the law, (Lev. ix. 24.) when Gideon offered upon the rock, (Judg. vi. 21.) and David stayed the plague, (1 Chron. xxi. 26.) and Solomon consecrated the temple, (2 Chron. vii. 13.) and when Elijah contended

with the Baalites, (1 Kings xviii. 38, &c.) Whence the Israelites, wishing all prosperity to their king, pray that God would *accept* (in the Hebrew, *turn into ashes*) *his burnt sacrifice*, (Psal. xx. 4.) And we find some relics of this among the heathen: for, when the Greeks went on shipboard to the Trojan war, Homer represents Jupiter promising them good success in this manner, Iliad. ii. v. 354:

Ἀστράπτων ἐπιδέξι' ἐναίσιμα σήματα φαίνων.

by *lightning on the right hand of them*, (as it may be translated) or *shining graciously* upon them, (as the ancient scholiast expounds it) *and making favourable tokens appear to them.* In like manner, he gave the same encouragement to the Trojans, when they were going to set upon the Greeks, Iliad. x. v. 236, 237:

Ζεὺς δὲ σφὶν Κρονίδης ἐνδέξια σήματα φαίνων,
Ἀστράπτει———

Jupiter giving them good signs, lightened upon them. And thunder sometimes accompanying these flashes of lightning (as it did on Mount Sinai), Virgil makes him to have established covenants in that manner, (Æneid. xii. v. 200.) Where, after Æneas had called the sun to witness, &c. Latinus lifts up his eyes and right hand to heaven, saying,

"Audiat hæc genitor, qui fœdera fulmine sancit."

Let the (heavenly) Father hear what I say, who establishes covenants with thunder.

If such passages as these were attended to, no considering man would think the books of Moses to be of less antiquity than they pretend to; they opening to us the very fountains of things, particularly of the ancient religion.

Ver. 5. *But unto Cain and his offering he had not respect.*] He did not so much as shine upon his sheaves; much less make them ascend up to heaven in a smoke: though he were the elder brother, and brought his offering first.

And Cain was very wroth.] This highly incensed him against Abel: when he should have made severe reflections on himself, and considered what it was that provoked God to slight his sacrifice; that so he might amend it, and procure his favour. Unto which he had not a title by his birthright, but by his piety. It is possible, indeed, that Eve might have instilled an opinion into him, that he, being the first-born, was the blessed seed which God had promised. And then this may be conceived to have enraged him the more against his brother; when he saw such a distinguishing mark of God's special favour to him in the very act of sacrificing. Which made him look upon Abel with a jealous eye, and tempted him to kill him; that he might not supplant him in his hope, of being the fulfiller of the oracle beforementioned, iii. 15.

And his countenance fell.] He did not merely look dejectedly through grief; but knit his brows, and had a down look, as we speak, lowering and cloudy: like those who have evil designs in their heads, and meditate nothing but revenge.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord said unto Cain,* &c.] He did not intend wholly to cast off Cain, by refusing his sacrifice, it is plain, I think, by this question. Which was, in effect, to tell him, he had no reason to be angry or out of humour; but only to become a better man: and then God would have respect unto him also. So it follows:

Ver. 7. *If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted?* &c.] There are vast varieties in the interpretation of this verse, with which I shall not trouble the reader (see Theodorick Hackspan, lib. i. Miscel. cap. 4. Mercer, and L. de Dieu, different from all, with Dr. Lightfoot), but only give the sense of our translation. "If thou dost well, shall thou not be accepted?" Canst thou doubt that I have an impartial respect to true goodness, wheresoever I find it?

But if thou dost not well, sin (that is, the punishment of sin, as ver. 13. xix. 15. and many other places) *lieth at the door.*] Is ready to follow the offence.

And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.] He is still thy younger brother, and shall be subject to thee, (see iii. 16.) and thou shalt be his superior. So here are three things suggested to Cain, to appease his anger against his brother. First, That the reason of his not being respected was not in his brother, but in himself: who, if he would do well, as Abel had done, should find favour no less than he. Secondly, That there was no reason he that did ill should fare like him that did well; but quite contrary, should feel the marks of God's displeasure. And yet, Thirdly, This should not alter his civil right, nor give Abel any authority over him: but he should still retain the privilege of his birthright; and need fear no harm from his brother, who was his inferior.

Ver. 8. *And Cain talked with Abel his brother.*] Asked him in a friendly manner (as one brother speaks to another) if he would walk into the fields? This seems more likely to me, than that he told him how the Lord had chidden him (as Aben Ezra interprets it), or that he disputed with him about the other world, and the judgment to come, as others of them expound it. Which Mr. Selden very judiciously concludes to have arisen from Onkelos's paraphrase on the foregoing verse, which is this: "If thou amend thy worship (or service of me) shalt thou not be pardoned? but if thou dost not amend it, thy sin shall remain to the day of judgment, in which thou shalt be punished if thou dost not repent." Upon which follows, in some editions of the Pentateuch, the dispute which Cain had with Abel about the day of judgment, as a traditional explication of this eighth verse. Lib. vii. de Jure N. et Gen. cap. 4.

When they were in the field.] When he had drawn him from company, and had him alone.

Cain rose up against Abel his brother.] Assaulted him on a sudden; took him at an advantage.

And slew him.] Gave him a stab; or some other way wounded him; so as to shed his blood. Verse 11.

Ver. 9. *The Lord said unto Cain, Where is thy brother?*] Which is not spoken, as if he was ignorant; but to awaken Cain, and make him sensible, that he knew what had passed.

And he said, I know not.] I can give no account of him.

Am I my brother's keeper?] Was he committed like a little child to my care; to look after him, and see he took no harm? Rage made him rude; and not mind what he said, nor to whom he spoke. Salvian, indeed, (lib. i. de gubern. Dei) thinks this speech proceeded from atheism; and that, in those early days, the opinion sprung up, which, in his time, had infected many, "Deum terrestria non respicere," &c. *That God did not mind what we do on earth:*

but the foulest fact may be covered with a lie. But this conceit is confuted by the very question which is put to Cain.

Ver. 10. *And he said, What hast thou done?*] Consider what a heinous crime thou hast committed; which cannot be concealed from me. For,

The voice of thy brother's blood crieth, &c.] Calls for speedy and severe vengeance. In the Hebrew it is *bloods*, in the plural number; because, say the Hebrew doctors, he killed Abel and all his posterity, which were in his loins: according to what we read, 2 Kings ix. 26. "I have seen the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons (though we read of nobody stoned but Naboth himself), saith the Lord, and I will requite thee in this plat," &c. See Sanhedrin, cap. iv. and Excerpt. Gemara, cap. vi. N. 7. à Joh. Coch.

Ver. 11. *And now thou art cursed from the earth, which hath opened,* &c.] I pass a sentence of perpetual banishment upon thee, from this country; which hath drunk in the blood of thy brother. Hitherto Adam and his children had lived together; but now, as Aben Ezra well observes, Cain was banished into a region far off from his father, who dwelt in the neighbourhood of Paradise.

Ver. 12. *And when thou tillest the ground,* &c.] And wheresoever thou shalt flee, the earth, which thou tillest, shall be barren; and not bring forth answerable to thy labour.

A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.] In that strange country thou shalt have no rest; but wander up and down unquietly, and not know where to settle: or as the LXX. translate the words, "Go about *groaning and trembling,* full of anguish in thy mind, and with a continual shaking in thy body." Thus St. Basil, in his Homily against Drunkenness understood it, when he said, "A drunkard draws upon himself the curse of Cain," Τρέμων καὶ περιφερόμενος διὰ παντὸς βίου. *Staggering and turned about uncertainly all his life long.* Hen. Valesius thinks his brother's ghost haunted him whithersoever he went; which made him run from place to place to avoid its persecution. So he paraphrases these words, (Annot. in lib. iii. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. cap. 6.) *Umbra fratris tui quem occidisti, persequeter te ubique, et aderit infesta.* And so he interprets the foregoing words, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the ground." Thy brother, whom thou hast impiously slain, requires me to avenge him, and exact the punishment of thee, which is due for his murder. And indeed it was a notion, not only among the pagans, but among the Jews also (as he shews), that the ghosts of those who were murdered persecuted their murderers, and required punishment of them.

Ver. 13. *My punishment is greater than I can bear.*] This is too heavy a punishment, for I sink under the weight of it. Others interpret it (as appears by the margin of our Bible), "My sin is unpardonable;" or too great to be forgiven. Thus he, who, at first, was not so sensible of his sin as to confess it, now thinks it to no purpose to beg mercy.

Ver. 14. *Behold, thou hast driven me this day from the face of the earth.*] Banished me (as was said before, ver. 11.) from my own native country.

And from thy face shall I be hid.] And more than that, I am banished from thy blessed presence, (as appears from ver. 16.) and shall not have the liberty to come before thy glorious Majesty. With respect to which he may be said to have been *excommunicated,* though not in full sense of that word, as Mr. Selden shews, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 2. p. 446. 455, &c.

And I shall be a fugitive, &c.] Wandering up and down in unknown regions.

And it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.] I shall be looked upon as a common enemy: so that whosoever lights upon me, taking me for a dangerous person, will kill me. To find another, in Scripture language, signifies to fall upon him by chance or unawares; without any precedent hatred: as Bochart observes, from 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. and other places, lib. ii. Hierozoic. p. i. cap. 21.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord said unto him, Therefore, whoso slayeth Cain,* &c.] Or, (as the word we translate *therefore* may be rendered) *not so:* it shall not be as thou suspectest. But Lud. de Dieu gives many instances where this word לכן is used as an affirmative, signifying as much as *surely.* So the meaning is, Take it for a certain truth, that if any man slay Cain, he (that is Cain) shall be avenged sevenfold; or rather, through seven generations, God will punish the slaughter of Cain a long time: for the number *seven* is ἀορίστου πλήθους σημαντικόν, (as the Chronic. Excerpt. before Joh. Antiochenus speak:) *an indication of an indeterminate, but great number;* signifying as much as he shall endure many punishments. For God intended the life of Cain should be prolonged, in a miserable estate, as an example of his vengeance; to deter others from committing the like murder.

And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, &c.] What this *mark* was, we must be content to be ignorant. Some think God stigmatized him with a letter of his name in his forehead; (or, rather, I should think, set such a brand upon him as signified him to be accursed:) others, that he looked most frightfully, so that every body avoided him; or, that his head shaked continually; or, (as others) he had a trembling in his whole body; or, his face, perhaps, was blasted by lightning from the presence of the Lord. Certain it is, that it was some notorious mark of God's displeasure; which made men shun him. For we must not imagine there was nobody in the world, at this time, but Adam, Eve, and Cain: but consider that the design of this Holy Book is not to give us a particular account of the whole race of mankind descended from Adam (who, no doubt, had a great many more children than Cain and Abel; and they also had children before this happened), but only of those persons who were most remarkable; and whose story was necessary to be known, for the understanding of the succession down to Moses's time. Accordingly we read, presently after this, that Cain had a wife; and more than that, he built a city: which supposes a great company of people to inhabit it, (ver. 17.) And here, by the way, we need not wonder there is no mention made of the institution of sacrifices; when the first peopling of the world is only supposed, not related.

Ver. 16. *And Cain went out.*] Not voluntarily, but by the force of the Divine curse.

From the presence of the Lord.] There was a Divine glory, called by the Jews the Schechinah, which appeared from the beginning (as I have often said before); the sight of which Cain never after this enjoyed; but was banished from it: and God withdrawing his gracious presence from him (so St. Chrysostom), he was also forsaken by him, and put out of his special protection. If Cain, after this, turned a down-

right idolater (as many think), it is very likely he introduced the worship of the *sun* (which was the most ancient sort of idolatry), as the best resemblance he could find of the *glory of the Lord:* which was wont to appear in a flaming light. And in aftertimes they worshipped *fire* in the eastern countries; as the best emblem of the sun, when it was absent.

And dwelt in the land of Nod.] At last he settled in a country, which had the name of *Nod;* from his wandering up and down, like a vagabond, till he fixed here: where, it seems, he still continued restless; moving from one part of the country to another, till, in conclusion, "he built a city," (for his security, some think) as we read in the verse following.

Some translate it, *in the land of vagabonds.* And R. Solomon fancies the very ground shaked under him, and made people run away from him, saying, "This is the cruel man that killed his brother."

On the east of Eden.] He still went eastward from that country, where Adam settled after he was thrust out of paradise. See iii. 24. Which Junius thinks was in that tract of ground where the Nomades afterwards dwelt, bordering upon Susiana. Which is far more probable, than the conceit of the author of the book Cosri, (par. ii. § 14.) who would have Cain's going "from the presence of the Lord" nothing else but his expulsion out of the land of Canaan, where Adam dwelt after he was thrust out of paradise: and consequently, the land of Nod was not far from the land of Canaan. Nothing can be more ungrounded than this; which overthrows, also, all that Moses saith of Eden, and the garden planted there; from whence Adam went out on the *east side,* and therefore not towards Canaan, which was *westward.*

Ver. 17. *And Cain knew his wife.*] There hath been no mention hitherto of any woman in the world but Eve, much less of Cain's having a wife. And therefore it is uncertain whether this were a wife he took before he killed his brother, or after. It is most probable before; because we may well think all the world abhorred the thoughts of marriage, with such an impious murderer, whom God also had accursed. But whether it were before or after, I see no reason to conclude that this wife was his sister: there being women enough in the world beside, before this time, as was said before, (ver. 15.) For even in our country, in the age before us, there sprung from two persons, three hundred and sixty-seven children, within the space of eighty years. And therefore, the world being now (when Cain slew Abel) a hundred and twenty-eight, or a hundred and thirty years old, according to Archbishop Usher, and Jac. Capellus's Chronology, we cannot but conceive there were a great number of people in it, descended from all those sons and daughters which Adam begot, (chap. v. 4.) We are not told how many, but some of the ancient eastern traditions (in Cedrenus) say, he had thirty-three sons and twenty-seven daughters.

It is true, indeed, that at the first Cain could marry none but one of his sisters. Which was then lawful, because absolutely necessary: but prohibited by God, when that necessity ceased. Of which the eastern people were so sensible, that they took care to have it thought, that Cain and Abel did not marry those who were nearest akin to them, but those that were at some distance. For their tradition is, that Eve, at her two first births, brought twins, a son and a daughter; viz. Cain with his sister Azron, and Abel with his sister Awin; as Saidus Patricides, patriarch of Alexandria, reports. Now, such was their caution not to match with those that were nearest in blood, but with those further off, as much as was then possible; Cain was not suffered to marry his twin-sister, nor Abel his: but Adam gave Awin to Cain, and Azron to Abel. I cannot vouch the truth of this story; which I mention only to shew, that mankind have had a sense, that all possible care should be used to avoid marriages with the nearest relations: for though this story was derived, perhaps, from the Jews, yet it was believed by other people. See Mr. Selden, lib. v. De Jure, N. et G. cap. 8. Whence Diodorus Siculus says, lib. i. it was κοινὸν ἔθος τῶν ἀνθρωπων, *the common use of mankind,* that brothers and sisters should not be joined in marriage. And Plato (lib. viii. de Legib.) calls such marriages μηδαμῶς ὅσια καὶ θεομισῆ, *by no means holy, but hateful to God.* For though they were not so in the beginning of things, they became so afterwards: that being natural in one state of things (as Grotius well observes, lib. De Jure, B. et P. cap. 10.) which is unnatural in another state.

And he built a city.] Not as soon as he came into this country; but when he had a numerous progeny, able to people it: and consequently in his old age. His end in building it, some think, was to cross the curse of wandering to and fro: others, to defend himself against those whom his guilty conscience made him fear; or, to secure the spoils which, by force and violence, (as Josephus relates, lib. i. Antiq. cap. 3.) he had taken from others. There are those who imagine, that when he attempted to build this city, he often broke off the work, out of a panic fear: such an one as Romulus felt, after he had killed his brother Remus.

And called the name of the city, after the name of his son.] Some think he declined his own name, because he knew it to be odious every where: but it is more likely, it was for that reason which moved men in aftertimes to do the same. For it hath been a very ancient usage for great men to call the cities which they built by the name of their sons, rather than their own; out of the great love they bare to their children. Thus Nimrod called Nineveh after the name of his son Ninus: which the psalmist notes as a piece of the vanity of mankind, to call their lands (that is, the houses where they dwelt, as R. Solomon Jarchi interprets it) by their own names, to be a lasting monument of them and of their family.

Enoch.] There were an ancient people called by Pliny, Heniochii; by Mela, Eniochi; and by Lucan, Enochii: some of which lived so far eastward, that Sir W. Raleigh fancies they might be the posterity of this Enoch.

Ver. 18. *And unto Enoch was born Irad,* &c.] It is remarkable, that though Moses gives us some account of the descendants of Cain, yet he saith not a word of the years that they lived; and carries their genealogy but a little way. Whereas he deduces the genealogy of Seth down to the flood, and so to his own time, &c. And also relates particularly, (chap. v.) to what age the life of his principal posterity was prolonged. It seems, he looked upon Cain's race as such a reprobate generation, that he would not number them in the book of the living: as St. Cyril speaks.

Ver. 19. *Lamech took unto him two wives.*] By a small transposition of letters, Lamech being the same with

Melech, which signifies a king, some of the Jews fancy him to have been a great man: for none but such, they say, had two wives in those ancient times; though they hold it was lawful (as Selden shews, lib. v. De Jure N. et G. cap. 6.) for any body that could maintain them to have had more. But it is more likely that Lamech was the first that adventured to transgress the original institution; which was observed even by the Cainites till this time. When, perhaps, his earnest desire of seeing that blessed seed which was promised to Eve, might induce him to take more wives than one: hoping, by multiplying his posterity, some or other of them might prove so happy as to produce that seed. And this he might possibly persuade himself was the more likely, because the right that was in Cain the first-born, he might now conclude was revived in himself: who, being the seventh from Cain, had some reason to imagine the curse laid upon him, of being punished *sevenfold, i. e.* for *seven* generations, was now expired; and his posterity restored to the right of fulfilling the promise.

Ver. 20. *He was the father.*] The Hebrews call him the *father* of any thing, who was the first inventor of it; or a most excellent master in that art. Such was Jabal in the art of making tents, folding flocks, and all other parts of pasturage. Which, though begun by Abel, was not by him brought to perfection; or, if it were, Jabal was the first in the family of Cain that was eminent in the following inventions.

Of such as dwell in tents.] Taught men to pitch tents; which were moveable houses, that might easily be carried from place to place, when there was occasion to remove for new pasture. Under this is comprehended all that belongs to the care of cattle in their breeding, feeding, and preserving, as appears by what follows.

And of such as have cattle.] In the Hebrew the words are, *and of cattle.* Where the copulative *vau*, which we translate *and*, signifies as much as *with:* and so the words are to be here translated, "such as dwell in tents, with cattle." Thus Bochartus observes it is used, 1 Sam. xiv. 18. "The ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel;" as we, with the ancients, truly translate it. And so it should be translated, Exod. i. 5. "All the souls that came out of Jacob's loins were seventy souls, with Joseph." For Joseph is not to be added (as we seem to understand it) unto the seventy, but made up that number, as appears from Gen. xlvi. 27. So that the sense of this whole verse seems to be, that though men fed cattle before in good pastures, yet Jabal was the first, that, by the invention of tents, made the more desert countries serviceable to them: where, when they had eaten up all the grass in one place, they might in a little time take up their tents, and fix them in another. To this purpose R. Solomon Jarchi. And in these tents, it is likely, he taught them to defend their cattle, as well as themselves, from heat and cold, and all other dangers to which they were exposed in those desert places.

Ver. 21. *Father of such as handle the harp and organ.*] The first inventor of musical instruments, and that taught men to play upon them. What *cinnor* is, (which we translate *harp*) see in Bochartus's Canaan, lib. ii. cap. 7. p. 808. I believe the first word includes in it all *stringed*, the latter all *wind* musical instruments.

It is possible that Apollo, or Linus, or Orpheus (for there are all these various opinions), might be the inventor of the harp among the Greeks: but it was their vanity that made them fancy such instruments had their original in their country.

Ver. 22. *Tubal-Cain.*] The Arabians still call a plate of iron or brass by the name of Tubal, (as Bochartus observes out of Avicenna, and others, lib. iii. Phaleg. cap. 12.) who, as it follows in the text, was

An instructor of every artificer in brass and iron.] *i. e.* Found the art of melting metals, and making all sorts of weapons, arms, and other instruments of iron and brass. Many think that Vulcan is the same with Tubal-Cain (their names being not unlike); particularly Gerh. Vossius, De Orig. Idolol. lib. i. cap. 16.

His sister's name was Naamah.] Whom Vossius, (Ib. cap. 17.) takes to have been the heathen Minerva, or Venus. Her name signifies beautiful, or fair, one of a sweet aspect: and the Arabians say, she invented colours and painting as Jubal did music. See Elmacinus, p. 8.

Ver. 23. *And Lamech said unto his wives,* &c. *Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech.*] Something had preceded these words, which was the occasion of them: but it is hard to find what it was. Jacobus Capellus, indeed (in his Historia Sacra et Exotica), hath a conceit that Lamech was now in a vapouring humour, being puffed up with the glory of his son's inventions; to whose music and other arts he endeavoured to add poetry: which he expressed in the following words, that seem to him a thrasonical hymn, wherein he brags what feats he would do. For so he reads the words (with Aben Ezra), not *I have slain* but *I will kill* a man with one blow of my fist, &c. But I can see no warrant for this translation, without a violence to the Hebrew text; and therefore we must seek for another interpretation.

I have slain a man to my wounding, &c.] These words would have a plain exposition (which otherwise are difficult), if we could give credit to the Hebrew tradition; which, St. Hierom says, several Christians followed: that Lamech, being informed by a certain youth, as he was hunting, that there was a wild beast lay lurking in a secret place, went thither; and unawares killed Cain, who lay hid there: and then, in a rage at what he had done, fell upon the youth that had occasioned this mistake, and beat him to death. But, as there is no certainty of this, so it doth not agree with the next verse: which seems to suppose Cain to be now alive. Therefore, Lud. De Dieu, following Onkelos, reads the words by way of interrogation; "Have I slain a man? or, so much as a boy?" that you should be afraid of my life? It seems the use of weapons being found out by one of his sons, and grown common, his wives apprehended that somebody or other might make use of them to slay him. But he bids them comfort themselves, for he was not guilty of slaying any body himself; and therefore might reasonably hope nobody would hurt him.

And then the meaning of the next verse is easy.

Ver. 24. *If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and seven fold.*] If God hath guarded Cain so strongly, who was a murderer, as to threaten great and long punishments to those that slay him; he will punish them far more, and pursue them with a longer vengeance, who shall slay me, being a guiltless person.

There are divers other interpretations, which I shall not mention; because this is most pertinent to the preceding discourse.

Ver. 25. *Bare a son.*] The Jews think he was born a year after Abel was killed.

And called his name Seth.] Mothers anciently gave names to their children, as well as the fathers. And Eve gave this son the name of Seth, because she looked upon him as *appointed* (so the word signifies) by God, to be what Cain, she thought, should have been; till God rejected his sacrifice, and he slew Abel: in whose room she believed God had substituted this son, to be the seed from whom the Redeemer of the world should come.

The Arabians say, (particularly Elmacinus, p. 7.) that Seth was the inventor of letters and writing (as Jubal was of music, and Tubal-Cain of arms), which so much surpassed all other inventions, that some (as Cedrenus tells us) called him a god; *i. e.* the highest benefactor to mankind. Which, if it were true, we might think that thence his children were called "the sons of God," (vi. 2.) But it is most likely this mistake arose from Symmachus's translation of the last words of the next verse, which, if we may believe Suidas, was thus: "Then began Seth to be called by the name of God." For which there is no foundation, either there or any where else in Scripture. For though it be said that Moses was made "a god to Pharaoh," yet he is never simply called a god, as Jacobus Capellus well observes. Nor is any king or prince called by that name, particularly, in Scripture; though in general it says of them all, that "they are gods."

Ver. 26. *To him also was born a son.*] When he was a hundred and five years old, as we read, v. 6.

And he called his name Enos.] Signifying the weak and miserable condition of mankind; which he seemed, by giving him this name, to deplore.

Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.] This doth not import that men did not *call upon the Lord* (which includes all his worship and service) before this time: but that now (as Jac. Capellus conceives) they were awakened, by the consideration of their infirmity beforementioned, to be more serious and frequent in religious offices: or, rather (as others understand it) they began to hold more public assemblies. For families being now multiplied, to which religion was before confined, they joined together and met in larger societies and communion, for the solemn worship of God by sacrifices, and other religious services. For to *call upon God*, comprehends, as I said, all religion: which consists in acknowledging him to be the Lord of all; in lauding all his glorious perfections; giving him thanks for his benefits; and beseeching the continuance of them.

But it being scarce credible, that public assemblies were not held long before this (it being probable that, even when Cain and Abel sacrificed, their families joined together to worship God), it hath moved some men of note (such as Bertram and Hackspan), to follow our marginal translation; "Then began men (*i. e.* the children of Seth) to call themselves by the name of the Lord:" that is, the servants or worshippers of the Lord; in distinction from the Cainites, and such profane persons as had forsaken him.

And indeed a great number of the Jewish writers, with whom Mr. Selden joins, (in his De Diis Syris, Prolegom. 3.) would have the words expounded thus, to signify that apostacy: "Then was there profanation, by invoking the name of the Lord." For the word *hochal*, which we here translate *began*, signifying *profaned*, in Lev. xix. 12. ("Thou shalt not profane the name of the Lord thy God;") they take Moses's meaning to be, "That the most Holy Name which belongs to the Creator and Possessor of heaven and earth alone, was now impiously given unto creatures:" particularly to the sun. And thus the Arabic interpreter, in Erpenius's edition; "Then began men to apostatize from the worship of God." But a great number of very learned men have opposed themselves to this interpretation; and with much judgment: Moses being here speaking of the pious family of Seth, and not of impious Cain's: and the word *hochal* (as Hackspan observes), with the preposition *le* following in the next word, being constantly used in the sense of *beginnings*, not of *profanation*. And therefore they content themselves with our marginal translation: or else think that God was now first called upon by the name of Jehovah. Or, that *liturgies*, as we call them, or public forms of worship, were now appointed at set hours: or, some other considerable improvements made in religious offices. For the Arabian Christians represent this Enos as an excellent governor: who, while he lived, preserved his family in good order; and when he died, called them all together, and gave them a charge to keep God's commandments, and not associate themselves with the children of Cain. So Elmacinus.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *THIS is the book of the generations of Adam.*] *i. e.* Here follows a catalogue of the posterity of Adam. So the word *book* signifies, Matth. i. 1. an account of those from whom Christ the second Adam came; as here, an account of those who came from the first Adam. Yet not of all, but of the principal persons, by whom, in a right line, the succession was continued down to Noah, &c. As for the collateral lines, which, no doubt, were very many, by the other sons and daughters which the persons here mentioned begot, they are omitted: because no more than I have said, was pertinent to Moses's purpose.

In the day that God created man.] This is repeated again, only to imprint on their minds that Adam was not produced, like other men, by generation, but by creation.

In the likeness of God created he him.] This also is again mentioned; to remember men how highly God had honoured them, and how shamefully they had requited him.

Ver. 2. *Male and female created he them*, &c.] Of different sexes, to be joined together in holy marriage: as Moses had shewn, chap. ii. 22, 23, &c.

Called their name Adam.] The common name to both sexes; like *homo* in Latin, &c.

Ver. 3. *And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years.*] This doth not assure us he had no children but Cain and Abel till now; but only acquaints us with his age, when Seth was born.

And begat a son in his own likeness, after his image.] Not so perfect as himself, when he was created; but with those

imperfections which impaired him, after he had eaten the forbidden fruit: that is, inclined to sin, and subject to death. For *his own likeness and image*, wherein this son was begotten, seems to be opposed to *the likeness and image of God*, wherein Adam was made, (i. 26.) which, though not quite lost, was lamentably defaced.

Maimonides will have this to refer to Seth's wisdom and goodness; he proving truly a man like to his father Adam: whereas the rest before him proved rather beasts. More Nevochim, par. i. cap. 7.

Called his name Seth.] He intends to give here an account of those descended from Seth alone, not of his posterity by Cain, (who are only briefly mentioned in the foregoing chapter, verses 17, 18.) because in Seth the posterity of Adam were preserved, when all the children of Cain perished in the deluge.

Ver. 4. *And he begat sons and daughters.*] After the birth of Seth he begat more children (as he had done, it is probable, many before), whose names are not here recorded: because Moses sets down only that race of men, from whom Noah and Abraham (the father of the faithful), and the Messiah were derived.

Ver. 5. *Lived nine hundred and fifty years.*] It is not reasonable to take a measure of the length of the lives of the patriarchs by the shortness of ours. For, as Josephus well observes, (lib. i. Antiq. cap. 4. and out of him, Eusebius, lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 13.) they being men much beloved of God, and newly made by him, with a strong constitution, and excellent temper of body, and using better diet, the vigour of the earth serving at the first for the production of better fruits; all these things, joined with their temperance, constant exercise and labour, a sweet temper of air, their knowledge in the nature of herbs and plants, &c. might well contribute very much, to as long a life as is here mentioned. Which was but necessary, also (and therefore God's providence took special care of them), that the world might be the sooner peopled; knowledge and religion more certainly propagated, by the authority of living teachers; arts and sciences brought to a great perfection, which could not have been effected in a short life, like ours. And therefore Josephus shews, that herein Moses hath the testimony of all the Greeks and Barbarians also, who have wrote about ancient affairs. Of Manethus (for instance) who wrote the Egyptian history; Berosus, who wrote the Chaldean; Mochus, Hestiæus, &c. who wrote the Phœnician; with a great number of Greek writers whom he mentions; who all say, men lived anciently a *thousand* years. None indeed came up to that full sum; but some so near it, that they who were not exactly acquainted with the sacred story, might well speak in that manner.

And this ought not to seem incredible to us in these days, when we consider how long several have lived in the later ages of the world; as Pliny reports in his Natural History, lib. vii. cap. 48. Nay, in times nearer to us, there are instances of this kind, as the Lord Bacon observes, in his Hist. Vitæ et Mortis; and Bartholin. in his Hist. Anatom. Rariorum Cent. v. Hist. 28.

But nothing is more remarkable than that which Gassendus reports in the Life of Nicol. Peireskius, lib. v. That he received a letter from Aleppo, no longer ago than the year 1636, of a man then in Persia, known to several persons worthy to be believed, who was four hundred years old: *Idque ipsis omnino esse exploratum atque indubium:* and the persons that wrote this, were fully assured of the undoubted truth of it.

Such instances indeed are rare; and there is one that thinks men did not generally live to such a great age in the old world: for Maimonides is of opinion, that none attained to so many years as are here mentioned, but only the particular persons expressly named by Moses; all the rest of mankind, in those days, living only the ordinary term which man did in aftertimes: or, in other words, this extraordinary length of days, was the privilege only of these singular individuals; either from their accurate way of living and diet, or God's special favour in reward of their eminent virtue and piety. (More Nev. par. ii. cap. 47.) But Nachmanides (another great Jewish doctor) opposes this with much reason; for, that their eminent virtue was not the cause they alone had this privilege, appears by Enoch, the most holy man of them all, who did not live to the age of four hundred years. And as there is no ground to believe these were the only persons who lived exactly temperate in all things; so it is manifest Moses doth not design to give us an account of those that lived longest, but of those from whom Noah descended; and it is incredible that they alone should be very long-lived, and nobody else, though descended from the same parents.

Ver. 6. *And Seth lived a hundred and five years, and begat Enos.*] We must not think he lived so long before he begat any children: no more than that Adam had none till he was a hundred and thirty years old, when he begat Seth, (ver. 3.) for we know he had Cain and Abel, and, in all likelihood, many others before. Therefore, to explain this and other things that follow, ver. 18. and 28. which seem more strange, (for Jared is said to have lived a hundred sixty-two years before he begat Enoch; and Lamech a hundred eighty-two years before he begat Noah,) we must consider, as was noted ver. 4. that Moses sets down only those persons by whom the line of Noah was drawn from Seth, and Abraham's line from Noah, by their true ancestors; whether they were the eldest of the family or no. Seth, it is likely, had many other children before Enos was born; as Noah, we may be confident, had before he begat Shem, Ham, and Japhet: which was not till he was five hundred years old, (ver. 32.) As Lamech also had several before Noah was born: though Moses doth not mention them; because he was here concerned only to inform us, who was the father of Noah.

Begat Enos.] The Arabian Christians, as I observed before, (iv. 26.) make him to have been a man of singular goodness.

Ver. 9. *Begat Cainan.*] The same writers represent him to have been like to his father: and say, he gave his children charge not to mingle with the seed of Cain. So Elmacinus. Yet there is but little difference between his name and that of Cain's; no more than between Irad and Jared, and some other of Sem's posterity and Cain's: which may teach us, says Jac. Capellus, (in his Hist. Sacra et Exot.) "Ne fatale nescio quod omen nominibus propriis effingamus:"—*that we should not fancy there is, we do not know what fatal omen in proper names.* The wickedness of Judas Iscariot did not make the other Judas, called by that name, to think the worse of it. And therefore Jared feared not to

call his son Enoch, by the very name of Cain's eldest son, (iv. 17.) And Methuselah also gave his son Lamech the name of one of Cain's grandchildren, (iv. 18.)

Ver. 12. *Begat Mahalaleel.*] This name imports as much as a *praiser of God:* which Canaan imposed upon this son of his (as Jacobus Capellus fancies), because he was born after he had lived ten weeks of years (*i. e.* when he was seventy years old), in the beginning of the *sabbatick* year; which was the eighth jubilee from the creation. For, as there were sacrifices and a distinction of clean beasts and unclean, so he conceives there might be a distribution of years by sevens or weeks (as they spake in aftertimes), from the very beginning of the world. But there is no certainty of this: nor of what the forenamed Arabian writers say of this Mahalaleel, that he made his children swear, by the blood of Abel (so Patricides), not to come down from the mountainous country where they dwelt, to converse with the children of Cain.

He is mentioned also by the Mahometans, as Hottinger observes in his Histor. Orient. p. 20.

Ver. 15. *Begat Jared.*] The same Arabian writers make him also a strictly pious man, and an excellent governor: but say, that in his days some of Seth's posterity (about a hundred in number), notwithstanding all his persuasions to the contrary, would go down and converse with the children of Cain; by whom they were corrupted. And thence, they fancy, he was called *Jared* (which signifies *descending*), either because they went down from the Holy Mountain, as they call it, where Seth's posterity dwelt; or piety, in his time, began very much to decline. See Hottinger's Smegma Orient. lib. i. cap. 8. p. 235, &c.

Ver. 18. *Begat Enoch.*] Whom the Arabians call *Edris;* and represent him as a very learned man, as well as a prophet; and especially skilled in astronomy. See Hottinger, Histor. Orient. lib. i. cap. 3. and Smegma Orient. p. 240. The Greeks anciently had the same notion of him, as appears by a discourse of Eupolemus, which Eusebius quotes out of Alexand. Polyhistor. lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. c. 17. where he says, Enoch was the first who taught the knowledge of the stars, and that he himself was taught, δι' Ἀγγέλων Θεοῦ, *by the angels of God;* and was the same person whom the Greeks call *Atlas.* Certain it is, his story was not altogether unknown to the ancient Greeks; as appears in what they say of Ἀννακὸς, or Καννακὸς, which is the same with *Enoch,* whose name in Hebrew is *Chanoch.* For Stephanus, in his book De Urbibus, says, that this Annacus lived above three hundred years, and the oracle told the people, that when he died they should all perish; as they did in the flood of Deucalion: in which he confounds the history of Enoch and Methuselah, as Bochart well observes. (lib. ii. Phaleg. cap. 13.)

Ver. 21. *Begat Methuselah.*] Enoch being a prophet (as we learn from St. Jude), and foreseeing the destruction that was coming upon the earth by a deluge, immediately after the death of this son of his, gave him this name of *Methusela,* which imports as much. For the first part of it, *Methu,* evidently carries in it the name of death; being as much as, *he dies:* and *sela* signifies *the sending forth of water,* in Job v. 10. And therefore *Methusela* is as much as, "when he is dead shall ensue an emission or inundation of waters," to the destruction of the whole earth. Which ingenious conjecture of Bochartus, (in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 13.) is far more probable than any other account of his name.

Ver. 22. *Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah.*] Of all the rest, Moses only says, they lived after they begat those sons here mentioned; but of this man, that he *walked with God: i. e.* was not only sincerely obedient to God (as we suppose his forefathers to have been), but of an extraordinary sanctity, beyond the rate of other holy men; and held on also in a long course of such singular piety, notwithstanding the wickedness of the age wherein he lived. And the very same character being given of Noah, (vi. 9.) it may incline us to believe, that, as Noah was a preacher of righteousness; so Enoch, being a prophet, was not only exemplary in his life, but also severely reproved the wickedness of that age by his word.

Ver. 24. *And Enoch walked with God.*] Persevered in that course beforementioned, to the end of his days.

And was not.] He doth not say that he died (as he doth of the rest in this chapter, both before and after), but that *he was not* any longer among men in this world. For,

God took him.] Translated him to another place. Which plainly signifies the different manner of his leaving this world; insomuch, that the apostle saith, "he did not see death," (Heb. xi. 5.) which confutes the conceit of Aben Ezra, and R. Solomon, and others, who would have this word *took* to signify, that he was snatched away by an untimely death: contrary to the opinion of their other better authors, and particularly Manachem; who, in his commentary on this place, saith, "That God took from Enoch his bodily clothes, and gave him spiritual raiment."

But whither he was translated, we are not told. The author of the book of Ecclesiasticus, chap. xliv. (according to the Vulgar translation), saith "into paradise." And upon this supposition, the Ethiopic interpreter hath added these words to the text: "God translated him into paradise;" as Ludolphus observes, (lib. iii. Commentar. in Ethiop. Hist. cap. 5. n. 40.) And accordingly we find, in the calendar of that church, a festival upon July 25, called "The Ascension of Enoch into Heaven," (for they were not so foolish as to understand by paradise a place upon earth, but a heavenly mansion,) unto which he was advanced, δι' ἄκραν ἀρετῆς τελείωσιν, (as Eusebius speaks, lib. vii. Præpar. Evang. cap. 8.) *because of his consummate virtue.*

And it is no unreasonable conjecture, that God was graciously pleased to take him unto himself at this time, to support and comfort mankind in their state of mortality (Adam, the father of them all, being dead not above fifty-seven years before), with the hope of a better life, in the other world. For which reason, it is not improbable, that he was translated in some such visible manner, as Elijah afterward was, by a glorious appearance of the Schechinah, from whence some heavenly ministers were sent to carry him up above.

Ver. 25. *Begat Lamech.*] The same name with one of Cain's posterity, (iv. 18.) But as he was of another race, so he was the grandchild and the father of the best men in those days, *viz.* Enoch and Noah.

Ver. 27. *All the days of Methuselah,* &c.] What was

wanting in the days of his father, God, in some sort, made up in his age: which was extended to the longest term of all other men. He died in the very year of the deluge, according to the import of his name. See ver. 21.

Ver. 29. *He called his name Noah.*] Which signifies *rest,* or *refreshment;* which proceeds from rest and quiet. Because, says he,

This same shall comfort us, concerning our work and toil of our hands.] He expected, some think, that he should be the *blessed seed,* promised iii. 15; or, that it should spring immediately from him. But the last words, *toil of our hands,* seem to import some inferior consolation, which he expected from Noah: and the Hebrew interpreters generally expound it thus, "He shall make our labour in tilling the earth more easy and less toilsome to us." Which agrees to what follows:

Because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.] There was a general curse upon it for the sin of Adam; and a particular upon some part of it for the sin of Cain. Now God, he foretels, would take them both off in great measure; and bless the earth to the posterity of this same man: who perfected the art of husbandry, and found out fitter instruments for ploughing the earth than had been known before. When men being chiefly employed in digging and throwing up the earth with their own hands, their labour was more difficult: which now is much abated, because the pains lie more upon beasts than upon men. And, indeed, Noah is called (ix. 20.) *Isch haadamah, a man of the ground* (which we translate *an husbandman*); one that improved agriculture, as other famous men had done pasturage, and found out other arts, (iv. 20, &c.)

In the same place, also, (ix. 20.) we read that Noah planted a vineyard: with respect to which, if he was the first inventor of making wine, he might well be said here to comfort them concerning their work and toil of their hands; wine cheering the heart, and reviving the spirits of men, that are spent with labour.

But if the last words of this verse be expounded, of the Lord's cursing the ground by sending a flood upon it, as Enoch had foretold; then Noah is here called their *comforter,* with respect to his being the restorer of the world, after it had been dispeopled by that inundation. And so Jacobus Capellus, not unreasonably interprets them to have relation to both curses, "à maledictione, quam terræ inflixit, et inflicturus est Deus."—*He shall give men rest from the curse which God hath inflicted, and intends further to inflict upon the earth.* Hist. Sacra et Exot. ad A. M. 1053.

Ver. 32. *And Noah was five hundred years old.*] See ver. 6. where I have said enough, to shew it is not reasonable to think he had no children till this age of his life.

And Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japhet.] Here ends the line of Adam, before the flood. For though these three were married, as appears vii. 13. before the flood came; yet they either had no children, or they did not live: for they carried none with them into the ark.

It doth not follow that Shem was the eldest of these three, because he is here and every where else in this book mentioned first: for I shall shew plainly, in its due place, that Japhet was the eldest. (x. 21.) Scaliger, indeed, would have this a settled rule, that, "Hunc ordinem filii in Scriptura habent, quem illis natura dedit."—*That children are placed in Scripture, according to the order which nature hath given them.* But it is apparent from many instances, that the Scriptures hath regard to their dignity other ways, and not to the order of their birth: as Abraham is mentioned before Nahor and Haran, "merito excellentiæ,"—*with respect to his excellence,* (as St. Austin speaks,) to which God raised him, though he was not the eldest son of Terah. (Gen. xi. 28.) Thus, Jacob is mentioned before Esau, (Mal. i. 1.) and Isaac before Ishmael, (1 Chron. i. 28.) Thus, Shem's eminence, in other respects, placed him before Japhet, to whom he was inferior in the order of nature: as appears even from their genealogy both in Gen. x. and 1 Chron. i. where Shem's posterity are placed below those of both his other brothers.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *WHEN men began to multiply.*] To increase exceeding fast; for they were multiplied before, but not so as to fill the earth. Or the word *men* may be limited to the children of Cain, (see ver. 2.) who now began to be very numerous.

And daughters were born to them.] In great numbers: for daughters, no doubt, they had before; but now so many more daughters than sons, that they had not matches for all: no, though we should suppose they followed the steps of Lamech (chap. iv. ver. 19.), and took more wives than one.

Ver. 2. *The sons of God.*] There are two famous interpretations of these words, (besides that of some of the ancients, who took them for angels.) Some understand by the *sons of God,* the great men, nobles, rulers, and judges, whether they were of the family of Seth or of Cain: and so, indeed, the word *Elohim* signifies in many places (Exod. xxi. 6. xxii. 28, &c.); and the ancient Greek version, which Philo and St. Austin used, perhaps meant no more, where these words are translated, οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the angels of God,* his great ministers in this world; who, in aftertimes, were mistaken for *angels in heaven.* These great persons were taken with the beauty of the daughters of men, *i. e.* of the meaner sort, (for so sometimes *men* signifies, Psal. xlix. 2, &c.) and took, by force and violence, as many as they pleased; being so potent, as to be able to do any thing with impunity. For they that should have given a good example, and punished vice, were the great promoters of it.

But there are other ancient interpreters, and most of the later, who, by the *sons of God,* understand the posterity of Seth, who were the worshippers of the true God. (iv. ult.)

They saw the daughters of men.] Conversed with the daughters of Cain. So Tho. Aquinas himself interprets it, pars i. q. 51. art. 3. ad 6.

That they were fair.] Being exceedingly taken with their beauty.

And they took them wives.] Made matches with them, and perhaps took more than one a-piece.

Of all that they chose.] Whomsoever they liked, (so the word *choose* is used in many places, Psal. xxv. 12, &c.) without regard to any thing else but their beauty. Some of the Hebrews by *daughters* understand *virgins,* which

they distinguish from *nasim, wives,* or married women; whom they also took and abused as they pleased. But there is no evidence of this. The plain sense is, that they who had hitherto kept themselves (unless it were some few, see ver. 15.) unmingled with the posterity of Cain, according to a solemn charge which their godly forefathers had given them, were now joined to them in marriage, and made one people with them. Which was the greater crime, if we can give any credit to what an Arabic writer saith, (mentioned first by Mr. Selden, in his book De Diis Syris, cap. 3. Prolegom. et de Jure N. et G. lib. v. cap. 8. f. 578.) that the children of Seth had sworn by the blood of Abel, that they would never leave the mountainous country which they inhabited, to go down into the valley where the children of Cain lived. The same author (*viz.* Patricides, with Elmacinus, also,) says, that they were inveigled to break this oath by the beauty of Naamah beforementioned, (iv. 22.) and the music of her brother Jubal. For the Cainites spent their time in feasting, music, dancing, and sports: which allured the children of Seth to come down and marry with them. Whereby all manner of impurity, impiety, idolatry, rapine, and violence, filled the whole earth, and that with impunity, as Eusebius observes, (lib. vii. Præpar. cap. 8.) This Moses here takes notice of, that he might give the reason why the whole posterity of Seth, even those who sprang from that holy man Enoch (except Noah and his family), were overflown with the deluge, as well as the race of Cain: because they had defiled themselves with their cursed affinity; and thereby were corrupted with their wicked manners.

Ver. 3. *And the Lord said.*] Resolved with himself.

My Spirit.] Either speaking by his prophets, such as Enoch had been, and Noah was; or working inwardly in all men's hearts.

Shall not always strive with man.] Chide and reprove them, and thereby endeavour to bring them to repentance; but proceed to punish them. There are several other interpretations, which may be seen in all commentators: which to me seem more forced than this.

For that he also is flesh.] For that besides his wicked actions, he is grown wholly fleshly in his inclinations and affections. He savours nothing but carnal things; and consequently is incurable. Or, as others expound it, even the best of them (the children of Seth) are become fleshly men.

Yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.] I will not destroy mankind presently; but have patience with them so long, that it may appear I would willingly have saved them.

Ver. 4. *There were giants in the earth.*] Men of vast stature and strength, which tempted them to oppress others by violence: for so several of the ancients translate the Hebrew word *nephilim* by βίαιοι, *violent men,* who carried all before them by main force: tyrants, who filled the world with rapines and murders, and all manner of wickedness, having society with the devil (as Eusebius understands it, lib. vii. Præpar. cap. 8.) in infernal arts, which they introduced. Josephus calls them ὑβριστὰς καὶ παντὸς ὑπερόπτας καλοῦ, *insolent contemners of all the laws of God and man.* Which made Origen look upon them only as impious atheists: but, no doubt, the extraordinary bulk and strength of their body is also intended.

In those days.] *i. e.* Before the sons of God married with the daughters of men. For these giants were produced by those who went down and mixed with the posterity of Cain in the days of Jared: as both Elmacinus and Patricides understand it.

And also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them.] The word *children* is not in the Hebrew: and it better agrees with what goes before to translate it, "Even they bare giants unto them." Besides those which were before, there was a new race of gigantic persons begot by the sons of God upon the daughters of men.

The same became mighty men.] Of great power, as well as strength of body.

Which were of old.] This may refer either to what goes before, or to that which follows.

Men of renown.] Of great undertakings, and adventurous actions: which got them a great name in ancient time. But they were no less famous for their wickedness, than for their valorous and great exploits; for by their means all mankind were overrun with impiety, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 5. *God saw the wickedness of man, that it was great,* &c.] All sorts of wickedness in a high degree overspread the whole earth.

And that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, &c.] And that there were no hopes of their amendment; their very minds being so set upon wickedness, that they thought of nothing else but how to satisfy their lusts. In the margin it is, "their whole imagination," *i. e.* all the designs and contrivances of all the men of that age, and this continually, day and night, were only rapine, filthiness, and all manner of evil.

Ver. 6. *And God repented,* &c.] God can neither properly repent, nor be grieved: but such expressions signify he resolved to do, as men do; who, when they repent of any thing, endeavour to undo it. And so it here follows:—

Ver. 7. *The Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created,* &c.] Though they be my creatures, I am resolved to have no pity upon them, but to abolish them, and all things else upon the earth. For that sort of punishment, which God intended, would in its own nature sweep all away.

For it repenteth me that I have made them.] See ver. 6. This represents how highly God was offended, that he would leave nothing of the old world remaining, but only to preserve the seed of a new one.

Ver. 8. *But Noah found grace,* &c.] This single person God resolved to spare, because (as it follows) he continued untainted in the midst of an universal contagion.

Ver. 9. *These are the generations of Noah.*] An account of his family. Or, as Paulus Fagius (who, upon xxxvii. 2. expounds the word we translate *generations,* to signify *events*), "These are the things which befel Noah and his family." Which way soever we expound this, the next words are inserted by a parenthesis as a character of Noah, who was

A just man.] Free from that violence which the rest committed.

And perfect in his generations.] Not guilty of any of those other sins which every where abounded.

And Noah walked with God.] Not only did well, but was addicted (as we speak) to it; continuing constant in the way of righteousness.

Ver. 10. *And Noah begat three sons,* &c.] *Vid.* chap. x. ver. 1.

Ver. 11. *The earth also was corrupted before God.*] The Jewish doctors say, that by *corruption* is always understood either *filthiness* (or forbidden mixtures), or else *idolatry.* Some take the first to be here meant; and then the next words, "filled with violence," denote their perverting of justice, taking bribes, and oppressing men by open force. But others think it better by *corruption* to understand *idolatry:* and then this generation is accused of the two highest crimes that can be committed; the one of which is between man and his neighbour, and the other between man and God. The highest degree of the former is, when they that sit in judgment make unrighteous decrees: which R. Solomon thinks is principally meant in these words, "the earth was filled with violence." See Mr. Selden, lib v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 9. latter end. However we understand the words, they point at some special enormous sins, which are only co prehended in general words before.

Ver. 12. *God looked upon the earth,* &c.] No fruits of God's long-suffering appearing, he resolved to visit men for their wickedness; which had rather increased, than been lessened, by his forbearing them one hundred and twenty years: which now, we must suppose, drew near to an end, (ver. 13.) The observation of some of the Hebrew doctors, perhaps, is too curious, which is this: that the name of *Jehovah,* which we translate *Lord,* is used ver. 3. where the first mention is made of this matter; for it betokens the clemency of the Divine Majesty, till the one hundred and twenty years were out, and then Moses uses the word *Elohim,* which is a name of *judgment;* the time of which was come.

For all flesh (*i. e.* all men,) *had corrupted his way upon earth.*] Wholly departed from the rule of righteousness; or had made their way of life abominable throughout the whole world.

Ver. 13. *The end of all flesh is come before me.*] I am determined to make an end of (*i. e.* to destroy,) all mankind shortly. So it follows:

I will destroy them with the earth.] *i. e.* With all the beasts and the fruits of the earth. Or, *from the earth,* as it is in the margin.

Ver. 14. *Make thee an ark.*] This vessel was not in the form of one of our ships, or boats: for it was not made sharp forward to cut the waves, but broad like a chest; and therefore had a flat bottom, with a cover or a roof. We do not find it had any rudder, being steered by angels.

Of gopher-wood.] There are various opinions about *gopher,* which some take for *cedar,* others for *pine,* &c.; but our learned Nic. Fuller, in his Miscellanies, hath observed, that it is nothing else but that which the Greeks call κυπάρισσος, the *cypress-tree.* For, taking away the termination, *cupar* and *gopher* differ very little in their sound. Bochartus hath confirmed this, and shewn that no country abounds so much with this wood as that part of Assyria which was about Babylon: where Arrianus, says Alexander, built a navy of these trees, τούτων γὰρ μόνον τῶν δένδρων εὐπορίαν εἶναι ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ τῶν Ἀσσυρίων, &c. (lib. vii.) *For there is great plenty of these trees alone in the country of Assyria; but of other fit for making ships there is great scarcity.* Strabo saith the same; (lib. xvi.) from whence Bochart thinks it probable, that Noah and his children lived in this country before the flood; for it is not likely that such a vast bulk as the ark was carried far from the place where it was made: and the mountains of Ararat, which he will have to be the Gordiæan mountains, are upon the borders of Assyria northward; which way the wind blew (if there were any) in all likelihood; the rain coming from the South Sea. (Lib. i. Phaleg. cap. 4.)

Rooms shalt thou make.] Little cabins or cells; to sever the beasts from the birds; the clean beasts from the unclean; and to preserve their several sorts of food.

And shalt pitch it, &c.] So the Arabic translation expressly, "pitch it with pitch." For the *bitumen,* which was plentiful thereabouts (which others think is here meant), was of the same nature, and served for the same use with pitch: being very glutinous and tenacious, to keep things close together. But not only the chinks were filled with it, but the whole body of the ark seems to have been all over daubed with it.

Within.] To give a wholesome scent, some think, among so many beasts.

And without.] To make the ark more glib and slippery, to swim in the water more easily.

Ver. 15. *And this is the fashion,* &c.] There are those who take these for geometrical cubits; every one of which contains six of the common. But there is no need of such: for, taking them for common cubits, containing each only one foot and a half, it is demonstrable there might be room enough in the ark for all sorts of beasts and birds, with Noah's family, and their necessary provision. (See ver. 20.)

Ver. 16. *A window shalt thou make to the ark.*] To let in the light into the several apartments: for which, should we conceive, that one great window might be so contrived as to be sufficient; I do not see how that would exclude many little ones, here and there, for greater convenience.

And in a cubit shalt thou finish it above.] That is, finish the ark; which had a cover, it is plain, from viii. 13. and was made shelving, that the rain might slide off.

And the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof.] But on what side, or whereabouts on the side, is not certain. It is probable on one of the long sides, and in the middle of it. Patricides calls it the eastern side.

With lower, second, and third stories, &c.] That Arabian author, and Pirke Elieser (cap. 23.), place Noah and his family in the uppermost story; the birds in the middle; and the beasts in the lowest. But they forgot to leave a place for their provision: and therefore they make a better distribution, who think the beasts were bestowed in the lower story, and that the third served for the birds, with Noah and his family: the second, between them both, being left for the stores that were to be laid in of meat and drink for them all. The creeping things, some think, might well live in the space between the lower story and the bottom of the ark.

Ver. 17. *And behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters,* &c.] *i. e.* They shall unavoidably be all swept away; for

I myself will bring a deluge upon them: not an ordinary flood, but one of which I will appear to be the author. All nations, it plainly appears, by such records as remain, had heard something of this flood. Lucian in his Dea Syria tells a long story of it, out of the archives of Hierapolis, very like to this of Moses, only puts the name of Deucalion instead of Noah. Plutarch mentions the dove sent out of the ark: and so doth Abydenus, mentioned by Eusebius, (lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 12.) speak of birds in general, which being sent out, returned again to the ship, finding no place to rest in but there only. Josephus mentions a great many more, not only Berosus the Chaldean, but Hieronymus Egyptius, who wrote the ancient Phœnician History, Mnaseas, Nicholaus Damascenus, with many others. St. Cyril also (lib. i.) against Julian, quotes a passage out of Alexander Polyhistor, wherein is part of the story; only he calls Noah by the name of Xisuthros (as Abydenus calls him Seisithrus), in the dialect of the Assyrians, as some conjecture. And now it appears that the Americans have had a tradition of it (as credible authors, Acosta, Herrera, and others, inform us), which saith, "The whole race of mankind was destroyed by the deluge, except some few that escaped." They are the words of Augustin Corata, concerning the Peruvian tradition. And Lupus Gomara saith the same from those of Mexico. And, if we can believe Mart. Martinius's History of China, there is the like among the people of that country.

Ver. 18. *And with thee I will establish my covenant.*] I will make good the promise I have made thee, to preserve thee and all that are with thee in the ark. For so the word *covenant* is sometimes used: and it is reasonable to think God made him such a promise; which is plainly enough implied in ver. 8. Or, otherwise, we must understand this of the covenant about the promised seed, (iii. 15.) which, he saith, he will stablish with him; and consequently preserve him from perishing.

Thou, thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. This passage shews the ark was not a hundred years in building, as some have imagined: for none of these sons were born a hundred years before the flood: and we must allow some years for their growth, till they were fit to take wives. Compare v. 32. with vii. 6. And, if we observe how Shem, though he had a wife before the flood, yet had no children, (for Arphaxad, his first child, was not born till two years after the flood, xi. 10.) it will incline us to think, that Noah received the command for building the ark not long before the flood came.

Ver. 19. *Two of every sort.*] *i. e.* Of unclean beasts, as it is explained, vii. 2.

They shall be male and female.] To preserve the species. Lucian, in his book of the Syrian Goddess, where he describes the flood, saith, all creatures went into the ark, εἰς ζεύγεα, *by pairs.*

Ver. 20. *Of fowls after their kind,* &c.] In such numbers as is directed afterward, (vii. 9.) Which seems to some to be so very great, there being many sorts of living creatures, that they could not possibly be crowded into the ark; together with food sufficient for them. But such persons never distinctly considered such things as these: First, That all those which could live in the water are excepted: and so can several creatures besides fishes. Secondly, That of the species of beasts, including also serpents, there are not certainly known and described above a hundred and fifty (as Mr. Ray hath observed), and the number of birds about five hundred. Thirdly, That there are but a few species of very vast creatures, such as elephants, horses, &c. And, fourthly, That birds generally are of so small a bulk that they take up but a little room. And, fifthly, That, if we suppose creeping insects ought to be included, they take up less, though very numerous. And, lastly, That less provision would serve them all, when they were shut up close, and did not spend themselves by motion; and besides, were in a continual confused agitation, which palled their appetites. From all which, and many more considerations, it is easy to demonstrate, there was more than room enough for all sorts of creatures that God commanded to be brought into the ark; and for their food, during the time they stayed in it.

Two of every sort shall come unto thee, &c.] In the foregoing verse he had said, "Two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark." Which he might think impossible; for by what means should he get them altogether? Therefore here it is explained in these words, "they shall come unto thee;" by the care of God, who made them and moved them to it. R. Eliezer (chap. 23. of his Pirke) is commonly censured for saying, "The angels that govern every species of creatures brought them thither." But (setting aside the opinion of angels peculiarly presiding over every kind of creature), I see no incongruity in affirming that God, by the ministry of his angels, brought them to the ark: but it is rather agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, which represent the Divine Majesty as employing their service in all affairs here below.

Ver. 21. *Take unto thee of all food that is eaten,* &c.] Either by man or beast: food suitable to every creature. Among which, though there be many that feed on flesh; yet other food, as several histories testify, will go down with them, when they are accustomed to it. See Philostratus, lib. v. cap. 15. Tzetzes Chil. v. Hist. 9. Sulpit. Severus, De Monacho Thebaid. Dial. i. cap. 7.

Ver. 22. *Thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him,* &c.] *i. e.* He made the ark of such dimensions, and laid up provisions for all creatures, as he was directed. This he did when the hundred and twenty years drew towards an end. See ver. 18.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *COME thou and all thy house into the ark.*] When the time of God's patience was expired, he required him to enter into the ark which he had prepared; and unto which all sorts of creatures were gathered.

For I have seen thee, &c.] I have observed thee sincerely obedient, when all the rest of the world were impious.

Ver. 2. *Of every clean beast,* &c.] The distinction of beasts, *clean* and *unclean,* being made by the law of Moses, hath given some a colour to say he wrote this book after they came out of Egypt and received the law: which made him speak in that style. But it may be answered to this, that though, with respect to men's food, the distinction of clean and unclean creatures was not before the law; yet some were accounted fit for sacrifice, and others not fit

from the beginning. And then clean beasts, in this place, are such as are not rapacious; which were not to be offered unto God. In short, the rite of sacrificing being before the flood, this difference of beasts was also before it. The only question is, How men came to make this difference? Some imagined, that they considered the nature of beasts, and by common reason determined that ravenous creatures were unfit for sacrifice: but it is more likely that they had directions from God for this, as they had for sacrificing. Which though they be not recorded, yet, I think, are rather to be supposed, than imagine men were left in such matters to their own discretion. Abarbinel, indeed, here says, that "Noah out of his profound wisdom discerned clean from unclean:" and if he had stopped here, and not added, that "he discerned the difference from their natures," he had said the truth. For he being a prophet, may be thought to have had instructions from above about such matters; though others, who first were taught to sacrifice, had them before him.

By sevens.] Seven couple, it is most probable, that they might have sufficient for sacrifice when they came out of the ark; and, if need were, for food, if other provision did not hold out: at least for food, after the flood, when God enlarged their former grant, ix. 3.

Ver. 4. *For yet seven days,* &c.] So much time he gave him for the disposing himself, and all things else in the ark.

Ver. 5. *And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him.*] He had said the same before, (vi. 22.) with respect to the preparation of the ark and provision of food: and now repeats here again, with respect to his entering into it himself, with all other creatures. For so it follows, ver. 7, 8, &c.

Ver. 6. *Noah was six hundred years old,* &c.] Current, as we speak, not complete, as appears by comparing this with ix. 28, 29. where he is said to have lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood, and in all nine hundred and fifty; whereas it should have been nine hundred fifty-one, if he had been full six hundred years old when the flood began.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass after seven days,* &c.] As he had said, ver. 4.

Ver. 11. *In the second month.*] Of the year, not of the six hundredth year of Noah's life: *i. e.* in October; for anciently the year began in September: which was changed, among the Israelites, in memory of their coming out of Egypt, into March, Exod. xii. 2.

The seventeenth day of the month.] Which was the beginning of our November.

All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, &c.] Here are two causes assigned of the deluge: first, The breaking up the fountains of the great deep: and, secondly, *The opening of the windows of heaven.* By the *great deep* is meant, those waters that are contained in vast quantities within the bowels of the earth. Which, being pressed upward, by the falling down of the earth, or some other cause unknown to us, gushed out violently at several parts of the earth, where they either found or made a vent. For that is meant by *breaking up the fountains* of the great deep: the great holes, or rather gaps, that were made in the earth; at which those subterraneous waters burst out. This, joined with the continual rains for forty days together, might well make such a flood as is here described. For the rain came down, not in ordinary showers, but in floods; which Moses calls opening the *windows* or *flood-gates* of heaven: and the LXX. translate *cataracts.* Which they can best understand who have seen those fallings of waters in the Indies, called *spouts:* where clouds do not break into drops, but fall, with a terrible violence, in a torrent. In short, it is evident from this history, that the waters did once cover the earth (we know not how deep), so that nothing of the earth could be seen, till God separated them, and raised some into clouds, and made the rest fall into channels, which were made for them, and commanded dry land to appear. (Gen. i. 2. 7. 10.) Therefore, it is no wonder if these waters were raised up again, by some means or other, to cover the earth as before: especially when the waters above the firmament, came down to join with those below, as they did at the beginning.

This some wise heathen looked upon as a possible thing. For Seneca, treating of that *fatal day* (as he calls it, lib. iii. Nat. Quest. cap. 27.) when the *deluge shall come* (for he fancied it still future), questions how *it* may come to pass. Whether by the force of the ocean overflowing the earth; or by perpetual rains without intermission; or by the swelling of rivers, and the opening of new fountains; or, there shall not be one cause alone of so great a mischief; but all these things concur, *uno agmine ad exitium humani generis,* in one troop to the destruction of mankind. Which last resolution, he thinks, is the truth, both there and in the last chapter of that book, where he hath these remarkable words: "Where hath not nature disposed moisture, to attack us, on all sides, when it pleases?" *Immanes sunt in abdito lacus,* &c. "There are huge lakes which we do not see; much of the sea that lies hidden; many rivers that slide in secret. So that there may be causes of a deluge on all sides, when some waters flow in under the earth; others flow round about it, which being long pent up overwhelm it; and rivers join with rivers, pools with pools, &c. And as our bodies sometimes dissolve into sweat, so the earth shall melt, and, without the help of other causes, shall find in itself what will drown it, &c. There being on a sudden, every where, openly and secretly, from above and from beneath, an eruption of waters." Which words are written as if they had been directed to make a commentary upon Moses.

Ver. 12. *And the rain was upon the earth forty days,* &c.] It continued raining so long without any intermission.

Ver. 13. *In the self-same day,* &c.] In that very day, when the rain began, did Noah and his family, &c. finish their going into the ark. Which could not be done in a day or two; but required a good deal of time: and now he had completed it; the very last creature being there bestowed. For, it is likely, he put in all other things first; and then went in himself, with his wife, and children, and their wives: who were no sooner entered, but the waters brake in upon the earth from beneath; and came down pouring from above.

Ver. 16. *The Lord shut him in.*] Or, shut the door after him: closed it so fast, that the waters could not enter, though it was not pitched, as the rest of the ark. How this was done, we need not inquire. It is likely by an angelical power; which, I supposed before, conducted the several creatures into the ark.

Ver. 17. *And the flood was forty days upon the earth,* &c.]

After forty days' rain the waters were so high that they bare up the ark, so that it did not touch the earth.

Ver. 18. *And the waters prevailed.*] By more rain, which fell after the forty days, the inundation grew strong and mighty (as the Hebrew word signifies); so strong, that the waters bore down houses and trees, as some expound it.

And were increased greatly.] He said before, (ver. 17.) they were *increased,* but now, that they were *greatly* increased. Which must be by more rain still falling on the earth; though not in such uninterrupted showers, as during the forty days.

And the ark went upon the face of the waters.] Moved, from place to place, as the waves drove it.

Ver. 19. *And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth.*] This is a higher expression than before; signifying their rising still to a greater pitch by continued rains.

And all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.] There were those anciently, and they have their successors now, who imagined the flood was not universal, ἀλλ' ἐν ᾧ οἱ τότε ἄνθρωποι ᾤκουν, *but only there where men then dwelt;* as the author of the Questions, Ad Orthodoxos, tells us, Q. 34. But they are confuted by these words, and by other passages, which say all flesh died. For the truth is, the world was then fully peopled as it is now; and not only inhabited in some parts of it; as may be easily demonstrated, if men would but consider, that, in the space of one thousand six hundred fifty-six years, when men lived so long as they then did, their increase could not but be six times more than hath been in the space of five thousand years, since men's lives are shortened as we now see them. Therefore it is a strange weakness to fancy, that only Palestine, Syria, or Mesopotamia, or some such country, was drowned by the flood; no more of the earth being then inhabited: for those countries could not have held the fortieth part of the inhabitants, which were produced between the creation and the flood; no, all the earth was not more than sufficient to contain them; as many have clearly proved.

Plato says, there were in his days, Παλαιοὶ λόγοι, *ancient traditions,* which affirmed there had been sundry destructions of mankind by floods, as well as other ways: in which, βραχύ τι τῶν ἀνθρώπων λειπεισθαι γένος, *a small parcel of mankind were left.* And particularly he saith concerning floods, that they were so great, that only σμικρὰ ζώπυρα, some very little sparks of mankind were saved, and those upon the tops of mountains: and the like he saith of beasts, that σπάνια ταῦτα, very few of them were left to support the life of mankind. (Lib. iii. De Legib. p. 677. Edit. Seran.) But this appears to have been an imperfect tradition; the higher mountains having been covered with the waters, as well as the low countries, and that all the earth over: which need not seem strange, if we consider what was said before upon ver. 11. And withal observe, that the diameter of the earth being seven thousand miles, and consequently, from the superficies to the centre, no less than three thousand five hundred miles, it is not incredible, (as Sir W. Raleigh discourses, lib. i. cap. 7. §. 6.) that there was water enough in the *great deep,* which, being forced up from thence, might overflow the loftiest mountains: especially, when water came pouring down, also, from above so fast, that no words can express it. For there is no mountain, above thirty miles high, upright; which thirty miles being found in the depths of the earth, one hundred and sixteen times; why should we think it incredible that the waters in the earth (three thousand five hundred miles deep) might be well able to cover the space of thirty miles in height? It would help men's unbelief, if they would likewise consider the vast inundations which are made yearly in Egypt, only from the rains that fall in Ethiopia: and the like overflowings yearly, in America, of the great river Oronooko; whereby many islands and plains, at other times inhabited, are laid twenty foot under water, between May and September.

Ver. 20. *Fifteen cubits upwards did the waters prevail,* &c.] Moses doth not here plainly say that the waters prevailed *fifteen* cubits above the highest mountains; though I do not see but there might be water enough heaped up, by the forementioned means, to cover them so high; and the whole verse be thus interpreted, "The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upwards, after the mountains were covered." Otherwise, by the *high hills* in the verse before, we must understand only such single hills as are in several countries; and by *mountains* in this verse, those long ridges of hills (such as Caucasus and Taurus, &c.) which stretch themselves many hundreds of miles through a great part of the earth. See viii. 5.

Ver. 24. *And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days.*] These words seem to me to import, that whatsoever short intermissions there might be, yet the rain continued a *hundred and fifty* days. Otherwise, it is hard to explain how the waters increased more and more, as it is said ver. 17, 18, 19. Besides, had the rain ended, as we commonly suppose, at *forty* days' end, the waters could not have prevailed a *hundred and fifty* days, but would have sunk much before that time; by reason of the declivity of the earth. And yet they were so far from falling, that (as Mr. Ray hath observed, in his pious and learned discourse of the Dissolution of the World), the tops of mountains were not seen till the beginning of the *tenth* month; that is, till *two hundred and seventy* days were passed.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND God remembered Nouh,* &c.] Took compassion upon him, and heard his prayers, which we may well suppose he made for himself and for all creatures that were with him. Thus the word *remember* is used, xix. 29. xxx. 22. The Hebrew doctors here again took notice of the word *Elohim,* (see vi. 12.) which is the name for *judges;* and observe, that even God's justice was turned to mercy. Justice itself was satisfied, as Sol. Jarchi expresses it.

And God made a wind to pass over the earth, &c.] Some gather from hence, that, during the fall of the rain, there was no storm or violent wind at all; but the rain fell downright. And consequently, the ark was not driven far from the place where it was built: it having no masts, or sails, but moving as a hulk or body of a ship, without a rudder, upon a calm sea. Philo, indeed, (in his book De Abrahamo) gives a quite different description of the deluge; representing the incessant showers to have been accompanied with dreadful thunder and lightning, storms and

tempests. But there is not a word in this story to countenance it.

This wind, it is very probable, was the *north wind*, which is very drying, and drives away rain, (Prov. xxv. 23.) which came, perhaps, out of the *south*, as I said upon iv. 14. Thus Ovid represents it in the flood of Deucalion, where he saith Jupiter,

" Nubila disjecit, nimbisque Aquilone remotis," &c.

And the waters assuaged.] This drying wind, and the sun, which now began to shine with great power, made the waters fall. For, if the second month, when the flood began, was part of our October and November; then the flood abated (after a hundred and fifty days) in the beginning of May, when the summer came on apace.

Ver. 2. *The fountains also of the deep.*] There was no farther eruption, or boiling up of the water, out of the bowels of the earth.

And the rain from heaven was restrained.] So that the rains ceased at the end of a hundred and fifty days.

Ver. 3. *And the waters returned from off the earth continually*, &c.] The waters, rolling to and fro by the wind, fell by little and little: and, after the end of the hundred and fifty days, began to decrease. So the Vulgar Latin well translates the latter end of this verse, *were abated; i. e.* began sensibly to decrease.

Ver. 4. *And the ark rested in the seventh month*, &c.] Of the year, not of the flood.

Upon the mountains of Ararat.] *i. e.* Upon one of the mountains, as xix. 29: " God overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt;" *i. e.* in one of which he dwelt. Judg. xii. 7. " Jephthah was buried in the cities of Gilead;" *i. e.* in one of the cities. For there was no one mountain called by this name of *Ararat:* but it belonged to a long ridge of mountains, like the Alps or Pyrenean, which are names appertaining not to one but to all. And Sir W. Raleigh, I think, truly judges that all the long ridges of mountains, which run through Armenia, Mesopotamia, Assyria, Media, Susiana, &c. *i. e.* from Cilicia to Paraponisus, are called by Moses *Ararat*, as by Pliny they are called *Taurus*. And that author thinks the ark settled in some of the eastern parts of Taurus, because Noah planted himself in the east after the flood (and it is likely did not travel far from the place where the ark rested), as appears, he thinks, from Gen. xi. 2. where we read his posterity, when they began to spread, went westward, and built Babel. The common opinion is, that the ark rested in some of the mountains of Armenia, as the Vulgar Latin translates the word *Ararat*; *i. e.* saith St. Jerome, upon the highest part of Taurus. But Epiphanius (who was before him) saith, upon the Gordiæan mountains; and so Jonathan, and Onkelos, and the Nubiensian geographer, and many others mentioned by Bochartus: who is of this opinion, as having the most authority. Many of which say, that some relics of the ark were remaining upon these mountains: which (as Theodoret observes upon Isa. xiv. 13.) were accounted the highest in the whole world. Vid. Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 3. and lib. iv. cap. 38.

There were such remainders of this history among the ancient Scythians, that, in their dispute with the Egyptians about their antiquity, they argue it partly from hence; that if the earth had ever been drowned, their country must needs be first inhabited again, because it was first cleared from the water; being the highest of all other countries in the world.

Thus their argument runs in Justin, lib. ii. cap. 1. where he hath given us a brief relation of it (if we had Trogus, whom he epitomizes, it is likely we should have understood their tradition more perfectly), in this manner: " If all countries were anciently drowned in the deep, *profecto editissimam quamque partem*, we must needs grant the highest parts of the earth were first uncovered of the waters that ran down from them: and the sooner any part was dry, the sooner were animals there generated. Now Scythia is so much raised above all other countries, that all the rivers which rise there run down into the Mœotis, and so into the Pontic and Egyptian sea," &c.

Ver. 5. *And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month.*] For the summer's heat must needs very much dry them up when there was no rain.

In the tenth month were the tops of the mountains seen.] This shews the mountain on which the ark rested was the highest, at least in those parts: because it settled there above two months before the tops of other mountains were seen. And, perhaps, the ark, by its weight, might settle there, while the top of that mountain was covered with water: which, it is possible, might not appear much before the rest.

Ver. 6. *At the end of forty days.*] Forty days after the tops of the mountains appeared; *i. e.* on the eleventh day of the eleventh month, which was about the end of our July.

Ver. 7. *He sent forth a raven.*] For the same end, no doubt, that the dove was sent forth; to make discovery whether the earth were dry: for, if it were, the smell of the dead carcasses, he knew, would allure it to fly far from the ark: which it did not, but only hovered about it, as it follows in the next words.

Went forth to and fro.] In the Hebrew more plainly, " going forth and returning." That is, it often went from the ark, and as often returned to it. For after many flights, finding nothing but water, it still betook itself unto the ark: either entering into it, or sitting upon it; till at last the waters being dried up, it returned no more; that is, fifty days after its first going forth, (ver. 13.) All which time it spent in going out and coming back. Bochart, indeed, approves of the Greek version; which makes the raven " not to have returned:" for which he gives some specious reasons, (lib. ii. cap. 12. p. 2. Hierozoic.) and hath such of the Hebrews to countenance him as R. Eliezer, who saith (Pirke, cap. 23.) that " the raven found a carcass of a man upon a mountain, and so would return no more."

But the next words (which in the Greek and Hebrew are both alike) confute this translation.

Until the waters were dried up from the earth.] Which make this plain and easy sense, in connexion with the foregoing (as they run in the Hebrew), that while the earth continued covered with water, the raven often flew from the ark, but, finding no convenient place to rest in, returned thither again, till the ground was dry. Whereas, according to the Greek, we must suppose the raven to have returned to the ark, when the waters were dried up from the

ground: which is very absurd. For, if it had sometime sat upon a carcass floating in the waters before they were dried up, or upon the top of some mountain which already appeared, what should make it return when all the waters were gone every where, and not rather while they remained upon the ground?

Ver. 8. *Also he sent forth a dove.*] As a proper creature to make further discoveries: being of a strong flight, loving to feed upon the ground, and pick up seeds; and constantly returning to its rest from the remotest places. These two birds (the raven and the dove) some imagine were sent forth upon one and the same day, or but a day between; as Bochartus conjectures. But this doth not agree with ver. 10. where it is said, "Noah stayed yet other seven days," and then sent out the dove again: which relates to seven days preceding; which seem to have passed between the sending out of the raven and of the dove.

Ver. 9. *The dove found no rest*, &c.] For though the tops of the mountains appeared, yet they continued muddy, as some conceive; or, they were so far off, that the dove could not easily reach them.

Ver. 10. *And he stayed yet other seven days.*] It appears by this, that on the seventh day Noah expected a blessing, rather than on another day: it being the day devoted from the beginning to religious services. Which he having, it is likely, performed, thereupon sent out the dove upon this day, as he had done before, with hope of good tidings.

Ver. 11. *And, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf* (or *branch* the word signifies) *plucked off.*] Bochart thinks the dove brought this out of Assyria, which abounds with olive trees, and lay south of Ararat; the wind then blowing towards that country from the north. (See Hierozoic, lib. i. cap. 6. p. 2.) where he shews, out of many authors, that not only olive trees, but some other also, will live and be green under water. All the difficulty is, how the dove could break off a branch (as the Vulgar translates it) from the tree. But it is easily solved, if we allow, as I have said before, that now it was summer time; which brought new shoots out of the trees that were easily cropped.

So he knew the waters were abated.] The tops of mountains were seen before, (ver. 5.) but now he understood the waters had left the lower grounds. Yet not so left them that the dove would stay; the earth, it is likely, remaining very chill.

Ver. 12. *And he stayed yet other seven days.*] See ver. 10. The observation there being confirmed by what is repeated here.

Returned not again to him any more.] There wanting neither food, nor a nest wherein to repose itself. By which Noah understood the earth was not only dry, and fit to be inhabited; but that it was not quite spoiled by the flood, but would afford food for all creatures.

Ver. 13. *Noah removed the covering of the ark.*] Some of the boards on the top. For he could see further by looking out there, than if he looked out at the door, or the window, which gave him a prospect but one way.

The face of the ground was dry.] Quite freed from water, but yet so soft and muddy that it was not fit to be inhabited: as appears by his staying still almost two months more before he thought fit to go out. So the following verse tells us.

Ver. 14. *In the second month*, &c.] If their months were such as ours, twelve of which make three hundred sixty-five days, then Noah stayed in the ark a whole year and ten days, as appears by comparing this verse with vii. 11. But if they were lunar months, which is most probable, then he was in the ark just one of our years: going out on the three hundred and sixty-fifth day after his entrance into it.

Was the earth dried.] Perfectly dried, so that no moisture remained; and grass, it is likely, was sprung up for the cattle.

It need not seem a wonder, that Moses gives so punctual and particular an account of this whole matter, and of all that follows; for he lived within eight hundred years of the flood: and therefore might very well know what had been done within that period, and easily tell how the world was peopled by the posterity of Noah. Which could not but be fresh in memory, when men lived so long; that not much above three generations had passed from the flood to Moses. For Shem, who saw the flood, was contemporary with Abraham; as he was with Jacob; whose great-grandchild was the father of Moses.

Ver. 16. *Go forth out of the ark.*] Though he saw the earth was fit to be inhabited; yet he waited for God's order to go out of the ark, as he had it for his entering into it.

Thou and thy wife, &c.] I do not think the observation of some of the Jews is absurd; who, by comparing this verse with vii. 13. make this collection: that while they were in the ark, the men did not cohabit with their wives; it being a time of great affliction: and therefore they kept asunder in separate apartments. So R. Eliezer in his Pirke, cap. 23. where R. Levitus thus gathers it: When they went into the ark, it is said, (vii. 13.) "Noah and his sons entered," and then "Noah's wife, and his sons' wives:" Behold, saith he, here the men are put together, and the women together: But when they come out, it is here said, "Go forth, thou and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives, with thee;" lo, here they are coupled together, as before they were separated. And so we find them again, (ver. 18.) where it is said, "Noah went forth, and his wife," &c.

Ver. 17. *Bring forth every living creature*, &c. *that they may breed*, &c.] One would think, by this, that no creature bred in the ark, no more than men: but now are sent forth to breed and multiply in the earth.

Ver. 20. *And Noah built an altar to the Lord.*] We never read of any built before this time: though we may reasonably conclude there was an altar upon which Cain and Abel offered; in the place appointed for Divine worship.

Offered burnt-offerings.] He restores the ancient rite of Divine service; which his sons and their posterity followed. Some think these *burnt-offerings* had something in them of the nature of a propitiatory sacrifice, as well as eucharistical, which they certainly were, for their deliverance from the flood. Their reason is taken from what follows.

Ver. 21. *The Lord smelled a sweet savour.*] That is, as Munster understands it, he ceased from his anger and was appeased. So the Syriac also, and Josephus. (Lib. i. Antiq. cap. 4.) But it may signify no more, but that his

thankfulness was as grateful to God as sweet odours are to us.

And the Lord said in his heart.] He determined, or resolved in himself. The Vulgar understands this, as if the Lord spake comfortably to Noah, (which in the Hebrew phrase is, "speaking to one's heart") and said,

I will not again curse the ground any more.] *i. e.* After this manner, with a deluge.

For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.] Such a proclivity there is in men to evil, that if I should scourge them thus, as often as they deserve, there would be no end of deluges. But the words may have a quite different sense, being connected with what went before in this manner; "I will not curse the ground any more for man's sake, though he be so very evilly disposed," &c.

Those words, "from his youth," signify a long radicated corruption, as appears from many places; Isa. xlvii. 12. 15. Jerem. iii. 25. Ezek. xxiii. 8, &c. Sol Jarchi extends it so far as to signify, "from his mother's womb."

Ver. 22. *While the earth remaineth.*] While men shall inhabit the earth.

Seed time and harvest, &c.] There shall not be such a year as this last has been: in which there was neither sowing nor reaping, nor any distinctions of seasons, till the rain was done.

Day and night, shall not cease.] One would think, by this expression, that the day did not much differ from night, while the heavens were covered with thick clouds, which fell in dismal floods of rain.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND God blessed Noah and his sons,* &c.] The Divine Majesty appeared now to Noah and his sons; to assure them of his favour and protection, and to renew the blessing bestowed upon Adam (as after a new creation), saying, "Increase and multiply."

Ver. 2. *The fear of you,* &c.] He seems also to confirm to them the dominion which God gave to Adam, at first, over all creatures, (i. 26.)

Ver. 3. *Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you,* &c.] Here the first grant made to mankind concerning food is enlarged, as St. Basil observes, ἡ πρώτη νομοθεσία τῶν καρπῶν ἀπόλαυσιν συνεχώρησε. The first legislation granted to them the use of fruits; but now of all living creatures; which they are as freely permitted to eat of, as formerly of all the fruits of the garden. For God seeing men to be ἀφειδεῖς, *contumacious,* as Greg. Nyss. expresses it, tom. i. p. 157. ἐπὶ παντῶν τὴν ἀπόλαυσιν συνεχώρησε, *he conceded to them the enjoyments of all things.* This is the general sense of the Jews, and of the Christian fathers, and of the first reformers of religion. They that would have this only a renewal of such an old charter, are of later standing; and can shew us no charter, but are led by some reasonings of their own, not by the Scriptures: unless we will admit such a criticism upon Gen. i. 30. as seems to me very forced. And they would have this also understood only of clean creatures: but I do not find any ground for the distinction of clean and unclean creatures with respect to *food,* but only to *sacrifice,* as was said before.

The reason why God now granted the liberty to eat flesh, Abarbinel thinks, was because otherwise there would not have been food enough for Noah and his sons: the fruits of the earth, which before were abundant, being all destroyed; so that for the present there was not sufficient for their sustenance. Others think the reason of it was, because the fruits of the earth were not now so nutritive as they had been, before the salt water of the sea very much spoiled the soil.

Ver. 4. *But flesh with the life thereof,* &c.] Here is one exception to the foregoing large grant, that the blood of beasts should not be eaten: just as, at the first, one fruit in the midst of the garden was excepted, when all the rest were allowed. The Hebrew doctors generally understand this to be a prohibition to cut off any limb of a living creature, and to eat it while the life, that is, the blood, was in it: *Dum adhuc vivit, et palpitat, seu tremit,* as a modern interpreter truly represents their sense: which is followed by many Christians. See Mercer, Musculus, especially Mr. Selden, lib. vii. cap. 1. de Jure N. et G.: who thinks, as Maimonides doth, that there were some people in the old world so fierce and barbarous, that they eat raw flesh, while it was yet warm from the beast out of whose body it was cut: and he makes this to have been a part of their idolatrous worship. (See More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 48.) But, supposing this to be true, there were so few of these people, we may well think (for he himself saith, it was the custom of the gentile kings to do thus), that there needed not to have been a precept given to all mankind to avoid that, unto which human nature is of itself averse.

St. Chrysostom there expounds this, of not eating "things strangled:" and L. de Dieu, of not eating "that which died of itself:" for *nephesh* in Scripture signifies, sometimes, a *dead carcass.* But it is manifest it was not lawful for all people to eat such things; for God himself orders the Israelites to give that which died of itself to a stranger, or to sell it to an alien. (Deut. xiv. 21.) And therefore the simplest sense seems to be, that they should not eat the blood of any creature: which was a positive precept, like that of not eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And the reason of it, perhaps, was, that God, intending in aftertimes to reserve the blood for the expiation of sin, required this early abstinence from it, that they might be the better prepared to submit to that law, and understand the reason of it: which was, that it was the life of the *beast* which God accepted instead of *their* life, when they had forfeited it by their sins.

And there is another plain reason given of this prohibition immediately after it; that they might be the more fearful of shedding the blood one of another, when it was not lawful so much as to taste the blood of a beast.

Ver. 5. *And surely.*] Or rather *for surely,* as the LXX. the Vulgar Latin, and a great number of learned men expound the particle *vau* as a *causal,* not as a *copulative,* in this place. So that the sense is this: Therefore I command you to abstain from the blood of living creatures, that you may be the farther off from shedding the blood of men: for that is so precious in my account, that I will take care he be severely punished, by whom it is shed; yea, the very beast shall die that kills a man. So it follows:

At the hand of every beast will I require it.] Not as if beasts were to blame if they killed a man (for they are capable neither of vice nor virtue); but this was ordained with respect to men, for whose use beasts were created.

For, first, such owners as were not careful to prevent such mischiefs were hereby punished: and, secondly, others were admonished by their example to be cautious: and, thirdly, God hereby instructed them that murder was a most grievous crime, whose punishment extended even to beasts: and, lastly, the lives of men were hereby much secured by the killing such beasts, as might otherwise have done the like mischief hereafter. See Bochart in his Hierozoic, par. i. lib. i. cap. 40.

At the hand of every man's brother, &c.] And therefore much more will I require it at the hand of every man. Whom he calls *brother,* to shew that murder is the more heinous upon this account; because we are all *brethren.* Or the meaning may be (as some will have it), that though he be as nearly related as a brother he shall not go unpunished.

Ver. 6. *Whoso sheds man's blood.*] He repeats it over again, to enact this law more strongly. Or, as the Hebrews understand it, he spake before of the punishment he would inflict himself upon the murderer; and now of the care we should take to punish it.

By man shall his blood be shed.] That is, by the magistrate or judges. For God had kept the punishment of murder in his own hand till now; as we may gather from the story of Cain, whom he banished, but suffered nobody to kill him: but here gives authority to judges to call every body to an account for it, and put them to death. They that would see more of the sense of the Jews about these and the foregoing words, may read Mr. Selden, de Jure N. et G. lib. i. cap. 5. and lib. iv. cap. 1. and de Synedriis, lib. i. cap. 5.

I will only add, that they rightly conclude, that as courts of judicature were hereby authorized; so what was thus ordained against murder, by a parity of reason, was to be executed upon other great offenders; there being some things which are no less dear to us than life; as virginal chastity, and matrimonial fidelity, &c.

For in the image of God made he man.] Notwithstanding the sin of man, there remained so much of the image of God in him as entitled him to his peculiar protection.

Ver. 7. *And ye, be ye fruitful,* &c.] You need doubt therefore of the blessing I now bestowed upon you, (ver. 1.) for you see what care I take of the preservation as well as the propagation of mankind.

Ver. 9. *I will establish my covenant with you.*] Because beasts cannot covenant, most understand by that word simply a *promise,* as Jer. xxxiii. 25. But there is no need of this explication; the covenant being made directly with Noah, including all other creatures who were to have the benefit of it.

Ver. 10. *From all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.*] That is, it shall extend not only to those which now go out of the ark, but to all their breed in future ages.

Ver. 11. *And I will establish my covenant with you,* &c.] Doubt not of it; for I tell you again, I will faithfully keep this solemn promise.

Any more be a flood to destroy the earth.] That is, the whole earth; for particular inundations there have been often.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord said, This is the token of the covenant,* &c.] I do not only give you my word; but a token or sign that I will keep it.

Ver. 13. *I do set my bow in the clouds,* &c.] Most think this doth not signify there never had been a rainbow before the flood; for since there was both sun and clouds, it is likely, say they, there was a rainbow also: only now it was appointed for a *sign,* which it was not before. But as this opinion hath nothing in Scripture to enforce it, so grounds in nature there are none to warrant it; unless we will assert this manifest untruth, that every disposition of the air, or every cloud, is fitly disposed to produce a rainbow. They are the words of that great divine, Dr. Jackson, (book i. upon the Creed, chap. 16.) who adds, that if other natural causes, with their motions and dispositions, depend upon the final (as Scripture philosophy teaches us), they, who acknowledge the Scripture, have no reason to think that either the clouds or the air had that peculiar disposition before the flood, which is required to the production of the rainbow: when this wonderful effect had no such use or end, as it hath had ever since, for it was appointed by God, to be a witness of his covenant with the new world; a messenger to secure mankind from destruction by deluges. Now, if it had appeared before the flood, the sight of it after the flood would have been but a poor comfort to Noah and his timorous posterity: whose fear, lest the like inundation might happen again, was greater than could be taken away by a common or usual sign. The ancient poets had a better philosophy (though they knew not the original of it), when they feigned Iris to be the daughter, or (as we would now speak) the mother of wonderment (Θαύμαντος ἔκγονον), the messenger of the great god Jupiter, and his goddess Juno: whom Homer (as he observes) represents as sent with a peremptory command to Neptune not to aid the Grecians; by the swelling, we may suppose, of waters, which much annoyed the Trojans.

My bow.] It is called *his,* not only because he is the Author of all things, which have natural causes, as there are of this: but because *he* appointed it to a special end, as a signification and assurance of his mercy to mankind.

Ver. 14. *When I bring a cloud over the earth.*] *i. e.* When there are great signs of rain, which come out of the clouds.

That the bow shall be seen in the cloud.] Not always, but at certain times; often enough to put men in mind of this promise, and stir up their belief of it. For it doth, as it were, say, I will not drown the earth again, though the clouds have thickened as if they threatened it. Common philosophy teaches us, that the rainbow is a natural sign there will not be much rain after it appears; but that the clouds begin to disperse: for it is never made in a thick cloud, but in a thin: so that if it appear after showers, which come from thick clouds, it is a token that now they grow thin. But the God of nature chose this to be a sign, that he would never let them thicken again to such a degree to bring a deluge upon the earth. And, indeed, the admirable form or composition of this "glorious circle (as the son of Sirach calls it, Ecclus. xliii. 12.) bent by the hands of the Most High," doth naturally excite one to look beyond the material and efficient cause of it to the final, as the forenamed author speaks. And now that we have Moses's commentary upon it, we may see, in the mixed colours of the rainbow, these two things; the destruction of the old world by *water,* and the future consumption of the present world by *fire;* whose flaming brightness is predominant in the waterish humour.

Ver. 15. *And I will remember my covenant,* &c.] Look upon it as a token of my faithfulness to my word.

Ver 16. *I will look upon it that I may remember,* &c.] This is spoken after the manner of men; the more to confirm their belief that God would not go back with his word.

Ver. 17. *And God said, This is the token,* &c.] As the promise is repeated twice, to express its certainty, (ver. 9. 11.) so is the token of it as oft repeated, for the same reason, (ver. 12. and here ver. 17.)

Ver. 18. *And the sons of Noah,* &c.] They are here again named, with respect to what follows: but not in their order, as shall be proved in its proper place, (x. 21.) for Japhet was the eldest.

And Ham is the father of Canaan.] This son of Ham is here alone mentioned, because he was concerned in the following wicked fact of his father: and his posterity were those wicked people, whose country God gave to the Israelites.

Ver. 19. *And of them was the whole earth overspread.*] By this it appears, that, though Noah lived above three hundred years after he came out of the ark, yet he begat no more children; or, if he did, none of them lived to have any posterity.

Ver. 20. *Began to be an husbandman.*] To improve the art of husbandry, which was understood before, but he much advanced it: there being nothing, in old time, which the greatest men thought more worthy their study; as we see by the Romans themselves, till they were corrupted by the luxury which their conquests brought in among them.

And he planted a vineyard.] There were vines here and there before the flood; but Noah seems to have been the first that made a *vineyard,* and put them in order: and the first, perhaps, that invented wine-presses, to press out the juice of the grapes, and make wine. If he was not the inventor of these two (planting of vineyards and making wine), yet we may well allow him to be the improver of them, as he was of husbandry.

Ver. 21. *And he drank of the wine, and was drunken.*] Being unacquainted with the strength of the liquor (as several of the fathers, as well as of the Jewish doctors think), or else being old and unable to bear its strength, as Epiphanius understands it: (see Hæres. lxiii. n. 3.) For it is manifest from what follows, that this happened a great while after the flood; Ham having a son, nay, more than one, for Canaan was not his first-born.

And he was uncovered in his tent.] The heat of the weather, or of the wine, perhaps, made him throw off the clothes: or he was negligent, being not himself.

Ver. 22. *And Ham, the father of Canaan,* &c.] There are some circumstances, which follow, that make the opinion of the Hebrew doctors not improbable; that Canaan first saw Noah in this indecent posture, and made sport with it to his father: who was so far from reproving him, as he ought to have done, that he also did the same.

And told his two brethren without.] In the street, publicly before the people, he proclaimed his father's shame, and mocked at it. For it is hard to think that God cursed him merely for his irreverence, but there was something of derision joined with it, and perhaps of profaneness and irreligion; in laughing (we may conceive) at the promise of the Messiah, which, it is likely, he heard his father often speak of, but now thought him incapable to beget. For Ham is generally thought to have been an impious man; and some take him to have been the first inventor of idols after the flood; nay, of magic, which he learned of the wicked Cainites before the flood. Thus Gaspar Schottus, lib. i. de Magia, cap. 3. prolegom. Where he endeavours to shew he was the same with him whom the Persians call Zoroaster.

Ver. 23. *And Shem and Japhet took a garment,* &c.] A great argument of their piety and dutiful affection to their father; which God, therefore, greatly rewarded.

Ver. 24. *And knew what his younger son had done.*] Finding himself covered with clothes that were not his own, he inquired, it is likely, how it came about: and was informed how he had been abused by one of his sons, and honoured by the other.

His younger son.] Some make this an argument that Canaan was the first that made himself merry with his grandfather: and is here called his *younger,* or *little* son (nothing being more common than to call those the sons of another who were his grandchildren, as cousin-germans are called brothers), for Ham was neither *little,* nor his *younger* son; but the middle-most, as he is always placed. Nor doth it seem at all pertinent to the matter to mention the order of his birth; but very fit, if he spake of his grandson, to distinguish him from the rest. And what follows is a farther proof of it.

Ver. 25. *Cursed be Canaan,* &c.] If what I said before, (ver. 22. 24.) be allowed, it makes it easy to give an account why Canaan is cursed rather than Ham; because he was first guilty. Ham, indeed, was punished in him: but he had other sons, on whom the punishment did not fall, but only on this. For which I can find no reason so probable as that beforenamed. Which, if it be not allowed, we must have recourse to a harsh interpretation; and, by Canaan, understand Canaan's father, as some do.

A servant of servants.] That is, the basest and vilest of servants. See the next verse.

Ver. 26. *Blessed be the Lord God of Shem.*] The Lord was the God of Shem, after a peculiar manner, just as he was the God of Abraham, because of the gracious covenant made with him: for God settled his church in the family of Shem; and Christ was born of his posterity; and he himself, in all likelihood, kept up the worship of the true God, and opposed idolatry. In short, to be the *God of Shem,* was to bestow all manner of blessings upon him; which Noah here prophecies to him, by blessing the Lord for them: whom he acknowledges to be the Author of them, out of his special grace and favour towards him. For he was the younger brother of Japhet, as I shall shew, x. 21. Thus Jacob interprets this phrase, xxix. 19, 20.

And Canaan shall be his servant.] This was fulfilled eight hundred years after, when the Israelites (who were descended from Shem) took possession of the land of Canaan; subduing thirty of their kings; killing most of their inhabitants; laying heavy tributes upon the remainder; and using the Gideonites (who saved themselves by a wile), though not as servants to them, yet as mere drudges for the service of the tabernacle. Whose name David is thought to have changed into *Nethinim* (Ezra viii. 20.); people who had voluntarily surrendered themselves (as they did to Joshua when he had discovered their fraud),

to do what he would with them. Solomon also made all the remainders of the people of Canaan subject to servile labours, when all the Israelites were free, as is plainly signified, 2 Chron. viii. 7, 8, 9. And see Joseph. Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 2. Thus, as the blessing promised to Abraham was not fulfilled in his own person, but in his posterity, many generations after his death; so this curse upon Cham did not take place till the same time: the execution of God's curse upon the one being his conferring of a blessing upon the other.

Ver. 27. *God shall enlarge Japheth.*] *i. e.* His habitation; for God gave him, for his possession, all the isles of the sea westward, and those countries near to them, as Spain, Italy, Greece, Asia the Less, &c. as Bochart hath observed in his Phaleg. lib. i. cap. i. Who further notes, that, in the Hebrew word for *enlarge*, there is a plain allusion to Japheth's name; as there are to many others in Scripture; Noah, (ver. 29.) Judah, Dan, Gad, &c. (xlix. 8. 16. 19.) They that translate this word *persuade* (as it is in the margin), did not consider, that it is commonly taken in a bad sense, when it is so used, for *deceiving* and *seducing;* and that it governs, as grammarians speak, an accusative case, and not a dative (as it doth here), when it signifies to allure or persuade. In short, this is a promise of a very large portion to Japheth's posterity in the division of the earth: which was but necessary; for that part of the world which bends to the north being assigned to him, vast regions were requisite for such a numerous offspring as were likely to come from him: the fruitfulness of people being wonderfully great in cold climates. And, accordingly, besides all Europe, and the Lesser Asia, there fell to the share of his posterity, Media, part of Armenia, Iberia, Albania, and the vast regions towards the north, which anciently the Scythians, now the Tartars, inhabit: from whom the people of the New World (as we call it) seem to be derived; the Scythians going thither by the Streights of Anian. Of which more upon x. 32.

Moses hath not told us, what were the names of any of their wives; but the Greeks have given to Japetus's wife the name of Κλυμήνη (as Hesiod calls her), because she was the mother of so many famous nations. So Vossius, lib. i. De Orig. Idolol. cap. 18. And Campanella's observation in this verse is, That all empires descended from the sons of Japheth, (L. de Monarchia Hispan. cap. 4) Which may be true of the great empires, but the Egyptians seem to have been the first considerable princes, and Nimrod was of the race of Ham.

And he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.] *i. e.* His territories shall be so dilated, that, in future times, he shall possess some of his brother's countries: which is also prophesied of, Numb. xxiv. 24. where it is said, they of Cittim "shall afflict the children of Assur and Eber;" *i. e.* afflict the Assyrians and the Hebrews, who were of the posterity of Shem. And so both the Greeks and the Romans did, who invaded and conquered that part of Asia which belonged to Shem. The Chaldee paraphrast gives a spiritual interpretation of this passage, which is very apt, That the gentiles should come into the church, which was in the family of Shem. And it is very remarkable, (which is observed by our Mr. Mede, book i. discourse 48.) that all the offsprings of Japheth are at this day Christians, Magog only excepted (*i. e.* the Turks), whom God seems to have reserved, as he did some of the Canaanites in the land of Israel, to prove and punish us withal. Our learned N. Fuller gives a quite different interpretation from all these, making God the subject of this speech, not Japheth; and thus translates it; "God shall dwell in the tents of Shem;" among them shall be the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty. But this doth not agree with what follows.

And Canaan shall be his servant.] The Grecks and Romans, descended from Japheht, conquered Canaan: and whatsoever relics there were of them any where, (for instance, at Tyre, built by the Sidonians; at Thebes, by Cadmus; at Carthage, by Dido;) they were all cut off by the Greeks or Romans. It is observed by Campanella, that "none are descended from Cham, but slaves, and tyrants, who are indeed slaves;" (cap. 4. De Mon. Hispan.) But Mr. Mede's observation is more pertinent: (in the forenamed discourse, p. 358.) There hath never yet been a son of Cham, that hath shaken a sceptre over the head of Japheth. Shem hath subdued Japheth, and Japheth subdued Shem: but Cham never subdued either. Which made Hannibal, a child of Canaan, cry out with amazement of soul, "Agnosco fatum Carthaginis," *I acknowledge the fate of Carthage.* (Livy, lib. xxvii. *in fine.*)

Ver. 28. *And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.*] Which was of great advantage for the certain propagation of the knowledge of those things before related, and of those that follow in the next chapter: for he died not above two-and-thirty years before Abraham was born.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *NOW these are the generations of the sons of Noah,* &c.] As he had often before mentioned the three sons of Noah, so now he mentions them again, being to give an account of their children, by whom the earth was peopled after the flood. And he reckons them in the same order he had always done, (vi. 10. vii. 13. ix. 18.) first Shem, then Ham, and last of all Japheth. But it is observable, that, in the next verse, he gives an account first of the sons of Japheth, who was, indeed, the eldest. There is great use of this genealogy, as Maimonides shews, (par. iii. More Nev. cap. 50.) because the doctrine of the creation of the world, which is the foundation of the law (*i. e.* of religion), would not have been so easily believed, if Moses had not given an account of the succession of mankind, from the first man to the flood; and from the flood to his own time: shewing from whom all nations were derived, and how they came to be dispersed.

Shem is named first of Noah's sons, because the blessed seed was to spring out of his family; in which the true religion was preserved: which was soon lost in the posterity of the other two; among whom their names remained in great honour. For,

Ham was the heathen Jupiter, who was called Hammon in Egypt; which, it will appear, was part of Ham's portion, and is called the Land of Ham, as every one knows, in many places of the Psalms. And, accordingly, the same country is called by Plutarch, Χημία.

Japheth also seems to have been the same with Japetus, whom the Greeks own to have been their father. Nor do they know any name of greater antiquity: which made

them give it to decrepit persons (as many, particularly Bochart, have observed); and it became a proverb in that country, "older than Japetus" Whom their poets feign to have attempted war against Jupiter; because of the dissensions which the unlikeness of their manners begat between them. Which seems to be nothing but the story in chapter ix. of this book, ver. 22. For Ham, as I said, is the heathen Jupiter.

Ver. 2. *The sons of Japheth.*] Were seven; the eldest of which, Gomer, had three sons; and the fourth, Javan, had four: whose names we have in the following verses.

Gomer.] It is hard, at this distance, to find what country was peopled by his posterity; but Bochartus, in his Phaleg. hath made such probable conjectures, about this and all that follow, from other Scriptures, and from neighbouring places, and the relics of their names in ancient geographers, and such-like things, that they carry a great appearance of truth in them. Our famous Camden (in his account of the first inhabitants of Britain), thinks that the Cimbri and Cimmerii descended from this Gomer, who gave them their name; and that the old Britons came from him, because they call themselves Kumero, Cymro, and Kumeri; which seems to denote them the posterity of Gomer. But this, as also the notion of Ludov. Capellus in his Chron. Sacra, p. 104. (who, if this of Mr. Camden be not accepted, propounds another, of the Comari and Chomari, a people in Scythia, mentioned by Ptolemy, within the mountain Imaus, near Bactriana), is confuted by what we read in Ezekiel, who makes Gomer to have been a neighbour of Torgamah. (Ezek. xxxviii. 6.) And Torgamah was a nation that usually went to the marts of Tyre, (xxvii. 14.) and consequently were not seated in the furthermost part of the north; but, as will appear afterward, not very far from Tyre. And in some countries thereabouts we must seek for Gomer: who, it is likely, gave Phrygia its denomination. For a part of it was called Κατακεκαυμένη by Diodorus and Hesychius, because it looked as if it were burnt. Such was all the country about Cayster, Mæander, and the city Philadelphia. Now this is the very signification of Gomer. For in the Hebrew Gomer is to *consume;* and so the Chaldee and Syriac frequently use it; whence Gumra, or Gumro, is a *coal.* And Phrygia is of the same signification (for φρύγειν in Greek is to *torrify*), which, being the name of part of the country, in time became the name of the whole.

Magog.] The second son of Japheth, was in all likelihood the father of the Scythians; which is the opinion of Josephus, Theodoret, St. Jerome, and others. For all that is said in Scripture about Magog exactly agrees to them; as Bochartus hath shewn at large, out of Ezekiel. lib. iii. Phaleg. cap. 13.

Madai.] From him the country of Media took its name; where he and his children settled: and it is the farthermost country eastward, where any of the posterity of Japheth inhabited. What is the name of this country, at present, is not easy to tell; the ancient name and limits of countries so remote, being quite worn out of memory. But it is no improbable conjecture of Bochartus, (lib. iii. cap. 14.) that the ancient Sarmatæ took their name from this man, Sear, or Sar-Madai, being, in Chaldee, as much as the relics of Madai or the Medes. Dr. Jackson, I think, hath well observed, (book i. chap. 16.) that Scythia, or the north part of Asia Minor, and other parts adjacent, were inhabited by the sons of Japheth, before they came into Greece (where the next son settled), or the other parts of Europe.

Javan.] Planted himself in Greece; under which word is comprehended, not only Achaia and the rest of the countries thereabout; but even Macedonia, and the nations neighbouring to it, towards the west: the sea that washes them, being called the Ionian Sea. And, indeed, the Hebrew word יון taking away the vowels, may be either read Javan or Ion. From whence the Iones; whom Homer calls Jaones, which is near to Javan; which a Persian, in Aristophanes's Acharnenses, pronounces Jaonau: as Grotius observes, Annot. in lib. i. de V. R. C. Hence Daniel calls Alexander, who came out of Macedonia, the King of Javan, (viii. 21.) And the Chaldee paraphrase hath here, instead of Javan, Macedonia. See Bochart. lib. iii. cap. 3.

Tubal and Meshech.] These two are constantly joined together by Ezekiel in many places, (xxvii. 13. xxxii. 26, &c.) Which is a sign these two brothers planted themselves not far from one another. And no conjecture seems so probable as that of Bochartus, who takes these to be the people whom the Greeks call Moschi and Tibareni: who are as constantly joined together in Herodotus, as Meschech and Tubal are in Ezekiel, and none need wonder that Tubal was changed into Tuber, and then into Tiber: for nothing was more common, among the Greeks, than to change the letter L. into R. as Βελιὰρ for Belial, and Φιχὼρ for Phicol, &c. The Moschi inhabited the mountains called Moschici, N. E. of Cappadocia, and all the mountains (as Bochart thinks) from the river Phasis to the Pontus-Cappadocius. The Tibareni were in the middle between the Trapezuntii and the inhabitants of Armenia the Less. So Strabo describes them, who was born not far from these countries, and had reason to know them. Nor is this a new opinion of Bochart's, that the Tibareni came from Tubal: for Epiphanius, in his Ancorats, mentions among the descendants of Japheth, Τιβαρινοὺς, together with the Chalybes and Mossynæci; whom our Broughton follows.

Tiras.] Or Thiras, the youngest of the sons of Japheth, possessed Thrace and Mysia, and the rest of Europe towards the north. For Θρᾶξ is Thiras or Thras, by the change of the letter Samech into Xi: which in the Greek alphabet (received from the Phœnicians) answers to the letter Samech; so that some of the Hebrews write Thracia with an S, Thrasia: and a Thracian woman is called by the Greeks themselves Θρᾶσσα and Θρεῖσσα: which comes very near to Thiras. And that great man Bochartus says a great deal more to confirm this; which was the opinion, he shews, of many of the ancients. (Phaleg. lib. iii. cap. 2.) And in late times, of Ludovicus Capellus; who adds, that possibly Tros and Troas were derived from this Thiras.

Ver. 3. *And the sons of Gomer.*] Now follows an account of those that descended from the eldest son of Japheth. Ashkenaz was the eldest son of Gomer, whose posterity settled in Bithynia (where we find the footsteps of his name, in the Sinus Ascanius, and Ascanius Lacus, and Amnis), and in Troas, and the Lesser Phrygia: in which is a country and a city called Ascania and Ascaniæ-

Insulæ. Into which country the offspring of Ashkenaz brought colonies from Gomer, or the Greater Phrygia: and extended themselves to the sea. Which being called by the people upon the coast Aseenaz, was pronounced by the Greeks Ἄξενος. Which being an odious name in their language, signifying *inhospitable*, they changed it into the contrary, and called it Εὔξεινος, the Euxine Sea. See more in the forenamed author, (lib. iii. cap. 9.) Ludovicus Capellus happened upon the same conjecture. Riphath, or Diphath, as it is written in 1 Chron. i. 6. whose posterity Josephus thinks to have inhabited Paphlagonia: which is a country near to Phrygia, upon the Euxine Sea: and there are remainers of the name in several places, both ways written with Resh, or with Daleth: as Bochart shews. (lib. iii. cap. 10.) Mela places the Riphaces in this country, as Grotius observes, Annot. in lib. i. de V. R. C.

Togarmah.] His posterity, it is manifest, settled northward of Judea, by that place in Ezekiel (xxxviii. 6.) where the Greek scholiast saith, some hereby understand the Cappadocians and Galatians. And, indeed, Cappadocia lies near to Gomer or Phrygia, with whom Togarmah is wont to be joined: and in respect of Judea, it lies northward; and was most famous for excellent horses; which the prophet saith came from Togarmah. (Ezek. xxvii. 14.) The Greek interpreters constantly write it Torgama, or Thorgama; from whence the name of the Trogmi, or Troemi, may well be thought to be derived: who, Strabo saith, (lib. xii.) lived near Pontus and Cappadocia: and it appears by Ptolemy, they possessed some cities in Cappadocia itself. This people are called by Stephanus, Troemeni, and in the council of Chalcedon, Troemades, or Trogmades: for their bishop is often mentioned, Ἐπίσκοπος Τροκμάδων. See Bochart in the same book, cap. 11.

Ver. 4. *And the sons of Javan.*] Having told us what sons Gomer had, he informs us who had descended from Javan: who had four sons, that gave names to four provinces.

Elishah.] His first-born inhabited Peloponnesus: in which there was an ample country, called by the ancients Elis: and one part of it called by Homer, Alisium. I omit the other arguments whereby Bochartus proves this to be the part of the earth where Elishah's posterity settled, not far from their father Javan. Nay, Ludovicus Capellus (p. 105. Chron. Sacra,) thinks the Αἰολεῖς, Æoles, and the country Æolia had its name from thence

Tarshish] (or Tarsis) Neither peopled Cilicia, where we meet with a like name, nor the coast about Carthage, as some of the ancients thought; but, as Eusebius, and from him our Broughton, and lately Bochart, have observed, from him came the Iberi in Spain. Θαρσεῖς ἐξ οὗ Ἴβηρες. Which name of Iberi came, as Bochart thinks, from the Phœnicians, who called the bounds and utmost limits of any thing Ebrim or Ibrim; a word often used in the Syriac version of the Psalms and the New Testament. From whence, it is not unlikely, the Spaniards were called by this name of Iberi, because they were thought to possess the utmost ends of the earth westward. However, we may well think Tarshish to be Spain, or that part of it which was most frequented by the Phœnicians, viz. about Gades and Tartessus, as Bochartus, I think, hath proved by evident arguments, fetched chiefly from what Ezekiel says of Tarsis, (xxvii. 12.) and comparing it with this country. (Lib. iii. Phaleg. cap. 7.)

Kittim.] The same author hath proved by solid arguments, and by good authority, that from him came the people who inhabited Italy: in which there were anciently many footsteps of this name. For there was in Latium itself a city called Κετία, as Halicarnasseus tells us: which was one of those great and populous cities taken by Coriolanus, as Plutarch, in his life, tells us. There was a river called Κετὸς about Cumæ, mentioned by Aristotle, as turning plants into stones. And the very name of Latines answers to Chittim: for most say it comes *à latendo*, being formed to express this ancient Scripture name. For Chetema, in Arabic (which is a branch of the Hebrew tongue) is *to hide:* and Chetim is *hidden*, and *lament.* And so, no doubt, it was anciently used in Hebrew: for what better sense can we make of those words of Jeremy, ii. 22. "thy iniquity, נכתם, is hidden or laid up with me?" according to an usual expression in Scripture, (Deut. xxxii. 34. Job xxi. 9. Hos. xiii. 12.) where there are words of the like import with this. That famous man Bochart saith a great deal more, to assert this, (lib. iii. cap. 5.)

Dodanim.] He is called Rhodanim, in 1 Chron. i. 7. by whom the Greek interpreters understand the people of Rhodes (and so do several of the ancients), but the name of that island is much later than Moses's time: and therefore it is better to understand hereby, that country now called France; which was peopled by the posterity of this son of Javan: who, when they came to this coast, gave name, as Bochart conjectures, to the great river Rhodanus; where it is likely they first seated themselves, and called the adjacent coast Rhodanusia: which had anciently in it a city of the same name, mentioned by Stephanus; and said to be seated in Μασσαλία, *in tractu Massiliensi*, where now stands Marseilles. (See Bochart, lib. iii. cap. 6.) These Dodanites are never mentioned in any other places of Scripture, which makes it the more difficult where to find them; but this account seems more probable than that of our learned Mede, who places them in Epirus (where there was a city called Dodona), and part of Peloponnesus: all which, and several countries thereabout, seem to be comprehended under the name of Javan.

Ver. 5. *By these were the isles of the gentiles divided.*] By the word isles we commonly understand countries compassed round about by the sea. But there were not such islands enough to contain the sons of Japheth (though these were part of their portion), and therefore we must seek for another sense of this word. Which the Hebrews use (as Mr. Mede hath observed), to signify "all those countries divided from them by the sea;" or, such as they used not to go to, but by sea. (See book i. disc. 47.) Many places testify this, (Isai. xi. 10, 11. xl. 15. Jer. ii. 10, &c.) Now, if Moses wrote this book in Egypt, as he thinks it probable, they commonly went from thence to Phrygia, Cappadocia, Paphlagonia, by sea, as well as to Greece, Italy, &c. To Media, indeed, he thinks, they did not use to go by sea, and therefore makes this an objection against Madia being the father of the Medes: for their country cannot be called an isle. But the far greater part of the regions, peopled by the sons of Japheth, being such

as, he confesses, the Hebrews call isles, Moses might well say, the isles of the gentiles were parted among them, though Media be comprehended, which was not such an isle. But there is no need of all this, if we take the word we translate *isle*, for a region, country, or province. And so it plainly signifies, Job xxii. 30. Isai. xx. 6. where, in the margin, we translate it *country*. And then the word Goim, which we render Gentiles, signifies a multitude of people: as it doth often in Scripture: particularly Gen. xvii. 4. 16. And so we translate it, *nations*, in the last words of this verse; and in the last clause of this chapter; "by these were the [Goim] nations divided in the earth." Which may serve to explain this phrase here; which we may thus interpret, "by these (or among these) were divided the regions of the people or nations (descended from Japheth) in their lands;" in the several countries which they possessed.

Divided.] It appears by the following words (according to his language, family, and nation), this great division of the earth was made orderly, and not by a confused irregular dispersion, wherein every one went whither he listed, and seated himself where he thought good. This, Mr. Mede thinks, is also suggested in the very word we translate *divided;* which signifies not a scattered, but a distinct partition.

Every one after his tongue, or *language.*] The same is said (ver. 20. and ver. 31.) of the posterity of Cham and Shem. Which signifies they did not all speak the same language, but doth not prove that any one of the forementioned people had a language peculiar to themselves, distinct from the rest, and not understood by them. As, when Ahasuerus is said to have caused letters to be written to a hundred and twenty-seven provinces, according to their language and their writing, (Esth. viii. 9.) it doth not prove there were so many several sorts of writing, and so many several languages in his empire; but only that to each of them was directed a letter, in that language which they spake.

After their families, in their nations.] The particle *in* denotes, as Mr. Mede observes, *families* to be subordinate to *nations*, as parts to a whole. Families are parts of a nation, and a nation is an offspring containing many families. So here was a twofold order in this division. First, they were ranged according to their nations; and then, every nation was ranked by his families. So that every nation had his lot by himself; and in every nation, the families belonging to it had their portion by themselves. The number of nations descended from Japheth were seven, according to the number of his sons, who were all founders of several nations. But the number of families is not here entirely set down: for Moses names only the families of Gomer and Javan: whose children, perhaps, are rather to be looked upon as founders of nations; and therefore mentioned by Moses, when the posterity of the rest are omitted.

Ver. 6. *And the sons of Ham.*] Having given an account of the sons and grandsons of Japheth, the eldest son of Noah, he next proceeds to the sons of Ham, the second son of Noah, which were four: and gives an account also of every one of their sons, and of some of their grandsons.

Cush] Gave name to a country very often mentioned in Scripture; which most of the ancients take for Ethiopia, and so we commonly translate the word *Cush*. But if by Ethiopia they meant that country south of Egypt, and not an eastern country (which may be a question), Jonathan is rather to be followed, who here paraphrases it Arabia. For Cush is the same with Chusan (only this latter is a diminutive), which is made the same with Midian, (Habak. iii. 7.) And so Moses's wife is called a Chushite (we render it Ethiopian), for she was a Midianite, (Exod. ii. 16. 21.) and therefore was of Arabia, not of Ethiopia: and so we should translate it, (Numb. xii. 2.) an *Arabian woman*. And there is a demonstration of it in Ezek. xxix. 10. that Cush cannot be Ethiopia; for, when God saith he will make Egypt desolate, "from the tower of Syene to the border of Cush," if we should understand by Cush the country of Ethiopia, it would be as if he had said, "from Ethiopia to Ethiopia." For every one knows Syene was the border of Egypt towards Ethiopia: and therefore here being two opposite borders, it is manifest that Cush, which is the opposite term to Syene, cannot be Ethiopia, but Arabia: which bounded that part of Egypt, which is most remote from Ethiopia. A great number of other arguments, out of the Scriptures, evince this: which Bochartus hath collected, (lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 2.) and Philip. Beroaldus asserted the same thing before him.

Mizraim.] The father of them who inhabited Egypt, whose metropolis [Alcairo] the Arabians at this day call Meser; and the first month among the ancient Egyptians was called Mesori: and Cedrenus calls the country itself Mestra, as Grotius observes in his Annot. in lib. i. de V. R. C. and Lud. Capellus, in his Chronol. Sacra, p. 109. And this word *Mizraim* being of the dual number (which shews it to be the name of the country rather than of a person), denotes two Egypts, as Bochart observes. For so there were, the higher and the lower. All that country was called the higher, where Nile runs in one stream; the lower was that, where it is divided into many: which the Greeks call Delta, from its triangular form.

Phut.] All Africa was divided between Mizraim and Phut, as Bochartus observes. For all Egypt, and several other parts of Africa, as far as the lake Tritonides (which divides Africa into two almost equal parts), fell to Mizraim. The rest, beyond that lake, to the Atlantic Ocean, was the portion of Phut. Of which name there are some footsteps, in the city Putea, which Ptolemy, (lib. iii. cap. 1.) calls Φούτης; and the river called Phut, mentioned by Pliny, as Grotius notes; and a country, which St. Jerome, in his time, says, was called Regio Phutensis: which lies not far from Fez. Another name of Africa is Lub, which we often meet withal in Scripture: whence the name of Lybia. Concerning which, and a great many other proofs that Phut was planted in Africa, see the famous Bochartus, (lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 33.)

Canaan.] The youngest son of Ham, every one knows, gave name to that country, which God gave afterwards to the Israelites. Which the Phœnicians, who descended from the Canaanites, called Χνᾶ, by a contraction of the word *Canaan*, as many have observed out of Eusebius, (lib. i. Præpar. cap. 10.) who quotes Sanchoniathon and Philo-Biblius for it. It is so certain that the Phœnicians had their original from the Canaanites, that the LXX. use their names promiscuously. For example, Shual is called,

(Gen. xlvi. 10.) the son of a Canaanitish woman: whom in Exod. vi. 15. they call the son of a Phœnician woman. And so in the New Testament, the woman whom St. Matthew calls a *woman of Canaan*, (xv. 22.) St. Mark calls a *Syrophœnician*, (vii. 26.) We never, indeed, find the Phœnicians called Canaanites by the Greeks: for their posterity, being ashamed (as we may suppose) of that name, because of the curse pronounced upon Canaan, chose to be called rather Syrians, or Assyrians, or Sidonians, or Phœnicians. For Syria, which was a common name to a great many people round about, was at first proper to them; from the metropolis of Phœnicia, which was Tyre, in Hebrew, *Sor* or *Sur;* from whence Surim, and thence the Greek Σύροι. They that would see more of this, may read the forenamed author, (lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 34.)

Ver. 7. In this verse Moses acquaints us, what people descended from the eldest son of Ham; viz. Cush, who had five sons: and the fourth of them had two.

Seba.] There were four nations, that had the name of Seba, or Shebah, as Bochart observes, (lib. ii. cap. 25.) Three of them are mentioned here in this chapter. The first of them, this son of Cush, is written with Samech, all the rest with Schin; viz. the grandson of Cush, who was the son of Raamah or Rhegma, in the end of this verse. The third was the son of Joktan, the son of Shem, (ver. 28.) And the fourth was a grandchild of Abraham, by his son Jokshan, (xxv. 3.) They that descended from the three first of these, were a people given to trade; from the fourth came a people addicted to robbery. The first, the second, and the fourth, were seated near the Persian Sea; the third near the Arabian; whence Pliny saith the Sabeans stretched themselves to both seas, (lib. v. cap. 28.) For all these four people were comprehended under the name of Sabeans, though very different one from another. But it may be doubted, whether the Sabeans, who descended from Jokshan the grandchild of Abraham, did live near the Persian Sea. And I shall shew upon xxv. 3. that Bochart himself thought otherwise, upon further consideration.

And as for this Seba, he was the father of a people in Arabia called Jemamites, as Alcamus, an Arabian writer, tells us: whose words are, "A certain man called Saba gathered together the tribes of the Jemamites:" *i. e.* He was the founder of the people called by that name, from a famous queen of that country called Jemama. See Bochartus, lib. iv. cap. 8. where he shews where they were situated: and that they are the Sabeans who are said by Agathercides to have been a very tall proper people, mentioned Isa. xlv. 14.

Havilah.] Or *Chavilah.* There were two Havilahs also: one the son of Cush here mentioned; another the son of Joktan, (ver. 29.) From this Havilah seem to have come the people called Chaulothæi by Eratosthenes: who were seated in Arabia Felix (as Strabo tells us) between the Nabatæi and the Agræi, *i. e.* the Hagerens. By Pliny they are called Chavelæi (which comes nearest to the Hebrew name), who were seated in that part of the country which lay towards Babylon: as appears by this, that, in the Scripture, the wilderness of Shur (nigh Egypt) and Havilah are opposed, as the most remote opposite bounds of Arabia. Thus the Ishmaelites are said to have dwelt "from Havilah to Shur," (Gen. xxv. 18.) that is, before Egypt, *e regione Egypti*, "over against Egypt," as Bochart translates it. That is, Havilah bounded them on the north-east; and Shur on the south-west: which Shur was near to Egypt. And so Saul is said to have smitten the "Amalekites from Havilah to Shur," &c. (1 Sam. xv. 7.) where we translate the last words, "over against Egypt."

Sabta.] Or *Sabtha*, (whom the ancients call *Sabatha*, or *Sabathes*) seems to have been settled in that part of Arabia Felix called Leanites, upon the Persian Sea; where there was a city, not far distant from the sea, called by Ptolemy Σαφθά: from whence they sent colonies over the Sea into Persia, as Bochart shews by several arguments, (lib. iv. cap. 10.) For there is an island on that coast called Sophtha; and a people called Messabatæ, or Messabathæ, upon the confines of Media; from the Chaldean word *Mesa* (which signifies middle) and *Sabatha;* as if one would say, the *Mediterranean Sabtæ.*

Raamah] Or, as the ancients pronounce his name, *Rhegma*, was situated in the same Arabia, upon the Persian Sea. Where there is a city mentioned by Ptolemy's tables *Rhegama;* in the Greek text expressly, Ῥέγμα, *Rhegma.* And so Stephanus mentions both Ῥῆγμα πόλις and κόλπος Ῥῆγμα, about the Persian Gulf.

Sabtecha] Or *Sabthecha*, as some read it, was the youngest son of Cush, except Nimrod, who is mentioned by himself. It is hard to find the place of his habitation: but the rest of the sons of Cush being seated about the Persian Sea (except Nimrod, who, as Moses tells us, went to Babylon), Bochartus thinks it reasonable to seek for him in that part of Caramania, where there was a city called Samydace, and a river Samydachus: which, he thinks may have come from Sabetecha, by the change of the letter B into M. Which was very frequent in Arabia, and the neighbouring countries. For Merodach is also called Berodach, in the Book of the Kings: and in the Chaldee paraphrase, Basan is called Bathnan and Mathnan: and Abana (the famous river of Damascus), is expounded Amana: and Mecca and Beccha, are the same city among the Arabians. In like manner, Sabtecha, or Sabithace, might be changed into Samydace. Now, into Caramania there was a short cut over the streights of the Persian Gulf out of Arabia. I see nothing any where more probable than this conjecture of that very learned man. (Lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 4.)

And the sons of Ramah, Sheba and Dedan.] He gives an account of none of Cush's other sons' posterity, but only of this: whose two sons were seated near him and one another. For the younger of them, Dedan, seems to have left his name in a city now called Dadan, hard by Rhegma, upon the same shore, eastward. And from this Dadan the country now hath its name: of which Ezekiel speaks, (xxvii. 15.) as Bochart shews plainly, (lib. iv. cap. 6.) And Sheba (or, as others read it, *Seba* or *Saba*), his elder brother, was seated in the same country not far from Dedan, where Pomponius mentions a people called *Sabæi:* and Arrianus speaks of a great mountain not far off, called *Sabo*, from this *Saba:* whose posterity, easily passing over the streights beforementioned into Caramania, might possibly give name to a city there, which Ptolemy calls *Sabis:* and Pliny mentions a river of the same name: and Dionys. Periegetes speaks of a people called *Sabæ.* Of whom the Scripture seems to speak, in those places where Sheba and Seba are joined together: (Ps. lxxii. 10.) "The kings of

Sheba (*i. e.* of this country) and Seba shall offer gifts." And sometimes Sheba and Raamah (for Rhegma) are joined; (Ezek. xxvii. 22.) where the prophet speaks of this *Sheba*, the son, or Rhegma; who brought those precious commodities there mentioned out of Arabia: they lying very commodiously for traffic upon the Persian Gulf. And these are the people also mentioned, ver. 23. of that chapter, with sundry other nations; who lived upon Tigris and Euphrates, which run into the Persian Sea; and therefore it is reasonable to think that Sheba's posterity lived near the same sea.

Ver. 8. *And Cush begat Nimrod.*] Besides all the forementioned, he also begat this son; whom Moses distinguishes from the rest, and mentions him alone by himself, because he was the most eminent among his brethren, though born the last; a mighty commander, as Moses here describes him. Thus in the title of Psal. xviii. it is said, David was delivered out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: who is particularly mentioned by himself because he was his chief enemy. Sir W. Raleigh thinks he was begotten by Cush when his other children were become fathers; and so, being younger than his grandsons, he is named after an account is given of every one of them.

Nimrod.] The author of the Chronicon Alexandr. thinks he was the same with Ninus: but Vossius rather takes him for him whom the Greek writers call Belus, that is *Lord:* And that Ninus was his son, so called from the very thing itself, *Nin* in Hebrew signifying a *son*, (lib. i. de Idolol. cap. 24.) The same Chronicon saith, that Nimrod taught the Assyrians to worship the fire: and both Elmacinus and Patricides affirm the same. (See Hotting. Smegma Orient. lib. i. cap. 8. p. 272.) Which, if it be true, I doubt not was as an emblem of the Divine Majesty; which used to appear in a glorious flame. Ur, a city of Chaldea, seems to have had its name from the fire which was there worshipped: and that Ur also, from whence Abraham came, the Hebrews fancy had the same original; for their fable is, that Abraham was thrown into the fire, because he would not worship it; and by the power of God delivered, as St. Jerome tells us in his Questions upon Genesis.

He began to be a mighty one in the earth.] He was the first great warrior and conqueror; so *Gibbor* is to be understood; not for a giant, or man of great stature, but for a potent person: and, as some will have it, a more severe governor than they had been, who only exercised paternal authority. For he was the first that put down the government of eldership, or paternity (as Sir Walter Raleigh speaks), and laid the foundation of sovereign rule.

Ver. 9. *He was a mighty hunter.*] Or rather, *mighty in hunting*: for the word *tzid* doth not signify a *hunter*, but *hunting*. Which shews by what means he came to be so great a monarch. He hardened himself to labour by this exercise (which was very toilsome), and drew together a great company of robust young men to attend him in this sport: who were hereby also fitted to pursue men, as they had done wild beasts. For this was looked upon, in all ages, as the rudiment of warfare, (as Bochart shews out of a great many authors, lib. iv. cap. 12.) all the heroes of old, such as Nestor, Theseus, Castor, Pollux, Ulysses, Diomedes, Achilles, Æneas, &c. being all bred up to hunting, as Xenophon informs us. And it was not without some such reason, that noble families carry in their coats of arms (as ensigns of their valorous achievements) lions, bears, tigers, &c. from their killing such-like fierce creatures. For it must be farther noted, that, in this age of Nimrod, the exercise of hunting might well be the more highly esteemed, and win him the hearts of mankind; because he delivered them, by this means, from those wild beasts, whereby they were much infested, and very dangerously exposed, while they were but few, and lived scattered up and down, in the open air, or in tents but weakly defended. The destroying of wild beasts (and, perhaps, of thieves whom he hunted also) was a great service in those times, and made many join with him in greater designs which he had at last; to subdue men, and make himself master of the people who were his neighbours, in Babylon, Susiana, and Assyria. The memory of this hunting of his, was preserved by the Assyrians (who made Nimrod the same with Orion), who joined the dog and the hare (the first creature perhaps that was hunted) with his constellation. This, Mr. Selden observes in his Titles of Honour, (part i. cap. 1.) where he farther notes, that he is to this day called, by the Arabians, *Algebar*, the mighty man, or the giant: from the Hebrew *Gibbor* here in the text.

Before the Lord.] *i. e.* To the highest degree. For so "a great city to God," is a very great city, (Jonah iii. 3.) and a child very beautiful is called ἀστεῖος Θεῷ, *fair to*, or *before God*, (Acts vii. 20.) Or the meaning may be, he was *truly so*, not only in common opinion. For that is said to be *before God*, which really is: because God cannot be deceived with false appearances.

Wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty, &c.] *i. e.* Thence came the common proverb: which Moses alleges as a proof of the truth of what he delivered. Nothing being more usual, in his days, than for men to say when they would express how exceeding great any man was, "He is like Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord." Thus common sayings are quoted in other places, nothing being more notorious than such proverbial speeches, (Numb. xxi. 27. 1 Sam. x. 12.)

It is not improbable that Nimrod is the same with him whom the Greeks call Bacchus; whose conquests in the east, as far as India, are nothing else but the expeditions of Nimrod and his successors. The very name of Bacchus imports this, which was made out of *Bar-Chus*, the son of Cush, as Dammasek (i. e. Damascus) was out of Darmasek. Many other arguments for this are collected by Bochartus, (lib. i. Phaleg. cap. 2.)

Ver. 10. *The beginning of his kingdom was Babel.*] (See xi. 5. 8.) Which, according to the gentile writers, was built by Belus, (the same with Nimrod, who was called Belus, as I noted before, from Baal, because of his dominion and large empire, over which he was an absolute lord.) They that say, his son Ninus (or, as Philo-Byblius, his son Babylon) was the builder, may be thus reconciled with the forementioned opinion, that Belus began it, and his son much augmented it. See Voss. lib. i. De Idol. cap. 24. and lib. vii. cap. 9. There are those that say it was built by Semiramis; but as they have it only from Ctesias, who is not to be relied on against Berosus and Abydenus, who wrote the history of that country out of the ancient records, and say Belus built it; so, if it be true, we must understand it of her rebuilding it, after it was decayed, or

adding greater splendour to it. And this also must be understood not of the wife of Ninus, for it is a question whether he had any wife of that name: or, if he had, she was different from her whom the Greeks so much magnify, who lived almost two thousand years after the son of Belus, as Salmasius observes (Exercit. in Solin. p. 1228.) out of Philo-Byblius.

And Erec, &c.] Having built Babel, which he made the chief city of his kingdom, he proceeded to build three cities more in the same country. Which they that think he won by conquest, imagine also that he made Babel the head city, because he won it first; and then the other. And all this, say some, before the dispersion we read of in the next chapter: which others think happened after the dispersion. Erec seems to have been the city which Ptolemy calls Arecca, and Ammianus, Arecha; which lay in the country of Susiana upon the river Tigris. Whence the Areccæi Campi in Tibullus, as Salmasius observes in his Exercit. in Solinum, p. 1194. From whence, Huetius thinks the country below it was called Iroque; mentioned by Alferganus, and other Arabian writers.

Acchad.] It is a hard matter to give any account of this city; but the LXX. calling it Archad, from the Chaldee idiom, which is wont to change the *Daghes*, which doubles a letter, into R, (as Darmasek for Dammasek, i. e. Damascus; and, by the same reason, *Archad* for *Acchad)* the footsteps of this name may be thought to remain in *Argad*, a river of Sittacene in Persia. For nothing is more common, than to change *ch* into *g*.

Chalne.] It is sometimes called Chalno, (Isai. x. 9.) and Channe, (Ezek. xxvii. 23.) From whence the country called Chalanitis (mentioned by Pliny and Strabo, Polybius, and Dionys. Periegetes) may well be thought to have taken its name: whose chief city was called Chalne, or Chalone, (which is the same) and afterwards changed by Pacorus, king of Persia, into Ctesiphon.

Ver. 11. *Out of that land went forth Ashur.*] This translation is not so likely as that in the margin, "He went out into Assyria." For Moses is speaking of what Nimrod the son of Cush did, and not of the sons of Shem, among whom Ashur was one. Nor is it agreeable to the order of history to tell us here what Ashur did, before there be any mention of his birth, which follows, (ver. 22.) Besides, it was not peculiar to Ashur, the son of Shem, that he went out of the land of Shinar: for so did almost all men who were dispersed from thence. Add to this, that Assyria is called "the land of Nimrod," by Micah: (v. 6.) "They shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod with their lances;" or, "in the entrance thereof," as we translate it. Therefore it is very reasonable to take Ashur here, not for the name of a man, but of a place, as it is frequently: and expound the word Ashur, as if it were Leashur into Ashur; as Beth in 2 Sam. vi. 10. is put for Lebeth; other examples there are of this, (2 Sam. x. 2. 1 Chron. xix. 2.) By "going forth" into Ashur, Bochart thinks, is meant Nimrod's making war there: for so the Hebrew phrase "go forth" imports, in 2 Sam. xi. 1. Psalm lx. 12. Isai. xlii. Zac. xiv. 3. So Nimrod went forth into Assyria, which belonged to the children of Shem: but was usurped, he thinks, by the son of Cush, who had no right to it, but what he got by his sword. If this be true, Mr. Mede's observation which I mentioned upon ver. 27. of the foregoing chapter, [That the posterity of Cham never subdued either those of Japheth or Shem,] must be understood of such large conquests as they two made over one another, and over him.

And builded Nineveh.] Which Nimrod so called from his son Ninus: the very word *Nineveh* being as much as *Ninus's habitation*, נין נוה. Thus Cain built a city, and called it not by his own but his son's name, (iv. 17.) This was the chief city of Assyria, and flourished in great glory till it was utterly razed by the Medes, and never again rebuilt. It stood on the east side of Tigris.

Rehoboth.] There was a city of this name upon Euphrates, which was famous for the birth of Saul, one of the kings of Edom, (Gen. xxxvi. 37.) which the Arabians call *Rahabath-Melic*, i. e. *Rahabath of the Kings*, a little below Cercusium, at the mouth of the river Chaboras. But this being too far distant from Nineveh (to which this and the two following cities were neighbours), Bochart's conjecture is not unreasonable, that this is the city which Ptolemy calls Birtha, on the west of Tigris, at the mouth of the river Lycus. For in the Chaldee tongue, Streets are called Birtha; and that is the signification of Rehoboth, as the margin of our Bible will inform the reader.

Calah, or *Calach.*] Seems to have been the chief city of the country called Calachene; about the fountain of the river Lycus: which Strabo often mentions.

Ver. 12. *And Resen*, &c.] The forenamed great man conjectures this to have been the city which Xenophon calls Larissa, situate upon the Tigris: which Moses might well call *a great city*. For so Xenophon says it was, and describes the height of the walls to have been a hundred foot, the breadth five-and-twenty, and the compass of it eight miles about. The Greeks found it in ruins, and uninhabited, when they came into those parts; being destroyed by the Persians, when they spoiled the Medes of their empire. And it is possible, as Bochart goes on, the Greeks asking whose city that was, and the Assyrians answering *Leresen*, i. e. *Resen's*, (adding, as is usual, *le*, the note of the genitive case) they might thence call it *Larissa*. Such a mistake, he shews, there is in the Vulgar translation of the Bible, which takes this particle *le* for part of the name. For in 1 Chron. v. 26. where it is said the king of Assyria carried the Israelites to *Halah*, the Vulgar says unto *Lahelah*. Whereas it is certain, from 2 Kings xvii. 6. that it should be unto *Halah*, or *Helah*. However, it is reasonable to think that these words, *this is a great city*, belong to Resen, not to Nineveh: whose greatness, as well as Babylon's, was very well known; and therefore these words seem to be added to denote Resen to be a great deal bigger than the two beforenamed, Rehoboth and Calah. See Bochart, lib. iv. cap. 23.

They that think Nimrod settled his kingdom in Babel before the dispersion, by confusion of their languages, imagine that he made this expedition into Assyria (where he built Nineveh, and the rest of the cities here mentioned), after they were forced to leave off their vain-glorious building at Babel, and to disperse themselves into other countries.

Ver. 13. *And Mizraim* (the second son of Cham) *begat Ludim.*] By whom we are to understand the Ethiopians, as Bochart hath proved by many arguments (which I shall not mention), and therefore understands by these words, that

the Ethiopians were a colony of the Egyptians, (lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 26.) For it appears by Diodorus that they were near of kin; having many things common to both nations; which he reckons up, and are sufficient to persuade those who consider them, that they had the same original: the only difference among them being this—which of them was of greatest antiquity. The Egyptians fancied they were the first of all men; and the Ethiopians pretended that they, living more southerly, had a stronger sun; which contributed more efficaciously to natural generation; and that Egypt was a country thrown up by the mud which Nilus left, and so got out of the sea. But Moses hath determined this controversy in these words, and by the rest of his history; which shews, that the first men after the flood came from the mountains of Armenia, which is in the north; and consequently they went to the southerly countries, by degrees, through Assyria, Babylon, Syria, and Egypt, into Ethiopia. And their discourse is ridiculous about the original of Egypt, unto which we see nothing added by the Nile, in many ages.

Anamim.] Our Broughton takes these to be the Numidians, among whom he finds Anubis. Others take them for the Anaitæ in Ethiopia. But these Anamims being derived from Mizraim, we are rather to seek them about Egypt: and the opinion of Bochartus is probable, that they are the Nomades, who lived about Ammon and Nasamonitis; and called Anamii from Anam, which signifies a *sheep* among the ancient Egyptians, as it doth among the Arabians. For the Nomades fed sheep, as Herodotus tells us, and lived upon them (whereas they abstained from eating cows or swine); and their garments also, as he tells us, were of sheep-skins.

Lehabim.] These are thought to be the Lybians; but that being a name which belongs to the greatest part of Africa, it cannot be well thought that so great a portion fell to this son of Mizraim, or that so many people were descended from him. Therefore Bochart, with great reason, thinks the Lehabæi were not all the Lybians; but those whom Ptolemy, Pliny, and others, call Lybiægyptii; because they lived next to Egypt on the west of Thebais, in a sandy, adust soil, burnt by excessive heat; from whence he thinks they had the name of Lehabim. For *lehaba* signifies both a flame and heat: as in Joel i. 19. "The flame (*lehaba* in the Hebrew, or scorching heat) hath burnt all the trees of the field."

Naphtuhim.] These seem to be the people of Nephthuah; and what that is we may learn from Plutarch: who, in his book De Iside et Osiride, says, the Egyptians call the country and the mountains that lie upon the sea Nephthun; which may incline us to think that the Naphtuhim were those people that lived upon the shore of the Mediterranean in Marmarica: for the people upon the Red Sea belonged to Arabia, not to Egypt. It is not improbable that from hence came the name of Neptune, who originally was a Lybian god; and known to none but that people.

There was a city called Nepata by Pliny, which Grotius thinks may explain this name: but it was in Ethiopia; and Moses is speaking of the sons of Mizraim.

Ver. 14. *And Pathrusim.*] Who were the inhabitants, it is likely, of Patros: which was a part of Egypt; though represented sometime in Scripture as a country distinct from it: just as Thebais is, in some authors, said to be, whereas it was the Upper Egypt. Bochart hath brought a great many arguments to prove this: particularly from Ezekiel xxix. 14. which shews clearly that Pathros belongs to Egypt: for the prophet foretelling that God would bring again the captivity of Egypt, he saith he would "cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation," or nativity: that is, into Thebais, which Nebuchadnezzar had principally afflicted, carrying most of the inhabitants of Thebes into captivity. This seems a more probable account of the Pathrusim than theirs, who take them to be the Pharusi (as Grotius doth), or Phautusii; who were a people of Ethiopia.

Casluhim, or *Casluchim.*] These were the Colchi, who, though they lived far from Egypt, from whence they are said here to descend, yet there are a great many arguments that they had their original from that country. For several ancient authors say so; as Herodotus, Diodorus, Strabo, and Ammianus: all of great credit. And there are many reasons whereby Herodotus proves it (as Bochart shews in his admirable work, often mentioned, lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 31.) they agreeing in so many things, especially in their manners and language, that one can scarce have any doubt of it. These people were seated at the east end of the Euxine Sea.

Out of whom came Philistim.] They were the offspring of the people of Colchis, as will appear in what follows.

And Caphtorim.] These were a people near to Colchis, as appears from hence; that the Philistim, who are said here to come from Casluchim, in other places are said to have come from Caphtor, Jer. xlvii. 4. Amos ix. 7. And Moses himself relates how the Avims, nigh to Gaza (a famous city of the Philistim), were driven out by the Caphtorim, Deut. ii. 23. All the ancients therefore are in the right, who take the Caphtorim for the Cappadocians: yet, not all the inhabitants of that country (part of which was possessed by other people, as was said before), but that part of Cappadocia which was next to Colchis, viz. about Trapezund, where Colchis ended. For there we find the city called Side, and the country Sidene, mentioned by Strabo. Now Side in Greek (as Bochart ingeniously observes), signifies the same with Caphtor in Hebrew, viz. *Malum punicum:* and therefore, in all likelihood, the same country was called by the Hebrews Caphtor, and by the Greeks Sidene.

What invited the Caphtorim out of Egypt into this country is hard to tell, at this distance of time. But Strabo thinks it was the fame of the gold wherewith this country abounded. And as this drew them thither, so perhaps the coldness of the country, very much different from that wherein they were born; or else their neighbours the Scythians, and Mesech and Tubal, (viz. the Moschi and Tibareni) who dwelt near them, and might be troublesome to them, made them think of returning back again. And in their way through Palestine they fell upon the Avim, whom they dispossessed of their country, and settled there (Deut. ii. 23.) by the name of Philistim.

Ver. 15. *And Canaan.*] Now follows an account of the posterity of Ham's youngest son.

Sidon.] Was his first-born: who was the founder of the famous city called by his name, *Sidon:* which Trogus saith was so called from *plenty of fish* on that coast. And so the present name of it, *Said,* signifies *fishing* or *fishery:* as the town in Galilee called Bethsaida, is as much as the *place of fishing:* for that sea upon which it lies, the Hebrews say,

abounded with fish. However, the Sidonians came from this son of Canaan; and some of them (if he did not found it himself), called the city by this name, in memory of him. It was far more ancient and famous than Tyre: for we read of it in the books of Moses, and Joshua, and the Judges: but nothing of Tyre till the days of David. Nor doth Homer mention Tyre; though he speaks of Sidon and the Sidonians in many places.

Heth.] His second son, was the father of the Hittites, or the children of Heth, often mentioned in Scripture; who dwelt about Hebron and Beersheba, in the south of the land of Canaan. They were a very warlike people, and struck a terror into their neighbours: from whence the word *Hittha* seems to be derived, which signifies *fright* and *sudden consternation;* such as came upon the Syrians, when they thought the kings of the Hittites were coming against them, (2 Kings vii. 6.) This was the country of the Anakims: for from Arba, who was a Hittite, descended Anak; and from him those three giants, Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, and the rest of the Anakims, (Numb. xiii. 22, 23. Josh. xv. 13, 14.)

Ver. 16. *The Jebusite.*] This people, who were situated near to the former, descended from Jebus, the third son of Canaan: and were a very warlike people also: for they kept Jerusalem and the fortress of Zion to the times of David, notwithstanding all the power of the Benjamites. And when David besieged it, they mocked at his attempt, (2 Sam. v. 8.)

And the Emorite.] They came from Emor, the fourth son of Canaan, and are commonly called Amorites; who possessed the mountainous parts of Judea: and many of them passed over Jordan, and, making war upon the Moabites and Ammonites, seized upon Bashan and Heshbon, and all the country between the rivers of Jabbok and Arnon, (Numb. xiii. 29. Josh. v. 1.) in memory of which victory some Canaanite poet made a triumphing song, which Moses hath recorded, (Numb. xxi. 27.) What a mighty people these were we learn from Amos ii. 9.

Gergasite.] There was a remnant of this people about Gerasa, or Gadara, beyond Jordan, in our Saviour's time, (Matth. viii. 28. Mark v. 1. Luke viii. 26.) And they were called, perhaps, by this name from the fat clayey soil of the country where they lived; for *garges* in Hebrew is *white clay.*

Ver. 17. *And the Hivite,* or *Hevite.*] They lived in and about Mount Hermon, as we read Josh. xi. 3. which being toward the east of the land of Canaan, they are called Kadmonites, *i. e. orientals* or *easterlings,* (Gen. xv. 19.) The Gibeonites and Sichemites were colonies from them, (Josh. xi. 19. Gen. xxxiv. 2.) who dwelt more westward: the former of them neighbours to Jerusalem; and the latter to Samaria.

Arkite.] This people, Bochart thinks, inhabited Mount Libanus, where Ptolemy and Josephus mentioned a city called Arca, or Arce: in which, he thinks, was the temple Veneris Architidos, worshipped by the Phœnicians, as Macrobius tells us, lib. i. Saturn. cap. 27. Pliny also mentions Arca among the cities of the Decapolitan Syria, and saith it was one of those which had a royal jurisdiction, under the name of a tetrarchy, as Salmasius observes in his Exerc. in Solin. p. 576.

Sinite.] St. Jerome saith, that not far from Arca there was a city called Sin; where we may suppose these people to have dwelt. But Bochart rather by the Sinites understands the Peleusiots, whose city was called Sin; which is of the very same signification with Pelusium.

Ver. 18. *And the Arvadite.*] These people are the same with the Aradii, who possessed the island called Aradus upon the coast of Phœnicia, and part of the neighbouring continent: where a place called Antaradus, opposite to the island, was seated. Strabo and others speak of this island, and mention another of the same name in the Persian Gulf, (as Salmasius observes upon Solinus, p. 1023.) whose inhabitants said, they were a colony from this island I now speak of, and had the same religious rites with these Aradians; who were very skilful in navigation, and therefore joined by Ezekiel with Zidon, xxvii. 8. where he makes them also a warlike people, ver. 11.

Zemarite.] They who make these the same with the Samaritans, do not observe that these names are written quite differently in the Hebrew; and that the Samaritans, so much spoken of in Scripture, had their names from Somron. And therefore Bochart thinks these are the Samarites mentioned by St. Jerome, who says, they inhabited the noble city of Edessa in Cœlosyria (it should be the city of Emesa, or Emisa, which was in that country, but Edessa in Mesopotamia, beyond Euphrates), and so both the Chaldee paraphrases have here for Zemarite, Emisæi. But I do not see why we should not rather think this son of Canaan (Zemarus), from whom the Zemarites came, was the founder of the city of Zemaraim (Josh. xviii. 22.) which fell to the lot of the tribe of Benjamin.

Hamathite.] These were the posterity of the last son of Canaan; from whom the city and country of Hamah took its name: of which name there were two; one called by the Greeks Antiochia, the other Epiphania: the former called the Great, (Amos vi. 2.) to distinguish it from this, which St. Jerome says, in his time, was called Epiphania, and by the Arabians (in the Nubian geographer) Hama. This is the city which is meant when we so often read that the bounds of Judea were to the "entrance of Hamath," northward, (Numb. xiii. 21. xxxiv. 8. and other places.) For it is certain they did not reach to Antiochia, but came near to Epiphania.

Afterwards were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad.] In process of time they enlarged their bounds: for they possessed all the country which lies from Idumæa and Palestine to the mouth of Orontes: which they held for seven hundred years, or thereabout. Moses, indeed, confines the land of Canaan in narrower bounds toward the north (as hath been said), but we must consider, that he describes only that part of Canaan which God gave to the Israelites for their portion. Now, there being eleven nations who had their original (as appears from this and the foregoing verses) from so many sons of Canaan; we do not find that the first and the five last were devoted by God to destruction, as the rest were. For we read nothing of the Zidonians, Arkites, Sinites, Aradites, Zemarites, and Hamathites, among those nations upon whom the sentence of excision was pronounced by God, and their country bestowed upon the Israelites. But we read of two others, not here mentioned, who made up the seven nations, whom God ordered to be cut off; viz. the Perizzites, and those who were peculiarly called Canaanites, who sprang from some of the forenamed eleven families;

but we do not know from which. We shall meet with it in the 15th chapter of this book.

Ver. 19. *And the border of the Canaanites*, &c.] Here Moses describes the bounds of that country, which was given by God to the Jews.

From Sidon.] *i. e.* The country of Sidon, which extended itself from the city so called, towards the east, as far as Jordan, or near it. This, therefore, may be looked upon as the northern bounds of the promised land.

As thou comest to Gerar unto Gaza, &c.] These, and all the rest, belong to the southern bounds: for these two were cities near to the Philistines. We often read of Gaza; and Gerar was famous for Abraham's and Isaac's sojourning there, (Gen. xx. 1. xxvi. 1.) and for the overthrow of the Cushites, (2 Chron. xiv. 13.)

Sodom and Gomorrah, &c.] These four cities are famous for their destruction, by fire and brimstone from heaven.

Even unto Lashah.] Or *Lasa*, which St. Jerome takes for Callirrhoe, as doth Jonathan also: a place famous for hot waters, which run into the Dead Sea. But Bochartus (lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 37.) doubts of this, because Callirrhoe was not in the southern part of Judea, as Lashah was: he propounds it therefore to consideration, whether it may not be a city of the Arabs called Lusa: which Ptolemy places in the middle way, between the Dead Sea and the Red.

Ver. 20. *These are the sons of Ham, after their families*, &c.] This is sufficiently explained by what was said upon ver. 5. where Moses concludes his account of the sons of Japheth. Only it may be observed, in general, that these four sons of Ham, and their children, had all Africa for their portion (Mizraim having Egypt, and Phut the rest), and no small part of Asia, which fell to the share of Cush and Canaan.

Ver. 21. *Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber.*] That is, of the Hebrew nation, whom Moses would have to know from what an illustrious original they sprung; and therefore breaks off the thread of his genealogy, to give a short touch of it. I can give no reason so likely as this, why he calls Shem the father of Eber's children, rather than of any other descended from him. He having told them before, that Ham was the father of Canaan, (ix. 22.) whom God cursed, and at the same time blessed Shem; he now tells them that this blessed man was the father from whom their nation was descended; that they might comfort themselves in their noble stock, and believe Canaan should be subdued by them.

The brother of Japheth the elder.] Scaliger translates these words, "Shem the *elder brother* of Japheth:" but the *he* which is prefixed to *gadol*, i. e. *greater*, plainly directs us to refer the word *greater*, or *elder;* to him who was last spoken of, viz. Japheth: who may be plainly proved to have been the eldest son of Noah, from this observation; that Noah was five hundred years old, before any of his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, were born, (v. 32.) When he was six hundred years old, he entered into the ark with them, (vii. 11.) And when he came out, two years after the flood, Shem begat Arphaxad, being then a hundred years old, (xi. 10.) and consequently Noah was six hundred and two. From whence it follows, that Shem was born when Noah was five hundred and two years old: and therefore Japheth must be two years older than he; for Noah began to have children when he was five hundred. But God preferred Shem before him; giving hereby an early demonstration (of which there were many instances afterward), that he would not be confined to the order of nature in the disposal of his favours; which he frequently bestowed upon the younger children: as he did upon Jacob, and in after-times upon David, who was the youngest and meanest of all his father's children.

Even unto him were children born.] Perhaps he was the last of his brethren that married; and then Moses shews, in the following verses, had five sons: the progeny of two of which are mentioned, but the rest passed over in silence.

Ver. 22. *Elam.*] Was his first-born; from whom came the Elamites, mentioned Acts ii. 9. whose metropolis was the famous city of Elymais. They lay between the Medes and Mesopotamians (as Bochart shews, lib. ii. Phaleg. cap. 2.) and were a very warlike and fierce people, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel testify. The Susians were a neighbouring people, but different from them; and therefore, when Daniel says Sushan was in the province of Elam, he takes Elam in a large sense; as Pliny and Ptolemy also do, who mention Elamites at the mouth of the river Eulæus (Ulai in Daniel), which was below Susiania. See Salmasius Exerc. in Solin. p. 1193, 1194. And thus Josephus may be allowed to say, the Elamites were Περσῶν ἀρχηγέται, *the founders of the Persians;* who were a distinct people from them, though often comprehended under this name of Elam.

Ashur.] From whom came the people called at first Assyres, and afterward Assyrians: which was a name as large as their empire, comprehending even Syria itself; which, in several authors, is the same with Assyria. But, in proper speaking, it was only that country, whose head was Nineveh, called sometimes Adiabene, and Aturia or Assyria.

Arphaxad.] Many, following Josephus, make him the father of the Chaldees. But I find no good reason for it; and it seems more probable that the Chaldees (in Hebrew, *Chasdim*) came from Chesed, one of Abraham's brother's sons, (Gen. xxii. 22.) which St. Jerome positively affirms. Therefore it is more reasonable to think Arphaxad gave name to that country which Ptolemy calls Arraphachitis, which was a part of Assyria.

Lud.] Seems to have given name to the country of Lydia, which lay about Mæander; and included in it Mysia and Caria, which lay on the south side of that river. Which, having the most windings and turnings in it of any river in the world (for it returns sometimes towards its fountain), the Phœnicians call this country, and another, viz. Ethiopia, that lay upon the Nile (which, next to Mæander, is the most crooked of all rivers), by the name of *Lud*, which, in their language, signified *bending* or *crooked*. See Bochart. lib. ii. Phaleg. cap. 12.

Aram.] From whom sprung the Syrians, whose name anciently was Aramæi, the children of Aram. A name not unknown to the ancient Grecians; for Homer mentions the Ἄριμοι in his second book of Iliads; and so doth Hesiod; and Strabo also saith, that many understood by the Arimi, the Syrians. And the Syrians, at this day, call themselves Aramæans. But Syria being so large a name, that ancient authors extend it to all those countries that

lay between Tyre and Babylon, we must not take all the people of them to have been the posterity of Aram. For it is evident some of them descended from Canaan, others from Ashur, others from Arphaxad. Therefore, those are to be thought to have come from him, to whom the name of Aram is prefixed or subjoined, as Aram-Naharajim, and Padan-Aram (*i. e.* the Mesopotamians), Aram-Soba (the people of Palmyra and the neighbouring cities), Aram-Damasek (situated between Libanus and Anti-Libanus, whose chief city was Damascus), and, perhaps, Aram-Maacha, and Aram-Bethrehob, which were places beyond Jordan, one of which fell to the share of Manasseh, the other of Asser.

Ver. 23. *And the children of Aram*, &c.] The four persons that follow in this verse are called the *sons of Shem*, (1 Chron. i. 17.) Nothing being more ordinary in Scripture, than to call those the *sons* of any person, who were his *grandsons*, (xxix. 5, &c.)

Uz.] Or *Utz*, the first-born of Aram, is generally said to have been the builder of Damascus: the valley belonging to which is, by the Arabians, at this day called Gaut, and Gauta, which differs from Utz in the letters, but not in the pronunciation: it being common to pronounce the letter *ajin* by our *G*, as in the words Gaza and Gomorrah. Accordingly, the Arabic paraphrast for Utz hath here Algauta. There were two other Uz's besides this, one the son of Nahor (Abraham's brother), Gen. xxii. 21. whose country was Ausitis in Arabia Deserta: the other was of the posterity of Edom, (Gen. xxxvi. 28.)

Hull.] Or *Chul.* Grotius observes out of Ptolemy, that there was a city in Syria called Chollæ, which, he thinks, might be founded by this second son of Aram. But Bochart more probably conjectures that his posterity possessed the country called Cholobetene, which was a part of Armenia. For the Armenians, and Arabians, and Syrians were much alike, as Strabo saith, in their shape of body, speech, and manner of life. And there are divers cities, which Ptolemy places in this country, that begin with *Hol* or *Chol;* as Cholus, Choluata, Cholana: and Cholobetene (the name of the country), which in their language is Cholbeth, signifies as much as the *house* or *seat of Chol.*

Gether.] It is hard to give any account of the country where his posterity settled, unless they gave the river Getri its name, which the Greeks call Κεντρίτη; which runs between the Carduchi and the Armenians, as Xenophon tells us. This is Bochart's conjecture, which is a little nearer than that of Grotius, (Annot. in lib. i. de V. R. C.) who explains this by the city Gindarus in Ptolemy, and the people called by Pliny, Gindareni, in Cœlo-Syria. But after all, it may seem as probable that Gadara, the chief city of Peræa, which Ptolemy places in the Decapolis of Cœlo-Syria, had its name and original from this Gether.

Mash.] Who is called *Mesech*, in 1 Chron. i. 17. seated himself, as Bochart thinks, in Mesopotamia, about the mountain Masius (which is Grotius's conjecture also), from whence there flowed a river which Xenophon calls Masca. The inhabitants of which mountain, Stephanus calls Masiæni; and perhaps the Moscheni, whom Pliny speaks of, between Adiabene and Armenia the Greater, were descended from this Mash, or Mesech.

Ver. 24. *And Arphaxad begat Salah.*] Having given an account of the posterity of Shem's youngest son, he now tells us what people descended from his third son.

Salah.] In Hebrew *Shelah.* His father being born but two years after the flood, (xi. 10.) seems to have given this name to his son, to preserve the memory of that dreadful punishment; that his posterity might not incur the like by their sins. For *Sela* signifies the letting forth of waters, (Job v. 10.) He is thought to have been the father of the Susiani: the chief city of their country, next to Susa, being called Sela, as we find in Ammian. Marcellinus: either because he was the founder of it, or in memory of him.

And Salah begat Eber.] The father of those from whom came the Hebrew nation, (as was said before, ver. 21.) Abraham being descended from him in the sixth generation. All other derivations of the name of Hebrew have great objections lie against them; but this hath none that I can see, and is most agreeable to the grammar of that language, in which all such names ending in *jod* (as עברי doth) are noted to come either from a place, or country, or people, or author: therefore, since there is no country or place from which the name of Hebrew can be derived, it is most reasonable to deduce it from the author of this people, *Heber.* And it is authorized by that speech of Balaam, (Numb. xxiv. 24.) Where, as by Ashur is meant the Assyrians, so by Heber, in all reason, we are to understand the Hebrews.

Ver. 25. *Peleg.*] Either he, or some of his posterity in memory of him, it is not unlikely, gave name to a town, upon Euphrates, called Phalga, not far from the place where the river Chaborus runs into it: upon which Charrah stood, built by Charan, the brother of Abraham.

For in his days was the earth divided.] The great dispersion, which we read of in the following chapter, fell out just when he was born; which made his father call him by this name, signifying *division* and *separation.* Which it appears, by the account given of his ancestors, (xi. from ver. 10 to 16.) happened in the hundred and first year after the flood. In that year, the tower of Babel and their language were confounded; upon which necessarily followed the separation here mentioned. The age that preceded, from the deluge to this division, is called, by the ancient poets, the Golden Age, (as Bochart observes, lib. i. Phaleg. cap. 9.) because the earth not being divided, they enjoyed all things in common. And Noah (whom they called Saturn) governing them, not as kings do their subjects, but as parents their children, not so much with fear and dread, as with love and reverence to his fatherly authority; it made the world so happy as it hath not been since.

Joktan, or *Jektan.*] The brother of Peleg, had a numerous offspring of thirteen sons; all seated in the inmost parts of Arabia Felix. So the Arabians, it is certain, derive their own original: who in this may as well be credited as the Europeans, who derive themselves from Japetus or Japheth, and the Africans from Cham or Hammon. They call him Cahtan (as our Mr. Pocock, as well as others, observes), by which name the Arabic paraphrast, upon this place, explains that of Jektan. And this Cahtan they say expressly was the son of Eber, the son of Salah,

&c. From whence the name of Catanitæ, a people in Arabia Felix, mentioned by Ptolemy; and a city, in the territory of Mecha, still retains the very name of Jektan, being called Baisath-Jektan, *i. e. the seat or habitation of Jektan*, in the Arabian geographer. See Mr. Pocock's notes upon Abul-Farajus concerning the original of the Arabians, p. 38, 39.

Ver. 26. *Almodad.*] The eldest son of Joktan seems to have given name to the people whom Ptolemy calls Ἀλλουμαιῶται, in the middle of Arabia Felix, near the original of the river Lar, which runs into the Persian Gulf. The Greeks, who knew little of this people, who lived a great way from the sea, might easily mispronounce their name, calling them *Allumæotæ*, instead of *Almodæi*.

Sheleph, or *Saleph.*] Was, it is likely, the father of the Salapeni. For such a people there were, mentioned by Ptolemy, who calls them Σαλαπήνοι: who were remote from the rest, about the neck of Arabia, not far from the spring of the river Betius.

Hatzermaveth.] Though the Arabians write this name with the very same letters, yet it sounds among them thus, *Hadramuth*, or *Cadramuht:* which the Greeks pronounce divers ways, because of the ambiguous sound of the two letters, *tzadi* and *cheth;* for sometimes he is called Asarmoth, sometimes (without an A) Sarmoth, and Armoth, and Atermoth, as Bochartus hath observed; who thinks the country called Chatramitis or Atramitis, Chatramotis or Atrimotis, to have been peopled by the children of this Hadramuth, as the Arabians pronounce this name Hatazmaveth. Ἀδραμύτα, Salmasius shews, is the name of a city or place, and Ἀδραμῖται, of a people or nation. (Exercit. in Solin. p. 489.) And the same people, he observes, (p. 490.) are called by Artemidorus, Ἀτραμωτῖται, whose country was that part of Arabia which abounded with frankincense, myrrh, cassia, and cinnamon, as Theophrastus tells us. And Strabo calls them (as he there notes) Χατραμωτῖται, and Uranius in Stephanus, Χατραμῶται; so differently was this hard word pronounced: who were so famous, that Eustathius Antioch. Eusebius, and others, make this Hatzermaveth the father of the Arabians, and Epiphanius derives their language from him; which they (as was said before) derive from Jektan himself; looking upon the dialect of Chadramites as barbarous. See Bochartus, lib. ii. Phaleg. cap. 16. where he observes, that *Hatzermaveth* in Hebrew signifies the *entrance of death*, and *Hadhramauth* in Arabic the *region of death*. Because the air of that country was very thick and foggy (and consequently unwholesome), as Arrianus relates, who saith, that the frankincense and myrrh were therefore gathered only by the king's slaves, and by condemned persons.

Jerah, or *Jerach.*] From whom came the people called Jerachæi, who lived near the Red Sea; called by Agatharcides, and others, Ἀλιλαῖοι, *Alilæi:* which is the very same in Arabic with the other in Hebrew. For *Hilal* is the *moon* in that language, as *Jerach* is in Hebrew. And the Nubiensian geographer mentions a people about Mecha, who, at this day, are called Bene-hilal, *the children of Jerach*, as the Hebrews would have expressed it. It seems they are come more towards the east, when anciently they dwelt in the south. Ptolemy mentions also an island, upon the coast of the Alilæi, which he calls Ἱεράκων νῆσος: but it doth not signify the *Isle of Hawks* (as the Greeks fancied, who imagined all these old words to come from their tongue), but of the *Jerachæi*.

Ver. 27. *Hadoram.*] He seems to have fixed his seat in the utmost corner of Arabia towards the east, where there was a people whom Pliny calls Drimati: a name easily made from Hadoramus. And the extreme promontory of that country is called by the Greeks *Corodamon*, by transposing the letters *D* and *R* from *Hadoramus*. I can find nothing more likely than this conjecture of that great man Bochartus, who hath outdone all that went before him in this argument, (lib. ii. Phaleg. cap. 20.)

Uzal.] Abraham Zachut, as he also observes, says, the Jews (who in his time dwelt there) called the chief city of Aljeman by the name of Uzal. Now the kingdom of Aljeman, or Jeman, is the south part of Arabia Felix: as the very name of *Jeman* imports, which signifies both the *right hand* and the *south*.

Diklah.] Both in the Chaldee and Syriac languages *Dicla* signifies a *palm*, or a *grove of palms;* which led Bochartus to conclude, that the Minæi, a people of Arabia Felix, whose country abounds with such trees, were the posterity of this Diklah. Both Pliny and Strabo mention them: And this is far more probable than the conjecture of Ludovicus Capellus, that the country of Dangala, in Ethiopia, near Egypt, might have its name from this man: for that is too remote from the rest of this man's posterity: and so is Δικελλεῖον mentioned, as he observes, by Herodotus, (Chronolog. Sacra, p. 108.)

Ver. 28. *And Obal.*] Which, in the Arabic pronunciation is *Aubal*, as *cocab*, a *star* in Hebrew, is in Arabic *caucab*, &c. The posterity of this Aubal, or Obal, Bochart thinks, passed over the streights of the Sinus Arabicus, out of Arabia Felix, into Arabia Troglodytica; where we meet with this name, in the Sinus Abalites (which others call Aulites), and in a great trading town called by Arrianus Ἀναλείτης; and in a people who lived in that Sinus, called by Ptolemy, Ἀναλῖται, and Ἀδουλῖται; I believe it should be Ἀβουλῖται, from this Obal.

Abimael.] Which the Arabians pronounce *Abimal; i. e. the father of Mali*, or the *Malitæ;* a people in Arabia next to the Minæi before mentioned. Theophrastus saith, Mali is the metropolis of a country in Arabia the Spicy: from whence the people called Malitæ, whom Ptolemy calls Manitæ, by an usual change of the letter *L* into *N*, as Nabonidus is the same with Labonidus, &c. And it is probable that Mali is the contraction of Abimali: nothing being more common than in compound names to omit the first part. As Sittim (Numb. xxv. 1.) for Abel-Sittim (xxx. 49.) Hermon very often for Baal-Hermon, (Judg. iii. 3.) Nimrim for Beth-Nimrim, and Salem for Jerusalem.

Sheba.] From whom came the Sabeans, who sometimes comprehend a great many people, but here are to be taken strictly for those upon the Red Sea, between the Minæi and the Catabanes: whose metropolis, which stood upon a high mountain full of trees, is called by ancient authors Saba and Sabai, Sabo and Sabas, as Salmasius shews out of Stephanus, Agatharcides, and others; who say that this city was πολὺ κάλλιστον, *much the fairest* of all in Arabia. (Exerc. in Solin. p. 491, 492, &c.) In later times this name was changed into Mariaba, the ancient name being lost, as the same Salmasius there observes, p. 497, and

1118. Which Pliny saith signifies as much as "dominos omnium," *the lords of all:* for from Rabba, to rule, comes Marab, which signifies in their language (as Bochart observes) the seat of those that rule: that is, the royal city, where their kings lived. The Nubiensian geographer saith, the Queen of Sheba came from hence to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

Ver. 29. *And Ophir.*] Which the Arabians pronounce Auphir, signifying *abundance:* gold being found there in such plenty, that they exchanged it for brass and iron, giving a double or triple proportion of gold for them. Bochart thinks he gave the name of Οὐφρῆ to an island in the Red Sea, mentioned by Eupolemus in Eusebius: and observes that there were two Ophirs, one belonging to India, whither Solomon's ships went once in three years (which he takes for Taprobana, now Zeilan), and the other belonging to Arabia, where the posterity of this Ophir, here mentioned, settled. Whose country he takes to have been near to the Sabeans, their brethren; which Stephanus and Ptolemy call Cassanitis. The same in sense with Ophir; for Chosan is a treasure, which the Arabians write Chazan, from which comes the word Gaza, for abundance of riches.

Havilah, or *Chavilah.*] See ver. 7. where we had this name before, among the sons of Cush; from whom the Havilah here spoken of is very different: giving name, it is probable, to the country which the Nubiensian geographer calls Chaulan: and says it was a part of Arabia Felix, nigh also to the Sabeans; which he accurately describes. See Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 28.

Jobab.] The father of the Jobabites, near to the Sachalites, as Ptolemy expressly says, if, instead of Jobaritæ in him, we should read Jobabitæ, as Bochartus corrects the passage, with great reason. And thinks also the reason of this name to be plain: for Jebab in Arabic signifies a desert: and there are many such in the country of the Jobabites, above the Sinus of Sachalites.

Ver. 30. *And their dwelling was from Mesha,* &c.] This conclusion confirms what hath been said, that all the thirteen sons of Joktan were seated in Arabia Felix, except Obal, who went, it is likely, after Moses's time, over into Abalites; the passage being short across that streight beforementioned, (ver. 28.) which was not above four or five miles broad. For Arabia Felix lies between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Now Mesa, or Musa, or Muza, was a famous port town in the Red Sea, which the Egyptians and Ethiopians frequented in their way to the country of the Sapharites, in the east; from whom they brought myrrh, frankincense, and such-like things. Ptolemy's Tables plainly shew this, that from Musa the Sapharitæ lay directly eastward; and Saphar was the metropolis of the country, at the foot of the mountain Climax: which, anciently, it is likely, was called Saphar, from the city at the bottom of it. And thus we are to understand Moses when he says here, that Sepher was a mountain of the east; not eastward from Judea, but from Mesha, which was in the west. See Bochart, (lib. ii. Phaleg. cap. 30.) where he observes, that the Arabic paraphrast (of the Paris edition) takes Mesha to be Meccha, and instead of "from Mesha to Sephar," saith "from Meccha to Medina." Which is nearer truth than their opinion, who place the children of Joktan about Copetes, upon the coast of India. But he shews that some of the children of Cush settled between Meccha and Medina: and it sufficiently appears that Joktan's children dwelt in the inmost part of Arabia Felix, and are the genuine Arabians.

Ver. 31. This is explained, ver. 5.

Ver. 32. *By these were the nations divided after the flood.*] They and their descendants shared the whole earth among them, as it is said expressly, (ix. 18.) "Of them was the whole earth overspread." But, according to the foregoing account, we find only three parts of the earth, Europe, Asia, and Africa, possessed by the three sons of Noah and their children. Which has made some so bold as to say, there were other people in America, who were not drowned by the flood. And one of their reasons why it was not peopled from any of the other three parts of the earth is, that we can give no account how lions, bears, wolves, foxes, and such-like creatures, should get thither: for none, sure, would carry them by shipping, though men themselves might, by that means, pass over into those regions. But this difficulty is not so great as they make it. For it is manifest, that, though the continent of America was found full of such beasts, when the Spaniards first came thither, yet none of the islands, though very large, which lay remote from the land, had any lions, tigers, or such-like creatures in them. Which is a demonstration, that these creatures were not originally from that part of the earth; for then the islands would have been furnished with them as well as the continent; just as they are with all sorts of vegetables: and consequently, the continent itself was stored with these creatures from some other part of the earth. Which might be done by some neck of land not yet discovered; which joins some part of Europe, or Asia, to the continent of America. Or, if there be no such neck of land now extant, yet there may have been such a bridge (as we may call it) between the northern parts of Asia, or Europe, and some northern part of America; or between the south-east part of China, or the Philippine islands, and the southern continent of that other part of this world, though now broken off (as many suppose England to have been from France) by the violence of the sea, or by earthquakes; which have made great alterations in the earth. And truly, he that observes (as that great man the Lord Chief Justice Hales speaks, in his book of the Origin of Mankind, §. ii. chap. 7.) the infinite number of islands, lying between the continent of China and Nova Guinea, the most contiguous to each other; hath probable reasons to believe, that these were all formerly one continent, joining China and Nova Guinea together, though now, by the irruption of the sea, crumbled into many small islands.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND all the earth.*] *i.e.* The inhabitants of the earth; as (1 Kings x. 24.) "all the earth" is explained; (2 Chron. ix. 23.) all the kings of the earth.

Were of one language.] In the Hebrew, *of one lip;* which is one instrument of speech comprehending the rest. Their mouth formed the same words. So it follows:

And of one speech.] Or *word,* as the Hebrew hath it. Some distinguish these two so subtilly, as to say, they had not only the same language, but the same manner of

pronunciation; which is often very different in the same language. The heathens themselves acknowledge there was but one language anciently, (see Josephus, and out of him Eusebius, lib. ix. Præp. Evang. cap. 14, 15.) which, in all likelihood, was the same that had been from the beginning, which Adam himself spake. For Methuselah, the grandfather of Noah, lived some time with him, and spake, we may well suppose, the same language that he did. And we cannot but think the same of Noah, who propagated it among his posterity till this time. But whether this was the Hebrew or no, we cannot be certain. The Chaldee paraphrasts, and the Hebrew writers, generally say it was; and most Christian writers have been of their opinion: insomuch that R. Gedaliah, upon these words, saith, "the wise men among the Christians have searched what was the first tongue; and all the world confesses that from Adam to the flood they spake the holy language." Which it is not to be thought we have now entire and pure; but that a considerable part of it still remains in the Bible. As may be proved by no contemptible arguments; particularly this, that Shem, the son of Noah, was for some time cotemporary with Abraham, who descended from him; and in whose family continued the same language, which they both spake, unto Moses's days.

They that have fancied there were more languages than one, at this time, grounded their mistake upon those words, (Gen. x. 5. 20. 31.) where the sons of Noah are said to have had the earth divided among them according to their tongues. Not considering that he speaks of this very division, of which he is going to give an account; and briefly mentioned there, (ver. 25.) For the thirteen sons of Joktan, immediately after mentioned (who had their share in the division), were not in being when their uncle Peleg was born; as the most learned primate Usher hath demonstrated in his Annals, (A. M. 1757.)

Ver. 2. *As they journeyed from the east.*] He doth not speak of all the posterity of Noah, who, after the flood, planted in the east; much less Noah himself: but of a great colony of them, who, when the east was much peopled, chose to go westward. By the east, most understand Armenia, where they suppose the ark rested, and Noah with his sons planted. But this hath great difficulty in it; for the mountains of Armenia lay north of Shinar, or Assyria, and not east. Which Bochart solves in this manner: Assyria being divided into two parts, one on this side, the other on the further side of Tigris, they called all that part beyond Tigris the east country, though a great part of it towards Armenia was really northward; and that part on this side they called west, though some of it lay to the south, (lib. i. Phaleg. cap. 7.) But there is no need of the help of this solution; the mountains of Ararat running a long way eastward: from which, when Noah and his sons descended, they settled, it is likely, in countries which were very much eastward of Assyria.

They found a plain.] They continued to dwell in the mountainous countries of the east, where the ark rested, till they grew very numerous and wanted room; and then descended into the plain, and some of them went westwardly into the land of Shinar, that pleasant plain (as Mr. Mede fancies) where God, at the beginning, had placed the first father of mankind, Adam.

Shinar.] By this name we are to understand, not only that part of Assyria where Babylon stood, but all that country which bordered upon Tigris unto the mountains of Armenia; from whence Noah and his sons are supposed to have descended when the earth was dry, and not to have gone far from thence, at first, till they were multiplied; and then some of them came into this country, which Noah had inhabited before the flood. Thus Bochart, in the place before named. But there is no certainty the ark rested in Armenia; it might be further eastward, upon some other part of that long ridge of mountains called Ararat: from whence they descended when the earth was dry, and dwelt in the lower grounds, which were warmer and more fruitful than the mountains.

But that from the east mankind were propagated, is apparent from the increase of arts and sciences; which, as Dr. Jackson observes, (book i. chap. 16.) were in some measure perfected there (in times as ancient as any profane history can point us unto), and thence derived, as from a centre, to more remote parts of the world. The ripeness of literature, civil discipline, and arts, among the eastern people, before they did so much as bud forth in Greece or Italy (I may add Egypt either), is a demonstration, that these were the stock, and the other but slips or branches transplanted from thence. Nay, the state and grandeur of those eastern countries, before Greece or Italy, or any other western people, grew into the fashion of a kingdom, shews, that the eastern people were the heirs of the world, and other nations but as colonies from them.

Ver. 3. *They said one to another.*] *i. e.* Consulted together.

Go to.] And stirred up one another to lay all their hands to this work.

Let us make brick.] In that low and fat soil there was no stone, as intimated in the next words, "and they had brick for stone." Nobody doubts but this is a true translation of the Hebrew word *labenah:* for Herodotus, and Justin, and many others, describe the walls of Babylon as made of such materials. What *chemar* is (which was the cement to join the bricks together), doth not so plainly appear. We translate it *slime;* following herein a great many of the Hebrews; particularly Kimchi, who says it is mortar, made of sand and lime. But there is much reason to think it was that which the ancients called Ἄσφαλτος, a kind of pitch (as Kimchi himself acknowledges some understand it), which is described by authors as a very glewy thing, and therefore used by Noah, by God's direction, about the ark. There was great plenty of it in Assyria, as Theodoret here observes, from some fountains which vomited it up with the water. And so Strabo and Dion affirm, that it was very fit for this purpose; and Herodotus says expressly, that the walls of Babylon were cemented with it, and so do many others, both Greek and Roman authors, mentioned by Bochartus, (lib. i. Phaleg. cap. 13.) And it is very observable, that Arrianus saith, (lib. vii.) The temple of Belus, in the midst of the city of Babylon, of a vast bigness, was made of brick, cemented with asphaltus.

Ver. 4. *And they said, Go to now.*] At the first, perhaps, they spake only of building themselves houses; but now they laid their heads together, and consulted to make a huge monument of their greatness.

A city and a tower.] Some fancy one thing to be expressed in two words: "a city and a tower," being a city with turrets. But both this verse and the next express them so severally, that we ought to think them to have been distinct. Yet, that the tower was part of the city, is plain by verse 8. where it is said, "they left off to build the city," making no mention of the tower: which was contained in the city, as a part of it; and may well be thought to have been the Acropolis (as the Greeks speak), a strong place in the highest part of the city; such as we call a citadel. For the Scripture by a tower, means some fortress to keep out an enemy, which was wont to be built in the midst of the city, that it might command every part of it.

Some fancy the temple of Belus, beforementioned, was afterward built where this tower stood; and was nothing else but the tower perfected for another use. Or, rather, a temple was built round about the tower, which stood in the midst of it, as Herodotus describes it, (lib. i.) Ἐν μέσῳ δὲ τοῦ ἱεροῦ πύργος στερεός, &c. *in the midst of the temple was a strong tower*, &c.

Whose top may reach up unto heaven.] *i. e.* To the clouds. As much as to say, an exceeding high tower. For the same is said of the walls of the cities of Canaan, (Deut. i. 28. ix. 1.) and therefore can mean no more here. And is an usual phrase in Scripture; as, when the Psalmist says, they that sail upon the sea are sometime lifted up to heaven, (cvii. 25.) which is a language that other authors speak; for Homer mentions a fir-tree which was οὐρανομήκης, *extended to heaven, i. e.* very tall. Which I note to shew the senseless spite of Julian the apostate, who endeavoured to discredit this sacred story, by the poetical fiction of the giants warring with heaven: as if there were no more truth in the one than in the other. But St. Cyril, in his fourth book against him, truly observes, that, in Scripture, this phrase, εἰς οὐρανὸν, *to heaven*, is put ἀντὶ τοῦ ὕψους, for that which is highly elevated, as this tower was. Which being half a quarter of a mile in breadth and length, had another tower stood upon it; and a third upon that, and so on, μεχρὶ οὗ ὄκτω πύργων (as Herodotus speaks), *till there were eight towers in all:* which made it of a vast height.

Let us make us a name, &c.] Here he plainly acquaints us with their intention in building this city and tower: which was to be a perpetual monument of their fame; to spread it far and wide, while they were alive; and that their names might live in this monument when they were dead: all posterity saying, such and such persons were the founders of the first and mother city of the world. So David is said to have got himself a name, (2 Sam. viii. 13.) *i. e.* extended his fame by his great achievements. And God is said to do the same, (Isai. lxiii. 12. 14.) Therefore there was no occasion for assigning other reasons for the building of this tower, when Moses gives one so clearly. That which hath been commonly fancied is, that they might secure themselves against another inundation: from which they were secured by the Divine promise (if they would believe it), together with the addition of a sign to it, (ix. 12.) And, if they did not believe it, why did they come down from the mountains into the plain country to build this tower; which might more rationally have been erected upon the top of the highest mountains, if their meaning had been, by this means, to preserve themselves from future floods? If there were any other meaning besides that mentioned by Moses, I should think that most probable which I find in Dr. Jackson, (book i. on the Creed, chap. 16.) That it might be "a refuge whereunto they might resort, and continue their combination:" something of which seems to be intimated in the next words. There is a conjecture also made by a most worthy friend of mine, a good while ago, Dr. Tenison, now bishop of Lincoln, in his book of Idolatry (which is not inconsistent with these), that this tower was consecrated by the builders of it to the sun, as the cause of drying up the waters of the deluge, (or rather, as the most illustrious and nearest resemblance of the Schechinah, as I noted on chap. iv.) and that it was intended as an altar whereon to sacrifice to it. But it is propounded only as a conjecture: which those Jews seem also to have had in their minds, who, by the word Shem, *(name)* understand God: as if their meaning were, "let us make us a god;" and raise him a temple. And perhaps future times did convert it to that use.

Lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.] Here they speak as if they feared a dispersion; but it is hard to tell from what cause, unless it were this, that Noah having projected a division of the earth among his posterity, (for it was a deliberate business, as I noted upon x. 5.) these people had no mind to submit unto it; and therefore built this fortress to defend themselves in their resolution of not yielding to his design. Thus the most learned Usher, (ad A. M. 1757.) But what they dreaded they brought upon themselves by their own vain attempt to avoid it: and now there is no memory preserved of the names of those that conspired in this attempt. Thus what Solomon saith, was long before verified, (Prov. x. 24.) "The fear of the wicked shall come upon him." But this evil by God's providence was attended with a great good: for by this dispersion the whole earth was peopled, and the foundation laid of several great nations and kingdoms.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord came down to see*, &c.] This is an accommodation to our conceptions, and means no more, but that by the effects he made it appear, that he observed their motions and knew their intentions.

Which the children of men builded.] It is generally agreed that *children of men* in Scripture, is opposed to *children of God;* as bad men and infidels are to the good and the faithful. Which gives us to understand, that neither Noah, nor Shem, nor Arphaxad, Salah, or Heber, were engaged in this work; but some of the worser sort of people, who degenerated from the piety of their ancestors. It is probable some of the race of Ham; who, it is likely, carried much of the spirit of Cain with him into the ark: otherwise he could not have behaved himself so vilely towards his father after they came out of it. For that terrible judgment, it seems, had not reformed him; and then it is no wonder if he grew more wicked after it was over. Josephus and others take Nimrod (his grandchild) to have been the ἀρχηγέτης, as his word is, ringleader of this crew, who combined in this design. But I take it to be more probable that he came and settled here after the dispersion. For there being not much above a hundred years between the flood and this time, it is not likely such a great kingdom could be erected in that space, as we read of, (Gen. x. 10.) And therefore he grew

so great after this dispersion, when he came out of Arabia, or some neighbouring country, and settled here in Babel; which was called by this name, upon occasion of the confusion of languages, and had it not before. Which is an argument that what we read, (x. 10, 11.) must be understood to have happened after this time. But, if all this be true, that some of Cham's race began this design, which other bad people were too much disposed to follow, and that they who retained the true religion (from whom Abraham descended) were not of the number, it is credible that they escaped the punishment here mentioned (in the next verses), retaining still their ancient seat, and the ancient language also; which continued in the family of Heber, and was called Hebrew.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord said,* &c.] This verse only expresses a resolution to spoil their project, and the necessity of so doing.

Ver. 7. *Let us.*] The rabbins fancy this is spoken to the angels. But it is beyond the angelical power to alter men's minds so in a moment, that they shall not be able to understand what they did before. Therefore God spake to himself: and this phrase suggests to us more persons than one in the godhead. In short, none but He, who taught men at first to speak, could, in an instant, make that variety of speech which is described in the next words. Novatianus therefore anciently took it, that this was spoken by God to his Son.

Confound their language.] The word *confound* is to be marked; for God did not make every one speak a new different language, but they had such a confused remembrance of the original language which they spake before, as made them speak it very differently: so that by the various inflexions, and terminations, and pronunciations of divers dialects, they could no more understand one another, than they who understand Latin can understand those who speak French, Italian, or Spanish; though these languages arise out of it.

And yet it is not to be thought, there were as many several dialects as there were men, so that none of them understood another; for this would not merely have dispersed mankind, but destroyed them. It being impossible to live without society, or to have society without understanding one another; for if the father could not have understood the son, nor the husband his wife, there could have been no comfort in living together. Therefore it is likely that every family had its peculiar dialect; or rather the same common dialect (or way of speaking) was given to those families whom God would have to make one colony in the following dispersion. Unto which dispersion they were constrained by their not being able to have such familiarity as they had before with every body; but only with those who understood their particular speech.

Into how many languages they were divided, none can determine. The Hebrews fancy into seventy, which opinion hath much prevailed, being grounded upon the foregoing chapter; where the descendants from the sons of Noah were just so many. The Greek fathers made them seventy-two, because the Greek version adds two more (Elisa among the sons of Japheth, and Cainan among the sons of Shem), and the Latin fathers follow them. But this is a very weak foundation; it being apparent that many of the sons of Canaan used the very same language in their country, and so did Javan and Elishah in Greece: and in other places, so many concurred in the use of the same speech, that scarce thirty remains of the seventy to be distinct, as Bochart hath observed. See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 9. sect. iii.

Ver. 8. *So the Lord scattered them.*] Broke their combination by making them speak several languages, which cut off the common bond of one society. For, as the unity of one common language (to use the words of Mr. Mede, p. 362.) had knit all mankind into one community; so God in his wisdom saw that plurality of languages was the best means to force them into a plurality of societies.

Abroad from thence.] Into all the regions of the north, south, and west; the east being inhabited before by Noah, and such of his offspring as abode with him. Which is not to be understood as if they were immediately scattered into the remotest places from Babel, but first into the neighbouring countries, and by degrees into those which were further off, according as their families increased.

How long this dispersion happened after the flood, cannot be certainly determined; but we can demonstrate it was not much above one hundred years. For Peleg (in whose days this came to pass, x. 25.) was born but a hundred and one years after; as was observed before upon that place. Now some think this division was made just at his birth; which St. Austin takes to have been the reason why his father called him Peleg, "Quia tunc ei natus est, quando per linguas terra divisa est;" *Because he was then born to him, when the earth was divided by their languages.* But the text doth not make this out, for it only says *in his days* the earth was divided. And the thirteen sons of Joktan (Peleg's brother) who had their share in this division, being not then born, we must conclude, that if this division began at Peleg's birth, it was not finished till some years after. Elmacinus says in the fortieth year of Peleg's age; the Hebrews generally say at his death. See Hottinger's Smegma Orient. p. 62. and 166.

And they left off to build the tower.] I see no reason to believe that God overturned it by a terrible tempest, as Epiphanius expresses it, Τὸν πύργον ἀνέμων βολὴ ἀνέστρεψεν. Which is the opinion of Josephus, (lib. i. cap. 5. Antiq.) and Abydenus, mentioned by Eusebius, (lib. ix. cap. 4. Præpar. Evang.) and divers others of the ancients; nor is there any ground for what others say, (particularly Benjamin Tudel. in his Itinerary, p. 77.) that it was burnt by fire from heaven. For Moses doth not intimate that it was either burnt or overturned; but only that they desisted from their enterprise: which naturally ceased, when they could no longer join to carry on the building. Which may rather lead us to think, that the city and tower stood long after this; and that Bochart's conjecture is not unreasonable, that it was the very tower which was afterwards consecrated to Belus, described by Herodotus, (lib. i.) For it is evident, that though this city and country lay waste for some time, men being frighted by the confusion of their languages from living there; yet Nimrod, a bold man, came and made this the seat of his empire: and it is very probable, carried on that work which was broke off by the dispersion. For it is not said, (Gen. x. 10.) that he built Babel, (as he did Nineveh, and other cities, ver. 11.) but only that it was "the beginning of his kingdom," the head city, where he made his residence.

Ver. 9. *Therefore is the name of it called Babel.*] Which signifies in Hebrew *confusion;* so frivolous is their conceit who make it to have been called by this name, from Babylon, the son of Belus. All the difficulty is to know who called it by this name. Some think the children of Heber, in whose family the original language continued; but it may be as rationally conceived, that, in the confusion of languages, all retained some of the ancient words, and particularly this, by which they all commonly called this place.

Confound the language of all the earth.] That is, the language of all those people who were in this western colony; not the language of Noah, and his plantation more easterly, who kept, as I said, the primitive language.

Scatter them abroad upon the face, &c.] This dispersion was so ordered, that each family and each nation dwelt by itself; which could not well be done, as Mr. Mede observes, but by directing an orderly division; either by casting of lots, or choosing according to their birthright, after portions of the earth were set out according to the number of their nations and families. For otherwise, some would not have been content to go so far north as Magog did; and others suffered to enjoy more pleasant countries.

Ver. 10. *These are the generations of Shem.*] It appears from the foregoing chapter, that these here mentioned were not all the persons who descended from him; but these were the ancestors of Abram, whom Moses derives by these from Shem.

Ver. 11. *Lived, after he begat Arphaxad, five hundred years.*] So that, as he had seen Methuselah and Lamech before the flood, he might also see, not only Abram, but his son Isaac, who by this account was one-and-twenty years old when Shem died.

Ver. 14. *Begat Eber.*] Who was the father of those from whom came the Hebrew nation; Abram being descended from him in the sixth generation. And that nation being called Eber, (Numb. xxiv. 24.) and "the children of Eber," (Gen. x. 21.) it is not reasonable, as I observed before, to seek for any other derivation of the name of Hebrews.

Ver. 16. *Peleg,* or *Phaleg.*] It is not unlikely that either he, or some of his posterity in memory of him, gave name to a town upon Euphrates called Phalga; not far from the place where Chaborus runs into it, upon which Harah (or Charrah) stood, built by Haran, Abram's brother.

Ver. 18. *Reu.*] (or *Ragau,* as some pronounce the Hebrew word) gave name to a field near Assyria, (Judith i. 5.) or, as Tobit saith, in Media; where Strabo mentions a city called Raga, and so doth Stephanus, Ῥάγα πόλις ἐν Μηδίᾳ. In the hundred and thirtieth year of his life, if we may believe Elmacinus, (p. 29.) Nimrod began to reign in Babylon; and in his days also, he says, the Egyptian kingdom began. Which need not seem strange, though scarce two hundred years were passed since the flood, when we consider the vast increase of people in these ages, from a few planters, within such a compass of time; and likewise the extraordinary fruitfulness which God after the flood bestowed upon them for the peopling of the earth. For he says twice to Noah and his sons, immediately after they came out of the ark, "Increase and multiply, (xi. 1. 7.) and replenish the earth." From this antiquity of the Egyptian kingdom, it is, that the later Pharaohs called themselves "the sons of ancient kings," (Isa. xix. 11.)

In Reu's time also, both the Egyptians and Babylonians now began to make images and worship them, if Patricides may be credited. See Hotting. Smegma Orient. cap. 8. n. 16.

Ver. 20. *Begat Serug.*] From whom (Bochartus thinks) some of his descendants might call the city Sarug: which the Arabian geographer says was near to Charræ, or Haran. He first began to celebrate every year the memory of famous men, after they were dead, and commanded them to be honoured as benefactors, if we may believe Suidas, in the word Σέρυχ, and Damascen, and a long roll of other authors mentioned by Jacobus Geusius, (par. i. cap. 2. De Victimis Humanis.)

Ver. 22. *Begat Nahor.*] The same writers say, that idolatry increasing much in his days, there was a great earthquake (the first that had been observed) which overturned their temples, and broke their images in Arabia.

Ver. 24. *Terah.*] Whom they make to have been an idolatrous priest; but to have repented and been converted to the worship of the true God. See ver. 31.

Ver. 26. *And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.*] *i. e.* He was *seventy* years old before he had any children, and then had three sons one after another; who are not set down in the order wherein they were born. For Abram's being first named doth not prove him to have been the eldest son of Terah, no more than Shem's being first named among Noah's three sons, proves him to have been the first-born, (ix. 18.) For there are good reasons to prove that Abram was born sixty years after Haran, who was the eldest son; having two daughters married to his two brothers, Nahor and Abram; who seems to be the youngest, though named first, both here and in the next verse, because of his pre-eminence. See ver. 32.

Ver. 28. *Haran died before his father,* &c.] In his own country (as it here follows), out of which he did not go, as the rest of his family did.

In Ur of the Chaldees.] That part of Mesopotamia which was next to Assyria, is called the *land of the Chaldees.* For Ur, as Abarbinel observes, was in Mesopotamia; lying in the way from Tigris to Nisibis. And therefore St. Stephen makes Mesopotamia and the land of the Chaldees the very same, (Acts vii. 2. 4.) Eupolemus, indeed, as Bochart notes, places this Ur, from whence Abram came, (ver. 31.) in Babylon; but Ammianus speaks of an Ur in Mesopotamia, situated as beforementioned; which we have reason to think was the place from whence Abraham came, because from thence to Canaan the way lay straight through Charran (or Haran), but it did not do so if he came from Babylon. And no good account can be given why he should go about through Mesopotamia and Charran, when there was a shorter way through Arabia, if he came from Babylon.

Ver. 29. *The father of Iscah.*] *i. e.* Of Sarai, whom Abram married; she being his eldest brother's daughter, sister to Lot. For Haran had three children, Lot, (ver. 27.) and Milchah, whom Nahor married, and Sarah, whom Abram married. That is, Haran dying, the two remaining brethren married his two daughters. For if we should understand any body else by Iscah but Sarah, there is no account whence she descended; which Moses sure would not have omitted, because it very much concerned his nation to know from whom they came, both by the father's and the mother's side. It is no wonder she should have

two names; one, perhaps, before they came out of Chaldea, and another after.

Ver. 31. *Went forth from Ur of the Chaldees.*] See what was said ver. 26, unto which I have nothing to add but this, that this country was so famous for superstition, that the Chaldeans, in Daniel's time, were reckoned as a distinct sort of diviners from magicians, astrologers, and soothsayers, or sorcerers, (Dan. ii. 2. 10. iv. 7. v. 11.) And it is likely, from some such sort of men, Terah and his family learned the worship of idols, (Josh. xxiv. 2.) But though he had been an idolater, yet it may be probably concluded from his leaving Ur of the Chaldees, with an intention to go to Canaan (as it is here said), that now he was become a worshipper of the true God. For what should move him to it, but obedience to the Divine direction which Abram received (as we read in the next chapter), to which he would not have agreed, if he had not believed in God; as Lot, it is plain, did, whom he took along with him? That word is much to be remarked, which makes him the principal agent in their removal; Abram himself being governed by his motion: for Moses says, "He took Abram, and Lot, the son of Haran," &c. And though Nahor did not now go along with his father to Haran (being left behind, perhaps to look after some concerns), yet afterwards he followed him, with all his family; as appears from chap. xxvii. 43. and the following chapter. And he also forsook idolatry; for Rebekah his grandchild was married to Isaac, and his great-grandchildren, Rachel and Leah, nay, their father Laban, seem to have been worshippers of the true God (though with a mixture of some superstition), for he makes mention of Jehovah upon several occasions, (Gen. xxiv. 31. 50, 51.)

And they came unto Haran.] It is possible that Terah going from Ur to Canaan, and staying in this place called the city Χάῤῥαι, *Charræ*, after the name of his son Haran (or Charan), who died a little before, (ver. 28.) For both the Greek and Roman writers call a city, famous for the death of Crassus, by the name of Charræ; situate on a river of the same name. It is likely from Abram's brother were derived both the name of the river and of the city, which the Arabians to this day call Charan, or Charran.

And dwelt there.] It is plain he intended to go to Canaan, and not to settle here; but being arrested with the sickness of which he died, could go no further.

Ver. 32. *And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years.*] Moses doth not sum up the years of any man's life mentioned in this chapter, (as he doth in chap. v.) but only of Terah's. Which he doth on purpose that we may know when this new period of time began, (of Abram's leaving his own country, and thereby becoming the father of the faithful), which we are not to count from the time when Terah began to have children, (ver. 26.) but from the time of his death; immediately after which Abram went on towards Canaan. See Usser. Chronol. cap. 3. and cap. 7.

From this also we learn when Abram was born. For, if seventy-five years (which was Abram's age when his father died, and he went from Haran, xii. 4.) be subducted from two hundred and five, it is manifest that he was born when his father was a hundred and thirty years old: that is, threescore years after his brother Haran, as I said on ver. 26.

CHAP. XII.

MANY ancient authors speak of Abram, as Josephus observes, and out of him Eusebius, who names others also, (lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 16, 17, &c.) All that I shall note is, that one great design of Moses being to lead the Jews to understand the genealogy of this noble ancestor of theirs, he hastens to it; relating other matters briefly, but spending many pages about him. For he comprises, for instance, the history of the world from the creation to the flood, containing one thousand six hundred and fifty-six years, in the compass of six chapters; but bestows on the history of Abram nineteen chapters, though it contain no longer space of time than a hundred and seventy-five years.

Ver. 1. *Now the Lord had said unto Abram.*] While he lived in Ur of the Chaldees; from whence it is certain he called him while his father was alive, (xi. 31.) We are not told how he spake to him; for here is no mention, as Maimonides observes, (par. ii. cap. 41.) of his speaking in a dream, or a vision, or by the hand of an angel; but only simply and absolutely that "the Lord said to him." By a voice, when he was awake, I suppose, from the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty; for St. Stephen saith expressly, "the God of glory appeared to him, before he dwelt in Charran," (Acts vii. 2.)

Get thee out of thy own country, &c.] Which began a good while ago to be infected with idolatry, (see xi. 18. 22.) some of Shem's posterity forgetting the Creator of all, and worshipping the sun as the great God, and the stars as lesser gods. So Maimonides, in his More Nevoch. (par. iii. cap. 29.) where he saith the Zabii relate in one of their books (which he there names), that Abram contradicting their worship, the king of the country imprisoned him, and afterward banished him into the utmost parts of the east, and confiscated all his estate. A tale invented to take away from him the honour of his voluntary leaving his country, and to discredit this sacred history, which tells us he directed his course quite another way, towards the west. Abarbinel, and others, will not have this call of God to Abram to have been when he was in Ur, but after they came to Haran; to which he fancies Terah came, because of some misfortunes he had in Ur. But this is invented to contradict St. Stephen, (Acts vii. 2.) with whom Aben Ezra agrees, who expounds these words of his calling out of Ur. For it is hard to find any other reason why he designed to go to Canaan, (xi. 31.) the place whither he went after Terah was dead.

Into a land that I will shew thee.] He had the Divine direction, it seems, all along, to conduct him in his journey. But it argued, as the apostle observes, a great faith in God, that he would follow him, not knowing the country to which he would lead him.

Ver. 2. *And I will make of thee a great nation.*] First, by multiplying his posterity, and then by making them a select, peculiar people; whom he distinguished, by his favours, from all other nations. So it follows:

I will bless thee.] Bestow many benefits both temporal and spiritual upon them.

And make thy name great.] Make him famous throughout the world; as he is to this day, not only among the Jews, but among Christians and Mahometans. So Mai-

monides observes, that all mankind admire Abram, even they that are not of his seed.

And thou shalt be a blessing.] Others shall be the better for thee; as Lot was, and the king of Sodom, &c. Or, as the Hebrews understand it, thou shalt be so prosperous, that when men would wish well to others, they shall use thy name, and say, "The Lord bless thee as he did Abram."

Ver. 3. *I will bless them that bless thee,* &c.] The highest token of a particular friendship which he here contracts with Abram (who is called the *friend of God)* in promising to espouse his interest so far, as to have the same friends and enemies that he had. Which is the form wherein kings and princes make the strictest leagues one with another.

And curse them that curse thee.] Maimonides will have it (in the place beforenamed), that the Zabæans loaded Abram with all manner of curses and reproaches (when he was sent out of their country), which he bearing patiently, God turned upon themselves.

And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.] Which was most eminently fulfilled in Christ. And here it must be remarked that this promise, of blessing all the world in Abram, was made to him before he received circumcision, while he was in Ur of the Chaldees, and before he had any issue, (for Sarai was *barren* and *had no child,* xi. 30.) And therefore before any preference of Isaac to Ishmael; or any distinction made between his posterity and the rest of mankind: in token that they were all concerned in this promise; whether descended from Abram, or not. In short, this promise only limits the birth of the Messiah to the seed of Abram; but declares that his benefits should be common to all other nations.

Ver. 4. *So Abram departed,* &c.] Having stayed some time in Haran, where his father fell sick and died, he prosecuted his journey from thence to Canaan, after his father was dead. So St. Stephen tells us expressly, (Acts vii. 4.) "From thence (*i. e.* from Charran), when his father was dead, he removed him into this land," &c. It was a wonderful effect of Abram's faith (I observed before) to move him to leave his own native country and go to Haran: but it was still a greater, after he had travelled a long way from Ur hither, to go three hundred miles more from hence to Canaan; a country of which he had no knowledge, nor had sent any body before him to discover it: taking his journey through the dangerous and barren deserts of Palmyrena; and having nothing to support him, but only the promise of God: which made him climb over the high mountains, either of Libanus, Hermon, or Gilead; for in that part of the country he entered, as Sir W. Raleigh hath observed. See ver. 5.

And Lot went with him.] He might conclude, perhaps, that Abram, being called in a special manner out of Chaldea, was thereby distinguished from the rest of Shem's posterity; and that he joining with him in obeying the same call, might claim the privilege of fulfilling the promise of the Messiah, no less than Abram.

And Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.] See xi. ult.

Ver. 5. *And all the souls they had gotten* (Hebrew, *had made*) *in Haran.*] *i. e.* All the slaves born in their house, or bought with their money. The Chaldee paraphrast interprets this of the proselytes they had won to God: for such only would Abram carry with him. And some of the Hebrew doctors are so nice, as to say, that Abram instructed the men, and Sarai the women, in the true religion: concerning which he wrote a book (if we may believe Maimonides, De Idolol. cap. 1.) and left it to his son Isaac. We read also in Pirke Eliczer, cap. 25. that he took a house, which fronted Charran, where, according to the ancient piety, he kept great hospitality: and inviting those that went in or came out of the town to refresh themselves if they pleased, set meat and drink before them; saying, "There is but one God in the world."

And into the land of Canaan they came.] We are told before, (xi. 31.) that Terah went forth to go to this country, but could not reach it, as Abram did: who entered into it, at the north part of it, as appears from the following part of the story; where we read he went to Sichem, &c. and ver. 9. went on "still towards the south."

Ver. 6. *Sichem unto the plain of Moreh.*] Or, as Mr. Mede, following the LXX. will have it, *the oak of Moreh:* understanding by oak, not only one single oak, but a *holt,* or *grove* of oaks. See xiii. 18. Where I suppose he intended to have fixed his dwelling; had not the temper of the people, who inhabited that country, made it inconvenient.

And the Canaanite was then in the land.] It was very pertinent to Moses's design, speaking of Abram's passage through this country, to tell who was at that time possessed of it. But it is dubious whether he meant by the Canaanite a particular people descended from Canaan, as he doth xv. 21. or, in general, all the nations which the Israelites afterwards destroyed. It seems to me the first of these is meant, and that by land he means only that part of the country where Sichem lay, which was then possessed by this particular people: for, in the next place that Abram went to, it is said, "The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land," (xiv. 7.) *i. e.* in that part of the country: where we do not read what entertainment Abram met withal; but I take it as an argument of Abram's great faith, that he would adventure among such a rough and fierce people, who had no kindness for the posterity of Shem upon an old score; and, if the ancient tradition in Epiphanius be true, upon a fresh account: for he saith, (Hæres. lxvi. n. 84.) that this country called Canaan did really belong to the children of Shem, by virtue of the division made among the sons of Noah: but the children of Canaan had dispossessed them. So that these words, "the Canaanite was then in the land," signifies, they had already invaded this country, before Abram came thither. To whom God promising to give it, he only restored the posterity of Shem (from whom Abram descended), unto that which the children of Ham had wrongfully seized.

By all which it is easy to see how frivolous their reasons are, who, from this place, conclude Moses did not write this book: because these words seem to signify the writer of them lived after the Canaanites were thrown out of this land: which was after Moses's death.

If these men had not a greater inclination to cavil, than to find out the truth, they would rather have said the meaning is, The Canaanite was possessed of this part of the country in Abram's time, though thrown out of it by Jacob's sons, (Gen. xxxiv.) before the times of Moses.

Which is another way of explaining these words: against which I see no objection but this, that their prince is called an Hivite, (xxxiv. 2.) To which there is an answer, (ver. 30.) which shews the people were partly Canaanites.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord appeared unto Abram.*] As he had done before, (ver. 1.) but now, it is likely, in a more glorious manner; to establish him in faith and obedience.

And said unto him, &c.] There was a voice came from the Schechinah, or Divine glory, which now appeared to him; and told him this was the country he intended to bestow upon his posterity. It is very remarkable, that he no sooner entered Canaan, but God renewed his promise to him, made before he came out of his own country.

And it is further observable (as we shall see in the following story), that Abram's obedience was constantly rewarded in kind, according to the quality of the service he performed: though, in quantity, the reward far exceeded the service. Thus, having left his own country and father's house (which was the first trial of his obedience), God promises to give him the whole land of Canaan, and to make his posterity a mighty nation. See xvii. 6. xxii. 16.

And there he built an altar, &c.] This was so glorious an appearance, that it moved him to offer up a solemn sacrifice to God, for which he built an altar here in Sichem. And it being the first that he built in this country, it made this become the first place that was established for public worship, after the Israelites conquered the land of Canaan. For here was the sanctuary of God in Joshua's time, near this very grove where Abram first pitched his tent, and built an altar, (Josh. xxiv. 1. 25, 26.) It continued famous also in after-times, as appears from Judg. ix. 6.

Ver. 8. *And he removed from thence unto a mountain,* &c.] Though the Lord here appeared to him, yet he did not think fit to trust himself among the Canaanites (who were the chief of the wicked nations that possessed this land), or he thought fit to see the rest of the country, which God promised to give him: and therefore came hither, which was about twenty miles further southward.

And there he built an altar.] Upon the mountain; where they anciently chose to sacrifice, rather than in other places. And, it is likely, God again appeared to him here, to encourage and strengthen him against all his fears: which made him build a new altar and offer sacrifices of thanksgiving to God, to implore his continued favour.

And it is observable, that the promise which God made in the former place, (ver. 7.) he renewed again in this, and more at large, after he came out of Egypt, (xiii. 3, 4. 14, 15, 16.)

On the east of Bethel.] So it was called in after-times.

Ver. 9. *And Abram journeyed,* &c.] He did not think fit to fix yet in the forenamed place; but made a further progress into the southern parts of the country. Yet after he had been in Egypt (the story of which follows), he returned to this place.

Ver. 10. *A famine in the land.*] Of Canaan.

He went down.] Egypt lay low in comparison with Canaan.

To sojourn.] Not to dwell there: for he doubted not of God's promise to him, of possessing the land which he had left.

Ver. 11. *Thou art a fair woman,* &c.] She was now threescore years old: but having comely features, and being of a fair complexion (in comparison with the Egyptians, who were sallow), she seemed to be younger than she was.

Ver. 12. *They will kill me.*] Knowing them to be a libidinous people, he was afraid they might be tempted to make him away, that they might have his wife.

Ver. 13. *Say, thou art my sister.*] He himself, upon another occasion, explains in what sense she was so, xx. 12. Therefore he teaches her not to tell a lie, but to conceal the truth.

Ver. 15. *Pharaoh.*] The Egyptian kingdom began about three hundred years before this (in the days of Ragau, xi. 18. if the Arabian writers say true) and now was grown to be very powerful, by the means of some king of this name; which (it appears by this place) was very ancient, and continued to be the name of all the kings of Egypt, till the captivity of Babylon; and we know not how much longer. Just as Ptolemy was their name after the times of Alexander; and Cæsar and Augustus were the names of all the emperors of Rome; and Candace of all the queens of Ethiopia; and the like may be observed in several other countries. Ludolphus takes *Pharaoh* to be a compound word, signifying as much as *father of the country:* for that is the meaning of *Phar-ot,* in the Ethiopic language; as *Pharmut* is *mother of the country.*

The princes also, &c.] The courtiers who studied to gratify their prince's pleasure.

Was taken into Pharaoh's house.] Into the house of the women, it is probable (for the Egyptian kings were now, as I said, very great; like those of Persia in after-times), intending to make her one of his concubines.

Ver. 16. *And he had sheep, and oxen,* &c.] By the gift of the king; besides those he had of his own before.

Ver. 17. *And he plagued Pharaoh,* &c.] Some of the Hebrews think they had grievous ulcers in the secret parts; which made both him and his servants incapable to enjoy either her, or any one else.

His house.] His courtiers partake of the punishment, because they were partners in the intended sin.

Ver. 18. *Why didst thou not tell me,* &c.] Some think he speaks thus subtilly to Abram, to see what he would say; not knowing yet that she was his wife. Or, that his priests and wise men had consulted the oracles about the cause of their plagues. But the simplest account is, that Sarai, being interrogated about it, confessed the whole truth. Whereupon he expostulated thus with Abram; who being silent, he took it for granted, that indeed she was his wife.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore behold thy wife,* &c.] He disclaims all intention of abusing another man's wife (so virtuous they were in those days), but would have made her his own, (as he saith in the foregoing words, "I might have taken her to me to wife"); that is, a secondary wife, as the manner was in those days; for it is not likely he had no wife at all before.

Ver. 20. *Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him,* &c.] Gave strict orders none should hurt him, or any thing belonging to him, but conduct him safely, whither he had a mind to go. And accordingly, the next words tell us they did.

They sent him away, &c.] Not with violence, but gave him a safe conduct: sending him away, perhaps, with a guard for his security. Such was the generosity of the Egyptian princes in those times.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *INTO the south.*] Into the southern part of Canaan, where he had been before, (xii. 9.)

Ver. 2. *Very rich,* &c.] His riches were increased since he went into Egypt, by the bounty of Pharaoh, (xii. 16.) and (if we could believe Josephus, lib. i. Antiq. cap. 8.) by the rewards he had for teaching them several pieces of learning, which he brought out of Chaldea. The author of Schalsch. Hakkab. quotes Eusebius's Præpar. Evang. lib. ix. cap. 4. to prove this. And, indeed, I find Eusebius quoting Josephus in the sixteenth chapter of that book; who says he taught arithmetic and astrology, of which the Egyptians were ignorant before: and in the seventeenth chapter Eupolemus, who says that Abram was familiarly conversant with the Egyptian priests at Heliopolis (when he went thither by reason of the famine in Canaan), and taught them many things; particularly the celestial sciences, which he calls astrology; *i. e.* the knowledge of the stars.

Ver. 3. *Unto Bethel,* &c.] Which was the second place wherein he dwelt, after his first entrance into Canaan, (xii. 8.)

Ver. 4. *Unto the place of the altar,* &c.] This seems to intimate that the altar itself was either fallen or thrown down. Some think demolished by Abram himself, when he left the place; others by the Canaanites when he was gone.

And there Abram called on the name of the Lord.] Commended himself, and all he had, to God's protection; who had promised to bestow this country upon him. Perhaps he built the altar again, and offered sacrifice thereon.

Ver. 5. *And Lot also,* &c.] God had blessed him likewise, as a faithful companion of Abram in his travels; and partaker also of his faith.

Ver. 6. *The land was not able to bear them,* &c.] There was not sufficient pasturage for them both, in that part of the country.

Ver. 7. *And there was a strife,* &c.] Wealth commonly breeds contentions. Yet here was no difference between the masters, but between their servants: each endeavouring to get the best pastures, and the best watering places for their flocks.

And the Canaanite and the Perizzite, &c.] This part of the country was inhabited by the people peculiarly called Canaanites, and by the Perizzites, (a very rugged and barbarous nation, see xv. 20.) among whom contention would have been dangerous, at least very scandalous.

Ver. 8. *Abram said to Lot.*] The best, the wisest, and men of greatest experience in the world, are most inclined to peace, and most yielding in order to it.

Let there be no strife between me and thee, &c.] There had been none yet; but their servants' quarrel might have proved theirs at last.

And between my herdsmen, &c.] *And* here signifies *or:* as xix. 12. Exod. xii. 5.

For we are brethren.] Near kinsmen, whom the Hebrews call brethren.

Ver. 9. *Is not the land before thee.*] There is room enough, though not here, yet in other parts of the country: now, since we cannot remain together, take thy choice which way thou wilt go, &c. A wonderful condescension in Abram, to let the younger, and least in estate, please himself. And he did not desire Lot to leave the country, but only to settle himself in what part of it he liked best; that he might be near to help him, as he did afterwards.

Ver. 10. *Behold all the plain of Jordan,* &c.] A fruitful and pleasant country, well watered by the streams of Jordan: which in many windings and turnings run through it, and at some times overflowed it; which made the ground very rich. And therefore Moses compares this plain to the garden of Eden, (as most understand those words, "the garden of the Lord") which was well watered by a river running through it; and to the land of Egypt, which is fattened by the overflowing of Nile, as this was by the overflowing of Jordan.

As thou comest to Zoar.] These words are not to be referred to "the land of Egypt," immediately foregoing (from which Zoar was at a great distance), but to those words in the beginning, "a plain well watered every where;" even to the utmost skirts of it, which was Zoar.

Ver. 11. *And Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan.*] He was invited by the richness of the soil, without regard to the manners of the people; which proved afterwards a great affliction to him.

And Lot journeyed east.] For the "plain of Jordan" lay east, from Bethel, where they now were.

Ver. 12. *And Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan,* &c.] In that part of the country where the people peculiarly called Canaanites (ver. 7. and xii. 6.) were seated: otherwise, if "the land of Canaan" be taken largely, the "plain of Jordan" was also a part of it.

Ver. 13. *The men of Sodom were wicked,* &c.] Their sins were grown ripe for punishment; having been brought (as it were) "before the Lord;" and sentenced at his tribunal to the judgment which shortly after befel them.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord said unto Abram,* &c.] It is likely the Lord appeared again to him, (as he had done formerly, xii. 7.) after Lot was separated from him: both to comfort him in his absence, by renewing his promise in larger words, and to assure him that his posterity, not Lot's, should inherit this country.

Lift up thine eyes, &c.] He dwelt now, it is likely, upon the mountain, which was on the east of Bethel, (where he pitched his tent before he went into Egypt, xii. 8.) and returned to it when he came from thence (ver. 3, 4. of this chapter), which gave him the advantage of a fair and long prospect of the country every way.

Ver. 15. *For all the land thou seest,* &c.] That whole country, some parts of which he saw a great way, in every quarter of it; and all the rest contiguous to them, were hereby assured to him.

For ever.] It doth not signify strictly time without end; but a very long period. The Jews, indeed, say that this world *olam,* when it is written full, as they speak, that is, with *vau,* denotes *eternity;* though, without *vau,* they confess it signifies only *a long time:* but this small observation is quite overthrown by many examples to the contrary. For (Exod. xv. 18.) where the Lord is said to *reign for ever,* this word *olam* is without a *vau,* and yet denotes *eternity.* And (Deut. xv. 17.) where it is said, "he shall be thy servant *for ever,*" it is written with a *vau,* and yet denotes only a term of *fifty years* at the most.

Ver. 16. *I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth,* &c.] More than could be contained in that land.

Ver. 17. *Arise, walk through the land,* &c.] He would have him, for his satisfaction, go and view it all more nearly in every part of it. Or, he gives him leave (if he desired to understand more fully both the quality and quantity of the inheritance he bestowed on him) to go and survey it: promising he would protect and preserve him in his perambulation. Nay, some look upon this as giving him a warrant to take possession of the country, though he should not yet enjoy it.

Ver. 18. *Then Abram removed his tent.*] To a place about twenty-four miles from Bethel, where he was before.

And dwelt in the plain.] Here the word we had before (xii. 6.) is in the plural number; and is taken by many for *oaks, i. e.* for an *oaken grove:* so the Arabic interpreter. The LXX. translate it παρὰ τὴν δρῦν, *by the oak,* in the singular number; for there seems to have been one *oak* more eminent than the rest: under which Abram pitched his tent, and built an altar unto the Lord.

This is confirmed by xviii. 1. compared with ver. 8. And indeed the ancients very much reverenced an oak, and therefore planted this tree very frequently. Jacob buried the idolatrous trumpery of his family under an oak, (xxxv. 4.) which was by Schechem, where the place of public worship seems to have been fixed in Joshua's time, (Josh. xxiv. 1. 26.) The angel of the Lord also appeared to Gideon under an oak (Judg. vi. 11. 19. 25. ix. 6.) And of all other trees, an oak was held most sacred by the heathen; particularly by the Druids. (See Pliny, lib. xvi. cap. 44. Max. Tyrius, Dissert. 34.) And Pausanias, in his account of Arcadia, says, the ancients made the images of their gods of oak, being the most durable wood.

This *oak,* some fancy, was in being in the time of Constantine, and there was great resort to it. (See Sozomen, lib. ii. cap. 4.) Here Abram dwelt a long time, and many great things passed here, before he removed to any other place.

Mamre.] Was the name of a man among the Amorites, as appears from the next chapter, ver. 13.

Which is in Hebron.] Or, rather, *by* or *near* Hebron (for so the particle *beth* is often used), which was a very ancient city, built seven years before Zoar; *i. e.* the famous city of Tanis in Egypt, (Numb. xiii. 22.) It was called Arba, or Kirjath-Arba at the first, (xxiii. 2.) but in Moses's time, Hebron. There are those, indeed, who say it was not called Hebron till the time of Joshua, who gave it to Caleb for his portion: (Josh. xv. 13. 15.) and thence conclude this passage was not wrote by Moses, but put in by some other hand, after his time. But I see not the least proof of this assertion, that Caleb was the first who gave it this name. His grandson, mentioned 1 Chron. ii. 42, 43. may rather be thought to have taken his name from this place, than to have given a name to it. Besides, there have been two occasions of giving one and the same name; as appears by what is said of Beersheba, (xxi. 31. xxvi. 33.) And therefore this city might have the name of Hebron in Moses's time; and it might be confirmed in Joshua's.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass,* &c.] It is very easy to give an account of this war, which the kings of the east made upon the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, &c. if what was said before (xii. 6.) be admitted; that the Canaanites had invaded the rights of the children of Shem, and gotten possession of a country belonging to them; which they now endeavoured to recover (as they had attempted before, ver. 4.) For Elam, of which Chedorlaomer was king, descended from Shem, (Gen. x. 22.)

Amraphel king of Shinar.] *i. e.* King of Babylon, as it is commonly understood. But it cannot well be thought that so potent a king as he is supposed to have been in those days, should need any associates in a war against such petty princes as those mentioned ver. 2. Or, that the king of Elam, (whose quarrel this was, as appears from ver. 4.) should not be able of himself to grapple with them: or, that the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, &c. durst have adventured, with a handful of people, in comparison, to rebel against him, after he had brought them under his subjection. Therefore, we must either take Amraphel to have been some small prince in the country of Shinar, *i. e.* Assyria; or, if he were king of Babylon, that monarchy was not very great in the days of Abram. And we must also look upon the rest as names of some particular places (like Sodom and Gomorrah) over which Arioch and Chedorlaomer reigned; who were such kings as those in Canaan when Joshua conquered it: or else, commanders of colonies, which they had led out of Assyria and Persia, and settling thereabouts, endeavoured to enlarge their plantations: as the manner was in those and in succeeding times; when the captains of a troop, and leaders of a small body of men, were called princes or kings.

Arioch king of Ellasar.] There was a city (mentioned by Stephanus, de Urbibus) called Ellas, in Cœlo-Syria, on the borders of Arabia; where Arioch perhaps commanded.

Chedorlaomer king of Elam.] Concerning this country see x. 22. where Chedorlaomer was either governor of some little province or city, or a commander of some troop of that nation.

Tidal king of nations.] Some take *gojim* in this place, which we translate *nations,* for a country or city. But it is more agreeable to the common use of the word in Scripture, to take it to signify a people: who either wanted a fixed habitation, or were gathered out of sundry regions.

Thus, part of Galilee being inhabited by a mixed people of divers countries, was thence called "Galilee of the nations," or gentiles, (Matth. iv. 15.) There were also, as Sir W. Ralcigh observes, several petty countries which adjoined to Phœnicia (viz. Palmyrena, Batanea, Apamena, Laodicene, &c. which lay towards Mesopotamia on the north, and Arabia on the east), over which we may suppose Tidal reigned. Eupolemus, an ancient Greek writer, relating this story, calls them Armenians, who made this inroad upon the Phœnicians, as Eusebius tells us out of Alexander Polyhistor. lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 17.

Ver. 2. *These made war with Bera king of Sodom,* &c.] They were lords of the country called Pentapolis, or five cities: which were so small, that there was no need to bring a great king from beyond Tigris, with such a mighty

monarch as he of Babylon is thought now to have been, and several other nations between these kings and Euphrates, to subdue their petty province. It had been madness also for these kings to resist such powerful armies as the eastern kings are commonly supposed to have brought against them. And therefore I think it reasonable, by the kings in the first verse, to understand some such petty princes as those mentioned in the second.

Ver. 3. *Valley of Siddim.*] The five cities stood in this goodly valley, which now is the Salt-Sea or Lake; since the overthrow of these cities by fire and brimstone from heaven. Some will not have *Siddim* a proper name, but translate it *ploughed lands;* in which this valley was very rich.

Ver. 4. *Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer,* &c.] This shews he was the principal in this war: and if he had been king of all that country called Elam, we cannot think he would have passed through so great a part of the world as Assyria, Mesopotamia, and part of Arabia, to conquer five towns: all whose riches could not countervail the charge, though he had sent only one of his lieutenants, with a small force, to bring them under.

Ver. 5. *Smote the Rephaims.*] In their way to Sodom they subdued these warlike people, who, it is likely, opposed their passage into Pentapolis. And these Rephaims, it appears by xv. 20. were a part of Canaan's posterity, situate (as one may gather from Josh. xii. 4. xiii. 12.) on the other side Jordan, in Bashan, or Batanea. They were of a giant-like stature: and therefore the LXX. here and in other places, instead of Rephaim, have giants.

Ashtaroth-Karnaim.] It is plain from the forenamed place, and from Deut. i. 4. that Ashtaroth was a place in Bashan. Whether so called because the goddess Astarte, *i. e.* Diana or Juno, was here worshipped, nobody can resolve. They that are of this opinion fancy that *Karnaim,* which in Hebrew signifies *two-horned,* denotes the *new moon.* But this word may as well denote that Ashtaroth was a city in the form of a half moon.

And the Zuzims.] Another warlike people thereabouts: who, some think, are the same with the Zamzummims, (Deut. ii. 20.)

The Emims.] It appears from Deut. ii. 9, 10, &c. that these were also a gigantic people, and near neighbours to the Horites, mentioned in the next verse. For the Emims possessed Ar and the field of Kirjath-Jearim; and the Horites possessed Mount Seir; till the former were driven out by the Moabites, and the latter by the children of Esau: and then the country of the Emims was called Moab, and the country of the Horites was called Edom.

Ver. 7. *And they returned.*] From the conquest of the forenamed people.

And came to En-mishpat.] Fell upon this country, which was called afterward by this name, because God here judged the Israelites for their murmurings and contention with Moses. From whence also it was called Kadesh, because here the Lord was sanctified among them. (Numb. xx. 13.)

All the country of the Amalekites.] The country which was afterwards possessed by the Amalekites, who were not yet in being; for they were the descendants of Esau, as Moses shews, (Gen. xxxvi. 16.)

And also the Amorites, who dwelt in Hazezon-Tamer.] Which is the same with En-Gaddi, near the Dead Sea, (2 Chron. xx. 2.)

Ver. 10. *Full of slime-pits.*] Into which they hoped their enemies might fall, and so be broken: which made them draw up their army, and wait for them in this place.

And the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled.] Were routed, as we now speak. Of the word *slime,* see xi. 3.

And fell there.] *i. e.* A great slaughter was made of their armies; for they themselves escaped it appears by the following part of the story. Some will have it, that many of them fell into those slime-pits, in which they hoped to have seen their enemies plunged. But the simplest sense is, many of them were slain, and the rest, as it follows, escaped to the mountain: but made such ill use of their preservation, from being killed with their fellows, that they only lived to suffer a greater vengeance.

Ver. 11. *And they took all the goods,* &c.] This is a further proof that Chedorlaomer, and the rest of his confederates in this war, were but petty princes (like the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, &c.), for, having broken the army of the five kings, they rested contented, and marched away with the prisoners and booty; but took not one of their cities: which, if they had been such great kings as is imagined, they would have certainly sacked, and perhaps burnt, if they had not thought fit to keep them. But we read (ver. 17.) the king of Sodom still reigned after this victory, and went out of his city to meet Abram.

Ver. 12. *And they took Lot,* &c.] Who is here called "his brother's son," and ver. 14. and 16. "Abram's brother." This was the foundation of Abram's quarrel with the four kings; whose war was just against the king of Sodom and his confederates: but they unjustly seized upon Lot and his goods, who was but a sojourner in that country, and had no hand in their revolt.

Who dwelt in Sodom.] In the country of Sodom, where he hired some ground for his cattle; but it is not likely he yet dwelt in the city (for then he had not been taken captive), but afterwards for, more security, betook himself thither.

Ver. 13. *Told Abram the Hebrew.*] So called from his ancestor Heber, as was before observed. To which may be added, that if he had been called by this name, as many think, only from his passing over the Euphrates (which the LXX. took to be the reason, when they translated it, περάτης), it would not have descended to all his posterity, who did not come from beyond the river. So little a thing as that would not have given a name to a whole and eminent nation; who are usually denominated from some eminent progenitor.

And these were confederate with Abram.] The three forenamed families were near neighbours to Abram; who, it is likely, farmed (as we now speak) some ground of them: and so entered into a league of mutual defence, having the same interest. I should think also, that, having the priest of the Most High God not far from them, (ver. 18.) they were good, pious people (rather than conclude, as I find some do, that they were utter strangers to the true religion), which made Abram more forward to embrace, if not to court, their friendship. For the sins of the Amorites being not yet full, (xv. 16.) there might be some remainders of true piety among them: and it is no argument, that because these three families were of that nation, they were wicked idolaters.

Ver. 14. *Armed his trained servants.*] Drew forth a select number of his servants, whom he had instructed to handle arms, in case of any assault by robbers or injurious neighbours. We read before (xii. 5.) of the servants they brought with them from Haran; and now they were more increased, as their cattle were (xii. 16. xiii. 2. 6.) so that he might well make a little army out of them.

And pursued them to Dan.] As far as that place, where one of the heads or springs of Jordan breaks forth, called *Dan*, as Josephus relates, where he speaks of this very history, (lib. i. Antiq. cap. 10.) This plain and short account of this word *Dan*, overthrows the argument which cavillers draw from hence to prove that Moses did not write this book.

Ver. 15. *And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night.*] The Vulgar Latin here reads, "His companions being divided, he fell upon them by night:" minding rather the sense than the words. For here is no mention of any but Abram and his servants: though it appears by the last verse of the chapter, that his confederates beforementioned, (ver. 13.) Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, joined with him in this expedition. Which they managed with great judgment (for stratagems in war were never wanting from the beginning), Abram and his servants making one troop or battalion (as they now speak), and the confederates making three more. Who, dividing themselves, fell upon the four kings, in the four quarters of their camp; that they might the more distract them, and make them apprehend their forces to be more numerous than indeed they were. They were put also into the greater confusion, because this assault was made in the night: when, perhaps, they were buried both in wine and in sleep.

Unto Hobah.] Which lay in the vale between Libanus and Antilibanus: called by Amos, (i. 5.) *the valley of Aven*, and *Beth-Eden*, or the seat of pleasure. In this vale was Damascus seated.

Ver. 16. *He brought back all the goods,* &c.] All the prey, whether in money, cattle, or other things, which the four kings had carried away.

The women also, and the people.] It seems they had carried away all the people of Pentapolis, who did not flee to the mountains or fenced cities; and women, in those days, were a special part of their booty.

Ver. 17. *Went out to meet him.*] To congratulate his victory; and to desire his people might be restored to him.

At the valley of Shaveth.] This seems to have been a pleasant place, wherein the king (that is Melchizedec, I guess by what follows) took delight: whence it was called the King's Dale: in which the King of Sodom met Abram; and Melchizedec entertained him with bread and wine.

Ver. 18. *And Melchizedec.*] The Jews generally say this was Shem, the son of Noah. But we have reason to look upon this opinion as proceeding from their pride and vanity: which could not endure to think the father of their nation had any superior in another nation, especially among the Canaanites. And therefore they will have Abram to have been blessed by his great ancestor, Shem; to whom also he paid tithes: which is a fancy so plainly confuted by the apostle to the Hebrews, that it is strange any Christian should follow it. For he saith expressly, that Melchizedec was not γενεαλογούμενος ἐξ αὐτῶν, (vii. 6.) *his descent*, or *pedigree, was not counted from them;* which is not true of Shem. Nor could Shem be said to be without father or mother; whose genealogy is evident from Adam. Nor was Shem's priesthood, if he had any, of a different order from Levi's; who was in his loins, as well as in the loins of Abram. And therefore it could not be said that Levi paid him tithes in the loins of Abram, but it would be as true that he received tithes in the loins of Shem: for, according to this interpretation, he was in the loins both of him that received tithes, and of him that paid them; and so the whole argumentation of the apostle falls to the ground. But setting aside these and other Christian reasons (which are strongly urged by Bochartus, lib. ii. Phaleg. cap. 1.) there is no cause, that we can discern, why Moses should call Shem (whom he so often mentions) by any other name than his own; nor is it likely that Shem reigned in the land of Canaan; which now was in the possession of his brother's son: nor could Abram be said to sojourn there as in a strange country, if his noble ancestor, Shem, had been a king there. Nor is this an ancient opinion among the Jews, at least not constantly believed: for Josephus says expressly, that Melchizedec was Χαναναίων δυνάστης, *a potentate of the Canaanites*, (lib. vii. de Bello Jud. cap. 18.) And yet it was so common, that it went to the Samaritans, as Epiphanius tells us, Hæres. lv. n. 6. (though not to the Arabians, who say he was the son of Peleg. See Hotting. Smegma Orient. 256. 269. 306.) and many Christians have embraced it, merely (as far as I can discern) because they would not acknowledge any good man to have been then among the Canaanites. Some heretics held him to be μεγάλην τινὰ δύναμιν, as Epiphanius tells us in the place forementioned, (Numb. I.) Which was the opinion of Hieracas, a great scholar and famous physician in Egypt. (Hæres. lxvii. n. 3.) And some of the church took him to have been the Son of God himself, who then appeared to Abram, ἐν ἰδέᾳ ἀνθρώπου, *in the form of a man.* (Hæres. lv. n. 7.) But the plain truth is, he was a king and priest (for those two offices anciently were in the same person) in that country: where men were not as yet wholly degenerated, and fallen from the true religion.

King of Salem.] It is a great error to think that this Salem was the same with Jerusalem. For it is plain, as Bochart observes, (lib. ii. Phaleg. cap. 4.) that Salem was in the way which led from the valley of Damascus unto Sodom: which we learn from this very place of Scripture. And so St. Jerome says, that he learned from the Jews in his time, that it was seated on this side of Jordan: and it retained its name in our Saviour's days, as appears by the story of John's baptizing near Salem. (John iii. 23.) Several of the fathers are of the same mind, quoted by Mr. Selden in his Review of the History of Tithes, p. 452.

Brought forth bread and wine.] This he did as a *king*, not as a *priest:* for it was not an act of religion but of hospitality. Thus heathens themselves understood this history, as we find by Eupolemus, (quoted by Eusebius, lib. ix. cap. 17.) who saith he received Abram as they were wont to do strangers, in a city called *Argarizin*, which he interprets the *Mount of the Most High.* We know not in what language it so signifies, or whether it be

misprinted for *Harellon:* but I think the plain sense is, that he treated Abram and his followers, by causing provisions to be brought forth for their refreshment after the fight. For *bread* and *wine* comprehend all sorts of provision for their repast: as to *eat bread* with another, in this book, is to *feast* with him, (xliii. 25.) And thus Tertullian, it is certain, understood it; who saith expressly, he brought them forth to Abram, and offered them to him, and not to God, (lib. adv. Judæos, cap. 3.) And Epiphanius observes, that the word in the Greek is not κατένεγκε but ἐξέβαλε; not *he offered,* but *brought out.* So it seems his copy had it.

Ver. 19. *And he blessed him.*] This he did as a priest (which office is just beforementioned) as he did the other as a king.

Blessed be Abram of the most high God.] He prayed God to confirm the blessing, which he had pronounced upon him.

Possessor of heaven and earth.] Rather *Creator,* as the LXX. and Vulgar Latin translate it. (See Dr. Spencer, lib. i. de Leg. Hebr. cap. 4. §. 10. and Lud. de Dieu before him, in his notes on this place, and Hotting. Smegma Orient. p. 87.) By this and the next verse, wherein he gives glory to the most high God for Abram's victory, it is apparent that he was a worshipper of the one only true God, and maker and governor of all things. To whom he also ministered in the office of a priest, who blessed men in his name.

And he gave him.] *i. e.* Abram gave to Melchizedec, as the apostle explains it, (Heb. vii. 2.) But the words are so doubtful as they lie here, that Eupolemus (in the place abovementioned) thought Melchizedec had bestowed gifts upon Abram.

Tithes of all.] He doth not say of what all; but that which goes before leads us to think he means tithes of all the spoil, which he had taken from Chedorlaomer, &c. For he had nothing else there to tithe, unless it were the remainder of the provision he had carried along with him in this expedition: all the rest of his own estate being many miles off, at Mamre. And thus Josephus interprets it, δεκάτην τῆς λείας, *the tithe of what was gotten by war.* And thus the apostle himself seems to expound it, (Heb. vii.) For having said (ver. 2.) he gave him the "tenth part of all;" when he comes to argue from this, he calls it "the tenth part of the spoils," (verse 4.) And, indeed, it was a very ancient custom to offer to God (whose priest Melchizedec was) the tenth part of what they took in war. Diodorus Siculus reports it of the Greeks, and many authors of the Romans. From whence we cannot infer, that they gave only tithes of such things; but rather that these were extraordinary acknowledgments of God's mercy to them, which it was usual to make out of those possessions which he had blessed them withal. For why should they give tithe of the spoils, if they were not wont to pay tithe of other things? And, therefore, St. Chrysostom makes this reflection upon this practice of Abram, that it should teach us to be willing and ready to offer unto God, ἀπαρχὰς, *the first-fruits of all that he hath bestowed on us.* This is confirmed by the story of Jacob, which, together with this of Abram, shews plainly the custom of paying tithes was before the law of Moses; and that not only of the spoils of war, but of their flocks, corn, and other fruit, which Jacob vowed unto God, (xxxviii. 22.) See there.

Ver. 21. *Give me the persons,* &c.] A truly generous disposition, becoming a king, to love the persons of his subjects better than their goods.

Ver. 22. *I have lift up my hand.*] *i. e.* Sworn, as the phrase is used in many places, (Exod. vi. 8. Numb. xiv. 30, &c.)

Possessor of heaven and earth.] See ver. 19.

Ver. 23. *I will not take from a thread,* &c.] *i. e.* The meanest thing.

I have made Abram rich.] He would have this to be only the work of God; who promised, a great while ago, to bless him, and had now renewed his promise by Melchizedec. And he would not have it thought that love of spoil had carried him to the war; but only love of justice. In short, here is a most noble example (as Maimonides observes, par. iii. More Nevoch. cap. 50.) of contentedness with what he had, of despising riches, and seeking praise rather from virtue.

Ver. 24. *Except only that which the young men* (*i. e.* the soldiers) *have eaten.*] For which he did not think it reasonable they should pay.

And the portion of them that went with me.] He could not bind his confederates by his own act, but left them to deal with their countrymen as they pleased: in either keeping their share of the spoil, or parting with it, as he had done. The Jews truly observe, that they who stayed with the stuff and carriages, had their portion equal with those that fought: as we read in the story of David, (1 Sam. xxx. 25.) But it is not certain that this custom was as old as Abram's time; which they would gather from this place. For here they take the young men for those who fought and pursued the enemy: and Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, stayed to guard the carriage. But I see no ground for this, it being most probable, as I observed before, that they attacked the enemy, as well as Abram's servants; and thereby acquired a title to part of the spoil. But whether we consider it this way, or the other, Abram could not give away their right, when he generously parted with his own.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND after these things.*] After this great victory, and his generous refusal of the king of Sodom's offer.

The word of the Lord came to Abram.] God revealed himself more clearly to him. For this is the first time we read of "the word of the Lord" coming to him; and of his having a vision: that is, being made a prophet, and that in a high degree, God revealing his mind to him, not in a dream but in a vision; when he was awake, but having his senses (as Maimonides explains it) bound up from their ordinary functions; during the time that the heavenly influence came upon his mind, and diffused itself to his imagination, where it represented several things to him. (More Nev. par. ii. cap. 41.) But these words may be understood of his having these things represented to him by the Divine Majesty, when he was perfectly awake, and used all his senses.

Fear not, Abram.] He heard these words, while he was in the ecstacy (according to Maimonides's explication),

encouraging his hope in God, that he and Lot should be safe from any new invasion by these or any other enemies. For, perhaps, there were some rumours abroad of the Assyrians recruiting their forces, with an intention to renew the war.

I am thy shield.] I will protect and defend thee.

And thy exceeding great reward.] Will give thee far more than thou hast lately denied to take for my sake.

Ver. 2. *Lord God, what wilt thou give me,* &c.] What good will all the riches in the world do me, if I have not a child to inherit my estate?

To go childless.] Is to die (to go out of the world without children), as Luke xxii. 22. "truly the Son of man goeth;" *i. e.* must die shortly. He doth not slight God's promise made in the foregoing verse; but only desires him to be so gracious as to give him a child for his reward.

And the steward of my house is this, &c.] He that takes care of all I have (and therefore deserves best of me), is not of my kindred.

Eliezer of Damascus.] Some think this signifies no more, but that he was born of a Syrian woman.

Ver. 3. *And Abram said,* &c.] He repeats the same again, out of a great concern to have God's promise fulfilled: which he did not disbelieve, but earnestly longed for, more than for all the riches in the world.

One born in my house is my heir.] It is likely, that Eliezer was one of their souls (*i. e.* servants) gotten in Haran, (xii. 5.) and had been such a wise and faithful manager of all things committed to his care, that Abram intended, before the promise made to him, to have left him his heir: thinking he should have no child of his own, Sarah being barren, as we read, xi. 30.

Ver. 4. *And behold, the word of the Lord came to him,* &c.] A new assurance is given him, from the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, that he should have an heir begotten by himself.

Ver. 5. *And he brought him forth abroad, and said,* &c.] Maimonides thinks (More Nev. par. ii. cap. 46.) that all this which follows was done in a vision: but others will have it, that he was really conducted out of his tent into the open air, and looked upon the stars. The former opinion is more probable, because the sun was not yet gone down, (ver. 12.) and therefore the stars were not to be seen with the eye, but were represented only in a vision.

So shall thy seed be.] Nehem. ix. 23. He not only promises him an heir; but that this heir should have a numerous posterity. Which, as before (xiii. 16.) he compared to the dust of the earth, so here he compares to the stars of heaven. Shewing (say some of the Jews) by the former their humiliation; and by this their exaltation and advancement: and indeed, in this chapter, he speaks of both.

Ver. 6. *He believed in the Lord.*] Was fully persuaded that God both could and would perform his promise, though it seemed to be very difficult, if not impossible, according to the ordinary course of nature: he and Sarah both being very old.

And he counted it to him for righteousness.] The Lord esteemed it a most noble act, and high expression of a pious confidence in him, (as that act of Phinehas was, in aftertimes, Psalm cvi. 31.) and thereupon graciously owned him for a righteous person: though he was not free from all sin whatsoever; but was guilty of some that were not consistent with perfect righteousness.

It is here to be considered, that Abram believed this promise before (xii. 1, 2, 3, 4.) but now his faith was the more remarkable; because, notwithstanding some time had passed since the first making of the promise, and he had no issue, he still persisted in the belief that God would bestow a son upon him, though it grew every day more unlikely.

Ver. 7. *I am the Lord that brought thee,* &c.] He reminds him of what he had already done for him; that he might confirm him in the belief of what he promised farther to do.

To give thee this land, &c.] To bestow it upon thy children for their inheritance.

Ver. 8. *Whereby shall I know,* &c.] This is not spoken doubtingly; for the strength of his faith is highly commended, but he desires to have it more and more strengthened and confirmed: as some good men did in aftertimes, when they were put upon very difficult services. So Gideon, Judg. vi. 37, &c.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto him, Take me an heifer,* &c.] *i. e.* Offer unto me (so it should be rendered, as Mr. Mede observes, book ii. p. 472.) the following creatures: which are of four sorts. From whence the Hebrew doctors would persuade us, the rise and the fall of the four monarchies are signified in these words: but it is a better observation, that God hereby fore-signified their sins should be expiated by sacrifices. For these were the creatures, and these alone, which were appointed to be offered in sacrifice to God, by the law of Moses. And it justifies their opinion, who think there were clean and unclean beasts, with respect to sacrifice before the law, though not with respect to meat.

Yet here is something singular, that God required Abram to offer an heifer of three years old, with a goat and a ram of the same age; whereas afterwards, under the law, they were commonly of one year old. I know not the reason of this difference; but certain it is, that a ram of three years old is in its full strength, and the vigour of its age, as Bochart observes. Whence it is that Lucian introduces Ganymede proffering to offer unto Jupiter (if he would dismiss him), τὸν τριετῆ τὸν μέγαν, &c. *a ram of three years old, a big one, the leader of the flock.* Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 46.

A young pigeon.] The Hebrew word *gozal,* signifies the young ones of ring-doves, wood-pigeons, or any other of that kind, as he also observes.

Ver. 10. *And he took unto him.*] Now we must suppose he was come out of his ecstacy; and really performed all that follows, until he fell into it more profoundly than before.

Divided them in the midst.] There is no footstep of this rite any where in the Scripture, save only in the prophet Jeremy, (xxxiv. 18, 19.) But this place shews it to have been very ancient: and St. Cyril, in his tenth book against Julian, derives this custom from the ancient Chaldeans. As others derive the very word *bireth,* [ברית] which signifies *a covenant,* from the word used both here and in Jeremy, viz. בתר, *batar,* which is the very same by a transposition of letters, and signifies *to divide,* or *cut asunder.* Because covenants were made by dividing a

beast, and by the parties covenanting passing between the parts of the beast so divided: signifying that so should they be cut asunder who broke the covenant. Thus Mr. Mede, in the place forementioned, truly explains this rite, which was as much as if they had said, "Thus let me be divided and cut in pieces, if I violate the oath I have now made in the presence of my God."

We find in Zenobius, that the people called Molotti retained something of this custom; for they confirmed their oaths when they made their covenants, κατακόπτοντες εἰς τὰ μικρὰ τοὺς βοῦς, *by cutting oxen into little bits.*

Laid each piece one against another.] So that there was a space left between them; through which the parties covenanting might pass. Which seems to be meant by Homer, when he says, (Iliad. *ά.* ver. 461.) that after the priest had prayed to Apollo, the sacrifice was slain and flayed, and then they cut it up,

Δίπτυχα ποιήσαντες,——

making duplicates, which were exactly answerable one to the other.

But the birds divided he not.] Thus it was prescribed afterwards, (Levit. i. 17.) because they were but an appendage to the sacrifice, and their blood was not sprinkled upon the altar. It is likely, notwithstanding, that the birds were laid one against the other, as the pieces of the beasts were. And there being a prophecy of the state of Abram's family in future times, (ver. 13, 14.) some fancy that the division of these beasts represented the dispersion of his posterity into divers countries.

Ver. 11. *And when the fowls came down,* &c.] The birds of prey. For the Hebrew word *ajit,* signifies "avis rapax et carnivora," *ravenous birds, that feed on flesh.* Whence Bochartus thinks an eagle is called in Greek Ἀετὸς, and Αἰετὸς, as the principal bird of prey. (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. iii. cap. 12.) And by these fowls some think the Egyptians are represented, who fell upon the Israelites, as rapacious birds do upon dead carcasses, and endeavoured to hinder their offering sacrifices unto God.

Abram drove them away.] He sat by the pieces of flesh (as the LXX. translate it) to watch, lest vultures, or such-like creatures, should snatch them away. For he looking upon them as things hallowed, watched to see what God intended in them.

Ver. 12. *A deep sleep,* &c.] Some would have it, that he being tired with the great labour of fetching the sacrifices, cutting them up, and watching them, naturally fell into a sleep. But Maimonides, more reasonably, looks upon this as the continuance of what was begun before in a vision: which at last was converted into a profound sleep, wherein things were represented to him in a dream. And therefore their wise men say, this was a prophetical sleep. More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 45.

A horror of great darkness fell upon him.] Prophecy, saith the forenamed author, begins sometimes in vision; afterwards that terror and vehement passion, which follow the high working of the imaginative faculty, being multiplied, it ends in a deep sleep, as it did here in Abram. Such a terror also possessed Daniel in some of his visions, while he was awake, (Dan. x. 8.) as the same Maimonides observes in the 41st chapter of that book.

This horror of great darkness, many think, signified the dismal condition of Abram's posterity in Egypt: which God now represented to him. And this horror coming upon him, at the going down of the sun, was, they think, a further signification of it. For we say a man's sun is set when he falls into great calamities. And it signified, some imagined, these calamities should come upon them a great while hence.

Ver. 13. *And he said unto Abram,* &c.] Here he informs him what the state of his family should be from the birth of Isaac, (which he had promised to him, ver. 5.) for the space of four hundred years.

Thy seed.] This shews from whence the four hundred years were to commence; viz. from the time of his having a son.

Be a stranger in a land that is not theirs.] *i. e.* Sojourn partly in Canaan and partly in Egypt. There are those, indeed, who fancy Canaan cannot be said to be a land that was not theirs, God having bestowed it upon Abram. But God himself teaches us otherwise, (Exod. vi. 4.) where he calls it, "the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers:" because they were not at present possessed of it, though they had a good title to it.

And they shall afflict them four hundred years.] These four hundred years are not to be referred only to what immediately goes before [*they shall afflict them*], but to all the rest, their sojourning in a strange land, and their being in servitude. These three things were to come to pass within that space: so that it is as if he had said, "Thy seed shall not possess this land till four hundred years hence." During which time they shall be sojourners in this land and in Egypt; that is, some part of it, and also be no better than slaves, nay, endure sore affliction.

It must here be noted, that from the birth of Isaac, when these years began, to their deliverance out of the Egyptian bondage, was just four hundred and five years: but the five odd years are not mentioned; it being the manner of all writers to take no notice of broken numbers (as they call them) when they name a round sum. Thus the Greek interpreters of the Bible are commonly called the LXX. though there were seventy-two of them. And the Roman writers call those Centumviri, who were in all a hundred and five. And Moses, in another place, (Numb. xi. 21.) saith, "the Israelites were six hundred thousand;" not reckoning the three thousand five hundred and fifty above that number, as appears from Numb. i. 46. and ii. 32.

If it seems a difficulty, that their sojourning is said in Exod. xii. 40. to have been four hundred and thirty years, it is removed by considering, that in those years is comprehended the time of Abram's sojourning also, as well as his seed. And it was just twenty-five years from his coming into Canaan to the birth of Isaac, which, added to four hundred and five years beforementioned, make up the number of four hundred and thirty. And this is so exactly true, that if we divide the sum of four hundred and thirty into equal parts, it is computed by the best of the ancient as well as later writers, that the Hebrew nation sojourned just two hundred and fifteen years in Canaan, (reckoning that short time Abram was in Egypt, chap. xii.) and as many after they went into Egypt. See Usser. Chronol. Sacra, cap. 10.

Ver. 14. *I will judge.*] *i. e.* Punish them.

Ver. 15. *Go to thy fathers.*] *i. e.* Die, and depart to the other world.

In peace.] And see none of the forenamed calamities.

Ver. 16. *The iniquity of the Amorites,* &c.] Abram now lived among the Amorites, (xiv. 13.) But under their name are comprehended all the other nations of Canaan. Who were very wicked; but God forbare them till their wickedness had overflowed the whole country, and that to the greatest height. Their most heinous iniquities were abominable idolatries, cruelty, beastly filthiness, to a prodigious excess, (Levit. xviii. 22, 23. &c.) See Theodoret upon Psalm cv. 44. and P. Fagius on Levit. v. 1.

But in Abram's time their iniquity was not full: *i. e.* there were several good men still remaining among them, as Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner seem to have been, who were confederate with Abram; and Melchizedec certainly was, who, being priest of the most high God, had some people sure worshipped together with him: and therefore God stayed till there was an universal corruption, and they were all ripe for destruction. For we read of none but Rahab, whose faith saved her and her family, when the time of their destruction came.

Ver. 17. *Behold a smoking furnace.*] If the great horror, (ver. 12.) represented the extreme misery of the children of Israel in Egypt, then this seems to signify God's vengeance upon the Egyptians, for oppressing them in the furnaces wherein they wrought, (Exod. ix. 8.)

A burning lamp, or *a lamp of fire.*] *i. e.* The Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, appeared in great splendour, (so Maimonides rightly explains it, par. i. More Nevoch, cap. 21.) like to a flaming fire. So it appeared to Moses, when God came to deliver them from the Egyptian bondage, (Exod. iii. 2. 6, &c.)

Passed between the pieces.] In token, as it follows, (ver. 18.) that he entered into a covenant with Abram and with his posterity: for *passing between* the pieces he consumed them (as St. Chrysostom rightly understands it), and thereby testified his acceptance of the sacrifices which Abraham offered. I noted before, that there is no such rite we read of any where in Scripture, but in Jeremiah, of making a covenant in this manner. But there are those who think they find this custom in other nations: for if Dictys Cretensis do not lie, after the manner of the Cretians (as Bochart speaks), both the Greeks and Trojans, from the time of Homer, did make covenants in this fashion. Certain it is, the Bœotians and Macedonians passed, on some occasions, through the parts of a beast dissected; but it was for lustration, not for covenanting, as the same Bochart observes, (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 46.)

Ver. 18. *Unto thy seed will I give this land,* &c.] Here is the utmost extent of the donation made to Abram; which began to be fulfilled in David, (2 Sam. viii. 3, &c.) for till then they did not enlarge their borders as far as Euphrates.

The river of Egypt.] So Nile is commonly called, but cannot be here meant, because the Israelites never enjoyed all the land of Egypt on this side Nile. Therefore we are to understand by it, that little river which came out of that branch of Nile called Peleusiacum Barachium; from whence a small river, not navigable, ran toward Judea, falling into the Egyptian or Phœnician Sea. For this river was the bounds of Palestine, and is mentioned by Strabo and others, whom G. Vossius cites, (lib. ii. De Idolol. cap. 74.) It is called, (Amos vi. 14.) "the river of the wilderness," because it run through the wilderness, which is between Egypt and Palestine, into the sea.

Ver. 19. *The Kenites, and Kenizzites.*] These are put into the number of the nations whose country God gave to Abram, but whether they were descended from any of the sons of Canaan we cannot tell; nor are we certain where they dwelt. Only Eustathius, bishop of Antioch, says, the Kenites dwelt about Libanus and Amanus; and the Kenizzites, it is likely, were their neighbours. But the names of these people were quite extinct between the times of Abram and Moses; for we find no mention of them by Joshua in the division of the land of Canaan, nor in the account he gives of the nations he conquered. We read, indeed, of the Kenezites, (Numb. xxxii. 12. Josh. xiv. 6. 14.) but they were of the children of Israel; and of the Kenites, (Judg. i. 16. iv. 11. 17.) but they descended from the father-in-law of Moses. And therefore those whom Moses here speaks of, it is probable, lost their name; being incorporated into some of the seven nations who inhabited this country when Joshua subdued it.

The Cadmonites.] These are no where else mentioned; but are thought, by Bochartus, to be the same with the Hivites; who, living about Mount Hermon, toward the east of the land of Canaan, were thence called Kadmonites; *i. e.* Orientals. See x. 17.

Ver. 20. *Hittites.*] See x. 15.

Perizzites.] They were a people inhabiting the mountainous and woody country of Canaan, as appears from Josh. xi. 3. xvii. 13. From whence we may gather, they were a wild sort of people, who lived far from cities, in little villages; and thence, perhaps, had their name: for *Pherazoth,* in Hebrew, signifies *Pagi,* villages. But from which of the sons of Canaan they descended, there is not the least signification in Holy Scripture.

Rephaim.] They dwelt in Bashan, and, perhaps, in other countries thereabouts. See xiv. 5.

Ver. 21. *Amorites.*] These were the mightiest people in the land of Canaan. See x. 16.

Canaanites.] These were some of the posterity of Canaan, who peculiarly inherited his name, living upon the sea-coast, and upon the banks of Jordan, (Numb. xiii. 30. Deut. i. 7. xi. 30.) And it is a reasonable conjecture, that they sprang from such of Canaan's sons, as had, for a time, the greatest power and authority in that country; and therefore had the prerogative of being called by his name; or else they were so called because they were merchants, and great traders by sea. For so the word is used in Scripture.

Gergasite.] See x. 16.

Jebusite.] See there also.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *SARAI bare him no child.*] Still the fulfilling of God's promise was deferred, for the greater trial of Abram's faith; which now had held out ten years, (ver. 3.) without seeing any fruit of it.

She had a handmaid, an Egyptian.] An Egyptian by

nation, but a proselyte to the true religion. St. Chrysostom thinks Pharaoh bestowed her upon Sarai, when he took her into his house, or when he sent her away, (xii. 15. 20.) Which he learnt from the Jews, who say the same, as may be seen in Pirke Eliezer, (cap. 26.) who says also, as R. Solomon Jarchi doth, that she was Pharaoh's daughter, by his concubine. But it is more likely she was such a servant to Sarai as Eliezer was to Abram; born in his house of an Egyptian, as he was of a Syrian woman.

Ver. 2. *And Sarai said unto Abram,* &c.] It is likely, he having acquainted her with the promise, she grew impatient to have it fulfilled some way or other.

Go in unto my maid.] *i.e.* Take her to wife, (ver. 3.)

It may be I may obtain children by her.] Being born of her bond-slave, they would be Sarai's children, according to the custom of those times, (xxx. 3. Exod. xxi. 4.)

And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.] Thinking, perhaps, that God might fulfil his promise this way, because he had only told him he should have seed, but had not, as yet, said by Sarai.

Ver. 3. *Gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.*] A secondary wife (which was a liberty they took in those days), who was not to be mistress of the house, but only to bear children, for the increase of the family. Now I can see no good reason why Sarai herself should persuade her husband (contrary to the inclination of all women) to take another wife, which she herself also gave him, but only the eager desire she was possessed withal of having the promised seed. Which gives a good account also of Jacob's wives contending so earnestly as they did for his company.

Ver. 4. *Her mistress was despised in her eyes.*] Hagar began to take upon her as if she had been mistress of the house; at least much more favoured by God, who had made her fruitful; which was accounted a great blessing and honour in those days, especially in a family that had no heir.

Ver. 5. *My wrong be upon thee.*] Thou art the cause of this injury (or these affronts) which I suffer by being too indulgent to my maid, and not repressing her insolence. Or, it is incumbent on thee to see me redressed of the wrong that is done me. See Lud. de Dieu.

The Lord judge between me and thee.] Sometimes this phrase signifies an appeal to God, as the avenger of wrongs; but here it seems only to denote her committing the equity of her cause to the judgment of God.

Ver. 6. *Behold, thy maid is in thy hand.*] Is subject unto thee.

Do with her as pleases thee.] Use her as thy maid, and not as my wife.

And when Sarai dealt hardly with her.] Beat her, perhaps, or imposed on her too much, or too servile, labour.

She fled from her face.] Run away, to avoid her cruel usage.

Ver. 7. *And the angel of the Lord,* &c.] This is the first time that we read of the appearance of an angel. By whom, Maimonides will scarce allow us to understand more than a messenger, (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 42.) But some Christians go so far into the other extreme, as to understand hereby, the Eternal ΛΟΓΟΣ, or Son of God. It seems to me more reasonable to think, that though the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, did not appear to her, as it had often done to Abram; yet one of the heavenly ministers, who were attendants upon it, and made a part of its glory, was sent to stop her proceedings. And a great favour it was, that the Lord would dispatch such a messenger after her, who was sufficient to do the business.

In the way to Shur.] She was flying into Egypt, her own country (upon which the wilderness of Shur bordered), and only rested awhile at this fountain to refresh herself.

Ver. 8. *And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid.*] He takes notice of her being Sarai's maid, rather than Abram's wife, to put her in mind of her duty, and that she could not honestly leave her mistress without her consent; for so it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 9. *Return to thy mistress, and submit;* &c.] It is the same word here translated *submit,* with that (ver. 6.) where it is rendered *dealt hardly;* signifying that she should be patient, and endure the hardship of which she complained (or suffer herself to be afflicted by her).

Ver. 10. *I will multiply,* &c.] I will make thee partaker of the promise I have made to Abram, (xv. 5.) The angel delivers this message to her in the name of God, who sent him.

Ver. 11. *Behold, thou art with child,* &c.] Do not doubt of what I say, for thou art with child of a son, who shall be the father of a great people. This promise was renewed to Abram in the next chapter, (xvii. 20.) and we find was performed, (xxv. 12.)

Shalt call his name Ishmael.] Some of the Jews take notice of the honour which was here done him, in calling him by his name before he was born; there being but six, they say, who were thus distinguished from others; the two first were the sons of Abram (Ishmael and Isaac), and the last was the Messias.

The Lord hath heard thy affliction.] Thy complaint under the affliction thou hast endured from thy mistress, and here in the wilderness. This passage shews it was an angel which appeared and spake to her from the Lord, and not the Lord himself.

Ver. 12. *A wild man.*] The Hebrew word *phere,* here joined with *man,* signifies a *wild ass;* and so is well translated by Bochart, "tam ferus quam onager," *as wild as a wild ass.* Which loves to ramble in deserts, and is not easily tamed to live in society.

His hand shall be against every man, &c.] He shall be very warlike; and both infest all his neighbours, and be infested by them.

He shall dwell in the presence of his brethren.] Be a nation by himself, near to all his brethren, whether descended from Isaac, or from the rest of Abram's sons by Keturah; who, though annoyed by him, shall not be able to dispossess him. This is such an exact description of the posterity of Ishmael throughout all generations, that none but a prophetic spirit could have made it, as Doctor Jackson truly observes, (book i. on the Creed, chap. 25.) Wildness being so incorporated into their nature, that no change of times hath made them grow tame.

Ver. 13. *She called the name of the Lord, that spake to her.*] By his angel, for she looked upon the presence of the angel as a token of the Divine presence, though she saw it not in its full glory.

Thou God seest me.] Takest care of me, wheresoever I am.

For she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth

me?] There are various interpretations of these words: the plainest is that of De Dieu, who observes, that the word *halom* always signifies *place*, not *time;* or, that which is done in any place, and so we translate it by the word *here*. But there he makes a stop after that word, by way of admiration, in this manner: *And even here also!* or, *even thus far!* It had been less wonder, if God had taken care of me in my master's house; but doth he follow me with his favour even hither? This is wonderful! And then the next words, *(have I looked after him that seeth me?)* carried this sense, Have I beheld God, who taketh care of me? What a favour is this, that he would so far condescend to me? It ought never to be forgotten; therefore she called his name, *Thou God seest me.*

Ver. 14. *Beer-lahai-roi.*] Some would have this refer both to Hagar and to God, in this manner: "The well of her that liveth, and of him that seeth," (*i. e.* who preserves me in life.) So it was an acknowledgment that she owed her life and safety to God.

Ver. 15. *Abram called his son's name,* &c.] Hagar having told him at her return the foregoing story, he gave his son this name, in obedience to the angel's command, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 16. *Fourscore and six years old.*] He was seventy-five years old when he came into Canaan, (xii. 4.) and had been ten years there when he took Hagar to wife (ver. 3. of this chapter), and therefore was then eighty-five years old; and consequently eighty-six the next year, when Ishmael was born.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *WHEN Abram was ninety-nine years old.*] Thirteen years after Ishmael's birth.

The Lord appeared to Abram.] In a visible majesty, to satisfy him that the promise made, (xv. 4, 5.) should not be fulfilled in Ishmael.

I am the Almighty God.] Or, All-sufficient. This is the first time we meet with this name; which was most fitly used here, when he speaks of a thing very difficult to be done, but not beyond the power of God, who can do all things, and needs none to assist him.

Walk before me.] Go on to please me.

And be thou perfect.] Till thou hast completed thy faith and obedience.

Ver. 2. *And I will make my covenant,* &c.] Establish and perform my covenant; for it was made before, and now only confirmed by a sign or token of it, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 3. *Abram fell on his face.*] Being astonished at the brightness of that Majesty which appeared to him, (ver. 1.)

Ver. 4. *As for me, behold, my covenant,* &c.] Be not afraid, for it is I, who am constant to my word, and now again engage myself unto thee.

Thou shalt be a father of many nations.] Not only of Jews, and Ishmaelites, and others, but, in the spiritual sense, of all the gentile world.

Ver. 5. *Neither shall thy name,* &c.] Abram is commonly interpreted *high father;* and Abraham, the *father of a multitude.* So the very text expounds the reason of this name: "For a father of many nations have I made thee." There are many ways of making out this meaning, but none seems to me so plain as that of Hottinger's; who makes it a composition of *Ab* (a father), and the old word *Raham,* which still in Arabic signifies a *great number.* Smegma Orient. cap. viii. §. 19.

Ver. 6. *And I will make thee exceeding fruitful,* &c.] I observed before, (xii. 7.) that Abram's obedience was constantly rewarded in kind, &c. of which here is a new proof. For, upon his submission to be circumcised (wherein his obedience was next tried), which might seem to weaken the power of generation, (as Maimonides affirms it doth, More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 49.) God promises that he would make him so exceeding fruitful, that nations and kings should proceed from him; as there did both by Israel, Edom, and Ishmael, from whom the Saracens came, &c.

Ver. 7. *An everlasting covenant.*] The word *olam,* which we translate *everlasting,* hath often a limited signification, to the end of such a period, (as, Exod. xxi. 6. *a servant for ever,* is, till the year of jubilee) though, with respect to the thing signified, this covenant is absolutely everlasting, and continues now that the sign is abolished. The next words tell us what was signified in this covenant of circumcision.

To be a God unto thee, &c.] I think Maimonides hath truly observed, that in circumcision they covenanted with God, to have no other God but him; or, in his phrase, they covenanted concerning "the belief of the unity of God," (More Nev. par. iii. cap. 49.) who promised to be their God; that is, to bestow all manner of blessings upon them, and at last to send the Messiah.

Ver. 8. *And I will give thee,* &c.] Here he again renews his promise, (xii. 7. xiii. 15. xv. 18.) and confirms it by this covenant, to give him that land, wherein he was at present a stranger, and to put his seed in possession of it.

An everlasting possession.] If they did not forfeit it by their disobedience to him.

Ver. 9. *Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore,* &c.] Now follows Abraham's part of this covenant, which was mutual between God and him.

Ver. 10. *This is my covenant.*] Which the next verse explains, by the sign or *token of the covenant.* As the paschal lamb is called the passover of the Lord; (Exod. xii. 11.) that is, the memorial of the angel's passing them by, when he killed the Egyptian children, (xiii. 9.) But circumcision was such a sign, that they entered thereby into a covenant with God to be his people. For it was not a mere mark, whereby they should be known to be Abraham's seed, and distinguished from other nations; but they were made by this the children of the covenant, and entitled to the blessings of it: though, if there had been no more in it but this, that they who were of the same faith, as Maimonides speaks, should have one certain character, whereby they should be known and joined one to another, without the mixture of any other people, it had been a very wise appointment. And this mark was very fitly chosen, because it was such a token as no man would have set upon himself and upon his children, unless it were for faith and religion's sake. For it is not a brand upon the arm, or an incision in the thigh, but a thing very hard, and in a most tender part: which nobody would have undertaken but on the forenamed account, (par. iii. More Nev. cap. 49.)

It may be proper here to add, that covenants were anciently made in those eastern countries, by dipping their weapons in blood (as Xenophon tells us), and by pricking the flesh, and sucking each other's blood, as we read in Tacitus; who observes, (lib. ii. Annal.) that when kings made a league, they took each other by the hand, and, their thumbs being hard tied together, they pricked them, when the blood was forced to the extreme parts, and each party licked it; which, he saith, was accounted "Arcanum fœdus, quosi mutuo cruore sacratum;" *a mysterious covenant, being made sacred by their mutual blood.* How old this custom had been, we do not know; but it is evident God's covenant with Abraham was solemnized on Abraham's part by his own and his son Isaac's blood, and so continued through all generations, by cutting off the foreskin of their flesh (as it follows in the next verse); whereby, as they were made the select people of God, so God in conclusion sent his own Son, who, by this very ceremony of circumcision, was consecrated to be their God and their Redeemer.

Ver. 11. *Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin.*] *i. e.* The foreskin of your flesh; for that member, which is the instrument of generation, is peculiarly called by the name of *flesh,* in many places, (Lev. xv. 2. Ezek. xvi. 26.) In which part of the body, rather than in any other, God appointed the mark of his covenant to be made; that they might be denoted to be a holy seed, consecrated to him from the beginning. The pagans made marks in several parts of their bodies (some in one, some in another), whereby they were consecrated to their gods; but the character which God would have imprinted upon his people, was in one peculiar part and no other (from which they never varied), *viz.* in that part which served for the propagation of mankind. Of which some have given natural, others moral reasons; but the most plain and obvious is, that it might be an apt token of the Divine covenant made with Abraham and his posterity, that God would multiply their seed, and make them as the stars of heaven, (xv. 5.) It is probable, also, that this part was chosen, rather than any other, to make them sensible that this was a Divine sacrament; for nothing but God's institution could at first engage men to lay that part bare, which nature hath covered.

It is of late, indeed, made a question by some learned men, whether this were the original of circumcision; which they fancy the Jews borrowed from the Egyptians, and not the Egyptians from the Jews. Certain it is, that not only the Egyptians, but several other nations, did very anciently use circumcision. Now it is improbable, say they, that the Egyptians (who seem to have had it the most early of all nations who sprang not from Abraham) would borrow this custom from the Hebrews, whom they perfectly hated (shepherds being an abomination to them, xlvi. 34.) and therefore they give themselves the liberty to say, that God did not now enjoin Abraham a new thing, when he ordered him to be circumcised, but only made this a sign of his covenant with him, which it was not with other nations. But unless it can be proved that circumcision was in use before Abraham's time, (which doth not appear from any good authors, though such as Celsus were so bold as to affirm it, as we find in Origen, lib. v.) such arguments as these will not persuade us to believe, that it came from the Egyptians, or any other nation; but they had it, if not from the Hebrews, yet from the posterity of Ishmael, or other people descended from Abraham: who, being highly beloved of God, it is not credible that God would set the mark of Ham's race upon him and his posterity; much less make it the token of his covenant with them. (See J. Ludolphus, lib. iii. Comment. in Histor. Ethiop. cap. i. n. 5.) The only authority upon whom the broachers of this novelty rely, is Herodotus, who, in this second book, cap. 104. says, "The people of Colchis, and the Egyptians, were the only nations that were circumcised, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, *from the beginning:* the Syrians and Phœnicians who live in Palestine, acknowledging they had this rite from them." Which is just such a tale as he tells in the second chapter of that book, that the Egyptians were the first inhabitants of the earth, unless, perhaps, the Phrygians. This opinion proceeded from their own vain conceit, which made them loath to confess they received circumcision from any other people. Though I think there is a convincing argument of it in Moses himself, who tells us, in chapter x. 14. that the Philistim came from the Casluchim; *i. e.* the people of Colchis, as that people came originally from Egypt. (So Herodotus himself, Diodorus, and abundance of other credible authors, testify.) This, it appears by what I noted there, was before the time of Moses, nay, before Abraham; for the Philistim had a king among them in his days, as we read in this book, (xx. and xxvi.) Now these Philistim were an uncircumcised people, and therefore the people of Colchis, no doubt, were so also, when they went out of their country, and drove the Avim out of Palestine. And, consequently, the Egyptians had no such rite among them, when the Casluchim came from Egypt, but put a gross cheat upon Herodotus when they made him believe they had been circumcised, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, *from the beginning.* And in like manner they imposed upon him, who told him the inhabitants of Palestine (whom he calls Syrians and Phœnicians) confessed they received circumcision from the Egyptians: for there were no inhabitants of Palestine circumcised but the Jews, who always professed they received it from Abraham; who, we may be confident, was the first person in the world that was circumcised; there being nothing to induce any body to use such a rite, unless they had been directed to it by God, as Abraham was; from whom the Ishmaelites received it, and from them the Arabians; and from those countries, or from Abraham's children by Keturah, it was derived (as seems most probable to me) to the Egyptians; from whom the people of Colchis, who knew themselves to be an Egyptian breed, embraced it, in imitation of their famous ancestors. But, after Abraham's time, we find no such rite among the Philistim, a colony of theirs; to whom, in all likelihood, they would have communicated it, as the Egyptians did to them, if it had been then used in that country.

Ver. 12. *And he that is eight days old,* &c.] Maimonides thinks, that if circumcision had not been performed in their infancy, it might have been in danger to have been neglected afterward. For an infant felt not so much pain as an adult person would have done; in whom the flesh is more compact, and his imagination stronger. The parents also (especially fathers) have not so strong an affection to a child when he is newly born, as they have when he is grown up; and so more easily submitted to this harsh rite at their first

appearance in the world than they would have done, after they were more endeared to them. But the child could not be circumcised before the eighth day after his birth; because till then he was looked upon as imperfect; and not yet sufficiently cleansed and purged; for which reason beasts were not accepted by God, till seven days were passed after their birth, (Exod. xxii. 30.) See More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 49.

And, as the child was not to be circumcised before the eighth day, so he was not (unless, perhaps, in cases of great weakness) to be kept uncircumcised beyond that day. On which, if the parents did not cause it to be circumcised, the house of judgment, as the Jews speak, were bound to do it. And if they did not (being ignorant perhaps of the neglect) the child when he came of age (*i. e.* was thirteen years old) was bound himself to get it done. If he did not, the judges (if it were known to them) were obliged to take care of it: as Mr. Selden observes, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 6. p. 96, 97.

Ver. 13. *He that is born in thy house, or bought with money, must needs be circumcised.*] Not whether they would or no: for men were not to be compelled to religion; which had been a profanation of this covenant. But Abraham was to persuade them to it; and, if they consented not, to keep them no longer in his house; but to sell them to some other people. So Maimonides expounds it, in his Book of Circumcision, cap. 1. which is true both of servants born in the house, and bought with money: but as for the children of these slaves, they were to be circumcised whether their parents would or no; because they were the possession of their masters, not of their parents. For which cause, when the parents were set free, their children were left behind, as their master's goods, Exod. xxi. 4.

Ver. 14. *That soul shall be cut off from his people.*] That is, if, when he came to the age of thirteen years, he did not cause it to be done.

What it is to be *cut off*, is very much disputed. The simplest sense seems to be, he shall not be accounted one of God's people. But the Hebrew doctors generally take this to have been a punishment inflicted by the hand of heaven; *i. e.* of God: though they be much divided in their opinions about it. Of which Mr. Selden treats, at large, in lib. vii. De Jure N. et G. cap. 9. and De Synedr. lib. i. cap. 6. and more briefly L' Empereur in his notes upon Chron. 1. Bertram de Republ. Jud. p. 351. Some say it was the shortening of the man's life; others say it was the making him childless; so that his family and name perished in Israel. Maimonides would have it the extinction both of soul and body, like a brute. And Abarbinel takes it for the loss of the happiness of the world to come. Some Christians would have it to be excommunication: which cannot be, because such a person was never a member of the church, which he was to be made by circumcision. The first of these opinions seems more probable than the rest: for God himself saith of several offenders, to whom he threatens this punishment, "I will cut him off, and I will set my face against him," (Lev. xvii. 10. xx. 5, 6. xxiii. 30.) Yet, in other places, it must be confessed, this *cereth*, or cutting off, signifies more largely, a punishment by the judge, and not by the hand of God. And therefore the signification of it must be determined by the matter with which it is joined. Thus the violation of the sabbath is threatened with *cutting off*, (Exod. xxxi. 14.) which was to be done by stoning him: and so were incestuous persons, blasphemers, idolaters, and others, to be judiciously cut off by the rulers.

Ver. 15. *Sarah shall be her name.*] The same letter is added to her name, that was to Abraham's, and for the same reason; for in the next verse it is said, "she shall be a mother of nations."

Ver. 16. *Give thee a son also of her.*] Here now the promised seed is determined to spring from Sarah. See xvi. 2.

Ver. 17. *Abraham fell on his face.*] Worshipped God with the humblest reverence.

And laughed.] Not doubting of the promise, (for the apostle tells us quite contrary, Rom. iv. 19.) but out of the exceeding great joy wherewith he was transported; and the admiration wherewith he was surprised. Which produced the following questions:

Shall a child be born unto him, who is a hundred years old? &c.] As if he had said, Strange! that I and Sarah, at this age, should have a child! What joyful news is this! Accordingly, the Chaldee translates the word *laughed*, he *rejoiced*.

Ver. 18. *O that Ishmael may live before thee!*] In his posterity; as appears by God's answer to this petition, verse 20.

Ver. 19. *Call his name Isaac.*] He had this name from Abraham's, not from Sarah's laughter: for that was after this; and proceeded not from the same cause with Abraham's.

Ver. 20. *I have heard thee.*] He shall have a numerous posterity. See Doctor Jackson's first book on the Creed, chap. 26. where he shews how the Hagarens grew a mighty nation: and at last (when they were called Saracens) became the scourges of all these parts of the world.

Ver. 21. *But my covenant will I establish with Isaac.*] The great blessings I have promised in the covenant I have made with thee, shall come to thy posterity by Isaac, not by Ishmael: particularly the Messiah.

Ver. 22. *And God went up from Abraham.*] That visible majesty wherein he appeared to him, (ver. 1.) called often, in aftertimes, "the glory of the Lord," went up to heaven from whence it came.

Ver. 25. *Ishmael was thirteen years old*, &c.] From hence it was, that the Saracens, descended from him, did not circumcise their children till they were thirteen years old. So it was in the days of Josephus, (lib. i. Antiq. cap. 13.) And the Saracens in Spain and Africa observed the same custom.

Ver. 26. *In the self-same day.*] The Jews will have this to be the same with the great day of expiation instituted in Moses's time: so that God every year remembered, say they, the covenant of circumcision. But this is an ungrounded fancy.

Ver. 27. *And all the men of his house.*] Maimonides understands by the *men of his house*, those whom Abraham had converted from idolatry, and made proselytes to the true religion. So do others among the Jews; (see his treatise of the Worship of the Planets, cap. i. §. 9.) But it is more proper to understand by the *men of his house*, all his family in general: who were either (as it follows) *born in his house* (and therefore it is likely were bred up in the true religion, and so easily persuaded to receive the mark

of circumcision), or *bought with his money;* who submitted to Abraham's arguments, not to his authority; for religion is to be chosen, not compelled.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord appeared to him.*] The glory of the Lord, or the Divine Majesty, which the Jews call the Schechinah, as it had done lately (xvii. 1.) And as the Lord then appeared to establish his covenant with him by circumcision, so some of the Jews imagine he again appeared to visit, comfort, and heal him, now that he was very sore of his circumcision; or rather, I should think, to testify, by his illustrious manifestation of his glory (ver. 2.) his high approbation of Abraham's ready obedience to so harsh a command. So the Jews themselves esteem it, and therefore think that, by receiving it, Abraham fulfilled that precept which goes just before it (xvii. 1.) "be thou perfect." Which may have some truth in it, if rightly understood: for his faith and obedience grew more perfect, by submitting to this command; and was completed, when he sacrificed his son.

However this be, I think it is plain from verse 10. that this appearance of the Divine Majesty was not long after the former.

In the plain.] Or, the oaks of Mamre, mentioned before, (xiii. 18.) This place continued famous till the time of Constantine; both Jews, gentiles, and Christians, meeting here once a year, not only for traffic, but for religion: Christians here calling upon God; and there being an altar here also, on which the gentiles sacrificed, and invoked the angels. Of which superstition Constantine being informed by his mother, he caused that altar to be demolished, and a church to be built in its place. (See Sozomen, lib. ii. cap. 4. Euseb. in vita Constant. lib. iii. cap. 53.)

And he sat in the tent door.] To observe what strangers passed that way.

In the heat of the day.] In the afternoon, when travellers sought for places of refreshment.

Ver. 2. *And he lift up his eyes, and looked.*] Having fallen down on his face (I suppose) and worshipped the Divine Majesty, as he did xvii. 17. he beheld, when he rose up again.

And lo, there stood three men by him.] Three angels in the shape of men (for so the apostle to the Hebrews calls them, xiii. 2. and so Moses himself calls two of them, xix. 1.) who were part of the heavenly retinue, as I may call it, waiting upon the Divine Majesty, mentioned in the verse foregoing. There is a maxim among the Jews, that no angel performs two ministries (that is, is sent on two messages), nor are two angels sent upon one embassy, (as Maimonides speaks, More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 6.) and therefore they think these three angels were dispatched for different purposes; one of them, and the principal, to bring a confirmation of the birth of Isaac; another to bring Lot out of Sodom; and a third to overthrow the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. And therefore, when one of these angels had delivered that message to Abraham, there were but two that went to Sodom, (xix. 1.) and Lot speaks to one of them as taking a particular care of him; (ver. 19, &c.) and then it is said, "The Lord rained fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven;" (ver. 24.) that is, that angel of the Lord, who was set by the Lord of heaven and earth over that work. Some of them, indeed, assign another work for one of them, (as we find in that title of the Talmud called Bava-Metzia, cap. 7.) but they agree in the main notion, that they had different offices with which they were entrusted. But some Christians, and those of great authority, have made a question whether they were all created angels; one of them, at least, seeming to be the Lord of all. Nay, St. Cyril, in his first book against Julian, thinks there was a representation of the blessed, undivided Trinity; for Abraham speaks to them, (ver. 4.) ὡς εἷς ὄντες οἱ τρεῖς, as if *the three were but one.* But St. Hilary's opinion (and Eusebius's, lib. v. Demonstr. cap. 9.) is more likely, that the Son of God only appeared with two angels attending on him: which many think is evident from ver. 22. and 25, of this chapter. Yet I think another account may be given of those verses: and if we should make that an argument that one of them was the increated Lord, another of them must be so also: for he is called likewise by the name of Jehovah, Gen. xix. 24. See St. Austin, lib. ii. de Trin. cap. 11. and lib. iii. cap. 11. where he confutes the forenamed opinion.

And when he saw them, he ran to meet them.] Was forward to invite them to refresh themselves with him: for he took them to be considerable persons, as appears by what follows.

And bowed himself towards the ground.] After the manner of the eastern people; in token of the respect and honour he had for them. For this was a civil action (not religious) it is manifest by this: that he did not know them to be angels; but only persons of quality (as we now speak), their aspect and habit, I suppose, being extraordinary.

Ver. 3. *My Lord, if now I have found,* &c.] One of them appeared more honourable and superior to the other two; and therefore he makes his address to him, as the chief: praying him, if he thought him worthy of such a favour, to honour him with their company.

Ver. 4. *And wash your feet.*] *i. e.* To wash your feet. For this was performed by servants, and not by the guests themselves.

And rest yourselves under the tree.] In an arbour under a great tree: where they were wont to eat, for coolness' sake. See Dr. Hammond upon Psalm cxxviii. 3. St. Jerome sometimes calls this tree an oak: sometimes a turpentine-tree, (as J. Filesacus observes, lib. i. Select. cap. 13.) unless we will say, that he thought Abraham dwelt under the one, and entertained them under the other. And so Eusebius (lib. v. Demonstr. Evang. cap. 9.) expressly relates it, that God appeared to him under the oak where he dwelt: and that he entertained the angels under a turpentine-tree, which was had in great honour in his time.

Ver. 5. *I will fetch a morsel of bread.*] Or rather a loaf of bread; as De Dieu shews the word imports: under which is comprehended, all necessary provision at a meal.

And comfort ye your hearts.] Refresh yourselves.

For therefore are ye come to your servant.] Divine Pro-

vidence hath directed you to come this way, at this time of day, that I may have an opportunity to entertain you hospitably.

Ver. 6. *Make cakes upon the hearth.*] Many interpret it, upon the *coals* or *hot embers*, according to what we read 1 Kings xix. 6. But Bochartus thinks the word there signifies, as it doth here, upon *hot stones;* others will have it, that they were laid upon the hearth, and covered with *hot embers*, (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 34.) and so they prepare them at this day, as Leon. Rawwolf tells us in his Travels, par ii. cap. 9. where he saith, That as he went through a country that lies between Mesopotamia and Media, a woman presently made them cakes, about a finger thick, and of the bigness of a trencher: which she first laid upon hot stones, and turned them often; and then threw ashes and embers over them: which, he says, were very savoury.

Ver. 7. *A calf tender and good.*] Which was a noble entertainment in those countries.

Ver. 8. *And he took butter.*] Though we read of cheese in Homer, Euripides, Theocritus, and others; yet they never mention butter: nor hath Aristotle a word of it, (as Bochart observes, Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 41.) though he hath sundry observations about cheese: for butter was not a thing then known among the Greeks; though we see by this, and many other places, it was an ancient food among the eastern people.

And he stood by them.] Waited upon them, and ministered to them. For he did not stand unmoveable; but as servants do that attend upon the table; who, as there is occasion, bring or take away, &c. (See P. Fagius on Deut. i. 38.)

Ver. 9. *And they said unto him, Where is thy wife?*] One of them (the rest signifying some way their consent) asked him for his wife; not being ignorant, but to introduce the following discourse.

In the tent.] In her apartment; for women had their apartments by themselves.

Ver. 10. *And he said.*] The principal of the three angels; or rather, the Lord himself, as it is explained, ver. 13. For, as Theodoric Hackspan judiciously observes, this appearance of the Divine Majesty was different from the foregoing: not being *immediate* by himself alone, like that xvii. 1. nor merely *mediate* by an angel, like that xvi. 7. 10, 11, 12, &c.: but *mixed,* the Lord himself (ver. 1.) being conjunct with the angels, whom he employed in this embassy.

I will certainly return to thee.] To fulfil the promise which I made thee, (xvii. 19.)

According to the time of life.] Nine months hence; which is the time of perfecting the life of a child in the womb. This appears to be the sense, from ver. 14. where he calls it the *time appointed,* or a set time.

In the tent door, which was behind him.] The angels sat with their backs to Sarah's tent: unto the door of which she was come to listen, having heard that they asked for her.

Behind him.] This shews the truth of what Hackspan notes, that this was a *mixed* apparition: for this word *him* plainly relates to the angel, whose words were in truth the Lord's, who was there present. For, as he observes in another place, (Disput. ii. de Nominibus Divinis, n. 15.) the Scripture relates these matters so, that sometimes it mentions the principal cause whose words are related; sometimes only the secondary cause: in which latter case, it must be understood, that when the words exceed the dignity of the minister, the Lord himself spake them. For the sacred writers mind more by whose authority any thing is spoken, than by whose ministry: so that it is not much material from whose mouth any message comes; but what is said must be attended. This will be made plainer, when I come to Gen. xxii. 11, 12, &c.

Ver. 11. *It ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.*] She was no longer capable of conception, according to the ordinary course of nature.

Ver. 12. *Laughed within herself.*] Not as Abraham, for joy; but out of incredulity: not thinking it possible for an old woman to conceive by an old man. And her smiling at this was the more excusable, because she did not know them to be angels of the Lord, but took them only for some great men.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord said.*] The Divine Majesty (mentioned ver. 1.) said, Why doth she not believe my messenger? The angel spake these words, but the words were the Lord's (not his), who was now present with the angels, and in a little time appeared without them, (ver. 17. &c.)

Ver. 14. *At the time appointed will I return to thee.*] Take it from myself, that what hath been told thee by them shall be effected.

Ver. 15. *Sarah denied.*] Fear (as it follows) put her into a confusion: so that she did not mind what she said. Otherwise she would not have denied, what she might well think they knew. Therefore she is only made sensible of her fault, by a simple affirmation of what she denied; without any further reproof.

Nay, but thou didst laugh.] The person that speaks seems to have turned to her, and said, Do not deny what I know to be true.

Ver. 16. *Looked toward Sodom.*] As if they intended to travel that way.

And Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.] A piece of civility like the former: having entertained them, he accompanied them so far as to direct them in the road to Sodom.

Ver. 17. *And the Lord said.*] The Divine Majesty, mentioned ver. 1. began now to discourse plainly and openly with him; not by the ministry of angels, but by himself. For, I take it, the three angels had now left Abraham alone: who, returning towards his tent, saw the glory of the Lord, and heard him speak what follows.

Shall I hide from Abraham, &c.] These words seem to have been spoken to Abraham: otherwise, how came he to expostulate with the Lord, as he doth ver. 23, &c. unless we will conceive (as we may) ver. 20, 21. to be the declaration of God's intention to destroy Sodom: and these words and the next, to be his resolution within himself, to acquaint Abraham with that intention?

Ver. 18. *Seeing that Abraham shall surely,* &c.] This is one reason why the Divine Majesty resolves to acquaint Abraham with his intended proceedings: because he had already revealed to him greater things and made him most gracious promises.

Ver. 19. *For I know,* &c.] This verse contains another reason; because he knew Abraham would approve himself so faithful to him, that he would not fail to enjoy all that he had promised.

To keep the way of the Lord.] Is to persist in the true religion and worship of God.

To do justice and judgment.] Includes in them all those virtues which were opposite to the sins of Sodom.

Ver. 20. *Because the cry.*] Of their sins: which are said to *cry;* first, to shew the enormous greatness and impudency of them: for "grandis absque dubio clamor est, qui a terra ascendit ad cœlum;" as Salvian speaks. And, secondly, to shew that the goodness of God could no longer bear with them; their sins compelling him, as one may say, to punish them: for, "Deus eos noluerit perdere, sed ipsi extorserint, ut perirent." They not only called, but cried to him for vengeance, as he also speaks; (lib. i. de Gubern. Dei, p. 19, 20. edit. Baluzii; and lib. iv. p. 75. lib. v. p. 113.)

Of Sodom and Gomorrah.] As they were the principal and greatest cities, so they were the most wicked; and led the rest into all manner of impiety: who, therefore, also perished with them.

Very grievous.] Not to be tolerated any longer. There are prodigious stories related of the wickedness both of their judges and of the people, in the Gemara Sanhedrim, cap. xi. which are there alleged as an explication of this verse.

Ver. 21. *I will go down now,* &c.] He uses the language of a good judge, (ver. 25.) who never passes sentence, much less executes it, till he hath examined the cause.

Whether they have done altogether, &c.] Whether they are come to the highest pitch of wickedness: or (as De Dieu) whether they are so resolved to go on in sin, that there is no hope of them.

If not, I will know.] That so I may use means for their reformation.

Ver. 22. *And the men.*] The three men mentioned ver. 2. It is commonly said that only two of them went away from Abraham, and that the third remained and held discourse with him. But I see no reason for this: they that came in and eat with him, and rose up from the table, (ver. 16.) who no doubt were all three, being the persons that are here said now to have turned their faces from thence; *i. e.* from the place where they had been entertained by Abraham: or where he parted with them.

And went towards Sodom.] As they intended, (ver. 16.)

But Abraham stood yet before the Lord.] Not before any of those three, but before the Divine Majesty: who appeared to him, (ver. 1.) and had spoken to him, (ver. 13.) and discoursed with him (ver. 17. 20.) in whose presence he still continued. Some by *stood* understand he *prayed:* but that follows in the next verse.

Ver. 23. *Abraham drew near.*] Approached towards the Divine Majesty, to make his addresses by prayer and supplication to him. Perhaps the Divine Majesty remained in the place where it first appeared, (ver. 1.) and Abraham, by conducting the three men some part of their way, being gone farther from it, now came nearer to it. Though the phrase doth not necessarily import it; to *draw nigh* to God, in the holy language, signifying no more but to worship him.

Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked?] As much as to say, I know thou wilt not. For such questions strongly deny; as in ver. 17.

Ver. 24. *Fifty righteous within the city.*] Of Sodom, which was the chief, and comprehended the rest of the country of Pentapolis: which one would guess, by Gen. xiv. 17. depended upon Sodom as the metropolis. So what is said here of it, I take to refer to the whole region.

Wilt thou not spare the place for the fifty, &c.] He desires two things of God. 1. That he would not destroy the righteous with the wicked. 2. That he would spare the wicked for the sake of the righteous; if any considerable number of them were found among the wicked.

Ver. 25. *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*] This refers (as we translate it) only to the first part of his request, "not to destroy the righteous with the wicked." Which was contrary to common justice, much more to that exact justice, which is administered by the Supreme Lord of the world: from whom there lies no appeal. But, according to the Vulgar translation, (which is this, "Thou who judgest all the earth, wilt by no means execute this judgment,") it refers to the other part also: that God would not be so severe as to destroy a whole country, whilst there were many good men still remaining in it: and so the word *right,* includes in it *clemency.* And, indeed, this passage seems to relate to both parts of his request; and is to be interpreted thus: Shall not the Supreme Judge shew mercy, as well as do justice?

Ver. 26. *And the Lord said, If I find fifty,* &c. *then will I spare,* &c.] This shews the foregoing interpretation to be right: God promising most graciously to be merciful to all, for the sake of a few, in comparison with the multitude of offenders.

Ver. 27. *Who am but dust and ashes.*] Very mean and vile.

Ver. 28. *Lack five of the fifty righteous.*] A great argument of Abraham's modesty; who durst not presume to ask too much at once; but by degrees proceeds, in the following verses, to petition for greater abatements: and that with fear and trembling, lest the Lord should be angry with his importunity.

Ver. 32. *I will not destroy it for ten's sake.*] A wonderful representation of the tender mercy of the Most High; who condescended so low as to grant a reprieve to the whole country, for the sake of so small a number, if they could have been found in it. And his mercy was still greater, even beyond Abraham's desire; for he spared one of the *five* cities, for the sake of *three* or *four* persons, as we read, xix. 20, 21.

We do not find that Abraham makes express mention of Lot in any of the foregoing petitions; but it is plain from xix. 29. that he was in his thoughts; which God knew: and he is comprehended in those words, (verse 23. of this chap.) "Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked?"

Ver. 33. *And the Lord went his way.*] The Divine Majesty, or the glory of the Lord, disappeared (and ascended perhaps towards heaven), after this communication with Abraham was finished.

And Abraham returned to his place.] In the plain of Mamre (verse 1.)

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND there came two angels.*] There were *three* at the first, (xviii. 2.) but the chief of them was gone; having

dispatched his message to Abraham; unto whom he was peculiarly sent. (See xviii. 2.)

At even.] They had been with Abraham in the heat of the day: and were now come to the gates of Sodom.

Lot sat in the gate of Sodom.] The Hebrew doctors will have it, that he was made a judge in this city; and the prime judge of all: for they adventure to name *five* (in Bereschith Rabba) and say Lot was the president of the court, which sat in the gate of the city. But this is only a fancy of theirs: he rather sat *in the gate* of this city, as Abraham did at his *tent door;* to invite strangers to his house (according to the hospitality of those days), which was the greater charity, because he knew the city to be so wicked, that (if we may believe the Hebrew doctors) they not only denied them all assistance, but abused them, and were cruel to them, (see Gemara Sanhedrim, cap. 11. and Pirke Eliezer, cap. 15.) for which last, they quote those words of Ezekiel, (xxii. 29.) "they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully." Which are spoken of Israel, whom (xvi. 49.) he had compared with Sodom: one of whose sins, he says, was, want of compassion to "the poor and needy."

Rose up to meet them, &c.] Just as Abraham did; whose civility he imitates, as well as his charity. For the *bowing himself* so lowly, was a token of the great honour he paid them: who had the appearance of great and noble persons. And therefore he calls them *lords,* in the next verse.

Ver. 2. *Turn in, I pray you, and tarry all night,* &c.] It is late, and the night draws on; take up your lodging with me, and refresh yourselves; and go away as early as you please.

And they said, Nay, &c.] It was as great a civility in strangers, not to be forward to accept, as it was in him to invite: and therefore they refuse him at first, to try his kindness: but intending, no doubt, to embrace his offer, if he pressed them further. So the following words are to be understood.

We will abide in the street all night.] Unless you persist in your invitation. In those hot countries, it was not unusual to lie in the open air; especially in summer. And in a city, they were safe from being infested by wild beasts, or robbers.

Concerning *washing the feet,* see xviii. 4.

Ver. 3. *He pressed upon them greatly.*] Would not be denied, but was so earnest that they yielded. It is the same word with that verse 9.

Bake unleavened bread.] Which would be soonest ready, that so they might, in good time, repose themselves.

Ver. 4. *And before they lay down.*] To take their rest.

Both old and young.] A manifest token of an universal depravation of manners, and dissolution of government.

From every quarter.] Or, as some understand it, from the most extreme parts of the city: as in Psalm xix. 4. One, it seems, told another, what goodly persons were come to their city: and all ran to the house where they heard they were, with the same wicked inclinations. This is a proof there were not *ten* righteous persons in Sodom.

Ver. 5. *That we may know them.*] A modest word for a lewd fact. Some, indeed, will have it understood simply, of their examining what they were, whence they came, and what their business was. Which might perhaps be their pretence: but Lot's answer to them, (ver. 7, 8.) interprets their meaning to be filthy.

Ver. 6. *Went out at the door.*] To try if he could persuade them to depart. From whence, perhaps, the Jews gathered he was a man of authority among them.

Ver. 7. *Do not so wickedly.*] As to break the rights of hospitality, and violate the laws of nature.

Ver. 8. *Behold now, I have two daughters,* &c.] This must be understood to have been spoken, in a great perturbation and perplexity of mind; and out of a vehement desire to preserve the men whom he had entertained: which made him say, he had rather they should abuse his own daughters, than those strangers.

For therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.] He pleads the laws of hospitality, which obliged him to protect them; though he himself suffered by it.

Ver. 9. *And they said, Stand back.*] Give way to us.

This one fellow, &c.] Here is one, and he but a sojourner; who takes upon him to be a *censor morum,* and control the whole city. This shews he was no judge.

Now will we deal worse with thee, &c.] Abuse thee more than them. For it is the same word with ver. 7. "doing wickedly."

Ver. 11. *Smote the men with blindness.*] Not with a total blindness, (for then they would not have sought for the door of Lot's house, but rather have groped for the way home) but such a dimness that they could not see any thing distinctly, or in its right place: but there seemed to be a door, suppose, where there was none: or, there was such a confusion in their brain, that all things were turned topsy-turvy (as we speak) in their imagination; and appeared quite otherwise than they were.

Ver. 12. *Son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters.*] Here the copulative *and,* must be expounded *or;* as it is used in many places: (xiii. 8.) "Let there be no strife between me and thee, or between my herdsmen and thine." And so we translate it, Exod. xii. 5. "Thou shalt take it out of the sheep, or out of the goats:" and, Exod. xxi. 15. "He that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be put to death." And so it should be translated here, "Hast thou any here besides son-in-law, or thy sons, or thy daughters?" As much as to say, we are desirous to save all that are nearly related to thee for thy sake.

Ver. 14. *Which married his daughters.*] Had espoused them for their wives, but had not yet consummated their marriage; as some understand it. Others will have it, that, besides those two virgin daughters at home with him, he had other daughters, who were actually married in the city. Which they gather from the next verse, "take thy wife and two daughters, which are here:" as if he had more daughters elsewhere. And R. Jehuda (in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 25.) names one of them married to one of the great men of Sodom, and calls her Pelothit. But this seems rather to have been the name of one of them who were saved by the angels, and thence so called: for it signifies *delivered,* or *snatched* from destruction.

He seemed as one that mocked.] Who was not in earnest; but only made sport with them, and spake in jest. For it is the same word from whence Isaac is derived, which signifies *laughter.*

Ver. 15. *And when the morning arose.*] At break of day: for the sun did not rise, till Lot was got into Zoar, (ver. 23.)

Take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here.] These last words, *which are here,* are not without emphasis:

and are paraphrased thus by the Chaldee interpreter, "which are found faithful with thee:" are not corrupted by the common wickedness of this place; or, that believe what we threaten.

Ver. 16. *While he lingered.*] Being loath to leave his goods, or his sons-in-law, and children: or, as some think, praying God to spare the city.

The men laid hold upon his hand, &c.] One of the angels laid hold upon him and his wife; and the other upon his two daughters: whom they pulled out of the house with some kind of constraint; and led them out of the city.

Ver. 17. *He said.*] That angel who had a peculiar charge of preserving Lot and his family. (See xviii. 2.)

Escape for thy life.] Make haste, if thou lovest thy life.

Look not behind thee.] To see what becomes of thy goods; or, as if thou wast loath to leave Sodom. Make no delay, no, not so much as to turn about and look back.

Neither stay thou in the plain.] Do not rest till thou hast got out of the plain: for every place in it is to be destroyed.

Ver. 18. *And he said unto them,* &c.] Both the angels were still with him: but he seems particularly to speak to him that led him and his wife out of Sodom; who had spoken before to him, and bid him make haste; (ver. 17.) But there are those (Franzius, for instance,) who would have the word *Adonai* translated, not *my Lord,* but *my Lords,* as if he spake to both.

Ver. 19. *I cannot escape to the mountains,* &c.] He that lingered before, (ver. 16.) now thought he could not make haste enough. Either being crazy, or, tired with sitting up all night; or, fearing the destruction would overtake him, before he could reach the mountain; and desiring, perhaps, to have a better dwelling than that.

Ver. 20. *My soul shall live.*] Rejoice, and be exceeding thankful.

Ver. 21. *See, I have accepted thee.*] Granted thy request.

I will not overthrow, &c.] A wonderful instance of the Divine clemency: which in the midst of wrath remembered mercy.

Ver. 22. *Haste thee.*] Make no more delays: no, not to make any further petitions.

I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither.] Having made thee this promise, I must defer the vengeance till thou art safe there.

Called Zoar.] In aftertimes it had this name; from the smallness of it: which he twice mentions, (ver. 20.)

Ver. 24. *The Lord rained from the Lord.*] It cannot be denied that here is an intimation of a plurality of persons in the Deity; yet there are many, both ancient and modern interpreters, who think the meaning is no more, than the Lord sent this rain from himself; it being the manner of the Scripture phrase, to repeat the *noun* instead of the *pronoun* (as grammarians speak); of which Cocceius (upon the Gemara of the Sanhedrim, cap. 4.) gives these instances, Gen. ii. 20. 1 Sam. xii. 11. Zech. i. 16. And there are others, which come nearer to these words, Exod. xxiv. "And he (*i.e.* the Lord, ver. 3.) said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord." Hos. i. 7. "I will save them by the Lord their God." Zech. x. 12. "I will strengthen them in the Lord," &c. The council of Sirmium, indeed, anathematizes those who thus interpret these words, and do not say, "the Son rained from the Father," (Socrat. lib. ii. cap. 30.) Yet St. Chrysostom did not fear to say this is an idiom of the Scripture language, which intended only to shew, ὅτι κύριος τὴν τιμωρίαν ἐπήγαγε, *that the Lord brought this punishment upon them.* Others also have observed, that the Scripture phrase being very concise, by *the Lord,* (in the beginning of the verse) may be meant, *the angel of the Lord.* For wheresoever mention is made of the Lord, it is to be understood of him, ובית דינו, *and his house of judgment* (as the Jewish doctors speak); *i. e.* of the angels which attend his Divine Majesty. And thus I find Arethas (or Andreas Cæsariensis), in his Commentaries upon the Revelation, p. 729, understands these words. For he there compares that captain who was over the locusts, (Rev. ix. 11.) to the angel that was sent to cut off the army of Senacherib, and to this angel, Ὁ τῶν Σοδόμων τὸν διάπυρον ὄλεθρον ἐπιστήσας, *who had the charge of executing the fiery destruction upon Sodom committed to him.* For all angels, saith he, are not ministering spirits, εἰς διακονίαν σωτήρων, *for men's preservation,* but some serve, εἰς τιμωρίαν, *for punishment.* And that they can bring fire from heaven, and raise storms and tempests, appears by the story of Job.

Out of heaven.] From the Lord whose seat is in heaven. The like expression we have, Rev. xx. 9.

Upon Sodom, and upon Gomorrah.] And the neighbouring cities, Admah and Zeboim; as appears from Deut. xxix. 23.

Brimstone and fire.] A most hideous shower, or rather storm, of nitre, sulphur, or bitumen, mingled with fire, fell upon this country from above; and, as the tradition was among the heathen, accompanied with a dreadful earthquake: which made an irruption of those bituminous waters, whereby this country was turned into the lake called Asphaltites, or the Salt, or Dead Sea. So Strabo, lib. xvi. in his description of that lake. And, indeed, it doth not seem improbable, that the earth quaked while the heavens did so terribly frown, and the Almighty's voice thundered from the clouds, as Doctor Jackson speaks, book i. on the Creed, chap. 15. For the word καταστροφὴ, (which St. Peter uses, 2 Pet. ii. 6.) may be thought to import some such subversion. But it was his ignorance of the sacred tradition in the Scriptures, which made Strabo wholly ascribe the desolation of that country to the earth; and not at all to the heavens. Whereas Tacitus, who was better informed, says these Judaical cities (as he calls them), "fulminum jactu (or ictu) arsisse," *were burnt by the stroke of thunderbolts from heaven:* and, a little after, "igne cœlesti flagrasse," *were set on fire and consumed by lightning,* (lib. v. Histor.) With which fell such abundance of bituminous stuff, that the valley which had only some pits of bitumen in it before, (xiv. 3. 10.) became a lake of it.

Ver. 25. *And he overthrew those cities,* &c.] "Super impium populum gehennam misit e cœlo," as Salvian glosses, (lib. i. et lib. iv. de Gubern. Dei.) *he sent hell from heaven upon an impious people.* Of whose destruction there remains an everlasting monument in the Salt Sea: into which that plain country is turned. The quality of which, and of the soil about it, is so contrary to the nature of all other seas, or inland lakes; that no philosopher can give an account of it, like that which Moses hath given us: as the same Doctor Jackson truly observes. He that will read Tacitus in the place forementioned, or Pliny, or Diodorus,

may be satisfied of this. The country where these cities stood, being become a *pan*, or *receptacle*, (as the forenamed doctor well calls it) of such a strange moisture, that it may be called liquid pitch, rather than water: for it is so stiff that no wind will move it: nor will a camel sink, if thrown into it; nor any fish, or bird, that uses the water, live in it: and therefore called the Dead Sea, and Salt Sea, as Salmasius thinks, (Exerc. Plinian. p. 577. 614.) because no creature can live there, and because the noisome steams that come from it blast all that grows of itself, or is sown in the earth about it. Nor do the rivers that run into it, at all alter it; but it infects all their waters, with the loathsome qualities of those dregs of God's wrath (to use Doctor Jackson's words once more) which first settled in it, at this overthrow: just like bad humours, when they settle in any part of our bodies, plant, as it were, a new nature in it, and turn all nourishment into their substance.

Ver. 26. *His wife looked back from behind him.*] She not only lagged behind, as we speak, but turned about and stood still awhile, bewailing perhaps the loss of all there: or, as some of the Jews fancy, to see what would become of her kindred, and whether they would follow her or no.

Became a pillar of salt.] Or, as some understand it, an everlasting monument: whence, perhaps, the Jews have given her the name of Adith, (as they call her in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 25.) because she remained a perpetual testimony of God's just displeasure. For she standing still too long, some of that dreadful shower, before mentioned, overtook her; and falling upon her, wrapped her body in a sheet of nitro-sulphureous matter: which congealed into a crust as hard as stone: and made her appear like a pillar of salt, her body being as it were candied in it. Kimchi calls it a heap of salt; which the Hebrews say continued for many ages. Their conjecture is not improbable, who think the fable of Niobe was hence derived: who, the poets feign, was turned into a stone, upon her excessive grief for the death of her children.

Ver. 27. *Gat to the place, where he stood before the Lord.*] Where he prayed, say the Jews, or communed with God, (xviii. 22. 33.)

Ver. 28. *The smoke of the country*, &c.] Some think, the Hebrew word signifies, *like the smoke of a lime-kiln;* or, of a *boiling cauldron*. After the shower was over, the reek or steam of it remained; and made that country look dismally, which before was like "the garden of God," (xiii. 10.) but now become a stinking puddle of filthy water, καθ' ὑπερβολὴν δυσωδες, as Diodorus speaks, *noisome beyond expression.*

Ver. 29. *Overthrew the cities, wherein Lot dwelt.*] In one of which he dwelt: which is an usual manner of speaking in Scripture. Gen. viii. 4. "The ark rested on the mountains (*i.e.* on one of the mountains) of Ararat." Judg. xii. 7. "Jephthah was buried in the cities (*i.e.* one of the cities) of Gilead." Which explains that of St. Matthew, xxvi. 8. "when his disciples (*i.e.* one of his disciples, Judas,) saw it, he had indignation," &c.

Ver. 30. *And Lot went up out of Zoar*, &c.] It appears from hence, that this good man was very timorous, not having so strong a faith as his uncle Abraham. For he that had lately obtained a pardon for this place, because he was afraid he should not have time enough to get to the mountain, now forsakes it: for fear, I suppose, a new shower should come from heaven and destroy it, after the rest; because the inhabitants, perhaps, continued unreformed, though they had seen such a terrible example of the Divine vengeance upon their wicked neighbours. If his "fear to dwell in Zoar" proceeded from this cause, it was the more reasonable; because he might think, though God had spared them for the present, yet they, taking no warning by the calamity of their country, would shortly perish as the rest had done. And so Theodoret, and others, think this city was afterwards destroyed: of which there is no certain record: and if the tradition be true, it was not speedily swallowed up, as they report, but retained for some time the name of Zoar; being before called Bela, (xiv. 2.)

Dwelt in the mountain.] It is not said what mountain; but it is probable one of the mountains in the country afterward called Moab; from one of his children, which he here begat. For Epiphanius (Hæres. liii.) describes the country of Moab as lying πέραν τῆς ἁλυκῆς, &c. *beyond the Salt, or Dead Sea.* (See Salmas. Exerc. Plin. p. 615.)

Ver. 31. *There is not a man in all the earth.*] Not one remaining of their kindred, that they knew: for they were not much acquainted, we may suppose, beyond that country which was destroyed; and those of Zoar were so wicked, that they looked upon them as beasts, rather than men.

Ver. 32. *Let us make him drink wine.*] Which they brought with them out of Sodom, to support their spirits in their flight; or, else got at Zoar: of which they invited their father to drink liberally, and cheer himself under his extreme great sorrow.

That we may preserve seed of our father.] This fact of theirs being objected by Celsus against our religion, Origen gives this account of it, (lib. iv. contra Cels.) That these two maids having learned something of the conflagration of the world, and seeing their own city and country destroyed by fire, imagined, ζώπυρον τοῦ γένους τῶν ἀνθρώπων, *that the seminary of mankind remained only in their father and them.* And if what they did was upon this supposition, that there was no other way to restore the world, they did no worse than the stoics thought their wise man might do, if the race of mankind were extinct, so that none but he and his daughter were left alive. Irenæus makes the same excuse for them, and says they did this innocently, and in their simplicity, believing all mankind were destroyed, (lib. iv. cap. 51.) But I take their conjecture to be highly probable, who conceive that the eager desire, which then possessed the hearts of good people, to fulfil the promise of the Messiah, was that which put them upon this, otherwise monstrous crime. For which there are these reasons: first, that they had lived so chastely in the midst of the impurities of Sodom, that one cannot think a spirit of uncleanness now entered into them, and carried them to this action: and indeed, secondly, their joining together in this contrivance (whereas matters of this nature used to be carefully concealed from the nearest friends, or make them fall out, if they find themselves engaged in the same intrigue), shews that they were acted by counsel and design, and not by brutish lust: and, thirdly, their perpetuating the memory of this fact, in the names of their children, is a demonstration there was something extraordinary in it; and that they were not ashamed of it, but rather gloried in it; desiring it might be remembered that these children were descended from Lot. Who they thought, perhaps, might pretend to fulfil the promise as well as Abraham: being

the son of Abraham's elder brother; and called out of Sodom by the ministry of angels, as Abraham was called out of Chaldea.

Ver. 33. *He perceived not when she lay down,* &c.] This seems hard to be understood: but it must be noted, that Moses only says he did not perceive when she came to bed to him, and when she got up again: not that he did not perceive when he lay with her, of which he could not but have some perception.

Though M. Montaigne, in his Essays, relates a story of a widow, who, being drunk, was abused by a hind in her house, and afterward finding herself with child, could not remember how it came to pass. But the fellow at last confessed his fact: of which, whatsoever sense she had then, she had perfectly forgot it when she awaked.

Ver. 34. *Go thou in,* &c.] If he had retained any remembrance of what he had done the night before, one cannot think he would have fallen into the same snare so soon again. For which reason, it is probable, he did not think he had been intoxicated, but only drank so freely as to make him sleep soundly, and forget his sorrow.

Ver. 37. *Moab.*] Most will have this word to signify, *from my father.* But Drusius, in Deut. ii. 8. takes the import of it to be, *Aqua Patris.*

Ver. 38. *Ben-ammi.*] This signifies as much as, *the son of my people.* Which doth not acknowledge so plainly as the other, that this son was begotten by her father: but only that he was the son of one of her own nation, or kindred, not by a stranger.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *JOURNEYED from thence.*] *i. e.* From Mamre, where he had dwelt a great while, and where many remarkable passages had happened, (xiii. 18. xviii. 1.)

Toward the south country.] Toward Egypt: for some fancy the very stench of the lake of Sodom was offensive to him in Mamre.

Sojourned in Gerar.] The metropolis of Palestine; and, as some compute it, not much above six miles from Mamre.

Ver. 2. *Abraham said of Sarah,* &c.] Just as he had done in Egypt, (xii. 13.) when there was greater reason for it, she being then thirty years younger than now, when she was no less than ninety years old. But it seems her beauty remained at this age, being healthful, and having born and suckled no children: and women in those days living so long, that they were as fresh at ninety as they are now at forty or fifty. When many that are of excellent constitutions, and naturally handsome, continue very lovely.

Abimelech.] The name of all the kings of Palestine, as Pharaoh was of the kings of Egypt. It is not improbable, as the author of Tzemath David conjectures, that the succeeding kings took the name of him who was the first king of the country. Ad A. M. 2600.

Sent and took Sarah.] By violence, some think; but I see no ground for it. He desired to have her, and might think Abraham would look upon it as a great honour to have his sister become wife to a king: and Abraham, it is likely, shewed no unwillingness, not being in a condition to deny him.

Ver. 3. *And God came to Abimelech in a dream by night.*] Two differences are observed by Maimonides, between this manifestation, which God made of his mind to Abimelech, and that which he made to the prophets. For it is only said here, "God came to Abimelech," and that he came "in a dream by night." The very same is said of Laban, the Syrian, who doth not seem to have been so good a man as Abimelech, (xxxi. 24.) But of Jacob it is said, "God spake unto Israel," and he spake to him in the visions of the night (not in a dream), and said, "Jacob, Jacob," xlvi. 2. (See More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 41.) God was not a stranger to other nations, when he was peculiarly kind to Abraham: but spake to them in dreams, and sometimes in visions, as appears in Eliphaz and Elihu, Job iv. 13. xxxiii. 14, 15, &c.

Thou art but a dead man.] *viz.* If thou dost not restore Abraham his wife, (ver. 7.)

She is a man's wife.] Or, *married to a husband* (as we translate it in the margin) so completely, that he hath enjoyed her as his wife. For from this place the Jewish doctors prove, that the marriage contract was not perfected in these days till the parties had lain together: after which, if any other person lay with the woman, he was to be put to death as an adulterer; but not if he lay with her after the contract, before it was consummated by actual enjoyment. (See Mr. Selden, de Jure N. et G. lib. v. cap. 4. p. 551.)

Ver. 4. *But Abimelech had not come near her.*] To use her as his wife.

Wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?] He was afraid (as became a good man, and a good king) lest his people should suffer upon his account, who, in this particular, had no guilt upon them.

Ver. 5. *Said he not unto me,* &c.] The fault is in them, not in me: for I had both their words for it, that he was her brother, and he said nothing of her being his wife.

In the integrity of my heart.] Not with any intention to defile her; but to make her my wife.

And innocence of my hands.] I did not take her by violence from Abraham; but he and she consented to it.

Ver. 6. *And God said unto him in a dream.*] The same expression is still retained, which we had (ver. 3.) to shew that this was a lower degree of Divine manifestation than was in Abraham's family.

I know thou didst this in the integrity, &c.] *i. e.* That thou didst not design any evil.

For I also, &c.] Or, rather, "and I also withheld thee." I dealt well with thee, because of thy integrity. Some think he was withheld by a disease in the secret parts, (ver. 17.)

From sinning against me.] From committing adultery.

Ver. 7. *He is a prophet.*] This is the first time we meet with the word Nabi, a prophet: and Abraham is the first that is honoured with this name. Which signifies one familiar with God, who might come to him to consult him upon all occasions, and be authorized to declare God's mind and will to others; and also prevail with him by his prayers for a blessing upon them. So it here follows:

He shall pray for thee.] Obtain life and health to thee. The greater any prophet was, the more powerful he was in prayer, as appears by the stories of Moses, Elias, and Samuel. (See Psalm xcix. 6.)

It appears by this whole history of Abimelech, that he

was a man of great virtue in those days: and not an idolator, but a worshipper of the true God, as Melchizedec, the high-priest of that country, was: yet not so well acquainted with Divine revelations as Abraham was.

Ver. 8. *Abimelech rose up early in the morning.*] This is a further token of his goodness, that he delayed not to obey the Divine command.

Called all his servants.] His privy-council, (as we speak) who were all of the same mind with him: that this was a Divine admonition, which it was not safe to disobey. From whence we may probably gather his court was not so corrupted as Abraham suspected.

Ver. 9. *What hast thou done unto us?*] Into what danger hast thou brought us?

Thou hast brought on me and my kingdom a great sin.] Run me into the hazard of committing a great sin, or suffering a heavy punishment (for so *sin* is sometimes taken), in not telling me the truth.

Thou hast done deeds unto me, that ought not to be done.] This is not fair dealing, such as I might have expected from thee.

Ver. 10. *What sawest thou,* &c.] What didst thou observe in my country, that made thee think we would meddle with thy wife? What tokens of injustice, or impurity, didst thou see among us?

Ver. 11. *Because I thought surely,* &c.] The word *rak*, which we translate *surely*, signifies *only:* and may be thus well translated here, "this only I saw wanting in your country, the fear of God:" *i. e.* a sense of religion, which restrains men from all manner of wickedness. It seems the people were not so good as their king.

Ver. 12. *And yet, indeed, she is my sister.*] Do not condemn me of telling a lie; for she is truly my sister. Such was the language of those days, to call their wives sisters, and their nephews brothers. As he calls Lot, xiii. 8. who was his nephew, and the brother of Sarah; as was observed upon xi. 29.

She is the daughter of my father.] *i. e.* His father's granddaughter, who are frequently in Scripture called the children of their grandfathers. For she was daughter to Haran, elder brother of Abraham.

But not the daughter of my mother.] It seems Terah had two wives, by one of which he had Haran, the father of Lot and Sarah; and by the other he had Abraham. So Sarah was daughter to one who was his brother by his father's side, but not by his mother: and with such a niece they thought it not unlawful then to marry. No regard being had to consanguinity (if we may believe R. Solomon Jarchi) by the father's side, before the law of Moses, but only by the mother's.

The more received opinion, indeed, of the Hebrew doctors is, (as Mr. Selden observes, lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 2.) that Sarah was indeed the daughter of Terah by his second wife, and so Abraham's half sister. And Said Batricides (patriarch of Alexandria above seven hundred years ago) in his Arabic History, tells us, the name of Terah's first wife was Jona; and the name of his second Tevitha, by whom he had Sarah. But there is no other authority for this.

Ver. 13. *When God caused me to wander.*] The Hebrew word which we translate *wander*, being in the plural number, the LXX. render the word Elohim (God) the *angels*, who, by the command of God, led him from his father's house, through divers countries. But the Chaldee translates it, "when because of the idols of Chaldea," I was called away from my own country, &c. For so the gods, that is, the idol gods, might be said to cause him to wander: because it was by reason of them, that God would not have him stay any longer in his own country. But there is no need of these devices: nothing being more usual in the Hebrew language than for the plural number to be put instead of the singular, especially when they speak of God, as Bochart observes, in many places, (Gen. xxxv. 7. Exod. xxxii. 4. Psalm cxlix. 2. Eccles. xii. 1.) See Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 34. Nay, Hackspan hath rightly observed that there are nouns of the plural number in their termination, which, in signification, are singular, with which it is usual to join a verb of the plural number, because of the plural termination of the noun. A plain example of which we have, Gen. iv. 6. "Why is thy countenance (in the Hebrew, *faces*) fallen?" The like he observes in the Syriac language: (John i. 4.) "The life (in the Syriac, *lives*) was the light of men."

Ver. 16. *I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver.*] The word *pieces* is not in the Hebrew. But by *ceseph, silver,* all, in a manner, understood *shekels:* for anciently there were no shekels of gold or brass, but only of silver. Yet there are those who think he did not give him thus much in money; but in the goods beforementioned, (ver. 14.) which were worth a thousand shekels. (See xxiii. 16.)

He is unto thee a covering of the eyes, &c.] These words are very variously expounded, according as the first word *hu* is interpreted: which may relate either to the gift beforementioned, and be translated *this;* or to Abraham, and be translated *he,* as it is by us. If they refer to the former, then the sense is, "I have given him that sum of money to buy thee a veil, that all who converse with thee here, or in any other country (where thou shalt come), may know thee to be a married woman." For a veil was worn in token of subjection to the power of the husband: and that thereby their chastity might be preserved safe from the snares of others. As G. Vorstius observes upon Pirke Eliezer, cap. 32. Or, as others interpret it, "this money will be a covering to thine eyes (that is, a defence to thy modesty): it being a testimony that Abimelech paid dear for taking thee into his house."

If they refer to Abraham, then the meaning is, "Thou needest no other defence of thy modesty and chastity than he, nor hast any reason to say hereafter he is thy brother; for he is so dear to God that God will defend him, and he will defend thee, without such shifts as this thou hast used: nay, not only thee, but all that are with thee; and that even against strangers." I omit other interpretations, and refer the reader to L. de Dieu.

Thus she was reproved.] Or, *instructed* (as some translate it) not to dissemble her condition: or, this was the reprehension he gave her, for saying Abraham was her brother.

Ver. 17. *So Abraham prayed unto God,* &c.] Beseeched God to restore them all to their health, now that his wife was restored to them, (ver. 14.)

Ver. 18. *For the Lord had fast closed up,* &c.] By such swellings (some understand it) in the secret parts, that the men could neither enjoy their wives, nor the women who were with child be delivered.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord visited Sarah,* &c.] Bestowed upon her the blessing he had promised her; *i. e.* made her conceive. For so the word *visit* signifies, either in a bad sense to inflict punishment, (Exod. xx. 5.) or in a good sense to confer blessings; as here, and Exod. iii. 16. and many other places.

And he did unto her as he had spoken.] Performed his promise by making her bring forth a child: for so it is explained in the next verse, "Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son."

Ver. 2. *Sarah conceived,* &c.] God not only made her womb fruitful, but brought the fruit of it to perfection, and then brought it into the world.

At the set time of which God had spoken to him.] (xviii. 14.) It is not said where Isaac was born: for we are not told here, whether Abraham departed from Gerar into any other part of this country, as Abimelech kindly offered and gave him liberty to do, (xx. 15.) But it appearing by the latter end of this chapter, that he continued a long time in Abimelech's country, though not at Gerar, it is probable Isaac was born at Beer-sheba, (ver. 31.)

Ver. 6. *God hath made me to laugh.*] *i. e.* To rejoice exceedingly.

So that all that hear will laugh with me.] All my friends and neighbours will congratulate my happiness and rejoice with me.

Ver. 7. *Give children suck.*] It is usual to put the plural number for the singular, as was observed before, (xix. 29.) Or, she hoped, perhaps, to have more children after this. And her giving him suck was a certain proof, that she had brought him forth of her own womb; and that he was not a supposititious child, as Menochius well observes. Others note, that the greatest persons in those ancient days suckled their own children: which Favorinus, a Greek philosopher, pressed as a duty upon a noble woman by many strong arguments: which are recorded by A. Gellius, who was present at his discourse; (lib. xii. Noct. Attic. cap. 1.)

Ver. 8. *The child grew, and was weaned.*] At the age of five years old, as St. Jerome reports the opinion of some of the Hebrews.

Made a great feast the same day.] Rather now than at his nativity, because there was greater hope of life, when he was grown so strong as to be taken from his mother's breast.

Ver. 9. *Sarah saw the son of Hagar,* &c. *mocking.*] He laughed and jeered, perhaps, at the great bustle which was made at Isaac's weaning: looking upon himself as the first-born, and by the right of that to have the privilege of fulfilling the promise of the Messiah. This gives a good account of Sarah's earnestness for the expulsion, not only of him, but of his mother also, who, it is likely, flattered and bare him up in those pretensions. Many think he did more than mock him, because St. Paul calls it persecution, (Gal. iv. 29.) which St. Jerome takes for beating Isaac; who, perhaps, resenting his flouts, might say something that provoked Ishmael to strike him. And it is very probable his mother encouraged him to this, or maintained him in his insolence, which was the reason Sarah pressed to have them both turned out of doors.

Some think he jested upon his name, and made it a matter of merriment. For so the word is used, xix. 14.

Ver. 10. *Cast out,* &c.] Let them not dwell here any longer, nor continue a part of thy family.

Shall not be heir, &c.] She judged, by what she had seen of his fierce and violent spirit, that it would not be safe for her son to let Ishmael have any share in his father's inheritance: for she was afraid he would make himself master of all.

Ver. 11. *Grievous, because of his son.*] His wife is not here mentioned, because his principal concern was for his son: but it appears, by the next verse, he had some consideration of her also.

Ver. 12. *God said unto Abraham,* &c.] By this he was satisfied that Sarah's motion proceeded not merely from her anger; but from a Divine incitation.

For in Isaac shall thy seed be called.] Here the blessing promised to Abraham's seed, (xvii. 7, 8.) is limited to the posterity of Isaac; and the meaning of the phrase is, they that descend from Isaac, and not they that descend from Ishmael, shall be owned by me for the children of Abraham; particularly the Messiah shall be one of his seed.

Ver. 13. *Also of the son of thy hand-maid,* &c.] He renews the promise he had made him before, (xvii. 20.) that Ishmael should have a numerous posterity: because he was descended from Abraham.

Ver. 14. *Rose up early in the morning.*] Delayed not to fulfil the Divine will.

Took bread and a bottle of water.] Which includes all sort of provision for their present necessity, till they came to the place unto which, in all probability, he directed them to bend their course. For it is not reasonable to think, that he sent them to seek their fortune (as we speak) without any care what became of them. It may seem strange rather, that he did not send a servant to attend them, but let Hagar carry the provision herself: which I suppose was done to humble her, and to shew that her son was to have no portion of Abraham's inheritance, nor of his goods; of which servants were a part. Doctor Jackson, (book i. on the Creed, cap. 25.) thinks that Abraham would scarce have suffered them to go into a wilderness so poorly provided, when he had store of all things, unless he had been directed by some secret instinct, presaging the rude and sharking kind of life unto which his progeny was ordained. Yet, it is probable, he was as kind to him as he was to the sons he had by Keturah, and sent him some tokens of his love afterwards. (See xxv. 6.)

Ver. 15. *She cast the child under one of the shrubs.*] He being faint, and ready to die with thirst. A presage (saith the great man beforenamed) that his posterity should be pinched with the like penury: scantiness of water (which was their best drink) straitening their territories in Arabia, as Strabo observes, lib. xvi. And after they had enlarged their bounds, even in Mesopotamia itself, they were still confined to the dry and barren places of it.

Ver. 16. *And she went and sat her down,* &c.] Her strength carried her further than he could go: but her affection still kept her within sight of the place where he was.

Ver. 17. *And God heard the voice of the lad.*] Who cried, it seems, as well as his mother: and it moved the Divine pity to send an angel to their relief.

Fear not.] Do not think I come to terrify thee: or, do not fear the death of thy child.

Ver. 18. *Lift up the lad,* &c.] It seems he was so faint that he was not able to stand without support.

Ver. 19. *Opened her eyes.*] Made her see what she did not observe before, by reason of her tears, or the great disturbance of her mind.

Ver. 20. *And God was with the lad.*] Preserved and prospered him: so that he grew to be a man.

Became an archer.] A skilful hunter and warrior also, with bow and arrows. Am. Marcellinus, lib. xiv. tells us, that the Saracens, who were of the posterity of Ishmael, never set their hands to the plough, but got their living, for the most part, by their bow. For such as they were themselves such was their food, *(victus universis caro ferina,* &c.) they all lived upon wild flesh, or venison, and such wild fowl as the wilderness afforded, with herbs and milk. Dr. Jackson observes, that he compares them to kites, ready to spy a prey, but so wild withal that they would not stay by it (as crows or other ravenous birds do by carrion), but presently fled with what they caught into their nests.

Ver. 21. *He dwelt in the wilderness of Paran.*] Which was near to Arabia: in which country all the Oriental writers say the posterity of Ishmael lived: particularly Patricides, who says he went into the land of Jathreb, which is that part of Arabia, in which is the city of Medina.

A wife out of Egypt.] Out of her own country, where she was best acquainted. The Jewish doctors say he had two wives, whose names, they tell us, were Aiscah and Phatimah: the first of which received Abraham churlishly, when he went to visit his son; and therefore he put her away and took the other, who proved more civil, when he made a second journey thither. Which, though it looked like a fable, yet I think it not improbable that Abraham might go to see how his son lived, and that Ishmael might sometimes wait upon him (as the author of Schalsc. Hakab. and Pirke Eliezer affirm); for we cannot think they were so unnatural as never to have any correspondence: especially since we read that Ishmael, as well as Isaac, took care of Abraham's funeral, xxv. 9. After which, it is not improbable, Hagar might have another husband; which is the account Aben Ezra (upon Psalm lxxxiii. 6.) gives of the people called Hagarenes, who are there mentioned as distinct from the Ishmaelites: they were, saith he, descended from Hagar by another husband, not by Abraham.

Ver. 22. *Abimelech and Pichol,* &c.] It is plain by this that Abraham still lived, if not in the country of Gerar, yet very near it.

God is with thee in all that thou doest.] They saw him so thriving and prosperous, that they were afraid he might grow too strong for them, if he should have a mind to disturb them.

Ver. 23. *Swear that thou wilt not deal falsely,* &c.] That as there hath been a long friendship between me and thee, so thou wilt not violate it; but always preserve it, even when I am dead: according to thy frequent professions and, perhaps, promises.

According to the kindness, &c.] Abimelech thought he might claim this oath from Abraham, by virtue of the obligations he had laid upon him.

Ver. 24. *I will swear.*] He was as forward to confirm his promises as to make them.

Ver. 25. *And Abraham reproved Abimelech.*] But before he sware, he thought it necessary to settle a right understanding between them: and therefore argued with Abimelech (as it may be rendered) about a well of water digged by Abraham's servants, which Abimelech's had injuriously taken from him. This was wisdom to complain of wrongs now, before they entered into a covenant, that they, being redressed, there might remain no occasion of quarrels afterward.

Ver. 26. *Abimelech said, I wot not,* &c.] This is the first time I heard of it; if thou hadst complained before I would have done thee right.

Ver. 27. *And Abraham took sheep,* &c.] Some think they were a present he made to Abimelech, in gratitude for what he had bestowed on him, (xx. 14.) or in token of friendship with him. But others think they were designed for sacrifices, by which they made a covenant one with another. At least some of them served for that use.

Ver. 28. *And he set seven ewe lambs by themselves.*] The meaning of this is afterwards explained, ver. 30. That though they were part of the present he made him, yet they should be understood also (being set apart from the rest) to be a purchase of a quiet possession of that well.

Ver. 30. *A witness unto me that I have digged this well.*] By this token it shall be remembered hereafter, that I digged this well, and that thou didst grant me quiet possession of it.

Ver. 31. *Called the place Beer-sheba.*] The Hebrew word *sheba* signifies, both *an oath,* and also *seven:* perhaps for both reasons this place had this name. We are sure for the first, which is here mentioned: because they sware to each other.

Ver. 31. *Thus they made a covenant,* &c.] By giving and accepting those sheep and oxen, mentioned ver. 27. and, perhaps, by offering sacrifices; or, at least, by eating and drinking together, as Isaac and Abimelech did in after-times, (xxvi. 30.)

Here some observe, it was not unlawful, by the law of nature, to make covenants with infidels and idolators, for mutual defence and commerce, or such-like reasons; but I see no proof that Abimelech was such a person. In future ages the people of Canaan were so corrupted by this, as well as other sins, that God commanded them to be exterminated, and made it unlawful to enter into a covenant with them, (Exod. xxxiv. 15.) But as the Philistines were none of them, so it still remained lawful to make leagues with other gentiles who were not of the seven nations of Canaan, as we see by the examples of David, and Solomon, and others.

They returned into the land of the Philistines.] Into that part of the country where they dwelt; for both Abimelech and Abraham were now in that land, as appears from the last verse of this chapter.

Ver. 33. *Abraham planted a grove.*] For a solemn and retired place wherein to worship God. For, as Servius says upon the ninth Æneid, "Nunquam est lucus sine religione;" *there never was a grove, in ancient times, without religion.* And therefore here we may well suppose Abraham built an altar, which was fenced and bounded with an inclosure, and shaded with trees, as Mr. Mede (Discourse xix.) observes their *proseuchas,* or *places of prayer,* to have been in aftertimes. For, that this was intended for

a place of prayer, appears by the following words—"and called there on the name of the Lord," &c.

From hence, some think, the custom of planting groves was derived into all the gentile world, who so profaned them by images, and filthiness, and sacrifices to demons, that God commanded them, by the law of Moses, to be cut down. But Abraham made use of a grove before this, (xii. 6. 8.) where we find he built an altar on a mountain, which, I question not, was compassed with trees. (See xiii. 18.) Therefore I take this only to have been the first grove that he planted himself.

Called upon the name of the Lord, the everlasting God.] I find that Maimonides, in several places of his More Nevochim, translates the last words, *The Lord God of the world,* or *the Lord the Almighty Creator of the world.* For this was the great article of faith in those days, that God made the world. (Par. ii. cap. 30. et par. iii. cap. 29.)

Ver. 34. *Sojourned many days,* &c.] The word *days* often signifies *years,* and, it is likely, signifies so in this place: for here Isaac was born, and here he was weaned; and after that Abraham found so much friendship from Abimelech, and so many conveniences of life, that they invited him to stay a long time in this country.

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass after these things.*] That which follows fell out while Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba, or near it, (ver. 19.)

God did tempt Abraham.] Proved or tried his faith, in a very difficult instance. The Hebrews take great notice, that the name of Elohim (which they call Nomen Judicii) is here used, as it is in several of the following verses.

And said unto him, Abraham.] I suppose there was such a visible appearance of the Divine Majesty to him as he had often seen, (xv. 1. xvii. 1. xviii. 1.)

Here I am.] A phrase expressing readiness to hearken and to give answer, (ver. 7. 12.)

Ver. 2. *Take now.*] Immediately.

Thy son.] A hard thing, had it been Ishmael.

Thy only son Isaac.] His only son by Sarah, and the child of the promise, (xxi. 12.)

Whom thou lovest.] Who was far dearer to him than any thing in this world; dearer than his own life; for men will venture that to preserve their children. According to an old saying in Euripides,

Ἅπασὶ δ' ἀνθρώποις ἄρ' ἦν ψυχὴ τέκνα.

Children are to all mankind, their very life, or soul.

Whence it was that Pacatus Drepanius said in his panegyric to Theodosius the Great, "Instituente natura plus fere filios quam nosmetipsos diligimus;" *we are taught by nature to love our sons, in a manner, more than ourselves.* But the love of God in Abraham was stronger than either.

Get thee into the land of Moriah.] So it was called afterwards, from God's appearing there (ver. 14.) for the deliverance of Isaac, as many think. Certain it is, that the temple of Solomon was built upon Mount Moriah; (2 Chron. iii. 1.) but this name belonged not only to that mountain, but to all the mountainous country thereabouts, which is here called *the land of Moriah.* Which Aquila translates καταφανῆ, *conspicuous;* for it is derived from the word *raah, to see.* And the LXX. translate it not amiss, γῆν ὑψηλὴν, *high country;* which is very conspicuous. But Mount Zion, and Acra, and other neighbouring mountains, being also very high, this name of Moriah belonged to them, because they were very conspicuous. Insomuch that Mount Zion is often used in Scripture for Mount Moriah; for all that mountainous country went by one and the same name.

And offer him there.] The Hebrews observe the word is ambiguous, and may be translated, *make him to go up;* but Abraham understood it in the usual sense, that he should kill him, as they did the beasts for sacrifices. A very hard injunction, which some think God would not have laid upon Abraham, if he had not had a power thus to dispose of Isaac, inherent in him as his father. (See Dr. Taylor, Duct. Dubit. lib. iii. cap. 5. rule 2. n. 1.)

Upon one of the mountains.] There were more hills than one thereabouts, (Psalm cxxv. 2.) as I observed on the foregoing verse. And it may be further here noted, that in ancient times they chose mountains, or high places, whereon to worship God, and offer sacrifices: (xii. 8.) which God himself approved of till they were profaned, as the groves were, (see xxi. 33.) and then he commanded Abraham's posterity not to worship in high places, but only in one certain mountain, where he ordered his temple to be seated. Nothing is plainer in the gentile writers, than that they chose mountains for places of worship: and herein Celsus, the Epicurean, compares them with the Jews; observing, particularly out of Herodotus, that the Persians offered sacrifices to Jupiter, going up, ἐπὶ τὰ ὑψηλότατα τῶν ὀρέων, *to the top of the highest mountains,* as his words are in Origen, (lib. v. contra Cels.) It is well known, also, that these mountains were well shaded with trees; so that, commonly, groves and mountains are mentioned together, as places for religious worship.

Ver. 3. *And Abraham rose up early in the morning,* &c.] Some here take notice of the readiness of his obedience, in several instances:

First, That he rose up early. Secondly, Saddled his ass himself (though the phrase doth not certainly import so much). Thirdly, Carried wood ready cleft along with him, for the offering, lest he should find none there.

And Isaac his son.] It is an inquiry among the Jews, how old Isaac was at this time. Some of them say seven-and-thirty, whom the Arabic Christian writers follow, Patricides and Elmacinus. Aben Ezra, more probably, saith he was thirty. But there is no certainty of such things: for I find in the Gemera Sanhedrim, (cap. x. n. 4.) it is said, this fell out a little after he was weaned. (See ver. 9.)

And went unto the place.] That is, toward the place; which he did not see till the third day after he set out.

Ver. 4. *On the third day.*] It was not much above one day's journey from Beer-sheba to Moriah; but an ass goes slowly, especially being loaded, as this was, with a burden of wood, and with provisions, we must suppose, for their journey; and Abraham, and his son, and servants, went on foot, and could not travel far on a day (Isaac being but young), for it doth not appear they had more than one single ass, (ver. 5.)

And saw the place afar off.] It is most reasonable to

suppose, that God had given him some token or sign, whereby he should know it. And I cannot but think it highly probable, that the Divine glory appeared in the place where he was to make the oblation. Which conjecture I find confirmed by R. Eliezer, among other of the Jews, who says, that when God bad him go to the place he would *tell him of*, (ver. 2.) and there offer his son; he asked how he should know it? and the answer was, "Wheresoever thou seest my glory, there I will stay, and wait for thee," &c. And accordingly, now, "he beheld a pillar of fire reaching from heaven to the earth," and thereby knew this was the place. (See Pirke Eliezer, cap. 31.)

Ver. 5. *Go yonder and worship.*] This confirms the forementioned conjecture, that, the Divine glory appearing upon the mountain, he went thither to worship God.

And come again to you.] He either speaks of himself alone, or believed God would restore Isaac to life, though he did slay him.

Ver. 6. *And laid it upon Isaac his son.*] A figure of Christ, who carried his own cross, (John xix. 17.) according to the Roman custom. Philo's reflection upon Isaac's carrying the wood for his own sacrifice is, that "nothing is more laborious than piety."

Ver. 7. *Behold the fire and the wood,* &c.] It appears by this, that he had not hitherto acquainted Isaac with his intention.

Ver. 8. *So they went both of them together.*] It seems they stayed awhile, (as they were going together, ver. 6.) till Isaac had finished this discourse with his father, and then they proceeded.

Ver. 9. *Built an altar there.*] Of turf, some think; or, of such stone as he could gather.

And bound Isaac his son.] Both his hands, and his feet, as it is explained in Pirke Eliezer. (cap. 31.) When the gentiles offered human sacrifices, they tied both their hands behind their backs, as appears from Ovid, (lib. iii. de Pont. Eleg. 2.) and other authors. Whether Isaac was thus bound, it matters not; but we cannot doubt that Abraham had now acquainted him with the will of God, and persuaded him willingly to comply and submit unto it: wherein he prefigured Christ the more exactly, who laid down his life of himself, and no man (without his consent) could take it from him, as he speaks, John x. 17, 18. We have reason to believe this of Isaac, because he, being younger and stronger, could have made resistance, had he been so minded. Josephus says he was twenty-five years old; (lib. i. Antiq. 14.) and Bochart makes him twenty-eight; the word *naar*, which we translate *lad*, being used for one of that age; nay, Joseph is called so when he was thirty years old, (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. iii. cap. 9.) This is certain, that he was old enough to carry such a load of wood, (ver. 6.) as was sufficient to make a fire to offer up a burnt-offering. There are those, also, who think Isaac was laid upon the altar to be offered, in that very place where Christ was crucified. And thus much is true, that though Mount Calvary was without Jerusalem, and therefore different from Mount Moriah, on which the temple stood, yet they were so near, and it is likely only parts of one and the same mountain, that they were anciently both comprehended under the name of Moriah.

Ver. 10. *Abraham stretched forth his hand,* &c.] His obedience proceeded so far, that it evidently appeared he was fully resolved to do as he was bidden; for the knife was just at Isaac's throat, ready to do the execution. Insomuch that God made account of it, as if it had been actually done, and accepted his obedience as ὁλόκληρος καὶ παντελὴς, *as entirely perfect, and absolutely completed,* as Philo speaks. And yet there have been those who disparage this obedience, by endeavouring to make the world believe that the sacrificing of children was in use before Abraham's time. And the very first thing that hath been alleged as a proof of it, is the very objection in Philo, made by cavilling calumniators (as he calls them) who said, why should such praise be bestowed on Abraham, ὡς ἐγχειρητὴν κεκαινουργημένης πράξεως, *as if he had attempted a thing altogether new, which private men, and kings, and whole nations, do upon occasion?* The learned reader cannot but know that one of our own countrymen, (Sir J. Marsham, in Canon. Chronic. §. v.) hath set this in the front of all his arguments, to prove that Abraham was not the first who sacrificed his son; without acquainting the reader with Philo's answer to this, which quite overthrows all his pretensions. For he says, (lib. de Abrahamo, p. 375, 376. Edit. Paris.) that some barbarians have done this, following the custom of their country, or being in great distress, &c. But nothing of this nature could move Abraham to it, for the custom of sacrificing children was neither in Babylon, nor Mesopotamia, nor Chaldea, where he had lived a long time; no, nor (as it follows a little after) in that country where he then lived; but αὐτὸς ἔμελλε πρῶτος ἄρχεσθαι καινοτάτου καὶ παρηλλαγμένου παραδείγματος, *he was to be the beginner of a perfectly new and unusual example.* What plainer confutation can there be of what the forenamed author pretends, than this, which he most disingenuously concealed? Nor is there more strength in what follows in him out of Sanchoniathon, who says that Saturn offered his only son. For by *Saturn* it is evident he meant *Abraham,* as appears by the name of that son whom such-like authors call *Jeud,* which is plainly the very same with *Jehid,* as Isaac is called in the second verse of this chapter. I omit the rest, which is of the like stamp.

Ver. 11. *And the angel of the Lord called to him,* &c.] That is, the Lord himself, by his angel. See upon xviii. 10. To which I shall here add, that, whether it be said in these holy books the Lord said any thing, or an angel spake, we are always to understand both to have been present; for the angels ever attend upon the Divine Majesty, and, being ministers of his, do nothing but by his order. Therefore, when he is said to speak, it is *by* them, and when they are said to speak, it is *from* him. It is the Lord, therefore, that speaks, whosoever be the minister. Of which St. Austin gives a demonstration from this very place, (lib. iii. de Trinitate, cap. 11.) in the beginning of this chapter, (ver. 1, 2.) "We read that *God tempted Abraham,* and bade him go and offer to him his son; but here the *angel of the Lord* called to him, and bade him not to do it. What is the meaning of this? Will they (whose opinion he there opposes) say that God commanded Isaac to be slain, and that his angel forbade it; and that Abraham obeyed the angel who bade him spare his son, against the command of God, who bade him slay him? This sense is ridiculous, and not to be endured. The plain meaning is, that God spake both times, in the one case and in the other; but by an angel, who was his minister. That is the reason angels

sometimes speak as if they were the Lord, because they speak in his name: just as when a public crier pronounces the sentence of a judge, 'Non scribitur in gestis, ille præco dixit, sed ille judex,' *It is not written in the records, that the crier, but the judge, pronounced that sentence.*"

And thus R. Jehuda understood this passage, whose gloss is this: (in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 31.) "He," *i. e.* the Lord, "made his voice to be heard from between the two cherubims, and said, Lay not thy hand upon the lad." I do not know whether it be worth observing, that God is not called in all this story (as the Jews note) by the name of Jehovah, till now; which being, say they, *Nomen misericordiæ*, is most agreeable to this part of the story, as Elohim was to the former part, (ver. 2.)

Abraham, Abraham.] He ingeminates his name, that he might make him attend to what he said, and put a stop to his proceedings.

Ver. 12. *Now I know thou fearest God,* &c.] Thou hast given sufficient proof of the regard thou hast to God and his commands. It is apparent from what thou hast done, and thou needest do no more to evidence it. And so Hackspan translates the word *know* in this place, *now I have proved,* or *approved,* as Psalm i. *ult.* Matt. vii. 23. Which proofs do not argue ignorance, no more than questions do. (Gen. iii. 9. John vi. 5, 6.)

Nobody (that I know of) hath better explained this whole matter than Moses Maimonides, whose words are these: (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 24.) This story of Abraham makes good two great foundations of the law: "one is, to shew us how far the fear and love of God extends itself. For here was a command to do that, with which the loss of money, or of life itself, is not to be compared; nay, that from which nature abhorred; *viz.* that a man very rich, and in great authority, who earnestly desired an heir, which was born to him when he had no hope of one, in his old age, should so overcome his natural affection to him (which could not but be exceeding great), as to forego all the expectations he had from him, and consent, after a journey of three days, to slay this son with his own hands. This is the greatest thing that ever was performed: for if he had done it in that moment when he was commanded, it might have been thought a sudden, precipitant, and inconsiderate act; but to do it so many days after he received the command, upon mature deliberation, is the highest proof of his obedience, and that this act proceeded from nothing but from the fear and love of God: for he did not make haste to slay his son out of any fright he was in lest God should have slain him, or taken away his estate, if he had disobeyed; but took time to consider of it, that he might shew to all men what one ought to do for the love and fear of God, and not for fear of punishment, or hope of worldly reward; for the angel said, *Now I know thou fearest God.*

"The second thing we are taught by this history is, that the prophets were fully assured of the truth of those things which God spake to them, either in dreams, or in visions, or any other way; which they believed as strongly as things of sense. For if Abraham had in the least doubted whether this were the will of God or no, which he received either in a vision, or a dream, he would never have consented to a thing which nature abhorred."

This very story is told by Alexander Polyhistor, as Eusebius relates out of him, (lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. §. xix.)

Ver. 13. *Abraham lift up his eyes.*] From looking upon Isaac, or upon the angel.

And looked.] He heard, we may suppose, a bustling noise, which the ram made when it was caught in the thicket; which made him look that way from whence the noise came.

And behold, behind him a ram, &c.] Bochart gives many reasons to prove that the most ancient reading, and much better, was, *Behold, one ram: achar,* which we translate *behind,* being put for *achad, one,* or a singular ram, (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 49.) But it is not material which way we take it; nor need we inquire how the ram came there. Nothing is more common than for sheep to go astray; and by God's providence this ram was caught in a thicket not far from Abraham; whereby he made good what Abraham had told his son, "God will provide a lamb for a burnt-offering." In which this ram was a notable type of Christ, who was a sacrifice provided by God, not by man, as this ram was brought by Divine Providence to be offered, not by Abraham.

And Abraham took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering, instead of his son.] Saying, as R. S. represents it, Lord, accept this sacrifice, as if my son himself were slain, and his blood shed, and his skin flayed off, and he were burnt and reduced to ashes.

And the ram being accepted instead of his son, may be thought to signify that the offering of the *blessed seed,* God's only Son, should be suspended till future times, and that in the mean season the offering the blood of beasts should serve as a pledge (to use the words of Mr. Mede) of that expiation which the blessed seed of Abraham should one day make, (Discourse xxv.) where he observes, that the more lively to express this, God so disposed, that the very place where the ram was offered instead of Isaac, should be the place of sacrifice for Israel. For there it was, where the Lord answered David by fire from heaven, (1 Chron. xxi. 26.) and so designed it for the place he had chosen for his altar; there David pitched him a tabernacle, (1 Chron. xxii. 1.) and there Solomon built him a house, (2 Chron. iii. 1.)

Ver. 14. *Jehovah-jereh.*] The Lord will see or provide: that is, take care of their safety who steadfastly obey him.

And it is said to this day.] Which is thus called to this day: or, as others interpret it, now it is a proverbial speech when men are in great straits, *in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen:* where a double variation is observed, from what was said before; for here is Jehovah instead of *Elohim,* (ver. 12.) and then *Jeraeh* instead of *jereh; i. e.* the passive instead of the active; signifying, that the Lord will not only see or provide, but make himself conspicuous by so providing, that all shall behold the care he takes of those that fear him.

Ver. 15. *And the angel of the Lord called,* &c.] This confirms what was noted on ver. 12. that it was God himself who called to Abraham to stay his hand, and now says, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord," &c. What can be clearer, as Hackspan glosses, (Disput. ii. de Nominibus Divinis, n. 16.) than that we are to turn away our eyes from the angel, and fix them upon God, who blessed Abraham, and is called the Lord, for whose sake (ver. 12.)

Abraham spared not his only son? In all like cases therefore, which exceed the angelical dignity, we are always to understand some such words as these here mentioned, *Neum Jehovah*, thus saith the Lord.

Ver. 16. *By myself have I sworn*, &c.] I observed upon xii. 7. and xvii. 6. that God enlarged his mercies to Abraham, proportionable to his obedience; which is apparent in this great and last trial of all, the offering his son, which was rewarded by the ratification of God's former promise or covenant, by a most solemn oath: *By myself have I sworn, I will multiply thy seed*, &c. This was promised before, but not confirmed by an oath: and, besides, the very promise is now more affectionate (if I may so style it); "in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thee," &c. In the latter end also of the blessing, there seems to be couched the highest of all blessings, that God would make his own only Son such a sacrifice as Abraham was ready to have made his son Isaac; that "all the nations of the world (ver. 18.) might be blessed in him;" *i. e.* all that would follow the faith of Abraham. So Abarbinel himself interprets it upon xii. 3.

Ver. 17. *Possess the gate* (that is, the cities) *of his enemies.*] And consequently their country: for the gates being taken, thereby they entered into their cities; and their cities being surrendered, the country was conquered.

Ver. 18. *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.*] God promised to make Abraham's seed as numerous as the stars of heaven; (xv. 5.) which promise he assures him here should be fulfilled in Isaac, (ver. 17.) But moreover directs him to expect, after the multiplying of his posterity, one particular seed who should bring a blessing to all mankind. This singularity St. Paul observes, and presses very much, (Gal. iii. 16.) applying it to the Messiah. And it is further observable, that there is an increase of sense in these words, as there is in the former. For he doth not simply say, נברכו, they *shall be blessed*, but התברכו, shall *bless themselves*, or *count themselves blessed in him;* to shew, as Jacobus Altingius thinks, that this person should not stand in need of any blessing himself, as the rest of Abraham's seed did; but be the author of all blessings unto others, who should derive them from him alone, (lib. ii. Schilo. cap. 2.)

Because thou hast obeyed, &c.] As a reward (the word in the Hebrew signifies) for obeying my voice.

Ver. 19. *Went together to Beer-sheba.*] Where he had for some time settled his abode, (xxi. 33.)

Ver. 20. *Milcah hath borne children*, &c.] The following genealogy is set down to shew, whence Rebekah the wife of Isaac was descended. For she alone, of all Bethuel's daughters (which is probable were many), is mentioned, ver. 23.

Ver. 21. *Huz his first-born.*] There were two others of this name. One, the son of Aram, (x. 23.) another of the posterity of Esau, (xxxvi. 28.) But this Uz here mentioned, is he from whom Job descended: whose country was called *Ausitis*, (so the LXX. translate *Uz*, Job i. 1.) and his posterity called *Ausitæ* by Ptolemy; who were a people of Arabia Deserta, near Chaldea, not far from Euphrates.

Buz.] From whom came Elihu the Buzite, (Job xxxii. 2.) a people in some part of the same country, or near it.

Aram.] Who inhabited, perhaps, some part of Syria: which had the name of Aram from another, mentioned x. 23.

Ver. 22. *Chesed.*] He was the father of the Chaldeans, who are called Chasdim in Scripture, from this Chesed, or Chasad, as some read it. Where the rest that follow settled, or whether they had any posterity or no, I cannot find. It is likely they never grew to make a nation or a family, and so left no name behind them.

Ver. 24. *And his concubine.*] This was not an ill name in these ancient times: but signifies a wife, who was not the mistress of the family; but only taken for the increase of it, by procreation of children. Such wives were generally servants; whereas the prime wife was a free-woman, or made so by being married to govern the family, and bring children to inherit the estate.

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND Sarah was a hundred and seven and twenty*, &c.] The whole verse may be thus translated, "And the years of the life of Sarah were (in the whole) a hundred twenty and seven years:" it being usual with the Hebrews to repeat a word (as *life* is here) when they would signify any thing to be complete. And Sarah is the only woman whose entire age is set down in Scripture.

Ver. 2. *Kirjath-arba.*] *i. e.* The city of Arba, who was a famous man among the Anakims, (as we read, Josh. xiv. *ult.*) and either built this city, or made it the place of his residence; from whence it took his name.

It doth not appear when Abraham left Beer-sheba, and removed to this place.

The same is Hebron.] A very ancient city, as appears from Numb. xiii. 22. When it assumed this name, instead of Kirjath-arba, is not certain: but some conjecture it might be after Abraham purchased a burial-place in this country. (See xiii. 18.)

Abraham came.] Some fancy he was in some other part of the country, when his wife died. And several of the Jews have a conceit, that he came from Mount Moriah, (which is confuted by what we read, xxii. 19.) where Sarah, hearing he was gone to sacrifice her son, died with grief. But Maimonides speaks better sense, when he says, Abraham came from his own tent, which was separate (as I noted before, xviii. 9.) from his wife's: as appears further from xxiv. 67.

To mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.] The first relates to private sorrow, the other to the public, especially at the funeral solemnities; when they made great lamentation. After Abraham had performed the former, he made preparations for the latter: but what the rites of mourning were in those days we do not know. It is likely they shut themselves up from company, neglected the care of their bodies, abstained from their ordinary food: which, with many others, were the customs of Abraham's posterity; who made it a part of their religion to mourn for the dead.

Ver. 3. *And Abraham stood up from before his dead.*] By this it seems to be apparent, that in Abraham's time they sat upon the ground while they mourned, as it is certain they did in future ages. In which posture they continued till they had satisfied natural affection, and the

decent custom of the age and country where they lived. Then they rose up, as Abraham here did, to take care of the interment of his wife. Seven days, in after ages, were the common time of mourning: and for illustrious persons they mourned thirty days.

Spake unto the sons of Heth.] In whose country he now lived: concerning whom, see x. 15. By *the sons* are meant the principal persons of that nation.

Ver. 4. *I am a stranger and a sojourner with you.*] Though I am not a native of your country, yet I have lived long enough among you to be known to you.

Give me possession of a burying-place, &c.] I do not desire any large possessions among you, being but a sojourner; let me have only a place, which I may call my own, wherein to bury those of my family which die.

Ver. 5. *And the children* (or sons) *of Heth answered,* &c.] By one of their body, who spake in the name of the rest: as appears by the first words of the next verse, "Hear us, my lord:" in which form they were wont to address themselves to great men, (ver. 11. 13. 15, 16.)

Ver. 6. *Thou art a mighty prince.*] We have a great honour for thee.

In the choice of our sepulchres, &c.] Make choice of any one sepulchre; and nobody will deny to let thee have it. Every family (at least great ones) had their proper place for burial: which, I suppose, were sometimes so large, that they might spare others a part of them; or, of the ground wherein they were made.

Ver. 7. *Abraham stood up.*] It seems they had desired him to sit down among them, while they treated this business: which when they granted, he stood up to thank them.

And bowed himself.] The Hebrew word signifies the *bowing of the body;* and there are other words in that language proper to the *bowing of the head,* or of *the knee.*

Ver. 8. *Entreat for me to Ephron,* &c.] He desires them to mediate between him and this man (who, perhaps, was not then present in the assembly) for a purchase of a convenient place in his ground.

Ver. 9. *Cave of Machpelah.*] We take this word Machpelah for a proper name, as many others do: but the Talmudists generally think it to have been *speluncam duplicem,* (as the Vulgar Latin also, with the LXX. understand it,) *a double cave.* Yet they cannot agree in what sense it was so; whether they went through one cave into another, or there was one above another. For that by a cave is meant a vault arched over with stones or wood, which the ancients call *cryptæ,* nobody doubts. Salmasius hath described them in his Plin. Exercit. p. 1208. where he says this cave is said to have been double, in the same sense that the Greeks called theirs σπήλαια ἀμφιδίδυμα, because they had a double entrance, so that one might go into them at both ends, as Hesychius expounds it. Which shews, as he adds, it was a large place, and would contain many bodies. And of this he is so confident as to say, "Non quærenda est alia duplicis speluncæ interpretatio:" *no other interpretation of this double sepulchre ought to be sought after.* But learned men will not hearken to such dictates; and particularly Theodorick Hackspan maintains Machpelah to be a proper name (as we take it) by these two reasons: first, because the field itself, wherein this cave was, is called the Field of Machpelah: (ver. 19.) which doth not signify sure that there was a double gate to this field, but that it was in that tract of ground called Machpelah. And, secondly, this Field in Machpelah, is said to be before Mamre, (ver. 17.) which plainly denotes it to be a place so called, (Miscell. lib. i. cap. 10.) For which last reason, Guil. Vorstius also takes it to have been the name of a country, or province, in which this field and cave lay. (Animadv. in Pirke Eliezer, p. 179.)

Which is in the end of his field.] Burying-places were not anciently in the cities, much less in their temples; but in the fields, in caves, or vaults made to hold a good number of bodies. And so they continued, it is manifest, in our Saviour's time, among the Jews; as appears by Lazarus's monument, (John xi. 30, 31.) and by the burying-places for strangers, (Matt. xxvii. 7.) and their carrying the widow's son out of the city, (Luke vii. 12, &c.)

This seems to have been in the corner of the field beforementioned; which, perhaps, was near the highway: for there they sometimes affected to bury their dead, as appears from Gen. xxxv. 8. 19. Josh. xxiv. 30.

Ver. 10. *And Ephron dwelt.*] The Hebrew word for *dwelt* signifies literally *sat.* Which hath made some think that Ephron was a great man (a ruler, or governor) among the children of Heth, who sat as a prince or judge in this assembly. And that this was the reason why Abraham (ver. 8.) addressed himself to others of the same rank, that they would make way for him into his favour.

In the audience of the children of Heth, &c.] It is judiciously observed by Cornel. Bertram, that all weighty matters in those days were determined by the king (if they had any), or the elders, with the consent of the people. (De Repub. Judaic. cap. 3.) Marriages were a matter of public right; (xxix. 22.) as sepulchres were, it appears by this place: both of them being held to belong to religion.

Ver. 11. *In the presence of the sons of my people,* &c.] Contracts, or grants, were wont to be made before all the people, or their representatives, till writings were invented.

Ver. 12. *Abraham bowed,* &c.] Because, by their intercession, this favour was granted him.

Ver. 13. *I will give thee money for the field.*] This was the surest title, he thought, by purchase. And it was but reasonable he should buy it, if he would have any land in Canaan; for the time of possessing it, according to God's promise, was not yet come.

Ver. 15. *The land is worth four hundred shekels.*] This is the first time we meet with the name of shekel. Mention was made of money before in general, (xvii. 12, 13.) and of pieces of silver, xx. 16. (which shews the use of money was found out in those early days, and they did not trade merely by the exchange of one commodity for another), but we have no name for the money till now: and cannot exactly tell of what value a shekel of silver was. But Josephus (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 10.) saith, Ἀττικὰς δέχεται δραχμὰς τέσσαρας, *it was as much as four Attic drachms;* that is, half an ounce: which, in our money, wants not much of half a crown.

What is that between me and thee?] Some will have this to signify as much as, This is not worth speaking of between friends, and therefore I had rather thou wouldst accept it as a gift. But it is more reasonable to think, that he only pretended to use him kindly, and not to exact

upon his necessity. It being as much as to say, This is no great price, but a friendly bargain: pay it, therefore, and bury thy dead.

Ver. 16. *Abraham weighed to Ephron,* &c.] They did not *tell* money as we do now, but *weighed* it: for it was not stamped anciently, as Aristotle observes: but in the beginning of the world was received, *μεγέθει καὶ στάθμῳ, by its bulk and its weight.* Which being very troublesome, they learned in time to set a mark upon it, to free them from that inconvenience. Ὁ γὰρ χαρακτὴρ ἐτέθη τοῦ πόσου σημεῖον, *for that mark was set upon it to denote its quantity; i. e.* how much it was worth. For having the public stamp, that made it current, at a known value. Which must not be understood of foreign money, which was still weighed, though stamped: but of that of their own country, which they were assured was worth so much as the mark expressed. Yet it continued to be weighed among the Jews in David's time; (1 Chron. xxi. 25.) nay, till the captivity of Babylon, (Jerem. xxxii. 9.) And, indeed, the very word *shekel* comes from *shakal,* to weigh. And may be interpreted, as Waserus observes, *the weight.*

From all which Herm. Conringius well concludes, there is no truth in what the Jews say, in Bereschith Rabba, and other books; that Joshua, David, and Mordecai, nay, Abraham, coined money in their days. To support which fiction, they have counterfeited some coins with the inscription of "*Senex et Anus*" on one side, and "*Juvenis et Virgo*" on the other. As if Isaac and Rebekah were now married: or Abraham had power to coin money in a country where he did but sojourn, and was no sovereign.

Ver. 17. *Which were before Mamre.*] Over against Mamre. (See xiii. 18.)

Were made sure.] By a solemn contract, in a public assembly, (ver. 11.) where the money was tendered and accepted; and all there present desired to be witnesses to it.

Ver. 18. *In the presence of the children of Heth.*] See ver. 11.

Ver. 19. *And after this Abraham buried Sarah,* &c.] It is not likely that Ephron had ever buried any of his family here, but had only begun to make a vault in this field which Abraham bought of him, with all the trees therein, (ver. 17.) or, if it were finished, he sold it before he had made use of it. For we cannot think Abraham would lay his wife's body among those of the Hittites: but in a vacant place where he intended to be interred himself: as his family after him also were, (xlix. 30, 31.)

Ver. 20. *Was made sure.*] He repeats this, which had been said, ver. 17. because now the purchase was more confirmed, by the laying Sarah's body in this place: it being a kind of taking actual possession of it.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND Abraham was old.*] Some of the Hebrews, and Christian writers also, refer this to his wisdom; as the next words [well stricken in years] unto his age: nobody being called *zaken* (though far more aged) in the Holy Scripture till now: and therefore they translate it *elder;* which is the name of a wise man. (See Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 14. p. 556, &c.) Certain it is, that Abraham was now a hundred and forty years old: for he was a hundred when Isaac was born, (xxi. 5.) and Isaac was forty when he married Rebekah, (xxv. 20.)

Ver. 2. *And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house.*] Or, rather, as the LXX. translate it, *He said to his servant, the elder of his house:* that is, the steward, or governor of his family, as the Jerus. Targum translates it. (See Mr. Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 14. p. 550. and Dr. Hammond upon Acts xi. not. b.) All take this servant to have been Eliezer, mentioned xxv. 2.

Put thy hand under my thigh.] Some will have this phrase to import no more than, Lift me up, that I may stand, and call God to witness. But Abraham, no question, was now so vigorous, as to be able to rise of himself: having many children after this. Others, therefore, follow the opinion of the Jewish doctors, which is this, in short; "Before the giving of the law, the ancient fathers swore by the covenant of circumcision." They are the words of R. Eliezer, in his Pirke, cap. 49. And it is not improbable, that this manner of swearing, by putting the hand under that part which was the subject of circumcision, had respect to the covenant God made with that family, and their right to accomplish the promise of the Messiah. But this was not a custom peculiar to Abraham's family, for we find it among other eastern people: and therefore, it is likely, more ancient than circumcision. For which cause, Aben Ezra himself thinks putting the hand under the thigh was a token of subjection and homage, done by a servant to his lord: he sitting, and the servant putting his hand under him. Grotius imagines, that the sword hanging upon the thigh (Psalm xlv. 3.) this was as much as to say, If I falsify, kill me. Which is very witty; but the other seems plainer, signifying as much as, I am under thy power, and ready to do what thou commandest.

Ver. 3. *Sweur by the Lord.*] It was not lawful to swear by any creature; but only by him that made them all. For they took the greatest care to declare that they worshipped him alone.

That thou wilt not take a wife unto my son.] It seems he intended to leave the guardianship of his son to him (if he should die before he had disposed of him), as unto a wise and faithful servant, who had managed his affairs above fifty years; and we do not know how much longer.

Of the daughters of the Canaanites.] For, though there were some good people among them, as appears by Melchizedec and Abimelech; yet he saw them degenerating apace into all manner of wickedness; especially into idolatry: which would bring them, he knew, to utter desolation when they had filled up the measure of their iniquity, (xv. 16.)

Ver. 4. *But go into my country.*] *i. e.* Into Mesopotamia, where he lived for some time in Haran, after he came from Ur: which was also in that country, as I observed upon xi. 31. It seems, also, his brother had removed hither; following his father Terah's and Abraham's example. (See xi. 31.)

And my kindred.] The family of his brother Nahor, which he heard lately was increased, (xxii. 20.) who, though they had some superstition among them, retained the worship of the true God; as appears from this very chapter, ver. 31. 50.

And take a wife unto my son Isaac.] Which, no doubt, was by Isaac's consent, as well as his father's command.

Ver. 5. *Must I needs bring thy son again into the land from whence thou camest?*] He desires (like a conscientious man) to understand the full obligation of his oath, before he took it. And his doubt was, whether, if a woman would not come with him into Canaan, he should be bound to go again, a second time, and carry Isaac to her.

Ver. 6. *Beware that thou bring not my son thither again.*] He would by no means his son should go to that country, which God commanded him to forsake; that command obliging not only himself, but his posterity. (See ver. 8.)

Ver. 7. *The Lord God of heaven,* &c.] He who rules all things above as well as below, who brought me from my own into this country, and hath promised, and confirmed that promise with an oath, that my posterity shall inherit it, will prosper thy journey, and dispose some of my kindred to come hither, and be married to my son.

Send his angel before thee.] Good men were ever very sensible of God's providence governing all things, and prospering their proceedings by the ministry of angels: which Abraham's servant takes particular notice of, ver. 40.

Ver. 8. *And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee,* &c.] If it fall out otherwise than I hope, thou hast done thy duty: if thou bring not my son into that country again. He speaks (both here and ver. 6.) as if Isaac had once been there: because Abraham himself came from thence, and his servant also, and a great many of his family, (xii. 5.) who, if Isaac went to settle there, must have gone with him, as part of his substance.

Ver. 10. *And the servant took ten camels,* &c.] Camels were of great use in those countries, as they are at this day: some of them being made for carriage of burdens; and others for swift travelling; which latter sort were called by a peculiar name, Δρομάδες, *dromedaries,* as Salmasius observes in his Plinian. Exercit. p. 987. These, perhaps, were of that kind, for the greater expedition: like those we read of, 1 Sam. xxx. 17.

For all the goods of his master were in his hands.] He might choose what accommodations he pleased for his journey; having every thing belonging to his master at his command: who being a great person, it was fit his principal servant should be well attended, (as it appears he was, ver. 32.) especially when he went upon such an errand, as to court a wife for his master's son. Most refer this to the presents he carried along with him: and R. Solomon will have it that he carried a writing with him under his master's hand (an inventory we call it), specifying all his goods and riches, that they might know what a great match his son was.

City of Nahor.] Which was Haran, from whence Abraham came, (xi. 31.) and to which Jacob went to find his kindred, (xxviii. 10.) How far it was thither we are not told, nor how long they were going to it: and Moses omits also whatsoever passed in the way, as not pertinent to his story.

Ver. 11. *Camels kneel down.*] The posture wherein they rest themselves.

Ver. 12. *O Lord God of my master Abraham,* &c.] He had observed the kindness of God to have been so great to Abraham, and Abraham to have such a peculiar interest in his favour; that in confidence he would make good Abraham's words, (ver. 7. and 40.) he not only begs he might have good success in his journey, but desires a sign of it to confirm his faith; and such a sign as was most apposite to denote the person that would make a good wife, by her courtesy, humility, condescension, hospitality, prompt and laborious charity: all which are included in what *he* desires and *she* did.

Ver. 14. *Thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness to my master.*] He had no confidence that God would do any thing for his own sake, but for his master's, whom God had most wonderfully blessed.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass before he had done speaking,* &c.] This shews it was by a Divine suggestion that he made this prayer; which was answered immediately. Such is the Divine goodness; or rather (to use the words of Sam. Bochartus, upon occasion of many such instances), "Sic enim parata et obvia esse solent Dei beneficia, ita ut preces nostras non tam sequantur, quam occupent atque antecedant," (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 49.) *So forward is God to bestow his benefits upon us, that they do not so much follow our prayers, as prevent and go before them.* (See ver. 45.)

With her pitcher upon her shoulder.] Behold the simplicity, frugality, and industry of that age.

Ver. 20. *Drew for all his camels.*] There were *ten* of them, (ver. 10.) and they are a very thirsty sort of creatures: and therefore she took a great deal of pains to serve him, who was but a stranger, in this manner. Which shewed extraordinary goodness, and a most obliging disposition; at which he might well be amazed, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 21. *Wondering at her, held his peace,* &c.] He was so astonished at her kindness, readiness to do good, and laborious diligence, &c. and also at the providence of God in making things fall out so pat to his desires, that for the present he could not speak; having his mind employed in marking and observing every passage; whereby he might judge how to conclude whether this was the woman or no, whom God designed for his master's son.

Ver. 22. *The man took.*] Gave her, as the phrase is often used. But he first asked her whose daughter she was, as appears from ver. 47.

A golden ear-ring.] Or rather (as the margin hath it) a *jewel for the forehead.* And so we translate the Hebrew word, Ezek. xvi. 12. and this person himself expounds it, ver. 47. "I put the ear-ring (or jewel) upon her face," *i. e.* her forehead. For such ornaments were used in those times and countries, hanging down between the eyebrows, over the nose.

Two bracelets for her hands.] *i. e.* Wrists.

Ver. 26. *Bowed his head, and worshipped the Lord.*] Gave solemn thanks to God for hearing his prayer: and acknowledged that by his providence he was conducted to the execution of his desires; as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 27. *Mercy and truth.*] Mercy in promising, and truth in performing: or, "hath truly been merciful to him according to his promise," (ver. 7.) See ver. 49.

The house of my master's brethren.] *i. e.* His near kindred.

Ver. 28. *Told them of her mother's house.*] The women in the eastern countries had their apartments by themselves;

as was before observed, and appears again, ver. 67. Thither it was proper for Rebekah to go and acquaint her mother with what had passed.

Ver. 30. *When he saw the ear-ring,* &c.] This was the reason why he ran to invite the man to their house.

He stood by the camels at the well.] Expecting to see the issue.

Ver. 31. *Come in, thou blessed of the Lord.*] Whom God favoureth, and I pray may still continue in his favour. For it refers both to the time past and future.

Ver. 32. *Water to wash his feet,* &c.] As the custom was in those countries. (See xviii. 4.)

Ver. 33. *I will not eat,* &c.] An excellent servant; who preferred his master's profit to his own pleasure.

Ver. 35. *The Lord hath blest my master greatly,* &c.] Enriched him exceedingly; so that he is become a person of great eminence, (xxiii. 6.)

Ver. 36. *Given all that he hath.*] Declared him his heir, and settled his whole estate upon him.

Ver. 40. *The Lord before whom I walk.*] Whom I worship and study to please; keeping a grateful remembrance of his benefits always in my mind. For so Abraham's own words are, (ver. 7.) "The God which brought me from my father's house," &c.

Ver. 41. *Thou shalt be clear from this my oath.*] Or *curse,* as the Hebrew word imports: for all oaths were made anciently with some imprecations upon themselves if they sware falsely.

Ver. 42. *O Lord God of my master Abraham,* &c.] He doth not relate just the very words which he said; but the sense of them, and most of the words.

Prosper my way which I go.] The design in which I am engaged.

Ver. 48. *My master's brother's daughter.*] The granddaughter of his brother Nahor.

Ver. 49. *If ye will deal kindly and truly.*] Be really and sincerely kind.

That I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.] A kind of proverbial speech; signifying, "that I may take some other course (which way God shall direct) to fulfil my master's desire." It is the fancy of some of the Hebrew doctors, that he meant, he might go either to the Ishmaelites, or the children of Lot.

Ver. 50. *Laban and Bethuel.*] The chief manager of this affair was Laban; for Bethuel is not mentioned till now; because, perhaps, he was old, and unfit for business: but consents to all that is desired.

The thing proceedeth from the Lord.] It appears to be the Divine will and pleasure.

We cannot speak unto thee good or bad.] No way contradict it.

Ver. 51. *Rebekah is before thee.*] Is by us delivered to thee, to be disposed of according to thy desire: as the phrase is used, xx. 15.

As the Lord hath spoken.] Declared, by those signs which thou hast related to us.

Ver. 52. *Worshipped the Lord to the earth.*] Gave the most humble thanks unto Almighty God, for his goodness to him.

Ver. 53. *Gave to her brother and mother.*] Here is no mention of the father: which hath made some think, as Josephus did, that the father was dead; and Bethuel, mentioned, ver. 50. was her younger brother. But I take it to be more likely, that her father being infirm had committed the care of his daughter to Laban and his wife: and so appeared no more than was just absolutely necessary, in this treaty of marriage; which was carried on principally by Laban, who is mentioned therefore before her mother.

Precious things.] Presents of great value.

Ver. 55. *Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at least ten.*] There is nothing more common in Scripture, than by *days* to express a *year.* And therefore we have exactly translated these words in the margin, *a full year, or ten months:* (See iv. 3. Lev. xxv. 29. 1 Sam. i. 3. compared with ver. 7. and 20.) Some think this cannot be the meaning, because the servant was in such haste to return to his master. But it was as fit for them to shew their love to Rebekah, as it was for him to shew his concern for his master. Besides, there was something of decency in it, the custom being in all countries, for her that was espoused to a husband, to stay some time with her parents, before the consummation of the marriage. And one would think the custom then was, for to keep her a year, or near it: which makes them desire she might stay at least *ten months,* that they might not depart too far from the common usage, and that she might have the longer time to fit herself with the usual nuptial ornaments. Thus Onkelos it is certain understood it, and the paraphrase of Uzielides, and the Mauritanian Jews, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 5.

Ver. 56. *That I may go to my master.*] Whom he would have to rejoice with him.

Ver. 57. *Inquire at her mouth.*] Let her resolve, how it shall be. St. Ambrose observes upon this passage, that they do not consult her about the marriage, "for that belonged to the judgment of the parents," but about the time of going to complete it. Upon which occasion he quotes the words of Hermione when she was courted by Orestes (in Euripides' Andromacha), which he thinks were taken from hence, Νυμφευμάτων μὲν τῶν ἐμῶν Πατὴρ ἐμὸς Μέριμναν ἕξει, κ' οὐκ ἐμὸν κρίνειν τάδε. *My father will take care of my marriage: these things do not belong to my determination.* (Lib. i. de Abrahamo Patriarcha, cap. ult.)

Ver. 58. *Wilt thou go with this man?*] That is, presently, as he desires. For that she should be Isaac's wife was agreed already between them: and we are to suppose she had consented. The only question was, whether so soon as the man desired?

And she said, I will.] I agree to go, without any delay: which, no doubt, very much endeared her to Isaac.

Ver. 59. *And her nurse.*] Whose name was Deborah; (xxxv. 8.) who did not suckle her, perhaps, but was (as we speak) her dry-nurse: for whom, it is likely, she had a great affection. It being a piece of ancient piety and gratitude to keep such persons as long as they lived, who had taken care of them in their infancy. It is probable also she was remarkable for prudence, and other eminent qualities; or else Moses would scarce have let her name, and her death and burial, had a place in this history, (xxxv. 8.)

Ver. 60. *And they blessed Rebekah,* &c.] Her father and mother, with all the rest of their family and kindred, prayed God to make her exceeding fruitful; and to make her posterity victorious over their enemies: which were the great things they desired in those days. The Hebrews look upon

this (as Mr. Selden observes in the place before named on ver. 55.) as an example of the solemn benediction, which was wont to be given (even before the law of Moses) when the spouse was carried to her husband.

Thou art our sister.] Near cousin or kinswoman: for all that were near of kin called one another brothers and sisters.

Ver. 61. *Her damsels.*] Who waited upon her; and were given as part of her portion.

Ver. 62. *Well of Lahai-roi.*] Mentioned xvi. 14. By which it appears that Abraham, after the death of Sarah, returned to live at Beer-sheba, or thereabouts; for that was nigh this well: and it is probable Abraham and Isaac were not parted.

Ver. 63. *To meditate,* &c.] The cool of the evening and solitude are great friends to meditation.

Ver. 64. *She lighted off the camel.*] As they always did who met any person whom they honoured.

Ver. 65. *Took a veil.*] Not only out of modesty, but in token of her subjection to him. Many will have this to have been a peculiar ornament belonging to a bride, called by the Romans *flameum,* by the Greeks Θέριστρον, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 5. Whence those words of Tertullian, de Veland. Virgin. cap. 2. "Etiam apud Ethnicos velatæ (*i. e.* sponsæ) ad virum ducuntur:" *Even among heathens brides are brought to their husbands with a veil over their faces.*

Ver. 66. *And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.*] How she had consented to be his wife.

Ver. 67. *Brought her into his mother Sarah's tent.*] That apartment wherein his mother dwelt: which was distinct from that of the husband's.

And Isaac was comforted after the death of his mother.] The love he had to his wife, helped to alleviate the sorrow he had conceived at his mother's death: which was so great, that now it had continued *three* years. Such was the pious affection children had for their parents, in ancient days.

Isaac was *forty* years old when he married Rebekah, (xxv. 20.) and, if we can believe the Jews (in Seder Olam), she was but *fourteen.*

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *THEN again Abraham took a wife.*] Sarah being dead, and Hagar long ago sent away, and his son Isaac lately married, he wanted a companion in his old age. For, having given up Sarah's tent unto Rebekah, (xxiv. ult.) it is probable he gave up his own to Isaac, and so dwelt in a tent by himself, where he found it necessary to have a wife to look after his family.

And her name was Keturah.] We are not told what family she was of: but it is not unlikely she had been born and bred in his own house, as Eliezer his steward was; and, perhaps, was chief among the women, as he among the men servants. Many of the Jews will have her to be Hagar, whom (Sarah, who was the cause of her expulsion, being dead) he now received again. So the Jerusalem paraphrase, and Jonathan also: but Aben Ezra confutes this opinion with good reason; for no account can be given of Abraham's having more concubines than one, (ver. 6.) unless we make Keturah distinct from Hagar. Nor can any body tell why he should call Hagar by the name of Keturah here, when he calls her by her own name, ver. 12.

Ver. 2. *And she bare him.*] He was now a hundred and forty years old: but so vigorous as to beget many children. Which need not seem strange, considering the age to which they then lived, (for he lived thirty-five years after this marriage, ver. 7.) and that now, in our time, men have had children after they have been seventy, nay, eighty years of age.

To the truth also of this history we have the testimony of pagan writers. For Alexander Polyhistor (mentioned by Josephus, and by Eusebius, lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 20.) tells us, that Cleodemus (called by some Malchas) writing the history of the Jews, reports just as Moses doth, Ὅτι ἐκ Χεττούρας Ἀβραάμῳ ἐγένοντο παῖδες ἱκανοί: *That Abraham had a good many children by Keturah:* three of which he mentions by name.

Zimran.] This son of his, with all the rest of his brethren, was sent by Abraham into the east country, (as we read ver. 6.) and therefore we must seek for them in those parts; viz. In Arabia, and the countries thereabout, where some footsteps of them have remained for many ages, particularly of Zimran; from whom we may well think the Zamareni were descended, a people mentioned by Pliny, with their towns in Arabia Felix, (lib. vi. cap. 28.)

And Jockshan.] Concerning whom I can find nothing but only this: that Theophanes, a chronographer, in the beginning of the ninth century, after he hath treated of the Ishmaelites and Madianites (the latter of which came from one of Keturah's children), and the parts of Arabia where Mahomet was born, immediately adds, that there were other people, ἐνδότεροι, more in the bowels of Arabia, descended from Jectan, called Amanitæ, that is, Homeritæ. Perhaps it should be written Jocshan, not Jectan: for Philostorgius expressly says of the Homerites, Ἐστι δὲ τὸ ἔθνος τῶν ἐκ Χεττούρας, &c. *That they are one of the nations descended from Keturah and Abraham,* lib. iii. Hist. Eccles. §. 4. where he relates a famous embassy which Constantius sent to them to win them to Christianity, and the good success of it. And there is this strong proof of their descent from some of Abraham's family, that they retained the rite of circumcision, even when they were idolators. For he says expressly, "that it was a circumcised nation," κατὰ τὴν ὀγδόην περιτεμνομένων ἡμέραν, *and circumcised also on the eighth day.* Which was not the custom of all the Arabians, if we may believe Josephus, (lib. i. Antiq. cap. 23.) and Eustathius in Hexaemeron, &c. who say the Arabians stayed till they were thirteen years old before they were circumcised.

Medan.] From whom the country called Madiania, in the southern part of Arabia Felix, it is likely had its name.

Midian.] From whom Midianitis, in Arabia Petræa, had its denomination.

And Ishbak.] I can find no footsteps of his posterity, unless it be in Bacascami, which Pliny says was one of the towns of the Zamareni, who descended from his eldest brother Zimran. There were a people also hard by, called Bachilitæ, as he tells us, lib. vi. Nat. Hist. cap. 28.

And Shuah.] Perhaps he had no children, or so few that they were mixed with some of their other brethren,

and left no name behind them. Yet Pliny, in the next chapter, mentions a town called Suasa, in that part of Arabia which is next to Egypt, lib. vi. cap. 29.

Ver. 3. *And Jokshan begat Sheba.*] I observed before upon x. 7. that there are four of this name, or near it, all comprehended by the Greek and Roman writers under the name of Sabeans. One of them, the son of Raamah, had a brother called Dedan, as this Sheba here hath. But they were the fathers of a distinct people, as is evident from the Scripture story, and from other authors. For, besides the Sabæi in the furthermost parts of Arabia, near the Persian and the Red Sea, there were also a people of that name (descended, it is very probable, from this son of Jokshan), in the very entrance of Arabia Felix, as Strabo tells us; who says, that they and the Nabatæi were the very next people to Syria: and were wont to make excursions upon their neighbours. By which we may understand (which otherwise could not be made out), how the Sabeans broke into Jacob's country, and carried away his cattle. For it is not credible they could come so far as from the Persian or Arabian Sea: but from this country there was an easy passage through the deserts of Arabia, into the land of Uz or Ausitis, which lay upon the borders of Euphrates. (See Bochart in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 9.)

And Dedan.] There was one of this name (as I said before), the son of Rhegma, (Gen. x. 7.) who gave name to a city upon the Persian Sea, now called Dadan. But besides that, there was an inland city, called Dedan, in the country of Idumea, mentioned by Jeremiah, (xxv. 23. xlix. 8.) whose inhabitants are called Dedanim, (Isa. xxi. 13.) And this Dedan, here mentioned, may well be thought to be the founder of it, as the same Bochart observes, lib. iv. cap. 6.

And the sons of Dedan were Ashurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.] If these were heads of nations, or families, the memory of them is lost. For it is a mistake of Cleodemus (who mentions the first of these in Euseb. Præpar. Evang. lib. ix. cap. 20.) to derive the Assyrians from this Ashurim: they having their original from Ashur, one of the sons of Shem, (x. 22.)

Ver. 4. *And the sons of Midian, Ephah.*] The name of Ephah, the eldest son of Midian, continued a long time; for these two are mentioned by Isaiah as near neighbours, (lx. 6.) And not only Josephus, Eusebius, and St. Jerome, but the Nubiensian geographer also, tell us of a city called Madian, in the shore of the Red Sea; near to which was Ephah, in the province of Madian. עיפה, *Epha*, or *Hipha*, is the same with that place the Greeks call Ἵππος, and Ptolemy mentions both a mountain and a village of this name on the same shore, a little below Madiane, which is the Madian here mentioned, as Bochart observes in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 3.

And Epher.] I can find no remainders of his family, unless it be among the Homeritæ beforementioned, whose metropolis was called Τάφαρον; in which Theophilus (sent by Constantius to convert that country) built a church, as Philostorgius relates, (lib. iii. Hist. Eccles. §. 4.) Which city is mentioned by many other authors, as Jacobus Gotofredus observes in his Dissertations upon Philostorgius; particularly by Arrianus, in his Periplus of the Red Sea, where he calls the metropolis of the Homeritæ expressly by the name of Ἀφὰρ, which one cannot well doubt came from this *Epher*.

And Hanoch.] In that part of Arabia Felix where the Adranitæ were seated, there was a great trading town called Cane, as Ptolemy tells us, and shews its distance from Alexandria; Κάνη ἐμπόριον καὶ ἄκρον, (lib. viii.) Pliny also mentions a country in Arabia, which he calls Regio Canauna; which may be thought to have taken its name from this person and his posterity.

And Abidah.] The relics of this name remain (if the two last syllables, as is usual, be inverted) in the people called Διβηνοὶ, who lived in an island called Διβοῦ, or Διβοῦς, which lay between Arabia and India, and is by authors said to belong sometimes to the one, and sometimes to the other. Philostorgius saith, only they bear the name of Indians (in the place beforenamed, where he saith, Theophilus, who was sent to convert the Homerites, was born here). But Pliny, reckoning up the tracts of Arabia, places the isle called Devadæ (which I take to be this) over-against the forenamed region called Canauna, (lib. vi. cap. 28.) And Strabo (as Gothofred observes), Agatharcides, and others, call it Δέβαι.

And Eldaah.] I know not where to find any remains of this name, unless it be in the city Elana (which might easily be formed from Eldaah, by leaving out the *daleth*, and turning the *ain* into *nun*, than which nothing more common), which was seated in the Sinus Arabicus, toward the east, called by others Αἰλάνα (*Ælana*), from whence the Sinus itself was called Elanites, and the people that lived in it Elanitæ, as Salmasius shews out of many authors: (Exercit. in Solinum, p. 482.)

Ver. 5. *Gave all he had to Isaac.*] As he designed long before, (xxiv. 36.)

Ver. 6. *Sons of his concubines.*] Which were Hagar and Keturah, who were wives, but of an inferior sort, according to the manner of those times and countries. Keturah is expressly called his concubine, 1 Chron. i. 32. as she is above (ver. 1. of this chapter) called his wife. Which R. Bechai (in Mr. Selden, cap. iii. de Successionibus) thus explains: "She was his concubine, because of a servile condition; but his wife, because married with covenants, to provide for her and her children;" though they were not to heir his estate. The Talmudists, indeed, do not perfectly agree in this matter; for, though they all agree (and prove it evidently) that they were real wives, yet some say they were made so only by solemn espousals, without any marriage settlement in writing, as the principal wives had: others think they had a writing also, but not with such conditions as the principal wives enjoyed. Abarbinel hath an accurate discourse about this, which Buxtorf hath translated into his book De Sponsalibus, n. 17. And see also Mr. Selden, lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 7. p. 570, &c. and G. Sckickard, de Jure Regio, cap. 3. p. 70.

Gave gifts.] Some portion of his money, or moveable goods; or, perhaps, of both: which, in all probability, he gave to Ishmael, as well as to these sons, (though it be not mentioned, Gen. xxi. 14.) because Moses here saith, he gave gifts *to the sons of his concubines;* of which Hagar was one.

Into the east country.] Into Arabia and the adjacent countries, as was said before. For the Midianites are called the "children of the east," in Judg. vi. 3. 33. vii. 12. viii. 10.

Ver. 7. *These are the days of the years of Abraham,* &c.] This is spoken by anticipation (to finish the story of Abraham), for Esau and Jacob were born before he died, and were now fifteen years old. For Isaac was but sixty years old when they were born, (ver. 26.) and seventy-five when Abraham died; who was a hundred years old at Isaac's birth, and lived to the age of one hundred seventy and five.

Ver. 8. *Abraham gave up the ghost.*] Died of no disease, but old age.

In a good old age.] Without pain or sickness.

Full of years.] The Hebrew hath only the word *full;* we add *years* to make up the sense: which some think rather to be this, that he was satisfied, and had enough of this world, desiring to live no longer. Like that expression in Seneca, (epist. lxi.) " Vixi, Lucili charissime, quantum satis est; mortem plenus expecto."

Gathered to his people.] It doth not relate to his body, which was not buried with them; and therefore must relate to his soul, which is supposed by this still to live in that place where his pious forefathers were gone. Or else it is a Hebrew idiom, signifying no more, but that he left this world as all his fathers had done before him.

Ver. 9. *His sons, Isaac and Ishmael,* &c.] By this it appears that Isaac and Ishmael were not strangers one to another. Nay, some of the orientals tell us that Abraham went to see Ishmael at his house, and that Ishmael came to see him after he was sent away; which is not at all improbable; for no doubt Abraham provided for him suitable to the condition of his birth: and Ishmael could not but be convinced that the inheritance of his father belonged of right to Isaac, who was the son of a free-woman, and he only of a bond-woman. Nor could he well be ignorant that Isaac was to be heir of Abraham's estate, by God's designation.

In the field of Ephron, &c.] See xxiii. 17.

Ver. 11. *Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi.*] He continued, after Abraham's death, his former habitation, which he had when he married, (xxiv. 62.)

Ver. 12. *Now these are the generations of Ishmael,* &c.] Having mentioned the blessing of God which went along with Isaac after his father's death (in the foregoing verse), he takes this occasion to shew, that God was not unmindful of his promise made to Abraham concerning Ishmael also, (xvii. 20.)

Ver. 13. *Nebaioth.*] As he was the first-born of Ishmael, so his posterity gave the denomination to the whole country of Arabia Petræa (in the best part of which, see ver. 3. they inhabited), which Pliny, Strabo, and Ptolemy, call *Nabatæa;* and sometimes other authors call *Nabathis;* as the inhabitants were called *Nabatæi;* who are mentioned also by Dionysius Periegetes, in his description of the world, and by Plutarch, in the Life of Demetrius; who, he saith, was sent to subdue the Arabs called *Nabatæi* (τοὺς καλουμένους Ναβαταίους) where he was in great danger to perish, by falling, εἰς τόπους ἀνύδρους, into places where there was no water. These are commonly called, in Scripture, Ishmaelites, as if they had been the sole heirs of their progenitor; and they dwelt near to the Midianites (their half brethren); for in the story of Joseph, he is said in one place to be sold unto the Ishmaelites, in another to the Midianites, (Gen. xxxvii. 27, 28. 36.) they being neighbours, and co-partners in traffic. The country of Moab also was near to these *Nabatæi,* as appears from Epiphanius, (Hæres. liii.) where, speaking of the countries that lay beyond the Dead Sea, he mentions this, which he calls Ναβατικὴ Χώρα, the region of Nebaioth, Ituræa, and Moabitis. (See Salmasius, Plin. Exercitat. p. 615.)

Kedar.] His posterity, called *Kedareni,* were also seated in Arabia Petræa, together with their elder brother: and their name also was so famous, that some authors call the whole country *Kedar.* For the language of Kedar is the Arabian language; and when David complains that he had dwelt long " in the tents of Kedar," the Chaldee expounds it, " in the dwelling of the Arabians." But those Arabians called Scenitæ were properly the people of Kedar: and yet not all the Scenitæ (*i. e.* all the Arabs who dwelt in tents), but those only who dwelt in Arabia Petræa. For there were divers kinds of them (all called Σκηνῖται), some near Euphrates, others in Arabia Felix, &c. as Salmasius shews in his Plin. Exercit. p. 484. Some take them to be the same with those whom Ptolemy calls Pharanitæ: for what the Psalmist calls dwelling among the " tents of Kedar," is called (1 Sam. xxvi. 1.) " dwelling in the wilderness of Paran." Pliny only says, Pharanitis bordered upon the Arabs (in " ora contermina gentis Arabiæ"), and so later writers make Pharan and Arabia Petræa to be near neighbours, as the same Salmasius shews, p. 485.

Ver. 14. *Dumah.*] He seems, by Isaiah xxi. 11. to have been seated near Idumea.

Ver. 15. *Hadar.*] Some think the Athritæ in Arabia Felix came from him. In which, likewise, there was a city called Tema, from the next son of Ishmael: and Jetur, the next son to him, may well be thought to have been the father of the Ituræi in Cœlo-Syria: and Kedemah, the last of his sons, to have dwelt near his brother Kedar. For so Jacobus Capellus expounds those words, (Jer. xlix. 28.) " Go up to Kedar, and spoil the men of Kedem," (which we translate " the men of the east.") And there are some other people in those countries, whose names sound something like the rest of the sons of Ishmael, but not so like as these I have mentioned: which makes me omit all further search after them, enough having been said to shew the truth of this account which Moses gives us of Ishmael's posterity.

Ver. 16. *These are their names, by their towns.*] Though some of them dwelt in tents (and thence were called Scenitæ Arabes), yet they did not live so scatteringly, but pitched them together, and made a town.

And their castles.] They had even then places of defence; which may make it probable, that they had also walled towns, to which they resorted from their tents in the fields, when they were in any danger, (Isa. xlii. 11.) For it must be here noted, that as there were divers people of this name of Scenitæ Arabes; so there was this difference among them (as Salmasius observes in the forenamed place), that some of them were Nomades, who wandered from place to place; others of them were not. Particularly the Sabean Scenitæ, and most of the rest, dwelt in tents, but were fixed in their habitations, and did not remove from one place to another, as those that dwelt in Mesopotamia did, who were both Scenitæ, and also Nomades. They, therefore, who were settled in tents, as the sons of Ishmael were, had reason to build fortresses for the security of their slender habitations.

Twelve princes according to their nations.] Or, rather, (as Dr. Jackson well glosses, book i. on the Creed, cap. 25.) twelve heads of so many several houses, tribes, or clans. Which kind of government they continued till four hundred years after Christ, and is better expressed by heathen writers than by many Christian interpreters, when they call them Φύλαρχοι Ἀράβων, *rulers of their tribes*, as Strabo speaks, (lib. xvi.) in his description of Syria. And so the later writers speak of the Saracens (who were the same people formerly called Scenitæ Arabes), whose governors they called Phylarchi Saracenorum, as may be seen in Sextus Rufus and Jornandes.

See Salmas. as before, p. 484, 485.

Ver. 17. *Gathered unto his people.*] The same phrase being used here of the death of Ishmael, that was (ver. 8.) of the death of Abraham; it shews the meaning is no more, but that they left the world as others had done before them. We do not read where Ishmael was buried: it is likely in his own country, not in the cave of Machpelah; for that had been to give his posterity a claim to a share in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 18. *They dwelt from Havilah unto Shur,* &c.] See Gen. x. 7. Josephus, (lib. i. Antiq. cap. 12.) makes the Ishmaelites to have possessed the whole tract between Euphrates and the Red Sea; which appears by this place not to be true. For between them and Euphrates were the Amalekites and Moabites, who did not reach to Euphrates neither. The Ishmaelites therefore possessed the country, which in that part eastward that was next to the Amalekites, was called *the wilderness of Havilah;* and in that part next to Egypt was called the *wilderness of Shur;* and in other places of Scripture is called *Kedar,* the *wilderness of Paran,* and *the wilderness of sin.* All which was comprehended afterward under the name of Arabia. For Stephanus (as Salmasius observes, Plin. Exerc. p. 488.) makes but two Arabias. One which he calls the *spicy,* between the Persian and the Arabian Sea; the other on one end of it westward, was next to Egypt; on the other end northward, next to Syria.

As thou goest towards Assyria.] The wilderness of Shur was over-against Egypt, and touched it in that part by which the way lay from Egypt to Assyria. Or, as some understand the whole verse, "The sons of Ishmael dwelt from Shur, which is towards Egypt, unto Havilah, which is towards Assyria, in the way from Egypt thither."

He died (Heb. *fell*) *in the presence of all his brethren.*] Of all his relations or kindred, which are called *brethren* in Scripture. But his death has been spoken of before; and in this verse mention being made only of the situation of his country, some interpret it in this manner, *His lot fell, i. e.* he had its portion in the presence of all his brethren, according to the promise made to his mother, (xvi. 12.) the children of Keturah lying on the east of his country, and Isaac's seed on the west. Or, if we take it to relate to his death, it may have the same sense: "Till death he dwelt in the presence of all his brethren, and was in a flourishing condition."

Ver. 19. *These are the generations of Isaac.*] His principal design being to give an account of those descended from Abraham by Isaac; Moses returns to that, after a short account of his other posterity.

Ver. 20. *The Syrian, of Padan-Aram,* &c.] Bethuel and Laban are called Aramites, or Syrians, not because they were of that nation, but because they lived in the country of Aram, or Syria, that is, in Padan-Aram; as it is here explained, and appears more fully from Rebekah's discourse with her son Jacob, when she sent him thither, (xxviii. 2. 5.) where he living twenty years with his uncle Laban, was upon that account called a Syrian, though born in Canaan, (Deut. xxvi. 5.)

Padan-Aram was a part of Mesopotamia. I say a part of it, for Mesopotamia itself was called Aram-Naharaim, that part of Syria (for there were many other Arams) which lay between the two great rivers of Euphrates and Tigris. Which country had two parts also; one toward the north, from the mountains of Armenia to the river Chaboras, *i. e.* Araxes, (from whence Balaam seems to have been fetched, Numb. xxiii. 7.) which was exceeding fruitful, and upon that account called *Padan,* which signifies in Arabic the same that *Sede* doth in Hebrew, *i. e. a field.* And therefore what Moses calls going to Padan-Aram, (Gen. xxviii. 2.) the prophet Hosea calls fleeing to *Sedo-Aram,* into the *country* or *field of Syria,* (Hosea xii. 12.) this being a cultivated country, abounding with all plenty. The other part of Mesopotamia was southerly, from the forenamed river unto Babylon; and was very stony and barren. The Syrians lived in the former, and the Arabians in the latter, as Bochart observes, (lib. ii. Phaleg. cap. 6.)

Ver. 21. *Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife,* &c.] The Hebrew word *atar* doth not signify barely to entreat, or pray, but to beseech with earnestness, vehemence, and importunity. It is most likely he continued these importunate prayers several years; the desire of seeing the Messiah making them very uneasy under barrenness: and some of the Hebrews fancy, that she remaining barren twenty years, Isaac at last carried her with him to Mount Moriah (where he should have been offered), and there made most fervent supplications for a son; as if he would remember God of the promise he had there made him, that he would multiply Abraham's seed as the stars of heaven, (xxii. 17.)

Ver. 22. *And the children struggled together within her.*] Some time before her delivery (ver. 24.) she felt as if two were wrestling together in her womb; and put her into pangs, by striving which should get out first.

If it be so, why am I thus?] If I cannot be delivered, why did I conceive?

And she went.] The struggling and pangs, we must suppose, ceased for some time; so that she was able to go and consult the Divine Majesty about this unusual contest.

To inquire of the Lord.] There were some places where the Divine Majesty used to appear, which was the settled place of worship. (See iv. 3.) Maimonides will have it, that she went to the school of Sem, or Heber, who were prophets, to desire them to consult the Divine Majesty about her case. (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 41.) And it is very probable, that there was some divinely-inspired person attending the Schechinah, wheresoever it was; such as Melchizedec was at Salem. Whom Patricides takes to have been the person to whom Rebekah resorted, for resolution of her doubt.

Ver. 23. *And the Lord said unto her.*] By Melchizedec, saith the forenamed Patricides; By an angel, saith Mai-

monides: who tells us (in the place now mentioned) their masters are so settled in their opinion that she went to inquire of the forenamed prophets, and that by *the Lord* is meant his angel, that they will have Heber to be him that gave the answer (for prophets, say they, are sometimes called angels), or the angel that spake to Heber in this prophecy; but it is most reasonable to think, that the Lord spake to her by an angel, from the Schechinah.

Two nations are in thy womb.] The heads of two nations.

Two manner of people shall be separated.] Greatly differing in their dispositions, manners, course of life, and country; which will make them perpetually disagree.

From thy bowels.] Shall issue from thee.

The elder shall serve the younger.] In his posterity, not in his own person.

Ver. 24. *When her days to be delivered were fulfilled.*] This demonstrates the time of her delivery was not come when the struggling first began.

Ver. 25. *Red all over.*] Some will have it with red hair, not only on his head, but all over his body.

Like a hairy garment.] As rough as hair-cloth; just as the poets describe satyrs. He was *hirsutus;* not only hairy all over, but those hairs as stiff as bristles; arguing great strength of body, and a rough, fierce temper.

They called his name Esau.] Which signifying *made* in Hebrew, this is commonly taken for the reason of his name, that he was as full of hairs when he was born, as others are at man's estate. But I think it may as well denote his active genius, which they thought this presaged.

Ver. 26. *Jacob.*] He certainly had his name from his taking his brother by the heel at his birth; as if he would supplant him, as he afterwards did.

Was threescore years old.] God exercised Isaac's faith and patience (just as he had done Abraham's) for the space of twenty years, before he gave him a child; for he was forty years old when he married (ver. 20.) and now sixty.

Ver. 27. *A cunning hunter.*] Had great skill in hunting, in which his active genius delighted.

A man of the field.] That took pleasure to be abroad, pursued wild beasts, in woods and mountains; where afterwards he had his habitation.

A plain man, dwelling in tents.] He loved not violent exercise, but kept at home; or looked after the flocks of sheep, and the breed of cattle.

Ver. 28. *And Isaac loved Esau,* &c.] Not only because he was his first-born, and because his love of hunting argued him to be a man of great activity and valour, who was likely to prove a great person, but because he also took care frequently to entertain his father with venison (which was of divers sorts), and afforded him such variety at his table, as gave his father frequent occasion to commend him.

But Rebekah loved Jacob.] Being a man of a more meek and quiet temper, suitable to her own disposition, and more at home also with her than Esau was, and designed by God to inherit the promise, (ver. 23.) It is likely Esau made great court (as we speak) to his father, and Jacob to his mother; whereby they won their affection.

Ver. 29. *He was faint.*] With too violent and long pursuit of his sports.

Ver. 30. *Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red,* &c.] It was made of lentiles, as we learn from the last verse of this chapter. And St. Austin upon Psalms xlvi. saith they were Egyptian lentiles; which were in great esteem, and much commended by Athenæus and A. Gellius: and gave the pottage, it is probable, a red tincture. Some think Esau did not know what it was, and therefore calls it only by its colour; asking for *that red, that same red,* as it is in the Hebrew.

Therefore was his name called Edom.] This repeated eager desire of he knew not what, for which he sold his birthright, gave him the name of Edom: which signifies *red.* Whence the city which he built, and the whole country his posterity inhabited, was called by the same name; and by the Greeks, Idumea; bordering toward the south upon Judea, Arabia, and Egypt.

Ver. 31. *Sell me this day thy birthright.*] The eldest son had several privileges belonging to him above the rest: the chief of which was to have a double portion of his father's estate. As for the right of priesthood, there are many reasons to prove it did not belong thereunto. But whatsoever they were, Jacob cunningly made an advantage of Esau's necessity, to purchase them all for a small matter. In which some think he did not amiss: about which I shall not dispute.

Ver. 32. *What profit shall this birthright do to me?*] He speaks very slightly, if not contemptuously of it: preferring the present satisfaction of his appetite, before his future dignity and greatness. For some are of opinion he pretended to be fainter than really he was; out of a vehement longing for the pottage; which, perhaps, was a rarity.

Ver. 33. *Swear to me this day.*] That I shall peaceably enjoy the prerogative of the birthright.

Esau seems to have been very violent in all things; and to have pursued this as eagerly as he did his sports: Jacob, on the contrary, very sedate and crafty to make the best use of the opportunities he met with to promote his ends.

Ver. 34. *Rose up and went his way.*] Well satisfied, and without any trouble for what he had done. Which the apostle censures as a piece of profaneness: parents being wont to give a special blessing to their first-born.

Despised his birthright.] He thought, perhaps, he could recover that by force, which he had lost by his brother's craft.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. *AND there was a famine in the land,* &c.] Such a scarcity of provisions, as was in Abraham's days, (xii. 10.) when he was newly come into Canaan, happened again in the days of Isaac.

And Isaac went.] It is not said from whence he went: but it is probable, after the death of Abraham, he went and dwelt where his father had often done, at Mamre, near Hebron. For he was not now at Beer-sheba, or the well Lahai-roi, (which was the last place of his habitation that we read of, xxv. 11.) for that was in this very country of Gerar, to which he now went.

Unto Abimelech.] The son, it is most likely, of him to whom Abraham went: for he is not to be thought the same; it being a hundred years since that time. And all the kings of that country were, for many ages, called by the name of

Abimelech; as appears from the story of David: who fled to one of that name called Achish in 1 Sam. xxi. 10. but Abimelech in the title of the xxxivth Psalm. (See Gen. xx. 2.)

Ver. 2. *And (*or, *for) the Lord appeared to him.*] He intended to have gone into Egypt, as Abraham his father had done in the like case, (xii. 10.) But God forbade him (appearing to him either in a vision, or a dream, or as the glory of the Lord appeared afterward to Moses and the congregation of Israel upon several occasions), and directed him to stay in this country, which was in the way to Egypt: where he promises to provide for him.

Though Egypt was a most plentiful country; yet the king of it, at this time, was not so good a man, perhaps, as him that reigned in the days of Abraham.

Ver. 3. *Sojourn in this land,* &c.] He not only promises to take care of him at present, during the famine; but renews the promises made to Abraham his father at sundry times, and in divers places, (xii. 3. xv. 5. xvii. 2. 8.) and at last confirmed by an oath, (xxii. 16, 17.)

I will be with thee, and bless thee.] These, and such-like words, Maimonides shews express a special providence over those to whom they are spoken, and over all belonging to them. (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 18.)

Unto thy seed will I give all these countries.] Which he repeats again in the next verse; having mentioned the vast multiplication of his seed.

Ver. 4. *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.*] In this is contained the promise of the Messiah, the highest blessing God could bestow: which he assured Abraham should spring out of his family, (xxii. 18.) and now assures the same to Isaac.

Ver. 5. *Because that Abraham obeyed my voice.*] In going out of his own country, when God called him; in circumcising himself and his family; but especially (xxii. 18.) in offering his son Isaac.

And kept my charge.] *i. e.* Observed the sabbath-day, says Manesseh Ben-Israel, out of the Hebrew doctors: (L. de Creat. Problema viii.) But it seems more rational to understand by this word which we translate *charge,* all that he commanded him to observe: the particulars of which follow.

My commandments, my statutes, and my laws.] These are nicely distinguished by some of the Jews; especially Abarbinel: who, by *commandments,* understands not only that of circumcision, but of expelling Ishmael: and by *statutes* (Hebr. *chukkothai,* which always relates to ceremonial things), not only binding his son Isaac to offer him in sacrifice, but his offering a ram afterwards in his stead: and by *laws* (which include the judicial part of Moses's writings), his taking a wife for Isaac out of another country; and bestowing gifts upon the children of his concubines, reserving the land for Isaac. But this may seem too curious: and so many words may be thought rather to be used, only to express his exact obedience to God in every thing, whether belonging to religion, or to justice, mercy, or any other duty. According to what he required of him, (xvii. 1.) "Walk before me, and be thou perfect."

Ver. 6. *And Isaac dwelt in Gerar.*] This is a fresh instance of his constant obedience; in trusting to God's providence here, and not going down into Egypt as he was inclined.

Ver. 7. *She is my sister.*] Or, *cousin;* for so she was. He told part of the truth, but not all.

For he feared to say, &c.] He imitated his father; as children are apt to do.

Ver. 8. *Sporting with Rebekah his wife.*] Using such familiarity with her, and blandishments, as were not allowable between brethren and sisters, but common between man and wife, even openly. As embracing her in his arms, and kissing her, perhaps, very often: he having an exceeding great love to her, (xxiv. 67.)

Ver. 9. *Of a surety she is thy wife.*] It seems he took Isaac to be so good a man, that he looked upon the liberties he took with Rebekah, as tokens of conjugal love, not of incestuous desires.

Ver. 10. *Brought guiltiness upon us.*] It is likely the punishment inflicted upon his father and family, (xx. 17.) only for taking Sarah into his house, with an intention to make her his wife, was yet in memory among them.

Ver. 11. *He that toucheth this man or his wife,* &c.] This looks like a modest word, as it is used, xx. 6. and 1 Cor. vii. 1. But the Chaldee paraphrast and the Hebrew doctors interpret it of not doing them any injury: because he speaks of the man, as well as his wife, and so it is explained, ver. 29.

Ver. 12. *Then Isaac sowed in that land.*] Most take this to have been in the time of famine: which makes it the greater wonder, that the ground should then bring forth so plentifully. But it seems more likely to me, that the dearth was at an end: for it is said (ver. 8.) that he had been in that country "a long time," when Abimelech saw him sporting with his wife.

A hundred-fold.] This, in itself, is not wonderful; though, at this time, it was a singular blessing of God, after there had been some time ago a dearth; and, perhaps, the soil not rich, which afforded so large a crop. Otherwise, Varro says (lib. i. de Re Rustica, cap. 44.) that in Syria, about Gadera, and in Africa, about Byzacium, they reaped a hundred bushels for one *(ex modio nasci centum);* Pliny and Solinus say the same of that country Byzacium: insomuch that Bochartus fancies the metropolis of that rich country, viz. Adrumetum, had its name from hence; signifying in the Phœnician language as much as, *the region of a hundred-fold:* (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 24.) Nay, some places in Africa were so rich that they produced *two hundred,* yea *three hundred*-fold, as he shews out of several good authors in the twenty-fifth chapter of that book. Whence he thinks Africa had its name; being as much as Εὔσταχυς γῆ, *terra spicarum, a land of ears of corn.* All which I have noted, that this passage may not seem incredible to any reader.

And the Lord blessed him.] Or, *for* the Lord blessed him. This is the reason of the fruitfulness of that soil; which naturally would not have yielded so much.

Ver. 13. *And the man waxed great,* &c.] I suppose he had many such fruitful years; so that his riches increased till he grew *very great,* and bought more cattle than he had before. For in them consisted the ancient riches, as Servius tells us on the first of Virgil's Eclogues. "Omne patrimonium apud majores peculium dicebatur, a pecoribus; in quibus universa eorum substantia constabat. Unde etiam pecunia dicta fuit, a peculio." The same also we find said by Columella.

Ver. 14. *Great store of servants.*] The margin hath, store of *husbandry*. Which is very likely; because he was encouraged in it, by his great crops: which could not likewise but increase the number of his servants. The Arabic set forth by Erpenius hath only, *a great revenue;* or *vast increase:* which, among the eastern people, as I said, was principally from their cattle. But God blessed him with abundance of corn also.

Ver. 16. *Thou art much mightier than we.*] As the people envied him, (ver. 14.) so the king himself, it seems, began to fear him: and therefore desired him, in a friendly manner, to leave his country. For they were not yet grown so wicked, as to attempt to destroy those who lived quietly among them; when they apprehended they would become richer and stronger than themselves.

Ver. 17. *The valley of Gerar.*] Where that was is uncertain; but at some distance from the city where Abimelech dwelt, and near to which Isaac had inhabited before.

Ver. 18. *Which they had digged in the days of Abraham.*] He chose to open the old ones, rather than dig new; both because he was certain there to find a spring of water, and because it was most easy, and less obnoxious to censure or envy: and because he would preserve his father's memory; for which reason he did not give them new names, but those they had in his father's days.

Ver. 19. *They digged in the valley,* &c.] In process of time, they found a necessity of more water; and so digged till they met with a new spring, in the valley.

Ver. 20. *The water is ours.*] Because it was found in their soil, as Menochius observes. But they having let the ground to Isaac, the water was truly his, as long as the contract lasted.

Ver. 21. *And they digged another well.*] I suppose, in the same valley: for, rather than contend, he receded from his right in the other well.

Ver. 22. *He removed from thence.*] To avoid strife, he quitted that part of the country, and went to another: where he was not disturbed in his pasturage.

For now the Lord hath made room for us.] He was straitened before, for want of sufficient water for his flock; which now he enjoyed in abundance.

And we shall be fruitful in the land.] Increase more than formerly: now that they could water their flocks quietly and plentifully.

Ver. 23. *Went up from thence to Beer-sheba.*] Where he and his father had anciently lived, (xxi. 33. xxv. 11.)

Ver. 24. *And the Lord appeared unto him the same night.*] As he had done before he came to Gerar, (ver. 2.)

I am the God of Abraham.] Who was so kind to him, and made a covenant with him.

I am with thee.] My special providence is over thee; as was explained before, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 25. *Built an altar there.*] To offer sacrifice unto the Lord.

Called upon the name of the Lord.] As Abraham had done before him, in this very place, (xxi. 33.)

And pitched his tent there.] Resolved to settle in this place.

Ver. 26. *Phicol,* &c.] The same name and the same office that he had, who is mentioned xxi. 22. but he was not the same man no more than Abimelech the same king. It is probable this was a name of some dignity among them; like that of Tribunus or Dictator among the Romans; which passed from one to another.

Ver. 28. *We saw certainly the Lord was with thee,* &c.] We have observed such a special providence over thee, that we come to establish a perpetual friendship with thee, by a solemn oath, if thou wilt consent to our desire. They were afraid, it seems, lest, being disobliged by their sending him out of their country, he should fall upon them one time or other; being mightier than they, as they acknowledged, (ver. 18.)

Ver. 29. *Have sent thee away in peace.*] They remember him how they dismissed him peaceably; and did not go about to seize upon his estate, while he lived among them: which they make an argument, why he should contract a nearer friendship with such civil people.

Thou art now blessed of the Lord.] This looks like a high compliment, or flattering expression.

Ver. 30. *He made them a feast,* &c.] So covenants were made, by eating and drinking together.

Ver. 32. *Told him concerning the well they had digged,* &c.] They had begun to dig before Abraham and Phicol came, (ver. 25.) and now they came at a spring of water.

Ver. 33. *He called it Sheba.*] From the *oath* which was lately made between him and Abimelech. It had been called so before by Abraham, (xxi. 31.) but that name, perhaps, was forgotten, and so he revived it, as he had done others, (ver. 18.)

Ver. 34. *The daughter of Beeri the Hittite,* &c.] Josephus saith, these two men, Berri and Elon, whose daughters Esau married, were *Dynastæ,* powerful men among the Hittites: which is not improbable. But his father sure had given the same charge to him, that Abraham had done concerning his own marriage, (xxiv. 3.) and then it was a very undutiful, nay, an impious action, to marry with those people, who were under the curse of God. The Scripture might well call him *profane;* who seems not to have regarded either the curse or the blessing of the Almighty.

Ver. 35. *A grief of mind.*] His very marrying with them sorely afflicted his father and mother. Or, as others interpret it, their idolatry and bad manners extremely grieved them.

CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *WHEN Isaac was old.*] A hundred thirty and seven years old, as many have demonstrated.

He said unto him, My son, &c.] It appears by this and what follows, that though Esau had displeased him by his marriage, yet he retained his natural affection to him, which he had from the beginning.

Ver. 3. *Thy quiver.*] Some take the Hebrew word to signify a *sword;* which was as necessary for a huntsman, as a bow and arrows.

Ver. 4. *Make me savoury meat,* &c. To raise his feeble spirits, and enable him to deliver his last and solemn benediction with the more vigour.

My soul may bless thee before I die.] It seems Isaac did not understand the Divine oracle (xxv. 25.) as Rebekah did; or, she had not acquainted him with it. For he intended to bestow upon Esau the promised land; which was that God told Abraham he would bless his posterity withal. For the last benediction of these great men was

the settling of their inheritance; and making those their heirs upon whom they bestowed their blessing. Now the birthright which Esau sold Jacob gave him right only to the greatest part of Isaac's estate; but not to the land of Canaan, which was to be disposed of by Isaac, according to Divine direction.

Ver. 7. *And bless thee before the Lord.*] These words shew it was not a common blessing, but a solemn benediction, and by Divine authority or approbation, which Isaac meant to give his son Esau.

Ver. 8. *Obey my voice,* &c.] Rebekah, having just reason to conclude that Esau had forfeited the blessing which she was desirous to preserve in her family, by marrying with the people of Canaan, who were cursed by God, thought of this device to get Jacob preferred before him. And, indeed, it cannot be denied, that it was a profane thing (as I noted before) to marry with a daughter of Heth. And he seems afterwards to have had no good design in marrying with a daughter of Ishmael, (xxviii. 9.) for it looks as if he went about to set up the pretensions of that family against Isaac's.

Ver. 9. *Two good kids of the goats.*] Two fat sucking kids, as Aben Ezra expounds this phrase, "kid of the goats," (upon Exod. xxiii. 19.) which, in old time, were accounted very delicious meat: a present fit for a king, (1 Sam. xvi. 20.) and which Manoah prepared for the angel, whom he took for a noble guest, (Judg. xiii. 15.) and (which is most proper to be here considered) allowed to decayed and weak people, as an excellent nourishment.

Both these kids were not prepared for Isaac: but she took the most tender and delicate parts of both, and dressed them for him.

And I will make them savoury meat.] Dress it so as to please his palate; and not to be distinguished by him from venison. For we know the natural taste of things may be quite altered by various sorts of seasonings, as we call them; and ordered in such manner, that Bochartus says he knew skilful huntsmen take a pasty made of beef for venison.

Ver. 11. *A hairy man.*] In the Hebrew, *isch sair,* a rough man, hairy like a goat. For the same word, *sair,* signifies a goat, Gen. xxxvii. 31. Lev. ix. 15. and other places.

Ver. 12. *A deceiver.*] One that cheats his father; imposing on his age, and on his blindness: which, he wisely considers, would have been a high provocation if he had been discovered.

Ver. 13. *Upon me be thy curse.*] *i. e.* There is no danger: I will warrant the success.

Ver. 15. *Took goodly raiment,* &c.] His best clothes; which most suppose were laid up in a chest, among odoriferous flowers, or other perfumes: both to preserve them from moths, and to comfort the brain when they were worn: for their smell is mentioned ver. 27. It is a groundless fancy of the Jews, that these were sacerdotal garments, (and the very same that Adam wore, which descended to Noah, &c.) for, as there was no sacrifice now to be made, so the primogeniture did not make him a priest, more than Jacob, as was noted before. One may rather say, these were garments belonging to him, as heir of the family: between whom and the other sons, it is very probable, the affection of the parents was wont to make some difference in their apparel.

Ver. 16. *Put the skin of the kids of the goats.*] It is observed by Bochartus, that in the eastern countries, goats'-hair was very like to that of men: (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 51.) so that Isaac might easily be deceived, when his eyes were dim, and his feeling no less decayed than his sight.

Ver. 18. *Who art thou, my son?*] He suspected him, from his voice, and returning so soon from hunting.

Ver. 19. *I am Esau, thy first-born,* &c.] Here are many untruths told by Jacob, besides this, (for his father did not bid him go get him some venison, nor did God bring this meat to him, which he had prepared, &c.) which cannot be wholly excused: but it must be confessed, he and his mother were possessed with a false opinion, that they might deceive Isaac for the good of his family.

Arise, I pray thee, and sit and eat, &c.] He was lying upon his bed, one would guess by this, being aged and infirm: and he intreats him to raise himself up and *sit:* for so they did in those days (as we do now) at their meals. This appears afterwards, when Joseph's brethren *sat down* to eat bread, (xxxvii. 25.) and sat when they ate with Joseph in Egypt, (xliii. 33.) And so Homer makes all his heroes sit at their feasts, as Athenæus observes: which custom continued among the Macedonians in the days of Alexander, as Bochartus observes in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50.

Ver. 21. *Come near,* &c.] Isaac still suspected by this long discourse with him, wherein he observed his voice, that it was not Esau. And the Hebrews, in Bereschith Rabba, say, that he fell into a great sweat, and his heart melted in him like wax, while he talked to him: so that an angel came to support him from falling down.

Ver. 23. *So he blessed him.*] After he had once more asked him whether he was his very son Esau, which Jacob affirmed, (ver. 24.) who was punished for this deceit, when he was cheated himself by Laban, in the business of his wives, as well as in other things: and (as the Hebrews observed) he that deceived his father by the skins of the kids of goats, was deceived himself into the false opinion that Joseph was killed, by his brethren dipping his coat in the blood of a kid of the goats, (Gen. xxxvii. 31.)

Ver. 26. *Come now, and kiss me.*] Some think he had a desire to be satisfied that way, whether he was Esau or not. But I take it rather to be a token of his great love and affection, wherewith he bestowed his blessing upon him.

Ver. 27. *He smelled the smell of his raiment.*] As he embraced him, he perceived the fragrancy of his garments: which he could not before, while he stood remote; his senses being weak and dull. The Jews, who fancy these to have been the garments wherein Adam ministered, imagine also that they retained the scent which they had in paradise. So Bereschith Rabba, and R. Sol. Jarchi, as Braunius observes, lib. i. de Vestib. Hebr. Sacerd. cap. 4.

See, the smell of my son.] The apprehension of one sense is, in this language, often used for the apprehension of another, (as Maimonides speaks, par. i. More Nevoch. cap. 46.) as, "See the word of the Lord," (Jer. ii. 31.) *i. e.* Hear his word. And so in this place, "See the smell," is as much as, Smell the odour of my son, &c. But it may simply signify, "Behold, or observe; no field that God hath adorned with the greatest variety of the most fragrant flowers, smells sweeter than my son."

Ver. 28. *Therefore God give thee,* &c.] I take it for a sign that God will give thee (for so it may be translated, as a prophecy as well as a prayer) the greatest abundance: which proceeds from a rich soil, well watered from heaven. These two are the causes of plenty.

The dew of heaven.] Rain fell only at certain seasons in that country: but there was a recompence for it by large dews; which very much refreshed the earth; and are represented in Scripture as a Divine gift, (Job xxxviii. 28. Micah v. 7.) which God threatens sometimes to withhold, because of men's offences, (1 Kings xvii. 1.)

Ver. 29. *Let people serve thee,* &c.] As the former part of the blessing relates to wealth, so this to dominion and empire: which was signally fulfilled in the days of David, when the Moabites, Ammonites, Syrians, Philistines, and Edomites also, were subdued under him.

Let thy mother's son bow down to thee.] This is a third part of the blessing, giving him a prerogative in his own family: and in the next words he pronounces a blessing upon all that should be friends to him; as on the contrary, a curse upon his enemies.

Ver. 33. *Isaac trembled very exceedingly.*] What the Hebrews say upon ver. 21. (see there) had been more proper here, that his heart melted, and he was ready to swoon away.

Who?] A broken form of speech.

Yea, and he shall be blessed.] He had blessed him so seriously, and with such affection, and (it is likely) extraordinary confidence of God's approbation, that he would not revoke it. For he felt, as I take it, the spirit of prophecy upon him, when he pronounced this blessing: and it enlightened him to understand the oracle formerly delivered, (xxv. 23.)

Ver. 35. *Taken away thy blessing.*] Which I intended to have bestowed on thee; looking upon it as thine, by the right of being my first-born.

Ver. 37. *All his brethren.*] His kindred.

What shall I now do unto thee, my son?] Having given Jacob so much, it was but a small matter he could do for him.

Ver. 39. *Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness,* &c.] Some have translated it, "Thy dwelling shall be without the fatness of the earth, and the dew from above: but by thy sword shalt thou live," &c. *i. e.* he prophesies that he should inhabit a poor country, but maintain himself plentifully by his sword. For otherwise (they think) his blessing would be the same with Jacob's, ver. 28. But if we retain our translation, there is a manifest difference between this and Jacob's benediction. For here he makes no mention of plenty of corn and wine; and gives him no such dominion as he did to Jacob (the Jews observe other differences); and whatsoever fatness was in the soil of his country, it did not last, as appears by Mal. i. 3.

Ver. 40. *By thy sword shalt thou live.*] Live upon spoil. Or, as others interpret it, be in perpetual war to defend thy country.

And shall serve thy brother.] Here Isaac speaks out the very words of the oracle mentioned before, (xxv. 23.) which was fulfilled in the days of David, 2 Sam. viii. 14. and 1 Chron. xviii. 15. (the circumstances of which conquest are more fully described, 1 Kings xi. 15, &c.) And again, after they had recovered some strength, Amaziah made great slaughters among them, (2 Kings xiv. 7.) as the Maccabees did afterwards, (1 Mac. v. 65.) and at last were utterly disabled by Hircanus, the son of Simon Maccabæus, as we read in Josephus, lib. xiii. Antiq. cap. 17.

When thou shalt have the dominion.] St. Jerome and the LXX. do not understand this of their having any dominion over the seed of Jacob (which we never read of), but only of their regaining power to shake off subjection to them, as it follows in the next words.

Thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.] Which they did in the days of Joram, as we read, 2 Kings viii. 20, 22. 2 Chron. xxi. 8, &c.

Ver. 41. *And Esau said in his heart.*] Designed and resolved within himself: and, as it should seem, was so full of it, that he could not contain his purpose within his own breast, but in his anger blurted it out to somebody, who told it to Rebekah.

The days of mourning for my father, &c.] He will die shortly (in which he was deceived, for he lived three-and-forty years after this), and then I will be revenged. He had some regard to his father still remaining (whom he would not grieve), but no consideration of his mother, who had helped Jacob to supplant him.

Ver. 44. *Tarry with him a few days.*] A year or two. But herein she also was mistaken, for he did not return in twenty years' time.

Until thy brother's fury.] Time, in which various things happen, very much allays fury and rage.

Ver. 45. *And he forget,* &c.] The memory of it be much worn out, and grown weak.

Why should I be deprived of you both in one day?] She had reason to think, that if Esau killed Jacob, and the public justice did not punish it (according to the precept ix. 6. which had settled courts of judicature), God himself would prosecute Esau with his vengeance, as he did Cain.

Ver. 46. *I am weary of my life, because of the daughters of Heth.*] The two wives of Esau, who were Hittites, were such a continual vexation to her, that she wished rather to die, than to live among them.

If Jacob take a wife, &c.] She pretends only this reason for sending Jacob among her kindred, and says not a word of the danger his life was in; for she would not afflict her husband, but only preserve her son.

What good shall my life do to me?] I had rather die, than live in such perpetual vexation; therefore let him go and take a wife, as Abraham did for thee, of our kindred.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND Isaac called Jacob.*] Sent for him to come to him.

And blessed him.] Renewed and confirmed the blessing he had already given him; that it might not be thought to be of less force, because procured by artifice and subtilty, (xxvii. 35.)

Ver. 2. *To Padan-Aram.*] See xxv. 20.

Ver. 3. *And God Almighty bless thee,* &c.] This is the solemn blessing mentioned ver. 1. wherein he ratifies what he had done, and more fully and distinctly settles the land

of promise upon him, and makes him the father of the promised seed.

Ver. 4. *Give thee the blessing of Abraham.*] The blessing of Abraham was, that he should inherit the land of Canaan, and that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, (Gen. xv. 18. xxii. 18.) Both which he now confirms to Jacob.

Ver. 5. *And Isaac sent away Jacob.*] In some haste, as the LXX. translate ver. 2. *Arise, flee, i. e.* depart without any delay. Which looks as if Rebekah had at last suggested something to him of the danger he was in.

And he went to Padan-Aram.] Prepared himself to go, and set forward. Or else it is spoken by anticipation; for he did not come thither till after several passages which are related in this and in the next chapter.

Son of Bethuel, the Syrian.] See xxv. 20.

Jacob's and Esau's mother.] Now Jacob is put first, as being lately declared Isaac's heir, and heir of all the promises.

Ver. 9. *Then went Esau unto Ishmael,* &c.] To the family of Ishmael, for he himself died fourteen years ago. And therefore Nebaioth (his eldest son, xxv. 13.) is here mentioned as the present head of the family, whose sister Esau married. Whereby he shewed himself not to have any great regard to the Divine revelation; otherwise he could not but have known, that this family, being descended from a bond-woman, was not to inherit the promises made to Abraham and Isaac.

Ver. 10. *Jacob went out from Beer-sheba,* &c.] Quite alone, without any servants to attend him, and without any presents to court a wife, or gain the kindness of Laban, neither of which were wanting, when Abraham sent Eliezer to take a wife for Isaac. But as he was sent away *in haste,* (as I noted before, ver. 5.) so hereby the anger of Esau was mitigated, who at present was left the sole possessor of all Isaac's riches, and saw Jacob depart in a poor condition. This also was an act of Divine faith, that God would take a singular care of him, and let him want nothing. And, as they could not but hope that Laban, being so near a relation, would be glad to see him and entertain him; so it is probable he might carry letters of credence with him, that he was to be heir to Isaac; as Eliezer assured them Isaac was to be to Abraham, (xxiv. 36.) We are to suppose, likewise, that he was not sent without money to bear his charges (as we speak), and had some provision with him, for we read of oil, (ver. 18.) which he poured on the top of the pillar.

Ver. 11. *And he lighted upon a certain place,* &c.] A convenient place (shaded with lovely trees, see ver. 19.) to lodge in; unto which he did not go by design, but happened (as we speak) upon it, when he did not think of it.

And he took of the stones of that place.] One stone from among many others that were there, as appears from ver. 18. The same form of speech was observed before, (xix. 29. xxi. 7.)

Ver. 12. *And he dreamed.*] He had the following representation made to him in a dream.

Behold, a ladder, &c.] It is judiciously observed by Maimonides, in his preface to his More Nevochim, that there are two sorts of prophetic parables (as he calls them), in one of which every word hath some peculiar signification: in the other, the whole parable represents the thing intended, but every word hath not its weight; some serving only for elegance. Among the first sort he reckons this; in which the ladder may be thought to represent the Divine Providence, which governs all things, and particularly now directed Jacob in his journey, every step of which was under God's guidance. It being "set upon the earth" denoted, he thinks, the steadfastness of Providence, which nothing is able to shake. And "the top of it reaching to heaven," signifies that it extends itself all the world over; to every thing, great or small, high or low; and the several steps in the ladder, the motions and actions of Divine Providence. The angels which went *up* and *down,* signify that they are the great ministers of God's Providence, by whom he manages all things here below; and that they are never idle, but always in motion to serve those especially who serve God faithfully. Their *ascending* represents their going to receive the Divine orders and commands; and their *descending,* the execution of his orders. Or (with a peculiar respect to Jacob's present condition) the one signified their safe conduct of him in his journey to Padan-Aram; and the other, their bringing him safe home again.

This is infinitely more solid than the conceit of almost all the ancient rabbins, that God represented in this ladder the rise and the fall of the four great monarchies. For where is there any mention in this dream of four angels? or, of seventy steps representing the seventy years' captivity in Babylon? or, of two-and-fifty steps representing the time of the reign of the four kings of Persia and Media, according to their computation? &c. All this is the pure invention of idle men, who dream upon the Holy Scriptures.

Ver. 13. *And behold, the Lord stood above it.*] Finally, he saw the Divine Majesty, or Glory, (so the Targum here expounds it) as the immoveable mover of all things: from whom all comes as the first cause, and to whom all returns as the last end.

I am the Lord God, &c.] This is the first time that we read of God's appearing to Jacob; and it was only in a dream. But it made such a deep impression upon him, that he doubted not of the truth of what was now expressly promised him by God himself; that he should have the *blessing of Abraham,* as his father had told him, (ver. 4.)

Ver. 15. *Behold, I am with thee.*] Or, will be with thee; *i. e.* My peculiar providence shall be over thee, and take care of thy safety, as Maimonides well expounds it, in his More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 18.

I will not leave thee, &c.] This shews the intent of the dream was to comfort Jacob in his solitary and poor condition, by an assurance that God's watchful providence should attend him till he had accomplished all his promises to him.

Ver. 16. *Surely the Lord is in this place.*] By his special extraordinary presence; for here he had manifested himself to him, and given him singular assurances of his favour, and that the very first night after he went from home; which made this place more acceptable to him than his father's house. For now he was become a prophet, as Maimonides observes, (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 45.) where he says, that they who prophesy in a dream, do not call it a dream after prophecy is come to them in a dream, but simply say, it was a prophecy. Thus the patriarch Jacob, after he awakened out of his prophetic dream,

(wherein he heard the Lord speak to him, ver. 13, 14.) he doth not call it a dream, but roundly says, *Surely the Lord is in this place*, &c.

And I knew it not.] I did not expect to meet with such a Divine appearance and revelation to me.

Ver. 17. *And he was afraid.*] Possessed with a religious, awful apprehension of God, which made him say,

How dreadful is this place!] With what reverence ought I here to behave myself!

This is none other but the house of God.] The Divine Majesty dwells here; this is not a common place, but a sacred, having a Divine presence in it.

And this is the gate of heaven.] Here God keeps his court, attended by his holy angels, whom he had seen come from heaven hither, and go up from hence thither. So Mr. Mede explains it, (book ii. p. 436.) The presence of God in one place more than another, consists in his train or retinue. A king is there, where his court is; and so God is there specially present, where the angels keep their station; which is the meaning of the *gate of heaven, i. e.* heaven's court; for the gate was wont to be the judgment-hall, and the place where kings and senators used to sit, attended by their guards and ministers.

Ver. 18. *Took the stone and set it up for a pillar.*] Upon the top of some other stones, which he heaped up together, that it might remain as a monument of the Divine mercy to him, and preserve the memory of this heavenly vision; and that by this token he might know this place, when God brought him back again, and commemorate his goodness to him here.

This stone was held in great veneration by the Jews in future times, and translated to Jerusalem. After the destruction of which by Titus, they were wont (upon that day when it was taken, which was the only day they were permitted to come thither), with great lamentation and rending their garments, to go and anoint this stone. Such is the power of fond superstition. (See Vossius, de Idolol. lib. vi. cap. 38.)

Poured oil on the top of it.] Not in honour of this stone (as Bonfrerius himself confesses), much less of any idol to which it was dedicated; but to consecrate it as a monument of God's great mercy to him in the beforementioned celestial vision. Oil, it appears by this, was anciently used in consecrating things, before the law of Moses; and not only in this family, but in others also, it is probable: from whence the pagan custom came of anointing stones, which by Theophrastus are called Λιπαροὶ Λίθοι, upon which superstitious people were wont, when they met with them in the highways, to pour oil, and fall down and worship. A great many authors mention them, which are collected by Elmenhorstius in his observations upon Arnobius, p. 37. They that would be satisfied how wretchedly some of the Romish writers plead for the worship of images from this very place, may read Dr. Jackson's Treatise of the Original of Unbelief, (chap. xxxv.) where he excellently explains this action of Jacob, n. 5, 6, 7.

Ver. 19. *And he called the name of that place Bethel.*] From this word *Bethel*, came the word Βαιτύλια (as Scaliger, in his Animadv. upon Euseb. p. 198. and others think) among the heathen; whereby they denoted rude stones, which they worshipped either as symbols of Divinity, or as true Gods, animated by some heavenly power. Of which worship, see Photius in his Bibliotheca, (ccxlii.) but especially Bochartus, (lib. ii. Canaan, cap. 1.) where he shews the Phœnicians (at least, as the Jews think) first worshipped this very stone which Jacob anointed; and afterward consecrated others, which they called *Bætylia*, and *Bætyli*, in memory of this stone anointed at *Bethel*; (see p. 785, 786.) Certain it is, this idolatrous practice came very early into the world; which made Moses forbid the erecting of such pillars, they being, in his time, converted to a profane use, (Lev. xxvi. 1. Deut. xii. 3. xvi. 22.)

But the name of that city.] Which was near to the place where this pillar was set up.

Was Luz at the first.] So called, perhaps, from the many almond-trees which grew there, (for *Luz* signifies an *almond*, see xxx. 37.) among which, it is probable, Jacob took up his lodging, because they were a kind of covering to him. Both this Luz, in the tribe of Benjamin, and the other among the Hittites, in the tribe of Ephraim, (Judg. i. 26.) Bochart doubts not had their name from this original, (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 35.)

Ver. 20. *Jacob vowed a vow.*] This is the first vow that we read of in Scripture; which all men allow is a part of religion, and so was acknowledged by the law of Moses, (Deut. xxiii. 21. Psalm l. 12. Psalm lxv. 2, &c.)

Perhaps Jacob was the first that in this manner expressed his devout affection towards God.

If God will be with me, &c.] Perform his promise to me, (ver. 15.)

Give me bread to eat, &c.] Support and maintain me, which is the explication of the promise.

Ver. 21. *Then shall the Lord be my God.*] I will most righteously worship and serve him: which doth not imply that he would not worship him, if he did not bring him home in peace; but that, if he did, he would perform some special service to him, and worship him with extraordinary devotion; consecrating (as it follows) this place to his honour, offering him sacrifice, and giving him the tenths of all he had, to maintain his worship.

Ver. 22. *And this stone, which I have set for a pillar.*] All pillars were not unlawful, but such only as were for idolatrous uses; as Maimonides resolves, (lib. de Idol. cap. 6. §. 8.) And therefore the Jews so expound those words beforementioned, "Thou shalt not set thee up any statue (or pillar), which the Lord thy God hateth," (Deut. xvi. 22.) concerning pillars set up for worship, not of those from memorial.

Shall be God's house.] Here will I set apart a place for God's solemn worship and service; build an altar, and offer sacrifice, &c. See xxxv. 3.

Give the tenth unto thee.] Δεκάτην τῶν πεπορισμένων, saith Josephus, *the tithe of all his income*, for the maintenance of burnt-sacrifices, and such-like pious uses, and, perhaps, for the relief of the poor. As for the priests, we do not yet read of any tithe given to them; though Mr. Selden (in his History of Tithes, p. 4, &c. and Review, p. 451.) thinks they were paid to Isaac, who was then priest of the family. And so Bishop Mountague, in his book against him; (p. 199.) who observes, that we read only of Abraham and Jacob paying tithe, not of Isaac; because Isaac was a more special type of Christ than either of these. And Abraham and Jacob were types of those two people who were to have part in the true Isaac;

for Abraham was father of all the faithful, and Jacob was the type of the synagogue; as St. Ambrose handles these matters in the life of Abraham. Yet the same Bishop confesses, that many doubt whether Jacob paid the tenth of all to Isaac, or immediately to God; because Jacob also was a priest himself. (See p. 205, &c.)

This, I think, we may certainly conclude from this place, that Jacob, the grandchild of Abraham, vowing the tenth of *all*, as Abraham had given the tenth of the *spoil*, he was induced to it by the custom which was then among religious people. How they came to pitch upon this portion, rather than a fifth, sixth, or any other, is not so easily to be resolved. But they seem to speak with much reason, who observe, that in this number ten, all nations in a manner end their account, (Aristotle in his Problems, lib. 3. §. xv.) and then begin again with compound numbers; or, as others phrase it, this is the end of less numbers, and the beginning of greater. So that it was looked upon as the most perfect of all other, and, accordingly, had in great regard. But, after all, it seems most likely to me, that they had some Divine direction for it, as they had for sacrificing. And it may be further noted, that what they gave to their kings was the tenth part, as well as what they gave to God. And nothing more common among the gentiles than tenths paid to their kings, and that very anciently; for it appears from 1 Sam. viii. 14, 15. 17. that it was part of the *jus regium* among the eastern people. Aristotle himself mentions it under the name of Παλαιὸς νόμος, *an ancient law in Babylon:* and it was also used in Athens, which was a commonwealth, as Dr. Spencer shews, in his learned work, de Leg. Hebr. Ritual. (lib. iii. cap. x. §. 1.) And Bishop Mountague shews they were paid among the Romans, p. 248, &c.

CHAP. XXIX.

Ver. 1. *AND Jacob went on his journey.*] Because the Hebrew phrase for *went on*, is *lift up his feet*, some will have it that he proceeded most cheerfully in his journey, after this glorious vision; which we may believe to be true, though not signified by this manner of speaking.

To the people of the east.] To Mesopotamia, which lay eastward from Canaan.

Ver. 2. *A great stone upon the well's mouth.*] To keep the water clean and cool.

Ver. 5. *Laban the son of Nahor.*] Grandson of Nahor, who is mentioned rather than Bethuel, because he was the head of the family.

Ver. 6. *Rachel his daughter.*] Her name in Hebrew signifies a *sheep*. For it was anciently the manner to give names, even unto families, from cattle, both great and small. So Varro tells us, (lib. ii. de Re Rustica, cap. 1.)

"Multa nomina habemus ab utroque pecore, &c. à minore PORCIUS, OVILIUS, CAPRILIUS; a majore, EQUITIUS, TAURUS," &c. (See Bochart. par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 43.)

Ver. 7. *It is yet high day,* &c.] A great deal of the afternoon yet remains. It was the custom of those eastern countries, where the sun had great power in summer-time, to bring their flocks towards noon into shady places, where there was water to refresh them; otherwise the extreme heat would have killed them. There they rested (it appears by many places of Scripture, particularly Cantic. i. 7.) till the heat of the day was over, and then, having watered them again, they carried them out to feed till sunset.

Ver. 9. *For she kept them.*] It was a noble employment in those days to keep sheep; whence God himself hath the name of the *Shepherd of Israel*. She had those under her, we are to suppose, who took the greatest pains about them; but she was the chief shepherdess, who inspected them all.

Ver. 10. *Went near, and rolled the stone.*] He was stronger, or more dexterous at such things, than any body there; or, the meaning is, he assisted in this work; and, perhaps, was the first that set to his hand about it.

Ver. 11. *Jacob kissed Rachel.*] Having told her who he was, and satisfied her of the truth of it, then (after the custom used among near relations at their first meeting) he saluted her; and that with more than ordinary affection, for he wept for joy to see her. Laban in like manner kissed him.

Ver. 12. *Her father's brother.*] So all near relations are called, (ver. 15.)

Ver. 13. *He told Laban all these things.*] Which are mentioned in the foregoing and this chapter. The reason of his coming from home, God's providence over him in his journey, and his happy meeting with Rachel.

Ver. 14. *Surely thou art my bone and my flesh.*] So very near of kin to me, that I can deny thee nothing.

Ver. 15. *Because thou art.*] Or, as De Dieu translates the word *Haci* (and gives many instances of it), *Art thou not my brother?* Is it fit then that thou shouldst serve me for nothing?

Ver. 17. *Leah was tender-eyed.*] Some translate it, *had delicate eyes*. So the Chaldee; and then the meaning is, *All her beauty lay in her eyes.*

Beautiful and well favoured.] Was every way amiable, being well shaped, having good features, and a fine complexion.

Ver. 18. *I will serve thee seven years for Rachel,* &c.] He had not brought money enough with him to purchase a wife (as the manner was in those days), and therefore offers his service for seven years, instead of it.

Ver. 19. *It is better that I give her thee,* &c.] He seems to answer cunningly; and yet one cannot but take it for a contract, as it appears to have been by ver. 21.

Ver. 20. *They seemed unto him but a few days.*] He valued Rachel so much, that the price at which he purchased her seemed inconsiderable.

Ver. 21. *Give me my wife.*] So she had been by contract ever since it was made, (ver. 19.) and he doth not now demand that he might have her to wife, but that he might enjoy her; being already his wife by that solemn agreement made seven years ago.

Ver. 22. *Laban gathered together the men of the place.*] All such private contracts were completed by the elders or governors of the place, in the presence of all the people. We had an instance of this before in Abraham's purchase of a sepulchre for his family; (xxiii. 11. 18.) which was a sacred and religious thing, as well as the rites of marriage; and therefore both of them *publici juris*, as Cornel. Bertram speaks, part of the public care.

Ver. 23. *In the evening.*] At bed-time.

Brought her to him.] The modesty of those times made them bring the bride to her husband's bed veiled, and with-

out lights; so that it was the easier for Laban to deceive Jacob by bringing Leah to him; whom he could not hope so readily to dispose in marriage as Rachel, because she was homely.

Ver. 24. *Gave unto his daughter Zilpah, his maid,* &c.] A very poor portion; yet all that he gave to Rachel afterward: (ver. 29.) which made them say, that he used them as strangers, not as his children; putting them off without any portion, (xxxi. 14, 15.)

Ver. 26. *It must not be so done in our country,* &c.] We do not read of any such ancient custom; and, therefore, this seems a mere shift, or a jest: or, if it had been true, he should have told it Jacob beforehand.

Ver. 27. *Fulfil her week,* &c.] Perfect this marriage with Leah, by keeping a seven days' feast (as the custom was), and then thou shalt have Rachel also. For he doth not speak of a week of years, but of days, as Mr. Selden shews out of many authors, (lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 5.) where he hath this plain commentary upon these words:

"Marriages are to be celebrated, according to custom, by a seven days' feast: complete this marriage thou hast begun with Leah, and then, upon condition of another seven years' service, thou shalt marry Rachel also, and keep her wedding-feast seven days."

Ver. 30. *And served with him yet other seven years.*] After he had solemnly married Rachel, and bedded her (as we speak), for that he did seven days after his marriage with Leah was accomplished. So this verse begins, "And he went in also unto Rachel," and then began his other seven years' service. There was no positive law, as yet, against such marriages as this (with two sisters), which were afterwards expressly condemned; but at present indulged; as the marriage of a man's own sister was in the beginning of the world. Whence that saying of the Jews in the Gemara Hierosol. upon the title Sanhedrim, "The world was built by indulgence." And Jacob, it is very likely, thought there was an unavoidable necessity for his marrying these two sisters. For Rachel was his true wife; Leah being imposed upon him by a cheat. But, having known her, he concluded he could not honestly leave her; no more than he could Rachel, to whom he was first contracted.

Ver. 31. *Leah was hated.*] Comparatively, not absolutely. For Leah having joined with her father to deceive him, he could not love her so well as Rachel; to whom he had engaged his first affection.

Ver. 32. *Reuben.*] The name of this son, and of all the rest that follow, are derived from the Hebrew tongue: which shews that Laban's family spake the same language with Abraham's with some little variation, as appears afterward, xxxi. 47.

CHAP. XXX.

Ver. 1. *ENVIED her sister.*] Was so grieved, that it made her fret into impatience and rage, for it is a frantic speech which follows.

Give me children, or I die.] I shall make myself away, (as we now speak) or die with grief. See here the great danger of too eager and impatient desires: the fulfilling of which was her death indeed.

Ver. 2. *Jacob's anger was kindled.*] He conceived a just indignation against her impatience, which he expresses with some heat.

Am I in God's stead, &c.] Is it in my power to give what God thinks fit to deny? Thus he puts her in mind of what the Psalmist said afterwards, "Children are a gift that cometh of the Lord," as the old translation hath it, cxxvii. 3.

Ver. 3. *Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her.*] She followed the steps of Sarah, Jacob's grandmother, (xvi. 1.) in adopting the son of her maid-servant; whom she gave to Jacob out of the same principle, that Sarah gave Hagar to be Abraham's wife; a vehement desire to fulfil the promise, that their seed should be as the stars of heaven; and especially the promise of the Messiah; which made them so extremely troubled at barrenness.

She shall bear upon my knees.] Bring me a child, whom I may set upon my knees, as my own. For so it follows.

That I may have children.] Though not by my own body, yet *by her.* For she being Rachel's servant, the children that were born of her, were Rachel's children, not her own.

Ver. 4. *And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife.*] Of such kind of wives as this and Zilpah, ver. 9. see xxv. 6.

Ver. 6. *God hath judged me.*] Decided the controversy between me and my sister; and given sentence on my side.

She called his name Dan.] The mothers sometimes gave names to their children (as Leah had done to her's, mentioned in the foregoing chapter); but with the approbation of the father, who sometimes controlled them, (xxxv. 18.)

Ver. 8. *With great wrestlings,* &c.] I have struggled exceeding hard (*i. e.* in incessant, vehement desires, and perhaps in prayers to God) to have another child, before my sister; and have prevailed.

Ver. 9. *Took Zilpah her maid, and gave her to Jacob to wife.*] Imitating her sister, and perhaps out of the same principle; hoping some or other of her children might be the father of the Messiah: and therefore the more children she had, the more likely some of them might be so happy.

Ver. 11. *A troop cometh.*] The Hebrew writers generally expound it, "Good fortune cometh:" as Mr. Selden shews in his Syntagm. de Diis Syris, cap. 1. And the LXX. translate it ἐν τύχῃ, *in a lucky hour:* and other Greek versions τετύχηκα, as in St. Chrysostom, (Hom. lvi. on this book) who expounds it ἐπέτυχον τοῦ σκόπου, *I have obtained my aim.* Others have εὐτύχημα, which is the same: whence the Latin anciently had it, *beata facta,* or *fœlix sum,* as in St. Austin, Q. xci. in Gen. And this seems to some to be nearer to the Hebrew than any other translation; because, what other way soever we expound the word *gad,* either for a *troop,* or *fortune,* we must make two words of *bagad,* as the Masorites do, and take ב to signify as much as את, according as we translate it, *A troop cometh,* or *Good fortune cometh.* But I see no necessity of this; for, taking *gad* for a troop, it may be simply translated, *With a troop;* a troop shall follow this, *i. e.* a great many more children. And it must be confessed that Jacob in his blessing (xlix. 19.) doth allude to this signification of the word, which I doubt not is the truest. For *gad,* or *gada,* never denotes *fortune* any where but in the Targum of Onkelos and Jonathan, and among the rabbins who follow them: and therefore this may be looked upon as a later not the ancient signification of the word.

Ver. 14. *In the days of wheat-harvest.*] Which began at

Pentecost, when the first-fruits of it were offered; as barley harvest began at the passover.

Mandrakes.] In the Hebrew the word is *dudaim:* which here signifies, the *fruit* of a tree or plant (whatsoever it be); and in the book of Canticles, vii. 13. it signifies the *flowers;* and these are the only two places where this word is found in the Bible. Which Job Ludolphus gives many reasons to prove, cannot signify a *mandrake:* for the flowers of that have a bad smell, and the fruit of it a bad taste. And therefore, after great variety of opinions, he concludes it to be that which in Syria they call *mauz:* which is an excellent sort of fruit, growing upon a plant, in the top of which there are great bunches of it like a cucumber. From whence he fancies this fruit was anciently called *dudaim;* from the Hebrew word *dud,* which signifies, *propinquus, cognatus, amicus;* which signifies a *neighbour, kinsman,* or *friend.* Such were these *dudaim,* which he calls *cognatos aut patrueles ab una stirpe profectos.* (Vide Comment. in lib. i. Histor. Ethiop. cap. xix. n. 72.)

Ver. 15. *Taken away my husband.*] It seems he had estranged himself, for some time, from Leah's bed, out of his great love to Rachel, or because he took little delight in her. Or Rachel's envy at her having so many children, when she herself had none, made her contrive ways to keep him from Leah.

Ver. 16. *Thou must come in to me,* &c.] I cannot think of any good reason, either of this contention among Jacob's wives for his company, or their giving him their maids to be his wives, or for Moses's taking such particular notice of all this; but only the earnest desire they had to fulfil the promise made to Abraham, That his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude; and that in one seed of his (the Messiah) all the nations of the earth should be blessed. It had been below the dignity of such a sacred history as this is, to relate such things, if there had not been something of great consideration in them. And what can that be, but chiefly the birth of the blessed Seed? which was the object of the hopes of all pious people in those days. For it is evident, both by Rachel and her sister, that it was children they desired, and not merely the company of their husbands: as it here follows, ver. 17.

Ver. 17. *God hearkened to Leah.*] To her earnest prayer, or vehement desire: and gave her another son.

Ver. 18. *God hath given me my hire.*] I purchased my husband's company, and God hath repaid me, by the gift of another son. Unto which she adds a further reflection; as if this was the reward of her kindness to her husband, in bestowing her maid upon him to be his wife.

Ver. 19. *Conceived again.*] The birth of this son begat a greater kindness between them; and made him less a stranger to her bed.

Ver. 20. *God hath endowed me with a good dowry.*] By restoring her husband to her, and bestowing new fruitfulness upon her: for she had ceased to bear, (xxix. *ult.*)

Ver. 21. *Dinah.*] No reason is given of her name: but it seems to have the same with that of Rachel's first-born by Bilhah, (ver. 6.) For, as if she had now got the better of Rachel, she calls this child by a name importing *judgment.*

Ver. 22. *God remembered Rachel.*] He would not have Leah insult over her, nor triumph too much; and therefore blessed Rachel with a son out of her own womb, for that was to *remember* her.

Ver. 24. *Joseph.*] His name seems to have been taken both from *ending* her reproach, which she mentions before, ver. 23. "The Lord hath taken away (*asaph* the Hebrew word is) my reproach," and from *adding* another son to this.

God shall add to me another son.] This was a great expression of her faith; more than we find in all the former births.

Ver. 25. *Send me away.*] It is plain, by this, that the seven years' service for Rachel was now finished, just when Joseph was born: and therefore he desires to be dismissed, having lived with him fourteen years.

To my own place, and to my country.] *i. e.* To his father's house in Canaan: which was his country, because he was born there.

Ver. 26. *For thou knowest what service I have done thee.*] He appeals to himself, whether he had not served him with all diligence and fidelity: and therefore deserved to be dismissed after such long labours.

Ver. 27. *I have learned by experience.*] Or, as the ancients understood the word *nichashti,* I have *found by divination:* and Aben Ezra thinks he learnt it by consulting with his Teraphim. But there needed no such advice with them; the thing was plain in itself, that he had brought prosperity along with him into his house.

Ver. 29. *Thou knowest how I have served thee.*] With how much care and fidelity, as he had admonished him before, (ver. 26.)

And how thy cattle was with me.] How they prospered under my care.

Ver. 30. *Blessed thee since my coming.*] So St. Jerome explains the Hebrew phrase, *at my foot:* ever since I set my foot within thy doors; or, since I entered into thy service. Others expound it, *wheresoever I went,* or, *by my leading thy flock.* But Maimonides says, this phrase, *leragli (at my foot)* signifies *because of me; for my sake.* And so he explains the like phrase, xxxiii. 14. par. i. More Nevoch. cap. 28.

Ver. 31. *Thou shalt not give me any thing,* &c.] I will take nothing of thee at present; but make this following bargain with thee, for the future.

Ver. 32. *All the speckled and spotted.*] In this place, and in xxxi. 10. there are four distinct words used to express what should be his.

The first of them is *nakod,* which we well translate *speckled.* For the word signifies little *points* or *pricks,* which the Greeks call στίγματα: as many have observed; particularly Bochart in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45.

The next is *talu,* which signifies, broader and larger spots; which we frequently see in cattle.

The next is *akod,* which signifies, spotted with divers colours: but most properly *spots,* or rather *circles,* or *rings* about the feet or legs (which we translate *ring-straked*): so Symmachus renders it λευκόποδας, *white-footed:* and Onkelos and Jonathan, having *marks on their feet;* rather *lists round their legs or feet;* for the word denotes, *binding* or *twisting* about any thing.

And then the last word *barud* signifies, *whitish spots* like hail. For *barud,* in Hebrew, is *hail.*

This shall be my hire.] He doth not mean, that those

cattle which were already *speckled and spotted*, &c. should be given him: for that doth not agree with what went before, "thou shalt not give me any thing" (*i. e.* I will take nothing that is now thine); and besides, it would have been no wonder, if those that were *spotted* already should bring forth others like to themselves. Therefore the sense is, that he would separate all the spotted sheep and goats; and then out of those which were of one colour, he would have all that should prove hereafter at all marked with any of the forementioned variety. Now this was a thing so unlikely to happen, that Laban, in the next verse, embraces the motion very greedily: thinking that white or black cattle would bring forth none but such as were like themselves.

Ver. 33. *So shall my righteousness*, &c.] This separation being made, it would appear, that if he had any *spotted*, they were not taken from Laban's flock; but given to him by God out of them, as a reward of his honest diligence.

Ver. 34. *I would it might be according to thy word.*] He thought this so good a bargain, that he was afraid Jacob would not stand to it.

Ver. 35. *Into the hands of his sons.*] *i. e.* Of Laban's sons, who were now grown up: though, perhaps, when Jacob first came to him, they were so little as not to be able to look after the flocks; which his daughter therefore fed: (xxix. 9.) as for Jacob's sons, the eldest of them was scarce seven years old; and therefore could not be fit for such employment. Laban therefore went and separated the *spotted* cattle from the rest; and then, lest Jacob should get any of them to mix with those of one colour, he committed them to his own sons, to be fed apart by themselves. And, as it follows in the next verse, made a distance of *three days' journey* between the one and the other; that none might be in danger to stray to the flock which was fed by Jacob: unto whose care were committed all that had no spots at all.

Ver. 36. *Set three days' journey*, &c.] That they might be sure not to come near, so much as to see one another.

Ver. 37. *Of the hazel.*] The Hebrew word *luz* signifies an *almond*, as Bochart proves at large, out of a great many authors. And therefore St. Jerome here rightly translates it, *virgas amygdalinas*. And the Hebrew interpreters, who will have it signify a *hazel-tree*, confess that herein they depart from the opinion of those that went before them. So Aben Ezra and Kimchi, who both acknowledge that the ancient doctors expound it, *almond-rods*.

And pilled white strakes in them.] He had three artifices to compass his end. The first was this: to peel off the bark from the rods, at certain distances, till the white appeared between the bark, which was of a different colour. And these rods, thus discoloured, he laid in the channels of water, at that time when the cattle were wont to couple (as it follows in the next verse), that their fancies might be painted with such divers colours as they saw in the rods. (See ver. 40, 41.)

Ver. 39. *And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth*, &c.] The Greek fathers ascribe this to the miraculous operation of God, as Bochart observes in his Hierozoic. (par. i. lib. ii. cap. 49.) But the Latin fathers, particularly St. Jerome, look upon it as done by the natural operation of the imagination. For which he alleges the like thing done in Spain among horses and mares: and brings Quinctilian and Hippocrates to justify the like conceptions in women. Which he backs with a great number of authorities, out of Galen and other writers; who have observed indelible marks to have been impressed upon children, by the objects that were presented to their mother's imagination at the time of her conception.

And St. Austin says, the Egyptians, by the like device with this of Jacob's, had still a new *apis*, or *pied-bull*, to succeed that which died: to whom they gave Divine honour. But whatsoever power there might be in natural imagination to produce such effects, it must be acknowledged that God gave an extraordinary blessing to this contrivance: as appears by the vision which Jacob says he had, wherein God (who had directed him to this invention) promised to give it success, (xxxi. 10—12.) For beasts have very rarely such a strong and vehement imagination as produces such effects; unless it be moved by some unusual passion. And therefore we must confess that God excited and stirred up their imagination; which otherways would not have wrought in that manner; at least, not in all the cattle. For, let any shepherd now try this device, and he will not find it do what it did then by a Divine operation. (Vide G. Vossius, lib. iii. de Idolol. cap. 22.)

Ver. 40. *And Jacob did separate the lambs*, &c.] One species is put for all: and the meaning is, that those young cattle (whether lambs or kids of the goats, &c.) which were thus brought forth spotted, he did not suffer to remain with the flock of Laban; lest he should say that he did him wrong by letting them mix together, and so bring forth spotted cattle, (and perhaps he might also think that they, looking upon Laban's one-coloured cattle, might bring forth young ones like to them.) But, instead of this way of intrenching himself, he had a second artifice; which was to put the spotted cattle (produced by the former device) foremost; so that Laban's flock should always look upon them, and thereby be the more apt to conceive the like. And then it follows, in the end of this verse,

He put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not to Laban's cattle.] Which looks like a repetition of what was said in the beginning of the verse: but the meaning is, that those which brought forth spotted, by this second artifice, he also put by themselves; and suffered them not to be mingled with Laban's cattle: as before he had separated those that were brought forth spotted, by looking upon the rods.

Ver. 41. *And it came to pass, when the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob*, &c.] This was his third artifice: which is thus expounded by the Chaldee and a great number of other authors, (which may be seen in Bochart, par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 46.) that he laid the rods before the cattle only in the spring-time, when the sun was ascending, and the cattle lusty and vigorous: but let them alone when the cattle came together in September, or the declension of the year (for they bred twice a year in those countries), at which time they were become more feeble. If he had always laid the rods before the cattle, there might have been none but spotted, and so Laban have been quite impoverished. Therefore he chose to do it only in their first and prime copulation, which was in the spring-time; and omitted it in the later, which was in the autumn. Our famous Mr. Mede follows this interpretation, (Discourse xlv.

p. 355.) But there is no certainty in it: for Pliny and Columella prefer those begot in autumn, to those begot in the spring. And therefore our translation is most proper, which represents Jacob as using this artifice, of laying the rods before them, only when the stronger cattle came together, and not when the weaker. And so the LXX. understood the words, without respect to the former or later breed: and so the Hebrew words import, as Bochartus shews in the place beforenamed, (p. 514.)

Ver. 43. *And the man increased exceedingly,* &c.] Some have made it a question, whether he got all these riches honestly; because Laban did not think of his using any art, but only of bare casual productions. But, as what was not directly against the contract, may be thought to be allowed by it; so it is certain that Jacob might lawfully take what God bestowed upon him: who seems to have directed him by an angel to use this artifice; or, at least, testified his approbation of it: intending to transfer unto Jacob the wealth of Laban, as he gave the riches of the Egyptians to the Israelites. For the world is his, and the fulness thereof: and he may dispose of every thing in it as he pleases.

Maid-servants, &c.] To look after his cattle; and after his camels and asses, which he also purchased.

CHAP. XXXI.

Ver. 1. *He heard the words of Laban's sons.*] Who uttered such discontented or threatening speeches, as made him fear they would fall upon him and do him mischief. This was the first cause of his resolved flight.

Hath taken away all that was our father's.] They speak of him as if he had been a thief: which made him suspect they would use him accordingly.

All this glory.] All these riches, (ver. 16.)

Ver. 2. *And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban,* &c.] This was the second cause of his resolution to be gone; that he saw by Laban's looks things were not likely to go well with him, if he stayed any longer.

Ver. 3. *And the Lord said unto Jacob,* &c.] This was the third cause, the Divine Majesty appeared to him, and bade him be gone. And as he had his warrant, so he seals it with his promise to protect him in his return to his own country.

Ver. 4. *Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah.*] Rachel is first mentioned as his chief wife; for so she was in his designment; and so the posterity of Leah afterward acknowledged, naming her first in the blessing of Ruth, iv. 11.

To the field unto his flock.] That he might discourse with them privately: fearing also, it is likely, that he might be seized by Laban and his sons, if he went to the house.

Ver. 5. *The God of my fathers hath been with me.*] Hath appeared to me, (ver. 3.) and bid me not fear your father.

Ver. 6. *With all my power.*] I have omitted nothing that I could do to promote his interest.

Ver. 7. *Hath deceived me.*] Dealt unjustly with me, in not standing to his agreement.

Changed my wages ten times.] *i. e.* Very often; as many interpret it from the like expression in other places, particularly Levit. xxvi. 26. where *ten women* are put for a great number of women. But others think that he really changed his wages just *ten times*. For he served him six years, after he made the agreement with him, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, ver. 31, &c. And the first year he stood to his bargain: but seeing him thrive exceedingly, he altered the form of their covenants, at the end of that year. And in like manner, every half year, when the ewes brought forth young ones (which they did twice a-year) and he saw them spotted, he broke his contract, and made a new one, less advantageous to Jacob: sometimes restraining it to one sort of cattle, sometimes to another; and not letting him have the whole benefit of his contract. Which is not at all improbable: for Jacob mentions his ill dealing with him in the very same words, (ver. 41.) And in the next verse to this he relates how Laban would sometimes let him have only the *speckled;* at another time, none but the *ring-straked;* and so we may suppose of the rest. See this explained by St. Jerome in Quæst. Hebr. and by St. Austin, Q. xcv. in Gen.

But God suffered him not to hurt me.] To defraud me of my wages, by these changes which he made in them.

Ver. 9. *Thus hath God taken away,* &c.] He prudently conceals his own artifice, and only relates what hand God had in the business (which indeed was the chief, for without his blessing it could not have prospered), for fear perhaps that they should any way divulge it, and bring him into danger with Laban. For every body cannot keep a secret (the Hebrews make too severe and foolish reflections on women upon this occasion); and his whole estate depending on this, he thought it best to keep it to himself for the present.

Ver. 10. *It came to pass, at the time the cattle conceived,* &c.] To confirm them in the opinion, that the hand of God had transferred all the riches of their father unto him, he relates what was represented to him in a dream.

The rams that leaped, &c.] He beheld them such as he had agreed to have for his hire; and therefore likely to produce others *spotted,* and *straked,* like themselves. According to the common observation of the poet:

"Sic catulos canibus similes, sic matribus hædos."

For in the Hebrew, the words *ring-straked* and *speckled,* may be referred to the ewes as well as to the rams. And it is probable he had this vision before he made his agreement with Laban; whereby he was directed to the artifice of which he made use: or else God represented to him afterward that he approved it, and would make it successful.

Grisled.] This word *(barud)* is not used before: but I took notice of it in the foregoing chapter, (ver. 32.) that it signifies as much as *great white* or *grey spots,* like to *hail-stones.* It is just the quite contrary to *nakod,* speckled or sprinkled with little black spots, which were upon the sheep that were white: as they were *whitish* or *grisled* spots upon those that were black.

Ver. 11. *And the angel of God spake unto me,* &c.] In the name of God, as his ambassador: God being supposed to be present, where his angels, who are his retinue, are said to appear; as I have often noted. (See xxviii. 17.)

Ver. 12. *Lift up now thine eyes.*] He said (ver. 10.) that he did *lift up his eyes:* therefore the meaning here is, *Observe now,* and *mark* what thou seest.

I have seen all that Laban doth unto thee, &c.] Taken such notice of it that I will do thee right.

Ver. 14. *I am the God of Bethel.*] It is plain by this, that though the angel only appeared, (ver. 11.) yet God himself was present and remembered him, how he had appeared unto him in Bethel, (xxviii. 11, 12, &c.) and how "Jacob had anointed the pillar, and vowed a vow unto him." So Maimonides expounds it; for Jacob, no doubt, saith he, made the vow to God, and not to the angel: and therefore the angel (as he understands it) speaks here in the name of God and not of himself, (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 27.) See chap. xxii. 11. 15. But I see no reason why we should not suppose the Divine Majesty himself to have appeared also, as he did at Bethel: when Jacob saw the angels ascending and descending upon the ladder, and the Lord himself standing at the top, and speaking to him, as he doth here. For upon a serious consideration of all the circumstances, this vision, here mentioned, seems to me to be distinct from what was represented by an angel in a dream, (ver. 11.) For he had *that,* it is evident, at the beginning of his last six years' service; *this,* at the conclusion of them: but he puts them both together, because they belong to the same matter.

And God now remembers his vow, to shew him that he was well pleased with it; and to excite him to perform it, when he had brought him (as he assures him he would) to that place again.

Ver. 14. *Rachel and Leah answered,* &c.] They immediately consented to go along with him; and not so much as to acquaint their father with it: for they knew he would give them nothing.

Is there any portion, &c.] We shall get nothing by staying with him: the reason of which follows.

Ver. 15. *Are we not counted as strangers?* &c.] He hath not dealt with us as if we were his children: but as if we were of some other family; whom he had bought, and sold again.

Sold us.] Not so much giving us in marriage, as selling us for the price of Jacob's labour.

Quite devoured our money.] Kept to himself all the money he got by thy service; and given us not a farthing of it.

Ver. 16. *For all the riches,* &c.] God hath but given us that which was our own: and therefore thou mayest lawfully keep it, and go away with it.

Ver. 17. *Jacob rose up.*] Prepared himself for the journey.

And set his sons.] As was but needful: Reuben, his eldest, being scarce fourteen years old; and Joseph, his youngest, scarce six.

Upon camels.] They used to ride upon camels in the east country; especially when they made long journeys. (See xxiv. 10.)

Ver. 18. *He carried away all his cattle.*] But nothing of Laban's, as Josephus, without any reason, fancies.

Ver. 19. *Laban went to shear his sheep.*] Which gave Jacob the better opportunity to escape, whilst he was busy about that; and feasting, perhaps, his shearers.

And Rachel had stolen.] In all likelihood his wives returned to the house, to fetch what they had left there, when Jacob sent to speak with them in the field, (ver. 4.) and then Rachel took away these images.

The images that her father had.] These images in the Hebrew are called *teraphim:* of which we read very often afterward, in the Holy Scripture. Mercer and Simeon de Muis. take it for an exotic word; but others derive it from the Hebrew word *rapha,* which signifies, to *cure* or *heal;* as if these were looked upon as *salvatores,* saviours and deliverers, or preservers from mischief.

There are other derivations, of which there is no certainty: but most agree they were a kind of *penates,* as the Romans called them, *household gods:* in which style Laban speaks of them, when he says, (ver. 30.) "Wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?" But it is a great question among the Hebrew doctors, whether, in these ancient times, they worshipped them as gods, or only used them as instruments of divination; as Mr. Selden observes, (de Diis Syris Syntagm. i. cap. 2.) where he shews, that several of the Hebrew doctors take them to have been figures in human shape, (1 Sam. xix. 13.) made by astrologers to be capable (as they fancied) of the heavenly influences. And for this reason, they think, Rachel stole them—that Laban might not inquire by them, which way Jacob and his family were gone. Hottinger also hath many ingenious arguments to prove, that they were the same with the Arabian talismans in aftertimes: which were images made under such or such constellations, to receive the heavenly influences; either to be a phylactery, or an oracle. (See lib. i. Histor. Orient. cap. 8.)

But the conjecture of Lud. de Dieu upon this place seems to me far more probable, that they were the representations of some angelical powers (teraphim and seraphim being the very same, by the change only of a letter), who, they imagined, declared the mind of God by them. For, in those countries where the Schechinah, or presence of the Divine Majesty, did not appear, as it did in Abraham's family, they had at least some tradition of it, and of the angels that were its attendants: the resemblance of which they made, in hope they might by that means have a communication with them, and gain intelligence from heaven. Of which evil spirits made their advantage; and abused mankind by the lying answers they gave to their inquiries. For there is no reason to think that God allowed, much less appointed, the making of these teraphim: which Gaffarel adventures to say, were piously used before the law of Moses, and God manifested his mind and will by them. This had been to lead men into idolatry, by image-worship: unto which they were too prone of themselves.

Expositors differ very much about Rachel's intention in stealing them. Some fancy, she still retained a tang of superstition: but I take it to be more likely, that Jacob, who loved her extremely, and was no less beloved by her, had brought her off from the false notions and bad customs of her country. And then, she did not carry them away, for fear Laban should inquire by them, which way they were gone (for she knew they were but vain idols, which could give no direction): but rather designed to convince her father of his superstition; by letting him see, that his gods (as he called them) could not preserve themselves, much less do any service to him. Or, perhaps, she intended to give herself some portion of his goods, which she thought justly belonged to her: and so took these teraphim, which were of some value (though small

images) because they are generally supposed to have been made of silver.

Ver. 20. *Jacob stole away unawares.*] Without the knowledge of Laban. For the word *heart* (as it is in the Hebrew) is here put for the *understanding and will.*

Laban the Syrian.] There being no necessity of mentioning his country (which was well known from the preceding story), some think he is here called *the Syrian,* to denote that, as cunning as he was, Jacob was too hard for him. For the Syrians, in ancient authors, are observed to have been a very crafty, subtle people. But there is no certainty of this; there being a frequent redundance very obvious in this language. (See ver. 25.)

Ver. 21. *So he fled,* &c.] Packed up his baggage (as we now speak) and made all ready for a speedy flight: and (as it follows) *rose up,* and made all the haste he could to get over the river.

And passed over the river.] *i. e.* Euphrates, frequently called in Scripture, *the river,* in regard of its eminence.

Mount Gilead.] So called afterward from what Jacob and Laban did there, (ver. 48.) It joined to Mount Libanus.

Ver. 22. *On the third day.*] There was such a distance between Jacob's flock and his, (xxxii. 36.) that he could not hear sooner: especially when he was taken up with other business, (ver. 19.) and did not make inquiry.

Ver. 23. *Took his brethren.*] Some of his near kindred.

They overtook him.] The Hebrew word imports, *they came close up to him.*

Ver. 24. *And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream,* &c.] See concerning this expression, xx. 3.

Speak not to Jacob either good or bad.] About his return to thee. Unto which God charges him he should neither allure him by promises, nor affright him by threats.

Ver. 25. *Then Laban overtook Jacob.*] This is a different word from that in ver. 23. signifying he came near, or approached just to him: so that they might confer one with another.

Now Jacob had pitched his tent, &c.] For Jacob and Laban had both pitched their tents in the same Mount; not far from one another. This Josephus thinks they had done in the evening; when Laban came up so close to him, that if the night had not parted them, they might then have discoursed together: which they did next morning, when they came nearer one to another; after God had warned Laban not to stop his journey.

Here *Gilead* is redundant, as the word *Syrian* was before in ver. 20. 24.

Ver. 26. *As captives taken with the sword.*] As prizes in war, which are wont to be carried off with force and violence.

Ver. 28. *Thou hast now done foolishly in so doing.*] He seems to pretend, that he would have been very kind to him, if they had parted with mutual consent: and would have him think he had lost, by stealing away, not only the music and merriment, (beforementioned, ver. 27.) but such gifts as he would have bestowed upon him.

Ver. 29. *The God of your father spake unto me,* &c.] There is no ground to think that the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, appeared to him; for we do not read either here or ver. 24. of his seeing any thing, but hearing one speak to him, and that in a dream: who told him, I suppose, that he was the God of Isaac, and of Abraham. Or, if he saw a glorious appearance, it was in his sleep only; not when he was awake.

Ver. 30. *Stolen my gods.*] See ver. 19.

Ver. 31. *Because I was afraid.*] This is an answer to the first part of Laban's expostulation, (ver. 26, 27, &c.)

Ver. 32. *With whomsoever thou findest,* &c.] This is an answer to the last part of it. From which some gather, that theft was punished with death in those days. Sacrilege perhaps was.

Ver. 33. *Laban went into Jacob's tent,* &c.] This shews that men and women had every one of them their distinct tents, apart by themselves; as was noted before, xxiv. ult.

Ver. 34. *Camel's furniture.*] The saddle upon which they rode, or laid their carriage.

Searched all the tent.] Except that place where she sat.

Ver. 35. *Let it not displease,* &c.] She begs his pardon that she did not stand up to do him reverence, as became a child to her father: and excuses it, by an infirmity which was upon her.

And he searched.] He looked all about the place where she sat.

Ver. 36. *Jacob answered and said,* &c.] He proceeded farther in his answer; and expostulates with Laban, as he had done with him: setting forth the causelessness of his pursuit, the injustice of charging him with theft, and all his unkind usage of him, from the time he came to him, till his departure; notwithstanding his faithful services, which he represents most admirably.

Ver. 38. *The ewes and she-goats have not cast their young.*] I looked so carefully after them, and such was the blessing of God upon my care, none of them miscarried. A most high commendation of his service. Who would not have valued such a servant, for whose sake God bestowed such an unwonted fecundity upon Laban's flock?

The rams of thy flock have I not eaten.] Under *rams* are comprehended the lambs also: for if he had eaten any of them, it had been no great commendation to abstain from the rams. But he contented himself with pulse, or such-like mean diet, to promote his master's profit.

Ver. 39. *That which was torn of beasts,* &c.] And that also which was stolen by theft, was not brought to Laban's account; but Jacob made them good. Which was not only an unjust exaction, but an inhuman: for the most careful shepherd in the world could not have his eye every where to prevent such things, especially in the dark; as it follows.

Whether stolen by day or by night.] A most barbarous usage of a nephew, and a son-in-law, to make him pay for that which wild beasts devoured, or thieves stole, against his will; when nobody could see their approach in the night. Some question where Jacob got money to pay for them. But it is to be considered, that he did not come quite unprovided from his father's house; with which also, we may reasonably think, he still held some correspondence.

Ver. 40. *Thus was I; in the day the drought,* &c.] While I served thee, the heat consumed me in the daytime, and the frost nipped me by night. For in those countries shepherds were wont to watch their flocks; especially about the time that ewes were likely to yean: as we read Luke ii. 8. (See Bochart in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 44.)

My sleep departed from mine eyes.] Many times he took no rest; being awakened by wild beasts, or by thieves, or kept awake by his great solicitude for his flock.

Ver. 41. *Thus have I been twenty years in thy house.*] This hath been my manner of life, for no less than twenty years, that I have been a servant in thy family.

Ver. 42. *The fear of Isaac.*] The God whom Isaac feared; that is, worshipped: as the Chaldee interprets it.

Thou hadst sent me away now empty.] Without goods, wives, or children: for he seems to have been so barbarous, that if he had been left to himself, he would have made them all his slaves.

God hath seen my affliction.] How ill thou hast treated me; and taken care to relieve me. For so the word *seen* signifies in many places; particularly xvi. 13.

Ver. 43. *These cattle are my cattle,* &c.] Because they belonged to his daughters, and their children, therefore he calls them his. That is, now he is in a good mood, and pretends the same care of every thing that Jacob had, as if it were his own. So it follows.

And what can I do this day unto these my daughters? &c.] How can I do them any harm, when they are so very dear to me?

Ver. 44. *Let us make a covenant,* &c.] Enter into a strict league, by some monument or other; that shall remain as a testimony of our friendship.

Ver. 45. *Set it up for a pillar.*] For a monument of what Laban desired.

Ver. 46. *Jacob said to his brethren, Gather stones,* &c.] He prays every one, whom Laban had brought with him, to bring a stone; and they did so, and laid them together on a heap; which was flat at the top like a table: so that they did eat upon it the next morning, (ver. 54.)

Ver. 47. *Laban called it Jegar-Sahadutha,* &c.] One of them gave it a Syriac name, signifying *the heap of testimony;* the other a Hebrew, signifying *the heap of witness.* For *gal* is a *heap* in Hebrew, and *ed,* a *witness.* These two languages were different: but not so much that they did not understand one another, as appears by the whole story.

Ver. 48. *This heap is a witness between me and thee this day.*] It shall remain as a monument, that we agree not to transgress these bounds; as it is explained, ver. 52.

Ver. 49. *Mizpah.*] A watch-tower. This shews that Laban understood Hebrew as well as Syriac: or, rather, that these were two dialects: which differed in pronunciation, and in many words, (as those mentioned ver. 47.) but in most had the same common to them both.

The Lord watch between me and thee.] Observe how we behave ourselves, when we cannot see one another. Here he uses the name of Jehovah; which shews he was acquainted with the religion of Jacob, as well as his language; and worshipped, it is likely, the Lord of heaven and of earth; though not without some superstitious mixtures.

Ver. 50. *If thou shalt afflict my daughters,* &c.] It seems to be a short form of speech, importing, God who observes all things will punish thee for it.

If thou take other wives besides my daughters.] Which might have been worse for them and their posterity; and therefore he lays this restraint upon him.

No man is with us, &c.] Though here be no man besides ourselves, to be witness of this agreement; yet consider that God (which is infinitely more) knows it, and will punish him that transgresses it.

In these two last verses, he discourses very religiously; which revived also his natural affection to his children.

Ver. 52. *This heap be witness, and this pillar be witness,* &c.] It seems that Laban and his company set up a heap, made of the stones which every one brought; and Jacob set up one single large stone (ver. 45.) in the form of a pillar. And it is likely his pillar looked towards the land of Canaan; and their heap towards Haran.

That I will not pass over this heap, &c.] As stones were set in the confines of fields to be boundaries, and landmarks (as we call them) to distinguish men's possessions, and limit them from encroaching one upon another; so were this heap and this pillar intended to be in the nature of such boundaries; beyond which neither of them should pass armed, to offend the other.

Ver. 53. *The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor.*] These two were brethren, (for he doth not mean, sure, their grandfather, the father of Terah, xi. 24.) and before Abraham was called out of Ur, they both worshipped other gods, (Josh. xxiv. 2.) But then Abraham renounced those gods; and worshipped only the Creator of heaven and earth; as Nahor, I have formerly conjectured, also did; when he followed him to Haran. Therefore, I think, we need not make a question by which of Abraham's gods Laban now swears: for I take him to have been bred up in the true religion, which made Abraham desire his son should have a wife out of this family; for which reason Isaac also sent Jacob hither.

The God of their father.] As much as to say, by the God of our ancestors: who, after God's appearing to Abraham and calling him out of his own country, became the worshippers of the Lord of heaven and earth alone. (See xi. 31.)

Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac.] By Him whom Isaac worshipped, (ver. 42.) He mentions the *fear of Isaac* rather than the *God of Abraham,* to declare more plainly and undoubtedly by what God he sware. For Abraham had been an idolater; but Isaac never was.

Ver. 54. *Jacob offered sacrifice.*] Peace-offerings (as they were afterward called), part of which were eaten by him that offered them, and by his friends. This further shews they were of the same religion, by their partaking of the same sacrifice: which Jacob no doubt offered to the true God.

Called his brethren to eat bread.] Invited them to feast with him upon that sacrifice: whereby they confirmed the covenant lately made between them.

Ver. 55. *Laban blessed them.*] Prayed God to preserve and prosper them.

Returned to his place.] *viz.* Haran.

CHAP. XXXII.

Ver. 1. *THE angels of God met him.*] To encourage and comfort him, with the assurance that God was with him. This is a remarkable passage, shewing the singular care God had of him: who, as he appeared to him when he went from Canaan, so now appeared to him again in his return thither; that he might depend upon the promise he then made him, (xxviii. 13—15.)

Ver. 2. *This is God's host.*] Which attend upon the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, to execute his commands.

Mahanaim.] *i. e.* Two hosts, or camps, as it is in the margin. Either, because there were several squadrons (as we speak) of the angels, drawn up like an army, ready for his defence: or, because, besides his own family, which was pitched here in order like a camp, there was that of the angels also. The former seems most probable, because this name relates to *God's host,* mentioned before; which consisted of several troops of angels.

Ver. 3. *And Jacob sent messengers before him,* &c.] As he was about to pass over Jordan, (ver. 10.) he sent some to wait upon his brother.

Unto the land of Seir.] Which Esau, it seems, had conquered in Jacob's absence, according to the blessing of his father, (xxvii. 40.) "By thy sword shalt thou live." This Jacob thought fit to congratulate to him; and at the same time to try how he stood affected towards himself.

The country of Edom.] So it was called in Moses's time.

Ver. 4. *Thus shall ye speak to my lord Esau.*] He calls him his lord, that he might mollify his anger, if any remained, by humble language. Which sounded as if he had no thoughts of the birthright he had purchased of him. This also was the style wherein others addressed themselves to Esau, after he had won the principality of Seir.

Thy servant Jacob.] These are submissive words also; importing his inferiority.

I have sojourned with Laban, &c.] This hath the same design with the foregoing words; to insinuate that he was much inferior to Esau; having been a servant a long time to Laban.

Ver. 5. *And I have oxen,* &c.] Yet he adds this, that he was plentifully provided for, lest Esau should think he came a begging, and might prove a burden to him; so the Hebrews understand it. And Maimonides observes, that he mentions only oxen, asses, and flocks (*i. e.* of sheep and goats), because these were the common possessions of all men, and in all countries, that had any thing. But horses and camels were not ordinary goods, but the possessions of a few great persons, and in some countries only: (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 39.) Jacob indeed had camels, (ver. 7. 15. and xxxi. 17.) but, it is likely, they were not many, and he had no great breed of them.

Men-servants and maid-servants.] These were a part of their possessions, as oxen and sheep were; which they bought and sold; and were no where more plentiful than in Syria (from whence Jacob came), if it were then such a country as it was in aftertimes, when the Roman writers say, they were "servituti nati," *born to slavery.*

That I may find grace in thy sight.] He courts his friendship, and desires he would favour him, and not hinder him in his passage to their old father.

Ver. 6. *We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee.*] They reported, no doubt, what he replied to Jacob's message; and this *coming to meet him* signifies, that he gave them a civil reception: and pretended, at least, to be glad to hear of his brother's return; and therefore prepared to come and welcome him into his own country.

Four hundred men with him.] Nobly attended; partly to shew his greatness, and partly to do honour to Jacob by a public salutation.

Ver. 7. *Then Jacob was greatly afraid,* &c.] Being conscious to himself what cause Esau had not to love him. He interpreted his coming to meet him, with such a number, otherwise than it was represented. The vision of angels, indeed, who met him, (ver. 1.) might have fortified him against all fear of Esau's meeting him: but the first motions of such passions cannot always be prevented.

He divided the people that were with him, &c.] Put his family and all belonging to him in as good a posture as he was able.

Ver. 9. *O God of my father Abraham,* &c.] As he had prudently disposed all things for the preservation of his family, at least of some of them; so he addresses himself to God (of whose goodness both Abraham and Isaac had very long experience), without whose favour he knew the angels themselves could do nothing for him: for they are his *host,* (ver. 2.) and act only by his command.

Return unto thy country.] He represents to God that he was in the way of obedience to his orders: and then remembers him of his gracious promise, "I will deal well with thee."

Ver. 10. *I am not worthy,* &c.] Next, he acknowledges what God had done for him already; and how unworthy he was of the smallest part of it.

With my staff.] As a poor traveller, having no more than I could carry about me. Travellers used staffs then, as they do now, for their ease, and for their defence.

Ver. 11. *The mother with the children.*] *i. e.* My whole family: which could not consist with God's promise, mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 12. *As the sand of the sea.*] The words of God's promise are *as the dust of the earth,* (xxviii. 14.) But that signified the same with what God had said to Abraham, (xxii. 17.) which this promise authorised him to apply to himself, as the seed whom he intended to bless.

Ver. 13. *He lodged there.*] *i. e.* In Mahanaim, or thereabouts: where he hoped God would command the angels, which he had seen, to protect him.

And he took of that which came to his hand, &c.] According to this translation, he took what he first lighted upon, without any choice; being still in a passion of fear. But the Hebrew phrase בידו, *that which was in his hand,* signifies what was in his power to present him withal, *viz.* such cattle as are after mentioned; though he had no jewels or precious raiment. And it appears that he chose them with great consideration, in exact proportions: for having commended himself, upon such good grounds, to the protection of the Almighty, his fear vanished.

Ver. 14. *Two hundred she-goats, and twenty he-goats,* &c.] The *males* bare the proportion of *one* to *ten females.* And so it was in the *rams* and *bulls;* which was the proportion Varro saith was observed in his days and country. (See Bochart in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 54.)

Ver. 15. *Milch camels.*] Who had lately foaled: for nothing was more delicious in those countries (as Bochart observes out of Aristotle, Pliny, and many other authors, Ib. lib. ii. cap. 2.) than camels' milk.

Ver. 18. *It is a present.*] With which he hoped to sweeten him; there being a great power in gifts to win men's hearts, even when they are disaffected: as the wise man observes in many places, (Prov. xvii. 8. xviii. 16, &c.)

And behold, he is behind us.] He would not have Esau think that he was afraid to see him.

Ver. 19. *And so he commanded the second,* &c.] He there-

fore distributed them into several droves, that they might make a greater appearance; and that he might still be more and more pleased, with the respect which was shewn him, and the present intended him. For every new drove, and new speech, made a new impression upon him.

Ver. 21. *Lodged that night in the company.*] Or, camp, *i. e.* where he pitched the tents for his family.

Ver. 22. *He arose up that night.*] Before it was day; in the last watch of the night.

His eleven sons.] *i. e.* All his children: for the daughter is comprehended.

Passed over the ford Jabbock.] This was a little river, flowing from the country of the Ammonites, and falling into Jordan, where it comes out of the lake of Genesareth. It was in one place fordable; and there Jacob first passed over himself, to try the depth of it.

Ver. 23. *And he took them and sent them over,* &c.] Having tried the ford, he returned; and caused them all to pass over: and so (as it follows) *was left alone,* on the east side of the brook.

Ver. 24. *And there wrestled a man with him.*] He stayed alone, in all likelihood, that he might commend himself and his family to God, by earnest prayer: which seems to be confirmed by the prophet Hosea, xii. 4. And as he was praying, or when he had done, a man encountered him, with whom he grappled; taking him, perhaps, for some of Esau's attendants come to surprise him. For it was so dark, that he could not see what kind of countenance he had: or, if he could, angels were wont to appear so like to men, that at the first they did not discern the difference. Maimonides fancies all this was done in a prophetic vision: (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 42.) but the whole narration confutes this. The only question is, whether this was a created angel, or the Eternal ΛΟΓΟΣ, as many of the ancient fathers understood it. Whose opinion is opposed by St. Austin, (as I observed upon the 18th chapter) and seems to me not so probable, as that this angel was one of God's host, mentioned ver. 2. sent from the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty: by whose order, and in whose presence, he strove with Jacob, in such manner as is here described. In short, I take him to be one of those, whom the Jews call *angels of the presence;* that wait continually upon the Divine Majesty, and make a part of his retinue. (See xxxv. 10.)

Ver. 25. *And when he saw that he prevailed not against him.*] Though Jacob, no doubt, was extraordinarily strengthened by God in this combat, (Hosea xii. 5.) yet the angel who represented God could have prevailed against him, if his orders had not been to let Jacob have the better.

He touched the hollow of his thigh.] The angel gave over the combat; but made him know, by this light touch, what he could have done, if he had pleased, *i. e.* quite overthrown him, as easily as he had made him go limping. This discovered to Jacob that he was more than a man who wrestled with him: and that he had not prevailed against him by his own strength; but by the power of God.

The hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint.] The thigh-bone slipped out of the cavity, or socket, into which it was inserted.

Ver. 26. *And he said, Let me go.*] Though the angel ceased to wrestle any longer, yet Jacob would not let go his hold: and, the more to set off his victory, the angel seems not to be able to break from him without his consent.

For the day breaks.] It is time for thee to follow thy family over the brook.

And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.] By this it plainly appears, Jacob began to understand who he was.

Ver. 27. *What is thy name?*] The angel doth not yet own his quality; but speaks as if he were unacquainted with Jacob.

Ver. 28. *Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel.*] *i. e.* Not only Jacob, (as this expression is used 1 Sam. viii. 7.) or not so much Jacob as Israel. Which name abolished the other, in his posterity: who were called Israelites, but never Jacobites.

For as a prince hast thou power with God and with men.] These words explain the end and intention of this combat; which was to shew, that he, having such power with God as to prevail over one of his ministers, needed not fear his brother Esau. So the Vulgar Latin expresses it: *If thou hast been strong against God, how much more shalt thou prevail with men?* And it is the sense of our translation, which more literally renders the Hebrew words, *Thou hast behaved thyself like a prince* (so the word *Scharitha* imports) *with God, and with men,* &c. That is, hast shewed such an heroic spirit (as we speak) in this combat, that thou needest not fear Esau and all his followers: this victory is an assurance that thou shalt get the better of him.

There is nobody skilled in the original language, but easily sees no other derivation of the name of Israel is to be sought for, but what is contained in this word *Scharitha:* which gives the reason of it. For *sar,* as St. Jerome observes, signifies a *prince;* and the *jod* in the beginning, is the common note of a proper name. So the meaning of Israel is as much as a *prince with God.*

Ver. 29. *Jacob asked him and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name.*] Jacob having told him his own name, desires him to requite him in the same kind: that thereby he might more certainly know, whether he was an angel or a man. For these words seem to demonstrate, he did not think him to be God himself.

Wherefore dost thou ask after my name?] Do not inquire after it. Rasi thinks angels changed their names according to the offices and functions to which they were assigned.

And he blessed him there.] Renewed the blessing which God had promised to Abraham and his seed; whereby Jacob was fully satisfied who he was: for he pronounced this blessing in the name of God, from whom he came.

Ver. 30. *I have seen God face to face.*] Been admitted to the nearest familiarity with him. For he looked upon this angel as a part of the Schechinah; which now also, it is likely, visibly appeared, and made him call this place Peniel, *the face of God.* Which doth not import that the Schechinah appeared in a human figure (for it never did), but that he looked upon it as a token of the Divine Presence, and that it approached very near him; as when one friend speaks to another *face to face,* as the ancient phrase was.

And my life was preserved.] This is commonly interpreted by the opinion, which was in old time, that if they saw one of the heavenly ministers, they were to be no longer men of this world, but die presently. But it may refer (as Menochius observes) to the principal scope of the combat, which was to confirm Jacob against the fear of Esau: and

so the meaning is, *I doubt not, I am safe, God will preserve me from any hurt by Esau.*

Ver. 31. *He halted upon his thigh.*] Because the hip-bone was out of its place. Many think this lasted only for a time; and some will have it, that the angel cured him before he got to Esau. But there is no certainty of either of these conjectures.

Ver. 32. *Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank,* &c.] That sinew (or tendon) which fastens the hip-bone in its socket: which comprehends the flesh of that muscle which is connected to it. He that eat of this was to be beaten, as the Jewish masters tell us. (See Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Synedriis, p. 552. Hottinger de Leg. Hebr. §. 3. Vorstius upon Pirke Eliezer, p. 221.)

CHAP. XXXIII.

Ver. 1. *JACOB lifted up his eyes,* &c.] Being come to his family, (whom he sent before him over the brook, xxxii. 23.) and looking about him, he beheld Esau and his train at some distance: and put himself, his wives, and children, in good order to meet him.

Ver. 2. *Joseph hindermost.*] As more dear to him, than any of the rest: for he did not yet know that the Messiah was to proceed from Judah, one of the sons of Leah.

Ver. 3. *And he passed over before them.*] Put himself in the front of them.

Bowed himself to the ground seven times.] At some convenient distance he began to bow: and so, at every other step, or more, he bowed again (seven times) *till he came near to his brother.* This was to testify the great honour he had for him: and to take out of Esau's mind all suspicion, that he looked upon himself as the elder brother.

Ver. 4. *Esau ran to meet him.*] This declares the forwardness of his affection: which would not let him proceed so ceremoniously as Jacob did.

Kissed him.] This word is marked in the Hebrew text (as fourteen other words in the Bible are) with four unusual points over it: to denote, as the Hebrew doctors think, some remarkable thing; which some of them take to be, the sincerity of Esau's reconciliation to his brother. And truly, if he heartily pardoned the injury, which he conceived Jacob had done him, it is much to be noted; and ought to be looked upon as a sign he was become a good man. And so Mart. Bucer, I remember, understood it, in his Commentaries upon the Epistle to the Romans: where he makes this an argument that Esau was not a reprobate, as some are apt to imagine. If it be said that God deterred him from doing his brother any hurt, it is more than can be proved. For it is recorded indeed that God threatened Laban in such a manner, that he durst not meddle with him: but no such thing is said of Esau, though it would have been of more concern to have recorded the same here, if Moses had known of any such Divine apparition to him.

Ver. 7. *Joseph and Rachel.*] The Hebrew doctors here observe, that Joseph goes before his mother; but the mothers of all the rest went before their children: of which, I think, it is not needful to seek a reason. For it is likely Moses did not take care to place his words exactly. Or, if he did, no more ought to be made of it than this; that Joseph being a goodly child, his mother put him before her; as we commonly do, when we would shew a child to advantage. Or, he being very young and a forward child, stepped before his mother, as children are wont to do, when some fine show appears which they eagerly desire to behold.

Ver. 8. *What meanest thou by all this drove?* &c.] The servants, no doubt, had told him, (as their master had ordered, xxxii. 17, &c.) but he asks Jacob that he might have an opportunity to declare how little he needed or desired such a present.

These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.] To testify my respect to thee, that I may obtain thy favour and good-will towards me. For inferiors were wont to approach to their superiors with presents, to make themselves the more kindly accepted. And it is observable, that as he and all his made such obeisance to Esau, as signified he was his servant, (as he calls himself, ver. 5.) so he still honours Esau by the name of his lord.

Ver. 9. *I have enough, my brother,* &c.] In this he shews himself not to be of a covetous humour: but as free from that vice as from revenge.

Ver. 10. *If I have found grace in thy sight.*] If thou lovest me.

As though I had seen the face of God.] For Esau's kind reception of him, he could not but look upon as a token of the Divine favour towards him. Some think by *God* may be meant an angel, or great man: into whose presence, inferiors, as I said, were wont to approach with presents.

And thou wast pleased with me.] Received me kindly.

Ver. 11. *Take my blessing.*] *i. e.* My present, as we expound it in the margin of 1 Sam. xxv. 27.

I have enough.] It is a larger word in the Hebrew, than that used by Esau, ver. 9. signifying that he had enough to spare of all sorts of things: and therefore Esau needed not fear his impoverishment, by accepting this present.

Ver. 12. *And he said, Let us take our journey,* &c.] Esau invites him to go along with him, to the land of Seir, and there refresh himself.

I will go before thee.] Shew thee the way, and conduct thee.

Ver. 13. *And he said unto him,* &c.] *i. e.* Jacob said this in excuse, that he could not go so fast as Esau; and therefore desired to follow after by easy journeys.

Children are tender.] Joseph was not above six or seven years old.

Flocks and herds with young.] The Hebrew word *aloth* (in 1 Sam. vi. 7.) signifies kine that had sucking calves. Unto which sense Bochart inclines in this place; and so do Jonathan, Onkelos, and other ancient interpreters. (See his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 30.)

Are with me.] Must be looked after very carefully.

All the flock will die.] *i. e.* All that are big with young; or, have newly brought forth young.

Ver. 14. *I will lead on softly.*] Follow thee with a gentle pace; such as the flocks and children can bear.

According as the cattle that go before me.] It was observed before, (xxx. 30.) that Maimonides interprets this phrase, *leregel, for the sake:* and so he understands it here, *with respect to the cattle and children.* (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 28.) Or, *because of the cattle,* &c. that they may not be overdriven.

Until I come to my lord, unto Seir.] Moses omits this journey to Seir, as he doth his visit to his father: which

one cannot think he deferred for so many years, as were between his return to Canaan, and the mention of his coming to Mamre, (xxxv. 27.) Or, Jacob was hindered, perhaps, by something which he could not foresee, from performing this promise to his brother: of which, no doubt, he gave him an account, that he might not be thought to break his word.

Ver. 15. *Let me now leave with thee,* &c.] He would have left some of his followers with Jacob, to shew him the way, and to be a guard to him; or honourably attend him.

Let me find grace in the sight of my lord.] In this also be so kind as to gratify my desire, (xxxiv. 11.)

Ver. 16. *Esau returned that day.*] The same day they met together; because he would not be a burden to Jacob.

Ver. 17. *Journeyed to Succoth.*] After he had been with his brother in Seir, if he did follow him thither; as it is likely he did, though not here mentioned: no more than the entertainment he gave him, and such-like things; which one cannot think were wanting at this meeting.

Built him a house.] Intending to make some stay in this place.

Ver. 18. *And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem.*] Or, he came safe and sound (so the Hebrews generally understand the word Shalem) to that city called Shechem. And it may refer either to the soundness of his leg; which was perfectly well, so that he halted no longer: or, to the safety of his person; in that he was not at all hurt by Esau: or, rather, to the safety of every thing he had: no evil accident having befallen him, of any sort, since he left Laban. Which is the rather now mentioned, because in the next chapter Moses gives a relation of a very sad misfortune, which befel his family.

When he came from Padan-Aram.] Some think this needed not to have been added: whereas it expresses more fully what was said before, that he came safe all the way from thence hither.

And pitched his tent before the city.] Because it was the sabbath-day, saith Manasseh ben Israel, out of the Hebrew doctors (Probl. viii. de Creatione), which made him stop and rest here, and not enter the city, till it was ended. But this is a mere fancy, for the *rest from all labours* on this day was not commanded to be observed till they came out of Egypt: and the true reason of pitching his tent here, was for the convenience of pasturage.

Ver. 19. *And he bought a parcel of a field.*] He made a small purchase, that he might be the less imposed upon by the inhabitants of that country: who had disturbed Abraham and Isaac, about the wells they digged in the ground they hired of them.

For a hundred pieces of money.] The margin hath a hundred lambs. But this is the right translation, as appears from Acts vii. 16. And Bochart hath taken a great deal of pains to shew that *kesita* doth not signify a *lamb*, but some sort of money: though of what value is uncertain. (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. i. cap. 2. and lib. ii. cap. 43.) For a great while before this time money was in use; with which they trafficked, and not by exchanging one commodity for another. (See xxiii. 16.)

Ver. 20. *Called it El-Elohe-Israel.*] This altar is dedicated to God, the God of Israel; who had delivered him from Laban and Esau, and lately honoured him with a new name, importing his great power with him.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Ver. 1. *WENT out.*] From her mother's tent, which was without the city, (xxxiii. 18.)

To see the daughters of the land.] Into the city of Shechem, to look about her with the young women (as the Hebrew word imports); who, as Josephus relates, celebrated a festival at this time, where some fine spectacles were presented.

Ver. 2. *And when Shechem.*] From whom the city, perhaps, had its name.

Prince of the country.] Or one of the prime nobility of the country, (ver. 19.)

Took her, &c.] By force (as both the Targums and many others understand it), and ravished her. From whence we learn, that this was done some years after Jacob's return into Canaan: for then Dinah was not much older than Joseph; and now we must suppose her, at least, fifteen. And indeed the bloody fact of her brethren shews as much, who must be grown up to be men: which they were not when Jacob returned to Canaan; the eldest of them being then scarcely a stripling of fourteen years old.

Ver. 3. *His soul clave unto Dinah.*] He could think of nothing else but her: for he loved her extremely, as it follows in the next words.

Spake kindly to the damsel.] Courted her to marry him, with such professions of sincere affection, as might gain her heart, notwithstanding the injury he had done her.

Ver. 4. *Get me this damsel to wife.*] Treat with her father about our marriage.

Ver. 5. *And Jacob heard,* &c.] By some of Dinah's servants or companions; for it is not to be thought, that she went out alone.

Now his sons were with the cattle in the field.] Which he had lately purchased, (xxxiii. 19.) or, in some hired ground remote from the city.

Held his peace, &c.] Took no notice of what he heard; till he could have their advice and assistance.

Ver. 6. *And Hamor went out.*] Of the city, to treat with Jacob in his tent, (xxxiii. 18.)

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Jacob,* &c.] As they were treating, in came Jacob's sons: who, hearing how their sister had been abused, were very much afflicted, and no less angry.

Wrought folly in Israel.] Or, *against Israel.* Committed a wickedness, highly to the disgrace and injury of Israel's family.

Which thing ought not to be done.] Contrary to the law of nations; that a virgin should be violated without punishment. So Rasi.

Ver. 8. *Hamor communed with them.*] With the whole family, Jacob, Leah, and Dinah's brethren.

Longeth.] Is extremely in love.

For your daughter.] The daughter of Jacob and Leah; unto whom he speaks in the presence of her brethren.

Ver. 9. *And make ye marriages with us,* &c.] Become one people with us, (ver. 16.)

Ver. 10. *And ye shall dwell with us.*] Settle yourselves among us.

And the land shall be before you.] In any part of our country.

Dwell ye.] He repeats it again, to beget in them a confidence of a settlement among them; in the enjoyment of all their rights and privileges; as much as if they had been natives.

And trade ye.] Exercise what traffic you please up and down the country, without any let or impediment.

And get you possessions therein.] Purchase land.

Ver. 11. *Let me find grace in your eyes.*] Grant this petition, which my father makes in my behalf, (xxxiii. 15.)

And what ye shall say unto me, &c.] Make your own terms, I will agree to them.

Ver. 12. *Ask me never so much dowry and gift.*] This shews more fully, that the custom of those times was (as was noted upon xxix. 18.) for men to give money for their wives. But there was a greater reason for a dowry now, and a large one too; that he might make compensation for the wrong he had done. For there was a natural equity in those laws of Moses, (Exod. xxii. 16. Deut. xxii. 28.) by which men were bound to make satisfaction to the fathers; if, either by incitement or violence, they had abused their daughters.

Dowry and gift seem to be distinct things: the *dowry* being given to the parents, the *gift* to the kindred.

Ver. 13. *The sons of Jacob answered,* &c.] Hence some infer, that, by the custom of those days, the consent of the brethren was required, rather than the parents: for the sons of Jacob here make the contract, as Laban had done with Abraham's servant, (xxiv. 50.) But it is more reasonable to think, that Jacob left it to them to consider what was fit to be done in a matter which required great deliberation, and then to report their opinion to him, who had the greatest interest in her, and right to dispose of her.

Ver. 14. *We cannot do this thing.*] It is against our religion. Which was partly true; for though Jacob himself had married one whose father was uncircumcised (as Isaac had done before him), yet by degrees this opinion prevailed among them, till it was established by the law of Moses.

For that were a reproach to us.] They plead honour as well as conscience.

Ver. 15. *In this will we consent unto you.*] Upon these terms we will agree to the match.

Ver. 17. *We will take our daughter and be gone.*] By this it appears they treated in their father's name, as was noted before, ver. 13.

Ver. 18. *And their words pleased Hamor,* &c.] It may seem strange they should so easily consent to be circumcised, till we consider how passionately Shechem loved Dinah, and the great affection Hamor had to Shechem: who was his beloved son, (ver. 19.) Besides, this was but a poor prince, and his city little and mean: which he thought to enrich and strengthen by Jacob's family (who were very wealthy) being incorporated with them, (ver. 23.)

Ver. 19. *He was more honourable.*] In greater esteem with his father, and all the family, than any other belonging to it.

Ver. 20. *Came unto the gate of their city.*] Where all public affairs were transacted.

And communed with the men of the city.] Such great matters could not be concluded without the public consent. (See xxiii. 18. xxix. 22.)

Ver. 21. *These men are peaceable.*] They use many arguments to persuade the people to consent: and the first is, that the Israelites had hitherto lived inoffensively among them.

Let them dwell in the land, and trade therein.] By a public decree, or law.

For the land is large enough.] This is the second argument, there was land enough in their country uncultivated, which these men would improve.

Ver. 23. *Shall not their cattle,* &c.] This is the greatest argument of all; taken from the profit they should have by them; the gain of no less than all they had. Which is not to be understood as if they intended to overpower them, and seize upon all their stock; but that, by intermarriages, their estates would be inherited by them, as much as by the Israelites.

Ver. 24. *All that went out of the gate of his city.*] *i. e.* All the citizens (xxiii. 18.) who were met together in the common-hall (or place of public assemblies), and were soon persuaded to yield to the reasons which had persuaded their rulers.

Ver. 25. *On the third day, when they were sore.*] And began to be a little feverish. For the greatest pain and anguish, the Jews observe, was upon the third day after circumcision, which very much indisposed them. (See Pirke Eliez. cap. 29. and Vorstius's Annotations, p. 195.) And indeed Hippocrates observes the same of all wounds and ulcers; that they are then most inflamed, by a conflux of sharp humours to them.

Two of the sons of Jacob, &c.] With their servants: for they two alone could not destroy a whole city, though but small.

Slew all the males.] The women and children in those days were always spared in the most deadly wars: as when the Midianites were killed, Numb. xxxi. 7. 9. and the Edomites, 1 Kings, xi. 16. And so Moses commanded they should do even with the Canaanites, Deut. xx. 13, 14. See Bochart, par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 56. Selden de Jure N. and G. lib. vi. cap. 16. p. 745. and de Synedr. lib. i. p. 81.

Ver. 26. *Took Dinah out of Shechem's house.*] Where it seems she remained, after the rape he had committed, in hope of a marriage.

And went out.] Carried her home.

Ver. 27. *And the sons of Jacob.*] The rest of his sons (who were able to bear arms) came after the slaughter, and helped to plunder the city. Thus they were all involved in the guilt, which was very great and manifold; as Bonfrerius, and, out of him, Menochius, have observed.

Because they had defiled.] Their prince had defiled her: whose fact, it seems, they did not disapprove: and therefore it is imputed to them all, as the cause of their slaughter.

Ver. 28. *They took their sheep,* &c.] It is a reasonable conjecture of Bonfrerius, that Jacob caused all these to be restored to the wives and children of the slain: whom he set at liberty.

And spoiled even all that was in the house.] Of Hamor and Shechem: which, perhaps, they kept to themselves, in compensation of the wrong he had done; and none of the family, perhaps, surviving to own them.

Ver. 30. *Ye have troubled me.*] Disturbed my quiet, and made it unsafe for me to live in this country; where I hoped to have settled.

Made me to stink, &c.] Made me odious to all the country, as a murderer, a robber, and a breaker of my faith.

Ver. 31. *Should he deal with our sister as with a harlot?*] As with a common whore, that prostituted herself to his lust? If she had done so, there had been no ground for their quarrel (according to the Hebrew doctors), because Shechem had not then offended against the laws of the sons of Noah (as they speak), *i. e.* the right of nations: which was not violated by a man's lying with a single woman, by her free consent. But Dinah being forced and violently ravished (as they take the sense of ver. 2. to be), they tell their father they might right themselves by making war upon them. For there was no other way to deal with princes, whom they could not implead in any court; and therefore betook themselves to arms. (See Mr. Selden, lib. vii. de Jure N. et G. juxta Hebr. cap. 5.)

CHAP. XXXV.

Ver. 1. *AND God said unto Jacob.*] There were several ways, as Maimonides observes, whereby God communicated himself to the prophets. Unto whom he is said sometimes, to speak by an angel in a dream, as he did to Jacob, xxxi. 11. Sometimes by an angel, without any mention how it was, whether in a dream or vision, or not: of which he takes this place to be an instance; and verse the 10th of this chapter, and xxii. 15. Thirdly, In other places there is no mention of an angel, but of God alone speaking; yet in a vision, or dream, xv. 1. And, lastly, God is said to speak absolutely, neither in a dream, nor vision, nor by angel, xii. 1. xxxi. 3. (More Nevochim, par. ii. cap. 42.) In which classes I think he might have put this apparition to Jacob, as well as that last mentioned: for there is no difference between them but this, that in the former place (xxxi. 3.) it is said, *The Lord said unto Jacob;* and here, *God said unto Jacob.*

Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there.] By this advice God shewed he still took care of him; and delivered him from the fear he was in of the Canaanites and Perizzites. Who, one would think, detested the fact of Shechem; or, else it may seem strange that they did not immediately cut off Jacob and his family, who had taken such a terrible revenge for it; but let them remove quietly to Bethel. But Moses gives us the true reason of this, ver. 5.

Make there an altar.] Perform a vow which thou madest in that place, (xxviii. 20—22.) Some wonder Jacob made no more haste to this place, after his return to his own country (for now he had been about nine years in Canaan), and some of the Hebrew doctors fancy God punished him for deferring so long to go thither (where he promised to worship him, if he prospered his journey and brought him back again in safety), by suffering his daughter Dinah to be ravished. But it is more probable that he met with obstructions, which made it not safe for him, as yet, to go thither; or, that he waited till God, who had conducted him hitherto, should direct him to take his journey to that place. For, it is very probable, he inquired of him about his removal.

Ver. 2. *Then Jacob said unto his household*, &c.] Being to perform a solemn sacrifice to God, he calls upon his family to prepare themselves for it.

And to all that were with him.] Hired servants who lived with him.

Put away the strange gods.] Rachel had her father's teraphim, which now, it is to be supposed, she confessed. And he suspected there might be some among the men-servants and maid-servants he brought with him out of Mesopotamia, (xxxii. 5.) where there was much superstition: and that in the sacking of Shechem they might bring away some images with them (for the sake of the silver and gold) which they kept secretly among them.

And be clean.] Wash your bodies, as Aben Ezra truly interprets it: for this was the ancient rite of cleansing. Wherein he seems to have followed Jonathan, who thus paraphrases it, *Purify yourselves from the pollution of the slain, whom ye have touched;* referring it to the foregoing slaughter of the people of Shechem.

And change your garments.] Put on clean clothes. Which was but a reasonable injunction, being to appear before the Divine Majesty; in whose presence it was rudeness to be seen in sordid raiment: especially in those wherein they had newly defiled themselves by a bloody slaughter. These two, I doubt not, were pious customs, which their godly ancestors had observed, from the beginning of offering solemn sacrifices. It being very unseemly to appear before a great man in dirty apparel, or with a sweaty body. And I do not see why we should not look upon these as an external profession of the like purity in their minds and hearts. All nations retained these *washings* and *white raiment*, when they performed the solemn offices of religion: which were not derived from idolaters, but from the purest antiquity.

Ver. 4. *And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods.*] Which, it seems by this expression, were numerous.

And the ear-rings that were in their ears.] In the ears of the idols; for there was no harm in the ear-rings they wore themselves. So some interpret it; not considering that, besides the ear-rings which were ornaments, there were others worn in the nature of amulets; or for some other superstitious uses, having the effigies of some god or other; or some symbolical notes, in which they fancied there was some power to preserve them from several mischiefs. Maimonides, in his book of Idolatry, cap. 7. mentions such idolatrical rings, as were utterly unlawful to be used; and vessels marked with the image of the sun, the moon, or a dragon: which were symbols of divinity among the heathen; who made marks also in several parts of their bodies.

And Jacob hid them.] Buried them in the earth; after he had first broken them in pieces (as some think), or melted them, as Moses and Hezekiah did, Exod. xxxii. 20. 2 Kings xviii. 4. Which, if it be true, it is but a tale which is told of the Samaritans; that they digged up these idols and worshipped them. (See Hottinger, Smegma Orient. p. 359.)

Under an oak which was by Shechem.] It was so unknown under what oak this was, that there is no ground for their opinion, who think this was the same oak mentioned in Josh. xxiv. 26. For he intended to abolish the memory of these idols; and therefore hid them, where he thought nobody would find them.

It took up some time to do all this; and yet the people of the land did not fall upon Jacob's family: the providence of God watching over him, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 5. *And they journeyed: and the terror of the Lord was upon the cities round about them,* &c.] Here is the true reason why the country did not, at least, fall upon the rear of Jacob's family, when they marched away; because God made a panic fear to fall upon them. Who otherwise (one would guess by this) had an inclination to be revenged for the destruction of Shechem. For though they could not justify the fact of Shechem; yet they might think Jacob's sons too cruel in the punishment of it: for their own father was of that opinion.

Ver. 6. *So Jacob came to Luz.*] See xxviii. 19.

Ver. 7. *Built there an altar,* &c.] And offered sacrifices of thanksgiving to God, for performing his promise to him, beseeching him still to continue his care of him.

Ver. 8. *Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died.*] She went to attend Rebekah, when she was married to Isaac: which troubles the Jews to give an account how she came here, into Jacob's family. R. Solomon solves it thus: that Rebekah having promised Jacob when he went away, to send for him, (xxvii. 45.) she performed this promise by Deborah: whom she sent to Padan-Aram to invite him home and in her return she died here. But it is more reasonable to suppose that Jacob had been at his father's house, before this time; and Rebekah being dead (whether before or after is uncertain), Deborah was desirous to live with his wives, who were her countrywomen: and that her death is here mentioned (though we read nothing of Rebekah's) to give an account how this oak came by the name of Allon-Bacuth, in aftertimes.

Under an oak.] There were many about Bethel, near to which there was a wood, or forest; out of which the bears came, who devoured the children that cursed Elisha, (2 Kings ii. 23.) And under an oak also the old prophet found the man of God sitting, as he went from Bethel, (1 Kings xiii. 14.)

Ver. 9. *And God appeared unto Jacob again,* &c.] The Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, who bade him go to Bethel, (ver. 1.) appeared to him when he came there, in a most glorious manner: as he had done when he lodged there in his journey to Padan-Aram, (xxviii. 13.)

Ver. 10. *Israel shall be thy name.*] This is a far more honourable name than that of Jacob: and therefore by it thou shalt be commonly called. For the name of Jacob was given him from the supplanting of his brother, and getting the advantage of him: but this of Israel from his prevalence over the angel of God.

And he called his name Israel.] He solemnly confirmed that name, which was given him before by his angel, (xxxii. 28.)

This seems to me to prove, that it was no more than an angel who wrestled with Jacob, and told him his name should be changed. For, if it had been God himself, Jacob was as much satisfied then, as he could be now, that Israel should be his name. But I take it, God reserved the declaration of it from his own mouth, till this time: when he ratified what he had before spoken by his angel.

And thus I find (since I noted this) St. Jerome understood this passage; whose words are these: "Dudum nequaquam ei nomen ab angelo imponitur," &c. *This name was not heretofore imposed on him by the angel; who only foretold that God would impose it on him: that therefore which was there promised should be, we are here taught was fulfilled.*

Ver. 11. *I am God Almighty,* &c.] Here God renews his promise to him, as he had often done to Abraham. He had first blessed him by Isaac, (xxviii. 3.) when he sent him from home. Then he himself blessed him, when he appeared to him, the first night of his journey (ver. 13. of that chapter); and now again, when he was come back to the very same place, where he blessed him before. And he speaks to him by the name of El-Shaddai, *i. e. God all-sufficient:* the very same whereby his father had blessed him, (xxviii. 3.) and whereby God blessed Abraham, (xvii. 1.)

Ver. 13. *And God went up from him.*] It is evident by this, that a visible majesty, or glory, appeared to him at this time: from whence the foregoing words were spoken to him: which being done, it went up towards heaven. In the Hebrew the words are, *went up from upon him,* or *over him;* and the very same is said of Abraham, (xvii. 22.) as if the Schechinah appeared over his head in great lustre; whilst he perhaps lay prostrate upon the ground.

Ver. 14. *Set up a pillar in that place.*] To be a monument of the Divine Goodness; who there appeared to him; and made him such gracious promises, as those beforementioned, (ver. 11, 12.) And to serve for an altar whereon to offer sacrifice. For so the word *matzebath* signifies, (Hosea iii. 4.) And therefore Isaiah seems to make an altar and a pillar the same thing, (xix. 19.)

Poured a drink-offering thereon.] To consecrate it unto the solemn service of God. For which end he poured oil upon it, as he had done upon the stone, (xxviii. 18.) which, in all likelihood, was a principal part of this pillar. And having done all this, we are to suppose he not only offered sacrifice, but paid the tenth of all that God had given him, according to his vow, (xxviii. ult.)

Ver. 15. *Called the name of the place.*] Or, rather, *of that place;* that famous place, which God hath made so remarkable by his goodness to him. For the Hebrews, not without reason, make the *he* before *makom* to add an emphasis to that word.

Bethel.] *i. e.* The house of God. So he said he would make this place, (xxviii. 22.) and now he is as good as his word, by renewing the name he had given it thirty years before, when he first went into Mesopotamia.

Ver. 16. *And there was but a little way to come to Ephrath.*] When they were come within a little of Ephrath. The Hebrew word for a *little* is *chibrath:* whose precise signification is uncertain. Benjamin Tudelensis saith, this place was within half a mile and a little more of Ephrath. (See his Itinerar. p. 47. and Const. L' Empereur on the place, p. 176.)

Ver. 17. *Fear not: thou shalt have this son also.*] The midwife seems to comfort Rachel with her own prediction, (xxx. 24.)

Ver. 18. *She called his name Ben-oni.*] Rachel seems to give her former hopes of a second son for lost; at least, she expected no comfort from him, being ready to expire. And therefore she called him a *son of sorrow:* his birth being her death.

But his father called him Benjamin.] To comfort Rachel in her sorrow, and to avert the sinister omen, Jacob immediately changed his name into *Benjamin;* signifying the

son of his right hand, or *of his strength,* as it is commonly interpreted. Though others will have it, *the son of years,* i. e. *of his old age:* or, putting both together, the support and stay of his old age.

Names are oft-times strangely adapted to things; and the presages of parents have anciently been observed to be fulfilled.

" —— Heu nunquam vana parentum
Auguria——"

Which is in no instance more verified than in this child of Jacob's, who did not bear either of these names for nought. There being two very different fates of his posterity, (as Dr. Jackson observes in a discourse of his upon St. Matt. ii. 17, 18.) answerable to the contrary importance of the names given him by his father and his mother. No tribe in Israel more valorous, yet none so subject to sorrowful disasters as this tribe of Benjamin. It was almost extirpated in the time of the Judges, (xx. 25, &c.) and yet before the conclusion of that age, Benjamin became the head of his brethren: the first king of Israel being chosen out of that late desolate tribe: and though that king proved at last but a *Ben-oni;* yet this tribe stuck close to Judah, when all the rest revolted to his brother Joseph.

Ver. 20. *Jacob set a pillar upon her grave.*] After that law was made (Deut. xvi. 22.) against erecting pillars, the Jews did not think all pillars unlawful; but only those for superstitious uses: not those which were in memory of something; as Maimonides's words are, lib. de Idolol. cap. 6.

Ver. 21. *And Israel journeyed.*] This is the first time that Moses calls him Israel after this name was given him by God, which he repeats twice in the next verse; and then calls him Jacob again, in the latter end of it. It is in vain to search for a reason. Some of the Jews will have it, that he calls him Israel, because he bare the death of his beloved wife with admirable patience and submission to God's will. But they cannot give so good a reason, why he immediately alters his style, and calls him Jacob again. (See ver. 22.)

Beyond the tower of Edar.] i. e. *The tower of the flock,* as some translate it; who think there was such a tower near Jerusalem, because of those words of Micah, (iv. 8.) " O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion." Which, if it be true, it doth not prove there was no tower in Jacob's days called by that name; but rather that in future ages this tower was renewed, in the same or a neighbouring place; and called by the ancient name which it had in the days of Jacob.

Ver. 22. *Went and lay with Bilhah, his father's concubine.*] She is called his wife, xxx. 4. and, according to the laws of those times, was truly so; as I have often observed all those called concubines were: though not the principal wives, but of a lower rank. (See Mr. Selden, de Jure N. and G. lib. v. cap. 7. p. 570, 571, &c.)

And Israel heard it.] And highly resented it, as we find xlix. 4. But in this short history Moses passes over Israel's censure of his incest till he came to die: which shews sufficiently how he was affected when the fact was committed. Or perhaps these words, *Israel heard it,* may signify, that though Reuben thought to have committed this sin so secretly, as to have concealed it from his father, yet he came to the knowledge of it; and gave him such private rebukes, as were fitting; but proceeded not to public punishment, to avoid scandal.

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve.] Their number being now completed by the birth of Benjamin, after whom he had no more children, Moses thought good here to enumerate them. And they being all born (save Benjamin alone) before he had the name of Israel, it may be the reason, perhaps, why he calls him Jacob.

Ver. 26. *Which were born to him in Padan-Aram.*] All except Benjamin, who (as was said just before, ver. 18.) was born in Canaan.

Ver. 27. *Jacob came to Isaac his father,* &c.] To dwell with him, and to be the comfort of his old age. For, it is not to be doubted, he had been with him before, since he came from Mesopotamia: but now came to stay with him, till death parted them.

Unto the city of Arba, &c.] Called Kirjath-Arba, (xxiii. 2.) from a great man (Josh. xiv. 15.) among the Anakims, whose name was Arba, and either was born, or dwelt, or ruled here. It was afterwards called Hebron, where Abraham dwelt a long time, (xiii. 18.) and where he bought a burying-place for his family, (xxiii. 19.)

Ver. 28. *The days of Isaac were a hundred and fourscore years.*] He lived five years longer than his father Abraham, (xxv. 7.)

Ver. 29. *His sons Esau and Jacob buried.*] As Isaac and Ishmael had done Abraham, (xxv. 9.) and no doubt in the same place: he sojourning there (as we said before) as his father had done before him. By this it appears, the friendship between Esau and Jacob continued, after the interview they had at Jacob's return into this country.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Ver. 1. *THESE are the generations of Esau.*] Which are here set down to shew how effectual his father's blessing was, (xxvii. 29.) and, as Maimonides thinks, (par. iii. cap. 50. More Nevoch.) to prevent the destruction of any of the family of Esau, but only those of Amalek: who descended from the first-born of Esau by a concubine, the sister of Lotan, a Horite, one of the ancient inhabitants of Seir, (ver. 12 and 22.) His descendants were to be destroyed, by an express precept, for a particular offence; (Exod. xvii.) but the Divine justice took care of the rest, by distinguishing them thus exactly from him; that they might not perish under the name of Amalekites.

Ver. 2. *Esau took his wives,* &c.] The names of these wives are not the same with those he is said to have married, xxvi. 34. Therefore it is probable his former wives died without issue: and so he took another daughter of Elon (when Judith was dead) called Adah: and the daughter of a man called Anah; by whom he had such children as here follow.

The daughter of Zibeon.] The word *daughter* here signifies *neice;* or, she is called Zibeon's daughter, because he bred her: as the children of Michal are mentioned, (2 Sam. xxi. 8.) though she had none at all; but only educated the children of her sister, as Zibeon, perhaps, did his brother Anah's daughter, (ver. 20.)

Ver. 3. *Bashemath, Ishmael's daughter.*] She is called by another name, xxviii. 9. But it is likely Esau changed her name from *Mahalah,* which signifies *sickly* and *infirm,* into this of *Beshmath,* which signifies *aromatic* and *fragrant:* either because the name better pleased him, or he thought would better please his father: or, she grew more healthy after marriage: or perhaps she had two names given her at first

Ver. 6. *Went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob.*] Into another country out of the land of Canaan: into which he lately came to bury his father, as we read in the latter end of the last chapter. Which being done, he and Jacob, no doubt, agreed about the division of Isaac's estate, out of which a large share came to Esau: who had something also of his own there before, (all his sons beforementioned being born to him in Canaan, ver. 5.) besides what he had in Seir.

His brother Jacob.] He knew of no other name his brother had; that of Israel, it is likely, being not yet published and commonly used.

Ver. 7. *For their riches were more than that they might dwell together.*] There was not room enough in the land of Canaan (where they were but sojourners, and could have no more than the present possessors would let to them) for such a vast stock as they had between them: and therefore were constrained to separate, as Abraham, for the same reason, had done from Lot, (xiii. 6, &c.) And Esau having begun before to settle in Seir, did not think fit to bring what he had there hither: but carried what his father left him thither. Where he had enlarged his dominion, since Jacob's return to Canaan.

Ver. 8. *Thus dwelt Esau in Mount Seir.*] It is a question how he could be said to have gone to dwell in Seir, upon this occasion; seeing we find him there before, when Jacob came out of Mesopotamia, (xxxii. 3.) But the answer is easy, that then he had only some part of the country, and not the best of it neither; and therefore, perhaps, had some of his estate still in Canaan, while the rest of it was in Seir. And it seems remarkable to me, that he is not said till now to dwell in Mount Seir, but only in the land of Seir, or barely in Seir, to which he invited Jacob at his return, (xxxii. 3. xxxiii. 14. 16.) This mountainous country, which was richer than the other, he got into his possession after that time.

Esau is Edom.] The father of the Edomites, as it follows, ver. 9.

Ver. 12. *She bare to Eliphaz, Amalek.*] This was necessary to be set down (as I observed on ver. 1.) that there might be a distinction between the Amalekites, who were to be destroyed, and the rest of the posterity of Esau: concerning whom it is said, "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, because he is thy brother," (Deut. xxiii. 7.) Thus Joseph Albo. For though they made a distinct people from the Edomites, and lived in a neighbouring country; yet they possessed that part of Mount Seir which was near Kadesh-Barnea, as may be gathered from Numb. xiii. 29. and xiv. 43.

Ver. 15. *These were dukes.*] The word *allouphe,* if we may believe R. Solomon Jarchi, signifies *heads, chiefs,* or *rulers of families,* who may be called princes; though their government was not yet regal, but a kind of aristocracy in the beginning.

Ver. 16. *Duke Corah.*] He is not reckoned among the sons of Eliphaz, (ver. 11.) but called the son of Aholibamah, (ver. 14.) and accordingly said to rule over a family descended from hers, (ver. 18.) We must suppose, therefore, there were two Korahs; one the son of Aholibamah, the other a nephew of Eliphaz, by some of his sons or grandsons; who came to be a great ruler, and to get the government of some of these families: and, according to the style of Scripture, is reckoned for Eliphaz's son.

Ver. 20. *These are the sons of Seir the Horite.*] From this Seir the country had its name: but from whom he descended is not recorded.

Who inhabited the land.] Who were the ancient inhabitants of this country before Esau conquered it, and perhaps were the first that possessed it after the flood; whose genealogy, I suppose, is here mentioned, because Esau's posterity married with some of them: particularly his eldest son Eliphaz took Timna, sister of Lotan (one of Seir's sons), for his concubine, (ver. 22.) Yea, Esau himself seems to have married one of this family, *viz.* Aholibamah, whose father and uncle are said to be Hivites, (ver. 2.) but here plainly called Horites; being descended from Seir the Horite, though dwelling then among the Hivites.

Ver. 21. *These are the dukes of the Horites.*] The heads of their families, who governed the country before Esau and his posterity dispossessed them; and settled themselves in the same form of government which they found among these Horites.

In the land of Edom.] So it was called in the days of Moses.

Ver. 24. *This is that Anah who found the mules in the wilderness.*] Not by accident, but by his art and industry he invented (as we speak) this mixture, and produced this kind of creature. So it is commonly interpreted. But the word *found,* though used four hundred times in Scripture, never signifies (as Bochart hath observed, par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 21.) the invention of that which was not before; but the finding that which already is in being. Nor doth *jemim* signify *asses* in Scripture; and therefore others have read the Hebrew word as if it had been written *jamim,* (as St. Jerome observes), imagining that as Anah fed his father's asses, he found a great collection of waters, (see Vossius, lib. iii. de Idolol. cap. 75.) which some fancy to have been hot waters, or baths, as the Vulgar Latin interprets it. But then we must read the Hebrew quite otherwise than we do now: and Bochart gives other reasons against this interpretation; and endeavours to establish another opinion: That by *jemim* we are to understand *emim,* a gigantic sort of people, mentioned in Scripture, and next neighbours to the Horites. These Anah is said to find, *i.e.* to meet withal and encounter; or, rather, to have fallen upon on a sudden and unexpectedly; as this phrase he shews signifies in Scripture. This opinion he hath confirmed with a great many reasons; to which another late learned writer (Wagenseil) thinks an answer may be given: though he inclines to it, if one thing were not in the way; which makes him think, here is rather meant some herb or plant, called ἰαμεὶν, which word the LXX. retain, not knowing how to translate it. And thus Aben Ezra affirms many interpreters of the Scripture have understood it: which seems to be the most probable conjecture of all others. (See Wagenseil in his Annot. upon that title of the Talmud called Sota, p. 217, 218, &c.)

As he fed the asses of Zibeon his father.] The sons of princes were wont to follow this employment in ancient times, as Bochart shews out of many authors, particularly the scholiast upon Homer's Odyssees. Τὸ παλαιὸν καὶ οἱ τοῦ Βασιλέων παῖδες ἐποίμαινον. (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 44.)

Ver. 28. *The children of Dishan are these: Uz,* &c.] From this man the whole country, or a great part of it, is called by the name of Uz, (Lament. iv. 21.) which was in Arabia Petræa, in the borders of the land of Canaan.

Ver. 30. *These are the dukes that came of Hori.*] This Hori was the ancestor of Seir, by whom this country was first planted.

Among their dukes.] Or according to their families, or principalities.

Ver. 31. *And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom.*] It appears by this, that after several *dukes* (as we translate it) had ruled the country; the Edomites changed their government into a monarchy. And here follows a catalogue of their kings. For I can find no ground for the opinion of the Hebrew doctors, that *alluph, a duke,* differed in nothing from *melech,* a *king;* but that the latter was crowned, the former not crowned.

Before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.] Moses having a little before this (xxxv. 11.) mentioned the promise of God to Jacob, that "kings should come out of his loins;" observes, it is a thing remarkable, being a great exercise of their faith, that Esau's posterity should have so many kings: and there was as yet no king in Israel when he wrote this book, nor (as it is commonly interpreted) a long time after. This Moses might well write without a spirit of prophecy; nor is there any reason to say, this passage was inserted by somebody else after the death of Moses. We might rather affirm, if it were needful, that Moses's meaning is, "All these were kings in Edom, before his own time;" who was the first king in Israel, (Deut. xxxiii. 5.) For he truly exercised royal authority over them, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de. Synedr. cap. 1, 2.

Ver. 32. *The name of his city was Dinhabah.*] Of which he was governor, perhaps, before he was made king; and wherein he reigned.

Ver. 33. *Of Bozrah.*] Which was afterward the principal city of the whole country; as we read in the prophet Isaiah, xxxiv. 6. and Jeremiah xlix. 3. and Amos i. 12.

It seems, by this list of their kings, that the kingdom at this time was elective; for the son did not succeed the father: which may have been the reason, perhaps, why it lasted but awhile, before their government was altered again, (ver. 40.) Maimonides hath an opinion different from all others, that none of these kings were of the race of Esau, but strangers, who oppressed the Edomites; and are here set down by Moses to admonish the Israelites to observe that precept, (Deut. xvii. 15.) "Not to set a stranger to be king over them, who is not their brother," *i. e.* one of their own nation.

Ver. 35. *Who smote Midian in the field of Moab.*] The Midianites, perhaps, came to invade them; and Hadad marched out and met them in the frontiers of their country, which joined to that of Moab: where he got a great victory over them.

Ver. 37. *And Saul of Rehoboth by the river reigned,* &c.] If by *the river* we should understand Euphrates (as it usually signifies), near to which stood the city of Rehoboth, (Gen. x. 11.) it may seem strange, that one should be chosen from so remote a country, to be king of Edom: unless we suppose him to have been born there, but to have lived in Edom; and by his great achievements to have got into the throne. Otherwise we must take this for some other city, which stood by the most known river of this country.

Ver. 38. *Baal-hanan.*] This name is the reverse (as I may call it) of Hani-ball.

Ver. 39. *His wife's name was Mehetabal,* &c.] None of their wives, much less their pedigree, are named besides this alone: which shews she was an eminent woman in those times and that country; either for wisdom or parentage, or estate, or some other excellence.

Ver. 40. *And these are the names of the dukes that came of Esau.*] They seem now to have returned to their first constitution; and kings were laid aside for some time. But in future ages we find they changed again, and then kings reigned successively, the son after the father, as they did in Israel. Some think, these were the great men, who ruled in Edom, in Moses's time.

According to their families, &c.] They were the heads of different families, and lived in different places; and, perhaps, reigned at the same time, in several parts of the country: so the words seem to import.

Ver. 43. *In the land of their possession.*] In their own country; whilst the seed of Jacob sojourned in a strange country, and possessed no land of their own.

He is Esau, &c.] He ends as he began. This is the account of Esau, the father of the people who are now called Edomites.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Ver. 1. *AND Jacob dwelt in the land,* &c.] Having given us an account of Esau's removal to Seir, (xxxvi. 6, 7.) and of the prosperity of his family there, he now goes on to tell us, that Jacob still continued in the country where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 2. *These are the generations of Jacob.*] These words are to be connected with the latter end of xxxv. 23, 24, &c. where he relates how many sons Jacob had; and then gives an account of the family of Esau, (in the 36th chapter) which being ended, he returns to finish the history of Jacob.

And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, &c.] These words *vehu naar,* signify he was very young, in the simplicity of his childish years; and come in by way of a parenthesis, in this manner. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren, (and he was but a youth, inexperienced, and therefore called a child, ver. 30.) *with the sons of Bilhah,* &c. Which last words are an explication of the former, shewing with which of his brethren he was. Not with the sons of Leah, but with the sons of Jacob's handmaids: particularly with Bilhah's, whom we may look upon as a mother to him now Rachel was dead, having waited upon her. And Zilpah's sons are also mentioned in the second place, as those, it is likely, who were thought to have less emulation to him than the sons of Leah. But we see by this, how much our greatest

prudence often fails: for Reuben and Judah, the children of Leah, had more kindness for Joseph than any of the rest.

Their evil report.] What evil lives they led.

Ver. 3. *Because he was the son of his old age.*] Benjamin was more so than he; and the rest were born not many years before him. But he is so called, because he had been married a good while to Rachel before he had him: and he was the greatest comfort of his old age; Benjamin not being yet grown up to give any proof of his future worth.

He made him a coat of many colours.] It is commonly thought to signify a garment wrought with threads of divers colours; or made up of pieces of silk or stuff, which had much variety in them; or wrought, as some think, with figures of fruit, or other things: (see Salmasius upon Flav. Vopiscus, p. 396.) But Braunius (de Vestib. Sacerd. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 17.) hath proved, I think, that the Hebrew word *passim* here signifies a long garment down to the heels or ancles, and with long sleeves down to the wrists; which had a border at the bottom, and a facing (as we speak) at the hands, of another colour, different from the garment. (See ver. 23.)

Ver. 4. *Could not speak peaceably to him.*] In a kind and friendly manner; but churlishly, and with evident signs of hatred. Aben Ezra fancies they would not so much as salute him, or wish him peace (as the phrase then was, Peace be to thee), or ask him how he did; as our custom is.

Ver. 5. *Joseph dreamed a dream.*] This was usual among the ancient patriarchs, and others also, as appears by Elihu: who shews that all dreams were not illusions of evil spirits, (Job xxxiii. 14, 15, &c.) And long before his time Abimelech was warned by God in a dream, chapter xx. of this book, ver. 3. 6, 7. Upon which consideration (as Dr. Jackson well observes) we should not mistrust the reports of several ancient historians, who tell us how princes and fathers of families have had forewarnings of future events; either concerning themselves, their kingdoms, or posterity: (book i. upon the Creed, chap. 9.)

He told his brethren.] This argues his great innocence and simplicity; that he had not yet understanding enough, to consider how ill this dream might be expounded: or not prudence enough to conceal what might be ill interpreted by them.

They hated him yet more.] The first ground of their hatred was their father's great love to him; and then, his informing their father of their bad behaviour; which was still increased by the fine clothes his father bestowed on him; and now most of all by this dream, which they interpreted to signify his superiority over them.

Ver. 7. *Your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance,* &c.] Or, gathered round about mine: which was fulfilled when they came for corn into Egypt; of which these sheaves, some think, were an apt representation.

Ver. 8. *Shalt thou indeed reign over us?*] It seems they could readily interpret the meaning of a dream, which shews how common they were in those days.

For his dreams, and for his words.] This seems to import, that he had more dreams of like nature, and was wont to talk of them, which they thought favoured of arrogance.

Ver. 9. *He dreamt yet another dream.*] Which confirmed the former; by repeating the same thing, under different figures. For as the former was taken from the earth, so this from heaven; and is more comprehensive than the former; for it concerns his father, as well as his brethren.

Behold the sun and the moon, &c.] They seemed to descend to him, or he to be carried up to them; where they bowed, and lay at his feet.

Ver. 10. *His father rebuked him.*] Gave him a check; that Joseph might not grow conceited of himself, and his brethren might not be provoked to hate him.

What is this dream that thou hast dreamed?] What an idle dream is this!

Shall I, and thy mother, and brethren, &c.] Who can believe this? Thy mother is dead (which is sufficient to shew the vanity of this dream), and thy father sure is not to truckle unto thee; no, nor thy elder brethren.

Ver. 11. *His brethren envied him.*] Though Jacob seemed to slight what he said, it incensed his brethren against him.

But his father observed the saying.] He did not look upon it as a mere fancy; but thought there might be something in it. And therefore, though he thought fit publicly to slight it, yet he took such notice of it privately, that he preserved it in mind, and laid it up in his heart; as the Scripture elsewhere speaks. And it really was fulfilled, when he went down into Egypt; and, no doubt, shewed that respect which was due to the viceroy of the country; and so did his mother Bilhah, and all his brethren.

Ver. 12. *His brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.*] As their flocks increased, so they enlarged their pasture; and they often removed to find fresh pasture. Besides, he had made a purchase in this place; where they fed his flocks in his own ground.

Ver. 13. *Come, I will send thee unto them.*] Make thyself ready, that I may send thee to inquire of thy brethren's welfare. About which he was now the more solicitous, because they were gone to a place where they had, some years ago, given great provocation to the country by their barbarous cruelty.

Ver. 15. *A certain man found him.*] Some take this to have been an angel, who took care of him, when he was at a loss which way to go. So Maimonides, par. ii. More Nevochim, cap. 42. where he makes this passage the very same with that xvi. 7. "The angel of the Lord found her," &c.

Ver. 18. *They conspired against him.*] the Hebrew word signifies, they took subtle and crafty counsel against him to slay him. Laid their heads together (as we now speak) to kill him, so that the murder might be concealed from their father.

Ver. 19. *Behold, this dreamer cometh.*] In the Hebrew, *This master of dreams,* or a frequent dreamer; one that hath dreams at command.

Ver. 20. *Cast him into some pit.*] Which they were wont to dig frequently in those countries, to hold rain-water for their cattle, when they could not find a spring, or were near no river.

Ver. 21. *He delivered him out of their hands.*] Preserved him from being murdered by them, as they intended; which he did by the following counsel, which seemed to have something of humanity in it, and yet would effect what they resolved.

Ver. 22. *Cast him into this pit.*] That he might perish with hunger.

And lay no hands upon him, &c.] Let not us kill him. This he said that he might save his life, intending secretly to draw him out of the pit, and restore him safe to his father. By which piece of good service, Reuben, perhaps, hoped to reconcile his father to him, who was justly angry with him for defiling his bed, (xxxv. 22.)

Ver. 23. *His coat of many colours*] By this it seems he was distinguished from the rest of his brethren: being not yet grown up to such laborious employments as they followed abroad; and therefore indulged to wear a richer sort of garment with his father at home. For, according to the common notion, it was wrought, or embroidered, with flowers: which was accounted noble, as well as beautiful, in ancient times. As appears by Plato, who, commending the government then admired in Greece, compares it to such a garment that hath variety of colours in it, (lib. viii. de Republ. p. 557.) Κινδυνεύει καλλίστη αὕτη τῶν πολιτειῶν εἶναι ὥσπερ ἱμάτιον ποικίλον πᾶσιν ἄνθεσι πεποικιλμένον, οὕτω καὶ αὕτη πᾶσι ἤθεσι πεποικιλμένη καλλίστη ἂν φαίνοιτο.

Ver. 24. *The pit was empty, there was no water in it.*] This shews the use of such pits was to hold water, which at this time was dried up for want of rain.

Ver. 25. *A company of Ishmaelites*] In the language of these times it is called a *caravan:* merchants not daring to travel alone, in small numbers, in those eastern countries, through the deserts, for fear of robbers, or of wild beasts.

From Mount Gilead.] They came from parts beyond that, but passed that way to traffic there.

With their camels.] Which were, and still are, the most proper beasts for carriage in those countries: being able to travel a great way in the deserts without drink. And the Midianites (who are here the same with the Ishmaelites, ver. 28.) had as great a breed of them as any other country: as Bochart observes, (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 3.)

Bearing spicery.] The word *nechoth,* which we, and a great many others, translate *spicery* in general, seems to signify some particular sort of spicery, as the following words do. A great many conjectures there are, what sort; and Bochart most probably concludes it to be *storax.* (See the forenamed book, par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 12.)

Balm.] So Kimchi, whom the modern interpreters generally follow, expounds the Hebrew word *tzeri,* which the ancients interpret *resin;* and Bochart justifies them by such reasons as these: that there was no balm in Gilead in these days; but it was brought thither out of Arabia Felix in the reign of King Solomon: and then it grew on this side Jordan, about Engaddi and Jericho; not beyond Jordan in the land of Gilead. (Ib. par. lib. ii. cap. 51.)

Ver. 26. *What profit is it if we slay our brother,* &c.] We shall get nothing by letting him die in the pit: had we not better make money of him?

And conceal his blood?] Though we should be able to conceal his murder, which is not easy to do.

Ver. 27. *For he is our brother, and our flesh.*] Natural affection persuaded to this, rather than to the other.

And his brethren were content.] As many of them as were then present; for Reuben was not among them at this consultation.

Ver. 28. *Then passed by Midianites.*] They are called Ishmaelites just before, (ver. 25.) and so they are immediately in this very verse [*Sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites*]; for they were very near neighbours, and joined together in trade, making now one *caravan,* with a joint stock, as this story intimates. Read Judg. viii. 1. 3. 22, 23, 24. 26, and it will appear the Scripture speaks of them as one and the same people, in aftertimes.

For twenty pieces of silver.] Most understand so many *shekels,* which was a very small price; but therefore demanded, and no more, that the bargain might be clapped up the sooner.

Ver. 29. *Reuben returned to the pit.*] He, pretending some business, had withdrawn himself from the company, with an intention, when his brethren were gone from the pit, to come privately and take Joseph out, and carry him to his father. Upon that design he now came thither.

Rent his clothes.] As they used to do, when they mourned for the dead; whereby he expressed his real grief for his brother.

Ver. 30. *The child is not.*] He is dead, as this phrase commonly signifies.

Whither shall I go?] I know not whither to flee, to hide myself from my father's anger: who might justly expect the eldest son should take the greatest care of him.

Ver. 31. *And they took Joseph's coat,* &c.] His brethren it seems persuaded Reuben also to join with them, in concealing the sale of Joseph; and making their old father believe he was devoured by some wild beast.

Ver. 32. *They sent the coat,* &c.] They first sent it by a messenger; and immediately followed themselves, with the tale which is here related.

Ver. 33. *An evil beast.*] Some wild beast, of which there were great stores in those countries (such as lions and bears), for he could not suspect his brethren would kill him.

Ver. 34. *Rent his clothes, and put sackcloth on his loins.*] This was the highest degree of mourning in those days. We read often of putting on sackcloth in future ages, upon such sad occasions; but this is the first time we meet with it, which shews the great antiquity of such customs.

Mourned for his son many days.] Beyond the ordinary time of mourning. *Many years* (as the word *days* sometimes signifies), perhaps, till he heard he was alive. So the following verse seems to denote; that he resolved not to cease mourning for him as long as he lived.

Ver. 35. *All his sons and daughters.*] He had but one daughter: therefore the meaning is, his sons' wives, or their daughters.

I will go down into the grave, &c.] If *sheol* here be expounded *grave,* then the next words must be thus translated, *mourning for my son;* as R. Solomon interprets them. For Joseph was not buried in a grave; and therefore he could not think of going down to him thither. And thus Christophorus à Castro, upon the Second of Baruch, acknowledges *sheol* signifies in this place, and interprets it in this manner: "Lugere non desinam, donec me sepulturæ demandetis;" *I will not cease to mourn, till you lay me in my grave.* But if we follow our translation, which is most common, *I will go down to my son,* then *sheol* must signify the state or place of the dead; as it often doth: and particularly Isaiah xiv. (where the King of Babylon is expressly denied the honour of a grave, ver. 19, 20.) *sheol* is said to be *moved for him,* and *to meet him,* and *to stir up the dead for him,* (ver. 9.)

Thus his father wept for him.] Continued his mourning;

not only by wearing sackcloth, but in such passionate expressions as these.

Ver. 36. *And the Midianites*] In the Hebrew the word is Medanim (a distinct name from those ver. 38.) who were a people derived from Medan, one of the sons of Keturah, and brother to Midian, (xxv. 2.) They and the Midianites lived near together in Arabia not far from the Ishmaelites: who all joined together in this caravan, and made one society of merchants; consisting of Medanites, Midianites, and Ishmaelites.

An officer.] The Hebrew word *saris*, oftentimes signifies an *eunuch*, by whom the eastern queens were attended. But it likewise signifies all the great courtiers (as the Chaldee here translates it), such as the *bed-chamber-men*, the *lord chamberlain* (as we now speak), and such-like officers of state: and therefore is rightly translated here, for Potiphar had a wife. The truth is, this was the prime signification of the word: till, in aftertimes, the depravation of manners, and the jealousy of the eastern kings, made them set none but slaves, who were castrated, to attend their queens; by whom they were preferred to great offices, and so came to enjoy this name.

Pharaoh.] This was a common name to all the kings of Egypt. (See xii. 15.)

Captain of the guard.] The LXX. translate it, *master cook:* and so Epiphanius calls his wife. Τὴν τοῦ Ἀρχιμαγείρου, (Hæres. xxxvi. n. 17.) Our margin hath it, *chief of the slaughter-men*, or *executioners*. But the word *tebachim* may better be translated *soldiers*, than *butchers* or *executioners:* and here, some think, may denote him whom we call the *provost-marshal:* others will have it *the master of the horse*. But I see no more proper translation than ours, *captain of the guard:* or, rather, chief commander of the king's guard; such an one as Nebuzaradan was; (2 Kings xxv. 20.) for *schar* is more than one whom we now call a *captain*. (See xl. 3.) This phrase *schar-hatabachim* is explained by Hottinger out of the Ethiopic tongue. (See Smegma Orient. p. 85.)

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AT that time.*] It is uncertain whether he mean at the time Joseph was sold (which is just before mentioned), or at the time Jacob returned from Mesopotamia to live in Canaan, (xxxiii. 18.) or when he went to settle with his father at Mamre, (xxxv. 27.) But, take it any of these ways, there was time enough for all the events following, before they went into Egypt; supposing Judah's children to have married very young: as may be seen in most interpreters.

Judah went down from his brethren.] Either upon some business, or in some discontent.

Adullamite.] A citizen of Adullam; which was a famous town, or city, that fell afterwards to the tribe of Judah, whose king was slain by Joshua, (xii. 19.) and where there was a famous cave, in which David hid himself, (1 Sam. xxii. 1.)

Ver. 2. *Judah saw there.*] So as to fall in love with her. For, according to the old saying, Ἐκ τοῦ ὁρᾶν τὸ ἐρᾶν.

A daughter of a certain Canaanite.] It was not so bad for a man circumcised to marry the daughter of one uncircumcised, as it was to give their daughters in marriage to an uncircumcised husband, (xxxiv. 14.) For an uncircumcised man was accounted unclean, though he had renounced idolatry: but a woman born of uncircumcised parents was not so accounted, if she embraced the worship of the true God. Whence Salmon, a great man in the tribe of Judah, married Rahab who was a Canaanite. Such an one we must suppose this woman, whom Judah married, to have been; or else he had offended his father, as much as Esau did Isaac by marrying the daughters of Heth.

Whose name was Shuah.] Her father's name was Shuah, (ver. 12.)

He took her.] To be his wife, (ver. 12.)

Ver. 5. *And he was at Chezib when she bare him.*] Some think this town the same with Achzib, belonging to Judah, (Josh. xv. 44.) But why Moses mentions his absence when this child was born, and why he sets down the place where he then was, we cannot give an account; though there was, no doubt, some special reason for it. Perhaps it is to shew, why she gave the name to this and to her former son, (whereas he himself named the first, ver. 3.) because he was not at home when they were born.

Ver. 6. *Whose name was Tamar.*] She seems also to have been a woman of Canaan; but not an idolater.

Ver. 7. *Was wicked in the sight of the Lord.*] *i. e.* Exceeding impious; and that notoriously. (See Gen. x. 9.) What particular sins he was guilty of is but conjectured. Some fancy they were of the same nature with his next brother's: (see Bonfrere, or Menochius out of him.)

And the Lord slew him.] Cut him off suddenly, by some unusual stroke.

Ver. 8. *Go in unto thy brother's wife*, &c.] This (say the Hebrew doctors) was an ancient custom, in force before the law of Moses, which only enacted what had been formerly practised, (Maimon. par. iii. cap. 49. More Nevoch.) that when a man died without issue, his next brother should marry his wife, (Deut. xxv. 5.) Which custom afterwards extended to the next cousin, if no brother remained.

And raise up seed unto thy brother.] Preserve thy brother's name and family; by begetting a child, which may be accounted his, and inherit his estate. For so the law was; that the first-born of such a match was not to be looked upon as the child of him that begat him; but as his brother's, who was the mother's first husband. All the following children were to be his own.

Ver. 9. *Onan knew that the seed should not be his.*] *i. e.* The first-born should be reputed his brother's child.

Lest he should give seed to his brother.] Or, *lest a child should be born in the name of his brother*, as the Vulgar Latin interprets it very exactly, according to the opinion of the Hebrews: as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. vii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 3.)

Ver. 10. *The thing which he did displeased the Lord.*] This made his sin the more heinous, that he acted against the Divine promise made to Abram, concerning the multiplying of his seed: especially against the belief of the promise of the Messiah; that seed for which all good men longed.

Ver. 11. *Remain a widow in thy father's house*, &c.] It seems the contract of marriage at first was so understood

in those days, that if the husband died without issue, the woman must marry his next brother; and as long as any of his brethren remained, they were bound to marry his wife, and preserve their brother's memory: or else solemnly renounce her, to their great infamy and disgrace. This was so well known, that there is nothing in the law that enjoins any new solemn contract in such a case: because the first husband being dead, she and the next brother were man and wife, without any further agreement, by virtue of the original law: until he renounced her. Yet, by the constitutions afterwards made by their elders, it was ordained, that he should espouse and endow her solemnly before witnesses: as Mr. Selden shews in his Uxor Hebr. lib. i. cap. 12. and lib. ii. cap. 2. and 10.

But Judah thought Selah was too young to perform this contract, and therefore desired her to stay till he was grown up, and to abide in her own father's house rather than in his; that Selah might not think of marriage too soon.

For he said, Lest peradventure he die also.] This some make an argument that he never intended to give her his son. But it is more agreeable to ver. 24. and 26. to think that, according to the custom of those days, he could not refuse it. And therefore he thought it was their youthful folly which made his two other sons perish: which made him resolve to keep this till he had more discretion, and was better instructed in his duty. Or, if we imagine their sin was known to none but Tamar, the meaning may be, that he thought their marrying too young was the cause of their death. And therefore he determined to keep this only remaining son, till he was of a riper age.

Ver. 12. *In process of time.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *the days were multiplied*, i. e. after some years.

To Timnath.] A town not far from Adullam, it is probable, for it was also within the lot of the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 57.)

He went up to Timnath.] Some have made a difficulty about this phrase: for Samson is said to have gone *down to Timnath*, (Judg. xiv. 5.) But they should have considered (as Bochart observes, par. i. Hierozoic. lib. iii. cap. 4.) that these were two different places, one called Timnah, the other Timnathah; this in the tribe of Judah, the other in the tribe of Dan. To this they went up, because it was in a mountainous country; to that they went down, because it was in a valley.

To his sheep-shearers.] It was the custom at such times to make a feast (as we do now), and to invite their kindred and friends to it (as he doth his friend Hirah), which appears sufficiently from the story of Absalom, (2 Sam. xiii. 23.) For in those countries, where they had vast flocks, sheep-shearing was a kind of harvest, which made that time to be observed with such joy, as there used to be in harvest: whence David's servants said to Nabal, that they were come to him *on a good day*; for he was shearing sheep, (1 Sam. xxv. 8.) Accordingly Judah, having finished the time of mourning for his wife, went to recreate himself, with his friends, at this festival season.

Ver. 14. *She put off her widow's garments.*] In which, it seems, such persons continued, till they were married to the next brother. But she, at this time, laid them aside, that he might not have the least suspicion she was the person whom he courted.

Covered her with a veil.] As all women did, in the eastern countries, when they went abroad: and there are examples of it also in the western parts of the world; as Mr. Selden at large shews, in his Uxor Hebraica, lib. iii. cap. 17, where he produces several passages out of the Alcoran requiring this.

Wrapped herself.] Muffled her face with it, as we speak, that she might not be known.

And sat in an open place.] Where two ways met, as the Hebrew words seem to import: unless we take it for a proper name, as it is in the margin of our Bibles. Either way it signifies in a public place, where every body might see her. It is commonly noted, that there was so much modesty left in those ancient days, that harlots both went veiled, and also sat without the cities, (see Origen, lib. iv. contra Celsum, p. 206.) But, however the latter part of this observation be, the former part of it is not true. For, as Bochartus observes, (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 46.) "Proprium fuit meretricum non *velari*, sed *revelari*," it was proper to harlots not to be covered, but to go barefaced: as appears from Isai. xlvii. 3. Nahum iii. 5, &c. All that can be answered to this is, that it might be otherwise in very ancient times. Which I do not take to be true: for all women, as I observed before, were covered; and therefore harlots were distinguished only by their sitting in the highways, not by their veils.

For she saw that Selah was grown, and she was not given, &c.] She resolved, if she could, to have a child by one of this family; and hoped, perhaps, that Selah might come along with his father, and have the same desires his father had: and in those days (as I noted before) there were no such solemnities required, as the Jews afterwards used (though the law did not enjoin it) to the making a marriage with one's brother's wife. Which was to be contracted, they say, before two witnesses, and by giving a piece of money, or a writing: but this was ordained only by their elders, not by the original law. (See ver. 11.) And therefore she thought, if she could have caught Selah by this device, it would have been held lawful: but this plot failing her, she so far transgressed, as to admit Judah himself to lie with her.

Ver. 15. *Because she covered her face.*] This is not the reason why he took her for a harlot; but why he did not know her to be his daughter-in-law, (as Mr. Selden observes in the place beforenamed, ver. 14.) because he could not see her face: and he thought her to be a harlot, because she sat *in trivio*, in the highway; where she publicly exposed herself.

Ver. 16. *Let me come in unto thee.*] There was an express law that there should be no *kedeschah* (or *whore*) among the daughters of Israel, *i. e.* none who should prostitute her body without marriage, (Deut. xxiii. 18. Levit. xix. 29.) But before the giving of the law (saith Maimonides), if a man found a single woman in a public place, and they agreed on certain terms, to lie together without being married, they were not punished. (See Mr. Selden, lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 4.)

What wilt thou give me?] That which made such facts not to be punished, was (saith the same Maimonides) because of the contract which passed between them. This reward which he gave the harlot for the use of her body, being like the dowry a man gave his wife when he put her away: which being paid, it was thought he did her no

wrong: (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 49.) They that would now have their wicked practices warranted by such examples, should consider, that every thing not punished by men was not allowed by God: and that we now live under another dispensation, which expressly forbids such uncleanness; and declares, that not only adulterers, but whoremongers, *God will judge*, i. e. punish, (Hebr. xiii. 4. See ver. 23.)

Ver. 17. *A kid from the flock.*] Which was looked upon as a valuable present in those days; as I have observed before, (xxvii. 9.)

Wilt thou give me a pledge, &c.] A pawn, as we now speak, to be returned when he sent what he promised.

Ver. 18. *Thy signet.*] His ring, wherewith he sealed.

Thy bracelets.] The Hebrews generally understand by this word his *cloak*, or some such garment: others, his *girdle*.

And thy staff, &c.] Which, it is likely, had something in it to distinguish it from other men's staffs. And she asks so many things, that by some or other of them (if not by all) it might be certainly known who was the father, if she proved with child.

And he came in unto her.] Not publicly; but in some bye-place, to which they retired.

And she conceived by him.] Though he did not know her, yet she knew him; which aggravated her crime, and made it incest in her, though only fornication in him. Unto which, one would think, she was tempted, by her vehement desire to have a child by one of this family; unto which the promise of the Messiah belonged. For though she seems to have been one of the seed of Canaan, (as I said before, ver. 6.) yet, embracing the religion of Jacob, she renounced the impiety of the Canaanites: and so is mentioned in the genealogy of our Saviour, as well as Rahab and Ruth.

Ver. 19. *Laid by her veil from her*, &c.] Retired into her father's house (for within doors they did not wear veils) where she clothed herself again like a widow.

Ver. 21. *Where is the harlot?*] By this it is apparent that the word *kedeschah* signifies a *common whore* (as we speak), who publicly prostituted herself for hire; as the Hebrew doctors observe upon this place, and upon Deut. xxiii. 17. But whence this name should be given to *harlots* is a great doubt; it coming from a root, which signifies that which is *sacred*. Which hath inclined some learned men to think, that the *women-priests* consecrated to the service of Baalphegor, or Priapus, were no better than whores: and the *men-priests* who served Ashteroth, mentioned 2 Kings xxiii. 7. made all whores be called *kedischim*, which was the name for those devoted to such impure ministeries, (See Mr. Selden, de Diis Syris, Syntag. i. cap. 5. and Syntag. ii. cap. 2.) But such beastly idolatry, surely, was not so old as the days of Jacob: and it seems more reasonable to me to think, that the original word signifying *separation*, it was applied either to those who were separated unto holiness, or unto uncleanness, as harlots were.

And they said, there was no harlot in this place.] They knew of none that publicly professed to be a prostitute: nor had they seen any one sit publicly to invite customers.

Ver. 23. *Let her take it to her.*] Keep the pledge to herself.

Lest we be ashamed.] Though the fact he had committed was in those days lawful (saith Maimonides), that is, was not punished by the judges; yet men did not publicly boast of it, nor were willing to own it; but were ashamed it should be known (which was a sign they were sensible there was a moral turpitude in it), and therefore endeavoured to hide and conceal it; even with the loss of those goods which were of greatest value. For the sense, saith he, of Judah's words, is this: "It is better to lose what she hath of ours, than, by inquisition after it, to divulge the business, and increase our shame:" (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 49.) Where he bids his reader observe, this is the moral virtue which ought to be learnt from this history; together with justice and equity: which appears in his performing the agreement he made of sending a kid; of which he desires his friend to be a witness, that he might not lie under any suspicion of having offered violence to her.

Ver. 24. *Bring her forth.*] Out of her father's house, into the place of judgment: where he would have her sentenced to the severest punishment.

Let her be burnt.] Not presently (for that had been the highest injustice and cruelty, to burn the child in her belly), but after she was delivered; till which time he would have kept her in such safe custody, that this execution might be done upon her. Some think *burning* was the punishment for adultery in those days. Others think the punishment depended on the will of the supreme governor, whosoever he was: whom some also take to have been Judah himself; as chief in his own family: and that he was so severe against her because she had disgraced his family, and he was glad to be rid of her, that he might not give his son Selah to her. But there are those, who think by *burning* is meant no more but *branding* her in the forehead, to denote her to be a whore. (See Mr. Selden, lib. vii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 5.) If Judah did mean *burning her at a stake* (as we now speak), it was a punishment not then commonly used, but inflicted (as his words are, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 12.) "ex more seu lege aliqua singulari:" *by some singular custom or law.*

All this proceeds upon a supposition, that she really was Selah's wife, though not solemnly married (as the Jews pretend it was necessary, after the law was given), by virtue of the first contract with his eldest brother: which was the reason of her being kept at her father's house; that nobody else might pretend to her, but she be reserved for him: otherwise there could have been no ground for proceeding against her as an adulteress.

Ver. 26. *She hath been more righteous than I.*] These words do not signify that she had in this matter committed a less sin than he (for she had committed a greater), but that in another matter, which was the occasion of this, he had broken his word with her, when she had, till now, kept her faith with him; and lived a widow honestly in expectation of his son. Besides, she committed this fact out of desire to have a child; he, to satisfy his lust.

And he knew her no more.] Which some have translated quite the contrary, *and he ceased not to know her, i. e.* he solemnly married her, and took her to be his wife: which was unlawful after the law of Moses was given, but as lawful before, as many other things which they practised. And two of the Chaldee paraphrasts have feigned a *bath-*

coll to have come from heaven, to countenance the fact. (See Mr. Selden, lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 9. and lib. vii. cap. 5.) But, it is not likely, he would take his son's wife to be his own. And likewise having known her, though by an error, most think Selah himself afterward had her not to wife: but she rather did penance (as we now speak) in widowhood all her days. For Selah, we find, had children by another, (Numb. xxvi. 19.)

Ver. 28. *This came out first.*] Perceiving there were twins struggling in her womb, the midwife, to distinguish this from the other, as the first-born, bound this thread about his wrist.

Ver. 29. *How hast thou broke forth?*] What is the cause of this? Or, what a violence is this? Speaking as one astonished at his eruption. For it was without example; and therefore the novelty of the thing made her break out into this exclamation. Though, if it be true which a learned anatomist affirms, that where twins are of the same sex, they are wrapped in the very same *secundines*, as they call them (whereas those that are of a different, are separated by distinct inclosures), the other son being stronger and more vigorous, might force his way the more readily, when his brother was nearer to the birth. (Fernellius, lib. vii. Physiolog. cap. 12.)

This breach be upon thee.] Take thy name from this breach. Be thou ever called *eruption*, or *breach;* as Bochart interprets it. (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 30.)

Ver. 30. *Called Zarah.*] Which most think signifies as much as *he ariseth* (being used commonly of the sun's rising), because this child appeared first, by putting out his hand before the other.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Ver. 1. *AND Joseph.*] Having ended this story of Judah, he returns to that of Joseph, which he had begun before in the thirty-seventh chapter; repeating, where he left off, how he was sold to Potiphar.

Brought down.] It is a descent from Judea to Egypt: which lies very low.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord was with Joseph.*] To guide him in his deportment, and in the management of all affairs committed to him: so that, as it follows, "he was a prosperous man."

He was in the house of his master.] One of his domestic servants.

Ver. 3. *His master saw that the Lord was with him,* &c.] Found by observation and experience that he was an extraordinary person. It is not likely that Potiphar knew God by the name of Jehovah: but the meaning is, he observed the happy fruits of Joseph's service; which Moses, not he, ascribes to the Lord's peculiar blessing.

Ver. 4. *And he served him.*] Found such favour with his master, that he took him to wait upon his person.

And he made him overseer over his house.] In time he advanced him to a higher station, to be (as they now speak) his major-domo, to whom all the servants in the family were to be obedient.

And put all he had into his hand.] Committed all his estate, both within doors and without (as appears by the next verse), to his care and management.

Ver. 6. *He left all he had in Joseph's hand.*] Did not call him to a daily account, nor concerned himself about any business: but trusted entirely to his prudence and fidelity.

And he knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat.] This is the highest expression of confidence; signifying, that he was utterly careless about any thing that concerned his estate: not minding what his expense or receipts were; but, taking his ease, left all to Joseph's honesty. In short, he thought of nothing, but only to enjoy what he had, without any care or trouble.

And Joseph was a goodly person.] Being the son of a beautiful mother.

Ver. 7. *Cast her eyes upon Joseph.*] Looked upon him amorously, or rather lasciviously: he being young as well as handsome.

Ver. 9. *How can I do this great wickedness?* &c.] Here are three *he hajedias*, as the Hebrews call them; pointing us to so many remarkable things. How shall I commit such a wickedness as adultery? such a great wickedness? against so kind a master, who so entirely trusts in my integrity? especially, since it cannot be committed without the highest offence to God.

Ver. 10. *Day by day.*] Took all occasions to solicit him.

Or to be with her.] He avoided, as much as was possible, to entertain any discourse with her, shunning her company, &c.

Ver. 11. *About this time.*] The phrase in the Hebrew (where there are again two *hes* of the same kind with the former) signifies some remarkable day. R. Solomon and Josephus think it was some festival, when the master and the rest of the family were gone to the temples; and she stayed at home, feigning herself not well. But the Vulgar translates it simply, *upon a certain day.* Or it may signify, *having the like opportunity*, as formerly, and Joseph being about his business in the house she caught him, &c.

To do his business.] To cast up his accounts, saith the Chaldee interpreters.

None of the men of the house were within.] In that part of the house where he was.

Ver. 12. *Left the garment in her hand.*] If he had struggled to get the garment away from her, the accusation might have been more specious, that he went about to ravish her. Epiphanius hath made a good reflection upon this example. Καταλιμπάνει τὰ ἱμάτια, καὶ τὸ σῶμα οὐκ ἀπόλλυσιν. Ἀποδιδράσκει τὸν τόπον, ἵνα μὴ πέσῃ τῇ παγίδι, &c. (vid. Hæres. lxxix. n. 9.) *He left his garment, that he might not lose his body: and shunned the place, that he might not fall into the snare.* And indeed it was dangerous to adventure himself in her company; much more to touch her, lest he should fall into temptation.

Ver. 14. *She called unto the men of her house.*] Cried to them, who were in her apartment, to come and help her.

He hath brought in.] In her rage she reflects upon her husband, as accessory to her danger, that she might the more incense him against Joseph. There is something like this in Apuleius's story (lib. x. Metamorph.) of the step-mother's love to her son-in-law, which was turned into hatred, and made her contrive just such a lie as this, when he would not yield to her.

To mock us.] To abuse our family.

I cried with a loud voice.] An improbable story (for no-

body heard it), but was easily believed against a servant; whom they all, perhaps, envied. If she pretended it was done in Joseph's apartment, the question might have been asked her, What she did there?

Ver. 17. *Came in unto me to mock me.*] To offer violence to me (as the Hebrew phrase signifies), and rob me of my chastity.

Ver. 18. *He left his garment with me.*] Philo observes, that this was an argument rather that she laid hands on him: for he could have easily taken his garment from her, if he had not fled hastily from her importunity. But her husband's jealousy made him credulous.

Ver. 20. *Joseph's master took him,* &c.] Caused him to be apprehended, and carried to prison. During his anger he would not hearken to the apology, which we cannot but think he offered to make for himself. Unless we suppose (which is not unlikely) that his master would not so much as see him; but ordered him immediately to be hurried to the jail.

A place where the king's prisoners were bound.] Where the king himself caused those who had offended him to be committed. This shews Potiphar was a great man, (see xl. 3.) and that he looked upon the crime as very great: for this prison, we must think, was most strictly guarded, that they who were thrown into it might not escape punishment. And it appears by what the Psalmist says, (cv. 18.) that the prisoners were hardly used; and that Joseph (xl. 15.) was thrust into the lowest part of the prison, which was the most dismal, as well as of greatest difficulty to make an escape out of it.

And he was there in the prison.] His master proceeded no further against him, but there he left him. Perhaps Joseph found means to let him know the truth; which made him not form any process to take away his life, or inflict any other punishment on him: and yet, to save his wife's credit, he let him lie in the prison.

Ver. 21. *The Lord was with Joseph.*] The same wisdom and virtue appeared in him, now he was in prison, that his master discerned, when he came first into his house, (ver. 2.)

Give him favour.] So that he had more liberty than the rest, after some short confinement.

Keeper of the prison.] The under-keeper it appears from xl. 4.

Ver. 22. *Committed to Joseph's hand,* &c.] His favour increased so much (as it had done in his master's house, ver. 4.) that he, in effect, was the keeper of the prison, not a prisoner.

CHAP. XL.

Ver 1. *HAD offended their lord.*] In the Hebrew is a word of the plural number for *lord,* viz. *adonim;* "ratione dignitatis," saith Bochartus; because of his high authority. And so it is used not only when he speaks of the king, but of great men; particularly of Joseph's master, (xxxix. 2.)

Interpreters do but guess at their offence: which might as well be an attempt upon his life (by poison, or other ways), as any thing else.

Ver. 2. *Wroth against two of his officers.*] They are called by the same name of dignity (viz. *saris*) which we met withal before, (xxxvii. 36.) For in all courts such officers had a principal place, (see ver. 4.)

Chief butler.] Or, *cup-bearer* to the king, (ver. 13.) He simply named the butler and baker in the foregoing verse: but now the *schar* (as the Hebrew word is), which in the next verse we translate *captain,* i. e. the principal officer of those kinds: which would incline one to think, that some under butler and baker were accused of a great fault, for which the head butler and baker were to answer: who, perhaps, were discovered to have ordered them to do what they did.

Chief baker.] Who took care of all baked meats, and confections, &c. (ver. 17.)

Ver. 3. *He put them in ward,* &c.] To be kept close prisoners.

In the house of the captain of the guard, &c.] In that prison, of which Potiphar had the chief custody. Who by this appears to have been such an officer as we call lieutenant of the Tower.

Into the prison where Joseph was bound.] Into that very place where Joseph had been bound. For now he was at liberty, in the prison.

Ver. 4. *And the captain of the guard charged Joseph,* &c.] By this it appears Potiphar's anger was mitigated towards him (having heard the truth, it is likely, before this time), and was of the same mind with the under-keeper of the prison: who entrusted all in Joseph's hand.

And he served them.] Attended upon them (which shews they were great persons) to provide them what they wanted, &c.

And they continued a season.] The Hebrew word is, *jamim,* i. e. *days:* which frequently signifies *a year;* as hath been observed before, (xxiv. 55.)

Ver. 5. *Each man according to the interpretation of his dream.*] Suitable to the office which he had held; and to the events which were shortly to befal them.

Ver. 6. *Joseph came unto them in the morning.*] To see that they were safe, and to know what they wanted.

And behold, they were sad.] It was very extraordinary, that they should both of them dream, in the same night, such dreams as had a great resemblance, one to the other; and seemed to import a great change in their condition: which made such a deep impression upon them, that they were solicitous to know the meaning.

Ver. 8. *We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it.*] *i. e.* Here in prison, we have not the opportunity of getting them interpreted. If they had been at liberty, there were men in those countries who pretended to the skill of interpreting dreams, which for the most part were not to be regarded; but some dreams carried such lively representations in them, and so suitable to their present condition, and made likewise so great a commotion in their spirits, that they could not but attend to them: nay, think God had sent them, and therefore desire to know the meaning of them.

Thus we find Achilles advising Agamemnon (in Homer's Iliad. i.) to consult with the interpreters of their gods, for what offence they had sent the plague among them; saying, "To what priest, or to what prophet, shall we go?"

Ἢ καὶ ὀνειροπόλον, καὶ γάρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν.

Or to what vender of dreams? For even dreams come from Jupiter.

Do not interpretations belong to God?] Who can shew

the meaning of dreams, but he that sent them? *viz.* God. This shews that God did sometimes admonish other nations (as we saw, xx. 6. xxxi. 24.) as well as the Jews by dreams: until they forgot (as Dr. Jackson judiciously speaks) that *interpretations were from God,* and laboured to find out an *art of interpreting.* Then they either ceased, or were so mixed with delusions, that they could not be discerned: or, if their events were in some sort foreseen, yet men, being ignorant of God's providence, commonly made choice of such means for their avoidance, as brought upon them the events which they feared. (Book i. on the Creed, chap. 9.)

Ver. 12. *The three branches are three days.*] *i. e.* Signify *three days.* So he understood their meaning to be, rather than *months* or *years;* because of the sudden budding, blossoming, knitting, and ripening of the grapes, (ver. 10.)

Ver. 13. *Shall lift up thy head.*] *i. e.* Advance thee; or, as it is in the margin, *reckon* thee; *number* thee among his servants (as the phrase is used, Exod. xxxi. 12.) For there being a roll, or catalogue of all the officers of the court, with their several salaries, they were all called over on some certain day (it should seem, by ver. 20. before the king's birth-day) and summoned to give their attendance. And then such as the king was offended withal, were struck out, and punished according to their deserts; or pardoned, and graciously restored to their places. This exposition best agrees with the event, (ver. 20.) where the heads of both these officers are said to be *lifted up:* though one of them only was advanced to his former station.

Ver. 14. *But think on me, when it shall be well with thee,* &c.] When my prediction is come to pass, I ask no other reward of thee, but that thou wilt be an instrument of delivering me from my imprisonment. Joseph was not only grown expert in interpreting dreams, (which he was not before he came into Egypt, xxxvii. 6. &c.) but fully assured he knew the right meaning of them; as appears by this passage. And such kinds of predictions by dreams were frequently in ancient times, among the heathen as well as among the Hebrews: though in after ages they grew rare in both. For (as Dr. Jackson admirably speaks, in the place beforenamed) the increase of wickedness in the world; multiplicity of business; solicitude of mind about worldly affairs; and men's too much depending on politic devices to accomplish their ends; caused the defect of true dreams, and of other Divine admonitions, for the welfare of mankind.

Ver. 15. *I was stolen.*] Carried away by violence, without the knowledge of my father; and sold for a slave. His brethren, in selling him, committed that crime, which the Latins call *plagium.* For, *Qui hominem liberum vendit, plagiarius est.*

Out of the land of the Hebrews.] Some men would have it thought, that these words were added by Joshua, or some other, after Moses's time: because Canaan was not called the *land of the Hebrews* in his days, much less in Joseph's. But they should have considered, that Joseph doth not call all the land of Canaan by this name; but only that part of it where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had very long lived, *viz.* about Hebron. There Abraham (who was the first that is called a Hebrew) settled with his family when he came out of Chaldea, (xiii. 17, 18.) There Isaac dwelt also, (xxxv. 27.) and Jacob, (xxxvii. 1. 14.) where it is said indeed, they were *strangers,* or *sojourners,* in this country: but they were strangers of great note and name (as Jacobus Altingius hath well observed), who were treated as princes, (xxiii. 6.) lived by their own laws; made leagues, not only with private men, but with cities and with kings: (xxi. 22, 23. xxvi. 28. xxxiv. 6.) and the fame of them could not but be spread abroad, both by the victory which Abraham got, in a battle, over several kings; and by the sacking of Shechem, which the neighbours durst not revenge. All which might well make that part of the country wherein they had resided for three generations be called *the land of the Hebrews:* where they were at first planted, by the consent of the natives; who were confederated with Abraham, (xiv. 13.)

That they should put me into the dungeon.] Into which he was thrown at the first, as a great malefactor; for this was the lowest and darkest place in the prison, being under ground. So the Hebrew word commonly signifies, a *pit,* either with or without water in it: and thence, this part of a prison; which Bochartus well translates *cryptam subterraneam;* and sometimes signifies a *grave,* (Psalm xxviii. 1. Hierozoic. par. i. lib. iii. cap. 4.)

Ver. 16. *The chief baker saw the interpretation was good.*] It was well the chief butler propounded his dream first, which had a good signification: for if this man had spoken first, the other, it is likely, would not have proposed his dream.

Three white baskets.] Or, as we now speak, three wicker baskets, and (as the margin hath it) the twigs so twisted, that they were *full of holes;* as ours many times are wrought.

Ver. 17. *In the uppermost basket.*] They were set one upon another: in the lowermost of which, we may suppose, was bread; in the middlemost pies; and in the highest, the finer sort of pastes of all sorts, biscuit, tarts, &c.

Ver. 19. *Lift up thy head.*] The same phrase, which was used of the other, (ver. 13.) but with this addition, *from off thee.* To signify, that his name should be called for another purpose; that he might not only have his name struck out of the roll, but his head struck off from his body. Though there is no necessity so to understand it; but only simply, that he *should lose his life.*

And shall hang thee on a tree.] They that fancy his head was first cut off, will have the body only hanged on a gibbet. But it is more likely he was hanged by the neck, as malefactors are now among us upon a gallows.

And the birds shall eat thy flesh.] He was left there, to be devoured by birds of prey.

Ver. 20. *Pharaoh's birth-day.*] Either the day on which he was born, or the day on which he came to the crown: which was *natalis imperii,* the *birth-day of his empire.* Both of them were wont to be celebrated with rejoicing and great feasts, in ancient time as well as now. (See the commentators upon Matt. xiv. 6.)

Ver. 21. *And he gave the cup.*] His fault, we may suppose, was of a smaller nature; or, there was not evident proof against him; or, he had better friends, who interceded for him: so that he was not only pardoned, but restored to his office.

Ver. 22. *But he hanged the chief baker.*] Ordered him to be hanged, being found guilty of what he was accused, &c.

Ver. 23. *Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph,*

but forgat him.] He repeats it, to shew how very unmindful he was of him: after the manner of those vain courtiers, who have no value for wisdom or virtue, but are wholly given up to their pleasures. It would have cost him nothing to mention Joseph to Pharaoh: but he seems to have been one of those who will spend their interest, as we now speak, for nobody but themselves. Or, as it may be interpreted, he did not, as soon as he came to his place, call him to mind, who foretold his good fortune: and so, in process of time, he quite forgot him.

CHAP. XLI.

Ver. 1. *AT the end of two full years.*] It is uncertain whether two years after Joseph was first put in prison, or after the chief butler was taken out of prison. It seems to relate to the latter, being connected immediately with that history.

Pharaoh dreamed.] Had an extraordinary dream, sent from God.

He stood by the river.] Where they were wont to recreate themselves; especially in hot weather, and when they expected its rise to such a degree, as to give hopes of a plentiful year.

Ver. 2. *Behold, there came up out of the river.*] This is a most apt and lively figure; representing things exactly conformable to the state of that country: which was enriched by the yearly overflowing of the river Nilus. Without which the beasts would have had no grass to feed them, much less to fatten them. But Bochart thinks the Hebrew word *jeor* (which we translate *river*) properly signifies, a *cut*, as we speak, or a *canal* out of Nile: of which there were many, for the drawing its water into several parts of the country. (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 42.)

Well-favoured kine, &c.] Or, *oxen*. By which the fields being ploughed, and all the business of husbandry managed, their fatness was a proper token of fertility; as their leanness was of famine. So Bochart observes; and see Vossius de Idolol. lib. i. cap. 29.

And they fed in a meadow.] This represented Nile as having overflowed a great way; to the enriching of a pasture, at a distance from the river.

Ver. 3. *Stood by the other kine.*] This signified the events denoted hereby to be near one to the other.

Upon the brink of the river.] Not feeding in a meadow (as the former did), but picking up grass here and there near the river. For this was a sign, it had not overflowed at all, or very little: there being no food for the cattle, but on the river's bank: where, perhaps, he saw them eat the flags.

Ver. 5. *Came up upon one stalk.*] A token of great plenty.

Ver. 6. *Blasted with the east wind.*] To this wind (which the Hebrews call *kadim*) is ascribed, in Scripture, all the mischief that was done to corn, or fruit; by blasting, smutting, mildews, locusts, &c. and was more pernicious in Egypt than other places, because it came through the vast deserts of Arabia.

Ver. 7. *And behold, it was a dream.*] Or, *behold, the dream* continued to run in his mind. When he was awake, he could not put it out of his thoughts, but it perpetually presented itself to him, as it had done when he was asleep. This shewed it to be one of those dreams which the Greeks called Θεόπεμπτα, *sent from God*; as the interpretation and the event shewed afterward more evidently. Bochart notes out of Josephus, (lib. xvii.) a dream of Archelaus (mentioned Matt. ii. 22.) composed of both these figures: for he saw *ten* ears of corn very plump and ripe, devoured by oxen; which Simon Essæus interpreted to signify, that he should live *ten* years; and then there should be a great turn of affairs (because oxen turn up the ground by the plough), and accordingly it came to pass, (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 41.)

Ver. 8. *His spirit was troubled.*] He could not rest satisfied till he understood the meaning of these dreams, which he thought imported some great alteration in the state of his country.

Called for all the magicians of Egypt.] The word in Hebrew (or rather Chaldee) for *magicians*, had a bad signification in aftertimes; but what kind of men they were now, we do not know: whether they professed to interpret dreams and expound things secret, by natural observations; or such rules as are now found in the books of *Oneirocriticks*; or by consulting demons; or only by the foolish art of astrology, to which they were much addicted in future ages.

Our learned Nic. Fuller (lib. v. Miscell. Sacr. cap. 11.) thinks the Hebrew word *chartummim* imports, such as divined by certain superstitious characters, pictures, images, and figures; which they engraved with magical rites and ceremonies.

All the wise men thereof.] These were the same, I suppose, with those who were called *philosophers* in Greece; from whence several great men went to learn of the Egyptian priests, who were famous for wisdom before it came into Greece.

Told them his dream.] He told them both his dreams, as appears from what follows; but Moses speaks in the singular number, because they were, in effect, but one and the same dream.

But there was none that could interpret them.] Either they were amazed, and did not attempt an exposition, as beyond their skill; or, what they said gave no satisfaction to the king. The *seven kine* and the *seven ears*, it is likely, they thought had a great mystery in them; if the worship of the planets was then among them. Which they invoked with secret or unutterable invocations, Κλήσεσι ἀφθέγκτοις, (as the oracle mentioned by Porphyry speaks) which were invented by that "most excellent of all magicians (saith the same oracle), the king of the seven sounds, whom all men know," *i. e.* Ostanes, or Hostanes.

——Ἂς εὗρε Μάγων ὄχ' ἄριστος
Ἑπταφθόγγου Βασιλεὺς ὃν πάντες ἴσασιν.

By which *seven sounds* (of which he was the inventor and governor) Mr. Selden thinks is meant the harmony, which the ancients supposed the seven planets to make: whom these magicians called upon ἑπτακίφωνοι, with seven invocations to each planet, upon its proper day. As he shews, lib. iii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 19. But the more they laboured to find out this mystery, the more they were puzzled and perplexed in their thoughts: nor could their prayers (if they went that way to work) help them to disclose the secret.

Ver. 9. *I do remember my faults this day.*] Call to mind the offences I committed against Pharaoh: or, as some will have it, my ingratitude to one, who was in prison with me.

Ver. 11. *Each man according to the interpretation of his dream.*] Just according to the event was each of our dreams.

Ver. 13. *As he interpreted to us, so it was.*] He repeats the thing often, to shew how exactly Joseph hit the truth in his interpretation.

Me he restored to my office, &c.] He told me, that on such a day I should be restored to my office; and he told the other he should be hanged.

Ver. 14. *Brought him hastily.*] With all speed; that Pharaoh might not continue in suspense.

Out of the dungeon.] It is reasonable to think, that, though he was thrown into the dungeon at the first, (xl. 15.) he did not continue there, when he looked after all the prisoners, and did the whole business of a keeper, (xxxix. 22, 23.) Therefore this part, as is usual, is put for the whole; signifying no more, than that they brought him out of prison, where he had been in the dungeon.

And he shaved himself, &c.] It was the custom in most countries, when men were in a mournful condition, to neglect their hair, both of the head and the beard: and not to shift their clothes, as in prosperity; but to continue in a rueful dress, whereby they expressed the sense they had of their calamity.

Ver. 16. *It is not in me.*] A modest answer. I do not pretend to more wisdom than those thou hast already consulted.

God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.] But God, I doubt not, will direct me to give the king a satisfactory answer: nay, an answer that shall be serviceable to him and to his kingdom.

Ver. 17. *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph,* &c.] We may well suppose that Joseph desired to know the dream: which Pharaoh repeats in this and the following verses something more fully than it is set down before.

Ver. 21. *When they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them,* &c.] An emblem of a very grievous famine, which is represented, not only by the lean kine devouring the fat (as much as to say, the barren years consuming all the growth of the fertile), but by their remaining lean, as if they had eaten nothing: which represents what often happens in famine, that men eat greedily, but are not satisfied, because God breaks the staff of bread: (Lev. xxvi. 26.) *i. e.* takes away its nourishing virtue; as Bochart expounds it, Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 41. But this seems to be a straining of that phrase, *break the staff of bread,* which signifies no more, than want of bread to support man's life. And all that can be gathered from this part of the dream, is, that there should be such exceeding great scarcity, that men should have but just enough to keep them alive.

Ver. 25. *The dream of Pharaoh is one.*] One and the same thing is represented by two several figures.

God hath shewn Pharaoh what he is about to do.] God hath in these dreams revealed to Pharaoh, what he intends shortly to bring to pass.

Ver. 26. *The seven good kine,* &c.] He represents in this, and in the following verse, how one thing is signified by two dreams. Seven good kine, and seven good ears, representing seven years of plenty; and seven lean kine, and seven empty ears, as many years of scarcity.

Ver. 28. *This is the thing which I have spoken,* &c.] I have told the king in short, what the Divine Providence is about to effect.

Ver. 29. *Behold, there come seven years,* &c.] I will repeat it more at large. Take notice then that, in the next seven years to this, there shall be very great crops of corn, every where, throughout the whole country.

Ver. 30. *And there shall arise after them,* &c.] And immediately after they are ended, shall follow seven years as barren as the former were fruitful, the earth bringing forth little or no corn; which will make so great a famine, that there shall be no memory of the foregoing plenty; for there shall be no corn left, but all eaten up, throughout all the land of Egypt.

Ver. 31. *And the plenty shall not be known,* &c.] I say, there shall be no mark remaining of the foregoing plenty; by reason of the extreme scarcity in the following years, which will be very heavy.

Ver. 32. *And for that the dream was doubled,* &c.] The repetition of the dream signifies the certainty of what I say: God having so determined; who will shortly justify the truth of my predictions. Both here and in the foregoing discourse, (ver. 25. 28.) he directs Pharaoh to look up unto God, as the author of all these events; and that, not in an ordinary, but extraordinary manner. For such fertility and such famine did not proceed from mere natural causes; but from an overruling Providence. It is observed by Pliny, (lib. v. Nat. Hist. cap. 9.) that when Nile rose only *twelve* cubits, a famine followed: when *thirteen,* great scarcity: when *fourteen,* they had a good year: when *fifteen,* a very good: and if it rose *sixteen,* it made *delicias,* luxuriant plenty: and the greatest increase they ever knew, was to *eighteen* cubits. Now that this river should overflow so largely for seven years together, as to make vast plenty; and then for the next seven years not to overflow its banks at all or very little, and so make a sore and long famine; could be ascribed to nothing but an extraordinary hand of God; it being quite out of the course of nature. And indeed the dream seems to signify something beyond that; for it is unnatural for oxen to devour one another.

Ver. 33. *Look out a man discreet and wise.*] One fit to manage so great an affair. He that could foretell such events, was fit to advise what was to be done upon the foresight of them: but, it is probable, he did not presume to give such directions, till he was asked his opinion.

Ver. 34. *Let Pharaoh do this.*] When this is done.

Let him appoint officers.] Let that chief ruler appoint officers under him, in the several provinces of the kingdom: such as the Romans called *præfectos annonæ.*

Take up a fifth part.] Some have asked, why not the *half,* since there were to be as many years of famine as of plenty. To which such answers as these have been given by interpreters:—that the greater and richer sort were wont in time of plenty to fill their storehouses; as a provision against a scarcer year, which sometimes happened. And, secondly, that, in time of famine, men are wont to live more frugally; and not spend so much as they do in better times. And, thirdly, that even in those years of greatest famine, something might be sown; at least near the banks

of Nile. But the plainest answer is, that *ten* parts being the tribute due to kings in many countries, and it is likely here, (as I observed upon xxviii. *ult.*) Pharaoh was advised to double this charge, in the years of extraordinary plenty: when the *fifth* part was not more than the *tenth* in other years. Or (which is rather to be supposed from a good king and a good counsellor), to buy as much more as was his tribute; which he might do at an easy rate, when vast plenty made corn very cheap.

Ver. 35. *Gather all the food of those good years that come.*] The *fifth* part of the growth of the next *seven* years.

And lay up corn.] In places provided for that purpose.

Under the hand of Pharaoh.] Not to be meddled withal, but kept by Pharaoh's order, to be dispensed hereafter, as need shall require.

And let them keep food in the cities.] Let this food be reserved in the several cities of the kingdom.

Ver. 36. *And that food shall be for store.*] Shall not be spent; but laid up and preserved against the time of famine.

That the land, &c.] The people of the land do not perish.

Ver. 37. *And the thing was good in the eyes,* &c.] The king and all the court were pleased with this advice. But some may wonder that Pharaoh and his ministers should so readily believe a young man, and a stranger; of a nation whom they did not converse withal, and lately accused of a great crime. But they may be satisfied, by considering, that Joseph had cleared himself in the opinion of the keeper of the prison; where he had been known already to have interpreted dreams exactly according to the events, in two notorious cases, which the chief butler had reported, (ver. 12, 13.) And besides, his exposition of the figures which Pharaoh saw in his dream, was so natural, that it was apt to beget belief, if he had not been an expounder of dreams before. And above all it is to be considered, that God, who sent the dreams, and made them stick in Pharaoh's thoughts, disposed his mind also to receive the interpretation, with a deep sense of its truth.

Ver. 38. *Pharaoh said to his servants.*] The great ministers of the kingdom, and officers of the court, who stood about him.

In whom is the Spirit of God.] Without which he could not foresee and foretell such things.

Ver. 39. *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph.*] It seems all his servants were of Pharaoh's mind, and consented to what he said, being amazed at the wisdom which appeared in Joseph.

Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this.] God wrought in him the highest opinion of Joseph, as a man divinely inspired.

There is none so discreet as thou art.] Thou thyself art the only person, whom thou advisest me to set over the land, (ver. 33.)

Ver. 40. *Thou shalt be over my house.*] Be the chief minister in my court: for that is meant by his *house*.

And according to thy word.] As thou shalt give orders.

Shall all my people be ruled.] The margin translates it *armed;* as if he put the whole militia of the kingdom into his hands: but this seems too narrow a sense; nor was there any thoughts of war at this time, but of the government of the kingdom in time of peace. And therefore we also translate it *kiss*, i. e. obey, as the LXX. and Vulgar well translate it; and as it signifies in Psalm ii. *ult. Kiss the Son,* i. e. submit to him, and obey him.

Only in the throne will I be greater than thou.] Thou shalt have no superior, but only myself.

Ver. 41. *See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.*] He had advised Pharaoh only to set a man to be the chief inspector of the stores of corn, ver. 33. (for which Pharaoh thought none so fit as Joseph himself, ver. 39.) but he now constitutes him chief governor, under him, in all affairs of the whole country.

Ver. 42. *Took off his ring,* &c.] This is well explained by Vossius, (lib. i. de Orig. et Progr. Idolol. cap. 9.) in these words: "Tum ut symbolum dignitatis, tum ad literas et diplomata publico nomine signandas:" *both in token of the dignity to which he was preferred, and that he might seal letters and patents in the king's name.*

Vesture of fine linen.] So the Hebrew word *schesch* signifies, rather than *silk* (as it is translated in the margin), though not the common linen, but that which the ancients called *byssus:* which Pollux saith was λίνου τι εἶδος, a sort of linen, very pure, and soft; and very dear; because it did not grow every where. *Linum tenuissimum et pretiosissimum,* as Braunius shews, (lib. i. de Vestib. Sacerdot. Hebr. cap. 6.) In garments made of this, great men only, not the vulgar people, were clothed: kings themselves, it appears by Solomon, being arrayed in such vestures.

Put a gold chain about his neck.] Another token of the highest dignity.

Ver. 43. *Made him ride in the second chariot which he had.*] In the best of the king's coaches (as we now speak) except one, which Pharaoh reserved for himself: and attended, no doubt, with a suitable equipage, of footmen and horsemen, perhaps, for a guard to his person.

Cried before him, Bow the knee.] They that went before his chariot, to make way for him, required all to do him such reverence as they did to the king himself, when he appeared: which was by bowing their knees or their body. The word they used to this purpose, as they went along, was *abrech:* which we translate *bow the knee,* deriving it from the Hebrew word *barach,* which hath that signification. Though others will have it to signify *the father of the king:* for *rach,* in the Syrian language, signifies a *king,* if we may believe R. Solomon. Others translate it, *a tender father,* of the country which he had preserved. (See Vossius, lib. i. de Idol. cap. 29.) And Hottinger will have it as much as *God save the king;* or, *A blessing light on you.* (See Smegma Orient. p. 131.) But unless we understood the old Egyptian language, I think we had as good rest in the Hebrew derivation as in any other; according to our own translation.

And he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt.] After this manner he constituted him supreme governor of the whole country, under himself: according to his resolution, ver. 41.

Ver. 44. *I am Pharaoh.*] This is my will and pleasure; who am king of Egypt.

Without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot, &c.] A proverbial speech. Let no man presume to do the smallest thing, in public affairs, without thy order.

Ver. 45. *And Pharaoh called Joseph's name.*] He gave him a new name; partly, because he was a foreigner; and partly, to honour him; and yet to denote him to be his

subject, though ruler of every body else. We find Nebuchadnezzar did the same in Babylon, (Dan. i. 7.) and it is still the custom in the eastern countries: where the Mogul never advances any man, but he gives him a new name; and that significant of something belonging to him. As, not long ago, he called his brother-in-law *Asaph Chan*, the *gathering*, or *the rich lord:* and his physician *Macrob Chan, the lord of my health*, &c. as Peter de la Valle relates in his Travels, p. 465. where he observes the same of his wives, p. 470.

Zaphnath-Paaneah.] Which St. Jerome interprets, *the Saviour of the world.* But the whole stream of interpreters carry it for another signification, which is, the *interpreter of secrets*, or *the revealer of future things*. See Sixt. Amama, and Athan. Kirker's Prodromus, cap. 5. and our countryman, J. Gregory, cap. xvi. of his Observations. Who, with Mr. Calvin, thinks it is ridiculous to attempt to make this sense out of the Hebrew language: and yet there are those who think they have done it with success. *Tzaphan* being to *hide* or *cover;* whence *tzaphnath*, that which is *hidden* or *secret;* and *panah*, signifying to *look into* or *contemplate*. So that Campeg. Vitringa thinks Josephus and Philo not to have ill interpreted this word, Ὀνειροκρίτης and κρυπτῶν εὑρετὴς, (Observ. Sacr. lib. i. cap. 5.) an *interpreter of dreams*, and *a finder out of things hidden*. But as Jacchiades observes upon Dan. i. 7. that the Egyptian and Persian kings gave names, *for honour and glory* (in token of their supreme greatness and authority), so it was most for their glory, to give them out of their own language. And therefore, if this be the meaning of *Zaphnath-Paaneah*, the Egyptian tongue and the Hebrew had a great affinity one to the other.

And he gave him to wife.] Either the king then disposed of the great noblemen's daughters, when their parents were dead (as our kings lately did of their wards), or Asenath was of Pharaoh's kindred, and so he provided her a husband, and gave her a portion. Or, the meaning simply is, he made this match for him.

The daughter of Potipherah.] This is a different name from his who was captain of the guard; and was of a different quality. And therefore there is no reason, from some likeness in their names, to think that Joseph married the daughter of him who had been his master: for he would have abhorred to match with one that was born of so lewd a woman as his mistress; as Vossius well observes in the place forenamed.

Priest of On.] Or, prince of On (as the margin hath it); for the word *cohen* signifies both *priest* and *prince*, (see 2 Sam. viii. *ult.*) priests being anciently the prime men of the kingdom; for kings themselves were priests.

On was a famous city in Egypt, called afterwards Heliobolis, which gave name to one of the Νόμοι, *i. e.* provinces of Egypt; whereof this Potipherah was governor, or lieutenant. Concerning which province, and Asenath, and Potipherah, see Mr. Selden, lib. iii. de Synedriis, p. 406.

And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.] To see what places were fittest for stores.

Ver. 46. *Joseph was thirty years old.*] So he had been out of his country thirteen years; for he was but seventeen years old (xxxvii. 2.) when he was sold into Egypt. In which time, we may well think, he had learnt the language of that country, and gained much experience; but never sent to his father; in which there is visibly a special providence of God; for his father might have used means for his deliverance, and then he had never come to this greatness.

When he stood before Pharaoh.] When Pharaoh made him his prime minister. For the great counsellors and ministers alone were admitted into the king's presence (in the eastern countries, and, it is likely, the same state was kept here) and are said to *stand before the king*, (Dan. i. 19.) and to *see the king's face*, (Esther i. 14.)

And went throughout all the land of Egypt.] He seems to have only taken a general view of the country before, (ver. 45.) but now a more particular; to give orders for the building of storehouses, against the plenteous years came.

Ver. 47. *Brought forth by handfuls.*] Such large ears, that a few of them would make a sheaf: which our translation seems here to mean by *handfuls:* for sheaves are bound up with men's hands. And so it may be interpreted, it brought forth *sheaves*, or *heaps:* or, more literally, *handfuls upon one stalk, i. e.* vast abundance. Some conceive the corn was laid up in sheaves, heaped up very high: and not thrashed out: for so it would keep the longer.

Ver. 48. *And he gathered up all the food.*] The fifth part, as he had proposed, (ver. 34.) *i. e.* he bought it; which he might do at a small price, when there was unusual plenty.

And laid up the food in the cities.] It is very probable he laid it up, as it was gathered, unthrashed: that there might be food for the cattle also. So the Vulgar, "In manipulos reductæ segetes congregatæ sunt in horrea." And what was laid up in the first year of plenty, it is reasonable to think was dispensed in the first year of famine, &c.

Round every city.] This was very wisely ordered; for it was less charge to Pharaoh for the present, and more easy to the country, when they wanted provision.

Ver. 49. *Gathered corn as the sand of the sea.*] The following words explain this hyperbolical expression. And the reason of his heaping up so much was, that there might be sufficient to supply the necessities of other countries, as well as of Egypt.

Ver. 51. *God hath made me forget all my toil.*] The great affliction and hard labour he endured in prison.

And all my father's house.] The unkindness of his brethren, who were the cause of all his trouble. By imposing this name on his first-born, he admonished himself in the midst of his prosperity of his former adversity, which he now thought of with pleasure.

Ver. 52. *In the land of my affliction.*] In the country where I have suffered much affliction.

Ver. 53. *And the seven years of plenteousness were ended.*] It was beside the intention of Moses to relate any of the affairs of that country, but what belonged to this matter: and therefore he passes over all other transactions of these seven years; as he doth all the things that happened in Jacob's family, ever since Joseph came from it.

Ver. 54. *The dearth was in all lands.*] In all the countries thereabouts, Canaan, Syria, &c. It seems there was a general want of rain.

But in all the land of Egypt there was bread.] They did not feel the famine presently, because they had much to spare from the former years of plenty.

Ver. 55. *And when all the land of Egypt was famished.*] When they had eaten up all their own stores, which, we may suppose, failed in two years' time.

The people cried to Pharaoh, &c.] Made earnest petitions to the king, for relief of their necessities.

Ver. 56. *And the famine was over all the face of the earth.*] Grew still greater in all the neighbouring countries.

And the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.] For the Egyptians themselves, having spent all their own stores, were sorely pinched.

Ver. 57. *And all the countries came to buy corn,* &c.] *i. e.* The neighbouring countries, as was said before, (ver. 54.) For if the most distant had come, the storehouses had been soon emptied.

Because the famine was sore in all lands.] It increased more and more, in those countries beforenamed, which were grievously afflicted by it.

CHAP. XLII.

Ver. 1. *AND when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt,* &c.] He saw, perhaps, some pass by laden with corn, which they had bought there. Or, one sense (as is frequent in Scripture) is put for another: *seeing* for *hearing;* as it is expressed, ver. 2.

Why do you look one upon another?] As idle people use to do, while none of them will stir to seek relief. Or, rather, as men that know not what course to take, expecting who would begin to advise for their preservation.

Ver. 2. *That we may live, and not die.*] He excites them to make no further delay, by the great necessity wherein they were; no less than danger of perishing.

Ver. 4. *Lest mischief befal him.*] He being, as yet, but young, and not used to travel, Jacob was afraid the journey might be hazardous to him. Besides, he could not but desire to have some of their company; though this was not his principal reason.

Ver. 5. *Came to buy corn among those that came.*] People came from all parts thereabout, upon the same business: and Jacob's sons among others; whom, perhaps, they met withal upon the road.

Ver. 6. *And Joseph was the governor,* &c.] The Hebrew word *schallit* signifies, sometimes, one that hath absolute power: and seems to be used here to set forth the high authority which Joseph exercised under Pharaoh.

He it was that sold to all the people of the land.] Appointed at what rates corn should be sold, in every part of the country. For it is not to be supposed that he in person could treat with every man that came to buy; but he by his deputies, who observed his orders.

And Joseph's brethren came.] It should seem by this, that all foreigners were ordered to come to him; in the royal city, where he resided; or, at least, their names were brought to him, that he might speak with such as he thought fit: and thereby get the better intelligence of the state of their several countries; and be sure to see his brethren, who, he knew, would be constrained to come thither.

They bowed themselves before him, &c.] Unwittingly fulfilled his dream. This seems to have been done after the manner of their own and other eastern countries; not of Egypt, where they only bowed the knee, (xli. 40.)

Ver. 7. *Spake roughly to them.*] Gave them hard words, as we speak. Or, spake in a harsh tone to them, and with a stern countenance.

Ver. 8. *And they knew not him.*] They had not seen him in twenty years: in which time a youth alters far more than grown men do; so that though he knew them, they might not know him; who appeared also in such pomp and state, that it made them not think of him: and he spake also to them by an interpreter, (ver. 23.) which represented him as a stranger to them.

Ver. 9. *Ye are spies.*] He did not think they were such persons, but said this to provoke them, to give an account of themselves, and of his father. Nor is there any reason to look upon this as a lie. For they are not words of affirmation, but of probation or trial: such as judges use, when they examine suspected persons, or inquire into a crime, of which men are accused. And therefore have the force of an interrogation; *Are ye not spies?* or, I must take you for spies, till you prove the contrary.

To see the nakedness of the land are ye come.] The weak places of the country, which are least defensible. Or, as others will have it, *the secrets of the land;* for it is the same word that is used to express the privy parts.

Ver. 11. *We are all one man's sons.*] There needed no more than this to take off his suspicion. For no man would have sent his sons, but rather his servants, if they had come upon an ill design: or, at least, not all his sons; or not all of them together in a company: but dispersed them rather about the country. Nor was it probable, that one man could have a design upon Egypt; but all the great men of Canaan must have joined in it: and then they would have sent men of different families, not all of one alone.

We are true men.] This was a good argument that they said true, when they told him (ver. 10.) they had no other business in Egypt but to buy corn.

Ver. 12. *And he said unto them, Nay,* &c.] Unless you have better arguments than this, I must take you for spies. He slights their argument, as great men sometimes do, when they know not presently how to answer it. He had a mind also to have them give a further account of their family, that he might be informed what was become of his brother Benjamin.

Ver. 13. *Thy servants are twelve brethren,* &c.] They enforce their former argument, by relating their condition more fully and distinctly. But still it amounts to no more than this; that it was not likely a parent would venture all his children, in such a design, as they were suspected to come about.

The youngest is this day with our father.] This was the thing he desired to know.

And one is not.] Is dead. So they thought, because they had heard nothing of him, in twenty years' space.

Ver. 14. *This is that I spake unto you,* &c.] This confirms what I said, and gives me just ground for suspicion, that ye are spies: because you pretend to have another brother, which is not likely; for why should not your father send all, as well as so many? This was but a cavil; but served to compass his end, which was to see his brother.

Ver. 15. *Hereby shall ye be proved.*] By this very thing shall you be tried; whether you be honest men, or no.

By the life of Pharaoh, &c.] As sure as Pharaoh lives;

or, *ita salvus sit*, so let Pharaoh be safe and in health, as I will keep you here, till I see your younger brother. Others expound it, If Pharaoh have any authority here, *i. e.* be king of this country, you shall not stir from hence, &c. But most authors take this for an oath: the original of which is well explained by Mr. Selden, in his Titles of Honour, p. 45. where he observes, that the name of gods being given to kings very early, δι' ἀρετῆς ὑπερβολὴν, (as Aristotle speaks, lib. vi. Ethic. cap. 1.) from the excellence of their heroic virtue, which made them anciently great benefactors to mankind, thence arose the custom of swearing by them, which Aben Ezra saith continued in his time (about 1170) when Egypt was governed by caliphs. If any man swore by the king's head, and was found to have sworn falsely, he was punished capitally. And when Scach Ismael, the first sophi, got the Persian empire, no oath was held so sacred (as Leunclavius reports), as to swear by his head, *i. e.* in effect, by his life.

But St. Basil will not have this to be an oath: but a solemn asseveration, to persuade belief. *For*, saith he, (tom. i. Hom. in Psal. xv. p. 155.) Εισί τινες λόγοι σχήματα μὲν ὅρκων ἔχοντες, οὐχ ὅρκοι δὲ ὄντες, &c. *There are certain speeches which have the fashion of oaths, and yet are not oaths: but θεραπεία πρὸς τοὺς ἀκούοντας, serve only to persuade the auditors.* Such he takes this to be; and that of St. Paul, Νὴ τὴν ὑμετέραν καύχησιν, *by our rejoicing*, 1 Cor. xv. 31. where he saith the apostle was not unmindful of the evangelical commandment, *not to swear:* but by a speech, in form of an oath, he would have them believe that his glorying in them (or rather in Christ) was dearer to him than any thing else. And the truth is, Judah seems to have taken these words of Joseph only for a solemn protestation, (xliii. 3.) wherein he exposed the life of Pharaoh (which was most dear to him) unto execration, if he was not as good as his word. So G. Calixtus understands it.

Ver. 16. *Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother.*] At first he proposed that only one of them should return home, to bring their brother to him; and all the rest remain, in the mean time, prisoners in Egypt.

Ver. 17. *And he put them altogether into ward*, &c.] That they might consult one with another, which of them should go to fetch Benjamin; about which, it seems, they could not agree: every one fearing to be the messenger of such sad tidings to their father; who might suspect they were all lost.

Ver. 18. *Joseph said unto them the third day*, &c.] I have no mind to destroy you: for I know there is a God, who will punish all injustice and cruelty. Therefore I make this new proposition to you.

Ver. 19. *Let one of your brethren*, &c.] This shall be the proof of your honesty. Instead of sending one of you to your father, you shall all go but one; who shall remain bound in prison till you bring your younger brother: and in the mean time carry provision for your families.

Ver. 20. *But bring your youngest brother*, &c.] Fail not to let me see your youngest brother: and so shall you justify yourselves to be no spies: and suffer nothing.

And they did so.] They consented to this proposal.

Ver. 21. *And they said one to another.*] They that had the chief hand in the conspiracy against Joseph, began upon this occasion to make the following reflections on it.

We are verily guilty, &c.] See the power of conscience, which flies in their face and reproaches them for a fact committed above twenty years ago.

In that we saw the anguish of his soul, &c.] We would have no pity, when he besought us with tears; and now nothing that we can say will move this man. They observe their guilt in their punishment. For, as they had thrown Joseph into a pit, so they had been thrown into a prison themselves: and as nothing he could say would incline them to spare him, so now they found Joseph inexorable to them.

This anguish of his soul and his entreaties are not mentioned before, (chap. xxxvii.) but could not but be supposed, if they had not been mentioned here.

Ver. 22. *And Reuben answered them*, &c.] You should have hearkened unto me, and then you had not come into this distress.

Behold, also, his blood is required.] You killed him, and now you must pay for it with the loss of your lives. For he thought him to be dead.

Ver. 23. *Spake to them by an interpreter.*] This shews the Egyptian tongue and the Hebrew were different; though in some words they might agree.

Ver. 24. *And he turned himself about from them.*] And went into some other room.

And wept.] Natural affection was too strong for the person he put on: and would not suffer him to counterfeit any longer.

Returned to them, and communed with them.] When he had vented his passion, and composed himself to his former temper, he repeated to them what he had told them before: but added withal, that if they brought Benjamin with them, they might traffic in the land, (ver. 34.)

And took from them Simeon.] Who, the Hebrews say, was the person that put Joseph into the pit: and therefore was now served in his kind. This, I think, may be fairly conjectured, that Reuben being resolved to save him, and Judah also inclined to favour him, if Simeon had joined with them, their authority might have prevailed to deliver him.

And bound him before their eyes.] Caused him to be bound in their presence; to strike the greater terror into them.

Ver. 25. *To give them provision for the way.*] That they might carry what they bought entire, for the use of their families.

And thus he did unto them.] Thus the person, to whom Joseph gave that command, did unto them.

Ver. 26. *And they laded their asses with corn*, &c.] It is not said how many asses they laded; but one would guess, by what follows, only each man one. For they went only to fetch a present supply: not thinking of providing against a long famine.

Ver. 27. *And as one of them opened his sack*, &c.] Wherein was their provision for the way, (ver. 25.)

Ver. 28. *He said unto his brethren*, &c.] Who all presently opened their sacks and found their money there. For so the story is told by Judah at their return to Egypt, (xliii. 21.) And both by that place and this, it appears this happened to them when they came unto their inn, to rest themselves, in their first day's journey.

And their heart failed them, &c.] Their guilt made them

afraid; otherwise they would have rejoiced. But all things terrify an evil conscience: which made them think some design was laid to undo them all.

What is this that God hath done unto us?] Now God was in all their thoughts, as the chief governor of all things; whosoever was the instrument.

Ver. 30. *The man who is the lord of the land.*] By this it appears Joseph was little less than a king, *i. e.* in his authority and sway, which he bare in that country.

Took us for spies.] In the Hebrew it is, *he gave us, i. e.* treated us as spies; by delivering us to be put in prison.

Ver. 34. *And ye shall traffic in the land.*] Buy corn, or any thing else the country affords; without any let or impediment.

Ver. 35. *When both they and their father saw the bundles of money,* &c.] They had seen the same before: therefore this is set down to express the fear which Jacob himself was in, at the sight of the money; though we may well suppose their fear was increased, when they perceived him to have the same apprehensions which they had, of some design that might be laid against their lives, when they returned to Egypt, though they brought their younger brother with them.

Ver. 36. *Simeon is not.*] He looked upon him as dead; being in the power of so rough a man, as they described the lord of the land to be: especially if he did not send Benjamin thither, as, for the present, he was resolved not to do.

All these things are against me.] Or, *upon me,* as the Hebrew words carry it. These are heavy burdens which lie upon me, not upon you; who can be content to have Benjamin go, after I have lost two of my sons already.

Ver. 37. *Slay my two sons if I bring him not to thee.*] Nothing could be more foolishly said; for what good would it do to Jacob (nay, what an increase of his affliction would it have been), to lose two grandchildren, after he had lost another son? But it was spoken out of a passionate desire to redeem Simeon, and to make more provision for their family: being confident that Joseph (who professed to fear God, ver. 18.) would be as good as his word.

Ver. 38. *He is left alone.*] The only child of his mother.

Bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.] You will make me, who am worn away already, die with grief.

CHAP. XLIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the famine was sore,* &c.] Still increased to a greater scarcity.

Ver. 2. *When they had eaten up the corn that they brought out of Egypt.*] So that they had nothing to live upon but only the poor crop that their own country produced, which could not long sustain them.

Buy us a little food.] He hoped, it is likely, the next year would be better; and so only desired a supply of their present necessity.

Ver. 3. *And Judah spake unto him,* &c.] Reuben had spoken to him in vain, (xlii. 37, 38.) and Levi, perhaps, had not recovered his interest in him, since the barbarous action at Shechem: and therefore Judah took upon him to persuade his father; being next in birth, and of no small authority among his brethren.

Ye shall not see my face.] But be taken for spies; and so lose their lives.

Ver. 5. *We will not go down.*] Because it would not only have been to no purpose, but also endangered their lives.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me?* &c.] It was unkindly done of you, to tell him of another brother. For what need was there to say any thing of one who was not with you?

Ver. 7. *The man asked us straightly,* &c.] They having told him, they *were all one man's sons,* (xlii. 11.) he might well ask them, what man's? And whether there were any more of them? And whether their father and brother were yet living?

And we told him according to the tenour of these words.] Answered every question as truth required.

Ver. 8. *Send the lad with me.*] *Trust him with me.* He calls him *lad,* because he was the youngest of them all; and one, of whom his father was as tender as if he had been a little child, though indeed he had children of his own, (xlvi. 21.)

That we may live, &c.] These were very moving arguments; the preservation of a whole family, Benjamin and all: who, if he went, might return in safety; but, if he stayed at home, must perish with all the rest.

Ver. 9. *I will be surety for him.*] Be bound in what penalty thou pleasest, to bring him back.

Of my hand shalt thou require him.] Punish me (who will be answerable for him) if he miscarry.

Bear the blame for ever.] Lie under thy displeasure, as long as I live. All this signifies only, that he would do his utmost to secure him: and rather suffer the heaviest thing himself, than lose Benjamin.

Ver. 10. *For except we had lingered,* &c.] If thou hadst not hindered us by these scruples about Benjamin, we had been there and at home again, by this time.

Ver. 11. *Take of the best fruits.*] The Hebrew word *mizzimrath* signifies *of the most praised;* or, as Bochart more literally interprets it, "quæ in hac terra sunt maxime decantata," (par. ii. Hierozoic. lib. v. cap. 9.) *those fruits which are most celebrated in the land of Canaan:* which was as famous for the things following, as Egypt was for corn. And it seems at this time did not want them; which might make them more acceptable in Egypt, where they grew at no time. For Egypt being a low and plain country, and Canaan a hilly, it made their products very different.

Balm.] Rather *resin,* as was observed on xxxvii. 25.

Honey.] For which this country was famous; especially in some parts of it, about Tekoah, as Bochart also observes. And therefore was a fit present for a king, as we see in the story of David, (2 Sam. xvii. 29.) And was carried from hence to the marts of Tyre. (Ezek. xxxvii. 17.)

Spices.] The word *necoth* signifies *storax;* as was also observed before, (xxxvii. 25.)

Myrrh.] Which Bochart translates *mastich.*

Nuts.] He also proves, by many arguments, that the word *botnim* signifies those nuts we call *pistachioes;* which may well be numbered among the best fruits of the land: being very friendly to the stomach and liver; powerful against poison; and highly esteemed, by the

ancients, as a delicious food. And so Maimonides and Kimchi expound the word.

Almonds.] They are fitly joined with *pistachioes,* as he observes; being *fructus congeneres:* and Dioscorides treats of them together; and Theophrastus describes the *pistachio* as ὅμοιον ταῖς ἀμυγδάλοις, *like unto almonds.* (Vid. Canaan, lib. i.)

Ver. 12. *Take double money.*] Other money besides their first. Which, if it signify as much more as the first, the reason was, because he thought corn might now be grown dearer.

Ver. 14. *If I be bereaved, I am bereaved.*] I submit unto it, and will bear it as patiently as I am able. Or, as some paraphrase it, I have been bereaved of Joseph and Simeon, so now I am of Benjamin: no new things happen to me; but I have been used to such afflictions; which I may therefore bear more equally.

Ver. 15. *Stood before Joseph.*] Presented themselves to him in his office (as we speak), or, in the place where he gave audience to those who came to petition him, or to buy corn of him. For it is plain, by the next verse, that he was not at his own house.

Ver. 16. *Bring these men home.*] Conduct them to my house.

And slay.] The Hebrew phrase signifies a *great slaughter;* of several sorts of creatures, perhaps; that there might be a plentiful provision.

Ver. 18. *And the men were afraid,* &c.] Every thing (as was observed, xlii. 28.) terrifies a guilty conscience.

And fall upon us.] *i. e.* Kill us.

And take us for bondmen, &c.] Rather, *or* take us for bondmen, and our asses.

Ver. 19. *They came near to the steward,* &c.] They desired to speak with him, before they entered into the house, that they might set themselves right in his opinion.

Ver. 20. *We came at the first time to buy food.*] And we paid for it what was demanded.

Ver. 21. *When we came to the inn,* &c.] There we found that very money, to a farthing, in our sacks' mouths, &c.

Ver. 22. *We cannot tell who put our money,* &c.] We are ignorant how it came there; but suppose it was by some mistake: and therefore have brought it again, with new money for another purchase.

Ver. 23. *Peace be to you.*] Trouble not yourselves about that matter.

Your God, and the God of your fathers, &c.] This steward had learned of Joseph the knowledge of the true God: to whose kindness he bids them ascribe this event.

And he brought Simeon out unto them.] Unbound; as free as themselves.

Ver. 24. *Gave them water.*] Ordered water to be brought, as the custom was, to wash their feet. (See xviii. 4.)

Ver. 26. *Bowed themselves to the ground.*] Here again was Joseph's dream fulfilled. (See xlii. 6.)

Ver. 28. *Thy servant our father,* &c.] Here they made a reverence to him in the name of their father: whereby that part of the dream (xxxvii. 9, 10.) which concerned him, was also fulfilled. And they speak likewise of him in an humble style, signifying his inferiority to Joseph.

Ver. 29. *Saw his brother Benjamin.*] He had seen him before, (ver. 16.) but did not think fit to take notice of him at the first: or, perhaps, was then full of business, when they presented themselves at their first appearance; and had not leisure to speak with them till dinner-time.

God be gracious unto thee, my son.] He blessed him, as superiors were wont to do those below them: whom they called their *sons,* with respect to themselves, as fathers of the country.

Ver. 30. *His bowels did yearn.*] He felt a great commotion within himself, which he was not able to keep from breaking out; and therefore he made haste out of the room where they were, as if some other business called him away.

Ver. 31. *Set on bread.*] Set the dinner upon the table.

Ver. 32. *And they set one for him by himself,* &c.] There seems to have been three tables. One where he sat alone in state, another where his brethren sat, and a third where the great men of Egypt were entertained.

For the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews, &c.] Because the Hebrews (saith Jonathan) did eat those beasts which the Egyptians worshipped. And to the same purpose writes Onkelos. In which regard the Egyptians were as scrupulous to eat with a Grecian in aftertimes, as now with a Hebrew. So Bochart observes out of Athenæus, lib. vii. Deipnos. where Anaxandrides, a comedian, jeers the Egyptians for worshipping an eel, as a great god, whom we, saith he, think to be most excellent meat. And out of Herodotus, who, in his Euterpe, (cap. 41.) saith no Egyptian man or woman would kiss the mouth of a Greek; nor make use of a knife, a spit, or a pot, belonging to them; nor take a bit of beef cut with a Greek's knife. (See Bochart's Hierozoic. par. vi. lib. ii. cap. 53. And Dr. Spencer, de Rit. Hebr. p. 125.) But though it appear by such passages, that, in the time of Herodotus and other forenamed writers, several animals were held so sacred among the Egyptians that they would not eat them, yet it may well be questioned, whether it were so in the days of Joseph. For there is not the least sign of it in this story; much less of their worshipping such creatures: the worship of the famous ox, called Apis, being a much later invention, as many learned men have demonstrated: and some of them having given probable reasons that Joseph himself was the person at first represented by that figure under the name of *Ab,* i. e. *Father* of his country. (See Ger. Vossius, lib. i. de Idol. cap. 29.)

Therefore it is most likely, that this abhorrence is to be resolved only into the very different manners of the Hebrews from the Egyptians: particularly at their meals, in the way of dressing their meat, or in their eating. For we know some of the Jews themselves afterwards scrupled to eat with those who had unwashen hands; and several nations have avoided such familiarity with others, merely on the account of their different customs; of which the Egyptians were exceeding tenacious, as Herodotus himself informs us, particularly in their eating. For he concludes his discourse about their feasts with this observation: (in his book beforementioned, cap. 28.) Πατρίοισι δὲ χρεώμενοι νόμοισι, ἄλλον οὐδένα ἐπικτέωνται: *Using their own country customs, they receive no other.* And in the ninety-first chapter of the same book he saith, that as they would use no Greek customs, so (to speak all in a word) μηδ' ἄλλων μηδαμῶ, &c. *Neither would they use the customs of any other men in the world whatsoever.* Nay, one part of Egypt differed extremely from another: for in the Theban province

they abstained from sheep, and sacrificed goats; but, in the Mendesian, quite contrary, they abstained from goats, and sacrificed sheep: as he tells us in his Euterpe, (cap. 42.) And the wisest of them were so nicely superstitious, that some of them thought it unlawful to eat of the head of any living creature; others the shoulder-blade; others of the feet; others of some like part. So Sextus Empiricus tells us: (lib. iii. Pyrrh. Hypot. cap. 24.) Αἰγυπτίων δὲ τῶν σοφῶν εἶναι νομιζομένων, οἱ μὲν κεφαλὴν ζώου φαγεῖν ἀνίερον εἶναι νομίζουσιν, &c. Upon which score I do not know but such kind of people might be so whimsical, as to refuse to eat with one another.

Ver. 33. *They sat before him.*] For that was the custom before the way of lying upon beds was invented. (See xxvii. 19. xxxvii. 25.)

And the men marvelled one at another.] That they should be so exactly disposed, according to the order of their birth: and so kindly treated by one that had lately used them very roughly.

Ver. 34. *And he took and sent messes,* &c.] Ordered those that waited to take and carry messes from his own table unto theirs. For such was the ancient custom, for great men to honour such as were in their favour, by sending dishes to them, which were first served up to themselves: from whence they were called *missa, messes,* things sent. The ancient way of eating also is to be observed, which was not like ours: as appears by Plutarch in his Sympos. lib. ii. Q. *ult.* where he disputes, which was the better custom, to eat out of one common dish, or every one to have a dish to himself, as the manner was in old time; when, all the meat being set on the table, the master of the feast distributed to every one his portion.

Benjamin's mess was five times as much, &c.] He had five dishes to their one: which was intended as a peculiar respect to him. Or, as others understand it, there was five times as much meat in his mess, as in one of theirs. Which might well be part of the cause of their wonder, (ver. 33.)

And they drank.] After they had dined, plenty of wine was brought in, for every one to drink as much as he pleased. For such is the custom of the Abyssines at this day, not to drink or talk at dinner, but after the meat is taken away; as Ludolphus assures us from Telezius; who takes it to have been the ancient custom among other nations, particularly the Romans; for which he alleges those verses of Virgil, Æneid. i.

> " Postquam prima quies epulis, mensæque remotæ,
> Crateras magnas statuunt, et vina coronant."

I mention *wine* here in Egypt: for though Herodotus saith in his days they had no *vines,* but used drink made of barley, *i. e.* such as ours, (lib. ii. cap. 77.) yet in the time of Joseph it seems to have been otherwise. For it is not likely the chief butler would have dreamt of a *vine* and *grapes,* and *pressing* them into Pharaoh's cup, (xl. 9, 10, 11.) if he had never seen them in Egypt.

And they were merry with him.] So we well translate the last words of this chapter; which signify their drinking plentifully; more liberally than at home: not till they were drunk (as R. Solomon saith some used to abuse this place, to countenance that vice), but till they were very cheerful. For they could not be so senseless, as, before so great a man in a strange place, where they were also full of fear, to make themselves drunk.

CHAP. XLIV.

Ver. 1. *FILL the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry.*] This seems to be an order, to load them more liberally than at their first coming, (xlii. 25.)

Ver. 2. *And put my cup,* &c.] The Hebrew word *gabiah* signifies an embossed cup (as we now speak), or a bowl; or goblet with a great belly: which St. Jerome translates *scyphus.* This he ordered his steward to put in Benjamin's sack, that he might make a trial of his brethren's concern for him, and affection both to him and to their father: and whether they would discover any envy to Benjamin, because of his extraordinary kindness to him.

Ver. 3. *The men were sent away.*] Had a pass, we may suppose, from Joseph; to carry so much corn out of the country, as their asses were loaded withal.

Ver. 4. *Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?*] Being entertained so kindly at my master's table, why have ye stolen his cup?

Ver. 5. *Is not this it wherein my lord drinketh.*] Did you not think this would be presently inquired after?

And whereby indeed he divineth?] The Hebrew word *nachash,* which we translate *divine,* it is very likely was anciently of an indifferent signification. And therefore Grotius thinks that Joseph meant by this speech, that he used this cup in his *drink-offerings;* when he sacrificed to prepare himself to receive Divine presages. But, I think, we had better say, there was a kind of divination by cups (though we know not what it was), as we are certain there was by many other things among the Greeks (who borrowed much of their religion from the Egyptians), than give this or other such-like interpretation of these words: particularly, their observing the sparkling of the wine in their libations. For it seems plain to me, that Joseph speaks of the cup he used at his own table; and it is not probable that he used the same in sacrifices to God. Such vessels as were used in Divine service were not used in their own: being held sacred; and therefore separated from common use; and kept so safe, no doubt, that it was not easy to steal them. He speaks therefore of some divination that was used at their meals: which doth not signify that Joseph practised it, nor doth his steward say he did; but only asks such a question, as might make them think he did. For, being a known interpreter of dreams, people, perhaps, thought he was skilled also in the arts of divination. But the words are still capable of a more simple interpretation. For *nachash* sometimes signifies no more than to *make an experiment:* as in the words of Laban, (xxx. 27.) And so the meaning may be (as Aben Ezra expounds this passage), Might you not have considered, that *my master made a trial* (so we interpret in the margin), by laying this in your way, *whether you were honest men or filchers,* as you are now proved to be? Or, as others will have it, *this is the cup wherein he drinks himself, and finds out what is in other men,* when they drink liberally with him at his table as you lately did. But the former is more likely to be the meaning.

Ye have done evil in so doing.] You have rendered yourselves very criminal by this fact. Or, you have done very foolishly in stealing a thing of this nature; which, being in continual use, would be soon missed.

Ver. 7. *God forbid that thy servants,* &c.] They disclaim the charge, with the greatest vehemence.

Ver. 8. *Behold the money,* &c.] And bring a very good proof of their honesty.

Ver. 9. *Both let him die, and we also,* &c.] Sometimes innocence makes men too confident; and less cautious than, in prudence, they ought to be. For their money having been put into their sacks, they knew not how, it was reasonable to have suspected this also might prove true.

Ver. 10. *Now also let it be according to your word,* &c.] I desire not so much; but only that he with whom the cup is found be my bondman, as you propound.

My bondman.] He speaks in the name and place of his master; by whom he was sent after them; and for whom he acted.

Ver. 11. *Then they speedily took down,* &c.] They were desirous to have their innocence cleared, without delay.

Ver. 13. *Rent their clothes.*] As the manner was, when any sad thing befel them, (xxxvii. 29. 34.)

Ver. 14. *Judah and his brethren came,* &c.] He is mentioned by name, though not the eldest son; because he was chiefly concerned for Benjamin, (xliii. 9.) and, as the Jews fancy, stood to him in this distress, when the rest would have delivered him up as a bondman: resolving either to set him free, or to be a bondman with him.

For he was yet there.] Not gone from home, since he gave order to his steward to pursue them.

They fell before him on the ground.] The dream of Joseph was again fulfilled. (See xlii. 6.)

Ver. 15. *Wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?*] Could not I, who foretold this grievous famine, discover such a theft as this, which you have committed?

Ver. 16. *And Judah said.*] He standing bound, as I said, (ver. 14.) for Benjamin to his father, took upon him to plead his cause: which Benjamin, being young, could not do so well himself. And indeed Judah seems to have been a man of the best sense, courage, and eloquence, among them.

What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? or how, &c.] A most pathetical beginning, and very apt to move compassion!

God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants, &c.] Having made some pause, after those words, *How shall we clear ourselves?* he proceeds to an ingenuous acknowledgment, that he and his brethren had been guilty of many sins; for which God had now brought them hither to suffer the punishment of them. Yet he neither confesses this particular guilt, nor denies it, nor excuses it: but, acknowledging God's justice, cast himself and his brethren upon Joseph's mercy.

Ver. 18. *Then Judah came near to him.*] The equity which appeared in Joseph (expressed in the words foregoing) emboldened Judah to approach nearer to him. For he seems to have spoken the former words as soon as he entered the room; when he and his brethren cast themselves down on the ground, (ver. 14.)

Speak a word in my lord's ears.] Have a favourable audience for a few words more. For he doth not mean to speak to him privately: and by *a word* he means all the following speech, which he makes as short as it was possible.

And let not thy anger burn against thy servant.] And be pleased to hear me out, with patience.

For thou art even as Pharaoh.] I know before whom I speak: and therefore will not impertinently trouble thee; but barely lay the state of our case before thee.

Ver. 20. *A little one.*] So Benjamin was, in comparison with themselves.

He alone is left of his mother, &c.] We do not read, that they had said this to Joseph before; but only that the youngest was with their father, (xlii. 13. 32.) But no doubt, Judah remembers him now of nothing, but what had been then delivered; but related more briefly than it is here.

Ver. 27. *My wife bare me two sons.*] He called Rachel his wife, as if he had no other, because she was the only person he designed to marry, and was by consequence his principal wife.

Ver. 30. *His life is bound up in the lad's life.*] It so depends upon the life of this son, that if he think he be dead, he will die with grief also.

Ver. 33. *Let thy servant abide instead of the lad,* &c.] It will be the same to thee (nay, I may be able to do thee more service), and the greatest act of pity to our aged father.

Ver. 34. *For how shall I go up to my father,* &c.] I must abide here too, if thou wilt not dismiss him; for I am not able to see my father die.

There is nothing could be said more moving than what is delivered in this speech of Judah's; which flowed, any one may see, from such natural passions, as no art can imitate: which makes me wish that they, who think these historical books of Scripture were written with no spirit but that with which honest men now write the history of their country, or the lives of any famous persons, would seriously read and consider this speech of Judah's to Joseph, together with the foregoing dialogue between Jacob and his sons (from the 19th verse of the forty-second chapter, to the 15th of the forty-third); and, I hope, it may make them change their opinion, and be of the mind of Dr. Jackson. (b. i. on the Creed, chap. 4.) "That seeing such passages are related by men who affect no art, and who lived long after the parties that first uttered them; we cannot conceive how all particulars could be so naturally and fully recorded, unless they had been suggested by his Spirit who gives mouth and speech to men. Who being alike present to all successions, is able to communicate the secret thoughts of forefathers to their children; and put the very words of the deceased (never registered before) into the mouths or pens of their successors, for many generations after: and that as exactly and distinctly, as if they had been caught in characters of steel or brass, as they issued out of their mouth. For it is plain, every circumstance is here related, with such natural specifications (as he speaks), as if Moses had heard them talk; and therefore could not have been thus represented to us unless they had been written by his direction, who knows all things; as well forepast, as present, or to come."

Philo justly admired this speech, which he hath expressed in an eloquent paraphrase: and Josephus hath endeavoured to outdo him.

CHAP. XLV.

Ver. 1. *COULD not refrain himself.*] Tears began to run down his cheeks; or, were ready to burst out with such violence that he could not hinder them.

Cause every man to go out from me.] He would not have the Egyptians to be witnesses of his brethren's guilt; nor did it become his dignity to be seen by them in such a passion: and therefore he commanded those that attended him to leave him alone with his brethren.

Ver. 2. *He wept aloud.*] Which we express very properly in our language, *he cried.* For tears having been long suppressed, are wont, when they break out, to be accompanied with some noise.

And the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.] They whom he sent forth, being in the next rooms, heard him cry, and reported what a passion he was in to the whole court.

Ver. 3. *I am Joseph.*] This word made them start; as appears by the next verse.

Doth my father yet live?] May I believe what you have told me? (xliii. 28.) He saith not this because he doubted of it: but to express his joy at that good news.

And they could not answer him.] Being astonished, as it follows, at his presence. For they could not but reflect upon their cruel usage of him; and now saw him in full power to punish them.

Ver. 4. *Come near to me, I pray you.*] This, I think, signifies, that they had started back, as men affrighted: and therefore he invites them kindly to approach him.

I am Joseph your brother.] This word *brother,* added to what he said before, (ver. 3.) was a comfort to them. For it shewed that his greatness did not make him forget his relation.

Whom you sold into Egypt.] Nor their unkindness alienated his affection from them.

Ver. 5. *Now therefore be not grieved,* &c.] Do not afflict yourselves too much for your sin, because God hath turned it into good.

God sent me before you, &c.] When you thought only to be rid of me, God intended another thing, which is now come to pass. For he hath made me an instrument of preserving all your lives. A most happy event of a most wicked deed!

Ver. 6. *Neither earing nor harvest.*] Or, no ploughing, sowing, or harvest. For to what purpose should they sow, when they knew (if they believed Joseph) that nothing would come of it?

Ver. 7. *And God sent me before you,* &c.] He repeats what he had said, (ver. 5.) concerning the hand of God in this business; that, by fixing their thoughts upon his providence, they might be less oppressed with the weight of their own guilt.

To save your lives by a great deliverance.] In a wonderful manner.

Ver. 8. *It was not you, but God,* &c.] He mentions this a third time, that they might see he did not think so much on their unkindness, as on God's great goodness: and therefore be confident, he would not remember what they had done to him; but what God had done for them all.

Hath made me a father unto Pharaoh.] Given me the authority of a father with him; so that he honours me, and doth nothing without my advice and counsel. And there was very good reason for it, his wisdom being so great and experienced, "Ut non ab homine sed à Deo responsa dari viderentur," (as Trogus, an ancient historian among the heathen, observes) *that his answers seemed not to be given by a man, but by God.* Which made him "regi percharum," *very dear to the king,* as the same author relates, who tells also the story of his being sold by his brethren, who envied his excellent wit. (See Justin, lib. xxxvi. cap. 2.)

Lord of all his house.] The principal person in his court.

And ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.] Chief governor of the whole country, in which were several provinces, which had distinct governors, who were all under the government of Joseph.

Ver. 10. *Thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen.*] This was that part of the lower Egypt which lay next to Arabia and Palestine, abounding with fair pastures, being watered by many streams from the Nile. Certain it is, it lay next to Canaan; for Jacob went directly thither when he came into Egypt, and stayed there till Joseph came to him, (xlvi. 28.)

And thou shalt be near unto me.] Therefore the royal city (where Joseph resided, that he might be always near to Pharaoh) was at this time in the lower Egypt, at Zoan, (Psal. lxxviii. 43.) which other authors call Tanis; which was situated not far from that mouth of the Nile which Plutarch calls τανιτικὸν στόμα. For that part of Egypt is called the *higher* where Nile runs only in one stream; that the *lower* where it divides into many; and from its triangular form is called by the Greeks Δέλτα. In the eastern part of which, or very near it, towards the Red Sea, was this country, called the land of Goshen.

This argues the great authority of Joseph, that he makes such promises as these, before he had asked the consent of Pharaoh.

Ver. 12. *And behold, your eyes see,* &c.] You cannot but be convinced, by the lineaments you see in my face, and by the language which I speak, and by all the things which I have related concerning the state of our family, that indeed it is your brother Joseph who speaks to you. Or, more simply, you have it not by hearsay, which might deceive you; but are eye-witnesses that I am alive, and say these things to you.

Ver. 13. *Tell my father of all my glory.*] Of the great honour which is done me in Egypt.

Ver. 15. *His brethren talked with him.*] After their fright was over, and he had so affectionately embraced them, they conversed freely and familiarly with him; acknowledging, it is likely, their crime, and acquainting him with what had passed in their family since they committed it.

Ver. 16. *And the fame thereof,* &c.] All the court rang (as we speak) with the news of Joseph's brethren being come; and that they were to fetch their father and settle in Egypt. For Joseph (it appears by the next verse) went and acquainted Pharaoh with his desire.

And it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.] No wonder that Pharaoh, who had raised Joseph so high, was pleased to be kind to his father and family; and the court follows the pleasure of the king.

Ver. 17. *Pharaoh said unto Joseph,* &c.] This no doubt

was the answer Pharaoh made to Joseph's petition; wherein he grants him not only what he asked, but all conducing to it.

Ver. 18. *I will give you the good of the land,* &c.] The richest part of the country, which produces the noblest fruits.

Ver. 19. *Now thou art commanded.*] Now that thou hast my warrant for it, go about it presently.

Ver. 20. *Regard not your stuff.*] If there be not waggons enough to bring all your stuff, do not matter it; you shall have better here. But the Vulgar seems to take it in a quite contrary sense, as if he had said, *Leave nothing behind you;* but bring all you have with you, if you think good: though whatsoever the land of Egypt affords is all yours.

All the good of the land of Egypt, &c.] You shall not want when you come hither, if it be to be had in Egypt.

Ver. 21. *Gave them waggons.*] And horses, no doubt, to draw them; with which Egypt abounded.

Ver. 22. *To each man changes of raiment.*] Two *vests,* or *robes,* as St. Jerome translates it: otherwise there would not have been a change. These were part of the ancient riches, as much as money.

Ver. 23. *After this manner.*] The Hebrew word *cezoth* signifies, according to that which he had given to Benjamin, i. e. *money,* and several changes of raiment: besides what follows, "ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt," &c.

Bread and meat.] *i. e.* All manner of provision.

Ver. 24. *See that ye fall not out,* &c.] About what you have formerly done to me, or any thing else that I have said to you. But when you reflect upon your selling me, adore the providence of God, which by that means brought about your happiness and mine.

Ver. 26. *His heart fainted.*] At the mention of Joseph's name he fell into a swoon; being fully persuaded he was dead, and giving no credit to what they said of his being alive.

Ver. 27. *And they told him all the words of Joseph.*] When he was come to himself, they related all that had passed between them and Joseph; how great a man he was, and how desirous to see him, &c. (ver. 13.)

And when he saw the waggons.] Had not only heard their relation, but saw also those carriages (which no doubt were splendid, and suitable to Joseph's quality) that were come to bring him into Egypt, he looked upon them as a sufficient confirmation of the good news.

The spirit of Jacob revived.] Which Bochart translates, "Pristino vigori restitutus est," *he was restored to his former vigour.* Not only recovered perfectly from his fainting fit, but raised to a greater liveliness than he had felt since the loss of Joseph.

Ver. 28. *It is enough,* &c.] I wish for no more but to see him; and then I shall be content to die.

CHAP. XLVI.

Ver. 1. *CAME to Beer-sheba.*] Which was in his way from Hebron (where he now lived, xxxv. 27.) into Egypt; lying in the most southerly parts of Canaan, near that wilderness through which the Israelites went when they came from Egypt.

And offered sacrifice.] Recommended himself and his family unto God's protection in his journey to Egypt, and unto his preservation when he came there. And he the rather called upon God in this place, because both his father and grandfather had found favour with him here, (xxi. 33. xxvi. 23.)

Unto the God of his father Isaac.] Who was his immediate ancestor, and had conferred the blessing of Abraham upon him; and therefore he mentions him rather than Abraham.

Ver. 2. *In the visions of the night.*] See upon xx. 3.

Jacob, Jacob.] He redoubles his name to awaken his attention; and he calls him Jacob rather than Israel (as he is called in the beginning of the verse), to remember him what he was originally, and that by his favour he was made Israel.

Ver. 3. *Fear not to go down into Egypt.*] He was afraid, perhaps, that if Joseph should die, his family might be made slaves; for which he had some reason, from what was said to Abraham, in a like vision, (xv. 13.)

I will make of thee a great nation.] He renews the promise, which at the same time was made to Abraham, that his seed should be as numerous as the stars of heaven, (xv. 5.)

Ver. 4. *I will go down with thee,* &c.] Take care of thee in thy journey, that no evil shall befal thee; and preserve thee and thy family there.

And bring thee up again.] *i. e.* His posterity, who should multiply there: for the Scripture speaks of parents and children as one person.

Put his hands upon thine eyes.] Be with thee when thou leavest this world; and take care of thy funeral, when thou art dead. For this was the first thing that was done, when one expired, to close his eyes; which was performed both among Greeks and Romans (as many authors inform us) by the nearest relations, or dearest friends. (See Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 7. n. 12. and Menochius de Repub. Heb. lib. viii. cap. 4. qu. xi.)

In short, by these words God assures him that Joseph should not die, while he lived, (as Mr. Selden observes out of Baal-haturim, in his additions to the forenamed chapter, p. 737.) and that he should die in peace, having his children about him.

Ver. 7. *His daughters.*] He had but one daughter, and therefore the plural number is used for the singular (as ver. 23, *sons* is put for *son*), or else he includes his granddaughter, who in Scripture language is called the daughter of her grandfather. But the first seems the truest account, if what is said ver. 13. be considered. Where the whole number of his descendants from Leah being summed up, Dinah (under the name of daughters) must be taken in, to make up three-and-thirty; reckoning Jacob himself also for one of them.

Ver. 9. *Hanoch.*] From whom came the family of the Hanochites, as we read Numb. xxvi. 5.

Phallu.] From whom, in like manner, sprung the family of the Phalluites, as Moses there notes; and says the same of the rest of Reuben's sons, that they were the fathers of families, when they came into Egypt.

Ver. 10. *Jemuel.*] This son of Simeon is called Nemuel in Numb. xxvi. 12. and 1 Chron. iv. 24.

Ohad.] He is named among the sons of Simeon, when

Moses was sent to bring them out of Egypt, (Exod. vi. 15.) But either he had no posterity, or they were extinct: for shortly after there is no mention of him, in Numb. xxvi. 12. Nor is he to be found among his sons in 1 Chron. iv. 24.

Jachin] Is called Jarib in 1 Chron. iv. 24. and is thought by some to have been the grandfather of Zimri, whom Phinehas slew in his fornication with the Midianitish woman.

Ver. 12. *Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan.*] And therefore are not to be numbered among them that went down into Egypt: but, instead of them, the two sons of Pharez are set down, though, perhaps, not now born; to supply the place of Er and Onan.

The sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul.] When Jacob went down into Egypt, Pharez was so young, that one can scarce think he had two sons at that time: but they were born soon after, before Jacob died. And St. Austin seems to have truly judged, that Jacob's descent into Egypt comprehends all the *seventeen* years which he lived after it. Or, we may conceive it possible, that their mother was with child of them when Jacob went down into Egypt. For then Pharez is thought to have been *fourteen* years old; at which age it is so far from being incredible that he might have two sons, that, in these later ages, some have begotten a child when they were younger. Jul. Scaliger, a man of unquestionable credit, assures us that in his memory there was a boy, not quite *twelve* years old, who had a daughter by a cousin of his, who was not quite *ten*. "Rem notam narro, et cujus memoria adhuc recens est in Aquitania." *This was a known thing, the memory of which was then fresh in Aquitain.*

Ver. 13. *And the sons of Issachar, Tola.*] Some have wondered that he should give his eldest son a name that signifies a *worm*. Perhaps it was (as Bochart conjectures) because he was a poor shrivelled child when he was born, not likely to live. And yet it pleased God, that he became a great man, from whom sprang a numerous offspring, (Numb. xxvi. 23.) and so fruitful, that in the days of David, there were numbered above *two-and-twenty thousand* of them, (1 Chron. vii. 2.) who were men of might and valour.

Ver. 15. *Which she bare unto Jacob in Padan-Aram.*] She bare the fathers of them there; but the children were born in Canaan.

All the souls of his sons and daughters, &c.] See ver. 7.

Ver. 19. *Rachel, Jacob's wife.*] She was his only choice, as was noted before, on xliv. 27.

Ver. 21. *The sons of Benjamin*, &c.] He being now but about *twenty-four* years old, we cannot well think he had all these sons when he went down into Egypt: but some of them were born afterward, before Jacob died, as was said before, (ver. 12.) Yet they are all here mentioned, because they were most of them now born, and all became the heads of families in their tribe. It is possible he might begin so early to beget children, as to have all these before they went into Egypt. (See ver. 12.)

Ver. 26. *Come out of his loins.*] In the Hebrew, *out of his thigh*. A modest expression: the parts serving for the propagation of mankind being placed between the thighs.

All the souls were threescore and six.] *i. e.* Leaving out Joseph and his two sons (who did not come with Jacob into Egypt, but were there already) and Jacob himself (who could not be said to come out of his own loins), they made just this number.

Ver. 27. *All the souls which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.*] There is a remarkable difference between this verse and the foregoing. There (ver. 26.) they only are numbered who came *with Jacob into Egypt:* which were no more than *threescore and six*. But here are numbered all that came into Egypt (*viz.* first and last), which plainly comprehend Jacob, Joseph, and his two sons; and make up *threescore and ten*.

Ver. 28. *And he sent Judah before him.*] Who seems by the whole story to have been the most eminent among Jacob's children, when Joseph was gone; as was noted before, (xliv. 14.)

To direct his way, &c.] To give Joseph notice of his coming; and to receive directions from him, in what part of Goshen he should expect him.

And they came into the land of Goshen.] Into that part of it which Joseph had appointed.

Ver. 29. *Presented himself to him.*] With such reverence as a son owes to his father, who embraced him most tenderly. For some refer the next words to Jacob, *he fell on his neck*, &c.; which expresses the highest affection.

And wept on his neck a good while.] We read before how Joseph fell upon Benjamin's neck, and wept; which was answered by the like endearments on Benjamin's part, (xlv. 14.) But the affection wherewith Jacob embraced Joseph (as Maimonides understands it), or (as R. Solomon Jarchi) Joseph embraced his father, far surpassed that. For they continued longer enfolded in one another's arms; where tears of joy flowed so fast, that for a *good while* they could not speak.

Ver. 30. *And Israel said unto Joseph.*] Some make this an argument, that it was Joseph, who, lighting out of his chariot, threw himself into his father's arms and wept, &c. which made Moses now more distinctly mention who said the following words.

Now let me die, &c.] These words signify that he now enjoyed the utmost happiness he could desire on earth; which therefore he was willing to leave, because nothing could be added to it. These were the first thoughts which his passion suggested to him; though to live with Joseph, and to enjoy his conversation, was far more than barely to *see his face*.

Ver. 32. *The men are shepherds*, &c.] He seems to have been afraid, lest Pharaoh should have preferred his brethren, and made them courtiers, or commanders in the army, &c. which might have procured them the envy of the Egyptians: and, besides, have separated them one from another. Whereas, by professing themselves shepherds, and traders in cattle, they kept all together in a body, separate from the Egyptians. Which two reasons are suggested by Josephus.

Ver. 33. *What is your occupation?*] Your way of living: for men did not live idly in those days.

Ver. 34. *Ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been*, &c.] He directs them to justify what he told them he would inform Pharaoh.

That ye may dwell in the land of Goshen.] A rich country, abounding with pasturage, and also next adjoining to Canaan, (as was noted before, xlv. 10.) unto which, when the time came, they might the more easily return.

For every shepherd.] Not universally, without limitation, but every *foreign shepherd*. For a considerable part of

the Egyptian people were *shepherds*, as Diodorus Siculus tells us, (lib. i. §. 2. p. 47. edit. Steph.) where he saith, the country being divided into *three* parts, the *priests* had one, their *king* a second, and the *soldiers* a third: and there were *three* other ranks of men under these, *viz. shepherds, husbandmen,* and *artificers*. The husbandmen, he saith, served their king, and priests, and military men, in tilling their ground, for small wages, and spent all their time in it. And the like account, he saith, is given of their shepherds, who, from their forefathers, followed that way of living. Which makes it plain they could not abominate those who were so serviceable to them; though they might contemn them as mean people, who never rose to any higher employment. But we need not go to him for the proof of this: it being apparent from this very book, that the Egyptians had sheep, and oxen, as well as horses and asses, which they sold to Joseph for corn in the time of famine, (xlvii. 17.) and that Pharaoh spake to Joseph to make such of his brethren as were men of skill, rulers over his flocks, (xlvii. 6.) which is a demonstration they bred cattle as well as other nations. And therefore, if we will understand this to be true of all shepherds, without exception, then, by Egyptians (to whom shepherds are said to be an abomination), we must not understand all the people of the country of Egypt (shepherds being a part of them), but only the courtiers and great men, as in xlv. 2. the Egyptians are said to hear Joseph weep, *i. e.* those that belonged to the court: who, it is likely, despised shepherds (as Rupertus Tuitiensis long ago expounded this passage); but that is far short of abominating them, which the Hebrew word imports. But after all this, I do not see how they could be contemptible, if it be true which the same Diodorus saith, p. 58. That when they buried a corpse, and made the funeral encomium, they never mentioned the parentage of the deceased; Ὑπολαμβάνοντες ἅπαντας ὁμοίως εὐγενεῖς εἶναι τοὺς κατ' Αἴγυπτον, *making account that all the people of Egypt were alike well-born.*

We must confine therefore this assertion to foreign shepherds; and it is not easy to give the reason why they were an abomination to the Egyptians, who were shepherds themselves. Onkelos and Jonathan, with a great many others, think that they would not converse (for that is meant by abomination) with the Hebrew shepherds; because they had no greater regard to those creatures which the Egyptians worshipped, than to breed them up to be eaten. But there is no good proof that they worshipped sheep or oxen in those days: and, on the contrary, it appears both out of Herodotus, and Diodorus Siculus, that they sacrificed such creatures in their days, and also eat of the sacrifices when they had done. (See Herodot. in Euterpe, cap. 40, 41.) And therefore the reason given by others for this abhorrence is not solid; that the Egyptians did eat no flesh, and upon that score could not endure those that did. This is the account which Aben Ezra gives of this matter; who fancies they were like the Indians, in his time, who abominated shepherds, because they drunk milk; contrary to their manners, who tasted nothing that came from any living creature. But, as it cannot be proved that this superstition was so old as Jacob's time; so the contrary is evident from this very book, (xliii. 16.) where Joseph bids his steward go home and *slay and make ready* a dinner for his brethren: whom he did not intend to entertain after the Hebrew but after the Egyptian fashion; that he might not be known by them. And so Herodotus informs us, that in his days, though they abstained from some animals, yet they eat of others, both fish and birds: (Euterpe, cap. 78.) And Diodorus, giving an account after what manner their kings lived, saith they used a simple diet, eating *veal and geese,* &c. (lib. i. §. 2. p. 45. edit. Steph.)

Jos. Scaliger therefore thinks this sort of men were abominable, because they had often raised rebellion in Egypt, and made a king of their own; who erected that which is called the *pastoral kingdom*. This is embraced by many great men, who have only the authority of Menetho for it; who says, these were Phœnician shepherds (as Josephus tells us, lib. i. contra Appion.) who reigned in Egypt, burnt their cities, and threw down their temples; in short, omitted no sort of cruelties. Upon this account the famous Bochartus (lib. iv. Canaan. cap. 4.) thinks it possible the Egyptians hated shepherds, who had done so much mischief: and, I may add, the Hebrew shepherds Joseph might think would be more abominated, because they came out of that very country, from whence those Phœnician rovers made their invasion. But as it doth not appear that they who did the forenamed mischief, were all foreigners; so the time which is assigned for this *pastoral kingdom* doth not agree with the Scripture story. For it is said to have been in the one thousand one hundred and twelfth year before the Israelites going out of Egypt; in the fifteenth dynasty, as they call it; that is, about two-and-forty years after the flood, when Mizraim the father of the Egyptians was scarce born, or was very young.

Our great primate Usher endeavours to avoid this absurdity, by placing this invasion (which he thinks was out of Arabia) three hundred years after the flood: when they took Memphis, overrun all the lower Egypt, and their first king there reigned nineteen years. But I have this to except; that Abraham, coming a good while after this into Egypt, was well entertained there; though he was as much a shepherd as his grandchild Jacob. (See Gen. xii.)

From whence I conclude, that if this story of Manetho be true, it happened after the time of Abraham; and so was fresh in their memory. Such a third rebellion of the shepherds the same Manetho mentions, within less than two hundred years before the children of Israel's departure out of Egypt. But this seems to be a story, framed from that departure of the Israelites themselves (who were shepherds) out of Egypt under the conduct of Moses. And so Josephus and several of the ancient Christians (Tatianus, Justin Martyr, and Clem. Alexandrinus) understood it. (See Usser. ad An. M. 2179.)

All this considered, Gaulmin (in his notes upon the book called the Life of Moses, p. 267, &c.) hath more probably conjectured, that this aversion to shepherds arose from their being generally addicted, in those parts, to robbery: which way of life made them abominable. This he justifies out of Heliodorus (lib. i.) and Achilles Tatius, (lib. iii.) who describe the seat of these Βουκόλοι and Ποιμένες (whom the Egyptians called *Hysch*), and the manner of their life. To which opinion I find Bochart himself inclined before he died, and confirms it (in his Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 44. par. i.) by many proofs, that shepherds anciently were *furax hominum genus,* a thievish sort of people; which

made them odious. Against which I see no exception but this; that Aulus Gellius tells us, (lib. xi. cap. 18.) out of an ancient lawyer, that the old Egyptians held all manner of thefts to be lawful, and did not punish them. And Diodorus Siculus mentions this law among them, That they who would live by robbery, were to enter their names, and bring what they stole immediately to the priest, who mulct the man that was robbed a fourth part, and gave it to the thief; by which means all thefts were discovered, and men were made more careful, to look well after their goods. But one cannot believe this law was of such antiquity as the times of Joseph: or, if it was, those outlaws (as I may call them) who robbed upon the borders, were not concerned in it: nor had their neighbours, who were no less addicted to theft, the benefit of it. Particularly those in Palestine, from whence Jacob came, one would guess by what we read 1 Chron. vii. 21, 22. were then much addicted to robbery. For, before this generation ended, we are told there the men of Gath slew several of the sons of Ephraim (who himself was then alive), "for they came down to take their cattle," saith that holy writer; that is, to get what plunder they could in Goshen: where the Ephraimites, defending their cattle, were some of them killed by the Philistines, to the great grief of their father. The Ethiopians also are noted by Strabo (lib. xvii. p. 787.) to live for the most part, Νομαδικῶς καὶ ἀπόρως, after a very poor, sharking, roving manner, by feeding cattle, where they could find food for them. And immediately adds, Τοῖς δ' Αἰγυπτίοις ἅπαντα τἀναντία συμβέβηκε, that all things were quite contrary among the Egyptians, who were a more civilized people, inhabiting certain and known places, &c. Which shews that their manners were very different; which easily bred hatred. Which appears by what Plutarch saith (in his book de Isid. et Osir.) that the Egyptians avoided the conversation of *black people:* which was the complexion of the Ethiopians. And for some such reason, he saith, in the same book, they avoided all mariners (of other nations, that is), as here Moses says they did shepherds, upon some or other of the accounts beforementioned.

It looks like a piece of great generosity in Joseph, not to conceal from Pharoah the quality of his family: though such kinds of men were under a very ill character. He hoped they would distinguish themselves from such vile shepherds as had made the name odious: and if they did not gain the love of the Egyptians, they would be the more secured in the love of God, by not learning their evil manners and superstitions: from which they would be preserved, by having no conversation with them.

CHAP. XLVII.

Ver. 1. *JOSEPH came and told Pharaoh,* &c.] He had his warrant sometime ago, to send for his father and his family, (xlv. 17. &c.) But it was good manners to acquaint him they were come; and to know his pleasure, how he should dispose of them.

Behold, they are in the land of Goshen.] They stop there (which was the entrance of Egypt) till they know thy pleasure.

Ver. 2. *And he took some of his brethren,* &c.] The Hebrew word *miktse* (which we translate *some*) signifies in common language, *de extremitate,* from the fagg-end, as we speak, of his brethren: which hath made some imagine, he presented the meanest of his brethren to Pharaoh; that he might neither be afraid of them, nor think of advancing them to employments in the court or camp. But this is a mere fancy; the word here denoting only, that he took from among all his brethren five of them: as Bochart observes, who translates it *ex omnibus fratribus suis;* taking it to be like that phrase (xix. 4.) where we translate it, *from all quarters,* (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 34.)

Ver. 3. *Both we and our fathers.*] It is not an employment we have lately taken up, but were bred to it by our ancestors; who followed the same profession. For this was the most ancient way of living, as Columella observes in his Preface. "In rusticatione antiquissima est ratio pascendi, eademque quæstuosissima." *In country business, the most ancient, as well as most gainful, is the way of feeding cattle.* From whence he thinks came the name of *pecunia* for money, and *peculium,* for riches, *à pecoribus,* from cattle; because the ancients had no other possessions. "Et adhuc apud quasdam gentes unum hoc reperitur divitiarum genus." *And to this day,* (saith he,) *there is no other riches to be found among some nations.* Which is still true of the Abyssines, especially of the Beklenses, as Ludolphus assures us, (lib. i. Hist. Ethiop. cap. 10. §. 8. and Comment. in Histor. lib. iv. cap. 4. n. 13.)

Ver. 4. *To sojourn in the land are we come.*] We do not desire to settle, but only to sojourn here, during the famine.

For the famine is sore in the land of Canaan.] It was a high country, in comparison with Egypt; and the grass sooner burnt up there than in Goshen, which being a very low country, they found some pasture in it for their flocks, and therefore besecched him to suffer them to dwell there. For, as St. Austin observes, from those that knew the country, there was more grass in the marshes and fenny parts of Egypt, when the Nile did not overflow enough to make plenty of corn. (Quæst. clx. in Gen.)

Ver. 6. *The land of Egypt is before thee.*] It is all in thy power: dispose of them as thou pleasest.

Any man of activity.] Vigorous and industrious; and that understands his business.

Make them rulers over my cattle.] Such as Doeg was to Saul, (1 Sam. xxi. 7.) and those great officers mentioned 1 Chron. xxvii. 29, 30, 31. were to King David. For the eastern kings raised part of their revenue from cattle; and so did the Egyptian (it appears by this place) who had some prime officers, to oversee the lower sort of shepherds. This shews that all shepherds were not an abomination to the Egyptians, but only those of other neighbouring nations (the Arabians, Phœnicians, and Ethiopians), who were either an ill sort of people, or forbidden by the law of Egypt (which abounded with cattle) to traffic with them there.

Ver. 7. *Jacob blessed Pharaoh.*] Gave him thanks for his favour; and prayed for his health and safety: for that is the blessing of an inferior to a superior. Thus Naaman prays Elisha, "Take a blessing of thy servant," *i. e.* an acknowledgment of my obligations to thee.

Ver. 9. *Pilgrimage*] So good men are wont to call their life; though they never stir from their native soil: looking upon it as a passage, not a settlement. But Jacob had

reason to call his life so more literally: having been tossed from place to place, ever since he went from his father's house in Mesopotamia, and returned from thence into Canaan: where he dwelt awhile at Succoth; and then at Shechem; and after that removed to Bethel; and so to Hebron unto his father Isaac; from whence he was now come into Egypt.

Few and evil have been the days, &c.] They had been *few,* in comparison with his forefathers; and *evil,* because full of labour and care, grief and sorrow, upon many occasions.

Ver. 10. *Jacob blessed Pharaoh.*] At meeting and at parting such salutations were usual. (See ver. 7.)

Ver. 11. *In the land of Rameses.*] In that part of Goshen which in the days of Moses was called Rameses; from the name of the city which the Hebrews built there for Pharaoh. Unless, perhaps, the city was called so from the country of Rameses, wherein it stood.

Ver. 12. *And Joseph nourished his father,* &c.] Though there was some pasture in this country for their cattle, yet not food enough for themselves; which Joseph therefore took care to supply them withal.

According to their families.] According as their children were more or fewer, so he proportioned their allowance.

Ver. 13. *There was no bread in all the land.*] This was the third year of the famine, (xlv. 6.) in which all the corn, which men had stored up in their several families, was wholly spent.

Ver. 14. *And Joseph gathered up all the money,* &c.] As long as the Egyptians had any money left, they bought corn of Joseph, which supported them all the third, and, it is probable, the fourth and fifth years of the famine.

And Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.] Into the treasury; which he filled, and not his own coffers, as Philo observes.

Ver. 15. *And when money failed.*] This, we may probably conceive, was in the sixth year of the famine, when they were forced to sell their cattle for food.

Ver. 18. *They came the second year.*] *i. e.* The next year after the sale of their cattle; which was the last of the famine, as appears from the next verse.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore should we die, we and our land?*] The land is said to die (as Bochart observes, in the beginning of his Hierozoicon), "cum inculta jacet et desolata," *when it lies untilled and desolate:* as he shews by examples out of some poets.

We and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh.] We that were free will become the king's bondmen: and our land, which was our own, we will hold of him.

And give us seed, &c.] This shews it was now the last year of the famine: they desiring corn not merely for food, but also to sow, in hopes to have a crop the next year. For Joseph had told them there should be but seven years of famine: and it is likely Nilus had now begun to overflow the country, as formerly; which confirmed his word.

Ver. 20. *And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh.*] So the whole country became the king's demesne; in which no man had any property but himself.

Ver. 21. *As for the people, he removed them to cities.*] Remote from those wherein they had formerly dwelt. Under the word *cities,* are comprehended all the villages about them.

From one end of the borders of Egypt, &c.] Transplanted them into far-distant parts of the country; from whence he brought others, in like manner, into their places: that they might in time forget the dominion they formerly had in the lands they had sold; and that there might be no combination afterward to regain them: the old owners being separated far one from another.

Ver. 22. *Only the land of the priests bought he not.*] This is commonly noted, as a great piece of religion in Joseph, that he took not away the land of those who were God's ministers: though engaged, it is thought, in superstitious, if not idolatrous, services (for, that the word *cohanim* here signifies *priests,* not *princes,* as sometimes it doth, the ancient versions generally agree). But it is plain they were in no necessity to sell their lands, having their diet continually from the king; which is given as the reason (in the following part of this verse) why he did not buy them. This therefore is rather to be observed, that the priests had anciently some public lands allotted to them for the support of their dignity. For both Herodotus and Diodorus tell us, they had a public maintenance, as Vossius observes, (lib. i. de Idolol. cap. 29.) The priesthood being confined to certain families (as it was in Israel to that of Aaron), and held in such veneration, that they were all not only ἀτελεῖς, *free from paying tributes,* and δευτερεύοντες μετὰ τὸν Βασιλέα, *next to the king in honour and in power;* but received a third of the royal revenues: out of which they maintained the public sacrifices, and their servants, and τὰς ἰδίας ἐχορήγουν, *provided for their own necessities.* Thus Diodorus Siculus, (lib. i.) as I find him alleged by Jac. Capellus, in his Hist. Sacra et Exot. ad A. M. 2294. Constantine the Great, in part, imitated this constitution, in that law of his, which made even all the professors of learning free from all public charges of any sort, besides the salary he allowed them; that they might the more cheerfully follow their several studies.

Ver. 23. *Behold, I have bought you this day, and your land,* &c.] The bargain could not be denied; but he would not be so rigid as to tie them strictly to it. For in the next verse, he requires only a fifth part of the increase of their ground for the king; and tells them, the rest should be their own. An act of great humanity and equity: wherein he shewed himself both a good man and a wise statesman; in taking away all matter of complaint from the people. For a tenth part of the increase was due, in all likelihood, to the king before, (xxviii. 22.) which he now only doubles: when he might have taken all; or given them but one or two parts, and kept all the rest for the king.

Ver. 25. *Thou hast saved our lives,* &c.] We owe our very lives to thee: and therefore let us but have thy favour, and we shall willingly be Pharaoh's servants. This is a high expression of their thankfulness, for such good terms as he offered them; which they readily accepted, with professions of their obligation to be Pharaoh's bondmen.

Ver. 26. *Joseph made it a law.*] By his advice this law was enacted; whereby the power of the Egyptian kings was mightily increased; for we read not of the like constitution in any other nation. Thucydides indeed relates that the people of Attica paid to Pisistratus the twentieth part of their corn; and Appianus Alexandr. says, the old Romans paid the tenth of their corn, and the fifth of their fruit: but it was the peculiar prerogative of the Egyptian

kings to have the fifth of all the increase of the field: which Joseph procured them by his admirable management.

Ver. 27. *And Israel dwelt in the land,* &c.] Ver. 11.

And they had possessions therein.] They could have no land of their own (for all the country was become Pharaoh's), but the meaning is, they farmed (as we speak) land of the king, to whom they became tenants.

And grew and multiplied exceedingly.] And consequently enlarged their habitation beyond the territory of Rameses, where they were first placed, into other parts of Goshen. Which we must not fancy to have been a country now empty of people: for though, perhaps, about Rameses there might be some vacant ground, sufficient for Jacob's family, when they came first to plant there; yet, when they increased very much, no doubt they lived among the Egyptians, where they could find admission. This plainly appears at their going from thence, (Exod. xii. 22, 23.) where God commands them to sprinkle their door-posts with the blood of the paschal lamb, to secure them from the destruction which was coming upon their neighbours, who wanted this mark of safety.

Ver. 29. *If I have now found grace in thy sight.*] This is a phrase used a little before, (ver. 25.) in a little different sense. For there it signifies the *favour* shewn to another: but here is as much, as *If thou lovest me.*

Put thy hand under my thigh.] *i. e.* Swear to me, as it is explained in ver. 31. (See xxiv. 2.)

Deal kindly and truly with me.] Shew me true kindness, in promising and performing what I desire. (See xxiv. 27. 49.)

Ver. 30. *I will lie with my fathers,* &c.] So all men naturally desire to do: but he had a peculiar reason for it. Which was his belief that the country where their bodies lay, was his in reversion; and that God, in due time, would put his children into possession of it. For which time they could not but the more earnestly long, because the bodies of their ancestors were there buried. (See l. 5.) Which explains the reason why Jacob exacts an oath of Joseph, not because he doubted he might not otherwise fulfil his desire; but that Pharaoh might be willing to let him carry his body thither, when he found he lay under so sacred an obligation to do it.

Ver. 31. *And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.*] Raised up his head from his pillow, and bowed: either to Joseph, in thankfulness for his promise; or to God, for the assurance he had received, that he should be buried with his pious forefathers: or else this bowing was the usual ceremony wherewith an oath was attended. The Chaldee paraphrast thinks the Divine Glory now appeared; which Jacob devoutly worshipped. But, if the author to the Hebrews had not understood his bowing to be an act of worship, the interpretation of some modern writers might, perhaps, have been thought reasonable; who translate these words thus, *he laid himself down on his pillow:* as weak men are wont to do, after they have set up awhile, to dispatch some business. For the Hebrew word *schacah,* which signifies *to bow the body,* signifies also to *fall down* upon the earth; and therefore might be here translated *lie down.* But the apostle, as I said, hath overruled all such conceits, if we suppose him to translate this passage, Hebr. xi. 21. Which to me indeed doth not seem evident. For the apostle is there speaking of another thing; not of what Jacob did now, when Joseph sware to him; but of what he did *after these things,* (xlviii. 1.) when he blessed Joseph's sons. Then the apostle says, "he worshipped upon the top of his staff." Which is not the translation of Moses's words in this place: but words of his own, whereby he explains the following story; and shews how strong his faith was, when his body was so weak that he was not able to bow himself and worship without the help of his staff. This clearly removes all the difficulty, which interpreters have made, about reconciling the words of Moses here in this verse, to the apostle's words in that.

But however this be, Jacob's bowing here, I doubt not, signifies worshipping; as the Vulgar Latin takes it: where the word God is added (which is not in the Hebrew), and these words thus translated, *Israel worshipped God, turning himself to the bed's head.*

CHAP. XLVIII.

Ver. 1. *AFTER these things.*] Some time after, though not long (for Jacob was nigh his end, when he sent for Joseph to make him swear he would bury him with his fathers), he grew so weak, that he concluded he could not live long.

One told Joseph.] A messenger was sent from his father's house, to acquaint Joseph with his weak condition. So the next verse teaches us to understand it.

He took with him, &c.] Immediately he went to receive his blessing, and took with him his two sons, that he might bless them also.

Ver. 2. *One told Jacob,* &c.] Joseph sent a messenger before him, to let his father know he was coming to visit him.

Israel strengthened himself.] This message revived him; and made him stir up all his spirits to receive him cheerfully.

And set upon his bed.] Leaning, it is likely, upon his staff, for the support of his feeble body. (See xlvii. *ult.*)

Ver. 3. *Appeared to me at Luz.*] He appeared twice to him in this place. First, when he went to Padan-Aram, (xxviii. 13.) upon which he gave this place the name of Bethel, (ver. 19.) and when he returned from thence, (xxxv. 6. 9. &c.) and, both times, made him the promise which here follows; and therefore it is likely he hath respect to both.

And blessed me.] Promised to me the blessing which follows.

Ver. 4. *For an everlasting possession.*] We do not read this in either of the appearances, in so many words: but he said it in effect, when he told him, in the last appearance there, (xxxv. 12.) "The land which I gave to Abraham, and Isaac, to thee will I give it," &c. Now he gave it to Abraham and his seed *for ever,* (xiii. 15.)

Ver. 5. *And now thy two sons,* &c.] Having assured him God would be as good as his word, in giving the land of Canaan to his posterity, he tells him what share his children should have in it.

Are mine.] Thy two sons shall be reckoned as if I had begotten them: and accordingly have each of them an inheritance, equal with the rest of my sons; and be distinct tribes.

As Reuben, and Simeon, shall they be mine.] He instances in them, because they were his eldest sons: who, he says, should have no more than Ephraim and Manasseh. And, perhaps, the meaning may be, these two shall be accounted as the first-born of my family. For he gives Joseph

the primogeniture (who was indeed the first-born of his first intended wife), and bestows a double portion upon him; by making his two sons equal to the rest of his children.

Ver. 6. *And thy issue which thou begettest after them shall be thine.*] I will make no distinct provision for them, as I have done for these two: but they "shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance," *i. e.* be reckoned among these two, Ephraim and Manasseh; and not make distinct tribes as they shall, but be comprehended in them.

Ver. 7. *And as for me, when I came from Padan-Aram, Rachel died by me,* &c.] He mentions her death (which doth not seem to belong to the foregoing discourse), because it happened presently after that last promise in Bethel, (xxxv. 18.) and he thought it would be grateful to his son, to hear him remember his dear mother. For it is as if he had said, *And now, my son, this puts me in mind of thy mother, who died immediately after that promise of multiplying my seed: and yet I see it fulfilled in those children which God hath given thee.* Or, we may look upon these words, as giving the reason why he took Ephraim and Manasseh to be his own children; and the sense to be as if he had said, *Thy mother indeed, and my beloved wife, died soon after she began to bear children; when she might have brought me many more: and therefore I adopt these her grandchildren,* and look upon them as if they had been born of Rachel. And I do it in memory and honour of her, *supplying by adoption, what was wanting in generation.*

And I buried her there.] He could not carry her to the cave of Machpelah, where he desired to be laid himself; because she died in childbed, which constrained him to bury her sooner than otherwise he might have done. And it is to be supposed he had not in his travels all things necessary to preserve her body long, by embalming her, as Joseph did him.

Ver. 8. *And Israel beheld Joseph's sons,* &c.] He saw two others stand by Joseph; but could not discern distinctly who they were, by reason of the dimness of his sight, (ver. 10.)

Ver. 9. *And I will bless them.*] As he had just before promised, (ver. 5.)

Ver. 10. *And he brought them near unto him.*] And made them kneel down before him; as the twelfth verse seems to intimate.

And he kissed them, &c.] Expressed the greatest affection to them.

Ver. 12. *Brought them out from between his knees.*] It appears by ver. 2. that Jacob sat upon his bed; and his legs hanging down, they kneeled between his knees: from whence Joseph took them. And then seems to have placed himself in the same posture, "bowing himself with his face to the earth" (as the following words tell us), to give his father thanks for his kindness to his children. Or, rather, we may conceive, that while Jacob embraced them in his arms, and kissed them with more than ordinary affection, Joseph was afraid that they might lie too long, or press too hard, upon his father's breast, and create some trouble to a feeble old man: and therefore he withdrew them from thence, and disposed them to receive his blessing.

Ver. 13. *And Joseph took them both,* &c.] Made them kneel down by himself, before Jacob; placing Ephraim towards Jacob's left hand, &c.

Ver. 14. *Stretched out his right hand, and laid it on Ephraim's head.*] Laying hands on the head of any person, was always used in this nation in giving blessings, and designing men to any office; and in the consecration of public and solemn sacrifices. This is the first time we meet with the mention of it; but in aftertimes we often read of it; particularly when Moses constituted Joshua to be his successor, God orders him to do it by laying his hands on him, (Numb. xxvii. 18. 23. Deut. xxxiv. 9.) Thus children were brought to our blessed Saviour, that he might lay his hands on them and bless them; and so he did, (Matt. xix. 13. 15.) And the right hand being the stronger, and that wherewith we commonly perform every thing, the laying that on Ephraim's head was giving him the pre-eminence.

Who was the younger.] It is observed by Theodoret upon 1 Sam. xvi. that God was wont from the beginning to prefer the younger before the elder: as Abel before Cain; Shem before Japheth; Isaac before Ishmael; Jacob before Esau; Judah and Joseph before Reuben; and here Ephraim before Manasseh, as afterwards Moses before Aaron; and David, the youngest of all, before his elder brethren. Which was to shew that the Divine benefits were not tied to the order of nature; but dispensed freely according to God's most wise goodness.

Guiding his hands wittingly.] He did not mistake, by reason of his blindness; but foreseeing, by the spirit of his prophecy, how much Ephraim would excel the other, he designedly and on purpose thus laid his hands across: so that the right hand lay upon the head of Ephraim, who was next to his left, &c.

Ver. 15. *He blessed Joseph.*] In the blessing he bestowed on his children.

All my life long.] The Hebrew word *mehodi* signifies *à die quo ego sum,* (as Bochart interprets it, Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 14.) *ever since I had a being.*

Ver. 16. *The angel which redeemed me.*] Who, by God's order, and as his minister, preserved me in all the dangers wherein I have been. Many of the ancient fathers (as Athanasius, lib. iv. contra Arianos, Cyril upon this place, Procopius Gazæus, &c.) understand hereby an uncreated angel, *viz.* the Second Person of the blessed Trinity. "But the discourse is not concerning the sending of the Son of God in our flesh to redeem mankind, but only concerning the preservation and prosperity of one man; and therefore I do not know whether it be safe to call him an angel, *i. e.* a minister or messenger, lest we detract from his Divinity. For in conferring blessings, he is not a messenger or minister, but a principal cause together with the Father." They are the words of that famous divine, Georg. Calixtus; who follows St. Chrysostom; who takes this *angel* to be one properly so called: and thence proves the heavenly ministers take care of pious people. And so doth St. Basil in no less than three places of his works: which shew it was his settled opinion. But it did not enter into their thoughts that Jacob here prayed to an angel; but only wished these children might have the angelic protection, by the special favour of God to them. For it is just such an expression as that of David, to a contrary purpose, (Psalm xxxv. 6.) "Let the angel of the Lord persecute them," where nobody will say he prays to an angel; though his words are exactly like these of Jacob's.

And let my name be named on them.] Here he plainly

adopts them to be his children, as he said before he would, (ver. 5.) For to be called by one's name (which is the same with having his *name named* on them), is as much as to be one's children. For thus they that are said to be *called by God's name*, became his peculiar people. Therefore Tostatus well interprets it, "Sint duo capita tribuum inter filios Jacob:" *Let them be the heads of two tribes among the sons of Jacob.* But none so plainly as David Chytræus, whose words are these, "Vera et simplicissima sententia hæc est; Isti pueri, à me adoptati," &c. *The true and most simple sense is, These youths, Manasseh and Ephraim, who are adopted by me, shall not hereafter be called the sons of Joseph, but my sons: and be heirs, and in the division of the inheritance of the land of Canaan, receive an equal portion with my sons.*

Grow into a multitude.] The Hebrew word, as Onkelos interprets it, signifies *increase like fishes* (as we also in the margin translate it), which are the most fruitful of all creatures, as authors commonly observe. (See Bochart, par. i. lib. i. cap. 6. Hierozoic.)

Ver. 19. *His younger brother shall be greater than he.*] His family multiplied faster, according to the signification of his name: as appears from Numb. i. 33. 35. And the kingdom was afterwards established in him; and all the ten tribes called by the name of Ephraim.

Shall become a multitude of nations.] In the Hebrew, the words are *fulness of nations, i. e.* of families. As much as to say, his seed shall replenish the country with numerous families: for that which replenishes the earth, is called "the fulness of the earth," (Psalm xxiv. 1.) and that which replenishes the sea, "the fulness of the sea," (Psalm xcvi. 11. Isai. xlii. 10.) See L. de Dieu.

Ver. 20. *And he blessed them that day.*] He concluded with a solemn benediction upon them both: and when he pronounced it, worshipped God, (as the apostle tells us, Hebr. xi. 21.) leaning upon the top of his staff. Whereby he was supported from falling; of which he would have been in danger, when he bowed, if he had not leaned on it.

In thee shall Israel bless.] When my posterity would wish all happiness to others, they shall use this form of speech; *God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.* Which continues, they say, among the Jews to this day.

Ver. 21. *Bring you again into the land of your fathers.*] Where your fathers sojourned; and which God bestowed upon them in reversion.

Ver. 22. *Which I took out of the hand of the Amorite,* &c.] He doth not mean the city of Shechem; which his sons took unjustly and cruelly (and not from the Amorites, but the Hivites), without his knowledge, and contrary to his will: but that piece of land which he bought of Hamor the father of Shechem, (Gen. xxxiii. 19. compared with St. John iv. 5.) Which seems to be the reason why Joseph was himself here buried in his own ground, given him by his father, (Josh. xxiv. 32.) and not in the cave of Machpelah. The only difficulty is, how he could say, that he took this land from the *Amorite by his sword, and by his bow* (which comprehend all warlike instruments), when he bought it for a hundred pieces of silver of Hamor the Hivite. It is to be supposed therefore that he *took it, i. e. recovered it* from the Amorites, who had seized on it, after his removal to another part of Canaan; and would not restore it, but constrained him to drive them out by force. We read nothing indeed in the foregoing history, either of their invading his possession, or his expelling them thence: but the Scripture relates many things to have been done, without mentioning the circumstances of time and place; as Bochartus observes. And among other instances gives that in xxxvi. 24. where Ana is said to have met with the Emims (so he understands it) in the wilderness: of which encounter we find no mention in any other place. (See his Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 13.) And, as I take it, we have a plainer instance in the place a little before mentioned, (Hebr. xi. 21.) where the apostle says, Jacob, when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph, "and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff." Of which there is not a word in this history, but only of his blessing them, (ver. 20.)

There are those who, with St. Jerome, understand by *sword and bow,* his money: which he calls by those warlike names, to signify this was the only instrument he used to acquire any thing. Just as the Romans, when they would signify they had got any thing without any other help but their own industry alone, say they obtained it *proprio marte;* using a similitude from military expenses and labours. If this do not seem harsh, it is not hard to give an account why he calls those Amorites, who before were called Hivites: for Amorites seems to have been the general name of all the seven nations of Canaan, they being the chief; just as all the people of the seven United Provinces are now commonly called Hollanders, who are the most potent of all the rest.

CHAP. XLIX.

Ver. 1. *JACOB called unto his sons.*] When he had done speaking with Joseph, perceiving his end approaching, he sent one to call the rest of his sons to come to him.

Gather yourselves together.] Come all in a body to me. Let me see you all together before I die.

What shall be in the last days.] The condition of your posterity in future times. Jacob is the first that we read of, who particularly declared the future state of every one of his sons when he left the world. But it hath been an ancient opinion, that the souls of all excellent men, the nearer they approached to their departure from hence, the more divine they grew; and had a clearer prospect of things to come. Whence Xenophon (lib. viii.) makes his Cyrus say, when he was near his end, that "the souls of men, at the point of death, become prophetic." Which never was universally true; for prophecy is not a natural thing; nor were all excellent men partakers of it; and God communicated it in what measures he pleased to those who had any thing of it; and to Jacob more than had been bestowed upon his great ancestors. For these last words of his may be called *prophecies* rather than *benedictions:* some of them containing no blessing in them; but all of them predictions.

Ver. 2. *Gather yourselves together.*] This is repeated to hasten them; as the two next words, *hear* and *hearken,* are used to excite their attention. It was the manner of good men among the Hebrews to call all their children before them, and give them good counsel, together with their blessing, when they drew near to their end: the words then spoken being likely to stick fast in their mind.

Ver. 3. *Reuben,* &c.] It is commonly observed, that the style wherein he speaks to his sons is much more lofty than that hitherto used in this book. Which hath made some fancy that Jacob did not deliver these very words; but Moses put the sense of what he said into such poetical expressions. But it seems more reasonable to me, to think that the spirit of prophecy now coming upon him, raised his style as well as his understanding: as it did Moses's also; who delivered his benedictions (in Deut. xxxiii.) in a strain more sublime than his other writings.

Thou art my first-born.] So we read xxix. 32. To whom the Jews commonly observe belonged three prerogatives—a double portion of the father's estate, the priesthood, and the kingdom (as they speak), *i. e.* the chief authority among his brethren. The first of these, says the Chaldee paraphrast, was given to Joseph, the second to Levi, the third to Judah, because Reuben had forfeited all the rights of his primogeniture, by his incest with his father's wife. But Mr. Selden himself (who gives a full account of the Jews' opinion in this matter) acknowledges the priesthood was not confined to the first-born before the law, as appears by Abel's offering sacrifice as well as Cain, and Moses being a priest as well as Aaron, (Psal. xcix. 6.) unless we understand thereby the office of chief priest. And so Jonathan here reports the ancient opinion of the Jews, that Reuben lost the high-priesthood. (Lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 16. p. 643, &c.)

My might.] Whom I begot when I was in my full vigour.

The beginning (or the *first-fruits*) *of my strength.*] The same thing, in more words. Or, it may be interpreted, *the prime support of my family.* The first-born is called *the beginning of strength,* in Deut. xxi. 17. Psal. cv. 36.

The excellency of dignity.] Who hadst the pre-eminence among thy brethren (being the first-born), if thou hadst not fallen from it by thy folly; as it follows afterwards.

And the excellency of power.] Who wast born to the highest authority among them. The Hebrews refer *dignity* to the priesthood, and *power* to the kingdom. But there being no solid ground to think the priesthood, as I said before, was confined to the eldest brother; I take *dignity* to signify the double portion of the estate; and *power,* authority among them, while they remained in one family.

Ver. 4. *Unstable as water.*] The Hebrew word *pachaz* signifying *haste,* and in the Chaldee having the signification of *leaping,* the interpretation of St. Jerome seems most reasonable; which is, *poured out* like water out of a vessel upon the ground. And then it denotes Reuben's falling from his dignity, and losing his pre-eminence; as water suddenly disappears, when it is poured out on the earth, and sucked up into it. Many refer it, particularly Ca. Vitringa in his late Sacred Observations, (lib. i. cap. 12.) to his unbounded lust: but that is taken notice of in the latter part of this verse, and given as a reason of his being degraded. Others therefore translate the Hebrew word *pachaz* by the Latin word *levis,* a *light* or *vain* person (as we speak at this day), and then the meaning still is, *Water is not more prone to flow, when it is poured out, than thou wast to lose thy dignity.* So Georg. Calixtus.

Thou shalt not excel.] There is nothing great said to be done by this tribe in Scripture. And they were not so numerous (to which the Vulgar Latin refers this) by more than a third part, as the tribe of Judah (to whom God gave part of Reuben's prerogative), when Moses by God's command took the sum of all the congregation. (Numb. i. 21. 27.)

Because thou wentest up to thy father's bed.] Committedst incest with my wife, (xxxv. 22.)

Then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch.] Or rather, *When thou defiledst my couch, it vanished, i. e.* his excellency departed. For the word *halah,* which is here translated to *go up,* signifies often in Scripture, to *vanish* or *perish.* As in Psal. cii. 25. Isai. v. 24. which makes the easiest sense of this place, in this manner; "Ex quo polluisti thorum meum, ascendit ut vapor aut fumus excellentia et dignitas tua, *i. e.* dilapsa est, extincta est, evanuit." *From the time that thou defiledst my couch, thy excellency and dignity went up like a vapour or smoke,* i. e. *it slid away, it was extinct, it vanished.* They are the words of the forenamed Calixtus; who well observes that this is explained in 1 Chron. v. 1.

Ver. 5. *Simeon and Levi are brethren.*] So were all the rest; but the meaning is, they are alike in their dispositions, and linked together in the same wicked designs: for so the word *brother* sometimes signifies, a *companion,* or *associate,* that agrees in the same inclinations or undertakings with others. As Prov. xviii. 9.

Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.] The word *mecheroth* (which we translate *habitations*) is no where else found, nor is there any root in the Hebrew language from whence it may derive that signification. Therefore Lud. de Dieu, from the Ethiopic language, translates it *counsels:* for so the word signifies in that tongue; and in an ill sense, conspirations, machinations, or mischievous devices. This Job Ludolphus approves of, and translates this sentence after this manner, "Consilia eorum nihil sunt nisi vis et arma:" *Their counsels are nothing but force and arms.* (Vid. Comment. in Histor. Ethiop. lib. i. cap. 15. n. 106.) Aben Ezra is not much different, who translates it, their *compacts:* as G. Vorstius notes upon Pirke Eliezer, cap. 38, where there are other various interpretations: with which I shall not trouble the reader, because I have given that which I think most natural.

Ver. 6. *O my soul, come not thou,* &c.] He utterly disclaims all knowledge of their wicked fact beforehand, or approbation of it afterward. For by *soul* is meant himself; and so the word *honour* or *glory* seems to mean, in the following words; which are but a repetition of this. Or, else it signifies the *tongue,* as in many places of Scripture, (particularly Psal. xxx. 12.) and the meaning is, he never in thought, much less in word, assented to what they did. They gloried in the slaughter they made; but God forbid that I should so much as approve it.

Secret signifying the same with *assembly,* is, in reason, to be interpreted a *secret place,* or *closet;* where cabals (as we now speak) are wont to be held.

Slew a man.] i. e. *Shechem;* a great man: or, the singular number is put for the plural.

In their self-will.] The Hebrew word *ratson* may well be translated *humour.* When they were in a fit of rage.

They digged down a wall.] Broke into Hamor's house, where Shechem was. In the margin we translate it *houghed oxen:* and indeed the Hebrew word *schor* signifies an *ox,* not a *wall;* which they call *shur.* Yet the Vulgar, the Sy-

riac, Arabic, Chaldee, and a great number of the Hebrew authors, interpret it a *wall.* And though the LXX. translated it ἐνευροκόπησαν ταῦρον, *they hamstringed an ox;* yet the author of the Greek Scholion (as Bochart acknowledges) translates it ἐξερρίζωσαν τεῖχος, *they undermined a wall.* The truth is, we read of neither in the story, but only of their *taking their sheep and their oxen,* (xxxiv. 28.) which signifies not their *houghing* them, but their driving them away. Perhaps, they both broke down a wall to come at their flocks; and also houghed those, which they were afraid would otherwise have escaped their hands, and got away.

Ver. 7. *Cursed be their anger.*] Their fury was most execrable and detestable; and brought a curse upon them.

For it was fierce.] Outrageous; or, as the Vulgar translates it, *pertinacious.* Not a sudden, impetuous passion, that was soon over: but a settled, inflexible rage. So he condemns them upon a double account. First, that they had such an implacable desire of revenge; and then, that their revenge was too cruel.

I will divide them in Jacob, &c.] This is the punishment, which by a prophetic spirit he foretels God would inflict upon them: that they who were associated in wickedness, should be disjoined one from another; when his children came to inherit the land of Canaan. And so it fell out; for Simeon's posterity had not a separate inheritance by themselves, but only a portion in the midst of the tribe of Judah, as we read Josh. xix. 1. 9. and accordingly we find them assisting one another, to enlarge their border, (Judg. i. 3. 17.) And their portion being too strait for them, we read how in aftertimes they acquired possessions where they could, far from the rest of their brethren: five hundred of this tribe, under several captains, going to Mount Seir, and there settling themselves, (1 Chron. iv. 39. 42.) It is a constant tradition also among the Hebrews (as P. Fagius observes), that a great many of this tribe, wanting a livelihood, applied themselves to the teaching of children, and were employed as schoolmasters in all the other tribes of Israel: where few followed this employment but Simeonites. If this be true, it is a further proof of their scattered condition.

As for the tribe of Levi, it is manifest they had no inheritance allotted to them among their brethren, but were dispersed among all the tribes: having certain cities assigned to them, with a little land about them. This indeed did not prove a curse to them; they having the tenth of all the increase of the land throughout the whole country. For this curse seems to have been taken off, upon that eminent service they did in falling upon the worshippers of the golden calf; and thereby consecrating themselves unto the Lord. (Exod. xxxii. 26. 29.) Upon which account Moses blesses this tribe a little before he died, (Deut. xxxiii. 9.) whereas he gives no blessing at all to the tribe of Simeon; but leaves them under this curse: a great ringleader of the idolatry with Baal-Peor, being a prince of this tribe; whom Phinehas, of the tribe of Levi, slew in his zeal for the Lord. (Numb. xxv. 11. 14.)

Ver. 8. *Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise.*] Or, thou art Judah; and well mayst thou be so called, for thy brethren shall praise thee. The name of Judah signifies praise, unto which his father alludes. It was given him by his mother, in thankfulness to God for him, (xxix. 35.) and now his father gives another reason of his name: because all his brethren should applaud his worthy acts, and praise God for them. Which is not spoken of Judah's person, but of his family, or tribe; who in future times were very famous.

Thy hand shall be in the neck of thy enemies.] To overthrow them, and bring them under: which was eminently fulfilled in David, as he himself acknowledges, (Psal. xviii. 40.) And so were the foregoing words; when all the daughters of Israel came forth of their cities singing his praises in such a high strain, as offended Saul, (1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7.)

Thy father's children shall bow down to thee.] Acknowledge thee their superior.

Ver. 9. *Judah is a lion's whelp,* &c.] He sets forth in this verse the warlike temper of this tribe; and their undaunted courage, and terribleness to their enemies. And he seems to express the beginning, increase, and full growth, of their power; by a *young lion,* a *lion,* and *lioness;* which is the fiercest of all other.

A lion's whelp.] This tribe gave early proof of their valour; being the first that went to fight against the Canaanites, after the death of Joshua, (Judg. i. 1, 2.) And David, who was of this tribe, when he was but a youth, killed a lion, and a bear, and the great giant Goliah.

From the prey, my son, thou art gone up.] He speaks as if he saw them returning in triumph; with the spoils of their enemies: alluding unto lions, who, having gotten their prey in the plain, return satiated to the mountains. As Bochartus observes, (par. i. lib. iii. cap. 2. Hierozoic.)

He stoopeth down, he coucheth as a lion.] The Hebrew word *ari* signifies a *grown lion,* come to his full strength. By whose *stooping down (bending his knees,* the Hebrew word signifies) and couching to take his rest (which all four-footed beasts do, but the lion is observed to sleep whole days in his den, or in thickets, that he may be fresher for his prey in the night); Jacob sets forth the ease and quiet that Judah should enjoy after their victories, without any fear of disturbance.

And as an old lion.] I think Bochart hath plainly demonstrated that *labi* signifies a *lioness:* which is rather fiercer than a lion; as he observes out of Herodotus, and other authors, (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. iii. cap. 1.)

Who shall rouse him up?] Having overcome his enemies, he shall live in secure peace; free from their incursions: none daring to invade him, no more than to stir up a sleepy lion.

Ver. 10. *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,* &c.] That the first word *schebet* is rightly translated *sceptre,* we have the unanimous testimony of the three Targums of the ancient book Rabboth, with a great many of the modern rabbins, (such as Caskuni, Bechai, Abarbinel, &c.) who all think the word signifies a *sceptre,* and not a *tribe,* as some few would have it; whom some Christians follow; particularly Jac. Altingius hath lately asserted it in his Schilo; but, in my judgment, against the clearest evidence for the other signification. For, as *schebet* doth not originally signify a *tribe,* but a *rod,* or *wand,* shooting from the root of a tree (from whence it was translated to signify a *tribe,* who springs out of a common stock, *i. e.* the father of a family), so the verse foregoing being a plain prediction of Judah's dominion, not only over external enemies, but over his brethren, what can we so reasonably think to be the design of

this verse, as to foretell the continuance and duration of that great power and authority promised in the foregoing? It is observable also that the very same phrase is used in this sense, and cannot have another, Zechar. x. 11. "The sceptre of Egypt shall depart away:" where there are two of the words here used; signifying the dominion, which the Egyptians then exercised over the poor Jews, should quite cease. And if Moses had meant a *tribe* in this place, he would not have said the *tribe shall not depart from Judah*, but the *tribe of Judah shall not cease:* for the former looks like a tautology.

The meaning of this word then being settled, it is manifest Jacob here gives Judah the highest superiority over his brethren; and informs them, that from the time his authority should be established, there should continue a form of government in this *tribe*, till the coming of the Messiah. The word *sceptre* is more used in ancient times (as Mr. Selden observes in his Titles of Honour) to signify kingly power, than either *crown* or *diadem*, which have been used more in later times. And therefore the LXX. translate it Ἀρχων, of whose authority the *rod, staff*, or *sceptre*, was the ensign. And accordingly in the prophecy of Amos i. 5. "He that holdeth the sceptre," is used absolutely for a king. Now this regal power began in the tribe of Judah, when David was king over all Israel, (1 Chron. xxviii. 4.) and his posterity held it till the captivity of Babylon.

But then the next word in this verse, *mechokek* (which we translate *lawgiver*), signifies a diminution of this dignity, before the finishing of this prophecy. For *mechokkim* were not of equal power with kings; and therefore we translate the word elsewhere *governors*, (Judg. v. 9. 14.) who were not endued with an absolute power, but depended on the power of another. And thus R. Solomon Jarchi expressly says (in his Commentaries on the Sanhedrin), that as *schebet* signifies the highest authority, so *mechokek* signifies a lesser magistrate or ruler; who was set over the people by the authority and licence of the kings of Persia. For this kind of power was settled among them, at their return from Babylon, when Zerobabel was made their governor. And after they were invaded by the Seleucidæ, this authority was recovered and maintained by the Maccabees; till they were deprived of it by Herod and the Romans. At which time Christ came; when it is evident they were become subjects to the Romans, by the very enrolling that was made of them at the birth of our Saviour: which was a public testimony of Augustus's sovereignty over them. So that the meaning of this prophecy is, *There shall be either kings or governors among the Jews till Christ come.* So J. Christoph. Wagenseil (who hath discussed this place with great exactness) gives the sense of these words; and it is literally true: till the captivity they had kings; after their return they had governors, under the Persians, Greeks, and Romans. (See his Confut. Carm. Memorialis Libri Nitzachon. R. Lipmanni, p. 293, &c.)

To strengthen which interpretation he makes this judicious remark, in another place of the same book, (p. 373.) That the whole time, from the beginning to the end of Judah's authority, was well nigh equally divided between kings and governors. For, according to Josephus, (lib. xi. Antiq. cap. 4.) they lived under kings, from David's time to the captivity, five hundred thirty-two years; and under the *mechokkim* or *governors*, after the captivity, much about the same number of years. For there being five hundred eighty and eight years from the captivity to our Saviour's birth; if seventy years be deducted (which was the time their captivity lasted) and ten be added (in which, after the birth of Christ, Herod and his son Archelaus reigned in Judea, and it was not yet reduced into the form of a province), there were just five hundred twenty and eight years; that is, the space in which they were under kingly authority, and under subordinate governors, was in a manner of the same length. Which makes it the more wonderful, that Jacob should so many ages before exactly divide the whole power he foresaw would be in Judah, between them that wielded a sceptre, and those who were only subordinate governors.

That the letter *vau* before the word we translate *lawgiver*, hath the force of a disjunctive, and is not a mere copulative, all allow: and there are many examples of it in other places, particularly in the tenth commandment, (Exod. xx. 14.) The greatest objection that I can find against this interpretation is, that though Zerobabel, the first governor after the captivity, was of the tribe of Judah; yet the Maccabees, who were their governors most of the time after the captivity, were of the tribe of Levi. But it is to be considered, that the prophecy doth not say these rulers or governors should be of the tribe of Judah; but only in that tribe which had a government of their own, till the coming of Christ. Besides, by Judah is not to be understood merely the people of that tribe; but all those that were called Jews, consisting also of the tribes of Benjamin and Levi; who were incorporated with them: and were all called Judah, in opposition to the kingdom of Israel. For Benjamin it is evident was so near to Judah, that they were reputed the very same. Whence it is that Mordecai, who was of the tribe of Benjamin, is called *Isch Jehudi, a Jew*, in Esther ii. 5. because that tribe was comprehended under Judah, from the time that the rest rent themselves from the house of David. When Jeroboam also set up the meanest of the people for priests; who were not of the tribe of Levi, (1 Kings xii. 33.) This made the Levites fly to Judah and become one with them. And therefore the Maccabees were, in effect, Jews, who held the chief authority among them, till Antigonus was driven out and killed by Herod: who was an Edomite set over them by the Romans.

From between his feet.] The common interpretation every body knows, which is, *of his seed*, or posterity: but Ludolphus, instead of *raglau, feet*, would have us read *daglau, banners*, according to the Samaritan copy. Which is well confuted by the forenamed Wagenseil, p. 269. of the forenamed book: where he translates these words thus, *even to the last end of that state.* For so the people *at the feet* signifies (Exod. xi. 8. 2 Kings iii. 9.) those that bring up the rear, as we now speak. And so some ancient interpreters in the Talmud, he shews, expound it here, of *the last posterity of Judah*, and the times when their commonwealth was coming to a conclusion.

Until Shiloh come.] Let the original of this word *Shiloh* be what it will (which some translate *to be sent*, others *his son*, or *child*, or *his seed*, others *quiet, peaceable, pacific, prosperous*, and consequently, *renowned, august*, to whom *gifts* or *offerings* shall be made, as R. Solomon takes it; others, *whose is, viz.* the kingdom), the Messiah or Christ

is certainly hereby meant: as all the three Targums agree; and the Talmud in the title Sanhedrin, cap. xi. and Baal-Hatturim, Bereschith-Rabba, and many other ancient and modern Jews. I will mention only the words of R. Bechai; who confesses, *it is right to understand this verse of the Messiah, the last Redeemer.* "Which is meant when it saith, *till Shiloh come, i. e.* his Son, proceeding from his seed. And the reason why the word *beno* is not used in this prophecy, but *Shiloh*, is, because he would emphatically express a son, who should be brought forth of his mother's womb, after the manner of all those that are born of a woman." Of this interpretation they are so convinced, that, to evade the argument we argue from hence to prove the Messiah is come, they have invented a great many tales of the power they have still in some remote parts of the world. There is a book written on purpose, called, The Voice of glad Tidings, wherein they labour to prove, they have a kingdom still remaining. Which, if it should be granted, signifies nothing; for this prophecy is concerning their government in their own country, the land of Canaan: as they themselves very well know; which makes them so desirous to return thither again, that the hand of Judah may be upon the neck of his enemies, and he may go up from *the prey like a lion*, and *tie his ass to the vine*, and *wash his garments in wine*, &c. as the words are in the rest of this prophecy. And whatsoever some of them are pleased to say concerning their power nobody knows where, they are sometimes in a contrary humour: for in the Gemara Sanhedrin they say, (cap. xi. §. 32.) "There shall not be the least magistrate in Israel, when the Messiah comes."

Unto him shall the gathering of the people be.] So this clause is expounded by Abarbinel himself, whose words are, *the people of the nations shall be gathered to worship him, i. e.* the Messiah. (See L'Empereur in Jacchiad. p. 164. and Codex Middoth, p. 106, 107.) Wagenseil indeed thinks the most literal interpretation to be this, *to him shall be the obedience of the people:* which is the interpretation of Onkelos and the Jerusalem paraphrast. Kimchi also (lib. Radic.) so expounds it, *the people shall obey him;* taking upon *them to observe, what he shall command them.* And in Prov. xxx. 17, which is the only place besides this where this word *jikkah* is found, it seems to signify *obedience.*

See Confut. Carm. R. Lipmanni, p. 295, where Wagenseil, after the examination of every particular word in this verse, thus sums up the sense of it in this paraphrase.

"That royal power and authority which shall be established in the posterity of Judah, shall not be taken from them; or, at least, they shall not be destitute of rulers and governors, no, not when they are in their declining condition: until the coming of the Messiah. But when he is come, there shall be no difference between the Jews and other nations: who shall all be obedient unto the Messiah. And after that the posterity of Judah shall have neither king nor ruler of their own: but the whole commonwealth of Judah shall quite lose all form, and never recover it again."

The truth of this exposition appears exactly from their history: of which it will be useful here to give an account. For from David to the captivity of Babylon they held the sceptre, for five whole ages and more, as I observed above. After which, when seventy years were finished in that captivity, they lived by their own laws in their own country: but had no absolute authority of their own, independent upon others; nor ever enjoyed a full liberty. For they were at first under the present monarchs: afterwards, upon the conquest made by Alexander, under the Greeks: and then under the kings of Asia Minor and Egypt; till the Roman yoke was imposed upon them. Yet all this time, while they were under the empire of others, they enjoyed governors or rulers of their own, who administered their affairs under those monarchs. The first was Zerobabel, called the *captain*, or *prince of Judah*, (Haggai i. 1.) After him Ezra and Nehemiah. And before them it is likely there were some others, as Jos. Scaliger gathers from Neh. v. 15. After the death of Nehemiah the government came into the hands of the high priests, as appears from Josephus, lib. xi. cap. 8, where he shews how Jaddus the high priest met Alexander in his expedition against Persia: which power was confirmed in that order, by the Maccabees, as we commonly call them. It began in Mattathias; and was continued in his sons. The third of which, Simon, raised it to such a splendour, that he looked like a prince, as the reader may see it described in 1 Maccab. xiv. From whence his grandchild Aristobulus seems to have taken occasion to affect the name of king; though he had but the shadow of that power. Yet his posterity kept that name to the time of Herod, who stripped them of all their power, and destroyed their family. After his death the kingdom was divided by Augustus into tetrarchies: Archelaus being made tetrarch of Judea; and the rest of the country divided between Philip and Antipas. But Archelaus misbehaving himself, he was deprived of his government, and banished to Vienne in France: and then Judea was reduced into the form of a province, and ruled by Roman governors. After which there was no king, nor ethnarch of Judea: so that after this time we may safely conclude, the Jews lost even their *mechokkim*, or governors, as they had long ago lost the sceptre; and had no power remaining among them of administering the affairs of their commonwealth.

Now at this time our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the true Shiloh, came; who was the founder of a new and heavenly kingdom. And nothing more was left to be done for the fulfilling of this prophecy, but, after his crucifying, to destroy Jerusalem and the temple, and therewith the whole form of their government, both civil and sacred. Then all power was entirely taken from Judah, when Christ had erected his throne in the heavens, and brought many people, in several parts of the earth, unto his obedience, and made them members of his celestial kingdom. Till which time this prophecy was not completely fulfilled: which may be the reason, possibly, that it is not alleged by Christ and his apostles; because the Jews might have said, We have still a government among us: which could not be pretended after the destruction by Titus. Which is now above sixteen hundred years ago: and there is not the least sign of their restitution. Which so perplexed R. Samuel Moraccanus, that it made him write thus to a friend of his, above six hundred years since:

"I would fain learn from thee, out of the testimonies of the law, and the prophets, and other scriptures, why the Jews are thus smitten in this captivity wherein we are: which may be properly called, the PERPETUAL ANGER OF GOD, because it hath no end. For it is now above a thousand years, since we were carried away cap-

tive by TITUS; and yet our fathers, who worshipped idols, killed the prophets, and cast the law behind their back, were only punished with a seventy years' captivity, and then brought home again: but now there is no end of our calamities, nor do the prophets promise any."

If this argument was hard to be answered then in his days, it is much harder now in ours, who still see them pursued by God's vengeance; which can be for nothing else but rejecting and crucifying the Messiah, the Saviour of the world.

Ver. 11. *Binding his foal unto the vine,* &c.] This verse sets forth the great fertility of Judah's country (abounding with vineyards and pastures) by two hyperbolical expressions. First, That vines should be as common there, as thorn-hedges in other places; so that they might tie asses with their colts to them: or, as some will have it, lade an ass with the fruit of one vine. Secondly, That wine should be as common as water; so that they should have enough, not only to drink, but to wash their clothes in it. Which doth not imply, that they made it serve for that use, but only denotes its plenty; which was so very great, that in treading the grapes, and pressing out the juice, their garments were all sprinkled with wine, which one might wring out of them.

Choice vine.] The vine of *Sorek* (which we here translate *choice,* and in Jerem. ii. 21. *noble* vine) was the most excellent in all that country. For *Sorek* was a place not above half a mile from the valley of Eschol; from whence the spies brought the large bunches, as a sample of the fruitfulness of the country. (See Bochart. par. i. Hierozoic. lib. iii. cap. 13.)

Ver. 12. *His eyes shall be red with wine,* &c.] This verse sets forth the healthfulness and vigour of the inhabitants of that fertile country. But Dr. Castell thinks this not to be a good translation; because it can be said of none but a drunkard, that his *eyes are red with wine.* And therefore it ought to be translated, *his eyes* (or *his countenance,* for so *eyes* sometimes signifies) shall be *brighter* and more *shining than wine.* So the word we render *red* signifies in the Arabic tongue, as he shews in his Oratio in Schol. Theolog. p. 31. and in his Lexicon. Yet the same word in the Proverbs (xxiii. 29.) cannot have any other signification than *red;* and the *red* colour of the eyes answers very well here to the *whiteness* of the teeth, which follows; and there is no more reason to think he means, they should make their eyes red with drinking wine, than that they should wash their clothes in it: but it may only express the great abundance of wine; to serve not only their necessity, but excess.

And his teeth white with milk.] Milk doth not make the teeth white; but gives such an excellent nourishment, that they who live upon it are healthy and strong: and their teeth not so apt to rot, as theirs who feed upon greater dainties. So the meaning is, the rich pastures in that country should feed great flocks, and consequently they should have abundance of milk, so good and nourishing, that the teeth of the countrymen who lived upon it should be as white as the milk they drank. Or, if the foregoing words be translated, *His eyes shall be brighter than wine;* these are to be translated, *His teeth whiter than milk.*

Out of these three verses foregoing, Bochartus thinks the whole story of Silenus was forged by the poets. (See his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 18. p. 482.)

Ver. 13. *Zebulon shall dwell at the haven of the sea.*] Near the lake of Tiberias; called in Scripture the *sea of Galilee.*

He shall be a haven for ships.] The lot that fell to him extended from thence to the Mediterranean, where there were ports for ships.

His border shall be unto Zidon.] He doth not mean the city of Zidon; for the tribe of Zebulon did not extend themselves beyond Mount Carmel, which is forty miles at least from thence, but the country of Zidon, *i. e.* Phœnicia, (as Bochart observes in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 34.) which the Zebulonites touched. For as the Phœnicians were called Syrians from Sur, *i. e.* Tyre: so they were called Sidonians from Sidon, as Hesychius tells us, who interprets Σιδόνιοι, by Φοίνικες. Whence the LXX. have Phœnicians for Sidonians, (Deut. iii. 9.) and Phœnice for Sidon, (Isai. xxiii. 2.)

It is very much to be admired, that Jacob should foretell, so many years beforehand, the situation of his posterity in the land of Canaan; when their several portions fell to them by lot, and not by their own choice, (Josh. xix. 10, 11.) This could not have been, but by the spirit of prophecy. And it is remarkable also, that he mentions Zebulon before Issachar, who was his eldest brother, (xxx. 11.) for no other reason, that I can discern, but because Zebulon's lot was to come up before Issachar's, in the division of the land, his being the third, and Issachar's the fourth, (Josh. xix. 17.) By this they were taught that their habitation in the land of Canaan was the gift of God; and did not come by chance: their forefather having so long before predicted the very portion they should inherit.

Ver. 14. *Issachar is a strong ass.*] As he compared Judah to a *lion,* because of his valour, so he compares Issachar to an *ass,* and a *strong ass,* because he foresaw they would be very patient and unwearied in rustical labours, in which asses were principally employed in those countries.

Couching down between two burdens.] There are various opinions about the signification of that word, which we translate *burdens.* But none seem to me so apt as that, to express the great strength of an ass; which lies down, with its load hanging down on both sides. Whence a she-ass is called *athon* (as Bochart observes) from the word *ethan,* which signifies *strength;* because no beast of that bigness can carry such heavy burdens.

Ver. 15. *And he saw that rest was good.*] Or, as some will have it, their *resting place;* the country that fell to their share in the land of Canaan, no part of which was more fruitful than some parts of Issachar's portion. Which way soever we take it, he seems to foretell they would choose to follow husbandry rather than merchandize (as Zebulon did), and love quiet and peace, as husbandmen do; especially when they live in a rich soil, as this tribe did. For so it follows.

And the land that it was pleasant.] The famous valley of Jezreel was in this tribe: whose border extended as far as Jordan; where there was a very pleasant country, (Josh. xix. 18. 22.)

Bowed his shoulder to bear.] Taking any pains to till the land; and to carry in the corn, with other fruits of the earth.

And became a servant unto tribute.] Submitting to the

heaviest taxes, rather than lose their repose: for the preservation of which they were content to give any money; that they might redeem their services in the wars or otherways by large contributions.

Ver. 16. *Dan shall judge his people,* &c.] In the word *judge* he alludes to the name of Dan, which signifies *judging, i. e.* ruling and governing. A great many follow Onkelos, who expounds it thus: *a man shall arise out of the tribe of Dan, in whose days the people shall be delivered,* &c. And accordingly we read that Samson, who was of this tribe, judged Israel twenty years. So the meaning is, the tribe of Dan shall have the honour to produce a *judge,* as well as other tribes. But there is this exception to this interpretation, that all the tribes did not produce *judges;* and all Israel (whom the *judges* governed) cannot be said to be Dan's people. But by *his people* (whom he is said here to judge) are properly meant those of his tribe. And therefore Jacob's meaning is, that though he were the son of a concubine, yet his posterity should be governed by a head of their own tribe: as the other tribes of Israel were. So by this he took away all distinction between the sons of his concubines (of whom Dan was the first) and those which he had by Leah and Rachel.

Ver. 17. *Dan shall be a serpent by the way.*] The next words shew, what kind of serpent he should be like, *an adder in the path.* The Hebrew word *schephiphon* some take for a *basilisk;* others for an *asp,* or a *viper;* others a *snake,* or *adder,* &c. The Vulgar translates it *cerastes,* which is a kind of viper: and Bochartus (in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iii. cap. 12.) hath confirmed this translation, by shewing how well it agrees to the characters which authors give of it: that it lies in sand, and in the ruts which cart-wheels make in the highway; and so is ready to bite travellers or their horses. Which is the harder to be avoided, because it is of a sandy colour; so that οἱ πολλοὶ ἀγνοοῦντες πατοῦσι, *many tread upon it unawares:* and Nichander says, the poison of these serpents is chiefly felt in the thighs and hams of those they bite. Which perfectly agrees with what Jacob saith in the following words.

That biteth the horse-heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.] The horse not being able to stand, when the venom works in his legs, the rider must needs fall with him. All this some make to be a description of Samson, who led no armies against his enemies, but overthrew them by subtlety and craft. But it rather belongs to all the Danites (as what was said before to all the Zebulonites and Issacharians) who Jacob foresaw would, "astu potius, quam aperto marte rem gerere," *manage their wars rather by cunning and craft, than by open hostility,* as Bochart speaks. An example of which we have in Judg. xviii. 27.

Ver. 18. *I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.*] They that refer the foregoing words to Samson, make an easy interpretation of this verse. Which is, that Jacob, foreseeing his great achievements for the deliverance of his children, prays that God would, upon all occasions, vouchsafe to send such deliverers unto them, from their oppressors. And the Chaldee paraphrasts make him look beyond such deliverers unto Christ, the great Saviour of the world. For these are the words of Onkelos (in the Complutensian edition, for they are not to be found in Buxtorf's or Bomberg's), "I do not wait for the salvation of Gideon the son of Joash, which is temporal salvation; or of Samson the son of Manoah, which is also a transitory salvation; but I expect the redemption of Christ, the Son of David," &c. Jonathan and the Jerusalem Targum say the same. And if we take all this prophecy to belong to the whole tribe (as I believe it doth), that doth not exclude such a sense. But Jacob foreseeing the distresses wherein they would be, (Josh. xix. 47. Judg. i. 34.) prays God to help them, and deliver them, and teach them to look up to him in all their straits and necessities: and especially to wait for the Messiah. Yet after all, I think, the words may have another meaning, which is this: Jacob, perceiving his approaching death, and his spirits beginning to fail him, in the middle of his speech to his sons, breaks out into this exclamation (which belongs to none of them), saying, *I wait, O Lord, for a happy deliverance out of this world, into a better place.*

And then, having rested himself awhile, to recover his strength, he proceeded to bless the rest of his sons.

Ver. 19. *Gad, a troop shall overcome him.*] Or invade him. There is an allusion in every word to the name of Gad: whose inheritance being in a frontier country beyond Jordan, was very much exposed to the incursions of the Amorites, and Moabites, and the rest of those envious neighbours, that dwelt in or near Arabia. And some think the word *troop* hath a great propriety in it; signifying, not a just army, but a party, as we speak, a band of men, that came oft-times to rob and spoil. But it appears by the prophet Jeremiah, (xlix. 1.) that the Ammonites sometime possessed themselves of the country of Gad, or, at least, of some part of it, and exercised great cruelties there, (Amos i. 13.) Long before which the book of Judges informs us, how they were oppressed by this people for eighteen years together, (x. 8.) and came with a great army and encamped in Gilead, (ver. 17.) which was in the tribe of Gad.

But he shall overcome at the last.] This was eminently fulfilled, when Jephthah the Gileadite, fought with the children of Ammon, and "subdued them before the children of Israel," (Judg. xi. 33.) and when this tribe (together with their brethren of Reuben and Manasseh) made war with the Hagarites, and possessed themselves of their country: which they kept till the captivity, "because the war was of God," (1 Chron. v. 22.)

Ver. 20. *Out of Asher.*] *i. e.* Of his country.

His bread shall be fat.] Shall be excellent provision, of all sorts, for the sustenance of human life. For *bread* comprehends not only corn, but wine and oil, and all sorts of victuals, (xxi. 14.)

And he shall yield royal dainties.] His country shall afford not only all things necessary, but the choicest fruits, fit to be served up to the table of kings. For part of it lay about Carmel, (Josh. xix. 26.) where there was a most delicious valley.

Ver. 21. *Naphtali is a hind let loose.*] As he had compared Judah to a *lion,* and Issachar to an *ass,* and Dan to a *serpent;* so he compares this son to a *hind,* which is not confined within pales or walls; but runs at large, whither it pleaseth. Whereby is signified that this tribe would be great lovers of liberty.

He giveth goodly (or *pleasing*) *words.*] Which denotes their address (as we now speak), charming language and affability, to win the favour of others; and thereby preserve their peace and liberty. Mercer makes this verse to sig-

nify their speed and swiftness in dispatch of business; and their smoothness in the management of it: which might render them acceptable to all men. There are no instances, indeed, in Scripture to make out this character: for Barak, who was of this tribe, was very slow in undertaking the deliverance of Israel. Nor do we read they were more zealous assertors of liberty than others. But yet this will not warrant us to alter the punctuation of the words (as Bochart doth, par. i. Hierozoic. lib. iii. cap. 18.) to make a quite different sense, which is this: *Naphtali is a well-spread tree, which puts out beautiful branches.* For we do not find that they were either more beautiful or numerous than other tribes: but we find, quite contrary, that Simeon, Judah, Issachar, Zebulon, and Dan, were all more numerous than they, when Moses took an account of them, (Numb. i. 23. 27. 29. 31. 39.) Besides, this interpretation makes this verse, in a manner, the very same with the next concerning Joseph. Therefore, though the LXX. agree to Bochart's version, we had better stick to our own; which makes a sense clear and proper enough.

Ver. 22. *Joseph is a fruitful bough.*] Or young plant. It is an allusion to his name; which imports growth and increase: and may well be understood of the great dignity to which he was risen in Egypt. Unto which he was advanced in a short time, after Pharaoh took notice of him: like a bough or young plant, which shoots up apace; and thence compared in the next words to

A fruitful bough by a well.] Or spring of water: which in those dry countries made the plants which were set near them to grow the faster, and to a greater height, (Psal. i. 3.) and therefore signifies his extraordinary advancement.

Whose branches run over the wall.] Cover the wall that surrounds the spring; or the wall against which the tree is planted. Which seems to denote the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh; which sprang from him, and were very flourishing: as appears from Josh. xvii. 14. 17. where they tell him, they were "a great people, whom the Lord had blessed hitherto." And Joshua there acknowledges as much, saying, "Thou art a great people, and hast great power:" and therefore assigns them a larger portion of land, than they had at first. The Hebrew word *banoth*, which we translate *boughs*, literally signifying *daughters;* some think that, as he speaks of the *sons* of Joseph in the foregoing part of the verse, so in this he speaks of his *daughters*, that they should *go to the wall, i. e.* saith Dr. Lightfoot, *even to the enemy:* to repair the hostile tribe of Benjamin; which otherwise had decayed for want of wives. For so the word *schur* signifies, and is translated by us an *enemy*, (Psal. xcii. 11.) And D. Chytræus understands here by *daughters*, the *cities* of the tribe of Ephraim which should be well governed, though some should set themselves against it.

Ver. 23. *The archers.*] In the Hebrew the words *baale chitsim* signify *masters in the art of shooting;* and therefore denote those here spoken of to be skilful in doing mischief: such were his brethren, who were full not only of envy, but hatred to him, (xxxviii. 4, 5. 11.) Some refer it also to Potiphar's wife, who wickedly slandered him: and others to the whole tribe of Ephraim, who were encompassed with enemies (who in general are meant by *archers*), when the kingdom was settled in them, over the ten tribes.

Have sorely grieved him.] By their unkind, or rather churlish behaviour towards him; "for they could not speak peaceably to him," (xxxvii. 4.) and it is likely they reviled him, and threw out bitter words against him: which are properly compared to *arrows*, (Psal. lxiv. 3.)

And shot at him.] Designed to destroy him; and did actually throw him into sore afflictions, (xxxviii. 22. 24. 28.)

And hated him.] Which arose from their hatred to him.

Ver. 24. *But his bow abode in strength.*] He armed himself with invincible patience; having nothing else to oppose unto their malicious contrivances. It seems to be a metaphor from those soldiers, who have bows so well made, that though often, never so often bent, they neither break, nor grow weak. Such was the temper of Joseph's mind.

And the arms of his hands were made strong.] *i. e.* He was strengthened and supported: being like to a strenuous archer, the muscles and sinews of whose arms are so firm and compact, that though his hands draw his bow continually, he is not weary.

By the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.] Which fortitude he had not from himself, but from the Almighty; who had supported Jacob in all his adversities; and made all that Joseph did (when he was sold and imprisoned) to prosper in his hands, (xxxix. 3. 22, 23.) The Hebrew word *abir*, which signifies *potent* or *powerful*, and we translate *mighty One*, is as much as *the Lord of Jacob*. For from power it comes to signify *potestas, authority* and *dominion* also, as Bochart observes.

From thence.] From the Divine Providence over him, before mentioned.

Is the shepherd.] Joseph became the feeder and nourisher of his father, and of his family, and of their flocks and herds: preserving them all from being famished.

And the stone of Israel.] Who upheld them all, and kept them from being ruined. Or, *shepherd* may signify his being made governor of all the land of Egypt; *and the stone of Israel*, the support of his family. For *shepherd* is a name of dignity and authority: and *stone* signifies *the foundation* (as Abarbinel here expounds it) upon which the whole building relies: as Jacob and all his children did upon Joseph for their sustenance.

Some I find (particularly D. Chytræus) refer the words *from thence* unto Joseph: and then by *the shepherd and stone of Israel*, understand those excellent men, who by their wisdom and valour supported the commonwealth of Israel. Such as Joshua, the captain of the Lord's host, and Abdon, one of the judges, who were of the tribe of Ephraim: and Gideon, Jair, and Jephthah, who were of the tribe of Manasseh. But the following words incline rather to the former sense.

Ver. 25. *Even by the God of thy father.*] Or *from* him that blessed me; and advanced thee to be the support of my family. For it refers to all that went before.

Who shall help thee.] Having said what God had already done for him; he now foretels what he would do hereafter: which relates to all his posterity; whom God would protect and defend.

And by the Almighty.] Or, from him who is *all-sufficient;* by which name he revealed himself unto Abraham, when he entered into covenant with him and with his seed, (xvii. 1.)

And bless thee with the blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under.] The meaning seems to be, that his posterity should be planted in a very fertile soil: watered from above with the dew of heaven and with showers of rain; and watered beneath with springs and rivers. As G. Vossius well interprets it, lib. i. de Idolol. cap. 77.

Blessings of the breasts, and of the womb.] A promise of a numerous and thriving progeny. Or, of a vast increase of cattle, so well fed, that they should bring up their young prosperously, as well as bring them forth abundantly.

Ver. 26. *The blessings of thy father.*] Either the blessings bestowed by God upon Jacob; or the blessings Jacob conferred on his son Joseph.

Have prevailed.] Are greater.

Above the blessings of my progenitors.] Than the blessings God bestowed upon Abraham and Isaac: who had not so many sons as God had blessed him withal: upon every one of whom also he conferred a share in the inheritance of the land of Canaan; whereas Ishmael was excluded by Abraham, and Esau by Isaac. Or, the meaning may be, *I have done more for thee, than they for me, i. e.* thou shalt be happier than I. For Jacob led an unsettled life: but Joseph flourished in great splendour in Egypt, to the end of his days.

Unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills.] As long as the world shall last. For perpetuity is expressed in Scripture by the durableness of mountains, (Isai. liv. 10.) And here he seems to allude to the noble mountains, which fell to be the portion of Joseph's children, *viz.* Bashan and Mount Ephraim. But there are those who think he hath not respect to the durableness of these mountains, but to their fruitfulness; translating the Hebrew word *tavath* not *bounds*, but *desires*, as the Vulgar Latin doth. And then the sense is, *Unto all that is most desirable in those ancient hills*, which abounded with the most excellent fruit. And this translation is grounded on Moses's blessing, which seems to be an interpretation of Jacob's, Deut. xxxiii. 15. where he blesses him; "for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills."

Of him that was separate from his brethren.] The word *nazir*, which we translate *separate*, signifies one that is separated from others, "vel voto, vel dignitate," (as Bochart observes, par. ii. Hierozoic. lib. v. cap. 6.) *either by a vow, or by his dignity.* And in the latter sense Joseph is called *nazir*, because of his eminent dignity; whereby he was advanced above all his brethren: being the viceroy of Egypt.

Ver. 27. *Benjamin shall raven as a wolf.*] This sets forth the warlike temper of this tribe: a wolf being both a strong and undaunted, and also a very rapacious creature: and thence in aftertimes dedicated to Mars. From whence wolves are called *Martii* and *Martiales* in Virgil and in Horace: and warlike men are called by the Greeks Λυκόφρονες, *of a wolf-like temper.* And the history justifies this character: the tribe of Benjamin alone maintaining a war with all the other tribes; in which they overcame them in two battles, though they had sixteen to one against them. And they killed then more men of Israel than they had in their whole army. (See Bochart, par. i. Hierozoic. lib. iii. cap. 10.)

In the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.] This doth not signify (as the forenamed author observes, in the same place) the whole *day*, but the whole *night:* one part of which is the *evening*, and the other the *morning.* And therefore the particle *and* signifies here as much as *after:* and this is the sense: *the tribe of Benjamin shall be like a ravening wolf: who shall have his prey to eat till morning-light; after he hath divided it in the evening.* For the division of the prey goes before the eating of it. This passage is like that Josh. vii. 25. "They burnt them with fire, and stoned them with stones," *i. e.* burnt them, after they had stoned them; as we there rightly translate it. And this applied to Benjamin, signifies such success in their wars, that they should come home loaded with the spoils of their enemies.

I omit the fancy of the Talmudists, who imagine Benjamin is compared to a wolf, because the altar of burnt-offering, where the morning and evening sacrifices were daily consumed, stood in this tribe. They that would know what they say of this, may look in Codex Middoth, cap. iii. §. 1. and L'Empereur's Annotations there.

Ver. 28. *All these are the twelve tribes of Israel.*] From these sprang the twelve tribes of Israel: or, these are the blessings of the twelve tribes: for these words plainly shew, that what he had said was not to be fulfilled in their persons, but in their posterity.

And blessed them; every one according to his blessing, &c.] He did not give them a new blessing after all this: but the meaning is, he blessed them (in the manner foregoing) every one according to the blessing designed by God for them. There seems indeed to be no benediction bestowed on the three first tribes; but that is to be understood only comparatively: for he provided for them all a portion in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 29. *I am to be gathered to my people.*] Must die shortly.

Bury me with my fathers, &c.] The reason of this injunction is well explained by Mercer: to whom I refer the reader.

Ver. 30. *In the cave that is,* &c.] He describes the place so particularly, in this and the two next verses, because he would not have them mistake it when they went to bury him; and that he might shew his title to it, if the inhabitants of Canaan (from which he had been absent some years) should dispute the laying his body there.

Ver. 33. *When Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons.*] Concerning his burial; which he briefly added to his prophecy.

He gathered up his feet into the bed.] The Hebrews think that out of reverence to God he sat up when he pronounced a blessing on his sons: his feet hanging down upon the ground. And indeed it is very propable he endeavoured to put himself into a posture of authority at least: and therefore *sat* on his bed-side while he spake. And now the prophetic spirit, which had raised his natural spirits above their ordinary pitch, departing from him, they presently sunk so much the lower; and in a short time he expired.

Yielded up the ghost.] The Hebrews will have it to express an easy death.

And was gathered to his people.] To his ancestors. From whence there are some (particularly Theodoret) who

infer the belief they had, in those days, of another life: in society with those who were departed out of this life. For brutes are never said to be gathered to those of their kind, that died before them.

CHAP. L.

Ver. 1. *JOSEPH fell on his father's face.*] He was transported by his affection, to the tenderest expressions of it: though he was a man in great dignity and authority.

And kissed him.] It is likely he first closed his eyes, as God promised he should do, xlvi. 4. (and as the custom was,) and then parted from his body with a kiss. Of which we find many examples both among heathen and Christian people: but they will not warrant us to say that it was done by every body; for all that I have observed were such near relations as Joseph was to Jacob. Thus Ovid represents Niobe as kissing her slain sons; and Meleager's sisters kissing him when he lay dead: and Corippus represents Justin the younger falling upon Justinian, and weeping, and kissing him, just as Joseph did here:

> "Ut prius ingrediens corpus venerabile vidit,
> Incubuit lachrymans, atque oscula frigida carpsit
> Divini patris."

Yet Dionys. Areopag. cap. vii. Eccles. Hierarch. describing the funerals of Christians, saith, the bishop prayed over the corpse when it was brought into the church, and after prayer, Αὐτὸς ἀσπάζεται τὸν κεκοιμημένον, &c. *Both he himself kissed the dead person,* and after him all that were present did the same: so it seems to have been their taking a solemn leave of the dead, till they met in another world.

Ver. 2. *His servants the physicians.*] Great men anciently, among other servants that waited on them, had a physician. And Joseph, being viceroy of Egypt, may well be supposed to have kept more than one in his retinue.

To embalm his father.] Of which there was now the greater necessity; because his body was to be carried a great way to its sepulchre. And both Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus tell us there were those in Egypt who professed the art of preserving bodies from corruption. Which, it is likely, was a part of their physicians' employment: for the word *ropheim* (which we translate *physicians*) constantly signifies in Scripture, such as cure or heal sick bodies. But the LXX. here aptly enough translate it ἐνταφιαστὰς *(those that prepared and fitted bodies for their interment,* by embalming them, as we translate it), because this now was their proper business. Whence it is that Pliny saith, (lib. xi. cap. 37.) "Mos est Egyptiis cadavera asservare medicata," *it is the custom of the Egyptians to preserve dead bodies ordered by the physician's art.* In which art they excelled all other people: bodies of their embalming remaining to this day; and are often brought into these countries, under the name of *mummy:* concerning which a late German physician (Joach. Struppius) hath written a peculiar treatise.

And the physicians embalmed Israel.] The forenamed authors (Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus) tell us the manner how it was performed; and at what rates: there being three several prices, according to the cost that men would bestow upon their friends. Upon the first rank of funerals they spent a talent of silver: the second cost about twenty pound: about the third they made small expense, as Diodorus expressly tells us, (lib. i. §. 2. p. 57. edit. Hen. Steph.) And Herodotus, in three distinct chapters, shews how they ordered the bodies of the better, middle, and meaner sort, so as to preserve them; and yet with greater or lesser expense. (Vid. Euterpe, cap. 86, 87, 88.) If things were thus in Joseph's days, it is not to be thought that he would spare any cost, but had his father's body embalmed in the noblest manner.

Ver. 3. *And forty days were fulfilled for him.*] That is, for his embalming: which could not be finished in a little time. For Diodorus tells us of several officers who were employed about it, one after another; and says expressly they spent more than *thirty* days in it. Which differs something from what is here related: but, it is likely, in future times (when Diodorus lived) they might have attained to a greater perfection in this art; and made their spices penetrate the whole body in less than *forty* days, but more than *thirty.* And Herodotus doth not really differ from this, when he saith, in the place beforenamed, Ταῦτα ποιήσαντες, *when they had done these things* (stuffed the body with myrrh, cassia, and other spices, except frankincense), ταριχεύουσι νίτρῳ, κρύψαντες ἡμέρας ἑβδομήκοντα, *they pickled it in nitre, where it lay soaking seventy days.* That is, *thirty* days more; till the *forty* were made up *seventy:* longer than which neither the bodies of the better nor the meaner sort were to be salted. But after that, they were wrapped in fine linen and gums; to make it stick like glue: and so they delivered the body to the kindred of the deceased entire (as Diodorus writes, p. 58.) in all its features, the very hairs of the eye-lids being preserved.

There have been some so morose as to censure Joseph for following the perverse customs, as they call them, of the Egyptians: who spent too much upon dead bodies. But they should have considered how much more perverse it is not to follow the decent customs of the country where we live; and that dead bodies, especially of the faithful, are not to be neglected, but treated (as St. Austin speaks, lib. i. de Civ. Dei, cap. 13.) as the organs of the Holy Ghost: which the ancients, he thinks, did well to carry to their funerals, *officiosâ pietate.*

And the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.] *i. e.* All that time they were preparing his body, in the manner before related, for its funeral: which Herodotus says, was just seventy days. He and also Diodorus describe their manner of mourning; and say that they daubed their heads with mud (as the Jews sprinkled ashes on their heads), and went about lamenting till the corpse was buried: abstaining from bathing and from wine, and from all delicate food, or fine clothes. Which latter part of their mourning, it is likely, might be in use in Joseph's time; though not the former, of besmearing their heads and faces with mud. But it is sufficient to say that they appeared in the habit of mourners (all the time the body was embalming), which was very various in different times and places: and continued in some countries a great many days longer than in others. This time of seventy days may seem to some too long: but Jacobus Capellus proposes this to their consideration, (Hist. Exot. et Sacra, ad A. M. 2310.) that Joseph being next to their king, the Egyptians honoured his father

with a royal funeral, and a mourning of seventy days: which he thinks is a round number for seventy-two: for Diodorus says so many were the days of mourning for their king. "It seeming reasonable to them, that as they gave the fifth part of the increase of their land to their king when he was alive; so they should bestow the fifth part of the year upon him in mourning for him when he was dead: which was just seventy-two, not reckoning the five odd days, which did not come into their account. As to those who object that this was immoderate mourning, having more of ambition than piety in it; his answer is, That (granting it to be true) Joseph did not bring in this custom; and had peculiar reason to follow what he found in use there: that they might be the more condemned who vexed the innocent posterity, on whose parent they had bestowed royal honours. Besides, there is something due to kings and great men, to distinguish them from the dregs of the people."

Ver. 4. *And when the days of mourning were past.*] That is, the seventy days beforenamed.

Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh.] To the great officers of the court; unto whom, it is most probable, he spake by a messenger: strict mourners (such as Joseph was) using to keep close in their chambers, and not to appear in public, or make visits. At least it was against the custom to appear in the court (if the same usage was there in those days, which was in the Persian court in Mordecai's time; and such rational customs one cannot but think were very ancient) in the habit of a mourner, (Esth. iv. 1, 2.) For which reason he did not go himself to make the following request to Pharaoh: they who were in the state of mourning being looked upon as defiled.

Ver. 5. *My father made me swear,* &c.] See xlvii. 29, 30. where Jacob engaged him by an oath to carry his body into Canaan, to be buried there: that he might keep up some claim to that country, by virtue of the sepulchre, which his grandfather had there purchased; and where his father Isaac lay buried.

Which I have digged for me.] In the cave that Abraham had bought, Gen. xxiii. (which was a large place) Jacob it seems had taken care to have a grave digged for himself. From which and such-like examples St. Austin argues (in the place quoted above, on ver. 3.) the bodies of the dead, especially of good men, are to be treated with such a regard, as they themselves thought was due to them.

Ver. 6. *According as he made thee swear.*] The religion of an oath, it appears from hence, was in those days so sacred, that the king, who had not sworn himself, would not have another man violate it, for his sake: who might have pretended he could not spare Joseph so long from his business, being his chief minister in the land of Egypt. Such heathen kings as these will rise up in judgment against those Christian princes who make a jest of their oaths.

Ver. 7. *All the servants of Pharaoh.*] This seems to be explained by the next words, the *elders of his house;* the principal officers of court. For the word *all* must be understood with some limitation, as usually in Scripture: some being left behind, no doubt, to wait upon the king. Thus in Matt. iii. 5. *all Judea* is said to have gone out to John's baptism, *i. e.* a great many.

The elders of his house, &c.] I have observed before on xxiv. 2. that *elder* is a name of dignity: as the Jerusalem Targum there expounds it; instead of *his servant the elder of his house,* having these words, *his principal servant, who was set over all the rest, as their governor.* And it appears by this place that this was used not only by the Hebrews, but by the Egyptians, long before Moses's time, as a title of honour and dignity: as it hath since been by all nations whatsoever. (See Mr. Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 14.)

All the elders of the land of Egypt.] The principal persons in authority and dignity, throughout the whole country, as well as those of the court: such as were governors of provinces, and cities, and counsellors, &c. Which honour they did to Jacob, in all likelihood, by Pharaoh's command: for how well soever they might stand affected to Joseph, they could not of their own accord desert their charge.

Ver. 8. *All the house of Joseph,* &c.] Their whole family; except such as were necessary to look after their little ones and their flocks, &c. This verse also shews the word *all* must have a limited sense.

Ver. 9. *And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen.*] As a guard to him; which, it is likely, always attended him, as viceroy of the kingdom: but now might be necessary for his safety, as he passed through the deserts, in case he should meet with any opposition, when he came to challenge his burying-place. Though it is probable that matter was settled beforehand with the Canaanites; who were in no condition to oppose the kingdom of Egypt: which was grown very rich, and they very poor, by the late famine.

And it was a very great company.] That he might appear in greater state, at such a solemnity.

Ver. 10. *And they came to the threshing-floor of Atad.*] Some take Atad for a place, and translate the word before it in the same sense, as if he had said they came to Goren-Atad. But Forsterus in his Lexicon thinks Atad was the proper name of a man, who was eminent in that country for his threshing-floor. Though there are those who take it for a *bramble,* with which that floor was fenced in: for so the word signifies, Judg. ix. 14. And the Africans called a bramble *atadim* (as Bochart observes, lib. ii. Canaan, cap. 15.) which is the plural number of Atad. But the Talmudists are so fanciful, that, not satisfied with such reasons, they say Jacob's coffin was here surrounded with garlands (crowns they call them) just like a threshing-floor, which is hedged about with thorns. For the tradition, they say, is, that the sons of Esau, Ishmael, and Keturah all met here; and seeing Joseph's crown hanging over the coffin, they all pulled off theirs, and hanged them up in the same manner. So the Excerpt. Gemaræ in Sota, cap. i. §. 45.

Beyond Jordan.] Some translate it, *On this side Jordan.* Both are true, with respect to several places: for it was *on this side Jordan* with respect to those in Canaan: but *beyond Jordan* with respect to those who came unto Canaan, through the deserts; as Joseph did now, and the Israelites afterward. Why Joseph passed this way, which was very much about, and not the direct road, which was a great deal shorter, is hard to tell. Perhaps it was a better way for chariots: for it is not probable they feared any opposition from the Philistines, or Edomites; with whom the matter might have been concerted (as we now speak) beforehand,

if they had apprehended their passage would meet with any hinderance from them.

There they mourned, &c.] Wherein this *great and sore lamentation* consisted, we are not able to give a certain account: but in aftertimes they sat with their faces covered; having ashes sprinkled on their heads; crying out with a mournful voice; sometimes wringing, sometimes clapping their hands together; smiting their breasts, or their thighs; with many other expressions of grief and sorrow. But why they made this lamentation at the floor of Atad, rather than at the grave, is harder to resolve. Perhaps it was a more convenient place to stay in seven days, than that where he was to be buried: and the mourning being made in the country where the body was laid, was the same as if it had been made at the grave. Or, it was the fashion, perhaps, at the very entrance of the country, where they carried a corpse to be buried, to fall into a lamentation: and they made the same again, when they came to the place where it was interred: though there is nothing of that here mentioned.

Seven days.] That that was the time of public mourning among the Jews in succeeding ages, it appears from many instances: particularly 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. Ecclus. xxii. 13. Judith xvi. 29. And just so long their joy lasted at solemn weddings; as we read in chap. xxix. of this book, ver. 27.

Ver. 11. *This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians.*] By this it appears this was a solemn public mourning, in which the Egyptians themselves joined, though not related to him. And therefore, it is likely, consisted in such wailings, and outward expressions of sorrow, as were made even by those who had no inward grief. For in following times there were a sort of men called סַפְדָנִים, *lamenters* (from the Hebrew word *saphad* used in the foregoing verse), who had a public office, as our *bearers* have, to attend upon funerals and make doleful lamentations. (See Buxtorf. Lex. Talm. f. 1524.)

Abel-Mitzraim.] This shews the lamentation was exceeding great, that it changed the very name of the place where it was made: or, at least, gave a name to it.

Ver. 14. *And Joseph returned into Egypt,* &c.] They had a prosperous journey: and there is no ground for what some Jews bid us here note; that not one man was lost, though they had a battle with the Edomites in their way to Canaan.

Ver. 15. *Joseph will peradventure hate us,* &c.] Their guilt was so great, that it continued to make them suspicious.

Ver. 16. *And they sent messengers unto Joseph.*] The same guilt made them fearful to go themselves; but they first tried how he would answer a messenger they sent to him (for it doth not appear there was more than one) in all their names; with a letter, perhaps, confirming what he delivered by word of mouth. Some think this message was sent before they went to bury their father; while the time of mourning lasted: when Joseph's heart, they thought, was tender, and his father fresh in memory. But this is not a sufficient reason to make us think it was not done in order of time as it is here placed in the story.

Thy father commanded before he died.] This was a feigned story: for we do not find that Joseph had acquainted his father with their usage of him. Or, if he did, it would have been more proper to have left this charge with Joseph, than with them; or rather, he knew him so well, that he needed not to command him to take no revenge.

Ver. 17. *Forgive the trespass.*] So we well translate the Hebrew phrase, *take away the trespass:* which is used elsewhere in this book, xviii. 24. 26. and in Hosea xiv. 2. And by *forgive* is meant, "Remitte pœnam, quam ab illis possis jure exigere propter peccatum in te commissum;" as Bochart well explains this passage; (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 41.) *Remit the punishment, which thou mayest justly exact of them, for the offence they committed against thee.*

Of the servants of the God of thy father.] They urge besides the command of their father, and the relation they had to him as his brethren, that they were of the same religion with him: which makes the greatest conjunction of minds and affections, if it be rightly understood and practised. For how can the worshippers of the same God hate one another? There are those who think they call themselves *the servants of God,* not merely upon the account of their worshipping the true God, but because they were teachers also of the true religion: for this made them, above other Israelites, to be the *servants of God.* So Jac. Alting. lib. iii. Shilo, cap. 14.

And Joseph wept when they spake unto him.] By their messenger. Which shews he was so far from being angry at them, that he pitied them, and had a tender affection to them.

Ver. 18. *And his brethren also went,* &c.] The messenger acquainting them how he stood affected to them; and, it is likely, carrying back a kind message from him, and an invitation to come to him; they went to his house, and humbled themselves at his feet. In which Joseph's dream was still further fulfilled.

We are thy servants.] They had not yet overcome their fear (so close did their guilt stick to their consciences), and therefore call themselves his *servants,* not his *brethren.* They had sold him to be a servant; and now they offer themselves to be so to him.

Ver. 19. *For am I in the place of God?*] His father Jacob had said the same to Rachel, (xxx. 2.) to persuade her to submit to Divine Providence: which seems to be the scope of the words here. *Shall I presume to oppose myself to what is come to pass; as if I were God, and not He, who hath ordered things so much for our good?* This appears to be the sense by what follows: and may be thus expressed: *shall I punish you for that* (for that may be meant by being in the *place of God,* to whom vengeance belongs) *which God hath turned so much to all our advantage?* Though the words may be simply rendered, *I am in the place of God,* without an interrogation. As much as to say, *I have nourished and sustained you all this while, and can you think I will now do you hurt?*

Ver. 20. *But as for you, ye thought evil against me,* &c.] It is true, indeed, ye thought to destroy me: but God designed by that very evil contrivance of yours, to bring about the greatest good both to you and me.

To bring to pass as it is this day, &c.] To accomplish what you now see, the preservation of our whole family: which he understands by *much people,* in the next words, who by this means were *saved* from perishing. Herein appears the wonderful wisdom of God's overruling providence: which, contrary to the nature of sin, and the will

of sinners, turns the evil they do into good, and directs it to the most excellent ends.

Ver. 21. *Now therefore fear you not.*] He again encourages their hope; by repeating what he had said, ver. 19.

I will nourish you, &c.] I will still take care of you all, as I have done hitherto.

And he comforted them, &c.] With such discourse as this he raised up their drooping spirits: for he spake most kindly to them.

Ver. 22. *And Joseph dwelt in Egypt,* &c.] He continued in Egypt; and so did his brethren, to their dying day. And, no doubt, made his word good to them: being one of the greatest examples of heroic virtue; to which none can arrive, unless they be meek and placable as he was. For, "Nihil est magnum, quod non idem sit placidum;" as Seneca truly said.

Joseph lived a hundred and ten years.] Not so long as his forefathers; for he was the son of his father's old age, and lived a great part of his time full of thought and care: having the weight of a great kingdom's affairs lying on him. For eighty of these years he spent in Egypt (being but thirty years old when he first stood before Pharaoh), in great prosperity, indeed; but in no less solicitude to discharge so great a trust as was committed to him.

Ver. 23. *Ephraim's children of the third generation.*] *i. e.* His great grandchildren. In which Jacob's prediction began to be fulfilled, (xlviii. 19, 20. xlix. 25.) We find indeed that after Joseph's death (I suppose) Ephraim had some of his children slain, (1 Chron. vii. 21, &c.) But God so blessed those who remained, that when Moses took an account of them after their coming out of Egypt, they were increased to above eight thousand more than the children of Manasseh, (Numb. i. 33. 35.)

Brought up upon Joseph's knees.] He lived to embrace and dandle them (as we now speak), in which old men and women much delight. Machir had only Gilead by his first wife; but he had more children by a second, as we read 1 Chron. vii. 16. All which were born before Joseph died; and, perhaps, by *children* he means the children of his grandchildren.

Joseph's great authority, and his children's great increase, overawed his brethren so that they never durst dispute their father's will: in which he gave a double portion unto them. Which one would guess by their temper, was as displeasing to them, as their father's kindness to Joseph anciently had been: but they durst not oppose it; nor do we find they quarrelled at it.

Ver. 24. *God will surely visit you.*] He explains his meaning by what follows; *and bring you out of this land,* &c. For the word *visit* is used indifferently either for bestowing good things, or inflicting evil. Thus he died in the same faith with his ancestors; that God would make good his promises to them.

Ver. 25. *And Joseph took an oath.*] As his father had done of him, (xlvii. 30, 31.)

Of the children of Israel.] Not only of his brethren mentioned before, (ver. 24.) but of all their family, who were to succeed them; and might live (when his brethren were dead) to carry his body out of Egypt; which he desired, for the same reason his father had done.

Carry up my bones from hence.] He did not desire to be carried immediately after his death, as his father was when his embalming was finished; but that they should carry him when they themselves returned to Canaan: by which time he knew his flesh would be quite dried up, and nothing left but bones. The reason why he did not desire to be carried away presently, was, that his body remaining with them, they might look upon it as a pledge and security of the promise God had made, of giving them the possession of that land, wherein he desired to be buried, or not buried at all. But he had repeated it twice, that God would *surely visit them,* (ver. 24, 25.) and was so confident of it, that he desired to be kept unburied, till the time of that visitation. Perhaps also he considered that they could not be of such authority as he had been: to prevail to have his body carried to Canaan, as his father's was: and therefore desired them not to think of laying him there, till that time came, when they should make a solemn and universal departure thither.

We read nothing what became of the rest of his brethren, but Josephus saith they were all carried into the land of Canaan to be buried: for they had the same desire, in all likelihood, and gave the same charge concerning their bodies;. to keep posterity in hope, that God would certainly bring them thither. Which the words of St. Stephen also may seem to import, when he saith, (Acts vii. 15, 16.) "Jacob died, and our fathers, and were carried over into Sychem," &c. Though we read of none of their fathers beside Joseph; yet it seems the tradition was, that they were all carried thither, after his example. And so St. Jerome saith, that he saw at Sychem the sepulchres of the twelve patriarchs. (Epitaph. Paulæ, cap. 6.)

Ver. 26. *So Joseph died.*] After he had taken the forenamed oath of them, and assured them again of the truth of God's promise: which were the last things he did.

Some, perhaps, may think it strange that so wise and great a man as Joseph, whose dying words, one cannot but think, would have left a deep impression upon his brethren, should not give them abundance of good counsel at his departure from this world: and lay some other charge upon them, besides this of carrying up his bones to the land of Canaan. But Moses did not intend to write all that excellent men said and did: and we may very well think, when he declared his steadfast faith in the promise made to Abraham, (which the apostle takes notice of, Hebr. xi. 22.) and assured them God would perform it, he enlarged himself on that subject, in more words than are here related.

Being a hundred and ten years old.] This was said before, (ver. 22.) but here repeated, to signify he did not live a year beyond it; and so died just fifty-four years after his father; and a hundred and forty-four years before their departure out of Egypt.

And they embalmed him.] His brethren took the same care of his body, that he had done of his father's, ver. 2. See there. For that Joseph died before any of his brethren, the Jews gather from Exod. i. 6, where it is said, "Joseph died, and all his brethren." He first, and they followed him. But not content with this, some of them adventure to tell us how many years every one of them lived; nay, the very month and day of their birth, as may be seen in R. Bechai. Reuben, for instance, they say was born the 14th day of Cisleu, and died when he was a hundred and twenty-five years old, &c.

And he was put in a coffin in Egypt.] To be pre-

served in that *chest* or *ark* (as the Hebrew word is commonly translated) till they themselves went from thence. Herodotus, in the book above named (Euterpe, cap. 86. 90.) speaks of the Θήκαι, *chests*, wherein dead bodies were enclosed after their embalming: which they laid ἐν οἰκήματι θηκαίῳ, *in the house or cell where these chests were reposited*, reared against the wall of it. Whether Joseph's coffin was put into such a common repository, or rather preserved in a place by it, we cannot determine. But the Chaldee hath an odd conceit, (as G. Schikkard observes in his Jus Regium, p. 159.) that it was kept in the river Nile. Which arose, perhaps, from a mistake of the relation which that author had met withal, of the place where they laid their bodies: which were let down very deep *wells*, or *vaults* some call them (some of which were not far from the river Nile), and so put into a *cave*, which was at the bottom of those *wells*. For so F. Vansleb and others, who have gone to search for mummies, describe the place where they lie: and tell us they found some of the coffins made of wood (not putrified to this day), and others of clothes pasted together, forty times double; which were as strong as wood, and not at all rotten.

The reader cannot but observe, that from the time of Joseph's advancement to the government, till the time of his death, *i. e.* for eighty years, there is no mention of the death of any king in Egypt. For it was not Moses's intention to write the history of that kingdom, or to give us the series of their kings: but only to acquaint us with the series of the patriarchs, and give some account of them, from the creation to his own time. All other things must be learned out of other authors. And, according to Eusebius, whom Jac. Capellus follows, the first king of the eighteenth dynasty (when the Egyptian history he makes account ceased to be fabulous) was Amos: whose dream Joseph interpreted, and was by him preferred. After he had reigned twenty-five years, he left the kingdom to Chebros; who reigned thirteen years. Next to whom was Amenophis (as much as to say, *a servant of Noph*, i. e. *Memphis*), who reigned twenty-one years: and then left the kingdom to Mephres, who held it twelve years. To whom Josephus, out of Manetho, substitutes Amersis, and says he reigned twenty-two years. And then succeeded Mephramuthosis, who reigned twenty-six years: in the beginning of whose time Joseph died.

THE

SECOND BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

EXODUS.

CHAP. I.

THIS book hath its name from the principal subject of it, *viz.* the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt. For so the Greek word Ἔξοδος signifies, *going out*, or *departing* from one place to another. It contains a history of about a hundred forty and five years (some make it two or three years less) from the death of Joseph, to the building of the Tabernacle. For it treats of several things which went before their *departure*, and which followed after it: but they all relate to that, and depend upon it.

Ver. 1. *Now these are the names of the children of Israel which came into Egypt*, &c.] Being to relate the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, it was very proper first to set down the number of those who came into it; and the heads of them: whereby it might the better appear also how God had fulfilled his promise to Abraham, of multiplying his seed: which Moses had recorded in his first book (Genesis), where he shews this promise was made at that very time, when he declared, after a long affliction in Egypt, he would conduct his posterity into Canaan, (Gen. xv. 5. 13. 18.)

Ver. 2, 3, 4. *Reuben, Simeon*, &c.] He doth not set down their names (in these three verses) according to their birth: but first the children of Leah; then one of Rachel's; and then those of his handmaids: and last of all (in the next verses) Joseph, who was in Egypt before.

Ver. 5. *And all the souls.*] *i. e.* Persons.

Who came out of the loins.] In the Hebrew, out of *the thigh*, which signifies that part whereby mankind is propagated: as was observed upon Gen. xlvi. 26. And so the author of the Tripartite history uses the word *femur*, when he speaks of the martyrdom of Benjamin, (as Bochart observes, par. ii. Hierozoic. lib. v. cap. 15.) "Alium rursum acutum Calamum in ejus femur, unde humana origo descendit, jussit immitti."

For Joseph was in Egypt already.] In the Hebrew the particle *vau* (which we commonly translate *and*, and here *for*) sometimes also signifies *with:* (see Gen. iv. 20.) And so it doth in this place: which should be translated *seventy souls, with Joseph; who was in Egypt already.* For Joseph is not to be added to the *seventy*, but reckoned among them; to make up that number: as appears from Gen. xlvi.

Ver. 6. *And Joseph died.*] See Gen. l. 26.

And all his brethren, and all that generation.] All that came with Jacob into Egypt.

Ver. 7. *And the children of Israel were fruitful,* &c.] Here are several words for the same thing; to shew their extraordinary increase, beyond what was usual in that or any other country. And because there are six words in all, to express this great increase, some of the Hebrews conclude they brought forth six children at a birth. Which others of them gather from the second word here used, *jischretzu:* which is a word whereby the increase of fishes is expressed in Gen. i. 20. So Theodoric Hackspan observes out of Baal-hatturim and Jalkut, and thinks the tradition is not to be rejected, because they bring frivolous conceits to support it. For Aristotle saith (lib. vii. Histor. Animal. cap. 4.) the Egyptian women were so fruitful, that some of them at four births brought *twenty* children. No wonder then, if some of the Israelites brought *six* at a time, by the extraordinary blessing of God upon them. For Caspar Schottus names the wife of a citizen in Florence, who had two-and-fifty children, and never brought less than three at a birth; lib. iii. Phys. Curiosæ, cap. 29. where he hath collected a vast number of examples of such strange fruitfulness.

But nobody hath explained this verse more soberly and unexceptionably than Abarbinel; who considers every one of the words here used very judiciously; and shews they are not multiplied in vain. For, as the first word,

Were fruitful] Signifies, he thinks, that none among them were barren, but brought forth every year, as trees are wont to do; so the next word,

And increased abundantly] Signifies, that they commonly brought forth more than one at a time, as *creeping* things do; to which this word alludes. And because when more than one are born at a birth, they are frequently very weak, and not long-lived; therefore he adds,

And multiplied.] Which signifies, that they grew up to be men and women; and lived to have children of their own. And those not feeble, but lusty and strong; as the next words, he thinks, import, *waxed exceeding mighty:* of which more presently.

Now this vast increase began at their first coming into Egypt, (Gen. xlvii. 27, 28.) and so continued till the death of all that generation, mentioned in the foregoing verse. When it began to be taken notice of by the Egyptians; who thought it might prove dangerous to them: for the Israelites having *multiplied exceedingly,* during the space of seventeen years, that Jacob lived in Egypt; there is no doubt they increased proportionably in the space of fifty-four years more, which Joseph lived after the death of his father. And so in sixty-four years more, from the death of Joseph to the birth of Moses, must needs be grown so numerous, as to *fill the country.* So that in eighty years more, they were increased to six hundred thousand men besides children, (Exod. xii. 37.) And the next year their number being taken, they were found to be six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty men, from twenty years old and upward; as we read, Numb. i. 45, 46. And therefore, reckoning women, children, and youths under the age of twenty, we cannot but think they were three times as many: or perhaps two millions. Which is not incredible, by a moderate computation, if we consider how many might spring from seventy persons in the space of two hundred and fifteen years (which the forenamed sums make), as Bonfrerius, and several others from him in our own language, have been at the pains to demonstrate.

And waxed exceeding mighty.] This is commonly thought to signify, that they were not only numerous, but robust and strong. And it may as well denote, that their vast numbers made them very formidable to the Egyptians: who began, it appears by the sequel, to be jealous of their power, if they should have a will to attempt any thing against them.

And the land was filled with them.] *i. e.* The land of Goshen; and perhaps some other parts of the lower Egypt.

Ver. 8. *Now there arose up a new king over Egypt.*] Some by a *new king* understand a king of another family, or race (as Josephus interprets it), nay, a stranger of another nation: just as *new gods* are strange gods, in Scripture language. Thus Sir John Marsham; and then it is no wonder, that he knew not Joseph, as it here follows. But this is not certain: and the conceit whereby Aben Ezra justifies it (which is, that the word *rose up* implies as much), is justly censured by Abarbinel as frivolous; it being the common word, which is used every where, when a new king succeeds his predecessor. It is most likely therefore that Moses means no more, but that the king in whose time Joseph died, being dead likewise (who many take to have been Mephramuthosis), and another after him, whom they call Thutmosis; the next successor in the throne (Amenophis) either had heard nothing of Joseph, or did not mind what was said of him. Our great primate of Ireland gives a different account of the succession of the Egyptian kings; and takes this king to have been Ramasses Miamum: but still supposes him to have been of the old line, and not a stranger.

Who knew not Joseph.] There is no doubt that Joseph died, as he lived, in high esteem and great reputation in that country: and that his memory continued precious, as long as any of that generation lasted. For Diodorus Siculus saith (lib. i.) that the Egyptians above all other people, εὐχαρίστως διακεῖσθαι πρὸς πᾶν τὸ εὐεργετοῦν, *were disposed to be grateful to all those who had any way merited of them:* looking upon the requital of the kindness of benefactors to be one of the greatest supporters of human life. And something to the same purpose is noted by Clemens Alexandrinus (lib. i. Strom. p. 303.) where, having said that barbarous nations highly honoured αὐτῶν νομοθέτας καὶ διδασκάλους, their *lawgivers* and *instructors,* whom they called gods; he presently adds, that the Egyptians, ἐθεολόγησαν ἀκριβῶς, *were very careful to deify such persons.* But if this was their inclination, in times so ancient as those of Moses, we must not think them all to have been so disposed; or that time did not obliterate the memory of benefits. For this prince (whom Artapanus in Eusebius, lib. ix. Præp. Evang. cap. 27. calls Palamanothes, so uncertain is his name) not having seen Joseph himself, nor having any knowledge perhaps of the benefits his country had received by his means, did not treat his kindred so kindly as they had been used in former times. But this phrase, *he knew not,* is commonly interpreted *he regarded not* the services which Joseph had done; of which he is supposed not to have been ignorant. For words of knowledge, in Scripture, include the affections also. As God is said *to know* those whom he loves; and *not to know* those

whom he doth not love, (Psalm i. 6. Matth. vii. 23.) Whence the Jews have raised this observation, that *he who forgets the benefits he hath received from other men, at last forgets those he hath received from God.* For he of whom it is said here, that *he knew not Joseph;* said, not long after, *I know not the Lord,* (ver. 2.) But this is grounded upon a mistake; for it was another Pharaoh, long after this king, who spake those words.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto his people.*] He called a council of the great men of the nation: to whom he represented how necessary it was to lessen the number, and weaken the power, of the Israelites.

Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we.] This was not true (unless he meant that no part of Egypt of that bigness had so many people and so strong as the Israelites in Goshen), but he said it to awaken his people to consider how to suppress them. And perhaps he was afraid of their power, or out of popularity would, in the beginning of his reign, give a proof of his care of his people by suppressing foreigners.

Ver. 10. *Come on.*] The Hebrew word *habah* is sometimes used in *petitions,* (Psalm lx. *ult.*) but most commonly in *exhortations;* when men excite and stir up one another, not to be slack in any business. (See Gen. xi. 3.)

Let us deal wisely with them.] He would not go about to destroy them by force, being loath to lose so many subjects; but was desirous to diminish them by subtle devices.

Lest they multiply.] Grow still more numerous and mighty.

Lest when there falls out any war.] With the Arabians, Ethiopians, or other neighbouring nations. For I see no reason to believe that he means the ancient Egyptians (with whom the Israelites had lived in great friendship, but now were expelled by the shepherd kings), and the people of Thebais; who at length made war with those kings, who reigned in the lower Egypt. This is Sir J. Marsham's conjecture (in his Canon Chron. sec. viii.) which I thought good to mention, though I do not follow it.

They join also to our enemies, and fight against us.] As it was natural for men to do, who were under grievous oppressions; and hoped thereby for relief.

And so get them out of the land.] They had heard the Israelites discourse, it is likely, that they never meant always to stay there; their fathers coming only to sojourn in Egypt: and the nearer the time approached, when God promised to bring them from thence, the more, we may well think, they spake of it. Which raised this jealousy, that, in case of any war, they would join with their enemies, that by their assistance they might be delivered.

Ver. 11. *Therefore they did set over them taskmasters,* &c.] This was the result of the council; that they should be brought low by laying heavy taxes upon them, to squeeze them of their money; and by making them labour very hard, whereby they thought to weaken their bodies. For the Hebrew word *missim* coming from *mas,* which signifies *tribute,* it may be reasonably thought, that these *taskmasters* (as we call them) exacted great sums of money of them, as well as *afflicted them with their burdens, i.e.* hard labour of all sorts, as the eastern writers expound it.

And they built for Pharaoh.] They did not labour for themselves, but for the king; who, it is likely, gave them no wages; but used them as mere slaves.

Treasure cities.] Fortified cities, wherein he had his magazines (as we now speak) of all sort of ammunition, and stores of corn, and public provisions; as well as treasures of money. For so we translate this word *miskenoth,* 2 Chron. xvi. 4. xvii. 12. *storehouses:* and xxxvi. 28. *storehouses for corn, and wine, and oil.* There was great labour, no doubt, employed in building such cities; surrounded with walls, and towers, and deep ditches, &c.

Pithom.] This is thought by Bochart to be the city which Herodotus calls Πάτουμος, (lib. ii. cap. 158.) but Herodotus there saith it was πόλις τῆς Ἀραβίας, *a city of Arabia.* And therefore Sir J. Marsham's conjecture seems more reasonable, who takes it for Pelusium: which was the most ancient fortified place in Egypt; called by Ezekiel, (xxx. 15.) *the strength of Egypt;* and by Suidas, long after him, κλεῖς τοῦ Αἰγύπτου, *the key of Egypt:* because it was the inlet from Syria into this country. Which was the reason, as Diodorus saith, (lib. xv.) that they most of all fortified τὸ Πελουσιακὸν στόμα, as his words are. And this agrees with the signification of *Pithom,* if C. Chytræus guesses aright, which is as much as *pi* and *tehom, i.e.* the *mouth of the deep:* being seated near the sea, at the mouth of one of the streams of the Nile. And thus I find it expounded in the Talmud, Tit. Sota, in the Gemara, cap. 1. §. 32.

And Rameses.] It is an ignorant conceit of Benjamin Tudelensis that this city is that called *Ein-Alschemes,* i. e. *the fountain of the sun;* in Greek, Heliopolis. (See his Itiner. p. 120. and L'Empereur's Annot. p. 223.) For the city was in the upper Egypt; whereas Rameses was in the lower, in the land of Goshen; and gave name to the whole country where the Israelites dwelt, (Gen. xlvii. 11.) And, it is most likely, it was a frontier town, which lay in the entrance of Egypt from Arabia, or some of the neighbouring countries. They that take the name of the king who now reigned to have been Rameses, think this city had its name from him, and the other called Pithom (as Mercator thinks) from the name of his queen.

Ver. 12. *But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew.*] Here is a new word, different from all the former (ver. 7.) to express their extraordinary increase; for so *jiphrots* signifies, *breaking out;* as water doth which bursts out with a greater force, when it hath been pent up. This, as St. Austin observes, (lib. 8. de Civ. Dei. cap. 6.) is to be ascribed to the Divine blessing, for naturally tiresome labours would have dispirited them, and made them less fruitful.

And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.] It vexed them to see this device prove so unsuccessful, that it promoted what they thought to hinder.

Ver. 13. *And the Egyptians;* rather *therefore.*] The Egyptians resolved to take a more severe course with them.

Made the children of Israel to serve with rigour.] Used them more tyrannically and cruelly; without any mercy: whereby their strength, in all likelihood, would be broken, as the Hebrew word signifies. Some of the Jews think they beat and scourged them sorely.

Ver. 14. *And they made their life bitter.*] The Hebrews call all things *bitter,* which extremely grieve and afflict the soul, (Gen. xxvii. 34. Lament. iii. 15.) Whence Naomi bids her daughters call her no more by that pleasant name,

but call her *Mara*, i. e. *bitter:* because of the very great afflictions she had endured in a strange country.

With hard bondage.] Such drudgery as if they had been mere bond-slaves.

In mortar and in brick.] Πηλὸν εἰς πλίνθον σχηματίζοντες, *by making clay into bricks* (as Philo well interprets it, lib. i. de Vita Mosis), or in working the clay, and then turning it into bricks. And so Bochart expounds it, by the figure of ἓν διὰ δυοῖν, *lateribus ex luto conficiendis.* There was great store of clay in that place; Pelusium (one of the cities which they built) having its name from thence, both in the Greek and in the Hebrew languages. For *sin* signifies the same with πηλὸς, *clay* or *dirt.*

And in all manner of service in the field, &c.] Not merely in ploughing, &c. but in digging trenches, to convey the water of Nile into their ground (as Philo expounds it), and in cleansing those trenches that had been formerly made; and in carrying dung, as others add, into the field; and such-like nasty services. And all these, Moses adds, were *rigorously* exacted of them: *i. e.* they did all they could to *break their hearts,* as we speak.

Ver. 15. *And the king spake to the Hebrew midwives.*] The former device failing him, or contributing little to his end, he betakes himself to one that, if it were pursued, could not but prove effectual. Some will have these *midwives* to have been Egyptians, but called Hebrew, because the women of that nation made use of their assistance, when they were in labour. But it is not likely that the Hebrews had not midwives of their nation, or that Pharaoh would impose his midwives upon them, and let them have none else; for that would have too plainly discovered his drift; whereas he intended to hide it, and to act cunningly against them, (ver. 10.)

The name of the one was Siphrah, &c.] We cannot well think there were only two midwives, to serve the whole nation: but these were the chief; who had the rest under their government, and gave orders and directions to them. So Aben Ezra; whom Abarbinel contradicts; but with slight reasons, to advance a subtle rather than solid conceit of his own; that every woman in Egypt had two midwives, and those were the common names of them, signifying what each of them was to do for the women in travail. There are those among the Jews who have fancied Jochabed the mother of Moses to be one of those here named: and some of them, who are pleased with seeming ignorant of nothing, say she is the person here called Siphrah: her daughter Miriam being the other, called Puah: so the Jerusalem Targum.

Ver. 16. *When ye do the office of a midwife,* &c.] Are called to their assistance in their labour.

And see them upon the stools.] The Hebrew word *obanajim,* which we translate *stools,* is so obscure, that the LXX. content themselves to translate this passage thus, *when you see them delivered:* which fully expresses the sense; and must be supposed to be the meaning, if we take *stools* for such seats as are purposely contrived for labouring women to sit on, that the midwives might the better do their office. For they could not tell whether they brought forth male or female, till they were delivered: unless the Hebrew doctors say true, who constantly affirm that boys come into the world with their faces downwards, and girls with their faces upwards; whereby they might know what sex a child was of before it was quite born. (See Tit. Sota in the Gemara, cap. 1. sect. 33.)

If it be a son, then ye shall kill him.] The Egyptians feared the men of Israel only; without whom they could have no children at all, but such as would be half Egyptians; and in time be wholly ingrafted into that nation.

But if it be a daughter then she shall live.] For, as Clemens Alexandr. well observes, (lib. i. Stromat. p. 343.) ἀσθενὲς εἰς πόλεμον γυνὴ, *women are feeble and unfit for war;* therefore they had no fear of them, but reserved them to increase the Egyptian breed.

Ver. 17. *But the midwives feared God,* &c.] They that take them for Egyptians, say these midwives were proselytes to the Jewish religion. But such faith in God, as made them not fear a great king, is hardly to be expected from any but those who had been always bred up in a deep sense of his Divine Majesty. Which gave them such courage, that, as Chytræus expresseth it in Herodotus's phrase, (which is in a manner the same with St. Peter's, Acts v. 29.) τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ πρεσβύτερα ἐποιεῦντο ἢ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, *they made account the things of God were to be preferred before those of men:* and therefore would not obey the king's command, by doing contrary unto God's.

Ver. 18. *And the king called for the midwives.*] Sent out a summons to appear before him.

And said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, &c.] Their being questioned for their disobedience, made their constancy the more remarkable.

Ver. 19. *For they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them.*] It doth not appear that these midwives told a lie, but only concealed some of the truth: which is not unlawful, but commendable, when it is to preserve the innocent. For many of the Hebrew women might be such as they are described, though not every one of them. The Hebrew word *chajoth* signifies three things; either *vivaces,* i. e. *lively,* or *obstetrices, midwives* (as Kimchi tells us), or *animantia, living creatures.* The LXX. follow the first notion, and so do we, which is very proper. Aquila follows the second, who translates this passage thus, Μαῖαι γάρ εἰσι, καὶ πρὶν ἐλθεῖν τὰς Μαίας τίκτουσιν; *they can do the office of midwives themselves, and are brought to bed before we can get to them.* Thus the Vulgar also take it, *they have skill in midwifery.* And the author of the Life of Moses (as several other Jews do) takes it in the third sense, expounding it thus; *they are like other living creatures, who do not need any midwives to help their young ones into the world.* And so Rasi also, and Theodotion, who thus translates it, ζωογονοῦσιν αὐταὶ, which doth not signify (as Gualmyn observes), *they bring forth living children,* but *ad instar animantium pariunt, they bring forth like animals.* Such lively women undoubtedly there have been, and are still in some parts of the world. For Varro reports (lib. ii. de R. R. cap. 10.) that the women of Illyricum, when they found their pangs coming, were wont to go a little aside from the work they were about, and presently were delivered of a child, *quem non peperisse, sed invenisse putes; which one would think they had found, not brought forth out of their womb.* Which place our Gataker mentioning in his Cinnus, (p. 213.) saith it is credibly reported, by those who had lived there a great while, that the Irish women sometimes rise from table, and are delivered,

and return to the company again before all be taken away.

Ver. 20. *Therefore God dealt well with the midwives*, &c.] He rewarded their service; whereby the children of Israel still more *multiplied, and waxed very mighty.*

Ver. 21. *Because the midwives feared God, he made them houses.*] These words seem to declare, wherein God rewarded them; which was in *making them houses.* Some indeed (particularly Mr. Calvin) refer this to the Israelites; because the word *them* is of the masculine gender: and therefore cannot, they think, be meant of the midwives; but must be interpreted, *by this means the children of Israel were exceedingly increased.* But, besides that this was said just before, it is not unusual in Scripture, when the speech is of women, to use the masculine gender. Thus Ruth (i. 8.) prays for her daughters-in-law in these words, "the Lord deal kindly with you;" where in the Hebrew the masculine gender is used, and not the feminine. But we need go no further for an instance of this than the very next chapter to this, (Exod. ii. 17.) where Moses is said to *water their flock*, speaking of Jethro's daughters, and the word for *their* is of the masculine gender. It agrees also best with the whole story, to take it so here; that God made the midwives houses (so the Chaldee and the LXX. understand it), that is, gave them a numerous offspring, out of which arose many families, which in Scripture language are called *houses;* (Gen. xxx. 30.) "When shall I make myself a house?" (the same phrase with this,) *i. e.* take care of my own family, (Deut. xxv. 9. Ruth iv. 5.) Or else the meaning may be, *he increased their estate*, and gave them great riches: which the Psalmist may be thought to mean, when he saith, "Except the Lord build the house," (*i. e.* preserve and increase the estate of a family) their labour is in vain that endeavour it. (See also 2 Sam. vii. 11. Psalm cxiii. 9.) Some that take these midwives to have been Egyptian women, proselyted to the Jewish religion, think the sense may be, that they married to Israelites, and God made their families eminent in Israel.

Ver. 22. *And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son*, &c.] Not being able to effect his end by the midwives, he commanded every body to inform his officers when any Hebrew woman fell in labour, and appointed searchers (it is likely) to examine whether they were delivered of male or female, and to act according to what is here ordered. Some, that understand the foregoing words of the Israelites, make this the sense of the two last verses: *Because the midwives feared God, and thereby the families of the Israelites were increased, not diminished; Pharaoh took a new course, and charged all his people to see that done, which the midwives refused.* The Jews (in the book called the Life of Moses), say that many of their people, upon this decree of Pharaoh, resolved not to marry, or not to come near their wives: and those who did, were forced to have them brought to bed alone, and throw their children into the fields, where the angels took care of them, &c. But this is confuted by what follows in the next chapter. And yet they are so fond of such fables, that in one of their Medraschim (or books of homilies) they say God made milk to come out of one stone, and honey out of another, to suckle them, while they lay hid in the earth. (See Buxtorf. of the education of their children, Synag. Judaic. cap. 7.)

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND there went a man of the house of Levi*, &c.] We are told both the man's name, and the woman's whom he married, (Exod. vi. 20. Numb. xxvi. 59.). Where Amram, grandson of Levi, is said to have been Moses's father; and Jochabed, daughter of Levi, to have been his mother. So Amram married his father's sister (as the text expressly tells us), which Moses was so ingenuous as not to conceal, though it might not be for his credit in future ages: when such marriages were forbidden by that law which he gave them from God; though practised before the giving of his law. (See Selden, lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 9.) The Jews also, fancying his mother Jochabed to have been born as soon as the Israelites came into Egypt, make the birth of Moses a miracle: because she must be, by that account, a hundred and thirty years old when he was born. But it may as well be thought that he was born to Levi in his old age, by another wife; and so she was younger than her nephew Amram, and but his half sister. Which makes their marriage no more strange than Abraham's marriage with Sarah. Besides, it is not certain she was his father's sister (in the strict sense of that word), but might be only one of his cousins, who in Scripture are frequently called sisters. And then, when it is said she was *a daughter of Levi*, the meaning must be, his *granddaughter*, or the child perhaps of one of his grand-daughters: who, in these writings, are commonly called *daughters.* And so all the objections against this marriage vanish; and the first words of this verse expound the last: *A man of the house of Levi, took to wife a daughter of Levi;* that is, one of the same house or family. But see vi. 20.

Ver. 2. *And the woman conceived, and bare a son.*] She had one before this, *viz.* Aaron; who, it is probable, was born before this persecution begun, being three years older than Moses, (vii. 7.)

And when she saw him, that he was a goodly child.] His goodly aspect (which seems to have been an early indication of his future greatness) is taken notice of by strangers; particularly by Justin out of Trogus, an ancient heathen historian, lib. xxxvi. cap. 2. where he saith, That besides the inheritance of his father's knowledge (whom he takes to have been Joseph), "etiam formæ pulchritudo commendabat," *the gracefulness of his person recommended him to others.* Insomuch, that the whole fable of Adonis among the heathen was framed (as Huetius conjectures) out of this story of Moses. For Apollodorus relates (lib. iii.) how Venus, admiring the great beauty of the infant, took him away privily, without the knowledge of the gods; and, hiding him in an ark, delivered him to Proserpine, &c. (See Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 3. n. 3.)

She hid him three months.] R. Simeon, in Pirke Eliezer, (cap. 48.) saith, she hid him in a vault under ground. But in Sota they say (in the Gemara, cap. i. sect. 38.) he being hid in a secret inner room of their house, was in danger to be detected by his crying; when some of the Egyptians came into the outer room, and brought a crying child with them on purpose; supposing the Israelites' infants would answer, if any were in the house. But there is no certainty of this.

Ver. 3. *And when she could no longer hide him.*] Some

discovery being made of him, by some means or other, by their neighbours; or the search after new-born children being now more narrow and diligent; she thought he could be no longer concealed, and therefore resolved to expose him, in the manner following.

She took for him an ark of bulrushes.] Or of *wicker:* for Kimchi observes the Hebrew word *gome* signifies the lightest wood. Patricides, an Arabian writer, saith it was made of that which the ancients call *papyrus:* and so the LXX. and Josephus, and Clemens Alexandrinus (Strom. i. p. 343. ἐκ βίβλου τῆς ἐγχωρίου σκεύός τι ποιησάμενοι), which was a *frutex* that grew particularly upon the banks of Nile, as Salmasius shews in Solin. p. 1002, &c.

And daubed it with slime and with pitch.] Of this word *slime,* see Gen. xi. 3. It is most probable that this was used within, and pitch without, to keep the water from coming into the ark. And so I find in the Gemara of that title, in the Talmud called Sota, (cap. i. sect. 29.) where this is said to have been an ancient tradition. Only they say, as many of the rabbins do, that *chemar* signifies *plaster,* not *bitumen:* because the bad smell of that, they think, would have been noisome to the child. R. Solomon's opinion is, that it was *pitched* both within and without; and plastered within over the pitch.

And she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.] That it might not be carried away with the stream; but she might come in the night and suckle it. Some think that the ark, notwithstanding, was made below, in the form of a boat, that, if it should chance to be carried from among the flags upon the shore, it might swim in the river. For it is certain the Egyptians made ships of the forenamed reed, as we find in Pliny and Solinus, who both mention *papyraceæ naves;* and in Theophrastus, who mentions Πλοῖα ἐξ αὐτοῦ, speaking of *papyrus:* as Salmasius observes in his Plin. Exercit. p. 1003. 1115, 1116. Herodotus also mentions, Πλοῖα ἐκ τῆς ἀκάνθης ποιεύμενα, in his Euterpe, cap. xcvi. (See Isa. xviii. 2.)

Ver. 4. *And his sister stood afar off, to wit what,* &c.] By her mother's order no doubt; that she might not seem to be set there, on purpose to watch him. We read of no other sister he had but Miriam, (Numb. xxvi. 59.) who therefore is thought to be the person.

Ver. 5. *And the daughter of Pharaoh.*] Called Thermutis by Josephus, (lib. ii. Antiq. cap. 5.) but by Artapanus, in Eusebius's Præpar. Evang. (lib. ix. cap. 27.) called Meris, or Merris. Which is her name, as Jacobus Capellus observes, in his Fasti Siculi. The same Artapanus there says, she was married to Cenephres, king of the country above Memphis; but had no child by him. Clemens Alexandrinus says the same, that she was not only a married woman, but had been long married, without being with child, τέκνου δὲ ἐπιθυμοῦσα, *but very desirous to have one.* (Lib. i. Strom. p. 343.)

Come down to wash herself at the river.] Not for pleasure, but for purification: this being an ancient rite of religion in all nations, to cleanse themselves, by washing their bodies, after any defilement. Thus Philo seems to understand it, in his book of the Life of Moses: where, speaking of this matter, he uses the word περιῤῥαντήρια, which is proper to sacred cleansing. And it seems far more probable, than that the scorching heat of the weather (caused by an extraordinary hand of God) made her betake herself to the cool streams for her refreshment (as the tale is told in the Hebrew book called the Life of Moses), or that the desire of children carried her hither; the waters of Nile being thought to make women fruitful. Clemens Alexandrinus seems to have put both these together, refreshment and religion; when he saith she came hither, λουτροῖς καὶ περιῤῥαντηρίοις χρησαμένη, (lib. i. Strom. p. 343.) It is still a further fetch of Jonathan, who would persuade us that at this time God had smote the Egyptians with a burning ulcer; which made their flesh so hot, that they could not endure it, but run to the river to cool their bodies. And in Pirke Eliezer, (cap. xlviii.) this inflammation is said to have seized on Pharaoh's daughter, whom he calls Bathia. Which is indeed the name of a daughter of one Pharaoh, (1 Chron. iv. 18.) but to make her the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, (as G. Vorstius observes they do, in Schemoth Rabba, and Vaijra Rab.) is altogether senseless. And yet it is upon that ground they make her a proselyte also, and say in the title of the Talmud beforementioned, called Sota, (cap. i. of the Gemara, sect. 40.) that she went into the river *to purge herself from the idolatry of her father's house: i. e.* to become a proselyte, who was received (in following times) into the Jewish religion by baptism.

And her maidens walked along by the river side.] While she washed herself, in a private place, which, no doubt, was made by the king for that purpose. For it is not to be imagined, that she washed herself publicly in the river; but in some inclosure, whereby she was separated from the sight of company. For Zoan (or Tanis) the royal city, it is certain, lay near the river; and it is likely the king's gardens extended themselves to the very bank of it; where convenient bathing-houses were contrived for himself, and the royal family, to bathe in the river when they pleased. Patricides seems to say, that the river run through the city, or by the side of it; for so the words are: *the ark was put in the banks of the river Nile, where the water was shallowest, in the city of Tzana, which was the metropolis of that part of the country.* And to the same purpose Elmacinus, another Arabian writer, as Hottinger observes in his Smegma Orientale, (lib. i. cap. 8. p. 400.)

And when she saw the ark among the flags.] In such a bathing-house, as I suppose her to have now been, there were lattices through which she could see what was done in the river, though nobody could see her. And she spying an unusual vessel among the flags, commanded it to be brought to her. Patricides saith, she heard the child cry. And Chuskuni observes, it was more easy for her who was in the river to espy the ark, than for her maidens who walked above the banks.

She sent her maids to fetch it.] The Hebrew word *amatha,* which we translate *maid,* is much different from that for *maidens* mentioned just before: signifying one that waited immediately upon her, whom we call a *handmaid:* the other properly signifying only young women; who were such, perhaps, as we now call *ladies of honour.*

Ver. 6. *And when she had opened it, she saw the child.*] And together with him the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, as Rabbi Jose saith in Sota: which is agreeable to their opinion who make her to be now proselyted, but hath no other foundation.

And behold, the babe wept.] There is nothing strange in

this, that a babe (which perhaps had been a good while without the breast) should weep: but it is remarkable, that Pharaoh's daughter should not find it, till tears ran down its cheeks: because this helped to move her *compassion* towards it, as it here follows.

And she had compassion on him.] Resolved to preserve him, contrary to her father's order.

And said, This is one of the Hebrews' children.] None else, she thought, would expose so goodly a child; and she was confirmed in her opinion, when she found he was circumcised, as the same R. Jose conjectures. And the truth is, we have no good reason to believe, that the Egyptians had, as yet, received circumcision.

Ver. 7. *Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter,* &c.] We cannot think his sister would be so imprudent as to step in immediately, upon the finding of the child, and ask if she should call a Hebrew nurse for it: but stayed some time (that she might not seem to know any thing of him, but what she heard them say), till they had tried other nurses (as the Hebrew doctors in Sota understand it, cap. i. sect. 43.) whose breasts the child refusing to suck, she took the opportunity to ask if she might see for a nurse among the Hebrew women. Josephus saith the very same.

Ver. 8. *And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Go.*] It is likely that Miriam addressed herself to her so discreetly, that it moved her easily to agree to her proposal. Though a singular providence of God guided this whole business.

And the maid went and called this child's mother.] Whose breast the child readily taking (having been used to it) she was instantly accepted to be his nurse. So it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 9. *Take this child away, and nurse it for me,* &c.] Thus by the wonderful providence of God, Jochabed had the pleasure of suckling her own child; and was also well paid for her pains.

Ver. 10. *And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter.*] The Hebrew writers say, that when he was two years old, he was taken from her: which is not so likely, as that he continued with her till he was grown capable to be instructed in true religion, and to understand and remember whose true child he was; whereby he was disposed to behave himself accordingly, when he came to live at court.

And he became her son.] She having no child of her own, adopted him for her son, with the consent, no doubt, of Pharaoh: not to succeed in the throne, as some have fancied; but to be the heir of her private estate. And accordingly she gave him a princely education, and took care he should be instructed in all *the wisdom of the Egyptians,* as St. Stephen hath remembered, (Acts vii. 22.) and, as Philo (in the Life of Moses) would have it believed, sent for the ablest masters out of Greece (as well as out of Assyria, and other eastern countries), to teach him their learning. Which is a piece of Jewish vanity; for there was no learning among the Greeks in the days of Moses, who was ancienter, not only than their philosophers and poets, but than most of their gods, as Clemens Alexandrinus demonstrates, Καὶ Θεῶν ἆρα τῶν πλείστων παρ' Ἑλλήνων οὐ μόνον τῶν λεγομένων σοφῶν τε καὶ ποιητῶν ὁ Μωσῆς πρεσβύτερος, (lib. i. Strom. p. 323.) And what learning there was now in Egypt is not certain; for there is no evidence that the *wisdom* St. Stephen speaks of, comprehends the knowledge of so many things, as some learned men are pleased to ascribe to them in those days.

And she called his name Moses.] The reason of this name is given in the following words:

And she said, Because I have drawn him out of the water.] This name seems to be derived from the Hebrew word *mashah,* which is never used in the Bible, but for drawing out of the water, (2 Sam. xxii. 17. Psalm xviii. 17. Isa. lxiii. 11.) And therefore there is no need to have recourse to any other language for the original of his name; which Philo, Josephus, and Clemens Alexandrinus, will have to be derived from the word Μῶ, which, in the Egyptian tongue, they say, signifies *water,* and ὕσης, which signifies *saved.* So that it is as much as *saved from the waters,* or preserved from drowning. It may be said, indeed, that it is not likely she should give him a name from any other language than her own: but it is to be considered, that the word *mashah* (from whence this name must naturally flow, and to which she herself said she had respect) might have the same signification in her language, that it had in Hebrew; there being a great affinity between these two tongues. (See Gen. xl. 45.) Alexandrinus saith, that the name he had given him by his parents at his circumcision was Joachim. Which he had, I suppose, out of some fabulous book; for, in the same place, he speaks of the name that was given him after he was translated to heaven, (lib. i. Strom. p. 343.)

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass in those days when Moses was grown.*] When he was not only arrived at man's estate, but was full forty years old, as St. Stephen observes, (Acts vii. 23.) and may be gathered from this history.

That he went out unto his brethren, &c.] He had a motion from God (as St. Stephen there seems to interpret it) to go, and acquaint himself with the condition of his brethren; and to own himself, more than he had done hitherto, to be one of them. The Jews tell many tales of what passed between him and Pharaoh till this time; but there is no more credit to be given to them, than to what Artapanus, a heathen historian, relates of his military exploits in a war with the Ethiopians, against whom Cenephres sent him as general of his forces: though this is remarkable, that his name and several passages of his life (mixed with some fables) were known to other nations, and by them magnified and admired. As appears by what Eusebius hath extracted out of Artapanus, Eupolemus, Demetrius, and other heathen writers, (lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 26, 27, &c.)

And looked upon their burdens.] Which he did very often (as Philo understands it, lib. i. de Vita Mosis), and not without great grief and heaviness; that he was neither able to hinder their oppression, nor to help them under it. But he exhorted Pharaoh's officers to moderate their severity; and the Israelites to be patient, in hope of deliverance.

And he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew.] The cause of it is reported (in the Life of Moses, in Hebrew, and in Schalschalah Hakkabalah) that this Egyptian had broken the Hebrew's house, and bound him, and ravished his wife, and now endeavoured to murder him. But this looks like a tale; which is a little better told by the author of Schemoth Rabba, and others mentioned by Mr. Selden, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 1.) who say, that this Egyptian was one of the taskmasters, who called this man out of his bed in the night to go to work, and then took his opportunity

to slip into it, and lie with Selomith, his wife, who took him for her husband. The plainest account and most likely, is this of Philo (in the place abovementioned), that some of Pharaoh's officers, little differing from the most furious beasts, not at all mollified, but more exasperated by entreaties; one of them, of the most violent temper, fell in an outrageous manner upon an Hebrew, because he did not do his work so fast as he would have him, beating him most cruelly till he had almost killed him.

One of his brethren.] All the Hebrews were his brethren; but this man was of his own tribe, and one of the children of Kohath, as the forenamed authors take it.

Ver. 12. *And he looked this way and that way,* &c.] Round about him; that he might not run into danger himself, by delivering his brother from it.

He slew the Egyptian.] Being stirred up to it by a Divine motion; otherways he could not have justified this fact to God and his own conscience. And therefore St. Stephen plainly makes this an indication to the children of Israel, that God intended to deliver them by his means; and says, Moses thought they would have so understood, (Acts vii. 25.) Nay, Maimonides himself gives this account of it (par. ii. cap. 45. More Nevochim), where, he making this the first degree of prophecy, when a man is moved and animated by God to some great and heroic enterprise (either for the preservation of the whole church, or the deliverance of eminent men from oppression), he reckons Moses, among others, as an instance of it, in these words: "Moses was endued with this power, when he grew up to be a man; by the impulse of which he slew the Egyptian, and checked him who unjustly strove with one of his brethren," &c. The Hebrews generally say that Moses did not kill this man with a sword, or any other weapon, but merely by the word of his mouth, pronouncing him dead in the name of God. Which tradition is so old, that it is mentioned by Clemens Alexandrinus, (lib. i. Strom.) φασὶ δε οἱ Μύσται λόγῳ μόνῳ ἀνελεῖν τὸν Αἰγύπτιον, &c. *They that pretend to secrets, say, that he killed the Egyptian with his word alone,* as Peter afterwards, in the Acts, killed Ananias and Sapphira.

And hid him in the sand.] An inaccessible desert lay on the west of Egypt, as Diodorus Siculus observes; and there was another also on the east of it: so that if this happened upon the borders, there was sand enough wherein to bury him.

Ver. 13. *And when he went out the second day.*] Having begun to act by the Divine commission, he seems to have resolved every day to give proofs of his authority; and awaken the people to expect deliverance by his means. And therefore went out, among them, this day, as he had done the day before.

Behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together.] He was surprised to find two of his brethren contending one with another; when they were so grievously oppressed by the Egyptians.

And he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?] He had no less authority to admonish and reprove his brethren, than to chastise their oppressors.

Ver. 14. *And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?*] It is plain by this that he acted as one that had authority; but this man questioned from whence he had it.

Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian?] It is not likely the man thought he had any such intention, but meant only to fright Moses from meddling in his matters, by letting him know, that what he had done already was not such a secret as he thought it.

And Moses feared.] He had not yet received a commission from God to act publicly as their governor, and therefore durst not stay to answer a charge against him (which he thought might be possibly brought), for what he had done privately. Some have troubled themselves to reconcile this with what the apostle saith, Hebr. xi. 27. that "he feared not the wrath of the king;" which doth not seem to agree with what is said here, that *Moses feared.* But there he may very well be thought to speak, not of his flight out of Egypt, but of his last departure with the whole body of the Israelites. Though if we should allow Moses, and the apostle, to speak of the same thing, there would be no contradiction between them. For he might so fear, as to make him cautious, and consult for his safety; rather than basely either deny or excuse what he had done, or ask pardon for it; unto which no *fear of the wrath of the king* could have moved him.

Ver. 15. *Now when Pharaoh heard this thing.*] Which was soon brought to his ears, as Moses suspected; and aggravated extremely by the great men of the court, as Philo represents it, (lib. i. de Vita Mosis.)

He thought to slay him.] Not so much because he had killed the man, as because he pretended to assert the liberty of the Israelites, and to be their deliverer. Demetrius bears witness to this story, just according to what is here related, in Eusebius's Præpar. Evang. lib. ix. cap. 29.

And Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh.] Wisely foreseeing the danger, he avoided it by flight into another country where he was out of his reach. For though the time of Israel's deliverance was not yet come, he was assured, that God intended to work it by his hand: and therefore thought it prudent to reserve himself till he received a further commission from God. But though this flight of Moses be here so plainly affirmed, yet the Jews are so fond of their own conceits, and so bold in their invention, that they say he was not only condemned to have his head cut off, but brought to the block; and when the executioner came to do his office, his sword would not enter; Moses's neck being, by a miracle, turned into a pillar of marble; and from thence he called his son Eliezer, &c. So the tale is told by the author of Moses's Life. What Pharaoh this was is not certain, but Eusebius calls him Orus (who succeeded Amenophis, in whose time Moses was born), and he is said to have reigned two-and-forty years.

And dwelt in the land of Midian.] Where some of Abraham's posterity were settled (Gen. xxv. 2.) in a part of Arabia Petræa. And therefore Philo only saith, ὑπανεχώρησεν εἰς τὴν ὅμορον Ἀραβίαν, *he withdrew into the neighbouring Arabia.* Into which country he chose to flee, both because his escape was easy thither, and because they were descended from the same stock with himself; and continued still good people; or at least had some good governors and families among them, as appears by what follows:

And he sat down by a well.] To refresh himself; and expecting, it is likely, to meet some company there, at the time when the flocks came to water.

Ver. 16. *Now the priest of Midian.*] Or *prince,* as it is

in the margin. For the word *cohen* indifferently signifies either *priest* or *prince:* but most anciently it signifies the latter (a *prince*), for so it is used in the Book of Job, xii. 19; he leadeth *cohenim (princes) away spoiled.* And in aftertimes it continued to have the same signification; David's sons being called by this name of *cohenim,* 2 Sam. viii. 18. which in 1 Chron. xviii. 17. is expounded, " were chief at the hand of the king." And so Ira is called, 2 Sam. xx. 26. *cohen,* a chief ruler about David. And so I think it is to be taken here, for a *ruler* or *governor,* (see Gen. xli. 50.) not of the whole country of Midian, but of some province of it. And it may be most truly rendered *a prince* (*i. e.* one of the princes, or rulers) *of Midian.* But in ancient time princes executed the priesthood also, as Plato observes they did among the Egyptians; and the consuls and emperors of Rome were ambitious of the same dignity: by which means the word *cohen* came to signify both. Though where the place or territory of which any person was *cohen* is mentioned, there it always signifies him to have been prince or civil governor of that place. So S. Jarchi observes, " the word *cohen* always denotes some Divine ministry or function, except where there is an addition of some particular principality to it, as *Cohen of Midian,* and *Cohen of On,*" (referring to this place, and that I now mentioned in Genesis), where it signifies a prince, though the priesthood might be joined with it. And so Artapanus in Eusebius, (lib. ix. cap. 27.) relating Moses's flight into Arabia, saith he came to Raguel, τῷ τῶν τόπων ἄρχοντι, *the ruler of those parts.* And the Jews, in their German translation of the Bible, call him *Heer, Lord of Midian.* See our most learned Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. c. ult. p. 648. I shall only add, that it is most likely that this *prince* (or *priest*) was a worshipper of the true God, and not an idolater: for Moses, we may be confident, would not have married his daughter, if she had been bred in a false religion.

Had seven daughters, and they came and drew water, &c.] He was but a small prince it appears by this; though it must be acknowledged it was a noble employment in old time (as I observed upon Genesis) to look after sheep: and we must not imagine these young women drew the water themselves, but had servants to attend them and obey their orders.

Ver. 17. *And the shepherds came and drove them away.*] Some rude and idle shepherds would have made use of the water which they had drawn; and had the benefit of their pains, without any labour of their own. This looks like an argument that their father was not a *prince,* for then, one would think, these shepherds would not have dared to contest with them. But it is as much an argument that he was not a *priest;* for they were great men also in those days. And it seems probable to me, that these were the shepherds of some other greater prince in those countries; who made thus bold with Jethro's daughters and their servants. For one cannot think, as I said, that they alone looked after this flock, but were overseers of those that did, like Rebekah and Rachel. (See Gen. xxix. 9.)

But Moses stood up and helped them, &c.] This was an act (as Maimonides suggests) of the same heroic spirit, mentioned before, (ver. 12.) which still rested on him, and moved him here, as it had done in Egypt. And thus Philo also represents him as ἐνθουσία μεταμορφούμενος, transported by such an enthusiasm when he spake to the shepherds, that it affrighted them from their attempt. Though it is not certain that he overcame them by persuasions, but the whole discourse seems rather to imply that he forced them to desist: which he could not do alone, but at the head of those servants that belonged to these young women: and it is not improbable he had some servants of his own, who attended him in his flight. Certain it is, that the Arabians' great employment was feeding of cattle, as Philo there notes, (lib. i. de Vita Mosis, κτηνοτροφοῦσιν Ἄραβες, &c.) " and that not only men, but women, young men and virgins, looked after them; and not those only of the meaner sort, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἄγαν ἐπιφανῶν, but they that were of noble families."

Ver. 18. *And when they came to Reuel their father.*] He is thought to be the same with Jethro, (iii. 1.) or was Jethro's father; and so the grandfather of these young women; which Drusius thinks most probable. (Miscell. Centur. 2. cap. 69.)

He said, How is it you are come so soon to-day?] It seems Moses not only valiantly defended and protected them; but so vigorously assisted them also in all their business, that they dispatched it sooner than they were wont to do.

Ver. 19. *And they said, An Egyptian.*] So they took Moses to be by his speech and his habit; and perhaps he told them he came out of that country.

Delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds.] This justifies what I said (ver. 17.) that these shepherds belonged to some other prince in those parts, who were wont, it seems, to infest those that were weaker; and that Moses by his extraordinary courage drove them away.

And also drew water enough for us, &c.] They had drawn water before, (ver. 16.) which the shepherds took from them: and he now did it with greater expedition, and in great plenty.

Ver. 20. *And he said unto his daughters, Where is he?*] This is a form of chiding, as Philo observes, or upbraiding for their ingratitude; as appears by what follows.

Why is it that ye have left the man?] Suffered him to remain in the field. Ye ought (as Philo explains it) to have invited him to my house; and if he had declined it, to have entreated and urged him to it.

Call him, that he may eat bread.] Go back (as he goes on) with all speed, and pray him to come and refresh himself; and receive my thanks, which are due to him. This shews Moses had done them some considerable service.

Ver. 21. *And Moses was content to dwell with the man.*] After some conversation with him, Raguel liked Moses so well that he offered him such terms as he accepted, and became one of his domestics.

And he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter.] The Divine writers do not relate all the passages of a story (as other authors delight to do) but only the most material. Therefore we are to suppose a great many things to have preceded this: which was not accomplished presently after he was entered into Reuel's house, but after he had had such experience of Moses's other virtues, as well as of his valour. Though the observation of Philo here is not to be slighted, that Ἀρίδηλοι αἱ μεγάλαι φυσεις, καὶ οὐ μήκει χρόνου γνωριζόμεναι. *Men of a great genius quickly shew themselves, and are not made known by length of time.* " And therefore, he thinks, that Reuel, being struck first with admiration of

his goodly aspect, and then of his wise discourse, immediately gave him the most beautiful of all his daughters to be his wife: not staying to inquire of any body what he was, for his own most excellent qualities sufficiently recommended him to his affection," (lib. i. de Vita Mosis, p. 611.)

Ver. 22. *And she bare him a son, and he called his name Gershom,* &c.] This word *Gershom* signifies a *desolate stranger;* which he made the name of this child, because he was born, not only in a foreign country, remote from his own people, but in a place where he had nothing but what he earned by his labour. For it is not to be thought, that in a hasty flight he could bring any great matter with him into Midian. Either this son was born long after his marriage, or he did not marry till he had been long in this country: for when he left it, after forty years' stay in it, his children were but young, as appears from iv. 20.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass, in process of time.*] After many days (as it is in the Hebrew), *i. e.* years: for this king reigned a long time. (See ver. 15.)

The king of Egypt died.] That king from whom Moses fled, *viz.* Orus. After whom Eusebius makes Acencres to have reigned: and after him Achrois: both which died before Moses returned into Egypt.

And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage.] Their cruel servitude did not end with the life of Orus; but the new king, who succeeded him, was so far from giving them any ease, that he laid more heavy burdens upon them.

And they cried.] This signifies they lay under the most grievous oppression; which grew intolerable.

And their cry came up unto God.] A cry that *comes up unto God,* signifies, in the holy language, the loudest and sorest cry. (See Gen. xix. 13.)

By reason of the bondage.] This may be referred both to their *cry,* and its *coming up to God:* who resolved speedily to free them from such insupportable burdens.

Ver. 24. *And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant,* &c.] There are four different words in these two last verses, (viz. *heard, remembered, looked upon them, had respect unto them,*) which, every one of them, signify God's kind intention towards them; but seem also to me to denote that the Divine Providence determined to proceed gradually in the deliverance of the children of Israel from their cruel servitude. For when he saith, *God heard their groaning,* the meaning is, he favourably condescended to grant their petition; which was the *first* step to their deliverance. And then,

He remembered his covenant with Abraham, &c.] This gives the reason of it, because he was mindful of his ancient promises to their forefathers; which was a further assurance of his favour. And then he

Looked upon them.] *i. e.* Took notice of their affliction and hard labour, (as Maimonides explains it, More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 48.) which was another motive to relieve them. And in the last place,

God had respect to them.] Which imports that he determined to *have mercy upon them* (and that includes all blessings in it). For so this phrase *to respect* another signifies, as Bochart hath shewn from many instances, particularly Psal. xxv. 12. Isai. lxvi. 2. (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 49.)

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *NOW Moses kept the flock.*] So Moses was taken from the sheepfold (as David was in aftertimes) to be the ruler of God's people, (Psal. lxxvii. 70.) "For as hunting of wild beasts (saith Philo) is proper to men of a martial genius, and fits men to be captains and generals of armies; so the feeding of sheep is Μελετὴ καὶ προγυμνασία βαζιλείας, &c. the best exercise and preparation for a kingdom, and the gentle government of mankind." Clemens Alexandrinus hath the same notion, and the same words; (lib. i. Strom. p. 345.) God's power also herein appeared the more wonderful, that he delivered his people from the Egyptian tyranny, by one that was contemptible, or rather abominable, to that nation, *viz. a keeper of sheep.*

Of Jethro.] It is most likely that Reuel, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, (ver. 18.) was now dead; to whom Jethro his son succeeded in that principality where he ruled: for it was now forty years since Moses came first into Midian.

His father-in-law.] This shews that the seven daughters spoken of, ii. 16. were the children of Jethro, and Reuel their grandfather: unless we will say, as a great many do, that Jethro had two names. Nay, they fancy he had three, being called Hobab they think, Judg. iv. 11, where Hobab is said to be *the father-in-law of Moses.* But the word *son* is there to be supplied (which in other places is sometimes to be understood), he seeming to be Jethro's son, brother to Zipporah: and accordingly is said, (Numb. x. 29.) *to be the son of Raguel the Midianite, i. e.* of Jethro, as many understand it. See there.

And he led the flock to the backside of the desert.] Or, as St. Jerome understands it, "ad interiora deserti," *to the inner parts of the desert* (where there was better pasture than in the place where he was before), to which he was conducted by the providence of God, who intended here to reveal himself more fully to him.

And came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.] Sheep delight to feed on mountains, as Bochart observes out of Theocritus and Virgil. Whence such mountainous places are often called in Homer οἴπολα, *sheep-walks;* they being wont to feed there, as Eustathius and Hesychius interpret it: (see Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 46.) And this is called *the mountain of God,* because, when Moses wrote this book, there had been a Divine appearance upon Horeb, which St. Stephen calls Sinai, (Acts vii. 30.) For Horeb and Sinai seem to have been two tops of one and the same mountain: which it is plain by this was not far from the country of Midian. We understand also by St. Stephen's words when this fell out, *viz.* after he had dwelt forty years in Midian: for so long, it is certain, he continued there, (Exod. vii. 7.) But how he employed all that time, we are not told. No doubt, in something else than mere feeding sheep. For, being learned in all the Egyptian wisdom, we may well think he both taught others, and made also great improvements himself in studying the records of that, and all other neighbouring countries: and besides, received, it is likely, Divine revelations. There are those, likewise, who think he now wrote the book of Job, to comfort the Israelites, by the example of his admirable patience, under their heavy oppressions in Egypt;

and the book of Genesis also; that they might the better understand what promise had been made to their noble ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and that the time drew near when they would be fulfilled.

It is noted by Ludovicus Capellus, in his Chronol. Sacra, that the number *forty* was much observed in the administrations of Divine Providence: Moses being forty years old when he fled into Midian, and staying there another forty years, and then leaving the world in the end of the next forty years of his age. It was so many years before the Israelites got to Canaan, after they were delivered out of Egypt. *Forty* days Moses continued with God in the Mount, both the first and second time of his going up thither. So many days the spies were in searching out the land: and the Israelites had just so many mansions in the wilderness. Their first judge governed just forty years, and the next twice as many. Deborah, Barak, Gideon, Eli, all judged forty years: and so long David reigned.

Ver. 2. *And the angel of the Lord appeared to him.*] So St. Stephen also, (Acts vii. 30.) By which some understand the eternal Word, the Second Person in the blessed Trinity. But I think he is not called simply an *angel* any where, but with some addition, as the *angel of the covenant:* for it would be a dangerous insinuation, that he was but a mere creature. Yet I believe he is not here to be excluded: for I take this to have been the appearance of the Schechinah; which comprehended both the Lord himself, and the angels that attended him as his ministers. One of which now appeared so gloriously, that he shewed God to be present: and accordingly we find, in the following words, that he himself spake to Moses. And thus the Lord is said to have sent his angel, when they cried to him, and brought them out of Egypt, (Numb. xx. 16.) Which angel is called Michael, by Menachem; and the same which they also call Goel, who redeemed Jacob from all evil, (Gen. xlviii. 16.)

In a flame of fire.] The glory of the Lord (as the Schechinah is frequently called) appeared in a flaming manner like fire: exceeding bright, and with an amazing splendour. So it appeared, though not so bright, when the first promise was made of their deliverance, (Gen. xv. 17, 18.)

Out of the midst of a bush.] To shew, say the Jews in Pirke Eliezer, (cap. xl.) that God was present with them, in their great affliction and tribulation: which was represented by this bush of thorns or briars (for so the Hebrew word signifies, such a bush as pricks those that touch it), or, as the prophet Isaiah speaks, (lxiii. 9.) "in all their affliction he was afflicted." And by his providence ordered things so, that their affliction did not consume them, but rather multiplied and increased them; for, as it there follows, "the angel of his presence saved them." And thus Eusebius tells us (in the latter end of lib. v. Demonstr. Evang. cap. 13.) some Christians understood it, *αἰνίττεσθαι δὲ φασὶ, τὴν μὲν βάτον, τὴν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἀγρίαν καὶ ἀπηνῆ καὶ ἀνήμερον μοχθηρίαν*, &c.

This fire also in the bush might be intended to shew, that God would there meet with the Israelites, and give them his law in fire and lightning; and yet not consume them. For this is the place, where God, after they came out of Egypt, delivered the law to them: which thence was called Sinai (saith the forenamed author in Pirke Eliezer), from this bush; which in Hebrew is *Sene,* and signifies in Arabic *a thorn-bush:* whereas before it was called Horeb, from its dryness and barrenness, as that word imports.

And behold, the bush burnt with fire, and the bush was not consumed.] The heathens had either read, or heard of this wonder, as appears by Artapanus, who mentions it, (in Eusebius, lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 27.) but he disguises it and misreports it; saying, it was a fire which suddenly broke forth out of the earth, and flamed, *μήτε ὕλης μήτε ἄλλης τινὸς ξυλείας οὔσης ἐν τόπῳ, when there was no matter, nor any kind of wood in the place to feed it.* But in the next chapter but one, an ancient tragedian reports it exactly, saying, just as Moses doth here, that "the bush burnt in a great fire, and yet remained entire and green in the flame," which he calls *τεράστιον μέγιστον, the greatest miracle.* The meaning of which I have already explained, in the foregoing observation. There is a story something like this in Dion Prusæus, Orat. xxxvi. where he saith the Persians relate concerning Zoroaster, that the love of wisdom and virtue leading him to a solitary life, separate from company, upon a mountain, he found it one day all in a flame, shining with celestial fire: out of the midst of which he came without any harm, and instituted certain sacrifices to God, who then he made account appeared to him. Which Joh. Henricus Ursinus, a good while ago, endeavoured to prove was nothing else but a corruption of this apparition to Moses. And Huetius lately (in his Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 5.) hath made such a laborious comparison between what is said of Moses and Zoroaster, as is sufficient to make it probable the ancient Persians derived their religion from these books of Moses.

Ver. 3. *And Moses said, I will now turn aside.*] It seems this glorious appearance was not directly before him, but on one side of him, and some distance from him.

And see this great sight.] This wonderful appearance; or, as Philo translates it, *ἐκπληκτικώτατον, this most stupendous and astonishing sight or vision.*

Why the bush is not burnt.] A fire which did not burn (that is, consume what it laid hold on) was very amazing. Yet the gentiles did not think such things incredible, as appears out of Seneca in his Thyeste, where he speaks of a forest which appeared all on a flame, without fire: and out of Lucan, and divers other authors, among the pagans, produced by the learned Huetius in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, (lib. ii. cap. xii. n. 10.)

Ver. 4. *And when the Lord saw that he turned aside,* &c.] It is plain by this, that the Lord himself was here present: his angels being but attendants, as I said, upon his Majesty. (See Gen. xii. 11. 15.)

God called unto him out of the midst of the bush.] He now calls him *God,* whom just before he called *Lord.* Both which are sometimes put together, as comprehending all the Divine attributes. Maimonides, who makes eleven degrees of prophecy (or Divine communications to men), justly thinks this the very highest of all, and it was peculiar to Moses, to hear God himself speaking to him in a vision, when he was entirely awake.

And said, Moses, Moses.] He repeats his name, to excite his attention. And some take it for a token of familiarity. (See Gen. xlvi. 2.) This is called by Gregor. Nyssen. (de Vita Mosis, p. 172.) *ἡ τοῦ φωτὸς φωνὴ*, &c. *a voice of that Light,* or *splendour; i. e.* of the Divine Majesty, which appeared to him.

And he said, Here am I.] A common expression of readiness to hearken and to obey.

Ver. 5. *And he said, Draw not nigh hither.*] He commands him to keep his distance, and not to approach nearer to him. This, and what follows, plainly demonstrate what I said before, that this was an appearance of the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty; to whom he could not pay too great a reverence.

Put off thy shoes from off thy feet.] Many frivolous reasons have been given for this precept, as may be seen in Braunius, (lib. i. cap. 3. de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr.) But the plain reason is immediately added in the text, because the place where he stood was *holy:* into which it was irreverend to enter with their shoes on; because thereby it might be defiled with the dirt that adhered to them. Certain it is, that, in the temple afterwards, the priests officiated barefoot; and all the eastern people came into their holy places in the same manner: which Justin Martyr thinks they learnt from this example of Moses. But Mr. Mede's opinion seems truer, that Moses did not give the first beginning to this rite; but it was derived from the patriarchs before him, and transmitted to future times from that ancient general tradition. For we find no command in the law of Moses, for the priests performing the service of the tabernacle without shoes; but it is certain they did so, from immemorial custom: and so do the Mahometans and other nations at this day. (See Mr. Mede, book ii. p. 442, &c. and p. 516. and Huetius in his Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. xi. sect. 2.)

The place whereon thou standest is holy ground.] It was made holy by the special presence of God, which was now there, who is most holy, and makes every thing relating unto him to be holy also. For thus the tabernacle, the temple, and the utensils thereof, with all things destined to the Divine service, were called *holy.*

Ver. 6. *Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father.*] *i. e.* Of Amram: who it seems was a very pious man.

And the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.] Who were so dear to him, that he made a covenant with every one of them (which is the reason he is distinctly called the God of each of them), as Maimonides observes, (More Nev. par. iii. cap. 51.) from Lev. xxvi. 42. And this covenant was, that he would be *their* God after a peculiar manner. For otherwise, he was the God of Noah, and of all the holy patriarchs before him: but he is called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for a peculiar reason, because of the promise made to these three of the blessed Seed which should spring from them; in opposition to the pretensions of other neighbouring people; who (as the learned Dr. Allix observes) were their rivals in that hope. These words being as much as if he had said, the *God of Abraham,* and not of *Lot,* as the Ammonites and Moabites pretended: the *God of Isaac,* and not of *Ishmael,* as his posterity pretended: the *God of Jacob,* and not of *Esau,* as the Edomites boasted.

And Moses hid his face.] In token of humility, submission, and reverence. So Elijah did in aftertimes, (1 Kings xix. 12.) Nay, the angels cover their faces in the presence of God, (Isa. vi. 2.)

For he was afraid to look upon God.] The splendour of the Divine Majesty was so great, that it dazzled his eyes; and he was not able to behold it. For though he stirred not a step further, after God prohibited him to come nearer; yet we may suppose him to be now nearer to it than he was at the first, (ver. 3.) and its glory also was much increased.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction,* &c.] To *see* signifies more than to observe and take notice; including in it such resolutions of Divine Providence, as would certainly produce their deliverance. For the doubling of the expression (*Seeing I have seen,* as it is in the Hebrew) denotes there was no doubt of it.

And have heard their cry.] Both this and the next phrase, *know their sorrows,* signify more than the simple words *hear* and *know* import, *viz.* such a regard to their miserable condition, as moved him to order a speedy relief to be given them.

Ver. 8. *And I am come down to deliver them.*] I now appear unto thee for that purpose.

Out of the hand of the Egyptians.] From their tyrannical power.

And to bring them up out of that land.] Where they are strangers, and used as slaves.

Into a good land.] A fruitful country of their own.

And a large.] Where they shall not be pent up so as they are in Goshen. And if it were considered according to the extent of the original promise, it was large and spacious indeed, even from the river of Egypt unto Euphrates, (Gen. xv. 18.)

Unto a land flowing with milk and honey.] By which phrase the poets express the greatest plenty; as Bochart shews out of Euripides, Horace, Ovid, &c. (Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 12.) For abundance of *milk* and *honey* argue a country to be well watered, fruitful, full of fair pastures and flowers: from whence the flocks may fill their dugs with milk, and the bees their cells with honey. Ælian (lib. iii. de Hist. Animal. cap. 35.) saith, "The goats of Syria (which includes this country) afford such plenty of milk, as is in no other country."

Unto the place of the Canaanites, &c.] See concerning all these people here mentioned, Gen. xv. 19, &c.

Ver. 9. *Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come upon me,* &c.] This was said before, (ver. 7.) but here repeated, as a reason of the commission he intended immediately to give to Moses, to go and deliver them.

Ver. 10. *Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh,* &c.] Leave thy flock; for I have another more weighty business, wherein I will employ thee. For thou shalt go with my authority to Pharaoh; and command him not only to release my people out of their servitude, but to let them go also out of Egypt. He had called them by the name of *his people,* (ver. 7.) and now mentions it again, to encourage their hope that he would take care of his own.

What Pharaoh this was (it being a common name to all the Egyptian kings) is very much disputed. The common opinion is, that after Orus (in whose time Moses fled into Midian), Acencres (or Acherres) reigned twelve years; and after him Achoris reigned seven years more; and then succeeded Cenchres, the worst of them all, to whom Moses was now sent. But Clemens Alexandrinus tells us, that Appion (a great enemy of the Jews, and who wrote against them) mentioning their going out of Egypt (in his fourth book of his History of Egypt), saith, it was in the reign of

Amosis. For which he quotes Ptolomæus Mendesius, an Egyptian priest, who wrote three books about their affairs, in which he saith, κατ' Ἄμωσιν Αἰγύπτου Βασιλέα, Μωϋσέως ἡγουμένου, γεγονέναι Ἰουδαίοις τὴν ἐξ Αἰγύπτου πορείαν, (lib. i. Stromat. p. 320.) But Tacitus calls him Bocchoris, or, as some read it, Occoris, (lib. v. Hist. cap. 3.)

That thou mayest bring forth my people, &c.] From this time we are to consider God as the king of this people: not in general only, as he is Lord of the whole world; but in a proper and peculiar manner. For whatsoever authority or power of jurisdiction the kings of other nations did exercise over their subjects, (as power of life and death, of making laws and leagues, &c.) the same prerogative did the Lord of heaven and earth reserve to himself alone, over the children of Israel. Upon which ground, as Dr. Jackson well observes, Moses was delegated to be his ambassador to the king of Egypt; and constituted (it appears by the whole story) his deputy or viceroy over Israel.

Ver. 11. *And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh,* &c.] He modestly declines the service, considering how mean a person he was, in comparison with Pharaoh; and how unable to do any thing for the Israelites. He had felt some extraordinary motion in himself, forty years ago; which he took to be an indication that God would use him as an instrument of their deliverance, (see chap. ii. 11, 12.) but at that time he was a far greater man than now; and had more interest at court: the princess who adopted him for her son being then perhaps alive, or having left him what made him very considerable. In short, he was then the son of Pharaoh's daughter; but now a poor shepherd.

Ver. 12. *And he said, Certainly I will be with thee.*] In answer to his objection, God bids him depend on this; that he would preserve him by a special providence from being hurt by Pharaoh. So Maimonides shews this phrase *(I will be with thee)* signifies in Scripture, (More Nev. par. iii. cap. 18.) And the confidence which God wrought in him of this, gave him courage and resolution: which is also denoted by this phrase, as he shews, (par. ii. cap. 38.) For all the prophets were endued with an extraordinary fortitude and magnanimity; which was in Moses above all the rest: he encountering a great king, and all his court and people, barely with a staff in his hand.

And this shall be a token to thee that I have sent thee; when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.] This could not be a token to him now, but was afterward: when God by his power brought them to this very place, to worship him, according to this promise, upon this mountain. In the meantime, there were many other tokens God gave him (as we find in this history) which were all confirmed by this at last.

Ver. 13. *And they shall say unto me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them?*] This doth not argue that they knew not what the name of their God was; for they and their fathers had been long acquainted with him: and they cried unto him, and he heard them, (ii. 23, 24.) But Moses being the first that ever spake to men in the name of God, (none of the patriarchs, either before the flood or after it, having said any such words as these; *God hath sent me to you: the Lord commands me to bid you do so or so,* as Maimon. observes in several places of his More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 63. par. ii. cap. 39.) it was natural for the Israelites to ask him by what name, or peculiar attribute, God had made himself known unto him, so as to authorize him to speak to them, as never any man before did. He had spoken unto Noah and unto Abraham, &c. but it was only for their own instruction; he never bid them deliver any message unto others: and yet it is observable, that, upon particular occasions, he still made himself known to them by different names or titles. As he saith to Abraham, (Gen. xv. 7.) "I am Jehovah, who brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees." But, xvii. 1. he saith, "I am El-shaddai." And to Isaac he saith, "I am the God of thy father Abraham," (xxvi. 24.) To Jacob he adds, "I am the Lord God of thy father Abraham, and the God of Isaac," (xxviii. 13.) And after this, "I am the God of Bethel," (xxxi. 13.) No wonder then that Moses should think the people would expect, upon so great an occasion, when he came to them as an ambassador from heaven, that the God of their fathers should speak to them in a new style, beyond all that had been known in former days.

Ver. 14. *And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM.*] That is, saith Maimonides, in the place abovenamed, *he that necessarily exists.* He who so is, that he must needs be. Or, as some translate it, *I will be what I will be; i. e.* the eternal immutable Being (so Elmacinus interprets it, *the Eternal that never dies),* who am faithful to my promises; and will be to you, what I told your fathers I would be. Whatsoever I said in the days of Abraham, concerning the giving the land of Canaan, I will certainly perform; for I change not.

Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.] The former words were a declaration of God's nature to Moses; and in these he bids him, in brief, only say to the Israelites that he was sent by him *who is.* That is (as was said before) necessarily exists: *always was, and ever will be.* Who alters not; but, by whatsoever name he makes himself known, is still the very same God. Which was a name not unknown to the gentiles, as one would think by the word *EI;* which was inscribed in the front of the Delphic temple (as Plutarch tells us), and was nothing else but the contraction of *EIMI,* which signifies, *I AM.* Or if we take *EI* to be an entire word (as it is commonly thought) signifying *thou art,* Ammonius rightly understood it to be αὐτοτελῆ τοῦ Θεοῦ προσαγόρευσιν καὶ προσφώνησιν (as Plutarch reports his words in a treatise on this subject), *the most absolutely perfect name and compellation of God.* For God, saith he, in the other inscription on the temple, speaks to us who approach him, saying to every one *KNOW THYSELF:* and we are taught to answer to him again, in the words of this inscription, *THOU ART:* ascribing to him ὡς ἀληθῆ καὶ ἀψευδῆ, &c. *that true, undoubted, and only appellation which belongs to him alone.* For he only is; we are not, &c. Thus he declares this word, to express most perfectly the Divine Essence; which is distinguished hereby from all false gods. See Eusebius, (lib. xi. Præp. Evang. cap. 11.) and in the two foregoing chapters; where he takes a deal of pains to shew that Plato borrowed this notion of τὸ ὂν ἀεὶ, γένεσιν δὲ οὐκ ἔχον, *a Being that is always, but had no beginning,* from these words of Moses. And Numenius, a Pythagorean, speaks it more plainly, when he saith, τὸ γὰρ ὄν, ἀΐδιον βέβαιόν τέ ἐστιν, ἀεὶ κατὰ ταυτὸν καὶ ταυτὸν, *that which is, is eter-*

nal and steadfast, always the very same without variation. And no wonder these men, if they met with this passage in Moses, were highly pleased with it; for St. Hilary himself tells us, that he, lighting upon these words (as he was musing about God and religion) before he was a Christian, was struck with admiration: there being nothing so proper to God as *to be.* And therefore he thought it worthy of God, to say of himself, I AM THAT I AM, and HE THAT IS (so he translates the last words) *hath sent me unto you;* (lib. i. de Trinitate.)

Ver. 15. *And said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say,* &c.] For a further explication of what he had now said, and a further satisfaction of their minds.

The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, &c.] The name JEHOVAH (as we pronounce it) seems to be in sense the same with *Ehjeh,* beforementioned. Which, as it declares his nature, so the word *God* added to it, expresses his favour, care, and providence. And consequently he bids Moses tell the children of Israel, that he who is *the Eternal* was the God of their fathers, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: to whom he had made many promises that he would be gracious to their posterity. This was sufficient for them to know of him.

This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial, &c.] Some refer the first words *(this is my name)* to the foregoing verse, I AM: and the next *(this is my memorial)* to those which immediately precede, *the Lord God of your fathers:* which in truth include the whole, *Jehovah* being the same with *I am.* And the meaning is, I will be for ever remembered, celebrated, praised, and invoked, by the name of *the Lord God of your fathers,* &c.

Ver. 16. *Go, and gather the elders of Israel together.*] The word *elders,* in these books, sometimes signifies the men of the great Sanhedrin, as they speak in aftertimes (or the judges in the highest court), Deut. xxi. 2. &c. Sometimes the judges in the lower courts, (Deut. xix. 12. xxii. 15.) Sometimes it only signifies the heads of the tribes, as here in this place: for now there were no such courts of judicature constituted. (See Selden, Uxor. Hebr. lib. i. cap. xv.) Some indeed (particularly Corn. Bertram) think it reasonable to suppose that the Israelites had judges among them all the time they dwelt in Egypt, though not mentioned in Scripture; as they had, no doubt, a form of religion, though we read nothing of it. And Moses, he thinks, is here ordered to send for those, who were their rulers, and administered public affairs among them. But there is this argument against it; that, after this time, when Moses had brought them out of Egypt, there were no such judges among them, but Moses (as we find Exod. xviii.) judged all himself, to his exceeding great trouble. And therefore by *elders* we are here to understand only the wisest and gravest men of the nation, who were in greatest esteem among them, (as Mr. Selden afterwards speaks, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. xv. p. 523, &c.) or, as was said before, the heads of their tribes. The famous H. Grotius confirms this, by a nice observation, that both here and ver. 18. they are barely called *zikne,* not *hazikne,* because there was not as yet, "certum collegium, sed sola qualitas denotatur," (as he speaks, lib. de Imp. Sum. Potest. circa Sacra. cap. xi. n. 15.) *a certain college or society of them, but their quality only is denoted.* And no doubt the word always signified men of dignity, or chief rank among others, both among the Israelites and among the Egyptians; as I have observed on Gen. xxiv. 2. l. 6.

And say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, &c.] See this explained, ver. 6.

Hath appeared unto me.] Ver. 2. 4.

Saying, Surely I have visited you.] So Joseph, when he died, assured them God would do, Gen. l. 24, where I observed to *visit them,* was to *bring them out of Egypt.* And so it signifies here, as is evident from what God said to Moses when he appeared to him, ver. 8. "I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians." Which was not yet actually done, but so absolutely decreed in the mind of God, that he might say he had already done it. Or the word *pakad* may be translated here, as it is elsewhere, *I have remembered you,* (1 Sam. xv. 2.) that is, so as to resolve to deliver them. And then the next words may depend on this.

And that which is done to you in Egypt.] For the word *seen* is not in the original: but either way, it relates to what God saith to Moses, (ver. 7. 9.)

Ver. 17. *And I have said.*] Determined, or resolved.

I will bring you out of the affliction of Egypt, into the land of the Canaanites, &c.] See ver. 9.

Ver. 18. *And they shall hearken to thy voice.*] A great encouragement to carry this message to the elders of Israel; which God promises to incline their hearts to receive and obey.

The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us.] We have received a special command from the eternal God, whom we, and our forefathers, worship: who hath appeared to us.

And now let us go (we beseech thee) three days' journey into the wilderness.] They intended to go quite away; but at first are directed to demand only to go as far as Mount Sinai: which was but three days' journey from Egypt, if they went the nearest way to it. For this they were humble petitioners; which is implied in those words, *We beseech thee.*

That we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.] When they delivered this message to Pharaoh, (ver. 1.) they call it *holding a feast to him:* which was to be made upon the sacrifices that they offered. For ver. 3. of that chapter, they speak in the same phrase which is used here.

Ver. 19. *And I am sure the king of Egypt will not let you go.*] God understood beforehand the hardness of his heart; and that he would not yield; no, not to let them depart for three days, much less for altogether.

No, not by a strong hand.] In the margin, *But by a strong hand; i. e.* by cutting off all the first-born in the country: till which, he knew Pharaoh would be obstinate.

Ver. 20. *And I will stretch out my hand.*] As the *hand* of God signifies his power, so the *stretching it out* seems to signify the exerting of that power in mighty deeds.

Smite Egypt with all my wonders.] The Hebrew word for *wonders* comes from a root, which imports something *singular,* and not *common.* Such were all the plagues God sent upon Egypt, which made them the more wonderful.

After that he will let you go.] They grew so terrible, at last, that he was afraid the next stroke would be upon his own person: which made him content to dismiss them.

Ver. 21. *And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians,* &c.] Dispose their hearts to be kind to them,

so that they should readily furnish them with any thing they desired.

Ver. 22. *But every woman shall borrow.*] The word *shaal* is of a doubtful meaning: for it signifying, in general, to *ask* or to *pray*, one may pray another, either to *give* or to *lend*. And if the Israelites asked their neighbours to bestow such things upon them as are here mentioned, and they, out of a desire to be rid of them, or hoping speedily to recover their goods, granted their requests, no wrong was done to them. And if they borrowed them of the Egyptians, it was by the authority of God, whose the world is and the fulness thereof: and who doth no man any wrong when he is pleased to transfer what he enjoys unto another. (See more xi. 2. xii. 35.)

Of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house.] By this it appears that the Egyptians were intermixed with the Hebrews, in the land of Goshen: and so might the more easily go along with them when they left Egypt; as many of them did, (xii. 38.)

Jewels of silver, &c.] Rather, *vessels of silver,* &c. Which were of greater use to them than *jewels;* unless they pretended to deck up themselves for the feast they were to keep. (See more xi. 2. xii. 36.)

And ye shall spoil the Egyptians.] Not by rapine or stealth, but by their own consent.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *BUT behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice,* &c.] This seems directly to contradict what God had said unto him, (iii. 18.) "They shall hearken to thy voice." Which Maimonides endeavours to reconcile, by saying, that Moses was satisfied they would believe that he told them concerning the *name* of God who spake to him; but not believe, without further proof, that he was *sent* by him, (par. i. More Nevochim. cap. 63.) But the plainest answer is, that God did not mean they would hearken to Moses immediately: but that he would so convince them by undeniable signs and tokens, that they should give credit to him, when he said he came from God to them: such signs he now asks, and God grants, that they might believe the Lord appeared to him, and gave him commission to deliver them.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thy hand?*] He asks this question to make way for what follows; and to move his attention to it.

And he said, A rod.] His shepherd's staff, it is most likely. For he takes occasion from what was in his hand to confirm his faith; and he was now feeding his father-in-law's sheep, when God appeared unto him. The Jews have a world of fabulous stuff about this *rod,* not worth the remembering.

Ver. 3. *And he said, Cast it on the ground,* &c.] As he was to do when he came before Pharaoh, (vii. 10.) that it might not be thought Moses's hand contributed any thing to the change; but it might appear to be wrought by the power of God.

And it became a serpent.] Αὐτίκα ψυχωθεῖσα εἵρπε (as Philo speaks), *immediately it was enlivened and crawled about.* The word *nachash* comprehends all sorts of *serpents;* and R. Eliezer takes it to have been a *flying serpent:* but our Doctor Lightfoot thinks it was a *crocodile;* for which there is some reason. For that which is here called *nechash* (which most think signifies a common *snake,* or *serpent*), when he threw down his staff before Pharaoh (vii. 10.) is called *tannin:* which signifies a serpent of the largest dimensions (ὑπερμεγέθης δράκων, Philo here calls it), and, as I proved upon Gen. i. 21. includes in it *crocodiles,* which Isaiah calls the *crooked serpent,* (xxvii. 1.) unto whose devouring jaws Pharaoh had exposed the Hebrew infants, when he commanded them to be cast into the river Nile, (i. 22.) which abounded with crocodiles.

And Moses fled from before it.] It being a very frightful sight; enough to dismay the most courageous man on earth: as God himself describes the crocodile in the book of Job, (xli. 14, 15.) "His teeth are terrible round about: when he raises up himself, the mighty are afraid."

Ver. 4. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thy hand and take it by the tail,* &c.] This shews Moses's faith to have been great, which overcame his fear. Most think this to have been an apt representation of the condition of the Israelites in Egypt, and of their deliverance there. R. Eliezer, in his Pirke, (cap. xl.) hath hinted the best explication of it, if it have any such meaning, when he saith, As a serpent bites and kills those on whom it seizes, so did Pharaoh and his people bite and kill the Israelites: or rather he should have said, So shall the Egyptians be afflicted and tormented by the rod which Moses carries in his hand.

Ver. 5. *That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers,* &c.] The meaning is, Thou shalt do thus before them, if they doubt whether I have appeared to thee (as he feared they would, ver. 1.) to convince them of it.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thy hand into thy bosom,* &c.] He did not ask for a new sign, but the Lord was graciously pleased to grant him a further confirmation of his faith; or rather, of the faith of the Israelites.

And he put his hand into his bosom, and when he took it out, behold, it was leprous as snow.] It was a wonderful thing, that out of the same place should come both the disease and the cure (as we read in the next verse, that by putting his hand into his bosom again it became sound), and it was the greater wonder, because the leprosy was a disease that was very hard to be cured. R. Eliezer, in the place forenamed, doth not give so good a reason for this sign as for the former: though it is not a bad one. For, he making a question, Why God should give them a sign by an unclean thing, and not by a clean? makes this answer to it; because, as a leper is unclean, and makes others so, in like manner Pharaoh and the impure Egyptians had defiled the Israelites: but God shewed by Moses's drawing his hand out of his bosom again pure and clean, that he would deliver and purge the Israelites from the filthiness of the Egyptians. I should think rather, that the leprosy represented God's smiting the Egyptians with his plagues; and the cure of it, God's removal of those plagues at Moses's prayer. But there is no end of such conceits. Therefore I shall rather observe, that God commanding him to work *all these wonders before Pharaoh,* (ver. 21.) it is very probable, this gave occasion to the fabulous story which was invented in future ages, that Moses was a *leper,* and the Israelites infected with that, and other scabby dis-

cases. For so Josephus tells us (lib. i. contra Appion.) the tale was told in Manetho's history, and thence descended unto others, that Moses was driven out of the country, διὰ τὴν λέπραν, (see Justin. lib. xxxv. cap. 2. Tacitus, lib. v. Histor. cap. 3.) *because he had the leprosy.* Which, as Manetho, perhaps, did not maliciously devise out of his own head, so those historians from whom he borrowed his work, might have but an imperfect tradition of the truth, derived from this passage of Moses appearing with a leprous hand before Pharaoh: which was presently noised about the country, without the other part, of his being immediately cured. And thus Helladius Besantinus, an Egyptian writer, in his Chresto-Mathia, mentions one who said Moses was called Ἄλφα, because his body, τοῖς ἀλφοῖς κατάστικτος ἦν, *was marked with white leprous spots.* And to this lie he calls Philo to be a witness. The very same is affirmed by Philemæus Hephæstionis, as J. Meursius observes in his notes upon the forenamed author.

Ver. 7. *And he plucked it out of his bosom, and behold, it was turned again as his other flesh.*] A manifest token (as Con. Pellicanus rightly takes it) that God could, with as much ease, restore his oppressed people to perfect liberty.

Ver. 8. *And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, nor hearken to the voice of the first sign.*] Here he gives the reason why he was pleased to add another sign to the former, that he might overcome the incredulity which he foresaw would be in many of them.

That they will believe the voice of the latter sign.] Yield their consent to that which is plainly taught them by both these signs, *viz.* that God had appeared to him, and ordered him to say what he did. And he saith they would *believe;* because it was rational to suppose they would: though he likewise supposes, in the next verse, some might still remain incredulous; and therefore he adds another.

Ver. 9. *Thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land; and the water shall become blood.*] This sign was not wrought now, when God talked with him, as the two former were: for he was in the desert, far from the river here spoken of, and near no river at all. Therefore, in case the Israelites did not believe upon the sight of the two former signs, this is ordered to be wrought, when he came into Egypt, for their conviction, by taking the water of Nilus, and turning it into blood. Which might be well looked upon as an indication that God was able to spoil that water, which was the great instrument of the fertility of that country, and make their land barren. And also put them in mind that the cry of the innocent blood of their infants, which had been drowned in that river, was come up to God.

There was a necessity that Moses should be instructed with all these powers, because he came with an unusual commission: which would not have been credited, if he had not brought such extraordinary proof of it. All the prophets after him did not work miracles, which were necessary only when some great change was to be made in the world; as there was now at their bringing out of Egypt. After which they were to be put into a new form and order, by a body of peculiar laws, both civil and religious; which when they were notoriously violated, God was pleased, by such wonders as Moses wrought, to turn their hearts back again; as he did in the days of Elijah, (1 Kings xviii. 37.)

Ver. 10. *And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord.*] This is a form of speech, whereby he declines this great employment, and desires to be excused. The reason of which follows.

I am not eloquent.] In the Hebrew, *Am not a man of words; i. e.* not a good speaker, or not accustomed to make speeches; or, as some take it, a man of few words, and therefore unfit to be sent to the Israelites, and much more to the king of Egypt, to whom none but great orators make addresses. Clemens, in his epistle to the Corinthians, makes this an argument of Moses's humility, and saith, he added these words (from I know not what author), ἐγώ εἰμι ἀτμὶς ἐκ χύτρας, *I am a reek from a pot.*

Neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant.] This hath been always my imperfection, that I could not speak fluently: nor do I find that I am altered, since thou hast been pleased to appear to me, and give me this commission.

But I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.] Cannot bring forth my words readily, nor pronounce them well. The Jews think he had some impediment in his speech, so that he could not pronounce some letters or words exactly; at least not without such difficulty, that it was long before he could bring them forth. But the LXX. understand these words, *slow of speech,* as if he had but a weak, small, or slender voice; speaking *voce gracili et exili* (as it may be translated in Latin), which made him very unfit, he thought, to be an ambassador. And this doth not disagree with what St. Stephen saith, that he *was mighty in words,* as well as deeds, (Acts vii. 22.) for the sense of what he spake was great and weighty, though his pronunciation was not answerable to it. Nor did his ill or weak pronunciation, nor his slowness in bringing forth his words, hinder him from being an excellent judge, and deciding causes from morning to night; as we read Exod. xviii. In the determination of which there was no need of oratory; but of a quick apprehension, exact judgment, and proper language; which he never wanted. One would think, also, that by use and exercise he grew prompt in the delivery of his mind; for he made several very long speeches to the people, and especially an incomparable discourse before his departure out of the world, in the beginning of the book of Deuteronomy. In the latter end of which, his song shews that he wanted no eloquent words, when he pleased to use them.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth,* &c.] Cannot I, who formed all the organs of speech, and made the rest of men's senses, and when I please deprive them of their use, take away this impediment of which thou complainest, and make thee to speak as roundly and gracefully as any man living? The author of the Life of Moses (who makes Pharaoh to have condemned Moses for killing the Egyptian, &c. see ii. 15.) fancies, that God puts him in mind of his deliverance at that time: as if he had said, Who taught thee to make thy defence, when thou wast arraigned before Pharaoh? Who made the king dumb, that he could not urge and press thy execution? Who made the executioner deaf, that he could not hear the sentence when pronounced? And who made them all blind, that they could not see, when thou madest thy escape? Which is very ingeniously invented; but we have no assurance of the truth of this explication.

Ver. 12. *Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.*] Excuse thyself no longer, but obey the commission I have given thee: and I will both help thy speech, and suggest to thy mind what thou shalt deliver. This doth not signify, as I take it, that if he had without further disputing gone about his business, God would have given him a better elocution: but that he would have made his words as powerful, as if they had been pronounced with the greatest advantage. Or the meaning may be, that he should never want either words or thoughts, to instruct his brother Aaron, whom God always intended to send along with him.

Ver. 13. *And he said, O my Lord.*] The same form of speech with that ver. 10.

Send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.] The Vulgar Latin having translated the word *Schilo,* (Gen. xlix. 10.) *qui mittendus est, him that is to be sent,* it hath inclined several great men to think, that Moses here desires God to send the Messiah. And several of the ancient fathers (Just. Mart. Tertull. and St. Cyprian, &c.) were of this mind: as many later interpreters, both of the Roman and of the reformed churches, have been, particularly Flaccius Illyricus (in his *Clavis* upon the word *Mitto*) thus explains this passage: "*Manda id functionis,* &c. commit this office to the true *Messiah, or blessed Seed; whom thou hast resolved to send:* who will discharge this trust far better than I can do," &c. But there have been and are other very considerable persons, who think Moses means no more than this; *Send a more proper person, one fitter for this employment than I am.* And the truth is, such speeches as these in Scripture, do not denote any certain person or thing; but signify something indefinite, and in general. Examples of which we have in 1 Sam. xxiii. 13. 2 Sam. xv. 20. upon which phrase [*vado quo vado*] *I go whither I may,* the same Flaccius observes, that it denotes an uncertain motion. In like manner, Moses here determines his desire to no particular person: but only wishes God would send any body rather than himself. And that he did not think of the Messiah, there is this argument: that he had no reason to believe he was now born: and yet God's promise was to send one immediately to relieve the Israelites. Upon which errand also, if he had prayed God to send him, it would argue Moses to have been in the same error with the present Jews, that the Messiah was to be a temporal deliverer.

Ver. 14. *And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses.*] These words seem to import, that God was highly displeased with him; and consequently that he had very much offended him. Yet some of the fathers, particularly St. Jerome and St. Basil, impute his backwardness to serve in this employment to his great modesty, humility, and a deep sense of his own infirmities: of which the wisest and best men are far more sensible than other persons. And then this anger amounts to no more than such a displeasure as a father hath at his child when he is too diffident, notwithstanding all that he hath said and done to breed in him a just confidence. And therefore no punishment followed his anger (unless we think, as R. Solomon doth, that because of his backwardness God preferred Aaron's family above his, or that this was the cause he would not cure his imperfection of speech), but only a chiding: which we may suppose went before the following question, *Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother?* which carries something of sharpness in it. And indeed this may be said in Moses's excuse, that the most excellent persons are the least forward to embrace the offers of great advancement. According to the observation of Plato, lib. i. de Republ. (which I find Eusebius also hath noted out of him, lib. xii. Præp. Evang. cap. 9.) that no magistracy being designed for the profit of him that governs, but of those that are governed; I must needs conclude, saith he, μηδένα ἐθέλειν ἑκόντα ἄρχειν, that *no man* (who is considerate, he means) *will voluntarily take upon him the government of a people;* but he must be hired to it: or he must be punished if he will not undertake it. For he that will use his power well, οὐδέποθ' ἑαυτῷ τὸ βέλτιστον πράττει, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἀρχομένῳ, *never doth that which is best for himself, but for those whom he governs.* Such an one was Moses, who sought not his own profit or glory (as those that now seek for great places, by which they design a benefit to themselves, and not to their neighbours), and therefore was not easily persuaded to accept of the high authority which was offered to him.

Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother?] One would think by this that Aaron was now a principal person, and of most eminent quality in the tribe of Levi: as may be concluded also from his marriage with the sister of the prince of the tribe of Judah, (vi. 23.) For it is but a fancy of R. Solomon's that he is therefore called the *Levite,* because the *Levitical* order should have proceeded from him, and the priesthood been entailed on Moses's family: but because of Moses's backwardness to serve God in this present employment, he in anger quite changed his intention, and advanced Aaron to the priesthood.

I know that he can speak well.] Is eloquent, and can deliver his mind in fluent words. There are two things which complete a commander, as Pericles speaks in Thucydides; σύνεσις καὶ δύναμις ἑρμηνευτική· *wisdom and eloquence*; which do not often meet in one person: but God is pleased to distribute these gifts, as he did to these two brethren. So Polydamas in Homer tells Hector: God's way is not to give all accomplishments to one man; but some to one, and some to others. Iliad. xiii. ver. 730.

Ἀλλ' οὔπως ἅμα πάντα δυνήσεαι αὐτὸς ἑλέσθαι·
Ἄλλῳ μὲν γὰρ ἔδωκε θεὸς πολεμήϊα ἔργα, &c.
Ἄλλῳ δ' ἐν στήθεσσι τίθει νόον εὐρύοπα Ζεύς, &c.

Which he expresses admirably again, Odyss. Θ. v. 168.

Οὕτως οὐ πάντεσσι θεὸς χαρίεντα δίδωσιν
Ἀνδράσιν, οὔτε φυὴν, οὔτ' ἂρ φρένας, οὔτ' ἀγορητύν.

Behold, he cometh forth to meet thee, &c.] By God's direction, no doubt, who suggested to him that Moses was coming by his order towards Egypt: which was such comfortable news to him, that when he saw him (after such a long separation), it could not but be a very joyful meeting. The fulfilling of this prediction was a new sign to Moses that God would be with him.

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth.*] Tell him from me what he is to speak.

And I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth.] Thou shalt have directions from me what to say to him: and I will enable him to speak to the people and to Pharaoh.

And will teach you what you shall do.] Instruct you in all your proceedings.

Ver. 16. *And he shall be thy spokesman to the people.*] Acquaint them with what thou hast to deliver to them.

And he shall be, even he to thee.] He doubles the words, to denote that he should need no other assistance but Aaron: who being his brother, he might the more securely rely on his fidelity.

Instead of a mouth.] To speak what thou canst not so well deliver thyself.

And thou shalt be to him instead of God.] Deliver my mind and will to him. The Chaldee translates the Hebrew word *Elohim*, in this place, a *prince* or a *judge:* who hath the power of life and death; (see Grotius in Acts vii. 35. and L. de Dieu in vii. 1.) For Moses by God's order and appointment executed all those judgments upon Pharaoh which Aaron pronounced. (See Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. ult.) If Justin Martyr did not misapprehend Diodorus Siculus, he saith the Jews called Moses *a God.* For so he reports Diodorus's words, (Adhort. ad Græcos, p. 10.) παρὰ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις Μωϋσῆν τὸν καλούμενον Θεόν: which now are otherways in the books of Diodorus, (edit. Steph. p. 59.) where, mentioning several lawgivers, that pretended to receive their laws from God, or some good angel, he names Moses among the rest, παρὰ δὲ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις Μωϋσῆν τὸν Ἰαὼ ἐπικαλούμενον Θεὸν, *who received his from the God called Jao:* so they pronounced that name which we call *Jehovah.*

Ver. 17. *And thou shalt take this rod in thy hand.*] The rod mentioned ver. 2. which is, ver. 20. called *the rod of God;* because it was an ensign of Divine authority and power; by which all the wonders were wrought.

Wherewith thou shalt do signs.] By stretching out so mean a thing as this rod, at God's command, great miracles followed; which demonstrated the power of God and not of man.

Ver. 18. *And Moses went and returned.*] From Horeb, where he had all this converse with God, he returned to the place where his father-in-law lived. (See ver. 1.)

To Jethro.] In the Hebrew his name is written *Jether.* And the tradition is, in Semoth Rabba, that he was once a gentile, and then his name was *Jether:* but being proselyted to the true religion, there was a letter added to his name, as there was to Abraham's, and he was called *Jethro.* And Mr. Selden observes he is called a proselyte in the Gemara of Babylon; and the first we find mentioned in Scripture, (lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 2.)

And said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee.] He did not think it honest to leave his service without his consent; especially since he entertained him, and gave him his daughter, when he was a stranger to him.

And return unto my brethren, which are in Egypt.] To his kindred and countrymen (who called one another brethren), whom he had not seen many years.

And see whether they be yet alive.] He concealed his main design from Jethro; not thinking it safe, perhaps, to trust him (who, though a good man, was not a Hebrew) with his commission; or, fearing that he might discourage him from an undertaking, which he had already too much declined, but now was fully resolved upon: and therefore loath to be again disheartened.

It may seem strange that Moses in so long a course of time as forty years, should not have heard of the state of his relations and friends: but it is to be considered, that, as he was afraid, perhaps, it should be known where he was, so intercourse with nations, though not very far distant, was not so easy then, as it is now-a-days.

And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.] He dismissed him kindly, and wished him a prosperous journey.

Ver. 19. *And the Lord said to Moses in Midian.*] Some translate it, *the Lord had said,* &c. to shew the reason why he now desired to have leave to visit his friends in Egypt. However that be, it is plain, this was a distinct appearance of God to him from that in Horeb: for this was in Midian. Where God (who had set him no precise time before) enjoins him to be gone presently: and assures him, that there were none left in Egypt who designed to be revenged of him for the slaughter of the Egyptian. So it follows:

For all the men are dead which sought thy life.] This is an encouragement, which God reserved as a reward of his obedience: having said nothing of it during the time of his hesitancy and reluctance.

Ver. 20. *And Moses took his wife and his sons.*] We read hitherto but of one son born to him: but it is plain he had another from xviii. 4. He carried his whole family with him, to let his brethren see he was so confident of their deliverance, that he ventured not only himself, but his dearest relations in their society.

And set them upon an ass.] One ass could not carry them all, with every thing necessary for their removal; therefore the singular number (as is very usual) is put for the plural: though one ass might perhaps carry her and two children, one of which, if not the other, was very small (see Drusius, Quæstiones per Epistol. 86. and Simeon de Muis in his Varia Sacra): asses are vile creatures here with us, but they were not so in those countries: for the noblest persons anciently rode on them; as appears by a great many places of Holy Scripture, Gen. xxii. 1. Numb. xxii. 21. 2 Sam. xix. 6. and several others, which are reckoned up by Bochart, (par. i. lib. ii. cap. 13. Hierozoic.)

And he returned to the land of Egypt.] Set out, and began his journey to that country.

And Moses took the rod of God.] So called, because God ordered him to carry it with him, (ver. 17.) and had appointed it to be the instrument wherewith he should work wonders.

In his hand.] As a sign of his authority. So Conr. Pellicanus hath not unfitly explained it: *he returned* with the rod of God, *signo apostolatus et ducatus, a sign or token of his embassy and government.*

Ver. 21. *And the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt.*] When thou art come thither.

See that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh.] The signs mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, with which he was to begin.

Which I have put in thy hand.] Given thee power to do.

But I will harden his heart, &c.] The meaning is not, that God would harden his heart at the first, as soon as Moses began to work his signs: no more than that he would, at the first, *slay his first-born,* as he threatens, ver. 23. But, as at last he intended to slay his first-born, if he would not be humbled by other plagues; so in conclusion he resolved to harden his heart, after Pharaoh had often hardened it himself. There are three distinct words used in this story about this matter: the first is *chazak,* the next is *kashah,* and the third is *cavad.* Which seem to signify a gradual increase of his obstinacy, till at last it grew very

grievous. For the last word *(cavad)* intends and increases the sense, whether it be in good or evil qualities.

Ver. 22. *And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh.*] In this God begins to fulfil his promise to Moses, that he would *teach him what he should say,* ver. 12. and 15, 16.

Thus saith the Lord.] This shews he came to Pharaoh in the name and by the authority of God.

Israel is my son, even my first-born.] Most dear to me, and beloved above all people (as the *first-born* son commonly is above the rest of the children), God having chosen and adopted them to be his peculiar people; on whom he bestowed singular privileges and blessings. Thus God speaks of David, Psalm lxxxix. 28. And Aben Ezra's interpretation of this phrase is not improper; that *their ancestors from the beginning had been worshippers of him the true God.*

Ver. 23. *And I say unto thee.*] I command and require thee (so the word *say* here signifies).

Let my son go, that he may serve me.] Not to keep my people in thy servitude any longer, but to dismiss them that they may worship me, as my servants ought to do.

And if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy first-born.] Not upon his first refusal, (see ver. 21.) but after a long course of other judgments, which would end, if he were not reformed by them, in this at last. With which he therefore terrifies him, that he might prevent it.

Ver. 24. *And it came to pass by the way.*] To Egypt, *in the inn* where they took up their lodging at night.

That the Lord met him.] The Schechinah, I suppose, appeared to him, from whence an angel was dispatched, to do as follows. And so both the LXX. and the Chaldee interpret it, *The angel of the Lord;* because the *Lord* sent an angel to execute what is here related.

And sought to kill him.] Appeared in such a manner, as if he intended to fall upon him (with a drawn sword, perhaps, as he did to Balaam and David), which threatening posture could not but very much affright him, and put him into disorder. Others imagine he inflicted a sudden disease upon him; or made as if he would strangle him. They that interpret this of killing his *child,* as many do, (see Mr. Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. vi. p. 88.) seem to me to have no reason on their side: there being no mention of a child in the foregoing story, but only of his sons. Therefore Chaskuni hath rightly observed that this verse is connected with the last words of the 20th (the three following coming by a parenthesis), and can refer to none but Moses. All the difficulty is to find, why the angel of the Lord should put him in fear of present death, when he was going upon God's message. The resolution of which seems to be contained in the following words.

Ver. 25. *Then Zipporah.*] His wife presently apprehended what was the cause of Moses's daughter, *viz.* because her child (of which she is supposed to have been not long ago delivered) was not circumcised. And therefore she immediately dispatched that work: her husband being in such a consternation, that he could not do it himself; but (as Kimchi will have it), called to her to do it; or she of herself went about it, having been the cause that it was not done before.

Took a sharp stone.] Or a sharp knife made of a flint: for such they used; which Justin Martyr (in his dialogue with Trypho) calls πετρίνας μαχαίρας. And so the LXX. and the Jews say, that such knives were commonly used in this work.

And cut the foreskin of her son.] But how came Moses to neglect this duty? Most say his wife was unwilling to it: not because she abhorred this rite, as cruel and unnatural (for she was of a race which came from Abraham, who first received this command of circumcising all his children; and she understood, it appears, how to do it readily, without endangering the child, which had scarce been possible, if she had been a stranger to it), but because the Midianites, perhaps, did not circumcise so soon as the Israelites; but imitated their neighbours the Ishmaelites, who deferred it till their children were thirteen years old, at which age Ishmael was circumcised; (Gen. xvii. 25.) or rather, because they were about to make a journey, when she thought it might be omitted; till they came to be settled among the Israelites. And truly, this seems to have been a good reason, to defer circumcision beyond the eighth day; motion being dangerous when the child was sore. But such a man as Moses should have trusted God to take care of his child; and not have been afraid of the consequence, if he had performed his duty. And because he followed the tender inclination of his wife, rather than a plain precept, (Gen. xvii. 12, 13, &c.) he fell into this great danger. Many other accounts are given of this (for the truth is, the whole matter is very obscure), but I see none more probable, than what I have mentioned.

And cast it at his feet.] It is uncertain at whose feet she cast it: whether at her husband's, or the child's, or the angels. The first seems most probable; if the next words be spoken to Moses, as they seem to me to be.

And said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me.] If the foregoing interpretation be true, these are not the words of an angry woman; but spoken with great affection: signifying that she had espoused him again; having saved his life by the blood of her son. Our famous Mr. Mede, indeed, (Discourse xiv.) carries the sense quite another way: because a husband, he saith, is never called *chatan* after the marriage solemnity was over. Which, if it be true, makes nothing against what I have said; because she looked upon herself as a second time espoused (or married) to him by this act, which had restored him to her, when his life was in danger. It must be granted that the word *chatan* doth not signify only a *spouse,* but sometimes a *son-in-law:* but why Zipporah should call her own child by this name, I do not see. Yet so Mr. Mede understands it; and adds, that the rabbins tell us it was the custom of the Hebrew women to call their children, when they were circumcised, by the name of *chatan* (i. e. *spouse*), as if they were now espoused unto God. And, indeed, Aben Ezra saith so: but I cannot find that this was an ancient notion among them. If it were, his interpretation might be the more easily embraced, which is this: that these were a solemn form of words used at circumcision; signifying as much, as *I pronounce thee to be a member of the church by circumcision.* Thus Val. Schindler also expounds it, (in his Lexic. Pentaglot. p. 677.) a child was called *chatan* upon the day of his circumcision, "because then he was first joined to the people of God, and as it were espoused unto God." And he thinks the Targum countenances this sense, when it thus expounds these words, "by this blood of cir-

cumcision a spouse is given to us." Which may as well be understood of Moses being given to her, as of the child: for he was, as I said, restored to her and to his family, upon the circumcision of the child: so it follows in the next verse. They that have mind to see the sense of an eminent writer of our church concerning this passage, may consult Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, book v. in the latter end of the sixty-second section, where he thus far agrees with me, that these words were spoken "out of the flowing of abundance of commiseration and love," with her hands laid under his feet. For so he thinks these words, *she cast it at his feet*, import.

Ver. 26. *So he let him go.*] *i. e.* The angel no longer threatened Moses with death: but his wife, to her great joy, saw him restored to her in safety. From which in aftertimes sprang the φαλλοφόροι, which were so famous among the Greeks and Egyptians, in the feasts of Bacchus and Osiris; whose stories Huetius hath lately shewn were framed out of this of Moses. From whence also, as he probably conjectures, they used remedies for diseases, *in forma fascini*, which they hung, as amulets, about their children's necks, (Demonstrat. Evang. propos. iv. cap. iv. n. 3.)

Then she said, or, when she said, *A bloody husband thou art*, &c.] *i. e.* As soon as Zipporah had circumcised the child, and thrown the foreskin at her husband's feet, and said these words, Moses was delivered from his danger. Or (according to our translation), as soon as her husband was safe, she repeated the foregoing words, saying, *I have redeemed thy life, by circumcising thy son.* They that make these words to have been spoken in a rage, because she was forced to do what she did, suppose her to have had little kindness for her husband; and as little regard to circumcision. I should rather translate the words, *so she let him go; i. e.* let Moses go to Egypt; and went back herself to her father; only repeating these words before she went, *Remember me, how I have saved thy life, and made thee my husband again (when death was at hand) by the blood of thy son, whom I have circumcised.* There is only this exception to it, that the Hebrew word for *let him go* is of the masculine gender; which is of no great weight, because it is usual in this language when they speak of females, (as I observed on i. 21.) and it is certain she returned to her father; but whether in this manner nobody can certainly determine. For we are not told any where, upon what occasion she went back to Jethro (unless it be here insinuated), as we find she did, (xviii. 2.) together with her children. But it is very probable, that she fearing some other danger, into which she and her children might fall by the way, or in Egypt, might desire Moses to send her home again, till he had finished the work he went about: unto which he consented.

Ver. 27. *And the Lord said unto Aaron.*] In Egypt, I suppose, he received this order from God: but we do not know how; whether by an apparition of the Divine Majesty to him, or in a dream, or otherways.

Go into the wilderness to meet Moses.] The wilderness was a wide place; therefore he directed him, no doubt, into what part he should go.

And he went and met him in the mount of God.] He went almost to Midian; that he might have the more time to hear what Moses's commission was, before they came to Egypt.

Ver. 28. *And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord*, &c.] Mentioned iii. 6. 8., &c. and in this chapter, 14—16, &c.

And all the signs, &c.] See ver. 2, 3, &c. which he told him to confirm his belief, that God had spoken those words to him.

Ver. 29. *And Moses and Aaron went.*] Came into Egypt.

And gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel.] The chief persons in every tribe, who bore a great sway among them. (See iii. 16.)

Ver. 30. *And Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses.*] According to what God had promised, (ver. 15, 16.)

And did the signs.] The signs are done by Moses, as the words were spoken by Aaron, (ver. 17.)

In the sight of all the people.] Who came along with the elders.

Ver. 31. *And the people believed.*] All the rest of the people also (to whom the elders reported what they had heard and seen) believed that God had sent Moses to be their deliverer.

And when they heard that the Lord had visited, &c.] See iii. 7. 16, 17.

Then they bowed their heads and worshipped.] Most humbly acknowledged the goodness of God, and his faithfulness to his word.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AND afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh.*] When they had convinced the elders of Israel of their commission, they desired audience of Pharaoh. Which having obtained, they went to court; taking some of the elders along with them, to attend them. Which is not a mere conjecture, from the decency of the thing, that they should not go alone on such a solemn embassy; but so they were commanded to do, Exod. iii. 18. and it will appear from ver. 3. of this chapter, that so they did.

I have observed before, (iii. 10.) that this Pharaoh is commonly thought to be him called Cenchres.

Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, &c.] These words contain only the substance of what they said: which was delivered, we may well suppose, in a longer oration. Wherein they declared they had received a commission from their God, the Lord of heaven and earth, to make this address to him.

In all nations there were some persons, who, pretending to greater familiarity with their gods than other men, were highly reverenced, both by their own countrymen and by strangers. And therefore it is no wonder Pharaoh offered no violence to them, when they came to make this demand; because their persons were held sacred; as those of ambassadors now are, who come from one prince to another. This is a better account than that which some of the Jews (in Schalschalah-Hakkabalah) give of it; who say, that when they came into Pharaoh's presence, they appeared in such majesty as daunted him: being like the angels of the ministry; and raised to a taller stature than they had before; and having a splendour in their countenances like that of the sun, &c. In which they seem to imitate the story of St. Stephen, whose face shined like that of an angel, when he appeared before their council.

That they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.] In order to which, it was necessary they should offer sacrifice, (ver. 3.) which they could not do in Egypt: and therefore desired to go into the wilderness; where they might use their own rites and ceremonies of religion, without offence to the Egyptians. Every word hath its weight in it: for a feast denotes an extraordinary service; and to me signifies such peculiar rites of worship, as should be prescribed and instituted by the Lord, in whose name they spake: for which the wilderness was most proper, because there was no concourse of people likely to be in that place to disturb them in their solemnity.

Ver. 2. *And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord?* &c.] These are not atheistical words; for he owned such gods as the Egyptians worshipped: but slighted that God whom Moses called JEHOVAH; to whom he saith, he owed no obedience, because he did not know who they meant by him. He speaks also with too much scorn; his pride and passion not suffering him to ask seriously who Jehovah was.

I know not the Lord, &c.] Nor did he desire to know; being so transported with anger that he would not examine their commission; but only resolved he would not obey it.

Ver. 3. *And they said, The God of the Hebrews.*] They gave him no other account (since he was so haughty and huffing), but that they came in the name of him, whom they and their ancestors had for many generations worshipped. Whom they had at first called (ver. 1.) *the Lord God of Israel:* Τὸν τῆς οἰκουμένης Δεσπότην, as Artapanus in Eusebius expounds it, *the Lord and Governor of the Universe.*

Hath met with us.] Appeared to us, and given us this commission, when we thought of no such thing. For they would not have him think that they sought this embassy; but were put upon it by the Divine authority, which they durst not disobey.

Let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert.] These are the very words in which God commanded Moses to deliver his message, (iii. 18.) And as their desire was moderate (to go but three days' journey), so it was very modestly delivered; by humble entreaty; and with such a reason as they thought might move him to grant their request.

And sacrifice unto the Lord our God.] That he may be propitious to us.

Lest he fall upon us with the pestilence, or with the sword.] Send a plague among us (for our neglect of him), or some foreign enemy to infest us, and cut us off. Whereby Pharaoh (they secretly suggest) would lose the benefit of their labours, more than by their going for a little time into the wilderness. (See viii. 27.)

It is observable, that they neither wrought any miracle, nor threatened any punishment to Pharaoh, at their first application to him; but only told him the danger they themselves were in, if they did not obey their God: which was a very submissive way of treating with him. Artapanus, indeed, (in Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. ix. cap. 27. and in Clem. Alex. lib. i. Strom.) tells us of several miraculous things which Moses did at this audience; whereby Pharaoh and his servants were astonished and frighted from doing them any hurt; nay, he asked Moses the name of his God, which he whispered in Pharaoh's ear. But he had all this out of some such fabulous author as him I mentioned above, (ver. 1.) and I mention him only to shew that the heathen had the knowledge of this history, and report it as a truth: though with some mixture of human invention.

Ver. 4. *Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works?*] Instead of answering their reasons, he tells them, That he looked upon them two as disturbers of the peace of the kingdom, and hinderers of his business.

Get you unto your burdens.] This seems to be spoken unto the elders, which they had brought along with them.

Ver. 5. *Behold, the people of the land now are many.*] They are very numerous, notwithstanding all their labours: to what will they grow, if they have nothing to do? Or, as some expound it, they will think of nothing but sedition, now they are so numerous, if they be suffered to cease from their burdens. Cajetan hence gathers, that the law for throwing their infants into the river was abolished as infamous; or he could not get it put in execution.

And you make them rest from their burdens.] Which was the course he took to make them less numerous. Perhaps this was the sabbath-day; on which they had been wont to rest, when they had their liberty.

Ver. 6. *And Pharaoh commanded the same day the task-masters of the people, and their officers.*] The *task-masters* were the chief exactors of their labours, being Egyptians, who had *officers* under them to execute their orders, and to give an account how they were obeyed: and it appears from ver. 14, 15, &c. that they were Israelites.

Ver. 7. *Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore,* &c.] Instead of easing them, he increased their burdens, and made them intolerable. What the use of *straw* was in making bricks is variously conjectured. Some think it was mixed with the clay, to make the bricks more solid. Others, that they only heated their kilns with it, to burn the bricks. Others (who think they were not baked in a kiln) imagine it served only to cover them; that they might not be cracked by the violent heat of the sun, wherein they were baked. For so Vitruvius tells us, that the best bricks were made in the spring and in the autumn, *ut uno tenore siccescant, that they might dry by an equal heat:* they that were made at the solstice being suddenly crusted over by the sun, and left too moist within, (lib. ii. de Architect. cap. 3.)

Ver. 8. *And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, you shall lay upon them,* &c.] It appears from ver. 13, 14. that there was a certain quantity exacted from them every day.

For they be idle, and therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God.] They have not work enough to employ their thoughts; which makes their mind wander after other things.

Ver. 9. *Let there more work be laid upon the men.*] Or, make it *heavy upon them* (as it is in the margin).

That they may labour therein.] Have no time to think of any thing else.

And let them not regard vain words.] So he calls the message of Moses and Aaron; who, he pretends, were mere deceivers, and fed their hope with lies (for so it is in the Hebrew, *words of falsehood,* or *lying words*), or, at least, he resolved their words should not prove true; for he would not let the people go.

Ver. 10. *Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw.*] The task-masters with their officers proclaimed the king's order, that every body might take notice of it.

Ver. 11. *Go, get you straw where you can find it,* &c.] A heavy sentence; importing, that whether they could find any or no, no abatement would be made of the number of bricks that was expected from them. This was to drive them to desperation, by demanding things impossible. And added (as Conradus Pellicanus observes) to the burdens on their bodies, very sore anguish of mind. For it tempted them to doubt of the goodness of their God, who they thought had sent a deliverer to them, (iv. 31.) by whom they were now reduced into a more miserable condition.

Ver. 12. *So the people were scattered abroad, throughout all the land of Egypt,* &c.] Some part of them were forced to go and pick up straw, or, for want of it, stubble (and sometimes travel a great way for it), while the rest were working in the brick-kilns without their help, which they were wont to have: whereby they were disabled from making so many bricks as formerly they had done.

Ver. 13. *And the task-masters hasted them,* &c.] Quickened them in their work; when they saw they were likely to fall short of their wonted task.

Ver. 14. *And officers of the children of Israel,* &c.] By this it appears (as I said ver. 6.) that these officers were Israelites. And from this place Bonavent. Bertram concludes, (lib. de Rep. Hebr. cap. iv.) that there was a civil government among the Israelites all the time they were in Egypt: and that these *schoterim* (as they are called in Hebrew) were men of the greatest note among the elders; who executed all their decrees; and consequently of high authority among the people. For which reason Pharaoh's task-masters chose them, to oversee and direct the labours of their brethren. But Mr. Selden (lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 15.) hath made it appear, that there was no such judicature among them at this time; and when there was, this was the name of those who executed the sentence of the judges; being like to our apparitors, and such-like under officers. (See p. 621, &c.)

Were beaten.] With sticks; or scourged with rods.

Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task, both yesterday, &c.] They punished the officers, as if they had been negligent in not pressing the people to their duty. Yet it seems they forbore them one day, to see if they would mend their fault the next.

Ver. 15. *Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying,* &c.] They had some hope this oppression might proceed from the task-masters, and not from the king himself: and therefore they represented their case to him, and petitioned for relief. It is said, indeed, (ver. 6.) that Pharaoh laid this command both upon the task-masters and their officers: but it is not unlikely that he gave it immediately only to the task-masters, who were his own ministers, and by them to the officers.

Ver. 16. *Thy servants are beaten, but the fault is in thine own people.*] This shews that they thought such inhuman usage was the effect of the task-masters' cruelty.

Ver. 17. *But he said, Ye are idle, ye are idle,* &c.] He soon made them understand it was by his decree, and not his servants' pleasure, that they were thus used. And which was worse, they saw he was fixed in his resolution; being void of all pity; and mocking at their complaints. For nothing could be more sarcastical, than to tell them they were idle when they sunk under their burdens.

Ver. 18. *Go therefore now, and work,* &c.] Do not spend your time in making complaints to me; but return immediately to your labours, and continue at them till my commands be executed: and expect no mitigation.

Ver. 19. *And the officers did see that they were in evil case,* &c.] By this answer they found themselves reduced to such straits, that now they despaired of all relief; the king himself being set against them.

Ver. 20. *And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh.*] They had placed themselves there on purpose, to hear what success the officers had in their petition.

Ver. 21. *And they said, The Lord look upon you and judge.*] This seems to be an imprecation: or, at least, the officers bid Moses and Aaron expect that God would take them to task (as we speak) for bringing his people into so bad a case.

Ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes, &c.] Made us odious; as this phrase signifies, Gen. xxxiv. 30.

To put a sword into their hand to slay us.] Who may take an occasion from hence, and make this a pretence for the destroying our whole nation.

Ver. 22. *And Moses returned unto the Lord.*] This plainly intimates, that the Lord had appeared to Moses since he came to Egypt: as he did at Mount Horeb: and that he appeared in some settled place, where he might upon all occasions resort to him.

And said, Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil-entreated this people? &c.] It was to no purpose to answer the officers who expostulated with him; for they were too much exasperated, and thereby prejudiced against any thing he could say. And therefore he chose rather to represent to God the complaints they had made to him: that he might be directed what satisfaction to give them. For he was not able of himself to give an account, why the Lord should suffer their condition to grow worse rather than better, since he delivered his message to Pharaoh: no, nor why he should send him on an embassy which was not at all regarded.

Ver. 23. *For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.*] He might have remembered that God told him more than once, that Pharaoh would not obey him at first, (iii. 19. iv. 21.) But the bitter reflections which the officers of the children of Israel made upon his conduct, had so disturbed his mind, that he forgot himself so far as to ask the indecent questions mentioned in the foregoing verse, and complains here that God had done nothing to fulfil his promise of deliverance to his people.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord said unto Moses.*] The Schechinah, I suppose, appeared to him (see ver. 12.) as it had done often before, since he was first sent upon this business, (iv. 22.) and graciously condescended to satisfy his two complaints, in the latter end of the foregoing chapter. Where he complains, first of all, that he had sent him about a fruitless message: for, secondly, he had not at all delivered his people. To the last of these he answers in the first place, here in this verse; where he tells him,

Now thou shalt see what I will do to Pharaoh.] That is, be patient and wait awhile; and thou shalt see Pharaoh compelled to dismiss my people.

For with a strong hand shall he let them go, &c.] I will so terribly scourge him, that he shall not only let them go, but thrust them out of Egypt; and be glad to be rid of them.

Ver. 2. *And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord.*] He also answers here to his first question [*Why hast thou sent me?*] by telling him, *I am Jehovah;* and have sent thee to make known this great name, that is, myself; who am constant to my word, and will faithfully perform all my promises.

Ver. 3. *And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty.*] Or, *God all-sufficient,* as the word *El-shaddai* may be interpreted, (see Gen. xvii. 1.) God infinite in power and goodness: of which he gave their fathers abundant proofs by delivering them in many and great straits.

But by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.] This *name of four letters,* as the Jews speak, is by the ancients called the *ineffable name:* for they would never pronounce it. Not because they could not, as Drusius well observes, (lib. i. Observat. cap. 1.) "Sed quod religione et εὐλαβείᾳ quadam ab eo efferendo abstinerent," *but because out of a religious reverence they abstained from it.* And this respect to it all the ancient interpreters observe, even St. Jerome himself: though in several of the ancient fathers (as Irenæus, Clem. Alexandrinus, Epiphanius, and Theodoret), and in some of the ancient heathens (as Macrobius and Diodorus Siculus), it is expressed by Jaho, and Ἰαὼ as the Greeks write it. Which name (however it be pronounced), some of the Jews imagine, was concealed till Moses's time; who was the first to whom it was revealed. But this is evidently false, as appears from the whole book of Genesis; and particularly from xv. 7. where (before he calls himself *El-shaddai)* he saith to Abraham, "I am Jehovah which brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees." In short, the opinion of Reuchlinus (in his Verb. Mirificum) is far more justifiable; which is, that it was revealed to our first parents, at the same time that God breathed into them the breath of life. For as soon as Eve brought forth her first-born, she saith, "I have got a man from the Lord," (Gen. iv. 1.) which name descended in a perpetual succession from Seth to Abraham: who when he went by God's direction out of his own country into *Canaan,* the *Lord appeared to him there,* and there *he built* an altar to the Lord, (Gen. xii. 7, 8.) And it is to be noted, that he doth not say to Moses in this place, *my name Jehovah was not known to them;* but *I was not known to them by this name.* That is, by that which it imports; *viz.* the *giving being* (as we may say) to his promises by the actual performance of them: *i. e.* by bringing them into the land of Canaan; and, in order to it, delivering them out of Egypt. Both which he had promised in the forenamed chapter, (Gen. xv. 14. 18.) and now intended to make good. And thus R. Solomon interprets this place, as P. Fagius notes; *I have promised, but have not yet performed.*

The like expression we find in the prophet Isaiah, as Theodoric Hackspan hath observed (Disput. de Nominibus Divinis, n. 15.) Isa. lii. 5, 6. where the Lord saith, "My name is blasphemed every day continually: therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak; behold, it is I."

Which cannot signify that the Jews did not then know that this was one of the names of God; but that all who blasphemed him should be confuted by sensible proofs which he would give, of his own unchangeable resolution to fulfil his promises, in bringing them out of Babylon; which fully demonstrated that he was Jehovah.

Which word, some think, includes in it, not only his eternal existence and immutable truth, but his omnipotent power, which gave being to all things. The last of which was now made known, so as it had never been to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for Moses was the first that wrought miracles and prodigies: God was known to the fathers, by visions and dreams; but not by signs and wonders. Moses made him known by these unto the world. And therefore upon the whole Maimonides well concludes from this place, that the prophetical spirit on Moses was more excellent than that which had been upon any before him. (More Nev. par. ii. cap. 35.)

Ver. 4. *And I also,* &c.] The Hebrew word *vegam* may be better translated *although.* Which makes a clear connexion of this verse with the former; and explains the meaning of the name Jehovah. By which he was not known in former times, although he had made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them the land of Canaan; and often ratified, confirmed (and *established* as he here speaks), this covenant, (Gen. xvii. 7, 8. xxvi. 3, 4, &c.) But now he not only declares himself mindful of that covenant, (ver. 5.) but, because he was the Lord, (ver 6.) would deliver them from the Egyptian bondage, and that with a miraculous power. Which should make them know more of him than their fathers did, (ver. 7.) both by his delivering them out of Egypt, and by bringing them into the land which he swore he would give to their fathers, (ver. 8.)

This is the sense of these five verses.

The land of their pilgrimage, &c.] So it is often called, when he speaks to Abraham, (Gen. xvii. 8.) and so Isaac calls it, (xxviii. 4.) and Jacob also, (xxxvii. 1.) And so it might be called, not only with respect to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but also to their posterity: because of the near union that is between fathers and children. Thus God is said to have given to these three patriarchs (as the famous primate Usher observes) the land of Canaan for an inheritance, (Psal. cv. 11.) which was not fulfilled to them, but to their posterity. And as the possession of posterity is attributed to the fathers, so, upon the same ground, he thinks, the peregrination of the fathers is attributed here to the children, (Chronol. Sacra, cap. viii.)

Ver. 5. *And I have also.*] This verse also begins with the same particle *vegam;* and must be translated *although,* if the former interpretation be right. Or else those words [*by my name Jehovah was I not known to them*] must come in by a parenthesis: and both these verses be connected with what goes before, *appeared unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by the name of God Almighty,* to whom he so appeared, as to make a covenant with them, which he perfectly remembered, and having taken notice to what condition they were reduced, was now come to deliver them.

Ver. 6. *Say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord.*]

Tell them, I will now shew that I am what this name imports, (ver. 2.)

And I will bring them from under the burdens of the Egyptians.] The heavy oppressions under which you groan, (ver. 5.)

And I will rid you of their bondage.] They were mere slaves, and lay also under such insupportable loads, as made it impossible for them to deliver themselves: but it was to be the sole work of God.

And I will redeem you with a stretched-out arm.] This word *redeem* implies their servitude; from which he rescued them by a power superior to Pharaoh's, or any power on earth, as appears by the following story.

And with great judgments.] When God first promised this deliverance, which Moses was about to effect, he told Abraham, "I will judge that nation," which oppressed them, (Gen. xv. 14.) That is, punish them (which is one office of a judge) according to their deservings. This now he intended to perform (and thereby shew himself to be Jehovah), and that in a most terrible manner; by inflicting not only very grievous, but many plagues upon them. For Greg. Nyssen observes, that all the elements, the earth, the water, the fire, and the air, were all moved against the Egyptians, οἱόν τις στρατὸς ὑποχείριος, *as an obedient army*, (lib. de Vita Mosis, p. 173.) Thus *judgments*, and to *judge*, are used in many places for punishing; (Psal. ix. 17. Prov. xix. 29. 2 Chron. xx. 12.)

Ver. 7. *And I will take you to me for a people.*] By the right of redemption beforementioned.

And I will be to you a God.] He was so before; but now after a peculiar manner.

And ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, &c.] By seeing my promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob fulfilled.

Ver. 8. *And I will bring you unto the land, concerning which I did swear to give it,* &c.] Two things were promised to Abraham in that vision mentioned Gen. xv. First, he would deliver his seed from this nation which oppressed them, (ver. 14.) And, secondly, that he would bring them into the land of Canaan, (ver. 16.) Both these he now declares should be fulfilled (the former in the foregoing verse, and the latter in this), and thereby they should be convinced that he was indeed Jehovah, true and constant to his word.

I am the Lord.] He concludes as he began: having said this twice before, (ver. 2. 6.)

Ver. 9. *And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel.*] He delivered this message, as he was commanded: which, one would have expected, should have raised their drooping spirits. But quite contrary.

They hearkened not unto Moses.] They did not believe, or receive what he said, (so Maimon. More Nev. par. i. cap. 45.) or it made no impression upon them. The reason follows,

For anguish of spirit.] In the Hebrew, because of *shortness of breath.* They were so extremely oppressed, that they could scarce fetch their breath, as we speak. Or, had no heart so much as to think of deliverance, much less hope for it; but sunk unto their burdens.

And for cruel bondage.] Common slaves, though they cannot deliver themselves, rejoice to hear the good news that they are likely to be delivered by those who have power and will to do it. But in this slavery they were used so cruelly, that they were quite dejected and incapable of any comfort. So the LXX. translate the foregoing words *(for anguish of spirit)*, ἐξ ὀλιγοψυχίας, out of *faint-heartedness:* they being quite dispirited.

Ver. 10. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] It is likely that Moses, finding the Israelites so regardless of what he said, went to the usual place, where he was wont to have recourse to the Divine Majesty, (see ver. 22.) to receive new directions what to do.

Ver. 11. *Go in, speak unto Pharaoh, king of Egypt,* &c.] The Lord bids him go again to Pharaoh, and renew the demand he made before, (ver. 1.)

Ver. 12. *And Moses spake before the Lord.*] This phrase, *liphne Jehovah, before the Lord,* plainly denotes that God appeared to him in a visible majesty, as I observed above, ver. 1. and see xi. 4.

Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened to me, how then shall Pharaoh hear me?] Their faint-heartedness disheartened Moses also, and made him unwilling to renew his address to Pharaoh. And there seems to be good reason in what he says; if the children of Israel, whose interest it was to give ear to him, did not believe him, what hope was there that Pharaoh should comply against his interest?

Who am of uncircumcised lips.] This reason he had alleged before, and was fully answered, (iv. 10, 11, &c.) and therefore ought not to have been repeated now. For his being of *uncircumcised lips* signifies no more than that he was an ill speaker, and wanted eloquence: it being the manner of the Hebrews to call those parts *uncircumcised,* which are inept to the use for which they were designed, and cannot do their office. Thus Jeremy saith of the Jews, that their "ear was uncircumcised;" and adds the explication, "they cannot hearken," (Jer. vi. 10.) In like manner *uncircumcised lips,* are lips that cannot utter words; as "uncircumcised in heart," (Jer. ix. 26.) are such as cannot understand. St. Stephen puts both together, "uncircumcised in heart and ears," (Acts vii. 51.) Perhaps Moses thought it some disparagement to him, that he was not able himself to deliver his mind in a handsome manner to Pharaoh; and therefore mentions this again, to move the Divine Majesty to *circumcise his lips* (as they spake), that is, remove this impediment.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron.*] Here is no express answer made to his objection, but it seems to be included in God's speaking *to Moses and to Aaron;* whereas before he had spoken only to Moses, (ver. 1. 10.) And it is likely Moses was admonished, that the Lord having given him Aaron to supply his defect, he ought to be satisfied therewith; and go with him, and renew his address, both to the children of Israel, and also to Pharaoh. So these words have respect to both parts of the foregoing objection.

And gave them a charge unto the children of Israel.] He laid his commands upon them, strictly requiring them to obey him. Which is a higher expression than we meet with before in the foregoing injunctions, (either in ver. 6. or 11.) and makes me think this verse is not a mere recapitulation of what had been said, as some take it; but an enforcement of what he had before commanded.

And unto Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to bring the children

of Israel out of the land of Egypt.] I suppose he now gave them authority to threaten him, if he did not obey.

Ver. 14. *These are the heads of their fathers' houses.*] The principal persons of the several families of Israel.

The sons of Reuben, the first-born, &c.] See Gen. xlvi. 9. where the sons of Reuben are reckoned up in this very order; in which they are here mentioned again, to introduce the genealogy of Moses and Aaron. Who being chosen by God to be the deliverers of his people, it was fit to shew that they were of the same stock, though not of the eldest family, of the children of Israel. To whom God promised, when he went down into Egypt, that he would *surely bring him up again,* (Gen. xlvi. 4.) that is, in his posterity: which would not have been so manifestly the work of God, if they that were the instruments of it had not been of his posterity.

Ver. 15. *The sons of Simeon,* &c.] They are mentioned for the same reason, and in the same order that they were in Gen. xlvi. 10.

Ver. 16. *These are the names of the sons of Levi,* &c.] Having briefly set down the heads of the two eldest families of Israel, he enlarges now upon the third, from which he himself was descended.

Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.] These three are mentioned also in Gen. xlvi. 11. as coming with Jacob into Egypt.

And the years of the life of Levi were a hundred thirty and seven years.] He is thought to have lived the longest of all the sons of Jacob: none of whose ages are recorded in Scripture, but only his and Joseph's; whom Levi survived twenty-seven years, though he was much the elder brother. Kohath, also, the second son of Levi, attained near to the same age with himself, (ver. 18.) And his grandson, Moses's father, lived just so long as Levi did, (ver. 20.) Next to Levi, the longest liver of all Jacob's sons was Naphthali, if we may believe the tradition in R. Bechai, who saith he lived to the age of a hundred thirty and three years; which was the age of Kohath.

Ver. 17. *The sons of Gershon, Libni, and Shimi,* &c.] These were born in Egypt, from whom descended two families mentioned afterwards, (Numb. iii. 18. 21.)

Ver. 18. *The sons of Kohath, Amram,* &c.] He had the most numerous offspring of all Levi's sons, (Numb. iii. 28.) from the eldest of which Moses came.

And the years of the life of Kohath were a hundred thirty and three years, &c.] He sets down the age of none but only of Levi his great grandfather, and Kohath his grandfather, and of Amram his father. And primate Usher makes account that Kohath was thirty years old when Jacob came into Egypt, and live there a hundred and three years; and died thirty-two years before Moses was born. (See Chronolog. Sacra, cap. 11.)

Ver. 19. *The sons of Merari, Mehali.*] From this Mehali, it is thought, sprung the famous singer Heman, who composed the 88th Psalm, (1 Chron. vi. 33.)

And Mushi.] From whom descended Ethan, who composed the 89th Psalm, (1 Chron. vi. 44.)

Ver. 20. *And Amram took him Jochabed his father's sister to wife.*] It must be acknowledged that the Hebrew word *dod* signifies an *uncle;* and therefore some would have the word *dodah,* in this place, to signify only his *uncle's daughter.* So the Vulgar and the LXX. translate it. But Moses tells us so expressly that she was "born to Levi in Egypt," (Numb. xxvi. 59.) that it unavoidably follows she was sister to Amram's father. Which the forenamed great primate maintains (cap. 8. of the same book) against Scaliger and Peirerius, who would have Jochabed called Levi's daughter, only as Ephraim and Manasseh are called Jacob's sons. Which would make a very easy sense (as I observed, ii. 1.) if it would consist with those words in Numb. xxvi. 59. "whom her mother (for that must be understood) bare to Levi;" which shew she was his daughter. And thus R. Solomon understood it; and so did Tostatus and Cajetan, and divers others, whom our Usher there mentions. And see our most learned Selden, (lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. ix. p. 584.) Which shews how sincere a writer Moses was, who doth not stick to relate what might be thought in after-ages (when the law against such marriages was enacted), a blot to his family. And it is observable, that he doth not say one syllable in commendation of his parents; though their faith deserved the greatest praise, as the apostle to the Hebrews shews, (xi. 23.) But Moses (as Jac. Capellus truly observes, ad A. M. 2481.) did not write for his own glory, but for the service of God and of his church.

And she bare him Aaron and Moses.] This shews, that God exactly fulfilled his promise of delivering the Israelites out of servitude in the fourth generation (Gen. xv. 16. *i. e.* the fourth from their descent into Egypt), for Moses was the fourth from Levi; being his great grandson.

And the years of the life of Amram were a hundred and thirty and seven years.] The very same age with his grandfather Levi, (ver. 16.)

Ver. 21. *And the sons of Izhar, Korah,* &c.] He gives an account of his uncle's sons, but saith not one word here of his own. Who were not to succeed him in his place and dignity, nor to be advanced to any other office. Such was his humility and generous love to his country, that he only sought the good of that; but nothing for his own family.

Ver. 22. *And the sons of Uzziel,* &c.] This was another of his uncles; whose posterity he mentions, that it might be seen how God blessed the tribe of Levi: notwithstanding the sin he had committed at Schechem, and the punishment his father denounced against him for it, (Gen. xlix.) He saith nothing of Hebron, another of his father's brothers; because, perhaps, he died childless; or his children had no issue.

Ver. 23. *And Aaron took him Elisheba, daughter of Aminadab, sister of Naashon, to wife.*] Though he says nothing here of himself, yet he relates particularly what concerned Aaron; who, he shews, was matched into an honourable family, with a sister of a prince of the tribe of Judah, chief commander of their host when they were come out of Egypt, (Numb. i. 7. ii. 3.) The knowledge of this, he thought, might breed in posterity a greater reverence to the priesthood; which was settled in the family of Aaron.

And she bore him Nadab and Abihu.] These two perished in the very first sacrifice which their father offered; because they did not take fire from the altar, but offered with strange fire, (Lev. x. 1, 2.)

Eleazar.] Who succeeded his father in the priesthood, (Numb. xx. 25, &c.) and assisted Joshua in the division of the land of Canaan, (Josh. xiv. 1. xix. 51. xxi. 1.) From

him sprung Zadok and the following high-priests, till the destruction of Jerusalem, (1 Chron. vi. 4. &c.)

And Ithamar.] From whom came Eli, and Abimelech, and Abiathar (in the time of David), in whom this family was extinct.

Ver. 24. *And the sons of Korah,* &c.] Though he himself perished in his rebellion against Moses, who was his cousin-german, yet his family remained (Numb. xxvi. 58.) and were famous in the days of David; being often mentioned in the Book of Psalms.

Ver. 25. *And Eleazar took one of the daughters of Putiel to wife.*] Who this Putiel was, is not certain. Dr. Lightfoot thinks he was an Egyptian convert, whose daughter Eleazar married. But I see no good ground for this opinion, but rather think it more likely Eleazar would marry one of the race of Abraham; being son to the high-priest. He was married, indeed, before his father was promoted to that dignity; yet Aaron was so great a man in his own tribe, (see iv. 14.) and married into so honourable a family in Israel, (ver. 23.) that it is not probable he would suffer his son to match with an Egyptian proselyte.

These are the heads of the fathers of the Levites, &c.] The great persons, from whom sprung the principal families among the Levites. He saith nothing of the other tribes; because his intention was only to derive his own pedigree and his brother Aaron's from Israel.

Ver. 26. *These are that Moses and Aaron, to whom the Lord said, Bring out the children of Israel,* &c.] These are the two persons, to whom God gave commission to be the deliverers of their nation out of the Egyptian bondage. He had mentioned, just before their genealogy, the charge God gave them, both to the children of Israel and to Pharaoh, (ver. 13.) And now he goes on to shew that they were the men, who were peculiarly chosen by God to discharge that office; first, by going to the children of Israel, which he mentions here; and then to Pharaoh, which he mentions in the next verse.

Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt.] Assure them of their deliverance, notwithstanding the pressures under which they groan.

According to their armies.] Not by a disorderly flight; but every family in such good order as an army keeps, (Exod. xii. 41. 51. xiii. 18.)

Ver. 27. *These are they that spake to Pharaoh,* &c.] Who carried the message from God to Pharaoh, requiring him to let Israel go out of Egypt, (v. 1, 2, &c. vi. 13.)

These are that Moses and Aaron.] He repeats it again, that all generations might mark who were the men that God employed, in this great and hazardous work of demanding the liberty of the children of Israel from Pharaoh's servitude; and effecting it in such manner, as is afterward related in this book.

There have been critical wits, who made this an argument, that Moses was not the author of these books; because it is not likely, they imagine, he would write thus of himself. But nobody but these critics can see an absurdity in it, that he and his brother, being the instruments in God's hand of effecting such wonderful things, should not let posterity be ignorant of it; but take care not only to record it, but to set a special note upon it, that none might rob them of the honour God bestowed on them; and He (by whose direction this was written) might have the glory of working such mighty things, by such inept instruments, as Moses often acknowledges himself to have been. Nor is this more than Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel say concerning themselves: and St. John may as well be denied to be the author of the gospel which bears his name, because he saith, "This is the disciple that testifieth these things," &c. (xxi. 24.) And besides this, the history of succeeding ages shews us the necessity of this, which Moses hath said of himself. For if he had not told us what his progeny was, we see by what we read in Justin and Corn. Tacitus, and such-like authors, what false accounts we should have of him: for Justin, from Trogus Pompeius, makes him (as I observed before) the son of Joseph. Nay, the Jewish writers have been so fabulous, that we should have learnt as little truth from them, if Moses had not told it us himself.

Ver. 28. *And it came to pass on the day when the Lord spake unto Moses,* &c.] Having finished the account he thought fit to give of himself and of his brother, whom God was pleased to employ in this great embassy, he resumes the relation of it, which he broke off at the end of ver. 13.

Ver. 29. *That the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I am the Lord,* &c.] This and the next verse seem to be a recapitulation of what God said in his last appearances to him (ver. 2. 10, &c.) and of his desire to be excused from the employment on which he was sent; urged by two arguments, ver. 12, 13. where they are related something more largely than they are here, in the last verse of this chapter. In which he mentions them again; that there might be a clearer connexion, with what God further added for his encouragement, when he gave him the forenamed charge, (ver. 13.) to deliver a new message to Pharaoh.

Ver. 30. *And Moses said before the Lord.*] We read the very same, (ver. 12.) which makes me think this is not a new objection; but merely a recital of what he had objected there. See what I have said on the foregoing verse.

Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips, &c.] See ver. 12.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord said unto Moses.*] He received new orders from the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty; before whom he stood, (vi. 12. 30.)

See.] Mark what I say, in answer to all thy objections.

I have made thee a god to Pharaoh.] Therefore, why shouldest thou fear to appear before him, who is but a man? Moses is not called absolutely *a god;* but only *a god unto Pharaoh:* which denotes that he had only the authority and power of God over him; or rather, he was God's ambassador to speak to him in his name; with a power ready to execute all that he desired for the humbling of Pharaoh, and punishing his disobedience to his message.

And Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.] Let therefore the *uncircumcision of thy lips* be no longer an objection: for he shall interpret thy mind, as prophets declare the mind of God.

Some slight wits have from this place also drawn an argument, that this book was not written by Moses; but by some other author long after his time. Because the word *nabi,* they fancy, was not now in use to signify a prophet:

as appears, say they, from 1 Sam. ix. 9. where it is said, "He that is now called (*nabi*) a *prophet*, was before time called (*roeh*) a *seer*." Which seems to signify that the word *nabi* (which Moses here uses for a prophet) was but newly come into use, in Samuel's days. But this is very far from Samuel's meaning: whose plain sense is this, that he who foretold things to come, or discovered secrets, was anciently called a *seer*, not a *prophet*. Which signified heretofore only an interpreter of the Divine will: but now they began, in Samuel's days, to apply the word *nabi* (or *prophet*) to those who could reveal any secret, or foresee things future. Which had not been the use of the word formerly: but it signified, as I said, one that was familiar with God, and knew his mind, and delivered it to others: as I observed upon Gen. xx. 7. where God himself calls Abraham a prophet; as he here calls Aaron. And what holy writer would dare to alter the word which God himself used? Which is far more proper also to this purpose than either *roeh* or *choseh* (which these men fancy were the words in use in Moses's time, not *nabi*), for they do not answer the intention of God in this speech concerning Aaron. Who was not to see, and divine, or to receive revelations from God, but to be a mouth to Moses; to utter what God revealed to him, not to Aaron. Which is the original signification of the word *nabi:* there being no derivation of it so natural that I can find as that of R. Solomon's, from the word *nub*, which signifies to utter, or to bring forth, (Prov. x. 31.)

Ver. 2. *Thou shalt speak all that I command thee*, &c.] This explains the latter end of the former verse: that Moses should deliver God's mind to Aaron; and Aaron should deliver it to Pharaoh: requiring him from God to dismiss the children of Israel out of his country.

Ver. 3. *And I will harden Pharaoh's heart.*] Or, *but I will harden*, &c. which Avenarius translates, *I will permit his heart to be hardened.* Though there is no need of it: for God here only foretels what Pharaoh would force him to do, (see iv. 21.) after several signs and wonders had been wrought to move him to obedience. For he was so stupid, and hardened his heart so often, (viii. 15. 32.) that in conclusion God hardened him, by withdrawing all good motions from him. And therefore, the first time that Jehovah is said to harden his heart, there is a special remembrance of this, that the Lord had foretold it, (ix. 12.)

And multiply my signs and my wonders, &c.] The first plagues that were inflicted on him proving ineffectual; it was necessary to send more and greater, that, if it had been possible, his heart might have been mollified.

Ver. 4. *But Pharaoh will not hearken unto you.*] Or rather, and Pharaoh shall not hearken to your demands. For this was the effect of his hardening.

That I may lay my hand upon Egypt.] Smite all their first-born: upon which immediately followed their march out of Egypt.

And bring forth mine armies, &c.] All the tribes of the children of Israel: which were so multiplied, that every one of them singly made an army. (See vi. 26.)

By great judgments.] That is, grievous plagues; which he inflicted on them, one after another. And thereby made good his word, that Moses should be *a god to Pharaoh*, (ver. 1.) that is, a judge, as the word *Elohim* sometimes signifies. (See vi. 6.)

Ver. 5. *And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord.*] Be convinced, or made sensible that none can withstand me.

When I stretch forth my hand against Egypt, &c.] This was most especially fulfilled, when he smote their first-born, which made them look upon themselves as lost men, if they continued disobedient, (xii. 33.)

Ver. 6. *And Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded them, so did they.*] He repeats what he saith of their obedience to God's commands, because, from this time forward, they no longer disputed, nor made any objection; but roundly went about their business.

Ver. 7. *And Moses was fourscore years old*, &c.] The Israelites were under a heavy persecution when Moses was born; and God exercised their patience (it appears by this) a very long time, that their deliverance might be for ever remembered with the greater thankfulness and obedience. Such grave persons as these were fittest to be employed as God's commissioners in this affair: for they could not well be thought to be hot-headed men, who thrust themselves forward into this embassy without a warrant. So some of the Jews very judiciously have observed, that God made choice of aged men to work all his miracles before Pharaoh, and to receive his revelations, because they were not apt to invent, nor to be under the power of fancy, at those years. See Sepher Cosri, lib. i. sect. 83. where Buxtorf notes, that Aben Ezra observes upon this place, that none besides Moses and Aaron ever prophesied in their old age; because they were more excellent than all the prophets.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying.*] When they were about to renew their addresses to Pharaoh, God was pleased again to appear, and give them his directions in their proceedings.

Ver. 9. *When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Shew a miracle for you.*] It was likely that Pharaoh would, when he was not in a passion, ask, how shall I know that you come from God with this message to me? give me some proof of your authority: and such a proof as can be done by none, but by the power of God. And therefore God directs Moses what to do in this case.

Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod.] The same rod is sometimes called the *rod of God*, (iv. 20.) sometimes Moses's rod, and sometimes Aaron's: as we find it in many places, ver. 10. 19. of this chapter; and viii. 5. 19, &c. Because God wrought all the following miracles by this rod; which sometimes Moses and sometimes Aaron held in their hand. But commonly Moses delivered it unto Aaron, as an agent under him, to stretch it out for the effecting of wonders. For he tells Pharaoh, in this very chapter, that with the rod which was in his hand he would *smite the waters*, &c. (ver. 17.) And immediately the Lord bade him "say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thy hand upon the waters of Egypt," (ver. 19.) By which it appears he had delivered the rod unto Aaron. For a rod being the ensign of authority, prophets were wont to carry one in their hand, in token of their office. And so did the Egyptian magicians also, who had every one their rod ready to throw down, (ver. 12.) And Mercury, whom the Egyptians counted a prophet (and thence called him Anubis), was represented with a wand in his hand.

And cast it before Pharaoh.] As God had before directed Moses, (iv. 3. 21.)

Ver. 10. *And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and did so as the Lord commanded them.*] At their first address to Pharaoh they only delivered their message; but did nothing to confirm it, (ver. 1, &c.) Nor were they commanded now to work any miracle, unless Pharaoh demanded one. Which it is likely he did; this second address to him moving him to ask, how shall I know that you come from God?

And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants.] The great men of the court, who are always supposed to be present where the king was; though not mentioned in the foregoing verse.

And it became a serpent.] See iv. 3. where we read that Moses himself, when this change was first made, *fled from before it;* the sight of it was so terrible. And therefore it is highly probable, that Pharaoh and his servants were no less startled at the first appearance of it. Artapanus relates several other miracles besides this, in Eusebius's Præpar. Evang. p. 434, 435. and 441. which I mention to shew that the fame of Moses's miracles was spread among the heathen, who were so far from disbelieving them, that they gave credit to other false reports, which some ill people had mingled with them.

Ver. 11. *Then Pharaoh also called the wise men.*] When he had recovered the fright in which we may well suppose him to have been, he sent some of his servants to call in those who he thought could cope with Moses and Aaron in wonderful works.

Wise men.] This word is sometimes used in a good sense: and therefore to shew they were such as we now call *cunning men*, he joins another word to it, which is never taken in a good sense, *viz.*

Sorcerers.] Which most take to be such as we call jugglers; who cast mists, as we speak, before men's eyes; and make things appear otherwise than they really are. For the Hebrew word *cischeph* (from whence comes *macaschephim*, which we translate *sorcerers*), signifies to delude the sight with false appearances. Sir John Marsham puts these two words together, and (by the figure of ἓν διὰ δυοῖν) translates them, *accersivit peritissimos artis magicæ, he called the most skilful persons in the magical art,* Chron. Can. Secul. ix.

Now the magicians of Egypt.] This is a third word, which seems to be of worse import than the two former. Some translate it *necromancers:* but it being a foreign word, we cannot determine its particular meaning: though, in general, no doubt it signifies men, that by evil arts performed amazing things: such as Simon Magus and Elymas in aftertimes. See Gen. xli. 8. and Bochart in his Hierozoicon, (par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 18.) where he hath a large discourse about the meaning of this word *chartumim:* which, after all that others have said about it, he thinks comes from the word *retan:* which in Arabic and Chaldee signifies to *murmur*, as magicians were wont to do in their incantations. So Hartun is properly ἐπαοιδὸς, an *enchanter.* And the name of Ἄρτεμις (the same with Hecate), he thinks alludes to it; whom magicians were wont frequently to invoke.

The names of the principal magicians at this time among the Egyptians were Jannes and Jambres, as not only St. Paul, (2 Tim. iii. 8.) but several, both Jewish, Greek, and Roman writers tell us. I will mention but one, the author of Schalsch-Hakkabalah, who calls them by these names; and saith, that in our language we would call them Johannes and Ambrosius. The reader may find a great many more, if he please, in primate Usher's Annals, ad A. M. 2513. and in Bochart's Hierozoic. (par. i. lib. ii. cap. 53. p. 645.) Artapanus, in Eusebius, calls them ἱερεῖς ὑπὲρ Μέμφιν, *priests at Memphis,* whom Pharaoh sent for to oppose Moses.

The original of which sort of men seems to have been this; that God being pleased to admit the holy patriarchs to familiar colloquies with him, the devil endeavoured to imitate him; that he might keep men in his obedience, by pretending discoveries of secret things to them. And when God was pleased to work miracles for the confirmation of the truth, the devil directed these men, who were familiar with him, how to invoke his help, for the performance of strange things, which confirmed them in their errors.

They also did in like manner with their enchantments.] If the Hebrew word come from *lahat,* which signifies a *flame,* (see Gen. iii. 24.) it seems to denote such sorcerers as dazzled men's eyes, and then imposed on them by shows and appearances of things, which had no real being. But it may be derived from *lahat,* which signifies *hidden* and *secret;* and then denotes those that used secret *whispers* or *murmurs,* as enchanters did (as Bochartus in this place now mentioned interprets it), or such as had secret familiarity with demons; as it is expounded in the Gemara Sanhedrin, (cap. vii. n. 10.) where there are many examples of the former sort of enchantments, by the deception of the sight. For instance, R. Asche relates that he saw a magician blow his nose, and bring pieces of cloth out of it. And R. Chajah saw one cut a camel in pieces with his sword, and then set it together again: which was nothing, saith he, but the delusion of the eye. Several other stories are told of the same nature.

Ver. 12. *For they cast down every man his rod.*] They were sent for to confront Moses, and therefore attempted to do the very same thing that he had done. For they took him for a mere magician, like themselves; and it was a common thing, in ancient times, for such kind of men to contend one with another. And their great study was (as Gaulmyn hath observed in his Notes upon the Life and Death of Moses, written by a Jew, p. 241, &c.) to find out the genius that attended their opposer; whom they strove to gain to their side; or to terrify him by a greater and more powerful angel. And they only were insuperable who had a deity to their genius; as Porphyry, saith Plotinus, had. Who contending with Olympius an Egyptian, when his genius was called, εἰς αὐτοψίαν, *to appear visibly;* there came a god and not a demon. Which made the Egyptian cry out, Μακάριος εἰς θεὸν ἔχων τὸν δαίμονα, *he is happy who hath a God for his genius,* as I suppose it should be interpreted. And thus the Jewish author of the Life and Death of Moses fancies, that these magicians, who resisted Moses, turned over all their books to find out the name of that deity, by which he did wonders, so much superior to theirs, &c.

And they became serpents.] Not real serpents, but seeming, as Josephus understood it, and several Christian writers; particularly Sedulius, (lib. iv. carm.)

——————" imagine ficta,
Visibus humanis magicas tribuere figuras."

I omit other ancient authors, who suppose that as spirits can assume bodies like to men, so they can as easily, out of the same air, make the appearance of a serpent; just as Circe is said in Homer to have changed Ulysses's companions into hogs. But there are those who take these to have been real serpents, brought hither by the power of the devil: who withdrew their rods, and put these (which he suddenly transported from some other place) in their room. Which, if it be true, it makes the power that wrought by Moses the more wonderful; whose serpent devoured them all.

But Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.] The serpent, into which Aaron's rod was turned, moved towards them, and eat them up. Which was, as I said, the more astonishing, if they were real serpents of the same bigness (as we may well suppose they would endeavour to bring) with that of Moses. However their serpents (whatsoever they were) could not stand before his; but were swallowed up, while his still remained. This might have convinced Pharaoh, if his magicians had not made him believe, that they would in time find a power superior to Moses. The Jews also imagine Pharaoh himself was a magician; and helped to get out of Moses the secret whereby he wrought these wonders. Which were the greater, because Moses, no doubt, in conclusion, took this serpent by the tail (as God had commanded him, iv. 4.) and it became a rod in his hand again. Whereas the Egyptian sorcerers had no rods remaining to take up; they being vanished with their serpents. Greg. Nyssen. (L. de Vita Mosis, p. 173.) takes the devouring of their rods to have been a plain argument, ὅτι οὐδεμίαν ἀμυντικὴν οὔτε ζωτικήν τινα δύναμιν εἶχον οἱ τῶν γοήτων ῥάβδοι, πλὴν τοῦ σχήματος, &c. *that the rods*, i. e. *serpents of the magicians, had no vital power in them able to defend themselves; but were mere delusions, without any real virtue.* And here I cannot but take notice of a remarkable passage in Numenius, a Pythagorean philosopher, recorded by Eusebius, (lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 8.) where he tells us, that Numenius (in this third book περὶ ἀγαθοῦ) expressly saith, "That Jannes and Jambres were, Αἰγύπτιοι ἱερογραμματεῖς, inferior to none in magical skill; and therefore chosen, by the common consent of the Egyptians, to oppose Musæus (as the heathens call Moses), the leader of the Jews: of whom he gives this noble character, that *he was a man most powerful with God in prayer,* ἀνδρὶ γενομένῳ Θεῷ εὔξασθαι δυνατωτάτῳ." Which is a plain confession, that he took Moses to be, as he is called in these books, *a man of God:* and may serve to shame those who either believe not this history, or think Moses to have been only a great magician.

Ver. 13. *And he hardened Pharaoh's heart:* or rather, *Pharaoh's heart was hardened.*] For so we translate this very Hebrew phrase, (ver. 22.) and I can give no account why we translate it otherwise here. Especially since the Vulgar and the Chaldee so render it, and the LXX. also in this verse, κατίσχυσεν ἡ καρδία Φαραὼ, *Pharaoh's heart grew stiff;* or, *waxed strong and stubborn;* and ver. 22. ἐσκληρύνθη ἡ καρδία Φαραὼ, *his heart was hardened.* And it is plainly the like form of speech with that in the next verse, (14.) where God himself interprets his own meaning, *Pharaoh's heart,* βεβάρηται, *is heavy, and will not stir.* Nor is there, in any of these three verses, the least mention of any person by whom his heart was hardened.

That he hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had said.] It is likely, upon the first sight of the serpent, his heart was inclined to hearken; but seeing the magicians do the same, it returned to its first bent; and there fixed, notwithstanding Moses's rod devoured theirs. This God had predicted, (iii. 19.) knowing his wicked disposition would not yield to any means he should think fit to use for his reformation.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord said unto Moses,* &c.] It is likely Moses, after he had been with Pharaoh and wrought this miracle, returned to the place where the Divine Majesty was wont to appear unto him, (vi. 12. 30.) and gave him an account of what had passed. Whereupon the Lord told him, he saw Pharaoh was resolved in his way; and therefore it would be to no purpose to wait to see what would be the effect of the late miracle: but bid him go the next morning, and carry a threatening message to him.

Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go.] It is observable that he doth not say, *I have hardened Pharaoh's heart,* (and therefore there should have been no such intimation in our translation of ver. 13.) but *Pharaoh's heart is hardened.* Which can imply no other hardening than what proceeded from his own settled resolution, not to lose the service of the Israelites.

Ver. 15. *Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning.*] Of the very next day, after he had wrought the foregoing miracle: and now begins the first of the ten plagues which God sent upon the Egyptians, for disobeying his ambassadors. Whose treaty with Pharaoh, as Jacobus Capellus (ad A. M. 2502.) thinks, continued about eleven months; from the end of harvest (which he makes account was in our May) to the beginning of the next year: which is the opinion of the Hebrew doctors. But our excellent primate Usher thinks, that all the following plagues were inflicted within the space of one month; in such order of time, as I shall observe in the beginning of each of them. And Bochartus gives good reason for it in his Hierozoic. (par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 8.) For we are told here (ver. 7.) that Moses was fourscore years old when he began to treat with Pharaoh: and in Josh. v. 6. that they "walked forty years in the wilderness." Now, if he had spent a year in inflicting these plagues, Moses, who died just as they were entering into Canaan, must have been a hundred and one-and-twenty years old: whereas he was but a "hundred and twenty," as we read Deut. xxxiv. 5. Nor was it suitable to the Divine goodness to be so long in delivering his people, who were reduced to extreme misery. It was but just, also, that God should follow Pharaoh, whose heart was so obstinately hard, with one plague upon the neck of another; and give him no time to breathe, after one was removed, before another came upon him.

Lo, he goeth out unto the water.] God, who knows all things, foresaw his motion beforehand; and speaks as if he then saw him actually going out of his palace to the river: either to walk there for recreation, or to worship the river Nile. For as Bochart (whose words these are) observes out of Plutarch, οὐδὲν οὕτω τιμὴ Αἰγυπτίοις ὡς ὁ Νεῖλος, *Nothing was had in such honour among the Egyptians as the river Nile.* If it was so in Moses's days, it is not unlikely that he went to pay his morning devotions to it. Or, if he were a magician, as the Hebrews fancy, he might be skilled in that which they call ὑδρομαντεία. For

so, he observes, they say in the Talmud: and make this the reason of Pharaoh's going to the river. Which Jonathan follows in his paraphrase, "*Behold, he goeth out to observe divinations upon the water, as a magician,*" Hierozoic. (par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 15.)

And thou shalt stand by the river's brink against he come.] Perhaps Pharaoh (as the same Bochart observes) had forbid him to come any more to the court: and so God directs him to take this occasion to meet with him.

And the rod which was turned into a serpent, shalt thou take in thine hand.] To give him the greater authority, and to put Pharaoh in fear at the sight of that rod, which had lately swallowed up all the γοητικὰ ξύλα (as Greg. Nyssen calls them), *magical staves* which encountered him.

Ver. 16. *And thou shalt say, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying.*] See ver. 3. To which add, that it is plain by this whole story, that all the messages delivered by Moses, and all the answers which Pharaoh returned, were *true and formal treaties of a solemn embassage* (as Dr. Jackson speaks), upon which Moses was sent to the king of Egypt, from the *Lord God of the Hebrews;* that is, their king (as he was become in a peculiar manner), under whom Moses acted as his deputy or viceroy.

Let my people go, that they may serve me, &c.] The merciful kindness of God to a hardened sinner is here very remarkable in renewing his message, and giving him warning of what would come upon him, if he did not yield. Whereas he might in justice have inflicted it, without any notice of his intentions. He sets before him also his sin and his danger, in being hitherto disobedient; *and behold, hitherto thou wouldest not hear*: *i. e.* "thou hast provoked the Divine Majesty, by disregarding several messages I have brought to thee from him."

Ver. 17. *Thus saith the Lord.*] Attend to this new message I bring to thee in his name.

In this thou shalt know that I am the Lord.] He had asked in a contemptuous way, *Who is the Lord?* and said after a supercilious manner, *I know him not,* (ver. 2.) nor indeed cared to know him; but slighted him and his messengers; as the word *know not* sometimes signifies, being as much as *not to regard.* Therefore now he bids Moses tell him, He would make him know that he was the omnipotent Lord of the world; by the change of the waters of the river (which Pharaoh perhaps adored) into blood.

Behold, I will smite with the rod, that is in mine hand.] God and Moses are represented in this history as one person (according to what he had said ver. 1. of this chapter), and therefore it was the same thing to say, the Lord (whose words Moses had begun to recite) *will smite;* or, to say, *I will smite:* (see ver. 16.) It is to be observed, also, that Aaron smote the river, (ver. 19.) but it being by Moses's direction and order, it was counted his act: so that he might say, *I will smite,* &c.

The waters of the river, and they shall be turned into blood.] This plague was the more remarkable, because, as Theodoret here observes, they having drowned the Hebrew children in this river, God now punishes them for it, by giving them bloody water to drink, (Wisd. xii. 7, 8.) And if they had the same notions then, that the Egyptians had in future times, the plague was the more terrible, because it fell on that which they thought had some divinity in it, and (as the same Theodoret observes) was honoured as a God; because it made plenty when it overflowed its banks.

The Hebrew doctors add another reason for this punishment: because the Egyptians had hindered them from their wonted baptisms (as the author of the Life and Death of Moses speaks), that is, saith Gaulmyn, from purifying themselves in the river by bathing, after they had lain in of their children: which, in the scarcity of water in that country, could no where be done but in the river.

Ver. 18. *And the fish that is in the river shall die,* &c.] Here are three grievous effects of this plague: it deprived them of their most delicious food, for so their fish were, (Numb. xi. 5.) And took away the pleasure they had of washing by the river's side, because it stank (both by the death of the fish, and the corruption of the blood, through the heat of the sun), by which means the water was made unfit for their drink.

Ver. 19. *And the Lord spake unto Moses.*] After he had been with Pharaoh, and delivered this message to him.

Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thy hand.] This warning being despised by Pharaoh, who would not relent; God requires them actually to do as he had threatened. And now Moses had delivered his rod to Aaron, that he might by his authority execute this judgment.

Upon the waters of Egypt.] These are general words, comprehending all the particulars following.

Upon their streams.] There were seven branches into which the river Nile was divided before it fell into the sea; which seem to be here understood: being called, (Isa. xi. 15.) the *seven streams,* or *rivers of Egypt.*

Upon their rivers.] There were several cuts made by art, out of every stream, to draw the water into their grounds: which seem to be here meant by *rivers.*

And upon their ponds.] These were digged to hold rain water, when it fell; as it did sometimes: and near the river also they digged wells, it is likely, which may be here intended.

And upon all pools of water.] There were, here and there, other collections of water: particularly in their gardens, derived by pipes from the river, into cisterns.

In vessels of wood, or of stone.] Wherein water was kept in private houses, for their present use.

Ver. 20. *And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded,* &c.] This first plague our primate Usher makes account was inflicted about the eighteenth day of the sixth month: which in the next year, and ever after, became the twelfth month. Artapanus tells this story otherwise; but it is evident he had heard of it among the gentiles: and Ezekiel the tragedian relates it all right; together with the following miracle: (see Euseb. Præpar. Evang. lib. ix. cap. xxix. p. 442.) Nor is there any thing more frequent in the Roman story (as Huetius observes, lib. ii. Alnet. Quæstion. cap. xii. n. 12.) than relations of rivers of blood flowing out of the earth; pits full of blood, showers of blood, and waters of rivers changed into blood, &c.

And he lift up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, &c.] Here is mention only of smiting the water in *the river.* And it is likely, that only *the waters of the river* were turned into blood (as it here follows) at the first lifting up of his rod; and then all the rest of the waters mentioned in the precedent verse.

Ver. 21. *And the fish that was in the river died,* &c.] All the effects of this plague which were threatened, ver 18. (see there) immediately following. The first of which was the death of the fish; which perished in such great numbers that the river stank, &c.

And there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.] The waters were in all places turned into blood, except perhaps the land of Goshen: which is not comprehended under the *land of Egypt.*

Ver. 22. *And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments.*] See ver. 11. In some of the pools or lakes of water they made an appearance of the like change; which made Pharaoh think his God was as powerful as the God of the Hebrews. The land of Goshen, as I said, might possibly be free from this plague; as it was certainly from several of the rest; (viii. 23. ix. 4, &c.) and some fancy the magicians had water from thence, to shew their power upon it. But I cannot think it probable that they made Pharaoh stay so long: and one may as well say they had it out of the sea, or out of the pits that the people digged, (ver. 24.) as Aben Ezra conjectures, and Justin. Martyr, Quæst. et Resp. xxvi. ad Orthodox. But there is no need of any of these conjectures, if it be granted (as the history leads us to conclude) that Moses did not in a moment change all the waters of the country, but only those of the river (as I said on ver. 20.) and afterwards, by degrees, all the rest; when the magicians had tried their art upon some of them. Which Moses also turned into real blood; so that neither they, nor any body else, was able to drink of them.

And Pharaoh's heart was hardened.] The very same words in the Hebrew, which we had before, (ver. 13.) where they should have been translated (I there observed) as they are here; and also in viii. 19.

Neither did he hearken unto them, as the Lord had said.] See iii. 19. This was more apt to move his heart than the former miracle, because it continued longer, (ver. 25.) and the magicians could not by all their spells, or skill in sorcery, remove this plague in all that time. See next verse.

Ver. 23. *And Pharaoh turned, and went unto his house.*] It seems that upon this refusal to hearken unto Moses's monition (ver. 15, 16, &c.) God sent this plague that very morning before he got home to dinner. So that there was not time to fetch water from distant places: but the magicians exercise their enchantments upon some ponds, which were not as yet turned by Moses into blood.

Neither set he his heart to this also.] Here is the reason why his heart was not moved by this miracle. He did not seriously consider what Moses had done, and examine the difference between the effect of this power and that of the magicians. Which was the cause that *his heart was hardened* (as we read before) as all men's are, who will think of nothing; but only to have their own humour satisfied.

Ver. 24. *And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink,* &c.] The whole country was forced to try to get water to quench their thirst, by this great labour. How it succeeded we are not told; but it is likely they found clear water, by percolation through the earth. For Moses smote only the pits that were then in being, when Aaron stretched out his rod: which had no effect upon those which were digged afterwards. Why they did not fetch it from Goshen, if there was any clear water there (as we cannot but think there was, for the use of the Israelites), is not easy to determine. Their pride, perhaps, would not suffer them, till they had tried other ways to supply their wants.

Ver. 25. *And seven days were fulfilled, after that the Lord had smitten the river.*] The rod of Moses could effect nothing without the Lord; by whose power this change was made in the waters. Which lasted *seven* days before this plague was removed. By which means they were convinced that all the waters were really corrupted: and they felt the heavy effects of it in a grievous stench, and perpetual labour in digging pits all about the river. Whether Pharaoh at last begged to have this plague removed, or no, we are not told. It is likely he was so obstinate that he would not stoop to ask this favour of them: which might be the reason it lasted so long; to see whether he would be moved to humble himself so far. To which when he would not yield, God took it away to make room for another stroke: or, as some think, it continued together with the plague of frogs, and were both removed upon his petition.

It is a weak conjecture of the Hebrew doctors, from these words, that all the ten plagues lasted *seven days* a-piece; which is plainly contrary to the story.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses.*] Who attended upon the Divine Majesty, we may reasonably suppose, every day to know his pleasure. And after the *seven* days (mentioned ver. 25. of the foregoing chapter) were fulfilled; the Lord commanded him to address himself again to Pharaoh: and to threaten him with a new punishment; which was inflicted upon the twenty-fifth day of the sixth month; and taken away the day after, (ver. 10.)

Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, &c.] The very same message, in effect, which he had delivered to him before, v. 1. vii. 16, 17.

Ver. 2. *And if thou refuse to let them go, behold,* &c.] He again threatens the plague before he inflicts it; both that Pharaoh might know it came not by chance, but by the determinate counsel of God; and that he might prevent it by repentance and submission to God's command.

I will smite.] This word commonly signifies in the Scripture language *to kill;* but here only to *afflict grievously.* See Psalm lxxviii. 45. where to *destroy them,* signifies to annoy them.

All thy borders.] Every part of his country, to the utmost extent of it; *i. e.* in all places where the Egyptians dwelt. For it is not likely the Israelites were infested with them. (See ver. 4.)

With frogs.] The Hebrew word *tsaphadéa* signifies, as Aben Ezra thinks, an Egyptian fish; which some will have to be a *crocodile:* as Gaulmyn observes in his Annotations on the Life and Death of Moses, p. 256. But this is undoubtedly false; for they could not infest them in that manner, as is described in the next verse.

Ver. 3. *And the river shall bring forth.*] Under the name of the *river* is comprehended all the *streams, ponds, lakes,* and other *waters* in Egypt, (as appears from ver. 5.) For

most of them came, one way or other, out of the river; they having little rain in Egypt.

Frogs abundantly.] The Nile naturally produced *frogs*, but such great abundance of them as filled the country, as miraculous; especially being produced on a sudden; and their going out of the river and fields into the cities and houses, &c. was still more miraculous.

Which shall go up.] Out of the river, which lay lower than the land.

And come into thine house, &c.] This explains what he meant by *smiting* in the foregoing verse: *viz.* inflicting a sore plague, more grievous than the former. For that spoiled only their water, but not their other liquors: whereas this made them uneasy day and night, in every place, whether they sat, or walked, or lay down, or did eat and drink. For their very *dough* (as we translate the word of this verse in the margin) was infested with them, as soon as they had kneaded it; and so was their drink, in all likelihood, as soon as it was poured into their cups. Nay, they got into their ovens: so that for the present, I suppose, they could not bake their bread.

Ver. 4. *And the frogs shall come up, both upon thee, and upon thy people,* &c.] They came not merely into their houses, but crawled upon their persons. And here it is observable, that this plague is limited to the Egyptians (Pharaoh, his people, and servants), the Israelites, one would think by these words, being excepted from it.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron,* &c.] No doubt, Moses delivered the foregoing message unto Pharaoh; but he, it seems, turned away, and would give no answer: for here immediately follows a new order (which God, perhaps, gave Moses upon the spot, as we speak, before he returned home), to inflict the plague he had bid him threaten.

Ver. 6. *And Aaron stretched forth his hand.*] He, as the minister of Moses, (who was to him as God, iv. 16.) inflicted this plague upon Egypt.

Over the waters.] He did not go to every place where there was water, but stood by the river, and stretched his rod over it, towards every part of the country (as Aben Ezra rightly explains it), and immediately God effected what Moses had denounced.

And the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt.] That is, there were vast numbers of them came up; for they did not so cover the land, but there was room for more; which the magicians counterfeited. The Jews think here was *mensura pro mensura, like for like,* as we speak. For they say it was a piece of their bondage, that the Egyptians, when they pleased, sent them a fishing: and now God made the river spawn nothing but frogs. Whose very croaking, others of them think, put the Egyptians in mind of the cries of the poor children whom they barbarously murdered.

Ver. 7. *And the magicians did so with their enchantments,* &c.] They should rather have shewn their skill in removing the frogs, or destroying those which Moses had brought. Which one would think Pharaoh expected from them; for they being unable to do this, he betook himself to Moses, whom he entreats to take them away: which he would never have done, if their power had not quite failed, and been unable to give him any relief. So Aben Ezra observes, he called for Moses, "because he saw the magicians had only added to the plague, but could not diminish it."

Ver. 8. *Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Entreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs,* &c.] He that had proudly said not long ago, *who is the Lord?* &c. (v. 2.) now says, *Entreat the Lord,* &c. This was an acknowledgment that the Lord sent them; and that he only had power to remove them. In the former plague, he did enough to make Pharaoh know he was the Lord, (vii. 17.) but this had that effect upon him for the present: which made him earnestly entreat those, whom he had scorned, to become intercessors to God for him and his people.

And I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the Lord.] This was not his settled resolution, but the present danger made him consent to it: for if the frogs had continued long, there had been no living in the country. As appears from what we read in Athenæus, out of Heraclides Lembus (lib. viii. Deipnos. cap. 2.) who says the whole country of Pæonia and Dardania were covered with frogs, which God rained down from heaven in such abundance, that the houses and highways were full of them. They spent some time in killing of them: and, by keeping their doors shut, they made a shift for awhile to bear this calamity: but when it did no good, but τάτε σκεύη, &c. all their vessels were full of them, and they mingled themselves with their meat, whether boiled or roast, and they could tread no where but upon frogs, they left their country; being forced to it, also, by the stench of the frogs when they died.

They that would see more of this out of several other authors, may consult Bonfrerius upon this very place: and Bochartus in his Hierozoic. (par. ii. lib. v. cap. 2. p. 661, &c.)

Ver. 9. *And Moses said unto Pharaoh, Glory over me, when shall I entreat for thee?*] Do thou appoint the time when I shall pray for thee, as St. Jerome translates it; and so doth the Syriac, and Onkelos, and the LXX. who differ from the Hebrew text in words only, not in sense. For by adding the word *saying* (as we do in Judg. vii. 2. where there is the same expression), this paraphrase of Bochart is very proper, (Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. v. cap. 2.) "though it belongs not to thee to determine the time of thy deliverance, which depends wholly upon the will and pleasure of God; yet I, who am his minister, give thee leave to take so much upon thee, as *to prescribe what time thou pleasest for the removal of this plague.*" For thus he thinks Moses's words are to be translated, *Glory over me, by telling me, when I shall intercede for thee,* &c. Moses saw, perhaps, that Pharaoh was much addicted to astrologers, who fancied all things here below to be governed by the motion and influence of the stars: and therefore would have him name the time; that he might be satisfied there was no day nor hour under such an ill aspect, but he could prevail with God, at any moment he thought good to pitch upon, to deliver him.

Bonfrerius, I think, hath expressed, in short, the literal sense of the Hebrew words, "Tibi hunc honorem defero, ut eligas quando," &c. *I will do thee the honour, that thou mayest assign the time.* And our Dr. Jackson still shorter, *Glory over me;* that is, saith he, *you shall command me.*

Ver. 10. *And he said, To-morrow.*] But why not on that very day? all men naturally desiring to be instantly re-

lieved from their sufferings. Perhaps he thought (as we said before) to try Moses's power; believing the next day not to be so lucky as the present, on which Moses had condescended to his request. Or, it might now be towards night when he called for Moses: who, he thought, would expect some time to pray to God for what he desired.

Be it according to thy word.] Thou shalt have thy desire.

That thou mayest know there is none like unto the Lord our God.] Mayest no longer depend upon thy magicians and their gods: being convinced that our God alone, whom we call Jehovah, can wound and heal.

Ver. 11. *And the frogs shall depart from thee,* &c.] This demonstrated the power of Moses with God, that he could as certainly foretell the removal of the frogs, as he had done the bringing them upon the land.

Ver. 12. *And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh.*] To the place, it is likely, where Moses was wont to attend upon the Divine Majesty.

And Moses cried unto the Lord, because of the frogs.] In the Hebrew the words are, *Cried to him about the business* (or the matter) *of the frogs,* which God had sent upon Pharaoh. Or, as Aben Ezra understands it, *concerning the frogs,* which he had promised Pharaoh should be removed: as if the words should be translated thus; *He cried unto the Lord concerning what he said about the frogs, and appointed unto Pharaoh.* For so the word *sham* in xv. 25. signifies to *appoint* or *propose,* and so the LXX. here translate the words (which we render *had brought against Pharaoh),* ὡς ἐτάξατο Φαραώ, *as he had appointed to Pharaoh.*

Ver. 13. *And the Lord did according to the word of Moses.*] So powerful was he with God in prayer, as the heathens themselves observed from this story. See what I observed out of Numenius, vii. 12.

And the frogs died, &c.] The Egyptians could not kill them; but God took away their breath: yet not removing them from the places where they were, but leaving them dead there. As appears by what follows:

Ver. 14. *And they gathered them together on heaps.*] That they might carry them, it is likely, into the river; and so they might go down into the sea. God could have dissolved them into dust (if he had pleased) or swept them into the river from whence they came; or made them quite vanish in an instant. But he would have them lie dead before their eyes; as a token they were real frogs, and no illusion of their sight.

And the land stank.] This was a farther sensible evidence that they were real frogs.

Ver. 15. *But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite.*] That he was freed from the great strait in which he was. For the Hebrew word for *respite,* signifies *breathing* or *enlargement;* and makes the sense to be this: that when the burden that pressed him was taken off, so that he could take his breath, he was of another mind, &c.

He hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them, &c.] Was not so good as his word, (ver. 8.) but returned to his former resolution, not to let Israel go. Which resolution grew so much more stubborn and obstinate, than it had been before; by how much the plague of the frogs had softened his heart, and inclined it to yield to God, more than the two former miracles had done.

Ver. 16. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron.*] The Lord seems to have given Pharaoh no warning of this plague; but to have inflicted it immediately upon the removal of the frogs, *viz.* on the twenty-seventh day of the sixth month. For his breach of faith was such a high provocation, that he deserved no other treatment, but a more notable judgment.

Smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice.] Some would have the Hebrew word *cinnim* to signify *gnats,* or some such kind of creature. Thus many of the ancients understand it; and Artapanus calls it ζῶον τι πτηνόν, *a flying sort of living creature:* which made such ulcers by its biting, as no medicine could cure. (See Eusebius, lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. p. 425.) But Bochartus hath sufficiently proved that our translation is right; and that out of the very text. For gnats, and such-like insects, are bred in fenny places; but these were brought out of the dust of the earth.

Ver. 17. *Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod.*] He still is the instrument to execute all the judgments which Moses denounced; as he was his mouth to deliver all the messages he carried to Pharaoh.

And smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice.] This shewed the lice were not a natural production; for they come out of the sweat and filth of men's bodies, and of other living creatures.

In man and beast.] This proves they were lice; which stick fast both to men and beasts. Whereas gnats, though they sting sorely, cannot be said to be *in man and beast:* for they are a most restless creature, continually buzzing about, and never settling constantly in one place. And there were various sorts of these lice: for beasts do not breed the same that men do: nor have all beasts alike; but some are peculiar to horses, others to oxen, others to sheep, and others to swine and dogs.

All the dust of the land became lice.] That is, nothing could be seen but lice, where dust was before. Or, lice were mingled every where with the dust.

Throughout all the land of Egypt.] Not of Goshen (it is very probable), which was inhabited mostly by Israelites.

Ver. 18. *And the magicians did so,* &c.] Attempted and endeavoured to do so: by using their wonted invocations and rites of incantation. For the common saying among the Jews is very frivolous, that *demons have no power over creatures so small as lice.* The meaning of which, Gaulmyn thinks, they themselves did not understand; which, according to the principles of the ancient magic, was this; that all animals had a particular genius presiding over them, by whose assistance their worshippers could do any thing among that sort of creatures. But this is meant only of perfect animals, not of insects (among whom they reckoned *lice),* which had no such heavenly power waiting on them. But if there had been any such notions then, these magicians sure would have understood it; and not fruitlessly have attempted that which they had no hope to produce.

But they could not.] Though they had counterfeited the former wonders; yet here a stop is put to their power, so that they themselves confess their weakness.

So there were lice upon man, and upon beast.] This seems to suggest, that since they could not produce any new lice, they attempted to remove those which Moses had brought upon the country. But they failed in that also: for, notwithstanding all that they could do, both men and beasts

were pestered with lice. The Hebrews say (in the Life and Death of Moses), that this plague was inflicted upon the Egyptians for another piece of oppression which they exercised on the Israelites: to whom they said, "Go, sweep our houses, and sweep our streets, &c." therefore God made lice to cover the earth a cubit deep. But this savours too much of their fabulous invention. It is more pertinent to observe, that though we read of particular persons, who, for great crimes, were punished with the plague of lice, (see Huetius, lib. ii. Quæst. Alnetanæ, cap. xii. n. 12.) yet we do not find in any story a whole nation infested with them; and that both men and beasts, without exception: the magicians themselves, in all likelihood, being sorely afflicted with them: which made them cry out as here follows.

Ver. 19. *Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God.*] The same with what is called, in other places of Scripture, *the hand of God,* (Psal. cix. 27.) that is, his power. There are those (particularly Bochartus) who think these magicians did not, by these words, give glory to God: but thought to save their own credit with Pharaoh, by telling him that it was not Moses or Aaron who were too hard for them, but a Divine power superior to them all. To this purpose Jonathan. But they ought then to have been sensible that the power which they dealt withal was far from being supreme: being unable to assist them upon all occasions. And, no doubt, God intended to confound them, by taking that time to disable them when they least expected it. For why should not their power have extended to such a small thing as this, when they had done greater? But God would not let them always abuse Pharaoh with their illusions; and gave them a check, when they thought themselves most sure of success.

And Pharaoh's heart was hardened.] One would have rather expected to have heard, that his heart began to relent, when he saw his magicians not only puzzled, but quite baffled; so that they owned Moses acted by a power above theirs. But this it was, not to stick to the good resolutions which had lately been wrought in him, (ver. 8.) from which he not only revolted, but grew more resolute not to yield to God. The effect of which was this further induration: it being natural for evil men, who resist the means of their cure, to grow worse and worse affected.

This miracle also of the lice, being more loathsome to Pharaoh than terrible, might haply be the reason (as Dr. Jackson conjectures) that he did not entreat Moses and Aaron to pray for him: as he had done upon the sight of the frogs; and as he straightway did after he felt the next plague of the flies.

I cannot but add also this further reflection of his, (book x. on the Creed, chap. xl.) that though *the finger of God* was very remarkable in producing the lice, which the magicians could not, yet it was no way remarkable in hardening Pharaoh's heart. For it is neither said, nor intimated, that *the finger of God hardened it:* but *Pharaoh's heart was hardened,* that is, remained obstinate. The cause of which was his *not hearkening to them,* as it had been before, (ver. 15.)

Ver. 20. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh.*] As he had ordered him to do, before he sent the second plague, (vii. 15.)

Lo, he cometh forth to the water.] This confirms what was said there, that in the morning it was usual with him to walk out by the river; either for his refreshment, or for his devotion. Perhaps that, after washing, he might worship the rising sun. For Moses is commanded to rise up *early* in the morning, and present himself before him.

And say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, &c.] The same message he had often sent him, (vii. 16, 17. viii. 1.) together with an admonition and warning of his danger: which God had not given him before the last plague, (ver. 16.)

Ver. 21. *Behold, I will send swarms of flies upon thee,* &c.] The Hebrew word *arob* being generally thought to come from a word which signifies to *mingle,* interpreters commonly think it denotes a *mixture* of several sorts of creatures. And some take it, as we seem here to do, for all manner of flies; which Aquila calls γαμμῆαν, *all sorts of insects.* Others take it, as it is in our margin, for *a mixture of noisome beasts:* and so the author of the Life and Death of Moses; God sent *lions, wolves, bears,* and *leopards,* and such-like wild beasts, which killed not only their cattle in the field, but their children in their houses. And so Josephus expounds it, θηρία παντοῖα καὶ πολύτροπα. But Bochartus hath confuted this notion by very good arguments, in his Hierozoicon, (par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 15.) where he shews no words have more significations than the Hebrew word *arab:* which signifies not only to *mingle,* but, among many other things, to *obscure* and *darken.* From whence the even-time is called *ereb.* And therefore, with great reason, he approves of the LXX. version, who translate it κυνόμυια, *a flesh-fly,* very bold and troublesome; being not easily drove away: which infests dogs very much, especially about the flaps of their ears. Some take it for that large black fly which fastens upon beasts, and sucks their blood, called *arob,* from its black colour: as *oreb* from thence signifies a *crow.* And so Philo describes this fly, called *cynomya,* that it is as impudent as a dog; and makes its assaults with great violence, like a dart; fastening its teeth so deep in the flesh, and sticking so close that it makes cattle run mad.

This plague the Jews say (in the forenamed book of the Life of Moses) was sent upon the Egyptians, because of the hard service they made the Israelites undergo, in feeding their cattle.

Ver. 22. *And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell,* &c.] Here now the distinguishing mercy of God to the Israelites is plainly expressed; which is to be understood in the foregoing plagues. And the Hebrew word, as well as the Chaldee, signifies, *I will make a wondrous difference.* So Jonathan, in that day, *I will work a miracle in the land of Goshen:* for, indeed, it was a marvellous thing, that countries so near one another should be in such a different condition at the same time. And it was the more wonderful, because there was such store of cattle in Goshen, whose dung is apt to breed flies.

That thou mayest know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth.] Who governs all things here below; or, that have a special care of my people. For so Bochart understood by *earth,* the land of Goshen. In the *midst* of which God is said to be, because he defended and delivered them from this sore calamity which their neighbours suffered. For thus this phrase is used in many places, (Deut. vii. 22. xxiii. 14. Psal. xlvi. 6, &c.) And thus Conr. Pellicanus

seems to have understood this passage, which he interprets, you shall know *that I am the Lord, and Prince of this country.*

Ver. 23. *I will put a division between thy people and my people,* &c.] It is repeated again, because it was a remarkable thing, and denoted the Israelites to be God's peculiar people; for whom he had a singular favour. Which is the reason that this mercy is called here a *redemption* (as the word in the Hebrew signifies, which we translate *division*), because God exempted and delivered the Israelites from those flies, which sorely infested all the rest of Pharaoh's dominions.

To-morrow shall this sign be.] The *finger of God* was so remarkable in the last plague, (ver. 19.) that his contemptuous disregard of it was very provoking: so that God would forbear no longer than till the next morning, before he scourged him with his new judgment. Which was very grievous and noisome, as appears by the following words; especially by his willingness to grant more than he had done before, that he might be rid of it.

Ver. 24. *And the Lord did so.*] Here is no mention of Aaron's stretching out his rod (as at other times), but this was done immediately by God himself: that the Egyptians might not imagine there was any secret virtue in the rod; but ascribe all to the Divine power.

This plague was threatened about the twenty-eighth day of the sixth month; and inflicted on the twenty-ninth: and removed on the thirtieth.

And there came a grievous swarm of flies, &c.] Or, *a vast number* of flies: for so the word *caved* (which we here translate *grievous* or *heavy*) is used in Gen. 1. 9. See there.

And the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm of flies.] We are to understand here, by *the land,* the *inhabitants* of the land: whose blood these flies sucked, and left such a poison in it, that their bodies swelled, and many of them died. So the Psalmist understood it, (lxxviii. 45.) There is something like this recorded in heathen stories; particularly, they say, that when Trajan made war upon the Agarans, he was so assaulted with flies, when he sat down to eat, that he looked upon them as sent by God, and desisted from his enterprise. And that whole countries have been infested with them, appears from a number of gods that were worshipped, because they were supposed to have drove them away, at Acaron, and several other places mentioned by the learned Huetius (in the place above quoted), from whence came the names of Jupiter, Ἀπόμυιος and Μυιώδης, and of Hercules, Μύαγρος, &c.

Ver. 25. *And Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron,* &c.] Sent a messenger to call them to him.

Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land.] He had consented to let them sacrifice, when he last sent for them, (ver. 8.) But he named no place: and also quickly repented of the concession. But now he determines it in the land of Goshen; where he grants them licence to offer public sacrifice. But this Moses tells him (in the next verse) was not fit for them to accept; nor was it what God demanded.

Ver. 26. *And Moses said, It is not meet so to do.*] Besides that this is not the thing that God requires, it is not prudent, because it is not safe for us to do it.

For we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God.] There is no indication, that I can find, of any such sottish idolatry now among the Egyptians, as was, it is certain, in after-ages, but what seems to be suggested in this place; which learned men have generally interpreted, as if the sense was this: "We must sacrifice to our God, oxen, sheep, and goats, which the Egyptians worship and adore: and that would be such an abominable thing in their account (to kill their gods) that it would give them the highest provocation." Thus both the Chaldee interpreters, the Syriac, St. Jerome, and others: which Bochartus himself approves of in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 34. and 53. and more largely, par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 17. But there is an objection lies against this interpretation, that long after Moses's time the Egyptians themselves did offer all the forementioned creatures to their gods: for Herodotus relates (in his Euterpe, cap. xli.) after what manner they sacrificed an ox in his time: and though some parts of the country abstained from sheep, yet they sacrificed goats; as, on the contrary, others abstained from goats and sacrificed sheep. (See upon Gen. xliii. 12.) Therefore it may be a question, whether these words do not refer only to the rites and ceremonies of sacrificing; and to the qualities and condition of the beasts which are offered: about which, the Egyptians in after-ages were every curious. For the same Herodotus tells us (in the same book, cap. xxxviii.) how the sacrifices were examined by the priest, and none allowed to be offered but those which had his mark upon them. And so Plutarch, (in his book de Isid. et Osir.) that the Egyptians, thinking Typho to have been red, sacrificed only such oxen as were of a red colour: making such an accurate scrutiny, ὥστε κἂν μίαν ἔχῃ τρίχα μέλαιναν ἢ λευκὴν, ἄθυτον ἡγεῖσθαι, *that if a beast were found to have one hair black or white, it was judged unfit for sacrifice.* The forenamed Herodotus, indeed, saith, they would not sacrifice cows, because they were sacred to Isis: which shews that in his time there was great superstition about such creatures; so that none durst offer the least violence to them. But, as we have no evidence, that in the days of Moses they were infested with such opinions, so their sacrificing such creatures, as the Jews did long after his days, and all mankind had done from the beginning, seems to be a prejudice against that sense of the words which is generally put upon them. But there were so many various ways of sacrificing in the world, that it is very probable the Egyptians differed very much from the Israelites: who might offer also (it is likely) such creatures as the Egyptians thought unclean; whereby they might be enraged at their profaneness.

Maimonides fancies the Egyptians worshipped the sign or constellation called Aries; and that this was the occasion of this speech: for which I can see no reason, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. xlvi.)

And will they not stone us?] We cannot gather from hence, that there was such a punishment among the Egyptians as stoning men to death. For he doth not speak here of punishment by their laws; but of what might happen from a popular fury.

Ver. 27. *We will go three days' journey into the wilderness,* &c.] So God had directed them; and it was not lawful for them to sacrifice in any place but where he appointed. Philo gives this reason why they were to go into a solitary place, there to receive commands from God

about sacrifice, and all other parts of his worship: because God intended to give them a law different from those of other nations, or rather quite opposite unto them. In which there were so many singular rites, that they would have offended other people, and seemed to them profane, if they had exercised them among them, (de Vita Mosis, p. 615.) And thus Corn. Tacitus understood the design of Moses, not to bring the Israelites to as near a conformity as he could with the gentiles (which some now in these days fancy), but to keep them at the greatest distance from other nations, by opposite rites of worship. His words are remarkable, (lib. v. Histor. cap. iv.) "Moses, quo sibi in posterum gentem firmaret, novos ritus, contrariosque cæteris mortalibus indidit. Profana illis omnia, quæ apud nos sacra: rursum concessa apud illos, quæ nobis incesta."

Ver. 28. *And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness.*] He doth not say expressly they should go *three days' journey*, as was demanded: which hath made some think this was but a niggardly concession of Pharaoh's, who intended to deceive them with general words. But Moses understood it otherwise, as appears by his acceptance of the grant.

Only you shall not go very far away.] No further than three days' journey.

Entreat for me.] This indeed is added so quickly, and, as it were, with the same breath that he granted their three days' journey; that it may make one think it was the least part of his intention to permit that, but only to get rid of this plague. Which if it had continued long, the Egyptians must have left their country to preserve themselves. Several people having been forced by flies to quit their habitations, as many ancient authors inform us, mentioned by Bonfrerius and Bochartus.

Ver. 29. *And Moses said, Behold, I go out from thee, and I will entreat the Lord that the swarm of flies may depart,* &c.] He was not more ready to desire, than the Lord and his servant Moses were to grant, the total removal of this plague: which was sent for his reformation, not his destruction; if he would have duly considered it.

To-morrow.] Yet he would not pray that he might be released from it presently; but let him lie awhile under the smart of his rod: that he might be truly humbled, and deal no more deceitfully with him, as he feared he would.

But let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more, &c.] He had promised fair before, (ver. 8.) but broken his word: which made this solemn caution the more necessary, lest he should be guilty of such false dealings again.

Ver. 30. *And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the Lord.*] He gave Pharaoh a good example of steadfastness, by making good his promise immediately, which he gave him in the beginning of the foregoing verse.

Ver. 31. *And the Lord did according to the word of Moses.*] Here was punctual performance on God's part, of what was agreed between him and Pharaoh, in the foregoing treaty.

There remained not one.] This was a greater miracle than that of removing the *frogs:* for they *remained* in heaps and stank, (ver. 14.) But these were all swept away (by a mighty wind, perhaps), either into the sea, or into the deserts of Lybia.

Ver. 32. *And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also,* &c.] This is here made an act of his own; as it was no doubt in all the former refusals to let him go, (ver. 15. 19.) And he hardened his heart, by not *hearkening,* or not *regarding* what they had done, as the word is used and translated, ix. 21. That which made him not to hearken or regard, was his excessive pride and covetousness; for he thought it a dishonour to submit to Moses: and he was very loath to lose the service of so many slaves, which was really more worth to him, than all the land they possessed in Egypt.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *THEN the Lord said unto Moses.*] See vii. 1.

Go in unto Pharaoh.] It seems now he went to the palace.

And say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, &c.] He sends the same message to him he ordered at the first, (v. 3.) and had continued ever since, (vii. 16, &c.)

Ver. 2. *For if thou refuse to let them go, and wilt hold them still.*] If thy covetous griping humour make thee still resolve to detain them in their slavery.

Ver. 2. *Behold.*] This word, as in most other places (as Dr. Jackson notes) is here a special character of the speedy execution of the plague threatened, and of the remarkable manner of its execution.

The hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle, &c.] That is, he will smite them (which is done by the hand), and is just ready to do the execution. Here is no mention of Aaron's rod, no more than in the foregoing plague, and for the same reason. (See viii. 21.)

A very grievous murrain.] That is, a great *plague* or *pestilence* (as we call it, in mankind), of which abundance of cattle shall die. For so the word *caved* (which we translate *grievous*) is used for *numerous:* (see viii. 24.) But the greater the number was that died, the more *grievous,* no doubt, was the calamity: God intended to deal more severely than formerly with him, because he had been guilty of a fraudulent contempt of his former solemn monition, (viii. 29.)

Ver. 4. *And the Lord shall sever between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt,* &c.] See viii. 22. This was the greater wonder (as the word imports), because the Israelites and Egyptians were mingled together in the land of Goshen: and their cattle breathed in the same air, and drank of the same water, &c. By which it appeared this pestilence was not natural; but proceeded, as was said before, from the hand of God.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord appointed a set time.*] That they might know this stroke came from him.

Saying, To-morrow the Lord shall do this thing in the land.] This plague was threatened upon the first day of the seventh month (which afterwards was changed into the first month of the year), and inflicted on the second day.

Ver. 6. *And all the cattle of Egypt died.*] Some survived, it is plain, from ver. 19. Therefore the meaning is, either all that were in the field, (ver. 3.) not those in the cities or houses: or, rather a great many of all sorts of cattle, as Drusius expounds it, "omne genus," *all kinds:* as the word *all* must be expounded, (ver. 26. vide lib. ii. Animadvers. cap. xviii.)

But of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one.] Of any sort whatsoever.

Ver. 7. *And Pharaoh sent, and behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead.*] We do not find that he sent to make any such inquiry in the former plagues. It is likely he slighted what they said, and would not do them the honour to seem to believe them. Moses also had said nothing of this difference God would make between the Israelites and them, till the last plague; when the flies were so busy and vexatious, that it made travel uneasy: as it was likewise in the two other before that, when they could tread upon nothing but frogs, or lice.

And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened.] One would rather have expected to hear that it relented; because he took the pains to satisfy himself that every thing foretold by Moses was come to pass: which looks as if he meant, upon the truth of that information, to alter this course. This plague likewise was much heavier than all, or most, of the preceding: which were rather more noisome and terrible (as Dr. Jackson speaks) than detrimental to Pharaoh and his people. For we do not read before this time of the death of any useful creatures, except fishes, when the waters were turned into blood: and that calamity was not so universal neither, being only in the river (and some think only near the court), as this murrain, which was all over the country; and did them a far greater mischief. But having accustomed himself to do evil, he grew still more obstinate and hardened in pride and covetousness. For he doth not so much as pray to be delivered from this plague; which had done all the execution, he thought, that was designed; and he intended, perhaps, to repair his loss, out of the flocks and herds of the Israelites, which haply might make him less affected with this wonder, than he had been with some of the former.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron.*] The former plague having so little moved his proud and stubborn heart, the Lord instantly, without any further message to him (as being now in process of sentence, says Dr. Jackson), commands them to bring another judgment upon the Egyptians, more dreadful and noisome than any of the rest had been.

Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace.] In which Pharaoh had made them labour, (Deut. iv. 20.) which moved God to punish him and his people with this plague, for their cruel usage of his people there.

And let Moses sprinkle it.] The Jews think God employed him only in executing this judgment, being much heavier than all the foregoing. But both he and Aaron being commanded to take ashes (in the words foregoing), as we read they did, (ver. 10.) it is more probable they both sprinkled, and so the meaning is, let Moses (as well as Aaron) sprinkle it.

Towards heaven.] To shew that the plague came from thence.

In the sight of Pharaoh.] That he might be convinced of it.

Ver. 9. *And it shall become small dust, in all the land of Egypt,* &c.] Instead of these ashes, which they threw up into the air, there came down a small sleet (as we call it) like that of snow, or the hoar frost, which scalded the flesh of man and beast; and raised a blister in every part upon which it fell. The poison of which penetrating into the flesh, made sore swellings, like those we now call buboes. Insomuch that, as Philo understood it (lib. i. de Vita Mosis), they were full of blotches from head to foot. Certain it is, that the Hebrew word *schechin* signifies an *inflammation*, that made a tumour or *bile*, (as we translate the word, Levit. xiii. 18, 19.) which turned into such a grievous ulcer, that Moses speaks of it afterwards as an unusual plague, which he calls the *botch of Egypt*, (Deut. xxviii. 27.) Dr. Lightfoot, indeed, observes, that in the book of Job (ii. 7, 8.) it signifies only a burning itch, or an inflamed scab: an intolerable dry itch, which his nails could not scratch off, but he was glad to make use of a potsherd to scrub himself. But then he confesses, that this *schechin*, here spoken of, was higher than that, having blains and biles that broke out with it; which Job's had not. So that the Egyptians, he thinks, were vexed with a double punishment at once; aching biles and a fiery itch. But our interpreters take it otherwise, and say that Job also was smote with *biles*, which, in conclusion, perhaps, had a scab that itched very much.

Ver. 10. *And they took ashes of the furnace,* &c.] This plague was inflicted about the third day of the seventh month, according to archbishop Usher's computation: who thinks it probable (as many others do), that from hence the tale was spread among the heathens, that the Egyptians drove the Israelites out of Egypt because they were scabby; lest the infection should spread all over the country. For they endeavoured, in future ages, to make it be believed, that what befel themselves was a plague upon the Israelites.

Ver. 11. *And the magicians could not stand before Moses, because of the biles,* &c.] This plague seized on them, as well as the rest of the Egyptians, and that in the presence of Pharaoh (as these words seem to import), which perfectly confounded them. For though, since the plague of lice, which they could not counterfeit, we read of no attempt they ventured to make to vie miracles with Moses and Aaron, yet they still continued about Pharaoh (it appears from this place), and endeavoured to settle him in his resolution, not to let Israel go: persuading him, perhaps, that though Moses for the present had found out some secret beyond their skill, they should at last be too hard for him. But now, being on a sudden smote with these ulcers, they were so amazed, that we do not find they appeared again to look Moses in the face. For now, as the apostle speaks, "their folly was manifested to all men;" (1 Tim. iii. 8, 9.) in that they could not defend themselves from this terrible stroke; which publicly seizing on them before Moses, in the sight of Pharaoh and all his servants, rendered them so contemptible, that we never hear more of them.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh,* &c.] If we suppose that the magicians, who had hitherto confirmed Pharaoh in his obstinacy, were forced to withdraw in great confusion, when they were smitten with the biles; one would have thought the next thing we should have heard would have been that Pharaoh relented. But here is not the least token of that mentioned in this history, but rather the express contrary; that God was so angry with him, that he himself hardened his heart, which he had never done before. This hardening, therefore, which is said to be God's doing, was something sure very extraordinary.

Yet it was not an infusion of any bad qualities or ungodly resolutions into Pharaoh's heart, but only that God did not vouchsafe him those convictions that might have softened him, and gave him up to his own heart's lusts: and likewise ordered things so to fall out, that he should hereafter be made by them more and more obdurate. For he had hardened himself against five plagues; therefore God leaves him to himself, and resolves he shall continue in his hardness. Accordingly he doth not so much as desire to be freed from this plague, no more than he had done in the former, which was nothing so grievous. The effect of such induration is well expressed by Dav. Chytræus in these words, "Cor induratum est, quod nec compunctione scinditur," &c. "A hardened heart is neither cut by compunction, nor softened by any sense of piety. It is neither moved by prayers and entreaties, nor yields to threatenings, nor feels the smart of scourges. It is ungrateful for benefits; treacherous to counsels; sullen to judgments; shameless to things most base; fearless of dangers; forgetful of things past; negligent of things present; improvident for the future. In short, it neither fears God, nor reverences man."

As the Lord hath spoken unto Moses.] The margin of our Bible directs the reader to iv. 21. where God saith, *I will harden*, &c. See there, and iii. 19. And observe that all along from thence to this place, it is very often said, in the close of the former plagues, that *Pharaoh's heart was hardened as the Lord had said*, (vii. 13. 22. viii. 15. 19. 32.) But this is the first time that it is said, *the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, as he had spoken unto Moses.* Which different close gives us to understand, that now, after the plague of blains, the sentence of destruction was irreversibly denounced against him; and God resolved to dispose things so, that he should not repent, but run headlong to his ruin.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning.*] That he might speak with Pharaoh before he went abroad; or at his going out of his palace.

And stand before Pharaoh, &c.] Present thyself unto him, with the same message that I have often sent to him. (See v. 3. vii. 16, &c.)

Let my people go, that they may serve me.] But why doth he send any more messages to him, may some say, after he had hardened him, and knew he would not submit? To which Dr. Jackson's answer is very apposite; that God dealt with Pharaoh just as he had done with the poor oppressed Israelites, after Moses had delivered his first message to him. Pharaoh immediately forbids his taskmasters to give them any straw, and yet required the same tale of bricks which they made when they had straw enough. The Lord in like manner demands the same obedience of Pharaoh, after he had deprived him of understanding, and of all good motions, which he had demanded of him before, or at the first exhibition of his signs and wonders. And this is that which gave occasion to the question we find, Rom. ix. 19. *Why doth he yet find fault?* To which there needs no further satisfaction in this place.

Ver. 14. *For I will at this time.*] For now I will begin to send more terrible plagues upon thee, one after another, till I have destroyed thee.

Send all my plagues.] All that I have resolved to inflict, as Menochius truly expounds it: "Not all that I am able, but all that I design to send for thy destruction."

Upon thine heart.] Such as shall make thy heart ache (as we now speak); not only afflict thy body and goods, but fill thy soul with terror, or grief, or rage.

That thou mayest know there is none like me in all the earth.] To teach thee, by sad experience, that my power is superior to all other. To which another reason is added in the next verse; that all the world might see the same. And a third, (x. 2.) that Israel might learn to worship him alone, and teach their children to do so likewise.

Ver. 15, 16. *For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence*, &c.] I do not see how this translation can be maintained; for we do not read that God after this sent a new *pestilence* upon Pharaoh: and the Hebrew word *deber* signifies nothing else. This, therefore, must needs refer to the time past: and the sense of these three verses (14—16.) must be this; "I will send more plagues on thee, and on thy servants, (as was threatened ver. 14.) for the truth is, I had now stretched out my hand to destroy both thee and thy people by my late pestilence, wherewith you had all been cut off, had it not been that I reserve you for further punishments: for which very cause I made thee to stand, when thou wast falling (*i. e.* kept thee from dying), that I might send more plagues upon thee, and make thy destruction more notorious to all the world." See Paulus Fagius, and Theod. Hackspan, and Fr. Junius also, who translate these words, *I had smitten thee and thy people with pestilence* (*i. e.* when he destroyed their cattle with a murrain), and then *hadst thou been cut off from the earth*, as it follows in the end of this verse; that is, when the biles broke out upon the magicians.

Ver. 16. *And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *I have made thee stand;* that is, preserved thee alive, when the pestilence would have cut thee off, as the murrain did thy cattle, if I had not kept thee from perishing then, that I might destroy thee in a more remarkable manner. And thus the LXX. understood it, when they translated it διετηρήθης, *thou hast been preserved*, that is, from destruction. With which the apostle agrees, though he doth not here follow their translation, ἐξήγειρα, *I have raised thee*, *i. e.* from the foregoing sickness, (Rom. ix. 17.) spared thee in the midst of malignant ulcers.

For to shew in thee my power.] By sending more dreadful plagues upon him; and at last overwhelming him in the sea.

And that my name may be declared throughout all the world.] If Pharaoh and his people had all perished by the pestilence, when the cattle did, or died when smitten with blains; the terror of God's powerful displeasure had not been so visible to all the world, as it was in overthrowing the whole strength of Egypt in the Red Sea.

Ver. 17. *As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people*, &c.] In these words he returns to finish his message begun ver. 13. which he concludes with this expostulation, which upbraids him with his senseless obstinacy. Which, in other words, may be thus paraphrased; "Dost thou still (notwithstanding all that I have done to humble thee) proudly insult over my people, and resolve to keep them in bondage?"

This expostulation, which is very sharp and cutting, may seem to some unreasonable, now that God himself had hardened him, and taken his understanding from him;

though before nothing could have been more proper, while there was a possibility of penetrating his heart. But God cannot lose his right to demand that obedience, which men have made themselves unable to pay: and it was but just he should be upbraided with his obstinacy, even when he could not comply, because he had brought upon himself this punishment of stupid insensibility. (See ver. 13.)

Ver. 18. *Behold, to-morrow about this time.*] As his destruction was determined, so it was to come speedily upon him; and therefore there was but one day between this plague and the former.

I will send a very grievous hail.] Great hailstones, falling very thick, as we speak.

Such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof.] Since it hath been inhabited. This shews that though rain was not frequent in Egypt, yet sometimes they had both rain and hail also. Otherwise, there could not have been a comparison made between this and former hail, if there never had been any at all.

Ver. 19. *Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle,* &c.] It appears by the next verse, that though Pharaoh and his grandees could not be moved by all these judgments, yet there were some persons in the court who were better disposed, for whose sake God gives this warning of the danger, that they might avoid it.

Ver. 20. *He that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh,* &c.] That which is opposed to this in the next verse is, *he that set not his heart unto the word of the Lord;* or, as we translate it, *regarded it not, i. e.* did not attend to what was said and done by Moses, and seriously consider it. Unto which the *fear of God* moves all those who are possessed with it; and serious consideration will not fail to work in men the fear of God and of his judgments.

Ver. 21. *And he that regardeth not the word of the Lord,* &c.] This was the cause of the ruin of all that perished; they did not set themselves to consider the irresistible power of him who inflicted such terrible judgments upon them, as Moses threatened. For at last they grew so stupid that they could not consider; but were perfectly infatuated.

Ver. 22. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch forth thy hand.*] With his rod in it, as it is explained in the next verse; and as he had directed on other occasions, (viii. 16, 17.) where it is said, "Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod."

Towards heaven.] To shew the plague was sent from God.

That there may be hail on all the land of Egypt, &c.] Here he more fully expresses the damage it would do, both to men and beasts, and to the *herb of the field,* which comprehends all the *trees,* (ver. 25.)

Ver. 23. *And Moses stretched forth his rod.*] Sometimes Aaron did it; but it was at the command of Moses, and as his minister; who sometimes did it himself, and was commanded by God so to do, (ver. 22.) He gave warning of this plague about the fourth day of the seventh month, and inflicted it upon the fifth, and removed it the sixth. The author of the Life and Death of Moses fancies that God sent this plague to punish the Egyptians for the drudgery they imposed upon the Israelites, in making them till their fields for them.

And the Lord sent thunder and hail, &c.] It was no wonder there should be *thunder;* but the claps of this were far more terrible than any that had been heard before in that country. As the hail also was more ponderous, and came down with a greater force, and was mixed with fire. Which the author of the Book of Wisdom observes (chap. xvi.) as a thing unusual. And herein consisted the miraculousness of this plague; that whereas other storms of *hail* generally reach but a little way (sometimes not a mile), this spread itself over the whole country, (ver. 25.) And flashes of *lightning* were not only mingled with it, but *fire* ran upon the ground, and killed their cattle, (Psal. lxxviii. 48.) when, at the same time, all the land of Goshen, though a part of that country, felt nothing of this storm, (ver. 26.)

And the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt.] This is repeated, to shew that it fell as thick as rain, and was not a mere shower, but a continual hail: and that this was the principal part of this plague, being alone mentioned ver. 22. and 26. (whereas nothing is said of *thunder* or *fire*), and put, in the first place, by the Psalmist, both in lxxviii. 48. and cv. 32.

Ver. 25. *And the hail smote,* &c.] That is, killed every man and beast that was in the field, (ver. 19.)

And smote every herb, and broke every tree of the field.] Especially their vines and fig-trees, as the Psalmist tells us, lxxviii. 47. cv. 33. Very great hailstones have fallen in several countries; some of a prodigious bigness (as credible historians relate), whereby some living creatures have here and there been killed: but none ever made such a general destruction as this storm did. Yet we are not to understand it as if no green thing escaped, nor a bough of any tree was left: but the meaning is, that a great many of every kind were destroyed: though some, as appears by the following chapter, still remained.

Ver. 26. *Only in the land of Goshen,* &c.] So that the Egyptians that lived among them fared the better (it is thought) at this time for their sake.

Ver. 27. *And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron.*] This is no more than he had done several times before, (viii. 8. 25.) but it may seem strange he should do it now, after the Lord had hardened his heart. The clearest account of it is, that he acted now as a man distracted and frighted out of his wits; which made him rave and cry out for help, in very passionate words, without any serious meaning.

I have sinned this time, &c.] The meaning is not, that he had not sinned before; but, *I now acknowledge my offence, and the justice of God in punishing the wickedness of me and of my people.* Which confession doth not argue any tenderness of heart; but was extorted by the horrible fright he was in of being undone, if he did not make some submission.

Ver. 27. *Entreat the Lord (for it is enough).*] Or, beseech him that what I have already suffered may suffice.

That there be no more mighty thunderings and hail.] The words import frightful claps of thunder, which sounded as if God was angry with them; especially since the hail fell like thunderbolts upon their heads, and struck those down that walked abroad. This was the reason that he begged their prayers: for he and his servants could not always continue within doors; and while the hail lasted, there was no safety abroad.

And I will let you go.] Not quite away, but three days' journey into the wilderness, as they desired.

And ye shall stay no longer.] He promises to dismiss them immediately.

Ver. 29. *And Moses said unto him, As soon as I am gone out of the city.*] By this he demonstrated the great power of God, who he knew would protect him, from receiving any harm by the thunder, lightning, and hail, which killed all others that went abroad into the fields.

I will spread forth my hands unto the Lord.] This was an ancient posture of supplication, in all nations (as many learned men have shewn), whereby men declared, that God is the giver of all good things; and that they hoped to receive help from him. For our hands are the instruments whereby we receive any gift that is bestowed upon us.

That thou mayest know how that the earth is the Lord's.] Have a demonstration (which was sufficient to make him know), that the Lord governs all things: as appeared by the ceasing of this dreadful storm, upon Moses's prayers to God, as well as by the pouring of it in such violence upon them.

Ver. 30. *But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the Lord God.*] The generality of the court he knew would continue as obstinate as their prince; though some of them had some sense of God, and of his judgments, as we read ver. 20.

Ver. 31. *And the flax and the barley were smitten,* &c.] From hence our learned N. Fuller gathers, that this fell out in the month of Abib, as Archbishop Usher observes in his Annals. For it appears, by Pliny and others, that *barley* began to ripen in those countries in March; but *wheat* not till April. Herm. Conringius differs from this account a little; for he thinks (in his treatise de initio anni Sabbatici) that this hail fell in the month of February; flax being sown here, and among the Romans, from the calends of October to the seventh of the Ides of December, as he observes out of Columella.

Ver. 32. *But the wheat and the rye were not smitten: for they were not grown up.*] In the Hebrew, *they were hidden;* i. e. *were as yet under ground,* as Kimchi, and from him Junius and Tremellius expound it. But that cannot be the meaning; for there was but a month's difference between the growth of wheat and of barley to maturity. And therefore Bochartus hath more truly expounded the meaning (Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 3.) that they were *not yet eared:* and so being tender and flexile, yielded to the stroke of the hail, and received less harm than the barley which was in *the ear,* and the flax which was *bolled.*

Ver. 33. *And Moses went out of the city,* &c.] As he had promised, (ver. 29.)

And the rain was not poured out.] It seems there was rain together with the hail and fire; which made this plague still the more wonderful. Or, by rain must be understood the shower of hail which the Lord "rained from heaven," (ver. 18.) which sense is confuted by the next verse.

Ver. 34. *And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, and the hail, and the thunder were ceased.*] As soon as the storm was over, and the heavens clear again.

He sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, &c.] That which should have made him acknowledge the power of God (which was as apparent in stopping the hail, as in pouring it on his country), made him the more contumacious. For seeing this danger over, he fancied there would be no more.

Ver. 35. *And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened,* &c.] Continued in hardness; for God would not soften it, having resolved still to harden him, as he had began to do, (ver. 12.) and did now, (x. 1.) For he neither moved his heart to remember his confession and his promise, (ver. 27, 28.) nor continued the means which extorted that seeming repentance from him. But by granting his desire, to have this stroke removed, suffered him to return to his wonted obstinacy.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh.*] Perhaps Moses might think that after seven messages delivered to him, and as many plagues for his refusal, and God's declaration that he had hardened his heart, it was to no purpose to make any new address unto him. Which it is likely he would have foreborne, if he had not received this express command from God to go to him again.

For I have hardened his heart, &c.] This is rather a reason why he should not go; and therefore the particle *ki* is not to be translated *for,* but *although,* as it many times is used in these books, and then the sense is clear; *although I have hardened his heart,* yet let not that hinder thy going to him, but still importune him; because I intend to take occasion from his refusing to obey me, to work greater signs and wonders for your benefit (as it follows in the next verse), and for his ruin.

That I might shew these my signs before him.] The *signs,* he speaks of, were those already done since he hardened him, and those which were to follow. For he had threatened, when he said he would harden Pharaoh's heart, (vii. 3.) to *multiply his signs and wonders* in the land of Egypt.

Ver. 2. *And that thou mayest tell.*] The LXX. translate it, *that ye may tell:* for he speaks to Moses, as sustaining the person of the whole people of Israel.

In the ears of thy son, and thy son's son.] All future posterity.

What things I have wrought in Egypt.] This may refer to the ten plagues which he inflicted on the Egyptians.

And my signs which I have done among them.] The turning of his rod into a serpent, and two other miracles, mentioned at his first mission, are called *signs,* (iv. 8, 9. and see vii. 9, 10.)

That ye may know how that I am the Lord.] That there is no other God but me.

Ver. 3. *And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh.*] As God had commanded Moses, (ver. 1.)

Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews.] This is the style wherein they began to deliver their message to him, and which they continued all along, (v. 1. 3. vii. 16, &c.)

How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me?] We meet not with this chiding question in any of the former messages; which was most proper now that he had so often refused to yield; or instantly revolted from his seeming submissions.

Ver. 4. *Behold, to-morrow.*] This word *behold,* denotes the speedy execution of a remarkable judgment: (see

ix. 3.) And, according to the computation beforementioned, it was threatened on the seventh day of the month Abib, to be executed the next day.

I will bring the locusts into thy coasts.] The Hebrew word *arbeh* comes from *rabah,* which signifies to be *multiplied.* For there is no living creature multiplies more than this. Whence they are said (in the next verse) to *cover the face of the earth:* and the Psalmist, speaking of them, saith they came *without number,* (Psal. cv. 34.)

Ver. 5. *And they shall cover the face of the earth,* &c.] So that nothing could be seen but locusts, (see ver. 15.)

And they shall eat.] How devouring they are, and destructive to the fruits of the earth, Vossius shews at large, (lib. iv. de Orig. et Pr. Idol. cap. 19. and Bochartus, par. i. lib. iv. Hieroz. cap. 3.) whole countries having been laid so bare by them, in a few hours, that it hath brought a famine upon the inhabitants. (See Pliny, lib. xi. Hist. Nat. cap. 29.)

The residue of that which is escaped, &c.] By this it appears that as the wheat and the rye escaped the stroke of the hail, (ix. 31.) so the trees were not broken, but some boughs remained.

And shall eat every tree, &c.] These creatures spare not the very bark of the trees; eating all things that come in their way, as Pliny testifies in the forecited place, "Omnia morsu erodentes, et fores quoque tectorum."

Ver. 6. *And they shall fill thy houses,* &c.] The author of the Book of Wisdom, (xvi. 9.) seems to think that they killed men and women. But that mistake, it is likely, arose from ver. 17. which may have another interpretation: see there. Though if the locusts died in their houses, the stench of their dead bodies was so offensive that it often bred the pestilence, as Bochartus observes, (par. i. Hieroz. lib. iv. cap. 3. 5.)

Which neither thy fathers, &c.] They exceeded all that had been seen (and they were a frequent plague in those countries), either in bigness or in number, or in both. That is, all that had been seen in Egypt: for in other countries, perhaps, there might have been as large; if Pliny may be believed, that in India there had been some seen three foot long. The Jews, in the book called the Life and Death of Moses, fancy these to have been of such a vast bulk, that "their jaw-teeth were like those of lions." But, it is likely, Moses speaks here only of their multitude. For the prophet Joel hath such an expression, when he speaks also of their being without number, (Joel i. 6.) "Whose teeth are the teeth of a lion," *i.e.* they devoured all things greedily and speedily.

And he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh.] Either Moses did not stay for an answer, knowing he would give him none better than formerly; or Pharaoh answered so churlishly, that Moses hastily turned about (as the words seem to import), and went away in some indignation.

Ver. 7. *And Pharaoh's servants said.*] Some of his counsellors, or courtiers, who feared the word of the Lord, (ix. 20.) Or, perhaps the whole court began now to be sensible of their danger.

How long shall this man.] They seem to speak contemptibly of Moses, to please Pharaoh: who they were afraid would not like counsel, unless they flattered him.

Be a snare to us?] The LXX. and the Vulgar translate it, *be a stumbling-block: i. e.* lay before us the occasion of our falling into one calamity after another. Or, involve and entangle us in so many mischiefs.

Knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?] Dost thou not consider that so many plagues have ruined our country?

Ver. 8. *And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh,* &c.] Upon this advice, he commanded them to be called back again: and consented to let them go, with some limitations; to which Moses could not agree.

But who are they that shall go?] In the Hebrew the words are, *but who and who?* that is, name the particulars. For his covetousness would not suffer the whole nation to go; but he would keep some fast in his hands, as a pledge for the return of the rest.

Ver. 9. *And Moses said, We will go with our young and our old,* &c. *with our flocks and with our herds,* &c.] The reason of this large demand is given in the end of this verse. They did not know what and how often they must sacrifice to the Lord: and therefore it was necessary their flocks and herds should go with them. And they being *to hold a feast unto the Lord,* none of them were to be absent from the solemnity.

Hold a feast unto the Lord.] It appears from v. 1. 3. that it was to be a *feast* upon a *sacrifice:* of which every one was to be a partaker.

Ver. 10. *And he said unto them, Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go,* &c.] Most take this for a form of imprecation; as if he had said, *I wish you may prosper no better than I will accord to your desire.* But some look upon it as an irrision or jeer; as if he had said, *you trust in the Lord, let him do all he can to deliver you, as I am resolved to keep you here.* This justifies the truth of their observation, who say that Pharaoh at the first behaved himself like a *proud fantastic humourist,* who slighted all that Moses said or did; but since the plague of murrain on the cattle, and blains upon the Egyptians, like a *fantastic distracted bedlam,* who raved, as if his brains had been blasted (to use Dr. Jackson's phrase), with the fumes of his seared conscience.

Look you to it, for evil is before you.] It is uncertain, whether he meant *evil* that they designed against him; or which he designed against them. The former best agrees with what follows; as if he had said, *you intend a rebellion;* therefore I will let none but the men go. Or, more plainly, *it is visible you design some evil: i. e.* you have conspired to be gone, and make a revolt. Or, it is plain and manifest, by your very countenances, that you intend some evil. If we take it the other way, for *evil* which he threatened to them, the meaning must be, *Mark what I say, I will take a course with you, unless you be content to go and sacrifice upon my terms; i. e.* the men only.

Ver. 11. *Not so.*] You shall not have your will.

Go now ye that are men and serve the Lord, for that you did desire.] So he interprets their demand, (v. 1.) pretending that women and children needed not to attend upon sacrifices.

And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.] It is likely he said, *I have no more to say to you;* or, *you know my mind, and therefore get you gone:* and then commanded his officers to thrust them out of doors; which they did with some violence. This shews he was in a fury; which made him neither regard God nor man: but reject the good counsel his own servants had given him, (ver. 7.) as

well as the commands which Moses from God had delivered to him.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand,* &c.] Upon this, the Lord immediately ordered Moses to execute the judgment he had denounced. Which, as I said before, was threatened about the seventh day, and inflicted upon the next; and removed on the ninth day of Abib. Compare ver. 4. 13. 19.

Ver. 13. *And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt.*] See viii. 6.

And the Lord brought an east wind, &c.] Though the Hebrew word *kadim* doth properly signify *the east,* yet it is sometimes used for the *south,* as Bochart hath demonstrated, (par. ii. Hieroz. lib. i. cap. 15.) and so the LXX. here understood it. For though in Arabia, which lay east of Egypt, there were great store of locusts, yet not such numbers as were in Ethiopia, which lay south of it; and abounded with them more than any country in the world. Some people there lived upon nothing else but locusts; which were brought thither in the spring, about the vernal equinox, in vast quantities; partly by the western, and partly by the southern winds, as the same Bochart shews out of good authors, (lib. iv. cap. 3.) And now it was about that time of the year, when, by a wind blowing from those parts, they were brought into Egypt. (See Psal. lxxviii. 26.)

Ver. 14. *And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt.*] Being lifted up by the wind (as Pliny speaks), they fly in the air in a great cloud; which now it seems spread itself over all the land of Egypt, "solicitè spectantibus populis," &c. (as the same author speaks), *people looking on them in great fear,* lest they fall down and cover their country; as the words following tell us they did here in Egypt.

And rested in all the coasts of Egypt.] After they had hovered awhile in the air over the whole country, they came down and settled upon the ground in every part of it.

Very grievous were they.] By their vast numbers. For so the word *caved,* I have often observed, signifies: and so the Vulgar Latin here translates, *innumerable.*

Before them there were no such locusts, &c.] See ver. 6.

Neither after them shall be such.] *i. e.* Not in the land of Egypt; though in other countries there might; particularly in Judea, when God brought this plague upon it, (Joel i. 2.)

Ver. 15. *For they covered the face of the whole earth,* &c.] The word in the Hebrew which we translate *face,* signifying properly *the eye,* it induced Onkelos to translate this passage, *they covered the sun;* which is the eye of the earth: that is, there was such a thick cloud of them before they fell, that they darkened the sun; as when they were fallen, *they darkened the land,* as it here follows. Or, the meaning is, there were such numbers, that they not only covered the earth, but the sun also. For many authors mention such prodigious clouds of them, as have so thickened the sky, that the day hath been turned into night. (See Bochart, par. ii. Hieroz. lib. iv. cap. 5.)

And they did eat every herb of the land, &c.] See ver. 5.

Ver. 16. *Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste.*] This Dr. Jackson not improperly calls, *another raving fit,* or *phrenetical symptom;* into which this new calamity threw him.

I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you.] Whom he had lately caused to be driven out of his presence, (ver. 11.) but now humbles himself before them, more than he had done at any time before. For this was such a plague as all men accounted a manifest token of the Divine displeasure. According to that of Pliny, (lib. xi. cap. 29.) "Deorum iræ pestis ea intelligitur." This is taken for *a plague of the anger of the gods:* or, as some copies have it, "Mira pestis," *a wonderful plague* sent from above.

Ver. 17. *Now therefore forgive, I pray you, my sin only this once,* &c.] Nothing could be spoken more humbly, and seemingly penitent, than this supplication; which includes in it also a promise never to offend again. But there was no sincerity in it, being the effect only of a great fright, which extorted this confession and submission from him, without any serious meaning to continue in this resolution. "Thus we all naturally think of repenting (as Pellicanus here piously reflects) when we are in great straits; nay, and promise it too, till we are out of danger: when we perform little of what we promised, as our whole life testifies."

That he may take away from me this death only.] We cannot gather from hence, that the locusts killed men and women as the hail did: for the fields, and the trees, &c. are said to die; as well as men, (Gen. xlvii. 19. Job xiv. 8, &c.) But the locusts, destroying the supports of life, (by eating up the corn, and the grass, &c.) might, by consequence, be said to kill the people. In both which regards, Pharaoh might call them *deadly* locusts.

Ver. 18. *And he went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the Lord.*] Both Moses and Aaron were called to Pharaoh; and therefore now went both out: but one only is mentioned, *viz.* Moses; because by his prayers this plague was removed.

Ver. 19. *And the Lord turned.*] This is supposed to be done the next day, as I observed ver. 12. according to what is said, viii. 29.

A mighty strong west wind.] Strong winds are the only remedy to free a country from this plague, as Pliny hath observed. For if they die in those fields on which they settle, the air is so corrupted by the stench, that it breeds pestilential diseases.

Which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red Sea.] That which we call the *Red Sea,* the Hebrews call the *Sea of Suph,* i. e. of flags; as we translate the word *Suph,* in the second chapter of this book, ver. 3. because it was full of a certain weed (which the Latins call *alga,* and the Greeks φυκίον), which some travellers have affirmed to be of a red colour, and to make the water appear as if it were red also: from whence some fancy it was called the *Red Sea.* Certain it is, it had the Hebrew name of *Suph* from hence; there being such abundance of this weed in that sea, that the inhabitants of the coast plucking it up out of the water, and laying it in heaps to be dried by the sun, it becomes so compact that they build houses of it, as Bochartus hath observed in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 29. But it is most likely to have had the name of the *Red Sea* from this: that what the Hebrews call the *Sea of Suph,* the nearer neighbours call the *Sea of Edom,* from the country which it washed, *viz.* Idumæa, (1 Kings ix. 26. Numb. xxi. 4.) From whence the Greeks, who knew not

the reason of the name, called it ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν, the *Red Sea;* because *Edom,* in Hebrew, signifies red, as we find Gen. xxv. 29. Now this sea (which late writers call Sinus Arabicus) lies east of Egypt: and therefore a west wind was most proper to drive the locusts thither.

There remained not one locust in all the land of Egypt.] The power of God appeared no less in sweeping them all away, than in bringing them upon the country: for both were done at the instance of Moses.

Ver. 20. *But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart,* &c.] See ix. 12. He left him to himself; and did not move him to persist in his late good resolution.

Ver. 21. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] He left off now to treat with Pharaoh; and only proceeds in the execution of the sentence of utter destruction, which he had decreed against him.

Stretch out thine hand towards heaven.] See ix. 22.

That there may be darkness over the land of Egypt.] So that they should not see any thing at noon-day.

Even darkness that may be felt.] In the next verse he calls it *thick darkness:* which was made, I suppose, by such clammy fogs, that they sensibly affected the Egyptians.

Ver. 22. *And there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.*] Some think, that during this *three days'* darkness the Israelites were circumcised; when the Egyptians, by reason of the great horror they were in at that time, could take no advantage of them. And so Dr. Lightfoot expounds Psalm cv. 28. "They rebelled not against his word;" but submitted to be circumcised. For the words seem to signify some special piece of obedience, which they then performed. The author of the Life and Death of Moses will have it, that they punished and cut off several wicked people among the Israelites themselves; which they did at this time, that the Egyptians might not know it, and rejoice at it. But that which is more certain, is, that if the former plague ended on the *ninth* day, this judgment was ordered upon the *tenth* of the month Abib. On which day they began to prepare for the passover, by taking up the lamb which was to be then slain *four* days after. And God appointed this to be the *first* month of the year, which hitherto had been the *seventh,* (xii. 2, 3, 4.)

Ver. 23. *They saw not one another.*] We may well look upon this as an emblem of the blindness of their minds; which was so great, that they had not the least discerning of their approaching destruction. Some of the Romans mention such darkness for a short time, as was counted prodigious by Livy and Julius Obsequens. Particularly at the death of the Emperor Carus, there was such a mist, that *one man could not know another:* (see more examples in Huetius, lib. ii. Alnet. Quest. cap. 12. p. 203, &c.) But of such a darkness as this, which continued to obscure all things *three days* together, there is no record, but in this sacred story. Which no man hath the least reason to disbelieve; it being as easy for God to continue it for three days, as for one hour; there being also a very great reason for it, both to punish the Egyptians, and relieve the Israelites.

Neither rose any from his place.] None stirred out of their houses: for they could not see one another within doors: no, not by the help of a candle, or a fire, as the author of the Book of Wisdom understood it, (xvii. 5.) where he also supposes, that they were affrighted with apparitions; and their own evil consciences were also a great terror to them, while they remained prisoners so long in dismal darkness. And the Psalmist justifies him, in part, when, instead of mentioning this plague of darkness (as he doth the rest which were inflicted on the Egyptians), he saith, "God sent evil angels among them," (Psalm lxxviii. 49.)

But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.] Whereby they were enabled to go about their business, and get all things ready for their departure, without any notice of the Egyptians, much less any hinderance from them; who were in a mist, and could not see what they were doing.

Ver. 24. *And Pharaoh called unto Moses.*] He was so terrified by the horrible apparitions he had seen, that, at the end of the three days of darkness, he sent a messenger to call Moses: for before that time none could find their way to him. Or perhaps the meaning may be, that, in his ravening fit, he called for Moses as if he had been near him.

And said.] When Moses came, he made his former confession a little larger: but had not the heart to comply entirely.

Go ye, serve the Lord; only let the flocks and the herds be stayed, &c.] It was a perfect infatuation to higgle (as we speak) with Moses, and still drive his bargain as low as he could, when he was reduced to such distress, that he was upon the brink of destruction. But this was the effect of his covetousness, which was incurable; and would not suffer him to part with them, but still to keep a pawn for their return to his servitude.

Let your little ones go with you.] His blindness made him think this a great condescension, because he had denied it before, (ver. 10,)

Ver. 25. *And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt-offerings, that we may sacrifice,* &c.] The difference between *sacrifices* and *burnt-offerings,* see xviii. 12. As they were to *sacrifice* unto the Lord their God, which was the service he required, so they were to hold a feast unto him; at which both *sacrifices* and *burnt-offerings* were necessary.

Ver. 26. *Our cattle also shall go with us.*] *i. e.* Therefore we cannot leave our cattle here, because we must use them in sacrifice, &c.

There shall not a hoof be left behind.] *i. e.* The smallest thing. For this was a proverbial speech in the eastern countries, as appears by the like saying among the Arabians; which was first used about horses, and afterwards translated to other things; *present money even to a hoof:* that is, they would not part with a horse (or any other commodity) till the buyer had laid down the price of it, to a farthing, as we now speak. Or, according to the present German language, the *hoof* may be put for the whole beast; and the meaning be, We will not leave so much as one behind us. So Conr. Pellicanus.

For thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God.] To offer sacrifice to him.

And we know not with what we must serve the Lord, &c.] Who was to appoint his own sacrifices: as he afterwards did, when they came into the wilderness.

Ver. 27. *But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart,* &c.] He did not incline Pharaoh to comply with this motion; but

suffered him to persist in his obstinate resolution, not quite to part with them: (see ver. 20.)

Ver. 28. *And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me.*] This sounds, as if he intended again to have him driven from his presence, (as ver. 11.) so soon did he forget his own humble confessions and supplications to him, (ver. 16, 17.) and returned to his frantic rage and fury against him.

Take heed to thyself, see my face no more: for in that day thou seest my face, thou shalt die.] A speech more foolish than proud (as Dr. Jackson observes), to come from a man whom the Lord had so much impoverished, and so often humbled; and given sufficient proofs of his power, not only to bring greater plagues immediately upon him, but to cut him off.

Ver. 29. *And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more.*] That is, unless I be called for; as one would think he was: because Moses did deliver one message more to him, (xi. 4. 8.) Though we may suppose he delivered it now; or, that he did not deliver it himself, but by some other person. But that doth not agree with the last words of ver. 8. of the next chapter. And we read also, (xii. 31.) that "Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron by night:" who perhaps did not go, but only receive his message.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord said unto Moses.*] It is uncertain when the Lord spake this: I suppose it was as soon as he came out from Pharaoh, at the end of the three days' darkness; which continued the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth of the month Abib; and on the fourteenth, in the morning, Moses received this new revelation.

Yet I will bring one plague more upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt.] The killing of the first-born; which was the last plague inflicted on them in Egypt.

Afterwards he will let you go hence, &c.] Not only consent to dismiss you entirely, but be earnest with you, and urge you to depart. So we find it came to pass, (xii. 31. 33.)

Thrust you out altogether.] Perfectly and completely, with some kind of compulsion.

Ver. 2. *Speak now in the ears of the children of Israel.*] Give order therefore to the Israelites, as I formerly promised to direct, (iii. 21, 22.)

And let every man borrow of his neighbour.] See iii. 21, 22. Unto which this may be added, that some of the ancient fathers looked upon this as a piece of justice, that they should be paid their wages for the labour they had undergone, in the service of the Egyptians; which God orders in this manner. So Epiphanius, in his Ancoratus, Num. cxii. cxiii. 1. where he gives this account of the Israelites spoiling the Egyptians, That they had served them a long time for nothing (he makes account 215 years), and therefore οὐκ ἦν δίκαιον καὶ παρὰ Θεῷ καὶ ἀνθρώποις, &c. *was it not just, both before God and man, that their wages should be paid them before they left the country?* See Petavius on that place. And Hæres. lxvi. lxxi. lxxxiii. and Irenæus, lib. iv. cap. 49. Tertull. adv. Marcion. lib. ii. cap. 20. And so the author of the Book of Wisdom took it, (x. 17.) where he saith, the Lord gave the Israelites the goods of the Egyptians, μισθὸν κόπων αὐτῶν, *the reward of their labours.* (See more, xii. 35.)

Ver. 3. *And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians.*] According to his promise, (iii. 21.)

Moreover, the man Moses was very great, &c.] This seems to be given as a reason, both why the court durst not meddle with Moses, though he had brought so many plagues upon them; and why the people were forward to grant the Israelites what they desired, because they all highly esteemed him, and had him in great reverence, as a person that had extraordinary power with God: from whence some think it credible, that their posterity might give him Divine honours, as is reported by some ancient writers.

Ver. 4. *And Moses said, Thus saith the Lord.*] It is manifest (from ver. 8.) that these words were spoken from the Lord to Pharaoh; but it is a great question, when they were spoken. It is commonly thought that Moses said this, when he last parted with Pharaoh, and told him, he would *see his face no more,* (x. 29.) And then the first words of this chapter, must be translated in the time past, *the Lord had said unto Moses,* that he would bring one plague more upon the Egyptians: which he now denounced to Pharaoh, because he said he should not have the liberty of being admitted to him again. Or else Pharaoh, contrary to his peremptory resolution, sent one more to speak with Moses; as it is plain he did after the first-born were slain, (xii. 31.)

About midnight.] About the midst of the following night. For they having kept the Passover, in the evening of this fourteenth day of Abib, the first-born were slain in the middle of that night. Not precisely (the Hebrew indicates) but it might be a little before or after midnight. (See Theodoric Hackspan, of such kind of speeches. Disput. de Locut. Sacris, N. iv.)

Will I go out.] By an angel, who was sent from the Schechinah (which resided in some part of the land of Goshen), and ordered to go and do this execution.

In the midst of Egypt.] Perhaps he means the royal city; where he began this execution, and then smote the whole country round about.

Ver. 5. *And all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die.*] This was the sorest plague that had been hitherto inflicted: nothing being so dear to parents as their children, especially their *first-born.*

From the first-born of Pharaoh, &c.] *i. e.* From the highest to the meanest person in the kingdom.

That sitteth upon his throne.] It is uncertain whether this relate to Pharaoh, or to his *first-born.* The LXX. seem to incline to the former; having left out the pronoun *his,* and simply translated it, *that sitteth upon the throne.* But the Chaldee determines it to the latter, by translating it, *who is to sit upon the throne of his kingdom; i. e.* to be Pharaoh's successor, the heir of the kingdom of Egypt.

The maid-servant that is behind the mill.] None were more miserable than those slaves, whose work it was to turn a mill with their hands, and grind corn perpetually; especially when they were condemned to this in a prison, nay, in a dungeon: that so we are to understand this, appears from xii. 29. The ancient comedians often mention this; and we find an instance of such drudgery in the story of Samson, (Judg. xvi. 21.)

Ver. 6. *And there shall be a great cry throughout the land of Egypt,* &c.] The calamity being general in every house, it made a general and very loud lamentation: men, women, children, and servants, bewailing the loss of the prime person in the family.

Ver. 7. *But against any of the children of Israel, shall not a dog move his tongue,* &c.] A great wonder! that when so many thousand people were upon their march, with abundance of cattle, &c. not a dog should stir; who, though never so gentle, yet commonly bark when they hear the least noise, especially in the night. All travellers know this.

That ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.] This was indeed a plain testimony of God's special care and providence over the Israelites; that when there was such a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, (ver. 6.) all was quiet, still, and silent among them.

Ver. 8. *And all these thy servants shall come down to me,* &c.] You that now forbid me to come to you (for Pharaoh himself is included, it appears from xii. 31, &c.) shall be forced to come to me; and submissively entreat, nay, press me to be gone, &c.

Come down.] It was a descent from that part of Egypt where the court was, unto Goshen: though it may simply signify, *come to me.*

Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee.] In the Hebrew the words are, *that is at thy feet:* that is, *to the very last man.* For they that bring up the rear, as we speak, or march last after their commander, are said, in Scripture, to be *at their feet:* as Wagenseil hath observed in his confutation of R. Lipman's Carmen Memoriale. (See Gen. xlix. 10.)

And after that I will go out.] When you shall think I oblige you, to leave your country.

And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger.] It moved the meekest man on earth to a just indignation (which, it is likely, he expressed in his countenance and behaviour) to see Pharaoh remain so stupidly insensible, as not to regard this threatening; which he might well think would be as certainly executed, as all the rest had been.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you.*] That is, I told thee at the first how it would be, and the reason of it, (iii. 19, 20.) Of which it was very proper to put Moses in mind at this time, when he was going to fulfil the last part of those words; "after that (after this last plague) he will let you go."

That my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.] That he might do one wonder after another until he had finished Pharaoh's destruction. (See vii. 3.)

Ver. 10. *And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh.*] This seems to be a summary of what hath been said hitherto, concerning the wonderful plagues of Egypt: which as God designed to inflict upon that country, so he did, by Moses and Aaron as his instruments.

And the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go, &c.] The obstinacy of Pharaoh, under several severe judgments, is so notorious, that it need be no wonder that the Lord himself hardened his heart, so that he would not suffer the people to depart, until what is here threatened was executed upon him. There is nothing more agreeable to the rules of justice, than to inflict heavy judgments upon contumacious offenders; and no punishment heavier than to let them undo themselves by their own wickedness, and blindly run on, without any stop, in their evil courses unto utter ruin. This was the case of Pharaoh; of which the heathen had a broken notion, when they said, "Quos Jupiter vult perdere, prius dementat:" *Those whom God intends to destroy, he first infatuates.*

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron,* &c.] We are not told here when the Lord spake this to them; but it is very likely it was on the tenth day of this month, before he brought the plague of darkness on the land; wherein he gave the Israelites opportunity to prepare for their departure: and then he changed this month from the seventh (as it was before), to the first, as it here follows.

Ver. 2. *This month.*] Which in process of time was called Abib, (xiii. 4. xxiii. 15.) because then the corn was eared, and grew towards ripeness (for *Abib* signifies an *ear of corn*), and was in after ages called Nisan, (Nehem. ii. 1. Esth. iii. 7.) which is a Chaldee word, denoting this to be the month wherein they went out to war; from *nissin,* which signifies ensigns or banners (as Bochart probably conjectures), which at that season were usually advanced; *viz.* in the spring time. So the Hebrews understand that place, (2 Sam. xi. 1.)

Shall be unto you the beginning of months.] *i. e.* The principal month of the year.

It shall be the first month of the year to you.] And therefore was hereafter to begin the year. Which is a plain intimation that the year had another beginning before this time, which was in the month they called Tisri, about autumn; but was now translated unto the spring. And so we find that all the ancient nations began their year, after their harvest and vintage, which were the conclusion of their year. But from henceforward the Jewish computation was from this month of Abib; at least, as to their feasts and things sacred; though their civil year still began where it did before. For after this, we find the old account continued, as appears from xxiii. 16. where the harvest is said to be in *the end of the year.* And yet the author of Meor E Najim (as Guliel. Vorstius shews in his observation upon R. D. Ganz) affirms, that the ancient Hebrews followed this new account from the time of their going out of Egypt, till the building of the temple (in all their contracts and affairs using this era of Exodus, in memory of that illustrious deliverance), as, after that time, till the captivity of Babylon, they dated all their writings from the building of the temple.

Ver. 3. *In the tenth day of this month.*] This is a law which hath respect to all future ages, as well as to this present time; that they should begin to prepare for the Passover, four days before: for which the Jews give such reasons as these: *viz.* it was necessary when they went out of Egypt to make this preparation, lest a multitude of business, when they were pressed to be gone in haste, should have made them neglect it. And it was necessary afterwards, that they might more narrowly observe if there were

any blemish in the lamb; and that they might be put in mind to dispose themselves for so great a solemnity.

And it is observable, that our blessed Saviour (the true paschal Lamb) came to Jerusalem on this very day (*viz.* the tenth of Nisan), four days before he was offered, (John xii. 1. 12.) Yet there are those who think, that this precept was peculiar to this time of their departure out of Egypt. For they that came, in after ages, out of all parts of the country to worship God at this feast, could not so well observe it; unless we suppose them to have come some days before to Jerusalem, (as it is certain some did, John xi. 55.) or to have sent beforehand thither, to have a lamb prepared for them, which is not unlikely.

They also, who think the Egyptians now worshipped such kind of creatures, imagine withal, that this day was chosen in opposition to them: who, because the sun entered then into Aries, began on this day the solemn worship of this creature, and of that celestial sign. Thus the author of the Chronicon Orientale, in express words: "This was the day in which the sun entered the first sign of Aries, and was most solemn among the Egyptians." And therefore God commanded the Israelites to sacrifice that creature which they worshipped. But there is no certainty of this, nor of what the author of Tzeror Hamor observes, that the feast of the Egyptians being at its height on the *fourteenth* day, God ordered the killing of this lamb at that time: which was the greatest contempt of their Coniger Ammon (whom they worshipped then with the greatest honours), shewing he could be no god whom the Israelites ate.

They shall take to them every man a lamb.] The word *seh* signifies a *kid* as well as a *lamb*, (Numb. xv. 11. Deut. xiv. 4.) and it is evident from the fifth verse of this chapter, that they might take either of them for this sacrifice. But commonly they made choice of a lamb, as the fittest of the two; being of a more mild and innocent nature. They that are of opinion, the Egyptians now worshipped such creatures, imagine also this was ordained to preserve the Israelites from their idolatry, by commanding them to kill such beasts as they adored. So R. Levi ben Gersom, God intended by this, "to expel out of the minds of the Israelites the evil opinion of the Egyptians," &c.

A lamb for a house.] Some translate it *for a family.* But that is not true: for as tribes were divided into *families*, so were *families* into *houses;* and when many lambs were few enough for a whole family, some houses were so small that they could not eat one, and therefore were to call in the assistance of their neighbours, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 4. *And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour,* &c.] They were not to be fewer than *ten* persons, nor more than *twenty*, to the eating of one lamb. At which meal, men, women, and children, masters and servants (if circumcised) were entertained, and every one did eat a piece, at least as big as an olive, if we may believe the Hebrew doctors.

Every man, according to his eating, shall make your count for the lamb.] That is, every master of a house shall take such a number of persons to him, as will be sufficient for the eating of the lamb.

Ver. 5. *The lamb shall be without blemish.*] In the Hebrew *perfect*, or without defect. There are *ten* blemishes mentioned in Levit. xxii. 22—24. which made a sacrifice unfit for the altar. About which the heathen themselves were very curious, as I noted above out of Herodotus: who relates how exact and scrupulous the Egyptian priests were in the scrutiny, whether a beast were fit to be offered. (See viii. 26.)

A male.] Because the male was counted more excellent than the female, (Malachi i. 14.) and therefore all whole burnt-offerings (which were the most perfect sort of sacrifices) were to be *males* only, (Lev. i. 3. 6.) From hence this custom (as Bochart thinks) was derived to the Egyptians; who offered only *males*, as he proves out of Herodotus, (par. i. Hieroz. lib. iii. cap. 33. 50.) But whatsoever the Egyptians did, the Romans did otherwise: for Servius saith, (in Æneid. viii.) "In omnibus sacris fœminini generis plus valent victimæ;" *that sacrifices of the female kind were of greatest value in all their holy offices.* Such different fancies there were in the world in after ages; but what opinions they had in Moses's time, none can certainly resolve.

Of the first year.] It doth not signify that the lamb was to be a year old (for then it was incapable to be offered) but under a year old. It was fit for sacrifice at eight days old, though not before, xxii. 30. Lev. xxii. 27. (which laws, Maimonides saith, were observed in the paschal lamb, as they were in the daily sacrifice, Exod. xxix. 38. Numb. xxxviii. 3. and in others, Lev. xxiii. 18, 19.) and so it continued fit from that time till it was a year old; after which it was not accepted. For which Bochart gives a very likely reason in the forenamed book, (par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50. p. 585.)

Ver. 6. *And ye shall keep it unto the fourteenth day of the same month.*] When it was to be offered to God by all the people, as our Saviour was upon the very same day. Which the Jews expected, as appears by a memorable passage which Andr. Masius (in Josh. v. 10.) quotes out of that tract in the Talmud, called Rosch Hashanash, where they say it was a "famous and old opinion among the ancient Jews, that the day of the new year, which was the beginning of the Israelites' deliverance out of Egypt, should in future time be the beginning of the redemption by the Messiah." Which was wonderfully fulfilled in our Lord and Saviour; who keeping the Passover the day before the rulers of the Jews observed it, it fell out that he, the true Lamb of God, was offered on that very day, which Moses here appointed for the offering this typical sacrifice.

And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it.] God here grants a liberty to any man among the Israelites to kill the passover. Which act did not make him a priest (whose work it was to offer the blood), for in other sacrifices any man that brought them might do the same, (Lev. i. 3, 4, 5.) and this is given as a reason, why the people did not kill the passover in Hezekiah's time, because they were unclean; and therefore the Levites had the charge of it, (2 Chron. xxx. 17.)

But, besides this, Moses seems to mean that all the company who were to eat, were to be present at the sacrifice: by which means, *the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel* were engaged in this service. And this was exactly also fulfilled in our Blessed Saviour (whom the apostle calls our passover), against whom the priests, and scribes, and

pharisees, and all the people, conspired to take away his life.

In the evening.] In the Hebrew the words are (as is noted in the margin of our Bibles), *between the two evenings.* The first of which began, when the sun began to decline from its noon-tide point, and lasted till sun-set. Then began the second evening, and lasted till night. Between these *two evenings*, about the middle of them, was the passover offered. For after the offering of incense, they began on this day to kill the daily evening sacrifice, between two and three in the afternoon (a little sooner than on other days), and having finished that, and trimmed the lamps (as Maimonides in his treatise on this subject, cap. i. sect. 4. describes the order of it), they went about the paschal sacrifice; which continued till sun-setting. That is, there were about two hours and a half for the dispatch of all the lambs. For the daily evening sacrifice, and all belonging to it, being over in an hour's time (by half an hour after three), all the rest of the day till sun-set (which was two hours and a half at the time of the year) remained for the killing of the paschal lambs. (See Bochart, Hieroz. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50. p. 558. and our learned Dr. Lightfoot, in his gleanings on Exodus.) Now our three o'clock in the afternoon being the same with the Jews' ninth hour, it is evident our Blessed Saviour offered up himself to God for our redemption about the same time that this lamb was slain, for their deliverance out of Egypt, (Mark xv. 34. 37.)

Ver. 7. *And they shall take of the blood.*] Which was the means that God now appointed for their preservation.

And strike it.] By dipping a bunch of hyssop into it, (ver. 22.)

On the two side-posts.] Upon which folding-doors moved. For from thence, Bochart thinks, they had their name in the Hebrew.

And on the upper door-posts.] The Hebrew word *maskuph* is no where to be found but in this chapter; and its carrying in it a signification of *looking through*, may induce us to think they had lattices at the top of their doors, through which they could peep, to see who knocked, before they opened them. Both these were sprinkled with the blood, but not the threshold, lest any body should tread upon it, which had been profane, this being a holy thing. This striking or sprinkling of the blood upon the posts, seems to have been peculiar to the first passover at their going out of Egypt; and not to have been used in aftertimes, when there was not the same occasion for it, *viz.* to distinguish their houses from the Egyptians, for their preservation from the destroying angel.

In the houses wherein they shall eat it.] In which the whole nation was gathered together; and so all delivered.

Ver. 8. *And they shall eat the flesh in that night.*] For it was not lawful to let any of it remain till the morning, (ver. 10.) And the Hebrews say, they were to eat it after they had supped, and were well filled with other meat.

Roast with fire.] Neither raw, nor sodden (as it follows in the next verse), for it might be sooner roasted than sodden: and they were in haste to be gone when it was offered.

And unleavened bread.] Partly to put them in mind of their hardships in Egypt (for unleavened bread is heavy and unsavoury) and partly to commemorate their deliverance from thence in such haste, that they had not time to leaven it, (ver. 39. Deut. xvi. 3.)

And with bitter herbs.] They were used for the same end, to put them in mind of their hard bondage in Egypt, which made their lives bitter to them, (i. 14.). Maimonides says, there were five of these herbs, whose names he mentions: but it is hard for us to tell what they were. That great man Bochartus hath given some guesses at them; and thinks the first of them was *wild lettice*, which is extremely bitter. (See Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50. p. 603, &c. and his Canaan, lib. ii. cap. 15. p. 857.)

Ver. 9. *Eat not of it raw.*] *i. e.* Half roasted; when some of the blood remains still in it. So Maimonides expounds it: and see Hottinger in his Smegma Orient. p. 169. For it doth not seem necessary to forbid them to eat it quite raw, mankind generally abhorring such food; unless we suppose there were such barbarous customs now, as there were in aftertimes; when, in some of the gentile feasts (particularly those of Bacchus) which had their original in Egypt, (as Herodotus tells us, lib. ii. cap. 49. and Plutarch also, lib. de Isid. et Osir.) they tore the members of living creatures in pieces, and did eat them, the blood running about their mouths, as Julius Firmicus observes. But the opinion of Theodoret seems to me probable (Serm. x. Περὶ χρησμῶν), that in old time, the wicked demons were in love with the sacrificing of men to them: but when they saw mankind began to abhor such sacrifices, and to abstain from them, as abominable cruelty, then they invented τὰς διαμαστιγώσεις καὶ ὠμοφαγίας, &c. *Scourgings and whippings, eating of raw flesh, and of other such-like rites,* (tom. iv. p. 625.)

Nor sodden at all with water.] It seems superfluous to say sodden, or boiled, *with water:* there being no other way of boiling things. But the Hebrew word *bashal* signifying to *roast*, as well as to *boil*, according as the matter is, Moses takes away that ambiguity, by adding *with water;* and also by expressly naming the opposite to it, *but roast with fire.* Which was ordained in opposition to some gentile customs in the eastern countries (if they were so ancient as the times of Moses), where they boiled the flesh of their sacrifices, when they prayed to their gods against drought, by the scorching heat of the sun. So Athenæus relates, out of Philocorus, that the Athenians did, in their sacrifices to the ὧραι, who came, in all likelihood, from the Egyptian Horus, which signifies *Apollo*, or the sun. The Zabii also were wont to boil kids in milk.

Roast with fire.] Contrary to the manner in all other peace-offerings, whose flesh, that was allowed to be eaten, either by priest or people, was to be sodden; even in the feast of the Passover: as we read expressly 2 Chron. xxxv. 13. where these things are accurately distinguished. And Maimonides gives this as the reason of it (why they are commanded to *eat it roasted*), because they went out in great haste, and had not time to boil it, (par. iii. More Nev. cap. 46.) Some of the gentiles in aftertimes *roasted* their meat in the sun, as Heliodorus tells us, lib. i. Ethiopic. And some Grecian women (as Plutarch tells us) did the same in their feast called Θεσμοφόρια.

His head with his legs, and the purtenance thereof.] They were to roast the lamb whole; to avoid perhaps the superstition of the gentiles, who were wont to rake into the bowels of their sacrifices, to make curious observations;

and also (in the Ωμοφογία of Bacchus) thought themselves full of their deity, when they ate the entrails of their sacrifices, with the blood running about their mouths, as Arnobius tells us.

Ver. 10. *And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning.*] This was a law about *eucharistical sacrifices,* (Lev. xxii. 30.) and before that, Lev. vii. 15. (only there is an exception in the two following verses, 16, 17. for sacrifices that were a *vow,* or a *voluntary offering,*) by which God provided that holy things should not be in danger to be corrupted, or put to profane uses; and that they might not lose their just estimation: as even common meat doth, which is not so much valued when it is kept till the next day; for men desire that which is fresh and newly dressed.

In this paschal sacrifice, also, it was the more necessary it should not remain, lest they should have been forced, either to carry it away with them, which might have been troublesome; or, if they left it behind them, it might have been profaned, and exposed to contempt by the Egyptians, or at least have been corrupted, which would not have beseemed so holy a meat. Besides, there might have been danger also of turning such relics to superstitious uses, as the brazen serpent was: God working as great a deliverance by the one, as by the other. And this we may the rather think, because it is certain the ancient idolaters were wont to save some part of their sacrifices for superstitious purposes, as appears from Baruch vi. 27. Herodotus testifies the same concerning the ancient Persians, (lib. i. cap. 132.) Which the Hebrews might have been easily inclined to do, if they had left any remains of this sacrifice, which had such wonderful effects for their preservation.

And that which remaineth of it till the morning ye shall burn with fire.] We read in Macrobius of such a custom among the ancient Romans, in a feast called Protervia: where the manner was (as Flavianus there saith), "ut si quid ex epulis superfuisset, igne consumeretur:" *that if any thing was left of the good cheer, it should be consumed with fire,* (lib. ii. Saturnal. cap. 2.)

Ver. 11. *And thus shall ye eat it.*] He here orders the habit and posture wherein they should partake of the Passover: which was like travellers, or like those who were going about some laborious work. So the three following particulars plainly import.

With your loins girt.] They wearing long and loose garments, in the eastern countries, it was necessary to tie them up, and gird them about their loins, whensoever they either went a journey, or undertook, as I said, any great labour; that so their garments might not be an impediment to them, as they would have been, if they had hung down about their heels. (See 2 Kings iv. 29.)

Your shoes on your feet.] Many fancy this refers to the ancient custom of putting off their shoes (which God now forbids) when they went to eat, lest they should make the beds dirty, on which they lay leaning. But Bochart hath demonstrated that this custom was not so ancient; but that in Moses's time, and after, they sat at their tables as we do now: of which there are many instances, in the book of Genesis, and elsewhere. And therefore it is more likely the Jews were wont to go without shoes when they were in Egypt; for anciently men did so; and that being a hot country, there was no need of them. And besides, they were so oppressed, that they may well be supposed to want many such conveniences of life. But now God commands them to put on shoes, being to travel a long journey. (See his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50. p. 508.)

And your staff in your hand.] Still the posture of travellers, who never went without a staff; both to support them in slippery places, and to defend them against assaults, (Gen. xxxii. 10.) They seem now to have eaten the lamb, leaning on their staves; and therefore stood all the time, as men ready to depart. But these were things peculiar only to that Passover which they kept in Egypt: afterwards they were not tied to them.

Ye shall eat it in haste.] As men expecting every moment to begin their journey. This was the foundation of many of the laws about the Passover, as Maimonides observes, (par. iii. More Nev. cap. 46.)

It is the Lord's Passover.] To be kept in memory of his wonderful mercy in sparing the Israelites, when he destroyed the Egyptians, and delivering them from their cruel bondage.

Ver. 12. *For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night.*] See xi. 4.

And will smite all the first-born, &c.] A most grievous judgment; all children being very dear to their parents, especially their first-born; and those more especially who are their only children, as it is likely they were too many in Egypt. It was the sorer plague also, because no man's children were spared, that he might comfort his neighbours; but they were all at the same time bewailing their loss. It is not certain by what sort of death they were smitten; but it was sudden, and extinguished them all in the same moment.

And against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment.] And so Moses tells us he did, Numb. xxxiii. 4. From whence it appears that the Egyptians were idolaters in Moses's days; and the Jewish doctors will have it, that all their idols were destroyed this night. So Jonathan in his Paraphrase: "Their molten images were dissolved and melted down; their images of stone were dashed in pieces; their images made of earth were crumbled into bits, and their wooden ones reduced to ashes." Of the truth of which we cannot be assured; though we meet with it not only in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 48. but in the author of Dibre hajamim, &c. or, the Life and Death of Moses: whose words are these: "All the first-born, both of man and beast, were smitten; the images also and pictures destroyed; whereupon the Jews borrowing gold, silver, and garments of the Egyptians, they went away laden with riches, according to what God said to Abraham, (Gen. xv. 14.) 'That nation whom they serve will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance.'" This the heathen seem to have understood (for this story reached them) as if they had carried away the gold and silver and garments of the Egyptian idols: for so Trogus reports it (in Justin, lib. xxxvi. cap. 2.) that when Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, "Sacra Ægyptiorum furto abstulit;" *he stole away the holy things of the Egyptians,* which he makes the reason why Pharaoh pursued them. Artapanus also in Eusebius saith, that most of their temples were overthrown by an earthquake, (lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 27.)

There are those, who by Elohim understand nothing

but their princes or judges, the great men of the kingdom, upon whom the judgment of God was now executed. But another place in this book, (xx. 23.) plainly determines it to signify images.

I am the Lord.] There is no other God but me: as he had said he would make both the Israelites and Pharaoh also to know, (x. 2. xi. 7.)

Ver. 13. *And the blood shall be to you for a token.*] Or a *sign*, by which the Israelites were assured of safety and deliverance from the destroying angel. Of which token, if we may believe Epiphanius, there was a memorial preserved even among the Egyptians themselves, though they were ignorant of the original of their own rites. For at the equinox (which was the time of the Passover) they marked their cattle and their trees, and one another, ἐκ μίλτου, with *red ochre*, or some such thing, which they fancied would be a preservative to them.

And when I see the blood.] Wheresoever my angel finds this blood upon the door-posts.

I will pass over you, &c.] Here is the reason of the name of *pesach*, as the Hebrews call it; or *pischa*, or *pascha*, as it is called by the Chaldees: because God ordered his angel to *pass over*, or *pass by*, the children of Israel, and not to smite any body in their families, when he smote every first-born of the Egyptians, (ver. 23.)

Ver. 14. *And this day shall be unto you for a memorial.*] To preserve in mind God's wonderful works, which "he made to be remembered," (Psal. cxi. 4.) that is, ordered and disposed things in such a manner, that they should not be forgotten: particularly by instituting a festival solemnity upon this day, as it here follows.

And you shall keep it a feast to the Lord, &c.] Called the feast of the Passover: the rites of which are all manifestly contrived to preserve a memory of the benefits they now received.

An ordinance for ever.] To the end of that economy. For it often signifies only a long duration, as Deut. xv. 17. And here imports no more, but that they should keep this ordinance, not only now, but when they came into the land of Canaan.

Ver. 15. *Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread.*] The seven days following the feast of the Passover, were observed as a distinct festival, and called "the feast of unleavened bread," (ver. 17.) because no bread that had any leaven in it, might be eaten all that time. Which the Jews expound thus: not that they were bound to eat unleavened bread all those seven days (which was necessary only on that night when the passover was killed) but only not to eat leavened bread. That was utterly unlawful; but they might eat rice, or parched corn, or any such thing. (See Patavius in Epiphan. Hæres. lxx. n. 11.)

At their march, indeed, out of Egypt, they were forced to eat unleavened bread (having none else to eat) not only for seven days, but for a whole month: that is, from the fifteenth of the first month, to the fifteenth and sixteenth of the next, when God gave them manna and quails, (xvi. 1. 12, 13.) But necessity, as I said, compelled them to this; they having nothing else to support them in the wilderness during that time; because, through haste, they were constrained to bring their dough out of Egypt unleavened, (ver. 39.)

Even the first day ye shall put leaven out of your houses.] Which they searched with great diligence the evening before; that the smallest crumb might not be left behind. So their doctors tell us, particularly Maimonides in his treatise on this subject. (See Buxtorf. Synagog. Judaic. cap. 17.)

That soul shall be cut off from Israel.] See concerning this *cereth* (or *cutting off*), which is often mentioned in these books, Gen. xvii. 14. Most think it a punishment by the hand of God, and not of man.

Ver. 16. *And in the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and in the seventh day*, &c.] The first and the last days of the *feast of unleavened bread* were kept holy (the other five were working days), because, as God delivered them from their cruel bondage in Egypt upon the first day, so he overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea upon the seventh.

No manner of work shall be done in them.] No manner of servile work. (See Lev. xxiii. 7, 8.)

Save only that which every man must eat, &c.] He that did any other work was to be beaten. For they equal these days with the sabbath in this regard; that whatsoever work was forbidden on the sabbath, might not be done on any such days as these, which they call *good days*. But they might provide good cheer on these days; though not more than could be eaten. See Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. cap. 19. where he shews at large what things might be done, and what not on these days, according to the opinion of their doctors.

Ver. 17. *And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread*, &c.] He repeats it again because it was a thing of great moment, to have these seven days observed entirely, and not only the Passover upon the fourteenth day in the evening: that they might every year think so long of God's great goodness, in delivering them from their miserable condition in Egypt, as not to let the sense of so singular a benefit slip at any time quite out of their minds.

By an ordinance for ever.] See ver. 14.

Ver. 18. *In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even*, &c.] The Passover was celebrated in the conclusion of the fourteenth day of this month; just before the beginning of the fifteenth day. For the next morning, when the Israelites, immediately after they had eaten the lamb, were hastened out of Egypt, was not part of the fourteenth day, but of the fifteenth: as we read Numb. xxxii. 3.

Until the one-and-twentieth day of the month at even.] That is, for seven days, (as was said before, ver. 15. and again is repeated ver. 19.) which began immediately after the eating the paschal lamb, in the end of the fourteenth day. For if they should be reckoned from the beginning of the fourteenth day, there would be not seven, but eight days of unleavened bread.

Ver. 19. *Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses.*] This still makes the precept stricter; that they were not only to abstain from any thing leavened, but not so much as to have it in their habitations. Accordingly the Jews tell us, of an exact search which every one was bound to make, with lighted wax candles, lest it should remain in any corner or crevice of the house. Their scrupulosity in this matter is exactly described by Buxtorf, in his Synag. Jud. cap. 17. p. 394. &c.

Whether he be a stranger, &c.] This is one of another na-

tion: but had embraced the Jewish religion, by receiving circumcision. For none else were admitted to eat of the Passover, (ver. 48.) Such a person was called by the Greeks, a *proselyte*.

Ver. 20. *Ye shall eat nothing leavened.*] This, according to the Jews, explains what follows: *In all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.* That is, if they eat any bread at all, it was to be without leaven: (see ver. 15.) Accordingly, on the day before the Passover, they were very busy in making cakes, which they call *mazzoth*, without any butter or oil, or so much as salt in them; of mere water and flour. Which being very insipid, some made bold (as their authors tell us) to add eggs and sugar; and sometimes the richer sort made them of mere almonds; both for the honour of the feast (as they pretended) and for the comfort of sick and infirm people, as well as to render them more pleasant. Yet on the first day of the feast they would eat none of these, but only the *bread of affliction* (as they called it), made merely of meal and water.

Ver. 21. *Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel.*] Immediately after he had received the command from God, he summoned them to deliver it to the people, that it might be put in execution. Concerning *elders*, see iii. 16.

Draw out, and take you a lamb.] It is thus expounded by Jonathan in his Paraphrase, *withdraw your hands from the idols of Egypt, and take a lamb to your families*, &c. By which it appears, he thought this was opposed to the rites of the Egyptians: but I know not on what ground; for the Israelites offered no sacrifices there.

According to your families.] See ver. 3.

And kill the passover.] It belonged to every man to do it, (as was said ver. 6.) and now there was no priest, as yet, ordained: but every father of a family exercised that office. I need not mention the manner after which the Jewish writers say it was to be slain.

The Passover.] The Hebrew word *pesach* signifies principally the angel's *passing by* the Israelites when he slew the Egyptian children. From whence it came to signify also the lamb that was offered in memory of this deliverance; and was a means of it at this time. So it signifies here, and in many other places. And likewise it signifies all the sacrifices which were wont to accompany this lamb, and were offered to God with it, at this festival, (Deut. xvi. 2.) And, lastly, the feast itself is called by this name, Luke xxii. 1.

And here it may be fit to note, that the lamb being first killed in Egypt, it was killed in every man's house, for they had no altar there, nor any other place where they had liberty to kill it. But after they came to the land of Canaan, it was not lawful to sacrifice it any where, but in the place which God appointed for his worship, (Deut. xvi. 2.) From whence Maimonides concludes, that whatsoever they did with other sacrifices, yet this could not be offered in the high places, but only at the Temple. And it is likely they did so in the Wilderness, the Tabernacle being newly erected at the keeping of the second Passover, (Numb. ix. 5.)

Ver. 22. *And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop.*] So the leper was to be cleansed, and the house infected with leprosy, (Lev. xiv. 6, 7. 49, 50, &c.) and so the prophet David prays to be purged from his sin, (Psal. li. 9.) Whence it is that Hesychius calls this herb βοτάνη σμήχουσα, *an abstersive and purging herb*, because it was appointed by the law of Moses for this purpose; otherwise, there is nothing abstersive in its nature.

And dip it in the blood that is in the bason.] The Hebrew word *saph*, which is here translated *bason*, is translated *cup* in Zach. xii. 2. but the LXX. and Vulgar take it to signify the *door* or *threshold* of the house, where some suppose the lamb was killed. Certain it is, that some of the vessels of the sanctuary are called in the plural number *sippim* and *sippoth*, (1 Kings vii. 50. Jer. lii. 19.) though the vessels which received the blood of the beast at the altar of burnt-offerings are called by another name: (see Exod. xxvii. 3.) There were no such now, and therefore they received the blood at present in a common *bason* or *cup*.

And strike the lintel, &c.] Or *sprinkle* it, as many understand it. For there being, as yet, no altar, the blood is ordered to be *sprinkled* in this manner; having in it something of the nature of a propitiation. Because by this *sprinkling* of the blood, God's displeasure was turned away from the Israelites, when it fell upon those houses where his blood was not seen.

And the two side-posts.] See ver. 7.

And none of you shall go out of the door of his house.] The destroying angel could have discerned an Israelite from an Egyptian though he had met him in the street: but this was required, to teach them that their safety consisted in being under the protection of the blood of this lamb, which was shed to save their blood from being spilt. Thus in the flood there was no safety but in the ark: nor could Rahab have been saved, when Jericho was destroyed, out of the house where the scarlet thread was tied.

Until the morning.] When they were importuned by the Egyptians very early (not long after midnight, ver. 31, &c.) to be gone with all they had, out of their country.

Ver. 23. *For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians.*] As he had threatened, (ver. 12.) For he rehearses to the elders what God had told him.

And when he seeth the blood, &c. *the Lord shall pass over the door*, &c.] So he had promised before, (ver. 13.) Maimonides, being of the opinion that the Zabii and other idolaters abhorred the killing of such creatures, thinks that God ordained this killing of the lamb, &c. both to purge the minds of the Jews from such false opinions, and make profession of the contrary; and to persuade men that that action which they accounted deadly preserved from death; according to these words, *the Lord shall pass over the door*, &c. (Par. iii. More Nevoch. cap. 46.)

Ver. 24. *And ye shall observe this thing*, &c.] Keep this feast, by sacrificing a lamb, and eating no leavened bread: though some of the ceremonies wherewith it was now observed, in aftertimes were not necessary.

Ver. 25. *When you be come to the land which the Lord shall give you*, &c.] This deliverance is not to be forgotten when God hath given you rest, in the land he hath promised you. But there you are most carefully to preserve the memory of it, by keeping this feast every year. And, indeed, most think they were not bound to keep it till they came thither: but what they did in the wilderness the next year was by a special direction, not by virtue of the command in this chapter, (Numb. ix. 1, 2, &c.)

Ye shall keep this service.] In all things, except what was proper and peculiar to their coming out of Egypt.

Ver. 26. *When your children shall say unto you, What mean you by this service?*] When children were twelve years old, their parents were bound to bring them to the temple; where, seeing what was done at this festival, they would be apt to inquire into the meaning of it. At every feast also of the Passover, the eldest person at the table instructed all the younger sort, that were there present, in the reason of this institution, rehearsing these very words, as Conradus Pellicanus observes: "This is the sacrifice of the Passover, in remembrance that the Lord passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."

Ver. 27. *It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover.*] Or, the sacrifice of the Passover *to the Lord: i. e.* in honour of the Lord, who passed over the Israelites, when he smote the Egyptians. It is frequently called by the name of a *sacrifice,* (xxiii. 18. xxxiv. 25. Deut. xvi. 4—6.) and it is called *corban;* which is a name given only to those things which were brought to be offered up to God. See Numb. ix. 13. where, as it is called *corban,* so the same word is used for *bringing it,* which is commonly used about other sacrifices. And it further appears to have been properly a *sacrifice,* by the rites belonging to it: for the blood of it was sprinkled by the priests, (2 Chron. xxx. 16. xxxv. 11.) Which, though it could not be done here, because they had no altar in Egypt; yet the posts of their houses (as I observed before) were sprinkled with it; and it had an effect accordingly.

And the people.] To whom the elders (ver. 21.) reported these things from Moses.

Bowed the head, and worshipped.] Expressed their belief of what Moses had said; and humbly acknowledged God's goodness to them.

Ver. 28. *And the children of Israel went away.*] To their several habitations.

And did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron.] (ver. 1.) They kept the Passover.

So did they.] According to all the forenamed rites belonging to it.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass, that, at midnight, the Lord smote,* &c.] According to the foregoing threatening, (xi. 4, 5.) See there.

The captive that was in the dungeon.] The pit or hole under ground. For the Hebrew signifies the lowest part of the prison. (See xi. 5.)

Ver. 30. *And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants, and all the Egyptians.*] I suppose the angel made a great noise when he came to give the blow; which made the Egyptians start out of their sleep, and behold the calamity which was come upon them. Or perhaps the first-born gave such a lamentable shriek, when they were struck, that it awakened the whole family.

And there was a great cry in Egypt.] It is no improbable conjecture, which was made a great while ago by Fortunatus Scacchus, in his Mirothec. Ebræochrism, (lib. i. cap. 6.) that the solemn feast among the Egyptians, wherein they went about with candles in the night, seeking for Osiris, with tears and great lamentations, took its original from Pharaoh's rising up out of his bed at midnight, and all the Egyptians with him; who, lighting candles, and finding their children dead, bewailed them with loud cries. And it is not unreasonable to think, as he doth, that Pharaoh's eldest son, who was now slain, had the name of Osiris: whose sudden death, by this stroke, all posterity lamented in one night of the year. Which was when the moon was at full, as he observes out of Apulcius: which still confirms this conjecture; it being at a full moon when this slaughter was made, and the Israelites delivered out of Egypt.

For there was not a house where there was not one dead.] If there were any children in it.

Ver. 31. *And he called for Moses and Aaron.*] By some of his servants whom he sent to them; as ver. 33. seems to signify.

By night.] He durst not stay till the next morning, for fear he should have been cut off also before that time.

And said, Rise up.] One would think by this that they found them sleeping securely in their beds, when this deadly blow was given to the Egyptians.

And get you forth from amongst my people, both you and the children of Israel, &c.] For he was sorely afraid, if they stayed any longer, they would bring some greater mischief upon him.

Go, serve the Lord, as ye have said.] He had several times made this concession; but was never so much in earnest as now.

Ver. 32. *Also take your flocks and your herds,* &c.] Though his heart had been often hardened, yet this slaughter of all their first-born made such a deep impression upon him, that he comes fully up to their terms, yielding for the present to all they had desired; though he did not continue constant in this mind, but soon revolted.

And bless me also.] Pray for me, as the Chaldee translates it.

Ver. 33. *And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people.*] They that brought from Pharaoh a grant of all the Israelites desired (and others also who had lost their children), pressed very hard upon them to accept it, and that with all speed: not out of love to the Israelites, but for fear they should perish themselves, if they did not leave their country. Pharaoh, especially, seeing his first-born, the heir of his crown, struck suddenly dead, had reason to conclude the next blow would be at his own life.

To send them out of the land of Egypt.] This shews they were not merely dismissed, but entreated, nay importuned, to depart. Such a change had this slaughter, and the general outcry that followed upon it, made in their hearts.

In haste.] They that were unwilling before to hearken to the Israelites' petition, now make their petitions to them: and were so glad to be rid of them, that they would not suffer them to delay their departure: nay, made a *golden-bridge* (as we speak) for their speedy passage out of Egypt, (ver. 35, 36.)

For they said, We be all dead men.] They were desirous the Israelites should enjoy their liberty, rather than they lose their own lives.

Ver. 34. *And the people took their dough, before it was leavened.*] They seemed to have newly mixed their flour and water together, and kneaded it into paste or *dough,* as we translate it: but had not put any leaven into it, nor had time to make it into cakes, and bake them.

Their kneading-troughs.] The Hebrew word comprehends both the *dough* and the thing wherein it was contained: which in viii. 3. we translate *ovens*, and here *kneading-troughs*, in which their dough was carried.

Being bound up in their clothes.] The Hebrew word for *clothes*, signifies any thing that covers another; or wherein it is wrapped: as the *dough* was in linen-clothes, it is most likely (for that is usual), to keep it from the cold air, which was sharp in the night, and would have hindered its rising.

On their shoulders.] For we do not read of any waggons or horses they had for the carriage of their goods out of Egypt.

Ver. 35. *And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses.*] Who had commanded them from God, to do as it here follows, (xi. 1, 2.) which was their warrant, and justified the fact.

And they borrowed of the Egyptians, &c.] So most understand it: though some think it was a free gift which the Egyptians bestowed upon them; when they were very desirous (as we read before) to have them gone out of their country; which made them not only entreat but hire them to depart. So Jacobus Capellus, ad A. M. 2503. They that had denied them leave to go away for a few days (saith he), now press them to depart with all speed; "quin et precibus Israelitas demulcent, ac donis onerant Ægyptii:" (see iii. 23.) But it is commonly thought, that the Egyptians imagined the Israelites only desired to appear as well adorned as they could before their God, at the great feast they were to hold in the wilderness, and so they readily lent them these jewels and fine clothes to deck themselves withal; which they hoped would be restored to them again as soon as the sacrifice was over.

Ver. 36. *And the Lord gave the people favour,* &c.] As he had promised, iii. 21. and see xi. 3.

So that they lent them such things as they required.] Though the men borrowed as well as the women, (xi. 3.) yet the women are only mentioned, (iii. 23.) because they borrowed most: and the women and maidens of Egypt might be the more willing to bestow their jewels and earrings upon them, that they might woo their husbands, children, and relations, to be gone with all speed.

And they spoiled the Egyptians.] God hath a supreme right to all things; and there was a just cause why he should transfer the right of the Egyptians unto the Israelites. (See xi. 2.) Unto which add this story, which is told in the Gemara of the Sanhedrin; that in the time of Alexander the Great, the Egyptians brought an action against the Israelites, desiring they might have the land of Canaan, in satisfaction for all that they borrowed of them when they went out of Egypt. To which Gibeah ben Kosam, who was advocate for the Jews, replied; that before they made this demand, they must prove what they alleged, that the Israelites borrowed any thing of their ancestors. Unto which the Egyptians thought it sufficient to say, that they found it recorded in their own books; mentioning this place. Well then, said the advocate, look into the same book, and you will find the children of Israel lived four hundred and thirty years in Egypt: pay us for all the labour and toil of so many thousand people as you employed all that time, and we will restore what we borrowed. To which they had not a word to answer. Tertullian mentions such a controversy, or plea between the two nations, (lib. ii. advers. Marcion.) where he relates this from an ancient tradition. (See Mr. Selden, lib. vii. de Jure Nat. et Gen. cap. 8.) Besides this, it is not impertinent to observe, that the Egyptians were declared enemies to the Jews: now it is not unlawful to spoil an enemy; nor ought this, upon that account, to be called a theft. This reason Clemens Alexandrinus joins to the former: (see lib. i. Stromat. p. 345. D.) But nobody, I think, hath expressed this in better words, and more full of sense, than our famous Dr. Jackson, book x. upon the Creed, chap. 40. where considering God, as become the *King* of this people, in a proper and peculiar manner; and considering, also, what unsufferable wrongs the king and people of Egypt had done unto this people of God, who were now become his peculiar subjects, or *proprietary lieges;* he concludes, that this fact, even by the course of human law, or law of nations, was more justifiable, than royal grants of letters of mart, or other like remedies are, against such other nations as have wronged their subjects, or suffered them to be wronged by any under their command, without restitution, when they solemnly, or by way of embassy demanded it. In short, whatsoever the Hebrew women took from the Egyptians, they took and possessed, *by the law of reprisal:* that is, by virtue of a special warrant, granted by the Lord himself, as he was now become, in special, not only the *God* of his people, but their *King.*

Ver. 36. *And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses.*] Whether this were a city or a country, the Israelites seem in this place to have made a general *rendezvous* (as we now speak), it being well known to them; for they were thereabout first planted, (Gen. xlvii. 11.)

Unto Succoth.] This being the fifteenth of Nisan, they began to keep the feast of unleavened bread at this place: called Succoth from the booths or tents which were here first erected (no houses being there), wherein they continued while they lived in the wilderness; and many preferred them before houses, when they came to Canaan. Whence we read so often, such expressions as these: *To thy tents,* O Israel; or, *They went every man to his tent.*

It is an idle fancy of R. Solomon upon this place, that they travelled this day one hundred and twenty miles, and that in an hour, because it is said (xix. 4.) that God *carried them on eagles' wings.* Some will have this place called Succoth, because the cloud of glory began here first to overspread them.

About six hundred thousand on foot that were men.] *i. e.* Were twenty years old, and upward; all fit for war.

Besides children.] If we reckon all under twenty years of age, with all the women and old men, there could not be less than *fifteen hundred thousand persons.* A vast increase in the space of a little more than two hundred years, from seventy persons that went down into Egypt.

Ver. 38. *And a mixed multitude went up also with them.*] Some think these were only a rabble that marched along with them; imagining they would return at three days' end. Which when they saw they did not they began to mutiny, and quarrelled with Moses, &c. as the author of Dibre Hajamim tells the story. Others think that many Israelites had made marriages with the Egyptians (as some it is plain did, Lev. xxiv. 10.) who now accompanied them at their departure, being loath to leave their relations. But it is most probable they were proselytes of the gate (as the Jews call them), who had renounced idolatry, but were not

entered into the covenant, by being circumcised. (See Selden, lib. i. de Synedriis, cap. 3.) It is uncertain what number there was of these; but it appears they were a *multitude.*

And flocks and herds, and very much cattle.] Some of which perhaps belonged to the mixed multitude: for they among the Egyptians that feared the Lord's word, preserved their cattle from the stroke of the hail, which destroyed all that was in the field, (ix. 20.)

Ver. 39. *And they baked.*] When they came to Succoth.

Unleavened cakes, &c.] The Scripture often mentions such bread, (Gen. xviii. 6. Numb. xi. 8. 1 Kings xvii. 12.) *for it was not leavened.* They could not stay till it was leavened; being thrust out in haste as they were preparing it, (ver. 33.) which doth not signify that they put leaven to it, when they came to Succoth (as Grotius understands it), for that was inconsistent with the *feast of unleavened bread;* which they were commanded to keep, (ver. 15.) and which it is reasonable to suppose they now observed, as well as killed and eat the paschal lamb, (ver. 6. 28.)

Neither had they prepared themselves any victuals.] This justifies what I observed upon ver. 15. that they lived a whole month upon unleavened bread, till God sent them manna to eat.

Ver. 40. *Now the sojourning.*] So the Hebrew word *moshab* most certainly signifies; not merely dwelling (as the Vulgar Latin renders it) but dwelling like strangers, who are not in their own country. Thus Abraham is said to *sojourn,* (Gen. xx. 1.) and Isaac and Jacob, (xxviii. 4.) And therefore, whereas the Roman copy of the LXX. reads here κατοίκησις, the *habitation,* the Alexandrian copy hath παροίκησις, the *peregrination* or *sojourning,* as we well translate it.

Of the children of Israel.] These words comprehend their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; as is evident from hence: that otherwise Israel himself should not be included in this sojourning, who was the person that brought them into Egypt, and lived there with his family seventeen years. Nor is any thing more ordinary in Scripture, than under the name of the father to comprehend all his posterity; and likewise, when the posterity is only mentioned to intend also their fathers: there being such a near union between parents and children, that they are considered as one person, (Deut. xxvi. 5. 9. Judg. x. 11, 12. Hosea xii. 4. and many other places.) And therefore the Samaritan copy here rightly reads, *the habitation of the children of Israel and of their fathers,* &c. Which is not to be taken for a translation of these words, but an interpretation. And so some copies of the LXX. had it, as St. Austin observes, anciently; and Drusius lately mentions an edition, wherein it was thus paraphrased, αὐτοὶ καὶ οἱ πατέρες αὐτῶν, *they and their fathers.*

Who dwelt in Egypt.] Here also the Samaritan copy hath it (as an explication, no doubt, not a literal translation), *who dwelt in the land of Canaan and in Egypt.* And so the Vatican edition of the LXX. *The habitation of the children of Israel, which dwelt in the land of Egypt and in Canaan.* Which is no late addition, but was in ancient copies; for Aben Ezra testifies in his commentary on this place, that they thus explained it, *which dwelt in Egypt and in other countries:* as Drusius observes, in his Quæsita per Epistolam, 51.

Was four hundred years.] That is, from the time of Abraham's coming from Charran into the land of Canaan (when this *sojourning* began till their going out of Egypt, was just *four hundred and thirty years.* For from Abraham's coming to sojourn in Canaan, to the birth of Isaac, was *twenty-five* years; and Isaac was *sixty* years old when he begat Jacob; who was a *hundred and thirty* years old when he went down into Egypt: which numbers put together, make *two hundred and fifteen years.* And from his family's coming into Egypt, till their departure, was just as many more. Which agrees perfectly with what the apostle saith, that the promise made by God to Abraham and his seed could not be made void by the law, which was *four hundred and thirty* years after, (Galat. iii. 16, 17.) Now the first promise made to Abraham was, when God bade him go to Canaan, Gen. xii. 3. (See Gen. xv. 13.) There are some, indeed, that reckon their stay in Egypt to have been only *two hundred and ten* years; and then they took in the *five* years Abraham stayed at Charran, after he left Ur of the Chaldees, to make up these *four hundred and thirty* years: of which opinion is Drusius, in the place abovementioned. But Josephus saith expressly, that they departed out of Egypt, διακοσίοις πρὸς τοῖς δεκάπεντε ἐνιαυτοῖς ὕστερον, *two hundred and fifty years after Jacob came into it,* (lib. ii. Antiq. cap. 5.)

All the difficulties that have been raised by commentators in the exposition of these words, are avoided by this interpretation; if we admit, that is, only these two synecdoches (the figure of part for the whole), first, that under the name of the children of Israel is comprehended Israel himself, with his father and grandfather: and secondly, that their sojourning comprehends the whole time that this nation dwelt in a land that was not theirs; half of which time, at least, was spent in Egypt. (See Guliel. Vorstius, in his notes upon Tzemach David, p. 200. 205. Ludov. Capellus Chron. Sacra, p. 135.) But especially our most learned primate Usher, Chron. Sacr. (cap. 8.) where he largely confutes the contrary opinion; which, if any one desire to see defended, I know none that hath done it better than Gerhardus I. Vossius, in his Isagoge Chronologica Dissert. vii. cap. 1, &c. where he fairly represents the arguments on both sides; but inclines himself to think the children of Israel dwelt four hundred and thirty years in Egypt; and endeavours to answer those who assert that interpretation which I have given, (cap. xii.) But acknowledges ingenuously (cap. 6.) that it is the sense, not only of the ancient Jews but of the ancient Christians (such as Eusebius, Epiphanius, and St. Chrysostom among the Greeks, and St. Jerome, St. Austin, &c. among the Latins), and of a vast number of later writers.

Ver. 41. *And it came to pass, at the end of the four hundred and thirty years.*] These years (says St. Jerome in Galat. iii.) are to be computed, "ab eo tempore, quo Deus ad Abrahamum locutus est," &c. *from the time when God said to Abraham,* "*In thy seed shall all nations be blessed;*" *i. e.* when he went first to Canaan.

Even the self-same day it came to pass.] They all went out on one day: or, they went out that very day four hundred and thirty years after Abraham came to Canaan. So faithful was God in his promise to his faithful servant.

That all the hosts of the Lord, &c.] So they are called, for the Lord was become their king (as I observed, iii. 10.)

and now led them forth as their captain general. And this word *hosts* imports that they went out not confusedly, but in good order; (see xiii. 18.) which is the more wonderful, there being such a vast number of them, (ver. 37, 38.) that one would think they could not so soon get together, especially in any order. But Josephus hath well resolved this: That Moses, having notice of God's intentions some days before, (see ver. 1.) had disposed them for their departure, καὶ διατάξας εἰς φρατρίας, *and distributing them into several companies*, had appointed them the place of general rendezvous, as we now speak: or at least directed who should march first, and what order they should observe, that they might not hinder one another in their march.

Ver. 42. *It is a night to be much observed.*] In the Hebrew (as the margin notes) *a night of observations.* That is, *a very remarkable night;* or a night in which there were many precepts to be observed, as some will have it. Or, as Conradus Pellicanus, a night in which the Lord, after a special manner, watched over the children of Israel. For which reason the Jews expect their Messiah to come in this night; foolishly imagining he will then find them all most ready to follow him to Jerusalem. For they are now corrupted in ancient tradition, which (I observed before, ver. 6.) was remarkably fulfilled in our Saviour's suffering that very evening, when the paschal lamb was killed, and the children of Israel redeemed from the Egyptian bondage.

Unto the Lord.] In honour of him, who had graciously begun to fulfil his promise made to their forefathers, (vi. 2—4.)

This is that night of the Lord, &c.] Which God hath commanded to be observed; because they came out at that season, (Deut. xvi. 6.) under his conduct from the Egyptian bondage. Or, it may be called *that night of the Lord,* because his power, and mercy, and faithfulness to his promises, so signally appeared that night.

Ver. 43. *And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron.*] At the same time, I suppose, that he instituted the Passover, (ver. 1.) he added this caution about it.

This is the ordinance of the Passover.] A further rule to be observed at this feast.

There shall no stranger eat thereof.] Several of the Jewish doctors, by *the son of a stranger,* understand an apostate from the religion of Israel to strange worship, *i. e.* idolatry; as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 12. p. 479.) But it is not to be so restrained, as appears from the next verse: which is a further explication of this. Wherein he ordains, that no man who did not embrace their faith and religion should eat of the Passover, though he was a proselyte so far as to be permitted to live among them. For this being a commemoration of the great deliverance bestowed upon the Israelites, none but they were to partake of it; unless they would be circumcised, and thereby come into the covenant made with Abraham. Which gave them a title to all the privileges of his children; and obliged them, as well as the natural Israelites, to give public thanks for this work of their redemption from Egyptian bondage; to worship and serve their God according as he directed.

Ver. 44. *And every man-servant that is bought for money.*] As many were in those times and countries; who became their master's proper goods, as much as their cattle.

When thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.] He was not to be circumcised against his will: but if he refused, after a year's trial (as Maimonides expounds it), to receive circumcision, his master was to sell him again. For it is very unreasonable to think, that he was to be compelled to be circumcised, as those Hebrew doctors seem to understand it, who say, "That both master and servant were forbid to eat of it, till the servant was circumcised." (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 1.) Where he shews at large, that, according to the Hebrew doctors, no man was to be admitted a proselyte, to partake of the paschal lamb, unless his whole family was circumcised with him, both children and servants.

Ver. 45. *A foreigner.*] The Hebrew word *toschab,* literally signifies a *dweller* or *inhabitant:* by which name those pious gentiles were called who renounced idolatry, though they did not embrace the Jewish religion; because they were permitted to settle among them, and dwell in their country, which was not allowed to other foreigners who continued idolaters. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 3. et cap. 5.) Where, he observes, Maimonides makes this exception, that no such persons might dwell in Jerusalem, because of the singular holiness of that city; but any where else they might, without the profession of Judaism.

And no hired servant.] Some of them were servants to the Jews, and so dwelt in the same house with them: and were called *hirelings,* when they bound themselves to serve their masters for three years: as the Jews gather from Isa. xvi. 14.

Ver. 46. *In one house shall it be eaten,* &c.] In the first night wherein this sacrifice was slain, they were enjoined not to stir out of doors, (ver. 22.) and therefore not to *carry forth ought of the flesh abroad* in another house. Besides, they were in such haste, that they had no time to send messengers from one house to another; which Maimonides makes the ground of this precept, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 46.) In aftertimes also, that law being in force, (ver. 4.) that lesser households, who had not company enough to eat the lamb up, should join with some other; it is here explained, that, for maintenance of friendly society, they should not divide the lamb, and carry half of it to another house, but all meet together in one, and feast upon it. Which the ancient fathers looked upon as a figure of the unity of the church of Christ.

This seems to be the most natural interpretation, that it should be eaten under one roof. But R. Simeon saith, "That God only bound them to eat in one company or society, not in two; but it was lawful for that family or society to eat it in two places, if they pleased." (Halicoth Olam, par. iv. sect. 3.)

Neither shall ye break a bone thereof.] The Jews fancy this law doth not speak of the lesser bones; but only of those in which there was some marrow. So Maimonides in his treatise on this subject, (chap. 10. sect. 1.) And indeed, being eaten in haste, they could not have time to break the bones, and suck out the marrow: which in the place beforenamed (in his More Nevochim), he makes the foundation of this precept: which was exactly fulfilled in the true Paschal Lamb; of which this was a figure, when he was offered for us, as St. John observes, (xix. 33. 36.)

Ver. 47. *All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.*] Women and children, as well as men. In aftertimes, indeed, only men were bound to come up at the three feasts, (xxiii. 17. xxxiv. 23. Deut. xvi. 16.) But devout people

were wont to carry up their wives and children with them, as appears by Elkanah, (1 Sam. i. 3, 4.) and by Joseph, who went up with the blessed Virgin, (Luke ii. 41.) And that place in Samuel informs us, that their sons and daughters did eat of the sacrifice.

Ver. 48. *When a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the Passover,* &c.] See ver. 43, 44.

No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.] Which is the reason, some have thought, why they observed no Passover, as far as we can find, after that in the very next year that followed their coming out of Egypt; because they were generally uncircumcised. But this seems to relate to men of another nation: who, though they were not admitted to eat of the lamb, unless they received circumcision; yet having renounced idolatry, the Jews say they might eat of the unleavened bread, and of the bitter herbs.

Ver. 49. *One law shall be to him that is home-born,* &c.] Nothing could be more equal than this, that no man should enjoy this privilege who was not of their religion; but whosoever embraced it should partake of the same benefits.

Ver. 50. *Thus did all the children of Israel.*] They kept this passover; and afterwards another, by a special direction, (Numb. ix.) but afterward, during their stay in the wilderness, they seem to have omitted it; because they omitted circumcision, without which (ver. 48.) they were not capable to partake of it.

As the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.] Observed it according to all the rites here enjoined: though in future ages several of them were omitted, as peculiar to this time.

Ver. 51. *And it came to pass, the self-same day,* &c.] On the day after they celebrated the Passover, they began their march out of Egypt. Which was a thing so notorious, that the memory of it was preserved in nations far distant from them: though the story was much corrupted, for want of the knowledge of these sacred records. For Strabo mentions it (to name no more), but saith the report was, that the Jews were descended from the Egyptians (which might be believed by strangers, because they dwelt so long in that country), and that Moses was an Egyptian priest, who had a certain part of that country; but being dissatisfied with the present state of things forsook it, and many worshippers of God (πολλοὶ τιμῶντες τὸ θεῖον) followed him. For he affirmed and taught that the Egyptians had not right conceptions, who likened God to wild beasts and cattle: nor did the Africans or Greeks conceive of him better, who represented him like to men: εἷς γὰρ ἓν τοῦτο μόνον θεὸς, τὸ περιέχον ἡμᾶς ἅπαντας καὶ γῆν καὶ θάλατταν, ὃ καλοῦμεν οὐρανὸν καὶ κόσμον: *For there is but this one only God, that which comprehends us all, and the earth and the sea, which we call heaven, and the world,* &c. In which words, he makes Moses not so foolish as the Egyptians and other nations, but attributes a senseless opinion to him (that the world, which we see, is God), if this be the right reading of his words. But I rather think the place is corrupted, and it should be, εἷς οὗτος μόνος θεὸς ὁ ποιῶν τὸ περιέχον, &c. For this is Moses's true opinion, with which he begins his books, that "he only is God who made the heaven and the earth." And this perfectly agrees with what follows in Strabo, That no image can be made of this God, and therefore a temple without any image must be erected to him, &c. Which is not true, if we take the visible world to be God; for the image of the heaven and the earth may be made, as well as of a man or a beast. However, it is true which he adds, That Moses persuaded many good men, and brought them into that country, where Jerusalem is the chief city; where they lived a long time happily, δικαιοπραγοῦντες καὶ θεοσεβεῖς ὡς ἀληθῶς ὄντες, *doing justly, and being sincerely religious.* Which is a notable testimony from a pagan, to be noted "aureis literis," *with letters of gold,* as Casaubon speaks in his Annotations on this place, (lib. xvi. p. 760, 761.)

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] After they came to Succoth; where I suppose the Schechinah appeared to him, as it had done in Midian and in Egypt; to direct him in his conduct.

Ver. 2. *Sanctify unto me the first-born.*] Separate, or set apart, from common uses, for I appropriate them to myself, as it follows in the end of the verse. This word *(sanctify)* as our Mr. Mede observes, signifies differently in several conjugations. Sometimes it signifies to devote, and consecrate to the service of God; and sometimes to use a thing as holy, being already devoted to him. And thus he reconciles this place, where he bids him sanctify all the first-born (*i. e.* look upon them as things separated to his own use, and therefore not to be used by them), with another place, (Lev. xxvii. 26.) where he saith concerning the first-born, "No man shall sanctify it, it is the Lord's;" *i. e.* the Lord hath already set it apart to himself, and therefore no man is to consecrate that again, which God hath already consecrated, that is, taken for his own. (See lib. ii. de Sanctuario Dei, p. 552.)

First-born.] There were two sorts of *first-born.* Some who were the first-born of the father, called "the beginning of his strength," (Deut. xxi. 17.) The other, the first-born of the mother, which are called here, "whatsoever openeth the womb." The Hebrews make a great difference between these two; and say, that to the former sort belong the prerogatives, both of having the inheritance of his father, and also the priesthood: but to the latter only belongs one of these prerogatives, *viz.* the priesthood. And they gather it from this very place, "whatsoever openeth the womb" (which is the first-born of the mother) is mine; *i. e.* shall be employed in my service. But instead of these, God took the Levites to attend upon him, (Numb. iii. 12.) After which, the first-born were to be redeemed at a certain rate, which was part of the priests' maintenance, (Numb. xviii. 15, 16.) See Selden de Successionibus, ad Leg. Hebr. cap. 7.

Among the children of Israel.] Whom this precept concerned peculiarly, but no other people. Therefore the Jews say, that if one of them and a gentile had any beast in common between them, the first-born was free (as their phrase is), because it is here said, *among the children of Israel,* not the gentiles. (See Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. cap. 38.)

Both of man and beast.] And is further directed and explained, (ver. 12, 13.)

It is mine.] And therefore was to be offered to God, if it were a male of any beast; only an ass was to be redeemed, (xxxiv. 19, 20.) God intended by this law to teach them

(saith R. Levi Barzelonita) that the whole world was his; and that men had nothing in it, but by his gracious grant: who challenged the first-born of every thing to himself, because all was his. For the first-born male was dearer to a man, saith he, than the apple of his eye (as no doubt he was), yet he was bound to consecrate him to God. But the plainest reason of this law was, to put them in mind of God's miraculous providence, in sparing their first-born, when those of the Egyptians were all killed. To which the Jewish doctors add a more ancient right God had to them: being the persons who sacrificed to God, before priests were ordained by the law of Moses. So Onkelos takes the "young men," (xxiv. 5.) to have been the first-born, and the priests mentioned xix. 22. (Aben Ezra also upon Numb. xvi. 1. saith the same), the truth of which I shall examine there.

Ver. 3. *And Moses said unto the people.*] God seems to have commanded Moses, at the same time he gave this precept, to repeat here at Succoth what he had said to them in Egypt, concerning the observation of the Passover, and of the feast of unleavened bread. It being of great moment to have the benefits hereby commemorated in perpetual remembrance.

Remember this day, &c.] Which was the first day of unleavened bread; commanded to be kept holy, (xii. 16.)

For by strength of hand the Lord brought you out.] That is, by a miraculous power; which constrained Pharaoh to let you go, much against his will. So God promised at his first appearance to Moses, (iii. 19.)

There shall no leavened bread be eaten.] Unleavened bread was to be eaten on the Passover night, and afterwards no leavened bread. See xii. 15, &c. where this is represented as the sense of the Jews: but the sixth and seventh verses following seem to say otherwise.

Ver. 4. *This day came ye out.*] In the morning of this day they began their march.

In the month of Abib.] This word *Abib* signifies an *ear of corn:* for then barley began to ear. The Syriac word *hababa* hath something of its sound, which signifies a *flower:* and so they here translate it, *the month of flowers.* Whence Macarius saith, God brought Israel out of Egypt, ἐν τῷ μηνὶ τῶν ἀνθῶν, *in the month of flowers;* when the pleasant spring first appeared. (See xxiii. 15.)

Ver. 5. *And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee into the land,* &c.] From hence they conclude, this precept did not oblige them in the wilderness: but it was by a special direction and command that they observed it the year after this, (Numb. ix. 1, 2, &c.) See xii. 25. 50. In confirmation of which, (Deut. xii. 1.) is alleged, where he begins to recapitulate all the laws they were to observe in Canaan; among which this is one, (xii. 5, 6.) yet this alone would not have been sufficient to prove this (for he might be thought now only to reinforce his laws, at their entrance into Canaan), if he had not added, (ver. 1.) "Ye shall not do after all the things you do here this day," &c. Which supposes, that in the unsettled condition wherein they were in the wilderness, they had not kept themselves to all those rules which follow, and had been formerly delivered.

Which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee, &c.] Gen. xv. 18, 19, &c.

Ye shall keep this service in this month.] Both the Passover, and feast of unleavened bread, (xii. 25.)

Ver. 6. *Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread.*] This seems to confute what the Jews say, that they were not bound to eat unleavened bread, but only when they ate the Passover. (See xii. 15.)

And in the seventh day shall be a feast unto the Lord.] As the first day was holy (ver. 3.) so was the last, (xii. 16.) that they might not fail in their gratitude for so great a benefit as they now commemorated.

Ver. 7. *Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days.*] This seems still to make the injunction plainer, that for seven days together they should eat *unleavened bread.* Which is so often repeated, because this made them sensible, more than any thing else, of the wonderful hand of God in bringing them out of Egypt; which was so sudden and hasty, that they had not time to bake the dough they had prepared, nor so much as put leaven to it, (xii. 39.)

There shall no leavened bread be seen with thee.] From whence the Jews conclude, that not only all such bread is to be carefully sought for and thrown out of their houses, but all their vessels that have been used the year before thoroughly scoured, lest any thing should remain in them, that might give a tincture of acidity to the bread that might be made in them. In which work they spend some days before the Passover, as Buxtorf observes in his Synag. Jud. cap. 17.

Neither shall there be leaven seen with thee, &c.] For which cause, as he there observes, they abstain, all the time of this feast, from all such things as may possibly have some leaven in them. As from honey and sugar, which are often adulterated with flower, &c.

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt shew thy son in that day,* &c.] That is, on the first day of unleavened bread, it was to be a part of their religion, to instruct their children in the meaning of their killing the lamb, and their abstinence from leaven. This the Jewish doctors make one of the DCXIII. precepts, that parents should tell the whole story of their going out of Egypt on the fifteenth day of Nisan: when every one, according to his ability, was bound in his own language, to bless and praise the name of God, for all his miracles, which he wrought for them. They are the words of R. Levi of Barcelona.

Ver. 9. *And it shall be for a sign unto thee.*] These seem to be still the words that the parents were to say to their children upon the festivals; whereby they taught them to look upon this observation as a token or memorial of what God had done for their forefathers, when he brought them out of Egypt.

Upon thy hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes.] To make thee as sensible of God's goodness, as of that which thou hast in thy hand; or of a thing that is continually before thine eyes. The Jewish superstition about their phylacteries took its rise from hence, but without any good ground: it being evident he speaks not of tying parchments, or any thing else, about their wrists, &c. but of teaching their children the meaning of their holy rites. And so some of themselves have expounded it; particularly the forementioned R. Levi of Barcelona, who gives this reason why such abundant care was taken to have these things remembered; "Because (saith he) this is the foundation of our law and of our religion: for which cause, in all our blessings and prayers, we commemorate our coming out of Egypt; because it is a sign to us, and a perfect demonstra-

tion of the creation of the world, and that our Lord God is the author of all creatures, and doth what he pleases, &c. For who but he could change the course of nature, and work such great and unheard of signs as he did? This is sufficient to confute those that deny the creation of the world; and to establish us in the belief of God most blessed: and to persuade both that there is a providence, and that his power extends to all things, both in general and particular." So he. (See ver. 16.)

That the Lord's law may be in thy mouth.] That their children might be able to declare to their posterity the law of the Lord about these matters.

For with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt.] By slaying all their first-born in one night. (See iii. 19.)

Ver. 10. *Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance.*] Of the Passover; and of the feast of unleavened bread.

In this season from year to year.] On the fourteenth, and the seven following days of the first month.

Ver. 11. *And it shall be, when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites,* &c.] Under the name of Canaanites he comprehends all the rest of the seven nations. And these words seem to import, that the law of the first-born was not to take place till they came into the promised land. Yet we find (Numb. iii. 12, 13.) that God demanded all the first-born of them, though he took the Levites in their stead: and both being numbered, and there being two hundred seventy-three first-born males more than there were Levites, (ver. 41—43.) he required them to be redeemed at five shekels a-piece, and the money to be given to the priests, (ver. 46—48.) But, perhaps, after this the law was not observed till they came to Canaan.

Which he sware unto thy fathers, &c.] See ver. 5.

Ver. 12. *That thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix.*] Here he shews what he means by that sanctification of the first-born, which was mentioned, ver. 2. and for what end and reason this was ordained. For that which is called sanctifying there, is here called *setting apart,* or separating it from the rest of that kind of creatures, for another use, *viz.* to be sacrificed to the Lord. For the word *heevarta,* which we translate *set apart,* is, in the Hebrew, *made to pass over.* Which is explained, xxii. 30. *Thou shalt give it unto me; viz.* to be offered at the altar.

The males.] The *first-born* are only mentioned, (ver. 2.) but here it is explained to signify only the males. If a female came first, and afterward a male; that male was not devoted unto God, because it did not open the womb, a female coming before it.

Shall be the Lord's.] And therefore *set apart* from common uses, to be employed in his service. That is, every firstling male of a cow, sheep, or goat, was to be offered in sacrifice: and the blood being sprinkled on the altar, the flesh of them was given to the priests. (See Numb. xviii. 17, 18.) where what is here briefly delivered, is there more largely explained.

Ver. 13. *And every firstling of an ass.*] There was the same reason for horses and camels: but an *ass* is only mentioned, because abundance of asses were bred in Judea; where there were few horses or camels. And therefore Numb. xviii. 15. it is said in general, "the firstlings of unclean beasts thou shalt redeem."

Thou shalt redeem with a lamb.] Which was to be sacrificed to God. If a man had not a lamb, he was to give the price of one. And because all lambs were not of an equal price (some being worth more than others), the rabbins say that a *good eye, i. e.* a liberal man, gave a shekel; an *evil eye* half as much; and a *middle sort* of men gave three quarters. It was to be redeemed also within thirty days.

If thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break (or cut off) *its neck.*] It was to die, one way or other, and not to be employed in common use: but thus to be disposed of, if they would not give a lamb, or its value, in exchange for it. Which men might sometimes be unwilling to do, because asses being so plentiful in that country, they might not be worth so much as a lamb. It is no improbable conjecture of Mr. Selden, that from this law of redeeming asses, the gentiles took up a fancy, which was common among them, that the Jews worshipped an ass's head. (See lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 1.) Which was one of their calumnies also of Christians (whom they took to be the same with the Jews), as we read in Minutius Felix, Tertullian, and others.

All the first-born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.] See ver. 11. Human sacrifices were not acceptable to God. For though he once commanded Abraham to offer his son, yet it was not actually done; and here he declares he did not approve of such sacrifices, by commanding them not to offer their first-born to him, as they did the firstling of clean beasts; but to redeem them. For the way of the gentile world, even in those days, was to offer their children to Moloch, as appears from (Lev. xx. 2.) where he orders him to be put to death, who "gives any of his seed to Moloch." The very same phrase which is used (as I observed, ver. 12.) concerning sacrificing the firstlings of their oxen, &c. And in Lev. xviii. 21. he uses both phrases, saying, "Thou shalt not give any of thy seed to pass through to Moloch, or to pass over to Moloch." The very same word, which we here translate (ver. 13.) *set apart.* And it was but necessary to give such precepts; for, notwithstanding these prohibitions, the Israelites fell into this barbarous way of worship, as we read Psal. cvi. 37, 38.

Now this redemption of their first-born, was not long after ordered by God himself; who took the Levites instead of them, (as we read, Numb. iii.) where a certain sum of money was paid for all the rest of the first-born, that were above the number of the Levites. Which sum, they who were born after that time paid to the priest.

Nor was this a thing unknown to the gentiles. For Paulus Venetus saith, (lib. i. cap. 45.) that the inhabitants of that region in India, called Tanguth, redeemed their sons with a ram, which they offered after the manner of the Hebrews: which makes it probable that this law of Moses had reached them; there being several remainders of the Hebrew language upon those coasts; as Huetius observes in his Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 6.

Ver. 14. *When thy son asketh thee, in time to come, What is this?*] Desires to know the meaning of this; or, whence this custom of offering or redeeming the first-born males is derived.

That thou shalt say unto him.] Great care was taken for the instruction of children in the rites of their religion;

it appears by this, and by ver. 8. where they are commanded to teach them the reason of eating unleavened bread, as here of their consecrating the first-born.

That by strength of hand, &c.] See iii. 19.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass when Pharaoh would hardly let us go.*] Obstinately persisted in his resolutions to keep us in slavery, or *hardened his heart* (as it may be translated by adding the word *libbo*), against all the monitions which had been given him, and the plagues inflicted on him.

That the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, &c.] Which struck such a terror into him, that immediately he dismissed us, (xii. 30, 31, &c.)

Therefore I sacrifice unto the Lord all that openeth the womb, &c.] Because when he slew all their first-born, he spared ours, (xii. 13. 23. 27.)

Ver. 16. *And it shall be for a token upon thine hand.*] By this means there was a perpetual remembrance preserved, of God's gracious deliverance of them, when the first-born of Egypt were slain. For nothing else can be meant by these words, but that they should endeavour, by consecrating their first-born, to keep that Divine benefit in mind as carefully as if they had put a sign upon their hand, or bound it upon their forehead before their eyes, to help their memory. For it is a plain allusion to those, who, having frail memories, are wont to tie a thread, or some such thing upon their finger, that they may not forget what they desire to remember: that which is upon their hand being continually in view, and so not easily forgotten.

And for frontlets between thine eyes.] Whatsoever be the original of the Hebrew word *totaphot*, which we translate *frontlets*, it is certain it signifies no more than *zicaron* in the ninth verse: a *memorial*, or *monument*, as the Vulgar translates it. And so Aben Ezra expounds it, *ke nu Zicaron*, as it were a memorial; and that *immoveable*, as the LXX. take it. Yet from hence the Talmudists have extracted their phylacteries (or pieces of parchment, wherein this and other texts were written), which they fancied were a kind of amulets to defend them from dangers. For so they are said to be in the Gemara Schabath; and therefore used in their prayers, to drive away evil spirits, as J. Braunius, and many others have observed. I shall only note further, that this word is found but three times in the law, and yet the Vulgar translates it three several ways; which shews how little the original is understood, though the sense of it is plain and certain. (See Petitus, his Var. Lectiones, cap. 20.)

For by strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt.] This hath been often mentioned in this very chapter, (ver. 3. 9. 14.) and now here repeated again, to make them very sensible, both that they owed their deliverance entirely to God, and that nothing was too hard for him to accomplish.

Ver. 17. *God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines,* &c.] That was the nearest way from Egypt to Canaan, by the Mediterranean, to the river of Egypt (as the Scripture calls it), and so to Azotus and Gaza: which was a journey of not above three days, as Philo says; others say of ten. But certainly it was no great way, for the sons of Jacob went it often to and fro, (Gen. xlii. xliii. &c.)

Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, &c.] The Philistines being a very warlike people, would, in all likelihood, have opposed their passage: and God knew the temper of the Israelites to be so timorous, that they would run away, and rather return to Egypt, than fight their way through Canaan. For all people grow cowardly by being kept long in slavery; which breaks their spirits, and sinks them as low as their condition. They fought indeed about forty days after this with Amalek; but it was only one battle; and then they were provided with arms (which they had not now) from the Egyptians, whom they found dead on the sea-shore. But their base temper appeared too plainly the next year, when they heard the report of the spies concerning the inhabitants of Canaan: which put the whole congregation into a fit of despair, and made them think of returning to Egypt, (Numb. xiv. 1, 2, &c.)

Ver. 18. *But God led the people about.*] The pillar of cloud mentioned ver. 21. in which the Lord was, conducted them in a way further about.

Through the way of the wilderness.] He led them to the right hand towards the Red Sea, and the desert of Arabia.

Of the Red Sea.] See x. 19.

And the children of Israel went up harnessed.] Or, in military order: for though it is not likely the Egyptians suffered them to have any arms, yet they did not go away tumultuously, like fugitives; but marched like soldiers in good order; and, as in our margin it is translated, *five in a rank*. Which is the interpretation of Theodotion anciently, and of Montanus, and others, lately. But Hottinger translates it, *in the form of an army*. For the Arabic word *chamis* (from whence, it is likely, comes the word *chamuschim* here used), signifies *exercitus πενταμερὴς, an army consisting of five parts;* which are the front, the main battle, the right wing and the left, and the rear; Smegma Orient, p. 71. And so David Chytræus long before him, "quinque agminibus," *in five bodies*, as we now speak. But the interpretation of Aben Ezra seems to be the most proper of all others, who simply expounds it, *girt about their loins*, i. e. *expedite or ready*, as Onkelos expresses it. For the Hebrew word *chomasch*, signifying those parts that are under the five small ribs, about which men were wont to be girt, when they went to fight or to travel; this word may well be rendered *εὔζωνοι, well girt*, as the LXX. translate it, (Josh. i. 14. iv. 13.) Here indeed they translate it, *πέμπτῃ δὲ γενεᾷ ἀνέβησαν, they went up in the fifth generation* (which St. Austin follows), taking Jacob for the first; Levi the second; Coath the third; Amram the fourth; and Moses the fifth. But as this exposition doth not agree with the Hebrew word, which doth not signify the fifth, but *in fives;* so it cannot be said of the children of Israel in general; for all the tribes were not yet come to the fifth generation. Our Nic. Fuller hath a learned discourse upon this word, in his Miscellan. lib. v. cap. 2.

Ver. 19. *And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him.*] And of the rest of the patriarchs, it is very probable: (see Gen. l. 25.) To which add, that the Jews say, every tribe took care of the body of the founder of their family. Which is far more likely than the story which the author of the Life and Death of Moses tells, that he carried Joseph's coffin out of Egypt upon his own shoulders: it being more probable that some of that tribe undertook the care of it. That it was buried in the bottom of Nile, is not affirmed only by him, but by Jonathan: though others say in the banks of Nile. And they seem all to have it out of the

Talmud; where in the Gemara of the title Sota, cap. i. sect. 47. they say the Egyptians themselves buried their relations in the Nile, to make the waters prosperous. And tell a vain story, how a woman called Serach told Moses where the body was, when he was at a loss where to find it, after he had searched for it three days (as the forenamed author tells the tale, while the Jews were borrowing jewels of gold and silver of the Egyptians), and that he called it up from thence, throwing (as he adds) the ineffable name into the river; which brought it up presently, though in a leaden, or, as others say, a marble coffin.

For he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, &c.] See Gen. l. 25. From whence Gaulmyn (lib. ii. cap. 2. Annot. in Vit. Mos.) not improbably conjectures, that the custom was derived of carrying the ashes of their ancestors into their own country; first by Hercules among the Greeks, and long before by the Egyptians and Chaldeans: whom the Arabians, as he shews, imitated in following ages.

Ver. 20. *And they took their journey from Succoth.*] They stayed but one day at *Succoth* (as Jac. Capellus supposes), where Moses gave the foregoing directions to them: and upon the sixteenth of Nisan they marched to *Etham.*

And encamped in Etham.] So called, he thinks, because the way here was very rugged and craggy.

In the edge of the wilderness.] Next to the Red Sea, called the wilderness of *Shur,* (xv. 22.)

Ver. 21. *And the Lord went before them.*] By *the Lord* we are here to understand the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, which appeared to Moses in the bush, (iii. 2.) when he gave him commission to bring his people out of Egypt; and directed him all along in his embassy to Pharaoh, and his treaty with him, (vi. 1, &c.) and now appeared in a glorious cloud to conduct them, and to assure them that he would take care of them. For this cloud was a symbol of his gracious presence with them, and special providence over them: it being an emanation from him (saith R. Levi ben Gersom), which was a sign (as others of the Jews speak) that God was night and day with them, to keep them from all evil. To which the prophets allude, (Isa. lii. 12. Micah ii. 13.) And though his going before them be not mentioned before this time, yet it is most likely he appeared in this cloud, as their conductor, from their first coming out of Egypt, and led them to Succoth, and then to Etham; as he did afterward to their stations, (Numb. x. 11, 12, &c.) Which doth not signify that God himself moved from place to place (for he is always every where), but this cloud was moved by him from whom it came, as a token that he was present, by his special favour, care, and providence, wheresoever it went.

By day in a pillar of a cloud.] It appeared from heaven, I suppose, in the form of a great long pillar; which below spread itself abroad, and covered the whole host of Israel. For it is certain, it was not only their guide to lead them the way (as it here follows), but also was a covering to them, whereby they were assured of the Divine protection. For so we are informed, Numb. x. 34. xiv. 14. Psalm cv. 39. 1 Corinth. x. 1. And I can see no reason to think these were different clouds, since one and the same would serve both purposes.

And by night in a pillar of fire.] The same pillar appeared in the night like fire, which in the day was like a cloud. The reason of which follows;

To give them a light.] That they might be able (as the next words tell us) to travel by night as well as by day. Which made the Psalmist say, he went before them *all the night, with the light of fire,* (lxxviii. 14.) This flaming light I take to have been a glorious appearance of angels from the Schechinah; for they always attend upon the Divine Majesty, "who maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flaming fire," (Psalm civ. 4.) Some fancy there were two distinct pillars, as these words and the next verse seem to import: but it is plain, by other places, it was but one and the same pillar, which had these different appearances. (See the next chapter, xiv. 19. 24. Deut. i. 33.) Therefore Salvian rightly describes it, (lib. i. de Gubern. Dei,) where he calls it, "Mobilem columnam, nubilam die, igneam nocte, congruas colorum diversitates pro temporum diversitate sumentem; sc. ut et diei lucem lutea obscuritate distingueret, et caliginem noctis flammeo splendore claritatis radiaret." And see Greg. Nyssen. de Vita Mosis, p. 175.

Now that the Schechinah, or *the glory of God,* was in this cloud, appears from hence; that it was the same cloud which afterwards rested upon the Tabernacle, as soon as it was set up, and is called *the cloud of the Lord,* (Exod. xl. 38. Numb. x. 34.) For *the glory of the Lord* was within the Tabernacle, as the cloud was without it, (Exod. xl. 34, 35, &c.) And it is there also described just as it is here, that it appeared as a cloud upon the Tabernacle by day, and as a fire by night, (xl. *ult.*) And so it is also Numb. ix. 15, 16. "At even there was upon the Tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, till the morning. So it was alway, the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night." And then it conducted them in their journeys, as it did now, (Exod. xl. 36. Numb. ix. 17, 18, &c.) Which shews that this cloud, which now conducted them out of Egypt, was the very same with that which afterwards settled upon the Tabernacle: and the *glory of the Lord* being in that, I make no doubt it was so in this. Which is the reason that the Lord is said to *go before them,* and to *lead* them by this cloud. For though the Lord of all doth not *go* from place to place, yet this visible *glory,* which represented him as in a special manner present with them (and therefore called *the glory of the Lord*), did go along with them in the cloud, to their several stations, whither they removed.

It is no improbable conjecture of Taubman, in his notes upon Virgil, that from hence it was, that the poets never made a deity to appear but in a cloud with a brightness in it. "Ad hoc exemplum credo poetas sancivisse nullum numen mortalibus apparere sine nimbo. Est autem nimbus, nubes divina, seu fluidum lumen, quod Deorum capita tingit."

Ver. 22. *He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.*] That is, it continued with them as long as Moses lived, till they came to pass over Jordan into Canaan; when not this cloud, but the ark was their guide. And it need not seem incredible, saith Clemens Alexandrinus, (lib. i. Stromat. p. 348.) that they were thus led by a pillar of fire, when the Greeks consider that Thrasybulus, they believe, was thus directed, Πῦρ ἑωρᾶτο προηγούμενον, &c. *by a fire which went before him,* and conducted him in a dark winter night through unknown ways, when he brought back the Athenian

exiles to their country. The wonder was, that this fire continued to lead the Israelites forty years in the wilderness; whereas that of Thrasybulus (if it be true) was but a short appearance. As that light also was, which they say shone from heaven to bring Timoleon unto his port when he sailed to Italy.

This pillar, also, the same Clemens thinks (in the place now named) signified τὸ ἀνεικόνιστον τοῦ Θεοῦ, *that no image could be made of God.* From whence he thinks likewise it was, that the ancient heathen, before they learnt to make images, set up pillars and worshipped them, ὡς ἀφιδρύματα Θεοῦ, *as representatives of God.* Which Huetius hath lately made out in many examples, (in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, p. 205, 206.) and thinks that from this pillar, which had two appearances, the two pillars were erected to Hercules in his temple at Tyre; and two likewise set up in the Temple of the Sun in Egypt.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses.*] Out of the cloud (where the Schechinah was) from whence he afterwards gave all his laws.

Ver. 2. *Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn.*] They were going directly towards Horeb: unto which they asked leave to go, three days' journey. And might have reached it this night, if they had proceeded forward on the left hand into the wilderness. But by this order they turned to the right hand, into a road that led them towards the Red Sea; which made Pharaoh think they had lost their way.

And encamp before Pihahiroth.] Before the straits of two great mountains; full of dangerous *holes:* as many think the word *Hiroth* imports. And *pi,* in Hebrew, signifying a *mouth,* this word *Pihahiroth* may properly be translated in our language, *the chaps of Hiroth.* The former day they had marched about eight miles; but now they doubled their pace, and marched sixteen miles from Etham hither.

Between Migdol and the sea.] Some take *Migdol* to have been a *tower* or *fortress* (for the word carries that signification in it), upon the top of one of the mountains beforementioned. But there was a tower called Μάγδωλος, by Herodotus, and Hecatæus, and others; which Bochart probably conjectures was this place. Certain it is, there was a city in Egypt called Migdol, (Jerem. xliv. 1.) And Stephanus de Urb. expressly saith, that Μάγδωλος was πόλις Αἰγύπτου; but whether the same with this place, I cannot determine.

Over against Baal-zephon.] This, I doubt not, was the name of a town also, or city; as Ezekiel the tragedian expressly calls it. For *Baal* was the name of a city, (1 Chron. iv. 33.) and it is likely there being more of the same name, this was called *Zephon,* to distinguish it from some other *Baal* in those parts. Either because it lay north, or had an eminent watch-tower in it. There are those indeed, who, following the Jewish doctors, (see Selden de Diis Syr. Syntagm. i. cap. 3.) imagine there was an image of *Baal* set up by the magicians of Egypt, by Pharaoh's order, near this Arabian gulf, to hinder the Israelites in their passage. And Varenius doth not quite disallow this: for he takes *Baal-zephon* to have been a great plain, into which they were to enter, by the chaps of Pihahiroth: in which an idol was worshipped, which, looking from the Red Sea towards the north, was called *the lord of the north;* as *Baal-zephon* imports. And Kircher seriously maintains it had a power of fascination, to stop the Israelites in their journey; which there is no ground to believe. For such images, made under a certain constellation, to avert evil things, &c. were not now in use: being no older, there are good reasons to think, than the time of Apollonius Tyanæus, who was the first inventor of them.

Ver. 3. *For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel.*] Here he gives the reason for this order; that Pharaoh might be enticed to pursue them, imagining they were in such difficulties that they could not avoid falling into his hands.

They are entangled in the land.] Perplexed, or dubious; not knowing which way to go.

The wilderness hath shut them in.] They were cooped up, he thought, by the sea, and by craggy mountains, which it was impossible for them to pass; especially being encumbered with a multitude of women, children, and cattle.

Ver. 4. *And I will harden Pharaoh's heart.*] He had hardened it before, (ix. 12. x. 1.) but now ordered things so, that he was more senseless than ever he had been. For having lately felt such a heavy stroke upon all the first-born, as mollified his heart for the present, and moved him to let Israel go; it was the highest degree of infatuation not to fear, (as formerly they had done, xii. 33.) that the next blow (if he pursued them) would be at himself and his followers.

And I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host.] Shew my power and justice in their destruction. Which would not have been so visible, had they died of the pestilence, when the cattle died of the murrain, and Pharaoh's heart was first hardened, as it was by hardening him so far as to follow the Israelites into the Red Sea, where he and his whole host were overthrown: which made the terror of the Lord's wrath manifest to all the world.

That the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord.] Have the greatest demonstration of my irresistible power, (vii. 5.) For the more strange the infatuation was, which led Pharaoh and his host to such an ignominious death, the more apt the hearts of the people that remained would be to acknowledge the hand of God therein.

And they did so.] They marched to this place on the seventeenth day of Nisan; which was their third day's journey. Jacobus Capellus thinks they rested this day, being the sabbath, and came not hither till the eighteenth.

Ver. 5. *And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled.*] Some of the mixed multitude that went along with them, (xii. 38.) seeing this strange turn, it is likely, forsook the Israelites, and returned to Pharaoh, to inform him that they had lost their way; and were shifting for themselves by flight into dangerous places. Or, as it is commonly interpreted, some spies, which Pharaoh had upon them, seeing them leave the way to Horeb, whither they desired to go three days' journey to offer sacrifice; concluded they never intended to return to Egypt, but would run quite away from them. This news, we may suppose, was brought to Pharaoh on the eighteenth day.

And the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people.] They had quite forgot their late fears, (xii. 33.) which made such a change in them, they would not suffer the Israelites to stay any longer in their

country: but those fears being vanished, their minds altered again, and they repented they had dismissed them.

And said, What have we done that we have let Israel go from serving us?] What a gross error have we committed, in losing the labour of so many slaves? Covetousness, as I have observed, often had a principal hand in hardening Pharaoh's heart.

Ver. 6. *And he made ready his chariot.*] Caused it immediately to be made ready: which we may suppose was done on the nineteenth day, when he began to pursue them.

And took his people with him.] All that were wont to attend him on such occasions.

Ver. 7. *And he took six hundred chosen chariots.*] The best chariots in Egypt, which were always ready prepared for such expeditions.

And all the chariots of Egypt.] That could be got ready on a sudden: for he had not time to muster all his force; but made all the haste possible, lest the Israelites should get out of the straits wherein they were, and go so far away that he could not overtake them. For which reason he pursued them with chariots and horsemen, who could make larger marches than the Israelites on foot. The strength also of this kingdom consisted in chariots, which carried men in them, who fought out of them. And every one knows that Egypt abounded with horses, as well as chariots; and that they were accounted very strong in these; (Isa. xxxi. 1.) yet Bochartus thinks all besides the six hundred chariots royal were only carriages for their baggage. (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 9.)

And captains over every one of them.] This shews there were men in them, and that to every chariot there belonged a troop of horsemen (we know not of what number) who were commanded by a captain. The Hebrews say there were fifty thousand horsemen: the Arabians make them as many more.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*] As he said he would, (ver. 4.)

And he pursued after the children of Israel.] Of all the infatuated resolutions (to use the words of a famous divine of our own, Dr. Jackson, book x. chap. 11.) that either king or people adventured on, the pursuing of the Israelites with such a mighty army, after they had most earnestly entreated and urged them to leave their country, may well seem to every indifferent reader the most stupid. And so the author of the Book of Wisdom justly censures it: (xix. 3.) "For whilst they were yet mourning and making lamentations at the graves of the dead, they added another foolish device, and pursued them as fugitives whom they had entreated to be gone." Yet Josephus gives good hints, that even this effect of Divine infatuation, was but such as hath seized upon worldly-wise princes and statesmen in former ages, and may hereafter be inflicted upon more.

And the children of Israel went out with a high hand.] Boldly and with assured confidence; not sneakingly, like slaves or fugitives. So Onkelos understood it, when he translated it *bareheaded, i. e.* confidently, fearing nothing; having been delivered and conducted by the powerful hand of God; as it is often repeated, (xiii. 9. 14. 16.) unto which some refer this phrase, and not to the Israelites. (See Drusius, lib. xvi. Observat. cap. 2.)

Ver. 9. *But the Egyptians pursued after them.*] This did not discourage Pharaoh and his servants: who, perhaps, were of the same mind with the Syrians: who fancied the God of Israel might not be alike powerful in all places; but though he was stronger than their gods in the hills, yet they might be too hard for him in the plain, (1 Kings xx. 23.) So the Egyptians, who had seen how much superior Moses was to their magicians, might possibly thus reason with themselves (as the same learned doctor expresses it), "Who knows whether all this power was given unto Moses to be exercised only within the meridian or climes of Egypt; or whether his commission extend over Palestine and Midian?" They presumed, at least, that the Lord God of the Hebrews had not granted Moses such a command over the armies or host of men (though he had done wonders among reasonless creatures), as the king of Egypt had: because the Israelites, they knew, had no skill in feats of arms, no captains of infantry, and no cavalry at all, no weapons or engines of war; of all which the Egyptians had great abundance. Upon these, or some such-like presumptions, and vain collections, they became fool-hardy, and desperately resolute to be revenged upon the children of Israel, for all the losses they had sustained by their leaders, Moses and Aaron.

All the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army.] By this it appears that there were both horse and foot, who pursued them; though it is likely the foot were mounted, to make the greater speed.

And overtook them encamping by the sea, &c.] On the twentieth day of Nisan, towards evening, they had got within sight of the Israelites, who were just settling their camp where God directed them, (ver. 2.) having had no time to rest themselves after so long a march.

Ver. 10. *And when Pharaoh drew nigh,* &c.] So that the Israelites could discern with how great a force the Egyptians were about to attack them.

They were sore afraid.] They who had marched hither with *a high hand,* (ver. 8.) full of alacrity and courage, now on a sudden were so dismayed, that their spirits sunk within them. For they had not a settled confidence and resolution wrought in them, by all the wonders God had done for them: but, though whilst they thought Pharaoh disheartened to meddle any more with them, they went on boldly; now their hearts began to fail them, when they saw him at their backs. For they were unfit for war, weary also, and in a very bad place.

And the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord.] This had been the proper remedy against their fears, if, in a thankful remembrance of what God had often done for them, they had humbly beseeched him to deliver them in this great strait: which was as easy for him to do, as to work all the miracles they had seen in Egypt. But these cries seem, by what follows, to have been rather the effect of despair, than of hope in God: such shrieks as naturally proceed from men when they are ready to perish. Pellicanus, indeed, thinks, that by *the children of Israel* is meant such as were good among them, who fell to their prayers, when the rest fell to railing, as it follows in the next verse. But such words comprehend the generality of the people, and not only the better sort.

Ver. 11. *Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?*] This is very sarcastical and reproachful language; arguing the height of discontent, or rather of rage against their Deliverer. From

whence we may learn the wicked temper of those who are ungrateful and unmindful of benefits.

Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us out of Egypt?] They seem to have been of the very same temper with the Egyptians, who had no remembrance what they had lately felt, nor made any reflections on what God had done in a wonderful manner among them. This neglect of God bred such a hardness of heart in them and their posterity, as was in Pharaoh and his people; which provoked God to harden them, in the same manner, to their utter destruction. For, as the apostle observes, "God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth," (Rom. ix. 18.) His mercy, that is, was not so tied to them, because they were Abraham's seed, but he could and would harden them, as he had done Pharaoh, if they proved as obstinate as he was.

Ver. 12. *Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone,* &c.] Do not increase our miseries, by attempting in vain to deliver us. This they seem to have said, after the first message Moses and Aaron delivered to Pharaoh: which only moved him to lay greater burdens on them, (v. 21. vi. 9.)

For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.] This is the language of base and servile spirits; who chose rather to live miserably than die gloriously in pursuit of their liberty.

Ver. 13. *And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not.*] These words argue a most admirable spirit that was in Moses: who was neither angry with them, nor dismayed at the approach of Pharaoh: but meekly and sedately exhorts them to be of good courage, and to trust in God; who, he assured them, would perfect what he had begun for them.

Stand still, &c.] I do not desire you should do any thing else, but only hope in God; and wait to see what he will do for you before this day be done.

For the Egyptians whom you have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.] Never see them more, as they saw them now, alive; though they saw them lie dead (ver. 30.) after their overthrow in the sea. For the power of Egypt was so shattered by that loss, and they were so confounded by it, that we never read of the least inclination in them to attempt any thing upon the Israelites, though they wandered forty years in the wilderness.

Ver. 14. *The Lord shall fight for you.*] He would not have them discouraged for want of arms, because they should have no need of them: God himself undertaking to defend them, and to discomfit their enemies.

And ye shall hold your peace.] Be still, and do nothing: not so much as strike one stroke. Or, as some understand it, do you forbear your cries. Or, he will silence all your murmurings.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord said unto Moses:*] See ver. 1.

Wherefore criest thou unto me?] He doth not blame him for crying unto him for help; but bids him continue his prayer no longer, for he would do as he desired. Greg. Nyssen calls this ἀλάλητος κραυγὴ, *a cry without a voice;* a silent cry without speaking a word, (de Vita Mosis, p. 175.)

Speak to the children of Israel, that they go forward.] Towards the sea, before which they lay encamped, (ver. 2. 9.)

Ver. 16. *But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea.*] By that rod wherewith he had done such wonders in Egypt, he bids him believe he would work a passage for them, even through the sea.

And divide it..] Command that it be divided, and I will effect it. For so it is explained, ver. 21. nor could it be done by any power but God's.

And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.] See ver. 21, 22.

Ver. 17. *And I, behold I, will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them.*] The Lord would have this noted, as a special judgment of his upon them. For of all the hardenings or infatuations which had possessed the hearts of the Egyptians, this was the greatest and strongest, that they should adventure to follow the Israelites, when they saw, or might have perceived, the Red Sea to open her bosom, to give the children of Israel a passage.

And I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, &c.] By giving them such an overthrow, as shall magnify both my power and my justice in their destruction. All the former judgments upon their cattle, or corn, and the annoyances on their bodies by frogs, and lice, and blains, were the just awards (as the forenamed Dr. Jackson speaks) of God's punitive justice upon Pharaoh and his servants, for the wrongs that he had done to his people, by bringing them into undeserved bondage. But he had not yet called them to an exact account, for making away so many infant males of the Hebrews as they drowned in the river. For that innocent blood he reckons with them now, and made them the executioners of his vengeance on themselves, by giving them over to their own proud presumptions of good success, in pursuing those whom they had lately beseeched to depart out of their land.

Ver. 18. *And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord.*] See ver. 4.

When I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, &c.] By overthrowing them in the Red Sea; that the blood of the Hebrew infants might be required of them, according to the law of retaliation, or most exquisite rule (as the abovementioned author speaks) of punitive justice.

Ver. 19. *And the angel of the Lord which went before the camp, removed and went behind them.*] The Lord himself is said to go before them, xiii. 21. (See there.) But we must understand, that, where the Lord is, he is attended by his angels. Some of which were sent from the Schechinah, which was in the cloud, to conduct the Israelites, and take care of them. The Jews take this angel to have been Michael, as we read in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 42. "He sent Michael the great prince," &c. for so he is called, Dan. xii. 1. Others say it was Gabriel. But which soever of them it was, he was only the commander of that host, which by the Lord's commandment went before the Israelites to fight for them. The Jews call him by the proper name of Metraton; because he marked out their camp for them where they were to stay; and described their way in their journey to their several stations; especially here in the Red Sea. (Vid. Buxtorf. Histor. Arcæ, cap. 14. p. 131, &c.)

And the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, &c.] This, it is evident, was done in the day-time, before

the night came: for the cloud appeared only in the day; in the night there was the appearance of fire.

And stood behind them.] To protect them from the Egyptians, who were at their backs, (ver. 9, 10.) but, by the intervention of this cloud, quite lost the sight of them; as it follows, ver. 20.

It may be noted here therefore once for all, that there were several uses of this cloud. First, to guide them in their journey. Secondly, to protect them from the heat of the sun in the wilderness; where there were few trees, and no houses to shelter them. Thirdly, to defend them from their enemies, that they might not assault them. And lastly, God from hence, when there was occasion, spake with Moses. For, it is plain, he appeared in this cloud, (Deut. xxxi. 15.) And from thence talked with Moses, (Exod. xxxiii. 9, 10.) And out of it called for Aaron and Miriam to come before him, (Numb. xii. 5.)

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel.*] This was done, as I said, in the day-time: and in the next words Moses informs us how it appeared in the night.

And it was a cloud and darkness to them.] *i. e.* To the Egyptians.

But it gave light by night to these.] To the Israelites.

It was at the same time both a cloud and a fire: being dark on the one side, next to the Egyptians; but bright and shining on the other side, next the Israelites. So that they might see their way, and the Egyptians not see them, nor come near them (as it here follows) all the night.

Ver. 21. *And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea.*] Having his rod in his hand, (ver. 16.) This was done in the beginning of the night.

And the Lord caused the sea to go back.] By this it is evident that the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, was present, and employed his angel (ver. 19.) in this work. As it is well explained by Pirke Eliezer, cap. 42 "The holy blessed God appeared in his glory upon the sea, and it fled back," &c. So the Psalmist understood it, (lxxvii. 16.) "The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee: they were afraid," &c. And, (ver. 19.) "Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters," &c.

By a strong east wind.] Or rather a *south wind*, as the LXX. translate the Hebrew word *kadim*. Which, though it properly signify the *east*, yet in many places it is used, as Bochart hath demonstrated, for the *south*, (par. ii. Hierozoic. lib. i. cap. 15.)

All that night.] All the forepart of the night.

And made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.] Or rather, *after the waters were divided*, as Bochart shews it should be translated. Thus Isa. lxiv. 5. "Thou art wroth, and we have sinned;" the meaning is, "for we have sinned," as Kimchi, and we ourselves also there translate it. (Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. iii. cap. 2. p. 409.)

Dry land.] The memory of this was preserved by the heathen, as we find in Diodorus Siculus, (lib. iii.) Παρὰ δὲ τοῖς πλησίον κατοικοῦσιν Ἰχθυοφάγοις παραδέδοται λόγος, &c. "There is a tradition among the Icthyophagi, who border upon the Red Sea, which they had received ἐκ προγόνων, *from their progenitors*, and was preserved unto that time; how that, upon a great recess of the sea, every place of that gulf (κόλπου) was quite dry; and the sea falling to the opposite part, the bottom of it appeared green (from the weeds, I suppose, that were in it), but returning back with a mighty force, possessed again its former place." No man is so blind as not to see, that this is a description of the miraculous work of God for the Israelites: the memory of which those barbarous people did not suffer to perish, but propagated it to their posterity; as Bochart well observes in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 29. The Egyptians indeed, we may well think, endeavoured to blot out the memory of this shameful overthrow, and kept no record of it; for Diodorus, it seems, could learn nothing of it among them (though he lived a considerable time there), but received this intelligence from the poor Icthyophagi, among whom this tradition was carefully preserved.

The waters were divided.] Into twelve parts (εἰς δώδεκα ὁδούς), according to the number of their tribes, as the tradition is in Epiphanius Hæres. lxiv. n. 6. 9. which he had from the Hebrews, who affirm the same in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 42. And Kimchi mentions it upon Psalm cxxxvi. 13. where, because God is said to have *divided the Red Sea into parts*, they fancy there were twelve divisions; every one defended with a wall of water. But there is no foundation for this in these words, nor in Psalm lxxvii. 19. where *paths* being in the plural number, they thence also deduce the same conceit, of a several path to every tribe. See Simeon de Muis on that place.

Ver. 22. *And the Israelites went into the midst of the sea.*] About the second watch of the night (which was at midnight), and about break of day they were got quite through.

Upon the dry ground.] This was not looked upon by the ancient heathen as incredible: for Homer makes Neptune driving his chariot upon the waves; and the sea with drawing its waters. And the waters of Scamander being swelled to destroy Achilles, he makes to be dried up by Vulcan. As Nonnus also makes Bacchus drying up Hydaspes; and smiting Orontes with his Thyrsus to have gone over it. (See the learned Huetius in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, p. 206, &c.)

And the waters were a wall unto them on the right hand, and on the left.] The strong east wind contributed, no doubt, to the cutting of the waters in two; though not without the help of angelical powers. But I do not see, how it could do any thing to the compacting of the waters to such a degree, that they were no longer fluid, but firm as a wall or bank on each side of them, (see xv. 8.) which was effected wholly by the angelical ministry; who upheld the waters in that solid posture, till the Israelites were got quite out of the sea.

It hath been an old question, whether they went quite cross the Red Sea, or only fetched a compass, and came out upon the same shore from which they went in. The Hebrew doctors are of opinion, that they did not go over to the opposite shore: but making a kind of semicircle, found themselves, when they came out, in the same country where they were before: their reasons are, because they could not in so small a time have marched so far; for in the narrowest place, that gulf is twelve or fifteen German miles over; so that they could not all have passed through in less than three or four days, as David Chytræus makes the computation. But especially, because Moses expressly makes their next station to be in the wilderness of Etham, (Numb. xxxiii. 8.) in which place they were the

day before they came to the sea, (Exod. xiii. 20.) Therefore they were still in the same wilderness.

Ver. 23. *And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them into the midst of the sea,* &c.] Imagining, perhaps, they were still upon the land, or on the shore where the sea was retired; the darkness of the night not suffering them to see the mountains of water on each side: or rather their minds being so intent to overtake the Israelites, that they regarded nothing else: for when men are engaged in a fierce chase of any thing, with eager desires and confident hopes of it, it takes up all their thoughts, and makes them overlook what lies before their eyes. Thus by their own violent passions and proud imaginations, God blinded their minds, and hardened their hearts, (as he said he would, ver. 17.) to rush into their own destruction.

Ver. 24. *And it came to pass that in the morning watch.*] The Romans, and the Hebrews also, divided the night into four parts, containing three hours a-piece. At the beginning of which the guard of soldiers, who kept watch by night, was changed; and thence they were called *watches.* Two of them we find mentioned by St. Luke, xii. 38. and St. Mark mentions them all, (xiii. 35.) and particularly the fourth watch, (Mark vi. 48.) called here *the morning watch;* which was the last of them; between day-break and the morning.

The Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians.] He frowned upon them; as we speak now in our language. For in Scripture, God is said sometimes *to look upon* those whom he is about to punish, (Psalm civ. 32. Amos ix. 4. Habakkuk iii. 6.)

Through the pillar of fire and the cloud.] By this it is manifest there was but one pillar, which had different appearances: and that the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, was in it. It seems to me also very probable, that whereas the cloudy part of the pillar had been towards the Egyptians hitherto, now it turned the other side towards them: and the fiery part appearing, let them see the danger wherein they were; and by its amazing brightness perfectly confounded them. So Philo seems to have understood it, when he saith (lib. iii. de Vita Mosis) that "from the cloud that was in the rear of the Israelites, there shone a fiery appearance of the Deity." Which may well be the meaning of the Lord's *looking through the pillar of fire.*

And troubled the hosts of the Egyptians.] This glorious light, I suppose, flashing in their faces, put them into a consternation. But Josephus adds, in the conclusion of his second book of Antiquities, that there was a dreadful storm or tempest, with thunder, lightning, and hailstones from the cloud, which put them into the greatest disorder; as it follows in the next verse. Hither Dr. Hammond refers those words of the Psalmist, (lxxvii. 17, 18.) "The clouds poured out water; the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world, the earth trembled and shook," &c.

Ver. 25. *And took off their chariot wheels.*] Some of their wheels were broken by the hailstones, or burnt with lightning: with which, it is likely, their horses were so affrighted, that they fell into disorder; and one chariot running against another, some of their wheels were taken off.

That they drave heavily.] They could scarce move, or but very slowly, when their wheels were broken, or taken off: and those wheels that remained sunk deep into the sand, when the waters returned upon it.

So that the Egyptians said, &c.] They cried one to another, Let us give over the pursuit.

For the Lord fighteth for them, &c.] Now Moses's words were made good, (ver. 14.) and the Egyptians themselves acknowledged it, (ver. 18.)

Ver. 26. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] He spake to him out of the cloud, where the Schechinah was; as I have often said.

Stretch out thy hand over the sea, that the waters may return again upon the Egyptians, &c.] God was pleased to use the ministry of Moses in the drowning of the Egyptians, as he had done in the preservation of the Israelites in the sea, (ver. 16. 21.) that all the people might honour and reverence him, and be obedient to his direction.

Ver. 27. *And the sea returned to its strength.*] The sense is truly expressed by the Vulgar, *the sea returned to its former place.* The great walls, or heaps of water, which were on each side of them, falling down, and rushing upon them with a mighty force, overwhelmed them, and filled the whole channel as before.

When the morning appeared.] When it was light.

And the Egyptians fled against it.] They were so frighted by the light which shone in their faces, and by the thunder and hail, &c. that they turned back; and, like men distracted, run and met the waters, which came tumbling down upon them.

And the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.] The Hebrew word imports throwing down with violence and precipitation: and may be translated, *threw them headlong.* Artapanus in Eusebius (lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 27.) tells this story from the Heliopolitans, after the same manner that Moses doth: only he makes some of them to have been killed with lightning, and the rest drowned.

Ver. 28. *And the waters returned, and covered the chariots,* &c.] The sea returned to its former depth; so that they were swallowed up.

And all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them.] Some have fancied that all the host of Pharaoh did not perish; but only so many of them as pursued the Israelites into the sea; which they fancy this place intimates some did not. But the plain meaning is, that they all *came into the sea* after the Israelites, and were all drowned in it. It is a wilder fancy, that Pharaoh alone was saved by the angels Michael and Gabriel; because he cried out, as he had done heretofore, (ix. 27.) "The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked." Thus the author of Dibre Hajamim (or, the Life and Death of Moses), who says they transported him to Nineveh, where he reigned as long as the Israelites wandered in the wilderness. The same is related by other such fabulous writers, who are soberly confuted by Aben Ezra from the following words, "There remained not so much as one of them:" and from xv. 4. 19. where Moses in his song plainly makes Pharaoh to have perished among the rest. And with them an old Midrash saith, that Jannes and Jambres were drowned, who had been the great instruments of hardening Pharaoh's heart. (See our learned J. Gregory's Observ. chap. 15.)

Ver. 29. *But the children of Israel walked on dry land,*

&c.] Or, *had walked:* for it seems to be a mere fancy, that they were still in the sea, and had not passed quite through it, when Pharaoh and his host were drowned. For which there is no ground but this word *walked;* which may as well be translated in the time perfectly past, as in the present. And so, I doubt not, Moses meant, that the Israelites were safe on shore, when the sea returned upon the Egyptians.

And the waters were a wall unto them, &c.] See ver. 22.

Ver. 30. *Thus the Lord saved Israel.*] As he had promised, (ver. 13.)

That day.] Which was the twenty-first of Nisan; and the last day of the feast of unleavened bread; which, by God's command, was to be kept holy, (xii. 16.) And now there was a very great reason for it: and for that triumphant hymn which they sung upon this solemnity, (chap. xv.) Mr. Mede will have this day to have been that which they afterward kept for their sabbath, in memory of their redemption out of the land of Egypt and the house of bondage. This he gathers from the repetition of the Decalogue in the fifth of Deuteronomy; where, leaving out the reason for this commandment, from the creation of the world, Moses inserts this other of their redemption out of Egypt, as the ground of observing that seventh day rather than any other, (ver. 15.) "Therefore the Lord commanded thee to keep the sabbath;" namely, not for the *quotum* of one day in seven (of that there was another reason, from the example of God in the creation), but for the *designation* of that day, after the preceding six days, rather than any other, (Discourse xv. p. 74.)

And Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore.] It may be interpreted, that, as they stood upon the sea-shore, they saw their dead bodies floating upon the waters. But it is likely, also, that by the working of the sea, and by the Divine Providence, many of their bodies were cast on shore, that the Israelites might have the benefit of the spoil, and especially of their arms, which they wanted, and were now by this overthrow furnished withal.

This shore was inhabited by the Icthyophagi, among whom the memory of this recess and return of the sea was preserved, (as I observed upon ver. 21.) and unto whom the dead bodies were given for food, as the Psalmist saith; (lxxiv. 14.) that is, to the beasts and birds of prey which peopled the neighbouring wilderness. This was done by the righteous judgment of the Lord God of the Hebrews: who made this proud prince, his statesmen, and army, a prey, not only to the fishes and sea-monsters, but a *visible booty* (as Dr. Jackson speaks) to the promiscuous sorts of ravenous creatures which inhabit the deserts.

Ver. 31. *And Israel saw that great work,* &c.] Of making a path for them to walk on dry ground in the middle of the sea, and then drowning the Egyptians when they followed them in the same path.

And the people feared the Lord.] They beholding and considering the powerful hand of God, which appeared in this great work; it begat in them, for the present, high and awful thoughts of him, and devout affections to him. For *the fear of the Lord* includes all religion. Or, if we take the word *fear* in a restrained sense, for a dread of the Divine Majesty; the meaning is, they were sensible how dangerous as well as vain it is to oppose his authority, to set themselves against his will, or slight his warnings, as Pharaoh and the Egyptians did.

And believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.] Believed the promises which God had made them by Moses, of bringing them into the land of Canaan, (iii. 17.) looking upon Moses as a servant of his, who faithfully declared the mind and will of God unto them.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *THEN sang Moses and the children of Israel,* &c.] Upon the twenty-first of Nisan, as I said before, which was the last day of unleavened bread, when they came safe through the sea, and saw the Egyptians drowned, they sang this song of praise to God, for their wonderful deliverance. So the constant tradition of the Hebrews is, and there is great ground for it.

This song.] Called *the song of Moses the servant of the Lord,* (Rev. xv. 3.) because he composed it by a Divine inspiration, to be sung by all the people. And it is the most ancient song of which there is any memory.

Unto the Lord.] In praise of the Divine power and goodness; which remarkably appeared in this deliverance.

Josephus (lib. ii. cap. ult. of his Antiquities) saith, this song is composed ἐν ἑξαμέτρῳ τόνῳ, *of hexameter verse:* which Eusebius represents as the opinion of many others, (lib. xi. de Præpar. Evang. cap. 3.) But I do not see how this can be made out: nor what St. Jerome saith concerning such songs; in many places. And after all the pains that Franc. Gomarus hath taken in his Lyra Davidis, to find of what sort of numbers this and other songs in Scripture consist, he hath not given any satisfaction to learned men: who think (as Ludov. Capellus doth in his Animadversions on that book) that all the Bible may be made verse, according to his method: nay, by his way of resolving sentences, all the orations of Tully and Demosthenes may be turned into verse, of some sort or other. The author of Sepher Cosri seems to me to deal ingenuously, who, when the king of Cosar objects to them, that the songs in the Bible are not artificially composed, according to numbers and quantities of feet and syllables, makes the Jew answer, That the Scripture poetry was of a nobler sort, not formed to tickle the ear, but affect the heart, by great height and elevation of the sense, together with lofty expressions, whereby men were moved to attend to it, and to keep it in mind; (par. ii. sect. 69, &c.) And so much Abarbinel acknowledges upon this place, "that no such verses, consisting in the number and quantity of syllables, are to be found either in the Bible or in the Talmud (either in the Mischna or the Gemara), but are of later invention among the Jews, in imitation of the Arabians and other nations among whom they dwelt in this long captivity. Yet in the Scripture poetry, there is a certain disposition of words, which makes them melodious, and fit to be sung to musical instruments; and so sententious, that they might be more easily remembered than simple narrations: though now, after so many ages, they cannot reduce this poetry to rules." He tries indeed to bring this song under certain regulations; fancying that it consists of eight orders or ranks (as he calls them), two of which are very short, and

two very long; and four of a middle size: which he prosecutes with much subtlety, but with little satisfaction.

And spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, &c.] Every one joined in this song of praise; which may be thus paraphrased:—

Ver. 1. "We will joyfully praise the Lord; for he hath in a most illustrious and magnificent manner shewn his power; by throwing horse and men, when they little thought of it, into the sea.

Ver. 2. "It is he who hath given us this victory, and therefore he is to be praised and acknowledged as our deliverer. He is our most gracious and mighty God; for whom we will prepare a tabernacle wherein to worship him. Our fathers had great experience of his goodness, and therefore we are the more bound to make him our most thankful acknowledgments, and give him the highest praises.

Ver. 3. "There is none can stand before the Lord, who hath perfectly subdued our enemies; and faithfully fulfilled his promises to his servants.

Ver. 4. "For he hath cast Pharaoh, and all his chariots, and great commanders, into the sea, as easily as one sends an arrow out of a bow.

Ver. 5. "They are buried, and shall rise up no more.

Ver. 6. "Thou hast manifested thy omnipotence, O Lord, most magnificently: it was thy irresistible power, O Lord, which dashed in pieces such mighty enemies.

Ver. 7. "It was a work of thy most excellent power; which will be ever magnified in the overthrow of such adversaries, with whom thou no sooner shewedst thyself displeased, but they vanished as stubble doth before the flame.

Ver. 8. "Thou didst but give the command, and by a vehement wind the waters of the sea were divided and heaped up, so that they swelled into little mountains; and were compact like a wall which was upheld from falling down, till the people passed through the midst of the sea.

Ver. 9. "Our enemies pursued us with a full confidence, that they should overtake and make a prey of us; and after they had satisfied their revenge upon us, as certainly reduce us under their yoke, as they drew their swords against us.

Ver. 10. "But with a turn of the wind all their vain hopes sunk on a sudden, together with themselves, to the bottom of the sea.

Ver. 11. "There are none among all that are called gods, in heaven or in earth, that are comparable to thee, O Lord, whose perfections infinitely transcend all other, and therefore art to be praised with the greatest fear and reverence; for thy very works are wonderful, and to be had in admiration.

Ver. 12. "By thy mighty power they were buried in the bottom of the sea, into which they sank.

Ver. 13. "And in great mercy thou hast preserved thy people, whom thou hast brought out of Egypt, and rescued from cruel servitude, and conducted, by a mighty providence, towards the holy land, which thou hast promised to them, there to dwell among them.

Ver. 14. "And why should we doubt of our coming thither? The fame of this wonder shall go before us, and strike a terror into the most valiant inhabitants of that country.

Ver. 15. "Nay, all their neighbours, as well as they, shall find their hearts fail them, and become as weak as water.

Ver. 16. "Such a terror shall fall upon them, that they shall be no more able to stir than a stone, when they hear of this dreadful execution: but suffer thy people, O Lord, to pass to their inheritance, which thou hast prepared for them.

Ver. 17. "Thither shalt thou bring them, and there make them to take root in the highest mountains of that country, where thou hast designed a place for thine own dwelling, of which thy power also will lay the foundation.

Ver. 18. "And thou shalt do more wonders; since thy dominion and power endures to all ages.

Ver. 19. "For who can dethrone thee? Who in the same sea hast made a grave to bury the Egyptians, and a path for thy people Israel to walk in, as if they had been on dry ground."

And now having given the sense of the song in this paraphrase, it may be proper to confirm it, by the explication of some phrases in it.

Ver. 1. *Hath he thrown into the sea.*] The Hebrew word *ramah* signifies a sudden precipitation; when they were in the height of their hopes to overtake and subdue the Israelites.

Ver. 2. *He is my God.*] Though some think the word *El* to be a contraction of Elohim, yet it seems to be derived from *ajal,* and is generally thought to import *might* and strength. But I have taken in the other notion of *goodness* also. (See ver. 11.)

Prepare him a habitation.] As if they thought a cloud too mean a habitation for the Divine Glory, they resolve to build him a tabernacle: just as David, ashamed he should dwell in a tabernacle, designed to build him a temple.

My father's God.] *i. e.* Jacob's; of whom God took a singular care, both before and after he came into Egypt.

Ver. 3. *The Lord is a man of war.*] *i. e.* Gets great victories, as the Targum expresses it. For when the Hebrews would express any eminent quality, they put the word *isch* before it. As in 1 Sam. xvii. 33. we meet with this very expression concerning Goliath, "a man of war from his youth;" *i. e.* a great warrior. And in the foregoing chapter, David is called both *isch milchamah,* a man of war, and *isch toar,* a man of form or beauty; *i. e.* a beautiful or *comely person,* as we translate it, 1 Sam. xvi. 18. And in this very book, *isch de varim,* a *man of words,* is an eloquent man.

The Lord is his name.] He seems to allude unto that which God said to Moses, when he first appeared to him, (iii. 14—16. vi. 3, 4. 6.)

Ver. 4. *Pharaoh's chariots.*] The Hebrew word *mercavah,* comprehends the horses by which they were drawn; which were commonly four to each chariot, as Maimonides probably gathers from 1 Kings x. 29. Where a horse is said to come out of Egypt at a hundred and fifty shekels, and a chariot at six hundred; because it comprehended four horses. (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 70.)

Chosen captains.] The Hebrew word *schalish* imports something extraordinary; either in their stature, or in their command; which they had, perhaps, over three squadrons, as we now speak. But Hen. Valesius, a very learned

man, thinks the LXX. rightly translated the word by τριστάτας; which he translates *three fighting out of a chariot.* For πρωτοστάτης and παραστάτης, are both words belonging to military discipline (which they call tactics), and τριστάτης he takes to be of the same kind, and rightly rendered by Rufinus, *ternos statores,* in Euseb. Histor. Eccles. lib. ix. c. 9. p. 358.

Ver. 5. *Sank to the bottom as a stone.*] The waters which stood up like a wall, falling down with great violence upon them, they sank under their weight to the bottom of the sea; from whence, after some time, they rose up again, and were thrown upon the shore, (xiv. 30.) though not all of them; but some seem to have been buried in the bottom of the sea. (See ver. 12.)

Ver. 6. *Right hand*] Is frequently used for the height of power exerted in the preservation of good men, or the destruction of the bad, (Psalm xx. 6. xxi. 8.)

Ver. 7. *In the greatness of thy excellency,* &c.] All words being too low to declare the greatness of God's power, which appeared in the overthrow of the Egyptians; he endeavours to rise higher and higher in his expressions, to shew how much he admired it.

Thou sentest forth thy wrath.] He seems to allude unto God's looking upon them through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, (xiv. 24.) and to the thunder and lightning, which are supposed to have come from thence.

Ver. 8. *And with the blast of thy nostrils.*] This may relate to the strong wind which drove the sea back, (xiv. 21.)

The waters were gathered together.] This word *Aram,* or *Haram,* signifies *to heap up together:* from whence the Arabians call those great banks, which are raised to keep in waters from overflowing a country, by the name of *Arem,* or *Harem,* as Bochartus hath observed in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 26. And so the word may be here translated, *the waters were heaped up as banks,* on each side of the Israelites.

Ver. 9. *I will divide the spoil.*] It belonged to kings, and chief commanders, to divide the spoil; as Moses, David, and Joshua did among the soldiers.

My hand shall destroy them.] Or, *repossess them* (as it is in the margin), bring them back to their slavery in Egypt.

Ver. 10. *They sank like lead.*] It signifies the suddenness of their destruction: for a talent of lead sinks in a moment.

Ver. 11. *Who is like unto thee among the gods?*] Or, *the mighty ones,* as it is in the margin. For *Elim* is the plural of *El,* which comes from *Ejalah* (saith the author of Sepher Cosri), which denotes *fortitude* or *strength.* For from him proceeds all power and might: but is himself more sublime and eminent, than to be likened to any other power, according to these words, which he quotes for the proof of it, (par. iv. sect. 3.)

Fearful in praises.] I see no solidity in the gloss of R. Eliezer, that Moses speaks in the plural number, because the angels praised God above when the Israelites praised him below, (Pirke Eliez. cap. 42.) The plain meaning is, that he ought to be praised with the greatest reverence; for to him alone (as Conradus Pellicanus glosses) belongs all honour and glory, who can never enough be praised.

Ver. 12. *The earth swallowed them.*] They who were drowned in the sea are here said to be swallowed up in the earth; just as Jonah saith, when he was in the sea, that "he went down to the bottom of the mountains; and the earth with her bars was about him for ever," (ii. 6.) because the sea, which swallowed both him and the Egyptians, is in the depths of the earth. R. Eliezer thinks that they being thrown upon the sea-shore, (xiv. 30.) the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up. Which is possible; but there is no necessity of so understanding it. Rather after the Israelites had spoiled them, the sea which had cast them on shore, afterwards, as is usual, carried them off again, and buried them in the sand or mud.

Ver. 13. *Thy holy habitation.*] The country where God himself intended to have a dwelling-place, (ver. 17.)

Ver. 14. *The inhabitants of Palestina.*] The Philistines seem to have been the most valiant people in that country to which the Israelites were to go, and therefore here mentioned.

Ver. 15. *The dukes of Edom.*] Concerning the word *alluphe,* see Gen. xxxvi. 18. By this it appears, that Idumæa was at this time under the government of dukes; though before Moses's death they had kings, (Numb. xx. 14.) For they often changed their government, as I observed upon Gen. xxxvi. where Moses gives an account both of their *dukes* and of their *kings.*

Ver. 16. *Shall be as still as a stone.*] The LXX. translate it ἀπολιθωθήτωσαν, *turned into stones; i. e.* so struck with the terror of the Lord, that they remained unmoveable as stones; having no heart to oppose the passage of the Israelites into Canaan.

Ver. 17. *The mountain of thine inheritance.*] Moses seems to have foreseen, by the spirit of prophecy, that God would place his habitation upon Mount Sion. Which he understood, perhaps, from the sacrifice of Isaac upon Mount Moriah, (Gen. xxii.)

Ver. 18. *The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.*] It may signify, that when they came thither, they would always acknowledge him for their Sovereign, who had done such mighty things for them.

Ver. 19. *The horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots,* &c.] In this, which the Greeks call the *epiphonema* of the song, Moses briefly comprehends the whole matter of it, and makes it end as it began.

Ver. 20. *And Miriam.*] Or, as the LXX., the Syriac, and others read it, *Mariam;* which some think comes from *marah,* which signifies *bitterness* (as the Arabic word *marara* doth), and that their cruel usage by Pharaoh, especially his decree that all the male children should be slain, was the occasion of this name; for it *made their life bitter* to them, as the text saith, (i. 14.) Thus the author of Dibre Hajamim (or, of the Life of Moses) and our Dr. Lightfoot, and others. But Le Moine guesses, not unhappily, that it signifies as much as *marjam,* which is, in English, *a drop of the sea;* from which the story of Venus was framed, among the Greeks, who feigned her to have been born of the *froth of the sea,* which gave her the name of Aphrodite. The fable of Diana also, as well as Venus, had no other original, but from that which is here said of Miriam; as Huetius hath probably conjectured, in his Demonstratio Evang. propos. iv. cap. 12. sect. 4.

The prophetess.] She was called by this name, I suppose, because she had a gift of composing hymns in praise

of the Divine Majesty, which, it is certain, is meant sometimes by *prophesying* in Scripture. (See 1 Sam. x. 5, 6.) And thus among the Greeks, a *prophet* and a *poet* were the same thing; and the Latin word *vates* signifies both. For, as Quinctilian saith, (lib. i. cap. 10.) music was had in such veneration in ancient times, that "iidem musici, et vates et sapientes judicarentur." But there are other places of Holy Scripture, which would incline one to think that she also received revelations from God, for the direction of the people. Particularly Mich. vi. 4. where she is mentioned as one that conducted Israel out of Egypt; and her own words, with Aaron's, (Numb. xii. 2.) "hath not the Lord spoken by us also?" Which the Lord *heard*, and doth not contradict, but rather allow to be true; though they had not such near communication with him as Moses had, (ver. 6.) Perhaps she instructed the women, as Moses and Aaron did the men.

The sister of Aaron.] And why not of Moses? The common answer is, that Aaron and she lived longest together; Moses having been absent from them forty years. Or, perhaps, Moses was not by the same mother which Aaron and Miriam had. She was married to Hur, if we may believe Josephus.

Took a timbrel in her hand.] So the manner was in aftertimes when they prophesied, (1 Sam. x. 5, 6. 2. Kings iii. 15.) and when they sang hymns, (Psalm xxxiii. 2. lvii. 7, 8.) and upon any occasion of great rejoicing, (Judg. xi. 34. 1 Sam. xviii. 6.) From which we may learn, how ancient music was in the service of God: there being nothing in which it can be better employed than in his praises. Therefore it was no part of the gentile idolatry, that they used such instruments as these in their Divine worship; but they honoured false gods in that manner, that Moses and the Israelites had done the true. And it ought to have a remark set upon it, that this way of praising God was no part of the Mosaical institution; but derived from more ancient times before the law was given.

And all the women went out after her.] To join with her in the praises of God, as the men did with Moses and Aaron, *with timbrels and dances.* As they played with these instruments in their hands, so their whole bodies made a decent motion with their feet. Which afterwards tended to lasciviousness, but anciently was very grave, and so becoming, that such dances were as devout expressions of joy, as their solemn music. This appears by the example of David, dancing before the ark, when it was brought up from the house of Obed-Edom, in a joyful procession both of men and women, with vocal and instrumental music, (1. Chron. xv. 27—29. Psalm lxviii. 26.) From which patterns all nations, from the most ancient times, made dancing a part of the worship of their gods; as Huetius observes, in his Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 6. n. 2. who ingeniously conjectures, in another place of that work, (cap. 12. n. 4.) that from this dancing of Miriam, and her companions, on the sea-shore, Callimachus, in his Hymn to Diana, ascribes to her ἑξήκοντα χορήτιδας ὠκεανίνας, *threescore dancers, the daughters of the ocean.*

Ver. 21. *And Miriam answered them,* &c.] *i. e.* She and the women answered Moses and the people, verse by verse: or after every verse sung by Moses and the men, Miriam and the women interposed and repeated this verse (which is the first of the song), saying, "Sing to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously," &c. And this was a way of singing in aftertimes, as appears from Psalm cxxxv. and Ezra iii. 11. of which I have given some account in my preface to the Paraphrase of the Book of Psalms. Which justifies, or rather commends, our way of reading or chanting the Psalms interchangeably by responses, as we call them, or answering one to another: which certainly, it appears by this place, is the most ancient way of all other. And is represented in Isa. vi. 3. as practised by the angels themselves, in their worship of the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 22. *So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea.*] Not without some importunity; they being eagerly bent upon gathering the spoil of the Egyptians. Some such thing the Hebrew word seems to import, which is *jassa, he made them to go up.* Which signifies some unwillingness, or backwardness; arising either from that cause, or from a desire to return to Egypt (as some fancy), which now perhaps they thought to be so empty, that they might get it for themselves.

And they went out.] From the station where they were at the Red Sea.

Into the wilderness of Shur.] Mentioned Gen. xvi. 7. and was a part of the wilderness of Etham; which was the general name for this desert, (Numb. xxxiii. 8.)

And they went three days in the wilderness.] *viz.* The twenty-second, twenty-third, and twenty-fourth of Nisan.

And found no water.] Which was a very great trial of them. For their cattle, as well as they, suffered much by it; and could not afford them milk sufficient to quench their thirst.

Ver. 23. *And when they came to Marah.*] This was the fourth station of the Israelites after they came out of Egypt; and in the same wilderness; which had this name given it after they came there, from the bitterness or brackishness of the water.

They could not drink of the water, &c.] This was the more grievous, because they had wanted this refreshment three days.

Ver. 24. *And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?*] It is the conceit of Abarbinel, that Moses brought them from the Red Sea without the direction of the cloud which conducted them thither: but then left them to his guidance. Which made the people think it was Moses's fault that they were in distress; who did not know how to lead them to the most commodious and likely places for the finding good water. And therefore from Marah they stirred not, till the cloud again led them; because it is said (xvii. 1.) they journeyed from Sin, *by the commandment of the Lord.* But all this is a mere fancy, to excuse his forefathers; who should rather have prayed to God than murmured against Moses. For we read expressly, God "did not take away the pillar of the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, from before the people," (xiii. 22.) that is, it constantly guided them in the way wherein they should go, whether they travelled by day or by night. And in that very place, which he builds his opinion upon, where it is said, they "journeyed according to the commandment of the Lord;" it is also expressly recorded, that "there was no water for the people to drink," (xvii. 1.)

Ver. 25. *And he cried unto the Lord.*] He did what they should have done; made his earnest prayer to God to re-

lieve them in this distress; which he instantly vouchsafed to do.

And the Lord shewed him a tree.] We are not told what tree this was; whose wood being thrown into the waters took off their bitterness; but, to increase the miracle, the Jews will have this to have been a tree of bitter taste (which Jonathan calls Ardophne), which naturally would have made the waters bitter, if they had been sweet. Demetrius mentions this wonderful cure of the waters, in Eusebius's Præpar. Evang. lib. ix. cap. 29.

Which when he had cast into the water.] By the order of the Lord, who shewed him the tree. For the wonder did not consist (as Huetius thinks, in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ) in curing the water by throwing the wood into it (for that may be done naturally, as Pliny shews), but that he found this wood in the wilderness, by the direction of God: as Elisha found, by the same Divine direction, that the throwing in of meal would make water sweet; which the same Pliny saith is a natural remedy.

There he made for them.] Propounded to them, or appointed them.

A statute and an ordinance.] This seems to signify, that for their better government, God now gave them a few rules to be observed for the present, till he should more fully declare his will to them from Mount Sinai. And it is a most ancient constant tradition of the Jews, that now he commanded them to observe the *sabbath* (which they understand by *statute)* and to do justice; particularly *honour their parents;* which they understand by *ordinance* or *judgment*, as the Hebrew word imports. And they instance especially in keeping the sabbath, and honouring of parents; because those two commandments are pressed upon them in Deuteronomy, with this particular enforcement, "As the Lord commanded thee," (Deut. v. 12. 16.) which they will have to relate unto this command at Marah. (See Mr. Selden, lib. iii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 9. p. 314. 333. &c.) And perhaps these two might be in the number; but it is probable there were more commands besides these, which were now given them; as the following verse seems to intimate.

And there he proved them.] He began there to make a trial of their obedience, whether they would observe these laws or no.

Ver. 26. *And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God,* &c.] This was the main thing he required of them, as Jeremiah observes, vii. 22, 23. Where, he saith, God spake nothing to them, "in the day when he brought them out of Egypt *(i. e.* at this time), concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices," but only commanded them, saying, "Obey my voice." And this Maimonides confesses in his More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 32. "It appears from the Scripture, and the Cabala also, that the first precept which God gave us after we came out of Egypt, was not concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices; but it was that given us at Marah. 'If thou wilt diligently kearken to the voice of the Lord thy God:' where he gave us a statute and a judgment. And it is a certain tradition, that the statute was the sabbath; and the judgment was the taking away all iniquity;" *i. e.* doing justly.

I will put none of those diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians.] He encourages their obedience by a gracious promise, to preserve them from those terrible plagues which he inflicted upon the Egyptians for their disobedience. Which is an indication withal, that if the Israelites proved like them, they should be punished in the same manner, as he threatens afterwards, (Deut. xxviii. 59, &c.)

I am the Lord that healeth thee.] There are two parts of a physician's office; to cure men when they are sick; and to preserve them in health when they are well. The latter is here chiefly intended: which the Psalmist takes notice of, when he saith, (cv. 37.) "There was not one feeble person among their tribes."

Ver. 27. *And they came to Elim.*] They seem to have stayed but a day at Marah, and on the twenty-fifth of Nisan to have come to this place called *Elim* (which signifies *rams*), from the good pasture which was here for the feeding sheep; as Jacobus Capellus will have it. But Bochartus thinks that *El* signifies in general a field; as *El-paran,* (Gen. xiv. 6.) he interprets the *field* or *plain* of *Paran:* and consequently *Elim* signifies a part of the wilderness, where there were large and spacious plains. Thus I find Ezekiel the tragedian (mentioned by Eusebius) understood it, in his Exagoge: where he brings in one talking with Moses, and pointing him to this place: where a great light shone, on a sudden, as a pillar of fire, to shew it to them. Which he calls λειμῶνα κατάσκιον, *a shady meadow,* and saith it was δαψιλὴς χῶρος βαθὺς, *an exceeding fertile ground,* (lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 29.)

Where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees.] Twelve wells of water, according to the number of the twelve tribes; and seventy palm-trees, according to the number of the elders of Israel, says the Jerusalem Targum and Jonathan's Paraphrase. Which Nachmanides so much believed, that he saith each tribe pitched their tents about one of these fountains: and the seventy elders sat down under the shadow of the palm-trees; giving thanks to God for the benefits they now received upon dry land, as lately they had done in the sea. But there is no reason to think that the high court, consisting of so many elders, was now constituted; as I have observed before: of which see Mr. Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 15. p. 626, &c. There is nothing in the story neither to warrant what Ezekiel says in the place beforenamed, that these twelve springs all gushed ἐκ μιᾶς πέτρας, *out of one rock,* which was in this beautiful plain. No more than there is for what follows in him, concerning a marvellous strange bird, such as no man ever saw before, as big again as an eagle, of various colours and a most sweet voice, which appeared to them upon this occasion. Which he seems to have had out of some Talmudical fable.

Palm-trees.] This tree delights in watery places; and therefore no wonder so many were planted here by these fountains. For it is noted by Pliny, that "gaudet irriguis, et toto anno bibere amat," *the palm-tree delights in places well-watered, and loves to drink all the year.* There were two sorts of these trees: the common, and that which was called καρυωτὸν, because it bare dates; as Salmasius hath observed in his Plinianæ Exercit. p. 472. 1326. If these were of the latter sort, they gave them the better entertainment.

And they encamped there by the water.] To refresh themselves and their flocks in this delightful place.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *AND they took their journey from Elim.*] After they had rested a good while there; as appears by the end of the verse.

And all the congregation came unto the wilderness of Sin.] Not directly; but first they went back towards the Red Sea; which was their next station after they left Elim: as Moses tells us, Numb. xxxiii. 10. where he gives an exact account of all their stations; one of which is here omitted, because nothing remarkable, I suppose, fell out there: and they did not stay long in it. This *Sin* is different from that where Miriam died, (Numb. xx. 1.) and written with different letters.

Which is between Elim and Sinai.] So the direct way to *Sinai* had been into this wilderness of *Sin*: but, for some reason which we know not, they first returned to some part of that sea where they had been before.

On the fifteenth day of the second month, &c.] Just a month after they came out of Egypt. And therefore, it seems, they stayed a good while at Elim, where there was plenty of water and some shade; which was now very comfortable: this second month (which they called Ijar) answering to part of our April and May. Or otherwise, we must suppose they spent some time at the Red Sea: whither God conducted them, perhaps, to put them in mind of his late great mercy to them there; which might incline them to be more obedient to his commands, mentioned xv. 25, 26.

Ver. 2. *And the whole congregation of the children of Israel.*] Their elders and all are included in these words, they being the same with those ver. 1. which certainly comprehend all that came out of Egypt. Though, it is likely, there were some more pious among them, who were not guilty of what follows; when the generality were so mutinous, that they who were better disposed could scarcely be discerned.

Murmured against Moses and Aaron.] This seems to be a higher discontent than the former, (xv. 24.) because *the whole congregation* were engaged in it: whereas there it is only said, *the people* were concerned in it. And there they quarrelled only with Moses: but here with both their leaders. And as that was for want of water, so this for want of bread: all their dough, which they brought out of Egypt, being now spent. So Josephus and R. Bechai, which latter saith, the dough they brought out of Egypt sufficed for a whole month, from the fifteenth of Nisan to the fifteenth of Ijar, and the night of the sixteenth they still ate of it. And then on the sixteenth, he thinks, the manna descended: which fell on the first day of the week, as he argues from those words, ver. 5. when on the sixth day they are commanded to gather twice as much as on other days. Which was (says he) both the sixth day of the week and of the descent of the manna.

Ver. 3. *Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord,* &c.] As some of the Egyptians did. A strange wish! proceeding from great ingratitude to God, and forgetfulness of his benefits.

When we sat.] That was the ancient posture of eating before this time, (xxxvii. 25. xliii. 33.) and afterward, (Exod. xxxii. 6. Judg. xix. 6.)

By the flesh-pots, and did eat bread to the full.] This is not likely; when they were not only mere slaves, but under cruel hardships. But they untruly magnify their former condition, that they may represent their present to be more miserable than really it was.

For ye have brought us forth into this wilderness.] They were glad to be brought out of Egypt; but their discontent arose from their being brought into a wilderness; where they wanted all provisions, but what they brought along with them.

To kill this whole congregation with hunger.] There was no danger of their perishing presently; they having so many flocks to feed them. But without bread this would not satisfy them; and they were loath, it is likely, to lose any of their stock, which they hoped rather to increase than to diminish. Or else they longed for dainties, as they did afterwards: which moved God to send them great store of fowl; as we understand ver. 12.

Ver. 4. *Then said the Lord unto Moses.*] He spake to him out of the cloud of glory, where the Schechinah was; as I observed above.

I will rain bread.] Send you down that which shall supply the place of bread, in a very plentiful manner; like drops of rain *from heaven* from above out of the clouds. Which was, as Greg. Nyssen speaks, τὸ πάντων ἀπιστότατον θαῦμα, οὐκ ἐκ γῆς κατὰ τὸ νενομισμένον, *the most incredible of all wonders,* that bread should be given them, not as usually out of the earth, but out of the air, where no seed is ever sown, (L. de Vita Mosis, p. 177.)

Every day.] It came down in daily showers; as much only as would suffice for one day; that they might be kept in a perpetual thankful dependance upon God's providence; and that this might more evidently appear to be a miraculous work of his, who made it fall at all times of the year alike. The heathen themselves preserved some memory of this, in that fable of Pan (whom Huetius shews to be Moses) finding out Ceres, when she had been long wanting, to give men bread when they were ready to starve with hunger.

That I may prove them.] Some think this relates to what goes before, concerning his sending them bread every day: which was so ordered, that he might prove whether they would murmur, because they had not enough at once for a whole year; or humbly hope in his mercy for a constant supply. But the following words (*whether they will walk in my law or no*) direct us to a larger sense; which is, that he tried whether they would be obedient to all his commands, when he let them want nothing to support and encourage them in his service.

Prove them.] Not as if he was ignorant; but that it might plainly appear to others, and to themselves, what they were. Or, as Maimonides interprets it, that it might openly appear to the world that God sustains him, who follows his worship and service, by means that he did not think of. So he expounds this very place, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 24.) "That every one may see and know, whether it be beneficial to give one's self to the service of God or not."

Ver. 5. *On the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in.*] When they had gathered it, and brought it into their tents, they were to grind and bake it, &c. (ver. 23.) and make ready all things that were necessary against the next day; which was to be a festival (*viz.* the sabbath),

on which they were to do nothing. For the sabbath was not to be disturbed with such kind of work: but though on other festivals they might prepare their meat and only abstain from labour, yet on this they might not so much as dress their meat; but it was to be done the evening before: on which they were to prepare every thing for the next day. From which preparation this day was called the *parascue*, (Luke xxiii. 54.) *the preparation for the sabbath.*

And it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.] Enough, that is, for two days, *viz.* that *sixth* day, and the next, which was to be the sabbath, ver. 23. where what is here briefly said in general, is more particularly and largely explained.

The Talmudists are generally of an opinion, that the fifteenth day of the second month, when they came hither, (ver. 1.) was the seventh day of the week: (see Mr. Selden, lib. iii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 11.) Which, if it be true, they knew nothing of the rest of the sabbath; for they travelled upon this day. But Mr. Mede hath observed, that it is altogether uncertain, whether or no it was the seventh day from the creation. It might possibly fall out so, by the providence of God, that the seventh day, designed by him for their sabbath, might be both the seventh in order from the creation, and also from the day of their deliverance out of Egypt. But that which now determined this seventh day, after six days' labour, to be their rest, was their redemption out of Egypt; and the overwhelming of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea: which was upon this very day. The example of the creation was a reason for sanctifying one day in seven: but the designation of this seventh day, was, as I said, from their wonderful deliverance. (See Discourse xv. book 1.)

Ver. 6. *And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel.*] What God spake to Moses alone, (ver. 4.) is delivered to the people by Aaron also, who was assistant to his brother in the government of them.

At even.] On the evening of this fifteenth day God sent them *quails*, as we translate ver. 13.

Then ye shall know that the Lord hath brought you out from the land of Egypt.] Be convinced, that it was by the Lord's direction and command that you were brought out of Egypt into this place. And therefore you have no reason to quarrel with us, who did nothing of ourselves without his order: but rather to trust in him; who can make as good provision for you here in the wilderness, as ever you saw in Egypt.

Ver. 7. *And in the morning.*] When the manna fell down, (ver. 13.)

Then ye shall see the glory of the Lord.] His great power (some interpret it) in sending them bread from heaven, and flesh also with it. But I take it rather to refer unto the visible appearance of the Divine Majesty, which they saw presently after this, (ver. 10.) and were convinced of his real presence in that cloud, by the descent of the manna from thence next morning; which no power but the Divine could produce. And so I find Abarbinel himself interprets it; "Their seeing the glory of the Lord, is not to be understood of the bread or the flesh he sent them, but of the fire which appeared to all the people, to reprove them for their murmurings."

For that he heareth your murmurings against the Lord.] He is present among you; and takes notice of your ungrateful behaviour towards him.

For what are we, that ye murmur against us?] Alas! we are but poor instruments of his; who hath done all the wonders you have seen, and by that means brought you hither: and therefore why do you complain of us, as if we acted any thing by our own authority?

Ver. 8. *And Moses said, This shall be, when the Lord shall give you,* &c.] I say again (therefore mark it), *when the Lord shall give you flesh to eat in the evening, and in the morning bread to the full;* then you shall be convinced that he hath taken notice of your murmurings: which are really against him, who employs us only as his ministers; and will be so gracious as not to punish your discontents, but provide for your necessities.

Ver. 9. *And Moses spake unto Aaron.*] Who was his minister, as Moses was more immediately God's.

Speak unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel.] Who were all engaged in this undutiful murmuring, (ver. 2.)

Come near before the Lord.] Before the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, which was in the cloud, (as I observed, xiii. 21.) and now was about to break forth upon them in a glorious manner. But, because of their murmurings, the cloud was removed, it is probable, to a greater distance from them than it used to be. Bonfrerius will have it, that they were to come near to the tabernacle of Moses, where the glory of the Lord appeared, (xxxiii. 7. 9.) But there is no proof that it was wont to be there till that occasion. See upon that place.

For he hath heard your murmurings.] He will shew that he is among you, and observes how ungratefully you requite him. It is not unlikely that Moses bade Aaron go and speak to the people, because he himself retired to speak to God. That is, to pray for them, and to acknowledge his great goodness in passing by their murmurings.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel.*] According to the command of Moses, (ver. 9.)

That they looked.] They were suddenly surprised, I conceive, with an unwonted brightness; which made them look about to see whence it came. Or Aaron, perhaps, bade them look that way.

Towards the wilderness.] Whither the cloud had conducted them; and stood at some distance from them.

And behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.] The Divine Majesty appeared in flaming light; such as they had never seen before, (see xiii. 21.) Thus N. Lyra truly expounds, "Fulgor quidam insolitus," &c. an unusual splendour, representing the Divine power, to reprove the murmurings of the people.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord spake unto Moses.*] Who was gone, as I said, to pray unto God; whilst Aaron was speaking unto the people.

Ver. 12. *I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel,* &c.] He repeats to Moses what he had bidden him tell them, (ver. 4—6.) and perhaps spake it from the cloud of glory, in the audience of all the people.

In the evening ye shall eat flesh.] Ver. 8.

And in the morning ye shall be filled with bread.] Ver. 4.

And ye shall know that I am the Lord your God.] Who

brought you out of Egypt; and will provide for you here in the wilderness.

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass that at even.*] According to God's promise, ver. 6. 8.

The quails came up.] The only person among the Jews, that adventures thus to translate the Hebrew word *selau* (which is used here, and Numb. xi. 31. and Psalm cv. 40.) is Josephus. All others either keep the Hebrew name, or make it another thing than *quails*. For Jonathan translates it *pheasants;* and Abarbinel makes them a kind of *sea-fowl:* and the Talmudists comprehend four sorts of birds under this name; *viz.* that which feeds upon figs (which the Greeks call συκαλὶς), and *thrushes*, and *pheasants*, and *quails*. (See Bochartus, par. ii. Hierozoic. lib. i. cap. 14.) But all this is without good ground; for the account which Moses gives of *selau* in the book of Numbers agrees to none of these, nor any thing we have knowledge of, but a kind of *locusts:* which Job Ludolphus therefore pitches upon, and gives very solid reasons for it; as I shall shew when I come to that place, Numb. xi. 31.

Came up.] From the country over against the desert: from the sea, saith Aben Ezra; and Josephus, from the Arabian Gulf. Not that they were a sea-fowl; but were in great quantity upon that coast.

And covered the camp.] It seems they fell in the very streets, as we speak: so that they needed not do more than step out of doors, and take up as many as they pleased. This lasted no longer than that evening: for the manna which fell next morning was to be their constant food.

And in the morning the dew.] Besides the *morning* dew, there was an *evening*, (Hos. vi. 4. Cant. v. 2.) and Moses in Numb. xi. 9. mentions the dew that fell in the night. From whence, I suppose, came the opinion among some of the Jews, that there was a double dew in which the manna was enclosed: a dew below it, which fell in the night; and a dew above it, which after the manna was fallen came upon it, and covered it in the morning: by which means, being thus enclosed, it was kept very clean.

Lay round about the host.] Not in the camp; but round about it on the *face of the wilderness*, (ver. 14.) For the camp was not so clean a place, nor so apt to congeal the manna, that fell with the dew.

Ver. 14. *And when the dew that lay was gone up.*] This shews the dew fell first, and then the manna fell upon it, (as we read expressly, Numb. xi. 9.) whereby it was kept pure, and free from the dust that was upon the ground.

Behold, upon the face of the wilderness.] When the dew was exhaled by the sun, the manna appeared; which covered the wilderness round about them.

There lay a small round thing.] This word is no where else to be found in the Holy Scripture; which hath made it differently rendered. But our translation is authorized by what is said, ver. 31. that it was like *coriander seed:* which hath respect not to its colour or taste, but to its form and figure. And so the LXX. here understood it, when they translated it ὡσεὶ κόριον λευκόν.

As small as the hoar-frost on the ground.] This seems to relate to the colour, which was white: but expresses also that it was very small, like a drop of dew frozen to the ground.

Ver. 15. *And when the children of Israel saw it.*] Which was as soon as they rose in the morning, and went out of the doors of their tents.

They said one to another, It is manna.] The Hebrew words *man hu*, are thought by some to signify as much as *mah-hu*, i. e. *What is it?* So Philo, Josephus, and a great number of the ancient and modern expositors, who take *man* to be an Egyptian word, signifying as much as the Hebrew word *mah*. But it doth not seem likely, that they joined an Egyptian word to a Hebrew; as *hu* is acknowledged to be. Therefore it may be better expounded, *it is a gift*, or *a portion*. For *manah* signifies to appoint or order one's diet, (Dan. i. 10.) and as *kav* comes from *kavah*, by casting away the last letter; so may *man*, in like manner, from *manah*. And the meaning is, *This is the gift of God;* or, *This is it which God hath appointed us:* not knowing (as it here follows) determinately what to call it. Suidas seems to have thought of this, when he defines it to be ἡ ἄνωθεν χορηγουμένη τροφὴ, &c. (See Drusius, in his Quæst. Hebraicæ, lib. i. cap. 62.)

For they wist not what it was.] Had not a distinct conception what kind of food it was, not having yet tasted it; nor knowing certainly (as Abarbinel fancies) whether this was the bread that Moses bade them expect: who therefore tells them, in the next words, that it was that bread.

This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.] You rightly called it, *a Divine gift* (as Abarbinel goes on), for this indeed is the bread which the Lord bestows upon you for your sustenance, according to his promise which he made you by me, (ver. 4.)

Ver. 16. *This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded.*] Here now Moses shews how the use of this food was to be regulated.

Gather of it every man according to his eating.] As much as will suffice for his and his family's sustenance for one day.

An omer for every man.] That they might be sure to have enough, he allows every person among them to have an *omer:* which was something less than half a peck of our measure. Here Abarbinel hath a pertinent observation; that is, being a Divine food, was not to be used as common things are, which men gather into heaps, lay up in barns, traffic withal, or lay up for their children: but it was to be spent as a gift of God both to poor and rich. Some can get more of worldly goods, and some less; by which means some give, and others receive: but here all received from the bounty of heaven; and God ordered it so, that they who were poor should not want, and they who were rich should have nothing beyond their wants, to lay up, or to sell, as they did other things. For every one was to have only as much as he could eat: and no man could eat above an *omer*. Which doth not signify that they gathered it by measure; but as much as they thought would amount to that quantity: with an intention, that if they had more than they needed others should have it, who had gathered less than they needed.

Take ye every man for them which are in his tents.] For the old and the young, who could not go out to gather for themselves.

Ver. 17. *And the children of Israel did so*, &c.] Gathered what they thought would be sufficient for themselves and their families: according as they were larger, or less in

number. And when they came home, they dealt to every one the proportion which God ordered.

And gathered some more, some less.] They were not all alike able (it is like) to gather, nor alike diligent; and so did not gather an equal quantity. But the true reason I have given already, *viz.* that some families did not require so much as others.

Ver. 18. *And when they did mete it with an omer.*] When it was brought unto their tents, (ver. 16.) then the father of the family, or some of the rulers of the congregation, (ver. 22.) measured what they had gathered with an *omer;* and gave to every one according as God directed.

He that gathered much had nothing over.] Had no more than his omer.

And he that gathered little had no lack.] He that had not gathered enough to make an omer for every man, had it made up to him out of other men's gatherings, who had more than enough. Abarbinel will have it, that they were so directed by a miraculous providence, as to gather just so much for their several families, that every person's share would come to an omer, and neither more nor less. And so Greg. Nyssen calls this the second miracle which was in the manna, having observed one before, ver. 14. But others think, that if any part of it remained after every one in the family had an omer, it was food for their cattle; which in the wilderness wanted grass sufficient for them. And this seems the more probable, because otherwise we must make a new miracle, that every man, woman, and child, should be able to eat an omer: which all grant was sufficient for the sustenance of any man whatsoever; but was too much sure for a child.

They gathered every man according to his eating.] As they were directed, ver. 16.

Ver. 19. *And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning.*] It was therefore to be all spent, one way or other, the same day it fell. Which was the law of all the holy feasts, particularly of the Passover, (xii. 10.) and of the sacrifices of peace-offerings, (Lev. xxi. 30.) Besides, God would have them depend upon his providence, and trust him for fresh supplies every day; as Aben Ezra well notes. And R. Levi ben Gersom; "He that kept it till the morning betrayed his want of faith, and feared God would send no more:" for if he believed, to what purpose should he be at the pains to keep it?

Here was a new wonder, that, as it fell every day for forty years together, both in winter and in summer; and likewise fell in such quantity, that every one had an omer, and none wanted this measure; so it would not keep till the next morning; which it might have done in its own nature, and did once in a week; and in the ark was preserved to many generations.

Ver. 20. *Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses, but some of them left of it till the morning.*] Either through unbelief, or mere negligence, or a wanton inclination to make an experiment, some among them disobeyed his command.

And it bred worms and stank.] This was a wonder also, that such a heavenly food, so pure and simple, should not only breed worms, but also stink. Which was a punishment for their disobedience, though a merciful one, in that God did not inflict it upon themselves, but upon their food.

The Jews commonly take these words to be transposed; things being wont first to putrefy, and then to breed worms; and in that order Moses relates this matter, when it was laid up for the sabbath, (ver. 22.) "That it neither stank, neither was any worm therein." But Abarbinel thinks that Moses here speaks of it according to the order wherein they found it: which was, that first worms appeared in it to their eyes, and then they smelt the stink. But in speaking of what fell out on the seventh day, he follows the natural order, and saith it did not stink, neither was any worm in it.

And Moses was wroth with them.] Chid them severely for their disobedience to him, who had bestowed such a singular benefit upon them.

Ver. 21. *And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating.*] This is not needlessly repeated; but a further explication of their care and diligence, to furnish themselves early in the morning with as much as was necessary, before the sun grew hot and melted it; or (as some of the Jews add) raised the wind, which blew dust upon it.

When the sun waxed hot, it melted.] That it might not be trod upon, nor putrefied. Which seems to be spoken of that which remained in the open field ungathered: though Abarbinel will have it, that what they had brought into their tents melted also when the sun grew hot; which obliged them not only to gather it early, but to bake and prepare it presently, while it was yet hard, and not dissolved. But I see no ground for this; nor is it likely that they were constrained to prepare it all together; but might any time that day, at supper as well as dinner, order it according to their liking. Others of the Jews fancy, that, being melted, it made little brooks and rivulets in the fields, &c.; but the plain sense is, that the sun which melted it, exhaled it also into the air, from whence it came, and returned again the next morning.

Ver. 22. *On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread,* &c.] According to the command of God, ver. 5. It appears by this place, where it is called *bread,* (as it is ver. 4. 12.) that it was of a hard substance when it fell, though it dissolved by the heat of the sun; being like the corn of which bread is made.

And the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.] He had bidden them gather a double quantity on the sixth day; but had not told them the reason of it, (ver. 5.) and therefore they come to inquire what they should do with it. By this one would think they were the rulers, who saw a distribution made to every one, in a just proportion: or, that they appointed overseers to take care of it.

Ver. 23. *And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said.*] This is the commandment which I have received from God about this matter.

To-morrow is the rest.] Or shall be the rest.

Of the holy sabbath unto the Lord.] To be kept holy, so as to do no work therein. And therefore you must not so much as go into the field to gather your food; which is the reason why you are ordered to make two days' provision in one. The words in the Hebrew (which we translate *the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord)* may be rendered, as they lie in order, *the sabbath, the holy sabbath unto the Lord.* Which Abarbinel explains, as if the word *sabbath,* being repeated, signified, that it was to be a ces-

sation from all manner of work, because it was the *sabbath* of the Lord himself, wherein he ceased from his works.

At this time, and not before, the rest of the seventh day seems to have been appointed. They performed religious offices upon one day in seven; but did not cease from all labour until now. These very words seem to shew, there had been some observation of a sabbath heretofore, and was not wholly a new thing: for if it had, they could not have understood Moses, nor known what he meant. See what I have noted upon the second of Genesis: where I thought it reasonable to assert, that God intended to preserve a memory of the creation in six days, by appointing the seventh day to be kept holy. And therefore the more pious any people were, the greater respect they had to this day. But when the world grew very wicked before the flood, as they little thought of God, so it is likely they neglected all distinction between this day and others. And the dispersion of people after the flood very much blotted it out of their minds, as it did many other good things. But in the family of Abraham we may well suppose it was continued; though not with such strict abstinence from all labour, as, for special reasons, was afterward enjoined. Which is the cause why we read nothing of their resting in their travels upon that day, before their coming out of Egypt: where they were under such cruel servitude, that all observation of the seventh day, it is likely, was laid aside: they being pressed, day and night, by their taskmasters, to hard labour without intermission. And therefore, when God brought them out of that slavery, he renewed his command for the observation of the sabbath, with this addition (in memory of their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage), that they should rest from all manner of labour upon that day. Both these reasons are given by Moses, why God commanded it to be observed, in memory of the creation in six days, (Exod. xx. 11.) and in memory of their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage, (Deut. v. 15.)

Bake that which you will bake to-day, &c.] The words *to-day* are not in the Hebrew; but are necessary to make the sense plain, because they were enjoined on this day to prepare or make ready all things against the next, (ver. 5.)

And that which remaineth over, lay up for you, to be kept till the morning.] From which words some have inferred, that there was no prohibition of baking and seething on the sabbath, but the contrary rather is here supposed; (see Dr. Heylin in his History of the Sabbath, par. i. p. 100.) But I do not see how this consists with the further explication of this matter in Exod. xxxv. 3. where they are forbidden to kindle a fire upon this day. Unless any one will say, that for the present they might do it, but shortly after were prohibited: which is not at all likely. For the plain meaning is, that if they would make any baked meats, or boiled with the manna, they must do it upon the sixth day: though what they did not then bake, nor boil, they might safely keep till the next day, and it should not breed worms nor stink. But what they so kept, was to be eaten without baking or boiling, as it well might; being a food prepared in heaven for their eating; without any need of further art. And therefore called *bread*, even when they gathered it, (ver. 22.)

Ver. 24. *And they laid it up until the morning*, &c.] Without any preparation of it by baking or boiling; and it kept the whole seventh day without any putrefaction.

Ver. 25. *And Moses said, Eat that to-day.*] Simple as it is, without baking or boiling.

For to-day is a sabbath unto the Lord.] The frequent repetition of this in this chapter, (ver. 23. and again, ver. 29, 30.) hath led the Jews into this mistake, that the sabbath was not ordained by God till they came out of Egypt: directly contrary to what we read in the second of Genesis, that it was instituted from the beginning. And therefore Moses here only gives an account why this precept was renewed at their coming out of Egypt: when there was a new religious observation added to it, which was not necessary before, *viz.* resting wholly from all manner of work. There is an excellent discourse on this subject in a late learned author, J. Wagensiel, (in his Confutation of R. Lipman's Carmen Memoriale, p. 559, &c.) who well observes, that this precept having a peculiar respect to the Jews, we are not bound to observe the rest of the sabbath with such strictness as they did; but only as the patriarchs did before the giving of the law, (p. 564.) As for the translation of the day from the seventh to the first day of the week, it is impossible for the Jews to prove, that the day they observe is the seventh from the creation. And besides that, the whole world cannot be tied to the circumstance of time precisely: for in some parts of it, the sabbath will fall eighteen hours later than in Palestine; as he evidently shews, p. 572, &c.

To-day you shall not find it in the field.] This Moses said to them, as Abarbinel thinks, in the evening of the sabbath; which was, in effect, a prohibition to them, not to go out to gather it on that day.

Ver. 26. *Six days shall ye gather it*, &c.] The same author thinks this is repeated to signify, that as long as they continued in the wilderness, they should gather it six days in a week, as they did now: but never find any on the seventh.

There shall be none.] As you rest, saith he, from doing any thing about the manna, so God will cease from sending it unto you. Upon which he makes this pious reflection: That in this world we must work for our souls, if we would be happy in the next world, which is an entire sabbath, or rest. "For he that labours in the evening of the sabbath, shall eat on the sabbath." To the same purpose Origen, long before him, (Hom. vii. in Exod.)

Ver. 27. *There went out some of the people on the seventh day to gather*, &c.] The same wicked disposition remained in them, which made them on other days keep it till next morning, (ver. 19, 20.)

Ver. 28. *And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments*, &c.] These chiding words are full of indignation: and yet signify the long-suffering patience of God, with an untoward generation. Abarbinel expounds this passage, as if, upon this occasion, he upbraided them with all their other transgressions; saying, "You kicked against me at the Red Sea, and believed not my words: at Marah also you murmured; and uttered very discontented words at Elim. Nay, after I had given you manna, you violated my precept, in reserving it till the next morning. And now you break my sabbath; what hope is there that you will observe any of my laws?"

Refuse to keep my commandments and my laws.] He

speaks thus, say some of the Jews, because that in which they now offended is a thing upon which the whole law, all his commandments depend. So the same Abarbinel. Because the sabbath instructed them in the creation of the world, upon which all the law depends, therefore he saith, *My commandments and my laws.*

Ver. 29. *See.*] Consider.

For that the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you, on the sixth day, the bread of two days.] You have no reason to seek it on the *sabbath*, being provided beforehand with as much as is sufficient for that day.

Let no man go out of his place.] The Jews say that a man went *out of his place*, if he went above two thousand paces from his dwelling. That is, if he went beyond the suburbs of his city, (Numb. xxxv. 5.)

Ver. 30. *So the people rested on the seventh day.*] The reprehension which God gave them by Moses, (ver. 28.) and the solemn renewal of the precept, (ver. 29.) wrought so much upon them, that for the present they rested upon this day. And they not having been used to this rest, God did not immediately punish their disobedience in going abroad to gather manna: though afterward he ordered a man to be stoned for gathering sticks on this day; for he had often repeated this law to them before that time.

Ver. 31. *And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna.*] This is repeated again, to shew that the name which they gave it at first, (ver. 15.) continued to it afterward: being so apt and proper to signify God's providence over them, that they could find no better.

And it was like coriander-seed.] Of a round figure, like that seed, (ver. 14.)

White.] Being like *bedolach*, as Moses saith, Numb. xi. 7. which signifies *pearl*, as Bochartus shews in his Hierozoic. (par. ii. p. 678.) where he observes the Talmudic doctors (in the title Joma) expressly say it was like *margalith*, (or *margarith*), i. e. *pearl.*

The taste of it was like wafers made with honey.] All things of a pleasant relish are compared in Scripture to honey. Whence those words of David, Psalm xix. 11. cxix. 130. Onkelos saith, manna tasted like escaritæ: which was a delicious food at Rhodes (as Bochart observes out of Julius Pollux), between bread and cake (like our biscuit, I suppose), which was so grateful, that they who did eat it were never satiated, but still desired more.

In Numb. xi. 7, 8. manna is said to taste like *fresh oil.* Which doth not contradict this: for, as Abarbinel and others observe, the meaning is, that when it first fell, before it was prepared, it tasted like *honey-wafers;* but when it was baked, then it tasted like *fresh oil.* And so the words, Numb. xi. 8. plainly import; "They took it, and beat it in a mortar, and baked it, &c. and the taste of it (*i. e.* thus prepared) was like the taste of fresh oil." Nay, the Jewish doctors commonly say it had all manner of pleasant savours, according to men's different palates; and thence they fancy it is called, (ver. 29.) the bread *mischne* (which we translate of *two days*), because it was changed according to the diversity of those that did eat it; children, young men, and old. Which conceit the author of the Book of Wisdom follows, (xvi. 20, 21.)

Ver. 32. *And Moses said, This is the thing which the Lord commandeth.*] I have this further command to deliver from God concerning the manna.

Take an omer of it.] Just so much as was assigned to every one for his daily bread, (ver. 16.)

To be kept for your generations.] For your posterity in future ages.

That they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you, &c.] For seeing with one's eyes (saith Isaac Aramah) mightly confirms a thing, and leaves one in no doubt of it. And he took care they should *see* both the manna itself, and the *measure* which he bountifully allowed to every one of them.

Ver. 33. *And Moses said unto Aaron.*] What God commanded Moses, he now commands Aaron to do.

Take a pot.] He saith nothing of the matter of this pot, or urn; which some say was an earthen pot, others say of lead, brass, or iron: and Abarbinel thinks it was of glass, that one might see what was within. But the apostle hath settled this controversy, by calling it a *golden pot*, (Heb. ix. 4.) and so do the LXX. in this place. And indeed all the vessels of the sanctuary being of gold, it was but reason that this, which contained such a precious monument of God's mercy, should be of the same metal.

Lay it up before the Lord.] *i. e.* Before the ark of the testimony, as it is explained in the next verse: which shews that this command was given after the building of the tabernacle; and is here mentioned, because it belongs to the same matter which Moses relates in this chapter. Others suppose it was spoken by way of prolepsis; which seems not to me so probable.

Ver. 34. *So Aaron laid it up.*] When the tabernacle was built.

Before the testimony.] This is the same with *before the Lord*, in the foregoing verse. For the Divine glory dwelt between the cherubims, which were over the ark; which is commonly called *the ark of the testimony*, (xxx. 6. xl. 3. 5.) But here, and xxv. 36, is simply called *the testimony:* by an ellipsis, or leaving out the first word, which is very usual in other instances: for thus it is called the *ark of God's strength*, (2 Chron. vi. 41.) but elsewhere the first word being omitted, it is called only *his strength*, (Psal. lxxviii. 61. cv. 4.) And therefore the ark is called *the testimony;* partly because there God gave them a special token of his dwelling among them; and partly because the two tables of stone were in the ark, which are called *the testimony:* (xl. 20.) where it is said, Moses put *the testimony into the ark:* and then immediately (ver. 21.) he calls it *the ark of the testimony.*

Ver. 35. *And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years.*] Within a month; which wanted to make complete *forty years.* For it begun to fall just thirty days after they came out of Egypt (on the 15th of April), and ceased to fall on the 15th or 16th of March, the day after the Passover, which they kept in the fortieth year, (Josh. v. 11, 12.) Now in all writers, some days under or over are not wont to be considered, when there is a round number.

But there are those who fancy these words were put into this book after Moses's death: for which I can see no ground. For it is certain he lived the greatest part of the fortieth year after they came out of Egypt, and brought them to the borders of Canaan, within sight of it, (Deut. i. 3.

xxxiv. 1, 2, &c.) And therefore may well be supposed to have added these words himself to this history, as he did the foregoing, (ver. 32.) that all belonging to this matter might be put together in one place.

Until they came to a land inhabited.] *i. e.* To Canaan, or the borders of it, as it here follows. For these words, saith Aben Ezra, have respect to the wilderness in which they now were, which was not inhabited.

Until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.] That is, saith he, to Gilgal, which was the borders, when they had passed over Jordan; when they did eat of the corn of the land, and had no further need of manna.

Ver. 36. *An omer is the tenth part of an ephah.*] From hence also some would fain conclude that Moses did not write this: because, say they, it is not usual, when measures are in common use, to tell in other words how much they contained; which then only is proper when they are grown out of use. But such observations seem to proceed from a humour of cavilling. For why may not an author set down distinctly things very well known in his time, that posterity also may have as distinct a knowledge of them? Besides, the very same men complain, on other occasions, that the writers of history have omitted to give us an account of several things, which in their time were most notorious; whereby posterity suffers much for want of such information. Nor do I see any proof that these measures were not as common in aftertimes as they were when Moses lived.

Several learned men have taken a great deal of pains to reduce these measures to those of the Greeks and Romans, particularly Salmasius in his epistles (n. lxvii.) and Herman. Conringius, in a treatise on this subject, de Mensuris Hebraicis. But none have done it so clearly and exactly as a very learned person of our own country, (Bishop Cumberland, in his Scripture Weights and Measures, chap. 3.) who computes an ephah to have contained seven white-gallons, a bottle, and half a pint: so that an omer was near three quarts: which, if any one imagine too great a proportion to be allowed to one person every day, he propounds these things to be considered: that manna, being of a globular figure (like coriander-seed), must needs have many empty spaces between every three or four grains; and those vacuities may reasonably be estimated a third part of the vessel's capacity: and it being a light aerial food, must needs be inwardly porous, and of a spongy contexture of parts. So that it wasted something in dressing by fire, as it melted by the sun when it grew hot: and consequently three quarts might, it is probable, be reduced to three pints of an oily liquid substance. Which was not too much in a hungry desert, where they might well be thought to have refreshed themselves thrice a day. See also what I have noted before, ver. 18.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *AND all the congregations of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin.*] Where they had been for some time, (xvi. 1.) and now pitched in Rephidim. That is, they rested here, after some other stations, in their passage hither: for Moses mentions two between the wilderness of Sin and Rephidim, Numb. xxxiii. 12—14. And that is the reason of the words here following.

After their journeys.] They proceeded in their journey to Dophekah, and then to Alush; and so to Rephidim: where they stayed some time.

According to the commandment of the Lord.] By the direction of the glorious cloud which went before them, and fixed their station for them where it rested.

And pitched in Rephidim.] This place was in the wilderness of Sin also: but called by a particular name; as the place from whence they came was called by the name of the whole. So St. Jerome. All the wilderness, as far as to Mount Sinai, was called Sin, which was the name also of one of their stations (as Moab was both the name of a province and of a city), and there were four others in this wilderness; those by the Red Sea, Dophekah, Alush, and Rephidim.

And there was no water for the people to drink.] This gave occasion to another remarkable mercy of God to them; whereas nothing considerable fell out at the two former stations: which is the reason they are here omitted. So Abarbinel judiciously observes. Moses would not set down in this history any of their stations but those in which some new and notable thing happened: the rest, in which no such thing was done, he describes in the book of Numbers, xxxiii.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore the people did chide with Moses.*] Expostulate with him in such an undutiful manner, that it may be translated *scolded* with him.

Saying, Give us water.] The word for *give* is in the plural number: and therefore this was spoken both to Moses and to Aaron; though Moses be only mentioned as the person they contended with. For there was no need (as Aben Ezra and others observe) to mention Aaron, because Moses was not wont to speak to the people but by him. Abarbinel carries it further, and will have this speech directed to Moses and to God, because they came hither by God's commandment: which made them insolently say, if by God's providence we were brought to this place, let him take care we be not killed with thirst.

And Moses said, Why chide you with me?] Who brought you hither by God's order?

Wherefore do you tempt the Lord?] And why do you distrust his power, and goodness, and faithfulness to his promise?

Ver. 3. *And the people thirsted there for water.*] This looks like a needless repetition; it being said before, there was no water in this place, (ver. 1.) which made the people chide with Moses, for bringing them into such an inconvenient station. But if we consider it well, we shall find it a necessary explication of the growth and progress of their discontent. For, as Abarbinel hath well observed, as soon as they came to Rephidim, they saw it was no commodious place, because it would not supply them with water: which made them begin to quarrel with Moses before they needed; merely out of fear, that when the water they had brought from Elim was spent, there would be none for them. And now, when after a day or two it was all gone, they were really very thirsty, and so fell into the murmuring here spoken of, from a sense of their misery, as before only out of a fear of it.

And the people murmured against Moses.] They pro-

ceeded from a lower to a higher degree of discontent; which made them at first only expostulate and argue with him; but now they *murmur* against him; and at length fell into such a rage, that they seemed to be ready to stone him, (ver. 4.) It is necessary to stop such motions in their beginning.

Wherefore is this, that thou hast brought us out of Egypt?] This shews the necessity of preserving the remembrance of God, and of his benefits, in our minds. Which if this people had done, they could not have fallen a third time into such a discontented fit, as made them speak reproachfully of their deliverer, and slight the wonderful deliverance itself, which God had lately given them out of cruel servitude. The character which Plato (in his Axiochus) gives of the vulgar sort of people, belongs to the Israelites above all other; *viz.* that this sort is ἀχάριστον, ἀψίκορον, ὠμὸν, βάσκανον, ἀπαίδευτον, (tom. iii. p. 369.)

To kill us, and our children, and our cattle, with thirst.] Children, as Abarbinel observes, can less endure thirst than grown men; and cattle need abundance of water, which is the reason they mention them.

Ver. 4. *And Moses cried unto the Lord.*] Which he did not upon their first complaint, (ver. 2.) because their necessity was not so urgent: but now, seeing their distress, and the height of their discontent, he prays God to take care of them: hoping he would supply them with drink, as lately he had done with bread.

What shall I do unto this people?] He said enough, no doubt, to quiet them; by remembering them what God had already done for them, and what reason they had still to trust in his good providence: but this would not satisfy them, unless their thirst was presently quenched; which he could not do for them, and therefore knew not how to appease them.

They be almost ready to stone me.] He represents to God not only their importunity, but his own great danger. For having promised to bring them to Canaan, he was afraid (as Abarbinel fancies) that if they continued to think they should die with thirst, they would take him for a false prophet, who had deceived them with lies; and consequently inflict the punishment upon him, which the law enacts against a false prophet, which was *stoning*. But, the law being not yet given, this could not be in their thoughts.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people.*] Be not afraid of their stoning (saith the same Abarbinel), but though they murmur, and are in a great passion, and impatient, go on before them confidently through the midst of their camps; and thou shalt see they shall not touch the hem of thy garment.

And take with thee of the elders of Israel.] Not valiant young men to thy life-guard; but grave persons, to be witnesses, that thou dost really bring water out of a rock; and the people may not say there was a spring there before. Concerning the elders of Israel, see iii. 16.

And thy rod wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thy hand.] Not a sword, or a lance (saith the same writer), but that wand wherewith thou smotest the river of Egypt, and turnedst it into blood; or didst divide the Red Sea, as some understand it: an arm of the sea being by good authors called a *river*.

And go.] As I bid thee.

When he is commanded to march before the people, it is supposed they were to follow: but they could not all move so soon as he and the elders, who went before to the very place. Which the whole body of the people could not do; the passage to the rock, it is likely, being narrow; so that they could not all see him smite the rock, and behold the water gush out; but expected till it flowed from thence unto their camp.

Ver. 6. *Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock.*] That is, *the glory of the Lord*, which in the cloud appeared in this place (as Abarbinel truly expounds it) to strengthen his faith: and to persuade the elders that this water was divinely given them, even as the manna was. For before that fell from above, the glory of the Lord appeared, (xvi. 10.) as it did now, before this water flowed to them from the rock. So that they were fed continually by the Divine Providence; from whence they received both their meat and their drink.

There is an emphatical *he* (as they call it) before the word for *rock:* and therefore it should be translated, *upon that rock*. Where Abarbinel fancies the Lord was wont to appear to Moses: but this being a rocky place, it may only denote that particular part of the rock to which God directed him to go; and was the same (that author probably thinks) with that mentioned xxxiii. 22.

In Horeb.] This was not a distinct mountain from Sinai, but only a different part of the same mountain, which was long, and had many risings, of which this was one.

And thou shalt smite the rock.] With the rod wherewith he smote the river, (vii. 17. 20.)

And there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.] According to their petition, ver. 2.

And Moses did so.] *i. e.* Smote the rock, and brought water out of it, in such plenty, that the Psalmist saith *it ran down like rivers*, (lxxviii. 15, 16.) to supply the want of the whole camp, unto which it flowed as far as Rephidim; so that they needed not to go to Horeb for it. Which is the difference (as Abarbinel thinks) between this miracle and that mentioned Numb. xx. where the waters were but like a well, to which they must go; and did not come to them, much less follow them in their journeys, as this did. For this was a continued fountain of water, which flowed out of the rock, (Psal. cxiv. 8.) and made this part of Arabia habitable in future ages, which no man dwelt in before. Moses doth not add, "and the people drank, and their cattle," because (as Aben Ezra observes) he studied brevity; and this was easily understood.

In the sight of the elders of Israel.] That they might be able to testify to the people the truth of this miracle, whereby they were relieved in their distress, and preserved in their travels through the wilderness: the fame of which, no doubt, reached other nations; the memory of it being remaining in several of their fables. For there is a manifest allusion to it in Euripides' Bacchæ, ver. 703. where he makes one of them smiting the rock at Clithæron, and waters gushing out of it.

Θύρσον δέ τις λαβοῦσ', ἔπαισεν εἰς πέτραν,
Ὅθεν δρυσώδης ὕδατος ἐκπηδᾷ νοτίς.

This I find observed by Bochartus, in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 16.; and Huetius hath observed many more such instances out of Nonnus, Pausanias, and divers other au-

thors, in his Alnetanæ Quæstiones, lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 18. And he thinks it very probable, that the fable of Janus was forged from hence; for which he alleges many arguments, (in his Demonstratio Evang.) and this among the rest: that Albricus describes his image holding a rod in his left hand, with which he smites a stone, and out of it water flows.

Ver. 7. *And he called the name of the place, Massah and Meribah,* &c.] That place which before was called Rephidim, was after this called Massah and Meribah: with respect to their chiding there with Moses, which is the import of Meribah; and their tempting God, which is the signification of Massah. Some think this one place was not called by two names; but that, upon the second striking of the rock, almost *forty* years after this, it was called Meribah, and till then only Massah. But in that story it is not said the *place* was called Meribah, but the *water,* (Numb. xx. 13.)

Is the Lord among us, or not?] Doth he take care of us, or not regard what becomes of us? For God is said to *be among,* or (as the phrase is in the Hebrew) *in the midst of those* whom he protects, and provides for, by a special providence, as we find Deut. vii. 21. xxiii. 14. Josh. iii. 20. and many other places.

Ver. 8. *Then came Amalek and fought,* &c.] The ground of their enmity is commonly thought to be the ancient grudge of the seed of Esau to those of Israel: for Amalek was descended from the eldest son of Esau by a concubine, (Gen. xxxvi. 12.) But it may very fairly also be supposed, that there was some league between the Amalekites and the people of Canaan, of mutual defence, which might move the Amalekites to oppose the passage of the Israelites, and endeavour to hinder their settlement in Canaan; unto which, perhaps, they imagined their own pretences to be as good, though the Israelites challenged the promise of it belonged to them alone.

Then came.] These words import that the Amalekites were the aggressors, without any provocation. If they fancied the Israelites would invade them, they might have prepared to defend themselves; but it was no ground for assaulting them. Unto which perhaps they were moved (as for other reasons, so) out of greediness of prey, hearing the Israelites were loaded with the spoils of the Egyptians.

And fought with Israel.] They came out of their own country *to fight* with them in the wilderness. Or we may suppose that they attacked their rear, as they were upon their march from Rephidim to Horeb; and cut off some stragglers, or such as lagged behind through faintness and weariness, as Moses relates, Deut. xxv. 18. The author of Dibre Hajamin makes the army of Amalek to have consisted of an incredible number, all exercising divinations and enchantments.

Ver. 9. *And Moses said unto Joshua.*] Who, it seems, was an eminent person, at their first coming out of Egypt.

Choose us out men.] Whom he knew to be as valiant as himself.

And go out and fight with Amalek.] Meet them, and give them *battle.*

To-morrow I will stand on the top of the hill.] To pray to God, who had lately appeared to him there, (ver. 6.)

With the rod of God in my hand.] This he said, to encourage Joshua to hope God would not fail to deliver them, though a miracle was required to bring it to pass.

Ver. 10. *So Joshua did as Moses had said to him,* &c.] Nothing but a strong confidence in God could have animated men, inexperienced in the arts of war, to encounter such mighty enemies.

And Moses, Aaron, and Hur, went up to the top of the hill.] The Jews do but conjecture who this Hur was; but we may be certain he was a person of great eminence for wisdom and piety, otherwise he would not have been joined with the leaders of God's people, Moses and Aaron. We read, indeed, (1 Chron. ii. 19.) of one Hur, who was the son of Caleb, and grandfather of the famous Bezaleel, who was of the tribe of Judah. But there is nothing to persuade us that he was the person here spoken of, nor that he was the son of Moses's sister, as some of the Jews tell us. See Pirke Eliezer, cap. 45. where strange stories are told of him. But it is more probable that he was Miriam's husband, as Josephus affirms, (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 2.) though we cannot tell whence he himself was descended.

Ver. 11. *When Moses held up his hand.*] Lifting up the hands was a posture of prayer, and imploring the Divine aid, as we find in many places; particularly Lament. iii. 40. "Let us lift up our hearts with our hands to God in the heavens." And it implies great earnestness in prayer; as doth also *lifting up the eyes,* and *lifting up the soul,* (Psal. xxv. 1. cxxi. 1, &c.) But though this be true, and no doubt Moses and his companions prayed to God most earnestly, yet this was not the occasion of his *lifting up his hand;* which was to advance the *rod of God,* which he held in his hand, and lifted up as their *standard* or banner, to which they should look and hope for help, from the mighty power of God, who had done such wonders by that rod.

That Israel prevailed.] The sight of the rod of God inspired them with such courage, that their enemies could not stand before them.

And when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.] Their spirits flagged when they did not see the rod; and they began to give ground: imagining, perhaps, that Moses despaired of victory; who (the fight being long) was not able alway to keep his hand erect.

Ver. 12. *But Moses's hands were heavy.*] Through weariness, by long holding them out upon the stretch.

And they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat thereon.] It seems he had been standing before, which gave them the greater advantage of seeing the rod, but made him the more weary.

And Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands.] Were his supporters; which it is probable was in this manner. Sometimes Moses held up the rod in his right hand, and sometimes in his left (for, ver. 11. he speaks only of one *hand* which was lifted up, or let down), and Aaron stood on one side of him (suppose his right hand), and Hur stood on the other: who, by that means, helped by turns to uphold his hands in that posture: for if they had done it both together, they might have been as weary as he.

And his hands were steady, &c.] Were kept up stretched out, without falling down, till sun-set.

Ver. 13. *And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people,* &c.] Routed their whole army. One would think the name of their kings was Amalek (as the kings of Egypt were

called Pharaoh), because he mentions *Amalek and his people.* Otherwise, if Amalek signifies collectively the Amalekites, then *his people* must signify those who were confederate with them.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] He appeared, it is likely, to him again in this place, (as he had done, ver. 6.) and gave him this order.

Write this for a memorial in a book.] Make a record of it; as he did both here, and Deut. xxv. 17, &c. And nobody was so fit to do it as he, who saw all that fell out in this fight; and was the undoubted author of what we read in this book; which was written by himself.

And rehearse it in the ears of Joshua.] That he, who was to be the leader of God's people after Moses, might never enter into any league with the Amalekites. For his prosperity depended upon the observation of the commands given by God to Moses: which therefore were carefully written in a book, and delivered to him, that they might not be forgotten. See Josh. i. 7, 8. where there is a plain proof, that the laws delivered by Moses were written before Joshua entered into the land of Canaan.

For I will utterly put out the name of Amalek from under heaven.] Have a perpetual quarrel with them, till they be quite extinct; as they were partly by Saul, (1 Sam. xv.) and partly by David, (1 Sam. xxx. 17.) and partly by the children of Simeon, (1 Chron. iv. 43.) Balaam also prophesied of their utter destruction, (Numb xxiv. 20) Which may seem a hard sentence; but it was (as Maimonides observes) to terrify others from the like malice. For as particular persons are sometimes punished very severely, for an example to others; so are families and nations. And Amalek, being the very first that drew a sword against Israel, unprovoked, God passed this heavy doom upon them: whereas Ammon and Moab (saith he) who out of mere covetousness committed what they did against Israel, and wrought mischief to them by craft and subtlety, had only this punishment inflicted upon them, that Israel should not contract affinity with them, &c. (Deut. xxiii. 3, 4. xxv. ult. More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 41.)

Ver. 15. *And Moses built an altar.*] Commonly altars were built for sacrifice: which Moses, perhaps, here offered in thankfulness to God for his benefits, particularly this great victory. But they were also built sometimes only as memorials, (Josh. xxii. 26, 27.) as this perhaps was: he thinking it fit to preserve the memory of this victory, not only by writing, but by this monument also, and the inscription he left upon it.

And he called the name of it Jehovah-Nissi.] Or, the Lord my banner; *i. e.* by him we overcame them. Some will have it translated, not he *called it,* but he *called him; i. e.* the Lord, by the name of *the Lord who lifted up a banner; i. e.* fought for them, (Psal. lx. 6.) From which inscription Bochartus thinks came the name of Dionysus among the Greeks: who, from this word *Nissi,* called him *Nissæus,* or *Nysæus;* and adding the name of their own Jupiter to it, called him Διόννσος, (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 18.) For Bacchus is said to have been a great warrior, and to have made mighty conquests. And, as Huetius observes, is called Arsaphes, which is the very name given to Moses by the Egyptians, who called him Osarsiph. Nay, in Orpheus's hymns, Bacchus is called Mises, which seems to be the same with Moses. Out of whose story all that the Greeks and others say of Bacchus, seems to have been framed; as he shews with great probability, (Demonstr. Evan. propos. iv. cap. 4. n. 3.)

Ver. 16. *For he said, Because the Lord hath sworn,* &c.] In the Hebrew the words are, *the hand upon the throne of the Lord.* Which is commonly interpreted, *the Lord hath sworn by his throne.* So R. Solomon, and Aben Ezra; and the Chaldee, whose paraphrase is, *this is spoken with an oath, from the face of the terrible One, whose Majesty is upon the throne of glory, that the Lord will have war with Amalek,* &c. That is, saith Maimonides, he hath sworn by himself, (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 9.) for in this, and all other places, the word *kisse* (i. e. *throne*) signifies his magnificence and power: which is not any thing without his essence; but is himself.

But here being no mention of *lifting up the hand,* which is the phrase for swearing, (Exod. vi. 8. Deut. xxxii. 40.) it may more simply be expounded, *because the hand of the Lord, sitting upon the throne* of his Majesty, is stretched out, and holds up his banner, to fight with Amalek throughout all generations. For Moses seems to allude in this phrase to what he had said, ver. 11, 12. "When Moses lifted up his hand, then Israel prevailed," &c. and bids them take notice, it was his hand, *i. e.* the omnipotent power of God, which gave them this victory: and would perpetually prosecute Amalek, till they were destroyed.

Joseph Scaliger would have *Kes-jah* to be but one word, and to signify the same with *Kese;* which, according to him, is the last day of the month, on which this battle was fought. And so this to be a part of the inscription upon the altar; as if he had said, *this pillar was set up on the last day of the second month, to declare ἄσπονδον πόλεμον, irreconcileable war with Amalek for ever,* (lib. iii. de Emend. Temp. p. 223.) But this is too bold a conceit, and is confuted by Hackspan and Glassius. There is a more ingenious conjecture (which I have somewhere met with), if there were any thing in Scripture to warrant it, that *laying the hand on the throne* was a form of swearing: as *touching the altar* was among some nations, which was as much as our *laying the hand on the Bible:* a principal external character of a solemn oath. Whence Juvenal saith, atheists do "intrepidos altaria tangere," *touch the altars boldly without trembling; i. e.* make no conscience of an oath.

But the marginal translation, after all, is very literal, and makes the sense exceeding plain and clear: *because the hand* (of Amalek) *is against the throne of the Lord* (*i. e.* against God himself), *therefore the Lord will have war with Amalek, from generation to generation.* This is easy and natural, and agrees with the whole history: that because they came out and opposed the design of God, who in a visible and most glorious manner conducted the Israelites to the land he had promised to give them, he would never be reconciled to them. For it was a high affront to his Majesty, who had lately done such astonishing wonders, as were famed, no doubt, in all the neighbouring nations, (xv. 14, 15.)

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW Jethro, the priest of Midian,* &c.] Many ancient and later versions have it, *prince of Midian:* (see chap. ii. 16.)

Heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel, &c.] The fame of which went into all the countries thereabout, (xv. 14, &c.)

Ver. 2. *Took Zipporah, Moses's wife, after he had sent her back.*] It is uncertain when Moses sent her back to her father: but it is likely it was done at her own desire, when she saw how difficult his work was likely to prove in Egypt: (see iv. 26.) The Hebrew word seems to some to intimate *a divorce,* as the Mauritanian Jews take it. But all Christian versions, and that of the German Jews, and the Persian, understand it as we do. (See Selden de Uxor. Hebr. p. 929.)

Ver. 3. *And her two sons,* &c.] Whose names carry in them a thankful remembrance of God's great mercy to him.

Gershom.] See ii. 22.

Ver. 4. *Eliezer.*] Who is thought to have been born a little before he left Midian, and went out of Midian into Egypt by God's special direction. (See iv. 25.)

Ver. 5. *And Jethro,* &c. *came unto Moses.*] Took a journey out of Midian to give him a visit.

Into the wilderness.] Into the same wilderness where Moses and the Israelites now were.

Where he encamped at the mount of God.] *viz.* At Horeb, which was not far from Midian, it appears from iii. 11. where we read that when Moses fed Jethro's flock, he led them hither to this mount. Which is called *God's mount,* because there he appeared first to Moses, (iii. 2, &c.) and had lately appeared there again upon the rock, (xvii. 6.) unto which place he bid Moses lead the congregation, (xvii. 5.) who were now, I suppose, encamped thereabout, after the fight with Amalek in Rephidim; which was not far from it.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto Moses.*] By a letter which he sent him from the place where he was encamped (of which these were the contents), to give him notice of his coming. Which was but necessary; that he might without any impediment pass the guards, which we may well think Moses had set very carefully, after the fight with Amalek; who had suddenly surprised the hindmost of the people, (Deut. xxv. 18.)

I, thy father-in-law Jethro, am come unto thee, &c.] Am upon the way, and come near to thee.

Here it may be fit to take notice, that there is a great dispute among interpreters, about the time when Jethro came from Midian, with Moses's wife and children: whether immediately after the fight with Amalek, as it is here set down; or some time after, when the Israelites were better settled. One would think, that he could not but take the first opportunity to visit Moses, and to bring him and his nearest relations together; after he heard the news of their coming out of Egypt, and their passing the Red Sea, &c. the news of which could not but reach him, who was a borderer upon this wilderness. Yet the Hebrews are generally of an opinion, that this fell out after the giving of the law at Mount Sinai: and many Christians have been of the same mind: particularly such great men as our most learned primate Usher, ad A. M. 2514. and Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 2. where he saith, no other account of it is to be received; "nec aliam sanè sententiam omnino amplexandam sentio:" but they are not agreed in what year he came. Some say it was in this first year, after their coming out of Egypt: and the Hebrews have an opinion that it was in the month of Tisri, and on the eleventh day of that month, when Jethro gave the following counsel to Moses, (ver. 19, &c.) *i. e.* above three months after God gave the law from Mount Sinai; or after Moses received the second tables. But others are as confident that it was in the second year; and place this story, according to order of time, after Numb. x. 28. or, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, it should come in between the 10th and 11th verses of that tenth of Numbers. And primate Usher, in like manner, judges his coming to have been about that time. But though all this be uncertain, yet Mr. Selden thinks he hath a strong ground to affirm, it was after the giving of the law, from what we read Deut. i. 6. 9—11, &c. And I confess it seems plain from thence, that the regulation which Moses made by the advice of Jethro, was after God spake to them in Horeb, which is the same with Mount Sinai. For though he did appear at Horeb before this (as I observed xvii. 6.) yet he said nothing then of that which Moses mentions Deut. i. which was after the giving of the law. At which time he saith there (ver. 9.) it was that he told them, "he was not able to bear them himself alone," &c. But notwithstanding this, I cannot think that the *coming* of Jethro to Moses was deferred so long (for no reason can be given why Moses here places the story of it, if it did not follow their fight with Amalek), though he did not give him the *advice* for the better administration of justice, till after God had delivered the law from Mount Sinai; as I shall observe in its proper place.

Ver. 7. *And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law.*] Before he came into the camp; or at least before he came to his tent: that he might shew the great respect he bare to him, and his joy to see him.

And did obeisance, and kissed him.] Welcomed him according to the custom of those countries.

And they asked each other of their welfare.] Had such discourse together, as friends commonly have at their meeting, till they came into the tent.

And they came into the tent.] Into the tent of Moses; or rather, the tent prepared to entertain Jethro. But the Talmudists are so possessed with the opinion, that this happened some months, if not a whole year, after the law was given, that they take this *tent* to have been Beth-midrash, the house of exposition; or the school where Moses made the people understand the law. For so Jonathan, in his paraphrase upon this and the foregoing verse; "I, thy father-in-law, am come unto thee, that I may be made a proselyte. And if thou wilt not receive me for my own sake; yet admit me for the sake of thy wife and children, which I bring with me. And Moses went out from under the cloud of glory to meet him, &c. and when they had mutually saluted, they came into the tabernacle of the house of learning." But nothing can be more absurd than this fancy; that he carried him immediately to hear a lecture upon the law.

Ver. 8. *And Moses told his father-in-law all that the Lord had done to Pharaoh,* &c.] It seems to me from these words, and those that follow, that all we read hitherto about this matter fell out in order of time as it is here set down. For if it had happened after the giving of the law, it is most probable he would have said something of the most remarkable passage of all other, God's glorious

appearance to them on Mount Sinai, and the law he had delivered to them, &c. Whereas, at this meeting, he only relates what God had done to Pharaoh, and to the Egyptians, and how the *Lord delivered* them; and *all the travail that came upon them by the way:* which comprehends their passing through the Red Sea, and their want of water and bread, and their fight with Amalek: that is, all that we read in the foregoing chapters. And, accordingly, Jethro rejoiced for their deliverance from the Egyptians, (ver. 9.) and gives thanks to God for it, (ver. 10.) taking notice of nothing else.

Ver. 9. *And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel,* &c.] The gentiles, as Conradus Pellicanus here observes, more devoutly acknowledged God's mercies when they understood them, than the Jews themselves did. With which our Saviour, when he came, upbraids that people; finding such faith among the gentiles, as he could not meet withal in Israel.

Ver. 10. *Blessed be the Lord who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians,* &c.] This may relate to the preservation of Moses and Aaron, who had brought the sorest plagues upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians; and yet God suffered them not to hurt them.

Who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.] And then this relates to the deliverance of the whole body of the people from the Egyptian bondage; and to the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea: whereby the Israelites were finally delivered *from under the hand; i. e.* the tyranny and oppression of the Egyptians.

Ver. 11. *Now I know that the Lord.*] He knew the true God before; but was now fully convinced that he alone was the Most High.

Is greater than all gods.] Than all that the world accounted gods. For he did not acknowledge any more Divine powers than one: but he speaks according to the common opinion men had in those days of other gods besides the Most High. This is a common acknowledgment of good men in aftertimes, (Psalm lxxxvi. 8. 10. cxxxv. 5.)

For in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them.] If we refer this to what immediately goes before *(viz. all gods),* the meaning is, that the Lord appeared superior to all the Egyptian gods, who insolently attempted, by the magicians, to equal him in his wonderful works; but were baffled and exposed to contempt, and at last thrown down in their images, (viii. 19. ix. 11. xii. 12.) But it is commonly thought to relate to the Egyptians and Pharaoh, mentioned in the foregoing verse: and then the meaning is, that the Lord confounded them that proudly contemned his authority, saying, " Who is the Lord," &c. (v. 2.) whom he forced to beg his pardon, (ix. 27.) and at last drowned him and his host in the Red Sea, when they said, in a haughty boasting manner, " I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my lust shall be satisfied upon them," &c. (xv. 9.) And to this purpose the Chaldee expounds it; *in that very thing wherein they thought to judge* (*i. e.* to punish or destroy) *the Israelites, they were judged themselves; i. e.* drowned in the sea, as they intended to drown all their male children.

Ver. 12. *And Jethro, Moses's father-in-law.*] He is constantly thus described, (ver. 1, 2. 5—8. and every where else but ver. 9, 10.) to distinguish him from any other Jethro, to whom these things might possibly be thought to belong.

Took a burnt-offering.] Which was to be wholly consumed upon the altar, and nothing of it eaten by any body, (Lev. i. 9.) This now may be thought to have been done, after the giving of the law at Mount Sinai; which Moses here mentions, because he would put together all that belongs to Jethro's story (though not all done at the very same time), just as I said he did what belonged to the history of the manna, xvi. 33. 35. (See there.)

And sacrifices.] *i. e.* Peace-offerings; of which the people, as well as the priests, were to be partakers, (Lev. vii. 34. Deut. xxvi. 7.) And regularly there never were any *burnt-offerings* made, which were wholly consumed upon the altar, but *peace-offerings* attended upon them; if they were not *offerings for the whole congregation,* but for particular persons; that so they who brought them might feast also with God upon the sacrifices. For feasting upon sacrifices was an appendix unto all sacrifices whatsoever, one way or other; if not by themselves, yet by the priests, who ate of the *sin-offerings,* as the proxies of the people. Of this there are numerous instances, not only among the Jews, after the law was given, but among other people, who had this custom antecedent to it: as appears from Numb. xxv. 2. where the Midianites invite the Israelites " to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people did eat," &c. Which they did not learn from Moses, but derived from higher antiquity; it is probable even from Abraham himself.

For God.] To be offered unto God. Who offered them we are not told; but it should seem by the word *took,* that Jethro himself (who was a priest) was permitted to perform this office; in token that they owned him to be a faithful servant and minister of the most high God, as Melchisedeck was. And accordingly it follows that Aaron was invited, with the elders of Israel, to come and feast with him upon these sacrifices.

And Aaron came.] This seems to signify, that Aaron was but a guest, and had not been the priest who offered the sacrifices. For though we suppose the law to have been now given, yet it is likely Aaron and his sons were not yet consecrated, nor the service of God as yet ordered, according to the law that had been delivered; no more than judicatures were erected, as after this they were by the advice of Jethro.

But of these things we can have no absolute certainty, but only make probable conjectures.

And all the elders of Israel.] See iii. 16.

To eat bread.] To partake of the sacrifices that had been offered; for this comprehends the whole meal, (Gen. xliii. 25.)

Before God.] Before the tabernacle where God dwelt. Or, if that was not yet set up, in the place where God appeared in an extraordinary manner, which it is likely was in the tent of Moses, (xxxiii. 7.)

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass on the morrow.*] The next day after this solemn sacrifice: which the Jews (I observed above) say was on the eleventh day of Tisri. So Sepher Mechilta, and others from thence, as Mr. Selden hath noted, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 2. p. 75.)

That Moses sat.] That was the posture of judges.

To judge the people.] To hear causes and determine them.

And the people stood by Moses, &c.] That was the posture both of the plaintiff and the defendant. And there were now so many causes brought before him, that they took up the whole day: so that he had no time to eat and refresh himself.

Ver. 14. *And when Moses's father-in-law saw all that he did to the people.*] He either was present, and observed himself; or was informed by others what insupportable pains he took.

He said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people?] What a burden is this, to judge the causes of a whole nation!

Why sittest thou thyself alone?] Takest more upon thee than any one person is able to bear.

And all the people stand by thee from morning to the even.] Till both thou and they are tired.

Ver. 15. *Because the people come unto me to inquire of God.*] I cannot refuse to do justice: and there is none but myself to declare what the law of God is in such cases as are brought before me.

To inquire of God] Doth not signify here, to desire him to consult the Divine Majesty for them; but to decide their controversies according to the mind of God, declared in the laws he had given him. So the LXX. *to seek for judgment from God:* and the Vulgar, *to seek God's sentence.* For what was determined according to God's law was *the judgment of God,* and so it is called by Moses: (see Mr. Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 15. p. 610.)

Ver. 16. *When they have matter.*] Of controversy.

They come to me.] That I may decide it.

And I judge between one and another.] Determine where the right lies.

And I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.] This explains what is meant by *inquiring of God; i. e.* what was the law of God in the case brought before him. From which we may probably gather, that the law was already given from Mount Sinai, and all the other *laws* and *statutes* which follow, (chap. xxi. xxii. xxiii.) before this happened. Unless we will say, as some do, that Moses was directed, upon the spot (as we speak), by a secret inspiration, how to determine every cause.

Ver. 17. *The thing that thou doest is not good.*] Neither profitable for thyself nor for the people; as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 18. *Thou wilt surely wear away.*] Decay apace, and without remedy; as the phrase in the Hebrew signifies.

Both thou and the people that is with thee.] Such tedious attendance will impair them also, as well as thyself.

For this thing is too heavy for thee, &c.] Too much for one man to undergo.

Ver. 19. *Hearken now unto my voice.*] Be advised by me.

I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee.] Though I am no Israelite, I will take upon me to be thy counsellor; and, I doubt not, God will shew my advice to be good, by the good success which will attend it.

Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God.] Appoint others to hear causes, and do thou give thyself μόνῃ τῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ θεραπείᾳ, *to the worship and service of God alone,* as Josephus expounds it, (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 3.) or, as Ruffinus glosses, *reserve thyself only to the ministry of God;* to attend, that is, upon him, and know his mind. Which, if it be the sense, must be understood with this exception, *only in greater causes* (as it follows afterward), which he was to hear himself. And that may well be the meaning of these words, *When the people bring any matter to thee, which is too hard for other judges to determine,* (ver. 22) *do thou, if need be, carry it to God, that he may resolve thee.* Not that he was always to consult the oracle; for he knew in most causes the sense of God's law: but in some it might be necessary to have a particular direction from heaven. As in Numb. xv. 34, 35. xxvii. 5, &c.

Ver. 20. *And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws.*] How these two differ is not certain: but *ordinances* are commonly taken to concern matters of religion; and *laws* civil matters of justice and charity. In both which he was, if the case required it, to bring it to God; and then to report to the people, what his resolution was about it.

And shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk.] How to behave themselves towards God.

And the work that they must do.] How to behave themselves one towards another.

Ver. 21. *Moreover.*] Now in order to this,

Thou shalt provide out of all the people.] Look out such men as are qualified according to the following directions. Which he did in this manner, as he himself relates, Deut. i. 13. where he saith to the people, "Take ye wise and understanding men," &c. In the Hebrew it is *give ye; i. e.* present to me such men as you think fit for this office: and then it follows, "I will make them rulers over you." They chose them; and then he approved them, and gave them authority. Or, perhaps they presented a good many whom they thought qualified; and out of them he appointed such as he judged most meet. And thus he saith again, (ver. 15.) "So I took the chief of the tribes," &c. (See Mr. Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 15. p. 632.)

Able men.] Men able to endure labour; or men who are not needy, but rich and wealthy; or men of parts, or men of courage: for it may refer to any of these, especially the last; such as did not fear potent persons, but God alone, as it here follows.

Such as fear God.] Men truly religious; who would fear to offend God by doing injustice, but not fear to offend men by doing right.

Men of truth.] Honest, upright men: whose love to truth would make them sift it out; by hearing both sides patiently, with impartial attention and unbiassed affection.

Hating covetousness.] Not greedy of money; but abhorring bribes, and all base ways of gain. Which, as Demosthenes says, ἐκφρονας καὶ παραπλήγας ποιεῖ τοὺς δικαστὰς, *makes judges beside themselves, and no better than mad.*

For all these good qualities they were to be eminent and noted among the people, as Moses's words import, (Deut. i. 13.) where he bids them present to him, not only *wise men and understanding,* but also *known among their tribes;* generally accounted men of understanding and integrity.

And place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, &c.] The Hebrew words are such, that it cannot be determined by them, whether this relate to the number of rulers, or of people that were to be ruled by them; as Mr. Selden observes, and discourses upon it very largely, in the forementioned place, (lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 15. p. 615.) Where he shews, that *Decemvir,* for instance, was not only one set

over ten; but one of the ten judges of which a court consisted; and so the rest may be interpreted. But the most ancient and most received sense is, that he doth not speak of the number of judges, (for what a strange court would that be in which there was a thousand judges?) but of the people, of whose causes they were to take cognizance: and it is commonly thought also there was but one ruler over a thousand (families or men, it is uncertain which), and so of the rest: though the words may import more than one in each of their judicatures; whether greater or smaller. The Talmudists make a prodigious number of judges of each sort; but it is most rational to think that Jethro's meaning was, that he should constitute greater and lesser judicatures, according to the division of their several tribes, into thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, and a competent number of persons appointed to be judges in these greater or lesser courts.

For, that their tribes were divided into *thousands* (for instance) is apparent from several places, Josh. xxii. 14. Judg. vi. 15. [where Gideon saith, *my family* (in the Hebrew it is *my thousand*) *is the meanest in Israel;*] 1 Chron. xii. 20. Mic. v. 2. These *thousands* Corn. Bertramus takes to be *families*, whom the Hebrews call *houses:* which were divided into so many *heads*, as they call them, as the tribes were into families. And of these, he thinks, Jethro advises him to make such rulers as are here mentioned, of several degrees. But others (particularly Herman. Conringius de Republ. Hebr. sect. 19.) think we are to understand only *rulers* over a *thousand men*, not *families:* as it is certain in military affairs, the captains of *thousands* were only of a thousand soldiers, (Numb. xxxi. 14.)

Rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.] There were four orders of these rulers: but whether there was a subordination of the lower order to the higher, as in armies there is of the captain to the colonel (as we now speak), and the inferiors to him, I cannot determine.

Ver. 22. *And let them judge the people at all seasons.*] Sit every day, some or other of them, in their several districts. (See ver. 26.)

Every great matter they shall bring to thee.] Not if they were able to determine it themselves. For they had power to hear all causes; but when they found any too difficult, they were to refer it to be heard by Moses himself. So R. Levi ben Gersom explains it: "Every great cause, in which they know not what to judge, they shall bring to thee, and thou shalt shew what is right:" or how it is to be decided.

There are those, indeed, who think there were several sorts of causes, that might not be brought before these inferior courts; but were to be reserved for Moses's hearing and judging. These they make to be four: First, all sacred matters or things belonging unto God; which they gather from ver. 19. Secondly, all matters of equity; where the rigour of the law was fit to be mitigated. Thirdly, all capital causes. And lastly, such as the *chiliarchs*, *i. e.* rulers of thousands, and the other judges referred to him. But this is said without ground; for it is plain, all sorts of causes might be determined by the inferior courts, if they were able to make an end of them, whether civil or sacred. Only those which were too difficult for them; that is, when they did not find a law to direct them, or it was obscure, or they could not agree about the punishment, then they were to be brought before Moses. So he himself charges; not that the people should bring such causes to him as they thought difficult, but that the judges themselves should bring them; *i. e.* order an appeal to him; (Deut. i. 17.) "bring it unto me (speaking to the judges) and I will hear it." Which shews the cause had been at the bar of other courts before, and that it was not unlawful for them to meddle with it if they had been able to determine it. And accordingly we read here below, (ver. 26.) that the judges did so. In short, these words do not intimate that there were some causes the other judges might not try, if they were able; but only that such things as they found themselves not skilful enough to determine, they should bring to him. (See Mr. Selden in the forenamed book, p. 633, &c.)

But every small matter they shall judge.] Hitherto Moses had heard all causes promiscuously, great and small: but Jethro well advises him to delegate the labour of judging all causes *liquidi juris* (as the lawyers speak), *where the right was clear:* and to reserve no part of the judicature to himself, but where the law itself was either defective or obscure.

So shall it be easier for thyself, &c.] Thou wilt ease thyself of a great burden, by appointing others to take their share of it.

Ver. 23. *If thou wilt do this thing, and God command thee so.*] If thou wilt follow this advice, by God's approbation; who was to be consulted whether he allowed it.

Then thou shalt be able to endure.] Thy days will be prolonged; which otherwise will be shortened with this intolerable labour.

And the people go to their place in peace.] Go home very much satisfied, with such quick dispatch, and happy composure of their differences.

Ver. 24. *So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law,* &c.] Followed his counsel, by God's approbation, with whom no doubt he advised, (ver. 23.) Here the Samaritan copy inserts those words of Moses, (Deut. i. 9, &c.) "I am not able to bear you myself alone, the Lord your God hath multiplied you," &c. Which he spake, indeed, when he made this constitution, but did not set it down in this book; where he intended only a short account of these transactions.

Ver. 25. *And Moses chose able men,* &c.] Out of those who were presented to him by the people. (See ver. 20.)

Ver. 26. *And they judged the people at all seasons.*] Whensoever they resorted to them: for some court or other sat every day that was not appointed by God for other business, *i. e.* for religion.

The hard causes they brought to Moses, &c.] It is plain by this that the judges, not the people, brought the hard causes unto Moses, for the people could not know whether they might not have a remedy nearer hand (than by going to him on all occasions) till they had tried.

Ver. 27. *And Moses let his father-in-law depart.*] After he had stayed some time with him, and could not prevail with him to stay longer (which he earnestly desired), and go with them to see the accomplishment of God's promises to them; as those words Numb. x. 29, &c. are thought to signify. But perhaps that Hobab there mentioned was not Jethro himself, but his son; whom Moses also persuaded not to return to his own country: for he makes no

reply, much less denies to stay with Moses, when he pressed him the second time, though he refused at first, (ver. 32.) But this I shall consider in that place.

And he went his way into his own land.] To make his children, or the people of the land, proselytes, saith the Chaldee paraphrase. Which it is probable he endeavoured (*i. e.* to bring them to true religion) and effected in some measure: so that piety was propagated in some families among them to future generations. For the Rechabites came out of this country, (1 Chron. ii. 55.) whose virtue Jeremiah praises in the latter end of the Jewish church, (chap. xxxv.)

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *IN the third month.*] Or, in the *third new moon.* For the Hebrew word *chodesh* signifies *a new moon,* as well as a *month:* nay, that is the prime signification, from whence the other is derived. And so we are to understand it here; that on the new moon, *i. e.* the first day of the third month (called Sivan), after their coming out of Egypt, they came into the wilderness of Sinai. Which was just forty-five days after they departed out of Egypt. For, if we add to the fifteen days of the first month twenty-nine, which made the second, these put together, with this new moon, make forty-five. Unto which, if we add that day when Moses went up to God (ver. 3.), and reported, when he came down, the message God sent by him to the elders of Israel; and the next day after, when he returned their answer unto God, (ver. 7, 8.) with the three days more, which God gave them to prepare themselves for his coming down among them, (ver. 10, 11.) there were just fifty days from their Passover to the giving of the law upon Mount Sinai: which laid the foundation of the great feast of Pentecost.

The same day.] *i. e.* On the forementioned *new moon* of the third month.

Came they into the wilderness of Sinai.] So called from that famous mountain *Sinai,* which gave the name to the wilderness which lay before it. This mountain was also called Horeb, (Deut. iv. 10.) they being only different tops of one and the same mountain; but this higher than Horeb: so that one may see the Red Sea from thence, as they that have travelled into those parts affirm, who say it is now called by the Arabians, Tur; and by Christians, the Mountain of St. Catherine.

Ver. 2. *For they were departed from Rephidim,* &c.] They began to move from *Rephidim* towards that part of the mountain called Horeb, upon their murmuring for want of water, (xvii. 5, 6.) But seem to have returned thither to fight with Amalek, (ver. 8.) And then they were led by God to this other side of the mountain, which is called the wilderness of Sinai.

There Israel encamped before the mount.] For the glorious cloud having led them hither, rested upon the mount; as appears from the words following.

Ver. 3. *And Moses went up unto God.*] Whose glorious majesty appeared upon the mount.

And the Lord called unto him out of the mountain.] Or rather, *for the Lord called to him out of the mountain,* where the Divine glory rested: unto which he would not have presumed to go, if the Lord had not called to him to come up thither. Which was upon the second day of the third month.

Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel.] There was some reason sure for calling them by these two names, *the house of Jacob* and *the children of Israel:* which perhaps was to put them in mind that they, who had lately been as low as Jacob when he went to Padan-Aram, were now grown as great as God made him when he came from thence, and was called Israel.

Ver. 4. *You have seen.*] There needs no proof, for you yourselves are witnesses.

What I did unto the Egyptians.] Smote them with divers sore plagues; and at last drowned them and their chariots in the Red Sea.

And how I bare you on eagles' wings.] Kept you so safe, and placed you so far out of the reach of your enemies, as if you had been borne up on high by an eagle. Which are observed to carry their young ones, not in their feet, as other birds are wont to do, but on their wings: and to soar so high, and with so swift a motion, that none can pursue them, much less touch them. Bochartus hath observed all the properties ascribed to the eagle; with respect to which, interpreters have thought God's care of his people to be here compared with that bird, (Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 5.) But after all he judiciously concludes, that Moses best explains his own meaning, in his famous song, Deut. xxxii. 11. where the eagle's fluttering about her nest, and making a noise, to stir up her young ones to leave their dirty nest, and try their wings, represents the many means God had used to rouse up the drooping spirits of the Israelites, when they lay miserably oppressed under a cruel servitude, and encourage them to aspire after liberty, and to obey those whom he sent to deliver them.

And brought you unto myself.] And by that means brought you hither, to live under my government. For this was the very foundation of his peculiar empire over them, that he had ransomed and redeemed them out of slavery, by a mighty hand and stretched-out arm, (as he speaks, xiii. 3. Deut. iv. 34.) so as he had not delivered any other nation: and thereby made them his own, after an extraordinary manner, peculiar to them alone. This Joshua also recals to their mind, when he was near his death, and renewed this covenant of God with them, (xxiv. 5, 6, &c.)

Ver. 5. *Now therefore.*] Having wonderfully delivered them, and supported them in a miraculous manner, by bread from heaven, and water out of a rock; he now proceeds to instruct them in their duty, as Greg. Nyssen observes, L. de Vita Mosis, p. 172.

If you will obey my voice indeed, &c.] If you will sincerely obey me, as your king and governor, and keep the covenant I intend to make with you, then you shall be mine above all the people of the earth; whose Lord I am, as well as yours: but you shall be my peculiar inheritance; in which I will establish my kingdom and priesthood; with such laws as shall not only distinguish you from all other nations, but make you to excel them. This is the sense of this verse, and the following.

A peculiar treasure unto me.] *i. e.* Very dear to me; and consequently I will take a singular care of you, as kings

do of those things which they lay up in their treasury. So the Hebrew word *segullah* signifies. Which Origen proves they really were (notwithstanding all the calumnies of Celsus), their laws being so profitable; and they being so early taught to know God, to believe the immortality of the soul, and the rewards and punishments in the life to come; and bred up to a contempt of divination (with which mankind had been abused), as proceeding rather from wicked demons, than from any excellent nature; and to seek for the knowledge of future things in souls, which by an extraordinary degree of purity were rendered capable to receive the Spirit of God, (lib. v. contra Celsum, p. 260.) And this the author of Sepher Cosri happily expresses, when he saith, "Our peculiar blessings consist in the conjunction of our minds with God, by prophecy, and that which is annexed to it:" that is (as Muscatus explains it), "the gift of the Spirit of God." And therefore, he doth not say in the law, If you will obey my voice, I will bring you after death into gardens of pleasure; but "ye shall be to me a people, and I will be to you a God," (par. i. sect. 109.)

For all the earth is mine.] Which made it the greater honour, that he bare such a special love to them.

Ver. 6. *And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests.*] An honourable, or a Divine kingdom: not like worldly kingdoms, which are defended by arms, but supported by piety. Or a princely people, that should rule over their enemies. For the same word signifies both *priests* and *princes:* and in the first times of the world, none was thought fit to be a *priest* but he who was a king, or the chief of the family; as we see in Melchizedeck and Jethro.

That God was peculiarly the king of this people, I observed above, (iii. 10.) and here he expressly owns this peculiar dominion over them, by saying, ye shall be *to me* a kingdom. And one reason, perhaps, why he saith they shall be *a kingdom of priests*, is, because they were governed (whilst they continued a theocracy) by the high-priest, as the prime minister under God, who in all weighty causes consulted God what was to be done; and accordingly they ordered their affairs. (xxviii. 30. Numb. xxviii. 21.) Which is the reason why God commands Moses to make such garments for Aaron as should be for *glory and beauty* (or, for *honour and glory*), as we read ver. 2. of that chapter; *i. e.* to make him appear great, like a prince; for they were really royal garments. And for his sons, also, he was to make bonnets of the like kind *for honour and glory*, (ver. 40.) they being in the form of the *tiaræ* which kings wore; and are joined in Scripture with crowns, (Job xxix. 14. Isa. iii. 23, &c.) Whence Philo says, (in his book de Sacerd. Honoribus,) that the law manifestly dressed up the high-priest, εἰς σεμνότητα καὶ τιμὴν βασιλέως. But the liberty and freedom also wherein they were instated, I doubt not, is signified by these words, *kings and priests* (as Onkelos translates them, and as it is expressed in the New Testament, Revel. i. 6. v. 10. and the Syriac also, *kingdom and priesthood*), for *kings and priests* were, of all other men, freed from oppression. And thus I find our Mr. Thorndike, a most learned man, glosses upon these words: (Review of the Rights of the Church, p. 132.) God called them *kings*, because redeemed from the servitude of strangers, to be a people, lords of themselves; and *priests*, because redeemed to spend their time in sacrificing, and feasting upon their sacrifices, (under which figure he afterwards represents the happy state of his church, Isa. lxi. 6.) though they sacrificed not in person, but by their priests appointed in their stead, by imposition of the elders' hands, (Numb. viii. 10.)

A holy nation.] A people separated to God from all other nations, and from their idolatry, to serve God in an acceptable manner.

These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.] The sum of what he was to say to them; comprehending both their duty and their high privilege.

Ver. 7. *And Moses came.*] Down from the mount, where he had been with God, (ver. 3.)

And called for the elders of the people.] The principal persons in the several tribes, (see iii. 16.) which he seems to have done in the evening of the second day of the month.

And laid before their faces all these words, &c.] Plainly declared to them, what God had given him in charge: which they went and propounded to the people of the several tribes, whom they represented.

Ver. 8. *And all the people answered together, and said.*] All with one consent declared as here follows:

All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.] They consented to have the Lord for their king; and promised to be obedient to his will.

And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.] This seems to have been done the next day, which was the third day of the third month. Upon which report made to God for the people's consent, he proceeds, after a few days' preparation, to declare the laws by which they should be governed, (chap. xx. xxi. xxii. xxiii.) and then, in the twenty-fourth chapter), these laws pass into a covenant between God and them.

Here Moses plainly acted as a mediator between God and the people.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I will come unto thee.*] Appear upon the mount.

In a thick cloud.] In a darker cloud than that which had hitherto gone before them to conduct them; so that they should see nothing but flashes of lightning which came out of it, in a very frightful manner, (ver. 16. 18.) For, that there was fire in it, appears from Deut. iv. 11. v. 22, 23. though at first, perhaps, only a thick cloud appeared, as a token of his approach.

That the people may hear when I speak with thee.] Though they saw no similitude, yet they plainly heard a voice speaking unto Moses, and declaring their duty. Maimonides, indeed, thinks that the words were directed only unto Moses; and that the Israelites heard merely the sound of the words, but did not distinctly understand them, (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 33.) Which is directly against what Moses says, (Deut. iv. 12.) "The Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire," &c. and, (v. 4, 5.) "The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount, &c. saying, I am the Lord thy God," &c. Which words are plainly directed to all the people.

And believe thee for ever.] They had been staggered in their belief, after they had professed it at the Red Sea, (xv. *ult.*) but after this, it might be expected they would never question his authority any more.

And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord.] Or rather, *for Moses had told,* &c. Upon which account God was pleased to make the foregoing declaration. Till they had owned him for the *Lord their God, i. e.* their king

and governor, he did not speak unto them at all, but only unto Moses: but now that they had consented to be his, he resolves to speak audibly to them; and henceforth to dwell among them; and in order to it, fix his tabernacle with them. For which he gives order (chap. xxv. &c.) immediately after they had entered into covenant to do as they had promised.

Or these words (which seem to be a needless repetition) may relate to that which follows, and be translated thus: *Moses having told the words of the people unto the Lord, the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them,* &c.

Ver. 10. *Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow.*] This shews that Moses was sent down early on the fourth day, to prepare them for the appearance of the Divine Majesty among them, by sanctifying them; that is, separating them from all uncleanness; or rather, from all common and ordinary employments; that they might give themselves to fasting, and prayer, and abstinence from otherwise lawful pleasures. For Pirke Eliezer takes abstinence from their wives, mentioned ver. 15. as a part of this sanctification, (cap. 41.) And so doth Gregory Nyssen in his book de Vita Mosis, p. 178. And Maimonides observes, that separation from wine and strong drink is called holiness in the law of the Nazarites, (Numb. vi. 5.) and therefore may be thought part of the sanctification here required, (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 33.)

And let them wash their clothes.] The Hebrews understand it, of washing their whole bodies. For thus Aaron and his sons were to be consecrated to their office, (xxix. 4. xl. 12.) and therefore thus the people were now to be made a holy people unto the Lord, and made fit for the presence of the Divine Majesty. Under whose wings (as they speak) none were received in future times, *i. e.* made proselytes, but by baptism (or washing of their whole body), which was taken from this pattern. And accordingly, where we read in the law of particular purifications by washing their clothes in case of any uncleanness, as Lev. xi. 25. 28. 40. xiv. 8. 47. (where Moses speaks of cleansing a leprous person), Numb. xxxi. 24. (where he speaks of cleansing soldiers), and many other cases, they understand it in the very same manner. In some cases indeed it is expressly prescribed, (Lev. xv. 5—7. xvi. 26, &c.) and they expound all others, where *clothes* only are mentioned, by the same rule; as Mr. Selden shews, (lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 3.) where he observes, that, in the pagan language, *pure garments* signify the washing of the whole body. (See p. 29.)

Ver. 11. *And be ready against the third day.*] He doth not mean the third day of the month, but the third day after this command to sanctify themselves. In which they were bound to spend *two* entire days; and then the Lord promised to come down in all their sight upon Mount Sinai. That is, when they were fit to receive him, by their professing themselves a holy people, of which that outward washing was a token.

For the third day the Lord will come down, &c.] Not from the mount, but from heaven, *upon Mount Sinai.* On which the Schechinah descended in a cloud, which struck a great awe into them: for it was darker than the pillar of the cloud by which they had been conducted hither; through which some rays, or glimpse of a glorious majesty that was in it, broke forth upon them.

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about.*] To keep them at a due distance, out of a just reverence to the Divine Majesty.

Take heed unto yourselves, that ye go not up, &c.] This caution also was given them, to work and preserve in their minds a most profound reverence of the Divine Majesty, and to those laws which were to be delivered from this mount.

Ver. 13. *There shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through.*] Be stoned, if he were near at hand; or shot through with darts or arrows, if at a distance. So Aben Ezra. And so Jonathan, likewise, translates the latter clause, *they shall throw darts at him:* and so our old translation, *stricken through with darts.* But the Talmudists, and the greatest lawyers among the Jews, expound both these clauses of *stoning,* which was twofold, as we read in the Misna Tit. Sanhedrin, cap. 6. either by throwing stones at a malefactor, or throwing him down from a high place upon stones. And thus this last phrase imports in the Hebrew, and may properly be translated, "projiciendo projicietur," *he shall be violently thrown down;* or, *thrown down headlong.* It is the very same word with that (xv. 4.) concerning the casting Pharaoh's chariots into the sea. And this was a punishment, as Mr. Selden observes, like that among the Romans, from the Saxum Tarpeium, which the Jews inflicted upon some captive Edomites, (2 Chron. xxv. 12.) and Jehu inflicted upon Jezabel, (2 Kings ix. 32.) On which story R. Levi ben Gersom observes pertinently, that as she caused Naboth to be stoned, so she was punished herself in the same kind; for stoning, saith he, was either by throwing stones at malefactors, or throwing them down upon stones: to justify which, he alleges this place in Exodus. And David Kimchi makes the same observation. (See Mr. Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 5. p. 74, &c.)

When the trumpet soundeth long.] When the sound of it is protracted, or drawn out; and, consequently, was less terrible than while it was shorter and broken. (See ver. 16.)

They shall come up to the mount.] To the foot of it, (ver. 17.) that they might more plainly hear the voice of God.

Ver. 14. *And Moses came down from the mount to the people.*] As he had been commanded, (ver. 10.)

And sanctified the people.] Commanded them to sanctify themselves, (as the author of Sepher Cosri explains it, par. i. sect. 87.) both with internal sanctification and external; among which the principal was, separation from the company of women, as it here follows, (ver. 15.)

And they washed their clothes.] See ver. 10. Unto which add, that it is no wonder they used this purification before the giving of the law: which had been anciently in use among their ancestors, upon solemn occasions. As appears by what I observed on Gen. xxxv. 2. where Jacob, before the building of an altar to God in Bethel, as he had vowed, cleansed his family after this manner. For so Aben Ezra truly expounds these words *be clean,* wash your bodies: which was the old rite of cleansing. (See there.)

Ver. 15. *And said unto the people, Be ready against the third day.*] Prepared to hear the words of God.

Come not at your wives.] For this time was set apart for solemn fasting and prayer; that they might be fit to

converse with God, by having their minds abstracted from earthly things.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass on the third day.*] See ver. 11.

There were thunders and lightnings.] Which broke out of the thick cloud, to awaken them to attend unto his Majesty, who was approaching.

And a thick cloud.] In which a flaming fire presently appeared, (ver. 18.) ὡς ἀόρατον γενέσθαι τὸ ὄρος, *so that the mountain could not be seen;* as Greg. Nyssen explains it, de Vita Mosis, p. 179.

And the voice of the trumpet.] The heavenly ministers, who were attendants upon the Divine Majesty, made a sound like that of a trumpet, to summon the people to come and appear before God, and receive his commands.

Exceeding loud.] Beyond what the blast of any men could make: for it made the whole camp quake, as the following words tell us.

Ver. 17. *And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp.*] When their trembling was abated, by the remission, as we may suppose, of the sound of the trumpet.

To meet with God.] That they might be espoused to him.

And they stood at the nether part of the mount.] Below at the foot of it, not presuming to touch it; which they were severely forbidden, ver. 11, 12. (See Deut. iv. 11.)

Ver. 18. *And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke.*] Nothing could be seen but smoke, mixed with a flame.

Because the Lord descended on it in fire.] The Schechinah came down into the thick cloud (ver. 9. 16.) with a glittering company of angels, who appeared like flames of fire, unto which they are compared by the Psalmist, (civ. 4.) Thus Moses himself seems to expound it (Deut. xxxiii. 2.) "He came with ten thousands (or myriads) of holy ones (*i. e.* of angels); from his right hand went a fiery law for them." Which plainly relates to this appearance at Mount Sinai.

And the smoke thereof ascended, as the smoke of a furnace.] Mixed with fire, which went up even to the midst of heaven, as Moses explains it, Deut. iv. 11.

And the whole mount quaked greatly.] See Psalm lxviii. 8. civ. 32.

Ver. 19. *And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long.*] It is a different word here in the Hebrew from that (ver. 13.) which we translate *sounded long:* signifying that it *proceeded* or went on either a long time, or to a greater loudness.

And waxed louder and louder.] In the Hebrew the words are *exceeding strong:* ὑπερέχει ἑαυτὴν ἡ σάλπιγξ, &c. *the trumpet exceeded itself;* the succeeding blasts transcending those that went before, as Greg. Nyssen well interprets the whole.

Moses spake.] The people trembled before at the loud sound of the trumpet, (ver. 16.) but now it grew so very terrible, that Moses himself said, (as the apostle expounds this passage, Heb. xii. 21.) "I exceedingly fear and quake." For hither, I think, Junius rightly applies those words.

And God answered him by a voice.] Bidding him not be afraid, but come up unto him, as it follows in the next verse. Greg. Nyssen thinks that the voice of the trumpet ἦν ἔναρθρος, *became articulate,* with the organs of speech, by the Divine power.

Ver. 20. *And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai.*] It is said before that the Lord descended upon it; (ver. 18.) therefore the meaning here is, that the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, settled there to speak unto the people.

On the top of the mount.] On the highest part of it, that there might be the greatest distance between him and the people, who stood at the foot of it.

And the Lord called up Moses, &c.] He stood lower before, though not so low as the people: but now is called up higher, even to the very place where God was; and, consequently, entered into the midst of the fire and smoke, wherein the mountain was wrapped, (ver. 18.) upon God's appearance there. From which, in all probability, the Persians (who had heard or read what is here related) framed the story of their Zoroaster: who, wandering in desert places, was carried up to heaven, and saw God encompassed with flames; which he could not behold with his own eyes (the splendour of them was so great), but with eyes which the angels lent him: and there he received from him a book of the law, &c. (See Huetius Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 5. n. 2.)

Ver. 21. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Go down and charge the people,* &c.] It seems that upon Moses's going up, some of the people thought of approaching nearer, out of curiosity, to see if they could discover more of the Divine Majesty. And therefore God sends him down again immediately, to bid them remember the charge he had given them, and not dare to come nearer than they were.

And many of them perish.] As many as were so presumptuous. *Many* sometimes signifies *all:* and here all that should adventure to go beyond their bounds.

Ver. 22. *And let the priests also.*] Who these were is much disputed; for Aaron and his sons were not yet consecrated. The Jews (it is commonly known) readily answer, they were the *first-born;* whose prerogative it was to minister to God, as his priests, till the law of Moses ordered things otherwise. But I have often observed this not to be true; being confuted by several examples of others who sacrificed and were not the first-born. And lately there is a learned man, who, in a just discourse, hath overthrown this opinion, (see Campeg. Vitringa Observ. Sacræ, lib. ii. cap. 23.) which was called in question, and briefly censured some time before, by a very learned friend of mine, Dr. Outram, (de Sacrificiis, lib. i. cap. 4.) Conradus Pellicanus, in the beginning of the Reformation, seems to have given a better account of the priests here mentioned, which were the prime and most honourable persons in the several tribes; the elders, and such as administered the government under Moses: among which there might be some of the first-born, nay, it is possible, many of them; but not by any special right which they had to this office.

Which came near unto the Lord.] To perform Divine services. By which one would think he speaks of those who had been already employed in this office: for having before this built an altar, (xvii. 15.) some think it probable sacrifice was offered upon it. But if it were only a monument, and no sacrifices were to be offered till they came to the mount of God, who was to appoint them; then Moses picked out the most excellent persons (as I said before) to perform this service when they came there, (xxiv. 5.)

Sanctify themselves.] Nothing was said before of their

sanctification; which is here enjoined by itself, because their high office required a peculiar separation to prepare them for it.

Lest the Lord break forth upon them.] Lest when they come near to sacrifice, God should be offended with their uncleanness, and destroy them. This supposes they might go nearer than the people.

Ver. 23. *And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai,* &c.] He thought it was needless to go down to restrain the people; having given them the charge which God commanded him, (ver. 11, 12.) and *set bounds about the mount* (as it here follows), by drawing a line, perhaps, beyond which they should not pass, and thereby separating the mount from them; which he calls *sanctifying it.*

Ver. 24. *And the Lord.*] Or, *but* the Lord.

Said unto him, Away, get thee down.] He knew the people's inclinations better than Moses did; and therefore commanded him to make no delay, for fear they should grow more bold than he imagined.

And thou shalt come up, and Aaron with thee.] After he had delivered this new charge to them. Which was the more necessary, because Aaron being also called up, they might think likewise of sharing this privilege.

And Aaron with thee.] Unto whom God did this great honour, because he was to be called shortly to the dignity of the high-priest: and would be the more respected by the people, when they saw him admitted far nearer to God than they were.

But let not the priests and the people break through, &c.] But let not any body else, as they love their lives, presume to press beyond their line: no not the priests, on whom I have bestowed the honour of coming nearer to me than other men, (ver. 22.)

Ver. 25. *So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them.*] Delivered the message to them, and to the priests, as he was directed: and then (as he was also ordered) returned to the mount, and his brother with him; but not to the top of the mount where he was before, (ver. 20.) as appears from the nineteenth verse of the next chapter: which shews that Moses was there where the people might speak to him; and therefore, if he went up now to the top of the mount, he came down again, when the Lord spake audibly to them, and stood in a place where he might be a mediator between them. So he himself saith, (Deut. v. 4, 5.) that when the Lord talked with them face to face in the mount, he *stood between the Lord and them.* And accordingly it follows (ver. 23. of that chapter), that when they heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, *they came near to Moses, and said,* &c. which shews he was not far off from them, though nearer to God than they.

But perhaps Moses and Aaron did not come up into the mount, till after the ten words (or commandments) were spoken: when Moses, we read (xx. 21.) *drew near unto the thick darkness where God was;* though we read nothing of Aaron there. Which inclines me to think the foregoing account of this matter to be the truer.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND God spake all these words, saying.*] After the trumpet had summoned them all to attend, and sounded a long time louder and louder, there came a voice from the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, out of the midst of the fire, (as we read Deut. iv. 12. v. 4. 22.) that is, of the angelical host which encircled him, and appeared like flames of fire: which made the apostle say, the *law was ordained by angels,* (Gal. iii. 19.) who were then in attendance upon the Divine Majesty, as his retinue, when he *spake all these words,* that follow to the end of the seventeenth verse; which are called the *ten words,* or commandments, in xxxiv. 28. And he spake them with so great a voice, (Deut. v. 22.) that all the people, who were very numerous, plainly heard them, which was very wonderful.

This was upon the sixth day of the third month, called Sivan. (See Selden, lib. iii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 11.)

Ver. 2. *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt,* &c.] In this preface to the ten commandments, he asserts his right to give them laws, not only in general, as he is Lord of all, but by a peculiar title he had to their obedience; whom he had taken to himself, after a special manner, to be his people, by bringing them out of the land of Egypt, and the servitude under which they groaned there. This was a benefit fresh in their minds, and most apt to affect their hearts: and, therefore, he doth not say, as the author of Sepher Cosri observes, (par. i. sect. 17.) *I am the Lord of heaven and earth;* or, *I am thy Creator;* but, *I am the Lord thy God,* who have shewn a particular favour and kindness to thee, by bringing thee out of the land of Egypt, &c. When he became their king by a special title, (as I observed, iii. 10.) and, upon that account, gave them these laws, whereby they were to be governed: and gave them peculiarly to them (as the forenamed author notes), who were tied to the observance of them, by virtue of their deliverance out of Egypt, and God's placing his glory among them. Whereas, if they had been tied to them by virtue of their creation, they would have belonged to all nations as much as unto them. Thus he. Maimonides will have these words, *I am the Lord thy God,* to signify the existence of God; and the next, (ver. 3.) his unity: which two are the great foundations of religion, (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 33.) And, indeed, the word Jehovah, or Lord, is generally thought to signify, *he who is of himself.* And the next word Elohim, which is the most ancient name of God in Scripture, learned men of late derive from the Arabic word *alaha* (there being no root in Hebrew remaining from whence it can so regularly come), which signifies to *worship, serve,* and *adore.* Hottinger hath taken a great deal of pains, in his Hexaemeron, and elsewhere, to confirm this out of that, and out of the Ethiopic language also. The Jews say, indeed, that Elohim is the name of *judgment,* as Jehovah is of *mercy;* but Abarbinel confutes this, to establish a notion of his own (viz. *the omnipotent Cause of all things),* which others oppose, as much as he doth the former. And therefore most, I think, now rest in the forenamed notion, that it properly signifies Him, who only is to be religiously worshipped and adored; as it follows in the next words.

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt have no other gods.*] That is, *believe in one God;* or, *believe there is no other God but me,* as Nachman interprets it; and, consequently, worship no other God. This is the great foundation (as the Hebrews speak) of the law: for whosoever confesses any other God, he denies the whole law. And they truly observe, also, that

this negative precept includes the affirmative, *viz.* a command to worship him, the only God. As when Naaman saith, he would neither offer burnt-offering nor sacrifice to any other God but the Lord; it is plain he meant, that he would sacrifice to him, (1 Kings, v. 17.) See Selden, lib. iii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 1.

Before me.] As they were not to forsake him and worship some other God; so not to worship any other God, *together with him,* as many did, (2 Kings xvii. 33.) For in his presence he could not endure any competitor.

Ver. 4. *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,* &c.] The difference between *pesel,* which we translate *graven image,* and *temunah,* which we translate *likeness,* seems to be, that the former was a protuberant image, or a *statue* made of wood, stone, &c. and the other only a *picture,* drawn in colours upon a wall, or board, &c. Both which, some have thought, they were prohibited here so much as to make; whether it were the image, or picture, of the stars, or birds, or men, or beasts, or fishes, for fear they should be drawn to worship them. Thus, it is certain, Origen understood this commandment, when he said, there was not permitted to be so much as ζωγράφος, οὔτε ἀγαλματοποιὸς ἐν τῇ πολιτείᾳ αὐτῶν, &c. *a picture-drawer, or a maker of statues in their commonwealth:* to take away all occasion of drawing men's minds from the worship of God, (lib. iv. contra Cels. p. 181.) Clemens Alexandrinus was of the same opinion, (lib. v. Stromat. and Tertullian, L. de Spectaculis, cap. 23.) Which they derived, in all probability, from the Jews, who, from the time of the Maccabees to the destruction of Jerusalem, thought they were forbidden by this law to make an image or figure of any living creature, especially of a man. This Hermannus Conringius hath plainly demonstrated (in his Paradoxa de Nummis Ebræorum, cap. 5.) out of many places in Philo and in Josephus. The latter of which tells us, (lib. xviii. Archæolog. cap. 5.) that all their governors before Pilate were wont to use ensigns in Jerusalem, without the image of Cæsar in them, because their law forbade them εἰκόνων ποίησιν, *the making of images.* And when Vitellius was to lead the Roman army through Judea, against the Arabians, with images in their ensigns, the people ran to meet him, beseeching him to forbear it, οὐ γὰρ αὐτοῖς εἶναι πάτριον περιορᾶν εἰκόνας εἰς αὐτὴν φερομένας, *for it was not consonant to the laws of their country to see images brought into it.* But whether this was the ancient exposition of the law before those times may be doubted. The Talmudists think it was unlawful to make any figures of celestial bodies, either prominent or plain, though it were for ornament's sake: but as for animals, they might make prominent statues of them, except only of men; the images of whom they might draw on a plain: (see Selden, lib. i. de Jure N. et G. cap. 6—8.) which distinctions most look upon as ungrounded; and the common opinion is, that Moses did not forbid the very making of an image; but that they should not make them to set up in the place of Divine worship.

Ver. 5. *Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.*] If they saw an image (as they must needs do in other countries, though we suppose they had none among themselves), he requires them not to use any gesture, or to do any thing that might signify reverence or honour given to them. Such were *prostrating* themselves before them, *bowing* their bodies, *kissing* their hands; much less to *offer sacrifice,* or *burn incense,* &c. to them. Here seems to be a plain gradation in this commandment; three things being here forbidden, if we take the first part of it to signify that they might not so much *as make a graven image, or any likeness* of any thing, for fear they should be tempted to idolatry. But though this may be supposed to have been a sin, yet not so great as the next, *to bow down to them;* which was a degree of honour too high to be paid unto any image: but was not the highest of all; which was to *serve them,* by offering sacrifice, burning incense, making vows to them; or swearing by them; or consecrating temples to them; or lighting candles before them.

For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.] This reason shews that this commandment is different from the first, and not a part of it. For worshipping of images is forbidden, not merely because he was their God, and there is but one God; but because he *is a jealous God,* who could not endure any corrival, or consort, in that which was proper to himself. And so the ancient Jews and Christians also, before St. Austin took this for the second commandment. The Arabian Christians, in later times, particularly Elmacinus, distinctly names the ten commandments in that order which we now do; as Hottinger observes in his Smegma Orientale, p. 436.

Visiting.] *i. e.* Punishing with heavy judgments, (Lev. xxvi. 39.)

The iniquity of the fathers upon the children.] This was threatened to terrify them from this sin, which would ruin their families; being a kind of high treason against the Lord of heaven and earth. Yet Aben Ezra understands it only of such children as trod in the steps of their forefathers; for if they repented the punishment was mitigated, (Lev. xxvi. 40, &c.)

Unto the third and fourth generation.] That is, as long as they could be supposed to live (which might be to see the third, and perhaps the fourth generation), he threatens to pursue them with his vengeance in their posterity; whose punishment they themselves should behold, to their great grief. So great was his hatred to this sin; and so odious were such people to him. Thus Maimonides expounds it in his More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 54. *Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children,* is threatened only against the sin of idolatry; as appears from what follows, that such sinners are called haters of him. And he mentions only *to the fourth generation;* because the most a man can live to see of his seed, is the fourth generation. Accordingly God orders, saith he, that if any city proved idolaters, the inhabitants should be destroyed utterly, and all that was therein, (Deut. xiii. 13—15.) Fathers, children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, and the newborn children, were all killed for the sin of their parents." Hence, he saith, (Deut. vii. 10.) he repayeth men that hate him *to their face:* which is there twice mentioned.

Of them that hate me.] For he looked on them not only as enemies, but as haters of him. It is an observation of the same Maimonides, that, in the whole law of Moses, and in the books of the prophets, we shall never find these words, *fury, anger, indignation, jealousy,* attributed to God, but when they speak of idolatry: nor any man called an *enemy to God,* an *adversary,* a *hater* of him, but only *idolaters,* (Deut. vi. 14, 15. xi. 16, 17. xxxi. 29, &c. Nehem. i. 2. Deut. vii. 10. Numb. xxxii. 21. Deut. xii. 31.

xvi. 22.) See More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 36. which he repeats cap. 54. "No man is called a hater of God, but an idolater;" according to that Deut. xii. 31. "every abomination to the Lord which he hateth." By which it appears, that they counted the worshippers of images idolaters; though they did not think these images to be gods (for no man in the world ever thought an image made of wood and stone, silver or gold, to be the Creator of heaven and earth, or the Governor of the world), but took them only for things intermediate between God and them, as he there speaks.

This was a law so well known to the ancient heathens, that the best men among them would suffer no images to be set up in their temples. In particular, Numa forbade this to the Romans, which he learned, as Clemens Alexandrinus thinks, from Moses. Insomuch, that for the space of a hundred and seventy years, though they built temples, yet ἄγαλμα οὐδὲν, οὔτε πλαστὸν, οὔτε μὲν γραπτὸν ἐποιήσαντο, *they made no image, neither statue, nor so much as a picture,* (lib. i. Stromat. p. 304.) Plutarch relates the same in the life of Numa Pompilius, and adds this reason, that he thought it a great crime to represent the most excellent Being by such mean things; and that God was to be apprehended only by the mind. The ancient Persians pretend to have received the same law from their Zoroaster; who, in a number of things, is so like to Moses, that Huetius thinks (not without reason) his story was framed out of these books.

Ver. 6. *And shewing mercy unto thousands.*] To invite their obedience, he promises to be kind unto them and their posterity for *many generations* (so *thousands* signifies), who were loyal and faithful to him. Such is the infinite goodness of God, that he delights more in shewing mercy, than in acts of severity; there being such a disproportion between the one and the other, as there is between three or four and a thousand. Which made the heavy punishment of idolaters the more reasonable, because they might have enjoyed such great and long-continued blessings, if they would have kept close to their religion.

Of them that love me.] Adhered to him alone, as the only object of worship and adoration; with such an affection as a chaste wife bears to her husband. For God now espoused this nation to himself (as the prophets taught them to understand it), and therefore all the idolatry which is forbidden in these commandments is called *going a whoring* from him.

And keep my commandments.] Not only professed to be his entirely, but proved it by observing his precepts. Which *keeping* or observing of *his commandments,* is mentioned here, perhaps, and not in any of the following commandments, because this and the first were the principal, upon which the rest depended: there being no reason to mind what he said, if they acknowledged any other God but him.

Ver. 7. *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.*] By the *name* of the Lord, in Scripture, is meant the Lord himself: and to *take,* or *lift up* his name, is to swear by him. So this word *nasa* sometimes signifies, without the addition of God's name, (Isa. iii. 7.) *Jissa,* he shall *lift up* in that day; which we truly render, *in that day he shall swear:* which they did then with the hand lifted up to heaven. And to take his name or swear *in vain,* is to swear falsely. That is the principal meaning undoubtedly, that they should not call God to witness unto a lie; promising in his name that which they meant not to perform; or affirming or denying with an oath that which they knew not to be true. For so the word *schave* frequently signifies in Scripture, *a lie.* This relates not to their giving a testimony before a judge upon oath (of which he speaks afterward in a distinct commandment), but to their intercourse and commerce one with another. For an oath, saith R. Levi, of Barcelona, ought to establish every thing: and thereby we declare ourselves to be as much resolved concerning that which we swear, as we are concerning the being of God.

Heathens themselves accounted an oath so sacred a thing, that it was capital for a man to forswear himself, as Hen. Stephanus (in his Fontes Juris Civilis, p. 7.) observes out of Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. and the reason he gives of it is this: that such a man committed two heinous crimes, by violating his piety to God and his faith to men in the highest degree.

But besides this, both Jews and Christians always understood swearing lightly, upon frivolous occasions, or without any necessity, to be here forbidden. R. Levi, beforementioned, saith this precept may be violated four several ways, besides swearing that which we mean not to perform. And Salvian applies this to the trivial naming of God and our Saviour, upon all occasions, and sometimes upon bad occasions. "Nihil jam pene vanius quam Christi nomen esse videatur," &c. Every body then swearing by Christ he would do this or that, though of no consequence whether he did it or no, or perhaps a thing which ought not to be done, (lib. iv. de Gubern. Dei, p. 88. edit. Baluz.)

They that understand this of swearing by false gods (which are called *vain things* in Scripture) do but trifle; that is condemned in the foregoing commandment; it being a piece of worship to swear by them.

For the Lord will not hold him guiltless, &c.] If men did not punish the false swearer, the Lord threatens that he will. And so mankind always thought, as appears by the law of the twelve tables (mentioned by Hen. Stephanus in the book quoted above), "Perjurii pœna divina, exitium, humana, dedecus:" *The divine punishment of perjury is utter destruction; the human punishment is disgrace or infamy.* And Alexander Severus was so sensible of this, that he thought, "Jurisjurandi contempta religio, satis Deum ultorem habet:" *The contempt of the religion of an oath hath God for a sufficient avenger.* For an oath is the strongest bond that is among men, to bind them to truth and fidelity, as Cicero speaks, (lib. iii. de Offic. cap. 31.) Witness, saith he, the twelve tables; witness our sacred forms in taking an oath; witness our covenant and leagues, wherein we plight our faith to enemies; witness the animadversions of our censors, "qui nulla de re diligentius quam de jurejurando, judicabant;" *who judged of nothing more diligently than of an oath.*

Nor was the other sort of *vain* (that is, light and idle) swearing, without any just occasion, suffered to go unpunished: for Mr. Selden observes, out of Maimonides, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 11. p. 497.) that if any man was guilty of it, he that heard him swear was bound to excom-

municate him (what that was he shews in the first book), and if he did not he was to be excommunicated himself. And there is great reason for these civil laws, which have provided a punishment for this crime; not only because it is a great disrespect to God, to use his name so lightly on every trivial occasion; but because such contempt of the Divine Majesty makes men fall into the fearful sin of perjury.

Ver. 8. *Remember the sabbath-day, to keep it holy.*] Be mindful of the day called the sabbath; to make a difference between it and all other days; so that it be not employed as they are.

Ver. 9. *Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work.*] This is not a precept requiring labour; but a permission to employ six days in a week, about such worldly business as they had to do. Which permission also God himself abridged, by appointing some other festival days; as all governors may do, upon some special occasions.

Ver. 10. *But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God.*] Appointed by his authority to be a day of rest from your labours.

In it thou shalt not do any work.] Herein the peculiar respect to the seventh day consisted: on all other days they might work; but on this they were to cease from all manner of work. In which very thing was the sanctifying of this day; it being hereby separated and distinguished from all other days in a very remarkable manner. But then it naturally followed, that, having no other work to do, they should call to mind the reason why it was thus sanctified, or set apart from other days. And the reason, say the Jews themselves, was, "That having no other business, they might fasten in their minds the belief that the world had a beginning; which is a thread that draws after it all the foundation of the law, or the principles of religion." They are the words of R. Levi, of Barcelona.

Besides which, there was another reason, which I shall mention presently. But by this it appears, that the observation of this day was a sign, or a badge, to whom they belonged: a profession that they were all the servants of him who created the heaven and the earth, as God himself teaches them to understand it, (xxxi. 13. 17.) And that their minds might be possessed with this sense, he ordered this solemn commemoration of the creation of the world to be made once in seven days. For as, if there had been quicker returns of it, their secular business might have been too much hindered; so, if it had been delayed longer, this sense might have worn too much out of their minds.

Thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, &c.] They might no more employ others in their worldly business on this day than do it themselves: but their children, though they understood not the reason, were to rest; that in time they might learn this great truth, that all things were made by God.

Nor thy cattle.] Their oxen, and asses, and all other creatures wont to be employed in their labours, were to enjoy the benefit of this rest as well as themselves, (Deut. v. 14.) Which was absolutely necessary; it being impossible for their servants to rest (as is here also required) if they were to set their cattle on work.

Nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.] No stranger, who, by being circumcised, had embraced the Jewish religion. But other strangers might work; who only dwelt among them, having renounced idolatry, but not taken upon them the obligation to observe their whole law. Yet if any such person was a servant to a Jew, his master might not employ him on the sabbath-day in any work of his; but the man might work for himself, if he pleased, being not bound to this law. (See Selden, lib. iii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 12.)

Ver. 11. *For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth.*] There were two reasons for the sanctification of this day. One was, because God rested from his work of creation on the seventh day, which is mentioned here; the other was, because he had given them rest from their labours in Egypt, which he mentions in the fifth of Deuteronomy. There is nobody hath explained both these better than Maimonides: (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 31.) "There are two different causes, saith he, for this precept, from two different effects. For when Moses first explained to us the cause of this celebration, in the promulgation of the ten commandments, he saith it was, because *in six days the Lord made heaven and earth.* But in the repetition of them, he saith, 'Remember that thou wast a servant in Egypt, &c. therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath-day,' (Deut. v. 15.) The first cause is the glory and magnificence of this day, as it is said, 'Therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and sanctified it,' (Gen. ii. 3.) This was the effect of that cause, *for in six days he made heaven and earth* (this was the reason, he means, of the first institution of the sabbath), but that he gave this precept of the sabbath unto *us,* (*i. e.* the Israelites) and commanded us to observe it, was from the other cause, which followed the first cause, *because we were servants in Egypt.* All which time we could not serve according to our own will and pleasure, nor had any rest, or observed a sabbath: and therefore God gave us this special precept of resting and cessation from labours, to join together these two reasons, *viz.* the belief of the beginning of the world, which presently suggests to us the being of God; and then the memory of God's benefits unto us, in giving us rest from our intolerable burdens in Egypt."

Wherefore he blessed the sabbath-day, and hallowed it.] In the beginning of the world he blessed the seventh day, (Gen. ii. 3.) and now particularly chose *this* seventh day for a sabbath; which he ordered them to observe in memory of their coming out of Egypt on that day; as I observed, xvi. 5. 23. By which he preserved in their minds that singular benefit which he had bestowed upon them: "and most manifestly (saith Maimonides in another place, par. iii. cap. 43.) procured great ease to all sorts of men, by freeing a seventh part of their lives from wearisome labour: which hath another blessing in conjunction with it, that it perpetually preserved and confirmed that most precious history and doctrine concerning the creation of the world."

Ver. 12. *Honour thy father and thy mother.*] In another place they are commanded to *fear* them, (Lev. xix. 3.) and as here the father is put before the mother, so there the mother is put before the father; to shew (as Maimonides takes it, in his treatise called Memarim, cap. 6.) that we ought not to make any difference between them; but they are both equally to be honoured and reverenced. Which is a duty of such great concernment, that we are taught, by the placing of this commandment immediately after those which pecu-

liarly relate to God's worship, that, next to his Majesty, our parents are to be honoured, with that reverence, love, obedience, and maintenance, which are due to them. And therefore notorious disobedience to them is threatened with death, as well as apostacy from God. Wherein this *honour* or *fear* doth consist, is taught in all books of religion: and Mr. Selden hath named a great many things wherein the Jews place it, as the learned reader may see, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. p. 558.)

I shall only add, that this was a law among the heathens, mentioned by Saleucus, Charondus, and others, in these words, τὰ τέκνα τοὺς γονεῖς τιμάτωσαν, *let children honour their parents.* And thus Ulpian expresses it, "Filio semper honesta et sancta persona patris videri debet." And afterward, "Filium patrem et matrem venerari oportet." With much more that Hen. Stephanus hath collected, in his Fontes et Rivi Juris Civilis.

That thy days may be long in the land, &c.] As disobedience to parents is, by the law of Moses, threatened to be punished with death; so, on the contrary, long life (which is the greatest worldly blessing) is promised to the obedient; and that in their own country, which God had peculiarly enriched with abundance of his blessings. Heathens also gave the very same encouragement, saying, that *such children should be dear to the gods, both living and dead.* So Euripides.

Ὅστις δὲ τοὺς τεκόντας ἐν βίῳ σέβει,
Ὅδ' ἐστὶ καὶ ζῶν καὶ θανὼν θεοῖς φίλος.

And this famous Senarius, mentioned by the same Hen. Stephanus, with many other notable passages.

Ἱκανῶς βιώσεις γηροβοσκῶν τοὺς γονεῖς.

Thou shalt live long (or, *as long as thou canst desire*) *if thou nourish thy ancient parents.* Whence children are called by Xenophon, and others, Γηροβοσκοί.

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt not kill.*] After the command about the respect due to parents, naturally follows the regard we ought to have to all other men who spring from them. And the greatest injury we can do another is to take away his life; whereby he is deprived of all the enjoyments of this world, and human society itself is also wounded, which cannot subsist if its innocent members cannot be safe. *Innocent,* I say, for this commandment doth not hinder men from defending themselves from violence, (xxii. 2.) nor forbid magistrates to punish those with death who commit crimes worthy of it; for this is to preserve the lives of other men, (xxii. 18—20.)

Ver. 14. *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*] Next to a man's self, his wife is nearer to him than any other person; they two being *one flesh.* Which makes the injury done to him in her person a breach of human society next to murder. Nay, the LXX. place this commandment before the other, *Thou shalt not kill:* virtuous women valuing their chastity more than their lives; and the crimes to which mere pleasure tempts men being more grievous, in the opinion of the great philosopher, than those to which they are stimulated by anger. Whoredom is also forbidden in the law of Moses, and incest; as wounding any man is, as well as murder: but in these *ten words,* which are a short abridgment of their duty, it was sufficient only to mention the principal things of every kind which were hateful to God and injurious to men.

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt not steal.*] This was to injure men in their goods and possessions; either by open rapine, or by craft and cheating; against which God intended to secure them by this precept. Several sorts of this sin are afterwards mentioned in particular laws.

Ver. 16. *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*] As our neighbour is not to be injured by us in deeds, so not in words, by giving a false testimony against him before a judge, which is the chief sin of this kind. This is both an injury to our neighbour, and an affront to God; in whose place the judge is, whom we go about to deceive.

Large commentaries on these commandments are not to be expected; which may be found in many authors commonly known.

Ver. 17. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house,* &c.] Here is forbidden so much as the designing any mischief to others in any of the things forementioned. For as all injuries in word or deed are prohibited in the four preceding commandments; so in this he prohibits those which are only in the heart or counsels of men, but never come to light. And in the enumeration of the things they were not to covet, he begins first with that which was last mentioned, and so backward to the other. For he saith, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house,* by designing to bear *false witness,* or to commit *theft.* And then follows, *thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife,* by intending to abuse her, if opportunity served; *nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant,* &c. which are his principal goods. He saith nothing of thirsting after his *life,* which is supposed to be unlawful, because less than that is forbidden.

Menander hath something like this:

Μηδὲ βελόνης ἔναμμ' ἐπιθυμῇς Πάμφιλε,
Ὁ γὰρ Θεὸς βλέπει σε πλησίον παρών.

Do not so much as covet the thread of a needle, for God sees thee, being intimately present with thee. (See more in Grotius's Prolegomena in Excerpta ex Stobæo.)

Ver. 18. *And all the people saw the thunderings,* &c.] *Seeing* being the principal sense, it is frequently put for the rest: and this passage may be translated, *they sensibly perceived,* &c. (See Gen. xlii. 1. and Drusius's Quæstiones Hebr. lib. i. cap. 10.)

The thunderings and the lightnings.] See xix. 16.

And the noise of the trumpet.] Which ceased, while God spake the *ten words* to them; but now began again, together with thunders and lightnings, when they were ended. For as they were introduced in a most majestic manner, to raise their attention, and strike an awe into them; so they were closed, that they might be the more sensible of the dreadfulness of that Majesty who spake to them; and that they might have a greater reverence to his law.

They removed, and stood afar off.] They were at the bottom of the mount while God spake to them; but now started back, for fear those flames they saw upon the mountain, (Deut. v. 25.) and perhaps flashed from thence in a terrible manner, should devour them. How far they removed we know not; some think to the place where they were encamped before this glorious appearance, out of which Moses brought them to meet with God, (xix. 2. 17.)

Ver. 19. *And they said unto Moses.*] By the heads of their tribes and their elders, (Deut. v. 23.) who came from the people to Moses while he remained still in his place.

For he saith there, *they came near unto him*, when they spake these words; which signifies they were at some distance before.

Speak thou with us, and we will hear, &c.] They desire that what God had farther to command them, he would be pleased to acquaint Moses with it; and they would receive it as his own words; but should die with fear if they heard him speak any more with his own voice. This is more largely related, Deut. v. 24, 25, &c.; and accordingly God afterward communicated to Moses alone the rest of his laws, both concerning religion and civil government.

Ver. 20. *And Moses said unto the people.*] He bade the elders return this answer to the people that sent them.

Fear not.] Be not afraid of your lives. No hurt shall come to you.

For God is come to prove you.] God intends, by this dreadful appearance, to discover unto yourselves and others whether you will be such as you pretend, (xix. 8.)

And that his fear may be before your face.] And that you may have an awful sense of him in your mind, by having before your eyes continually the glory of his majesty, of which you were lately sensible, (ver. 18.)

That you sin not.] Let this be your only fear, not to offend God by disobeying his commands.

Ver. 21. *And the people stood afar off.*] In their tents, within their camp. For God commanded him to bid the elders, after this discourse, to go to their tents from whence they came; where, I suppose, the rest of the people were, (Dent. v. 30.) But he bade Moses stay with him; and he would, as they desired, tell him all the rest of the things which he intended to enjoin them, (ver. 31.)

And Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.] Who called him to him again, as he had done before, (xix. 20.) There is a curious observation in Pirke Eliezer, that the Hebrew word here is not *nogesh*, he *approached*, or *drew near*, as we translate it; but *niggesh*, he *was drawn near:* the angel Gabriel, or Michael (as he fancies), coming, and taking him by the hand and leading him up to God, (cap. 41.) But this signifies rather that he did not go up of his own accord, but was called by God to draw near to his Divine Majesty. Which he did the next day, upon the seventh day of Sivan: and received fifty-seven laws (besides the ten which God himself delivered), partly civil and partly religious; which were explications of the decalogue.

Ver. 22. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] When they were together in the thick cloud beforementioned.

Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel.] When thou goest down again to them.

Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.] The apprehension of one sense (as Maimonides phrases it, More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 46.) is usually in Scripture put for the apprehension of another. As, *see the word of the Lord;* (Jer. ii. 31.) that is, hear it, or mark it diligently. Or, the meaning here may be, *you saw, i. e.* perceived, by the thunderings, and lightnings, and all the rest of the tokens of a majestic presence, that it was I who spake from above.

Ver. 23. *Ye shall not make with me.*] The Hebrew writers here make a pause, or full stop, as if it were a complete sentence. And the meaning is explained in the Talmud to be, *Ye shall not make the similitude of the ministers that minister before me above,* as the sun, the moon, the stars, or the angels, (Gem. Bab. upon Avoda Zura.) And so Maimonides, upon the same subject; it is unlawful to form the images of the sun, the moon, the stars, the celestial signs, or angels, according to that which is written, *Ye shall not make with me; i. e.* nothing like the ministers that minister to me above. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 6. p. 198.) But if we join these with the following words the sense is the same; that, as they acknowledged no other gods but him, so they should not make any image to represent him. To enforce which, the word *make* is repeated in the end of the verse, whereby greater efficacy is added to the command.

Gods of silver, or gods of gold, shall ye not make unto you.] He gives this caution, lest by the splendour of these metals they should be tempted (being prone to superstition and idolatry) to make such kind of representations. For by *gods* are meant images to represent him; which at the first were made very glittering, like the heavenly bodies; but afterward they proceed to worship images of mere wood, or stone.

The coherence of this with the foregoing verses is something obscure: unless we observe how this is reported in the book of Deuteronomy: where Moses puts them in mind, that they "saw no similitude on the day that God spake with them in Horeb," (iv. 15.) and therefore ought not to "make them a graven image, the similitude of any figure," &c. (ver. 16—19.) Accordingly the meaning is here, "ye have seen that I talked with you from heaven," (*i. e.* you heard only a voice, but saw no similitude of man, or any other creature,) therefore ye shall not represent me by any image, though never so rich and glorious. And thus Greg. Nyssen seems to have understood it, de Vita Mosis, p. 180 God gave Moses many Divine commandments, the chief of which is ἡ εὐσέβεια, καὶ τὸ τὰς πρεπούσας ὑπολήψεις περὶ τῆς θείας φύσεως ἔχειν, *piety towards God, and to have becoming notions and conceptions of the Divine nature,* as transcending all visible things, nay, all our thoughts, and like to nothing that we know. And therefore he bids them, in their conceptions of him, not to look at any thing they saw, nor liken τὴν τοῦ παντὸς ὑπερκειμένην φύσιν, *the nature which transcends the whole universe,* to any thing that they were acquainted withal.

There was the greater need of this precept, if the Egyptian worship in these days was the same with that in other times; when Osiris was adored in the form of a golden ox, or an ox of wood all *gilded over,* as Plutarch calls it βοῦς διάχρυσος.

Ver. 24. *An altar of earth shalt thou make unto me.*] For the better observation of the foregoing commandment, he orders that his altars should be made as plain and simple as might be. Either of sods and turfs of earth (which were easily prepared, in most places, whilst they stayed in the wilderness), or of rough and unpolished stone (if they came into rocky places where no sods were to be got), that so there might be no occasion to grave any image upon them. Such altars, Tertullian observes, were among the ancient Romans in the days of Numa: when, as they had no sumptuous temples, nor images, so they had only *temeraria de cespite altaria, altars hastily huddled up of earth without any art,* (Apolog. cap. 25.) which Jamblichus calls βωμοὺς αὐτοσχεδίους, *ex tempore,* altars (as we would now speak) *thrown up on a sudden.* And so Scioppius

pretends he found some MSS. have it in that place of Tertullian, not *temeraria*, but *temporaria;* altars made only for a present use, not to remain after the sacrifice was done. Nay, Fortunatus Scacchus will have it that Moses here commands them *to make the earth their altar;* as the words may be translated out of the Hebrew: which he thus interprets, "Thou shalt mark out a place upon the bare ground, and there offer sacrifice," (Myrothec. ii. Sacr. Elæochrys. cap. 56.)

And shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, &c.] This form of worship, as Maimonides himself acknowledges, was appointed by God, because it was used in all the world. Which moved him, not to abolish it, but to translate it, from created and imaginary beings, to his own most adorable name. Therefore he commanded us, saith he, to make him a sanctuary, (xxv. 8.) and consecrate an altar to his name, and offer him sacrifices (for which he alleges this very text), and on the contrary prohibits us to do such things to any other being, (xxii. 20. xxxiv. 13, 14. More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 32.)

In all places.] This shews that the foregoing commandment hath a peculiar respect to the time they were in the wilderness (especially till the tabernacle was erected) when they were in their travels, removing from place to place, and not fixed in any: then these altars were very proper, which might be prepared on a sudden, and as suddenly thrown down again.

Where I record my name.] Or cause it to be remembered and acknowledged, by some token or symbol (that is) whereby he signified that he would be worshipped there. Which sense the Chaldee seems to me to have expressed most exactly; *in every place where I shall make my glory (i. e.* the Schechinah) *to dwell, from whence I will bless thee: i. e.* hear their prayers. This must be the meaning here; because the ark, which was the memorial of God's presence with them, was not yet made. Or else, he means the sacrifices and altars beforementioned, which Mr. Mede thinks may be here pointed at; because these were rites of remembrance whereby the name of God was commemorated and recorded, and his covenant with men testified and renewed. (See book ii. p. 453, &c.) And, indeed, the word *zacar* doth most certainly signify, not only to *remember* or *record*, but to *worship* and to perform sacred offices: so the meaning may be, *in every place where I exhibit myself to be worshipped and honoured.*

I will come unto thee, or, *meet with thee.*] Upon which account the tabernacle of the Lord was called *Ohel Moed*, the tabernacle of meeting. Not because of the people's meeting there to worship (as is commonly supposed, when we translate those words *the tabernacle of the congregation*), but of God's meeting there with his people, as Mr. Mede observes (p. 436.) from many plain places of Scripture, (Exod. xxix. 42. xxx. 36. Numb. xvii. 4.)

And I will bless thee.] Give thee testimonies of my gracious presence and acceptance. The gentiles believed their gods were present where their images were worshipped. But he promises to be present in all places whatsoever, where he would have his name celebrated (*i.e.* where he would be worshipped), though their sacrifices were offered upon the most mean and simple altar.

Ver. 25. *If thou wilt make me an altar of stone*, &c.] If it cannot be made without stones (saith Maimonides, par. iii. More Nevoch. cap. 45.) take care that the stones remain in their own natural form, and that they be not polished, &c. This was to avoid idolatry; for fear they should make any figure with the tools they employed, in shaping and fashioning the stones, after an artificial manner: or should reserve the pieces of stone that were pared off for superstitious or magical uses. Just, saith Maimonides, as he forbids planting a grove near his altar, for that was to imitate idolaters, (Deut. xvi. 22.) See Deut. iv. 15, 16. which plainly shews this was the reason of this command.

In short, these altars were built like those of turf, on a sudden, without any art; only by piling stones one upon another. Such an altar David built upon a special occasion, (2 Sam. xxiv. 25.) and after him Elijah, (1 Kings xviii. 31, 32.) and Fortunatus Scacchus makes it probable that it was such an one which Ezra built, at their return from Babylon to their own country, (iii. 2, 3. Myrothec. ii. Sacr. Elæochrys. cap. 59.) where he represents the form of such an altar among the heathen, out of an ancient monument, (p. 585.) And there is little doubt, I think, that the altars built by the patriarchs were of this sort; particularly that which Abraham erected whereon to offer his son Isaac, (Gen. xxii. 9.) for it was raised so suddenly that no art could be employed about it.

I omit other reasons which the Jews allege for this law, for they seem to me to be fanciful. And shall rather observe, that Plato in his Laws ordered all things belonging to the service of God should be very simple and plain, without any cost or ornament: and therefore forbids gold, silver, or ivory, because they were *things too invidious* (ἐπίφθονον κτῆμα), and brass and iron he would not have used, because they were πολέμων ὄργανα, *the instruments of wars:* but one single piece of wood or stone should serve for an image, and that made in a day's time, (lib. xii. de Legibus, p. 955, 956. edit. Serran.)

It seems difficult also to reconcile these two verses with God's own ordinance, not long after, in the twenty-seventh chapter of this book; where he bids Moses to make him an altar neither of earth, nor of stone, but of shittim-wood, covered with brass, for the use of the tabernacle, where he recorded his name. But it is to be considered, that these two verses speak only of occasional altars (as I may call them) which they might have use of, not only before but after the tabernacle was erected. These God doth not forbid, when there was a special reason for them; but he intending there should be no stated altar, but that at the tabernacle, he would have these made of unpolished stones, laid one upon another, that they might be thrown down as soon as raised; and that they might not draw people from the tabernacle, nor administer occasion of idolatry, by an artificial workmanship and imagery. Now that there were such altars raised upon certain great occasions, but not to continue, appears from the sacred history. For (xxiv. 4.) Moses built one at the foot of Mount Sinai, by God's command it is likely, and of this fashion. And he gave order for building one of stone after they came to Canaan, (Deut. xxvii. 1—3.) which Joshua performed, according to this rule, as is expressly said Josh. viii. 30, 31. Of this sort were those of Gideon and Manoah, (Judg. vi. 24. 26. xiii. 19.) And we read of altars built by Samuel, (1 Sam. vii. 17.) and by Saul, (xiv. 35.) and David, as was before ob-

served, (2 Sam. xxiv. 25.) and Solomon, (1 Kings iii. 2. 34.) besides the altar which was in the tabernacle and the temple.

Ver. 26. *Thou shalt not go up by steps unto my altar.*] This was most suitable to the state of travellers, to have their altars low, not lofty. Besides, he would not have them imitate the gentiles, who sacrificed in high places; imagining their sacrifices were most acceptable when they were nearest to heaven. Whence the Egyptians, living in a flat country wherein were no mountains, built altars of a very great height, which could not be well done by sods of earth, or stones loosely laid together. Nor would God have it done, when he ordered Moses to make an altar of brass and wood at the tabernacle; which it is evident was so low, that a man might stand and minister there without being raised from the earth: for it was but three cubits high, (xxvii. 1.) which is less by one cubit than the ordinary stature of men.

Not go up by steps.] There were steps in the temple built by Solomon unto the brazen altar, which was ten cubits high: and Ezekiel expressly mentions them in the description of his temple, (xliii. 17.) which seeming to disagree with this command, interpreters are much concerned to reconcile them. And the forenamed Fortun. Scacchus, cap. 63. contends earnestly that no altar was higher than three cubits; and therefore those steps mentioned by Ezekiel did not belong to the altar, but to the basis or ground-work (as we speak) upon which it stood. But this is said without good ground, for we read expressly that Solomon's altar was ten cubits high, (2 Chron. iv. 1.) at which therefore the priest could not minister, without some *steps*, whereby he ascended so high, as to be able to lay on the wood and the sacrifice upon it, &c. By *steps* therefore (to omit other conjectures) I understand *many steps* (which are here forbidden), such as the gentiles had to go up to their *Bamoth*, or high places; as we see by one of the pyramids in Egypt, and the high tower at Mexico; to which they ascended by a hundred and eighty steps. But a very few served for Solomon's altar; and they were so contrived also, as, the Hebrew writers tell us, that there was no danger of that which God intended hereby to prevent in the words following.

That thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.] The Hebrews say it was a kind of causeway, or bridge, whereby they went up to the altar; which rose by little and little, till they came to the place where they were to stand. (See L'Empereur upon the Codex Middoth, cap. 3. sect. 3.) Or else the steps were so broad and so little distant one from another, and the ascent thereby made so easy and equal, that there was no need of lifting up their legs high, and therefore no danger of discovering the lower parts of the body (their thighs, buttocks, and secret parts), which might have been seen by those below (had they ascended by many large and high steps) under such loose garments as were worn in those countries; and thereby the priests might have been exposed to contempt, and the people moved to laughter, or had bad thoughts excited in them. In short, the meaning is, they should not go up many steps, far distant one from another, so that one must have taken large strides to ascend them.

The Jews say, particularly Maimonides, (par. iii. More Nevoch. cap. 45.) that the worshippers of Baal-Peor were wont to discover their nakedness, that is, their secret parts, before him. Which he takes to be the reason of this command; lest any such thing should happen in God's presence: and this was the reason also of another law, that the priests should have breeches made for them, which none of the people wore, in those times, but the priests alone; and that only when they ministered. The Gemara Hierosolym. upon the story of Balaam, gives a long account of this impure worship, as L'Empereur observes upon Codex Middoth, cap. 3. sect. 4. But there is no proof of this from any ancient author; and the Babylonian Gemara gives a different account of the worship of Peor; which looks as if the Jews studied how to make it ridiculous, as well as filthy. But if there were any solid ground for it, it would afford the clearest explication of this place.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *NOW these are the judgments thou shalt set before them.*] By *judgments* are meant such political laws which God thought fit to give for the determination of differences among the people; and that they might be justly and peaceably governed. Which, though they were not spoken with such pomp and majesty as the ten commandments were (and much less were the ceremonial precepts delivered with such solemnity), yet the Israelites believed that they came from the same authority, though spoken to Moses in the mount privately, and not in the audience of all the people; as appears by their submission to these, no less than to the other laws. And there was great reason for it; it being their own desire not to hear God's voice any more; but to be instructed by Moses what God required, and they promised to obey it, (xx. 19.)

Ver. 2. *If thou buy a Hebrew servant,* &c.] Or a *slave.* Some persons sold themselves by reason of poverty: of which sort the Hebrews understand that law, (Lev. xxv. 39.) Others were sold by the court of judgment; which was in case of a theft they had committed; for which, not being able to make satisfaction unto him that had received the damage, they were condemned to be his servants. Of these they interpret this place, and Deut. xv. 12. But this sale, they say, did not extend to both sexes; for a woman was not to be sold for theft.

In the seventh year he shall go out free for nothing.] If the damage was so great, that his six years' service had not satisfied for it, yet he was not to be kept longer. And his servitude also might end sooner, by manumission, or redemption, or the death of his master, if he were a gentile or a proselyte. Nay, if he were a Hebrew, his death put an end to it, in case he left no son. And his master also was bound to maintain his wife and children (if he had any), all this time giving them food, raiment, and a dwelling, though they were not to be his servants. (See Mr. Selden lib. vi. de Jure N. et G. cap. 7.)

It is remarkable, that he sets this law in the first place, because mercy, next to piety, is the most excellent virtue: and God would have his people, saith R. Levi Barzelonita, adorned with and full of the noblest qualities, which are benignity and mercy.

This year of release also being a sacred year; the whole land being holy to the Lord, so that no man might chal-

lenge any right or propriety in it, to sow his field, or reap that which grew of itself, &c. it was sacrilege for any master to keep a servant from his freedom, when the year came which was the Lord's release, as we read expressly Lev. xxv. and Deut. xv. Whence it was, that, because the Jews were so profane as to break this law, and not give their servants liberty (as we read in the thirty-fourth of Jeremiah), God punished them with a captivity of seventy years, in which the land lay waste, till it had fulfilled the years of rest which they would not observe; as Mr. Mede hath truly noted, Discourse xxvi. latter end.

Ver. 3. *If he come in by himself*, &c.] That is, a single man without a wife; so he was to depart. But if he was a married man when he was sold; as the master was not to let his wife and children want food, and raiment, and habitation, while he continued his slave; so, when he was free, he was not to meddle with them, or detain them from their father and husband, (Lev. xxv. 41.)

Ver. 4. *If his master have given him a wife.*] Unto such a servant as this, who was sold by the court of judgment, his master might give a gentile maid to wife (and no other Hebrew, but such as he, might marry a gentile), that he might beget children of her, who were to be the master's servants or slaves for ever. The Hebrew doctors say, the master could not do this, unless such a servant had a lawful wife and children before of his own, who were not to be kept from him; but he might beget children for himself, as well as for his master; who could not impose upon him more than one maid-servant to be his wife. He that sold himself also was not subject to this law. But as his master could not impose a wife of this sort upon him; so neither was he bound, when the servant went free, to bestow any gift upon him: which was due only to him that was sold by the court for theft, (Deut. xv. 12.) to whom the ancient Jews say he was to give thirty shekels.

And she have born him sons or daughters.] During his service.

The wife and children shall be his master's, &c.] For the wife was a slave as well as himself when he married her. And she was given to wife, merely that he might beget slaves of her. Who therefore continued with the master, as well as their mother, when the man had his liberty: for they were not so much his, as his master's goods; who had such a power over them, that he might circumcise them, as he did his own children, without their consent. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure N. et G. cap. 7. and de Uxore Hebr. lib. i. cap. 6. p. 39.)

Ver. 5. *And if the servant shall plainly say.*] In the Hebrew the words are *saying, shall say; i. e.* stand in it (as we speak) and steadfastly resolve, by saying it not in a fit, but constantly.

I love my master, my wife, and my children, &c.] If his love to such a wife and children, who were not properly his own, was greater than his love to liberty; which made him still desire their company, and choose to stay with his master who had been so good to him.

Ver. 6. *His master shall bring him to the judges.*] That it might appear he was not fraudulently or forcibly detained against the law, but with his own consent, or rather at his desire.

He shall also bring him to the door, or the door-post.] After the case had been heard, and the judges had given sentence.

And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl.] In token that he was now affixed to his house, and might not so much as step over the threshold without his leave, but be obedient to his will for ever. This is to be understood only of one that was sold by the court; not of him that sold himself. And though the Hebrews take this to have been a mark of infamy, set upon a man who chose servitude before liberty; yet it being chosen out of love to his master, I cannot think that they intended by this act to disgrace him: but look upon it only as a solemn addiction of him to his master's service; which was done, it is likely, in the presence of the judges. This custom of boring the ears of slaves lasted a long time after this in Syria and Arabia, as Bochartus shews out of Juvenal, sat. i. and Petronius, (lib. iii. Hierozoic. cap. 6. p. 1.)

He shall serve him for ever.] Till the year of jubilee, or till his master died (for his son was not to detain him when his father was dead), unless he would release him, or he was redeemed.

Ver. 7. *And if a man sell his daughter to be a maid-servant.*] Besides the two former sorts of persons sold to be his servants, there was a third here mentioned, which is thus expounded by the Hebrews: that she was to be a virgin under age; that is, less than twelve years old and a day. For if she was more than that, it was not lawful for him to sell her: and when she came to be of age it put an end to her servitude, as well as the year of jubilee did, or redemption, or the death of her master. Besides, her father might not sell her, unless he were reduced to extreme poverty. If he did, without such necessity, he was forced by the court of judgment to redeem her. And she was not to be sold neither, unless there was some hope her master or his son might take her to wife.

She shall not go out as the men-servants do.] There were other and better conditions for her, than for the servant mentioned ver. 3, 4. particularly, her master could not marry her to any body but to himself or his son.

Ver. 8. *If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself.*] This shews she was sold to him upon the presumption he would take her for his wife; and there was such a previous agreement about this, that there needed no other espousals: but if, after this, he changed his mind, and did not like her enough to make her his wife; then God ordains as follows:

Then shall he let her be redeemed.] She was to serve her master six years, if she was sold for so long; unless she was redeemed (which her master is here required not to refuse) or manumitted; or set free by the year of jubilee; or by the death of her master; or (which was peculiar in this case) the signs of her being ripe for marriage appeared: (see Selden in the place beforementioned.)

To sell her to a strange nation he shall have no power.] No man had power to sell a Hebrew servant to one of another nation: and therefore, by a *strange people* (as the word is here in the Hebrew) must be meant an Israelite of another family, that was not of her kindred, nor had any right of redemption.

Seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her.] Frustrated her hope of marrying her.

Ver. 9. *If he hath betrothed her to his son.*] Which was

expected from him, if he did not think fit to marry her himself, *he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters.* If the word *he* relate to the father, the meaning is, he shall give her a portion, as if she were his own daughter. If it relate to the son, the meaning is, he shall treat her like a wife.

Ver. 10. *If he take him another wife, her food,* &c.] If after the son had married her, he took another wife besides, he was still to perform to this all those things that belong to a wife, *viz.* give her food, and raiment, and at certain times (which were determined by law in some countries) cohabit with her as her husband. From this place the Hebrews have made a general rule, that these three things are owing to all wives from their husbands, *viz.* alimony, clothes, and the conjugal duty. For howsoever the Vulgar Latin understands the last word, the Hebrews generally take it for that which St. Paul calls *due benevolence,* 1 Cor. vii. 3. (See Selden, de Uxor. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 4.) Now what was accounted alimony, and sufficient for clothes, he shews cap. v. and what belongs to the other, cap. vi. The Hebrew word *gonata,* which we translate *duty of marriage,* properly relates to the stated and determined time wherein every thing is to be done; and therefore here signifies the use of marriage, *certo tempore et modo,* as Bochart hath well expounded it, (lib. ii. Canaan, cap. 11.) Many indeed will have it derived from עון, from which comes מעון, a *habitation;* as if it signified here the cohabitation of a man with his wife. But Aben Ezra rather refers it to ענת, from whence comes עת, *time:* whence *gonat* signifies the set and appointed time wherein every thing is done. And so the Chaldee uses the word *goneta,* for the term prescribed to every thing (as the same author observes), that it may be done in due time and manner.

Theodoric Hackspan thinks Moses here speaks of the father; to whom all the precedent and subsequent acts belong, and not to the son.

Ver. 11. *And if he do not these three to her.*] *i. e.* Neither marry her to himself, nor to his son, nor suffer her to be redeemed.

Then she shall go out free without money.] When she came of age, and was ripe for marriage, she was to be set free, and pay nothing for her freedom: nay, on the contrary, he was to give her something, as appears from Deut. xv. 12, 13. 17. What the signs of puberty were, Mr. Selden shews, Lib. de Successionibus, cap. ix.

Ver. 12. *He that smiteth a man, so that he die.*] That is, commit wilful murder, as we now speak.

Shall surely be put to death.] Wheresoever we find this word *maveth (death)* absolutely, without any addition, it always signifies *strangling.* They are the words of R. Levi Barzelonita. But the Jewish doctors will not have this law extend unto proselytes of the gate, much less to gentiles, whom, if any Israelite killed, he was not to suffer death for it. (See Mr. Selden, lib. iv. de Jure N. et G. cap. 1.) But Plato, in his Book of Laws, (lib. ix. p. 872.) hath determined more justly than these rabbies, that in the case of murder the same laws should be for strangers and for citizens.

Ver. 13. *And if a man lie not in wait.*] Do not design to kill another.

But God deliver him into his hand.] But he happens, as we speak, to kill a man by that action which aimed at another end. This the Scripture expresses more religiously, by acknowledging God in every thing that falls out, who permits such things as are mentioned, Deut. xix. 5. whereby a man is killed, without the intention of him who was about such actions.

Then I will appoint him a place, whither he shall flee.] He may flee to one of the places which I will appoint for his security. Which place, the Jews say, was the camp of the Levites, while they continued in the wilderness: but when they came to Canaan, there were cities appointed for this purpose, as we read Numb. xxxv. 11, 12. Deut. xix. 2, 3, &c. And there being several kinds of involuntary killing men, the Hebrews make these φυγαδευτήρια, or *places of refuge,* to belong only to one of them, for the rest did not need them, as Mr. Selden shews, (lib. iv. de Jure N. et G. cap. 2.) An officer of justice was not bound to flee if he chanced in the execution of his office to kill a man that resisted him: nor a master if he killed his scholar, or a father his son, when he gave him correction.

Ver. 14. *But if a man come presumptuously.*] The Vulgar Latin rightly translates it *industriously,* or with design to kill him; for it is opposed to ignorance. The Hebrew word also carries in it a signification of *boiling anger;* which doth not alter the case: for if a man in the height of his rage resolved to kill another, and laid wait for him to execute his design, it was justly judged to be wilful murder, and punished with death. Which was far more equal than Plato's law, that such a man should only be banished for three years; as he that on a sudden killed a man in his anger only for two, (lib. ix. de Legibus, p. 867.)

Upon his neighbour.] The Hebrew doctors by *neighbour* understand only an *Israelite,* or a *proselyte of justice:* as for others, they were not put to death if an Israelite killed one of them. Which was not the intent of this law; whereby God would have all men that lived among them safe and secure from being murdered.

To slay him with guile.] By which it appeared the act was designed and deliberate. For two things are denoted by this word *with guile;* first *forethought,* and then *delay,* as Isaac Karo observes: (see L'Empereur in Bava kama, cap. iii. sect. 6.)

Thou shalt take him.] If it be inquired who should take him, it seems to be determined, Deut. xix. 12. where the elders of the city were to fetch away a wilful murderer from the city of refuge. In aftertimes the king ordered it, as Moses did while he lived, (1 Kings i. ult. ii. 29.) By which places it appears, that if a man refused to come from the altar (being judged upon proof to be a wilful murderer or other high offender), he might be there killed, as Georg. Ritterhusius shews, (L. de Jure Asylorum, cap. viii.) where he observes, out of Plutarch in his Laconia, that Agesilaus declared publicly at the altar of Pallas, where he sacrificed an ox, that he thought it lawful to kill one that treacherously assaulted him, even at the altar. And thus the practice was among Christians (as he there shews) when their temples became sanctuaries to malefactors.

From my altar.] This was an asylum, as well as the cities of refuge; but under many limitations, both with respect to the part of the altar, and to the persons that fled thither, and to the crime they had committed; as Mr. Selden shews in the place abovementioned, (p. 475.)

That he may die.] Though he was the high-priest, and in

the act of sacrifice, he was to be taken away without delay if he had committed wilful murder; if it was involuntarily, then he was to be taken from thence and carried to the city of refuge; for God would not have a pious place (as Conradus Pellicanus glosses) be a protection to impiety. (See Mr. Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 8. p. 100.)

Maimonides's observation is pertinent enough upon this occasion; "That the mercy which is shewn to wicked men is no better than tyranny and cruelty to the rest of God's creatures: and therefore, though such persons sought to God for his patronage, by betaking themselves to that which was dedicated to his name, he would not afford them any protection; but commanded them to be delivered up to justice," (More Novoch. par. iii. cap. 39.)

Ver. 15. *And he that smiteth his father or mother.*] So as to wound them, and to make the blood come; or to leave a mark of the stroke, by making the flesh black and blue, as we speak, (Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. p. 556.)

Shall be surely put to death.] Strangled (say the Hebrews, see ver. 12.) by the sentence of the judge, there being competent witnesses of the fact, as in other cases. The giving them saucy words, or making mouths at them, which signified contempt, was punished also with whipping. There was no need to say any thing of killing them: for all wilful murder was punished with death. And Solon, it is commonly noted, made no law about this; because it was not to be supposed any man would be so wicked. Nor was this crime known among the Persians, as Herodotus saith, in his days. Nor do we find any mention of it in the law of the twelve tables. But in aftertimes there were most severe punishments enacted against parricide, which are described at large by Modestinus. And Diodorus Siculus tells us of the like among the Egyptians. (See Hen. Stephanus in his Fontes et Rivi Juris Civilis, p. 18.) Plato would have him that killed either father or mother, brethren or children, not only to be put to death, but to be disgraced after his execution, by throwing his dead body naked into a common place without the city, where all the magistrates, in the name of the people, should every one of them throw a stone at his head, and then carrying him out of the coasts leave him without burial, (lib. ix. de Legibus, p. 873.)

Ver. 16. *He that stealeth a man.*] By *a man* the Hebrews understand an Israelite; whether he was a freeman, or but a servant; as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. vi. de Jure N. et G. cap. 2.)

And selleth him.] No Israelite would buy him, and therefore such plagiaries sold him to men of other nations, which made the crime to be punished with death; because it was a cruel thing, not only to take away his liberty, but make him a slave to strangers.

Or if he be found in his hand.] Though he had not actually sold him; yet his intention was sufficiently known by his stealing him.

Shall be surely put to death.] I observed above, ver. 12. they interpret this phrase every where to signify *strangling*. If it be said any where *his blood shall be upon him*, it signifies stoning. Maimonides makes this the reason why such a man was condemned to die, because it might well be thought he intended to kill him, whom he violently carried away (at least, as I understand it, if he could not find means to sell him), More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 41.

Ver. 17. *And he that curseth his father, or his mother,* &c.] The Hebrews take this law to concern those who cursed their dead parents, no less than those who cursed them when they were alive: but not without præmonition and witnesses, as in other capital crimes: and not unless they cursed their parents by some proper name of God, as Mr. Selden observes out of the Jewish doctors, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13.) This and the other law (ver. 15.) enacted death as the punishment of such crimes, because they were a sign (saith Maimonides, More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 41.) of a desperate malice and audacious wickedness; being a subversion of that domestic order which is the prime part of good government. (See Lev. xx. 9.) And thus far the Athenians went in this matter, that by their law a son was disinherited who reproached his father. And if the father did not prosecute such a son, he himself became infamous. So Sopater ad Hermogenem; Τὸν ὑβρίσαντα τὸν αὐτοῦ πατέρα μὴ μετέχειν τῆς οὐσίας, καὶ τὸν ὑβρισθέντα πατέρα μὴ ἐπεξιόντα τῷ παιδὶ ἄτιμον εἶναι. By the same law, also, if he struck his father both his hands were to be cut off; as we read in Heraclides Ponticus, in Allegor. Homer. and in Quinctilian, Declam. 372. "Qui patrem pulsaverit, manus ei incidantur." And by another law he was to be stoned to death, as the author of Problemata Rhetor. tells us: Νόμος ἐκέλευσε τὸν τύψαντα αὐτοῦ τὸν πατέρα λιθοβολῆσαι, and that without any formal process against him, ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου ἀκρίτως.

Ver. 18. *And if men strive together.*] Fall out and quarrel.

And one smite another.] So that from words they proceed to blows.

With a stone, &c.] Men usually in their anger take up any thing that is next at hand to throw at him against whom they are enraged; or, finding nothing, smite them with their fists.

And he die not, but keepeth his bed.] Sometimes the blow falls in such a place that sudden death follows: or such a wound or bruise is given as confines a man to his bed.

Ver. 19. *If he rise again, and walk abroad,* &c.] If a man recovered so far as to get up and walk abroad, after the stroke, it was presumed (though he died not long after) it was by his negligence, or something else, not of the blow he received. And upon the hearing of the cause, the judges were to *acquit* the man that gave the blow; *i. e.* he was not to die for it.

Only.] The Hebrew particle *rak* signifies *but*, or *truly*, as well as *only:* and here expresses, that the man who gave the blow should not escape all punishment, but suffer something for the hurt he had done. Yet if we take it to signify *only*, the sense is not much altered; for the meaning is (as Constant L'Empereur observes in Bava kama, cap. viii. sect. 1.) by this word to exclude death, but not other punishment in his purse.

He shall pay for the loss of his time, &c.] The Jews say, in Bava kama, cap. viii. sect. 1. that satisfaction was to be given him for the loss he had sustained in five things: for the hurt in his body; the loss of his time; the pain he had endured; the charge of physician and surgeon; and the disgrace: all which they there endeavour to prove out of the Scripture. Two of them are plainly here. The first of which the doctors upon the Misna consider with great nicety, as L'Empereur observes upon the forenamed trea-

tise; some men being able to earn more by their labours than others; and the disability the stroke brought upon them being, more or less, of a larger and shorter continuance; with respect to all which a proportionable compensation was made to them.

And shall cause him to be thoroughly healed.] Here they also distinguished between the cure of the wound, bruise, or swelling, caused by the stroke, and of any other breaking out that he chanced to have at the same time. He was bound to pay for the cure of the former, but not of the latter. And if after a man was cured he fell ill again, he that struck him was not bound to take care of his cure.

The same provision is made in the civil law, as L'Empereur notes, which perfectly agrees with this constitution of Moses: "Judex computat mercedes medicis præstitas, cæteraque impendia, quæ in curatione facta sunt: præterea operas quibus caruit, aut cariturus est ob id, quod inutilis factus est."

According to Plato's laws, he that wounded another in his anger, if the wound was curable, was to pay τοῦ βλάβους τὴν διπλασίαν, *double to the damage the wounded man sustained thereby*. If it was incurable, he was to pay fourfold; and so he was to do likewise if it were curable, but left a remarkable scar. If the wound was given involuntarily, he was to pay only simple damages: Τύχης γὰρ νομοθέτης οὐδεὶς ἱκανὸς ἄρχειν: *for no lawgiver is able to govern chance*, (lib. ix. de Leg. p. 878, 879.)

Ver. 20. *If a man smite his servant*, &c.] A slave; who was not an Israelite, but a gentile.

He shall surely be punished.] With death, say the Hebrew doctors, (in Selden, lib. iv. de Jure N. et G. cap. 1. p. 463.) if the servant died while he was beating him: for that is meant by dying *under his hand*. But it seems more likely to me that he was to be punished for his cruelty, as the judge who examined this fact thought meet. For his smiting *with a rod*, not with a sword, was a sign he intended only to correct him, not to kill him. And besides, no man could be thought to be willing to lose his own goods, as such servants were.

Ver. 21. *Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two.*] A day and a night, as the Hebrew doctors interpret it.

He shall not be punished.] Because it might be presumed he did not die of those strokes.

He is his money.] His death was a loss to his master: who therefore might well be judged not to have any intention to kill him; and was sufficiently punished by losing the benefit of his service.

Ver. 22. *If men strive, and hurt a woman with child.*] Who interposed between the contending parties; or came perhaps to help her husband.

So that her fruit depart from her.] She miscarry.

And yet no mischief follow.] She do not die, as the Hebrew doctors expound it. (See Selden, lib. iv. de Jure N. et G. cap. 1. p. 461.)

He shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him.] Her husband may require a compensation, both for the loss of his child, and the hurt or grief of his wife. Yet he was not to be judge in his own case; but it was to be brought before the public judges, as it here follows.

And he shall pay as the judges determine.] Who considered in their decree what damage was done; which was estimated by the hurt his wife received in her body; and by the lessening of her price, if she were a slave and might be sold. Unto which several other mulcts were added, to be given to the woman herself, as Mr. Selden observes in the place abovenamed.

Ver. 23. *And if any mischief follow.*] If the woman did die.

Thou shalt give life for life.] In the interpretation of this, saith Jarchi, our masters differ. For some by *life* understand that which is properly so called, or the person himself: so that it should signify, being put to death: but others understand by it, a pecuniary mulct; that so much money should be paid to the heirs, as the person killed might have been sold for. The LXX. carry it to quite another sense; which is, that if a woman miscarry, and the child was μὴ ἐξεικονισμένον, *not yet formed and fashioned*, that the man who occasioned the miscarriage was to pay a fine. But if it were formed, then life was to be given for life. So that this whole law is to be understood of an *abortion;* and according to the condition of the *abortive* (not the life or death of the mother), so the punishment was to be inflicted. And thus Philo takes it, and hath a large discourse upon it. (See Selden, lib. iv. de Jure N. et G. cap. 1. p. 464. and Constantine L'Empereur in Bava kama, p. 200, &c.)

Ver. 24, 25. *Eye for eye, tooth for tooth*, &c.] These and all the rest that follow to the end of the twenty-fifth verse, the Hebrews understand to signify pecuniary mulcts; as may be seen in their Comments upon this place. And Maimonides gives three reasons for it, which L'Empereur takes notice of, and endeavours to confute in his Annotations upon Bava kama, p. 187, &c. 198, &c. But, after all, there seems to be a great deal of reason, at least in many cases, to admit of a compensation. As in that mentioned by Diodorus Siculus, (lib. xii.) where the one-eyed man complained of this law (which was among the heathen) as too rigid; for if he lost the other eye, he should suffer more than the man whom he injured, who had still one eye left. Upon such considerations Phavorinus argues against this law, which was one of the twelve tables, as not possible to be justly executed, according to the very letter of it. For the same member of the body is far more valuable to one man than it is to another. For instance, the right hand of a scribe, or a painter, cannot be so well spared as the right hand of a singer. And therefore the law of the twelve tables concerning *taliones (like for like)*, was with this exception—*Ni cum eo pacet:* that is, if he who had put out a man's eye, or taken away the use of any other member, would not come to an agreement, *de talione redimenda, to make him satisfaction*, and redeem the punishment he was to suffer in the very same kind. So Sex. Cæcilius expounds it in Aulus Gellius, (lib. xx. cap. 1.)

Ver. 26. *If a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid*, &c.] It is but reason that this should extend to all servants, though of another nation, not merely to those who were Jews. And so Maimonides seems to allow, when he saith, "This is a precept of piety and mercy to poor wretches, who should not be any longer afflicted with servitude when they have lost a member of their body." (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 41.) And therefore the common resolution of their doctors is very cruel, that gentile servants (whom they call Canaanites), who were not circumcised,

should not have the benefit of this law. For they thus distinguish servants of another nation. Some were circumcised and baptized; others still remained gentiles, or were only proselytes of the gate. The former kind might be set free three ways; by being redeemed by a price paid by themselves, or any friend; by manumission; and by virtue of this law, upon the loss of any member. For though only an *eye* and a *tooth* be here mentioned, yet herein are included all the rest of the principal members of the body, which, being mutilated, cannot be repaired; which they reckon to be four-and-twenty in all. If they did not dismiss such a servant thus maimed, the court of judgment, upon an appeal to it, compelled them to give him his liberty with a certificate of it. But the second sort of gentile servants could be made free only by the two first ways, having no benefit (according to this doctrine) by this third way here mentioned. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure N. et G. cap. 8.) But heathens themselves were more merciful than these doctors; for the civil laws (as L'Empereur observes upon Bava kama, cap. 8. sect. 3.) made better provision for slaves when they were hardly used.

Ver. 27. *And if he smite out his man-servant's tooth,* &c.] The loss of a *tooth* was not so great as that of an *eye:* yet, to prevent cruelty, God ordained a master should lose the service of his slave for so small a loss as this.

Ver. 28. *If an ox gore a man, or a woman, that they die, then the ox shall be surely stoned.*] This was not a punishment to the ox, as the Sadducees, saith Maimonides, cavil against us, but to his owner; who was admonished hereby to look better after his cattle: for which reason also the ox was not to be eaten. (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 40.)

And his flesh shall not be eaten.] Because God would have the owner entirely lose all benefit by it, as Maimonides interprets it. And so Josephus, (lib. iv. Archæol. cap. 8.) μηδ' εἰς τροφὴν εὔχρηστος, &c. *It was not permitted to be so much as profitable to him for his nourishment.* And the Hebrew doctors say, that if a man ate so much as the bigness of an olive of this flesh he was to be scourged. By this means both he and others were admonished to be more careful and cautious: and God also declared how heinous the crime of murder is; the punishment of which, in some sort, reached even unto beasts: which were therefore also stoned, when they had killed a man, that no more might be in danger of their lives by them. Some think its flesh therefore could not be eaten, because, being stoned, it was a carcase whose blood was in it. But Maimonides answers to this in his treatise of Forbidden Meats, that the scope of the law is, that as soon as the sentence for its being stoned was pronounced it became unclean. Nay, if a man, to prevent this sentence, killed it after a legal manner, no man might eat a bit of it. And when it was stoned, the flesh was neither sold, nor given to the gentiles, nor to the dogs, &c. as Bochart observes, (lib. ii. Hierozoic. par. i. cap. 40.)

The same Maimonides, in his treatise of Pecuniary Mulcts, rightly extends this law to other creatures, whether beasts or birds, that any man kept; as L'Empereur observes upon Bava kama, cap. 4. sect. 5. And Plato, I observe, hath the very same law, that ἐὰν ὑποζύγιον ἢ ζῶον ἄλλό τι φονεύσῃ τινὰ, &c. *if an ox, or any other animal, kill a man (except it were in the public combats), the officers called* Ἀγρονόμοι, *that were set over their fields, were to kill it, and throw it out of their territories,* ἔξω τῶν ὅρων τῆς χώρας ἀποκτείναντας διορίσαι, (lib. ix. de Legibus, p. 873.)

But the owner shall be quit.] The loss of his ox was all his punishment. And if the ox did not kill the man, but only wounded him, in that case the owner was obliged to make him such a compensation as the judges thought equal, and to take care the like happened not again.

Ver. 29. *But if the ox were wont to push in time past, and it hath been testified to him,* &c.] In the former case, the owner was only punished with the loss of his ox; it being the first time that it had been known to push. But if the ox had formerly been known to be so unruly, and he had been told of it, and yet did not take care to prevent further mischief, then he, as well as the ox, were to be put to death. The Jewish doctors, indeed, have softened this by divers exceptions: as, first, they say it was to be proved that the ox had pushed upon *three* several days; for though it appeared he pushed a great many times in one day, it would not make the man liable. And, secondly, it was to be testified, not only to the owner, but before the magistrate, that he had pushed so often. And, lastly, they interpret the last words of this verse *(the owner also shall be put to death),* of punishment by the hand of Heaven: that is, they leave him to God. (See Bochart in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 40.) But though Abarbinel propounds this as the opinion of their wise men, yet he was sensible of its absurdity. For he confesses that God doth decree the sentence of death should be executed upon the owner of the ox: only he thinks that he remits something of the strictness of it in the next verse. And there are *three* cases here mentioned relating to this matter: one in the foregoing verse, where the ox is ordered to be stoned: another in this, where the owner is also made liable to be put to death: and a third in the next verse, where a pecuniary mulct is only set upon him.

Ver. 30. *If there be laid upon him a sum of money, then he shall give it for the ransom of his life.*] By this it appears there might be a case wherein the owner of the ox should not be put to death, but only be fined, though the ox had been wont to push, and he was told of it. And the interpretation of this and the foregoing law, which is given by Constantine L'Empereur, is not unreasonable, upon Bava kama, cap. 4. sect. 5. Either the knowledge which the owner had of the ill conditions of his ox was certain or uncertain; and his carelessness in preventing the mischief he was wont to do was greater or lesser; and the friends of him that was killed pressed the strictest justice, or were content to remit it. In the former cases (if the knowledge was certain, the carelessness very gross, and the friends were strict in the prosecution) he was punished with death: but if otherwise, he was punished only by setting a fine upon him. Certain it is, that the foregoing law might prove too rigorous in many cases (as, if the ox pushed, being provoked; or broke loose when he was tied up; or was let go by the negligence of a servant, &c.); and therefore God permitted the judges to accept of a ransom, as they saw cause, which was to be paid according as the Sanhedrin thought meet. So Jonathan.

Whatsoever is laid upon him.] He was to submit to the fine, whatsoever it was: and it was given to the heirs of him that was killed. If a man's wife was killed, the Jews

say it was given to the heirs of her father's family, and not to her husband.

Ver. 31. *Whether he have gored a son, or have gored a daughter,* &c.] Because what was said (ver. 29.) of killing *a man or a woman,* might have been restrained to the father or mother of a family, whose loss was greatest, and their lives most precious: therefore the same law is here extended to the children: yet both Jonathan and Onkelos confine it to the children of Israelites; as if all mankind besides were nothing worth. (See Bochartus in the place abovementioned.)

Ver. 32. *If an ox shall push a man-servant or a maid-servant,* &c.] Whether the servant was of greater or lesser value, saith Maimonides, the punishment was the payment of thirty shekels (and the loss of the ox); half the price of a freeman, who was estimated, he saith, at sixty shekels, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 40.) He adds, in another place (in his treatise of Pecuniary Mulcts), that the owner was not bound to pay this ransom, unless the ox killed the man out of his own ground. For if he was killed within the owner's ground, the ox, indeed, was stoned, but no ransom was paid. Divers other cases he mentions in that book, as L'Empereur observes upon Bava kama, p. 85. where he takes notice that Solon himself wrote βλάβης τετραπόδων νόμον, *a law concerning the mischief done by cattle,* as Plutarch relates in his life.

Ver. 33. *And if a man shall open a pit,* &c.] In the street, or public highway, as Jonathan rightly interprets it. For if he opened or digged a pit in his own ground, he was not concerned in this law, though another man's beast fell into it.

And not cover it.] If he did cover it conveniently, though in time the cover grew rotten, and a beast fell into it, he was not bound to make it good, as Maimonides resolves the case.

Ver. 34. *The owner of the pit shall make it good,* &c.] There were so many cases arose upon this law, that it is not easy to number them. Maimonides hath amassed together abundance belonging to this matter, with wonderful accuracy, as Bochartus observes; who hath transcribed a great many of them, in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 40. p. 391, &c.

Ver. 35. *If one man's ox hurt another's, that he die.*] Which equally belongs to all other cattle, as Maimonides observes; for the law mentions an ox only for example's sake.

They shall sell the live ox, and divide the money, &c.] Though the ox that was killed was worth as much more as the other, yet satisfaction was to be made only out of the live ox which did the mischief, as the same Maimonides observes, who hath several cases upon this law, as may be seen in the forenamed book of Bochart's, p. 393. But it might so happen, that the ox which was killed was of little value, and the live ox worth many pounds: in which case it seems so unreasonable, the man whose loss was small should be a great gainer by the sale of the ox which did the mischief, that the Jewish lawyers resolve the meaning of this law is, the man whose ox was killed should receive half the damage he had sustained; as L'Empereur observes upon Bava kama, cap. 1. sect. 4.

Ver. 36. *Or if it be known that the ox hath used to push,* &c.] There is a great difference between what is done casually, and what is done constantly. The former verse speaks of the hurt done by a beast that was not wont to push; and this, of the hurt done by one that was notoriously mischievous; and accordingly, greater damages were given in this latter case than in the former. And by this general rule the Jews regulated all other cases: making those mischiefs that were done by beasts which were wont to hurt, or were of a hurtful nature, to be punished above as much more, than the mischief done by a creature that was not wont to hurt, or with a part of his body which uses not to hurt. (See L'Empereur in Bava kama, cap. 2. sect. 1.)

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *IF a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it.*] Before the theft was discovered to be done by him.

He shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.] There is a smaller satisfaction required in other things, (ver. 9.) and here is also a disproportion observable between the stealing of an ox and of a sheep. The reason of both was this; that money, goods, garments, jewels, which men keep in their houses within towns and cities, are better guarded, and not so easily stolen as cattle in the field: and of cattle in the field, an ox was more easy to be stolen than a sheep: for sheep feeding in flocks may be all in view of the shepherd; but oxen, feeding scattered one from another, are not so easily observed and kept by the neatherd. Thus Maimonides, More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 41. But the true reason of the difference between an ox and a sheep seems to be, that an ox was of greater value, and likewise useful to more purposes in husbandry, (as ploughing, carrying in, and treading out the corn, &c.) which made the punishment of stealing an ox greater than that of stealing a sheep. Yet there was a difference between a thief who came and confessed his sin of his own accord, and him that stood out till he was apprehended and convicted of it: for, in the former case, Moses seems to require only the restitution of that which was stolen, with the addition of a fifth part of the value, and a sacrifice, (Lev. vi. 4, 5.) All this is far more equal than Plato's constitutions, which for all thefts require the same punishment, which was paying double; ἐάντε μέγα ἐάντε σμιχρὸν κλέπτη τις, εἷο εἷς νόμος κείσθω, &c. (lib. ix. de Legibus, p. 857.)

Ver. 2. *If a man be found breaking up.*] Some translate it, *if a man be found with a digging instrument;* or, it may signify any sort of weapon: yet he was to be taken in the very act of breaking up or digging.

And be smitten that he die, &c.] The master of the house might kill the robber in this case; because it might well be thought he intended to kill him rather than lose his booty. The law of the twelve tables allowed this, as A. Gellius relates, (lib. xi. cap. 18.) "Duodecim tabulæ nocturnum furem quoquo modo, diurnum autem, si se telo defenderit, interfici impunè voluerunt." It was one of Plato's laws, also, that if a thief entered a man's house in the night he might innocently kill him: Νύκτωρ φῶρα εἰς οἰκίαν εἰσιόντα, ἐπὶ κλοπῇ χρημάτων, ἐὰν ἑλὼν κτείνῃ τις, καθαρὸς ἔστω, (lib. ix. de Legibus, p. 874.) But the Hebrew doctors make

some exceptions; as, if he did not fly; and if there were no witnesses present: for if there were, then it was like theft in the day-time. (See Grotius, lib. ii. de Jure B. et P. cap. i. sect. 12.)

Ver. 3. *If the sun be risen*, &c.] When they might possibly know who he was; and it might be presumed he intended only to steal, not to kill; then to kill him was to be accounted murder.

He shall be sold for his theft.] For six years. But the Hebrew doctors have many mollifications of this law: for they say a woman was not to be sold; nor a man, but for the principal sum. For *double*, or *four* or *fivefold*, he was not to be sold; but have credit for it, till he was able to pay. And he was not to be sold who robbed a Samaritan; nor if he had stolen less than he was worth when sold, &c. with many other, which so mitigate, that they almost abrogate it. But the law of the twelve tables thought it reason, a thief should be delivered to him whom he robbed to be his slave, as A. Gellius tells us, lib. xx. cap. 1. (See Bochart. Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 40.)

Ver. 4. *If it be certainly found in his hand alive*, &c.] There was a great difference between killing, or selling, after the stealth; and having these cattle found alive with him. In the former case he was punished four or fivefold, (ver. 1.) but in this only double. Because the former concealed his theft with more industry, and left less hope of discovery and restitution than in the latter, as Bochart there observes. Where he also takes notice of the like law at Athens, mentioned by Demosthenes and by A. Gellius, (lib. xi. cap. 18.) But the Hebrews here also have their exceptions; and will not have this extended to women, children, and servants.

He shall restore double.] In case he did not confess the fact himself, but was otherwise found out. For if he did accuse himself, and had neither sold nor killed that which he stole, he was not to restore double. He that stole from another thief was not bound, as Maimonides thinks, to restore double. But in case a thief killed what he had stolen, and after that consecrated it to God, he was obliged notwithstanding to restore fourfold: though if he consecrated it before he killed or sold it, only to restore double. For though the sanctification of a thing, after the sin was committed, did not take away the guilt: yet before he aggravated his fault by killing or selling what he stole, the sanctification lessened the punishment. (See L'Empereur in Bava kama, cap. 7. sect. 1, 2.)

Ver. 5. *If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten.*] This our rabbins, saith R. Levi of Barcelona, understand concerning the damage done by beasts eating another man's grass or corn, &c.

And shall put in his beast.] This they understand of the damage that may be done by their feet, in treading down the tender grass or corn.

Of the best of his field, and of the best of his vineyard, shall he make restitution.] What is determined in this case, the Jews extend to all other: that men should make satisfaction for the wrong done to their neighbours in any kind, with the best of what they possessed of that kind. So the Misna in Bava kama, cap. 1. sect. 1. and Abarbinel on this place, *damages are paid out of the best.* Which made men very careful in looking after their beasts, that they did no hurt in their neighbours' ground. For which Plato orders only such satisfaction to be made as the Ἀγρονόμοι should judge meet, (lib. viii. de Legibus, p. 843.) But the Jews were so scrupulous in this matter, that, to prevent the damage one man might do another, they made a constitution that no man should keep goats, or rabbits, or any such-like small creatures, near the corn-fields, or vineyards, or olive-yards of his neighbour; no, nor in any parts of the land of Israel, (as the Misna hath it in the Bava kama, cap. 7. sect. 7.) but in Syria, or in the deserts of their own land. This the Talmudists carry so far, as to urge it to inept superstition; as L'Empereur observes on that place.

Ver. 6. *If fire break out*, &c.] The Hebrew word properly imports that which breaks out of itself (as R. Levi Barzelonita observes), so that the meaning of this law is, that though a man kindle a fire within his own bounds, and it spread further, to the damage of his neighbour, he shall be guilty, though he had no hand in putting the fire to the stacks of corn which were burnt by it; because he should have looked better after it when he had kindled it. For every man, saith he, is bound to watch the fire that he kindles, lest it do mischief; it being its nature to break out, and catch hold of any thing that is near it. And therefore Plato ordains (in the place mentioned upon the former verse) that ἐὰν πυρεύων τὴν ὕλην μὴ διενλαβηθῇ τῶν τοῦ γείτονος, &c. *if a man set fire to any combustible matter, and do not take care his neighbour receive no harm by it, he shall pay such damages as the magistrates judge just.* But here the Jewish lawyers consider, at what distance the fire was kindled; and resolve, that if there was a fence of four cubits high, or a public highway, or a river between the fire and the field, or stack of corn that was burnt, the man that kindled it was free. (See Bava kama, cap. 6. sect. 4, 5. and L'Empereur in his Annotations there.)

Ver. 7. *If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money, or stuff to keep*, &c.] The equity of the law contained in this and the following verse, is very well explained by Maimonides, par. iii. cap. 42. More Nevoch. He that takes a neighbour's goods or money to keep for nothing, and hath no profit thereby, doth a kindness to his neighbour, and therefore is not to bear the loss of them; which must fall upon the owner himself. But he that desires to be the keeper of his goods, and receives a benefit by the use of them, or is paid for his care, must make them good if they be stolen. Or if the owner and the keeper equally partake of the profit, they must equally bear the loss. R. Levi Barzelonita interprets this place of that which a man takes into his custody *chinnam* (as his word is), *gratis*, as we speak, without any reward for his care in keeping it.

Ver. 8. *Shall be brought to the judges.*] The principal judges were called *Elohim, gods.* And there were to be three of them at least; who were to examine upon oath (ver. 11.) and endeavour to find out the truth. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synod. cap. 5. p. 232.)

To see.] *i. e.* Find out.

Whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods.] Or, whether through negligence he suffered them to be stolen. In which he was bound to make them good, as Maimonides saith, in the place beforementioned; who will have the name of *Elohim* originally to belong to judges; and from thence to be translated to God, the Judge above all, (par. ii. cap. 2.) But of this see xx. 2.

Ver. 9. *For all manner of trespass, whether it be for ox,*

or ass, or sheep.] Though these be only mentioned, yet the law reaches to all cattle whatsoever.

Which another challengeth to himself.] There is great variety in the translation of these words, as Mr. Selden shews; (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 12.) but, according to ours, the meaning is, when a man affirms that he either deposited such things with his neighbour, or lent them to him, or that he took them, (as R. Levi Barzelonita interprets it; Præcept. liv.) both parties were to be brought before the judge; that he might examine where the right lay.

He shall pay double unto his neighbour.] *i. e.* He who pretended to have deposited the goods (suppose) was to pay double if he brought an unjust action against his neighbour; or he with whom the goods were deposited was to pay it, if it appeared he had dealt fraudulently: but if it were found that the goods were lost by mere chance, he was not bound to pay any thing.

Maimonides explains it thus, according to the opinion of the Talmudists (as Mr. Selden observes in the place now mentioned); when a man brings an action against another about such things as are here mentioned, and the defendant confesses part of the charge, but denies the rest; he was to restore as far as he confessed; but for the other which he did not confess, he was to be put upon his oath. Or, if he denied the whole, and he that brought the action had but one witness against him, he was to purge himself by an oath; for, by the law, no man was compelled to clear himself by an oath but in three cases, of which this was one, when a man was guilty by one witness.

Ver. 10. *If a man deliver unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast to keep,* &c.] If he lend any of these things to his neighbour, upon certain considerations, or let them for hire; and his neighbour affirms that they died, or were hurt, or driven away by enemies who carried them captive; but there was no witness of any of these allegations; then the cause was to be brought before the judge to find out the truth, in the manner following:

Ver. 11. *Then shall an oath of the Lord be between them both,* &c.] If there was no other way to discover the truth, then he to whom they were delivered, was to purge himself by an oath that he had not killed the beast, nor done any thing to hurt it; and the owner was to trouble him no further: nor was he bound to make any satisfaction, provided he had used these goods according to the agreement between them; for if he had employed them contrary to their contract, then he was bound to make them good to the owner of whom they were borrowed or hired. If he refused to take the oath, he was pronounced guilty; and restitution was ordered to be made out of his goods. But there were some temperaments of this law; for every man was not admitted to purge himself by an oath. For instance; he that was of so bad a reputation, that they had a suspicion he would not stick to perjure himself, was not admitted to be abjured; no, though he that brought the action required it, &c. (See Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 12. p. 520.)

Ver. 12. *And if it be stolen from him.*] Through his negligence who was entrusted with it.

He shall make restitution to the owner thereof.] Because he was bound to have looked better after it; by receiving wages for his care and pains in keeping it (as some interpret), or engaging to make it good, if he did not take the same care of it as if it had been his own.

Ver. 13. *If it were torn in pieces, then let him bring it for witness,* &c.] If he could produce any part of it, as an evidence that it was torn, and he endeavoured to rescue it, he was not to make it good. But here the Hebrew doctors make many exceptions: for they would have him make good what was torn by one wolf alone; because they think he might have been able to defend the cattle against one, though not against many. If, also, he put the oxen or sheep into a pasture, wont to be infested with wild beasts or thieves; or, if he did not call in the help of his neighbours, &c. in these, and such-like cases, he was to make good that which was torn, as Maimonides reports their judgment. (See Bochart. Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 44.)

Ver. 14. *If a man borrow aught of his neighbour, and it be hurt or die.*] This the Hebrew doctors think concerns such things as were lent to another out of kindness, without any consideration for the use of them. About which, if there arose any controversy, by reason of some maim that it received, or its death, it was to be determined by the rule following.

The owner thereof being not with it, he shall surely make it good.] These words, and those in the beginning of the fifteenth verse *(but if the owner be with it, he shall not make it good)*, seem to signify, that if the owner was with the thing that was lent, at the time of its hurt or death, it was to be presumed he would do his best to preserve it, and see it was not ill used, and so must bear the loss: but if he was not present at that time, then the contrary was presumed, that the borrower was in fault, and therefore bound to make it good. Which, though it may seem hard, was but necessary to make men careful, and do their best to preserve what was lent them in pure kindness. R. Levi, of Barcelona, (Præcept. lvi.) interprets it quite another way, in this manner: that if the owner was with it at the time it was borrowed, though not present at the time of its hurt or death, the borrower was free; but if the owner was present at the time of the hurt or death, but not at the time of lending, he was bound to make it good. For "the matter (saith he) depends upon the beginning of it."

Ver. 15. *If it be a hired thing, it came for his hire.*] Some make the Hebrew word *sachir* (which we translate *hired thing*) to relate unto the person; *if he be a mercenary; i. e.* the man who lends agrees to let the borrower have it at a certain price, &c. But this is the same, in effect, with the sense of our translation, which makes this word relate to the thing itself: which, if it were borrowed with a condition to pay so much for the use of it as the lender demanded, then the man who hired it was not bound to make it good, whether the owner were present or not, when it was hurt, or died. But the owner was to run the hazard, because of the hire which he received for the use of the thing.

Ver. 16. *If a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her.*] Whosoever lay with such a maid in the city was thought to have been an *enticer* only (unless witnesses came and proved that he forced her), because it might be well supposed her voice would have been heard, if she had cried out upon the force in the city. But if he lay with her in the field, where nobody could hear, it was presumed to be a rape. Thus Maimonides and other Hebrew doctors.

He shall surely endow her to be his wife.] This law doth not say, as the old translation hath it, *he shall endow her,*

and take her to be his wife, but only, *endow her to be his wife:* that is, give her such a dowry that she might be his lawful wife. So the same Hebrew doctors understand it; who will not have it to be a command that he should marry her (though that was best), but only that he should make satisfaction for taking away her virginity; which was by paying so much, in the nature of a dowry, as would render her fit to be his wife, if both of them could agree. Yet so, that if either he, or she, or her father refused (for it was in the power of any of these, as they say, to hinder the marriage), he paid this mulct as the dowry of a virgin to her father. (See Selden's Uxor. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 16.) There is another law of this nature, (Deut. xxii. 28, 29.) but it speaks of a virgin deflowered by force: of which see there.

Ver. 17. *If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him.*] Here is mention made only of the father; not of the man that deflowered her: who, one would think, should have been bound to marry her, if she and her father pleased. And so Josephus, ὁ φθείρας παρθένον, &c. αὐτὸς γαμείτω. But if the father of the damsel did not like to give her to him, he was to pay as here is directed.

He shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins.] That is, saith Josephus, fifty shekels, τὴν τιμὴν τῆς ὕβρεως, *as a satisfaction for her reproach,* (lib. iv. Archæol. cap. 8.)

Ver. 18. *Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.*] This law about witches follows the other about virgins; because witches, among other practices, help by evil arts to allure and entice silly virgins to consent to men's solicitations. Epiphanius reports from one that saw it such a magical operation used by a Jew to procure the love of a Christian woman, who was preserved from the δύναμις φαρμακείας, *power of his witchcraft,* by the seal of Christ (as he calls the sign of the cross), wherewith she fortified herself, at the first attempt made upon her, (Hæres. xxx. n. 7, 8.) But such wicked wretches did a world of other mischief, and therefore were to be put to death, whether they were men or women. The Scripture, indeed, mentions a *witch* only, (saith the Gemara of the Sanhedrin, cap. 7. n. 10.) because, for the most part, they were women who were addicted to magic. So Maimonides also, because the greater part of evil works are performed by women; therefore the law saith, *thou shalt not suffer Mechasshepha, a witch, to live*; (par. iii. cap. 37. More Nevochim.) Where he discourses of the sorts of witchcraft: and in general affirms, that there were no magical works performed without respect to the stars. For such people held that every plant had its star, and so had every animal, and all metals. For example; they said, "Pluck such a leaf, or such an herb, when the sun, or any other planet, is in such a place; let such a metal be melted under such a constellation, or such a constitution of the moon; and then say such and such words, and let a fume be made with such herbs or leaves, and that in such and such a form, and then this or that will follow. This was their doctrine, and such works as these were the peculiar worship of the stars, who were delighted, they imagined, with such actions, words, or fumes, and for the sake of them would do whatsoever was desired."

All this, he saith, he took out of their books then extant; from which he concludes, that the scope of the law being, that all idolatry should be taken out of the world, and that no virtue should be ascribed to any star of doing good or hurt to men (which opinion led men to their worship), it necessarily followed that all *witches* and *wizards* should be put to death, because they were idolaters; though after a peculiar and different way from that wherein the vulgar worshipped idols. And he thinks that a *witch* is rather mentioned than a *wizard* (though both intended), because men are naturally more tender towards the female sex, and apt to favour them: and, therefore, it is as if Moses had said, *Thou shalt kill even a woman that is guilty of this crime.* But afterwards (Lev. xx. 27.) he commands both men and women to be stoned.

Others of the Hebrew doctors (particularly R. Levi Barzelonita) give this reason why *witches* were not to live, "Because they directly thwarted God most blessed, who made all things when he created them for such and such purposes; which they perverted, and, by devices of their own, made to serve other ends which God never designed:" (Præcept. lxii.) but this they could not do without the help of evil spirits; and therefore their crime consisted in entering into a familiarity and a league with them, whose assistance upon such occasions they invoked: which was, in effect, a renouncing of God.

This was an impiety which had overspread the whole world, especially the eastern parts of it. And as for the Romans, we find a law, as old as the twelve tables, against witchcraft; "apud nos in duodecim tabulis cavetur, ne quis alienos fructus excantassit," as we read in Seneca, (lib. iv. Nat. Quæst. cap. 7.) where he mentions the like law among the Athenians. For the Greeks were extremely addicted to this, especially in Thessaly. Of which none, that I have read, spake so plainly as Plato, in his eleventh book of Laws, p. 932, 933. where he orders punishments not only for those who destroyed others by portions, but for those who pretended to be able to revenge themselves on others, ἢ μαγγανείαις τε τισὶ καὶ ἐπῳδαῖς καὶ καταδέσεσι λεγομέναις, "either by certain *enchantments,* or by *charms,* or by those *spells* which are called *ties,* or *knots.* Concerning which, he acknowledges, it is hard to know any thing, or to persuade others there is nothing in them. For if a man see any where, κήρινα μιμήματα πεπλασμένα, &c. *waxen resemblances,* made and set either at their *doors,* or in the *turning of the ways,* or at the *tombs of their ancestors;* none can prevail with him to neglect these things, because he knows not what efficacy is in them." And therefore he would have even such people, who used these sorts of witchcrafts, to be put to death, if they were professors of any sort of knowledge (as Μάντεις καὶ τερατοσκόποι), but if they were simple people, he leaves the judges to punish them as they found reason.

Ver. 19. *Whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death.*] This is so infamous a sin, and such a dishonour to nature, and the Author of nature (as Conr. Pellicanus well glosses), that it was not fit such a person should live upon the face of the earth, but die without mercy. See Lev. xviii. 23. xx. 15, 16. where this is more largely handled.

Ver. 20. *He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed.*] Sacrifice being the principal act of worship in those days, includes in it all other acts of worship and Divine service, which they were required to pay to the Lord alone (xx. 2, 3, &c.); but the punishment of doing otherwise was not enacted till

now. Of which he treats more largely Deut. xvii. 2, 3, &c. See there.

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him.*] Here are two distinct commands. The first of which [*not to vex a stranger*] the Hebrews will have to consist in not upbraiding him with his former state of heathenism, nor giving him any opprobrious words: as saying, Remember what thou wast; or what thy father did. And this was neither to be done to a proselyte of justice, nor to a proselyte of the gate, as far as Mr. Selden could judge of their opinion herein, (lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 4.) The second [*not to oppress him*] consisted in not using him hardly in their dealings with him, by making him pay, for instance, for any thing more than it was worth. Which, the same Mr. Selden (lib. vi. cap. 5. p. 690.) thinks, the Hebrews were of opinion belonged only to their usage of proselytes of justice, who were perfectly in their communion. But this is very unreasonable: for (as R. Levi Barzelonita himself observes), by thus treating any proselyte, they might endanger their return to paganism again, out of indignation to be so despised; and much more when they saw they were wronged. Which God took care they should not be, because they were more helpless than other men, and had fewer friends. Which is the reason that this precept (as the Jews themselves have computed) is inculcated in one-and-twenty places. (See particularly xxiii. 9. Lev. xix. 33.)

For ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.] There could not be a more powerful reason to move them to treat strangers kindly, than the remembrance of their own oppressions in Egypt, from which they were delivered by the mere mercy of God, which they ought to imitate.

Ver. 22. *Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.*] Give them no trouble either in word or deed, as the same R. Levi interprets it (Præcept. lxv.); but in all their commerce with them, in buying, selling, or any other intercourse, treat them not only civilly, but kindly and benignly. And the reason of the precept, saith he, is the same with the former; because widows and orphans have few or none to protect them, or plead their cause; and therefore the law took care of them, as if their husbands and parents were yet alive.

Ver. 23. *If thou afflict them in any wise.*] By giving them ill language, or by insulting over them, or destroying their goods: much more if any man smote them, he was liable to the judgment of God, as Nachmanides interprets it.

And they cry at all unto me.] A child, saith the same R. Levi, cries to his father, and a wife to her husband: but the widow and the fatherless cry unto me, and I will hear them, for I am merciful.

I will surely hear them.] Punish you for your ill usage of them, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 24. *And my wrath shall wax hot.*] This signifies their punishment should be Θεήλατος, *sent upon them from God;* who orders no penalty to be inflicted by their judges, because he intended himself to be their avenger, and that in a very remarkable manner, by serving them in their kind; as it here follows.

And I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.] Here the Hebrew doctors cry out, *Measure for measure* (as R. Levi observes); for he threatens that the wives of those that afflicted them should be widows, and their children fatherless, and find none to take pity upon them. For with the measure that men mete withal, others shall mete to them: "if a woman (as he goes on) shall afflict them, she shall die, and her husband shall marry another wife, which shall afflict her children."

If thou lend money to any of my people.] That is, to an Israelite.

That is poor by thee.] By a *poor* man they do not understand one that goes a begging, but one in such want that he is more to be pitied than those who have the confidence to beg in the streets. The foundation of this precept (as the beforementioned R. Levi observes) was to fix in them the great virtue of mercy, kindness, and clemency; whereby poor people being helped, in this way of lending them money *gratis*, might recover again to a better condition, by the goodness of God to them.

Thou shalt not be as an usurer to him.] Neither domineer over him, nor make him pray, and entreat, and wait long, as if he were a slave; nor exact any thing for the use of the money.

Neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.] Not make him find sureties: or, as some of them interpret it, this is a precept requiring all Israelites to have no hand in letting out money to usury, either by writing the bonds, or by being a witness to them, or by being bound with others for the interest of money: for the word they observe is in the plural number, *ye shall not put upon him usury.* Which law concerning usury is fully handled by Mr. Selden, (lib. vi. de Jure N. et G. cap. 9, 10.) where he shews that some usury was forbidden by the law; and other by the decrees of their wise men. The law forbade them to contract to receive back again any sum of money more than they lent. But it was further required by their wise men, that they should not receive any gift beforehand to induce them to lend; nor any thing afterward by way of gratuity, or to express their thankfulness. Yet this last was permitted in the loan of orphans' money, as Maimonides saith. And what was thus forbidden to be done to an Israelite, was permitted to be done to a gentile. Nay, some will have that to be an affirmative precept which we read Deut. xxiii. 20. obliging them to take usury of a gentile, if they lent any money to him. But that Maimonides contradicts. And there are those who think this law only forbade them to take usury of a *poor* Israelite, but not of a *rich:* it being unreasonable that he should increase his wealth by the use of his neighbour's money, and he have no profit thereof.

Ver. 26. *If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment.*] His *coverlid*, as we speak, or bed-clothes. For it is plain, by what follows, he speaks of that which was to keep him from the cold in the night.

To pledge.] As a security for the payment of the money which he lent him.

Thou shalt deliver it to him by that the sun goeth down.] This shews that he speaks of a poor man; which is more fully declared, Deut. xxiv. 12, 13.

Ver. 27. *For that is his covering only,* &c.] It was contrary to humanity, to keep from him the only thing he had to keep him warm in his bed; for it was in effect to kill him.

And it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear him.] Punish thee for thy barbarous cruelty, (ver.

23.) and besides, the Hebrew doctors say, he was to be beaten, by order of the court of judgment.

For I am gracious.] And would have you like myself.

Ver. 28. *Thou shalt not revile the gods.*] *i. e.* The judges, as no doubt it is to be interpreted. (See Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 13. p. 268.) And the Hebrew doctors give this reason for it; because it tends to terrify them from doing justice, and exposes them to the contempt and hatred of the people; whom it also inclines to sedition. But many of them (see him, cap. i. p. 9.) will have another precept contained in this, that they blaspheme not the name of the Most High. Some few also (among whom is Philo) fancy it to be a command not to revile the gods that other people worship, though they be false ones. And so Julian the apostate took it; who is confuted by St. Cyril, as Mr. Selden there observes.

Nor curse the ruler of thy people.] That is, either the prince of Israel, or the president of the great Sanhedrin. So R. Levi Barzelonita, (Præcept. lxxvii.) The intention of the Scripture is to admonish us of our duty to him, who is the prince of the empire of Israel; with respect both to the dominion of the kingdom, and of the law (as his words are), it being a great crime to speak evil of him, by whose care all differences were composed, &c.

If any man was guilty of this crime, he was to be scourged three times: and if he were the son of a prince, he had four scourgings. And that very justly; for heathens themselves reckoned this among the greatest offences. It was one of the laws of Charondas (as Hen. Stephanus observes in his Fontes et Rivi Juris Civilis): ἔστω δὲ μέγιστα ἀδικήματα, θεῶν καταφρόνησις, καὶ γονέων κάκωσις ἑκουσία, καὶ ἀρχόντων καὶ νόμων ὀλιγωρία, καὶ ἑκούσιος ἀτιμία δικαιοσύνης, *let these be reckoned the greatest crimes; contempt of the gods, and voluntary abuse of parents, disrespect to rulers and laws, and voluntary dishonour of justice.* In like manner Zaleucus ordains, that, next after the gods, and demons, and heroes, γονεῖς τε καὶ νόμοι καὶ ἄρχοντες σύνεγγύς εἰσι ταῖς τιμαῖς, *parents, and the laws and rulers, should be equally had in honour.* And Plato thought those that would not be subject to them were unsufferable: because they had the spirit of the old Titans, who would have pulled the gods out of their thrones, τὴν λεγομένην παλαιὰν Τιτανικὴν φύσιν ἐπιδείκνυσι καὶ μιμοῦνται.

Ver. 29. *Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruit,* &c.] The Hebrews will have this to be a direction for the bringing unto God, in due order, those things which were to be offered to him. As, first, the *trumah;* which was the first oblation that was made out of the corn, when it was newly threshed out: which was to be, they say, a fiftieth part; which was given to the priest. Then the first tithe, which was given to the Levites; and the second tithe, which the possessors ate at Jerusalem, when the tabernacle was settled there. This order, they say, God here requires them not to invert, by offering that last which should have been first. So R. Levi of Barcelona, (Præcept. lxxviii.) But, from what follows, it seems to relate only to the first-fruits of their harvest, and of their vintage; which they were bound to bring as soon as they were ripe; and it was the portion of the priests. (See Deut. xviii. 4.) There was no determinate portion prescribed: but they who were tolerably good (as the Hebrews say) gave a fiftieth part; liberal men a fortieth; and covetous men a sixtieth; less than which was not accepted for a *trumah.*

The first-born of thy sons shalt thou give me.] The reason of this is given chap. xiii. when it was first enacted.

Ver. 30. *Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen,* &c.] See xiii. 2. 12. 15.

On the eighth day thou shalt give it me.] It was not acceptable to God, because not fit to be offered to him, till the eighth day; for the same reason that children were not circumcised till the eighth day. For all creatures, when they are newly born, saith Maimonides, (par. iii. More Nevoch. cap. 49.) by reason of their abundant moisture, are so weak and feeble, that it is doubtful whether they will live or no: and therefore, till seven days be over, they are looked upon as but abortives (so his words are), and scarce numbered among the living. Besides, they are not sufficiently purged till then from the foulness of their stomach and bowels: which is another reason they were not to be offered unto God; who did not accept that which was imperfect or impure. Whatsoever was the reason, this law was observed also among the gentiles, as Bochart shews out of Pliny in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50.

Yet there was this difference between these and the first-fruits mentioned in the foregoing verse; that though these creatures were fit for sacrifice on the eighth day, yet they might stay longer before they were offered, though not beyond the year, for then they were not accepted, (as was observed before, xii. 5.) but the first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, were to be offered presently, as soon as they were ripe.

Ver. 31. *And ye shall be holy men unto me.*] Because the Israelites were a peculiar people, separated to God by peculiar laws and rites by him instituted, (and thence called a *holy nation,* xix. 6.) therefore God commanded them to distinguish themselves, even in their diet, from other people; and look upon it as below their dignity to eat such things as the gentiles did. This is the meaning of their being holy to God, as appears from Deut. xiv. 2, 3. 21.

Neither shall ye eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field.] Both because the blood was in it and it was devoured by unclean creatures. R. Levi, beforementioned, saith, it was unwholesome; which he makes the reason of the prohibition. But whether it was torn by a wolf, a lion, or a bear, or any other beast, it made no difference, if so be it died presently, or not long after. So the Jews interpret the Hebrew word *terephah,* as L'Empereur observes out of Moses Mikkotsi, (in his notes upon Bava kama, cap. 7. sect. 2.) who saith it signifies *that which a beast tears, or bruises, so that it is near to death, though it be not actually dead.* For if it was dead, they call it נבלה *nevelah,* a carcass; which in their language signifies not only that which dies of itself, but which is killed with a weapon, or torn by a wild beast. Accordingly they take *terephah* here to signify, not only that which is torn by beasts, but that which any other way is so hurt that it is near to death. As, if it fall from a house, and break its ribs, or other members; or an arrow be shot through its heart or lungs; or any disease have affected those vital parts. If death were likely to ensue upon such things, it was not to be eaten.

In the field.] Whether it were torn in the field, or any

other place, it made no difference: but the *field* is mentioned, because there commonly such things happen.

Ye shall cast it to the dogs.] R. Solomon saith they might sell it to the gentiles, whom the Jews counted no better than dogs. Which agrees with the decree in the Misna, (Bava kama, cap. 7. sect. 2.) that though it appeared afterward a thief had stolen what was torn, yet he was to make the legal restitution: contrary to the opinion of R. Simeon, who absolved such a thief, because he might not eat it, and consequently have no benefit by it. But most thought he might sell it; and therefore was liable to make satisfaction. If any Israelite did eat of it, he was to be scourged. Sir J. Marsham quotes the like precept out of Phocilides's verses, which end thus:

—— Ϟηρῶν ἀπὸ Ϟῆρες ἔδωνται.

Let beasts be eaten by beasts. (Chron. Egypt. sect. ix.)

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *THOU shalt not raise a false report.*] The Hebrews think this law peculiarly concerns judges; who are not to suffer their minds to be prepossessed with false reports. For that word we translate *raise,* signifies also to *take up, i. e.* to entertain, or *receive* (as we have it in the margin) and give credit to reports. And, consequently, they were not to hear any man's cause unless his adversary was present; but to look upon all as false, which was said by one party alone without the other. So R. Levi of Barcelona. Yet he confesses, that the law hath respect also to him who brings an action against another; that he should not lay his cause before the judge, in the absence of him that is to answer, though the judge would hear it. And he also adds, that the rabbins take it to comprehend such as report a calumny, or that receive it; or give a false testimony. And Philo thinks the Greeks from thence took that law, μὴ μαρτυρεῖν ἀκοήν, *not to make a proof of a hearsay;* which was in the Attic law, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. p. 576.) And it seems to me most rational to take this to relate to *witnesses* (as the following clause doth), that they should neither calumniate any man, nor bring ungrounded reports to carry a cause.

Put not thy hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.] This the Hebrews likewise think concerns judges; who are required not to receive the testimony of a wicked man, nor do any thing upon his suggestions. And here they mention ten sorts of persons whose testimony was not be received. But the last words in this clause incline one to think it rather concerns witnesses than judges. For *to put one's hand with another,* is to help and assist him; to be confederate with him: and therefore *to put the hand with the wicked,* is to help a wicked man in a bad cause, *viz.* (as the last words interpret it) by giving a false testimony in his behalf. Of the Hebrew word *chamas,* which we rightly render *unrighteous,* or unjust, Bochartus hath a long discourse in his Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 15.

Ver. 2. *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.*] This may well be thought to respect judges, as the foregoing verse doth witnesses. And the most obvious meaning is, that no judge should condemn an innocent man, though the whole court, besides himself, gave sentence against him. But many of the Jews say, that they should not condemn one, whom they thought guilty, if he was cast only by one voice: if there were a majority of two, then, indeed, they say, a judge was bound to join with them. See Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 5. p. 229; and cap. 6. p. 259. where he shews they take the word *evil* in this place to signify *the evil of punishment.* (See also cap. 12. p. 525.) But this seems to be only a subtlety. Their opinion is more reasonable, who, by the Hebrew word *rabbim* here, understand, not a multitude, but *great* and *potent men:* to whom a judge was not to have respect in judgment, no more than to a poor man; who (ver. 3.) is opposed to those men of might. But what follows I think will better interpret this.

Neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment.] This is interpreted by Maimonides to signify, that no judge was to give his sentence in a capital cause, either for absolving or condemning, according to the opinion of the rest, if he were not able to deliver any opinion of his own. (See Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. p. 529.) Other fancies they have about the word *rabbim* in this clause of the verse, which he notes there, cap. 9. p. 421. But the sense I think will be most plain and easy, if we take *rabbim* in the first part of the verse (as we do) for the *multitude;* and in this latter part, for the *great* and *potent,* or *ruling* men, who are generally attended by a multitude; and expound the whole thus: that the judges were not to be deterred, either by the people or by mighty men, to pronounce a false judgment. This agrees with what follows, and with Lev. xix. 15.

Ver. 3. *Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause.*] So as to give a wrong judgment in his favour. The word we translate *countenance* (in Hebrew *tehedar*) signifies to *adorn,* or *honour:* and so we translate it, Lev. xix. 15. And so it may be translated here, *Thou shalt not adorn, or set off a poor man's cause, with fine words and plausible colours, to make it look better than it is.* (See Deut. i. 16, 17.)

Ver. 4. *If thou meet thy enemy's ox or ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again.*] The Samaritan copy adds (after *ox or ass*) *or any other beast.* And Moses himself extends it to all sorts of goods that are lost, (Deut. xxii. 3.) But the Jewish doctors as (R. Levi of Barcelona confesses) restrain the word *enemy* to an Israelite: as if they thought not themselves bound to any such kindness for one of another nation. This, perhaps, they gathered from Deut. xxii. 1, 2. where, instead of the word *enemy,* we find Moses uses the word *brother.* But this should have taught them, to look upon all men, even enemies, as brethren; having the same common original, and bearing the image of the same God.

This verse may be connected with the foregoing in this manner: *If you be inclined to shew pity,* do it in such instances as these, but not in judgment.

Ver. 5. *If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden.*] His ass is only mentioned, but oxen, and other like creatures, are intended; as appears from the former verse. Yet this likewise the hard-hearted Jewish doctors would have belong only to an Israelite who hated them. And they put several cases upon this law: as, what if the beast be a gentile's, and the burden belong to an

Israelite, or on the contrary; what is to be done? And if they meet with two beasts belonging both to Israelites, and labouring under burdens; but one the beast of a friend, the other of an enemy; which is he bound to help? In which they resolve, that he is by this precept to have regard to the beast of his enemy: that he may subdue his evil affection, which would persuade him otherways. How far also the word *see* extends, is a question among them: that is, how far they were to go out of their way to lend their help: with such-like niceties, which I shall not trouble the reader withal.

And wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.] The sense is clear enough: but the construction of the words, in the Hebrew, is not so plain. For the word *azab*, which we translate *help*, signifies to *leave* or *forsake:* and so the Chaldee here interprets it; *Thou shalt in that moment dismiss or forsake thy enmity to him, and go and help him.* And L. de Dieu to the same purpose; *Rather than leave him under his burden, quit thine enmity to him,* &c. A great many other ways there are to make out the grammar of the Hebrew words; but Bochart thinks all in vain: unless, instead of the particle *lo* with a *vau*, we admit it with an *aleph:* and then it runs clearly in the Hebrew in this manner, *Thou shalt cease (or abstain) from leaving him* (*i. e.* not follow thy own inclinations to pass by him); *leaving thou shalt not leave him* (*i. e.* by no means leave him), *viz.* to raise up his beast himself, as if it nothing concerned thee. Or, *Thou shalt abstain from leaving it* (*i. e.* the ass labouring under his burden); *I say, thou shalt by no means leave it.* The same thing is repeated, because it is a command so opposite to men's depraved affections; and therefore was fit to be inculcated, that they might not lightly pass it over. (See Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 40. p. 399.)

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause.*] As they might not favour a man because he was poor, (ver. 3.) so much less might they wrong him; or not do him right, because he wanted money to prosecute it. There seems to be an emphasis (as Conradus Pellicanus observes) in the word *thy* poor: importing that they had such a relation to them, that they ought to be as much concerned for them as any other member of their body.

But the Jews, fancying this to be sufficiently included in the precept beforementioned, (ver. 3.) understand here by the *poor*, a bad man: who is *pauper præceptorum, non facultatum, one that wants virtue, not money.* To whom a judge might not say he was a wicked fellow, and condemn him without any farther examination of his cause: for it belongs to God (saith the same R. Levi) to execute judgment upon the ungodly, and not to the judges.

Ver. 7. *Keep thee far from a false matter.*] *i. e.* From a false judgment (for he seems to speak to the judges), and neither admit that which is false, nor pronounce it.

And the innocent and righteous slay thou not.] That is, (saith the beforenamed R. Levi Barzel.) beware carefully, lest thou takest away the life of him that may be innocent of that whereof he is accused. And therefore, he saith, the judges were to condemn no man, but by the testimony of two eye-witnesses. And they make this precept as much as, *thou shalt not judge out of conjectures.* Nay, if there were two witnesses that did not speak to the same matter, he was not to be condemned. As, if one witness said he saw such a man break the sabbath, and another said he saw him commit idolatry; judgment was not to be given against him upon this testimony; because Moses saith, *slay not the innocent.* Another example of which is still more close, which is mentioned in the T. Sanhedrin: if one said he saw him worship the moon, and another that he saw him worship the sun, the man was not to be condemned who was thus accused, because the witnesses did not speak to the same sort of idolatry. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. p. 567.) By the same reason they were not to acquit him who was plainly convicted of such impieties.

For I will not justify the wicked.] *i. e.* Such an unjust judge.

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt take no gift.*] No, not to absolve the innocent; or to condemn the guilty: as it is interpreted in Siphri.

For a gift blindeth the wise.] Such presents made to a judge are apt to cast a mist (as we speak) before his eyes, *i. e.* to corrupt his understanding; though he be otherwise perspicacious enough to discern between truth and falsehood, good and evil, (1 Sam. viii. 3.) The word which we translate *wise*, is in the Hebrew *piccehim, open* or *seeing;* concerning which consult Bochart, lib. i. Canaan, cap. 16. p. 470.

And perverteth the words of the righteous.] By *words* seems to be meant the sentence of those who might otherwise have been inclined to be righteous and upright judges.

The Hebrew lawyers say, that not only pecuniary gifts are here forbidden, but such words also (I suppose they mean promises of reward) as may win the affection: and that he who gave the present was guilty, as well as he that received it. (See Selden de Synedriis, lib. ii. cap. 13. p. 570.) But especially Joh. Coch. ad excerpt. Gem. Sanhedrin. cap. i. sect. 10. Annot. 4. where, among other things, he gives this ingenious derivation of the Hebrew word *schochad*, which we translate *gift* (out of the treatise called Chetuboth, where it is said to be as much as *schechu chad*, that is, *whereby he is one):* for the party who receives the gift hath his mind so drawn to the giver, that *he becomes one and the same with him.* And no man is fit to be judge in his own cause. Plato thought this so necessary a law, that he expressly enacts, (lib. xii. de Legibus, p. 955.) that all men who served their country in any office, should δώρων χωρὶς διακονεῖν, *perform their duty without gifts.* Ὁ δὲ μὴ πειθόμενος ἁπλῶς τεθνάτω ἀλοὺς τῇ δίκῃ. *He that offended against this law was to suffer death.* Which was the law of the twelve tables among the ancient Romans; "Judex qui ob rem dicendam, pecuniam accepisse convictus est, capite punitor:" *a judge that is convicted to have received money for giving his sentence, let him lose his head.*

Ver. 9. *Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger.*] This was said before, (xxii. 21.) but then it was a precept to all Israel; which is here applied peculiarly to judges; whom he would have to deal equally with strangers, and to make no difference between them and Israelites, remembering what they themselves were not long ago; and that they found by experience it was affliction enough to be strangers. That is the meaning of what follows in this verse.

For ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.] Ye have felt what a distressed condition that is; how friendless and helpless. (See Deut. xxiv. 17, 18. xxvii. 19.)

Ver. 10. *And six years thou shalt sow thy land.*] There was the same reason for dressing their trees.

And gather in the fruits thereof.] Together with the fruits of their trees.

Ver. 11. *But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest, and lie still.*] Neither sow, nor reap, nor prune the trees, nor gather the fruit.

The poor of thy people may eat.] And the Levites, and themselves also; who might take their share, not to lay up but for present use; though not as proprietors, but in common with the rest of the country. Whence it was that Alexander the Great, allowing them to live by their ancient laws, among other things granted τὸ ἕβδομον ἔτος ἀνείσφορον εἶναι, *every seventh year should be tribute-free;* (Josephus, lib. ix. Archæol. cap. 8.) For since they received nothing, it seemed reasonable to him they should pay nothing.

And what they leave the beast of the field shall eat.] This signifies God sent such vast plenty, when they observed his laws, that so much sprung up of itself as would more than satisfy men, and afford food to the beast.

In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard and olive-yard.] Under these two are comprehended all other sorts of fruit trees, as the Hebrews themselves acknowledge, who give several reasons for this law. Which was ordained, saith Maimonides, (par. iii. More Nevoch. cap. 39.) in compassion to all men in general, that they might have some time of breathing and refreshment. But principally, say others of them, to be a memorial of the creation of the world, and the production of all things by the power of God in six days, and his resting on the seventh. Their exposing all things in common which that year produced, as well as letting the land rest, "put them in remembrance (saith R. Levi of Barcelona, Præcept. lxix.) that God was their preserver as well as creator: the earth bringing forth fruit every year, not by its own proper strength, or of its own accord, but because it hath a Lord upon whom it depends; who, where he pleases, hath a right to dispose of its fruit to a public use." This command also bred in them a trust in God and in his providence; and was a curb to covetousness, and taught them mercy also and liberality. Philo adds, that this was a politic contrivance to let the earth rest; partly that it might have time to recruit its strength, that it might bring forth more plentifully; and partly that the people might grow stronger, and more apt for all employments, by so long forbearance of their labours. This Eusebius thought worthy to transcribe out of him at large, in his Præpar. Evang. lib. viii. cap. 9.

But this precept about the year of rest is more fully delivered in Levit. xxv. 2, 3, &c. where see what I have noted.

Ver. 12. *Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest.*] He would not have them imagine they should rest less on the sabbath this year than in others, because this whole year was a kind of sabbath; but keep it with the usual strictness. Which is the reason, perhaps, of the repetition of this precept in this place.

That thine ox and thine ass may rest, &c.] This shews that one great end of instituting the observation of this day at Marah (xv. 25. xvi. 23.) was, that men and beasts might rest, in remembrance of the rest that God had given them from their burdens in Egypt. (See xxxv. 2.) R. Levi Barzelonita observes, that this precept is repeated in the law twelve times.

Ver. 13. *In all things that I have said unto you, be circumspect.*] Be cautious, lest you offend in any of the forenamed particulars; but especially in that which follows.

And make no mention of the names of other gods.] Such cautions as these, to prevent idolatry, are repeated no less than forty-four times in the law, as the same R. Levi observes. And the meaning of this is, either that they should not swear by other gods, or make any vows in their names; nor consequently enter into society with gentiles, as the best of the Hebrew writers understand it, and as the Vulgar Latin takes it, or that they should not so much as simply name the gods of other nations. They who are of this last opinion differ in their explication of it. For some of them say, only the calling them by such names as attribute some divinity to them, is the thing forbidden; not calling them by their proper names of Moloch or Bell, or the like: and thus Tertullian understood it. But there are others who think it unlawful so much as to use any of their names in common discourse; though there be no mention of their divinity. For Chemosh and Milcom, and such-like names, they say, are not mentioned in Scripture but with detestation and reproach (as the abomination of the Moabites or Ammonites), and therefore they think it unlawful to say, *I invite thee on the feast-day of such an idol of the gentiles,* or the like. Yet some of those who imagine the simple use of their names to be forbidden, except the names of those mentioned in Scripture. So Maimonides; the names of the idols of the gentiles which are mentioned in Scripture it is lawful for us to name; as Peor, Bell, Nebo, Baal, &c. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 13. p. 269, &c.) They say this precept binds men and women in all places, and at all times; and the punishment for its violation was beating.

Neither shall it be heard out of thy mouth.] *i. e.* With any respect or reverence to them: otherwise, the simple pronunciation of the name was not unlawful.

The sabbath being instituted partly to preserve them from idolatry, some think the reason why this precept is joined to that.

Ver. 14. *Three times shalt thou keep a feast unto me in the year.*] *viz.* At the Passover, Pentecost, and when they gathered all the fruits of the earth, and dwelt in tabernacles; as it follows in the next verses. The first of which was plainly instituted, in memory of their coming out of Egypt. The second, some think, was in memory of their coming into Canaan, (rather of the overthrow of Pharaoh in the sea, and giving the law on Mount Sinai.) And the third, in memory of their dwelling so long in the wilderness, and of the wonders which God did there; as Maimonides observes in his More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 43. At these three great solemnities three things were to be done: first, they were to make a feast: secondly, to appear before God in the court of the temple: and, thirdly, to rejoice. Besides which, they were to bring certain offerings unto God.

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread,* &c.] See xii. 17, &c. xiii. 6, 7.

In the time appointed of the month Abib.] Or in the *month of new ears of corn.* (See xiii. 4.) For many learned men (particularly Huetius) think this word *Abib* not to be a proper name, but an *appellative* (as they speak), the proper

names of months being not yet used among the Hebrews: who spake of them before the captivity of Babylon, according to the order and number wherein they stood, *viz.* first, second, third, &c. month. (See Demonstr. Evang. prop. iv. Cap. de Libro Joshua, n. 2.)

And none shall appear before me empty.] The phrase in the Hebrew (which we translate *appear before me)* is very remarkable, *viz. None shall see my face:* which does not signify that they beheld the external symbol of his presence; but that they looked directly that way where it was; and that they should not be accepted by God, unless they brought some present with them. For none approached to an earthly majesty in those countries without a present (as we read in the sacred story), which was a token of love and affection, as well as of respect and honour. And therefore this precept did not belong only to this feast, but to all the three mentioned in the verse before, as appears from Deut. xvi. 16. And accordingly there were special oblations ordained by the law itself, which were then to be made. At the Passover, when their harvest began, they were to bring *a sheaf of the first-fruits of their harvest,* and might not eat any corn till this was done, (Lev. xxiii. 10. 14.) At the next feast they brought *two wave loaves,* for a second first-fruit, of their wheat harvest; (Lev. xxiii. 17.) and at the feast of tabernacles, they offered the first-fruits of wine and oil. (See Mr. Mede, Discourse xlvi. p. 355.) Besides all which, good men brought free-will offerings; which are often mentioned in the law.

Ver. 16. *And the feast of harvest.*] Called also the *feast of weeks,* (xxxiv. 22.) because it was seven weeks after the Passover. Mr. Mede, in the place now named, thinks this was called the *harvest-feast;* because, as harvest began at the Passover, so it ended at Pentecost. And thus Bochart also: "At the Passover they first put the sickle into the corn; and about Pentecost harvest was finished, and all brought into the barn," (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. iii. cap. 13.) But this seems not to be true; for now only the first-fruits were brought: which were not offered in the end, but in the beginning of harvest. And so it follows here.

The first-fruits of thy labours which thou hast sown in the field.] Which is not to be understood of all their labours, but of those fruits which were first sown in the ground. It being therefore called the *harvest-feast,* because the principal part of harvest, *viz. the wheat-harvest,* (as it is expressly called, xxxiv. 22.) then began: which sort of grain was sown before barley, as that was before flax; and therefore here called *the first-fruits of their labour sown in the field.*

And the feast of in-gathering.] Called also the *feast of tabernacles,* Lev. xxiii. 34.

Which is in the end of the year.] By this it appears that their year anciently began in the month Tisri, about autumn; at which time the world itself began, as Scaliger, and a great many other learned men assert, with such reasons as are not easy to be confuted.

When thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.] At this feast their harvest was completed; the fruits of the earth being not only ripe, but gathered into their barns. Which was the foundation of the great rejoicing we read of at this time; because God now gave them some rest and respiration, as Maimonides speaks, from their employments, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 43.) where he observes that Aristotle himself, in his eighth book of Ethics, mentions such a feast among the gentiles, and upon the same ground, in these words, as he recites them: "Anciently, sacrifices and public assemblies for the sake of sacrifices, were in the gathering of the fruits and products of the earth: as if the sacrifices were offered for their respiration." The Israelites dwelt in booths at this feast for another reason: and their dwelling in booths was now most tolerable (as the same Maimonides there notes), because the weather was moderate at that time; when they were not wont to be troubled either with heat or with rain.

Ver. 17. *Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord God.*] This verse more fully explains what was said ver. 14. by shewing where they should keep these feasts, *viz.* before the Lord; *i. e.* in the place where his most glorious majesty should settle; which was first in the tabernacle, and afterward in the temple: and then who should appear before him there, *viz.* all the males. Others were not bound to it; though some religious people carried their whole families with them, as appears by Elkanah, (1 Sam. i.) This command is repeated, (xxxiv. 23.) and the true reason of it seems to have been this: that while they dwelt in the wilderness they ate no meat at all at their private tables, but what had been first offered up to God at the tabernacle, (Lev. xvii. 4, 5.) Which precept was dispensed withal when they came into the land of Canaan, and dwelt, many of them, so remote from the tabernacle, that they could not come up every day to sacrifice, (Deut. xii. 21.) Instead of which therefore there were these three constant and set times appointed in the year: in which every male was bound to come up, and see God at his tabernacle, and there eat and drink before him. Whence the sacrifice which was then offered, was wont to be called *a sacrifice of seeing,* as Dr. Cudworth hath observed in his little treatise of the Right Notion of the Lord's Supper. But as the doctors interpret it, they were not bound to bring their males to appear before the Lord till they were able to walk, in their father's hand, up from Jerusalem to the temple.

Ver. 18. *Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice.*] That is, the paschal lamb, as Jonathan in express words interprets; and as it appears from xxxiv. 25. That the Passover was a sacrifice, I observed before, xii. 27.

With leavened bread.] There being three great solemn feasts appointed in the foregoing verses, (ver. 14. 17.) in this and the following he prescribes some rules how they were to be observed. And here, in this verse, ordains two things relating to the Passover: that it should not be *eaten with leavened bread;* nor any of the *fat of it remain until the morning.* Both which were ordained before, (xii. 10. 14, 15.) in its first institution: and here repeated, upon its being mentioned again with the other feasts.

It may be fit for me here to observe, that to move the Israelites to keep this Passover with the greater care, God calls it both here and in xxxiv. 25. after a peculiar manner, *my sacrifice* and *my feast* (as the latter part of this verse may be translated), being a feast of a most solemn nature; and a sacrifice then offered of singular use. For which reason he requires them, as not to offer it with leaven (which was at that time forbidden for special reasons), so

not to reserve the fat of the offering till the next day: for that was not for the honour of the sacrifice; flesh being apt quickly to corrupt in those hot countries, and to offend the palate, or the nose, which had been against the dignity of the sacrifice. Which is the reason the Jews give why the flesh of the peace-offerings was not to be kept till the third day, (Lev. xix. 6.) It was to preserve *the magnificence of the sacrifice;* things kept so long being apt to stink. Whence ἔωλα, *yesterday's meats,* in Hippocrates, is the same with σαπρὰ, *corrupt:* and Galen expounds ἐωλίζειν by the word προσηπεῖν, *to tend to corruption;* as Pet. Castellanus observes, (lib. i. de Esu Carnium, cap. 5. p. 42.)

Ver. 19. *The first of the first-fruits of thy land, thou shalt bring unto the house of the Lord thy God.*] This precept hath a respect to the next feast, that of Pentecost. And therefore, though there were several *first-fruits,* which were all to be offered in their time (which were of seven things, barley, wheat, figs, pomegranates, olives, dates, and grapes), yet here are meant only the two *loaves* or *cakes* made of their new wheat, which were to be offered at this feast, (Lev. xxiii. 17.) for till this was done they might not make use of their corn. (See more concerning this matter on Lev. xxiii. 10.) R. Levi of Barcelona, and others, rightly observe that this was brought as an acknowledgment unto God, that he was the giver of all good things.

Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk.] This precept hath a particular respect to the third feast, that of the *in-gathering of the fruits of the earth, in the end of the year,* mentioned ver. 16. And the Jews commonly take it to be a prohibition against eating a kid so boiled, or tasting of the milk: taking it to be a precept against cruelty. But here is not a word about *eating,* either of the kid or the milk; but only about *boiling.* The famous Bochartus mentions three other interpretations, but confutes them all: and taking the words simply, as we translate them, supposes there was some such custom as this among the gentiles, which Moses would not have them imitate. And so doth Maimonides, in his More Nevoch. (par. iii. cap. 48.) where he takes this, indeed, for a command not to eat flesh with such milk; but saith, that, besides it was very gross nourishment, &c. it seems to him it was prohibited, because it smelt of idolatry; the gentiles doing so in their worship, upon some of their feasts. He could not find indeed, as he confesses, any such rite in the books of the Zabii: but yet he was confirmed in this opinion, by the law constantly mentioning this only when it speaks of their feasts; for there are other places where we meet with it, xxxiv. 26. Deut. xvi. 21. in both which he speaks, as he doth here, of their three great feasts. At the last of which, Abarbinel expressly affirms, the ancient idolaters were wont, when they gathered the fruits of the earth, to seethe a kid in its mother's milk, that their gods might be the more propitious to them. But as he names no author for his opinion, so he doth not explain the manner of it. Our most learned Dr. Cudworth was the first person who happily found this in a Karaite writer; who saith, "All the trees, and fields, and gardens, were sprinkled with this broth (of a kid seethed in its mother's milk), after a magical manner, to make them more fruitful in the following year." This Bochart also takes to be the truest interpretation, and quotes the forenamed doctor for it, not having seen the author himself: (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 52.) See Right Notion of the Lord's Supper, p. 25.

To which may be added, that a goat was anciently used in magical rites; and that demons were wont to appear in that form. But it must be noted withal, that in every one of the three places where this precept is mentioned, the LXX. translate the word we render *kid,* by ἄρνα, *a lamb;* though every where else they translate it ἔριφον. And I make no question, but we are to understand here either a lamb or kid boiled in its mother's milk; and the Hebrews say, any other clean creature. Concerning which I shall add no more, but that nothing could be more contrary to nature (and therefore agreeable to the institutions of the devil) than to boil any young creature in the milk of its mother, from whom it came. Which they first offered to their gods, and then ate some of it themselves, and the rest they sprinkled as beforesaid. Some relics of which custom we find even among the Romans themselves, who propitiated Sylvanus, with offering him milk, and Faunus with a kid: and every one knows both these were used in the worship of Bacchus.

Ver. 20. *Behold, I send an angel before thee.*] In the twenty-third verse he calls him *mine angel:* by which the Jews commonly understand Michael; there being but a very little difference between Malachi (which signifies *my angel*) and Michael. But a great many Christians think this was not a created angel, but an increated, *viz.* the eternal Son of God; who, they suppose, appeared to Moses in the bush, and conducted them all along to Mount Sinai. Which I am afraid to assert, because it seems dangerous to me (as I observed upon Gen. xlvii. 16.) to call him simply an *angel, i. e.* a minister, or messenger, without any such addition as that in Mal. iii. 3. *The angel of the covenant.* For so he was at his incarnation, of which he there speaks: before which I dare not ascribe to him such ministerial works as these, of bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt, and going before them to lead them the way to Canaan. This was properly the work of an angel, to whom Moses attributes it, when he orders his ambassadors to say to the king of Edom, (Numb. xx. 16.) "When we cried unto the Lord he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt," &c. But this angel was a prime minister in the heavenly host, by whom he was accompanied. So he saith to Joshua, (ver. 14.) "I am come as captain of the host of the Lord:" which is the title of Michael in Dan. x. 13. 21. But though we thus understand it here, this doth not exclude the presence of God himself, but rather proves it: for this angel and his host were sent from the Schechinah, who was in the *pillar of cloud:* which was moved by this angel, and conducted them through the wilderness. (See iii. 2.)

To keep thee in the way, &c.] To preserve and protect them, as well as to direct and guide them, till they came to Canaan: which was the place God had prepared for them.

Ver. 21. *Beware of him.*] Or observe him.

Obey his voice.] Because he did but report what God himself commanded; who was there present with them, as long as they obeyed him.

Provoke him not.] By any disobedience.

For he will not pardon your transgressions.] But punish you, when you contumaciously offend me.

For my name is in him.] He acts by my authority and

power, and sustains my person, who am present where he is. For the *name of God* is said to be there, where he is present after a singular and extraordinary manner, (1 Kings viii. 16. 1 Chron. vi. 5, 6.) Maimonides expounds it, *My word is in him, i. e.* saith he, God's will and pleasure was declared by the angel, (par. i. More Nevoch. cap. 64.) In which he seems to follow the Chaldee, who translates it, *for his word is in my name; i. e.* what he speaks is by my authority.

Ver. 22. *But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak.*] By this it appears that the words of the angel were the words of God; who spake by him: and both are to be understood to be present. (See Gen. xxii. 11. 15.)

Then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, &c.] God and the angel seem to me to be so distinguished in this verse, that we should not look upon the angel as God, but as his minister.

Ver. 23. *For my angel shall go before thee.*] The word Malachi *(my angel)* consisting of the very same letters with Michael, the author of Baal Hatturim takes it, as if he had said, *Michael, my proper or peculiar angel,* &c.

And bring thee unto the Amorites.] Who were the principal people in the land of Canaan; and had made themselves masters of the first country which Joshua conquered. (See Gen. x. 16.)

And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, &c.] Concerning these, and the other people here mentioned, see Gen. x. 16, 17. xv. 19, &c. The reader cannot but observe that here are only six nations mentioned, whereas there were seven in all, whom God delivered up into their hands; (Josh. iii. 10.) yet in another place, where he commands them all to be utterly destroyed, Moses mentions but six, as he doth here, (Deut. xx. 17.) For, as some have conjectured, the Girgashites, who are here omitted, had been subdued by the Amorites, and were mixed with them; who were the most powerful of all the seven nations, and had spread themselves into many parts of the country; as appears from Gen. xiv. 13. Numb. xiii. 29. Deut. i. 7. 19. 44.

Ver. 24. *Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them.*] This is a caution against the idolatry of the people of Canaan: into whose country, when he had brought them, he charges them to be so far from doing any honour to their gods, either outwardly by *bowing down* to them, or inwardly *by serving them; i. e.* as some of the Hebrews interpret it, praying to them, or giving thanks, &c. (Selden, lib. iii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 3.) that he commands them to break them down and utterly destroy them.

Nor do after their works.] These words are so large, that they may comprehend all the abominable things which were done by the seven nations (mentioned in Lev. xviii. and other places); but here the matter seems to restrain them to their worship, which he would not have them imitate, by building temples or altars in honour of their gods, or offering such sacrifices as they did, or observing any of their religious rites.

But thou shalt utterly overthrow them.] This relates to the people of the land; as it is explained in Deut. xx. 17.

And quite break down their images.] For they were bound entirely to root idolatry out of the land of Canaan: though in other countries which they might conquer they did not think themselves bound to break their images, as Selden observes, (lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 2.)

Ver. 25. *And ye shall serve the Lord your God.*] Worship him, as he directs, and no other being. I observed before, that none were so senseless as to imagine a figure of any thing made of wood or stone, &c. to be the Creator of heaven and earth: but they worshipped them (as Maimonides well observes) as things intermediate between the Most High and them; which is here forbidden, (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 36.)

And he shall bless thy bread and thy water, and I will take sickness away from thee.] This is a promise that he would abundantly supply them with meat and drink, and also give them health; without which they could take no comfort in that plentiful provision.

Ver. 26. *There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren in thy land.*] Abortion and barrenness hinder all propagation, both in men and beasts; and therefore, to the two foregoing blessings, of plenty and health, he adds two more in this place: a numerous increase of their cattle and of their own progeny; together with long life in the land which he gave them.

The number of thy days I will fulfil.] Thou shalt come to a good old age, such as healthful men (who are not cut off by any accident) are wont to attain. Procopius Gazæus gathers from hence, that there is not a fixed term set for every man's life. But it rather seems to suppose that there is a term fixed, beyond which men cannot ordinarily go (to some a longer, to some a shorter, according to their several constitutions), but may come short of it, by various accidents, and by their own ill usage of themselves, or by the judgment of God: who also, in regard to their obedience, prolongs the life of some men beyond what it would naturally reach.

Ver. 27. *I will send my fear before thee.*] Strike a terror into the inhabitants of Canaan before thou comest thither, which shall facilitate the conquest of them. (See Josh. ii. 9, 10.) With which agrees the story that is told in the Gemara Hierosol. ad Tit. Shebiith (by R. Samuel ben Nachman), that upon Joshua's denouncing war against the seven nations, the Girgashites fled into Africa. Which may be true, perhaps, of a part of them, but not of them all; for some of them were remaining, it appears from the book of Joshua, iii. 10. xxiv. 11. This is confirmed by another story in the Talmud, of the Africans suing to Alexander the Great to be restored to their ancient possessions in Canaan (which I mentioned before), and the old inscription in Procopius (lib. ii. de Rebus Vandal) not far from Tangier, which said the ancient inhabitants of that country fled from the face of Joshua, the son of Nun. (Selden, lib. vi. de Jure N. et Gent. cap. 13. p. 736.)

And I will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come.] Make them more afraid when they come to fight; so that presently they shall run away and be easily slain: for that is the meaning of the last words, *I will make all thine enemies turn their backs to thee.*

Ver. 28. *And I will send hornets before thee.*] Either before they came thither, or when they marched against the people of that country. Both seem to be true: that many of them were forced to quit their country, when it was infested by the hornets God sent in great swarms among them; and that they who remained, when they came to fight,

were assaulted by these hornets, which flew in their faces, and so sorely pricked their eyes (as Kimchi and R. Solomon take it) that they could not see to strike a stroke. Whence those words of Joshua, (who expressly saith this was fulfilled, xxiv. 12.) that the Amorites were not driven out by the sword and bow of the Israelites, but by the sting of these hornets. Which seem also to have pursued them when they fled away, and killed them in their lurking holes, where they hid themselves after the fight, (Deut. vii. 20.)

Which shall drive out.] That several nations have been driven out of their country, by contemptible creatures, such as frogs, mice, snakes, and gnats, is made good by Bochartus out of several authors. And he hath particularly shewn, that by these very creatures, wasps and bees, people have been forced to forsake their country, as Herodotus, Appianus, and Strabo testify: (see his Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 13. p. 539, &c.) where he shews the sting of this sort of wasp (called a hornet) is of all other the most pernicious: for it is bigger than the ordinary wasp, and fiercer; seldom stinging, as Pliny saith, without putting men into a fever. (Ib. p. 543.) And of their flying at men's eyes, see what he alleges out of good authors, p. 535.

The Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before thee.] These three nations, it seems, were principally infested by the hornets; among whom, perhaps, they were more venomous than elsewhere (for so R. Solomon saith, their poison was deadly), though the rest of the nations also felt their sting, as we read in Josh. xxiv. 11, 12.

Ver. 29. *I will not drive them out from before thee in one year.*] All the reasons of which are not here declared, (as they are elsewhere, Judg. iii. 1—3.) because he would not dishearten them.

Lest the land become desolate, &c.] *i. e.* Lest some part of the land should be left without inhabitants, and so be possessed by wild beasts: which might have been very dangerous to the Israelites in other parts where they were settled. For if all the people of the seven nations had been destroyed at once, the Israelites were not yet numerous enough to people the whole country; especially, when two tribes and a half were settled on the other side of Jordan.

Ver. 30. *By little and little I will drive them out before thee.*] Diminish them, by degrees, till they were wholly expelled.

Until thou be increased and inherit the land.] Until the Israelites were grown so numerous, that they were able to stock the whole country.

Ver. 31. *And I will set thy bounds,* &c.] This was the utmost extent of the country which he intended to bestow upon them, (see Gen. xv. 18.) but they did not enjoy it till the times of David, (2 Sam. viii. 1. 3, &c.) and Solomon, (1 Kings iv. 21. 24.) when their dominion seems to have been enlarged not only to Euphrates, but even beyond it, Ezra iv. 16. 20. (see my paraphrase upon Psal. lxxii. 8.) Before these times, it appears by the book of Joshua, and those that follow, that many of the old inhabitants remained long after his death.

From the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines.] These were the bounds from east to west. For though the Red Sea was towards the south, yet the farthermost part of it lay east. And the *sea of the Philistines* is that now called the Mediterranean, which was full west.

And from the desert.] Of Arabia, called Shur, (xv. 22.)

Unto the river.] *i. e.* To Euphrates: which made the southern and northern bounds of the country God promised to them.

For I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into thy hand.] This seems to relate to that land which the seven nations inhabited: for as far as Euphrates they never drove out all the inhabitants, but only made them tributaries.

And thou shalt drive them out before thee.] In such manner as is mentioned in the foregoing verses.

Ver. 32. *Thou shalt make no covenant with them.*] *i. e.* With the people of the seven nations. But with other gentiles they might make covenants: only not suffer them to live in their land, unless they renounced all idolatry. Nay, Maimonides is of opinion, that such of the seven nations as renounced idolatry, were to be received into their friendship: for that law in Deut. xx. which requires them to send a summons to every city before they besieged it, with an offer of peace, he extends even to them; and grounds his opinion upon Josh. xi. 19, 20. As for that objection which seems to lie against this, about the Gibeonites, who needed not by craft to have obtained a league with the Israelites, if this were true doctrine: his answer is, that Joshua had sent a summons, with offers of peace to them and all the rest, which they rejected; but would afterward have gladly accepted, and then it was not to be admitted: and therefore they contrived that cunning way to be received into friendship with the Israelites. See P. Cunæus, lib. ii. de Republ. Hebr. cap. 20. And Selden, lib. vi. de Jure N. et G. cap. 13. where he quotes a passage out of the Jerusalem Gemara, which says, that Joshua sent three letters to the Gibeonites. But he shews withal, that other Jews contradict this; and expressly declare the seven nations were not to be invited to peace. What the terms were on which others were invited, see there, cap. 14.

All this considered, I am inclined to think Maimonides's opinion to be true; which that place in Joshua very much favours; and so doth the story of Rahab, and the practice of Solomon; who only put the remainders of these nations under tribute, (1 Kings ix. 20, 21.)

Nor with their gods.] This prohibits them to suffer any of the seven nations to exercise idolatry among them, as R. Levi of Barcelona interprets it. Or rather, he forbids them to make any vows to their gods, or oblige themselves to perform any act of worship to them.

Ver. 32. *They shall not dwell in thy land.*] If a gentile did renounce his idolatry he might dwell among them; and was called a stranger, *toshab,* dwelling, or inhabiting. But if he did not forsake it, they might not sell him a foot of land, nor let him hire a house among them: only he might come and sell commodities to them, as the same R. Levi expounds it. But Maimonides says, they might not so much as suffer them to pass through their country, when they had power to hinder it; which others think too rigid an opinion, as Mr. Selden shews, (lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 3. p. 155, &c.)

Lest they make thee sin against me.] All society with idolaters was forbidden, lest they should infect the Israelites with their infidelity (as the same R. Levi speaks), of which there was the greater danger, because they were too prone to follow the gentile customs.

For if thou serve their gods.] This caution, being re-

peated three times in this chapter, ought to have been the more diligently observed by the Jews, and made them more fearful of entering into familiarity with idolaters. Who were of various sorts; for not only every nation had its proper and peculiar gods, but every city, town, house, nay, every man made themselves gods according to their fancy.

It will surely be a snare unto thee.] Bring great calamities upon thee, and at last be thy ruin; as it is explained Josh. xxiii. 13. Judg. ii. 3. For instead of driving out the seven nations, they brought Israel under their yoke, and grievously oppressed them; as we read in the story of the Judges, particularly in the fourth chapter.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND he said unto Moses.*] When God had delivered the foregoing law unto Moses in the mount, where he was with him (xx. 21.) after he had spoken the ten commandments, he bade him go down (as we read here he did, ver. 3.) and set them before the people, (xxi. 1.) And when he had engaged them in a covenant to observe these laws (ver. 7. of this chapter), then to come up to him again; and bring Aaron, and the rest that are here mentioned, with him.

Come up.] To receive further orders from the Divine Majesty; together with the two tables of stone.

Unto the Lord.] To the mount, where the glory of the Lord appeared; and from whence he had spoken the ten words.

Thou, and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, &c.] But not all to the same nearness unto the Divine Majesty, as appears by the following verse.

And seventy of the elders of Israel.] This seems to intimate, that there were more than seventy called elders: but these were the chief, being perhaps the heads of those families which came into Egypt, which were just *seventy.* (See xviii. 12.) For he doth not direct Moses how to choose them, (as Corn. Bertram observes, lib. de Repub. Jud. cap. 5.) but speaks as if they were well known, and distinguished from other persons, by the rank they held among them. And therefore called (ver. 11.) *the nobles,* or, as the Latin speaks, *Magnates, seu optimates, the great men, of the best quality in Israel.* The reason of their being thus called up to God was, to be witnesses of Moses's ascending up to the place where the Divine Majesty appeared; and that they also might have some sight of it, (ver. 10.)

And worship ye afar off.] All of them, before they came to the mount, were, at a good distance from it, to fall down prostrate before God, that they might be possessed with such a holy reverence to him, as not to presume to approach nearer than they were ordered.

Ver. 2. *And Moses alone shall come near the Lord.*] Unto the very top of the mount, where the glory of the Lord abode, (ver. 16—18.) unto which none was admitted but himself. Who now came nearer than he had done before, (xx. 21.) for he went into the *midst of the cloud,* (ver. 18.)

But they shall not come nigh.] Unto that part of the mount whither he went; but keep in a lower station.

Neither shall the people go up with him.] But stay at the bottom of the mount, (as they did before the giving the ten commandments, xix. 17.) below the place where the elders were. So I think Maimonides rightly understands this place, in his More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 32. where, speaking of the several degrees of prophecy, or familiarity with God, he observes that Moses was here placed in the supreme degree (he alone being allowed to *come near the Lord);* below him was Aaron placed; and below him Nadab and Abihu; and below them the seventy elders; and beneath them the rest of the people. Which is the meaning of that saying of their wise men, "Moses is a wall by himself, and Aaron a wall by himself:" that is, they were in separate apartments at this glorious appearance of God.

Ver. 3. *And Moses came.*] From the mount, where he had received the precepts mentioned in the three foregoing chapters.

And told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments.] Some understand here by the *words of the Lord,* the ten commandments, called the *ten words,* (xxxviii. 18.) But these words the people heard spoken by God himself, and not by the report of Moses. Therefore I take these words to signify rather what he had spoken in the latter part of the foregoing chapter, from the twentieth verse to the end. And then by *all the judgments,* he means those laws which he had received for their good government in the twenty-first, twenty-second, and the former part of the twenty-third chapters.

And all the people answered with one voice, and said.] In all likelihood Moses had told the elders what God had said to him; and they went and told it to the people, who gave the following answer to them. For thus it was before, (xix. 6, 7.)

All the words that the Lord hath said will we do.] They had consented before in *general,* to do whatsoever God required of them, having owned him for their King and Governor; (xix. 6—8.) but now they consent in *particular,* after God had declared what he would have them do (in the twentieth chapter), and Moses had also reported the rest of the judgments delivered in the twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third chapters.

Ver. 4.] *And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord.*] Both the ten commandments, and all the rest of the judgments delivered in the foregoing chapters. God, indeed, wrote the ten commandments himself: but for the present Moses made a record of them, that the people might not only hear, but read what they had to do.

And rose up early in the morning.] The next morning, it is likely, after he had received those judgments, and delivered them to the people, and wrote them in a book; which was upon the seventh day of Sivan, as I observed, xx. 21. that is, on the sixth of our June, as Jac. Capellus reckons. Therefore on the eighth of Sivan he built the altar, &c. as it here follows.

And builded an altar under the hill.] At the foot of the hill where the people were allowed to stand. This altar was to represent God, to whom sacrifices were offered upon it.

And twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.] This was to represent all the people. The gentiles abusing such pillars to idolatrous uses, the erecting of them is afterward forbidden in the law. But before the building of the tabernacle, Moses here erects them, as

Jacob had piously done in former times, (Gen. xxxv. 14.) See Selden, lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 6. p. 185.

Ver. 5. *And he sent young men of the children of Israel.*] These are said by the Hebrews to be the *first-born*, as Onkelos here expressly translates it, *He sent the first-born:* and the paraphrase ascribed to Uzielides follows him; adding this reason, *because the Aaronical priests were not yet consecrated.* The Arabic and Persian versions say the same, as Mr. Selden hath observed, (lib. i. de Succession. ad Pontif. cap. 1.) and most interpreters have been of the same mind. But I have often observed before (particularly xix. 22.) that I can see no proof of this, that they only officiated as priests: every man anciently, in his own family, having a right to offer sacrifice, till the law of Moses restrained it to the family of Aaron. Therefore I take these *young men* to have been the choicest persons among them, whether *first-born* or others, who had been appointed to minister unto God. For Joshua, who is called here (ver. 13.) *Moses's minister*, is, in Numb. xi. 28. called *his young man.* Such were fittest for all service; especially for that of sacrificing to God. For which they anciently chose the strongest and properest persons, as we see in the Greek story of Jason, (which our learned Dr. Spencer observes, p. 140.) whose sacrifices were led to the altar by the young men of his company, *i. e.* men of greatest strength and beauty, (lib. i. Argonaut.) And this so far remained, after the priesthood was confined to the family of Aaron, that no man was permitted to officiate at the altar after he was fifty years of age; that is, when he was past his best (as we speak), the flower and strength of his age, (Numb. viii. 25.) Fortunatus Scacchus conjectures that there were twelve of these young men, one of each tribe, who offered in the name of their brethren, (Myrothec. Sacr. Elæochr. par. ii. cap. 59.)

Which offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord.] Though *oxen* are only mentioned, yet there were other creatures sacrificed, as appears from Hebr. xi. 19, 20. And in following times, *peace-offerings* might be either of calves, or lambs, or goats, as we find in Lev. iii. and so might *burnt-offerings* also; (see Lev. i. 2. 10.) Our learned primate Usher thinks also there were *expiatory* sacrifices offered, together with these *burnt-offerings* and *peace-offerings*, and that in the first place; (ad A. M. 2513. mens. 3.)

Ver. 6. *And Moses took half the blood, and put it in basons.*] It may be a question, whether he speaks of the blood of all the sacrifices, or only of the *expiatory* (if there were any), or of the *burnt-offerings*, or *peace-offerings*. But which way soever that be determined, this half of the blood, it is certain, was reserved to be sprinkled on the people, (ver. 8.)

Concerning the word *agganot*, which we translate *basons*, the learned reader may consult Bochartus, in his Hierozoic. par. i. p. 549.

And half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.] The altar representing God, (as was said before, ver. 4.) this blood sprinkled upon it, signified that he, for his part, engaged to be faithful in the covenant he now made with them, and they with him; by performing all the promises he had newly made them by Moses in the latter end of the foregoing chapter; especially those four great promises, of *plenty, health, numerous offspring*, and *long life*, (ver. 25, 26.) together with the driving out the people of Canaan from before them, (ver. 27, &c.)

Ver. 7. *And he took the book.*] Some have made it a difficulty to find what book this was; and have been pleased to fancy, that some book which Moses wrote is lost: when this plainly refers to what is said ver. 4. where we read that "Moses wrote all the words of the Lord," that is, the commandments and judgments mentioned in the four foregoing chapters. Which though they made no great volume, yet might be called a *book* in their language: for even the bill of divorcement, which they gave their wives (and was very short), is called by this name of *sepher*, a *book*, Dent. xxiv. 1.

Of the covenant.] That they might remember upon what terms he would bestow upon them the forenamed blessings, he engages them in a solemn covenant to observe the commandments and judgments contained in this book.

Ver. 8. *And Moses took the blood.*] That half of it which was in the basons, (ver. 6.)

And sprinkled it on the people.] As he had sprinkled one half on the altar, in token God was a party in the covenant; so he sprinkled the other half on the twelve pillars, which represented the children of Israel, in token that they were the other party engaged in the same covenant. Thus our forenamed primate, and several others understand it: and it carries some show of probability in it. Yet I cannot think it unlikely, that it was sprinkled upon the seventy elders, by whom the people consented; if not upon all the people who stood next to the altar, and are here expressly mentioned. The apostle to the Hebrews (ix. 19.) saith, he sprinkled *the book*, as well as *the people*, which is not here mentioned, but supposed. For when he went to sprinkle the blood, we must conceive he laid down the book, that he might be at more liberty for this other action; and perhaps he laid it on one of the pillars, where it was sprinkled, as they were, together with the people whom they represented.

And said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.] Look upon yourselves as obliged by this blood, to observe all the commands which I have delivered to you in the words you have heard. For there were two ways of making covenants anciently; both which were here used. The first was, after a sacrifice had been offered, to sprinkle the blood of it upon both parties who were to be confederates: which was done here, (ver. 6. 8.) And secondly, the confederates thereupon proceeded to eat together some part of the sacrifice; which follows, (ver. 11.) where we find the elders of Israel (who represented the people) did eat and drink in the presence of God.

Ver. 9. *Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel.*] These things being done, they went up into the mount as they were ordered, (ver. 1.) *i. e.* they went up to that part of the mount where Aaron, and his sons, and the elders, were appointed to come; but no further.

Ver. 10. *And they saw the God of Israel.*] When Moses is commanded to come near unto the Lord, (ver. 2.) Maimonides acknowledges it may be understood of his local approach to the place where the light or glory of God then appeared, (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 18.) And therefore it is something strange that he expounds the elders'

seeing God, of their apprehension of him by their understanding; and not rather of their beholding some glimpse of that visible majesty which was on the top of the mount. For that, I doubt not, is the meaning, as appears by what follows. And so the Chaldee expounds it, *They saw the glory of the God of Israel;* surrounded, we may well suppose, with a heavenly host of angels, attending upon the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, as it was also called.

And there was under his feet.] This hath made some conceive, that this visible glory appeared in the form of a man, with his back towards them, standing upon a shining pavement. But this is contrary to Deut. iv. 15. For though that be spoken of another time and place, *viz.* the giving of the law, which all the people heard, but saw no similitude; yet, if the elders had afterward seen a similitude, it would have spoiled Moses's argument, they being the representatives of the people. This glorious light, therefore, far surpassing all other, had no form, nor could be described by any art: and consequently, by its *feet* is meant only the lower part of it; which rested, as it were, upon a most glorious pavement. And thus the Divine Majesty is said to have had a *footstool* (which was the cover of the ark), though it had no human shape.

As it were a paved work of sapphire-stone.] The glorious majesty of God was represented as having under it a pavement suitable to itself, very bright and shining. For there is a sort of sapphire called χρυσοστιγὴς, *spotted with little points, or pricks of gold,* which shine like stars interspersed in the body of it. (See Salmasius in Solinum, p. 131. 203.) Such was this pavement, as we may gather from the following words.

And as it were the body of heaven in its clearness.] As clear as the purest and serenest sky, when it is all spangled with stars. All which signifies, as I take it, that the glory of the Lord appeared far above the glory of the sun, in its greatest brightness, upon a pavement sparkling like the stars in the heaven, when it is most clear. The LXX. instead of the words *saw the God of Israel,* have, *saw* τὸν τόπον *the place of the God of Israel.* As if they saw a throne, upon which there was a visible majesty, beyond all description. And if this be admitted, then this throne may well be said to have *feet,* standing upon such a glorious pavement. And so they translate it in the next verse, where this is repeated.

Ver. 11. *And upon the nobles of the children of Israel.*] *i. e.* The elders beforementioned, (ver. 1. 9.) called here *atzilim,* to signify that they were the prime and choicest persons among the Israelites. For *atzal* signifies to separate; and consequently *atzilim* imports men distinguished from others, either by their birth, office, or some excellent qualities.

He laid not his hand.] Did not hurt them. Whereas it was the common opinion, that they who saw God (though it was by one of his angels) should presently die. The splendour of that glorious light was so dazzling, that it was a singular favour it did not put out their eyes, as the light wherein St. Paul saw our Saviour did his. We are told, (ver. 17.) "The sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire." Which might put them in fear, perhaps, they had been scorched by it, when it flashed out upon them; but they found not the least hurt by it. Thus Jonathan saith in his paraphrase upon the thirty-second chapter, that when Moses delayed to come down from the mount the people fancied him to be burnt up by the fire, which shone from the presence of God, which there appeared.

This sight of God, which he vouchsafed to the elders, was in all likelihood to convince them that he was among them, and had spoken to them, and sent them the precepts beforementioned by the hand of Moses.

Also they saw God, and did eat and drink.] After they had seen God, they were so far from receiving any harm, that they feasted with him upon the relics of the peace-offerings, with great joy and gladness. Or we may suppose, that the glory of the Lord shone upon them, as they sat down to eat and drink, in token of their full consent to the covenant now made, (for so the custom was of making covenants, Gen. xxiv. 30. xxxi. 54.) and that notwithstanding they continued to finish their feast, not being dispirited (as good men were sometimes afterwards with glorious visions, Dan. x. 8. 16, 17.) but rather strengthened and made more vigorous.

The word for *saw* in this verse is different from that in the former; importing, I suppose, that this appearance of God to them lasted some time.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] He called to him, perhaps with an audible voice, from the place where they saw his glory; that they might know how familiar he was with God, and might more readily receive whatsoever commands he brought from him.

Come up to me into the mount.] To the top of the mount, where the glory of the Lord was, (ver. 17.) For hitherto Moses had gone no further than the rest; but was with them when they did eat and drink before the Lord.

And be there.] Stay with me there, (ver. 18.)

And I will give thee tables of stone.] Not only the Jews, but Epiphanius also, fancy these tables were made of sapphire, from what was said ver. 10. But the words signify plainly enough that they were of stone.

And a law and commandments which I have written.] From this place the Jews endeavour to establish their unwritten or oral law, *i. e.* their traditions; which, they say, were now delivered, together with the tables of stone. So Maimonides, in his preface to Jad Chazeka; "All the precepts which were given to Moses on Mount Sinai were given with their explications; according to what is said, *I will give thee tables of stone, and a law and commandments:* where by the *law* is meant the written law, and the *commandments* denote the explication of it, which we call the oral law." Thus he, and others of them, directly against the text itself, which saith expressly, both of the *law and the commandments* here mentioned, that they were *written.* (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 16.) Therefore, by *law* and *commandments,* we are to understand nothing else but *the law contained in the ten commandments.*

That thou mayest teach them.] Instruct the people to observe them as the most sacred of all other precepts; being written, as well as spoken, by God himself, who taught men by this example, how to preserve their laws. For Aristotle saith in his Problems, that in old time men being ignorant how to write, ᾖδον τοὺς νόμους, ἵνα μὴ ἐπιλάθωνται, *were wont to sing their laws, that they might not be forgotten.* It being the invention of the Corybantes, ἱστάναι λίθους (as Theopompus speaks), *to set up pillars,* and engrave their laws upon them. Which Solon at last wrote on wooden tables, called Ἄξονες and Κύρβεις, which were laid

up in the temple of the mother of the gods, (vid. Sam. Petitum Præfat. in Leg. Atticas.)

Ver. 13. *And Moses rose up.*] From among the elders; with whom he was before.

And his minister Joshua.] Who attended him further than the elders; but not into the place where he went. For God intending him to be Moses's successor, seems to admit him unto a nearer familiarity than any one else besides Moses.

And Moses went up into the mount of God.] The place where the Divine glory appeared. But Joshua stayed for him in some lower part of the mountain, expecting his return. For he did not go up to the top of the mount, as appears from the thirty-second chapter; where Moses's descent from thence being mentioned, Joshua is not named till it be said that Moses was come down from the mount, (ver. 15. 17.) He went with them therefore till he entered into the cloud, and then he stayed as it were at the door waiting for his return.

Ver. 14. *And he said unto the elders.*] Before he left them, he gave them this order.

Tarry ye here for us.] Not in the place where they had seen God, and did eat and drink with him; whither the people might not come: but rather in the camp, or some place near it, whither the people might upon occasion resort to them. Unto which place Moses seems to have walked with them from the mount, before he returned to go up into it; or, at least pointed them unto it with his finger, that they might there wait for him.

Until we come again to you.] He could not tell how long God would detain him; and therefore commands them to govern the people till his return to them.

And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you.] Who seem to have been of greatest authority next to himself; and were with him in the mount when the Israelites fought with Amalek, (chap. xvii.)

If any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them.] In all causes, which were too hard for the elders to determine, he directs them to go to Aaron and Hur, as they were wont to do to him. By this it appears, that these seventy elders were some of the judges appointed by the advice of Jethro, (xviii. 22.) which he continued to follow, and orders them to observe in his absence.

Ver. 15. *And Moses went up into the mount.*] Having said this, he and Joshua left them; and he went into the higher part of the mount.

And a cloud covered the mount.] That part of it where he was: so that the people, and Joshua also, lost the sight of him.

Ver. 16. *And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai.*] That visible majesty which shone in extraordinary splendour, was settled for the present upon the top of this mount.

And the cloud covered it.] *i. e.* Covered the glory of the Lord, not the mount, as Aben Ezra observes. For the cloud was not the glory of the Lord, but encompassed and covered it: so that for six days nothing but the cloud appeared to the Israelites: till on the seventh day the cloud was rent (as I take it) or opened; and the glory of the Lord appeared like flaming fire.

Six days.] Thus long it was hidden in a cloud, so that Moses himself could not see it, but remained wrapped up in darkness; which might have astonished him, if he had not been supported by the Divine power, and a comfortable sense of God, who had often appeared to him and conversed familiarly with him.

And the seventh day he called unto Moses.] The second time (for he had called to him before to come up to him, ver. 12.) commanding him to approach into his glorious presence.

Out of the midst of the cloud.] Where the Divine glory was, and now broke out and appeared, I suppose, unto Moses. Some think the seventh day might be the sabbath, upon which God chose to appear to him.

Ver. 17. *And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire, on the top of the mount, in the eyes of the children of Israel.*] It broke out of the cloud, after six days, so that the people saw it like flaming fire. To which the Psalmist seems to allude, (Psal. xcvii. 2, 3.) "Clouds and darkness are round about him, and fire goeth before him," &c. Thus the glory of the Lord is described in other places, as within a cloud, and sometimes breaking out of it, (Exod. xl. 35.) where the cloud is said to be upon the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord to fill it with; which (ver. 38.) is described like fire. (See also Numb. xvi. 42.) And thus, at its first appearing, there was a pillar of a cloud and of fire led them, (xiii. 21.) And it sometimes appearing in an amazing brightness, beyond that of the sun; and sometimes being wrapped up in as thick a cloud: God is likewise said both to *dwell in light* and in *thick darkness*, (1 Kings viii. 12.)

Ver. 18. *And Moses went into the midst of the cloud.*] From whence the Lord had called to him, (ver. 16.) Therefore he broke through the thick cloud into the very presence of God, which was in a secret part of the cloud, called the *midst of it*.

And gat him up into the mount.] To the top of it, where the glory of the Lord appeared to him in the midst of the cloud; the external parts of which and the fire only being seen by the people.

And Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.] That he might receive the two tables of stone, and the gift of prophecy (as Elmacinus, an Arabian Christian, adds), with directions for the making the tabernacle, and all things belonging to it, and the service to be performed there by the priest, apparelled according to Divine prescription, &c. which follow in the ensuing chapters: where Moses relates what orders God gave him about every thing relating to his Divine service. And it need not seem strange, as Clemens Alexandrinus excellently speaks, (lib. i. Stromat. p. 351.) that Moses received his laws from God; when the Greeks pretend the same of their Minos: only they say he went into Jupiter's cave, and was nine years there in learning the laws which he gave him; when Moses was but forty days in the mount, where God visibly appeared. They believed also that Lycurgus received his laws from Apollo; and Zaleucus (as Plato, Aristotle, and divers others whom he mentions, say) received his from Minerva. All this was firmly believed among them, who, in not acknowledging the divinity of Moses's ministration, were very ungrateful; for his was the *archetype*, as he speaks, or pattern, of what was pretended in their stories.

Forty days and forty nights.] It may be a question, whether the six days that he remained in the cloud, before the

Lord called him higher, be included in these forty days; or were only preparatory to his nearer access to God. They may well be both: for it is not said he was in the *midst of the cloud* forty days and forty nights; but that he was so long *in the mount*. Part of which time was spent in the dark cloud, and the rest in the bright presence of God, in the midst of the cloud: and in all that space he did neither eat nor drink, (xxxiv. 28. Deut. ix. 9.)

God could, if he had pleased, have revealed to him all his mind in a less time: but the method of the Divine wisdom is to do all things gradually. For instance, the substance of a child in the womb (saith the author of Schalsch. Hakkabalah) is not perfected in less time than forty weeks, in all which time it receives no meat nor drink (at the mouth we must understand him), and so many days did the Divine power work in Moses to form him into a new essence (as his words are), and give him a full comprehension of all that God communicated to him. And all this time he neither did eat nor drink; for these actions (says that Jew) prejudice the understanding; which God intended to exalt, by depressing the bodily faculties and powers: which for want of meat and drink were brought down very low, that the understanding might be raised and lifted up. And thus we find, in aftertimes, that Daniel chastened his body for three whole weeks together, the better to dispose him for heavenly vision, (x. 2, 3. 12.)

This ascent of Moses from the cloudy part of the mount to the fiery top of it was upon the fourteenth of Sivan: and we may suppose, as Jacobus Capellus doth, that the cloud accompanied him, as he went up, to defend him from the circumambient flame.

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses.*] Out of that glorious and flaming light where he appeared to him.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel.*] When he went down from the mount.

That they bring me.] In the Hebrew, *take for me*, out of their goods.

An offering.] The Hebrew word *terumah* (or, as some pronounce it, *trumah)* is commonly translated a *heave-offering*, or offering lifted up. Which the Chaldee translates, *that which is separated* from common use: and in the separation, perhaps, was lifted up towards heaven, in token that they desired God to accept it.

Of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering.] They were only to be moved to it, but not importuned; much less told what quantity they should give: but every man was left to his own good inclination. And accordingly Moses delivered the mind of God unto them, when he came down from the mount; and they made a free oblation, (xxxv. 5. 21. 29.) Besides which, there was also a tribute laid upon them for the ransom of their souls, (xxx. 12—14.) which amounted to a great sum of money, as we find in xxxviii. 24, &c.

Ver. 3. *And this is the offering which ye shall take of them.*] The things which ye shall accept as an offering to me.

Gold, and silver, and brass.] Unto what uses these were to be employed we are told afterwards.

Ver. 4. *And blue, and purple, and scarlet.*] Wool, or yarn, or stuff (or, as Abarbinel will have it, silk), of these colours. About which there is much dispute; but no translation hath better described them than our English. For *thecelet*, which we translate *blue*, and Abarbinel will have it to be a *sea-green*, is certainly a *sky-colour*. So Maimonides expresses it, the *colour of the firmament:* and Kimchi calls it *ultramarine*. This hath been demonstrated by Braunius, who shews how it was died, (lib. i. de Vest. Sacer. Hebr. cap. 13.)

Argaman, also, he hath demonstrated, (cap. 14.) signifies *purple*, as we translate it. For both Josephus and Philo say so; and he brings many proofs that they say true. And there being several sorts of purple, he shews this had in it the *brightest and most florid redness;* the manner of dying, which he also there demonstrates. See also Bochartus, concerning these two words *thecelet* and *argaman*, in his Hierozoic. (par. ii. lib. v. cap. 10, 11.)

Tholaat-shani we also rightly translate *scarlet*, as the same Braunius shews, (cap. 15. of the forenamed book.) And very probably makes the word *scarlet* signify as much as the *colour of Tyre:* for *Sar*, or *Sarra*, is *Tyre;* and *lacea* is a *red colour*.

Abarbinel most assuredly makes this to be the native colour of silk, without any die. (See Bochart. Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 27. p. 624.)

And fine linen.] The Hebrew word *schesch* signifies that pure linen called *byssus:* so the Chaldee calls it *butz*. Which was peculiar to Egypt, as some fancy, where their priests were clothed with it; and thence called *linigeri*. But Philostratus saith there was a *byssus* among the Indians with which the better sort of people were clothed. And Pausanias saith it grew in Elis, and in no other part of Greece. (See Salmasius, Plin. Exercit. p. 998. and what I have noted on Gen. xli. 42.)

And goats' hair.] In the Hebrew there is only the word *izim*, which signifies *goats:* but all interpreters, by a common ellipsis, understand it of their hair. And Jarchi saith it signifies the *flower* of goats' hair; or, as we speak, *the down;* the very softest part of it. And no other wool (as they call it) was accepted for the use of the sanctuary (if we may credit Abarbinel) but only this. For the wool of lambs and sheep was vile in comparison with this, which was precious in the eastern countries; where excellent cloth was made of it, not inferior to silk in softness and brightness; as the same Braunius observes, (lib. i. de Vestitu Sacer. Hebr. cap. 9.)

Ver. 5. *And rams' skins died red.*] Or, *red rams' skins;* for such there were in the eastern countries, which were naturally of that colour.

And badgers' skins.] The Hebrew word *thecasim*, which we translate *badgers* (following those who think *thacas* to be the same with the Latin word *tazus)*, the ancient interpreters take for *a colour*. And Bochartus hath at large endeavoured to prove that it signifies a kind of *violet* or *purple* colour. So that God commands them to offer *red and violet rams' skins*. (See Hierozoic. par. i. lib. iii. cap. 30.)

And shittim-wood.] Kimchi saith this was the best kind of cedar: but Aben Ezra takes it for the wood of a tree which grew in the wilderness, not far from Mount Sinai, in that place where the Israelites sometimes encamped. (Numb. xxv. 1.) called Shittim from this wood: unless the wood were so called from the place where it grew. And thus St. Jerome seems to have understood it. For he saith

upon Joel iii. that they were great trees, which were not to be found in the Roman countries, or in cultivated places; but in the desert of Arabia only: out of which very broad boards might be cut, exceeding strong, and of incredible smoothness and beauty. And upon Isa. xli. he calls it *lignum imputribile, an incorruptible wood* (as the LXX. also here translate it, ξύλα ἄσηπτα), very smooth, excelling all wood in firmness and brightness, &c. (See Menochius, lib. v. de Repub. Hebr. cap. 2.)

Ver. 6. *Oil for the light.*] For that lamp that was to burn continually in the sanctuary.

Spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense.] See xxx. 23, &c. and ver. 34, 35, &c.

Ver. 7. *Onyx-stones.*] Or sardonyxes. (See Gen. 11, 12.)

And stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breast-plate.] There were two *onyx-stones* to be set in the *ephod*, (xxviii. 9, 10, &c.) and the other stones (whose names are there mentioned, ver. 17, 18, &c.) were to be set in the *breast-plate*.

These five verses contain all the materials which were to be used about the sanctuary, and the garments of the priests who were to attend there. The only question is, How they got such things in the wilderness? Some think they brought them with them out of Egypt, as it is evident they did gold, silver, and jewels. And Abarbinel thinks they also trafficked with the neighbouring people while they remained here, of whom they bought oil, and spices, and shittim-wood, &c. which is probable enough, every thing being to be had for money, of which they brought good store from Egypt.

Ver. 8. *And let them make me a sanctuary.*] Now follow directions for the making a house for God, and every thing belonging to it. For so this place is sometimes called, God's *house*, or *habitation*, because there, as Abarbinel observes, the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, had its residence. And it is called a *sanctuary*, or holy place, because no uncircumcised or unclean person might enter into it. For under the name of *sanctuary* is comprehended, as the Jews rightly understand it, all the courts belonging to it, as well as the very house itself; with all the utensils, or sacred vessels, which are afterward prescribed for the service of it.

That I may dwell among them.] God resolving to manifest himself, as, in a peculiar manner, constantly present among them, was pleased to order a tent or tabernacle to be built for him; wherein, while they sojourned in tents in the wilderness, he dwelt among them in a visible manner, by the Schechinah, or *habitation of the Divinity*, which was fixed here; and was a special type of God's future dwelling in human nature. In short, this *sanctuary* was his *palace*, saith Moses Nachmanides, wherein he dwelt as their king. And accordingly, Schem Tob, upon Maimonides's More Nevoch. par iii. cap. 40. pertinently observes, that God ordered all manner of things belonging to a palace to be in this house; particularly, ministers that constantly attend on him; a table with daily provision; all manner of utensils, such as pots, spoons, forks, &c. a closet proper to himself alone; that the most vulgar understanding might conceive their king, the Lord of Hosts, continually resided there. And, indeed, the Hebrew word *mikdash*, which we render *sanctuary*, sometimes signifies a *palace*, (Ezek. xxviii. 18.) and so Kimchi interprets it upon Isa. viii. 14.

Among them.] In the Hebrew, *in the midst of them.* For the tabernacle, when it was erected, was placed in the midst of their camps, (Numb. ii. 17.) Which was the reason that all unclean persons were to be removed out of their camp, lest God, who dwelt in it, should be offended by the pollution, (Numb. v. 3.) And this is the reason why God is said to *walk among them*, (Lev. xxvi. 12. Deut. xxii. 14.) because he dwelt in that tent, which moved up and down, as they did while they dwelt in the wilderness.

Ver. 9. *According to all that I shew thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, so shalt thou make it.*] This signifies that God shewed him a *model* (as we now speak) of the house he was to make, and of all the things belonging to it: and, accordingly, he bid him rear it up (xxvi. 30.) according to the *mischpat*, the *scheme* or *draught* he shewed him in the mount: which represented every thing so lively and distinctly, and in their just proportions to him, that he was the better able to make them. For things seen, and seen in all their dimensions, as Abarbinel observes, are more easily retained, as well as conceived, than things that are only heard. And Greg. Nyssen had reason when he said, (de Vita Mosis, p. 181.) that God did not represent the sanctuary to Moses merely in a picture, much less give him an idea of it only in his mind; but set before him a *structure* which he should imitate. For so the Hebrew word *tabnit* (which we translate *pattern*) signifies a *structure*, or building; which cannot be better expressed than by the word *model*, which he now saw of the house he was to erect. Thus Maimonides explains this word, in distinction from *temunah*, which signifies only the *resemblance* of a thing; whereas *tabnit* signifies the *structure*, or disposition of it, *i. e.* saith he, its form; whether it be in a square, or circle, or triangle, or any other figure; and he quotes this place for it, and ver. 40. (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 3.)

Which confutes the fancy of those who will have Moses to have framed this house, and all belonging to it, according to the fashion of such things which he had seen in Egypt, and were in use among other nations: unto whose religion he designed to make himself as conformable as might be safely allowed. And particularly made this tabernacle to be carried on the priests' shoulders, as the tabernacle of Moloch was, &c. Nothing seems to me to be further from the intention of Moses, or rather from the directions which God here gives him, than this conceit. He had a more Divine guide than the Egyptians, and made things by a heavenly *pattern*, and not according to their *modes*. The Jews were so possessed with this opinion, that when the temple came to be built instead of this tabernacle, they say it was done by consulting the oracle, and by the solemn decree of the king, and of the great Sanhedrin, and of the prophets. For which they allege this very place, as Mr. Selden observes out of the Misna, and Maimonides, &c. (lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 13. n. 2.)

Ver. 10. *And they shall make an ark.*] Or *little chest*, or rather *coffer*: which was to be placed in the very inmost and most secret part of God's house (in his *cabinet*, as we now speak, into which none entered but himself), the better to *represent his dwelling among them.* And therefore was called *the ark of the Lord*, (Josh. iv. 5. 11.) and *the ark of God*, (1 Sam. iii. 3.) For herein was put his most precious treasure, those Divine records, the two tables of stone, wrote with his own finger, called *the tables of testimony*,

(xxxi. 18.) because they were the testimony of the covenant between God and the Israelites; whereby he testified his will, and they their obedience to it. Whence the ark itself is called *the ark of the testimony*, (xxx. 6. from whence also the whole tabernacle had its name, Numb. ix. 11.) and *the ark of the covenant of the Lord*, (Numb. x. 33.)

Of shittim-wood.] See ver. 5.

Two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.] In this shape, and in these dimensions, it was set before Moses in the mount, that he might direct it to be made exactly of such an oblong square (as we speak), as is here described, in its *length, breadth,* and *height*. There are great disputes among the Jews about a *cubit*, which is commonly thought to be half a yard of our measure, that is, eighteen inches. But one that hath taken a great deal of pains to examine such things (Dr. Cumberland, now bishop of Peterborough), hath, in a very learned discourse about the Scripture Measures, given strong reasons to incline us to think that the Egyptian and the Jewish cubit was about twenty-one inches. And if they had not been so, the table (which is described ver. 23.) would have been inconvenient, being but three quarters of a yard high, *i. e.* twenty-seven inches (according to the common notion of a *cubit*), which is too low for a table. Whereas, according to his account, it was about *thirty-two inches*, which is a very convenient height for a table. (See chap. ii.)

Ver. 11. *And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold.*] Not merely gild it, but lay it over with thin plates of gold; for if they had been thick, it would, as Abarbinel notes, have been too heavy to carry. Thus we see chests now sometimes plated with iron in some parts of them.

Within and without.] So that nothing but gold could be seen, whether it were shut or open.

And shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about.] A border or list of gold went round at the top of it; which was called a crown, because it compassed every part of it: but was of another figure, not round but square, as the ark was. It was of great use, as well as ornament, for the better settling the propitiatory upon the ark, that it might not slip off, but be kept up firmly by this border going round about the top of the ark. And it might the better be called a *crown*, because it was of some height, for the surer supporting of the propitiatory.

It may not be improper here to observe, that, as the ancient crowns were only a plain circle of gold, or other thing, so they were set upon the heads of none but their gods, as Pliny tells us, (lib. xvi. cap. 4.) who says there, that Bacchus was the first that put a crown upon his head, which was made of *ivy*. Certain it is, that God requires those things which were peculiarly sacred to him and his service to be crowned, as a mark of their excellency: which were four only; this crown upon the ark, and that upon the golden table, (ver. 24. of this chapter), and upon the altar of incense, (xxx. 3.) and on the head of the high-priest, (xxix. 6.)

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it.*] Which were of massy gold, we must suppose, because the ark was carried by staves put into these rings.

And put them in the four corners thereof.] The Hebrew word *paamoth* comes from *paam*, which never signifies a *corner* in the Holy Scripture; but always a *foot*, or *basis*, or *step*, as Aben Ezra notes. Which hath made some think the ark had feet to stand upon (such round *knobs* as now our chests and boxes many times have), though the Scripture doth not mention them. But we are not to make conjectures out of our own heads; which some have carried so far as to fancy there were wheels in these feet, for the ark to run upon, which made it God's *chariot*, wherein he rode. But whoever heard of a chariot carried on men's shoulders? Therefore Nachmanides more reasonably conceives, that these rings were indeed in the corners of the ark, but not in the higher (as R. Solomon would have them), but in the lower; and therefore said here to be in *the feet*. For the Scripture calling the top of every thing *the head* of it: the bottom is commonly there called *the feet*: and so the ark (by placing the rings and staves in the bottom) was carried on high upon the priests' shoulders, representing God, *who is highly exalted.*

And two rings shall be on the one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it.] That is, in the length of it (as Josephus expressly testifies) and not in the breadth.

Ver. 13. *And thou shalt make staves of shittim-wood.*] Of such a length that the ark might be at a decent distance from those that carried it.

And overlay them with gold.] With plates of gold, as the ark itself was, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt put the staves into the rings, by the sides of the ark.*] The Hebrews say these staves were ten cubits long.

That the ark may be borne with them.] Upon the shoulders of the Levites, particularly the sons of Korah. (See Numb. iv. 4—6, &c. vii. 9.) For it was a crime to carry it any other way, either in their hands, or drawn in a cart. (Compare 1 Chron. xiii. 7. with xv. 15.)

Ver. 15. *And the staves shall be in the rings of the ark.*] Continue and remain in the rings, when they were once put therein.

They shall not be taken from it.] When they set down the ark they were not to take out the *staves*, and put them in again when it was to be carried; but let them, as we said, continue in the rings: that there might be no danger of letting them fall (which had been a great irreverence), and because they would be best preserved, and take less harm there than any where else; and if they had occasion to remove the ark suddenly all would be ready; and the Levites were hereby kept from touching the ark, or coming nearer to it than the ends of the staves.

Ver. 16. *And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I will give thee.*] The two tables of stone, containing the ten commandments, which are called *the testimony*, and the *two tables of testimony*, (xxxi. 18.) because they testified what the will of God was, which they had consented to observe; and were therefore public, authentic instruments, attesting the covenant between God and them. Whence the ark which contained these is called *the ark of the testimony*, (as I observed above, ver. 10.) ver. 22. and in a great many other places of the fortieth chapter. And in one place it is called *the testimony*, (xxx. 36.) and *the ark of the covenant of the Lord*, (Deut. x. 8.) because the *ten words* were the principal part of the covenant, to which they stood obliged. And perhaps the book of the covenant which Moses made with them (xxiv. 7.) is comprehended under the name of *the testimony*. For though

we read in 1 Kings viii. 9. there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, &c. yet the apostle mentions some other things that were not *in*, yet *by* or *before* the ark, (Hebr. ix. 4.) But I assert nothing in this matter. And shall only further observe, that this direction, for putting the testimony (or tables of stone) into the ark, is given before any order is taken for making a covering to it, which follows after. And therefore he was to put in the law before the cover was set on. For though (ver. 21.) this be mentioned again, and put after the cover is named, yet the meaning is, that he should set on the cover, having put in the law. And it is repeated, that he should be very careful of this, because the cherubims were to protect and defend it.

Ver. 17. *And thou shalt make a mercy-seat.*] The Hebrew word *capporet* literally signifies *a covering* of any thing: and that is the proper signification of this *mercy-seat* (as we translate it), which was the covering of the ark. For it had no door, but was open at the top, so that they might put the tables of the covenant into it, and then it was to be fastened above by this cover, which any one may discern by its dimensions was exactly fit for it.

Others will have it called *capporet*, not from *capar*, to *cover*, but from *cipper*, to *excipiate*, and render propitious. And so, indeed, the apostle calls it ἱλαστήριον, *the propitiatory;* because God here shewed himself to be propitious, and appeased by the blood of the sacrifices, which was sprinkled before this place. But the reason of this translation may be, because when sins are pardoned they are said in Scripture *to be covered.* The LXX. put both these together in their translation, which is ἱλαστήριον ἐπίθεμα.

Of pure gold.] Not of wood crusted over with gold, but all (as Abarbinel speaks) of solid gold; because it was the cover of the ark, in which were the tables of the covenant written with God's finger, than which nothing was more precious.

Two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, &c.] Which was the length of the ark, (ver. 10.) as *the breadth was a cubit and a half,* both of that and this: which shews this was the cover of the ark, being most exactly adapted to it.

Ver. 18. *And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold.*] We read of *cherubims* in the beginning of the world; and have good reason to believe thereby is meant angels. (See Gen. iii. 24.) But in what shape they appeared we are not told; nor is there the least signification of it here in this place, but what we can gather from ver. 20: so that I can only say this, they were of such a shape as the angelical ministers appeared in, which attended upon the Divine Majesty in the mount; or rather, such as God shewed Moses *a pattern of,* whereby to represent these heavenly ministers. For both the ark and all belonging to it were made according to the *model* God gave him; not from any Egyptian pattern, as some imagine. Bochart seems to me to speak judiciously, when he saith there were not *figures* of angels, but rather *emblems,* whereby the angelical nature was in some sort expressed, (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 25.) and were therefore ordered to be made, as Maimonides conjectures, that the Jews might be confirmed in the belief of the existence of angels, which is the *second article* of their faith, next to the belief of God. And he commanded *two* to be made; because, if there had been but one, it might have led them into a dangerous error, that this was the figure of God, whereby they might have been inclined to worship it. But there being *two* of them ordered, with this declaration, *the Lord our God is one God,* it led them into right thoughts, that God had many of these angelical ministers. Thus he: More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 45.

Of beaten work shalt thou make them.] The Hebrew word *miksheh,* which we translate *beaten work,* signifies that both of them should be made out of the same piece of gold that made the cover of the ark; so as to be one continued work with that, not separate from it. This appears to be true from the next verse, *min hacapporet; out of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubims,* &c. or, *from the mercy-seat* shall they proceed, on the two ends of it.

Ver. 19. *And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end.*] This looks like tautology (saith Abarbinel) it being said in the foregoing words, *in the two ends of the mercy-seat:* but it is far from it; being a declaration (as he takes it) that the *cherubims* should not be placed both on one side of the ark; nor so as not to be opposite one to the other: but one on one side, and the other on the other side.

Even of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubims, on the two ends thereof.] They were not to be made separate from the mercy-seat, and afterwards joined to it, but to be made *out of it,* so as to be one piece with it, (as was said, ver. 18.) which in the execution of this command appears very plainly, (xxxvii. 8.)

Ver. 20. *And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high.*] This shews they were made like flying creatures; but had not the resemblance of any fowl that we know. So Josephus, Ζῶα πετεινὰ, μορφῇ οὐδενὶ τῶν ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων ἑωραμένων παραπλήσια, &c. *flying animals, like to none of those which are seen by men;* but such as Moses saw figured in the throne of God; when he beheld, he means, his Majesty in the mount, attended by the heavenly host, (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 8.) and again, (lib. viii. cap. 2.) *As for the cherubims, nobody can tell or conceive what they were like;* οὐδεὶς ὁποῖαί τινες εἰπεῖν οὐδὲ εἰκάσαι δύναται. Some, indeed, think that we may understand from what Ezekiel saith of them their true figure; and that they had the face of *oxen.* For that face which in Ezek. i. 10. is called *the face of an ox,* is afterward called, (x. 14.) *the face of a cherub.* But it is to be considered, that there is no proof the *cherubims* here spoken of by Moses had the same face with those mentioned by Ezekiel, but were rather a quite different representation. For here God was represented as *dwelling,* nay *sitting,* and abiding among the Israelites; but there as *removing* and departing quite away from his dwelling-place: and consequently, I conceive, his minister and attendants appeared then in quite different shapes from what they had now.

Stretch forth their wings on high.] As being upon the wing (to use our language), that is, ready to fly, whither they were ordered by the Divine Majesty.

Covering the mercy-seat with their wings.] Their wings were not to lie close to their bodies, but to be raised up (as was said before) and spread: so that meeting together, they made, as it were, a seat over the ark, called *the throne of God.*

Their faces shall look one to another.] To signify, saith Abarbinel, their mutual consent and concord.

Towards the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubims be.] They were so contrived that they looked downward, when they looked one to the other; to shew (saith he) that they were keepers of the law, which was under the mercy-seat.

Ver. 21. *And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark.*] Having first put in the testimony which he gave him (as it here follows), then he was to set the mercy-seat upon the ark (within the crown which encompassed it) as a cover to it. (See ver. 16.)

Ver. 22. *And there will I meet with thee.*] When thou hast occasion to consult me, I will there be present to communicate my mind to thee: so Abarbinel. After the ark is made, and the law put into it, and the cover laid upon it, I will speak with thee from the midst of the mercy-seat, between the cherubims: so that thou shalt not need to come up hither any more into the mount to fetch down prophecy (as his phrase is), but I will give it thee from thence, and tell thee all that is to be taught Israel. (See xxx. 6.)

And I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims, &c.] Here the *glory of the Lord* resided, between the cherubims; whose wings were the seat of the Divine Majesty; as the cover of the ark beforementioned was his footstool. For he is said to *sit between the cherubims,* (Psalm lxxx. 2.) and the ark is called *his footstool,* (Psalm xcix. 8. cxxxii. 7.) This, therefore, being that part of the sanctuary which was the place of his peculiar abode, where he is said to dwell, 1 Sam. iv. 4. (see de Dieu there), when Moses had any occasion to consult him he was to resort hither; where God promises to meet him, and confer with him from hence, as we read he did, Numb. vii. 89.

Of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.] This shews that he resided here as their Lord and Governor; the wings of the cherubims composing his throne, whereon he sat as their King, to give orders for their government: which *more imperatorio de tribunali loquebatur, he delivered from this supreme tribunal, after the manner of emperors* (as Fortunatus Scacchus expresses it), or great princes, who were wont in all countries to have such magnificent thrones erected, from whence to speak to their subjects, (Myrothec. Sacrorum Elæochrysm. ii. cap. 36.)

Thus far he hath named only the furniture of the inward house and cabinet of the Divine Majesty, called *the holy of holies.* Now follows the principal furniture of the outward house, called *the holy place.*

Ver. 23. *Thou shalt also make a table.*] Which is a necessary part of the furniture of a house, and therefore here ordered to be made in token of God's dwelling among them, (ver. 8.)

Of shittim-wood.] Of the same materials with the ark, (ver. 10.)

Two cubits shall be the length thereof, &c.] It was neither so long nor so broad as the ark, but of the very same height, (ver. 10.) Josephus, to make the Greeks apprehend its fashion, saith, it was like the famous table at Delphi, (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 9.) which, if it be true, was made, it seems, in imitation of the table of Moses.

Ver. 24. *And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold.*] Just as the ark was; (see ver. 10.) and therefore it is probable that the lower parts of it, as well as the upper, and the feet also, were plated with gold, so that it might be called a golden table.

And make thereto a crown of gold round about.] See ver. 10. where the same is directed for the ark: and this had the same use, to keep what was set upon the table from slipping off and falling on the ground.

Ver. 25. *And thou shalt make unto it.*] That is, to the crown of gold, as Fortunatus Scacchus understands it, though others refer it to the table.

A border of a hand-breadth round about.] Which came down below the *crown* or *cornice,* as they now speak. Though some think this border was towards the bottom, to join the feet more firmly together.

And thou shalt make a golden crown to the border thereof round about.] Wheresoever this *border* was (which I suppose was plated with gold), like the table, it had a crown, or a *cornice,* as an ornament to it. For this crown was different from that mentioned in the foregoing verse; and was under the *border* (as the other crown was above it), as Fortunatus Scacchus apprehends it, (Myrothec. ii. cap. 38.)

Ver. 26. *And thou shalt make for it four rings of gold.*] As there were for the ark, (ver. 12.) only they were to be *cast,* these to be *made:* but how we are not told.

And put the rings in the four corners that are on the four feet thereof.] The Hebrew word here for *corners* always hath that signification; being quite different from that word which is used ver. 12. when he speaks of the ark: which may well incline us to Josephus's opinion, that these rings were not below, as they were in the ark, but on the upper part of the feet of the table; so that it was not carried up on high, as the ark was, but hung down between the priests, on whose shoulders the staves rested.

Ver. 27. *Over against the border shall the rings be,* &c.] Just below the *border* and the *cornice* beforementioned (ver. 25.) were these rings to be placed; as the border and its *cornice* were placed below the upper *crown* (or cornice) which compassed the top of the table, (ver. 24.)

For places of the staves to bear the table.] This expresses the use of the rings.

Ver. 28. *And thou shalt make the staves of shittim-wood, and overlay them with gold.*] Such as were made for the carriage of the ark, (ver. 13.)

That the table may be borne with them.] By the priests upon their shoulders. For the tabernacle being a moveable house, there were frequent occasions, as they journeyed from one place to another, to carry this table along with them, as they did all other things belonging to the house of God.

It is not ordered that the staves should remain in the rings, as they did in those belonging to the ark, (ver. 15.) because they might have been a hinderance to the priests in their ministration at this table every day. Therefore it is likely, they were laid up in some place near it, and put in when they travelled, as they were ordered to be, (Numb. iv. 6.)

Ver. 29. *And thou shalt make the dishes thereof.*] It is not easy to give an account either of the form or of the use of these *keharoth,* which we translate *dishes,* i. e. *patins,* whereon to put the bread, which were twelve loaves, (Lev. xxiv. 6.) and the frankincense which was to be set upon each row of loaves, (ver. 7.) This is a plain sense, if the loaves stood upon dishes, and not immediately upon

the table, as Fortunatus Scacchus thinks they did: and therefore imagines they were full of fine flour, of which the bread was made; or with oil which was to be mingled and used in their sacrifices. But this is more unlikely than the other, the flour not being kept here in the holy place, but in the outward court; and his reason for it is not solid; which is, that the heads of their tribes offered every one of them a silver *charger,* (so we render the same word we here translate a *dish,* Numb. vii.) full of fine flour mingled with oil. But those were not for the use of this table, on which such large dishes or chargers could not stand, there being no room for them. Therefore at last he fancies them to have been salt-sellers, which were set upon the table together with the bread, being used at all meals. And Philo, as he observes, seems to be of this opinion, who, speaking of this table (in his third book of the Life of Moses), saith, ἐφ' ἧς ἄρτοι καὶ ἅλες, *upon it were loaves and salts:* from whence he conjectures there were two salt-dishes at least. (See his Myrothecium Sacror. Elæochrysm. lib. ii. cap. 41.)

And spoons thereof.] If this be a true interpretation of the Hebrew word *cappoth,* their use was to put incense into the dishes, and to take it out: for that they contained incense is evident from Numb. vii. 14. 20. 26. &c. Which makes the forenamed author think this word should rather be rendered *vials,* which Pollux numbers among the sacred vessels; and it is plain were used in offering incense in the temple: for St. John saw the twenty-four elders, having *every one of them golden vials full of odours,* or incense, (Rev. v. 8.) whence it is the LXX. translate this word Θυίσκαι. The form of which Fort. Scacchus, in the place forementioned, hath adventured to describe.

And covers thereof.] Wherewith both the loaves and the incense were covered. So it is commonly understood. But Fortunatus Scacchus endeavours at large to prove that the Hebrew word *kesoth* is rightly translated by the LXX. σπονδεῖα, which were vessels used in their *libamina,* when they poured wine upon the sacrifice, or upon the altar, when they sacrificed. For authors do not agree when this was done; some saying the wine was poured out after the sacrifice was slain, and laid on the altar; others, that it was most commonly done before. The manner being, first to throw frankincense into the fire on the altar, then to pour out the wine, and then the sacrifice was slain. In which order Homer and Ovid report it, as Cuperus observes in his Apotheosis Homeri, p. 71. However this be, it is certain, from Hesychius, Pollux, and Suidas, that σπονδεῖον signifies such a vessel: and Josephus saith, that when Pompey went into the holy place, he saw there such vessels as these, together with the table and candlestick, λυχνίαν τε, καὶ λύχνους, καὶ τράπεζαν, καὶ σπονδεῖα, καὶ θυμιατήρια, &c. (lib. i. de Bello Jud. cap. 5.) The only objection against this is, that there was no use for such vessels in that place. To which I think it may be truly answered, that it was fit notwithstanding God's house should be furnished with all kinds of utensils.

And bowls thereof.] So St. Jerome understands the Hebrew word *menakioth,* which, following the LXX. he translates *cyathos:* the form of which Fortunatus Scacchus (in his forenamed book, cap. 44.) hath endeavoured to make out, and establish this as the certain meaning of the word. But it is very hard to tell of what use they were here, where no drink was used: and yet our marginal translation of the next word seems to favour it, making these *to pour out withal.* And, indeed, the Hebrew word signifies both to *cover* and to *pour out.* But the former seems most proper here, unless we take these to have been *bowls* (or such-like vessels) set here merely to signify more completely, that God kept house among them (as we speak) they being part of the furniture of a table.

Others think they were stands, upon which the dishes of bread were set.

To cover withal.] If we allow of this translation, and it relate to the word *bowls* immediately preceding, then it signifies these vessels were a larger sort of covers. Or it may refer to the whole; that all the forenamed vessels were made to cover the table entirely. But the marginal translation being also agreeable to the Hebrew text, it may possibly declare the use of the forenamed vessels, which was *to pour out withal.* For in their *libamina* there were several sorts of these vessels used among the gentiles; one only to taste the wine before the sacrifice, which Scacchus thinks was that the Romans called *simpulum:* another to pour it upon the sacrifice when it was offered, which they called *guttus,* because it had a narrow mouth, out of which the wine came out by little and little.

Out of pure gold shalt thou make them.] All things in this part of the house were of gold, that the royal palace of their King might be most sumptuously furnished, suitable to the greatness of his majesty.

Ver. 30. *And thou shalt set upon the table shew-bread.*] In the Hebrew, *bread of the face,* or *presence;* because it was set before the ark of the covenant where God was present. The forementioned Fort. Scacchus thinks the heathen from hence borrowed their custom of setting sacred loaves before Ceres, in her feast called *Thesmophoria,* as he observes out of Athenæus, lib. iii. Deipnosoph. cap. 25. and other places. (Vid. Myrothec. ii. Sacr. Elæochrysm. cap. 39.)

Before me alway.] These loaves constantly stood upon the table (new ones being brought, when the old ones were removed, every sabbath-day) before the Divine Majesty; a cloth being spread upon it, whereon these and all the forenamed things were set, (Numb. iv. 7.) And they were twelve of them in all, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, whose offering these were to God, whose ministers ate them in the holy place, (Lev. xxiv. 5. 7—9.) They were set in two rows, one piled upon another, as Josephus represents them.

When Maimonides wrote his More Nevochim, he confesses (part. iii. cap. 5.) to that day he was ignorant of the reason of this table, and the bread continually upon it. Which is very strange, when at the beginning of these directions God had declared he would have a house built that he might dwell among them, (ver. 8.) which dwelling among them was admirably represented, by its having in it all things belonging to a dwelling-house, particularly a table and bread (signifying all provision), whereby they were made to understand that God, as was said before, kept house among them. Which nobody hath explained so well as an incomparable writer of our own, Dr. Cudworth, in a discourse put out long ago, concerning the Right Notion of the Lord's Supper, cap. vi. where he observes, out of Nachman, that there was a table and candlestick ordered for this house, because they were the

ordinary furniture of a room. For which reason the table had its dishes, spoons, bowls, and covers (though they were never used), and was always furnished with bread upon it; as the candlestick also had lamps continually burning. From hence it was, likewise, that there was a continual fire in this dwelling of God upon his altar. And, to carry on the notion thoroughly, constant meat and provision brought to it, by the sacrifices there offered. Which were partly consumed by fire upon God's own altar; and partly eaten by the priests, who were God's domestic servants, and therefore to be maintained by him. And besides the flesh of the beast offered up in sacrifice, there was a *mincha*, or *meat-offering*, made of flour and oil; together with a drink-offering, which were ever joined with the daily burnt-sacrifice, being the bread and the drink which were to go along with God's meat. So the sacrifices are called in the first of Malachi. It was also strictly commanded, as we read in Leviticus, that salt should accompany every sacrifice and oblation; because it was not fit, as the same Nachman observes, that God's meat should be unsavoury. And all these were to be consumed on the altar only, by the holy fire which came down from heaven, because they were God's portion, and therefore to be consumed by himself in an extraordinary manner.

There are those of the Jews who look upon this bread set on God's table as an acknowledgment that they received their food from God. And we may add, that this bread being made of the same corn, which they ate of themselves, is still farther represented to them, that they were God's *convivæ:* who continually entertained them with that provision which was made for him.

Ver. 31. *And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold.*] Another necessary piece of furniture for a house; especially when there were no windows in it.

Of beaten gold shall it be made.] Not hollow, but of solid gold.

His shaft.] The main body or trunk of it.

And his branches.] Which shot as it were out of the trunk.

His bowls.] Or cups: for so the word *gebieha* is translated, Gen. xlv. 1. 5. and they were in the fashion of an almond, as it is ordered, (ver. 33.)

His knops.] Round like an apple or pomegranate; as the word *caphtoreha* signifies.

And his flowers.] The Vulgar translates it *lilies:* but the word properly signifies the blossoms of trees.

Shall be of the same.] All of gold, though not all of one piece: for, as Fort. Scacchus not unreasonably conjectures, these several parts of the candlestick were separable one from another, when there was occasion to remove it from one place to another. (See his Myrothec. Sacr. Elæochrysm, cap. 46.)

Ver. 32. *And six branches shall come out of the sides of it,* &c.] In this and the following verses he describes how all the abovenamed parts should be disposed so as to make the candlestick appear glorious. And first he here directs that *three branches* should come out of each side of the main trunk or shaft.

Ver. 33. *Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a knop and a flower in one branch,* &c.] Next he orders that every branch of the six should have *three bowls* (or cups, as I said before), into which, perhaps, the snuff was to fall: and between every one of them a *knop* and a *flower*. And the *cups* were to be of the figure of an almond.

So in the six branches.] Which were to be all alike.

That come out of the candlestick.] *i. e.* Out of the trunk; which is here and in the next verse called *the candlestick:* because it was the main part of it, which supported all the branches.

Ver. 34. *And in the candlestick.*] *i. e.* In the main trunk or shaft, out of which the branches proceeded.

Shall be four bowls like to almonds, with their knops and their flowers.] The branches were to have but *three bowls* and as many *knops* and *flowers;* but the shaft or trunk was to have four of each: it being longer than the branches that came out of it.

Ver. 35. *And there shall be a knop under two branches of the same,* &c.] This being repeated twice, signifies that the *knops* should be so contrived, that out of three of them should arise two branches, one on the one side, and one on the other. So that out of the fourth knop, which I suppose was the lowermost, there was no branch at all; but that, with the cup and flower, were the ornament of that part of the shaft which was under the branches.

That proceeded out of the candlestick.] *i. e.* Out of the shaft or main trunk, (ver. 34.)

Ver. 36. *Their knops and their branches shall be of the same,* &c.] No difference between them; but all solid, not hollow work, of pure gold.

Here is nothing said of the *foot* of it; which was no question proportionable to the rest. Nor doth he mention the length of the start or trunk: but Fortunatus Scacchus adventures to guess that it was near double the height of the table, and of the altar of incense, which made it look majestically; and yet did not raise it so much as to damnify the roof of the tabernacle, (Myrothec. ii. cap. 45. p. 439.)

Ver. 37. *And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof.*] *i. e.* Cause them to be made. But of what metal it is not said; most likely of gold, as well as the *tongs*, and the other things mentioned, ver. 38. The form is not here prescribed, which the forenamed Scacchus (Myrothec. i. cap. 7.) thinks was like an almond.

And they shall light the lamps thereof.] They whose work it is, *viz.* the priests, (xxx. 7, 8. Lev. xxiv. 3, 4.)

That they may give light over against it.] That is, over against the candlestick (as some will have it), the six branches all inclining to the trunk in the middle. But here he speaks of the seven lamps, not of six only, which gave light over against some other thing, which I take to be the table. For it is plain, by xxvi. 35. and xl. 24. that the candlestick was placed over against the table, being on the south side of the house, as the table was on the north. (See Numb. viii. 2.)

Ver. 38. *And the tongs thereof.*] Or snuffers, belonging to it: which Scacchus (both in his first and second Myrothecium) probably proves were not of such a form as are now in use; but were only little *tongs* or *scissars*, whereby the lamps were clipped to make them shine more brightly, (Myrothec. i. cap. 10. and ii. cap. 46. p. 455.)

And snuff-dishes.] In which the snuffers and the snuffings of the lamps were put; and for the latter use he thinks they had water in them.

Shall be of pure gold.] It was most for the magnificence

of this house, and becoming the Divine Majesty who dwelt there, that the meanest thing therein should be made of pure gold.

Ver. 39. *Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels.*] A talent was three thousand shekels, as will appear afterward: which how much it makes of our money, see xxxviii. 25.

Ver. 40. *And look that thou make all after their pattern.*] Take care to observe that precept which I have already given, (ver. 9.) and now repeat again; that every one of these things be made according to that model which I set before thee. For God would have nothing left to the fancy of the people, whom he knew were too much inclined to the gentile superstition. And if Moses had not been determined by Divine prescription, they would have been apt in all these things to have interposed their own inventions.

Which was shewed thee in the mount.] By this it still plainly appears, that Moses saw not only the house, but all the furniture belonging to it, set up in the mount before him, just as he afterward set it up below among the people.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. *MOREOVER.*] From the furniture he proceeds to the house; and first orders him how to make the inward part of it.

Thou shalt make me a tabernacle.] The Hebrew word *mischcan* properly signifies a place to dwell in; a habitation, (according to what was said xxv. 8.) For this was the place of the Schechinah (which comes from the same root with *mischcan*), which dwelt here as in its house. But it is commonly translated a *tabernacle*, only to signify what kind of *dwelling* it was, *viz. a portable house*, as Philo calls it, φορητὸν ἱερόν: which might be taken down, and removed from one place to another, and set up again, without any damage to it.

With ten curtains.] These were so many pieces of tapestry (as we now call them), with which this tent was hung on the sides, and covered at the top.

Of fine twined linen.] Concerning *fine linen*, see xxv. 4. and concerning *twined linen*, see xxviii. 6.

Blue, purple, and scarlet.] *i. e.* Yarn died of these colours. (See xxv. 4.)

With cherubims.] It is uncertain what figure these were of. (See xxv. 18.)

Of cunning work shalt thou make them.] There were two sorts of work more artificial than ordinary: the one called *choscheb* (which is that here mentioned), the other *rokem*, which we translate *needle-work*. The former was the most excellent; for it was done by weaving, and had figures on both sides: whereas that by needle-work had only on one side, as Jarchi here notes. Who says there was, suppose the figure of a lion on one side, and of an eagle on the other: or rather, he should have said, the same figure appeared on both sides, as Maimonides seems to take it, in his Kele Hammikdah, cap. 8. "Wheresoever any work is called *rokem* in Scripture, it is to be understood of figures which are made only on one side of the web: but the work called *choscheb* had figures on both sides, before and behind." (See xxviii. 39.)

Ver. 2. *The length of one curtain shall be eight-and-twenty cubits*, &c.] Every one of these curtains were fourteen yards long, and two yards broad: for a cubit was half a yard of our measure, according to common estimation. It was some inches more, as I have observed on xxv. 10. But to make the reader more easily comprehend it, I shall not exactly compute the length and breadth of these curtains, but follow the vulgar opinion. And with these, it will appear afterward, both the roof of the tabernacle was covered, and the sides of it likewise, almost down to the ground, that is, within a cubit of it, as Josephus saith, and as may be made out from the text: the tabernacle (according to the common notion of a cubit) being fifteen yards long, five yards broad, and as many yards high.

Every one of the curtains shall have one measure.] Be exactly of the same length and breadth.

Ver. 3. *The five curtains shall be coupled together, one to another: and other five curtains, one to another.*] Being thus sewed together, of ten curtains (each of which, as was said before, was fourteen yards long, and two yards broad) was made two large pieces of tapestry; each of them fourteen yards long, and ten yards broad. With one of these pieces of tapestry the holy place was covered, it being just so many yards broad as that place was long; so that it did not come down before at the east end, which was the entrance of the sanctuary. The other piece of tapestry covered the holy of holies: which being but five yards long, one half of this piece hung down behind it at the west end and touched the silver bases.

Ver. 4. *And thou shalt make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain*, &c.] These two great curtains being made by sewing five lesser together, the loops were not woven with the curtains, but tacked to the selvage of the outermost of them; and were made of blue tape.

In the coupling.] In that part of the great curtains where they were to be coupled together.

Ver. 5. *Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain*, &c.] Each of those great pieces of tapestry had fifty loops, answering one to another so exactly, that they might take hold one of another.

Ver. 6. *And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold*, &c.] By these golden clasps the loops were so linked together, that the two great pieces of tapestry made but one covering. Which is the meaning of the following words.

And it shall be one tabernacle.] By this union the covering of the tabernacle shall be as if it were one entire piece.

Ver. 7. *And thou shalt make.*] Now he gives directions about the outward part of the house.

Curtains of goats' hair.] Though a soft kind of cloth was made of goats' hair, yet, in comparison with the other, it was a coarser sort of covering, to be laid over the finer beforementioned, for their preservation and sheltering from the weather. The old Arabians, called *Scenitæ*, made their tents of goats' hair; for Solinus calls them *Cilicina*, which he interprets *caprarum pilis texta*. Concerning the word we translate *goats' hair*, see xxv. 4.

To be a covering upon the tabernacle.] By *tabernacle* in the foregoing words, (ver. 6.) seems to be meant the covering of the tabernacle, which was of one entire piece. And so it is to be understood here, where a second covering is ordered to be thrown over the first.

Eleven curtains shalt thou make.] There was one more of these camlet curtains (as I may call them) than of the tapestry, which were but ten.

Ver. 8. *And the length of one curtain shall be thirty cubits.*] As there was one curtain more of these, so they were one yard longer than the former.

And the breadth of one curtain four cubits.] This was the breadth of the former, ver. 2. (where see what a cubit was) but there being one curtain more of these than of the other, they were two yards broader than them when they were all joined together. Insomuch, that they both came down lower than the other, on either side, half-a-yard; and also hung down a yard before the entrance of the tabernacle, which the former did not cover at all.

Ver. 9. *And thou shalt couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves.*] They were to be coupled together after the same manner as the former, that they might make two large pieces: but there being eleven curtains in all, there were but five in one piece, and six in the other.

And shalt double the sixth curtain in the fore-front of the tabernacle.] The meaning seems to be, that he should turn up that part of the curtain which hung down at the entrance of the tabernacle.

Ver. 10. *And thou shalt make fifty loops,* &c.] This may be sufficiently understood by what was said concerning the loops of the other covering, ver. 4, 5.

Ver. 11. *And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass,* &c.] The two great pieces of the inner hangings, being the richer, were coupled together with clasps of gold, (ver. 6.) but these, being coarser, only with clasps of brass. Which did not lie directly over the golden, but, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, were three-quarters of a yard more westward; these two large pieces not being of an equal bigness.

And couple the tent together.] *i. e.* These outward hangings or *coverings* (as we translate the word *ohel,* ver. 7.) of the tent.

That it may be one.] That the two pieces may be knit together, by the loops and clasps, into one. See ver. 6. where this place is there called *mischcan (dwelling),* which is here called *ohel;* to shew more clearly what kind of dwelling it was; an ambulatory house, such as shepherds have, which they remove from place to place, (Gen. iv. 20.)

Ver. 12. *And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remaineth, shall hang over the back-side of the tabernacle.*] These outward curtains being four cubits, that is, two yards and more broader than the inward, they hung down above a yard lower than the other on the *back-side* (or west-part) of the tabernacle, as they did on the front or entrance, (I observed before, ver. 8.) which was on the east.

Ver. 13. *And a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side, of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle,* &c.] These outward curtains being a yard (as two cubits are commonly esteemed) longer than the inward, as appears from ver. 8. they hung down, therefore, on either side a cubit, that is, half a yard lower than the inward did. And yet they did not come quite to the ground, but the foundation of the tabernacle, which was of silver, might be seen round about, save only at the west end.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skins died red.*] This was a third covering to be laid over the other two, to keep them from wet. It is not said of what dimensions it was, which hath made some fancy it covered only the roof. But it is far more reasonable to think that it was as large as the foregoing covering of goats' hair; which might have been spoiled by rain and dust, if the sides had not been defended as well as the roof. Concerning these *rams' skins,* see xxv. 5.

And a covering above.] That is, a *fourth* covering above that of rams' skins, for the greater security of the two inmost hangings; which had need of all this defence, especially on the roof; because it was flat, and consequently the rain was more likely to soak into it.

Of badgers' skins.] I observed on xxv. 5. that all the ancient interpreters take *thachas* for a *colour,* and not for a badger, or any other animal. For which there is this considerable argument, which I did not there mention; that when God sets forth his extraordinary kindness to Israel, as his beloved spouse, and shews in many magnificent expressions how richly he adorned her, he saith, among other things, that he shod her with *thachas,* which we translate *badgers' skins;* of which the meanest people never made any use for shoes: and therefore Bochartus rightly concludes it signifies something of greater value, *viz.* rams' skins died of a kind of purple colour.

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt make boards for the tabernacle.*] Or *planks,* which were the walls of the house.

Of shittim-wood.] See xxv. 5.

Standing up.] Erect upon one end, and not lying sideways.

Ver. 16. *Ten cubits shall be the length of a board.*] By this it appears the house (according to the vulgar opinion of a *cubit*) was but five yards in height. (See ver. 18.)

And a cubit and a half shall be the breadth of one board.] Three quarters broad; by which (compared with ver. 18.) it will appear how long the house was.

Ver. 17. *Two tenons shall there be on one board,* &c.] The Hebrews call them *hands;* because they were so made as to take fast hold of the sockets mentioned, ver. 19.

Set in order one against another.] They were in each corner of every plank, at the bottom of it.

Ver. 18. *And thou shalt make,* &c. *twenty boards on the south side southward.*] By this it appears the tabernacle was *thirty* cubits, that is (according to common estimation) fifteen yards long; each of these twenty boards being three quarters of a yard broad. But this seems not to be magnificent enough; and therefore it is more reasonable to follow their computation, who think the Jewish cubit was *three inches* and more longer than our *half yard.* Which makes the tabernacle near half as big again, both in length and height, than it is commonly described. (See xxv. 10.)

Ver. 19. *And thou shalt make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards,* &c.] There were two silver sockets for each plank, whose tenons sinking into these mortises, the middle of the planks settled upon these *bases,* as the foundation of the house. For so the Hebrew word *adon* imports; signifying that which supports another thing which stands upon it. And these seem to have been so large, that two *sockets* were as long as each plank was broad, that is, three quarters of a yard; and being joined close together, they made one entire foundation, though consisting of several pieces.

Ver. 20. *And for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, there shall be twenty boards.*] This verse, and the next, only direct that the north side of the tabernacle should be answerable to the south.

Ver. 22. *And for the sides of the tabernacle westward.*] The Hebrew word we translate *sides*, should rather be translated *ends*. For יָרֵךְ, when it is applied to an inanimate thing, signifies *the end, the term*, or *extremity of it*. As Gen. xlix. 13. we translate it, *a border*, and the LXX. in Isa. xxxvii. 24. translate it, τὰ ἔσχατα, *the extreme parts of Lebanon*. And so both the Chaldee paraphrasts in this place explain it, *by the ends of the tabernacle westward;* for the entrance was on the east, and the end of it on the west.

Thou shalt make six boards.] Of the same breadth with the other, which made them four yards and a half, according to the vulgar notion of a cubit.

Hitherto there is no direction about the entrance, or east end; which is reserved till the last.

Ver. 23. *And two boards shalt thou make for the corners of the tabernacle on the two sides.*] Besides the six planks beforementioned, there was a plank at each corner, which joined the end of the tabernacle and the two sides together; and made the whole building stronger and more steadfast. How broad they were he doth not tell us; but I suppose only large enough to make the west end five yards broad, that is, each of them half a cubit.

Ver. 24. *And they shall be coupled together beneath, and they shall be coupled together above the head of it, unto one ring,* &c.] To make all more firm, these two corner planks (for of them he seems here to speak) were to be knit to the other planks, both at the top and at the bottom, with a golden link. Some think every plank was thus linked to the next (whence they are here called twins), for the strengthening the whole fabric: but if this be true it is not clearly expressed.

Ver. 25. *And they shall be eight boards, and their sockets of silver,* &c.] Thus there were eight planks in all at the west end, (ver. 22, 23.) whose tenons struck into the mortises of sixteen silver bases. (See ver. 19.)

Ver. 26. *And thou shalt make bars of shittim-wood.*] Besides the links of gold which held the boards together, at the top and at the bottom, there were also wooden bars, which run into staples of gold, which were fastened in every plank, as it follows, (ver. 29.)

Five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle.] There were five of these bars on each side, (ver. 27.) whereby the planks were held tight together. Of what length they were, is not here said; but Josephus tells us, they were each five cubits.

Ver. 27. *And five bars for the boards of the tabernacle for the two sides westward.*] Besides those on the north and south sides (mentioned in the latter end of ver. 26. and the beginning of this), there were five at the west end. For so it should be translated, not the *two sides* (for there was but one) but the *two ends;* that is, the two corners at the west part of the tabernacle, which was much strengthened by these bars. Or the plural number (as is usual) is put for the singular; this being the end wherein two sides terminated.

Ver. 28. *And the middle bar.*] This seems to intimate that the other four were at the top and at the bottom; and this in the midst of the planks.

In the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end.] The Hebrew doctors, whom Dr. Lightfoot follows, take this as if it signified that this bar went through the very planks which were bored in the midst. But then the planks must have been of such a thickness, as would have made them less portable than this tabernacle seems to have been; for they would have been timber rather than planks. I take it therefore that this was a long bar, which *reached from end to end*, and went through staples, which were in the middle of the planks, as the other did above and below. The only question is, whether these bars were in the inside of the tabernacle, or the outside? It seems most probable they were without, under the coverings; for they had not been so sightly within.

Ver. 29. *And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold.*] If they were overlaid with plates of gold, it made them very heavy; unless we suppose the plates to have been very thin. Others, therefore, take it, that they were only gilded.

And make their rings of gold, for places for the bars, &c.] The staples were of massy gold into which the bars went; which were also either overlaid with plates of gold, or gilded.

Ver. 30. *And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle, according to the fashion thereof, which was shewed thee in the mount.*] When all these materials were prepared, then he is here commanded to set it up, according to the model which was shewn him now in the mount. (See xxv. 40.)

Ver. 31. *And thou shalt make a veil of blue,* &c.] Concerning these colours, see xxv. 5. and of *fine linen*, xxv. 4. of *twined linen*, xxviii. 6.

Cunning work.] R. Solomon here repeats what he said before on ver. 1. that the work called *choscheb* was so artificial, that it had not only figures on both sides, but those different one from the other: for example, on one side a lion, on the other an eagle. Josephus saith, all sorts of flowers, and other ornaments, were wrought in this veil, except only the figures of animals.

With cherubims shalt thou make them.] See xxv. 18. This veil seems to have been of the same work with the rest of the inward hangings of the tabernacle, mentioned ver. 1. unless we suppose that in them the *cherubims* only were of *cunning work*. But I take the whole work of this veil to have been of that sort; the *cherubims* being in the midst of all sorts of flowers and other pictures.

The Hebrew word *paroketh*, which we translate *veil*, coming from *perek*, which signifies *hardness* and *rigour*, (Exod. i. 13, 14.) it hath made some conclude, that this *veil* was of a great thickness (the Hebrews say four fingers), which makes it the more wonderful that it was torn in sunder at our Saviour's passion. Certain it is, that it was so thick that none could look through it into the holy of holies.

Ver. 32. *And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim-wood, overlaid with gold.*] This is a sign that it was thick and heavy, there being four pillars to support it, which stood at an equal distance one from another. Of *shittim-wood*, see xxv. 5. It is uncertain whether the pillars were plated over with gold, or only gilt.

Their hooks shall be of gold.] Some will have the word *vavehim* to signify the *heads* of the pillars; for so the LXX. call them κεφαλίδες. But it literally signifies *hooks* (as we translate it), in the form of the letter *vau*, which

were on the top of the pillars, upon which the *veil* was hung; as appears from the next verse.

Upon four sockets of silver.] As the tops of the pillars were of gold, so they stood upon pedestals of silver.

Ver. 33. *And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches.*] The golden clasps that knit together the two great pieces of hangings, (ver. 6.) were just between the *holy* and the *most holy place*: so that the veil, which separated these two, hung exactly under these clasps.

That thou mayest bring in thither, within the veil, the ark of the testimony.] A separate place being made by this veil, the ark was to be brought into it, (see xxv. 16. 22.) and set at the west end of it.

And the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.] It made a partition of the tabernacle into two parts; one of which was the *holy place*, into which none but the priests might enter; and the other *the most holy*, into which none but the high-priest might enter, and that but once in the year. The most holy place was but a *third* part of the tabernacle; being a perfect square, *five* yards high, and as many long and broad; according to the common opinion concerning a *cubit*.

Ver. 34. *And thou shalt put the mercy-seat.*] See xxv. 17.

Upon the ark of the testimony, in the most holy place.] This being the most precious testimonial of God's presence with them was put in the most secret place of God's house. Just as the *palladium*, or whatsoever other sacred thing it was of which the Vestal virgins were the conservators (for Diodorus Siculus saith he could not certainly tell, nor did he think it became a religious man to inquire into that which was intended to be a secret), was kept in the inmost part of the temple of Vesta, which was called *Penus*, as we are told by Festus; who saith, "Penus vocabatur, locus ultimus in æde Vestæ, tegetibus septus," &c. Into this place none but the Vestal virgins and the Pontifex Maximus might go; as Lipsius observes in his Syntagma de Vesta et Vestalibus, cap. 4.

Ver. 35. *And thou shalt set the table without the veil,* &c.] This verse only directs how the table and the candlestick (which were ordered to be made, xxv. 23. 31.) should be set in *the holy place*, which was without the veil; one of them on the south side, and the other on the north side over against it. But whether in the middle of the *holy place*, or more towards the upper end, is not said.

Ver. 36. *And thou shalt make a hanging for the door of the tent.*] Now directions are given about the entrance of the tabernacle; before which he orders a curtain to be hung. Which may be called the *first veil*, with respect to that beforementioned, (ver. 31.) which the apostle calls the *second*, (Heb. ix. 3.)

Of blue and purple, &c.] Concerning these colours, see xxv. 5. and concerning *fine twined linen*, xxviii. 6.

Wrought with needle-work.] This was not such curious work as that which we translate *cunning work*, (ver. 31.) which was in the other veil, before the most holy place. (See xxxviii. 39.)

Besides this, Josephus saith there was another veil of linen to defend it from the injury of the weather; which was wont to be drawn aside upon festivals, that the people might see the beauty of this first veil. And indeed it is very probable, that some curtain or other was, in bad weather at least, hung before it, to secure it; as the covering of skins was over the hangings of the tabernacle.

Ver. 37. *And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars of shittim-wood.*] These pillars seem to have been disposed in this manner: two of them were placed at each corner, which, if they took up a cubit, then the other three being placed at an equal distance, made four spaces, each of two cubits (*i. e.* a yard) wide: at which the priests entered, when they went to minister in the sanctuary.

And overlay them with gold.] It is not certain whether with plates of gold, or only gilded. But it appears from the thirty-sixth chap. *ult.* (where we read of the execution of this command) that by *pillars* are here to be understood only the *chapiters* of them, which were all gilded; and the pillars themselves had only *fillets* or hoops of gold about them, in several parts of them.

And their hooks shall be of gold.] As those for the other veil were. (See ver. 32.)

And thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them.] Their bases on which they stood were meaner than those for the pillars on which the second veil hung; for they were of silver, as the foundation of the whole house was, (ver. 25. 32.)

CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *AND thou shalt make an altar.*] Of burnt-offering, as it is explained xxxviii. 1. And the Hebrew word *mizbeach*, properly signifies that upon which sacrifices were slain and offered.

Of shittim-wood.] What sort of wood this was, see xxv. 5.

Five cubits long, and five cubits broad, &c.] It was two yards and a half square (according to the common notion of a cubit) at the top and bottom of it.

And the height thereof shall be three cubits.] Being a yard and a half in height from the ground, the priest (as Fortunatus Scacchus observes) who ministered at it was half a yard above it; the common stature of a man being four cubits, *i. e.* two yards, (Sacr. Elæo. Myroth. ii. cap. 65.) It is not said how thick the wood was of which this frame (as I may call it) was made; but it is certain that it was hollow within, that the grate mentioned ver. 4. might hang in the midst of it.

Ver. 2. *And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof.*] The Hebrew word *kerem*, which properly signifies a *horn*, signifies also an eminent or high place; as in Isa. v. 1. God saith he had planted a vineyard *in a fruitful hill;* where the words in the Hebrew are, *in a horn of the son of oil.* From whence it signifies a *pinnacle*, or *spire* rising up from any building, as these horns did from the altar, for the ornament of it. Some will have it that they were useful also to tie the sacrifices to it, (which they gather from Psalm cxviii. 27.) and that they were of the fashion of oxen or rams' horns. Fortunatus Scacchus contends earnestly for this, in his Myrothec. ii. Sacr. Elæochrysm, cap. 65. such horns being much in use in the ancient religion, as appears (he observes) from the altars of the gentiles. And yet he confesses in the sixty-ninth chapter of the same book, that such kind of straight pinnacles as I mentioned before, after the manner of obelisks (as his words are), were more convenient for the putting of the blood of the sacrifices round about them, as is required Lev. xvi. 18.

His horns shall be of the same.] These spires seem to have been wrought out of the same piece of wood with the corners of the altar.

And thou shalt overlay it with brass.] Some think it was overlaid with brass, not only without but within; that the fire which burnt in the grate might not take hold of the wood. To prevent which, others fancied it was lined within with unhewn stone: but there is no mention of any such thing; and it was unnecessary, if the brass be supposed to have been of such a thickness as to secure the wooden frame of the altar.

Ver. 3. *And thou shalt make his pans.*] The Hebrew word *siroth* signifies *pots* as well as *pans;* but here is determined to the latter sense, by the use of them, which here follows.

To receive his ashes.] Or rather, to carry out the ashes which fell from the altar upon the earth; and being taken up, were put into these pans to be carried into a clean place, (Lev. iv. 12.) Fortunatus Scacchus hath adventured to delineate the form of them in the book beforementioned, cap. 73.

And his shovels.] The Hebrew word *hajahim* properly signifies *beesoms* or *brooms;* but here is rightly translated *shovels,* by which, being made of brass, the ashes under the altar were scraped together on a heap, and then thrown into the pans.

And his basons.] The principal use of these vessels was to receive the blood of the sacrifices, which was to be sprinkled as the law directed: for the Hebrew word *mizrakoth* carries this signification in it. Besides which, Fort. Scacchus thinks they served for the mixture of the oil with fine flour and frankincense, which were to be burnt on the altar. For when any man offered a meat-offering, the priest was to take a handful of the flour and of the oil, with all the frankincense, as God's part, to be consumed on the altar; and therefore we must suppose some vessel wherein these were brought to the priest, as the law requires, (Lev. ii. 1, 2.)

And his flesh-hooks.] Or *forks,* as the word *mizlegoth* may be translated; which Fort. Scacchus thinks were in the form of a *trident.* With which they stirred up the fire; and also ordered the pieces of the sacrifice, if any chanced to lie out of it, and put them into it, that every bit might be surely consumed.

And his fire-pans.] These are commonly taken for dishes or censers, in which the priest carried burning coals from the altar into the sanctuary, to offer incense upon the golden altar. But the abovenamed Fort. Scacchus thinks they did not minister in the holy place with brazen censers; and therefore takes these *fire-pans* for a larger sort of vessel, wherein the sacred fire which came down from heaven was kept burning, whilst they cleansed the altar and the grate from the coals and ashes, and when this altar was to be carried from one place to another, as it was often in the wilderness, (Myrothec. ii. Sacr. Elæochrysm, cap. 73.)

Ver. 4. *And thou shalt make for it a grate.*] This was the principal part of the altar; the wood being laid here, and the sacrifices burnt in it. Whence the Greeks call it ἐσχάρα; which was the name the heathen gave to the fire-place upon their altars, as we learn from Jul. Pollux. The figure of it was round, (as Fort. Scacchus gathers from the very name in Hebrew; for *michbar* signifies a *sieve*), but grew less and less, till at the bottom it ended, like a top, in a point. So he describes it in the forenamed book, (cap. 71.)

Of net-work.] It was made full of holes, like a *sieve,* or *net* (and thence called simply *the net,* in the latter end of this verse and in the next), that the ashes might fall through them to the bottom of the altar; where there was a door, on the east side, to open and take out the ashes.

Of brass.] The metal of which all the forenamed things were made, and the altar itself was overlaid.

And upon the net.] *i. e.* The grate full of holes, as was said before.

Thou shalt make four brazen rings.] The use of which was double; first, that by them it might be hung upon the altar: and then, when it was to be cleansed, or removed in their travels, it might by them be taken off.

In the four corners thereof.] This seems to overthrow what I now said of its circular figure: but it is to be observed, that Moses doth not use the same word here, which he doth when he speaks of the four corners of the altar, which he calls *pinoth,* (ver. 2.) but calls these only *ketzoth,* which may be better translated the *extremities* of it, as the said Fort. Scacchus hath noted.

Ver. 5. *And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath.*] Some have fancied that this grate was placed only at the top of the altar: but that doth not agree with these directions, which only place it beneath, in the hollow part of the altar (called in the Hebrew *carcob,* which signifies, as R. Solomon saith, any thing that is round, and is by us translated *the compass*), but so much lower than the top of the altar, that it was *even to the midst of it,* as it here follows.

That the net may be even to the midst of the altar.] This shews the depth of the grate to have been a cubit and a half: for the altar being three cubits high, (ver. 1.) and the bottom of this being even to the *middle of the altar,* it must hang down half way to the ground, and consequently be a cubit and a half from the top of it to the bottom. So that this grate seems to have been made like to a furnace, full of holes round about, as well as below; and perhaps was hung by chains, in the rings beforementioned, to the horns of the altar.

Ver. 6. *And thou shalt make staves for the altar,* &c.] Of such a length, that they might be laid upon the shoulders of the priests; and the altar, when they carried it, hang between them.

Ver. 7. *And the staves shall be put into the rings.*] Besides the rings for the *grate,* there were others (it appears by this) in the altar itself, into which the staves were to be put when it was to be removed.

And the staves shall be upon the two sides of the altar to bear it.] It is plain by this, that the staves were not put into the rings of the *grate* (which was within the hollow part of the altar), unless we imagine, as Dr. Lightfoot doth, that the rings of the *grate* came through the frame of the altar, and hung out on the sides of it; so that the frame and the grate were carried together. But, besides other objections against this, from the different form of the grate and the altar, it may be doubted whether they were carried together, and not separate one from another; especially if we conceive the grate to have been carried with the fire still burning on it; which would have immediately consumed the purple cloth, wherewith the altar was to be co-

vered, when they removed it, (Numb. iv. 13.) But the *fire-pans* beforementioned, (ver. 3.) it is probable, as I noted there, received the fire out of the *grate:* and then, it being cleansed from the ashes, was carried together with the altar, to which it was fastened by its rings; a purple cloth being spread over both.

Ver. 8. *Hollow with boards shalt thou make it.*] Otherwise the grate could not have been in the midst of it, as is before ordered, (ver. 5.)

And it was shewed thee in the mount.] Of this also he had a model set before him, as he had of other things. (See xxv. 9. 40.)

So shall they make it.] By that pattern he was to direct the workmen to make it.

Ver. 9. *And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle.*] The Hebrew word *chatzar* properly signifies a *green field* or *close.* Such was this place, uncovered in the open air, but enclosed with pillars and hangings; which made it such a place as we call a court-yard before a house. In this court stood the tabernacle, or dwelling-house of God: not just in the midst of it, but towards the upper end. And here the altar of burnt-offering stood, between the tabernacle and the lower end of the court: and the laver, wherein they washed, stood on the side of the altar. David speaks of more courts than one, (Psal. lxv. 5. lxxxiv. 3.) but Moses made only one, into which the priests came to offer sacrifice. Whether the people were admitted into it is not certain: if they were, it could contain no great number; and they stood at a great distance from the priests, in the lower part of the court; and were separated by some bounds or other, as they were in aftertimes when they came into Canaan. Where being settled, and the tabernacle fixed in Shiloh, the Hebrews say it was enclosed with a wall, as well as with hangings: and then, it is likely, a distinct court was made for the people; at least it was so in David's time, as the places abovementioned prove. And in the temple of Solomon we read plainly of more courts than one, (1 Kings vi. 36. vii. 12. 2 Chron. iv. 9. xxxiii. 5.) *viz.* the *court of the priests,* and the *court of the people.* Unto which, in the temple of Herod, after the captivity, was added a third, the *court of the women.*

For the south side southward.] It was to have two large sides, as the tabernacle had; whose south side being first ordered to be made, (xxvi. 18.) so is the same side of the court.

There shall be hangings for the court of fine twined linen.] What *fine linen* and *twined* were, see xxv. 5. xxviii. 6. These hangings were not curiously embroidered with flowers, as those of the tabernacle were, (xxvi. 1.) but were made of simple fine six-threaded linen.

Of a hundred cubits long, for one side.] By this it appears that the length of the court was a hundred cubits, or fifty yards, though of yards longer than ours, as I have said before, xxv. 10. (See ver. 18.)

Ver. 10. *And the twenty pillars thereof.*] These are thought by most to be made of shittim-wood.

And their twenty sockets shall be of brass.] The pillars were placed five cubits distant from each other, upon bases of brass, which were more firm and lasting than wood.

The hooks of the pillars.] These were, like our tenters, to hang the curtains of the court upon. See xxvi. 32. concerning the word *vave,*

And their fillets shall be of silver.] The Hebrew word *chuschuk* properly signifies a *circle:* but whether these were thin *hoops* of silver, or only *fillets* (as we translate it), or *silver twist,* is uncertain. Yet it seems to be plain from the thirty-eighth chapter, that the heads of the pillars, into which the hooks were fastened, were silvered over.

Ver. 11. *And likewise for the north side,* &c.] Here are the very same directions given for the hangings, pillars, bases, &c. of this side of the court, which are nothing different from the former.

Ver. 12. *And for the breadth of the court, on the west side, shall be hangings of fifty cubits,* &c.] By this it appears that the court was as long again as it was wide, there being hangings but of half the length for the west end, and only half so many pillars and sockets.

Ver. 13. *The breadth of the court on the east side,* &c.] This end was of the same dimensions with the west end.

Ver. 14. *The hangings of one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits,* &c.] The hangings of this end of the court were divided, because there was to be a gate; the entrance into the court being at the east end. Each side of the gate consisted of fifteen cubits; and accordingly the hangings were of that length, upon three pillars on each side, as this verse and the next direct.

Ver. 16. *And for the gate of the court shall be a hanging of twenty cubits.*] The entrance being twenty cubits wide, if we add to them the fifteen cubits which were on each side of the entrance, they make in all fifty cubits; which was the breadth of the east end of the court, as well as of the west, (ver. 12, 13.)

Of blue, and purple, and scarlet, &c.] Concerning all this, see xxv. 5. And here only observe, that the hangings of the gate were far-richer than of the rest of the court: which were merely of fine twined *linen,* (ver. 9.) but these of several other beautiful colours, and adorned with that work they called *rokem,* which we translate *needle-work.* What that was, see xxxviii. 39.

And their pillars shall be four, and their sockets four.] Proportionable to those on each side of the gate; which were *three* for hangings of *fifteen* cubits, (ver. 14, 15.) as these were *four* for hangings of twenty.

Ver. 17. *All the pillars round about the court shall be filleted with silver.*] Those at the east and west ends, as well as those on the south and north sides.

Their hooks shall be of silver, and their sockets of brass.] As was before directed, (ver. 10, 11.)

Ver. 18. *The length of the court,* &c.] Here all the dimensions of the court are put together: the *length* and *breadth* of which might be inferred from the hangings, (ver. 9. 12, &c.) but here are expressly determined; together with the *height,* which was not at all intimated before; and now appointed to be *five cubits, i. e.* two yards and a half, of larger measure than ours. So that the tabernacle might be plainly seen by the people; for it was as high again as the walls (if I may so call them) that encompassed it.

Of twined linen, and their sockets of brass.] This seems to be a brief repetition of what was said before concerning the hangings, and the pillars which stood on bases of brass.

Ver. 19. *All the vessels of the tabernacle in all the service thereof.*] This is also a repetition in general of what was

said before, particularly ver. 3. for all the vessels belonging to the tabernacle itself were of gold, as we read in the twenty-fifth chapter.

And all the pins thereof.] The tabernacle had nothing of brass in the fabric of it, but the bases of the pillars at the entrance, (xxvi. 37) and therefore these *pins*, I suppose, belong to them, whereby the pillars were fastened in their sockets.

And all the pins of the court shall be of brass.] These brazen pins were struck into the ground (as Dr. Lightfoot understands it), that the hangings, which were tied to them by cords, might be kept from flying up at the bottom.

Ver. 20. *And thou shalt command the children of Israel that they bring thee pure oil-olive beaten.*] Not squeezed out by a press, or by a mill (for such was full of sediment and dregs), but which run freely from the olives, being bruised with a pestle.

For the light.] In the golden candlestick, (xxv. 37.)

To cause the lamp to burn always.] Sufficient to keep the lamp always burning. Some imagine that it did not burn day and night, but, being lighted every evening, went out in the morning. And there are some places which seem to favour this opinion, particularly 1 Sam. iii. 3. where mention is made of the lamp going out, *viz.* in the morning. See also 2 Chron. xiii. 11. where we read of *setting the lamps to burn every evening:* which seems to signify that they did not burn in the day. But Josephus, who was a priest and could not but know, and had no reason to tell a lie, saith they burnt day and night. And indeed it was but necessary; for otherwise the priest must have ministered in the dark, at the altar of incense, before the Divine Majesty, who kept a table in the sanctuary, which required light; for nobody feasts in darkness. And therefore R. Levi, of Barcelona, (Præcept. xcviii.) saith, God commanded a lamp should always burn in the sanctuary for the honour and majesty of it; there being no light conveyed to it otherways. But it is highly probable, there were not so many of the lamps burning in the day as in the night, when all the seven lamps were lighted: some of which were put out in the morning, and lighted again in the evening. So Josephus saith expressly, (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 9.) "Three burnt all day before the Lord, and the rest were lighted in the evening."

Ver. 21. *In the tabernacle of the congregation without the veil.*] That is, the second veil, which was before the most holy place.

Which is before the testimony.] That is, the ark of the testimony. (See xxv. 21, 22.)

Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the Lord.] As direction is more fully given, xxx. 7, 8.

It shall be a statute for ever, &c.] See xxxviii. 43.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND take thou Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel.*] Here Aaron and his sons are designed to the priest's office: and afterward (xxxii. 19.) the whole tribe of Levi were consecrated to the Lord by a noble act of zeal which they performed. And at last (Numb. i. 51. and many other places) it was made capital for any one else to officiate at the tabernacle, but they only.

That he may minister unto me.] Attend on me as my servant in my court. For *cohen* signifies one that serves *in ministerio honorabili, in an honourable office,* as appears from Job xii. 19. Therefore David's sons are called by this name, (2 Sam. viii. 18.) and it was given to the priests: "quatenus fuerunt primarii Dei ministri," *as they were the principal ministers of God;* as Junius observes upon Gen. xli. 45.

In the priest's office.] Wheresoever there hath been any religion there have been priests; whose office it peculiarly was, to minister unto God in the service belonging to him. But this is the first time we read of any constituted in Israel by a Divine appointment; at least, the priesthood was not confined to the particular family of Aaron, who was made high-priest, and his sons priests of a lower order. Some heathens imitated this, by continuing the priesthood in a certain family. For Plato says, there were in some places πάτριαι ἱροσύναι, both of men and women; which in the founding of a city he would not have a lawgiver alter; but where there was no such constitution he would have annual priests, and none but grave men of sixty years of age put into the office, (lib. vi. de Leg. p. 759.)

Even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.] These were all the males in this family at present, whose descendants in future ages were all priests.

Ver. 2. *And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother.*] If very good authors did not affirm it, we should scarce think it credible, that the priests among some of the ancient heathens offered sacrifices to their gods naked. Particularly the old Arabians, as Hottinger observes in his Histor. Orientalis, lib. i. cap. 7. But such filthiness was abhorred by most people, whose priests were not only clothed, but performed their service at the altar in a peculiar habit. So that there is scarce any author, who treats of the sacrifices and the priests of the heathen, that doth not speak of their garments also. As Moses here in the first institution of the priesthood among the Jews, to offer peculiar sacrifices at God's house, takes a special care, by the Divine direction, about their vestments. Which the Hebrew doctors think so inseparable from the priesthood, that they fancy Adam, Abel, and Cain, did not sacrifice without them. (See Gen. iii. 22.)

They are called *holy*, because they might be worn by none but them, and by them only when they ministered unto God.

For Aaron thy brother.] The high-priest had some garments peculiar to himself, which none of the other priests might wear. They were four; the breast-plate, the robe, the ephod, and the plate of gold. There were four more he also wore, but they were common to him with the other priests, *viz.* the coat, the drawers, the girdle, and the bonnet. Their bonnets, indeed, and his mitre, were of a different form; yet they are not considered by the Jews as distinct vestments, being both coverings of the head. And they make account the high-priest never wore at any one time above eight sorts of garments; nor the lower above four. This is the universal sense of the Hebrew writers; and I cannot give any account why Grotius mentions only seven garments of the high-priest (reckoning the golden plate for one), which he will have to answer unto the seven lamps

in the candlestick. For it is evident by this very chapter he wore eight, *viz.* the *ephod,* (ver. 8.) the *breast-plate,* (ver. 15.) the *robe,* (ver. 31.) the *plate of gold,* (ver. 36.) the *embroidered coat,* the *girdle,* and the *mitre,* (ver. 39.) which are all ordered for Aaron the high-priest: and afterward (ver. 42, 43.) *breeches* are ordered for him as well as his sons, which make up the number of eight.

For glory and for beauty.] To make their office more respected, and strike men with an awful sense of the Divine Majesty, whose ministers they saw appear in such grandeur. For this and the foregoing precepts (as Maimonides observes) were given to render the sanctuary of God more august and magnificent: for which end he magnified the dignity of those who ministered there; and not only separated them from other men, but ordered them to be clothed in beautiful and precious garments, that they might appear there like men of honour, (More Nevoch. lib. iii. cap. 45.) unto which R. Levi of Barcelona well adds, (Præcept. xcix.) that by these glorious garments the priests were put in mind of their dignity, and admonished to perform the Divine service with a spirit suitable to the greatness of Him unto whom they were consecrated. It may be fit for me also to add, that there being two sorts of garments which the high-priest wore (those they called *white,* and those they called *golden),* both of them were very rich, and made him look gloriously; whether the materials, or the colours, or the art wherewith they were made, be regarded; as will appear in the particular account which is given of them in this chapter. (See ver. 40.)

Ver. 3. *And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise-hearted.*] So the Hebrews call those who had extraordinary skill in any art: according to the ancient opinion, which made the heart the seat of the mind.

Whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom.] Endued with singular skill. For the word *ruach,* in Scripture, signifies *a gift of God;* whereby they who had it performed what they undertook excellently. And mechanical arts are called *wisdom,* as well as higher sciences: so St. Paul calls himself *a wise master-builder.* Which was the ancient language of the world before the time of Pythagoras, as Cuperus observes, (in his Apotheosis Homeri, p. 119.) out of Georgius Diaconus's preface to Aristotle's Logic, and out of Nichomachus Gerasinus, whose words are very remarkable: "When all before Pythagoras were called by the common name of Σοφοὶ, even *builders of houses,* and *curriers of leather,* and *pilots,* καὶ ἁπλῶς ὁ τέχνης τινὸς καὶ δημιουργίας ἔμπειρος, *and, in general, every one that was skilful in any art or public work,* that philosopher denied this name to them." Notwithstanding which, some authors, in aftertimes, still observed the ancient use: insomuch that Ælian calls fishermen, who understood their art well, σοφοὶ τῶν ἁλιέων, (lib. i. de Animal. cap. 2.) and Lucius calls Perilaus, σοφὸν χαλκέα, *a wise brazier;* and Aristotle himself observes that Phidias was called λιθουργὸν σοφὸν, *a wise stone-cutter,* (lib. v. Moral. ad Eudemum.) Nor were the Latins strangers to this language (as Cuperus shews in the same place), which is here used by Moses; whose entire sense in these words is this: that the men here spoken of, "being very skilful of themselves in their several arts, their skill was so increased by God's special gift, that they became marvellous artists."

That they make Aaron's garments.] They were first employed in making garments for Aaron; which were the most costly, and required most care in the work about them. The principal of these excellent artists were Bezaleel and Aholiab, (xxxi. 1, 2, &c.)

To consecrate him.] To be put on at his consecration, (xxix. 5, 6, &c.)

That he may minister to me in the priest's office.] For without these garments he might not minister. Whence that common saying in the Talmud, concerning the priests, "While they are clothed in their garments they are priests; when they want them, they are not priests." Which Maimonides expresses thus: When they are clothed in their garments their priesthood is upon them; when they are not clothed with them, their priesthood is not upon them. That is, they might no more perform Divine service than mere laymen. Whence it was, that under the second temple (when they wanted the holy oil to anoint him), the high-priest was made merely by clothing him with the forenamed eight garments. And as they might not minister without these, so they might not add any other to them: if they did, their ministry was unlawful. For which reason they might not wear gloves on their hands, or shoes on their feet: for from their knees (to which their breeches reached) to their feet, they were naked; only their coats in some sort covered their legs. But they stood barefoot in the sanctuary while they ministered. We do not find, indeed, that God any where forbade them to minister in shoes; but they being not commanded, when God orders them other vestments, particularly bonnets for their heads, and saith here expressly, these are the garments thou shalt make, that Aaron *may minister to me in the priest's office;* the Jews thence concluded, that God intended they should use no other, and not so much as any thing on their feet in the sanctuary. And this out of reverence to that holy place; as Moses was commanded to put off his shoes, because of the presence of God in that ground where he stood.

Which to me is an argument, that Moses did not intend to come as near to the Egyptian rites as he might with safety, but rather to oppose them. For their priests had ὑποδήματα βύβλινα on their feet, as Herodotus tells us, (lib. ii. cap. 7.) And so the priests of several other nations ministered in shoes of several kinds: though others, it is certain, ministered barefoot; particularly the priests of Diana at Castobala, as Strabo tells us, lib. xii. And nothing is more known than that saying of Pythagoras, ἀνυπόδητος θύε καὶ προσκύνει, *sacrifice and worship unshod:* the people, as well as the priests, putting off their shoes when they came to the temple, as the Jews did.

Ver. 4. *And these are the garments which thou shalt make,* &c.] These which follow were the principal garments wherewith the high-priest was clothed: besides which there was a plate of gold; and also breeches, common to him and all the rest of the priests.

And they shall make.] The skilful men beforementioned were to make them by his order and direction.

Holy garments.] Which none should wear but they. (See ver. 2.)

For Aaron thy brother, and his sons.] Some of these were peculiar to Aaron; others of them common to him and to his sons; as will appear in the particular account which is given of them afterward.

That they may minister unto me in the priest's office.] See ver. 3. These garments were only to be used in the time of their ministration: at other times they never wore them, but were then habited like other men; as Mr. Selden proves, (lib. ii. de Succession. cap. 7.) and at large confirms, (lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 11. n. 3, &c.)

Ver. 5. *And they.*] *i. e.* The skilful workmen beforementioned.

Shall take gold, &c.] This verse directs to the materials of which the priests' garments were to be made. For though these five words denote so many colours; yet the first word and the last (*viz. gold* and *fine linen*) shew the matter also is included; from which colour cannot be separated. And as for the matter of their garments, they were made either of woollen or linen; nothing of hair or silk being used in their contexture: for as to *gold* and *jewels,* they were rather for ornament, than for the making the substance of the garments. So all the Hebrew doctors, whose maxim is this, "the priests are not clothed in their ministry at the temple, but in woollen and linen." The matter of them, indeed, is not here expressed in this chapter, save only of their breeches, which are ordered to be made of linen, (ver. 42.) But in xxxix. 27, &c. all the garments of Aaron's sons are expressly said to be made of fine linen; except the girdle, which was partly of linen, partly of woollen. The garments of the high-priest, which the Jews called white garments, were certainly made of linen; and his girdle also was of the same, without any mixture of woollen, when he wore those garments on the great day of expiation, as Braunius shews, (lib. i. de Vestitu Sac. Hebr. cap. 7.)

Gold.] The Hebrews say there were seven sorts of gold, which was diversified either by its colour, or the place from which it came, or its goodness. But that which was used about these garments, they conclude was the gold they called *tahor,* which we translate *pure gold,* (ver. 22. 36.) *i. e.* the finest, and of the brightest colour; between a yellow and red.

And blue, and purple, and scarlet.] Of these colours, see xxv. 4.

And fine linen.] The Hebrew word *schesch* signifies a pure kind of *fine linen,* not silk (as some have imagined), for there was no such thing known in Moses's days. It was of a shining white colour; and therefore all the inferior priests were clothed in white, their garments being made of this. And such were all the garments wherewith the high-priest entered into the most holy place, on the great day of expiation. And wheresoever the Scripture speaks of *fine linen,* and mentions no colour, we are to understand white.

Ver. 6. *And they shall make the ephod.*] We retain the Hebrew word, which doth not express the form of this garment; but the next verse teaches us something of it; that it was a short garment, which hung behind upon the shoulders down to the buttocks, and came down before upon the breast and the belly. It consisted of three parts: that which covered the breast and the back (which the Hebrews take to be properly called the *ephod*), then the two shoulder-pieces, which came up from the arm-holes to the shoulders (mentioned in the next verse), and then the girdle belonging to it, (ver. 8.)

Of gold, of blue, and of purple.] See the foregoing verse.

And fine twined linen.] Here is another word added to *schesch* (or *fine linen*), which is *maschzar.* Which is never joined with any thing but *schesch* in all the Scripture; and only once found without *schesch,* which is to be understood, xxxix. 24. It is thought by Maimonides, and other Hebrew doctors, to signify *linen of six threads:* some will have it, that where it is mentioned alone it signifies *eight-threaded linen.*

With cunning work.] The Hebrew word *choscheb,* which we translate *cunning,* signifies the most artificial, or ingenious sort of work; which consisted in the great variety of figures and colours that were in it; like that which is sometimes made of divers birds' feathers; as J. Braunius shews, (lib. i. de Vest. Sacr. Hebr. cap. 17.)

Ver. 7. *It shall have the two shoulder-pieces thereof.*] They are so called, because they covered the shoulders; from whence the LXX. call the whole ephod by the name of ἐπωμίς. The Jews think they were woven by themselves, and then sewed to the back and breast-pieces with a needle. So the next words seem to them to signify.

Joined at the two edges thereof.] Which Abarbinel interprets in this manner: the ephod shall have two shoulder-pieces, which, being made by themselves separate from it, were afterwards sewed to the two extremities of the ephod. But the Hebrew words, if they be examined, import no such thing; but run thus, *it shall have two shoulder-pieces, joined at the two ends of it.* Now they might be joined in the very weaving of it, and not by a needle afterward: and so they were in all probability, as Braunius hath endeavoured to demonstrate.

And so it shall be joined together.] In the Hebrew the words are no more but these, *and it shall be joined together:* which may be understood of the coherence of the fore-part and hinder-part, by the two golden buttons, set with onyx-stones, which joined them together on the shoulders.

Ver. 8. *And the curious girdle of the ephod.*] The word *choscheb,* which we translate *curious girdle,* signifies it was of such artificial work as the ephod itself was. And it seems to have been two strings (as we may call them) which went out of each side of it, and tied it to their bodies, under their arm-holes, about the heart. So the high-priest had two girdles; that belt (as we may call it) which tied his coat to him; and this girdle, which tied the fore-part and hinder-part of the ephod together. It is called the *girdle of the ephod,* because it was annexed to those two cloths, and not to the shoulder-pieces.

Shall be of the same.] Or, *out of it:* to signify that the girdle was woven together with the ephod, and went out of it. So Jarchi and Abarbinel.

According to the work thereof.] This signifies it was to be made of the same matter, and woven after the same manner, with all the ornaments of the ephod itself; having all those five colours in it, mentioned ver. 4. and here repeated again.

Ver. 9. *And thou shalt take two onyx-stones.*] Concerning the onyx-stones, see Gen. ii. 12.

And grave on them the names of the children of Israel.] The princes (as Abarbinel observes) presented Moses with these stones; on which he himself did not engrave the names of the children of Israel, but some person skilful in that art. For it is expressly called, (ver. 11.) *the work of an engraver in stone,*

Ver. 10. *Six of their names on one stone, and the other six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth.*] The six eldest on that stone which was upon the right shoulder; and the six younger on the other upon the left: as several of the Hebrew doctors expound it: particularly Jarchi, with whom Josephus agrees, (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 8.) The Talmudists, indeed, dispose them otherwise; but this is most suitable to the word *toledoth*, according to their *generations*, or their *birth*, as we render the latter end of the verse.

Ver. 11. *With the work of an engraver in stone.*] Done with such art as such workmen use.

Like the engravings of a signet.] The same words are used again, (ver. 36.) where he speaks of the engravings upon the *plate of gold*. On which Abarbinel saith the letters were protuberant, as they are upon coins, or upon wax impressed with a seal: but here on the ephod and the breast-plate, he thinks the names were cut deep in the stones, as letters are in a seal. For which I can see no reason, the words being the very same; and therefore, if the letters were protuberant in the one, they were so in the other.

Thou shalt make them to be set in ouches of gold.] The Hebrew word *mischbetsoth*, which we translate *ouches*, signifies as much as the Latin word *funda;* the *socket*, as I may say, wherein the stones were set. Both which made a button; not of a round figure, but something like a *lozenge*, or, as Maimonides expresses it, like the figure of those holes that are in the stomach of such animals as chew the cud, called *reticulum*. (See Jo. Braunius de Vest. Sacr. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 17. n. 8.) By these buttons the hinder-part of the ephod was fastened to the fore-part upon the shoulders; and the breast-plate also hung upon them by golden chains.

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod, for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel.*] This is explained in the following words, that *Aaron might bear their names before the Lord upon his shoulders for a memorial*. That is, might remember to recommend the twelve tribes of Israel unto God, when he offered incense, and made his prayers before him. Or, for a token, that he appeared before God in the name of the whole people of Israel.

Others will have this memorial refer to God, before whom he presented himself, that he might be gracious unto his people, when the high-priest came thus attired, according to his own order, to pray for them; with assurance that he would be mindful of them all. And to this the twenty-ninth verse seems to incline; where the same is said to be the intention of engraving their names upon the twelve stones on the breast-plate. (See xxxix. 7.)

Ver. 13. *And thou shalt make ouches of gold.*] See ver. 11. where the word *mischbetsoth* is explained.

Ver. 14. *And two chains of pure gold at the ends*, &c.] These chains did not consist of many little rings, but of many threads or wires of gold twisted together like a rope. For which reason Moses adds, *of wreathen work shalt thou make them*. This Bartenora takes to be the meaning of the word *migbaloth* (which we translate *at the ends*), which he expounds *cords* or *cables*. They were not, saith he, like to those iron chains wherewith prisoners are bound, consisting of several joints; but twisted of golden threads, till they were as thick as cords. Others think *migbaloth* signifies *equal;* because they were of an equal thickness, or of an equal length. But our translation also may be defended; for the ends of them were annexed to the rings of the breast-plate, (ver. 24.) But as these chains were annexed at one end to the rings of the breast-plate, so at the other end they were annexed to the golden buttons upon the shoulders; so that the breast-plate hung upon the golden buttons by the chains.

And fasten the wreathen chains to the ouches.] Moses only briefly mentions the two chains in this place, to signify that the *ouches* in the ephod served for the support of the breast-plate, by these two chains; which properly belonged to that, and not to the ephod, as Jarchi observes. And therefore, after directions for the breast-plate (which here follow), they are again spoken of in their proper place, (ver. 22.) As ver. 27. there are two golden rings spoken of, which belong to the ephod; but not mentioned till then, because by these rings the breast-plate and ephod were knit together.

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt make the breast-plate.*] Next, after the ephod, directions are given for the *choschen*, which we translate *breast-plate;* taking it, I suppose, to come from the Hebrew word *chazeh*, which signifies the *breast*. For by the change of a letter (which is not unusual) *choschen* may well be thought to come from thence, because it lay upon the breast and covered it.

Of judgment.] For the priest wore it, when he went to consult the Divine Majesty about the great concerns of their religion or government; and received such answers, as directed them what to determine in dubious cases, either in war or peace. (See ver. 29.)

With cunning work.] See ver. 6.

After the work of the ephod thou shalt make it, &c.] It was to be made of the same materials with the ephod; and with the same artifice, as it here follows.

Ver. 16. *Four-square shall it be, being doubled.*] The words are in the Hebrew, *four-square shall it be doubled*. Which are to be thus understood, that the whole piece was not square till it was doubled. So Maimonides. It was a cubit long (*i. e.* two spans) and its breadth a span, but being doubled it was a square of a span, both in length and in breadth. From whence it follows, that it was hollow; so that it may be compared to one of our purses: only it doth not appear whether it were sewed together at the sides, or on one side, or open on both sides; though it is commonly said so to be. But it is possible that it was doubled, merely that it might be stronger to bear the weight of so many precious stones, and of the rings and chains; not that it might have any thing put between it.

A span shall be the length thereof, &c.] This is just the measure of a man's breast.

Ver. 17. *And thou shalt set it in settings of stones.*] Or, as it is in the Hebrew, *fill it with fillings of stones*. Which plainly signifies that these stones were set, as precious stones are now in our rings, in a *funda*, or *hollow*, which was filled up with the stone. In the twentieth verse we translate it *enclosings*. So Jarchi, because the stone filled up the hollowness of the *ouches* to which they were fitted, and therefore Moses uses the word *fillings*. Abarbinel here observes, that Moses saith *fillings of stone*, in the singular number, not the plural (and so in the next words, four rows

of *stone*, or *stones*, as we translate it), to signify that all the stones were so set in the breast-plate, as if they were but one stone. For all the *fundæ*, in which they were set, consisted of one mass of gold, wherein were twelve *ouches*, in which every single stone was set, as we see it now in our present lockets.

Even four rows of stones.] With a square of precious stones.

The first row shall be a sardius, &c.] There is so little certainty what these stones were, that nothing can be affirmed about them; as appears by the vast variety of interpretations that have been made of them, by writers both old and new. The first of them is called *odem* in the Hebrew, which some take to be a *ruby;* but have no other reason for it than only because אדם signifies *red*. Others take it for an adamant; which may seem to be derived from *odem*, as a jasper is from *jasphe*. And there are several other conjectures, but none so probable as that of our translators; who call it a *sardius*, (or *sardine* stone, as they render it, Rev. iv. 3.) which is of a red flaming colour, (as Braunius hath demonstrated from several authors, lib. ii. de Vest. Sacr. Hebr. cap. 8. n. 8.) but, as some describe it, with a cast of yellow in it, like that of fresh oil. And it is not improbable that this stone had the name of *sardius* from the Hebrew word *sered*, which signifies red, Isa. xliv. 13. as Kimchi there interprets it. And thence the Divine Majesty is said to look like a sardine stone (in the place abovenamed) because he appeared in great anger. So an ancient writer, διὰ τὸ φοβερὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, πυροειδὴς λᾶς τὸ Σάρδιον.

A topaz.] The second stone in this row is, in Hebrew, called *pitdah*, which we truly translate a *topaz:* which was a stone of a green colour, not a yellow, as we now commonly understand it. So Pliny and others, as the same Braunius shews, (lib. ii. cap. 9.) where he fancies that the word *topasion*, by an easy change of letters, was made out of *pitdah:* for the Syriac interpreter, (Rev. xxi. 20.) calls this stone *topadion;* in which there are the same letters that are in *pitdah*. But however this be, it appears from Job xxviii. 19. that this is the right translation of the word; for there it is *Pitdah Cush*, the most excellent *topaz* stones being found in an island belonging to Arabia, called thence by the name of *Topazion*.

And a carbuncle.] So we translate the third stone of the first row (which in Hebrew is called *bareketh*), following perhaps Abarbinel. But the greatest part of interpreters take it for the *smaragdus;* which good authors describe as the most radiant of all other stones; and therefore called, perhaps, *bareketh*, from its extraordinary splendour; for *barak*, every body knows, signifies to *glitter*, (Ezek. xxi. 10.) The best authors say, the colour of it is a *grass green;* wonderfully refreshing (as Pliny describes it) to the eyes, when one looks upon it.

Ver. 18. *And the second row shall be an emerald.*] The Hebrew word *nophech*, which we translate *emerald*, is by most interpreters taken to signify a *carbuncle*. Some of which stones are white; but the most excellent of all other are red, shining like fire, or a burning coal: whence the name of *carbuncle*, from *carbo*, a hot coal. And to this the Hebrew word *nophech* agrees; which Braunius ingeniously conjectures comes from *phuch*, which signifies that red wherewith women painted their faces, (2 Kings ix. 30.) And, in short, he takes it for that stone which we now call a ruby. And so Abarbinel translates it, and Luther also; (vide lib. ii. cap. 11.)

A sapphire.] This stone is mentioned before, xxiv. 9. and it retains its name to this day, almost among all people. So that there is no question, but only what kind of stone it was, about which authors differ. For some say it was a white stone (and there are some so pale, that they incline to that rather than any other colour), but it is plain that stone was called anciently a *sapphire*, which is now so called; being of the colour of the heavens, or the veins, that is, a sky-colour. (See xxiv. 10. Cantic. v. 14. Lament. iv. 7.)

And a diamond.] So we rightly translate the Hebrew word *jahalom:* which is thought to come from *halam*, which signifies to *break*. Whence *halmuth* is a *hammer*, or a *maul*, (Judg. v. 26.) For the adamant or diamond is the hardest of all stones; which breaks them all, but is broken by none, as Abarbinel speaks. It was anciently accounted the most precious of all gems, as Pliny acknowledges, (lib. xxxvii. cap. 4.)

Ver. 19. *In the third row, a ligure.*] So we translate the Hebrew word *leschem*, which being no where else found, the meaning of it is uncertain. But a great many, both of the ancients and moderns, translate it as we do: though what a *ligure* is cannot easily be resolved. Some think λιγύριον, or λυγγούριον, to be nothing but the best *amber*. But that is no precious stone, as all here mentioned are; and therefore (to mention no other conjectures) Braunius thinks we are to understand by this word a kind of *jacinth*: of which there being divers sorts, he judges it likely to be that which nearest approaches to the colour of amber; which hath made authors take them for the same. The ancients, indeed, commonly by a jacinth understand a stone of a violet colour, but more pale and dilute than in the amethyst: and the stone now called an *amethyst*, was anciently called a *jacinth*. Yet they mention jacinths of divers other colours, and some shining like fire; (vide lib. ii. de Vestit. Sacr. Hebr. cap. 14. n. 11, 12.)

An agate.] So the Hebrew word *schebo* (which is no where else mentioned in Scripture) is translated by the greatest part of interpreters; who take this for that stone the Greeks call *achates*. Which is so well known that it needs no description; being that beautiful stone which nature hath painted with great variety: from whence it hath got several names, as the same Braunius observes in the same book, cap. 15. n. 4, &c. And the very name of *achates*, seems to be derived from its various colours: *akud* in Hebrew signifying that which is spotted, as Jacob's cattle were, (Gen. xxx. 35.) Though now, because they are common, they are of no great value; yet anciently, it appears from Theophrastus and Pliny, they were more precious. (See there, n. 9.)

And an amethyst.] The Hebrew word *achlam* is no more to be found in Scripture elsewhere, than the two former. But the best and most ancient authors take it as we do, for that stone which other writers call an *amethyst:* which is of a bright violet colour, or like red wine, from whence it has its name in the Greek. The nearer these stones came to a purple, and the more they had of the flame of a carbuncle, the more precious they were esteemed, as the forenamed Braunius shews, (lib. ii. cap. 16. n. 56.)

Ver. 20. *In the fourth row, a beryl.*] The Hebrew word

tharschisch is very variously interpreted: but the LXX., Josephus, and a great many others, take it for that which the ancients call a *chrysolite;* that is, a stone of a golden colour, which others call a *topaz.* This Braunius endeavours to prove was the colour of *tharschisch,* out of Dan. x. 5, 6. Cant. v. 14, &c. (See cap. 17. n. 12, 13, &c.)

An onyx.] The Hebrew word *schoham* we meet withal in the beginning of the Bible, (Gen. ii. 12.) and translate it as we do here, an *onyx.* But Josephus, St. Jerome, and the Vulgar, translate it *sardonyx;* which was of a mixed colour, of white and red. For the most precious Indian sardonyx had a radix (as they call it) white, like the nail of one's finger; and the superficies red like blood; and both of them transparent: from whence it had its name; the *sardius* stone (as was said before) being red, and the *onyx* signifying the nail of one's finger. (See the forenamed Braunius, cap. 18.)

A jasper.] Though the Hebrew name, which is *jaspeth,* be retained among all people to this day, yet all interpreters have not translated it as ours do, who, no doubt, are in the right. For why should we not think *jaspeth* is certainly that stone which the Greeks and Latins call *jaspis?* as we doubt not the *sapphire* beforementioned (ver. 18.) is the stone they call *saphirus.* The best of these stones are of a green colour, like a *smaragdus;* but sometimes they have little spots or points in them, of various colours; which hath made some authors call this stone *panthera.* (See Braunius, cap. 19.)

They shall be set in gold in their enclosings.] Or, more literally, *they shall be golden ouches in which they are set.* (See ver. 17. and ver. 11.)

Ver. 21. *And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel,* &c.] Upon each stone was to be engraven the name of one of the sons of Jacob. And, in all probability, in the same order wherein they were engraven upon the two stones of the ephod; where it is ordered they should be engraven *according to their birth,* (ver. 10.) And so Josephus saith it was here, κατὰ τάξιν ἣν ἕκαστον αὐτῶν γενήσεσθαι συμβέβηκεν: which is but the translation of Moses's words now named, *according to their generations.* And so Maimonides understands it, though here it be only said, *according to the twelve tribes;* as if he had said, upon the first stone in the first row (*viz.* the sardius) shall be the name of *Reuben;* upon the second, the name of *Simeon;* upon the third, the name of *Levi;* and so of the rest.

Like the engraving of a signet.] See ver. 11.

Ver. 22. *And thou shalt make upon the breast-plate chains.*] These chains are not different from those mentioned ver. 14. as some imagine: who think there he speaks of the chains of the *ephod,* and here of those of the *breast-plate.* For the *ephod* had no *chains* belonging to it, nor needed any: and the *breast-plate* had only these two; which, though mentioned before, are now more exactly described in their proper place, and the use of them directed.

At the ends.] Concerning the word *gabluth,* see ver. 14. where I observed, some think it signifies *cords,* from *gabal,* which, as well as *chabal,* signifies a *rope* or *cord;* from whence some fancy comes our English word *cable.*

Of wreathen work.] So many wires of gold were wreathed together, as to make a chain of some thickness, like a cord. So Bartenora interprets it. Abarbinel saith they were weaved; but he must mean such a weaving as we make with our fingers, when we twist several threads together, which the LXX. call ἔργον πλοκῆς, *twisted work.*

Ver. 23. *And thou shalt make upon the breast-plate two rings of gold, and shalt put the two rings on the two ends of the breast-plate.*] The breast-plate had four rings in all; one at each corner of the square. And here he gives direction for the making those two, which were at the two upper corners of it: the other two are ordered, ver. 26.

Ver. 24. *And thou shalt put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings, which are on the ends of the breast-plate.*] This verse and the next shew how these chains were to be disposed, and for what end they served. Below they were fastened to the two rings, in the upper part of the breast-plate, as is here directed: and above they were fastened to the two buttons, upon the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, as is directed in the next verse. So the breast-plate was supported by these two *chains,* which hung upon the buttons, as the *breast-plate* did upon them.

Ver. 26. *And thou shalt make two rings of gold.*] That is, two other besides those mentioned ver. 23.

And thou shalt put them upon the two ends of the breast-plate.] This is to be understood of the lower corners of the breast-plate, as ver. 23. of the higher.

In the border thereof.] In the lower border of it.

Which is in the side.] Or, over against.

The ephod inward.] So that these two lowermost rings were not seen, being inward; lying, as it were, between the *ephod* and the *breast-plate.*

Ver. 27. *And two other rings of gold thou shalt make.*] These, though belonging to the *ephod,* are not mentioned till now; because the use of them would more plainly appear in this place.

And shalt put them on the two sides of the ephod.] Or rather, *shoulder-pieces of the ephod:* for so we translate it more plainly, ver. 7.

Underneath.] Below, at the lower end of the shoulder-pieces.

Towards the fore-part thereof.] Or, in its fore-part.

Over against the coupling thereof.] Opposite to the rings of the breast-plate; being to be coupled to it by these rings.

Above the curious girdle of the ephod.] All this is said only to mark out the place exactly, where these two rings were to be fastened to the *ephod;* that the breast-plate might be inseparable from it.

Ver. 28. *And they shall bind the breast-plate by the rings thereof, unto the rings of the ephod, with a lace of blue, that it may be above the curious girdle of the ephod.*] A blue lace, or ribbon, being put through the two lower rings of the *breast-plate,* and then through the rings of the *ephod:* they by it were tied together, a little above the girdle of the *ephod.*

And that the breast-plate be not loosed from the ephod.] And thus being joined, they were not to be separated one from another; no, not out of the time of ministration: but always continued so fast together, that the *ephod* could not be put on without the *breast-plate.* Thus Maimonides, and the Gemara, (cap. 7. of Joma,) *If any one remove the breast-plate from the ephod, or the staves from the ark, he shall receive forty stripes.*

Ver. 29. *And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breast-plate of judgment upon his heart.*] Appear in the name of the whole people of Israel, to beg direction of God in all difficult cases.

When he goeth in unto the holy place.] Where with his face towards the ark (where the Divine Glory sat) he prayed to God for them.

For a memorial before the Lord continually.] That God might remember them, when he remembered him daily of the promises made to them, and to their forefathers. Which, in Scripture phrase, denotes God's gracious hearing his prayers, when he addressed himself unto him, in the manner he required. For then he is said to remember his people, when he granted their desires: and they remembered him, when they did as he bade them.

Ver. 30. *And thou shalt put in the breast-plate of judgment.*] It is called both here and in the foregoing verse *the breast-plate of judgment*, not only for the reason there named, but because the high-priest (nay, the whole body of the priests, but he especially) sat as a judge to determine several controversies, as appears from many places, (Lev. x. 11. Deut. xvii. 8, 9. xix. 7. xxxiii. 8. 2 Chron. xv. 3, &c.)

The urim and the thummim.] There is not the least intimation any where what these were, nor any direction given to Moses for the making of them, as there is for the rest of the priestly attire. Which may incline one to conclude one of these two things: either that they were things delivered to Moses by God himself, as the two tables of stone were; or that they are not things different from the precious stones beforementioned. But if the former of these were true, I should think it would have been as plainly mentioned that God delivered these unknown things to him, as that he did the two tables of stone. The other hath something in the Scripture to countenance it. For in the thirty-ninth chapter of this book, where Moses sets down the making of all those things which are here ordered, he mentions only the four rows of stones, in the same manner as he doth here; but saith not a word of putting the *urim* and *thummim* in the breast-plate: though he spake particularly of other things, even of the rings, and the chains, and the lace, whereby it was tied to the ephod. And, on the other side, when he speaks of habiting Aaron with all these vestments, in order to his consecration, he only saith, (Lev. viii. 8.) that *he put the breast-plate upon him, also he put in the breast-plate the urim and the thummim;* but saith not a word of the four rows of stones. For which it is hard to give a reason; unless it be, because the *urim* and the *thummim* were one and the same thing with the twelve precious stones: so that it was indifferent, whether he said *urim* and *thummim* were put into the breast-plate, or the twelve precious stones; which are the only things in all this description of the holy vestments that can be thought to be *urim* and *thummim*. And, indeed, there being such a particular direction for every thing else, and also a description of their form and fashion (as, that the chains should be of *wreathen work*), one cannot but think there would have been something said of these, if they had been distinct from what was mentioned before. Mr. Mede, indeed, thinks that nothing is said concerning them, because they were things well known to the patriarchs. But this is well confuted lately by another great man, Dr. Pocock, in his late learned commentary upon the prophet Hosea, (p. 149.) unto which I refer the reader, because I have other things to note, and would not willingly enlarge too much on this subject.

As for that which some have said concerning two little images, or representations of angels, which were put in the hollow of the breast-plate, I see no foundation for such a conceit. One may better say, that these two words *urim* and *thummim* were written or wrought on the breast-plate; signifying that from hence they should receive the clearest and most perfect resolution of all their doubts. And of this opinion was R. Asaria in his Meor Enajim, cap. 46.

But if we take the former to be the truer account, that he only repeats what he said before, (as he doth what he had said of the rings belonging to the breast-plate, ver. 14. 22.) then the meaning is, that the twelve stones should be the most sparkling, and most perfect in their kind, that could be got (for *urim*, all acknowledge, signifies *fires* or *illuminations;* and *thummim*, the greatest *perfection*), and that all belonging to the breast-plate (the *square stuff*, the *stones* engraved, the *rings*, the *chains* and *lace*) should be prepared and made ready before they were set in the breast-plate.

And of this opinion (that the precious stones were the *urim* and the *thummim*) were Josephus and the Talmudic doctors, who therein, I take it, were in the right; though they do not give a likely account how the mind of God was declared by them.

And they shall be upon Aaron's heart.] So it is said concerning the names of the children of Israel, (ver. 29.) which were engraven on the twelve stones; and seems to confirm the foregoing interpretation.

When he goeth in before the Lord.] To minister unto the Divine Majesty, and to enquire of him: which he did in the holy place, standing with his face towards the ark in the holy of holies. Into which he went only once a year, upon a particular business, to expiate the sins of the people; and had not on these glorious robes here mentioned; but was only clothed in fine linen, as we read, Lev. xvi. And therefore it is strange that Buxtorf should say he went into the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, with the *urim* and *thummim*, to inquire of God. See his history of them, cap. i. (where he alleges this verse for it) and cap. iii.

And Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel.] By *judgment* is here meant the *breast-plate of judgment*, as it is called, when he begins to speak of it, (ver. 15.) and in the foregoing verse; just as the *ark of the testimony* is sometimes called *the testimony*. Or else the meaning is, that he should carry the great concerns of the children of Israel (their weighty causes and doubts) before God; and desire his direction for the king, for the great council, and for the people, in all difficult matters, both in war and in peace, whether belonging to religion or to civil government.

Upon his heart before the Lord.] He was never to appear in the holy place without this breast-plate, with the names of all the children of Israel upon it. Many learned men have taken notice of that passage in Ælian, (lib. xiv. Var. Hist. cap. 34.) where he relates how the Egyptian priests had an image made of sapphire stone about their neck (which was called Ἀλήθεια, *i. e. truth*), when they sat in judgment. And Diodorus Siculus saith, (lib. i. cap. 75.) that it consisted of more precious stones than one; from whence some have imagined that Moses took his pattern of this breast-plate. But as they did not wear this badge of authority, when they ministered about sacred things, but in their civil courts where they sat as judges; so there is no reason to think this ornament of theirs was so old as the time of Moses (there being no mention of it in Hero-

dotus), but was rather a later invention, unto which other countries were not strangers. For the vestal virgins among the Romans, at least she that was called Maxima, wore an ornament upon her breast made of precious stones, as a statue digged up at Rome, in the beginning of the last century, seems to represent it, (see Lipsius, cap. ult. de Vesta et Vestal.) And Gutherius hath proved that these vestal virgins sat in judgment, and tried causes, as the Pontifex Maximus did; and then, it is likely, and not at other times, wore this *antepectorale*. There is more ground also to say, that the Egyptians took their pattern from the Jews, than that these took it from the Egyptians; there being in the time of Solomon a great correspondence between them, by his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter.

Continually.] Whensoever he appeared before the Lord to inquire of him. The greatest difficulty is, how the Lord answered by *urim* and *thummim?* Which the Jews generally think was by the shining of the stones, and the prominence of such letters in them, as made the answer. If they had left out the latter part of this resolution (about the prominence of the letters) what they say would have been more likely: especially since Josephus only mentions their extraordinary splendour; telling us, for instance, that when the high-priest inquired, whether they should go to war or not? if God approved of it, there was such a refulgent brightness in the stones, ὡς τῷ πλήθει παντὶ γνώριμον εἶναι, τὸ παρεῖναι τὸν Θεὸν εἰς ἐπικουρίαν, *that made all the people know God would be present for their help and succour.* And when God did not approve of their undertaking, he saith there was a cloudiness upon the stones, as there had been for two hundred years (he confesses) before he wrote his history, τοῦ Θεοῦ δυσχεραίνοντος ἐπὶ τῇ παραβάσει τῶν νόμων, *God being angry with them, for the transgression of his laws,* (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 9.) But this alone could not resolve such questions as that Judg. i. 1. "Who shall go up first to fight against the Canaanites?" to which the Lord answered, (ver. 2.) "Judah shall go up." For if this answer was given in the way now mentioned, that stone alone, which had the name of Judah engraven on it, must have had a splendour in it above all the rest. Which if we should suppose, yet an answer could not have been given to all their questions, merely by the refulgency of all, or of any one stone; as if they asked, *Which way they should go against an enemy?* therefore it is more likely, that there was a voice which spake to the high-priest, from the Divine Glory, on the mercy-seat; as we read there was to Moses, when he went into the most holy place to speak with God, (Numb. vii. 89.) Against which I do not see what can be objected; and it seems far more probable than their opinion, who think God inspired the high-priest at that time, when he consulted him, as he did the prophets. For this makes no difference between inquiring by *urim* and *thummim*, and by the prophets, but only this; that God (they say) constantly answered when the high-priest consulted him, which favour he did not always grant the prophets. If there be any truth also in what the Jews say concerning the *bath-col* under the second temple, it seems to me to tell us, that God then directed them, without the *urim* and *thummim*, in the same way as he had formerly done with it. Certain it is, that such a voice often spake to our Saviour, in the audience of his apostles, out of the high and holy place in the heavens; to shew that he was the *prophet like unto Moses*, whom he promised to raise up unto them, (Deut. xviii. 15.)

There are those who have adventured to affirm, that others besides the high-priest might wear the *urim* and *thummim*, to consult the Divine Majesty, particularly their kings. But how weak the grounds of this assertion are, will appear when I come to those places which they allege to justify it. I shall conclude what I have to note about this matter, with one observation more; that this is one of the principal reasons, why the government of this people before they had kings was (as Josephus calls it) *theocracy*, that is, *the empire of God*, because he, by this oracle of *urim* and *thummim*, prescribed how they should proceed in all their public affairs of great moment. And another reason was, because he stirred up judges when he thought it necessary; who, being of his immediate appointment, are so far acknowledged by him, that when they were weary of Samuel's government (who was a judge) and desired a king, God declared it was not Samuel whom they rejected, but himself.

Ver. 31. *And thou shalt make the robe.*] The Hebrew word *mehil*, which we translate *robe*, is by the Latins called *pallium*, and by the LXX. ποδήρη, *a garment coming down to the ancles.* The form of it is intimated in the next verse; and the matter of it is here ordered to be *all of blue*, i. e. *of blue cloth.* Some, indeed, say of silk: but it is certain *thechelet* signifies *wool died of a sky-colour.* (See Braunius, lib. i. de Vest. Sacr. Hebr. cap. 9. n. 1.)

Robe of the ephod.] So called, because the *ephod* was put upon it.

Ver. 32. *And there shall be a hole in the top of it.*] From hence the form of it may be gathered, that it was like one of our surplices, or shirts without sleeves: but with two holes on the sides to let their hands through. And it was put on over their heads, it appears by this hole at the top; and so covered their whole body.

In the midst thereof.] Not cross-wise, from shoulder to shoulder: but long-wise, from the back to the middle of the breast, as Abarbinel expounds it. Wherein it differed from a surplice, and from the *tunic*, or *coat:* the hole of which at the top was round; whereas this was oblong, as they speak.

It shall have a binding.] This was both for handsomeness, and for strength, that it might not be further slit. Josephus mentions the former as a reason for this *binding* or *border*, that there might appear no δυσπρέπεια (as his word is), *no deformity about the priest:* and the text itself in the end of the verse mentions the latter, *that it be not rent.* This binding Abarbinel thinks, on the former account, was on the inside, for decorum's sake, that nothing might be seen but the robe.

Of woven work.] It was not to be sewed to it, but woven with it of one entire piece; which could not be done without a great deal of art. So Abarbinel; the opening or hole was not to be cut with scissars, and then sewed with a needle; but it was woven with the very garment.

As it were the hole of an habergeon.] The ancient *habergeons*, or *corselets*, being made of leather and linen, needed a *limbus* about the neck to keep the part firm and tight. But whether the binding had hooks and eyes (as we call them) like those which are in *corslets*, to fasten the parts together, is uncertain. Abarbinel affirms it, but without any authority.

That it be not rent.] That is, the robe be not rent in putting it on; or by the ephod and breast-plate that were upon it; for that had rendered it contemptible; a rent among us (saith L. Levi Barzelonita) being dishonourable, (Præcept. ciii.)

Ver. 33. *And beneath upon the hem of it.*] Or, upon its skirts. Κατὰ πέζαν, saith Josephus, *towards the bottom, where it touched the feet.*

Thou shalt make pomegranates.] So the Hebrew word *rimmonim* undoubtedly signifies, as Maimonides and other learned Jews affirm. Jarchi saith, they were to be of the bigness of a hen's egg.

Of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof.] Though the robe itself was of one simple colour, yet the skirts of it were very much adorned by variety of colours in the pomegranates; which were made of yarn died *blue, purple,* and *scarlet,* (of these see xxv. 4.) and the LXX. add, of *fine linen.* For so we read they were made, xxxix. 24.

And bells of gold between them round about.] The Targum upon Esth. vi. 10. makes the kings of Persia to have worn such kind of garments. For he represents Ahasuerus as saying to Haman, "Go to my wardrobe, and take one of my best purple cloaks, and of the best silk vests, with gems at the four corners of it, and golden bells and pomegranates hanging round about." And no doubt they were intended partly as an ornament to the high-priest, their matter being of gold; but what their form was we are not told. There were round bells in use amongst them, like those which we commonly see upon the collars of our horses' necks: but Maimonides saith, these were of a pyramidal figure, open at the bottom, with clappers in them, like our little hand-bells.

Ver. 34. *A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the bottom,* &c.] So there was a bell (as the Jews explain it) between every two pomegranates; and a pomegranate between every two bells. But how many of each there were is uncertain; though the Jews commonly say there were seventy-two. Which if it was true, and the pomegranates were of such a bigness as was said before, this robe would have been so wide at the bottom, as to have been cumbersome, especially with so many pomegranates and bells hanging upon it.

Ver. 35. *And it shall be unto Aaron to minister.*] He was never to appear before God without this garment; nor to wear it but when he ministered. The same is said of all the priestly garments, both of his and of his sons', (ver. 3, 4.)

And his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord.] That the people, upon this notice, might fall to their prayers, while he was offering incense; which represented their going up to heaven.

And when he cometh out.] That they might then dispose themselves to be dismissed with his blessing.

That he die not.] For neglecting to appear before God, in this solemn manner, as he required. For it is the common maxim among the Jews, that when the priests were clothed with their garments, they were held to be priests; when they were not so clothed, they were not priests. That is, if they presumed to minister without this attire, it was an illegal act, and unacceptable to God. (See ver. *ult.*)

Ver. 36. *And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold.*] The Hebrew word *zitz* is translated πέταλον by the LXX. which signifies *a leaf expanded.* And such was this *plate* (as we render it), a thin piece of gold, two fingers broad (as Jarchi tells us), and so long as to reach from one ear to the other; being bound to the forehead with a string, which was tied behind the head; and thence is called a *crown,* (xxxix. 30.) as all things are which compass the forehead. And crowns being anciently made of flowers or leaves, which we call garlands, Josephus saith this crown was adorned with the figures of that flower which the Greeks call κυανὸς, of which there were three rows, (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 8.) And indeed the Hebrew word *zitz* signifies a *flower;* which hath made some think this plate had its name from the flowers which were wrought in it, to make it look more beautiful. (See xxix. 6.)

And grave upon it like the engravings of a signet.] Not by cutting the letters deep in the plate, but by making them protuberant, like those which are made by a seal upon wax. (See ver. 22.)

HOLINESS TO THE LORD.] The ancient crowns perhaps had some image or other in them (for in later times Domitian had a golden crown with the effigies of Jupiter and Minerva, as Suetonius tells us), instead of which, God commands his own great name to be engraven on Aaron's crown in these words; which signify, that he was *separated to the service of the Most High.* It is but a frivolous question which the Jews make, whether these words were engraven in one line, or in two, one above another? for there is no reason to make us think they were not in one line as they are here written.

Ver. 37. *And thou shalt put it on a blue lace.*] It hung on a ribbon of blue, by which it was fastened upon the mitre, as it follows in the next words. The Talmudists fancy there were *three* ribbons, one at each ear, and one in the middle, which is this here mentioned. But this one was sufficient for the purpose, as will appear when the next words are rightly understood.

That it may be upon the mitre.] There was an order before for making a *mitre,* among other vestments: but we have not been told hitherto of what it was made, (which is mentioned below, ver. 39.) nor what was the form of it. The Latins anciently called it *stroppus,* which is the same with the Greek στρόφιον; being a fillet wound about the head of their priests, as Festus tells us. Prudentius calls it *tortam infulam,* because it was made sometimes of three or four ribbons or laces wreathed together, (vid. Cuperus in his Apotheosis Homeri, p. 138.) The ancient Greeks call it *tiara,* and *cidaris,* and sometimes *diadema,* which was commonly made of *byssus,* or fine linen, as appears even from the story of Alexander the Great, who (as Justin tells us) took his diadem from his head to bind up the wounds of Lysimachus; (lib. xv.) which shews that it was made of fine linen, which was proper for that purpose.

They were of divers colours, but commonly white: and such were the diadems of kings, which Ammianus calls *fasciolam candidam, regiæ majestatis insigne,* (lib. xii.) Such was the mitre of the high-priest (ver. 39.) and the bonnets of the lower priests. The former of which they called *mitznephet,* and the other *migbaoth.* They did not differ at all in their matter, but only in their form. Both consisted of sixteen ells of fine linen, as the Hebrew doctors agree;

but do not tell us of what breadth: which might be wrapped round several times about, into what form they pleased. And the *migbaoth*, or *bonnets*, they all say came lower down upon the forehead than the mitre, and rose up higher, like a hillock. But the *mitznephet* did not cover the forehead at all, and was flatter than the bonnets, but much broader, consisting of more folds round, like the turbans which are now worn in the east, or like a half sphere.

Now some understand these words, *that it may be upon the mitre*, as if the golden plate was bound upon the mitre, which is contrary to what follows, (ver. 38.) *it shall be upon Aaron's forehead.* This therefore must be understood of the lace or ribbon, which was to come down over the mitre, to fasten the golden plate which depended upon it. For being put through a little hole in the middle of the plate, it went over the mitre; and each end of it being put into the holes of the plate which were at each ear, it was brought up again and tied over the mitre. Thus we must interpret it, if there was but one string to fasten it. It cannot be denied, indeed, that sometimes more than one thing of a kind is intended where the Scripture speaks in the singular number, (as in viii. 21. x. 4, &c.) and therefore we may conceive, as I said before, that there were three ribbons, one at each end, and another in the middle, by which it hung upon the forehead; whereby they might more easily be fastened at the top of the mitre.

Upon the fore-front of the mitre it shall be.] That is, the golden plate shall be in the fore-front of it. By which it appears that the Hebrew doctors rightly described it, as reaching before from ear to ear; but no part of it behind. That is, it was a half-circle, not a whole, encompassing only the fore-part of the head, not like other crowns that encompass it round.

Ver. 38. *And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead.*] The mitre, as I said before, did not come down low (as the bonnets did), but only covered the crown and the upper part of the head, the whole forehead being left bare, that there might be space enough for this plate of gold to lie upon it, and for his phylacteries, as the Jews will have it, which were next to the mitre, and then the crown, a little above the eyes. But some of them think the high-priest wore no phylacteries, having no need of them, when he was clothed with so many holy garments. But, not to trouble ourselves with that, it appears by these words that the plate did not lie upon the mitre, but upon the high-priest's forehead.

That Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their gifts.] These words suppose there might be some defects in their sacrifices and gifts, which they consecrated and presented unto God (though they were ignorant of it), which were all pardoned (for that is meant by *bearing*, that is, taking away iniquity) by the intercession of their high-priest, when he appeared before God with this crown upon his head, that is, thus perfectly and completely attired. Wherein he represented our great high-priest, Christ Jesus; by whose perfect sanctity and satisfaction all the defects of our sincere services are supplied.

And it shall be always upon his forehead.] That is, whensoever he went in to minister in the holy place.

That he may be accepted before the Lord.] That the children of Israel and their sacrifices and gifts might be accepted when they presented them to God; which they were not, if the high-priest did not appear before him in this manner on their behalf. The heathens themselves (as Athenæus informs us, lib. xv. cap. 5.) thought prayers and sacrifices then acceptable to their gods, when they offered them with crowns on their heads. And therefore a great many authors tell us, the priests in all countries were crowned when they ministered; nay, the sacrifices themselves, and their altars, and their holy utensils, were crowned; as if all their services had been ineffectual if made without a crown. For they that prepared the beasts for sacrifice, and the musicians, and all that were present, were crowned, as appears out of ancient coins and innumerable ancient writers. (See Cuperus, Apotheos. Hom. p. 70.)

Ver. 39. *And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen.*] This *coat* is one of the garments ordered to be made ver. 4. in Hebrew called *ketonah:* from whence both the Greek word χιτὼν, and the Latin *tunica*, seem to be derived. The matter of it was *fine linen*, and therefore it was white. The form of it was not much unlike one of our shirts, with sleeves coming down to the wrists; but made pretty close to the body, and so long as to reach down to the heels. It was the most inward of all the priestly garments, being next to their body. And though it be not mentioned in the description of it, there is no doubt that it had a slit in the neck of it, by which it was put over their head, and then tied to the neck with strings.

Embroidered.] The Hebrew word *taschbetz* all agree signifies a work with certain figures woven in it, either of gold or other materials. But what sort of figures is not certain. The famous Salmasius thinks they were round, like to our eyes. Others take them to have been square or cubical. R. Sol. Jarchi saith in general, that it was a work like the *ouches* (as we translate *mischbetzoth)*, in which the precious stones were set. But none, I think, hath made such likely guesses at the figure of them as Jo. Braunius, who takes them to have been nothing else, but *lacus aut fossulas angulares*, &c. such little deep holes, as resemble those that are in one of the stomachs of those animals that chew the cud, called *reticulum.* (See lib. i. de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebræorum, cap. 17.)

And thou shalt make the mitre of linen.] See ver. 37. where the mitre is mentioned.

And thou shalt make the girdle of needle-work.] It is mentioned before (ver. 4.) under the name of *abanet*, or *abnet*, which, no doubt, signifies a *girdle* or *belt;* yet not like our common girdles, but like that which we call a *sash*, being made of twined linen and worsted of divers colours, as we find xxxix. 29. where blue, and purple, and scarlet, signifies wool, or worsted-yarn of these colours. Such were the girdles of all the priests, which they wore all the year, the high-priest as well as the rest, except upon one day (that of *expiation)*, when he had on a girdle of fine linen only, not mixed with woollen. These girdles were of such a length, that they might go round the body more than once, as Josephus tells us, lib. iii. cap. 8. For, if we may believe him, they were two-and-thirty ells long, and four fingers broad, being hollow within. When they were not in the act of ministration, both ends of them hung down to their very feet, πρὸς εὐπρέπειαν, &c. (as the same Josephus speaks) *for comeliness' sake, that they might ap-*

pear more goodly to the beholders: which agrees to what Moses saith in the next verse, that they (as all the priestly garments, ver. 2.) were made *for glory and beauty.* But when they went about any holy work belonging to their office, they threw them over their left shoulder, that they might not be a hinderance to them. The use of this *girdle* was to gird their *coat* close to them, which they tucked up also in the girdle (when they went about their ministry) to the middle of their legs, that it might not encumber them in their service.

Of needle-work.] This was a different sort of word from *taschbetz,* (which we translate *broidered,* ver. 4.) and from *choscheb,* (which we translate *cunning,* ver. 6. 15.) and is here called *rokem;* which signifies the same with *choscheb,* as to the variety of colours and figures in the work: but *choscheb,* as the Hebrew doctors tell us, was done by weaving, and *rokem* with a needle, as we rightly take it. Of the two, *choscheb* was the most artificial, as the word seems to intimate; being wrought on both sides with the same figures, whereas *rokem* was only on one side. This they gather from xxvi. 31. where the veil is ordered to be made of the work called *choscheb,* which it is probable was glorious on both sides, both within and without the most holy place. Josephus saith, this girdle was wrought with flowers of the several colours mentioned xxxix. 29.

Ver. 40. *And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats.*] The coats of all the priests, as well as of the high-priest, were embroidered, as Maimonides expressly affirms. And it seems to be the sense of ver. 4. where he is commanded to make garments not only for Aaron, but for his sons (*i. e.* all the rest of the priests), among which the *broidered coat* may well be thought to belong to them. (See xxxix. 27.)

And thou shalt make for them girdles.] The girdles of the inferior priests were the very same with that of the high-priest (as well as their tunics or coats), being to bind their coats to their body.

And bonnets.] How these differed from the *mitre* of the high-priest, in their form not in their matter, see ver. 37.

For glory and for beauty.] The garments of all the priests were contrived to make them appear in a splendid and comely manner, when they ministered to the glorious majesty of God, being of fine linen, which was worn by the greatest persons, made with great art, especially their coats and girdles, which were finely adorned (as I have shewn in the verses foregoing) with elegant figures and rich colours: for blue, or sky-colour, purple and scarlet, belonged to kings and persons of honour. But the garments of the high-priest were above all the rest most glorious, and designed so to be, (ver. 2.) For besides those common to him with all the priests, which were very costly, he had others far more precious: particularly the ephod and its girdle, the breast-plate set with stones of great value, the robe, and the crown of gold. The two stones also on the shoulders of the ephod, were not only precious in their kind, but for their bigness; being so large, that twelve names were engraven in them, containing six-and-thirty letters. All which considered, Philo had reason to say (L. de Sacerd. Hon.) *it is manifest the law dressed up their priest,* Βασιλέως εἰς σεμνότητα καὶ τιμὴν, *to the venerableness and honour of a king.* For the priesthood in old time was so honourable, that kings themselves discharged it: which is the reason that in Scripture princes and priests have the same name of *cohenim.*

To all which I may add, that they took such care all their garments should be *for glory and beauty,* that when they were foul, they did not wash them, nor repair them when they had any breach in them: but new ones were bought, and the old employed about the lamps in the feast of tabernacles. (See Mr. Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 11. p. 142.)

Ver. 41. *And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him.*] As we read he did, Lev. viii. 6, 7, &c. 13.; and this was part of Aaron's consecration, ver. 3. of this chapter.

And shalt anoint them.] He anointed Aaron by pouring the holy oil upon his head; (Lev. viii. 12.) but he anointed his sons only by sprinkling some of it upon their garments (as he did upon his also) with the blood of the sacrifice, (xxix. 21. Lev. viii. 30.)

And consecrate them.] By the sacrifice of a ram, called the *ram of consecration,* the blood of which he put *upon the tip of their right ear,* &c. (xxix. 20. Lev. viii. 22, 23, &c.) and by the wave-offering which he put into their hands, that they might wave them before the Lord, xxix. 24. Lev. viii. 27. from whence the phrase for *consecrate* here in this place is in Hebrew *fill their hand.*

And sanctify them.] By the foregoing ceremonies. For they were set apart to the Divine service, by putting on their garments, anointing them, and offering the sacrifice of consecration, and by washing them with water, as appears from Lev. viii. 6, 7. 12. where it is said, he anointed Aaron to *sanctify him;* and ver. 30. having sprinkled their garments, it is said *he sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him.*

Ver. 42. *And thou shalt make them linen breeches.*] Though these are mentioned in the last place, yet they were put on the first of all the priest's garments; after them the *coat,* which being girt about with the *girdle,* the *bonnet* was put upon the priest's head. The high-priest, in like manner, having put on his breeches, coat, and girdle (which were common to all priests), was clothed with his *robe,* and next with the *ephod* and *breast-plate,* which were inseparable; and last of all with his *mitre* and the *golden crown.* To which order nature itself directed them; the inward garments being always put on before the outward.

Now as to these *miknese,* which we truly render *breeches,* the matter of them was linen, as we are here informed: and not ordinary *linen,* but that which the Hebrews call *schesch,* which was *fine linen;* and more than that, they were of *twined* (or six-threaded) *linen,* as we read xxxix. 28. They were made with great art, being woven of one piece, and not sewed together, as Maimonides tells us. The form of them was like our *breeches* or *drawers,* which may be the reason why Moses here uses a word of the dual number, because they had two parts, which covered each thigh distinctly.

To cover their nakedness.] This was opposed, as Maimonides thinks, to the idolatrous worship of Peor; which, if we may believe him, was so beastly, that it was performed by discovery of their nakedness, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 45.)

From the loins even to the thighs they shall reach.] They were bound about the loins with strings, which run through

the top of them, that they might be drawn straiter or looser, as they pleased; and came down the thighs as far as to their knees. There were some breeches anciently which covered the legs also, and came down to the feet, such as sailors use in cold countries: but these did not come down so low, the intention of them being only to cover those parts (as it goes before) which ought not to be exposed. For though they had a coat over their whole body, yet that being loose and wide below, by some accident or other, those parts might have been seen which ought to be secret, if that had not been prevented by these drawers, which so covered the lower parts, that nothing could possibly be seen. For in this they differed from our drawers, that they had no opening, either behind or before. Some think before this time there were no such thing as breeches in use among the Hebrews; nor after this, among any other men but the priests in their ministration. But in latter ages they came in use, as appears from Dan. iii. 21.

Ver. 43. *And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place.*] They could not be permitted so much as to appear in the tabernacle, much less to *minister*, especially in the *holy place*, without their *holy vestments*. Which they wore there only, but in no other place: for at home, or abroad, or in the Sanhedrin, and all other places out of the temple, they wore common garments, such as other men did. Insomuch that St. Paul could not distinguish the high-priest, when he sat in the court, by his habit, from other judges, (Acts xxiii. 5.) And accordingly as we read, Ezek. xlii. 14. xliv. 17—19. an express precept for putting off the priests' garments, and laying them up in the chambers appointed for that purpose, when they went out of the court where they ministered. The high-priest, as Maimonides informs us, had a chamber, or vestry, peculiar to himself, where his garments were laid up, when he put them off, as the robes of kings are in their wardrobe. Of this one cannot reasonably doubt, that they, being not only precious, but sacred things, were kept safe in the temple, which was a holy place. And so were the garments of the inferior priests, as we may learn from Ezra and Nehemiah: who, among other things put into the treasury, mention a certain number of priests' garments, (Ezra ii. 69. Nehem. vii. 70.) In their vestries also there were peculiar chests, where every sort of vestment was kept by itself. All the breeches, for instance, which had this inscription, *Miknese*, i. e. *breeches*. In like manner, all the coats and the bonnets had two distinct chests, with this inscription, *Ketonoth* and *Migbaoth:* and so had the rest, as we are told in the Misna Tamid, cap. 5.

But while they were in the temple, they might keep on their holy garments (only not sleep in them there) even at those hours when they did not minister. Which this text seems to suppose, when it saith, they shall be upon them, *when they come into the tabernacle*, as well as *when they come near unto the altar to minister*. Thus the Talmudists: in the temple they might keep on their garments, *whether in the time of their ministration, or out of it*. But this they understand only of their breeches, their coat, and bonnet: for their girdle they were bound to lay aside as soon as they had done ministering.

That they bear not iniquity and die.] That God do not punish them with death, for being so profane as to appear before him without their holy garments, which he appointed to preserve his service from contempt.

It shall be a statute for ever unto him, and his seed after him.] That is, as long as there shall be any priest of the order of Aaron, they shall appear before God in these garments. But that priesthood being abolished by the true eternal priesthood of Christ, there is no longer any use of them; no more than of the sacrifices those priests offered, which are completed in the sacrifice of Christ. As for the Jewish sense of these words, it is manifest that it hath been long confuted; there having been no priesthood, nor holy garments, nor sacrifices, no, nor temple among them, for above sixteen hundred years. Nay, before the coming of our Saviour, some of the priestly ornaments, and those the chief of all, were gone, *viz.* the *urim* and the *thummim* in the breast-plate; which they generally confess were not in the second temple: and it may be a question, whether they continued to the end of the first. But the truth is, there was the breast-plate and the ephod, and consequently the *urim* and *thummim*, as to its matter and form (though it had lost its use, there being no answers from God given by it), and accordingly all the rest of the priestly garments remained as long as there was any priesthood; which is the full sense of these words, *a statute for ever to him, and his seed after him.*

CHAP. XXIX.

Ver. 1. *AND this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them.*] Having ordered Aaron and his sons to be set apart to attend upon him in his house as his ministers; he now directs how they should be *hallowed* (or made holy), that is, separated to his service in the priest's office.

To minister unto me in the priest's office.] This was the design of their separation from other men, as was often said before, (xxviii. 1. 3, 4. 41. 43.)

Take one young bullock and two rams without blemish.] There were several things to be done before this, though this was the chief. For they were to be *washed*, and *robed* with their priestly garments, and *anointed;* and then they were completed by peculiar sacrifices, which are directed and described, ver. 10, 11, &c. and put in execution, Lev. viii. 1, 2, &c.

Ver. 2. *And unleavened bread*, &c.] Together with the foregoing sacrifices (which it will appear hereafter were of several sorts), there was a *mincha* to be offered; bread being necessary at a table together with flesh. And this consisted of three parts; *unleavened bread, unleavened cakes tempered with oil*, and *unleavened wafers* (or thin cakes, like to our *pancakes*) *anointed with oil*, before they were put into the pan to be fried. All these were to be made of *wheaten flour:* and the two last were accounted a delicious bread among the Greeks, as Athenæus tells us, lib. iii. Deipnosoph.

Ver. 3. *And thou shalt put them into one basket*, &c.] All these, making but one *meat-offering*, were to be put into one basket, and so brought to the door of the tabernacle, to be presented there to God, together with the bullock and rams, (ver. 23.)

Ver. 4. *And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto*

the door of the tabernacle.] To be presented unto God, together with their sacrifice.

And shalt wash them with water.] This was the first thing that was done for *the hallowing* them, (ver. 1.) as we read Lev. viii. 6. and was performed, some think, at the laver, which is directed to be made in the next chapter, (xxx. 18, 19.) where they were to repeat this washing every time they went in to minister unto God. But now, I take it to be more likely, at their first consecration, water was brought from thence to wash them at the door of the tabernacle, before they were permitted to enter into it. Whether their whole bodies were now washed, is not said; but we may probably gather that they were; for they were now looked on as wholly unclean (being *unhallowed*), and therefore were to be washed all over: though, being once cleansed, they needed not do more, when they went to minister, but only wash their hands and their feet; which agrees with our Saviour's words, John xiii. 10. Such washings, every body knows, were in use among the gentiles before they offered sacrifice.

Ver. 5. *And thou shalt take the garments.*] Their bodies being washed, they were, next of all, *robed* with those garments prescribed in the foregoing chapter.

And put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, &c.] The order wherein these garments were put on, according to the Talmudists, was this: first the *breeches* were put on by the priest himself, and that privately; which is the reason, perhaps, they are not here mentioned. They being tied about his loins, Moses put upon him the close *coat,* which came down to his ankles. Then this being bound to him by the *girdle* (which went round several times about him under the arm-holes), he put upon him his *bonnet.* This was the manner of habiting an ordinary priest. But when the high-priest was consecrated, after the *girdle,* beforenamed, was put on the *robe,* with the *ephod* and *breast-plate,* and then his *mitre;* to which was added the *golden-plate,* tied with a blue riband upon his forehead. (See Selden de Succession. ad Pontif. lib. ii. cap. 8.)

Ver. 6. *And put the holy crown upon his head.*] By this *crown* is meant nothing else but the golden-plate, on which was written *holiness to the Lord;* (xxviii. 36.) which is expressly called by the name of a *crown,* xxxix. 30. Lev. viii. 9. being bound upon the forehead with a blue riband like a *diadem.* Josephus seems to call the mitre by the name of a crown, (lib. vi. Halos. cap. 15.) but then he immediately adds, περὶ ἣν χρυσοῦς ἄλλος ἦν στέφανος, &c. *about which there was another golden crown, having holy letters written in it,* &c. (Vide Selden, lib. ii. de Succession. cap. 7.)

Ver. 7. *And thou shalt take the anointing oil.*] The next thing that was done for the consecration of Aaron, was anointing him with that oil which God ordered to be made, xxx. 31, 32, &c.

And pour it upon his head, and anoint him.] The Jews seem to think these two distinct things, *pouring oil on his head,* and then *anointing him.* The manner of which they say was thus: the oil being poured upon his head, which ran down to his face, he that anointed him drew with his finger the figure of the Greek letter *chi* (or St. Andrew's cross) upon his forehead between his eyebrows. This was done, Aben Ezra thinks, before his mitre was put upon his head. But that is contrary to the order here set down, which prescribes the putting on all his priestly garments (of which this was one) before the anointing. And he was therefore to be anointed in all his habiliments, because he was anointed to minister unto God; which he could not do without all the holy garments, (xxviii. 43.) particularly this, it being unlawful to appear before God with the head uncovered; as it was also among the gentiles. Other of the Jewish doctors therefore think, that when his head was wrapped about with the mitre, a place was left bare upon his crown for the pouring the oil upon it. Certain it is, that it was so poured on his head, as to run down upon his beard, (Psal. cxxxiii. 2.) And the Jews say, the form of the letter *chi* was drawn upon his forehead to distinguish his anointing from that of their kings; who were anointed in the form of a circle, or crown. (See Selden de Succession. lib. ii. cap. 9.) Where he observes also, that there being no holy oil all the time of the second temple after the captivity, they made high-priests only by putting on their holy garments. Which that they might have complete, they made an imitation of *urim* and *thummim* (though they had not the oracle itself), that none of the eight garments might be wanting. So Maimonides.

The only remaining difficulty is, whether all Aaron's sons were anointed as well as himself. And Mr. Selden, in the place beforenamed, thinks they were at the first, but not in future times: though all Aaron's successors in the high priesthood were consecrated by anointing, as long as the holy oil lasted; that is, to the captivity of Babylon, or, as some say, fifty years before, when it was hid, and no more found. And there is a place in the next chapter which seems to favour this opinion, (xxx. 30.) But as we read of no command for their anointing, as there is here for Aaron's; so, when this command came to be executed, it is said expressly, that Moses poured oil on Aaron's head; but that upon his sons he only put the holy garments, (Lev. viii. 12, 13.) And therefore he is peculiarly called, "the high-priest from among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured," (Lev. xxi. 10.) The anointing therefore of his sons, (xxx. 30.) is only meant of that unction which is here mentioned, ver. 21. of this chapter, where a mixture is ordered to be made of the blood of the sacrifice and of their anointing oil, which was ordered to be sprinkled both upon Aaron and his sons, and upon their garments, and was a part of their consecration. For it was done accordingly at that time, as we read Lev. viii. 30. So that Aaron himself had a double unction; one proper to him alone, as high-priest, upon whose head the holy oil was poured; another common to him with his sons, as he was a priest, whose garments were sprinkled with the oil and blood mingled together.

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt bring his sons, and put coats upon them.*] The high-priest was first habited, and then his sons, in the order I have described, (ver. 5.)

Ver. 9. *And thou shalt gird them with girdles,* &c.] See ver. 5.

And the priest's office shall be theirs, &c.] That is, as long as the holy garments were upon them, the priesthood was upon them: but if they were not upon them, neither was the priesthood upon them. They are the words of Maimonides in Celi Hammickdash, cap. 10. Or the

meaning may be, they shall enjoy in perpetual succession the office of priests, as their father and his successors the office of high-priests.

And thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons.] Thus doing, they shall be completely consecrated. For in the Hebrew the phrase is, *shalt fill the hand of Aaron*, &c. which was done after the manner prescribed, ver. 22—24, &c. Which shews that this was the principal part of their consecration: or, at least, the consummation of it. And there was, besides this, a peculiar offering, which both Aaron and his sons are commanded to offer, in the day of their anointing, (Lev. vi. 20, 21.)

Ver. 10. *And thou shalt cause a bullock.*] The *young bullock* he commanded him to take, (ver. 1.)

To be brought before the tabernacle of the congregation.] In order to its being offered to God: for in this and in the following verses, the sacrifices are prescribed which were to be made at the consecration of Aaron and his sons; which were there: the first is this here mentioned, which was an *offering for sin*, as appears from ver. 14. For till their sins were expiated, they were not fit to offer any thing to God; much less to offer for the sins of others. The next was a *holocaust*, or whole burnt-offering, as a gift or present, whereby they were recommended to God. And the third was a *peace-offering;* on which they made a feast, and by that were in itiated into God's family.

And Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the heads of the bullock.] This was the form in all sacrifices, both *burnt-offerings* (Lev. i. 4.) and *peace-offerings*, (Lev. iii. 2. 8.) by which they devoted the sacrifice to be the Lord's. But in *sin-offerings*, there being a solemn confession of sins made, (Lev. xvi. 21.) he that laid his hands on the beast, seemed thereby to have transferred the guilt from himself unto the sacrifice, desiring it might be accepted for him.

Ver. 11. *And thou shalt kill the bullock before the Lord.*] Though Moses was never consecrated after the manner of Aaron, yet he was made a priest, for this peculiar purpose, by an extraordinary commission from God.

By the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] Where the altar of burnt-offering was placed, at the erection of the tabernacle, (xl. 6. 29.)

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt take of the blood of the bullock, and put it upon the horns of the altar with thy finger.*] Some have fancied that he means *upon the horns of the altar of incense;* because, when a priest offered a sin-offering for himself he was so to do, (Lev. iv. 7.) But it is to be considered, that Aaron and his sons, for whom this sacrifice was offered, were not yet priests, but common men, who, by this sacrifice, were to be made priests: whose blood therefore was to be put upon the *horns of the altar of burnt-offerings*, as is expressly required in other sin-offerings, (Lev. iv. 25. 30.)

And pour all the blood.] All the rest of the blood.

Beside the bottom of the altar.] This shews he speaks of the altar of burnt-offerings; at the bottom of which there was a trench, into which they poured the blood of the sacrifice, as I shall shew hereafter.

Ver. 13. *And thou shalt take all the fat that covereth the inwards.*] He means that part of the beast which is called the *omentum*, in which all the bowels are wrapped; which in Lev. ix. 19. is simply called *that which covereth*. This hath a great deal of fat upon it, to keep the bowels warm, and was much used in ancient sacrifices, both among the Greeks and Romans, who herein followed the Jews. Nay, the Persians also offered to the gods nothing but the *omentum*, or a part of it, as Bochartus observes out of Strabo. (See Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45.) And from the condition and situation of the *omentum*, the heathen diviners made their conjectures; insomuch, that some think it had the name of *omentum*, because they made their good or bad *omens* from thence.

And the caul that is above the liver.] Our interpreters take this for the *diaphragm*, or the *midriff*, upon which the liver hangs. But Bochartus hath demonstrated, I think, that it signifies the greatest lobe of the liver, upon which the bladder of gall lies, (lib. ii. Hierozoic. par. i. cap. 45.) The only argument against it is, that this *jothereth* (as the Hebrews call it) is said here to be *above the liver*, and therefore must signify the *diaphragm*, upon which the liver depends. But the particle *al* signifies *upon*, as well as *above:* and is to be here so translated, *upon* or *by the liver*. And the reason why this *lobe* of the liver was peculiar to the altar, was because of the fat that is upon it.

And the two kidneys, &c.] For the same reason the kidneys were appropriated to God: which had one of their names from the fat that is upon them, which Homer (as the same Bochartus there observes) calls ἐπινεφρίδιον.

Ver. 14. *And the flesh of the bullock and his skin*, &c.] The *burnt-offering* being flayed, the skin of it was given to the priest, (Lev. vii. 8.) But in *sin-offerings* the skin was burnt (and the flesh also in some cases), and that also without the camp, not at the altar, (Lev. iv. 11, 12. viii. 17.) The heathen sometimes burnt the skin even of their *holocausts*, as Bochart shews, par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 34.

Shalt thou burn with fire, &c.] The Hebrew word here for *burn* is quite different from that in the foregoing verse, which is used concerning the burning of *incense*, which soon vanished into smoke, as the *fat* there mentioned did. But the *flesh*, and the *skin*, and the *dung*, were burnt with a stronger fire, and were longer before they were consumed; and therefore burnt *without the camp*, where the ashes were poured out, as a thing abominable.

It is a sin-offering.] The priest might eat of any *sin-offering*, whose blood was not brought into the sanctuary; or rather it was his duty so to do, (Lev. x. 17.) because it argued that the people's sin was borne and taken away by the priest. It may seem strange then that Moses (who was in the place of a priest) is ordered to burn all this sin-offering, and not permitted to eat of it; though Aaron and his sons could not, because they were not yet priests. The best reason I have found of it is, that it was to signify the imperfection of the legal dispensation; since the sins of the priests themselves could not be taken away by the priests of the law, or their sacrifices; but were to expect a better sacrifice, or a better high-priest, as Dr. Jackson's words are in his Consecration of the Son of God, cap. 26. n. 2.

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt also take one ram.*] One of the rams mentioned above, (ver. 1.)

Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram.] See concerning this, ver. 10.

Ver. 16. *And thou shalt slay the ram.*] Where the bullock was killed, by the door of the tabernacle, (ver. 11.)

And thou shalt take his blood, and sprinkle it round about upon the altar.] It was a different sacrifice from the other, and therefore had different ceremonies belonging to it; some of the blood of the bullock being only put on the horns of the altar, (ver. 12.) How the blood was sprinkled *round about* upon the altar, will be explained Lev. i. 11.

Ver. 17. *And thou shalt cut the ram in pieces.*] That the parts might the more easily be burnt upon the altar.

And wash the inwards of him, &c.] Upon which there was a great deal of fat; which being put upon the *pieces,* and the *head,* made them consume the sooner, by nourishing the flame. Thus Homer represents the sacrifice of the Greeks (as Bochart observes), when they offered to Jupiter; *they cut the thighs in pieces, and then covered them over with fat.*

Μηρούς τ' ἐξέταμον, κατά τε κνίσῃ ἐκάλυψαν.

(Iliad. 2. ver. 423. Vid. Hieroz. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45. p. 472.)

Ver. 18. *And thou shalt burn the whole ram upon the altar: it is a burnt-offering unto the Lord,* &c.] By this it appears, that as the former was a *sin-offering,* so this was a *holocaust,* or *burnt-offering;* which would not be received till their sins were expiated by the foregoing sacrifice. Nothing of which was offered at the altar, but some of the fat only, because (as R. Levi ben Gersom observes) the offerers were not yet worthy that God should accept any offering from them.

Ver. 19. *And thou shalt take the other ram.*] Mentioned ver. 1.

And Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram.] See ver. 10. This, it will appear afterward, (ver. 28. 32.) was a peace-offering: upon which, being now reconciled to God and received into his favour, they feasted with him at his table.

Ver. 20. *Then shalt thou kill the ram.*] Where the bullock was killed, which was first offered ver. 11.

And take of his blood.] Which was received in a bason.

And put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron and his sons, &c.] This being peculiarly called *the ram of consecration,* ver. 22. 31. the blood of it was not put upon the horns of the altar, (as in the first sacrifice, ver. 12.) nor merely sprinkled round about the altar, (as in the second, ver. 16.) but put upon Aaron and his sons. And first upon the *tip of their ears,* to signify that they should hearken to the Divine prescriptions; and then upon their thumbs and great toes (in which lie the strength of the hands and feet), to denote their ready and strenuous performance of every thing required of them. And being put upon the tip of their *right ear,* and the thumb of their *right hand,* and the great toe of their *right foot,* it may well be thought to signify the most exact and perfect obedience: the right hand being every where represented as the most excellent and strongest to do any execution. To this purpose Abarbinel discourses on this place, whose words are these: "All this tended to make the priest understand, that he ought to apply himself diligently to the study of the law; and to employ his hands with the same diligence in his sacred ministry; and to walk in the way of God's precepts," &c. Some of the Jews consider these things so scrupulously, as to say the priests might not use their left hand in their ministry, no more than minister with unwashen hands.

And sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about.] *i. e.* The remainder of the blood. It is no improbable conjecture of Fortunatus Scacchus, that from hence the heathens learnt their *taurobolia* and *criobolia:* which in process of time they disguised with infernal rites and ceremonies. For a deep hole being made in the ground, the priest to be consecrated was put into it; and then planks being laid over it, with a great many holes in them, the bullock or the ram was slain over them, and their blood running down into the hole, the priest received it on his eyes, his ears, his nose, his mouth; nay, he besmeared his body with it. And this was accounted the highest consecration of a priest; the virtue of which lasted twenty years before it was renewed: and he that was thus consecrated, was had in the greatest honour and veneration. Thus filthily did the devil pervert the most simple and cleanest rites which Moses prescribed, of putting a little blood, with a fragrant oil, on the tip of one of their ears, thumbs, and toes. (Myrothec. ii. Sacr. Elæochrysm. cap. 77.)

Ver. 21. *And thou shalt take of the blood that is upon the altar.*] Some of that which was sprinkled (as the foregoing verse directs) round about the altar. Or, perhaps some of the blood was left in the bason, upon the altar, for that use.

And of the anointing oil.] Which is afterward ordered to be made, (xxx. 23, &c.)

And sprinkle it upon Aaron and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him.] By which sprinkling, both they and their garments were separated to a holy use, as it follows in the next words, *and he shall be hallowed and his garments,* &c. (see upon ver. 7.) This may be looked upon as a lively representation of our purification by the blood of Jesus Christ, and by his Holy Spirit.

Ver. 22. *And thou shalt take of the ram the fat.*] All the fat in general was to be the Lord's, (Lev. iii. 3.)

The rump.] Here he seems to reckon up the particulars. And the rump of a sheep was the principal in those eastern countries, where their tails are of a prodigious bigness, and exceeding fat, as Bochartus observes, par. i. Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. 45. and Job Ludolphus in his Histor. Ethiop. lib. i. cap. 10. n. 16. and in his Comment. in Histor. lib. i. cap. 10. n. 76.

And that covereth the inwards, &c.] See ver. 13. where these and the following words are explained.

And the right shoulder.] In peace-offerings this belonged to the priest, (Lev. vii. 32.) and so it is here ordained, (ver. 27, 28.) But now it was to be burnt upon the altar, (ver. 25.) because they were not yet priests, as the following words tell us, which give the reason why this shoulder was burnt.

For it is a ram of consecration.] Whereby they were consecrated, and made priests, but not yet completed, and therefore could not eat of that shoulder.

Ver. 23. *And one loaf of bread, and one cake of oiled bread,* &c.] Of that bread and those cakes mentioned ver. 2. of this chapter.

That is before the Lord.] Which had been presented unto God, (ver. 3.) for this by the law was to accompany their other sacrifices, (Numb. xv. 4.)

Ver. 24. *And thou shalt put all.*] Both bread, and cakes, and fat, and right shoulder, beforementioned.

In the hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his sons.]

Thence this sacrifice was called *milluim*, that is, *filling of the hands;* which we translate *consecration*. And their hands were thus filled, to shew that Aaron and his sons did not usurp this dignity, or take it upon themselves (as we speak), but were called unto it by God, who ordered these things to be put into their hands, that they might present them to him. R. Solomon will have this ram called *the ram of fillings* or *impletions;* because by this sacrifice they were completed, and absolutely made priests; nothing remaining to be done after this.

And shall wave them.] When such holy things were put into the hands of the offerers by the priest, then the priest put his hands under theirs, and they were lifted up, and then waved about on all sides.

For a wave-offering.] The Hebrew word *tenuphah* signifies *agitation*, or shaking to and fro; which, Abarbinel saith, was performed upward and downright, and then round about to all quarters of the world, to signify that *the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;* or rather, that he is the the *possessor of heaven and of earth*. Others of them speak to the same purpose.

Before the Lord.] Standing with their faces towards the sanctuary.

Ver. 25. *And thou shalt receive them from their hands,* &c.] After they had waved them, they delivered them into the hands of Moses; who, as the priest at this time, laid them upon the altar, and burnt them.

For a burnt-offering.] It is certain this was not a whole burnt-offering, but a peace-offering, as appears from ver. 28, 31, 32. yet some of it being burnt on the altar, that part is called a burnt-offering.

It is an offering made by fire.] So the burnt-offerings are called, Lev. i. 9. 13, &c. but this was so only in part, as I said, not in the whole; and may be interpreted by Lev. iii. 5. where all that was to be burnt of the peace-offerings, is commanded to be *burnt upon the burnt-sacrifice*, and in that regard might be called a *burnt-offering*. (See ver. 27.)

Ver. 26. *And thou shalt take the breast of the ram of Aaron's consecration.*] Of the consecration of him and of his sons.

And wave it for a wave-offering before the Lord; and it shall be thy part.] Being a peace-offering, the priest who offered the sacrifice was to have his share of it: and therefore the breast is here given to Moses, after he had acknowledged it to be God's by waving it about, and that he had it only as his minister.

Ver. 27. *And thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave-offering, and the shoulder of the heave-offering.*] Upon this occasion, he makes a general law, to be always observed hereafter; that though, in this peculiar case, the *right shoulder* of this sacrifice was burnt (being for Aaron's consecration) and called a *burnt-offering*, (ver. 25.) yet, in all future times, both the breast and this shoulder should belong unto the priest. Therefore the word *sanctify* here signifies, as much as declare them to be sanctified, or set apart for the priest's use: as they were again by an express law, (Lev. vii. 31—34.)

Which is waved, and which is heaved up.] There is no difference, that I can find, between *terumah*, which we translate *heave-offering*, and *tenuphah*, which we translate *wave-offering;* but the former was only lifted up and so waved, and the other was waved all manner of ways, up and down, east, west, north, and south; to signify that He to whom it was offered was Lord of the whole world, and all that therein is.

Ver. 28. *And it shall be Aaron's and his sons' by a statute for ever.*] So it is called Lev. vii. 34. and it is again repeated for greater confirmation, Deut. xviii. 3.

For it is a heave-offering.] It is consecrated to God, to whom it belongs; and he bestows it upon his ministers.

And it shall be a heave-offering of the sacrifice of their peace-offerings, &c.] And it shall always in future times be presented unto God as his part of the peace-offerings; who constitutes the priests to eat it in his stead. As the former ram was a *burnt-offering*, so this, it is plain, was a *peace-offering*, in token that now they were in a state of perfect friendship with God. Which was procured by their sin-offering, (ver. 14.) which was offered first; whereby their *present* to God (ver. 18.) was made acceptable, as now their *persons* were declared by this sacrifice of peace-offering.

Ver. 29. *And the holy garments of Aaron shall be his son's after him, to be anointed therein,* &c.] Upon this occasion, also, God makes another general law, that all the successors of Aaron in the high priesthood, should be set apart to that office, in such garments, and by such an unction, and such sacrifices, as he was consecrated withal. And it appears by Numb. xx. 28. that Aaron's son was invested with the very same garments which Aaron wore: for those which peculiarly belonged to the high-priest, did not decay as the tunic and breeches did, and therefore went from one to another.

Ver. 30. *And that son which is priest in his stead shall put them on seven days.*] This was to be done seven days, one after another, that a sabbath might pass over him. For no man could be a complete high-priest, as the Jews imagine, till a sabbath had gone over his head. But the principal intention of this was, that he might be made a priest with great solemnity and deliberation; and put on his habit so often, that he might learn how to appear in them after a decent, or rather magnificent manner, before he undertook to minister. Yet the Jews say, that if he did offer sacrifice before the seven days' end, it was not accounted unlawful; provided he had been anointed, and had put them on once. So Maimonides, who adds, that he was to put them on by day, and not by night. (See Selden de Successionibus, lib. ii. cap. 8.) Where he shews (cap. 9.) this is to be understood of his unction also, which was to be by day, and not by night; and to be repeated seven times. And by the same reason, the sacrifices were also to be repeated; though if he ministered before they were offered, the doctors held it not to be illegitimate; as he shews in the end of that chapter.

When he cometh into the tabernacle of the congregation, to minister in the holy place.] At his entrance into the tabernacle he was to put them on for seven days together, before he could go to minister in the sanctuary.

Ver. 31. *And thou shalt take the ram of the consecration.*] That is, all the rest of the flesh which was not burnt on the altar nor given to Moses. Who having had their share, (ver. 22. 26.) the remainder, as the manner was in peace-offerings, belonged to those that brought the sacrifice.

And seethe his flesh in the holy place.] At the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, as we read expressly, Lev.

viii. 31. and as it is explained in the next verse, that there they should eat it. Fire was taken from the altar to boil it.

Ver. 32. *And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram.*] That is, feast with God in his own house, as persons now completely qualified to minister unto him.

And the bread that is in the basket.] All the remaining bread and cakes, which were presented unto God, after that which was burnt upon the altar, as his part, (ver. 23, 24, &c.)

By the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] Hence it appears, that this sacrifice had something in it peculiar from other peace-offerings; which might be carried home and eaten there, after God and the priests had had their parts. But this was to be eaten in God's own house, where they were ministers, as a thing more holy: and therefore Aaron and his sons and daughters could not eat of it, as all the family did of other sacrifices of this kind.

Ver. 33. *And they shall eat those things.*] Aaron and his sons alone were to eat them; and nobody else with them.

Wherewith the atonement was made.] The atonement was not made by these things, but by the bullock, which was offered in the first place; which made them fit to have their *hands filled* with these things (as the Hebrew phrase is for consecrating, ver. 23, 24.) to complete their sanctification. And therefore the words should be thus translated, *they shall eat those things for whom the atonement* (or expiation) *was made.*

To consecrate, and to sanctify them.] Their consecration and sanctification began by the sacrifice for sin; and was completed by this now mentioned.

But a stranger shall not eat thereof.] None that are not of the family of Aaron, to whom alone this holy food belonged. Nor were all his domestics allowed to eat of it, though they might eat of other peace-offerings; but only Aaron and his sons: who being consecrated persons, were to eat these things, which had a special holiness in them, being part of the *sacrifice of consecration;* and therefore appertained only to such persons as had been consecrated.

Because they are holy.] Had a special holiness, as I said, in them; which made it fit only for such persons to eat them.

Ver. 34. *And if aught of the flesh of the consecrations, or of the bread, remain unto the morning.*] He and his sons being not able to eat it all.

Then thou shalt burn the remainder with fire.] This is a further argument, that there was a peculiar holiness in this sacrifice, of which only Aaron and his sons might eat: for if this had been like to the flesh of other peace-offerings, it might, according to the following law, have been kept two days before it was eaten, (Lev. vii. 15, 16, &c.)

It shall not be eaten.] Upon the second day.

Because it is holy.] Is of more than ordinary sanctity; being offered to make men holy to God: and therefore the greatest care was taken, it should not be in danger to be in the least corrupted.

Ver. 35. *And thus shalt thou do unto Aaron, and unto his sons, according to all things which I have commanded thee.*] This is the sum of what I have to command thee, concerning the consecration of Aaron, and of his sons.

Seven days shalt thou consecrate them.] They shall not be made complete priests, in less time than I have appointed. Which no doubt was to make them sensible of the weight of their office.

Ver. 36. *And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin-offering for atonement.*] Lest he should think that only the *ram of consecration* should be offered seven days together, he here expressly directs the *bullock* for a sin-offering should be so often repeated. The reason of it follows, because it was *for atonement.* Which appears by the next words to signify, that it was not only for the atonement of the priest, but of the altar itself, which was, by this sacrifice, made fit for God's service. And that is the reason, perhaps, why he saith, in the plural number, it was for *atonements.* So the Hebrew text.

And thou shalt cleanse the altar when thou hast made an atonement for it.] The altar was not capable of any guilt; therefore this word *atonement* is here used improperly, to signify that, by these repeated sacrifices, it was set apart to be a place where expiation should be made. Or simply, this expiation of the altar was no more, but, of a common, making it a sacred place: or, as Fortunatus Scacchus understands it, it was purified by these rites from that defilement it must be supposed to have contracted, by the hands of the workmen that made it: for all vessels, in the sense of the law, were looked upon as made unclean, by the touch of any unclean person. And therefore perhaps the altar was also washed with water, as the priests were; which is here called its *cleansing.*

And thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it.] To perfect its sanctification or separation from common use, it was anointed with the holy oil (mentioned in the next chapter), as Aaron and his sons were. For as by the blood of the bullock it was expiated, so by this anointing it was consecrated: which is meant by *sanctifying* it.

Ver. 37. *Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it.*] Many think that these were not distinct *seven* days from those in which the priests were expiated and consecrated; as the bullock for the cleansing of the altar, was not a distinct bullock from that for the priests: but the same sacrifice served for both. This opinion I shall consider in the conclusion of this book, (xl. 17, 18.) and now only observe, that thus not only the priests among the heathen, but their altars also, were dedicated, by their *taurobolia* and *criobolia,* (which I mentioned ver. 20.) for we find an ancient inscription, wherein one is said to have set up *petram tauroboliatam, an altar consecrated, by besmearing it with the blood of those sacrifices,* as Fortunatus Scacchus interprets it, (Ib. cap. 69.)

Make an atonement for the altar.] By the blood of the bullock.

And sanctify it.] By anointing it with the holy oil.

And it shall be an altar most holy.] The reason why it is so called, is given in the following words; because it was not only thus separated to a holy use, but made those things to be holy which were offered upon it. Which they could not be till it was thus expiated and sanctified. Therefore Fort. Scacchus expounds these words [*an altar most holy*] it shall be *fully and completely consecrated,* by observing all the rites which are here prescribed, for *seven* days together. Till the end of which no sacrifice whatsoever was offered on this altar (because it was not cleansed and sanctified to make them holy and acceptable), but on the *eighth* day, when all was performed that was required on the

preceding *seven* days, fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering, (Lev. viii. 1. 24.)

Whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy.] Nothing was acceptable unto God, unless it was offered upon this altar; which sanctified every thing that was laid upon it, according to God's direction. Thus our Saviour seems to explain these words, (Matth. xxiii. 19.) *The altar sanctifieth the gift.* That was the name for all things presented unto God, which were called *korban;* being destined to be offered at his altar.

Ver. 38. *Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar.*] The principal use of the altar was, that there might be a constant sacrifice offered upon it, in acknowledgment of God's sovereign dominion over them. Which could not be done till it was expiated and consecrated: but that being finished, Moses directs here what should be the first sacrifice offered upon it.

Two lambs.] These were to be a burnt-offering; which was the most ancient of all other sacrifices, being the same that Abel offered.

Of the first year.] See xii. 5.

Day by day continually.] There were other occasional sacrifices of various sorts; but these were stated, and so constant, that they were never intermitted. No, not upon festivals, when other sacrifices were added: as upon the sabbath this sacrifice was doubled, (Numb. xxviii. 9, 10.) and upon new moons, and other feasts, several other sacrifices were appointed, as may be seen there, (ver. 11.) and in the rest of that chapter. It appears by Lev. ix. 17. that this daily sacrifice was offered (at least for some time) in the wilderness; but after they began to wander to and fro, for eight-and-thirty years, some think it was omitted. Which was the reason that God renewed this charge in Numb. xxviii. 3, 4. (See Junius and Menochius on that place.)

Ver. 39. *The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other thou shalt offer at even.*] At what time in the morning and even, is not here plainly prescribed: but the word in the Hebrew for the latter being *between the evenings,* which was about three o'clock in the afternoon; the morning sacrifice also was offered between the rising of the sun and noon, *viz.* at nine o'clock in the forenoon.

Ver. 40. *And with one lamb a tenth-deal of flour.*] Most understand the tenth part of an ephah, which was an omer: (concerning which see xvi. 36.) And so Moses afterward expressly orders by God's command, (Numb. xxviii. 5.)

Mingled with the fourth part of a hin of oil, &c.] A hin was the sixth part of an ephah; containing one wine gallon, two pints, and fifteen inches (as Bishop Cumberland computes, in his learned treatise of Scripture Measures). So that the fourth part of it was a quart, and something more than a quarter of a pint.

The principal thing here to be observed is, that this was ordained (as I noted upon the twenty-fifth chapter) to represent God's dwelling among them in the sanctuary; where this daily sacrifice was the constant provision made for his table (as the altar is called), and bread and wine a necessary attendant (as they are at all tables) upon the meat that was set before him.

Ver. 41. *And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereunto according to the meat-offering in the morning, and according to the drink-offering thereof.*] The same rites were to be observed in this, that were in the morning sacrifice, without any difference. For as Abarbinel observes, in his preface to the book of Leviticus, the true reason of these two sacrifices was, that all men, who live well, having two meals a day, so many sacrifices (which were his meat) were therefore appointed for the Divine Majesty.

For a sweet savour.] See Lev. i. 9.

An offering made by fire unto the Lord.] *i. e.* A burnt-offering, as the next verse explains it.

Ver. 42. *This shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout their generations, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*] For there the altar of burnt-offerings stood, as we read, xl. 6. 29. Lev. xvii. 6, &c.

Before the Lord.] Who dwelt in the most holy place, in the upper end of the tabernacle.

Where I will meet you.] Their coming to worship in that place, is called *drawing nigh to God:* accordingly he promises to vouchsafe his gracious presence to them. (See xxv. 22.)

To speak with thee.] More especially, he promises to meet Moses there upon occasion; and to declare his mind and will to him, in such cases wherein he should consult him.

Ver. 43. *And there I will meet with the children of Israel.*] That they might not think his meeting with them (before-mentioned) was only by revealing his mind to Moses, and so to them (as the last words of the foregoing verse might seem to intimate), he explains his meaning to be, that there he would grant tokens of his special love and favour to them all, when they approached unto him.

And the tabernacle shall be sanctified with my glory.] The glorious presence of God, which filled this house, (xl. 35.) was that which sanctified it, or made it a holy place. But some refer this not to the tabernacle, but to Israel (which is just before mentioned, and the word *tabernacle* not in the text), and the truth is, they were made a holy people also, by this glorious presence of God among them, in the tabernacle.

Ver. 44. *And I will sanctify,* &c.] That is, manifest them to be sanctified; or still more completely sanctify them, by the appearance of the Divine Glory in the tabernacle, (Lev. ix. 24.)

The tabernacle of the congregation.] In the Hebrew, the name is *ohel moed,* which signifies exactly the *tabernacle of meeting;* so called, not from the people's meeting there (as we seem to take it when we translate it, *tabernacle of the congregation),* but from God's meeting there with them, which is mentioned just before; and in the next chapter, (xxx. 36.) is expressly called *the tabernacle of meeting* (as I think it should be translated), *where I will meet with thee.* Which shews that this was the reason of its name. (See also Numb. xvii. 4. and Mr. Mede, book ii. p. 436.)

Now all the people could not come to attend upon the daily sacrifice, which was offered for them, and so to meet with God here; and yet it was a maxim among them, that *no man's sacrifice was accepted, unless he was present at it:* therefore, there were certain select persons chosen to wait upon God, in the name of all the rest (and there were twenty-four classes of them, as of the priests in David's time), called by the Jews *stationary men;* who never missed, when their course came, to attend on the Divine Majesty at the tabernacle, as the representatives of all their brethren.

Concerning which see Pet. Cunæus, lib. ii. de Repub. Jud. cap. 10. and our learned Dr. Lightfoot, in his Temple Service, chap. 7. sect. 3.

I will sanctify both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office.] He declared them to be sanctified to be his priests, by the appearance of his glory at their first sacrifice after their solemn consecration; and by fire coming from heaven to consume their burnt-offering, (Lev. ix. 23, 24.)

Ver. 45. *And I will dwell among the children of Israel.*] The Chaldee renders it, *I will place my divinity* (*i. e.* the Schechinah) *among them.* In the Hebrew it is, *in the midst of them:* for the tabernacle was situated in the very middle of their camp, while they were in the wilderness, (Numb. ii. 17.)

And will be their God.] Bestow special blessings upon them; such as he did not vouchsafe to other people.

Ver. 46. *And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them.*] By his special favour towards them, it was evidently manifested to them, that he brought them out of the slavery of Egypt, to make them a select people unto himself; among whom he settled his habitation, and appeared, by a most glorious symbol of his presence, to be in the midst of them.

I am the Lord their God.] How could they doubt of it, when they remembered, in what a wonderful manner he had brought them out of Egypt; and what they had heard him declare from his own mouth at Mount Sinai? (xx. 2.)

CHAP. XXX.

Ver. 1. *AND thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon.*] This is commonly called the *golden altar;* upon which sweet incense was as constantly burnt every day, as the morning and evening sacrifice of a lamb (beforementioned, xxix. 38, 39.) was offered at the brazen altar.

Of shittim-wood shalt thou make it.] See xxv. 5.

Ver. 2. *A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, (four-square shall it be.)*] It was a square of not much more than half a yard; because it served only to offer incense upon twice a day, and had no other use.

And two cubits shall be the height thereof.] It was as high again as it was broad; that the priest might minister there without stooping.

The horns thereof shall be of the same.] At each corner there was a spire, rising out of the same piece with the corner-post. (See xxvii. 2.)

Ver. 3. *And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold,* &c.] The top of it, and the frame on all sides, with the horns, were to be covered with plates of gold, as the table was, (xxv. 24.)

The top thereof.] The Vulgar Latin translating the Hebrew word *gag,* by *craticula,* hath led many into a conceit that there was a *grate* upon this altar, as there was upon the other. But as the word for that is quite different (*viz. micbar*), so there is not the least mention here made, of cleansing this altar from the ashes, or of any thing to receive them; and therefore Fortunatus Scacchus ingenuously acknowledges, there was no grate on this altar; but a golden pan, or dish, was set upon the top of it (as we translate it rightly), with coals therein, when incense was to be burnt; and taken away with the coals, when that was done.

And thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about.] A border of gold which went about the brim or edge of it. (See there, xxv. 24.) This seems to have been made of massy gold, not of shittim-wood, overlaid with gold.

Ver. 4. *And two golden rings shalt thou make to it, under the crown of it.*] The golden crown arose upward above the table, and these rings were fixed below it.

By the two corners thereof, upon the two sides thereof shalt thou make them.] On each side of the altar, near the corners of it, were these golden rings annexed; at each of the four corners, one.

And they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal.] This shews the use of the rings.

Ver. 5. *And thou shalt make the staves of shittim-wood, and overlay them with gold.*] Just like the staves for the carriage of the ark and the table, (xxv. 13. 28.)

Ver. 6. *And thou shalt put it before the veil.*] In the midst of the house, between the candlestick and the table; though not just between, but something higher, towards the veil; where it was placed directly before the most holy place.

That is by the ark of the testimony.] See xxv. 22.

Before the mercy-seat.] Towards which the priest looked when he offered incense; recommending to God the people and their prayers, which they were making without, while he burnt incense within. There is no ground to think that this altar stood in the most holy place, as St. Austin and some others have conceived; for these words are a plain demonstration to the contrary. (See Cunæus, lib. ii. de Repub. Jud. cap. 5.)

That is over the testimony.] That is, the ark; which is here simply called the *testimony,* as it is ver. 36. because it was the principal thing in the ark, xl. 20. (See xxv. 22.)

Where I will meet with thee.] Though Aaron and his sons might go no farther than the holy place (except only once a year, when Aaron alone went into the most holy) to offer incense, before the mercy-seat; yet Moses had the privilege to consult the Divine Majesty, in the most holy place, where the Divine glory shined, as these words, and xxv. 22. Numb. vii. *ult.* seem to intimate. For since he was admitted into the mount (as P. Cunæus argues, in the place beforementioned) to speak with God face to face, for many days together; it is not unreasonable to think that he was admitted to speak with him, upon occasion, in the most holy place in the tabernacle.

Ver. 7. *And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense.*] He did it at first; but afterward his sons in their courses performed this service: as appears from Luke i. 8, 9. where Zacharias, who was not high-priest, offered the incense when it came to his turn, *according to the custom of the priest's office.*

Sweet incense.] For it was a compound of several spices, which were very fragrant, as appears by the latter end of this chapter.

Every morning when he dressed the lamps.] At the rising of the sun, the priests went in to look after the lamps which they had lighted in the evening before. The dressing of them, as the Hebrews describe it, consisted in cleansing the snuff-dishes, and snuffing those lamps they found burning, and supplying them with new oil; and in putting new

cotton (as we now speak) and oil into those that were gone out, and lighting them at some of the lamps which still continued burning.

He shall burn incense upon it.] The manner of it is described by Dr. Lightfoot in his Temple Service, chap. 9. sect. 5.

Ver. 8. *And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even.*] See concerning this xxvii. 20.

He shall burn incense upon it.] As he did in the morning.

A perpetual incense.] In the same sense that the morning and evening sacrifice is called a *continual* burnt-offering, (xxix. 38. 42.) this is called *perpetual* incense, because it was never intermitted twice a day. And one reason why it was thus continually burnt, was, because of the vast number of beasts that were slain, and cut to pieces, and washed and burnt every day at the sanctuary: which would have made it smell like a shambles (as Maimonides speaks), if this sweet odour had not perfumed it, and the garments of the priests who there ministered. Whence, saith he, that speech of our rabbins, *this sweet odour might be smelt as far as Jericho.* Whereby the reverence due to God's house was preserved; which would have been contemptible, if there had been an ill smell constantly in it, as he truly observes, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 45.)

Before the Lord.] For this altar stood right over against the mercy-seat, (ver. 6.)

Throughout your generations.] In all future ages.

Ver. 9. *Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon.*] None but that, which by God's own order is directed to be made, in the latter end of this chapter.

Nor burnt-sacrifice, nor meat-offering, neither shall ye pour drink-offering thereon.] There was another altar appointed, without the holy place, for all these: which as they might not be offered any where else, so this altar was appropriated for an offering more grateful than all their burnt-sacrifices, or meat and drink-offerings. So Porphyry seems to have learnt from this place (for he was acquainted with these books): "It is most fit to worship the gods with incense, both because it is more grateful, and also more pure than a hecatomb: for blood doth not at all delight the gods." Accordingly we find in Numb. xvi. 46, 47. that the wrath of God was appeased, when it broke out in a plague upon the people, merely by offering incense, whereby he is said to *make an atonement for them.*

Ver. 10. *And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once a year, with the blood of the sin-offering of atonement.*] Only once a year, the blood of that great sin-offering, which was made for the general atonement of the people, was to be put upon the horns of this altar; though no sacrifice might be burnt upon it.

Once in the year.] Upon the great day of expiation, which was the tenth day of the seventh month: when the high-priest was first to go with the blood of the sin-offering into the most holy place, and sprinkle it before the mercy-seat; and then come out into the sanctuary, and there put the blood upon the horns of this altar, and sprinkle it upon it also with his finger seven times, as we read Lev. xvi. 18, 19.

Shall he make atonement upon it.] The *atonement* mentioned so often in this verse, seems to relate to the altar itself, (as it is explained Lev. xvi. 18.) which was hereby cleansed from the impurities, which it was supposed to have contracted by the sins of those who constantly officiated there.

It is most holy unto the Lord.] This may be meant of that solemn expiation, upon the day of atonement; which was the most holy rite in all their religion: for that sacrifice is called by the peculiar name of *the sin-offering of atonement*, or expiation, (Numb. xxix. 11.) Or, it may be expounded of this altar itself; which by this was declared to be separated to the most holy service, in which none should presume to officiate, but they who were thereunto consecrated. Which was the reason of the heavy punishment upon king Uzziah, for attempting that which belonged to the priests only, as we read 2 Chron. xxvi. 18—20.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] This is often repeated in this chapter (ver. 17. 22. 34.) and in the next; to shew that God did not deliver all his precepts to Moses in the mount without intermission; but gave him some time to rest, and then spake to him again.

Ver. 12. *When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel, after their number.*] This was done twice by God's own order, (Numb. i. and xxvi.) From whence it doth not follow that it could not be done lawfully, without a special command: for there might be reasonable causes, why the rulers of the people might think fit to order them to be numbered, especially in time of war.

The reason why this is here mentioned seems to be, because, besides the offerings made voluntarily (xxv. 2.) every man also paid half a shekel towards the building of the tabernacle, and providing all the furniture of it: for which directions had been given in the foregoing chapters. This appears from xxxviii. 25, 26.

They shall give every man a ransom for his soul.] This was a homage, whereby they acknowledged they were God's redeemed ones; and whereby they also preserved their lives, which were in danger if they did not pay it.

Unto the Lord.] To be employed about his house.

That there be no plague among them, &c.] Which God might have justly inflicted, if they had not made him this acknowledgment, for increasing and multiplying them according to his promise.

Ver. 13. *This shall they give, half a shekel.*] A shekel wanted not much of our half crown. (See Gen. xxiii. 15. and Bishop Cumberland's treatise of Scripture Weights and Measures, chap. iv.)

After the shekel of the sanctuary.] There the standard was kept, by which such money was to be examined; as Justinian commanded the weights and measures, whereby all others were to be regulated, to be kept in the great church of every city. For I see no reason to think, that there were two sorts of shekels among the Jews, one sacred, and the other common; but much reason against it: for a *shekel of the sanctuary*, which is the rule of the rest, (Lev. xxvii. 25.) was in value but *twenty gerahs;* which is the same with *aguroth,* (1 Sam. ii. 36.) and is by the LXX. translated ὀβολός.

A half shekel shall be the offering of the Lord.] This was a tax, which was continued in following times, for the reparation of the tabernacle, and afterward of the temple, (Matth. xvii. 24.) For Cicero, in his oration *pro Flacco,* speaks of gold, sent every year, in the name of the Jews, out of Italy and all the provinces to Jerusalem; which Mr. Selden thinks was this half shekel, paid for the maintaining

the public sacrifices, and such-like uses, (lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 8.) And he shews, (lib. iv. cap. 5.) out of the Misna, in the title Siklim, and other authorities, that on the first day of the month Adar, men were appointed to sit in every city of Judea to receive this payment. Which is the tribute mentioned by Titus in his oration to the Jews; wherein he puts them in mind how kind he had been to them, in permitting them to take tribute, and to gather gifts for God, δασμολογεῖν τὸ ὑμῖν ἐπὶ τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ ἀναθήματα συλλέγειν ἐπετρέψαμεν, (Josephus, lib. vi. Halos. cap. 34.)

Ver. 14. *Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the Lord.*] Every man was bound to offer, whether priest or Levite, Israelite or stranger; except women, servants, and such as were under age. Yet, if any one of these did make a voluntary offering, it was accepted: only from a gentile, who was an idolater, they would not accept it, as Maimonides tells us. (See Selden, lib. iii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 4. p. 291.)

Ver. 15. *The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel.*] They were all equally concerned in this tax, being for the support of the daily, weekly, monthly, and annual sacrifices; and for the providing salt, and wood, and the shew-bread, &c. whereby all Israel came to have an interest in whatsoever was done at the house of God all the year long. The priestly garments also were provided out of this money, and other things belonging to the Divine service, and to the reparations of the house of God. See Mr. Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 10. n. 2, 3, 4. where he shews, that if any thing remained in the end of the year, after all these charges were defrayed, it was spent in extraordinary burnt-offerings; which were called the *second sacrifices of the altar.*

When they give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.] Whence this money is called in the next verse *keseph hakippurim, the money of expiations.* Which made every man, though never so poor, endeavour to raise it, though he sold his clothes to get it; and he that failed to pay this tribute, was separated from the congregation, and not comprehended in the expiation, (as R. Levi, of Barcelona, speaks, Præcept. cv.) that is, was not partaker of the benefit of the expiatory sacrifices.

Ver. 16. *And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.*] See the verse foregoing, and Nehem. x. 32, 33, where we read of ordinances made, to charge themselves with the *third part of a shekel,* for the forementioned uses; because the expenses were then so great, that half a shekel was not sufficient to maintain them.

That it may be a memorial for the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for their souls.] A testimony of their gratitude to God; who graciously accepted this acknowledgment of him, and spared their lives, which by their sins they had forfeited: this being a propitiation for them, because it purchased propitiatory sacrifices to be offered on their behalf.

Ver. 17. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] See ver. 11.

Ver. 18. *Thou shalt also make a laver of brass.*] There is nothing said, either here or xxxviii. 8, concerning the form or bigness of it. But we may probably think, that though Solomon made a *sea of brass,* much bigger than this vessel (which was to be carried about with them in their travels in the wilderness), yet he made it of the same form; and that was circular, as we read 2 Chron. iv. 2, 3, &c. And after their return from the captivity of Babylon the laver was restored (as L'Empereur observes out of Maimonides, in his Annotations on Codex Middoth, cap. 3. sect. 6.) but there is nothing to be found in the Talmudists concerning its dimensions.

And his foot also of brass.] The basis of it was so contrived, as to receive the water which ran out at the laver at certain spouts.

To wash withal.] At those spouts the priests washed their hands and their feet, before they entered upon their ministration. For if they had put their hands and feet into the laver, the water in it would have been defiled by the first man that washed therein. And the sea of brass made by Solomon was so high, that they could not put their feet into it.

And thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar.] It stood, according to the Talmudists, between the porch of the temple and the altar; and consequently, in the tabernacle, at the entrance of it, but a little on the south side, and not just before the altar. That is, it was placed like our fonts, which stand at the lower end of our churches, towards the door. So that the priests coming into the court immediately went to the laver, and there washed, and then ascended to the altar.

And thou shalt put water therein.] The heathens were so superstitious, as to think there was a greater virtue in some waters than in others for their lustration: particularly the Greeks (as Fort. Scacchus observes) would admit of no other water, in some of their greatest solemnities, but that from the fountain Callirrhoe. But the Divine institution was more simple, requiring merely spring-water, for all manner of purifications: only this water here mentioned was put into a vessel sanctified by a solemn unction, (xl. 11.)

Ver. 19. *For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet therein.*] Which, that it might be done more conveniently, the Talmudists tell us there were twelve spouts or cocks, in the form of a woman's breast (whence they call them *paps* or *dugs*), to let the water out of the laver: so that the twelve priests, who attended upon the daily sacrifice, might wash there altogether. See L'Empereur in the place abovenamed, where he treats at large of this, and of the conveyance of water into the laver: which in the tabernacle (at least while they were in the wilderness) was brought thither every day in other vessels, and put into it, according to the direction in the conclusion of the foregoing verse.

Every one knows that the gentiles took great care of washing their hands, before they sacrificed, as appears by many places in Homer (to name no other authors), who, in the first book of his Iliad, speaking of the great sacrifice that was preparing to be offered, for the appeasing of Apollo, saith,

Χερνίψαντο δ' ἔπειτα, καὶ οὐλοχύτας ἀνέλοντο.

Upon which words Eustathius observes it as the ancient custom, before they sacrificed, to wash their hands, δεῖ γὰρ καθαροὺς τῶν θείων γίνεσθαι, *for none but those who were*

clean and pure might meddle with sacred things. And again in the third book,

Ἀτὰρ βασιλεῦσιν ὕδωρ ἐπὶ χεῖρας ἔχευαν.

They poured water upon the hands of the kings: ὡς μέλλουσι θύειν, saith Eustathius, *as being about to sacrifice.* But I do not find in any author, that they were concerned for more than washing their hands (from whence came the proverb of doing things *illotis manibus*, see Erasmus in his Adages), there being no mention of washing their feet: which was an extraordinary degree of purity, which God required in his priests, who ministered in his house barefoot: and so they did among the gentiles also, as appears by that saying of Pythagoras, mentioned by Jamblicus, ἀνυπόδητος ζύε καὶ προσκύνει, *sacrifice and worship without shoes;* which St. Ambrose thinks was borrowed from Moses, lib. i. Epist. 6. (See Cuperus in his Apotheosis Homeri, p. 185.)

Ver. 20. *When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water.*] This washing was not to be repeated before every act of their ministration; but it sufficed for all the service of that day, if they washed once at their entrance upon it. Only on the great day of expiation, before five of the various duties then to be performed, the washing was to be renewed.

That they die not.] By the hand of Heaven, as the Jews speak; that is, of God, who punished such profanation, as ministering to him in their uncleanness, with death. And the service performed by such a person, was all without effect; whether he were the high-priest, or a common one, as R. Levi of Barcelona saith, (Præcept. cvi.)

Or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the Lord.] Whether they were to go in to minister at the altar of incense in the tabernacle (of which he speaks in the first words of this verse), or to offer sacrifices at the brazen altar in the outward court, they were to wash before they entered upon their service.

Ver. 22. *So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not.*] There was no need of doing more, being washed once all over before they were consecrated, (xxix. 4.) but their hands and feet were to be washed, upon pain of death, every day, before they ministered.

And it shall be a statute for ever to them.] As long as the tabernacle or temple stood.

Ver. 23. *Take thou also unto thee principal spices.*] So we rightly translate the Hebrew word *roschim*, which literally signifies *heads;* but thence, the chief of any kind of thing: the *head* being the principal or chief member of the body.

As for the word *besamin*, which we translate *spices*, it seems to be a general name for all the following species, which are comprehended under it. (See ver. 34.)

Of pure myrrh.] The Hebrew word *mor*, according to Maimonides, signifies *musk;* and David Kimchi commends their exposition, who take it for a kind of frankincense: but the general opinion of the Hebrews, as well as of later writers, is, that it signifies *myrrh*, which seems to be derived from the ancient word *mor*. And that being the best which flows from the shrub of itself, Moses is required to make use of such *myrrh*. For the word *deror* (which we translate *pure*, or not adulterated) properly signifies *freely flowing* or *dropping myrrh:* which was far better than that which came out from the tree by incision. The fragrancy of this is taken notice of by a great number of authors; who also mention it as having a principal part in the composition of the most costly ointments, as Fort. Scacchus observes, (lib. i. Myroth. Sacr. Elæochrysm. cap. 51, 52. and lib. ii. cap. 8.)

Five hundred shekels.] That is, in weight; which was two hundred and fifty ounces: a *shekel* being as much as half an ounce of our weight.

Of sweet cinnamon half so much.] There were two sorts of *cinnamon:* one that doth not smell very much; another which was very aromatic, and rarely to be found (Galen saith, in his time) but in the closet of kings. And therefore God commands Moses here to take not mere *cinnamon*, but with the addition of *bosem*, which signifies *sweet-scented.*

Salmasius in his Plin. Exerc. treats of both these spices.

And of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels.] This spice hath also the same addition of *bosem* to it, because there was a *calamus* that was not sweet-scented; and that which was they held very precious, being not of the growth of Judea, but coming from distant places. So we read (Jer. vi. 20.) of "sweet cane from a far country;" and Isaiah intimates in xliii. 24. that it was a foreign commodity of great value: and Salmasius is positive, that there was no aromatic *calamus* grew out of India, (Plin. Exercit. p. 1052.) But Bochartus very well observes that there was no traffic, in all likelihood, with India in the days of Moses: and therefore they had it then from Arabia: where Dionysius Periegetes, together with frankincense and myrrh, mentions (in one and the same verse) εὔοδμος κάλαμος, *sweet-smelling calamus.* (See Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. v. cap. 6.)

Ver. 24. *And of cassia five hundred shekels.*] There is no mention of this spice (which the Hebrews call *kidhah*) but here and in Ezek. xxvii. 19. where it is joined with *calamus*, and reckoned among the precious things which were brought to the marts of Tyre. Therefore, it doth not signify that *cassia* which is now used among purging medicines, but another mentioned by Pliny, together with *cinnamon*, (lib. xii. cap. 19.) There being one sort of it called *isocinamomum*, because it was equal to *cinnamon* in virtue and in value: (see Salmasius in his Plinianæ Exercit. in Solin. p. 1302.) But this sort of *cassia* differing but little from *cinnamon*, Fort. Scacchus thinks, for that very reason, we are here to understand by *kidhah* that aromatic plant which the ancients call *costus:* the best of which was brought out of Arabia, and was of a white colour, as he proves out of Avicenna, Dioscorides, and Pliny. And it appears by Propertius it was used by the ancients to be burnt on their altars, as well as frankincense:

"Costum molle date, et blandi mihi thuris honores."

(Myrothec. Elæochrysm. par. ii. cap. 11, 12.)

After the shekel of the sanctuary.] See ver. 13.

And of oil-olive.] Which was clear, and free from all dregs. (See xxix. 40.)

A hin.] I observed there that it contained a wine-gallon and two pints, and something more.

Ver. 25. *And thou shalt make it.*] From hence, and from those words, (ver. 23.) "take thou unto thee sweet spices," &c. the Hebrew doctors conclude, that Moses made this holy oil with his own hands. Of which there is no cer-

tainty; much less that none ever adventured to make it after him: nay, it is evident that Bezaleel made it, as well as all other things beforementioned, (xxxvii. 29.)

An oil of holy ointment.] To anoint with it all the things mentioned in the next verse; whereby they were sanctified (that is, set apart) for the service of God. It was not thick, like those compositions which we now call ointments, but thin as oil is; being nothing but oil, with an infusion of these strong spices, which made it have a comfortable scent. For it is observed by Dioscorides, that oil was very proper, εἰς τὴν τῶν μύρων κατασκευὴν, *for the preparation of ointments:* odours being better preserved in oil than in any other liquor, as Pliny observes, (lib. xiii. cap. 2.) And this oil, no doubt, was the purest they could get (such as they brought for the light of the tabernacle, xxvii. 20.) which would best imbibe the tincture.

After the art of the apothecary.] Or *ointment-maker;* of whose art Theophrastus and Dioscorides give an account. But the manner of making this ointment, as Maimonides describes it, was thus: the spices were beaten severally (he should have excepted the myrrh, which was liquid), and then they were mixed together, and macerated in pure water, till all the virtue of them was extracted. Which being done, the hin of oil was poured upon them, and all was boiled upon the fire till the water was evaporated, and the oil alone remained: (see Guil. Schickkard in his Mischpat hamelek, cap. 1. p. 24.)

It shall be a holy anointing oil.] Wherewith none were to be anointed but sacred persons and things.

Ver. 26. *And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith,* &c.] This and the following verses shew the use of the holy oil; which was to consecrate or set apart every thing hereafter mentioned, to the service of God, whereby the majesty of God's house (as the Jews speak) was set forth: for anointing belonging only to kings and princes, this ceremony begat in people's minds a greater fear and reverence towards God himself, as Maimonides's words are, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 45.)

Ver. 27. *And the table and all his vessels,* &c.] Here being such a particular mention of every thing that was in the sanctuary, he only saith, when it was erected, (xl. 9.) "Thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle, and all that is therein," &c.

Ver. 28. *And the altar of burnt-offering,* &c.] In this verse he mentions all that was without the sanctuary, in the court of the Lord's house; of the unction whereof he also gives a particular charge, (xl. 10, 11.) And accordingly when he gives an account of the consecration of Aaron and his sons, he also tells us how he executed these commands of anointing the tabernacle, and all that was in it; but more especially this altar, which he sprinkled seven times with the holy oil, (Lev. viii. 10, 11.) See there.

Ver. 29. *And thou shalt sanctify them.*] Separate all the forenamed things from common uses, to the service of God alone, by anointing them with this holy oil.

That they may be most holy.] They were made hereby *most holy,* because, as it here follows, they made other things to be holy.

Whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy.] As the gift was made holy by the altar, upon which it was laid. (See xxix. 37.)

Ver. 30. *And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons,* &c.] (See xxix. 7, 8.)

Ver. 31. *This shall be a holy anointing oil unto me, throughout your generations.*] The Jews understand this, as if it were meant of this individual oil now made by Moses; which lasted till the captivity, or till the time of Josiah. But this seems to be as fabulous as that Josiah hid it so, that it could never be found after his death. For there were so many things to be anointed with it at present, and in future times (all the high-priests being anointed, not with a drop or two, but with such a plentiful effusion of it, that it ran down to their beards, nay, the skirts of their garments, Psal. cxxxiii. and their kings also, when there was any doubt of their title), that this oil could not last so long, much less retain its scent for so many generations, without a miracle, of which there was no need. For though there was near half a hundred weight of the spices, yet there was but five or six quarts of oil; and therefore the ointment could not be more: the odours of these spices being only extracted by infusion, and the substance left behind. And such a quantity as this, one may well suppose, was near spent in the anointing of so many things and persons, as are here mentioned: and therefore it was upon occasion to be made again, as the perfume was, which follows here, ver. 34.

Yet it must be confessed that there hath been a very ancient opinion among the Jews, that *in the second temple there was no holy oil:* for which one can see no reason, but that they did not think it lawful to make this composition, and therefore consecrated their high-priests, only by putting on their robes. How they came to fancy it unlawful doth not appear; but the omission of this unction after their return from their captivity, seemed to foretell that there should be another and better kind of unction, which was by the Holy Ghost; the variety of whose gifts might perhaps be fore-shadowed by these several spices.

A holy anointing oil unto me.] There was no rite or ceremony ordained whereby this oil became holy; but it was consecrated by this Divine institution, which appropriated it unto God alone in these words, *unto me.* Which separated it to God's uses and service; and made it unlawful for any body to employ it to other purposes.

Ver. 32. *Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured.*] Here follow two prohibitions, to breed in the people the greater reverence to this holy ointment. The first is this, that it should not be poured *on man's flesh, i. e.* on common men, who were not priests, or were not appointed by God to be anointed with it. It is well known, that in the eastern countries (whom the Greeks and Romans also imitated) men were wont to anoint their heads and faces, and that with very precious ointments, especially at their feasts, and when they would make a splendid appearance: and therefore they are here forbidden to make use of this oil for such uses.

Neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it.] This is a second prohibition, not to make any ointment of these spices, for private and common use.

It is holy.] It is set apart for my use alone.

And shall be holy unto you.] And therefore you shall not employ it to any other.

Ver. 33. *Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger,* &c.] That is, if any man broke either of the foregoing prohibitions, by making

the like composition, or putting any of this upon one who was not a priest, he was liable to be cut off from Israel. What that is, see Gen. xvii. 14. The reason of these prohibitions is manifest, as Maimonides excellently discourses, (More Nevochim. par. iii. cap. 45.) which was, that this sweet odour being smelt no where else, men might be more in love with it in the sanctuary: and that none, by being anointed with the like, might fancy themselves better than others, from whence great dissensions and mischiefs might have arose. The same may be said concerning the perfume, (ver. 37, 38.)

Kings, indeed, are said to have been anointed with this very oil; at least Solomon was, (1 Kings i. 39. though we may doubt of David, when he was anointed king of Judah, 2 Sam. ii. 4.) which was, I suppose, by a special direction of the prophets; that the people might look upon them as sacred persons, and special ministers of God, for their good. The Jews also will have it, that he whom they call *the anointed of war*, that is, say the Jews, the priest mentioned Deut. xx. 2. but I should rather think, the general who commanded their forces, in any sudden danger, was anointed also with this oil, that he might be inspired with courage, when he fought as a sacred person. So that they interpret the first words of the foregoing verse [*upon man's flesh shall it not be poured*] in this sense: *None shall be anointed with it but the high-priest, the anointed of war, and the kings of the house of David.* For the kings of Israel were not anointed with it, but with simple balsam, as they also tell us.

Ver. 34. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices.*] There are the same words here in the Hebrew, that we had before, (ver. 23.) save only that there he saith, *Take to thee rosamin* (with the addition of *rosch*, principal, or most excellent), and here, *Take to thee samim*, which we translate *sweet spices*. How these two differ, interpreters of all sorts extremely vary: but they both seem to be general words, which contain the following species under them; and *samim* to signify spices of less value than *besamim*. The latter of which denotes such spices as were either liquid or most proper to mix with oil, or other liquid things, to give them a fragrancy, as Fort. Scacchus thinks, who hath discussed these two words with great diligence, in his Elæochrysm. Myroth. par. ii. cap. 7.

Stacte.] The Hebrew word signifies something that drops, which some have taken for *balsam;* but the LXX. translate it as we do; and Salmasius hath shewn that it is the liquid part of myrrh (not which flows of itself) which drops from it when it is pressed out by art. (See Plin. Exercit. p. 520.) The same Fort. Scacchus, cap. 8. observes, out of Dioscorides, who calls it προσφάτου σμύρνης τὸ λιπαρὸν, &c. *the most unctious part of fresh myrrh, pressed out with a little water*, (cap. 74.) This was used in the perfumes which the heathen burnt upon the altars, as appears by that of Euripides in Troad. where he mentions,

Σμύρνης αἰθερίας τὸν κάπνόν.

Onycha.] The Hebrew word *secheleth* is translated by Jonathan *ceseth*, which the famous Bochartus proves by many arguments to be *ladanum*, which was one of the principal aromatics among the Arabians. The stream of interpreters indeed carry it for *onycha*, but are not agreed what that is: for some take it for the hoof or claw of an animal (as Maimonides), others (as Jarchi) for the root of a plant, which is smooth and transparent as the nail of a man's hand, which the Greeks call *onyx;* but there are others, and more numerous, who take it for the shell of a fish, in the fens of India, that are full of *spikenard*, upon which this fish feeding, it makes the very shell odoriferous. (See Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. v. cap. *ult.*) He observes also, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 1. that there was such a shell-fish in Babylonia, which was nearer to the Jews than the Indians. The Greeks called it *onyx*, from the form of it; and the Hebrews *secheleth*, from its colour, which was black.

And galbanum.] That which is sold in our shops is of an offensive smell; but there was another in Syria, in the mount Amanus, which had an excellent scent. And, therefore, to distinguish it from ordinary *galbanum*, there is a word added to it, as the Vulgar Latin takes it, in which it is called *galbanum boni odoris.* For that translation joins the next word (which we translate *sweet spices)* unto *galbanum:* as if he had said, *aromatic galbanum.*

With pure frankincense.] It was gathered twice in the year; in the spring and in the autumn: and Pliny tells us, that gathered in the autumn was the purest and whitest; with which the other (that was reddish) was not to be compared, (lib. xii. cap. 14.) Every one knows that this was very much used by the gentiles upon their altars.

Of each shall there be a like weight.] This is the common interpretation of the Hebrew words; and I will not trouble the reader with any other. But we have no certain knowledge what weight this was: for I see no authority for what the Hebrew doctors say, that there were seventy pounds of each of these four spices. And they add (which makes all they say of this matter questionable), that there were also several pounds of *cinnamon*, and *cassia*, and *crocus:* in short, of thirteen several spices, which Josephus (lib. vi. Haloseos, cap. 6.) affirms were in this composition. Of which Moses, they say, made in the whole three hundred and sixty-eight pounds; that is, one pound for every day in the year, and three for the day of expiation. And, accordingly, R. Levi Barzelonita saith, the priests made every year as much as would suffice for every day of it; and that the ordinary priests might make it, as well as the high-priest, (Præcept. ci.)

Ver. 35. *And thou shalt make it a perfume.*] Some think the last words of the foregoing verse signify, that each sort of spice was to be pounded, one by one: and then they are all ordered here to be put together.

A confection after the art of the apothecary.] Made with great care, and according to this Divine prescription. Thus Plutarch, speaking of the aromatic Μίγμα among the Egyptians, which was burnt morning and evening on their altars, saith it was not put together, ὅπως ἔτυχεν, *on any fashion*, or *as it happened;* ἀλλὰ γράμματα ἱερῶν τοῖς μυρεψοῖς, &c. *but the sacred books were read to those who compounded it*, when it was mixed, (lib. de Isid. et Osiride.)

Tempered together.] Both the Chaldee and the LXX. render this *mingled;* just as salt is with any thing upon which it is sprinkled.

Pure.] Without any other mixture.

And holy.] To be used only in the Divine service. For this was one of the most ancient ways of worshipping God; the word *θυσία, i. e. sacrifice* (as Porphyry saith, lib. ii.)

being derived ἀπὸ θυμιάσεως: the first men making a fume, by burning parts of trees, and shrubs, and seeds, and fruits. And the sweeter their scent was, the more grateful they fancied the fume was to their gods. So that though at first they contented themselves with simple herbs and plants, and Moses here prescribes only some few spices fetched from foreign countries, yet, in aftertimes, they increased them to a greater number: for that aromatic mixture I mentioned before among the Egyptians, called Κῦφι, was a composition of sixteen things, which Plutarch reckons up in the forenamed book. And Sophocles brings in Clytemnestra (in his Electr. ver. 637.) calling for θύματα πάγκαρπα, *fumes of all sorts of seeds*, to be offered to Apollo, that she might be delivered from her terrors.

Ver. 36. *And thou shalt beat of it very small.*] Reduce it to powder.

And put it before the testimony.] Burn it upon the altar of incense, which was placed before the ark, as we read ver. 6. This seems to be the meaning; and not that he should put it in a dish upon the table, ready to be burned: for the table did not stand before the ark of the testimony.

Where I will meet with thee.] See xxix. 42.

It shall be unto you most holy.] Employed only in the worship of God, before the most holy place.

Ver. 37. *And as for the perfume which thou shalt make,* &c.] Or rather, *And the perfume which thou shalt make, you shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof.* For any private use; which is imported in these words, *to yourselves.*

It shall be unto thee holy for the Lord.] Entirely separated to the Divine worship; and therefore not to be touched by any but the priests, and that when they ministered in the sanctuary, before the mercy-seat.

Ver. 38. *Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto.*] For his own pleasure: (see ver. 33.) R. Levi of Barcelona hath well explained this: no man was to make this composition with the same spices, and the same weight, and with an intention to burn it. So he interprets those words *to smell thereto*; that is, to make a perfume with it by burning it: (Præcept. cxi.) yet if any man (as Maimonides observes) did smell this perfume, but did not make it, he was not guilty of being cut off.

Shall even be cut off from his people.] See ver. 33. Their opinion is not improbable, who think by this is meant not only the excision of the transgressor, but of his whole race; none of which should remain to keep up his name in Israel. By which severe threatening, the people were deterred from profaning these holy things.

CHAP. XXXI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] After all the foregoing directions from the twenty-fifth chapter unto this (in which, as I said before, xxx. 11. one may well think there was some intermission), the Lord proceeded to give Moses this following information, to encourage him to go about this work.

Ver. 2. *See I have called.*] Be not solicitous where thou shalt find workmen, who have skill enough to make all the things which I have commanded; for I have taken care of that; and pitched upon one who shall be the chief director of the whole business.

By name.] Made a particular choice of one man above all others, whom I have designed for this work. It appears by other places, that this phrase (to call him *by name*) gives Bezaleel the pre-eminence above all other artificers. See xxxiii. 12. 17. where he saith the same of Moses; and Isa. xlv. 3. where he saith it of Cyrus.

Bezaleel the son of Uri.] See 1 Chron. ii. 18—20. Though he was particularly chosen and fitted for this work, yet there was another joined with him to be his assistant, (ver. 6.) Which two did not do all the work with their own hands (as appears from xxviii. 3. where he speaks of many persons endowed with extraordinary skill), but they were the principal artists, and the chief directors and overseers of the work. And therefore, after the mention of Aholiab, (ver. 6.) he speaks also of others into whose hearts he had put wisdom, to do all that he commanded.

The son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.] This Hur is thought by some to have been the husband of Miriam, the sister of Moses: (see xvii. 10.) And then the observation of Abarbinel is not impertinent, that God did the more particularly declare his choice of Bezaleel, and Moses the more punctually remember it, to take away all exceptions from the Israelites; who might have been apt to think that Moses had too much regard to his own kindred, if he had appointed him to be the chief governor of this work, without the special call of God unto it. For thus they might have cavilled (as some of them did afterward, in part)—he makes *himself* king, and Aaron his brother high-priest; and now delivers into the hands of his *nephew* all the oblations and collections that have been made for the tabernacle. For which there could be no colour, after God had solemnly declared it was done by his special order. He adds also (which is not so justifiable) that there was a strife among the Israelites who should undertake this work; for which, though Moses knew the fitness of Bezaleel, yet he durst not mention him, for fear they should think him partial; till God commanded him, saying, Do not regard what the people say, for thou, and they all, shall see that he is chosen by me, and not by *thee*, unto this work; for I will give him extraordinary wisdom, &c.

Ver. 3. *And I have filled him with the spirit of God.*] *i. e.* With an excellent spirit; or with Divine inspiration. Which was but necessary; because the Hebrews being long kept in slavery under the Egyptians, cannot be supposed to have been bred up to the learning of those ingenious arts mentioned in the next verses. For they were acquainted only with the making of bricks, during that heavy servitude; and therefore God instructed several men, particularly Bezaleel, in those arts which they had no master to teach them, and with their natural genius, though never so great, could not attain, especially on a sudden, without inspiration.

In wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge.] Here wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, do not signify as they do in other places, particularly in the Proverbs, and in Isaiah xi. 2. (where the Messiah is said to be "filled with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and the spirit of knowledge,") but skill in the arts of engraving, and setting jewels, and weaving, and needle-work, &c. How *wisdom* differs from *understanding* and from *knowledge*, is not much

material; they may be many words used only to express their skill in all sorts of arts, that might make them accomplished workmen, as it follows in the latter end of the verse, *to work in all manner of workmanship*. They that would see how the Hebrews distinguish them, may look into Paulus Fagius upon the place, or Buxtorf's Historia Arce, cap. 2. n. 3.

Ver. 4. *To devise cunning works*, &c.] There are two things required in an excellent artist: good invention, and ability to do what he hath contrived. The first of these seem to be intended in this verse; and the other in the next: together with a dexterity to teach other artificers, who were to be employed under Bezaleel and Aholiab.

Ver. 5. *And in cutting of stone*, &c.] There were no stones employed about the tabernacle; and therefore this must be meant of *cutting* and *setting* the precious stones mentioned chap. xxviii. and in graving on them what God commanded, ver. 11. 21.

And in carving of timber.] We do not read in the foregoing chapters of any carved work about the tabernacle; and therefore this word may better be rendered (as it is in the beginning of the verse) *cutting*, rather than *carving* timber. For it signifies, in general, doing all the work of carpenters and joiners.

To work in all manner of workmanship.] That was necessary for the making of every thing God had commanded.

Ver. 6. *And I, behold, I have given with him.*] Lest Moses should think one principal contriver and director not to be sufficient, God joins another with him.

Aholiab, of the tribe of Dan.] It is observed by R. Bechai, that God chose one out of the lowest tribe (for so they accounted that of Dan), as well as one out of the chief, which was Judah; that Bezaleel, saith he, might not be lifted up with vain conceit; for great and small are equal before God. And he truly observes, that one of the same tribe, of Dan, by the mother's side, was the most skilful person that could be found, for the building of the temple by Solomon, (2 Chron. ii. 14.)

And in the hearts of all that are wise-hearted, I have put wisdom.] That is, God endued the minds of all ingenious persons among them with an extraordinary skill; which they never learnt, either by their own study or any master, but had it by an inspiration from above. There were several, no doubt, who had a natural genius to such arts as were necessary in this work; but they could not, by their own industry, have attained such skill as God bestowed on them; at least not so soon, as to go immediately about the building of the tabernacle, and all things belonging to it.

That they may make all that I have commanded thee.] Not to imitate the Egyptian contrivances, as some have fancied (for which no such great skill, one would think, was necessary), but to make all exactly according to the model which Moses had seen in the mount, and he described to them; which could not have been done without God's extraordinary assistance.

Ver. 7. *The tabernacle of the congregation, and the ark of the testimony*, &c.] These things are here mentioned, according to the order of nature; which is first to build a house, and then to provide its furniture. And it is observable, that there was but one house, or tabernacle, one ark, and one altar, either for sacrifice or incense, to preserve in their minds the belief of the unity of God; contrary to the gentiles, who had their temples and altars every where, and each family its domestic gods, and particular superstitions.

Ver. 8. *The pure candlestick.*] It is hard to tell why this is particularly called *pure*, unless it be because it was entirely of pure gold, (xxv. 31.) which the table and altar of incense were not; for they were only overlaid with pure gold, (xxv. 24. xxx. 3.) Some have thought that it is called *pure*, because no blood was ever sprinkled upon it, as there was on the altar of incense; but this is not a good reason, for we do not find there was any sprinkled on the table.

Ver. 9. *The altar of burnt-offering*, &c.] Concerning this and the *laver* he had received orders, xxvii. 1. xxx. 17.

Ver. 10. *And the clothes of service.*] Wherewith the *ark*, and the *table*, and the *candlestick*, and the *golden altar* were covered (Numb. iv. 6, 7. 9. 11, &c.) when the camp removed.

The holy garments for Aaron, &c.] Which are ordered chap. xxviii.

Ver. 11. *And the anointing oil and sweet incense*, &c.] These were ordered in the foregoing chapter, ver. 23. 34.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] After he had delivered him all the foregoing orders, about the tabernacle, its furniture, and the workmen to be employed in making them; he added what follows.

Ver. 13. *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths shall ye keep.*] This hath been mentioned thrice already (see xvi. 23. xx. 8. xxiii. 12.) but here seems to be repeated again, upon this special occasion, that they might not think this sacred work would warrant them to break the sabbath. On which he bids Moses tell them, they must not do this work no more than any other: for the tabernacle was built for the service of God, which was principally performed upon this day. And he uses a word of the plural number, not to signify any other sabbath but this; which recurring so often as once in seven days, he might well admonish them to keep his sabbaths. And so the apostle plainly speaks, Coloss. ii. 16.

For it is a sign between me and you.] This plainly shews he speaks of the weekly sabbath; the observation of which testified to all the world what God they worshipped: as all nations signified, by their rites and ceremonies, what their gods were to whom their services were paid. Now the Israelites stood in a double relation to God; as his creatures, and as those who were redeemed by him from the Egyptian bondage: in both which regards the sabbath was a sign or token between him and them. For by observing one day in seven, after six days' labour, they signified that they worshipped the Creator of the world; who in six days made all things, and then rested: and by observing such a seventh day, (see xvi. 5.) after six days' labour, rather than any other, they signified they owned him to be their deliverer from Egyptian slavery. This is opened excellently by our Mr. Mede, Discourse xv. p. 73, 74.

Throughout your generations.] During this polity which God now establishes among you.

That ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.] To be my peculiar people, by observing this solemnity. For it was peculiarly enjoined to them, and to no other nation; and was looked upon as a singular benefit

conferred on them above all people; as appears by the devout acknowledgment Nehemiah makes of this, among the rest of the Divine favours to them, that *he made known unto them his holy sabbath*, ix. 14. and see Ezek. xx. 11, 12.

Ver. 14. *Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore.*] Since it is such a distinguishing mark, be the more careful to observe it.

For it is holy unto you.] This depends upon what was said in the conclusion of the foregoing verse, that hereby they were *sanctified*, or separated to God as a peculiar people; and therefore, in all reason, should look upon this as a *holy* day.

Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death.] If there were credible witnesses of his profanation.

For whosoever doth any work thereon.] This was to defile or profane it.

That soul shall be cut off from among his people.] God seems to threaten that he himself would shorten his days, if the judges, for want of witnesses, could not punish him. So Eliah ben Moseh (one of those whom the Jews call *Karaites*) most excellently expounds this, and all the rest of the punishments threatened to the violation of this precept, which Mr. Selden hath given us out of a MS. lib. i. de Synedriis, cap. 6. The sense is this, in short: he that violates a negative precept, as they call it, either doth it secretly, which is most frequent, or openly, which happens seldom, unless a man be one of those profligate wretches whom we call apostates. Now him that secretly broke the sabbath, the Scripture threatens with cutting off, *viz.* by the hand of God, according to what is written here in this place. In like manner, incestuous and unlawful conjunctions are threatened, (Lev. xviii. 29.) because they were wont to be committed secretly. But if any man did any work openly on the sabbath, so that there were witnesses of it, he was to be stoned, according to what is said Numb. xv. 35. Though if he did it out of mistake, either secretly or openly, he was only to bring a sacrifice for his error: and if he offended against any of the decrees of the wise men about the sabbath, he was to be beaten. Or if there was no court of judgment in the place (as now, in their present condition), then all such transgressors were left to God to punish them, of whatsoever sort they were.

Ver. 15. *Six days may work be done, but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord.*] So it is called also xxxv. 2. and Lev. xxiii. 3. And so the *sabbath* wherein the land rested, is likewise called, Lev. xxv. 4. But the Hebrew words *schabbat schabbaton (sabbath of rest)* properly signify *sabbath above all sabbaths, i. e.* the greatest sabbath; on which a *rest* was to be most punctually observed from all manner of work, which the Jews, as De Dieu notes, call the *weighty sabbath;* as if other days of rest were but light in comparison with this. According to that saying of R. Josee, *great is circumcision, because the weighty sabbath gives place to it;* that is, admits of this work, though the rest on this sabbath be so very great.

Shall surely be put to death.] As an idolater, who did not acknowledge the Creator of the world. See before, ver. 14.

Ver. 16. *Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout all their generation, for a perpetual covenant.*] The most literal interpretation of this verse seems to me to be that of Lud. de Dieu, *the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath by making the sabbath a perpetual covenant throughout their generations.* That is, by never suffering it to be interrupted, they made it a perpetual covenant between God and them throughout all ages.

Ver. 17. *It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever.*] A badge and livery that they were the servants of the Most High, who made the heavens and earth. A mark of their being devoted to him, and continuing in covenant with him, no less than circumcision.

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth.] In memory of which the sabbath was first instituted, "to preserve perpetually and establish that most precious history and doctrine of the creation of the world," as Maimonides speaks, More Nevoch par. iii. cap. 43.

And on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.] Delighted in the contemplation of all his works, which he saw were very good, (Gen. i. 31.) The same Maimonides observes, that the word *jinnaphash* (which we translate *was refreshed*) comes from *nephesh*, which, among other things, signifies the intention of the mind and the will; and therefore the sense of this phrase is, "all the will of God was perfected and brought to a conclusion: his whole good pleasure was absolutely finished on the seventh day," (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 67.)

Ver. 18. *And he gave unto Moses, when he made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai.*] When he dismissed him, having said all that is before related during his forty days' stay with him in the mount, he delivered unto him two tables of testimony, to carry down with him to the people.

Two tables of testimony.] Wherein God testified to them his mind and will, in the principal things which concerned their duty. (See xvi. 34.)

Tables of stone.] That what was written upon them might be more durable. There is no ground to think that these tables were made of some precious stone (as the author of the book Cosri, and other Jews fancy), for the word *eben* in the Hebrew simply signifies any sort of stone, and is wont to have some other joined to it, when precious stones are meant, as in 2 Sam. xii. 30. 1 Kings x. 2. 2 Chron. iii. 6.

Written with the finger of God.] *i. e.* By God himself. Just as the heavens, saith Maimonides, are said to be *the work of his fingers*, (Psal. viii. 4.) which he interprets in another place (xxxiii. 6.) "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made." Therefore *written by the finger of God*, is as much, saith he, as by the word; that is, the will and good pleasure of God, (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 66.) In short, this phrase signifies, that God employed neither Moses, nor any other instrument, in this writing, but it was done by his own powerful operation. For all things that we do, being wrought by our hands and our fingers, these words are used to express God's power. (See xxxii. 16.)

This was a thing so notorious in ancient times, and so much believed by those who were not Jews, that many other nations pretended to the like Divine writings, that they might gain the greater authority to their laws. Thus the Brachmans report in their histories, that the book of their law (which they call Caster) was delivered by God to Bremavius, upon a mount in a cloud: and that God gave

also another book of laws to Brammon in the first age of the world. The Persians say the same of those of Zoroaster; and the Getes of Xamolxis. Nay, the Brachmans have a decalogue like this of Moses, and accurate interpretations of it, in which they say there is this prophecy, That one day there shall be one law alone throughout the world. This evidently shews how well the world was anciently acquainted with these books of Moses, and what a high esteem they had of them. (See Huetius, lib. ii. Alnetan. Quæst. cap. 12. n. 19.)

CHAP. XXXII.

Ver. 1. *AND when the people.*] Not the whole body of the congregation; but so many of them, that the rest durst not appear to oppose their desires.

Saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount.] The Jews fancy that he stayed beyond the time that he had appointed for his return to them. But that is not likely; for he himself was not told how long God would detain him there. (See xxiv. 14.) The meaning therefore is, that he stayed longer than they expected; so that they did not know what to think of it. And having as yet received no directions about the service of God, for which they were called out of Egypt (vii. 16. and other places), they thought it was time to desire Aaron to set about it, in such a way as other people served their gods.

The people gathered themselves together unto Aaron.] They applied themselves to him, as being left by Moses, to be the chief director and governor of affairs, together with Hur, during his absence, (xxiv. 14.) And according to the computation made concerning the time of his going up into the mount, (see xxiv. 18.) this happened upon the fifteenth of our July; which month the Hebrews call Tamuz.

And said unto him, Up.] One cannot think that they spake thus to him at the very first words; but other discourse passed before this: unto which Aaron, in all probability, making some difficulty to consent, and persuading them not to persist in their demand, they would not be denied any longer, but said in a seditious manner, *Up*, make no further delay, for we will have what we desire.

Make us gods.] Or, rather, *make us a god:* for so Nehemiah expresses it in the singular number, ix. 18. and so Elohim is often translated, Gen. xx. 13. xxxv. 7, &c. For their meaning was, make us a sacred symbol or sign, as other nations have, that may represent God in a visible manner to us. So the Jews expound it in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 45. "They said to Aaron, The Egyptians extol their gods, they sing and chaunt before them; for they behold them with their eyes. Make us such gods as theirs are, that we may see them before us." And so R. Jehudah, in the book Cosri, par. i. sect. 97. "They desired a sensible object of Divine worship to be set before them; not with an intention to deny God, who brought them out of Egypt, but that something in the place of God might stand before them, when they declared his wonderful works." Such, no doubt, was their meaning: for they could not be so senseless as to imagine the true God could be made by a man; or that an image could go before them (as it here follows), which may have feet, but cannot walk, as the Psalmist speaks. And therefore Aben Ezra judiciously interprets it, *some corporeal image, in which God may reside.*

Which shall go before us.] Conduct us through the wilderness. God himself, in a pillar of cloud and fire, hitherto went before them: but that cloud now covering the mount where Moses was, and not stirring at all from thence, they imagined, perhaps, that Moses being lost, it would no longer lead them as it had done.

For as for this Moses, &c.] This doth not seem to be the language of those who had any regard to him.

We wot not what is become of him.] They thought, perhaps, that he was consumed in the mount, by the fire which shone from the face of God, as Jonathan paraphrases it. Greg. Nyssen's reflection upon this demand of the people is very natural; that they were like schoolboys, who, in the absence of their master, were carried ἀνοήτοις ὁρμαῖς εἰς ἀταξίαν, *with senseless impetuous motions, into rudeness and disorder,* (p. 183. de Vita Mosis.) For there were many among them who were infected with the Egyptian idolatry, as we learn from Josh. xxiv. 14. Ezek. xx. 7, 8. xxiii. 3. 8. And, therefore, hankering after that way of worship by images, which they had learnt there, they took this opportunity to desire a visible representation of God among them, as the Egyptians had. And so St. Stephen looks upon this as a turning back in their hearts unto Egypt, (Acts vii. 39, &c.)

Ver. 2. *And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden ear-rings,* &c.] This confirms what I said, that there was some debate about this matter, before they spake those words to him, (ver. 1.) *Up, make us gods,* &c. For it is not credible that Aaron would immediately consent to so foul a fact as this, without the least argument against it. Which is so unlikely, that the Jews have devised this tale: that Hur rebuking them in his presence, the people fell upon him and killed him; which affrighted Aaron into a speedy compliance.

The golden ear-rings.] These, it is probable, were some of the jewels which they borrowed of the Egyptians, (xii. 35.) and possibly might have worn superstitiously, as I observed (Gen. xxxv. 5.) they did very anciently. There are those who think Aaron hoped they would not have easily parted with these; and so their design might have been broken.

From the ears of your wives, of your sons, and your daughters.] Men wore these ornaments in the eastern countries, as well as women; as we find in the story of the Ishmaelite and Midianite soldiers, (Judg. viii. 24. and Pliny, lib. xi. cap. 31.) "In oriente quidem et viris aurum eo loci," &c. *In the east it is esteemed an ornament for men to wear gold in that place;* speaking of their ears. (See Bochart. Hierozoic. par. i. lib. i. cap. 34.)

Ver. 3. *And all the people.*] All that were engaged in this design; who were so many (as I said ver. 1.) that the rest it is likely durst not oppose it.

Broke off the golden ear-rings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron.] So zealous is superstition, which prevails over pride and covetousness.

Ver. 4. *And he received them at their hands.*] They seem to have presented them as an offering, towards the making of a representation of God; wherein every one of them might have an interest; and accordingly Aaron accepted them.

And fashioned it with a graving tool.] The Hebrew word *cheret* (which we translate *graving tool*) is used for a writing pen, (Isa. viii. 1.) and for a crisping pin, which women used about their hair, (Isa. iii. 22.) And therefore interpreters take it here for an instrument of engraving. And some think that Aaron made such marks with it in this calf as there were in the Egyptian Apis: which was a cow that had a spot on her right side like a crescent, (as some writers say, though Herodotus saith otherwise, and the marks are variously reported; see Pignorius in his Mensa Isiaca, p. 18, &c.) and a square white spot in the forehead. But others think it more likely, that the calf coming rough out of the mould, Aaron only polished it with a proper tool. For though Apis was in great honour among the Egyptians, yet it was a living cow, and not the image of one, which they had in such veneration. Therefore Mr. Selden (in his Syntagma, i. de Diis Syris, cap. 4.) takes it to be more probable, that this golden calf, or ox, or bullock (for so the Psalmist differently calls it, cvi. 19, 20.) was made in imitation of that golden ox that represented Osiris; which was very famous among the Egyptians: who had a mighty veneration for the river Nile, called in Hebrew *Sichor* (from whence came Syris), and for the dog-star (called Syris likewise), at whose rising that river began to swell; and for the sun (which was principally meant by this name), to whom both the bull at Heliopolis, and the ox at Memphis were consecrated, as Macrobius tells us, lib. i. Saturnal. cap. 21. But though all this be very ingenious, yet the truth of it may be well questioned, as I shall shew presently; when I have noted that this translation, *fashioned it with a graving tool*, is not so agreeable to what here follows, as another which the Hebrew words will as well bear.

After he had made it a molten calf.] The words in the Hebrew are, *and he made it*, &c. we translate them *after*, &c. to make this agree with what goes before, according to our translation, *he fashioned it with a graving tool:* which may as literally be translated, *he bound them up in a bag.* For we find the word *jatzar*, which we here translate *fashioned*, to have the signification also of *binding* or *tying up*: and *cheret* in the plural number to signify *a bag*, (2 Kings v. 23.) And thus the prophet Isaiah (as Bochart observes) describes the making of images, (xlvi. 6.) "They lavish gold out of the bag, and they make it a god." Which agrees with what is here said of Aaron—he received the ear-rings, and put them in a bag; and then having made a mould, cast them into it, and made a golden calf. (See ver. 24.)

A molten calf.] So he calls it, because it was no bigger than a calf, though the head was like an ox: and therefore, as I observed before, so called by the Psalmist. What moved Aaron to represent God in this figure, is hard to resolve. Most think he imitated the Egyptians, among whom he had long lived: which seems not to me at all likely, since he had seen the judgment that God executed against all their gods, (xii. 12.) Yet so great a man as I. Gerh. Vossius hath taken a great deal of pains to prove, that Joseph was adored by them under the name of Apis and Serapis; and that his symbol was an ox. This he hath laboured to support by many ingenious conjectures. But it is not likely, if he were thus publicly honoured as a god, that a king should arise who *knew not Joseph*, i. e. *had no regard to him*, (Exod. i. 8.) and another succeed him, who endeavoured to ruin all his kindred. The worship of Serapis also was not so ancient, for Herodotus saith not a word of it, nor any body else, till the time of Alexander the Great; and many authors say it was brought into Egypt out of Pontus by Ptolemy: (see Bochartus in his Hierozoic. par. i. p. 338.) And though Apis was more ancient, yet not of such antiquity as Moses, as a very learned person of our own (Dr. Tenison, archbishop of Canterbury) hath shewn in his book of idolatry, chap. vi. part 4, 5, &c. And as for Osiris, both Plutarch and Strabo say he was the same with Apis: which was not then known, as I have said, in Egypt, no more than Typhus or Typhon, whom Philo thinks to be here intended; but was certainly a later invention, and, as Bochartus imagines, represented Moses himself, though very much disguised.

Cuperus, indeed, hath made it probable (in his Harpocrates, p. 83, &c.) that there was a Serapis worshipped in Egypt, before that brought out of Pontus: but whether it be so or no, I do not take it to be at all material, because it is not likely that Aaron would make such a representation of the Divinity as was in use among them, from whose slavery God had lately delivered them. For how could he think the Lord, to whom he proclaimed a feast, would be pleased to be represented by any of those idols, on whom, as I said before, he had executed judgment, at their departure out of Egypt? Or what reason is there to think the Israelites themselves could be inclined to think their God to be like any thing which that people worshipped, who abhorred the sacrifices which the God of Israel required? Their conjecture seems to me far more likely, who think that Aaron, in making this calf, took his pattern from some part of the Schechinah which appeared to him and the elders of Israel (when they ate before God, xxiv. 10.) attended with the angels: some of which, called cherubims, they think appeared with the faces of oxen. But as there is no mention in that place of cherubims, nor of the angels appearing in any shape whatsoever; and Moses expressly saith, the Israelites saw no manner of similitude on the day when the Lord spake to them in Horeb (Deut. iv. 15. and therefore Aaron and the elders, in all probability, saw none afterward), so I think there is no evidence that the heavenly ministers at any time appeared in this shape, till the Schechinah departed from the temple, in the days of Ezekiel. (See xxv. 18. 20.)

After all this considered, Aaron seems to me to have chosen an *ox* to be the symbol of the Divine presence, in hope the people would never be so sottish as to worship it; but only be put in mind by it of the Divine power, which was hereby represented. For an ox's head was anciently an emblem of strength, and horns a common sign of kingly power. So they were among the Phœnicians, (as Pignorius observes in his Mensa Isiaca, p. 15. out of Eusebius's Præpar. Evang. lib. i. cap. *ult.*) and among the Egyptians, (as Diodorus Siculus relates, lib. i.) and among the Romans, as appears by that famous story of Genucius Cipus, (in Val. Maximus, lib. v. cap. 6.) who, when he was prætor, had horns come out of his head on a sudden, as he was going out of the city to the wars; whereupon he was told, "Regem eum fore, si in urbem revertisset;" *that he should be a king, if he returned into the city.* And something like it is related by Julius Capitolinus concerning Clodius Albi-

nus, at whose birth a cow brought forth a calf with purple horns, which they looked upon as *signum imperii, a token of empire.* Which made the ancient fathers, perhaps, when they spake of this calf or ox of Aaron's, mention only its head. For so doth Tertullian: (lib. adversus Judæos, cap. 1.) "cum processisset eis bubulum caput;" and St. Cyprian, Lactantius, St. Jerome, St. Ambrose, and others: not because they thought Aaron made only the head; but because this was the principal part whereby God was represented.

And they said.] The people cried out aloud.

These be thy gods, O Israel.] Or, as Nehemiah expresses it, (ix. 18.) *This is thy God,* &c. the image or symbol of the Divine Majesty: or, as Abulensis interprets it, *his Divine virtue resideth in this golden body.* The plural number is commonly used for the singular, especially when God is spoken of, as I observed before, Gen. xx. 13. xxxv. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 23.

Which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.] This shews they looked upon this ox only as a representation of the Almighty Lord their God: for it being but newly made, they could not imagine they were brought by it from the Egyptian slavery, but by his ower, which perhaps they fancied now resided in it.

Ver. 5. *And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it.*] As at the people's request he made it, so he, seeing them receive it with such applause, presently consecrated it; by building an altar, offering sacrifices, and keeping a solemn feast in its honour.

And Aaron made proclamation.] Caused it to be publicly proclaimed throughout the host; that every one might have notice of the solemnity.

And said, To-morrow is a feast.] Which was a part of worship ordained by his authority.

To the Lord.] Not to this ox, but to the Creator of the world, whom they worshipped in this image. Notwithstanding which, this was no better than an idol, (Acts vii. 41.) and they gross idolaters, (Psal. cvi. 19, 20. 1 Cor. x. 7.) Some think, indeed, that Moses being gone, and, as they imagined, either burnt up or famished, they desired this representation of God to go before them, and direct them, as a kind of *teraphim:* but God allowed no such visible sign to be made of his presence with them, which he knew would in a short time have their adoration.

Ver. 6. *And they rose up early on the morrow.*] The next day, which was the sixteenth of our July, they kept their festival. And to shew their devotion, they began betimes in the morning, and seem not to have stayed for Aaron: but, as it follows, offered sacrifices themselves.

And offered burnt-offerings.] Which always preceded others. See xviii. 12. xxiv. 5. where I observed, that whole burnt-offerings were entirely consumed on the altar, being wholly God's.

And brought peace-offerings.] This intimates that some persons received what they brought; and perhaps they were the young men mentioned xxiv. 5. where I noted also, that of peace-offerings the people that brought them had a share, that they might feast with God; and they invited their friends likewise to feast with them. There is no mention either here, or in the other places, of sin-offerings: whereof the priests had a part, but not the people.

And the people sat down to eat and to drink.] Upon the sacrifices of peace-offerings; whereof the people, as I said, had their part: and by partaking of it, had fellowship with the idol, to whom they were offered, as the apostle shews, (1 Cor. x. 20, 21.) Thus the Egyptians kept a Πανδαισία at the feast of Apis; in imitation rather of the Israelites, than otherwise.

It may be fit here to note, that this custom of sacrificing, and also of feasting on the sacrifice, in token of their communion with him to whom the sacrifice was offered, was so very ancient, that it is not easy to believe the observation of St. Chrysostom to be true, that God gave no commandment about sacrifices, till after this sin of worshipping the golden calf: when, seeing their proneness to offer such sacrifices, he thought fit to ordain them himself, and direct them to their right object. Much less is it true, that before this οὐδαμῶς θυσίας ὄνομα, *we do not find any where the name of sacrifice,* (as he speaks Homil. xvii. upon Acts vii.) no, not with the qualification of Grotius, who says (upon Exod. xv. 26.) that there was no law about sacrifices, except that of the Passover, till after they had committed idolatry. For, besides that, there is an order how to make an altar, on which to sacrifice their burnt-offerings, (xx. 24.) which supposes God's intention about them; and the building of an altar, and actual sacrifice upon it, at the sealing of the covenant between God and Israel, xxiv. 4, 5. &c. (which surely was not without God's command) there is a whole chapter in this book about sacrifices at the consecration of Aaron and his sons, before this sin was committed, (chap. xxix.) and particular directions given in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth verses of that chapter, about the daily burnt-offering. I omit what might be said concerning the oblation of sacrifices from the beginning of the world, which it is hard to believe was without a Divine institution. St. Jerome's words therefore are also too large, who saith, in his commentaries upon Ezek. xx. that the Israelites received only the decalogue before this offence of the calf: after which, God gave them *multiplices legis ceremonias, abundance of legal ceremonies.* All that can justly be said in this matter is, that Moses had not yet delivered to them the commands beforementioned, which God had given him; and that they had received but a few commands about sacrifices till after this sin: when the precepts were multiplied, that they might upon all occasions offer sacrifice to God, and not to demons, as they were inclined to do. The daily burnt-offerings were appointed before (as I said) though not delivered to them; and so was the sin-offering for the consecration of Aaron and his sons, and the altar, (xxix. 36, &c.) But the sin-offering for particular persons, and for the whole congregation of Israel, and the great variety of sacrifices, with the manner of them, were not yet prescribed; and perhaps were ordained upon this occasion to preserve them from idolatry; though not merely for that, there being respect in them to the great sacrifice of Christ, especially in that sacrifice upon the day of expiation. But in general, it may be reasonably thought, that if they had not been perverse, they might have been left more at liberty to do these things at pleasure, according to the law of nature; and they might perhaps have been permitted to offer sacrifices every where, as the patriarchs did, though there is no certainty of such speculations.

And rose up to play.] So God commanded at their festi-

vities; and when they offered solemn sacrifices, to rejoice before him, (Deut. xii. 6, 7. xvi. 11.) as David did before the ark, after he had sacrificed oxen and fatlings, (2 Sam. vi. 13—16.) Thus they now expressed their joy, by music, and dancing, and songs, and such-like tokens of mirth, which was wont to be very great upon their feasts. (See ver. 18.) There are those who think, that after they had eaten of the sacrifices to the idol, and drunk liberally, they committed fornication, after the manner of heathen worshippers. Thus Tertullian expounds this phrase, (L. de Jejunio, cap. 6.) "Intellige Scripturæ verecundiam;" *the Scripture modestly expresses their lewd filthiness.* And so this very word which we translate here *play*, is used by Potiphar's wife; (Gen. xxxix. 17.) the Hebrew servant came in, *to mock me, i. e.* to violate my chastity. So that the Israelites did now, as they did afterwards when they worshipped Peor, (Numb. xxv. 1, 2.) And the truth is, these sacrifical feasts were turned among the gentiles into drunkenness and lasciviousness, which are wont to be companions; insomuch, that the ancient Greeks, even Aristotle himself, as Athenæus tells us, (lib. ii.) derived the word μεθύειν, *to be drunk*, from μετὰ τὸ θύειν, *after the sacrifice*, when they were wont to drink very largely. And it is also true, that nothing enticed men to idolatry more than these filthy pleasures, which were a part of that worship. Yet I think it is not credible, that the Israelites, at the very dedication of their idol, when they pretended much religion, fell into such foul practices, which were not at first committed among the heathen. Nor is there any signification of it in this story; but only of their singing and dancing, ver. 18, 19. (accompanied, it is likely, with music) which Philo indeed calls χορους ἀχορεύτους, *unseemly dances;* but that was only, I suppose, because they were in honour of a calf. Nor did the gentiles themselves, as I said, run at first into such excess of riot, as Athenæus observes, (lib. viii. Deipnosoph.) where, in the conclusion of it, he describes all the city full of the noise of pipes, and cymbals, and drums, and the voice of those that sung in a great festival; and thence takes occasion to remember, that the ancients observing what a great inclination people had to pleasure, took care they might enjoy it εὐτάκτως καὶ κοσμίως, *orderly and decently*, by setting apart certain times to entertain them with it. When in the first place they sacrificed to their gods, and then were left to take their ease: that every one believing the gods came to their sacrifices, μετὰ αἰδοῦς τὴν συνουσίαν ποιῆσαι, *might behave themselves at such meetings with modesty and reverence.* For we are ashamed, saith he, to speak or do any thing unseemly before a grave person: and therefore, supposing the gods to be nigh them, τὰς ἑορτὰς κοσμίως καὶ σωφρόνως διῆγον, *they passed their festival days, in ancient times, decently and soberly.* And so he proceeds to shew how much the world was altered in his time, when nothing but mad revelling was to be seen on such occasions. He observes it also as a sign of the ancient modesty at these feasts, that they did not κατακλίνεσθαι, *lie along*, ἀλλὰ δαίνυσθ' ἑζόμενοι, *but they sat down to eat and drink*, as the Israelites here did.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down.*] He had dismissed him before, having done communing with him, (xxxi. 18.) and now sends him away from the mount in some haste, at the end of the forty days mentioned in the twenty-fourth chap. *ult.*

For thy people, which thou broughtest out of Egypt.] These words are generally looked upon, as God's abandoning the Israelites, and disowning them to be his people. But then, they would not have been Moses's people neither, but utterly destroyed, (ver. 10.) Therefore the true meaning is explained by St. Stephen, who calls Moses their λυτρωτὴς, *deliverer*, (Acts vii. 35.) because by his hand God redeemed them; and in that regard they became his people.

Have corrupted themselves.] He doth not mention Aaron, though he was very angry with him also, (Deut. ix. 20.) because the people were the beginners of the revolt, and he complied with them out of fear.

Ver. 8. *They have turned aside quickly out of the way, which I commanded them.*] It was not much above six weeks since they heard God charge them, in a terrible manner, not to worship any image, (xx. 4.) and they solemnly promised to do whatsoever Moses commanded them from God, (ver. 19.) Immediately after which, this command is in a peculiar manner repeated, (ver. 23.) *Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold.* Which, with all the rest of his judgments, they covenanted also to observe, (xxiv. 3. 8.) And therefore such a speedy revolt, from such obligations, made their crime exceeding heinous.

They have made them a golden calf.] For what Aaron did was at their instigation.

And have worshipped it.] By kissing it (saith R. Eliezer in his Pirke, cap. 45.) and bowing down to it; and then offering sacrifice to it (as it here follows) and acknowledging it to be their conductor out of the land of Egypt.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] He added this further before he went down from the mount.

I have seen this people.] Long observed their disposition.

And behold, it is a stiff-necked people.] This character of them is repeated, xxxiii. 3. 5. xxxiv. 9. being a metaphor from untamed heifers, who draw their necks and shoulders back when they are put under the yoke. The prophet Isaiah alludes to this, when he saith of this people, (xlviii. 4.) *Thy neck is an iron sinew*, which would not bend. And Jeremiah v. 5. where he saith, the great men *had broken the yoke and burst the bonds.*

Ver. 10. *Now therefore let me alone.*] Do not interpose in their behalf, with thy prayers and deprecations for them.

That my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them.] That the just indignation I have conceived against them, may proceed to punish them with utter destruction.

And I will make of thee a great nation.] Or, *I will set thee over a great nation;* make thee prince of a mightier nation than they, (as the words are Numb. xiv. 12.) for so the word *asah (to make)* signifies, 1 Sam. xii. 6. where we translate it, *advanced Moses and Aaron.* Which seems to be the meaning here, because Moses urges (ver. 13.) the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as if that would not be made good if the people were all destroyed. Whereas there would have been no danger of that, if God had made a great nation to spring from Moses, who was of their seed.

Ver. 11. *And Moses besought the Lord.*] The Hebrew word *challah*, from whence comes *vaichal* (which we translate *besought*) importing something of sickness and in-

firmity; denotes that Moses besought the Lord with much earnestness, and great agony of mind.

His God.] He hoped he had not lost his interest in God, which the people had justly forfeited.

And said, Why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people.] There was great reason for this high displeasure against them, which God threatened, ver. 10. and Moses himself was not only angry, but his anger waxed hot; (ver. 19.) yet he hoped other reasons would move the Divine mercy to moderate his anger; that is, not to punish them so severely as they deserved.

Which thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, with great power and with a mighty hand?] This is one ground of hope, that God would not on a sudden destroy what he had employed so much power to preserve.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore should the Egyptians say, For mischief did he bring them out.*] This is another reason, that the Egyptians might not be led into a misbelief, or confirmed in their infidelity.

To slay them in the mountains.] There were many mountains besides Sinai (where they now were) in that desert into which God led them: and they were the most dangerous part of it.

Turn from thy fierce wrath, &c.] Let these considerations prevail for a pardon.

Ver. 13. *Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, to whom thou swarest by thine own self,* &c.] This is the great argument of all, the promise made to their forefathers, who were his faithful servants, and this promise confirmed by an oath (often repeated) which he hoped God would faithfully fulfil.

I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven.] Gen. xv. 5. xxii. 17. This part of the promise he had fulfilled; which made him hope he would fulfil the other part which here follows.

And all this land that I have spoken of will I give to your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.] Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 15. xv. 7. xxviii. 13.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.*] He did not change his mind; for there was not a peremptory decree or definitive sentence (as they speak) pronounced against them; but only a signification of what they deserved, (ver. 10.) which, unless it had been for the forenamed reasons, and Moses's intercession, he would have inflicted upon them.

Ver. 15. *And Moses turned.*] From the presence of God, with whom he had been forty days.

And came down from the mount.] From the place where he was with God, to that where he left Joshua waiting for his return. (See xxiv. 13.)

And the two tables of the testimony were in his hand.] Which God promised to give him, and one would think had readily prepared for him before he went up into the mount, (xxxiv. 12.) and when he was coming down, delivered into his hands, (xxxi. *ult.*) They are called *tables of testimony,* because God declared and testified therein what his mind and will was, as I have often noted.

The tables were written on both their sides.] Some fancy that the writing was both on the fore-part and the back-part of them; that so the ten commandments might be read by those who stood either before or behind, when they were set up; being written (according to this conceit) twice over. But they were not made to be set up, but to be reposited in the ark: and therefore the meaning is, they were written on both the leaves (as I may call them) which were to be folded up and shut like a book, when they were laid in the ark.

On the one side and on the other were they written.] On the right hand, and on the left. How many were written on the one, and how many on the other, is variously disputed, but cannot certainly be determined.

Ver. 16. *And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven on the tables.*] The tables were made and planned by God himself; as well as the letters written by him, (xxxi. 18.) and no creature employed in either work; much less Moses, who seems to have found them ready prepared for him, when he came into the mount, as I observed before from xxiv. 12.

Ver. 17. *And when Joshua heard the noise of the people, as they shouted.*] Being come to the foot of the mount, they could easily hear the noise which the people made in their festival.

He said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp.] Knowing nothing of the occasion, he took it for the noise which soldiers make (called by the Hebrews *teruah,* by the Greeks ἀλάλαγμα) who make a great shout when they give the onset; and much greater when they get the victory.

Ver. 18. *And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome.*] Being before instructed by God what the people were a doing, (ver. 7.) Moses could easily correct his mistake; assuring him, it was neither *the cry of strength, nor of weakness* (as the words are in the Hebrew), i. e. *of conquerors,* as we rightly translate it, *or of those that are overcome.*

But the noise of those that sing do I hear.] Out of merriment in a festival. For thus Apis was brought in solemn pomp to Memphis, the royal city; the children going before in procession, and singing a song of praise to the deity. Which was not the pattern to the Israelites, nor borrowed, perhaps, from them; but the common practice of the world on such occasions, from ancient times, as I observed before out of Athenæus, (ver. 6.) whose words are, ἐγένετο κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν πόλιν αὐλῶν βόμβος, καὶ κυμβάλων ἦχος, ἔτι δὲ τυμπάνων κτύπος; μετ' ᾠδῆς ἅμα γενόμενος. And this was part of the entertainment in private feasts; as appears by those known words of Homer:

——— δαίνυντ' ἐρικυδέα δαῖτα
Τερπόμενοι, μετὰ δέ σφιν ἐμέλπετο δῖος ἀοιδός.

They feasted upon excellent cheer, and were very merry; and then the Divine songster sung among them.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp.*] Which was at some distance from the mount, (xix. 21. 23. xx. 21. xxiv. 1.)

That he saw the calf, and the dancing.] Which began early in the morning, and continued all day: for we may presume it was towards the evening before Moses got to the camp; having spent a considerable part of the day in beseeching God for them.

And Moses's anger waxed hot.] The sight of their madness turned the compassion he had for them (ver. 11, 12, &c.) into a kind of rage.

And he cast the tables out of his hands, and he brake them

beneath the mount.] He did not do it till now (though he knew their guilt, and no doubt was affected with it before *he came nigh to the camp, and saw the calf, and dancing),* because he would have the people see how he resented their wickedness, and with what indignation it filled him. And now he did it, no doubt, by the same Divine impulse, or heroic motion, which stirred him up to kill the Egyptian. (See ii. 12.) For he is never blamed for this; and therefore did it by a Divine incitement: to shew the Israelites how unworthy they were to be espoused to God (as some have expressed it) by these instruments or deeds, which were most precious tokens of God's love to them. To this effect Abarbinel discourses: "Moses did not leave the tables in the mount where they were delivered to him, when he heard how the people had revolted; but brought them along with him, that he might make all Israel sensible what they had lost, by breaking them before their eyes."

Ver. 20. *And he took the calf, which they had made, and burnt it in the fire.*] Melted it down; so that though the matter remained (*i. e.* the gold), yet the form and external shape of the calf was so destroyed, that it might be said properly enough to be *burnt.* For the Romans (as Bochart observes) called that place where they melted their metal *Ustrina.*

And ground it to powder.] Some have pretended to the knowledge of an herb, which will dissolve gold, and reduce it to ashes: but they do not say what it is, or that it was to be found in that wilderness. And if Moses had known, and used this secret, what need was there of his grinding it again, after it was dissolved to ashes? it is most likely, therefore, that this was done with a file, whereby it was grated into dust as small as flour, which is ground in a mill. With such dust some powdered their own hair, and the manes of their horses, (as Bochart observes in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 34.) which made them glitter and sparkle when the sun shone upon them.

And strawed it upon the water.] Of the brook which descended out of the mount, (xvii. 6. Deut. ix. 21.) By which means the calf was utterly abolished; and demonstrated (as Abarbinel notes) to have no more divinity in it than the dust or water hath.

And made the children of Israel drink of it.] He did not constrain them; but having no other water, they could not avoid, when they were thirsty, to drink with this mixture. Which Moses threw into it, not to discover who were guilty of idolatry, as the Jews fancy, who say this was like the water of jealousy, (Numb. v. 27.) which made their bellies swell, or their beards, as some have since fabled, turn yellow, (for it was a general apostacy, ver. 1. 3.) but to make them sensible how vile a thing this idol was; which was gone into their draught, and mixed with their dung and their urine. They that have a desire to see the conceits of the Jews about it, may look into Selden de Diis Syris, Syntag. i. cap. 4. and J. Wagenseil upon Sota, p. 1128.

Ver. 21. *And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee?*] It was not sufficient that the idol was destroyed, but he thought fit to call his brother to an account, for his misgovernment in his absence. Who makes a very weak defence, as all commentators observe, to whom I refer the reader. And shall only note, that the best apology he could have made had been this (if it had been true), that he only represented God unto them, as he had represented himself to him and the elders of Israel; when the cherubims, in the form of oxen, made part of the train of the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty. But he says not a word of this; which I suppose therefore is a groundless opinion.

That thou hast brought so great a sin upon them.] If they had made or built a house for Divine worship (saith Sepher Cosri in the place abovenamed), according to their own fancies, that they might have offered their sacrifices there, and directed their devotions thither, it would not have seemed to me so grievous a sin: for at this day we make such houses, and have a veneration for them, and promise ourselves the Divine benediction in them, &c. But to make an image was directly against the command of God; and to fancy that he would be present with that which he abhorred, very much aggravated the crime.

Ver. 22. *And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot.*] He beseeches him in a very humble manner to hear him calmly.

Thou knowest the people.] He had been long acquainted with their rebellious and obstinate humour: which made them fall a murmuring as soon as ever they were delivered from Pharaoh at the Red Sea, (xv. 24. xvi. 2, &c.)

That they are set on mischief.] The words in the Hebrew, *bera hu,* are more emphatical, *they are in wickedness,* or *in idolatry:* like that expression in St. John, 1 Epist. v. 19. *the whole world lieth in wickedness.* Or, as we say in our language, they were *stark naught.*

Ver. 23. *For they said unto me, Make us gods,* &c.] This verse is but a recital of what the people said to him, ver. 2. (See there.)

Ver. 24. *And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let him break it off: so they gave it me.*] This is the sense of ver. 2 and 3.

Then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.] He speaks as if he did not make the calf, but the gold being cast into the fire, out it came in this form. Which made Dr. Jackson think it more than probable, that th erewas some magical or demoniacal skill practised in the sudden moulding of this idol, which very much increased the people's superstition to it. For what else, saith he, could Aaron mean by these words, *I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf,* than that there was some secret invisible operation whereby it was moulded into this form in an instant? which raised, as I said, the people's devotion to it. Herein he follows some Jews, who go a great deal further, saying, that the devil entered into it, and made it roar like a bull, to strike a greater awe into the people, as R. Juda saith, in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 45. And in Tanchuma they say, it not only roared, but danced also. Which seem to me to be conceits invented for the excuse of Aaron; who is said plainly enough (ver. 4.) to have *made this molten calf.* Which he could not have done without designing it, and running the gold into a mould of this figure.

Here is no account at all given what judgment Moses made of this defence; but it appears by Deut. ix. 20. that God was so angry with him, that he had been destroyed, if Moses had not interceded for him, and beseeched God to pardon his weakness, in complying with a people set on mischief; (ver. 22.) for, no doubt, in his own mind he was against this fact, as the Levites were, of whom he was the chief.

Ver. 25. *And when Moses saw that the people were naked,*] Without the Divine protection. For the glory of the Lord

in the cloud, it is likely, departed and went up from them; which we read descended again, xxxiii. 9.

For Aaron had made them naked, &c.] Laid them open, by this sin, to the scorn of all their enemies, who should hear of such a shameful revolt from their God.

Ver. 26. *Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp.*] Where the courts of judgment were wont to sit, to hear causes, and to punish offenders. So it was in their cities, in aftertimes, which it is likely was derived from the usage now: as now they did but follow the practices of their forefathers. For in the days of Abraham, the city gate was the place where all public and private business was transacted, (Gen. xxiii. 10. 18.) which seems to have been the manner in all the country; for at Shechem we find, as well as here at Hebron, when Hamor and his son proposed to make an alliance with the Israelites, they motioned it to the people at the gate of the city, (Gen. xxxiv. 20.) Which was the same thing with the forum or exchange among the Romans: the market being also held here, where there were seats for the judges and elders.

And said, Who is on the Lord's side?] Abhors this idolatry, and cleaves to the worship of the Lord only?

Let him come unto me.] To receive his commands; who was under God their leader.

And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.] If not the whole tribe, yet as many as had any zeal for the Lord; who were the most. This is an argument there was a general defection of the people to this idolatrous worship, that none but the sons of Levi appeared to join with Moses on this occasion.

Ver. 27. *And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side.*] The Lord himself, by his command, warrants what I bid you do.

And go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp.] They were not to go into their tents (where they who were sensible of God's displeasure, it may be presumed, were bemoaning their sin), but to kill every one they met in the street.

And slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, &c.] All the Israelites were *brethren;* and they are commanded to spare none they met withal, because they were *near relations,* or *friends,* or *next neighbours.* Some may imagine this too hazardous an undertaking, the Levites being but a very small number in comparison with the people of Israel; but having God's warrant, they were confident none would have the courage to oppose them; for guilt makes men timorous: and the Levites also found them, as men used to be at the conclusion of a festival, weary with their dancing and sports. Besides, there are those who, by their *being naked,* (ver. 25.) understand they were *unarmed:* for Aaron had disarmed them to their shame, by setting up the calf for them to dance about; which made them lay aside all thoughts of their arms, and so were more easily slain by the Levites.

Ver. 28. *And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses.*] Who being, under God, their chief ruler, passed this extraordinary sentence upon the offenders, without the common process in courts of judgment, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 2. in the end of it.

And there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.] The Vulgar hath twenty-three thousand, contrary to the LXX. as well as the Hebrew text, and all the eastern versions, except the Arabic, printed at Rome in this age, and manifestly out of the Vulgar Latin, as Mr. Selden hath observed in the same place, and Bochart shews largely to be against all the ancient translations and writers, Hieroz. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 34. p. 353. where he notes also out of Philo, these *three thousand* to have been ἀρχηγέτας μάλιστα τῆς ἀσεβείας, *the principal ringleaders of this impiety.*

In memory of these disasters, the breaking of the tables, and this slaughter, the Jews keep a fast every year on the seventeenth of Tamuz, which, by Jac. Capellus's computation, answers to the sixteenth of our July.

Ver. 29. *For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves today to the Lord.*] Or, Moses said, *ye have consecrated yourselves,* &c. Which way soever we take it (either as spoken before the execution, to encourage them to it, or afterward, to commend them for it), the meaning is, that this act was as acceptable to God as a sacrifice, and had procured them the honour to wait upon him as his ministers.

Every man upon his son, and upon his brother.] This seems to signify that some of the tribe of Levi had also prevaricated, to whom these pious Levites had no regard, but killed them indifferently with the rest, though they met with one of their own children; for which they are highly commended by Moses in his blessing, Deut. xxxiii. 9. But it may signify no more, but that they went out with this sincere resolution to spare none, though never so dear to them.

That he may bestow upon you a blessing this day.] This blessing was the preferment of the tribe of Levi to be God's ministers in his house, and to enjoy all the *tenth* of the land for an inheritance, (Numb. xviii. 21. 24.)

Ver. 30. *And it came to pass on the morrow.*] Which was the eighteenth day of Tamuz, or our seventeenth of July.

That Moses said unto the people.] Whom he assembled together, that he might make them sensible of their sin.

Ye have sinned a great sin.] He set their sin before them, it is likely, in all its aggravating circumstances.

And now I will go up unto the Lord.] But he would not have them despair of recovering God's favour, though he could not absolutely assure them of it.

Peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.] That God might not inflict any further punishment upon them.

Ver. 31. *And Moses returned unto the Lord.*] Not, as yet, to the place where he was before with the Lord for forty days; but to some part of the mount, where he might put up his most fervent prayers to God, by which his anger was turned away, as well as by sacrifices.

And said, Oh! this people have sinned a great sin.] He begins his prayers with a confession of their guilt in a most pathetical manner.

And have made them gods of gold.] Contrary to the express repeated command of God, (xx. 4. 23.)

Ver. 32. *Yet now.*] Here follows his earnest and most affectionate deprecation for them.

If thou wilt forgive their sin.] Be thou pleased, or, O that thou wouldst forgive them! See Dr. Hammond upon Psal. xcv. not. 6.

Or if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.] Let me die, rather than live to see the evils that are coming on them, if thou punish them as they deserve. God hath no need of a book, wherein to register and record any of his purposes; but the Scripture uses the language of men, as the Jews speak, who, to this day, re-

tain this form of speech, in their prayer wherewith they begin the new year. *O, our Father and our King, write us in the book of the best life, in the book of righteousness, in the book of redemption.* They desire, that is, to be preserved that year in a happy condition, free from sin, from want, and from danger. See Theodoric Hackspan, in his annotations on this place.

Ver. 33. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.*] This was all the answer Moses could obtain: *that they only should perish who had offended the Divine Majesty.* Which doth not deny them a pardon, if they ceased to offend him.

Ver. 34. *Therefore now go.*] Speak no more of this matter, but return to the camp.

Lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee.] Take the conduct of the people upon thee to the land which I promised to bestow on them. This supposes God would not punish them as they deserved; though, by the words following, it appears he abated something of his wonted kindness to them.

Behold, mine angel shall go before thee.] Not the angel spoken of, xxiii. 20. but some lesser minister in the heavenly court, as appears from the next chapter, ver. 2. where he saith only, *I will send an angel before thee,* viz. in the pillar of cloud and fire, (xiii. 22.)

Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.] Upon the next occasion to punish other offences, I will further punish this. Whence the saying of R. Isaac, in the Gemara Sanhedrin, cap. 11. "There hath no vengeance come upon the world, in which there hath not been half an ounce of the first calf." To which R. Uschajah there hath respect, in these words: "Till the days of Jeroboam, the Israelites sucked but of one calf, but afterward of three." That is, their punishment was twice as great; for they made two calves, though they had seen the terrible punishment which came upon their forefathers from making one.

Ver. 35. *And the Lord plagued the people.*] With the pestilence, as some imagine, though it be not mentioned in Scripture. Or, he means all the evils that afterward consumed them in the wilderness. But there are those who understand this of the slaughter made by the Levites; which he briefly repeats (as the manner sometimes is in these writings) as a conclusion to this history of the golden calf.

Because they made the calf which Aaron made.] Provoked him to make.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord said unto Moses, Depart, and go up hence, thou and thy people,* &c.] This is a renewal of the order he had already given, (xxxii. 34.) which he further explains, by expressly assuring him he would make good his promise to their forefathers, of which Moses had remembered him, (xxxii. 13.) But they were not by this ordered presently to remove, till Moses had been again in the mount, and the tabernacle was set up, and all the service of it prescribed.

And I will send an angel before thee, and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, &c.] I will not wholly withdraw my protection from you (as he had for the present, xxxii. 25.) but send one of my ministers to discomfit your enemies, till you get possession of their land.

Ver. 3. *For I will not go up in the midst of thee.*] For though I intended to have dwelt among you myself, by my special presence, (which was in the Schechinah, xxv. 8. xxix. 43. 45, 46.) you have justly forfeited that favour. The Chaldee gives the true sense of this speech, *I will not make my majesty* (so the Schechinah or Divine Glory was called) *to go up in the midst of thee.* And accordingly it follows, (ver. 7—9.) that he did remove to a distance from them. Concerning that phrase, *in the midst of thee,* see xvii. 7.

For thou art a stiff-necked people.] See xxxii. 9.

Lest I consume thee in the way.] It is not fit for me to see myself affronted to my face by stiff-necked offenders, and not punish them with utter destruction. This is an argument that the angel, he saith he would send before them, was not God himself (as the eternal ΛΟΓΟΣ is), for then he would have had the same reason to consume them for their disobedience.

Ver. 4. *And when the people heard these evil tidings.*] This threatening of such a grievous punishment.

They mourned.] Fasted, perhaps, and wept; and hung down their heads with shame and sorrow.

And no man did put on him his ornaments.] But every one laid aside his usual attire, and appeared in the habit of penitents; which, in aftertimes, was sackcloth.

Ver. 5. *For the Lord had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiff-necked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee.*] This verse gives a reason of their mourning, because Moses had by God's order said to them, what God said to him, that they were such a perverse people, it was not safe for them that he should stay among them; and he provoked by their transgressions suddenly to destroy them.

Therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee.] These words shew that he had not peremptorily resolved to forsake them (as he threatened, ver. 3.) but might be moved by their repentance to continue with them. And therefore he orders them to put themselves in a mourning habit, in token of their hearty sorrow for their sin.

That I may know what to do unto thee.] Deal with you according as I find you disposed. (See Gen. xxii. 12.)

Ver. 6. *And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments.*] Not only of those wherewith they had decked themselves, at their late festival, but of all other that they ordinarily wore; which they, who were not dressed, forbore to put on, (ver. 4.)

By the Mount Horeb.] Or rather (as the Hebrew word *mehar* imports) *from the mount;* that is, a great way off from the place where God appeared; as unworthy to come into his presence.

Ver. 7. *And Moses took the tabernacle.*] His own tent, as the LXX. interpret it, τὴν σκηνὴν αὐτοῦ: meaning, I suppose, not his own private tent, where he and his family lived; but a public tent, where he gave audience, and heard causes, and inquired of God; which Bonaventura C. Bertramus calls *castrorum prætorium,* in his book de Repub. Jud. cap. 4. For such a place, we cannot but think there was, before that tabernacle was erected, whose pattern he saw in the mount; where all great affairs were

transacted, and where religious offices, in all probability, were performed.

And pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp.] At the distance of two thousand cubits, as R. Solomon interprets it. Which was done to humble them, when they saw the displeasure of God and of his servant against them, declared by this departure far from them: for they might justly fear he would remove quite out of their sight.

And called it the tabernacle of the congregation.] Gave it the same name which was afterward appropriated to the tabernacle built for Divine service alone. Because here God met with Moses, and communicated his mind to him; and hither they were all to resort, who had any business with Moses; or would receive an answer to their inquiries from God.

And it came to pass, that every one which sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp.] This is commonly understood of those who came to desire resolution in any case of difficulty; which they could not have, as formerly, within the camp; but were forced to go and seek it without. Which, as it shewed God's displeasure, so withal gave them some hope of mercy; because it plainly appeared, God was not quite alienated and estranged from them.

Ver. 8. *When Moses went into the tabernacle, all the people rose up, and stood every man at his tent-door.*] In reverence to him, as their leader, whom they had lately despised. Or, it may be thought also, a posture wherein they implored his intercession for them, that God would be graciously pleased to return to them: which is expressed by what follows.

And looked after Moses.] Expecting what would be the end of this business; both God and his minister being removed from them.

Until he was gone into the tabernacle.] As long as they could see him.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass, as Moses went into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended.*] In which the Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, was, (xl. 35.) which was gone up before, because of their idolatry, whereby the camp was become unclean; but now came down again upon the removal of the tabernacle. Where, it is very probable, it used to be settled, as the token of the Divine presence among them: and afterward was translated to the tabernacle, made after God's appointment, where this cloud stood just as it did here, at the door of it, (Numb. xii. 5.)

And stood at the door of the tabernacle.] Openly to assert the authority of Moses, with whom God shewed himself present, though he had forsaken them.

And the Lord talked with Moses.] Which shews the Divine Glory was within the tabernacle, where Moses now was: and so the people understood it, as appears by the next verse.

Ver. 10. *And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle-door.*] Which they knew was an evident token that God was there.

And all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent-door.] Bowed themselves unto the Divine Majesty, and humbly deprecated his displeasure; acknowledging, we may reasonably think, his great goodness, in condescending to appear again to them, though at a distance from them.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, face to face.*] In a familiar manner, which did not affright or astonish him, by a dreadful appearance of his majesty; which, in the sight of the children of Israel, looked like devouring fire, (xxiv. 17.) but appeared to Moses in a milder and more cheerful brightness. The like expression in Numb. xii. 8. seems to relate only to the discourse he had with Moses, which was clear and plain, and by a voice; not in visions and dreams, and obscure resemblances: and so it may be understood here, as Maimonides takes it, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 45.) But Abarbinel thinks that these expressions signify, God treated with Moses in his own person, not by an ambassador; just as one friend converses with another. And this is a common notion among the Jews, that God did not speak to Moses by an angel, but by himself: which they take to be the meaning of this phrase, *face to face.* Which seems to me rather to import the clearness and evidence of that Divine light, wherein God revealed himself to Moses; whether it was by himself, or an angel, it matters not. Yet the New Testament determines this question, when he tells us, the law itself was *given by angels,* in the hand of a mediator. And accordingly the old tradition was, that Moses saw things in a clear and bright glass; but the rest of the prophets, in a glass that was dim and cloudy.

As a man speaks to his friend.] This is added, to shew how differently God treated Moses from all other men. For he is said to have talked *face to face* with all the Israelites, (Deut. v. 4.) but it was out of the midst of the fire, which struck a terror into them: whereas he spake to Moses out of the midst of a glorious but comfortable light, which gave him high satisfaction.

And he turned again into the camp.] After some time spent in conversation with the Divine Majesty, he went to comfort the people, it is likely, with hopes of recovering his favour; of which they might have quite despaired, if he had stayed long from them.

But his servant Joshua, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.] It is hard to tell for what end Joshua should stay behind his master; and it seems not decent that Moses should return alone without his servant to attend him. They that say he stayed to guard the tabernacle, have no foundation for it; and they have not much, who say he stayed to give judgment in small causes, which needed not Moses's resolution, (according to xviii. 26.) For we never read that Joshua was a judge, but a constant attendant upon Moses's person. And therefore the words may better be translated, as they plainly run in the Hebrew, *he turned again to the camp, and his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man.* At which there is a stop in the Hebrew (over the word *naar, young man*) to distinguish these from the following words; which are,

Departed not out of the tabernacle.] That is, the Lord departed not from thence, but his presence remained there; and would not come into the camp, as Moses did. And this interpretation is the more likely, because the last words in the Hebrew are, *out of the midst of the tabernacle:* which cannot refer to Joshua, because he did not go thither; but only Moses, who conversed alone with the Divine Majesty.

Why Joshua is called a *young man,* when he was near sixty years old, is not easy to resolve. Perhaps it signifies

a *valiant man*, for so he was; or, he had waited on Moses from his youth: or, as Maimonides, this is the phrase of the Hebrew nation, who call all men young, till they begin to decay; as Joseph is called, when he was thirty years old, Gen. xlii. 2. More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 32.

Ver. 12. *And Moses said unto the Lord.*] When, or where Moses spake what follows, we are not here informed. It is likely, that after he was satisfied the people were very penitent, he returned to the tabernacle; and there made this address unto the Divine Majesty, for a perfect reconciliation with his people.

See.] A word imploring attention and regard to his petition.

Thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people.] Lead them to the land of promise, (xxxii. 34. xxxiii. 1.)

And thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me.] Thou hast only said, thou wilt send an angel before me; but I hope to obtain greater favour from thee, which thou hast not yet declared to me. And I have no heart to proceed, if thou thyself wilt not guide us in the pillar of cloud, as thou hast done hitherto, and dwell among us, as thou hast promised, in thy sanctuary. This seems to be the sense (if this verse be compared with the fifteenth), and not barely that he did not know what angel he would send with him.

Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name.] The Chaldee takes it to be the same with what is said of Bezaleel, whom God called by name, (xxxi. 2.) that is, particularly designed to make the tabernacle, and all belonging to it. But to *know* is more than to *call;* signifying God's special love and kindness to Moses above all men, as the LXX. interpret it.

And thou hast also found grace in my sight.] God had often heard his prayers for this people, as he hoped he would do now. For that was the effect of his being *an acceptable person* unto him; which is the proper signification of this phrase.

Ver. 13. *Now therefore I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight.*] If I still continue in thy favour.

Shew me now thy way.] The interpretation of Maimonides (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 54.) is too much strained, who thinks he here desires the knowledge of God's attributes, as ver. 18. he desires the sight of his essence. The plain meaning of this prayer is, that God himself would conduct him, and shew him the way wherein he should lead his people unto their rest in the land of Canaan, (xxxii. 34.)

That I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight.] That I may be fully assured of thy gracious acceptance of me.

And consider that this nation is thy people.] I do not beg this merely upon my own account, but for those who have been redeemed by thee out of the land of Egypt, and have engaged themselves to be thine by a solemn covenant, (xxiv.) and now return unto thee by repentance, (ver. 6.)

Ver. 14. *And he said, My presence shall go with thee.*] In the Hebrew, *my face, i. e.* I myself, as the LXX. translate it: *my majesty*, as the Chaldee. He promises, that is, to continue with them, as he had done hitherto, and not merely send an angel to accompany them: but to lead and guide them himself, by the pillar of the cloud, and his glorious presence in the tabernacle.

And I will give thee rest.] Some think these words are particularly spoken to Moses; and signify, that God would give him ease in this point, and quiet his spirit (which was now very solicitous about his departure from them) by returning to them. But as the foregoing words are a promise, that he would take the conduct of the people again; so is this, that he would not leave them till he had brought them to their rest.

Ver. 15. *And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with us.*] Some translate the words, *for he* (i. e. *Moses*) *had said unto him, i. e.* to God, *If thy presence*, &c. So that these words and the following are the reason of God's answer to him, ver. 14. And if they be not thus taken, one would have expected Moses should rather have given God thanks for his gracious promise, than further pressed him to it. But the seventeenth verse doth not well agree with this; and therefore these words are to be looked on only as part of what Moses said to God after his promise, that his *presence should go with him.* Which he acknowledged to be the greater favour, because otherwise he had rather never stir from the place where they now were.

Carry us not up hence.] Let us go no further, if thou thyself dost not lead and guide us in our way.

Ver. 16. *For wherein shall it be known here, that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight?*] How shall all the people round about us be convinced that we are not abandoned by thee in this wilderness?

Is it not in that thou goest with us?] Is not this the great demonstration of it, that thou leadest us in a pillar of cloud and fire, day and night?

So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.] This will distinguish us, while it continues with us, from all other people whatsoever; none of which have such a token of thy presence with them. The manna, indeed, continued all this time to descend for their sustenance, which was a miraculous food: but it might have been ascribed to other causes, if this glorious token of God's presence had not still appeared among them.

Ver. 17. *And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken.*] Distinguish you from all other people; not only by leading you in a pillar of cloud and fire, but dwelling among you, as I designed, xxv. 8.

For thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.] He owns Moses still to be most acceptable and dear to him as he had been, (ver. 12.) and therefore, at his intercession, promises to be perfectly reconciled, and return to his people.

Ver. 18. *And he said, I beseech thee.*] Having obtained so much favour of God, he presumes to ask something beyond all this, but with all humility.

Shew me thy glory.] In the Hebrew the word is *hareni*, make me to *see* thy glory. Where Maimonides takes the word *see* to signify, *apprehend with the understanding*, not with the bodily eye, (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 4.) For by *glory* he there understands (cap. 54.) the Divine essence, which he makes Moses to be desirous to apprehend; which is not likely such a man as he should think possible. For thus he explains himself in his book de Fundamentis Legis, cap. 1. n. 10. "Moses desired to know the truth of the Divine essence, as one man knows another, whose face he beholds, and his image is so engraven in his mind, that he exists there distinguished from all other men: so he begs that the Divine essence might be distinct in his mind

from all other essences, till he knew the truth of it, as it is in itself." But he confesses, in another place of that book, (cap. 64.) that by the *glory* of the Lord, is many times understood a created light or splendour, whereby God miraculously set forth his majesty, (xxiv. 26. and other places.) And I can see no reason why it should not so signify here, and the meaning be, that he desired to see that glorious presence (or *face of God*, as it is called) which he promised should go with them; not veiled in a cloud, but in its full splendour and majesty. For hearing him speak from the Schechinah, he supposed, perhaps, that God appeared therein, in some visible shape, which he desired to be acquainted withal. To confirm this, it is observable that God himself, in his answer to Moses, calls this glory *his face*, (ver. 20.) as he had done, ver. 14, 15. And thus R. Jehudah, in the book Cosri, pars iv. sect. 3. (towards the latter end of it) seems to have understood it. (See upon ver. 20.)

Ver. 19. *And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee.*] Which Maimonides thinks signifies his making Moses to understand the nature of all creatures, and how they are knit and united together, and after what manner they are governed, both in general and particular; because when God had made all his works, he saw that *they were very good*, (Gen. i. 31.) But that text is a very slender ground for such an interpretation. The LXX. seem to come nearer to the matter, who interpret this passage, παρελεύσομαι πρότερός σου τῇ δόξῃ μου, *I will pass before thee with my glory*. That is, he promises to give him a transient view of his glory, while it passed by him, (ver. 22.) though it could not be seen in its full majesty. And then the word *tobh* (which we translate *my goodness*) must rather be rendered *my beauty*, it being the same with *glory*, only a softer word, to express such a degree of its splendour as would not hurt him, but be delightful to him. And thus the word *tobh* is used in the second chapter of this book, ver. 2. and 1 Sam. ix. 2. Or, if this be not the meaning, *all his goodness* must signify his gracious intentions concerning the children of Israel, to whom, he assures him, he would fulfil all his promises, which was sufficient for him to know.

And I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee.] The LXX. seem to have understood this right, when they translated it, *I will call to thee by my name* (saying), *The Lord is before thee*. That is, lest, when I pass by thee, thou shouldest not observe it, I will admonish thee, by a voice calling to thee, and telling thee, that now the Lord is presenting himself to thee. And so we find he did, xxxiv. 6.

And will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.] This is the substance of the words, which he tells him he would proclaim, after notice given him of his coming to pass by him. And their meaning is, that he would dispense his favours, according to his own good pleasure, as he did now to Moses; unto whom he vouchsafed such a revelation of himself, as he did not make to others. For thus he explains it, xxxiv. 6, 7. where he tells him, he would be very gracious, patient, and long-suffering, unto some; but punish severely the iniquity of others.

Ver. 20. *And he said, Thou canst not see my face.*] But as for thy request, that I would make thee see my glory in its full splendour, thou art not capable of it. I know none that hath explained this whole matter better than R. Jehudah, in Sepher Cosri, par. iv. sect. 3. "For the glory mentioned in Scripture, there is one of such a nature, that the eyes of the prophets could sustain it; another all the Israelites saw (as the cloud and the consuming fire); but another so pure and bright to such a high degree, that no prophet is able to apprehend it: but if he venture to look upon it, his composition is dissolved, *i. e.* he dies." Such was the glory here spoken of, a splendour so great and piercing, that none could behold it.

For there shall no man see me, and live.] Accordingly we find, when the Schechinah, or Divine Glory, filled the tabernacle, Moses was not able to enter into it, (xl. 35.) that is, he could not, with safety to his life, look upon it. And so it was after the temple of Solomon was built and consecrated by solemn prayer to God, "The glory of the Lord filled the house, and the priests could not enter into the house, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house," (2 Chron. vii. 1, 2.)

From this speech to Moses, it is likely that men, in future times, imagined they should die immediately, when they saw only an angel appear in such a high glittering manner that it amazed them.

Ver. 21. *And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me.*] It doth not plainly appear by the story, from whence God now spake to Moses. It is most likely from the mount, where he had long conversed with him. Or, if it was from the tabernacle, (where his glory appeared, ver. 9. and continued, ver. 11.) that was not far from the mount; where he tells him, he would make his glory pass before him.

And thou shalt stand upon a rock.] It is probable, this was the rock in Horeb, where the Lord had formerly appeared to Moses, (xvii. 6.)

Ver. 22. *And it shall come to pass, that while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock.*] Perhaps it was in one of the clefts which was made in the rock, when God brought water out of it, (Psal. lxxviii. 15.) into which he directed Moses. For that is meant by *putting* him in the cleft; shewing him the place where he should be, while the Divine Majesty passed by.

And I will cover thee with my hand, &c.] That he might not be hurt by the splendour of that glory, as it passed by the cleft. This doth not certainly signify, that the glory of the Lord appeared in a human shape: for *hands* are ascribed to God (in accommodation to us) when nothing is meant but this invisible power: which now, perhaps, cast a cloud about him, that he might not be struck dead by the inconceivable brightness and force of those rays which came from the face of the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 23. *And I will take away mine hand.*] As soon as the face (as it is called, ver. 20.) of the Divine Majesty was gone by him (which it was impossible for him to behold, and live), he promises to remove that cloud which covered him: so that he should look upon the hinder parts of his glory, though not upon the face.

And thou shalt see my back parts.] In which the glory of the Divine Majesty shone in a lower degree of light; which was not so piercing, as to put out the eyes, and take away the life of the beholders: and yet there was such a resplendent brightness in it, that Moses's face shone when he came down from the sight of it, (xxxiv. 29.) For that lustre in his countenance is to be ascribed, in all probability, to that sight which he had of the Divine Majesty at

that time. Some little particles of light remaining upon his face, and sticking to it (if I may so speak) from that exceeding great splendour which shone upon him, and passed before him, as he lay in the hollow place of the rock.

But my face shall not be seen.] My glory in its full lustre, without any veil before it, cannot be seen. (See ver. 20.) There are many other interpretations of this verse, as well as of the 18th and 19th Maimonides, in his book de Fundam. Legis, cap. 1. n. 11. takes it thus: "God revealed that to Moses, which no man, either before or after him, ever knew: he making him to apprehend something of his very essence, whereby God was separated in his mind, from all other beings; as a man discerns another man, when he sees his back parts, and by his mind discerns his proportions distinct from all other men." But in his More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 21. he takes this discovery to Moses, to be the knowledge God gave him of his works and attributes, *viz.* those mentioned xxxiv. 6. And thus Gregor. Nazianzen. (Orat. xxxiv. p. 559.) expounds it, ταῦτα γὰρ τοῦ Θεοῦ τὰ ὀπίσθια ὅσα μετ' ἐκεῖνον, &c. *Those things are the back parts of God which are after him; whereby he is known as the sun is by its image in the water,* &c. upon which Elias Cretensis hath this ingenious gloss, "That the face of God signifies his essence before the beginning of the world: and his hinder parts, his creation and providence in the government of the world." But Maimonides, in the same place now mentioned, acknowledges also, that this may be interpreted according to the Targum; that God made his majesty, that is, an exceeding bright representation of himself (though not in its fullest glory) to pass before him. Which Onkelos sometimes calls *Jekara, Glory;* sometimes *Memra, the Word;* and sometimes *Schechinah, the Majesty.* Which seems to be the most literal meaning; that God himself, particularly the eternal Word, in a visible glory or majesty, appeared unto him in so much splendour, as human nature was able to bear; but not in his unveiled brightness, which is, as the apostle speaks, *inaccessible.*

CHAP. XXXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord said unto Moses.*] Having obtained a promise of a pardon for the people, and of greater favour to himself, than had been hitherto shewn him; God directs him here to dispose things for the performance of both.

Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou breakest.] Every attentive reader must needs observe the difference between the first tables, which Moses brake, and those which he is now ordered to prepare. For God did not only write his laws with his own finger upon the first tables, but the tables themselves also were the work of God, (xxxii. 16.) Whereas in these, as Greg. Nyssen well expresses it, (de Vita Mosis, p. 183.) ἡ γραφὴ μὲν ἐκ θείας δυνάμεως ἦν. ἡ δὲ ὕλη, διὰ τῆς Μωϋσέως ἐξησκήθη χειρός: *the writing, indeed, was by the Divine power, but the matter of them framed by the hand of Moses.* So that, at the same time God shewed he was reconciled, he put them in mind that he had been offended; and restored them to his favour with some abatement.

Ver. 2. *And be ready in the morning.*] On the eighteenth day of July. (See xxxii. 30.)

And come up in the morning unto Mount Sinai.] From whence God spake to the Israelites (Deut. v. 4, &c.) those very words which he intended to write upon the tables. He orders him to come up in the morning, that all the people might see him ascend, and carry the tables with him.

And present thyself there to me, in the top of the mount.] Where the Divine Majesty appeared before in its glory; and where Moses stayed with him forty days and forty nights, (xix. 26. xxiv. 17, 18.)

Ver. 3. *And no man shall come up with thee.*] The same precept is renewed, which was given at his first ascent, (xxiv. 1, 2.)

Neither let any man be seen throughout the mount.] See xix. 12. 21, &c.

Neither let the flocks nor herds feed before the mount.] He seems to require their removal to such a distance, that they should not be within view of the Divine Majesty. By which means the people were naturally led to stand in greater awe of God, and there was the less danger of any beasts touching the mount, (xix. 13.)

Ver. 4. *And Moses hewed two tables of stone,* &c.] These and the following words only declare that he did as God bade him, (ver. 1, 2.)

And took in his hand the two tables of stone.] These he carried with him; but the first tables were given him when he came there, (xxiv. 12.) They seem to have been thin, being ho heavier than that he could carry them in one hand.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord.*] The Schechinah, or Divine Majesty; called also the *glory of the Lord.*

Descended in the cloud.] Wherein it had been wont to appear from the beginning of their deliverance out of Egypt; and had lately appeared to Moses in the tabernacle, (xxxiii. 9.) when the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of it, while the Lord talked with Moses there. And it seems, when that was done, the glory of the Lord in the cloud went up again towards heaven, and now came down upon this occasion.

And stood with him there.] The cloudy pillar, wherein the glory of the Lord was, rested upon the top of the mount where Moses now was, (ver. 2.)

And proclaimed the name of the Lord.] Gave him notice of his presence, as he had promised, (xxxiii. 19.) and is more fully expressed in the next verse.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord passed by before him.*] Which Onkelos translates, *the Lord made his majesty to pass before him.* Which exposition Maimonides acknowledges to be right; and confirmed by the Scripture itself, when it saith, (xxxiii. 22.) *While my glory passeth by,* &c. which he confesses signifies not the Divine essence itself; but some created splendour, which no eye was able to behold, (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 21.)

And proclaimed.] As the glory of the Lord passed by, he heard a voice proclaiming this description of the Divine nature.

The Lord.] Some join the next word to this, as if the voice said, *The Lord, the Lord;* the more to awaken his attention, to mind what he heard. (See xxxiii. 19.) And this name of his signifies his self-existence, and his absolute dominion over all creatures, which received their being from him. (See vi. 3.)

God.] The Hebrew word *el* signifies strong and mighty; in one word, his irresistible power, (Job ix. 4.)

Merciful.] The word *rachum* signifies that which we call *tender mercies;* such as parents have to their children, when their bowels yearn towards them.

And gracious.] We call that *chaninah* (*grace* or *favour*), saith Maimonides, which we bestow upon any man to whom we owe nothing, (Gen. xxxiii. 5. 11.) And therefore God is here called *chanum* (*gracious*), with respect to those whom he created, preserves, and governs, but is not obliged by any right to these things; as his words are, More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 45.

Long-suffering.] So slow to anger, that he doth not presently punish those that offend him, but bears long with them.

Abundant in goodness.] The Hebrew word *chesed*, which we translate *goodness*, signifies, as Maimonides saith, (More Nevoch. par. iii.) the excess and highest degree of any thing whatsoever it be; but especially, the greatest benignity. And therefore, with the addition of *rabh* (*abundant*), denotes long-continued kindness; as is more fully declared in the next verse.

And truth.] Most faithful and constant to his promises; which he steadfastly keeps throughout all generations. The word *abundant* refers both to this and to his benignity, (Psal. cxlvi. 6.)

Ver. 7. *Keeping mercy for thousands.*] The same word *chesed*, which before we translated *goodness*, we here translate *mercy:* and the Hebrews observing the letter *nun* to be greater in the word *notzer (keeping)* than is usual, fancy that it denotes the immense treasures of the Divine bounty. But the word *thousands* fully explains how abundant his mercy is.

Forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin.] Here are three words, to signify all sorts of offences, which he passes by, till men grow intolerably wicked. But some distinguish them by making *iniquity* signify offences against men; and *transgressions*, offences against God himself; and *sin*, all the errors, childishnesses, and follies, which men are guilty of, in the conduct of themselves. But they may as well signify the offences which were committed against the *moral*, *ceremonial*, and *political* laws.

And that will by no means clear the guilty.] These words, according to Maimonides, belong still to the loving-kindness of God, as all the foregoing do; signifying, that when he doth punish, he will not utterly destroy and make desolate. For so the Hebrew words, *nakkeh lo jenakkeh*, he thinks, are to be literally rendered, *in extirpating he will not extirpate;* as the word *nakah* he observes is used, Isaiah iii. 26. "She shall sit desolate on the earth." And to the same sense these words are expounded by many modern interpreters; particularly Lud. de Dieu: *When he empties, he will not empty;* or *make quite desolate.* For the maxim of the Hebrew is, (as Maimonides there observes, More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 54.) that *the property of goodness far excels that of severity.* For here being thirteen properties of God mentioned (I can find but ten, besides the name of the Lord), there is but one of them that belongs to the latter (*viz.* that which follows), all the rest belong to the former. And, indeed, we find that Moses urges these very words, among other, why God should not destroy the Israelites as one man, (Numb. xiv. 18.) which had been very improper, if God would *by no means clear the guilty.*

Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children.] This is meant, saith the same Maimonides, only of the sin of idolatry; unto which God threatens, in the second commandment, this punishment to the third and fourth generation, upon *those that hate him.* For no man is called a hater of God, but only an idolater; according to what we read, Deut. xii. 31. "Every abomination which the Lord hateth," &c.

Unto the third and fourth generation.] He mentions, saith the same author, none beyond these; because the utmost that any man can live to see of his seed, is the *fourth* generation. And therefore, when an idolatrous city was destroyed, the old idolater, with children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, were all cut off; according to the precept, (Deut. xiii. 15.) "Destroy it utterly, and all that is therein."

The sense of the whole seems to be, that this is the glory of the Divine Majesty: that he hath a sovereign dominion over all, because he is the fountain of being, the original of all things; most powerful to do what he pleases; and so merciful, that he delights to bestow his benefits unasked; and so gracious, as to continue them to the unthankful: bearing long with them, when they provoke him; multiplying favours on those who have no deserts; and faithfully performing his promises, though never so great; doing good unto a thousand generations of those who adhere faithfully to him, and do not apostatize from him: for he pardons innumerable offences, of all sorts, that are committed against his laws; and when the provocations are so great, that they are fit to be punished, he proceeds not to the utmost extremity till there be no remedy; then he punishes idolaters terribly, to the third and fourth generations.

Ver. 8. *And Moses made haste, and bowed his head towards the earth, and worshipped.*] Being transported with joy at so glorious a sight, and such gracious words, he immediately worshipped God with the humblest reverence, acknowledging his great condescension to him.

Ver. 9. *And he said.*] Which encouraged him to renew his request to God.

If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord.] He doth not doubt of it; but the meaning rather is, *since I have found grace*, &c. as appears from what he granted him, (xxxiii. 17, 18, &c.)

Let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us.] Upon the mention of the last property of the Divine Majesty, [*visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children*, &c.] Moses seems to have been afraid he might be provoked to proceed to such severity with the Israelites, who had lately apostatized from him: and again beseeches him he would be so gracious, though they should again offend him, as to continue his presence among them, which he had threatened to withdraw, (xxxiii. 3.)

For it is a stiff-necked people.] If we adhere to this translation, the meaning is, they needed such a governor, by whose authority and presence they might be kept in awe, and cured of their perverseness. But the particle *ki*, which we here translate *for*, often signifies *though:* and may be very fitly so rendered here: and then the meaning is, Though they be very refractory, (xxxii. 9.) yet do not forsake them, and leave them to themselves; but still conduct them as thou hast done.

And pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance.] Since thou art so ready to forgive, (ver. 7.) do not cut us off for our late offences; but still continue to own us for thy peculiar people. This Moses had begged

of God before, and obtained a promise of it, (xxxiii. 16, 17. and see xix. 5.) and now he beseeches him, out of his goodness which he had proclaimed, to confirm that promise, and not to revoke it upon every new provocation.

Ver. 10. *And he said, Behold, I make a covenant.*] Herein God verified the truth of what he had proclaimed; being so *merciful and gracious,* as not only to confirm his promise, but to turn it into a covenant, like that at the giving of his laws from Mount Sinai, (xxiv. 3. 7, &c.) which he renews with them in the next verse: where he engages to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan before them; and then requires them to take care not to imitate their idolatry.

Before all thy people will I do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, &c.] This seems to relate to all the wonderful works he intended to do, in their introduction into the land of Canaan, by making the waters of Jordan retire, and the walls of Jericho fall down; with the rest that followed, till they got possession of their inheritance.

For it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee.] Such as shall declare the almighty power of the Divine Majesty; and strike a terror into all those that oppose him, but demonstrate (in an astonishing manner) his fidelity to his people. For all this is said to confirm their belief of the covenant he said he would make with them, in the beginning of the verse.

Ver. 11. *Observe thou that which I command thee this day.*] Doubt not of what I say; but only mark, and take care to do all that I now enjoin thee.

Behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite and the Canaanite, &c.] To encourage them so to do, he premises what he intended to do for them; which he put at the conclusion of his covenant, when he first declared it, (xxiii. 23. 28.) but here puts it in the front of it, that they might be the more sensible of the reasonableness of those commands to which he expected obedience.

Ver. 12. *Take heed to thyself.*] He now renewing that covenant with them, which they had broken by the worshipping the golden calf, repeats the principal precepts which concerned his worship and service (which had been delivered to them before), and excites them to the observance of them, by the addition of a very gracious promise, (ver. 24.)

Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest.] Nothing could be more reasonable than this, that they should not enter into friendship with those nations, whom he commanded them to expel, for their abominable wickedness; unless they would renounce their idolatry, and come under their government. (See xxiii. 32. and Mr. Selden, lib. vi. de Jure N. et G. in the latter end of the thirteenth chapter and beginning of the next.)

Lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee.] Lest they inveigle thee to imitate their manners.

Ver. 13. *But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves.*] This more largely explains what was briefly and summarily delivered in xxiii. 32. "Thou shalt not make a covenant with their gods." And, ver. 24. "Thou shalt quite break down their images." Which images and altars were usually set in *groves,* as sacred places; being the temples of their gods. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 24.) For when Tacitus saith (Lib. de Moribus Germanorum), that the old Germans went to war as if God commanded them, whom they believed to be present with them; he tells us, "Effigiesque et signa quædam detracta lucis ad prœlium ferunt," *they carried with them into the battle certain images and signs, which they took out of their groves.* These, in all probability, were the images of their gods, who they thought fought for them, as Joh. Filesacus conjectures, (lib. ii. Selectorum, cap. 5. de Ceremoniis, sect. 7.) where he observes, that these groves were impure places, not only because there were the images and altars of their false gods; but all manner of filthiness and lewdness was committed under those shades. Which made Horace call them, *parum castos lucos,* (lib. i. in the latter end of the twelfth Ode.)

Some of the Hebrews restrained this precept only to the land of Canaan: where they were bound to destroy all things belonging to the religion of those idolatrous people, in whose place they were planted, that they might not be infected with their impiety. (See Deut. xii. 2, 3.) But in other countries which they conquered, they fancied they were not bound to root it out. Yet afterward they saw it necessary to extend this precept to all idolatrous countries which came under their power, where they destroyed their idols, as they had done in Canaan: lest by imitation *παραπροπή τις τῶν κατὰ τὴν πολιτείαν ἔσοιτο, their polity should have been quite subverted,* as Josephus speaks. (See Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 2.)

Ver. 14. *For thou shalt worship no other god.*] This being the great principle of their religion, "the Lord thy God is one Lord," (Deut. vi. 4.) and there is no other God beside him.

For the Lord, whose name is Jealous.] So he calls himself, xx 5. and gave himself this peculiar name, because he could not bear any other god to be rival with him, after the manner of the gentiles: whose gods suffered a number of other gods to share in the worship that was given to them, by offering sacrifices, and burning incense, and bowing down to them.

Is a jealous God.] As is his name, so is he himself: he will not endure any other to be worshipped with him.

Ver. 15. *Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land.*] That is, a covenant of *marriage,* (for covenants in general were forbidden before, ver. 12.) which he commands them not to contract with the inhabitants of Canaan: no, nor with any idolaters whatsoever. For though some of the Jews would restrain this to the seven nations only, yet the generality of them resolve it is meant of all other idolatrous people. And there is an illustrious argument of it, in the ninth and tenth chapters of Ezra, and in Nehemiah, xiii. 25. This they will have to have been as old as the law of circumcision; which they gather from Gen. xxxiv. 14. and it held throughout all following ages; insomuch that Mahomet forbids any of his religion to marry any one that is not made a Mussulman, *i. e.* a believer of his doctrine. As for such as turned from idolatry, it was always lawful to marry them; but they were so far from having to do with others, that the Talmudists held it as unlawful to lie with a gentile woman, as with a woman in her uncleanness. Whence that character which Tacitus gives of the Jews, "Projectissima ad libidinem gens, alienarum concubitu abstinet." (See Selden, lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 12.)

And they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice to their gods.] Of which there was very great danger if they loved their wives; who would have great power over them (as appears by Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 2, 3, &c.) to entice them to their religion. Of this phrase, *going a whoring after their gods*, see Seld. Uxor. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 23.

And one call thee.] Invite thee (as the manner was) to the feast that was usually made, upon the sacrifices offered to their gods: as the Israelites ate of the peace-offerings, and invited their friends to partake with them.

And thou eat of his sacrifice.] By this we see how ancient and universal the custom was of feasting upon sacrifices: which Mr. Mede truly calls *epulæ fœderales, federal feasts*, (upon Malachi ii.) For the meat was God's, being set upon his table; of which he inviting the offerers to partake, they were his guests; whom he entertained at his table, in token of reconciliation and friendship with him. And therefore, whosoever ate of the sacrifices offered to other gods, professed themselves to be their worshippers and servants. Which made the Jews so cautious in this matter, that they would not so much as drink the wine, or the water, or use the salt of an idolater, not knowing but it might have been set before an idol. So R. Levi Barzelonita, in the explication of the 112th Precept. This explains that discourse of the apostle, 1 Cor. x. 20.

Ver. 16. *And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons*, &c.] If they themselves married idolaters, there was the greater danger they might be content to let their sons and daughters marry with them; especially if they were rich or beautiful: and so the whole family be undone.

Ver. 17. *Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.*] Images are called by the name of *gods*, because they were worshipped together with them, as symbols of their presence. And though *molten* be here only mentioned, (upon occasion of their late sin, in worshipping the *molten calf*, xxxii. 4.) yet all other images are intended, as appears by xx. 4. 23.

Ver. 18. *The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep*, &c.] See all this explained, xii. 15, 16, &c. xiii. 6, 7. xxiii. 15.

As I commanded thee in the time of the month Abib, &c.] See xiii. 4. xxiii. 15.

Ver. 19. *All that openeth the matrix is mine*, &c.] See xiii. 12. xxii. 29, 30.

Ver. 20. *But the first-born of an ass shalt thou redeem*, &c.] See xiii. 13.

And none shall appear before me empty.] See xxiii. 15.

Ver. 21. *Six days shalt thou work*, &c.] See xx. 9. xxiii. 12. xxxi. 15. where this is sufficiently explained. But here, to shew the necessity of forbearing labour on this day, they are not permitted it *in earing or in harvest*: that is, in the two most busy times of the year; when they ploughed and sowed their ground, and when they reaped the fruits thereof. (See Gen. xlv. 6.)

Ver. 22. *And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks*, &c.] This verse also hath been explained before, xxiii. 16. Only here observe, that the *first-fruits of wheat-harvest*, being now offered at this feast, there was a harvest before this, which began at the Passover, when they offered the *first-fruits of barley-harvest*, (Deut. xvi. 9.)

Ver. 23. *Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord, the God of Israel.*] This likewise was explained, xxiii. 14. 17. And nothing need be added, but that these peculiar laws are here repeated (together with those that follow, ver. 25, 26.) upon this occasion, because they were ordained to preserve the people in the worship and service of the true God, from whom they had lately departed. Who therefore puts them in mind, in the last words of this verse (which was not said before), that he was *the God of Israel*, to whom they were devoted by especial obligations.

Ver. 24. *For I will cast out the nations before thee.*] Till this was done, they were not bound to observe the precept, of appearing three times in the year before the Lord.

And will enlarge thy borders.] Beyond the land of Canaan, as he had promised before, (xxiii. 31.)

Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord, &c.] To remove all fear out of their mind, that their neighbours might invade them, when all the men were gone, and none but women, and children, and old men left at home, he adds this promise to all he had made before (or rather makes it a part of his covenant, which he now renews), that he would lay such restraints upon their enemies, that they should not so much as think of invading them at those three feasts; much less make any actual incursions into their country.

Ver. 25. *Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice*, &c.] At the Passover. See this fully explained, xxiii. 18.

Ver. 26. *The first of the first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the Lord thy God.*] At Pentecost, which was the *feast of the first-fruits*. (See xxiii. 19.)

Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk.] This concerns the other great feast, that of tabernacles. (See in the same place.)

Ver. 27. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] Having recited the principal part of his covenant, mentioned ver. 10. he gives the following order.

Write thou these words.] From ver. 11 to this place: just as he did those words contained in the twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third chapters of this book, (see xxiv. 4.) out of which these words are extracted, as the chief things respecting the worship of God; which he requires him to write in a book by itself.

For after the tenor of these words have I made a covenant with thee, and with Israel.] See xxiv. 7. where the covenant, containing these words and many other, was sealed with the blood of a sacrifice.

The Jews are so blind as to found their oral tradition upon this place, and upon one small word *(pi)*, which signifies, indeed, *mouth;* but withal is an expletive particle, denoting the manner and value of any thing, as appears from Gen. xliii. 7. Lev. xxvii. 18. and, therefore, here rightly translated *the tenor* of these words. Yet R. Johannes, in the very beginning of Halicoth Olam, gathers from hence, that God made a covenant now with their fathers, concerning all the unwritten laws delivered by word of mouth. Unto which, while they adhere, they can never understand their Divine writings: for what can be more plain that the covenant here mentioned was ordered to be *written?*

Ver. 28. *And he was there with the Lord.*] This, saith Maimonides, was the highest degree of prophecy, which none attained but Moses: whose thoughts were wholly taken off from all other things, and fixed upon God, while he was with him in the holy mount; that is, asked and re-

ceived answers from the Lord: (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 51.)

Forty days and forty nights.] As he had been at the first, (xxiv. 18.) Which was partly to make a new trial, how they would behave themselves in his absence; and partly to give the greater authority to the laws, he brought them from God, which he renewed, as we read in the end of this verse.

And did neither eat bread, nor drink water.] But was supported by influences from the Almighty, who kept up his spirits in their just height, without the common recruits of meat and drink: which, when they give us refreshment, likewise make us drowsy, (see xxiv. 18.) To which add what Maimonides saith in the place now named, that the joy wherewith he was transported made him not think of eating and drinking; for his intellectual faculties were so strong, that all corporeal desire ceased.

It seems to me very probable, that, during this time, he saw again the model of the tabernacle and all its furniture, with every thing else he was ordered to make when he went first into the mount, from the beginning of the twenty-fifth to the end of the thirtieth chapter, which are briefly summed up xxxi. 7—11. He seems also to have spent much of this time in prayer to God for the people, that he would restore them entirely to his favour, and bring them to their inheritance, (Deut. ix. 18, 19. 25, 26. x. 10.)

And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, &c.] That is, the Lord wrote, (as he said he would, ver. 1.) not Moses; who wrote the foregoing words in a book; but not these, which were written by the finger of God in the tables of stone. So Moses tells us expressly, Deut. x. 4. Jacobus Capellus, and others, following the Hebrew doctors, imagine that Moses was three times with God in the mount, for the space of forty days; and that this was the last time. Between which and the first they place another, which they fancy is mentioned, xxxii. 30, 31. compared with Deut. ix. 18, &c. But I see no solid ground for this; for God called him up into the mount but twice; and he durst not have adventured to go so near him, as he was both these times, without his invitation.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai.*] Which was upon the twenty-fifth of our August, according to the former computation, (ver. 2.)

With the two tables of testimony in Moses's hand, when he came down from the mount.] So he came down at the first, (xxxii. 15.)

That Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone.] There was a radiant splendour in his countenance; which is the import of the Hebrew *karan*, which the Vulgar translates *horned*. Not imagining that Moses had horns, but rays of light which imitated horns. And therefore the Hebrew word *karnaim* signifies both; and R. Solomon Jarchi upon this place calls these rays on Moses's face, *horns of magnificence*, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 6. p. 292.) It is not improbable that the hair of his head was interspersed with light, as well as that rays came from his face; which perstringed the eyes of beholders. And painters had done more reasonable, if, instead of horns upon Moses's forehead, they had represented him with a glory crowning his head, as the saints are usually painted in the Roman church. Which perhaps came from the ancient custom among the heathen, who thus represented their gods, as Tho. Bartholinus observes (de Morbis Biblicis, cap. v.) out of Lucian de Dea Syria, where he saith she did ἐπὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ ἀκτῖνας φορέειν, *carry beams upon her head.* Whence it was that the Roman emperors, who were raised so much above the rest of mankind, that they honoured them as a sort of deities, were thus represented; as appears by many testimonies, particularly Pliny, who, in his panegyric to Trajan, laughs and jeers at the *radiatum Domitiani caput.*

While he talked with them.] While he conversed so familiarly with the Divine Majesty, and both saw his glory and heard him proclaim his name, (ver. 5—7.) At his first being in the mount, there was no such brightness left upon his countenance; for he did not see the Divine Majesty in so great a splendour as he did now, when the Lord, upon his petition, vouchsafed him such a sight of his glory as he could bear, (xxxiii. 18. 23.) which was so exceeding piercing, that it altered the very skin of Moses's face, and made it luminous: of which Moses doth not seem to have been sensible, till some time after he came down from the mount (when Aaron, as well as others, were afraid to come nigh him), having his thoughts wholly possessed with the far more transcendent glory of the Divine Majesty, of which he had a glimpse.

From this familiar conference which Moses had with God, it is likely the heathen took occasion to invent the like stories of their Zamolxis, who pretended to receive his laws from Vesta; and Minos and Lycurgus, who said they received theirs from Jupiter and Apollo; with several others mentioned by Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. who then adds, Moses had his from the god *Jao;* so they pronounced the name *Jehovah.* But they had no such testimony as this of their communication with the Divine Majesty; much less were their laws confirmed by such miracles, as lasted for the space of forty years under the conduct of Moses, in the sight of all people.

Ver. 30. *And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone.*] This highly established his authority, and bred in them a reverence to the laws he brought, that they were all witnesses of the *brightness* or *glory of his countenance*, (as the apostle calls it, 2 Cor. iii. 7.) which demonstrated he had been with God, as he affirmed, and had beheld the glory of his majesty, and received from him the tables of testimony. By *all the children of Israel*, in this verse, seems to be meant *all the rulers of the congregation* mentioned in the next.

And they were afraid to come nigh him.] The light which shone from his countenance was so great, that it dazzled the eyes of beholders, even of Aaron himself, who did not know whether it would be safe to approach him. This was an illustrious testimony that he had been with God, *who dwells,* as the apostle speaks, *in light inaccessible.*

Ver. 31. *And Moses called unto them.*] Invited them to come near him, and not to fear any hurt.

And Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him.] *viz.* After he had put a veil upon his face, till which they could not *steadfastly look upon it,* (as the apostle speaks, 2 Cor. iii. 7.) the light of it being so strong, that it hurt their eyes, if they fixed them there.

And Moses talked with them.] Acquainted them with what he had seen and heard.

Ver. 32. *And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh*, &c.] There was a general assembly of all the tribes summoned, that he might deliver to them all that which he had received from God. (See xxxv. 1.)

And he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai.] All the orders he had given about the building of the tabernacle, and the rest contained in the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth chapters, and those that follow to the thirty-second. For at his first coming from the mount, finding them in an apostacy from God, he said nothing to them about these matters; but, in abhorrence of their foul idolatry, broke the tables of testimony which God had given him to deliver to them.

Ver. 33. *And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face.*] This seems to belong as well to ver. 31. as to the 32d, and accordingly I have interpreted it. Though there are those who think he persuaded Aaron and the rulers to approach without a veil; but put it on when he spake to the people, who were less able to bear it. But there seems to be the same reason for both; Aaron being no less afraid than any of them: and the majesty of his countenance appeared sufficiently, even when it was veiled; for the brightness was not quite obscured, though very much shaded by it.

Ver. 34. *But when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he took the veil off till he came out.*] He went into the tabernacle, where he spake with him, face to face, as a man speaks to his friend, (xxxiii. 9—11.)

And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded.] This seems to relate unto the frequent occasions Moses had to go and consult with God in difficult cases, whose mind he declared to them when he had received it.

Ver. 35. *And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses's face shone*, &c.] Some great men have thought that the brightness continued on Moses's face till his death; so that he spake to them with a veil on his face, from this time, as long as he lived: of which we cannot be certain; though thus much is evident, from this and the foregoing verse, that the splendour of his countenance did remain for some time after he came down from God's presence in the mount; during which, as oft as he went in to speak with God, he took off his veil, and when he came out to speak with them, he put it on, *until he went in to speak with God again*, as this verse concludes. How long it was before it vanished none can resolve: perhaps not till he had set up the tabernacle, and consecrated Aaron and his sons, and delivered all the laws he had received about the service of God, which are recorded in the book of Leviticus: that is, all the time they stayed near Mount Sinai; from whence they removed a little more than half a year after this, (Numb. x. 11, 12.)

CHAP. XXXV.

Ver. 1. *AND Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together.*] Having told them what orders he had received from the Lord, and sufficiently convinced them of his authority, (xxxiv. 32, 33.) he now proceeds to put them in execution. And in order to it, he gathered *col-hadath*, all the congregation: which sometimes signifies all the elders and judges, &c. (the prime governors of the people) and sometimes the whole body of the people, as Corn. Bon. Bertram observes, de Repub. Jud. cap. 6. It seems here to be used in the first sense; for he could not speak these words to the whole body of the people, but to the principal persons of the several tribes, by whom what he said was communicated to all Israel.

These are the words which the Lord hath commanded, that ye should do them.] Before they entered upon the work, he admonishes them that none of it must be done upon the sabbath.

Ver. 2. *Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy sabbath*, &c.] This commandment was particularly repeated to Moses, at the end of all the directions about the building of the tabernacle, (see xxxi. 13—15.) and now repeated to them (as it was at his late renewing his covenant with them, xxxiv. 21.) that they might not imagine any of the work here commanded to be done about the tabernacle, &c. would license them to break the sabbath. The observation of which being the great preservative of religion, that is the reason it is so often enjoined, and particular care taken to secure it. And it is not to be omitted, that (to shew of what great concern it is) he calls it here, as he did xxxi. 15. where the end and use of it is set down, the *sabbath of sabbaths*, that is, the great sabbath or rest.

Ver. 3. *Ye shall kindle no fire in your habitations upon the sabbath-day.*] To dress their meat, or for any other work: otherwise they might kindle a fire to warm themselves in cold weather. This is sufficiently comprehended under the general command, *thou shalt not do any work*, (xx. 10.) Therefore the meaning is, Thou shalt not so much as kindle a fire for any such purpose. For that is the rule they give in Halicoth Olam, cap. 2. that such particular prohibitions *forbid the whole kind, i. e.* all manner of work whatsoever; which is here mentioned, to shew they might not kindle a fire for this work of the tabernacle.

Ver. 4. *And spake unto all the congregation*, &c.] See ver. 1.

This is the thing which the Lord commanded.] Having secured the observation of the sabbath, according to the direction given just before he came down from the mount the first time, (xxxi. 13—15.) he now relates to them what commands he received from God, concerning all that follows.

Ver. 5. *Take ye from amongst you an offering unto the Lord.*] And first he makes a motion to them from the Lord, that they would make a free oblation of materials for the building of the tabernacle, and all other things which the Lord commanded to be made, (ver. 10, &c.)

Take ye, is as much as *bring ye*, and so we translate it xxv. 2. (See there.) Where it appears that this was the very first thing God said to him (concerning a voluntary offering, which was the foundation of all the rest), and therefore is first propounded to the people by him.

Whosoever is of a willing heart, &c.] See xxv. 2.

Ver. 6—9.] All these have been explained in the twenty-fifth chapter, ver. 3—5, &c.

Ver. 10. *Every wise-hearted among you shall come, and make all that the Lord hath commanded.*] Every skilful person in the art of making the things following. The same is said of the women, ver. 25. The Hebrew word *cochmah*,

which we translate *wisdom*, is used variously, as Maimonides observes; sometimes for the understanding of Divine things; sometimes for moral virtue; and sometimes for skill in any art (of which he alleges this place as an instance), and sometimes for craft and subtlety. (See More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 54.) The word *leb* (or *heart*) is used here according to the vulgar opinion of those days, that the heart is the seat of the understanding. And thus I observed before upon chap. xxv. that excellent artists are by the heathen called *wise men*. Since which I have observed, that this is the language of Homer himself; whose verses concerning Margites are quoted by Aristotle in more places than one, (lib. vi. Moral. ad Nichomach. cap. 7. et lib. v. Moral. ad Eudemum, cap. 7.) where he saith he was so foolish, that

Τὸν δ' οὔτ' ἄρ σκαπτῆρα θεοὶ θέσαν οὔτ' ἀροτῆρα
Οὔτ' ἄλλως τι σοφόν.

The gods neither made him a ditcher, nor a ploughman, nor any other sort of wise man. Upon which Aristotle notes, τὴν δὲ σοφίαν ἐν ταῖς τέχναις, τοῖς ἀκριβεστάτοις τὰς τέχνας ἀποδίδομεν, *We ascribe wisdom in arts to those who excel in them;* and then he instances in Phidias a stone-cutter, and Polycletus a statuary.

Ver. 11. *The tabernacle.*] This signifies sometimes the whole structure of the house of God; but here only the fine inward curtains, mentioned xxvi. 1, 2, &c.

His tent.] This signifies the curtains of goats' hair; which were laid over the other, (xxvi. 7, &c.)

His covering.] Of rams' skins and badgers' skins; which were thrown over the other two, (xxvi. 14.)

His taches, and his boards, his bars, his pillars, and his sockets.] All these are explained in that chapter.

Ver. 12. *The ark and his staves, with the mercy-seat.*] See xxv. 10. 13. 17.

And the veil of the covering.] Whereby the holy was separated from the most holy place. Which is here fitly mentioned between the mercy-seat, which was within; and the table, &c. which were without this veil.

Ver. 13. *The table, and his staves, and all his vessels.*] See all these explained, xxv. 23, 24, &c.

And the shew-bread.] This is a short expression, one word (as is usual) being cut off, *viz. the dishes*, in which the *shew-bread* was set. For Moses had not order to make the bread itself, but the dishes (as I said) on which the loaves were laid, (xxv. 29.)

Ver. 14. *The candlestick also for the light, and his furniture, and his lamps.*] See xxvi. 31, 32, &c.

With the oil for the light.] See xxvii. 20, 21.

Ver. 15. *And the incense-altar, and the staves.*] See xxxi. 1, 2, &c.

And the anointing oil.] See xxxi. 23, 24, &c.

And the sweet incense.] See xxxi. 34, &c. He mentioned before the materials for them, (ver. 8.) and now the things themselves.

And the hanging for the door, at the entering in of the tabernacle.] Of this, see xxvi. 36.

Ver. 16. *And the altar of burnt-offering, with his brazen grate, his staves.*] These are explained, xxvii. 1—7.

And all his vessels.] See there, ver. 3.

The laver and his foot.] See xxix. 17, 18.

Ver. 17. *The hangings of the court, his pillars, and their sockets.*] See xxvii. 9, 10, &c.

And the hangings for the door of the court.] See there, ver. 16.

Ver. 18. *The pins of the tabernacle,* &c.] See xxvii. 19.

Ver. 19. *The clothes of the service, to do service in the holy place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and his sons,* &c.] Of which there is an account in the whole twenty-eighth chapter. And Moses here makes this large enumeration of all the things which God had commanded, (ver. 10.) that they might be stirred up to be the more liberal in their offering, when they saw how many things were to be done.

Ver. 20. *And all the congregation of the children of Israel.*] Whom he had summoned to meet together, (ver. 1.)

Departed from the presence of Moses.] When he had reported to them what orders he had received from the Divine Majesty in the mount, (ver. 4, 5, &c.)

Ver. 21. *And they came.*] Being dismissed to their own tents, they went thither only to fetch an offering to the Lord; which they came and brought immediately.

Every one whose heart stirred him up.] Whose mind was raised to a free and cheerful readiness. The Hebrew words are, *lifted him up;* that is, had *animum excelsum, a noble mind;* or was of a generous spirit; as the following words import, *Every one whom his spirit made willing.*

And they brought the Lord's offering.] An offering to the Lord, as Moses exhorted, (ver. 5.)

To the work of the tabernacle.] For the building a sanctuary, wherein God might dwell among them, (xxv. 8.)

And for all his service.] For all that belonged to the furniture of it, both within and without, which are mentioned in the verses beforegoing.

And for the holy garments.] That the priests might minister there in their office, (ver. 19.)

Ver. 22. *And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted.*] Who seem to have been the greatest part of the congregation.

And brought bracelets, and ear-rings, and rings.] They were no less forward to offer to the service of God, than they had been to the making the golden calf, (xxxii. 2, 3.) for which offence they now make some sort of satisfaction; being more liberal in contributing to this work, than they were to that. For we read there only of their *ear-rings*, which they brake off from their ears and brought to Aaron; but here of their *bracelets* also, and *rings*, with other things. For though they may be supposed to have parted with a great deal, on that wicked account; it did not make those who were touched with what Moses said, less willing to give afresh to a holy use.

Tablets.] The Hebrew word *comaz*, or *camaz*, is of very uncertain signification; for some make it an ornament of the arms, and others of some other part: but the Chaldee takes it for something about the breast; a *fascia* (saith Elias) wherewith women tied up and compressed their breasts, to make them appear more beautiful, by being round. This Bochartus approves, in his Canaan. lib. ii. cap. 5.

All jewels of gold.] All the four forenamed sorts of ornaments were of gold.

And every man that offered, offered an offering of gold unto the Lord.] The first oblations that were brought, either by the women or the men, were all of gold: and then followed meaner things, which the people of lower condition brought to the Lord.

Ver. 23. *And every man with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen,* &c.] The common sort of people also offered such as they had, yarn, and fine linen, goats' hair, and skins. (See xxv. 4, 5.)

Ver. 24. *Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass,* &c.] Those of a middle condition offered silver, and brass, and shittim-wood. All which were necessary for several uses: for the ark and the table were to be overlaid with gold; of which the candlesticks and several other things were to be made. (See chap. xxv.) The inward cutains were to be made of the yarn; and the outward of goats' hair, and the covering of both of skins. The foundations of the tabernacle were of silver; and the taches of the curtains and altar of burnt-offering of brass; and shittim-wood was used about the boards of the tabernacle, the ark, table, &c. (See chap. xxv. xxvi. xxvii.)

Ver. 25. *And all the women that were wise-hearted, did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun,* &c.] Not only the men, but the women also, brought materials for the house; and more than that, such as were skilful among them spun both yarn and thread; which was the proper work of women, not of men. Unto which work alone they were bound to apply themselves, if by the custom of the place no other work (such as knitting, and sewing with their needle, &c.) was usually performed by them, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. iii. de Uxor. Hebr. cap. 10. where he treats of all the employments of their women.

Ver. 26. *And all the women whose heart stirred them up.*] Whose minds were elevated to excellent contrivances.

In wisdom, spun goats' hair.] With great art spun goats' hair; which was not so easy as to spin wool and flax. For though their goats were shorn in those countries, as sheep are here (their hair being longer than ours), yet there was a great deal of skill required to work it into a thread, and to make stuff of it. (See Bochart. Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 51.) In old time also women were wont to weave as well as spin, as appears not only out of the sacred books, but out of Homer, Plato, Cicero, and many other authors, mentioned by Braunius, in his book de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 17, where he observes (N. 33.) out of Herodotus, that he, shewing the Egyptian customs to be different in many things from those of other nations, mentions this among the rest, that their men κατ' οἴκους ἥμενοι ὑφαίνουσι, *sat at home and weaved,* while their women went abroad and bought and sold, (lib. ii. cap. 35.)

Ver. 27. *And the rulers brought onyx-stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breast-plate.*] The great men also offered suitable to their quality; such things as the people could not furnish, *viz.* precious stones, for uses mentioned xxv. 7. xxviii. 9. 17, 18, &c.

Ver. 28. *And spice, and oil for the light, and for the anointing oil,* &c.] Such principal spices (as we translate it) mentioned xxx. 23. 34, together with oil for the light, (xxvii. 20.) which was so pure, that ordinary persons had it not. For there were several sorts of olives (as Fort. Scacchus shews, Myrothec. Sacr. Elæochrysm. par. i. cap. 4, 5.) some of which were not so common as the other, and therefore of greater value.

Ver. 29. *The children of Israel brought a willing offering,* &c.] To sum up all in a few words, they brought whatsoever was necessary, *for all manner of work which the Lord had commanded to be made.*

By the hand of Moses.] Whom he employed to deliver these commands to his people.

Ver. 30. *And Moses said, See, the Lord hath called by name,* &c.] Hath principally made choice of Bezaleel to undertake and perform this work. This he said, that they might not be solicitous about artists, to make all that was propounded; for they knew that there were none among them bred to such employments. Moses therefore informs them, in the first place, that God had provided himself of a master workman, as he told him xxx. 1, 2, &c.

Ver. 31. *And he hath filled him with the spirit of God in wisdom,* &c.] This verse is explained before, xxxi. 3. 6. only I shall add, that the extraordinary skill which any man had without teaching, in common arts, was by the heathens ascribed to their gods. There are several instances of it observed by Maximus Tyrius, Dissert. xxii. where he argues, that it should not be thought strange, if a man be made virtuous by a Divine inspiration, when some have no other ways become admirable artists. Among which he mentions Demodocus, a musician, whom Homer introduces speaking thus of himself:

Αὐτοδίδακτος δ' εἰμὶ, θεοὶ δέ μοι ὤπασαν ὁμφήν.

I was never taught by any body, but the gods bestowed on me the gift of singing. The latter end of which verse is a little otherwise in Homer, as we now have him, (Odyss. x.) but to the same sense, and it is Phemius, not Demodocus, who there speaks, as Petrus Petitus hath observed, in his Miscell. Observ. lib. i. cap. 19.

Ver. 32. *And to devise curious works.*] The Hebrew word *chaschab* signifies to *devise* and *excogitate;* whence *macheschaboth,* which we translate *curious works* (and in the end of the next verse *cunning works*), is as much as ingenious inventions, devised with much art. Such were the engines made by king Uzziah, which are said to be invented by cunning men, or excellent engineers, as we now speak, (1 Chron. xxvi. 15.) See xxxi. 4. where this verse hath been explained.

Ver. 33. *And in the cutting of stones,* &c.] See xxxi. 5.

Ver. 34. *And he hath put in his heart that he may teach.*] Instruct others in his arts. For this was a gift of God, as much as any of the rest, to be able to inform others dexterously, in those things which he knew himself: as it was, to be able to comprehend what Moses told him God had ordered, and put it in execution. For God gave Moses the pattern, according to which all things were to be wrought: and as it was a peculiar gift of God, which enabled him to represent to Bezaleel what had been set before him; so it was by an extraordinary operation on his mind, that he conceived presently what was represented, and had skill to perform it according to direction.

Ver. 35. *Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work,* &c.] This is repeated so often, and such particular mention is here made again of their skill in every thing, though of ever so difficult contrivance, to assure the Israelites that they were so well qualified for the work, that they might be entrusted with the offerings they had made. And accordingly they were, (xxxvi. 3.)

CHAP. XXXVI.

Ver. 1. *THEN wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise-hearted man,* &c.] This verse is only a general account of what follows more particularly, concerning the execution of that which God had commanded, and for the effecting of which the people had liberally contributed. It is not said where they wrought, but some think it was in that very space of ground where the tabernacle was set up when perfected.

Ver. 2. *And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise-hearted man, in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom.*] It appears by this, that all the lower artificers, who were taught by the master-workmen, Bezaleel and Aholiab, were also disposed by God to learn; he giving them a quickness of apprehension and sagacity beyond what was natural to them.

Even every one whose heart stirred him up, to come unto the work to do it.] Yet this signifies, they had also a natural genius, which inclined and prompted them to such employments.

Ver. 3. *And they received of Moses all the offerings which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the sanctuary,* &c.] Into the hands of all these artists, Moses delivered the offerings that had been made; and directed them what to do with them.

And they brought yet unto him free-offerings every morning.] The hearts of the people were so enlarged, that every day they brought new contributions unto Moses; who sent them (as appears by the next verse) to the workmen, as soon as he received them.

Ver. 4. *And all the wise men, which wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which he made.*] After they had continued some time at their work, they all agreed to desist awhile, and go to Moses, to let him know that there needed no further offerings, for they had sufficient already; nay, more than enough, as it follows, ver. 5.

Ver. 5. *And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work,* &c.] A wonderful instance of integrity, that there should not be one man found among them (for the words in the Hebrew are very emphatical, *isch, isch* [*man, man*], that is, none excepted) who was inclined to purloin any thing for his own proper use: but by common consent, they left their work, to put a stop to all further contributions. A sign they were men endued with extraordinary virtue, as well as skill in their employments.

Ver. 6. *And Moses gave commandment.*] To those that attended on him; or perhaps to Bezaleel and Aholiab, and the rest.

And they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp.] By some under officers, who, it is likely, were wont to execute such commands.

Saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary.] It seems some men prepared and made ready some of the things which they offered; as the women spun yarn and hair, and brought them to Moses. For it was not hard to plane boards (for instance) though the joining them together, as God appointed, was beyond the skill of common people.

Ver. 7. *For the stuff they had was sufficient,* &c.] There were materials of all sorts, for every thing that was to be made, beyond what was necessary.

Ver. 8. *And every wise-hearted man among them that wrought the work of the tabernacle,* &c.] They began first (as was but fit) with the house of God, before they made the furniture. For that was first ordered in general words, (xxv. 8.) though the structure of it be not directed till the twenty-sixth chapter. Where every thing mentioned in this is explained; and therefore there will need no more to be done here; but to point to a few things which are explained elsewhere, particularly in the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 14. *He made curtains of goats' hair for the tent over the tabernacle.*] What is here meant by *tent,* see xxxv. 11.

Ver. 19. *He made a covering for the tent.*] This curtain covered the *tent,* as the curtain of which the tent was made covered the *tabernacle.* (See xxvi. 14. xxxv. 11.)

Of rams' skins died red.] The particle *mem* here is cut off before *skins;* as it is in several verses of this chapter, (8. 34, 35. and others.)

Covering of badgers'-skins.] I observed on xxvi. 14. that *thaccas* doth not signify a badger, but a certain colour, and alleged that place in Ezek. xvi. 10. for the proof of it; where God setting forth his kindness to Israel, under the figure of a most loving husband, who denies his wife nothing, though never so costly, saith, he shod her with *thacas;* which I since find translated by an anonymous author, *with purple shoes.*

CHAP. XXXVII.

IN this chapter Moses gives an account of the making of all the furniture of the tabernacle, with such exactness, as he describes the making of the tabernacle itself, in the foregoing chapter: to shew that God's directions about the making every thing was punctually observed; nothing being omitted or added, but all made according to the pattern in the mount, (xxv. 9. 40.) In which chapter most of the things here mentioned are explained; and there needs little to be added here.

Ver. 1. *And Bezaleel made the ark of shittim-wood,* &c.] Abarbinel fancies, that though other things were made by inferior artificers, whom Bezaleel directed; yet the ark, because of its dignity and pre-eminence, above all other things, was made by him, without the help of any other. And so Rambam also; from whence the Jews commonly called it (as Buxtorf observes), the *ark of Bezaleel.* But this hath no good foundation; for he is said to have made also every thing else in the tabernacle; the table, and all its vessels: in short, every thing mentioned in this chapter, and in the next also, and in the foregoing, (ver. 10, 11, &c.) He therefore is said to have made the ark, &c. because he gave directions to the under workmen, and saw them make it.

Ver. 10. *And he made the table of shittim-wood,* &c.] Next to the ark, the mercy-seat, and the cherubims which belong to it, the table and the vessels appertaining to it were the principal things within the tabernacle. See xxv. 23, &c. where all the things mentioned between this verse and the seventeenth are explained.

Ver. 17. *And he made the candlestick,* &c.] The orders

which Moses received for the making this, the branches and the lamps thereof, and every thing appertaining to it, are set down xxv. 31, 32, &c. which Bezaleel exactly followed.

Ver. 25. *He made the incense-altar,* &c.] This, and all that follows in the three next verses, see explained, xxx. 1, &c.

Ver. 29. *And he made the holy anointing oil,* &c.] See xxx. 31, &c.

And the pure incense, &c.] See xxx. 34, &c.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND he made the altar of burnt-offering,* &c.] Having given an account of the making of all the furniture of the house, he proceeds to shew how all things were made without doors with the same exactness, according to the Divine prescriptions. All which Bezaleel could not make with his own hands; but he was chief director in these things as well as the rest of the work.

Five cubits was the length thereof, &c.] See xxvii. 1, 2, &c. where this, and the six following verses are explained.

Ver. 8. *And he made the laver of brass,* &c.] See xxx. 18. where order is given for the making of this laver, and its situation directed: but neither there nor here are we told the figure or dimensions of it; but have a particular remark, in this place, concerning the materials out of which it was made, in the following words.

Of the looking-glasses.] So we interpret the Hebrew word *maroth;* because now such things are commonly made of *glass;* but anciently of *polished brass:* which they looked upon as far better than silver, for that made a weaker reflection, as Vitruvius informs us, (lib. vii. cap. 3.) And the best of these *specula* were, among the ancient Romans, made at Brundusium, of brass and tin mixed together, as Pliny tells us, (lib. xxxiii. 9. xxxiv. 17.) This shews the *laver* was made of the finest and most pure brass.

Of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] The Hebrew word *Hattzobeoth* signifies that they came by troops to make this present to the Lord. And the LXX. and Chaldee understanding it of such women as came together to serve God, by fasting and prayer, (for there is the same word used in 1 Sam. ii. 22.) most interpreters think, they that made this oblation were very devout women, who were wont to spend much time at the tabernacle, where the presence of God was. For Moses's tent served instead of the tabernacle of the congregation, and was so called, till this tabernacle was built, (xxxiii. 7, &c.) Thus Aben Ezra also observes, upon these words; that these women making a free-will offering of the looking-glasses, wherein they were wont to behold the beauty of their faces, and to dress and adorn their heads, it seems to argue their very religious mind, despising the vanity of the world, and delighting far more in the service of God.

Ver. 9. *And he made the court,* &c.] All that follows from this place to ver. 21. is explained in the twenty-seventh chapter, from ver. 9. to ver. 20. except two or three words, which I shall here take notice of.

Ver. 17. *The chapiters of silver.*] There is no mention of *rashim (chapiters)* in the twenty-seventh chapter; but only of *vauim* (or *hooks)* which were of silver, ver. 10. and 17. But this verse shews that those hooks were in the chapiters, or heads of the pillars, out of which those arose, as an ornament to them.

Ver. 18. *And the height in the breadth,* &c.] This is a Hebrew phrase, signifying the height of the hanging itself: whose breadth, when it lay along, was called its height when it was hung up. And that was *five cubits;* proportionable to the hangings of the court, which was five cubits high, (xxvii. 18.)

Ver. 21. *This is the sum of the tabernacle, even of the tabernacle of the testimony,* &c.] Some will have this relate to the forenamed things, mentioned in this and in the foregoing chapters. But I take it rather to be a preface to the account which Moses ordered to be taken of all the gold, silver, and brass that was employed in building of the tabernacle. Which being summed up, amounted to so many talents as are mentioned, ver. 24, &c.

For the service of the Levites.] Rather, *by the ministry of the Levites;* whom Moses appointed to take the account of all the expenses.

By the hand of Ithamar, son to Aaron the priest.] Under the conduct of Ithamar, the youngest son of Aaron; whom he appointed to preside over the Levites, in taking this account.

Ver. 22. *And Bezaleel, the son of Uri, made all that the Lord commanded Moses.*] Which gold, silver, and brass was committed into the hands of Bezaleel (though in the presence of all the rest of the workmen, xxxvi. 2, 3.) as the principal person, who was to see it employed in making every thing which the Lord commanded Moses.

Ver. 23. *And with him was Aholiab,* &c.] Unto whom God joined Aholiab as his associate in so great an undertaking; who made use of several others, whom they taught in those arts, which God, by an extraordinary inspiration, had made them to understand, (xxxv. 30, 31. 34, 35.)

Ver. 24. *All the gold which was occupied for the work,* &c.] About the ark, the table, the candlestick, and all belonging to them, (xxxvii. 2. 11. 17. 24. 26.) and about the holy garments mentioned xxxix. 5, &c. 15. 25. 30.

What was not employed about this work (for the people brought more than enough, xxxvi. 5. 7.) it is very probable was laid up in the treasury, for sacred uses, as there should be occasion.

Twenty and nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels.] It hath been noted before, that a shekel is near half-a-crown of our money: now it is evident (from ver. 25, 26.) that there were three thousand shekels in a talent; so that a talent of silver, as Dr. Cumberland, bishop of Peterborough, computes it (in his learned treatise of Scripture Weights and Measures, chap. 4.) amounts to three hundred and fifty-three pounds, eleven shillings, and some odd pence, in our money. And a talent of gold (reckoning gold to be above fourteen times in value) to five thousand and seventy-six pounds, three shillings, and tenpence.

Ver. 25. *And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation was a hundred talents, and a thousand seven hundred and threescore and fifteen shekels,* &c.] There being six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty men, that offered each of them half a shekel (as the next verse tells us), they make three hundred and one thousand, seven hundred and seventy-five thousand shekels. Which, amounting to a hundred talents, with one thousand seven

hundred and seventy-five shekels more, demonstrates that a talent contains three thousand shekels. For no number (as the same learned bishop hath shewn) but three thousand, dividing three hundred and one thousand, seven hundred and seventy-five, will produce a hundred, and leave one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five in remainder.

Ver. 26. *A bekah for every man, that is, half a shekel,* &c.] See xxx. 13. Some may possibly think it unaccountable, that so great treasures should be found among the Israelites in the desert; and especially that they should be furnished with such precious stones, as are mentioned in the next chapter, ver. 10, &c. as they were before, xxviii. 17, 18, &c. But such persons should consider, that their ancestors were very great men, and had gathered great riches, before they came into Egypt; where Joseph, it is likely, left them no small treasures: and though Pharaoh perhaps squeezed them (as I said upon chapter the first) yet they preserved most of their riches, and were reimbursed what they lost, by what they borrowed of the Egyptians. From whose dead bodies thrown on the sea-shore, we may well suppose they got still more; as they did also from the Amalekites, who being a people near to Arabia (from whence a great part of the precious stones came), we may likewise suppose were not unfurnished with them. And besides all this, they had shittim-wood good store in the wilderness; (as I noted chap. xxv.) and some of the Jews, particularly Abarbinel, think it not improbable, that they traded with the neighbouring nations, who bordered upon the wilderness, while they continued in it.

Ver. 27. *And of the hundred talents of silver were cast the sockets of the sanctuary,* &c.] It appears by the twenty-sixth chapter, that there were just a hundred of these sockets, which were the foundation of the house of God, (ver. 19. 21. 25. 32.) To the making of every one of which there went a talent of silver.

Ver. 28. *And of the thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels, he made,* &c.] A hundred talents being spent in making the sockets, the remainder, which was one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, (ver. 25.) was laid out upon hooks, and chapiters, and fillets, about the pillars. Which make up the whole account of the silver.

Ver. 29. *And the brass of the offering,* &c.] This verse gives an account of the value of the brass, which the people offered; as the former verses of the gold and silver.

Ver. 30. *And therewith he made the sockets to the door of the tabernacle, and the brazen altar,* &c.] This verse and the next gives an account how the brass was employed, according to God's order beforementioned, (xxvi. 37. xxvii. 2—4.)

Ver. 31. *And the sockets of the court,* &c.] See xxvii. 10. 17—19. Here is not such a particular account given upon what things the gold was employed, (but only in general, *in all the work of the holy place,* ver. 24.) because all things that were not made of silver and brass were made of gold; and a great deal, it appears by the next chapters, was employed in making Aaron's glorious attire.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Ver. 1. *AND of the blue, and purple, and scarlet.*] These artificers proceeded, in the most natural order, to make all that God commanded. For, first, they made the house itself, in which he was to dwell, (chap. xxxvi.) then all the furniture belonging to it, (chap. xxxvii.) and then the outward court, and all that was therein, (chap. xxxviii.) and now Moses relates how they made the priestly garments, without which they could not minister to God in this house.

They made.] This shews how all that goes before (where it is said *he made*) is to be interpreted. Bezaleel and Aholiab, and all that were employed under them, had a hand (as we speak) in these garments; the principal artists directing, and the rest working all that is here mentioned.

Clothes of service.] To be put on when they ministered unto God, in the priest's office, (xxviii. 4. xxx. 10. xxxv. 19.) not to be worn abroad, but only in the sanctuary. As Mr. Selden observes, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 11. p. 145. where he looks upon the following words, *to do service in the holy place* (or, to serve in the sanctuary), as determining them to be used here, and no where else.

Ver. 2. *And he made the ephod,* &c.] Gave direction for the making it of such materials as here follow. (See xxviii. 6, &c.)

Ver. 3. *And they did beat the gold into thin plates,* &c.] The under workmen, by Bezaleel's direction, did first beat the gold into very thin plates, and then slice them into wires, or small threads of gold. For in those days they had not the art which we have now, of drawing a piece of gold into round wires or threads of what length we please; but, as Moses here describes it, they beat it first into broad thin plates, and then cut off lesser and narrower wires (as we call them), which were not round, but of a very small breadth; which they wove with the other materials here mentioned. But nothing is here said of silver thus wrought; for they had not the art of weaving silver in this manner, in ancient times, as Salmasius observes upon Vopiscus, in the life of Aurelian; in whose days the art of making *silver* into threads, and weaving it with their garments, was not known; but was much in use in the time of the latter Greek emperors.

To work it in blue, and in purple, &c.] The manner of it was thus (as Maimonides saith): "They took one thread of wire of gold, and joined it with six threads of *blue,* and twisted all seven into one. And so they mingled the like thread of gold with six of *purple;* and another with six of *scarlet;* and another with six of *fine linen:* so that there were twenty-eight threads in all." Which R. Solomon Jarchi expresses thus upon xxviii. 8. These five kinds (blue, purple, scarlet, fine linen, and gold) were twisted into one thread. For the gold being stretched into a thin plate, and threads cut out of it, they weaved a thread of gold with six threads of *blue* (and so they did with the rest), after which they twisted all these threads into one. (See Joh. Braunius de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 17. n. 26.)

Cunning work.] See xxviii. 6.

Ver. 4, 5.] See xxviii. 7, 8.

Ver. 6. *They wrought onyx-stones.*] See xxviii. 9.

Ver. 7. *For a memorial.*] See xxviii. 12.

Ver. 8. *He made the breast-plate,* &c.] See this explained, and all that follows to ver. 22. in xxviii. 15, 16, &c. only observe, that there is not a word here said of his making *urim* and *thummim:* which confirms what I said there, that they were not distinct things from the precious stones in the breast-plate.

Ver. 22. *And they made the robe of the ephod,* &c.]

See this and the two following verses explained, xxviii. 31—33.

Ver. 24. *And twined linen.*] In the Hebrew there is only the word *twined:* but the Masora rightly observes, that *schesch* is to be understood; which we have therefore justly supplied in the word *linen.* And so the LXX.

Ver. 25. *Bells of pure gold,* &c.] See xxviii. 33, 34. where this and the next verse are explained.

Ver. 27. *And they made coats of fine linen.*] Coats were ordered to be made for Aaron and his sons, xxviii. 40. but the matter of them not mentioned: which is here therefore ordered to be of *fine linen.* For white garments, being pure, bright, unmixed, and also splendid and stately (for anciently the greatest persons were so clothed, as appears by Joseph, when he was honourably arrayed by Pharaoh, Gen. xli. 42.) were used by all nations in the service of God. And what was most suitable to nature, God thought fit to continue in his service, though used perhaps by idolaters before this time. Only his priests wore these garments no where but in the sanctuary; whereas the priests of Isis (for instance) went every where clothed in white.

Of woven work.] Not sewed with a needle; for such coats may be made without any seam; and Braunius hath shewn the manner of weaving them, lib. i. de Vestitu Sacerdot. Hebr. cap. 16.

Ver. 28. *Mitre of fine linen.*] See xxviii. 39. And of bonnets and breeches. (See there, ver. 40. 42.)

Ver. 29. *And a girdle of fine twined linen,* &c.] See xxviii. 39.

Ver. 30. *And they made the plate of the holy crown.*] See xxviii. 36. To which I shall only add, that the priests, both men and women, among the gentiles, had ordinarily the epithet of στεφανοφόροι, from the crowns they wore upon their heads; which were sometimes of gold, sometimes of laurel. (See Cuperus, in his Harpocrates, p. 137.)

Ver. 31. *A lace of blue,* &c.] See xxviii. 37.

Ver. 32. *Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation finished,* &c.] Every thing belonging to the house of God (which he commanded Moses to make) was completed exactly according to his directions: though they were not yet set in their place, which God orders in the next chapter.

Tabernacle of the tent, &c.] See xl. 2.

And all the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they.] This hath a more particular respect to the workmen; yet all the materials being brought by the body of the people, they are also comprehended in this expression.

Ver. 33. *And they brought the tabernacle unto Moses, the tent, and all its furniture,* &c.] In this and the following verses he makes a recapitulation of all the particulars, mentioned in the foregoing chapter: which they brought to Moses, that they might see whether they were made according to his order. It is probable that the whole congregation, or the heads of them, accompanied Bezaleel and the other artificers, when they brought these things to Moses for his approbation.

Ver. 34. *And the covering of the rams' skins,* &c.] Of this covering, and of the next, see xxvi. 14. xxxvi. 19.

And the veil of the covering.] See xxvi. 36.

Ver. 37. *The pure candlestick.*] Of pure gold, as we read xxv. 31. xxxvii. 17.

Ver. 42. *So the children of Israel made all the work.*] Here again the whole body of the people are said to have made all the work forementioned, (see ver. 37.) because they contributed to it, and also helped to prepare some materials for the workmen, (xxxv. 25. xxxvi. 6.)

Ver. 43. *And Moses did look upon the work.*] Took a solemn view of it; and examined it carefully whether it was performed according to the order they had received.

And behold, they had done it as the Lord commanded.] This is the tenth time that Moses, in this one chapter, saith all was done *as the Lord commanded,* ver. 1. 5. 7. 21. 26. 29. 31, 32. 42. and here in this last verse; to shew how exact they were in their obedience; and that nothing was done according to their own reason and opinion, but all according to the Divine precept, without addition or detraction. They are the words of the author of Sepher Cosri, (par. iii. n. 23.) who well observes, that all was done and brought to perfection by two things, which are the pillars of the law: the one is, that *the law is from God;* and the other, that *it be accepted by the church with a faithful heart.* And thus was the tabernacle ordered by the Divine precept; and it was made by the whole church or congregation, (xxv. 2.)

And Moses blessed them.] Both the workmen, who had done their work faithfully; and the children of Israel, who had contributed the materials, and also now, together with Bezaleel and the rest of the artificers, presented the whole to him.

CHAP. XL.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] After he had taken a survey of all the work beforementioned, God gave him the following command, in the latter end (it is probable) of the twelfth month.

Ver. 2. *On the first day of the first month.*] Of the second year after their coming out of Egypt, (ver. 17.) which was a complete year (within fourteen days) after that great deliverance.

Shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.] This is a full description of the place, which was made for a habitation of the Divine Majesty, (xxv. 8.) and therefore called *mischchan,* which we translate *tabernacle,* but properly signifies a *dwelling.* It was a moveable house, to be set up and taken down as there was occasion; and therefore called *ohel,* a *tent;* such as shepherds dwell in, (Gen. iv. 24. See xxix. 11. of this book.) Or, the word *tabernacle* may be thought to signify, the inward part of this house; as *tent,* the outward part, which covered the inward. (See ver. 17. 19. 29.)

Why it is called *ohel moed* [the *tent of the congregation*] see xxix. 44.

Ver. 3. *And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony.*] This was the principal end of building this house, that God (as was said before) might dwell among them; and his residence was over this ark. Which therefore is ordered, in the first place, to be brought into the holy of holies, prepared for it as soon as the house was erected. Why called *the ark of the testimony,* see xxvi. 20, 21.

And cover the ark with the veil.] Which hung before it; that nobody (not the priests themselves) might see it (xxvi. 33.)

Ver. 4. *And thou shalt bring in the table,* &c.] When the ark was placed in the holiest of all, then the table, with all belonging unto it, and the candlestick (whose lamps were to be lighted) are ordered to be set in the sanctuary, which was divided by the veil from the other, (xxvi. 35.)

Ver. 5. *And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony.*] See xxx. 6.

And put the hangings of the door to the tabernacle.] See xxvi. 36, 37. This is ordered to be hung up, when the table, candlestick, and altar of incense, were put into the holy place, because there were no more things but these three to be there.

Ver. 6. *And thou shalt set the altar of burnt-offering,* &c.] In this and the two following verses, he is ordered to place the altar of burnt-offering, and the laver, as he had been before directed, (xxx. 18.) and to set up the outward court, and the hanging at the gate of it, in order to place the altar and the laver there, (xxvii. 9, &c.)

Ver. 9. *And thou shalt take the anointing oil.*] Mentioned xxx. 23, &c. Every thing being disposed in its proper place, now follows their consecration. For they were not consecrated separately, before the house was erected, and its furniture brought in: but after every thing was set in the order which God appointed.

And anoint the tabernacle and all that is therein, &c.] As was before directed, and now ordered to be put in execution, xxx. 26—29. where this and the two following verses are explained.

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tabernacle.*] The laver being sanctified, (ver. 11.) many think that the sanctification of Aaron and his sons (*i. e.* their separation to their office) began in their being washed with water. But I look upon this as a mistake, there being a washing prescribed, before the laver was ordered, (xxix. 4.) where they were to wash only when they went in to minister, (xxx. 19—21.)

Ver. 13. *And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments.*] Mentioned in the twenty-eighth chapter.

And anoint and sanctify him, &c.] See xxx. 30, 31.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt bring his sons and clothe them with coats.*] See xxvii. 40, 41.

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst their father.*] See concerning this xxix. 7. where both their anointing and their father's is explained.

For their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood, &c.] Not only consecrate them to the priest's office as long as they live; but consecrate their posterity also, who shall need no other anointing in succeeding generations: but minister to God by virtue of this anointing, as long as that priesthood lasted. So the Hebrews interpret it. None of them needed in aftertimes, saith R. Levi ben Gersom (upon 1 Kings i.) to be anointed, but only the high-priest; whose successors were to be anointed, as they gather from Levit. vi. 22. "The priest of his sons, who shall be anointed in his stead," &c. (See Selden de Succession. in Pontificat. lib. ii. cap. 9.)

Ver. 16. *Thus did Moses; according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he.*] He took the same care in erecting the tabernacle, and disposing every thing in its place, that the workmen had done in making all things according to God's mind, (xxxix. 43.)

Ver. 17, 18, &c. *And it came to pass, in the first month,* &c.] This and the following verses to ver. 34. give an account of the execution of what God commanded, in the foregoing part of this chapter. But it is not easy to resolve, whether every thing was executed at this very time, or no. For full understanding of which, it will be necessary to mark diligently the order wherein God requires all the foregoing commands to be performed. And first he bids him set up the tabernacle, and put every thing belonging to it in its place, ver. 2, 3. and so forward to ver. 9. And next, to consecrate it, and all the vessels thereof, with the altar of burnt-offerings and its vessels, &c. (ver. 9—11.) And then to proceed to consecrate Aaron and his sons, (ver. 12—15.) Now it is expressly here affirmed, that Moses did perform the first of these, that is, set up the tabernacle, and put every thing appertaining to it in its right place, on the first day of the first month of the second year after their coming out of Egypt. At which time we must suppose also he began to consecrate it, and spent seven days in the consecration of it and of the altar of burnt-offering, as is appointed xxix. 37. But the difficulty is to determine, when he consecrated Aaron and his sons, as he is here required, in which seven days were also spent, as we read Lev. viii. Some think there were but seven days in all set apart for this work, and consequently they were consecrated together. So Torniellus in his Annals, and Abulensis before him, who follow Seder Olam and other Jewish writers, who are of this opinion. The ground of which is, that the tabernacle being erected on the first day of the month beforementioned, and its consecration finished on the eighth, there was a solemn Passover kept upon the fifteenth, (Numb. ix. 1, 2, &c.) which could not be held, they suppose, unless there were priests to offer the Passover: who therefore were consecrated at the same time with the tabernacle; because on the eighth day another business began, which was the offering made by the princes of the tribes, every one in their day, (Numb. vii. 1.) But the principal ground is, that, in Lev. viii. 10, 11, &c. Moses speaks of the *anointing* (*i. e.* consecrating) *the altar,* and of *consecrating Aaron and his sons,* as done both at the same time. But there is a weighty objection against all this; which is, that in the consecration of Aaron and his sons, there were three sacrifices offered upon the altar, one for a sin-offering, another for a burnt-offering, and the ram of consecration for a peace-offering, (Lev. viii. 4. 18. 22.) None of which could be acceptable for their sanctification, till the altar itself was made holy. And therefore the seven days appointed for that purpose were ended, before the consecration of the priests began, which continued seven days more; and then the next day was the feast of unleavened bread. Which was famous on a double account; first, because it was the first day of unleavened bread; and then it was the octaves of the consecration. And this appears more plainly from Lev. i. 1 where we find the following commands were given to Moses out of the tabernacle by the Divine Majesty; who therefore dwelt there, when he commanded the priest to be consecrated, which he did not till the tabernacle was solemnly consecrated to be his habitation. There the priests also are commanded to abide during the seven days of their consecration, (Lev. viii. 33.) which shews that all things belonging to its sanctification were finished, before their consecration began. As to that which is

alleged from Lev. viii. 10, 11, &c. I shall consider it there.

Ver. 19. *And he spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle.*] The *ohel*, which we translate *tent*, sometimes signifies the whole house of God, (see ver. 19.) but here only the external part of it, which covered that which was properly called *mischchan* [the *tabernacle.*] Which Moses having erected with all its sockets, boards, bars, and pillars, ver. 18. (and hung it, we must suppose, with the inward hangings, which were the richest), he spread abroad over them the curtains of goats' hair, called the *tent*, (xxvi. 11.) to be a covering over the tabernacle, (xxvi. 7. xxxvi. 14. 19.) So the tabernacle was a house within a house, inclosed with strong walls (as we call them) to secure it from the injury of the weather.

And put the covering of the tent upon it.] Mentioned in xxvi. 14.

Ver. 20. *And he took and put the testimony into the ark.*] The two tables of stone, as he had been commanded, xxv. 16. which he mentions again in the repetition of the law, (Deut. x. 5.) Hence the ark is called the *ark of the covenant* or *testimony*, in the next verse, and ver. 3. of this chapter.

Ver. 21. *And he brought the ark into the tabernacle.*] It is probable that he had placed the ark, after it was made, in his own tent, which for the present was called *the tabernacle of the congregation*, and had the glory of the Lord in it, (xxxiii. 7. 9.) but now he brought it into this tabernacle, which by God's order was prepared for it.

And set up the veil of the covering, &c.] See ver. 3.

Ver. 22. *And he put the table in the tent of the congregation.*] Here the whole house is called the *ohel* (or *tent*), as I observed upon ver. 19. But immediately the word *mischchan* (which we translate *tabernacle*) is used, as the most proper expression for the inside of the house, as the other most properly denotes the outside of it. All is made more clear in the thirty-fourth verse; where we read that *the cloud covered the tent of the congregation*, that is, the outside of the house; and the glory of the Lord *filled the tabernacle* within. Though afterward, (ver. 38.) the cloud is said to be *upon the tabernacle*, as (ver. 36.) it is said to be *over the tabernacle*, because it was over the tent which covered it.

Ver. 25. *And he lighted the lamps before the Lord*, &c.] In this, and all that follows, of burning sweet incense, (ver. 27.) offering the burnt-offering and meat-offering, (ver. 29.) Moses acted as a priest, appointed by an extraordinary commission from God, only for this time; that he might consecrate the house of God, and the priests that were to minister therein; which being done, his priesthood ceased. And he did all that is mentioned in these verses, when the tabernacle was consecrated, and the glory of the Lord had filled it; testifying the Divine presence to be there.

Ver. 31. *And Moses, and Aaron, and his sons, washed their hands*, &c.] This shews that Moses acted now as a priest, and therefore washed himself before he went to sacrifice at the altar, as the priests afterward were always bound to do, (xxx. 19—21.) But it must be understood, that neither this washing here spoken of, nor his offering sacrifice, mentioned ver. 29. was till some days after this. (See ver. 17.)

Ver. 33 *So Moses finished the work.*] And then anointed the tabernacle, and all contained in it, according to God's order, (ver. 9—11.) The execution of which, though now not here mentioned in so many words, is expressly said to be on the same day that he had completely set up the tabernacle, (Numb. vii. 1.)

Ver. 34. *Then a cloud* (or, then *the cloud*) *covered the tent of the congregation.*] After it was anointed and sanctified for the Divine residence (and the princes, perhaps, had also finished that large offering which we read, Numb. vii. was made on this day), God was pleased to fill this place with his glorious presence. For the cloudy pillar, which descended upon Moses's tent, and stood there before the door of it, (xxxiii. 9.) removed now from thence, and came hither; not standing at the door of it in the form of a pillar, but spreading itself all over the outside of the tabernacle, so that it was covered with it, as we read also Numb. ix. 15.

And the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.] See ver. 22. What God promised, (xxv. 8. 22.) he now performed, notwithstanding their revolt from him, by worshipping the golden calf. Which made him withdraw himself from them, (xxxiii. 7, &c.) till, upon Moses's earnest intercession for them, and their repentance, he graciously consented to return to them, and abide among them, (ver. 14, 15, &c.) As he now did by settling his glorious presence in this tabernacle, which was set up in the midst of them. For, whereas the other tabernacle of Moses was removed a mile or two from their camp, (xxxiii. 7.) this tabernacle was pitched (a month after this, Numb. i. 1.) in the midst of their camps, as we read Numb. ii. 2. 17.

Ver. 35. *And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation.*] For the glory of the Lord shone so bright and so strong, beyond all that it had ever done, that no eye could look upon it. And it filled not only the most holy place, but the whole body of the tabernacle; so that he durst not adventure to come within it till he was called, (Lev. i. 1.) After which time he seems to have had liberty to go in unto God when he pleased, (Numb. vii. 89. ix. 8, 9.) For after this great day, the glory of the Lord retired into the most holy place, within the veil; and resided constantly there, over the ark of the testimony: from whence he spake to Moses, when he came to consult him in the holy place. (See the forementioned Numb. vii. 89.) Whence he is said *to dwell between the cherubims;* though, on some occasions, this glory appeared without upon the tabernacle, (but over the ark, it is likely, Numb. xvi. 42.) And so perhaps it did, (xi. 17. 25.) and sometimes at the door of the tabernacle, (Deut. xxxi. 14, 15.)

Because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the house.] The cloud and the glory of the Lord were not two different things; but one and the same, as the pillar of cloud and of fire were. For outwardly it was a cloud, and inwardly a fire: and, accordingly, here the external part of it covered the tabernacle without; while the internal part shone in full glory within the house. Thus it was upon Mount Sinai, where Moses is said to "draw near to the thick darkness where God was," (xx. 21.) that is, the glory of the Lord was in that thick darkness. And so we read before, that "the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud," (xvi. 10.) And so those words are to be interpreted, xxiv. 16. "The glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it (that is, covered *the glory of the Lord*, not *the mount*) six days." After which, on the

seventh day, the glory of the Lord broke through it, and appeared like *devouring fire*, in the sight of all the people, (ver. 17.)

Ver. 36. *And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in their journeys.*] That is, the Lord (whose glorious presence was in this cloud) led and conducted them in all their removals. And therefore they are said to have *journeyed at the commandment of the Lord:* because when the cloud (wherein the Lord was) was taken up, then they journeyed, (Numb. ix. 17, 18. 20. 23.)

Ver. 37. *But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up.*] They were wholly governed by its motions, and followed its directions.

Ver. 38. *For the cloud of the Lord.*] So it is called also in Numb. x. 34. because the glory of the Lord was in it.

Was upon the tabernacle by day.] And so it was by night, but then had another appearance, as it here follows.

And fire was on it by night.] The *fire* and the *cloud* (as I said ver. 35.) were not different things; but the same pillar which was dark by day, when there was no need of light, shone like fire by night, when the dark part of it could not be seen, to lead and conduct them. It appeared, therefore, like a cloud by day, and turned the light side to them (which was as bright as fire) by night, that they might march, if there were occasion, by its direction, both day and night. And thus it is described, xiii. 21, 22. Numb. ix. 15, 16, &c. And so this verse may be translated, *the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and the fire was* [*bo*] *in it* (*i. e.* in the cloud) *by night.* For so they are elsewhere described, as one within the other: (Deut. v. 22.) "The Lord spake unto all your assembly out of the midst of the fire of the cloud, and of the thick darkness."

In the sight of all the children of Israel, throughout all their journeys.] The whole congregation had constantly this comfortable token of God's presence among them, by the cloud in the day-time, and fire in the night: which never left them all the time they were in the wilderness, but brought them to Canaan.

THE

THIRD BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

LEVITICUS.

CHAP. I.

THE Greeks and Latins give it this name of LEVITICUS, not because it treats of the ministry of the Levites, properly so called (of which the book of Numbers gives a fuller account than this book doth), but because it contains the laws about the religion of the Jews, consisting principally in various sacrifices; the charge of which was committed to Aaron the Levite, (as he is called Exod. iv. 14.) and to his sons, who alone had the office of priesthood in the tribe of Levi: which the apostle therefore calls a *Levitical priesthood*, Heb. vii. 11.

Ver. 1. *And the Lord called unto Moses.*] That is, bade him draw near, and not be afraid, because of the glory of that light which was in the tabernacle, (Exod. xl. 35.) For this is a word of *love*, as the Hebrew doctors speak: who observe, that God is not said to call the prophets of the gentiles; but we only read that God *jikar, met Balaam;* not *jikra, called* to him, as he did here to Moses. Who, as Procopius Gazæus hath well observed upon this word, appointed no service of God, in his house which he had lately erected, without his order: whereas the worship performed in the honour of demons, was without any authority from him. Nay, there were magical operations in it, and invocation of demons; and certain tacit obligations which their priests contracted with them. For which he produces Porphyry as a witness.

And spake unto him out of the tabernacle.] Hitherto he had spoken to him out of heaven, or out of a cloud; but now out of his own house. Into which, it is not here said he bade him come (as he did afterwards when the glory of the Lord dwelt only in the inner part of the house, over the ark), but he stood, it is likely, without the door of the tabernacle, till the sacrifices were appointed (as it here follows), and the high-priest entered into it with the blood of expiation. I can find no time in which this can so probably be supposed to have been done, as immediately after the consecration of the tabernacle, as soon as the glory of the Lord entered into it. And so I find Hesychius understood it, who, observing this book to begin with the word *And*, which is a conjunction used to join what follows with that which goes before, thence concludes, that the beginning of this book is knit to the conclusion of the last; and consequently what is here related was spoken to Moses on the same day he had set up the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord filled it. When Moses might well think (as the Jerusalem Targum explains it), that if Mount Sinai was so exalted by the Divine presence there for a short space, that it was not safe for him to approach it, much less come

up into it, till God commanded him; he had much more reason not to go into the tabernacle, which was sanctified to be God's dwelling-place for ever, till God called to him by a voice from his presence: nay, he durst not so much as come near the door, where I suppose he now stood, without a particular direction from the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them.*] The tabernacle being erected, it was fit, in the next place, to appoint the service that should be performed in it: which consisted in such sacrifices as are here mentioned in the beginning of this book. There could not be a more natural order, in setting down the laws delivered by Moses, than this which is here observed.

If any man of you bring.] It is the observation of Kimchi, that in the very beginning of the laws about sacrifices, God doth not require them to offer any, but only supposes they would; having been long accustomed to it, as all the world then was. To this he applies the words of Jeremiah, vii. 21. and takes it for an indication, that otherwise God would not have given so many laws concerning sacrifices, but only in compliance with the usage of the world; which could not then have been quite broken, without the hazard of a revolt from him. And therefore they are directed to the right object, the eternal God; and limited to such things as were most agreeable to human nature.

An offering unto the Lord.] The Hebrew word *korban*, which we translate an *offering*, and the Greeks translate a *gift*, is larger than *zebach*, which we translate a *sacrifice*. For, as Abarbinel observes in his preface to this book, though every *sacrifice* was an offering, yet every *offering* was not a sacrifice. A *sacrifice* being an offering that was slain; but there were several *offerings* of inanimate things (as those mentioned in the beginning of the second chapter of this book), which therefore were not properly sacrifices; but were accepted of God as much as the offering of beasts, when they had nothing better to give. And therefore the same Abarbinel will have the name of *korban* to be given to these offerings, because thereby men approached to God. For it is derived from a word which signifies to *draw near:* from whence he thinks those words in Deuteronomy, iv. 7. "What nation is there that hath God so nigh unto them," &c.

Ye shall bring.] He speaks in the plural number, say some of the Hebrew doctors (who have accurately considered these things), to shew that two men might join together to offer one thing.

Your offering of the cattle.] I do not know what ground Maimonides had to assert, in his More Nevochim, (par. iii. cap. 46.) that the heathen in those days had brute beasts in great veneration, and would not kill them (for it is no argument there was such a superstition in Moses's time, because there were people in the days of Maimonides, as there are now, who were possessed with such opinions). But he thinks God intended to destroy this false persuasion, by requiring the Jews to offer such beasts as are here mentioned; that what the heathen thought it a great sin to kill, might be offered to God, and thereby men's sin be expiated. By this means, saith he, men's evil opinions, which are the diseases and ulcers of the mind, were cured; as bodily diseases are by their contraries. Yet in the thirty-second chapter of that book, he saith, God ordered sacrifices to be offered, that he might not wholly alter the customs of mankind, who built temples, and offered sacrifices every where; taking care (it may be added) at the same time, that they should be offered only to himself, at one certain place, and after such a manner, as to preserve his people from all idolatrous rites: which if they had considered, who contemned this book of Leviticus (as Procopius Gazæus tells us some did) because it treated too much of sacrifices, they would not have thought it unworthy the Creator of the world, especially if they had looked further to the wisdom hidden under these things; which were *examples, shadows, and patterns of heavenly things,* as the apostle speaks, (Heb. viii. 4. ix. 13.) And so was the tabernacle itself, a figure (as we read ver. 9.) "for the time present, of a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands."

Even of the herd and of the flock.] That is, bullocks, sheep, and goats. For under the word *tzon* (which we translate *flock*) both *sheep* and *goats* are comprehended. And so Moses expounds himself, ver. 10. These were the principal sacrifices, and most acceptable to God, as Abarbinel observes in the forenamed place. For though *doves* and *turtles* were accepted when men were not able to bring the other; yet in public sacrifices these birds were never allowed: but only the three sorts of four-footed beasts beforementioned. Which were therefore chosen (as he proceeds) because these were the most excellent of all brute creatures, on several accounts; and because they were not hard to be found, but easily procured: and therefore no wild beasts were required to be offered, because God would not impose upon his people (as his words are) so great a burden, as to bring him that which could not be got without some difficulty. For which cause, also, young pigeons and turtles were only offered among birds. He gives other reasons for this, which seem to me very far-fetched, and therefore I shall not mention them. But this I may further add, that as they were the most ready at hand, and in common use among men at their tables (which he should have noted as the plainest reason of all), so they had been in most ancient use among religious people in their sacrifices. (See Gen. xv. 9.) And it is very likely they were restrained peculiarly to these, that they might not follow the customs of the gentiles; as they would have done, had they not been abridged in their liberty. Now though we find in Homer mention made of hecatombs (which were a sacrifice of a hundred oxen), and of perfect lambs and goats, whereby Achilles hoped Apollo might be appeased, and moved to cease the plague he had sent upon the Greeks; yet there was no more ancient sacrifice among the heathen, if we may believe themselves, than that of swine. Which made that learned Roman, Varro, derive the word *ὗς* (which is the Greek word for that creature) from *σῦς*, *i. e.* from a sacrifice, because it was most anciently offered to their gods; there being no more delicious food at their own tables than swines' flesh. (See Petrus Castellanus de Esu Carnium, lib. ii. cap. 1.) And afterward they also sacrificed not only harts to Diana, but horses to the sun, wolves to Mars, nay, dogs to Hecate; whereby they destroy the very nature of sacrifices, or at least of sacrifical feasts; in which people had communion with the gods whom they worshipped, by partaking at their table. For who would endure to eat of such meat as horse-flesh, and the flesh of wolves, nay asses, which were offered to Priapus?

Ver. 3. *If his offering be a burnt-sacrifice.*] Having pre-

scribed what sort of creatures should be offered, he first directs them about their *holocausts*, as the Greeks call them, which were wholly burnt upon the altar; and were the most ancient sacrifices that had been in the world. They are often mentioned by the Greeks, particularly by Xenophon in his Cyropædia, lib. viii. where he saith, ὡλοκαύτωσαν τοὺς ταύρους, &c. *they sacrificed whole burnt-offerings of oxen to Jupiter, and afterward of horses to the sun.* (See Bochart. lib. ii. Hierozoic. cap. 33. par. i.) Sometimes, indeed, the heathen burnt only a part, and reserved the rest to feast upon, as he there observes: but among the Jews no man ever partook of these offerings. For there being four sorts of sacrifices prescribed by the law, (Abarbinel observes in his preface to this book, cap. 2.) the *whole burnt-offerings*, the *sin-offerings*, the *trespass-offerings*, and the *peace-offerings;* there was this difference made between them; that, of the first of these, whether it was a public or a private *whole burnt-offering*, nobody partook, no, not the priests themselves; but it was entirely consumed except the skin. Of the second, some part was burnt; the rest the priests had, and were to eat it in the court of the tabernacle (though there was one sort of *sin-offering* which was wholly consumed, as the burnt-offerings were). The third sort, which were *trespass-offerings*, were only offered for private persons; some parts of which, as in the former, were burnt upon the altar, and the rest eaten by the priests. As for the last (the *peace-offering*), some parts of such sacrifices were burnt on the altar, the priest had the breast and the right shoulder; and the remainder, he that brought the sacrifice ate with his friends. I shall add no more, but that these *whole burnt-offerings* seem to have been simple acknowledgments of God, the Creator of the world, and testifications that they owned him to be their Lord, and continued in covenant with him, and implored his blessing upon them. And therefore, with respect to the first and last of these considerations, the gentiles were permitted to bring these sacrifices (as the Jews tell us), but no other whatsoever, to be offered unto God.

Of the herd.] As burnt-offerings were the principal sacrifices, and therefore mentioned in the first place, so those of beeves were the chief of all burnt-offerings, both among the Jews and among the gentiles. Whence βουθυτεῖν, *to sacrifice oxen*, became a proverb for a magnificent entertainment.

Let him offer a male.] These were accounted the best, and therefore principally appointed. And so they were among the heathen; insomuch, that the Egyptians offered only ἔρσενας τῶν βοῶν, (as Herodotus tells us, lib. ii. cap. 41.) and thought it unlawful to offer females. Which shews that Moses did not conform his laws to their customs, for he admitted the sacrifice of females, (iii. 1.) Nay, it was particularly prescribed in some cases, (Numb. xix. 2.)

Without blemish.] Or *perfect*, as the Hebrew word *tamim* signifies. Which word Homer expressly uses, when Achilles speaks about the sacrifice to Apollo,

—— ἀρνῶν κνίσσην αἰγῶν τε τελείων.

For to the gods (as Eustathius there observes) who are most perfect, προσάγειν χρὴ τέλεια, *the most perfect things ought to be offered.* The like passage a very learned friend of mine, now with God (Dr. Outram), observes out of the scholiast upon Aristophanes's Acharnenses, (lib. i. de Sacrificiis, cap. 9. sect. 3.) where more may be seen to the same purpose. Now that is perfect in which there is no defect in any part, and is not decayed by age. For which reason, Abarbinel observes, great care is taken in the law, that this sort of creatures were to be offered before they were three years old; and the other sorts before they were two.

He shall offer it of his own voluntary will.] In this translation we follow the opinion of the Jews, who refer this to the persons that brought this offering; which they might do when they pleased. The like expressions we read xix. 5. xxii. 19. But the LXX. thought it hath respect to God; and so the phrase may be interpreted, he shall bring it *for his acceptation, i. e.* that he may find a favourable acceptance with God.

At the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] Where the altar of burnt-offering was placed, (Exod. xl. 6. 29.) And this was so necessary, that it is required upon pain of death to be brought hither, and offered in no other place, (xvii. 3, 4, &c.) For which cause, it is likely, *the door of the tabernacle* is here mentioned rather than the *altar;* that it might be understood to be unlawful to offer at any other altar, but that which stood at the door of the tabernacle.

Before the Lord.] With their faces towards that holy place where the Divine Majesty dwelt: unto whom the sacrifice was brought, and at the door of the tabernacle received by the priest, from the hand of the offerer.

Ver. 4. *And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering.*] Both his hands; as some gather from xvi. 21. and (as Maimonides saith) he was to do it with all his might. This was a right belonging to *peace-offerings*, as well as to *burnt-offerings*, (iii. 2.) and to *sin-offerings* also, (iv. 4.) The meaning of which, in this sort of offerings, seems to have been, that he who brought the sacrifice renounced all his interest in it, and transferred it wholly to God, unto whose service he entirely devoted it. It being like to the old ceremony among the Romans, who laid their hands upon their servants when they gave them their liberty, and abdicated their own right in them, saying, "Hunc hominem liberum esse volo," *I will that this man be free:* which is called manumission. In other offerings it had another meaning, as I shall observe in due place: and it was imitated by the gentiles, though not without the addition of impious superstitions. For they writhed back the head of the beast upward, when they sacrificed to the gods above; and thrust down its head towards the ground, when they sacrificed to their infernal deities; as J. Brentius hath observed in his preface to this book.

And it shall be accepted for him to make an atonement for him.] It shall be so acceptable, as to recommend him to the favour of the Divine Majesty. For so the Hebrew word *caphar* seems here to signify, not properly to make an atonement (which was the business of a *sin-offering*), but to own him to be in a state of reconciliation with God: unto whom he was supposed to give up himself wholly, as he did this beast. The Jews, indeed, who stick to the literal signification of the word, fancy that these *burnt-offerings* expiated evil thoughts and desires: but there is no ground for this in Scripture; and the most that can be made of it is, that God accepted his prayers which he made in general, for the forgiveness of all his sins, when he laid his hand upon the head of this sacrifice. For it must be

here observed, that laying on of hands was always accompanied with prayer, as appears by Jacob's laying them on the head of Manasseh and Ephraim, (Gen. xlviii. 14. 16. 20.) and the high-priest's laying them on the *scape-goat*, (xvi. 21. of this book.) Insomuch, that *laying on of hands* signifies sometimes in the New Testament *to pray*, (Matth. xix. 15. Mark v. 23.) and other places. But if a man had committed any sin, there are other sacrifices peculiarly appointed by the law for their expiation; which he was bound to offer with confession of sin, and prayer to God for pardon.

Ver. 5. *And he shall kill the bullock.*] That is, the man himself who brought it, as Rasi interprets it; or one of the Levites, as others understand it: for they killed the paschal lamb at that great Passover mentioned 2 Chron. xxx. 17. as Bochart observes. But he should have added the reason of it, which Rasi there gives; that a great many of the congregation having not sanctified themselves (as we read in that place), *therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passover, for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the Lord.* Otherwise every man might kill his own passover, (Exod. xii. 6.) as they might do all their other sacrifices. For certain it is, this was none of the work of priests, as Maimonides shews in a passage mentioned by Dr. Cudworth (in his book concerning the Lord's Supper, p. 27.) out of Biath Ammikdath: where he quotes this very place to prove, that "the killing of the holy things might lawfully be done by a stranger; yea, of the most holy things: whether they were the holy things of private persons, or of the whole congregation." The common objection to this is, that none might come into the court where the altar was but the priests. To which the answer is plain, that upon this occasion other persons might come so far within the court, because it was indispensably necessary that the man who brought the sacrifice should lay his hand upon the head of it; which was to be done at the altar when it was to be slain.

Before the Lord.] See ver. 3.

And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood.] Now begins the work of the priests: the receiving of the blood and that which immediately followed, belonging to their office. They received it in a bason, (Exod. xxiv. 6.) as the manner also was among the heathen; which our learned Sheringham observes upon Codex Joma (p. 85.) out of Homer's Odyss. lib. iii. where Thrasymedes is represented as cutting the ox asunder with a cleaver; and Perseus as receiving the blood in a bason, which he calls ἄμνιον. A word used in Crete, as Eustathius notes, for such kind of vessels; which some think was originally ἀΐμνιον, from the receiving of the blood.

And sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar, &c.] That this might be done readily, one priest received the blood, and another took it from him, and sprinkled it about the altar; or, as the Jews understand it, on every side of the altar; which they performed by two sprinklings, at the opposite corners of it. Which was a rite also used in peace-offerings and trespass-offerings: but in sin-offerings the blood was poured out at the foot of the altar: (see vii. 2.) Thus the heathen also themselves took care the blood of their sacrifices should not run upon the ground, but be received, as I said, in vessels prepared for that purpose; and then poured upon their altars, and so offered and consecrated to their gods. So Lucian, in his book of sacrifices, represents the priest, τὸ αἷμα τῷ βωμῷ περιχέων, *as pouring the blood upon the altar.* (See Dilherrus Disput. Philolog. tom. ii. p. 253.)

Ver. 6. *And he shall slay the burnt-offering.*] Next followed the taking off the skin; which God ordered to be given to the priests, (vii. 8.) Though the heathen burnt skin and all, in some places, as Bochart observes out of Plutarch and Lucian in the forenamed place, (Hieroz. par. ii. lib. i. p. 324.) But whose work it was to slay the beast, is not here expressed. The Jews say it belonged not to the priests to do this, but to the man himself, who brought the beast to be offered. For (to shew in brief what belonged to the *owners of the sacrifice, and what to the priests*) it may be fit to note out of Abarbinel, that each of them had five things to do. The owner of the sacrifice laid his hand upon it, killed, slayed, cut it up, and washed the inwards: and then the priest received the blood in a vessel; sprinkled the blood; put fire on the altar; ordered the wood on the fire; and ordered the pieces of the sacrifice upon the wood. And that the beast might more easily be slayed, there were eight stone pillars (as the Jews tell us in Middoth, cap. 3.) and beams laid over them; in each of which there were three iron hooks fixed; that the greatest beasts might hang upon the highest, the lesser upon the middlemost, and the least of all on the lowest: and so be more commodiously stripped of their skins. Concerning this excoriation both Homer and Virgil speak, as the aforenamed Dilherrus hath observed in the same book, p. 255.

And cut it into pieces.] This followed the excoriation among the gentiles also, as the same author shews. And it was done with such accuracy, that Homer saith they dissected the sacrifice ἐπισταμένως and περιφραδέως: from whence some great men have thought St. Paul borrowed the word ὀρθοτομεῖν, to express the care the ministers of the gospel should have, in dividing rightly the word of truth, (2 Tim. ii. 15.) These *pieces* were not the very same in bullocks and goats, that they were in sheep, as will appear afterward; and therefore the greater care was to be used in the *cutting* of them; especially when, besides those parts which were offered to God, the priests and the people were to have their share also.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon the altar.*] This, as I said before, was one of the works of the priests: who did not put fire daily upon the altar, (for being once kindled, they were to keep it always burning, vi. 13.) but stirred it up, and blowed the coals. Which is meant by *giving fire*, as the phrase is in the Hebrew; that is, disposing it so that it might burn quick. Yet, if the fire were taken off from the altar, as when they removed the camp, (Numb. iv. 14.) none might lay it on again but the priest. Or, if it were extinct, as it was in the days of Ahaz, who shut up the door of the house of God, which was not opened till Hezekiah reigned, (2 Chron. xxviii. 24. xxix. 34.) none but they might kindle it again.

And lay the wood in order upon the fire.] This the priests did every morning and every night, that the fire might be preserved from going out. And when the time of the morning and evening sacrifice came, they brought new wood, and laid it in such order upon the fire, that it might the better consume the parts of the sacrifice that were laid thereon.

Ver. 8. *And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head and the fat.*] The Hebrew word *peder* doth not simply signify the *fat* (for which they have another word, *cheleb*), but that fat which is separated from the rest of the flesh. So it is to be understood here, and in iii. 9. iv. 35. Which being gathered together, and thrown into the fire, fed the flame, and made it burn more fiercely: by which means the other parts, into which the sacrifice was divided, were the more easily and the sooner consumed. Particularly, St. Jerome takes it for that fat which adhered to the liver: and both Solomon Jarchi and David Kimchi observe, that this *peder* was thrown upon the *head* of the sacrifice (when it was cast into the fire), just in the place where the head was cut off from the body; because, otherwise, the gore which issued from it might have extinguished the flame. (See Exod. xxix. 17.)

In order upon the wood, &c.] That they might lie upon the wood, so as to have the same situation in the altar that they had in the beast when it was alive. So Maimonides in Maase Korban, cap. 6.

Ver. 9. *But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water.*] These parts were not to be burnt upon the altar till they were well cleansed by washing them in water. For which end there was a private room afterward, in the court of the temple (as now, it is likely, there was in the tabernacle), called the *washing-room,* (as we find in Codex Middoth, cap. 5. sect. 2.) There they having washed them privately, and freed the inwards from their filth, they brought them into the court, where there were two marble tables, between the pillars beforementioned, (ver. 6.) and there they were washed more exactly, as we read in the same book, (cap. 3. sect. 5.) Where Const. L'Empereur observes, out of R. Hobadia, the reason why they used to lay the flesh upon such tables, was, because marble made it cold and stiff, and preserved it from stinking in very hot weather.

And the priest shall burn all on the altar.] From whence this sacrifice is called *ischeh,* an offering made by fire (from *isch,* which signifies *fire),* because it was altogether consumed in the fire; and no part of it left, so much as for the priest to eat of it.

Of a sweet savour unto the Lord.] *i. e.* Most acceptable. For it is a form of speech taken from men, who are delighted with the good scent and taste of meat and drink. But none can reasonably imagine it was the mere sacrifice that was pleasing unto God, but, as Conrad. Pellicanus well notes, the devotion, faith, obedience, and sincerity of their minds who made the oblation.

Ver. 10. *And if his offering be of the flocks, namely, of the sheep or of the goats,* &c.] If a man were not able to bring a bullock for a *burnt-sacrifice* (which could not be so well spared, being of great use in agriculture), he might bring one of these creatures, which were of less value; only perfect in their kind, as it here follows.

He shall bring it a male without blemish.] See Exod. xii. 5. What the blemishes were, that made any animal unfit to be offered on the altar, Moses tells us in this book, xxii. 22—24. where he mentions twelve, which shall be there considered.

Ver. 11. *And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward.*] The greater sacrifices, which the Jews call the *most holy things,* had this peculiar place assigned them, where they were to be killed, *viz.* all the *burnt-offerings* (whether of bullocks, sheep, or goats), and all *offerings for sin,* (vi. 25.) and all *trespass-offerings,* (vii. 2.) But all the other sacrifices, which they call the *lesser holy things* (such as the *peace-offerings* of particular men, the *paschal lamb,* the *first-born,* and that which was *tithed),* might be killed in any part of the court, where the altar stood; there being no peculiar place appointed by the law for that purpose, but only at the entrance of the tabernacle. Yet a *peace-offering* for the whole congregation, was looked upon as belonging to the things *most holy;* and so was slain (as Maimonides tells us) at the north side of the altar: where there were certain rings fixed, to which the head, or, as some say, the feet of the beast, was tied, in order to its being killed. But they were not perfect rings, as L'Empereur observes, being rather half-segments of rings, one part of which was fastened to the pavement, and by the other the neck of the beast was tied to it. (See Codex Middoth, cap. 3. sect. 5.) The reason of this difference seems to be, only to make a distinction between these and other sacrifices. And all this is to be understood of the four-footed beasts beforementioned, not of birds; which were sacrificed after another manner, as appears from ver. 15.

And the priests shall sprinkle his blood round about upon the altar.] See ver. 5. and vii. 2.

Ver. 12. *And he shall cut it into his pieces, with his head and his fat,* &c.] This verse hath been sufficiently explained, ver. 5, 6. 8.

Ver. 13. *And he shall wash the inwards and the legs,* &c.] See ver. 9. where this also is explained.

It is a burnt-sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.] As much as to say, this is as acceptable to the Lord as the sacrifice of a bullock, when offered with a pious mind.

Ver. 14. *And if the burnt-sacrifice for his offering to the Lord be of fowls.*] It is well observed by Maimonides, in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 46. that when a man was not able to go to the charge of a *sheep* or a *goat* (much less of a *bullock),* God was so merciful as to accept of a bird; only he prescribes of what sort they should be. Nay, he that was not able to be at this expense, was accepted if he offered *bread,* however prepared, whether in an oven or a pan, according to the custom of those times. And he to whom this was too great a burden, might worship God, by bringing only fine flour, as will appear in the next chapter.

Then he shall bring his offering of turtle-doves, or of young pigeons.] The same author observes, that there was a vast plenty of these birds in the land of Canaan; and consequently they were so cheap, that it would put the poorer sort to no great charge to bring this oblation. These were also very anciently sacrificed, (Gen. xv. 9.) and of a gentle nature, (as Procopius and others observe.) And *pigeons* being best when they are young, and *turtles* when full grown, accordingly they are appointed to bring them, when they were most esteemed. These are but seldom mentioned in the sacrifices among the gentiles, who offered *cocks* to Æsculapius, and *geese* to Isis, as we read in several of their authors.

Ver. 15 *And the priest shall bring it into the altar, and wring off his head.*] Pinch it off with his nail (as the Jews say) at one of the corners or horns of the altar: *viz.* the *whole burnt-offering* at the south-east corner, and the *sin-offering* at the north-west, as Maimonides saith in his trea-

tise called Korbanoth, cap. 5. But their heads were so to be wrung or pinched as not to be separated quite from the body, but to be left still hanging to it. For so it is ordered in that sacrifice mentioned v. 8. and therefore they suppose it was so in all.

And the blood thereof shall be wrung out, at the sides of the altar.] This is the reason that the priest alone might kill the bird, (though others might kill the beast, see ver. 5.) because the sprinkling of the blood, which none might do but the priest, was immediately conjunct with the wringing off its head.

Ver. 16. *And he shall pluck away his crop.*] Or the stomach; that the sacrifice might be clean, and free from all filth.

With his feathers.] Which were no more to be offered, than the skin of the beasts, (ver. 6.)

And cast it beside the altar on the east part.] As far as might be from the most holy place, which was in the west.

By the place of the ashes.] See iv. 12.

Ver. 17. *And he shall cleave it with the wings hereof, but shall not divide it asunder.*] The wings were to be so cloven, as not to be quite separated from the body, but still to remain hanging to it: and so salt being sprinkled upon the whole body, it was thrown into the fire. So Maimonides observes in the forenamed treatise: where he takes notice, also, that it was otherwise in *fowls* offered for sin; of which nothing but the blood belonged to the altar; the flesh of them being eaten by the priests and their sons. Whence it was, that no *sin-offering* of birds was accepted, unless it were accompanied with a whole *burnt-offering;* that the altar might not be without a feast, when they that ministered there were entertained. Thus it is required in several cases, mentioned v. 7. xii. 6. 8. xiv. 22. xv. 15. 30. and Numb. vi. 11. The same Maimonides likewise observes, that this sacrifice of birds was one of the most difficult works in the sanctuary; whereby the mind of the priest was kept as intent upon the poorest sacrifice, as upon the most splendid.

And the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that is upon the fire.] This was in part said before, but here repeated more distinctly, to shew there was no difference to be made between the sacrifices of the meanest and of the greatest.

It is a burnt-sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.] The same is said of this, as of all other holocausts, (ver. 9. 15.) to shew that whether the oblation was of the greater animals or of the less, or only of birds, it made no difference in its acceptance with God: who graciously ordered these various sorts of offerings, that the poor as well as the rich might be capable to express their devotion to him, and be confident to find favour with him.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND when any will offer a meat-offering unto the Lord.*] Here is a merciful provision for those, who were neither able to offer beasts of any sort, nor birds, whom God ordered to bring meal, (as was observed before on the first chapter, ver. 14.) which was called in the Hebrew language *mincah*, and by us translated a *meat-offering:* for it was a *korban*, or gift, as well as the foregoing, though of a lower sort. And R. Levi Barzelonita thinks this sort of mean present (as we may call it) had the name of *mincah*, because such offerings were very often merely voluntary; from whence whatsoever is not due among men from another is called *mincah*, a *gift*. Some of which were constant and stated, and also of a determinate quantity; being an appendix to the daily burnt-sacrifice, morning and evening, as we read Exod. xxix. 38, 39, &c. But these here spoken of were voluntary, when any man's devotion inclined him to acknowledge God, and implore his Divine blessing. And no certain quantity was prescribed; only the Jews say, not less than an ephah was accepted, but as much more as they pleased. See Dr. Outram in his excellent book De Sacrificiis, p. 90.

His offering shall be of fine flour.] *viz.* Of wheat-flour. For all the offerings of this kind, whether for the whole congregation, or particular men, were of pure wheat-flour, sifted from the bran; except only the omer of first-fruits of their harvest, (xxiii. 13, 14.) and that which was called the *mincha of jealousy*, (Numb. v. 15.) which were of barley. Of these voluntary offerings there were five sorts, as appears by this chapter: for they were either of raw meal (mentioned in this verse), or meal made into cakes, baked in an oven, (which was of two sorts, ver. 4.) or baked in a pan, (ver. 5.) or in a frying-pan, (ver. 7.) The first of which was the most ancient, as appears from Gen. iv. 3. and from what the heathen say of it; particularly Plato, lib. vi. de Legibus, and Pliny, lib. xxx. Nat. Hist. cap. 5. where he saith Numa ordered the Romans *Deos fruge colere*, &c. And Pausanias, in his Attica, tells us, in the porch of the most high Jupiter there was an altar, where they did not offer the sacrifice of beasts, but only of fine flour. The same he repeats in his Arcadica, and says this was ordained by Cecrops, that they should sacrifice only πέμματα ἐπιχώρια, which the Athenians in his time called πέλανοι. And accordingly Triptolemus, another of their most ancient lawgivers, enacted this as one of his principal laws, that they should worship their gods *with the fruits of the earth.* For these three laws of his, Porphyry saith, were preserved to his days, Γονεῖς τιμᾶν, Θεοὺς καρποῖς ἀγάλλειν, Ζῶα μὴ σίνεσθαι: (lib. iv. περὶ Αποχ) *to honour their parents, worship their gods with the fruits of the earth, and hurt no living creature.* Which last St. Jerome (lib. ii. contra Jovin.) translates, *not to eat flesh.*

And he shall pour oil upon it.] Which was done to give this sort of offering a grateful relish, as Maimonides observes, par. iii. More Nevochim, cap. 46. The heathen used oil in their sacrifices, but not mixed with flour; but poured upon the flesh of the beast that was sacrificed, to make it burn the better upon the altar. So that of Virgil shews, (Æneid. vi.)

" Pingue superque oleum fundens ardentibus extis."

And put frankincense thereon.] To make a sweet odour in the court of the tabernacle, which otherwise would have been offensive, by reason of the flesh that was burnt there daily, as the same Maimonides speaks in the place beforenamed. When they came into the land of Canaan, where they were required (Numb. xv. 2, 3, &c.) to take care that this *mincah*, or meat-offering, should attend all the free-will-offerings of beasts, as well as the daily morning and

evening sacrifice, there is no frankincense appointed; but a certain quantity of wine, which perhaps was instead of it (having a fragrant smell), and was not required in the offering here mentioned. Both these were common in the sacrifices of the gentiles, as appears by this single passage in Ovid. lib. v. de Tristibus, Eleg. 5.

"Da mihi thura, puer, pingues facientia flammas,
Quodque pio fusum stridat in igne merum."

Ver. 2. *And he shall bring it.*] In a silver dish, or of some other metal, (as R. Levi of Barcelona expounds it, Præcept. cxvi.) wherein he delivered it to the priest, who carried it to the altar, and presented it to God by lifting it up over his head; and, as the Jews generally say, turning it about to all the four quarters of the world, in token that it was offered to the Possessor of heaven and of earth.

To Aaron's sons, the priests.] To one of them that ministered at the altar that day this offering was brought, as appears by the next words.

And he shall take thereout his handful of the flour thereof.] As much as he could take up between his fingers, saith the forenamed R. Levi.

And of the oil thereof.] Which was mingled, as I said before, with the flour.

With all the frankincense thereof.] None of which was to be reserved for the priest's own use; but entirely burnt upon the altar. Which was contrary to the way of the gentiles, who called frankincense προσφιλέστατον τοῖς θεοῖς, (as Diodorus Siculus speaks, lib. ii.) *a thing most beloved of the gods*, but yet offered only so much as they could take up with two fingers, or, as others say, three. (See Cuperus's Apotheosis Homeri, p. 74, &c.)

And the priest shall burn the memorial thereof upon the altar.] As a grateful acknowledgment unto God, that they held all they possessed of him their sovereign Lord; whom they supplicated also hereby, that he would still be mindful of them, that is, be gracious to them. For this offering seems to have something of the nature of a holocaust, or whole burnt-offering: though others will have it to be an expiatory sacrifice, because part of it was eaten by the priests. But it being said in the next words, to be an *offering made by fire*, (which is the phrase for a whole burnt-offering, in the foregoing chapter, ver. 9. 13. 17.) I take the other to be the truer.

Of a sweet savour unto the Lord.] The very same being said of this sort of offering, which is of the foregoing, that was more chargeable, (i. 9. 13. 17.) Procopius Gazæus had great reason here to observe (which cannot be too oft repeated), "that true piety is not demonstrated by the greatness of its presents. The way of piety is open and easy unto all: for God's commandment is exceeding broad. And he that maketh the smallest signification of it, if it be sincere, differs nothing from him, who shews it by the largest gifts," &c. So vain were the reasonings of the heathen, who disputed which were the most acceptable sacrifices to their gods, those of living creatures, or of things inanimate. Julian contended that τιμιώτερα τῶν ἀψύχων ἐστὶ τὰ ἔμψυχα, &c. *the sacrifices of living creatures were more esteemed, than of those without life;* because they were *nearer of kin to the living God, and the Author of life.* But his great doctors, Pythagoras and Porphyrius (as St. Cyril observes, lib. x. contra Julianum), condemned these sacrifices of beasts, as hateful to their gods; who they fancied were pleased only with those that were made διὰ καρπῶν καὶ λιβανωτοῦ, *of fruits of the earth, and of frankincense.* But they might have learnt from Moses, if they had pleased (Julian and Porphyry being acquainted with his books), that these things were alike acceptable, God having respect to the mind of him that offered, not to his gifts.

Ver. 3. *And the remnant of the meat-offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'.*] To be eaten by them. But that meat-offering which was offered for the priests themselves, was to be wholly burnt, and no part eaten, (vi. 22, 23.)

It is a thing most holy of the offerings of the Lord made by fire.] Nothing is more known than the distinction which the Jews make between things *most holy* and the *lighter holy things* (as their phrase is), which I took notice of before. The *most holy* were such, as none whatsoever might eat of; or none but the priests, and the sons of priests; and that only in the sanctuary, and no where else: (see vi. 16. 26.) such were all whole burnt-offerings, all the sin-offerings, and all the peace-offerings for the whole congregation. The *lighter holy things* were such, as might be eaten by those who were not priests, in any place within the city of Jerusalem (to which their camp now answered), and such were all the peace-offerings of particular persons, the paschal lamb, the tenth and the firstlings of cattle.

Ver. 4. *And if thou bring an oblation of a meat-offering baken in the oven.*] This is the first sort of baked *minchas*, for the preparing of which there was an oven in the court of the tabernacle, as afterward there was in the court of the temple, (1 Chron. xxiii. 28, 29. Ezek. xlvi. 20.)

It shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.] If the cakes were thick, then the oil was kneaded together with them: but if they were thin (like a wafer) then it was only spread upon it, before it was baked, (see Exod. xxix. 2.) or, as some will have it, after it came out of the oven. Concerning its being unleavened, see below, ver. 11.

Ver. 5. *And if thy oblation be a meat-offering baken in a pan.*] Or in a *flat plate*, as we translate it in the margin. For Maimonides says, this was the difference between *macabath* (which is the Hebrew word in this place) and *marchesheth*, that the former was a *pan* or *plate* without any rim about it; and the other had one, as our frying-pans have. And so Abarbinel, in his preface to this book, observes out of Jarchi, that there was a vessel in the temple, which was only flat and broad, but had no rising on the sides of it: so that the oil being poured upon it, when it was set on the fire, ran down and increased the flame, and made the cake hard.

It shall be of fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil.] This sort of cake seems to have been both kneaded with oil, and to have had oil also poured upon it, after it was laid upon the plate.

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt part it in pieces*, &c.] This, according to Abarbinel, was done as it lay baking upon the plate. Or, if this division was made after it was taken off, the reason was the same; because part of it was to be given to God, and the rest to the priests.

And pour oil thereon.] Upon the pieces; that they might by this new addition of fresh oil be made more savoury.

It is a meat-offering.] And therefore to be eaten with oil, (ver. 1.)

Ver. 7. *And if thy oblation be a meat-offering baken in the frying-pan.*] This vessel was not flat, but deep, (as Abarbinel observes, see ver. 5.) because that which was baked in it was moist and fluid.

It shall be made of fine flour with oil.] The oil was not kneaded with this sort of *mincha*, but put into the pan, so that it mixed with the flour; which might be shaken and moved up and down, as things are which are baken in liquors. So Abarbinel's words are in his preface to this book.

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt bring the meat-offering that is made of these things unto the Lord*, &c.] This relates to all the baked meat-offerings beforementioned, which were to be brought to the Lord at his house, and there presented to the priest; who was to bring them to the altar, when they were prepared as before directed. (See ver. 1, 2.) And this variety of *minchas* was allowed, that the table of the Lord (*i. e.* the altar) might be furnished, and his ministers that waited on him entertained with all sorts of provisions.

Ver. 9. *And the priest shall take from the meat-offering a memorial thereof.*] A part of the cake (of whatsoever sort it was) was separated from the rest of the Lord's portion; to whom it was offered as an acknowledgment of his supreme dominion over them, and in commemoration of his goodness to them.

And shall burn it upon the altar.] Before the other parts were eaten by the priests; as was directed before about the fine flour, (ver. 2.)

It is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.] See ver. 2.

Ver. 10. *And that which is left of the meat-offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'*, &c.] All this verse has been explained, ver. 3.

Ver. 11. *No meat-offering which ye shall bring unto the Lord shall be made with leaven.*] These words [*which ye shall bring unto the Lord*] seem to have a peculiar emphasis in this place; importing, that no meat-offering, part of which was offered upon God's altar, should be leavened. For no part of that leavened bread which was offered in eucharistical sacrifices, (vii. 13.) nor the two loaves offered in the feast of Pentecost (which some mistake for an exception to this precept), were offered upon the altar, but given entirely to the priests, as their portion.

Made with leaven.] There are many moral reasons given, both by Jewish and Christian writers, why none of the cakes beforementioned should have any leaven in them, which I shall not here set down. There is some probability in their opinion, who think this was ordered to refresh their memory, by putting them in mind of their deliverance out of Egypt. But Maimonides seems to me to have given the best account of this, in his More Nevochim, (par. iii. cap. 46.) where he saith, God prohibited this to root out the idolatrous customs in those days, as he found in the books of the Zabii, who *offered to their gods no bread but leavened.* Next to this, the account which Abarbinel gives of it is not to be disregarded, who thinks it was forbidden, because it would have made delay, if they had waited at the tabernacle till the fermentation was perfected.

For ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord made by fire.] Neither mixed with bread, nor alone by themselves. For honey was a kind of leaven, and it is certain was used by the heathen in their religious rites: as appears not only from Maimonides (who tells us in the place forenamed, that *they chose sweet things for their offerings, and anointed their sacrifices with honey*), but from a great number of other authors, who make mention of it: particularly Plato, who saith, (in his de Legibus vi.) that anciently men did not sacrifice living creatures, but only fine flour, καὶ μέλιτι καρποὶ δεδευμένοι, *and fruits moistened with honey.* And so Phylarchus tells us, (in Athenæus's Deipnos. lib. xv.) that the Greeks sacrificed honey to the sun (which was the great God among the gentiles) but poured no wine upon his altars. Which Polemon (in Suidis) calls Νηφάλιον θυσίαν, *a sober sacrifice;* because there was no wine in it, but honey and water mixed together. Nay, there was scarce any god among the heathen to whom honey was not offered, as Bochartus hath shewn at large in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 12. But one testimony may serve for all, which is from Pausanias (in his Eliaca), where, having reckoned up at least fifty altars in the temple of Jupiter Olympius unto several deities, and some of them common to them all, he saith, they sacrificed upon every one of them once a month, after an ancient manner (ἀρχαῖόν τινα τρόπον), *frankincense and wheat mingled with honey.* Which being so common and ancient a thing among the gentiles in their idolatrous worship, was the reason, it is likely, that God forbade it to be used in his sacrifices. And under the name of honey, the Jews think figs and dates, and all other sweet fruits, are comprehended. For the famous composition among the Egyptians called Κῦφι, which was burnt every day, morning and evening, on their altars, consisted of such things, as well as of myrrh, calamus, and cardamum. So Plutarch tells us (in his book de Iside et Osir.) and mentions honey in the first place, with wine and raisins: Τὸ μὲν Κῦφι μίγμα, &c. μέλιτος καὶ οἴνου καὶ σταφίδος, &c.

Ver. 12. *As for the oblation of the first-fruits, ye shall offer them unto the Lord, but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savour.*] There were several sorts of first-fruits, (as I observed Exod. xxiii. 19.) That which is here spoken of was of the corn unground, only a little parched at the fire, which was to be presented unto God; but not burnt on the altar, because they belonged to the priests.

Ver. 13. *And every oblation of thy meat-offering shalt thou season with salt.*] All the forenamed *minchas*, which were *korbans* (as they are often here called), were to be thus seasoned, because salt was a thing never wanting at any table; and all meat is unsavoury without it.

Neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat-offerings.] It is called the *salt of the covenant of God*, as some think, because required by this law, which they covenanted with God to observe, as much as to offer sacrifices; which were not acceptable without salt, as appears from the repetition of it three times in this one verse. But there is a plainer reason than this, which is, that the sacrifices being God's feasts, and they that did partake of them being his guests, who did in a manner eat and drink with him at his table; the salt that was cast upon all sacrifices (as appears by the words following) is called *the salt of the covenant*, to sig-

nify, that as men were wont to make covenants by eating and drinking together (where salt is never wanting at their tables, but a necessary appendix at every feast), so God by these sacrifices, and the feasts upon them, did ratify and confirm his covenant with those that did partake of them. For salt, as is commonly observed, being a constant concomitant of all feasts, and covenants being made by eating and drinking at the same table, where salt was ever used; thence salt itself was counted by the ancients to be the *symbol of friendship,* and proverbially used among the Greeks to express it. By which other places may be explained, about which some have bestowed vain labour, Numb. xxiii. 19. 2 Chron. xiii. 5. where the same words are used, but inverted; it being called *a covenant of salt* (instead of the *salt of the covenant*), because covenants, as I said, were established by eating together, where salt is never wanting.

With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.] Not only with the *minchas,* or meat-offerings, mentioned in this chapter, but with all other sacrifices whatsoever. Which is so solemnly enjoined (as Maimonides says in the place beforenamed), because the heathen did not use any salt in their sacrifices. Which is not unreasonable to think, since honey (with which salt doth not well agree) was in such constant use among them. And therefore, saith he, *God prohibited us to offer leaven or honey, and commanded us, with great seriousness, to use salt in all our sacrifices.* That is, as R. Levi of Barcelona explains it, (Præcept. cxvi.) the flesh of all sacrifices was to be salted; and the meal of all *minchas.* For which he gives these two reasons; because nothing is grateful to the palate without salt; which also preserves things from corruption, as the sacrifices did their souls from perishing. Abarbinel saith the same. And therefore, whatsoever the custom might be in ancient time among the heathen, in after-ages they learned from Moses to use it in all their sacrifices: as appears from Pliny and Ovid (and many other authors), the first of which says, that salt was so necessary, that no sacrifices were offered *sine mola salsa:* which every one knows the Greeks called οὐλὰς and οὐλοχύτας. And, among the Jews, this salt was not brought by him that offered the sacrifice, but was provided at the public charge; there being a chamber in the court of the temple (as we read in Middoth, cap. 5. sect. 2.) called *the chamber of salt.* Which was one of the three rooms on the north side of the court (as there were three others on the south side, for other uses), where the flesh of the sacrifices was powdered, as the *minchas* were seasoned at the very altar. And this was so necessary, that though a sacrifice was not looked upon as null, if the priest neglected to salt it; yet the want of it in the *minchas* (as the Hebrew doctors say) made them void; because it is here so expressly required in this verse, *Thou shalt not suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking in thy meat-offering.* And whosoever offered any sacrifice without salt, or with honey or leaven, was beaten, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13.

Ver. 14. *And if thou offer a meat-offering of thy first-fruits unto the Lord, thou shalt offer for thy meat-offering,* &c.] This is very different from the oblation of first-fruits mentioned ver. 12. For there they are called *resith,* which signifies the first-fruits at harvest-time: but here *bichurim,* which properly imports the first ripe fruits, before the rest were ready. And therefore the manner of their oblation was different from the former, which follows in the conclusion of this verse. And first he describes what he means by the first-fruits, which he calls *abib, i. e.* full ears of corn, but as yet *green and moist:* which he saith therefore in the next place must be dried by the fire; and then bruised and beaten in a mortar, or with a mill: and they were to be brought out of the richest or fattest of their fields: for so the last words seem to signify *garesh carmel* (which we translate *corn beaten out of full ears*), for *carmel* sometimes signifies a *fruitful field,* (Isa. xxxii. 15.) and therefore may very well be thought in this place to import, *the largest ears of tender corn.* And the intention of its contusion seems to have been, that it might be reduced into flour; as it might easily be, after it had been dried by the fire. And therefore differed from that meat-offering mentioned ver. 1. only in this; that the former was flour of old corn, this of new: and that was fine flour sifted from the bran; this had nothing taken out of it, but remained as it came from the mortar or the mill. And so the LXX. seem to have understood it. There are those, indeed, who think it was only thrashed out of the husk, and so offered; and fancy also that from this word *geresh,* the goddess called *Ceres* had her name among the gentiles. Which last conceit is the stranger, since they endeavour to have it thought that the Jews derived this custom of offering first-fruits from the gentiles; and not the gentiles from the Jews. Whereas the gentiles had no such custom, that I can find, as this, to offer the first-fruits of green corn; but only the first-fruits of their harvest, which they called *novas fruges*: of which the Romans thought it unlawful to taste, "antequam sacerdotes primitias libassent," *before the priests had offered the first-fruits,* as Pliny tells us, lib. xviii. cap. 2. and Censorinus saith the same, cap. 1. de Die Natali. Or if they did offer any first-fruits before corn was ripe, they boiled them in a pot; but did not roast them in the fire, as is here directed. For so Hesychius seems to say, that in the feast called Θαργήλια (which was in the month that answers to our April), they offered τὰς ἀπαρχὰς τῶν φαινομένων, καὶ περικομίζουσι, *the first-fruits that appeared out of the ground, which they carried about, i. e.* in pots, as other authors tell us. And Hesychius himself saith, that Θάργαλος signified *a pot full of sacred decoction.*

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt put oil upon it,* &c.] See ver. 1.

Ver. 16. *And the priest shall burn the memorial of it, part of the beaten corn thereof, and part of the oil, and all the frankincense.*] All the rest that was not burnt was the priest's portion, except the frankincense, which is here ordered to be entirely offered to God, (see ver. 2.) and made this, and such-like offerings, be called an *offering of a sweet savour unto the Lord,* ver. 2. 9. 12.

It is an offering made by fire unto the Lord.] See upon ver. 9.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AND if his oblation be a sacrifice of peace-offering.*] Having given orders about *whole burnt-offerings,* in the first chapter, and *meat-offerings* (which had something of that nature in them) in the second; he proceeds to *peace-offerings,* which in the Hebrew are called *schelamim,* from the

word *schalam*, either as it signifies *retribution*, or *peace* and *concord*. They that take it in the first sense, think the reason of the name to be from this; that God, the offerer, and the priest, had each of them their portion assigned to them of this sacrifice. And they that follow the second sense do not much differ, when they say, that these sacrifices were symbols of friendship between God, and the priests, and those that brought them; for all these feasted at a common table, as R. Levi ben Gersom expresses it. For part being offered on the altar, and the priest having taken his share, the rest was given to him that offered the sacrifice. So that it was called a *peace-offering*, saith Abarbinel (in his preface to this book), *because it made peace* (or rather declared peace) *between the altar, the priest, and the owner*. But they seem to me to have given the best account of this, who, because *peace* in their language signifies *prosperity* and *happiness*, think these were called *peace-offerings*, because they were principally thankful acknowledgments of mercies received from God's bounty. For there being three sorts of them mentioned vii. 15, 16. that of *thanksgiving* is the first, called *tothah*, acknowledgment of some benefit received.

The gentiles called such sacrifices χαριστήριοι, as appears from many places of Dionys. Halicarn. (lib. vi. and lib. viii.) where there are these words, θυσίας τε χαριστηρίους τοῖς θεοῖς ἐποιοῦντο, καὶ ἦσαν ἅπαντες ἐν ἑορταῖς καὶ εὐπαθείαις. Plutarch calls them, εὐαγγέλια, particularly in the life of Agesilaus, where he saith, ἔθυσεν εὐαγγέλια, καὶ διέπεμπε μερίδας τοῖς φίλοις ἀπὸ τῶν τεθυμένων· which is a perfect description of such sacrifices as are here appointed; with part of which they entertained their friends. They are also called by those writers ἐκβατήρια, especially when they had respect to any great danger they had escaped; for which they offered these thankful acknowledgments. The LXX. call such sacrifices σοτήρια.

If he offer it of the herd, whether it be a male or female.] A *whole burnt-offering* was to be only of a *male*: for being wholly God's, and offered purely for his honour, it was to be of the very best, (i. 3.) But *peace-offerings* being also for the profit of him that offered them, who had the greatest share of them; it was at his liberty whether he would offer a *male* or a *female*. Directly contrary to the Egyptian customs, if they were the same now, that they were in the time of Herodotus, who saith expressly, θηλείας οὔ σφι ἔξεστι θύειν, *it was not lawful among them to sacrifice females*, (lib. ii. cap. 41.)

He shall offer it without blemish, &c.] See i. 3.

Ver. 2. *And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering.*] The man who brought the offering was to lay his hand upon the head of it; as was ordered in the *whole burnt-offering* and *sin-offering*, (see ch. i. ver. 4.) It might not be done by a deputy, unless he was heir to one that had vowed this sacrifice, and died before he had performed it; in which case the heir was to do what the man himself should have done, if he had been alive, as Maimonides observes. In this sacrifice, *laying on of hands* seems to have been done, not only with prayer to God, that he would accept the oblation (which the Jews say always accompanied this action), but with acknowledgment of those mercies which were the occasion of it. So Conr. Pellicanus well glosses upon i. 4. (which may be best applied to the use of this rite in *peace-offerings*): "Laying on of hands signifies devotion and faith, with acknowledgment of the Divine benefits; for which we cannot offer any thing of our own, but rather return and restore to him what we have received; that we may understand giving of thanks to be the greatest of our sacrifices."

And kill it.] See chap. i. ver. 5.

At the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] These being the *lesser holy things*, as the Jews call them, were not offered as the *whole burnt-offerings* and *sin-offerings* were, on the north side of the altar, (see chap. i. ver. 11.) but any where else near to the entrance of the tabernacle; which was in the east, where the ashes were thrown out, and therefore a less holy place. Only in laying on of hands, every man was bound, wheresoever the sacrifice was killed, to turn his face westward, towards the sanctuary; because then, as I said, he made certain prayers and acknowledgments to the Divine Majesty, which was always to be done in that posture.

And Aaron's sons, the priests, shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about.] See chap. i. ver. 5.

Ver. 3. *And he shall offer.*] One of the priests then in waiting at the altar.

Of the sacrifices of the peace-offerings, &c.] After the sacrifices were flayed and cut up, as is directed i. 6.

The fat that covereth the inwards.] That is, the *omentum* as the Latins call it, and hath much fat in it. (See Exod. xxix. 13.)

And all the fat that is upon the inwards.] All the fat which adheres to the mesentery, and other entrails.

Ver. 4. *And the two kidneys, and the fat that is on them.*] The kidneys are noted by Aristotle to have more fat about them than any of the other bowels: Ἔχουσι δὲ οἱ νεφροὶ μάλιστα τῶν σπλάγχνων πιμελήν, (lib. iii. de Animal. cap. 9.) being so covered with it, that, in dissecting of a body, the kidneys, at first sight, are not to be perceived, as anatomists observe; particularly our own countryman, Dr. Highmore.

Which is by the flanks.] The Hebrew word *cesilim* signifies the *loins*, (as Bochart hath demonstrated in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45.) which have *collops of fat* upon them, as Eliphaz speaks, (Job xv. 27.) and thence are easily inflamed, (Psalm xxxviii. 7.)

And the caul above the liver.] The Hebrew word *jothereth* signifies the greatest lobe of the liver. (See Exod. xxix. 13.)

It shall he take away.] Separate from the rest of the flesh, to be offered on the altar. For all the fat here mentioned was God's portion of the sacrifice: the priest had the breast and the right shoulder; and he that brought the offering had the rest; as will appear more fully, vii. 15, &c. 31, 32, &c.

Ver. 5. *And Aaron's sons.*] Some of those that minister that day.

Shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt-sacrifice.] By the *burnt-sacrifice* seems here to be meant the daily sacrifice, which was burnt every morning: after which this was to be offered, but not before it.

Which is upon the wood that is on the fire.] The same wood, upon which the burnt-sacrifice had been offered, would serve to burn this fat. Which being entirely consumed, as the holocausts were, it is called in the following words, "an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord." (See chap. i. ver. 9.) That is, God was pleased graciously to accept their pious acknowledgments: the offerings of these inwards being, as if he that brought them had said, *I will pour out my soul unto the Lord* in thanks

and praise for the benefits he had received. So Abarbinel explains it in his preface to this book.

Ver. 6. *And if his offerings*, &c. *be of the flock.*] *i. e.* Of sheep or goats, which are both comprehended under the word *flock*, (as was noted before, chap. i. ver. 2.)

Male or female.] See ver. 1. where I observed a difference between these sacrifices and whole burnt-offerings, in this respect; that either *male* or *female* were accepted for peace-offerings, but *male* alone for the other. To which may be added, that birds were allowed for *whole burnt-offerings*, (i. 14, 15, &c.) but not for *peace-offerings:* which were only of the *herd* or *flock; i. e.* of bullocks, sheep, or goats. The reason seems to be plain; because *peace-offerings* being to be divided between God, the priest, and him that brought them, the portion of each would have been so small, that it would have made the feast upon it so very meagre and jejune, that it would have been contemptible.

He shall offer it without blemish.] It was at his choice whether he would bring it from the *herd* or the *flock:* but in its kind it was to be perfect. (See chap. i. 3. 9.)

Ver. 7. *If he offer a lamb for his offering.*] Though a bird was not accepted for a peace-offering, yet a *lamb* was; though not of such value as a fat sheep, or a goat.

Then shall he offer it before the Lord.] This seems to be meant of the man's presenting it to be offered at the altar.

Ver. 8. *And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering*, &c.] This whole verse is only a direction to do with a *peace-offering* of a lamb or sheep, as they were to do with that of a bullock, (ver. 2.)

Ver. 9. *And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace-offering, an offering made by fire unto the Lord.*] As was directed in the offering of a bullock, (ver. 3.)

The fat thereof, and the whole rump.] The whole fat being to be offered (as was ordered also before) he enumerates the particulars; because in this was more fat, than in other sacrifices of this kind. For the *whole rump* of a sheep was to be offered to God, though not of a bullock, nor a goat. And the reason was, because in those countries the tails of their sheep are so vastly big, that (as Golius and others assure us) the least of them weigh ten or twelve pounds; and some exceed forty pounds weight: and they are so very fat, that they melt the fat and keep it to butter their rice, and for other uses, as Bochartus observes in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45.

It shall he take off hard by the back-bone.] The Hebrew word *atzah*, which we translate the *back-bone*, denotes that part which is next to the tail or *rump:* and therefore must signify that which Galen calls κόκκυξ. Which is a bone at the extremity of the broad bone, called *os sacrum*; consisting of three cartilaginous parts, as he describes it.

And the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards.] See ver. 3.

Ver. 10. *And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them*, &c.] This verse is explained above, (ver. 4.)

Ver. 11. *And the priest shall burn it upon the altar.*] As he did the fat of the bullock, (ver. 5.)

It is the food of the offering made by fire unto the Lord.] That which was offered upon the altar was accounted God's *mess*, as appears from Malachi i. 12. where the altar is called his *table*, and the sacrifice upon it his *meat:* as here it is called his *bread* or *food;* to represent in a lively manner to them, that God dwelt, and (as we say) kept house among them; and that they who partook of these sacrifices, feasted with him upon his provision. (See upon Exod. xxv. 8. 30.)

Ver. 12. *And if his offering be a goat*, &c.] The law concerning this sacrifice is the very same with the former (except what is ordered about the *rump* of a sheep), and this and the following verses (13—15.) need no farther explication.

Ver. 16. *And the priest shall burn it upon the altar: it is the food of the offering*, &c.] See before, ver. 11.

All the fat is the Lord's.] That is, all the *fat* beforementioned; which may more properly be translated the *suet.* For that *fat* which was a part of the flesh might be eaten, (as appears from many places, particularly Deut. xxxii. 14.) but not that which only lay upon it, and might be separated from it; which was burnt upon the altar, when they sacrificed either a bullock, sheep, or goat. And when they killed any of these, or other clean creatures, for their food at home, still they were to forbear to eat the *suet;* partly out of reverence to God, whose portion it was at the altar; and partly because it was heavy and too strong a food, as Maimonides takes it, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 48.) And it seems therefore to have been offered upon the altar, because it was so unctuous, that it would easily burn, and make the flesh also consume the sooner. But from its being God's part, it came thence to signify, the very best and most excellent of any kind of thing. As the best of the tithe is called the *fat of the tithe*, Numb. xviii. 17. and the best corn is called the *fat of the wheat*, Psal. lxxxi. 16. and rich and powerful men are called the *fat upon earth;* as the chief and principal part of the people, Psal. xxii. 29.

Ver. 17. *It shall be a perpetual statute.*] In force as long as this law about sacrifices shall last.

For your generations.] For their posterity, as well as them who received this law in all succeeding ages.

Throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood.] This confirms what was said before, that they might not eat such fat as is beforementioned, at home, at their ordinary food; because it is said, *throughout all your dwellings ye shall eat no fat.* And *fat* being joined with *blood*, is another argument, that they might no more eat the *suet* of beasts that were killed at home, for common use, than the blood of such beasts. From which they entirely abstained, for the foregoing reasons, as Maimonides observes in the book forenamed; and for another also which he mentions in the forty-sixth chapter of it. Where he saith, "The ancient idolaters, called Zabii, were wont to eat the blood of their sacrifices, because they imagined this to be the food of their gods; with whom they thought they had such communion, by eating of their meat, that they revealed to them things to come." And in this R. Moses bar Nachman concurs with him, as Dr. Cudworth observes in the conclusion of his treatise of the Right Notion of the Lord's Supper. For though he saith that blood was forbidden, because it served for expiation (in which he differs from Maimonides), yet he adds also, that it was used superstitiously by the heathen in their idolatrous worship; where "they partook of the blood with their demons, as being their guests, and invited to eat with them at their table. And so were joined in federal society with them; and by this kind of communion enabled to prophesy and foretell things to come."

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Having directed him about *whole burnt-offerings*, and *meat-offerings* (which constantly attended some of them), and *peace-offerings*, which supposed men to be in a state of favour with God; he now proceeds to give order about the expiation of their sins, when they had offended him, by doing contrary to his commands; which he continues to the fourteenth verse of the fifth chapter. And this law about *sin-offerings*, seems to have been delivered to Moses at a different time from the former; being about a different matter; but by a voice speaking to him out of the tabernacle, as before, (chap. i. 1.)

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance*, &c.] There are three conditions expressed in this verse, of the sin for which the following sacrifice was admitted. First, It was to be committed *ignorantly;* not wittingly and presumptuously. Secondly, It was for sin against a *negative* precept (as the Jews call them), *i. e.* such a commandment as forbade something to be done. So it is said here expressly, *concerning things which ought not to be done.* As for the omission of such things as were commanded to be done, they might be performed some other time, when men had better bethought themselves; which was much more acceptable to God, than offering sacrifice for the omission. And thirdly, It was for *facts* committed, not for *words* or *thoughts;* so the last words are, *and shall do against any of them.* As for the sins which men might imprudently commit in *word* and in *thought*, they were so many, that the whole flocks and herds would not have sufficed for their expiation, nor the altar contained all such sacrifices. The Jews add a fourth condition, that the sacrifice here appointed was such *facts*, as if they had been committed wittingly, a *cereth*, i. e. *cutting off*, was threatened to them by the law: which they gather from Numb. xv. 30. But that phrase, *with a high hand*, seems not to signify any *sort* of sin, but a certain *manner* of sinning: as when a man despised God's commandments, and brought contempt upon the law by his sins, as a very learned friend of mind, now with God, hath observed. And, therefore, it is probable all sins committed ignorantly were expiated by the following sacrifices, save only those which are appointed to be expiated by other sacrifices, or after another manner. (See Dr. Outram de Sacrificiis, lib. i, cap. 12. n. 2—4.)

Ver. 3. *If the priest that is anointed do sin.*] And first he prescribes the sacrifice which he who was to make the great expiation for all the people, should offer for himself, *viz.* the high-priest: who only, of all the priests, was constantly anointed at the entrance of his office. And if, after he was put out of his office, he committed any such sin as is here mentioned, he was to make this offering for his expiation, as much as if he had continued in it. So Mr. Selden observes out of the Misna, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 15. n. 14.

According to the sin of the people.] In the manner beforementioned. Or, as R. Solomon interprets it, if he hide any thing from the people, whereby they err. For so the words run in the Hebrew, if he sin *to the guilt of the people* (or to the making them guilty), either by misinforming them, or drawing them into error by his example; so that they take a thing to be clean, which is indeed unclean, or the like.

Then let him bring for his sin which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish.] It is observed by some, that in great offences the sacrifices were small; lest they should imagine their pardon was procured by their great expense. For here the word is *par ben bachur, a young bullock*, that was but a little bigger than a calf. And so this sacrifice is called (*par*) in the following verses. Whereas that of the *peace-offering* is called (ver. 10.) *shor*, an *ox* (though we translate it also *bullock*), one that was grown to its full bigness, and consequently of greater value.

For a sin-offering.] How *chattah*, which we translate *sin-offering*, differs from *ascham*, which we translate *trespass-offering*, I shall examine afterward, when Moses came to speak of the latter; and now only observe, that *chattah* is the name both for *sin*, and for the *sin-offering:* as the word *piaculum* was among the heathen; which signified both a great crime, and the expiatory sacrifice for it. By which those words in the New Testament may be explained, "Christ was made sin for us;" that is, a sacrifice to expiate our sins. And so the word ἁμαρτία, *sin*, certainly signifies, Rom. viii. 3.

Ver. 4. *And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord.*] This, as I take it, was to be done by himself; who was to present the sacrifice to the Divine Majesty, and desire it might be accepted for the purpose to which it was to be offered.

And shall lay his hand upon the bullock's head.] As every one that brought other offerings was bound to do, (see chap. i. 4. iii. 2, &c.) but here for another purpose; *viz.* to confess their sins unto the Lord, and beseech him to forgive them. (See v. 5.) There is a good gloss upon this, in a very bad book called Nitzachon, not long ago published by the learned Wagenseil: where that author saith, (p. 11.) "When a man sacrificed a beast, he was to think in his mind, I am more a beast than this here present. For I have sinned, and for the sins I have committed, I offer this: but it were more just that he who hath sinned should suffer death, than this beast (which hath not offended): therefore thus a man, by the help of this sacrifice, began to repent."

And kill the bullock before the Lord.] This seems to have been done by him that laid his hand on the head of the bullock, that is, by the hand of the high-priest himself. For the greatest men, in old time, did not think such work below them; but rather esteemed every thing that served to the worship of God, to be noble and honourable. So Homer represents king Agamemnon as killing the lambs himself; by the blood of which he was to seal the treaty he made with the Trojans; (Iliad. 3.) yet in this case, it is likely, the high-priest himself did not kill the sacrifices, but some of the other priests that then ministered. For he that did this seems to be distinguished, by the next words, (ver. 5.) from the *priest that is anointed; i. e.* the high-priest. Nor was this sacrifice killed in the ordinary place where *sin-offerings* were killed, (see 24.) being an extraordinary sort of offering, as that which follows also was.

Ver. 5. *And the priest that is anointed.*] Whoever killed the sacrifice, the high-priest himself, for whom it was offered, did what follows.

Shall take of the bullock's blood.] In a bason.

And bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation.] Into the very sanctuary; where, as it follows, he was to dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord.

Ver. 6. *And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood.*] Or rather, *dip it into the blood.*

And sprinkle of the blood seven times before the Lord.] This was peculiar to his sacrifice for sin, and done in no other but that for the whole congregation. To signify, perhaps, that their offences were more heinous, and could not be so easily expiated, as those of other men. The number *seven*, every one knows, was of great account, and thought most powerful in religious actions, even among the heathen. For as Elisha bade Naaman go and wash *seven times in Jordan*, to cure him of his leprosy; so Apuleius, in the beginning of the eleventh book of his Metamorphosis, speaks of dipping the head *seven times* in the sea for purification, and gives the reason for it; "Quod eum numerum præcipue religioni aptissimum divinus ille Pythagoras prodidit;" because the *Divine Pythagoras* (as he calls him) *taught this number to be above all other most proper in religion.* Which, in all probability, Pythagoras learnt from the truly Divine Moses: to whom God revealed the creation of the world, in six days, and his consecrating the seventh day, on which he rested; which made the number *seven* so much used in sacred matters. For not only in this sacrifice, but in making the water of separation by burning a red heifer, this rite was used, (Numb. xix. 4.) and in purging a leper, (Lev. xiv. 7.) in dedicating the altar, (Exod. xxix. 37.) when the oil was sprinkled on it seven times, (Lev. viii. 11.) and at the consecration of the priests; (Exod. xxix. 35.) and, to say no more, as every seventh day of the week was holy, so every seventh year the land rested; and after seven times seven there was a *jubilee*, (Levit. xxv.) They that would see more of this number, and of its *sacramenta*, as St. Jerome speaks, may read him upon Amos v. 3. and Drusius on this place, and on Josh. vi. 4. and Wolfius upon Nehemiah viii.

Before the veil of the sanctuary.] Which parted the *holy place* from the *most holy*. For that is peculiarly called by the name of *porocheth*, which is the word here used, (xxvi. 31. 33. 35. Lev. xvi. 2, &c.) as the other veil, which was before the door of the tabernacle, is constantly called *masach*, (Exod. xxvi. 36, 37.)

Ver. 7. *And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense*, &c.] This also was peculiar to his sacrifice; and to that for the whole congregation, (ver. 17.)

And shall pour out all the blood of the bullock.] That is, all the rest of the blood which remained after the sprinkling before the mercy-seat; and the tipping of the horns of the altar with it.

At the bottom of the altar of the burnt-offering.] Where, after the building of the temple, there were two holes; one on the west side of the altar, the other on the south, (as the Jews tell us in Middoth, cap. 3. sect. 2.) by which it is conveyed into a *canal* under ground, through which it ran into the brook Kidron. And there was only this difference (they say) about these two holes, that the blood of the sin-offering (any part of which was carried into the most holy place) was poured out only into that on the west side of the foundation of the altar. And, if we may believe the Jews, the gardeners bought this blood of those that were the treasurers of the temple, to enrich their ground with it, as Constantine L'Empereur there observes. And while they were in the wilderness, and all the time they had only a moveable tabernacle, it is most likely there were receptacles made under ground, with conveyances to some distant place, where it sank into the earth, or was covered with dust, as other blood is commanded to be, (xvii. 13.) For Maimonides thinks the pouring out the blood (so that it might not remain in one place) which is constantly and strictly required by the law, was in opposition to an idolatrous custom of the old Zabii; who made a collection of the blood in a vessel, or in a little pit, about which they sat, and ate the flesh, imagining their gods feasted upon the blood; as I noted before out of Maimonides, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 46.)

Which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] For there was the place of it, as hath been observed, Exod. xl. 6.

Ver. 8. *And he shall take off from it all the fat of the bullock for the sin-offering*, &c.] All that follows in this and the two next verses, (ver. 9, 10.) is the same that was ordered to be done about peace-offerings, as appears from ver. 10. See therefore the foregoing chapter, ver. 3—5.

Ver. 11. *And the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards*, &c.] This sacrifice was so laborious, to work in them a greater detestation of sin; which was aggravated by the quality of the person that committed it. And Nachmanides hath an observation, which (in some parts of it, at least) is very remarkable; "That all a man doth, being performed in words, in works, or thoughts, God commanded them, when they brought an offering for sin, that they should lay their hands on it, which had respect to the works they had done; and make confession over it, which had respect to their words; and burn the inwards and kidneys, which are the organs of thoughts and desires; the legs, also, had a respect to a man's hands and feet, by which he doth all his work; and the blood that was sprinkled on the altar signified his own blood. So that while a man did all these things, he was put in mind how he had sinned against God, both in soul and body, and deserved to have his blood shed, and his body burnt; unless the mercy of the Creator had accepted a price of redemption for him, *viz.* a sacrifice; whose blood was for his blood, and its life for his life; and the principal members of the sacrifice, for the members of his body." By which it appears, that the best sort of Jews had a sense, that the sacrifices for sin were offered to God in their stead, as a ransom for them. And so we Christians are to understand the sacrifice which Christ made of himself, who "gave himself a ransom for us all," as the apostle speaks, 1 Tim. ii. 6. and our Lord saith the same, Matt. xx. 28. Mark x. 45. Such sacrifices the heathens themselves had, which they called *Lustralia*, from the word *lustrare*, which signifies to *expiate* among the Romans; and that by *paying a price.* For the ancient poet Ennius (as our excellent Mr. Thorndike hath observed), translating into Latin a Greek tragedy called Ἑκτοροκλύτρα (being taken out of Homer, where he speaks of Priamus ransoming of Hector's corpse from Achilles), entitled *Hectoris lustra*, (which shews this is the Latin of λύτρον,) *ransom* or *redemption:* and that ἀπολυτρόω signifies

in the New Testament *to deliver by paying a ransom*, see his Epilogue, book ii. chap. 27.

Ver. 12. *Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp.*] It was not dissected, as the *peace-offerings* were, because nobody was to partake of any part of it; being a sacrifice for the priest's own sin. And therefore it was to be carried (though not by himself, but some other person) to be burnt without the camp, to express the abominableness of the sin. This rite, and the carrying the blood within the tabernacle, to be sprinkled before the Lord, were used only in these two cases; of the sin of the high-priest, and of all the people. For of other sin-offerings the priest might eat, (vi. 26.) but of this, being for himself, he was not to taste at all, because he was in a state of guilt.

Into a clean place, where the ashes are poured out.] On the east part of the tabernacle there was a place for the ashes to be thrown into, when they are taken from the altar; which afterward were carried into a clean place, without the camp. And so they were carried out after the temple was built at Jerusalem, at the east gate of the city, into a valley which lay between Jerusalem and Mount Olivet.

And burn him on the wood with fire.] Not upon an altar, but in a fire made with wood upon the ground, to shew the odiousness of the sin, as Maimonides thinks. For as the whole *burnt-sacrifices* were burnt on the altar, because they were an *offering of sweet-smelling savour* unto God; so this was burnt without the camp upon the ground, to shew that the *odour of it was ungrateful and abominable;* More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 46. where he also observes, that the burning of the beast entirely, being the destruction of it, so that nothing of it remained, it signified in like manner the utter deletion of sin, so that it should be remembered no more. And the bullock being burnt without the camp, I take it to denote, that the people should not suffer for the sin of the priest, which was abolished together with his sacrifice.

The same Maimonides hath another observation upon the title Zebachim, that there were three places constituted for the burning of holy things. The first was in the sanctuary, as every one knows; the second was in the mount of the house (as they called the place round about the court of the sanctuary), where, if any blemish happened to a bullock or a goat, they were brought out of the sanctuary, and burnt in a place called Bira; the third was in this place of the ashes, without the city.

Where the ashes are poured out, there shall he be burnt.] This is repeated, that none might presume to take the liberty to burn the bullock in any other place.

Ver. 13. *And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance.*] The Jews generally understood by the *whole congregation*, the great Sanhedrin, who represented the whole people of Israel. So Maimonides in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 41. and in his treatise of Sacrifices; and R. Levi, of Barcelona, Præcept. cxviii. For they sometimes erred in judgment; and thereby misleading the people, they were bound, when they found their error, to offer this sacrifice. Yet the Talmudists have raised many disputes upon this point, and made various cases: in some of which the house of judgment was bound to offer the sacrifice here appointed, and not they who followed their sentence: and others there were, in which they who followed their sentence were bound, and not the judges themselves. But if Moses's words be well considered, it will appear, that he speaks of a sin committed by all the people, in doing something which God had forbidden; by making wrong constructions of the law, or by common false opinions, or popular customs. For the *whole congregation* is here plainly distinguished from the *elders of the people*, (ver. 15.) which is certainly the name for their judges and governors. It was Mr. Selden's intention to have treated largely of the sense and notion of this law, as appears by what he saith of it, lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 14. n. 4. where he refers his reader to the third book on that subject for an account of this place. In the beginning of which (cap. 1. n. 1.) he signifies his intention to explain what the office of the Sanhedrin was, in offering expiatory sacrifices for the *whole congregation*. Which he repeats again, (cap. 10. n. 1.) with this addition, that they made this sacrifice in the name of all the people, when they offended as a community. But he did not live to pursue his intentions, being diverted by long digressions about other matters: yet he shews sufficiently his opinion was, that this sacrifice was not offered *for* the *Sanhedrin*, but *by* them for the *people*.

And the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly.] They are not sensible of their mistake for the present; but afterward discover it, either by themselves or by their rulers.

And they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord, concerning things which ought not to be done.] Have offended against some of the *negative* precepts (as the Jews speak) which forbid such things to be done. (See ver. 2.)

And are guilty.] Are sensible of their guilt.

Ver. 14. *When the sin which they have sinned against it is known.*] When they have discovered what precept they have violated.

Then shall the congregation offer a young bullock for the sin.] Without blemish, as was required for the sin of the high-priest, (ver. 3.)

And bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation.] *i. e.* Cause the bullock to be brought thither, by some of his people, in the name of all the rest.

Ver. 15. *And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock*, &c.] They were to do this as representatives of the people. (See ver. 13. and the end of *laying on their hands*, v. 4.)

And the bullock shall be killed before the Lord.] Either by some of them, or some of the people whom they appointed. (See ver. 4.)

Ver. 16. *And the priest that is anointed.*] That is, the high-priest: (see ver. 5.) All the rest that follows, to ver. 22, is exactly the same that is prescribed in the foregoing offering, for the high-priest himself. Only R. Solomon Jarchi hath a nice observation on the next verse, that it is not said in this case (as it is in the former) he shall sprinkle of the blood seven times *before the veil of the sanctuary*, but only *before the veil*, without the addition of *hakkodesh*, of the sanctuary, as it is ver. 6. Because, saith he, if the high-priest only sin, the holiness doth not depart: but if all the congregation sin, then it doth depart. As, if a province rebel against a prince, his family stands; but if there be a general defection, he must fall. He hath

the like observation upon ver. 22, 23. but it seems too subtle: for in the eighteenth verse Moses only saith, he shall put some of the blood upon the *horns of the altar*, without adding of *sweet incense*, (as before, ver. 7.) and yet it is manifest he means the same altar; and what was done in this sacrifice was as acceptable as what was done in the other.

Ver. 22. *When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance against*, &c.] The word *nasi*, which we translate *ruler*, signifies the *head of a tribe* in Numb. i. 4. 16. vii. 2. But the Jews commonly understand it peculiarly of the *head*, or *prince of the great Sanhedrin;* who, when they were under the government of kings, was the king himself. Thus the Misna gathers from these words in the text, *when he sinneth against any of the commandments of the Lord his God*, which signify him, say the doctors, that hath no superior but the Lord. And so the Gemarists understand it also, as Mr. Selden shews, lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 16. p. 666. But I think it is most reasonable to extend this to all great officers and judges, who had a peculiar relation to God; and therefore were called by his name.

Concerning things which should not be done.] See ver. 2.

And is guilty.] Acknowledges that he hath offended God by the sin which he hath committed.

Ver. 23. *Or if his sin wherein he hath sinned come to his knowledge.*] If we retain this translation (and do not render the first word *and*, but *or*), then the foregoing words in the latter end of ver. 22, *veashem*, must be translated (not *is guilty*, but) *and acknowledges his guilt*. Which seems to be the true sense; for when men sin they are guilty, though the sin was committed ignorantly; but they do not acknowledge their guilt till they see it; as Moses here supposes they might, when they considered better, or somebody informed them aright. So these words signify, *or his sin is made known unto him*. Thus L'Empereur very judiciously translates this whole passage, *And he acknowledges himself guilty, or his sin be shewn to him:* otherwise there is no room for this disjunctive particle. (See his Annot. upon Bava kama, cap. 7. sect. 1. and cap. 9. sect. 4, 5.) And thus we ourselves translate the first part of this disjunction (in the latter end of the foregoing verse), Hosea v. 15. *acknowledge their offences*.

He shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats.] His sacrifice was of less value than the two former. From which Mr. Selden concludes, that the high-priest was not always the head of the Sanhedrin, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 16. p. 653.) For their sacrifices were very different, which argues a difference in their persons. And the Misna says, if the high-priest were put out of his office, his sacrifice was still the same, *viz.* a bullock without blemish: but it was not so with the *nasi*, or ruler, who offered only the sacrifice of a private man if he lost his office.

A male without blemish.] It was to be the best of this kind; though not equal to the sacrifice for the high-priest and the whole congregation. (See ver. 28.)

Ver. 24. *And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat.*] Of this see ver. 4.

And kill it in the place where they kill the burnt-offering before the Lord.] Where that was, see chap. i. ver. 11. Neither of the two forementioned offerings (for the high-priest, or the whole congregation) are ordered to be killed here; but only *before the Lord*, (ver. 14, 15.) that is, in any part of the court but that which was proper to the *burnt-offering*, and the common *sin-offering*, as it here follows.

It is a sin-offering.] And therefore was to be killed where the burnt-offering was: for so it is ordained (vi. 25.) that all *sin-offerings* should be there slain. Which doth not imply that the two former were not sin-offerings, but that they were not of the common sort; as appears by the carrying of their blood into the sanctuary, and burning their flesh without the camp, which are not ordered either in this or in the following sacrifices.

Ver. 25. *And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin-offering with his finger.*] By dipping his finger into it, (ver. 6. 17.)

And put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering.] Whereas the blood of the two former was put upon the horns of the golden altar in the sanctuary, (ver. 7. 18.)

And shall pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar of burnt-offering.] See ver. 18.

Ver. 26. *And he shall burn all his fat upon the altar*, &c.] See chap. iii. 9. It is not here said what should be done with the flesh; which in the two foregoing offerings is ordered to be burnt without the camp, (ver. 12. 21.) But in chap. vi. 26. 29. and xviii. Numb. 9, 10. the law of the sin-offering is set down to be this, that the priest and his sons should eat it, in the sanctuary, and no where else; provided also that they were free from uncleanness, (xxii. 4.)

And the priest shall make an atonement for him, as concerning his sin.] By this sacrifice his guilt was expiated; which must be understood to be the effect of the sacrifice for the high-priest, though it be not expressed, as it is in that for the whole congregation, (ver. 20.)

And it shall be forgiven him.] So that he should not be liable to the punishment of *cutting off*, as the Jews understand it; who fancy such sins to which that is threatened are here spoken of. (See ver. 1.) Rather, he was restored to communion with the people of God, from which he was separated while he remained in a known guilt.

Ver. 27. *And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance.*] Commit the same offence that a ruler or public officer doth.

And be guilty; or if his sin which he hath committed come to his knowledge.] See how this ought to be translated, ver. 22, 23.

Ver. 28. *Then he shall bring his offering; a kid of the goats, a female without blemish.*] Being a common person, less was required of him than of a prince; who was to offer a *male*, (ver. 23.) which in all creatures was of greater value than a *female*, as Maimonides observes: who reckons up three-and-forty offences of this sort, that might be committed imprudently (in his treatise called Schegagoth), in one of which, *viz.* worshipping an idol ignorantly, the sacrifice was the same for a private man as for the king, or the high-priest, or the priest anointed for war: but in all the other forty-two a *female* goat or lamb sufficed for a private man, (cap. 1. sect. 4.) And this sacrifice they call *stated*, or fixed, because no man offered more or less, whether rich or poor, man or woman; except only those who ate holy things, or entered into the sanctuary; whose sacrifices were higher or lower, as they speak. And there were three things, if we may believe them, which, though committed by error, were expiated by no sacrifice, *viz.*

blasphemy, neglect of circumcision, and not keeping the Passover. (So R. Levi of Barcelona, Præcept. cxix.) Which seems to be an unreasonable opinion, since idolatry committed ignorantly, they say, was comprehended within this law.

Ver. 29. *And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin-offering*, &c.] This verse and the following, with the beginning of ver. 31. contain nothing but what was ordered about the foregoing sacrifice, (ver. 24—26.)

Ver. 31. *And the priest shall burn it upon the altar, for a sweet savour unto the Lord.*] This is a phrase used concerning *burnt-offerings*, (i. 9. 13.) and *peace-offerings*, (iii. 5. 16.) but it is not said of any of the foregoing sin-offerings, that the burning of them, or their fat, was for *a sweet savour unto the Lord*. The reason of which I am not able to give, unless it were to comfort the lowest sort of people with hope of God's mercy, though their offering was mean, in comparison of those offered by others. Abarbinel gives this reason for it: because a sin of ignorance being a less fault in a common man, it was a sign of great probity in him to bring a sacrifice for the expiation of it: but for the high-priest, or senate, or ruler of the people, to be ignorant of the law, was such a high crime, that it was no commendation to them to bring a sacrifice for their purgation.

Ver. 32. *And if he bring a lamb for a sin-offering*, &c.] For which reason God was pleased to accept a *lamb*, and that a *female*, of those who were not able to bring a young kid.

Ver. 33. *And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin-offering, and slay it*, &c.] This and the next verse differ not from the foregoing, and therefore need no explication.

Ver. 35. *And the priest shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the Lord.*] Or rather *upon* the offerings, or *after* the burnt-offering. (See iii. 5.)

And the priest shall make an atonement for his sin, &c.] And if by the same error he had committed several sins, there was a distinct atonement to be made for every one of them: so that if he had committed ignorantly the forty-three offences beforementioned, though it were by one and the same error, he was bound to offer as many expiatory sacrifices, (as Maimonides resolves in the forenamed treatise Schegagoth, cap. 4.) This, and such-like things, made this law "a yoke which they were not able to bear," as St. Peter speaks, Acts xv. 10.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *IF a soul sin.*] In the manner following.

And hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness.] Being adjured in the name of God, when he is called to be a witness in a cause, to speak the truth. For judges had power to use such adjurations, that they might either draw a confession from an accused person, or a faithful testimony from a witness. Of the former of which there is a solemn form remaining in Scripture, (1 Kings xvii. 16. 2 Chron. xviii. 15.) as Grotius hath observed upon Matt. xxvi. 63. And Dr. Hammond, upon the same place, hath observed instances of the latter, (1 Kings vii. 31. Prov. xxix. 24.) And Micah's mother seems by her own authority to have adjured her family, as they dreaded the vengeance of the Divine Majesty, to discover if they knew any thing of the eleven hundred shekels of silver, which had been stolen from her, (Judg. xvii. 2.) In all which cases, men were bound to answer, as much as if they had taken a solemn oath so to do. Insomuch, that our blessed Lord himself, being thus adjured, made an answer to the court of judgment, though before he had stood silent.

Whether he hath seen or known of it.] Whether he can say any thing of the matter in question; either from his own knowledge, or from the information of credible persons.

If he do not utter it.] Declare what he knows, being thus adjured.

Then he shall bear his iniquity.] Let him not think it is no offence to suppress the truth, when he is so solemnly admonished to declare it; but offer such a sacrifice for his sin, as is prescribed ver. 1. which belongs to all the following cases. The Jews make four sorts of oaths in their courts, or commerce one with another; as Mr. Selden hath observed out of their writers; (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 11. n. 8.) which are, *rash oaths*, *vain oaths* (of which they also make four sorts), *oaths about trusts*, (mentioned vi. 2, 3.) and this, which they call *the oath of testimony*; which they say every man was bound to give before the Sanhedrin when he was required. With this distinction between capital and pecuniary causes, that in the latter a man was not bound to come and testify, unless he was cited by the plaintiff, or by the court; but in capital causes, and in such things as the law prohibited (as if a man saw another smite his neighbour), he was bound to come of his own accord, without any summons, and give his testimony in court. Yet in this they make some difference, as may be seen in R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. cxx. They who would see more of these several sorts of oaths among the Jews, may find them considered in Sam. Petitus's Var. Lectiones, cap. 16. And such a law as this there was anciently in other countries, that he who saw a crime committed, if he could not hinder it, should be bound, at least, to prosecute the malefactor. So the Egyptian lawgiver saith concerning *theft*, which a man saw committed, μηνῦσαί γε πάντως ὤφελε τοὺς λῃστὰς, καὶ ἐπεξιέναι τὴν παρονομίαν, *to prosecute the law against that crime.* So Plato uses the same word ἐπεξιέναι, lib. iv. de Legibus, saying, that he who knew of such a fact, or had certain information of it, καὶ μὴ ἐπεξιὼν, *and doth not prosecute the person that did it*, ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐνεχέσθω νόμοις, *let him be liable to the same punishment.* (See Hen. Stephanus's Præfat. ad Fontes Juris Civilis.)

Ver. 2. *Or if a soul touch any unclean thing, whether it be a carcass of an unclean beast*, &c.] The Hebrew doctors expound this of such persons, as, having touched any of the unclean things, which are mentioned in this verse and in the next, came into the sanctuary, or did eat of the holy things. Which they gather out of vii. 20, 21. and Numb. xix. 20. where *cutting off* is threatened to those, who knowingly were so guilty. For otherwise, it was sufficient for a man's expiation, who touched any unclean thing, to wash himself; and his uncleanness lasted only till the evening. (See chap. xi. and Numb. xix.) But why may it not be meant of those who neglected to wash themselves, who were to expiate that neglect by a sacrifice?

He also shall be unclean and guilty.] Obliged to offer the sacrifice prescribed (ver. 6.) for eating that which is holy (saith Rasi) or coming into the sanctuary.

Ver. 3. *Or if he touch the uncleanness of man,* &c.] Such uncleannesses as are mentioned in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fifteenth chapters of this book.

And if it be hid from him, when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty.] The words may be translated, *Whether he did it ignorantly, or had some knowledge of it,* and yet offended, he shall be obliged to offer the sacrifice mentioned, ver. 6.

Ver. 4. *Or if a soul swear.*] This the Hebrew doctors expound of that sort of oath which they call *futile,* or *rash:* when a man saith he hath done, or will do, or not do, a thing that is in his power to do.

Pronouncing with his mouth.] It was to be uttered in words, and not merely thought in his mind.

To do evil or good.] That he hath done a thing, or not done it, of whatsoever kind it be; or that he will, or will not do it. For these four kinds of oaths, of this sort, the Hebrew doctors make, two about things past; and two about things to come, (see Selden de Synedr. lib. ii. cap. 11. n. 8.) As if he swear that he did eat, or he did not eat of such a meat; did talk, or did not talk with Reuben or Simeon, &c. Rasi thinks by *doing good* is meant something for his own advantage, and, consequently, by *doing evil,* we are to understand *afflicting* himself, or *punishing* his servant, &c. But it may as well be understood generally of all things whatsoever, which are comprehended under the name of *good and evil.*

And it be hid from him.] He did not rightly understand, or consider the thing about which he sware; whether it was in his power, for instance, to do what he swore he would do; or, whether he could lawfully do it; or if through forgetfulness he omitted to do what he might have done. Some interpret these and the following words, as those of the foregoing verse.

He shall be guilty in one of these.] Obliged to offer a sacrifice (as it follows, ver. 6.) if he have sworn rashly in any of the foregoing instances.

Ver. 5. *And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing.*] When he laid his hand upon the head of his sacrifice, this confession of his offence, it is likely, was made; without which his sacrifice would have been of no avail: so all the Hebrew doctors understand it; particularly Abarbinel, upon the sixteenth chapter of this book, saith, that *confession was necessary to be added to every sacrifice for sin.* For what is here commanded in this case, they resolve belongs to all *sin-offerings,* and *trespass-offerings* also. And, indeed, it was a notion among the heathen themselves, that an offering without prayer was to no purpose: "Quippe victimas cædi sine precatione, non videtur referre, nec Deos ritè consuli," as Pliny speaks, (lib. xxviii. Nat. Hist. cap. 2.) and every one knows that confession was a part of prayer. (See Dr. Outram de Sacrificiis, lib. i. cap. 15. n. 9.)

Ver. 6. *And he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the Lord.*] There is a difference between a *sin-offering* (called *chattah*) and a *trespass-offering* (called *ascham*), as is plain in the latter part of this chapter, compared with this. But here in this place they are not distinguished, for the name of *trespass-offering* is given to that which was really a *sin-offering:* as appears from the latter end of this verse, and from the two next, where this offering is expressly called a *sin-offering.*

For his sin which he hath sinned.] In any of the four forementioned cases; either by polluting the sanctuary, or eating holy things, or a rash oath, or by refusing to give his testimony, being adjured by the court of judgment to do it. Thus R. Levi of Barcelona explains this, (Præcept. cxxi.)

A female from the flock, a lamb, or a kid of the goats, for a sin-offering.] As the Hebrews call the *sin-offering,* mentioned in the foregoing chapter, (ver. 27.) a *fixed sacrifice;* so they call this *higher or lower,* being brought according to every man's faculty or ability; some more, some less, as the forenamed author, and many other of their doctors observe; and is plain of itself from the following verses.

And the priest shall make an atonement for him, concerning his sin.] By sprinkling the blood, and burning the fat of the sacrifice, as is directed, iv. 34, 35.

Ver. 7. *And if he be not able to bring a lamb.*] See the mercy of God, saith the same R. Levi, who was pleased to exact such small punishments for these sins, *because it was very easy for men to fall into them.* For we are more prone to offend in word than in deed: and without great caution it was scarce possible not to fall into such legal pollutions, as required this expiation.

Then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, unto the Lord.] Who, though he would not exact a heavy punishment of them for these offences, yet would not suffer them to escape altogether unpunished; that they might not be presumptuous, but use due care and caution in their words and actions. So the same R. Levi represents the sense of this law, as if the Lord had said, "I would not have such things done; but if any man by frailty commit them, let him repent with all his might, and set a guard upon himself; and let him offer a sacrifice, which may imprint the remembrance of his guilt upon his heart; and preserve him that he may not hereafter offend."

The one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering.] First, he was to have his peace made with God, by a *sin-offering;* and then his *burnt-offering,* or his gift, might be accepted, as Rasi observes; and is expressly ordered in the next verse, *the priest shall offer that which is for the sin-offering first.*

Ver. 8. *And wring off his head from his neck,* &c.] Or rather, nip it off with his nail, (as the Jews explain it, see i. 15.) so as not quite to separate it from the body. For that had been to make the sacrifice contemptible, (as R. Levi, of Barcelona, gives the reason of it, Præcept. cxxviii.) the bird looking more handsome with its neck still joined to the body, than without it. And it was fit the sacrifice, even of a poor man, should be as decent as possible; it being sufficient he thus suffered, without increasing his affliction by the mean and abject form of his sacrifice.

Ver. 9. *And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin-offering,* &c.] Some of the blood, which ran out of itself, as the priest held it by the neck, where he nipped it, he was to sprinkle upon the side of the altar. And then he was to press out the rest of the blood (when as much was ran out as would of itself, by that nip) at the bottom of the altar; where they were wont to pour out the blood of the sin-offering, (iv. 7. 18. 25. 34.)

It is a sin-offering.] Therefore the blood was there pressed out: whereas, in *burnt-offerings* of a bird, we read only of pressing or squeezing out the blood at the side of the altar,

(i. 15.) It is not said what was to be done with the flesh; but it is plain, from vi. 26. that the priest was to have it; the blood only being offered to God.

Ver. 10. *And he shall offer the second for a burnt-offering, according to the manner.*] Prescribed in the first chapter, ver. 15.

And the priest shall make an atonement for him, &c.] Some gather from hence, that the *burnt-offering* was also an expiatory sacrifice. But it is so plainly distinguished from it, that these words seem to me to relate only to the foregoing offering, (ver. 8, 9.) Though this may be concluded from hence: that the *sin-offering* was not accepted for his expiation; unless this *burnt-offering* followed, as a thankful acknowledgment made to God for his goodness.

Ver. 11. *But if he be not able to bring two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.*] This was still a more merciful provision for the poor; who were not to be so ambitious of offering a beast or a bird, as not to content themselves with offering the smallest thing that God would accept. So R. Levi, of Barcelona, observes, that God having such compassion on men's poverty, it did not become them to strain themselves to offer more than they were able; for so they might have been tempted to steal. Yet, if, after a man had set aside a little money to buy this quantity of fine flour, his estate was bettered, he was then bound (as Maimonides saith, in the treatise called Schegagoth) to add so much to it, as would buy the birds before prescribed. And in like manner, if he had designed to buy birds, and on a sudden grew richer, he was to procure a lamb or a kid. On the contrary, if a man had set apart money to buy a bullock for his sin-offering, and unexpectedly grew poor, he might buy two turtles, or young pigeons, and by them redeem his money so consecrated, &c. (cap. 10.)

Then he that hath sinned shall bring for his offering a tenth part of an ephah of fine flour, &c.] Neither more nor less; which was but a small quantity, (see Exod. xvi. 36.) because God would not have his creature oppressed, as the same author observes, (Præcept. cxxix.)

He shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon.] In commiseration of his poverty, God required only a little flour, which every one might easily get, to offer without any oil to it, which was more costly; and also had something of magnificence in it (kings and priests being anointed), and therefore not becoming the meanness, or the grief and humility, of the person that brought this offering. For which reason *frankincense* was also omitted, being a pleasant thing; and not fit to be added to an offering for sin: which was offensive to God. To this purpose the same R. Levi, in the same place. And we find this imitated also by the heathen; for Pliny saith, in his preface to Vespasian before his Natural History, "Mola tantum salsa litant, qui non habent thura."

Ver. 12. *Then shall he bring it to the priest.*] Confessing his sin to him (as is ordered, ver. 5.) for which he desired this offering might be accepted.

And the priest shall take his handful of it, even a memorial thereof.] For an acknowledgment of his fault, and as a caution to him hereafter.

Ver. 13. *And the priest shall make an atonement for him, as touching the sin that he hath sinned in one of these.*] With one of these three forementioned sacrifices: either with a lamb, or with two turtles or young pigeons, or with fine flour. For, as Rasi hath observed, there are three sorts of men; rich, poor, and very poor: and so three sorts of offerings are prescribed in this chapter, suitable to each of their abilities.

And the remnant shall be the priest's, as a meat-offering.] See chapter the second, ver. 2, 3. where the whole *meat-offering* (except one handful) is given to the priest: who had nothing at all of some of the *sin-offerings,* mentioned in the foregoing chapter, (ver. 12. 21.) which were entirely consumed.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying*] Here begin the orders which were given to Moses about another sort of sacrifice, near of kin to the former: but delivered, it is likely, at some other time; after he had written down the foregoing laws about *sin-offerings.* (See iv. 1.)

Ver. 15. *If a soul commit a trespass.*] In the Hebrew this is a different phrase from what hath been hitherto used, signifying another sort of guilt.

And sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the Lord.] By applying to his own private use any thing that was dedicated to God, (as Maimonides expounds it in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 46.) which might be committed in the payment of tithes, and in first-fruits, and the first-born of cattle, or meddling with that part of the sacrifice which belonged to the priest alone. Which things he that committed *presumptuously,* was to be cut off, (Numb. xv. 30.) but if *ignorantly,* he was to do as here is directed in this verse. But these words seem to be particularly restrained to the last of those things now mentioned, (eating any part of the sacrifice which belong to the priest alone, xxii. 14.) and the end of this law (as R. Levi Barzelonita speaks, Præcept. cxxii.) was to excite fear and reverence in all those who approached unto holy things.

Then he shall bring for his trespass unto the Lord, a ram without blemish out of the flocks.] As a sheep was a more noble species among creatures than a goat; so a *ram* was of a greater value among sheep, than a female: and therefore this sacrifice was more costly than the *sin-offering* mentioned ver. 6.

With thy estimation.] Besides his sacrifice, he was to make satisfaction in money, according as the priest should esteem the damage. For that is the meaning of *with thy estimation;* according to the value thou shalt set upon the thing, which he applied to his own use.

By shekels of silver.] At least two shekels, as the Jewish doctors resolve.

After the shekels of the sanctuary.] See Exod. xxx. 13. The Jews were thus confined to these rites, and such as are mentioned ver. 8, 9. in the rest of these prescriptions, that there might be no room for idolatrous ceremonies; nor might men among themselves be left at liberty to invent impious or frivolous ways of worship: and that the obedience of good men might be also exercised in these minute matters; and the contempt of wicked people be the more apparent, in refusing to comply with these known laws of God.

For a trespass-offering.] The Hebrew word *ascham,* which we translate *trespass-offering,* is so near of kin to *chattah,* which we translate *sin-offering,* that one of them is sometimes used for the other, as I observed upon ver. 6. yet there is a real difference between them: though it be not easy to determine wherein it consists. For the greatest men differ in their opinion about the quality of the offences,

for which these two kinds of sacrifices were to be offered: some saying that the offences for which *ascham* was offered, were inferior to those for which *chattah* was offered; which is the opinion of Maimonides in his More Nevochim, (par. iii. cap. 46.) Others, on the contrary, think, that the offences which were expiated by *ascham*, were more grievous than those expiated by *chattah*; which is the opinion of no less a man than the deservedly-admired Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, (par. i. lib. ii. cap. 33.) Where he adds, that the former sort of sins were committed knowingly; the other only ignorantly. For so the LXX. translate *chattah* by ἁμαρτία, which seems to denote a fault committed by error and mistake: but *ascham* by πλημμέλεια, which carries in it the notion of something premeditated and designed. But this is directly contrary to the very words of Moses here in this verse; which expressly speak of a *trespass* committed through ignorance. Aben Ezra therefore distinguishes these two much better, making *chattah* to signify a *sacrifice* which was made for the purging offences, committed through ignorance of the law; and *ascham* for such as were committed through forgetfulness of the law. But as he gives no proof of this, so he was sensible it was liable to exception; there being one of this sort of sacrifices mentioned ver. 17. which he saw could not be comprehended under this rule. Others therefore think, the former hath respect to offences against God; and the latter to those against men; not observing, that the very same sort of sin, which when it was known is called *chattah*, when it was doubtful is called *ascham*. From whence a very learned person of our own (now with God), who had much and long considered this matter, concludes, that an offence was peculiarly called *ascham* (which is a name for the sin, as well as for the sacrifice, as *chattah* also is) about which either a man was dubious (as in the following verse), or did a manifest damage to other men. There being no *ascham* (or *trespass-offering*) commanded to be offered by the law, but for such offences as were so committed against God, that their neighbours also were injured by them. As in the case of those who did eat holy things, here mentioned, whereby the priests were damaged: and of those mentioned vi. 2—4. and such as lay with a bondwoman betrothed to another, (xix. 20, 21.) Which are all the cases belonging to this matter; excepting that of the Nazarite defiled by the dead, (Numb. vi. 12.) and of the leper, (iv. 12.) who were to be purged with a *sin-offering*, as well as with a *trespass-offering*: and therefore not to be considered in this matter. See Dr. Outram, lib. i. de Sacrificiis, cap. 13. n. 8. and Samuel Petitus's Variæ Lectiones, cap. 22. who hath said the same, but not so fully and distinctly. If this do not satisfy, yet it is plain the sacrifices which go by this name of *trespass-offerings*, and the rites also about them, were so different, that they are sufficient to distinguish them from the other. For none but *rams* and *male-lambs* were admitted for *trespass-offerings*, which were not used at all in any *sin-offerings*. And the blood of the *sin-offerings* was put upon the horns of the altar, (as was noted in the foregoing chapter, ver. 7. 18. 25.) but that of the *trespass-offerings* was sprinkled round about upon the altar, (vii. 2.) *Sin-offerings* also were offered for the whole congregation of Israel, (iv. 13.) but *trespass-offerings* only for private persons, which made Bonfrerius (I suppose) after a long discussion of this matter, to conclude, that the difference between *sin* and *trespass* consisted only in the sacrifices which were offered for them. See him upon the fourth chapter of this book, ver. 1.

Ver. 16. *And he shall make amends for the harm he hath done in holy things, and shall add a fifth part thereunto,* &c.] Besides the compensation mentioned in the foregoing verse, for the damage that was done, according to the valuation made by the priest, there was a *fifth* part more to be added thereunto, and given to the priest who had suffered the damage.

And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass-offering, and it shall be forgiven him.] The atonement was not made, nor forgiveness obtained, till full satisfaction for the wrong had been made.

Ver. 17. *And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things,* &c.] *i. e.* Did eat any of the holy things beforementioned, which God forbade any but the priest to eat.

Though he wist it not.] *i. e.* Be not certain whether they were holy or no. For the Hebrews generally call this *ascham talui*, a *dubious* trespass-offering: being in a matter about which a man was in suspense, whether he had offended or not.

Yet he is guilty, and shall bear his iniquity.] He shall be obliged to offer this sort of sacrifice. Which was ordained (saith R. Levi Barzelon. Præcept. cxxiii.) to make men cautious, and fear to sin; and to attend diligently in all their actions, that they transgressed not the laws of God.

Ver. 18. *And he shall bring a ram without blemish, out of the flock, with thy estimation,* &c.] The offering before appointed, (ver. 15, &c.) with this difference only, that no *fifth part* was in this case to be added, because it was not certain whether he had transgressed or no.

The priest shall make an atonement for him, concerning his ignorance wherein he erred, and wist it not.] Did not know whether he had offended or not: which distinguishes this from the sin of ignorance mentioned ver. 15.

And it shall be forgiven him.] But if he afterward came to have a certain knowledge of his offence, he was not excused by this *dubious offering* (as Rasi observes), but was bound also to offer a *sin-offering*.

Ver. 19. *It is a trespass-offering.*] In this case a sacrifice must be offered, as well as in a certain trespass.

He hath certainly trespassed against the Lord.] The words in the Hebrew are, *ascham ascham lajhova*; which, I think, should be translated, *a trespass-offering certainly unto the Lord*. That is, in this doubtful case, let him take a sure course, by offering the sacrifice here prescribed. For though neither this sort of sacrifices, nor *sin-offerings*, were to be voluntary (which was proper only to *whole burnt-offerings* and *peace-offerings*), yet the very suspicion of a guilt required a sacrifice. As for all those offences which might be committed by men who had no sense or suspicion of them, they were expiated by the sacrifices which were offered for the whole congregation, at certain stated times: but no particular person was to offer either *sin-offering* or *trespass-offering* of his own accord, unless he knew or feared he had contracted some guilt.

I cannot think fit to conclude this chapter, without taking notice how Jonathan paraphrases these last words of it; who, instead of saying he hath trespassed (as it is commonly translated) *against the Lord*, saith, *against the name of the Word of the Lord*. Which is an observation that

might have been made in my notes upon the two foregoing books of Moses, where many such passages occur, which I did not mention. And I should not have done it now (being unwilling to swell this commentary with any thing that doth not tend to the explaining the sense of the text), did not the impious pamphlets that have lately been spread abroad against the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, make it necessary for me to take this occasion to assert, that this doctrine was not unknown to the ancient Jews, as appears even from the frequent mention of the *Word of the Lord* in the Chaldee paraphrasts, where the Hebrew hath only Jehovah (or the Lord): for which I can see no reason at all, if there had not been a notion among them of more persons than one who was Jehovah. It doth not always, indeed, carry this signification in it; but there are very many places where, by the *Word of the Lord*, cannot be meant a *word spoken by the Lord*, or any thing else, but a *person speaking or acting*, &c. *who is the Lord*. There is a famous instance of it in Gen. xxviii. 20, 21. where Jacob's vow is thus translated by Onkelos: *Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If the Word of the Lord will be with me, and keep me*, &c. *then shall the Word of the Lord be my God.* Where the *Word of the Lord* is so plainly made the object of his adoration, that it evidently shews they had a notion in those days when Onkelos lived (which was about our Saviour's time), of more persons than one who was the Lord. The Jerusalem Targum also speaks this so clearly, that one cannot but be something amazed to meet with such expressions in it, as those upon Gen. iii. 22. *The Word of the Lord said, Behold, Adam whom I have created, is my only-begotten in this world; as I am the only-begotten in the heavens above.* Which may fairly induce a belief that St. John used the known language of those times, when he declared our blessed Saviour's Godhead under the name of the Word, *who was in the beginning with God, and was God*, (John i. 1.)

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] What here follows belonging unto the same with that which went before, it is likely, was spoken at the same time. And these words signify, that the Lord *further spake unto Moses*, what concerned *trespass-offerings*.

Ver. 2. *If a soul sin, and commit a trespass.*] The same sort of expression is used in the beginning of this law, concerning the trespass-offering, ver. 15. Which some translate *prevaricate*, or act insincerely.

Against the Lord.] The Sovereign of the world; who was peculiarly affronted by the following sins; especially by swearing falsely, which was calling him to bear witness to a lie.

And lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep.] Deny the trust which was committed to him; and that when he was brought upon his oath to deliver the truth, as appears by the next verse. For this is the instance of that sort of oath, which the Jews call *the oath about a thing deposited*, (see v. 1.) For there being no witness of what was done between two friends or neighbours, who trusted one another in such matters, but God alone; they appealed unto him, from whom nothing could be hid. And this oath, the Jews say, was governed by another, which they call *the oath of testimony*: which a man was not bound to give, unless he were adjured to it by the court of judgment: and so it was in the oath about the things deposited; he was not guilty who was adjured by private persons, and denied it; but he that denied it before the court. So they resolve in Halicah Olam, par. iv. cap. 2.

Or in fellowship.] To carry on a common trade, in joint-stock; or (as others understand it) in any thing for which he gave his hand unto another: for so the Hebrew words are, *putting of the hand*, as contracts are oft-times made: which if a man afterward denied, he fell under the guilt here mentioned. And there is some reason to think, that this is much of the same nature with the former; because, when he speaks of restitution, (ver. 4.) this is not repeated. And therefore it seems to be included in that which was deposited with another: whether it were money, called here *pikkadon*; or any other goods, called *tesumah jad*. They that would see more opinions about these words, *putting of the hand*, may consult Const. L'Empereur, in his annotations on Bava kama, cap. 9. sect. 7.

Or in a thing taken away by violence.] That is, by robbery or stealth, as the word *gazel* signifies. For theft not being punished among the Jews with death, they tendered an oath to those who were accused or suspected of it, to clear themselves from the imputation, (Exod. xxii. 11.)

Or hath deceived his neighbour.] Wronged him by false accusation, as the Hebrew word *hoschok* seems to import. Which St. Jerome always translates *calumny*; as the word *haschak* he translates *to calumniate*. It signifies also *extortion*; and Rasi takes it for defrauding a hireling of his wages.

Ver. 3. *Or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it.*] Deny that he found a thing lost; which in truth came to his hand.

And sweareth falsely.] They put men to their oath in this case also, when there was a just cause of suspicion; as they did in matters of theft.

In any of all these.] In any of these sorts of things; as the Hebrew may be translated.

That a man doth.] Wherein one man dealeth with another: or which *frequently happen*, as Grotius thinks this phrase signifies, in his annotations upon 1 Cor. x. 13.

Sinning therein.] By these means contracting a guilt.

Ver. 4. *Then shall it be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty.*] The last words should rather be translated, *and acknowledges his guilt*. For so this word *ascham*, guilty, ought to be expounded, as I shewed iv. 22, 23. to make a clear sense of the law there mentioned. And it would otherwise be superfluous here: for when a man hath sinned so grievously as the foregoing verses suppose, who could doubt of his guilt? The true meaning therefore is, *when he hath sinned* (so the first words may be translated) by committing any of those things forementioned, *and acknowledges his guilt*, he shall restore that which he took away violently, &c. And this most plainly reconciles the contradiction, that otherwise would be between this law and that in Exod. xxii. 1. 7. 9. where a man that stole an ox is condemned to restore five oxen, and four sheep for one; and if he delivered money to another to keep, and it was stolen, the thief was to pay double; whereas here, one simple resti-

tution is exacted, with an addition of a fifth part. The reason is, because in Exodus he speaks of those thieves who were convicted by witnesses in a court of law; and then condemned to make such great restitution: but here of such as, touched with a sense of their sin, came voluntarily and acknowledged their theft, or other crime, of which nobody convicted them, or at least confessed it freely when they were adjured; and therefore were condemned to suffer a lesser punishment, and to expiate their guilt by a sacrifice. See L'Empereur upon Bava kama, cap. 7. sect. 1. and cap. 9. sect. 1. 5. 7. where he observes very judiciously, that this interpretation is confirmed by Numb. v. 7. where the first words may be translated, *If they shall confess their sin that they have done*, &c. And this seems to be more reasonable than the account which Maimonides gives of this matter in his More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 41. where, expounding these words, *which he took violently*, of an open robber, he gives these reasons why he was not punished so much as a thief, but restored only the principal, with a fifth part; because rapine happens seldom, but theft often; for it cannot be committed so easily as theft; and is done openly and manifestly, whereas theft is committed more secretly: so that a man may be aware (he imagines) of a robber, and defend his goods against him, better than against a secret thief. Yet this is better than the account of R. Johannes f. Zachei, (mentioned by J. Coch upon the Gemara of the Sanhedrin. cap. 7. p. 271.) that a mere thief fears man more than God; but a robber fears both alike.

Ver. 5. *Of all that about which he hath sworn falsely, he shall even restore it in the principal.*] The same numerical thing which he took away, if it still remain in his possession unaltered; or else the just price of it: as R. Levi Barzelonita expounds it, Præcept. cxxv. And the Jews pretend to such scrupulosity in this matter, that they say a man, who was to have a share in his father's estate, from whom he had taken something by robbery, was to restore it before the division was made, and not by detaining it to make his share greater than it ought to be. (See Bava kama, cap. 9. sect. 9.)

And shall add the fifth part more thereto.] The Jews have many subtilties about this, as may be seen there, sect. 6, 7. The plain sense is, that he should compensate the loss which the right owner might have sustained (by wanting the use of his goods so long as the other had detained them in his hand), by adding a full fifth part of the principal, as an amends for the wrong. Yet, if he had really forgotten that he had found such a thing as he was charged withal, at the time he denied it upon oath, he was not bound to pay the fifth part more, nor to offer the expiatory sacrifice, though he really was possessed of the thing; as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 11. p. 506.

And give it unto him to whom it appertaineth.] If he hath stolen from a man the smallest piece of money, which the Jews call *peruta*, and had forsworn it, they fancy he was bound to restore it to the owner himself; though he lived as far off as Media: and it would not suffice to give it to his son, or his attorney, whom he had left to act for him. Yet they are something humorsome in these absurdities, for they do not tie a man to go so far to pay the fifth part; though in a case where it was more than a peruta. (See Bava kama, cap. 9. sect. 5, 6.)

In the day of his trespass-offering.] Or, *in the day of his trespass;* that is, as soon as he acknowledgeth his guilt, as this word I shewed ver. 4. is to be interpreted. And this agrees with what our blessed Saviour requires, (Matt. v. 23.)

Ver. 6. *And he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the Lord, a ram without a blemish.*] This the Hebrews call an offering for a *certain guilt;* as that v. 15, was for *a dubious.*

With thy estimation, &c.] R. Levi of Barcelona interprets it, a *ram worth two shekels*, (Præcept. cxxiv.)

Ver. 7. *And the priest shall make an atonement for him*, &c.] The offender was not to think he was cleared by making restitution, and adding the fifth part, whereby his neighbour might well be satisfied: but withal, this sacrifice was necessary for his expiation, without which no satisfaction was made to the Divine Majesty. The Jews themselves also think that this was prescribed, to make them more sensible of their sin, and to render it more odious unto them; as the same author observes.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Here the Hebrews begin a new section of the law, as well as a new chapter (as we call it), for the first seven verses plainly belong to the matter of the foregoing chapter. And it is reasonable to think, that the following precepts were given at a distinct time from the former, (see iv. 1.) being about a different matter. For having declared what offerings the people should bring to the Lord, he now gives instructions to the priests, how they should manage the several offerings that were brought.

Ver. 9. *Command Aaron and his sons, saying.*] As before he bade Moses speak unto the *children of Israel*, (Lev. i. 2. iv. 2.) because the laws he then gave concerned them: so now he bids him command *Aaron and his sons* what to do; and acquaints them with the laws, that is, the rites they should observe in offering the several sacrifices before directed to be made.

This is the law of the burnt-offering.] He mentions that first, which was first delivered, and was the principal offering, being purely in honour of God; whereas the other was occasioned by men's sins, or the benefits he had bestowed on them.

It is the burnt-offering.] He explains what *burnt-offering* he chiefly means, *viz.* the daily sacrifice: which was the principal burnt-offering, according to which all other offerings of that kind were to be regulated.

Because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning.] Or, *for the burning upon the altar*, &c. This was the reason of its name, because it was burning on the altar from the evening (at which the Jews began their day) till the morning. For which purpose the priests watched all night, and put the sacrifice upon the altar piece by piece, that it might be consumed by a slow and gentle fire. As for the *morning sacrifice*, it is not here mentioned, because it was consumed by a quicker fire; that there might be room for other sacrifices that were commonly offered after it, (as appears from ver. 12.) and were only offered in the morning, not at night. But if there were no other sacrifices to succeed it in the morning, then, it is very likely, that it was also kept burning till the evening sacrifice; that God's altar might always have meat upon it.

And the fire of the altar shall be burning in it.] Or, *For the fire of the altar*, &c. So it should be translated: unless

we translate the last word not *in it*, but *by it*. *And the fire of the altar shall be burning* (*i. e.* be fed or maintained) *by it.*

Ver. 10. *And the priest shall put on his linen garment.*] Mentioned Exod. xxviii. 40.

And his linen breeches shall he put upon his flesh.] To cover his secret parts, as appears from Exod. xxviii. 42.

And take up the ashes, which the fire hath consumed with the burnt-offering, &c.] Or rather, *When the fire hath consumed the burnt-offering on the altar.* For the word *aschar*, which we here translate *which*, signifies also *when;* and is so translated by us, iv. 22. Or else the sense must be, *The ashes into which the fire hath consumed the burnt-offering.* Or, to make good our present translation, a few words must be added, in this manner, *The ashes* (of the wood) *which the fire hath consumed with the burnt-offering.*

And he shall put them beside the altar.] On the east part of it, as far as might be from the most holy place. (See i. 16.) For this was most suitable to the glory of the house of God (saith R. Levi of Barcelona), and the fire would burn better, when the altar was cleared from the ashes.

Ver. 11. *And he shall put off his garments.*] Those beforenamed, *and put on other garments.* It is a question among the Jews whether he mean his common raiment, or some other garments, not holy, and yet not quite common, but of a middle nature. It is most likely that the carrying the ashes out of the tabernacle, being not a holy action, as they were not to perform it in their priestly, *i. e.* sacred garments, wherein they took them from the altar; so they did it in the common habit, which they wore when they did not minister. Yet Rasi thinks this was not absolutely necessary, but only fitting and seemly: it being indecent to do this work in the same garments wherein they served at the altar. And the ashes having been upon the altar, there are those (as I said) who fancy this was not a work fit to be performed in their common garments; and therefore have devised a habit of less dignity than those garments wherein they ministered, which they used when they carried out the ashes. Thus Maimonides himself, and others, mentioned by Mr. Selden, lib. iii. de Synod. cap. 11. n. 6. where he likewise observes, that Chiskuni is of opinion, that such of the family of the priests, as were both excluded from their ministry in the sanctuary, and from wearing the holy garments, by reason of some defect in their bodies, were permitted to perform this office of carrying away the ashes.

And carry forth the ashes without the camp, into a clean place.] See iv. 12. The forementioned Rasi will have it, that they needed not to take away all the ashes every day; but only a shovel-full, which they laid beside the altar. And when the hollow place of the altar was so full, that there was no room to lay on the wood, they were bound to empty it, and carry all the ashes away.

Ver. 12. *And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it, it shall not be put out.*] This precept is repeated again in the next verse; as it was mentioned once before, (ver. 9.) For which there is a just reason, as Abarbinel makes account. For in the ninth verse he requires, that the wood for the evening sacrifice should be so ordered and attended, that the fire might be kept in till the morning. And then, here, in this verse, he requires there should such care be used in taking away the ashes, that the fire might still remain, and not be extinguished. After which, speaking of the morning sacrifice, in the latter part of this verse, he requires in the next, (ver. 13.) that such a quantity of wood should be laid on the altar, when they offered it, that the fire might be kept in till the evening sacrifice; or, that if there were any extraordinary sacrifices brought besides the daily burnt-offering, the priests should still add more wood, that the fire might not be put out by that means, but be able to devour them.

And the priests shall burn wood on it every morning, &c.] The Hebrew word for *wood* being in the plural number, R. Levi of Barcelona concludes there were more bundles than one brought in every day. And from this place (and i. 7.) he gathers there were three. The first of which he calls the *great heap;* with which the daily sacrifice, and the rest, for which there was occasion, were offered: of which he thinks Moses speaks in the ninth verse of this chapter. The second was lesser, which was laid at the side of the other, that they might have coals for the burning incense: and this he thinks intended here. And the third was merely to keep in the fire perpetually; of which he thinks Moses speaks in the next verse. The Misna also tells us, that there being seven gates to the great court of the sanctuary, three on the north, and as many on the south, and one at the east; the first on the south side was called the *gate of burning:* because at that gate they brought in the wood, which was to preserve the fire perpetually on the altar: (see Codex Middoth, cap. 1. sect. 4.)

And he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace-offerings.] This fat of the peace-offerings was to be burnt together with the burnt-offering, and not separate from it: by which means the burnt-offering was the sooner consumed, and more room was made for other occasional sacrifices.

Ver. 13. *And the fire shall be ever burning upon the altar.*] This fire was not kindled by the priests, but by God himself; who sent it from heaven to consume the first sacrifice that was offered by Aaron, (ix. *ult.*) From which time they were bound to take care, that it never went out; that so their sacrifices might be constantly offered by celestial fire: because it was the continuation of that fire which came from heaven, by a continual addition of fuel, whereby it was preserved. And so it continued, as the Jews affirm, till the captivity of Babylon; and after it, as some of them would have us believe (who fancy it was preserved in a pit, by the care of some religious priests, till their return), though against the common tradition among them, which is, that *there was no sacred fire in the second temple;* for they reckon this among the five things which were wanting there, and had been in the first. And as for the constant continuance of this fire, there was care taken that wood should be laid up in the temple for the maintenance of it: so in order thereunto, there was a certain set time, when the people were obliged to carry wood thither; which made a kind of festival, called by Josephus ξυλοφόρια, lib. ii. de Bello Judaico, cap. 31. τῶν ξυλοφορίων ἑορτῆς οὔσης, &c. *it being the feast of the wood-carrying; when it was the custom for all to bring up wood for the altar: that there might be no want of fuel for the fire, which was never to go out.*

It shall never go out.] This was a thing so famous, that it was imitated among the gentiles; who thought it ominous to have their sacred fire go out: and therefore appointed persons on purpose to watch it, and keep it perpetually burning, as appears by the vestal virgins at Rome,

whose great business it was to look after the *eternal fire*, as they called it; imagining the extinction of it purported ἀφανισμὸν τῆς πόλεως, *the destruction of the city*, as Dionysius Halicarn. speaks. This institution is ascribed, both by him and by Plutarch, unto Romulus; into whose history many things were translated by the ancient pagans out of these sacred records of Moses, as the learned Huetius hath made probable in his Demonstratio Evangel. Propos. iv. cap. 9. n. 8. The Greeks also preserved such a πῦρ ἄσβεστον, *inextinguishable fire* at Delphi; and the Persians in like manner, and many other people, as Bochartus hath shewn in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 35. and Dilherrus before him, in a special dissertation (as he calls it) de Cacozelia Gentilium, cap. 11. where he hath heaped up a great deal to this purpose; and, among other things, hath this conjecture—that the Grecian Ἑστία, and the Roman *Vesta*, had their names from the Hebrew word *esch*, or the Chaldean *escha*, which signifies *fire*. The conjecture of David Chytræus also is no less ingenious, who derives those names from *eschjah, the fire of the Lord*.

Ver. 14. *And this is the law of the meat-offering.*] He doth not speak of the offerings which accompanied the daily burnt-offerings, but of those which were offered alone, mentioned in the second chapter. Where directions are given of what they should consist; and also how much the priest should have for his portion: but here are some things added concerning the place where they should be eaten by the priests; and concerning those *meat-offerings*, which were peculiarly to be offered for themselves.

The sons of Aaron shall offer it before the Lord, before the altar.] Or rather, *upon the altar:* for so the Hebrew phrase [*on the face of the altar*] signifies. Or else the meaning is, he shall present it to the Lord before the altar; and then afterward (as is directed in the next verse) burn a handful of it upon the altar. And so the rule is, chapter second, ver. 8, 9. *When it is presented to the priest, he shall bring it to the altar*, &c.

Ver. 15. *And he shall take of it his handful of the flour of the meat-offering*, &c.] According to the prescription in the second chapter, ver. 2. where all this verse is explained.

Ver. 16. *And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat.*] If they had no pollution upon them, xxii. 6. (See chap. ii. 3.) The reason of the precept was, (as R. Levi Barzel. observes, Præcept. cxxxiii.) that it preserved the dignity of the sacrifice to have it eaten only by the priests: and by them (I may add) only in the holy place, and not carried out from thence, as it here follows.

With unleavened bread shall it be eaten.] There is nothing in the Hebrew text to answer unto the word *with;* which makes the sense unaccountable, that otherwise is easy and natural. If we translate it as the Hebrew words plainly signify, *unleavened it shall be eaten*, see x. 12.

In the holy place.] There was a room in the court of the priests, where they ate these holy things, as Kimchi observes upon Ezek. xlii. Which may be confirmed out of Numb. xviii. 10. where the *most holy place* can signify nothing but the court of the priests, as L'Empereur rightly understands it in his Annot. upon Middoth, cap. 2. sect. 6.

In the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it.] As the priests did eat it in their own court, so their male children had place in the court of the Israelites wherein to eat it, (x. 12, 13.) And they are all said to eat before the Lord, because this was a part of the tabernacle: as was also the court of the women, where there was a place for the priests' daughters to eat, as well as their sons, of the firstlings that were offered to the Lord, (Numb. xviii. 19.)

Ver. 17. *It shall not be baken with leaven.*] There were two little rooms at the east gate of the court of the temple, called the gate of Nicanor; one of which was a vestry for the priests to put on their garments when they went to minister; and the other was for baking this flour, and that mentioned ver. 21. So they tell us in Middoth, cap. 1. sect. 4. And therefore it is ordered to be baken without *leaven*, because it was a part of the Lord's sacrifice: which being offered unleavened, (chapter second, ver. 11.) the remainder must needs be unleavened also, because the whole was God's; and the priests could have it no other ways than it was offered unto him.

I have given it to them for their portion of my offerings made by fire.] That is, of the *meat-offerings* beforementioned.

It is most holy, &c.] This is the reason why it was not to be carried to be eaten out of the holy place. (See chap. ii. ver. 10.)

As is the sin-offering, and as the trespass-offering.] See ver. 26. and vii. 6.

Ver. 18. *All the males among the children of Aaron shall eat of it.*] And none but they, because it was a thing *most holy*.

It shall be a statute for ever in your generations.] That is, as long as the law about sacrifices shall last.

Every one that touches them shall be holy.] According to this translation of these words, the meaning is, that it was not sufficient to be descended of priests, and to be males, but they were also to be free from any legal defilement, who were admitted to eat of this offering, (xxii. 6.) But these very words, which we here translate *every one*, in the twenty-seventh verse we translate *whatsoever:* and then the meaning is, *Every thing that toucheth them shall be made holy by them.* That is, the very *dishes* into which such holy things were put, or the *spoons*, or *knives*, wherewith they were eaten, were never to be employed to any other use. (See Exod. xxix. 37.)

Ver. 19. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] At the same time the Lord gave direction about another offering, near of kin to the former; but not yet mentioned.

Ver. 20. *This is the offering of Aaron and his sons, which they shall offer unto the Lord.*] The Jews call this *a mincha of initiation;* which every high-priest, and every other priest (as they understand it), were bound to offer, when they were consecrated; and the high-priest to continue every day as long as he lived. So Abarbinel, in his preface to this book, (sect. 2.) reckoning the various sorts of meat-offerings, makes this the fourth kind; which the high-priest offered every day, and every other priest once in his life, *viz.* when he first was admitted to minister at the altar, at the age of twenty years. For both these meat-offerings, saith he, are comprehended in this verse. But it may as well be understood only of Aaron, and his successors in the priesthood, of whom the following words seem to speak, and not of the common priests.

In the day when he is anointed.] The Hebrew word *bejom* may be translated *from the day;* and so the Jews understand it, that he was to make this oblation, not only upon the day of his consecration, but ever after (as I said),

every day, as long as he continued in the priesthood. And so the next words seem to explain it.

The tenth part of an ephah of fine flour, for a meat-offering perpetual; half thereof in the morning, and half at night.] The high-priest, saith Josephus, (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 10.) sacrificed twice every day at his own charges: and then he describes this very offering, which was distinct from that which attended the daily burnt-offering; as appears by the quantity of this meat-offering, and by the manner of ordering it. For that seems to have been raw flour, mixed with oil; but this baken, as it follows in the next verse. (See Exod. xxix. 40, 41.) The reason why it is here mentioned, is, because it was a *mincha* (or *meat-offering*), of whose rites Moses is treating; and this is an exception from the rest.

Ver. 21. *In a pan shall it be made with oil.*] With three logs of oil; as the Jews determine.

And when it is baken.] See ver. 17.

Thou shalt bring it in.] Unto the altar.

And the baken pieces shalt thou offer, &c.] If it was a meat-offering of the high-priest, it was divided into twelve pieces (as Maimonides saith); if of a common priest (for they will have both to be included in this law) then into ten pieces; which were so exactly divided, that half of them were offered in the morning, and the other half in the evening. And the handful of frankincense (which they say was offered with them) was in like manner divided, and burnt on the altar, (Maase Korban, cap. 13.)

Ver. 22. *And the priest of his sons, that is anointed in his stead, shall offer it.*] What he had said of Aaron and his sons in general, (ver. 20.) he now particularly requires of every son of his, that should succeed him in his office. For which there was the greater necessity, because (as R. Levi of Barcelona understands it, Præcept. cxxxiv.) the high-priest was an ambassador between the Israelites and their heavenly Father (by whom their prayers were offered to God, and who made reconciliation for them), and therefore should be bound, in all reason, to offer a perpetual sacrifice twice every day, for the constant needs of the congregation; and to apply his mind to this (as he speaks), that he and they might be the better for it.

It is a statute for ever unto the Lord.] As long as that priesthood continued.

It shall be wholly burnt.] In which it differed from other *meat-offerings*, as will appear in the next verse.

Ver. 23. *For every meat-offering for the priest.*] Or *of the priest.* This may seem to relate to every common priest; who were not all bound to offer this sacrifice every day, but only he who did it in the name of all the rest, *viz.* the priest who offered the daily burnt-sacrifice. He may be well thought to have been obliged to this; by which means this *meat-offering* was offered to God every day, by one or other of them, and never omitted. But Abarbinel (as I noted before, ver. 20.) thinks, that only the high-priest was bound to offer this *meat-offering* every day; and every other priest once in his life, *viz.* when he began his ministry.

Shall be wholly burnt: it shall not be eaten.] The priests had all the *meat-offerings* which were brought by the people, except one handful which was offered to the Lord. (See chapter second, ver. 2, 3.) But of their own *meat-offerings* they were not to taste, but wholly burnt them on the altar. For it had not been seemly for him, both to offer unto God, and to eat of it as if it were his own; as Maimonides speaks, (par. iii. More Nevoch. cap. 46.) or, as R. Levi Barzelonita gives the reason, (Præcept. cxli.) the scope of the sacrifice being to raise the mind of him that offered it unto God, it was not fit he should think of eating any part of his own offering; which would have taken his mind off from God.

Ver. 24. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] He added further several things concerning other offerings; which perhaps were delivered at the same time with the foregoing; being still concerning the priests, (see ver. 8, 9.) And therefore the next verse begins thus, "Speak unto Aaron and his sons, saying."

Ver. 25. *This is the law of the sin-offering.*] That is, for particular persons: that for the priests themselves, being governed by another law. For it is plain, that, in the fourth chapter, he distinguishes the *sin-offering* into two kinds: one, whose blood was carried into the sanctuary, and the flesh of it burnt entirely without the camp, (ver. 7, 8, &c. and here ver. 30.) and another, whose blood was not carried into the sanctuary; the flesh of which the priests were to eat, as is here directed.

In the place where the burnt-offering is killed, shall the sin-offering be killed before the Lord.] See iv. 24. 29. 31.

It is most holy.] This is the reason of what follows, that none might eat of it but those who were holy to the Lord.

Ver. 26. *The priest that offereth it for sin, shall eat it.*] The flesh of this *sin-offering* fell to the share of him who offered the sacrifice that day; and to his male children: though he might invite any other priests, and their sons, to partake with him, if he pleased; as appears from ver. 29. I need not add, that the *immurim*, as the Hebrews call them, were excepted: that is, the fat, &c. mentioned iii. 9, 10. iv. 26. which were to be wholly burned upon the altar.

In the holy place shall it be eaten, &c.] See ver. 16. For it being *most holy* (as the words are in the conclusion of the foregoing verse), it was to be eaten in the *holy place;* and that the same day and night when it was offered; and none of it to be kept till the morning. Whereas some of the peace-offerings (which they called the *lighter holy things*) might be eaten the next day, (vii. 16.) See Maimonides, More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 46. This seems to have been imitated by the heathen, who required that their most holy sacrifices should not be carried out of the temple; as the scholiast upon Aristophanes's Equites observes, concerning the sacrifices offered to Ceres and Proserpina: οὐκ ἐξῆν τὰ θυόμενα Δημήτρι καὶ Περσιφόνῃ ἔξω ἀφιέναι.

Ver. 27. *Whosoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy.*] See ver. 18.

And when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment.] This is commonly understood of the priest's garment, who alone sprinkled the blood. But his garments being holy, the blood that might chance to fall upon them was not thereby at all dishonoured: and therefore (if this be the meaning) we are to understand, that the garments would appear less venerable, when they were spotted with blood; and upon that account were to be washed. If we take it for the garment of him that brought the sacrifice, which when it was killed, the blood might chance to spirt upon his clothes; then the washing of them was out of reverence to the blood; which, being holy, was not

to remain upon a common garment. Which way soever it be interpreted, the intention, it is manifest, was to preserve in their minds an awful regard to God, and to whatsoever belonged unto his service.

Thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place.] Where there was a room (after the temple was built) which was called *lischath hagullah*, the chamber of the spring, or well, out of which water was drawn for the use of the court of the sanctuary. And there, it is probable, these garments were washed. (See Codex Middoth, cap. 5. sect. 3.)

Ver. 28. *But the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden shall be broken.*] For it being very porous, might so deeply imbibe a tincture from the flesh, that it could not be washed out; but the smell of it might remain a long time. And being of a small value, it was no great loss to have it broken; rather than any thing that was holy, remaining in it, be profaned. What became of the broken shreds of these earthen vessels, is a doubt among the Hebrew doctors; because it was neither fit to throw them out in a profane place, nor yet seemly to heap them up in the sanctuary: and therefore they fancy the earth opened and swallowed them up, as a great man in this kind of learning (J. Wagenseil) hath observed upon the Mischna of Sota, cap. 3. But they might have rather said, that they were thrown abroad into a clean place, after they were broken into small bits, or crumbled to powder; just as the ashes were that came from the altar, which was a holy place.

If it be sodden in a brazen pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water.] Nothing could so easily sink into this, being a solid metal: but whatsoever stuck to it might be rubbed out and cleansed by washing. From this verse, compared with other places, it seems apparent, that nothing was roasted in the sanctuary, but only boiled. So we find the peace-offerings (mentioned 1 Sam. ii. 13, 14, 15.) were constantly sodden; and all other holy offerings, except the paschal lamb (which they roasted at home), 2 Chron. xxxv. 13. And after their return from the captivity of Babylon, the same is intimated in the last verse of the prophecy of Zachariah.

Ver. 29. *All the males among the priests shall eat thereof: it is most holy.*] See ver. 16. and 26.

Ver. 30. *And no sin-offering.*] Or rather, *but no sin-offering.*

Whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation, to reconcile withal in the holy place, shall be eaten, &c.] Such were those sin-offerings for the high-priest, (iv. 3.) and for the whole congregation, upon particular occasions, (iv. 13, &c.) Or upon the day of general atonement, (xvi. 27.) No part of these was to be eaten, but entirely burnt in the fire; as it here follows in the end of this verse. There is no necessity of Maimonides's observation upon these words; that no man whatsoever might eat of these sacrifices: for if the priest might not, they were certainly prohibited to all other persons.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *LIKEWISE this is the law of the trespass-offering.*] The people were directed before in what cases they should bring this sort of offering; and I have noted the difference between them and *sin-offerings;* (v. 15.) but now the priests are directed in their office about *trespass-offerings.*

It is most holy.] In general they were to observe that these offerings, as well as *sin-offerings*, were to be numbered among the *most holy things;* and therefore to be accordingly used, (ver. 6.)

Ver. 2. *In the place where they kill the burnt-offering, shall they kill the trespass-offering.*] The same order that was given about *sin-offerings*, (iv. 24. vi. 25.)

And the blood thereof shall be sprinkled round about upon the altar.] This is a different rite from that which was observed in the *sin-offerings;* whose blood was put upon the horns of the altar, (iv. 25. 34.) and the blood of such *sin-offerings* as were made for the high-priest, or the whole congregation, was also to be sprinkled seven times before the veil of the sanctuary, (iv. 6. 17.) But this to be sprinkled *round about* the altar of burnt-offering; according to the manner used in the *whole burnt-offerings*, (i. 11.) and in the *peace-offerings;* (iii. 2. 8.) only with this difference, that there being a scarlet thread, or line, which went round about the altar exactly in the middle, the blood of the whole *burnt-offerings* was sprinkled round about above the line, and the blood of the *trespass-offerings*, and the *peace-offerings*, round about below the line. (See Codex Middoth, cap. 3. sect. 1. and L'Empereur, Annot. 12.)

Ver. 3. *And he shall offer of it all the fat thereof.*] This was the work of the priest, first to offer unto God his part of the sacrifice.

The rump.] All the fat belonging unto God; this is particularly mentioned in the first place, as the principal fat. For the tails of their sheep in those countries (and no other creature but a *ram* was allowed for a *trespass-offering*, as was before noted) were of a prodigious bigness, as hath been noted by many: particularly by the famous Bochartus in his Hierozoicon, (par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45.) and lately by another excellent person, Johns Ludolphus, in his Ethiopic History, (lib. i. cap. 10. n. 16.) and in his commentaries on it, (num. 76.) And therefore it is called, both here and in other places, by the peculiar name of *alja;* whereas the *tail* or *rump* of other creatures, is called *zanah.* (See what I have noted upon iii. 9.)

And the fat that covereth the inwards.] This, and all that follows in the next verse, hath been explained before, (iii. 3, 4. 8, 9.)

Ver. 5. *And the priest shall burn them upon the altar,* &c.] As he did the fat of the *sin-offerings* and *peace-offerings*, (iv. 26. 31.)

Ver. 6. *Every male among the priests shall eat thereof,* &c.] All the fat being offered to God, the flesh became the portion of the priest; who, with his male children, but not females, were to eat it: but not in any place out of the sanctuary; as it here follows. (See vi. 18. 26. 29.)

Ver. 7. *As is the sin-offering, so is the trespass-offering: there is one law for them.*] In this matter (though in other things they differed), for the same rule is given here about the *trespass-offering*, that is given in the chapter foregoing (ver. 26.) about the *sin-offering.*

The priest that maketh atonement therewith shall have it.] Who might invite other priests, if he pleased, to eat with him, and with his sons: but he was not bound to it; for the flesh of this sacrifice was entirely his own.

Ver. 8. *And the priest that offereth any man's burnt-offering, even the priest.*] Or, *that priest* who offereth it.

Shall have to himself the skin of the burnt-offering, which he hath offered.] All the *flesh* of the *burnt-offerings* being wholly consumed, as well as the *fat*, upon the altar, (chap. i. ver. 8, 9.) there was nothing that could fall to the share of the priest, but only the *skin:* which is here given him for his pains. I observed upon Gen. iii. 21. that it is probable that Adam himself offered the first sacrifice; and had the skin given him by God, to make garments for him and for his wife. In conformity to which the priests ever after had the skins of the whole *burnt-offerings* for their portion. Which was a custom among the gentiles (as well as the Jews), who gave the skins of their sacrifices to their priests, when they were not burnt with the sacrifices, as in some *sin-offerings* they were among the Jews, (iv. 11.) Who employed them to a superstitious use, by lying upon them in their temples, in hope to have future things revealed to them in their dreams. This Dilherrus hath observed, out of these words of Virgil:

——— "huc dona Sacerdos
Quum tulit, et cæsarum ovium sub nocte silenti
Pellibus incubuit stratis, somnosque petivit,
Multa modis simulacra vidit variantia miris,
Et varias audit voces, fruiturque Deorum
Colloquio." ———

And in the Eleusinia, he observes, out of Suidas, the Daduchus put on the skins of the beasts which had been sacrificed to Jupiter; which were called Διὸς κώδια, *the fleece of Jupiter*, (Dissert. Special. de Cacozelia Gentil. cap. 9.)

Ver. 9. *And all the meat-offering that is baken in the oven, and all that is dressed in the frying-pan, and in the pan.*] See concerning these various sorts of *meat-offerings* in the second chapter, ver. 4, 5. 7.

Shall be the priest's.] All but the memorial of it, which was burnt upon the altar. (See ii. ver. 9, 10.)

That offereth it.] That particular priest who offered it was to have the remainder for his portion.

Ver. 10. *And every meat-offering.*] Or, *but every meat-offering:* for here is an exception to the foregoing rule.

Mingled with oil, and dry.] The foregoing verse speaks of such *meat-offerings* as were any ways *baken;* but this of those that were *raw:* which were of two sorts; either of flour mingled with oil, as all voluntary offerings of this sort were, (ii. 1.) or *dry* without any oil, as some *sin-offerings* were, (v. 11.) and the *offering of jealousy*, (Numb. v. 15.)

Shall all the sons of Aaron have, one as much as another.] All the priests who attended on that day were to have an equal share in this kind of *meat-offering:* though he alone who ministered at the altar had the *baked* meat-offerings. There are some indeed who can see no reason for this difference (though this last sort, others think, was more easily divided, and therefore shared among them all), and consequently take these words to signify the same with those in the foregoing verse: *Every one, in the course of his ministry, shall have this benefit, in his turn of waiting at the altar.*

Ver. 11. *And this is the law of the sacrifice of peace-offerings,* &c.] This is the only sort of offerings remaining to be spoken of: which, when he required them of the people, are mentioned in the third place, after the *burnt-offerings* and *meat-offerings;* before the *sin-offerings* and *trespass-offerings.* But here are reserved for the last place, in his directions he gives to the priests about them; because, as there were several sorts of them, so there were various rites to be observed about them. Which rites, as I observed before, are called here the *law* of such sacrifices.

Ver. 12. *If he offer it for a thanksgiving.*] In this, and in the sixteenth verse, we have an account of three sorts of peace-offerings. This, which was the principal, for benefits received from God's bounty; the other two, for the obtaining such blessings as they desired to receive. And this of thanksgiving, was either general for the whole congregation (of which there was but one only, at one time of the year, in the feast of Pentecost, xxiii. 19, which was accounted *most holy*), or particularly for private persons, as occasion offered, which were accounted *less holy.* And they are these here mentioned; which might be either of the flock, or of the herd (but no birds), and either greater or smaller of those kinds; that is, of the herd from the first year to the third, and of the flock from the first to the second year complete. If they were older, they were not fit for sacrifice. All this R. Levi Barzelonita, (Præcept. cxxxvii.) explains at large.

Then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, unleavened cakes mingled with oil, &c.] The same R. Levi observes, that some peace-offerings were offered without any bread; *viz.* such as they called *hagigah* and *schimcah*, sacrifices of festivity and rejoicing, *i. e.* at their great solemn festivals. But these here mentioned were all offered with bread; and that offered with this, which was the first of them, was called *the bread of thanksgiving.* R. Solomon Jarchi restrains this sort of peace-offerings (of thanksgiving) to such wonderful deliverances, as those mentioned in the hundred-and-seventh Psalm; from tempests at sea, or dangerous travels through the wilderness, and the like. Aben Ezra also seems to have been of the same opinion, when he saith, that men being delivered out of straits and distresses, gave thanks to God by this oblation. But I can find no ground for this limitation; it being far more likely, that this sacrifice was offered by all devout persons, for any mercy whatsoever that God bestowed upon them.

Unleavened cakes, and unleavened wafers.] For none of God's bread was to be leavened. (See chap. ii. 11.)

Ver. 13. *Besides the cakes.*] Beforementioned; which were to be unleavened.

He shall offer for his offering leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, &c.] Not upon the altar (for that was absolutely forbidden in the forenamed chapter of this book), but he was to give it to the priest who waited at the altar, and was to partake of this sacrifice, and to rejoice together with him that offered it. Which is the reason that such different sorts of cakes are ordered in the foregoing verse, all unleavened (of which the priest was to have his share), and also others leavened, which are prescribed in this verse; that God's family (his servants the priests) might want no variety of bread, at their feasts upon these sacrifices: and that God might shew his friendship with those who offered the sacrifice, by accepting the same bread at his own table, which they were wont to use at theirs.

Ver. 14. *And of it he shall offer out of the whole oblation,* &c.] One of the cakes beforementioned (ver 12.) was

to be presented to God for a *heave-offering:* concerning which, see Exod. xxix. 24. 28.

And it shall be the priest's that sprinkleth the blood of the peace-offerings.] Having offered one cake out of the whole, all that remained was the portion of the priest who sprinkled the blood of the *peace-offerings* on the altar.

Ver. 15. *And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings for thanksgiving, shall be eaten the same day that it is offered,* &c.] The reason of this, which was observed in most of their sacred feasts, (particularly in the paschal lamb, Exod. xxii. 10. and in the manna itself, xvi. 19, &c.) was to maintain the honour and dignity of the sacrifices; that they might not be in danger to be corrupted, or turned to any profane use, or gratify men's covetousness. For, as Philo observes (in his book of Sacrifices), "It was not fit that these holy things should be put into their cupboards, but immediately set before those who are in need; for they were no longer his that offered them, but his to whom they were offered: who being himself most liberal and bountiful, would have guests invited to his table to partake with those who offered the sacrifice. Whom he would not have to look upon themselves as masters of the feast, ἐπίτροποι γὰρ εὐωχίας εἰσὶν οὐχ ἑστιάτορες, *for they are but ministers of the feast, not the masters or entertainers.* That belongs to God himself, whose bounty ought not to be concealed, by preferring sordid parsimony before generous humanity." His meaning is, that all the sacrifice was God's, who graciously granted to him that offered it a part of it to entertain his friends and the poor, whom he would have invited forthwith, that no part of it might be converted to any other use but that which God appointed, who made the feast.

Ver. 16. *But if the sacrifice of his offering be a vow, or a voluntary offering.*] These two other sorts of *peace-offerings* were in the nature of prayers, for the obtaining such blessings as they desired and hoped for. And they were either the performance of a vow, which they made to God of offering him such a sacrifice, when they received the benefit, which was called *neder:* or, they were freely made beforehand, in hope God would bestow the benefit; which sacrifice was called *nedebah,* a *voluntary offering.* Now these were not so holy as the former; and therefore might be eaten on the morrow, as well as on the same day they were offered. So it here follows.

It shall be eaten the same day that he offereth his sacrifice.] Then they were immediately to begin to feast upon the sacrifice.

And on the morrow also, the remainder of it shall be eaten.] But if they could not conveniently eat it all the same day, or had a mind to lay up some of it till the next, they had that liberty allowed them. For which Philo gives this reason (in the same book), that these being for mercies not yet received (or offered by virtue of an obligation), they might take more time to feast upon them with their friends, and be more sparing: but the former being a thankful acknowledgment of blessings already bestowed, their hearts were to be enlarged in greater bounty, Ἵν' οἱ ἐπιτυγχάνοντες ἑτοίμων καὶ προχείρων εὐεργεσιῶν, ἑτοίμην καὶ ἀνυπέρθετον ποιῶνται τὴν μετάδοσιν· *that they upon whom God readily bestowed his benefits, might make a quick and speedy return,* by doing good to others without delay. And what is here said of the flesh of the sacrifice, the Jews also understand of the *meat-offerings* mentioned ver. 12, 13. None of which was to be kept longer than two days at the most.

There is no place here assigned, where these sacrifices should be eaten, at the sanctuary; as there is for the other, vi. 16. 26. and here in this chapter, ver. 6. The reason is, because there was such a multitude of them, that it might have made too great a crowd in the court of the Israelites, if they had been confined to it. Where they might eat them if they pleased, (as I shewed before, vi. 16.) but were not determined to that place; but left at liberty to eat them in any part of the city where the tabernacle, and afterward the temple, stood. (See Deut. xii. 6, 7.) And consequently, while they dwelt in the wilderness, they might eat them any where in the camp; which was pitched round about the tabernacle: only it was to be in a clean place, where the priests might eat them as well as the people, (x. 14.)

Ver. 17. *But the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day, shall be burnt with fire.*] If there were such plenty, or they and their friends were so few, or they were so niggardly as not to call poor enough to eat all in two days' time, they were to have no further benefit of the flesh of this sacrifice; but what remained of it on the third day was to be burnt. Which was to preserve the *dignity of the sacrifice,* as the Jews speak, in preventing its stinking. And there was no nobler way of consuming it than by fire, which consumed the sacrifice on the altar. So R. Levi Barzel. observes, Præcept. cxxxviii. where he also adds, that God taught them hereby not to be solicitous for the future, nor careful to hoard up more than needed; when they saw him command the holy flesh to be destroyed, after the time allotted for its use was past. The heathens themselves thought this a decent rite; for there was a sacrifice at Rome, which they called *Protervia,* (as Bochart observes out of Macrobius, lib. ii. Saturnal. cap. 2.) in which the custom was, *ut si quid ex epulis superfuisset, igne consumeretur, that if any thing of the feast remained, it was consumed in the fire.* (See his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50.)

Ver. 18. *And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace-offering be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted,* &c.] He lost the fruit of his sacrifice which he had offered to God by this profanation; which destroyed the grace and favour which it had procured him with God.

Neither shall it be imputed to him that offered it.] He shall not be thought to have made any offering at all.

It shall be an abomination, &c.] And more than that, it rendered him abominable; being abominable itself: and made him liable to be scourged, as the Jews here understand the last words of this verse, *he shall bear his iniquity.* Which, I think, also signifies, that he should lie under a great guilt, till it was purged by a *trespass-offering.*

Ver. 19. *And the flesh that toucheth any unclean thing shall not be eaten.*] That is, the flesh of the *peace-offerings* beforementioned, which might happen, as they carried it from the altar to the place where they intended to make a feast upon it, to touch any unclean thing, might not be eaten by any body.

But burnt with fire.] As that which remained to the third day was, (ver. 17.) This made them very careful to preserve it pure.

And as for the flesh.] That is, all the flesh which was not defiled by touching any unclean thing.

All that be clean shall eat thereof.] Whether the priest,

or other persons. For the priest had the right shoulder and the breast, (as we read expressly, ver. 33, 34.) and he that brought the sacrifice had the rest. Of the former, the whole family of the priest might eat; not only his sons, but his wife and daughters, who were not married; or being widows, were come back to their father again, if they had no children; or if those they had were begotten by priests: yea, his servants born in his house, or bought with his money. (See xxii. 11—13. Numb. xviii. 11.) And of the rest of the sacrifice, he that offered it might eat it, with all his family and his friends; excepting those who had any uncleanness upon them. There is frequent mention of these feasts in the following books of the Bible. As that made by Elkanah, (1 Sam. i. 4.) and by Samuel, when he entertained Saul, (1 Sam. ix. 13. 24.) And when the kingdom was renewed to Saul at Gilgal, there was a public feast made on these offerings, with great rejoicing, (1 Sam. xi. 15.) And the like was made for Jesse and his sons, (xvi. 3. 5.) And by David, when he entertained the people, (1 Chron. xvi. 3.) And by Solomon, at the dedication of the temple, (1 Kings viii. 65.) And all the children of Israel made such a feast, at their return from Babylon, (Nehem. viii. 19.) There are many examples also of the like feasts among the heathens; particularly in Homer, where Agamemnon (Iliad. i.) offered a hecatomb, and made a feast upon it. And Nestor (Odyss. iii.) offered a sacrifice of eighty-two oxen, and made the like entertainment.

Ver. 20. *But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace-offerings that pertain unto the Lord.*] By these last words it appears, that the whole offering was the Lord's, whose bounty entertained him and his friends, to whom he gave the greatest part of it.

Having his uncleanness upon him, &c.] In this verse and in the next, every one that had any legal defilement upon him is prohibited, under a severe penalty, to eat of the *peace-offerings.*

And they might be made unclean either by impurity in their own body, or by the contact of unclean things; of the former of which he speaks in this verse; and of the other in the next. Both were to be punished with *cutting-off;* which hath been explained elsewhere, (Gen. xvii. 14.) From whence it was that the Jews were so very careful, not to go into the judgment-hall when our Saviour was condemned, *lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover,* (John xviii. 28.) at which feast, *peace-offerings* were offered together with the paschal lamb. (See more of this xxii. 2—4.)

Ver. 21. *Moreover, the soul that shall touch any unclean thing, as the uncleanness of man, or any unclean beast, or any abominable unclean thing.*] All these several sorts of uncleanness, contracted by touching things unclean, we shall find in the following chapters, xi. &c.

And shall eat the flesh of the sacrifice of peace-offerings, which pertain unto the Lord, even that soul shall be cut off, &c.] The intention of such precepts was, that the greater reverence (as Maimonides speaks, par. iii. More Nevoch. cap. 41.) might be maintained towards the sacrifices which were offered unto God. Upon which account, Julian highly commends Moses, who, he saith, (as St. Cyril quotes his words, lib. ix. contra Julian.) was ὄντως εὐλαβὴς περὶ τὴν τῶν ἱερῶν ἐδωδὴν, *truly religious about the eating of holy things;* which he proves from these very words of Moses. But his conclusion from thence was very frigid, as St. Cyril calls it, that Christians were therefore to blame, because they would not partake of such sacrifices: for we abstain not from them, saith that father, as unclean things, but ἡμεῖν δὲ μᾶλλον ὡς ἐκ τύπων, ἐπὶ τὸ ἀληθὲς, *we rather make a progress, as from types, unto the truth.*

Ver. 22. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] At the same time that all these precepts were ordered to be delivered to the priests, he takes occasion to repeat several precepts he had before given, which concern all the people; because it was of great moment to have them observed.

Ver. 23. *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Ye shall eat no manner of fat.*] Because this was God's part, and therefore not to be eaten by any one, but burnt upon his altar. (See iii. 16, 17.) And the reason Maimonides gives, why it was reserved for him alone, was, because it was very delicious to the taste, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 41.)

Of ox, or of sheep, or of goat.] The Jews restrain this precept to these three sorts of creatures (which were the only beasts that were offered to the altar), taking the fat of all other beasts to be lawful. (So R. Levi, beforementioned, Præcept. cxlix.)

Ver. 24. *And the fat of the beast.*] Of one of the forenamed beasts, which alone were allowed in sacrifices.

That dieth of itself, and the fat of that which is torn with beasts, may be used in any other use, &c.] Though the flesh of such beasts was unclean, yet they might apply the fat, when separated from the body, to any use: only they might not eat it.

Ver. 25. *For whosoever eateth the fat of the beast, of which men offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.*] This seems to justify the opinion of those Jews who restrain the eating of fat only to the three sorts of creatures mentioned ver. 23. as was there observed.

Even the soul that eateth it, shall be cut off from his people.] If he did it presumptuously; but if through inadvertence, he was to be scourged, as the Jewish doctors affirm. Yet, if he did it a third time, scourging did not suffice; but they shut him up in a little cave, where he could not stand upright, nor had room to sit down; and there fed him with the bread and water of affliction, till his bowels were sorely pinched, &c. as Maimonides describes this punishment. (See Schikkard's Mischpat Hammeleck, and Carpzovius's annot. on him, cap. 2. Theorer. vii.)

Ver. 26. *Moreover, ye shall eat no manner of blood, whether it be of fowl, or of beast.*] See iii. 17. Men were very prone to this in those times (as Maimonides thinks), whereby they ran into idolatrous worship. Which was the reason God restrained them from it, by threatening *cutting off* (ver. 27.) to those who were guilty of it, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 41.)

In any of your dwellings.] This is added to signify, that they might no more eat of the blood of those beasts which they killed at home, than of those slain at the altar.

Ver. 27. *Whatsoever soul it be that eateth any manner of blood, even that soul shall be cut off,* &c.] The reason of it is given xvii. 10, 11. But the Jews here distinguish (particularly R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. cxlviii.) between the *blood of the soul,* or *the life* (as they speak), and *the blood of a member.* The former, which run out freely when the

beast was killed, in which was the life of the beast, is that which is here meant, as Moses more fully explains it, in the place beforementioned. The other, which remained in the several parts of the beast, they looked upon as belonging to the flesh, and therefore might be eaten with it.

Ver. 28. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] He delivered at the same time some other rules to be observed by the people in these matters. (See ver. 22.)

Ver. 29. *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, He that offereth the sacrifice of his peace-offerings unto the Lord, shall bring his oblation unto the Lord of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings.*] The meaning may be no more than this, that before he and his friends feasted together, as is directed ver. 15, &c. he was to take care *to bring his oblation unto the Lord,* that is, to see that God had his part of the *peace-offering;* for till that was offered, none could meddle with the rest. But if the import of the Hebrew words be well observed, they seem to have a further meaning; which is, that whensoever any man brought the *sacrifice* (which in the Hebrew is here called *zebach*) of his peace-offerings, he should also bring his *oblation* (which, in distinction from the other, is called *korban*), that is, a *mincah,* or *meat-offering* together with it; that the feast which was to be made, might be completely furnished with bread and wine, as well as the flesh of the sacrifice.

Ver. 30. *His own hands shall bring the offerings of the Lord made by fire, the fat, with the breast, it shall he bring.*] The sacrifice being slain and divided, the priest was to put what belonged unto the Lord into the man's own hands (*viz.* the fat, with the breast and the shoulder), that he might present it himself unto the Divine Majesty.

That the breast may be waved, for a wave-offering before the Lord.] This is the manner wherein it was to be presented; the man was to lift it up over his head, and wave it to and fro; his hands being supported and guided by the priest. (See Exod. xxix. 24. and Numb. vi. 19, 20.) Maimonides describes the order of it in this manner: first, the priest put into the man's hands the fat; and then laid upon it the breast and the shoulder; and after that, one of the pieces of the cakes for the meat-offering upon them; all which he waved about.

Ver. 31. *And the priest shall burn the fat upon the altar: but the breast shall be Aaron's and his sons'.*] When that part which belonged to God's altar (*viz.* the *fat*) had been burnt there, the priests had the breast and the shoulder to their own use; as servants have what comes from their master's table. For it was all offered unto God, (ver. 29, 30.) who, taking only the fat for himself, bade them take the rest, *viz.* the breast and the shoulder: which had been presented unto God by waving them to and fro, as a sacrifice to the Lord of the world; but by him bestowed upon his ministers for their maintenance in his service. This is more fully expressed in the three next verses; in which there is no difficulty, and therefore I shall but lightly touch them.

Ver. 32. *And the right shoulder shall ye give unto the priests,* &c.] This is only a more particular declaration what belonged to the priest; who was to have not only the *breast* beforementioned, but also the *right shoulder.*

Ver. 33. *He among the sons of Aaron that offereth the blood of the peace-offerings, and the fat, shall have the right shoulder for his part.*] This is still a more special direction, providing for the encouragement of that priest, who, on that day, ministered at the altar; unto whom the *right shoulder* was appropriated, as a reward of his pains in offering the sacrifice.

Ver. 34. *For the wave-breast, and the heave-shoulder, have I taken of the children of Israel, from off the sacrifices of their peace-offerings, and have given them to Aaron and his sons,* &c.] This doth not contradict what I observed just before; for when he saith, he hath given these to *Aaron the priest and his sons,* the meaning must be, to those of his sons, who, at the time when these were offered, sprinkled the blood and burnt the fat.

Ver. 35. *This is the portion of the anointing of Aaron, and of the anointing of his sons,* &c.] In the Hebrew the words are, *This is the anointing of Aaron,* &c. that is, this they have in right of their unction to the priest's office; which entitles them to all beforementioned.

In the day.] The Hebrew word *bejom* may, both here and in the next verse, be translated (as I observed before, vi. 20.) *from the day,* and ever after.

When he presented them to minister unto the Lord in the priest's office.] Made them draw near to attend upon him at his altar.

Ver. 36. *Which the Lord commanded to be given them, in the day that he anointed them,* &c.] By virtue of a grant from God when they were made priests, to enjoy this benefit in all future ages.

By a statute for ever, &c.] As long as this law of sacrifices and this priesthood shall last. (See vi. 22.)

Ver. 37. *This is the law of the burnt-offering, of the meat-offering, and of the sin-offering, and of the trespass-offering,* &c.] This verse contains a summary of what he had commanded Aaron and his sons, from the ninth verse of the sixth chapter unto this place.

And of the consecrations.] The whole order of their consecration is not here directed, (but in Exod. xxix.) only something belonging to that matter, (vi. 20, &c.)

Ver. 38. *Which the Lord commanded Moses in Mount Sinai.*] In that mountainous country which lay near to Mount Sinai, as Maimonides truly expounds it. For he was come down from Mount Sinai, and had delivered to them all that he received there, (Exod. xxxiv. 29. 32.) before these commands were given: but they still continued near unto it; and so the word *behar* may be translated, *by Mount Sinai.* For, as the last words of this verse tell us, they were still in the wilderness of Sinai: that is, in that part of the wilderness which took its name from its nearness to Mount Sinai.

In the day that he commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations unto the Lord, &c.] This doth not precisely signify, that he commanded Aaron and his sons (vi. 9, &c.) all these things, on the very same day that he commanded the children of Israel what oblations to bring, (chap. i. 2, &c.) but they were delivered all at the same time, immediately after the other, without any other commandments intervening.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] See iv. 1.

Ver. 2. *Take Aaron and his sons with him.*] Having delivered the laws and rules about sacrifices and the rites

belonging to them, he now prepares the priests to offer them, as had been commanded. And there is not much said in this chapter, but what had been explained in Exod. xxix. and other neighbouring chapters; where he relates the orders he received in Mount Sinai about those things which were now performed.

And the garments.] Exod. xxviii. 2. 4.

And the anointing oil.] Exod. xxx. 24, &c.

And a bullock for the sin-offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread.] See Exod. xxix. 1—3, &c. These were in their kind the very best of the legal sacrifices, as appears, in part, from that expression of the Psalmist, Psalm lxix. 30, 31. where he prefers thanksgiving and praise, before a *bullock that hath horns and hoofs* (a young bullock, which began to spread its horns and hoofs), that is, before the very best of all their bloody sacrifices.

Ver. 3. *And gather thou all the congregation together,* &c.] All the elders of the people, with the great officers who were set over thousands and hundreds, &c. For these are frequently called by the name of *col ha edah*, which we translate *all the congregation;* particularly in Numb. xxv. 7. xxxv. 12. Josh. xx. 6. Judg. xxi. 10. 13. 16. where the *elders of the congregation,* and the *congregation,* and *all the congregation,* are plainly the same thing. Which is further confirmed from the next chapter of this book, (ver. 1.) where it is said expressly, *Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel.*

Ver. 4. *And Moses did as the Lord commanded.*] Summoned them to appear before the Lord.

And the assembly was gathered together.] The word we translate *assembly,* is the same with that in the foregoing verse, which we translate *congregation:* that is, as I said, the assembly of the elders.

Unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] That they might be witnesses of what was done, and satisfy all the people, that Aaron and his sons did not intrude themselves into his office; but were solemnly called and consecrated to it by Moses, the servant of the Lord. It is likely, also, that as many of the people as the place would conveniently hold, met together to be spectators of this solemnity.

Ver. 5. *And Moses said unto the congregation, This is the thing which the Lord commanded to be done.*] I am now about to execute what God hath formerly commanded, when I was with him in the holy mount, (Exod. xxix. 4.) At what time this was executed, is a question among learned men. And our great primate of Ireland places this consecration of Aaron and his sons, together with the tabernacle and all things belonging to it, in the second month of the second year, after they came out of Egypt: moved thereunto, I suppose, by what is said in Numb. vii. 1, 2. So that, according to his opinion, the numbering of the people, and the separation of the Levites to God's service, preceded this action. But I do not see any reason why we should not think all things were done in the order wherein they are here related. And then this consecration was performed in the first month of that year; after the tabernacle had been erected and set apart for the habitation of the Divine Majesty. (See Exod. xl. 17, 18.)

Ver. 6. *And Moses brought Aaron and his sons.*] To the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; as he had been directed, (Exod. xxix. 4.)

And washed them with water.] As is there also directed; having first likewise washed himself, (xl. 31.)

Ver. 7. *And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle,* &c.] Moses, by an extraordinary commission from God, performed the office of a high-priest on this day, and the six days following: and put Aaron in possession of this office by clothing him with the garments here mentioned, (according to the orders which had been given, Exod. xxix. 5, &c.) which was thought sufficient for the consecration of a high-priest, after the captivity of Babylon; when they wanted the holy oil, as hath been before observed. Whence Philo often calls Moses by the name of Ἀρχιερεὺς, *i. e. high-priest.* And in Schemoth Rabba the tradition is, that he continued high-priest all the time they continued in the wilderness: though others, they confess, are of opinion (which is the truth) that he officiated only the seven days of the consecration; after which this office was settled in Aaron. (See Selden, lib. i. de Succession. in Pontificatum, cap. 1.)

Ver. 8. *And he put the breast-plate upon him: also he put in the breast-plate the urim and the thummim.*] See Exod. xxviii. 30. It is observable that he saith nothing here in this place of the precious stones, but only mentions *urim* and *thummim;* as in Exod. xxxix. 10. (where he describes the same thing) he makes mention only of the *four rows of stones,* but saith not one word of *urim* and *thummim:* which I look upon as a proof that they were all one.

Ver. 9. *And he put the mitre upon his head; and upon the mitre, the golden plate, the holy crown,* &c.] According as God commanded him in Exod. xxviii. 36, 37, &c. xxix. 6.

Ver. 10. *And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle, and all that was therein.*] See Exod xxix. 26, &c. and Exod. xl. 9—11. There being several ways of anointing a thing or person, either by pouring oil upon them, or by putting it upon them with the finger, or by sprinkling; it is not an improbable conjecture of Fortunatus Scacchus, that Moses anointed the tabernacle and its utensils, by dipping his finger in the oil, and putting it upon them. For though the word *mascah,* which he useth for *anointing,* be general, yet the Vulgar expressing it by *linivit,* and the LXX. by ἔχρισε (which import this particular sort of anointing), and there being different words used to express the anointing of the altar and of Aaron, it may well incline one to his opinion; (Myrothec. 2. Sacr. Elæochrysm. cap. 70.)

And sanctified them.] Set them apart by this unction for the holy use; for which they were designed.

Ver. 11. *And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times; and anointed the altar, and all its vessels,* &c.] We do not find this expressly before directed: but the intention of anointing the altar being to make it most holy, (because it was to sanctify all that was laid upon it, Exod. xxx. 29. xl. 10.) it was very fit it should be both sprinkled seven times with oil, and also anointed: in token of its extraordinary sanctity, which was put upon it by this very solemn rite. For here are two distinct words about this anointing; the first is *jaz,* he *sprinkled* of the oil upon it; and then *jimshach, he anointed it,* by putting some of the oil on it: whereas it is said of the tabernacle, and of the things there, only *jimshach, he anointed them,* without any sprinkling.

Some think, that the altar being mentioned twice in this

verse, he speaks of the *altar of incense*, as well as of the *altar of burnt-offerings*. But it is plain by those places in Exodus it was the altar of burnt-offerings, which was thus sanctified; and here the laver and its foot (which stood in the same court) is said to be sanctified with it. As for the altar of incense, it is included in what is said in the foregoing verse, that he anointed *the tabernacle and all therein*.

Both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them.] It may be thought that he *sprinkled* with oil the *laver* and its *foot*, as well as anointed them; which is the opinion of the forenamed Fort. Scacchus. But the Hebrew words will not warrant it; for they only signify that they were anointed as the altar was after its aspersion.

Ver. 12. *And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head.*] Here now is a third word distinct from the two former, viz. *jitzok*, which signifies there was more done to Aaron than to any of the holy things, to sanctify him to his office; for the holy oil was poured on his head.

And anointed him.] Perhaps he drew the oil with his finger upon his forehead, after it was poured on his head, as the Jews think he did. (See Exod. xxix. 7, 8. xxx. 30. xl. 13.)

To sanctify him.] *i. e.* Set him apart to this sacred office. Now this consecration of Aaron and his sons being mentioned here together with the consecration of the tabernacle and all belonging to it, it hath made some conclude, that both were done at the very same time. But I have given some arguments to prove the contrary, upon Exod. xl. 17, 18. And the meaning of these three verses (tenth, eleventh, and twelfth of this chapter) may be, not that they were consecrated at the same time, but with the same oil. For first he says, Moses took the anointing oil; and shews how it was employed after a different manner upon the tabernacle and its utensils, upon the altar, and upon Aaron, on whose head it was poured; whereas the former had it only put upon them with the finger, or were sprinkled with it. But though they were not consecrated together, yet their consecration immediately followed one another. For seven days being spent in sanctifying the tabernacle and the altar, then immediately began the sanctification of Aaron and his sons: during which time Moses may be supposed to have received the foregoing laws about sacrifices, in which they were to be employed as soon as they were consecrated. And the seven days for the consecration of Aaron and his sons, immediately succeeding the other seven days which were spent in the consecration of the tabernacle and the altar; it may be the reason why they are here succinctly mentioned both together, and neither of them mentioned before. For if the account we have in the fortieth of Exodus concerning these things be well attended to, it will appear that nothing is there said of the anointing of the tabernacle, or any thing else; but only that he set it up the first day of the month, as he was commanded ver. 2, &c. and 17, &c. And he is commanded in like manner to take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all therein, (ver. 9, &c.) and then to anoint Aaron and his sons; (ver. 13. 15.) but he relates nothing of his doing either of them till now, when he executed those commands.

Ver. 13. *And Moses brought Aaron's sons, and put coats upon them, and girded them with girdles,* &c.] See Exod. xxviii. 40, 41. xxix. 30. xl. 14.

As the Lord commanded Moses.] He commanded him also to anoint them at the same time, (Exod. xxviii. 41. xl. 15.) but it is not here mentioned; because they were not anointed as he was, by pouring oil upon their heads; but sprinkling it on their garments, with the blood of the sacrifice offered for them. And that he did afterward as he had been ordered, ver. 30. (See Exod. xxviii. 41. xxix. 7.)

Ver. 14. *And he brought the bullock.*] See Exod. xxix. 1. 10. &c.

For a sin-offering.] So it was designed to be, Exod. xxix. 14.

And Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bullock for the sin-offering.] See Exod. xxix. 10. Levit. i. 4.

Ver. 15. *And he slew it.*] Exod. xxix. 11.

And Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger.] As he had been directed, Exod. xxix. 12.

And purified the altar.] It was purified before; but this was a further purification of it; that it might be the more fitted to be a place to make reconciliation upon it, as it follows in the conclusion of the verse.

And poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, &c.] The Vulgar Latin, I think, gives the true interpretation of these words, rather than translate them in this manner; *it being expiated and sanctified, he poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar,* &c. Fort. Scacchus hath taken a great deal of pains to prove that this expiation (as the Vulgar Latin calls it) went before the anointing or consecration of the altar; in his Myrothec. (par. ii. cap. 34.) But his arguments seem to me of no force to overthrow the opinion of Abulensis and Philo, that these words do not speak of a proper expiation of the altar; but that it was only hereby more particularly set apart (as the word *sanctify* signifies), to be the place where sin-offerings might be made; that men who had committed offences might be expiated by these sacrifices.

Ver. 16. *And he took all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the caul,* &c.] See Exod. xxix. 13.

Ver. 17. *But the bullock and his skin, his flesh and his dung, he burnt with fire without the camp, as the Lord commanded Moses.*] See Exod. xxix. 14. Yet we do not find that the blood of this sacrifice was carried into the holy place; and therefore it did not fall under the rule in the sixth chapter of this book, (ver. 30.) but might have been eaten by the priests, as is there allowed, (ver. 26.) Some think it sufficient, for the solution of this, to say that Aaron and his sons were not yet completely consecrated, and therefore had not a right to eat of the flesh of this sin-offering. But such persons do not consider that Moses, who now acted as a priest, could not be debarred of that benefit by this reason. And therefore it is better to say, that no high-priest, whether ordinary or extraordinary (such as Moses now was), might eat of any sin-offering, offered for the priests themselves; although the blood of it was not brought into the sanctuary. From whence we may draw this consequence: that although the sins of the people were taken away by the priests; who, by eating of their sin-offering, plainly shewed that they *bare their sin*, (as the phrase is, x. 17.) yet the sins of the priests themselves could not be taken away, by any sacrifice they could offer for sin, of which they might not eat: but they were

to expect, as an excellent person of our own speaks, (Dr. Jackson, book ix. upon the Creed, chap. 26.) a better sacrifice, made by a better high-priest, the Son of God. But these legal sacrifices, in the mean time, were offered in such a place, as prefigured the place where this better sacrifice should be offered, *viz.* without the camp: as when they came to their rest, without the city of Jerusalem, where our Saviour's body was offered for our redemption.

Ver. 18. *And he brought the ram for the burnt-offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.*] According to the direction given to Moses, when he was with God in Mount Sinai, (Exod. xxix. 15, 16.) where all that follows here, to the end of the twenty-first verse, is explained: this being nothing else but the execution of what was before ordered.

Ver. 22. *And he brought the other ram.*] For he was commanded to bring *two*, (ver. 2. and Exod. xxix. 1.)

The ram of consecration.] So it is called Exod xxix. 22. 31. for the reason there given.

Ver. 23, 24. *And he slew it, and Moses took of the blood of it,* &c.] These two verses are explained Exod. xxix. 20. where order was given for what was now done. I shall only add a remark of R. Levi ben Gersom, upon the order wherein these sacrifices were offered; which was most rational. For, first, there was a *sacrifice for sin* offered, (ver. 14.) before they could be worthy to have any gift or present which they made to God received by him. But upon their expiation, a *whole burnt-offering* was accepted; (ver. 18.) and after that followed this sacrifice, which was a *peace-offering,* (as appears from ver. 31.) part of which was burnt upon the altar, part given to the priest, and the rest they themselves ate for whom it was offered; that it might appear they were so far in the favour of God, as to eat with him of his meat from his table. Abarbinel hath the same observation.

Ver. 25. *And he took the fat, and the rump,* &c.] All this verse likewise is there explained, Exod. xxix. 22.

Ver. 26—28. *And out of the basket of unleavened bread,* &c.] These three verses shew, that Moses exactly followed the orders he had received Exod. xxix. 23—25. where they have been explained.

Ver. 28. *Burnt them upon the burnt-offering.*] This shews that they were not a *burnt-offering* properly, as I there observed, but an appendix to it.

They were consecrations for a sweet savour.] Because they were offered to *consecrate and sanctify them,* as this is explained Exod. xxix. 33. (See there.)

Ver. 29. *And Moses took the breast and waved it,* &c.] According to the direction given Exod. xxix. 26. where it is also ordered that this should be Moses's part.

Ver. 30. *And he took of the anointing oil, and of the blood that was upon the altar, and sprinkled it on Aaron,* &c.] See Exod. xxix. 21. where it appears plainly this *blood* that was mixed with the *oil,* was the blood of *the ram of consecration.*

Ver. 31. *And Moses said unto Aaron and his sons, boil the flesh at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and there eat it,* &c.] God having had his part, (ver. 28.) and Moses, who performed the office of a priest at this time, having had that which belonged to him on that account, (ver. 29.) the rest was given (as the manner was in *peace-offerings*) to those for whom the sacrifice was offered: that is, all but the *right shoulder,* which was burnt upon the altar, and the *wave breast,* which was given to Moses, as priest. (See Exod. xxix. 31, 32.)

Ver. 32. *That which remains of the flesh and the blood shall ye burn with fire.*] See Exod. xxix. 34. This shews it was of the nature of a *peace-offering,* (vii. 15. 17.)

Ver. 33. *And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle in seven days,* &c.] For till then their consecration was not perfected (as the following words signify), no more than the consecration of the altar was, till a bullock had been offered, to cleanse it, and make an atonement for it, seven days together. (See Exod. xxix. 35—37.) This was to make them more sensible of the great weight, as well as dignity of their office.

Ver. 34. *As he had done this day, so the Lord hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you.*] Every day of these seven those sacrifices were to be repeated, the sin-offering, the burnt-offering, and the peace-offering; and their garments were to be sprinkled with the blood and the anointing oil, as the Lord required when Moses was with him in the mount, (Exod. xxix. 35.) This shews the imperfection of all the legal sacrifices; which would not have been so often repeated, if they had been of greater efficacy: yet the continuance of them *seven days,* doth signify the complete consecration of these priests, according to the rites of those times. In conformity to which, our great high-priest, the Lord Christ, who was perfected by one sacrifice of himself, spent seven days in his consecration to his office. For as Aaron is commanded to attend at the tabernacle so many days together, in like manner our Lord Christ, (as Dr. Jackson observes in the forenamed book, chap. 25.) did attend the temple five days one after another, before his death; (see John xii. 1. 12, &c. Matt. xxi. 8, 9, &c.) and having purged it on the first or second of those days, from the profaneness that was exercised in it by merchandizing; and afterward hallowed it by his doctrine, and by his Divine presence, which appeared in several miraculous cures, he went the sixth day into his heavenly sanctuary, into paradise itself; to purify and sanctify it with his own blood: as Moses, at Aaron's consecration, did the material sanctuary and altar with the blood of beasts. And having rested the seventh day, finished all by his resurrection early the next day in the morning.

Ver. 35. *Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*] Where all things mentioned in this chapter had been done, and were still to be repeated, (ver. 3, 4.) for they could not go into the sanctuary till they were completed.

Day and night.] This was to make their consecration more solemn, and taken notice of by all the people.

Seven days.] By which means, a sabbath, as the Jews observe, passed over their heads: without which, they conceive, Aaron and his sons could not have been completed. But the sabbath of the Lord did never so exactly pass over any high-priest in his consecration, as it did over the High-priest of the New Testament. For however it were of Aaron's it was to our blessed Saviour (as the forenamed Dr. Jackson notes) a day of rest indeed, after six days of labour, watching, praying, and fasting, which concluded in his bloody death and passion.

And keep the charge of the Lord.] That which he had now

enjoined. Or rather, watch the tabernacle and his vessels, &c. as they were to do in time to come. The Hebrew doctors have here raised a great difficulty, about the necessary easements of nature; for which they had no convenience, if they might not stir for seven days from the door of the tabernacle; and therefore they fancy, there was a hole digged in the ground for such occasions. But it is more likely they were not so confined, as not to be allowed this liberty: and one cannot well doubt of it, who considers the word *mismoroth* here used (which we translate *keep the charge of the Lord*), which is a military phrase, signifying the stations and watches kept in their turns for certain hours: after which they were at liberty to attend their own affairs. Such was the charge here one may reasonably think, of not departing from the door of the tabernacle, while they were upon the guard (as we speak), which some or other of them kept night and day; in such order, that while some watched, others might sleep, or step out about the necessary occasions of nature.

That ye die not.] It may seem hard that they should be in peril of their life, if they omitted any of these rites. But this was necessary, to make those serious and intent upon their business, who were to save the lives of others, by making expiation for them, when they deserved to perish.

For so I am commanded.] These orders, as hath been already observed, he received in the holy mount.

So Aaron and his sons did all things which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.] This was necessary to be added, that all generations might be assured, whatsoever was performed by their ministry, would be effectual, to the end for which it was appointed; they being exactly consecrated to God's service, without the least omission of any thing that he had required. In like manner, our great High-priest was consecrated to his eternal priesthood, by fulfilling all the will of God; and that in a far more solemn and public way than Aaron's was; it being performed by suffering such things, as nothing but a perfect filial obedience to his heavenly Father could have moved him to admit, because it was accomplished by shedding his own blood in a lingering death.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass on the eighth day.*] He doth not mean on the *eighth* day of the month; but on the next day after their consecration, which was *seven* days in doing, (viii. 33. 35.) Then it was that the fire fell down from heaven, and consumed the sacrifices which Aaron offered: and this seems also to have been the first day of unleavened bread, which fell upon the fifteenth day of this month; for on the fourteenth in the even, which was the last day of the consecration of the priests, the Passover was kept, (Numb. ix. 2. 5.)

That Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel.] Just as he had done before, (viii. 2, 3.) that the rulers, and as many of the people as could meet together, to behold what was done, might see the *glory of the Lord*, which appeared at this time, (ver. 6.)

Ver. 2. *And he said unto Aaron, Take thee a young calf.*] This is the first sacrifice that was offered to God, by the priests of the order of Aaron. It differed from that which was offered by Moses for Aaron and his sons, as *egel*, a *young calf*, doth from *par*, a *young bullock:* by which his sin was expiated at his consecration. And Maimonides saith, that the former signifies a calf of one year old; the latter one of two. Others say, a calf was called *egel* till his horns budded; and then it was called *par*.

For a sin-offering.] For his sins in general; not for any determinate offence, like that iv. 3. which therefore was something different from this. The Jews fancy, that a young calf was appointed for the first *sin-offering*, to put Aaron and the people in mind of the golden calf, which they worshipped. So Maimonides reports the opinion of their wise men, in his More Nevoch. (par. iii. cap. 46.) Where he also hath this conceit, that it was to expiate that sin.

And a ram for a burnt-offering.] For none but males were accepted for *burnt-offerings*, (i. 10.) There is no *peace-offering* ordered for him, (as there is afterward for the people, ver. 4.) because it was not fit he should have all the sacrifice, as he must have had, according to the law of such sacrifices, being both the priest and the offerer; between whom and the priest (after the fat was burnt) all was to be shared.

Ver. 3. *And unto the children of Israel thou shalt speak, saying.*] Unto all the elders, (ver. 1.) who were to bring the following offerings, in the name of all the people of Israel; and that by Aaron's direction, who was now to act as God's high-priest, and give out this order.

Take ye a kid of the goats for a sin-offering.] The Hebrew word *seir* signifies a *he-goat*. Concerning which Maimonides (in his book concerning Sacrifices) delivers this opinion, that "all sacrifices for sin, whether of private persons, or the whole congregation, at their three principal feasts, new moons, and the day of expiation, were he-goats." For this reason, because the greatest sin and rebellion of those times was, that they sacrificed to demons, who were wont to appear in that form. For which he quotes, xvii. 7. *They shall no more offer their sacrifices, lesseirim;* which we translate *unto devils:* but the word *seirim* is but the plural number of the word *seir*, which signifies *a goat*. And further he adds, that their wise men think the sin of the whole congregation was therefore expiated by this *kid of a goat*, because all the family of Israel sinned about a goat when they sold Joseph into Egypt, (Gen. xxxvii. 31.) And such reasons, saith he, as these should not seem trifles, for the end and scope of all these actions was, to imprint and engrave on the mind of sinners the offences they had committed, that they might never forget them. According to that of David, Psalm li. 5. "My sin is ever before me."

This *sin-offering* was different from that iv. 14. being not for any particular sin, as that was; but in general, for all the offences that the high-priest might have committed.

A calf and a lamb, both of the first year, &c.] When they were in their prime.

Ver. 4. *Also a bullock and a ram.*] These also were, no doubt, to be *without blemish*, as is prescribed in the two foregoing offerings. And the Hebrew word *sor* (which we translate a *bullock)* often signifies a well-grown ox: as in Exod. xxi. 28. Deut. xxv. 8. As *ajil*, a *ram*, the Hebrews say, signifies a sheep of above a year old. These made very large *peace-offerings*, and consequently a liberal feast upon them.

For peace-offerings.] The very same order is here observed that was at Aaron's consecration: first, *sin-offerings*, then a *burnt-offering*, and then a *peace-offering* was offered to the Lord, (viii. 14. 18. 22.)

And a meat-offering mingled with oil.] Which was to complete the *peace-offerings* on which they were to feast, that meat might not be without bread to it.

For to-day the Lord will appear to you.] Give you an illustrious token of his presence by sending fire from heaven, or from the brightness of his glory, to consume the sacrifice, (ver. 23, 24.) Whereby they were all assured that both the institution of this priesthood, and the sacrifices offered by it, were acceptable to the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 5. *And they brought that which Moses commanded.*] Both Aaron (ver. 2.) and all the congregation (ver. 3.) brought all the offerings which Moses required.

Before the tabernacle of the congregation.] Where these sacrifices were to be offered.

And all the congregation drew near and stood before the Lord.] Approached to the door of the tabernacle, and stood there by their sacrifices, looking towards the holy place; and worshipped the Lord.

Ver. 6. *And Moses said.*] Unto the congregation.

This is the thing which the Lord commanded that ye should do.] I require this of you by the commandment of God, who will demonstrate, by a visible token, his presence among you.

And the glory of the Lord shall appear unto you.] That glory which filled the tabernacle when it was erected, (Exod. xl. 34, 35.) openly shewed itself to them all, (ver. 23.) and declared his grace and favour towards them, by consuming their sacrifices, as an acceptable oblation to him, (ver. 24.) Whereby a particular honour also was done unto Aaron, who was hereby most illustriously owned to be God's high-priest; and all other persons deterred from pretending to his office.

Ver. 7. *And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin-offering, and thy burnt-offering.*] One of them after the other, in the order wherein they were directed, *viz.* his *sin-offering* first, to make his *burnt-offering* accepted.

Make an atonement for thyself and for the people.] First for himself, (as the apostle observes, Heb. vii. 27.) that then he might be capable to offer for the sins of the people. This was the great imperfection of the Aaronical priests, that they were sinners like other men: by reason whereof they were bound, "as for the people, so also for themselves, to offer for sins," (Heb. v. 3.)

And offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them.] After he had offered both the *sin-offering*, (ver. 8.) and the *burnt-offering*, (ver. 13.) for himself; then he was to begin to offer for the people. For his own sins being expiated, and his burnt-offering being accepted, he was fit to procure remission and acceptance for them.

Ver. 8. *Aaron therefore went unto the altar.*] That he might be ready to perform his part of the service, which was to sprinkle the blood, after he had first of all offered the morning sacrifice. (See ver. 17.)

And slew the calf of the sin-offering which was for himself.] Ordered it to be slain: for this was no part of the priest's work, as I shewed upon the first chapter, ver. 5.

Ver. 9. *And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him.*] They received it in basons as it run from the calf when it was killed, (see i. 5.) and brought it unto him; who stood at the altar to receive it, and do what follows.

And he dipped his finger in the blood.] The fore-finger of the right hand, which had been sanctified to this ministry, by putting the blood of the sacrifice of consecration upon the thumb of the right hand, (viii. 23, 24.) whereby we grasp all things, and cannot hold them strongly, nor perform any thing well, if that be wanting.

And put it upon the horns of the altar, &c.] See iv. 25.

Ver. 10. *But the fat, and the kidneys, and the caul about the liver.*] See iv. 8, 9.

He burnt upon the altar, as the Lord commanded Moses.] Laid or disposed them upon the altar, to be burnt by the heavenly fire, (ver. 24.) as most understand it. And the LXX. justify this opinion; who, though they here translate it, *he offered it on the altar*, yet, ver. 13. where there is the same phrase, they expressly translate it, ἐπέθηκεν τὸ ὁλοκαύτωμα ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον, *he laid the burnt-offering upon the altar:* and again, ver. 17. in the same manner, ἐπέθηκεν ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον χωρὶς, &c. *he laid it upon the altar, beside the burnt-sacrifice of the morning.* For common fire, it is supposed, was no longer to be used when Aaron's sacrifice began; as it had been all along before. But there is no certainty in this: and we may as well take the words in their proper sense, that Aaron burnt this and the following sacrifice, as Moses had done before, (viii. 14. 21. 28.) until the *burnt-offering* for the people came to be offered, which God consumed by fire from himself: and then followed those other sacrifices mentioned, ver. 17, 18. For all these sacrifices, for Aaron and for the people, could not be laid upon the altar at once; but one after another, in the order here directed: and consequently, this sacrifice here mentioned was actually burnt upon the altar, to make way for those which followed it.

Ver. 11. *And the flesh and the hide he burnt with fire, without the camp.*] See viii. 17.

Ver. 12. *And he slew the burnt-offering, and Aaron's sons presented to him the blood,* &c.] See i. 5.

Ver. 13, 14. *And they presented the burnt-offering unto him, with the pieces thereof,* &c.] All that is contained in these two verses is explained in the first chapter, (ver. 8, 9.) where the law about *burnt-offerings* is delivered.

Ver. 15. *And he brought the people's sin-offering,* &c.] Having offered all that was necessary for himself, now he became fit to make supplication for the people.

And offered it for sin, as the first.] In the same manner as he offered the foregoing *sin-offering* for himself, (ver. 8, &c.)

Ver. 16. *And he brought the burnt-offering.*] Here being no express mention of *burning* it, some from thence conclude, that this was the offering which alone was consumed by fire from the Lord. (See ver. 24.)

And offered it according to the manner.] Laid it upon the altar, as Moses had directed in the first chapter of this book.

Ver. 17. *And he brought the meat-offering,* &c.] Which attended upon *burnt-offerings*, (Numb. xv. 2—4, &c.)

Beside the burnt-offering of the morning.] This shews that Aaron began his priestly function with the morning sacrifice, which preceded all other, and was never omitted for the sake of any other sacrifice that was to follow it,

and it had always a meat-offering waiting upon it, (Exod. xxix. 39, 40.)

Ver. 18, 19. *He slew also the bullock and the ram, for a sacrifice of peace-offerings.*] These two verses are explained in the third chapter; which treats of such kind of offerings.

Ver. 20. *And he put the fat upon the breasts,* &c.] That it might by elevation and waving be presented unto the Lord; and then burnt upon the altar. (See vii. 30.)

Ver. 21. *And the breasts and the right shoulder Aaron waved for a wave-offering before the Lord.*] The fat being burnt upon the altar, as God's portion, these were the portion of the priests; who feasted upon God's meat; for they were solemnly presented unto him, before they had them. (See vii. 34.)

Ver. 22. *And Aaron lifted up his hands towards the people.*] Imploring the Divine blessing upon the people; which he afterwards pronounced. At this day, they that are of the family of Aaron, going up the steps which lead to the place where the book of the law is kept, lift up their hands as high as their heads, and pronounce a blessing in their synagogues upon the assembly. And they say the ancient custom was, which is still observed, not only to lift up and spread their hands, but then to join them together by the thumbs, and the two fore-fingers; dividing the other from them, in that figure which is represented by an eminently learned person, J. Wagenseil, in his commentary upon Sota, (cap. 7. p. 672. and 1132.)

And blessed them.] We read of no order for this: but natural reason taught them, from the beginning, that the priestly office consisted in praying for the people, and blessing them: we find an example of it in Gen. xiv. 18, 19. And not long after Aaron's consecration, Moses delivered from God a form of words, wherein the priests should bless the people, (Numb. vi. 24.) And at this day, there is nothing done among the Jews with such solemnity, and in which they place so much sanctity, as this. For when the blessing is pronounced in their synagogues, they all cover their faces; believing they would be struck blind, if they should look up: because the Divine Majesty, at that time, sits upon the hands of the priest. So the same Wagenseil observes, in the place abovenamed: which shews, not only how laborious they have been to maintain in the people's minds an opinion, that God is still as much present with them in their synagogues, as he was anciently in the tabernacle and temple; but how high a value they set upon the Divine blessing pronounced by his ministers.

And came down from offering the sin-offering, and the burnt-offering, and peace-offerings.] He pronounced the blessing before he came down from the altar, which stood upon raised ground, (though there were no steps to it, Exod. xx. 26.) that all the people might the better see what was done, while he offered all these sacrifices for them, and lifted up his hands to implore God's blessing upon them.

Ver. 23. *And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation.*] The sacrifice being ended, it is likely Moses went with Aaron into the sanctuary, to instruct him how to sprinkle the blood, and to burn incense, and order the shew-bread, and such-like things as were to be done only in the holy place.

And came out, and blessed the people.] I suppose that all the sacrifices beforementioned might be offered after the *morning sacrifice,* (ver. 17.) which took up a great deal of time, before they were all completed. After which Moses and Aaron went into the sanctuary, and stayed there till the time of the *evening sacrifice;* and then came out and dismissed the people with a new blessing, when the evening sacrifice was finished.

And the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people.] That *glory* which filled the tabernacle, (Exod. xl. 34, 35.) now appeared without: either at the door of it, or upon it, in the sight of all the people, as Moses had foretold, (ver. 6.)

Ver. 24. *And there came a fire out from before the Lord.*] Either out of the sanctuary, from the holy of holies: or from that glory which now appeared unto them, and sent out flashes of fire which burnt up the sacrifice. In either of these senses, it may be said to come from *the face of the Lord,* as the Hebrew phrase is.

And consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat.] It seems to me most natural and easy to take this *burnt-offering* and its *fat* for the evening sacrifice; which concluding the work of this day, God gave a special token of his acceptance of all the other sacrifices, by consuming this; and likewise publicly testified his approbation of all the forementioned rites of the ministry of Aaron, whose authority was hereby established in a miraculous manner. To confirm this, it may be noted, that, as the place which God chose for his worship and service, was afterward designed in the time of David after the very same manner; (1 Chron. xxi. 26.) so it was at the time of the *evening sacrifice,* as may be gathered from 2 Sam. xxiv. 15. where it is said the pestilence continued from morning, *to the time appointed,* that is, to the evening; and then David saw the angel, who commanded Gad to bid him set the altar in the threshing-floor of Araunah; where God answering by fire from heaven, it made him say, *this is the house of God, and this is the altar of burnt-offering,* (1 Chron. xxii. 1.) And when Solomon built the temple in that very place, it was thus consecrated by fire coming from heaven, and consuming the burnt-sacrifice, as well as by the glory of the Lord filling the house, (2 Chron. vii. 1—3.) And it is very probable, also, that this was at the time of the *evening sacrifice;* for the former part of the day had been spent in bringing the ark into the house of the Lord, and in Solomon's prayer; as we read in the two foregoing chapters. Certain it is, that the authority of Elijah to restore God's true religion and worship was thus justified, 1 Kings xviii. 38, 39. and it was at the time of the offering the *evening sacrifice,* (ver. 39.) From whence that prayer of the Psalmist, (Psal. cxli. 2.) *Let the lifting up of my hands be as the evening sacrifice.*

All this was so notorious, that Julian himself acknowledges, that fire came down from heaven in the time of Moses, and again in the days of Elijah, *τὰς θυσίας ἀναλίσκον, consuming the sacrifices;* as we find his words related by St. Cyril, (lib. x. contra Julianum.) And this gave such a Divine authority to the Jewish religion, that it is no wonder to find, that the pagans endeavoured to get credit to their religion by the like reports of fire, from an invisible power, consuming their sacrifices: which perhaps was sometimes really done by the prince of the power of the air, as the apostle calls the devil. However that be, there are several instances of this in Pausanias, Dionysius, Halicarnassæus, Valerius Maximus, and Pliny. But Servius

may serve instead of all; who, upon those words of Virgil, in Æneid xii.

—— "fœdera fulmine sancit,"

saith, that anciently they did not kindle fires upon their altars, "sed ignem divinum precibus eliciebant," &c. *but they procured by their prayers Divine fire,* which inflamed their altars. And Solinus saith, (cap. 11.) that the flame sprung out of the wood by a Divine power. "Si Deus adest, si sacrum probatur, sarmenta licet viridia ignem sponte concipiunt," &c. *If God be present, if the sacrifice be acceptable, the faggots, though green, kindle of themselves;* and without any one to set them on fire, a flame is raised by the Deity to whom the sacrifice is offered. Thus *there rose up fire out of the rock,* and consumed Gideon's sacrifice, (Judg. vi. 21.) They that would see more of this out of pagan writers, may consult J. Dilherrus Dissert. Special. de Cacozelia Gentil. (cap. 11.) But especially Huetius, in his Alnetanæ Questiones, (lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 21.)

But whether this fire, which now came from before the Lord, consumed Aaron's sacrifice instantly, or only set it into a flame, which consumed it leisurely in the sight of all the people, cannot certainly be determined. The Jews seem to suppose the latter; the heavenly fire being now kindled, which continued ever after by a constant supply of fuel, whereby it was kept perpetually burning, as is ordained vi. 12, 13. (See note on that place.) Where to me it seems very observable, that this law of keeping in the fire perpetually, is ordered to be put in execution at the evening sacrifice, ver. 9. of that chapter. Which is a sufficient reason to incline one to think, that the celestial fire now came, as I have supposed, at the evening sacrifice, and consumed the burnt-offering.

Which when all the people saw, they shouted.] They fled not from it, as men affrighted, but shouted for joy: or, as Abarbinel's phrase is, *they lifted up their voices with singing, and prayed to God,* or rather praised him. Just as they did when the fire came down at the consecration of Solomon's temple, *When the people saw it they praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever,* (2 Chron. vii. 3.)

And fell on their faces.] Worshipped God with humble thankfulness; who hereby testified his presence among them, and his gracious acceptance of them. For thus he had of old shewed his respect to Abel, (Gen. iv. 4.) and to Noah, (vii. 20.) and to their father Abraham: whose sacrifice was thus accepted in the *evening,* when the sun went down, (Gen. xv. 17.)

And there was great reason, that both priests and people should rejoice at this sight: for, as the author of the book Cosri discourses, (par. iii. sect. 53.) "If a man look only at the foregoing part of the work of this day (the killing of the sacrifices, the blood running about their hands; their slaying of them, washing the entrails, rincing the pieces of flesh, sprinkling the blood, laying the wood in order, kindling the fire), they would rather set his mind further off from God, than draw it near to him: till after all these things performed orderly, he saw the fire coming down from heaven, testifying God's gracious acceptance of the sacrifice; or felt another spirit excited in him, beyond any thing he was acquainted withal before; or had Divine dreams, or heroical motions; which he believed were the effects of what he had been doing," &c. And no doubt, all good men, in future ages, felt their minds raised, by the thoughts that the sacrifices they offered were as acceptable to God as that offered at this time; being consumed, in some sort, by the same fire, which burnt continually on this altar; and, after this day, was never extinguished till the captivity. Which seems to be the original of that expression of the people, in their prayer for their king, that God would "remember all his offerings, and accept (*turn to ashes,* it is in the Hebrew) his burnt-sacrifice," (Psal. xxi. 3.)

"Such acceptable sacrifices, (St. Cyril tells Julian,) we Christians still offer, but infinitely better, being spiritual and intellectual (and consequently nearer to the Divine nature), and that by fire sent from heaven, *viz.* the Holy Ghost (of whom this fire was but a figure), καταφωτίζων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, *illustrating the church,* and enabling the members of it to offer continually the sweet-smelling sacrifices of faith, and hope, and charity, and righteousness, temperance, obedience, perpetual doxologies, and all other virtues," (lib. x. contr. Jul.)

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron.*] His two eldest sons, (Exod. vi. 23.)

Took either of them his censer.] Here are two of their errors expressed in these words, if Abarbinel conjecture aright (who supposes this to have happened on the last day of their consecration, when fire came down from heaven), first, that they adventured, without any order from God, to go and burn incense in the sanctuary. For though this did not belong to the office of the high-priest alone, yet, upon this solemn day, Aaron only was commanded to perform the whole service; as upon the day of expiation, (ix. 7.) And this account Bochartus gives of their offence, that "sine vocatione, thus obtulerunt," *they offered incense without any call to it,* (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 49. p. 557.) And secondly, both of them went about this work; whereas the incense was to be offered only by one, and not by two at a time. Procopius Gazæus adds a third error; that they attempted this out of the due season for it: which was only in the morning and evening.

And put fire thereon.] As the priests were required to offer *no strange incense,* (Exod. xxx. 9.) so, in all reason, they were to think, it was not to be offered with *strange fire;* but only with a coal from that altar, where there was a fire kindled by God himself.

And offered strange fire before the Lord.] Here are two sins more (if Abarbinel take it right), that they brought fire from another place, without the sanctuary; and did not take it from the altar: and then, that they attempted to go into the *most holy place;* which he thinks is signified by these words, *before the Lord.* The first of these is the opinion also of Aben Ezra, and other learned men among the Jews; who by *strange fire* understand, *fire that did not go out from before the Lord,* (ix. 24.) that is, was not taken from the altar of burnt-offering; where fire from heaven lately consumed their oblations. And so R. Bechai: "They imagined that the fire on the altar of burnt-offerings was only for consuming sacrifices; and therefore, they fetch some from without, for the burning incense." But as to the

second thing, it doth not seem to me probable; for Aaron himself had not yet gone into the holy of holies.

Which he commanded them not.] This they did (saith Aben Ezra) from their own proper motion and opinion; without any authority from God: for whose order they should have waited, if his mind was not already sufficiently declared, as it was fully afterward, (xvi. 12.)

How two such excellent men as these (who had had the honour to be called up to God, when he appeared on Mount Sinai, and to have a sight of him, and to eat and drink in his presence, Exod. xxiv. 1. 9, 10, &c.) came to be so rash, and to fall so unadvisedly into so great an error, as this here mentioned, cannot be certainly resolved. But it seems to me highly probable, that at the feast upon the *peace-offerings*, they had eaten and drunk too liberally; which made them forget themselves, and fall into this gross mistake. For I can see no other reason why that command, (ver. 8.) of not drinking wine or strong drink, when the priests were to go into the sanctuary, is annexed unto this story of their death and burial; but only this, which I have now alleged; that their miscarriage arose from drinking too much wine before this office was to be performed.

Ver. 2. *And there went out fire from the Lord.*] As they were entering into the sanctuary, or as they stood at the golden altar, ready to offer incense, fire came out from the most holy place (where the glory of the Lord was), and struck them dead.

And devoured them.] It did not reduce their bodies to ashes, nor so much as burn their clothes, (ver. 5.) but they were killed as men sometimes are with lightning; which penetrates into the vital parts, and puts a sudden end to their life. That is meant here by *devoured them;* took away their breath in a moment. From which expression the Hebrew doctors conclude, that when any body was condemned to be burnt, it was not to be consumed to ashes, but only exanimated by the fire; because this is called *devouring* or *burning*, here in this place. (See Gemara Sanhedrin, cap. 7. n. 1.)

And they died before the Lord.] Fell down dead in the house of God. Which may seem too great a severity, till it be considered how reasonable and necessary it was to inflict a heavy punishment upon the first transgressors of a law, concerning a matter of great moment, to deter others from the like offence. Many instances of which there are in Scripture: some observed by St. Chrysostom upon Psal. vi. 2. where he gives this account, why the man who gathered a few sticks upon the sabbath-day was adjudged to be stoned, as blasphemers were; because it was a very heinous thing, ἐκ προοιμίων εὐθέως παραβῆναι τὸ πρόσταγμα, &c. *as soon as a law was enacted, immediately to break it:* which made it necessary it should be thus severely punished, to strike such a terror into others, that they might not dare to do the like, which was the reason, he observes, of the sudden death of Ananias and Sapphira, mentioned Acts v. Isidore of Pelusium hath made the same observation, (lib. i. epist. 181.) and goes so far back as to our first parents, who were dreadfully punished for a seemingly small offence, because they were the first transgressors. The same others have observed of the punishment of Cain, who committed the first murder; of the filthiness of Sodom; of the idolatry of the golden calf; the covetousness and sacrilege of Achan; the disobedience of Saul, the first king of Israel; the sudden death of Uzzah, who was the first that presumed to touch the ark of God.

Ver. 3. *And Moses said unto Aaron.*] To satisfy him in the justice and wisdom of this dreadful stroke, at which he could not but be extremely afflicted.

This is that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me.] To *come nigh* unto God, is, in the holy language, to perform the office of a priest, (Exod. xix. 22. Numb. xvi. 5.) who, having the honour of attending upon the service of the Divine Majesty, was bound to approach into his presence with the greatest reverence. We do not read indeed those very words, which Moses here recites, in the foregoing books; but, as many things were spoken to them which are not recorded, so the sense of these words is in the place forenamed, Exod. xix. 22. and the reason of them in Exod. xxix. 43, 44. where the tabernacle being said to be *sanctified* by the Divine Glory, and the priests being *sanctified* to minister unto him therein, (which was seven days a doing, as we read here, viii. 35.) they were plainly taught to draw nigh to God with a holy fear, and to do nothing rashly, nor without order from him. For God being peculiarly known by the name of the Holy One, *i. e.* who hath incomparable perfections, such as no other being hath, he justly required to be accordingly worshipped, suitable to his most surpassing greatness; by peculiar rites of his own prescribing, in a different manner from all other beings. It was, for instance, below his eminency, or rather supereminent majesty, to have common fire (such as they employed in their kitchens) used for the burning sacrifices on his altar. And in like manner all other parts of his service were, in reason, to be performed after such a fashion as might signify their sense of the peculiar excellences of the Divine Nature; who, therefore, sent fire from heaven as only fit to burn perpetually upon his altar.

And before all the people will I be glorified.] This may be thought to be but a solemn repetition of what was spoken before, as the manner is in these books to deliver the same thing twice in different words. Or the meaning is, If they who draw nigh to me will not sanctify me, I will vindicate my own honour by such punishments, as shall openly declare to all that I am the Holy One. Thus God is said to be honoured upon Pharaoh by drowning him in the Red Sea, (Exod. xiv. 4.)

And Aaron held his peace.] Silently adored the justice of the Holy One, and did not complain of his severity. For this doth not seem to be the effect merely of great grief, but of great reverence to the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 4. *And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel, the uncle of Aaron.*] It appears from Exod. vi. 18. that Uzziel, the father of Mishael and Elzaphan, (ver. 22.) was the younger brother of Amron, the father of Aaron, and consequently Aaron's uncle.

And said unto them, Come near, and carry your brethren.] All near kindred are called *brethren* in Scripture. And these cousin-germans of theirs are appointed to carry them out, because Aaron's other sons were now attending upon God in their ministration, upon the day of their consecration. But without this special order, these two persons could not have been admitted to *come near* into the very sanctuary, being not of the family of priests, though of kin to them,

From before the sanctuary.] See ver. 2.

Out of the camp.] For anciently they buried not in their cities, but in the fields adjacent to them, (Gen. xxiii. 9. 17.) and so they did in aftertimes, Matt. xxvii. 7. and Luke viii. 27. where the tombs are plainly intimated to be without the city.

Ver. 5. *So they went near.*] There being two accents upon the Hebrew word for *draw near*, the cabalists from thence observe (I know not upon what grounds), that these men did not come into the very sanctuary where the dead bodies lay, but drew them out with long poles, and those of iron, being afraid of the fire wherewith Nadab and Abihu had been killed: or rather, fearing to go into the sanctuary, or too near it. (See Hackspan's Cabala Judaica, n. 58.)

And carried them out in their coats, &c.] Their linen vestments wherein they ministered; which having touched dead bodies, were no more fit to be used in the Divine service.

As Moses had said.] As he had directed in his order which he gave them.

Ver. 6. *And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar his sons.*] These two were all the sons that Aaron had now remaining; from whom came two great families of the priests; which, in the days of David, we find very numerous (though more of the house of Eleazar than of the other), when they were by him divided into twenty-four classes, and had their courses of waiting appointed them, (1 Chron. xxiv. 4, &c.)

Uncover not your heads.] The Hebrew doctors interpret it quite contrary, *Let not the hair of your head grow:* so long, that is, as to cover their faces; which was the custom of mourners, (2 Sam. xv. 30. xix. 4. and many other places.) And thus Onkelos, and the Arabic version set forth by Erpenius, and many of the Jewish commentators (such as R. Solomon and Aben Ezra), who give the same account of Lev. xxi. 10. where the same thing is required of the high-priest. And the time of their letting their hair grow on such occasions, they determine by the law of the Nazarites, who were not to cut their hair all the time of their vow of separation, which the Jews say was at least thirty days, (Numb. vi. 5.) Therefore the priests were not to let their hair grow so long: if they did, they were incapable of officiating. Only they make this difference between the common priests and the high-priest; that this law did not bind the priests at all times, but only in their course of ministration: but the high-priest (whose presence was always necessary in the sanctuary) might never let his hair grow; but was bound every week to have it cut even, on the evo of the sabbath. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Success. in Pontiff. cap. 6.)

But the foundation of all this is not very strong; for it relies chiefly on the use of the Hebrew word פֶּרַע in that place of Numbers vi. 5. where it signifies *hair:* from whence they conclude the verb here may have the same notion, and signify the *growth of hair.* But this is not the usual signification of it in Scripture, where it commonly imports the *rejection* of something; as of good *counsel,* (Prov. i. 25.) of *reproof* or *instruction,* (Prov. xiii. 18. xv. 32.) And being joined with the *head,* plainly signifies the *uncovering it.* (See Numb. v. 18.) And, therefore, so the LXX. understand it here; as if they were forbidden to *put off their bonnets.* But that they always did, as soon as they had performed their sacred office in the sanctuary: and therefore, it may be meant of making their heads *bare* by shaving them, or *bald* by pulling off the hair, as the manner was in mourning, (Isa. xv. 2. Jer. xli. 5. xlviii. 37. and many other places.) And in this, the priests among the Jews directly opposed those among the Egyptians who shaved their heads; as appears by what Minutius Felix, and Lampridius, in the life of Commodus, say, concerning the priests of Isis. And Herodotus, also, in his Euterpe, whose words are these, Οἱ ἱερεῖς τῶν Θεῶν τῇ μὲν ἄλλῃ κομέουσι, ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ δὲ ξυρεῦνται. *In other places the priests of the gods nourish the hair; but in Egypt they are shaved.*

Neither rend your clothes.] Which was another rite of mourning; not only among the Jews, but among all people in ancient times, especially in the eastern countries; as every one knows that hath read any of their authors. (See Job i. 20.) And it was used on many other occasions among the Jews, as well as in their funerals; particularly when any man blasphemed, (Numb. xiv. 6. 2 Kings xix. 1.) when any ill tidings came which put them into a passion, (2 Kings v. 7.) or any misfortune befel them, (Gen. xliv. 13. Judg. xi. 35.) But was thought so unseemly in a priest, especially when he ministered, that the Jews say, they whose garments were rent by accident, were as incapable of ministering, as they who rent themselves in mourning.

The reason of this precept was, (as R. Levi of Barcelona well observes, Præcept. clv.) that it being not allowed in those countries for mourners to come into the presence of their kings (as appears by the history of Esther), much less was it seemly for any that attended upon the Divine Majesty, to come into his house in such a habit.

Lest ye die.] As Nadab and Abihu did. For after such a monition as this, they had highly dishonoured God if they had appeared in his sanctuary in such an indecent manner.

And wrath come upon the people.] For want of priests to make atonement for them when they offended.

But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the Lord hath kindled.] He doth not prohibit the rest of the people, who were not priests, to mourn for them; but rather requires it of them all: that they might be sensible of their loss, and of the sin which was the cause of it. And it is likely the people bewailed them, by rending their clothes, and baring their heads, and putting ashes upon them; or some such rites then in use among them.

Ver. 7. *And ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*] For it is supposed the seven days of their consecration were not yet quite ended, (viii. 35.) or they had begun some other ministration in the sanctuary; and therefore were not to stir out of the court of it till it was finished. And the Hebrews think this law did not only bind Aaron and his sons at this time, but their posterity for ever: that if they heard of the death of any of their kindred, when they were ministering in the sanctuary, they should not stir from their duty: for that would have been to shew a greater affection to a dead friend, than to the living God. This appears to be true, by the like command to this, and in the same words, laid particularly upon the high-priests, xxi. 12.

For the anointing of the Lord is upon you.] You are devoted and consecrated by a solemn unction (viii. 10, &c.) to the service of God; which must not be omitted out of respect to any person whatsoever. For in this precept (as R. Levi Barzelonita observes, Præcept. clvii.) the dignity and majesty of the Divine worship were consulted; which, if his ministers had deserted on such occasions, for a moment, would have been brought into contempt. For it would have been a declaration, that there was something in the world more to be regarded than God's service. And therefore the punishment of death is threatened (in the foregoing words) to those who were guilty of such an offence.

And they did according to the word of Moses.] Stayed in the tabernacle, without any of the usual tokens of mourning. Wherein they performed an eminent piece of obedience to God; whose commandment suppressed those natural affections, which are very hard to be kept in subjection.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying.*] It may be thought, that the Lord was so pleased with his obedience, that he himself now spake unto Aaron; whereas hitherto he had spoken to him by Moses.

Ver. 9. *Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou nor thy sons with thee.*] By *wine* every one knows is meant that liquor which is pressed out of grapes: and by *schechar* (which we translate *strong drink*) is meant such liquors as were made in imitation of wine, of dates or figs, and many other sorts of fruits; also that which was made of honey, which we call mead, and metheglin. There are many sorts of such liquors mentioned by Pliny, (in his Natural History, lib. xiv. cap. 16.) which he calls *vina factitia.*

When ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation.] To perform your ministry. At other times they might drink wine: and, if we may believe the Jews, they did not offend against this precept, if, before they went into the sanctuary, they drank no more than a fourth part of a log: which contained an egg-shell and a half. If they exceeded this measure, then their ministry, they say, was profaned, and they were liable to death by the hand of Heaven. See R. Levi of Barcelona, Præcept. clviii. who hath many niceties about this matter; as hath also Maimonides, mentioned by the learned Dr. Outram, in his book de Sacrificiis, lib. i. cap. 6. n. 4.

Lest ye die.] As their brethren did: see upon ver. 1. where I observed it to be very probable, that they were burnt with fire from the Lord upon this account. They that think it worth their while, may see after what manner the cabalists make out this, and what reflections they make upon it, in Theod. Hackspan's Cabala Judaica, n. 144, 145.

It shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations.] And such a law there was in some heathen countries, that no magistrate, all the year he was in office, nor any judge, while he was in action and employment, should οἴνου γεύεσθαι τὸ παράπαν, *so much as taste a drop of wine.* So Plato tells us; with which Eusebius compares this law of Moses, (lib. xii. Præp. Evang. cap. 25.) And Chæremon, the Stoic, describing (in Porphyry's book, περὶ Ἀποχῆς, lib. iv.) the diet of the Egyptian priests, tells us, that οἴνου οἱ μὲν [οὐδ' ὅλως· οἱ δὲ, ὀλίγιστα ἐγεύοντο, *some of them drunk no wine at all, and others very little.*

Ver. 10. *That ye may put a difference between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean.*] Here is the ground and reason of this precept; that they might have their wits about them (as we speak), and preserve their minds from being clouded (as Nadab's and Abihu's were, who put no difference between holy fire and common), and so be able *both to put a difference* (as the first words may be translated) *between holy and unholy,* &c. and also to *teach the people all the statutes,* which God had delivered to them; as it follows in the next verse.

And here it must be observed, that as some days and places were more holy than others, so were some parts of the sacrifices also; which they might not eat themselves, but were reserved for the altar. Some beasts also were clean, and others so unclean, that they might neither be offered in sacrifice, nor eaten at their common tables, (xi. 47.) Some men and women were so unclean, that they were not to be admitted into their ordinary conversation; much less into the sanctuary, (chap. xii. xiii.) Of all which the priests were the judges, and therefore had need to be perfectly sober, that they might make an accurate difference between one thing and another. And for such a like reason it was, the Egyptian priests were so abstemious in drinking wine, because they looked upon it as ἐμπόδιον εἰς εὕρεσιν, *an impediment to the finding out of the truth.* So Chæremon speaks in the forementioned book.

Ver. 11. *And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes,* &c.] Which concern the rites and ceremonies of God's worship.

Ver. 12. *And Moses spake unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons that were left.*] This was still spoken on the same day, a little after what he had said to them ver. 6, 7.

Take the meat-offering that remaineth of the offerings of the Lord made by fire, &c.] He seems to have been afraid, that Aaron's grief for the loss of his sons might have so disturbed his mind, as to have made him negligent in some part of his duty; or that Eleazar and Ithamar, through mistake or forgetfulness, might have offended against some of the laws lately delivered about sacrifices; which therefore he here repeats, that they might be exactly observed. And in the first place, that they should eat *what remained of the meat-offering,* as was commanded vi. 16. Where it is required also, as it is here, to be eaten *without leaven,* and *beside the altar,* in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation, as it is there expressed.

For it is most holy.] See there, vi. 17.

Ver. 13. *And ye shall eat it in the holy place.*] This he repeats, because they might possibly have forgotten it, or not sufficiently attended to the difference between things *most holy* and things only *holy.* The former of which the priests alone might eat, and that only in the *holy place*: the other all their family might eat (as he saith in the next verse) in any place that was *clean.*

Because it is thy due, and thy sons' due, &c.] Nobody might eat but holy persons; for so God directed, chap. ii. 3. vi. 16—18. vii. 9, 10.

Ver. 14. *The wave-breast and the heave-shoulder shall ye eat in a clean place.*] They were not bound to eat these in the court of the tabernacle, (as in the former case, ver. 13.) but in any part of the camp that was not defiled.

Thou, and thy sons, and thy daughters with thee.] These

being those which the Jews call *lighter holy things*, might be eaten by the whole family, as was before observed.

For they be thy due, and thy sons' due, which are given you out of the sacrifices of peace-offerings of the children of Israel.] They were bestowed upon them by an express grant, vii. 34. where, though only his sons be mentioned, as they are here, yet it is plain all of their family, who were clean, might eat of these things. (See upon vii. 19.)

Ver. 15. *The heave-shoulder and the wave-breast shall they bring, with the offerings made by fire of the fat, to wave it for a wave-offering before the Lord.*] This also he inculcates again, which had been said before, (vii. 29, 30.) that they must take care first to wave these things before the Lord, and to burn the fat upon the altar: for till this was done, they had no right to eat these things.

And it shall be thine, and thy sons' with thee.] When they had been presented to the Lord of the whole earth, and he had received his part, these became theirs, by an express grant from him, (vii. 32—34.)

By a statute for ever.] As long as such kind of sacrifices should last.

Ver. 16. *And Moses diligently sought the goat of the sin-offering.*] Which had been offered for the people, (ix. 15.)

And behold, it was burnt.] This justified Moses's suspicion and fear, that some mistake might have been committed in other matters; because he found, upon a diligent inquisition, that they had burnt upon the altar those parts of the sin-offering which they ought to have eaten themselves, (vi. 26. 29.) In which it was the easier for them to mistake, without diligent observation of Moses's directions; because the sin-offering, which had been offered for Aaron himself, was just before wholly burnt without the camp, (ix. 11.) and so were all the sin-offerings for the high-priest, and for the whole congregation, ordered to be, (iv. 12. 21.) that is, if their blood was carried into the holy place, then nothing of them might be eaten, (vi. 30.) But otherwise, their flesh was to be eaten in the court of the tabernacle, as is expressly commanded, (vi. 26.) This distinction they either did not well observe, when it was delivered; or, being oppressed with sorrow, for the loss of Nadab and Abihu, they did not think it fit to feast at this time upon the flesh of this offering. For so Aaron excuses this fact, (ver. 19.)

And he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar.] He said nothing to Aaron, either because he was loath to add to his grief, or because it was the business of his sons to look after this sacrifice, and to see that the flesh of it was disposed of according to God's orders.

The sons of Aaron which were left alive.] Who, by the punishment upon their brethren, should have learned greater caution in their ministry.

Ver. 17. *Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin-offering in the holy place?*] That is, obeyed the commandment which I gave you? (vi. 26.)

Seeing it is most holy.] See vi. 25.

And God hath given it you.] See vi. 29.

To bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord.] God bestowed upon the priests this reward of their service, that they might be the more willing to take upon them the people's sins, and to make an expiation carefully for them. And indeed the very eating of the people's sin-offering, argued the sins of the people were in some sort laid upon the priests; to be taken away by them. Which being done, they had reason to rejoice also in a feast upon this sacrifice; which God had been pleased to accept, for the taking away of the sins of the people. From whence the sacrifice of Christ may be explained, who is said to *bear our iniquity* (as the priest is said here to do), all our sins being laid on him; who took upon him to make an expiation for them, by the sacrifice of himself. For the priest here by eating of the sin-offering, receiving the guilt upon himself, may well be thought to prefigure one, who should be both priest and sacrifice for sin: which was accomplished in Christ.

Ver. 18. *Behold.*] Observe what I say to you.

The blood of it was not brought in, within the holy place.] It was none of those sacrifices which I commanded you to burn entirely; but required you to eat of, (vi. 26. 30.)

Ye should indeed have eaten it in the holy place, as I commanded.] For as there was a peremptory law forbidding the priests to eat the flesh of any sacrifice, whose blood was brought into the holy place, to make atonement with it: so there was as peremptory a law, that they should eat the flesh of those sacrifices for sin, whose blood was not brought in thither.

Ver. 19. *And Aaron said unto Moses.*] Though Moses questioned only Eleazar and Ithamar, yet Aaron makes the answer: they not being able, perhaps, to give an account of what they had done, though sensible of their mistake.

Behold, this day have they offered their sin-offering, and their burnt-offering before the Lord.] His apology for them seems to be this, that they had not wholly violated God's command; but performed the substance of it, though they had failed in one circumstance. For they had not only offered the *sin-offering* for the people (for that is meant by *their sin-offering*), but also their *burnt-offering*, (ix. 15, 16.) and that *before the Lord*, in the place where he ordered them to be offered. In all this Aaron was the principal minister, but they assisted him: for it is expressly said, *they presented unto him the blood* of the peace-offerings (which at the same time were also offered), *and they put the fat upon the breasts*, when *he burnt the fat* upon the altar, (ix. 18. 20.)

And such things have befallen me.] After this was done, followed the death of Nadab and Abihu, who went in to burn incense: which struck him into such a consternation, and made him so exceeding sad, that he was not fit to feast with Eleazar and Ithamar upon the sacrifice: and so suffered them to burn it.

And if I had eaten the sin-offering to-day, should it have been accepted in the sight of the Lord?] Would God have been pleased with me, if in such sadness and sorrow I had eaten of the sacrifice? This is the reason whereby he justifies the omission of which his sons were accused, in not eating the sin-offering in the holy place. The blame of which he takes upon himself; for to have eaten it with a sad countenance and a heavy heart, he thought would have been to pollute it. And therefore he chose to forbear it, and to give it wholly to God, by burning the flesh of it, as he had done the fat: which he hoped would be more acceptable than to eat it in grief. And to eat it without grief and sorrow was impossible: for though they had not been

so dutiful to him as they ought to have been, yet he could not extinguish the affection of a father towards them, nor suddenly cease to mourn inwardly for their untimely death.

From this place Maimonides gathers, there was but one day of mourning due to the dead, *viz.* the first: the rest were added by the constitution of the elders.

Ver. 20. *And when Moses heard that he was content.*] He was either satisfied with his reason, and thought he had done well, (for nature seems to have directed what was afterwards enjoined, that they should rejoice in their feasts, Deut. xii. 7, &c. and not eat holy things in their mourning, xxvi. 14.) or he would not further charge him with a fault, for which there was so far an excuse. For where there is no wilful contempt, but rather a respect intended in any action, all good men are inclined to make a favourable construction of it, and grant it an indulgence, though there be some error in it.

CHAP. XI.

MOSES having mentioned, in his preceding discourse about sacrifices, several sorts of uncleanness, (v. 2, 3.) and in the foregoing chapter (x. 10.) commanded the priests to keep themselves sober, that they might at all times be able to distinguish between *clean* and *unclean*, takes an occasion from thence to give an account of that matter. For otherwise that which we read chap. xvi. would here have most naturally followed (as appears from the eleventh verse of it), being about the principal sacrifice, whereby all manner of uncleanness was to be expiated; which he now inserts in the midst of those things that belong to that head. For, first, he treats in this chapter of *unclean meats;* and in the twelfth to fifteenth, of *unclean persons, garments, and habitations.* And then (after he hath directed how to make the great atonement for the whole nation, and some other things) he returns in the latter end of chap. xvii. to speak of some *forbidden food;* and chap. xviii. of *unclean marriages:* and after a repetition of several laws, (chap. xix.) of some greater uncleannesses; and chap. xxi. of priests that were unclean: and lastly, of sacrifices not fit to be offered, (chap. xxii.)

Ver. 1. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, and to Aaron, saying unto them.*] The consecration of Aaron benig now completely finished, God spake to him, as well as unto Moses; he being also highly concerned to teach the people the difference that is here made between several sorts of meats, (x. 11.) which Moses assures them was enacted by Divine authority.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying.*] They were all to take special notice of what follows, because, by the diet here prescribed, they were discriminated from all other people in the world.

These are the beasts that ye shall eat, among all the beasts that are on the earth.] God having bestowed upon mankind, after the flood, every living thing to be their food, (Gen. ix. 3.) it hath raised a question among learned men, why God should limit and restrain his own people from the benefit of this general grant. And some have thought this so unaccountable, that they have said it is in vain to inquire into the reason of the difference that is made here of meats: concerning which P. Cunæus declares (as Plutarch doth of the laws of Solon and Lycurgus), that no doubt they were enacted with wise counsel; but the reason of the authors cannot be known, (lib. ii. Republ. Heb. cap. 24.) But others think the reason is plain enough; and the Jews are of opinion, that the creatures here called *unclean*, were forbidden to be eaten, because they were unwholesome food. So Maimonides discourses at large in his More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 48. where he saith, there can be no doubt that every thing here prohibited yields a bad nourishment, except it be *swine's flesh* and *fat:* and yet he endeavours to shew, that there is no reason to think otherwise of those two. R. Levi of Barcelona is of the same mind, but pretends not to be able to demonstrate it, as Maimonides doth. For the sum of a long and pious discourse, which he hath upon this subject (Præcept. lxxix. where he treats of that flesh which was torn by wild beasts) amounts to this: "that the body being the seat of the soul, where it doth its business, God would have it fitted to the desires and employments of the soul. And therefore the law (saith he) removes from us all those things which may hinder the soul in its operations. For which reason such and such meats are forbidden, as breed ill blood: among which, if there be some whose hurtfulness is neither visible to us, nor to physicians, do not wonder at it; for *the faithful Physician who forbids them, is wiser than any of us.*"

This opinion I cannot think to be wholly groundless: for though there be some creatures here prohibited, which seem to us of as good nourishment as those which are allowed; yet, considering that climate wherein the Jews lived, and the temper of their blood, which was very hot, and apt to be extremely corrupted (as appears by the unusual leprosy to which they were obnoxious, more than other nations), it is reasonable to conclude, that God had some respect to this, in the ordering of their diet. (See J. Wagenseil Confut. Carminis R. Lipmanni, p. 556.) Yet I cannot think this to have been the chief reason of this law, (though it be very agreeable to the peculiar care God had of this people, that he should not only give them civil and sacred laws, but direct them in the smallest matters, as he did in their apparel, building, &c.) but the main drift and scope of it was, that the Israelites might be separated from all other nations in the world by a diet peculiar to themselves: which kept them from such a familiar conversation, as otherwise they might have had with the gentiles; and consequently from learning their idolatrous customs. And I do not see why I should not add, most of the creatures, which are reckoned *unclean*, were such as were in high esteem and sacred among the heathen. As a *swine* was to Venus, the *owl* to Minerva, the *hawk* to Apollo, the *eagle* to Jupiter, and even the *dog* to Hecate, &c. Whence Origen justly falls into a high admiration of Moses's wisdom; who so perfectly understood all animals, and what relation they had to demons, that he pronounced all those to be unclean, τὰ νομιζόμενα παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων μαντικὰ, &c. *which were esteemed by the Egyptians, and other nations, to be the instruments of divination;* and those to be clean, which were not so, (lib. iv. contra Celsum, p. 225.) And if in Moses's time such creatures were not sacred to demons, it is a greater wonder that he should mark those out for impure, which proved to be so sacred in after-ages: as a great number of birds mentioned by Porphyry (lib. iii. περὶ Ἀποχῆς), who saith the gods used them as Κήρυκες, to declare their mind to men:

and several other creatures, mentioned by other authors, as peculiarly appropriated to other deities.

Many have discoursed largely of the moral reasons of these precepts; particularly a very learned man now living, Joh. Wagenseil, in his annotations on that title in the Misna called Sota, (fol. 1171, &c.)

Ver. 3. *Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is cloven-footed.*] There are some creatures which Porphyry (in the book forementioned, lib. iv.) calls μώνυχα, *whose hoofs are solid,* and not at all divided; such as *horses, asses,* and *mules:* others that are πολυσχιδῆ, *divided into several parts,* like toes; as *lions, wolves,* and *dogs:* but a third sort that are only δίχηλα, (as Aristotle calls them), *divided into two parts;* as *oxen, deer, sheep, goats,* &c. And these are of two kinds; for some divide the hoof in two parts, but it is not cloven quite through; as the camel, whose hoof is parted above, but joined by a thick skin below, and therefore reckoned among the unclean beasts. Others both divided and cloven, which are those allowed by this law to be clean creatures.

And cheweth the cud among the beasts, &c.] As all those beasts do, which are not ἀμφόδοντα (as Aristotle calls them, lib. x. cap. 50.) that is, have not a set of teeth both above and below: such are oxen, sheep, and goats, which want upper teeth; and therefore bring their meat up again into their mouths, after it hath been some time in the stomach; that it may, by a new chewing of it, be better prepared for digestion. So the author of Porta Cœli, who explains this very exactly, when he saith, "For want of upper teeth they cannot chew their food perfectly at one time; nor can the stomach make a perfect digestion till it be ground a second time. And therefore such creatures are provided with a double stomach; an upper, into which the meat goes down after the first chewing; and another, into which it is sent, after it hath been grinded a second time."

That shall ye eat.] The Hebrews truly observe, (particularly R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. clix.) that all kinds of animals, which had not every one of these marks (of parting the hoof, and being cloven-footed, and chewing the cud) were unlawful to be eaten.

Ver. 4. *Nevertheless, these shall ye not eat, of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof.*] This is added as an explication of the foregoing rule, to shew, that if any of the forementioned marks were wanting, such creatures must not be eaten.

As the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof, &c.] The latter part of this character is not to be understood, as if the *camel* did not divide the hoof at all; but not quite through, so as to be *cleft,* as well as *divided.* For, though its hoof be divided above, it coheres below, as R. Solomon observes. And so doth Aristotle, (lib. ii. cap. 1.) and Pliny, (lib. ii. cap. 45.) This being so very plainly expressed in this law, it is something strange that Heliogabalus should order the flesh of *camels* and *ostriches* to be served up to his table, "Dicens, præceptum Judæis ut ederent:" saying, *the Jews were commanded to eat them;* as Lampridius reports his words, (cap. 28.) Salmasius, indeed, upon that place, saith, he found these two words, *struthiones* and *camelos,* joined together, to make one word in a MS. of the Palatine library, which reads *struthiocamelos exhibuit in cœnis.* Which seems to some to mend the matter; but then they are forced to interpret *præceptum* by *concessum;* as if he had said, *God did not forbid this meat to the Jews:* which is altogether uncertain. It is better to say, that though many of the pagans did read the law of Moses, yet they did it carelessly, without sufficient attention to it.

Ver. 5. *And the coney.*] Much might be said to justify our translation of the word *saphan,* by the English *coney,* if it could be proved that they *chew the cud;* which they do not, having upper teeth. Therefore, Bochart, by many arguments, proves this word, *saphan,* to signify a *mountain mouse;* which, as Solomon saith, (Prov. xxx. 26.) *make their holes in rocks:* which *rabbits* do not; but this creature doth, as he proves out of the Arabian writers; who call it *aliarbuo,* and say it chews the cud. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 33.)

Because he cheweth the cud, &c.] Or rather, *though he cheweth the cud,* yet, wanting the other mark, they were to look upon it as unclean.

Ver. 6. *And the hare, because he cheweth* (or *though* he cheweth) *the cud, but divideth not the hoof, he is unclean unto you.*] The same author shews in the same book, (cap. 37.) that the Hebrew word *arnebeth* is rightly translated a *hare.* For though no author, but Moses, saith it *chews the cud,* yet Aristotle saith something like it, lib. iii. cap. 22. where he observes, it hath a runnet in the stomach. And Tho. Bartholinus, in his Anatom. Hist. Cent. 2. Histor. lxxxvi. tells us, that in his dissection of a *hare,* though he found but one stomach, which made him wonder, at first, that Moses should reckon it among the creatures that ruminate, yet he found, that what was wanting in the simple stomach was supplied by the largeness of the *intestinum cæcum,* which gut is of a great bigness, consisting of two parts. In one of which he found liquid and white excrements (like to *chyle),* as if it were another stomach: the other part towards the *ileon,* being full of black excrements.

Ver. 7. *And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be cloven-footed, yet he cheweth not the cud: he is unclean to you.*] Though the swine hath the first part of the mark of a clean creature completely, being cloven-footed, as well as having the hoof divided, yet not chewing the cud, it is forbidden to be eaten. And this, no doubt, was the sole foundation of the Jews abstaining from this meat. Whose filthy feeding and wallowing in the mire, Maimonides fancies, was the only cause why it was prohibited, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 48.) To which others add, its feeding upon flesh, as Vossius observes, lib. iii. de Orig. et Progressu Idol. cap. 42. where he gives other reasons also for it. One of which, *viz.* that it was apt to breed the leprosy, to which they were very subject in those countries, is ingeniously treated of by Petrus Cunæus in his Republ. Hebræor. (lib. ii. cap. *ult.*) and more lately by another very learned person, J. Wagenseil, Carminis R. Lipmanni Confutatio, p. 556. To which Clemens Alexandrinus adds several other reasons, (lib. vii. Strom. p. 718.) and there are many more in Lactantius relating to mortality, (lib. iv. Divin. Instit. cap. 17.) But whatsoever grounds there might be of this prohibition, that alone could not be the reason why the whole nation of the Jews abhorred this more than any other unclean creature, which was equally forbidden with this. Insomuch that they would not, when they spoke of it, mention its proper name; but called it *another* (or a *strange) thing.* Which arose sure from some other cause;

that, in process of time, made this the most abominable of all other creatures. And that was, I take it, because the gentiles used it in their sacrifices and mysteries of religion; and because nothing was accounted a more delicious food among many great nations: which (if a vehement abhorrence had not been infused into the Jews of this creature) might have invited them to their tables, and bred such familiarity with them, as might have concluded in idolatry. Pliny observes, (lib. viii. cap. 51.) that no creature affords greater plenty of delicious dishes at their tables than this, "Neque alio ex animali numerosior materia ganeæ," &c. Insomuch that old Homer, relating how Eumæus entertained Ulysses, (Odyss. xiv.) saith only, that he killed a great hog of five years old, and that only for five guests. They that would see more of this, may look into Petrus Castellanus, lib. ii. de Esu Carnium, cap. 1, 2, &c. where he shews also, out of Varro, (lib. ii. de Re Rustica, cap. 4.) that the gentiles knew of no ancienter sacrifices than this, after they began to offer animals upon their altars. For they thought that would be most acceptable to their gods which best pleased themselves: insomuch that a swine, which the later Greeks called ὗς, was anciently called θῦς, *ab illo verbo quod dicitur θύειν, from that word which signifies to sacrifice.* For the first sacrifices were of this creature, as appears by the mysteries of Ceres, in which a sow was offered; and at their marriages the ancient kings and great men of Etruria offered the like sacrifice; and so did the Latins and Greeks in Italy. The Hierapolitans, indeed, looked upon swine as unclean, and would neither eat them, nor offer them to their gods; nor would they of Pessinuntium, in Galatia: "quod prorsus Mosaicum est," *which they learnt, in all likelihood, from Moses,* as Huetius thinks, (Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 11. n. 1.) But in many other nations this food was highly valued: and Athenæus, I observe, gives the very same reason of its name that Varro doth, (lib. ix. Deipnos.) Οἱ δὲ σὺν εἰρῆσθαι οἰονεὶ θῦν, τὸν εἰς θυσίαν εὐτεθοῦντα. From whence it is, that Aristophanes calls them Μυστικὰς Χοίρους, *mystical swine,* in his Acharnan. because, as the scholiast there explains it, διὰ τὸ ἐν τοῖς Μυστηρίοις Δήμητρος θύεσθαι, *they were offered in the mysteries of Ceres.* And Julian himself, in his oration upon the Mother of the Gods, (Orat. v.) confesses Φίλον εἶναι πεπίστευται θῦμα τοῖς χθονίοις θεοῖς οὐκ ἀπεικότως, *it was deservedly believed to be a grateful sacrifice to the terrestrial gods,* (p. 332. Edit. Patav.)

Ver. 8. *Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcass shall ye not touch.*] Some think the latter part of this precept signifies no more, but that they should not meddle with their carcass to prepare it for meat, (as the word *touch* seems to be used, Gen. iii. 3.) though they did not eat it. But others take it more largely, that they should not so much as open them, to take out the fat, and apply it to any use. In this the Jews are so scrupulous, that they say they may not touch them (though alive) with one of their fingers, for fear of the leprosy. It being a proverbial saying among them, which we read in the treatise Kidduschin, that "ten measures of leprosy descending into the world, swine took to themselves nine of them, and the rest of the world one."

If we may believe Herodotus, (lib. ii. cap. 47.) the Egyptians looked upon swine as so unclean, that if any one touched one of them by chance, as he passed by, he was bound to wash himself, with his garments, in the river. Certain it is, that not only they, but the Arabians, and some other neighbouring nations, did abstain from swine's flesh, as Bochartus and others have observed, (see his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 57. p. 702. and Petr. Castellanus, lib. ii. de Esu Carnium, cap. 4.) which they learned, I doubt not, at first from the Jews; and afterward found other reasons for it. This abhorrency of swine is propagated into far distant countries among the Mahometans; particularly into Mindanao, one of the Philippine islands; where, if any one have but touched one of these creatures, he is not permitted to come into any body's house for many days after. So Dampier relates in a late Voyage round the World, (chap. 12. p. 343.) where he says, "the sultan's brother having a pair of shoes made him by one of their ship's crew (which they seldom wear there), fell into a great passion, when he was told the thread wherewith the shoes were sewed, was pointed with *hog's bristles;* and would not wear them."

Ver. 9. *These shall ye eat of all that are in the waters.*] Though some of the heathens abstained perpetually from all fish, and others only for some time, ἐν ταῖς ἁγιστείαις, *when they were under strict obligations of purity,* (as Julian tells us in the forementioned oration v.) yet God left his people at greater liberty, forbidding to them only some kinds of fish; by abstinence from which they were sufficiently distinguished from those nations which did eat all indifferently, and accounted fish the greatest delicacy.

Whatsoever hath fins and scales.] If both these marks did not concur in a fish, they were not to eat it. But their doctors say, (as we learn from R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. cl.) that if but one scale was found on a fish, it was accounted lawful; and they needed not to observe whether it had fins or no: for all that have scales, they say, have fins; though, on the contrary, all that have fins have not scales. They observe also, secondly, that it was lawful to eat young fish before their scales appeared, if they were of that kind which have scales when they are grown. And, thirdly, all fishes that have scales when they are in the sea, but cast them when they are taken out, are lawful.

In the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers.] By *waters* in this place, as distinguished from *seas* and *rivers,* are meant *lakes* and *ponds.* And so Moses expresses all the places where fish is found.

Ver. 10. *And all that have not fins, nor scales,* &c. *shall be an abomination to you.*] There was an ancient law among the Romans, made by Numa, that no fish which wanted scales should be used in those feasts which they made in honour of their gods. So Pliny tells us, lib. xxxii. Nat. Hist. cap. 2. where he quotes an ancient writer for it.

Ver. 11. *They shall be even an abomination unto you.*] The next words explain what he means by *abomination;* that they should not eat their flesh, nor touch their carcasses.

Ver. 12. *Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that shall be an abomination unto you.*] He repeats it again, that they might take notice, that this alone was a sufficient mark of difference: and, therefore, he doth not give any instance of particular fishes that might be eaten or not eaten; as he did of beasts. He uses also the word *abomination* concerning prohibited fishes (which he doth not of such beasts, whom he only calls *unclean*), because there was greater danger of their transgressing in this matter; fishes

being a more usual food among the eastern people than flesh. Insomuch, that among the later Greeks, the word ὄψον, which signifies *all manner of victuals,* came to be used peculiarly for fish. See Bochartus, in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. i. cap. 6. where he observes, also, the greatest luxury was committed in this sort of food; which any one may see that reads Athenæus.

Ver. 13. *And these are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten.*] Here are no notes given, as in the two foregoing sorts of creatures, to distinguish clean birds from unclean: and therefore the Hebrew doctors say, all birds are lawful to be eaten, but these twenty-four mentioned in this chapter, which they were to have in abhorrence. Yet they adventure to give four marks of a clean bird; the principal of which are, if it do not fasten its talons; *i. e.* be not rapacious; and have one claw longer than the rest. (See R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. clxi.)

They shall be an abomination.] This is repeated to make them more careful in this matter.

The eagle.] He names in the first place, *the king of birds,* as Pindar calls the eagle,

——— οἰωνῶν Βασιλῆα,

whose flesh is very hard, and whose nature is very rapacious: and therefore, both upon a natural and moral account, some authors fancy it was forbidden to be eaten. (See Vossius, lib. iii. de Orig. et Progr. Idol. cap. 77.) But I think Origen hath given a better account of it, in the place I named above; that Moses by his admirable wisdom understood what creatures were looked upon as prophetical by the Egyptians and other nations; and these he prohibited to the Jews: among which he expressly names the *eagle* and the *hawk,* (lib. iv. contra Celsum, p. 225.) For Diodorus Siculus saith, (lib. i.) that τὸν δ' ἀετὸν Θηβαῖοι τιμῶσι, *the people of Thebes worship the eagle,* looking upon it as a royal bird, and worthy of Jupiter. And Julian in his oration upon the Mother of the Gods (Orat. v.) saith, that in the time of their strictest purifications, they were permitted πτηνοῖς χρῆσθαι (so Spanhemius truly reads in the late edition of Julian's works), *to eat birds,* πλὴν ὀλίγων, οὓς ἱεροὺς εἶναι πάντη συμβέβηκε, *except a few which had been commonly held sacred.* Which is a plain acknowledgment of the sacredness of some birds among the gentiles.

The ossifrage.] All authors in a manner agree, that the Hebrew word *peres* signifies a kind of *eagle;* but what kind is not so certain. Bochartus thinks it is rightly translated by Junius, as it is by us, the *ossifrage;* for the Hebrew word *paras,* in Micah iii. 3. is used for *breaking of bones.* (See Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 5.)

The osprey.] This is also of the same species; and signifies that sort which the Greeks call *halietus,* the *sea-eagle.* But Bochartus in the same book, cap. 6. thinks the Hebrew word *oznija,* rather signifies that which they call *malaniætus,* the *black eagle.* Which though it be the least, yet is the strongest of all other, and therefore called *valeria* by the Romans: and was so noted for many other qualities, besides its great strength, that it makes it probable Moses did not here omit it.

Ver. 14. *And the vulture, and the kite after his kind.*] No wonder interpreters differ in their translation of the two Hebrew words, *daa* and *aja;* the former of which we translate a *vulture,* the latter a *kite* (which others translate quite contrary, taking *daa,* or *raa,* as it is called in Deuteronomy, for a *kite*), because there is no way to find the signification of them, unless it be by the roots, from whence they may be thought to be derived. Which makes Bochart think the first ought to be translated a *kite,* called *daa,* from its very swift flight. Most of the ancient and later interpreters also are of his mind. As for the second word in this verse, *aja,* some take it for a *vulture:* but Bochart, from several observations, judges it to be a kind of *hawk* or *falcon.* (See the same book, cap. 8.) After this word there follows in Deuteronomy xvi. 13. the name of a bird which is here omitted, called *daja,* which he takes for the *black vulture;* as the reader may find in the next chapter, (cap. 9.)

After his kind.] Though there be some little difference in shape, yet these birds all belong to one species. (See ver. 22.)

Ver. 15. *Every raven after his kind.*] Nobody doubts that the Hebrew word *oreb* (which signifies *blackness*), is rightly translated a *raven;* of which the Arabian writers mention four kinds. And some think under this name is comprehended, not only crows, and daws, and choughs; but starlings and pies also. (See Bochartus, cap. 10. p. 202.)

Ver. 16. *And the owl.*] The Hebrew word *bath-jaana,* it appears by many places in the prophets, signifies a bird which inhabits the wildernesses and desolate places. (See Isa. xiii. 21. xxxiv. 13. Jer. l. 39, &c.) By which the ancient interpreters of Scripture almost unanimously understand the ostrich; though a very learned man of our own nation (Nic. Fuller, in his Miscellanies, lib. vi. cap. 7.) endeavours by a probable argument to support our translation. But it hath been the constant persuasion of the Jews, that God did not permit them to eat the flesh of an ostrich, which is no where forbidden, if not in this word. And therefore Bochartus maintains against our Fuller, and labours to prove that *bath-jaana* signifies the *female ostrich,* par. ii. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 14, where he shews the word *bath* (i. e. *daughter*) is prefixed to the name of many birds, without any respect to their age, and doth not signify their *young ones;* but only the *females.*

And the night-hawk.] In the next chapter to that now named, the same Bochart proves, that the Hebrew word *thacmus* (which we here translate the *night-hawk*), signifies *male ostrich.* For there is no general name for this bird in the Hebrew language, to comprehend both sexes (as there is for an eagle and raven), and therefore Moses mentions both male and female distinctly, that none might think, by forbidding one of them only, he allowed the other.

And the cuckoo.] The LXX. St. Jerome, and some later interpreters, translate the Hebrew word *sachaph* by the Greek word Δάρος, a *sea-gull.* Which the same great man, beforementioned, thinks most probable, (cap. 18.)

And the hawk after his kind.] There is the greatest consent in the translation of the Hebrew word *netz,* which all agree signifies a *hawk;* from its strength and swiftness in flight, which made it sacred to Apollo. For Eustathius observes upon Iliad. x. that ὀξυπετὴς ὁ ἱέραξ, καὶ Ἥλιος ὀξυκίνητος, *a hawk flies, as the sun moves, very swiftly.* And every one knows there are very various kinds of these

birds. Callimachus mentions six, Aristotle ten, and Pliny sixteen sorts. (See Bochart in the same book, cap. 19.)

Ver. 17. *And the little owl.*] Interpreters generally agree that *chos* signifies a kind of owl, following the LXX. who translate it νυκτικόραξ. Yet Bochart hath collected a great many ingenious arguments, to prove that it signifies that bird which the Greeks call ὀνοκρόταλος, a *bittern*. (See there, cap. 20.)

And the cormorant.] Though the same learned person doth not approve of this translation, yet he acknowledges the Hebrew word *salach* signifies some *sea-bird*, which sits upon rocks, and strikes at fishes with great force, and draws them out of the waters. And so the Talmudists, in the treatise called Cholin, expound it; and the gloss upon it there says, it signifies the *crow of the waters*, that is, a *cormorant*.

And the great owl.] There are various translations of the Hebrew word *jansaph*, which St. Jerome takes for a *stork*, and others for a *bustard*: but Bochart acknowledges the Syriac and Chaldee translation to be the most probable, which is the same with ours.

Ver. 18. *And the swan.*] In this translation we follow St. Jerome: but Jonathan takes it for a kind of *owl*, which he calls *otia*. Whereby he means, no doubt, that bird which Aristotle calls ὠτός: which he saith is like an owl, having tufts of feathers about its ears, from whence it hath the name of *otus*, (lib. viii. cap. 12.) And so the Chaldee, the Syriac, and the Samaritan here translate the Hebrew word *thinsemeth*, which a great many modern interpreters follow; who take this for that which the Latins call *noctua*, as the former for that owl which they call *bubo*.

The pelican.] That the Hebrew word *kaath* signifies a *pelican* is not disputed. But that it also signifies the bird we call a heron, is not improbable; being joined with *chos* in Psalm cii. 6. which is a bird that makes an unpleasant noise, especially that kind of them that cries like a bittern, and is called by later writers *butorius*.

And the gier-eagle.] There are many various opinions about this bird, which the Hebrews call *racham*. But Bochart hath shewn, out of the Arabian writers, that it signifies a kind of eagle, or vulture: for sometimes they call it by one of these names, sometimes by the other. It being of a dubious kind, between an eagle and a vulture; and therefore happily by us translated a *gier-eagle*, that is, a *vulture-eagle*, which Aristotle calls γυπαίετος. See Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 25—27. where Bochart shews it is such a harmless and good-natured bird, that thence it had the name of *racham*, and in Arabic of *rachama:* and was made the hieroglyphic of mercy and tenderness among the Egyptians, if Horus Apollo may be believed.

Ver. 19. *And the stork.*] There are vastly different interpretations of the word *chasida;* which imports kindness no less than the foregoing *racham*. But there is no reason to depart from the opinion of the later Hebrews, who take it, as we do, to signify a *stork*. The *piety* (as the Latins call it) of which bird is celebrated by all authors, and is the very import of the Hebrew word *chasida*. But it feeds upon serpents, and therefore, as Bochart imagines, was prohibited to be eaten by the Jews: though upon this account it was had in honour by the people of Thessaly, and by the Egyptians, as he observed in the forementioned book, cap. 29.

The heron after his kind.] There are at least ten different interpretations of the Hebrew word *anapha;* among which ours is one. But it being derived from a word which signifies *anger*, Bochartus rather takes it for a *mountain-falcon*, which is a fierce bird, and very prone to anger.

And the lapwing.] The Hebrew doctors take *dukiphah* for a *mountain-cock*, which had a double crest, and thence hath its name, according to R. Solomon. Or rather it may be so called from the place where it resorts; for *dik* in Arabic is a *cock*, and *kapha* a *rock*, from whence Bochart probably conjectures this bird had its name, because it lives in mountainous places. And he thinks the LXX. and the Vulgar have rightly translated it ἔποπα, and *upupam:* which is the sense also of four Arabian interpreters. It is a portentous kind of bird, which hath a crest from its bill to the hindermost part of its head; and one of the principal birds used in the ancient superstitions of the magicians and augurs, as he observes cap. 31.

And the bat.] As Moses begins the catalogue of birds with the noblest, which is the eagle, so he ends it with the vilest, which is a *bat;* being of a dubious kind, as Aristotle observes, between a bird and a mouse, lib. iv. cap. 13. where he saith it doth ἐπαμφοτερίζειν τοῖς πτηνοῖς καὶ πεζοῖς, &c. See the famous Bochartus, who shews that its name in Hebrew, which is *attaleph*, imports it to be a *bird of darkness*. Whence that phrase in the prophet Isaiah, ii. 20. "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver and gold to the bats, and the moles;" *i. e.* they shall no more appear to delude men with their glittering brightness, but be utterly destroyed.

Ver. 20. *All fowls that creep.*] The Hebrew word *oph* is not well translated *fowls;* but signifies rather all *flying things going upon all four*. All flying things that go upon four feet are here forbidden; such as all kinds of flies, and wasps, and bees, as Jonathan here explains it. A fly indeed is observed to be ἑξάπους: but though it have six feet, yet it goes only upon four, as not only Lucian, but Aristotle notes; the two fore-feet serves for other uses. (See Bochart in his Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 9.)

Shall be an abomination to you.] It is observed by some, that the birds here forbidden are either rapacious, and live on flesh, (as eagles and hawks, &c.) or are night-birds, (as owls, &c.) or haunt lakes and marshes, (as the bittern, &c.) or are heavy, and not easily raised from the earth, as the ostrich; or live in graves or in dung, as the upupa, and some of those flying things mentioned in this verse: and upon these accounts are forbidden by Moses; who allows all those that live upon a cleaner food, as those that follow do.

Ver. 21. *Yet these may ye eat, of every flying, creeping thing,* &c.] In this verse he excepts such flying insects, as, besides their four feet wherewith they go, have two legs or thighs, which enable them to leap upon the earth, as well as to go. Such are all the locusts mentioned in the next verse; unto which Aristotle ascribes six feet, whereas Moses mentions but four. In which they do not disagree; for Aristotle plainly saith, *they have six feet,* σὺν τοῖς ἁλτικοῖς μορίοις, *if we take into the number the parts with which they leap,* (lib. iv. cap. 6.) Which two hinder leaping legs Moses distinguishes from the other four wherewith they go.

Ver. 22. *Even these of them ye may eat.*] There are nine kinds of locusts mentioned in the holy books; four of which are here permitted to be eaten.

The locust after his kind.] The Hebrew word *arbeh* is sometimes a common name for all locusts; but here signifies a peculiar sort, of that kind beforementioned, which leaped as well as went.

The bald locust after his kind.] The Hebrew word is *solam:* so called, as Aben Ezra thinks, because it climbs up roots, in which it delights.

The beetle after his kind.] This sort of locusts called *chargol,* seems to have its name from the vast company wherein they fly together. But it is not fitly translated a *beetle;* for none ever ate beetles; nor are they four-footed, with legs to leap withal. Therefore *chargol* is another sort of locusts, unknown to us in these countries; and so is that which follows; for a grasshopper is not a sort of meat: but there were locusts of that shape, which were large and fleshy in the eastern countries, and very good food.

The grasshopper after his kind.] The Hebrew word *chagab* signifies (as I said) a sort of locusts, the original of whose name Aben Ezra intimates may be found in the Arabic tongue. In which *ghahageba* signifies to cover as with a veil: and in such troops these locusts fly, that sometimes they seem to darken the sun itself. But by what marks these were distinguished from one another, the Hebrews differ so much, that it plainly shews they are wholly ignorant in this matter. The most that can be made of what they say, is, (as a man very learned in these things hath observed, Job. Ludolphus, in his dissertation de Locustis, par. i. cap. 23.) that *chargol* hath both a bunch on its back and a tail also: *arbeh* hath neither: *solam* only a bunch, and not a tail; and *chagab* a tail, but no bunch. Which whether it be true or false it doth not much concern us to know. But it is evident, that before our Saviour's time they knew very well and certainly what kind of locusts is here meant; and accordingly perfectly understood what they might eat, and what not. For otherwise John the Baptist would have been hard put to it, who had no other diet but this and honey. And, indeed, in desert places there was little other food but this; by which whole armies of men have been relieved, when they were in danger to perish in Lybia. For, that locusts were a common food in the eastern and southern countries is so known, that I need not produce any authors for it. Nay, among the Greeks also, as Bochartus hath shewn in his Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 7. and Vossius, lib. iv. de Orig. et Progr. Idol. cap. 78. But nobody hath given such satisfaction in this matter as the forenamed Ludolphus, who hath shewn at large how many nations live upon them, in his commentary upon his Ethiopic History: and more lately in his most excellent Dissertation concerning Locusts. Wherein he relates what clouds of them came into Germany not long ago (in the month of August, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-three); of which he seeing hogs and hens and other creatures feeding greedily, he and his family adventured to eat freely of them also, and found the taste of them like that of a crab. And a Jew of Jerusalem, who was then in their country, assured him, that the locusts in Judea were much of the same shape with these in Germany, which he demonstrated to him by a draught he had made of them.

After his kind.] Here it may be fit to note, in the conclusion of all, that this phrase, *after his kind* (which is so often repeated in this discourse of *fowls* and *flying things*), doth not necessarily signify that there are different kinds of every bird or flying thing to which it is applied; but only imports *every one of that kind.* For he doth not speak in the plural number, *according to their kinds,* but in the singular, *after his kind;* which only denotes that the whole *species* is prohibited. And what he saith of some *fowls,* is in reason to be applied to all; though, to avoid repetition, he doth not add these words [*after his kind*] to every one of them.

Ver. 23. *But all other flying creeping things which have four feet, shall be an abomination to you.*] Whether they were locusts, or any other kind of creature, who came under this character, they were to avoid them carefully.

Ver. 24. *And for these ye shall be unclean: whosoever touches the carcass of them shall be unclean.*] If they did either eat of them, or so much as touch the carcass of them, they might not be admitted to come into the tabernacle, nor eat of any holy thing, nor converse with their neighbours.

Until the even.] He doth not say they were to wash themselves, or their clothes (as in the following verse), which would incline one to think, that their mere separation for all the day, from communing with God and with one another, was their cleansing, without any other purification. But there are so many commands for washing themselves, and their clothes, in other defilements no greater than this, that it hath persuaded some to think such cleansing was necessary in this case also. (See xv. 5—8. 10. and several other verses in that chapter.)

Ver. 25. *And whosoever beareth aught of the carcass of them.*] Though it were only to carry them out of the camp or city, or remove them out of the way, that they might not infect the air.

Shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.] His body also, in all likelihood, was to be washed, as was required in other purifications. No time is appointed for this, which, perhaps, a man might think fit to do presently; but, notwithstanding, he was to remain unclean till the setting of the sun.

Ver. 26. *The carcass of every beast which divideth the hoof, and is not cloven-footed,* &c.] He takes occasion from hence to inform them, that it was as unlawful to touch the carcasses of beasts before prohibited to be eaten, (ver. 3, &c.) as of the fowl and flying things now mentioned. But while they were alive it was not unlawful to touch them; for they used *camels,* and *horses,* and *asses,* for their necessary service; and therefore it is so expressed in other things, (ver. 31.) *when they are dead.*

Ver. 27. *And whatsoever goeth upon his paws,* &c.] Hath feet with fingers like unto a hand; for so it is in the Hebrew, *Whatsoever goeth upon his hands,* such as the ape, the lion, the bear, dogs and cats, &c. whose fore-feet resemble hands: these might neither be eaten, nor their carcasses touched, without incurring uncleanness till sunset.

Ver. 28. *And he that beareth the carcass of them, shall wash his clothes,* &c.] See ver. 25.

Ver. 29. *These also shall be unclean unto you.*] So that they might not so much as touch them (as it is explained ver. 31.) when they are dead, much less eat them.

Among the creeping things that creep upon the earth.] Among things that have such short feet, that some of their bellies seem to touch the ground.

The weasel.] Though most interpreters follow this translation of the Hebrew word *choled;* yet Bochartus hath alleged a great many probable reasons that it signifies a *mole;* and one is, because it is joined here with the *mouse.* See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 35. where he treats of this very largely.

The mouse.] All acknowledge the Hebrew word *achbar* signifies a *mouse,* and more especially a *field-mouse,* which doth great mischief there; and thence hath its name, as the same Bochartus shews in the foregoing chapter of that book. But all sorts of mice are here to be understood, as Jonathan observes, who thus paraphrases this word, *the black mouse, the red, and the white;* for they are of so many colours.

The tortoise after his kind.] The same author has taken a great deal of pains to prove that *tzab* doth not signify a *tortoise;* but, as the LXX, and St. Jerome take it, *a land-crocodile,* which is a large sort of *lizard,* a cubit long, with which Arabia abounds; out of which language he endeavours at large to prove the truth of this interpretation, (lib. iv. cap. 1.)

Ver. 30. *And the ferret.*] Out of the same language, and the Syriac and Samaritan paraphrase, the same judicious writer proves, that *anaka* signifies another sort of *lizard,* which the Latins called *stellio,* and in those countries hath a shrill cry. (See there, cap. 2.)

And the chameleon.] Most of the ancient interpreters take *coach* for another sort of *lizard,* which is the strongest (as this name imports) of all other; and in these countries was famous for its encounters with serpents and land-crocodiles; as the forenamed Bochartus shews out of the Arabian writers, (Ib. cap. 3.)

And the lizard.] All the ancient interpreters agree, that the Hebrew word *letaa* signifies a sort of *lizard,* but of what kind it is hard to determine. The aforesaid Bochart out of the Arabian writers hath shewn, it is like to that which is of a reddish colour, and lies close to the earth, infecting the meat which it touches with its venom, (Ib. cap. 4.)

The snail.] The same admirable person, with great probability, still thinks Moses speaks of a sort of *lizard* called here *chomet,* because it lies in the sand, which, in the Talmudic language, is called *chometon,* (Ib. cap. 5.)

And the mole.] It is apparent that the word *thinsemeth,* which we here translate a *mole,* is of a very doubtful signification: for in the eighteenth verse of this chapter it signifies a sort of *fowl;* as here, in all probability, another sort of *lizard.* And if we may guess what sort, by the original of the word, it probably signifies the *chameleon,* which gapes to draw in air. (See Bochart. Hieroz. par. i. lib. iv. cap. 6.) But, after all that can be said, it must be acknowledged, the significations of all these words are lost among the Jews; as Aben Ezra confesses upon this verse: "Neither these eight sorts of creeping things, nor the birds beforementioned, are known to us, but by tradition." Which is as much as to say, they are not known at all; for there is no tradition about them, as the Talmudists acknowledge; who send those who are doubtful what birds are lawful, and what not, to be informed by those that are masters of the art of fowling. Which might help to convince the Jews, were they not resolved to shut their eyes, that difference of meats is now ceased, because they know not what is forbidden, and what not, in many cases. And, consequently, the Messiah is come, to whom the *gathering of the people* was to be, (according to their father Jacob's prophecy, Gen. xlix. 10.) so that they should be no longer separated, but all nations collected into one body, and converse freely together, without any danger of being defiled. For idolatry being abolished by him, there was no reason remaining for keeping up the discrimination between Jews and gentiles by a different diet. This some of the ancient Jews saw very well, who said, that in the days of the Messiah it should not be unlawful to eat swine's flesh, no more than it was while they were subduing the land of Canaan. This tradition is acknowledged by Abarbinel himself in his Rosch Amanah, where he disputes for the eternity of their law, and endeavours to elude this tradition of the ancient doctors by allegorical interpretations. (See J. Carpzovius in Schickkard. Mischpat hammelech, cap. 5. Theorem. xviii.)

Ver. 31. *These are unclean to you among all that creep: whosoever toucheth them when they be dead, shall be unclean.*] The Jews understand this with respect to the touching the dead carcasses of these creatures, and make the sense of it to be, *These eight alone are unclean to you; all other reptiles, as serpents, and scorpions, &c. you may touch and not be polluted.* Thus R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. clii. For nothing was unclean by Moses's law, whilst it was alive, but only a leper, and a woman in her separation. Worms, dogs, swine, &c. were unclean to be touched, only when they are dead.

Until the evening.] See ver. 4. This was a plain document, as Pellicanus there observes, that there was no impurity in the things themselves; but it was merely a prudential constitution, to make such defilements end with the day wherein they were contracted.

Ver. 32. *And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean.*] That is, it might not be used till it was cleansed. Whence the same R. Levi saith, the Jews are wont to call these the fathers of pollutions; because by their contact they defiled other things, (vessels and raiment, &c.) as well as men, (Præcept. clii.) where he acknowledges that the reason why these creatures made things unclean, more than others, is not manifest. But he gives this pious admonition thereupon: "If by our reason we be able to discern the usefulness of some precepts, let us be very thankful for it: but if we cannot find how they are any way profitable to us, let us believe that God, in his infinite wisdom, saw the benefit we should receive by it, and therefore commanded it."

Whatsoever vessel it be wherein any work is done, it must be put into water, &c. *so shall it be cleansed.*] The heathens purified all things, in a manner, by washing them in water; but Moses requires only these things, which were of common use, to be so purified, in case of any defilement. And therefore Maimonides saith, "Such laws as these were made to lessen their labour and service; and if there be any thing in them that seems too troublesome and tedious, it arises from our ignorance of the rites and customs of those times, which make such precepts necessary," (par. iii. More Nev. cap. 47.)

Ver. 33. *And every earthen vessel, whereinto any other of them falleth, whatsoever is in it shall be unclean.*] It defiled both the vessel and that which was contained in it.

And ye shall break it.] This is prescribed vi. 28. because such vessels were of no great value.

Ver. 34. *Of all meat which may be eaten, that on which such water cometh shall be unclean.*] The Jews have many observations about these sorts of pollutions: but the simple meaning is, that any meat, which might otherwise be lawfully eaten, was made unclean, if any water poured out of such a vessel as is beforenamed had come upon it. For the water being defiled, it made the meat on which it came to be unclean also. This appears to be the sense by what follows.

And all drink that may be drunk in every such vessel shall be unclean.] It might not be drunk out of such a vessel, though otherwise it was not prohibited; but though liquid things were by such means made unclean, yet not dry things (such as bread), because they did not so soon receive any effluviums from a dead carcass as liquid things did. This they gather from ver. 37, 38.

Ver. 35. *And every thing whereupon any part of their carcass falleth shall be unclean.*] Though the whole carcass did not fall upon the things here named, yet, if any part of it did, they were not fit to be used any more, but were to be broken in pieces. (See ver. 33.) The design of all which laws is very visible, that by making the Israelites very cautious how they touched these things, or any other on which they fell, they might much more abhor to eat any unclean creature; and thereby be kept a separate people from all other nations, from whose familiar conversation they were by this means restrained, and consequently in less danger to learn their idolatrous customs.

Whether it be oven, or ranges for pots, &c.] Some translate the words simply *pots:* and Conr. Pellicanus hath pertinently observed, that those places where meat and drink were commonly prepared (such as oven, and pots, and wine vessels, and cellars), it became them to preserve very clean and pure: which is the reason that Moses requires them to be broken down, if any part of the carcass of unclean creatures fell upon them.

For they are unclean.] Rendered hereby unfit for use.

And shall be unclean unto you.] And therefore shall not be used by you as heretofore.

Ver. 36. *Nevertheless a fountain or pit* (or *cistern*, as some translate it), *wherein there is plenty of water, shall be clean.*] This exception seems to have been a merciful provision for their speedy cleansing from such pollutions as they frequently contracted; by allowing them to make use of any collection of waters (notwithstanding any such carcass had fallen into them) in their own private grounds, as well as in the public baths; such as Bethesda seems to have been, which had five porches; that they who laboured under the same sort of pollution, might betake themselves to the same porch, and go down into the water together. If this had not been permitted, it might have been impossible (considering the few rivers they had in that country) to have cleansed themselves after their defilements.

But that which toucheth their carcass shall be unclean.] The man who drew out these carcasses out of such waters was to be unclean till the even; *i. e.* separated, as I said before, from the tabernacle and from common conversation. Or the meaning may be, that the instrument, whatsoever it was, which he used to pull the carcass out of the fountain or cistern, should be unclean, and not used any more.

Ver. 37. *If any part of their carcass fall upon any seed which is to be sown, it shall be clean.*] If a mouse, for instance, was found dead among the wheat that was to be sown, it might notwithstanding be used for seed: but other wheat, which was not intended for seed, was made unclean, and might not be used till it was washed. The reason of this difference is plain, because the seed that was to be sown went through many alterations before it could become food, which took away all the pollution.

Ver. 38. *But if any water be put upon the seed, and any part of their carcass fall thereon, it shall be unclean unto you.*] Wet seed might be supposed to have received some tincture from the carcass, which dry did not: and not being so fit to be sown till it was dry, was in that time to be cleansed.

Ver. 39. *And if any beast of which ye may eat die.*] Either of itself, or torn by wild beasts, or be suffocated, so that the blood remains in the veins.

He that toucheth the carcass thereof shall be unclean until the even.] Such meat became unlawful, not only to be eaten, but to be touched.

Ver. 40. *He that eateth of the carcass of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: he also that beareth the carcass,* &c.] See ver. 24, 25. He speaks of such as ate of this meat ignorantly: for if they did it knowingly, it was a presumption to which cutting off is threatened, (Numb. xv. 30.)

Ver. 41. *And every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*] Except those beforementioned, ver. 21, &c.

Shall be an abomination: it shall not be eaten.] Such as worms and serpents: which for this very reason are counted vile and filthy, because they crawl upon the earth.

Ver. 42. *Whatsoever goeth upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth upon all four, and whatsoever hath more feet,* &c.] This verse seems to be an explication of the foregoing. For some creeping things have such short feet, that they are not to be discerned by our naked eyes, but they appear as if they went upon their bellies. Others have feet apparently; and some only four, (as moles, &c.) others have many more than four, as caterpillars and hog-lice, which we call *millepedes,* and those called *centipedes* in the Philippine islands, (mentioned in Dampier's late Voyage round the World, p. 320.) not because they have really a thousand or a hundred feet, but because they have a great many. And the *scolopendra,* which the Arabians call *nedall,* is another of this sort, which, they say, hath precisely fourty-four feet, *viz.* twenty-two on each side, as Bochart notes, lib. iv. cap. 6. p. 1. And so the English call the *centipedes,* beforementioned, *forty legs,* which are on each side of the belly.

Among all the creeping things that creep upon the earth.] Here Nachmanides is something curiously critical, and bids us observe, that Moses speaking (both here and in the foregoing verse) not merely of *creeping things,* but of such as *creep upon the earth;* doth not intend such little worms as are in pease, or figs, or dates, or other fruit, which were not included in this precept, but might be eaten.

Ver. 43. *And ye shall not make yourselves abominable by*

any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby.] They made themselves abominable if they did eat them: and they made themselves unclean if they did but touch them. R. Levi of Barcelona fancies, that in this verse Moses speaks particularly of things creeping in the waters; as in the foregoing, of things creeping on the earth. And then, as all those worms which are in fruit, were not to be deemed unlawful; so all those little animals which move in the waters might be drank, together with the water which was drawn out of wells, or pits, &c. and which were bred in water kept in vessels.

Ver. 44. *For I am the Lord your God.*] See Exod. iii. 15. 18.

Ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves.] By this separate sort of diet, and other forementioned observances.

And ye shall be holy; for I am holy.] The word *holy* signifies sometimes that which is most excellent and highly exalted above all other things. In which sense God here puts them in mind, that he being the most eminent in all perfections, incomparably above all the gods of the nations, both in his nature and in his works, (particularly in their redemption out of Egypt, ver. 45.) it was but reasonable that they should be distinguished from all other nations in their manner of living; and particularly by abstaining from all the defilements beforementioned. For he having declared them *a holy people,* (Exod. xix. 6.) it was but just that they should live after another fashion than the rest of the world; and look upon those things as unclean to them, which were not so to other people. (See Exod. xxii. *ult.*)

Neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.] Here being a different word used in the last clause from that in the foregoing (both which signify *creeping things*), Maimonides here distinguishes between them: and saith, that the first word *scheretz* signifies such creeping things as are produced by male and female; and *romesch* (which is the other word) such as arise out of putrefaction. Which is now discovered to be an error; there being no such animals as are produced merely by the power of the sun, out of putrefied matter; but all out of some seed or other which comes from male and female. This, therefore, is only a repetition of what was delivered before, and now confirmed by an unanswerable reason.

Ver. 45. *For I am the Lord your God, that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt.*] This was a benefit so fresh in their minds, that he speaks of it as if it were now a doing: and being the first and greatest benefit (the very foundation of the rest), there could not be a higher aggravation of guilt, than to be insensible of this obligation, (Exod. xxxii. 8.)

To be your God.] He having redeemed them out of slavery, made them thereby his own people; over whom he had a peculiar dominion, in the right of this redemption. (See Exod. xx. 2.)

Ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.] They being his peculiar people; he separated them from all other nations by peculiar laws; which made them different from all other people, as he himself was from all other beings.

Ver. 46. *This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl,* &c.] That is, this is the rule you are to observe in eating of *beasts,* and *fowl,* and *fish,* and things that *creep* on the earth. Of which four sorts of living creatures, Moses hath treated in this chapter, though not in that very order in which they are set down in this verse; but first of *beasts,* (ver. 2, 3, &c.) then of *fishes,* (ver. 9, &c.) then of *birds,* (ver. 13, &c.) and lastly of *creeping things,* (ver. 20, &c.) Some of all which kinds he forbade them to eat, for such reasons as I have already mentioned: unto which this may be added, that by not allowing them an entire liberty to eat every thing, but rather laying many restraints upon them, he intended to prevent that gluttony and luxury which is the ruin of a state; unto which nothing administers more than too great variety of meats, the desire of which is insatiable.

Ver. 47. *To make a difference.*] To direct you how to make a difference.

Between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten, and the beast that may not be eaten.] There was no uncleanness in any of these things, but what was made by this prohibition of them. But there being great reason to prohibit them, it was very necessary that both priests and people should observe, and be well skilled in the marks whereby what was lawful to be eaten, might be known from what was unlawful. Upon which account this is so oft repeated, and the same here expressed twice in different words.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] The directions in this chapter are given to Moses alone; whereas those in the foregoing were delivered unto Aaron also; as those are in like manner which follow, about the leprosy, (xiii. 1.) because Aaron and his sons were peculiarly concerned in those matters, to make an exact difference between clean and unclean, (x. 10, 11. xiv. 57.) in which there was some difficulty; and therefore they are charged by God himself, to attend carefully to the laws he gave about them. But there was no such difficulty in what belonged to the purification of women; and therefore it was sufficient that they received admonitions from Moses concerning it.

Ver. 2. *If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man-child.*] Whether it were born alive or dead; were an abortive, or come to its full time: this made no difference, as the Hebrew doctors understand it.

She shall be unclean seven days.] For the first seven days after the birth of the child, she was neither to partake of any holy thing, nor to have common conversation with others; her husband not being permitted to eat and drink with her all that time: for they that attended her became unclean also. And so they were accounted among the heathen, as Dilherrus observes out of Plautus, in his Dissert. Special. de Cacozelia Gentilium, cap. 3. where he saith, the women that assisted at the labour solemnly washed their hands, and had a sacrifice offered for them on the *fifth day* after the delivery. Plautus's words indeed will not warrant all this, which I find in his Truculentus, act. 2. scen. 4. where the harlot says, she will sacrifice for the child on the *fifth day,* according to the custom:—

"Quin Diis sacrificare hodie pro puero volo
Quinto die, quod fieri oportet."——

Where Scaliger observes, that the Greeks were wont to purify their children on the *fifth day;* but the Latins on the *eighth,* if they were daughters; and on the *ninth,* if they were sons; which was called *Dies lustricus.*

According to the days of the separation for her infirmity, shall she be unclean.] That is, her case shall be the same with that of a menstruous woman, who was in a state of the highest uncleanness, (xv. 19, 20.) For every thing she touched was unclean, and made those so who touched that thing.

Ver. 3. *And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.*] This is here mentioned to shew, that one reason for not circumcising the child till the eighth day was, its mother's uncleanness the first seven days of her lying-in; which made the child unclean also.

Ver. 4. *And she shall then continue.*] From the seven days' end.

In the blood of her purification.] In the purification of her blood: for all the following days were days of *purification;* not of entire *separation.*

Three-and-thirty days.] All the days of her uncleanness were *forty:* and for the first seven days she was to be separate from all conversation with her neighbours; but the following three-and-thirty she had free conversation with them, and was only excluded from the sanctuary, and from eating of the peace-offerings, or the paschal lamb, and (if she were the wife of a priest) of the tithes, and other *lesser holy things;* of which otherwise she might have eaten.

She shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purification be fulfilled.] If Maimonides may be credited, the Zabii, an ancient sort of idolaters in those eastern parts, had a great number of tedious and tiresome customs about the purification of their childbed women; from all which God freed his people, by restraining them only from coming into his sanctuary, or partaking of holy things; but, otherwise, leaving them at liberty to perform all manner of offices in their family, during the time of their purification, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 47.) It is apparent, also, that other gentiles kept their women from their temples, a long time after their childbirth; and that superstitious people would not so much as go within their doors. See Dilherrus, in the forenamed book and chapter.

Ver. 5. *And if she bear a maid-child, then shall she be unclean two weeks, as in her separation.*] The time of strict *separation,* when they brought forth a female, was double to that which was prescribed (ver. 2.) when they brought forth a male. And so also was the time of their *purification:* which lasted threescore and six days, as they in the other case by thirty and three. The reason of which difference, not only the Jews, but others also, derive from the greater redundancy (as R. Levi Barzelonita calls it, Præcept. clxvi.) of blood in the latter case than in the former; and from the slowness of nature in its operation, which made the purgation longer before it was effected. Hippocrates himself treats of this difference, in his book de Natura Puerp. where he saith, women are sooner purged after the birth of males than of females: (see Joh. Meursius in his Syntagma de Puerperio, cap. 6, 7.) The natural weaknesses of women also, during this time, required quiet, and little company: from which the very temper of their blood, in those climates, made a longer separation more necessary than in these colder regions. But if there were no such apparent reason to be given of these things, yet "vel ex ipsa veneranda antiquitate, et simplicitate suscipienda forent et minimè contemnenda," (as Conrad. Pellicanus speaks upon the foregoing chapter, ver. 35.) *they ought, for the sake of their venerable antiquity and simplicity, to be duly regarded, and not to be despised.*

Ver. 6. *And when the days of her purification are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter.*] Which were not till the end of the fortieth day for a son, and the eightieth day for a daughter. And therefore, the offerings here mentioned were not offered till the day after, *viz.* the forty-first day for the one, and the eighty-first day for the other; because, till then her purification was not perfected, as Maimonides observes in his book de Sacrificiis, (Tract. v. sect. 5.) where he observes, also, that they might not eat of holy things, till these sacrifices had been offered for them.

And she shall bring a lamb of the first year.] Which then was in its greatest perfection, as hath been often noted.

For a burnt-offering.] In gratitude to God for giving her a safe deliverance, and bestowing a child upon her, and raising her up to her former strength, and bringing her again to his sanctuary. Where, by this offering, she also commended herself and child to his continued care and blessing, and implored his Divine guidance and assistance in its education. For these *offerings,* as I observed before, were a kind of supplication, which they that brought them made to God: and there was nothing that pious people could more earnestly desire on such occasions, than that God would take their little ones into his tuition. Who are continually liable to so many dangers, that without the special favour of God, and the custody of his angels, they could never grow to be able to take any care of themselves. They are the words of Conradus Pellicanus upon this place: who thence infers, how necessary it is that the people of the church should be admonished frequently, to commend their children unto God both by private and by public prayers, and take care of their instruction, "lest they become like the horse and the mule, that have no understanding."

And a young pigeon, or a turtle-dove, for a sin-offering.] To complete her purification from her uncleanness. For that is here meant by *sin;* the impurity which the law made, by separating such persons from others, and from the sanctuary for a time. And thus a *sin-offering* is commanded to be brought by a leper, when he was cleansed; who was charged only with a legal uncleanness, not a moral. And it is more plain, from what is ordained concerning menstruous women, whose courses were purely natural, and yet they were to offer a *sin-offering* when they were gone, (xv. 30.) because the law accounted that a state of uncleanness: and from the case of a Nazarite, who had unwillingly touched a dead body, Numb. v. 11. where it is said, he had *sinned by the dead; i. e.* was legally polluted. And this may be the reason, perhaps, why a *burnt-offering* is here mentioned before the *sin-offering,* which is wont to precede the other, (ver. 7, 8.)

It may be conceived, indeed, that in all the forementioned cases, those persons (especially lepers) had some way of-

fended God, before or in their state of separation; and therefore were to have their sin (properly so called) expiated by a *sin-offering*. And R. Bechai also gives another probable account of it; that this sacrifice was offered not for her own sin, but the sin of her first parent, the mother of all living, who brought sin and sorrow into the world: for from a bad stock there cannot sprout good branches; and therefore God appointed this offering for the expiation of that primary sin.

Unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest.] It was a most wise constitution (as a person of excellent learning, Dr. Alix, observes), which bound this people, from their first coming into the world, to their going out of it, to have a dependance upon the priests and the Levites, (who for that purpose were dispersed through all the tribes of Israel, that people might be instructed by them how to govern themselves in all the passages of human life.) For there are laws not only about marriages and successions, but about their lying-in, whether of a son or daughter, and about all they were to do while that time lasted, and when it ended; and indeed all the time they lived, and when they went out of the world; in their funerals, and mourning for the dead.

Ver. 7. *Who shall offer it before the Lord, and make an atonement for her.*] By this offering she was restored to the liberty of God's house, and to partake of holy things. For so it follows.

And she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood.] No longer separated from the holy society.

This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female.] All this principally respected the woman; yet not excluding her child; who (it appears by St. Luke, ii. 22.) was on this day of his mother's purification *presented unto the Lord*. That indeed had respect to the law about the first-born: but a very ancient MS. and the Syriac, and Origen, taking this for the day of *their* purification, and not merely of *hers* (καθαρισμοῦ αὐτῶν), it plainly shews the child could not be admitted into the Divine presence, no more than the mother, till the days abovementioned were accomplished.

Ver. 8. *And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, and two young pigeons*, &c.] This was a merciful provision for the poorer sort, as in other cases, (v. 7. 11.) And from this very place we may learn, in how mean a condition the mother of our Lord was; who for her purification did not bring a lamb (unto which her piety, no doubt, would have prompted her, if she had been able), but only this lower sort of offering, as we read Luke ii. 24.

And the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.] This sacrifice was as available as the other to restore her to communion with God's people. The Greeks imitated this; among whom the *fortieth* day was *insignis* (as Censorinus speaks), *famous* or *remarkable* upon more accounts than one. For women with child did not go to the temple *ante diem quadragesimum, before the fortieth day:* and after their delivery, commonly, they were not fit to go out till forty days more (his words are, "Quadraginta diebus pleræque fœtæ graviores sunt, nec sanguinem interdum continent"), during which time their little ones were sickly, never smiled, nor were out of danger. Which is observed by that great physician Celsus, (lib. ii. cap. 1.) "Maxime, omnis pueritia primum circa quadragesimum diem periclitatur." And therefore, when this day was past, they were wont to keep a feast (as Censorinus there tells us, cap. 11. de Die Natali), which they called Τεσσαρακοστόν at which time, it is likely, they offered sacrifices also, as the Jewish women did.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying.*] Here God speaks to Aaron again, as well as unto Moses, (see xi. 1.) because he and his posterity were peculiarly concerned in the following laws about the leprosy, both in judging and cleansing of it.

Ver. 2. *When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh.*] For there this disease lay and shewed itself.

A rising, a scab, or a bright spot.] The leprosy appeared in one of these three forms, either as a tumour or swelling, or a scab, or a bright spot in the skin.

And it shall be in the skin of his flesh, like the plague of leprosy.] There were some swellings, and scabs, and spots, which were not the leprosy, but only like it. And therefore Moses here teaches the priests how to discern between a true leprosy and the resemblance of it; that accordingly they might either pronounce a person clean or unclean; shut him up, or let him have his liberty; shave him, or let his hair grow.

Plague of leprosy.] If we may believe Pliny, (lib. xxvi. cap. 1.) this disease was peculiar to Egypt, which he calls *genitrix talium vitiorum:* and if Artapanus, in Eusebius, saith true, (lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 27.) Pharaoh, who sought to kill Moses, was the first who was struck with this disease, and died of it. So false is the story of Manetho, who, to hide the true cause of the Israelites' departure out of Egypt, saith, that they cast out a company of leprous people, of whom Moses was the captain. Out of Egypt, it is likely, this disease spread into Syria, which is noted likewise to have been much infested with such foul irruptions in the skin: which have as many various names, as there are risings, or breakings-out, or spots there; and are commonly all comprehended under the name of *leprosy*, as P. Cunæus observes, (lib. ii. de Republ. Judæorum, cap. *ult.*) But Moses here distinguishes them, and seems to instruct the Israelites, that the *leprosy* which he speaks of was no common disease, but inflicted by the hand of Heaven. So the Hebrew doctors understand it; particularly R. Levi Barzelonita: (Præcept. clxviii.) "a leprous man ought not to look upon his disease as a casual thing; but seriously consider, and acknowledge, that some grievous sin is the cause of it." Which made the knowledge of their priests so admirable, (as the author of the book Cosri speaks, par. ii. sect. 58.) that they were able to understand what was *Divine* in the leprosy, and what was from *natural* temper. For that there was something Divine in it is confirmed by the story of Naaman, (2 Kings v. 7.) where the king of Israel plainly declares, none but God could cure a leper: whom therefore they looked upon as smitten by God; and thence called this disease the *plague*, or stroke, *of leprosy*, and sometimes simply the *plague* or *stroke*, (ver. 3. 5. 17. 22. of this chapter.) For they could not understand how such a pestilent disease, as infected not merely

men's bodies, but the very walls of their houses, and garments, should proceed merely from ordinary causes; and therefore they thought there was an extraordinary hand of God in it.

Then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests.] Not to the physicians, but to the priests; who were the only judges, whether it was a true leprosy or no: and if it were, could best direct him to his cure (by repentance and prayer to God), and cleanse him when he was cured. But they might resort to any priest whatsoever, as Mr. Selden observes out of the Talmud (where there is a large treatise of this matter), though he was maimed in any part of his body, and so unfit to minister at the altar, provided his eyes still continued good, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 14. num. 5.)

Ver. 3. *And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of his flesh.*] When there is a suspicion that it is a leprosy. The same great man observes, that this inspection might be made upon any day of the week, but the sabbath or festivals. Yet not in the night, nor in any hour of the day, but the fourth, fifth, eighth, and ninth: for they accounted the morning, evening, and noon, not such proper times to make this inspection. Which, they say, also might be made by an Israelite; though none but the priest could pronounce one clean, or unclean. For though perhaps the priest was ignorant, and stood in need to be informed by wiser persons than himself, yet that man who was not a priest could only direct him what to judge, but not give the judgment. According to that law, (Deut. xxi. 5.) *Out of their mouth,* or, *by their word, shall every stroke be tried:* which particularly relates to the leprosy, (xxiv. 8.)

And when the hair in the plague is turned white, &c.] He begins with the last of the three indications of a leprosy, *viz. the bright spot.* In which, if the very hair was turned white, and it was not only a superficial whiteness, but the spot seemed to have eaten deeper into the very flesh, then it was to be judged a true leprosy. R. Levi Barzelon. expresses it thus: "When there was one or more places so white, that their whiteness was like that of an egg-shell, or more glossy, then it is the leprosy."

And the priest shall look upon him.] Having made this inspection, and found it to be the leprosy.

And pronounce him unclean.] Command him to be separated from the congregation, and shut up by himself, (ver. 46.)

But though all the Israelites, children and servants, as well as others, were under this law, yet no gentile, nor the *proselytes of the gate,* were, as Maimonides, and the rest of the Hebrew doctors tell us.

Ver. 4. *If the bright spot be white in the skin of his flesh.*] *i. e.* If there be barely a white spot in the skin which hath not altered the hair.

And in sight be not deeper than the skin, and the hair thereof be not turned white.] The forenamed R. Levi explains this passage thus: If it were not a perfect white, but something duskish, below the whiteness of an egg-shell, he was to look upon it as that which might prove a lesser sort of foulness in the blood and skin, short of the leprosy, which infected the very hair in that place.

Then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague seven days.] He had something like the plague, which might prove to be it; and therefore he was to be separated from others so long, that some judgment might be made, whether it was, or would be so or not: for seven days commonly make considerable alterations in the state of all diseases.

Ver. 5. *And the priest shall look on him the seventh day.*] Until which it was not likely any certain judgment could be made.

And behold.] Observe this.

If the plague in his sight be at a stay.] In the Hebrew the words are, *If the plague standeth in his sight; i. e.* seemeth to him not to have spread itself at all in the skin, as it follows in the next words. Or, as it may be translated, *if it continue in the same colour,* which it had before, and were not altered: for the Hebrew word signifies *colour,* as well as *sight.* And if this translation be right, then here are two marks which the priest was to observe (*viz.* whether the spot had not altered its complexion, and whether it had not spread further in the skin); but according to our present translation there is but one, the next clause being but the explication of this.

Then the priest shall shut him up seven days more.] The case remaining dubious, he was to make a further trial.

Ver. 6. *And the priest shall look on him again the seventh day; and behold, if the plague be somewhat dark.*] The priest was to mark diligently whether there were any alteration in the colour, and that which was bright before now looked dark; which justifies the second interpretation of the first clause in the foregoing verse.

And the plague spread not in the skin.] This was another token by which the priest was to be governed in his judgment.

The priest shall pronounce him clean.] He was to be shut up no longer, but left at liberty to go abroad and freely converse with his brethren.

It is but a scab.] An ordinary scab, or scurf, short of the leprosy: such as is now in Guam and Mindanao, which Dampier (in his late New Voyage round the World, chap. 12.) describes to be a dry scurf all over the body, that causeth great itching, and raiseth the outer skin in small white flakes, like the scales of little fish, when they are raised on end with a knife. But he did not perceive that they made any great matter of it, for they did not refrain any company for it.

And he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.] Having been suspected to have a leprosy, and something like it appearing, which had kept him separate from his brethren several days, he was to use this small purification; because there was some kind of impurity in his blood, which broke out into the skin, though not infectious.

Ver. 7. *And if the scab spread much abroad in the skin.*] The second sort of leprosy was a scab, (ver. 2.) which seems to have been of two kinds: one of which Moses joins to what he saith of *the swelling;* and the other to what he saith of the *bright spot.*

After he hath been seen of the priest for his cleansing.] That is, after the priest had pronounced him clean, (ver. 6.)

He shall be seen of the priest again.] A new inspection was to be made by the priest. And if any man (as Maimonides saith) was so profane as carelessly to neglect it, by not going to the priest, and shewing him his case, his punishment was to have his leprosy cleave to him for ever.

Ver. 8. *And if the priest see, that, behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin.*] Though it lurked for a time, yet this spreading of it in the skin was to be taken for an evident mark that it was the leprosy.

Ver. 9. *When the plague of leprosy is in a man.*] That is, when there is a suspicion of the first sort of leprosy, mentioned ver. 2. and called a *rising* or *swelling*.

Then he shall be brought unto the priest.] By those who feared his company might be infectious; but good men went of themselves to him.

Ver. 10. *And the priest shall see him.*] Diligently view, and consider the nature of the scab.

And, behold, if the rising be white in the skin, and it have turned the hair white, and there be quick raw flesh in the rising.] If upon examination the priest found a third mark, besides the two former (*whiteness in the skin*, and *the hair turned white*), *viz.* that it had eaten into the very flesh; he was to look upon it as an undoubted leprosy.

Quick raw flesh in the rising.] *Quick* or *living* flesh (as the Hebrew word is) signifies sound flesh not corrupted. So the meaning seems to be, if it have broken through the skin, and in the raw sound flesh there appeared white spots, there needed no further consideration; for it would soon taint the whole mass of blood.

Ver. 11. *It is an old leprosy in the skin of his flesh.*] The two first signs were very bad, particularly the second, *the hair turning white* (just as a plant, saith Procopius Gazæus, or a flower dies, together with the earth in which it grows), but this last was far worse; being a mark of an inveterate evil that had been long breeding, and got not only into the skin and the hair, but into the very living flesh; which, as the same Procopius speaks, it began to corrode, and would devour.

And the priest shall pronounce him unclean.] Without any further examination.

And shall not shut him up.] Because there was no need of any more proof, nor any doubt, whether it was the leprosy or not.

For he is unclean.] It was apparent from the tokens, which were already very visible.

Ver. 12. *And if a leprosy break out abroad in the skin.*] He calls that a *leprosy*, which was not truly so, but was by some thought to be so, because it had a likeness to it.

And the leprosy cover all the skin of him that hath the plague.] *i. e.* Seemeth to have it.

From his head even to his foot, wheresoever the priest looketh.] An eruption in every part of his body, which was spread all over with scabs.

Ver. 13. *He shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague.*] This sort of breaking-out, from top to toe, as we speak, was not to be looked upon as the plague of leprosy; being rather a relief to the body, than a disease.

It is all turned white, he is clean.] There was no danger in this eruption; nature having only discharged those putrid salt humours which were in the blood. Just as those among us, who have the measles and small-pox, are likely to do well, when they come out every where; but not when they stick in the skin.

Ver. 14. *But when raw flesh appeareth in him, he shall be unclean.*] When the sound flesh appeared speckled with the forementioned spots, it was an evident token that it was a settled leprosy: nature being not able to throw out the ill humour into the skin; but working inward into the flesh.

Ver. 15. *And the priest shall see the raw flesh, and pronounce him to be unclean.*] When he sees the sign beforenamed, he shall make no further examination, but declare him to be unclean.

For the raw flesh is unclean; it is a leprosy.] This was so undoubted a mark, that there needed no more. Which makes Moses repeat it, that the priest might observe it the more carefully, when he made his inspection.

Ver. 16. *Or if the raw flesh turn again.*] If there was such an alteration in it, that it was freed from these pestilent spots.

And be changed into white.] Look like other flesh, which hath a white skin upon it.

He shall come unto the priest.] Desire him to make a new examination of the state of his body.

Ver. 17. *And the priest shall see him.*] Take a view of his body; especially in those parts where the leprosy was suspected to be.

And, behold, if the plague be turned into white, &c.] If, upon due consideration, his body appear alike white every where, and no spots to be seen in the flesh, the priest was to declare him to have no leprosy remaining.

Ver. 18. *The flesh also, in which, even in the skin thereof, was a bile, and is healed.*] In this and the following verses he treats of such a leprosy as arose out of ulcers which had been healed: and afterward there was a new eruption, which might prove a leprosy.

Ver. 19. *And in the place of the bile.*] Where the bile formerly broke out; but seemed to be healed.

There be a white rising, or a bright spot, white.] These two are the first and last indications of a leprosy, mentioned ver. 2.

And somewhat reddish.] This is a mark not hitherto mentioned: which some render *exceeding shining;* or *an inflammation which looked very red.* For so the Hebrew word *adamdameth* seems to import; it being certain, that the doubling of the radicals of any word increases the sense. This is apparent from abundance of instances in other words; which are heaped up together by Bochartus in his Hierozoicon, (par. ii. lib. v. cap. 6.) where he observes, with respect to this word, that it being impossible that the same thing should be both very white and very red, it hath made most interpreters expound this word *adamdameth* as we do, *somewhat reddish;* quite contrary to the true sense of the word, which imports a high degree of some colour, and therefore ought to be translated *exceeding glistering.* For *Adam* signifies not only *red,* but also to *glister:* and accordingly, persons very leprous are said in Scripture to be as *white as snow,* (Exod. iv. 6. Numb. xii. 10. 2 Kings v. 27.) See ver. 49. of this chapter.

And it be shewed to the priest.] That he might pass his judgment upon it, whether it were the leprosy or not.

Ver. 20. *And if, when the priest seeth it, behold, it being in sight lower than the skin, and the hair thereof being turned white,* &c.] If, upon a serious search, it appear to have the two marks here mentioned, (which are those before set down, ver. 3.) the priest was to declare him unclean.

It is a plague of leprosy broken out of the bile.] In the place where the *bile* formerly was, (ver. 19.)

Ver. 21. *But if the priest look on it, and, behold, there is no white hair therein, and it be not lower than the skin.*] If he find upon search neither of the two marks beforenamed.

But be somewhat dark, &c.] Though it had not eaten into the flesh (which was a certain sign of a leprosy), yet, if it changed colour, there was some ground of suspicion: and therefore he was to be *shut up seven days.* (See ver. 4.)

Ver. 22. *And if it spread much abroad in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean.*] The spreading of the spot was a token the blood was much vitiated, and that this foul disease was begun in the body.

It is a plague.] Of leprosy.

Ver. 23. *But if the bright spot stay in its place, and spread not,* &c.] If it continued in the same condition, and made no progress, it was an indication the bile was breaking out again; which did not make him unclean.

Ver. 24. *Or if there be any flesh in the skin, whereof there is a hot burning.*] In the Hebrew the words run thus, *Or the flesh, when it shall be in the skin a burning fire.* That is, when there is an inflammation made in the skin and the flesh, by a hot burning coal, or some such thing falling upon it. For in the foregoing paragraph (ver. 16, &c.) he speaks of ulcers which arose of themselves from bad humours in the body: and here of such as were made by fire.

And the quick flesh that burneth.] The part of the body that is burnt.

Have a white bright spot, somewhat reddish, or white.] Very shining. (See ver. 19.) For this was a sign of the leprosy broken out in that burnt place, which otherwise would have looked black.

Ver. 25. *If the hair in the bright spot be turned white,* &c.] See ver. 20.

Ver. 26. *But if the priest look upon it, and, behold, there be no white hair,* &c.] The same direction is given here, as in the foregoing case, (ver. 21.)

Ver. 27. *And the priest shall look upon him the seventh day, and if it be spread abroad much in the skin,* &c.] This verse and the next contain the same marks with those ver. 23, 24.

Ver. 28. *It is a rising of the burning.*] A tumour made by fire, or a hot iron, &c. which burnt the part. A mere *inflammation* (as he calls it in the end of this verse) arising from that burning.

Ver. 29. *If a man or woman have a plague upon the head, or the beard.*] Such a kind of disease, Pliny saith, came into Italy in the middle of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, which they called *mentagra,* because it commonly began in the chin; and was so filthy, "ut quæcunque mors præferenda esset," *that any death was preferable to it.* (Lib. xxvi. Nat. Hist. cap. 1.)

Ver. 30. *Then the priest shall see the plague: and, behold, if it be in the sight deeper than the skin,* &c.] There are the same marks of this sort, with those of the former: only instead of a white hair, which there was in other kinds of leprosies, there was a yellow hair in this; and not so thick as the white.

Ver. 31. *If it be not in sight deeper than the skin,* &c.] This was some indication that it was not a leprosy; yet if there were no black hair in it (as it here follows) which was a sign of soundness and health, (ver. 37.) the case was not certain, but doubtful; and therefore he was to be shut up seven days, to see what it would prove.

Ver. 32. *And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the plague.*] So he calls it, because it had a resemblance of the leprosy.

And, behold, if the scall spread not.] For this was the nature of the disease, which Pliny describes in the place abovementioned, that it spread itself in many persons, from the chin all over the face, except the eyes; and went down to the neck, the breast, and the hands, *fœto cutis furfure, with a filthy scurf of the skin,* which is here called *a scall.*

And there be no yellow hair in it.] This, with the foregoing and the following sign (that it was not in sight deeper than the skin), made it probable it was not the leprosy. Yet he was not upon this immediately discharged; but a further trial, as the next verse tells us, was to be made, before he was set at liberty.

Ver. 33. *He shall be shaven, but the scall shall he not shave,* &c.] For sureness' sake, the head and beard were to be shaven (which might be performed by any body), that the priest might the better discern whether the scall spread, or no. Only the place where the scall appeared was not shaven; because the priest was to observe of what colour the hair in it was. So R. Levi Barzelonita, (Præcept. clxxii.) "They shave round about the scall, leaving only the two next hairs; that they may know the decrease or increase of the disease."

And the priest shall shut him up that hath the scall seven days more.] In which time, some considerable alteration would be made one way or other.

Ver. 34. *And in the seventh day.*] Before it was completed.

The priest shall look on the scall; and, behold, if it be not spread.] Here are the same marks which were mentioned before; that if the scall did not spread in the skin, nor eat into the flesh, he was not to be shut up any longer, but pronounced clean; and, after he had washed his clothes, be admitted into the society of God's people again. (See ver. 6.)

Ver. 35. *But if the scall spread much in the skin after his cleansing.*] It fell out sometimes, that the scall, which had stood at a stay for a fortnight, and seemed neither to spread nor corrode at all, began to go on to the neighbouring parts.

Ver. 36. *Then the priest shall look on him; and, behold, if the scall be spread in the skin,* &c.] If he found this single mark, that after the scall had been at a stand a good while, it began to spread much, he was not to trouble himself for any further token, by seeking for the *yellow hair,* (ver. 30.) but immediately declare him to be a leper.

Ver. 37. *But if the scall be in his sight at a stay,* &c.] If after this the scall stopped again, and made no further progress; and withal there was a black hair appeared in it (which the priest could not find before, but now was grown up in it), he was to take it for an evident sign that the man was cured of his leprosy. For the hair being restored to its natural colour, was a certain indication that the blood was cleansed from its impurity.

Ver. 38. *If a man or woman have in the skin of their flesh bright spots, even white bright spots.*] *i. e.* No other sign of the leprosy but only this.

Ver. 39. *Then the priest shall look; and, behold, if the bright spots in the skin of their flesh be darkish white,* &c.] In this case the priest was to observe, whether the spots had any thing of a cloudiness in them; for if they had, it

was not a leprosy: if they were perfectly clear and bright, then it was.

Ver. 40. *And the man whose hair is fallen off his head.*] *i. e.* From the hinder part of it.

Ver. 41. *And he that hath his hair fallen off from the part of his head towards his face,* &c.] The design of these two verses is, to instruct the priest that the mere falling off the hair from his head, which made him bald, either behind or before, should not be taken to be a sign of the leprosy.

Ver. 42, 43. *And if there be in the bald head, or bald forehead, a white reddish sore,* &c.] If either in the hinder or forepart of a bald head there appeared a *white sore exceeding bright* (as it should be translated), like that which appeared sometimes in the skin, (ver. 24.) then, as it here follows, he was to be looked on as a leprous man.

Ver. 44. *The priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean.*] As unclean as any of the forenamed persons.

His plague is in his head.] The leprosy appears in his head, as in other persons it appears in the skin of their bodies.

Ver. 45. *And the leper in whom the plague is.*] Any of the forenamed sort of leprosies.

His clothes shall be rent.] After the manner of mourners (as some take it), that he might sensibly declare his afflicted condition. For upon any sad occasion, they were wont in those countries to rend their clothes, (Ezra ix. 3. 5. Job ii. 12.) Others, indeed, think this was intended only for a mark of his uncleanness: but I do not see why it might not serve to both ends.

And his head bare.] This was another token of mourning. But the Hebrew writers unanimously translate these words quite contrary: the phrase in the original being, *his head shall be free; i. e.* say they, from cutting or shaving: which was as much as to say, he should *let his hair grow long.* This also was a sign of sadness and sorrow. (See x. 6.)

And shall put a covering upon his upper lip.] Either he was to cover it with his hand, or with the skirt of his garment, which they threw over their heads, when they were in a state of mourning. Of which this was another sign, (Ezek. xxiv. 17. 22.) as it was also of shame, (Mic. iii. 7.) Some will have all these to be marks only for men to avoid them: but that is sufficiently taken care of, in the last words of this verse.

I shall only add, that the Hebrews well observe, that none were bound to any of these things, who were shut up on suspicion of leprosy; but only such as were absolutely pronounced to be leprous.

And shall cry, Unclean, unclean.] Give notice to passengers not to come near him, by crying out aloud, so that they might hear him, *I am in the most unclean condition wherein any man can be.* Some fancy this was required, that men might avoid infection: but the true reason was, that they might avoid legal pollutions by conversation with them; as appears by the next verse. Jeremiah seems to allude to this, Lament. iv. 15. And there seems also to have been the like care among the heathen, to give notice of any place which was unclean, that none might be defiled by it. So Servius tells us upon Æneid. iv. that the Romans were wont to set a cypress-tree (which being cut down could not grow again) before the door of a dead man's house, "Ne quis sacram rem facturus, imprudens domum præteriret," *lest any man, who was going to perform sacred offices, should unawares pass by his door.*

Ver. 46. *All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled.*] Remain in that desolate state.

He is unclean.] Separate from company.

He shall dwell alone.] 2 Kings xv. 5.

Without the camp shall his habitation be.] There were three camps (as the Hebrews commonly observe); that of the Divinity (or the sanctuary), that of the Levites, and that of the Israelites: out of all which a leprous man was to be removed, that no man might have conversation with him, but only such who were leprous like himself; who in aftertimes were shut out of the cities, as now out of the camp, (2 Kings vii. 3.)

Ver. 47. *The garment also that the plague of leprosy is in.*] This is a matter which we do not now understand; that a leprosy should not only cleave to a garment and infect it, but appear and be seen in it. As, in the next chapter, Moses speaks also of a leprosy in a house, (xiv. 34.) which he doth not mention here, because they had no houses in the wilderness, but dwelt in tents covered with skins, and such-like things: in which, as well as in garments, he supposes the leprosy will be. (See xiv. 34.) But what kind of disease this was, which appeared in insensible things, the Syrians and Egyptians perhaps might then understand, but we now are ignorant, as P. Cunæus speaks; "Cujusmodi id vitium in rebus inanimatis fuerit, Syri fortasse et Ægyptii tunc intellexerunt; nos hercle ignoramus," (lib. ii. de Republ. Hebræor. cap. *ult.*) And, indeed, it seems to have been a Divine stroke, as Moses himself signifies, (xiv. 34.) and appears not only from the place abovementioned, (2 Kings v. 7. 27.) but from xv. 5. of the same book. And so the Jews have always understood it, particularly Maimonides, who, in his treatise on this subject, (cap. 16. sect. 9.) saith, "that this change in garments and houses did not proceed from natural causes, but was a sign and a miracle in Israel." That is, an extraordinary punishment inflicted by God, as a token of his high displeasure. And it is not at all incredible that such a strange plague should then infest them, which is not now known in the world; when we consider what unusual diseases there have been in other countries, unknown in former times; which afterwards have also vanished, and are now to be found only in books. Pliny mentions several new diseases, "omni priori ævo incognitos," *unknown to all ages past;* some of which were peculiar to some provinces, and touched not others. Concerning which he did not know what to say, but only this: "Quid hoc esse dicamus, aut quas Deorum iras?" *What shall we call this? or from what great anger of the gods doth it proceed, that the diseases which already certainly infest men's bodies (which in number are above three hundred) should not be sufficient; but new ones are still to be feared?* (lib. xxvi. Nat. Hist. cap. 1.) He looked, that is, upon these strange diseases as sent by God, when men had highly incurred his displeasure. The last century was famous for such an extraordinary plague (as Johannes Wierus, who then lived, often calls it), when the scurvy, which was confined before to some northern regions, near the sea, overran the Low Countries, being at that time unknown in Germany, Italy, France, and Spain, which were entirely free from it. (See his Observationum Medicarum, lib. i. sect. 1.)

Whether it be a woollen garment or a linen.] There is a great dispute among the Talmudists, whether garments made of camels' hair (which they call the *wool of camels*) were comprehended under these words or not.

Ver. 48. *Whether it be in the warp or woof, of linen, or of woollen.*] In the inward or outward part of it.

Whether in a skin, or in any thing made of skin.] They were more likely to be infected than woollen or linen garments; because they had been part of the body of living creatures.

Ver. 49. *And if the plague be greenish or reddish in the garments,* &c.] There seems to be great reason in what Maimonides saith, in his treatise of the leprosy, that the Hebrew word *jerakrak* (which is made by the doubling of the radical letters) should be interpreted *the most intense green;* such as is in the wings of a peacock (as he speaks) or in the leaves of a palm-tree. As the word *adamdam,* in like manner, signifies the highest degree of another colour, *viz.* redness; such as the brightest scarlet: (see ver. 19.) And if a spot of these colours were found in a garment or skin, as broad as a bean, it was a sufficient ground to think it might be the leprosy; if it were not so broad, it was accounted clean.

It is a plague of leprosy, &c.] It was justly to be suspected, and therefore was to be brought to the priest for his judgment to be passed upon it. Who was to make a trial what it would prove, by shutting up that garment or skin wherein the spot was for the space of seven days; as is directed in the next verse.

Ver. 50. *And the priest shall look upon the plague,* &c.] If, upon his inspection, he found the forenamed tokens, he was to do with it as he did with persons who were under a suspicion of a leprosy.

Ver. 51. *If the plague be spread in the garment,* &c.] There were three certain marks (as Maimonides notes) of the leprosy in a garment; the extreme greenness or redness of the spots in it; and the spreading of them after they were first discovered.

The plague is a fretting leprosy.] The Hebrew word *mamereth,* which we translate *fretting,* is very variously rendered by the ancient interpreters; as Bochart hath observed in his Hierozoicon. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45. where, from the Arabic tongue, he thinks it may be best translated an *exasperated* or *irritated* leprosy: that is, very sharp and pricking (which suits well with our translation), eating into the garment or skin, till it was consumed. Abarbinel translates it *painful:* because this sort of leprosy in the body of a man was full of anguish. And so this word is used in Ezek. xxviii. 24. where a *thorn* is called *mamir;* and translated by us a *grieving thorn.*

Ver. 52. *He shall therefore burn that garment,* &c.] It seems this leprosy could never be got out of the garment or skin wherein it was; which therefore was ordered to be burnt, as never likely to be fit for use.

Ver. 53, 54. *If it be not spread in the garment,* &c.] If the spot was at a stay, and did not proceed further, then the garment, as the following verse directs, was to be washed, and shut up for seven days; in which time it appeared whether the impurity were quite gone, or still remained.

Ver. 55. *If the plague had not changed its colour.*] If washing had not altered that vicious colour, but it still continued very red or green.

And the plague be not spread.] Or, *though* it be not spread; yet it was to be pronounced unclean, and adjudged to be burnt.

It is fret inward.] Though it did not spread in breadth, yet it fretted in depth.

Whether it be bare within or without.] In the Hebrew the words are, *In the baldness of the hinder part, or in its forepart:* which seems to be a manner of speaking taken from ver. 42, 43. where he treats of bald heads. And the meaning is, whether it eat into the right side of the garment (which is compared to the forehead), or into the wrong side (which is compared to the hinder part of the head), making it as bare as a bald head is, when there is not a hair left. For this sort of leprosy was wont to eat off the nap of the cloth, and make it threadbare.

Ver. 56. *And if the priest look; and, behold, the plague be somewhat dark, after the washing of it,* &c.] If it had changed its colour, from very green or red, and became duskish (or, as Abarbinel understands it, the spot *was contracted* or shrunk up in the washing; so that it was gone in part, if not in whole), then the priest was to cut out that part of the garment where the spot was; there being some indication that the whole garment might not be tainted.

Ver. 57. *If it appear still in the garment,* &c.] If, after the spot was out, the neighbouring parts appeared to have a tincture of a very green or red colour, it was to be taken for a demonstration that there was a *spreading* leprosy (as it here follows) in the garment, or skin, which would proceed till it was entirely infected with it.

Thou shalt burn that wherein the plague is with fire.] Therefore, the leprosy being incurable, there was no other remedy but to destroy the thing wherein it was.

Ver. 58. *And the garment, either warp or woof, or whatsoever thing of skin it be, which thou shalt wash, if the plague be departed from them,* &c.] Whatsoever, after washing, had no appearance of such spots, as are here beforementioned (ver. 49, &c.) remaining in it, there was no further trial to be made of it, but, being washed a second time, it was to be accounted *clean, i. e.* fit for common use.

Ver. 59. *This is the law of the plague of leprosy in a garment of woollen or linen,* &c.] By these rules the priests were to judge whether garments were lawful to be used or not; and accordingly to determine: as, by the rules in the foregoing part of the chapter, they were to judge and pronounce whether men and women were fit to be allowed to keep company with others. And when we consider how nice and diligent many nations were, and still are, in their washings, after any sort of defilement, it it no wonder (as Conradus Pellicanus here glosses) that some laws of cleanliness, even about their garments, were prescribed to the Jews; which admonished them of that inward purgation of their hearts from all impure affections, about which they were to be far more solicitous. I have forborne to apply what is here said of the leprosy, in this chapter, to the various degrees of pollutions that are in men's minds; because that would have made this book too large; and it is done already by a great number of commentators, both modern and ancient; particularly among the latter, by Procopius Gazæus, and Hesychius Presb. Hierosolymorum, who sometimes have done it very ingeniously.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] All that is said before, concerning the rules whereby they were to discern the leprosy from the like diseases, were given unto Aaron as well as unto Moses, (xiii. 1.) For Aaron and his posterity were constituted the judges of such matters, in which they had need to be well studied and versed. But the way and manner of cleansing a leper is delivered only to Moses, to be by him given unto Aaron and his sons, who were to depend on him as God's great minister, and their instructor in all religious rites.

Ver. 2. *This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing.*] The manner and means which God hath ordained of purifying a leper (as Maimonides expounds it), and restoring him to the communion of God's people.

He shall be brought unto the priest.] Not to the house of the priest; for he was to go out to the gate of the camp (as appears by the next verse), and thither the leper was to be brought to him. But these words seem to import the leper was first to come towards the camp (unto some place which the priest, it is likely, appointed), and then the priest, having notice of it, was to go out and look upon him.

Ver. 3. *And the priest shall go forth out of the camp.*] To the place where the leper was, (xiii. 46.)

And the priest shall look.] Diligently examine in what condition the leper is, by the rules mentioned in the foregoing chapter.

And, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper.] The priest, no doubt, had been informed, before he went to make the inspection, that there were good grounds to believe the man was freed from his leprosy.

Ver. 4. *Then shall the priest command to take for him,* &c.] That some of his friends, or such as he ordered, should provide what follows for his purification.

Two birds alive, that are clean.] The margin of our Bibles translates it *two sparrows:* and they who take the word in this sense have some pretty conceits about it. Particularly this: that it signifies him who lately sat alone, like a solitary sparrow on the house-top (as the Psalmist speaks), to be now admitted into the society of others again. But Origen takes these birds to have been *hens,* (and so Scaliger shews out of Nicander, that the Greek word στρουθὸς anciently signified; Exerc. 230.) and the LXX. better translate it, δύο ὀρνίθια, *two little birds,* of any sort whatsoever, provided they were *clean, i. e.* lawful to be eaten, as the Vulgar truly interprets it. For to restrain it to *sparrows* had been very absurd, whether they had been clean birds or unclean; because it had been in vain to say a clean sparrow, when the whole species were so by the law; and more unaccountable to require a clean sparrow, if all had been unlawful, as Bochart rightly observes, lib. i. Hieroz. cap. 22. par. ii.

Grotius takes this to have been the Δῶρον, or *gift,* which is mentioned Matt. viii. 4. which was presented by the leper in the day of his cleansing; rather than those mentioned ver. 10. of this chapter. But I can see nothing of the nature of a gift or present in these birds, which were not to be offered at the altar.

And cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop.] Why his purification was to be made by these things, Maimonides saith he could never understand, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 47.) But Abarbinel adventures to guess at the reason, and imagines that these four things, the *living birds,* the *cedar,* the *scarlet,* and the *hyssop,* signified the leper to be cured of the four evils under which he had laboured; in his flesh, his humours, his colour, and smell, which were represented by the four things beforementioned; and were now all become sound and good. For the *living birds,* he thinks, were a sign that his dead flesh was restored to vigour and life again. And the *cedar-wood,* which is not easily corrupted, denoted the putrefaction was cured which the leprosy had made in the humours of his body. The *scarlet* thread, or wool, was an indication of his good complexion restored to him: for this is a bright and grateful colour, as the leprosy was livid and loathsome; signifying (saith he) his blood was purified, which made a lively colour return into his countenance. And lastly, the *hyssop,* which in that country was a very odoriferous plant, signified the nastiness and stench of that disease was gone. Whatsoever any one may judge of this account of these things, I think it is very plain, that the Jews being possessed with a great detestation of the filthiness of the leper, it was necessary (as Pellicanus observes) that they should be as strongly persuaded, by a great many prolix, laborious, and public ceremonies used for men's purification from it, that they were fit for their society again.

I omit the moral reasons which are given by R. Levi Barzelonita, (Præcept. clxxiii.) for the use of the forementioned things; and the mystical significations of these, and all the following rites of purification: which the most learned and ingenious Bochartus hath drawn out in near twenty particulars, (Hierozoicon. par. ii. lib. i. cap. 22.)

Ver. 5. *And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed.*] Not as a sacrifice; for that could be made no where but at the altar; whereas this was without the camp, at a great distance from the sanctuary; and therefore was used only as a rite of cleansing. (See ver. 49.)

In an earthen vessel over running water.] There seems to be a transposition (as is very usual) in these words; the sense being, over an earthen vessel, that hath running, *i. e.* spring water in it. For so R. Levi Barzelonita, in the place beforenamed, describes this ceremony: "The priest takes a new earthen vessel, and pours into it living water, till it be a quarter full:" which was the measure, according to the tradition of the scribes. Who say, also, that the best and fattest of the two birds was killed over the water, and the blood pressed out so long, that the water was discoloured with it; and then he digged a hole, and buried the dead bird before the leper.

Ver. 6. *As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar-wood, and the scarlet-wool,* &c.] He took a stick of cedar-wood (as R. Levi Barzelonita describes this rite, and Maimonides saith the same), which was a cubit long; and tying the bird to it, with its tail uppermost, together with a bunch of hyssop, of a handful long, and as much scarlet-wool as weighed a shekel; he then dipped the bird's tail and wings, with the hyssop and scarlet-wool, in the water tinctured with the blood of the other bird.

Ver. 7. *And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from his leprosy.*] R. Levi will have it, that he sprinkled the back of his hand, towards the top of it, with this water and blood.

Seven times.] In token of a perfect purification. (See iv. 17.)

And shall pronounce him clean.] So as to let him come into the camp (from whence he had been excluded), as, in aftertimes, into the city.

And shall let the living bird loose into the open field.] The manner of doing it (as the same R. Levi relates) was, the priest, going into the city, threw the bird over the walls towards the wilderness; the intention of which was, to shew that the leper was restored to a free conversation with all his neighbours, as the bird was with the rest of its kind. (See ver. 53.)

Ver. 8. *And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes.*] He was to do this, and what follows, before he could be admitted into the camp.

And shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water.] *i. e.* Wash his whole body. All which contributed to cleanliness.

And after that he shall come into the camp.] But not enter into his own habitation; as appears by the words following.

And tarry abroad out of his tent seven days.] They lived in tents while they remained in the wilderness, which every man had apart, for himself and for his family. Unto which a leper was not restored immediately after his admission into the camp; for fear there should be any undiscerned remainder of his disease, whereby his wife and children might be endangered. For which reason he might not lay with his wife, till *seven days* were over.

Ver. 9. *But on the seventh day he shall shave all his hair off his head,* &c.] This may be thought to have been the time appointed for the *shaving* mentioned in the foregoing verse: but R. Levi, and other Hebrew doctors, understand it of a second shaving at the seven days' end, that they might be assured nothing of the leprosy remained.

Even all his hair he shall shave off.] Under his arm-holes, and in other places of the body where it uses to grow: as well as the hair of his head, and his beard, and his eyebrows.

And he shall wash his clothes.] This seems to be a second washing, after the first at the end of the seven days. And the Hebrew doctors note, that the killing of the bird, the shaving and the sprinkling, were all to be done in the daytime; the rest might be done either by day or by night.

Also he shall wash his flesh in water.] His whole body. For which end such a measure is prescribed by the Hebrew tradition, as would cover it entirely.

And he shall be clean.] So as to be not only restored to his tent, but admitted to go to the tabernacle of the congregation, and offer the sacrifices appointed (in the following part of this chapter) for his complete purification. Till which time he was called *Mechussar Kapparah,* one that needed expiation; and was not permitted to eat of the holy things.

Ver. 10. *And on the eighth day.*] If we may believe the Hebrew tradition, he washed himself again on this day, in the court of the women; where there was a room, called *the chamber of the lepers,* provided for that purpose. So Maimonides. Which great caution was imitated by the primitive Christians, who would not receive great sinners into their communion again, till they had made a long trial of the truth of their repentance.

He shall take two he-lambs without blemish, and one ewe-lamb without blemish.] There were three kinds of sacrifices to be offered upon this occasion; *viz.* a *trespass-offering,* a *sin-offering,* and a *burnt-offering:* for which these three lambs were to be provided.

Of the first year.] Such were all the lambs to be, both male and female.

And three tenth-deals of fine flour for a meat-offering.] To each of these sacrifices there was a *meat-offering* appointed, consisting of a tenth part of an ephah of fine flour, *i. e.* an omer. (See Exod. xvi. 36.) Which is a thing unusual: for we read of no meat-offerings ordered (in the fourth and fifth chapters of this book, which treat of them) to accompany either *trespass-offerings* or *sin-offerings.* But there were peculiar rites belonging to the cleansing of a leper, different from the common usages, to make him sensible how great a mercy he had received from God, who alone could cure this disease which his hand had inflicted.

Mingled with oil.] As the manner was in *meat-offerings.* (See chap. ii. 1.)

And one log of oil.] Which served to another purpose, mentioned ver. 15, 16. of this chapter. And oil being of a healing virtue, may be thought to denote the perfect health and soundness to which the leper was now restored; as the fragrancy of it put him in mind of the happiness he now enjoyed.

A *log* was the smallest measure among the Jews, containing about half a pint of our measure, as a very learned prelate of our own (Dr. Cumberland) hath computed in his Scripture Weights and Measures, p. 86.

Ver. 11. *And the priest that maketh him clean.*] Who performeth this office of declaring the leper perfectly clean.

Shall present the man that is to be made clean, and those things, before the Lord, at the door, &c.] He set the man in the first place at the east gate of the court of the Israelites (which in aftertimes was called the gate of Nicanor), with his face towards the sanctuary. For here all those who needed expiation stood; it being unlawful for them to enter into the court of the Israelites, until the expiation was made. So Maimonides observes in his treatise called Mechussare Kapparah, sect. 4.

Ver. 12. *And the priest shall take one he-lamb, and offer him.*] Next he was to bring one of the lambs to the same place, and present him to the Lord, as is directed in the end of the verse; for that is meant here by *offering him,* the slaying of him following in the next verse.

For a trespass-offering.] After the manner that the *trespass-offerings* were offered, (of which see chap. vii.) that he might beg pardon of God (as Abarbinel understands it) for such sins as he had ignorantly committed.

And the log of oil.] Which was presented at the same time with the lamb.

And wave them.] Both the lamb and the log of oil.

For a wave-offering before the Lord.] Which was done by waving them to and fro, up and down, and turning towards all the four quarters of the world, as was noted before. But Maimonides saith, this was waved towards the east: and if he waved them both together, or separated one from the other, the lamb first, and afterward the log of oil, it made no difference.

Ver. 13. *And he shall slay the lamb.*] The lamb was brought, saith the same author in the forenamed treatise, to the door of the court where the leprous man stood, who stretched out his hands into the court and laid them upon his sacrifice: after which it was killed, as is here directed.

In the place where he shall kill the sin-offering, and the burnt-offering.] See vi. 25.

In the holy place.] In the court of the tabernacle, at the north side of the altar of *burnt-offering*, (chap. i. 11.) which was a place more holy than the entrance, or east end of the court, where the *peace-offerings* were to be killed, (see iii. 2.)

For as the sin-offering is the priest's, so is the trespass-offering.] See vii. 7. Both of them were to be eaten by the priests in the court of God's house; and, therefore, were equally holy.

It is most holy.] See ii. 3.

Ver. 14. *And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass-offering.*] There stood two priests, as Maimonides represents it, (in his treatise beforementioned, sect. 4.) ready to receive the blood of the lamb: one, in a holy vessel, with which he sprinkled the altar; the other, in his right hand, which he poured into his left: and then with the fore-finger of his right hand put it upon the right ear, &c. of him that was to be cleansed.

And the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot.] The priest standing within the court at the entrance of it, and the man standing still without, the man thrust his head within the gate, and the priest put some of the blood which he held in his hand upon the tip of his right ear. After which, the man stretched out his right arm, and the priest put some of the same blood upon the thumb of his right hand; and next, his right leg, on the great toe of which he likewise put some more blood. Thus Maimonides in the same place. Where he saith, if the priest had put the blood upon the left ear, thumb, or toe, all had been of no effect. And he adds, (sect. 5.) that the blood was put upon half of the flap of his ear, and upon the whole breadth of the top of his thumb and great toe, for if he put it on the sides or beneath it was ineffectual. Which is very reasonable to believe, because there was no natural efficacy in these things to cleanse a leper; but it depended wholly upon the will and pleasure of God, which was punctually therefore to be observed; that, by the exact performance of all these ceremonial signs (as Pellicanus speaks) in the face of the church, all men might be satisfied that he was perfectly purified; and he might be publicly authorized to associate himself with the rest of God's people, and be no longer abominated by them for his impurity. For the signification of these ceremonies some think to have been, that he was restored to free communion with God, and with man. (See Exod. xxix. 20.) And Abarbinel looks upon them as a signification also, that the leprosy began in those parts of the body (which are less fleshy and fat), and were now, therefore, particularly declared clean. But whatever the intention of them was, there was a just and wise reason, no doubt, for them; though at this distance from those ages, countries, and customs, &c. we may not be able to discover it.

Ver. 15. *And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand.*] Or, as Maimonides saith, he might pour some of it into the left hand of the other priest, who sprinkled the blood at the altar.

Ver. 16. *And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil,* &c.] The fore-finger of his right hand, as the same Hebrew doctor observes.

And shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the Lord.] At every sprinkling he dipped his finger in the oil, and directed it towards the most holy place, where God dwelt: though, if it were not exactly directed to it, the same doctor saith, the sprinkling was good.

Ver. 17. *And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear,* &c.] Then the priest returned to the man who was to be cleansed, upon the tip of whose ear, and thumb, and toe, he had put the blood of the trespass-offering, and put some of this oil upon that blood. Which seems to have been a token of forgiveness by the blood, and of healing by the oil.

Ver. 18. *And the remnant of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed.*] Which one thing, if it were omitted, the leper was not cleansed. As for the rest of the log of oil, which was not all poured into his hand, but only some of it, (ver. 15.) that was distributed to the priests (as the same Maimonides observes), who alone might eat it in the court of the tabernacle, as they did other holy things. But none might taste of it before the sprinkling, and other things beforementioned, were performed. If any man did he was beaten; as he was who ate the holy things before the sprinkling of the blood. For that was a great profaneness for any person to take his portion before God had that which belonged unto him.

And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord.] This seems to suppose that the leprosy was inflicted as a punishment for some sin, which by this sacrifice was taken away. But the word *make atonement* doth not always signify the taking away sin; but sometimes merely making a thing fit for holy uses. Thus Moses is said to *make an atonement for the altar,* Exod. xxix. 36, 37. (See there.) And in the same sense may an atonement be said to be made for the leper by this sacrifice; which restored him to be made partaker of the holy things offered at the altar. (See below, ver. 53.)

Ver. 19. *And the priest shall offer the sin-offering.*] The other *he-lamb,* mentioned ver. 10. which was to be offered after the manner of the sin-offering for such offences (as Abarbinel understands it) as he knew he had committed.

And make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed.] His atonement was begun by the *trespass-offering,* (ver. 18.) and was advanced by this; which, Abarbinel thinks, was added, to make men more cautious how they contracted any sort of impurity, which would put them to great charges, before they were purged from it. For he could find no other reason, he saith, for the like sacrifices which were offered by him that had an *issue,* or had meddled with a *menstruous woman,* or had been defiled by the *dead,* or tasted *swine's* flesh, or any *creeping* thing.

And afterward he shall kill the burnt-offering.] This being a present to God himself, was not accepted, till, by the other offerings for trespass and sin, the man was purified. And this I take to be properly the Δῶρον, or *gift,* mentioned by our Saviour, Matt. viii. 4.

Ver. 20. *And the priest shall offer the burnt-offering and the meat-offering upon the altar.*] There were so many offerings made, to shew the greatness of his uncleanness, and now his perfect cure. We read of no *meat-offering* made with the two former sacrifices; but the *three tenth-deals of fine flour* (mentioned ver. 10.) seem to signify, every one of these sacrifices, the *trespass-offering*, the *sin-offering*, and the *burnt-offering*, had its proportion of a *tenth-deal* of flour offered with it. But if we think the whole was appropriated to the *burnt-offering*, yet it was the same thing to the leper, whose cleansing cost him as dear one way as the other. Only by understanding it thus, the priest, perhaps, had a greater reward for his pains; if we suppose he only burnt a handful upon the altar (as the manner was in these offerings), and had all the rest to his own use. (See chap. ii. ver. 2, 3.)

And the priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean.] By this, his atonement was completed; and he was made so perfectly clean, as to be admitted to be partaker of the altar, when *peace-offerings* were sacrificed.

By this very long process, through so many different rites, and for so many days, before men could be purified from a legal defilement in their bodies, was a plain instruction to all persons of good sense, how much more difficult it would prove to cleanse their souls from those moral impurities which they contracted by long habits of sin: and what great pains must be taken both by the sinners themselves, and by God's ministers, to root them out; and with what repeated prayers the mercy of God towards them was to be implored, of which they ought not hastily to presume.

Ver. 21. *And if he be poor, and cannot get so much.*] The Divine Goodness always made a merciful provision that his service should not be burdensome to men; and therefore took care the poor should not be charged with too costly sacrifices, and yet partake of the benefit of them as much as the rich. (See i. 14. 17. v. 11, &c.)

He shall take.] After he had undergone all the purgations beforementioned, from the fourth verse of this chapter to the tenth, which continued for seven days together: for though his poverty excused him from such chargeable sacrifices, as others of greater ability were to offer, yet he was to be at all the trouble and pains that others took for their purification; there being not one of the rites before prescribed which is omitted in the following verses, only they were less expensive.

One lamb for a trespass-offering.] It is not determined whether it should be a *he-lamb* or a *ewe-lamb*; and, therefore, it was left indifferent, for the greater ease of his poverty; only it was to be of the *first year*, and without *blemish*, as is prescribed ver. 10.

To be waved.] According to the directions given ver. 12.

To make an atonement for him.] Which was effected by this, as well as by a more valuable sacrifice; when it was the best he had to offer.

And one tenth-deal of fine flour, mingled with oil.] Instead of three tenth-deals, which the richer sort were to offer, (ver. 10.) But if a poor man had vowed he would offer all that is prescribed in that verse, in case God would be pleased to cure him, he was bound thereby (as Maimonides says in the forenamed treatise), and this smaller sacrifice would not serve for his cleansing; but, by the help of his friends or neighbours, he was to procure all that he had vowed.

And a log of oil.] This is the same quantity, the better sort were to offer; for oil was not dear in this country.

Ver. 22. *And two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.*] Instead of the other two lambs, required of those who could provide them, (ver. 10.)

Such as he is able to get.] The best he could procure: but the meanest would be accepted, if he could get no better.

And the one shall be a sin-offering, and the other a burnt-offering.] Neither of which was to be omitted, though the things offered were but mean: (see i. 14. v. 11.) it being necessary he should perform all religious services, according to his ability. And I think the observation of Conr. Pellicanus is not absurd, that, though there was an exchange made of two lambs for two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, in consideration of a man's poverty; yet no person whatsoever, whether rich or poor, could be cleansed without the sacrifice of *one lamb*: which may well be looked upon as the figure of *the Lamb of God*, who alone taketh away the sins of the whole world.

Ver. 23. *And he shall bring them on the eighth day.*] This plainly suggests, that this poor man had done all that was prescribed on the seven days foregoing, as well as the rich.

For his cleansing unto the priest, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, &c.] See ver. 10, 11, &c. where all that follows here, unto ver. 33. is explained: there being the same rites prescribed, and in the same words, about a poor man, which were used for the cleansing of the rich.

Ver. 24. *And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass-offering.*] See ver. 12.

Ver. 25. *And he shall kill the lamb.*] See ver. 13.

And shall take some of the blood of the trespass-offering, and put it upon the tip, &c.] See this explained, ver. 14.

Ver. 26. *And the priest shall pour of the oil into the palm of his own left hand.*] See ver. 15. It is not said either there or here how much, but only *some of the oil* (as it is there translated), that is, as much as the priest thought would be sufficient.

Ver. 27. *And the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger,* &c.] According to the directions given before, ver. 16.

Ver. 28. *And the priest shall put of the oil that is in his hand upon the tip of the right ear,* &c.] See ver. 17.

Upon the place of the blood of the trespass-offering.] It being not said here, *upon the blood of the trespass-offering*, (as the words are ver. 17.) but *upon the place of the blood*; the Jews infer from thence, that if the blood laid upon the tip of the *ear*, *thumb*, or *toe*, were by any means wiped off, it was sufficient to lay the oil in the very place where the blood had been. So Maimonides, in the forenamed treatise, concerning *those that wanted expiation*, sect. 5. But that which he there adds is very unreasonable; that if a man wanted the thumb of his right hand, or the great toe of his right foot, or the lap of his right ear, he could never be purified from his uncleanness. For it is not to be thought, that God would make his cleansing impossible, who was maimed or defective in any of these parts: which had been to add one misery to another. Therefore, in this case, the blood and the oil might be put upon the parts next to these.

Ver. 29. *And the rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand,*

he shall put upon the head of him that is to be cleansed, &c.] See ver. 18.

Ver. 30. *And he shall offer the one of the turtle-doves, or of the young pigeons, such as he can get.*] *i. e.* The best that he is able to procure.

Ver. 31. *Even such as he is able to get.*] He repeats it again, that the man might not be troubled if he was not able to procure the very best, provided he did his endeavour to bring the best that his estate could reach.

The one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering, &c.] See ver. 19, 20.

Ver. 32. *This is the law of him in whom is the plague of leprosy.*] Who was shut out of the camp, because of the leprosy, which formerly appeared in him.

Whose hand is not able to get that which pertaineth to his cleansing.] Who is so poor that he cannot procure what is prescribed to those that are able to make such offerings as are beforementioned, (ver. 10, &c.) for their reception into the congregation again, when they are found to be free from their leprosy.

But here Maimonides puts this case: suppose a man, having brought the offering of the poor, suddenly becomes rich; or, on the contrary, having brought a rich man's offering, immediately becomes poor, what is to be done? He answers; if this happen before the sacrifice be finished, he is to proceed according to the state in which he was when his *sin-offering* was offered: that is, offer the sacrifice of a rich man, *viz.* another lamb, if he was then rich; or the sacrifice of a poor man, if he was then poor.

Ver. 33. *And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying.*] Now he again speaks to them both conjunctly, (which he did not ver. 1.) as he had done xiii. 1. because Aaron and his sons were peculiarly concerned to judge concerning the leprosy in houses as well as in their inhabitants.

Ver. 34. *When ye come into the land of Canaan.*] This seems to import that the leprosy did not infect their habitations, till they came into the land of Canaan. When some of the rabbins say, (as R. Levi Barzelonita observes, Præcept. clxxvii.) that God sent this plague for the good of the Israelites, into certain houses, that they being pulled down, the treasure which the Amorites had hidden there might be discovered. But this looks like one of their dreams, who are not willing to think themselves at any time out of the favour of God.

Which I give you for your possession.] From these words (and those in the conclusion of this verse, where Canaan is called *the land of their possession),* Moses bar Nachman draws a better conclusion; that the leprosy was a Divine stroke in this country, and no where else; because it was *a holy land,* bestowed upon the Israelites by God, who dwelt here himself, and punished great offences against his Divine majesty with this sore disease; whereby he banished them from his presence, till they amended.

And I put the plague of leprosy upon a house, &c.] These words seem to be a good ground to think, that this plague was a supernatural stroke: not like the contagion which now adheres to the house and clothes of those who have the pestilence. Thus Abarbinel understands it when he saith, *I put the plague,* it shews the thing was "not natural, but proceeded from the special providence and pleasure of the blessed God." And so the author of Sepher Cosri: (par. ii. sect. 58.) "God inflicted this plague of leprosy upon houses and garments, as a punishment for lesser sins; and when men continued still to multiply transgressions, then it invaded their bodies." So that it began in the houses, which were not infected by the inhabitants, but the inhabitants by the houses. And Maimonides will have this to have been the punishment of an *evil tongue, i. e.* of detraction and calumny; which began in the walls of his house, and went no further, but vanished, if he repented of his sin. But if he persisted in his rebellious courses, it proceeded to his household-stuff: and if he still went on, it invaded his garments, and at last his body, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 47.) The very same is quoted by Muscatus, out of Midrash Ruth, to this sense: "That God is so very merciful, as not at first to inflict punishment on men's bodies, as appears in the case of Job; whose goods were first destroyed, and then his children, before his body was touched: and in the plagues of Egypt itself, whose vines and fig-trees God smote, and then their cattle, before he killed their first-born. In the same manner, the plague of leprosy first invaded a man's habitation; though not the whole house, but some stones only, in the beginning of it. Then it spread all over, till the house was pulled down. From thence it went to men's garments; and, if they did not amend, to their bodies; till in the issue they were shut out of the camp, from the company of their brethren." R. Levi Barzelonita explains it after the same manner, in the place beforementioned. And Abarbinel thinks the end and intention of this miracle (as he calls it) "to be a caution and admonition from God, that the man might be converted from his sins: as if the stone in the wall had cried out, and the beam out of the timber answered it, (as Habakkuk speaks, ii. 11.) to the master of the house, saying, 'Turn unto the Lord thy God, O Israel: behold, the plague is come into thy house; and if thou wilt not be converted, it shall abide upon thee and on thy children.'" And this he saith is the opinion of their rabbins.

In a house.] They had no houses till they came into Canaan; but dwelt in tents.

Of the land of your possession.] The Jews were so fond of Jerusalem, that they have excepted it from this plague; because, saith the forenamed R. Levi, Jerusalem was not divided among the tribes; and, therefore, cannot be comprehended under the name of *their possession.* This he had out of the Gemara of Bava kama, where this is reckoned among the ten privileges of the holy city; that *it was not defiled with the plague of leprosy.* (See Con. L'Empereur's annotations on Bava kama, cap. 7. sect. 7.)

Ver. 35. *And he that owneth the house shall come and tell the priest,* &c.] As soon as any inhabitant (for he is meant by him that *owneth the house)* had a suspicion that this plague was in his dwelling, he was bound to give notice of it to the priest; or else was in danger to incur a further punishment.

Ver. 36. *Then the priest shall command that they empty the house.*] Of all the household-stuff: and that the inhabitants also should go out of it.

Before the priest go into it to see the plague.] To see whether that which the man suspected was the plague or not.

That all that is in the house be not made unclean.] Till the priest had given his judgment, all things in the house were accounted clean: as till a man was pronounced by

him to have a leprosy, nobody was bound to avoid his company.

And afterward the priest shall go in to see the house.] When it was cleared of every thing that might hinder his exact inspection.

Ver. 37. *And, behold, if the plague be in the walls of the house.*] They were principally to be searched, together with the pavement, and the roof; where this plague appeared.

With hollow strakes.] There was the same kind of mark of a leprosy in a house, that there was of it in the body of a man: for if a spot was deeper than the skin of the flesh, (xiii. 3.) it was a bad token: in like manner, when there were *hollow* or *depressed strakes* in the wall of a house, (or, as it is in the latter end of this verse, *in sight lower than the wall),* it was a sign of the leprosy, which began to corrode and eat into it. This seems to be the import of the Hebrew word *schickharuroth,* which signifies something that lies deep, and is sunk into the place where it is. For that is a more probable derivation of the word, from *schakah,* than that of Forsterus, who derives it from *schakar,* which signifies false. And so the LXX. translate it by the Greek word Κοιλάδας, signifying the leprosy had so eaten into the stones, as to have *pitted* them (as we speak in our language), *i. e.* made a cavity in them. Which the Jews justly looked upon as a thing very extraordinary; a *miraculous effect* (as Maimonides calls it) of the Divine hand.

Greenish or reddish.] Which was the mark of a leprosy in a garment, (xiii. 49.)

Ver. 38. *Then the priest shall go out of the house, to the door of the house.*] Where he was to stay till he had seen the house shut up, that none might go into it, and thereby be endangered to be defiled.

And shut it up seven days.] In which time he might be able to make a certain judgment, whether it was the leprosy or not. (See xiii. 4.) For the plague would sooner appear when the house was not inhabited.

Ver. 39. *And the priest shall come again the seventh day, and shall look.*] Make a new inspection, as he did when a man or a garment were suspected to have the leprosy, (xiii. 6. 51.)

And, behold, if the plague be spread in the walls of the house.] This was a bad sign in a man's body or garment, (xiii. 5. 51.)

Ver. 40. *Then the priest shall command that they take away the stones in which the plague is.*] As far as it was spread in the walls of the house; which it seems were generally made of stone, when they came to Canaan. Meaner houses, the Jews say, were not infected with the leprosy: nor a habitation called a *house* (as their doctors affirm) unless it had four walls of four cubits high, built of stones and timber, (ver. 45.)

And they shall cast them into an unclean place, without the city.] Where they threw their dung and all manner of filth. For such places there were without their cities; as there were others where no manner of filth might be thrown; which were called *clean places.* (See iv. 12.)

Ver. 41. *And he shall cause the house to be scraped within round about,* &c.] All the rest of the walls, where no spots as yet appeared, were to be scraped; that if any of the contagion stuck to them, it might be taken away, and the spreading of it prevented. For which end these scrapings were also thrown out into the same unclean place where the stones were laid.

Ver. 42. *And they shall take other stones, and put them in the place of those stones.*] Put fresh untainted stones in the room of the other which were taken out of the walls.

And he shall take other mortar, and plaster the house.] Command them to lay fresh plaster all over the walls, where they were scraped.

Ver. 43. *And if the plague come again, and break out in the house,* &c. *after he had taken away the stones,* &c.] If after all the forementioned care (of putting in new stones, scraping, and new plastering the walls) the same marks appeared again, which are mentioned ver. 37. the house was to be pulled down, as it is directed in the next verse but one.

Ver. 44. *Then the priest shall come and look.*] Upon notice given him; or, perhaps, he was bound to come after a certain time, and examine the state of it.

And, behold, if the plague be spread in the house, it is a spreading leprosy.] Of the same nature with that in a garment, which could not be stopped. (See xiii. 51.)

It is unclean.] Incapable to be cleansed from the leprosy, and therefore (as it follows) to be demolished.

Ver. 45. *And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house.*] This was a damage to the owner, but it was to prevent a greater unto him, and unto others: and was not done till there was no remedy. For if he had hearkened to the stones that cried out of the wall (as Abarbinel speaks), saying, *Repent, and amend,* &c. (which was the meaning of the plague) the infection would have spread no further. (See ver. 34.) The same author fancies, that this plague in their houses was an emblem of the idolatry they would exercise there, when they came into Canaan: and that the pulling down of *their* houses, was a sign of the destruction of the sanctuary itself, because of their iniquities. This seems to be something forced: but we may not unfitly look upon this manner of proceeding with their houses, when they were infected (some of the stones whereof were taken out, &c. before all was pulled down), as a representation of God's proceedings with them, when they rebelled against him: for, first, some of them were removed; and then the whole nation, by degrees, very much impaired, before they were all carried captive out of their own land.

And he shall carry them forth out of the city, into an unclean place.] Order them to be carried to the place, where the stones and the scrapings of the house, mentioned ver. 40, 41. were thrown. Which may well be looked upon as a figure of their being carried away for their wickedness into heathen countries, which in Scripture are called *unclean lands.* Such the land of Canaan was before they came into it, (Ezra ix. 11.) and such were all people uncircumcised, (Isa. lii. 1.)

Ver. 46. *Moreover, he that goeth into the house all the while that it is shut up,* &c.] If he did but enter within the door of the house, while it remained under a suspicion of being defiled, he contracted a defilement himself, under which he lay till night. Which strict care to keep the Israelites free from all such pollutions, is an admonishment to us (as Conradus Pellicanus well notes) to avoid all suspected places and company: according to the exhortation of the apostle, "Abstain from all appearance of evil."

Ver. 47. *And he that lieth in the house shall wash his*

clothes.] It sufficed for the cleansing of him that only entered into such a house, but made no stay there, to be separated for a short time from society: but he that lay there all night, was to do more for his purification; being in more danger to bring away the infection, if there were any.

And he that eateth in the house shall wash his clothes.] He that made a meal there was also exposed to danger, and therefore was bound to wash his clothes (which were very apt to catch the infection), though he did not stay so long as to lie there.

Ver. 48. *If the plague had not spread in the house, after it was plastered, then the priest shall pronounce the house clean.*] Just as it was in the leprosy in men's bodies, or garments, (xiii. 6. 53.)

Because the plague is healed.] A stop being put to its progress, it was a sign the house was free from the plague, of which it was suspected.

Ver. 49. *And he shall take to cleanse the house two birds, and cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop.*] The very same rites are used for the cleansing of a house, which were appointed for the cleansing of man, (ver. 4.) And the reason of it was, as Abarbinel well conjectures, to denote that the house was smitten for the man's sake; who was to look upon himself as saved and preserved by the Divine mercy.

It is not said here, indeed, that these two birds should be *alive* and *clean*, (as is directed ver. 4.) but that is necessarily understood; for he is ordered immediately to kill one of the birds, and let the other fly away (as in the former case), and nothing unclean could be of effect to cleanse a man from uncleanness.

Ver. 51. *And he shall take the cedar-wood, and the hyssop,* &c.] This whole verse is explained before, ver. 6. which differs not from this in any thing; but only that the living bird is *there* mentioned in the first place, and *here* in the last: and in this verse is more distinctly declared, that all these things should be dipped *in the blood of the slain bird, and in the running water.*

Ver. 52. *And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird,* &c.] There is nothing to be observed here, more than before, but only this, that the house is said to be cleansed *by the living bird,* as well as by the *blood of that which was slain:* its flying away being a declaration the house was free for any man's habitation. Thus the scapegoat, which was let run into the wilderness, took away the sins of the people, as well as the goat offered at the altar. (See xvi. 5.)

Ver. 53. *And he shall let go the living bird out of the city into the open field.*] This justifies what the Jewish doctors say upon ver. 7. (See there.)

And make an atonement for the house.] An atonement was made for the house, no otherway than for the altar, (see upon ver. 18.) by cleansing it so as to make it fit for any man to dwell in it.

And it shall be clean.] The owner (who was commanded to forsake the house, ver. 36.) or any one else, might return to it, and inhabit it, as before it was suspected to have the plague in it.

Ver. 54. *This is the law for all manner of plagues, and leprosy, and scall.*] The rule whereby to judge and to cleanse all leprosies in the bodies of men; and that leprosy in the head or the beard, called a *scall,* (xiii. 30—38.)

Ver. 55, 56. *And for the leprosy of a garment, and of a house, and for a raising,* &c.] The foregoing verse and these two, are a recapitulation of the laws delivered in the thirteenth chapter and in this.

Ver. 57. *To teach when it is unclean, and when it is clean.*] To guide the priest in judgment when to pronounce a man, a garment, or a house, infected with the leprosy; or when to declare them free from it.

This is the law of leprosy.] Here is a conclusion of what belongs to this matter. Which profane minds, who love to disparage the Holy Scripture, and admire no ancient authors but such as Homer, Virgil, and Plautus, (to use the words of Pellicanus upon ver. 39.) may deride as unworthy to be made a part of a Divine law. But men better disposed may discern herein the great goodness of God to the Israelites, whom he had adopted for his peculiar people, in taking care to give them precepts about all manner of things, which were many ways profitable both for the regulating their manners and preserving their health; and accustoming them to an exact obedience to him in every thing. And who doth not see that by these external rites and ceremonies he admonishes us to keep pure consciences, void of offence both towards God and men, in a strict observance of all the rules of our most holy religion?

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying.*] For Aaron was particularly concerned to see these laws observed, as well as the foregoing.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them.*] Moses, it is likely, first delivered these laws to them, in the presence of Aaron; who afterward instructed and exhorted them to the observance of them.

When any man hath a running issue.] He speaks of that disease which physicians call a *gonorrhœa:* which commonly proceeded from an ill course of life, and had in those countries a great virulency in it. If it proceeded merely from some strain in the back, by carrying too great a burden, or by violent leaping, (and several other natural causes, which Maimonides enumerates in his Mechuss. Kapparah, cap. 2.) the man was not defiled with it, nor concerned in this law. And therefore the causes from whence it proceeded were diligently to be considered, as Maimonides there admonishes; which might be discerned by such effects, as made it a very nasty and offensive disease in those hot countries, as it is sometimes here in these colder climates.

Out of his flesh.] The word *flesh* signifies the secret parts, as it doth Gen. vi. 10. xvii. 13. Ezek. xvi. 26. and other places.

Because of his issue he is unclean.] Upon that account alone he was to be kept from the sanctuary, and separated from company. (See ver. 31.)

Ver. 3. *And this shall be his uncleanness in his issue.*] The rule whereby to judge of it.

Whether the flesh run with his issue, or his flesh be stopped from his issue, it is his uncleanness.] Whether there were a continued distillation of the corrupt matter, or it was so coagulated as to stop in the passage: either way, it made the man unclean.

Be stopped from his issue.] Rather, *with his issue;* as the Hebrew words will bear.

Ver. 4. *Every bed whereon he lieth that hath the issue is unclean: and every thing whereon he sitteth,* &c.] This and the following verses unto ver. 13. are a demonstration that this disease made a man legally unclean to a very high degree: being so offensive, that not only every thing he touched became unclean, but whosoever touched such things was made unclean also. There is little in them that needs any explication; the only difficulty was, to know whether a man laboured under this disease. Which was not wholly left unto his conscience to determine; but his countenance discovered it: the continual flux making a great alteration in the whole habit of his body. For virulent gonorrhœas sometimes last several years (as Tho. Bartholinus saith, he knew one that had it ten years, and was reduced to skin and bone), being frequently accompanied with inflammations and ulcers in the neighbouring parts, from which the filthy humour flows, (Bartholin. Hist. Anatom. Cent. ii. Hist. xxxvi.)

Ver. 5. *And whosoever toucheth his bed.*] Upon which he hath lain.

Shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water; and be unclean until the even.] Which was the law in other cases, when men had touched an unclean thing, (xi. 23.)

Ver. 6. *And he that sitteth on any thing whereon he sat that hath the issue.*] Though he did but just sit down, and did it ignorantly; presently rising up again as soon as he knew his error; he became defiled, and might not go to the sanctuary till he was purified, by washing his clothes and himself in water.

Ver. 7. *And he that toucheth the flesh of him that hath the issue.*] That is, any part of his body.

Ver. 8. *And if he that hath the issue spit upon him that is clean,* &c.] By the same reason, if he blowed his nose upon him it defiled him.

Then he shall wash his clothes.] *i. e.* The man upon whom the spittle fell.

Ver. 9. *And what saddle soever he rideth upon,* &c.] By the same reason that the seat he sat upon was defiled, (ver. 4.)

Ver. 10. *And whosoever toucheth any thing that was under him,* &c.] Either the saddle, or any thing else that was under him when he rode.

And he that beareth any of those things, &c.] Removeth them from one place to another; though it be to carry them out of the way, that others may not be defiled by them unawares.

Ver. 11. *And whomsoever he toucheth that hath the issue (and hath not rinsed his hands in water) he shall wash,* &c.] It is somewhat doubtful, whether these words *(hath not washed his hands in water)* belong to him that had the issue, or to him that his hands touched. Most understand it of the former, that if the man who had an issue touched any other man, and had not first washed his hands, that man whom he touched should be defiled. But the Syriac takes it to refer to the man that was touched by him, who, if he did not immediately wash his hands with water, was to be cleansed after a more laborious manner, by washing his clothes, and bathing himself in water. But I do not see how washing of his hands could cleanse him; when the man that had the issue touched, perhaps, some other part of his body.

Ver. 12. *And the vessel of earth that he toucheth, which hath the issue, shall be broken,* &c.] That it might not be employed hereafter to any use. (See xi. 33. vi. 18.)

And every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.] Such vessels were not broken, but only well washed, because they were not so easily made as the other, and were of more value. There are so many washings prescribed here, and on other occasions, that it is reasonable to believe there were not only at Jerusalem, and in all other cities, but in every village, several bathing-places contrived for these legal purifications, that men might, without much labour, be capable to fulfil these precepts. And one cannot but think that such frequent washings were enjoined, to admonish them how carefully they ought to preserve purity of heart and life.

Ver. 13. *And when he that hath an issue is cleansed of his issue.*] It having ceased for some time.

Then he shall number to himself seven days for his cleansing.] That there might be sufficient proof made whether the issue was stopped; that is, he was really cured.

And wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh.] In the conclusion of the seventh day.

In running water.] *i. e.* Spring-water (as we speak), which was most pure. River-water was the same, which comes from springs.

And shall be clean.] So that he might keep company with his neighbours, but not have communion with God at the sanctuary, till after the following sacrifices were offered: for, if in the end of the seventh day, after his washing, the flux returned again, all this labour was lost, and he was to stay seven days more, as Maimonides observes in his treatise on this subject, cap. 3.

Ver. 14. *And on the eighth day.*] If he continued free from the flux, after his washing on the seventh day, in the evening.

He shall take to him two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.] These were the sacrifices appointed for the meaner sort of people, who were not able to be at the charge of a lamb, or other sacrifices of the flock or herd, (v. 7. xii. 8.) And perhaps the great trouble the man had endured, and given others, while he laboured under this disease, might be considered so far as to put him to as little charge as might be for his purification.

And come before the Lord, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] But not into the court of the Israelites, till his sacrifices were offered.

Ver. 15. *And the priest shall offer them, the one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering.*] As in the case of a poor leper, (xiv. 31.) who was bound also to offer a trespass-offering of greater value.

And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord, for his issue.] Perfectly restore him to partake of holy things, of which he was debarred while he had his issue. And here it may be fit to observe, that the greater part of all the legal defilements depended upon the seat or place of the Divine Majesty, (as the author of Sepher Cosri speaks, par. iii. sect. 49.) whose presence there made their country be called the *holy land,* and was the ground of all these injunctions about cleanliness: to which, he thinks, they have no obligations at this day, now that they live in an *unclean land* (*i. e.* among us gentiles), and want the presence of the Divine Majesty among them.

Ver. 16. *And if any man's seed of copulation.*] Though

the holy writers speak very plainly of some things, that we think it not so modest to name in that manner; yet it is observable, on the other hand, that in things of the same nature, they use circumlocutions to express them, which we stick not to speak of in blunter words. As when they say, *the water of the feet*, meaning urine; and call going to stool, *uncovering of the feet;* which shews that it is nothing but the vast difference of times and places, which makes that language seem uncivil to us, that was not so to them; and, on the contrary, made them very cautious in their expressions, where we think it unnecessary.

Go out from him.] Involuntarily; in his sleep, or otherwise, which the Hebrews call *keri, i. e.* accidental.

Then he shall wash all his flesh with water, and be unclean until the even.] This was one of the smallest legal pollutions, from which they were soon cleansed without any sacrifice; and which some of them think did not oblige them to wash, unless they intended to go to the sanctuary. But though that opinion be not true, yet this rite had such a respect to the sanctuary, that now they have none, they do not think themselves bound to use it on such occasions.

Ver. 17. *And every garment, and every skin,* &c.] These things were made so unclean by such accidents, that they might not be used the next day, nor till they were washed.

Ver. 18. *The woman also with whom man shall lie with seed of copulation.*] It is no wonder the holy writers speak so plainly of these matters, being men of great simplicity, free from all wantonness, commonly far advanced in years; among whom marriage and a numerous issue were accounted the greatest blessings, and therefore coveted by all, and renounced by none.

They shall both bathe themselves in water, &c.] There is no sort of pollution in the act of marriage, which is of God's own institution, but what this law made: and the law made it, as Theodoret thinks, that the trouble of such constant purification after it, might preserve them from the immoderate use of it. So those words of his signify, Κελεύει καθαίρεσθαι, ἵνα κωλύῃ τῆς συνουσίας τὸ συνεχὲς, ἡ περὶ τὴν κάθαρσιν ἀσχολία, (Quæst. xx. in Levit.)

Ver. 19. *And if a woman have an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood.*] In the Hebrew the words run much clearer; *and a woman when she shall have an issue of blood, and her issue be in her flesh.* The latter part of which are added, to distinguish this from bleeding at the nose, or from the hemorrhoids (which did not pollute any body); for the word *flesh* here signifies, as it doth ver. 2.

She shall be put apart seven days.] From her husband, and from the sanctuary: to which these sorts of uncleanness have a peculiar respect, as I before noted. And Maimonides here, not unfitly, observes, that whereas the Zabii accounted a man polluted if he did but speak with a menstruous woman, or if the wind, which came from the quarter where she was, blew upon him; God only required her not to meddle with holy things, nor to approach to the sanctuary. Otherwise she might eat all manner of common meat, and perform all domestic offices for her husband, as formerly; only not lie with him while she remained in this condition. So he explains this, More Nev. par. iii. cap. 47.

And whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even.] If they were grown persons, as Menochius well observes; for infants were excepted from this pollution, by their age and the necessities of nature. The same is observed by Maimonides, in the chapter forenamed; that the more frequent any of these uncleannesses were, the greater and longer purifications were required. As touching of a dead body, especially of friends and neighbours, being the most usual, it could not be cleansed but by the ashes of the red heifer (which were not easily had), and not till seven days were passed. In like manner, fluxes and menstruous pollutions, because they oftener happened, and were more grievous than touching the unclean, those therefore that laboured under them, had need of seven days' purification; but they that touched them, of one day only, before they became clean.

Ver. 20. *And every thing that she lieth upon in her separation shall be unclean,* &c.] The very same sort of uncleanness was contracted in this case, as in the foregoing, ver. 4, &c. For if we believe some authors, it might not only be properly called *her sickness;* but such an one as had some infection in it (at least something offensive) in those hot countries. (See Pliny, lib. vii. 5. and lib. xxviii. 2.)

Ver. 21. *And whatsoever toucheth her bed,* &c.] This and the two following verses contain the very same prohibition in this case, which were given in the other. (See ver. 5, 6, &c.)

Ver. 24. *If a man lie with her at all.*] *i. e.* Unwittingly, not knowing in what condition she was: for if he did it knowingly, both of them were liable to be cut off, (xx. 18.)

He shall be unclean seven days.] As having contracted one of the greatest sorts of uncleanness, (ver. 19.) For though this flux was natural and beneficial, and therefore could have no sort of uncleanness in it but what was made by this law: yet there was a great reason for the keeping men from the company of women in this condition, if leprosies, and such-like diseases, were thereby propagated, as Theodoret says some think; Φάσι γάρ τινες, ἐκ τῆς τοιαύτης συναφείας, καὶ λώβην καὶ λέπραν ἀπογεννᾶσθαι, &c. Especially since they were so libidinous a people (as he describes them, in words of a very bad signification), that it was highly necessary to lay such restraints upon them; and to make even involuntary pollutions very penal, that they might learn ὅτι πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἐναγῆ ἑκούσια, *that all wilful uncleannesses were far more detestable.*

Ver. 25. *And if a woman have an issue of blood many days out of the time of her separation,* &c.] As before he spoke of the natural course of the blood, so here of a disease; which Procopius Gazæus calls *malum immedicabile, an incurable evil.* So it sometimes proved, as appears by the story of the woman in the gospel, whose case this was, (Matt. ix. 20.)

All the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall be as the days of her separation.] She was to be in the same condition with the woman mentioned ver. 19. who was put apart seven days; *i. e.* as long as her uncleanness lasted. Which made the case of those that laboured under this infirmity very lamentable, because it continued in some many years.

Ver. 26. *Every bed whereon she lieth all the days of her issue shall be unto her as the bed of her separation,* &c.] Like the bed and the seat of her mentioned ver. 20.

Ver. 27. *And whosoever toucheth these things shall be unclean,* &c.] As in the case forementioned ver. 21.

Ver. 28. *But if she be cleansed of her issue.*] Cured of her disease.

Then shall she number to herself seven days.] For a trial whether it was a perfect cure or not.

After that.] If there were no return of the flux.

She shall be clean.] So as to be restored to common conversation: but not to the sanctuary, till the following oblations were made.

Ver. 29. *And on the eighth day she shall take unto her two turtles, or two young pigeons,* &c.] The same sacrifices which were prescribed in the case of a man who was cured of an issue, (ver. 14.) And this relates only to the extraordinary flux, out of or beyond the usual course of nature, (ver. 25.) for it would have been too burdensome unto some persons, if they had been bound to offer thus once a month.

Ver. 30. *And the priest shall make an atonement for her before the Lord,* &c.] See ver. 15.

Ver. 31. *Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness.*] Take care that they separate themselves; by instructing them, when they are under any of the forenamed impurities, to observe the directions now given. Thus the LXX. and the Vulgar Latin understand these words.

That they die not in their uncleanness.] Lest I punish them with death, if they approach unto my sanctuary, having any of the forementioned uncleannesses upon them.

When they defile my tabernacle that is among them.] This shews what is meant by *separation* and *putting apart* in the foregoing verses: which was principally from the tabernacle where God dwelt. Out of respect to which, and to preserve their due regard to it (that is, to God himself), all these cautions were given, as I observed before, ver. 15. of this chapter. And see chap. xii. ver. 4. what I noted out of Maimonides, who discourses excellently on this subject, in his More Nevoch. (par. iii. cap. 47.) where he observes, that there could not well be a more notable means contrived, to maintain a holy fear and reverence to the Divine Majesty upon their minds, than to forbid every person that was any way polluted to come unto his sanctuary. For there were so many sorts of pollutions, made by the law, that it was very hard to avoid falling under some of them: and, consequently, a business of great care, circumspection, and labour, to approach, as they ought, into the Divine presence. For if a man escaped defilement by a dead body, yet he could not easily avoid being defiled by some of the eight creeping things, which he might chance to tread upon; or might fall on his meat, or his drink: and if he escaped these, yet he might be defiled involuntarily by the means mentioned here, (ver. 16.) or by touching a menstruous woman, or one that had a flux of blood; or, at least, by touching their beds, their seats, or something belonging to them, &c. All which kept a man from the sanctuary; which he could not enter therefore when he pleased, but was to stay a certain time before he could be admitted to worship God there; and not then neither, till he had washed himself. "By all which actions, reverence, affection, and devotion, were preserved to the sanctuary; and men were excited to great humility, which in this was principally regarded."

Ver. 32. *This is the law of him that hath an issue,* &c.] In this and the next verse, he recapitulates the matter of this chapter: as he did in the latter end of the foregoing sum up the contents of that.

Ver. 33. *And of him that hath an issue, of the man and of the woman.*] Even of the person that hath an issue, whether it be man or woman, &c.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, after the death of the two sons of Aaron.*] This chapter would have naturally followed the tenth chapter, where the death of those two persons is related, if that had not occasioned the inserting some other laws about uncleanness, (see preface to chapter xi.) which being delivered, Moses now goes on to give direction about the great sacrifice, in which the whole nation was concerned: as he treated of lesser and common sacrifices in the beginning of the book.

When they offered before the Lord, and died.] See x. 1. This is mentioned again, to make the priests careful, not only to sacrifice unto the Lord alone, but after such a manner as he ordered.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto thy brother Aaron, that he come not at all times into the holy place, within the veil.*] Into the holy place without the veil, he, or some of the other priests, were bound to go every day, morning and evening, when they offered incense: but into this, as none of them might go at all, so he not at all times, when he went into the other; but only upon one particular occasion, which is mentioned here in this chapter.

Before the mercy-seat, which is upon the ark.] This being the place of God's special presence, none might enter into it but his principal minister; and he no oftener than the Divine Majesty allowed; which was only once a year, (it appears from ver. 29.) when he offered the great sacrifice here prescribed. And so much was intimated to Moses before, (Exod. xxx. 10.) And the Jews add, that on this day of the year he might go in but four times; once to burn incense; a second time to sprinkle the blood of the bullock; then to sprinkle the blood of the goat; and lastly, to fetch out the censer, wherein he burnt incense. If he went in a fifth time, he died for his presumption, as they say; particularly R. Levi Barzel. (Præcept. cclxxxvi.) Such sacred places the gentiles had in some countries, which, according to this pattern, were opened only once a year. Particularly Pausanias mentions, in his Bœotica, the temple of Dindymene: which they thought it was not lawful to open more than one day in the year: Μιᾷ δ' ἐφ' ἑκάστων ἐτων ἡμέρᾳ, καὶ οὐ πέρα τὸ ἱερὸν ἀνοίγειν νομίζουσι. And the same he saith of another, in the same book; and in his Eliaca, of the temple of Orcus, Ἀνοίγνυται μὲν ἅπαξ καθ' ἔτος ἕκαστον, &c. *It is opened once every year.* (See Dr. Outram's excellent book De Sacrificiis, lib. i. cap. 3.)

Lest he die.] As his sons had done for their presumption, in offering with other fire than God allowed. In the like danger Aaron himself had been, if he had come into the Divine presence without his leave, and without such caution as is given ver. 13. which is the reason of this order here delivered to Moses, and by him to Aaron, for the prevention of any such dangerous mistake.

For I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat.] That was God's own dwelling-place, where his glory appeared; into which, therefore, none might enter, but when he appointed, and as he directed. The only difficulty is, what is meant by *the cloud,* wherein he saith he will appear on the mercy-seat. One would think he meant, as usually, the cloud wherein the Divine Glory resided, (Exod. xl. 34, 35.

1 Kings viii. 10, 11.) But *the cloud* seems to have been on the outside of the tabernacle; and within a *glory*, or great splendour, only unclouded. And therefore most, I think, understand this of the smoke of the incense, that the high-priest burnt when he entered into the most holy place; which was *the cloud* wherewith the mercy-seat was then covered, (ver. 13.) And there is great reason for this opinion: for if there had been a cloud in the most holy place, over the mercy-seat, before the high-priest entered, what need had there been to make a new cloud of smoke, (as he is ordered ver. 13.) when the Divine *Glory* was sufficiently obscured already? Besides, in the place beforementioned, (Exod. xl.) the *cloud*, as I now observed, is said to be without the tabernacle, and to cover it; the *glory* only being within: and in the other place of the book of Kings, (and 2 Chron. v. 13, 14.) it is said only *to fill the house of the Lord, i. e.* the body of the temple: but not to be settled upon the mercy-seat. Where we may very well doubt whether there was any cloud or not; but only the Divine Glory. The only ground that I can see for it is, that God is said there *to dwell in thick darkness:* which seems to import, that the Divine Glory was wrapped up in a cloud. But, however that be expounded, these words, which we here translate, *I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat,* may very well be rendered, *I will be approached in a cloud, (i. e.* of incense.) For so this word we translate *appear* is used Exod. xxiii. 15. not for God's appearing to to them, but for the people's appearing before him: and this sense the thirteenth verse seems to enforce, as Campegius Vitringa hath observed, lib. i. Observ. Sacr. cap. 11.

Ver. 3. *Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place.*] As he might come into it only once a year; so then with such preparation, and in such a manner, as is here prescribed. And the Jews say, that he was separated from his own house and family seven days before, and dwelt apart from them in a chamber of the temple; that he might the better prepare himself for the offices of this day, by sprinkling the blood of the daily sacrifice, burning incense, and such-like things. And lest he should be either ignorant of his duty (as some proved, in the latter end of their state, when the high-priesthood was bought for money), or forgetful, the Sanhedrin sent some to read before him the rites of this day; who adjured him also to perform every thing according to God's command. The night before also they let him eat but little, that no accident in the night might make him unfit to officiate the next day; and that he might awake the sooner, and begin the service of the day betimes, as they did upon all great solemnities. All this, and a great deal more, is related in Codex Joma, cap. 1. And Mr. Selden, likewise, hath observed, out of Sepher Schebat Jehuda, with what a magnificent pomp the high-priest was conducted from his own house when he went to the temple, seven days before this day of atonement, accompanied by the king and the whole Sanhedrin, the royal family, and the whole choir of priests, &c. (lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 11. n. 7.) Something like this was the triumph wherein our blessed high-priest, Christ Jesus, was conducted to Jerusalem, five days before he offered himself there, for the sins of the whole world, (John xii. 1. 12, 13.)

With a young bullock for a sin-offering.] To be offered for himself and for his family, as appears from ver. 6. For no other sacrifice was allowed for the sin of the high-priest (though it were dubious), but only a young bullock, (iv. 2, 3.)

And a ram for a burnt-offering.] Which accompanied the *sin-offering* at his consecration, (viii. 18.) But first of all the morning sacrifice was offered, with the additionals usual on this day (as the Jews say), *viz.* a bullock, a ram, and seven lambs, all for burnt-offerings.

Ver. 4. *He shall put on the holy linen coat,* &c.] There were eight garments belonging to the attire of the high-priest: four of which are here mentioned, which the Jews call his *white garments;* and four more mentioned Exod. xxviii. 4. which they call the *golden garments;* because there was a mixture of gold in them; whereas these were all made of fine linen. Upon other days, when the high-priest officiated, he was bound to put them on all (not one of the eight being wanting); but on this day, when he went into the most holy place, he put on only those four, which were the habit of the ordinary priests as well as his. This, some conceive, was in token of humility, because this day was appointed for confession of sins, and repentance, &c. Upon which account they imagine, also, these linen garments were coarser than those which he wore every day with his golden garments. But all the Jews agree, that these garments, which he wore on the day of expiation, were made of the purest and most precious linen of all other: which they call (in Massechet Joma, cap. 3.) *fine linen of Pelusium,* which was a city in Egypt, famous for the richest and whitest linen, as our Sheringham shews (in his notes on that treatise) out of Pliny and Silius Italicus. And if we may believe the Talmudists, as the high-priest put on fine linen of Pelusium in the morning of this day, so he put on fine linen of India (*i. e.* in their language, of Ethiopia or Arabia, as Braunius observes, lib. i. de Vest. Sacerd. cap. 7. n. 9.) in the evening of it; which was not of much less value than the other. And this is not disagreeable to Moses, who saith God commanded the priest's garments to be made *for glory and beauty,* (Exod. xxviii. 2.) And therefore the high-priest appeared, even upon this day, in a splendid and noble habit; which was not inconsistent with inward humility and lowliness of mind; whereby the comely and beautiful performance of God's service was not to be obstructed. For whereas, upon other days, the high-priest washed his hands and his feet in the brazen laver; on this day, if we may believe the Jews, he washed them in a vessel of gold, as the same Braunius observes out of Massechet Joma, cap. 4. There are those who fancy the high-priest went into the most holy place with the ephod and breast-plate, whereon were the names of the children of Israel: but that is quite contrary to what Moses here delivers, who mentions no other garments but these of fine linen which he wore upon this day; no, not when he went into the holy place, (ver. 23.) And the Hebrew doctors all thus understand it, as Mr. Selden shews out of them and Josephus, (lib. ii. de Succession. in Pontific. Hebræor. cap. 7. p. 250.)

Yet the Roman church hath grounded a solemn practice upon the forementioned fancy; the priests, and bishops too, being wont on Good Friday to minister only in the habit of deacons, while they are reading or singing the office of the passion; but when they come to the sacrifice of the mass (as they call it), then they put on richer vestments, proper to their order. Which is a mistaken imita-

tion of the ceremonies under the law, upon this great day of atonement; when the high-priest never put on any of his golden garments for the service of it.

And he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh.] To cover his secret parts. For the word *flesh* is to be understood here as in xv. 2.

And shall be girded with the linen girdle, and with the linen mitre, &c.] These two, with the two foregoing, make up the four *white garments:* which might possibly, as the Jews say, be made of the finest and richest linen that could be got, that the high-priest might appear splendid in the simplest habit wherein he ministered. But it is evident he was not allowed to appear in those garments which were wrought with gold, and scarlet, and blue, and purple, (Exod. xxviii. 6. 8, &c.) because such very sumptuous apparel, it must be acknowledged, was not so suitable to the service of the day. On which the high-priest (as the Hebrew gloss notes upon this place) did not so much put on the person of a patron, as of an accuser; confessing their sins before God, and begging pardon for them.

These are holy garments.] To be used only when he ministered in the sanctuary, (Exod. xxviii. 2.)

Therefore he shall wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.] There was no need, upon other days, to wash more than once, in the beginning of Divine service; but on this great day he washed five times, as oft as he shifted his garments, and went from one ministry to another; as appears in part from ver. 23, 24. where see what I have observed. Here he seems to speak of his washing after he had offered the morning sacrifice, &c. in his golden garments: and then began the service of the day in these *white garments* alone.

Ver. 5. *And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel.*] The former sacrifices (ver. 3.) were for himself: these for all the people.

Two kids of the goat for a sin-offering.] These *two goats* made but one *sin-offering;* which is described more largely and particularly, ver. 8—10. The former, perhaps, which was sacrificed to the Lord, was to procure those good things which they had forfeited by their sins: and the other (the *scape-goat,* as we translate it) to avert those evils which they had deserved: for the name that is commonly given it by the Greeks, signifies its power to turn away punishments. Or the simple reason of it might be, that the Israelites, by this double sacrifice (for both were presented before the Lord), might be the more fully satisfied of the expiation of their sins. There is the like example before of two birds appointed for the cleansing of a leper's house; one of which only was killed, the other let fly away; but both of them are said to *cleanse* the house, and to be for *atonement,* (xiv. 49. 52, 53.) In which some of the ancient fathers thought they saw a notable type of our Lord Christ. Whose sacrifice, as it was prefigured by all the legal sacrifices, (for the paschal lamb itself was a type of him sacrificed for us, 1 Cor. v. 7.) so by this more especially on the day of expiation. Which was of greater and more universal efficacy than all the rest, and therefore represented him more fully than the other did. Insomuch, that these *two goats* joined in one sacrifice, may be thought to represent one Christ, consisting of two natures. For since it was not possible, as Theodoret expresses it, to adumbrate both the "τὸ θνητὸν, καὶ τὸ ἀθάνατον, *that which was mortal, and that which was immortal* in Christ; he commanded two to be brought, ἵνα ὁ μὲν θυόμενος, τῆς σαρκὸς τὸ παθητὸν προτυπώσῃ. ὁ δὲ ἀπολυόμενος δηλώσῃ τὸ ἀπαθὲς τῆς θεότητος· *that the goat which was offered in sacrifice, might prefigure the passable nature of his flesh: and that which was let go, might shew the impassable nature of his Divinity,*" Quæst. xxxii. in Levit. And St. Cyril discourses to the same purpose, in his ninth book against Julian.

And one ram for a burnt-offering.] Which was no more than was appointed for Aaron himself, (ver. 3.) who herein is equalled with all the princes of the people; in whose name this ram seems to have been offered.

Ver. 6. *And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin-offering, which is for himself.*] Not by killing it, which was done afterwards, (ver. 11.) but only by presenting it before God to be sacrificed; which was done with a solemn prayer, wherein he beseeched God to be propitious unto him and his. The form of it is set down in Massechet Joma, cap. 3. sect. 8. He laid his hand upon the head of the bullock, and said, "I have done amiss, and been rebellious, and sinned before thee, I and my house. I beseech thee now, O Lord, remit my rebellion, and my sin which I have committed, and my house," &c.

And make an atonement for himself, and for his house.] For his family, as I said, (ver. 3.) and for all the priests; who are called *the house of Aaron,* (Psal. cxv. 10. 12. cxxxv. 9.) And I do not see why all the house of Levi should not also be understood; for they are not comprehended under the name of *the congregation of the children of Israel* (mentioned in the verse before), and therefore must be contained here under the name of the house of Aaron. (See Numb. i. 49.)

Ver. 7. *And he shall take the two goats.*] Mentioned ver. 5. which were to be of equal stature, of the same colour, and the same price, (as the Hebrew doctors say in Joma, cap. 6.) both designed to the same end, the expiation of their sins.

And present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle, &c.] All the *sin-offerings* which were made for the congregation, were presented either by the high-priest, or by the elders, (iv. 15.) and by them devoted to God, to be sacrificed on his altar. For this *presenting* of the goat is the same with his *offering* of the bullock in the verse foregoing; which was nothing else but his solemn consecration of them, as I said, to be sacrificed. According to which pattern, our blessed Lord and Saviour, a little before he suffered upon the cross, and made himself a sacrifice for us, voluntarily offered himself to die for our sins. Which is the meaning of those words of his, John xvii. 19. where, praying for his apostles, he saith, *For their sakes I sanctify myself:* that is, *offer* myself to die as an expiatory sacrifice for them. For that ἁγιάζειν sometimes signifies as much as προσφέρειν, Dr. Outram hath demonstrated, lib. ii. De Sacrificiis, cap. 3. And so St. Chrysostom here expounds these words, *I sanctify myself,* by προσφέρω σοὶ θυσίαν, *I offer thee a sacrifice;* or consecrate and devote myself to be sacrificed. And it is not an improbable conjecture of another very learned friend of mine, now also with God (Dr. Spencer), that the appointing of two goats to be both presented to God at the same time, and with the same rites, was to preserve the Jews in a belief that there is but one Principle of all things: who both bestows good things, and inflicts evil. Contrary to the opinion of the gentiles,

who made two principles, one good and the other bad; which was the ancient belief of the Chaldeans, and other eastern people, and from them propagated to the Greeks and Romans. Most of whose sacrifices (as another very learned man of our own country hath observed) had respect to these two principles; to one of which they offered in the morning, and to the other at night. See Dr. Windet de Vita Functorum statu, sect. 3. where he observes, that there are plain footsteps of this old error at this day, through all the east, as far as China: for there was an endeavour to infect Christianity with it, by Manes the Persian, in the reign of the Emperor Aurelian; nor was there any heresy that spread so far as this dotage did.

Ver. 8. *And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats.*] The manner of it is described in the same treatise, Massechet Joma, (cap. 3. sect. 9.) The high-priest went to the east part of the court, on the north side of the altar, having the *sagan* (his vicar) on his right hand, and the head of the house of the fathers on his left. There stood two *goats* with an urn or box, which they call *calpi*, (the very same name which Lucian, and the scholiast upon Aristophanes, give to the same thing, as our learned Sheringham upon that book, and Bochart in his Hierozoicon, have observed.) Into this urn the two lots were cast, which were made of box-wood (as the Misna here says), and in after-times came to be of gold. But Maimonides, in his treatise on this subject, saith, they might be made either of wood or stone, or any metal, provided one of them was not bigger than the other, (nor one of gold, the other of silver, &c.) but both every way equal, as the goats were to be. Upon one of these lots was written the name of the goat which was for the Lord; and on the other that which was for Azazel. And then the priest, shaking the urn, and putting in both his hands, (as it there follows in Joma, cap. 4.) took up a lot in each. And if he brought up God's lot in his right hand, the *sagan*, who stood there, said, "My lord, lift up thy right hand:" if in his left hand, the head of the fathers said, "Lift up thy left hand." And so the priest let the right hand lot fall upon the goat that stood on the right hand; and his left hand lot upon the other.

One lot for the Lord.] To be offered unto the Lord at the altar.

The other lot for the scape-goat.] Or, as it is in the Hebrew, for Azazel; as some have anciently translated it. Now why a goat was offered in sacrifice, and another goat let go free, laden with their sins, rather than any other creature, may be understood, perhaps, from the inclination of the heathen world in those days, when they worshipped demons in the form of a goat. The Egyptians were famous for this, and the Israelites themselves (it appears from the seventeenth chapter of this book, ver. 7.) were prone to offer sacrifices *le seirim;* which signifies *demons* in that form. And therefore, to take them off from such idolatrous practices, God ordained these creatures themselves to be sacrificed and slain, to whom they had offered sacrifice. And the young ones he appointed for this purpose (for so *seirim* signifies), which the Egyptians most of all honoured, and abhorred to offer or kill. So Juvenal:

—— "Nefas illic fœtum jugulare Capellæ."
Sat. xv. ver. 11.

Now from hence, perhaps, it was, that some fancied Azazel signified the devil; as R. Menachem and R. Eliezer among the Jews; Julian among the heathen; and some great men lately among us. Who conceive, that as the other goat was offered to God at the altar, so this was sent among the demons, which delight to frequent desert places, and there appeared often in the shape of this creature. But this will not agree with the Hebrew text, which says this goat was for *Azazel*, as the other was *for the Lord.* Now none sure will be so profane, as to imagine, that both these goats being set before the Lord, and presented to him, as equally consecrated to him, he would then order one of them to be for himself, and the other for the devil. We must therefore be content with our own translation, which derives the word *Azazel* from *ez*, a goat; and *azal*, to go away; and fitly calls it the *scape-goat:* so Paulus Fagius, and a great many others: against which I see nothing objected, but that *ez* signifies a *she*-goat, not a *he.* Which made Bochartus fetch this word from the Arabic; in which language *azala* signifies to *remove*, or to *separate.* And this agrees well enough with the name of this goat, according as the ancient translators understood it; some of which, as Symmachus, render it ἀπερχόμενον, *the goat going away:* others, as Aquila, ἀπολελυμένον, *the goat let loose:* and the LXX. ἀποπομπαῖον. In which they had no thought of the notion of this word among the Greeks, who called those demons by this name, who were esteemed ἀλεξίκακοι and ἀποτρόπαιοι (as J. Pollux speaks), *averters of evil things from them:* but simply meant, as Theodoret interprets it, ἀποπεμπόμενος εἰς τὴν ἔρημον, *the goat sent away into the wilderness.* And so St. Jerome expounds it, *Hircus emissarius*, which agrees with the notion which Bochartus puts upon the word out of the Arabic tongue. This goat being sent away into remote places, there to remain separate from the flock to which he belonged; and that upon a mountain (as the Jews fancy) in the wilderness of Sinai, which from this goat was called *Azazel:* but I see no ground for this.

Ver. 9. *And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell.*] In the Hebrew the word is, *went up;* for he first took it up out of the urn, and then let it fall upon the goat.

And offer him for a sin-offering.] Devote him to God to be a sacrifice for their sins: beseech him to accept of this sacrifice for that end. So the word *offer*, I observe, signifies, ver. 6. order being given afterward for the killing of the goat, (ver. 15.)

Ver. 10. *But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scape-goat, shall be presented alive before the Lord.*] This shews that the *scape-goat* was equally consecrated and devoted to God, as the other was; though not to be killed, but sent away alive; after the other had been offered in sacrifice.

To make an atonement with him.] For this was a sin-offering, though not slain, no less than the other: as appears from ver. 5. which shews these *two goats* made but one *sin-offering;* which was partly slain at the altar, and partly let go (as it here follows) to run whither he would; the more perfectly to represent the taking away of their sins, and *removing their iniquity*, (as the prophet speaks, Zech. iii. 9.) by virtue of this offering for them.

Some, indeed, have thought that this goat was not sacrificed, but only presented alive before God, and so let go; lest it should be thought God could not forgive their sins,

unless he was appeased by some slain beast: which imagination was destroyed by letting this *sin-offering* he left alive, at full liberty to run quite away. But I can see no ground for such a construction; because these were not *two* but *one* sin-offering, as I said before: which being slain in part, established that opinion in them, of the impossibility of obtaining reconciliation without a bloody sacrifice. Certain it is, that the whole law supposes this, that *without shedding of blood there is no remission*, as the apostle observes, (Heb. ix. 22.) And therefore it will be more agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, if we think, as some do, that the first goat represented our Lord in his sufferings, and this other in his resurrection; whereby he was freed from the bands of death: both his death and his resurrection being for our deliverance, as the apostle shews, Rom. iv. *ult.*

And let him go free.] Whither he pleased. For so the Hebrew word *schalac* (*send him away*, or *dismiss him*), signifies, in Scripture, *entire liberty*, such as God demanded for the Israelites from Pharaoh, (Exod. iv. 23. v. 1.)

For a scape-goat.] Into remote places.

Into the wilderness.] In token their sins were quite carried away, to be found no more; for the goat was not merely sent into the wilderness, but into the most desert places of it, as appears from ver. 22.

Ver. 11. *And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin-offering which is for himself,* &c.] This former part of the verse is word for word the same with ver. 6. which shews that *offering* there (as we translate it) was nothing else but bringing it to be offered; or presenting it before the Lord, to be a sacrifice for himself, and for his family. But now his *bringing* it was, that it might be killed immediately, as it follows in the latter part of this verse.

And shall make an atonement for himself, and his house.] By killing it, as the next words tell us.

And shall kill the bullock of the sin-offering which is for himself.] He was first to offer for himself, before he could acceptably offer for the people, as the apostle observes, Heb. v. 3. ix. 7. And as the Jews tell us, (in Massechet Joma, cap. 4. sect. 2.) he again put his hand upon the head of the bullock, and made the confession and supplication beforementioned upon ver. 6. And when he had done, then he killed the bullock with his own hands. For though all other sacrifices might be killed by any person, yet the high-priest himself was bound to kill this; as they say in the same place of the Misna, (sect. 3.) And having received the blood of the bullock in a bason, he delivered it to another priest, to keep it in continual agitation, till he had offered incense in the holy place, that so it might not grow thick and be clotted; but be kept liquid and thin, fit to be sprinkled before the mercy-seat.

Ver. 12. *And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire.*] Which he held in his right hand.

From the altar before the Lord.] From the brazen altar where the bullock was slain: for coals were burning before God no where else but there.

And his hands full of sweet incense beaten small.] With his left hand he took as much of the incense, mentioned Exod. xxx. 34. 36. as his hand would hold (besides the incense which he burnt every morning and evening, which was a whole pound), and put it into a cup.

And bring it within the veil.] With both these, the censer of coals, and the cup of incense (the former in his right hand, the other in his left), he went within the veil, which divided the holy place from the most holy, and set down the censer; and then (as it follows in the next verse, see there) threw the incense upon the burning coals. This the Hebrew doctors take to have been so difficult a work, that, in the Gemara upon Joma, (cap. 1.) they say some of the elder priests were sent to him beforehand, to shew him how he should fill his hand with the incense. And the Misna there says, that they adjured him in these words: "We are the legates of the great Sanhedrin, and thou art our legate and theirs; we adjure thee, we adjure thee by Him whose name dwells in this house, that thou change not any one thing of all that we have said unto thee." And so they parted with tears on both sides. The reason of which solemn adjuration, they say, was, that the Sadducees affirmed, he might burn the incense *without* the veil, and so enter into the most holy place; directly contrary to this text, which required him to do it *within;* where nobody could see what the high-priest did, and consequently could not tell whether he performed the service there aright. Therefore they took this oath of him, in the latter ages of their state, when some of the faction of the Sadducees were thrust into the priesthood, as Mr. Selden probably conjectures, (lib. iii. de Synedriis, cap. 11. n. 2.) This was the first time of the high-priest's going into the holy of holies on this great day.

Ver. 13. *And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord.*] He entered (as the Misna saith in Joma, cap. 5.) with his face towards the south; and so went sideways (for he might not look upon the ark, where the Divine Glory was) till he came to the staves of the ark; where he set down the censer, and put on the incense. And having filled the house with a cloud of smoke, he went out backward (out of reverence to the Divine Majesty), into the holy place without the veil. Where, when he was come, he made this short prayer, "May it please thee, O Lord God, that this year may be hot and also wet; that the sceptre may not depart from the family of Judah, nor thy people Israel want food; and that the prayer of the wicked may not be heard." And then he presently went out of the sanctuary, and shewed himself to the people; that they might not suspect he had done amiss, and miscarried in his office. For so they say it sometimes happened, that the high-priest, having violated these holy rites appointed by God, was struck dead in the holy place.

The incense which was burnt every day in the holy place, at the golden altar, representing the prayers of the saints, as St. John teaches us, (Rev. viii. 3, 4.) this incense, which was burnt in the holy of holies, may well be thought to represent the prayers of the high-priest himself, which he made upon this occasion; as our blessed Saviour did before he offered the great sacrifice of himself (John xvii. of which more hereafter), with the blood of which he now appears in the heavens before God for us.

That the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony.] So that nothing of it might be seen: it being the place of the residence of the Divine Majesty, (Exod. xxv. 21, 22.) whose glory was inaccessible.

That he die not.] By gazing on the Divine Glory. (See ver. 2. and Exod. xxxiii. 20.)

Ver. 14. *And he shall take of the blood of the bullock.*]

Having done what is commanded in the foregoing verses, he came out of the sanctuary, and went to the priest whom he left at the altar of burnt-offering, stirring the blood in the bason, which he delivered to him, (as I observed ver. 11.) and taking it from him, went with it (the *second* time) within the veil; and standing where he did before, when he burnt the incense, sprinkled it as is directed in the words following.

And sprinkle it with his finger.] *The very root or essence of a sacrifice* (as the maxim of the Jews is) *lies in the sprinkling of the blood.*

Upon the mercy-seat.] One would think, by this translation, that he sprinkled the mercy-seat itself, with some of the blood. But all the Jews understand it quite otherwise: and indeed the Hebrew words are *al pene, over against the face, i. e.* as they interpret it, (in the Misna beforementioned, cap. 5.) *towards* the mercy-seat. And so it follows in the next words, *and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle.* Only this difference there was in the sprinkling: that this particle *al,* they think, imported that he was to make the first sprinkling, here mentioned, *towards the top* of the mercy-seat. The Vulgar Latin wholly omits this part of the verse, and only mentions the latter sprinkling, seven times *contra propitiatorium, over against the mercy-seat* eastward.

Eastward.] I should have thought the observation of our learned countryman (Mr. J. Gregory) very remarkable, if he had been commanded only to sprinkle the blood *eastward.* For then there might have been room for his conjecture, that though Aaron at all other times turned his face towards the west (where the most holy place was) and at the very killing of the goat and the bullock, not only looked that way himself, but turned their faces towards the west (as the Jews say in Joma), yet, when he came to perform the chief part of this mystery, *he turned his back upon the beggarly elements of the world,* and sprinkled this blood *eastward,* to represent the man, whose name is the *East, i. e.* Christ. But I do not see how this agrees with this sprinkling the blood *before the mercy-seat;* which could not be done without looking towards the west. And therefore it must be confessed that he did not sprinkle it eastward: but standing eastward of the mercy-seat, with his face towards it, he performed this office, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 16. p. 426.) Or it may be said to be done *eastward,* because that part of the ark before which he sprinkled looked *eastward.*

And before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.] This is a distinct sprinkling from the foregoing, which was done but once, and towards the upper part of the mercy-seat; but this was done seven times, towards the lower part of it, as the Jews understand it: who say he sprinkled eight times in all, but none of the blood touched the mercy-seat. So the Gemara on that place, and Maimonides in his Jom hakippurim, and Obadiah Bartenoca, whose words are these; "The drops of blood did not come upon the mercy-seat, but fell upon the ground;" as two of our very learned countrymen have observed, Mr. Sheringham upon Joma, and Dr. Outram, lib i. De Sacrificiis, cap. 16. n. 4.

Seven times.] Concerning this number *seven,* see before, iv. 6. This was the *second* time of going into the holy of holies upon this day.

Ver. 15. *Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering that is for the people.*] The blood of which was received in a bason, as that of the bullock was, (see ver. 11.) and he carried it within the veil (as here follows), and did just as he had done before, (ver. 14.) But whether he first burnt incense, as he had done before he brought in the blood of the bullock, is uncertain: it is likely the fume that had been then made still remained; so that there was no need to renew it.

And do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle, &c.] For he stood in the same place (as the Misna observes), and there sprinkled once towards the top of the mercy-seat; and then seven times before the bottom of it. Which is not here expressly said, but is to be understood from what goes before; which orders him to do with this blood as he had done with the other.

This now was the *third* time of his going into the most holy place upon this day. (See ver. 2.)

Ver. 16. *And he shall make an atonement for the holy place.*] By the sprinkling beforementioned (both of the blood of the bullock and of the goat, as I gather from ver. 18.) God's own dwelling-place was purified: the blood (which was sprinkled seven or eight times before the mercy-seat) being thrown, it is probable, towards both sides of it.

Because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins.] The many sins whereby they had transgressed God's holy laws, the whole year before, had made them so unclean, that it provoked God to leave them, and made this most holy place unfit for his habitation; unless he were reconciled to them: for it was seated among an unclean people, as the rest of the sanctuary was; and on that score might need an atonement. (See Exod. xxix. 36, 37.)

And so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation.] When he had done all this within the veil, he was to do the same without in the sanctuary: where he sprinkled first the blood of the bullock, and then the blood of the goat, against the veil which parted the sanctuary from the holy of holies. So the Misna in the place forementioned; and R. Solomon Jarchi upon these words; "As he sprinkled part of the blood of both sacrifices, once above, and seven times beneath, in the inward sanctuary; so he sprinkled towards the veil without, once above, and seven times below." For they all agree the blood was not sprinkled upon the veil, but before it: by which sprinkling the sanctuary was purified, as the apostle observes, when he saith, *almost all things were by the law purged with blood,* &c. (Heb. ix. 21—23.)

That remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.] Surrounded by a sinful people, who are full of legal, as well as other impurities: and had been likewise defiled by many, who had ignorantly come into it, in their uncleanness. So Maimonides judiciously observes. It could scarce be avoided, but some or other would ignorantly, and some presumptuously offend, by going into the sanctuary, or eating holy things when they ought not: and therefore God commanded this expiation to be made for the pollutions of the sanctuary and its utensils by such means, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 47.)

Ver. 17. *And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in*

the holy place.] During this action none of the priests, who used to attend in the tabernacle, were to come into it, till the high-priest had expiated its uncleanness; which it was supposed to have contracted by their coming into it all the year before.

Until he came out.] Of the holy place.

And have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.] Finished all that he had to do there, for the expiation of his own sins, and his family's, and all the people's. That is, from the time of his going to offer incense, till he came out to purify the tabernacle. Some of which time he spent in prayer to God, (as I observed ver. 13.) for all the people; as he had done before when he presented the sin-offerings to him; with solemn supplication for himself and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel; the forms of which are extant in their books. In conformity to which, when our blessed Saviour consecrated himself to be a sacrifice for us, (as I noted upon ver. 7.) he first commended himself to God, in that solemn prayer before his death, John xvii. ver. 1, 2, &c. and then his apostles, who were his household, ver. 9, 10. and so forward to the twentieth verse; and then prayed for all that should believe on him; *i. e.* the whole congregation of Christian people, from ver. 20. to the end. Immediately after which, he went to the place where he was apprehended, and led to be condemned and crucified, John xviii. 1. (See Dr. Outram De Sacrificiis, lib. ii. cap. 3. n. 3.)

Ver. 18. *And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord.*] These words, *before the Lord*, seem to restrain this to the golden altar, where incense was offered in the sanctuary: and so I find it is generally interpreted, even by the Jews themselves, (in Joma, cap. 5. sect. 5.) as well as Christians. But the words, *he shall go out*, plainly signify his coming from the sanctuary, where the golden altar was (and had been cleansed, we may well suppose, together with it, ver. 16.) in the outward court, to the altar of burnt-offering, which was also *before the Lord*, (Exod. xxix. 11.) though at a greater distance from him: and which, one would think, stood in need to be cleansed, as much as the altar of incense. Now, unless it was ordered to be cleansed in these words, I can see no care taken about it at all. In Exod. xxx. 10. there is express mention, indeed, made of making an atonement upon the altar of incense once a year; and nothing said of the other: and if we will so understand it here, then the words, *he shall go out*, must have respect to *his going into the holy place*, mentioned in the verse before.

And make an atonement for it.] This is generally understood, as I said, of the golden altar, because such express mention is made of its purification yearly, in the place now mentioned, (Exod. xxx. 10.) And, no doubt, that which is here commanded was done there, when he made atonement for the table, where it stood: but there being the same need, as I said, to expiate the other altar (where no fewer errors had been committed than here, and which stood nearer to an unclean people, who encompassed it), I cannot but think that it is here included.

And shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the goat.] He put the blood of the bullock and of the goat together; and then poured them into another vessel, that they might be well mingled. For here is no command in this place, that he should go round the altar twice; and tip the horns of it, first with the blood of the bullock, and then of the goat, separate one from the other; as the Misna in Joma observes, cap. 5. sect. 4.

And put it upon the horns of the altar round about.] He began at the north-east corner, and so went to the north-west; and from thence to the south-west, and lastly to the south-east: and as he came near to each corner, he put the blood upon it. So the Jews describe this matter in the same place, sect. 5.

Ver. 19. *And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times.*] Not upon the middle of the altar, but nigh the corners; *viz.* in the place where he ended, when he put the blood upon the horns of the altar. So the Jews say in the place abovementioned, (sect. 6.) And I do not see why the particle *upon* should not be expounded here, as in ver. 15. (if their interpretation be true), to signify, that he sprinkled the blood *before* the altar; which he did not touch.

And shall cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.] The Jews refer this cleansing to his taking the coals and the ashes from the altar, that he might sprinkle the blood in a clean place. And then the words are to be translated, *He shall sprinkle the blood*, &c. *having cleansed and hallowed it.* But the conclusion of the verse determines us to another sense, which is, that by sprinkling the blood he cleansed and sanctified it, from the *uncleanness of the children of Israel*, whereby it had been defiled: the priests having either come in their uncleanness thither, or not performed their service as they ought there; and the people thereby remaining in their impurities.

Now, when the high-priest had done all this, the Jews say (in the Misna beforenamed) he poured the rest of the blood of the bullock and goat at the bottom of the altar of burnt-offerings (where, I conceive, he concluded this atonement), for there was a conveyance to carry it away, as I observed upon iv. 17. And they make account, also, that if every thing was not done in this order it was ineffectual, and was to be done over again. For example; if the blood of the goat was sprinkled before the blood of the bullock, (contrary to the directions, ver. 14, 15.) he returned, and sprinkled the blood of the goat after that of the bullock, &c.

Ver. 20. *And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place.*] Making it fit to continue God's dwelling-place, (ver. 16.)

And the tabernacle of the congregation.] By this, I think, is meant the sanctuary, and every thing in it; particularly the golden altar.

And the altar.] Of burnt-offerings, where he ended his atonement for the whole house of God.

He shall bring the live goat.] Two had been presented to the Lord, (ver. 7. 10.) that is, solemnly consecrated and devoted to be expiatory sacrifices; one of which having been slain, the other was now brought to be made an expiation for sin, after another manner. And he was brought, no doubt, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, where they were wont to lay their hands upon other sacrifices, (i. 3, 4.)

Ver. 21. *And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat.*] Laying of the hand upon the head of

the beast, was a rite used in all sorts of sacrifices, whether *burnt-offerings, peace-offerings,* or *sin-offerings.* See i. 4. iii. 2. iv. 4. 33. In which places, mention is made only of *laying on his hand:* but here the high-priest is commanded to lay on *both hands,* as he and his sons did in the sacrifice of the bullock and the ram at their consecration, (viii. 14. 18.) The meaning of which was, the more solemnly and entirely to devote the sacrifice to the use for which it was designed; which, in this sacrifice, was to bear all their sins. For they were all laid upon this sacrifice, unto which the punishment of them was transferred: this rite signifies as much as if they had said, Whatsoever we have done amiss, let not us, but this sacrifice be charged with it: that is, let it bear the punishment which we deserve. Such phrases there are, 2 Sam. i. 16. Esther ix. 25. Psal. vii. 16. and other places.

And confess over him.] This must have been understood, if it had not been expressed; for imposition of hands was always accompanied with prayer, of one sort or other, according to the occasion of it. Insomuch, that the Jews say, "where there is no confession of sin, there is no imposition of hands; for imposition of hands belongs to confession." (See Dr. Outram De Sacrif. lib. i. cap. 15. n. 8.) And it is observable, that the high-priest made confession three times on this day. First for himself, and then for his brethren the priests, and now for the whole congregation; saying this prayer, (as they tell us in Joma, cap. 6. sect. 2.) "I beseech thee, O Lord, this people, the house of Israel, have done wickedly, and been rebellious, and sinned before thee. I beseech thee now, O Lord, expiate the iniquities, the rebellions, and the sins which thy people the house of Israel have done wickedly, transgressed, and sinned before thee. According as it is written in the law of Moses thy servant (*viz.* in the thirtieth verse of this chapter), 'on that day he shall make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the Lord.'" Which last word (Lord) as soon as all the priests and the people, that were in the court heard pronounced by the high-priest, they bowed and fell down flat upon their faces, and worshipped, saying, "Blessed be the Lord; let the glory of his kingdom be for ever."

All the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins.] These three words, *iniquities, transgressions,* and *sins,* are the very words used by the high-priest in his confession beforementioned; which comprehend all manner of offences, whether committed deliberately or not against negative or affirmative precepts (as they call them). Grotius, in his notes on this place, hath thus distinguished them, but whether exactly or not cannot be determined. But it is probable that *sins* signify offences committed by error, not deliberately; *iniquities,* such as were deliberately committed against the prohibiting precepts; and *transgressions,* those that were deliberately committed against commanding precepts. All, except those to which *cutting off* was threatened, which were not expiated by any sacrifice.

Putting them upon the head of the goat.] By putting his hand on the head of the goat, and confessing their sins over him (with prayer to God to remit them), they were all charged upon the goat, and the punishment of them transferred from the Israelites unto it. Just as the sins of all mankind were afterwards laid upon our Saviour Christ, (as the prophet speaks, Isa. liii. 6.) "Who his ownself bare our sins in his own body," (saith St. Peter, 1 Ep. ii. 24.) the punishment passing from us to him, "Who was made sin for us," (2 Cor. v. 21.) Which expressions are manifest allusions unto this sacrifice on the great day of expiation: which was the most illustrious figure of the sacrifice of Christ; and shews, beyond all reasonable contradiction, that Christ suffered in our stead, and not merely for our benefit. For it is very evident, the sacrifice offered on this day was put in the place of the people; and all their sins, that is, the punishment of them, laid upon its head. And it appears by the form of all other *sin-offerings,* which were occasionally offered at other times, that he who brought them put off the guilt, which he had contracted, from himself, and laid it on the sacrifice which was to die for him. Which he did by laying his hand on the head of it at the door of the tabernacle while it was yet alive. Then with his hand so placed, he made a confession of his sins, for which he desired forgiveness by the offering of this sacrifice: that is, he prayed by these rites, that, the beast being offered and slain, he might be spared from punishment; which was a plain transferring the guilt from himself unto his sacrifice. Which being yet alive, and thus laden with his guilt, was then brought to the altar, and there slain for the guilty person: that is, it died in his stead; for there was no other reason of its being put to death there in that manner.

I have insisted the longer on this, because nothing can better explain the true meaning of *Christ's dying for us:* which was by transferring the suffering due to our sins upon him; as the manner was in the legal sacrifices. Which was a thing, let me add, so notorious in the world, that other nations from hence derived the like custom to that here mentioned by Moses. Particularly the Egyptians, as David Chytræus hath long ago observed, and since him many others out of Herodotus: who tells us, (lib. ii. cap. 39.) that they made this execration over the head of the beast which they sacrificed; Εἴτε μέλλοι ἢ σφισι τοῖς θύουσι, ἢ Αἰγύπτῳ τῇ συμπάσῃ κακὸν γενέσθαι, εἰς κεφαλὴν ταύτην τραπέσθαι· *that if any evil was to fall, either on themselves who sacrificed, or upon the whole country of Egypt, it might be turned upon the head of that beast.* And this, he saith, was the custom over all the land of Egypt; and the reason why no Egyptian would taste of the head of any animal. Nor was this the notion of the Egyptians only, but of other countries also; who called those sacrifices which were offered for them Ἀντίψυχα, being sacrificed in their stead; and the life of the beast given for theirs. Thus the Greeks sometimes sacrificed men, when some very heavy calamity was fallen upon them, whom they called Καθάρματα, *expiations to purge them from their sins,* by suffering in their room. For they prayed thus over him, who was devoted every year for the averting evils from them, Περίψημα ἡμῶν γενοῦ, ἤτοι σωτηρία καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις· *be thou our cleansing; that is, our preservative and redemption, or ransom.* And with these words they threw him into the sea as a sacrifice to Neptune. And thus the Massilienses did, as Servius tells us, (upon the third Æneid.) in time of a plague, praying, "ut in ipsum recideret mala totius civitatis," *that on him might fall the evils of the whole city.*

And shall send him away.] As soon as the confession was over, the goat was sent away.

By the hand of a fit man.] By a man prepared beforehand (as the ancients interpret it), or that stood ready for this purpose. Jonathan saith, he was designed for it the year before; others say only the day before; and that the high-priest appointed him: who might appoint any body whom he thought fit; but did not usually appoint an Israelite, as they say in Joma, cap. 6. n. 3.

Into the wilderness.] It is not certainly known what wilderness this was; but the Hebrews call it the wilderness of Tzuk, which, they say, was ten miles from Jerusalem. And they say, that at the end of each mile there was a tabernacle erected, where men stood ready with meat and drink, which they offered to him that went with the goat, lest he should faint by the way. And the nobles of Jerusalem, they add, accompanied him the first mile; further than which they might not go, because this day was a sabbath. After which, they that were in the first tabernacle accompanied him to the next; and they that were there to the third; and so forward to the last; that they might be sure to have this great work done of carrying their sins quite away from them. So we read in the treatise on this subject, called Joma, cap. 6. sect. 4, 5. which Maimonides hath explained, as I have now done.

Ver. 22. *And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities.*] This shews more fully still the nature of this sacrifice, in which *all their iniquities, i. e.* the punishment of them was laid, that he might carry them away. For this goat was not capable to bear their sins, but only their punishment; as Christ also did, who knew no sin, and yet was made sin; by having the punishment of our sins laid on him. For, that this *scape-goat*, which was loaded with their sins, was a *sin-offering*, is plainly said before in this chapter; and consequently represented Christ (who is our sin-offering), as well as the other part of this *sin-offering* did, whose blood was carried into the holy place. And in some regard this *scape-goat* was a very notable representation of him; if it be true, that our Saviour entered upon his office, of being the Mediator of our reconciliation with God, upon this great day of atonement, which was the day on which he was baptized, as our Dr. Jackson, together with some good chronologers think. For though the tradition of the western church be, that his baptism was on the sixth of January, yet, as Jansenius, and some others of the Roman communion, do not think fit to follow it, so he judges it more probable to have been on the tenth of September. In the beginning of which month, when the feast of blowing of trumpets was celebrated, (as we read xxiii. of this book, 24.) John Baptist began to lift up his voice like a trumpet, and call the Jews to repentance. Who accordingly flocked to him, and, confessing their sins, were baptized by him in Jordan; where our Saviour also being baptized on the tenth day, which was the day of atonement, and being declared the Son of God by a voice from heaven, was "immediately driven by the Spirit into the wilderness," as St. Mark tells us, i. 12. Which was a manifest indication (he thinks) to John Baptist, that this was the Redeemer of the world prefigured by the *scape-goat;* who, going into the wilderness on the day of atonement, immediately after the people had made confession of their sins, gave him to understand (who was well acquainted with the meaning of the legal rites) that he was sent by God to take upon himself the sins of the world, and carry them away, by being, in due season, offered to God, and slain as a sacrifice to God for them. And this he did at that very time, when the *paschal lamb* was killed, (as I have shewn upon Exod. xii. 6.) to the end that they might take notice he was the Lamb of God, whose sacrifice that lamb prefigured: as by being led into the wilderness on the same day as the *scape-goat* was carried thither, he shewed that the mystery represented by that ceremony was exactly fulfilled in him.

This notion of his I thought good to mention (though, as far as I know, he is singular in it), because it carries some probability in it, if what the apostle saith (Coloss. ii. 17.) be well considered, that the law contained "shadows of things to come, the body of which was Christ." Who was a body consisting of so many different parts, and so complete (as he observes), that no one, nor a few legal ceremonies, could perfectly foreshadow it: but as the ceremonies were many, and almost infinite, so every one did foreshadow some part or piece of this complete body: that is, no remarkable part of it, no special event or action, which concerned our Saviour Christ, but was foreshadowed by some or other legal ceremony: see Christ's Answer to John's Question, numb. 62—64. and his ninth book upon the Creed, concerning the Consecration of the Son of God (which was printed several years after), sect. 4. chap. 24. n. 5—8. where he resumes this argument, and endeavours to answer this question; Why, since Christ was to accomplish the legal priesthood and sacrifice, by his bloody sacrifice upon the cross, he did not offer himself, and die upon this very day of atonement. To which he gives full satisfaction: but it is too long here to be inserted.

Unto a land not inhabited.] So the LXX. translate the Hebrew word *gezera*, γῆν ἄβατον, *a land into which nobody came*, or *desolate country*. The Hebrew word properly imports *a land cut off*, (as Bochart observes, lib. ii. Hierozoic. cap. 54. par. i.) that is, from habitable countries: not which *cuts off* what is sent into it, by its rugged and sharp stones, as the Jews expound it. This still sets out the design of this sacrifice, which was to free men so perfectly from the punishment of their sins, that they should not fear the return of them any more. For this goat was not merely sent into the wilderness, but into the most uninhabitable and inaccessible part of it (as the Greek word properly signifies), where none were likely ever to see it again.

And he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.] When he came to the last stage, nobody accompanied him that led the goat any further; but he went the tenth mile alone, by himself; and the men in the tabernacle only stood looking to see what he did with it. And the Misna saith (in the place beforenamed), that he threw it headlong down the rock Tzuk; where, they say, it was broke in pieces before it came to the middle of it; or, as Jonathan said, God raised a storm which blew the goat down with a mighty force. But this is contrary to the very words of Moses, who saith, he was to *let the goat go*, or dismiss him, *in the wilderness*, to run whither he would. And it seems contrary also to the intention of this law, which was, that only one of the goats should be killed, the other let go alive. Whereby was represented, that their sins, which were expiated by the blood of the sacrifice, should not return again to be

charged upon them. Or, that they were as free from their sins as the leprous person was from his confinement, when the bird was let fly into the fields. Which perfect freedom from the punishment of their sins, was further signified by the burning of the flesh, the skin, and the dung of the *sin-offering*, without the camp: which denoted that all memory of the sins, for which this expiation was appointed, was clean removed and abolished.

The Jews will have it, that a piece of scarlet cloth being tied upon the horns of this *scape-goat* (as another was about the neck of the goat which was sacrificed), when the man had brought it to the top of the rock Tzuk, he divided the cloth into two pieces, and let the goat go away with one, but tied the other to the rock, that he might see when it changed colour and became white, as they say it did when the goat was thrown down headlong. Anciently, indeed, they say this scarlet cloth was tied to the gate of the temple, and if it turned white when the goat was sent away (as they pretend it usually did), there was great joy among the people; because it was a sign their sins were forgiven, according to that of the prophet, Isa. i. 18. "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow," &c. But if it did not change its colour into white, they hung down their heads, and were full of sorrow; they looking upon it as a token of God's anger. Which I relate only for this purpose, that I may take notice how the same authors, who tell this story, confess, that for *forty* years before the destruction of the second temple, that is, from the time of our Saviour's death, this shred of cloth never changed its colour at all. Which, if it be true, was a notable token of the wrath of God coming upon them, for their crucifying the Lord Christ.

Ver. 23. *And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation.*] All that the high-priest did about the scape-goat was performed at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; where he laid his hands upon him, and confessed over him all their sins, (see ver. 20, 21.) which being done, and he having sent the goat away, he is now ordered to come into the sanctuary itself.

And shall put off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the holy place.] See ver. 4. The Jews say there were two sorts of white garments which he wore on this day: one in the morning, which was made of fine linen of Pelusium, which was a third part of greater value than those he wore in the evening, which were of Indian linen. Now here he speaks only of the garments that he wore in the morning, wherein he had hitherto officiated; but is ordered, after he had done all this, to put them off; there being many other things to be still performed upon this day; yea, he was to go once more into the holy place, in order to which he put on other garments; as will appear in what follows.

And shall leave them there.] Never to be used more, either by him, or by any body else. But they were laid up where they were left; and new ones made against the next year, as the Gemara upon the third chapter of Joma relates. And the same is affirmed by Maimonides, R. S. Jarchi, and others, mentioned by Braunius, lib. ii. de Vest. Sacerd. cap. 25. n. 9. R. Levi Barzelonita also gives the same exposition of it, Præcept. 99. and see Mr. Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. xi. p. 143.

Ver. 24. *And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place.*] Either in the laver which stood in the outward court, or in a room in the tabernacle, which in after-time was called *happarvah;* where the priest, they say, washed himself upon this day every time he changed his garments. And this agrees well enough with the words of Moses, which here follow, that when he had put on his garments, he should *come forth;* that is, from this chamber, to perform such offices as are aftermentioned. The end of this washing, in this place, seems to have been, that he might purify himself after he had touched the goat, which bare all their iniquities, (ver. 21.) as the man that carried him into the wilderness was to wash after he had done that business, (ver. 26.) Though others will have it, that it was in token he had now finished the expiation. Certain it is, here is another washing, distinct from that mentioned ver. 4. when he put on the white garments. Which in part justifies what the Misna saith in Joma, cap. iii. sect. 3. that the high-priest washed *five times* upon this day; all in the house *happarvah*, except the first; which could not be in the court of the tabernacle, because he was to wash before he entered into it. For there were *five* ministries to be performed upon this day, at each of which he changed his garments; and between every ministry, when he changed his garments, he washed himself. There is a long discourse about this, and about washing his hands and his feet, in Torah Cohanim, quoted by our learned countryman, Mr. Sheringham, in his annotations upon Codex Joma, p. 57, &c. which they endeavoured to ground upon the very words of this verse.

Now as the leading of Christ into the wilderness, upon the day of atonement, was foreshadowed by the ceremony of the scape-goat; so his baptism on the same day was as expressly foreshadowed, or prefigured, as any event concerning him, either was, or could be, by the legal ceremony here mentioned, of Aaron's washing his body in the holy place. They are the words of Dr. Jackson, in Christ's Answer to John's Question, sect. 64. where he endeavours to make out this.

And put on his garments.] *viz.* His other garments, wherein he officiated upon other days; which the Jews call his *golden garments*, to distinguish them from the *white garments;* which alone he wore when he went into the most holy place. And the Jews call by this name of *golden garments*, all the eight garments of the high-priest: four of which were common to him with the lower priests, and were made only of linen (yet they never call them by the name of *white garments*, which they appropriate to those in which he went to the most holy place); the other four, which gave the name to all the rest, were proper only to the high-priest himself; *viz.* the *robe* (which had bells of gold at the bottom), the *ephod*, the *breast-plate*, and the *golden-plate* upon his forehead: which being put over the other four common garments, made him appear as if he were all clothed in gold. For they either consisted of solid gold, as the plate on his forehead; or had solid gold appendant, as the robe had; or had gold interwoven, as the ephod and the breast-plate. Now he put on these, after he had put off the linen garments, mentioned ver. 4. 23. which were never used but when he ministered in the holy of holies; where he did not appear with the breast-plate of *urim* and *thummim*, and the rest of the golden garments, as some learned men have imagined; particularly Corn. Bertram,

in his book de Republ. Hebr. cap. vii. where he saith, "Hujus sacerdotis erat semel in anno adytum sanctuarii adire, indutus ipso ephode." *It belonged to the high-priest to go once in the year into the most secret place of the sanctuary, clothed with the ephod.* Which is directly contrary to ver. 4. of this chapter. But many other great men have fallen into the same mistake: (see J. Braunius de Vestitu Sacerdot. Hebr. lib. ii. cap. 20. n. 29. and cap. 25. n. 9, 10.)

And come forth.] From the place where he put on his golden garments unto the altar of burnt-offerings.

And offer his burnt-offering, and the burnt-offering of the people.] I take this for the daily evening sacrifice, which usually was one lamb; but on this day was two rams, one for himself, and another for the people; unto which there was an additional offering of seven lambs of the first year; as they tell us in Joma, cap. 7. sect. 3. But before this, they there say, he went and read to the people out of the book of the law, which was with great ceremony delivered to him. And he might read either in his pontifical habit, or in his own robes (which he pleased), for reading was no ministry, as the Gemara there observes. This reading began at Numb. xxix. 7, &c. where the sacrifice of seven lambs is ordered upon this day.

And make an atonement for himself, and the people.] Rather, *having made an atonement;* which was already done by other sacrifices, not by these.

Ver. 25. *And the fat of the sin-offering shall be burnt upon the altar.*] This also, I think, should be translated in the same manner, *having burnt the fat of the sin-offering:* which was done, I suppose, in the morning, when both the bullock and the goat were offered for sin, (ver. 11. 14.) but was not mentioned till now, to shew that their sacrifices were not perfected till both Aaron and the people were reconciled to God; after which their burnt-sacrifices were acceptable to him. This burning of the fat was ordered in all *sin-offerings,* (iv. 8. 10. 26.) and therefore, was not now to be omitted. And, perhaps, it was reserved to be burnt, when the flesh of the bullock and the goat was burnt without the camp, (ver. 27.) which was in the conclusion of all the services of this day.

Ver. 26. *And he that let go the goat for the scape-goat.*] After the man had dismissed the *goat,* it was not lawful for him to return farther back than one mile to the last tabernacle, where he was permitted to rest himself after his labour, and not remain all night in the wilderness. So they tell us in Joma, cap. 6. sect. 6.

Shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water.] This goat being a public Κάθαρμα, or *purgation,* (upon whom all their sins were thrown, was extremely impure; and therefore could not be touched, without rendering the person who led him away unclean in the highest degree: which was the reason that he was bound to wash both his clothes and also his whole body in water, before he could so much as come into the camp. Porphyry observes the same custom among the heathen, who ἐν θυσίαις ὑποτροπαίοις (as his words are), *in such kind of sacrifices as those for the averting evils,* permitted no man who had meddled with them to come into the city, or to go to his own house, μὴ πρότερον ἐσθῆτα καὶ σῶμα ποταμοῖς ἢ πηγῇ ὑποκαθῆρας, *who had not first washed his clothes and his body in some river, or in spring-water,* (lib. ii. περὶ Ἀποχῆς, sect. 44.) For nothing is more known than that such a kind of purification for washing themselves, was a custom all the world over; and continues to this day in the eastern, or other hot countries, not only among the Mahometans, but the pagans, who plunge themselves three times, one after another, into their rivers, rising up with their faces to the east, as all travellers into those parts tell us.

And afterward come into the camp.] Have free conversation with his brethren, and, I suppose, without any farther ceremony, be admitted to the sanctuary.

Ver. 27. *And the bullock for the sin-offering, and the goat for the sin-offering.*] Mentioned ver. 11. 15.

Whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place.] Of which we read in the same place, ver. 14, 15.

Shall one carry forth.] But first they were ripped up, and the *imurim,* as they call them, (mentioned in iv. 8, 9.) taken out, to be burnt upon the altar. And then the priest dissected them, (as the Misna saith in Joma, cap. 6. sect. 7.) not to pieces, as was wont to be done in *burnt-offerings,* but made only deep incisions, letting the parts hang still together; which being done, *four* men, saith R. Solomon, carried them forth upon two staves or bars, *one* being not able to do it: and accordingly the LXX. translate these words ἐξοίσουσι, *they shall carry forth.* But one person, it is likely, had the principal care to see them burnt; which is the reason he only is mentioned.

Without the camp.] Into a clean place, where the ashes were wont to be poured out, (iv. 12.) There were *three* camps; (as I noted before, xiii. 46.) *the camp of the people,* unto which Jerusalem answered in aftertimes; *the camp of the Levites,* unto which answered the *mountain of the house* (as they called it), the whole circuit about the temple; and the *camp of God,* or the *sanctuary* with all its courts, unto which answered the temple and its courts. So Maimonides, in his treatise called Beth Habbechira, cap. vii. Now, as these sacrifices were carried to be burnt without the *camp of the people,* when they were in the wilderness, so they were burnt without the city of Jerusalem, after the temple was built there.

Which illustrates the words of the apostle, Heb. xiii. 10, 11, &c. where he takes it for granted, as a thing they all knew, that Jerusalem answered to the *camp of Israel:* and from thence shews, that the mystery prefigured by this goat, *whose blood was brought into the holy place to make atonement* (as he speaks in this verse), was accomplished in our blessed Lord and Saviour, *who, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate,* as the apostle there observes: that is, without the city, yet near the suburbs of Jerusalem; whose type or figure was *the camp of the Israelites* in the wilderness.

And the intent of the apostle in this, and other such-like observations, was to shew, that our Saviour's sufferings on the cross were a most true and proper sacrifice; a sacrifice fully satisfactory for the sins of the world: or rather, more satisfactory for all the sins of men against the moral law of God, than the sacrifices on the day of atonement, the Passover, or other anniversary solemnities, were for sins merely against the law of ceremonies: as the apostle shews in the foregoing part of that epistle, (Heb. ix. 13, 14.)

And they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung.] Here, it is plain, there was more than one who carried the bodies of these beasts without the camp;

they being too heavy for any single person to bear. And they burnt them entirely: (see iv. 11, 12.) except what was offered upon the altar. Yet Josephus is pleased to except τὰς ἐξοχὰς, by which he seems to mean their rumps, (lib. iii. cap. 30.) In which he forgot himself: for though these were comprehended under the *imurim* of some sacrifices, (see viii. 3.) yet neither here, nor in the fourth chapter, ver. 8, 9. is there any mention of this fat; nor is it comprehended under the fat mentioned above, (ver. 25.) which the Misna in Joma says, was the fat of the inwards only.

Ver. 28. *And he that burneth them.*] The Vulgar Latin, I think, rightly translates it, *Quicunque combusserit, whosoever burneth them:* for there was more than one, as I said before, employed in this business.

Shall wash his clothes, &c.] Being defiled by touching the sacrifices, which were charged with so many sins; as he that carried away the scape-goat was, ver. 26. where there is the very same order in the same words. Now, when all this was done, the Misna saith, (cap. vii. Joma, sect. 4.) the high-priest washed himself again, and put on his white robes, which were proper to this day; and went into the most holy place, to fetch out the censer, with the dish, or cup, which he carried in when he went to burn incense, (ver. 12, 13.) And when he came out from thence, he washed, and put on his *golden garments,* and offered incense upon the golden altar, and trimmed the lamps. Which being done, they brought him his own garments, which he wore constantly; and when he had put them on, they accompanied him to his house, where he entertained his friends with a feast, being come out of the sanctuary in peace; that is, safe and in health. For by shifting his garments, and washing so often, he was in danger to catch cold (as we speak), and they did sometimes fall into various diseases upon this occasion, as P. Cunæus observes out of Maimonides, lib. ii. de Repub. Heb. cap. 14. and some died in the holy place, not having performed the service duly. Which made it very reasonable, that he and his friends should rejoice, when he returned in health and safety.

Ver. 29. *And this shall be a statute for ever unto you.*] Till the coming of Christ, in whom all that these sacrifices signified was accomplished: who put an end therefore to this legal dispensation, (see Exod. xii. 14.)

And in the seventh month.] When they had gathered in all the fruits of the earth, and thereby had the more liberty to attend such a solemn service. Which was the reason, perhaps, why there were more solemnities appointed in this month, than in any other month in the year; as appears from the twenty-third chapter of this book. It had been anciently also the first month in the year, being the month, it is likely, wherein the world was created: but upon the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, the month Abib, by God's special command, was ordered to be the first. Yet not absolutely, but only in respect of that which was most eminent, *viz.* for the ecclesiastical account: for as to their civil or temporal affairs, the seventh month (Tisri) still retained the precedence.

On the tenth day of the month.] The Arabians imitated this; calling the fast of the tenth day of the month Moharram, by the name of *Ashura;* which is exactly the *Ashor (tenth day)* here mentioned by Moses; from whom these people derived it, before the appearance of Mahomet: who, finding the Jews, when he came to Medina, fasting upon this day *Ashura,* asked them the reason of it: who told him (as the Mahometan writers report) it was in remembrance of Pharaoh's being then drowned in the Red Sea: whereupon he said, I have more to do with Moses than you, and thereupon commanded his followers to fast on this day; (see Dr. Pocock upon Abal-Farajius concerning the Manners of the Arabians, p. 309, 310.) But this is plainly an idle tale, invented by him or his followers; for the Jews would rather have feasted, than fasted upon the day of such a deliverance. But it shews that this day was remarkable among the Jews, and solemnly observed by them, wheresoever they were; and was chosen by God, rather than any other day of the month, (if we may believe Maimonides, More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 43.) because it was the day on which Moses came down from the mount, with the second tables in his hand, and proclaimed to the people the remission of their great sin, in worshipping the golden calf; in memory of which it was ordered to be entirely a day of repentance and of Divine worship.

Ye shall afflict your souls.] By fasting and abstinence, not only from all meat and drink, but from all other pleasure whatsoever: insomuch, that they might not wash their faces, much less anoint their heads, nor wear their shoes, nor use the marriage bed, nor read (if their doctors say true) any portion of the law, which would give them delight: for example, the story of their coming out of Egypt, and leading them through the Red Sea, &c. so far is the Mahometan story from having any colour of truth. It is likely, also, that to increase their grief they rent their clothes (as they did in other fasts in aftertimes), put on sackcloth, girded it close to their flesh, sprinkled ashes on their heads, &c. which were all intended, no doubt, to work in them an inward sorrow for all their sins, with a hearty abhorrence of them, and resolution to mortify and abstain from them. For though the word *soul* be generally expounded the *sensitive* part of us, which is *afflicted* by *fasting,* (as the prophet Isaiah expounds this phrase, lviii. 3. 5.) yet it is absurd to think that God was pleased with this alone, without that inward compunction of *mind,* which made them break off their sins by *righteousness;* which the prophet there declares was the only acceptable fast to the Lord.

The Hebrew doctors here observe, that they did not afflict little children on this day, by making them fast from all food, till they were of the age of eleven years; but only taught them what they were to do when they came of age, that they might be accustomed to the precept. (See Joma, cap. 8. sect. 4.)

And do no work at all.] Not only abstain from all pleasure, but from all labour whatsoever: nothing being to be done upon this day but confession of sins and repentance, as Maimonides expresses it in the place beforementioned.

Whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you.] The Hebrew word *ezrach* is extant only here and xxiii. 42. which signifies as much as one that had his *original* among them, being born an Israelite, as it is there expressed. The opposite to which is *gher* (a *stranger,* we translate it), one that was of another nation, but had embraced the Jewish religion, and lived among them; who in the New Testament is called a *proselyte.*

Ver. 30. *For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you.*] If upon this day they afflicted and humbled their souls (as Conr. Pellicanus glosses), with *fasting and prayer and anguish for their sins, with alms also, beseeching God's mercy with tears and signs in sackcloth and ashes; resting from all servile works, and devoted wholly to the Lord.*

To cleanse you.] From all the transgressions and sins mentioned ver. 16. from which both the high-priest, and his family, and all the people were to be purged on this day. For which reason the greatest care was to be used to see it rightly observed, because all their happiness depended upon it. For the land of Canaan was promised them, upon condition that they kept the law; offering all the sacrifices therein prescribed; especially this great sacrifice, which was to cleanse them from the guilt of all their neglects or breaches of this law. Which should teach us Christians to conclude, that as the inheritance of that good land was assigned the Jews in consideration of their sacrifices, as the condition of that covenant, by which they were prescribed; so the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven is made over to us by the covenant of grace, in consideration of the obedience and sufferings of Christ Jesus, of which they were a figure. For it is his blood *that cleanseth us from all unrighteousness* (as St. John speaks), and secures our claim to the heavenly inheritance.

That ye may be clean from all your sins.] If a man was bound to offer sacrifice for any sin that was certain, he was not excused from it by this sacrifice on the day of expiation; but was bound to make that other sacrifice also. But the day of expiation freed those who were bound to offer sacrifices for dubious offences. So Maimonides saith, (in his treatise of Offences committed through Error, chap. 3. sect. 9.) that those sins which were known to none but God, were taken away by this solemn day of expiation, without any other sacrifice. But the Misna, in the last section of Joma, acknowledges very honestly, that the day of expiation did not purge men from the guilt of the offences they had committed against their neighbour, unless they first gave him satisfaction.

Before the Lord.] Who dwelt among them, and would continue to do so, if they observed his laws, and took care to be thus cleansed from all their sins. But, lest any man should mistake this matter, it may be here fit to observe, that there were no sacrifices at all appointed by the law of Moses for capital offences; and therefore when he speaks here of making them clean from *all their sins* upon this day, such as these (for instance, murder, adultery, idolatry, &c.) are not included: for this great sacrifice could not obtain a pardon for them, but only for offences committed against the ritual laws contained in this book; and that also when they were committed through error or ignorance: for if they were done presumptuously, cutting off was threatened to them: (see Numb. xv. from ver. 22. to 32.) And this appears plainly from the sacrifices themselves that are here appointed; which had no virtue in them from their own worth and value, but only from God's institution, to make expiation for any sin. For the death of a bullock or a goat was not of such account with God, that it could prevail for the taking away of guilt, unless he had given it such a power. And that power which he was pleased to allow unto them, was neither infinite, nor could it be so. For the guilt that they were principally designed to abolish, was not of such a nature as to require such an expiation: it arising from things which were neither good nor evil in themselves; and therefore could not create such a guilt. Such were all the uncleannesses from certain natural fluxes, from touching a dead body, and innumerable other such-like impurities: which depending wholly upon the will of God, who by a positive law made such things to bring men under a guilt; by the same will he appointed a proportionable expiation of it by these sacrifices, whose power to cleanse depended also purely upon his pleasure. And if they had any virtue to purge men from the real guilt of sins committed against the eternal laws of God; this they had not of themselves, but from the most gracious will of God, who was pleased to apply to this purpose the future satisfaction of the immaculate Lamb of God, of which these sacrifices were a shadow and type. For a body being prepared for the Son of God, and he offering himself for us, that was a sacrifice of such infinite value in its own nature, that it expiated all manner of sins of all men. To this effect, that excellent person Joh. Wagenseil discourses, in his confutation of R. Lipman's Carmen Memoriale, p. 488.

Ver. 31. *It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you.*] In the Hebrew the words are *a sabbath of sabbaths*, i. e. *a great* or *perfect sabbath*, like that of the seventh day in every week; on which they might do no manner of work. And so *the seventh day* is called just as this is, *a sabbath of rest*, or *sabbath of sabbaths:* (see Exod. xxxi. 15. xxxv. 2.) which gave occasion to those jeers we meet withal in Martial and others, at the Jews' fasting on their *sabbath-days:* for reading Moses's books carelessly, they fancied the Jews observed as strict a fast upon every *sabbath-day*, as they did on this, which was but once a year.

And ye shall afflict your souls by a statute for ever.] See ver. 29.

Ver. 32. *And the priest whom ye shall anoint*, &c.] The high-priest, who should be anointed and consecrated in his father's stead (when he was dead), is here ordered to make this atonement yearly. That is, what was now done by Aaron, was to be done by every high-priest successively, when he was legally put into his office; by vesting him with the priestly garments, anointing him, and offering the sacrifices of consecration, (viii. 7. 10. 22.)

This statute confined the sacred work of this day to the high-priest, who alone could perform it: but it shews withal, as the apostle observes, the great imperfection of this legal priesthood, which could not, *by reason of death*, continue always in one person: but there were *many priests*, succeeding one another in the office, which became often vacant. Whereas our great High-priest, *because he continued for ever, i. e.* never dies, *hath an unchangeable priesthood: and therefore is able to save to the uttermost*, or evermore, *those that come to God by him*, (Heb. vii. 23—25.)

And shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garment.] He was to take a special care not to officiate on this day in any other garments but those mentioned ver. 4. which were peculiarly appropriated to this service, and called *the white garments;* which were a figure, perhaps, of the perfect purity of our great High-priest, who, as it there immediately

follows, (Heb. vii. 26.) *is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.*

Ver. 33. *And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary,* &c.] In this verse he only sums up the whole duty of the day; in which a general atonement was made, for all things, and for all persons. The only thing to be observed is, that the expiation of the *sanctuary,* the *tabernacle,* and the *altar,* preceded the expiation of the *priests* and of the *people,* who were to be expiated by the sacrifices offered there. But the expiation of the *high-priest* himself, who was to make the expiation of the sanctuary, preceded all the rest; as is apparent from ver. 11.

Ver. 34. *And this shall be an everlasting statute.*] The repetition of this the third time, (see ver. 29. 31.) shews of how great importance it was, that this annual solemnity should be observed.

Unto you.] The high-priests (beforementioned), of whom he speaks in the plural number, because none of them could continue always, (as I have observed ver. 32.) but enjoyed the office successively, upon the death of their predecessors.

To make an atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year.] This is only a repetition of what was said ver 30. that it should be incumbent on the high-priest, by a perpetual obligation, to make an atonement for the people's sins on this day; as it was incumbent on the people (ver. 29.) to afflict their souls upon this day.

And he did as the Lord commanded Moses.] The service of this day was immediately performed by Aaron, according to the forenamed order.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] After he had ordered the great anniversary sacrifice, in the foregoing chapter, he gives some directions about other sacrifices, for which there would be occasion every day.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto Aaron and his sons, and all the children of Israel.*] Who were all concerned in what follows; and therefore this command is directed to the whole *house of Israel,* (ver. 3.) to whom this was delivered, it is likely, by their elders: or else Moses himself went from tribe to tribe, and spake to their several families.

And say unto them, This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded.] Enjoined by a special law.

Ver. 3. *Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat.*] *viz.* For a sacrifice or offering, (as it follows ver. 4.) these being the only creatures of the herd and the flock that were permitted to be brought to God's altar. There are those, indeed, who think Moses speaks of killing these creatures for common use; which it was lawful for them to do any where, after they came to the land of Canaan, (Deut. xii. 15.) but now they were not to kill them for their food, unless they brought them to the door of the tabernacle, and there first sacrificed some part of them to the Lord, before they tasted of them themselves. By which their sacrificing to demons was prevented, (to which they were prone, ver. 7.) and they also constantly feasted with God while they dwelt in the wilderness. But this is better founded upon Deut. xii. 20, 21. where it is supposed that they had thus done, while they remained in the wilderness; and were so near to the house of God, that they might easily bring thither every beast they killed for ordinary use. But they were dispensed withal as to this, when they came into Canaan, and could not possibly, when they had a mind to eat flesh, go so far as to the tabernacle or temple, which was many miles from some of them. Instead whereof, they were bound to come at the three great festivals, and appear before God at his house, wheresoever they dwelt.

In the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp.] This seems to shew that he doth not speak of killing these beasts, *ad usum vescendi,* as St. Austin's words are, *for the use of eating* (for that they did not do *out of the camp,* but in their tents), but *de sacrificiis,* he speaks *concerning sacrifices.* For he prohibits (as he goes on) private sacrifices, lest every man should take upon him to be a priest, &c.

Ver 4. *And he bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the Lord.*] In ancient time every man had performed the office of a priest in his own family: but now that liberty is taken away, because they had abused it to idolatry: and every man was bound to bring his sacrifice to the house of God, where none but the sons of Aaron could officiate, and had the most sacred obligations on them to offer only to the Lord. The very heathens themselves, in future times, found it necessary to enact the very same; as appears by Plato in the latter end of his tenth book of Laws, where he hath these memorable words: Ἔστω νόμος ὅδε τοῖς ξυμπᾶσι κείμενος ἁπλῶς, ἱερὰ μηδὲ εἷς ἐν ἰδίαις οἰκίαις ἐκτήσθω. *Let this be a law imposed absolutely upon all, that no man whatsoever have a sacred place in private houses;* but when he hath a mind to offer sacrifice, let him go to the public temples, and deliver his sacrifice to the priests, whether men or women, οἷς ἀγνεία τούτων ἐπιμελής, *whose business it is to take care that these things be performed in a holy manner.* By which it appears, that these were two established principles of religion in wise men's minds, to sacrifice publicly, and to bring their sacrifices to the priests, who were to take care to offer them purely. Unto which Moses adds one thing more, that their public sacrifices should be offered only at one place: which was a most efficacious preservative from all strange worship; nothing being done but under the eye of the ministers of religion, and the governors of the people. Insomuch that St. Chrysostom (as our learned Dr. Spencer observes, lib. i. de Rit. et Leg. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 4. sect. 1.) calls Jerusalem, which was afterwards established to be this place, καθάπερ τινὰ σύνδεσμον λατρείας, *a kind of bond or knot, whereby the whole nation was tied to the Judaical religion.*

Before the tabernacle of the Lord.] Before the Divine Majesty, which dwelt in the tabernacle; round about which they all inhabited, and were so near it while they travelled in the wilderness, that, as there was no trouble in bringing all their sacrifices thither, so they knew certainly whither to go. And thus the Hebrew doctors observe it was when they came into Canaan; where, while the tabernacle was fixed in Shiloh, none might sacrifice any where else: but when it wandered uncertainly (after Shiloh was destroyed), being sometimes in Mispeh, sometimes at Gilgal, and at Nob, and Gibeon, and the house of Obed Edom, they fancy it was lawful to sacrifice in other places. For so

we find Samuel did, 1 Sam. vii. 9. ix. 13. (where he sacrificed in a high place), xi. 15. xvi. 2. and David, 2 Sam. xxiv. 18. and Elias, 1 Kings xviii. 23. But these may be thought extraordinary acts, done by an immediate warrant from God; for none of these persons were priests, but prophets guided by Divine inspirations. (See Dr. Outram lib. i. De Sacrific. cap. 2.)

Blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood.] He was to be punished as a murderer; that is, die for it. For to have *blood imputed to a man,* in the Hebrew phrase, or to be *guilty of blood,* is to be liable to have his blood shed, or to lose his life. Which, as of old it was the punishment of every one who killed another man, (Gen. ix. 6.) so here he is condemned to die who sacrificed any where but at the tabernacle.

And that man shall be cut off from among his people.] This, not another punishment (unless we suppose it relates to his posterity), and therefore the first word should be translated, not *and,* but *for.* And the meaning either is, that the magistrate should pass the sentence of death upon him, or God would destroy him himself. The latter sense is most probable, because he threatens (ver. 10.) to execute vengeance with his own hand, upon him that was guilty of eating blood. It is thought, indeed, by some, that *cutting off* doth not signify *death;* but, as in other places of this book, *cutting off* is so evidently joined with *death,* that so little cannot be meant by it, as depriving such persons of the privileges of God's people, (for instance, when any offered his children to Moloch, xx. 2—5. or did not afflict his soul on the day of atonement, xxiii. 29, 30.) so here in this place it most certainly signifies the putting him that was guilty of this crime to death; because he was to be punished as a murderer. Which severe penalty was enacted in this case, to preserve the Israelites from idolatry. For if they had been permitted to offer sacrifice where they pleased, they might easily have forsaken God by altering the rites which he had ordained; nay, by offering to strange gods: particularly to the demons, which, in those days, frequented the fields, and endeavoured to persuade the ignorant that they were gods, as seems to be intimated in the next verse and ver. 7.

Ver. 5. *To the end.*] Or, *for this cause; i. e.* to avoid that heavy punishment beforementioned.

That the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices.] Or, *shall bring:* as the Vulgar Latin translates it (regarding the sense more than the words), "Ideo sacerdoti offerre debent," &c. *Therefore they ought to bring to the priest their sacrifices,* &c.

Which they offer in the open field.] Where the pagans erected their altars, to procure fruitfulness to their fields. Insomuch that Libanius saith (in his oration ὑπὲρ ἱερῶν), that the temples, or holy places, were the *very soul or life of the fields:* Ψυχὴ γὰρ, ὦ βασιλεῦ, τοις ἀγροῖς τὰ ἱερά. And that *in them lay the hope of the husbandmen:* καὶ τοῖς γεωργοῦσι ἐν αὐτοῖς αἱ ἐλπίδες. How old this idolatry was, we cannot certainly tell; but it continued a long time among the Israelites, as we learn from the prophet Jeremiah, xiii. 27. and Hosea xv. 11. where he saith, "Their altars were as heaps in the furrows of the field:" that is, there were abundance of them, notwithstanding this early prohibition given by Moses. And among the gentiles, Festus tells us they offered sacrifices to the *terrestrial gods, in terra, upon the very ground* (according to the Hebrew phrase here, *on the face of the field),* but to the *infernal gods, in terra effossa, in holes or pits digged in the earth;* and to the *celestial, in ædificiis a terra exaltatis, in buildings exalted above the earth; i. e.* upon altars: which had their name from hence, *ab altitudine, from their height,* as both he and Servius also tell us. And every one knows that they delighted to set them in high places, on the tops of mountains and hills; especially where there were groves and shady trees, under which they set them, even in valleys, and in the highways, fields, and meadows. For they were so fond of them, that those who were against erecting of temples to their gods (as Zeno was), yet never sacrificed without altars, which they set in the open air, to signify they believed he whom they worshipped could not be circumscribed.

Even that they may bring them unto the Lord.] Or, *they shall bring them even unto the Lord:* who had settled his habitation at the tabernacle, and would be worshipped no where else with sacrifices.

Unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation unto the priests.] Here seems to be another reason why they were not permitted to offer in the field; because God would have none but the priests (men appointed by himself to attend for this purpose at his house) to offer sacrifices to him, according to the rites he had prescribed.

And offer them for peace-offerings unto the Lord.] Upon these words Nachmanides grounds the forenamed opinion, that whilst the Jews continued in the wilderness, they ate no meat at their own private tables, but what had been first offered to God at the tabernacle. *Behold,* saith he, *God commanded that all which the Israelites did eat should be peace-offerings.* Which was afterwards altered when they came to Canaan, and lived remote from the house of God. And such a custom prevailed among the gentiles, who would not sit down to eat at their tables till they had offered bread and wine unto their gods. Thus it was among the Chaldees, as appears from Dan. i. 8. But then they had many altars every where, even in their own private houses. Whereas here in the wilderness there was but one altar, which could not contain all the fat that was to be burnt on it every day, if we suppose the Israelites to have commonly killed beasts for their own eating. It seems to be the truer opinion, that they seldom or never did that while they were in the wilderness; but all the beasts they killed were for sacrifice, of which Moses here speaks. So R. Levi Barzelonita, (Præcept. clxxxvii.) and other Jewish doctors; they are here forbidden *to offer a sacrifice to God any where without the tabernacle.* He mentions indeed only *peace-offerings;* but the reason is, because they were most common; being offered not only for all the mercies they had received, but for all they desired to obtain from God; as Abarbinel observes upon the seventh chapter of this book, where the several sorts of them are mentioned. Men were more forward also to bring these *offerings* than any other, because they were to have their share of them, and feast upon them.

Ver. 6. *And the priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the Lord at the door of the tabernacle.*] This depends upon the foregoing command of offering all their sacrifices at the tabernacle; that so the blood might be sprinkled upon the altar (and poured out at the bottom of

it, as it is required in other places of this book), and not kept together in a vessel, or a hole in the ground, as the manner of the ancient idolatry was, when they offered their sacrifices in the field, and sat about this blood, and feasted upon the flesh of their sacrifice. So Maimonides saith the custom of the Zabii was, (More Nevochim. par. iii. cap. 46.)

And burn the fat.] So the manner was in all sacrifices: which is said also to be *for a sweet savour unto the Lord,* (see i. 8, 9. iii. 3. 5. iv. 35, &c.)

Ver. 7. *And they shall no more.*] It seems by this they had been guilty of other idolatrous practices, besides that of worshipping the golden calf, (Exod. xxxii.) And so much is expressed Deut. xxxii. 17. And it was a sin of which their fathers had been long guilty, especially in Egypt, (Josh. xxiv. 14. Ezek. xx. 7. xxiii. 2, 3.) which they had not left, but continued in the wilderness, (Amos v. 25.)

Offer their sacrifices unto devils.] These words shew the reason why God commands them, under such a heavy penalty, to offer only in one place at the tabernacle; because, while they sacrificed in the open fields, they had been in danger to be seduced by demons, who were wont to frequent those places (especially in deserts), and present themselves to ignorant people as if they were gods, and entice their devotion towards them. Which demons, or evil spirits, appeared, it is likely, in the form of goats; and therefore are here called *seirim,* which properly signifies *goats.* And hath made some imagine, that they really sacrificed to these creatures, as some of the Egyptians did, who held goats be be sacred animals. So Diodorus tells us, (lib. ii.) Τὸν δὲ τράγον ἀπεθέωσαν, &c. *they deified a goat;* upon the same account that the Greeks worshipped Priapus. Herodotus, in his Euterpe, cap. 46. saith the same of the Mendesii, who, he saith, worshipped the males more than the females. And many other authors mentioned by Bochartus (in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 53.) report the same. But I question whether the Egyptians were guilty of such idolatry in the days of Moses. Nor is there more truth in their opinion, who think the Israelites now worshipped images in this form of goats. Which the LXX. seem to have thought, when they translated it τοῖς ματαίοις, *to vain things,* as idols are called in Scripture. And yet this very word, *seirim,* is by the Greek translators rendered Δαιμόνια, Isa. xiii. 21. which we here follow; only instead of *demons* translating it *devils:* whom the ancient Zabii worshipped, they appearing to them in the form of goats; and this custom was universally spread (as Maimonides thinks) in Moses's time, which was the cause of this precept, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 46.)

And, indeed, nothing is more common in the writings of the ancient heathen, than the mention of fauns and satyrs, and ægipanes, whose shape below was that of a goat. And to this day, in the solemn conventions of witches, the chief devil that presides in their assemblies, is said, by all that have examined such matters, to have the form of a goat. And our famous countryman, Alexander Hales, in his discourse upon the scape-goat, (which is in his Summa, par. iii. q. 55.) derives the reason of it from the frequent appearance of demons in this shape in the wilderness; as Mr. Selden observes in his Prolegomena to his book De Diis Syris. They that would see more of these *seirim,* may consult I. G. Vossius, lib. i. de Orig. et Progr. Idol. cap. 8. and Bochartus's Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. vi. cap. 7.

There is one, indeed, (Anton. Van Dale) who hath lately endeavoured to explode all these fancies, as he esteems them, of demons: which he would have to be the mere invention of the ancient Chaldeans; and from them derived to other nations. But he will never be able to make any wise man believe, that the world was so sottish as to worship the images of goats (which he takes to be meant by *seirim*), if there had not been an appearance of something in that shape which they accounted Divine.

After whom they have gone a whoring.] *i. e.* With whom they have committed idolatry. For this sin was justly called by the name of *whoredom,* ever after they were solemnly contracted and espoused to God, to be his peculiar people. (Exod. xix. 5.) Which is the reason that he is said so often to be a *jealous God,* (particularly Exod. xx. 5.) highly incensed, that is, at their worshipping other gods besides him. For this and such-like words are never used but concerning idolatry; which Ezekiel describes as the foulest whoredom, (xvi. 22.) and particularly mentions this whoredom with the Egyptians, ver. 26. and the Assyrians, ver. 28, &c.

This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout all generations.] These words seem to me to determine the sense of the foregoing precept, to which they relate, (from ver. 2, &c.) not to be, that all the meat they killed for their own tables should be peace-offerings; for that, all confess, was not a *statute for ever* (if it were one at all) *throughout all generations;* but only while they were in the wilderness.

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you.*] These words also shew he speaks in the foregoing of bringing all sacrifices whatsoever to the tabernacle; the same law which was given before to the Israelites, being now extended to all strangers that sojourned among them. By whom he means all such as were proselytes to the Jewish religion. So the LXX. here translate it; and they add the very same words to ver. 3. where *the house of Israel* is only mentioned in the original Hebrew. The only question is, what sort of proselytes are here intended? And I take it he speaks of the proselytes of righteousness (as the Jews call them), who were circumcised, and thereby embraced the whole religion of Moses. And this, I find, is the general opinion: though some few learned men contend, that any stranger, who had renounced idolatry (whom they called *a proselyte of the gate*), might bring his sacrifices to the altar. Which one can hardly allow, (though asserted by so great a man as Grotius, lib. i. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 16.) because he speaks of the same strangers here, which are mentioned ver. 10. where all such strangers are forbidden to eat blood. Which plainly belongs to such strangers as were become Jews by circumcision: for other strangers might eat it, as appears from Deut. xiv. 21. where the Israelites are allowed to sell what died of itself to a stranger, that he might eat it if he pleased: and such creatures had their blood in them.

That offereth a burnt-offering or sacrifice.] *i. e.* Any other sacrifice besides *burnt-offerings,* viz. *sin-offerings,* or *trespass-offerings,* or *peace-offerings.* None of which were accepted, but from such as were admitted into the Jewish re-

ligion: though the pious gentiles, the Jews say, might bring *burnt-offerings.*

Ver. 9. *And bringeth it not to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the Lord.*] As he ordered their *peace-offerings* to be, ver. 4, 5.

Shall be cut off from among his people.] This demonstrates, that the foregoing precept and this belong to the same matter; being enforced with the same penalty, (ver. 4.) And it also shews, that the *strangers* beforementioned, signify such gentiles as were circumcised: for otherwise they were not of the body of the people of Israel, from which they are threatened to be cut off, if they did not observe this law.

Ver. 10. *And what man soever he be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you.*] See ver. 8.

That eateth any manner of blood.] This is forbidden before, iii. 17. and repeated again, vii. 26. (see both those places), where it is explained what blood he means; either of birds or beasts. Nothing is said of fishes, because they were not offered at the altar, and have little blood in them: nor is there any direction given any where how they should be killed. It is said, indeed, in this place, that they should not eat *any manner of blood;* but the meaning seems to be, neither of blood offered at the altar, nor of beasts killed for their own use: or else it is to be limited as before, to the blood of beasts and birds, (ver. 13.) for fishes were not at all considered. And here the reason is added why they should not eat blood (which was not mentioned in the forenamed places), because it was the life of the beast, and was therefore reserved to make atonement for their souls.

I will even set my face against that soul, &c.] That is, be extremely angry with him, and severely punish him, by cutting him off (as it here follows) from the body of the nation. Maimonides observes in the forenamed place, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 46.) that this is the same expression which is used against him that offered his children to Moloch, xx. 3. and that this phrase is never used in Scripture concerning any other sin, but only these two, *idolatry* and *eating blood.* For the eating of blood gave occasion (he shews) to one kind of idolatry, in the worshipping of demons: whose food the ancient idolaters imagined the blood was; by eating of which their worshippers had communion with them. (See Psal. xvi. 4. and Grotius there.)

Ver. 11. *For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls,* &c.] Some think here are two distinct reasons against eating of blood: but the words, as they lie in the Hebrew, may well be translated, *Because the life of the flesh* (of any beast, that is) *is in the blood,* therefore *I have given it to you* (or, appointed it for you) *upon the altar, to make an atonement,* &c. Which is as much as to say, the life of the beast lying in the blood, I have ordained it to expiate your sins, that by its death, in your stead, your life may be preserved: and, therefore, I require you not to eat that which is appointed for so holy an end. For it would have been very unseemly if they had vulgarly used that to which they owed the favour of God and their very lives.

Nothing could be more rational than this precept, *viz.* that a thing so sacred, as to be peculiarly *appointed for them upon the altar,* should not lose that honour and esteem that was due to it. As the blood would have done, if it had been allowed to be commonly eaten; for that is very contemptible which goes into the draught (as our Saviour speaks), and at last becomes ordure.

For it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.] The blood, that is, of the sacrifices, which by God's appointment are offered to expiate your sins; that is, to preserve you from perishing. For to *make an atonement,* and to be a *ransom,* are the very same thing; as appears from Exod. xxx. 12. compared with ver. 15, 16. And to be a *ransom,* is to deliver from death, as appears from the words in that place—they shall every man give a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, *that there be no plague among them.* For the sins of the sacrificer being laid upon the beast which he offered, by imposition of his hand on its head, and confessing them there, they were taken away by the blood of that beast, unto which they were translated. And that not merely by the obedience of him that offered the sacrifice (which the followers of Socinus say God accepted), but by the blood of the sacrifice itself, as these words expressly declare, which was offered in his stead. Thus Theodoret upon these words; *God commanded the soul of the irrational creature, with its blood,* ἀντὶ τῆς σῆς, &c. *to be offered, instead of thy rational and immortal soul.* And thus the Jews themselves understand it; particularly Aben Ezra, upon these words, saith, *the soul, instead of the soul; i. e.* the soul of the beast was offered instead of the soul of the man. And R. Solomon Jarchi to the same purpose; *one soul comes, and makes expiation for another soul.* And Maimonides more largely; *I have spared the soul of the man, and given this blood upon the altar; that the soul of the beast may make expiation for the soul of the man.* And so Abarbinel, and many more, which may be seen in Dr. Outram's most learned book De Sacrificiis, lib. i. cap. 22. n. 11.

Ver. 12. *Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.*] What other reason soever there was before for not eating blood, (see Gen. ix. 4.) this is the reason why God forbade it to *the children of Israel;* and to all that joined themselves unto their religion.

Ver. 13. *And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten.*] Though no other beasts or fowls be mentioned but those that were taken in hunting (that being a very common thing in those days), yet the precept extends to all those that were bred at home, and were allowed by the law for their food. So a MS. author, mentioned by J. Wagenseil, in his annotations upon Sota, cap. 2. excerpt. Gemara, n. 6. where he puts abundance of cases upon this subject.

He shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.] Though it was not the blood of a sacrifice offered at the altar, but of a beast or bird killed for their own use, they might not eat it, but bury it in the ground; lest any beast should lick it up, as it is commonly interpreted. Maimonides hath found a deeper reason for this, which is, that nobody might meet and feast about it. By which means Moses broke their society and fellowship with demons; who, in those times, were thought to feed upon the blood, in a bowl or hole, whilst their worshippers sat about it eating of the flesh. So he writes in the place often beforementioned, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 46.) And this was the more necessary while they remained in the wilderness, because demons were wont to haunt such places, and

there appear; but not in cities or habitable places. (See Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 4. p. 201.) If a man, therefore, saw his neighbour kill a beast, and neglect to cover its blood with dust, he was bound to go and do it himself; because God speaks here unto *the children of Israel, i. e.* to all of them, (ver. 12.) as R. Levi Barzelonita glosses, Præcept. clxxxv. And the forenamed MS., mentioned by Wagenseil, saith, they covered the blood with this form of benediction; "Blessed be the Lord our God, the King of the world, who hath sanctified us with his precepts, and commanded us to cover blood." Which shews they thought this a precept of great weight.

Ver. 14. *For it is the life of all flesh,* &c.] Whether of beasts or fowl beforementioned: and therefore prohibited to be eaten by them (as was before observed), because it was offered to God, and accepted by him for their life, when they had forfeited it by their sins.

Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh.] See ver. 12. where the same thing is said, but not so fully as here: for he only saith in that verse, *No soul of you shall eat blood:* but in this, *Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh.*

For the life of all flesh is the blood thereof.] This is so often repeated (no less than *three* times in this verse), the more to deter them from eating blood: which was the life of the beast, and therefore offered to God, as the Lord and Giver of life; and consequently belonged to nobody else.

Ver. 15. *And every soul that eateth that which dieth of itself.*] And consequently had the blood remaining in it; as all things, also, which were not rightly killed had (the Hebrews think), and therefore here forbidden.

Or that which was torn with beasts.] Which was nothing else (as Maimonides speaks) but the beginning to be a dead carcass, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 48.)

Whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger.] By a *stranger,* is meant one that had embraced the Jewish religion: for other gentiles might eat such things. Nay, the Israelites themselves (as Maimonides observes), when they went to war, and entered the countries of the gentiles, and subdued them, might eat that *which died of itself,* or *was torn of beasts;* nay, swine's flesh, and such-like food, when they were hungry, and could find no other meat. (See Schickardi Mishpat Hamelek, cap. 5. Theor. 18.)

He shall both wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, &c.] When he had eaten these things unwittingly, and came to know it, he was thus to purify himself. If he did it knowingly, it was a high crime against an express law, repeated more fully Deut. xiv. 21. and punished, as some think, with death. But I suppose they mean he was obnoxious to the Divine displeasure, and in danger to be cut off by him, if he did not offer a sacrifice to expiate his offence: which seems to be allowed in such cases, as it was for greater offences, (vi. 1, 2, &c.) And the Jewish doctors say, he who violated this law, was only to be beaten: for *cutting off,* either by the hand of God, or the court of judgment, was not threatened to sins of so light a nature as this. So Maimonides observes in his More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 41.

Ver. 16. *But if he wash them not, nor bathe his flesh, he shall bear his iniquity.*] Be liable to be punished by God, for the neglect of the means of his purification. And if while he continued thus unclean, he adventured to eat of the *peace-offerings,* he was in danger to be *cut off from his people,* (vii. 20.)

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] It is not said, when the Lord delivered these laws to Moses; but it is likely after the other, and before those that follow.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them.*] They were all concerned in these laws about marriage; and therefore they are directed to the whole body of the people: who received them, I suppose, by their elders and heads of the tribes, to whom Moses delivered them, and charged they should be communicated to every family and household. (See xvii. 2.)

I am the Lord your God.] I have a right to give you laws (being your sovereign, upon more titles than one), to which all human customs must yield, though long practised, and spread every where in the world. This reason is mentioned *six* times in this chapter; and oftener in the next. (See ver. 4.)

Ver. 3. *After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do.*] The manners of these two countries (of Egypt, wherein they had dwelled a long time; and of Canaan, wherein they were going to settle) they were in the greatest danger to imitate: especially in taking the liberty of making such marriages as they saw practised among them, against which they are here severely cautioned. But though these words seem to have a particular respect to those marriages, yet Maimonides extends them to all their other practices, for which they could see no reason: *magic* being in much use among them, in dressing their trees, and ploughing their ground, and such-like common things: in which they had a respect also to the disposition of the stars of heaven, which led them to the worship of them; as he shews at large in his More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 37. R. Levi Barzelonita also extends these words to the customs of all other nations, (Præcept. cclxii.) which he that observed was to be beaten. But the *doings,* or customs, which Moses here speaks of, seem to be those that follow, ver. 6, 7, &c. as appears from ver. 24, &c. And the other customs of those nations, about their clothes, and cutting their hair (which the forenamed author mentions), are forbidden in other places.

Neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.] The Hebrew word *chukkoth,* which we commonly translate *statutes,* and here *ordinances,* seems to import that the incestuous marriages here mentioned were allowed by the laws and constitutions of those countries; which made their wickedness the more intolerable, (ver. 24.)

Ver. 4. *Ye shall do my judgments, and keep my ordinances, to walk therein.*] Frame your lives according to the laws and rules which I give you to observe; and not according to their wicked practices, which were grown into customs and precedents. The Gemara Babylonica, mentioning these words, saith, it is a tradition of their doctors, that by *mishpatim* (which we translate *judgments*), are to be understood such natural laws as all mankind are bound to observe, though there were no written commands for them: such as those against idolatry, and those about un-

covering the nakedness of such near relations, as are here mentioned, and murder, &c. And by *chukkim* (*ordinances*, or *statutes*), such laws are meant as depended only on the pleasure of God; and obliged none but those to whom they were given: such as those about meats, and garments, and leprosy, &c. Against which, lest any one should object, it is here added, *I am the Lord your God.*

I am the Lord your God.] I, who am your sovereign Lord; and, by redeeming you from the Egyptian bondage, am become, in a special manner *your God*, have ordained these things. Therefore let no man dispute them, or make a question of them, as the forenamed Gemara expounds these words. See Selden, lib. i. de Jure N. et G. cap. 10. p. 122. where he observes, that the laws called *statutes* are, in their language, such as depend only *on the royal authority*.

Ver. 5. *Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments.*] Observe the laws beforementioned. For the word we here translate *statutes*, is the same with that translated *ordinances* in the foregoing verse.

Which if a man do, he shall live in them.] Not be *cut off*; but live long and happily, in the enjoyment of all the blessings which God promised in his covenant with them.

I am the Lord.] Who will faithfully keep my covenant, and fulfil my promises, (Exod. vi. 3.)

Ver. 6. *None of you.*] In the Hebrew the words being *isch, isch* (as much as to say, *man, man*), that is, no man; the Talmudists take it as if he had said, neither Jew nor gentile. For all mankind, they say, are comprehended under these laws about incest. Nay, the very Karaites (or those who adhere only to the Scripture, and reject a Talmudical exposition) are of this mind, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. i. de Uxore Heb. cap. 5. But the Talmudists themselves do not all understand this matter alike. For some of them think all the gentiles (at least those who were under the dominion of the Israelites) were bound to refrain from all incestuous marriages; to which death is threatened by the law. But others of them think they were concerned only in those six things which were unlawful before the law of Moses was given. (See Selden, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 1. and cap. 11. p. 596, &c.) But the ancient Hebrews give a good reason for all these laws, as Grotius observes, lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 5. sect. 13. n. 2.

Shall approach.] Some of the Jews have been so rigorous, as to expound this word, as if it bound them not to have any familiarity with the persons afternamed, (R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. clxxxviii.) which is against all reason and natural affection. The plain sense is, they should not *approach*, or *come near* to them, for the end afterward mentioned, *viz. to uncover their nakedness*. Nay, this very phrase is used for the same thing, Gen. xx. 4. without the addition *of uncovering their nakedness*.

Any that is near of kin to him.] It must be confessed, that these words *near of kin* do not sufficiently express the full sense of the Hebrew phrase; nor are they of a determinate signification: for a man may be *near of kin* to a woman, who is not *the remainder of his flesh*, as the Hebrew phrase is: that is, *so near of kin to him, that nothing comes between them*. This is properly the *nearness of flesh* here spoken of; she that is immediately born of the same flesh that a man is, or she out of whose flesh he is born; or she that is born out of his flesh; that is, in plainer words, a man's sister, mother, or daughter. These are a man's own immediate relations; which the Karaites call *the foundation and root of all that is here forbidden*, as Selden notes, lib. i. Ux. Hebr. cap. 2. For the sake of whom the rest here mentioned are prohibited, having a *nearness of flesh* to them, *viz.* his father or mother's sister; his granddaughter, and his niece. For the best explication of this phrase, is the express particulars mentioned by God himself in this place.

To uncover their nakedness.] To have carnal knowledge of her, as the Scripture modestly speaks in other places. For *nakedness* in the holy language signifies the secret parts, which natural modesty teaches all civilized people to cover; and not to reveal them to any but those whom they marry. Therefore *not to uncover the nakedness* of the persons here named, is properly, not to take them in marriage; and much less to have knowledge of them without marriage. Answerable to this is the name of a virgin whom the Hebrews call *alma*, which is as much as *covered*, clothed, or veiled: because those parts were never exposed to any one, but those to whom they were espoused and joined in marriage.

I am the Lord.] By my authority, who am your sovereign, and the sovereign of the world, these laws are enacted: and I will punish those that break them.

Ver. 7. *The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, thou shalt not uncover.*] It is commonly thought by interpreters, that the particle we translate *or*, is here as much as *that is*, (for so it signifies in some places, particularly 1 Sam. xxviii. 3.) So that the latter part of the verse is only an explication of the former, and makes them but one prohibition, against a man's marrying his mother. And this, indeed, the next words seem to imply, *she is thy mother;* who bare thee, and therefore not to be taken to be thy wife, much less to be otherwise known by thee. But we may as well think, that *the nakedness of the father and of the mother* are both here mentioned, to shew neither the daughter might marry her father, nor the son his mother; and consequently, that in all the following particulars, women were concerned just as men were; though the men be only mentioned. And under the name of *father* and *mother* are comprehended grandfather or grandmother, or other progenitors before them.

She is thy mother, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.] This is the very first prohibition; it being a going back in nature for a man to marry his mother. Which, though it was practised in those days by the Canaanites, and Egyptians, and by the Persians also, in aftertimes, and some other eastern countries, yet in the western part of the world (as Mr. Selden observes) such marriages were *nunquam non execranda, execrable in all ages*, (lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 11. p. 601, &c.) Such were the marriages of Œdipus with Jocasta, of Nero with Agrippina, Pelopeia and Thyestis her father, of whom Ægistus was born; which every body detested. (See Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. ii. cap. 5. sect. 2.) For the law of nature was against such marriages, notwithstanding the practice of persons, nay whole nations, whom God gave up to πάθη ἀτιμίας (as St. Paul shews), *dishonourable affections*, for their other sins; especially for their forsaking him, and falling to idolatry.

Maimonides gives this as the general reason of prohibiting this, and all the following marriages: because the persons here forbidden to be so joined together, are all, in a manner, such as are wont to live together in the same house (for so fathers, mothers, children, brothers, and sisters do), who might easily be tempted to lewdness one with another, if even marrying together were not severely forbidden. And thus the LXX. translate the words of the foregoing verse; none of you shall approach to any *that is near of kin to him*, πρὸς οἰκεῖα σαρκὸς, or, as other copies, πρὸς οἰκεῖον σαρκὸς, *to those that are so near of kin, that they usually dwell in the same house;* as parents and children; brothers and sisters; and the brothers and sisters of our parents. Mahomet, as lewd and impudent as he was, had not the boldness to control these laws; but, in the fourth chapter of his Alcoran, expressly forbids his followers to marry their *mothers*, their *mothers-in-law*, &c. and a great many of the rest which here follow.

Ver. 8. *The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover.*] That is, of a step-mother. Such was the incest of Reuben with Bilhah, (Gen. xxxv. 22.) and of Absalom with the wives of his father David, (2 Sam. xvi. 21, 22.) and of Antiochus Soter with Stratonice; who, abhorring from such a conjunction, was taught that all things were honest that pleased the king. But the thing itself is so hateful, that the very naming it is a condemnation; and therefore it is all one with the prime natural law, which prohibits the conjunction of *parents* and *children*. "For she that is one flesh with my father (as a great man speaks), is as near to me as my father, and that is as near as my own mother. As near, I mean, in the estimation of law, though not in the accounts of nature; and, therefore, though it be a crime of a less turpitude, yet it is equally forbidden, and is against the law of nature, not directly, but by interpretation," (book. ii. chap. 2. Ductor. Dubitantium, rule iii. n. 29.)

It is thy father's nakedness.] He having known her, it was not permitted the son to have her also. Nay, the Jews say, if the father had only espoused her, it was not lawful for the son to have her to wife; or if he had divorced her, it was not lawful for the son to have her, even after he was dead. (See R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. cxci. Buxtorf. de Sponsal. p. 16, 17.)

Ver. 9. *The nakedness of thy sister.*] As the nearness of flesh (mentioned ver. 6.) above a man, is his mother; and below him, is his daughter: so, on the side of him, is his sister.

The daughter of thy father.] Though she were begotten by his father of another wife, not of his mother; yet he might not marry her.

Or the daughter of thy mother.] Born of her by another husband, not by his father.

Whether she be born at home, or born abroad.] Be legitimately born in wedlock; or illegitimately, out of wedlock; as the Talmudists expound it: see Selden, lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 10. p. 591. where he observes, that though the Egyptians (as Philo and others report), with such-like nations, thought the marriage of brothers and sisters to be lawful, and it was practised also in Greece; yet the greatest men in the western countries condemned such marriages; which some of the Greek philosophers also disallowed: and Euripides himself called barbarous, even when it was practised. Insomuch, that in after-ages this wicked custom was quite abolished; and that before Christianity was well settled among them. For Sextus Empiricus saith, that in his time it was utterly unlawful: see there, cap. xi. p. 603. 605, &c. where he shews the Romans always abhorred such marriages; nay, it was late before the Persians took up this abominable custom, after the example of Cambyses: who being in love with his own sister, as Herodotus relates, (in his Thalia, cap. xxxi.) and having a mind to marry her, which was never practised before in that country; he commanded the royal judges (as he calls them), who were the interpreters of the laws, to advise whether he might lawfully do it, or not: who, to please him, and yet not seem to give an illegal opinion, answered, νόμον οὐδένα ἐξευρίσκειν ὃς κελεύει ἀδελφεῇ συνοικέειν ἀδελφεὸν, &c. *That they could find no law which permitted a brother to marry a sister: but there was a law, that the Persian king might do even what he would.* (See Grotius, lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 5. sect. 13.)

Even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.] It shall be unlawful to thee to marry any of the forenamed sisters. For though the marriage of brother and sister was necessary in the beginning, when God created but one man and one woman, by whose children the world was peopled; yet, when it was so, there was great reason that it should be made utterly unlawful, as many have demonstrated; particularly Bishop Taylor, in his Ductor. Dubitantium, book ii. chap. 2. rule iii. n. 24, 25, &c. "For now it is next to an unnatural mixture (as he speaks), it hath something of confusion in it, and blending the very first partings of nature, which makes it intolerably scandalous and universally forbidden; for if it were not, the mischief would be horrible and infinite."

Ver. 10. *The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.*] This law concerns a man's grand-daughter, by his son or his daughter, whether legitimately or spuriously begotten, as R. Levi Barzelonita expounds it, (Præcept. cxciii.) Who adds, in the next precept but one, this is another prohibition, *thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter;* which (saith he) is not expressly mentioned in this law, because it was not necessary. For a man's grandchildren, either by sons or daughters, which are more remote, being forbidden, there was no need to say it was unlawful for him to marry his own daughter.

For theirs is thy own nakedness.] They have their original from thy nakedness. For which reason some of the Jews extended this to those descendants which were still farther off, as a hedge to this law. So R. Levi calls it, in the place forenamed. The ancient Romans also (as our Mr. Selden shews) were very strict in restraining the marriage of men with their nieces, either by their brothers or sisters, and with others mentioned in the following laws of Moses, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gentium, &c. cap. 11. p. 605, &c.

Ver. 11. *The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father (she is thy sister), thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.*] This prohibition, seeming to be the same with that, ver. 9. some of the Hebrews have expounded this concerning the daughter of a mother-in-law begotten by another father. For the words may be thus translated, as Mr. Selden observes the order of them will bear, (lib. i. de Uxore Heb. cap. 4.) *The nakedness of the daughter of thy*

father's wife (for she that is born of thy father is thy sister) thou shalt not uncover. And with this the Greek and several other versions of the Bible agree, who make the prohibition of *the wife's* daughter to end before he speaks of his own sister. And it is the sense of the principal men among the Karaites, as he shews, cap. 6. But this is against the constant sense of the Hebrew doctors, who say it is lawful to marry the daughter of a mother-in-law which she had by another husband; for there is no *nearness of flesh* at all between these two. And therefore, as in the ninth verse, the marriages of all brothers and sisters, in general, are forbidden; so here, more particularly, the marriage with a sister by the same father, though not by the same mother: which was necessary to be expressly forbidden; because, before the law, the sons of Noah thought it lawful to marry a half-sister (as we speak) by the father's side, though not by the mother's. (See Buxtorf. de Spons. et Divort. p. 15, 16.) And this was the ancient law of Solon among the Athenians, that they might marry ὁμοπατρίους, their sisters *by the same father*, but not ὁμομητρίους, their sisters *by the same mother;* as Joh. Meursius shews in his Themis Attica, lib. i. cap. 18. And if the one of these had not been in so many words prohibited, as well as the other, the Jews might still have continued in that practice, which was usual before the law. (See Sam. Petitus in Leges Atticas, p. 440.)

Some are of the opinion, that, in the ninth verse, the son of a second venter is forbidden to marry the daughter of the first: and here, the son of the first venter, to marry the daughter of the second. And others fancy, that the sister here meant is one that was adopted by his father.

Ver. 12. *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister.*] And it made no difference whether she was his father's sister legitimately or illegitimately begotten by his grandfather; as R. Levi Barzelonita represents the opinion of the Hebrew doctors, (Præcept. cxcvii.) Such marriages also were prohibited by the ancient Romans, as Mr. Selden observes in the place forenamed, (lib. v. cap. 11. p. 605.) though before the law of Moses they are supposed to be lawful; for it is commonly thought that his father Amram married his aunt Jochobed, (Exod. vi. 20.) and therefore no wonder it was practised in other countries, who were not acquainted with this prohibition: particularly at Sparta, where Herodotus saith (in his Erato, cap. lxxi.) Archidamus their king married Lampito, who was sister to his father Zeuxidamus, δόντος αὐτῷ Λευτυχίδεω; Leutichydes (who was father both to her and to Zeuxidamus) giving her to him in marriage.

She is thy father's near kinswoman.] So near, that as he could not be permitted to marry her, so his son also, who was not but a little farther removed from her, was forbidden to touch her. And by the same reason that a man might not marry his aunt, an uncle might not marry his niece. Which, though practised among the Romans after Claudius married Agrippina, till the time of Constantine; yet it was a new thing, as Claudius himself acknowledges in Tacitus, ("Nova nobis in fratrum filies conjugia," lib. xii. Annal. *marriages with our brother's daughters are new things with us.)* And all he could say for it was, that it was common in other nations, "nec lege ulla prohibita," *and not forbidden by any law.* And indeed the newness of it so frightened Domitian, that he would not venture upon it; nor did many use it. Which shews that this law had some foundation in nature; which made those men cautious about such marriages, who had nothing else to guide them. Or, at least, there had been such a long custom against them, in the western part of the world, that men, who were otherwise very bad, would not help to alter it.

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister: for she is thy mother's near kinswoman.*] There is the same reason for this, as for the former prohibition: the aunt, by the mother's side, being as near to a man, as his aunt by the father's.

Ver. 14. *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother.*] This is explained in the next words, *thou shalt not approach to his wife:* that is, not marry thy uncle's wife. And therefore much less might an uncle marry his brother's daughter: as Herodotus tells us Darius married Phrataguna, the daughter of his brother Atarnes, who gave him all his estate with her; and Leonides, king of Sparta, married Gorgo, the daughter of his brother Cleomenes. See lib. vii. (called Polymnia) cap. 224. and 239.

She is thy aunt.] By such near affinity, that marriage is forbidden with her, as well as with an aunt by consanguinity, (v. 12, 13.) In which the ancient Romans also were very strict, as our Selden observes in the place abovenamed. And it made no difference, whether he were only espoused to her, or had after marriage divorced her, or was separated by death: or whether he was his father's brother legitimately, or spuriously, as R. Levi Barzelonita observes, Præcept. cxcix. and cc. Where he notes, that though the father's brother's wife be only mentioned, yet the mother's brother's wife is also prohibited. This is repeated xx. 20.

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter-in-law: she is thy son's wife,* &c.] Though only espoused to him; and therefore much more when solemnly married; as the same R. Levi explains it, Præcept. cci. where he hath the same observation as before; that if she was afterward divorced, he might not marry her: and that it is probable the wife of a bastard son is prohibited; for he is his son; though a child by a slave, or a stranger, is never called a man's son.

Ver. 16. *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife,* &c.] Unless he died childless; for in that case the next brother was bound to marry her, (Deut. xxv. 5. see Buxtorf. de Spons. p. 25. and Grotius in Matt. xiv. 4.) Much less might a man marry his brother's daughter (as was before noted), who was nearer to him, and of his own flesh. Which was so much abhorred by the ancient Romans, that Claudius Cæsar durst not celebrate his marriage with Agrippina, till he had got a decree of the senate for it, "Quo justæ inter patruos, fratrumque filias, nuptiæ etiam in posterum statuerentur:" *which made the marriage of uncles with their brother's daughters to be lawful for the future: which hitherto had been without example.* So Tacitus relates in the forenamed book of his Annals, (cap. 5.) where he saith, notwithstanding this decree, there were none found, but only one man, who desired such matrimony; and most thought he did it to gain Agrippina's favour: "Neque tamen repertus est, nisi unus, talis matrimonii cupitor," &c.

Ver. 17. *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a wo-*

man and her daughter.] If a man married a widow that had a daughter, it was a wicked thing to marry that daughter, either while her mother lived, or after she was dead.

Neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, nor her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness.] To preserve them from this, the Jews added, as a hedge to this law, a prohibition to marry the grand-daughters of such daughters, as R. Levi Barzelonita tells us, (Præcept. ccv.)

For they are her near kinswomen.] Of such consanguinity with her (from whom they directly come), as makes it very criminal in him that is one with her to marry them.

It is wickedness.] The Hebrew word *zimmah* imports more than *wickedness.* The LXX. translate it ἀσέβημα, *impiety;* the Vulgar Latin, *incest;* others, *nefarious wickedness,* which is the word in the civil law for those marriages that are contrary to nature. Such were these in some measure, though not in the highest degree.

Ver. 18. *Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister.*] There are a great many eminent writers, who, following our marginal translation [*one wife to another*], imagine that here plurality of wives is expressly forbidden by God. And they think there is an example to justify this translation in Exod. xxvi. 3. where Moses is commanded to take care the five curtains of the tabernacle were coupled together, *one to its sister* (as the Hebrew phrase is), *i. e. one to another.* And so the Karaites interpret this place; that a man, having a wife, should not take another while she lived. Which, if it were true, would solve several difficulties: but there are such strong reasons against it, that I cannot think it to be the meaning. For as more wives than one were indulged before the law, so they were after. And Moses himself supposes as much, when he provides a man should not prefer a child he had by a beloved wife, before one by her whom he hated, if he was the eldest son. Which plainly intimates an allowance in his law, of more wives than one. And so we find expressly their kings might have, though not a multitude, (Deut. xvii. 17.) And their best king, who read God's law day and night, and could not but understand it, took many wives, without any reproof: nay, God gave him more than he had before, by delivering his master's wives to him, (2 Sam. xii. 8.) And, besides all this, Moses speaking all along in this chapter of consanguinity, it is reasonable (as Schindlerus observes) to conclude he doth so here: not of *one woman to another;* but of *one sister to another.* There being also the like reason to understand the word *sister* properly in this place, as the words *daughter* and *mother* in others, (ver. 17. and xx. 14.) where he forbids a man to take a *woman and her daughter,* or a *woman and her mother,* as Theodoric Hackspan judiciously notes, Disput. i. de Locutionibus Sacris, n. 29. (See Selden, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 6. and Buxtorf. de Sponsal, p. 28, 29.)

The meaning therefore is, that though two wives at a time, or more, were permitted in those days, no man should take two sisters (as Jacob had formerly done) begotten of the same father, or born of the same mother, whether legitimately or illegitimately, as the forenamed R. Levi expresses it, (Præcept. ccvi.) Which, though it may seem to be prohibited before, by consequence and analogy (because the marriage of a brother's wife is forbidden, ver. 16.) yet it is here directly prohibited, as other marriages are; which were implicitly forbidden before. For, ver. 7. the marriage of a son with his mother is forbidden: and ver. 10. the marriage of a father with his daughter.

To vex her.] There were wont to be great emulations, and jealousies, and contentions, between wives (some of them being more beloved than others, and also superior to them), which between two sisters would have been more intolerable, than between two other women: who not being "a consanguinitate, æquiore animo sub eodem marito, ætatem una agant," (as Petrus Cunæus speaks, lib. ii. de Repub. Heb. cap. 23.) *of the same consanguinity (as two sisters are), might live with more equal and quiet minds under the same husband.* The Vulgar Latin understands this, as if Moses forbade them to make one sister their *wife,* and the other their *concubine;* which could not but beget the greatest discords between them.

In her life-time.] From hence some infer, that a man was permitted to marry the sister of his former wife, when she was dead. So the Talmudists; but the Karaites thought it absolutely unlawful, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. i. de Uxore Heb. cap. 4.) For it is directly against the scope of all these laws, which prohibit men to marry at all with such persons as are here mentioned, either in their wives' life-time, or after. And there being a prohibition (ver. 16.) to marry a brother's wife, it is unreasonable to think Moses gave them leave to marry their wife's sister. These words, therefore, *in her life-time,* are to be referred, not to the first words, *neither shalt thou take her,* but to the next, *to vex her,* as long as she lives. Chaskuni refers it to both the sisters, according to the Targum, and makes this the sense; *lest they should both be afflicted widows as long as they live:* for nobody would marry either of them, being defiled by such an incestuous conjunction, for which God cut off their husband.

In this the ancient Christians were so strict, that if a man, after his wife died, married her sister, he was by the tenth canon of the council of Eliberis, to be kept from the communion five years.

Ver. 19. *Also thou shalt not approach to a woman.*] No, not to his own wife, as the forenamed R. Levi expounds it, (Præcept. ccvii.) though all other women also are comprehended, even their Canaanitish slaves, as he observes.

As long as she is put apart for her uncleanness.] Which was seven days, (xv. 19.) All the laws about marriages unto this place, seem to have a special regard to the wicked customs among the Egyptians; who, above all other people, were then polluted with such incestuous mixtures. And now he proceeds to direct them to abhor the customs of the Canaanites; who were polluted more than other nations with adulteries, and offering their children to Moloch, and the rest of the foul crimes which follow. For against the practices of these two nations, the Egyptians and the Canaanites, Moses cautions them, (ver. 3.) and accordingly first mentions the doings of the Egyptians unto this place; and then those of the Canaanites in the following verses.

Ver. 20. *Moreover, thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife.*] While he lived with her: for this was to commit adultery.

To defile thyself with her.] This signifies the foulest impurity, as appears from ver. 23. and was punished with death, (xx. 10.)

Ver. 21. *And thou shalt not let any of thy seed.*] *i. e.* Of their children, as it is explained Deut. xviii. 10. This was a spiritual adultery, and therefore here mentioned.

Pass through the fire to Molech.] It is certain that Moloch was particularly worshipped by the children of Ammon, (at least in future ages, 1 Kings xi. 7.) but seems to have been the name of many of the heathen gods, and the same with Baal: both of them signifying *dominion*. This appears by comparing Jer. xix. 5. with xxxii. 35. But more especially it signifies the *sun*, the prince of the heavenly bodies, (see Vossius de Orig. et Progr. Idolol. lib. ii. cap. 5.) as the queen of heaven was the *moon*, (Jer. vii. 18.) Now it is evident, by several passages in Scripture, that the ancient pagans (whom the Israelites were prone to imitate) not only made their children *pass through the fire*, but also *offered* them in sacrifice unto Moloch. The former I take to be forbidden in this law; the latter in xx. 3. where giving their children to Moloch is prohibited under a severe penalty, of being put to death for that crime: whereas there is no penalty annexed here to their making them *pass through the fire*. Which I take therefore to have been a less crime than the other; though an idolatrous rite, practised by those who abhorred the cruelty of offering the very life of their dear children to Moloch. Instead of which, this rite was devised, of making them pass through the fire (for though the word *fire* be not here in the Hebrew text, yet it is understood by all, and expressed Deut. xviii. 10.) by way of purification, and *lustration*, as they called it; and by this means to dedicate them to the worship and service of Moloch. And therefore, being a rite of initiation, whereby parents consecrated their sons and daughters to their deities; we never find it mentioned in Scripture, but only concerning children (not concerning men and women), whom the Israelites are forbidden to dedicate in this manner; which was, in truth, to alienate them from the Lord God of Israel.

Now, that this was practised among the ancient pagans as a rite of initiation, appears particularly in the mysteries of Mithra (see Suidas upon that word); and continued long among the Persians, if we may believe Benjamin Tudelensis, in his Itinerarium, p. 214. (See G. Schickardi Tarich, p. 126, &c.) And this very phrase, *make to pass unto* (for the word *fire*, as I said, is not here mentioned), signifies as much as *ad partes ejus transire, to be addicted to any one*; like that phrase προσέρχεσθαι τῷ Θεῷ, *to come unto God*, (Heb. xi. 6.) And so this Hebrew phrase is used Exod. xiii. 12. and may very well be thus understood here, for devoting, or making over their children unto Moloch. For the heathen thought their children unclean, and obnoxious to the anger of their gods, and consequently in danger to be taken away from them, if they were not thus expiated, as Maimonides tells us, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 37.) And, on the contrary, they fancied, (as R. Levi Barzelonita observes, Præcept. ccviii.) that if only one of their children were thus consecrated to Moloch, all the rest were blessed, and should be prosperous. For he very nicely takes notice that the Israelites are forbidden to make *any of their seed* to pass through the fire: it not being the manner, he saith, to make them all pass. But the idolatrous priests (to make the people more willing to this service) cunningly persuaded them, that if any one child was offered to Moloch, it procured a blessing upon all; and if there was only one child in a family, they laid no obligation on the parents to do this.

The manner of doing it, at this distance of time, cannot certainly be known. Some say their parents carried them through two fires upon their shoulders. Others, that they were led between them by their priests: and so R. Levi in the place beforenamed; "The father delivered the child to the priest, in the name of the idol; just as it is said concerning legal sacrifices, (xv. 14.) 'he shall give them to the priest.'" Others think that the priest, or somebody else, waved the child about in the very flame, while men and women danced round the fire; nay, leaped through the flame. And Joh. Coch. observes, upon the title Sanhedrin, cap. 7. n. 7. that some are of opinion, the children thus dedicated did not walk, but dance through the fire: which being an emblem and representative of the sun, plainly signified such children were consecrated to that deity. And this comes nearer to the Hebrew phrase, as we translate it, that they did not pass *between fires*, but *through the fire*. But which way soever it was done, whether they waved the child through the very fire, and presented it to Moloch, before whom the fire was kindled, or led it between two fires; when they had so done, the priest restored the child to the father again. And in some such way Ahaz made his son "to pass through the fire, according to the abomination of the heathen," (2 Kings xvi. 3.) which cannot be meant of his burning him: for Hezekiah his son outlived him, and succeeded in his throne. (See Theodoret in Kings iv. quæst. 47. Maimon. de Idol. cap. 6. sect. 14. n. 4—7. and Vossius's notes; with Simeon de Muis in Psal. cvi. 37.)

Neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God.] By offering their children to Moloch, they in effect rejected and disowned (as I before observed) the Lord God of Israel: which was to *pollute his name*, by giving that honour, which was due to him alone, unto another God: for he gave them children; who were therefore to be devoted to none but him.

I am the Lord.] The only sovereign of the world; who will severely punish the transgressors of this law.

Ver. 22. *Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is an abomination.*] A detestable wickedness; condemned by all nations, though practised by some lewd persons among them. Insomuch that the apostles of Christ make mention of it with the greatest abhorrence, (Rom. i. 27. 1 Cor. vi. 9. 1 Tim. i. 10.) For not only several of the Roman emperors were infamous upon this account, but some also of the Greek philosophers.

This prohibition is repeated, according to Maimonides, in Deut. xxiii. 17. whom our translation follows; there shall not be a *Sodomite of the sons of Israel*. But Onkelos interprets that place otherwise.

Ver. 23. *Neither shalt thou lie with any beast,* &c.] *i. e.* Of any kind whatsoever. Some are apt to say, what need was there of such prohibitions? when it is so monstrously unnatural, to mix with creatures of a different species from us, as all beasts are. But such persons do not understand, that this was not only practised in Egypt, (against whose doings he cautions them, ver. 3.) but was also made a piece of religion: women devoted to the worship there used, most filthily submitting to the lust of their sacred goats. So Strabo tells us, lib. vii. p. 802. that at Mendes, where they worshipped Pan, Τράγοι ἐνταῦθα γυναιξὶ μίγννν-

ται, *goats* (which were there also worshipped) *lay with women*. For which he quotes Pindar; as do also Priscianus and Ælian, lib. vii. de Animal. cap. 19. as Casaubon there notes. And Herodotus vouches this upon his own knowledge, and saith they did it *openly* (so ἀναφανδὸν signifies) when he was in Egypt. His words are these, in his second book called Euterpe, cap. 46. Ἐγένετο δ' ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τούτῳ ἐπ' ἐμεῦ τοῦτο τέρας· γυναικὶ τράγος ἐμίσγετο ἀναφανδόν. *This prodigy happened in this part of Egypt* (*i. e.* among the Mendesians) *when I was there, a goat had to do with a woman in the view of all.* Τοῦτο ἐς ἐπίδειξιν ἀνθρώπων ἀπίκετο. How long this beastly custom had been among them, none can tell, but these words import that then it was notorious; and so far from being kept secret, that they rather made an ostentation of it. Which I look upon as an argument that this had been a very old practice; otherwise they would have blushed at it.

Ver. 24. *Defile not yourselves in any of these things.*] This seems to relate particularly to the sins beforementioned, ver. 20—23. (See ver. 26.)

For in all these the nations are defiled, which I cast out before you.] The seven nations that inhabited the land of Canaan, (mentioned in many places, particularly Deut. vii. 1.) were so overrun with these filthy vices, that God could not bear with them, but ordered them to be destroyed for this very reason. Which was a sufficient caution to the Israelites, who came in their room, to keep themselves from such impurities.

Ver. 25. *And the land is defiled.*] To make the Israelites the more abominate such doings, he represents the very land, in which they dwelt, as sensible of the foul wickedness of the inhabitants; who were a loathsome burden to it, which it could not digest.

Therefore do I visit the iniquity thereof upon it.] I am about to punish them upon that account.

And the land itself vomiteth out its inhabitants.] A most eloquent figure, expressing the excessive loathsomeness of their wickedness: which made their own country nauseate them, and throw them out, as our stomach doth meat that offends it. The same expression is used, ver. 28. xx. 22. Rev. iii. 16. Theodoret expounds this word by βδελύσσειν, which signifies their *expulsion*, as an *execrable* people. And, indeed, the word *vomit* in Scripture is used for that which is most detestable and abominable, (Isa. xxviii. 8. Jer. xlviii. 26. Habak. ii. 10.)

Ver. 26. *Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments.*] These laws I have given you. (See ver. 4, 5.)

And shall not commit any of these abominations.] From this word *abominations*, which the nations God cast out to make room for them, are said to have committed, ver. 27. some conclude, that every one of the foregoing marriages, mentioned in this chapter, are in their own nature sinful; the nations who had no positive law to forbid them, being cast out for such pollutions. But the mere force of this word will not warrant such a conclusion; because several things are called in this book *an abomination*, which have no moral turpitude in them; but were made so by God's positive laws, as Mr. Selden observes (lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 11. p. 598.) from Lev. xi. 10. 20. 41, 42. where several sorts of creatures are forbidden to be eaten, as *abominable:* and the sacrifice of a bullock or a sheep that had a blemish, is said to be *an abomination*, (Deut. xvii. 1.) not from the very nature of the thing; but from the prohibition which God had made against such offerings.

It is most reasonable, therefore, to refer the *abominations* here spoken of to those foul things mentioned in the latter end of this list, (ver. 20—23.) and to those in the beginning, (ver. 7—9, &c.) For lying with one's mother, or mother-in-law, or sister, was always *an abomination*. But we cannot say the same of every one of the rest (the law itself following, or rather requiring, in one case, the marriage of a brother's wife), which were made an abomination by the law now given to the Israelites.

Neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you.] That is, any proselyte who had embraced their religion. (See xvii. 8.)

Ver. 27. *For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you,* &c.] He admonishes them to beware of these abominations, by the example of those who were utterly undone by them. For God is no respecter of persons; but would punish them in the same manner, if they did the same things.

Ver. 28. *That the land spew not you out also,* &c.] As it did at last, (Jer. ix. 19. Ezek. xxxvi. 17.)

Ver. 29. *For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them, shall be cut off from among their people.*] The multitude of the offenders shall not keep off the punishment; but they shall suffer by the hand of the judges, or by the hand of God, if they neglect their duty. (See Gen. xvii. 14.)

Ver. 30. *Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinances.*] Live by all these rules which I have now given you.

That ye commit not any of these abominable customs, which were committed before you.] By observing every one of these laws, they were kept at a distance from those greater abominations, mentioned in the beginning, and in the latter end of these prohibitions. The positive laws (or ordinances) now added, being in the nature of an *antemurale*, or an *outwork;* to stop their proceeding to the higher crimes, which were against the law of nature.

I am the Lord your God.] As their Lord, he had authority to make these laws: and as their God, they had particular obligations to observe them. Nay, it was a singular token of his love to them, that he prescribed these laws of chastity and modesty: that thereby he might preserve them a holy people to him, pure and free from those abominable filthinesses, and those indecent conjunctions, that were practised in the world. For, as the ancient rule was, "semper in omnibus conjunctionibus, non solum quod liceat considerandum est, sed et quod honestum est:" *in all marriages it is always to be considered, not merely what is lawful, but what is honest and seemly.* Which is more true in the Christian religion, than in any other: for thereby marriage is advanced, to represent the unity that is between Christ and his church. And besides, in contracting marriage, we are not only to have regard to our own conscience (as Joh. Brentius wisely observes, upon the forenamed rule of the ancient law), but to succession also, and to inheritances. And therefore, "id agendum, quod et boni viri honestum judicant; et a legitimo magistratu permittitur:" *that is to be done, both which good men judge to be honest, and is allowed by lawful governors.*

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] The following precepts, which contain in a manner all their duty, seem to have been delivered to Moses immediately after the former; being in a great part a repetition of some principal things which had been already commanded.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel.*] It is uncertain whether he delivered these precepts only to their elders and heads of their tribes, to be communicated by them to the people; or at several times he called every family of every tribe, and spake these words to them himself.

And say unto them, Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.] This very thing was said to them before, with respect to several meats which are forbidden them, xi. 44. (See there.) And now is repeated with a peculiar respect (as Maimonides thinks, More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 47.) to the filthy marriages and abominable idolatries mentioned in the foregoing chapter; as it is repeated again in the next chapter, (xx. 7. 26.) with respect to some other things. It being a general reason, why they should be separated from all other people, by the observation of peculiar laws (which is the meaning of being *holy*), because they were the worshippers of Him, whose most excellent nature transcended all other beings, not only in purity, but in all other perfections.

Ver. 3. *Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father.*] This duty is called *honour* in the fifth commandment, (Exod. xx. 12.) and the father there put before the mother; which being here called *fear*, and the mother put before the father, it shews, saith Maimonides, that *honour and fear are equally due to both*, without any difference. And the proper expressions of *fear* and *reverence* are (according to those doctors), not to sit in their seat, nor to contradict them in any thing they say; much less to cavil against them; nor to call them by their proper names, but to add the title of *Sir*, &c. (as we speak) or the like. And the expressions of *honour*, are not to sit down in their presence; and to provide them with necessaries, if they fall into poverty, &c. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 13. p. 557, &c. and R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. xxvii.)

And keep my sabbaths.] Obedience, as well as reverence, is included in the word *fear:* but if parents commanded them to break the sabbath-day, or to profane any other day consecrated to God's service, they were not to be obeyed.

I am the Lord your God.] I rested on the sabbath-day; who am your sovereign, and therefore have power to require you to rest on any other days. Particularly on the great day of atonement, (xvi. 31.) when I am so gracious as to accept of an expiation for all your sins. This is repeated ver. 30. and xxiii. 3.

Ver. 4. *Turn ye not unto idols.*] Not so much as to look upon them; no, nor to think of them, (as R. Levi Barzelonita expounds it, Præcept. ccxxv.) much less to inquire after what manner the gentiles worshipped them, (which is expressly forbidden Deut. xii. 30.) for by this means they might be allured to idolatry. The word we here translate *idols*, is a word of contempt, signifying *a thing of nought*. Or, as some of the Jews will have it, this word *elilim*, is compounded of the particle *al*, signifying *not;* and *El, i. e.* God. As much as to say, *which are not gods;* and therefore called in Scripture *vanities*, which can do neither good nor hurt.

Nor make to yourself molten gods.] This seems to have respect to the golden calf, which they made to worship, and is called a *molten calf*, (Exod. xxxii. 4.) But all graven images are no less forbidden: for if to look towards an idol was a sin, much more was it to make an image of any sort to worship it. The Jews are something curious in their observations upon this precept. For, in the book Siphra, they say that they might not make molten gods for others, much less for themselves. Whence that saying, "He that makes to himself an idol, violates a double precept; first in making it, and then in making it to himself." (See R. Levi beforementioned, Præcept. ccxxvi.)

I am the Lord your God.] The same reason is given in the foregoing verse for the observation of their sabbaths: and that of the seventh day every week, was ordained in memory of the creation of the world; and consequently intended as a preservative from idolatry, (as I observed upon Exod. xx. 8.) which, perhaps, makes these two precepts be here put together. But it is evident Moses doth not observe the order wherein these precepts were first delivered; but rather inverts it, beginning with the fifth commandment, and so going back to the fourth; and here to the two first.

Ver. 5. *And if ye offer a sacrifice of peace-offerings unto the Lord.*] As they were to avoid all idolatry, so they were to be careful to perform the service due to the true God in a right manner. *Peace-offerings* are only mentioned, because they were the most common sacrifices, being of three sorts, (see chap. vii. 11, &c. and xvii. 5.)

Ye shall offer it at your own will.] Either of the herd, or of the flock; male or female, (chap. iii. 1. 6.) Or rather, (as the Vulgar Latin and the LXX. understand it) they were to offer it so, that it might be *acceptable to the Lord;* according to the rules prescribed in the seventh chapter.

Ver. 6. *It shall be eaten the same day ye offer it, and on the morrow.*] This shews he speaks particularly of those *peace-offerings* which were a *vow*, or *a voluntary offering*, (chap. vii. 16.) for sacrifices of *thanksgiving* might not be kept till the morrow, but were to be eaten on the same day, ver. 15. of that chapter: (see the reason of this, Exod. xxiii. 18. the latter end.)

And if aught remain till the third day, it shall be burnt with fire.] See chap. vii. 17.

Ver. 7. *And if it be eaten at all on the third day, it is abominable.*] See chap. vii. 18.

It shall not be accepted.] See there. This seems to justify the sense which the Vulgar puts upon those words, ver. 5. which we translate, *according to thy will.*

Ver. 8. *Therefore every one that eateth it shall bear his iniquity.*] See chap. vii. 18.

Because he hath profaned the hallowed things of the Lord.] By keeping them till they were in danger to stink, or to be corrupted.

That soul shall be cut off from his people.] By the judges, if the thing was known: otherwise by the hand of God.

Ver. 9. *And when ye reap the harvest of your land.*] Which was a time of great joy, when they offered, it is likely, many *peace-offerings* of that sort beforementioned.

Thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field.] But leave a sixtieth part (as their wise men have determined it), and that in the extreme part of the field, rather than any other place, that the poor might know where to come for it; as R. Levi Barzelonita explains it, Præcept. ccxiii. And this, whether they were in the land of Israel, or out of it; as Mr. Selden observes out of the Talmudists, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 6. p. 692. where he shews it was the custom to add something to the sixtieth part, proportionable to the largeness of the field, or the multitude of the poor, or the greatness of the crop.

Neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.] That is, if an ear or two of corn fell (as they cut it, or bound it up) out of the sheaves, or from under their sickle, they were not to gather them up from the ground, but leave them for the poor, as oft as they fell: but not if there fell three ears at a time, as the Talmudists determine: (see Mr. Selden in the place abovenamed; and the same R. Levi, Præcept. ccxiv.)

Ver. 10. *And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard.*] When they had cut off the great bunches, they were not to examine the vine over again for the scattered grapes, or small clusters.

Neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard.] If any fell to the ground as they gathered them, they were not to take them up. That is, if one or two clusters fell; but not if three, much less if more: for they construe this as they do the precept about ears of corn, (ver. 9.) They also say, they were bound to leave the corners of the vineyard uncut, as well as the corners of the field. (R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. ccxxx. and ccxxxi. and Mr. Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 6. in the place beforenamed.) And these precepts obliged such strangers as sojourned among them, (mentioned chap. xvii. 8. and xviii. 26.) who, before they were admitted to embrace the Jewish religion, were examined whether they understood that they must observe such and such precepts, particularly these here mentioned, which were propounded to them plainly and distinctly: and after they had promised to keep them, they were circumcised, &c. As G. Schickard observes out of the Talmud, the custom was, after the destruction of Jerusalem, in Mishpat Hamelek, cap. 5. Theorem xvii.

Thou shalt leave them for the poor and the stranger.] Though by *stranger* the Jews think is understood a proselyte of righteousness (as they call him who had embraced their religion, by receiving circumcision), yet they did not hinder any poor gentile from partaking of this charity; as the same R. Levi says. And if any one transgressed any of the precepts contained in these two verses, he was beaten; as Mr. Selden shews, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. n. 8.

I am the Lord your God.] I give you the country to which you go, with these reserves for the poor: and have been so bountiful to you, that I require you to be so to them.

Ver. 11. *Ye shall not steal.*] Here are several moral precepts put briefly together, for the maintaining justice and truth; without which societies cannot be preserved. And, first, he forbids theft; the coveting of other men's goods being the source of the other sins that follow. And whether they were the goods of an Israelite, or of a gentile idolater, that any man stole, he was bound to make restitution, as R. Levi observes, Præcept. ccxxxii. (See Exod. xxii. 1.)

Neither deal falsely.] This is a Divine caution (as the Hebrew doctors observe) against denying a thing that was deposited with them; or which they had found, &c. which they would never pretend they had not, if they were disposed to be sincere and upright in their dealing.

Neither lie one to another.] Words being intended to declare the mind, and for no other end; he that hears us speak hath a right in justice to be done him, that what we speak be true. For otherwise he doth not know our mind by our words; and then we had better be dumb. But though all kind of lying be contrary to the intention of God, in giving us speech; yet this relates particularly to such lies whereby a man's neighbour was injured; defrauded, for instance, of his goods which he had deposited with another; or of the just debts which were owing him, &c. But though the simple denying of such things was not punished with beating, as Mr. Selden represents the opinion of the Talmudists, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 11.) yet he that denied a thing deposited with him was not admitted to be a witness in any case, though he had not forsworn himself, unto which this lying disposed him. So R. Levi, Præcept. ccxxxiii.

Ver. 12. *And ye shall not swear by my name falsely.*] Much less was it lawful for them to confirm the lies forementioned with an oath. So the Jewish doctors interpret it, as Mr. Selden observes in the same place. If any man did, and was found guilty, he was adjudged to restore the principal, and a fifth part more, (chap. vi. 5.) And whether he forswore himself knowingly, or ignorantly, he was to expiate his crime with a sacrifice. But if he was ignorant of that command concerning a sacrifice; or if, though he had the thing which he denied in his keeping, yet he had really forgot it, when he swore he had it not; he was freed both from the fifth part and from the sacrifice. (See chap. v. 4.)

Neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God.] By calling God to witness unto a frivolous thing, or to a rash resolution: as if a man swore in his anger he would not speak to such a person, but afterward did; or, he would not eat of such meat, &c. In such cases, the Jews say, when a man's heart was touched with repentance for his rashness and incogitancy, he was to go to some wise man, or to three neighbours, and desire them to absolve him from his oath, of which he truly repented. Which they did, when they found him truly penitent; saying, *Be thou loosed*, or, *It is remitted to thee*, or the like. So Mr. Selden observes out of Maimonides, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 11. n. 9.

Plato hath said some remarkable things concerning *forswearing*, and also of *lying*, and *deceit:* for which I refer the learned reader to his eleventh book of Laws, p. 216, 217. edit. Serrani.

I am the Lord.] And therefore expect the greatest reverence to my name; and that you should deal honestly one with another.

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him*, &c.] Here are several precepts, almost coincident in their sense, but have some peculiar negations belonging to them. For (as R. Levi Barzelonita observes), "in all things from which God would have them carefully abstain, he multiplies admonitions," (Præcept. cxxxvi.) Ac-

cordingly here to *defraud* is to keep in one's hand that which belongs to another: and such a person, he saith, is called an *oppressor* in Scripture. The Vulgar Latin refers it to that which men get from others by *calumny:* as the next words relate to that which is wrested from them by open violence.

Neither rob him.] The same R. Levi expounds this of that which is taken from another by manifest force, and doth not belong to him that takes it, (Præcept. ccxxxvii.) For so the Hebrew word *gazilah* signifies, that which a man wrests out of the hand of another against his will, (1 Chron. xi. 23.)

The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night till the morning.] For this was a kind of force and robbery, to detain what was owing to him against his will. In Deut. xxiv. 15. the words are, "Thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it." From whence the Hebrew doctors conclude there were two sorts of people that wrought for hire; one were *day-labourers,* whom Moses speaks of in this verse; another *labourers by night,* of whom he speaks in Deuteronomy. Neither of which were to stay for their wages beyond the time appointed; but the one were to have it before sun-set, the other before morning; for it was due as soon as the day or the night was done. So the Misna, *The day-labourer requires his wages all night, and the night-labourer all day.* See the forenamed R. Levi, (Præcept. ccxxxviii.) who gives this reason for it; that "the merciful God would have his creatures subsist; which poor labourers cannot do if they want their wages to buy them victuals." Upon which account, the detaining of their wages is said to be *a crying sin,* in that Deut. xxiv. 14. and in St. James, v. 4.

Ver. 14. *Thou shalt not curse the deaf.*] No Israelite, whether man or woman, was to be cursed, though he could not hear the curse, and so was insensible of the injury, as R. Levi explains it, (Præcept. ccxxxix.) For there was the addition of barbarous baseness in it, to curse or revile a person who was not capable to answer for himself, nor do himself right: and the case of the sick, and the infirm, or the absent, was the same with the deaf. As for others, who were not deaf, it was forbidden to curse them, saith Maimonides, because it provoked to anger and rage, which stirred men up to take revenge.

Nor put a stumbling-block before the blind.] This is as inhuman as the former; proceeding from so great malice, that the Hebrew doctors seem to think men incapable of it; and therefore expound it of giving ill counsel to simple people, and advising them to their damage. So R. Levi; (Præcept. ccxl.) which is no less contrary to nature than laying a stumbling-block in the way of those that cannot see to avoid it; and a far greater sin, because it abused their minds, and might tend to the hurt of their souls.

But shalt fear thy God.] Believing he sees and hears, and will avenge the cause of those who cannot right themselves, because they know not who injured them. If any man was convicted of either of these crimes he was beaten.

I am the Lord.] And am therefore to be feared and obeyed.

Ver. 15. *Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment.*] The Jews take this to be an admonition to their judges, that they should have an equal regard to the plaintiff and defendant, and not prefer the one before the other. Whence these words are thus explained in Siphra: "Thou shalt judge thy neighbours justly; not letting one party stand, and bidding the other sit; nor suffering one to speak as much as he pleaseth, and bidding the other be short." (See Selden de Synedr. lib. ii. cap. 13. n. 10.) But none hath explained this so largely as Maimonides, in the whole twenty-first chapter of Sanhedrin, where he, in general, defines the just administration of justice to consist in an equal respect to both parties in the suit; so that one of them have not the liberty to say what he will, and the other be cut short: and then descends to many particulars, wherein equal respect to both parties is to be observed; some of which, it will be fit to mention, because they illustrate the words of St. James, in the second chapter of his Epistle, ver. 2—4. "If two parties appear in a cause, one of which is clothed in precious garments, the other is ragged, or in a poor habit, let it be said to him that is the more honourable, Either do you bestow upon your adversary as good apparel as you have on yourself, or else put on such as he wears, that you may be both alike, and then appear before the court of judgment. By no means let the one sit, and the other stand; but let them both be commanded to stand: or, if it please the judges to give them both leave to sit, let not one of them sit in a high place, the other in a low, but both on the same bench, one by the side of the other." See R. Levi Barzelonita, (Præcept. ccxvii.) who observes, that mankind are preserved by a righteous judgment; and therefore, if a judge was found to have given an unjust sentence, he was condemned to make restitution to him, whose cause he had perverted, (Præcept. ccxli.)

Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor.] See Exod. xxiii. 3.

Nor honour the person of the mighty.] This R. Levi explains, (Præcept. ccxlii.) as he did the first clause: "The judge shall not bid the great man sit down while the meaner stands; but both shall stand before the judge, as if they were in the presence of the Divine Majesty, who standeth in the midst of the judges," (Psal. lxxxii. 1.) If, by the favour of the judges, both were permitted to sit, yet, when sentence came to be pronounced, both rose up and stood; according to Exod. xviii. 13.

But in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.] The observation of Maimonides seems to be too nice and curious, who from this place gathers, that though the lowest court of judgment ordinarily consisted of no less than *three* judges, yet, by the law, one of them might sit alone as judge in matters not capital; because it is said here, in the singular number, *in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour:* for, at the same time, he acknowledges their wise men require that he should take some assessors to him, when they say, *Do not judge by thyself alone, for there is no sole judge, but one only,* viz. GOD. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 14. n. 2. and Guil. Schickardi Mishpat Hamelek, cap. 4. Theor. xiv.)

Ver. 16. *Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people.*] The Vulgar Latin takes the Hebrew word *rachil* to signify one that goes about with calumnies. But it may simply signify, as we translate it, a *tale-bearer;* whom Aben Ezra compares to a *merchant* or *pedlar* (as the Hebrew word imports), who buys of one what he sells to

another, and goes about the country, as a tale-bearer doth from house to house, carrying to one what he hath heard at another; saying, such a one hath said so and so of you; whereby peace and concord are destroyed among men. For commonly such men carry false stories to their neighbours, or add to the true, and secretly backbite others: which hath moved many to think a *detractor* is meant by this word, who hopes by his tales of others to get some advantage to himself, as every trader doth by his merchandize. Whence the Jews say, "An evil tongue kills three: him that speaks; him that hears; and him of whom he speaks." R. Levi, Præcept. ccxliii.

Neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour.] Much less be a false witness against him, to the endangering of his life. So it is commonly interpreted, because the accusers and witnesses stood before judges who sat in the courts of judgment. But R. Levi Barzelonita, and the rest of the Hebrew doctors, generally understand it otherwise; that no man should suffer his neighbour to perish in judgment, or other ways, when he could free him by his testimony or assistance: (Præcept. ccxliv.) So it is said in Siphra, in so many words: "Whence do we gather that he who can clear another by his testimony, must not suppress it in silence? Because it is said, Thou shalt not stand against the blood of thy neighbour." Whence it follows, that if a man saw his neighbour any way in danger, he was bound, if he could, to deliver him; not only when his life was in hazard, but that which is as dear as life, one's honour and chastity. Thus, if any one went about to force a woman, espoused to another, &c. he that saw it was bound to rescue such a person, though with the death of him that made the attempt. For this was a piece of justice which they committed to private men, as Mr. Selden shews out of the Jewish authors, (lib. iv. de Jure N. et G. cap. iii. p. 481, &c.) But then, they restrain this charity only to themselves; and from the word *neighbour* argue, that they are bound to do thus only to an Israelite. Nay (which is strange), some of them are so selfish, and so ill-natured, that they fancy they are forbidden to do such kindness to a gentile. (See there, p. 485.

Ver. 17. *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart.*] When thy brother hath done thee any wrong, do not conceal a secret hatred against him in thy breast, but tell him plainly of his fault; as the next words seem to direct. It appears by this, they were ill interpreters of the law, who thought it forbade only external acts of sin, but not evil affections which were not executed.

Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour.] Time after time (if he will not be sensible of it at first) argue the case with him, and reprove him for his fault. And if he will not amend, do it publicly (as the Vulgar Latin interprets it), and bring him before the judges. So R. Levi, Præcept. ccxviii. But he extends this to all sins, whether against God, or against themselves; which, he thinks, they were bound to reprehend privately, and then publicly, if the offenders did not grow better.

And not suffer sin upon him.] He interprets it, *But not put him to confusion.* For nothing is more grievous to a man than that: and therefore reprehension ought to be mild and gentle, especially when the offence is against one's self; but in those against God, greater sharpness is allowable. So he discourses, Præcept. ccxlvi. the words in the original being, *Thou shalt not bear sin upon him;* charge him with his guilt too severely; or, as others take it, *Thou shalt not accuse him of any crime whereof he is not guilty* Our translation, in the margin of our Bibles, takes it as if, by not reproving their neighbour, they brought the guilt of his sin upon themselves; for so the words there are, *That thou bear not sin for him:* which is an excellent sense, if the Hebrew word *alau* did not signify *upon him*, not *for him.* And yet some of the Jews have thus understood it; this saying of Rabbi Chanina being famous among them, "Jerusalem had not been destroyed, but because one neighbour did not reprove another:" see Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 9. p. 280. Where he observes, the doctrine of the ancient Jews was (drawn from this text), that when one man offended another in things concerning themselves, relating to their civil affairs, he was to be reproved by his neighbour, once, or twice, or thrice, if the matter required; but without sharpness, and so that he was not exposed to public shame: but if the offence was against God, in matters of religion, they say private reproof was first to be given; and if that did not work amendment, then public before all. And they admitted public reprehension upon no other score: but said, "He that publicly puts his brother to shame, shall have no part in the other world."

Ver. 18. *Thou shalt not avenge.*] Not deny to do their brethren a kindness, out of a remembrance of any injury received from them; as R. Levi interprets it, (Præcept. ccxlvii.) By which means, as he observes, strife and contention were abolished, and peace and concord established among men. It may be thought, also, that as they are forbidden to take revenge themselves for the wrongs any one did them; so likewise to seek for redress from the public, merely to satisfy their wrath and desire to have the injurious person suffer, and not to prevent the like or greater mischiefs for the time to come.

Nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people.] When thou dost thy neighbour a kindness, do not spoil it by upbraiding him with all his faults. For the Hebrew word *natar* signifies having something in *reserve* in one's mind, particularly *anger* or *wrath;* which our translation frequently supplies to make out the sense, (Jer. iii. 12. Psal. ciii. 9. Nahum i. 2.) And so the LXX. understand it here, καὶ οὐ μηνιεῖς, &c. *and thou shalt not be angry with the children of thy people.*

But thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.] In not doing to him what thou wouldst not have done to thyself; and taking such care of him, and what belongs to him, as thou wouldst have him to do of thee and thine. This, saith R. Aquiba, (as R. Levi observes, Præcept. ccxix.) is the *great sum of the law; i. e.* many precepts depend upon this: for he that thus loves his neighbour, will neither steal any thing from him, nor violate his wife, nor murder so much as his good name, nor remove his land-mark, nor offend him any other way: the same, in a manner, with what St. Paul saith, Rom. xiii. 8, 9, &c.

The only question is, Who is to be understood here by their *neighbour?* which the Jews would restrain to themselves, and have the meaning to be, that one Israelite should love another; but he is not bound to love a stranger in the same manner: which is directly against Moses's command, ver. 34. And certain it is, the word

neighbour comprehends more than Israelites, as appears by the last commandment, which forbids them *to covet their neighbour's wife*, which did not give them leave, sure, to covet the wife of a gentile, provided they did not covet the wife of an Israelite. A *neighbour*, therefore, is every other man, as in Deut. xxii. 26. and more plainly in Exod. xi. 2. where the Egyptians are called their *neighbour*. And therefore D. Kimchi saith very honestly, upon Psal. xv. 3. *a neighbour is every one with whom we have any dealing or conversation*. Which justifies our blessed Saviour, in making this command, of *loving their neighbours as themselves*, to reach all men with whom they had to do, (Luke x. 27, 28.)

I am the Lord, &c.] Unto whom you are all equally subject; and upon that account ought to love one another. (See ver. 34.)

Ver. 19. *Ye shall keep my statutes.*] This may be thought to be premised to what follows; lest such commands as are contained in this verse, seeming small, should be neglected by them.

Thou shalt not let thy cattle (or rather *make* them) *gender with a diverse kind.*] As horses with asses, goats with sheep, &c. whose mixture one with another they were by no means to procure. But if they did of themselves come together, it was lawful to use such heterogeneous creatures as were so produced. For they did not abhor the use of *mules*, which were either begot by accident among them, or brought from other countries to them.

The reason the Jews commonly give for this precept is, because God having made all things perfect in their kind, it was a presumptuous attempt to go about to mend his creation, and add to his works. By this means also men were deterred from unnatural mixtures, which they saw to be abominable in brutes. So R. Levi Barzelonita (Præcept. ccxlix.) and Philo, whose words are very ingenious, (lib. de Creatione Princip.) "Things of the same kind were made for society one with another;" but things heterogeneous (as we call them), were not intended to be mixed and associated; and therefore, he who attempts to mingle them, ἄδικος νόμον φύσεως ἀναιρεῖ, *wickedly destroys the law of nature*. To the same purpose Josephus: (see Selden, lib. vii. de Jure N. et G. sec. Heb. cap. 3. p. 798.) Maimonides also himself gives this reason of this precept, More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 49. where he saith, "No creature hath a desire commonly to mix with a creature of another kind; and therefore men ought not to promote such a desire." But after all, there might possibly be a respect in this precept to some idolatrous customs which Moses intended to prevent or abolish: for there is good ground to think the following precepts in this verse were so intended; and in aftertimes, some gentiles did procure such mixtures of creatures as are here forbidden (mules, for instance), in honour of their gods: see our learned Dr. Spencer, lib. ii. de Leg. Heb. Ritualibus, cap. 20. where he endeavours to prove, that by *cattle* in this place is peculiarly meant *oxen* and *asses*, which were used in husbandry; and are of such different natures, that none would ever have thought to procure their conjunction, unless he had been moved to it by the devil.

Thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed.] The reasons of this, according to the Jews, are the same with the former: and R. Levi extends it to trees; which, he saith, they were not to ingraft of different kinds one upon another. But it concerns, they say, only such seeds and plants as are for men's food; not those which are for medicine, (Præcept. ccl.) But Maimonides found a particular reason for this precept, from the idolatrous customs of the old Zabii; who not only sowed different seeds, and grafted trees of a diverse kind one upon another, in such or such aspect of the planets, and with a certain form of words and fumigations; but also with abominable filthiness, at the very moment of the incision. Which he proves out of a book, concerning *the incision of an olive into a citron:* and doubts not, that God forbade his people to *sow with mingled seed*, that he might root out that detestable idolatry, and those preternatural lusts, which abounded in those days, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 37.)

Neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee.] In the Hebrew the words are, *A garment of mixtures of schaatnez shall not come upon thee.* But, that they might certainly know what *schaatnez* was, it is explained in Deut. xxii. 11. to signify (as we translate it) a garment of woollen and linen mixed together. The Jews have taken abundance of pains to find out the original of this word; which Bochartus derives from the Arabic word *saat*, which signifies to mingle, and *nez*, which signifies to weave. (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45.) But Joh. Braunius, I think, hath demonstrated, that it doth not import the weaving of any different things together, but only of *linen* and *woollen;* and that by *woollen* is to be understood only what is made of the *wool* of sheep, not of camels or goats, which they called by the same name, (lib. i. de Vestitu Sacerd. Heb. cap. 4. n. 2, 3. 6.) Where he observes out of Maimonides, in his Halach. Kelaim, that if a man saw an Israelite wear such a garment, it was lawful for him to fall upon him openly, and tear his garment in pieces; although he were his master, who taught him wisdom. And the reasons for this abhorrence are commonly such as are given of the former precepts; to preserve them from the horrid confusion which was among the gentiles, by incestuous and unnatural mixtures. But Maimonides takes it to have been principally intended as a preservative against idolatry; the priests of the gentiles in those times wearing such mixed garments, of the product of plants and animals, with a ring on their finger, made of some metal; as, he says, he found in their books, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 37.) By which mixture, it is likely, they hoped to have the beneficial influence of some lucky conjunction of the planets or stars, to bring a blessing upon their sheep and their flax.

Ver. 20. *Whosoever lieth carnally with a woman that is a bondmaid, betrothed to a husband.*] The Jews had some servants that were gentiles; who, if they embraced the Jewish religion, were baptized; sometimes with the reservation of their servitude, and sometimes with the full grant of liberty. But some there were in a middle condition, partly free and partly servile; *viz.* when part of their redemption-money had been paid, and part was still behind. Now, as, while a woman was a perfect slave, no Israelite might marry her; so, when she was partly free, though he might espouse her, and the espousals were valid, yet they could not be of full force till her liberty was perfected. And of such a maiden the Hebrew doctors understand Moses to speak in this place, that was in part free, but not wholly, as the next words interpret it.

And not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her.] Not entirely, but in part redeemed; and consequently her freedom not absolutely granted to her.

She shall be scourged.] If she had been perfectly free, both he that lay with her, and she herself, should have been put to death, (Deut. xxii. 23, 24.) But being not fully free, and consequently not fully his wife who had espoused her, it was not reckoned adultery; and therefore punished only with scourging, (see Selden, lib. v. de Jure N. et G. cap. 12. p. 613.) And Maimonides, I observe, thus expounds it, of a woman that was not a mere servant, and yet not completely free, but between both, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 41.) But whereas we mention here in the text the scourging only of the woman; in the margin it is rightly noted, that the Hebrew words are, *there shall be scourging; viz.* of them both, as the Vulgar Latin, with great reason, understands it. And the Hebrew word *bikkoreth* properly signifies scourging with *thongs* made of a bull's or ox's hide; as Bochartus observes in his Hierozoicon, (par. i. lib. ii. cap. 29. and cap. 33. n. 8.)

They shall not be put to death, because she was not free.] Her master not having set her quite at liberty, her marriage was not complete; which freed her from suffering death, though some punishment she deserved, because it was begun.

Ver. 21. *And he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the Lord, unto the door,* &c.] Which was not enjoined her, because she had not wherewithal to offer for her expiation; all she had being her master's, and not her own.

A ram for a trespass-offering.] Which was the proper sacrifice in such a case, (chap. v. 17, 18.)

Ver. 22. *And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass-offering.*] She needed an atonement as well as he, being equally guilty in consenting to the fact; and being espoused to another, seems to have had a greater guilt upon her; and therefore was left in a lamentable condition, without any public assurance of God's pardon.

For his sin which he hath done.] Which had so much guilt in it, that besides the punishment he suffered in being scourged, this satisfaction was to be made to God.

And the sin which he hath done shall be forgiven him.] By virtue of the sacrifice, which would not have been accepted if she had been perfectly a freewoman: but the sin would have cost his own life and hers also, (Deut. xxii. 23, 24.)

Ver. 23. *And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food.*] The precept is so general, that the boldness of R. Zerika is unaccountable, who would have it understood only of the vine, which, if it be not cut, its grapes are not so large, nor the wine so good, nor fit to be offered at the altar, &c. as his opinion is represented in Pirke Eliezer, (cap. xxix.) But Moses expressly mentioning *all manner of trees for food,* there is no colour for this limitation; and a very good account may be given of this prohibition, if we have respect only to natural reason. For young trees grow better, if they be stripped of their fruit; the juice of which is waterish and unconcocted, having neither pleasant smell nor taste, as Nachmanides observes; and therefore not fit for food; and upon that score not fit to be offered as the first-fruits to God.

But, besides all this, Maimonides affirms there was an idolatrous custom among the Zabii, to which this law of Moses may reasonably be thought to be opposed: for they imagined all trees would be blasted, or their fruit fall off, whose first-fruit was not part of it offered in their idol temples, and the other part eaten there: as their children, they thought, would not thrive, unless some of them passed through the fire. And therefore God commanded his people to forbear to eat the fruit of any tree till the fourth year; and not doubt of the fruitfulness of their plantations, though they did not consecrate the fruit of the years foregoing, after the manner that the gentiles did: More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 37. where he observes some trees brought forth fruit in one year, some not till the second, and others not till the third, according to the different ways wherein they were planted.

Ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised.] That is, as unclean, and therefore to be cast away as the foreskin was.

Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you; it shall not be eaten of.] And therefore they plucked off the buds when they put forth, that they might not grow into fruit; or, if any by chance did, they threw it away, as unfit for food. But this is meant only of such fruit-trees as they planted after they came into Canaan; not of such as they found already planted there. And it was the same thing, whether he planted them himself, or bought an orchard, or vineyard, &c. of another Israelite, or had it left him as an inheritance, or bestowed on him as a gift; the three first years the fruit was not to be used.

Ver. 24. *But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy, to praise the Lord withal.*] It was to be offered as the first-fruit to God, and eaten by the priests; which, as Maimonides saith in the book forenamed, (cap. 49.) was to excite them to liberality, and give a check to their appetites as well as to covetousness. Yet there are those who say this fruit of the fourth year was to be eaten by the owners before the Lord at Jerusalem (when his dwelling was settled there), as they ate the second tithe. So R. Levi Barzelonita (Præcept. ccxx.) shews at large. And they observe many benefits which the Israelites received by this means; not only in exciting their thankfulness to God, but their love to that holy place: unto which some of their family might conceive such an affection, as to settle there, and learn the law.

Ver. 25. *In the fifth year shall ye eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof.*] He would not have them think that they should lose any thing, by staying till the fifth year for the fruit of their trees; but promises them here, that, by forbearing so long, their trees should be the more exceeding fruitful.

I am the Lord.] Who bestowed this land upon them, to hold of him by what tenure he pleased; by whose blessing they might expect to receive the *increase thereof* abundantly; without the help of such wicked arts as Maimonides says the Zabii used: who, letting certain things lie till they were purified, and, when the sun was in such or such a degree, sprinkling them about the trees which they had planted, with certain magical ceremonies, they fancied flowers and fruits would be produced sooner than they could have been without these practices.

Ver. 26. *Ye shall not eat any thing with the blood.*] This

is an admonition, as R. Levi Barzelonita fancies, (Præcept. cclii.) against gluttony and drunkenness; such as the rebellious son was guilty of, (Deut. xxi. 18, &c.) which made men prone to shed blood; for so he understands this precept, *Thou shalt not eat upon blood; i. e.* eat till thou art excited to shed blood: unto which he applies Deut. xxxii. 15. *Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked.* But this is a very forced interpretation; and our translation is not exact: for he doth not say, *Ye shall not eat* any thing *with the blood;* but, Ye shall not eat *upon the blood,* or *at the blood;* which Oleaster very sagaciously suspected to be a piece of *superstition unknown to him;* and so did the LXX. when they translated it, *ye shall not eat,* ἐπὶ τῶν ὀρέων, *upon the mountains,* which was an idolatrous custom, mentioned in Hosea iv. 13. and here forbidden, as Procopius and Hesychius imagine: but the Hebrew word *haddam* no where signifies a *mountain,* but *blood,* as the Vulgar here truly translates it. There is a Greek Scholion which renders these words, οὐ φάγεσθε ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος, *ye shall not eat on the house-top;* which, in all likelihood, as some have conjectured, was a mistake of the transcriber for ἐπὶ τοῦ αἵματος, *upon the blood,* which is the literal translation of the Hebrew phrase, and imports something more than is prohibited, chap. xvii. 12. where he simply saith, *no soul of you shall eat blood;* but here warns them against an idolatrous practice of the Zabii, who, to enter into the society of demons, and obtain their favour, were wont to gather the blood of their sacrifices into a vessel, or a little hole digged in the earth; and then, sitting about it, to eat the flesh of the sacrifices; imagining, that by eating, as it were, of the same food (for they thought the demons fed upon the blood, as their worshippers did upon the flesh), they contracted a friendship and familiarity with them. So Maimonides relates in his More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 46. For the prevention of which idolatrous custom, God ordered their sacrifices to be offered only at one place, where his own house was; and there the priests sprinkling the blood, and they eating the flesh of their peace-offerings, God and they feasted together upon them. Nachmanides is wont to oppose Maimonides in his notions; yet this was so plain, that he confesses, (as Dr. Cudworth hath observed, in his treatise of the Right Notion of the Lord's Supper, chap. *ult.*) that blood itself was forbidden in the law, upon the account of the heathens' performing their superstitious worship in this manner, by gathering together blood for their demons, "and then coming themselves, and eating of it with them, whereby they were their demon's guest; and by this kind of communion with them, were enabled to prophesy and foretell things to come." And this interpretation is the more probable, that they hoped, by eating of the blood of the sacrifices, or the flesh, or both, to have such familiarity with them, as to receive revelations from them, and be inspired with the knowledge of secret things; if we consider the two other prohibitions in this verse, that are joined with this of *not eating upon blood;* which shews that it was a rite of divination.

Neither shall ye use enchantment.] In the Hebrew the words are *lo tenachashu;* which, all agree, signify some superstitious observation or other, whereby they made omens, and guessed what should happen to them; either from men's sneezing, or the breaking of a shoe-latchet; or the name of a man they met withal; or some creature's crossing their way, or passing upon their right hand, or their left. And most, following the LXX. and the Vulgar Latin, take it for divination by the flying, or crying, or pecking of birds. But the word *nachash,* signifying a *serpent,* and having no relation at all to birds, the famous Bochartus thinks *tenachashu* (which seems to be derived from thence) to relate rather to the ancient ὀφιομαντεία, *divination by serpents,* than to their ὀρνιθομαντεία, *divination by birds;* for it was very much in use among the gentiles in old time, as appears from Homer, (in his seventh Iliad.) where Chalchas seeing a serpent devour eight sparrows with their dam, divined how long the Trojan war would last: and many such instances he heaps up together in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. i. cap. 3. R. Levi Barzelonita (Præcept. ccliii.) refers this to any kind of divination: by their staff falling out of their hand; by a serpent creeping on their right hand, or a fox going by their left, &c. which made them forbear any work they were about; but he thinks withal, it may signify, as we translate it, *enchantment:* to cure wounds (for instance) by reading a verse of the law; or laying the book of the law, or a phylactery, upon a child's head to procure sleep; which are such superstitions as are now in use among some Christians, who hang the first verse of St. John's Gospel about people's necks to cure an ague. But such things could not be meant by Moses, who had not yet delivered them a copy of his laws; nor can we certainly fix upon any other in particular which were then in use; see J. Coch upon the title Sanhedrin, cap. 7. n. 18. and Maimonides de Idololatria, cap. 11. sect. 4—6, &c. where he gives a great number of instances of such superstitious observations as were in use among the heathen: some of which are mentioned by Theophrastus in his characters of Superstition; and by Plutarch, in his book on the same subject; and are derided by Terence in his Phormio, act. iv. scen. 4. with which superstitions the greatest persons were anciently very much infected; and they were so settled in men's minds, that when they became Christians, they could not presently shake them off; as appears by the frequent reprehensions which St. Chrysostom (and others) give to those who continued to be governed by them; particularly in his eighth homily upon the Colossians, he chides his people severely for contemning the cross of Christ, and calling in old drunken women with their salt, their ashes, and soot, to free those that were bewitched. And more especially in his sixth homily against the Jews, he sharply rebukes those that used ἐπῳδαὶ καὶ περίαπτα, *charms, and things hung about the neck,* to cure agues; whereby they got a worse disease in their souls, and wounded their consciences, &c. And in other places he reprehends their observing of omens, good and bad; some of which were very strange. (See tom. vi. p. 610, 611. edit. Savil.)

Nor observe times.] Take no notice of days, according to the precepts of astrologers, who made some to be lucky, others unlucky. For the Jews generally think something of this nature is here forbidden, the Hebrew word *teonenu* being derived, they imagine, from *onah,* which signifies *time,* (as R. Levi, beforementioned, saith, Præcept. cclv.) such an hour being thought, by superstitious people, to be fit for business; but another very cross to it. Which opinion God seems to have intended to extinguish, by appointing the sabbath as the only day of the week upon

which they should rest from their labours, leaving all the other six days to be employed in their business, without any difference of days or hours. But there being no such signification, as many think, of that word in the Hebrew language, they rather derive *teonenu* from *anan*, a *cloud*, imagining Moses to forbid them to mark the flying of the clouds, or to make observations from their motions; which was a thing common among the gentiles. But Maimonides, who, in the eleventh chapter of Avoda Zara interprets it, as we do, of observing times, by esteeming one day fortunate, and another unfortunate, mentions another notion of this word from *ain*, an *eye;* and saith, in the same treatise, that jugglers, who delude men's sight, in playing their tricks, are comprehended under the name of *meonim*. And there are those also, who, deriving this word from *anah*, to *answer*, think it intends such as pretended to tell their fortunes.

I shall not determine which of these is most likely; but only observe, that there was no superstition of this sort more ancient than that of astrology, which was in use among the old Chaldeans, who pretended to cast men's nativities (as we speak), and thence to tell their fortunes. But this sort of men were rejected, as Strabo tells us, lib. xv. by the astronomers of that country, and so they were by the best philosophers in other nations, as Tully tells us, who calls their pretences *Chaldæorum Monstra*, lib. ii. de Divin. And therefore, no wonder God cautions his own people against them, as he doth not only here, but by his prophets, especially Jeremiah x. 2, 3. "Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the heathen are dismayed at them," &c. But then this caution was most necessary, when they were going captives into that country, which at that time was undoubtedly infected with this error, but may be thought, perhaps, not to have been so in the days of Moses; and therefore I say no more of it, but this, that all those whom we call *jugglers*, were sometimes comprehended under the name of *Chaldeans;* who seemed to perform wonderful things, as vomiting fire, and transforming straws into birds, &c. which relate to the other notion of *meononu*, derived from עין, which signifies an *eye;* which they deluded by the sleight of their hand, or other means.

Some of the Jews confess, that their nation is at this day extremely addicted to these things. See Wagenseil's Annot. on Sota, p. 529, &c. where he recites a long passage to this purpose, out of Fredericus Franciscus Offingensis, a converted Jew; whom one of his own nation undertaking to confute, he confirmed the charge.

Ver. 27. *Ye shall not round the corners of your head.*] Or, *The ends of the hair of your head.* For the Hebrew word *peah*, which we translate *corners*, signifies also the *ends* or *extremities* of any thing: and the meaning is, they were not to cut their hair equal, behind and before; as the worshippers of the stars and the planets, particularly the Arabians, did, (as R. Levi Barzelonita interprets it, Præcept. cclv.) For this made their head have the form of a hemisphere.

The LXX. translate it οὐ ποιήσετε σισόην ἐκ τῆς κεφαλῆς ὑμῶν. Where *sisoe* is the same with the Hebrew *sisith*, which signifies that lock which was left in the hinder part of the head, the rest of the hair being cut in a circle.. And thus the ancient Arabians cut their hair, as Herodotus tells us, in imitation of Bacchus. Whence, as Bochartus notes, (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 6.) the Idumeans, Ammonites, Moabites, and the rest of the inhabitants of Arabia Deserta, are called *circumcised in the corners, i. e.* of the head, (Jer. ix. 26.) And the Greek scholiast on that place saith, that in his time the Saracens were so cut.

But there are those who think this refers to a superstitious custom among the gentiles, in their mourning for the dead. For they cut off their hair, and that round about; and threw it into the sepulchre with the bodies of their relations and friends; and sometimes laid it upon the face, or the breast of the dead, as an offering to the infernal gods, whereby they thought to appease them, and make them kind to the deceased. For that this relates to the dead, is probable from the like law, repeated Deut. xiv. 1. and from the next verse to this. (See Maimonides de Idol. cap. 12. 1, 2. 5.)

Neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.] There were five corners (as their phrase is) of their beards; one on either cheek, and one on either lip, and one below the chin: none of which, much less all, they might shave off, as the manner of the idolatrous priests was; if we may believe Maimonides, par. iii. More Nevoch. cap. 37. But if the former have respect to their mourning for the dead, I do not see why this should not also be so interpreted; the gentiles being wont (as Theodoret observes) to shave their beards, and smite their cheeks, at the funerals of their friends.

Ver. 28. *Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh.*] Either with their nails, or with knives, or other sharp instruments; as the manner of the heathen was.

For the dead.] To pacify the infernal spirits, and make them propitious to the dead; which was the end at which the gentiles aimed in slashing themselves. Otherwise, simple tearing their flesh out of great grief and anguish of spirit doth not seem to be prohibited, no more than tearing off their hair; which were in use among the Jews, without any offence against this law, Jer. xvi. 6, 7. xli. 5. and other places. (See Maimon. de Idol. cap. 13. sect. 10—13. I. Gerard. Vossius de Idol. p. 209. edit. 1. and Gierus de luctu Hebræorum, cap. 10. sect. 2, 3.) Huetius thinks that law of Solon's, which was transcribed by the Romans into the twelve tables, *that women in mourning should not scratch their cheeks*, had its original from this law of Moses. (Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 12. n. 2.)

Nor print any mark upon you.] If this refer to the dead (as the foregoing prohibition doth), then these marks were made by the gentiles in their flesh, at the funeral of their friends; that, by the compunction and pain they felt in their bodies, they might appease the infernal powers. And so Aben Ezra understands it: though there be no footsteps, that I can find, of this, in any other author; but it is probable only from what goes before. There is far greater reason for another exposition, that these *prints* were made in the flesh, that they who had them might be known to belong to such or such a god. For it was the custom of idolaters, saith the often named R. Levi, (Præcept. cclvii.) to devote themselves to their gods by notes or signs, *signifying they were their servants* (for every one knows, in future times, slaves had marks set upon them to certify to whom they belonged), *redeemed with their price, and stamped with their marks*. And these marks were made with a hot iron, in

their hands, foreheads, or necks; or they were pricked with a needle dipped in glastum, as he says, which made blue spots in their skin; as the manner was among the Arabians, especially the Scenitæ. And they expressed either the very name of the god, to whose service they were consecrated, or else, by a proper character, denoted whom they honoured: as a thunderbolt signified they were devoted to Jupiter; a spear or helmet to Mars; a trident to Neptune, &c. And these were signs (or sacraments, as we may call them) whereby they were solemnly addicted to their worship.

It is possible there might be some nations then that made some marks in their flesh as an ornament to them: for at this day the women in Greenland do not paint their faces, which are very swarthy, but stigmatize them in several places, by drawing a needle and thread dipped in whales' grease through the skin, in what figure they please. Such Tho. Bartholinus saith he had seen; though he fancied they did not this as an ornament, but in token they were marriageable; for they that were not, had no such marks. (Anatom. Histor. Cent. iv. Hist. 90.) But if any such thing were in use in ancient times, it easily might degenerate into the idolatrous custom beforementioned: for nothing more certain than that they made such marks in honour of Mars, the god of battle; and that he who devoted himself to Hercules, received στίγματα ἱερὰ, ἑαυτὸν διδοὺς τῷ θεῷ, *sacred marks, giving up himself to that god;* as Herodotus speaks (lib. ii. cap. 13.) of one that fled to his temple in Egypt. And Lucian saith of the priests of the Syrian goddess, στίζονται δὲ πάντες, &c. *they were all marked; some in their wrists, others in their necks: from whence all the Assyrians* στιγματηφοροῦσι, *carry such brands,* or marks, *in their flesh.* And so are the Jews, that were initiated in the Egyptian rites, said (by the author of the third book of Maccabees) to be stigmatized with the leaves of ivy, which were the insignia of Bacchus. From which ancient practice, it is probable, Christians have derived the custom of printing the Jerusalem cross upon the arms of those who go to visit our Saviour's sepulchre. (See Tollius in Carmina inedita Gregor. Nazianz. p. 160.) I shall add no more, but that the Jews themselves were so inclined to receive such a badge as this, that they made no scruple to print the name of their own God in their flesh; as appears by that saying mentioned by Schickard out of the title Sopherim: "If any man write the name of God upon his flesh, let him neither wash nor anoint in that place." (See his Mishpat Hamelek, cap. ii. Theor. 5. and Carpzovius's Annotations upon it.)

I am the Lord.] For this reason such marks were forbidden, because the Israelites were peculiarly devoted to him, as their sovereign Lord and Benefactor (for the Syriac adds *your God),* and therefore were not to own any other but him, whose mark they had received in circumcision; which made all other absolutely unlawful.

Ver. 29. *Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore.*] It is scarce to be imagined that any man would prostitute his daughter, to be a common strumpet; though he might possibly overlook the lewdness to which she had given up herself. Therefore here, in all probability, is prohibited the exposing their daughters, as a piece of religion, to the service of such filthy deities, as were worshipped in those days, by acts of uncleanness in their temples. For which purpose both men and women were there kept as persons consecrated to such uses. Our great Selden hath observed something of this in his discourse upon Succoth-Benoth. (See Syntagma de Diis Syris, ii. cap. 7.)

Those are fanciful interpretations which R. Eliezer and R. Akiba make of these words; who say, a man prostitutes his daughter who did not get her a husband when she was marriageable; or married her to an old man. (Gem. Sanhedrin, cap. 9. n. 1.)

Lest the land fall to whoredom.] Unto which nothing could contribute so much as to make whoredom a piece of religion.

And the land become full of wickedness.] By such *abominable idolatries* (as St. Peter calls them), and many other foul sins, particularly murders, which flowed from hence; as Maimonides observes in his More Nevochim. par. iii. cap. 49.

Ver. 30. *Ye shall keep my sabbaths.*] Not the days consecrated by the gentiles to the service of their gods; but the solemn days which I have appointed for the remembrance of my benefits. (See ver. 2.)

And reverence my sanctuary.] This reverence consisted principally in coming to it so prepared as the law required; in such purity and cleanness as was there prescribed: and then behaving themselves there with an awful humility. But the better to secure this reverence, the masters in Israel ordained, that no man should come into the *mountain of the house* with a staff, or a sword, or a girdle with a purse, or with shoes on his feet; and that no man should spit there, nor make it a thoroughfare; nor go out of it with his back towards the sanctuary, but go backward leisurely with his face towards it, till he was out of the gate, &c. So Maimonides in his Beth Habbechira, cap. 7. R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. ccxxi. and see Petrus Cunæus, lib. ii. cap. 12. de Republ. Hebr.

But the great thing which secured the reverence due to the sanctuary, was, that which I mentioned at first, the strict purity from all legal defilements, with which they were to be prepared; which made it very difficult to be in a condition to approach it. For when there were so many ways of being defiled, and so much time required to make men clean again, and so many things, in many cases, to be done for that purpose, it was not possible that they should be fit to come thither very often, without exceeding great care and diligence; as I observed before out of Maimonides, (par. iii. More Nevoch. cap. 47.) which very much tended to preserve their reverence to the sanctuary: for men led by sense, as they were, make nothing of those places to which they may go when they please; but those to which they cannot be admitted, without much solemnity, and only at certain times, and after great pains to fit themselves for it, they are apt to have in great esteem.

I am the Lord.] Whose majesty dwelt in that house; unto which therefore nobody might approach, either for prayer or for sacrifice, without an awful sense of him. For so Maimonides explains it in the place now named; "the sanctuary itself was not be reverenced, but He who commanded that reverence."

Nor did this reverence belong only to the tabernacle or temple, instituted by God's express command, for that ceremonial service, which was unlawful to be performed any where else (for then it might seem proper only to that ceremonial dispensation, and to be now vanished under the

gospel); but the perpetual practice of the Jewish nation shews, that they thought themselves obliged by this precept to use reverence in their synagogues, which were neither instituted by any written precept of the law, nor for any ceremonial service, which was confined to the temple, but for public assemblies, to hear the law read and expounded, and to offer the prayers of the people to God; for in the Psalms of Asaph (where there is the only mention we find of synagogues in the Old Testament), they are called, not only *houses* and *assemblies* of God, but also *sanctuaries* (as the word is here in Moses), Psal. lxxiii. 17. lxxiv. 4. 7, 8. lxxxiii. 12. See Mr. Thorndike in his Rights of the Church in a Christian State, p. 213.

Ver. 31. *Regard not them.*] Do not go to consult them; nor follow their directions.

That have familiar spirits.] It is uncertain what is here meant by *oboth*, which we translate *familiar spirits*. But the word *ob* signifying a *bottle*, or hollow vessel, (Job xxxii. 19.) the Jews think it probable that *oboth* here signifies such as the Greeks call Ἐγγαστρίμυθοι, *who had a spirit or demon speaking out of the belly*, or chest, with a hollow voice, as if it came out of a bottle. So the woman whom Saul went to consult, is called *baalath ob*, a *mistress of such a spirit;* where, it is plain, *ob* signifies the *spirit*, or *demon*, (see chap. xx. 27.) and he or she that had familiarity with such a spirit, was properly called *baal*, or *baalath ob*, the master or mistress who possessed it, and gave answers by it, with a voice that seemed to come out of the lower parts of the belly. In one place, indeed, the LXX. translate it, οἱ ἐκ τῆς γῆς φωνοῦντες, (Isa. xix. 3.) *They that speak out of the earth;* because the voice coming from the lower parts of her that was possessed, seemed to come out of the earth; as Mr. Selden explains it in de Diis Syris.

R. Levi Barzelonita saith, the manner of it was thus: (Præcept. cclviii.) After certain fumes, and other ceremonies, a voice seemed to come from under the arm-holes (so he takes it, and so it is said in Sanhedrin, cap. 7. n. 7.) of the person that had the familiar spirit, which answered to the questions which were asked. For this he quotes Siphra. But if it came from under the arm-holes, still it was so low and hollow, as if it had been out of the bottom of the belly, or the cavities of the earth. Others imagine such persons had the name of *oboth*, because they were swelled with the spirit, as a bladder is when it is blown. However it was, this continued till the times of the gospel, as appears from Acts xvi. 16. for she that had the spirit of Python was the same with an ἐγγαστρίμυθος, as Plutarch informs us. (See Casaubon and L. de Dieu on that place.) The famous Pythia, who delivered the oracles of Apollo, sat over a hole, and by her secret parts received the spirit which swelled her, and made her utter oracles; as Origen observes, lib. vii. contra Celsum; and St. Chrysostom, Hom. xxix. in 1 Epist. ad Corinth. (See Beyerus in his Annot. upon Selden de Diis Syris, p. 226, &c.)

There are those that look upon all that these authors say as old stories, to which no credit is to be given. But Aug. Eugabinus affirms, that he himself had seen such women, called *ventriloquæ* (which is the same with the Greek ἐγγαστρίμυθοι), from whom, as they sat, a voice came out of their secret parts, and gave answers to inquiries. And Cælius Rhodoginus (lib. viii. Antiq. Lect. cap. 10.) saith, this is not to be entertained with laughter; for not only he saw such a woman, and heard a very small voice coming out of her belly, but innumerable other people, not only at Rhodigium, but in a manner through all Italy; among whom there were many great persons (who had her stripped naked, that they might be sure there was no fraud), to whom a voice answered unto such things as they inquired. Hieron. Oleaster also, upon Isa. xxiv. 4. saith, he saw such an one at Lisbon, from under whose arm-holes, and other parts of her, a small voice was heard, which readily answered to whatever was asked.

Neither seek after wizards.] The Hebrew word *jideonim*, importing *knowledge*, as all confess, signifies such as we call *cunning men;* who pretended to tell what was lost, or what fortune people should have; and these were men (as far as I can judge), as the other were mostly women, who held intelligence with some demon; for this word seems to have the very same derivation in Hebrew which the other hath in Greek, for all say Δαίμονες are as much as δαήμονες, *knowers;* and *jideonim* are as much as *joadim*, which is the very same, *futurorum conscii*, as Mr. Selden observes; and so the LXX. translate it, γνῶσται, (2 Kings xxi. 7.) though here and chap. xx. *ult.* they render it ἐπαοιδοὶ, and elsewhere τερατοσκόποι. This knowledge they pretended to obtain (as some think) by looking into the entrails of their sacrifices; or, as Maimonides will have it, by putting the bone of a certain bird, called *jaduà*, into their mouths, with certain fumes and adjurations, which made them fall into an ecstacy, and foretell things to come. (R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. cclix.) And there are those who think that these *jideonim* were such as pretended by charms to cure diseases, &c. of which we can have no certainty, and it seems to rely only on the LXX. in this place, who, as I observed, translate it by a more general word in another.

To be defiled by them.] With the foulest sins. For seeking to these was a forsaking of God, and one peculiar kind of idolatry; and therefore they that were guilty of it were to be stoned (as the same R. Levi observes) if they committed this sin knowingly, and there were witnesses of it. If there were no witnesses, then they were left to God to be cut off by his hand, (chap. xx. 6.)

I am the Lord your God.] Unto whom you are to seek for all that you desire.

Ver. 32. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head.*] That they might accustom themselves to modesty and humility, (as Maimonides glosses upon this law, More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 36.) for the maintenance of which the usage was, they say, to rise up to them, when they were at the distance of four cubits; and as soon as they were gone by, to sit down again; that it might appear they rose up purely in respect to them. To this nature directed all civilized people; who anciently, as Juvenal says, (Sat. xiii.) believed this a great wickedness, to be punished with death, if a young man did not rise up to an old.

> "Credebant hoc grande nefas, et morte piandum,
> Si juvenis vetulo non assurrexerat".——

And such a law there was established among the Lacedemonians, τοὺς γέροντας αἰσχυνέσθωσαν οὐδὲν ἧττον ἢ πατέρας, *that aged persons should be reverenced no less than if they were their fathers.* And so Plato, πᾶς αἰδέσθω τὸν ἑαυτοῦ πρεσβύτερον ἔργῳ καὶ ἔπει, *let every one reverence him that is elder than himself, in deed and in word,* (lib. ix. de Legibus,

p. 875.) where he requires that a youth should honour a stranger that was his ancient; and hath this memorable saying, Καλλωπίζεσθαι χρὴ τῷ καλῶς δουλεύσαι, &c. *that youth should glory more in obeying well, than in ruling well: and first of all in obeying the laws; for this is all one with serving God; and next in giving honour to old men; and to those especially, who have passed their days honourably and with glory.* (See more to this purpose in Henricus Stephanus de Juris Civilis Font. et Rivis.) And there was the greater reason for this reverence towards old men in this nation, there being nothing else among them but age and experience that could distinguish them; for they were all equally noble, and equally rich; of the same profession, and brought up in the same manner.

And honour the face of the old man.] Or, of the *elder;* that is, or those who are skilful in the law, as the Jews interpret it; and I see no reason to contradict it (as some have done), since he speaks of aged persons before. See Mr. Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 14. where he deduces this at large: and another excellent writer of our own, Mr. Thorndike, in his Rights of the Church in a Christian State, p. 214, &c. "For if such as taught the law had not been honoured before men, nobody would have minded their words, nor received what they propounded, about things to be known or to be done;" as Maimonides's words are, in his More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 36. And it made no difference of what age he was, whether an old man or a young (for some elders, it appears by Daniel, were not aged); but the same honour was given to him, even by wise men, as R. Levi Barzelonita shews, (Præcept. ccxxii.)

And fear thy God.] This is the fountain of all virtue; particularly of the forementioned; God having imprinted a venerable character upon those who are grown aged, especially on such as are wise, and instruct others in virtue. But some of the Hebrews think that in this verse there are three degrees of honour enjoined to three ranks of men; one to the aged; the next to the wise and learned; and the third to the judges; who they imagine are here meant by *Elohim* (God) whom they are commanded to fear or reverence.

I am the Lord.] Most high above all; and therefore greatly to be feared.

Ver. 33. *And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him.*] Not so much as by upbraiding him with his being a stranger, or his having worshipped idols heretofore; for of such a stranger they understand this, as was become a proselyte to their religion. (See chap. xvii. 8. 12, 13. and Exod. xxii. 21.) But common humanity teaches every body to be kind to all manner of strangers, and not merely to refrain from oppressing them, or giving them vexation. Plato hath most excellent discourses about this in several places; particularly lib. v. de Legibus, where he shews, that God is the avenger of all wrongs done to strangers, more than of those that are done to our fellow-citizens: Ἔρημος γὰρ ὢν ὁ ξένος ἑταίρων, &c. *For a stranger being destitute of friends and kindred, is the greater object of pity, both of men and of God; and therefore, he that can hurt most, should be most ready to help him,* &c. (See p. 729, 730. edit. Serrani.) Upon which account he makes it lawful for a stranger to pluck any of the best fruit, as he is upon his way, whether grapes, figs, or apples, &c. (lib. viii. p. 845.) And the corn being divided, as he would have it, into twelve parts; and a twelfth part divided into three; he orders one of those third parts to be given to strangers, p. 847, 848. Τὸν γὰρ εἰσεπιδημήσαντα χρὴ φιλοφρονεῖσθαι, *for a stranger or sojourner ought to be comforted, in a most friendly manner,* &c. (See lib. xii. p. 952, 953.)

Ver. 34. *But the stranger that dwelleth with thee shall be as one born among you.*] They understand this only of such a stranger, who by circumcision was become a perfect proselyte; whom they were to be so far from oppressing, that they were to treat him as if he had been a native Jew, and love him as a brother.

And thou shalt love him as thyself.] He had commanded them, (ver. 18.) *to love their neighbour, i. e.* an Israelite (they expound it), *as themselves;* and now he commands them to love a stranger with the same affection; which demonstrates, they think, he was become an Israelite; and therefore was to have the same privileges with themselves, both in all civil and sacred things. And this, no doubt, was true, that they were bound to treat such a proselyte with a tender affection, and to make no difference between him and an Israelite. For he was to be admitted to eat of the paschal lamb, and of the peace-offering, and he might marry with an Israelite; insomuch, that Moses saith, *one ordinance shall be for both,* (Numb. xv. 15.) All the difference I can find was, that they never admitted any stranger to be a member of the great Sanhedrin. But notwithstanding all this, I cannot think it reasonable to exclude all other strangers from their affection; but they were bound to love them, and to be kind to them, though not to embrace them with such a strict friendship as the other. And, to confirm this, it may be observed, that in the fourth commandment, *the stranger within their gate* signifies, as they confess, not him that was a perfect proselyte, but only one that had renounced idolatry: and so they understand the word *stranger* in the twenty-fifth chapter of this book, (ver. 47.) and I see no reason why such a *stranger* should not be admitted here to have a share in their affection, who was become a worshipper of the true God, though he had not taken upon him to observe the whole law.

For ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.] This reason is little less than a demonstration, that such *strangers* as I now mentioned are comprehended in the foregoing precept. For the remembrance of what their condition was in Egypt, is that whereby they are moved to have pity on those whom they found among themselves in the same; and they and the Egyptians were not of the same religion, but they found such kind entertainment there a long time, as they were to give to those who were of their religion.

This argument indeed became stronger, when any persons were incorporated with them, and became more one with them than they were with the Egyptians; but was of great force to procure kindness to those who did not live by their laws.

I am the Lord your God.] Who have done so much for you when you were mere strangers, that you should not stick to be kind to those who are in the like condition.

Ver. 35. *Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment.*] The Hebrews refer this word *judgment* to all the following particulars; and think that Moses uses it here to shew of what moment this law is, which he calls *doing judgment;* so that he who measures or weighs hath the office of a

judge: and if he commit any fraud in his measures or weights, he is a corrupter of judgment, and is called wicked, abominable, accursed. They are the words of R. Levi Barzelonita, Præcept. cclx. where he adds, that such men are the cause of five mischiefs, which are imputed to unjust judges: "who defile the land; profane the name of God; remove the presence of the Divine Majesty; bring a sword upon the people; and at last carry them captive out of their own country." And therefore great punishments have been enacted in all countries against this crime, as destructive to human society; particularly Justinian ordained that such offenders should be beaten ἰσχυρῶς ὡς ἀσεβεῖς *sorely, as impious people.*

In mete-yard.] By which they measured lands, cloth, and such-like things; for *middah* (as Fosterus observes) is the measure of continued quantity, *viz.* in things dry.

In weight.] By which they paid and received money in those days; and sold brass and iron, and things of like nature.

Or in measure.] The Hebrew word *mesurah* (from whence seems to come the Latin *mensura,* and our English word *measure*) denotes the measure of discrete quantity (as we speak), as of corn; and of all continued fluid quantity, as of wine and oil. And the forenamed R. Levi will have it to signify the very least of such measures; about which, saith he, the law concerns itself, that men should be exact in them, as well as in the greatest. And so Hesychius here notes, that Moses provides against all injustice in small things, as well as in great; for what the possession of a field or a house is to a wealthy man, that the measure of wine or corn, or the weight of bread, is to the poor, who have daily need of such things for the support of their life.

Ver. 36. *Just balances, just weights.*] This verse only positively requires strict justice in those things, wherein the former verse forbade all deceit. And these two words refer to things sold by weight.

A just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have.] These two words, *ephah* and *hin,* comprehend all sorts of measures of things, whether wet or dry. And, that they might have such just weights and measures among them, the standard of them was kept in the sanctuary, by which all were to be governed; as appears from 1 Chron. xxiii. 29. (See Exod. xxx. 13.) The Jewish doctors also say, that it was a constitution of their wise men, for the preventing all fraud in these matters, that no weights, balances, or measures should be made of any metal, as of iron, lead, tin, &c. (which were obnoxious to rust, or might be bent, or easily impaired), but of marble, stone, or glass, which were less liable to be abused.

For these constitutions Moses was so famous, that his name was celebrated on the account of them in other nations. Nay, Lucius Ampelius (a rude kind of writer, but who had collected much out of better authors) saith, that Mochus was the inventor of scales and weights; and that his memory is preserved in the constellation called Libra. Now if for Mochus we read Moschos, it is the very name of Moses in Hebrew (viz. *Moscheh),* who is called so by other authors, as the learned Huetius observes in his Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 7. n. 16.

I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.] This is the general reason for their obedience; which is repeated in this chapter above a dozen times. Sometimes more briefly, *I am the Lord;* and sometimes a little larger, *I am the Lord your God:* and here with this addition, *which brought you out of the land of Egypt.* Whereby he in a special manner demonstrates himself, both to be their Lord (faithful to his promise, Exod. vi. 3.) and their God, who obliged them to his service, by the most singular benefit.

Ver. 37. *Therefore shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them.*] These words, *statutes* and *judgments,* comprehend all the laws of God: some of which were prohibitions, which they were to mark and *observe* diligently, so as to abstain from such things; and other precepts, or commands, which they were to practise, and *do* according to them.

I am the Lord.] No more need be said to engage your obedience in every thing than this, that I am your sovereign, and the sovereign of the whole world.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Some time after the delivery of the laws mentioned in the two foregoing chapters, the chief of them were enforced with the addition of penalties, which are set down in this chapter.

Ver. 2. *Again thou shalt say to the children of Israel.*] Repeat what I said before, (chap. xviii. 21.) and add this which follows unto it.

Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth among you.] The proselytes, who had embraced their religion, were no less concerned in this law than the native Israelites: (see chap. xvii. 8. 10, &c.)

That giveth any of his seed unto Moloch.] This looks like the prohibition before given, (chap. xviii. 21.) and R. Levi gives this reason of its repetition—because it was a piece of idolatrous worship so usual in those days, when the law was delivered, that there needed great endeavours to preserve them from it, (Præcept. ccviii.) And Maimonides also observes, (as I noted upon chap. xviii. 21.) that idolaters used to fright people into this worship, by telling them their children would die, if they did not make them pass through the fire, and thereby devote them to their gods. But upon due consideration of these words, it may appear probable, that there is something more in them than in the former; importing a higher degree of this sin. For to *give their children to Moloch,* seems to be no less than to offer them in sacrifices (so Christ *giving himself for us,* constantly signifies in the New Testament), which was a more horrid thing than merely making them *pass through the fire,* which did them no hurt. And therefore this crime is here forbidden under the penalty of death; whereas in the eighteenth chapter no punishment is threatened. Certain it is, children were really burnt upon the altars of the ancient pagans, especially in times of great distress, when they hoped to pacify the anger of their gods, by offering to them the dearest thing they had: see our great Selden, lib. de Diis Syris Syntagm. i. cap. 6. where he shews the Phœnicians offered their children to Saturn, (so Porphyrius expressly says, lib. i. de Abstin.) who is said by the poets to have devoured his own children; and by many is thought

to be the same with Moloch. Though others take it for the sun, to whom it is certain human sacrifices were offered. Many authors make mention of it; and Eben Batrich thinks such sacrifices began in the days of Serug, and were first used among the Syrians. Which is a very probable opinion, as Johan. Geusius hath demonstrated, (lib. de Victimis Humanis, par. i. cap. 4, 5.) And it is easy to conceive how, from the Syrians, this abominable practice was derived to the Phœnicians, who worshipped the sun under the name of *Baal*, or *Bel*, as Herodian (lib. viii.) testifies. Which doth not contradict what others say, that they were devoted to the worship of Hercules: for by him is meant the sun also, as his very name imports, *viz. Or-col*, which in that language signifies as much as *him that illuminates all things*. From the Phœnicians this worship of offering human sacrifices was propagated to the Carthaginians, and other people of Africa, among whom this impious idolatry continued till the time of Hannibal; as Bochartus gathers out of Silius Italicus: (lib. iv.)

> "Mos fuit in populis quos condidit advena Dido,
> Poscere cæde Deos veniam, ac flagrantibus aris,
> Infandum dictu, parvos imponere natos."

Who says, the Carthaginians were wont to appease their gods, by burning their children on their altars: and then follows (after the words now mentioned) the lamentation of Imilce the wife of Hannibal, whose son was, by lot, to be sacrificed, (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 28.) And this wicked custom continues still to this day, among some of the people in the southern parts of Africa, as good authors affirm; it having spread itself all over the world (as appears by the discoveries that have been made in America), even into the northern countries of Scythia. But I shall content myself with observing only what the Scripture saith concerning a people in the east, called Sepharvites, who "burnt their children in the fire to Adramelech," 2 Kings xvii. 31. which god seems to have been the same with Moloch, here mentioned by Moses; only with the addition of an epithet, signifying their opinion of him: for *adra* is as much as *potent*, or *mighty:* and therefore *Melech* signifying a *king*, *Adramelech* is in our language *mighty king*. Now, that the children of Israel, notwithstanding this severe prohibition against it, imitated this barbarous worship, is evident from 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Jer. vii. 31. xix. 5. Psal. cvi. 37, 38. and we may very well think the prophet Micah also alludes to it, chap. vi. 7. as Isaiah, lvii. 5, 6. and Ezekiel, xvi. 20, 21. 36. xxiii. 37. 39. likewise do.

The manner of sacrificing their children, and the figure of the idol to which they offered, are described by many, according to the Jewish notion; particularly by Paulus Fagius out of Jalkut: who makes it a hollow image, having seven apartments in it (according to the number, I suppose, of the seven planets), into one of which, *viz.* the lowest, the infant was thrown when it was red hot; as flour, a turtle-dove, a sheep, &c. were into the rest. We can have no certainty of this; but such kind of statues were found in the West Indies when they were discovered, as Ludovicus Vives observes in lib. vi. cap. 19. de Civitate Dei. And Diodorus Siculus, in his Bibliotheca, lib. xx. describes the statue of Saturn among the Carthaginians, as stretching forth its hands down towards the earth; so that the child which was put into it might *roll and fall*, εἰς τὸ χάσμα πλῆρες πυρὸς, *into a gulf full of fire*. Benjamin Tudelensis in his travels (about five hundred years ago) affirms, that, in some islands in the east, the worshippers of fire were wont to leap into it, in performance of some solemn vow, and were counted by all to be happy men. Which I mention here, because he says these fires were kindled in a valley, as those among the Jews were in the valley of Hinnom, (p. 108, 109.)

He shall surely be put to death.] Sufficient proof being made of the fact, (Deut. xvii. 6.)

The people of the land shall stone him with stones.] Which was the proper punishment in this, and in some other cases; particularly adultery, (ver. 10.) and blasphemy, (chap. xxiv. 14, &c.) The manner of it is described out of a Hebrew MS. (Ez Hechajim.) by J. Wagenseil, upon Sota, cap. 3. to have been thus: he that was to be punished with stoning was stripped naked, having only a covering before, and set upon a high place, attended by the witnesses against him, his hands being bound: one of the witnesses giving him a strong push, threw him down headlong from thence. If this fall killed him, there was an end; but if life remained in him, the witnesses took up a stone, which was laid there on purpose, as big as two men could lift, and threw it upon him; and before he quite expired, all the people that stood by threw stones at him, according to the law, (Deut. xvii. 7.) A woman was only stripped to her shift.

Ver. 3. *And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people.*] In case, that is, there was not sufficient proof against him, God threatens that he himself would take care to punish him, by cutting him off from the land of the living. R. Bechai, and others, observe, that this *cutting off* is threefold in the law: one is, the cutting off the body, *i. e.* shortening men's lives; which is threatened to six sins in Scripture. The second is, the excision of the soul only; which is threatened by Moses six-and-twenty times, and particularly to incestuous marriages. The third is, excision both of soul and body; which is threatened to fifteen sins; among which they reckon this, of giving their children to Moloch: (see Selden, lib. vii. de Jure N. et G. sec. Heb. cap. 9. p. 828, 829, &c.)

To defile my sanctuary.] By this sin God's sanctuary was defiled, as well as his holy name profaned, because they sacrificed to Moloch in other places, despising the tabernacle, which was the only place appointed by God where Divine service was to be performed. And therein consisted part of the honour and reverence which God required to his sanctuary, (chap. xix. 30.) that it should be looked upon as the only place where acceptable sacrifices could be offered to him. And therefore, then it was dishonoured and defiled, when they offered sacrifice in any other place, as they did, in aftertimes, to Moloch in the valley of Hinnom, as I observed before, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Where they built high places to Baal (which is another name for the sun), on purpose that they might offer their children upon them, (Jer. xx. 5, 6. xxxii. 35.) This was a plain contempt of God, and of his sanctuary, which they forsook, as if it had not been a holy, but a defiled place. Otherwise they would have kept to it, and offered no where else, nor after any other manner than according to the rites thereof.

And to profane my holy name.] By giving the name of God and his honour to such an abominable idol.

Ver. 4. *If the people of the land.*] In that part of the country where this crime was committed.

Do any way hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Moloch, and kill him not.] If they connived at what he did, and dissembled their knowledge of it; or would not speak the whole truth, and endeavour to convict him of this foul crime, that he might be stoned.

Ver. 5. *Then will I set my face against that man, and against his family.*] As the idolater was liable to this punishment from the hand of Heaven, (see ver. 3.) so they that favoured him, and would not testify against him when they knew him guilty, fell under God's high displeasure (which is meant by *setting his face against them*), and so did all their children, whom God threatens to destroy. He speaks, indeed, in the singular number, because commonly, in such cases, there was some one person by whose authority others were persuaded to wink at such offences, and not to discover what they knew of them. But all such men are threatened with the Divine vengeance in the next words.

And will cut him off, and all that go a whoring after him, &c.] That is, all others, who, following his example, favour such idolaters, and protect them from punishment. For every one knows that idolatry is called by the name of *whoredom* in Scripture; because God having espoused the Israelites to himself, as his peculiar people, their forsaking him, to serve other gods, was a spiritual adultery.

To commit whoredom with Moloch.] *i. e.* To worship him as their god.

Ver. 6. *And the soul.*] *i. e.* The person.

That turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards.] Who they were that pretended to have *familiar spirits*, or were *wizards*, see chap. xix. 31. where they are commanded *not to regard them;* and here, if any did consult them (which is called *turning after them*), cutting off is threatened to them; that is, shortening their days: for such persons are reckoned by the Jews as the chief of those six sorts of sinners, who were liable to the first kind of excision, which I mentioned ver. 3. As for the man himself who had a familiar spirit, or was a wizard, he was to be stoned, if he was discovered and convicted, (ver. 27.) And so they observe in Sanhedrin, cap. 7. n. 7.

To go a whoring after them.] It was a kind of idolatry to seek to such people for advice or relief; being a forsaking of God, and putting confidence in them. Though sometimes *to go a whoring*, signifies the commission of any grievous sin, which idolatry usually led men unto; as Mr. Selden hath noted, lib. iii. de Uxore Hebr. cap. 23.

There is some reason to think, there was something *magical* in the oblation of their children to Moloch; and that thereby they consulted with demons about things future or secret; because such superstitions are here immediately forbidden, after the prohibition of giving their children to Moloch; and because they are frequently joined together in other places, as in Deut. xviii. 10, 11. 2 Kings xvii. 17. and xxi. 6. Certain it is, that in aftertimes they did sacrifice children, ὑπὲρ μαντικῆς, *that they might divine*, by looking into their bowels; as Joh. Geusius hath shewn out of Porphyrius, Philostratus, Herodotus, and others, lib. de Victimis Humanis, par. i. cap. 17.

I will even set my face against that soul, &c.] See ver. 3. 5.

Ver. 7. *Sanctify yourselves therefore.*] Worship therefore God alone; to whose service you are set apart.

And be ye holy.] Keep yourselves free from all idolatry. (See chap. xi. 44.)

I am the Lord your God.] See chap. xix. 2, 3. 10, &c.

Ver. 8. *And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them.*] Be governed by these laws, and not by the customs of other people.

I am the Lord which sanctified you.] Separated you to myself from all other people, by peculiar laws which I have given you.

Ver. 9. *For every one.*] Or, *if any one;* the particle we translate *for* signifying frequently *with*, or *if*.

That curseth his father or mother.] Reproacheth them with imprecations.

Shall surely be put to death.] *i. e.* Be stoned. And it made no difference, whether he cursed them when they were alive, or after their death, as R. Levi Barzelonita says, the rule of their doctors was; yet they resolve, that, unless he cursed them by some proper name of God, he was not liable to be put to death, but only to be scourged, (Præcept. cclxi.) See Exod. xxi. 17.

His blood shall be upon him.] When the law only saith, a man shall *die the death*, the Jews understand it of *strangling;* which was the easiest punishment among them. For where there was not an express mention of the kind of death, they thought the most favourable was to be inflicted. But when the law adds, *his blood shall be upon him*, they say, it is meant of stoning: and the meaning of this phrase is, *he shall perish by his own fault;* and therefore his blood, that is, his death, shall not be vindicated. The blood of one that was slain, being innocent, was upon the murderer, and therefore avenged; but he that was put to death for his crimes, had his blood upon himself, and nobody was to bear it, the executioner himself being not guilty of blood.

Ver. 10. *And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife,* &c.] By the ancient law of Draco and Solon, the husband of the adulteress, if he found them in the fact, might kill them both, or put out their eyes, or stigmatize them; or make the adulterer pay a fine, if he had a mind to spare his life. See Meursius in his Themis Attica, lib. i. cap. 4, 5. and the Leges Atticæ, set forth by Petitus, lib. vi. tit. 4. where it appears, that it was infamous for the husband to live with his wife after she had committed adultery; and that it was unlawful for her to enter into the public temples, or go dressed in the streets. If she did, any body might tear off her clothes, and beat her, only not kill her. (See S. Petiti Comment. p. 460, &c.)

The adulterer and adulteress shall surely be put to death.] It is not left to the husband's liberty, by this law, whether he would spare their lives or not; but the fact being proved, they were both to die for it: only it is not said here what kind of death they should suffer; nor was the same kind of death inflicted upon all that were guilty of this crime; for, if the daughter of a priest played the adulteress, she was to be burnt, (chap. xxi. 9.) and the adulterer to be strangled, as the Jews understand it. If a man lay with a virgin espoused to another man, but not yet married, they were both to be stoned, by the express words of the law, (Deut. xxii. 23.) But adultery with a married woman, if we may credit the Jewish doctors, was

punished with strangling. (See Selden, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 2.) For when we meet with this phrase, *they shall surely die*, it is always meant of death by the sentence of the house of judgment (as they speak), and if the law add no more, they resolve it to be by *strangling*. If these words be added, *their blood shall be upon them*, then, they say, they were to be stoned. This I observed before; and shall add now, that *strangling*, as they describe it, was not such a punishment as our hanging men by the neck; but the criminal being stuck up to the knees in dung, they tied a napkin about his neck, and drawing it hard at both ends, choked him. There was such a thing as hanging men on a gallows (as we speak), but it was after they were dead, and only such as had been stoned; and not all of them neither, but such alone as had been stoned for blasphemy or idolatry. (See Joh. Carpzovius upon Schickard's Jus Regium, cap. 4. Theor. xiv.)

The greatest thing that can be objected against this account of the punishment of adultery, is that which St. John tells us the Jews said concerning the woman taken in the very act of it, "Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned," (John viii. 5.) But it may be answered, that this woman was espoused only, and not yet married; and so, by the law, as I observed before, was to be stoned, (Deut. xxii. 23, 24.) If this seem absurd, that the adultery of one espoused should be accounted a greater crime than of one married (for stoning was a heavier punishment than strangling), it ought to be considered, that the love of those who were newly espoused, was commonly more fervent than theirs who were married, especially among the Jews, who for light causes were wont to be divorced from their wives; and therefore no wonder if the adultery of the former was judged a greater crime than of the latter.

Ver. 11. *And the man that lieth with his father's wife*, &c.] This was condemned before as a heinous sin, (chap. xviii. 8.) and now the penalty of death is inflicted upon the offenders.

Their blood shall be upon them.] All the Hebrew doctors agree, that wheresoever we meet with this phrase, it is meant of stoning, as I before observed.

Ver. 12. *If a man lie with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death.*] This was forbidden, chap. xviii. 15. and the same penalty is here enacted as against the former crime.

They have wrought confusion.] By perverting the order which God hath appointed, and making great disturbance in the family, &c. It is the same word that is used for a more foul sin, (chap. xviii. 23.) and therefore shews this to be an abominable mixture.

Ver. 13. *If a man also lie with mankind*, &c.] This also was condemned before, (chap. xviii. 22.) but the penalty not declared till now.

They shall surely be put to death, &c.] By stoning; unless one of them was under a force, and then that law took place which we find Deut. xxii. 25, 26.

Ver. 14. *And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness.*] See chap. xviii. 17.

They shall be burnt with fire.] Which was a higher punishment than stoning, as that was higher than strangling. R. Levi Barzelonita (Præcept. ccxxiv.) describes the manner of it to have been thus: they set the malefactor in dung up to the knees, and then tied a cloth about his neck, which was drawn by the two witnesses, till they made his mouth gape; into which they poured hot melted lead down his throat, which burnt his bowels. And thus the rest of the Talmudists expound it: but I see no good authority they have for it, the word for *burning* being the same that is used, when mention is made of burning with fire and faggots, as we speak. And R. Eliezer ben Zadoc saith, he saw a priest's daughter thus burnt for fornication. But the doctors commonly say, the judges were ignorant of the law; or, that they were Sadducees who then had got into the seat of judgment, who followed the very letter of the Scripture.

Both he and they.] That is, both the mother and daughter, if the mother were consenting to it. Otherwise, only the woman that offended. From whence the Karaites formed this rule, "after the same manner that men were obliged by a precept in Scripture, the women were obliged also." (Selden. lib. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 5.)

That there be no wickedness among you.] That others may be deterred from the commission of such enormous crimes: for the Hebrew word imports more than ordinary wickedness. (See chap. xviii. 17.)

Ver. 15. *And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death.*] See chap. xviii. 23. This death was by stoning, as appears from the next verse.

And ye shall slay the beast.] Just as they were to destroy, not only the inhabitants of an apostate city, but their cattle also, &c. (Deut. xiii. 15, 16.) to terrify others from committing the like sin; and, as the Talmudists observe, that there might be no memorial left of so foul a crime, by men's pointing at the beast, and saying, There goes the beast that such a man lay with. They might have added, to prevent monstrous births. (See Selden, lib. i. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 4.) Maimonides gives a good reason, why a beast that killed a man should be slain; as a punishment to the owner, for looking no better after it; but his application of it to this matter seems impertinent, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 40.) Bochartus's gloss is far better; the beast was killed as an instrument in the crime, just as a forger of deeds is hanged with his pen and counterfeit seals; and a conjurer with his magical books and characters. And this also is useful for an example, though not to other beasts, yet to men; whose concern it is to consider, that if beasts were not spared, who were not capable of sinning, what would become of them who committed such crimes against the known law of God, and the impressions of nature itself? (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 16.)

Ver. 16. *Their blood shall be upon them.*] This relates to the man and the woman (mentioned in these two verses), who committed this foul crime; for a beast is not capable of punishment. But, as the canon law speaks, "Pecora inde credendum est jussa interfici, quia tali flagitio contaminata refricant facti memoriam;" *it is to be believed, that the beasts which were polluted with such a flagitious wickedness, were therefore commanded to be slain, because they rubbed up the memory of the fact:* which is the very reason given of it in the Mischna, Tit. Sanhedrin, cap. 7. n. 4. And so R. Solomon: "the beast was killed, lest it should be said, There is the beast for which such a woman was put to death."

Ver. 17. *If a man shall take his sister*, &c.] Whether she

was his sister by the whole blood (as we speak), or by half blood only, by the father's side or mother's, he was not permitted to marry her by the law mentioned, chap. xviii. 9.

And see her nakedness.] It is the same with *uncovering her nakedness* to lie with her; as it is there expressed, and here in the end of the verse (*he hath uncovered his sister's nakedness*), the sense of *seeing* being put for that of touching, or any other, in this language.

It is a wicked thing.] A flagitious, or nefarious wickedness, as the Vulgar expresses it. But the Hebrew word *chesed* signifying sometimes in the prophetical language *mercy* and *indulgence;* the Talmudists take these words, as if they came in by a parenthesis, to obviate an objection which might be made, that Cain and Abel married their sisters. True, saith Moses, that was by an indulgence in the beginning, arising from the necessity of things, when there were none but brothers and sisters in the world. But now *they shall be cut off in the sight of their people,* who marry such near relations. So the Gemara Hierosol. ad Tit. Sanhedrin. (See Selden, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 8. p. 581.) And so the Chaldee paraphrase, ascribed to Jonathan, whose words are these: "It is a filthy thing; but I used an indulgence to the first men by whom the world was to be propagated, until mankind was sufficiently multiplied: after that, whosoever doth any such thing, let him be cut off," &c.

And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people.] Publicly put to death: (see ver. 10.)

He shall bear his iniquity.] *i. e.* The punishment of it, (chap. v. 1.)

Ver. 18. *And if a man shall lie with a woman, having her sickness,* &c.] Here the sentence of death is pronounced upon them; whereas in chap. xv. 24. it is only said, the man should be *unclean seven days.* Therefore many think in that place he speaks of doing this ignorantly, and here of doing it knowingly. But if the man might be ignorant of the condition she was in, the woman herself could scarce be so: and, therefore, others think, when the fact was altogether private, they only incurred a legal impurity for a certain season; but when it was publicly known, and proof made of it before a judge, it was a capital crime, because it was done in contempt and despite of the law; otherwise, it could not have been so publicly known as to be legally proved. Whether this law oblige in the state of Christianity, is at large discussed by Bishop Taylor (not to mention other writers abroad), in his Ductor Dubitant. book ii. chap. 2. rule iii. n. 8. and book iii. chap. 2. rule ii. n. 3, &c.

Ver. 19. *And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister,* &c.] See chap. xviii. 12, 13.

They shall bear their iniquity.] It not being said, they *shall die,* or be *cut off* (as in the former cases), it hath made some conclude this sin, being not of so high a nature as the foregoing, was punished only as those that follow, (ver. 20, 21.) where they that committed them are threatened to *die childless.*

Ver. 20. *If a man shall lie with his uncle's wife,* &c.] See chap. xviii. 14.

They shall die childless.] This is understood by some as if Moses meant they should be put to death, before they could have any fruit of such a conjunction. But most think he only means, that either they should have no children; or that their children should not live, but die before their parents; or be looked upon as a spurious issue, and not inherit their estate; which is the sense St. Austin puts upon these words. And Procopius Gazæus also mentions it; and says this was the Roman law about all incestuous marriages, "Semen eorum non recensebitur inter liberos;" *such issue shall not be reckoned among their children.*

Ver. 21. *And if a man shall take his brother's wife,* &c.] See chap. xviii. 16.

They shall be childless.] See ver. 20.

Ver. 22. *Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments,* &c.] Particularly these concerning the foregoing matters. (See chap. xviii. 4, 5.)

That the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spew you not out.] As it did the former inhabitants. (See chap. xviii. 25. 28.)

Ver. 23. *And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation which I cast out before you.*] *viz.* Of the Amorites, as the Hebrews rightly expound it; for they were the principal nation in Canaan, and extremely given to idolatry. R. Levi Barzelonita extends this to all their customs, in cutting their hair, and such like, (Præcept. cclxii.) but it seems here particularly to relate to their marriages and idolatry. (See chap. xviii. 3.)

For they committed all these things.] These words shew that the foregoing have particular respect to their abominable marriages and idolatry.

Therefore I abhorred them.] So as to cast them out of their country, (chap. xviii. 25.) Onkelos translates it, *my Word* [*Memri*] *abominated them.* Which is a plain intimation of a notion they had in ancient times of more persons than one in the Deity; and particularly here denotes him whom St. John calls *the Word.* For *Memri* (*Word*) plainly signifies a *person* in this place; and a person of the same essence with Jehovah.

Ver. 24. *But I have said unto you.*] Made you a promise.

Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, &c.] For he promised to expel the former inhabitants of that country, to make room for them. (See Exod. iii. 8. 17. xxiii. 27, 28. xxxiii. 3.)

I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people.] This may refer either to what goes before, that they should not live like other nations, because he had, by peculiar laws, as well as by signal deliverances, distinguished them from all the people of the earth; or to what follows, that he had made such a difference between them, and other people, that in their very diet they should not agree with them, much less in the forenamed impurities. For, that the difference of meats was instituted, to keep them from familiar conversation with their idolatrous neighbours, is very evident (as I before observed), and the gentiles themselves took notice of it, and looked upon them as unsociable people upon this very account. Josephus often mentions this objection against them. And Euphrates complains, (in Philostratus de vita Apolon. Lib. cap. 2.) "That of old they separated not only from the Romans, but from all mankind: for they had invented *βίον ἄμικτον a manner of living that would not let them mix with other people,* either at a common table, or in their prayers or sacrifices."

Ver. 25. *Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean,* &c.] According to the prescriptions in

the eleventh chapter, which are here briefly repeated, to enforce the observation of the foregoing precepts against such incestuous marriages as other nations allowed; their law not permitting them so much as to eat such meat as those nations did; but to account many things, which they freely used, unclean and abominable.

Ye shall not make yourselves abominable, &c.] See chap. xi. 43.

Which I have separated from you, as unclean.] Forbidden you to eat; and thereby separated you from all other people. Which had this intention in it (among others already mentioned), that this nation, from whom the Messiah was to spring, might be kept pure and sincere; free from all mixture with strange people; unto which nothing contributed more efficaciously (as an excellent person hath observed) than the difference of meat, which made it not easy for them to contract acquaintance, much less friendship, with other nations. And truly, unless the people from whom the Messiah was to come, had been kept separate from all other nations, either all hope of him would have been lost, or many in every country, to the great hurt and destruction of mankind, would have pretended to be the person: whereas, by keeping them a people distinct by themselves, it came to pass that all countries thereabouts were filled with a report, that the Lord of the world should come out of Judea: see Joh. Wagenseil. Confut. Carm. Lipman. p. 554, &c.

Ver. 26. *And ye shall be holy unto me, for I the Lord am holy.*] See chap. xi. 44. xix. 2. and ver. 7. of this chapter.

And have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.] The very difference of meats which they used, was a token that God had separated them from other people, to be subject to such rites and laws as he ordained: and hereby also they were so severed from others, as to be kept from the most familiar conversation with them (which is at meals), and thereby they were preserved from the danger of being seduced to the worship of strange gods.

Ver. 27. *A man also, or a woman, that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard*, &c.] The consulting such persons is forbidden, chap. xix. 31. and the penalty added ver. 6. of this chapter: and here the persons themselves who were proved to have a *familiar spirit*, or to be a *wizard* (what they are, see there), are condemned to the heaviest punishment; which was by being stoned to death. For which severity Maimonides gives this reason: "Because it is the very scope of the whole law to root out idolatry, and abolish the very name of it. And therefore God ordered magicians to be stoned, because, without doubt, they are idolaters; though in a manner peculiar and different from the vulgar. And the greater part of such evil arts being practised by women, (which is the ground, he thinks, of that law, Exod. xii. 18.) towards whom men are naturally pitiful: therefore Moses saith in this place, *A man also, or woman, that hath a familiar spirit*, &c. like to which we find in no precept, not about the profanation of the sabbath; but in this case it was necessary expressly to mention *women* as well as *men;* because of men's natural tenderness and clemency towards women." Thus he, More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 37. Procopius Gazæus's gloss on these words is very pious, but something fanciful; "He that is hardened like a stone to virtue, deserves to be stoned. For magic commits murders, digs up sepulchres, disturbs the souls of men. For magicians are men who corrupt human nature."

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto the priests.*] This law about the priests, perhaps, follows that last mentioned (ver. 27. of the foregoing chapter), to shew unto whom they should resort, and of whom they should inquire, *viz.* of the priests; who should always be ready for any priestly office, and for common conversation.

The sons of Aaron.] His daughters were not concerned in the following prohibitions; because they had nothing to do in offering sacrifices; as Maimonides observes, More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 47.

There shall none be defiled for the dead.] By touching the dead body, or coming (as the Hebrews say) within four cubits of it, or entering into the house where it lay (though it were to take care of the funeral), or by following the corpse to the grave, or making any mourning for the dead: because by these things they were legally polluted for no less than seven days, (Numb. xix. 11. 14.) and, consequently, unfit for the service of God, and for conversation with their neighbours; who had the greater reverence also for them, when they saw their dignity to be so great, that they were not permitted to perform such offices as others were obliged unto. For this, no doubt, was intended very much to put an honour upon the priesthood: as it was also in other nations, particularly among the Romans, who would not have their Pontifex to look upon a funeral, as Bochart observes out of Seneca, (Hieroz. par. i. lib. iii. cap. 4.) and the Flamen Dialis might not go into the place where the coffin was. For which reason, as Servius tells us, (ad lib. iii. Æneid.) they ordered a bough of a cypress-tree to be stuck at the door of the house where a dead body lay, that the high-priest might not ignorantly go into it. It appears also by Plato, that it was thus likewise among the Greeks. For he would have the priests, of both sexes, to accompany one that had discharged the office of a censor well, unto his grave when he was buried, as unto a *pure funeral* (ὡς καθαρεύοντι τῷ τάφῳ ἕπεσθαι); but for this, he says, they must ask leave of Apollo, (lib. xii. de Legibus, p. 947.) See Porphyrius de Abstin. lib. ii. sect. 50.

Among his people.] The Jews are so critical, as, from the word *beammo*, *among his people*, to gather, that if a man did not die among his people, but in a strange country, where there was nobody to take care of his funeral, and see him buried, a priest might do it himself, rather than his body should lie above ground.

Ver. 2. *But for his kin that is near unto him.*] Here is an exception to the general rule; because it would have been very hard to restrain natural affection from carrying them to their parents, and children, and brethren, and sisters, when they died. Which cases would not often happen, as Maimonides observes in the place before alleged; and they are particularly named, that there might be no mistake, nor any colour to extend this indulgence to relations more remote.

For his mother, and his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and for his brother.] If any have a mind to

know the rabbinical reasons, why the mother is here put before the father, and ver. 11. the father before the mother, with such-like things, he may consult Simeon de Muis in his Varia Sacra, p. 356, &c.

Ver. 3. *And for his sister a virgin.*] I see no reason why it should be restrained to his whole sister, both by father's and mother's side (as some of the Hebrew doctors would have it); for, that his half-sister, by either of them, was *nigh unto him* (as it here follows), it appears by the law about incestuous marriages, (chap. xviii. 9.)

Which hath had no husband.] To take care of her funeral, which her brother therefore, though a priest, might. It is commonly observed, that there is no mention here of *his wife*. But Maimonides, with great reason, thinks it was lawful for him to mourn for her; but it was needless to mention her, who, by the law of God, was dearer to him than father or mother. And there is this argument for it: that Ezekiel, who was a priest, is forbidden, by a special command, to mourn for his wife, which otherwise he would have done, (ch. xxiv. 16, &c.)

Ver. 4. *But he shall not defile himself, being a chief man among his people.*] But though he might defile himself for such very near relations, yet he might not for the greatest man in the nation, who was not so near of kin to him. This seems to me to be the easiest and the most natural sense of this verse, by adding the particle *lamed* (which in the two foregoing verses is put before *mother, father, son, daughter, brother,* and *sister*) to *Baal*; *i.e. chief man* (as we translate it); nothing being more usual than to omit such a particle, which yet must be understood when it hath been often before mentioned. And thus the Vulgar Latin understands it; and the sense is the same, if we take it as our translation seems to intend it: *But he shall not defile himself* (for any other), *being a chief man,* &c. As for the marginal translation, I can see no ground for it: and there must be a greater supplement, by adding *for his wife;* which one cannot well think is here forbidden, as I observed on the foregoing verse. They also who translate it, *a chief ruler shall not defile himself,* &c. have still less reason, the whole discourse in this place being concerning the priests.

To profane himself.] He himself, in sacred offices, being the greatest person, would have been profaned, *i. e.* rendered a common man, if he had mourned for any but those whom nature had very closely linked him unto.

Ver. 5. *They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corners of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh.*] Though they were allowed to mourn for some persons, yet for none after this manner: that is, according to the custom of certain places in Chaldea, as Aben Ezra glosses upon these words. And he might have added also, of the Egyptians; among whose ceremonies we find this in aftertimes, and it is likely it had been very ancient. For Jul. Firmicus tells us, in the beginning of his book, that in their annual lamentations of Osiris, they were wont "to shave their heads, that they might bewail the miserable misfortune of their king, by depriving themselves of the ornament of hair," &c. And he adds, that they did tear their flesh, and cut open the scars of their old wounds, &c. where Johan. Wouver observes the same out of several other authors. And Plutarch, in his book of Superstition, saith, they generally used in mourning to be shaven; whereas the Hebrews let their hair grow: (see chap. x. 6. xix. 27.)

Ver. 6. *They shall be holy unto their God.*] Attend to their office, unto which they are peculiarly consecrated; and not, without great necessity, be at any time unfitted for it.

And not profane the name of their God.] By doing as the common people did; or rendering themselves incapable to minister unto the Lord; as they were when they were any way defiled.

For the offering of the Lord made by fire.] They attend upon his altar, where the burnt-offerings, peace-offerings, and all the rest were offered.

And the bread of their God, do they offer.] The word *and* is not in the Hebrew, and the sense will be clearer if it be left out: *the offering of the Lord made by fire,* being called *the bread of their God, i. e.* his meat, or food. For the altar was his table; and what was burnt thereon was in the nature of his provision: which in the Scripture language is comprehended under the name of *bread.* So Solomon Jarchi saith, *whatsoever may be eaten is called bread,* (see chap. iii. 11.) Thus *fruit* is called *bread,* Jer. xi. 19. and *milk,* Prov. xxvii. 27. and *honey,* 1 Sam. xiv. 28. And therefore no wonder the sacrifices are here called by that name, and by Malachi his *meat* or *food,* (chap. iii. 12.) Which phrase is used, as the author of Sepher Cosri well observes, to keep up the notion that God dwelt gloriously, and kept house among them, (par. ii. cap. 26.)

Ver. 7. *They shall not take a wife that is a whore.*] All incestuous marriages were as much forbidden priests as any other men. But besides, here are three sorts of persons whom it was unlawful for a common priest to marry, though there was no kindred between them. The first is a *whore;* whereby the Hebrew doctors understand, not only one that was a common prostitute, but one that was not an Israelite, or an Israelitish woman, with whom a man had lain, whom it was unlawful for her to marry. Which comprehends not only all such as are forbidden in the eighteenth chapter of this book; but those also in Deut. xxiii. 2, 3. (See Selden de Successionibus, lib. ii. cap. 2. et 3. and Uxor. Hebraica, lib. i. cap. 7. lib. iii. cap. 23.)

Or profane.] A woman was accounted so (as he shews in the same place) who was either descended from such a person, as is beforementioned; or who was born of such a conjunction, as is here forbidden to a priest. And there are those who think it may be understood of one that had been consecrated to a false deity; whom she served with the use of her body, which she exposed to the worshippers of that deity: who, though she afterwards repented, and became good, yet a priest was not to marry her, no more than an ordinary whore. But the simplest meaning of these three seems to be, that they should not marry one that had prostituted her body, or that had been any way vitiated, though against her will; or was of suspected chastity; or (as it follows) was divorced from her husband.

Neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband.] For commonly women were put away for some fault, as Abarbinel notes; and were presumed not to be such as a priest should desire. To the same purpose Procopius Gazæus. A priest, saith he, should not only fly from manifest evils, as fornication, but decline whatsoever may blemish his fame: now a woman that is put away

by her husband, lies under a suspicion of something that is bad. For which reason (as Mr. Selden observes in the place abovenamed), a priest might not marry her, whom her husband's brother refused to marry after his death.

For he is holy unto his God.] Consecrated, after a special manner, to the service of the Divine Majesty; and therefore was not to dishonour his priesthood by such marriages as were not of good reputation. If he did, he was not to be suffered to minister, until he had given such a wife a bill of divorce; as Maimonides saith in Biath Hamikdasch, cap. 6. An example of which there was in Manasseh, the brother of Jadua the high-priest; who, marrying, contrary to the law, the daughter of Sanballat the Samaritan, was commanded either to put her away, or not to come to the altar. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Successione in Pontificatum, cap. 6. p. 238.)

Ver. 8. *Thou shalt sanctify him therefore.*] This seems to be spoken to Moses, and to all that should succeed him in the supreme authority, that they should take care the priests should not marry with such persons; or if they did, not be suffered to minister in the priest's office till they had put them away. Accordingly we find, that, to keep the priesthood pure, and to avoid all suspicion of any such pollution, the names of the priest's parents were carefully preserved in the genealogical tables, as we learn from Ezra ii. 62. Nehemiah vii. 64. (See Selden de Succession. in Pontif. lib. ii. cap. 3. Uxor. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 7.)

For he offereth the bread of thy God.] Ministereth at the altar. (See ver. 6.)

He shall be holy unto thee.] Keep himself pure, that he may not be unfit to offer sacrifice for the people, as need shall require.

For I the Lord which sanctify you am holy.] I, who have taken you to be my peculiar people, excel in all perfections; and therefore require persons of extraordinary sanctity to minister unto me.

Ver. 9. *And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore.*] The Hebrew doctors understand this of one married, at least espoused. So Aben Ezra and R. Sol. Jarchi say expressly, "Our rabbins confess, with one mouth, that one not espoused is not concerned in this law." (See Selden, lib. i. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 6. and lib. iii. cap. 23. p. 488.)

She profaneth her father.] She was doubly guilty: first, in profaning, *i. e.* dishonouring herself; who, being the daughter of such an eminent person, committed such a heinous crime; and secondly, in dishonouring her father, whose reputation hereby suffered.

She shall be burnt with fire.] Which was the sorest punishment among the Jews, (see chap. xx. 14.) and was not inflicted upon other persons, in this case, (who were barely stoned, Deut. xxii. 14.) but only upon the daughter of a priest, from whom greater virtue was expected. But if the witnesses of this fact were convicted of perjury by other credible witnesses, produced by the woman or her father, then both her husband who accused her, and those false witnesses, suffered the same punishment that she should have done. (See Selden, lib. iii. Uxor. Heb. cap. 1. p. 321.)

Ver. 10. *He that is the high-priest among his brethren.*] Hitherto the laws given in this case concern the common priest: now follow those by which the high-priest was to govern himself, who was under peculiar laws more strict than the rest.

Upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, &c.] He having a peculiar consecration different from the rest, by pouring the holy oil upon his head, and clothing him with the most glorious robes, (see chap. viii. 7, 8, &c.) was in all reason to distinguish himself, more than the rest of the priests, from common men.

And that is consecrated.] In the Hebrew the words are, *whose hand is filled;* as it was with the fat and the right shoulder of the ram of consecration, &c. by which he was hallowed to minister in the priest's office, (Exod. xxix. 22—24.)

To put on the garments.] To be high-priest.

Shall not uncover his head.] Rather, shall not let his hair grow neglected without trimming; as the manner was, in token of mourning. So Onkelos and Jonathan, and a great many more: (Selden, lib. ii. de Successione in Pontificatum, cap. 5. p. 235.) and what I have noted upon the tenth chapter of this book, ver. 6.

Nor rend his clothes.] Another token of mourning which he was to forbear; though the Talmudists will have it, that he might rend his garments at the bottom, about his feet, but not at the top, down to his breast; as P. Cunæus observes out of Mass. Horajoth, lib. ii. de Rep. Hebr. cap. 3. Before his anointing and consecration, and putting on the holy garments, it was not unlawful for him to attend the funeral of his father; and therefore Eleazar was present when Aaron died, (Numb. xx.) being as yet in a lower ministry, and not completely advanced to the office of high-priest, but only declared Aaron's successor by putting on his garments. (See chap. x. 6.)

Ver. 11. *Neither shall he go in to any dead body; nor defile himself for his father, or for his mother.*] He might not go into the house, where the body of his father or mother lay dead, (which was permitted to the inferior priests, ver. 2, 3.) and, consequently, he was not to make any external signs of mourning for son or daughter, brother or sister.

Ver. 12. *Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary.*] If he was there when he heard of the death of his father or mother, he was not to stir out from thence till he had finished his ministry. (See chap. x. 7.) For he had a little house (after the temple was built) within the precincts of it, where he commonly remained all the day-time, which was called *lischcath cohen gadol, the parlour of the high-priest:* as Cunæus observes out of Mass. Middoth, lib. ii. de Repub. Hebr. cap. 3. At night he went to his own dwelling-house, which was in Jerusalem, and no where else; there he might perform all the offices of a mourner, except those which are here forbidden; and the people came to comfort him (as Maimonides relates in his treatise on this subject), and, sitting upon the ground, while he sat in his chair at the funeral feast, they said, *Let us be thy expiation* (*i. e.* let all the grief that is on thee fall upon us); unto which he answered, *Blessed be ye from heaven;* as their words are reported in Sanhedrin, cap. 2. n. 1.

Nor profane the sanctuary of his God.] By preferring his affection to the dead, before the service of God in the sanctuary: or, by returning thither to his ministry, when he had been defiled by the dead; which had been a great profanation: for he that touched a dead body was unclean seven days, (Numb. xix. 11, 12.)

For the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him.] Some supply the word *and* between *crown* and *anointing oil;* and so make *two* reasons why he should distinguish himself from all other men: first, because the *holy crown,* as it is called, (Exod. xxix. 6.) which had *holiness to the Lord* engraven on it, (Exod. xxviii. 36.) was set upon his head; and his head also was anointed with the *holy oil,* (Exod. xxx. 25. 30.) whereby he was, in a special manner, consecrated to the service of the Most High. But there is no need of this, for the anointing oil itself was that which sanctified him to his office, and was poured on him, after the holy crown was set on his head; (Lev. viii. 9. 12.) and so these words may be translated, *the consecration* (for so the Hebrew word *nezer* signifies) *of the anointing oil of his God is upon him.* That is, he must remember he is solemnly devoted unto my ministry by that anointing; and therefore must not leave it to attend any other.

I am the Lord.] Whose servant he is by a peculiar obligation.

Ver. 13. *And he shall take a wife.*] From the word *wife,* in the singular number, the Talmudists generally conclude, that polygamy was not allowed to the high-priest, who was to have but one wife at a time, though other men were permitted to have more. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Successione in Pontif. cap. 2. p. 207. and Uxor. Hebraica, lib. i. cap. 8.) If he did take another, he was to give a bill of divorce to one of them before the great day of expiation; or else he was incapable to perform the offices of it; as P. Cunæus observes in the place forenamed out of Joma. But if his wife died, it was not unlawful for him to marry again, as Tertullian fancied from this very place, (lib. de Monogam. cap. 7. and Exhort. ad Cast. cap. 7.)

In her virginity.] And not so much as espoused to any other person. Nor was any sort of virgin thought fit for his wife, but only one that was newly come out of her minority, and had not yet attained to her full puberty; as Maimonides explains the sense of their ancient doctors. See Selden, lib. i. Uxor. Hebr. 7. where he observes also, that this is to be understood of the high-priest after he was in his office; for if he had married a widow before he was high-priest, he was to keep her, and not put her away when he was advanced to it. But there are those who imagine this law obliged all the common priests, who were to marry none but virgins; as they are persuaded from Ezek. xliv. 22. And no less a man than Hugo Grotius seems to be of this opinion, both here and in his book de Jure Belli et Pacis, (lib. ii. cap. 5. n. 9.) in his Annotata to that section. But the Hebrew doctors are all of a contrary mind, and so are Josephus and Philo; as Mr. Selden observes, in his Addenda to the seventh chapter of his first book Uxor. Hebr. and lib. ii. de Success. in Pontif. cap. 2, p. 208. And so Cunæus also in the place forenamed, speaking of this very law, "Non enim Sacerdotibus posita eadem lex fuit; quippe viduam illi rite duxerunt," &c. But above all, a later most learned writer, Joh. Wagenseil, hath largely confuted this opinion, in which he hath shewn Grotius was singular; for, besides that Ezekiel there supposes they might marry the widow of a priest, it is evident both from Jewish and Christian interpreters, that the state of things under the law is not to be measured by what the prophet Ezekiel saith concerning the future temple and priests: but, as Kimchi himself saith upon this place, "if this verse must be expounded of every priest, it relates to the greater sanctity of the future temple:" for the law at first undoubtedly was, that none but the high-priest was confined to marry a virgin. What Grotius alleges out of Josephus to prove his assertion, he hath shewn, with due respect to so great a man, doth him no service. (See his Annotata ad Mischna Sota, cap. 4. p. 557, &c.)

Ver. 14. *A widow.*] This was peculiar to the high-priest, that, besides other women which no priest might marry, he alone is forbidden to marry a widow; as the same learned person there shews is the sense of all the Hebrew writers. And Moses Kotzenses observes, that by a *widow* is to be understood, not only a woman that had been married; but if she had been merely espoused, it was unlawful for the high-priest to take her for his wife: and by the *high-priest,* he saith, is to be understood, not only the successor of Aaron, but he also that was anointed to the war; which seems to be stretching of the word beyond its meaning, though the word *widow* may be allowed to comprehend one only espoused, whom he might not marry, though she had been espoused to his predecessor.

Or a divorced woman.] No, nor the wife of his brother that died without issue; which others were bound to marry, but he was not.

Or profane.] The word *chalalah* was explained before, ver. 7. which, according to the Jews, signifies a woman born of such a person as a priest is prohibited to marry; as, if the high-priest had taken a widow, and had a daughter by her, that child was *profane,* and might not be married, though a virgin, by a succeeding high-priest. And so of the rest. (See Buxtorf. de Sponsal. et Divort. p. 37, 38.)

Or a harlot.] See ver. 7.

But he shall take a virgin of his own people.] He was commanded before to marry none but a virgin; and now he is further limited to a virgin of Israel; for he doth not mean one of his own tribe, there being instances to the contrary, of a high-priest marrying into the royal tribe, (2 Chron. xxii. 11.)

Ver. 15. *Neither shall he profane his seed among his people.*] Many think this refers to what goes before, that he should not debase his family by such mixtures as have been mentioned; but I rather think it to be a new precept (as the Vulgar Latin takes it), that as he might marry none but of his own people, *i. e.* an *Israelite;* so among his people he should not match with a vulgar person, but with one nobly born; for that was the way to preserve the dignity of the priestly office, at which all these precepts aim.

For I the Lord do sanctify him.] I have separated him to myself, for a special and most holy service; for which reason he was to distinguish himself from other men, even in his marriage, to make them the more reverence the Lord whom he served. Upon this account it was, that many constitutions were made by the elders, forbidding him what was allowed to other people; whereby they intended to advance his honour. For instance, he was forbidden to go into the public baths, or to feasts. If he would visit any that mourned, he was to be attended by other priests. He was obliged to cut his hair every week, but never to shave with a razor; to be in the sanctuary every day, and to go home not above twice in a day; to have but one wife at a time; and going into the temple to have three other priests with him, &c. So Maimonides in Cele Mikdash, cap. 8.

Ver. 16. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Upon this occasion God gave some other precepts concerning the priests, who were to wait upon him in his house and at his table.

Ver. 17. *Speak unto Aaron, saying.*] Having forbidden such marriages as would have been a dishonour to the priesthood, had they been permitted, he now forbids any to serve at his altar, who had the least blemish in his body; for that would have disparaged his Divine service.

Whoever he be of thy seed.] Whether high-priest or the common priests.

In their generations.] In future ages as well as the present.

That hath any blemish.] From these general words the Hebrew doctors conclude, that not only the particular blemishes afterward mentioned made them incapable to minister, but all other whatsoever which appeared in the body; of which these here named are but a specimen or example. So Maimonides in Biath Hamikdasch, whose words are, "the blemishes expressed in the law, are propounded for examples of the rest;" which they reckon to be in all one hundred and forty-two, accounting only those which openly appeared, and not those which were inward, in the kidneys, bladder, or bowels; because there are no examples of such in the particulars which here follow. They are divided by the doctors into *three* classes: such as made beasts unfit to be offered, (chap. xxii. 20.) as well as priests unfit to minister; of which sort they reckon *fifty*. And such as only made priests incapable to minister; of which sort they reckon *ninety*. And such as only made men look ill-favouredly; which were but *two*. (See Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Successione in Pontific. cap. 5.)

Let him not approach.] Unto the altar.

To offer the bread of his God.] *i. e.* To sacrifice. (See ver. 6. and chap. iii. 2.)

Ver. 18. *For whatsoever man he be that hath a blemish.*] Though never so wise or pious.

He shall not approach.] He makes it a standing law, that no man that had a blemish should come to minister unto him at his altar. And a reasonable law it was, approved by pagans themselves; for it is the very first qualification which Plato requires in him who was to be made a priest, that he should be ὁλόκληρος καὶ γνήσιος, &c. *perfect in all his parts, and not a bastard;* and that he should be born of honest parents, who had lived without the blemish of murder, or any other impiety, (lib. vi. de Legibus, p. 759.) And such a law there was among the ancient Romans: *sacerdos integer sit, that a priest should be entire in all his parts.* Which Seneca mentioning (Controv. iv. 2.) explains it by the example of Metellus, who, losing his eyes, by adventuring to snatch the Palladium out of the flames, when the temple of Vesta was burnt, was denied the priesthood; for, though he had done great service, which did him great honour, yet their opinion was, that "Sacerdos non integri corporis, quasi mali ominis res, vitandus est:" *a priest who wanted any part of his body, was to be avoided, as a thing that boded ill:* for thus it was in sacrifices, and therefore they thought, with much more reason it should be so in the priests that offered them. (See Dilherrus Disput. Academ. tom. ii. p. 187, &c.)

A blind man, or a lame.] Such natural defects which befal us without or against our will, as Procopius Gazæus observes, are not to be imputed to us as any fault: and therefore he thinks such vices in the mind as answer to these blemishes in the body, are here intended by Moses; yet he could not but acknowledge, that if we will follow the literal sense (which no doubt is meant by these words), it is not becoming to see a man perform priestly offices, who hath any visible blemish in his body; for instance, *that halts, or cannot walk unless he have one to lead him.* But Moses, he still thinks, had a respect to higher matters, *viz.* to all the good qualities that St. Paul requires in a bishop; and therefore by a *blind* man he understands one without knowledge; and by a *lame*, one that walks not uprightly in the ways of God's commandments. Such accommodations are so easy, that I need not take further notice of them.

Or he that hath a flat nose.] In the two first words, *blind* or *lame*, there was no difficulty; but the word *harum* (which we translate *hath a flat nose*) is not so plain; yet the Hebrews generally agree it signifies one, the upper part of whose nose was so depressed, that the two eyebrows seemed to meet, and to be but one; as Bochartus observes out of R. Solomon, in his Canaan, (lib. i. cap. 33. p. 655.)

Or any thing superfluous.] The Hebrew word *sarua* signifies any member disproportionable to the rest; but more especially (as their doctors take it) the inequality of those members that are pairs: as, when one of a man's eyes, or ears, or legs, was bigger than the other.

Ver. 19. *Or a man that is broken-footed.*] Though a man did not halt, yet, if his foot was so broken, that it looked deformed, he was incapable to minister to the Divine Majesty; because it rendered him contemptible in the eyes of the people; at least not so graceful, as the servants of the Most High were to be.

Or broken-handed.] Any fracture in the hand made a man more remarkably unfit than the foregoing blemish; because by this part all the Divine offices were to be performed.

Ver. 20. *Or crook-backed.*] The Hebrew word *gibben* properly signifies *bunch-backed:* whether the bunch came from the luxation of the backbone, or from a swelling in the flesh.

Or a dwarf.] Who, besides that he looked despicably, was not able to reach up to the altar. The marginal translation may be justified from the Hebrew, for *dak* in that language signifies *lean*, or *slender:* but then the meaning must be, one whose flesh was wasted by a *consumption*. The Vulgar took it for one *blear-eyed:* and the LXX. also thought it signified some disease in the eyes, if the Complutensian edition be right, where this word is translated ἔφηλος τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς. But other editions leave out the two last words, and then it is uncertain what ἔφηλος signifies; but most likely some ill-favoured spots or pustles in the face.

Or that hath a blemish in his eye.] The Hebrew words *toballul beeno* signify one that hath a confused spot in the eye; which is called by the Chaldee paraphrasts, and by the Talmudists, *chillez* and *chaluzon*, which is the very same with the Greek word Χάλαζα, importing a concretion of a white humour (like to a hailstone), κατὰ τὸ βλέφαρον, as Ægineta speaks, and Galen also. (See Bochart in his Hierozoïcon, par. ii. lib. v. cap. 9.) But this spot did not make a priest incapable to minister (as Selden observes in the place abovementioned), unless it was a little prominent, which made the blemish more apparent.

Or be scurvy, or scabbed.] One of these words signifies a dry *scurf* or *scab*, the other a purulent.

Or hath his stones broken.] Is bursten, or hath a rupture, as some expound it. The LXX. translate it Μόνορχις; which Procopius Gazæus understands an *hermaphrodite*.

Ver. 21. *No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh,* &c.] This seems to confirm what was observed before, (ver. 17.) that any other blemish, besides these here particularly mentioned, made a man incapable to officiate at the altar. And, in the first place, the Hebrew doctors reckon five in the ears, besides the want of them: an example of which Josephus gives in the story of Hyrcanus the high-priest, whose ears Antigonus cut off, that, if he should return again, he might not resume his office, (lib. i. de Bello Jud. cap. 11.)

He hath a blemish.] This general repetition is a farther confirmation, that all apparent blemishes of the same kind with these here particularly named, excluded them from ministering at the altar. And there being some of them that were *permanent*, or perpetual (as they speak), and others that were *transient*, which remained but for a time; no man that had a blemish, though only of the latter sort, was to minister at the altar till it was gone.

He shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God.] *i. e.* The *offerings made by fire* beforementioned, which are here plainly represented as the meat that was served up to his table. (See ver. 6.) If any of them did presume to offer at the altar, there were different effects of their contumacy, according to the different sorts of their blemishes, which the Hebrew doctors divide into three classes, as I observed ver. 17. If any man having a blemish of the first sort ministered, it profaned the very sacrifice which he offered, and he was to be scourged. The second sort did not vitiate the sacrifice, but the priest was to undergo the forenamed punishment. The third sort was so inconsiderable, that neither of these effects followed, upon his ministering who was blemished by them; as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. ii. de Success. in Pontif. cap. 5. p. 234.)

Ver. 22. *He shall eat of the bread of his God.*] But, though such a priest might not offer any sacrifice, yet he might eat with his brethren of that part of the sacrifices which was given to them for their portion, which no man in his uncleanness might do. Therefore these natural infirmities were not legal impurities, but only incapacities (as we speak) which disabled them for their office.

Here again the sacrifices are represented as the provision made for the Divine Majesty. (See ver. 6. 21.)

Both of the most holy.] Such were the *meat-offerings*, (chap. ii. 3. vi. 17.) the *sin-offerings*, (chap. vi. 25, 26.) and the *trespass-offerings*, (chap. vii. 1.) See chap. xiv. 13. The *shew-bread* also was a most holy thing; and all such were to be eaten only by the males of the priest's family, in the holy place, (Numb. xviii. 9—11, &c.)

And of the holy.] Such were the wave-breast and the heave-shoulder of the peace-offerings, (chap. vii. 35. and x. 14.) and the first-fruits, and the tithes. But, though the peace-offerings of particular persons were among the *less holy* things, yet the peace-offerings of the whole congregation were *most holy*. (See chap. xxiii. 20.)

Ver. 23. *Only he shall not go in unto the veil.*] He was not to enter into the sanctuary to burn incense, or to trim the lamps, &c.

Nor come nigh unto the altar.] No, nor go to the altar of *burnt-offering*, which was in the court of the Lord's house; but he was to sit in the *wood-room*, where he was employed in picking out all the wood which had any worms in it, that it might be laid aside, and not carried to the altar, as Maimonides and others relate. He had also another employment. (See chap. xiii. 2.) If any man were so presumptuous, or so forgetful, as to minister notwithstanding the manifest blemish which was upon him, he fell under censure, and was punished according to the degree of his fault, as I observed before, (ver. 21.) out of Mr. Selden, who hath, in the place there mentioned, handled this more accurately than I thought it needful for me to do.

That he profane not my sanctuary.] That he might not make others think meanly of the service of God; and consequently of God himself; who would have men, in their greatest perfection, minister unto him, to preserve in people's minds a sense of his most excellent being, unto whom they ministered. For which reason all the foregoing prohibitions were given against marrying such persons as had been vitiated, &c. and against mourning for the dead, that they might not *profane the name of their God*, (v. 6.) by doing as vulgar people did, or making themselves incapable to minister unto God, as they were when they were defiled. And thus Maimonides discourses upon this subject: (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 45.) "God commanded his ministers should wear precious apparel, and that none should be admitted to the ministry who had any defect in his body; nay, they who were deformed and ill-favoured were excluded; because the vulgar do not judge according to men's true worth or beauty (which lie in the soul), but according to their outward appearance, in the comeliness of their bodies, and the richness of their garments; and therefore the end of all these things was, that God's house might be had in due honour and reverence."

My sanctuaries.] This word, in the plural number, relates to the two parts of the sanctuary; the court where the altar of *burnt-offering* stood (which was a holy place) and that which was properly called the *sanctuary*, wherein the altar of incense was; into neither of which a priest that had any blemish might enter; as was said before.

For I the Lord do sanctify them.] I have set apart both those places for my service; and therefore, no man with a blemish shall be admitted into them, to perform any holy office there; yet they might come into the court, to eat with their brethren, of holy things, but not in their priestly garments, which it was not lawful for them to use.

Ver. 24. *And Moses told it unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel.*] They were all acquainted with these laws, because they were all concerned the service of God should be administered acceptably unto him.

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] These commands that follow were delivered at the same time with the foregoing; belonging to the same matter: for though the priests, who had a blemish, might eat of the holy things, yet he would have them know, that neither they, nor such as were unblemished, should presume to do it in their uncleanness.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, that they separate themselves.*] *viz.* When they were in their uncleanness, (ver. 3.)

From the holy things of the children of Israel.] Abstain from eating (ver. 3, 4. 12.) of that part of the sacrifices which belonged to the priests, but was to be eaten only by such of them as were free from legal impurities, (chap. vii. 20, 21.) Nor were they to eat of the first-fruits, which were also their portion, (chap. xviii. Numb. xii. 13.) but they might eat of the tithes, which were allowed for their constant sustenance.

And that they profane not my holy name.] This is the very ground of this prohibition; that they might preserve in their minds a due reverence to the Divine Majesty: unto whom, as they might not approach, so they might not meddle with any thing consecrated to him, in a state of legal impurity. All great persons are to be approached with a great deal of ceremony, especially when any are invited to their table; otherwise they might fall into contempt; and therefore, much more was this reverence to be shewn to the Divine Majesty, that they might entertain high apprehensions of him, by abstaining from all things belonging to him, when they were under any pollution.

In those things which they hallow unto me.] Which the children of Israel devoted unto God; for so the foregoing words and the next verse explain it.

I am the Lord.] The greatest regard is to be paid to my majesty.

Ver. 3. *Say unto them, Whosoever he be of your seed.*] Of the priests.

Among your generations.] In succeeding times.

That goeth unto the holy things.] To eat of them; as appears from ver. 4. 6. 12.

Which the children of Israel hallow unto the Lord.] Offer to him at his altar.

Having his uncleanness upon him.] For which they were to separate themselves, (ver. 2.)

That soul shall be cut off from my presence.] Thrust out of the priest's office, no more to minister at the altar; and then it was the act of a judge: or cut off from the land of the living; which was done by the hand of Heaven.

I am the Lord.] Who will vindicate my own honour.

Ver. 4. *What man soever of the seed of Aaron.*] These words, *of the seed of Aaron*, include his daughters as well as his sons, who might eat of some holy things, (Numb. xviii. 11. 19.) but not in their uncleanness.

Is a leper, or hath a running issue.] There are eleven fountains of uncleanness (as the Hebrews speak), two of which are these here mentioned; as appears from chap. xiii. 3. xv. 2.

He shall not eat of the holy things until he be clean.] See chap. xiv. 2. xv. 13.

And whoso toucheth any thing that is unclean by the dead, or a man whose seed goeth from him.] These were two other fountains of uncleanness, (chap. xi. 31, 32, &c. xv. 16.)

Ver. 5. *Or whosoever toucheth any creeping thing, whereby he may be made unclean.*] See chap. xi. 24, &c.

Or a man of whom he may take uncleanness.] See chap. xv. 7.

Whatsoever uncleanness he hath.] Suppose the leprosy, (chap. xiii. 45.) These are two such fountains of uncleanness as the former.

Ver. 6. *The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until the even, and shall not eat,* &c.] So the law was in the forenamed cases; as appears by the places abovementioned.

Ver. 7. *And when the sun is down he shall be clean.*] Having washed his flesh with water.

And shall afterward eat of the holy things; because it is his food.] God was so gracious, as not to keep a priest any longer in a state wherein he should want his necessary or comfortable sustenance.

Ver. 8. *That which dieth of itself, or is torn with beasts, he shall not eat, to defile himself therewith.*] This was forbidden before to all the Israelites, (chap. xxii. 15.) but made a priest no longer unclean than an ordinary man, because of the foregoing reason.

I am the Lord.] Who will have my ministers pure from all such pollutions. The remainder of which were, the uncleanness of the water of separation, as Maimonides speaks, chap. xix. 21. and of the great sacrifice of expiation, chap. xvi. 28. and of a menstruous woman, chap. xv. 9. and of a woman in child-bed, chap. xii. 2. But nothing made men so unclean as the dead body of a man; which defiled, not only him that touched it, for seven days, but all that came into the house, and every thing that was in the house where he died, (Numb. xix. 11. 14.) which was the reason of the foregoing law, that the high-priest should not go in to the dead body of his father or mother; nor any inferior priest be defiled for any, but their near relations, (chap. xxi. 1, 2. 11.)

Ver. 9. *They shall therefore keep mine ordinance.*] Observe this constitution; because I, who am their Lord, make it.

Lest they bear sin for it.] Be punished if they break it.

And die therefore.] As Nadab and Abihu did; who presumed to break another law about holy things.

If they profane it.] By eating of the holy things in their uncleanness.

I the Lord do sanctify them.] Separate them to my service; and by such constitutions teach them carefully to avoid all pollutions.

Ver. 10. *There shall no stranger eat of the holy thing.*] The *holy thing* here mentioned is that beforenamed; (chap. x. 14.) and by a *stranger* he doth not mean one of another nation, but one that is not of the seed of Aaron, or is not one of his family; for the word in the Hebrew is not *nechar*, which properly signifies such a stranger as is not an Israelite, but *zar*, which signifies any one to whom a thing doth not belong; as holy things did not to those who were not at least part of the priest's family, though not of his race. For, that such might eat of them who were not of their race, provided they belonged to them as a part of their family, appears from the next verse.

A sojourner of the priest.] Who boards with him (as we now speak), or dwells in a part of his house (as some understand it), but hath a distinct family.

Or a hired servant.] Such were those who served by the day, (chap. xix. 13.) or for a certain time, and after that might dispose of themselves as they pleased.

Shall not eat of the holy thing.] None of these might eat of the priest's portion, (chap. x. 14. Numb. xviii. 11.) because they were not members of his family.

Ver. 11. *But if the priest buy any soul* (*i. e.* person) *with*

his money.] There were those of their own nation, who, by their poverty, were compelled to sell themselves, or their children, (chap. xxv. 39.) and others they bought of other nations, (ver. 44, 45, &c.) who, becoming proselytes to the Jews' religion, were permitted to eat of the priest's meat, because they became part of his family.

And he that is born in his house, &c.] They that were born of such purchased servants were their master's goods, and such a part of their family, that they left them to their children who succeeded them; and, therefore, they also were allowed to eat of the meat of the priest.

Ver. 12. *If a priest's daughter also be married unto a stranger.*] Unto one that is not of the family of the priests.

She may not eat of an offering of the holy things.] She lost her right to eat of those holy things, which she did partake of while she remained a part of her father's family; for that entitled persons to this privilege; insomuch, that a priest taking a wife out of another family, she might eat of them, because she was one with him, and therefore had more right than a servant. But, for the same reason, a priest's daughter, married to a stranger, might not eat of them, because she was gone out of his into another family.

Ver. 13. *But if the priest's daughter be a widow, or divorced, and have no child.*] If she had any children, they and she made another family; and they being begotten by a father who was not a priest, had no right to eat of the priest's meat. But if she was left without children, then she was accounted still one of her father's family, provided she returned (as it follows) to live with him.

And is returned to her father's house, as in her youth.] To be a part of his family, as she was before she married, (chap. x. 14.)

She shall eat of her father's meat.] Have the same privilege she had when she was a virgin.

But there shall no stranger eat thereof.] This seems, as I said, particularly to relate unto her children, if she had any; who, being begotten by one of another family, were looked upon as *strangers.* (See ver. 10.)

Ver. 14. *And if a man.*] Who hath no right to them.

Eat of the holy thing unwittingly.] Not knowing it to be a holy thing.

Then he shall put the fifth part thereof unto it.] Besides his sacrifice which he was bound to offer for his trespass. (See ver. 15.)

And shall give it unto the priest, with the holy thing.] He could not give the priest the holy thing which he had eaten; but the meaning is, that he should make satisfaction to the priest for the damage done to him, by paying him the true worth of the thing, and the fifth part more of its value. (See ver. 16.)

Ver. 15. *And they shall not profane the holy things of the children of Israel, which they offer unto the Lord.*] This seems to refer to the persons beforenamed, none of which should presume to profane sacred things, by eating them when they did not belong to them. The priests seem also to be concerned in it, who were not to suffer them to eat such holy things; as it follows in the next verse. Or, if it entirely relate to the priests, the meaning is, they should not profane holy things, by eating them in their uncleanness, (ver. 9.) And one reason was, because the children of Israel, whose offerings these were, might be discouraged from bringing them to the Lord, when they saw them so profaned.

Ver. 16. *Or suffer them.*] *i. e.* The people.

To bear the iniquity of trespass, &c.] To fall under the punishment which God will inflict for their trespass, in eating things which do not appertain to them. The marginal translation refers this also wholly to the priests, in this manner, *Or lade themselves with the iniquity of trespass in their eating holy things; viz.* in their uncleanness, and with such persons (it may be added) as ought not to eat of them.

For I the Lord do sanctify them.] These words seem to justify this last interpretation: (see ver. 9.)

Ver. 17. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] The following laws, no doubt, were delivered at the same time with the former; because they still concern the same matter.

Ver. 18. *Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel.*] For they were all concerned in the perfection of the sacrifices, as they were in the perfection of the priests that offered them: (see chap. xxi. 24.)

And say unto them, Whosoever he be.] The Hebrew doctors say, that the phrase *isch, isch (man, man, i. e.* any man), is here used, as it was chap. xviii. 6. to shew that gentiles are comprehended under this law as well as Jews; as Mr. Selden observes out of the Gemara Babylon. Tit. Cholin. (See lib. iii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 4. p. 289.)

Of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel.] They understand by *strangers in Israel,* such as they called *proselytes of the gate;* who were not circumcised, but had renounced idolatry, and joined themselves to the God of Israel. R. Levi ben Gersom takes perfect proselytes to be here meant (whom they called *proselytes of righteousness*), yet not excluding the other.

That will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his free-will-offerings.] See chap. vii. 16.

Which they will offer unto the Lord for a burnt-offering.] If a gentile brought a peace-offering to the Lord, it was offered as a burnt-offering; and no meat-offering was permitted to be offered with it, as Maimonides observes: (see Selden in the place beforenamed, and ver. 25. of this chapter.) And Dr. Lightfoot gives a large account of it in his Temple Service, chap. 8. sect. 4.

Ver. 19. *Ye shall offer at your own will.*] So these words are commonly understood; that the sacrifices, both of Jew and gentile, should be spontaneous, as well as without blemish: though they will bear another sense, as I observed, chap. i. ver. 3.

A male without blemish, of the beeves, and of the sheep, and of the goats.] See chap. i. ver. 3. 10. All burnt-offerings were to be males; though peace-offerings might be females, (chap. iii. 1. 6.) and so might sin-offerings also, (chap. iv. 32.) but all without blemish. For, as God accepted only some kind of creatures (*viz.* beeves, sheep, and goats, and no other of the herd), so he would have a choice to be made out of them, of the very best; as had been often before directed.

Ver. 20. *But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer.*] This general rule is here repeated, because he is going to specify what creatures they should account blemished.

For it shall not be acceptable for you.] This seems to justify the exposition which I said might be given of that

phrase in the foregoing verse, *at your own will;* or *for your acceptation:* (see upon chap. i. 3.)

Ver. 21. *And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace-offerings unto the Lord.*] Which were either to obtain blessings, or to give thanks for them when they were obtained.

To accomplish his vow.] It was usual to make such vows, for procuring from God what they desired, when they undertook a journey, or went to sea, or were sick, or in any danger, &c. an example of which we have in Jonah i. 16. where we read, the mariners in a storm *offered a sacrifice to the Lord, and made vows; i. e.* they vowed a sacrifice to God (for they could not sacrifice on ship-board), when he had brought them to a safe port. And so Cicero speaks of certain mariners, who, being tossed in a tempest, vowed, if they gained their haven, "Ei Deo, qui ibi esset, se vitulum immolaturos;" *they would offer a calf to the god of that place.* And Homer, in like manner, brings in the mother of Telemachus, vowing perfect hecatombs unto all the gods, if she might obtain her desires, (Odyss. xvii. ver. 59.)

Or a free-will-offering.] This also was a *peace-offering* for obtaining blessings; not when they were in distress, I suppose, but in general to procure God's favour to them and theirs.

In beeves, or sheep.] And likewise *goats;* for all these were allowed in *peace-offerings,* (chap. iii. 1. 6. 12.)

It shall be perfect to be accepted.] That was accounted *perfect* which wanted none of its parts, nor had any defect in any of them. The heathen themselves did not think any other would be *accepted,* and therefore made a careful choice of their sacrifices; as appears by those words of Virgil, (lib. iv. Æneid. ver. 57.)

——— "Mactant lectas de more bidentes."

Which he calls elsewhere *eximii,* singled out as most excellent, (lib. iv. Georg. ver. 550.)

"Quatuor eximios præstanti corpore tauros."

And, that they might be such, there was *probatio victimarum,* proof made of sacrifices, as Pliny speaks, lib. viii. cap. 45. where he saith, such as were lame, or had one leg shorter than the other, were rejected. Which *probation* was to be made by those that brought the sacrifices; but if they did not do their duty, the priest upon examination refused to admit them to be offered.

There shall be no blemish therein.] This is an explication of what he means by *perfect,* which Solon (who seems to have taken the rites of religion from Moses) called Ἀφελῆ; in the explication of which word, Hesychius, after several other expressions, concludes with this, ὁ μήτε πλεονάζων μήτε δέων τι τοῦ σώματος, *which neither hath any part more or less than it should have.* Julius Pollux (who reports this of Solon) hath a great number of other words to express the perfection required in sacrifices, which were to be ἄρτια, ἄτομα, ὁλόκληρα, ὑγιῆ, ἄπηρα, παμμελῆ, ἀρτιμελῆ, μὴ κολοβὰ, μηδὲ ἔμπηρα, μηδὲ ἠκρωτηριασμένα, μηδὲ διάστροφα, (lib. i. cap. 1.) some of which are of the same signification, and serve only to shew how complete their sacrifices were to be.

Ver. 22. *Blind, or broken,* &c.] In this and the following verses he mentions twelve blemishes, which render any beast unfit for sacrifice; and the first is *blind,* under which the Hebrews comprehend that which the Latins call *cocles,* a beast that hath but *one eye.*

Or broken.] In the bones of the thighs, or the legs.

Or maimed.] Most take it for that which the Latins call *mutilum, that which lacketh any part.* The LXX. took it more particularly for that which had its tongue cut out: the Hebrew doctors for that whose eye-brows or lips were slit, or cut off; which is nearer to the Hebrew word *charuts* than the Vulgar, which translates it only a *scar.*

Or having a wen.] The Hebrews generally understand by the word *jabbeleth,* that which the Latins call *verruca,* a *wart,* or hard knob rising in the flesh; which is better than the Vulgar, who translates it *papulas,* which properly signifies *pimples, pushes,* or *wheals.* But I think our translation cannot be mended; a *wen* being a more manifest deformity, and more common in beasts, than the other.

Or scurvy.] This is that which the Greeks call Ψώρα, the *itch.*

Or scabbed.] Some take this word to signify the same with the Latin *impetigo,* i. e. *a ring-worm* or *tetter,* which spreads in the skin with a dry scab; though others take it for that which they call *porrigo,* for which I know no English word, unless it be the *mange.* The Hebrews take it for the *porrigo Ægyptiaca,* as Bochart observes, a scabby disease of this kind frequent among the Egyptians.

Ye shall not offer these unto the Lord.] Not so much as present them to be offered in sacrifice.

Nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the Lord.] Much less burn them upon the altar; for the Lord will not accept such sacrifices.

Ver. 23. *Either a bullock or a lamb, that hath any thing superfluous.*] This word we had before (which we translate *superfluous*), chap. xxi. 18. but it properly signifies the inequality and disproportion that there is between those parts that are pairs, as the eyes or legs; and particularly when one of them exceeds its just bigness, *ex. gr.* when one leg is longer than it should be.

Or lacking in his parts.] This word signifies just the quite contrary to the other; when one part is less, and more contracted than it should be; one leg supposed shorter than ordinary. So all the Hebrews understand these words, particularly Onkelos and Jonathan.

That mayest thou offer for a free-will-offering.] A very learned person of our own takes these words for an exception to the foregoing general rule; that such defects as these two should not hinder the acceptation of a beast for a free-will-offering, though not for a vow; and it must be acknowledged, that is the most plain and simple sense. But the Jews, as he observes, particularly R. Solomon Jarchi, expound them otherwise, and will not have this offering to signify the sacrifice of such things at the altar, but the giving them to the priest for some sacred use; to be sold, for instance, for the reparation of the temple, for which they were accepted. (See Dr. Outram, lib. i. de Sacrificiis, cap. 9. n. 2.)

But for a vow, it shall not be accepted.] Free-will-offerings were much different from vows, there being no obligation upon them to offer the former, as there was to offer the latter: and a less perfect creature would be accepted in the one case, though not in the other.

Ver. 24. *Ye shall not offer unto the Lord that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut.*] That is, as the Hebrews interpret it (and so do the LXX. and the Vulgar), any beast whose testicles were *compressed* or *bruised,* &c.

for these four ways they used to castrate a lamb (for instance) and make it wether; and so they did with kids and calves, as Bochart observes out of Aristotle and others, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 46.

Neither shall you make any offering thereof in your land.] The word *offering* is not in the Hebrew, and this passage may be thus exactly translated, *neither in your land shall ye make,* or *do.* So the LXX.: the sense of which the Vulgar expresses by adding the word *this, i. e.* the forenamed castration, either by compression or contusion, or any way; for Josephus saith, it was unlawful among them to geld any creature; which was prohibited to keep them from doing so with men, which they were taught to be abominable. And these words suggested as much, being thus translated, *Neither in your land shall it be done.* (See Selden, lib. vii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 3. p. 799.)

Ver. 25. *Neither from a stranger's hand.*] By *bennechar, the son of a stranger* (as it is in the Hebrew), who is called (chap. xxv. 47.) *a stranger and sojourner* (*viz.* a gentile that dwelt among them), is meant a pious man of another nation, who had renounced idolatry, and abstained from blood, and observed the rest of the precepts of the sons of Noah (as they called them), but was not circumcised, which would have obliged him to the whole law of Moses. Such persons, being worshippers of the true God, were permitted to bring him sacrifices to be offered at his altar. (See Grotius, lib. i. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 1. sect. 16. n. 3.)

Shall ye offer the bread of your God from any of these.] Some have taken these words, as if no sacrifice was to be accepted from a gentile, but only money, with which the priest might buy a sacrifice, and offer it for him. But this is confuted by ver. 18. and here it is evident, he only forbids them to accept of any sacrifice which had the forenamed blemishes from a gentile, who might think them not unacceptable, because the gentiles made no scruple to offer such as these last mentioned to their gods, though their laws, in some places, were against it. *The bread of your God:* the Hebrews understand hereby to be meant, only *burnt-offerings;* which Maimonides saith, were accepted from a gentile, even burnt-offerings of birds, though he had not yet renounced idolatry. But they were not to accept from him peace-offerings or meat-offerings, or sacrifices for sins of ignorance, (chap. iv. 27.) or trespass-offerings, (mentioned chap. vi. 6.) nor was a burnt-offering to be accepted, unless it was a free-will-offering, or a vow, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. iii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 4. But if he brought such spontaneous offerings as had the forementioned blemishes, the priest was to reject them (though the gentile might say they were such as had been accepted by his gods), or else he was to be scourged. So this law is briefly expounded by the Jews, when they reckon it up among their precepts, that *a defective sacrifice is not to be accepted, no, not from the hand of a gentile;* as he observes in the same book, cap. 7. where he discourses at large on this subject. And it need not seem strange a gentile should bring any such sacrifices (when their laws, as I observed before, required a choice to be made), for they were not so curious in their choice as the Hebrews; but, as Tertullian upbraids them, sacrificed *enecta, tabidosa, et scabiosa,* (Apolog. adv. Gentes, cap. 13.) which the better sort of people, perhaps, did not offer, but the vulgar did: and the priests made no scruple to accept them.

Because their corruption is in them, and blemishes be in them.] The word *corruption* seems particularly to relate unto the forementioned castration, for it signifies such a corruption as is the destruction of any member. See Bochart in his Hierozoicon, (par. ii. lib. v. cap. 4.) And *blemishes* relate to other defects, which made them unacceptable; twelve of which, as I said, are here mentioned; but the Hebrews look upon them only as examples and specimens of other the like defects, which they make in all to be fifty; as I observed before out of Selden, (lib. ii. de Success. ad Pontific. cap. 5.) Maimonides gives us a catalogue of them in his treatise of Entrance into the Sanctuary, (cap. 7.) but to make up that full number, he is constrained to add these three, which have no example among the twelve here mentioned, *viz.* such as tremble by age, or by some disease, or are torn by wild beasts.

Ver. 26. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] These laws following being of the same nature, were in all likelihood delivered at the same time with the foregoing.

Ver. 27. *And when a bullock, or sheep, or goat is brought forth.*] These were the only beasts that were allowed to be sacrificed, (ver. 19.)

Then it shall be seven days under the dam; and from the eighth day and thenceforth it shall be accepted for an offering, &c.] They were not fit for food when they were not seven days old, and therefore not for sacrifice; which was the bread or food of God, as it is called ver. 25. but this hath been sufficiently explained before, Exod. xxii. 30. I shall only add, that I have since observed that P. Cunæus hath briefly expressed the sense of Maimonides, which I there represented, (lib. iii. de Republ. Hebræor. cap. 5.) and that the Gentiles were so far from offering creatures so young, that they thought them fittest for sacrifice when they were two years old; as appears from the words of Virgil beforementioned,

——— "Mactant lectas de more bidentes."

Where Servius saith that *bidentes* were so called, because they were *biennes,* two years of age; for it was not lawful to sacrifice those that were younger, nor those that were older.

Ver. 28. *And whether it be cow, or ewe, ye shall not kill it and her young both in one day.*] Lest the young one, saith Maimonides, should happen to be killed before the dam; which would have given the greatest grief to her, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 48.) Any thing that looked like cruelty, therefore, was by this law banished from among them; for they might not so much as kill both the young and the dam on the same day, to offer them to God himself; of which he is here speaking.

Ver. 29. *And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the Lord.*] He had mentioned *free-will-offerings* and *vows* before, (ver. 21.) and now briefly touches upon the third sort of *peace-offerings.* (See chap. vii. 15, 16.)

Offer it at your own will.] Male or female; of the herd, or of the flock, (chap. iii. 1. 7. 12.) Or the meaning may be (as hath been often said), *he shall offer it in such a manner as that it be accepted.* (See chap. i. 3.)

Ver. 30. *On the same day it shall be eaten,* &c.] See chap. vii. 15.

Ver. 31. *Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and do them,* &c.] Because he had said before, (ver. 30.) and

now repeats it again in the conclusion of this verse, *I am the Lord:* to whom they owed obedience; especially when he required they should reverently use all holy things.

Ver. 32. *Neither shall ye profane my holy name.*] This may refer either to what goes before, (that they should not make him and his service contemptible, by offering such things as were defective, &c.) or be taken as a precept by itself. And then the name of God was profaned three ways (as Mr. Selden observes), besides the most grievous of all, by blasphemy. Either when a man, for fear of death, violated the Divine law; or when he contemptuously and wantonly broke any precept; or when a man of great note, for knowledge and piety, gave a scandal to others by doing such things, as were not perhaps directly against the law, yet made him lose all his authority. (See lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. juxta Disc. Hebr. cap. 10.)

But I will be hallowed among the children of Israel.] Either by the observation of his laws, or by punishing those who transgressed them: for so this phrase is used, chap. x. 3.

I am the Lord which hallow you.] Have separated you to myself, as a special people from all others, by laws different from theirs, and more excellent.

Ver. 33. *That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God.*] And moreover distinguished you from all others, by singular benefits; particularly by delivering you from the most grievous slavery, that I might make you a happy people.

I am the Lord.] When you remember my benefits, remember I am your sovereign, who expect your obedience.

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] All the laws in this chapter were delivered at one time, not long after the former.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel.*] Who were highly concerned to observe all the solemnities enjoined in this chapter, in such a manner as God required.

And say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the Lord.] It hath been anciently observed, that φιλέορτοι οἱ Σύροι, *the Syrians were great lovers of feasts.* Which made it the more reasonable (if they were so in Moses's days), that the Israelites, who were to be their neighbours in the land of Canaan, should have so many feasts appointed them, weekly, monthly, and yearly; all in honour of their God. From whence they are called *feasts of the Lord.* But this word *moed,* which we translate a *feast,* properly signifies an *assembly.* And so Mr. Thorndike would have it here translated; because the name of *feasts* is proper to those solemnities which are to be celebrated with joy and cheerfulness; whereas under this general word *moed* is comprehended the day of atonement, which is one of the *assemblies* here named, (ver. 27.) but was no *feast;* being to be observed with the greatest humiliation and affliction that could be expressed. He therefore exactly translates these words in this manner; *The assemblies of the Lord* (for the word *concerning* is not in the Hebrew) *which ye shall proclaim for holy convocations, these are my assemblies:* (see Religious Assemblies, chap. ii.) All that can be said for our translation is, that the day of atonement being a day of rest from all labour, it may go under the name of a *feast,* in opposition to working-days.

Which ye shall proclaim.] Or *call* by the sound of the trumpet, which the priests were to blow upon these days, (Numb. x. 10.)

To be holy convocations.] The Hebrew word *mikra,* which here signifies a *convocation,* signifies also *reading,* (Neh. viii. 8.) For on these days they were called to assemble together to hear the law read to them, as well as to offer sacrifice, and make their prayers to God, with thanksgivings for his benefits.

Even these are my feasts.] Or *my assemblies,* as I said before; the first of which was the sabbath, then the Passover, Pentecost, the beginning of the new year, the day of atonement, and the feast of tabernacles: which are all contained under the general word *moed,* and none besides.

Ver. 3. *Six days shall work be done.*] They were allowed all these for any sort of business, wherein they pleased to employ themselves.

But the seventh day is the sabbath of rest.] See Exod. xx. 9, 10. xxxi. 15. This was the greatest of all solemnities appointed for assemblies, returning once every week; and therefore is set in the head of all the rest; from which it seems to be distinguished, (ver. 37, 38.) And accordingly in the next verse, having here mentioned this as a day by itself, he begins to reckon the *feasts* or *assemblies of the Lord.* And the reason why this day was made a *sabbath of rest,* was, because God himself then rested from his works. In memory of which they were to keep this day free from all labour, that the belief of the creation of the world might be fixed in their minds; or, as Maimonides phrases it, (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 113.) *a belief that nothing is coævous with God.* Whence that saying of theirs (mentioned by Aben Ezra), "whosoever doth any work upon the sabbath-day, denies the work of the creation."

Ye shall do no work therein.] They were commanded so to rest on this day from all bodily labour, as not to kindle a fire, to dress the meat they ate upon it: which is not required upon any other day, but only the great day of expiation, (ver. 28. 30.) Concerning these two days alone it is said, *Thou shalt do no work upon it:* but of the days of other assemblies, no more is said but this, *Thou shalt do no servile work therein,* (chap. v. 7, 8, &c.) that is, only such work as they were wont to put their slaves to do was prohibited. For though they might not bake nor boil their meat on the sabbath-day, (Exod. xvi. 23.) nor on the day of expiation (ver. 28. of this chapter); yet on other solemn days they might make provision for their tables, Exod. xii. 16. where Aben Ezra notes, "of none of the solemn assemblies, besides the sabbath and the day of atonement, it is said *no manner of work:* only of the Passover he saith it, and addeth an exception of the meat of the soul;" that is, what was requisite for the sustenance of nature: as our Mr. Thorndike observes, in the place before quoted.

It is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.] To be kept holy in honour of the Lord, by every man, wheresoever he dwelt: for they had synagogues for worship in all their towns; though most of the other assemblies could be held only in the place where the sanctuary, and afterwards the temple was; whither all their males went up thrice a year at the great festivals. Aben Ezra therefore thus glosses upon these words: "*In all your dwellings;* in your

land, and out of your land; at home, and upon the way:" to shew that the command, (Exod. xxxv. 3.) "You shall kindle no fire throughout your habitation on the sabbath-day," was to be observed, not only whilst they lived upon manna in the wilderness, (when God gave them a double portion on the sixth day, that they might prepare it against the sabbath, Exod. xvi. 5. 29.) but in all places, whereso-ever they dwelt afterwards.

Ver. 4. *These are feasts of the Lord.*] Now follow the solemn assemblies which are to be kept by this ordinance of mine; besides that of the seventh day, which was celebrated from the beginning.

This looks like a title to all that ensues.

Even for holy convocations.] Solemn meetings of the people, who were called together to celebrate the mercies of God with sacrifices of thanksgiving and public rejoicings. Such there were in all nations, who had their Πανηγύρεις (as the Greeks called them), *general assemblies* of all the country, to do honour to their gods. As in Egypt, we are told by Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. 59. they did once a year πανηγυρίζειν in honour of Isis, Mars, and Diana. The like was in other nations, as every body knows.

Dr. Hammond hath observed something concerning this phrase *holy convocations*, upon Matt. xx. not. c.

Which ye shall proclaim in their season.] Or, in their appointed times: which here follow.

Ver. 5. *On the fourteenth day of the first month.*] See Exod. xii. 18.

At even.] See Exod. xii. 6.

Is the Lord's Passover.] See Exod. xii. 27.

Ver. 6. *And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord,* &c.] That is, then the seven days of eating unleavened bread were to begin, (Exod. xii. 15.)

Seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.] See Exod. xii. 19, 20.

Ver. 7. *On the first day ye shall have a holy convocation.*] Exod. xii. 16.

Ye shall do no servile work therein.] Such days as these were not observed so scrupulously as the seventh day of every week, on which (as I observed before) they might not boil nor bake, *i. e.* prepare their meat; which on this day was allowed, as appears from the place last named in Exodus. Nor might they stir out of their place, *i. e.* take a journey on the sabbath, (Exod. xvi. 29.) but on this day they might: as appears from Deut. xvi. 7. where, having sacrificed the passover, and eaten it on the fourteenth day at even, they have leave given them to go home the next morning, which was the first day of unleavened bread. For on this very day, betimes in the morning, they came out of Egypt, and travelled from Rameses to Succoth. By *servile work* therefore we are to understand their ordinary labours on other days, from which both they and their servants were to abstain on this day: which it was the custom of all nations to forbear, upon such great solemnities, as Strabo informs us, (lib. x.) where he saith, Κοινὸν τοῦτο καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ Βαρβάρων ἐστὶ, τὸ τὰς ἱεροποιΐας μετ' ἀνέσεως ἑορτασικῆς ποιεῖσθαι· *This is common both to Greeks and barbarians, to keep their holy days, with a festival remission of their labours.*

Ver. 8. *And ye shall offer an offering made by fire seven days unto the Lord.*] These were not merely idle times, but days for Divine service; about which there is a particular direction given afterward (Numb. xxviii. from the nineteenth to the twenty-fifth verse), where the sacrifices for every one of the seven days are prescribed. And though there is no mention of any particular work of the moral service of God upon these days (no more than there is of that sanctification of the sabbath-day), yet the Jews were not so blind, but that they were able to perceive the spiritual service of God, by prayers, and praises, and hearing the law, and meditating upon God's works, was required on these days, especially on the sabbath: which appears from Josephus and Philo, and divers others of their later writers.

In the seventh day is a holy convocation.] Exod. xii. 16.

Ye shall do no servile work therein.] It was to be observed as the first day of the seven, that the feast might conclude as it began.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Though the following could not be yet practised; yet he would have them take a particular notice of it, as no less solemnly enjoined than the foregoing.

Ver. 10. *Speak unto the children of Israel.*] They being all concerned in this precept.

And say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you.] In the wilderness they sowed no corn, and therefore could not be obliged by this precept till they came to Canaan: nay, till they had driven out the old inhabitants, and God had given them rest in the land of promise, as Moses himself seems to expound it, Deut. xii. 10, 11.

And shall reap the harvest thereof.] Begin to reap it, as it is explained, Deut. xvi. 9.

Then shall ye bring a sheaf.] Or a *handful*, as it is translated in the margin of our Bibles. And there was the very same custom among the heathen, to bring δράγμα, *a handful of the new corn*, to be offered to their gods; as Diodorus Siculus saith the practice was among the Egyptians.

Of the first-fruits.] There were several things comprehended under the name of *first-fruits*, which are commanded to be offered unto God, (Exod. xxiii. 19.) The Greeks have accurately distinguished them by proper and peculiar names. Πρωτότοκα were the *first-born* of men or of cattle, mentioned Exod. xiii. Then Πρωτογενήματα were the *first corn* that was ripe, or the *first-fruit* of trees, which they brought from the field, or from their plantations, before they ate any themselves. And then Ἀπαρχαὶ (which the Hebrews call *terumoth*, or *trumoth*) were the *first-fruits* of their wine and oil, (Numb. xviii. 12.) and the first loaves or cakes made of their wheat, mentioned below, ver. 17. (See there.)

Of your harvest.] Of barley-harvest, which began at the Passover, when they offered the first-fruits here mentioned; as wheat-harvest began at Pentecost, when they offered the first-fruits, mentioned ver. 17. as at the feast of tabernacles those of the vine, and other fruit-trees, were brought and offered. And so much weight was laid on this, and there were so many of them, and such care taken of their payment, because this was held by all mankind as a principal part of religion, to make this early acknowledgment to God for his goodness; insomuch, that they who offered no first-fruits were looked upon as atheists. So Porphyry, lib. iii. περὶ Ἀποχῆς, sect. 78. And, indeed, this was a practice derived from the beginning of the world, (Gen. iv. 3, 4.) Aristotle himself testifies as much when he saith

(lib. viii. ad Nichomachum), Αἱ ἀρχαῖαι θυσίαι καὶ σύνοδοι, &c. *The ancient sacrifices and assemblies were after the carrying in the harvest, when they offered the first-fruits,* μάλιστα γὰρ ἐν τούτοις ἐσχόλαζον τοῖς καιροῖς, *for they chiefly relaxed themselves at those seasons.*

Unto the priest.] Who offered part of it to God, and had the rest himself. For thus the Jews describe the gathering and offering of them: On the evening of the first day of the Passover-week, some were ordered by the Sanhedrin to take sickles and baskets, &c. and go out when it was dark (having a great company with them), and cut a sheaf of corn, which they brought into the court of God's house, and parched it, (as may be gathered from the second chapter of this book, ver. 14—16.) and having ground it, they sifted it often (no less than thirteen times), till it was very fine flour. After which they took out a tenth-deal (an omer, which was the tenth part of an ephah), and brought it to the priest, who took out a handful, and put it on the altar with oil and frankincense, and the remainder he had for himself. (See Dr. Lightfoot in his Temple Service, chap. xiv. sect. 2. Dr. Outram de Sacrificiis, lib. i. cap. 8. n. 6. and J. Wagenseil upon Sota, cap. 2. Annot. 11.)

Ver. 11. *And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord.*] They did not offer the corn green in the ears (as I observed in the foregoing verse), but parched, dried, ground, and scarsed; and then they waved a tenth-deal of the flour, which came from the sheaf, as a present to the Lord of the whole earth.

To be accepted for you.] To procure God's blessing upon the rest of the harvest; and that they might have liberty to use the corn it produced: which it was not lawful for them to do, till the first-fruits were given to God.

On the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.] We are not to understand by the *sabbath* the seventh day's rest, which was the opinion of the Sadducees, as R. Levi ben Gersom tells (upon the fifth of Joshua), but the day here mentioned, (ver. 7.) which was a kind of *sabbath*, because no servile work might be done therein. And therefore this *morrow after the sabbath* was the sixteenth day of Nisan, or the next day to the first of unleavened bread. So the LXX. translate it, τῇ ἐπαύριον τῆς πρώτης, *the morrow after the first:* and Josephus more plainly, τῇ δευτέρᾳ τῶν ἀζύμων ἡμέρᾳ, &c. *on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth day of the month,* &c. (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 10.) This was the first of the fifty days, which they reckoned till Pentecost, (ch. v. 15.) and was the day on which manna ceased when they came into Canaan, because then they ate of the fruits of that country, (Josh. v. 10—12.) And indeed it was not lawful for them (as I said before) to eat of the fruits of the earth, till after the Passover; because then the sheaf of the first-fruits was waved, which consecrated the rest of the corn. And so God continued manna to them till they had other food to eat.

Ver. 12. *And ye shall offer that day, when ye wave the sheaf, a he-lamb without blemish,* &c.] Though this day was not so holy as the first day of unleavened bread, yet it was a part of the festival, and was called *moed katon,* a lesser solemnity; as all the rest of the days were, between the first and the seventh. And therefore a special offering is here ordered upon this day, besides the daily burnt-sacrifice; and besides the sacrifice which was appointed (ver. 8.) to be offered upon every one of the seven days.

Ver. 13. *And the meat-offering thereof shall be two tenth-deals of fine flour,* &c.] I observed before (upon the second chapter, ver. 1.) that all sorts of bread might be offered to God, as being a very ancient sacrifice, and commonly used at every table; for which reason *wine* also is here ordered; but it was to be simple wine, not mixed, as was the heathenish custom. *Salt* also was added (chap. ii. 13.) as common at all tables; but no *honey,* nor *leaven,* which men's superstition had introduced, (and therefore expressly forbidden in that place, ver. 11.) as it did also *milk,* and *herbs,* and *leaves of trees;* not a word of which is to be found in the law of Moses. But here it is observable, that he commands *two tenth-deals* of fine flour to be offered; whereas one tenth was the common *meat-offering,* (Exod. xxix. 40.) Because, as one of them was a necessary attendant on the lamb, (mentioned before, ver. 12.) so the other was in honour of the day, which was a lesser kind of festival.

And the drink-offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of a hin.] Here is not a double proportion of wine ordered, but the usual quantity; because, perhaps, this was a thanksgiving only for their corn, not for their vintage, which came afterward.

Ver. 14. *And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self-same day that ye have brought an offering to your God.*] It was not lawful for them to reap, and therefore not to eat any of the fruits of the earth, till the forenamed first-fruits were offered, as an acknowledgment to the Donor of them. For nothing was more just and equal, all men thought, than to give some part to him, who gave to them all they had; and, in the first place, to give him his due before they took any thing to themselves. The Romans in this expressed the sense of all mankind; who, as Pliny tells us, lib. xviii. cap. 2. "Ne gustabant quidem novas fruges, aut vina, antequam sacerdotes primitias libassent," *did not so much as taste of their corn or wine, till the priests had offered the first-fruits.*

It shall be a statute for ever, &c.] As long as their polity lasted.

In all your dwellings.] Throughout the whole land of Canaan.

Ver. 15. *And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath.*] From the sixteenth day of Nisan, or the second day of unleavened bread; which was the morrow after the sabbath, (ver. 11.)

From the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering.] This is added only as a fuller description of the time from which they were to count.

Seven sabbaths shall be complete.] Seven whole weeks, reckoning that day from which the account begun, for the first day of the first of those weeks; which made forty-nine days in all. Maimonides thinks it was for the honour of this great day of Pentecost, that they were to count the days till it came; just as a man, saith he, who expects his best friend, is wont to tell the days and hours till he arrive, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 43.) And therefore the present Jews begin this supputation with a solemn prayer, saying, "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the Lord of the world, who hath sanctified us with thy precepts, and commandest us to number the days of harvest: and this is the first day." And thus they go on to pray till the seventh day, when they add, "Now there is one week:" and so

proceed in the same prayers to the evening of Pentecost. Which feast they not being able now to keep, as the law appoints, they pray to God every day, after they have done counting, that he would restore Jerusalem and the temple; and then they promise to do all that is here prescribed. And this counting in some places is performed publicly in their synagogues; yet so that every master of a family is bound every night to do it at home: (see Buxtorf. Synag. Judaica, cap. 20.)

Ver. 16. *Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days.*] The next day after the seventh sabbath (or week) made just fifty days: from which this feast was called *Pentecost:* and in the Old Testament, *the feast of weeks;* because it began the next day after the seven weeks beforementioned, Exod. xxxiv. 22.

And ye shall offer a new meat-offering to the Lord.] *viz.* Of new corn made into loaves, as it follows in the next verse: which was the first-fruits of wheat-harvest, as the place beforementioned tells us, Exod. xxxiv. 22.

This day the Samaritans take to have been the first day of the week, after the very letter of this law; which is thus made out by the great primate of Ireland: Our blessed Lord being slain at the feast of the Passover, the whole sabbath following (which was the first day of unleavened bread) he rested in his grave. The next day after that sabbath, the *sheaf,* or *omer,* of the first-fruits of the barley-harvest was offered to the Lord; when Christ rose from the dead, and became *the first-fruits of them that slept.* From this day was the account taken of the seven sabbaths, or weeks: and upon the morrow after the seventh (that is, upon our Lord's-day) was celebrated the feast of weeks, which is called *the day of the first-fruits,* (Numb. xxviii. 26.) because then were offered the first-fruits of their second, or wheat-harvest; and therefore called *the feast of harvest,* (Exod. xxiii. 16.) because then was the principal and the conclusion of the whole harvest of the year. Upon which day the apostles, having themselves received the *first-fruits of the Spirit,* begat three thousand souls, through the Word of truth, and presented them as the *first-fruits of the Christian church* unto God and unto the Lamb. Now the matter being so ordered by God, that in the observation of the feast of weeks, the seventh day of the week (the Jewish sabbath) was purposely passed over, and that great solemnity kept upon the first day of the week, no wonder the Christian church hath appropriated that day, instead of the seventh, for the service of God.

Ver. 17. *Ye shall bring out of your habitations.*] These oblations seem to have been offered at a common charge, in the name of the whole nation, which is the reason of this phrase, *Out of your habitations.* For to affirm, as some do, that *two loaves* were to be brought out of every house, or, at least, out of every town, is absurd; for they may as well say *seven lambs* (as it follows) which were offered with this bread, were to be furnished in like manner out of every family or town.

Two wave-loaves of two tenth-deals.] A double proportion, as before, ver. 13. which was presented to God, the Lord of the whole world, by waving them to all quarters. Each loaf did not contain two tenth-deals, but there was one in each loaf.

They shall be of fine flour.] Of wheat.

They shall be baken with leaven.] And therefore were not burnt upon the altar, (for that was unlawful, Lev. ii. 11, 12.) but wholly given to the priests. Whence it was, as the Jews observe, that the bread accompanying their peace-offerings of thanksgiving was leavened, (chap. vii. 13.) and not burnt on the altar, but entirely given to the priests, the servants of God, who attended at his altar, that they might feast together with him.

They are the first-fruits unto the Lord.] Other first-fruits are mentioned, ver. 10. but these were the principal, being the first-fruits of wheat-harvest, which, with all the rest, are exactly enumerated by Nehemiah, chap. x. 35—37. And that place of Pliny, mentioned ver. 14. seems to prove, that the heathen offered both the first of their fruits before they brought them out of their fields and vineyards, and also the first of what was made of them after they were brought home; which they did, partly out of gratitude to God, to thank him for making the year fruitful, and partly to pray him to grant fruitful seasons for the future.

Ver. 18. *And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish,* &c.] This being a great day, and burnt-offerings being the noblest sort of sacrifice, purely in honour of God, a greater number, both of lambs and other creatures, are required upon this solemnity.

And one young bullock, and two rams.] In Numb. xxviii. 27. it is said, *two young bullocks and one ram,* besides the seven lambs. Perhaps they were left to their liberty, either to bring one young bullock and two rams, or one ram and two young bullocks; or else those mentioned in Numbers were distinct sacrifices, besides those here mentioned: and so Josephus saith, (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 10.) that there were offered upon this day *three* young bullocks, *two* rams (it should be *three* rams), and *fourteen* lambs; all which were offered, besides the morning and evening sacrifice of every day.

They shall be a burnt-offering to the Lord, with their meat-offering, &c.] There being all sorts of sacrifices prescribed for the great solemnity of this day, he mentions the burnt-offering in the first place, because it was the principal, and offered next to the two loaves.

Ver. 19. *Then shall ye sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin-offering.*] Next followed the *sin-offering,* which, for a particular sin of the congregation, was a *bullock,* (chap. xviii. 14.) but for the sins of the nation in general, only *a kid of the goats:* for, as Maimonides observes, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 46.) the more grievous the sin was, the viler the sacrifice, there being no greater sin than idolatry, nor viler sacrifice than a she-goat; and yet this was the expiation of that sin, as they interpret chap. iv. 27. Numb. xv. 17.

And two lambs of the first year, for a sacrifice of peace-offerings.] Double the number to what was commonly offered; for this being a high day, all sorts of sacrifices (as I said before) were offered (*burnt-offerings, sin-offerings,* and *peace-offerings*) upon it, and in greater proportions (except the sin-offering) than on other days. And these were the only *peace-offerings* of the whole congregation of Israel, offered only at this one time of the year, and never else.

Ver. 20. *And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first-fruits, for a wave-offering before the Lord.*] These sacrifices, with the *trespass-offering* for a leper, (chap. xiv. 12, 24.) were the only offerings that were waved about

towards all the corners of the world. So Abarbinel upon this place: "The waving was performed by the priest, who reached them out, upward and downward, this way and that way, towards the six quarters of the world, to shew that the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;" or, as R. Levi ben Gersom speaks, "that they might understand the providence of God is every where, above and beneath, in every corner of the world."

With the two lambs.] This seems to signify the forenamed *burnt-offering* and *sin-offering* were thus waved, as well as these *peace-offerings*; that is, some part of them all, in the name of the rest; for the priest could not wave the whole body of them, they were so heavy.

They shall be holy to the Lord for the priest.] Who had not only the breast and the shoulder (as was usual); but all the flesh of these *peace-offerings* (their blood being sprinkled, and their inwards burnt) was given unto him, to be eaten by the males among the priests, in the court of the sanctuary, even as the *sin-offerings* were: for these *peace-offerings* being (as I before noted) the only peace-offerings of the whole congregation, were reckoned among the *most holy* things; whereas the peace-offerings of private men were *less holy*, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, in his Temple Service, chap. viii. sect. 4. And the true reason why the priest had all the flesh of these sacrifices was, because they being for the whole congregation, the offerers were too many, to have any portion of them distributed among them.

Ver. 21. *And ye shall proclaim on the self-same day.*] Before the solemnities began.

That it may be a holy convocation to you.] See ver. 4. The reason of this holy assembly was, partly to commemorate God's great goodness, in giving the law from Mount Sinai, on the fiftieth day after their coming out of Egypt, (which was the chief end of God's bringing them from thence, as Maimonides speaks, par. iii. More Nevoch. cap. 43.) and partly to thank him for giving them such fair hopes of completing their harvest, which had been begun at the Passover.

Ye shall do no servile work therein.] It was to be observed, as the first and the last days of unleavened bread, (ver. 7, 8.) with such a rest, as made it little different from a sabbath. And that great vision (as Maimonides calls it), at the giving of the law, lasting but one day, was the reason the memory of it was celebrated only for one day in the year; whereas the feast of unleavened bread lasted seven days, for one day was not sufficient to make them sensible enough of the affliction they endured in Egypt. But, perhaps, one day only was appointed at Pentecost to be free from all servile work, because of the great business of wheat-harvest, which was then coming on, and could not permit them to be so much at leisure, as they were when the fruits of the earth were all gathered. Then they kept a feast seven days, (ver. 39.) as they did at the beginning of barley-harvest, when the feast of unleavened bread was held: at which time harvest did not come on so fast, as it did at Pentecost; for the first-fruits then were of green corn, parched, and dried, and offered to God, for the hope they had he would bring the rest to maturity.

Ver. 22. *And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of the field,* &c.] This precept hath been sufficiently explained before, (chap. xix. 9, 10.) only the occasion of its repetition here ought to be observed, which is the mention of harvest and first-fruits, which, in gratitude, they then offered unto God, of whose goodness he would have them so sensible, as not to be unmindful of the poor; but to be such benefactors to them, that they might still receive more benefits from God.

Ver. 23. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] These words are frequently prefixed to a new matter, though delivered at the same time with what went before

Ver. 24. *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying.*] Who (as I have often said) were all concerned to take notice of such precepts.

In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, ye shall have a sabbath.] Such a sabbath as those mentioned, ver. 7, 8. 21. on which no servile work was to be done, as it follows in the next verse: for the seventh month was the first month of the year, according to the ancient computation, and continued so still to several purposes; particularly with respect to their jubilee, when they were to blow the trumpet, as they did on this day, which was the chief new moon in all the year, and the more illustrious, because it fell in the time when all the fruits of the earth were gathered.

A memorial of blowing with trumpets.] It is not easy to tell of what this blowing of trumpets was a memorial. Maimonides, in the place aforenamed, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 43.) will have it to be instituted to awaken the people out of sleep, and call them to repentance; being to put them in mind of the great day of expiation, which followed nine days after. This he explains more largely in his Jad Chazakah, in the treatise of Repentance, (cap. 3.) where he saith, "The sound of the trumpet, at this time, did in effect say, Shake off your drowsiness, ye that sleep; and, being awaked, watch to your duty. Search and try your ways; remember your Creator, and repent. You, whom the vanity of the times hath led into a forgetfulness of the truth; who spend your days wandering after empty things, which profit nothing; bethink yourselves, and take care of your souls. Let every one forsake his evil way, and his thoughts which are not good." And accordingly he saith, in the same place, "the Israelites were wont to multiply alms and good works, and to apply themselves to the precepts (as his phrase is), from the beginning of the year, till the day of atonement, more diligently than at any other time; rising in the night to pray in their synagogues till break of day," &c. But, though this be very pious, I see no ground for it; no more than for what they say of commemorating the deliverance of Isaac: for why should not blowing of trumpets be ordered for a preparation to other solemn days, and in memory of other deliverances, as well as this of Isaac?

It seems more probable, that all nations making great shouting, rejoicing, and feasting in the beginning of the year, at the first new moon (as many have observed), hoping the rest of the year, by this means, would prove more prosperous; God was pleased to ordain this great rejoicing among his people, in honour of himself, upon the day of the first new moon (which was to be continued every first day of the month), that he might preserve them from the worship of the *moon*, and make them sensible, that he alone gave the good years, and renewed his mercies daily, from month to month, upon them. Bonfrerius imagines, that God put an honour upon this month, because

it was the *seventh:* that, as every *seventh day* was a sabbath, and every *seventh year* the land rested, &c. so every *seventh month* of every year should be a kind of sabbatical month; there being more feasts in this month than in any other month in the year.

But all this doth not explain what this blowing of trumpets was a *memorial* of, which I take to be the creation of the world, which was in *autumn;* upon which account it was, that they anciently began their year at this time, as the eastern people do at this day. They acknowledged also God's goodness, in blessing all the year past, and bringing them to the beginning of a new year, which they prayed him to make happy to them.

They began to blow at sun-rise, and continued it till sun-set. He that sounded the trumpet began with the usual prayer, *Blessed be God, who hath sanctified us with his precepts,* &c. subjoining these words, *Blessed be God, who hath hitherto preserved us in life, and brought us unto this time.* When all was ended, the people said, with a loud voice, these words of the Psalmist, (Psal. lxxxix. 15.) *Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.* (See Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. cap. 24.)

Such blowing with trumpets was used by the gentiles; particularly in the solemnities they observed in honour of the mother of the gods: one whole day (which was the second) being spent in blowing of trumpets, as Julian tells us, in his fifth oration upon this subject, εἶθ' ἑξῆς περισαλπισμὸς παραλαμβάνεται, p. 168.

Ver. 25. *Ye shall do no servile work therein.*] It was a very solemn day, like the day of Pentecost, (ver. 21.) and others beforenoted, on which they might only make provision for their meals, (Exod. xii. 16.) which were wont to be very liberal upon this day. And, among other dishes, they serve up to the table a ram's head, in memory of that ram which was sacrificed in the room of Isaac, which they fancy was upon this day.

But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.] About which directions are given afterward, (Numb. xxix. 2, &c.) For it was not to be a day of rest merely, but of religion.

Ver. 26. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] The following precept is of great moment, which makes this preface to be set before it.

Ver. 27. *Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement.*] This hath been explained, chap. xvi. 29—31.

It shall be a holy convocation to you.] On which they were to assemble, to humble themselves before God; as it here follows.

And ye shall afflict your souls.] See chap. xvi. I shall only add, that the Jews fancy this solemn day of fasting was appointed, partly to avert those diseases which were wont to be rife in the autumnal season; and this day chosen rather than any other, that they might express their grief at that time, when the sin of the golden calf was committed.

And offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.] A *burnt-offering,* about which directions are given in Numb. xxix. 8.

Ver. 28. *And ye shall do no work on that same day.*] See ver. 3. and chap. xvi. 31.

For it is a day of atonement.] Set apart wholly for this work; which is at large described in chap. xvi.

To make an atonement for you before the Lord your God.] First the priest made an atonement for himself and his family, (chap. xvi. 6, &c.) and then for the people, and for the holy place, &c. (ver. 15, 16. 33.)

Ver. 29. *For whatsoever soul he be that shall not be afflicted on that day, he shall be cut off from among his people.*] The affliction here spoken of consisted chiefly in abstaining from all manner of food (as the Jews make account) from one evening to the next: in which time, if any man ate to satisfy his appetite, that is, above the quantity of a date, he was in danger to be cut off; by the hand of God, I suppose: so they say, in Joma, cap. 8. n. 2. Besides which, there were four other mortifications; for no man was to put on his shoes, nor anoint himself, nor wash his face, nor enjoy his wife. (See Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. cap. 26.)

Ver. 30. *And whatsoever soul he be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.*] The two great things required on this day, being to afflict themselves, and to rest from labour; they who transgressed either of these commands, are threatened to be cut off, and that by God himself, as this verse teaches us to expound the foregoing.

Ver. 31. *Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever,* &c.] This is repeated again, because it was a thing of such high importance, that they should wholly attend to the business of this great day, which was a day of humiliation and repentance, and making their peace with God. And, as the Jews themselves observe, there was no man so good but he had offended in some thing or other: and besides, they were to afflict themselves for the sins of the whole body of the nation.

Ver. 32. *It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest.*] As the weekly sabbath was, (ver. 3.) when they did not merely *rest* from labour, but employed themselves in the Divine service; as (ver. 8.) I observed they did on other sabbaths of lesser strictness. And this the heathens themselves could discern, that the design of their festivals, which were days of ease and remission of labours, was τὸν νοῦν ἀπάγειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρωπικῶν ἀσχολημάτων, *to withdraw the mind from human employments,* τὸν δὲ οὕτως τρέπει πρὸς τὸ θεῖον, *that so a man may have leisure to turn his mind towards God;* which is a most Divine saying of Strabo, which, I think, I have noted before, but cannot be too oft repeated, (lib. x. Geograph. p. 467.)

And ye shall afflict your souls in the ninth day of the month at even.] They kept the high-priest on the *even of the day of expiation* from eating much, because it would make him sleepy, as they tell us in Joma, (cap. 1. n. 4.) Where our learned Sheringham observes, that the evening before is called *the even of the day of expiation,* because they began the fast before the setting of the sun; so that the whole evening belonged to the following sabbath. By which these two places, chap. xvi. 29. where it is said they shall afflict their souls on the *tenth* day, and this verse, which saith on the *ninth* day, which seem to clash one with another, may be easily reconciled; for they began to afflict themselves in the conclusion of the *ninth* day, and ended the fast in the conclusion of the *tenth.* (See Manasseh ben Israel, Quest. 4. ad Lev.)

From even unto even shall ye celebrate your sabbath.] This justifies what was just now said, that this day began in the even of the *ninth* day, and continued till the even of the *tenth.*

Your sabbath.] So this day was called, because no manner of work might be done on this day, no more than on the seventh, or weekly sabbath, (ver. 31.) And so it is called by the prophet, Isa. lviii. 13.

Ver. 33. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] The same preface is prefixed to this, as to the rest, because it was one of the three greatest solemnities appointed by God in remembrance of his benefits. (See ver. 39.)

Ver. 34. *The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles, for seven days unto the Lord.*] It was to begin on the fifteenth day, and continue seven days, as the feast of unleavened bread did. The design of this feast is thus expressed by Maimonides, who compares it with the Passover; which served, saith he, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 43.) to preserve the memory of all the miracles which God did in Egypt, out of which he brought them at that time; as the feast of tabernacles did to preserve the memory of the signs and wonders he did in the wilderness, where he afforded them his Divine protection under a glorious cloud, and preserved them without any houses, both in the cold of winter and heat of summer. In short, there are two ends mentioned in this chapter of the institution of this festival; one to give thanks for the fruits of the earth, which were then gathered, (ver. 39.) another, and the principal, in a grateful remembrance that they dwelt in booths forty years, and were brought into better habitations when they came to Canaan, (ver. 42, 43.)

Ver. 35. *And on the first day shall be a holy convocation,* &c.] It was to be observed as the day of Pentecost, (ver. 21.) And they every one carried in their hands the bough of some goodly tree, as the Hebrews understand the first words of ver. 40. Josephus, describing this festivity, (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 10.) mentions, in the first place, boughs of myrtle.

Ver. 36. *Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.*] The peculiar sacrifices, with their meat-offerings, which were to be offered on these seven days, are distinctly set down in Numb. xxix. from the thirteenth verse to the end, where it will be most proper to consider them.

On the eighth day shall be a holy convocation unto you.] See ver. 4.

And ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.] A *burnt-offering*, with a *meat-offering* attending upon it, according to the appointment in Numb. xxix. 36, 37.

It is a solemn assembly.] This is a new word, which is not used hitherto concerning any of the feasts here mentioned; signifying, as we translate it in the margin, *a day of restraint*, or rather, *a closing*, or *concluding day*, for then the solemnity ended. And so Theodoret, τὸ τέλος τῶν ἑορτῶν, *the conclusion of the feasts;* whence the last day of the feast of unleavened bread is also called by this name of *atzereth*, (Deut. xvi. 8.) And so is the feast of Pentecost (which was kept in the end of seven weeks) called, by Josephus, by the same name of *asartha*, (lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 10.) This, therefore, as it was the *last*, so it was the *great day* of the feast, as St. John calls it, chap. vii. 37. On which day they read the last section of the law, and so concluded the reading of the whole five books of Moses. And thence any great solemnity is called by this name of *atzereth*, (2 Kings x. 20. Joel i. 14.) This seems to me to be a far better account of this word, than that which the Jews commonly give, who render it *a day of detention;* because, saith Abarbinel, they were bound to detain the feast to this day (whereas no other feast continued more than seven days), staying at Jerusalem till it was over; whence this day seems to him to be to the feast of tabernacles, as the day of Pentecost was to the Passover; for as they were bound to count seven weeks from that time, and then made this fiftieth day a feast, so they are here commanded, after the seven days of the feast of tabernacles, to stay and feast one day more. Others of them, as R. Solomon Jarchi, say this was as if a man, having been entertained by his friend seven days, should, to express greater kindness to him, be detained one day more.

And ye shall do no servile work therein.] But spend their time in feasting, mirth, and rejoicing, with thankful acknowledgments of God's benefits to them: (see ver. 7, 8.)

Ver. 37. *These are the feasts* (or assemblies) *of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations.*] This was the preface to them, (ver. 4.) and now is the conclusion, to make them the more observed.

To offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering, and a sacrifice, &c.] These offerings are particularly set down (as hath been noted all along) in the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters of Numbers; and, by *a sacrifice*, seems here to be meant *a sin-offering;* which is ordered, throughout those two chapters, together with burnt-offerings, upon all these festivals.

Ver. 38. *Besides the sabbaths of the Lord.*] *i. e.* Besides the sacrifices appointed upon all the sabbaths in the year, which were not to be omitted, if any of the feasts here mentioned fell upon the seventh day of the week.

And besides your gifts.] Most understand by *gifts*, such presents as men made to God, beyond their first-fruits and tenths; but it may be thought only a general word, including the two particulars which follow, *vows* and *free-will-offerings.*

Ver. 39. *Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land,* &c.] Here is no new injunction in this verse, but only an enforcement of what was said before, the very same days being appointed to be observed with those named, ver. 24. Therefore, the Hebrew particle *ak* should not have been translated *also*, but *surely*, or *certainly*, or *truly*, as we translate it in other places; particularly Gen. xxix. 14. "Surely thou art my bone and my flesh." Psal. lxxiii. 1. "Truly God is good to Israel." Lam. ii. 16. "Certainly this is the day that we looked for."

When ye have gathered in the fruit of the land.] These words give a reason of the repetition of the command, because there was something more designed in this festival than merely the remembrance of their condition in the wilderness; which was, to express their thankfulness to God for their desired harvest, which they had now gathered; for which cause, besides the seven days which were in commemoration of their dwelling in tents in the wilderness, there was an eighth added, to acknowledge the mercy of receiving the fruits of the earth.

Ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days.] This was the feast of tabernacles, which lasted all these seven days.

On the first day shall be a sabbath.] See ver. 35.

And on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.] In the institu-

tion of the feast of unleavened bread, it is said, *In the seventh day is a holy convocation, ye shall do no servile work therein; i. e.* it shall be a sabbath; (ver. 8.) but here the *eighth* day hath that honour put upon it (not the *seventh*), being added to the festival for a peculiar reason, and therefore to be observed in a very solemn manner; for the feast of tabernacles fell in the time of vintage, when the fruits of the earth were, in a manner, all gathered, (Deut. xvi. 13.) from whence it is called by the name of the *feast of ingatherings*, (Exod. xxiii. 16.) not because the whole feast was celebrated on this account, but because a principal part of it was kept on this score; *viz.* the *eighth day*, as the other *seven* days were in memory of their dwelling in tents. But, that the *eighth* day had no relation to this is apparent; for they did not dwell in tabernacles on the *eighth* day of this feast, but only on the *seven* preceding; which being ended, they returned to their houses, and kept this day there to another purpose, here named; for so it is expressly said, ver. 42. *Ye shall dwell in booths seven days;* which being over, a great solemnity continued to another purpose, and was kept after another manner, not in booths, but in their houses. So Maimonides, in his More Nevoch. (par. iii. cap. 43.) "That we go from the feast of tabernacles to another solemnity, on the eighth day, it tends to make our joys perfect; which could not be done in tabernacles, but in large and spacious houses and palaces;" where they made still greater feasts, as well as sung the praises of God at the temple, with trumpets and instruments of music; in which service some say those three Psalms were used, which have the title of *Alhagittith, (viz.* Psal. viii. lxxxi. and lxxxv.) For *gath* signifies a wine-press, and therefore they think these Psalms were sung in the time of the vintage. Certain it is, that the two last named were sung at some great solemnity, wherein they celebrated God's wonderful providence over them: and, that they used to sing and shout at their vintage, is clear from Judges ix. 27. Isai. xvi. 9, 10. Jer. xlviii. 33. Hosea ii. 15. which the gentiles imitated; who, when they pressed their grapes, sung a song to Bacchus, which was thence called ἐπιλήνιος, *the song of the wine-press:* (see Scaliger, lib. i. Poet. cap. 15.)

Now this being a time of such great rejoicing, in both respects, it led Plutarch into a fancy, that the Jews celebrated two feasts unto Bacchus at this time; for he writes, in his Symposiacs, (lib. i. prob. 3.) that in the midst of the vintage the Jews spread tables furnished with all manner of fruit, and lived in tabernacles, made especially of palms and ivy wreathed together, and called the day which goes before the feast, *the day of tabernacles.* And then, a few days after, saith he, they kept another festivity; which openly shews it was dedicated to Bacchus, for they carried boughs of palms in their hands, &c. with which they went into the temple; the Levites (who he fancies were called so from Εὔιος, which was the name of Bacchus) going before with instruments of music, &c. All which may very well incline us to think, that the gentiles corrupted this holy festivity (as they did other sacred institutions), and turned it into the profane Bacchanalia; which is no improbable conjecture of Jo. Mich. Dilherrus, in his Dissert. de Cacozel. Gentil. cap. 3.

Ver. 40. *And ye shall take you on the first day.*] Then they began to build their booths, that they might dwell in them the rest of the feast.

Boughs of goodly trees, &c.] Some fancy, that this is not a direction for the building of booths with these branches, but for the carrying them in their hands, as Josephus tells us, lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 10. And they say these branches were called *hosannas,* because they sung those words of the Psalmist as they marched along with these boughs in their hands, "Save now [in the Hebrew the word is *hosan-na*] O Lord: O Lord, send now prosperity," Psal. cxviii. 25. And this is so riveted in the minds of the Jews, that Aben Ezra makes it the opinion of the Sadducees to hold that they were not for any other use. But it is evident, from Nehem. viii. 15. that they cut these branches to make booths, and not to carry in their hands; though it is likely that this might also be thought a fitting expression of joy in aftertimes, especially after they were expelled out of their own land. It is not unlikely also that they celebrated this festival by singing of *hosannas,* among other tokens of rejoicing, praying for a happy new year, whose feast went a little before on the first of this month; whence the rabbins call this feast of tabernacles by the name of *hosanna,* and the last day of it they call *hosanna rabba.* And they repeat this often in their prayers at that time, as they tell us in their *Minhagim* (or books of rituals), saying,

> "For thy sake, O our Creator, hosanna.
> For thy sake, O our Redeemer, hosanna.
> For thy sake, O our Seeker, hosanna."

As if they beseeched the blessed Trinity to save them, and send help to them. In short, they call the prayers they say at this feast by the name of *hosannas,* as Joh. Mich. Dilherrus hath observed, lib. ii. Electorum, cap. 20.

Boughs.] The Hebrew word *pri* signifies *fruit,* as is noted in the margin of our Bibles; from whence some have gathered that they were to be the boughs of fruit-bearing-trees; nay, the Jews fancy they were to be boughs with their fruit, as well as leaves on them. But Buxtorf made no doubt (in his sixteenth chapter of Synag. Judaica), that the word is rightly translated a *bough,* whether without fruit or with it; though in later editions of that book this passage be left out.

Goodly trees.] The Hebrew word *hadar* doth not merely signify that which is *beautiful* and *goodly,* but that which is *large* and *well spread;* as is observed by Hottinger, in his Smegma Orientale, lib. i. cap. 7. where he thinks these words may be thus exactly translated, *Take to you the boughs of trees with broad leaves, such as the branches of palm-trees;* so that *hadar* is a general word, and *branches of palm-trees* a special instance of a tree with spacious leaves, which were the fittest to be used, because they were best able to defend them, either from heat, or cold, or rain. Maimonides takes this word to signify the boughs of a particular tree, which he will have to be a *citron:* and the Jews are so possessed with this opinion, that, at this day, they fancy the feast cannot be celebrated without such branches; and therefore the Jews now in Germany send into Spain, and endeavour to get one every year with the *pomecitrons* on it; and, after the feast, they offer the citrons to their friends as a great present. Hottinger saith he had one presented to him at Heidelberg, that very year he wrote his book now mentioned. (See Dr. Lightfoot, in his Temple Service, chap. 6. sect. 3. and Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. cap. 21.)

Branches of palm-trees.] With which Judea abounded, and was so noted for them, that in the ancient coins a palm-tree represented that country.

And the boughs of thick trees.] Which were shady, and afforded a good shelter. The Jews take these for myrtles, which have very thick leaves and boughs, close one to another, though the leaves be small.

And willows of the brook.] If this translation be right, it is likely they served only to twine about the rest, and bind them together: and therefore, in Nehemiah viii. 15. no mention is made of them; their tabernacles not consisting of such boughs, which were used only for the compacting and tying together the other.

And ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days.] These were the seven days of the feast of tabernacles (as I noted before), which were spent in feasting, and other tokens of joy, with thanks to God for his great goodness, who had brought them out of the wilderness, where they had no fig-trees, vines, or pomegranates, into a country which abounded with fruitful trees of all sorts; which was the reason, Maimonides thinks, that Moses bids them take the boughs of the most *goodly trees* wherewith to build their booths, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 43.)

But of all the joys at this festival none was comparable to that *of drawing and pouring out water;* concerning which the Talmudists have this noted saying, "He that never saw the rejoicing of drawing water, never saw rejoicing in all his life." The manner of which is described out of the Jewish writers by Dr. Lightfoot, in his Temple Service, chap. 16. sect. 4. And our blessed Saviour is thought to allude to it, when, in the last, the great day of this feast, he cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, &c. out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," John vii. 37, 38. But I have not met with any one that gives a tolerable reason of this custom at the feast of tabernacles; which I take to have been in memory of that water which followed them all the time they were in the wilderness, without which they had perished; and in thankfulness to God, that he had brought them into a "land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills," as well as into "a land of vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates," &c. as Moses speaks, Deut. viii. 7, 8.

Ver. 41. *And ye shall keep it a feast unto the Lord seven days in the year.*] He repeats it again, because it was of very great importance that they should keep in mind such a singular benefit as this, of their preservation in the wilderness.

It shall be a statute for ever in your generations.] For the end mentioned ver. 43.

Ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month.] They came out of Egypt in the first month, and then began to dwell in tabernacles at Succoth, (Exod. xii. 37.) and, from that place, were conducted ever after under the cloud, (Exod. xiii. 20, 21.) which being in that month we call March, some may think it had been most proper to have kept this feast at that time of the year, and not in September. To which the Jews answer, that in March summer began, when it was usual for people to dwell in booths, as more refreshing than houses: so that if they had kept this feast then, it would not have been known that they dwelt in booths by a singular command of God, and in memory of a Divine benefit; but men would have thought the season of the year led them to it. Therefore God appointed it in the *seventh* month, which is a time of cold and rain, when men commonly left their tabernacles, and betook themselves to their houses; that it might appear they did not go out of their houses into booths for their own pleasure, or from common custom, but by the Divine precept, in memory of a marvellous benefit: yet the fifteenth day of this month was appointed for the beginning of this feast, because it was upon the fifteenth day of the first month that they marched out of Egypt to Succoth.

Ver. 42. *Ye shall dwell in booths seven days.*] They left their houses for seven days, and went into the fields, and pitched their tents there, or on their house-tops, or in their court-yards; as we read in Nehem. viii. 17.

All that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths.] Sick people were excepted; and the rabbins also freed women and little children from this obligation. If the rain likewise proved so great that they could not live there dry, and the cold so intense that it endangered their healths, they might all return to their houses.

Ver. 43. *That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths.*] This expresses the end and intention of this feast, which was, to preserve a memory in future ages of the goodness of God to their forefathers, in affording them his Divine protection; which overshadowed them, and was a covering to them (when they had no houses), by that glorious cloud which went before them to conduct them. For all the forty years they were in the wilderness, it overspread them like a tabernacle, and defended them from the injury of the weather, and wild beasts, and all their enemies; they having no other shelter in that desolate place, but only this: and consequently, this feast was instituted to make them sensible how very happy they were in goodly cities and fine painted houses (as Maimonides speaks in the place abovementioned), when they came to the good land promised to their fathers, who wandered in a howling wilderness, without any certain dwelling-place.

And another feast was tacked to this, on the eighth day, on purpose to make them more sensible of the happy exchange of their condition from a wilderness into a land of corn, and wine, and oil, which they had plentifully gathered. Dr. Lightfoot, in his Harmony of the Evangelists, upon Luke iii. 21. hath another reason for the observation of this festival; for which I can see no ground, and therefore do not mention it, but refer the reader to the first volume of his works, p. 477.

When I brought them out of the land of Egypt.] For the very first place where they rested, after their first day's march out of Egypt, was called *Succoth*, (as I observed before), that is, *tabernacles;* because here they began to spread their tents, in which they lived ever after, for forty years. Nay, in the very land of Canaan there were some who preferred tents before houses, as appears by that phrase we meet with so often, when any assembly or army was dissolved, *They went every man to his tent.* And, indeed, it was the most ancient way of living, for shepherds, and such as feed cattle, (as Moses observes, Gen. iv. 20.) and therefore no wonder it lasted so long among the Israelites, who originally were such people.

I am the Lord your God.] Whose commands ought to

be observed, and whose benefits ought to be remembered.

Ver. 44. *And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the Lord.*] So he was commanded to do, ver. 2. they being concerned, as much as Aaron and the priests, in keeping these holy solemnities in honour of the Lord.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Directions having been given, after the setting up of the tabernacle, for the several sorts of sacrifices that were to be offered there (particularly upon the great day of atonement); and Aaron and his sons having been consecrated, and care taken that none of their posterity should minister before God, but such only as were without blemish; nor any other sacrifices be offered but such as were every way perfect; and only such feasts observed as are mentioned in the foregoing chapter: he proceeds now to give order for the daily service of God in the sanctuary, which was not yet settled, till the princes had all made their offerings, &c. (Numb. vii. 1, 2, &c. viii. 1.)

Ver. 2. *Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee.*] The daily sacrifices were to be maintained at the public charge, and so were the incense and the lamps; and therefore it was proper to speak to all the people, in whose name the priests performed all these things, to take care they should be furnished with them. (See Exod. xxx. 13, &c.)

Pure oil-olive, beaten, for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually.] All this hath been explained, Exod. xxvii. 20. where this order was first given, and now is commanded to be put in execution. It is not improbable that the oil, to make it more pure and free from all dregs, passed through two strainers into the lamps; as Fortunatus Scacchus endeavours to make out, (Myrothec. i. Elæochrys. Sacr. 10.)

Ver. 3. *Without the veil of the testimony,* &c.] This is a short expression, which, in Exod. xxvii. 21. is delivered more fully, *without the veil, which is before the testimony,* that is, before the ark.

Shall Aaron order it.] He or his sons, as it is explained in Exod. xxvii. 21.

From the evening unto the morning.] The Hebrew word *boker* properly signifies, that part of the *morning* which is from break of day till sun-rise; and the other word *arvaim,* the *evening,* after sun-set, till it be dark. Therefore, very early in the morning, and late at night, the priests were to look after the lamps.

Before the Lord continually.] For the lamps burnt on one side of the sanctuary, as the table stood on the other side with the shew-bread on it; and both of them *before the Lord, i. e.* before the ark of the testimony, where the Divine Majesty dwelt, (Exod. xxv. 30. xxvi. 35.)

It shall be a statute for ever, &c.] Exod. xxvii. 21.

Ver. 4. *He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick.*] The candlestick was made of *pure gold,* (Exod. xxv. 31. xxxvii. 17.) and thence seems to be called the *pure candlestick,* (Exod. xxxi. 8.) But here it is possible Moses may have respect to the making it clean every day, before the lamps were lighted.

Before the Lord continually.] See Exod. xxx. 7, 8.

Ver. 5. *And thou shalt take fine flour.*] Of the best wheat.

And bake twelve cakes.] These are called *the bread of the presence* (which we translate *shew-bread*), in the place now named, Exod. xxv. 30. where see what I have noted. They were prepared by the Levites, (1 Chron. ix. 32. xxiii. 29.) and were in number twelve, to represent the twelve tribes of Israel as continually before God, *i. e.* under the care of his gracious providence. Nor was this number diminished after the apostacy of ten tribes from the worship of God at the tabernacle; but still twelve cakes were set before the Lord, because there was a remnant of true Israelites among them, (1 Kings xxx. 18.) and this was a constant testimony against those apostates, and served to turn them back to the right worship of God at that place; where they were assured they and their sacrifices would be acceptable, and no where else: which made Abijah mention this to Jeroboam and the ten tribes, among other things that should induce them to repent of their forsaking God and his dwelling-place; where he tells them, "the priests, the sons of Aaron, minister; and the Levites wait on their business: and they burn unto the Lord, every morning and every evening, burnt-sacrifices and sweet incense: the shew-bread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold, with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening," &c. (See 2 Chron. xiii. 9—11, &c.)

Two tenth-deals shall be in one cake.] That is, two *omers;* for an *omer* was the tenth part of an *ephah,* (Exod. xvi. 36.) Where we likewise read, ver. 22. that every Israelite, while they were in the wilderness, gathered just this quantity against every sabbath. On which day these cakes being set upon God's table, (as it here follows, ver. 8.) Dr. Lightfoot thinks, both the measure and the time were designed to put the Israelites in mind of their sustenance in the wilderness.

Ver. 6. *And thou shalt set them in two rows,* &c.] One upon another, as the Hebrew writers expound it. Who say also, that they were set length-wise cross over the breadth of the table; and that they were ten hand-breadths long, and five broad, and seven fingers thick. (See Dr. Lightfoot's Temple Service, chap. 14. sect. 5.)

Upon the pure table.] It was called *pure,* because it was overlaid with pure gold, (Exod. xxv. 24.) and, we may be sure, was kept very clean and bright.

Before the Lord.] Who dwelt in the most holy place, before which the bread was set.

Ver. 7. *And thou shalt put pure frankincense.*] The best that could be got, unmixed with any thing else. And there was no better in the world than their neighbouring countries afforded.

Upon each row.] On the top of each row of cakes there was set a golden dish, with a handful of frankincense therein.

That it may be on the bread.] Or, *for the bread.* That is, offered unto God, instead of the bread; which was to be given to the priests, who waited on him at his table, for their portion.

For a memorial.] For an acknowledgment of God, and of his sovereignty over them; and to beseech him to be always gracious to them; (see chap. ii. ver. 2.) and to represent also (as Conradus Pellicanus understands it) that God was ever mindful of his people, and had a great love

to them; for *the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears open to their prayers.*

Even an offering made by fire unto the Lord.] The frankincense being set upon the bread, they seem to be considered as one thing; part of which was to be offered unto God, and the rest to be given to his ministers. Now, instead of the bread, which was the principal, the frankincense was burnt every week unto the Lord, when the bread was eaten by the priests. Which bread, it is evident, (ver. 9.) is called *one of the offerings of the Lord made by fire;* because this frankincense, which stood upon it all the week, was burnt, as an oblation to him.

Ver. 8. *Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the Lord continually.*] The shew-bread was prepared the evening before; and then, on the sabbath, four priests went in to fetch away the old loaves and frankincense that had stood there all the week before; and other four followed after them to carry new ones and frankincense in their stead: for two of them carried the two rows of bread (six cakes a-piece), and the other two carried each of them a golden dish, in which the frankincense was set upon the bread. (See Dr. Lightfoot of the Temple Service, chap. 14. sect. 5.)

Being taken from the children of Israel.] At whose charge they were provided, though prepared by the Levites. (See Nehem. x. 32, 33.)

By an everlasting covenant.] By virtue of that command (which they had all agreed to observe) which required the shew-bread to be set before the Lord alway, (Exod. xxiv. 3. xxv. 30.)

Ver. 9. *And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'.*] Who, as God's servants, ate of the bread which came from his table.

And they shall eat it in the holy place.] For the most holy things could be eaten no where else. (See chap. iv. 26. 29.)

For it is most holy unto him.] See chap. ii. of this book, ver. 3.

Of the offerings of the Lord made by fire.] It need not seem strange that this bread, which was not burnt upon the altar as meat-offerings were, should be reckoned among the offerings made by fire; for as the altar (where those meat-offerings were burnt) is called God's table, (Mal. i. 12.) so this table, where the shew-bread stood, was really God's altar: insomuch that the bread, which was set upon it before him, was looked upon as offered unto him; and the frankincense set upon the bread, as a part of it, being really burnt, it may be called an *offering made by fire.* Thus the gentiles also, as an excellent person of our own hath observed, thought tables, rightly dedicated unto their gods, to supply the place of altars. So Macrobius saith, (lib. iii. Saturnal. cap. 11.) it evidently appeared, by Papyrian's law, that *aræ vicem præstare posse mensam dicatam, a table consecrated might serve instead of an altar.* Of which he gives an instance in the temple of Juno Populonia; and then proceeds to give a reason for it, because altars and tables, *eodem die, quo ædes ipsæ, dedicari solent, were wont to be dedicated on the same day with the temples themselves.* From whence it was that a table, *hoc ritu dedicata, dedicated in this manner,* was of the same use in the temple with an altar. (See Dr. Outram de Sacrificiis, lib. i. cap. 8. n. 7.)

By a perpetual statute.] As long as these sacrifices lasted.

Ver. 10. *And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel.*] In the Hebrew the words run thus; *And there went out the son of an Israelitish woman, and he was the son of an Egyptian man, in the midst of* (or, *among*) *the children of Israel:* which last words signify, that, though his father was an Egyptian by birth, yet he was become a proselyte by religion: and was one of those (as it is probable) who went along with the Israelites when God brought them out of Egypt, (Exod. xii. 38.) So R. Solomon Jarchi interprets this phrase, *among the children of Israel:* hence, saith he, we learn, that he *was a proselyte of righteousness.* And Aben Ezra to the same purpose, *he was received into the number of the Jews.* See a great many more in Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 1. numb. 2. where he observes, that it is the common opinion of the Jews, this man was the son of him whom Moses killed in Egypt, (Exod. ii. 12.)

And this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp.] When God was delivering the foregoing laws unto Moses, this case seems to have happened. And the Jews say the controversy between these two was this: the former, looking upon himself as having a good right to it by his mother, came and endeavoured to set up a tent among the children of Dan, in that place where their tribe had pitched their tents; which was opposed by one of that tribe, who told him, the right of his mother would do him no service, unless his father had been an Israelite: for the law was, (Numb. ii. 2.) that every man of the children of Israel should pitch by his own standard, with the *ensign of their father's house:* which law, though given afterward, yet they suppose was the rule before; by which this man was condemned, by those that heard the cause, to be in the wrong.

Ver. 11. *And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the Lord, and cursed.*] Sentence being given against him, he uttered *blasphemous words* against God himself (perhaps renounced the Lord), and also *cursed* those judges that had condemned him.

The Jews commonly think, that this blasphemy was his pronouncing the peculiar name of God, which he heard at Mount Sinai, when the law was given. But this is a mere fancy; for there were some reproachful words uttered against God, as well as against the judges, as appears from ver. 15. And they themselves acknowledge, that a proselyte was guilty of death, whether he cursed by the proper name of God, or any other, as Mr. Selden shews, (lib. ii. de Jure N. et G. cap. 12.) Pellicanus thinks it probable that this man mocked at the foregoing laws, which were delivered about the worship of God; and contemned God himself, when he was told by whose authority they were enacted.

And they brought him unto Moses.] If the occasion of their strife was such as the Jews imagine, then Mr. Selden thinks it highly probable that the cause had been heard and judged by some of the lesser courts established by Jethro's advice, (Exod. xviii. 21, 22.) where the blasphemy had been so plainly proved, that he was convicted of it: but they, doubting about the punishment of so high a crime, referred the consideration of that to Moses, as the supreme judge.

And his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of

Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.] I see no reason of mentioning the name of the woman from whom he was descended, but that all might be satisfied of the truth of this history.

Ver. 12. *And they put him in ward.*] Committed him to prison, that he might be secured till his punishment was declared.

That the mind of the Lord might be shewed them.] In the Hebrew the words are, *That it might be expounded to them (viz.* by Moses), *according to the mouth of the Lord;* that is, as the Lord should declare to him. And so Onkelos renders them, *Till the matter was expounded to them, according to the sentence of the word of the Lord.* For it is noted here, by a famous commentator among the Jews, (as Mr. Selden observes in the place beforementioned, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 1.) that God was consulted about this matter, "Because they did not know whether he was to die for this crime; or whether his judgment was to be expected from the hand of Heaven, or otherwise:" whence Jarchi says, "They did not know whether he was guilty of death or not." And so Theodoret, Q. xxxiii. in Lev. There was no law, as yet, about this matter: but there was a plain law, that whosoever cursed his father or mother should die, (Exod. xxi. 17.) from whence they might justly infer he was to be so punished, who cursed his heavenly Father; there being also another law against those that reviled the judges and rulers, (Exod. xxii. 28.) And therefore I take it, they only doubted what kind of death he should die, about which Moses consulted the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] It is likely Moses went into the sanctuary to inquire of God, who, from the mercy-seat, pronounced the following sentence against him; and also made a perpetual law about this case, with some others.

Ver. 14. *Bring forth him that cursed without the camp.*] This is the sentence pronounced by the mouth of God, from whom they expected it. And, first, he orders the criminal to be carried forth out of the camp, as an *unclean,* (Numb. v. 2, 3.) nay, an *accursed* thing, (Josh. vii. 24.)

And let all that heard him.] Next, he orders the witnesses to be produced, who heard him speak the blasphemous words.

Lay their hands upon his head.] This was a peculiar thing in this case, hands being laid upon no man's head condemned by the Sanhedrin, but only upon a blasphemer. By which ceremony they solemnly declared, that they had given a true testimony against him, and thought him worthy of the death he was condemned to suffer; and, perhaps, prayed God, that all the punishment of this sin might fall upon this man, and not upon them, nor the rest of the people. And so the Jews tell us their manner was to say, *Let thy blood be upon thy own head, which thou hast brought on thyself by thy own guilt.*

And let all the congregation stone him.] This was the last part of the sentence, that, when they that heard him curse had taken off their hands, all the congregation should stone him: which is the same punishment the law inflicted on him that cursed his father or his mother, (chap. xx. 9. see there.)

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying.*] Upon this occasion a new law is made, in express terms, against blasphemy.

Whosoever curseth his God.] Some of the Hebrews understand this of a gentile, who lived among them, and was not yet solemnly made a proselyte of the gate, that, if he cursed the god which was worshipped in his country, he should die for it. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. *ult.*) And Procopius Gazæus extends the words to such persons as cursed the god they worshipped, though he were a false god: which is according to the common rule of the Talmudists, that where we find these words, *isch, isch* (*man, man,* which we well translate *whosoever*), they comprehend gentiles as well as Jews. But, no doubt, this law particularly concerned the people of Israel; whom God intended, by this law, to preserve from such horrid impiety as is here mentioned.

Shall bear his sin.] Be stoned. (See chap. xx. 9.) If the word *curseth* be understood in the proper sense, Procopius well observes, that nothing could be more senseless than this sin, and upon that account deserved stoning; *for he that curseth his God, upon what God will he call to confirm his curse?* But the Hebrew word seems to import only speaking *contemptuously of God.*

Ver. 16. *And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall surely be put to death,* &c.] It is uncertain, whether this be a higher degree of the sin mentioned in the foregoing verse, or only a repetition of the same law, with a more express declaration of the punishment he should bear for his sin. The Jews unreasonably understand it of him alone that *expressed the name, i. e.* the most holy name of God, as they say in Sanhedrin, cap. 7. numb. 5. where Joh. à Coch observes out of the Jerusalem Targum on Deut. xxxii. that it is thus explained, *Woe unto those that in their execrations use the holy name; which it is not lawful for the highest angel to express.* But this is a piece of their superstition: the meaning undoubtedly is, that if any man reproached the Most High, he should die for it; but the mere pronouncing his holy name could be no crime, when men might swear by it, though not take it in vain, (Deut. vi. 13. Exod. xx. 7.)

All the congregation shall certainly stone him.] As they were ordered to do with the present offender, (ver. 14.)

As well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, &c.] By *stranger* may be meant a proselyte, like the Egyptian, whose offence was the occasion of this law: but the Jews extend it to Samaritans and gentiles; only they say, such were to be punished by the sword, and not by stoning.

Ver. 17. *And he that killeth a man, shall surely be put to death.*] This law was given before, Exod. xxi. 12. And it is not easy to give an account why it is here repeated after the case of a blasphemer. Perhaps it was upon the occasion of the last words in the foregoing verse, *as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death.* For, after the following laws, they are repeated again as a general rule, (ver. 22.) that no man might think it hard a stranger should be punished for blasphemy, as much as an Israelite, when in other cases the same judgment passed upon them both. Procopius Gazæus thinks a murderer is joined with a blasphemer, because they have the same mind and intention; the one desiring to destroy God, if it were possible, as the other doth his neighbour. "Therefore the law puts them together; just as, on the contrary, when it commands the love of God, it couples with it the love of our neighbour." So he.

Ver. 18. *And he that killeth a beast shall make it good, beast for beast.*] It was incongruous, as the same Procopius speaks, to annex unto the law against murder a law against other injuries. And concerning this, see Exod. xxi. 33, 34. For the Hebrew word *behemah*, here used, signifies such domestic tame *beasts* as are there mentioned.

Ver. 19, 20. *If a man cause a blemish in his neighbour, as he hath done, so shall it be done to him*, &c.] This law concerns only free persons, not their slaves, and hath been explained, Exod. xxi. 24, 25.

Ver. 21. *And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it; and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death.*] This is a short repetition of the two first laws here mentioned, (ver. 17, 18.) to make them the more regarded.

Ver. 22. *Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger as for one of your own country.*] In these, and in all other cases, as well as blasphemy, (ver. 16.) you and the stranger shall be judged by one and the same law.

For I am the Lord your God.] Who will neither favour *your* wickedness, nor suffer *theirs* to go unpunished; but do equal justice unto *all*. Yet the Jews, by a *stranger* here, will understand only a *proselyte of righteousness*, as they call him; that is, one who had entirely embraced their religion; for such alone, they imagine, were equalled with them. (See Selden, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 1. p. 468.)

Ver. 23. *And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of their camp*, &c.] It appears, by this, that all the foregoing admonitions were repeated to Moses, upon the occasion of the law against blasphemy, before he proceeded to put it in execution.

And the children of Israel did as the Lord commanded Moses.] Executed the whole sentence pronounced by God against the blasphemous person, (ver. 14.)

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai, saying.*] That is, in the wilderness of Sinai, (Numb. i. 1.) For they stayed almost a whole year not far from this mountain, from whence they did not remove till the *twentieth* day of the *second* month of the *second* year after their coming out of Egypt. (See Numb. x. 11, 12.) And thus the Hebrew particle *beth* is often used for *by* or *near*, as in Gen. xxxvii. 13. Josh. v. 13. and we find this expression again in the end of the next chapter, and in the conclusion of this book. Which shews that all here related was delivered to Moses in the *first* month of the *second* year after their coming out of Egypt, immediately after the tabernacle was set up, (Exod. xl. 17.)

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them.*] For what follows was of universal concernment.

When ye come into the land which I give you.] This law, though delivered before they left Mount Sinai, could not take place till they came into Canaan.

Then shall the land keep a sabbath.] Rest from being tilled, or sown, &c. (See Exod. xxiii. 11.)

Unto the Lord.] In obedience to him, and in honour of him. Some have understood the foregoing words, *When ye shall come into the land which I give you*, as if they were to begin the sabbatical year as soon as they entered into Canaan: which is very absurd; for so, not the seventh, but the first, would have been the year of rest. And that had been very inconvenient, if not destructive; the war making such great waste, no doubt, that provision would have been very scarce, if no care had been taken for the ensuing year. It is to be considered also, that the old store upon which they lived when they entered into the land of promise, was the fruit of the labour of the Canaanites, and not of the children of Israel. The meaning therefore is, that the seventh year after their entrance into Canaan, or rather, after they were settled, and had rest in it, they should let the land rest.

The only question is, when this year was to begin? whether in the month of Tisri (which answers to our September), which was the ancient beginning of the year; or in Nisan (answering to our March), which was made a new beginning of it, by an express law, Exod. xii. 2. the former still continuing the beginning of the year for civil things as this for sacred. Now there is great reason to think that this sabbatical year was to commence from September, when all their harvest was over, which began in March. Then they were not to sow, as they were wont to do in October, and the following months; but to stay till the return of this season the next year: for, if this year had been to begin in March, they could not have reaped the harvest of the sixth year.

Ver. 3. *Six years shalt thou sow thy field, and prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof.*] Exod. xxiii. 10. But what was allowed in other years, is forbidden in this.

Ver. 4. *But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord.*] Or, *unto the Lord*, (as we translate it before, ver. 2.) who, though he gave this land to them, continued the proprietor of it (as he declares, ver. 23.) and the Lord in chief, himself; of whom they held it by this tenure, that they should till it, &c. only six years together, for their own use; and in the seventh, let it lie in common, for such uses as he appointed. And it was for the honour of the Lord that they observed this law; for as the weekly sabbath was an acknowledgment that they were his, so this sabbatical year was an acknowledgment that their land was his.

Thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.] By this he explains what he means by letting it rest. And these two words, *sow* and *prune*, comprehend all other things that were usually done about their fields or trees, as ploughing, digging, dunging, &c. And though a *vineyard* be only mentioned, yet it is plain, by Exod. xxiii. 10. that *oliveyards* are comprehended under the same law; and these are mentioned only as examples of all other fruit-trees, which were to be left in common as these were.

Maimonides seems to be something too curious in what he saith upon this subject; for, inquiring why Moses mentions only these two things, *sowing* and *pruning*, his resolution is, that for these two, if men offended in them this year, they were punished with that scourging called *malkut*; but if they offended in any other sort of labours belonging to the culture of the fields, or of trees, they were not punished with the scourging of *malkut* (which was by a certain measure, not exceeding thirty-nine stripes), but with the scourging called *mardut*, *i. e.* of contumacy and rebellion, which

was without number or measure. As, if a man digged or ploughed his ground; if he gathered out the stones, or dunged it, &c.; if he planted trees, or grafted, &c.; he suffered the scourging of rebellion. And more than this, he saith, it was not lawful in the seventh year to plant any tree, though it was not a fruit-tree; nor to cut off the dead branches; nor to make a smoke under them to kill the worms; nor to anoint young plants to preserve them from the bitings of birds, &c. If they did, they were liable to the scourging of *mardut*. Nay, he is so nice, as to say it was unlawful to sell to any man any instrument of husbandry in this year, as a plough, a yoke, a sieve, &c.; yet he allows them, when they were under the oppression of the gentiles, and bound to find provision for their armies, to sow so much as would maintain them. Of which things he discourses at large, in his treatise called Schemitta ve Jobel, cap. 1. and cap. 7.

Ver. 5. *That which groweth of itself.*] Either from seed which fell casually the year before, or from the old root which sprouted out again, as Maimonides expounds it in the same treatise, cap. 4. which is wholly about such things.

Of thy harvest.] Of the corn scattered last harvest. He saith nothing of their gardens; which, it is probable, every man had to his own private use, and was not bound to lay them open to all.

Thou shalt not reap.] That is, saith he, not the whole field, so as to gather it into cocks, and to tread out the corn with his oxen (if any did, they were scourged with thirty-nine stripes), but they might cut down a little, in common with other persons, and shake it out, and eat it, as he there determines, (sect. 2.)

Neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed.] In the Hebrew the words are, *the vine of thy separation;* for it was separated this year from his dressing: and what he gathered in common with others, was not to be pressed in a wine-press, but with another instrument. The like he saith of olives, and of figs, and other things, which were to be ordered after another manner in this year than in the foregoing, (sect. 23.)

For it is a year of rest unto the land.] This general reason is so oft repeated, to make them sensible they were no more to do any thing about their land this *seventh year*, than they were to labour upon the seventh day. But he acknowledges, that if a gentile hired land in their country, he was not bound to let it rest, (sect. 29. of that chapter.)

Ver. 6. *And the sabbath of the land.*] Here the word *sabbath* signifies the fruit that grew in the sabbatical year; as the word *sabbaths* is used before (chap. xxiii. 38.) for the sacrifices upon the sabbaths.

Shall be meat for you.] This explains the prohibition of reaping any corn this year, or gathering any fruit, not to be meant absolutely; but only that they should not look upon any thing that grew this year as peculiarly theirs, because it grew in their ground, but let all be common to others as well as themselves.

For thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, &c.] This, and the next verse, shew that all the fruits of the earth were perfectly in common this year: for the very beasts were not excluded; and, therefore, much less any man that dwelt among them, though he was uncircumcised. But it is very plain, likewise, that the owner of the land and his family were not forbidden to take their share, but might gather for their daily use as well as others, only not lay up any thing separate for themselves.

Ver. 7. *And for thy cattle, and for the beasts that are in the land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.*] For his own cattle, and for other men's: which were not to be fed with the fruits which are proper to men; (as Maimonides observes in the same book, cap. 5. sect. 5.) but if they came of themselves, and ate figs, for instance, they were not to be hindered. But it seems probable that wild beasts might be driven out of their vineyards, &c. in this year as well as others, because they made such waste as would have very much damaged the owner for the future. As for all other tame creatures, the Jews, (if we may believe Maimonides, cap. 7.) were so superstitiously careful they should have an equal share with themselves, that when there was no fruit any longer for the beasts in the field, they ceased to eat what they had gathered for themselves; and, if they had any thing of it left, threw it out of their houses.

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee,* &c.] Which, put together, made forty-nine years; as it follows in the rest of this verse. They began their first account (as Maimonides there observes) from the fourteenth year after their entrance into Canaan; for they were seven years in conquering the land, and seven more in dividing to every one their portion: so that the first sabbatical year was in the one-and-twentieth, and the first jubilee in the sixty-fourth year, after they came to the land of promise; so he, cap. 10. where he observes, they numbered seventeen jubilees from that time to their captivity in Babylon, which fell out in the end of a sabbatical year, and the thirty-sixth of the jubilee.

Ver. 9. *Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee.*] The word *jobel* (which we translate *jubilee* in the next verse) is not in the Hebrew, but *teruah*, which, in the margin, we translate *loud of sound:* for the trumpet was blown after a different manner at this time, than upon other occasions, that every one might understand the meaning of it.

To sound.] In the Hebrew the word is, *cause it to pass*, that it might be heard every where throughout the land. So these words may be most literally translated, *thou shalt cause to pass the trumpet loud of sound.*

On the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement.] This day was very fitly chosen, that this year might begin at the same time that a general atonement was made for the sins of the whole nation: for they would be the better disposed to forgive their brethren their debts, when they craved pardon for their own.

Shall ye make the trumpet sound (or *pass*) *throughout all your land.*] This is repeated, to make them careful to awaken every one to this duty, by the sound of the trumpet at every door; there being an unwillingness in most people to part with their servants, and their lands, &c. which they had long enjoyed. And therefore, every private man, as Maimonides saith, was bound to blow with a trumpet, and make this sound nine times, that they might fulfil these words of this precept, *throughout all your land.* By this means, as R. Levi Barzelonita notes, every one was the better inclined to hearken, when he saw it was a duty incumbent on the whole country, which all were to perform.

Ver. 10. *And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year.*] Distinguish it from all other years, by doing what follows. Maimonides fancies, that these two precepts of *numbering seven*

sabbaths of years, (ver. 8.) and of *sanctifying the fiftieth year,* were delivered only to the house of judgment; whose business, no doubt, it peculiarly was, to give notice of this year, and to cause the trumpet to be sounded, and all the following precepts to be observed. (Schemitta ve Jobel, cap. 10. num. 1.)

And proclaim liberty.] Unto all servants, who were this year made free.

Throughout all the land.] Even in all the highways, as Aben Ezra glosses, that every one might have notice.

Unto all the inhabitants thereof.] That is, to all the children of Israel who were servants; or so poor, that they had sold their estates, as it here follows. From these words the Jews gather, that after the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half tribe of Manasseh were carried captive, jubilees ceased. They are the words of Maimonides in the forenamed treatise; for then *all the inhabitants of the land* were not in it. And therefore much more when they were all carried captive, they only numbered the rest of every seventh year without any jubilee.

It shall be a jubilee unto you.] Whence this year hath the name of *jobel,* there are so many opinions, that Bochartus himself scarce knew which to follow. Josephus saith it signifies ἐλευθερίαν, *liberty;* and the LXX. and Aquila translate it ἄφεσιν, *remission,* having a regard to the thing, rather than to the import of the word *jobel,* which never signifies any thing of that nature. D. Kimchi tells us, that R. Akiba, when he was in Arabia, heard them call a ram by this name of *jobel;* and thence some fancy this year was so called, because it was proclaimed with trumpets of rams' horns. But what if there were no such trumpets? as Bochart thinks there were not, these horns being not hollow. See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 43. p. 425, &c. where several other opinions are confuted. The most probable that I meet withal, is, that it was called *jobel,* from the peculiar sound which was made with the trumpet when this year was proclaimed. For the trumpet blowing for several purposes, *viz.* to call their assemblies together, to give notice of the moving of their camps, to excite soldiers to fight, and to proclaim this year; there was a distinct sound for all these ends, that people might not be confounded, but have a certain notice what the trumpet sounded for. And this sound mentioned before (ver. 9.) was peculiarly called *jobel,* as Hottinger thinks, who considers a great many other opinions in his Analecta, Diss. iii. wherein he follows Joh. Forsterus, who, near a hundred years before, observed that *jobel,* which we commonly translate *trumpet,* (Exod. xix. 13. and other places) doth not signify the instrument itself, but the sound that it made. And when it is used absolutely alone, it signifies this year, which was called *jobel,* from that sound which was then made; as the feast of unleavened bread was called *pesach,* from the angel passing over them when he slew the Egyptians. The opinions of the Hebrew writers about it are collected and largely represented by Josephus de Voisin, (lib. i. de Jubilæo, cap. 1.)

And ye shall return every man unto his possession.] Unto his field, or his house, which his poverty had forced him to sell: but now was restored to him without any price, because they were not sold absolutely, but only till this year. By which means the estates of the Israelites were so fixed, that no family could ruin itself or grow too rich. For this law provided against such changes, revoking once in fifty years all alienations, and setting every one in the same condition wherein he was at the first. By which means ambition was retrenched, and every man applied himself with affection to the improvement of his inheritance, knowing it could never go out of his family. And this application was the more diligent, because it was a religious duty, founded upon this law of God.

And ye shall return every man unto his family.] From which he had been estranged by being sold to another family, either by himself, or by his father, or by the court of judgment. So here are two parts of the liberty forenamed more expressly declared: their land, which was alienated, returned to the first owner; and such as were sold for servants into another family came home again to their own family, being freed from their servitude. Which was a figure of that *acceptable year of the Lord,* as St. Luke calls it, (chap. iv. 19.) in the prophet Isaiah's language, wherein our blessed Saviour preached deliverance to all mankind. The Jews themselves are not so stupid as to think nothing further was intended, but only freedom from bodily servitude in this year of jubilee; for Abarbinel himself, in this very verse, endeavours to discover something of a spiritual happiness. For the former part of the words now mentioned, *ye shall return every man to his possession,* he saith, belongs to the body; but the latter part, *and every man unto his family,* belongs unto the soul, and its return to God: so several others, whom J. de Voisin produces in the forenamed book, (cap. 2.) And, if our Dr. Lightfoot hath made a right computation, the last year of the life of our Saviour, who, by his death, wrought an eternal redemption, and restored us to our heavenly inheritance, fell in the year of jubilee, the very last that was ever kept. For, if we count from the end of the wars of Canaan, which was seven years after they came into it (and I do not know why we should not think they began to number then, and not seven years after, as Maimonides would have it), there were just fourteen hundred years to the thirty-third of Jesus Christ, that is, just twenty-eight jubilees. And it is the confession of the old book called Zohar, as he observes, that "the Divine Glory should be freedom and redemption in a year of jubilee." (See Harmony of the New Testament, sect. 59. and Usserii Chronologia Sacra, cap. 13.)

Ver. 11. *A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you.*] It is a question, whether the year of jubilee was the year following the forty-ninth year; or, the forty-ninth year was the jubilee; which, reckoning the foregoing jubilee for one, was the fiftieth year. Josephus Scaliger, in his fifth book de Emend. Temporum, and several other great men, are of this last opinion, to avoid a great inconvenience, which otherwise would ensue, *viz.* that the forty-ninth year being the sabbatical year, in which the land was to rest, if the next year to that had been the jubilee, two sabbatical years would have come immediately one after another; for the land was to rest in the year of jubilee, as it here follows. One would have expected, therefore, that in the forty-eighth year there should have been a special promise, that the land should bring forth fruit for four years, and not for three only, as the blessing is promised every sixth year, (ver. 21.) Thus Jacobus Capellus reasons, in his Historia Sacra et Exotica ad A. M. 2549. But others think

this objection not to be so great as to make them depart from the letter of this law, which saith, (ver. 10.) *ye shall hallow the fiftieth year;* and here in this verse, *a jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you.* Though a very learned man, P. Cunæus, thinks this of no great moment either way; for it is usual, in common speech, *septimanam octiduum appellare* (and Hospinian, in like manner, we call a week *octiduum, eight days,* because we reckon *utramq; Dominicam, both the Lord's days).* And the greatest writers anciently called an *olympiad,* which contained but the space of four complete years, by the name of *Quinquennium.* (See lib. i. de Republ. Judæorum, cap. 6.) Yet, besides the express words of the law, the consent of the Jews sways very much the other way; for they accurately distinguish between the *schemitta,* or year of remission, and *jobel,* the year of jubilee, even then when these two solemnities succeeded each other; as I shall have occasion to observe on the next verse.

Ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it.] Because it was the sabbatical year, (ver. 4, 5.) as some will have it; from the observance of which they were not absolved by its being the jubilee. But others think, as I observed, that the jubilee itself was a new sabbatical year.

Ver. 12. *For it is the jubilee.*] He doth not say it is the *sabbath of the land,* as he doth of the seventh year, (ver. 6.) Which makes for their opinion who think the jubilee was not the same with that, but a new sabbatical year; so that two years together they neither sowed nor reaped. But they that maintain the other opinion, look upon this only as a new reason why they should forbear such labour this year; because, besides that it was the sabbatical year, it was also the jubilee; a time of great joy, in regard of the liberty to which every one was restored; which made it more necessary every one should enjoy what the earth brought forth of itself, and none appropriate any thing to themselves.

It shall be holy unto you.] Because it was the Lord's sabbath, (ver. 3.) separate from the common employments of other years; being dedicated to the uses expressed in this law, (ver. 10.) which are two; manumission of servants, and restitution of men to their ancient possessions: unto which some add a third, *viz.* remission of debts. But the Jews are of a quite contrary opinion; that in this the year of jubilee differed from the sabbatical year—that debts were remitted in the one, but not in the other. Whence those words of Maimonides, in the treatise I have so often mentioned: (cap. 10. sect. 16.) "In this the sabbatical year excels the jubilee, that it remits debts, which the jubilee doth not: but the jubilee in this excels the sabbatical year, that it sets servants free, and restores possessions, which the other doth not. And the jubilee likewise restores possessions in the very beginning of the year; but the sabbatical year doth not release debts till it be ended."

Ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.] By plucking what they needed for every day's use; but not by reaping, and gathering, and laying up in barns.

Ver. 13. *In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man to his possession.*] This being the most remarkable thing belonging to the liberty of this year, it is therefore here again repeated. For it was so famous, that the heathens themselves took notice of it; insomuch, that Diodorus Siculus saith, (lib. xi.) it was not lawful for the Jews τοὺς ἰδίους κλήρους πωλεῖν, *to sell their own inheritances:* meaning, as Mr. Selden expounds it, (Lib. de Success. ad Leges Hebr. cap. 14.) to sell them quite, so as to alienate them for ever from their families; which is expressly forbidden, (ver. 23.) And so the Locrians, as is observed by Aristotle in his Politics, were prohibited, by their laws, to sell their ancient possessions. (See P. Cunæus, lib. i. de Repub. Jud. cap. 4.)

Many reasons are given, by learned men, for this law among the Jews, (see Menochius, lib. iii. de Repub. Hebræor. Quest. 3.) The most obvious is, that by this law God fixed the Jews to the land of Canaan; since all their possessions were so entailed, that the right heir of any of them could never be wholly excluded from his estate; but it would entirely return to him after a certain number of years. And, by this means also, they preserved a distinct knowledge of their several tribes and families to which they belonged; for which end their genealogies were of necessity to be carefully kept, that they might be able to prove their right to the inheritance of their ancestors. By which means, as Menochius notes, it was certainly known of what tribe and family the Messiah was when he was born. And M. Alix hath taken notice (which is worth observing), that God ordered things so, that they should have the means of preserving their genealogies, by not suffering them to continue in captivity out of their own land, for the space of two whole jubilees. For they were but seventy years in Babylon; in which short time their genealogies could not be easily confounded, especially since several who saw the first temple burnt, lived to see the second begin to be rebuilt. Two other reasons are most judiciously managed by Petrus Cunæus, lib. i. de Republ. Hebr. cap. 3. to which I refer the learned reader.

Ver. 14. *If thou sellest aught to thy neighbour, or buyest aught of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another.*] As Moses took care that the wealth of some should not oppress the poverty of others, by making the foregoing law, that a poor man should not lose his land for ever; so, in buying of a poor man's land, he would not have the rich man give less for it than it was worth; no more than the poor man require more for it than its just value till the year of jubilee. The Hebrew doctors have formed a rule about this: that if a man bought any thing for a sixth part less than its worth, or sold it for a sixth part more than its worth, he was bound to restore that sixth part; but nothing at all if it were short of a sixth part, wherein he had damaged his neighbour. But if the difference was more than a sixth part, the buyer might rescind his contract, if the bargain was not quite finished, and require his money again. And the seller (if the damage was on his side) might at any time require the thing to be returned to him at the price for which he sold it. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 5.)

Ver. 15. *According to the number of years after the jubilee, thou shalt buy of thy neighbour.*] They were to consider how many years were gone since the last jubilee, and consequently to purchase the profits of the remaining years till the next; for they could not, either by sale or any other contract, transfer *plenum fundi dominium* (as Cunæus speaks), *their full interest in the land* to any other man.

And according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee.] He that sold the remaining term of years till the jubilee was to consider, that every sixth year there was no fruit, and therefore he should demand nothing for them; but set his price only according to the number of the other years, not reckoning those.

Ver. 16. *According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price.*] This is added only to make what was said before plainer, that the price should rise or fall, according as there were more or fewer years to come before the next jubilee. For example, Maimonides puts this case: if there be ten years to the jubilee, and a man buy another's field for a hundred pence; after which, the buyer having enjoyed it three years, the seller hath a mind to redeem it; he must then give to him that bought it of him seventy pence. In like manner, if the buyer have enjoyed it six years, the seller must give him forty pence.

For according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee.] Therefore, if a man, saith the same Maimonides, (cap. 11. num. 6.) sell another a field full of fruit, and, after two years, would redeem it, he must not demand him to restore the field as he sold it, full of fruit, because it is said here, *according to the multitude of years,* or *fewness of years* (and, in the foregoing verse, *according to the number of years after the jubilee),* which shews the *years* only were to be considered in the redemption, and not the *fruits.*

Ver. 17. *Ye shall not therefore oppress one another.*] The seller by demanding too much, nor the buyer by giving too little.

But thou shalt fear thy God.] For nothing could be so powerful as the fear of God to restrain them from oppression, and to preserve an equality between the land to be sold and the price to be paid.

For I am the Lord your God.] Whose land this is, and by whose favour you enjoy it.

Ver. 18. *Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments.*] Which are the tenure whereby you hold this land of me.

And ye shall dwell in the land in safety.] And if you obey them, you shall not be disturbed in it by your enemies.

Ver. 19. *And the land shall yield her increase, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety.*] He encourages them in their obedience, by a promise of plenty and abundance, as well as of safety and security in their possessions.

Ver. 20. *And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year?* &c.] To take away all distrust of his promise, he removes an obvious objection which might arise in their minds: that they might want food, if they neither sowed, nor gathered in their increase, in the seventh year, as he required.

Ver. 21. *Then will I command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years.*] This is the answer to the doubt they might have of wanting sustenance, that he would bless them with such a plentiful crop in the sixth year, as should be sufficient for that and for the two following years. From which Petrus Cunæus thinks the argument very strong, that there were not two sabbatical years together, one in the forty-ninth, and another in the fiftieth year; for then the earth in the sixth year should have brought forth not for three years, but for four; which was never heard of in any country. Palestine, indeed, was a country, to which God afforded an extraordinary blessing, beyond the common laws of nature; yet, since there are no testimonies of so great and frequent a miracle in the book of God, we ought not easily to believe this. Thus he, lib. i. de Repub. Heb. cap. 6. To which it may be replied, that this was not so frequent as he makes it, but only once in *fifty* years: and the reason why Moses here saith, *the land should bring forth fruit for three years,* and not for *four,* is, because he speaks only with respect to the common sabbatical years (every *seventh* year), not to the *great sabbatical* year, as they call the *forty-ninth;* before which, God may very well be supposed to have blessed the earth with a larger crop than in any other preceding sixth year. Besides, though it is said they should not *sow* in the jubilee, (ver. 11.) yet it is not said they might not prune their trees, as it is of other sabbatical years, (ver. 4.) so that they might be dressed as in other common years, to yield a plentiful increase for their support in the succeeding year.

Ver. 22. *And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year.*] Some have interpreted these words, as if they were to eat the old store, till the fruits of the *ninth* year came in; and bring it as an argument, that the sabbatical year began in March; whereas the plain sense is, that the fruits of the eighth could not be thrashed out for food till the ninth year. And then the next words,

Until her fruits come in, ye shall eat of the old store.] Are not to be understood of the fruits of the *ninth* year, but of the fruits of the *eighth,* which were to be eaten in the *ninth.* Till then they were to live upon the old store; which served for two years, beside the sixth.

Ver. 23. *The land shall not be sold for ever.*] Having mentioned the selling of their land, (ver. 14—16.) he here again enacts it should not be sold for ever: which may be called the *lex agraria* of the Jews, whereby estates were preserved in the family to which they belonged at the division of the land by Joshua: for they could not be quite *cut off,* as the words are in the Hebrew, which we translate *for ever;* or, as it is in the margin, *for cutting off;* so that the seller and his heirs should be cut off from it, as Mr. Selden interprets it; or, as the LXX. εἰς βεβαίωσιν, *by an alienation never to be rescinded:* but all estates were at the jubilee to return to their first owners, or their heirs, though they had changed possessors a hundred times, by being sold so oft. And the same law held in donations, as much as in sales; as Maimonides observes. Yet this is to be understood only of absolute alienations, without any mention of time; for if any man sold, without fraud, an estate to his neighbour for sixty years, it was not to return to him, or his heirs, in the year of jubilee, which came before the expiration of that term; for in the jubilee, saith he, nothing returns but that which was sold for ever, (Halicoth Schemitta ve Jobel, cap. 11. sect. 2. and see Selden de Successionibus ad Leges Hebr. cap. 24.)

For the land is mine.] I reserve to myself the supreme dominion in it, and propriety of it; and have disposed it to you on such terms as I thought fit.

For ye are strangers and sojourners with me.] These words suggest another sense of the foregoing; that their land was God's, as he dwelt in a special manner there in

the sanctuary, which was his royal palace: and they were all his tenants, who held the land of him as long as he pleased; but were no more to him, than the proselytes were to them. The land was his, and not theirs; and they did but enjoy the use and the fruits of it, but had not the property. (See Mr. Mede, p. 157.)

Ver. 24. *And in all the land of your possession, ye shall grant a redemption for the land.*] If any man whose poverty had forced him to sell his land, grew afterward so rich, that he was able to redeem it before the year of jubilee, this law provides he should be permitted to do it, and the buyer could not refuse it. But then this was to be done honestly and truly: he was not to borrow money of another man to redeem it; no, nor sell other land to redeem that which he had sold before, which they looked upon as a fraud to the buyer. Therefore he had this right, only in case he was grown rich since the sale; otherwise he was to stay till the year of jubilee, when it returned to him for nothing. So Cunæus out of the same Maimonides, (lib. i. cap. 2.)

Ver. 25. *If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession.*] No man, if we may rely upon the same Maimonides, might sell his house or his field till the time of jubilee, unless poverty compelled him to it. For it was not lawful to sell it, that he might lay up the price of it in his coffer; or exercise merchandize; or buy goods, servants, or cattle; but only buy necessary provision with it. But if any man did transgress, and employ the money otherwise, the sale notwithstanding was held to be good.

And if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall be redeemed what his brother sold.] Here is a further enlargement of this liberty; that if any of his near relations would redeem the land he had sold (though he was not able to do it himself), it should be allowed: for the design of Moses in this law was, "Ne paucorum opulentia quandoque cæteros opprimeret," *lest the wealth of a few should at any time oppress the rest.*

Ver. 26. *And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it.*] In the Hebrew it is, *his hand hath attained and found sufficiency:* which justifies the limitation the Jews put upon this, (as I observed, ver. 24.) that he should not have the right of redemption, unless he was grown able to repurchase it since the sale of it.

Ver. 27. *Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it.*] This was the manner of the redemption: they counted how many years were gone since the sale; and if there remained just so many more to the jubilee, then he paid the buyer half the price at which he purchased it, for its redemption. But if the number of years from the sale to the jubilee were not equal, then he deducted proportionable to the years he had enjoyed it since the purchase, and gave him as much as the years remaining till the jubilee were worth. And if he sold a field at first for a hundred pounds, suppose, and he that bought it sold it to another for two hundred, he was to redeem it, as Maimonides saith, according to what was first given for it, because it is said here, he shall restore the overplus *unto the man to whom he sold it.* In like manner, if a man sold a field for a hundred pounds, which in the hands of the buyer so improved, that it might be sold for two hundred, the redemption was to be according to what was first paid for it. But if he sold it for two hundred pounds, and it was grown so much worse that it was worth but a hundred, it was to be esteemed in the redemption according to the present value. His reason is, because "the condition of him that sold his inheritance was always to be bettered; and the condition of him that bought it to be made worse."

Ver. 28. *But if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that bought it, until the year of jubilee.*] If he could not pay him the money it cost him, according to the forementioned proportion, nor any of his kindred redeem it for him, then he that bought it was to enjoy all the profits of it till the jubilee.

And in the jubilee he shall go out, and he shall return to his possession.] The purchaser was to quit his possession of the land; and he that sold it enjoy it again for nothing. And whosoever he was that possessed the land at the jubilee, though it had been sold never so often before it came to him, the jubilee ejected him, and restored the land to the first owner, or his posterity. For no man, as was before observed, could either by sale, or any other contract, transfer the full dominion of his land to another man; so that it should be his for ever.

Ver. 29. *And if a man sell a dwelling-house in the walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold.*] This verse and the next make a great difference between houses in walled cities, and lands in the country. If such houses were sold, men could not redeem them from the purchaser when they pleased, but must do it within the compass of a year, or else they were barred for ever; and the year of jubilee would not relieve them.

Within a full year may he redeem it.] He might redeem it the next day after he had sold it, if he pleased, paying the full price that was given for it: and if he that sold it was dead, his son might redeem it: or if he that bought it was dead, it might be redeemed from his son, if done within the year: but his kindred could not redeem it, nor might he borrow money to redeem it, nor redeem it by parcels; but he might sell some of his goods to redeem it. So Maimonides, in the forementioned treatise, (cap. 12.) where he saith, If a man sold a house in such a city, and the jubilee fell out in the year of sale, it did not restore the house to the seller; but continued his that bought it, unless within a year from the day it was sold it was redeemed.

Ver. 30. *And if it be not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house shall be established for ever to him that bought it.*] The reasons for this law seem to be such as these; that by this means (as Menochius observes, lib. iii. de Republ. Hebr. cap. 11.) cities might be better filled with inhabitants; who were invited thither, when they had hope of a settlement there. And secondly, that men might not rashly and easily part with their houses, which they could never recover, after they had let one year slip, which was allowed for their redemption. And thirdly, tribes and families were not distinguished by houses they had in cities; from whence it was that the Levites might possess them, who otherwise are said to have no possession in the land of Canaan. And lastly, perhaps it was intended by this law, that proselytes, who were not of the Hebrew nation, and could have no fields or vineyards, might yet have something of their own stable and certain: and not be forced always to want a perpetual possession.

It shall not go out in the jubilee.] They say in the Ge-

mara of Bava kama, that the houses in Jerusalem were not subject to this law; because that city, as they pretend, did not belong to any certain tribe. (See L'Empereur upon that book, cap. 7. p. 172.)

Ver. 31. *But the houses in the villages, which have no walls round about them, shall be counted as the fields of the country,* &c.] The quite contrary law is made for country-houses, which might be redeemed at any time; and if they were not, returned to their first owners at the jubilee. The reason of this difference is very plain; for the houses in walled cities were their own proper goods; but in the country they were accounted part of the land which was God's. And so these words are to be understood, they *shall be counted as the fields in the country:* that is, fall under the same law with the lands, (ver. 23.)

Ver. 32. *Notwithstanding the cities of the Levites.*] Of which we have an account, Numb. xxxv. 2. These are excepted from the foregoing law concerning houses in walled cities; as it here follows.

And the houses of the cities of their possession may the Levites redeem at any time.] Not any of their houses; but only those which they possessed in the forty-eight cities assigned to them for their habitations. If they purchased houses in any other places, they were subject to the same law with other men, (ver. 29.) Insomuch, that a Levite, who was heir to his mother, who was an Israelite, was to redeem as other Israelites did, and not after the manner of the Levites; for the Levites had a right different from other men only in the *cities of their possessions;* as Maimonides observes in the forecited book, (cap. 13.) But if an Israelite was heir to his mother, a Levite, he redeemed as the Levites did, though he were not of that tribe; because the right of their redemption "was tied to the places, and not to the persons;" as he there speaks.

Ver. 33. *And if a man purchase of the Levites, then the house that was sold, and the city of his possession* (i. e. *in the city of his possession*), *shall go out in the year of jubilee.*] If he did not redeem it before, it was to come back to him for nothing in this year. But there is another translation in the margin, which the first words will bear, *viz. If one of the Levites redeem them.* Though he was not near of kin, (ver. 25.) yet any Levite might redeem any of these houses: however, they were to be restored to that tribe at the jubilee.

For the houses of the cities of the Levites.] It is plain by this, that in the foregoing words he speaks of the *houses,* and not of the *cities* themselves.

Are their possession among the children of Israel.] They were of the same nature with the land that other tribes had; which could not be alienated for ever. For they having no other possessions that could be sold, but houses, it was reason these houses should return to their owners at the jubilee, as other men's possessions did, (ver. 10.)

Ver. 34. *But the field of the suburbs of their cities.*] See Numb. xxxv. 4, 5.

May not be sold.] As their houses might be; but if any man bought them, the bargain was immediately void. The tradition among the Jews (as Maimonides says in the same place), was, that *not be sold* in this place, signifies *not be changed;* so as to turn a suburb into a field, or a field into a suburb; but fields, suburbs, and cities, were to continue perpetually in the same state.

For it is their perpetual possession.] Their fields were to be always in their own hands. And the reason why houses might be sold, when the fields could not, seems to be this: because the houses belonged to particular Levites, who might alienate them for a time, and not suffer much by it; but the fields of the suburbs were common to the whole body of the Levites, who would have been undone if they had wanted pasture for their flocks, which were all their substance. Some indeed fancy that these suburbs were enclosed, and every family of them had its several portion; but as there is no proof of this, so, had it been thus, such families could not, without great inconvenience, have wanted their lands for the feeding of their flocks.

Ver. 35. *And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen to decay with thee.*] In the Hebrew it is, *When his hand faileth;* so that he is not able by his labour to support himself and his family.

Then shalt thou relieve him.] By bestowing alms upon him (as the Jews interpret it), not by lending him money; though the following words seem to incline this way: (see Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 6.)

Yea, though he be a stranger or a sojourner.] By a *stranger* they understand a proselyte of righteousness, and by a *sojourner* a proselyte of the gate; as Mr. Selden there observes, out of Jarchi and Abarbinel, p. 694. They say Hyrcanus was the first that began ξενοτροφεῖν, *to entertain strangers of other countries,* by building hospitals for their reception.

That he may live with thee.] Have a comfortable subsistence by the relief of charitable people; for every Jew, they say, was bound to contribute something towards it; and this was to prevent their selling themselves, as some did, through extreme poverty, (ver. 39.)

Ver. 36. *Take thou no usury of him, or increase.*] Though these are promiscuously used, yet the next verse seems here to expound *usury* to signify that which is taken for money; and *increase* that which is taken for corn, fruits, or goods. They that would see more of these two words, *nesek* and *tarbith,* may consult Salmasius de Usuris, where he hath largely discoursed of them. I shall only further observe, that this precept follows the other of relieving poor people by alms very fitly; because it is as great a charity unto some to lend them money without usury, as it is to give freely unto others. (See notes on Exod. xxii. 25. Deut. xxiii. 19.)

But fear thy God.] Lest he that is so good to thee, should punish thee for thy inhumanity towards the poor; of whom he hath a care, as well as thee.

That thy brother may live with thee.] This is repeated, to shew that by these laws God intended to provide for the poor such a comfortable subsistence in their own country, that they might not be tempted to forsake it, and therewith perhaps forsake their religion.

Ver. 37. *Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.*] Some thought, if they lent money freely, they might receive more than they lent of other things; therefore, the latter clause of this verse was added, to prevent such oppressions as St. Jerome mentions; who says, some would lend a neighbour ten bushels, of corn, suppose, in winter, to receive fifteen bushels for it the next harvest.

Ver. 38. *I am the Lord your God, which brought you*

forth out of the land of Egypt.] Who have obliged you with far greater blessings than I command you to bestow upon others.

To give you the land of Canaan.] Under such covenants as have been mentioned.

And to be your God.] To preserve you in the possession of it in peace and plenty, if you keep these covenants, (ver. 18, 19.)

Ver. 39. *And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee.*] Some were sold by the court of judgment, when they had committed theft, and were not able to make satisfaction; of whom the Hebrews interpret that place, Exod. xxi. 2, &c. Others were sold by their parents, (ver. 7, 8. of that chapter.) But others sold themselves, being reduced to great poverty, notwithstanding the alms that had been bestowed upon them, and the money or goods that had been freely lent them. And of such the Hebrew doctors understand these words; and say, it was not lawful for a man to sell himself till his poverty was extreme, and he had nothing at all left, but must preserve his life by the price which was given for him. Thus Maimonides, in these words: "A man might not sell himself to lay up the money which was given for him; nor to buy goods; nor to pay his debts; but merely that he might get bread to eat. Neither was it lawful for him to sell himself, as long as he had so much as a garment left." See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 7. where he observes, that the court of judgment might not sell a thief of their nation to any but to a Hebrew; not to a proselyte of either sort; much less to a mere gentile. But if a Hebrew sold him to a proselyte, or to a gentile (which he was admonished not to do), the bargain was good; but he was to be redeemed by his kindred, or by the people; as it here follows, ver. 48, 49. Which other people imitated, who derived their laws from Moses; particularly the ancient Indians (as Huetius observes out of Diodorus), whose philosophers commanded that none of their nation should submit themselves to servitude, (Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 6.)

Thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant.] As a slave, which they bought of other nations, or took in their wars; over whom they had an absolute dominion (as they had over their goods, or cattle), and might bequeath them and their children to their sons and posterity for ever, (ver. 45, 46.) or sell them and their children at their pleasure.

Ver. 40. *But as a hired servant, and as a sojourner.*] They were to treat him gently; as they did those who let out their service for wages, for a certain time, and then were at their own disposal again.

Shall he be with thee.] Some of the Jews have carried this very far in speculation. For thus they gloss upon this place in Jalkut: "Let him be with thee in meat and drink; so that thou do not eat bread of fine flour, and he of bran; nor thou drink old wine, and he new; nor thou lie on a soft bed, and he upon straw." But it is not likely that this was their practice.

And shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee.] Beyond which time it was not lawful to keep him in service: for in the very beginning of this year, all such servants were immediately dismissed. Which made the year of jubilee such a time of joy, that for *nine* days together, before it began, these servants kept a kind of Saturnalia, in prospect of their approaching happiness. For, as Maimonides saith in the latter end of the tenth chapter of Schemitta ve Jobel, from the beginning of the year until the day of atonement, "Servants were neither dismissed, nor yet served their masters; but they did eat, and drink, and made merry; wearing garlands on their heads. And when the day of atonement came, the Sanhedrin commanding the trumpet to be sounded, all servants immediately went whither they pleased; as lands were restored to their first owners."

Ver. 41. *And then shall he depart from thee.*] His master to whom he was sold might keep him till the jubilee: whereas he that was sold by the court of judgment might go free, if he pleased, in the *seventh* year of release, (Exod. xxi. 2.)

Both he and his children with him.] He that bought a servant of the court of judgment, was bound to maintain his wife and children, if he had any, with meat, drink, and clothes; and yet they were not bound to serve him: much less did they remain servants, when their father's and mother's servitude was at an end; as Mr. Selden observes in the forenamed place: and therefore it was much more reasonable in this case, that he and his children should go out together.

And shall return unto his own family.] From which he was gone, while he remained a servant.

And unto the possession of his fathers shall he return.] If any was befallen him since his servitude.

Ver. 42. *For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt.*] A good reason why they should not be treated like slaves; because they were all redeemed by God out of the slavery of Egypt into a state of perfect liberty.

They shall not be sold as bondmen.] Not publicly, and in the common place of sale, or in the street; but privately, and in a way of honour, (as the Jewish phrase is.) So Maimonides, alleged by Mr. Selden, in the forenamed place, p. 705. But the plainest sense is, they should not be used like slaves, while they continued in servitude; for though they had the use of them in all bodily employments, yet their bodies or persons were not theirs, and therefore they might not use them as they pleased. So it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 43. *Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour.*] As Pharaoh did over all the Israelites, (Exod. i. 13, 14.) or as the Israelites were wont to do over their servants of other nations; but gently use their service in such employments, as would not be unworthy of them if they were freemen.

But shalt fear thy God.] Remembering that they were all slaves in Egypt, and delivered by his wonderful goodness; which was thankfully and reverently to be acknowledged.

Ver. 44. *Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen.*] If they would have any slaves, they were to be such of other nations, as were sold to them, or were taken by them in their wars. Whence the very name of *mancipia* came, as the Roman lawyers tell us, *quasi manu capti:* and the name of *servus* also, which signifies one who was saved, when he might have been killed.

Round about thee.] He doth not say, *in the midst of thee;* for they were bound to destroy the people of Canaan.

Of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.] If they had need of their service. But it does not appear that they had any great number of them; nor had they any great occasion for them, being themselves so laborious, and breeding their children to look after their land and their cattle (in which their estates chiefly consisted), and being also so very numerous in a small country.

Ver. 45. *Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy.*] Whether they were perfect proselytes by circumcision, or only proselytes of the gate, (as Mr. Selden observes, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 8.) their children were not exempted from being made slaves, if they sold them to the Hebrews.

And of the families that are with you, which they begat in your land.] If any of their family or kindred, as the LXX. translate it, had begat children in Judea, and would sell them, the Jews might make a purchase of them.

They shall be your possession.] Become your proper goods, and continue with you as your lands do, unless they have their liberty granted to them. And the first sort of proselytes obtained it three ways; either by purchasing it themselves, or by their friends; or by being dismissed by their master, by a writing under his hand; or, in the case mentioned in Exod. xxi. 26. where the loss of an eye, or a tooth, by the master's severity, serve only for examples of other maims, which procured such a servant his liberty. But the second sort of proselytes did not obtain their liberty, if we may believe the Hebrew doctors, by this last means, but only by the two first. And the year of jubilee gave no servants of either sort their liberty.

Ver. 46. *And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you.*] To whom they might bequeath the very bodies of them and their children.

To inherit them for a possession.] That they might have the same power and dominion over them, that they had over their lands, goods, or cattle.

They shall be your bondmen for ever.] Not have the benefit of the year of jubilee, but be your slaves as long as they live; unless they, by any of the means beforementioned, obtained their liberty.

But over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule over one another with rigour.] As they did over the slaves beforenamed; whose masters (as the Hebrew doctors say) were not bound to find them food and raiment; and, besides, might treat them with the greatest severity, provided they did not strike out an eye, &c.

Ver. 47. *If a sojourner or stranger.*] The Chaldee interprets these words, *an uncircumcised proselyte.* And so Maimonides says, they signify one who hath undertaken the precepts of the sons of Noah; whom they also call, in their books, *the pious among the gentiles.* (See Selden, lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 3. p. 153.)

Wax rich by thee.] As many of them did by trading, though they could not purchase land.

And thy brother that dwelleth by him waxeth poor.] Which was a case, Moses supposes before, (ver. 35.) might happen.

And sell himself unto the stranger and sojourner by thee.] So I observed before (ver. 39.) they might do, though they were admonished not to do it; and the bargain held good, though they sold themselves to a gentile. So Onkelos here translates it, *If thy brother sell himself to an Aramite, i. e.* to an idolater; for idolatry was thought to have sprung first from them: Terah and Nahor being Aramites, who were the first idolaters mentioned in the holy Scripture.

Or to the stock of the stranger's family.] To one that sprung out of the family of a proselyte; who, though now incorporated into the Jewish nation, yet, being originally of a stranger's stock, was not to have the privilege to keep a Hebrew sold to him from the benefit of redemption.

Ver. 48. *After that he is sold.*] And actually in the possession of a stranger.

He may be redeemed, &c.] The Hebrews understand this, as if some of his kindred were bound to redeem him; or, if they did not, he was to be redeemed at the charge of the country; and that, though he sold himself a second time, after he had been redeemed. But if he sold himself a third time, they looked upon him as unworthy of redemption, unless it were merely to save his life. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 7.) But the fifty-fourth verse seems to suggest, that they were not bound to redeem him; though they might, if they pleased, and his master could not refuse it.

One of his brethren may redeem him.] This Redeemer (saith R. Bechai) is the Messiah, the Son of David, of the tribe of Judah: which I mention to shew, that the Jews thought there was something more Divine couched under this law of the jubilee, (as I observed, ver. 10.) than the very letter of it imported. Though the truth is, they wretchedly mistook the business of the Messiah: for the same R. Bechai (speaking of this section of the law) saith, "It contains a sign and a hope to Israel of redemption from the captivity of the four monarchies;" as if the Messiah should have nothing to do, but to put them in possession of their own country, and to make them lords of the world.

Ver. 49. *Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him,* &c.] Here the persons are named by whom his redemption might be made; which, in short, was by any man of his family.

Or, if he be able, he may redeem himself.] If, after his sale, an estate fell to him, whereby he became able to redeem his liberty.

Ver. 50. *And he shall reckon with him that bought him, from the year that he was sold to him unto the year of jubilee,* &c.] That no injury might be done to his master, they were to compute how long he had served him, and how long he had still to serve, and what price was paid for him; and then, according to the number of years gone and to come, he was to make his demands: which is the meaning of the following words, *And the price of his sale shall be according to the number of years.*

According to the time of a hired servant shall it be with him.] The labour and service that he had done him was to be valued, as they would do that of a hireling (who wrought for so much by the day or the year), and deducting that from the price which was given for him, the remainder was the price of this redemption.

Ver. 51. *If there be yet many years behind, according unto them he shall give again the price of his redemption.*] If he had served but a few years, and there were many to come before the jubilee; then there was less to be deducted from what his master gave for him, and the price of his redemption was higher. But if there remained *but few*

years unto the year of jubilee (as it follows in the next verse), then less was to be given for his redemption, because he had had his service a long time.

Ver. 53. *And as a yearly hired servant shall he be with him.*] His master was to treat him as a hired servant, who let out his service for wages by the year; and that both with respect to the price of his redemption, and to his usage while he remained in his service; as appears by the next words.

And the other shall not rule with rigour over him.] Use him harshly and severely; for one Israelite was not permitted to use another in that manner, (ver. 43.) and therefore much less was it to be suffered from a stranger.

In thy sight.] If they observed any such rigorous usage, they were to endeavour to get it remedied by the authority of the magistrate.

Ver. 54. *And he be not redeemed in these years, then he shall go out in the year of jubilee.*] If neither his kindred nor country redeemed him, nor he was able to redeem himself, (ver. 49.) from the time he was sold to the year of jubilee, he was to stay till then; when he went out, as others did, without paying any thing for his liberty. By which it is evident, that he had not the benefit of the seventh year of release, as Hebrew servants had who served Hebrew masters. For it had been unequal, if Hebrews sold to proselytes had been discharged from their service so soon, when the children of proselytes sold to Hebrews (ver. 45.) were to be their inheritance for ever. It was more reasonable (and therefore so here enacted), that the Hebrews sold to proselytes should not be free till the year of jubilee, unless they were redeemed by themselves or their friends. By which law also they were made more careful not to sell themselves to strangers.

He and his children with him.] It seems a proselyte was bound, when he bought a Hebrew servant, to maintain his family while he served him; as the Hebrews were bound to do, when they bought one of their own nation, (ver. 31.)

Ver. 55. *For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt.*] He would not have them serve with rigour, nor beyond the year of jubilee, because they were his servants by a peculiar title, being redeemed by him from the Egyptian bondage, where they were held a long time in cruel servitude, (ver. 38.)

I am the Lord your God.] Your sovereign, who will be ever kind to you, while you serve and obey me.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. *Ye shall make you no idols.*] This precept hath been often mentioned; but being now to enforce all his precepts by the most solemn promises and threatenings, he repeats the principal thing upon which all depended, which was, that they should keep close to the worship of him, the only God, and abhor all idolatry, which he knew would corrupt their manners.

The Hebrew word *elilim* hath been observed before, (chap. xix. 4.) to express contempt; signifying the *idols* (as we translate it) which the heathen worshipped, to be mere empty vanities, things of nought, as we speak; and therefore to be rejected with disdain, rather than any way regarded.

Nor graven image.] The Hebrew word *pesel* signifies the image of any thing hewn out of wood or stone: (see Exod. xx. 4.) These images the gentiles did not worship, till they were dedicated and consecrated with certain rites and ceremonies (which were very various, according to the difference of the deities, and the superstitions of several countries), by which consecration they imagined their gods were invited to be present in these images and statues; otherwise they were not so stupid, as to worship wood and stone.

Neither rear up a standing image.] The Hebrew word *matsebah*, is translated by the LXX. στύλην, *a pillar*, as we also translate it in the margin. And if we translate it *statue*, or *standing image*, we are not to understand by it the figure of a man, or of any other creature; but, as the Hebrews seem rightly to take it, for any work, an altar for instance, which is erected and set up for sacred assemblies to be held thereat, though they be to the true God. So Maimonides, (as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 6.) who saith, this was the custom among idolaters, to erect such statues to their gods. And so Pausanias saith (in his Achaica), that in ancient time among the Greeks, universally, ἀντὶ ἀγαλμάτων εἶχον ἀργοὶ λίθοι τιμὰς θεῶν, *rude stones, instead of images, had Divine honours paid to them.* (See Maimonides de cultu Stell. et Plan. cap. 6. sect. 8.) These were the most ancient monuments of all other; and being plain and simple, might be thought to be less tempting and inviting, than those images which had the figure of men, or other creatures; yet, even these God forbids to his people, because he would have no representation of him whatsoever, though it might seem to have no danger in it. These were they which the Greeks called Βαιτύλια. (See upon Gen. xxviii. 19. and Selden de Diis Syris, Syntag. 2. cap. 1.)

Neither set up any image of stone in your land.] There was greater reason they should not set up *Eben Maschkith*, which signifies *carved or figured* stones that had pictures cut in it, as the Hebrews understand it. (See Maimonides in the place beforenamed, and Dionys. Vossius's notes upon him.) And Mr. Selden observes, also, it was unlawful to set up these *in their land* (as Moses here speaks), though it were without the temple; and it was no more permitted to a proselyte than to an Israelite. If any man did make such statues he was beaten.

Possibly this may signify such images as were common among the Egyptians in aftertimes; which were not representations of their gods, but were full of symbols and hieroglyphics, expressing some of the perfections of their gods. These God would as little allow among his people as any of the former: such caution he used to prevent this sort of idolatry, by *image-worship.*

To bow down unto it.] Though they did not worship it, but only worship God before it.

I am the Lord your God.] Who admit of no such things where I am worshipped, (Exod. xx. 4.)

Ver. 2. *Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary,* &c.] See chap. xix. 30. where there is the same precept: which seems to be here repeated, because, if they *kept his sabbaths,* they would preserve them from idolatry, being appointed for the worship of the Creator of all things; especially if they had such a sense of his Divine majesty as wrought *reverence* in them, even to his sanctuary.

Ver. 3. *If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them.*] If the regard you have to my majesty make you obedient to my laws.

Ver. 4. *Then will I give you rain in due season.*] Here follow the promises of all things that men naturally most desire for their happy living here in this world. And first he assures them they should have fruitful seasons, which depended upon rain in due time, (Jerem. v. 24.) For Canaan was not a country like Egypt, which was watered and made fertile by the overflowing of their river; but without rain was quite barren.

And the land shall yield her increase.] Corn for the use of men; and grass for the cattle.

And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.] Which was very various every one knows, such as figs, pomegranates, dates, apples, &c. which he promises they should never want.

Ver. 5. *And your thrashing shall reach unto the vintage, &c.*] This is a promise of such plenty of corn, that before they could have reaped it all, and thrashed it out, the vintage would be ready, and call for their labour about it; and before they could have pressed out their wine, it would be time to sow again: as much as to say, they should have such abundance, that they should have scarce time enough to receive and lay up one blessing before another came upon them.

And ye shall eat your bread to the full.] Have no want of any sort of provision (which is comprehended under the name of *bread),* but as much as you can desire: which promise may seem to have a peculiar regard to the command lately given, chap. xxv. 4. 11. though there he took care to secure them by a special promise, that they should not want in those years, (ver. 20, 21.) and therefore much less in any other.

And dwell in your land safely.] Plenty would have been little satisfaction to them, if they had been in danger to lose it, or to be disturbed in it; and therefore he promises to defend and protect them in the secure enjoyment of it. (See chap. xxv. 18, 19.)

Ver. 6. *And I will give peace in your land.*] There shall be no insurrections or seditions in your country, which are wont to arise from poverty and discontent: for this seems to relate to peace among themselves; as the latter end of the verse, to freedom from the desolations their enemies might make among them.

And ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid.] It is a promise to preserve them from housebreakers and robbers.

And I will rid evil beasts out of the land.] Which (as it will appear from ver. 22.) made lamentable havoc when they increased, and were let loose upon them: but these God promises to extirpate, if they would be obedient, either by hindering their breed, or making them devour one another, or driving them out of their country.

Neither shall the sword go through your land.] Their enemies should not be able to penetrate their country, to make any ravage there.

Ver. 7. *And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword.*] This supposes their neighbours might invade their country, but should fail in their attempt, and be driven away with shame.

Ver. 8. *And five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight.*] That is, a few shall be too hard for a great multitude; as it proved in the conquest of Canaan: insomuch that Joshua saith, (chap. xxiii. 10.) *One man of you shall chase a thousand.* Which was fulfilled in the days of Gideon, who, with three hundred men, put to flight a vast army, (Judg. vii. 22.)

And your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.] Which commonly made a greater slaughter in their flight than was made in the battle.

Ver. 9. *For I will have respect unto you.*] The reason of which great success (as well as of the plenty beforementioned), he would make them sensible, was God's great kindness and favour towards them, as the reward of their obedience. This Joshua most thankfully acknowledges, chap. xxiii. 9.

And make you fruitful, and multiply you.] Make you a populous, and consequently a powerful nation.

And establish my covenant with you.] Keep it inviolably, and most certainly perform it: (see Gen. vi. 18.)

Ver. 10. *And ye shall eat old store.*] Have a great deal of old corn left when the new is come in.

And bring forth the old because of the new.] Have so much of it left, as to want room for it when the new is to be laid up.

Ver. 11. *And I will set my tabernacle amongst you.*] This is the great promise of all, that his tabernacle, wherein he dwelt among them, should remain and abide with them: for it was set already among them; but now he promises it should be *fixed:* that is, his Divine presence should continue with them.

And my soul shall not abhor you.] I will not cast you off, because of your offences; for which I have appointed an expiation.

Ver. 12. *And I will walk among you.*] Conduct you from place to place, all the time you are in this wilderness. For he dwelling in the tabernacle, in the cloud of glory which covered it; when that cloud was taken up, the ark presently moved to go before them, and led them to the next station, where they should pitch their tents, Numb. x. 11, 12. (See Exod. xxv. 8.) This is given as the reason why they should keep their camp from all impurities: (see Deut. xxiii. 12—14.)

And I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.] Bring you to the land of Canaan; and there continue with you, and bless you, as my peculiar people.

Ver. 13. *I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt.*] I will not leave my own work imperfect; but as I delivered you from the Egyptian slavery, so I will continue to preserve your liberty and happiness.

That ye should not be their bondmen.] Remain any longer their slaves, as they intended to make you for ever.

And I have broken the bands of your yoke.] When you could not deliver yourselves, I set you free from the heavy burdens which oppressed you.

And made you go upright.] They were so loaded with insupportable burdens in Egypt, that they could not look up, but hung down their heads with heaviness: till God, by setting them free, made them go out from thence, not with dejected, but with cheerful countenances. For that is the meaning of making them *go upright:* as freemen, not bowed down with oppression, but lifting up their heads for joy at their deliverance: (see Exod. xiv. 8.)

Ver. 14. *But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not*

do all these commandments.] After the promise of these extraordinary blessings, as the reward of their obedience, he threatens them with as extraordinary plagues and calamities, if they were disobedient. And as nothing moves us more powerfully than hope of some good, or fear of some evil; so there are no greater blessings in this world than those which God's promises gave them hope to enjoy, nor greater evils than those of which his threatenings put them in fear. But such is the Divine goodness, he always offers mercy before he proceeds to judgment, and mingles judgment with mercy, before he proceeds in rigour of justice. Which will appear in the following threatenings.

Ver. 15. *And if ye despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments.*] They were not thus wicked at the first; but disobedience to God's commands (mentioned in the foregoing verse) proceeded to a contemptuous neglect of them; and that in time to an abhorrence of them.

So that ye will not do all my commandments.] Though often admonished by his prophets; whose messages they not only rejected, but slighted and despised.

But that ye break my covenant.] By forsaking him, and falling to idolatry. For that was the principal thing in the covenant, that they should have no other God, but him alone.

Ver. 16. *I also will do this unto you.*] I will alter the method of my providence towards you.

I will even appoint over you.] Or, as it is in the Hebrew, *upon you:* causing the following diseases to seize upon them (as the phrase signifies) and arrest them; that they might feel the heavy displeasure of Him, whose laws they set at nought.

Terror, consumption, and the burning ague.] It is not certain what diseases are comprehended under these words; especially the first, *behalah,* which we translate *terror.* But, coming from a word importing *haste* and precipitancy, I take it to signify the *falling sickness;* whereby people are so suddenly surprised, that they sometimes fall into the fire by which they sit.

The other two words probably are rightly translated. For the next, *sachepheth* is by Kimchi and a great many others understood to signify a *consumption,* or a *hectic fever;* though R. Solomon and some others seem to take it for a *dropsy;* for he says it is a disease that puffs up the flesh, or (as David de Pomis) makes it to break out in blotches. (See Bochart in his Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 18.) As for the last word, *chaddachat,* it coming from a word denoting *great heat,* may well be translated a *burning fever.*

That shall consume the eyes.] Make you look ghastly.

And cause sorrow of heart.] Take away all the comfort of life.

And ye shall sow your seed, but your enemies shall eat it.] Next to bodily sickness, he threatens them with the incursions of their enemies; which was a higher punishment than the former, according to that of David, it is better to fall into the hands of the Lord than into the hands of men.

Here also it is observable, he doth not threaten the worst that their enemies might do to them; but first, that they should carry away their harvest, and make a scarcity among them; and in the next verse, speaks of delivering them to be slain by them.

Ver. 17. *And I will set my face against you.*] Be extremely angry with you. (See chap. xvii. 10.)

And ye shall be slain before your enemies.] The neighbouring nations oft-times made great slaughter of them, and conquered them; as we find in the book of Judges, and in the beginning of the first book of Samuel.

They that hate you shall reign over you.] And grievously oppressed them, (Judges iv. 3. vi. 2, &c.) This made them very contemptible; and was a just punishment of their contempt of God's laws.

And ye shall flee when none pursueth you.] Lose all your courage; directly opposite to the promise, ver. 7, 8.

Ver. 18. *And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me.*] If by these sore punishments they were not reclaimed from their idolatrous practices, he threatens to send greater.

Then will I punish you seven times more for your sins.] The number *seven* is used for any indefinite multitude, and therefore here signifies a great increase of their plagues; which, by their continued provocations, became more and more grievous than in former ages.

Ver. 19. *And I will break the pride of your power.*] That power wherein you glory. Which some understand of the *sanctuary;* which in the days of Eli was forsaken of the *ark of God's strength* (as the Psalmist calls it), 1 Sam. iv. 10, 11. But it seems rather to relate to their numerous forces, which at the first were every where victorious; but, after sundry defeats in foregoing times, were in the days of Saul reduced to such straits, that they hid themselves in caves, and pits, and thickets, &c. and there was not a sword or a spear to be found in any of their hands (save Saul's and Jonathan's), when they should have fought with their enemies, (1 Sam. xiii. 6, 7. 22.)

And I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass.] The one, he means, should afford no rain, and the other, for want of moisture, bring forth no fruit; which must needs make a sore famine among them.

Ver. 20. *And your strength shall be spent in vain,* &c.] This is a further description of that calamity; when, after all their labour in ploughing and sowing their land, or digging and dunging their trees, they brought forth nothing for their sustenance. We read in Scripture of such famines, wherein man and beast were ready to perish; particularly 1 Kings xvii. 1. 12. xviii. 15. 2 Kings viii. 1.

Ver. 21. *And if ye walk contrary unto me.*] Go on in your idolatrous courses, directly contrary to my commands, (ver. 1.)

And will not hearken unto me.] Be obedient to the admonitions of his prophets, whom he sent to call them to repentance.

I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.] As their sins increased, so did their plagues: for these that follow are more dreadful than the foregoing. And it was a high aggravation of their sins, that they would take no warning by the severe punishments which God inflicted upon their forefathers. This augmented his plagues upon succeeding generations; which, as Dr. Jackson speaks, usually run by *the scale of sevens;* so that if we call the literal meaning to a strict arithmetical account, these later plagues were *nine-and-forty times* heavier than the former. But it is most likely, a certain number is put for an uncertain; yet denoting a very great increase of their punishments, beyond what had been in preceding times.

It ought to be observed, that there is in the margin another rendering of the first words of this verse *(If ye walk*

contrary to me), which some follow; *If ye walk at all adventures with me;* that is, live carelessly, as if you had no regard at all to me; I will have as little regard to you, or concern for you. But the ancient translations go the other way.

Ver. 22. *I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children,* &c.] If the terrible *famine* would not work upon their stubborn hearts, no more than the forenamed *sicknesses* and *wars,* (ver. 16, 17. 19, 20.) then he threatens they and their cattle should be devoured by wild beasts; the principal of which were lions, unto which the depopulation and devastation of countries are ascribed in Scripture; particularly in the prophet Jeremiah, (chap. ii. 15. iv. 7.) where the Assyrians and Nebuchadnezzar are therefore compared to lions, because by those fierce beasts countries were sometimes laid desolate; man and beast being destroyed by them. We read of no other that killed the people planted in Samaria by the king of Assyria, instead of the Israelites, whom they carried away captive, (2 Kings xvii. 25.) And God threatened to destroy the remnant of Moab, by the same means, (Isai. xv. 9.) But there were other wild beasts also to do this execution, (Jer. v. 6.) As bears, who killed two-and-forty children at one time, (2 Kings ii. 24.) Serpents and cockatrices, (Jer. viii. 17.) And in general, that prophet threatens the destruction of Judea by such creatures, (Jer. xv. 3.) Nor are examples wanting in other histories of such calamities; one monument of which continues still in the church. For the solemn prayers in Rogation week were first instituted (as Sidonius relates), by Mamertus bishop of Vienne, in France, for this reason among others, that wolves and other wild beasts did very great mischief in those parts. (See Sirmondus, in lib. vii. Epist. 1.) Nay, some countries have been so infested with smaller creatures, particularly Spain, by conies, that they left no thing untouched; being noxious not only to roots and seeds, but subverting whole towns, which were undermined by them. And in the neighbouring islands, called Baleares, they were so plagued with them, that they were forced to petition Augustus to send soldiers to defend them from these little animals. (See Bochartus, in his Phaleg. lib. iii. cap. 7.)

And your highways shall be desolate.] For travellers would not venture into the highways, for fear of the wild beasts, and because of the scarcity of people to give them entertainment. It is observable, that this plague is directly opposite to the blessing promised unto their obedience, (ver. 6.) where he saith, *I will rid evil beasts out of the land;* which was never overrun with them till it was overspread with wickedness.

Ver. 23. *If ye will not be reformed by me, by these things.*] He would have them observe his hand in all these punishments; by which he intended their reformation.

But will walk contrary unto me.] See ver. 21.

Ver. 24. *Then will I also walk contrary unto you.*] Serve you in your kind, and still make your plagues more grievous, as your stubbornness grows more obstinate. To what was said before of this matter, I shall add the interpretation of Maimonides, in his More Nevoch. (par. iii. cap. 36.) where he thus glosses on this place: "If, when I inflict upon you these punishments, you believe them to be accidental things, mere *chances* (so he understands the word *keri,* which we translate *contrary*), then will I deal with you according to your opinion, and lay more heavy punishments upon you: for because they believed these plagues happened by *accident,* which were the consequents of their false opinions and evil works, therefore they did not reform them; as Jeremiah saith, (chap. v. 3.) *Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved.*" Thus he.

And will punish you yet seven times for your sins.] If we should follow the literal exposition mentioned ver. 21. then those plagues there threatened being *seven times multiplied,* would make the plagues threatened in this verse, for their multiplied transgressions, *three hundred and forty-three times* greater than the first, ver. 18. But the meaning is only, that they should still grow more numerous and more destructive.

Ver. 25. *And I will bring a sword upon you.*] This seems to be no new plague, having been before threatened, ver. 17. Therefore the meaning is, that he would send three sore judgments upon them, all at the same time, *viz. war, pestilence,* and *famine;* which are contained in this and the next verse. Of *war* and *famine* at once, see Jer. xiv. 18. and xvi. 4. Of *pestilence* added to them, together with captivity, chap. xv. 2—4. and xliv. 12, 13. and see Ezek. vi. 11, 12. and still worse, Ezek. xiv. 21.

That shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant.] My quarrel with you for the breach of that covenant which you solemnly made with me, (Exod. xxiv. 3. 8. and xxxiv. 10—12, &c.)

And when you are gathered together within your cities.] Thinking there to defend yourselves against your enemies, by impregnable fortifications.

I will send the pestilence among you.] To destroy the soldiers in your garrison.

And ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.] Forced to surrender, because you have no men left to defend the place.

Ver. 26. *And when I have broken the staff of bread.*] Taken away its power to nourish you (as Bochart expounds it), or rather, taken bread itself from you, which is the support of life by a sore famine, (ver. 10.) If they either wanted corn to make bread, or their corn had no heart in it (as we speak), either way they would be starved.

Ten women shall bake your bread in one oven.] That is, there shall be such scarcity, that a small oven shall be sufficient to bake bread for ten families, *i. e.* for a great many, as the number *ten* in Scripture signifies, (1 Sam. i. 8. Job xix. 3.)

And they shall deliver you again your bread by weight.] Distribute to every one in the family a certain quantity; not enough to satisfy them, but only (as we speak) to keep body and soul together. So it follows:

And ye shall eat, and not be satisfied.] Never have enough to satisfy their hunger; but, by eating, made to crave the more to eat: so Pellicanus glosses, who thus concludes his notes on these verses, *Hæc sunt arma Dei contra insensatos,* &c. "*These are the weapons of God against stupid wretches;* which no wicked man can evade, when God in anger begins to fall upon them. Let no man, though never so great and rich, hope to be safe from the hand of the Lord, *who can kill kings by worms and lice when he pleaseth.*"

Ver. 27. *And if you will not for all this hearken unto me,*

but walk contrary to me.] If all these plagues have no better effect upon you than the former. (See ver. 21. 23, 24.)

Ver. 28. *Then will I also walk contrary to you in fury.*] His indignation rises proportionable to their offences: for now he not only saith he will set *his face against them,* (as he speaks, ver. 17.) but proceed against them, *in fury;* by such punishments as should quite ruin them.

And I, even I will chastise.] The very manner of speech expresses anger and indignation: being as if he had said, I will make you know who it is that you have despised, (ver. 15.) The word *jissarti* also, which we render *chastise,* imports smarter punishments than those expressed by *hickethi,* I will *smite,* or punish you, (ver. 24.)

Seven times for your sins.] If we should by a literal account multiply the number of plagues mentioned, ver. 24. *seven times,* the threatening here would amount to this: that their rebellion, not amended by so many plagues, but continued still from age to age, (notwithstanding all the corrections inflicted on them for their reformation, ver. 23.) should in conclusion be punished *one thousand one hundred ninety-seven times* more severely than at first, (ver. 18.) But the simple sense is, that their obstinate contempt of his laws, should be punished with new and more grievous plagues. Which was fulfilled, as our Dr. Jackson observes, (book i. on the Creed, chap. 22.) in their captivity, in the days of Manasseh, Jehoiachim, and Zedekiah: and again in the time of Ptolemy, the first under Antiochus Epiphanes. For these latter calamities were at least *seven times* greater (both for extent and durance) than the former persecutions, which they suffered from the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, and Syrians. By all which, and by what follows, it plainly appears, that these threatenings were a kind of prediction. For Moses evidently foresaw they would not prove so obedient as he desired, (Deut. xxxi. 27, 29.) and consequently that these threatenings, in case of disobedience, would turn into prophecies. Unto every one of which their history exactly answers; as the book of Deuteronomy will give me occasion to shew more fully.

Ver. 29. *And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.*] This is the very utmost calamity that could come upon a people: and yet (as Conradus Pellicanus observes) it is put before the throwing down of their high places and images, &c. As if the devouring of their children (such was their incredible lust after idols) would seem a less evil to them, than the loss of their images.

This was fulfilled among the Israelites in the siege of Samaria, (2 Kings vi. 29.) and among the Jews in the siege of Jerusalem before the Babylonian captivity, (Lament. iv. 10.) and in the last siege by Titus, as Josephus relates, (lib. vii. de Bello Judaico, cap. 8.)

Ver. 30. *And I will destroy your high places.*] Where they were wont to worship their idols, according to the manner of the heathen; who built temples, and altars, and offered sacrifices to their gods, upon mountains and high hills; especially such as were shaded with trees. Insomuch, that the Indians in Philostratus call the high mountain Caucasus, Θεῶν οἶκον, *the house of the gods.* And the ancient Persians, (as Herodotus saith in his Clio, cap. 131.) ἐπὶ τὰ ὑψηλότατα τῶν ὀρέων ἀναβαίνοντες, *going up to the top of the highest mountains,* there offered sacrifices unto Jupiter; calling the whole circle of the heavens by that name. And in the island Naxus the highest mountain was also consecrated to him; as from his worship on Mount Athos he is called Ἀθῶος in Hesychius. They that would see more of this matter, may look into Cuperus's Apotheosis Homeri, p. 15, 16, &c. And the reason of their choosing these places for their worship was, because they thought their sacrifices would be more acceptable there than in valleys. For, as Lucian himself saith, they thought themselves in such high places to be nearer to their gods, and so should more easily obtain audience, Ὅτι τῶν εὐχωλέων ἀγχόθεν ἐπαΐουσι οἱ Θεοί. (Lib. de Dea Syr.) and Tacitus saith the same in the last book of his Annals.

How much the Israelites were inclined to follow the nations of the world in this, appears too plainly by their history; which shews that high places were frequented in the reigns of their good kings, as well as of their bad. Yea, they were so fond of them, that when they could not go to them, they offered upon the tops of their houses, (Jer. xix. 13. xxxii. 29. Zeph. i. 5.)

And cut down your images.] The Hebrew word *chammanecem,* which we translate *your images,* properly signifies *temples erected for the worship of the sun,* as Aben Ezra says upon this place. For it is certain that the Hebrews call the sun *Chammæ;* from whence comes the word *Chamman,* the temple of the sun: whom the ancient Phœnicians took to be the Lord of Heaven. So Sanchoniathon, Τοῦτον γὰρ (speaking of the sun) Θεὸν ἐνόμιζον μόνον οὐρανοῦ Κύριον. Though it is very probable, that, as superstition increased, the name of *Chammanim* was given to other temples, as well as those of the sun. (See Bochart in his Canaan, lib. ii. cap. 17.) Others take this word to signify what the Greeks call Πυραθεῖα and Πυρεῖα, *temples of the fire;* which being worshipped by the eastern people, temples were erected in honour of it. But this is not much different from the former: the Persians worshipped the sun in the fire, which was the symbol and representative of the sun: (see Selden Syntagma ii. de Diis Syris, cap. 8.)

And cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols.] Which were both burnt together, as some imagine. However, this expresses the utmost contempt both of them and of their idols; who were alike detestable. Their fondness of them also when they were alive seems to be represented by throwing them upon them when they were dead. And the Hebrew word *gillulim* (which we barely translate *idols),* importing something belonging to the dunghill, is taken by some to signify the images of Baal-peor; who was worshipped, as the Jews say, after a most beastly manner. These idols, whatsoever they were, though dressed up finely, yet were no better than dead *carcasses,* without any life or soul in them. And we might think (if that superstition were so old) that Moses alludes to the little images of Isis, which were made of plaster and clay, and are found frequently in the sepulchres of Egyptians at this day. Unto which Christoph. Arnoldus (in his epistle to Wagenseil) thinks the Talmudists allude, when they say that Pharaoh's daughter, becoming a proselyte to the Jewish religion, washed herself in the river Megullile, from these dunghill idols (as some render it) of her father's house, (Excerp. Gemaræ in Sota, cap. 1. sect. 40.) The Dutch interpreters translate it *dreck-goden,* not merely for the matter (as Arnoldus thinks), but also for the form of a beetle, which lives in dung: for so they represented Isis, as Plutarch

tells us in his book de Isid. et Osir. (See Wagenseil Sota, p. 1176.)

And my soul shall abhor you.] As so offensive to me, that I can bear with you no longer. This is directly opposite to his promise, if they would be obedient, ver. 11. *My soul shall not abhor you.*

Ver. 31. *And I will make your cities waste.*] Their walls being thrown down, and their houses burnt.

And bring your sanctuaries unto desolation.] They had but one *sanctuary*, and therefore some think their *synagogues* are comprehended under this name; for they are sometimes called sanctuaries, as I observed before. But the sanctuary, properly so called, having several parts, which were all holy, Moses may be thought to speak of it here in the plural number. As Jeremiah represents the Jews, saying, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these;" (chap. vii. 4.) that is, both these courts wherein we stand, as well as that of the priests, and the most holy place, are all the Lord's temple. Or the word *your* is to be applied to such places of worship as they themselves had consecrated, in opposition to God's sanctuary.

And I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours.] This seems to determine the meaning of *sanctuaries* to God's own house, where *sweet odours* of incense, made of several sweet spices, were daily offered unto him: which being a representation of their prayers sent up to him, he here declares that he will not be appeased by them, nor by any sacrifices they could offer to him, but utterly reject them.

Ver. 32. *And I will bring the land into desolation.*] The people being carried captive, or forced to flee into strange countries, (ver. 33.)

And your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.] They that possess this country, out of which you are expelled, shall be amazed when they reflect upon the calamities that are fallen upon you: which Jeremiah describes as very dreadful, (chap. vii. 20.) and often mentions the astonishment wherewith they were struck, who beheld them, (chap. xviii. 16. xix. 8. xxv. 9. 11.) and see 2 Chron. xxix. 8, 9. which shews this began before Jeremiah's time.

Ver. 33. *And I will scatter you among the heathen.*] Some fled into one strange country, and others into another, according as they could find means and opportunity; insomuch, that there were no known places where they were not dispersed. So Jeremiah threatens, chap. xiii. 24. xv. 4.

And I will draw a sword after you.] So Jeremiah threatens those that would go into Egypt for safety; that "the sword which they feared should overtake them there," (chap. xlii. 16—18.)

And your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.] For they that were left there, and their enemies to whom the country was given, were not enough to cultivate the land and build their cities. By all this, as well as by what follows, it appears that here is a plain prediction of the miseries that came upon Israel, by Tiglath-Pileser and Salmanasar; and upon Judah by Nebuchadnezzar; who laid their cities waste, destroyed the sanctuaries, despoiled them of their goods, drove them into strange countries, and, as it here follows, made their land keep its sabbaths.

Ver. 34. *Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemy's land,* &c.] This is a most bitter reproach to them for their ingratitude to God, and inhumanity to their brethren, in not keeping the sabbatical year, mentioned in the foregoing chapter. Dr. Hammond hath another notion of the word, which we translate *enjoy:* (see Note g. upon Psal. cii. p. 504.)

Ver. 35. *As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest.*] Lie untilled, as it ought to have done every seventh year. And it lay thus seventy years; because, as some think, they had neglected to keep so many sabbatical years: which we cannot think to be true, without supposing that they kept none for half the time, from their entrance into Canaan, till they were expelled out of it by the captivity of Babylon.

Because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.] "For in those four hundred and ninety years (says Procopius Gazæus), when they were under the government of kings, there were seventy years to be kept as sabbaths: which, that the land might enjoy its sabbaths, were spent in the captivity of Babylon." We do not expressly read, indeed, of this profane neglect, while they dwelt in their land; but Jeremiah complains, that they did not, in his time, give their servants liberty in the seventh year, (chap. xxxiv. 17.) and he gives this as one reason why God delivered them up to slavery, (for so I understand those words, Lam. i. 3. "Judah is gone into captivity, because of affliction, and because of great servitude.") And from thence we may conclude, that the same covetous humour (and distrust of God's providence) made them not suffer their land to rest in that year; especially since the author of the second book of Chronicles expressly mentions this as a reason of their captivity, *to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah the prophet, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbaths, to fulfil threescore and ten years,* (2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.) Now their punishment in this was made the more remarkable, if it be true, that both the kingdom of Samaria and the kingdom of Judah were destroyed in a sabbatical year; and that immediately after a jubilee, the city and temple were destroyed by Titus, according to Scaliger's computation. And so I observed before Maimonides makes account, (chap. xxv. 8.) that the year when they were carried captive to Babylon, and the first temple destroyed, was in the expiration of a sabbatical year, (Schemitta ve Jobel, cap. 10. sect. 3.)

Ver. 36. *And upon them that are left alive of you.*] This imports that the body of the people should be destroyed.

I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies.] Where their spirits sunk under their present miseries.

And the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them.] And yet they were condemned to live in continual dread of more miseries. For the Hebrew word we translate *faintness* signifies *softness*, which could not support the weight of their affliction. And this last phrase imports such a timorousness as should make their life always uneasy to them, and such a cowardice as should render them vile and despicable. And so they are noted at this day to be mean-spirited and faint-hearted: it being scarce ever heard, that a Jew listed himself for a soldier, or engaged in the defence of the country where he lives.

And they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword, and fall when none pursueth.] Fancy they hear the sound of trumpets or clashing of arms; which made them start and run away, nay, fall into a swoon, when there was no danger.

Such terrors the heathen themselves have observed, in men of an evil conscience, who are afraid of their own shadow, as they say of Orestes.

Ver. 37. *And they shall fall one upon another.*] As people are wont to do, when they make too much haste, and run confusedly; or the foremost hinder the flight of those that follow, (Jerem. xlvi. 16.)

As it were before a sword, &c.] For fear of the sword; as this Hebrew phrase certainly signifies, and is so translated in the margin of our Bibles, Isa. xxi. 15. and xxxi. 8. (See Bochartus in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 8.)

And ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies.] Being so timorous as to flee when there were none (as it goes before), they could not stand before them when they appeared.

Ver. 38. *And ye shall perish among the heathen.*] Die with grief, or by diseases, poverty, oppression, and hard usage.

And the land of your enemies shall eat you up.] Insomuch, that the ten tribes never returned to their own land: but either perished by hunger and bad accommodations; or were swallowed up (as we say) into the body of another nation.

Ver. 39. *And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquities, in their enemy's land.*] With grief and sorrow, and sad reflections upon the miseries into which their sins, and the sins of their fathers, had thrown them: insomuch that death was more acceptable to them than life, (Jerem. viii. 3.)

And also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.] Especially those of Manasseh king of Judah, whose wickedness was so great, that the zealous reformation which his grandchild made could not turn away "the fierceness of God's great wrath against them," (2 Kings xxiii. 26, 27.)

Ver. 40. *If they shall confess their iniquity,* &c.] Though Moses had been above three times as long in recounting the plagues, which he either foresaw, or feared would come upon them for their sins, than in the blessings which he promised should follow their obedience: yet he plainly shews, that the blessings would have far excelled the curses, had not their disobedience hindered. For after all these dreadful calamities were come upon them, he concludes with a most gracious promise, that God would restore them to their own land, from whence they were expelled, if they truly repented of those sins which were the cause of it.

He means, by *confessing their iniquities, and the iniquities of their fathers,* &c. acknowledging them with such unfeigned sorrow as wrought repentance; without which he gave them no hope of deliverance. And it is well observed by a great divine of our own, that if, without confession of *their fathers' iniquities,* they could not be absolved from *their own,* their fathers' iniquity not repented of was their own, and so was the punishment due unto it.

And that they have walked contrary to me.] Both they and their forefathers; whose ways had been so contrary to God's laws, that, if they sincerely confessed it, God expected they should take the quite contrary course, and observe those precepts carefully which their fathers had violated.

Ver. 41. *And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies.*] Be sensible that all the miseries they have endured came not by chance, but were the just punishment I sent upon them for their sins: particularly that it was by my order that they were carried captive into a strange land.

If then their uncircumcised heart be humbled.] By an *uncircumcised heart* seems to be meant a heathenish temper of mind, insensible of God; which made them stubborn and refractory; and, therefore, this phrase is the same with a *hard heart:* for which there was no cure, but such remarkable judgments, as evidently carried in them the marks of a Divine hand: which when they saw, and submitted to it, he gives them hope of deliverance.

And they accept of the punishment of their iniquity.] Patiently bear it, as their just desert; and acknowledge they do not deserve to be delivered from it.

Ver. 42. *Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham.*] See Exod. iii. 6. He promises to restore them to their own land; according to the covenant made with their forefathers, that he would give it them for an everlasting possession. For to *remember* a covenant, or promise, in Scripture language, is to perform it, and make it good. Accordingly we find the forenamed confession made by Daniel, (chap. ix.) and he makes it in the name of all the people; among whom, no doubt, there were many that heartily joined with him: and then followed their wonderful restoration in the reign of Cyrus; of which we read, Ezra i. &c.

And I will remember the land.] Repeople it with its former inhabitants, &c. See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23. where this immediately follows the relation he had made of the land being laid desolate.

Ver. 43. *The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths,* &c.] This verse is very obscure; unless we take it to speak of a new expulsion out of their land, after their reduction to it. And then the next words,

And they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity.] Must be interpreted, *after they had accepted,* or *though they had accepted,* &c. This made their sin the more provoking; that they offended God again, when he had so graciously forgiven them, and delivered them from a dismal captivity.

Because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.] Returned to the very same wicked disposition for which they had been formerly expelled, (ver. 15.) This was fulfilled by degrees, by the successors of Alexander, and at last by the Romans.

Ver. 44. *And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies.*] He would not have them utterly despair of mercy, even after a new banishment, which hath now continued many ages. For this promise is not yet fulfilled; as Dr. Jackson observes, book i. on the Creed, chap. 31. sect. 9.

I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly.] As we see at this very day they are not *destroyed utterly,* but remain a great body in several countries; after above sixteen hundred years' expulsion from their own land.

And to break my covenant with them.] Never more to own them for my people.

For I am the Lord their God.] I still continue to have a

peculiar right to their obedience, as they have to my kindness, if they will return to their duty.

Ver. 45. *And I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors,* &c.] The meaning cannot be, that God would be so gracious *for their sakes* who were so very wicked; but, as the words in the Hebrew are, he would *for them* (*i. e.* for their good and advantage) *remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom he had brought forth out of the land of Egypt;* that is, once more deliver them from their miserable condition, and restore them to his favour, that he may be *their* God. And that great man (now mentioned on the foregoing verse) observes, "That the continuation of their plagues seems so much interrupted, and the plagues themselves so much mitigated, in the last age (since the gospel hath been again revealed), as if their misery were almost expired, and the day of their redemption drawing nigh." But then they must first *confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers,* (as Moses speaks before, ver. 40.) *with their trespass which they trespassed* in crucifying Christ the Lord, *and accept the punishment of their iniquity,* acknowledging that so horrid a crime deserved so long and so heavy a punishment. For *every child* (as he observes in another place, book xi. p. 3750.) *is born,* as it were, *heir to his father's sins,* and to their plagues; unless he renounce them by taking their guilt upon him, and such hearty confession as this law prescribes, and patient submission of himself to God's correction.

Ver. 46. *These are the statutes, and judgments, and laws, which the Lord made between him and the children of Israel.*] This may be thought to refer either to all the foregoing book of laws, or to what is said in this chapter. Menochius thus expounds it: These are the punishments which God threatened to the breakers of his laws. But it is more reasonable to take in the whole, in this manner, *These are the statutes, and judgments, and laws* (together with the promises and threatenings annexed to them), *which the Lord made between him and Israel.*

In Mount Sinai.] See chap. xxv. 1.

By the hand of Moses.] By the ministry of Moses, who delivered these laws from God's own mouth.

It is obvious to observe, that, instead of *these are the laws which the Lord made between him and the children of Israel,* Onkelos, the famous Chaldee interpreter, hath, *between his Word and the children of Israel.* Which Theodoric Hackspan produces, among other places, to prove, that in those paraphrasts the Word of the Lord signifies no more than αὐτὸς, *himself.* Which, though it be true in some places, yet in others, as I have observed before, it cannot have that signification; particularly in Psal. cx. 1. where the Hebrew words are, *The Lord said unto my Lord;* which are thus expounded by Jonathan, *The Lord said unto his Word:* where it can signify nothing, but another Divine person. And so Onkelos might intend it here; that the Lord made all these laws between his eternal Word and them.

CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Some religious people, it is possible, were touched with such a sense of what Moses had now delivered, in the foregoing promises and threats, that they thought of giving themselves wholly unto God, or of vowing some of their goods to him: and therefore he gives Moses further directions for the regulating of such vows.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow.*] And, first, if any man vowed himself, or his children, wholly to the service of God in the tabernacle, he directs what was to be done in that case. Which he calls a *singular,* or *extraordinary vow;* and by Philo is called εὐχὴ μεγάλη, *the great vow:* it being a wonderful piece of devotion (as the word *japhli* in the Hebrew imports), because men were desirous to help God's priests in the meanest ministry; such as bringing in wood, carrying out ashes, sweeping away the dust, and such-like.

The persons shall be for the Lord by thy estimation.] The meaning would have been more plain, if the words had been translated just as thy lie in the Hebrew, *According to thy estimation, the person shall be for the Lord.* For this immediately suggests to one's thoughts, that the service of the persons themselves thus devoted, was not to be employed in the tabernacle; but a value set upon them by the priest, and that to be employed *for the Lord, i. e.* for holy uses; for repairing the sanctuary, suppose, or any thing belonging to it. The reason why God would not accept the persons themselves, as they desired, but the value of them, for his service, seems to be, because there was a sufficient number of persons peculiarly designed for all the work of the tabernacle; which he would not have encumbered by more attendants there than were needful.

Ver. 3. *And thy estimation shall be.*] That the priest might not either overvalue, or undervalue any person, the rates are here set down which he should demand for their redemption.

Of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old.] For at twenty years of age (saith Procopius Gazæus) men begin to be fit for business, and continue so till sixty; when it is time to leave it off.

Thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver.] That this one rule should serve for all men, though of different qualities, Philo thinks was fit for several reasons, which he gives in his book of Special Laws: the principal is, because God regarded only the vow, the value of which was equal, whosoever made it, whether a great man or a poor.

After the shekel of the sanctuary.] See Exod. xxx. 13.

Ver. 4. *And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels.*] Women could not be so serviceable as men, and therefore were valued at a less rate: for all that they could do was, to spin, or weave, or make garments, or wash for the priests and Levites.

Ver. 5. *And if it be from five years old even unto twenty years old.*] It appears by this, that, though a child of five years old could not make a vow, yet his parents might solemnly devote one of that age to God; and it did oblige them to pay what is here required for the use of the sanctuary.

Thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.] Less is required than for those above twenty, because their life was more uncertain; and they were less capable to do any service, before they came to their full growth.

Ver. 6. *And if it be from a month old even unto five years old,* &c.] Before a child was a month old, it seems, it was

not capable to be devoted to God; but then it might. And still less was demanded as the value of them; because children so small were very weak and imperfect, and the price therefore set accordingly. But the words may be understood, not of children that were a month old, but that were in the first month of their life: and Samuel we find was devoted to God before he was born.

Ver. 7. *And from sixty years old and above, if it be a male, then thy estimation shall be fifteen shekels,* &c.] They are valued much less after sixty than before, (ver. 3.) because their service then was little worth, and their life likely to be short.

And for a female ten shekels.] The Hebrews think it observable, that in their youth (ver. 3, 4.) males were valued almost double to females; but now, in old age, they are made almost of equal value: for old women continue very serviceable in many things, when old men are not; whence they have a saying, *An old woman in a house is a treasure in a house.*

Ver. 8. *And if he be poorer than thy estimation.*] If he be not able to pay according to the forenamed rates.

Then he shall present himself before the priest.] Who was then in attendance at the tabernacle; for he doth not speak of the high-priest, but of the lower.

And the priest shall value him.] According to the best information he could get of his ability; as it here follows.

According to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him.] He was to examine his condition; and accordingly set such a rate upon him as he might be able to pay, without undoing his family.

Ver. 9. *And if it be a beast.*] Now he proceeds to the second case; which was, when any man vowed to give God a beast of some sort or other.

Whereof men bring an offering unto the Lord.] And first he mentions clean beasts, such as God accepted at his altar; as these are explained by the opposite *unclean beast,* (ver. 11.)

All that any man gives of such unto the Lord.] Whether to be sacrificed or not.

Shall be holy.] Set apart for God's service, according to the nature of his vow; to be offered at the altar, if he so expressed it; or to be given to the priests and Levites, if that was his desire; or to be sold for the service of the tabernacle, if it was left at large.

Ver. 10. *He shall not alter it, nor change it.*] Some think these words, *alter* and *change,* are two expressions of the same thing. But the first word may signify, that he should not *alter* it for any other beast, or thing; and the second, that he should not *change* it for any beast of the same kind: but that very beast which was vowed, was to be given to the uses intended; and no other accepted in his stead, though it were really better.

A good for a bad, or a bad for a good.] If men had been left to their liberty, either to give unto God the beast they had vowed, or another in its room, they might have given a bad instead of a good, as Maimonides observes, which had been a great profaneness. But supposing those that were truly religious would have brought a good instead of a bad (that is, one much fatter and more valuable), God would not suffer it, because he would preserve a reverence to things once consecrated, which he would not should return to common uses, though a better thing was substituted in its room. If any man did change what he had vowed, though it were for the better, he was to be beaten, as Maimonides saith in his treatise on this subject, (cap. 1.)

And if he shall at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be holy.] The man was to be beaten, and both the one and the other beast was to become God's. Which the Jews understand thus (as Maimonides tells us in the same treatise), that if he changed the beast he vowed twice or thrice, nay, a thousand times, they all became holy; and he was also to suffer the punishment of stripes for every one of them.

Ver. 11. *But if it be an unclean beast, of which they do not offer a sacrifice unto the Lord.*] Some comprehend under this, such beasts as, though in themselves clean, yet had some blemish in them, which rendered them unfit for sacrifice. But, as they could not be offered in sacrifice, so one would think it was not lawful to vow them either to that or any other holy use.

Then he shall present the beast before the priest.] That he might consider the worth of it.

Ver. 12. *And the priest shall value it, whether it be good or bad.*] Of a great price or a small. He was not allowed to exchange it for a clean beast; both because it was dedicated to God, and because that exchange might have been a great damage to the priest: many unclean beasts being of greater value than some clean; a horse or a camel, for instance, of greater price than a sheep or a goat.

As thou valuest it, who art the priest, so shall it be.] He directs his speech to the priest, to awaken his conscience, to attend and make upright judgment; because that was to be the value of it, which the priest determined it to be worth.

Ver. 13. *But if he will at all redeem it.*] It was in the man's choice, either to leave the beast with the priest, or to pay him the money at which he had rated it.

Then he shall add a fifth part thereof unto thy estimation.] If he chose the latter, it was a sign he thought it worth more than the price which the priest had set upon it, who could not understand the value of it so well as himself. And every man, as Maimonides observes, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 46.) regarding his own advantage, and inclining naturally to save what he can; if a beast were not rated at its just value, he that had vowed it would be disposed rather to redeem the beast than let the priest have it. Which is the reason that God orders he should in this case pay a fifth part more than the priest set upon it, that he might be sure to give the full value.

Both this and the foregoing law was to preserve that from being vile and cheap, which bare the name of God (as he there speaks), and was consecrated to his uses.

Ver. 14. *And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the Lord.*] By vowing it to God's service; for of such *sanctifying* he speaks in this chapter: and this is the third case about vows; which commonly consisted in promising to God some part of their estates, either to serve for sacrifices, or to be kept for some sacred uses: whence came those vast treasures which were in the house of God, mentioned 1 Chron. xxvi. 26—28. for they were chiefly oblations of part of the spoils taken from their enemies, which David, and Saul, and Abner, and Joab had dedicated: together with the oblations of such persons as Samuel the

seer, who is there said to have dedicated a great deal *to maintain the house of the Lord.*

Then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad, &c.] He makes the same law in this case which he had done about unclean beasts; that the priest should consider the worth of it, and accordingly set the price, having respect to the condition of the house, whether it was great or little, old or new, &c.

As the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand.] That was to be the fixed price; which no man was to attempt to alter.

Ver. 15. *And if he that sanctified it will redeem his house.*] If he that vowed it to God, chose afterward rather to pay the price himself than part with the house, he was to submit to the law made in the foregoing case; which was, to add a fifth part to the rate set upon it. For there was another reason why many might make this choice, (besides that mentioned in ver. 13.) because, if they did not redeem it, the house could never return to them again; no, not at the jubilee. For it is probable, that the law concerning lands (which immediately follows) was the rule for houses also, which were valued according to their distance from the year of jubilee, at a higher or lower price, as lands were, (ver. 18. 22, 23.)

Then shall he add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation, and it shall be his.] "He that gave us the law, (saith Maimonides in his treatise on this subject, cap. *ult.*) knows the most intimate sense of all men's souls, and penetrates into the most secret recesses and lurking-places of human desires: and he seeing that their love of riches would make them very saving; so that, if out of a religious motion they had consecrated any thing to him, they would be prone to repent of it; he therefore ordained, that if any man had a mind to redeem what he had consecrated, he should add a fifth part to its just value;" that is, pay well for it.

Ver. 16. *And if a man shall sanctify unto the Lord.*] By a vow; after the same manner that some did a house, (ver. 14.)

Some part of a field.] This seems to signify, that it was not lawful for a man to vow his own field; that is, all his estate: because God would have no man's family undone and made beggars to enrich his sanctuary.

Of his possession.] Not purchased by him, but descended to him as an inheritance from his ancestors.

Then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof.] It shall be valued according to the quantity of seed which is required to sow it.

An omer of barley-seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.] So much land as an omer of barley would sow, was to be rated at fifty shekels, and so proportionably; so much as would take up two omers at a hundred, or half an omer at five-and-twenty. Menochius thinks it was to be rated so much yearly; but there is not the least intimation of this in the text; and his only reason for it is this of Abulensis, that it would have been too little to give for a piece of land to be held forty-nine years. (See lib. ii. de Republ. Hebræor. cap. 19. Quæst. 7.) Which is of no force at all; for it is plain God designed a moderate rate should be set upon all things which men vowed to him; whereby men were not discouraged to vow. And this yearly rent had been excessive and oppressive: for a piece of land, which an *omer of barley* (*i. e.* about a pottle of our measure) would sow, could yield no great crop, and consequently could not be of a considerable value; barley also being much cheaper than wheat. Concerning an *omer*, see Exod. xvi. 36.

Ver. 17. *If he sanctify his field from the year of jubilee.*] Make this vow immediately after the jubilee, or in that year.

According to thy estimation.] Beforementioned, of *fifty shekels* for an omer of barley.

It shall stand.] It shall be so rated, and nothing abated.

Ver. 18. *But if he sanctify his field after the jubilee.*] Some years after.

Then the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the year of jubilee, &c.] The priest was to compute how many years were gone since the last jubilee, and how many yet remained till the next; and accordingly to deduct from the rate of *fifty shekels* beforementioned, either more or less, as the years yet to come were more or fewer.

Ver. 19. *If he that sanctified the field will in any wise redeem it, then shall he add the fifth part,* &c.] The very same rule is given in this case, as in those of unclean beasts and houses, ver. 13. 15.

Ver. 20. *And if he will not redeem the field.*] When the priest hath set his value upon it, and tells him he may have it again at such a rate, if he pleases, and he refuses the offer.

Or if he have sold the field to another man.] That is, if the priest, upon his refusal, have sold it to another man; and afterward he that vowed it hath a mind to it himself, and would give the price at which he might have had it.

It shall not be redeemed any more.] He was then excluded from all benefit of redemption.

Ver. 21. *But the field when it goeth out in the jubilee.*] Out of the possession of him to whom the priest sold it.

Shall be wholly unto the Lord.] Shall not return to him that vowed it, but continue God's portion.

As a field devoted.] Being solemnly consecrated to the Divine service.

The possession thereof shall be the priests'.] Who were to have the inheritance of it for their better support. But they might sell it; nay (Menochius thinks), were bound to sell it to some of the kindred of him that devoted it, or to some of his tribe; for otherwise lands would go out of the tribe to which they belonged; and besides, the priests were to have no inheritance in the land, (Numb. xviii. 20.) See him, lib. ii. de Republ. Hebr. cap. 19. and his Annotations upon this place. But these seem not to be solid reasons why the priests should not enjoy this land themselves: for though they were not to have any inheritance in the division of the land of Canaan, yet if any fell to them by the means now mentioned (which was but very seldom, since men were very careful to preserve their inheritances), God doth here bestow such land upon his priests; who might possess it if they pleased, because they had it in God's right; or else sell it, (ver. 20.) and keep the money to their own use.

Ver. 22. *And if a man sanctify unto the Lord a field which he hath bought.*] And consequently could enjoy only till the year of jubilee; when it was to return to the family of whom he purchased it.

Which is not of the fields of his possession.] No part of

his paternal inheritance, (as that mentioned ver. 16.) but bought of the priests, to whom it was fallen by a vow; or of him to whom the priests had sold it.

Ver. 23. *Then the priest shall reckon unto him the worth of thy estimation.*] Set a value upon it, according to his judgment.

Even unto the year of jubilee.] With respect to the number of years, between the time of the vow and the year of jubilee.

And he shall give thy estimation in that day.] Presently pay the price that the priest hath set upon it, without the addition of the fifth part (as Menochius well observes in the place beforementioned), which he, who redeemed his paternal inheritance, was bound to pay over and above the price at which the priest esteemed it, (ver. 19.) For this was not so much worth as that, being but for a term of years, till the jubilee.

As a holy thing unto the Lord.] As a thing devoted unto God, instead of the land, which was redeemed with this money.

Ver. 24. *In the year of jubilee the field shall return unto him of whom it was bought,* &c.] Not unto him who bought the field, and then vowed it to God, but unto the hereditary owner; which is the meaning of the next words, *even unto him to whom the possession of the land did belong.*

Ver. 25. *All thy estimations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary,* &c.] Full weight, according to the standard kept in the sanctuary: (see Exod. xxx. 13. and chap. xix. of this book, ver. 36.)

Ver. 26. *Only the firstling of the beasts, which shall be the Lord's firstling, no man shall sanctify it.*] By vowing it to be a whole *burnt-offering,* or a *peace-offering* unto the Lord; as Maimonides expounds it. The reason was, because no man could lawfully vow that which was not his own, as the *firstlings* were not; they being the Lord's already, as it follows in the end of this verse.

The same reason held (as Maimonides likewise observes) in all things belonging to God, as *tenths.* Yet they devised ingeniously enough (as he speaks) a way to give these *firstlings* to God by a new obligation, and yet not offend, as they imagined, against this law; for they interpret these words of *firstlings* already brought forth: no man might sanctify such; but while they were in the womb, they might; saying, "I vow that lamb (suppose) which my ewe goes with to be a whole burnt-offering to God, if it be a male:" but they could not vow it for a *peace-offering,* because no man could alter any thing for his own profit.

Whether it be ox, or sheep.] Under these two are comprehended all other kind of creatures, whose firstlings belonged to God.

It is the Lord's.] Num. iii. 13. viii. 17. For this reason no man was to presume to vow such things; it being a kind of mockery to make a present of that to another which was his own before. (See Mr. Mede concerning this verse, p. 512.)

Ver. 27. *And if it be of an unclean beast.*] Most understand this of the *firstling* of an unclean beast. Against which there is this objection, that such things were before ordered to be redeemed, not with money, but with a lamb, (Exod. xiii. 13.) Therefore it seems more reasonable, to understand this of the firstlings of such an unclean beast, which a man hath redeemed, (ver. 13.) but afterward devoted to God; which he might do; for, after the redemption, it was become his own again.

Then he shall redeem it according to thy estimation.] At the rate thou shalt set upon it.

And shall add a fifth part of it thereto.] As was ordained before in the like case, (ver. 11.)

Or if it be not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to thy estimation.] Any other man might buy it, at that rate the priest had set upon it; and the money was applied to holy uses.

Ver. 28. *Notwithstanding, no devoted thing that a man shall devote unto the Lord.*] Nothing that was devoted by that sort of vow, which was called *cherem* (as the word is here in the Hebrew), with a curse (as the word implies) upon themselves and others, if the thing was not employed according to their vow.

Of all that he hath, both of man and beast, &c.] All manner of things which might be sanctified to the Lord, by the forementioned simple vow, might be thus devoted and consecrated to him by a *cherem,* i. e. *beasts* and *houses,* and *lands,* and even *men* themselves, as far as they had power over them; for that is meant by those words, *all that a man hath.* (See the next verse.)

Shall be sold or redeemed.] For this was the peculiar nature of this sort of vow; that the thing devoted by it should remain irreversibly and unalterably to the use unto which it was devoted; for the person was *accursed* that applied it to any other use than that to which it was consecrated.

Every devoted thing.] Of this kind.

Is most holy to the Lord.] Other things devoted by a simple vow were *holy,* (ver. 9, 10, &c.) but these were *most holy,* so that none might touch them but the priests; and they were so strictly applied to the Divine service, that they could not be alienated, either by sale, or redemption, or commutation, or donation, or any other way. (See Mede, p. 160.)

Ver. 29. *None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed, but shall surely be put to death.*] Some learned men have, from these words, asserted, that parents and masters among the Jews had such a power over their children and servants, that they might devote them to death, and so kill them; only the sentence of the priest was to concur, to whom every devoted thing fell as his portion. This is maintained by Ludov. Capellus, and confuted by Mr. Selden, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. juxta Disciplin. Hebr. cap. 6. where he judiciously observes, that this power would have too much entrenched upon the *sixth commandment,* if private men might have, at their pleasure, thus disposed of their children and slaves. And, in the next chapter, he explains the sense of this verse; and proves, indeed, that there may be a *cherem (minha-adam) of men,* or *from among men,* as well as of *beasts;* but this word hath four several senses among the Hebrews. First, it signifies the sacred gift itself, which was devoted to God, or to holy uses; and so it signifies in the foregoing ver. 28. Secondly, it signifies that which was devoted to perdition and utter destruction, either by the right of war, or upon the account of capital enmities: an example of which we have in Jericho, Josh. vi. 17. where the whole city was a *cherem* (devoted to destruction), as a punishment to their enemies; yet so, that the metals were made a *cherem*

of the first sort; that is, sacred to the Lord and his holy uses. And thus the great Sanhedrin (called in Scripture *the whole congregation*) might devote those to be a *cherem*, who, going to the wars, did not obey orders, and perform the charge laid upon them. An example of which we have, Judges xxi. 5. 1 Sam. xiv. 24. I omit the other two for brevity's sake, (of which there are examples, Josh. vi. 26. Ezra x. 8. Acts xxiii. 12.14.21. see Selden, ib. cap. 7, 8.) because the *cherem* here mentioned by Moses is of this second sort: for it is evident that the *cherem* of the first sort, mentioned ver. 28. was of such things, over which they had an entire power, to dispose of them as they pleased. And therefore those words, *both of man and beast*, the Hebrews understand of their slaves, whether men or women (who were Canaanites, or gentiles, not others), who were in their power as much as their *beasts*, to give away or to sell. But to take away their life, or to give them to be slain, was not in their power; but all the effect of this *cherem* was, that the whole right which they had to the service of such slaves, was transferred by him that devoted them to the service of the priests and sacred uses. (See Selden in that book, cap. 9. p. 518, &c.) But though they might not devote their servants to death, yet they might their enemies, before they went out to war with them; and such of their own people also as did not observe the military laws. An example of which we have, Numb. xxi. 2. Upon which account also, the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead were slain, (Judges xxi. 9, 10.) for violating the solemn public *cherem*, pronounced against those that came not up to Mizpeh, (ver. 5.) And this is the *cherem* spoken of in this verse. (See Selden, cap. 10.) For as for the *cherem*, whereby a man was excommunicated, it only loaded him with many curses, and made him execrable, so that no man might come near him; but did not touch his life, as he there shews, p. 520.

Ver. 30. *All the tithe of the land*, &c. *is the Lord's.*] By an ancient right before the law of Moses was delivered: for this is the first time we find any mention of a law about tithes: for which he giving no reason, it is a sign this was a pious usage all the world over; and therefore, being no new thing, but what all nations practised, the Jews could not think it burdensome to them; unless they would be wholly irreligious, and not acknowledge God to be the author and fountain of all the plenty and happiness they enjoyed: which was the intention of paying tithes; as the gentiles anciently did, and the Jews themselves, after victory over their enemies. For which there being no precept that appears, what can we think, but that natural reason, and the common custom of mankind (founded, perhaps, upon some direction given to our first parents from above), taught them to make this acknowledgment to God, as the author of their successes and safety, as well as of all plenty and prosperity. (See Gen. xiv. 19. xxviii. 22.)

Whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the trees.] By the *seed of the land* is meant corn (as Rasi expounds it), and by the *fruit of the trees*, wine and oil. For thus they are reckoned up in other places, (Numb. xviii. 12.) where he gives the priest the first-fruits of the *wine, and oil, and wheat*. And the like we read in Deut xviii. 3, 4. and in Deut. xiv. 23. they are commanded to eat before God, *the tithe of their corn, of their wine, and their oil.* Under which last is comprehended the fruit of all other trees; as under the word *seed* in this place seems to be comprehended all manner of herbs, as well as corn. For so the pharisees understood it; and our Saviour doth not disallow it.

It is holy unto the Lord.] God, having declared his right in the tithe, in the beginning of the verse, here commands that it be reserved to him as his portion: which he afterward conferred and settled upon the Levites by a special donation, (Numb. xviii. 21.)

Ver. 31. *And if a man will at all redeem aught of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof.*] Mr. Selden, in his History of the Tithes, (chap. ii.) speaking of the second tithe, mentioned Deut. xiv. 23. which was to be spent at Jerusalem (either in kind, or else, if it were too far thither, by turning it into money, and therewith to buy provision to make feasts), saith, *that to this tithe do the Jews apply that of* Lev. xxvii. 30, 31. But for this he quotes only R. S. Jarchi: who, though he was a great Talmudist, yet must not be thought to understand the sense of all their doctors. Aben Ezra, it is plain (to name no more), takes it otherwise; making Moses to speak of such a tithe as Abraham gave Melchisedec, and Jacob vowed to God. Lyra, I might add, a converted Jew, agrees with him. And there is great reason for it; no such thing as a *second tithe* being as yet ordained: and when they were commanded, and the changing of them into money allowed, there is not a word said of *adding a fifth part*, (see Deut. xiv. 24, 25.) which is sufficient to shew that Moses, in these two verses, speaks of the *first tithe*, which was paid to the Levites, by a law made some time after this; which transferred the right that God had *in the tithe of the land* unto them: which, if any man had a mind to *redeem*, and not pay it in kind, God allows him so to do; because the tithe was not more holy than things vowed to God, spoken of before: but then he was to do as in the case of such things, (ver. 13.) add a *fifth part*, over and above, to what such a portion of tithe was esteemed to be worth. The reason of which was, as Mr. Calvin well observes, not that the priest should get more than his due, by the man who desired to redeem his tithe, but that the man might not make a gain of the priest. For it is seldom seen that a husbandman desires to pay money rather than his tithe; unless he propound some considerable advantage to himself.

Ver. 32. *And concerning the tithe of the herd and of the flock.*] Every one knows, that by *the tithe of the herd* here is meant *calves*, and by the *flock* is to be understood *lambs* and *kids*, (Lev. i. 2.) For this was the tithe of those young ones that were brought forth that year; the same cattle not being again tithed every year. And he speaks of clean beasts, which were allowed in sacrifice; for tithe was not paid of other beasts; but their first-born only was the Lord's. This tithe was paid to God every year, as an eucharistical sacrifice, for all the benefits they received from God by their cattle.

Even of whatsoever passeth under the rod.] This expresses the manner of this tithing, which, if we will believe the Jews, was thus: they were all brought into a sheep-cot (saith Maimonides, in his Treatise of First-born, cap. vii. in the beginning), in which there was but one gate or door, and that so narrow as to suffer no more than one to come out at once. Their dams being placed without, and the gate opened, the young ones were invited by their bleatings to

press to get out to them; and as they passed by, one by one, a man who stood at the gate with a rod, coloured with ochre, told them in order; and when the tenth came out, whether it was male or female, sound or not, he marked it with his rod, and said, *Let this be holy in the name of the tenth.* And this account R. Solomon and others give of this matter; of which notion they are so fond, that R. Bechai (upon Numb. xvii.) makes Jacob (who vowed tithe of all that God should give him) to have decimated his children on this manner, beginning at Benjamin and stopping at Levi, who was the tenth according to that reckoning, and hath some pretty conceits about it. But Bochartus thinks Moses doth not speak here of the rod of the tithes, but of the shepherd's crook; and so doth Aben Ezra, the Syriac, and the Vulgar: for the flock passed under his rod as oft as he numbered them, which was every morning and evening (if he was a good shepherd), especially in the evening. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 44. p. 499.) Of this Jeremiah speaks, (chap. xxxiii. 13.) and Ezekiel alludes to it, when he saith, (chap. xx. 37.) *I will cause you to pass under the rod.* Where Kimchi notes it is the same phrase with this in Leviticus, and as much as to say, "As he that telleth his sheep holdeth a rod in his hand, and telleth them one by one, and brings out the tenth for the tithe; so will I number you, and the sinners shall perish," &c.

The tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.] That is, saith Maimonides (in his forenamed treatise called Bechoroth), the fat and the blood of them was offered at the altar; and then the owners eat the flesh any where in Jerusalem, as they did the lesser holy things. For the priests had no portion of them, but all belonged to the owner, as did the paschal lamb. If there was any blemish in them, whether before or after the tithing, then they might be eaten in any place. And so Bartenora, (as Dr. Outram observes, lib. i. de Sacrificiis, cap. 11.) "we do not find in the whole law that any part of these tenths was given to the priests." So a great many other of their doctors, who observe that Moses doth not reckon these among the twenty-four *gifts* (for so many they make the whole number of them) which were bestowed upon the priesthood. But as there is nothing else in Scripture to warrant this, which no where prescribes how these *tenths* should be employed, but only declares that they are *holy to the Lord;* so this very phrase, I should think, sufficiently signifies that they belonged to the Lord's ministers; and if not entirely to the priests, much less entirely to the owners of them (before they were the Lord's); but if they were to eat them at Jerusalem, as the Jews imagine, the Levites sure were to have their share, and the stranger and other poor people, as they were to have in their *second tithe* of corn, wherewith they made feasts there, (Deut. xiv. 27—29.)

Ver. 33. *He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it.*] It is not easy to give an account why God required so punctually the *tenth* calf, goat, or lamb; that though it were never so lean or blemished, he would not suffer it to be exchanged for the better, unless it were to avoid all disputes, strife, and contention. There are those, indeed, that think the reason was; because in those ages this was looked upon as so sacred a number, that it mystically denoted God, whose Divine perfections, providence, and bounty, they were thought to acknowledge, who gave the *tenth* to him; which was not to be altered and changed no more than he himself can be.

If he change it at all, then both shall be holy.] As it was in beasts avowed to God, (ver. 9, 10.)

It shall not be redeemed.] Nor might they sell it, no more than suffer it to be redeemed. If they did, he that sold it or bought it got nothing (as Maimonides speaks); and besides, the seller was to be scourged, as he that sold the *cherems* given to the priest, ver. 28. (Bechoroth, cap. 6. sect. 5.)

Ver. 34. *These are the commandments which the Lord commanded Moses, for the children of Israel, in Mount Sinai.*] That is, these moreover were added to the foregoing commandments, before they removed from the wilderness of Mount Sinai. (See chap. xxv. 1. xxvi. *ult.*) For having said before, in the conclusion of the foregoing chapter, *these are the statutes, and judgments, and laws which the Lord made,* &c. which respect all that preceded in this book, the *commandments* here spoken of can relate to nothing more but the laws delivered in this chapter about *vows,* and *devoted things,* and *tithes.*

Which laws ought not to be passed over, without serious consideration how far we may be concerned in them. And therefore to make what I have noted about them more useful to us in these days, I desire the reader to observe, that the very same pious inclinations have ever been in all good Christians, which Moses here supposes (in the former part of this chapter) would be in the Jews, to devote some part of their goods, their houses, or lands to the service of God; which became sacred things, and were to be employed to no other use but that. The very first Christians had so much of this spirit in them, that they sold all their possessions, and goods, and let every one that needed have a share of them; (Acts ii. 45. iv. 35.) because the whole number of believers attended to nothing else but the service of Christ; and the apostles also were to be furnished with means to go and propagate the gospel in all the world. Where, as soon as the Christian religion prevailed in any place, immediately there were the like voluntary oblations made, in such a proportion, as served not only for the support of the service of God in that church, but helped to maintain the Christians at Jerusalem, who had been brought low by parting with their estates to further the first preaching of the gospel. This we find in a great number of places; but it may suffice to say, that the feasts of charity were maintained out of these oblations.

By which it is apparent, that they took themselves to have the very same obligations upon them in this matter, which the Jews formerly had; and therefore it is no wonder that *tithes* came in time to be devoted for the maintenance of God's ministers. For it is senseless to imagine, that the gospel, which constrained them to give up themselves to God, should not constrain them, with the same freedom of mind, to give some of their goods (as Moses here supposes the Jews would do) for the maintenance of his service. And it is as unreasonable to think it did not move them to give the ministers of God as honourable a maintenance, as had been allowed under the law of Moses.

Which required, besides the *tenth* here mentioned, another tithe of the remainder to be spent in sacrifices at Jerusalem, of which the Levites had their share, as I observed from Deut. xiv. 22. 28. To which, if we add the first-born, with all sin-offerings, and the priest's share of peace-offer-

ings, and the skins of the sacrifices (which alone made a good revenue, as Philo observes), and likewise all such consecrations as are mentioned in this chapter, the Levites' cities and suburbs, it will easily appear it could not be so little as a *fifth* part of the fruit of the land which came to their share.

Now the reason we find no such certain rate determined by the gospel, as was by this law, is, because there was no need of it; and for the same reason there was none, for a good while, settled by the church; all the revenues belonging to it, which served for all sorts of pious uses, arising from the devotion and oblations of the people, which were more than enough for God's service. This was visible in the beginning of our religion, when the first Christians far outdid any thing that had been done under the law. And they could not imagine, that they who succeeded them would fall so short as not to offer sufficient for God's service; though not so much as they had done, because there could not be the same necessity. And so Mr. Selden himself observes, that this reason is given by Agobardus, why nothing was decreed in councils, or publicly promulgated by the fathers in the first ages, concerning giving of their goods, and adorning churches; because there was no necessity of it: the religious devotion, the love of Christians to such things *ultro æstuante, being very fervent, and abounding of its own accord.*

And when love began to wax cold, so that they found it needful to make laws about such things, they could not think fit to order less for the settled maintenance of God's service than the *tenth* (besides all voluntary oblations), which had been the part most eminently limited under the law of nature, long before the law of Moses. See Irenæus, lib. iv. cap. 34. where he saith, Christians, having greater hopes, could not give less than they did in former times, when their hope was lower.

I shall add but one observation more, from an excellent person of our own church, (Mr. Thorndike, in his Rights of the Church, &c. p. 219.) that as all such consecrations, as here are mentioned by Moses, tended to communion with God, by the participation of sacrifices offered to him, which were maintained by such contributions; so whatsoever is devoted by Christians unto such holy uses, as to build and repair churches, to maintain holy assemblies, and to support those who minister God's ordinances, or enable the poor to attend upon them, hath the like intention to obtain an interest in the sacrifice of Christ, represented in the eucharist; which is the chief part of the service rendered to God in the church. This is notably exemplified in the account which Tertullian gives of Marcion the heretic, (lib. de Præscriptionibus, cap. 30.) who, when he first embraced the faith of Christ, and was received into the church, *pecuniam Catholicæ Ecclesiæ contulit, contributed a sum of money to the church;* which money, when he fell off from the Christian truth to his own heresy, was straightway thrown out together with him. This both demonstrates that they continued, in those days, to bring offerings into the treasury of the church; and that the intention of them was, that they might have communion with the church in all its services; for when men fell off from Christianity they cast out their offerings, in token they had no communication with them.

I end all with the words of Conradus Pellicanus upon the thirtieth verse of this chapter; which will shew the sense of the first reformers in this matter. "All the tithe is the Lord's, and remains so for ever, &c. and therefore tithes are to be paid by Divine and natural right, and religiously expended, according to his appointment, &c. And if tithes should not be sufficient for the maintenance of those who ought to be sustained in the church, at the public charge, the ninths, or the eighths, ought of necessity to be raised by the judgment and consent of the church; for the law of charity dictates this, and the excellent, irreprehensible ordinance of God: which charity binds more strongly in the evangelical law than in the Mosaical; inasmuch as the church ought to be more perfect than the synagogue; and charity than fear."

THE

FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

NUMBERS.

CHAP. I.

THIS Book is called by the name of NUMBERS in our language; because it begins with an account of the numbering of the people in the beginning of the second year after they came out of Egypt; though it contains a great many things besides that; particularly, another numbering of them (chap. xxvi) towards the conclusion of their travels in the wilderness: for this book comprehends a history of about thirty-eight years, though most of the things related in it fell out in the first and in the last of these years; and it doth not appear when those things were done, which we read of about the middle of the book, from the fifteenth to the twentieth chapter.

Ver. 1. *And the Lord spake unto Moses.*] Who undertook nothing without order from God.

In the wilderness of Sinai.] Where they had continued near a full year (as appears by comparing Exod. xix. 1. with this place), and shortly after this removed from it, (chap. x. 11.)

In the tabernacle of the congregation.] From whence the Lord delivered those laws which we read in the foregoing book, (see on Lev. i. 1.) and now seems to have admitted him into the tabernacle, whereas before he only spake to him *out of it*.

On the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt.] All that is related in the foregoing book, seems to have passed in the first month of the second year after their coming out of Egypt, in the beginning of which the tabernacle was set up, (Exod. xl. 2. 17.) and in the middle of it the Passover was kept; as appears by this book, (chap. ix. 1; 2, &c.)

Ver. 2. *Take ye the sum.*] There had been a muster, as we may call it, of the people, before the tabernacle was erected, (Exod. xxx. 12.) and consequently some months before this; for it was in order to a contribution, which every one was to make towards that holy work, (Exod. xxxviii. 26.) whereas this was for the better disposing of their camps about the tabernacle now that it was set up; and for their more regular march when they removed from Mount Sinai, which they were to do shortly.

Of all the congregation of the children of Israel.] Who alone were numbered; all except the Levites; but none of the mixed multitude that came with them out of Egypt, (Exod. xii. 38.)

After their families,] It appears by Josh. vii. 16, 17, &c. that the several tribes of Israel were divided into *families*, and those *families* into *households*, and those *households* had every one of them a head or chief, who is called the *father* of it. There were seventy of these *families* in all; but some tribes had more, others fewer, according to the number of souls (as they are called); that is, persons who were in each when they went down into Egypt, (Gen. xlvi. 27.)

By the house of their fathers.] Every *family*, as I said, being distributed into *houses* (which we now call families); these *houses* were denominated from their chief, whom they called their *father*; for no houses were denominated from the mother, as Jews say.

With the number of their names.] The names of every person, in the several houses, were set down and registered, that they might be the better known.

Every male by their poll.] But no women; for the reason which follows.

Ver. 3. *From twenty years old and upward.*] Which was ever after this the age when men were thought fit for war.

All that are able to go forth to war in Israel.] One would think by this they were not to number very aged and decrepit people, because they were no more able to go to war than women and children, and those under twenty years old. And if we may believe Josephus (lib. ii. Antiq. cap. 9.) after fifty years old, men were not bound to pay the half shekel which was due in such musters; and therefore we may reasonably think were excused from going to war, unless they had a mind themselves.

Thou and Aaron.] Who had the highest authority in the nation.

Shall number them by their armies.] This seems to import, that, in taking the account of them, they distributed them into certain troops or companies, out of which were formed regiments (as we now speak), and greater regular bodies, which composed several armies. We do not read this was required in the former numbering, (Exod. xxx.) that being for another end, as I now observed; not for their more orderly march in their remove from Mount Sinai. And here I cannot but take notice, what a vast difference there was between this method and that rude way which Cecrops, the first king of Attica, after the Ogygian flood (which happened about the time of Moses), took to know the number of his people; which the Greek writers say, was by requiring every one of them to bring a stone, καὶ βάλλειν εἰς τὸ μέσον, *and throw it down before them*; which he counting, found them twenty thousand. So the scholiast upon Pindar, (Ode ix.) and others in Meursius de Regibus Atheniens. (lib. i. cap. 7.)

Ver. 4. *And there shall be with you a man of every tribe.*] Whom they were to take for their assistants.

Every one head of the house of his fathers.] The LXX. and the Vulgar understand this to signify the principal persons in each tribe, who were best acquainted with every family and household in that tribe. And so it is expounded, ver. 6. and many think these were the first-born in their tribe: but there is this objection against it, that Nahshan, who is named for the tribe of Judah, (ver. 7.) was not descended from the first-born of that tribe; for Pharez was not Judah's eldest son, Selah being before him, who had children, as we find in chap. xxvi. of this book, (ver. 20.) Besides, when the principles of the tribes are reckoned again (chap. xxxiv. of this book), in the last year of their abode in the wilderness, none of them are derived from these men here mentioned, but from others: and therefore these were the most eminent men in the several tribes, upon a different account; either for wisdom or valour, or some other excellent quality.

Ver. 5. *And these are the names of the men that shall stand.*] Be assistants.

With you.] *i. e.* With Moses and Aaron.

Of the tribe of Reuben, Elizur the son of Shedeur.] There is little to be observed concerning these tribes, but that they are here placed not in the order of their birth, but of their mothers who bare them. First, the children of Leah, who are all reckoned in the same order wherein they were born of her, (ver. 6—9.) Then the children of Rachel, (ver. 10, 11.) and after them the children of the two handmaids, in the four following verses; where (ver. 12.) Dan is set first, he being the first-born of Bilhah, whom Rachel gave Jacob for his wife, (Gen. xxx. 5.) but then the next that follow are not reckoned according to the order of their birth; for Naphtali, who was born next, is placed the last; and the youngest son of Zilpah placed before the eldest; for which we cannot now discern the reason, though it is likely it was upon the account of some pre-eminence or other which they had gained; as Ephraim, the youngest son of Joseph, is mentioned before Manasseh the eldest, (ver. 10.) because Jacob had given him the precedence, when he blessed them before his death, (Gen. xlviii. 19.)

Ver. 6. *Of Simeon, Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.*]

There is less to be observed concerning the names of these great men of each tribe; for whatsoever the import of them may be in the Hebrew language (which Chytræus and others have endeavoured to make out), it signifies nothing to us: only most of them shew how much God was in the thoughts of those who imposed these names on their children; for Elizur signifies *my God the rock;* and Shelumiel is as much as *God my peace,* or *God my rewarder;* and Zurishaddai, *my rock omnipotent,* or *all-sufficient,* &c.

Ver. 14. *The son of Deuel.*] So he is called also, chap. vii. 42. and yet in the second chapter, (ver. 14.) he is called the son of Reuel; for these two letters, *daleth* and *resch,* are very often changed, the one for the other; as Ripah (Gen. x. 3.) is called Dipath, (1 Chron. i. 6.) as, on the other hand, Dodanim (Gen. x. 4.) is called Rodanim, (1 Chron. i. 7.) and it is to no purpose to heap up more examples there are of this.

Ver. 16. *These were the renowned of the congregation.*] The Hebrew word *keruim* signifies properly men *called* or *named;* that is, who had the honour to be named by God to this employment; which made them more noble than they were before. But, without this respect to their nomination by God, this word signifies, in general, *famous* men, as we translate it, (chap. xvi. 2. xxvi. 9.) or *renowned,* (Ezek. xxiii. 23.) Accordingly the Vulgar translates it, *most noble.*

Princes of the tribes of their fathers.] As appears more plainly from the noble offerings which each of them made for the dedication of the altar, (chap. vii.)

Heads of thousands in Israel.] Men not only of great authority; such as Jethro advised Moses to take to his aid in governing the people, (Exod. xviii. 21.) but the highest of that rank; being chief commanders over all the thousands that were in their several tribes; under whom, no doubt, were many inferior officers of great account; for so all people have found it necessary to submit themselves to the government of some supreme power, with several subordinate rulers under it. In which Israel excelled all other nations, being under the government of God himself, who appointed Moses immediately under him, with several others, as we here find, to assist him; for it is truly observed by Xenophon, that οὐδὲν οὕτως οὔτ' εὔχρηστον, οὔτε καλὸν ἀνθρώποις ὡς ἡ τάξις: *nothing is either so profitable for men, or so becoming, as good order;* and, on the contrary, nothing so mischievous, or unseemly, as confusion. Now *order* is nothing else but the apt disposition of every thing, in its proper place, for certain ends and uses. Accordingly among men nothing is more necessary, than that every one should know and keep his place in that degree and rank that belongs to him; as was here ordered by God for the preservation and good government of his people.

Ver. 17. *And Moses and Aaron took these men.*] To be their associates in the numbering of the people.

Which are expressed by their names.] Whom God himself marked out by name to be joined with them. For as people cannot be preserved without order, so that cannot be preserved without rulers and governors; and they will signify nothing if their authority be not reverenced; and nothing can gain them such reverence, as a particular designation by God to their office.

Ver. 18. *And they assembled all the congregation together on the first day of the second month.*] They immediately executed their commission, on the same day they received it, (ver. 1.) summoning all the people to appear before them.

And they declared their pedigrees.] The people instantly obeyed, and every one shewed from whom he was descended; or it may refer to Moses and Aaron, and the rest, who set down every man's original in the public tables.

After their families, by the house of their fathers, &c.] First, they shewed of what family they were; and then of what house in that family; and then the name of every person in that house was given in. (See ver. 2.) Such a kind of distinction Cecrops made in Attica, when he numbered the people, whom he divided into four tribes (which in the days of Alcmæon, their last king, were increased into ten); every one of which had several people in it, which were like the families in Israel; there being no less than ten or eleven people in that tribe which was called after his own name, Κεκροπίς. (See Meursius, lib. i. de Reg. Athen. cap. 7. and lib. ii. cap. 10.) And every one knows how Rome, at the first, had three tribes instituted by Romulus, which were divided into ten courts (if I may so call them), and those into certain families; which in aftertimes were increased into five-and-thirty tribes, according to the regions of the city.

Ver. 19. *As the Lord commanded Moses, so he numbered them.*] With the assistance of the forenamed persons.

In the wilderness of Sinai.] Before they removed from Sinai; which being upon the twentieth day of this month, (chap. x. 11.) they finished this work in so many days, or less.

Ver. 20. *And the children of Reuben, Israel's eldest son, by their generations,* &c.] The word *generations* seems to be larger than *families,* as that is than *houses,* comprehending every family in that tribe; as families comprehend every household, and household comprehends every person therein. So the meaning is, all that were descended from Reuben, according to their several families; and houses in those families; and persons in those houses.

Ver. 21. *Those that were numbered of them,* &c. *were forty and six thousand and five hundred.*] Some have observed, that this tribe was one of those who had the smallest number of men in it; in which they think was fulfilled the prophecy of Jacob, who foretold that Reuben should not excel, (Gen. xlix. 4.) But I do not look upon this as solid; for there were several tribes, who all this time had fewer persons in it than this; particularly the children of Joseph (whom Jacob compared to a *fruitful bough,* Gen. xlix. 22.) were very much fewer. (See below, ver. 33. 35.) Gad also, Benjamin and Asher, were fewer in number than Reuben; who, in this regard, excelled five tribes.

Ver. 23. *Of the tribe of Simeon were fifty and nine thousand and three hundred.*] He had six children when they went down into Egypt, and Reuben but four; which is a plain reason of the greater increase of this tribe than the former.

Ver. 24. *Of the children of Gad,* &c.] It is probable that this tribe is therefore mentioned next, though descended from a handmaid, because they were to encamp and march together with Simeon under the standard of Reuben; as is ordered in the next chapter, ver. 14.

Ver. 25. *Of the tribe of Gad were forty and five thousand six hundred and fifty.*] He had more sons than Simeon (Gen. xlvi. 10. 16.) when they came out of Egypt; and yet fewer descended from him, by many thousands,

than there did from Simeon; of which the reason doth not appear.

Ver. 27. *Of the tribe of Judah were threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred.*] It may be justly thought, that Jacob's prophecy concerning the power and strength of this tribe (Gen. xlix. 8, &c.) began already to be fulfilled, they being far more numerous than any other.

Ver. 28. *Of the tribe of Issachar,* &c.] There is a plain account why this tribe and Zebulun are mentioned next to Judah, because they two marched under his standard, (chap. ii. 4, 5. 7.) It may be observed also, that these two tribes were more numerous than many other, who had more children when they came out of Egypt.

Ver. 32. *Of the children of Ephraim.*] He had the preeminence given him to Manasseh long ago, (Gen. xlviii. 19.) and therefore is here placed before him.

Ver. 33. *Of the tribe of Ephraim were forty thousand and five hundred.*] Though they were hitherto but few in comparison with some other tribes; yet in this the prophecy of Jacob was fulfilled, (Gen. xlviii. 19, 20.) that they were more fruitful than Manasseh, there being above eight thousand persons more in this tribe than in the other, (ver. 35.)

Ver. 35. *Of Manasseh were thirty and two thousand and two hundred.*] This was now the smallest tribe; but before they got to Canaan they grew very numerous, being increased above twenty thousand, (chap. xxvi. 34.)

Ver. 37. *Of the tribe of Benjamin were thirty-five thousand and four hundred.*] Though Benjamin had more children than any of the rest of his brethren, when they went down into Egypt (Gen. xlvi. 21. where it appears he had ten sons), yet his tribe had the fewest men in it of all other, except Manasseh.

Ver. 39. *Of Dan were threescore and two thousand and seven hundred.*] On the contrary, Dan, who had but one son when they went down into Egypt, (Gen. xlvi. 23.) grew to a greater number than any other tribe, except Judah. So variously did the Divine providence work in fulfilling the promise to Abraham, of multiplying his seed.

Ver. 41. *Of Asher were forty and one thousand and five hundred.*] The growth of this tribe was not proportionable to that of some other, considering how many children Asher had at their going down into Egypt. But they increased near twelve thousand more before they got out of the wilderness, (chap. xxvi. 47.)

Ver. 43. *Of Naphtali were fifty and three thousand and four hundred.*] The great increase of this tribe is alleged by Bochartus, to justify his interpretation of Gen. xlix. 21. by altering the punctuation of the words. But I have there observed, that five other tribes were more numerous than Naphtali when this account was taken of them.

Ver. 44. *These are those that were numbered.*] This is the account that was taken of the number of men in each tribe.

Which Moses and Aaron numbered, and the princes of Israel being twelve men.] See v. 3, 4, &c.

Each one was for the house of his fathers.] Who could the better judge to what tribe every one belonged.

Ver. 45, 46. *So were all those that were numbered,* &c. *six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.*] By which it appears there was not one man dead since their last numeration (seven months ago), when they were taxed for the tabernacle; for they were at that time just so many as are here mentioned, (Exod. xxxviii. 26.) As for Nadab and Abihu, they were of the tribe of Levi, who are not here reckoned; and the man that was stoned for blasphemy (Lev. xxiv.) was not of Israel, by the side of his father.

Ver. 47. *But the Levites, after the tribe of their fathers, were not numbered among them.*] There was no account taken of them among the other tribes; as it is likely they were not comprehended in the former number, (Exod. xxxviii. 26.) being the persons who took the account, (ver. 21.) and had before this consecrated themselves to the Lord, (chap. xxxii. 29.)

After the tribe of their fathers.] Is a Hebraism, for the *fathers of their tribe;* expressing, in short, what is at large said of all the rest, *by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers,* (ver. 20. 22. 24, &c.)

Ver. 48. *For the Lord had spoken unto Moses, saying.*] He had received an order from God, when he commanded him to number the people, not to number them; which he sets down, that it might not be thought he favoured them, because he was of their tribe, and therefore exempted them from the wars, unto which all others were engaged.

Ver. 49. *Only thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi,* &c.] Because they were intended for another service, and therefore were to be numbered by themselves. There was as stout and valiant men in this tribe as any other, (which appeared sufficiently when God's honour was to be vindicated, Exod. xxxii.) but God did not design them for the wars of Canaan, they having employment enough in carrying and guarding the tabernacle.

And from this example, the heathen learned to exempt all those who ministered to their gods from all other services; particularly from the war. Strabo notes (lib. ix. Geograph.) this custom to have been as old as Homer's time; for in all his catalogue there is no mention of any ship that went against Troy from Alalcomenon, because that city was sacred to Minerva, who is thence called by Homer Ἀλαλκομενηὶς Ἀθηνᾶ. The same is observed by Cæsar (lib. vi.) of the ancient Druids, that they were freed from the wars, and from tribute also. Which privilege St. Basil challenges as belonging to the clergy, κατὰ τὸν παλαιὸν νόμον, *according to the ancient law,* Epist. cclxix. and S. Greg. Nazianzen doth the same in many places; particularly by his letter to Julianus, Epist. clxvi.

Ver. 50. *But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle.*] This was their work, to attend continually upon the house of God.

Of testimony.] So it is called, because the ark of the testimony was there; for which it was principally made. See Exod. xxxviii. 21. and what I have noted upon Exod. xxv. 16. chap. xl. 3.

And over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong unto it.] Not to use them in any sacred ministry (which belonged to the priests alone), but to carry them when they were to be removed; and to keep them in safety at all times. See chap. viii. *ult.* where it is expressly said, they *shall do no service* there.

They shall bear the tabernacle and all the vessels thereof.] As is particularly directed in the fourth chapter.

And they shall minister unto it.] Which ministry is at large described in the third chapter.

And shall encamp round about the tabernacle.] As a guard unto it: they being like to the legions about the palace of a great king, to secure and defend it from violence or rudeness. Which was the reason that they did not march under any of the standards of the other tribes: because they were to make a camp by themselves; the order of which is directed in the same third chapter. And for the same reason they were not to go to the wars; because their camp was to attend upon the tabernacle, the house of God.

Ver. 51. *And when the tabernacle setteth forward, the Levites shall take it down; and when it is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up.*] When the Israelites removed to a new station, the tabernacle was taken in pieces, that it might be the more easily carried from place to place: in which the Levites were to be employed; and likewise in putting it together again, when it was to be set up, where they rested in their journeys; as is more fully ordered in the fourth chapter, where the manner of taking it down and setting it up again is directed; and every one's office about it, whether priests (for they had some hand in it) or Levites, exactly appointed.

And the stranger.] Who is not of this tribe, though an Israelite.

That comes nigh.] To perform any of the forenamed offices.

Shall be put to death.] As a presumptuous person, in meddling with that which doth not belong unto him. The author of Schebet Jehudah extends this to all strangers, who worshipped strange gods; and saith, there was a golden sword hung up in the gate of the temple with this inscription, *The stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.*

Ver. 52. *And the children of Israel.*] The rest of the tribes beforementioned.

Shall pitch their tents every man by his own camp, &c.] In the order prescribed in the next chapter.

Ver. 53. *But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony.*] As is directed chap. iii. where they are ordered to make a camp nearer the tabernacle, within the other camp of the Israelites.

That there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel.] To prevent the other camp of the Israelites from coming too nigh the tabernacle; whereby they might have incurred God's displeasure.

And the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony.] That is, therefore they were to be a constant guard about it; that no man might approach nearer than God allowed, and so bring heavy punishments upon himself and upon the congregation.

Ver. 54. *And the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they.*] Consented to all that is here required, and did accordingly.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying.*] The just number of days that were spent in taking the forenamed account of the people is uncertain, (see chap. i. 19.) but that being finished, now order is given for their encamping under their several standards. And it is directed to Aaron as well as Moses; though the order for numbering them was directed to Moses only, (chap. i. 1.) Aaron having by that first order been joined with him in taking the account of them.

Ver. 2. *Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard.*] By the banner of that tribe, to which he was joined by the following order.

With the ensign of their father's house.] Every family and household had their particular ensigns, beside that great banner under which they encamped and marched; it being pitched and carried (as will appear) in the midst of them. How these banners and ensigns were distinguished one from another, we have no certain knowledge. The later Jews say (particularly Aben Ezra upon this place), that Judah carried in his standard the figure of a lion, and Reuben the figure of a man; Ephraim of an ox, and Dan of an eagle, for which I can see no ground. For though Judah be compared to a lion, yet the reasons he gives for the other are very absurd; with which I shall not trouble the reader, but only observe, that there is not one word of any such thing in their ancient writers; no, not in the whole body of the Talmud, as the famous Bochartus assures us. And it is not likely that they, who so lately smarted for making the golden calf, would adventure to make any other images, and expose them to the eyes of all the people. Nor is it impertinent to observe, that when Vitellius in after-ages was to march against the Arabians through Judea, the great men of the nation met him, and beseeched him to march another way: the law of their country not allowing images (such as were in the Roman ensigns) to be brought into it. So Josephus relates, lib. xviii. Antiq. cap. 7. for which one can see no reason, if their ancestors in the wilderness had, by the command or allowance of Moses, carried an eagle in any of their standards: (see Bochart in his Hieroz. par. i. lib. iii. cap. 5.) It is more probable, if there be room for conjecture in this matter, that the name of Judah might be embroidered in great letters in his standard, and of Reuben in his, and so of the rest: or they were distinguished by their colours only, as now our regiments are.

Far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch.] At such a distance as might shew their reverence to the tabernacle; and that there might be another camp of the Levites within them, who made a nearer inclosure about it, in the same form with the camp of Israel, which was quadrangular. This distance of the camp of Israel from the tabernacle, is reasonably judged (by Josh. iii. 4.) to have been two thousand cubits; that is, a mile.

Ver. 3. *And on the east side toward the rising of the sun.*] These are two expressions (after the manner of the Hebrews) for the same thing. Or *kedma*, which we here translate *on the east*, may be translated *on the fore-part, viz.* of the tabernacle: which was towards the sun's rising.

Shall they of the standard of the camp of Judah pitch.] These had the most honourable post (as we now speak) of all others; pitching before the most holy place, where Moses and Aaron had their station in the camp of the Levites, (chap. iii. 38.) And therefore the LXX. translate the first words of this verse thus, οἱ παρεμβάλλοντες πρῶτοι, &c. *they that encamp first towards the east shall be,* &c.

Throughout their armies.] They being, as we read before (and as the next verse tells us again), threescore and

fourteen thousand and six hundred men, were divided into several bodies (such as we now call *companies*, and *regiments*, and *brigades*), under their several officers: for which the Hebrews have no name but that of *army* or *host*.

And Nahshon the son of Amminadab.] He who was employed as the principal person in that tribe to help to take the number of them, (chap. i. 7.)

Shall be the captain of the children of Judah.] Their commander-in-chief, or general, as we now speak.

Ver. 4. *And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were threescore and fourteen thousand,* &c.] Hitherto Moses had set down the words that God spake to him: but these are his own words, which he intermixes all along with those of God's.

Ver. 5. *And those that do pitch next unto him.*] These now are the words of God; ordering what tribes should pitch under the standard of Judah.

Shall be the tribe of Issachar.] He and Zebulun were two of the sons of Leah, as well as Judah: and therefore their tribes are fitly placed under the standard of the tribe of Judah, as likely to agree well together.

And Nethaneel, the son of Zuar, shall be captain of the children of Issachar.] It may be noted, once for all, that the commanders-in-chief of the several tribes, were those very persons who were chosen to take the number of them: which shews they were men of eminence among them; as I observed, chap. i. 4.

Ver. 6. *And his host, and those that were numbered thereof, were,* &c.] These are the words of Moses, which to the end of the chapter (as I noted before) are interspersed with the orders that God gave for the forming of their camp.

Ver. 9. *And all that were numbered in the camp of Judah were a hundred thousand,* &c.] This was the greatest body of all other; which had the honour to be placed just before the oracle, as the strongest guard to it: the tribe of Judah lying in the midst, and the tribes of Issachar and Zebulun on each side of his standard; unto which all their ensigns were in some sort of subjection.

Throughout their armies.] This great body was divided into several smaller companies; for which they had no other name (as I observed before), but that of armies.

These shall first set forth.] When they removed from one station to another, this camp marched first. For they commonly went eastward; in which quarter this camp was pitched, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 10. *And on the south side shall be the standard of the camp of Reuben, according to their armies,* &c.] There is nothing to be observed concerning this camp, but that the tribe of Reuben had the honour to pitch in the midst of it; and the tribes of Simeon and Gad lay on either side of him under his standard or banner: just as Issachar and Zebulun did on either side of Judah. And there was an evident congruity in it; Simeon being his next brother, and Gad the eldest son of Zilpah, the handmaid of their mother Leah, (Gen. xxx. 10, 11.)

Ver. 14. *Eliasaph the son of Reuel.*] See note upon chap. i. 14.

Ver. 16. *And they shall set forth in the second rank.*] That is, when they removed, the three tribes that were pitched on the east marched first under the banner of Judah, (as was said before, ver. 9.) and then followed these three that lay on the south under the banner of Reuben.

Ver. 17. *Then the tabernacle of the congregation shall set forward with the camp of the Levites.*] After the forenamed camps the tabernacle was to follow, between those two that went before, and the camp of Ephraim and the camp of Dan that came after. So they did not march as they pitched; for then there was a camp on each side of the tabernacle: whereas when they marched there was none on the sides, but two camps went before it, and two followed it.

In the midst of the camp.] Not entirely in the midst: for it appears by the tenth chapter of this book, ver 17. that after the first camp under the standard of Judah was gone forward, the tabernacle was taken down and carried by the sons of Gershon and Merari between the camp of Judah and that of Reuben, which next followed: and then the sanctuary set forward, borne by the Kohathites, (ver. 21.) who marched exactly *in the midst*, between the standards of Judah and Reuben and the standards of Ephraim and Dan.

As they encamp so shall they set forward.] This may refer either to the Levites, the sons of Kohath; that, as they lay encamped on the same side of the tabernacle that the standard of Reuben did, so they should immediately march after them. Compare ver. 10. of this chapter with chap. iii. 29. Or to the two camps forenamed; that they should march in the same order wherein they lay encamped: Judah, for instance, in the midst of Issachar and Zebulun, before and behind him, or on each side of him.

Every man in his place by their standards.] Every man keeping his place which was assigned him, under the standard to which he belonged; that there might be no disorder among them.

Ver. 18. *And on the west side shall be the standard of the camp of Ephraim.* &c.] There is little to be noted here, but that Ephraim is plainly preferred before his brother, as he was in Jacob's blessing, (Gen. xlviii. 19, 20.) and that the two tribes which encamped under his standard, *viz.* Manasseh (ver. 20.) and Benjamin, (ver. 22.) are fitly joined with him; they being all descended from Rachel.

Ver. 24. *All that were numbered of the camp of Ephraim were a hundred and eight thousand,* &c.] This was the smallest body of all the four.

And they shall go forward in the third rank.] And therefore, though they lay on the west side in their encampment, yet when they marched they did not go in the rear of all, but immediately behind the tabernacle.

Ver. 25. *The standard of the camp of Dan shall be on the north side,* &c.] This tribe, we may reasonably think, was advanced to this dignity, of bearing one of the four standards, though they descended from a handmaid; because Dan was the eldest of Jacob's sons of that sort, (Gen. xxx. 6.) and this tribe was the most numerous of all others, except Judah; as the foregoing chapter shews, (ver. 39.) with whom the tribes of Asher and Naphtali are fitly joined, being descended from handmaids also.

Ver. 31. *All that were numbered in the camp of Dan were a hundred and fifty-seven thousand,* &c.] This was the greatest body of men, except that under the standard of Judah, who marched in the front; and is the reason, perhaps, why these are ordered here, in the next words, to bring up the rear.

They shall go hindmost with their standards.] Here the

standard comprehends *ensigns;* for there was but one *standard* for this camp, as there were no more for the other three: therefore the meaning is, they shall march hindermost under their several colours, as we now speak; which was ordered for the greater security of the sanctuary, by the two strongest bodies marching before and behind, where there was the greatest danger.

Ver. 32. *These are those which were numbered of the children of Israel by the house of their fathers,* &c.] That is, thus were all these persons disposed under their several standards; whose number was taken by Moses and Aaron, with their associates, (chap. i. 44, 45.)

Ver. 33. *But the Levites were not numbered among the children of Israel, as the Lord commanded Moses.*] And consequently did not belong to any of these standards, being to make another camp by themselves, (chap. i. 47, &c.)

Ver. 34. *And the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses.*] As they gave in their names when they were to be numbered, (chap. i. 54.) so they now joined together under such standards as God appointed.

So they pitched by their standards, and so they set forward, &c.] Each tribe encamped under the standard that was assigned to them; and they also marched, when they set forward, in such order as is here directed. Some order, no doubt, had been observed before, both when they rested and when they marched, (see Exod. xii. 18.) but it was not so exact and regular as this form, into which they were now cast by God himself, nor can we think it was so strictly observed.

The Jews say that this camp made a square of twelve miles in compass about the tabernacle; as Dr. Lightfoot hath observed, in his Cent. Chorogr. cxlviii. and J. Wagenseil more lately, in his annotations upon the Gemara of Sota, cap. 1. sect. 51. where several of them say, that the camp was three parasots in compass: and a parasot was four miles.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *THESE are the generations of Aaron and Moses.*] Being now to give an account of the Levites, who had not been numbered with the rest of the children of Israel, he sets down the descendants of the principal persons among them; *viz.* Aaron (whom he puts in the first place, because he was the eldest brother, and his posterity were advanced to the dignity of priests) and Moses; whose posterity were only ministers to the priests, as all the common Levites were. It may seem, indeed, at first sight, as if he gave an account only of Aaron's posterity; (ver. 2.) but if we look further to ver. 27, 28. we shall find the posterity of both here numbered in the family of the Amramites, of which both Aaron and Moses were: Amram being their father; from whom the genealogy of the children of Moses is derived, (1 Chron. xxiii. 13, 14, &c.) through their generations; as here those of Aaron.

Concerning the word *generations,* see Dr. Hammond on the first of St. Matthew, note a.

In the day that the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai.] This circumstance seems to be particularly specified, because at that time Nadab and Abihu (who are mentioned in the next verse) were both alive, and very eminent persons, (Exod. xxiv. 1. 9, 10.) though they were now dead, at this numbering of the Levites.

Ver. 2. *These are the names of the sons of Aaron, Nadab the first-born,* &c.] There seems no necessity of setting down the names of Aaron's sons, they not being here to be numbered. But it was of great concernment to have the distinction preserved between the priests and the Levites, their offices being very different; and therefore Moses here sets down who belonged to the one, and who to the other.

Ver. 3. *These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the priests which were anointed.*] See Levit. viii. 30.

Which he consecrated.] In the Hebrew, *whose hand he filled.* (See Exod. xxviii. 41. and xxix. 9.)

To minister in the priest's office.] He would have it noted, that Aaron's posterity were solemnly consecrated to a higher office than the rest of the tribe of Levi, who were to be their servants: the very name of *cohen* carries dignity in it; signifying sometimes a *prince,* as well as a *priest.* Accordingly, the priests had very little servile work imposed upon them; but their chief business was to draw near to God, to present him with the blood, and the fat, and some part of the sacrifices which might be killed by other persons. This shews that they were God's familiars; insomuch that some sacrifices were divided between him and them: and it was the same thing, whether they were consumed on the altar, or eaten by the priests: and those things are said to be given to God which were put into their hands, though they never came to the altar: which is an evidence of the near relation they had to the Divine Majesty, which the Levites had not; for they could not come nigh to offer any thing to him, no more than the rest of the Israelites but were employed in inferior service about the tabernacle, that the priests might wholly attend to the service of God at the altar.

Ver. 4. *And Nadab and Abihu died before the Lord,* &c.] A little after their consecration, (Lev. x. 1, &c.)

And they had no children.] Which is here recorded, that all posterity might know there were none to be admitted to the office of priesthood, but such as could derive their genealogy from Eleazar or Ithamar. If the other had left any sons, they would have inherited their father's office before Eleazar; as Maimonides observes out of Siphre: (see Schickard's Jus Regium, cap. vi. Theor. xx.)

And Eleazar and Ithamar ministered in the priest's office, in the sight of their father.] The LXX. rightly translate it, *together with their father,* who was the high-priest, and they lower priests under him: and so were all their sons; which it is likely they had in good number: for they are appointed, (ver. 38.) for the guard of the tabernacle towards the east. And thus the Gemara Hierosol. in the title concerning Fasting, saith, that Moses appointed eight classes of priests: four of the family of Eleazar, and as many of Ithamar; which continued till the time of Samuel the prophet, and David, who admitted many more: (see Selden de Success. in Pontif. cap. 1.)

Ver. 5. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Now he gives order about the rest of the tribe of Levi, who had been omitted in the late muster.

Ver. 6. *Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them.*] They had consecrated themselves to God by a noble act,

mentioned Exod. xxxii. 29. which procured them this blessing, to be presented to God, and consecrated to him in a solemn manner, for such services as he should assign them. So this word, *bring near*, signifies to offer them unto God: as they were, chap. viii. 10, 11.

Before Aaron the priest.] In his presence.

That they may minister unto him.] Unto Aaron and the rest of the priests, who were the immediate ministers of God; and the Levites were given to minister unto them: which they did many ways; especially while they remained in the wilderness, where they had a peculiar charge (which otherwise would have been incumbent on the priests), not only to guard the tabernacle, and keep a watch night and day about it; but also to take it down, and to carry it, when they removed, and to set it up again when they rested; as we read in the following part of this chapter, and in the next. When they came into the land of Canaan, and were settled there, they had less to do of this kind: but as the charge of the tabernacle still lay upon them, as it had done before, so did other works in the courts of the Lord's house, and in the chambers where they waited on the priests; which are particularly mentioned in 1 Chron. xxiii. 28, 29, &c. And in David's time their work was still more increased; for he appointed them to be singers in the house of the Lord, and to play upon several sorts of instruments, (1 Chron. xxv.) which they did morning and evening, (1 Chron. xxiii. 30.) Porters, perhaps, there were before, who stood at the several gates of the tabernacle, as afterward of the temple; and are said therein "to minister in the house of the Lord," (1 Chron. xxvi. 12.) as also guards of the treasury of God's house, and of things dedicated to him, (ver. 20.) But as he increased the number of them, so he settled them in their courses, that there might be a constant attendance with greater ease. As for those of them that were made judges and officers, not only in matters concerning the Lord, but in the service of the king, (as we read there, 1 Chron. xxvi. 29, 30.) it no more belongs to what is said of them here, than what follows there, (ver. 31.) that "there were found among them mighty men of valour." (See upon ver. 10.)

Ver. 7. *And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation.*] It highly concerned Aaron in particular, and the whole congregation in general, that the tabernacle should be well guarded: and this was the Levites' great business at present; who took this charge from off their hands, by attending that service, which all of them were bound to perform.

Before the tabernacle of the congregation.] This exactly expresses in what their ministry consisted; which was not performed *in* the tabernacle (where the priests only officiated in the holy place, as the high-priest in the most holy), but *before* it, in the external part of it, where they assisted the priests in their service.

To do the service of the tabernacle.] Such service as I have mentioned before, (ver. 6.)

Ver. 8. *And they shall keep.*] By guarding them, and keeping a continual watch about them.

All the instruments of the tabernacle of the congregation.] Every thing belonging to it.

And the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle.] By which service at the tabernacle they took upon them the charge; which otherwise was incumbent on the whole congregation, who were to take care that the holy things were kept both safe and secure, and also separate to the sacred uses to which they were appointed.

These words, which are often repeated, [*to do the service of the tabernacle,*] are to be carefully noted; because the Levites did not *serve in the tabernacle* (which belonged only to the priests), but *served the tabernacle,* by guarding it, and taking it down, and carrying it, &c. as was said before.

Ver. 9. *And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons.*] They were first presented unto God, (ver. 6.) and God bestowed them as a gift upon the priests. (See chap. viii. 19.)

They are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel.] To attend upon the priests, and to obey their orders; for which they paid them nothing, but they were to do it freely, being given to them to be their servants by God, who paid them their wages.

Ver. 10. *And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office.*] Or, thou shalt appoint them to wait on their priesthood: which he had shewn before was very different from the Levitical office; but, to make them more mindful of their dignity, he repeats it again; that Aaron and his sons alone should officiate as priests, *viz.* in offering sacrifice; in setting the bread upon the holy table; looking after the lights, and burning incense; which they were to perform in their own persons, and not appoint any others, as their deputies, to do them: for none of these things could be performed by the Levites, whose business it was to look after the fine flour of which the bread was made; to prepare it, and the frankincense which was to be burnt; and abundance of such-like things, which are particularly mentioned, 1 Chron. ix. 27—29. 31, 32. But they could not make the *anointing oil,* or the *sweet perfume,* mentioned Exod. xxx. 23. 34. for they were *most holy;* and, therefore, the priests only could compound them.

And the stranger that cometh nigh.] By *stranger* is meant any one (though a Levite) that was not of the sons of Aaron, who alone had the privilege to approach unto God.

Shall be put to death.] God himself sent out a fire to consume Korah and his company, who presumed to offer incense, being but bare Levites, and not priests, (chap. xvi.)

Ver. 11. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] To make the matter more clear, he further tells Moses the reason, why he took the Levites from among the children of Israel to be his after a peculiar manner.

Ver. 12. *And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel.*] Take notice of the reason why I have taken the Levites from among the rest of the Israelites, (ver. 9.) for it is by my order and appointment.

Instead of all the first-born that openeth the matrix, &c.] To make an exchange with them for all their first-born, which I have heretofore challenged as my own, and now take the Levites in their stead.

Therefore the Levites shall be mine.] As all the first-born were, which now shall be *theirs,* and the Levites be mine.

Ver. 13. *Because all the first-born are mine.*] By a special right, which is mentioned in the next words.

For on the day that I smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt.] The title whereby he laid a claim to all the first-born was, that great miracle (as R. Levi of Barcelona calls

it) which he wrought, when he destroyed all the first-born of their neighbours in Egypt, and touched not one of theirs. By which sparing mercy he acquired a just right to them; and by that solemn dedication which he then commanded to be made of them unto his uses, (Exod. xiii. 2. 12, 13.)

I hallowed unto me all the first-born in Israel, &c.] He separated them unto himself, by sparing them, when he killed all other first-born, but only theirs.

Mine they shall be.] Both by that act of his own, and by the act of the children of Israel, whom he commanded to sanctify them to him, (Exod. xiii. 2. and xxii. 29.) they became God's. By which it appears, that he had not a peculiar right in the first-born, more than in any other of their children, till their coming out of Egypt. And therefore, the taking of the Levites to be his, instead of the first-born, is no argument that the first-born had hitherto been the priests who ministered unto God, till this exchange of them for the Levites. So our learned Dr. Lightfoot seems to infer, in his notes upon this passage; "The first-born (saith he) had been priests till the consecration of the Levites; but now that function must be confined to that tribe." In which words (with due respect be it spoken to that excellent man's labours) there are several mistakes. For, as the priesthood was not now confined to this tribe, but to one family in this tribe (that of Aaron), so it was not confined to it upon this occasion; but he and his sons were consecrated before this exchange of the Levites for the first-born, who were now given to minister unto them, but had nothing to do with the priesthood; no more than the first-born had, for whom they were exchanged; that peculiar right which God had in the first-born being since their coming out of Egypt. Upon all which considerations, we may look upon this exchange as an argument rather that the first-born were not priests in former times than that they were: as the Jews fancy, and as many have suggested from this very taking of the Levites to be God's portion in their stead. For so Menochius himself (lib. ii. de Repub. Jud. cap. 1.) asserts from this very place, "Jus sacerdotum in Levitas translatum, et eos loco primogenitorum acceptos, quibus hoc jus debebatur," *that the right of priests was transferred to the Levites, and they were accepted instead of the first-born, to whom that right belonged.* In which there is not a word of truth, but only that the Levites were accepted instead of the first-born; who had the same right to the priesthood that the Levites had; that is, none at all.

I am the Lord.] Who may take whom I please to be employed in my service; and think it reasonable that those whom I spared, when I slew the Egyptian first-born, should be mine.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord spake unto Moses.*] There was some reason, no doubt, why Moses alone is commanded to take the number of the Levites upon this occasion, (as he alone did, ver. 16.) when Aaron is joined with him in numbering the Israelites, (chap. i. 3.) and in numbering the Levites themselves who were fit for service, (chap. iv. 2. 41. 45.) nay, the chief of the Israelites assisted therein, (ver. 46.) And it is most probable he alone was employed to take this account, because Aaron was a party in it; the money that was to be paid for so many of the first-born, as exceeded the number of the Levites, being given to him and to his sons, (ver. 48.)

In the wilderness of Sinai.] This command immediately followed the other, in the two preceding chapters, before they departed from the wilderness of Sinai; where they had been ever since God delivered the law to them from that mountain.

Ver. 15. *Number the children of Levi, after the house of their fathers, by their families.*] Just as they had numbered the rest of the children of Israel. (See chap. i. 2.) Only those they numbered from twenty years old and upward; but the Levites from a month old and upward.

Every male from a month old and upward shalt thou number them.] The reason of this difference was, that this was the age at which they were to redeem their first-born, (chap. xviii. 16.) in whose stead the Levites were to be given unto God. (See ver. 40. of this chapter.)

Ver. 16. *And Moses numbered them according to the word of the Lord,* &c.] This charge was committed to him alone, (ver. 10.) and he alone (as I there observed) performed it.

Ver. 17. *And these were the sons of Levi, by their names, Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari.*] The same account we had before, (Gen. xlvi. 11. Exod. vi. 16.)

Ver. 18. *And these are the names of the sons of Gershon, by their families, Libni and Shimei.*] The same is said Exod. vi. 17.

Ver. 19. *And the names of the sons of Kohath,* &c.] They are mentioned in the same order, in Exod. vi. 18, 19.

Ver. 20. *These are the families of the Levites, according to the house of their fathers.*] These were the principal families in this tribe; from whence the several households, and the persons in them, were derived.

Ver. 21, 22. *Of Gershon was the family,* &c.] From his two sons sprung two families; who had in them seven thousand and five hundred male children, from a month old and upward.

Ver. 23. *And the families of the Gershonites shall pitch behind the tabernacle westward.*] Where the most holy place was; and where they under the standard of Ephraim lay, in the great camp of Israel, (chap. ii. 18.) between whom and the tabernacle this part of the camp of Levi pitched.

Ver. 24. *And the chief of the house of the father of the Gershonites,* &c.] The commander-in-chief, as we may style him, or the principal officer in this part of the camp of the Levites, was Eliasaph the son of Lael; but of what family he was, whether of the Libnites or Shimites, is not related.

Ver. 25. *And the charge of the sons of Gershon.*] That which was committed peculiarly to their care.

In the tabernacle of the congregation.] In the things belonging to the tabernacle; for none went into it but the priests alone.

Shall be the tabernacle.] Not the boards, and pillars, and bases of it, (for they belonged to the care of the sons of Merari, ver. 36.) but the ten curtains, which were the inward hangings of it, and are called the *mischan,* or tabernacle, (Exod. xxvi. 1. and see the next chapter of this book, ver. 25.)

And the tent.] The outward curtains of goats' hair, which are called *ohel,* the tent, (Exod. xxvi. 7. 12.)

The covering thereof.] The *michse,* as the Hebrews call it, or the covering of the tent, were the rams' skins and badgers' skins, which lay outmost of all, upon the curtains of goats' hair, (Exod. xxvi. 14.)

And the hanging for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] The outward veil, mentioned Exod. xxvi. 36. for the inward veil, which hung before the most holy place, was the charge of the Kohathites.

Ver. 26. *And the hangings of the court.*] See Exod. xxvii. 9.

And the curtain for the door of the court.] Exod. xxvi. 16.

Which is by the tabernacle, and by the altar round about.] Or, as the Hebrew particle *al* may be translated, is *over*, or *upon* the tabernacle, &c. that is, this curtain at the door and the hangings of the court compassed the tabernacle, and the altar of burnt-offerings (which stood at the door of it, Exod. xl. 19.) round about; so that they were not exposed to common sight: for these Gershonites had nothing to do with the altar itself, which was the charge of the Kohathites, (ver. 31.)

And the cords of it.] This seems to refer, not merely to the curtain for the door of the court, but to all that went before, *viz.* the cords whereby those hangings were stretched out, and fastened by pins to the wood-work of the tabernacle: for the cords of that belonged to the custody of the sons of Merari, (ver. 37.) and we find pins and cords, as well for the tabernacle (that is, the hangings) as for the court, *i. e.* the boards, &c. (Exod. xxxv. 18.)

For all the service thereof.] Of this part of the house of God, as appears from ver. 31. and 36. where this is repeated with respect to the other parts of it.

Ver. 27. *And of Kohath was the family of the Amramites,* &c.] He was the second son of Levi, and had as many more families sprung from him as from the eldest; among which was the family of the Amramites, of which were Moses and Aaron.

Ver. 28. *In the number of all the males,* &c.] Though there were four families of the Kohathites, and but two of the Gershonites, yet the latter were as numerous as they, within eleven hundred.

Keeping the charge of the sanctuary.] Of what belonged to the holy place, which was committed to their charge, as it follows afterward; and they were instructed in it betimes.

Ver. 29. *The families of the sons of Kohath shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle southward.*] Between the tabernacle and the standard of Reuben, (chap. ii. 10.)

Ver. 30. *And the chief of the house of the father of the families of the Kohathites shall be Elizaphan the son of Uzziel.*] There was a commander-in-chief appointed over this body of the Levites, who was chosen out of the youngest family of the Kohathites. But it is observable, there were no standards belonging to any of these bodies, they being designed for other service, and not for war.

Ver. 31. *And their charge shall be the ark, and the table, and the candlestick.*] The sanctuary, as was said before, (ver. 28.) being committed to their custody, the particulars are here mentioned, which were the most precious of all the holy things, with which the Kohathites had the honour to be entrusted, though a younger family than those descended from Gershon, because Moses and Aaron were of it, being of the family of the Amramites; which is the reason why the Kohathites are reckoned first in the next chapter; (ver. 2.) and that of the forty-eight cities given to the Levites by Joshua, almost half of them fell to their families, (Josh. xxi. 4, 5.)

The altars.] Both the altar of burnt-offerings and the altar of incense.

And the vessels of the sanctuary wherewith they (*i. e.* the priests) *minister.*] See Exod. xxv. 29. xxxvii. 16.

And the hanging.] That is, the veil before the most holy place, for all other hangings were under the care of the Gershonites, (ver. 25. 26.) wherein the ark was wrapped, when they carried it, (chap. iv. 5.)

And all the service thereof.] Whatsoever belonged to this part of God's house: (see ver. 26.) and the particulars are mentioned in the next chapter, ver. 7. 9. 14.

Ver. 32. *And Eleazar, the son of Aaron, shall be chief over the chief of the Levites.*] There was one officer in chief set over each of these great families; of the Gershonites (ver. 24.) of the Kohathites, (ver. 30.) and the Merarites, (ver. 35.) And over all these chiefs there is now appointed a supreme chief (who was to govern them as they governed those under them), and that was Eleazar, who was more than a Levite, being the eldest son of Aaron, the high priest.

And have the oversight of them that keep the charge of the sanctuary.] But, more particularly, Eleazar was to supervise those that had the sanctuary under their care; that is, all the Kohathites and Elizaphan their chief, (ver. 20.)

Ver. 33, 34.] *Of Merari was the family of the Mahlites, and the family of the Mushites,* &c.] Nothing is observable of these, but that they were the fewest in number, being thirteen hundred less than the children of Gershon, (see ver. 22.)

Ver. 35. *These shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle northward.*] Opposite to the Kohathites, between the standard of Dan and the sanctuary, (chap. ii. 25.)

Ver. 36. *And under the custody and charge of the sons of Merari, shall be the boards of the tabernacle,* &c.] Concerning all the things mentioned in this, and in the next verse, see Exod. xxvi. 15, 16, &c. xxvii. 10—12, &c. and the next chapter of this book, ver. 31, 32.

Ver. 37. *And their cords.*] These are different from those beforementioned, ver. 27. as I noted there.

Ver. 38. *But those that encamp before the tabernacle towards the east.*] Where the entrance into it was.

Even before the tabernacle of the congregation eastward.] He would have this station observed, as much excelling the rest.

Shall be Moses, and Aaron and his sons.] There were but three bodies of the Levites, descended from the three sons of Levi, (ver. 1.) and therefore none left to guard this side of the tabernacle, but Moses and Aaron, and their families; who lay between the standard of Judah and the tabernacle, (see chap. ii. ver. 3.) which was the most honourable post, as I there noted: where the priests were with great reason placed, together with the chief governor of all, Moses; because they were to guard the holy place, that none might go into it but themselves.

Keeping the charge of the sanctuary.] Of the entrance into it.

For the charge of the children of Israel.] Which it concerned every one of the children of Israel should be kept sacred: (see ver. 7.)

And the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.] No man that was not of the house of Aaron (though a Levite) was, upon the peril of his life, to enter into the sanctuary: of which they had the charge: (see ver. 10.)

Ver. 39. *All that were numbered of the Levites, which*

Moses and Aaron numbered, at the commandment of the Lord.] This looks like a contradiction to the observation I made, ver. 14. 16. But Aaron's numbering here, in all probability, is only agreeing that this was a true account which Moses took of the tribe of Levi. For Moses still continues to be alone concerned in numbering the first-born of the children of Israel, for whom they were to be exchanged, (ver. 40. 42.)

Were twenty and two thousand.] If the particular sums beforementioned (ver. 22. 28. 34.) be put together, they amount to *three hundred* more than *twenty-two thousand.* Therefore it is a reasonable conjecture, that the *three hundred* are omitted in this account, because they were the first-born of the Levites themselves; and upon that score belonging to God already, (by the law in Exod. xiii. 2. xxxiv. 20.) could not be exchanged for the first-born of other tribes, and substituted in their stead, as other Levites were. It is very observable here also, that the Levites were the fewest in number of any tribe; being but *two-and-twenty thousand three hundred,* from a month old and upward: when some tribes were twice, nay thrice as many, (see chap. i. 27.) not reckoning children, but only men from twenty years old and upward. In which the Divine Providence was very conspicuous, which so ordered it, that this whole tribe might be dedicated to him; whereas, if it had grown proportionably to the rest, there would have been more Levites by far than the first-born of all the tribes.

Ver. 40. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] To whom alone this command is directed, as I observed above.

Number all the first-born of the males of the children of Israel from a month old and upward.] The first-born males were to be a month old, before their parents were bound to redeem them: if they died before, they were not to pay any thing for them. Which depends upon another law, Lev. xii. 4. 6. where if a woman brought forth a male, besides the *seven days* of her separation, she was to stay *three-and-thirty* days more before she went unto the sanctuary: at which time the child being to be presented to God, it appears that he acknowledged them for his when they were a month old. Yet they distinguish between the time when the redemption money was due, and when it was offered. This latter was deferred till the mother was abroad again: but it was due, and the father obliged to pay it, as soon as the child was a month old. So Const. L'Empereur observes out of Maimonides, upon Bava kama, cap. vii. sect. 6.

And take the number of their names.] That their number, and that of the Levites, might be compared one with the other; for the reason which here follows.

Ver. 41. *And thou shalt take the Levites for me (I am the Lord), instead of all the first-born among the children of Israel.*] God had taken them before, as we read, ver. 12. by declaring his will to Moses about it. And now he commands Moses to declare his will to the people, and actually to make this exchange; after he had taken the number, both of the first-born and of the Levites. For he had authority to take which he pleased, being their Lord.

And the cattle of the Levites, instead of all the firstlings among the cattle of the children of Israel.] Not that they should be sacrificed, or taken from the Levites; but that they should be accounted God's cattle; they being the cattle of the Levites, who were his entirely: and therefore were presented unto him, as the Levites were; but still continued in their possession by his allowance, for their encouragement in his service: (see ver. 45.)

Ver. 42. *And Moses numbered as the Lord commanded him all the first-born of the children of Israel.*] But we do not find that he numbered the firstlings of their cattle, or the cattle of the Levites; because the exchange of them was not made in particular, by substituting one for one; but generally, by substituting all the cattle of the Levites, instead of all the firstlings of the Israelites' cattle.

Ver. 43. *And all the first-born males, by the number of names, &c. and were twenty and two thousand two hundred and threescore and thirteen.*] It may appear something strange, that, from above six hundred thousand men, (reckoning from twenty years old and upward, chap. i. 46.) there should not be more than this number of first-born sons; till it be considered, that thus many were born since the slaughter of the Egyptian first-born (which was not much above a year ago), after which time all the first-born of Israel became God's; but not those that were born before: for so the law is, Exod. xiii. 2. *Whatsoever openeth the womb, (i. e.* hereafter) *both of man and beast, shall be mine.*

Ver. 44. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Still he is the person solely employed in this business.

Ver. 45. *Take the Levites instead of all the first-born among the children of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead of their cattle.*] Having numbered both the Levites and the first-born, now he bids him take those two-and-twenty thousand Levites instead of so many first-born. As for the cattle, they were not numbered, as I observed before, but exchanged in the lump, as we speak.

And the Levites shall be mine.] I think it is remarkable that he doth not add, *and their cattle shall be mine also.* For he did not take their cattle from them when they became his; but left them the use of them, who still enjoyed them in his right.

I am the Lord.] This exchange is made by my authority, who am the Lord, both of them and all they have.

Ver. 46. *And for those that are to be redeemed of the two hundred and threescore and thirteen, &c.*] There being two hundred threescore and thirteen first-born more than there were Levites, they are directed, in the next verse, what to do about them. For there could be no exchange of Levites for them, because there was not a sufficient number to be taken in their stead.

Ver. 47. *Thou shalt even take five shekels a-piece by the poll.*] This was the price of redemption ever after, as appears from chap. xviii. 16. For it had been lately constituted the value of a man-child, from a month to five years old, in Levit. xxvii. 6.

After the shekel of the sanctuary, &c.] See Exod. xxx. 13, &c. The only difficulty in this matter was, to determine which of the first-born should be redeemed by paying this money, and which should be exchanged for the Levites. For every one of the Israelites, no doubt, was desirous rather to have his first-born redeemed by a Levite, than by paying five shekels; and yet some of them must be put to this expense, there not being Levites enough to answer for them all. The Jews think (particularly R. Solomon) that there was no way to satisfy this doubt like that by draw-

ing of lots, which was done in this manner. Moses, saith the forenamed doctor, took two-and-twenty thousand scrolls of parchment, and wrote in them these words, *a son of Levi;* and two hundred and seventy and three more, wherein he wrote *five shekels;* and then putting them all together in an urn, and shaking it to mingle them, he commanded every one of the first-born to come, and put in his hand, and draw out a schedule: and to him that drew out one of the former sort, he said, *a Levite hath redeemed thee;* but to him that drew out one of the latter, he said, *pay thy price.* And thus they tell the story also in the Gemara Babylon. Tit. Sanhedrin, which is probable enough; unless we suppose the congregation to have redeemed the two hundred seventy-three first-born out of a common stock; which was a shorter way, but not so Divine as the other.

Ver. 48. *And thou shalt give the money, wherewith the odd number of them is to be redeemed, unto Aaron, and to his sons.*] Which was but reasonable; because the Levites being given to them by God, (ver. 6, 7.) the money that was paid to make up what was wanting in their proportion to the first-born belonged to them likewise.

Ver. 49. *And Moses took the redemption-money of them that were over and above.*] To whom the lot fell, having *five shekels* written upon it.

Them that were redeemed by the Levites.] The first-born were redeemed by the Levites as far as their number would reach; the rest, who were more than the Levites, were redeemed by money.

Ver. 50. *Of the first-born of the children of Israel took he the money, a thousand three hundred and threescore and five shekels.*] Five times *two hundred seventy and three* make just this number.

Ver. 51. *And Moses gave the money of them that were redeemed unto Aaron, and to his sons.*] Which was a rule observed in future generations, (chap. xviii. 15, &c.)

According to the word of the Lord, as the Lord commanded Moses.] This is so oft repeated, to shew how faithful a servant Moses was; who did nothing but by the Divine order, and omitted nothing that was commanded him.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying.*] They being both of them concerned to see this carefully executed, he speaks to both; and they took others to their assistance, (ver. 34. 46.)

Ver. 2. *Take the sum of the sons of Kohath,* &c.] They are first mentioned, being employed in the most honourable work; as I observed before, (chap. iii. 31.)

Ver. 3. *From thirty years old and upward.*] In this work, to which they are appointed, they were not employed till they came to *thirty* years of age; but they were admitted to attend at the tabernacle, and do other service, at the age of *five-and-twenty;* as we read, chap. viii. ver. 25. Which place the Jews (in the Gemara Babylonica upon the title Cholin) reconcile with this, after this manner: they were admitted to learn their duty at *five-and-twenty,* and to minister at *thirty.* And so Aben Ezra upon Numb. viii. *They were probationers, and might do some service at five-and-twenty years old, but not do all:* for they might wait upon the tabernacle, but not bear the ark. And that is the exact truth; they were admitted to minister to the priests at *five-and-twenty,* but were not put upon this laborious work here mentioned, till they had sufficient strength for it; which was at *thirty* years of age, when they were able to *carry burdens;* for by that word their work is described, (ver. 15. 19. 24. 31. 47.) For though some things, which they were charged withal, might be put into waggons, yet the ark and the most holy things were to be carried upon their shoulders, though they marched never so far, (ver. 15. and vii. 9.) When the ark, indeed, was settled in the temple, which was a fixed place, and therefore was no longer to be carried up and down, then (as D. Kimchi observes upon 1 Chron. xxiii.) king David appointed them to enter upon their office at *twenty* years old; there being also other great work to be performed in his time, for which they were fit at that age. And so it continued even after their return from the captivity at Babylon, Ezra iii. 8. (See Selden de Success. in Pontificat. lib. ii. cap. 4. and Lightfoot in his Temple Service, chap. vi. sect. 1.)

Even until fifty years old.] Beyond which age they were not bound to do any service, but only to minister with their brethren at the tabernacle, (chap. viii. 25, 26.)

All that enter into the host.] Or, *into the warfare.* For their watching continually, as a guard, about the tabernacle, (chap. iii. 7, &c.) made them a sort of militia, who were encamped, as appears by the foregoing chapter, about the tabernacle for its security. Besides which, there was other work which might make their service as laborious as a soldier's life is, and give it the name of *entering into the host;* which manner of speaking St. Paul uses unto Timothy, 1 Tim. i. 18. where he exhorts him to *war a good warfare.*

To do the work of the tabernacle of the congregation.] They did not perform any work in it, but about it (such as here follows), unless we understand by the *tabernacle,* the outward court, into which they went to minister unto the priests.

Ver. 4. *This shall be the service of the sons of Kohath, in the tabernacle of the congregation, about the most holy things.*] The next verses explain what this service was: or, if the word *about* (in the latter end of the verse) were quite left out, the sense would be more clear; *this shall be the service of the sons of Kohath,* &c. *the most holy things;* that is, the ark, as Aben Ezra expounds it. And his interpretation may be justified from ver. 19, 20. in the latter of which it is called the *holy,* and in the former the *holy of holies;* as it is here in the Hebrew: for it was the *most holy of all other holy things* in the tabernacle; and gave the name to the place where it stood, of *holy of holies,* or the *most holy place.* And this made the service of the Kohathites the most honourable of all other, and is the reason they are mentioned first.

Ver. 5. *When the camp setteth forward:*] Which it did not do till the cloud was taken up, and removed from off the tabernacle, (Exod. xl. 36, 37. Numb. x. 11.)

Aaron shall come, and his sons.] While the cloud rested upon the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord filled the house, none but Aaron might come into the most holy place where the ark was, and that but on one day in the year; and then, after he had filled it with incense, which made a cloud before the mercy-seat (which was the cover-

ing of the ark), over which the Schechinah was. But that being removed in the cloud, when it was taken up from the tabernacle; not only Aaron, but his sons also might come into the most holy place, without any irreverence; that which made it so holy *(viz. the glory of the Lord)* being gone out of it for the present; so that there was no danger in approaching to the ark where it was wont to rest.

And they shall take down the covering veil.] Whereby the holy place was parted from the most holy; which is always meant by the word *parocheth,* (as I shewed upon Exod. xxvi. 31.) which is here used: and though the word *masach* be added to it, which constantly signifies the outward veil at the entrance of the sanctuary; yet it is plain that the inward veil, which was at the entrance of the most holy place is here intended: for the other was committed to the care of the Gershonites, (ver. 25.)

And cover the ark of the testimony with it.] By this it is evident they went into the holy place, unto the very ark, over which they threw this covering.

Ver. 6. *And shall put thereon the covering of badgers' skins.*] Not any of those wherewith the tabernacle was covered, (Exod. xxvi. 14.) but a covering made on purpose for this use, to defend the ark from the injury of the weather when they carried it on their shoulders.

And shall spread over it a cloth wholly of blue.] Or, of *perfect blue.* This was the third covering of the ark; which, till it was laid upon it, the Levites might not approach it. And since the tabernacle was the image of things in the heavens (as not only the apostle, but the Jews themselves say), the ark in particular being a figure of the celestial throne of God; it is not an unreasonable conceit of R. Bechai, that this *blue*-coloured cloth was spread over it as an emblem of the skies, which are spread like a curtain between us and the Majesty on high.

And shall put in the staves thereof.] It is not said they shall put them *in the rings;* for they were never to be taken out of them, (Exod. xxv. 15.) Nor do the Hebrew words signify that they should *put them in;* but it should be translated, *put the staves thereof,* that is, upon their shoulders. So Aben Ezra interprets it; which seems to me the most simple exposition: or, *fit and dispose them,* under the covering, that they might be laid on their shoulders: or, *order* them so in the rings (which is Chuskuni's explication), that they might fall into the two notches, which were in the staves, to keep the ark from sliding up and down.

Ver. 7. *And upon the table of shew-bread they shall spread a cloth of blue.*] It is not said *wholly of blue,* as it is of the former; which shews it was of something a different colour.

And put thereon the dishes.] Upon which the bread was set.

And the spoons and bowls, &c.] See Exod. xxv. 29.

And the continual bread.] *i. e.* The bread which stood continually in the presence of God.

Shall be thereon.] Even when the table was carried from place to place; which shews that they provided this bread, (according to the order, Exod. xxv. 30.) all the time they were in the wilderness. And it was not hard to procure so much corn from their neighbours, bordering upon the wilderness, as would be sufficient for this purpose, and for others, which I shall note in their proper places; particularly from the land of Midian, where Moses's father-in-law lived; which was not far from Sinai, (as appears from Exod. iii. 1.) where they were at present.

Ver. 8. *And they shall spread upon them a cloth of scarlet, and cover the same with a covering of badgers' skins.*] These had a triple covering, as well as the ark; being holy things, and having a *holy thing* (that is, the *bread of the presence,* as it is called in the Hebrew, because it stood before God continually) in the dishes upon the table.

And shall put in the staves thereof.] That it might be ready to be carried, (Exod. xxv. 27, 28.)

Ver. 9. *And they shall take a cloth of blue.*] Like that which covered the table, (ver. 7.)

And cover the candlestick of the light.] See Exod. xxv. 31. and xxxvii. 17, &c.

And his lamps, and his tongs, &c.] Exod. xxv. 37, 38, and xxxvii. 23.

And all the oil-vessels thereof.] For God commanded them to bring pure oil to feed the lamps continually, (Exod. xxvii. 20.) which was put, no doubt, in vessels, to preserve it for daily use.

With which they minister unto it.] With which oil they keep the lamps continually burning.

Ver. 10. *And they shall put it, and all the vessels thereof, within a covering of badgers' skins.*] There were but two coverings for the candlestick and its vessels, it being of lesser value than the table of shew-bread, and what belonged to it.

And shall put it upon a bar.] Rather upon a *bier;* for the word we here translate *bar,* is different from that used before, (ver. 6. 8.) which we translate *staves;* and signifies any instrument whereby things are removed from one place to another. We translate it indeed a *staff,* (chap. xiii. 23.) whereon two of them that went to spy out the land carried the cluster of grapes they had cut down: which was laid, no doubt, upon something that was broad; as this bar was whereon they carried the candlestick: which had no rings belonging to it, and therefore, I take it, was carried upon something resembling a *bier,* on which corpses are carried to their grave in this country: see ver. 12. and so the LXX. ἐπ' ἀναφορέων.

Ver. 11. *And upon the golden altar.*] So called, because it was overlaid with pure gold, (Exod. xxx. 3.)

They shall spread a cloth of blue, &c.] As they did upon the candlestick, (ver. 9.)

And shall put to the staves thereof.] Into the rings; which were made on purpose, that it might be carried upon the staves, (Exod. xxx. 4, 5.)

Ver. 12. *And they shall take all the instruments of the ministry wherewith they minister in the sanctuary.*] I do not see what can be meant by these, but the holy garments which Aaron and his sons put on in the time of their ministration. For all other things have been already mentioned; and these are called the *clothes of service,* Exod. xxxi. 10. where they are immediately mentioned after all the forenamed furniture of the tabernacle.

And shall put them in a cloth of blue, and cover them with a covering of badgers' skins.] As they did the candlestick, and the altar of incense, (ver. 9. 11.)

And put them on a bar.] By this it appears that the Hebrew word *mot,* which we translate a *bar,* signifies a broad instrument for carriage; such as I have described ver. 10.

Ver. 13. *And they shall take away the ashes from the altar.*] Of burnt-offering; which was often cleansed from its ashes, (Lev. vi. 10, 11.) but then especially when it was to be removed. What they did with the fire, which was always to burn upon it, (Lev. vi. 12, 13.) is not here related; but we may suppose that it was carried upon the grate, which had rings on purpose, that it might be carried separate from the altar. (See Exod. xxvii. 4.)

And spread a purple cloth thereon.] As being a *holy thing*, though not of such sanctity as those beforenamed.

Ver. 14. *And they shall put upon it all the vessels thereof*, &c.] That they might be carried with it.

The censers, the flesh-hooks, and the shovels, and the basons.] Here the *censers* are put first, which are mentioned last in Exod. xxvii. 3. where this word is translated *fire-pans*. Others understand by it, *tongs*.

All the vessels of the altar.] Immediately after these words, we find there follows, in two places, *the laver and his foot*, Exod. xxxv. 16. and xxxix. 39. where, in the very same verse, the *laver* is mentioned with the *altar* and its *vessels:* and immediately follows them in two other, Exod. xxxviii. 7, 8. and xl. 30. The reason why it is not mentioned here, is, perhaps, because he names only those things upon which the sons of Aaron were to put a covering; and this, it is likely, was carried without one.

And put to the staves of it.] Exod. xxvii. 6, 7. and xxxviii. 6, 7.

Ver. 15. *And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary and all the vessels*, &c.] This work was to be performed by them alone; and the Levites were not to meddle with any of these things till they had done.

After that the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it.] For all the forementioned things, belonging to the sanctuary, were to be carried by them, even the ark itself: which they carried so, that all the people might see it went along with them. For the rings being fastened to the bottom of the ark, (see Exod. xxv. 12.) when the staves were on their shoulders it appeared on high: to represent, saith R. Bechai, Him that is most highly exalted over all. The priests, indeed, might carry the ark, being more than Levites, (Deut. xxxi. 9.) and accordingly we find, that, upon extraordinary occasions, they did; as when they went over Jordan, (Josh. iii. 14.) and when Jericho was besieged; (chap. vi. 6.) some think also, when David, as he fled from Absalom, sent the ark back, (2 Sam. xv. 29.) But it appears, from ver. 24. that there is no certainty of that; especially since, when he brought it from the house of Obed-Edom, he not only employed the Levites in it, but declared none else ought to bear it, (1 Chron. xv. 2. 15. 27.) He bade the priests indeed, as well as the Levites, sanctify themselves for this work: for *ye* (saith he to the priests, ver. 12.) *are the chief of the fathers of the Levites:* but they seem to have been present, only to see the Levites perform their charge; and to accompany the ark, as David himself did.

But they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die.] Some imagine they were not to touch these things till they were covered by the priests: but it is more likely that even then they were not to touch them, but only the staves, or the bar, whereon they were carried; especially the ark, which is here principally meant by *the holy thing* (the word *any* not being in the Hebrew), whose staves only they touched, and lifted it up by putting them upon their shoulders.

These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath, in the tabernacle of the congregation.] When it was removed; for at other times they had nothing to do with these things: which are here called their *burden*, as, ver. 4. they are called their *service*, to shew the nature of their service, which required the strength of grown men, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 16. *And to the office of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, pertaineth the oil for the light*, &c.] It is commonly thought, that he is required to carry this, and the other things that follow in this verse, himself: but, if all things be considered, it will appear more reasonable to think, that he, who was the chief of all the chiefs over the Levites, (chap. iii. 32.) is peculiarly required to see the Kohathites did their duty: for, though they had a chief over them, whose work it was to inspect them, (chap. iii. 30.) yet God thought good to appoint Eleazar to supervise both him and all under him in these weighty concerns: and so the words may be interpreted out of the Hebrew.

The oversight of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, shall be the oil, &c. *the oversight of all the tabernacle, and of all that is therein*, &c.] And there is the greater reason thus to understand it, because the *oil-vessels* are before committed to the Kohathites, (ver. 9.) and consequently the *oil* itself; which could not be carried but in the *vessels*.

The sweet incense.] Mentioned Exod. xxx. 34.

And the daily meat-offering.] See Exod. xxix. 40, 41.

And the anointing oil.] Exod. xxx. 23, &c. These were not named before; but it is here laid upon Eleazar, to see that they were as carefully carried by the Kohathites as any other things belonging to the sanctuary.

Ver. 17. *And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying.*] The things beforementioned, especially the ark, were so sacred, that he repeats the admonition he had given about the danger of irreverence to it: which he here represents in a frightful manner.

Ver. 18. *Cut ye not off.*] Do not by your negligence occasion the destruction of a great many persons.

The tribe of the family of the Kohathites from among the Levites.] A considerable part of the tribe of Levi, *viz.* the family of the Kohathites, who were near a third part of it.

Ver. 19. *But do thus for them, that they may live and not die.*] Proceed in this manner, to prevent so great a mischief as their destruction.

When they approach unto the most holy things.] Come to take up the ark: which is meant by the *holy of holies:* (see ver. 4.)

Aaron and his sons shall go in.] And cover the ark, and the rest of the things within the sanctuary; as is before directed.

And appoint them every one to his service, and to his burden.] And then allot to every one his share in this work; that is, to carry such particular things, as they think most proper for them.

Ver. 20. *But they shall not go in to see.*] They might go in to the most holy place, when not only the glory of the Lord was removed; but the ark and mercy-seat, upon its removal, were covered by the priests (for then the place where they lay covered was no longer holy), but they

might not come in to see the priests cover them; which was to be done before they approached.

When the holy things are covered.] In the Hebrew it is in the singular number, *when the holy*, or *holy thing* is covered, *i. e.* the ark, as the Jews generally understand it; and that with great reason, as any one may be satisfied, who will take the pains to compare 1 Kings viii. 8. with 2 Chron. v. 9. Where that which in the former place is called the *holy*, in the latter is called *the ark*.

Lest they die.] They might not, under pain of death, either see it when it was covered, or touch it afterward, (ver. 15.) but only carry it in the manner there described.

Ver. 21. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] He was principally concerned in this, but Aaron was also joined with him, to see the execution of what is here required, (ver. 1. 19. 34.)

Ver. 22. *Take also the sum of the sons of Gershon*, &c.] The eldest son of Levi, (chap. iii. 17.) who, though they were employed in lower services, were to account it an honour to serve about the tabernacle.

Ver. 23. *All that enter in to perform the service.*] I do not understand why this should not be translated as ver. 2. *into the host.* For it is the very same phrase in the Hebrew, both here and there: only here more emphatical by doubling the word for *host:* and therefore may, very properly, be translated in this place, *that enter in to war the warfare.* For the service of the Gershonites was more burdensome than the former, though they were fewer in number, (ver. 36. 40.)

Ver. 24. *This is the service of the families of the Gershonites.*] Which were only two, (chap. iii. 18. 21.)

To serve, and for burdens.] To *serve*, when the tabernacle rested; and to *carry burdens*, when it removed: (see ver. 47.)

Ver. 25. *And shall bear the curtains of the tabernacle.*] The ten fine curtains, which were the inward hangings of the tabernacle, (Exod. xxvi. 1, 2, &c.) Which, I suppose, were taken down as well as carried by the Gershonites: because nothing is said here of Aaron or his sons being employed, to make them ready for carriage.

And the tabernacle of the congregation, his covering.] Not the boards of the tabernacle, which were the charge of the children of Merari, (ver. 31.) but the eleven curtains of goats' hair which covered the boards, (see Exod. xxvi. 7, 8, &c.)

And the covering of badgers' skins, which is upon it.] The outward covering of all, which was of rams' skins died red, and badgers' skins (as we translate it, Exod. xxvi. 14.)

And the hanging for the door of the tabernacle.] Which is described, in the conclusion of the same chapter, (Exod. xxvi. 36.)

Ver. 26. *And the hangings for the court.*] Exod. xxvii. 9, &c.

And the hanging for the gate of the door of the court.] See Exod. xxvii. 16.

Which is by the tabernacle, and the altar round about.] The sense would have been more plain, if the particle *al*, which we translate *by*, had been translated *upon*, or *over*; for the court encompassed both the tabernacle and the altar, (Exod. xl. 6—8.)

And their cords.] Which were employed in fastening these hangings.

And all the instruments for their service.] The brazen pins, I suppose, mentioned Exod. xxvii. 19.

And all that is made for them.] And whatsoever else belonged to them: (see chap. iii. 26.)

So shall they serve.] Or, in that shall they serve.

Ver. 27. *At the appointment of Aaron and his sons shall be all the service of the sons of the Gershonites*, &c.] In the Hebrew it is, *at the mouth of Aaron*, &c. *i. e.* according to their order, every one of the Gershonites were to apply themselves to such services as they directed: for God had given the Levites to them to be their ministers, and keep their charge, (chap. iii. 6, 7.)

And ye shall appoint unto them in charge all their burdens.] The word here for *appoint* seems to import, that the priests gave them a particular, as we speak, of what they were to do; that they might neither forget nor mistake; for it is the same word that is used in the beginning of this book (chap. i. 3.) for numbering the people; and so it is used here, ver. 34. 47, 48. Therefore the Vulgar translates these words: "Et sciant singuli cui debeant operi mancipari;" *and every man may know what is the proper business of his own calling;* not to meddle with other men's, nor to think himself fit to undertake every thing. Ἓν γὰρ ὑφ' ἑνὸς ἔργον ἄριστα ἀποτελεῖται, as Aristotle speaks in his Politics, (lib. iii.) *one work is best performed by one person.*

Ver. 28. *And their charge shall be under the hand of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest.*] That is, under the direction and conduct of Ithamar: for though the Gershonites had a chief of their own, (chap. iii. 24.) yet Ithamar was to inspect both him and them, and see they did not neglect their duty. Thus Eleazar was set over the Kohathites, (ver. 16.)

Ver. 29. *As for the sons of Merari, thou shalt number them after their families*, &c.] Which were but two, (chap. iii. 33.) as those of Gershon were.

Ver. 30. *Every one that entereth into the service.*] The words in the Hebrew are the very same with those, ver. 3. which we translate *enter into the host.* (See there.)

Ver. 31. *This is the charge of their burden*, &c.] The most cumbersome things fell to their charge; which here follow.

The boards of the tabernacle.] See Exod. xxvi. 15, &c.

And the bars thereof.] See there, ver. 26, &c.

And the pillars thereof.] See in the same place, ver. 32. and xxxvi. 36.

And sockets thereof.] These belonged both to the boards of the tabernacle, (Exod. xxvi. 19. 21. 25.) and to the pillars, (Exod. xxvi. 32. xxxviii. 27.)

Ver. 32. *And the pillars of the court round about.*] Exod. xxvii. 10—12.

And their sockets.] See there.

And their pins.] Ver. 19. and chap. xxxviii. 20.

And their cords.] Exod. xxxv. 18. xxxix. 40.

By name ye shall reckon the instruments of the charge of their burden.] The priests (particularly Ithamar) were to give them an inventory of these things; expressing by name every pin, for instance, and to what use, and in what place it served; because otherwise such small things might have been lost, if they had not taken a special care of them; and they might not have been able to set up the tabernacle again when they rested for want of them.

Ver. 33. *This is the service of the families of the sons of*

Merari, according to all their service in the tabernacle of the congregation.] In taking down and carrying the tabernacle.

Under the hand of Ithamar, &c.] Who had the oversight both of the Gershonites and the Merarites; as Eleazar had of the Kohathites, (ver. 16. 28.)

Ver. 34. *And Moses and Aaron, and the chief of the congregation.*] They took to their assistance the very same men, I suppose, who were employed in numbering all the children of Israel, (chap. i. 4. 16, 17.)

Numbered the sons of the Kohathites, &c.] Having assigned to them their particular charge, they now proceed to number them; as God commanded, (ver. 2, 3.)

Ver. 35. *Every one that entereth into the service.*] Or, as we translate it, (ver. 3.) *entereth into the host.*

Ver. 36. *And those that were numbered of them, by their families, were two thousand seven hundred and fifty.*] Of the whole number of males descended from Kohath, (compare this with chap. iii. 28.) there was a fourth part, and better, that were fit for service.

Ver. 37. *These were they that were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all that might do service in the tabernacle.*] Such service as is particularly mentioned from ver. 4. to ver. 16.

Ver. 38. *And these are they that were numbered of the sons of Gershon,* &c.] He proceeds in the same order to number them, which he observed in giving them their charge; beginning with the children of the second son of Levi, and then going back to the eldest.

Ver. 39. *From thirty years old and upward,* &c.] This verse is the very same with ver. 35.

Ver. 40. *Two thousand and six hundred and thirty.*] A third part and little more of their males were fit for service. Compare this with chap. iii. 22.

Ver. 41. *These are they that were numbered of the families of the sons of Gershon, of all that might do service in the tabernacle,* &c.] Such service as is described from ver. 24. to ver. 29.

Ver. 42, 43.] These two verses are the same with ver. 38, 39.

Ver. 44. *Even those that were numbered of them, after their families, were three thousand and two hundred.*] It is very remarkable, the descendants from the youngest son of Levi, (chap. iii. 17.) which had the fewest males in it of a month old and upward, had the most robust men fit for service: for here are above half (compare this with chap. iii. 34.) of the whole number of males grown up to thirty years of age: which was a singular providence, the heaviest burden laying upon them who were to carry the boards, &c. of the tabernacle; not indeed upon their shoulders, but in waggons; which they were to load after they had taken them down, and unload when they were to set them up again; and for that reason had more waggons allowed them than their brethren the Gershonites, (chap. vii. 7, 8.)

Ver. 45. *These are those,* &c. *whom Moses and Aaron numbered.*] Who were principally employed in this business.

According to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses.] To whom the command is expressly directed, (ver. 21.)

Ver. 46. *All those that were numbered of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron, and the chief of Israel, numbered.*] For they took in others to their assistance, (ver. 34.) which is here repeated, to shew that there was no fraud in the business; there being witnesses of every tribe that they proceeded impartially, and did not favour the Levites, who were their brethren.

Ver. 47. *Every one that came to do the service of the ministry, and the service of the burden in the tabernacle,* &c.] The first of these [*the service of the ministry*] one would think related to their serving the priest when the tabernacle was standing; and the latter [*the service of the burden*] to their carrying the tabernacle when it was taken down, and removed; and so I expounded those words, ver. 24. But he mentioning here only those that were numbered from thirty years old, I think, upon further consideration, that there is no regard in these expressions to the service they did to the priests in the tabernacle, unto which they were admitted at twenty-five years old, (see ver. 3.) but only to the service mentioned here in this chapter, which relates altogether to the taking down and carrying the tabernacle. And therefore these must be looked upon as two phrases for the same thing: the former of which is not exactly translated; for there is nothing of *ministry* in the Hebrew; but the words are, *every one that cometh to serve the service of the service, and the service of the burden,* or *carriage.* For it is the same word, which, being joined with *work,* we translate *servile,* (Lev. xxiii. 7. and other places.)

Ver. 48. *Eight thousand and five hundred and fourscore.*] If the three sums, mentioned ver. 36. 40. 44. be put together, they amount exactly to this sum in the whole.

Ver. 49. *According to the commandment of the Lord, they were numbered by the hand of Moses.*] By the assistance of Aaron and others, (ver. 1. 34. 36.)

Every one according to his service, and according to his burden.] I observed before, (ver. 47.) that *service* and *burden* are two expressions of the same thing. For though the sons of Kohath had the noblest part of the work, yet their employment is called both a *service* and a *burden,* ver. 19. as that of the Gershonites is, ver. 24. For which service all the tithes of the country of Canaan were given to them, and continued to be theirs when this kind of service ceased; as it did when the temple was built: for then there were no *burdens to be carried on their shoulders,* (as Josiah speaks, 2 Chron. xxxv. 3.) but their duty was changed, even by David, before the building of the temple; who made them singers, and keepers of the treasury, as well as porters at the gates of God's house; and likewise judges and other officers in the country; as we read in 1 Chron. xxvi. But the alteration in their service made no alteration in the wages allotted to them; for they still enjoyed all the tithes.

Thus were they numbered of him, as the Lord commanded Moses.] This is so often repeated, (ver. 37. 41. 45.) that all posterity might reverence these ordinances as Divine institutions, and not merely human appointments. And so we are to look upon all these laws, as wise orders made by the Sovereign of the world, for the better government of that people, whom he had taken for his own peculiar. And it argues a very profane spirit in those (as Conr. Pellicanus here observes) who can admire and praise Ovid de Fastis, and such-like books, and have no regard at all (if they do not ridicule them) to these sacred writings, which are of such venerable antiquity.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] It is not said when this was spoken which here follows; but it is likely immediately after the foregoing commandments, upon which it hath some dependance.

Ver. 2. *Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, and every one that hath an issue, and whosoever is defiled by the dead.*] There were three camps, (as Maimonides, and a great many others mentioned by Mr. Selden, observes, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 1. n. 5.) the camp of the Schechinah, or of the Lord, *viz.* the sanctuary with its courts, which are called the *tents of the Lord;* (1 Chron. xxxi. 2.) and next the camp of the Levites, who, with Aaron and his sons, made a camp about the tabernacle (chap. iii. of this book), and then the camp of Israel, (chap. ii.) which encompassed them all. Answerable to these, when the temple was built, they reckoned the temple itself from the east gate to be the camp of the Lord; and the camp of the Levites, to be from the entrance of the mount of the house of the Lord to that east gate of the temple; and the camp of Israel they thought extended from the entrance of Jerusalem to the mount of the house of the Lord. Now lepers were so unclean, that they were not admitted into any of these three camps, but shut out of them all: (see Lev. xiii. 46.) But he that had *an issue,* (Lev. xv. 2.) was only shut out of the two first camps, the camp of the Lord, and the camp of the Levites; but he might be in the camp of Israel. And he that was *defiled by the dead,* (Lev. xxi. 1.) was only excluded from the first, the sanctuary, but not from the other two: (see Drusius also upon chap. iv. 25.)

Ver. 3. *Both male and female shall ye put out.*] For women had issues (for instance) as well as men, (Lev. xv. 2. 19, &c.)

That they defile not their camps.] The camp of Israel consisted of four camps (and therefore he speaks in the plural number), that of Judah, that of Reuben, that of Ephraim, and that of Dan, (Numb. ii. 3. 10. 18. 25.) Which would have been so defiled, if they had suffered these unclean persons to stay among them, that none would have been fit to go to the sanctuary.

In the midst of which I dwell.] By his special presence in the sanctuary, which was encompassed by these camps; out of reverence to which, such unclean persons were to be kept at a greater distance than other men and women.

Ver. 4. *And the children of Israel did so, and put them without the camp,* &c.] There was an order for this before; particularly for putting out the lepers, (Lev. xiii. 46.) which could not be put in execution till the camp was formed, as now it was.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] It is uncertain when this was spoken; but I see no reason why we should not think it was at the same time with the other things here mentioned.

Ver. 6. *When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit.*] In the Hebrew the words are plainly these, *shall commit any sin of man;* that is, against his neighbour: as in Joel iii. 19. *violence of the children of Judah,* is truly translated, violence *against* the children of Judah. For it is apparent from the next verses, (7, 8.) that Moses here speaks of offences against their neighbours.

To do a trespass against the Lord.] Such offences against their neighbours as were also great offences against God. For the Chaldee understands these words of frauds and cheats put upon men by a false oath. And there is a good warrant for this interpretation from Lev. vi. 2, 3. where Moses gives the same command: which seems here to be repeated, only because he had something to add unto it, (ver. 8.)

And that person be guilty.] Or rather, *be sensible of his guilt,* (see Lev. vi. 4.)

Ver. 7. *Then they shall confess the sin that they have done.*] Or rather, *if they shall confess,* &c. For so the particle *vau* sometimes signifies: particularly chap. xii. 14. where we (as well as the LXX.) translate it, *if her father had spit in her face:* see what I have noted upon Lev. vi. 4.

And he shall recompense, &c.] Rather, *then he shall recompense* the injury he did to his neighbour, in the manner here directed; which hath been explained, Lev. vi. 5. (see there.)

Ver. 8. *But if a man have no kinsman to recompense the trespass unto.*] By this it is apparent, that if a man, to whom an injury had been done, was dead, he that committed it was bound to make satisfaction to his heir, whosoever he was, by restoring the principal, and adding a fifth part to it. Now the Israelites never wanting some of their kindred to succeed to their inheritances, the Hebrew doctors expound this of the *proselytes of righteousness;* who might possibly die without any heir; because they had no kindred, but such as were born after their regeneration. In which case the goods that had been illegally taken from such a proselyte by a Jew, did not become his own, unless he paid the price of them, with such an addition as is here required, &c. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 4. p. 684, 685. edit. Lond.)

Let the trespass be recompensed unto the Lord.] By bringing to him the principal and the fifth part.

Even unto the priest.] Whom God deputed to receive it as his minister. And it was (as the Jews rightly expound it) equally distributed among all the priests, who were then waiting in their course. Which is a new addition to the law in Levit. vi. and the reason, it is likely, why that law is here repeated.

Besides the ram of the atonement, &c.] Mentioned Levit. vi. 6, 7. where see what I have noted.

Ver. 9. *And every offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel.*] Upon the occasion of the foregoing laws concerning a recompence to be made to the priest, where a man that had been wronged was dead, and no heir to him could be found, he explains some other laws wherein the priests were concerned: who were to have all the *heave-offerings,* as the word *trumoth* (here used) signifies, (chap. xviii. 8.)

Which they bring unto the priest.] To be offered unto God.

Shall be his.] Who offers it. For there being many priests who waited in their courses at the tabernacle; all of which could not officiate at the same time, but some at one time, some at another; this law determines, that the particular priest who performed the office of sacrificing, should have to himself that part of the holy things which fell to the priest's share; and it should not be divided among them.

all. Thus L'Empereur (upon Bava kama, cap. 9. sect. 12.) expounds these words better than any I have met withal.

Ver. 10. *And every man's hallowed thing shall be his.*] As the former verse speaks of the holy things of the children of Israel in general, so this, of what any particular person offered: which still with greater reason was to belong to the priest that offered it. For "the labourer is worthy of his hire:" and therefore he that did the work of sacrificing, had the reward of it. R. Solomon applying this to tithes hath a gloss upon these words, which, though not pertinent, is very remarkable: "He that doth not duly pay his tithe, in the end his land shall yield him but a tithe of what it was wont to yield." And so R. Bechai upon Deut. xiv. expounds these words, when a man divideth not as he ought, *he shall have nothing but the holy things;* that is, the tithe of what he used to have, according to Isa. v. 10.

Whatsoever any man giveth the priest, it shall be his.] These words are only a fuller explication of this law (as the same L'Empereur observes), that the rest of the priests might not take away those holy things from him that offered them, under pretence that they belonged to the whole sacerdotal order. For though they were delivered unto him, yet it was, they might say, that they should be divided among the whole classes then in attendance. So some things were, (ver. 2.) and therefore this law is added to prevent their extending what was done in some cases unto all.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] There is so little connexion between this and the foregoing laws, that it is not easy to give a reason why it is here placed. All that I can say is, that Moses having spoken concerning frauds, from the suspicion of which men were to purge themselves, by an oath, (ver. 6.) he here takes occasion to mention the greatest case that could happen of this nature: which was, when a woman was suspected of adultery; concerning which God gave him the following order.

Ver. 12. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man's wife go aside.*] Being private, for some time, with another man; whose company her husband had charged her not to keep alone; and therefore is suspected by him to be an adulteress.

For it is certain, that, by a wife that *goeth aside* (whom the Hebrews from hence call *Sota*), is not meant one that hath certainly committed adultery; but is, with some reason, suspected of that crime. And therefore it is a rule among the Jews, "The bitter waters never are used but in a dubious case."

And commit a trespass against him.] And thereby hath very much offended him.

Ver. 13. *And a man lie with her carnally.*] As her husband hath cause to suspect; he having (as I said before) admonished her not to be with such a man in private: that is, to give him no cause of jealousy. So Abarbinel rightly expounds a man's *lying with her carnally*, of her husband's opinion and suspicion: and the next verse justifies this exposition.

And if it be hid from the eyes of her husband.] There being no clear evidence, but only conjectures, that she is actually defiled.

And be kept close.] The matter having been carried very secretly: or, as it may be interpreted, *but she was shut up close with him.*

And she be defiled.] In her husband's opinion.

And there be no witness against her.] For if there had, she must have been put to death, (Levit. xx. 10.)

Neither she be taken with the manner.] She not being apprehended in the very act.

Ver. 14. *And the spirit of jealousy come upon him.*] He be possessed with a strong conceit, of which he cannot rid himself, that she hath been unfaithful to him. For so *a spirit of slumber* (and the like) is used in Scripture, for such a sluggish temper, as a man cannot shake off.

And he be jealous of his wife, and she be defiled.] Whether it be really so.

And he be jealous, and she be not defiled.] Or whether it be only his suspicion.

Ver. 15. *Then shall the man bring his wife unto the priest.*] To the magistrates of the place where they lived (saith the Mischna, cap. 1. sect. 3. of Sota), together with his witnesses, both of the premonition he had given her, and of the privacy she had had with another man after his premonition, so long that there might be time enough for him to defile her: otherwise this action did not lie against her, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 13.) But having these witnesses ready, he was to speak to the priest when he brought his wife before him, after this manner; "Having a jealousy of this my wife, I admonished her not to keep company with such an one; with whom she afterward was in secret; and these are the witnesses of it. She saith she is innocent, but I desire the water may be given her, that the truth may be tried." See Selden, in the place beforenamed, (cap. 15.) and Wagenseil upon Sota, (cap. 1. sect. 3. not. 2.)

And he shall bring her oblation for her.] That is, the husband shall bring her oblation (not the priest, as some understand the words of the Mischna about this matter): which Chaskuni fancies was offered, as his oblation, not the woman's; to expiate his fault in not reproving her sufficiently, when he first observed her immodest behaviour: for it could not be a sacrifice for *her* expiation (saith he), because *the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination.* But this is against the very words of Moses in this place; which say, he shall bring her oblation *for her.* And so Abarbinel expounds it, "the Scripture intimates that this sacrifice was brought by the husband for the sake of his wife; for he had done nothing that needed a sacrifice." Nor is Chaskuni's reason of any moment; for there is nothing said to make us look upon this as an expiatory sacrifice; but the true intention of it was (as Wagenseil well observes, Annot. in Mischna Sota, cap. 2. p. 349.) to supplicate the Divine Majesty, that he would be pleased to clear the woman's innocence if she were causelessly suspected; or otherwise discover and punish her guilt.

By this it appears, that if the process was began in some court below (as the Jews affirm), the cause was removed to Jerusalem (where only they could sacrifice when the ark of God's presence was settled there), and brought before the great Sanhedrin: who, putting her husband out of the court (as they say in the next section of the forenamed Mischna), and having the woman alone by herself, endeavoured first by striking a terror into her, and then by giving her good words, to persuade her to tell the truth: saying, "Dear daughter, perhaps thou wast overtaken by drinking too much wine, or wast in a frolic humour, or carried away by the heat of youth, or by the example of evil neighbours:"

come, confess the truth, for the sake of His great name, which is described in the most sacred ceremony; and do not let it be blotted out (ver. 23.) with the bitter water." If, after this, she confessed the fact, saying, *I am defiled;* then she was to tear the instrument of her dowry in pieces, and go whither she pleased. For such an adulteress was not put to death, but only lost her dowry, without any other punishment. If she said, *I am pure;* then she was brought to the door of the tabernacle, and they did as follows. So the Mischna, (cap. 1. sect. 5.) and see Wagenseil's annotations on Sota. And now that they have not this way of trial among them, if a man's wife give him suspicion, by keeping a man's company in secret, which he forbade her, he may not use her any more as his wife, and she loses her dowry; as Buxtorfius observes, in his book de Sponsal. et Divort. par. i. sect. 92.

The tenth part of an ephah of barley-meal.] The common offering of this sort was of fine wheat-flour; only this, and the sheaf, or handful, mentioned Lev. xxiii. 10. were of barley. But that was of fine flour sifted from the bran; this of coarse flour, that had nothing taken out of it, as the Mischna saith in Sota, (cap. 2.) Where the reason given for this barley-offering is, because she was supposed to have committed the act of a beast (which is not confined to one), therefore she was to sacrifice the food of a beast; for so barley was in Judea. Many such pretty, rather than solid reasons, are collected out of their authors by Simeon de Muis in his Varia Sacra upon this place. The simplest reason seems to be, that a viler sort of sacrifice was most suitable to her vile condition; for which reason also there was no oil nor frankincense permitted to be offered with it; as it here follows.

He shall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincense thereon.] This sacrifice was different from all others of this kind, (see Lev. ii. 15.) For though that mentioned Lev. v. 11. was to have no oil nor frankincense with it, yet it was of fine flour, and not barley. And though the sheaf mentioned Lev. xxiii. 10. was of barley, yet it was sifted, and, besides, oil and frankincense were used with it; which are here forbidden. The reasons of which are given by the Jews, according to their various fancies: and some of them are ingenious enough; as, that a good name being compared to oil, (Eccles. vii. 1.) it is here omitted, because the woman had lost her reputation. Maimonides is a little more judicious; for looking upon oil and frankincense as added unto sacrifices for the honour and dignity of them, he thinks God would have this splendour (as his word is) to be wanting to such a woman's sacrifice, because of the baseness of her behaviour, which was the occasion of it; as if she had been told (to stir her up to repentance), "because of the filthiness of thy actions, thy oblation is more imperfect than others," (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 46.) But none, I think, hath given a better account of this than St. Chrysostom (Orat. v. adv. Judæos), because the woman was loaded with sorrow, and heavy accusations, and evil suspicions, ἐμιμεῖτο τὴν συμφορὰν τῆς οἰκείας θυσίας τὸ σχῆμα, *the form of the sacrifice imitated the domestic calamity:* for every one knows that oil and frankincense were signs of joy and gladness; and therefore not used upon so sad an occasion as this was.

For it is an offering of jealousy.] These and the following words give the reason why oil and frankincense were to be omitted; because it was an offering for one suspected of adultery. And, in such cases, God had before ordained there should be no oil nor frankincense used, (Lev. v. 11.) delicacies being improper in offerings for sin.

An offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.] For she appeared before God as a sinner; and if she were not guilty, yet she was loaded with an accusation, and a just suspicion of guilt; to which, if she had given any occasion, this sacrifice reminded her of it, and awakened her conscience to reflect upon it.

Ver. 16. *And the priest.*] It is the opinion of P. Cunæus, (lib. i. de Rep. Hebr. cap. 12.) that the priest here mentioned was to be a member of the great Sanhedrin; to whom the judgment of the matter belonged. But another very learned person thinks, with more reason, the priest, whose lot it was to attend at that time in his course, is here meant. (See Mischna, cap. 1. Sotæ, sect. 5. annot. 8. Wagenseil.)

Shall bring her near.] Rather *bring it* (that is, her offering) near to the altar at the door of the tabernacle.

And set her.] Rather *set the offering;* for she is ordered to be set before the Lord afterward, (ver. 18.)

Before the Lord.] At the altar, which was at the door of the tabernacle. (See Lev. i. 3.) At the east gate of the temple, saith the Mischna, which was called the *gate of Nicanor;* for there women also after child-bed were purified, and the lepers cleansed.

Ver. 17. *And the priest shall take holy water.*] From the laver: for no water was holy, but that which was made so by the laver; as the Jews say in Jalkut. Therefore Onkelos, instead of *holy water*, hath *water from the laver.*

In an earthen vessel.] Which had never been employed to any other use (as the Mischna saith), and contained about a pint of our measure. This I take to have been appointed, as a further expression of the vileness of her condition; for the reasons which the Jewish doctors give of it are not to be regarded. The best that I have observed is, to declare that she should be broken in pieces, like that earthen vessel, if she was guilty of that which she denied.

And of the dust.] Another token of her vileness; this being the serpent's food.

That is in the floor of the tabernacle, &c.] To make her afraid of the judgment of God. For if there were no dust in the tabernacle, they were to fetch it from some other place, (as Maimonides relates their practice, Hilcoth Sota, cap. 4.) and lay it upon the floor of the tabernacle; and then take it and put it into the water.

And put it into the water.] Sprinkle a little of it upon the water (that it might be more easily drunk), but so much, that it might be plainly seen. For there were three things, the Jews say, of which a less quantity was not admitted than might be seen, *viz.* this dust, and the ashes of the red heifer, (chap. xix. 17.) and the spittle in the face of him that would not marry his brother's wife, (Deut. xxv. 9.) But if the priest put the dust into the vessel first, and then poured the water upon it, he did not do amiss; as the Jews say in the ancient book Siphri. (See Wagenseil upon Mischna Sotæ, cap. 2. sect. 2. annot. 11, 12.)

It hath been observed by some, that such ways of trial were in use among the gentiles; which if they could be proved to have been as ancient as Moses's days, it would make it probable, that this was ordered by God, to divert

the Jews from following the superstitions of other nations to make this discovery, and bring them to appear before him at his tabernacle, and there use such rites as were of his appointment: (see our learned Dr. Spencer, lib. iii. Dissert. i. cap. 2. p. 539, &c.)

Ver. 18. *And the priest shall set the woman before the Lord.*] At the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; where a great many women, who were called together on purpose, stood about her; "that they might be taught not to do after her lewdness," (as the prophet Ezekiel speaks, chap. xxiii. 48.) As many others also as would might be present; except only her maids and domestic servants; who were put out, lest they should disturb her mind too much; as Mr. Selden interprets the words of the Mischna, about this matter, (lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 15.) Which another very learned man (J. Wagenseil) interprets the quite contrary way, "lest her mind should place any hope in them," (cap. 1. sect. 6. annot. 8. on Sota.)

And uncover the woman's head.] He was to strip her of all her head attire (as the manner was, if we may believe Philo, in all judicial proceedings), to loose her hair, and tear her garments down to her breast; which he bound about her (as the Jews say) with an Egyptian cord. And if she had any gold or jewels, or other ornaments about her, they were all taken from her; and she was clothed with a black garment. All which were plain tokens of her lamentable condition.

And put the offering of memorial in her hands.] After he had put it into a frying-pan, under which he held his own hand, (Lev. ii. 7.) and at the same time held in his other hand the bitter water; which he shewed her.

Which is the jealousy-offering.] Offered purely upon the account of her husband's jealousy; as he told her.

And the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water.] So called, because they put wormwood, or some such thing into it, to give it a bitter taste; as Maimonides and the ancient rabbins fancy. But the later doctors say, nothing was mixed with this water but dust; and yet it became bitter in the mouth. So Nachman and others. But the most probable account of all others is, that this water was called *bitter*, from its direful effects upon the body of the woman, if she was guilty. To which exposition Jacob Abendana inclines: (see Wagenseil upon the Mischna Sota, cap. 3. sect. 5. annot. 1.)

Which causeth the curse.] Or rather, *which was given her with curses*, and dreadful imprecations: blotted out with the bitter water, (ver. 21. 23.) as R. Bechai expounds it.

Ver. 19. *And the priest shall charge her by an oath.*] Adjure her to tell truth, in the manner following.

And say unto the woman, If no man hath lain with thee, &c.] If thou art innocent of that whereof thou art suspected.

Be thou free from the bitter water, &c.] It shall have no ill effect upon thee.

Ver. 20. *But if thou hast gone aside,* &c.] Art guilty of adultery.

Ver. 21. *Then the priest shall charge the woman with an oath of cursing.*] This is no new adjuration; but only another part of that which began ver. 19. and is continued in this and the foregoing. So that these three verses contain the entire form of adjuration; which the priest was to pronounce in a language which the woman understood, as the Jewish doctors observe; otherwise, how could the woman answer *Amen?* as R. Ismael saith in Siphri; exactly according to the apostle's doctrine, 1 Corinth. xiv. 16. And the priest was to signify to her, that this proceeding was merely to satisfy her husband's jealousy, by discovering the truth. Thus this whole matter is related, by the author of Ez. Hechajim (an incomparable MS. as Wagenseil calls it, who hath it in his possession): "The priest pronounces this curse in a language which she understands; and signifies to her in the vulgar tongue, that these things are done purely because her husband is jealous of her, she having been secretly with one whose company he forbade her to keep: and then saith in a tongue familiar to her, *If no other man hath lain with thee but thy husband, &c. be thou free from these bitter waters, &c. but if thou hast been false to him, &c. the Lord make thee a curse, &c.* Unto which the woman was to answer, *Amen, Amen.*" By which words she not only consented to what the priest said, but made the same imprecation upon herself.

The Lord make thee a curse.] So that when men would imprecate any evil to another, they should say, *Let that befal thee which befel such a woman:* as Rasi expounds it.

And an oath among thy people.] A form of execration, as the aforesaid MS. expounds it: or, as Rasi will have it, when men called God to witness, they should say, *If I swear falsely, let God punish me as he did such a woman.* These execrations were tacitly supposed in the oaths among the pagans, as our great Selden shews at large, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 11. p. 461, &c. where he observes, out of Porphyry, that the ancient Indians had their Λίμνην δικαστηρίου, *lake of probation,* or *trial:* and in his Marmora Arundeliana, (p. 28.) there is this form of imprecation in the league between the city of Smyrna and Magnesia, Εὐορκοῦντι μοὶ εὖ εἴη. Ἐπιορκοῦντι δὲ, ἐξώλεια καὶ αὐτῷ καὶ γένει τῷ ἐξ ἐμοῦ. *Let it be well with me, if I swear truly; but if falsely, let destruction be both to myself and to my posterity.* And at this day there is a custom in the kingdom of Siam to determine dubious cases, by giving a lump of rice impregnated (as my author speaks) with curses to a man to eat. Which if he can swallow without vomiting, he carries the cause; and his friends carry him home in great triumph, &c. So Jodocus Schoutenius (who was director of the East-India Company there, 1636).

When the Lord doth make thy thigh to rot, and thy belly to swell.] When they see the dreadful effect of this water, in the rotting of thy thigh, after thy belly is swelled. For the swelling of the belly, it appears by the next verse, preceded the rotting of the thigh.

Such imprecations were in use in Homer's time it appears by Agamemnon's prayer; wherein he calls Jupiter, and all the rest of the gods, to bear witness of his sincerity; wishing them to send a multitude of pains and griefs upon him if he forswore himself: (Iliad. xix. ver. 264, 265.)

ἐμοὶ θεοὶ ἄλγεα δοῖεν
Πολλὰ μάλ', ὅσσα διδοῦσιν ὅτις σφ' ἀλίτηται ὀμόσσας.

Ver. 22. *And this water that causeth the curse.*] Or, *For this water,* &c.

Shall go into thy bowels, &c.] If thou art guilty, it shall produce the following effects.

To make thy belly to swell.] By the *belly* the Jews under-

stand the womb, and the bowels, which swelled till they burst.

And thy thigh to rot.] By her *thigh* is meant the secret parts of her body, as Chaskuni observes on this place. And both Bochartus and Heinsius have given many instances of the use of the word in this sense: the former in his Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. v. cap. 15. and the latter in Aristarch. Sac. cap. 1. And thus we read, in the passion of SS. Perpetuana et Fælic. that when Perpetuana was thrown to the beasts, and lay on the ground, she drew back her coat, which was torn from her side, *ad velamentum femoris, to cover her thigh from being seen; pudoris magis memor quam doloris, having a greater sense of modesty than of pain,* (p. 32. edit. Oxon.)

The Mischna here observes, not impertinently, *with what measure men mete, it shall be measured to them again;* for in the very part that offended, she suffered for her crime. I noted before (ver. 17.) that there were such ways of trial anciently among the gentiles; but I am apt to think they were all later than the times of Moses, who did not ordain these rites to keep the Jews from following their customs, but they rather imitated what was practised among the Jews. Particularly Bochartus observes, out of Philostratus, there were waters in Cappadocia, sacred to Jupiter, which were very sweet and pleasant to those who were innocent and swore truly, but quite contrary to those who were perjured; whose eyes, hands, and feet were presently seized and infected with blotches and filthy ulcers, ὑδέροις καὶ φλύαις, which is the very disease here mentioned, if we believe Josephus, who saith the woman's belly swelled by the dropsy, till at last it burst. And Philostratus adds, that the whole body of such people grew consumptive; nor could they stir from those waters, but there they lay deploring their misery. (See Bochart. lib. i. Canaan, cap. 28. p. 589, 590.) Which agrees so perfectly with what the Jews say of this *bitter water,* that it is most likely this story of the Cappadocian water was derived from thence. For they say, not only the belly of the woman swelled, and her thigh rotted, but every member of her body felt the effects of this deadly poison, which spread to the very hairs of her head; as they tell us in Rabboth, quoted by Wagenseil upon the Mischna, which saith the same, (cap. 1. Sotæ, sect. 7.) And therefore Huetius justly thinks the fable of the Stygian Lake, and several other rites of finding out the truth of secret crimes, were invented by the Greeks from this example, (Demonst. Evan. propos. iv. cap. 11. n. 2.) Many authors have collected several sorts of trials of this kind; and lately Guil. Saldenus, in his Otia Theologica, Exercit. v. n. 24, 25. But, above all, see Huetius's Quæstiones Alnetanæ, (lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 22.) where he gives a large account how far this rite of trying women's chastity by drinking this water was spread amongst the most barbarous nations.

And the woman shall say, Amen, Amen.] The word *Amen* is doubled, to express her full consent, and her earnest desire that God would deal with her according to her deserving. The Mischna will have the first *Amen* refer to those words, *The Lord make thee a curse;* and the second to the next words, *And an oath among thy people:* so that she prayed God both might come upon her, if she were guilty. We may as well say, that one of these *Amens* relates to the first part of the adjuration, (ver. 19.) and the other to the second part, (ver. 21.) Or, as Abarbinel doth, that there being a double curse, one that her belly should swell, and another that her thigh should rot, she said a double *Amen;* praying both might befal her, if she were guilty. And, as the Talmudists understand it, they were an imprecation upon herself. For so they say in Schevnot; Whosoever saith *Amen* to an oath (or curse) seems to pronounce the oath, or curse, with his own mouth. See Wagenseil upon Mischna Sotæ, (cap. 2. sect. 5. annot. 3.) where he produces a great deal more out of the Scripture itself, in confutation of the opinion of our learned Fuller, who, in his Miscellanies, affirms, that *Amen* is only an asseveration, but never a form of swearing.

Ver. 23. *And the priest shall write these curses.*] Several opinions are related in the Mischna, concerning the words that were to be written; which some would have to begin at ver. 19. *If no man have lain with thee,* &c. and to continue to this verse. But others think they began at those words, ver. 21. The *Lord make thee a curse and an oath,* &c. and that the last words were omitted, *the woman shall say, Amen, Amen.* Which of these opinions is the true, neither the Gemara nor Maimonides have determined.

In a book.] Every scroll of parchment, wherein any thing was written, the Jews call *sepher,* a book: in which, it hath been commonly said, the name of the woman was written, together with the curse; but there is nothing either in the Scripture or in antiquity to countenance this.

And he shall blot them out with the bitter water.] Or rather, *into the bitter water;* that is, he was to scrape out the words he had written into the water, and so make the woman drink it: or, as the Jews explain it, wash the words he had written with the bitter water till they were quite blotted out: see Wagenseil in Mischna Sotæ, cap. 3. sect. 3. Who observes a great many curiosities which the Jews have about the parchment and the ink, upon and with which these curses were written; and that they were not valid, if they were written by a layman; or by a priest that was not of age; or if they were written before she was adjured; or if he blotted out one word before the rest were written, &c. (See there, cap. 2. sect. 4.) Hottinger forgot himself when he said, the scroll itself was thrown into the water, (Thesaur. Philolog. lib. ii. cap. 2.) for no such thing appears.

Ver. 24. *And he shall cause the woman to drink,* &c.] *viz.* After he had offered the jealousy-offering upon the altar, (ver. 26.) And if she refused to drink the water, into which the curses were scraped, they forced her to it, with this preceding admonition; *My daughter, if thou art confident of thine innocence, do not fear to drink this water; which will do thee no more hurt than dry poison laid upon the flesh of a living creature,* &c. If hereupon she confessed that she had been polluted, the water was straightway poured out; *because there was no holiness in it,* as Maimonides saith. For it is called *holy,* ver. 17. not because it was sanctified to this use, but only because it was taken out of the *laver,* which was a holy vessel: see Selden, lib. iii. Uxor. Heb. cap. 15. who observes also, in the foregoing chapter, that if after a man had brought his wife to this trial, he chanced to die before this adjuration, she was freed from taking the potion, but lost her dowry.

And the water that causeth the curse.] Or, that is loaded with curses, which have been scraped into it.

Shall enter into her, and become bitter.] Produce those direful effects beforementioned, if she be guilty.

Ver. 25. *Then the priest shall take the jealousy-offering out of the woman's hand.*] Into which he had put it, before he adjured her, (ver. 18.)

And shall wave the offering before the Lord.] How this waving was performed hath been shewn before, upon Leviticus. Rasi here expresses it in four words, he moved the oblation *to and fro, up and down.* Something like to which Pythagoras seems to intimate in that Symbol of his, Προσκύνει περιφερόμενος, *worship, turning round.* Which Plutarch ascribes to Numa; in whose life, he says a great many observable things, concerning *turning round* in their sacred offices: which was a rite in use among the gentiles; who, when they saluted their gods, standing with their heads uncovered, *turned about their bodies to the right hand;* as Christoph. Arnoldus observes out of Suetonius and others, in his appendix to Wagenseil's annotations upon Sota, p. 1186.

And offer it upon the altar.] At the south corner of it.

Ver. 26. *And the priest shall take a handful of the offering, even the memorial thereof.*] See upon the second chapter of Leviticus, ver. 2.

And burn it upon the altar.] The rest of it the priests were to eat, unless her husband himself was a priest; in which case, it was all thrown among the ashes. See Selden in the place abovenamed: where he also observes, that if she confessed the fact, or her husband would not have her drink, or either of them died before she drank, or a witness of the adultery appeared (which made the waters useless), the whole sacrifice was burnt, and not only a memorial thereof. All which is in the Mischna, sect. 3, 4.

And afterward shall cause the woman to drink of the water.] The sacrifice therefore was first offered; though the Mischna says, that if the priest gave her the water to drink first, and then presented the offering, he did not do amiss.

Ver. 27. *And when he hath made her to drink the water.*] By this it appears he might force her to drink, if she would not do it by persuasion.

Then it shall come to pass, that if she be defiled, and have done trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter, &c.] These effects here mentioned presently followed: for she grew pale, and her eyes were ready to start out of her head, &c. so that they cried out, *Carry her forth, carry her forth, lest she defile the court of the temple,* by dying there, as the Mischna saith, cap. 3. sect. 4. The adulterer also, if we may believe the Jews, died the same day and hour: nay, his belly swelled, as hers did; and his secret parts rotted, as the author of Ez. Hechajim saith, in Wagenseil upon Sota, (cap. 5. sect. 1.) where he adds, that all this came to pass, in case her husband had never offended in the same kind: for if he had at any time defiled the marriage-bed, then this water had not these effects upon his wife, though she had been faulty. Which the Gemara also affirms.

Ver. 28. *And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean, then she shall be free.*] Receive no harm at all by drinking the water.

And shall conceive seed.] If she was barren before, she became fruitful after this trial, and also bare a man-child (if we may believe the Jews), and had easy labour. Her beauty also increased, her health was confirmed, and if she had any disease it was cured. They observe also, that if, after she was thus cleared, she kept company again with the same man whom her husband suspected, and by his renewed admonition had required her not to be in private with him, this potion was not repeated; but she was dismissed from being his wife, without any dowry: but if she kept company with any other person privately, after admonition to the contrary, this potion might be repeated, as often as she offended with new lovers. Thus that MS. Ez. Hechajim, so highly commended by Wagenseil, who also adds, that in case her husband put her away after her acquittal, and she married another man, who had the same ground of jealousy that her former husband had, because of her familiarity with the same person whom he had forbidden her to keep company withal, her new husband might bring her to a new trial by this water: and so might as many husbands as she should marry one after another, if she gave the like occasion of jealousy.

Ver. 29. *This is the law of jealousies.*] Whereby God declared himself to be privy to the most secret sins, and to be both the preserver of conjugal faith and chastity, and the protector of innocence: and provided that man and wife should live happily together, by keeping men from cruel and furious proceedings against their wives, when they entertained a jealousy of them (willing them to commend the case to God), and by continuing wives in their duty out of dread of this punishment; which was so terrible (as Maimonides well observes) even to innocent women, that they would have given all they had to avoid it; nay, wished rather to die than undergo such a public infamy, of having their head uncovered, their hair cut off (as he represents it), their garment torn to their breasts; and so to stand in the sanctuary before a great multitude of men and women, and the whole Sanhedrin. (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 49.)

When a wife goeth aside.] If the man went aside from her, she had not the same action against him; because the family was not so much injured by his going aside, as by hers; which brought a spurious brood to inherit his estate.

To another instead of her husband.] Hence the Talmudists conclude, such an action did not lie against a woman who was only espoused; or that waited for her former husband's brother to take her to wife; if they gave suspicion of being defiled. So the Mischna, cap. 4. sect. 1.

And is defiled.] By that other man with whom she went aside.

Ver. 30. *Or when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife.*] It appears by the first words of this law, (ver. 13, 14.) that whether she was really defiled, or there was only a vehement suspicion of it, which bred a jealousy in him; the husband had liberty to bring her to this trial for his own satisfaction: which law was rather permissive than preceptive.

And shall set the woman before the Lord.] That he might shew whether there was cause for her husband's jealousy or not: (see ver. 18.)

And the priest shall execute upon her all this law.] Though the man was not bound to bring her to this trial, but rather the contrary, if he could otherwise get rid of his jealousy;

yet the priest was bound to proceed against her, according to the foregoing rules; when she was set before the Lord to be tried. And he might set her before him on any day that was not a festival, and in any hour of the day; but not in the night: nor might he give the drink to two suspected women at one and the same time.

Ver. 31. *Then shall the man be guiltless from iniquity, and the woman shall bear her iniquity.*] By *iniquity* here is to be understood the punishment due to iniquity. For the wife, or her parents, if she appeared to be innocent, could have no action against the husband, upon the account of this accusation: and if she was guilty, she was justly punished for her crime; and her husband had no reason to say (as the Jews speak in Pesikta), "Woe is me, that I have killed a daughter of Israel," &c. for he is here pronounced innocent in that matter by the eternal God; who doth not exercise a tyranny (as they there go on) over his creatures, nor gives them precepts, that he may make them weary of their lives, or destroy them. No, his precepts are right; the whole law is Divine: and God doth not bring any man into judgment, but for the violation of that which was expressly commanded, and which he might have been able to fulfil.

But the particle *vau* in the beginning of this verse signifies sometimes as much as *if*, as I observed upon ver. 7. And so the Jews here commonly understand it, *if the man be guiltless from iniquity*. For thus the rule is expressed in the Gemara, upon the fifth chapter of Sota: *When the husband is free from iniquity* (*i. e.* from adultery), *then the water tries his wife: but if he be not free* (*i. e.* be himself also guilty of adultery), *then the water hath no power to try her:* that is, produces none of the effects beforementioned. And so the author of Ez. Hachajim, in Wagenseil upon Sota, (p. 595.) concludes from these very words, That the bitter water then only had power, when the man was free from the sin of which he suspected his wife: and gives this as the reason, why, in the latter end of the second temple, this way of trial ceased, and was quite taken away by the Sanhedrin; because the number of adulterers was then so great, that the water had no effect; according to those words of the prophet Hosea, (chap. iv. 14.) "I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your spouses when they commit adultery," &c. For that is another rule of theirs, *When adulterers were multiplied, the bitter waters ceased; i. e.* there was no trial by them: (see Selden, lib. iii. Uxor. Heb. cap. 15. p. 408.) Yet the Jews seem to have continued in after-ages, since their temple was destroyed, some form of dreadful imprecations, in their synagogues, for the discovery of truth in doubtful cases. For St. Chrysostom says, he himself saw a very modest, good Christian woman, brought by a senseless fellow (who also had the name of a Christian) into a Jewish assembly; whom he would have compelled to take their oath, *περὶ τῶν ἀμφισβητουμένων αὐτῷ πραγμάτων, concerning some things wherein he desired satisfaction:* from which the woman being rescued, by St. Chrysostom's assistance, when he examined the man about it, how he came to forsake the church, and resort to their Sanhedrin; his answer was, "That he had been told by many, *φοβερωτέρους τοὺς ἐκεῖ γινομένους ὅρκους εἶναι, that there were more horrible adjurations among them than Christians,*" (Homil. i. adv. Judæos.) Which, no doubt, arose from the direful effects of this adjuration here prescribed, if the woman was guilty of what she was suspected.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] This law very properly follows the foregoing (about women suspected of adultery), as a remedy against all such sins; by abstaining from wine, and all other incitements to lust; and by devoting themselves, for some time, in a peculiar way to the service of God. And there seems to be a plain opposition between a woman professing herself a Nazarite, and forbearing wine, and the care of her hair; and a woman that loved company, and was entangled in the love of other men besides her husband.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel.*] Who were all concerned in this law.

When either man or woman.] For women as well as men might make this vow, if they were at their own disposal, and not under the power of their parents, or husbands, by whose authority this vow might be disannulled, (chap. xxx. 4, 5, &c.)

Shall separate themselves.] The Hebrew word *japhli* signifies the doing something extraordinary, beyond the common rate of other men: and therefore Forsterus hath well translated it, when a man or woman *shall vow a singular vow.*

To vow a vow of a Nazarite.] The Hebrew word *Nazar*, which signifies in general to separate, in the conjugation *niphal* (as they call it) signifies to separate from others, by a profession of some special act of religion. Whence *Nazir* signifies one that, beyond the common prescription of the law, dedicates, not his goods, but himself to God in a peculiar kind of sanctimony. So Philo, who calls this *μεγάλη εὐχὴ, the great vow:* because he that makes it, devotes not his corn, or beasts, &c. but his own self unto God; *κτημάτων γὰρ τὸ μέγιστον αὐτός τίς ἐστιν αὑτῷ, for every man is to himself the greatest possession he hath.*

To separate themselves unto the Lord.] To separate themselves for some time, to a higher measure of purity than other men practised; that they might attend to the service of God. From whence this vow was called, *separation unto the Lord.* For they who observed it were holy, saith Maimonides; yea, were placed, for the present, in the dignity of the high-priest as to sanctity: being forbidden to pollute themselves for their father or mother, as it follows afterward, (More Nev. par. iii. cap. 48.) The Jewish doctors are wont to be so curious in marking every word, and scrupulously adhering to it, that it is something strange they should allow a father the liberty to separate his child to be a Nazarite, without its consent; when the text expressly speaks of those who *separate themselves.* But so the Mischna determines in Sota, (cap. 3. sect. 8.) and it allows this liberty to the father, though not to the mother; though we find Hannah vowing Samuel to be a Nazarite before he was born, 1 Sam. i. 10, 11. (See Wagenseil on that place, annot. 2, 3.)

Ver. 3. *He shall separate himself from wine.*] In this consisted one part of the special sanctity of Nazarites; that, by abstinence from wine, or any thing that was intoxicating, they might the better attend to the study of the law, or other exercises of religion.

And strong drink.] As wine was made of grapes, so *shecar* was a liquor made of other fruit, as dates, &c. (see Lev. x. 9.) To which add, that other authors call the juice of dates, as well as grapes, by the name of *wine*. Nay, Pliny saith, that *præcipua vina, the choicest wines*, were made of those dates called *cariotæ*, which grew about Jericho; though they were *iniqua capiti, hurtful to the head*, from whence they had their name, (lib. xiii. Nat. Histor. cap. 4.) With great reason, therefore, such intoxicating liquors were forbidden to those who set themselves apart to attend upon God, during the time of their separation. Which justifies, in part, what Maimonides saith, that Nazarites were advanced to the dignity of priests, who might not drink any wine, or strong drink, in the time of their ministration to God in the sanctuary.

And shall drink no vinegar of wine, &c.] For that had the same effect with wine and strong drink, of which it was made.

Neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes.] *i. e.* Secondary wine; which was made by maceration of grapes in water, after the juice had been pressed out to make wine. Pliny speaks of various kinds of it, (lib. xiv. Nat. Hist. cap. 10.)

Nor eat moist grapes, or dried.] Which might have stirred up their appetite after wine, or heated their blood; and indisposed them for the service of God, to which they had devoted themselves.

Ver. 4. *All the days of his separation.*] Or *Nazariteship*, as it is in the margin. Which sort of vow, either was for all their life, or only for a time. Samson and John Baptist were made perpetual Nazarites, by the direction of God, from their mother's womb. But here Moses speaks of such as were made Nazarites by themselves, for a time only. Which the Jews say was at least for thirty days: but it appears by St. Paul it might be for a week only: unto which he limited the time of his ἁγνισμὸς, as it is called in Acts xxii. 26, 27. For every one might vow for what time he pleased.

Shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine-tree.] No paste, nor sauce, that had any of the juice or infusion of the grapes in it.

From the kernel even to the husk.] Which might give the smallest tincture to any thing into which they were put.

All this caution seems to be intended to instruct those, who give themselves wholly unto God's service, to be very sober and abstemious in the use of wine and strong drink; the excess of which is the bane of true piety. For "Amat Spiritus Sanctus sicca corda," as Grotius admirably observes upon Luke i. 15. *The Holy Ghost delights in dry souls.*

Ver. 5. *There shall no razor come upon his head.*] Nor was his hair to be cut with scissors, or any other instrument; but he was to let the locks of his hair grow, as it is in the conclusion of this verse. This made such persons look majestically and venerably, without any expense. For, as Agesilaus speaks in Stobæus, τὸ κομᾶν τῶν κόσμων τὸ ἀδαπανώτατον, *to let one's hair grow long, is the cheapest ornament.* Besides, neglect of the hair was proper to those who renounced, for the present, all manner of pleasure (as the Nazarites did), and betook themselves to a severer sort of life. Such persons not only let their beards and their hair grow, but wore a hairy garment, which the Hebrews called *addareth.* Such an one John Baptist wore, as Elijah did before him, whose mantle is called by this name, (1 Kings xix. 19.) and who is said himself to have been a *hairy man*, (2 Kings i. 8.) from whence Grotius concludes, that either he was a Nazarite, or the habit of a prophet and a Nazarite was the same. (See him on Matt. iii. 4.)

But Moses himself seems, in the next words, to give the plainest reason of this matter.

Until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy.] It was a token he had kept himself pure from all legal defilements: for if he had not, he must have shaved his head, (ver. 9.) as they did who were cleansed from their leprosy, (Levit. xiv. 8, 9.)

And shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.] This law, in which consists the second part of their Nazariteship, some fancy to have been translated from the Egyptians, into the religion of the Hebrews. Which was the opinion of S. Cyril of Alexandria, lib. xvi. de Adorat. where he saith, that Moses, knowing how hard it would be to bring the Israelites from the ill customs they had learnt in Egypt, most wisely instituted the like rites to those that were in use there, to the intent they might not perform such worship any longer to demons, but to the Lord of all. Procopius Gazæus, upon this place, hath the same notion: "Græcorum liberi, si in nymphas vel montanas vel aquatiles incidissent, comas nutriebant. Lex itaque mala dæmonum consuetudine dempta, ad Deum hoc ipsum transfert." The sense of which is, *that the Greeks let their hair grow in honour of the nymphs; and therefore the law, to abolish that wicked custom, transferred that to God which was done to demons.* To which I should readily subscribe, if there were any proof that this rite of consecrating their hair to demons was so old among the Egyptians and Greeks as the times of Moses. It is far more probable, that the original of this custom among the gentiles was from this law of the Nazarites. So Hen. Lindenbrogius very well observes upon those words of Censorinus, (de Die Natali, cap. 1.) *Crinem Deo sacrum pascebant, that they let their hair grow in honour of their gods;* particularly of Apollo, who thence was called Κουροτρόφος; of Bacchus, Minerva, and others; yea, this superstition grew so much, that they consecrated it to rivers, in which they thought there was some divinity. But *hujus moris origo* (saith that learned annotator upon him) *videtur fluxisse à Nazaræis Judæorum. The original of this custom seems to have flowed from the Jewish Nazarites.* (See more upon ver. 18.)

Ver. 6. *All the days that he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall come at no dead body.*] This was a third part of this religion, not to touch a dead body, nor be in the house where a dead body was, nor accompany it to the grave, (see chap. xix. 11—13.) For such defilements by the dead made men unclean seven days, so that they might not approach to the house of God; and therefore, that the Nazarites might always be fit to attend upon his service, he would have them avoid this defilement.

Ver. 7. *He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother*, &c.] In this he was superior to the ordinary priests, who might be defiled for such near kindred, (Levit. xxi. 2, &c.) and was equalled to the high-priest (as I observed before, ver. 2. out of Maimonides), who might not, (Levit. xxi. 11.)

Because the consecration of his God is upon his head.] His hair upon his head, which was unshorn, shewed him to be *separated* (as the word is in the Hebrew) unto God. Which hair also was consecrated to him, when the days of his *separation* were fulfilled. For in this unshorn hair seems to have consisted the principal part of Nazariteship.

Ver. 8. *All the days of his separation he is holy to the Lord.*] By a peculiar vow, and therefore was not to come near a dead body.

Ver. 9. *And if any man die very suddenly by him.*] Either by violence, or an apoplexy, or any other way. And the case was the same, if he chanced to light upon a dead body unawares.

And he hath defiled the head of his consecration.] The consecration of his head; that is, his hair. For though he could not help his being so suddenly surprised, yet he was defiled by being where a dead body was: and consequently the hair of his head, which had been consecrated to God, was defiled also; and therefore could not be offered to him, and burnt in his honour.

Then he shall shave his head in the day of his cleansing.] His Nazariteship was interrupted by this defilement, so that it could not proceed further; but, after the usual purification, was to be begun anew; by shaving off this polluted hair, and letting new hair grow instead of it. By this it appears that Moses here speaks only of such as made this vow for a limited time: for perpetual Nazarites, who were consecrated to God for all their life, were never shaven, whatsoever defilement they contracted.

On the seventh day shall he shave it.] For so many days uncleanness by the dead lasted, (chap. xix. 11.) and the seventh day was the day of cleansing from that uncleanness, (ver. 12.) All other legal uncleannesses polluted a Nazarite so, as to make him stand in need of such purifications as other men used in those cases: but this alone polluted him so as utterly to put him out of that state; which, as it here follows, was to be begun again.

Ver. 10. *And on the eighth day he shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons, to the priest,* &c.] The very same sacrifice which was offered for one that had been defiled by a running issue, (Levit. xv. 14.)

Ver. 11. *And the priest shall offer the one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering.*] As in the forenamed case, (Lev. xv. 15.)

To make an atonement for him.] Which was to be done before the burnt-offering would be accepted.

For that he sinned by the dead.] He had not properly sinned; but contracted a legal uncleanness, by touching a dead body, or being where it was. Which, though it was against his will, yet was a defilement in the account of the law; and a kind of sin, because it was a breach of a ceremonial law, and therefore thus to be purged. The reason of which, and such-like precepts, Abarbinel observes, (in his preface to the book of Leviticus, chap. iv.) was only this; to make men very cautious how they contracted any defilement; as the Nazarite might do in the time of his separation, and put himself to much trouble. Which is the foundation of a famous saying among their wise men: "Diligence begets caution; and caution purity; and purity, holiness and sanctity."

And shall hallow his head the same day.] Consecrate his hair afresh to the Lord, after his head hath been shaved.

Ver. 12. *And he shall consecrate unto the Lord the days of his separation.*] This is a further explication of what was said just before, in the end of the foregoing verse: that from the eighth day he shall begin to compute the time of his Nazariteship, for so many days as he at first vowed unto the Lord.

And shall bring a lamb of the first year, for a trespass-offering.] Which was to be offered even for ignorant offences, by the law made before, (Levit. v. 15.)

But the days that were before] His defilement by the dead.

Shall be lost.] Shall not be reckoned, as the LXX. have it, but go for nothing (as we speak), though they were so many that he had almost fulfilled his vow. If, for instance, he had vowed to be a Nazarite for a whole year, and in the twelfth month happened upon a dead carcass, all the foregoing eleven months were lost, and he was to begin his year's vow again: and this, as often as such an accident happened, if it were before the time that his vow was completed. Which may seem very hard, if we do not seriously consider the intention of it; which was, to oblige them to the strictest care to preserve themselves holy and pure in all things; as they were plainly taught to be, by the watchful diligence they were bound to use, to avoid this legal defilement here mentioned. For none could absolve them from this vow, till it was fulfilled in the exactness that is here required. For, as they tell the story in the Talmud, Queen Helen having taken a vow upon her for seven years, by coming into the holy land was engaged for seven years more; and being defiled towards the latter end of them, was obliged for another seven years; which was twenty and one years in all. (See Dr. Lightfoot of the Temple, chap. 18.)

Because his separation was defiled.] His first separation was defiled by a dead body; which made it necessary he should begin a new one. It might happen also that he might die, before he had fulfilled the time he had vowed to be a Nazarite. In which case, Maimonides saith, any of his sons might go on where he left, and at the end of the days which his father had vowed, offer the sacrifices here appointed, and be shaved in his stead. (So the Mischna Sotæ, cap. 3. sect. 8.) But Maimonides acknowledges there is no foundation for this in Scripture; but it relies wholly upon tradition. (See Wagenseil on that place, annot. 4.)

Ver. 13. *And this is the law of the Nazarite.*] Of putting an end to his Nazariteship.

When the days of his separation are fulfilled.] At the end of the time he vowed to continue in this state.

He shall be brought.] By the priest.

Unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] That the sacrifices here prescribed might be offered for him.

Ver. 14. *And he shall offer his offering unto the Lord.*] *i. e.* The Nazarite was to present these following offerings unto the Lord: for the priest's offering them is not mentioned till ver. 16.

One he-lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt-offering, and one ewe-lamb, &c.] Here are all sorts of offerings, which he was obliged to make in the conclusion of his Nazariteship. A *burnt-offering*, as an acknowledgment of God's sovereign dominion. A *sin-offering*, imploring pardon for any omissions of which he might have been

guilty during this vow: and a *peace-offering*, in thankfulness to God, who had given him grace both to make, and to keep, and to fulfil this vow.

Ver. 15. *And a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil.*] Besides the forementioned sacrifices, here are three oblations more prescribed to complete his thankfulness: of which see Exod. xxix. 2.

And their meat-offerings, and their drink-offerings.] This seems to relate to the *burnt-offering* and *peace-offering* beforementioned, (ver. 14.) which were to have their proper *meat-offering and drink-offering;* besides the basket of *unleavened bread*, with the *cakes* and the *wafers:* see Levit. vii. 12. Numb. xv. 2, 3, &c. Where these accessory offerings are ordered to accompany the *burnt-offerings* and *peace-offerings*, though *sin-offerings* had none.

Ver. 16. *And the priest shall bring them before the Lord.*] Unto the altar of burnt-offerings; as the Nazarite had already brought them to the door of the tabernacle, (ver. 14.)

And shall offer his sin-offering, and his burnt-offering.] Though the *burnt-offering* be first named, (ver. 14.) as the principal sacrifice of all other, yet the *sin-offering* was first offered; by which his peace being made with God, the two other offerings which followed were acceptable to him.

Ver. 17. *And he shall offer the ram for a sacrifice of peace-offerings unto the Lord, with the basket of unleavened bread.*] And the cakes and wafers, which accompanied the *peace-offering*, that nothing might be wanting to complete the feast which was to be made upon them.

The priest shall offer also his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.] By this it appears, that these were distinct from the basket of unleavened bread, &c. as I observed, ver. 15.

Ver. 18. *And the Nazarite shall shave the head of his separation.*] *i. e.* The hair of his head, which was consecrated to God, shall be shaved off, that it may be presented unto him. For having now fulfilled his vow, this hair was holy; it not having been defiled as that hair was which he shaved off before, (ver. 9.)

At the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] That it might be publicly known he had ended his vow.

And shall take the hair of the head of his separation.] His hair which was consecrated to the Lord.

And put it in the fire.] Where it was burnt.

Which is under the sacrifice of the peace-offerings.] In the court of the women, (as they tell us in Middoth, cap. 2. sect. 5.) where there were four rooms; and that in the north-east corner was the room of the Nazarites; in which they boiled their *peace-offerings*, and, having polled their hair, put it under the pot where the sacrifice was boiling: which, as L'Empereur there observes out of Abarbinel, was offered out of joy, that their vow was fulfilled; and therefore they put their hair to be there burnt, as a testimony that their Nazariteship was at an end, and that they had no further obligation to let their hair grow, in observance of this law. And according to this account, that question is resolved which many have made: whether the Nazarite's hair was to be burnt with holy fire, (*viz.* that on the altar) or with common: for it was burnt with that which was under the pot, or caldron, in which the *peace-offerings* were boiled, which was common fire. And, indeed, it had been unseemly to burn hair upon the altar, it being God's table, where his meat was set before him; for it would not have been grateful at one of our feasts. Yet the fire under the *peace-offerings* may, in some sort, be called holy, as it was employed to boil holy meat; and in that regard, more sacred than other vulgar fire.

There are those who think no account can be given of such ordinances as these, but only this; that it was so general a custom, and so very ancient among mankind, to let their hair grow on purpose, and to plait it in locks, that they might, at a certain time, cut it off, and devote it to some of their gods; that, in all likelihood, the Israelites would have followed their superstition, if God, to prevent it, had not instituted a way of doing what the rest of the world did, without their idolatry. For the directions which God here gives about it, are manifestly opposite to the way of the gentiles. For the Nazarites are here directed to cut their hair (when the time of their separation was completed) at the door of the tabernacle, where it was also to be burnt; whereas the gentiles hung their hair, when they had cut it, upon trees; or consecrated it to rivers, (as I observed, ver. 5.) or laid it up in their temples, there to be preserved. The Hebrew Nazarites also are required to offer various sorts of sacrifices, when they cut their hair; of which we rarely read any thing among the gentiles: and all the time of their separation were to drink no wine, nor eat grapes, &c. which was not known among the heathen. From whence it is, one may think, that they are so often put in mind of the Lord, in this law of the Nazarites; who are said to be *separated unto the Lord*, (ver. 1. 5, 6.) and the *consecration of his God* is said to be upon his head, (ver. 7.) and all the days of his separation he was *holy to the Lord*, (ver. 8.) unto whom he *consecrated the days of his separation*, (ver. 12.) to put them in mind, that, though they used this rite, which was common to other nations, yet it was in honour of the Lord only, whom they acknowledged to be the author of health, and strength, and growth: for the devil also had his Nazarites, as appears from Hosea ix. 10. All this is said, and much more, with a specious show of truth, by a most ingenious and learned friend of mine, now with God, in his excellent book, De Legibus Hebræorum Ritualibus, &c. lib. iii. Dissert. 1. cap. 6.

But there are two things wanting to make this opinion probable. First, none can tell how the world came by such a custom of letting their hair grow for sacred uses, unless they had it from Moses; who tells us whence he derived it, *viz.* from God; who appointed this rite for such reasons, as then were plain, but now, perhaps, do not appear to us. Besides, secondly, there is not the least evidence that this custom was so old as Moses's time; which to me seems not likely, but rather that it was derived, among the gentiles, from an imperfect knowledge of what is here ordained by Moses. For the chief part of this Nazariteship consisting in letting their hair grow, and consecrating it unto God, the gentiles took it to be a piece of great devotion, Μὴ ἀποκείρειν τῶν παίδων τὰς κορυφὰς, &c. as Theodoret speaks, Quæst. xxviii. in Levit. *not to cut off their children's hair, but let it grow, and, after a certain time, dedicate it to their demons.* Many authors have written much of this custom; for which there was a certain day appointed at Athens, *viz.* the third day of the feast called Ἀπατούρια, which day was called Κουρεῶτις, because then the hair of their grown children was shorn off, and sacrificed to Diana. (See Petr. Castellanus, in his Syntagma

de Festis Græcorum; where he quotes a passage out of Hesychius, (p. 28.) who says, that before they cut off their hair, they brought a measure of wine, which they offered to Hercules, and then all that were present drunk of it: which is some imitation of the drink-offering here mentioned by Moses, which was offered at the completion of their Nazariteship. And Grotius and Huetius have made it so plain, that the Attic laws were derived from Moses, that I cannot doubt but this custom also flowed from the same fountain.

And, if we must give an account of the reason of this institution among the Hebrews, I think that of Maimonides is better than this, against which I have excepted; *viz.* that this law about their hair was made in opposition to the opinion of the ancient idolaters, called Zabii, who held all things which were separated from the body to be impure; as the hair, the nails, and the blood. From whence all barbers among them were accounted impure persons, because they cut men's hair, and let blood: and whosoever suffered a razor to pass upon his flesh, was required to wash himself in pure fountain-water; as he shews, More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 47.

Ver. 19. *And the priest shall take the sodden shoulder of the ram.*] The left shoulder, which he was to take out of the pot as it was boiling; for the right shoulder (which is called the *heave-shoulder* in the next verse) was the priest's portion, by a law made before this, (Lev. vii. 32, 33.)

And one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer.] The basket of unleavened bread was ordered to be offered before, (ver. 17.) and now he orders one of the *cakes* and one of the *wafers* (mentioned with the bread, ver. 15.) to be put into the hands of the Nazarite; the rest being burnt, I suppose, upon the altar.

And shall put them into the hands of the Nazarite.] That he might give them to the priest, in token of his thankfulness to him for his pains.

After the hair of his separation is shaved.] And his vow, in a manner, completed; as it was immediately after these things were presented unto God.

Ver. 20. *And the priest shall wave them.*] Both the sodden shoulder and the cake and wafer.

For a wave-offering before the Lord.] See Lev. vii. 30, 31.

This is holy for the priest, with the wave-breast, and heave-shoulder.] These two were the priest's portion out of all peace-offerings, as I observed before, from Lev. vii. 34. but in this peace-offering he had, moreover, the other shoulder, as a special token of the Nazarite's gratitude for his cleansing.

And after that the Nazarite may drink wine.] He was restored to his former freedom, to live as other men did.

Ver. 21. *This is the law of the Nazarite, who hath vowed, and of his offering to the Lord for his separation.*] All these things he was bound to perform, before he could be freed from his vow, though he was never so poor.

Besides that that his hand shall get.] Besides which he might add, if he pleased, according to his ability.

According to the vow which he vowed, so must he do after the law of his separation.] There was a necessity that he should perform what his vow obliged him unto, according to the law of Nazariteship; though he might voluntarily offer what he thought good, over and above his oblation, now that he was executing his vow. His friends also might join with him in the expense he was at for so many sacrifices as he was enjoined to offer; or in providing voluntary offerings, beyond his oblation. Thus we read, in Acts xxi. 23, 24. that St. Paul, by the advice of St. James, and the elders at Jerusalem, was at charges with certain men that had this vow upon them, and purified himself with them: which was agreeable to the custom among the Jews, as Petitus and others have observed out of Maimonides; who says, others might help the Nazarites to fulfil their vow, and partake with them in it, by abstaining from wine, &c. for some time, as they did.

Ver. 22. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] The tabernacle having been lately erected, to which the people were all to resort, they are invited to it by the directions here given, how they should be dismissed, when they came to worship: which was in such a manner, that they might not doubt (as R. Menachem glosses) but the Divine benediction would come down upon them from his celestial habitation, when they devoutly frequented his house here on earth.

Ver. 23. *Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, saying.*] Whose proper office it was to bless the people; as it was to offer their sacrifices, and burn incense, (Deut. xxi. 5.)

On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them.] Standing so that they might be seen with their hands lifted up and spread; speaking with a loud voice, with their faces towards the people: (see Lev. ix. 22.)

Ver. 24. *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee.*] Give thee all good things, and preserve thee from all evil.

Ver. 25. *The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.*] Be favourable unto thee, and pardon all thy sins.

Ver. 26. *The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*] Be always with thee to protect and defend thee, and give thee perfect happiness.

When this benediction was said in the sanctuary (if we may believe the Jews), it was but one, and pronounced without any pause; the people keeping a profound silence: but out of the sanctuary (in their synagogues) they made three of it, the priest pausing at the end of every verse, and the people saying *Amen* to each of them. In the sanctuary also they pronounced the name Jehovah, which is here thrice repeated; but in their synagogues they used some other name instead of it. So the Mischna Sota, (cap. 7. sect. 6.)

The repetition of this name three times, in these three verses, and that with a different accent in each of them (as R. Menachem observes), hath made the Jews themselves think there is some mystery in it: which we understand, though they do not. For it may well be looked upon by us, as having respect to the three persons in the blessed Trinity; who are one God, from whom all blessings flow unto us, (2 Cor. xiii. 14.) This mystery, as Luther wisely expresses it, (upon Psal. v.) is here *occulte insinuatum, secretly insinuated,* though not plainly revealed. And it is not hard to shew, if this were a place for it, how properly God the Father may be said to *bless and keep us;* and God the Son to *be gracious unto us;* and God the Holy Ghost to *give us peace.*

Ver. 27. *And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel.*] To put God's *name upon them,* was to commend them to his almighty goodness; or, to bless them, by call-

ing upon the Lord, and beseeching him to bestow all that they desired upon them.

And I will bless them.] The Jews from hence observe, that God's blessing, in some sort, depends upon the blessing of the priest: which they thought so necessary, that such priests as were admitted to no other service might perform this; for fear the people should at any time want it. So Chaskuni, (upon Deut. xxi. 5.) and Jalkut, (as Wagenseil observes upon the Gemara Sotæ, cap. 7. sect. 26.) whose words are these, "The blessing pronounced by a priest, who hath some blemish in his body, ought to be accounted legitimate."

Jonathan here paraphrases these words in this manner, *I will bless them in my Word,* or *by my Word:* which is the apostolical doctrine, that *God the Father hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in,* or by *Christ,* (Ephes. i. 3.) who, with the Holy Ghost, is most high in the glory of God the Father. And it is observable, that the Jews think it utterly unlawful to add a fourth benediction to these three, though they find one in Deut. i. 2. "The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more than you are; and bless you as he hath promised you."

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle.*] Which he did upon the first day of the first month of the second year, after they came out of Egypt, (Exod. xl. 17, 18.)

And had anointed it, and sanctified it, &c.] See Lev. viii. 10, 11.; where it is said, he anointed also (as it here likewise follows) all belonging to it: which being seven days in doing, as appears from the thirty-fifth verse of that chapter, it is evident that the word *day* doth not here precisely denote the very day on which the tabernacle was erected; but more largely, at or about that time (as it must necessarily signify, ver. 84. of this chapter), after he had set up the tabernacle; and not only sanctified and anointed it, but received orders about sacrifices, and anointed the priests (with the rest mentioned in the book of Leviticus), and also had numbered the people; ordered their encampment, and the encampment of the Levites; and given them their charge about the tabernacle. In short, when Moses had done all the things mentioned hitherto in this book, then followed this dedication of the altar. And whosoever will compare this chapter with the second, may easily be convinced that this offering of the princes was not made till the camp was formed, and the tribes ranged under their several standards: for the princes' offer held in the same order and method that they are disposed there.

Ver. 2. *That the princes of Israel, heads of the house of their fathers.*] Mentioned chap. i. 5. 16.

And were over them that were numbered.] This evidently shews that this offering of the princes was after the numbering of the people.

Offered.] In the order that is set down in this chapter.

Ver. 3. *And they brought their offering.*] The LXX. translate the Hebrew word *korbanam,* τὸ δῶρον αὐτῶν, *their gift,* or *their present,* which they made to God; which consisted of several things, for divers uses.

Before the Lord.] *i. e.* At the door of the tabernacle; as it is explained in the end of the verse.

Six covered waggons, and twelve oxen.] In the first place they made a present for the service of the tabernacle itself; that such parts of it as were most cumbersome might be more conveniently carried; and that they might be free from dust, rain, or hail. The waggons were *covered;* being not ordinary carriages, but such as were used by great persons. So the LXX. understood it, who translate the Hebrew word *tzabbim,* by λαμπήνη, in Isa. lxvi. 20. and here ἁμάξας λαμπηνίκας. Now as Pollux reckons λαμπήνη among the waggons and chariots then used, so Hesychius tells us (as learned men have observed) it signifies such waggons as illustrious men and women used; and that they were covered above.

A waggon for two of the princes.] This shews plainly enough, that they were sumptuous, and had, perhaps, rich coverings; in that two of the great men joined in the present of one waggon.

And for each one an ox.] That there might be a pair of oxen to draw each waggon. And it is probable, those oxen were yoked together, which were offered by those two princes, who joined in offering one waggon.

And they brought them before the tabernacle.] Set them before the entrance of it.

Ver. 4. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] It seems Moses did not accept these presents, till he had orders from the Lord, in the next words.

Ver. 5. *Take it of them.*] Receive their presents, as acceptable to me.

That they may be to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.] He directs their use: which was to carry the tabernacle, when they removed from one place to another.

And thou shalt give them to the Levites.] In order to which, he directs him to bestow them upon the Levites, who had the charge of that carriage.

To every man according to his service.] In such proportions as the things they had to carry required.

Ver. 6. *And Moses took the waggons and oxen, and gave them to the Levites.*] In such proportions as follow in the next two verses.

Ver. 7. *Two waggons and four oxen to the sons of Gershon, according to their service.*] As they were fewest in number that could do service, so they had less burdensome things to carry than the sons of Merari, (chap. iv. 25, 40.) and therefore had fewer carriages allowed them.

Ver. 8. *And four waggons and eight oxen he gave unto the sons of Merari, according to their service.*] They were the most numerous, and had the greatest burden; and therefore had allowance of more carriages and oxen, (chap. iv. 31, 32. 48.)

Under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.] Who had the inspection and care both of the Gershonites and Merarites, (chap. iv. 28. 33.)

Ver. 9. *But unto the sons of Kohath he gave none.*] For the reason that follows.

Because the service of the sanctuary belonging unto them was, that they should bear upon their shoulders.] The LXX. translate it more exactly, *because they had the service of the holy thing,* (τοῦ ἁγίου, as the ark is called, chap. iv. 4.) *they shall carry it on their shoulders:* which was for the greater honour and dignity of the ark, and of the law contained in it; as Maimonides, R. Levi ben Gersom, and others, ob-

serve: and that the form and structure of the ark might not be discomposed, as Maimonides adds, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 45.) nor the ephod and the breast-plate ruffled; as they might have been by the shaking of a waggon. Yet they all observe, this was not so peculiar to the sons of Kohath, but that the priests, the sons of Aaron, upon some special occasions, carried the ark; particularly when they went over Jordan, (Josh. iii. 3.) and at the siege of Jericho; at both which times a great miracle was to be wrought; and when Zadok and Abiathar carried it back to Jerusalem, 2 Sam. xv. 29. (though that, I observed before, may be otherwise interpreted, and there seems no reason why they should carry it back, when the Levites brought it, ver. 24.) and when Solomon's temple was built, (1 Kings viii. 6.) For the Levites might not go into the holy place, and therefore it was then carried by the priests.

Ver. 10. *And the priests offered.*] They brought the offerings, which they desired might be presented unto God.

For the dedicating of the altar.] The Hebrew word *chanac*, which, in one place of the Pentateuch, signifies simply to begin to use, or enjoy a house, (Deut. xx. 6.) here, and in several other places, signifies the first application and addiction of any thing to sacred uses, or to the Divine service; to which it had been designed and consecrated. And this was done with some certain solemn words and actions, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 13. n. 1. and cap. 15. n. 3. And so, among the Latins, the word *inchoare*, when applied to sacred things, signifies, to perfect or consummate; as Servius observes upon Æneid. vi. And both civil and sacred initiations were accompanied with great joy and gladness. But this is not to be understood, as if the dedication of the altar was the setting of it apart, and sanctifying it for the service of God, (which had been done before, and seven days spent therein, Exod. xxix. 27. Levit. viii. 11.) but, as the word properly signifies, the beginning to use it, after it had been so sanctified.

In the day that it was anointed.] At the time that it was set apart; and all other things ordered for the safeguard of the tabernacle. (See ver. 1.)

Even the princes offered their offering.] Presented their gifts (as the LXX. translate it), which they desired God would accept upon this great occasion.

Before the altar.] At the door of the tabernacle, near unto which the altar stood, (Exod. xl. 6.) for he speaks of the altar of burnt-offerings.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord said unto Moses, They shall offer their offering.*] Here again Rasi observes, that Moses would not receive their offering till he knew the mind of God; who directed in what manner and order their gifts should be offered to him.

Each prince on his day, for the dedication of the altar.] This made the dedication a very long solemnity, which continued twelve days. When these twelve days began, it is not easy to determine; but it seems to me a very reasonable computation, which Fortunatus Scacchus hath made of this whole business, Myrothec. Sacr. Elæochrysm. lib. ii. cap. 74, where he supposes, that the tabernacle being erected the first day of the first month of the second year, after they came out of Egypt, seven days were spent in the consecration of it and of the altar, &c. And on the eighth day Moses began to consecrate Aaron, and his sons, which lasted seven days longer. Then the fifteenth day of that month was the first day of unleavened bread, which God commanded (as we read here, chap. ix.) to be observed in the first month, and lasted till the two-and-twentieth. The rest of the month we may well suppose was spent in giving, receiving, and delivering the laws mentioned in the book of Leviticus. After which, on the first day of the second month, he began to number the people, according to the command in the beginning of this book, which may be supposed to have lasted three days. And then on the fourth the Levites were numbered: on the next day we may suppose they were offered to God, and given unto the priests: on the sixth day they were expiated and consecrated (as we read in the next chapter); and on the seventh day their several charges were parted among them, (of which we read chap. iv.) After which the princes, he supposes, began to offer upon the eighth day of the second month, for the dedication of the altar, which lasted till the nineteenth day inclusively: and on the twentieth day of this month they removed (as we read chap. x. 11, 12.) from Sinai to the wilderness of Paran.

Ver. 12. *And he that offered his offering the first day.*] By God's order, no doubt.

Was Nahshon the son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah.] He held the principal place among the Israelites, being the *nasi*, the *prince* or *captain* (as we translate it, Numb. ii. 3.) of the children of Judah, who had the first standard. And yet he alone, of all the twelve great men here mentioned, is not called *nasi*, prince of Judah, as all the rest are called princes of their tribes, (ver. 18. 24. 30, &c.) but simply *Nahshon of the tribe of Judah.* The Jews give several reasons of it: but perhaps it was, because he offered first, which was honour enough; and there needed no more to be said of him.

Ver. 13. *And his offering was one silver charger, the weight whereof was a hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl,* &c.] It appears by the metal that this *charger* and *bowl* were of, that they were for the use of the altar of *burnt-offerings* in the outward court, for all the vessels of the sanctuary were of gold. And I take this *charger* (or broad dish, or platter) to have been offered, for receiving the flesh which was offered at the altar, or the fine flour for the *meat-offerings.* And the *bowl* received the blood, or was used for pouring out wine.

Both of them were full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering.] Which was to attend upon the *burnt-offering* and the *peace-offering*, mentioned ver. 15. 17. See chap. iv. 7. where I observed, it was not difficult to procure this fine flour in the wilderness.

Ver. 14. *One spoon of ten shekels of gold, full of incense.*] Both the metal of which it was made, and that which was in it, shew this *spoon* was for the use of the golden altar in the sanctuary: which may incline one to think, that both altars were now dedicated; that is, first began to be used for the service of the whole congregation. (See ver. 88.)

Ver. 15. *One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year.*] There are so many sacrifices mentioned here and in the two following verses (no less than twenty-one in all), that, together with the silver and gold plate, they look like too great a present to be made out of one man's private estate: and therefore some have thought, that the rest of the great men of the tribe of Judah joined with Nahshon

in their contributions towards it; and that it was offered in his own and their names.

For a burnt-offering.] This is first mentioned, as being the most ancient sort of sacrifice, long before we read of any other; and being an acknowledgment of God's sovereign dominion over all.

Ver. 16. *One kid of the goats for a sin-offering.*] This in all likelihood was first offered, though the other be first mentioned. For in the next chapter we find the *burnt-offering* enjoined in the first place; but the *sin-offering* offered before it, (chap. viii. 8. 12.) The like I observed before, (chap. vi. 16. see there.)

Ver. 17. *And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year.*] These sacrifices were more numerous than the *burnt-offering* or the *sin-offering;* because the priests, and the princes, and as many of the people as they invited, had their share of them, and feasted before the Lord upon them, with great rejoicing: which custom, as Mr. Selden observes, flowed from hence to the gentiles, who dedicated their altars, and temples, and statues, &c. with much ceremony; and the ancient Greeks, πολυτελεστέροις ἱερείοις, *with more sumptuous sacrifices.* See lib. iii. de Synedriis, cap. 14. num. 3. where he also shews, how they were dedicated among the Romans with plays, and feasting, and public largesses; and at last their feasts became anniversary, as the *feast of dedication* among the Jews was, after the times of Antiochus, (num. 6, 7.) In which feast there was Ανχνοκαΐα, *illuminations* (as we now speak), by setting up of candles, or lamps, in token of joy, (cap. 13. num. 9.)

This was the offering of Nahshon, the son of Amminadab.] And was the pattern which all the rest followed.

Ver. 18. *On the second day.*] Their offerings were thus distributed, to be offered on several days, that confusion might be avoided; and that every tribe might distinctly express their devotion to God, and be graciously accepted by him; and the solemnity be made the more remarkable, by continuing it so long as twelve days. For which reason the *feast of dedication,* after Mattathias had purged the temple and the altar, after the profanation of them by Antiochus, was kept eight days by the Jews in following times; and this *Parascha* (as they call it) of the law, from chap. vi. 22. to chap. viii. 4. of this book, was wont to be read at that feast; as the same Mr. Selden observes, (cap. 13. n. 7.) As among the Romans, he observes, (cap. 14. n. 7.) there was a feast of like nature kept six days.

Nethaneel the son of Zuar, prince of Issachar, did offer.] This tribe, and Zebulun, being under the standard of Judah, are the next that offer. And so they proceed in the same order; Reuben, and those under his standard offering next; because they encamped next to them, (ver. 30. 36. 42, &c.)

Ver. 19. *He offered for his offering one silver charger, the weight whereof was a hundred and thirty shekels,* &c.] It may be observed, once for all, that there is no difference in the offerings of these princes; but all offered plate of equal weight, and an equal number of sacrifices, without the least variation: either by common agreement, or by the Divine appointment; that the vanity of vying one with another might be prevented; and none might brag of their outdoing their brethren; and all might be confident that they were equally interested in the altar, and accepted by the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 24. *On the third day Eliab the son of Helon,* &c.] Here it may be observed, that Moses thought fit to set down distinctly, and at length, the offerings of the princes of every tribe (as he doth here, and in the following part of this chapter), though they were the very same, without any difference; that an honourable mention being made of every one apart, none might think themselves in the least neglected.

Ver. 30. *On the fourth day Elizur,* &c.] There is nothing new to be noted of him, or any of the rest; because the same thing is repeated, for the reason forementioned.

Ver. 48. *On the seventh day Elishama,* &c. *offered.*] This solemnity was not interrupted by the sabbath; but the offerings continued then, as upon other days.

Ver. 84. *This was the dedication of the altar.*] By these oblations and sacrifices; which were simple and plain, though costly and magnificent. With which the gentiles were not content, but used sometimes barbarous rites in their dedications; as appears by their *taurobolia* and *criobolia* in honour of the mother of the gods, &c. (See Selden in the forenamed book, cap. 14. n. 8, 9.)

In the day when it was anointed.] The dedication lasting *twelve* days, it is apparent the word *day,* in this place, necessarily signifies the time (were it more or less), wherein a thing was done; as I observed ver. 1. and see ver. 88.

By the princes of Israel.] From whose examples princes and great men should learn (as Conradus Pellicanus well applies all this), "to be devoutly religious; and to possess the fear and reverence of the Lord God in their breasts: to be strong in faith; far from covetousness; unanimous in their endeavours to do honour to God; to give a good example of faith and good works to others; to seek the profit of their subjects; assist the servants of God; lend their helping hand to the proficiency of true piety; provide the ministers of the church with all things necessary, that religion be not neglected and contemned by their poverty; for the sake of God whom they serve, to do them honour by word and deed; and follow their godly admonitions, &c. This is a profitable allegory (saith he) of this history: and we need not seek for one more ingenious. As for those who highly value the allegorical sense of all these things, *habent alios qui gustui suo consulent et curiositati; they may find other commentators to please their taste, and satisfy their curiosity.*"

Twelve chargers of silver, twelve silver boards, &c.] In these and the following words the whole sum of the oblations and sacrifices is set down by Moses; that every reader, in all future times, might see (without the trouble of casting up the account) how devout and generous their ancestors were.

Ver. 87. *All the oxen for the burnt-offering were twelve bullocks,* &c.] Whether there were any prayers made for a gracious acceptance of the sacrifices, which should be hereafter made on this altar, we are not told. But the sacrifices themselves were in the nature of supplications; and it is likely, they that offered them made their humble petitions with them. And so the gentiles always did at the dedication of their temples or altars: an instance of which is observed out of Gruter, by Fort. Scacchus and by Selden, in these words: "Hanc tibi aram Jupiter Opt. Max. dico dedicoque uti sis volens propitius mihi collegisque meis," &c. Which is a dedication of an altar to Jupiter, with a

prayer that he would be gracious to him that dedicated it, and to his friends and neighbours. The like dedication there is of a temple to Priapus, near Padua, with this prayer, that he would constantly guard their fields, &c. (Myroth. Sacr. Elæochrys. 2. cap. 28. lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 14. p. 290. 309.)

With their meat-offering.] Which was brought in the *twelve* chargers and bowls, as a necessary appendix to the *burnt-offerings* and the *peace-offerings;* as is fully explained chap. xv. 8, 9.

Ver. 88. *This was the dedication of the altar.*] Which is repeated here again, to shew why it was called the *dedication;* because this was the first solemn sacrifice which was offered for the tribes, or particular persons among them; and therefore was the more sumptuous.

After that it was anointed.] Here the word *day* is omitted, (which is used ver. 1. and ver. 84.) Moses intending only to let posterity know that this dedication followed not long after the anointing of the tabernacle and the altar; whereby it was sanctified to God's service.

Ver. 89. *And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with Him.*] That is, with God. This seems to be here mentioned, because he had lately had a special occasion to go and inquire particularly of God, about a matter of great concernment, as will appear from chap. ix. 8, 9. And it is likely he had gone in twice upon this occasion, to consult him about the offering of the princes, (ver. 4, 5. 10, 11.) and now, it is possible, went in again, to know if the Lord would give him any further directions.

Then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat, &c.] There God promised to meet him, and to commune with him, &c. (Exod. xxv. 22.) which supposes he would be always present there. And so he was; for the cloud of glory filled the house after it was set up, (Exod. xl. 33, 34.) from whence God spake to him, (Lev. i. 1.) and told him he would *appear* (*i. e.* reside constantly) *in* the cloud upon the mercy-seat, (Lev. xvi. 2.) Now here he relates how God appeared and communed with him from thence; which was by a *voice* that he heard of one speaking to him, as he stood in the outward part of the sanctuary. So the Jews understand it; particularly R. Solomon, who thinks that Moses only entered into the sanctuary, and, standing in the very entrance of it, heard the voice speaking to him *from between the two cherubims:* which was very clear and strong; but went no farther than into the sanctuary, where Moses alone at that time was. So they observe in Siphri, as Buxtorf notes in his Histor. Arcæ Fæderis, cap. 15.

And he spake unto him.] With an audible voice; and so distinctly, that he perceived and understood every word. Which Abarbinel thinks God vouchsafed for this reason; that, as he visibly represented to him in the mount the pattern of the tabernacle, and of every thing belonging to it, whereby the form and figure of every particular was imprinted on his mind, and he was the better able to give directions how to make them exactly: so he being to write in his law all that God required them to do, he delivered every thing to him in an audible voice; that he might set down in these books the very words and phrases which he heard with his ears from the mouth of God, as plainly as if he had described them from some ancient volume.

To which I cannot but add, that this audible articulate voice from God, which was perceived by human ears, represented God as if he was incorporate; and may well be looked upon as an earnest of that great mystery, *God manifested in the flesh;* who in the fulness of time became a man, and spake to all the Jews familiarly in their own language.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] When this was spoken is not certain. If Moses went into the tabernacle immediately after the princes had offered (ver. 89. of the foregoing chapter), it may be thought he then spake these things to him. But both this, and what follows concerning the Levites, seem rather to have been delivered after the order for giving them to the priests, and settling their several charges, (chap. iii. and iv.) But some other things intervening, which depended upon what had been ordered concerning their camp, and that of the Israelites, (see ver. 4.) Moses omits this, till he had set down them, and some other matters, which he had received from God. (See chap. vii. 11.)

Ver. 2. *Speak unto Aaron, and say unto him, When thou lightest the lamps.*] At the same time the public service of God began at the altar of burnt-offerings (of which he speaks in the foregoing chapter), the setting on the shew-bread, offering incense, and lighting the lamps, were begun in the sanctuary. The last of these is only here mentioned: but it supposes the other.

The seven lamps shall give light over against the candlestick.] Upon the table which was over against the candlestick; as the Vulgar Latin very well explains it: which is rather a paraphrase upon these words than a translation of them, in this manner: *When thou lightest the seven lamps, let the candlestick be set up on the south side,* (for so it was ordered, Exod. xxvi. 35.) and so Moses set it, (chap. xl. 24.) *and let the lamps look towards the north, over against the table of shew-bread,* see Exod. xxv. 37. where there is the like obscure expression, but to this sense. And thus this verse may be translated exactly out of the Hebrew, *When thou settest up the lamps, the seven lamps shall shine before the face of the candlestick, i. e.* enlighten all the room that is opposite to it; for there were no windows in the sanctuary, and therefore these lamps were lighted.

Ver. 3. *And Aaron did so: he lighted the lamps thereof,* &c.] For God's table being placed over against the lamps, where he was represented as feasting with his people (which nobody doth in the dark), it was but fit that there should be continual light in that place. And this, as I take it, is the first time that the lamps were lighted, when the altar was dedicated, and the public service of God began, which continued ever after.

Ver. 4. *And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold,* &c.] Upon this occasion he briefly repeats what is more largely said concerning the structure of this candlestick, Exod. xxv. 31, &c. and xxxvii. 17, &c.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] That which follows plainly belongs to what was said, chap. iii. 7.

Ver. 6. *Take the Levites from among the children of Israel.*] In that place (chap. iii. 7.) he bade Moses give

them to Aaron and his sons, out of the children of Israel; and now he executes it.

And cleanse them.] He had given them their charge, (chap. iv.) and now he prepares them for the performance of it: for they could not be fit to attend in the tabernacle till they were purified, and, in some sort, consecrated to that service.

Ver. 7. *And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them.*] Here he directs how they were to be purified; and then (ver. 9, 10, &c.) how they were to be consecrated or dedicated to God.

Sprinkle the water of purifying upon them.] The manner of making this water is not described till chap. xix. 9. but, in all likelihood, had been ordered and made before, because the Levites were sprinkled with it; as those also were who had been defiled by the dead, (chap. xix. 13.)

And let them shave all their flesh.] The greatest purity was required in them; for they are here ordered to be cleansed, according to the cleansing of a *leper*, (Levit. xiv. 8, 9.) and of a Nazarite, when he was defiled by the dead, (Numb. vi. 9.) R. Levi ben Gersom thinks there was this moral signification in this shaving; that they were hereby admonished, "To cast away all worldly cares, as much as might be, and wholly give themselves to their sacred ministry."

And wash their clothes.] That their bodies being cleansed might not be defiled by foul apparel.

Ver. 8. *Then let them take a young bullock.*] For a burnt-offering, as is manifest from ver. 12.

With his meat-offering.] Which always attended upon burnt-offerings, (chap. xv. 9.)

And another young bullock shalt thou take for a sin-offering.] This being offered for the whole body of the Levites, is the same sacrifice that is ordered when the whole congregation of Israel sinned through ignorance, (Lev. iv. 13, 14.)

Ver. 9. *And thou shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation.*] To the door of it, where the altar of burnt-offerings stood, (Exod. xl. 6.)

And thou shalt gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together.] The Hebrew words, *col adath*, which we translate the *whole assembly*, frequently signifies *all the elders of Israel;* as in chap. xv. 4. xxv. 7. and xxxv. 12. And it cannot well have any other sense in this place, as appears from the next verse.

Ver. 10. *And thou shalt bring the Levites before the Lord.*] Present them to him at the altar.

And the children of Israel.] The elders of the people mentioned in the foregoing verse. For all the children of Israel could not possibly do what is here enjoined; but some of them in the name of the rest; and none so proper as their rulers and governors, who were their representatives.

Shall put their hands upon the Levites.] As men used to do upon their sacrifices; which signified the devoting of that beast to God, by him who laid his hand on it at the altar, for such purposes as he brought it. And this was done by private men in their burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, as well as in their sin-offerings; (see Levit. i. 4. chap. iii. 2. and viii. 13.) but the Jews observe, that the whole congregation laid their hands only upon the sin-offering that was offered for them, (Lev. iv. 15.) Therefore the Levites are here to be considered under that notion; as is manifest from ver. 19. where God is said to have given them to Aaron, &c. *to make an atonement for the children of Israel.* For the Levites being given to God instead of the first-born, by the sanctification of which first-born to God, (as it is called, Exod. xiii. 1.) the whole family was sanctified, and their sin, after a sort, expiated; the offering of the Levites after this manner to God, was to have the same effect that the offering of the first-born had; *viz.* the sanctification and atonement of the children of Israel.

Ver. 11. *And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the Lord, for an offering of the children of Israel.*] The Hebrew words are more significant; *Aaron shall wave the Levites before the Lord, for a wave-offering*, &c. I have often observed before, that this waving, or agitation to and fro before the altar, (of which, see Exod. xxix. 24.) was a solemn consecration of a thing to God, as a sacrifice: and therefore the Levites were presented unto him, under the same consideration as the first-born were. But it was impossible for Aaron to wave them, as he did some parts of a sacrifice; and therefore, it is probable that he lifting up his hands, and turning about to all sides (as he did when he offered a wave-offering), they, at his command, imitated the same motion; and so were offered up to God, and became wholly his. (See ver. 21.)

That they may execute the service of the Lord.] Or, as it is more significantly in the margin, *that they may be to execute*, &c. Which expresses the intention of this *waving them before the Lord*, that, being wholly given up to him, they might become meet to execute that service to which he appointed them at his house.

Ver. 12. *And the Levites shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks.*] It being evident, from ver. 19. that the Levites were considered as an expiatory sacrifice; and yet, not being to be devoted to death (no more than the first-born were), these two sacrifices, one for sin, the other a burnt-offering, were substituted in their stead. Upon which, therefore, they were to lay their hands, that the sin, which the children of Israel laid upon them, (ver. 10.) might be transferred to these beasts, by laying their hands upon them, to be actually sacrificed unto God, by shedding their blood.

The one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering, unto the Lord.] The burnt-offering was mentioned first, ver. 8. being the most ancient of all offerings, from the beginning of the world: but the sin-offering is offered first, to make the other acceptable. And so it was when Aaron was consecrated, (Lev. viii. 14, 18.) and when he offered for himself, (Lev. ix. 8. 12.) and for the people, (ver. 15, 16.) and (to name no more) in the cleansing of a leper, (chap. xiv. 19.)

To make an atonement for the Levites.] The sin-offering properly made the atonement; and the burnt-offering declared its acceptance.

Ver. 13. *And thou shalt set the Levites before Aaron and his sons.*] As they were brought before the Lord, because they were to be given unto him, (ver. 9.) so now they were set before Aaron and his sons, because they were given by God to them, (ver. 19.)

And offer them for an offering unto the Lord.] Or, as it is in the Hebrew, *and wave them for a wave-offering unto the Lord.* Some imagine, that as Aaron *waved* them before, (ver. 11.) so now they were in like manner *waved* by Moses. But it seems to me more probable, that the meaning is, they being waved, &c. should be *set before Aaron and his sons*, and presented to them as God's gift, according to his

order, (chap. iii. 9.) And so these words ought to be translated, *after thou hast waved them for a wave-offering;* that is, after Aaron, by his order, had waved them: and thus the like words must be understood, ver. 15. (See there.)

Ver. 14. *Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel.*] By the forementioned purification, (ver. 7.) and oblation, (ver. 10, 11.)

And the Levites shall be mine.] They became his, by this solemn oblation of them to him, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 15. *And after that shall the Levites go in.*] To the court of the tabernacle, where they were to attend upon the priests, and assist them in their ministry, and in taking down the tabernacle when it was to remove.

To do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.] In the court of the priests, where the altar of burnt-offering stood: for into the sanctuary itself none but the priests entered; and there was no ministry there in which the Levites were to assist.

And thou shalt cleanse them, and offer them for an offering.] Or rather, *after thou hast cleansed them, and offered,* &c. according as was directed, ver. 7. 11.

Ver. 16. *For they are wholly given unto me,* &c.] God commanded them before to be taken from among the children of Israel, (chap. iii. 45.) and now they are given to him. The word is repeated twice in the Hebrew, *given, given* (which we translate *wholly given*), because the children of Israel had devoted them to him, by laying their hands on them, (ver. 10.) and Aaron had waved them as a wave-offering to the Lord, (ver. 11.)

Instead of such as open every womb, &c.] See chap. iii. 12, 13.

Ver. 17. *For all the first-born of the children of Israel are mine, both man and beast,* &c.] Exod. xiii. 2.

Ver. 18. *And I have taken the Levites for all the first-born of the children of Israel.*] By the exchange mentioned chap. iii. 2. 13. 45.

Ver. 19. *And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron, and to his sons,* &c.] In the Hebrew the words are more emphatical, *I have given the Levites given,* &c. that is, the Levites, which are given unto me, (ver. 16.) I have given unto Aaron and his sons, (chap. iii. 9.)

To do the service of the children of Israel.] See chap. iii. 7. The Vulgar Latin translates it, *to serve me for the children of Israel; i. e.* to do them service, by assisting the priests in offering sacrifice for the people.

In the tabernacle of the congregation.] See ver. 15.

And to make an atonement for the children of Israel.] Not by offering sacrifice, for that was the work of the priests alone; but by being offered themselves, in the nature of an expiatory sacrifice unto God, as I observed before, (ver. 10. 12.) For though they were not slain at the altar, as sacrifices were, yet they might expiate, as the scape-goat did; which was sent away alive into the wilderness, after it had been presented unto the Lord, as these Levites were, (Levit. xvi. 7. 10.)

That there be no plague among the children of Israel.] As there would have been, if any man had presumed to officiate in the house of God, but such as were, in this manner, taken by himself to minister there.

When the children of Israel come nigh unto the sanctuary.] To worship God, and to bring their sacrifices to be offered at his altar.

Ver. 20. *And Moses and all the congregation of Israel.*] *i. e.* The elders of the people, (ver. 9, 10.)

Did to the Levites according unto all that the Lord commanded Moses concerning the Levites, &c.] Separated them to God from the rest of the Israelites, as he had directed, (ver. 14.)

Ver. 21. *And the Levites were purified, and they washed their clothes.*] According to the order given, ver. 7.

And Aaron offered them an offering before the Lord.] Or rather, *waved them a wave-offering,* &c. as I observed ver. 11. To which may be added, that it is likely some of the Levites were thus waved in the name of all the rest; for there being two-and-twenty thousand of them, (chap. iii. 39.) one cannot well conceive how they should be every one thus offered.

And Aaron made an atonement for them to cleanse them.] See ver. 12.

Ver. 22. *And after that the Levites went in to do their service in the tabernacle of the congregation.*] According to the directions given ver. 15.

Before Aaron and before his sons.] In their presence, and by their direction.

Ver. 23. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] After the foregoing commands, he gave him some further instructions.

Ver. 24. *This is it that belongeth unto the Levites.*] Add this to what hath been said about them.

From twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in.] Then they might begin to take the custody of the tabernacle upon them, and to be door-keepers, to keep out strangers and such as were unclean; but not to load the waggons, and do such-like work of burden, till they were *thirty* years of age. (See chap. iv. 3.)

To wait upon the service of the tabernacle, &c.] In the Hebrew the words are *to war the warfare of the tabernacle;* which is a phrase often used before, chap. iv. 3. 23, &c. and there applied to those that carried the tabernacle: which they might not do till *thirty* years of age, but might go in to learn at *five-and-twenty,* as some reconcile these two. But Abarbinel notes, that there is nothing said of their learning, but of their service, or ministry; and therefore at *twenty-five* years old they began that part of the service which consisted in the custody of the tabernacle.

Ver. 25. *And from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service thereof.*] In the Hebrew, *shall return from the warfare of their service, i. e.* be discharged from their function, and no longer burdened with any laborious work, as that of carrying the tabernacle was.

And shall serve no more.] In such manner of work.

Ver. 26. *But shall minister with their brethren.*] This ministry is explained in the following words, *to keep the charge;* that is, to take care of the tabernacle, unto which they were to be a guard.

In the tabernacle of the congregation.] See chap. iv. 3.

And shall do no service.] In the Hebrew, *serve no service;* that is, do no laborious work (as was said before), their age beginning to require ease and rest; and therefore no ministry was required of them, but what they might well perform without pains and labour.

Thus shalt thou do unto the Levites touching their charge.] Appoint them their ministries, according to these rules.

which were observed after the ark of God was settled, and there was no occasion to remove it any more; when David, therefore, instead of carrying the ark and the tabernacle (for which there was then no further occasion), appointed them to be singers in the temple, and porters, &c. for which they were fit at twenty years of age; but continued their employment no longer than till fifty (as the Jews tell us), when their voice began to decay. Whence that observation of Abarbinel upon this very chapter: "Age makes Levites unfit for service, not blemishes in their bodies; but priests are unfit by blemishes in their bodies, not by age:" for priests continued their service as long as they lived; and though they did not begin it till twenty years of age, yet no law of God forbade them to begin sooner.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai.*] Or, *the Lord had spoken;* for he relates now what was done a month ago; but not recorded till now, for a special reason: which was, that God having commanded them, in the month before this, to keep the Passover, some persons were unprepared for it; and thereupon a question arose, what course they should take? for they were much troubled they could not do as their brethren did: which produced a new command from God, that they should keep the Passover in this second month of the first year after they came out of Egypt. This Moses being to give an account of, as a matter of great importance, he doth it in the proper place for it, when he was relating what things were done in this month, (chap. i. 1.) and deferred the mention of keeping the Passover in the first month, till he could speak of them both together.

In the first month of the second year, after they were come out of the land of Egypt.] In which month they were commanded to keep the Passover, in memory of their wonderful deliverance from the land of Egypt.

Ver. 2. *Let the children of Israel also keep the Passover at his appointed season.*] Aaron having been lately consecrated, and having offered all sorts of sacrifices for himself and for the people; and God having declared his acceptance by fire from heaven, (Lev. viii. and ix.) God commanded the people should keep the Passover; which he had lately admonished them was one of the feasts of the Lord, (Lev. xxiii. 5.) But the first order for the observation of it, being that they should *keep this service when they came to the promised land,* (Exod. xii. 25.) they might thence conclude, there lay no obligation upon them to keep it here in the wilderness: and therefore, by a special precept, they are required to keep it (when the year was come about to the time of its first observation), that the memory of so singular a benefit might not presently slip out of their mind: (see Exod. xiii. 5.)

Ver. 3. *In the fourteenth day of this month at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season.*] So it was ordained, Exod. xii. 6. Lev. xxiii. 5.

According to all the rites of it.] With unleavened bread, and bitter herbs, and the other rites mentioned Exod. xii. 9, 10.

And according to all the ceremonies thereof.] If there be any difference between *ceremonies* and *rites,* I should think this belongs to their eating it in haste, with their loins girt, shoes on their feet, and staves in their hands, (Exod. xii. 11.) Unto which they were not bound, when they came into the land of Canaan, when they were no longer travellers; but, it is likely, were observed here in the wilderness, when they were in an unsettled condition.

Ver. 4. *And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the Passover.*] According to all the rites and ceremonies belonging to it.

Ver. 5. *And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even.*] It was not hard to procure so much flour, as would serve to make unleavened bread for that even, from some of their neighbours about the wilderness. (See chap. iv. 7.)

In the wilderness of Sinai.] Where they rested almost a whole year; but after they removed from thence were so uncertain in their motions from place to place, that they did not circumcise their children, who consequently could not eat of the Passover: and therefore we never read of its being kept after this during their forty years' stay in the wilderness; nor would they have been obliged, as I said, to keep it now, without this special command. Yet their doctors say, that this is written by Moses, as a reproach to the Israelites, that *they observed no Passover in the wilderness, but this one alone.* Yet there are Christian writers, who deliver it as the opinion of the Hebrews themselves, that they kept another Passover, a little before they ended their wanderings in the wilderness, *viz.* in the first month of the year wherein Miriam died. (See Selden de Synedr. lib. ii. cap. 2. n. 1.)

According to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.] They kept the Passover on the fourteenth day at even; but perhaps did not keep the feast of unleavened bread for *seven* days following. For here is no mention of that; and it had not been easy to provide so much bread, the want of which was supplied by manna.

Ver. 6. *And there were certain men who were defiled by the dead body of a man.*] And by a late law, (for there is nothing about this in the original law of the Passover, Exod. xii.) no unclean person might eat of holy things, (Lev. vii. 20.)

That they could not keep the Passover on that day.] On the *fourteenth* day of the first month, at even, when the rest kept the Passover who were not defiled.

And they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day.] On the very day that the Passover was kept.

Ver. 7. *And these men said unto him.*] Though they came before them both, whom they found sitting together; yet they applied themselves to Moses only, as the supreme judge in such singular cases: for the judges, which were constituted by the advice of Jethro, could not resolve this hard question; and therefore they resorted to Moses, unto whose judgment all difficult causes were reserved, (Exod. xviii. 22. 26. see Selden, lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 1. n. 3.)

We are defiled by the dead body of a man.] And therefore some may think, should have been excluded out of the camp, (according to what was ordained, chap. v. 2.) and consequently kept from coming with such questions, or about any other business to Moses. But it must be considered, that when this happened, the law now mentioned

was not given: for this was in the first month of the second year; and that law was not given till the second month, when the camps were formed.

Wherefore are we kept back.] It was against their will that they were defiled by the dead body of a man (which perhaps they were bound to bury), and therefore they expostulate with Moses about their being denied the liberty which others had; pleading, in effect, it was not their fault that they were defiled by the dead, but rather their unhappiness; and therefore, why might they not challenge a right in this sacrifice, as well as others, seeing they had not forfeited it by any other voluntary guilt?

That we may not offer an offering of the Lord.] The Passover is called the *korban of the Lord*, because it was to be killed, and its blood sprinkled (which shews it to be properly a sacrifice), and then eaten by God's commandment, in a grateful remembrance of an exceeding great benefit; which shews it to be an eucharistical sacrifice. For though the first sacrifice in Egypt was to procure deliverance to them, and to avert the evil which fell on the Egyptians by the destroying angel; yet, ever after it was a thanksgiving for deliverance then wrought, by God's special favour to them: of which there was a compendious commemoration made in their paschal rites, (Exod. xii. 26, 27.)

In his appointed season among the children of Israel.] For if they did not perform all this service now, they knew it was not lawful to be done at any other time.

Ver. 8. *And Moses said unto them, Stand still.*] Or, wait here awhile. In which words Moses himself acknowledges the difficulty of the case; which he could not resolve, till he had first consulted the Divine Majesty about it. Which may teach judges not to be ashamed to confess their ignorance, and take advice on matters dubious; as the Jerusalem Targum here observes. But I see no such good ground for the other part of his observation on this verse; that there being four difficult causes brought before Moses, in two of them he made haste to determine; but in the other two he was slow. Those of the first sort were this, and that of the daughters of Zelophehad; (chap. xx.) these he judged presently, because they were pecuniary matters; but the other two, (*viz.* about him that blasphemed, Lev. xxiv. and him that gathered sticks on the sabbath-day, Numb. xv.) being capital causes, he took longer time to judge; for he put them in ward till the mind of the Lord was known: to teach those that succeeded him in the office of judges, "to make quick dispatch in money matters, but to proceed slowly in capital causes." But, as this was no pecuniary cause, so it doth not appear but he took as much time to understand the mind of God in it, as in the other two about blasphemy and sabbath-breaking: for he went in to consult with him, as he did also in the case of Zelophehad's daughters, whose cause he brought before the Lord, (chap. xxvii. 5.)

I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you.] These words seem to signify, that Moses might go into the holy place when he pleased to inquire of God; where God spake with him in an audible voice, (chap. vii. 89.) whensoever he desired satisfaction about any doubt. So Abarbinel, who in this forsakes the Talmudists: for they fancy, that because God called to Moses, and then spake to him out of the tabernacle, (Levit. i. 1.) he could never go into the holy place, but when he was called. Which was true only at that time, when the glory of the Lord had newly filled the tabernacle; so that he durst not come into it, till he was invited: but was not a general rule to be observed in all his colloquies with the Divine Majesty (that he should wait till he had a singular call to come to him); for it is plain by this place, that he went in to speak with him, whensoever he had occasion.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] He brought this case before the Lord, as his manner was in such doubts, and the Lord gave him the following answer; which was to be a rule, not only to these present inquirers, but to all posterity.

Ver. 10. *If any man of you, or of your posterity, shall be unclean.*] From hence the Jews observe, that this is a law concerning particular persons only; not concerning all the people, or the major part of them. For, as the Mischna saith in the title Pesachim, (cap. 7.) if all the people, or the greater part, or the priests, had contracted any defilement, they ought notwithstanding to keep the Passover, even in that defilement. But if the lesser part only were defiled, then they that were clean ought to keep it in the first month, and they that were defiled in the second. This they ground upon the very first words of this law, (ver. 6.) *there were certain men;* and upon these, *if any man of you,* &c. From whence, saith Maimonides, this doctrine follows, out of ancient tradition, that "there were some private persons, who were adjourned to the second Passover; but if the generality should be defiled by the dead, they were not to be so adjourned, but to sacrifice in that uncleanness." A great deal more to the same purpose may be seen in the forenamed Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 1. n. 3.

By reason of a dead body.] This case is mentioned instead of all other of like nature. For there was the same reason for those who were unclean by a leprosy; for women in child-bed, or that were menstruous, or those that had a running issue, or had touched a dead carcass. And this some of them ground upon ver. 13. where, speaking of those who should keep the Passover, it is said in general, *the man that is clean,* &c. therefore, he that was any way unclean might not keep it.

Or be in a journey afar off.] Out of his own country, (for it could not be kept any where but in Judea, Deut. xvi. 2.) or at such a distance that he could not reach the tabernacle upon the day appointed. In the Mischna, indeed, this *dereck rechokah,* as it is in the Hebrew (*a long way off*), is defined to be *fifteen* miles from Jerusalem, or the place where the tabernacle was. Whence Maimonides saith, "If any man on the *fourteenth* day of the month Nisan, at sunrising was *fifteen* miles or more from Jerusalem, this was a *remote way;* but if he was not so far from it, he was not comprehended in this *remote way;* for he might be at Jerusalem time enough in the afternoon to keep the Passover that evening; though he went but a slow pace, and that on foot. But I do not take this to be a reasonable explication. Philo hath determined the distance a great deal better, according to the interpretation I mentioned at first, lib. iii. de Vita Mosis, where he saith, the second Passover was permitted, τοῖς μακρᾶς χάριν ἀποδημίας κωλυομένοις, &c. *To such who were hindered by their travels into countries a great way off, from sacrificing with the rest of*

their nation. For it was not their fault that they were deprived of this honour; especially considering that so small a country as Judea could not contain such a populous nation, but sent out colonies into many places. As for those who were only *fifteen* miles from Jerusalem, they might easily have come to the feast, if not on the *fourteenth* day, yet the day before; and if this distance had been a good reason to excuse their absence, most of the nation might have stayed away without any danger.

Yet he shall keep the Passover unto the Lord.] When that uncleanness is gone, and he is returned to his own country again.

Ver. 11. *The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it.*] They had a whole month's time given them, to dispose themselves and their affairs, so that they might be able to keep it.

And eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.] Those Jews who are called Karaites, as Mr. Selden observes in the place beforenamed, (n. 7.) expressly say, that they were not bound in the second month Passover unto more than this; to eat the lamb with unleavened bread and bitter herbs: but they were not obliged to keep the feast of unleavened bread seven days, because they might do that in the Passover of the first month: for the unclean are only prohibited to eat the Passover, but not to keep the feast of unleavened bread.

If the same persons that could not keep it in the first month, happened again to be unclean in the second, they could not keep it in the third, or the fourth months: for this had been to confound one feast with another; and there is no order for it.

Ver. 12. *They shall leave none of it till the morning, nor break any bone of it.*] This belongs to the eating of the paschal lamb, (Exod. xii. 10. 46.)

According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it.] See ver. 3. This is to be understood of all the rites that were proper to the offering, and to the eating of the paschal lamb; but not to the keeping of the seven days of unleavened bread.

Ver. 13. *But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the Passover.*] In the first month, which was the time appointed for it.

Even the same shall be cut off from his people.] By the hand of the judges, or of God.

Because he brought not the offering of the Lord in his appointed season.] See ver. 7.

That man shall bear his sin.] The punishment of it.

Ver. 14. *And if a stranger shall sojourn among you.*] He speaks of a proselyte, who had not entirely embraced their religion; but was no idolater.

And will keep the Passover unto the Lord.] Hath a desire to join with you in the solemnity.

According to the ordinance of the Passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do.] He was to be circumcised, and his whole family; or otherwise he could not be permitted to keep it. (See Exod. xii. 44.) If he was made an entire proselyte after the Passover in the first month, and before that in the second, it was a question whether he might keep it then or not.

Ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.] See Exod. xii. 49.

Ver. 15. *And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up.*] This is here mentioned again by Moses, because he is going to speak of their removal from Sinai; which was by the direction and guidance of this cloud, which settled upon the tabernacle when it was first erected, (Exod. xl. 34.)

The cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony.] The words may be exactly rendered out of the Hebrew, *the cloud covered the* (*mischan*, or) *dwelling-place of God, upon* (or *over*) *the tent of the testimony:* that is, over that part of the tabernacle where the ark was, the cloud appeared visible to all, *viz.* over the most holy place; where the Lord appeared in a glorious cloud upon the mercy-seat, (Lev. xvi. 2.)

And at even.] When it grew dark.

There was upon the tabernacle.] Upon that part of it now mentioned.

As it were the appearance of fire.] The same cloud which was outwardly dark was bright within, and turned that light side towards them in the night; when the cloudy part could not be seen nor be useful to them.

Till the morning.] Till it was day, when the cloud was more serviceable to them than the light.

Ver. 16. *So it was alway.*] All the time of their continuance in the wilderness. (See Exod. xiii. 21.)

The cloud covered it by day.] The word *by day* is not in the original: it being the manner of the Hebrew language to omit a word sometime in one part of a sentence, which the other part necessarily supplies: as in Psal. lxxxiv. 11. *One day in thy courts is better than a thousand; i. e.* in any other place. And Psal. xci. 7. *A thousand shall fall at thy side* (*i. e.* on thy left hand), *and ten thousand at thy right hand.*

And the appearance of fire by night.] As the dark side of the cloud appeared by day over the holy place, when they had need of no other light but that of the sun; so the bright part appeared every night, and that like fire; when the cloud, by reason of darkness, could not be seen, nor be serviceable to them for their direction. (See Exod. xl. 38.)

Ver. 17. *And when the cloud was taken up.*] Or went up from off the tabernacle, which it before covered, and appeared higher in the air. From hence to the end of the chapter, Moses gives an account of their removal from Mount Sinai, and the reason of their staying a longer or shorter time in those places to which they removed, all the time of their travels in the wilderness.

Then after that the children of Israel journeyed.] They took down the tabernacle, when the cloud was gone up from it, (as had been directed, chap. iv. 5, &c.) and followed the cloud, which went before them, and led them to the place where they were to rest, (Exod. xiii. 21.)

And in the place where the cloud abode.] Where it stopped its motion, and stood still.

There the children of Israel pitched their tents.] Set up the tabernacle, and encamped round about it.

Ver. 18. *At the commandment of the Lord the children of Israel journeyed.*] The motion of the cloud was an indication of the Divine pleasure, that they should move also, and go towards another station: which they did, and went on as long as the cloud moved.

And at the commandment of the Lord they pitched.] For when the cloud stood still, that was a Divine direction to

them to stand still also, and there to fix their station where the cloud stood; which, as soon as the tabernacle was set up again, came down and settled upon it, in its wonted place, over the tent of the testimony, (ver. 15.)

As long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in the tents.] And as long as the cloud rested immoveable, in that new place to which it had conducted them, they likewise rested in tents round about it.

Ver. 19. *And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days.*] As it sometimes did: for Maimonides reckons that they stayed eighteen years in one place.

Then the children of Israel kept the charge of the Lord.] This phrase is used here something differently from the sense it hath chap. iii. 25. 28, &c. signifying their obedience to God in fixing their abode there where the cloud rested till it moved again, though it rested never so long.

And journeyed not.] This is the explication of the foregoing words, *they kept the charge of the Lord:* not daring to stir without the conduct of God, though sometimes they stayed so long in a place, that, no doubt, it was very irksome to those who were very desirous, if not impatient, to be in the land of promise. This is an instance of some regard they had to the Divine Majesty; though they did not fear and reverence him so much as they ought to have done; which appeared by their frequent mutinies and disobedience, mentioned in the following story.

Ver. 20. *And so it was, when the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle, according to the commandment,* &c.] If they had a desire to rest awhile longer in some station which was very convenient for them; yet, upon the motion of the cloud, they took down their tents and moved also.

Ver. 21. *And so it was, when the cloud abode from even unto the morning, and the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed.*] That is, if it did not stay a whole day in a place, but settling, in the even upon the tabernacle, it was taken up again the next morning; yet they followed its motion. This is a great instance of their obedience in this particular: for, having rested but one night, they might be weary, and very unwilling to take down their tents and the tabernacle, and travel again the next morning.

Whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed.] This is a further instance of their being perfectly guided by God in this matter; that, though they were at rest in their beds, yet, if notice was given of the motion of the cloud, they rose up and went after it. For they were sensible their safety depended upon the protection and guidance of this cloud.

Ver. 22. *Or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle,* &c.] These words may seem superfluous (saith Maimonides, par. iii. More Nevochim, cap. 50.) unto those who do not consider the intention of Moses in this relation; which was, to confute the conceit of profane people, who imagined the reason of the Israelites staying so long in the wilderness was, because they lost their way. For the Arabians, he saith, in his days, still called the wilderness, in which they travelled, the *wandering desert;* fancying the Israelites here bewildered (as we speak), and could not find their way out; but wandered like men in the dark, backward and forward; not knowing which way to turn themselves: therefore the Scripture punctually shews, that all their removals (which were irregular), and the time they rested in any place (which was very unequal, being sometimes for eighteen years, some only for one day, or one night), were all ordered by a special direction of God. For which cause all the circumstances of their motion are recited so particularly by Moses. Which shews, also, that the way from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea (on the borders of the land of Canaan) was a plain, known, and beaten road, of about eleven days' journey; which it was not easy for them to miss. And therefore the cause of their going about, and of their staying forty years in the wilderness, is that which Moses relates.

Ver. 23. *At the commandment of the Lord they rested in the tents,* &c.] This is the usual recapitulation of what goes before; (see chap. ii. 34. iv. 49. vi. 21.) and here was the more necessary, because it gives an account of a most material thing, their long stay in the desert, through which God thought fit to lead them, (Exod. xiii. 17, 18.)

They kept the charge of the Lord.] Moved or rested according to the direction which God gave them.

At the commandment of the Lord.] See ver. 18.

By the hand of Moses.] By his ministry, who told them they were to be guided in their motions by the cloud. And therefore they expected no other commandment but that; the Lord being in that cloud, and telling them by its motion or rest what they should do. And when it did move, no question, it was so leisurely, as that they, their children, and cattle might follow it with ease, and be able to take their necessary refreshment.

It is observable, that in all these verses 18. 20. 23. where it is said they journeyed or rested *al pi (at the mouth)*, which we well translate *at the commandment of the Lord*, Onkelos renders it *at the mouth (or commandment) of the Word of the Lord:* which Word he takes to have given to Moses all the commandments he received; for so he translates those words, Exod. xxv. 22. "And there will I meet thee by these; and I will prepare (or appoint) my Word to thee there:" to deliver, that is, the Divine oracles and answers to him.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] This commandment concerning the trumpets, it is very likely, was given before, but not mentioned till now, when there was an occasion for one principal use of them, *viz.* the removal of their camp, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 2. *Make thee two trumpets.*] There were several sorts of trumpets, of different form, among the ancients, as Eustathius shews upon Homer's Iliad Σ. p. 1138. where he mentions six: the second of which was στρογγύλη, *turned up round* like a ram's horn; which, he saith, the Egyptians used (it being found out by Osiris) when they called the people to their sacrifices; Χρῶνται δὲ αὐτῇ πρὸς θυσίαν καλοῦντες τοὺς ὄχλους δι' αὐτῆς. It was called in their language Χνουή. Now in this Moses opposed the Egyptians (which they would do well to take notice of, who make their customs to be of the greatest antiquity); for those which he here ordered to be made were long, such as we use at present. So Josephus tells us, in whom there is a large description of them, lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 11. where he saith they were a cubit long, and narrow, like a pipe; but wider, as ours are, at the bottom.

Though only two be now ordered for present use, it did not hinder their making more hereafter; when both priests and people also were multiplied: see 2 Chron. v. 12. where, in Solomon's time, there were a hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets. And Josephus mentions a vast number more, (lib. viii. Antiq. cap. 2.)

Of silver.] These being sacred trumpets, as Josephus frequently calls them, it was fit they should be made of this pure metal; which gave them also a shriller sound.

Of one whole piece shalt thou make them.] As he did the candlestick, (Exod. xxv. 31.) which made them the more firm, and apter to give a certain and distinct sound.

That thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps.] These are the two great uses for which they were designed: unto which some think a third is added, (ver. 9. see there.) It is certain, that in ver. 10. another use of them is assigned.

Ver. 3. *And when they.*] *i. e.* The priests, (ver. 8.)

Shall blow.] With an equal and continued sound.

With them.] With both the trumpets, as appears from ver. 4.

All the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee.] By this kind of sound, with both the trumpets, the people understood that the whole congregation was called to meet together.

At the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] Which seems to have been the usual place where they assembled; and made their meeting the more solemn, because it was before the Lord.

Ver. 4. *And if they blow but with one trumpet, then the princes which are heads,* &c.] If only one trumpet made the sound beforementioned, it was intended to summon only the princes of Israel to attend Moses.

Shall gather themselves to thee.] At the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, as was said before.

Ver. 5. *When ye blow an alarm.*] When they did not simply blow with a long, even, and plain blast; but with an interrupted, and a broken or trembling sound: which had, as the Jews say, a plain note before, and after that a quavering. We generally explain it by a *tara-tan-tara:* but that word (as Dr. Lightfoot observes) signifies a blast, which put the quavering sound before and after, and the plain note in the midst; which is contrary to the Jewish description of it. (See Temple Service, chap. 7. sect. 2.) Hottinger makes no other distinction between the foregoing sound, (ver. 3.) called *tekiah,* and this called *teruah;* but that the former was equal, and this was quick and concise, (Analect. Dissert. iii. p. 152.)

Then the camps that lie on the east parts shall go forward.] *viz.* If this alarm was blown only once, (as appears from ver. 6.) then the hosts that were under the standard of Judah began to march: (see chap. ii. 3.)

Ver. 6. *When ye blow an alarm the second time,* &c.] Having ceased for awhile, if the alarm was blown again, then those tribes which were under the standard of Reuben (chap. ii. ver. 10, 11, &c.) began to move, who lay on the south side.

They shall blow an alarm for their journeys.] That is, they shall blow a *third* and *fourth* alarm, for the moving of the other two standards. So the LXX. rightly explain it, in so many words at length; *Ye shall blow an alarm the third time, and the camps that lie towards the sea* (*i. e.* on the west side) *shall take their journey; and ye shall blow the fourth alarm, and they that lie towards the north,* &c. In what order the camp of the Levites moved, is related afterward, ver. 17. 21.

Ver. 7. *And when the congregation is to be gathered together, you shall blow, but you shall not sound an alarm.*] Here is a manifest distinction between plain *blowing* and *sounding an alarm;* which were for different purposes, and accordingly to be used, (ver. 3. 5.)

Ver. 8. *And the sons of Aaron the priests shall blow with the trumpets.*] None else were permitted to use them, either for calling the assembly together, or for their march, or at their feasts: because God would have the greater regard paid to the sound which was made by his ministers; as if he himself called upon them to attend his summons.

And they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations.] These trumpets shall be used by you, not only while you stay in the wilderness, but in future ages, as long as you are a nation.

Ver. 9. *And if you go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you,* &c.] This is thought to be a *third* use of the trumpets; when they were going to give battle to their enemies. Which may be confirmed from chap. xxxi. 6. and from 2 Chron. xiii. 12. But this doth not exclude another meaning; which is, that they called the people together to fast and pray to God before they went out to battle. For it is certain that a fast was proclaimed by blowing of the trumpet, (Joel ii. 15, &c.) Which justifies what Maimonides saith in Taanioth, cap. 1. that they blow with the trumpet, not only when they were in danger from their enemies; but in all other distresses, by famine, or pestilence, &c. For he makes this blowing with the trumpets in this place, to be the same with that precept, Psal. l. 14. "Call upon me in the day of trouble," (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 36.) The only objection that I can find against this exposition (which is very ancient) is, that Moses speaks here of *blowing an alarm* with the trumpets; which was not used (ver. 7.) for calling the assembly together, but for the motion of the camps, (ver. 5.) Yet one cannot conceive how they should be gathered together to make an army to fight with their enemies, but by some sort of sound with the trumpet, (see Judg. iii. 27. vi. 34.) and being met, it is highly probable they called upon God by prayer and fasting for good success; as the latter part of this verse intimates. Besides, these silver trumpets seem to have been used only at the sanctuary; and other trumpets were used when they went to war. For at the siege of Jericho, the priests blew with horns, not with these silver trumpets. Therefore, they may well be thought here to have called them to the sanctuary to pray to God before they went to war; and that by blowing an alarm, whereby they understood the meaning of the summons. And if we may believe the Jews, they used, when the temple was built, to *blow an alarm* every morning at the opening of the gates of it; particularly at the opening of the east gate, called the gate of Nicanor (as Dr. Lightfoot observes in the place abovenamed); for which, though there was no express command, yet it was grounded on this reason, that the Levites, who were God's host, as they are often called in this book, (chap. iv. 3, &c. viii. 24.) might be awakened to come and attend their service in the house of God.

And ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God.] He will be merciful to you, and grant your request; as the next words explain it.

And ye shall be saved from your enemies.] Which is to be understood with this condition, *that they turned to him with unfeigned repentance;* which was the proper intention of their prayer and fasting.

Ver. 10. *Also in the days of your gladness.*] Here is the fourth use of these trumpets, which were blown when they rejoiced for the good success, suppose, of their arms, or any other great deliverance; like that mentioned Esther ix. 19. when they feasted upon the peace-offerings, which were then offered. And thus it was when Solomon built the temple, (2 Chron. v. 12. vii. 6.) and at the laying the foundation of the second temple after the captivity, (Ezra iii. 10.) and at the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem, (Nehem. xii. 27. 35.)

And in your solemn days.] Mentioned in Levit. xxiii. which were proclaimed by sound of trumpet; (see there, ver. 2.) and there were great feasts upon many of them, at which the Levites, the poor, and the widows were entertained, (Deut. xvi. 11. Nehem. viii. 10. 12.) But they were not all *feasts* which are there mentioned; for one of those *solemn days* was a *fast, viz.* the great day of atonement. And therefore the Hebrew word *mode* should rather be translated *days of assemblies,* as our Mr. Thorndike observes; who (in his book concerning the Service of God at religious Assemblies) notes, that Moses here distinguishes three sorts of solemnities. First, *The days of your gladness;* which signifies solemnities to be celebrated with cheerfulness of heart, *i. e.* feasts. Then, *The solemn days of assemblies* (as he translates it); containing, besides those, assemblies for humiliation, as the day of atonement. And lastly, *The beginnings of your months;* to which there was a peculiar service appointed, (chap. xxviii. 11.)

And in the beginning of your months.] On the new moons, which the Jews observed, not like those other festivities and days of assemblies, upon which they abstained from all servile work; but with special sacrifices, which God appointed to be offered to him upon them, (Numb. xxviii. 11. 14.) and with the solemnity of blowing with trumpets, (Psal. lxxxi. 3.) And they were the more careful to observe the new moons, because their great festivals depended upon them; though they are not reckoned among their festivals or solemn assemblies, (Levit. xxiii.) but only the first day of the seventh month was a memorial of blowing of trumpets, (ver. 24.) which gave occasion, perhaps, for observing all the new moons in the year. And there being no express command for observing the first day of the month, but only for peculiar sacrifices upon it, and blowing of trumpets, some argue from thence, that, in the most ancient times, before the law of Moses, new moons were observed with festival joy (it being plain that they were so in the days of Hesiod); of which, though we can have no certainty, yet it is very probable, that the idolatry of worshipping the sun, moon, and stars, being then in the world, they were wont, at the appearance of every moon, to express much joy, and offer sacrifices to it. From which God intended to preserve his people, by appointing special sacrifices (with blowing of trumpets) to be offered unto himself at that time. And it is manifest the Jews were so observant of the new moons, that they seem to have regarded them next to their sabbath, as times of religious worship of the Divine Majesty, (2 Kings iv. 23. Isa. lxvi. 23. Amos viii. 5.)

And thus I find, that, among the Athenians (whose laws are observed by many to have been derived from Moses), the first day of the month was ἱεροτάτη ἡμέρα, as Plutarch speaks, *a most holy day;* and yet it was not a festival: nor was it consecrated to any particular god, but unto all. And there was a law, ταῖς Νουμηνίαις θύειν, *that they offer sacrifices upon the first day of the month;* when they went up to the *acropolis* (as Demosthenes tells us) to pray for the public welfare of the city, and for their own private happiness: (see Sam. Petitus in his Comment. in Leges Atticas, lib. i. tit. 1. p. 85.)

Over the burnt-offerings.] Especially the morning sacrifice; at the offering of which the trumpets began to sound, (2 Chron. xxix. 27.)

And over the sacrifice of your peace-offerings.] Which, being sacrifices of thanksgiving, it was very proper to have them attended with the sound of the trumpets.

That they may be to you for a memorial before your God.] *i. e.* That he may graciously accept your offerings, and bless you (as the phrase signifies in the foregoing verse), when he sees his service to be your delight and joy.

I am the Lord your God.] By whose sovereign authority these commands were given; and in the observance of which they might be assured of his blessing.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year.*] After their coming out of Egypt, as appears from chap. i. 1.

That the cloud was taken up.] In token that they were to begin to move, as the cloud did, (chap. ix. 17.)

From off the tabernacle of the testimony.] *i. e.* The most holy place, over which it resided, (chap. ix. 15.)

Ver. 12. *And the children of Israel took their journeys.*] After the cloud was taken up, it stood still for some time, till they had taken down the tabernacle, and packed up their own tents and household-stuff. Or else, while those under the first standard moved, they took down the tabernacle: but still the three tribes which first moved, upon the going up of the cloud, must have some time allowed to take up their own tents, &c.

Out of the wilderness of Sinai.] Where they had stayed near a year.

And the cloud rested.] After *three* days' motion, (ver. 33.)

In the wilderness of Paran.] Where they had several stations, besides this; which was the midway between the Red Sea and the land of Canaan; and, from the graves of those that lusted, was called Kibroth-hattaavah, (chap. xi. 33. xxxiii. 16.) where they stayed a month; and from thence went to Hazeroth: and were still in the wilderness of Paran, (chap. xii. 16.)

Ver. 13. *And they first took their journey.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *they journeyed at the first; i. e.* at their first removal; which was this.

According to the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses.] Not whither they pleased themselves, but according as God had before directed, when the cloud was taken up; and in such order as he appointed: (see chap. ix. 18.) and there seems to have been a special direction, by an express command, for this first removal, (Deut. i. 6, 7.)

Ver. 14. *In the first place went the standard of the children of Judah,* &c.] By this it appears, that the foregoing words, concerning their removal *according to the commandment of the Lord,* relate to the order of their march, as well as to the way they went. See, concerning those that marched under his standard, and their commanders (which are here mentioned, and in the two next verses), chap. ii. 1. 3. 5. 7.

Ver. 17. *And the tabernacle was taken down.*] By the Levites, (chap. i. 51.) who went about this work as soon as the cloud went up from the tabernacle; while the three tribes under the standard of Judah were setting themselves to move.

And the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set forward.] They immediately followed the three tribes, which encamped on the east of it, under the standard of Judah.

Bearing the tabernacle.] Such parts of it, as were committed to each of their charge, (see chap. iv. 24, &c. 31, &c.)

Ver. 18. *And the standard of the camp of Reuben set forward, according to their armies,* &c.] Of this and the two following verses, see chap. ii. 10. 12. 14.

Ver. 21. *And the Kohathites set forward, bearing the sanctuary.*] That is, the ark, the holy table, the candlestick, &c. and other things belonging to the sanctuary, (chap. iv. 15, 16, &c.) which the Kohathites carried in the middle of the four camps, for their greater security.

And the other.] *i. e.* The Gershonites and the Merarites beforementioned, (ver. 17.)

Did set up the tabernacle against they came.] When the cloud rested, the two foregoing camps under the standards of Judah and Reuben rested also; and settled themselves in their tents: which while they were doing, the Gershonites and Merarites (who marched between them) set up the tabernacle, that it might be ready to receive the ark, and the other holy things, which followed immediately, under the care of the Kohathites. This shews the excellent order wherein they always moved; not only without any tumult or confusion, but with such a discipline, as signified they were under the conduct of a most skilful leader.

Ver. 22. *And the standard of the children of Ephraim set forward according to their armies.*] After the Kohathites followed three other tribes, who were under this standard: see chap. ii. 18. 20. 22. 24. where all that was needful hath been said of the two following verses.

Ver. 25. *And the standard of the children of Dan set forward,* &c.] See concerning him, and those mentioned in the two next verses, chap. ii. 25. 27. 29.

Which was the rere-ward of all the camps throughout their hosts.] The Hebrew word *measseph* (which we translate *was the rere-ward),* comes from a word, which every where signifies to gather together, or collect. And therefore is here to be so understood; and the whole sentence thus rendered: *Then set forward the standard of the camp of Dan, gathering to it all the camps, throughout their hosts:* or, *according to their armies,* as we here translate the last part of these words, (ver. 14. 18. 22.) So Forsterus translates it; the meaning being, that all the rest of the people, who were not a part of the four beforementioned camps, all under twenty years old (who were *not able to go forth to war*), together with the mixed multitude that came with them out of Egypt, (Exod. xii. 38.) and all the unclean persons, who were shut out of the camp, (chap. v. 2.) came after this hindermost standard of the children of Dan.

Ver. 28. *Thus were the journeyings of the children of Israel,* &c.] In this order they marched, when they removed from one station to another.

Ver. 29. *And Moses said unto Hobab.*] His wife's brother, as Theodoret understands it.

The son of Raguel the Midianite.] The son of Jethro, priest of Midian; for Raguel and he are thought by many to be the same person; (Exod. ii. 18. iii. 1.) or one was the father, and the other the son, and Hobab was the grandson of Raguel.

Moses' father-in-law.] These words may either refer to Raguel, who is supposed to be Jethro; and then it is rightly translated *father-in-law:* or they may as well refer to Hobab, and be translated *brother-in-law;* for so the Hebrew word *choten* sometimes signifies, a very near kinsman. It cannot, without great straining, be otherwise expounded in Judges i. 16. and iv. 11. After Jethro, therefore, was gone back to his own country, (Exod. xviii. 27.) Hobab, his son, stayed still with his sister Zipporah, and accompanied Moses all the time he stayed near Sinai, which was not far from Midian, whither he thought to return, now the Israelites were marching away from that neighbourhood; but Moses was desirous to have his company further, even to the land of promise.

We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you.] *i. e.* To the land of Canaan; for thither God intended to have brought them, shortly after this removal; as appears from Deut. i. 6, 7.

Come thou with us, and we will do thee good.] See ver. 32.

For the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.] Promised to bestow a noble country upon us for our inheritance.

Ver. 30. *And he said, I will not go.*] This was his present resolution, till Moses had further persuaded him.

But I will depart to my own land.] Which he was loath to leave, merely in hope of what the Israelites had not yet in possession.

And to my kindred.] With whom all men love to live and die.

Ver. 31. *And he said.*] *i. e.* Moses replied.

Leave us not I pray thee.] Do not persist in that resolution, but be persuaded to go along with us.

Forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness.] He being a borderer upon this wilderness, was well acquainted with every part of it, and the better able to advise them how to secure their camp (for the cloud only served to direct them where it should be pitched), and defend themselves from the people, on all sides, that might be injurious to them; which made Moses so earnest with him to stay with them, while they had such need of his assistance.

And thou mayest be to us instead of eyes.] To give them advice and counsel in any difficulty they might meet withal in the places where they stayed; or to direct them how to provide themselves with such things as they wanted: for he, having lived long thereabouts, could not but understand the neighbouring countries. The LXX. understand this passage, as if he desired him to continue to be what he had been hitherto in the wilderness (*viz.* a good adviser, like his father Jethro), assuring him, they would look upon him as an *elder;* that is, have him in great honour.

Ver. 32. *And it shall be, if thou go with us.*] Not only stay with us, while we are here in the wilderness, but go along with us into Canaan.

Yea, it shall be.] Depend upon it.

That what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.] Give thee some part of the possession which God shall bestow upon us. Accordingly it appears, that, as Moses prevailed with him to accompany them, so he and his posterity were settled among the Israelites, Judges i. 16. and iv. 11. (where either he or his father is called the Kenite), who lived in tents, not in houses, after the manner of their forefathers in Midian.

Ver. 33. *And they departed from the mount of the Lord.*] *viz.* Horeb, in the wilderness of Sinai, where they had stayed a long time, (Deut. i. 6.)

Three days' journey.] They travelled three days before the cloud settled again upon the tabernacle; though it stood still sometimes (but did not descend) to give them time for necessary refreshment, and for sleep. (See chap. xi. 1.)

And the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days' journey.] It is said, ver. 21. that the sanctuary was carried between the two first standards, and the two last; *i. e.* in the midst of the camp, as we expressly read, chap. ii. 17. which Abarbinel thinks is to be understood of all their journeys, but only this. That was the constant order of their march; first went the standard of Judah; next that of Reuben: after this, the tabernacle of the congregation; then followed the standard of Ephraim; and last of all, that of Dan. But now, in their first removal, God did them the honour to appoint the ark to go before them, in the front of all the camps; as he did when they passed over Jordan; (Joshua iii. 6.) that is, in their first and last journeys this extraordinary favour was shewn them; but in all the rest the ark went in the midst of them. And thus Aben Ezra upon this place: "This first removal was not like the rest of their removals." But I see no good ground for this exposition. The plain meaning seems to be, that the Lord, as their king and governor, led them by the cloud, which was always over the ark; just as a general leads his army, though he be not in the front of it, but in the midst, from whence he issues out his orders.

To search out a resting-place for them.] There was no need of inquiry after a fitting station for them; but he speaks after the manner of generals, who send officers before them, to take up the most convenient quarters for their army. (See Deut. i. 33.)

Ver. 34. *And the cloud of the Lord was upon them by day, when they went out of the camp.*] It seems this removal of their camp from Sinai was in the day-time; (as sometimes they removed in the night, chap. ix. 21.) and the cloud being taken up from off the tabernacle, so moved over the ark, as to overspread them all by day, as the pillar of fire was over them by night, to give them assurance of the Divine protection. (See note upon Exod. xiii. 21. and Psal. cv. 39.)

Ver. 35. *And when the ark set forward.*] There being the letter *nun* turned the wrong way in the Hebrew word for *set forward;* as there is in the word for *complained,* in the first verse of the next chapter; the Jewish doctors fancy it denotes here God's gracious converting his face towards them, at the prayer of Moses; and, in the following story, the people's aversion to God, and ungrateful turning away their hearts from him.

Moses said.] It was his custom to pray in this manner upon such occasions; as R. Levi ben Gersom expounds it.

Rise up.] This is an expression (saith Abarbinel) like that in Isa. xxxiii. 10. "Now will I rise, saith the Lord, and will be exalted," &c. where his taking vengeance upon his enemies is called *his rising;* according to Job xxxi. 14. "What shall I do, when God riseth up," &c. The next words, "Let thine enemies be scattered," &c. justify this sense.

Lord.] It seems very strange to me, that any should allege this place as a proof that the ark is called Jehovah; when the prayer of Moses is so plainly directed to the Lord himself (who was there in a glorious symbol of his presence), and not to the ark; considering also, that, in other places where this very form of speech is used, the Lord and the ark are most manifestly distinguished the one from the other, (see 2 Chron. vi. 41. and Psal. cxxxii. 8.) And yet an anonymous anti-trinitarian writer (confuted by Joseph de Voisin fifty years ago), observing that the Chaldee here, instead of the *Lord,* hath the *Word of the Lord,* is so absurd, as to say, that the ark is called the *Word;* because God, (saith he, p. 234.) "ante illam responsa vel oracula sua dabat," &c. *before the ark gave his answers or oracles, when the priest, in dubious matters, consulted the mouth of the Lord:* which exposition carries its own confutation in it; for, if the high-priest consulted the mouth of the Lord (as he speaks), then, by the *Word* which gave the answer, must be meant the Lord himself; to whom Moses here directs his prayer, as the Jerusalem Targum excellently paraphrases this verse; "And it came to pass, when the ark was taken up, that Moses lifted up his hands in prayer, and said, Rise now, O Word of the Lord, in the strength of thy power, and scatter the enemies of thy people," &c.

And let thine enemies be scattered.] This is a prayer, that God would put all those to flight (as he had done the Amalekites, Exod. xvii.) who opposed their passage to the promised land: as, after they came thither, they used this prayer, (Psal. lxviii. 1.) for his aid against all those who sought to dispossess them of it.

And let them that hate thee flee before thee.] This is a repetition of the same prayer, as is usual; for *thine enemies,* and *those that hate thee,* signify the very same, (Psal. xxi. 8. Dan. iv. 19. Luke i. 71.)

Ver. 36. *And when it rested.*] As it did wheresoever the cloud stayed, and moved no further.

He said.] He prayed again. So the Jerusalem Targum understands both this and the former verse, "Moses lifted up his hand in prayer, and said," &c. And Jonathan Uzielides, "Moses stood in prayer, and begged mercy of God, saying," &c.

Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel.] Which Onkelos thus paraphrases, *Come again, and dwell with thy glory in the midst of us.* And so he did; the cloud, wherein the Divine Majesty resided, settling upon the tabernacle, over the ark of the testimony, as soon as it was again pitched. Others translate it, *Give rest, O Lord* (which the Hebrew words will bear); secure us, that is, in peace against the incursions of our enemies, and all other dangers. R. Levi ben Gersom expounds it, *Bring back*

the Israelites into the land of promise, where their forefathers dwelt when they were few in number; whose posterity was now increased to *ten thousand thousands*, as the last words are in the Hebrew. And there are those who will have this to be a prayer for their increase and multiplication into many more thousands than they were already. And thus the Jerusalem Targum (who still by the *Lord* understands his *Word*), *Return now, O Word of the Lord, from the vehemence of thy anger, and come back to us in thy merciful goodness; bless the myriads, and multiply the thousands of Israelites.*

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND when the people complained.*] Or, as it is translated in the margin, *were as it were complainers*, or mutterers. Which words, D. Kimchi, in his Michol, brings as an instance to prove that the particle *caph* (which we translate *as*), doth sometimes serve only to signify the truth of a thing, and to confirm it, and imports nothing of *likeness*. For the discontent of the people did not rest in their minds, but broke out into open murmurings and undutiful complaints. The like he observes Gen. xxv. 31. 33. and Hosea v. 10. "The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound:" where we make it to signify a similitude, but should only have taken it as a strong affirmation of the truth of the thing. (See Theod. Hackspan Disput. iv. de Locutionibus Sacris, n. 4.)

Complained.] Of their long march for three days together, with their little children, cattle, and all their baggage. So it is commonly thought; but I can see no good ground for it. For, no doubt, the cloud stood still, (though it did not come down and settle, as I said, chap. x. 33.) that they might make some convenient rests in their journey; else, how should they gather the manna that fell every night about their tents, and would keep but one day, as we read Exod. xvi.? I conclude, therefore, that this muttering was the beginning of those loud complaints which were made a little after, (ver. 4, 5, &c.) because they were not brought by this removal to a place where they might have had other food than manna, of which they now grew weary, having lived upon it near a whole year.

It displeased the Lord.] In the Hebrew, *it was evil in the ears of the Lord;* that is, though it was only a muttering, which did not come to the ears of Moses (as this complaint shortly after did), yet the Lord took notice of it, and was much offended at it; as it here follows.

And the Lord heard it, and his anger was kindled.] Or, *when the Lord heard it*, he demonstrated he was highly offended, by sending a fire among them.

And the fire of the Lord burnt among them.] Some take this phrase, *fire of the Lord*, to signify a great fire; as *mountains of the Lord* are high mountains; which came either from heaven like lightning, (as in 2 Kings i. 12.) or from the pillar of cloud and fire over the tabernacle; where the glory of the Lord appeared sometimes like unto fire.

And consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camps.] Where the mixed multitude was (as I observed, chap. x. 25.) who came out of Egypt; and may well be supposed to have stirred up the Israelites to complain of their tedious journey, which had not yet brought them near to the land of Canaan. And perhaps some of them lagged behind on purpose, that they might complain of weariness (as some take it), or rather of want of stronger food. But Bochartus hath demonstrated, that this word which we translate *the uttermost parts*, signifies *in all*, or *throughout*. Of which he gives many instances out of Lud. de Dieu, upon Ezek. xxxiii. 1. (See Gen. xix. 4. and xlvii. 2, &c. Hierozoicon. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 34.) And therefore so it should be here rendered, *consumed some in every part of the camp;* where they began to make complaints one to another, of their being still in a wilderness.

Ver. 2. *And the people cried unto Moses.*] Of whose power with God they had great experience; but had reason to distrust their own interest in him, because of their murmuring humour: for it is likely they are the same people that cried now to Moses, who before complained, (ver. 1.)

And when Moses prayed unto the Lord.] As they begged he would.

The fire was quenched.] Went out; and no signs of it appeared. So the Hebrew phrase signifies, *it sunk*. What number of them was burnt we are not told: it is likely not many, because the terror of it instantly made them deprecate God's displeasure, by Moses their intercessor; which put a stop to it.

Ver. 3. *And he called the name of the place Taberah.*] Which, for another reason, was also called Kibroth-hattaavah, (ver. 34.) They are mentioned, indeed, in Deut. ix. 22. as if they were two distinct places; but it is plain, by the story, that the things which occasioned both these names, happened in one and the same station. And therefore they were only different names for the same place; unless we suppose Kibroth-hattaavah to have been the name of that particular piece of ground in that place where the lusters were buried.

Because the fire of the Lord burnt among them.] This is the reason of the name of *Taberah* (which signifies *a burning*), which was imposed on this place, to preserve the memory both of God's judgments and of his mercy.

Ver. 4. *And the mixed multitude that was among them.*] The Hebrew word *hasaphsuph* is well translated by Bochartus, "populi colluvies undecunque collecta," *the dregs or scum of the people gathered together from all parts.* For the doubling of words increases their sense, in the Hebrew language, and makes the same with the superlative degree in other tongues: of which he gives many instances in his Hierozoicon, (par. ii. lib. v. cap. 6.) See Lev. xiii. 19. where *adamdameth* signifies *exceeding red;* as *hasaphsuph* here doth *a very great collection* of all sorts of people, both Egyptians and other neighbouring nations, who were invited, by their wonderful deliverance out of Egypt, to join themselves to the Israelites, as proselytes to their religion. (See Exod. xii. 38.) The Jews, in Tanchuma, say, there were forty thousand of them, and Jannes and Jambres at the head of them.

Fell a lusting.] He doth not say for what; and the Jews have taken the liberty to fancy what they please. Some of them say that they lusted after such women, as Moses had lately forbidden them to marry. So the paraphrase of Uzielides: *Moses heard the people weeping, because those that were near of kin to them were forbidden in marriage.* And he makes as if these proselytes petitioned Moses to abrogate those laws about incest. Such conceits others

have indulged to themselves, (as Mr. Selden shews, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 4. p. 202.) when the words (in the end of this verse, and ver. 13. 18.) plainly shew they lusted *for flesh to eat.*

And the children of Israel also.] Though the mixed multitude were the first fomenters of this discontent, yet it run among the children of Israel throughout the whole camp; and rose so high that they fell into a great passion.

Wept again.] They had shed some tears, it seems, before, (when they complained, ver. 1.) but now they wept aloud, out of anger, vexation, and grief. Or else this weeping again refers to their first murmuring a year ago, like unto this, (Exod. xvi. 3.)

And said.] They could not refrain from bursting out into such discontented language; as argued they were extremely angry, or rather enraged.

Who shall give us flesh to eat?] It is an expression of a vehement impatient desire (mixed with despair) after flesh-meat; which they needed not to have wanted, if they would have killed their cattle, which they brought with them out of Egypt in great abundance: (Exod. xii. 38.) but they preserved them for breed when they came to Canaan; and if they killed them daily, they would not have lasted long to suffice six hundred thousand people, besides women and children. (See ver. 21, 22.) Besides this, while they continued in the wilderness, they were not permitted to eat any flesh, but only their share of the peace-offerings that were offered at the altar, (Levit. xvii. 3—5.) Which lasted, the Jews think, till they came to the land of Canaan, when this restraint was taken off, (Deut. xii. 15, 16.) And, indeed, the wilderness was so barren a place, that they could there have no great increase of cattle, scarce sufficient for sacrifice. They were angry, therefore, that they were not yet brought to a country where they might have had all sorts of flesh, without killing their own cattle; and have taken their fill of that and all other food (as appears by the next verse), at as easy rates as they had done in Egypt: whereas now they despaired, as I said, of getting any such food; for so such questions as this signify, (Psalm cxiii. 5. Isai. liii. 8. John viii. 16.)

Ver. 5. *We remember the fish.*] This shews, that all kind of food is comprehended under *flesh*, for which they longed; particularly this, which is one sort of flesh, (1 Cor. xv. 39.)

Which we did eat in Egypt freely.] Or, for nothing: for they could easily catch them in the river of Egypt, which abounded with them, (Isai. xix. 8.) and in the sea also, which was not far from them; wherein was exceeding great plenty of excellent fish.

The cucumbers, and the melons, &c.] None of which grew here in the wilderness, but were there in such plenty and perfection, that they were the common food of the Egyptians; who were noted anciently for the meanness of their diet, as Casaubon observes, in lib. ix. Athenæi Deipnos. cap. 11. p. 674. Some fancy these things were the cheaper there, because the Egyptians durst not eat either fish, or leeks, or onions; as is said by Juvenal, Sat. xv. Pliny, lib. xix. cap. 6. and Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. 37. where he saith, it was not lawful for the Egyptians to taste of fish. But, in my opinion, these words of the people demonstrate rather, that they were not so superstitious in the days of Moses; for they were not the words merely of the Israelites, but of the *mixed multitude,* who were the beginners of this mutiny, and of this sort of undutiful language; which, one would think, they put into the mouths of the Israelites, who could not otherwise have had the impudence to magnify their condition in Egypt, where they groaned under the sorest slavery.

It is a strange fancy of one of the doctors in the Talmud (in the title Jona), who by *fishes* understands *harlots;* whom this crew of mixed people lusted after.

The onions.] The Hebrew word *chatzir* properly signifies *grass;* which being no part of human food, the LXX. here render the word *onions;* as agreeable to the other words that accompany it. But the learned Ludolphus thinks they had no other reason for it; and therefore, out of the Arabian language, rather interprets it *lettuce,* or *sallads,* in general, which were most excellent in Egypt. (Dissert. de Locustis, par. ii. cap. 14.)

Ver. 6. *But now our soul is dried away.*] They speak as if they were starved; and, as we speak, had neither life nor soul left in them. Such is the vile nature of discontented ingratitude, which makes men that are advanced from a poor to a plentiful condition contemn their present enjoyments, and praise their former wretched state.

There is nothing at all besides this manna before our eyes.] They were angry that they were come to a place, where they found nothing but that of which they were now grown weary; and therefore speak of it with disdain.

Ver. 7. *And the manna.*] Upon this occasion he describes more fully what kind of thing it was which they despised, that it might appear how justly God was displeased with them for their ingratitude.

Was as coriander-seed.] Not in colour (for that was like *bdellium,* as it here follows), but in its shape and form, being round, (Exod. xvi. 14.)

And the colour of it as the colour of bdellium.] Of a pure white colour, and bright like pearl; so that it was very grateful to the eye, as well as pleasant to the taste, (see Exod. xvi. 31.)

Ver. 8. *And the people went about.*] Round their camp, (Exod. xvi. 13.)

And gathered it.] Fresh every morning; which made it still more acceptable, (Exod. xvi. 18, 19.)

And ground it in mills.] Into flour, with a hand-mill.

Or beat it in a mortar.] Bruised it with a pestle in a wooden or stone mortar.

And baked it in pans.] Or else boiled it (as R. Bechai expounds it) in a pot.

And made cakes of it.] Or made cakes of it in an oven, or in a pan; that is, saith the same R. Bechai, it was of such an excellent composition, that it might be dressed divers ways, or eaten as it fell. For, if they would, they might use it, saith he, for food immediately, as they gathered it; or they might grind it, or bruise it, and then either boil it or bake it; and it was agreeable in what way soever it was prepared: which Moses mentions, to shew how ungrateful they were to God, who, by one thing, entertained them with great variety.

And the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil.] When it was newly fallen, it tasted like honey; but when it was prepared by boiling, or baking, it tasted like fresh oil, (see Exod. xvi. 31.) Or to some it had the taste of honey; to others, of fresh oil. The Jews, indeed, say it had all sorts of tastes, according to every man's desire. So the author

of the Book of Wisdom speaks, (chap. xvi. 20, 21.) from the ancient tradition of the Hebrews: whereby, I suppose, they meant no more, but that it pleased every man's palate; and had in it all that could be desired in any meat; being grateful to the taste of young and old, and refreshed the spirits, and kept up the flesh of their bodies in good plight. For it is not unreasonably observed, by the aforesaid R. Bechai, that it is compared by Moses to *fresh oil*, which is fat as well as sweet, to shew how unjust their complaint was, that they had no moisture left in them, but were *dried away*, (ver. 6.)

Ver. 9. *And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night.*] There was a great providence of God in this, saith the same Bechai, which sent it in the night, while they slept quietly in their beds; that when they rose in the morning they might find their food ready for them. And thus, saith he, it was when they came to Canaan; the rains were wont to fall in the night-season, and not in the day-time; that they might not be hindered from their work in the fields, and in their plantations.

The manna fell upon it.] That is, upon the dew; for it did not fall upon the camp, but round about it: (see Exod. xvi. 14.) This is a further aggravation of their ingratitude, that they despised this rare food, which came not out of the earth, or the waters, but from above out of the air; and therefore was more pure and spirituous than cucumbers and leeks, &c. which crude and gross sort of food their depraved minds preferred before this celestial nourishment, which by falling on the dew was kept clean and pure for their use.

Huetius observes, that several authors, both ancient and modern, mention manna as a thing which sometimes falls in those countries (particularly in Arabia, and upon Libanus), which they call *aerial honey*, or *dewy honey*, and *Syrian dew*; which was fit for food. But it never fell in such quantity, nor so constantly, every day, for the space of forty years; and so delicious and hearty. All this was miraculous; as was also its melting when the sun shone upon it; and that it putrefied before the next day, except on the sabbath, and yet kept in an urn many years: (see Alnetanæ Quæst. lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 17.)

Ver. 10. *And Moses heard the people weep, throughout their families.*] Or, for their families: or, about the state and condition of their families, as some of the Jews understand it, though to a foolish sense: (see Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 4. p. 203.) who they pretended could not live any longer upon manna.

Every man in the door of his tent.] It may be understood of Moses's tent, about which the heads of the several families were gathered; as mutinous soldiers are wont to be, about the door of their chief commander.

And the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly.] Which brake forth shortly after, in a great plague upon them, (ver. 34.)

And Moses also was displeased.] The same phrase with that, ver. 1.

It was evil in the eyes of Moses.] *i. e.* Grieved him so, that it made him wish himself rid of the burden of their government.

Ver. 11. *And Moses said unto the Lord.*] I suppose he went into the sanctuary to bewail himself, and pray God to relieve him, (see ver. 24.)

Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant?] By committing this people to his charge.

And wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight.] By granting the prayer which he made at his first call to this office, (Exod. iii. 2. iv. 10.)

That thou layest the burden of this people upon me?] *i. e.* The principal care of such an untractable multitude upon one man, to whom they resorted in all difficulties, (Exod. xviii. 22. 26.)

Ver. 12. *Have I conceived all this people, have I begotten them?*] Are they my children, that I should make provision for the satisfaction of all their desires?

That thou hast said unto me, Carry them in thy bosom (as a nursing father beareth the sucking child) unto the land, &c.] Take a tender care of them, as a parent doth of a little infant, and conduct them into Canaan, &c. Nothing can more lively express the affection that princes ought to have for their people (if they have any regard to the will of God), than this Divine command to Moses.

Ver. 13. *Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people?*] It is impossible for me to do what they desire.

For they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh that we may eat.] And yet they will not be satisfied without it. He seems to be affected with their weeping, as the most loving parents are with the tears of a sucking child, when it cries for that which they have not for it.

Ver. 14. *I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.*] Let me have some joined to me to take part of this trouble with me, and help to manage them in such mutinies; for it is beyond my strength to undergo the toil of hearing all their complaints, and appeasing their tumults. Some may imagine there was no reason for this request; he having several persons already appointed to assist him, by the advice of Jethro, (Exod. xviii.) But Rasi thinks those men were burnt in the late fire; because they did not suppress the beginning of this mutiny, (ver. 1.) but perhaps join in it: and so Bechai. But the true account is rather this, that they were set only to hear and judge smaller causes; all the weighty and difficult causes being still brought before Moses, to whom also the last appeal was made in every cause: which was so great a burden, that he complained for want of help in those great things which lay wholly upon him: (see Exod. xviii. 22.)

Ver. 15. *And if thou deal thus with me.*] If thou leavest me still alone in this office.

Kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight.] I shall take it for the greatest kindness to be taken immediately out of the world.

And let me not see my wretchedness.] Live to be a most miserable creature. For to *see wretchedness* is to be wretched; as to *see death* is to die, (Psalm lxxxix. 48.) And what could make such a tender parent as he was more miserable than their perpetual untowardness, together with the intolerable trouble it would give him to see heavy punishments continually befal them for their wickedness, and the enemies of God rejoice in their ruin?

Ver. 16. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] Here is not the least sign of God's dislike of this expostulation of Moses with God; which seems not very dutiful: because the vexation this stubborn people gave him was really so great, that he had reason to desire to be eased of it: which,

though he begged with much earnestness, yet, no doubt, with no less submission to God's holy will and pleasure.

Gather unto me.] These words are interpreted by the Talmudists, as if the meaning was, that *they may be a Sanhedrin to my land; i. e.* a holy, perpetual, standing council, to endure throughout all generations. For wheresoever we meet with this word *li* unto me, they think it signifies a thing to be established by God to all generations. The examples they allege of it are these: of Aaron and his sons he saith, They shall minister *unto me* in the priest's office, (Exod. xxviii. 41.) and of the Levites he saith, (Numb. iii. 12.) They shall be *mine*, or *unto me;* and of the Israelites, (Lev. xxv. 55.) *Unto me* the children of Israel are servants. The like is said of the *first-born*, (Numb. iii. 13.) of the *sanctuary*, (Exod. xxv. 18.) of the *altar*, (Exod. xx. 24.) of the *holy ointment*, (Exod. xxx. 31.) of the kingdom of David, (1 Sam. xvi. 1.) and of the *sacrifices*, (Numb xxviii. 2. See Mr. Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 4. n. 2.)

Seventy men of the elders of Israel.] This number is generally thought, both by the Jewish and Christian writers, to be derived from the number of persons that came down into Egypt with Jacob, (Gen. xlvi. 27.) who, saith R. Bechai, were a kind of prototype of this number in future ages. For hence they were governed by so many elders when they were in Egypt, Exod. iii. 16. (where there is no mention indeed made of *seventy*, but he gathers it from what followed), and those were the *seventy* whom we find at the giving of the law, a little after they came out of Egypt, (Exod. xxiv. 1. 9.) who are called *nobles*, or great men, (ver. 11.) So that this number was not now first constituted; but rather continued and confirmed.

Whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people.] For there were many elders, out of whom *seventy* were chosen: (see Exod. xxiv. 1.)

And officers over them.] That is (saith R. Bechai) whom thou knowest to be of the number of those who, when they were *officers* in Egypt over the people, were beaten by Pharaoh's taskmasters, (Exod. v. 14.) Which word *officers* doth not signify men that had any judicial authority; but only such as had an inspection over others, to see they did their work, and to give an account of them. But it is very likely they were persons of note, who had more than ordinary understanding and breeding, which advanced them to be inspectors of others. And therefore the Talmudists rightly observe, that *the elders and officers* here mentioned were, no doubt, men of wisdom and judgment; who knew how to use the authority that was committed to them. And it is not improbable (as some of them affirm) that they were chosen out of those lesser courts which were erected by the advice of Jethro. See Selden in the same place, (sect. 5.) who at large confutes Baronius and others; who say, that the number of the great Sanhedrin (which derived its original from hence) was *seventy-two;* and makes it appear they were only *seventy;* and with Moses, their head, *seventy-one*, (sect. 8.) And it is not unworthy our notice, that about the same time (as he observes, sect. 12.) that this number of *seventy* judges was here constituted in the wilderness, the great judicature in Areopagus was constituted among the Greeks, *viz.* in the reign of Cecrops, the first king of Athens after the Ogygian flood: when, according to Eusebius, the people of Israel were brought out of Egypt. The Marmora Arundeliana indeed say, this court was erected in the time of Cranaus; but that makes no great difference, for he was the successor of Cecrops. We do not find of what number it consisted, but it is certain it was the highest πάντων τῶν ἐν τοῖς Ἕλλησι Συνεδρίων, *of all the courts among the Greeks.* And it is no less observable, that, as that court began about the same time with the constitution of this among the Hebrews, so they both ended in the reign of the emperor Vespasian; as the said Mr. Selden shews in that book, (cap. 16. sect. 10.)

And bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation.] That there they might be, as it were, consecrated unto God; and that the people might know they received their authority from him.

That they may stand there with thee.] As those men who were to be sharers with him in his authority, and were like to him in wisdom, piety, and descent. So Maimonides glosses upon these words in Hilk. Sanhedr. cap. 2. where he saith, none were made members of the Sanhedrin but priests and Levites, and such of the Israelites as were descended from the noblest families; and quotes these words to prove it.

Ver. 17. *And I will come down.*] In a visible manner, (ver. 25.)

And talk with thee there.] To declare (perhaps in their audience) that he appointed them to the office of being the assistants of Moses in the government.

And I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and put it upon them.] He did not take away from Moses any of the gifts which he had bestowed upon him; nor did he diminish them: but conferred upon these men some of the gifts (which are here meant by *spirit*), *viz.* of wisdom, and judgment, and courage; with all others that were needful in a governor. This R. Solomon Jarchi illustrates by the comparison of a great lamp set up in a room, at which many others are lighted, without the least diminution of its light. (See further, ver. 25.)

And they shall bear the burden of the people with thee.] By this it appears it was the spirit of government which God intended to give them, that they might ease Moses, by assisting him, with the same authority that he had, to hinder or to appease such mutinies as now the people were fallen into.

That thou bear it not thyself alone.] That all the murmurings of the people might not be only against him; but some of their complaints might be diverted unto others: who might also help him in the judging of such causes as had hitherto been reserved to him alone. For it is plain that these seventy persons made a higher court than any of those constituted by the advice of Jethro.

Cornelius Bertram indeed fancies, that these rulers of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, not being sufficient for the business committed to them (though he likewise conceives they had some of their several families joined with them), God appointed these seventy for their assistance, to whom they were to bring all causes which they could not determine, before they troubled Moses with them, (lib. de Repub. Jud. cap. 6.) But our learned Mr. Thorndike, in his Rights of the Church, chap. 2. hath well observed, that those captains were to be in place only during the pilgrimage of the wilderness; for when they came to the land of promise, the law provided that judges and ministers should be ordained in every city, (Deut. xvi. 18.)

who, if there fell any difference about the law, were to repair to the place where God dwelt, to the successors of Moses, and these seventy, for resolution in it, (Deut. vii. 11, 12.) For, as he judiciously notes in his Review, p. 69. (suitable to what is here delivered), they were assumed to assist Moses in his great office of judging the hardest causes; and, by that law, (Deut. xvii. 8, &c.) were afterwards made a standing court, resident at the place of the tabernacle; to judge the last result of all causes concerning the law, and to determine all matter of right not determined by the letter of the same.

Ver. 18. *And say thou unto the people.*] All that he said hitherto concerned Moses himself, in answer to his request. Now he tells him what he should say to the people, in answer to their complaint.

Sanctify yourselves.] Here the word *sanctify* seems to signify no more, but to *prepare* and *make themselves ready* to receive what they desired. So the Chaldee expounds it; and so the word is translated by us several times in the book of Jeremiah, (chap. vi. 4. xii. 3. li. 28.)

Against to-morrow.] He seems at the same time to gratify Moses and satisfy them: for his setting the seventy elders before the Lord, and their eating flesh, succeed one another. Or else, he immediately gathered the elders; and the next day the quails came for their food.

And ye shall eat flesh, for ye have wept in the ears of the Lord, &c.] You shall have what you long for with such vehemence, that it hath made you utter complaints against the Lord.

Ver. 19. *Ye shall eat not one day.*] As they did about a year ago, (Exod. xvi. 12, 13.)

Nor two days, nor five days, &c.] Not for a short time only.

Ver. 20. *But even a whole month.*] So long (the Hebrews gather from hence) they stayed in this part of the wilderness of Paran; or rather, a little longer. For they came hither on the twenty-third day of the second month, in the even; on which, if we suppose the fire to have burnt among them, (ver. 1.) and that the next morning, which is scarce credible, they lusted after flesh, and in a tumultuous manner demanded it of Moses, who promised they should have it; we must allow a little time for the constituting of the seventy elders: and suppose it was done on the twenty-fifth day, and that the next day the quails came (as we translate it), they were two days in gathering them: from whence, if we begin this month, it will appear they stayed here longer than that space.

Until it come out at your nostrils.] Till you be glutted with it, and vomit it up so violently, that it come not only out at your mouth, but at your nostrils.

And it be loathsome to you.] Which was both the cause and the effect of vomiting.

Because that ye have despised the Lord.] Forgetting all that he had done for them, as if it had been nothing; and slighting his servant Moses.

Which is among you.] By a visible token of his glorious presence in the sanctuary, where he dwelt among them, (Exod. xxv. 8.)

And have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?] As if he had undone them by their deliverance from thence.

Both Onkelos and Jonathan translate this verse in such a manner, that one cannot but think they had a notion in their days of more persons than one in the Godhead. For these are the words of the latter of them, *Because you have despised* (or rejected, as Onkelos), *the Word of the Lord, for glorious is his majesty which dwelleth among us.* For I cannot see how the word *Memri* can signify any thing in this place (whatsoever it may do in some others), but a person equal to Jehovah. And yet the anonymous writer against the Trinity (confuted by de Voisin), hath the strange unaccountable boldness to pass it by with this silly gloss, "Propriè de lege accipi potest," &c. *It may be properly understood of the law, which may be contemned or transgressed:* as if this could be called *the glorious majesty of the Lord,* which dwelt among them. What will not men say or do to serve a cause?

Ver. 21. *And Moses said, The people among whom I am.*] Over whom I preside, as their governor.

Are six hundred thousand footmen.] Who were able to carry arms; besides women, and children, and slaves, and the mixed multitude; who in all may well be supposed to have made thirty hundred thousand.

And thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month.] *i. e.* How can this be? Which is a downright distrust of God's promise, if we regard merely the words, and do not consider that they were spoken hastily, and something inconsiderately, while his mind was very much disturbed by the tumult which the people made: for which reason a severe notice is not taken of it; but he only put in mind of God's eternal power, (ver. 23.) Which may make it probable, that they were only words of admiration, how such a provision should be made for such a vast number; and those uttered on a sudden.

Ver. 22. *Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them?*] In the Hebrew the words are, *If the flocks and the herds be slain for them, will they be sufficient for them?* That is, there will not be enough for a whole month. And so the next passage is to be translated, *If all the fish of the sea be gathered for them, will they be sufficient for them?*

Ver. 23. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Is the Lord's hand waxed short?*] *i. e.* I need not tell thee that my power is as great as ever.

Thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee, or not.] For thou shalt be convinced of it by the speedy performance of my promise.

Ver. 24. *And Moses went out.*] I supposed, ver. 11. that Moses went into the sanctuary to make his addresses to God for relief; and if that be true, then that is the place from whence he now went out. But there is this objection against it, that if he had gone to consult God in the sanctuary, (as he did on some occasions, chap. vii. 89.) it would not have been said that he *went out;* but that he *came out.* For that is the usual expression in this matter. Therefore we may rather think he now *went out* of his own tent, where the people stood murmuring, (ver. 10.)

And told the people the words of the Lord.] Both concerning them and concerning himself.

And gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people.] That is, sent out his summons to them to attend him; though two of them, it appears afterward, did not come, (ver. 26.)

And set them round about the tabernacle.] That is, required them to come thither, and there place themselves;

that the people might understand they received their authority from God; and that from thence he might send his Holy Spirit upon them. For God alone, who was their king, could appoint who should bear rule among them. There also were the great assemblies held. (See chap. xxvii. 2.)

Ver. 25. *And the Lord came down in a cloud.*] The Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, appeared from heaven in a cloud; or, in the *pillar of the cloud*, as it is in chap. xii. 5.

And spake unto him.] As he had promised, ver. 17. declaring, it is likely, the reason and intention of his appearing on this occasion.

And took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders.] See there, ver. 17.

And it came to pass, that when the spirit rested upon them.] *i. e.* As soon as they received it.

They prophesied.] Either by setting forth the praises of God in such a strain as none else could imitate, or giving such admirable instructions to the people, as manifested they were raised above themselves; or perhaps by declaring things to come (particularly that they should have *quails*, as we render the word, in great abundance very shortly, as some of the Jews take it), though that could not gain them such credit as the other gifts, till their predictions were fulfilled. And these the Jews call the *second degree of prophecy:* concerning which Maimonides speaks in his preface to his More Nevoch. but more fully in his second part of it, cap. 45. where he saith the *first degree* was, that which moved and enabled men to some *heroic* undertaking, with assurance they were put upon it from God; as to deliver men from tyranny and oppression: which was the *Spirit of the Lord* that came upon Gideon and Samson, and the rest of the judges of Israel; who were carried by an extraordinary power to perform such things, as otherwise they thought not themselves fit to undertake. And the *second degree* was, when a man found a power upon him, exciting him to speak either psalms, or hymns, or wholesome precepts of living; or about political affairs, and civil government, far beyond his natural capacities; and all this waking, and in the full vigour of his senses. This is also called the *Holy Spirit;* and in this number he places these seventy elders, who were endued with the spirit of Moses, for the government of the people with him, in such measure that they attained to be prophets. Just as in the New Testament the prophets are placed next to the apostles; so these men were next to Moses.

And ceased not.] In which translation we follow the Chaldee paraphrasts, as several others do: but the LXX. translate it, *and they added no further* (which the Hebrew words will well bear), taking the meaning to be, that they prophesied that day, but not after. And this is the sense of the Talmudists, particularly of Jarchi, who, in his gloss upon this place, saith: "All these elders prophesied only this first time that the Spirit rested on them, as they stood about the tabernacle; but they did not prophesy after that." The like say several others mentioned by Mr. Selden, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 4. sect. 2.) And indeed the Spirit was not sent upon them to make them prophets, but to make them governors and judges. And therefore the gift of prophecy, which God gave them for the present, was only to procure them reverence from the people; as an evident sign that they were chosen by God to be coadjutors to Moses, in the exercise of his supreme authority over them. And thus I find Theodoret understood it: (Quæst. xx. in Num.) *The seventy did not prophesy beyond this day,* ὅτι οὐ προφητείας χάριν ἀλλ' οἰκονομίας, &c. *because God promoted them not to prophesy, but to govern: which St. Paul also reckons among other gifts bestowed upon Christians,* (1 Cor. xii. 26.) Now, that it might appear God had conferred this Divine gift of government upon them, they also prophesied the first day that they received it. And I do not see why our translation [*did not cease*] may not be interpreted to this sense; that is, *they did not cease all that day while they stood about the tabernacle.*

Ver. 26. *And there remained two of the men.*] Of the seventy elders, whom Moses ordered to appear, and set themselves about the tabernacle. So the Jerusalem Targum: these were "of the number of the seventy wise men, neither did the seventy wise men go from the tabernacle while Eldad and Medad prophesied in the camp." And so R. Levi ben Gersom notes: "It seems to be plain out of the text, that these two were of the seventy elders." Which our translators thought necessary to express by adding those words *of the:* for in the Hebrew there is no more said, but only *there remained two men.*

In the camp.] Among the rest of the people; from whom they would not come, out of modesty, saying, *They were not equal to such a dignity;* as the words are in the Gemara Babylonica, tit. Sanhedrin. Or perhaps they loved a private life; and were afraid of being envied by the people, whom they saw to be so unruly, that it made them decline the burden; as Saul did, when he hid himself among the stuff.

The name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad.] We do not find the names of any other of the seventy elders, but only these two; who, Jonathan saith, were Moses's brothers by the mother's side. And St. Jerome himself mentions such a tradition, that they were his brethren. But there is no certainty of this; nor of what others of the Jews say concerning them. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 4. sect. 3.)

It may be they are mentioned in honour of their virtuous modesty, which made them think themselves unworthy of so high a dignity.

And the spirit rested upon them.] As it did upon those who were about the tabernacle, (ver. 25.) Whereby God marked them out to be in the number of those whom he had chosen to be assistants unto Moses.

And they were of them that were written, &c.] Whose names Moses put into the summons, which he sent to those whom he judged fit to be advanced to this authority. The Jews (particularly Solomon Jarchi) say, they were chosen by the way of casting lots; and, according to their manner, they tell the story thus, in the place mentioned before in the Gemara:—Moses, say they, was in doubt how he should execute God's command, (ver. 16.) because, if he did not choose an equal number out of every tribe, it might be ill taken: and if he chose *six* out of each of the twelve tribes, they would exceed the number of seventy; if but *five*, they would fall short of it. He resolved, therefore, at last, to choose *six* out of each tribe, which, in all, were seventy-two persons: and in seventy schedules he wrote the name of *elder*, but the other two were blanks. Then mixing all these in an urn, he bade them come and draw: and to

every one who drew a schedule, that had the name of elder in it, he said, *God hath sanctified thee;* but to him that drew a blank, he said, *God hath not chosen thee.* And those two blanks, some of the Jewish doctors say, came into the hands of Eldad and Medad; who, therefore, were left behind in the camp. And this conceit our very learned Dr. Lightfoot himself entertained, saying (in his short account of this chapter), "that six of a tribe made up the number of the Sanhedrin (which was chosen), and two over. And those two were Eldad and Medad, who were written for elders, but the lot cast them out; that there might be but seventy. Yet did the Lord honour them with the spirit of prophecy."

But as this whole story of the manner of choosing the elders is very doubtful; so other Jews, of great authority, say, that Eldad and Medad were of the number of the seventy that were chosen. Particularly Jonathan saith expressly, they were of the number of those whose schedules came up with the name of elder in them; but they did not go to the tabernacle, because they had no mind to be governors. Nay, the Talmudical gloss upon the forenamed place of the Gemara, saith, that when seventy of the seventy-two had drawn, two of them had blanks; whereby Eldad and Medad knew that the two remaining schedules had the name of elder in them, and therefore would not draw them, because they were sure not to have blanks. The very same Mr. Selden shews is in other noted books of theirs. So that it is generally received, they were in the number of those seventy which were chosen to be joined with Moses in the government. (See lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 4. sect. 7.)

And they prophesied in the camp.] Which was a greater thing than if they had prophesied at the tabernacle: denoting them to be men so highly in the favour of God, that he would distinguish them from other men wheresoever they were, and not want their service. The Jerusalem Targum relates what each of them foretold (for to that he restrains their prophesying), and what they both foretold; but it is not worth the mentioning.

Ver. 27. *And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp.*] The Jews, who will seem ignorant of nothing, say it was Gershon, the son of Moses, who carried these tidings to his father.

Ver. 28. *And Joshua the son of Nun.*] From whence some conclude, that he was none of the seventy elders; though a man of a most excellent spirit. And indeed this is likely enough, he being to succeed Moses, and so to become the head of them.

The servant of Moses.] Who ministered to him, as a constant attendant on his person, (Exod. xxiv. 13.)

One of his young men.] The word *one* is not in the Hebrew, which may be translated *from among his young men: i. e.* the rest of those that waited on him.

My lord Moses, forbid them.] Perhaps he thought they could have no authority; not being at the tabernacle: or rather, that their prophesying too much lessened the authority of Moses; by whose consent, and in whose presence, the rest were joined to him; but these two, without his knowledge, and being absent from him, became his consorts in spiritual gifts. This he thought tended to the diminution of his master; for whom he expressed a great honour. The two Targums say that they prophesied of the death of Moses, and the advancement of Joshua to be the leader of God's people; which made Joshua the more concerned to have them suppressed. But this is like the rest of their conceits; several of which are mentioned by Mr. Selden in the place beforenamed, sect. 3.

Ver. 29. *And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake?*] This shews that Joshua thought it a disparagement unto Moses, that they should have the gift of prophecy bestowed on them, and be no way indebted to Moses for it; as the others were, who were brought by him to the tabernacle, where he presented them to God, as men fit to partake of it: but these two seemed to have no dependance on him for what they received.

Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets.] This shews also that the gift of prophecy was a distinct thing from the gift of government: for he did not wish they might all be made rulers; than which nothing could have been more absurd.

And that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them.] That they might all break forth, by his inspiration, into his praises: which is a high demonstration of that most excellent spirit that dwelt in Moses; which had nothing of envy, pride, or vain-glory in it: for he sought not himself in the least, but purely the glory of God, and the good of his people: which admirable temper of mind St. James from hence commends to all Christians, when he saith, (chap. iv. 5.) "Do ye think, that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace." Where doth the Scripture (by which word the apostles commonly mean the Old Testament) say any thing like this, unless it be in this place? the sense of which is fully expressed by James, as Hermannus Witzius well explains this meaning, "Doth that spirit, whereby we are regenerated and governed, move us to envy, or any such-like vicious desire? No, far from that; it giveth greater grace, and makes us rejoice in the good of our neighbours," &c. as Moses did, when he said, *Dost thou envy for my sake?* and thereby excitest me to the like envy? Is that suitable to the Spirit that is in us? which I wish God would bestow *upon all his people.* This agrees with what St. James saith, "But he giveth more grace." (Miscell. Sacr. lib. i. cap. 18. n. 27.)

Ver. 30. *And Moses gat him into the camp.*] From the tabernacle where the elders had been presented unto God, and endued with his Spirit.

He and the elders of Israel.] That they might exercise their authority jointly with him. And there, I suppose, Eldad and Medad were assumed into the same authority; for we do not read that they were brought to the tabernacle; being sufficiently approved by God in the camp.

Ver. 31. *And there went forth a wind from the Lord.*] At the prayer (it is likely) of Moses and the elders, who promised the people flesh enough, a mighty wind of an extraordinary force was raised beyond the common course of nature. The Psalmist informs us from what quarter this wind blew, when he saith, (Psalm lxxviii. 26.) "He caused the east wind to blow in the heaven, and by his power he brought in the south wind:" which some understand, as if sometimes an east wind blew, and sometimes a south; that these quails (as we call them) might be brought from several coasts. But the Hebrews wanting compound words,

make use of these two words, to express that which we call a south-east wind. Or, as Bochartus will have it, the Hebrew word *kadim*, which properly signifies the *east*, doth sometimes signify the *south*; and is by the LXX. often so translated; of which he gives a great many instances. And therefore the Psalmist (as the manner of the Hebrew language is) repeats the same thing in other words. (See Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. i. cap. 15.) And so the famous Ludolphus, both in his commentary upon his Ethiopic History, and in his dissertation De Locustis, saith, they were brought in by a south wind blowing from all points of that quarter.

And brought quails.] Nobody, that I have met withal, hath laboured so much to give a clear explication of this whole following discourse as Job Ludolphus, in his most learned commentary upon his Ethiopic History, lib. i. cap. 13. n. 96. where he hath a long discourse (to which I refer the reader), to shew that the Hebrews do not take the word *selau* (here used) to signify *quails:* but we take that translation of it only from Josephus. (See what I have noted on Exod. xvi. 13.)

The no less learned Bocar, indeed, hath said a great deal to justify Josephus; and hath shewn that Egypt and the neighbouring regions abound still with *quails;* from whence this wind blew fair to bring them to the Hebrews. And every one knows that there are certain winds called *Ornithias*, from their bringing great flights of birds along with them. *Quails* also, he observes, are wont to fly from the *southern* countries to the *northern*, in the spring-time (as it now was), and to fall sometimes in such vast quantities as to sink a ship. Notwithstanding all which, and a great deal more which he alleges, with great learning, there are several things said in the following relation, which by no means can be brought to agree to *quails;* and therefore Ludolphus rather takes *selau* to signify *locusts;* by which it is easy to give a plain explication of all that is said of them. It is certain they were not only used for food in those parts of the world, but that some of them were very delicious meat in several countries; for they that have eaten them (see Lev. xi. 22.) compare them to young pigeons, or to a fresh herring, or to a crab, or lobster (like to which they are in shape and figure), and they are several ways prepared, and accounted very wholesome food, when they have thrown away the heads, and wings, and legs. Pliny saith that some parts of Ethiopia lived upon them; and that they were preserved *fumo et sale, by being dried in the smoke and salted,* for their nourishment, throughout the whole year. Now all that is said in this, and in the following verses, will have a plain and easy meaning (as I said), if we follow this interpretation; but not, if we take them for *quails*, or *pheasants*, or *sea-fowl*. As, for example, what was said before, concerning God's sending a mighty wind, is not hard to understand, if we suppose him to speak of *locusts;* which all authors say are brought with a wind: but it was never heard to bring *quails*, which cannot fly high, nor far; much less so far as from the sea to the middle of Arabia Petræa. Nor would the locusts have come this way, had not this wind brought them from their ordinary course.

From the sea.] *viz.* From the Red Sea, yet not excluding the Persian Gulf; which must not be understood as if they came out of the sea, but from the sea-coast; and it is very probable out of Africa, where they abound. So the aforesaid Ludolphus expounds it, in his late Dissertatio de Locustis, par. ii. cap. 39, &c.

And let them fall by the camp.] Or poured them down upon the camp, as *dust* or *rain* falls thick upon the ground. For both these comparisons the Psalmist uses in the place beforenamed, (Psal. lxxviii. 27.) And this is expressed in Exod. xvi. 13. by *covering their camp.*

As it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side.] A day's journey, as Bochartus makes account, is at least twenty miles. See the place beforenamed, Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. i. cap. 15. p. 105.; or, as Ludolphus makes the computation, sixteen miles, in his Dissertation de Locustis, par. ii. cap. 44, &c. Take it either away, it shews there was a vast number of them: for he adds,

Round about the camp.] So that which way soever they went for sixteen or twenty miles together, there lay heaps of them upon the ground: which, if we understand this of quails, cannot be conceived without a heap of miracles. And if we resort to that, what need was there of a wind to bring them, when God must be supposed miraculously to have created them as he did manna. And yet such a quantity of quails was not to be found any where, without a miracle, as would cover the heavens forty miles (according to Bochartus) on all sides. But that which would have been on many accounts miraculous, if we understand it of quails, will be found less wonderful, or rather natural, if it be understood of locusts: who come in very great and thick clouds, which darken the sky; as all authors tell us. (See Ludolphus Comment. in Histor. Ethiop. p. 188.)

And as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth.] This interpreters look upon as impossible: for then the quails would have been choked and stifled; if they had been heaped so deep one upon another. And therefore they have devised the addition of a new word; and refer this, not to their falling upon the ground, but to their flying in the air, two cubits high above the earth; that so they might the more easily be taken by their hands. So the Jews, and so Val. Schindler in his Lexicon upon the word *selau*. But, besides that there is nothing of this in the text; and it is contrary to what the Psalmist says, that they fell *in the midst of their camp*, (ver. 28.) and that they came down like rain, which always falls upon the ground; there are many other difficulties in this interpretation, (as he shews p. 189. and defends what he there asserts in his Dissertation de Locustis, par. ii. cap. 49, 50.) And therefore it is better to expound it of locusts; who, though they fall one upon another to a great depth, are not thereby suffocated, by reason of the length of their feet, and the thinness of their wings.

Ver. 32. *And the people stood up* (or rather, *rose up*) *all that day, and all that night, and all the next day.*] They were intent upon the gathering of them for thirty-six hours.

And they gathered the quails.] By this it is evident that they gathered something lying upon the ground, and not flying in the air: for we do not *gather* things there, but *take* or *catch* them.

He that gathered least.] *viz.* The master of every family for himself, and for those belonging to him. For we are not to suppose that every man in Israel gathered so many as follows.

Gathered ten homers.] A vast quantity if they were quails; which would have served them, not for a month, but for a year or two: as Ludolphus observes, (p. 190. of his Commentary on his Ethiopic Hist.) besides, we do not use to measure fowl, but to number them. And therefore Bochart, being sensible of this impropriety, takes the word *homer* here to signify a *heap:* which is confuted by Ludolphus in his Dissertatio de Locustis, (par. ii. cap. 54, 55, &c.)

And they spread them all abroad for themselves, round about the camp.] This is another plain indication that they were locusts; which they spread to be dried in the sun: but if they had been quails would have been very preposterous; for it would have made them the sooner stink. Interpreters therefore commonly pass by this, and give no account why they spread them abroad; and the Vulgar Latin omits this word *spread:* whereas all authors tell us, this is the principal way of preparing locusts, and preserving them for a month or more: which they boiled, or otherwise made fit to eat, when they had occasion. (See Ludolphus in his forementioned Commentary; and in his defence of it lately in his Dissertatio de Locustis, par. ii. cap. 97, 98, &c.)

Ver. 33. *And while the flesh was yet between their teeth.*] While they were eating; and therefore were in good health, and had a good stomach.

Ere it was chewed.] Before they had swallowed it.

The wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people.] They felt unexpected effects of God's displeasure; being taken, perhaps, with a sudden vomiting, of which they died, (ver. 20.) This was in the conclusion of the month; for so long (he there saith) they should eat flesh.

And the Lord smote the people with a very great plague.] He sent a pestilence among them, as Aben Ezra supposes; or, as others think, they wasted away in a consumption: the vomiting, perhaps, continuing so, that they could never retain any meat, till they died. This they gather from Psal. cvi. 15. where the Psalmist saith, "He sent leanness into their soul." But Bochartus and Menochius think he burnt them up with a fire from his presence, as at the beginning of this murmuring, ver. 1. where it is said, as it is here, "The anger of the Lord was kindled." But Bochartus grounds this chiefly upon Psal. lxxviii. 21. where it is said, "A fire was kindled in Jacob;" which he refers to this story.

It may seem strange to some, that now they should be punished so heavily, when about a year ago they murmured for flesh as they did now; and he gave it them in the even, together with manna in the morning, without any punishment at all. But it is to be considered, that, as it was a greater fault to fall into the same sin again, after God had been so good to them; so they were not in such necessity now as they were then, when they were really pinched with hunger: whereas now they were fed with bread from heaven; and therefore cried for meat, not out of need, but wantonness. And it may be added, that they were not then so well taught as they had been since; by the giving of the law to them at Mount Sinai, and many other instructions from the house of God.

Ver. 34. *And he called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah.*] That is, the Graves of Lust: because their wanton appetites threw them into those graves; for there, as it follows, they buried those that lusted.

For there they buried the people that lusted.] Not all that lusted, for then all the people who were guilty of this sin would have been buried; but all that died of the plague, which was inflicted for this sin; who, perhaps, were those that began and headed this mutiny; or were most violent in it.

Ver. 35. *And the people journeyed.*] When the cloud was taken up, (chap. ix. 17.)

From Kibroth-hattaavah.] From whence they departed about the beginning of the fourth month, called Tammuz.

Unto Hazeroth.] Another place in the wilderness of Paran; but how far from the former station, whether a day's journey or more, we do not find.

And abode at Hazeroth.] There the cloud rested, and accordingly there they encamped. But we do not read how long: only we are sure they stayed there at least a week, (chap. xii. 15.)

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses.*] I can see no good reason that can be given why Miriam is put here before Aaron; but because she, it is highly probable, was the beginner of this sedition, and drew her brother Aaron into it.

Because of the Ethiopian woman.] Or rather Arabian woman: (see Gen. x. 6.)

Whom he had married.] Whom most both of the Jewish and Christian writers take to have been Zipporah; though some few fancy he speaks of another woman, whom he had lately married; Zipporah being either dead, or divorced. The only difficulty is, why they should quarrel with him about Zipporah; who, if she had been dead, or divorced, it is not likely he would have married a Cushite, but a Jewish woman. The Hebrew doctors have devised strange stories about his forbearing her company; which may be read in many authors; particularly in Selden, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 26. where he recites many of their opinions about this matter. The most common is, that they were angry at his marriage with a woman of another nation; whom they would have had him put away, and taken another wife. So they interpret the following words, *for he had married an Ethiopian woman:* as if his mere marriage with her was the thing which they spake against. Which is not at all probable, if this be meant of Zipporah; for he had been married to her forty years; which, if they had disliked, one would think should have long before now been charged upon him as a fault. I rather think that they were jealous of his being ruled too much by her, and by her relations. For it was by her father's advice that he made the judges, mentioned Exod. xviii. 21, 22. and perhaps they imagined she and Hobab had a hand in choosing the seventy elders lately made, as we read in the foregoing chapter. With which this story being immediately connected, it makes me think it hath some relation to that. For those elders were nominated, it is evident, by Moses alone; without consulting Aaron or Miriam: who, taking themselves to be neglected, in so great an alteration made of the government without their advice, were very angry: and not daring to charge Moses directly with this neglect of them, they fall upon his wife; whom in scorn they call a Cushite or Arabian woman; which in aftertimes

were accounted a vile people, as appears from Amos ix. 7. For that country was inhabited by divers nations, mingled together, *viz.* Ishmaelites, Midianites, Amalekites, and such-like: who, from thence, some think, were called by the general name of Arabians; because of their mixture. For *Ereb*, in Hebrew, signifies a *miscellaneous company*, or *mixture of many people:* see Jeremiah xxv. 20. 24. where he calls this very people by this name.

Ver. 2. *And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses?*] Here it appears that it was really Moses with whom they were offended; who alone had called what men he thought good to be presented unto God, to be constituted by him his assistants in the government, (chap. xi. 24.)

Hath he not also spoken by us?] Are not we also acquainted with God's mind, being prophets? For so Aaron was made, (Exod. iv. 14, 15.) and Miriam so acknowledged, (Exod. xv. 20.) And moreover the prophet Micah (chap. vi. 4.) mentions them as conductors of the people, while they were in the wilderness, together with Moses. Which might make them stomach it, that he took no notice of them when he chose the seventy elders, who were to be his coadjutors, but did it of himself.

And the Lord heard it.] Observed their ill behaviour towards him; though he himself took no notice of it.

Ver. 3. *Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.*] This is added as the reason why he passed by the affront they put upon him, and why God avenged it; because he was so exceeding meek and patient (or, as others translate it, so humble and lowly), that he would have been exposed to further affronts, if God had not chastised their insolence. Moses also might think fit to set this down, as a confutation of their charge against him; being so far from that pride which they imputed to him, that he did not resent (though he was so very much above them) their undutiful behaviour towards him; who had conversed immediately with God himself, and been with him in the holy mount many days together; who sent several commands to Aaron, as well as to the people by him alone: which made such a difference between him and all others, that, as it was an unaccountable arrogance in them to equal themselves unto him, so he demonstrated how far he was from being proud of his superiority, by meekly bearing their haughty behaviour towards him.

So little cause there is for their cavils, who from hence argue that Moses was not the author of these books, because he commends himself in them: for this is not so much a commendation, as a necessary account of himself, to shew how causeless their charge against him was. To such vindications of themselves the humblest souls may be constrained, by the calumnies of wicked men: as we see not only in St. Paul, but our blessed Saviour, who were put upon glorying and magnifying themselves by the malignity of their enemies. (See John x. 36. 2 Cor. xi. 10. 23, &c.) And this is the more allowable, when men know, not only that they write the truth, but that it is notorious to all that are acquainted with them, and cannot be contradicted. The holy writers also are not to be confined to our rules, being moved by the Holy Ghost to set down such things, which, if they had been left to themselves, they would not have mentioned. And men, who have a due reverence to the Holy Scriptures, will look upon this rather as the Holy Ghost's testimony concerning Moses, than Moses's testimony concerning himself. But we have to do now with a generation of men that write upon these books, not as of a Divine original, but as they do upon common authors.

Ver. 4. *And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses.*] The Lord thought fit immediately to stifle their insurrection; which might have proved dangerous if it had spread among the people. And perhaps the word *suddenly* may relate to the manner of his calling to them with a quick and hasty speech, as one provoked and highly displeased.

And unto Aaron, and unto Miriam.] It is uncertain whether God spake to these two by himself or by Moses. It is likely he spake to them all together (while Aaron and Miriam were expostulating with Moses), with such a voice as he was wont to use when he communicated his mind to the prophets.

Come out ye three.] It is likely they were all in Moses's tent, whither his brother and sister were come to utter their complaint.

Unto the tabernacle of the congregation.] Which was God's tent, wherein he dwelt among them, and from whence he declared his will to them.

And they came out.] To attend the pleasure of the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud.*] The pillar of the cloud, which was wont to be over the most holy place, where the Lord dwelt, came down from thence, and the Schechinah in it; and stood, as it here follows, at the door of the tabernacle.

And stood in the door of the tabernacle.] As if it would leave them; as it did, ver. 9.

And called Aaron and Miriam.] Who were at some distance, I suppose; and are commanded to come nearer.

And they came forth.] From the place where they were when he called them; or from Moses, with whom they came from his tent, and are now required to stand by themselves.

Ver. 6. *And he said, Hear now my words.*] Mark what I say to you.

If there be a prophet among you.] This doth not make a doubt of it, but supposes that they, and others among the people, were prophets; as they alleged, (ver. 2.) But God would have them to understand, that he did not communicate his mind to all alike, nor in the same way and manner; but so differently, as to make a remarkable distinction between Moses and others.

Whether there were, in those days, men brought up and trained to be made fit to receive this gift bestowed upon them, we do not know: but, in aftertimes, it is evident there were certain colleges of prophets, wherein disciples of prophets were bred. Such was that, 1 Sam. x. 5. and xix. 18, &c. where the *sons of the prophets, i. e.* their scholars or disciples (as Jonathan always translates that phrase), were brought up: and, for the most part, such only were endued with this gift, who were so educated in those schools, in the study of the law and in piety. Though God did not tie himself to dispense it to such persons alone, but bestowed it upon whom he pleased, though they had spent no time in those schools of the prophets. This is apparent, from that proverbial speech, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (1 Sam. x. 11. and xix. 24.) This

had been no wonder (as this saying imports), if it had been usual for persons to be endowed with this gift on a sudden, who were never bred up in such a course as led to it. But to shew how this came to pass, *one of that place answered and said,* (as it there follows, ver. 12.) *But who is their father?* that is, this is no such wonder, if it be considered who makes men prophets, *viz.* God, who is the father of all the children of the prophets, and therefore may inspire whom he pleases: as he now might have imparted this gift to meaner persons than the seventy elders presented to him by Moses; and made them equal, if he had thought fit, with Aaron and Miriam. For this was the case of Amos, in after-ages; who was *no prophet, nor a prophet's son* (as he himself relates, chap. vii. 14.) *but a herdsman;* and yet *the Lord took him as he followed the flock, and bade him go and prophesy unto his people Israel.*

I the Lord.] Here is the original of prophecy; *will make myself known unto him,* communicate to him my mind and will.

In a vision.] This was one way of discovering his mind to the prophets; by representing things to them, when they were awake, as if they had perceived them by their senses; which at that time were locked up, and all transacted by a Divine operation upon their mind and imagination: (see Gen. xv. 1. and Dan. viii. 1. 15.) Abarbinel mentions one, who observes, that the word *marah* (the plural of which, *maroth,* signifies *looking-glasses,* in Exod. xxxviii. 8.) is a different word from *mareh,* which is commonly used for *vision;* and teaches us, that all the representations made in this way to the prophets, were only as the images of things represented in a glass; in which we behold the outward shape, or shadow, as we may call it, but not the thing itself. And so St. Paul seems to have understood this word (if he alludes to this place, as Grotius thinks he doth), when he saith, *Now we see,* δι ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι, *through a glass darkly,* (1 Cor. xiii. 12.)

And I will speak unto him in a dream.] This was another way of God's revealing his mind unto the prophets, in their sleep; when they not only saw things represented to them, but also heard a voice. And both these seem sometimes to have been mixed together, or to have followed one another; as in Gen. xvi. 12. Dan. vii. 1. and viii. 16—18. And it is a maxim among the Jews, that there is no degree of prophecy, but it is comprehended under one of these, *visions* or *dreams.* So Maimonides, in his More Nevochim, par. ii. cap. 32. and 41. and again, cap. 43. where he saith, "There is no third degree of prophecy besides these two." For as for that Divine Spirit, which moved men to speak of things appertaining to the knowledge of God and his praises, beyond their natural or acquired abilities, without seeing any figures, asleep or awake, though with assurance that it was from God, they will not have it called prophecy; though they acknowledge those parts of Scripture which they call *Cetuvim,* and the LXX. ἁγιόγραφα, *i. e. written by the Holy Ghost,* were indited by that Divine Spirit; and therefore we cannot reasonably deny those that were inspired by it the name of prophets.

Ver. 7. *My servant Moses is not so.*] Doth not receive my mind in either of those ways; and therefore is more than a prophet, having it communicated to him in a far more noble and clearer manner, which placed him in a higher rank than any other inspired person.

Who is faithful in all my house.] Because he was entrusted (so the word may be understood) with God's whole family; that is, with all the children of Israel, and faithfully discharged the trust reposed in him, by acquainting them with all God's will, and executing all his commands; and doing nothing of himself (as now he was falsely accused), but only what God required. This is a high testimony to him; and the Jews, when they are in the humour of exalting Moses, say he was *more faithful than the angels of the ministry:* they are the words of R. Jose in Siphri; and if he had said, *as faithful as the angels of the ministry,* it might have passed for a good explication.

Ver. 8. *With him will I speak, mouth to mouth.*] In a most familiar manner, as one friend discourses with another. So it is explained, Exod. xxxiii. 11. From whence Abarbinel, in his Rosch Amana, gathers, that Moses's prophecy differed from others in these four things: first, that God spake to others by a mediator (that is, as he explains it, by some angel), but to him by himself, without the intervention of any other. Secondly, that they never prophesied, but their senses were all bound up, either in visions or in dreams; whereas he was as perfectly awake, as we are when we discourse one with another. Thirdly, that after the vision was over, they were often left so weak and feeble, that they could scarce stand upon their feet; as appears from Dan. x. 8. 11. but Moses spake with the Divine Majesty, without any consternation or alteration; his conversation with him being like that of one friend with another. And lastly, no prophet but he could understand the mind of God when they pleased; for he communicated himself to them only when he thought good; whereas Moses might at any time resort to God, to inquire of him, and receive an answer: (see chap. ix. 8.) To the same purpose also Maimonides writes, in his book De Fundamentis Legis, (cap. vii.)

Even apparently.] Plainly, clearly, and distinctly; so that there was no difficulty to apprehend his meaning, nor need of an explication. Thus he proclaimed his name to Moses, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

And not in dark speeches.] Or, in parables and enigmatical representations, such as the *ladder* which Jacob saw in a dream, the *boiling-pot* which was shewn to Jeremiah, the *wall,* the *plumb-line,* and the *basket of summer-fruits* which Amos saw; the *beasts* which were represented to Daniel, the *lamps, mountains, horses,* and *chariots* to Zachariah, the roll of the book which Ezekiel was to eat. By all which the prophet (as Maimonides observes, whose illustrations these are of these words) was given to understand some other thing, which was intended to be made known to him by these figures; (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 43.) who, in his book concerning the Foundations of the Law, further observes, that some of these prophets had both the parable (as he calls it) and its interpretation represented to them: others, the parable only without any exposition; and to some was only delivered the explication.

And the similitude of the Lord shall he behold.] I am apt to think the word *not* should be here again repeated, (as it must be in some places to make out the sense, as Prov. xxv. 27.) which will make the meaning plainly this, *he shall not behold the Lord in similitudes and resemblances,* as other prophets did. For the Hebrew word *temunah*

signifies the shape of a thing represented either to the outward senses or to the imagination, not the thing itself. Therefore it would be to equal Moses with the rest of the prophets to say he should see the *similitude* of the Lord; for so did they. Amos, for instance, saith he *saw the Lord standing upon the altar,* (chap. ix. 1.) that is, some angelical appearance in a glorious shape. And Eliphaz saith, that *a spirit passed before him, the form* (or *aspect*) *whereof he could not discern;* only the *temunah* (we render it an *image*) *was before his eyes,* (Job iv. 15, 16.) But God did not thus reveal himself to Moses by images and similitudes of things, but spake to him himself, as it goes before, *mouth to mouth.* Which led Maimonides into the opinion (which he often repeats) that when God is said to speak to any other man, it was by an angel; and that he never spake to any one himself, but only to Moses. Nor did any man before him say that God *spake to him,* or that he *sent him* on a message unto others; but Moses was the first that had this honour. (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 63. and par. ii. cap. 39.)

But if we follow our translation, which should run thus, *But the similitude of the Lord shall he behold,* it relates to that wonderful apparition of God to him in the bush, (Exod. iii. 6.) as Maimonides thinks, More Nevochim, par. i. cap. 5. where he saith, "God poured upon him as much as he could contain," but especially to that revelation which God made of himself to him, when he told him that he could not see his *face,* but should behold his *back parts,* (Exod. xxxiii. 20. 23.) which was a privilege granted to none but him. And thus *the similitude of the Lord,* or his *likeness,* signifies the Lord himself, (Psal. xvii. *ult.*) *When thy likeness shall awake* (that is, *thou thyself appear for me), I shall be satisfied.*

Wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?] Who is my prime minister, employed by me in the highest services.

Ver. 9. *And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them.*] As appeared by what follows.

And he departed.] He withdrew his presence from the door of the tabernacle, immediately before they could make an answer: which was a token of exceeding great displeasure; as it is in us when we will not so much as hear what men say for themselves, when they have highly and notoriously offended us, and we reprove them for it, but turn away from them.

Ver. 10. *And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle.*] It was not merely taken up from it (as it was wont to be when they were to remove their camp), but quite disappeared for a time; or stood at a great distance from them, till Miriam was removed from the tabernacle, and carried out of the camp: for that was one reason of its departure; the Divine Majesty not designing to stay where so impure a creature was. And this was also a manifest token of God's high displeasure against them, which moved him to forsake them.

And behold, Miriam became leprous.] Or, *was become leprous;* a proper punishment for pride and evil-speaking: which was not inflicted upon Aaron, because he was to judge of leprosy, and was not the first in the transgression. And besides, it is likely, God would not have one that was but newly made his high-priest become vile and contemptible.

White as snow.] Which was a mark of an incurable leprosy, when all the body was overspread with it, (Exod. iv. 6. 2 Kings v. 27.)

And Aaron looked upon Miriam.] As he was bound to do; whose office it was to inspect it, and judge whether it was a leprosy or not, (Lev. xiii. 2, &c.)

And behold, she was leprous.] He could not but judge her to have a leprosy, and consequently pronounce her unclean.

Ver. 11. *And Aaron said unto Moses.*] He was made sensible that Moses had greater interest in God than himself, and therefore desires his intercession for them.

Alas! my lord.] Have pity upon us, miserable wretches.

I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us.] He supplicates him as his superior, and humbly begs his pardon; and that he would obtain remission of the punishment which they had justly deserved by their sin: for he was afraid he himself might suffer, as he saw she did.

Wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned.] He prays him to look upon their offence as proceeding from folly and weakness, though in itself a great sin.

Ver. 12. *Let her not be as one dead,* &c.] For so she was not only legally, being to be separated from the living, but naturally also; this being, as I said, the worst kind of leprosy, which ate into the very flesh, and made her look like an abortive (as it here follows) or still-born child, which had lain long dead, and was half wasted away in its mother's womb.

Ver. 13. *And Moses cried unto the Lord.*] Most earnestly petitioned the Lord for her; such was his meekness and piety. And his *crying,* perhaps, supposes the Divine Majesty to be gone afar off, if not out of sight.

Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.] For it was beyond any other power but his to recover her.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had spit in her face.*] An expression of extreme anger, abhorrence, and contempt, (Job xxx. 10. Isa. lii. 6.)

Should she not be ashamed seven days?] She could not have had the confidence to come presently into his presence; but be ashamed for a great while to look him in the face.

Let her be shut out of the camp.] Much more is it fit that Miriam should avoid my presence, and not presume to come before me; who have set a greater mark of my indignation and detestation upon her. For spittle might soon be wiped off; but the leprosy stuck to her, and made her unfit for all conversation with God or man.

Seven days.] Which was the time for legal cleansing from such great impurities, (Lev. xiv. 8. Numb. vi. 9. xxxi. 19.

And after that let her be received in again.] I suppose she was presently freed from leprosy; but kept out from the camp so long, to declare God's displeasure against her; and to humble her, by exposing her to shame.

Ver. 15. *And Miriam was shut out of the camp seven days.*] That her offence might be known to all, by her open punishment.

And the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.] For the cloud was gone which should have directed them in their motions. And besides, this respect, perhaps, was shewn unto her because she was a prophetess;

and hereby she had time given her to humble herself before God, and to beg his pardon for her sin.

Brought in again.] When one would have expected that such sacrifices should have been offered for her cleansing, as are required in Lev. xiv. But this was an extraordinary case; she being on a sudden miraculously struck with the highest degree of the plague of leprosy, and as suddenly cured by the same hand that struck her.

Ver. 16. *And afterward the people removed.*] Which shews that the cloud, which departed from the tabernacle, (ver. 10.) returned again to it, together with Miriam, that it might guide them in their removal to another station; for till it was taken up from the tabernacle, they stirred not from the place where they were, (chap. ix. 17, 18.)

From Hazeroth.] After they had abode there seven days at the least.

And pitched in the wilderness of Paran.] Where they were before, (see chap. x. 12.) but now were brought into another part of it, called Rithmah, (chap. xxxiii. 18.) which was called also by another name, Kadesh-barnea, (chap. xiii. 26. Deut. i. 19.) Or else we must suppose these two places to have been so very near together, that they might be said to have pitched either in the one or the other. This station was at the foot of the mountain on the south part of Canaan, (Deut. i. 20.) so that their next removal was to have been into the land promised to them, if they themselves had not hindered, by their renewed rebellion. This removal was in the fourth month of the second year after they came out of the land of Egypt. (See chap. xi. 20. 35.)

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] They being now come to the borders of Canaan, the Lord ordered Moses to exhort them to go up, and take possession of it, and *not to fear nor be discouraged;* as we read in Deut. i. 21. But the people (out of a distrust of God's power, as Moses seems to intimate, Deut. ix. 23.) desired they might first send some to search out the land, before they attempted its conquest, (Deut. i. 22.) About which, it is likely, Moses consulted the Divine Majesty, who gave them leave so to do.

Ver. 2. *Send thou men.*] For their greater satisfaction, God ordered them to have their desire. For there seems to have been a general fear upon them (every one of them coming to Moses with this request, Deut. i. 22.) which could not be removed, but by sending some to bring them intelligence what kind of country it was, and what people they had to deal withal, (ver. 18—20.)

That they may search the land of Canaan.] To make a discovery, both of the country and of the inhabitants, and the best way to invade it, (Deut. i. 22.)

Which I give unto the children of Israel.] To the possession of which God now intended to introduce them. For he had already brought them to the confines of it, and bidden them go up and possess it, (Deut. i. 20, 21.) but they would needs make this delay, for a discovery of the condition of the country; which was their own contrivance at the first, and not a Divine counsel.

Of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man.] That there might be no suspicion or partiality in their report.

Every one a ruler among them.] Men of authority and prudence, who might be the more believed; yet not of the highest rank, (for such are called by the name of princes, chap. i. 16.) but rulers perhaps of thousands, who were very considerable in their tribes: for they are called by the same name in the Hebrew, every one being said to be a *nasi* and a *rosch*, a *leader* and a *head*, in their tribes; which may incline one to think, that there were higher and lower persons of this sort, who had the same title in every tribe.

Ver. 3. *And Moses, by the commandment of the Lord.*] Which was given him in the fifth month (called Ab, as St. Jerome notes from the Jews) of the second year after they came out of Egypt: it is not certain upon what day; but it is likely in the beginning of the month, which answers to the nineteenth of our July.

Sent them from the wilderness of Paran.] From Kadesh-barnea, (chap. xxxii. 8. Deut. i. 19, 20. ix. 23. Josh. xiv. 7.)

All those men were heads of the children of Israel.] So the rulers of thousands and hundreds are called, (Exod. xviii. 25.) as well as the princes, (Numb. i. 16.) But these were a lower sort of *heads*, or great men, in the several tribes of Israel.

Ver. 4. *And these were their names: Of the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur.*] There is little to be observed concerning this verse, and those that follow to the sixteenth, but that it is evident these were not the same men, who, in the first chapter of this book, are called the *heads* and *princes* of the tribes; being inferior persons, who ruled over some part, not over a whole tribe. The three first tribes also that are here mentioned, sprang from the three eldest sons (for Levi did not make a tribe in Israel) of Jacob: but, in the enumeration of the rest, there is not any order observed, of which I can give an account. Perhaps they being to disperse themselves, when they entered the country they were to search, (see ver. 22.) and thinking it not prudent to go above two (at the most) in company, cast lots who should be associated: and the first lot fell to those of the tribes of Reuben and Simeon; the next to those of Judah and Issachar; and so to the rest.

Ver. 11. *Of the tribe of Joseph.*] *i. e.* Of the other branch of Joseph's family, *viz. of the tribe of Manasseh*, as it here follows.

Ver. 16. *These are the names of the men that Moses sent to spy out the land.*] He would have their names remembered (which is the reason of this remark), for the sake of those two worthy men, Caleb and Joshua, whose virtue was very illustrious in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

And Moses called Oshea, the son of Nun.] So he is called, ver. 8. being named for the tribe of Ephraim.

Jehoshua.] He was called by this name presently after they came out of Egypt, (Exod. xvii. 9.) when he went to fight with Amalek: whom he having overcome, Moses looked upon it as a token that he should save and deliver the people of Israel, and then called him by this name: which imports something more than Oshea; for that denotes only *a prayer* for salvation (as Menochius observes), but this carries in it *a promise* of it. And some think the addition of the first letter in the name of Jehoshua was from the name Jehovah; implying that the Lord would

employ him in leading and conducting his people into the land of promise: wherein he was a type of the Saviour of the world, the Lord Jesus (whose name is the same with this), who conducts those that believe on him to a heavenly inheritance.

If I could find the like comfortable signification in the rest of the names of these men, I should think there might be some ground for their opinion, who fancy Moses chose Joshua because there was a good omen in his very name. For all nations took great care that no man should be employed in affairs of moment, whose name carried any unlucky signification in it. So Cicero observes, in his first book of Divination, that the generals of armies, and the censors, took care that none should so much as lead the sacrifices to the altar but who were *bonis nominibus, of names that signified good:* of which the consuls also were very observant, *ut primus miles fiat bono nomine, that the first soldier whom they listed should be of a good name;* such as Valerius, Salvius, Statorius, or the like. On the contrary, the name of Nævius was deemed so bad, that in his oration pro Quinct. Sext. he saith, *having named the man, methinks I have said enough.*

Ver. 17. *And Moses sent them to spy out the land, and said unto them.*] That is, when he sent them to spy out the land (as was said in the foregoing verse), he gave them the following directions.

Get ye up this way southward.] This south part of Canaan fell afterward to be part of the lot of the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 1—3.) and was very dry, and consequently barren, (Judg. i. 15.) and, therefore, fittest for their entrance to spy out the land unobserved, being less inhabited than the better parts of the country. Besides, it was nearest to the place where they now were encamped.

And go up into the mountain.] Where the Amorites dwelt, (Deut. i. 19.) together with some Amalekites, and other people, (chap. xiv. 43. 45.) From whence they were to go down into the valleys.

Ver. 18. *And see the land what it is, and the people that dwell therein.*] These are the general directions which he gave them, to inform themselves both of the country and of its inhabitants.

Whether they be strong or weak, few or many.] In particular, with respect to the latter, he directs them to inform themselves whether the inhabitants were strong-bodied or feeble; and whether their number was great or small.

Ver. 19. *And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad.*] And, with respect to the former, he would have them bring an account; first, what sort of country it was, whether healthful and delightful, or unwholesome and unpleasant.

And what cities they be, that they dwell in.] And then how large their cities were, and of what strength.

Whether in tents, or in strong holds.] Whether they lived in tents, as the Arabians did (and the Israelites while they were in the wilderness), or in houses; and whether they were fortified. Or rather (as we would say in our language), whether in *open villages or in walled cities:* for so the word *mahanaim* signifies, not *tents* (as we here translate it), but *hosts* or *camps,* (Gen. xxxii. 1.) and here *towns* without walls, as the LXX. interpret it; and the Vulgar, also, only inverting the order of the words, *whether in walled towns, or without walls.*

Ver. 20. *And what the land is,* &c.] And last of all, what is the soil of the country; whether rich and fertile, or poor and barren; and also, whether it be a woody country, or otherwise.

And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land.] In which discoveries, there being some hazard, he bids them be confident God would preserve them; so that they might venture to bring away with them some of the fruit which the country produced.

Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes.] Towards the vintage.

Ver. 21. *So they went up, and searched the land, from the wilderness of Zin.*] Which was on the south of the land of Canaan, (chap. xxxiv. 3. Josh. xv. 1. 3.) being different from the wilderness of Sin, which lay near to Egypt, (Exod. xvi. 1.)

Unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath.] The city of Rehob lay in the north of the land of Canaan, and fell to the lot of the tribe of Asher, (Josh. xix. 28.) And it lay not far from Hamath (which, in aftertimes, was called Epiphania), a city which we very often read of afterward, as the bounds of Judea northward; which Moses saith was *unto the entrance of Hamath,* (chap. xxxiv. 8.) So that they took a survey of the whole country, from one end of it to the other, south and north; and also, as they passed along, observed those parts that lay east and west. For they gave an account of the Canaanites, as dwelling *by the sea* (which was westward), *and by the coast of Jordan,* which was on the east, (ver. 29.) Or, if by *the sea* we understand not the Western Ocean, but the Dead Sea (as some do); yet it appears by these very words, that they bent their course, as they passed from south to north, unto the western and eastern parts also. For Rehob and Hamath both lay at the foot of Libanus; one to the north-west (towards Sidon), and the other to the north-east.

Ver. 22. *And they ascended by the south.*] In their return from searching the country.

And came unto Hebron.] That is, some of them. For the word in the Hebrew is not *they came* (as it is *they ascended*), but *he came;* which demonstrates that they did not go all of them together in a company (for that had been dangerous, and might have made them taken notice of), but dispersed themselves; some going to discover one place, some another. And it is a probable conjecture of some of the Hebrew doctors, that Caleb was the man that went to take a view of Hebron; and was so little affrighted at the sight of the giants there, that he was the very person that afterward drove them out; and had this place given him for his portion: for it was in the south part of the lot of the tribe of Judah; being formerly called Kirjath-Arba, (Josh. xiv. 9. 12. 14.)

Where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak were.] These were the grandchildren of Arba (from whom Hebron had the name of Kirjath-Arba, *i. e.* the city of Arba), who was the father of Anak, whose family was more eminent than any other in Canaan; these three sons of his being men not only of great bulk, but prowess and valour. Bochartus thinks (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 1.) that Anak signifies as much as the Roman name Torquatus; being like to that Gaul whom Manlius vanquished. And Ahiman signifies as much as, *who is my brother?* importing there was none to be compared with him. Sheshai he takes to be

as much as Sixtius, *viz.* six cubits high, as Goliath was. And Talmai he derives from *talam, furrow:* as if he seemed in length to equal a furrow in the field. These were the people that made the Israelites tremble; for it is likely their whole family was of a very large stature, though not so big as these. And, indeed, they were so very terrible to all their neighbours, that it became a proverbial saying in those countries, *Who can stand before the children of Anak?* (Deut. ix. 2.)

Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.] The Egyptians boasted of the great antiquity of their nation and cities: but Moses shews that Hebron was built before the capital city of their country: for so Zoan was; and called in after-ages Tanis; lying not far from that mouth of the river Nile, which from thence was called by Plutarch τανιτικὸν στόμα. R. Solomon will have it that Hebron was built by Cham, one of the three sons of Noah, and the father of Mizraim; from whom the Egyptians descended. But of this there is no certainty; and the Gemara upon Sota (cap. 7.) saith, It is not likely that a man would build a house for his younger son, before he had built one for his elder; for Canaan was the youngest of all the sons of Cham, (Gen. x. 6.) Yet those doctors are willing to suppose that Cham built both these cities; and therefore interpret the word *banah,* which is rightly translated *built,* as if it signified *fruitful,* (according to Gen. xvi. 2.) and make the sense to be, that *Hebron was seven times more fruitful than Zoan:* which is very foolish; as, upon other accounts, so on this, that Hebron was a stony place, and therefore not fertile.

Ver. 23. *And they came unto the brook Eshcol.*] A place which lay in a valley at the foot of the mountain, (Deut. i. 24.)

And cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes.] This was done, no doubt, in some private place, upon the southern borders of Canaan; just as they were returning to the camp of Israel again. For it would have given the country too great an alarm, if they had marched in the highway with this bunch upon their shoulders.

And they bare it between two.] A great many authors mention vines and grapes of an extraordinary bigness in those eastern and southern countries. I need only refer to Strabo, who says, the vines in Margiana, and other places, were so big, that two men could scarce compass them with their arms, and that they produced βότρυν δίπηχυν, *a bunch of grapes of two cubits,* (lib. ii. Geograph. p. 73. and lib. xi. p. 516.) Which is in part justified by Olearius, in his late travels into Persia, book iii. where he saith, not far from Astracan, he saw vines, whose trunks were so thick, that a man could do no more than grasp them about with both his arms. And Forsterus, in his Dictionarium Hebraicum, p. 862. saith, there was a preacher at Nuremberg called Achaicus, who lived as a monk eight years in the holy land (as they call it), who told him upon his sick-bed, that in his time there were clusters of grapes at Hebron of such bigness, that one single kernel was sufficient to quench his thirst a whole day, when he was sick there of a tympany. J. Conradus Dieterius hath collected a great deal more to this purpose out of Leo Africanus and Nic. Radzivillius, and other authors, in his Antiq. Biblicæ, p. 249. And since him the most learned Huetius, in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 24. where, among other things, he observes, that Crete, Chios, and other islands in the Archipelago, afford bunches of grapes of ten pound weight, sometimes of thirty-six, yea, of forty. And he mentions grapes of a prodigious bigness in the island of Madeira.

Upon a staff.] See chap. iv. 10.

And they brought of the pomegranates and figs.] Which grew in the parts nearest to the place where the Israelites were encamped.

Ver. 24. *The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.*] That is, when the Israelites got possession of the land, they called this *brook* (or *valley*) by the name of *Eshcol,* in memory of this bunch of grapes, for so *Eshcol* signifies.

Ver. 25. *And they returned from searching of the land.*] Came back to the camp of Israel.

After forty days.] This shews that they did not take a cursory view of the country; but took time enough to make their observations. And the ripe fruit which they brought with them, after they had been *forty* days from the camp, demonstrates that their return was in the latter end of the sixth month, very near to the seventh; that is, in the end of the year, according to the old style of that nation. For on the fifteenth day of the seventh month God ordered the feast of tabernacles to be celebrated; a little before which they gathered both their harvest and their vintage, (Exod. xxiii. 16. Lev. xxiii. 39. Deut. xvi. 13.)

Ver. 26. *And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron,* &c.] They went up the mountain from Eshcol; and came down on the other side of it, to Moses and Aaron, and all the congregation, (Deut. i. 24, 25.)

Unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh.] Unto the place from whence they were sent; which was Kadesh-barnea, (see ver. 3. and Deut. ix. 23.) which is here in short called Kadesh; but is quite different from that Kadesh we read of afterward, (chap. xxi. 1.) For that was in the wilderness of Sin; and they did not come to it till the fortieth year after they came out of Egypt, (chap. xxxiii. 37, 38.) whereas they were at this Kadesh in the second year; before they were doomed to wander forty years in the wilderness.

And brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation.] Gave a public account before Moses and Aaron of what they had discovered.

And shewed them the fruit of the land.] And at the same time presented to them the cluster of grapes, the pomegranates, and figs, which they had brought with them.

Ver. 27. *And they told him, and said.*] They address their relation to Moses; because he sent them, (ver. 2.)

We came unto the land whither thou sentest us.] I suppose they chose some of their number to speak in the name of the rest: and, first, they give an account of the land, as he required, (ver. 19, 20.)

And surely it floweth with milk and honey.] Their report of the condition of the land was as honest as could be desired; for they testify it to be such as God promised to bestow upon them, (Exod. xxxiii. 3.)

And this is the fruit of it.] They prove what they say by a sample of the product of it: which was so large, that some of the Jews fancy there were eight men employed to carry this one cluster, as they say in the Gemara Sotæ, cap. 7. Of which the spies made this wicked use, as from thence to tell their brethren, "You see this goodly fruit, how vast it is: but believe us, the inhabitants of the country exceed

us, and all other men in stature, as much as this fruit exceeds all other of the same kind, throughout the world." So Wagenseil explains the sense of their discourse in that place, sect. 4.

Ver. 28. *Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land; and the cities are walled, and very great.*] This is an account of the other part of the inquiry Moses commanded them to make, concerning the inhabitants and their cities, (ver. 18.)

And moreover we saw the children of the Anakims there.] See ver. 22. All this was true; but spoken in such a manner, as to represent the conquest of the country exceeding difficult, if not impossible. So they explain their meaning in downright words, (ver. 31.) and so the people understood them, Deut. i. 28. where these frightful people are called *the sons of the Anakims:* for they saw, not only those three mentioned before, (ver. 22.) but others also that were descended from them; who, as I there noted, were gigantic persons. So the LXX. translate these words *υἱοὶ γιγάντων*, and so the Chaldee; and so the Jews use the word *Anakim*, to signify *giants;* particularly Benjamin Tudelensis, p. 3. of his Itinerary: where L'Empereur thinks it probable they were called *Anakims*, "à torque quo colla superbe cingebant," *from a collar or chain, which they proudly wore about their necks:* for the word *Anak* properly signifies *collum torque cingere*, (p. 136.) *to wreath a chain about the neck.* But it is evident they had their name from their progenitor, Anak, the son of Arba: whence he was so called we do not know.

Ver. 29. *The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south.*] They do not represent the Amalekites as inhabitants of the land of Canaan; but they observe that they lay on the *south* border of it: where, if they went about to enter, in all probability, that nation (which were their early enemies when they came out of Egypt) would help to oppose them in their attempt, as much as the people of Canaan. For that is their intention, in the following report, to shew what a stout people they must encounter, which way soever they endeavoured to enter into Canaan.

And the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites.] An account of all these see Gen. xv. 20, 21.

Dwell in the mountains.] Which were in the entrance of the land of Canaan, on the south-east part of it. Particularly the Amorites, it is evident, were planted there, upon the mountains of the borders of Canaan, (Deut. i. 27. 44.) And many of them had made an expedition into the country beyond Jordan, where they had possessed themselves of Bashan and Heshbon, and all the land between the rivers Jabbok and Arnon. For they were a very warlike people, and of great stature, (Amos ii. 9.) which made these searchers of their land afraid of them; and bid their brethren consider whether they thought they should be able to dispute their passage with them: which they plainly suggest, in their opinion, they could not. For the Jebusites were another mighty people, whom, after the conquest of Canaan, they could not of a long time dispossess of Mount Sion. I need not say how terrible the Hittites were; for it is probable from thence came the word *hittha*, which signifies a fright and sudden consternation; as Bochartus hath observed in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 36.

And the Canaanites.] Those who were particularly called by this name: see Gen. xv. 21.

Dwell by the sea.] It is certain that the Canaanites dwelt by the ocean, called the Midland Sea; for they seem to have had their names from merchandizing; for which that situation was most proper; and for that reason others of them were seated near Jordan. This, I think, is plain from Deut. i. 7. And, besides, the word *sea* alone commonly signifies that great ocean. But, it being plain that they were also seated, as it here follows, upon the river Jordan, it is possible that by *sea* may be meant, in this place, the Dead Sea, or the Lake of Genesareth, or both of them; because they were near Jordan, which ran into them.

And by the coast of Jordan.] Where the Canaanites were also seated, as is evident from Deut. xi. 30. For there were both western and eastern Canaanites, as appears from Josh. xi. 3. and they are frequently joined with the Perizzites, (particularly Judg. i. 4.) who were a fierce sort of rough people, that dwelt in the woody part of the mountains. So that the intention of the men, who made this report, was, to represent to the people, that whether they invaded the land by the *southern* parts, or the *eastern*, they would find *both* strongly guarded by a mighty people, much superior to them in force: which account, the following verse shews, put the people into a tumult.

Ver. 30. *And Caleb stilled the people.*] It is plain by this, that the people understood, by their way of speaking, countenances, and gestures, that the meaning of these men who made this report (which was not false in itself) was, that, though the country indeed was very rich and desirable, yet it was impossible for them to drive the inhabitants out of it: which put them into a mutinous disposition, as Caleb perceived by their looks and their muttering; and therefore stepped forth, before it brake out, to quiet their spirits with his account of the country and inhabitants, in which Joshua, no question, joined with him. It is not indeed here mentioned, because Caleb, perhaps, stood next to those who began to make a commotion, and therefore spake first: but he was seconded by Joshua, we may be sure; because we find him mentioned in the next chapter, and, in the first place, together with Caleb, as endeavouring to appease the tumult. And he is not only exempted from the punishment inflicted upon the people for their rebellion, (chap. xiv. 30. 38.) but is expressly said to have *followed the Lord fully*, as well as Caleb, (chap. xxxii. 12.)

Before Moses.] The Hebrew phrase *el moscheh* may signify that he stilled them, as they were coming towards Moses in a seditious manner; or quieted them so far as to make them hearken to Moses; or, as we render it, in his presence, when they were ready to fly in his face. One of the doctors in the Gemara beforementioned, (cap. 9.) saith, that Joshua being about to speak, they bitterly reproached him, and would not suffer him to proceed: and therefore Caleb thought good to give them a great many blandishing words, and to call Moses *this son of Amram*, which looked like contempt of him; whereby he stilled them, and disposed them to listen to him. And then he said, "Is not he the person that brought us out of Egypt; that divided the Red Sea for us to pass through it; that gave us manna from heaven? What if he should bid us make ladders and climb up into the skies, should we not obey him?"

And said, Let us go up at once.] Or, go up immediately, without a stop.

And possess it.] He speaks as if it were already their own (as indeed it was, by God's gift), and they needed only enter and take possession of it.

For we are able to overcome it.] There will be no such difficulty, as these men represent, in the conquest of it.

Ver. 31. *But the men that went up with him.*] The rest of the company that went to search the land; who if they had not persisted in their unbelief, the people perhaps might have been perfectly appeased by Caleb and Joshua.

Said, We be not able.] Now they open their minds more plainly, in their reply to Caleb, whom they oppose directly; and declare their opinion downright, that they were not an equal match for their enemies.

To go up against the people.] To beat them out of the mountains which they inhabited.

For they are stronger than we.] These men had no confidence in the promise and power of God, on which Caleb and Joshua relied; but measured all things by human strength.

Ver. 32. *And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel.*] In the heat of their opposition, they now disparage the country which they had before praised, (ver. 27.) and also stretch their report of the inhabitants beyond the truth.

Saying, The land, through which we have gone to search, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof.] Unless we suppose that there was a great plague at this time in the country, as the Hebrews do (who love to excuse their forefathers' sins), this was a gross lie. But take it as they suppose, yet this was a very malignant report. For if they saw the people of the country every where, as they passed along, carrying their neighbours to their graves (as the Jews tell the tale), this, which they should have ascribed to the providence of God, who sent this mortality, that they might have fewer enemies to oppose them, and that these spies might pass more freely, and less observed, they most wickedly ascribe to the badness of the air: which being very unhealthful to the natives, might well be thought would be much more so to strangers. Thus bad minds (as the aforesaid Gemara glosses well enough upon this story) turn that which God intends for their benefit into their hurt. And if we had any better authority for this story, the word *achal* (which we translate *eat up*) would well enough agree with it. For, as Maimonides observes, in the first part of his More Nevoch. (cap. 30.) it is used in the Holy Scriptures concerning any kind of consumption, destruction, or desolation: as here in this book, chap. xi. 1. Lev. xxvi. 38. 2 Sam. ii. 26, &c.

And all the people that we saw in it were men of great stature.] The Hebrew phrase is, *men of measures*, ἄνδρες ὑπερμήκεις, as the LXX. translate it, *men of larger size than the rest of mankind.* Which we have no reason to think was true: but having seen the sons of Anak in one part of the country, they imagined all the rest of the people to be near unto their stature. For this is the description of that giant of Gath, mentioned 1 Chron. xx. 6. where he is called *a man of measure*; and 2 Sam. xxi. 20. where he is called in the plural number (as they are here), *a man of measures*, ἀνὴρ ὑπερμεγέθης, *a man above the common bigness.* And thus very great houses are called *houses of measure*, (Jerem. xxii. 24.)

Ver. 33. *And there we saw giants.*] Men of greater bulk and strength than the biggest of those very great men, (see Gen. vi. 4.) which they spake of in the foregoing words.

The sons of Anak.] They had mentioned this once before, (ver. 28.) and now repeat it again; because they were struck with such a terror at the sight of them, that they were always at their tongue's end. Just as Homer mentions, Τρῶάς τε καὶ Ἕκτορα, as Bochartus makes the comparison, (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 1.)

Which came of the giants.] Who were descended from a gigantic race of men; particularly from Arba, who was their grandfather, as Joshua tells us, chap. xiv. 15. xv. 13, 14, &c. where he shews how Caleb drove these Anakims out of their cities, and made them fly to the Philistines; where there were some remainders of them till the days of David. And others of them, perhaps, fled into Greece; for there was a race of men among the Greeks called Ἄνακες; who Vossius thinks it probable might descend from these children of Anak, (lib. i. de Orig. et Progressu Idolol. cap. 13.)

And we were in our own sight as grasshoppers.] Their fear magnified them above measure; though, no doubt, they were men of such an extraordinary height, that they might look upon themselves to be as small and contemptible, as grasshoppers are compared with us. And such very tall men there are still in some parts of the world, as Job Ludolphus observes, in his Commentary upon his Histor. Ethiopica, lib. i. cap. 2. n. 22.

And so we were in their sight.] One of the Jewish doctors makes bold to call these men liars: for, though their fear might make them appear as grasshoppers, yet how could they tell, saith he, that they were so in the sight of the children of Anak? Here the Gemarists (in the place I mentioned above, cap. 10.) endeavour to help them out, by continuing the tale of the great mortality which was then in those countries. Where a funeral-feast (as the manner was) being one day made under certain cedar-trees, which are very shady; the spies got up to the top of them, to hide themselves among the thick boughs: but the people below happening to look up, the spies heard them say, There are men got up into the trees, who look like grasshoppers. But there needs no such inventions to defend them, when an hyperbole will do it: their plain meaning being this, that the Anakims looked down upon them with the utmost contempt.

By all which it appears, that they had not only a sight of the Anakims, but the Anakims also saw them, and looked upon them, it is likely, as they did upon other travellers; who were wont to come thither, either for their pleasure, or to traffic in their country; or in their way to other places: whom it was not their custom to examine strictly, whence they came, and what their business was; but let pass to and fro among them freely.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AND all the congregation.*] By *all the congregation* may be here meant, all the great men (for so the phrase sometimes signifies), except Caleb and Joshua, and, perhaps, some few others.

Lifted up their voice, and cried.] Shrieked, and made loud lamentations.

And the people wept.] Which put all the people into tears.

That night.] Which followed after the report made by the spies.

Ver. 2. *And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses, and against Aaron.*] As they had frequently done before; but now in a more tumultuous manner.

And the whole congregation said unto them.] The great men spake in the name of the whole body of the people.

Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt!] In a fit of fury and despair, they quite forgot how miraculously God had brought them from thence; and consequently could as easily bring them into Canaan.

Or, would God that we had died in this wilderness!] When several of their brethren were burnt, and smote with a very great plague, in this very wilderness of Paran, (chap. xi. 1. 33.)

Ver. 3. *Wherefore hath the Lord brought us into this land.*] Having vented their passion against God's ministers, they most undutifully accuse him, as if he had dealt deceitfully with them.

To fall by the sword.] Of the children of Anak, who they fancied were irresistible.

That our wives and children should be a prey.] To the people of Canaan, after all the men of Israel were killed.

Were it not better for us to return into Egypt?] Their rage deprived them of the use of their reason.

Ver. 4. *And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.*] They knew that Moses would not conduct them thither; and therefore they thought of choosing another leader. But, though they might in a raging fit speak of returning to Egypt, yet it is an amazing thing that they should continue in this madness, and deliberate about it; nay, actually appoint them a captain, as Nehemiah saith they did, chap. ix. 17. For how could they get thither without food? which they could not expect God would send them from heaven, when they had forsaken him. Or how could they hope to find their way, when his cloud, which directed them, was withdrawn from them? Or hope to deal with those that might oppose their passage, if they hit upon the right way? And after all, if they came into Egypt, what entertainment could they look for there, among a people, whose king, and princes, and first-born, had lately perished on their account? Nothing can be said in answer to these things, but that outrageous discontent will not suffer men to consider any thing, but that which grieves them; and that foul ingratitude and forgetfulness of God's benefits, throws them into such discontents.

Ver. 5. *And Moses and Aaron fell on their faces.*] To deprecate God's displeasure; which lately arose against them, upon a less occasion than this, (chap. xi. 33.) and they might justly fear would now destroy them all, for their incurable infidelity; as Josephus explains it.

Before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.] Some fancy, that their falling down *before them*, was to beseech them to desist from their murmuring; and to trust in God, who would go before them, and fight for them; as he saith he told them, Deut. i. 29, 30. But *falling on their faces* being the posture of the most humble supplicants to God, and not to men, (as all understand it in other places, particularly chap. xvi. 4. xx. 6.) their falling down *before the assembly* signifies no more, but that in their presence Moses and Aaron humbled themselves deeply before the Divine Majesty; and prayed to him with the greatest earnestness to forgive them, and to bestow a better mind upon them. Which they did in their presence, to awaken them to consider the danger they were in by their heinous sin; that they themselves might cry to him for mercy. For the usual posture of prayer in that nation was *standing;* but in very great distress, and anxiety of mind, when they were exceeding solicitous to obtain their petition, they *kneeled* down, and sometimes *fell on their faces;* which was still a sign of greater ardour and concernment, as appears from our blessed Saviour, (Matt. xxvi. 39. Luke xxii. 41.)

Ver. 6. *And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes.*] As the manner was, on any sad and doleful occasion; especially when they heard any man blaspheme the Divine Majesty; in detestation of the impiety, and to declare their sorrow, and indignation, and dread of God's judgments; as appears from Jerem. xxxvi. 24. where the stupidity of Jehoiachim and his servants is represented by this, that when they heard the words which the prophet declared in God's name against Judah, *they were not afraid, nor rent their garments.*

Ver. 7. *And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying.*] This shewed great courage, that they durst declare their opinion, contrary to the sense of so great a multitude.

The land which we passed through to search it is an exceeding good land.] This is opposed to what their fellows had said, that it was a land *which ate up its inhabitants,* (chap. xiii. 32.) Quite contrary they assure them it was *very, very good,* as the words are in the Hebrew; and so expressed by the Chaldee, and the LXX. *exceeding, exceeding good:* that is, every way desirable; for thus the Hebrews express the superlative degree.

Ver. 8. *If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us.*] If we do not forfeit his favour, he will make us so happy, as to drive out the Canaanites, and settle us in the possession of this land.

A land which floweth with milk and honey.] As their companions themselves had confessed, (chap. xiii. 37.)

Ver. 9. *Only rebel ye not against the Lord.*] By slighting his goodness, by murmuring, and discontented speeches, and talking of going back to Egypt, (ver. 2—4.)

Neither fear ye the people of the land.] This is opposed to what the rest of the spies had said, concerning the mighty power and strength of the inhabitants of Canaan, (chap. xiii. 28, 29. 31, &c.)

For they are bread for us.] We shall as easily vanquish them as we eat our meat.

Their defence is departed from them.] In the Hebrew the words are, *their shadow;* whereby men being defended from heat in those countries, it signifies the protection which God gives men from those things that might hurt them: which Divine protection, they tell the people, was now withdrawn from the Canaanites, who had filled up the measure of their iniquities, (Gen. xv. 16.) and now were exposed as a prey to the Israelites.

And the Lord is with us.] For, on the contrary, they entreat the people to consider that God, who was departed

from the Canaanites, was with them, to aid and assist them in the conquest of the country: and for both these reasons they needed not to fear them. So they conclude their speech, like men of an undaunted spirit, in these words; *fear them not.*

Ver. 10. *But all the congregation.*] The Hebrew words *col ha edah,* as I observed, ver. 1. signifies *all the great men; the rulers of the rest.*

Bade stone them with stones.] Ordered the people to stone them to death; as they had done, it is likely, if they had not been deterred from the attempt by the appearance of the Divine Majesty. For the Hebrew word *amar* (as Maimonides observes in his More Nevochim, par. i. cap. 65.) is used, not only concerning that which is *spoken* or *thought,* but of what is *decreed* and *resolved.* And he produces these words as an instance of it, together with Exod. ii. 14. 2 Sam. xxi. 16.

And the glory of the Lord appeared.] The Schechinah which resided within the tabernacle, upon the mercy-seat, now openly appeared, in a bright flaming light, like fire: and, in all probability, after such an amazing manner, as terrified them from their design. Thus it appeared on Mount Sinai, to fright them from approaching near unto it, Exod. xxiv. 17. (from whence Moses saith, *the Lord thy God is a consuming fire,* Deut. iv. 24.) and thus it appeared afterward, Numb. xvi. 19. 42.

In the tabernacle of the congregation.] Or rather *upon* the tabernacle (for *in* the tabernacle the people could not have seen it, as now they did), over the most holy place; which the cloud constantly covered, over the mercy-seat, where the Divine Glory dwelt: (see chap. ix. 15.)

Before all the children of Israel.] Both to fright them, as I said, from their purpose of stoning Joshua and Caleb; and to shew his anger and displeasure at their rebellion, which, it is likely, appeared by the flashes that came from the glorious flame.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] In answer, I suppose, unto his prayer, (ver. 5.)

How long will this people provoke me?] Shall I always bear with their most undutiful behaviour; which will provoke the greatest patience unto anger?

How long will it be ere they believe me.] Dost thou not see that their unbelief is incurable?

For all the signs which I have shewed unto them?] Since they continue in it, notwithstanding all the wonders I have done, to convince them of my power and faithfulness.

Ver. 12. *I will smite them with the pestilence.*] Send a pestilential disease among them to sweep them away at once, as the fifteenth verse interprets it, (see Exod. xxxii. 10.)

And disinherit them.] And so deprive them and theirs of the country which I promised to their fathers for an inheritance, (Gen. xv. 7.) This was not an irrevocable decree, but a threatening which God changed into another severe punishment.

And will make of thee a greater nation, and mightier than they.] Fulfil my promise to Abraham, by making thee the father of a more numerous people, and more powerful than they whom I reject.

Ver. 13. *And Moses said unto the Lord, Then the Egyptians will hear it, (for thou broughtest up this people by thy might from among them.)*] It is an abrupt kind of speech, proceeding from the great disturbance which this threatening made in his mind; being as much as if he had said, If thou thus destroy them, the Egyptians, when they hear of it, will triumph; and thou wilt lose all the honour thou hast got, by the wonderful deliverance thou didst work for thy people from their bondage.

Ver. 14. *And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land.*] Or rather, *they will say* to the inhabitants of this land, *i. e.* the Canaanites, with whom the Egyptians had frequent commerce.

For they have heard, &c.] The word *for* is not in the Hebrew: and the sense will be more plain if we omit it, and translate the whole thus; *They will say to the inhabitants of this land, they have heard that thou Lord art among this people:* that is, that there was a glorious token of thy presence among us.

That thou Lord art seen face to face.] And spakest to us from Mount Sinai out of that glorious cloud, which there appeared unto all the people, (Exod. xix. 18. xx. 1. xxiv. 16, 17. Deut. iv. 12.)

And that thy cloud standeth over them.] Numb. x. 34.

And that thou goest before them by day-time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night.] Exod. xiii. 21.

Ver. 15. *Now if thou shalt kill all this people.*] Or rather, *but thou hast killed all this people.*

As one man.] On a sudden, with one stroke; as if they had all but one life.

Then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying.] Of which the nations that have heard the forenamed report of thy majesty will make this construction.

Ver. 16. *Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land.*] Because he whom they called Omnipotent, was indeed defective in his power; which at last failed him, so that he could not complete what he had undertaken.

Which he sware unto them.] Gen. xv. 17, 18. xxiv. 7.

Therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness.] Killed them all, before they came to the land he had solemnly promised to them; for that was an easier work than to make good his word.

The sum of this argument is, that it would be a great disparagement to the Divine Majesty if he now destroyed this nation; because his enemies would conclude, he had deluded them with false promises, which he wanted power to effect.

Ver. 17. *And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great.*] That is, let it appear to be unlimited, by bringing them into the land which he sware to give them, (ver. 16.) or by pardoning their sin, which had provoked his high displeasure against them, (ver. 11.) For by *power* may be meant either that which is properly called by that name, *viz.* his omnipotence, which can conquer all opposition; or his mercy and clemency, in overcoming his anger, and bearing with an ungrateful people: which agrees very well with what follows; but both tend to the same meaning, that he would not destroy them, but bestow the land of Canaan upon them according to his intentions.

According as thou hast spoken.] Which will be suitable to thy blessed nature, which thou didst proclaim to me when thy glory passed by me, (see Exod. xxxi. 22. xxxiv. 5, 6.)

Ver. 18. *The Lord is long-suffering, and of great mercy,*

forgiving iniquity, &c.] In these very words (though something more largely) God proclaimed his name to Moses, when he shewed him his glory, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. where they are explained.

And by no means clearing the guilty.] Even these words (according to the interpretation I have there given of them) are a plain argument to move the Divine goodness to pardon their sin. But the next words [*visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children*, &c.] seem to be directly contrary to the intention of his petition, till it be considered, that they had not now committed idolatry, against which sin, God, in these words, particularly declares his severity; and that Moses did not now plead for an absolute pardon without any punishment at all, but only that he would not destroy the whole nation as one man, and utterly disinherit them, as he seemed resolved to do, (ver. 12. 15.) This threatening he hoped his gracious nature would incline him to revoke; notwithstanding which he might *visit the sin of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation;* that is, punish them and their posterity a long time. And so this latter part of the verse is to be interpreted, (according to what I observed, Exod. xxxiv. 7.) *in making desolate he will not make quite desolate, though he visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children*, &c.

Ver. 19. *Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people.*] So far as not to destroy them utterly.

According to the greatness of thy mercy.] Which God himself had proclaimed, (ver. 18.)

As thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt even until now.] This looks like an argument against them: for they having provoked him so often as they had done since they came out of Egypt, in the space of one year and little more, (see ver. 22.) and been as often forgiven, it might seem more reasonable that he should now punish them, and not forgive them any more. But he appeals to that *long-suffering* goodness which he mentions as the prime character of the Divine Nature, (ver. 18.) which, though it had been exercised by them many ways, yet he hoped would still bear longer with them.

Ver. 20. *And the Lord said, I have pardoned, according to thy word.*] Granted thy desire, not to destroy them utterly and altogether, (ver. 12. 15.)

Ver. 21. *But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.*] In the Hebrew the words run plainly thus, *As true as I live, and that all the earth shall be* (or *hath been*) *filled with the glory of the Lord.* For so the Egyptians themselves confessed, (ver. 14.) that the fame of it was come to them; and afterward he did many more wonderful things when he brought them into Canaan: unto which (if these words be taken in the future tense) he hath respect, when he saith, *as true as that he would in a most glorious manner subdue the Canaanites, not one of these murmuring Israelites should come into that good land.*

Ver. 22. *Because all those men*, &c.] The sense would have been clear if we had left out the word *because*, as we might have done, the Hebrew particle *ki* being sometimes only an expletive, or if we had translated it *that*, as it signifies in Gen. xxii. 17. and many other places. For the meaning plainly is, though the words be something intricate, that all the men of whom he is speaking should perish, and not one of them come into Canaan.

Which have seen my glory.] Which appeared to them in the cloud upon Mount Sinai, and resided in the tabernacle.

And my miracles which I did in Egypt.] Mentioned in the fourth, seventh, eighth, and following chapters of the book of Exodus.

And in the wilderness.] Where he divided the Red Sea for them to pass through on dry land, and gave them manna constantly from heaven, with water out of a rock, which followed them whithersoever they went, &c.

And have tempted me now these ten times.] That is, very oft, as this phrase *ten times* signifies, (Gen. xxxi. 7. 41. Nehem. iv. 12. Job xix. 3.) But some of the Hebrews will not be satisfied with this explication, but endeavour to find out precisely just ten provocations of which they were guilty: though, to do this, they are forced to begin with one which fell out before they came to the Red Sea, (Exod. xiv. 11, 12.) and all the other nine they find in the wilderness. (See Pirke Avoth. cap. 5. and Paulus Fagius's Scholia upon it; with Genebrard upon Psal. lxxviii. 46.) Mr. Mede hath observed, that *to tempt* God, in Scripture language, is to *provoke him by some presumptuous fact to anger;* as it were, *to try* whether he will punish or not; or, in fewer words, *to dare* God, (book i. Discourse 26. p. 153.) And the following words in the next verse justify this notion in this place.

And have not hearkened to my voice.] This seems particularly to refer to their disobedience, when he bade them *go up, and possess the land of Canaan; notwithstanding, they would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord their God*, (Deut. i. 21. 26, &c.)

Ver. 23. *Surely they shall not see the land*, &c.] The Hebrew particle *im*, when it follows an oath, is to be simply translated *not*. And so the words run clearly here, *they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers.*

Neither shall any of them that provoked me see it.] This is but an explication of the foregoing words, and might have been better translated, *even all that provoked me* (by their discontent and murmuring, &c. ver. 1—3.) *they shall not see it.* This heavy doom was passed upon them on the ninth day of the month Ab (which answers to our July), as Moses Kotzensis reports the opinion of their doctors: on which day, they say, both the first and second temples were levelled with the ground; and Bitter, likewise, a great city, was taken on the same day, in which were many thousand Jews; who, with their king (as they called him), Ben Cosiba, and his whole army, were cut in pieces. And to make this day still more dismal, Turnus Rufus, one of the Roman captains, ploughed up the ground on which the temple and buildings about it stood upon this very day. (See Wagenseil upon Gemara Sotæ, cap. 7. sect. 10. annot. 8.)

Ver. 24. *But my servant Caleb.*] He alone is here particularly mentioned, because this is the first proof we read of his sincerity and resolution. But Joshua is as much concerned in this character and promise, whose faith and courage were tried, as soon as they came out of Egypt, by fighting with the Amalekites. And therefore there was no need to speak here of his integrity: though afterward it is expressly remembered, in the very same words used in this place concerning Caleb, (chap. xxxii. 12.) And here below in this chapter, (ver. 30.) he is assured of coming into

the land of promise as well as Caleb, with whom he joined in opposing the mutinous multitude, (ver. 6.) where he is named first in that heroic action.

Because he had another spirit with him.] Was otherways affected (as we now speak), trusting in the power and promise of God, and not at all afraid of the strength of their enemies.

And hath followed me fully.] The Hebrew phrase is, *hath fulfilled after me; i. e.* completed his obedience to me; or fulfilled my will and commands in every thing: being not only full of courage himself, but endeavouring to put it into others, (Deut. i. 36.)

Him will I bring into the land whereunto he went.] Into Canaan: particularly to Hebron, and the parts about it; which were bestowed upon him by the order of Moses himself, (Josh. xiv. 9. 13, &c, see chap. xiii. of this book, ver. 22.)

And his seed shall possess it.] Or, as some translate it, *shall expel it; i. e.* drive out the inhabitants of that place, and the parts adjacent, as we read he and his brother did, (Josh. xv. 13—15, &c.)

Ver. 25. *Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwelt in the valley.*] These words being read without a parenthesis, in conjunction with those that follow, are very plain, being thus translated; *both the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley:* that is, at present lie in wait for you at the bottom of the other side of the mountain. For they were not far from one another, (chap. xiii. 29.) and the Hebrews use the word *jashah* for any *abode* in any place, though it be not a settlement, but for a short time. (See ver. 45.)

To-morrow turn you.] Therefore, do not go forward, as I formerly commanded you, lest you fall into their ambushes; but face about, and return from whence you came, &c. This he bade them do *to-morrow, i. e.* hereafter; at their next removal: for they did remain some days in Kadesh before they turned about, (Deut. i. *ult.*) And so the word *to-morrow* is used in Exod. xiii. 14. for the *time to come.*

And get you into the wilderness, by the way of the Red Sea.] Into that wilderness which led to the Red Sea, and so to Egypt, whither they desired to return, (ver. 3, 4.) This command was so grievous to them, that it set them, as I take it, into a new fit of murmuring: which is the occasion of what follows in the next verses, 26, 27.

Ver. 26. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, saying.*] He now speaks unto Aaron, what he only spake to Moses before, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 27. *How long shall I bear with this evil congregation.*] It is a short imperfect sort of speech in the Hebrew, such as men use when they are very angry; *how long to this evil congregation, i. e.* shall I shew mercy: which is the same with *bear with them,* as we translate it, to supply the sense.

Which murmur against me?] Whom nothing will please, unless they have their own will in every thing.

I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me.] This seems to signify that there was a new discontent; which, in all likelihood, arose, because God would not conduct them forward to Canaan; but bade them go back from whence they came: which order he tells them, in the following words, he would never revoke.

Ver. 28. *Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the Lord.*] This oath made what he had resolved unalterable.

As ye have spoken in mine ears.] See chap. v. 2.

So will I do unto you.] Give you your own wishes, to die in the wilderness; which was exactly fulfilled, (chap. xxvi. 65.)

Ver. 29. *Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness.*] He repeats their own desire.

And all that were numbered of you.] Which number was taken about half a year ago; as we read in the first chapter of this book, (ver. 3. 18, &c.)

According to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward.] Which amounted in all to six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty, (ver. 46.) besides the Levites, who were not numbered at this time, as we read in the next verse, 47. And when they were numbered, their number was not taken from *twenty* years old; but from a *month* old and upward, (chap. iii. 15.) And therefore, the Levites are not comprehended in the heavy sentence here denounced, no more than the children under *twenty* years old, or the wives of the men that murmured; but only the men of war, who were above *twenty* years old. And accordingly we find Eleazar, who is mentioned at the numbering of the Levites, (chap. iii. 32.) alive at the dividing of the land of Canaan, (Josh. xiv. 1.)

Ver. 30. *Doubtless ye shall not come into the land.*] He would not have them retain the least hope of having this sentence reversed, being established by God's oath.

Concerning which I sware to make you dwell in.] Not to make these particular men, but the seed of Abraham inhabit it; as Grotius rightly observes, (lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 13. sect. 3.) The land was promised by oath, *non personis, sed populo, not to persons, but to the people; viz.* to the posterity of those unto whom God sware to give it, (ver. 23.) Now such a promise, as he observes, may be performed at any time, because it is not tied to certain persons.

Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.] They are excepted, because they had distinguished themselves from the rest, by their eminent faith and courage, in the midst of a perverse generation.

Ver. 31. *But your little ones.*] All under twenty years old.

Which ye said should be a prey.] He upbraids them with their discontented and distrustful language, (ver. 3.)

Them will I bring in, and they shall know the land.] That is, enjoy it.

Which ye have despised.] See chap. xiii. 32.

Ver. 32. *But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness.*] He repeats it again, to make them sensible of the certainty of it; and, in their own words, (ver. 2.) to humble and put them to confusion.

Ver. 33. *And your children shall wander.*] So the Chaldee interpret what in the Hebrew is *shall feed,* or graze, as sheep do in the deserts. Or rather, after the manner of the Arabian shepherds, who could not stay long in one place, but were forced to remove their tents to another, that they might find pasture for their flocks. So R. Solomon interprets it.

Forty years.] Reckoning from their first coming out of Egypt; from whence they were brought into the wilderness a year and a half ago; and now are condemned to make up their time of wandering in it full *forty* years.

And bear your whoredoms.] That is, the punishment of

their whoredoms; as idolatry is peculiarly called, (chap. xv. 39. Exod. xxxiv. 15. Jerem. iii. 14.) of which they had been guilty presently after they came out of Egypt, when they made the golden calf and worshipped it; and continued other idolatrous practices, (Lev. xvii. 5. 7.) which God punishes now that he visits their present rebellion. For it was not that alone to which he threatens this punishment, but he reckons with them for all the rest of their iniquities, (Deut. ix. 18. 24.) especially for the greatest of them all, which he declared he would not forget to punish upon any new occasion, (see Exod. xxxii. 34.) which they now gave him. It must be acknowledged, also, that other heinous sins are called by this name of *whoredoms* in Scripture, as well as idolatry, (Psalm lxxiii. 26.) See Mr. Selden, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 23. p. 489.

Until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness.] This is the third time he reflects upon their foolish wish, (ver. 29. 32.)

Ver. 34. *After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days.*] See chap. xiii. 25.

(Each day for a year) shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years.] Reckoning the time past, since they came into the wilderness, which was a year and a half: so that the meaning is, they should wander *forty* years in the wilderness before they got out of it. Which is not to be understood so precisely as to want nothing at all of it: for they came out of Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow after the Passover, (chap. xxxiii. 3.) and they came into Canaan and pitched in Gilgal, upon the tenth day of the first month of the *one-and-fortieth* year after their departure from Egypt; (Josh. iv. 19.) and, consequently, there wanted *five* days of full *forty* years.

And ye shall know my breach of promise.] In the Hebrew the words are no more than these, *ye shall know my breach:* which the ancients understand of God's breaking in upon them, to take vengeance of them for their sin. So the LXX. γνώσεσθε τὸν θυμὸν τῆς ὀργῆς μου, *ye shall know the fury of my anger;* and the Vulgar translates it, *ultionem meam, my vengeance:* that is, you shall find that I am the avenger of iniquity. And it is the same, if we understand *my breach* to signify God's departure from them, who had so shamefully departed from him. Or, according to our translation, it signifies, *a revocation of the blessing promised to them:* which was so nullified, that they were left without any hope of having the like promise of entering into Canaan renewed to them.

Ver. 35. *I the Lord have said.*] Decreed and pronounced this sentence.

I will surely do it to all this evil congregation.] Break from them; or break in upon them, to consume them, and utterly disinherit this untoward generation.

That are gathered together against me.] Whom they accused, as well as Moses and Aaron, (ver. 2, 3.)

In this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there shall they die.] The repetition of this so frequently (ver. 29. 32, 33.) was to convince them the decree was peremptory and irreversible.

Ver. 36. *And the men which Moses sent to search the land.*] That is, ten of them.

Who returned.] See chap. xiii. 25, 26.

And made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land.] See chap. xiii. 31, 32. xiv. 2.

Ver. 37. *Even those men, &c. died by the plague.*] Either by the pestilence, threatened ver. 12. or by lightning, or some other sudden death: about which there is a dispute among the Hebrew doctors, in the Gemara on Sota, cap. 7. sect. 11. where some of them say they died of a quinsy, which choked them; or, as others, their tongues swelled, and hung out of their mouths down to their navels, and were full of worms, &c. So that their punishment was suitable to their sin (as they conclude); *with their tongues they offended, and in their tongues they suffered.*

Before the Lord.] Whose glory appeared upon the tabernacle, before them all, (ver. 10.) unto which I take these words to relate; signifying that they died in his presence (and perhaps by a flash of fire from thence), on that very day upon which this murmuring was raised by their false report.

Ver. 38. *But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land.*] Here Joshua is mentioned with Caleb, and placed first (as in the sixth verse), as Caleb was in ver. 30. Which shews there was no difference made between them.

Lived still.] This is set down to shew God's faithfulness in his promise to them: who, I suppose, were now in the company of the rest of the searchers of the land, before the Lord, and had no hurt, when all the other ten fell down dead on a sudden; which made their preservation the more remarkable.

Ver. 39. *And Moses told all these sayings unto all the children of Israel.*] Acquainted them with the doom which God had passed upon them.

And the people mourned greatly.] Were extremely afflicted at the news; but did not beseech him to pray for them, (as at other times, chap. xi. 2.) because he had told them the doom was irreversible.

Ver. 40. *And they rose up early.*] Or, *but they rose up.*

In the morning.] The next morning after they were told what God had decreed against them.

And gat them up into the top of the mountain.] They resolved they would go up; or they prepared themselves for it: for they did not yet actually go up; as appears by the following words.

Saying, Lo, we be here.] We are ready to do as Joshua and Caleb exhorted us, chap. xiii. 30. xiv. 9. They seem now to be as forward, as before they were backward to go to possess the land: which their rising *early* signified.

And we will go up to the place which the Lord hath promised.] They pretend now to depend upon his promise, and to trust he will make it good.

For we have sinned.] Are sensible of our sin, and repent of it. Or, *though we have sinned,* yet we hope he will make good his promise.

Ver. 41. *And Moses said, Wherefore now do you transgress the commandment of the Lord.*] Why do you still continue in your disobedience to God; who commands you to return, and not to go forward? (ver. 25.)

But it shall not prosper.] You shall not succeed in your enterprise; which these words shew they stood ready to take in hand.

Ver. 42. *Go not up.*] Though they sought the renewal of God's promise with tears, (ver. 39.) and now were ready to testify their repentance with the hazard of their lives, he would not recal the sentence passed upon them.

For the Lord is not among you.] The cloud did not stir to conduct them; by which they might have understood that their attempt was presumptuous.

That ye be not smitten before your enemies.] Who, without God's help, would be too strong for them.

Ver. 43. *For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you.*] Either they were removed out of the valley where they were before, (ver. 25.) or, their main body being there below, they sent a strong party to possess themselves of the top of the mountain, and to make good the pass against the Israelites.

And ye shall fall by the sword.] Lose your lives in the attempt.

Because ye are turned away from the Lord, therefore the Lord will not be with you.] This was a powerful reason to check their motion, and to restrain them from their attempt: but, after the manner of obstinate sinners, they go on still in their unbelief; as the next words inform us.

Ver. 44. *But they presumed to go up to the hill-top.*] They audaciously endeavoured to ascend the mountain, against the Divine command: which is a strange instance of hardened infidelity.

Nevertheless, the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of the camp.] The cloud stood still over the tabernacle; and therefore Moses, and the Levites, and the ark (which went before them, when they first removed from Sinai, chap. x. 33.) did not stir out of the place where they were encamped to conduct them. But this seems to signify that all the other camps, except that of the Levites, *i. e.* the whole body of armed men, moved without the guidance of God; who would not favour them, because they moved against his express command.

Ver. 45. *Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites.*] With whom the Amorites also joined, (see Deut. i. 44.)

Which dwelt in that hill.] Who had posted themselves there, and possessed themselves of the top of the mountain, (ver. 43. and see ver. 25.)

And smote them.] Having a great advantage of them that were climbing up the hill: from whence they came pouring down upon them.

And discomfited them.] It is not said how great a slaughter they made of them; but it is likely it was not small, because they chased them a good way. Thus began God's threatening to be immediately fulfilled, (that their carcasses should fall in that wilderness, ver. 29.) by their own wilfulness.

Even unto Hormah.] A place in the confines of Canaan, near the Dead Sea: so called from the destruction that was here made of the Israelites, and afterward of the Canaanites, (chap. xxi. 3. Judg. i. 17.) And upon the occasion of this calamity which befel the Israelites, and the great mortality which followed, while they stayed in the wilderness, Moses is thought to have penned the ninetieth Psalm; in which he signifies the life of man was now shortened, and reduced to seventy or eighty years; that is, made but half as long as their forefathers'.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] We read in Deut. i. *ult.* that *they abode in Kadesh* (where the foregoing murmuring was) *many days:* during which time (and in the latter part of this second year after they came out of Egypt), it is very probable all that we read in this chapter, and in the four following, was transacted.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them.*] These words were not directed to the whole congregation, but to the younger sort, who had not forfeited the favour of God, as their fathers had done; several of which, it is likely, were already dead, according to the doom God had passed upon them; and the rest looked upon themselves as disinherited: (chap. xiv. 12.) and therefore these precepts were not delivered to them.

When ye come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you.] This shews he speaks to the children of the murmurers, whom he promised to bring into the land of Canaan, (chap. xiv. 31.) and would therefore have well instructed in the manner of sacrificing, wherein God's worship and service very much consisted; which is the reason why he further explains what he had heretofore said about this matter. But hence it appears, that they were not bound to observe these laws till they came to Canaan.

Ver. 3. *And will make an offering by fire unto the Lord.*] This comprehends all the sacrifices which were burnt upon the altar, either in the whole or in part.

A burnt-offering.] This was the principal, and most ancient sacrifice of all other; which was wholly burnt upon the altar, every morning and every evening, (Exod. xxix. 40.) of which he treats in the first of Leviticus.

Of a sacrifice.] This undoubtedly signifies *peace-offerings*, as appears from ver. 8. and from the words here following; and likewise from the use of the word *sacrifice* in other places, (Exod. xviii. 12. Levit. xvii. 5. 8.) and from this consideration also, that *sin-offerings* had no *meat-offerings* attending on them, but only in the case of a leper, (Lev. xiv. 10.)

In performing a vow, or in a free-will-offering.] These words explain what he means by *a sacrifice*, viz. *peace-offerings;* which were offered in performance of some vow, or freely of their own accord, (Lev. vii. 16. xxii. 21.) or by God's command upon their solemn feasts; as it here follows.

And in your solemn feasts.] Mentioned Levit. xxiii. (See there, ver. 37. and Numb xxix. 39.)

To make a sweet savour unto the Lord.] Levit. i. 9.

Of the herd or of the flock.] Under the word *flock* is comprehended both *kids* and *lambs:* for the Hebrew words *tson* and *seh* signify both; as many have observed, particularly Bochart in his Hierozoicon, (par. i. lib. ii. cap. 42.)

Ver. 4. *Then shall he that offereth his offering unto the Lord.*] Of any of the forenamed sorts.

Bring a meat-offering.] As a necessary appurtenance to such sacrifices.

Of a tenth-deal of flour.] That is, the tenth part of an ephah, (as is expressly declared, chap. xxviii. 5.) which was an omer: (see Exod. xvi. 36.)

Mingled with the fourth part of a hin of oil.] See Exod. xxix. 40. In this, such meat-offerings as were accessaries to other offerings, and a part of the sacrifice, which went before, differed from those meat-offerings which were not dependant upon a foregoing sacrifice, but offered alone by themselves: for in these latter the oil was only poured upon the meat-offering, (Lev. ii. 1, &c.) and not mingled

and macerated with the flour; as it is here ordered: and there was this further difference between them, that those meat-offerings which were accessary to other sacrifices, were all burnt on the altar, in honour of God, as Josephus observes, lib. iii. cap. 10. but when a meat-offering was solitary (as we may call it), as the principal offering which a man then made, a little part of it only was burnt upon the altar, and the priest had the rest; as appears from the second chapter of Leviticus.

Ver. 5. *And a fourth of a hin of wine for a drink-offering shalt thou prepare.*] See Exod. xxix. 40.

With the burnt-offering or sacrifice.] Whether it were a whole burnt-offering, or a peace-offering, (ver. 3.) this wine was wholly poured upon the altar; and the priest had none of it.

For one lamb.] It was the same *for one kid.* If there were more than one, the drink-offering, as well as the meat-offering, was increased; particularly upon the sabbath, (chap. xxviii. 9.) And the true reason why meat-offerings and drink-offerings are required to attend upon the burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, was, because these sacrifices were a feast, and are called the *bread* or food *of God,* (chap. xxviii. 2.) And therefore, as bread and wine, as well as flesh, are our refection; so God required them at his table. And *salt,* though not here named, was also added, (because it was to be omitted in no sacrifice, Lev. ii. 13.) as also *frankincense;* because it is said both ver. 7. and ver. 10. this drink-offering was for *a sweet savour unto the Lord;* which seems to allude to the fragrancy of frankincense.

This was a thing so well known, that the heathen imitated this practice, in all their sacrifices, which were ever accompanied with a meat-offering: insomuch that Pliny saith, without this *mola salsa,* no sacrifice was thought to be good: "Nullum sacrificium ratum fieri existimant," (lib. xxx. cap. 5.) And long before him we meet with it in Homer, in those known words of his,

———Οὐλοχύτας προβάλοντο.

And as for wine, Brentius, in his paraphrase to Leviticus, takes notice of that phrase in him, no less obvious,

———ἐπὶ δ' αἴθοπα οἶνον
Λείβε———

which they not only poured upon the sacrifice, as it stood at the altar ready to be offered, but upon its flesh, when it was burning there: as we find in Virgil, Georg. iv.

"Ter liquido ardentem perfudit Nectare flammam."

And in many other places. (See Dilherrus, in his Dissert. Specialis de Cacozelia Gentilium, cap. 10.)

Ver. 6. *Or for a ram, thou shalt prepare for a meat-offering two tenth-deals,* &c.] This being a nobler sacrifice than a *lamb,* a larger *meat-offering* (and *drink-offering* also, as appears by the next verse) is required to attend it.

Ver. 7. *And for a drink-offering, thou shalt offer a third part of a hin of wine,* &c.] Whereas for a *lamb* a fourth part was sufficient, (ver. 5.)

Ver. 8. *And when thou preparest a bullock.*] This is a sacrifice of the *herd,* as the former of the *flock,* mentioned ver. 3.

For a burnt-offering, or for a sacrifice in performing a vow, or peace-offerings unto the Lord.] That is, free-will-offerings; which were one sort of *peace-offerings,* as those for performance of a vow were the other: (see ver. 3.) But free-will-offerings are peculiarly called by the name of *peace-offerings,* because they were the most acceptable of this sort; being offered purely out of love and affection to God, and not as a payment which was due upon a vow.

Ver. 9. *Then shall he bring with the bullock a meat-offering of three tenth-deals of flour,* &c.] The *meat-offerings* increased proportionably to the sacrifices upon which they attended: one tenth-deal, with a fourth part of a hin of oil, being sufficient for a lamb, (ver. 4.) and two tenth-deals, with a third part of a hin of oil, for a ram, (ver. 6.) but three tenth-deals of flour, and half a hin of oil, is here required to accompany the sacrifice of a bullock.

Ver. 10. *And thou shalt bring for a drink-offering half a hin of wine,* &c.] The same was to be observed in the *drink-offering;* which is larger in this sacrifice than in the two former, (ver. 5. 7.)

Ver. 11. *Thus shall it be done for one bullock, or for one ram, or for a lamb, or a kid.*] He repeats what he had said more distinctly, proceeding from the sacrifice last mentioned unto the first: which (ver. 5.) is said to be *one lamb;* but here explained to comprehend also *a kid.* For so the last part of this verse runs in the Hebrew; *for a young one* (which he calls *seh*) *either of the sheep, or of the goats.*

Ver. 12. *According to the number that ye shall prepare, so shall ye do to every one, according to their number.*] This I take to be a general rule, by which these offerings were to be governed; that, proportionable to the number of bullocks, rams, sheep, or goats that were offered, should be the quantity of the *meat-offering* and *drink-offering;* for bread and wine must bear proportion to the meat set on the table.

Ver. 13. *All that are born in the country shall do these things after this manner.*] *i. e.* All Israelites.

In offering an offering made by fire, &c.] When they offer any of the forenamed sacrifices, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 14. *And if a stranger sojourn with you.*] There were two sorts of strangers, it is vulgarly known, among the Israelites: some that entirely embraced and professed the Jewish religion, into which they were admitted by circumcision, &c.; others that were permitted to live among them, having renounced all idolatry, but did not submit to their whole religion. The Talmudists expound this place of the former sort.

Or whosoever be among you in your generation.] One would think this should signify the other sort of strangers; but they make it only an explication of the former: whether he were a proselyte that sojourned for a time, or were settled among them.

And will offer an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord.] Any of the forementioned offerings, which could be offered, as is here directed, by none but one that was subject to their law. For though another proselyte, who worshipped the true God, but was not circumcised, might bring a burnt-offering; yet they say it was without a meat-offering and drink-offering; and no peace-offerings were accepted from him.

As ye do, so he shall do.] Offer according to the rules above given; which is farther explained in the following verses.

Ver. 15. *One ordinance.*] *viz.* About sacrifices.

Shall be both for you of the congregation.] *i. e.* For you Israelites.

And also for the stranger that sojourneth with you.] Here the LXX. translate it, Προσηλύτοις προσκειμένοις ἐν ὑμῖν, *proselytes that are added, or joined to you;* or are *juris vestri participes,* as Mr. Selden expounds it, (lib. ii. Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 2. p. 147.)

An ordinance for ever, &c.] Never to be repealed as long as your religion lasts.

As ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord.] In matters of religion and Divine worship, though not in all civil things: for no proselyte, they think, could be chosen a member of the Sanhedrin, or great council at Jerusalem. The Jews extend these words to the way and manner of being made proselytes, by circumcision, baptism, and sprinkling of blood; as the Jews were originally, they say, initiated into their religion. (Selden, lib. i. de Syned. cap. 3. p. 34.)

Ver. 16. *One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.*] This general rule was made to invite and encourage strangers to become proselytes to the Jewish religion, and to engage the Jews to be kind to them; they being admitted to an ἰσοτιμία, as Philo calls it, *an equal privilege* with those who were born Jews. Yet this, the Jews say, is to be received with some distinctions; for the laws of Moses, either concerning the duties they owed to God and one to another, or concerning magistracy and marriages; they say, those of the first sort belonged to proselytes, as much as to original Jews, yet with some temperament; (as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 4.) but in those of the second sort they had not an equal privilege; for they were not to have any sort of command, either civil or military: and though they might marry with the Jews, yet not with the priests; and some marriages were permitted to them, which were forbidden to the Israelites: (see there, p. 167.)

Ver. 17. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] These commands were given, in all likelihood, at the same time with the foregoing.

Ver. 18. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them.*] See ver. 2.

When ye come into the land whither I bring you.] See there also; only add this, that the Jews acknowledge such kind of offerings, as here follow, and first-fruits, were due by the law only from the corn, &c. that grew in the land of Canaan; but by the decree of their wise men, they were to bring them out of Syria, and out of the land of Og and Sihon; as Maimonides saith in his treatise called Biccurim, cap. 2.

Ver. 19. *When ye eat.*] *i. e.* When it is ready to be eaten; for they offered it before they ate of it.

Of the bread of the land.] So corn is called, (Psalm civ. 14.) and the meaning seems to be, that when they made bread of the new corn of the land, they should out of the dough first make a cake, and offer it to the Lord, before they baked bread for their own use.

Ye shall offer up a heave-offering unto the Lord.] This is explained in the next verse, of offering a cake out of the first dough, whether it were of wheat, or barley, or rye, or oats, or that which they call *cusemim* (which they describe to be a kind of wheat, or barley, different from that which is commonly known by those names); for of these five kinds of grain, the Talmudists say, this cake was to be offered; and that out of the gleanings, and the sheaf left in the field, and out of the corners of the field.

Ver. 20. *Ye shall offer up a cake of the first of your dough for a heave-offering.*] Not upon the altar; but it was given to the priests, on whom God bestowed all their *heave-offerings,* (chap. xviii. 8.) yet they are said to be *offered unto the Lord,* because they were *heaved,* or lifted up to him, as the Creator of heaven and of earth; and then given to his ministers, who had it in his right.

As ye do the heave-offering of the thrashing-floor, so shall ye heave it.] That is, as the first-fruits of the harvest were given to the priests, and not offered upon the altar, so should this be given them, (Lev. xxiii. 16, 17.) and so were the first-fruits of their oil and their wine, &c. (Numb. xviii. 12, 13.) All which the Jews call the *great terumah,* or *heave-offering.*

Ver. 21. *Of the first of your dough shall ye give unto the Lord a heave-offering in your generations.*] This being a new law, not given before, he repeats it, that they might be the more observant of it: as we may see they were by this; that it was one of the things which rendered a woman infamous (though not so as to give her the bitter water), if she did not separate this cake from the first dough of the new corn to be presented to God; but either made her husband believe she had done it, when she had not, or ate it herself; as Mr. Selden observes, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 17. and therefore at this very day the Jews are so nice in this point, that they take enough to make a cake, as soon as the meal is mingled with water. The proportion is not mentioned in the law; but their wise men say, it was to be the forty-fourth part of the whole dough: (see Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. cap. 34.) The cabalists observing that this verse begins with the letter *mem,* and ends with *mem,* conclude (after their way), that therefore they were to give the fortieth part, because *mem* is the numeral letter for forty.

Ver. 22. *And if ye have erred, and not observed all these commandments which the Lord hath spoken unto Moses.*] Which have been now given concerning sacrifices; for to such commandments these words seem to have respect. Maimonides, in his treatise of the worship of the planets (and the Jews generally), saith this concerns idolatry.

Ver. 23. *Even all that the Lord hath commanded you by the hand of Moses:*] That is, all the commandments in the book of Leviticus, about such matters of God's worship and service.

From the day that the Lord commanded Moses.] The word Moses is not in the Hebrew, and the sense is plainer without it, as the Vulgar hath translated these words, *from the day he began to command.*

And henceforward.] Or rather *thenceforward,* until now; or until he made an end of commanding. So this phrase is used in Lev. xxii. 27. *From the eighth day, and thenceforth,* creatures were clean to be offered. (See Ezek. xxxix. 22.)

Among your generations.] In the Hebrew, *to your generations.* And so the LXX. εἰς τὰς γενεὰς, *to be observed throughout all generations.*

Ver. 24. *Then it shall be, that if aught be committed by*

ignorance, without the knowledge of the congregation.] It is commonly said, that Moses here speaks concerning sins of *omission* (as we call them), as in Lev. iv. 13. he doth of sins of *commission*, or doing that which ought not to be done; as here not doing that which ought to be done; for which different sorts of sacrifices are appointed. But others think that he speaks in both places of the same errors; only in that law, (Lev. iv. 14.) concerning those committed by the *whole congregation*, here of such as were committed by some lesser number of them, called *the congregation;* suppose the seventy elders, or the rulers of thousands and hundreds, &c. who are sometimes called by this name, (chap. xxv. 7. xxxii. 12. Josh. xxiv. 4.) But the Jews generally think Moses here speaks of strange worship, which was to be expiated by this sacrifice of a goat for a sin-offering. And therefore an excellent person of our own, after long consideration of this matter, comes to this conclusion: that in Leviticus he requires a young bullock to be slain for a sin-offering, when the whole congregation, though adhering to the true worship of God in every thing, were led ignorantly to do something against some negative precept (as they call it); to practise, that is, what God had forbidden, (so those words seem to import, Lev. iv. 13, 14.) but this kid of the goats here mentioned for a sin-offering, together with a young bullock for a burnt-offering, was to be sacrificed, when all the people, forgetting the holy rites prescribed by Moses (which often happened under bad kings), fell by a common error into idolatrous worship; which agrees very well with what is said in the two verses beforegoing; where he speaks, as I noted, of not observing these holy rites about sacrifices: (see Dr. Outram, lib. i. de Sacrificiis, cap. 14. sect. 2.)

Then all the congregation shall offer one young bullock for a burnt-offering.] Having neglected these laws ordained by Moses, and worshipped God in a wrong manner, according to the rites used in other countries (or at least mistaking the proper sacrifices and rites belonging to them, which they ought to have offered), this burnt-offering, I suppose, is commanded to be offered, when they saw their error, in token that they returned to God's true religion, and that way of worship which he had prescribed.

With his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.] Prescribed above, ver. 8—10. Which, perhaps, they had neglected to offer formerly with the burnt-offering.

It is well observed by Mr. Thorndike out of Maimonides, that *all the congregation* (if we understand thereby the whole body of the people), could not possibly offer these sacrifices; but the great consistory offered them as often as they occasioned the breach of the law, by interpreting it erroneously. (Rights of the Church in a Christian State, p. 159.)

And one kid of the goats for a sin-offering.] To expiate for what had been done after the manner of the heathen, contrary to the laws of God's worship here delivered by Moses; or otherwise than he directed: from whence it was (which adds much probability to this), that when Hezekiah restored the true worship of God, after the temple had been shut up, and the daily sacrifice omitted, and many idolatrous rites there used, by the ignorance of the people, in the days of his father, (2 Chron. xxviii. 24. xxix. 3.) he caused seven bullocks to be offered for a burnt-offering; and as many goats for a sin-offering; and so Ezra did at the restoration of the Divine service after they came out of Babylon, (Ezra viii. 35.) And it makes no difference, that Moses here requires only *one* of a sort to be offered, whereas Hezekiah offered *seven*, and Ezra *twelve;* for this only proves that one was absolutely necessary, but more than one was acceptable; especially when exceeding great errors had been committed in God's worship.

Ver. 25. *And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation.*] Who had thus committed an error in the worship of God out of ignorance: being misled by the great interpreters of the law; who therefore were to bring this sacrifice in the name of them all. For it is apparent by this, as well as the former verse, that *all the congregation* were concerned in this sacrifice, as much as in that Lev. iv. 13. And the same appears from the next verse, where he saith, *all the people were in ignorance.*

And it shall be forgiven them, for it is ignorance.] Proceeding from an erroneous interpretation of the law, or some other mistake; not from contempt of God and of his laws: for then they were to be utterly cut off, (ver. 30, 31.)

And they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire unto the Lord.] That is, a burnt-offering: which is not prescribed in Leviticus (as I observed before), and therefore was a different sort of offering, for a different offence.

And their sin-offering before the Lord.] Prescribed in the foregoing verse.

For their ignorance.] Which made them capable of a pardon; though not without these sacrifices.

Ver. 26. *And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel.*] He repeats it again, that they might not doubt of reconciliation to him, when they repented as soon as they understood their error, and acknowledged it, and begged his pardon by these sacrifices.

And the stranger that sojourneth among them.] Who were obliged to the same laws with the Israelites, and had the same privileges, (ver. 14—16.)

Seeing all the people were in ignorance.] It was a common error; and therefore no wonder strangers were carried away with it.

Ver. 27. *And if any soul.*] *i. e.* Any particular person.

Sin through ignorance.] Offend in matters of religion; by not observing the rites here prescribed, or by doing contrary to them through mere ignorance. To this, I think, these words are to be limited; wherein they differ from that law, Lev. iv. 27. which speaks of all manner of offences through ignorance.

Then he shall bring a she-goat of the first year for a sin-offering.] This sin-offering differs from that in Leviticus, (chap. iv. 28.) which was only a female kid of the goats.

Ver. 28. *And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly.*] As he was to do for the whole congregation, (ver. 25.)

When he sinneth by ignorance before the Lord.] These words, *before the Lord,* seem to me to import, that he speaks of sins committed about the worship of God; and confirms what I have said upon ver. 24. For in Lev. iv. both ver. 13. and ver. 27. he speaks in general of sins committed, either by the congregation, or by particular persons, *against any of the commandments of the Lord,* not *before the Lord; i. e.* (as I understand it) in his worship and service.

To make an atonement for him, &c.] He repeats it again,

to shew them that he would no more have a particular person suffer for his error than the whole body of the people.

Ver. 29. *You shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.*] See ver. 15. This must necessarily be meant of a proselyte of justice, as they called him that was circumcised, and undertook to keep the whole law; for he speaks of such, whether natives or others, as erred in not observing all his commandments, (ver. 22, 23.)

Ver. 30. *But the soul that doeth aught presumptuously.*] Not merely knowingly, but wilfully and audaciously; in contempt of the Divine Majesty and his authority: for so the Hebrew phrase, *with a high hand,* signifies, as Maimonides observes, in his More Nevochim. par. iii. cap. 41. where he saith, it imports a sin, not only publicly and openly committed, but with pride and insolence; it proceeding, not merely from an ill custom a man hath got of doing amiss, but from an express intention to contradict the law of God, and to set himself in defiance of it: which is the reason of what follows, *the same reproacheth the Lord.*

Whether he be born in the land, or a stranger.] Here the word *stranger* is simply used, without the addition of *that sojourneth among them* (as in the preceding verse), and therefore Mr. Selden well concludes, that even the *proselytes of the gate* were concerned in this law (as it related to idolatry and blasphemy), though not in the foregoing; and that they were liable to be *cut off* by the hand of Heaven; but whether to be punished by the judges or not, it doth not appear, (lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 11.)

The same reproacheth the Lord.] "No man sinned thus (saith Maimonides in the place forenamed), but he who had a settled opinion in his mind, contrary to the law of God; in which he dissented from it. And the common received exposition of this place is, that it speaks of an idolater; because he opposed the chief and principal foundation of the law. For no man worshipped a star, or a planet, but he that believed its eternity: which is the most repugnant of all other things to the law of God; which, in the very first words of it, declares, that all the world had a beginning, and was made by Him whom the Jews worshipped." Thus he. But doing any thing *with a high hand* doth not signify any one certain kind of sin, as the Jews generally fancy, (who think he speaks here only of an idolater or blasphemer: see Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 6. p. 101.) but a certain manner of sinning, with despite to the commands of God, and contempt of his authority, in any kind of sin whatsoever. And this Maimonides himself afterward acknowledges, in the words following: "There seems to me to be the same reason in all other transgressions, which are committed contemptuously against any law of God; as, if an Israelite seethed a kid in its mother's milk, or wore heterogeneous garments, or rounded the corners of his head, or his beard, in contempt of the law. For the consequence of this is, that he believes this law not to be true; which, in my judgment (saith he) is the meaning of these words, *He reproacheth the Lord.*"

And that soul shall be cut off from among his people.] No sacrifice could make an atonement for such a man; but he was to die, either by the hand of Heaven, or of the judges. Sometimes God saith, he will cut off idolaters, and such as consulted familiar spirits, (Lev. xx. 5, 6.) Sometimes he only saith certain offenders shall be cut off; as here in this, and many other places. Of which phrase I have given an account, Gen. xvii. 14. where the reader may see the several opinions that have been about it; and that its meaning must be determined by the matter in hand. Accordingly, Maimonides hath judiciously resolved, that, in this place, it signifies cutting off by the hand of the magistrates, as in the case of apostacy to idolatry, (Deut. xiii. 13, &c.) Not that all their goods were to be destroyed, and nothing left to their heirs (as when they served other gods); but, though a whole tribe had, *with a high hand,* transgressed any precept of the law, that is, denied it to be God's law, he thinks they were only to be all killed. Just as all the people thought in the case of the Reubenites, Gadites, and half tribe of Manasseh; who, only building an altar on the other side of Jordan, contrary to God's law, as was imagined, all the rest of the tribes of Israel gathered together, *to go up to war against them,* and cut them off, Josh. xxii. 11, 12, &c. 22, 23. where they acknowledged they deserved to perish, if they had built an altar for worship, as their brethren thought they had done.

Ver. 31. *Because he hath despised the word of the Lord.*] This shews the nature of the offence; which was setting at nought God's laws, and denying them to be of Divine authority.

And hath broken his commandment.] Not only by doing contrary to it, but, in effect, disannulling it; by rejecting its authority, and affirming he is not bound to observe that precept.

That soul shall be utterly cut off.] They shall have no mercy upon him.

His iniquity shall be upon him.] Not upon those who put him to death; but upon himself.

Ver. 32. *And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness.*] In this part of the wilderness, at Kadesh-barnea, it is very probable: (see ver. 1.)

They found a man.] The Jews, who would not be thought ignorant of any thing, say this man was one of those that presumed to go up to the mountain, when Moses forbade them, (chap. xiv. 44.) And some of them say expressly, his name was Zelophehad; about the dividing of whose estate a question afterward arose, (chap. xxvii. 1, &c.) So the Chaldee paraphrase, ascribed to Jonathan and others: (see Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 1. n. 9.)

That gathered sticks.] Or was *binding up sticks,* which he had gathered, and plucked up by the roots out of the earth; as some of the Jews understand the Hebrew word (Mr. Selden there observes), from Exod. v. 7.

On the sabbath-day.] This the Jewish doctors would have to be the very next sabbath after its first institution in the wilderness; which is to make this history misplaced, and the foregoing also, without any necessity.

Ver. 33. *And they that found him gathering sticks.*] Admonished him (as the Jews also say) of the unlawfulness of it, and wished him to desist. But he would not hearken unto them; and therefore (as it here follows) *they brought him unto Moses,* &c. as one that contemptuously, and with a high hand, had offended God. For they make this an instance of such a presumptuous sin as is mentioned before, ver. 30, 31. which is not improbable. And it appears from hence, that they observed the sabbath while they were in the wilderness; and therefore did not bring him before

Moses on that day, but the next after; or at least he was not judged till the next day.

Brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation.] Who were now, they fancy, hearing a sacred lecture, when they brought the man before Moses. For he was the chief judge, who was to determine such cases: though we may conceive the seventy elders (who were constituted before this happened, chap. xi. 24, &c.) to have been now sitting, and Moses at the head of them. But he being not deprived of any authority by their creation, who were added only to give him ease, it is more likely this man was set before Moses, as the sole judge of this case. For God speaks to him alone, (ver. 35.) when he directs what should be done with him. Yet Aaron and the elders, it appears by these words, were present (and called here *all the congregation*), when this offender was brought before him.

Ver. 34. *And they put him in ward.*] By the order of Moses, (as they did the man that blasphemed, Lev. xxiv. 12.) to secure him, till the mind of God was known how he should be punished.

Because it was not declared what should be done to him.] They knew very well that he was to die; for it had been declared, (Exod. xxxi. 14. xxxv. 2.) but they questioned what kind of death he should suffer, as the Jews interpret it. For they observe this difference between that case of the blasphemer in Leviticus, and this here of the sabbath-breaker: that there they doubted whether he should be punished by them, or by the hand of Heaven; but here, what kind of death they should inflict upon him. Though there are some (as Mr. Selden there observes, n. 8.) who imagine, the question here also was, whether the sense of the law was, that they should expect his punishment from God, or he be put to death by the court of judgment.

Ver. 35. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] Who went, I suppose, into the sanctuary, to inquire what the pleasure of God was in this matter; as he did in another difficulty, (Numb. ix. 8.)

The man shall be surely put to death.] By this answer, it seems to me, the question was not, at first, what death he should die; but whether he should be put to death or not: that is, whether the gathering and binding up sticks into a faggot was such a work as is forbidden in the law, (Exod. xx.) unto which death was afterward threatened in the places beforementioned. And the resolution was, that he should be put to death, as a man that denied God, the creator of the world; though not in words, yet in fact. For he who did any work on the sabbath, (as Aben Ezra notes upon Exod. xx.) denied the work of creation; though he did not in downright terms deny God himself. For the sabbath being a *sign* (as God calls it) that they were the worshippers of him who made all things; the contempt of that was a renouncing of their religion, and therefore deserved to be punished with death; the belief of the creation of the world being the very foundation of the Jewish religion; as the belief of its eternity was the foundation of the pagan. This made the breach of this precept, of keeping the sabbath strictly (which is more frequently repeated than any other, for the reason forementioned), so heinous a crime, and so severely punished; for by this time a true worshipper of God was distinguished from a profane person and an idolater.

All the congregation shall stone him with stones, without the camp.] This was a punishment inflicted for very enormous crimes. (See Lev. xx. 2. xxiv. 12.) And this man was condemned to suffer it, because he was the first breaker of this sacred law. And he doing it presumptuously, (as is supposed from the connexion of this story with ver. 30, 31.) in contempt of the law; and not desisting from his impiety, when he was admonished to forbear, (as I said, ver. 33.) it highly aggravated his guilt; being no less than *a reproaching of the Lord, and a despising of his word.* Whence the vulgar saying of the Talmudists, *He that denies the sabbath, is like to him that denies the whole law.*

Ver. 36. *And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him,* &c.] Not on the sabbath-day, as I said before; for that was unlawful (as Philo observes), but the next day after; or as soon as Moses had passed sentence upon him.

Ver. 37. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] This was spoken, it is most likely, about the same time that the foregoing passage happened, and the commands mentioned in the beginning of this chapter were delivered. For this that follows, is a direction for the better observance of all the rest of God's commandments.

Ver. 38. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes.*] This is the best word we have in our language to express the Hebrew word *tzitzith*, which imports something of an ornament resembling a flower, as the word *tzitz* signifies. Of how many threads they consist, and after what fashion they are made by the Jews at this day, see Buxtorf's Synagoga Judaica, cap. 9.

In the borders of their garments.] Or (as it is in the Hebrew) *in the wings of their garments;* which had four skirts, as appears by Deut. xxii. 12. at the bottom of each of which they were to have a fringe: which seem to have been only threads left at the end of the web unwoven; at the top whereof they put a lace, as it here follows.

Throughout their generations.] To be a perpetual mark of their religion, and put them in mind of their duty.

And that they put upon the fringe of the borders a riband.] Or, a *lace;* which both bound the fringe fast at the top, and also made it more conspicuous and observable; which was the intention of it. For by this they were distinguished from all other people who were not Jews; as well as put in mind of the precepts of God, as it follows in the next verse.

Of blue.] Or, as some would have it translated, of *purple.* But the Hebrew writers say, *thecleth* signifies that colour which we now call *ultramarine;* as Braunius hath observed, (lib. i. de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr. cap. 13. and Bochart. Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. v. cap. 10, 11.)

There is another very learned person, also, who hath more lately shewn, out of an excellent MS. in his possession, what the Jews deliver concerning the way and manner of dying this colour: which being not easy to compass, the Jews at this day, instead of this colour, are contented to use *white.* (See J. Wagenseil upon the Gemara Sotæ, cap. 2. annot. 8.)

Ver. 39. *And it shall be to you for a fringe.*] Or rather, *it* (that is, the riband) *shall be unto you upon the fringe;* or, *to the fringe;* added to it, to make it the more noted; being of a distinct colour from the fringe, which was of the same colour. And the garment, the Jews say, in the sel-

vage of which these fringes were, was their upper garment, called *talith*, being a kind of cloak.

That ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord.] *i. e.* When they looked down, this fringe and lace which they saw there might put them in mind of the duty they owed to God; who commanded this, not for itself, but to remember them that they were a holy people, bound to God by peculiar laws, which they should be as careful to observe as to wear these fringes. Hence it was that they, who pretended to greater sanctity than others, enlarged these fringes, (as our Saviour observes, Matt. xxiii. 5.) *i. e.* extended them to a greater length, so that they swept the ground, which made them more observable, as Braunius notes out of the Gemara of Gittim. lib. i. de Vest. Sacerd. Hebr. cap. 3. n. 16. where he also observes, that their superstition grew so much, as with great subtilty to contrive, that these fringes might be so wrought, as to denote the six hundred and thirteen precepts contained in the law of Moses; that so they might be put in mind *of all the commandments of the Lord.* (See Buxtorf also in the place beforenamed; and Bishop Montague, in his Apparatus, cap. 7. n. 32.)

And do them.] Which was the end of remembering them, as that was of their wearing them; though the Jews proved so foolish, as to pride themselves in the bare use of their ornaments; *i. e.* in their being a select people; which ought to have made them more careful to do the whole will of God.

And that ye seek not after your own heart.] Follow not your own thoughts and imaginations, (as Maimonides expounds it, More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 39.) or rather, *your own desires.* Or the word *seek* may import, *inventing* other ways of serving God, according to their own fancies.

And your own eyes.] Nor follow the example of others; as they were prone to do, it appears, by their making the golden calf, that they might have such a visible representation of God, as other nations were wont to have.

After which ye use to go a whoring.] It appears by this, that the foregoing words have a peculiar regard to the worship of God (which he speaks of in the beginning of this chapter), from which, when they departed, they are said to go *a whoring from God,* unto whom they were espoused.

Ver. 40. *That ye may remember and do all my commandments.*] He would not have them think there was any sanctity to be placed merely in wearing these fringes; but they were to be considered only as instruments, to call their duty to remembrance, and excite them to the performance of it. And so the Jews themselves sometimes call them, as Buxtorf observes in the place beforenamed, "means and instruments of observing the precepts."

And be holy unto your God.] By observing all his commandments; especially keeping themselves from idols.

Ver. 41. *I am the Lord your God.*] Their sovereign and benefactor.

Which brought you out of the land of Egypt.] He remembers them of the most peculiar obligation they had upon them, to observe this law and all the rest of his precepts.

To be your God.] They were redeemed by him on purpose, when none else could deliver them, that they might acknowledge no other God, but only him, to whom they owed their liberty, to serve him.

I am the Lord your God.] This seems to be repeated, to encourage them to hope that he would still continue good to them, notwithstanding the rebellion of their fathers; for which he had condemned them to die in the wilderness; where he would preserve them (their children), and at last bring them into Canaan, if they would follow his directions.

CHAP. XVI.

WE have nothing here said to direct us to the time and place, when and where this new rebellion happened; but it is very probable (as I said, chap. xv. 1.) that it was in some part of the second year after they came out of Egypt, before they removed from Kadesh-barnea.

Ver. 1. *Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi.*] By this it is evident that Korah was cousin-german (as we speak) to Moses and Aaron; for Izhar (Korah's father) was the second son of Kohath, as Amram (the father of Moses and Aaron) was his eldest son, (Exod. vi. 18. 1 Chron. vi. 2.)

And Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab.] This Eliab was the son of Pallu, the second son of Reuben, as appears from chap. xxvi. 5. 8, 9.

And On the son of Peleth.] He also was descended from Reuben, as well as Dathan and Abiram (as the next words tell us, *sons of Reuben*), but of what family it doth not appear. Nor is this man any where again mentioned, no, not in the progress of this conspiracy; which inclines me to think, that though he entered into it, yet he afterward withdrew himself, or was so inconsiderable, that no notice was taken of him.

Took men.] The word *men* is not in the Hebrew; but simply *Korah took.* Which word *took* being the first word in the Hebrew text, the whole verse may be thus translated, *Korah the son of Izhar,* &c. *took both Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth,* &c. That is, he drew these into a conspiracy with him. Or, *he betook himself to a party,* as the Chaldee understands it, *he divided himself;* with an intention, that is, to make a sedition. But the sense is the same, if we follow our translation, *he took men;* that is, complices or associates with him in his rebellion: by which we may understand *the two hundred and fifty,* mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 2. *And they rose up.*] Made an insurrection: in which Korah seems to have been the ringleader, having drawn the rest into it; which he might the more easily do, because the Kohathites and Reubenites lay encamped on the very same side of the tabernacle, (Numb. ii. 10. compared with chap. iii. 29.) by which means they had opportunity often to conspire together. Whence R. Solomon makes this reflection, *Woe to the wicked, and woe to his neighbour!* The cause of the insurrection is generally thought, both by Jews and Christians, to have been, that Korah could not brook the preferment of Aaron and his family, so high above the rest of the Levites, who were made only their ministers, (chap. iii. 6. 9. viii. 19.) For he thought this was too great a difference between the children of two brothers, who were of equal deserts. Nay, Aben Ezra thinks, that he wholly disliked the late exchange of the first-born for the Levites. And besides, it may be

thought that he stomached the late preferment of Elizaphan the son of Uzziel, who was the youngest son of Kohath, to be chief of the family of the Kohathites, (chap. iii. 30.) which he thought rather belonged to himself, who was the son of the second son of Kohath. And finding himself too weak to make an insurrection alone, he persuaded Dathan and Abiram (of the tribe of Reuben), and those in whom they had an interest, to join with him, upon another pretence; that they were descended from the eldest son of Israel, to whom the chief authority in the nation belonged, which Moses had taken upon himself; and likewise preferred the tribe of Judah to the principal place in their encampment, (chap. ii. 3.) and also the seventy elders to be his assistants, without their advice, and leaving them out of the number.

Such as these may be thought to be the grounds upon which they proceeded: Korah seeking the priesthood, and the sons of Reuben the civil dignity. But it seems to me that the ground of the quarrel was wholly upon the account of the priesthood (as I shall shew upon the next verse), and that they struck at Moses only as advancing his brother and his family, by his own authority, and not (as they pretended) by God's direction. For, as Dathan and Abiram did not appear openly, when they had formed this faction (for we find them in their tents, ver. 12. and refusing to come to Moses when he sent for them), so, in the next verse, they seem to speak of nothing but the priesthood: and so Moses understood their meaning, ver. 5. 10. 15.

Before Moses.] In an open defiance of his authority; who, they pretended, had no power to make such alterations as he had done.

With certain of the children of Israel.] It is not said out of what tribe; but it is likely out of several: if not some out of every tribe, in whom they had any interest.

Two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, &c.] The LXX. divide their character into three parts. First, that they were *princes of the assembly,* ἀρχηγοὺς συναγωγῆς, *rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds,* &c. And secondly,

Famous in the congregation.] Which they translate συγκλητοὺς βουλῆς, *who used to be called to public consultations,* when they were to deliberate about weighty affairs. And so several, both ancient and modern, translations, as Mr. Selden hath shewn ,ib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 4. n. 10. where he saith, they were called "maxime puto, si non solum, deliberandi causa," *chiefly, if not only, to have their advice.* And then lastly,

Men of renown.] Such who had got a great name (that is, fame and credit) among the people, upon these, or other accounts. This made the insurrection the more dangerous, that such great persons were engaged and appeared in it.

Ver. 3. *And they gathered themselves together.*] The forenamed company came in a body.

Against Moses.] As an arbitrary disposer of all preferment.

And against Aaron.] Who was promoted by Moses to the office of high-priest; which he himself had discharged before Aaron's consecration; which, perhaps, they made a ground of their quarrel.

And said unto them, Ye take too much upon you.] In the Hebrew the words are *rab-lachem, it is sufficient for you*: that is, you have domineered long enough; resign your places to others: for all of us, nay, every man in Israel, is as good as you.

Seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them.] Here seems to be the root of the quarrel. Before Moses's time every one might offer sacrifice in his own family (as I have often observed), which custom these men would have had still continued; being angry that this high office was confined to one family alone, who were to enjoy all the benefits of it; which were exceeding great. For the priests had a large share in most offerings; and some things wholly to themselves. This is the more probable, because it was so very hard to convince the people that God had settled this dignity, and all the profits belonging to it in Aaron's family. For though God did a new thing never heard of before, to demonstrate these people, that rose against Moses and Aaron, to be seditious, yet it was necessary still to do more. For after the earth had swallowed up Dathan and Abiram, and fire consumed Korah and his company, and a plague destroyed many more of them, the Lord did another miracle, (chap. xvii. 8.) in making Aaron's rod blossom and bud, and bring forth almonds in one night's time; when all the rest of the rods remained dry sticks: which makes it probable, as I said before, there were some in all the tribes who were engaged in this sedition; and were so deeply infected with the false notions of Korah, that it was necessary to give them all this satisfaction.

And the Lord is among them.] The people need no other governor but him, who dwells among them in his tabernacle, where they can present their sacrifices to him themselves without your assistance.

Wherefore then lift you up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?] Since God owns us all for his special and peculiar people, why do you take upon you such high places and dignity above us all? For Moses disposed and ordered all things; and Aaron, by his order, took upon him to be solely God's chief minister in his sanctuary.

Ver. 4. *And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face.*] With Aaron also, it is likely, as they did lately, (chap. xiv. 5.) And for the same end (see there), to deprecate God's displeasure (which they might justly think would now rise higher than ever), and to beg his direction what to do in such a dangerous state of things.

Ver. 5. *And he spake unto Korah, and unto all his company.*] This shews that Korah was the head of this faction, and Dathan and Abiram did not at the first (I guess from hence) appear with him.

Saying.] Being risen up from prayer, he made this answer to the seditious people, by order from God, who, no doubt, directed him to this way of suppressing them.

Even to-morrow the Lord will shew, &c.] In the Hebrew the words are, *to-morrow* (or, *in the morning*) *and the Lord will shew,* &c. That is, stay but till to-morrow, and it shall appear, without any further delay, whether you or we be in the right. He would keep them in suspense no longer, and yet gave them so much time to consider better, and repent. Some observe that the morning was the time of executing justice, and therefore here appointed.

Will the Lord shew.] By some visible token.

Who are his.] Or, *who appertain to him; viz.* as his ministers.

And who is holy.] Separated and solemnly consecrated, by his appointment, to the sacred office of priesthood.

And will cause him to come near unto him.] Make it appear that they are the persons who ought to burn incense and to offer sacrifice. For *to come near*, is to perform these offices, as may be learnt from Lev. xix. 22. but especially from Lev. x. 3. And the very word *cohen* denotes it; for it signifies *a minister next to the king.*

And him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him.] They shall discharge the office of priesthood, whom God himself hath chosen to it, and nobody else.

Ver. 6. *This do.*] I put you to this trial.

Take your censers.] Perform the office of priests, unto which you pretend a right.

Korah and all his company.] All the two hundred and fifty men, and whosoever else were in the faction of Korah; whom he orders, no doubt, by God's direction, to execute the office to which they aspired.

Ver. 7. *Put fire therein, and put incense in them.*] As the priests were wont to do.

Before the Lord to-morrow.] At the altar of the incense, as some conceive, before the most holy place. So Menochius. But this is contrary to ver. 18. where we read they *stood in the door of the tabernacle*, with their censers, fire, and incense. Nor would the sanctuary contain such a company; or, if it had been large enough, the people could not have seen either their offering or their punishment from the Lord for their sin. Therefore these words *before the Lord* signify with their faces towards the sanctuary, at the gate of which they stood; for what was done there is said to be *before the Lord*, (Exod. xxix. 42.)

And it shall be, that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy.] This comprehends both the man and all his family: so the meaning is, the Lord would declare whether Aaron and his sons should execute the priesthood alone, or Korah and his company be admitted to it.

Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.] It is the same phrase which we had before, ver. 3. *rab-lachem:* you are high enough already: let the station wherein you are suffice you, and aspire not after greater dignity. The following words justify this interpretation.

Ver. 8. *And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi.*] By this and by the foregoing verse it appears, not only that there were some of the Levites in this sedition, together with Korah at the head of them, but that they were the chief incendiaries (though others, as I said before, were drawn in to join with them), because Moses addresses himself only to them.

Ver. 9. *Seemeth it a small thing unto you.*] Do you take it to be no honour to you.

That the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel.] Made choice of you, above all other Israelites, to wait upon him in his family, as his domestic servants, (Numb. iii. 12. viii. 6. 14.)

To bring you near to himself.] Though not so near as the priests, yet nearer than all other men, being the sole attendants upon the priests, (chap. iii. 6. viii. 10, 11.)

To do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord.] See chap. iii. 7, 8. particularly the Kohathites were chosen to do the service of the tabernacle, *about the most holy things*, (chap. iv. 4. 19.)

And to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?] See chap. viii. 11. 19.

Ver. 10. *And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren, the sons of Levi, with thee.*] Or, *though he hath brought thee* (speaking unto Korah) thus near to him, and all the rest of the Levites thy brethren. (See chap. viii. 10. 11. 15. 19.)

And seek ye the priesthood also?] Will it not content you that you alone are chosen to minister unto the priests, (chap. iii. 6.) but you must be advanced to minister unto God in their office?

Ver. 11. *For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord.*] By whose order Aaron and his sons were appointed to serve him in the office of priests; as was declared when the Levites were taken to minister unto them, (chap. iii. 3. iv. 15. 19, 20.) And therefore, to rise up against them, was to rise up *against the Lord*, and oppose his authority, who made them his priests.

And what is Aaron.] Or, *and Aaron, what hath he done?* Wherein is he faulty?

That ye murmur against him?] For taking upon him the office of priesthood; into which he did not intrude himself, but was chosen and appointed by God to do him that service; who would have been angry with him if he had refused it.

Ver. 12. *And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab.*] To summon them to the place where Moses now was; which the Jews say was the court of judgment. This shews, that either these men (as I said, ver. 2.) did not openly appear with Korah and his company against Moses: (ver. 3.) or, if they did, they retired to their tents, before he rose up from his prayer, to give them an answer.

What became of On we are not informed: for he is neither mentioned here, nor in the following part of this narrative, concerning their sedition; nor any where else in the Holy Scripture.

Which said, We will not come up.] They bade the messenger, who summoned them to appear before Moses, to tell him plainly that they denied his authority. For that is the meaning of this language, *He hath no authority to command us, who are none of his subjects; and therefore will not obey him.*

Ver. 13. *Is it a small thing with thee that thou hast brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness?*] Though they would not come to him, yet they returned him this message; Have we not suffered enough by being brought out of a rich and plentiful country, abounding with all good things, into a barren wilderness, where we are ready to starve? Nothing could be more insolent and ungrateful, than to describe Egypt in the very same language wherein God himself had often spoken of the land of promise; particularly when he sent Moses to tell them, he would *bring them out of the affliction of Egypt*, under which they groaned, (Exod. iii. 16, 17.)

Except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?] Unless we allow thee to make what laws thou thinkest good, and impose what thou pleasest upon us? A most rude and insolent speech; signifying, that they had not shaken off the yoke of bondage, but only exchanged it; and instead of the rich and wealthy oppression of Pharaoh, were come under the poor and hungry tyranny of Moses. For so the next verse imports.

Ver. 14. *Moreover, thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey,* &c.] Or, certainly, this

is not the good land into which thou didst promise to conduct us. It seems to be a sarcastical speech; upbraiding him, as if he had put a cheat upon them, and fed them only with good words, to which they would no longer trust.

Or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards.] But told us it shall be bestowed forty years hence, when we are all dead. This still shews they took him for a deluder of them with deceitful promises.

Wilt thou put out the eyes of these men?] Some of them spake this in the name of the rest, who were now with Dathan and Abiram; and the meaning is, Dost thou think to blind us so, that none of us shall discern this imposture? or, shall we suffer thee to lead us about like blind men, whither thou pleasest; sometimes towards Canaan, and now back again towards the Red Sea and Egypt?

We will not come up.] A peremptory resolution, not to own his authority, which they denied at the first, (ver. 12.)

Ver. 15. *And Moses was very wroth.*] For such behaviour and language was so provoking, that it was no wonder it incensed the meekest man upon earth, (chap. xii. 3.) Yet the LXX. translate the words, as if he only *took it very heavily,* ἐβαρυθύμησε σφόδρα, *it made him exceeding sad.*

And said unto the Lord, Respect not their offering.] He calls the incense which they were about to offer by the name of *mincha,* which commonly signifies a *meat-offering;* but sometimes any inanimate thing that was consumed in honour of God, as incense was; and must so signify in this place, for they offered nothing else. And when Moses desires it may not be accepted, he means a great deal more, that God would give some sign of his dislike to it. Hence it seems plain to me, that Dathan and Abiram, as well as Korah, quarrelled at the confining the priesthood unto Aaron's family; for Moses calls this *their offering:* by the acceptance or rejection of which this controversy was to be decided.

I have not taken one ass from them.] This seems to be an appeal to God against their unjust charge, that he acted arbitrarily, and did with them what he listed, (ver. 13.) From which he was so far, that he declares before God he had not *taken, i. e.* received by way of gift or reward (so the LXX. and the Vulgar understand it), the smallest thing (for such a single *ass* was), much less extorted any thing from them.

Nor have I hurt any one of them.] None can say that I have done any kind of evil to them; but contrarily, all good offices. For, that he did not seek himself, appeared in this, that he had not advanced his own family to the priesthood, but left them in the number of the other Levites, upon the same level with Korah and his company.

Ver. 16. *And Moses said unto Korah, Be thou and all thy company before the Lord,* &c.] He repeats what he had said to him before, (ver. 6, 7.) only adding, that he would have Aaron also there, together with them. So it follows, *Thou, and they, and Aaron to-morrow.*

Before the Lord.] *i. e.* In the court of the tabernacle, see ver. 7. where, by an extraordinary commission from the Divine Majesty, this trial was to be made. And therefore Aaron himself did not now go into the sanctuary to offer incense (which was the proper and only place allowed by the law), but stood with them without: as in another great necessity he offered incense in *the midst of the congregation,* (ver. 46, 47.) Both which were done by a dispensation from him that made the law.

Ver. 17. *Take every man his censer, and put incense in them, and bring ye before the Lord every man his censer.*] Let every man of them stand before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle, to do the office of priests; to which they pretended as good a right as Aaron and his sons.

Two hundred and fifty censers.] This shews that the incense being offered by so great a number, (as it appears it was, ver. 35.) they did not offer it in the sanctuary; which would not contain so many persons.

Thou also, and Aaron, each of you his censer.] This seems to signify, as if Korah was commanded to stand by Aaron, since he pretended to be his equal; which made the hand of God the more remarkable upon him, when he was struck with lightning, and no harm came to Aaron, who stood by him: but it may be doubted, what way Korah perished.

Ver. 18. *And they took every man his censer.*] That is, the two hundred and fifty men did as they were commanded; but Korah went first to muster up as many as he could get together against Moses, (ver. 19.) and then seems to have gone to his tent, (ver. 24.) Herein these men submitted to the way of decision which Moses propounded, though they had so boldly denied his authority. For they could not but think, that God, whom they owned to be among them, (ver. 3.) would approve of them, if they were in the right, and make good their allegation, that *all the congregation were holy,* by accepting their incense, as much as Aaron's: to whom they did not deny an equality with themselves; but only a superiority.

And put fire in them.] From the altar of burnt-offering, which stood in the court, at the door of which they were placed, (Lev. i. 5.) for Aaron durst not take it from any other place; his sons having lost their lives for offering with strange fire: the remembrance of which, it is likely, deterred these men from doing otherwise; who did not as yet put in the fire, but only took their censers, and put incense in them (which is all that is ordered in the preceding verse), and put fire in afterward.

And stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron.] As if they were nothing inferior to them.

Ver. 19. *And Korah gathered all the congregation against them.*] The LXX. translate it, *Korah gathered all his congregation, i. e.* all the men of his faction. But the Hebrew words import that he gathered all the congregation of Israel, at least all the great men; who are sometimes called by the name of *all the congregation,* (chap. xiv. 1.) whom he got together, that they might be witnesses, at least, of the issue of this trial; though their coming together with Korah and his company, rather than with Moses and Aaron, is too plain an indication that they were inclined, if not to throw off, yet to doubt of their authority.

Unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] Where they themselves stood, (ver. 18.) And so did Moses and Aaron; but the Israelites that Korah had gathered together stood on his side, as appears from the foregoing words, and from ver. 24.

And the glory of the Lord.] The Schechinah, or Divine Majesty, came forth out of the most holy place, where it usually resided.

Appeared unto all the congregation.] Openly shewed itself in the sight of all the people; and, it is likely, in such an amazing manner, as it had done before, (chap. xiv. 10.) But where it appeared, we are not told: I suppose in the cloud, which was just over the ark of the testimony, (chap. ix. 15.) not in the door of the tabernacle, for there Korah and his company stood. (See Exod. xvi. 10.) And the end of the Lord's appearing was to give sentence in this case; and to declare, by a visible token, whom he accepted as his priests. Thus the glory of the Lord appeared the first time that Aaron and his sons offered sacrifice, (Lev. ix. 6. 23.)

Ver. 20. *And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying.*] A little before they put fire in their censers.

Ver. 21. *Separate yourselves from this congregation.*] *viz.* From Korah and his company, and the people they brought along with them; who seemed to favour them, (ver. 19.)

That I may consume them in a moment.] As he did Korah and his companions.

Ver. 22. *And they fell on their faces, and said.*] To pray to God, as they had done before, (ver. 4.)

O God.] The most mighty.

The God of the spirits of all flesh.] Who hast created the souls of all mankind, (so *flesh* often signifies *all men*, Gen. vi. 13.) and therefore searchest into their most secret thoughts and inclinations. So these words signify, chap. xxvii. 16.

Shall one man sin.] Korah, who was the chief incendiary and contriver in this sedition.

And wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?] Many of which he thought might, through weakness, be seduced into this faction, having no malice at all in their hearts: which God knew perfectly; and therefore he begs of him that he would make a distinction between such as these, and the men that misled them.

Ver. 23. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] He bade him rise up, having granted his petition.

Ver. 24. *Speak unto the congregation.*] Whom Korah had gathered together, and brought along with him to the door of the tabernacle, (ver. 19.)

Get ye up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.] Which, it seems, was not far off; or wheresoever it was, there a great number of people was gathered together to see what would be the conclusion of this contest. The word *tabernacle* is in the singular number; but includes all the tents belonging to these men, as appears from ver. 26. Or, perhaps, they had set up one great tabernacle, (for the word here is *mischcan*, which may be thought to signify more than *ohel*, a *tent*, ver. 26.) unto which abundance of people resorted, as the place that Korah and the rest had appointed for the general rendezvous (as we now speak) of all their party. For here Dathan and Abiram, it is evident, (ver. 27.) were with him; but there is no mention at all of On; which makes it probable he had forsaken them, as Moses wished all the people to do; on which condition God promised to pardon them.

Ver. 25. *And Moses rose up, and went unto Dathan and Abiram.*] To try, I suppose, if he could reduce them to their obedience, and prevent their ruin. He seems to have had no hopes of Korah, but looked upon him as incorrigible.

And the elders of Israel followed him.] Either the seventy elders, who were lately chosen out of the rest, (chap. xi. 16.) or the whole body of those who were called by that name, and were men of authority, attended upon him, to make this action more solemn, and to let Dathan and Abiram see how much Moses was reverenced by better men than themselves, who refused to come to him, (ver. 12. 14.)

Ver. 26. *And spake unto the congregation, saying.*] It seems Dathan and Abiram refused to hear him, as they did to come to him: for here is no mention of any thing he spake to them; but only to the congregation, who were gathered about their tents.

Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men.] I suppose now they were gone to their own tents, where their families were; from which he beseeches the people to remove with all speed. And he doth not mean merely that they should remove their persons from them, but their tents, and their goods, and cattle.

And touch nothing of theirs.] Because all belonging unto them was under an anathema which God had passed upon them; that is, was devoted to destruction, and therefore not to be touched, (Deut. xiii. 17.)

Lest ye be consumed in all their sins.] Destroyed with them; who had sinned so grievously, as to fall under the curse beforementioned.

Ver. 27. *So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.*] Where the greatest number of people were gathered together, as I observed, ver. 24. For here is the same word *mischcan* again, in the singular number, denoting some spacious habitation, where perhaps they held their consultations, and unto which there was the greatest resort.

On every side.] From which we may conclude, that the people had come from all quarters of the camp to these rebels; either to join with them, or out of curiosity to see how things would go.

And Dathan and Abiram.] With Korah also, it may be thought, because he is mentioned in the beginning of the verse. Yet this conclusion cannot be drawn from thence, for it is not said he was now there; but that it was *the tabernacle of Koran, Dathan, and Abiram;* where they used, I suppose, to meet.

Came out.] From the tabernacle beforementioned.

And stood in the door of their tents.] Of their own tents, where they commonly dwelt.

And their wives, and their sons, and their children.] With their whole families. This was the highest degree of audacious and hardened infidelity; whereby they declared that they feared not what Moses (who had given the greatest proof he was a man of God) could do unto them.

Ver. 28. *And Moses said.*] Unto all the people of Israel; or to the elders, and as many as could hear him.

Hereby you shall know.] I will now give you an evident demonstration.

That the Lord hath sent me to do all these works.] That I have been commissioned by God to do all the things with which those men find fault; particularly to take upon me the government of them, and to put Aaron and his family into the priesthood, and make the Levites only their ministers, &c. (See ver. 2, 3. 13, 14.)

For I have not done them of my own mind.] In the Hebrew the words are, *and that not out of my heart.* It was

none of my own device or contrivance: I did it not out of an ambitious desire to be great myself, nor out of private affection to my brother.

Ver. 29. *If these men die the common death of all men.*] In the Hebrew it is, *as die all mankind:* that is, a natural death, as we now speak.

Or if they be visited after the visitation of all men.] *i. e.* Such judgments of God come upon them, as are usual and common in the world; *viz.* a pestilence, the sword, or famine.

The Lord hath not sent me.] Then look upon me as an impostor.

Ver. 30. *But if the Lord make a new thing.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *if the Lord create a creature; i. e.* do something that was never seen nor heard of in the world before. The Jews, in several of their books (particularly in Pirke Avoth), say, there are ten things which God created after the world was perfected: and they mention *the mouth of the earth* for one of them; that is, the gaping of the ground, to swallow up these wicked people: which is said to be *created*, as Aben Ezra well observes, because by this miracle God altered the course of nature, and did a thing extraordinary.

And the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up with all that appertain unto them.] *i. e.* On a sudden; when there is no earthquake, but all is calm and still; and it swallow up none but them alone.

And they go down quick into the pit.] Be buried alive, when they are in perfect health. By this place it is apparent, that the Hebrew word *sheol* doth often signify the *grave;* which Bellarmine and others most earnestly contend never signifies so, but *hell;* which, from hence, he asserts to be in the centre of the earth, (lib. iv. de Christo, cap. 10.) not observing, that if it signify *hell* in this verse, and ver. 33. then the houses of these men, and their household-stuff, and all that appertained to them, went down thither, which is very absurd. It is hard also to think that all their little children went down into *hell* for their fathers' sin, though they did into the *grave.*

Then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord.] You shall be sufficiently convinced that they have unjustly accused me, and brought this destruction upon themselves.

Ver. 31. *And it came to pass, that as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them.*] He had no sooner done speaking, but immediately what he said was verified, which made it the more remarkable.

Ver. 32. *And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up.*] *viz.* Dathan and Abiram beforementioned, (ver. 27.) who stood in the door of their tents outfacing Moses.

And their houses.] *i. e.* All their family; or, as Moses himself hath explained it, (Deut. xi. 6.) *Their households, and their tents, and all the substance that was in their possession.*

And all the men that appertained unto Korah.] We are not told what became of Korah himself: for it is not said he was swallowed up, but all that appertained to him; *i. e.* all that were at that time in his tent: his whole family, except his sons, who escaped, (chap. xxvi. 11.) taking warning, I suppose, from what Moses said: (ver. 26.) which hath made some think that Korah was at the head of his two hundred and fifty men, who were the great abetters of his faction: who, if he had forsaken them at this trial that was made who were in the right, we may well think would have withdrawn themselves also, and not have stood to it without their chieftain, as we find they did, (ver. 35.) Yet he is not mentioned there as perishing with them by fire from the Lord: and Moses seems to say, (chap. xxvi. 10.) that Dathan and Abiram were swallowed up *together with Korah;* who had as much reason, or more perhaps, to think it necessary to be with that other company which he had gathered against Moses, (ver. 19.) and to encourage them to persist in their resolution, than to be with the two hundred and fifty men, who were men of such authority, (ver. 2.) that they may be thought to have needed none to support them. It may be added also, that the word *appertaineth* is not here in the Hebrew (which makes these words sound as if the meaning were only those that were of Korah's family), but simply *all the men* that were to Korah; *i. e.* were gathered to him, and were at that time with him: which seems to be an indication that they and he were swallowed up together. How many there were that stayed with him there is not certain; but the generality left him, ver. 27. where it is expressly said, "they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram," as Moses had commanded, (ver. 24.) Which may be taken for a further indication, that he was swallowed up in the tabernacle where he was, or in his own tent after he came out of that tabernacle. But those places, I observed before, may be otherwise understood: that place also, which is the main foundation of this opinion, (chap. xxvi. 10.) may likewise receive another interpretation, as I shall shew when I come thither. And they that are of the other opinion, think his tabernacle, and his family, and all his household-stuff, might be swallowed up, though he himself was not with them, but was burnt by fire with the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense; for Moses bade him take his censer as well as them, (ver. 17.) Which, since they did, and put fire and incense therein, why should it be thought he did not do the same? It seems to me highly probable that he did, otherwise he would have seemed to distrust his cause: but it must be confessed that it is obscure which way he perished, and therefore it is not fit to contend about it.

And all their goods.] All their household-stuff and cattle, and whatsoever was in or about their tents.

Ver. 33. *They, and all that appertained to them.*] See Deut. xi. 6.

Went down alive into the pit.] As Moses had foretold, (ver. 30.)

And the earth closed upon them.] This made it the more wonderful, that the earth, having swallowed them all up, had no cleft remaining in it, but closed up again and was as firm as before.

And they perished from among the congregation.] Were never more seen.

Ver. 34. *And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them.*] Though they were at a distance from their tents, (whence they had removed on all sides, ver. 27.) yet they heard them shriek so loudly, as they sunk down into the ground, that it put them into a great fright, and made them fly still further off.

For they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.] Some of them were conscious to themselves that they had favoured

this wicked faction; and all of them knew how highly they had lately offended God, by their unbelief and murmuring, (chap. xiv.) which might make them justly fear the same fate with their brethren.

Ver. 35. *And there came out a fire from the Lord.*] From the glory of the Lord, which appeared unto all the congregation, (ver. 19.) as ready to decide the controversy: this fell out either at the same time the earth swallowed up Dathan and Abiram, or immediately after it.

And consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.] Which was a plain declaration that they usurped the office of priests; and, therefore, were thus punished by God himself for their presumption. It is not certain, whether they were devoured by the fire, or only struck dead, as men are sometimes on a sudden by lightning; and perhaps scorched, as they likewise sometimes are. The latter seems most probable from what follows, (ver. 37.) and from the like punishment *by fire from the Lord,* which is said to devour Nadab and Abihu, and yet their bodies remained entire, (Levit. x. 2. 4.) This was the more astonishing, because Moses and Aaron, who stood with them at the door of the tabernacle, (ver. 18.) had no hurt.

Ver. 36. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Immediately after the death of those men.

Ver. 37. *Speak unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest.*] Who it is likely stood by them, as next successor to Aaron, in the office which was disputed; and therefore, perhaps, employed in what follows rather than Aaron, that his succession might be confirmed. Though others will have it, that it was below the dignity of Aaron to perform such a mean office: and besides, he might have been in danger to be polluted by the dead bodies of the men that were burnt.

That he take the censers out of the burning.] Out of the place where the men were burnt, as some understand it: or (which differs not much) from among the dead bodies, which were burnt: *burning* being put for *bodies burnt,* as *captivity,* (chap. xxi. 1.) for those that were *carried captive,* or *made prisoners,* as we there translate it. But there is no need of either of these additions; *burning* signifying the fire which burnt in them, which he orders Eleazar to throw out, that the censers might be brought away.

And scatter thou the fire yonder.] The men were burnt as soon as ever they put fire to the incense in their censers, (ver. 18.) which, flaming at the door of the tabernacle where they stood (near the altar from whence they took the fire), God commanded to be thrown away without the camp; into that place, I suppose, where they were wont to throw the ashes; (Lev. vi. 11.) or rather, into some unclean place, where they threw the dust scraped from the walls of leprous houses, (Lev. xiv. 41.) For it was to shew that God abhorred their offering.

For they are hallowed.] Or had fire from the altar put into them; which some think sanctified them. But the plain reason is given in the next verse, because *they offered them before the Lord: i. e.* they had been employed to a holy use, and that by God's command, (ver. 6. 17.) and therefore God would not have them hereafter serve for any other.

Ver. 38. *The censers of these sinners against their own souls.*] Who have brought destruction upon themselves, by their presumption.

Let them make of them.] Either Aaron or Eleazar was to cause them to be beaten into such plates as here follow.

Broad plates for a covering of the altar.] Of *burnt-offering,* which was covered with brass; (Exod. xxvii. 12.) but these plates were to be laid upon that covering which it had already, for the end mentioned in the conclusion of this verse. And hereby also the proper covering of the altar lasted the longer.

For they offered them before the Lord.] Presented them before the Lord, when they offered incense in them, (ver. 35.)

Therefore they are hallowed.] Or holy; that is, I will have them separated, for this reason, to my use alone, and no other. It is a thing worthy to be taken special notice of, that the impiety of the men that offered incense, did not discharge their censers of the discriminative respect (as our famous Mr. Mede speaks) due unto things sacred; as these in some sort were, by being presented to the Lord, which made it unlawful to employ them to common uses. For as the Lord himself is that singular, incommunicable, and absolutely Holy One, and his service and worship therefore incommunicable to any other, so should that also which is consecrated to his service, be in some proportion incommunicably used, and not promiscuously and commonly, as other things are. (See Book i. Discourse 2. p. 18.)

And they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel.] That God accepts no sacrifice which is not presented by the hands of the sons of Aaron. This the Levites were to remember, who attended upon the priest, when they saw these plates laid upon the altar of burnt-offering every day.

Ver. 39. *And Eleazar the priest took the brazen censers,* &c.] By this it appears these censers were made of the same metal (though it was not said before) that Aaron's censer was of, and wherewith the altar was overlaid. He took them up out of the burning, no doubt, immediately upon the foregoing commands; and as soon as the mutiny was quite quelled, they were employed as Moses had directed.

Ver. 40. *To be a memorial unto the children of Israel.*] This explains what is meant by a sign, (ver. 38.) *viz.* to put them in mind; or rather, to keep in their memory.

That no stranger.] Though he were an Israelite, nay a Levite, if he were not (as it here follows) of the seed of Aaron, he was reputed a *stranger* to this office.

Come near to offer incense before the Lord.] Presume to execute the office of a priest in the sanctuary.

That he be not as Korah, and his company.] Destroyed in a dreadful manner. By this it appears that Korah perished as well as the two hundred and fifty men; and it is likely, as they did, by fire from the Lord.

As the Lord said unto him.] *i. e.* To Eleazar.

By the hand of Moses.] See ver. 36, 37.

Ver. 41. *But on the morrow.*] An astonishing instance of the incurable hardness and insensibility of some men's hearts; which were not in the least altered by God's terrible judgments and singular mercies; but instantly forgot both.

All the congregation of the children of Israel.] Not merely the rulers of the people (as this phrase sometimes signifies), but all the people in general, (ver. 47.) who were incited, it is probable, by that lewd route which Korah had ga-

thered together against Moses and Aaron, (ver. 19.) some of which were swallowed up, but most of them remained still alive to do more mischief.

Murmured against Moses and against Aaron.] In such a mutinous and threatening manner, as demonstrated the contagious nature of a seditious humour, beyond all example: for, from a discontented party, who grumbled that they were not preferred suitably to the opinion they had of themselves, it spread itself into the whole body of the people, and so infected them as to kindle a new flame, as soon as the former had been extinguished, by such a terrible vengeance, as one would have expected should not have left the smallest spark of this mutinous humour in them.

Saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord.] So they impudently call those men, whom God himself had declared, by a visible token, to be presumptuous sinners against their own souls. Some imagine they quarrelled with Moses and Aaron, because they had not prevailed with God to pardon them; which they could as well have done as procured this judgment upon them. But the displeasure which God here expresses against this new murmuring, shews this not to be a true excuse for them.

Ver. 42. *And it came to pass, when the congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron.*] Their murmuring presently proceeded to an insurrection.

That they looked towards the tabernacle of the congregation.] *i. e.* Moses and Aaron implored help from God, which is implied in their looking towards his dwelling-place.

And, behold, the cloud covered it.] One would think by this that it had for some time withdrawn itself from the tabernacle, when the dead bodies of Korah's company lay at the door of it.

And the glory of the Lord appeared.] To comfort them in this distress; and to shew he was ready to support and vindicate them.

Ver. 43. *And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation.*] Perhaps for safety and security; or, to hear what directions God would give them.

Ver. 44. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Out of the tabernacle; before which he stood, waiting for the Lord's orders.

Ver. 45. *Get ye up from among this congregation.*] He speaks to Aaron and Eleazar, I suppose, as well as unto Moses.

That I may consume them as in a moment.] As he was inclined to do before, (ver. 21.) and now had a greater reason.

And they fell on their faces.] To beseech God not to punish the people as they deserved, (ver. 22.)

Ver. 46. *And Moses said unto Aaron.*] By God's direction.

Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar.] Near to which they now were, (ver. 43.)

And put on incense.] Upon the fire; but not till he came into the midst of the congregation, (ver. 47.)

And go quickly unto the congregation.] With the incense, which regularly was to be offered only at the golden altar within the sanctuary; but now, in this extraordinary case, by God's special order, Aaron is sent with it into the camp, that they might all be witnesses of his power with God, and that, by his authority, he was settled in the priesthood.

And make an atonement for them.] Which was usually performed by the blood of a sacrifice: but there was not time for that; and therefore now it was made by the incense, wherewith their daily sacrifices, morning and evening, were concluded; and was accompanied by the prayers of the people, while the priest, as he offered it, made intercession for them, (Psalm cxli. 2.) Thus, as St. Jerome glosses, "Currens ira Dei, sacerdotis voce prohibebatur;" *the Divine anger, coming with full speed upon them, was stopped by the voice of the priest:* which was a notable type of the power of our great high-priest and intercessor with God, the Lord Jesus.

For there is wrath gone out from the Lord.] Who would not wholly grant their prayer for a pardon, (ver. 45.) but inflicted some punishment upon them.

The plague is begun.] A pestilence, in all probability, of which several immediately died.

Ver. 47. *And Aaron took as Moses commanded.*] A censer, and fire from the altar, with incense ready to be put upon it, (ver. 46.)

And ran.] According to the command of Moses, (ver. 46.) who bade him *go quickly.*

Into the midst of the congregation.] Perhaps into the midst of each of the four camps, of Judah, Reuben, Ephraim, and Dan (mentioned in the second chapter), it being broke out every where.

And, behold, the plague was begun among the people.] He saw people die on all sides of him.

And he put on incense.] Whereupon he put incense upon the fire, which he brought along with him from the altar, (ver. 46.)

And made an atonement for the people.] Interceded with God for them, and obtained what he desired.

Ver. 48. *And he stood between the dead and the living.*] This seems to intimate, that the plague began in the skirts of their camps, and was proceeding into the heart of them, where Aaron stood, as a mediator for those who were not yet smitten.

And the plague was stayed.] A stop was put to its progress; which was a further evidence of Aaron's right to the priesthood, by God's appointment; who not only preserved him when he offered incense together with Korah's company, (ver. 17.) but now makes him an instrument of preserving others from destruction.

Ver. 49. *Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred.*] Who, it is likely, were of the forwardest men to associate themselves with Korah, (ver. 19.)

Besides them that died about the matter of Korah.] Whose just number is not known; for besides the two hundred and fifty men, (mentioned ver. 25.) the whole families of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were swallowed up.

Ver. 50. *And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*] To carry back his censer.

And the plague was stayed.] Or rather, *for the plague was stayed;* and so, having done his business, he returned to the tabernacle.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Not long after the plague was stayed. For though there had

been enough done to satisfy the people that Aaron was advanced to the priesthood by God's appointment, and not by Moses's affection to his kindred; yet their minds had been so poisoned by Korah and his complices, with the contrary opinion, that it was necessary to do still more to root it out. Which was the occasion of what follows.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel.*] Order them to bring what I require thee to take of them.

And take of every one of them.] *i. e.* Of every tribe.

A rod.] Or a *staff*, as the Hebrew word *matteh* is often translated: which some take for an ordinary walking-staff, or for the staff which was the badge of their authority, as princes of the several tribes; neither of which seems to me to be true. For what reason have we to think that every man's staff which he commonly used was made of the wood of an almond tree? as these were, one may probably conclude from the eighth verse. And therefore, I take it, they were now all cut off from some tree of that kind, and it is likely from one and the same tree, that none might fancy there was any difference between them. For the miracle was great enough (which here follows), without supposing, as some do, that these rods were all of some other common wood; and yet Aaron's rod produced almonds, which were not the proper fruit of it: though it must be confessed, that if they were not of the wood of an almond tree, the wonder was greater that his rod should bring forth almonds; and struck their minds more strongly.

According to the house of their fathers.] In the Hebrew it is *father*, in the singular number; denoting the principal person or patriarch (as we call them), of whose house or family he was to take one rod.

Of all their princes, according to the house of their fathers.] This explains the meaning more fully, that the prince of every tribe, who was the head of the house of their fathers, should bring these rods. Their names we have in the first chapter of this book, (ver. 5, 6. chap. vii. 2. 12, &c.)

Twelve rods.] Besides Aaron's; for so many tribes there were besides that of Levi. And too great a number of every tribe, in all likelihood, had joined with Korah in their discontented murmurings, at the confinement of the priesthood unto Aaron's family alone; to which they all fancied they had as much right as he. Which is the reason of taking a rod from every tribe; that they might all be convinced that none of them, but he and his family alone, were owned by God for his priests: (see chap. xvi. 3.)

Write thou every man's name upon his rod.] Either by an incision into the very wood; or with such ink as they wrote withal in those days, (v. 22.) This he did in the presence of the princes; that they might not afterward suspect any fraud, when they came to take their rods again; but be satisfied they were the very same which they saw noted with their names.

Ver. 3. *And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi.*] Because God had made him the prince of that tribe, by giving him the high-priesthood. And he would have them see, that as no other person in any of the twelve tribes, so no other Levite ought to pretend unto that high office, which he had invested him withal, and him alone.

For one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers.] One rod was sufficient, because the head of the tribe comprehended the whole tribe, who were all excluded from the priesthood, by the exclusion of him who represented them.

Ver. 4. *And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle.*] In the most holy place.

Before the testimony.] *i. e.* Before the ark; called in many places *the ark of the testimony*, (Exod. xl. 3.) because therein Moses put the testimony (or, two tables of stone), and the mercy-seat above it, ver. 20, 21. where the Divine Glory resided. Therefore, to lay the rods *before the testimony*, was to lay them before the Divine Majesty; who intended by them finally to determine the present controversy.

Where I will meet with you.] There he promised to meet with Moses, Exod. xxv. 22. by whom he communicated his mind unto the people. For he neither met with them, nor with Aaron, there, any other way, but by Moses. And therefore the Vulgar Latin here translates it, minding the sense rather than the words, *Where I will speak to them.* And so the LXX. *By which I will be made known to thee there.* And indeed *meeting with them* here, is nothing but declaring, or making known his mind to them all, by what was done there upon Aaron's rod. So it follows in the next verse. And for this reason the tabernacle of the Lord is called *ohel moed*, the *tabernacle of meeting;* not of men's meeting there (as is commonly supposed, by our translating it *the tabernacle of the congregation*), but of God's meeting there with men: for so the Lord himself gives the reason of the name, both here and in Exod. xxix. 42. xxx. 36. where I have noted the same out of Mr. Mede.

Ver. 5. *And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod whom I shall choose shall blossom.*] The rods being laid before me, I will tell you whom I have chosen to minister to me in the priesthood, by making the rod upon which his name is written to blossom, when all the rest remain as they were before, without any alteration. This was a kind of new choice (as the words import), whereby God confirmed the choice he had formerly made of Aaron to be high-priest.

And I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.] And hereby stop all their mouths from murmuring any more about this matter; unless they will oppose me directly, who declare beforehand how I intend to give judgment in this case, and put an end to this dispute.

Ver. 6. *And Moses spake unto the children of Israel.*] Told them what God had said, that they might be all consenting to this way of decision.

And every one of their princes gave him a rod a-piece.] For they could not refuse such a fair proposal.

For each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods.] Observing herein the commands of Moses; who wrote, no doubt, every man's *name upon his rod*, as he was also commanded, ver. 2.

And the rod of Aaron was among their rods.] Not one of the *twelve*, as the Jews fancy; but besides the twelve rods for the twelve tribes (as was directed, ver. 2. and obeyed by them, as the foregoing words tell us), his rod was put among them with his name upon it, as their names were upon their rods. And therefore the Vulgar translates it, having regard to the sense only, *there were twelve rods besides the rod of Aaron:* which the LXX. intended in their

translation, Καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος Ἀαρὼν ἀναμέσον τῶν ῥάβδων αὐτῶν; *and the rod of Aaron in the midst of their rods.* And if it were cut from the very same tree with theirs, the miracle became the more remarkable.

Ver. 7. *And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord.*] Who was by them to declare his choice, (ver. 5.)

In the tabernacle of witness.] In that part of the tabernacle where the ark was, which had in it the *witness* or testimony which God gave Moses, (Exod. xxv. 21.) who alone could go into that place.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass, that on the morrow.*] It is likely God told him he would forthwith shew whom he had chosen.

Moses went into the tabernacle of witness.] The most holy place, where the rods were laid up by God's order.

And behold, the rod of Aaron.] Which had his name written on it.

For the house of Levi.] Or, *to the house of Levi, i. e.* whom God had made head of the Levites.

Was budded, and brought forth buds, and blossomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.] In some places of the rod, I suppose, there was an appearance of buds coming forth; in others, the buds were fully thrust out; and in others, they were opened and shot forth into blossoms; and those blossoms, in other parts, knotted and grown into almonds. Μέγιστον καὶ τοῖς ἀπίστοις θαῦμα, &c. as Gregory Nyssen speaks in the Life of Moses, (p. 185.) *The greatest miracle even in the judgment of unbelievers;* who now acknowledged that which before they opposed, (ver. 12, 13.) For, that in one night, a dry stick (as some suppose them all to have been) should produce buds, and flowers, and fruit, when all the rest, which perhaps were cut from the same tree, were as dry as they were before, could not but be very amazing; and, unless they would shut their eyes, make them see the distinction which the Lord made between Aaron, whose name that rod bore, and all the rest of the children of Israel, whom the other rods represented.

The heathen did not think such things incredible, as Huetius hath shewn in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, (lib. i. cap. 12. n. 24.)

Ver. 9. *And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto all the children of Israel.*] Before whom they were exposed to open view, that they might see the difference God had made.

And they looked, and took every man his rod.] Viewed them, and, taking them into their hands, examined them; and found they were the very same rods which they had delivered unto Moses with their names on them, without any alteration.

Ver. 10. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again.*] Which either Moses held in his hand, or delivered it to Aaron (as he did the rest to the several princes of the tribes), who shewed it to the children of Israel, with the buds, blossoms, and almonds, upon it: after which God commanded it to be returned unto him.

Before the testimony.] To be laid up in the place where it was before it was thus changed, (ver. 4. 7.)

To be kept for a token against the rebels.] That it might be produced as a sufficient conviction of their impiety, if any presumed hereafter to rebel against Aaron's authority: or rather, that it might prevent all insurrections against it for the future. For it remained, we find, in the most holy place for some time; as appears both from the apostle, (Heb. ix. 4.) and from the reason of its being put here, that it might be preserved as a sign or proof of Aaron's authority, and suppress all opposition to it. But how long it continued we cannot tell, (for it is not mentioned when the ark was brought into the temple of Solomon, 1 Kings viii. 9.) nor is it certain whether it continued in that verdure wherein it now appeared, with the buds, blossoms, and fruit, though it is highly probable it did; because it was to be a testimony that the honour of the priesthood should continue to Aaron's family alone, through all generations.

There are those who take this rod which blossomed, and was laid up in the most holy place, to have been the rod of Moses, wherewith he wrought so many miracles in Egypt and at the Red Sea: concerning which the Jews tell very many incredible things; as, that it came from a branch of the *tree of life*, which an angel gave to Seth, who planted it in the wilderness, where Moses found it grown to a tree, and cut this rod from it. For when they came to Marah, and could not drink the waters, because they were bitter, God shewed them this tree, that with it he might make them sweet. Upon which tree he afterward placed the brazen serpent, by looking on which the people were healed, &c. Thus the cabalists generally tell this tale; but some of them much otherwise; who say it was given to Adam, and by him to Enoch, and so on till it came to Joseph, in whose house the Egyptians found it when he died, and brought it to Pharaoh; from whom Jethro stole it, &c. with a great deal of such-like stuff: which Abarbinel saith is to be understood mystically. But all the ground they have for this fancy, of the rod here laid up being Moses's rod, is from chap. xx. 8, 9. where it is said, that *Moses took the rod from before the Lord,* wherewith he brought water out of the rock; and this rod is said (ver. 11.) to be Moses's rod. Dr. Owen, upon the Epistle to the Hebrews, follows this conceit, and endeavours to find many mysteries in it. But it is evidently false: for as there is not the least intimation here that it was the rod of Moses, but, quite contrary, it is called *the rod of Aaron,* ver. 6. so it had not been a sufficient argument to convince the infidelity of the Israelites, if Aaron's rod had not been of the same kind with all the rest. For they might have ascribed what came to pass to the singular quality or virtue of that rod, especially if it were Moses's rod (wherewith wonders used to be wrought), and not to a special hand of God appearing to establish the authority of Aaron. And besides, a rod full of blossoms and fruit had been very unfit to be used to smite the rock withal; for which purpose that rod (which seems to have been his pastoral staff) wherewith he smote the rock in Horeb was most proper, (Exod. xvii. 5, 6.)

And thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me.] *i. e.* Silence all their cavils against Aaron and his family; which the Lord here declares he would no longer bear, if they continued in them after this demonstration of his will and pleasure. For here were a great many miraculous things concurred together to convince them, that to oppose Aaron was to oppose God himself. The Jews reckon up eight. First, that Aaron's rod should bring forth buds, blossoms, and fruit, all in one night, when the other rods, which were of the same nature, brought forth nothing. And then, secondly, that the buds brought forth leaves; for so

they interpret those words, (ver. 8.) the rod of *Aaron was budded, i. e.* brought forth leaves; for the next words speak of its *budding*, which followed after. And thirdly, that it thrust out leaves before the blossoms, which is contrary to the nature of the almond tree. And next, that it put forth blossoms all the rod over; as they interpret those words; *bloomed blossoms*. And then, that a dry stick (as they understand it) should produce fruit, and this fruit almonds; which such trees (they think), as that rod was taken from, did not bear. And further, that it produced *ripe almonds*, as the Hebrew word *schekedim* imports. And lastly, that Moses shewed the people all these at one view, the leaves, buds, blossoms, and fruit in perfection. By which multiplicity of miracles the dignity of Aaron was so demonstrated, that we do not find they at any time hereafter adventured to rise up against him. For, besides all those wonders now mentioned, it may be, that it was not the season of the year for almonds, nor so much as for the budding of that tree; which made it the more astonishing. But the greatest thing of all was, the continuing of this miracle to future ages; which might well make them afraid to open their mouths again in murmurings against Aaron.

That they die not.] Be not consumed in a moment, as God had more than once formerly threatened, (chap. xvi. 21. 45.) and now declared, if they did not mend their manners, and cease their murmurings about this matter, he would instantly execute.

Ver. 11. *And Moses did so: as the Lord commanded, so did he.*] Both brought the rod again to him, and laid it up before him; and told the children of Israel the reason of it, which occasioned what follows.

Ver. 12. *And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish,* &c.] Moses having told them that he laid up the rod for this end, to be a witness against them, that (if they murmured any more) they deserved to be all cut off, as they should certainly be, it moved them to make this doleful complaint, wherein they seem to be convinced of their guilt, and to bewail their miserable state. For the sense of these two verses is, *Some of us died before, and now lately more have perished, and we are all in the same danger; surely we shall never have done dying, till we be all consumed.*

Behold, we die.] This seems to relate to those judgments which had passed upon them heretofore.

We perish.] And this to what had very lately happened to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with their company, and to those that murmured the next day after, (chap. xvi. 49.)

We all perish.] This will be the fate of the whole congregation.

Ver. 13. *Whosoever cometh any thing near unto the tabernacle of the Lord.*] Who was not a priest, and yet approached nearer than God allowed.

Shall die.] So Moses had threatened; and they now believed him, and were afraid withal they should some time or other incur God's displeasure by their rashness.

Shall we be consumed with dying?] They seem to be afraid, lest, for their late murmurings and insurrection, after such a heavy punishment for that sin, (chap. xvi. 41, 42.) God should further plague them, as by this new sign he convinced them they justly deserved; and therefore beg of Moses to entreat God to spare them, and not to go on utterly to destroy them.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord said unto Aaron.*] By the hand of Moses, it is most likely, unto whom God was wont to communicate all that he would have delivered, either to Aaron or to the people, (chap. xvii. 4.) And having done more miracles than one to establish Aaron in the priesthood, he now lets him know that the honour he had done him was an office of great weight and burden, wherein he was to behave himself with great care and circumspection: and withal, he again declares what the duty of the Levites was, together with the *priests*, from ver. 1. unto ver. 8. And from thence he proceeds to tell them what maintenance he had settled upon both, for their encouragement in doing their duty; as I shall observe in the proper places.

Thou, and thy sons, and thy father's house with thee.] You and the Levites (whom he calls his *father's house*), who had the charge of the sanctuary.

Shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary.] If the sanctuary were profaned, through the negligence of the Levites, who were to keep strangers, and people in their uncleanness, from entering into it; and if the priests were remiss, and did not take care to see the Levites do their duty, the punishment of such profanation, he tells them, should fall upon them.

And thou and thy sons with thee.] *i. e.* Aaron and the priests alone.

Shall bear the iniquity of the priesthood.] Suffer the punishment of it; if they permitted any person who was not of the line of Aaron to offer incense, or perform any part of the priest's office; or if they themselves should minister in their uncleanness, or having any blemish, or did any thing contrary to the rules of their office.

This was some comfort to the people, who were afraid they should die for every error committed in their approaches to the sanctuary, (chap. xvii. 12, 13.) for which he assures them he would punish the priests and the Levites, and not them. And it also served to remove the people's envy to the priest, whose dignity they saw accompanied with such great danger.

Ver. 2. *And thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father.*] This also was a comfort to the Levites, and designed to make them more contented than they had been, in their inferior offices, that the priests were to look upon them as their brethren.

Bring thou with thee.] Into the tabernacle.

That they may be joined with thee.] As assistants to thee there.

And minister unto thee.] In such things as I have mentioned: (see upon chap. iii. 6.)

But thou and thy sons with thee shall minister before the tabernacle of witness.] The words *shall minister* not being in the Hebrew, some think he still speaks of the Levites, and translate the words thus, *both to thee, and to thy sons with thee* (they shall minister, as was said before) *before the tabernacle of witness.* But they that are of this opinion do not consider what is meant by *the tabernacle of witness*, which signifies the most holy place, (see chap. ix. 15. and x. 11.) before which the Levites did not minister; but before the *tabernacle of the congregation*, as Moses expressly speaks, chap. iii. 7. (see there,) where they attended upon

the priests in the court of the sanctuary, in which the priests only could minister; as Aaron alone did, upon one certain day only, in the most holy place.

Ver. 3. *And they shall keep thy charge, and the charge of all the tabernacle.*] Of the outward part of it; (see chap. iii. 7, 8.) and carry the vessels belonging to the inward part, *viz.* the sanctuary, (chap. iv. 15.)

Only they shall not come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary.] They were not to touch them when they carried them, (chap. iv. 15.) nor to see when they were covered by the priests, (chap. iv. 19, 20.)

And the altar.] I take this to be meant not only of the *altar of incense*, but also of the *burnt-offering*; unto which they were not to approach, nor touch it, while they attended upon the priests, who only could minister there. This is justified from Exod. xxix. 37. where this altar is said to be *most holy*, and whosoever touched it is required to *be holy*.

That neither they nor you also die.] They for presuming to go beyond the bounds of their office, and the priest for permitting them.

Ver. 4. *And they shall be joined unto thee.*] He would have the priests look upon the Levites as part of that sacred body of men that waited upon God in the tabernacle, though in an inferior office. And, indeed, the very name of Levi imported as much: and denoted them to be adjuncts to some other persons. Accordingly we find, in aftertimes, that as the Levites were a guard on the outside of the temple, so the priests watched within it.

And keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, for all the service of the tabernacle.] See chap. iii. 7, 8. The heaviest part of their service, which is called their burden, is mentioned particularly chap. iv. 3, 4. and the rest of that chapter.

A stranger shall not come nigh unto you.] This seems to relate both to the priests and to the inferior ministers: that none should presume to perform the office of the former, but only the family of Aaron; nor of the latter, who were not of the tribe of Levi. But the Hebrew doctors, particularly Maimonides, by *zar* (a *stranger*), understand in this place every one that was not of the seed-male of Aaron: so that the sons of his daughters should not minister. For the sons of Aaron, saith he, (Biath Hammikdash, cap. 9.) are appointed, and none other, to lay things in order for sacrifice, (Lev. i. 5.) and to burn the fat of the peace-offerings upon the altar, (Lev. iii. 8.) His daughters were incapable of it; and so were all those that descended from them. The same may be said of the Levites.

Ver. 5. *And ye shall keep.*] That is, the priests were bound to do what follows.

The charge of the sanctuary.] Where, as they alone were to minister, so they were to take care of all the holy things therein contained, (the shew-bread, lamps, &c.) and to cover them when they were to be removed, (chap. iv. 5, 6, &c.)

And the charge of the altar.] Of burnt-offering; where they only were to offer sacrifice, and to take care of every thing belonging to it, (chap. iv. 3. 14.)

That there be no wrath any more upon the children of Israel.] That you may by your care and constant admonitions prevent the children of Israel from running into such profanations, much more from such intrusions into the sacred offices, as may bring God's most high displeasure again upon them.

Ver. 6. *And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel.*] See chap. iii. 12. 41. 45. and viii. 6. 16. 18. The Levites are again called their *brethren*, that the priests might not despise them because they served in a lower condition, but treat them with kindness and brotherly affection.

To you are they given as a gift.] See chap. iii. 9. but especially chap. viii. 19.

For the Lord.] To assist you in your ministry to the Lord.

To do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.] This hath been repeated very often, (chap. iii. 7, 8. iv. 3, 4. 23, &c. viii. 19. 22. 24.) and here is mentioned again that the Levites might be possessed with this opinion, that they were but ministers to the priests, and therefore ought not to presume hereafter to aspire, as Korah did, to the office of priesthood.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office.*] Preserve it to yourselves, and suffer no other person to invade it.

For every thing of the altar.] These words, and the following, briefly declare what is meant by the priest's office. First, to offer sacrifice at the altar of *burnt-offering*, and sprinkle the blood, &c.

And within the veil.] Next, to perform all the service of God within the sanctuary. For in the Hebrew the words are, *and for within the veil*, which is a short form of speech, importing both all that was to be done in the sanctuary by the sons of Aaron (as, burning incense, putting on the shew-bread, and lighting the lamps), and likewise all that was to be done in the most holy place, by Aaron himself, on the day of atonement. For the word *paroceth* always signifies the *inner veil*, before the most holy place; the *outward veil* being constantly called *masack;* and therefore the exactest translation of the Hebrew words *lemibbeth laparoceth* is this, *for within the house* (*i. e.* the holy place) *for the veil; i. e.* within the veil, in the most holy place.

And ye shall serve.] In these places ye alone shall serve, and employ nobody else.

I have given your priest's office unto you as a service of gift.] He would have the Levites to know, that Aaron and his sons had not arrogantly usurped this office of ministering alone at both the altars; but he had freely bestowed it upon them, and appropriated it unto them.

And the stranger.] Though a Levite, if he be not of the family of Aaron.

That cometh nigh.] Presumes to offer sacrifices at the altar of *burnt-offering*, or incense at the golden altar.

Shall be put to death.] This is repeated, by reason of the late rebellion of Korah and his complices, who, aspiring to the priesthood, came to a fearful end. (See chap. iii. 10.)

Ver. 8. *And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying.*] Having told him in the foregoing part of the chapter (particularly in the foregoing verse) what should be the work of him and his sons, he proceeds to tell him what recompence he should have for his service at the altar of *burnt-offerings* and in the *sanctuary*. Of which he gives him a large account (from this verse to the twentieth), that he might want no encouragement to care and diligence in his employment.

Behold, I also, I have given thee the charge.] He bids him observe the large grant which he now makes him, as well as the work he had laid upon him: for by *giving him the charge* of what follows, he means bestowing them upon him for his own use; with a charge to let none have them but himself.

Of my heave-offerings of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel.] See Lev. vii. 34. and below, ver. 11. of this chapter.

Unto thee have I given them, by reason of the anointing.] Because thou art consecrated, by being anointed with the holy oil to the office of a priest, (Lev. viii. 12.)

And to thy sons by an ordinance for ever.] See Lev. vii. 34.

Ver. 9. *This shall be thine of the most holy things.*] He begins with those things which might be eaten only by the priests themselves.

Reserved from the fire.] From the altar of burnt-offering: for there were some things called *most holy*, which were their portion, that came not from thence, but out of the sanctuary; *viz.* the *twelve cakes*, which were taken off the table, and given to Aaron and his sons every sabbath-day, (Lev. xxiv. 5—9.)

Every oblation of theirs.] In the Hebrew, *all their korbans:* which is a larger word than *zebach;* comprehending not only such sacrifices as were killed at the altar (which are properly called *zebachim*), but all the *minchas*, or *meat-offerings* (as we translate it), which were of things inanimate; and the sacrifices of birds also, whose blood was never poured out at the altar. And therefore *korban* seems here to be a general word, comprehending all the particulars which follow; especially if all be translated exactly, as the words are in the Hebrew.

Every meat-offering of theirs, &c.] In the Hebrew the words are, *for all their meat-offerings;* which makes the sense plainer, if the whole be thus translated, *All their korbans* (or oblations) *for all their meat-offerings, and for all their sin-offerings, and for all their trespass-offerings;* of all which the priest had a part. Concerning the *meat-offerings*, or rather the *bread-offerings* (for so *mincha* may most fitly be translated, the sacrifices being flesh, which were not eaten without bread and drink, that were their concomitants), see Lev. ii. 3. 10. vi. 15, 16. where the flesh of the sin-offerings, except those whose blood was brought into the most holy place, is given also unto them, (ver. 26.) and so are the trespass-offerings also, in the next chapter, (Lev. vii. 6, 7.) As for burnt-offerings, they were wholly the Lord's; and peace-offerings were not accounted things *most holy*, but reckoned amongst the *less holy;* as appears from ver. 11. of this present chapter.

Which they shall render unto me.] These words relate only to the trespass-offerings, immediately before named; which were attended with a recompence of the wrongs done, either unto the Lord, (Lev. v. 15, 16.) or unto their neighbours, (Lev. vi. 5. Numb. v. 8, 9.)

Shall be most holy for thee, and for thy sons.] To be used by none else; as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 10. *In the most holy place shalt thou eat it.*] *i. e.* In the place where they performed their sacred office (in that part of the tabernacle next the sanctuary), which is called *most holy*, in comparison with the rest which were further off, because none might enter into it but the priests alone: see note upon Lev. vi. 16. where it is said expressly, *it shall be eaten in the holy place, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.* And see ver. 26. and chap. x. 12, 13.

Every male shall eat it.] And none else, as the places beforementioned expressly limit it, (Lev. ii. 3. 10. vi. 18. 29. vii. 6.)

It shall be holy unto thee.] Peculiarly separated from the use of all other persons, but only Aaron and his sons.

Ver. 11. *And this is thine.*] Now he mentions the *less holy* things, as before the *most holy;* which he bestowed upon him and his whole family.

The heave-offerings of their gift, with all the wave-offerings of the children of Israel.] That is, the breast of their *peace-offerings* (which are here called their *gift*), which was *waved* before the Lord, and the right shoulder *heaved;* and then given to the priest for his portion, (Lev. vii. 30—34.) And so was the right shoulder of the ram, which was offered for the Nazarite, (Numb. vi. 19, 20.)

I have given them unto thee, and unto thy sons, and to thy daughters with thee, &c.] These were not confined to the males only, but might be eaten by their daughters also, (Lev. x. 14.)

Every one that is clean in thy house shall eat of it.] Not only their wives, and their daughters that were not married, but those who were divorced or widows, and returned to their father's house without children; or had children begotten by a priest, (see Lev. xxii. 13.) together with their servants also, whether bought with their money, or born in their house; though not hired servants, or mere sojourners, (Lev. xxii. 10, 11.) But these things were to be eaten in a clean place, (Lev. x. 14.) somewhere within the camp, as afterward in Jerusalem: (Deut. xii. 6, 7. 17, 18.) and no unclean person permitted to eat of them, (Lev. vii. 20, 21. xxii. 4.) And besides, when any Israelite killed an ox, a sheep, or a goat for his own use, he was bound to give the priest the shoulder, the two cheeks, and the maw; as the Jews understand, Deut. xviii. 3.

Ver. 12. *All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine,* &c.] The Greek translates the Hebrew word *cheleb (fat)* by μυελὸς, *marrow*, Gen. xlv. 18. but here ἀπαρχὴ, *the first-fruits of the oil,* &c. signifying these first-fruits were to be of the very best of all the things here mentioned; which were to be brought in the beginning of the vintage, and of the harvest: the precise quantity of which is no where determined; but, they say, it was at least the sixtieth part of the whole: see Exod. xxii. 29. xxiii. 19. Deut. xviii. 4. where he speaks of the first-fruits which every private man was to offer; beside which there was a first-fruit offered in the name of the whole congregation, (Lev. xxiii. 10. 17.) All which belonged to the priests as a reward for their service.

The first-fruits of them, which they shall offer unto the Lord, them have I given thee.] Our Mr. Thorndike thus distinguishes the two sorts of first-fruits mentioned here, and in other places: the one was to be taken by the priests at the barn and wine-press, as he thinks that here spoken of was: the other was to be brought to the sanctuary, *viz.* those mentioned Exod. xxii. and xxiii. Deut. xxvi. 1, 2. The quantity of either of them being in the moderate account, a fiftieth part, as St. Jerome determines upon Ezek. xlv. which is agreeable to the Jewish constitutions in Mai-

monides, of First-fruits, cap. 2. and of Separations, cap. 3. But the Scripture (Ezek. xlv. 13.) requires only the sixtieth part. (See Rights of the Church in a Christian State, p. 210.)

Ver. 13. *And whatsoever is first ripe in the land, which they shall bring unto the Lord, shall be thine.*] Some take this to signify the *first-fruits* of all other things besides corn, wine, and oil, mentioned in the foregoing verse. But it being a different word from that which we translate *first-fruits* (*viz. biccurim*, not *reshith*), it is most likely, he here intends, either the things *first ripe* (as we translate it) before the rest of the harvest and vintage; or those voluntary offerings of this sort which any one pleased to make; which seem to be intended in these words, *which they shall bring unto the Lord; i. e.* of their own good will, over and above the ordinary first-fruits.

The Jews generally understand by *biccurim* such things as are ripe before the rest, either in the field or elsewhere; whether they were wheat, barley, or any other sort of grain; or figs, grapes, pomegranates, olives, or dates; which they bound about with a rush, and said, *let this be for the first-fruits:* which every man might bring in what measure he pleased, none being appointed by the law.

Every one that is clean in thy house shall eat of it.] The whole family of the priests, if they were under no pollution: (see ver. 11.)

Ver. 14. *Every thing devoted in Israel shall be thine.*] Of those things which the Hebrews call *cherem* (a thing devoted), Moses speaks in Lev. xxvii. 21. 28. And they were either simply devoted, in such words as these, *let this thing be a cherem;* or with an addition (determining it to a certain use), *let this be a cherem offered by me for holy uses.* The first sort was wholly the priests'; but the latter was employed about the temple, or the vessels of it, or the priests' garments. And these devoted things, which became the priests' portion, differed in this from free-will-offerings, that every thing which was offered as a *cherem* might be eaten only by the priests in the holy place; but other free-will-offerings by the whole family in any clean place.

Ver. 15. *Every thing that openeth the matrix in all flesh, which they bring unto the Lord, whether it be of men or beasts, shall be thine.*] That which first came out of the womb of any creature was to be the priests', if it were a male. If a female were the first-born, and a male followed next, that was not the priests', because it did not open the womb, as the Hebrews expound it. (See Exod. xiii. 2.)

Nevertheless the first-born of man shalt thou surely redeem, and the firstling of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem.] See Exod. xiii. 13. xxxiv. 20.

Ver. 16. *And those that are to be redeemed.*] *viz.* Of the first-born of men mentioned before, (not of unclean creatures, which were to be redeemed by a lamb, Exod. xiii. 13.) and that after they were eight days old, (Exod. xxii. 30.)

From a month old shalt thou redeem.] Then the money was due, but they commonly stayed till the fortieth day, when the woman was purified.

According to thy estimation.] Some think this relates not to what follows, that the priest should set a value upon them (for that was a set rate, *five shekels* for every one), but to what goes before, that, after a child was a month old, the priest should appoint a day for the payment of the redemption-money; either immediately after the woman had lain-in a month, or on the fortieth day, that she might be purified and the child redeemed both together. But it rather refers to what follows: for though the price be determined, yet so it is in another case, (Lev. xxvii. 3, 4.) and notwithstanding is said to be by the estimation of the priest; because he was to take this money, not according to the quality of the person, but as much of a poor man as of a rich, and not more of a rich man than of a poor.

For the money of five shekels, &c.] Which was the price set upon the first-born, when they were exchanged for the Levites, (chap. iii. 46, 47.) This redemption of every first-born was a matter of great importance, and therefore so often mentioned, as a very learned friend of mine, Dr. Alix, observes, in his Reflections on the four last Books of Moses, chap. 3. For as the separation of the tribe of Levi to God's service instead of the first-born, whom God spared and preserved in Egypt (of which we read in the third chapter of this book), made every Levite become a living memorial of that great miracle wrought at the Israelites going out of Egypt; so this law concerning the redemption of the first-born made a further impression upon their minds, of that mighty hand of God which compelled Pharaoh to let the Israelites depart out of his country.

Ver. 17. *But the firstling of a cow, or of a sheep, or a goat, thou shalt not redeem.*] For they were clean creatures; and only unclean beasts were to be redeemed, (ver. 15.)

They are holy.] Separated by my appointment for a holy use; *viz.* to be offered in sacrifice; not redeemed, nor put to any other use.

Thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar, and burn their fat, &c.] Just as they did with their peace-offerings, (Lev. vii. 31. 33.)

Ver. 18. *And the flesh of them shall be thine.*] The whole body of the beasts (not merely some part of them), after the fat was burnt, became the priests' entirely.

As the wave-breast and the right shoulder are thine.] As these parts of the peace-offerings were the priests', (see ver. 11.) so that all their family, who were clean, might eat of the flesh of these firstlings, as they did of those parts of the peace-offerings.

Ver. 19. *All the heave-offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the Lord.*] He repeats what he had said in the beginning of this discourse, (ver. 8.) that he had given him all the heave-offerings; which comprehend those mentioned chap. vi. 19, 20.

Have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever.] Settled upon the priests and their whole family for their support, by an unalterable law. (See ver. 11.)

It is a covenant of salt for ever before the Lord unto thee, &c.] *i. e.* An everlasting covenant, never to be revoked. (See upon Lev. ii. 13.) And these things being to be eaten *before the Lord,* there was a place in the court of the women where they feasted upon them; as L'Empereur observes upon Middoth, cap. 2. sect. 6.

Ver. 20. *And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying.*] See ver. 1.

Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land.] *i. e.* In the land of the children of Israel, whom he speaks of in the foregoing verse: where, having told him what reward he

and his family should have for his service, he bids them be satisfied therewith, and not expect any more. And indeed it was so very liberal a provision, that their desires could not reasonably extend any further. For as they had two sorts of first-fruits (as I observed ver. 12.) so, after a tithe of that which was given to the Levites, there was another tithe of what remained to be spent in sacrificing at Jerusalem; that is, for the most part, upon the priests and Levites, unto whom, and unto the poor, it wholly belonged every third year, (Deut. xiv. 22. 28. Exod. xxiii. 19. xxxiv. 20.) Add hereunto the first-born, all the sin-offerings, and their share in the peace-offerings, and the skins of the sacrifices (which alone, as Philo observes, were a great revenue), and it will appear it could not be so little as a fifth part of the fruit of the country that came to the priests for their maintenance, as Mr. Thorndike observes in the Rights of the Church in a Christian State, p. 211.

Neither shalt thou have any part among them.] When the land was divided, no fields, or vineyards, &c. were to be given to the priests, nor to any of the tribe of Levi. And, as the Jewish doctors say, they were to have no part among their brethren in the spoil. So Jarchi upon this place, and Maimonides, and others, who endeavour to answer the objection which may be raised against this from the thirty-first chapter of this very book, ver. 28, 29. where a tribute was taken of the prey they got from the Midianites, and given to Eleazar and the Levites. This tribute, say they, was offered because the spoil came by executing God's vengeance upon a land that was not theirs, (chap. xxv. 17.) But of the land of Sihon and Og (which God bestowed upon them, as he did the land of Canaan), nothing was given to the priests and Levites; for they were admonished to the contrary (as they understand them) by these words, *neither shalt thou have any part among them;* no, not of the spoil.

Certain it is, that of the land of the country they were to have no part, God having otherwise provided for them, that they might attend wholly to his service, and not spend their time in tilling the ground, or feeding cattle, which would have taken up their thoughts very much from their sacred employment. Yet the Levites had certain cities and their suburbs assigned to them, chap. xxxv. 2, &c. (which was executed by Joshua, as God commanded, Josh. xxi. 2, 3.) whereby they were dispersed among the tribes of Israel, that they might the better instruct the people in the Divine law, (Deut. xxxiii. 10. 2 Chron. xxx. 22. Malachi ii. 4, 5, &c.) By accident also the priests came to have some land. (See Lev. xxvii. 20, &c. and my notes there.)

I am thy part, and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.] For they were maintained in his house, and lived upon his altar, and fed from his table; as it is explained in Josh. xiii. 14. "The sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as he said unto them:" which is given as the reason why Joshua gave them no inheritance. And see ver. 33. of that chapter, where the *Lord God of Israel* is said to be *their inheritance:* who, it appears by the foregoing part of this chapter, and other places, made such an ample provision for them, that if he had given them any part of the land of Canaan together with it, there had been too great an inequality between them and the rest of the tribes of Israel. For without any share in the land, their portion was far richer than that of any other persons whatsoever. I have said enough to prove this already; but it may not be amiss to set it before the reader again a little more distinctly. As they had yearly the first-fruits of the whole country, which were at least the sixtieth part of the fruits it produced; and the tenth part of the tithe given to the Levites, (as it follows below, ver. 26.) and all free-will-offerings; together with the money which arose out of persons and things devoted unto God; and all the firstlings of cows, sheep, and goats, and the redemption-money for the firstlings of such creatures as were unclean: so they had all the meat-offerings, offerings for sin, and trespass-offerings; together with the breast and shoulder of all peace-offerings, and the skins of all burnt-offerings; and the loaves made of the first dough, and the shew-bread, and (as Josephus and others expound Deut. xviii. 3.) a considerable part of every beast that was killed for private use; besides the cities and land about them which were assigned to the Levites: which, if well weighed, there will appear a vast difference between the priests and the rest of the people. For the first-fruits alone, if they were not less than the sixtieth part of the product of the country, might seem sufficient, especially if the firstlings be added, the priests not being the sixtieth part of the people; no, nor the hundredth part, as learned men have computed. (See Bonfrerius.)

Ver. 21. *And, behold.*] Now he gives the Levites notice of the recompence he would make them for their service, as he had told the priests what they should have for theirs. And Aaron hath the delivery of this grant made to them from God, that they might see he did not mind himself, and the interest of his own family only.

I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel.] See Levit. xxvii. 30. and 2 Chron. xxxi. 5, 6. where they are distinctly mentioned. Aben Ezra thinks the *tenth* rather than any other part was assigned, because it was a perfect number; ten being in simple numbers the highest to which we can arise, without repeating the numbers under it. For it is (as he speaks) the beginning of the second combination, and the end of the first, whereupon all numbers do depend: which our Mr. Mede hath expressed, in my judgment, far better; who looks upon it as God's favourable dealing with men, in requiring but *the tenth*, which is in truth the least part of their goods, according to the first division. For when we proceed beyond ten, we begin to make a new division, as eleven is ten and one, &c. But we need not have recourse to such niceties. (See upon Genesis xxviii. 22.)

For an inheritance.] Instead of a share in the land of Canaan, which other tribes had divided among them. And a larger inheritance this was than any other tribe possessed; for this was the smallest tribe of all, as appears by comparing the account which is given of them in the beginning of this book. For all the males of this tribe, from a month old and upward, were but two-and-twenty thousand; (chap. iii. 29.) whereas in the tribe of Judah alone there were above threescore and fourteen thousand men of war: (chap. i. 26, 27.) and yet the Levites had a tenth part of the product of the whole country; and the twelve tribes had only the other nine parts among them. Such a care had God of those who were peculiarly devoted to his service.

For the service which they serve, &c.] As a reward of their service; of which see chap. iv.

Ver. 22. *Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation.*] Or rather, *Therefore the children of Israel must not come nigh*, so as to perform any of the offices belonging to the priests and Levites; who were appointed to do every thing belonging to the service of God there, and had their reward for it also appointed.

Lest they bear sin, and die.] Be punished with death; which is often threatened to such presumption.

Ver. 23. *But the Levites shall do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.*] It was their work, and nobody's else; and therefore no other persons were to meddle with it: that is, they alone guarded the tabernacle, and afterward the temple; opened the gates of it, kept out all strangers (*i.e.* all but priests and Levites), carried the tabernacle, and its vessels, when they were to be removed, &c.

And they shall bear their iniquity.] They shall die for it, if they permit any one else to come there and do their work, (see ver. 1.)

It shall be a statute for ever throughout their generations, that among the children of Israel they have no inheritance.] As all other persons were excluded from serving in the tabernacle, so they who served there were shut out from having any inheritance among their brethren. This was made an unalterable law, which provided another separate maintenance for them, by the tithes of all the land; as here it again follows.

Ver. 24. *But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as a heave-offering unto the Lord.*] That the people might not grudge to pay them the tithes for their service, he represents them as a heave-offering which they offered to God, in gratitude to him, of whom, as the supreme landlord, they held their land. Not that they were heaved up or waved before the Lord: but they were of the same nature with those things that were so offered to him, *i. e.* holy things, separate to his uses; all which are called by this name of *terumah*, (ver. 8.) And particularly all the offerings which God required to be freely brought, for the building him a sanctuary, are called by this name of *terumah*, or heave-offering, (Exod. xxv. 2. See there.)

I have given to the Levites to inherit.] The Israelites gave them to God; and he gave them to the Levites for their inheritance; who had as much right to them, as the other tribes had to their land. Which was the reason he ordered they should have no portion of the land of Canaan with the other tribes, as it here follows; *therefore have I said unto them, Among the children of Israel shall they have no inheritance*: for he had given them the tithes to inherit. But R. Solomon Jarchi observes also, that the Levites themselves had no right to them, till they had taken out the tenth part from their tenth, and given it to the priests; as is here immediately directed.

Ver. 25. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] In all the foregoing part of the chapter, (ver. 1. 8. 20.) the Lord spake unto Aaron (though by Moses), but here his order is particularly directed to Moses; because that which follows would better come from him, than from Aaron; who was employed in acquainting the Levites with the donation God had made of the tithes to them, (ver. 21.) but it would not have been so proper for him to tell them what was to be given out of the tithes to himself and to the priests.

Ver. 26. *Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes, which I have given you from them for your inheritance.*] In these words Moses confirms the report which Aaron had made to them, that the tithes of the land should be theirs, and their brethren the children of Israel have no right to them.

Then shall ye offer up a heave-offering for the Lord.] As the Israelites made their grateful acknowledgments to God by offering their tithes to him, for the use of his servants the Levites, (ver. 24.) so it was but fit that the Levites should be so grateful as to offer to him the tithe of their tithes (as it here follows), for such uses as he should appoint.

Even a tenth part of the tithe.] For the tenth part which God reserved to himself out of the land which he gave the children of Israel, was a kind of rent paid to him their supreme Lord: and he assigning this rent over to the Levites for their maintenance, thought good notwithstanding to reserve a tithe of this tenth part to himself; that thereby he might, as it were, hold his possession, and keep *seisin* (as the lawyers speak) of his own inheritance.

Ver. 27. *And this your heave-offering shall be reckoned unto you.*] Be accepted by God, as the offerings heaved up to him in the sanctuary are, (ver. 24.) though it be but the hundredth part of the whole fruit of the land.

As though it were the corn of the thrashing-floor, and as the fulness of the wine-press.] As if you paid such a tithe, as the Israelites do to you, out of all their own fields and vineyards: that is, they were to believe their offering of this small part to be as acceptable to God, as that of all the tribes of Israel; and that they should have the same right to what remained, when they had done this, as the people had to all the rest of the fruits of the earth, when they had paid the tenth part to the Levites.

Ver. 28. *Thus you also shall offer a heave-offering unto the Lord of all your tithes which ye receive of the children of Israel.*] He would have them know that he ordered this, because he would not have the Levites alone offer nothing to him, from whom they received so much; but they also should make him a grateful acknowledgment as well as others.

And ye shall give thereof the Lord's heave-offering.] It is called so often the *Lord's heave-offering*, that they might the more willingly pay it, out of a thankful sense of what they owed to him, the donor of all.

To Aaron the priest.] This tithe is thought by some to have been designed for the high-priest alone. Two great men in their time were of this opinion, *viz.* Nicolaus Lyra, and the famous Alphonsus Tostatus. And another very learned person of our own (bishop R. Montague), thinks it not altogether improbable, that such a provision as this might be made for the high-priest and his family, state and dignity; he being a man of great power and might, only less than the kings of Israel; and the inferior priests having a noble maintenance, without this, from the first-fruits and offerings of the people.

But there is nothing to support this, but the mere letter of the text: for Josephus expressly says the contrary, (lib. vi. Archæolog. cap. 4.) and so do the generality of the Jewish writers, and St. Jerome also, that all the priests had their share in this tenth paid by the Levites: which, till it was paid, the Levites might not spend, to their own use, any

part of their tithe. And to secure this, "the priest was to be with the Levites when they took tithes," (as we read Nehem. x. 37, 38.) to take care that they set out a tenth part of them for the priests. Where by *the priest the son of Aaron*, I cannot think is meant the high-priest himself (for that had been below his dignity), but some priest, I suppose, appointed by him, who took care of the concerns of the whole order of priesthood, and particularly of the high-priest's interest; who, it is probable, had a principal share among the rest in this revenue; perhaps a tenth part out of their tenth. But for this I have no authority: though I take it for certain, that when he saith this tenth should be given *to Aaron the priest*, the meaning is, that, as it was not for himself alone, but all his sons had a share in it, so he himself was not excluded from an honourable portion of it.

It may seem strange, perhaps, that there is no particular portion set out for the high-priest by himself, if this be not it. But it is to be considered, that all the forenamed provision (from ver. 8. to ver. 20.) was made for him in the first place, and for the priests together with him. For so the words run, *unto thee have I given them, and to thy sons*, (ver. 8, 9, &c.) And he had this privilege also, that he did not minister by lot, as the other priests did in their several courses, but when he pleased; and might take to himself what sacrifices he thought good to offer, (ver. 9, 10.) as Maimonides tells us, in Cele Mikdasch, cap. 5. where he speaks concerning the high-priest's prerogatives.

Ver. 29. *Out of all your gifts.*] Not only out of their tithes, but out of all their other possessions, which God gave them; their fields, for instance, which were in the suburbs of their cities.

Ye shall offer.] Make a present to the priests.

Every heave-offering.] Some portion of every thing God gives you to possess.

Of the Lord.] As a thankful acknowledgment of the Divine bounty to you, upon whom he hath bestowed so many good things. (See ver. 28.)

Of all the best thereof.] And that not of the refuse, but of the best of the tithe, and other things that were given them: by which is not to be understood, that they were bound to pick out the very best, wheat suppose, and separate it from the worse (which would have been to have given them more than a tenth part), but they were to give the priests as good as they left for themselves. For that was the rule, (Lev. xxvii. 32, 33.) And it was but reason the priests should have this honourable provision made for them above the Levites, their vocation being more honourable, and their service more noble, in the very sanctuary itself: for which cause this tenth of the tithe of the land was assigned them; which, they being but few in comparison with the Levites, made the allowance to every one of them much greater than to any of the Levites. And yet, as an augmentation to it, they had the first-fruits and their fees, as I said before, out of the sacrifices and other things wholly to their own use.

Even the hallowed part thereof, out of it.] The sacred part was the tenth part, which they might not use; it being taken by God for his part, (Lev. xxvii. 30.) By which all the rest was sanctified to the use of the owner, when this part was taken out of it, which may possibly be here also intended.

Ver. 30. *Therefore thou shalt say unto them.*] Tell them the reason why this tenth part must be separated from the rest.

When ye have heaved the best thereof from it.] Taken out the tenth part as an offering to the Lord.

Then it shall be counted to the Levites as the increase of the thrashing-floor, and as the increase of the wine-press.] Then the remainder may be as freely used by them as the corn or the wine of any man's land in Israel, when he had paid his tithe: but till then it was unlawful for him to enjoy it, because God was first to be served. This is made more plain in the next verse.

Ver. 31. *And ye shall eat it.*] After the hallowed part was taken out (ver. 29.) all the rest was theirs, to be enjoyed as men do that which is their own.

In every place.] This seems to be said to distinguish these from the holy things given by God to the priests; which, being offered at the altar, were to be eaten only in the holy place; but the tithes, though they were a kind of offering to the Lord, yet not being presented at the altar, might be eaten any where, after the tenth part was given to the priests.

And your households.] All their family, servants as well as others, might eat of them, whether they were clean or not. And more than this, they might sell them to strangers, to buy other necessaries with the money they yielded, or exchange them for other commodities.

For it is your reward for your service in the tabernacle of the congregation.] See ver. 21.

Ver. 32. *And ye shall bear no sin.*] Suffer no punishment.

By reason of it.] For eating it, with your households.

When ye have heaved from it the best of it.] When they had taken out the tenth part as sacred to God's uses, (ver. 28.) they might safely use the rest themselves as they pleased: for God had given it to them for their support, and therefore would not punish them for eating it, as he did those that did eat holy things which did not belong to them.

Neither shall ye pollute the holy things of the children of Israel.] Nor would there be any danger of polluting the holy things (which God had reserved to himself) by turning them to a common use, as there would have been if they had eaten the tithes, or other gifts, before the tenth part, which was God's, was taken out of them.

Lest ye die.] In the Hebrew it is, *nor shall ye die;* as those did who meddled with the holy things, which God reserved for his ministers alone.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying.*] They were both concerned in what follows; Moses to deliver the command, and Aaron to see it executed.

Ver. 2. *This is the ordinance.*] Or, *the constitution.*

Of the law which the Lord hath commanded.] Which is now passed into a law by God's command; who had ordered this water of purification to be made some time before, as appears from chap. viii. 7. but now sets down a rule for all posterity to observe in the making of it. It is the rather mentioned now after the foregoing history, to free the people from that great fear they were in of perish-

ing in their uncleanness, (chap. xvii. 12, 13.) by shewing them a way how to be purified from the greatest pollution, before they approached to the tabernacle.

Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee.] At the common charge of the people, because it was for their common benefit.

A red heifer.] The Hebrew word *parah*, which we translate *heifer*, signifies a *young cow*; as *par* signifies a *young bullock*, not above two or three years old at most, as Kimchi and others observe.

Without spot.] This the Jews refer to the word *red*, which goes before, and take it to signify *perfectly red*, without the mixture of any other colour: for as to any other imperfections, they are provided against in the next words, *without blemish:* insomuch that Maimonides, in his treatise on this subject, saith, that if this cow had two hairs black or white, it was unfit for this use. From whence other nations, particularly the Egyptians, derived the custom of sacrificing red oxen, as Plutarch tells us in his book de Iside et Osiride, τῶν βοῶν τοὺς πυῤῥοὺς καθιερεύουσιν, &c. And he saith they searched them so very narrowly, that if they found one hair black or white, they counted it ἄθυτον, *unfit to be sacrificed:* see Bochartus, par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 39. where he shews, this was the most common colour among that sort of creatures in some countries.

Wherein is no blemish.] See Lev. xxii. 20—22.

And upon which never came yoke.] Had never been employed in ploughing the ground, or any other work: for according to the common sense of all mankind, those creatures which had been made to serve other uses, became unfit to be offered to God. Whence Diomedes promises Pallas a cow of a year old,

————ἣν οὔπω ὑπὸ ζυγὸν ἤγαγεν ἀνήρ.

Which no man hitherto had brought under the yoke. (Iliad. K.) And so doth Nestor, Odyss. 1. and the like Bochartus observes out of Virgil, Ovid, and others, in his Hierozoicon, (par. i. lib. ii. cap. 33.)

All this is very plain; but why a young cow, rather than a bullock (which is commonly appointed in sacrifices), and why one perfectly red, is not so easy to understand. If we had any reason to believe that those superstitions were among the Egyptians in the days of Moses, which were when Plutarch or Herodotus lived, we might very probably say (as some men of learning have), that this precept was given to preserve the Israelites from their religion. For they abhorred to offer a cow, whom they honoured as sacred to Isis. So Herodotus; they sacrificed males, both old and young, τὰς δὲ θηλέας οὐ σφιν ἔξεστι θύειν· *but it is not lawful for them to offer females,* (lib. ii. cap. 41.) And therefore God, it might be thought, ordered a cow to be burnt rather than a bullock: and for the same cause one perfectly red, because that was a colour odious and abominable to the Egyptians; who fancied Typhon (the author of all evil in their account), to be of that colour; and therefore offered him red oxen, as hateful to them as red men and asses were. Thus Plutarch and Diodorus Siculus. In opposition to which it may be thought, that a cow of this colour was acceptable to God, because hated and abhorred by those idolaters: but I look upon what such late writers say as of no authority in this matter. And as there is no proof of any such customs among the Egyptians in Moses's time, so there is a high probability that the whole fable of Typhon was framed out of the story of Moses, as Bochartus hath most ingeniously endeavoured to make out, by many observations out of that book of Plutarch, and other authors, (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 34. p. 340, 341, &c.)

But supposing the antiquity of those superstitions among the Egyptians to have been as great as some fancy them, I cannot think, that if Moses had had any respect to them, he would have ordered such a great number of sacrifices, as we read of in his law, without the least consideration of the colour of any one of them, and only mention the colour of this cow, which was no sacrifice. I rather think this perfect red colour was chosen because of its rarity; it being hard to find a cow without any the least mixture of other hair. And though it were not a sacrifice, yet being designed to the same end, there was a respect herein to that great expiation which was made by the sacrifice of Christ: with whose blood, though the apostle did not compare the blood of this heifer (because it was not offered), yet he doth compare it with the ashes of this burnt heifer, put into the water of purification. See Heb. ix. 13. where, after the blood of bulls and goats, he mentions the *ashes of this heifer sprinkling the unclean.* For they were a more extraordinary sort of purification than any under the law; of which we no where read, but in this place; nor of any command for the repeated burning of such an heifer to ashes (as there is for the anniversary sacrifice on the day of atonement), but only of the use of the water made of these ashes as oft as there was occasion. But of this it will be more fit to treat in the following part of the chapter.

Ver. 3. *And ye shall give her.*] They who brought her in the name of the whole congregation were to bring her to Moses, as the foregoing verse directs: and he and Aaron were to deliver her to Eleazar.

Unto Eleazar the priest.] It is commonly thought that Aaron might not be employed in the following work, because it would have defiled him, and made him unfit to minister before God for a season; which he was bound to avoid, even when natural affection seemed to require it: (Lev. xxi. 11, 12.) yet a vulgar priest was not entrusted with this service, but it was committed unto the very next person to Aaron, who was to be his successor, because it was of very great weight and importance.

That he may bring her forth without the camp.] As a thing exceeding unclean; more impure than any common offering for sin. For the greater the impurity was that was laid upon any sacrifice, the further still off from the sanctuary it was carried. The bullock, for instance, which was offered for a sin committed by the priest, or the whole congregation, was in part offered at the altar, but the far greater part was to be burnt without the camp, (Lev. iv. 12. 20.) And so was the bullock and goat, offered for all the sins of the people, on the great day of expiation: (Lev. xvi. 27.) and the scape-goat, which was designed for the same purpose, was not so much as burnt, but banished into a land not inhabited, nobody knows whither. All which more particularly represented Christ in his sufferings, as the apostle observes, Heb. xiii. 11, 12. and so did this in part; having something of the nature of a sacrifice in it. For though it was not a sacrifice brought to be slain at the

altar, yet it was intended to be used to the same purpose, for the cleansing of the people from the greatest legal defilement.

And one shall slay her before his face.] Some person appointed by Eleazar (for it was not necessary a priest should do it) was to kill her without the camp. Where it is plain from ver. 5. 8, 9. there were more than one concerned in this office. But it could not be slain unless Eleazar was there; and it was to be done in his presence, who was the chief of the priests, to shew that it was intended for God's service, though not offered as sacrifices were at the tabernacle before the Lord. And this is the reason, perhaps, why the care of this heifer is committed to Eleazar, and not to Aaron, because he officiated only at the tabernacle.

Ver. 4. *And Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger.*] As they did in expiatory sacrifices, (Lev. iv. 6.)

And sprinkle of her blood.] In the sprinkling of the blood, as the Jews observe, consisted the very essence of an expiatory sacrifice. Therefore, though this was not a sacrifice, yet it had something of that nature in it, and may be called a *piaculum*, an expiatory thing; though nothing was called *korban, a sacrifice*, but what was offered at the altar, as our Dr. Outram hath most judiciously observed against Abarbinel, who calls this red cow *an offering for sin.*

Directly before the tabernacle of the congregation.] This rite of sprinkling the blood was never used but in sacrifices slain at the altar, in the presence of God; and in this red cow, which was slain in the prospect of the sanctuary; towards which the priest was to look steadfastly while he sprinkled it; otherwise, the Jews say, it was in vain: which shews that the validity of this act, and of the purification to be made by it, was to be expected from the sanctuary. For the blood of that heifer, whose head was cut off to cleanse a city, near to which a man was found slain by an unknown person, was not sprinkled; being slain, not in sight of the sanctuary, but in a valley near that city, (Deut. xxi. 3, 4, &c.) And in this the Jews were so curious, that after the temple was built, this blood being to be sprinkled directly before the porch of it, they took care the gate Shushan, which was before it, should have lower battlements than any other gate of the temple had, that the priest might see the face of the porch of the house of God.

Seven times.] This signifies the perfection of the expiation that was to be made by this red cow, on whose ashes the Jews thought so much depended, that they took care the priest, who was to see her burnt, should be put apart in a chamber of the temple (called *the house of stone*), that they might be certain he was free from all pollution by a grave, or a dead corpse. For the ashes of this burnt cow being the great and only cleanser for that defilement, they took suitable care that he should not be defiled who went to burn her. See Dr. Lightfoot's Temple Service, chap. 17. sect. 2. where he describes, out of Maimonides, and others, how solemnly the priest was attended when he went about this work. And the apostle had reason to mention the ashes of this heifer, wherewith the water was made for sprinkling the unclean, as the principal thing that *sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, i. e.* taking away bodily defilements: with which he compares the blood of Christ, as infinitely more powerful for the *purifying of the conscience from dead works.* (Heb. ix. 13, 14.) In which words, *dead works*, there is a respect (as our Dr. Jackson observes) to the main intention of these ashes, which were for the purification of those defiled by dead bodies. And he seems to me also not to be led by fancy, but by a solid judgment, when he considered these ashes also as a notable figure of the everlasting efficacy of Christ's blood, of which the apostle there discourses. For, if the frequent occasion for the use of the water of purification had not spent all the ashes of the heifer now slain and burnt by Eleazar, they might have been preserved for this purpose, without any danger of putrefaction, for a longer time than the law of ceremonies lasted. For ashes, being well kept, never perish; and therefore are an emblem of immortality. But it must be considered, that the frequent use of these ashes might exhaust the whole stock of them made at this time, and make it necessary the priests should burn another heifer for the same end; as the Jews say they did, though so rarely (as I shall note below), that this burning of a red heifer was not reiterated, if we may believe them, till the destruction of Solomon's temple. Which makes them a more notable figure, though not a perfect one (for no such can be found), of the power of Christ's blood to purify us for ever, without the repetition of it continually; which was the imperfection of the legal sacrifices, that they must be often offered.

Ver. 5. *And one shall burn the heifer in his sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn.*] There was a great pile of wood (to which they set fire immediately after he had done sprinkling), in which this heifer was more entirely burnt than any public expiatory sacrifice beforementioned, ver. 2. (for here the remainder of the blood is ordered to be burnt), because this was of all other things the most unclean, and to be utterly consumed at a distance from the sanctuary.

Ver. 6. *And the priest shall take cedar-wood, and hyssop, and scarlet.*] These three things composed that instrument which the priest made use of for sprinkling of leprous persons, or houses, when they were to be cleansed, (Lev. xiv. 6, 7. 49, 50, &c. where see what I have noted.) And the apostle mentions two of them, as used by Moses himself, when he sprinkled the book of the covenant, and all the people, with the blood of the sacrifice; (Heb. ix. 19.) which, though not mentioned in Exodus, yet the apostle knew was the ancient way of sprinkling. And therefore these things which were used of old as cleansers, either of inward or outward filth, are ordered here to be thrown into the fire, while the heifer was burning in it, whose ashes were to be the great means of men's purification from the highest pollutions.

And cast it.] He speaks as if these three things being bound together became one.

Into the midst of the burning of the heifer.] To denote the great virtue which the water, made of the ashes of all these things, should have to cleanse those who were sprinkled with it; one of these things (*viz.* hyssop) being ordered to be dipped into the water for that purpose, (ver. 18.)

Ver. 7. *The priest shall wash his clothes, and shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.*] Though we do not find that Eleazar was employed, either in killing or in burning this heifer, which was only to be done in his presence, yet, having touched her blood, he became unclean; and therefore was to use these cere-

monies for his cleansing, before he returned to the camp; as Aaron did when he had offered the great sacrifice of expiation, on the day of general atonement, (Lev. xvi. 24.)

And shall be unclean until the even.] So as not to come into the camp, I suppose, much less to the sanctuary, until sun-set; which was but a short time, considering the greatness of this heifer's impurity; this being the common time of remaining unclean for the smallest defilements, (Lev. xi. 24, 25. 27, &c.)

Ver. 8. *And he that burneth her shall wash his clothes in water,* &c.] This was a general maxim among the Jews, that the bodies of those beasts whose blood was carried into the holy place, polluted those that touched them: which is justified by Lev. xvi. 28. And therefore he that burnt this heifer, whose blood was sprinkled towards it, was to do the same as he that carried the scape-goat into the wilderness was also bound to do, (Lev. xvi. 26.)

Ver. 9. *And a man that is clean.*] Free from any legal defilement.

Shall gather up the ashes of the heifer.] They were the principal ashes, though the ashes of the cedar-wood, hyssop, and scarlet-wool, were also mingled with them; which, being taken up, were pounded and sifted, as the Jews tell us.

And lay them up without the camp in a clean place.] The Jews say that the heifer, in aftertimes, being burnt on the pitch of Mount Olivet, which was over against the temple, they laid up some part of the ashes in a place near that mount, for the sprinkling of the people; and another part was delivered to the twenty-four courses, for the sprinkling of the priests; and another third part laid up for a memorial in the inclosure of the court of the temple. (See Dr. Lightfoot in the place beforenamed.) But there is no certainty of this, and it contradicts in part what is here commanded, that they should be laid up without the camp. (See ver. 12.)

And it shall be kept.] Laid up, εἰς διατήρησιν, as the LXX. translate it, *to be reserved* and kept for the use of those who had defiled themselves by the dead; unto whom it was delivered when they had occasion for it. And this word *reserved*, or *kept*, imports, that these ashes were not for the use of that generation only, but for all posterity. And as manna (which was commanded in the same form of speech to be *kept* or *reserved* in the ark) was a type of Christ, as he was the food of life, or the bread that came down from heaven: so were these ashes kept as an emblem of the everlasting efficacy of his sacrifice. For there is no bodily substance under heaven (as Dr. Jackson speaks, book x. chap. 55.) which can be so true an emblem or model of incorruption, as ashes are; for being the remainder of bodies perfectly dissolved or corrupted, they are not capable of a second corruption.

For the congregation of the children of Israel.] This one heifer, being slain, and its blood sprinkled, and body burnt, afforded ashes enough to season as many vessels of water as the whole people of Israel should need. Wherein it was a notable representation of Christ's blood, shed for the whole world, *to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Yea, they were sufficient for all the people, for many generations, though they had frequent occasion to use them for legal purification; wherein still they more lively represented the virtue of Christ's one sacrifice, which continues for ever. For the Jews say, this red heifer was killed but *nine* times, while their state lasted. First, by Eleazar here in the wilderness; which was not repeated till after the destruction of Solomon's temple, *i. e.* not during the space of more than a thousand years. The second time it was burnt by Ezra, after their return from the captivity of Babylon; and but seven times more, till the destruction of the second temple. Since which they have not adventured to make these ashes, but expect it to be done the tenth time by the king Messias, who, indeed, came to put an end to this and all other legal rites; not after the legal manner, but by offering himself *once for all,* instead of all other sacrifices or ways of purification.

For a water of separation.] To be put into spring-water (which was always accounted more pure than other), by which those *persons* were to be cleansed, who for their pollutions were separated from the congregation; and those *things* also which had been defiled were restored to their common use. Ashes, all know, are of great use in scouring things polluted; and the ancient gentiles used them much in their lustrations, as appears from Virgil, Ovid, and many other authors. But the water into which they put them was prepared with magical rites, and, for the most part, was drawn out of some pretended sacred fountain; and sometimes it had a burning torch, taken from the altar, quenched in it; and in some places they put sulphur, and spittle, and other cleansing things, into it. In which, I suppose, at first they imitated this rite prescribed by Moses; but in process of time added many superstitions of their own to it.

It is a purification for sin.] In the Hebrew the words are, *it is sin;* and we add, *a purification,* to explain the sense. For it was not a proper sacrifice for sin, (as this phrase *for sin* sometimes imports, Lev. iv. 24.) but had something of that nature in it (as I observed before), and may be properly said to purify or cleanse men from their sin, *i.e.* from such legal defilements as are mentioned afterwards. And it may, in a less proper sense, have the name of a *sin-offering,* inasmuch as the body of it was burnt without the camp (as the great sin-offering was on the day of atonement), and its blood sprinkled seven times towards the sanctuary, though not shed at the altar; whereby it became a more complete representation of the sacrifice of Christ, especially if we consider, that this *purification* here mentioned doth not signify only one, or a few acts of purification, but a *continued purification;* the ashes being to be laid up as a treasure or storehouse (to use Dr. Jackson's words) for making as many purifications, or waters of sprinkling, as the Israelites should have occasion to use. For therein consisted the excellence of this *purification,* that the ashes were not to be made by burning a heifer every time the people had occasion for them; but the ashes of this one sacrifice (as we may call it) was sufficient for the use of many generations. Accordingly the apostle saith our Lord Christ, καθαρισμὸν ποιησάμενος, *having made a purification of our sins,* (Heb. i. 3.) *sat down at God's right hand:* which word *purification,* in that place, doth not signify one act or operation, but implies that by this one act of sacrificing himself, he was consecrated to be a perpetual fountain of purification, being still *the propitiation for our sins.*

Ver. 10. *And he that gathereth the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.*] This

is one of the strange things which the Jews say Solomon himself did not understand, (and Maimonides professes he could find no reason of, More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 47. and the author of Sepher Cosri also ascribes purely to the will and pleasure of God, of which he could give no account, par. iii. sect. 53.) that the same thing should both cleanse and pollute, as these ashes did, which polluted him that gathered them, and made those that used them clean from the highest legal pollutions. But this is not strange to those who consider that all those great sacrifices which were offered for sin, (which I mentioned ver. 7.) though they purified those for whom they were offered, were very impure themselves, because the sins of men were laid upon them, as all our sins were upon Christ; who, therefore, is said to be *made sin for us,* (2 Cor. v. 21.) *that we might be made the righteousness of God, i.e.* freed from all sin.

And it shall be unto the children of Israel, and unto the stranger, &c.] All proselytes to their religion were to have the benefit of this purification, as well as the Jews, by an unalterable law; by which was figured the propitiation Christ made for the sins of the whole world.

Ver. 11. *He that toucheth the body of any dead man shall be unclean seven days.*] This long uncleanness by touching a dead body, was the ground of those strict injunctions to the priests about mourning for their dead relations; which is forbidden, lest they should be hindered too long in their ministration. (See Lev. xxi.) He that touched the carcass of any unclean creature, was defiled only until the even, (Lev. xi. 24.) nor was he longer who touched the bed of him that had an issue, or his seat, &c. (Lev. xv. 5—8.)

Ver. 12. *He shall purify himself with it.*] With the *water of separation,* mentioned ver. 9. Which seems here to be designed chiefly, if not only, for the purging of this great impurity, by touching any man's dead body.

On the third day.] Then he was to begin his purification, by being sprinkled with it; which makes it probable that these ashes were kept in more places than the Jews mention *without the camp* (as afterward near Jerusalem), and, it is most likely, in all the cities of the country. For it had been too hard for all the people, nay, impossible for those who were remote, to go to Jerusalem the third day after they were defiled to fetch these ashes; which, therefore, were kept in several clean places, where every body might easily have them to put into water, and be sprinkled with it. For as there was no sacrifice, so no priest required to make this purification; but any clean person might sprinkle the water, (ver. 18, 19.)

And on the seventh day he shall be clean.] Then his purification was perfected; but not without a new sprinkling on this day, (ver. 19.)

But if he purified not himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean.] If he did not begin his purification on the third day, his sprinkling on the seventh would not make him clean. But it is very probable, that, though he omitted it on the *third* day, yet, if he purified himself on the *fourth* or *fifth,* or any day following, that being reckoned as if it had been the *third,* when he had made up the number *seven,* his cleansing might be completed.

Ver. 13. *Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and purifieth not himself.*] With the water of separation, in the manner before prescribed, (ver. 12.)

Defileth the tabernacle of the Lord.] If he approach unto it without this purification.

And that soul shall be cut off from Israel.] He was to die for it if he did it presumptuously.

Because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him.] Because he neglected the means of his purification.

He shall be unclean.] Remain in his uncleanness.

His uncleanness is yet upon him.] Not to be purified now by this water of separation, but cut off from the body of the people. This still concerns those that came to the tabernacle presumptuously, being unpurified. If they did it ignorantly, a sacrifice was admitted for their atonement, (Lev. v. 3. 6. 17, 18.)

Ver. 14. *This is the law.*] Concerning such defilements as these, by the dead bodies of men.

When a man dieth in a tent.] Wherein they now lived during their stay in the wilderness; and the same law obliged them, when they came to dwell in houses, in the land of Canaan.

All that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days.] The meaning seems to be, that every person who came into the tent while the dead body lay there (or before the tent was purified), as well as they who were in it when the person died, should be unclean. For all the goods of the house were not made unclean; but only all open vessels.

Ver. 15. *And every open vessel which hath no covering bound upon it is unclean.*] Because the air in the house, which was supposed to be tainted by the dead body, came as freely into such vessels as it did to the dead body. Tho. Aquinas fancies, that this law was made to prevent idolatry: for the ancient idolaters thought, that if a mouse, or a lizard, or such-like thing, which was dedicated unto their idols, fell into a vessel, or into water, they became thereby very acceptable to their gods. And he saith this superstition continued till his days; in which some women were wont to leave their vessels uncovered on purpose, in observance of the nocturnal deities, whom they called Janos. (See Prima et Secunda Quest. 102. artic. 5.) To abolish which superstition God required, he thinks, all vessels left uncovered, where the dead lay, should be polluted; *i. e.* not acceptable unto God, nor employed to holy, no, nor common uses. If such customs had been in Moses's days, this might be better applied to what we read in Lev. xi. 32, 33.

Ver. 16. *Whosoever toucheth one that is slain with the sword in the open fields.*] Or killed any other way, it appears by the words following.

Or a dead body.] Of a man that falls down dead of a sudden, or is executed for his crimes.

Or a bone of a man.] Taken out of a grave, or the grave itself where the dead body lies; as the next words are.

Shall be unclean seven days.] As long as if he had touched the dead body itself.

Ver. 17. *And for an unclean person.*] *i. e.* For the cleansing of one defiled any of these ways.

They shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin.] It is not said what quantity, therefore; I suppose, whether it were little or great it would serve the turn. It is observable, that the ashes of the burnt heifer are here called *chattah (sin),* which shews they had the virtue of a sin-offering in them. (See ver. 9.)

And running-water shall be put thereto in a vessel.] The

ashes being put into a vessel, they were to put pure spring, or at least river water upon them; which became the *water of separation.*

Ver. 18. *And a clean person.*] It is not said a priest; and therefore I suppose any other person, who was not unclean, might do this: as any such person might slay the heifer, and burn her, (ver. 3. 5.) But in this the Jews were so curious, that their tradition made this extend, not only to a person that was at present clean, but that never had been defiled by a dead corpse in all his life; and therefore tell us what devices they had to keep persons thus clean, for this very end and purpose. (See Dr. Lightfoot in his Temple Service, chap. 17. sect. 2.)

Shall take hyssop.] When the priests sprinkled the lepers, or their houses, with the blood of a bird killed over running-water, he dipped hyssop, cedar-wood, and scarlet-wool in them, (Lev. xiv. 4. 6, 7. 49, 50, &c.) But here the sprinkling being made by some neighbour, hyssop alone sufficed; which every one knows was a cleansing herb, and easily procured: instead of which the gentiles, in their superstition, used branches of laurel, or of olive; as we learn from Juvenal and Virgil.

And sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, &c.] For the purifying of all the things, and all the persons abovementioned, (ver. 14—16.)

Ver. 19. *And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day.*] Here he explains what was not so distinctly delivered, ver. 12. And I suppose both persons and things were to be sprinkled on both days, because he saith in general, *upon the unclean;* which seems to relate to all that is mentioned in the foregoing verse.

And on the seventh day he shall purify himself, &c.] This seems to be meant of the clean person who sprinkled the unclean, and by coming near them, was in some sort defiled. But he was not to be purified by the *water of separation;* but only *by washing his clothes, and bathing himself in water;* and his uncleanness lasted but till *the even,* as it here follows in the rest of this verse. (See ver. 21.)

Ver. 20. *But the man that shall be unclean.*] By a dead body, a bone, or a grave, &c.

And shall not purify himself.] By the water of separation appointed for that purpose.

That soul shall be cut off from among the congregation.] As a contemner of this law of God.

Because he hath defiled the sanctuary of the Lord, &c.] This and the following words are only a repetition of what was said ver. 13. for the greater confirmation of it.

Ver. 21. *And it shall be a perpetual statute unto them, that he that sprinkleth the water of separation shall wash his clothes.*] Be reputed unclean, until he hath washed his clothes; which I suppose comprehends his body also, ver. 19.

And he that toucheth the water of separation.] As a man might chance to do, when he mingled the water and ashes together, (ver. 17.)

Shall be unclean until even.] And wash his clothes, it must be supposed from the foregoing words. For mere staying *till even* purified nobody, without some rite of cleansing. And there was more reason for him that touched the water, immediately to wash his clothes, than for him who only sprinkled with it.

Ver. 22. *And whatsoever.*] Or *whomsoever.*

The unclean person toucheth shall be unclean.] He doth not mean, by the *unclean person,* him who was made unclean by touching the water of separation (for his uncleanness was so slight, that any one would think he should make nobody unclean by his touch), but the unclean person spoken of all along in this chapter; who was defiled by touching a dead body. He whom such a person touched was made unclean, and therefore was to wash his clothes, and not be thought clean until the even.

And the soul that toucheth it.] Or toucheth him.

Shall be unclean until the even.] Not only he whom the unclean person touched, but he who touched the unclean person, or any unclean thing, was to be unclean till the even, and wash his clothes (as I said before) for his cleansing. No other cleansing was necessary for such kinds of uncleanness as these. For sacrifices were required only for the uncleanness of lepers, and of a childbed woman, and of a flux of blood, or seed: all others were purged without sacrifice.

By this nice care, which is here taken, about the smallest bodily defilements, God intended (I make no doubt) to make them sensible how necessary it was to preserve inward purity; without which they could not be acceptable to God, though they approached to his sanctuary. For these laws, extending to what was done at home, as well as abroad, were a plain instruction, both that it was not sufficient to be pure in the eyes of men, and that nothing could be concealed from the Divine Majesty, who sees what passeth in secret.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *THEN came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the wilderness of Zin.*] From Rithmah, or Kadesh-barnea, they came at last into this wilderness, after many removals to other stations, of which Moses gives an account in the thirty-third chapter, from ver. 19. to ver. 36. For God led them, by the cloud, quite back again to the Red Sea, (chap. xiv. 25.) and from thence brought them into this wilderness of *Tzin;* which is quite different from that mentioned Exod. xvi. called *Sin:* for this lay on the confines of Idumea, as appears from ver. 14, 15.

In the first month.] Of the fortieth year after they came out of the land of Egypt. For Moses gives an account of the transactions only of the two first years after they came from thence, and of the last: the rest he passeth over in silence, being spent in tiresome journeys; whereby all above twenty years old were consumed, by one disease or other. In those travels he shews how, at several removals, (mentioned chap. xxxiii.) they were led back from Kadesh-barnea unto Ezion-Geber (that is, from the north to the south of the shore of the Red Sea), in which journey they compassed the land of Edom many days, (Deut. ii. 1.) that is, many years. For, from the time they left Kadesh-barnea till they returned back again was thirty-eight years, (Deut. ii. 14.)

And the people abode in Kadesh.] Not in Kadesh-barnea, which was their fifteenth station, and in the confines of the south part of Canaan, (chap. xxxiv. 4. Josh. xv. 3.) but another Kadesh on the confines of the land of Edom, towards the Red Sea, (chap. xxxiii. 36. Deut. ii. 3. Judges xi. 17.)

And Miriam died there.] Four months before her brother Aaron, (chap. xxxiii. 38.) and eleven months before Moses; being elder than either of them. For she was near a hundred and thirty years old, as may be gathered from Exod. ii. 4. 7. where it appears she was not a child when Moses was born.

And was buried there.] In Kadesh, where she died. But we read of no mourning for her, as there was for Aaron a little after, (ver. 29.)

Ver. 2. *And there was no water for the congregation.*] The water that hitherto followed them from the rock in Horeb now failed. Which happening just at the death of Miriam, the Jews have a foolish conceit, that as her piety procured it for them, so she being dead, it was taken from them, and was restored again for the piety of Moses and Aaron. It is more reasonable to think, that God suffered the water to be discontinued for a time, that he might try the faith of this new generation, whether they were any better than their rebellious fathers, and withal, to convince them that the water out of the former rock was not contained in it, if he had not produced it, who could bring forth water out of any other place as well as that. Or, they being now going towards Canaan, and near a country where water might be had for money (or they might have found it by digging for it), God thought fit to let the miracle cease; that they might see he would shortly provide for them otherwise. For it is very likely, that, in their last station, where they were before this, at Ezion-Geber, (chap. xxxiii. 36.) the water that had followed them in all their journeys thither fell there into the Red Sea, and so was swallowed up; they being, as I said, to return towards Canaan, by places where water might be procured without a miracle. For being upon the edge of the land of Edom, when Aaron died in their next removal, (ver. 28. chap. xxxiii. 37.) we read expressly that they presently after came to a *land of rivers of water*, (Deut. x. 7.) And, indeed, not long after they removed from Mount Hor, when Aaron died, we find, in the next chapter to this, that they came to Oboth, (chap. xxi. 10.) which signifying *bottles*, it is no unreasonable conjecture, that here they met with water, with which they filled their empty bottles. And, next to that station, they came to Jie-Abarim, (ver. 11.) *heaps of fords;* or, as the Chaldee expounds it, *the ford of those that pass over:* and then to the valley of Zared, (ver. 12.) or to the brook Zered, as it is in Deut. ii. 13, 14. And then to the river Arnon, (ver. 13.) and thence to Beer, where they digged a famous well, (chap. xxi. 16—18.) which, perhaps, they might have done before in other places, if they had made experiment; for Kadesh, where they now were, was in the border of a country inhabited.

And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.] Just as their fathers had many times done; particularly upon such an occasion as this, (Exod. xvii. 2, 3.)

Ver. 3. *And the people chode with Moses.*] Instead of condoling with him, and comforting him, for the death of his sister and their prophetess (as Abarbinel observes), they came in a rude manner to scold at him.

And spake, saying, Would God that we had died, when our brethren died before the Lord!] By a sudden death, rather than linger away by thirst. They allude to the strokes upon their brethren, chap. xi. 1. 33. xiv. 37. xvi. 32. 35. 46. which one would have thought should have affrighted them from uttering such very discontented language, (chap. xix. 2.) But nothing will alter those, who will not lay to heart, and preserve in mind, God's mercies and judgments.

Ver. 4. *And why have ye brought the congregation of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there?*] The very words of their fathers, presently after they came out of Egypt, (Exod. xvii. 3.)

Ver. 5. *And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt.*] They speak as if it had not been their own desire, but that they were persuaded to it by Moses to leave Egypt; who was sent to tell them God heard their sighing, groans, and cries, and would deliver them, (Exod. ii. 23, 24. iii. 17.) But in a discontented fit, nothing of this was remembered.

To bring us unto this evil place?] They do not speak of returning to Egypt, as their fathers did, (chap. xiv. 3, 4.) but they repented that they were come out of it. So shamefully forgetful they were of all God's benefits, who had in a wonderful manner redeemed them from the heaviest slavery, and hitherto provided for them miraculously in the wilderness, which was a better place than such an ungrateful people deserved!

It is no place of seed.] *i. e.* Of corn.

Or of figs, or of vines, or pomegranates, &c.] Now they complain for want of other things, as well as water: wherein they still imitate their unbelieving fathers, (chap. xvi. 14.)

Ver. 6. *And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*] To pray to God to pardon their sin, and to supply their wants.

And they fell upon their faces.] As they had often done before, on other such-like occasions; particularly chap. xiv. 5.

And the glory of the Lord appeared unto them.] Unto all the people, it is likely; as it had done several times, to silence their murmurings, (see chap. xiv. 10. xvi. 19. 42.)

Ver. 7. *And the Lord spake unto Moses.*] From that glory which appeared upon the tabernacle.

Ver. 8. *Take the rod.*] That famous rod wherein Moses had wrought so many miracles in Egypt, and at the Red Sea, &c.

And gather thou the assembly together.] This word *edah* signifying sometimes only the assembly of the elders, not of the whole people, it would be uncertain which of them he is bid to gather together, (for it is a different word from that which we translate *assembly*, ver. 6.) if the tenth verse had not determined that it was the *kahal*, or congregation of the people, as the word *edah* also signifies just before, (ver. 8.)

Thou and Aaron thy brother.] For the people were gathered together against Aaron, in a mutinous manner, as well as against Moses, (ver. 2.)

And speak ye unto the rock before their eyes.] To the first rock you meet withal (saith Nachmanides), and that is within their sight. For this is not the same rock out of which the former water flowed, as the Jews fancy; but quite different. Their very names are different; that being called Tzur, this Selah. That was in Rephidim, this in Kadesh; two very distant places. Thus Chaskuni; some think this the same with that in Exodus: "but it is not the

same history. For the former was in Horeb, this in Kadesh; which is in the extremity of the land of Edom." But whether God pointed him to a rock, which was then in their sight, (as he did at Horeb, Exod. xvii. 5, 6.) or left him to choose any stony place, is not certain. But it is a mere fancy of some of the Jews, that, because God here bade them speak to the rock, Moses offended God in *smiting it*. For to what purpose should he take *the rod*, if he was not to smite the rock with it, as he had done formerly? Just such another conceit there is in Schalschelet Hakkabala; where R. Gedaliah saith, that he had given an account of this sin in another book, which he gathered out of various writers, and found there were twenty-eight different opinions about it: but he preferred this before any of them; that whereas God bade Moses gather the *edah* together, that is, the assembly of the people, (ver. 8.) he gathered the *kahal, i. e.* the congregation of the princes and elders (as he will have it), whose faith needed no confirmation: (see Hottinger in his Smegma Orientale, cap. 8. p. 451.)

And it shall give forth his water.] The Jews puzzle themselves about this expression, which sounds, they think, as if the water was contained in the rock; and Moses only made a gap for it to gush out: but it seems to be spoken in opposition to the waters issuing out of the former rock, which had supplied them hitherto, but now ceased to flow; it being as much as if he had said, This shall give forth water as that did before: now it shall be called the water of this rock; not that of Horeb.

And thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock?] Renew the former miracle.

So thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.] So that they and their cattle (which they fear will perish, ver. 24.) shall be as plentifully provided for as ever.

Ver. 9. *And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him.*] From hence some conclude, that this was the rod of Aaron which blossomed; because he is said to take it *from before the Lord*, where Aaron's rod was laid up, (chap. xvii. 10.) But this rod is so expressly called *Moses's rod*, ver. 11. which was the instrument of bringing the former water out of the rock in Horeb, that I cannot but think this was the very same rod; which being there called *the rod of God*, (Exod. xvii. 9.) as it is at the first mention of it, (Exod. iv. 20.) it is very probable, that by God's order it was laid up somewhere before him in the sanctuary; though not before the ark of the testimony. For having been employed in doing so many wonders, it was not seemly it should lay in his own tent, as a common staff; but in the house of God, as a sacred wand. This, indeed, is no where mentioned, no more than many other things, which notwithstanding are plainly intimated.

Ver. 10. *And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation before the rock.*] As God had commanded, ver. 8.

And he said unto them.] Moses, who was the chief actor, said unto them.

Hear ye now, ye rebels.] The Talmudists fancy that this is the great sin for which Moses and Aaron were denied to go into Canaan, because he called God's people *rebels:* from whence they have framed this maxim, *He that treats the church contemptuously, which ought to be honoured, is as if he blasphemed the name of God.* But they subvert the truth, who build it upon no better foundations. For Moses, the great minister of God, only uses God's own language to their fathers, chap. xvii. 10. where he bids him lay up Aaron's rod, *as a token against the rebels.* And if this were a sin, Moses committed it again not long after this, and in a higher strain (which nobody can think he would have done, if it had cost him so dear), when he saith, Deut. ix. 24. "Ye have been rebellious against the Lord ever since I knew you."

Must we fetch you water out of this rock?] In these words, also, some of the Jews (particularly Nachman) think they find the sin of Moses and Aaron; who here (they fancy) ascribe to themselves that which they ought to have acknowledged the work of God alone. But this is without any ground; for the plain meaning of the words is quite contrary; *Is it in our power to bring water out of a rock?* So the Vulgar Latin translates it; it being a speech of those that wonder, like that 1 Kings xxi. 19. "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?" As if Moses had said, *Strange! that you should think it possible for us to bring you water out of a rock, which is the work only of an omnipotent power!*

Ver. 11. *And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice.*] It seems the water did not gush out at the first stroke; which made him repeat it.

And the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.] So that their present necessity was supplied; and they also filled their vessels when they left this place, to serve them till they met with the convenience of water; as they did, I shewed upon ver. 2.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not.*] Here interpreters have been much troubled to find what it was for which God was offended at Moses and Aaron: for though the text tells us expressly it was for their unbelief (whereby they gave great scandal, and did not *sanctify him* as they did formerly, before the Israelites), yet it doth not clearly appear wherein this unbelief declared itself. Abarbinel hath collected several opinions of the Jewish doctors about this matter, which are no less than *ten;* after which he delivers his own, which seems to *me* as unsatisfactory as the rest were to *him;* for it is far-fetched, with too much nicety and subtilty, and relies also upon uncertainties. The plainest account of it, I think, is this, which none of them take notice of; that the water now ceasing at the same time that Miriam died, Moses was very sad both for her death, and, perhaps, for the ceasing of the water; and being unexpectedly assaulted by the people, who ought to have had a greater reverence for him, in a time of mourning especially, it was the occasion of a greater commotion of anger and indignation than was usually in him: which gave him such a disturbance in his mind, and so disordered his thoughts, that when God bade him take his rod, and go and speak to the rock, he fell into some doubt, whether God would grant them the favour he had done before; either, because they were so wretched a people, that it was not fit God should do any thing for them; or because he thought, perhaps, water might be otherways procured for them. And because of this doubting, I suppose, it might be, that upon the first striking of the rock no water came forth (God also, perhaps, so ordering it, that he might try him); and hereupon his diffidence increased into unbelief, and a settled persuasion they should have no water. His anger also at such a

rebellious generation, it is likely, made him the more distrustful, that God would do nothing for them. For both these are mentioned by the Divine writers that touch upon this history, that he *did not believe;* and that his spirit was so provoked, that *he spake unadvisedly with his lips,* (Psal. cvi. 32, 33.) which was when he spake those words, ver. 10. *Must we fetch you water out of this rock?* i. e. *is that a likely matter?* They being words of the same sort with those of Sarah, Gen. xviii. 13. *Shall I of a surety have a child, who am old?* that is, *I cannot believe it.* And when he saw the water did not come out at the first stroke, he might be so rash as to say, *Now it is plain God will give you none, but let you perish:* or words to that effect.

I know nothing more probable than this; unless the reader likes the opinion of Joseph Albo better, which is the ninth opinion mentioned by Abarbinel. That Moses and Aaron having had such long experience of God's goodness to this people, and of his readiness to help them, ought not to have gone and made their complaints to God about the want of water, (ver. 6.) but immediately, of themselves, gone to the rock (being confident of God's power and mercy, which had never failed them), and called for water to come out of it. For now the tabernacle was built, and they had God dwelling among them (which they had not when he smote the rock at first), which ought to have bred in them the highest assurance that God would supply them. Dr. Lightfoot hath another conjecture (which I shall propound, that the reader may judge which is most likely), that Moses and Aaron began to distrust God's promise of entering into the promised land, at the end of forty years; imagining, that, if they brought water again out of the rock, it must follow them as long as the other had done. For this he makes the sense of their words, "*What, ye rebels! must we bring water out of a rock,* as we did at Horeb? Are all our hopes and expectations of getting out of the wilderness come to this? We never fetched you water out of a rock but once; and that was because ye were to stay a long time in the wilderness, &c. Now that is gone, must we fetch water out of another rock? O ye rebels, have ye brought it to this pass by your murmurings, that we must have a new stay in the wilderness? Are we to begin our abode here again, when we thought we had been at the end of our travels? At this rate we shall never get out." Whereupon he presently smote the rock twice in a fume; whereas God bade him only speak to it, (ver. 8.)

To sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel.] *i. e.* Openly to assert me to be *the Holy One of Israel,* faithful to my promises (as well as infinite in power), of which they had given the Israelites occasion to doubt, by declaring some distrust of what God said to them, (ver. 8.) For these words plainly shew that their sin did not consist only in an inward diffidence, but in such outward expressions of it in their anger and impatience, as might be apt to breed unbelief in the Israelites; who were already too prone thereunto. And it is no improbable conjecture of a Jewish doctor (in his book of the Death of Moses), that the Divine Glory not appearing now upon this rock, as it did at Horeb, (Exod. xvii. 6.) which perhaps they expected; it gave some occasion to their unbelief: which, he thinks, was not so great a sin in itself, as to have deserved the following punishment, had not God, in passing this sentence, had a respect to the excellency and dignity of their persons; in whom a fault of this nature was far more grievous than in an ordinary man.

Therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.] They brought them into the land of Sihon, and of Og; but not into Canaan, which was properly the land promised to them.

Ver. 13. *This is the water of Meribah.*] Called Meribah-kadesh, Deut. xxxii. 51. to distinguish it from that Meribah mentioned Exod. xvii. 7. where the Israelites are guilty of the same crime.

Because the children of Israel strove with the Lord.] Expostulated with him most undutifully, and accused him of unkindness to them, (ver. 3, 4.)

And he was sanctified in them.] The Hebrew doctors differ very much in their opinions about this also, whether he was sanctified in the waters, or in the people of Israel, or in Moses and Aaron. Some fancy it is meant of the waters; *viz.* that God did himself great honour in bringing waters again out of a rock: and therefore the name of the place was called Kadesh, from his being sanctified there. Thus Chaskuni. But it seems to have been called so before this, being a place well known to the Edomites, (ver. 16.) The common opinion is, that he speaks of Moses and Aaron: for God's name, saith R. Solomon, is much revered when he doth not spare even his holy ones, (Lev. x. 3.) But Nachmanides expounds it of the Israelites, before *whose face* (as he expounds sanctified *in them*) God's power, and faithfulness, and goodness appeared: and who alone are mentioned in this verse; not Moses and Aaron. But all three opinions in the issue concur in this one, that God made his power, &c. appear in the eyes of all the Israelites, by bringing water out of a rock; and at the same time demonstrated his holiness and impartial justice in punishing his greatest friends for their unbelief.

Ver. 14. *And Moses sent messengers.*] By God's order, as his words seem to import, in Deut. ii. 2—4.

From Kadesh.] On the confines of the king of Edom's country.

Unto the king of Edom.] When the Israelites came out of Egypt, Moses speaks of Edom as governed by dukes, (Exod. xv. 87.) for the successors of Esau at first had no higher title, (Gen. xxxvi. 15, &c.) Not long after, it seems, their posterity became kings; and now (nine-and-thirty years after the Israelites' coming out of Egypt) they were still under kingly government. And this king, to whom Moses now sends messengers, the great primate of Ireland takes to have been Hadar, the last of those that Moses mentions Gen. xxxvi. 39. who, for his inhumanity to the children of Israel, was shortly after punished with death; and the kingdom turned again into the government by dukes. For Moses (as he thinks) writing the book of Genesis in the latter end of his life (or then adding what was necessary to what he had written before), reckons immediately after Hadar several dukes reigning all at one time, in several parts of the country which they had shared among them. (See Usser. Chronolog. Sacra, cap. 11.)

Thus saith thy brother Israel.] In the language of those times, all that were near of kin called one another brethren: and these two nations descended from two twin-brothers.

Thou knowest.] For they could not but have received intelligence before this time of such public things.

All the travel that hath befallen us.] How we, and our

fathers before us, have travelled from place to place, without any certain habitation. (See Psal. cv. 13.)

Ver. 15. *How our fathers.*] After several removals from one part of Canaan to another.

Went down into Egypt.] Which was so public a thing (they being invited by Pharaoh, who sent carriages for them), that the Edomites could not be ignorant of it.

And we have dwelt in Egypt a long time.] See Exod. xii. 40, 41. and what I have observed there.

And the Egyptians vexed us and our fathers.] See Exod. i. 11—13, &c.

Ver. 16. *And when we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice.*] See Exod. ii. 23—25. iii. 7, 8.

And sent an angel.] See Exod. iii. 2, &c. Maimonides here by *angel* understands Moses himself; for the prophets are sometimes called *angels, i. e.* messengers sent from God, (Judg. ii. 1.) This he asserts in the first part, and more than once in the second part, of More Nevochim. But it is very unreasonable to think, that Moses would thus magnify himself to the king of Edom, who understood not such language; and could not but be the more moved to hearken to his embassy, if he believed the Israelites were under the conduct of a heavenly minister, who, as other Jews think, was Michael, the prince of the heavenly host, whom they commonly understand by the angel here mentioned. But many great men, particularly Masius, think this is short of the truth, unless we understand by Michael, the eternal Son of God, who was, as he speaks, *the perpetual prince and director of the people of God.* For though he was then properly made the *messenger* of the Father, when he took on him our flesh, and dwelt here among us, yet from the beginning it was his constant care to reconcile men to God, and preserve religion among them. So that he might be called *the angel of God* before he became a man, because God the Father by him communicated with men about all things necessary for their good. And the Jews seem to have had some obscure notion of this: for what else could Moses Gerundensis mean, when he saith, the angel whom Moses saw in the bush was the same whom Jacob calls *the God of Bethel*, and whom he calls *the angel Redeemer?* of whom Moses, he saith, speaks in this place, and in Deut. vi. 12. *The Lord brought us out of Egypt.* Certain it is, that thus the ancient Christians understood such places, taking the *angel* here spoken of to be the eternal *Logos*, or *Word*, as St. John calls the eternal Son of God: whose sense no man, I think, hath better explained than our Mr. Thorndike; who, though he confesses it to be plain by the Scriptures, that it was always an angel that appeared under the Old Testament, who is sometimes called by the proper name of God (Jehovah), yet this is no prejudice to what the fathers of the church teach, concerning the appearing of the eternal Word; who was that Lord who then assumed some angelical nature, wherein he might appear, to deal with men for a short time; after which he dismissed it, when he had done that business for which he assumed it.

And hath brought us forth out of Egypt.] See Exod. xiii. 22. xiv. 19.

And, behold, we are in Kadesh.] Near to *Kadesh;* for it is not likely they were admitted into the city itself, which gave its name to the adjacent country.

A city.] Or town; for it doth not seem to have been a walled place.

In the uttermost of thy borders.] In the confines of the king of Edom's country; and belonging, it is likely, to his dominion.

Ver. 17. *Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country.*] In our way to the land of Canaan; which God hath promised to give us.

We will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards.] They engaged not to turn aside, as they went along, into any private man's grounds. (See chap. xxi. 22.)

Neither will we drink of the water of the wells.] Which any private person had digged for his own use; but only of the rivers, which are common to all creatures.

We will go by the king's highway.] Keep in the common road, which is made for all passengers, by the king's allowance.

We will not turn to the right hand or to the left.] Out of the road, but go straight on.

Until we have passed thy borders.] Got to the other side of the country of Edom.

Ver. 18. *And Edom said unto him.*] This sounds as if the whole country had joined in the following answer.

Thou shalt not pass by me.] Go through our country, (ver. 20.)

Lest I come out against thee with the sword.] The king bids them not attempt it, for he would oppose their passage with all his forces. He was afraid, no doubt, lest they should seize his country, or spoil it, and therefore would not trust their declarations which they made to the contrary.

Ver. 19. *And the children of Israel.*] Who were sent upon this message, (ver. 14.) Or else some new ambassadors, whom Moses dispatched with new entreaties after he understood his denial.

Said unto him.] Gave him new assurances of their honest intentions.

We will go by the highway.] Believe us, we will not step out of the common road.

And if I and my cattle drink of thy water.] Out of the wells beforementioned, (ver. 17.) which private men had digged, and therefore had a propriety in them.

Then will I pay for it.] For water was commonly sold in those dry countries, where it was very scarce.

I will only, without doing any thing else.] The Hebrew words *ein dabar* (which we translate, *without doing any thing else*), literally signify in our language, *it is no word, i. e.* not mere fair promises, but we will perform what we say.

Go through on my feet.] Go through, as fast as we can travel on foot.

Ver. 20. *And he said, Thou shalt not go through.*] He persisted in his resolution; and would not rely on their most solemn asseverations. Yet he consented (as appears by Deut. ii. 28, 29.) to furnish them with necessary provisions, both of meat and drink, for their money.

And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand.] For fear they should press into his country, he raised a great and powerful army to oppose them; and shewed himself ready to fight them if they moved that way.

Ver. 21. *Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border.*] Which Grotius censures in his second book De Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 2. sect. 13. as contrary to the law of nations; by which the highways, as well as the sea and

the rivers of all countries, ought to be free for all that have a mind to pass through them upon just occasions. And he gives many examples of such permission out of heathen story; and therefore looks upon the denial of this as just ground of war with Sihon and Og (mentioned in the next chapter, where I shall consider it), as it might have been with Edom and Moab, had not God prohibited it. Nor doth the fear, he thinks, which the Edomites, it is likely, had of letting such a vast number of people pass through their country, alter the case; for no man's fear is to take away another man's right: and there might have been means contrived to remove this fear, by letting them pass through in small companies at a time, or unarmed. He had better have said, in my opinion, by giving hostages on both sides for the performance of conditions: for it might have put the Israelites in as great fear to have gone through in small parties, or if they should have disarmed themselves. But, when all is said, it seems not clear that all men have such a right, as that great man thinks they may claim. For no man can challenge a passage through a private man's ground without his leave; and every prince hath the same dominion in all his territories that a private man hath in his land. There are many examples also, as Gronovius hath observed, of countries which have suffered extremely by granting this liberty (which shew that princes have reason to deny it for their people's security), and the examples of those who have granted it, are examples of fact rather than of right; and of such as were not in a condition to refuse what was demanded. (See Selden's Mare Clausum, lib. i. cap. 20.)

Wherefore Israel turned away from him.] By God's command; who ordered them also to buy what they wanted of the Edomites, (Deut. ii. 5, 6.) For they stayed some time in Kadesh, by their consent, before they removed; that they might furnish themselves, as they offered, with necessaries, (Judges xi. 17.)

Ver. 22. *And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation.*] For they might not divide into several bodies, lying in several places; but all march together, when the cloud moved, in the order God appointed, (chap. x. 13, 14, &c.)

Journeyed from Kadesh, and came to Mount Hor.] Another place upon the edge of the Edomites' country, chap. xxxiii. 37. where they pitched in a part of that mountain which was called Mosera, (Deut. x. 6.) Whether Mount Hor gave the name of Hori to him, who was the ancestor of Seir, and the first planter of the country, which was afterward conquered by Esau, (Gen. xxxvi. 20. 30. Deut. ii. 12.) or had its name from him, cannot be determined. But Hori, we are sure, was the first possessor (of whom there is any memory) of this mountain Hor, which was afterward called Seir (from one descended from him), and afterward Edom.

Ver. 23. *And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in Mount Hor.*] At the foot of the mount, as appears from ver. 25.

By the coast of the land of Edom.] See chap. xxxiii. 37.

Ver. 24. *Aaron shall be gathered unto his people.*] Shall die, (ver. 26.)

For he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.] See ver. 12. A manifest token that the earthly Canaan was not the utmost felicity at which God's promises aimed; because the best men among them were shut out of it.

Because ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah.] By this word *rebelled*, it appears there was something of obstinacy in their unbelief, mentioned ver. 12.

Ver. 25. *Take Aaron and Eleazar his son.*] Speak to them in my name. For it is expressly said, (chap. xxxiii. 38.) that they went up "at the commandment of the Lord."

And bring them up unto Mount Hor.] This shews that they pitched their tents at the bottom of it, in a place called Mosera. See Deut. x. 6. where this seems also to have been the name of the whole hill, as well as Hor.

Ver. 26. *And strip Aaron of his garments.*] *i. e.* Of his priestly robes (as Josephus rightly expounds it, τὴν ἀρχιερατικὴν στολὴν), mentioned Exod. xxviii. 2, 3, &c. wherewith he was clothed when he was anointed to the office of high-priest, (Lev. viii. 7—9.) which he put on, I suppose, in the camp, and went up in them to Mount Hor, that he might die gloriously; not in his robes, but immediately after he put them off to be put upon his son. For this stripping him of his robes was in effect the divesting Aaron of his office, that it might be conferred upon his son; which was done as follows.

And put them upon Eleazar his son.] Which was the investing him with the office of high-priest, in which he now succeeded in his father's stead, and was by this ceremony admitted to it. The Talmudists say the manner was, first to put on the breeches, then the coat; which being bound about with the girdle, then the robe, upon which was the ephod, and then the mitre and golden crown. (See Selden de Succession. in Pontif. lib. ii. cap. 8.)

And Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, and die there.] This was said before, in short, ver. 24. but now the time of his death is expressly declared (immediately after he laid down his office, and had the satisfaction to see his son inaugurated in his room), and the place of it, upon Mount Hor. Of this phrase, *gathered to his people*, see Gen. xxv. 8. 17.

Ver. 27. *And Moses did as the Lord commanded: and they went up into Mount Hor, in the sight of all the congregation.*] That they might all be witnesses of the succession of Eleazar to the office of his father.

Ver. 28. *And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son.*] This Moses did as the minister of God; who now translated the priesthood to another.

And Aaron died there in the top of the mount.] And was buried also there, (Deut. x. 6.) For great and heroic persons were in ancient days usually buried in high places. So Joshua was, (chap. xxiv. 30. 33.) and Eleazar, (Judges ii. 9.) and Cadmus and Harmonia; who lived near the time of Joshua, as Bochartus observes in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 23.

And Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount.] After they had seen him laid in his grave by those that attended them.

This fell out in the fortieth year after they came out of Egypt, on the first day of the fifth month; when Aaron was a hundred and three-and-twenty years old, as we read chap. xxxiii. 38, 39. in the new moon of the month, which the Athenians called *Hecatombæon*, the Macedonians *Lous*, and the Hebrews called *Sabba*, as Josephus glosses. But

that last word should be *Ab*, not *Sabba*, as Jacobus Capellus observes, (in his Histor. Sacra et Exotica ad An. 2542.) which answers, he thinks, to the nineteenth of our July. And so the Hebrews say in Seder Olam, "Aaron died on the first day of the month Ab;" upon which there is a fast in their rituals, in memory of it.

Ver. 29. *And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead.*] *i. e.* Understood (as the word *see* is used Gen. xlii. 1.) that God had taken him out of the world, as Moses and Eleazar told them; who also came down from the mount with him.

They mourned for Aaron thirty days.] Till the end of the month. For so long their mourning seems, in those days, to have been continued for great persons, (as it was for Moses, Deut. xxxiv. 8.) though a week sufficed for private persons.

Even all the house of Israel.] Both men and women.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *AND when king Arad the Canaanite.*] In the Hebrew the words are thus placed, *when the Canaanite king Arad:* and so they are in the LXX. and the Vulgar: and Arad may as well signify a place as a person: nay, there seems more reason to translate the words thus, *the Canaanitish king of Arad:* because there was such a city in Canaan, mentioned Josh. xii. 14. and Judges i. 16. One of the sons of Canaan being called Arad, (as both the LXX. and the Vulgar translate the Hebrew word *Arvad*, Gen. x. 18.) who it is likely gave his name to this part of the country; the chief city of which was also called after him.

Which dwelt in the south.] In the south part of the land of Canaan, towards the eastern angle of it, near the Dead Sea. (See chap. xxxiii. 40.)

Heard that Israel came by the way of the spies.] Which were sent by the king Arad (as many suppose) to bring him intelligence which way the Israelites marched. For it being eight-and-thirty years since the spies sent by Moses went that way; or rather, they going so secretly, that it was not known which way they went, it is thought not probable that Moses speaks of them in this place. But there is no necessity of taking the Hebrew word *Atharim* to signify *spies;* but it may as well be the name of a place, as the LXX. understood it, by whom it is translated Ἀθαρείμ. And, if the situation would agree to it, one might probably conjecture the place was so called from the spies that went from thence by Moses's order to survey the country. For that was a thing so memorable, that, as it could not well slip out of the minds of the people of Canaan, so they found, I make no question, after they were gone, which way they came into their country (though for the present they passed unobserved), and ever after called it *the way of the spies.*

Then he fought against Israel.] He marched out of his country with an army; and fell upon the Israelites as they passed that way.

And took some of them prisoners.] He attacked, it is likely, at first, only the skirts of their camp, where he surprised some of them, and carried them away *captive*, as the words are in the Hebrew.

Ver. 2. *And Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord.*] It was resolved, it seems, that they should engage them; but the Israelites being afraid of them, because they were unexperienced in war, implore the Divine aid by this solemn vow.

If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand.] Give us the victory over them.

Then will I utterly destroy their cities.] They vow to reserve none of the spoil to their own use; but devote it all to destruction. For such was the nature of this vow called *cherem.* (See Lev. xxvii. 29.)

Ver. 3. *And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel.*] He approved their vow.

And delivered up the Canaanites.] The Israelites vanquished their army.

And they utterly destroyed them and their cities.] Utterly devoted them to destruction, according to their vow. For they did not now actually destroy them, they remaining when Joshua came to Canaan, who executed this *cherem*, or curse, upon them, (chap. xii. 14.) which, if it had been executed now, they must have entered into the land of Canaan at this time; from whence we cannot imagine they would have returned, to march further about before they got into it; but have gone on to prosecute their victory, by subduing the country, as they had begun.

And he called the name of the place Hormah.] From the *cherem* (or *herem* as some write it) which was pronounced against it; which, when it was put in execution, this name became more proper to it, (Judges i. 17.)

Ver. 4. *And they journeyed from Mount Hor.*] Where their camp was pitched, when the king of Arad assaulted them; and whither they returned, after they had overthrown him.

By the way of the Red Sea.] Towards Ezion-Gaber, as we read Deut. ii. 8.

To compass the land of Edom.] Which extended itself unto the Red Sea.

And the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.] The word we translate *discouraged*, signifies two things; to *faint*, and to *breathe short*, through the anguish and bitterness of one's spirit, (Exod. vi. 9.) And secondly, to be angry at, or at least impatient, by reason of some trouble. And so it may be best taken in this place, (as Buxtorfius observes, in Histor. Serp. Ænei, cap. 1.) not simply for their being tired, with a tedious, long, and troublesome march; but that accompanied with no small indignation and wrath: which did not only burn within, but broke out into words of great impatience, as appears by what follows. Whence the Hebrew words *ketzar-ruach (short of spirit)* signify *angry*, or *hasty*, Prov. xiv. 29. and in Job xxi. 4. we translate it *troubled*, and Zach. xi. 8. *loathed;* where it had better been translated, *I was angry with them.* Now that which made the people thus fret, or faint (if we will have it so interpreted), was the way wherein they were now led, which was about the land of Edom. For when they were come towards Canaan, in the middle of the fortieth year (at the end of which they were promised to enter in and possess it), they are carried back again towards the Red Sea, whither God had sent their fathers after they had brought a false report upon the land, (chap. xiv. 25.) This made them think, perhaps, that they should never come to Canaan; or, at least, it was tedious to march such a great way about, after they had

been kept so long from their inheritance, and were lately in such hopes of it, when Moses demanded a passage into it through the country of Edom.

Ver. 5. *And the people spake against God and against Moses.*] This shews they were in a very great rage, which made them so forgetful of their duty, as to charge God himself with ill conduct: whereas their fathers were wont only to murmur against Moses and Aaron.

Wherefore have ye brought us out of Egypt.] The Hebrew word *heelithunu (made us to go up)* is a strange word (as Dr. Lightfoot calls it) in this language; declaring the great fume they were in when they uttered it.

To die in the wilderness.] As if they had said (so Abarbinel explains it), What can we expect or hope for but death from this long stay in the wilderness?

For there is no bread, neither is there any water.] For we want the most necessary things for the support of life (as he also well explains it), which they spake in a rage; for they had both, by a miraculous providence over them. They themselves immediately confess they had manna; and that they lately received water out of a rock. But nothing would satisfy, unless they were brought to a country where bread and water were to be had without a miracle. For the meaning of their complaint was, that God did not deal with them as he did with other people, who (to speak in our phrase) do not live from hand to mouth, as the Israelites did, who had bread given them only to suffice for one day, and no more; and that such bread as they despised. It is likely, also, they began now to want water again, which did not follow them, as formerly, out of the rock: and what they had in their vessels, perhaps, was near spent.

And our soul loatheth this light bread.] As for the bread God bestowed upon them, they were so far from being satisfied with it, that they loathe it, and call it by the scornful name of *light bread.* So we translate the Hebrew word *kakkilkel:* which, being the doubling of a word which signifies *light* or vile in that language, imports as much as very despicable, exceeding vile; or, as the LXX. translate it, *very empty;* having no substance in it to fill their stomachs. So Abarbinel expounds this passage, *We are tired with long journeys, which require more solid bread than this to support us.*

Ver. 6. *And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people.*] So most of the Jews translate this place; taking *seraphim* for an adjective (as grammarians speak), and consequently rightly translated *fiery.* But there are those who take it to signify a peculiar sort of serpents; being added to *nechashim (serpents)* by way of apposition (as they speak), and signifying such serpents as the Greeks call Πρηστῆρες and Καύσωνες, whom Pliny reckons among the *sceleratissimi serpentes, most pernicious serpents,* (lib. xxiv. cap. 13.) Or, as others will have it, those called Διψάδες, because they made great inflammations in men's bodies, and an unquenchable thirst, being also of a flame colour. But the famous Bochartus hath alleged a great many arguments to prove that they were a sort of serpents, called *hydrus,* because in winter they lived in fens and marshes; which being dried up in summer they were called *chersydrus,* because then they lived in dry places, and in the hot season had a most sharp, stinging poison, which, as Nicander saith, made such inflammations as brought upon him that was stung by them, ἄλγεα μυρία, *innumerable griefs.* See Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iii. cap. 13. where he shews also they were flying serpents, of which the prophet Isaiah speaks, chap. xix. 29. xxx. 6.; and that now was a hot season, wherein they were wont to be most venomous. For Aaron dying the first day of the fifth month (which answers to the nineteenth of our July), and they mourning for him thirty days; after which followed their encounter with the Canaanites, and then this murmuring, and this punishment; it must fall out in the latter end of August, when the dog-days were going out. (See Vossius de Orig. et Progressu Idolol. lib. iv. cap. 56.)

And they bit the people.] This Aben Ezra and others think was a punishment suitable to their sin, which was evil-speaking against the Lord, by calumniating his providence. For Solomon compares a calumniator to a serpent, which bites if it be not charmed, (Eccles. x. 11.)

It is a strange fancy of Fortunatus Licetus, that Moses here speaks of a disease bred in the body, which in children is called *dracunculus,* and not of the biting of serpents from without, (lib. de Ortu Spontaneo viventium, cap. 51.) For which there is no ground at all; and, on the contrary, nothing more certain, than that, in Arabia, and Egypt, and other countries of Africa, there are such serpents as are here described. Yet Bartholinus seems to think that this opinion may be defended against Ezekiel de Castro, who confuted it. (See Epistol. Medic. Centur. i. Epist. 32.)

And much people of Israel died.] The whole wilderness, through which the Israelites marched so many years, was full of fiery serpents and scorpions, as Moses's words import, Deut. viii. 15. which makes it the more wonderful, that we never hear of their being bitten and killed by them until now. But it is to be considered, that they were protected by the cloud from this, and from all other dangers (as the Hebrews well observe), which now withdrew its shadow from them, and let in the serpents upon them. Or rather (as Moses here expressly saith), God, who had hitherto kept them off, now *sent* them, and, perhaps, brought them from remote parts of the wilderness to infest the whole congregation.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned.*] It doth not appear whether they were immediately sensible of their sin, and confessed it, upon the biting of the serpents and the direful effects of it, or stayed till there had been a great mortality among them. It is likely they instantly made their addresses to him; but before a remedy was found out, by erecting the brazen serpent, many of them perished.

For we have sinned against the Lord, and against thee.] They make a particular acknowledgment of their guilt, as a token of the sincerity of their repentance.

Pray unto the Lord that he take away the serpents from us.] In the Hebrew the words are, *take away the serpent,* in the singular number; about which the Jews make a great many curious observations, as if there was one evil angel that governed them all. And if there be any truth in this observation, we Christians cannot but think these words point to *the old serpent, the devil,* who lost his sting by the lifting up of Christ on the cross; as the brazen serpent, it here follows, was lifted up for the cure of the biting of those serpents. But the simple truth is, that in this language the singular number is often used *collectively* for the

plural. As in Exod. viii. 6. "The frog came up and covered the land," *i. e.* a vast multitude of frogs. And so Moses speaks in the place just now named, Deut. viii. 15. where he calls this wilderness wherein they travelled, *a place of a fiery serpent and scorpion; i. e.* saith Jonathan, full of such creatures.

And Moses prayed for the people.] Here R. Bechai and others observe the great meekness and charity of Moses, and thence draw this instruction: that *he of whom any one asks pardon for an offence, ought not to be hard-hearted, but ready to forgive.* Thus Abraham prayed for Abimelech, Gen. xx. 17. Job for his friends, chap. xlii. 10. It would be a sin to do otherwise, (1 Sam. xii. 19, 20. 23.)

Ver. 8. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] In answer to his prayer.

Make thee a fiery serpent.] The figure of one of those serpents which bite the people. Abarbinel thinks that upon Moses's prayer the serpents were removed; but still there remained many among the people sorely afflicted by the venomous effects of their biting, for whose cure God graciously gave this direction.

It is something strange, that any learned Christian should so much admire the Egyptian learning as not to forbear the mention of their *incantations* of serpents, when they speak of this relation which Moses makes concerning the brazen serpent which God ordered him to set up. Yet Sir John Marsham (in his Chronicon, sect. 9.) when he comes to treat of this station of the Israelites at Tsalmona, hath a long discourse to shew how famous the Egyptians and other nations were in this sort of magic; and thus concludes it, that Moses, putting this brazen serpent upon a perch, "non tam serpentes igneos incantabat ne nocerent, quam eorum venenum extinguebat," *did not so much charm these serpents that they should not hurt, as extinguish their venom.* This seems to me a scurvy intimation, that Moses had their practices in his mind, but went beyond them. He should have said, Moses abominated their wicked arts (if they had any such in those days), and directed the Israelites to look up to God for healing. So the Jews themselves, particularly Aben Ezra, who takes notice that some superstitious people fancied that this serpent was a *talisman*, made to receive I know not what influence from the stars. But God forbid, saith he, God forbid we should have any such thought! this was made by the Divine order; the reason of which let us not scrupulously search: they thought, that is, there was something extraordinary init, as Jonathan plainly declares in his paraphrase of the last words of this verse: *he shall be healed if he direct his heart to the name of the Word of the Lord:* where no Christian can forbear to think of our blessed Saviour, the eternal Word, who was prefigured (as I shall shew in the following verse) by the erecting of this serpent here mentioned upon a pole, that all might look upon him and live.

And set it upon a pole.] So high, that every one in the camp might see it. For the word signifies such a *pole* as made their ensign or banner, to which all the army was to resort. Concerning this word *nes*, see Bootius, lib. ii. cap. 4.

And it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it.] The Jews generally have so much understanding as to say, that the mere beholding of it did not cure them; but that they were to look up to God (as the Scripture speaks) when they beheld it, and expect a cure from him. So the author of the Book of Wisdom, chap. xvi. 7. "He that turned himself towards it, was not healed by the thing which he saw, but by thee, that art the Saviour of all." And therefore he calls it, in the foregoing verse, "A sign of salvation, to put them in remembrance of the commandment of the law."

Shall live.] Be cured, and restored to perfect health: which the Jews think the greater miracle, because naturally it would have made the inflammation greater. So Nachmanides: This rather would have increased the disease; for they who are bit by venomous beasts (according to the prescriptions of physicians), must not see the image of the beast by whom they are bitten: but this was commanded by God, that the Israelites might know both their disease and their medicine came from God, who made that whose aspect was hurtful to be the means of their cure.

Ver. 9. *And Moses made a serpent.*] Whence this place seems to have been called Zalmonah, (chap. xxxiii. 41.) which imports an *image*, similitude, or resemblance of a thing represented by it. And another place thereabouts, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, called Maaleh Akrabbim, seems to have had its name from the same thing, it signifying *the going up of scorpions*, Josh. xv. 3.

Of brass.] Polished, that it might resemble a serpent of a flaming colour; and being very glittering, it might be the better seen far and near. So several of the Hebrew writers, particularly Nachmanides and Abarbinel, who observe, that God did not bid him make a serpent of brass, but only *a saraph*, (ver. 8.) *i. e.* a resemblance of a flaming serpent: which could not be made so well of any other metal as of brass; those *saraphs* (which we render *fiery serpents*) being fiery red, like copper or brass: of which there was good store not far off from this place; for the next station to Zalmonah, where they now were, was Punon, or Pinon, as Moses tells us, chap. xxxiii. 42. a place belonging to the Edomites, (who had an ancient duke of this name, Gen. xxxvi. 41. 1 Chron. i. 52.) famous for mines of brass, as Bochartus shews out of several of the fathers; who speak of Χαλκοῦ μέταλλα ἐν φαινοῖ. From whence Moses, perhaps, had this brass, (Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iii. cap. 13.)

And put it upon a pole.] As he had been directed in the foregoing verse.

And it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man.] Which was not present death, but made an inflammation, and such ulcers (as some conceive) as were incurable.

When he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.] Though naturalists say, the sight of brass was hurtful to those who were bitten, yet hence they received their cure: as the sight of Christ crucified naturally filled his crucifiers only with anguish, when they beheld him whom they had pierced, and were convinced he was their Messiah; but by the grace of God, became their only salvation through faith in him.

The Hebrews cannot but acknowledge a mystery in this brazen serpent, as Moses Gerundensis calls it; which our Lord Christ himself hath explained in his discourse with Nicodemus: (John iii. 14.) "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not

perish," &c. Where he doth not compare himself to the brazen serpent (for what likeness can there be found between the serpent and the Seed of the woman; or how should light be foreshadowed by darkness? as Dr. Jackson speaks), but he compares the lifting up of this serpent on the pole, with his lifting up, or crucifixion on the cross; for so he himself expresses his death, and the manner of it, (John xii. 32.) "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." And their looking on the serpent in the wilderness, as evidently represented men's believing on Christ; and their cure, the powerful virtue of Christ's death to preserve all those that believe on him *from perishing* (as he speaks in the place named before), and procure for them *everlasting life*. For by his death, our Saviour "destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," (as the apostle's words are, Heb. ii. 14.) which was notably represented in this brazen serpent put upon a pole; which was not a figure of Christ, but of the old serpent himself (the devil), as wounded, bruised, and dead, by the lifting up of Christ upon the cross; where he entirely disarmed him of all his power to hurt us.

I cannot tell whence Justin Martyr concluded this brazen serpent to have been made in the form of a cross, as he saith it was in his Second Apology; unless we conceive it to have been made with wings at the bottom of its neck, which might give it that figure. But his observation in his book against Trypho (p. 322. 338.) seems very considerable; that there must be some mystery in it, that God, who forbade all manner of images, should now command one to be made: of which, he saith, one of the Jews confessed he could never hear a reason from their doctors; who cannot understand it, till they believe in Christ and him crucified; whose victory over the devil, by his cross and passion, was herein most lively represented. I shall only add, that this *lifting up the brazen serpent*, was a thing so public and so well known to all neighbouring nations, that the fame of it, in all likelihood, went into India; where they still set up an idol in form of a writhed serpent, upon a perch six or seven feet high, which they solemnly worship; and carrying it along with them in their travels, set it up every morning for the company to pay their adorations to it. So Taverneir relates in his travels to that country, p. 28. And see the present Lord Archbishop of Canterbury's excellent treatise of Idolatry, p. 351, &c. with Huetius's Demonstr. Evang. p. 96. and his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, (cap. 12. n. 25.) where he shews the talismans, in all likelihood, were an imitation of this serpent: of which the Jews were so fond, that they *burnt incense to it* in the days of Hezekiah, and had done so we know not how long, (see 2 Kings xviii. 4.) Which may make it the less wonder, that the poor Indians should worship a *serpent* upon a pole, when they that should have understood better committed such a foul idolatry, as to do Divine honour to the figure of the greatest enemy of God and of mankind.

Ver. 10. *And the children of Israel set forward.*] After they had been at two other places; which Moses now omits for brevity's sake, because he intended hereafter to give an exact account of all their removals at one view; which he doth in the thirty-third chapter of this book: (see ver. 41, 42.)

And pitched in Oboth.] Where, it is probable, they found water; of the want of which they complained: (see chap. xx. 2.)

Ver. 11. *And they journeyed from Oboth, and pitched in Jie-Abarim.*] Not that Mount Abarim where Moses died, (chap. xxvii. 12.) but another place in the confines of Moab, as it here follows: (see what I have observed, chap. xx. 2.)

In the wilderness which is before Moab.] Called the wilderness of Moab, Deut. ii. 8.

Towards the sun-rising.] On the east part of it, as Jephthah observes, a great many years after this, that *they came by the east side of the land of Moab*, (Judges xi. 18.)

Ver. 12. *And from thence they removed.*] As they were about to remove from this last place, they received a command from God not to meddle with the country of Moab, (Deut. ii. 9.) which is the reason (as Abarbinel observes) that Moses here sets down briefly, whence and whither they went, and where they pitched; that it might appear they did not transgress that command.

And pitched in the valley of Zared.] Or, as some translate it, in Nachal-Zared; which is called Dibon-Gad, chap. xxxiii. 45. For this place had two names (as the same author observes), and it was just eight-and-thirty years since the spies went up to survey the country, from Kadesh-barnea till their passing this *brook*, as we translate it, Deut. ii. 14. But I take Dibon-Gad rather to have been a place which lay upon the brook Zered.

Ver. 13. *And from thence they removed, and pitched on the other side of Arnon.*] The Hebrew word *meheber* may be translated *on this side*, or *on the other side*. And some think they were now on this side of the river, and not yet gone over it. Nor did they immediately come hither from their former station; but first to Almon-Diblathaim, (chap. xxxiii. 46.) which is also called Beth-Diblathaim in the wilderness of Moab, Jerem. xlviii. 22. and Diblah, Ezek. vi. 13. And then, passing by Ar, in the confines of Moab, and approaching to the country of the children of Ammon, God commanded them not to invade the Ammonites, being descendants from Lot, as well as the Moabites, (Deut. ii. 18, 19. 37.) but to pass over the river Arnon, (Deut. ii. 24.) to that side of it which belonged to the Amorites. For this river, at that time, divided the Moabites from the Amorites, as it here follows.

Which is in the wilderness, that cometh out of the coasts of the Amorites.] Runs by the wilderness of Kedemoth, unto which the Amorites extended their dominion, (Deut. ii. 26.)

For Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.] This river flowed from the mountains of Arabia, where it had its rise, and fell into the Dead Sea, (as Josephus saith, lib. iv. Antiq.) ὁρίζων τήν τε Μωαβίτην καὶ Ἀμορίτην, *bounding the country of the Moabites, and of the Amorites;* the country of Moab lying on one side of it, and that of the Amorites on the other. For though the Moabites formerly possessed the country on both sides of Arnon, as far as Heshbon, yet the Amorites had driven them out of that part of it which lay next to them; and made the river the boundary of their two kingdoms, (ver. 26, 27.) This Moses recites the more exactly, that it might appear the Israelites invaded none of the Moabites' possessions, but what was now possessed by the Amorites: by which Jephthah defended the right of the children of Israel, in future

times, against the Ammonites, who pretended this country belonged to them, (Judges xi. 13—15, &c.)

Ver. 14. *Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the Lord.*] A proof of this Moses thought good to allege out of an authentic record in those countries, containing the history of all the wars that had been in those parts; which are here called the *wars of the Lord,* because he is the great Governor of the world (as Abarbinel interprets it), *from whom and by whom are all things,* who *putteth down one, and setteth up another* (as the Psalmist speaks) *at his good pleasure.* This book, he thinks, was written by some of the wise men of those nations (and so thinks Nachmanides), who, looking upon this conquest made by Sihon as a very memorable thing, put it down in their Annals; which, after the way of those countries, were written, he thinks, in a poetical manner. There are those who are of opinion, that this book was written by Moses himself; who left in it directions to Joshua how to proceed in the *wars of the Lord,* when he conquered Canaan. So Dr. Lightfoot conjectures; and Bonfrerius doth not much differ from him. But I take the former account to be the more probable, that Moses justifies what he writes concerning this conquest out of their own books; which he quotes just as St. Paul, in the New Testament, doth one of the Greek poets.

What he did in the Red Sea.] These are the words of the book, out of which he quotes a small fragment: and the marginal translation of them is most proper, *Vaheb in Supheh,* only the word *eth* is omitted; which makes the sense to be this, *against Vaheb in Supheh;* that is, he came (some such word must be understood) against *Vaheb* (a king of the Moabites), and overthrew him in *Supheh,* a place in the frontiers of Moab. (See Deut. i. 1.) Others understand by *Vaheb* the place where Sihon gave the Moabites this blow; which he did by falling upon them on a sudden, with a terrible fury. So Nachmanides understands these words *besuphah;* he stormed the city, and made a furious assault, when they thought not of it: for *Supheh* signifies a *whirlwind,* or *stormy tempest,* (Isai. v. 28.)

And in the brooks of Arnon.] The same Nachmanides takes the word *veeth,* which we translate *and in,* to signify rather *and with;* and these being still the words of the book beforementioned, the sense is this: In the same manner he smote the brooks or torrents of Arnon; upon which he fell like a tempest, and carried all before him.

Ver. 15. *And at the streams of the brooks.*] None, I think, hath given a better account of these words than the same Nachman, who by *esched hannechalim* (which we translate the *streams of the brooks*), understands either a cliff from whence the torrents flowed (as Aschdod and Happisgah, Deut. iii. 17. are the hills from whence the springs gushed), or the valley through which the torrents ran; where they made a great broad water, which is here called an *effusion of torrents,* as R. Levi ben Gersom interprets the Hebrew words, *esched hannechalim.*

That goeth down to the dwelling of Ar.] Which extends itself as far as Ar, a city of Moab, (ver. 28.) R. Levi ben Gersom takes the word *Schebet* (which we translate *dwelling*) to signify a place as well as Ar, towards which these torrents bent their course.

And lieth upon the borders of Moab.] Which leaneth or belongeth unto Moab, being in the border of that country.

Thus far are the words of the book of the *wars of the Lord:* and the meaning of them is, that the king of the Amorites took all these places by a sudden, furious invasion; which Moses therefore punctually recites, to shew that the country of the Moabites now reached no further than Arnon: all the brooks, or torrents, and all the effusions of water as far as Arnon (*i. e.* all the country about them), being taken from them by the Amorites, in whose possession it now was, and, perhaps, had been a long time. And therefore the Israelites took nothing from the Moabites when they conquered this country (as was said before), nor from the Ammonites neither; part of whose country the Amorites also had got from them, (Deut. iii. 11.) and the Israelites took from the Amorites, when they conquered Sihon and Og; and it fell to the share of the Gadites, (Josh. xiii. 25.)

Ver. 16. *And from thence they went to Beer.*] A place which took its name from the *pit,* or *well,* which was here digged by God's order, as the next words tell us.

That is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses.] That is, saith Abarbinel, that place was remarkable for the well that God gave us, of his own accord, without our petition; which he prevented by bidding Moses dig it for us.

Gather the people together, and I will give them water.] Which they now again wanted, being removed from the river Arnon; but did not murmur about it, as they had done formerly: and therefore God most graciously, when he saw their distress, provided it for them.

Ver. 17. *Then Israel sang this song.*] This extraordinary kindness of God, which prevented their prayers, and gave them water out of his own good pleasure alone (as Abarbinel speaks), transported them with such joy, that it made them express their thankfulness in this song.

Spring up, O well.] As soon as they saw Moses and the princes thrust their staves into the earth, and the water began to bubble up, they said, with a loud voice, *Come up, O well;* that is, let waters flow abundantly to satisfy us all.

Sing ye unto it.] Or, as it is in the margin, *answer unto it.* The manner of the Hebrews was anciently to sing their songs of praise alternately, as appears from Exod. xv. 20. And so one company having said, *Spring up, O well* (which it is likely they repeated often), they called to the rest to answer to them; which they did, I suppose, in the following words.

Ver. 18. *The princes.*] *i. e.* The seventy elders, and heads of the tribes.

Digged the well.] Very easily, only turning up the earth with their staves.

The nobles of the people digged it.] The other side of the choir, perhaps, took up the song again, repeating the sense of what the former company had said.

By the direction of the lawgiver.] Or, *together with the lawgiver,* who began the work, and whose example they followed.

With their staves.] With no more labour but only thrusting their staves into the ground and turning up the earth. For, as R. Levi ben Gersom takes it, the ground here being sandy and very soft, was easily penetrated, though they were not likely to find water in it. But they believing Moses, and following his direction, God sent it copiously unto them; and with no more pains than a scribe takes when he writes with his pen. For so he translates the

Hebrew word *mechokek*, (which we render *lawgiver*) a *scribe*, or *doctor of the law*.

And from the wilderness.] Mentioned ver. 13.

They went to Mattanah.] This and the place following are otherwise named in the thirty-third chapter, as the forenamed ben Gersom understands it. But others think these were no stations (which alone Moses gives an account of in the thirty-third chapter), where the Israelites pitched their tents, but places through which they passed, till they came to the station from whence they sent to Sihon for leave to pass through his country.

Ver. 19. *And from Mattanah to Nahael*, &c.] This, as well as the place next mentioned in this verse, seems to have been on the borders of Moab.

Ver. 20. *And from Bamoth in the valley.*] Rather *from Bamoth* (which signifies a very high place) *to the valley*. Or, as it may be translated, *from Bamoth a valley* (that is, there is a valley) *in the field of Moab*, &c. unto which they came next; for some such thing must be understood.

That is in the country of Moab.] Or near to it.

To the top of Pisgah.] Or, *to the beginning* (as the Hebrew word *rosch* may be interpreted) of the high Mount Pisgah; that is, they pitched at the foot of it, where the mountain began: which mountain was a part of the mountains of Abarim, as appears from Deut. xxxii. 49. xxxiv. 1.

Which looks towards Jeshimon.] Or, *towards the wilderness*. For so R. Levi ben Gersom interprets it; to a land that was *shemumah*, untilled and desolate, *viz.* to the wilderness of Kedemoth: where they pitched and settled their camp; and from thence sent messengers to Sihon.

Ver. 21. *And Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites.*] These messengers were sent from the wilderness of Kedemoth, which was in the skirts of his country, (Deut. ii. 26.) or lay just upon it: for there was a city of this name in that country, which was given to Reuben, in the division of the land, (Josh. xiii. 18.)

Ver. 22. *Let me pass through thy land.*] They do not seem to desire a passage through the midst of his country, but only the extreme parts of it; which would have shortened their journey to the fords of Jordan.

We will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink of the waters of the well, &c.] This is the very same civil message which they sent to Edom, (chap. xx. 17.) By whose example they pressed Sihon to grant them, at least, as much as the Edomites and Moabites had done: (see Deut. ii. 28, 29.)

Ver. 23. *And Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his borders.*] This shews that they asked only to pass through the skirts of his country: (see Deut. ii. 30.)

But Sihon gathered all his people together.] He not only refused to grant their request; but came in a hostile manner, with all the forces he could raise, to oppose their passage over Arnon.

And went out against Israel into the wilderness.] From whence they sent their friendly message to him, ver. 21. which Moses, in Deut. ii. 26. calls, *words of peace*.

And he came to Jahaz.] A city, it is probable, belonging to the Moabites; whither the Israelites, perhaps, retreated, when Sihon denied them a passage through his country. For Isaiah plainly mentions Jahaz, as a place either in the country of Moab, or near it, (chap. xv. 4.) and Jeremiah, also, calling it Jahazah, (chap. xlviii. 21.)

And fought against Israel.] Who had orders from God, not to decline the battle (as they did with the Edomites and the Moabites), and were assured of victory, (Deut. ii. 31.) For they were Amorites, whose country God promised to Abraham, (Gen. xv. 21.) being part of the Canaanites, whom they were commanded to destroy; for they were descended from one of the sons of Canaan: (Gen. x. 16.) which made this war with them to have a just ground; not because they denied the Israelites a passage through their country, against the right of nations, as Grotius thinks (which was but the occasion, not the ground of the war), but because they were one of the seven nations condemned by God to destruction, (whose land he bestowed upon the Israelites, Josh. iii. 10.) and because Sihon came out armed against them, beyond the bounds of his own dominions; and fell upon them, when they had given him no provocation.

Ver. 24. *And Israel smote him with the edge of the sword.*] Utterly overthrew his army; and, putting them all to the sword, made themselves masters of his country.

And possessed his land.] For they destroyed all the inhabitants, men, women, and children, (Deut. ii. 33, 34.)

From Arnon unto Jabbok, even unto the children of Ammon.] This is a brief description of the extent of Sihon's country; which reached from the river Arnon, the bound of the Moabites' country on the south, (chap. xxii. 36.) unto Jabbok, which was the bound of the Ammonites' country on the north, (Deut. iii. 16. Josh. xii. 2. xiii. 10.) But they meddled with no place that lay upon the river Jabbok, which belonged to the Ammonites; for that God had forbidden, (Deut. ii. 37.) By which Jephthah (as I observed), two hundred and sixty years after this, justified the title of the Israelites to all the country here mentioned; which they took not from the Ammonites, or Moabites, but from the Amorites, who were the owners of it when they conquered it, (Judges xi. 13. 15. 22, 23.) For Sihon had got half of their country, as well as part of the country of Moab, as appears from Deut. iii. 11. and from Josh. xiii. 25. where it is plain, Joshua gave the Gadites half of the country of the children of Ammon, which was now taken from the Amorites, who had dispossessed them. Josephus describes it as lying between three rivers, like an island: for the banks of Arnon were the bounds of this region on the south side; and Jabbok on the north, which running into Jordan lost its name; and the western tract of it was washed by Jordan itself: and on the east part it was surrounded with the mountains of Arabia.

For the border of the children of Ammon was strong.] This is not mentioned here as a reason why the Israelites did not set upon their country, (for they were expressly forbidden to do it, Deut. ii. 19.) but why Sihon conquered none of the Ammonites' country beyond Jabbok (as he did all from Arnon thither), because their frontiers on that side of the country were very strong, by the fortifications, which it is likely they had made upon the river.

Ver. 25. *And Israel took all these cities.*] All the cities of that country which lay between Arnon and Jabbok: some of which are named, ver. 30.

And Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites.] Having destroyed the former inhabitants, as I noted before, Deut. ii. 34.

In Heshbon.] Even in their royal city.

And in all the villages thereof.] In Hebrew *the daughters;* as villages and castles are called, which depend upon the metropolis, as daughters on their mother.

Ver. 26. *For Heshbon was the city of Sihon the king of the Amorites.*] He had made this the seat of his kingdom, after his conquest of this country: which Moses observes (together with what follows), that it might appear to posterity, they invaded no part of the Moabites' territories, or of the Ammonites', but what was in the quiet possession of the Amorites, who had taken this country from them, and, perhaps, in a just war, and long enjoyed it.

Who had fought against the former king of Moab, &c.] It is not certain that this Sihon, whom the Israelites now vanquished, had dispossessed the Moabites of this country; but more likely some of his ancestors, who were all called by the name of Sihon (as the kings of Palestine were all called Abimelech, Gen. xx. 2. xxvi. 1. and the kings of Egypt called Pharaoh), who had fought not with the present king of Moab, but with one of his predecessors, and conquered him and his country.

The former king of Moab.] These words are not to be understood as if he fought with the king of Moab who immediately reigned before Balak, but, as I said, with some of his predecessors. So the LXX. τὸ πρότερον, *that heretofore was* king of Moab: and in the Hebrew the words are literally, *the king of Moab, the first;* perhaps of the present race.

Ver. 27. *Wherefore they that speak in proverbs.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *wherefore the proverbialists;* that is, the poets, whose composures, in those days, were very sententious.

Say.] Have this song in their mouths: which seems to have been composed by some of the Amorites, upon the victory which Sihon got over the Moabites; particularly upon the taking of Heshbon, which, I suppose, he besieged immediately upon the routing of their army. This Moses thought good to insert in his history, as an evidence that this country belonged to the Amorites when the Israelites subdued it. Thus he quotes a common saying about Nimrod, to justify what he writes of his greatness: (see Gen. x. 9.)

Come into Heshbon.] The words either of Sihon calling to his people, or of the Amorites exhorting one another to go to Heshbon, and help to repair the ruins that had been in it by the war, that it might become the royal city of their country. For that is the meaning of the following words.

Let the city of Sihon be built and prepared.] Let that place which Sihon hath chose for his seat be built up again, and made fit for his reception.

Ver. 28. *For there is a fire gone out of Heshbon.*] Now the poet rises into a rapture, and prophesies the conquest of the whole country by the army of Sihon marching out of Heshbon. For in the prophetical language, the desolations made by war are compared to *fire* and to the *flames,* which consume all they come near, (Amos i. 7. 10. 12. 14. ii. 2. 5.)

A flame from the city of Sihon.] This is but a repetition (as the manner is) of what was now said in other words; expressing the certainty of this presage.

It hath consumed Ar of Moab.] He speaks as if he already saw the thing done which he foretold, though it never came to pass. For they did not conquer Ar, which remained in the possession of Moab in Moses's time, as appears from Deut. ii. 9. 18. 29. But, in his poetical heat (or fury, as they speak), he exults, as if they had actually taken the capital city of Moab. For so Ar was; and afterward called Rabbath, and Rabbath-moba, *i. e.* the great city of Moab, to distinguish it from Rabbath-Ammon, *i. e.* the great city of the Ammonites. For so we find in Stephanus (de Urbibus), Ῥαββάθμωμα (it should be Ῥαββάθμωβα, as Bochartus hath truly corrected it, in his preface to his Phaleg.) which he calls Πόλις τρίτη Παλαιστίνης ἡ νῦν Ἀρεόπολις. For Ar, as I said, was the old name of it, (Deut. ii. 29. Isa. xvi. 1.) from whence came the name of Ἀρεόπολις, which it retained in later ages.

And the lords of the high places of Arnon.] The *masters* or *owners* (as the word *baale* may be translated) *of the high places,* &c. *i. e.* those that dwell in the strongest forts of the country: or, as some fancy, the priests of the places are here meant; or, rather their temple where Baal was worshipped. For we find a place in this country called Bamoth-Baal, (Josh. xiii. 17.) *the high places of Baal.* And it is evident, this poet triumphs in this Ἐπινίκιον over their gods and their religion, as well as over them.

Ver. 29. *Woe unto thee, Moab!*] He goes on to foretell the calamity of the whole country.

Thou art undone, O people of Chemosh!] So he calls the Moabites, who served (as the Chaldee translates it) or worshipped Chemosh as their god: for so we read he was, Jerem. xlviii. 7. 13. 1 Kings xi. 7. Judges xi. 24. which St. Jerome thinks differs from Baal-Peor only in name. (See Vossius de Orig. et Progr. Idolol. lib. ii. cap. 8.) Some take Chemosh to be Saturn; particularly Scharastanius: the manner of whose worship see in Dr. Pocock's excellent annotations in Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 316. I shall only add, that as the Moabites are called *the people of Chemosh,* because they worshipped him as their god, so the Israelites are called *the people of the Lord* and *the people of God,* because they worshipped the Lord alone. (Judges v. 11. 1 Sam. xiv. 13.) For in the days of paganism, as Mr. Mede observes, every country, nay, every city, had its proper and peculiar gods, which were deemed as its guardians and protectors: from whence the nations themselves are expressed by the name of their gods. That is evident from this place; but it is not so plain, that when God threatens to deliver up Israel to serve other gods, he means giving them up into the hands of the people of strange countries; which he takes to be intended in Deut. iv. 28. xxviii. 64. Jerem. xvi. 16, &c. (See book iv. p. 977.) And so he thinks the words of David may be expounded, (1 Sam. xxvi. 19.) "They have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go serve other gods;" *i. e.* banished me into the country of idolaters. See book iii. p. 823. where this is more largely explained.

He hath given his sons that escaped, and his daughters, into captivity, unto Sihon king of the Amorites.] This is a manifest triumph over their god Chemosh, who was not able to save his worshippers (whom he calls his *sons* and his *daughters, i. e.* his children) who were under his protection. No, he could not so much as preserve those that escaped the fury of the sword, but they were afterward taken captive, to make up part of the triumph of Sihon king of the Amorites.

Ver. 30. *We have shot at them; Heshbon is perished even*

unto Dibon.] The Hebrew words *vanniram abad Heshbon ath Dibon*, may as well, if not better, be translated, *their light is perished* (or taken away) *from Heshbon unto Dibon.* So Forsterus in his Lexicon, and the Tigurin version, and others. That is, their glory is gone from one end of the country to the other: for Heshbon and Dibon were two famous places in this territory, (Josh. xiii. 17.) And some think this is the place called Dibon-Gad, chap. xxxiii. 45. which was the more noted, because there Nebo, one of their gods, was worshipped: for in Isaiah xv. 2. Dibon is mentioned as one of their high places; and there Nebo is lamented, *i. e.* their god which was there worshipped; whence Hesychius saith, Δεηβὼν (which, no doubt, is this Dibon) τόπος ἔνθα ἵδρυται ἱερὸν Μοαβιτῶν, *a place where the Moabites had a temple.* (See Selden de Diis Syris, Syntagm. 2. cap. 12.)

We have laid them waste even unto Nophah.] Another place in that country, as appears by the words following.

Which reacheth unto Medeba.] That is, the territories of Nophah extended as far as Medeba, which was certainly a place in the country of Moab, (Isaiah xv. 2.) But the word *reacheth* is not in the Hebrew; and the words without it may be thus truly translated, *and as far as Medeba.* For so the Hebrew particle *ascher* is sometimes used, to signify simply *and,* as Eccles. vi. 12. *ascher mi, and who* can tell, &c. so here *ascher ad, and unto,* &c.

And here I think fit to note, that it is likely these verses were some part of the history of those countries: for a poetical way of writing was in use before prose, as Strabo tells us, lib. i. Geograph. p. 18. where he saith, ὁ πεζὸς λόγος ὅ γε κατεσκευασμένος μίμημα τοῦ ποιητικοῦ. Πρώτιστα γὰρ ἡ ποιητικὴ, &c. *All set or artificial speech* (whether historical or rhetorical) *was but an imitation of poetical compositions,* the ancients knowing no other: Cadmus, and Pherecydes, and Hecatæus, being the first who brought in this form of writing now in use. (See Salmasius in Solinum, p. 841. and Cuperus in his Apotheosis Homeri, p. 55.) However, this is certain, that they who would instruct the people put their lessons into verse, as Strabo there shews; where he says, p. 15. Οἱ Παλαιοὶ φιλοσοφίαν τινὰ λέγουσι πρώτην τὴν ποιητικὴν εἰσάγουσαν, &c. *the ancients call poetry the first philosophy, forming our lives from tender years, teaching good manners, governing the passions and actions with pleasure:* for which cause the Greeks instituted their children in their cities by poetry, Οὐ ψυχαγωγίας χάριν δήπουθεν ψιλῆς ἀλλὰ σωφρονισμοῦ, *not merely for the sake of bare delectation, but to form them to sobriety.*

Ver. 31. *Thus Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorites.*] This he mentions again to make it the more observed, that this was the country of the Amorites, into which the children of Israel entered, not of the Moabites, who had been expelled out of it, as was notoriously known, there being a song in every body's mouth which continued the memory of it.

Ver. 32. *And Moses sent to spy out Jaazer.*] Another city formerly belonging to Moab, but now in the possession of the Amorites, which the Israelites did not take at the first; but after they had conquered all the country beforementioned, they sent some men to bring them intelligence which way it was best to attack that city also, and the country about it. It was not far from Mount Gilead, (2 Sam. xxiv. 5, 6. 1 Chron. xxvi. 31.) and both of them were famous for good pasture, and therefore given to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, who had much cattle, (chap. xxxii. of this book, 1. 3, 4. 35, 36.) After the ten tribes were carried captive from their own land, it fell into the hands of the Moabites again, as may be gathered from Jer. xlviii. 32.

And they took the villages thereof.] As well as the city itself.

And drove out the Amorites that dwelt there.] If it had not been possessed by them they would not have meddled with it.

Ver. 33. *And they turned.*] Or *returned* (as the LXX. have it) from Jaazer.

And went up by the way of Bashan.] A famous mountain (Psalm lxviii. 15.) lying more northerly than the country of Sihon, and belonging also to the Amorites, where was very rich pasture, and an excellent breed of cattle, (Deut. xxxii. 14. Psalm xxii. 12.) and stately oaks, (Ezek. xxvii. 6.)

And Og the king of Bashan.] The whole country of which he was king had its name from that mountain, and was called *the kingdom of Og in Bashan,* Deut. iii. 10. where he is said, as well as Sihon, to be *a king of the Amorites,* (ver. 8.) and (ver. 11.) that he was *of the remnant of the giants,* or of the Rephaim, who were a mighty people in that country of Bashan, (see Gen. xiv. 5.) which in after-ages was called Batanæa.

Went out against them.] To oppose their passage.

He and all his people.] With all the men of war in his country.

To the battle at Edrei.] A city near that country, afterward called Adara, as St. Jerome tells us in his book De Locis Hebraicis. He offered the Israelites battle, which, by God's order, they accepted.

Ver. 34. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] That he might report it to the people.

Fear him not.] They had reason to be courageous (and not affrighted, because he was a giant), having lately overcome a mightier king than he, of which God puts them in mind in the end of this verse.

For I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, &c.] For their greater encouragement he adds his promise, on which he bids them rely, as if they saw it already done, that he would give them the victory over Og and all his forces, and bestow upon them his country. This history Moses reports more at large, Deut. iii. 1—3, &c.

Ver. 35. *So they smote him, and his sons, and all his people, until there was none left him alive.*] After they had overthrown him and his army, they pursued the victory till they had destroyed all the people of the country; some part of which held out longer than the rest, (as appears from chap. xxxii. 39, &c.) but at length was wholly subdued by Jair, the son of Manasseh, who had all the region of Argob given him for his pains, (chap. xxxii. 41. Deut. iii. 14.)

And they possessed his land.] Wherein were sixty walled cities, besides a great many small towns, (Deut. iii. 4, 5. Josh. xiii. 30.) All which was given to the half tribe of Manasseh, (Deut. iii. 13. Josh. xiii. 29, 30. 1 Kings iv. 13.)

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *AND the children of Israel set forward.*] In what month of the fortieth year this which follows fell out

we cannot tell, but it is likely in the seventh; when they removed from the mountains of Abarim, (chap. xxi. 20. xxxiii. 48.)

And pitched in the plains of Moab.] Which had formerly belonged to the Moabites, from whom it took its name: but had been taken from them by the Amorites; and now was in the possession of the Israelites.

On this side Jordan.] Unto which river this plain extended: and they pitched near to it, from Beth-Jesimoth unto Abel-Shittim, (chap. xxxiii. 49.) where they stayed, till under the conduct of Joshua they came to Jordan, and passed over it, (Josh. iii. 1.)

By Jericho.] Rather *against Jericho*, as the LXX. translate it: for Jericho was on the other side of Jordan, directly opposite to the place where they now pitched. And therefore the Vulgar Latin translates, or rather paraphrases it, *where Jericho is situated beyond Jordan: i. e.* passing the ford, they came directly to Jericho.

Ver. 2. *And Balak the son of Zippor.*] Who was king of the Moabites at this time; and descended, it is likely, from the ancient kings of that country, (chap. xxi. 26.)

Saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites.] To Sihon and Og, the *two kings of the Amorites*, (as they are called, Deut. iii. 8.) who were such near neighbours to Balak, that he not only *saw*, but considered (as the word implies) what a speedy conquest the Israelites had made of their country.

Ver. 3. *And Moab was sore afraid of the people.*] Lest they should expel them out of their country, as they had done the Amorites: for they knew nothing of God's command to the Israelites, not to disturb them in their possessions. Some imagine, but I see no good ground for it, that they were afraid the Israelites should get possession of the land of Canaan, unto which they thought themselves perhaps to have a better title; being descended from the eldest daughter of Lot, who was the son of Abraham's elder brother; for Abraham was the youngest son of Terah. But nobody can see any right that this descent gave Lot or his children; there being no promise made of it by God to any person, but Abraham and his posterity.

Because they were many.] Too strong for the Moabites to deal withal; having conquered those who had been too hard for them, and taken a great territory from them, (chap. xxi. 26.)

And Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel.] As Moses in his song, after they had passed the Red Sea, foretold they would be, (Exod. xv. 15.)

Ver. 4. *And Moab said.*] By messengers, which were sent (it is most likely) by the king and the princes of the country.

Unto the elders of Midian.] Who were their neighbours and confederates. The title of *elders*, it appears by this, was given in other nations, as well as among the Israelites, to the greatest persons in their countries: or the Israelites, after their manner, so called men every where, who were in high authority. For these persons who are here called *elders*, are called *kings*, chap. xxxi. 8. and *princes*, Josh. xiii. 21. In like manner they, who in the seventh verse of this chapter are called *the elders of Moab*, are in the next verse called *the princes of Moab*. Which, it is evident, was the ancient language among the Egyptians (Gen. l. 7. unless we suppose Moses, as I said, to have spoken in the language of the Jews), and, it is very likely, was also the ancient language of Phœnicia, and the countries thereabouts; and perhaps in much remoter parts. For it is a known story, that when the Phœnicians fled before Joshua, and forsook the land of Canaan, they fixed in Afric; where they left this name of *elders* among the Carthaginians. (See Mr. Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 14. p. 587, &c.)

Midian.] This is not the country wherein Jethro was a prince; for that was not far from Mount Sinai, as appears from Exod. iii. 1. whereas this was remote from that place, adjoining to the Moabites, and near to Palestine: though it is very probable the people of both these countries were descended from Abraham, by one of the sons he had by Keturah, (Gen. xxv. 2.)

Now shall this company.] The army of Israel encamped in the plains of Moab, (ver. 1.)

Lick up all round about us.] *i. e.* Devour us and all our neighbours (or our whole country), unless we join together to oppose them.

As the ox licketh up the grass of the field.] They use this metaphor, to signify how easily the Israelites would conquer them, without a timely, resolute, and unanimous opposition; and likewise what an universal desolation they would make. For the words are in the Hebrew, *the green of the field, i. e.* not only the *grass*, but the leaves of trees, which oxen eat, as Bochartus observes out of the Scripture, as well as other authors, (Isa. xxvii. 20.) And to *lick up* is not lightly to touch with their tongue, but to eat and consume. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 31.)

And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time.] He was mentioned before, ver. 8. but here recorded to have been king of the country; who endeavoured to secure himself, by the assistance of his neighbours and allies; unto whom he sent this embassy, to advise with them what course it was best for them to take for their common safety.

Ver. 5. *He sent messengers therefore.*] The result of the treaty with Midian was, that with joint consent they should send ambassadors, of each nation, and of the same quality, on the following message, ver. 7. And this counsel, it is likely, was given by the Midianites; for Balak saith nothing of it by his messengers: but it was resolved on when they came there, as the most effectual means for their security. This, I think, the word *therefore* imports.

Unto Balaam.] A famous soothsayer, or diviner, as he is called in Josh. xiii. 22. That is, one who pretended to foretell future things, and discover secrets, &c. though not by good and allowable arts, but such as were absolutely prohibited to God's people, (Deut. xviii. 10.) He had been formerly a good man, and a true prophet, till, loving the *wages of unrighteousness*, he apostatized from God, and became a *kosem*, which we translate a *diviner:* that is (saith Aben Ezra) an astrologer; who, observing when men were under a bad aspect of the stars, pronounced a curse upon them; which sometimes coming to pass, gained him a great reputation. But this is not the import of that word, as I shall shew in its proper place. Let it suffice now to observe, that the Jews are so much of this opinion, that he had been a better man than he was now, that they take him, as St. Jerome observes, to be the same person who, in the book of Job, is called Elihu. But Origen and some others think he was no prophet, but only one of the devil's sorcerers, of whom he went to inquire; but God was

pleased to put the devil by, and give what answer he thought fit: which Balaam himself plainly discerned, and therefore calls himself, "He who heard the words of God," &c. On which side the truth lies, we shall be able to judge, when we come to consider what passed between God and him, in the following history.

The son of Beor.] Who was also called Bosor, as some gather from 2 Pet. ii. 15. though that place may have another interpretation.

To Pethor.] A city in Aram, or Mesopotamia, (chap. xxiii. 7. Deut. xxiii. 4.) This was the ancient name of the place; which in aftertimes the Syrians called Bosor, by an easy change of two letters, which is very usual. So Grotius understands those words, (2 Pet. ii. 15.) Βαλαὰμ τοῦ Βοσὸρ, *Balaam* (not the son, but) *of the city of Bosor.*

Which is by the river of the land of the children of his people.] *i. e.* Near to Euphrates; which is commonly in these books called by the name of *the river*, (Gen. xv. 18. and many other places.) This determines Aram (which was the name of several countries thereabouts) to signify that which is called in Scripture Aram Naharaim; that is, the Aram which lay between the two famous rivers of Euphrates and Tygris. The former of which was called, by way of eminence, *the river* (though the other also was eminent), because it was nearest and best known to the Israelites. And Ptolemy mentions a city called Pachoria in his time, upon this river, which some take to be Pethor. And it is very probable that Abraham, before he came into Canaan, lived hereabout, (Gen. xxiv. 4. 10. Josh. xxiv. 2.) And here Jacob also served for his wife, and begat all the patriarchs, except Benjamin, (whence the Israelites acknowledged their father to have been a poor Aramite, or Syrian, as we translate it, Deut. xxvi. 5.) by which means some relics of true religion still remained in this country, though mixed with a great deal of superstition.

To call him.] To invite him to come to them.

Saying, There is a people come out of Egypt.] Which all the power of Pharaoh could not hinder.

They cover the face of the earth.] Are exceeding numerous.

And they abide over against me.] Lie encamped not far from me, and are ready to invade my country.

Ver. 6. *Come now therefore, I pray thee.*] They were to speak in the name of the king of Moab, (whose words these are said to be, ver. 7.) there being no king, perhaps, at this time in Midian, but several little princes, who are called kings, (chap. xxxi. 8.)

And curse me this people.] It seems they had an opinion in those days, which prevailed much in aftertimes, that some men had a power, by the help of their gods, to blast not only particular persons, but whole armies; so that they should not be able to effect their designs. This they are said to have done, sometimes only by bare words of imprecation; of which there was a set form among some people, which Æschines calls διοριζομένην ἀρὰν, *the determinate curse.* Sometimes they also offered sacrifices, and used certain rites and ceremonies, with solemn charms; a famous instance of which we find in the life of Crassus; where Plutarch tells us, that Atteius, tribune of the people, made a fire at the gate, out of which Crassus was to march unto the war against the Parthians: into which he threw certain things to make a fume, and offered sacrifices to the most angry gods, with horrid imprecations upon him; which, he saith, according to ancient tradition, had such a power, that no man, who was loaded with them, could avoid being undone.

For they are too mighty for me.] I am not able to deal with them without thy help.

Peradventure.] But I hope, &c. For the Hebrew word אולי is not a particle of doubting, but of hoping: "Non est particula dubitantis, sed bene ominantis et sperantis;" as Forsterus observes, (Isa. xxxvii. 4. Zephan. ii. 3.)

I shall prevail, that I may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land.] I hope, by the conjunction of thy curses with my sword, I may be able to destroy them; or at least to drive them out of this country.

For I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.] The ancient prophets had such power with God to obtain great blessings from him, for others, as appears by the story of Abraham and Abimelech, (Gen. xx. 10.) and of Jacob, who blessed Pharaoh, (Gen. xlvii. 7.) and afterward all his own sons. And no doubt their imprecations were as powerful, when there was a just cause for them; according to what we read, 2 Kings ii. 24. And it is likely, while Balaam (who was a prophet, as appears by what follows, and is so called by St. Peter), continued a good man, he blessed and cursed no other way, but by prayer to God, and by imprecations in his name: which was imitated by other great men, particularly by king Cambyses in his speech to the Persians, recorded by Herodotus, in Thalia, cap. 65. where he saith, "If you do what I require, then let your land bring forth plentifully; and your wives and your flocks be fruitful, and yourselves enjoy your liberty: but if ye do not, τὰ ἐναντία τούτοισι ἀρέομαι ὑμῖν γενέσθαι, *I imprecate the quite contrary things to these to fall upon you.*" But when Balaam degenerated into a false prophet, and became a diviner, then he used spells and enchantments (as is plain by this history), and such rites and ceremonies as were the invention of wicked spirits; which Pharaoh's magicians, the Jews fancy, made use of to stop the Israelites at the Red Sea; (see Exod. xiv. 2.)

Ver. 7. *And the elders of Moab, and the elders of Midian.*] I take these two nations to have been ancient confederates; but the Jewish tradition is, that they had been always at enmity, and now reconciled by a common danger; just as two mastiffs (so they explain it), who are continually fighting, when they see the wolf set upon one of them, join together for their defence; because, if he devour the one, the other will not long survive him.

Departed with the rewards of divination in their hand.] It was the custom among God's people, when they came to consult with a prophet, to bring him a present; as appears from 1 Sam. ix. 7, 8. And indeed, from ancient time, men were not wont to approach great persons without one: (see Gen. xliii. 11. 25, 26.)

And they came unto Balaam, and spake unto him the words of Balak.] Delivered their message; having first, as the manner was, made him the present.

Ver. 8. *And he said unto them, Lodge with me this night.*] That was the time, it seems, wherein he was wont to receive answers to his inquiries; either in a dream, or by apparitions, or some other way. There are those who think he now began to betray the naughtiness of his heart, in taking

time to advise about this matter; which, if he had been a faithful servant of God, he would instantly have rejected with disdain. And it is likely enough, by what follows, that he was as desirous of their money, as they were of his imprecations.

And I will bring you word again, as the Lord shall speak unto me.] You shall have my answer, according to the directions which the Lord shall give me. By this I take it to be evident, that he was not a stranger to the true God, with whose name it is certain he was acquainted; and, it is probable, had received revelations from him, till he became a covetous mercenary prophet, and addicted himself to superstitious rites and ceremonies; making use of *teraphim*, perhaps; which had been of ancient practice in his country, and worshipping God, perhaps, by other images. See Gen. xxxi. 19. 24. 30. 49. where it is evident that Laban had still communication with the Lord, though he used *teraphim*, and calls them his gods. Which perhaps put that idle conceit into the head of some of the Jews, that it was one and the same person, who is there called Laban, and here Balaam: who falling, as I said, into idolatrous practices, was forsaken by God, and delivered up to the impostures of evil spirits; though he still continued to inquire of the Lord, who was pleased, at this time, to make his mind known to him, for the preservation of his people Israel.

And the princes of Moab abode with Balaam.] As did those of Midian also; who are mentioned in the foregoing verse. Though some of the Jews have a fancy, that the elders of Midian went away (which they give as the reason that they are not here mentioned) as soon as they heard Balaam say, he would address himself for advice unto the Lord; who they knew would be favourable to Israel. And on the other side, some Christians have been of opinion, that he addressed himself to the Lord, only to try if he could draw him by his charms to take part with the Moabites: just as the Romans, when they laid siege to a city, endeavoured, by all means they could invent, to persuade the tutelar gods of that place to forsake it, and come over to their side: which rite is described by Macrobius.

Ver. 9. *And God came unto Balaam.*] As he is said to have done unto Abimelech in a dream, Gen. xx. 3. where I observed that Maimonides makes a distinction between God's *coming* to a person, and his *speaking* to him: but that cannot be made use of here; for God did both *come* and *speak* to Balaam, as appears from ver. 32. 35. where we read, the angel of the Lord spake to him. And here it will be fit to note, that all nations, of whom we have any knowledge, have been possessed with this opinion, that God was wont to appear frequently unto men; especially, *cum recentes à Deo essent*, (as Seneca speaks in Epist. xc.) *when they were newly come out of his hand:* and that he also was pleased to reveal his mind and will unto them, by some means or other; particularly by his angels, whom he sent on messages to them, as long as there was any goodness left among them. This is most admirably expressed by Catullus:

> "Præsentes namque ante domos invisere castas
> Sæpius, et sese mortali ostendere cœtu
> Cœlicolæ, nondum spreta pietate, solebant."

See Huetius in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ. lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 1, 2. And indeed no account can be given, how it came into the head of Homer, and other poets, to bring in the gods appearing so oft as they do, upon every occasion, if God had not been wont, in ancient time, to manifest himself, not only to the Israelites, but to other nations also, especially before the distinction of this people from them. So he did to Abimelech, Laban, &c. as well as to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For, as Dr. Jackson hath well observed, (in his first book upon the Creed, chap. 11.) if they had never heard nor read of any such thing, all the wits in the world, had they beat their brains never so much, could not have thought of bringing the gods in a visible shape upon the stage, or interlacing their poems with their frequent apparitions: nor can any other account be given, how this came to be the common belief of the world, from one end of it to the other, that the gods revealed their mind to men; the philosophers, as well as ordinary people, in the east, west, north, and south, making no doubt of it: for Abaris Hyperboreus, and Zamolxis Geta, were no less famous in the north, than the Egyptian prophets were in the south.

But when mankind degenerated, and corrupted themselves by all manner of wickedness, then God forsook them, and permitted evil angels to take the place of the good, and plunge mankind further into all manner of filthiness; especially into abominable idolatries. So that Balaam, who, I question not, had at first familiarity with God and his holy angels, abusing this honour God had done him, in making him a prophet, by employing it to serve his vile covetousness, God gave him up to the delusion of evil spirits; of whom he learnt enchantments. But at this time God was pleased again to appear to him himself, for the good of his people Israel, and to overrule all his bad inclinations: insomuch that Moses says at last he did not go, as he had done, to *seek enchantments*, (chap. xxiv. 1.) but gave up himself wholly, for the present, to the conduct of God's Spirit; as I shall there observe.

And said unto him.] By an angel, as Maimonides interprets it, (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 41.)

What men are these with thee?] He asks this question, partly to prove Balaam, whether he would tell him the truth of their business; and partly to make way for the following direction.

Ver. 10. *And Balaam said unto God.*] To whom (it appears by this) and to the way wherein God communicated himself, he was not a stranger.

Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying.] This shews the embassy was sent principally in his name; the Midianites only joined in it, (ver. 5.)

Ver. 11. *Behold, there is a people come out of Egypt,* &c.] This verse contains only a brief report of the message that was sent him; to which he desired God would tell him what answer he should return.

Ver. 12. *And God said unto Balaam.*] By an angel, (ver. 9. and ver. 35.)

Thou shalt not go with them, thou shalt not curse this people: for they are blessed.] He not only forbids him to comply with Balak's desire, but gives him such a reason as was likely to prevail with him, if his prohibition was not sufficient; that it was impossible, with all his enchantments, to reverse the blessing which God had bestowed upon this people.

Ver. 13. *And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said to the princes of Balak, Get ye to your own land.*] He seems resolved to obey God, rather than comply with them; and therefore dispatched them, as soon as he could, with the following answer.

For the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you.] He acquaints them only with half of God's answer; for he omits the reason, which was the principal thing: though it may be thought to be implied; that if the Lord, on whose pleasure he pretended to depend, refused to let him go, it was in vain to attempt to curse them.

Ver. 14. *And the princes of Moab rose up.*] They did not stand to dispute the matter with him, or to importune him; which shews that he had given them a peremptory denial.

And they went unto Balak, and said, Balaam refuseth to come with us.] They report his answer as imperfectly as he did God's; saying not a word, that the Lord refused to let him come. They were loath, perhaps (as the manner of such persons is), to deliver unwelcome news to their master.

Ver. 15. *And Balak sent yet again princes, more, and more honourable than they.*] He being ignorant of the true cause of his refusal, imagined that Balaam thought himself slighted; and expected a greater number of persons, and of greater quality, should have been sent to him. For prophets, in ancient time, were men highly esteemed; as not only sacred persons, but who had a great interest in God; of whom they could obtain whatsoever they desired. God himself thought this sufficient to keep Abimelech from injuring Abraham, to acquaint him that he was *a prophet*, (Gen. xx. 3.) And therefore they were called *men of God;* being thought, by the very gentiles, to be full of some *Numen* or other; whereby they became *interpreters of the gods* (as they called them), who ministered ἐν μέσῳ θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων, *between the gods and men:* insomuch that women, when they became prophetesses, had very great authority; as we find in Deborah, who calls herself *a mother in Israel:* (Judges v. 7.) and therefore all such persons were under the special protection of Heaven, (Psal. cv. 15.)

Ver. 16. *And they came unto Balaam, and said, Thus saith Balak the son of Zippor.*] They seem to speak of their master in a higher style than the former ambassadors did, ver. 7. where it is only said, "they spake unto him the words of Balak."

Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming to me.] Yet they submissively beseech him, in their master's name, not to suffer any thing to keep him from coming to him; for he thought, perhaps, that Balaam might be detained by other more profitable employments.

Ver. 17. *For I will promote thee to very great honour.*] He imagined, it is probable, that Balaam looked upon the rewards of divination, which he sent him, as not sufficient encouragement; and therefore he promises him to advance him to some high preferment in his court.

And I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me.] And moreover, he promises to bestow an estate, as great as he would desire, to support his new dignity.

Come therefore, I pray thee.] They add importunity to their earnest request.

Curse me this people.] Having heard (as David Chytræus understands this) that the Israelites conquered their opposers by prayers, rather than by arms (as they had done Pharaoh and the Amalekites), the king of Moab thought he might prevail against them by the same means.

Ver. 18. *And Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak.*] To the messengers whom he had sent, who, it appears by this, were principal officers in his court, (ver. 15.) For the servants of Pharaoh are called *the elders of his house,* Gen. l. 7.

If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do more or less.] This is not the language of one that was a stranger to the true God; for no prophet in Israel ever spake of him in more familiar terms than these, *the Lord my God.* And for the present, the command of God seems to have suppressed his covetous and ambitious desires, so that he durst not yield to them; though it appears, by what follows, he was strongly inclined to follow them.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore, I pray you, tarry you also here this night.*] Take a lodging with me, as your predecessors did, (ver. 8.)

That I may know what the Lord will say unto me now.] Whether the Lord will alter his mind, as he hoped he might; otherwise he would have rested in the first answer he received from God, and not tried again if he could prevail by his importunity to get leave to go; as these great promises of riches and honour made him desire.

Ver. 20. *And God came unto Balaam at night.*] Notwithstanding which, God was pleased again to visit him with his presence; at least by one of his angelic ministers.

And said unto him, If the men come to call thee.] Press thee again to comply with them.

Rise up, and go with them.] Since thou hast such a mind to go, follow thy inclinations. These words seem to be spoken angrily, though not sarcastically, as some would have them, like those 1 Kings xxii. 15.

But yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do.] Some take these words to be not so much a command as a prediction; that he should not be able to say a word but what he was ordered by God.

Ver. 21. *And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass.*] Commanded his ass to be made ready; for he had servants to wait upon him, (ver. 22.) And great persons in those countries were wont to ride upon asses; of which we find examples before this, in Abraham, (Gen. xxii. 1.) and in Moses, (Exod. iv. 20.) and, in aftertimes, the judges of Israel were thus mounted, (Judges v. 10.) and their children, (chap. x. 4. xii. 14.)

And went with the princes of Moab.] They set out, perhaps, together; or he desired them to go a little before, and he would follow them. For it appears by the following part of this relation, that he did not make a part of their train; but travelled, at least some part of the way, with his two servants alone.

Ver. 22. *And God's anger was kindled because he went.*] This may seem strange, since he had a permission to go along with them: but the meaning is not, that God was displeased because he did as he was permitted; but because he went so readily (without offering to stay at home, as he had been commanded at first), and because he carried along with him an evil mind, desirous to get the money and the honour that was proffered him; and consequently with an inclination to curse Israel, and with hopes that he might, by some means or other, compass that wicked end. This

is plainly signified by the angel's words, ver. 35. where he permits him still to go on, but with a caution not to attempt to speak a word otherwise than he bade him. This is more plainly evident from Deut. xxiii. 5.

And the angel of the Lord.] The same angel, which is thought to have spoken to him, ver. 12. 20.

Stood in the way.] In the very path wherein his ass was going.

For an adversary against him.] To stop his proceedings, that he might not go on in his sin, and perish, as R. Solomon glosses.

Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him.] He was in his journey upon the road, but separated from the rest of the company; having only his own two servants with him, who waited on him.

Ver. 23. *And the ass saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way.*] The Lord, saith the same R. Solomon, let the ass see what his master could not, his mind been blinded by his converse with demons: or rather, God deprived him, for the present, of the power of seeing what stood just before him.

And his sword drawn in his hand.] Threatening to kill him if he went forward.

And the ass turned aside out of the way.] Out of the road wherein they were travelling.

And went into the field.] Which lay on the side of the highway.

And Balaam smote the ass to turn her into the way.] As the manner is still, when such creatures are unruly.

Ver. 24. *And the angel of the Lord stood in the path of the vineyards.*] It is uncertain whether the ass turned into the way again, or went on in the field, till they came to these vineyards.

A wall being on this side, and a wall on that side.] In a very narrow passage.

Ver. 25. *And when the ass saw the angel of the Lord.*] Which opposed him here again, as he had done in the broad highway.

She thrust herself unto the wall.] To avoid the angel.

And crushed Balaam's foot against the wall.] The angel and his drawn sword, which it is likely he brandished, took up so much of the way on both sides, that there was not room for the ass to pass without going too close to the wall.

And he smote her again.] Being very angry at her untowardness.

Ver. 26. *And the angel of the Lord went further, and stood in a narrow place.*] Through which Balaam was to pass.

Where there was no way to turn, either to the right hand or to the left.] Where the angel took up the whole passage, and left no space on either side for the ass to go.

Ver. 27. *And when the ass saw the angel of the Lord.*] And no way to avoid him.

She fell down under Balaam.] Being unable either to turn back, the way was so narrow, or to go forward, because the angel filled up all the passage.

And Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff.] Harder than he had done before.

Ver. 28. *And the Lord.*] By his *angel*, as Bochart interprets it.

Opened the mouth of the ass.] Which naturally is a dumb creature, having no organs of speech; but, by an extraordinary power of God, who made man's mouth, had her tongue so moved to the palate, teeth, and lips, and the air was so compressed within her mouth, as to form words as plain as we speak.

And she said unto Balaam.] That an ass should, by the power of God, be made to speak, one would think should not seem incredible to Christians, when heathens did not disbelieve such things, but received them as undoubted truths. Witness what they say of the ass upon which Bacchus rode, and the ram of Phryxus, and the horse of Achilles and Adrastus, and the bull of Europa, and the lamb in Egypt when Bocchoris reigned there, and the elephant of Porus in India; all which are reported to have spoken: and vast numbers of other instances are heaped up by two eminently-learned Frenchmen, Bochartus in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 14.; and Huetius, in his Alnetanæ Quæstiones, lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 26.; which things are alleged out of their books, not to prove all such stories to be true, but that they thought them true, and thought it did not exceed the power of their gods to effect such things. Nor could they except against the Bible, because of the strange things there reported, the like wonders being commonly believed among themselves; which, if they were devised by the gentile writers, it was, in all likelihood, out of this sacred history; that they might not seem to come behind the Jews in any thing which might give credit to their own religion.

If Maimonides had been acquainted with such things as these, he would not have said, that all this which happened to Balaam in the way to Balak, was done in a prophetical vision, (par. ii. More Nevochim, cap. 42.) which is the conceit of R. Levi ben Gersom also, who compares this with what we read, Hosea i. 3, &c. concerning the prophet's taking a wife of whoredoms, &c. and denies the literal sense, merely because he could not imagine how an ass should be made to speak: no, nor could he, or any man else, tell how such a representation could be made to the prophet's imagination in a vision, but by the power of God; to whom the one was as easy as the other.

What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smote me these three times?] There was some cause; for his foot was crushed, and he fell with her: but the ass could not help it.

Ver. 29. *And Balaam said unto the ass.*] One would have expected that he should have been astonished, and struck as dumb as the ass naturally was, to hear her speak so plain, and expostulate with him: but he was in a rage, or rather fury; so that for the present he did not consider any thing, but her untoward crossness. St. Peter observes so much, when he saith the dumb ass rebuked *the madness of the prophet;* where the word Παραφρονία is unusual in the Greek language, signifying that he was *beside himself*, not knowing what he said or did; partly out of anger, and partly because he was possessed with an eager desire and hope to serve Balak, and get the riches and honour he promised him, now that he had got leave of God to go to him.

Because thou hast mocked me.] Or, as the Arabic version, printed at Paris, translates it, *thrown me in the dirt.* But they seem to have read the word otherways than it is in the Hebrew; where it signifies either mocking, or exposing to scorn and laughter.

I would there were a sword in my hand, for now would I kill thee!] This shews the height of his rage, to be thus crossed in his designs; and, as the Jewish doctors take it, the height of his folly also; that he should pretend to be able to destroy the whole congregation of Israel with his enchantments, who needed a sword to kill a poor ass.

Ver. 30. *And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass?*] This does not prove that the ass understood what Balaam said, and thereupon returned this pertinent answer; but that the same Power which made the ass speak at first, continued to form such an answer as might convince Balaam of his error.

Upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day?] The Hebrew words will not bear this sense; but are exactly rendered in the margin of our Bibles, *ever since thou wast,* that is, a rider; ever since thou began to ride, as Aben Ezra expounds it. Whence many render it, *from thy youth;* which may be supposed to be a long time; Balaam, in all likelihood, being now no young man, but for many years a famous prophet.

Was I ever wont to do so unto thee?] Hast thou not had sufficient experience, in so many years as I have served thee, of my sure going? As much as to say, Thou shouldst have thought some unwonted cause had forced me to do three times what I never did before.

And he said, Nay.] He could not but allow the truth of what was spoken by the ass.

Ver. 31. *Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam.*] He was not blind before; but his eyes were held as the eyes of the men of Sodom were, who could not see Lot's door, though they found their way to their own home, (Gen. xix. 1.)

And he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand.] He understood the true cause of the ass's turning aside, and falling under him.

And he bowed down his head, and fell flat upon his face.] He first bowed his head, and then his whole body, in token of his most profound reverence.

Ver. 32. *And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thy ass these three times?*] This serves to teach us, saith Maimonides, not to use cruelty towards beasts, but to treat them gently and mercifully; (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 17.) or rather, as another of them makes the angel say to Balaam, If I am commanded to reprove thee for thy injustice to thy ass, how much more for thy wicked intention to destroy a whole nation? But the drift of this speech seems to be, to reprehend the brutish stupidity of the prophet, in not apprehending some extraordinary hand of God, which turned his ass aside so oft, and at last made her speak.

Behold, I went out to withstand thee.] I was the cause of thy ass's turning out of the way, and falling down, by my standing in the path to oppose thee, and stop thy proceedings, (ver. 22.)

Because thy way is perverse before me.] His intentions and purposes were not sincere and honest: for, pretending to obey God, he designed, if he could, to serve Balak. The word we translate *perverse,* signifies *perplexed* and *intricate* in the Arabian language: and so Bochartus thinks it should be translated here.

Ver. 33. *And the ass saw me, and turned away from me these three times.*] I was merciful unto thee, in letting the ass see me, which saved thy life, as it here follows.

Unless the ass had turned from me, surely now I had slain thee, and saved her alive.] It had cost thee thy life if the ass had gone forward, and thy life alone; for I would not have done any hurt to her.

Ver. 34. *And Balaam said unto the angel of the Lord, I have sinned.*] It is not certain that this refers to any sense he had of the perverse disposition of his heart; for it may have respect only to his outrageousness against his ass, which he confesses was without cause.

For I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me.] Or rather, *but I knew not,* &c. for this seems to be said in excuse of himself, from his ignorance that the ass was turned out of the way by the angel.

Now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.] He would not understand the angel right, who did not find fault with his going to Balak, but with his going with such bad intentions.

Ver. 35. *And the angel of the Lord said unto Balaam, Go with the men.*] As God had before bidden him, (ver. 20.) and did not send the angel to forbid what he had allowed.

But the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak.] These words are something different from those in ver. 20. importing both that he should not presume to speak a word but what he ordered, and that he should not forbear to speak what he bade him.

And Balaam went with the princes of Balak.] Whom he overtook after this stop, either at the place where they lodged, or where they stayed for him; but he did not tell them what he met withal in the way.

Ver. 36. *And when Balak heard that Balaam was come.*] By some messenger sent before to acquaint him with his coming.

He went out to meet him.] Partly out of joy, and partly out of respect to him.

Unto a city of Moab, which is in the border of Arnon.] This city seems to have been Ar, (chap. xxi. 15.)

Which is in the utmost coast.] He did him the honour to meet him at the very entrance of his country; and did not think it sufficient to send some of his court to receive him.

Ver. 37. *And Balak said unto Balaam, Did not I earnestly send unto thee to call thee?*] After this compliment was paid to Balaam, the king could not forbear to let him know, he did not think himself well used by him, whom he had earnestly entreated to come to him, and at the first he would not.

Wherefore camest thou not unto me?] As soon as I sent for thee.

Am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?] Dost thou doubt of my power to make thee a great man, if thou gratifiest me in my desire? And his readiness he shewed by this honourable reception of him.

Ver. 38. *And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee.*] Say no more of that; but be satisfied that I am now come.

Have I now any power at all to say any thing?] Yet he would not have him expect that he should do all that Balak desired, or he himself was inclined to do; for he was under a higher overruling Power, which he could not gainsay.

The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.] He seems to acquaint him that he had received such a command from God, (ver. 35.) and he must be obedient.

Ver. 39. *And Balaam went with Balak.*] This did not discourage the king of Moab from carrying Balaam along with him into his country; where he hoped he might be persuaded to do as he would have him.

And they came unto Kirjath-huzoth.] The royal city, it is likely; for it signifies in our language the *city of streets;* that is, a large city, which had many streets and (consequently) inhabitants in it.

Ver. 40. *And Balak offered oxen and sheep.*] In thankfulness that he had procured Balaam's assistance, as he hoped, against his enemies.

And sent to Balaam.] They were such sacrifices as the Jews called *peace-offerings;* of which the offerers had a share for themselves and for their friends: and the sacrifice being over, Balak invited Balaam to come to the feast he made thereupon.

And to the princes that were with him.] The princes, I suppose, of Midian and of Moab, who were sent on the embassy to him, and had succeeded in it, (ver. 7. 15.)

Ver. 41. *And it came to pass, that on the morrow.*] Having rested one night after his journey, Balak would have him go about his business, and see what he could do for him.

Balak took Balaam.] Into his chariot.

And brought him up into the high places of Baal.] All nations worshipped their gods in high places; and Baal was the god of this country; who was worshipped in more high places than one; unto all which he brought Balaam, that he might see where he could take the fullest view of the Israelites, and which of them would be fittest for his purpose. These high places were full of trees, and very shady, (as I observed, Lev. xxvi. 30.) which made them the fitter both for the solemn thoughts and prayers of such as were devout, and for the filthy inclinations and intentions of the wicked. Baal was the name of several gods, both male and female, as our Selden shews in his Syntagma ii. de Diis Syris, cap. 1. And I suppose Chemosh, the god of Moab, is here called by this name (signifying *a lord),* though that great man seems to take it for Baal-Peor, (cap. 2. of that book.)

That thence he might see the utmost of the people.] *i. e.* All their armies, to the very skirts of their camp.

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here.*] Upon one of the high places; which Balaam, it is likely, pitched upon as fit for his purpose.

Seven altars.] The number *seven* was much observed we find among the Hebrews, by God's order; (see Lev. iv. 6.) but we never read of more than one altar built by the patriarchs, when they offered their sacrifices; nor was more than one allowed by Moses. Therefore in this there was something of the heathen superstition; who, worshipping the sun (who is principally meant by Baal), offered also to all the seven planets: unless we allow the conjecture of Fortunatus Scacchus, who imagines, that as Moses erected twelve pillars, according to the number of the children of Israel, when he entered them into the covenant of God, (Exod. xxiv. 4.) so Balaam ordered seven altars to be erected, according to the number of the principal houses of Moab, (Myrothec. Sacr. Elæochrysm, par. ii. cap. 59.) But there is no ground for the conceit of Abarbinel, who, in his preface to Leviticus, (sect. 4.) saith, Balaam ordered this in emulation of the seven acceptable altars to God, built by seven men famous for piety; *viz.* Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. There is more certainty in this, that these altars were erected in honour either of the Most High, or of the greatest of their gods: for, according to the account which both Festus and Servius have given us of the ancient times, they sacrificed to the celestial gods only upon altars (which were so called, because they were *aræ altæ, built high and lofty*), whereas to the terrestrial they sacrificed upon the earth; and to the infernal gods, in holes digged in the earth.

And prepare me here seven oxen, and seven rams.] To offer one of each upon the several altars, as it follows, ver. 2. This number was used by pious persons, both in these days, (Job xlii. 8.) and in aftertimes, (1 Chron. xv. 26.)

Ver. 2. *And Balak did as Balaam had spoken.*] Caused the altars to be built (which was done, either of stones, or of turf), and the sacrifices to be brought.

And Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram.] Kings, in ancient times, were priests also; as appears by Melchizedeck: but perhaps Balak only presented the sacrifices to be offered for him, and for his people; and Balaam performed the office of a priest. The only doubt is, to whom these sacrifices were offered. I suppose each of them had their several intentions: Balak supplicating Baal by them; and Balaam making his prayer to the Lord, though with such superstitious ceremonies, it is likely, as were used by the worshippers of Baal; in one of whose high places these sacrifices were offered. But it may also be supposed, that Balaam telling Balak he could not effect any thing without the Lord, the God of Israel, persuaded him to join with him at present in his worship, that they might prevail with him to withdraw his presence from the Israelites: for there is no reason to think, that Balaam would go to inquire of the Lord, when he had sacrificed to other gods; and it appears evidently from ver. 4. that he pretended to sacrifice unto God; and would not have presumed surely to tell him so, if he meant otherwise.

Ver. 3. *And Balaam said unto Balak.*] When he had laid the pieces upon the altars.

Stand by the burnt-offering.] Attend thy sacrifice, and pray to God to accept it. By this it appears, that these sacrifices were of a different nature from those mentioned in chap. xxii. 40. being burnt-offerings which were wholly consumed. And one of them seems to have been offered particularly for Balak, which he calls *his burnt-offering;* as the rest were for the princes of Moab, who, it is likely, stood by them representing all the people.

And here it is to be observed, that, in old time, before the law of Moses was given, burnt-offerings served for all purposes in Divine worship; whether they gave thanks for blessings, or deprecated evil things, or prayed for good. Thus Noah, when he returned thanks to God for his preservation in the ark, *offered burnt-offerings,* (Gen. viii. 20.)

And when Job beseeched God to pardon his sons, (chap. i. 5.) and his friends, (chap. xlii. 8.) he offered sacrifices of this sort: and so did Balak and Balaam here use them, to procure blessings upon Moab, and a curse upon Israel.

And I will go.] By myself, into some private place, to consult with God, and to exercise his enchantments, (as may be gathered from chap. xxiv. 1.) whereby he thought he might prevail for such a power as he desired, of cursing the people of Israel.

Peradventure the Lord will come to meet me.] He durst not be confident, because he had lately opposed his proceeding (chap. xxii. 31.) in a frightful manner.

And whatsoever he sheweth me.] Whatsoever he reveals to me, either by word or otherwise.

I will tell thee.] Deal faithfully with thee, and conceal nothing from thee.

And he went to a high place.] Or rather, *into a valley;* for he was now in a *high place* when he sacrificed, and did not go into another high place, but down into the plain (as the Hebrew word properly signifies), where he might, in some solitary retirement, address himself to God, and expect his presence with him. So we translate it in the margin, *he went solitary.* Therefore, if we retain the other translation, it must be understood of some part of the *high place,* where he might be solitary, *viz.* into the *grove,* which high places seldom wanted. In these high places they built their temples, and had their oracles: as we learn from Justin, lib. xxiv. cap. 6. where he saith, the temple of Apollo "positum est in monte Parnasso, &c." *was seated upon the mountain Parnassus:* and from Pausanias, who, speaking of the cave of Trophonius in Bœotia, saith, ἔστι δὲ τὸ μαντεῖον ὑπὲρ τὸ ἄλσος ἐπὶ τοῦ ὄρους, *the oracle is in a grove upon a mountain.* The like might be observed of other oracles; which may countenance this conjecture, that some such pretended oracle might be in this high place, where Balaam went for direction from God.

Ver. 4. *And God met Balaam.*] Appeared unto him, as he had been wont to do in other places, chap. xxii. 9. 20. where the word Elohim is constantly used, as it is here and every where else, till we come to ver. 16. which strengthens the opinion, that the Lord hitherto spake to him only by an angel.

And he said unto him.] *i. e.* Balaam said unto God, when he saw him appear.

I have prepared seven altars, and have offered upon every altar a bullock and a ram.] This shews he sacrificed unto God, and not unto Baal: and he represents it to God that he might be moved thereby to condescend to his desire. For sacrificing was a form of supplication, as we find in other places, particularly 1 Sam. xiii. 12. and that which he begged of God was, in all likelihood, that he would give him power to curse Israel.

Ver. 5. *And he put a word into Balaam's mouth.*] Told him what he should say. And therefore (saith Maimonides) he spake by the Spirit of God: which he makes account was the second degree of prophecy. Whence that description Balaam gives of himself, "He hath said, who heard the words of God," (par. ii. More Nevochim, cap. 45.)

And said, Return unto Balak, and thus shalt thou speak.] He commanded him to speak unto Balak, at his return to him, as he was instructed, and no otherwise. The words he bade him speak, are those that we read below, (ver. 7, 8, &c.)

Ver. 6. *And he returned unto him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt-sacrifice.*] He found him in the very same posture wherein he left him: (ver. 3.) which shews Balaam did not go far, nor stay long before he returned; and that Balak was earnest in his supplications.

He, and all the princes of Moab.] Who were concerned in the good success of his negotiation.

Ver. 7. *And he took up.*] A Hebrew phrase for *speaking aloud.*

His parable.] Or, prophetical speech; which was sometimes delivered in *parables,* properly so called: that is, not in plain words, but in apt figures and resemblances, (concerning which see Maimonides, par. ii. cap. 43.) But here the word *parable* signifies (as it doth in the book of Job) a weighty speech, expressed in sublime and majestic words, Job xxvii. 1. xxix. 1.

And said, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram.] See chap. xxii. 5.

From the mountains of the east.] The country of Mesopotamia lay eastward of Moab: and that part of it towards Arabia was stony and mountainous. (See Bochartus in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 6.)

Saying, Come, curse me Jacob; and come, defy Israel.] Two different expressions for the same thing; only the latter word (which we translate *defy*) imports something of fury; because he would have had him curse them in such a prophetic rage, as should have the most direful effects upon them.

Ver. 8. *How shall I curse him whom God hath not cursed?* &c.] As much as if he had said, Balak desires of me that which is impossible. In the Jerusalem Targum this verse is thus paraphrased: *How shall I curse the house of Jacob, when the Word of the Lord hath blessed them? or how shall I diminish the family of Israel, when the Word of the Lord hath multiplied them?*

Ver. 9. *For from the top of the rocks.*] Upon which he then stood, when he spake these words.

I see him.] As Balak desired he might, (chap. xxii. 41.) though for another purpose; that he might curse them.

And from the hills I behold him.] The same thing again, in other words, according to the manner of the eastern people. And both these may relate, not only to the present view he had of the camp of Israel, but to their future settlement in their own land; wherein they were represented to him as dwelling securely, under the special protection of the Almighty.

Lo, the people shall dwell.] In the land of Canaan.

Alone.] Not mingled with other nations, but separated from them by different laws, religion, and manners. It seems also to import their security and safety, by the situation of their country, and God's care of them.

And shall not be reckoned among the nations.] Be a peculiar people by themselves; and therefore not liable to the power of my curses, like other nations. All this came to pass, partly by the natural situation of their country, which was surrounded with high mountains, and rocky precipices, so that the coming to it was very difficult; but more especially by their rites and customs; and particularly by their diet, which restrained them from common conversation with other nations, because they could

not eat of their food (swine's flesh, for instance, which was a delicate dish among the gentiles, was an abomination to the Israelites). By which means they were the better secured from learning the religion of the gentiles, having so little communication with them, that they were called by Diodorus Siculus, and others, *an unsociable people*, and thought to have an enmity to the rest of the world.

Ver. 10. *Who can count the dust of Jacob.*] This may refer either to their present, or their future increase; which was so great, that they might be compared to the dust of the earth, or the sand on the sea-shore, which is without number. Hereby he confirmed the promise made by God to Abraham, Gen. xiii. 16. and to Israel, chap. xxviii. 14. where he saith expressly, "Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth."

And the number of the fourth part of Israel.] Any one of their camps, every one of which was grown to a vast number: for the whole host of Israel was divided into four camps, under the standard of Judah, Reuben, Ephraim and Dan (as we read in the second chapter of this book), one of which camps lay more plainly before him than the rest, *viz.* that on the west, under the standard of Ephraim.

Let me die the death of the righteous.] By the *righteous* he means Israel, who were now a people free from idolatry, which was the great crime of those days: and he desires either to be as happy as they in the other world, or that he might not die an immature and violent death, but enjoy such a long life here as was promised to them. The author of Sepher Cosri takes it in the former sense; alleging this place as a proof that a future state was believed in ancient times, though not so clearly expressed in the prophetical writings, as other things are: for there is a certain prayer, saith he, of one that prophesied by the Holy Ghost, who desired that he *might die the death of the righteous*, (par. i. sect. 115.)

And my last end be like his!] Or, *let my posterity* (for so the word we here translate *last end* often signifies, Psal. cix. 13. Dan. xi. 4.) or, *those that come after me*, be like unto his descendants.

Ver. 11. *And Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done unto me?*] This is very surprising.

I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether.] Thou hast not only frustrated my desires in not cursing them, but, quite contrary, hast pronounced great blessings upon them. For so the Hebrew words signify, *Blessed them with blessings.*

Ver. 12. *And he answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?*] He had told him so before, more than once, (chap. xxii. 23. xxiii. 3.) and now makes him judge, whether it was safe for him to disobey the Lord to comply with his desires.

Ver. 13. *And Balak said unto him, Come, I pray thee, with me to another place?*] He thought Balaam gave him a reasonable answer; and, therefore, gently entreats him to make a trial, whether God would be pleased to be more favourable to his desires if he sought him in some other place. For whatsoever Balaam thought of this matter, Balak was possessed with a superstitious fancy, that the very place or prospect had been a cause concurrent to produce the contrary effect to what he desired, and therefore entreated he would come with him to another, where he might not see too many of them at once.

From whence thou mayest see them.] It seems this was thought necessary to make their curses effectual; that they should have a sight of those whom they cursed, and that they should look upon them.

Thou shalt see but the utmost part of them.] The skirts of their camps.

And shalt not see them all.] He imagined, perhaps, that Balaam was affrighted at the sight of their multitude, and therefore durst not meddle with them.

And curse me them from thence.] He seems to desire him to curse only that small parcel of the Israelites whom he saw in the utmost part of the camp, hoping he might by degrees get them all, in like manner, destroyed.

Ver. 14. *And he brought him unto the field of Zophim.*] Or, as some translate it, unto *Sede-Zophim;* a place by the very name apt to enchant a superstitious mind with expectation of success, as Dr. Jackson speaks. It is thought by some to be so called from the *watchers* that were placed here, which the word Zophim imports.

To the top of Pisgah.] A very high mountain in the country of Moab, from whence one might see a great way, and take a view of all the parts of Canaan, (Deut. iii. 27. xxxiv. 1, 2, &c.) But on that side of it whither Balak brought him, Balaam could not see much of the camp of Israel. It is likely he thought, by bringing him to a place so exceeding high, he should be nearer heaven, and so procure a more favourable audience than before.

And built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar.] As he had done before at Balaam's desire, in another high place, (ver. 1, 2.) for there only he imagined their sacrifices would be acceptable. From hence Conradus Pellicanus concludes Balaam to have been a worshipper of the true God (as Jethro was), because he still continues to offer only such clean creatures as were wont to be sacrificed to him by his own people.

Ver. 15. *And he said unto Balak, Stand here by thy burnt-offering.*] The same direction which he had given before, (ver. 3.)

While I meet the Lord yonder.] In a place to which he pointed. Balaam made a peradventure of it before, whether the Lord would come to meet him or not, (ver. 3.) but now he confidently expects it; though he endeavoured (it appears from chap. xxiv. 1.) still to compass his bad ends by his enchantments.

Ver. 16. *And the Lord met Balaam.*] This is never said before, but only that God met him (by his angel, as the Jews interpret it), which I take to be much short of what is here said, that the Lord himself now met him; that is, there was a glorious appearance of the Schechinah to him (though not in such lustre, I suppose, as when it appeared to Moses), which so amazed him, that after this he never went so much as to inquire what he should say or do: for, though he doubted, perhaps, of what the angel said, yet now he was fully assured the Israelites must be blessed.

And he put a word in his mouth.] Instructed him what he should say to Balak.

And said, Go again unto Balak, and say thus.] *viz.* All that we read ver. 18—20, &c. which is a great deal more than he had said before.

Ver. 17. *And when he came to him, behold, he stood by*

his burnt-offering, and the princes of Moab with him.] See ver. 6.

And Balak said unto him, What hath the Lord spoken?] He was more solicitous to know his doom than he was before, when he asked no such question; and plainly demonstrated, that he believed Balaam went to inquire of the Lord.

Ver. 18. *And he took up his parable.*] See ver. 7.

And said, Rise up Balak, and hear.] If this word *rise up* hath respect to the outward reverence, which was wont to be shewn to all messages brought from God, (which was expressed by *rising up* to receive them, as appears from the story of another king of Moab, Judges iii. 20.) then, after the sacrifice was ended, at which they stood, Balak sat down until Balaam could be ready to acquaint him with the mind of God. But it may have respect only to the mind, and signify, *stir up thyself* to attend; awaken thy thoughts, and listen to what I say.

And hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor.] The same thing repeated with more earnestness: for to *give ear*, as the word is in the Hebrew, imports something more than merely to *hear; viz.* diligent and earnest attention of mind to what is spoken.

Ver. 19. *God is not a man, that he should lie.*] Do not imagine that God is like to one of us: he can by no sacrifices, or prayers, or other means, be induced to break his word; and, therefore, it is in vain for me any longer to importune him to curse Israel, when he hath said he will bless them.

Neither the son of man.] An usual variation of the expression of the same thing. (Psal. viii. 4.)

That he should repent.] Alter his mind, when he hath absolutely resolved any thing. Balak seems to have fancied, that, by the change of the place where he sacrificed, (ver. 13.) he might procure a change of the Divine counsels.

Hath he said, and shall he not do it?] What should hinder? for he wants no power to execute his will; and he cannot be moved to revoke his word by better information; nor can any thing happen which he did not foresee, to make him do otherwise than he intended.

Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?] This is the same with the former, after the prophetical manner of speaking, *Omnia per juga repetendo* (as Conradus Pellicanus glosses) *ad exaggerationem:* only the foregoing words may be thought to refer to his threatenings, and these to his promises.

Ver. 20. *Behold, I have received commandment to bless; and he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it.*] In these words he applies the general proposition, in the foregoing verse, to this particular case: God hath ordered me to pronounce a blessing upon Israel, for he himself hath blessed them; and I can neither reverse that blessing, nor go against his order.

Ver. 21. *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel.*] Both the word *aven* (which we translate *iniquity)* and the word *amal* (which we translate *perverseness)* signify frequently in Scripture the highest wickedness, *viz.* idolatry. And so Onkelos here understood it, when he thus paraphrased these words: *I see that there are none who worship idols in the house of Jacob, nor any servants of trouble and vanity* (so they called idols) *in Israel.* And accordingly the Vulgar Latin expressly translates this verse thus, *There is no idol in Jacob, nor is there any image seen in Israel:* which seemed so clear a truth to Johannes Forsterus, a famous professor of the Hebrew tongue in the beginning of the Reformation, that, in his explication of both these words in his Lexicon, he saith, "From this place all the prophets borrow these phrases, and translated them to express impiety, *i. e.* idolatrous worship, devised according to men's own humours and desires, and by the instinct of the devil: for Moses was the fountain of all the prophets." Thus he writes upon the word אָוֶן, and he repeats it again upon the word עָמָל. So that this is the reason Balaam gives, why God had blessed, and he could not curse them, because they were free from idolatry; unto which, unless they could be seduced, there was no hope that God would deliver them unto the power of their enemies: for which reason Balaam afterward counselled this prince to entice them to this sin by beautiful women, as the only way to move God to be angry with them.

There are indeed a great many that take these words in the common sense, for all manner of sin; which God is said not to see in this people, *i. e.* so as to mark it out for punishment; for though they were many ways great offenders, yet he had such an indulgent kindness to them, that he would not correct them for every sin which they committed. But this returns to the former exposition; that they were safe, as long as they kept themselves from the great transgression, that is, idolatry.

The Lord his God is with him.] They worshipping God alone, were therefore under his special care and protection. Onkelos renders it, *the Word of the Lord his God is his help.* And so the Jerusalem Targum.

And the shout of a king is among them.] God being their king, he prophesies that they should always triumph over their enemies: for he alludes to the shouts which are made when a king or great captain returns victorious with the spoils of those he hath vanquished. So the meaning of the whole verse is this, in brief: Since they do not worship idols, but cleave to the Lord their God, and serve him alone, he is present with them, not only to preserve them from their enemies, but to give them glorious victories over them.

Ver. 22. *God brought them out of Egypt.*] That they might be his worshippers and servants, which if they continue he will not desert them. For God brought them forth from thence that they might be his peculiar people, and he their King and their God, as he often saith himself, Lev. xi. 45. xxii. 23. xxv. 38. Numb. xv. 41. all which places are observed by the author of Sepher Cosri, (par. ii. sect. 50.)

He hath as it were the strength of an unicorn.] Some would have this referred to God, who brought them out of Egypt by a mighty power; because he speaks in the plural number of those to whom the former sentence belongs. But this is no good reason; for the Scripture frequently varies the number, when the same person is spoken of. And in chap. xxiv. 8. it is expressly said, *God brought him (i. e.* Israel) *out of Egypt; and he hath the strength,* &c. which every one allows is spoken of the Israelites, who are said to have the *strength* of this creature, with whom they are compared; or rather the *height,* as the Hebrew word certainly signifies, Psalm xxv. 4. *The strength of the hills* (or

rather, the *heights of the hills*, as it is in the margin) *are his also:* and Job xxii. 25. *The Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.* So the sense led our interpreters to translate the Hebrew word תוע פות, which may be literally here rendered *great heaps* of silver. These are the only places where this word is found. The only difficulty is, what creature it is which is here called *reem;* which we translate (as many others have done) an *unicorn:* which, though most now take to be a fabulous creature that is not in being, yet Tho. Bartholinus, in his Anatomical Histories, (Centur. ii. Histor. 61.) tells us, that an ambassador from the king of Guinea to the duke of Courland, assured him, at Copenhagen, that there is a beast in Africa of the bigness of an ordinary horse, very swift and fierce, which hath a horn in its forehead about three spans in length; the dead carcass of which he had seen, though never one alive. But if this be supposed to be true, it is not the creature here meant; for it is plain by the Scripture, that the *reem* hath two horns, Deut. xxxiii. 17. where we read of the *horns of the unicorn* (as we translate it), to which the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh are compared. (See also Psalm xxii. 27.) Therefore the famous Bochartus, after a long discussion of other opinions, thinks it most probable, that the *reem* is a kind of goat, which the Arabians called *algazel*, and is now called *gazellas;* which is a tall creature (some of them as high as a stag) with long and sharp horns. So that Balaam foretells the Israelites should be as eminent among other people as the *reem* was among other kinds of goats. Unless we will think it refers to what the Arabians observe, that it is proper to this animal to carry his head very high, and to erect his ears, which is an excellent emblem of the people of Israel; who being lately oppressed in Egypt, were asserted by God into a state of liberty, and raised to a great height of glory, in order to be advanced unto a higher, (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 27.) At this Onkelos seemed to have aimed when he translates these words thus, *fortitude and exaltation are his;* taking *reem* not for a proper name but for an appellative, as if it were derived from *ramam*, which signifies to exalt. I shall only add, that there is one who refers these words neither to God nor to the Israelites, but to Egypt beforementioned; as if the sense was, Though the Egyptians were as strong as an *unicorn*, they were not able to detain the Israelites any longer in bondage to them; but God brought them thence with a mighty hand and outstretched arm: so Joseph. Hispanus, (lib. iii. Ikaurim, cap. 8.)

Ver. 23. *Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel.*] Neither I, nor any body else, have power to hurt them, by all the secret arts of sorcery and soothsaying, which are practised in the world. It is not proper here to mention the various sorts of them; but it is manifest, from ancient history, that these *curious arts* (as St. Luke calls them) had got a kind of sovereignty in the eastern nations, who for many ages were much addicted to them. One of our own church hath said many excellent things concerning the original of this sorcery and idolatry, which commonly accompanied each other; to whom I refer the reader: (see Dr. Jackson's Original of Unbelief, &c. cap. 19.) The Vulgar Latin takes these words, as if they were spoken in praise of the Israelites, that there were no enchantments or divinations used among them, nor any other diabolical arts, which were forbidden by their law in several places. From these they being as free as from idolatry, (mentioned ver. 21.) they were secure of God's favour to them. And so we acknowledge, in the margin of our Bibles, the words may be translated, *There is no enchantment in Jacob, or among them:* from which God intended in all ages to preserve them by the prophets he raised up to them. And thus R. Solomon expounds this verse, either to signify that they could not be cursed, because they were not given to enchantments and divinations; or that they needed not to make use of diviners and magicians, having all that was needful for them to know revealed to them by God's prophets, and by *urim* and *thummim*, &c.

According to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!] The LXX. translate the first words κατὰ καιρὸν, *when time shall be;* or, *upon all occasions:* not only now, but in future ages, men shall relate, with admiration, what God hath wrought for this people; not only in bringing them out of Egypt, but in conducting them into Canaan; in drying up Jordan, as he did the Red Sea; and subduing the Canaanites, as he overthrew Pharaoh and his host, &c. If there be any difference between Jacob and Israel, the former signifies this people, when they were in their low estate; and the latter, when they were eminently exalted: in both which God did wonderful things for them, which astonished all that observed.

Ver. 24. *Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion.*] The Hebrew word *labi* certainly signifies a *lioness*, which is no less, but rather more fierce than a *lion*, and so represented by Herodotus, (lib. iii. cap. 108.) and many other authors mentioned by Bochartus in his Hierozoicon, (par. i. lib. iii. cap. 1.)

And lift up himself as a young lion.] The Hebrew word *ari* is used in general for any lion whatsoever, without respect unto age. They that would have it signify a younger sort, take it for a lion full grown and adult (as they speak) of a middle age, between *cephir*, which signifies a *young lion*, and *sachel*, which signifies an *old*. And the Israelites are here said to *rise up*, and to *lift up themselves*, like to these fierce creatures, to signify their assaulting their enemies with an undaunted courage.

He shall not lie down till he eat of the prey.] Which lions rend and tear with their claws and teeth, irresistibly and speedily. So the Hebrew word *tereph* (which we render *prey*) imports; the flesh of beasts torn in pieces.

And drink the blood of the slain.] He alludes to the ravenousness of lions; and signifies the entire and perfect victory the Israelites should win over their enemies. For this prophecy hath a peculiar respect to the conquest of the Canaanites under the conduct of Joshua.

Ver. 25. *And Balak said unto Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all.*] It seems he thought his blessings to be as powerful as his curses; and therefore desires him to forbear both, if he could not have what he desired.

Ver. 26. *And Balaam answered, Told I thee not, saying, All that the Lord speaks, that must I do?*] As I cannot do any thing against the mind and will of God, so I must do as he bids me, (ver. 3. 12.)

Ver. 27. *And Balak said unto Balaam, Come, I pray thee, and I will bring thee to another place.*] Still he fan-

cies, according to the superstition of those days, there might be something unlucky in the place, that made his prayers unsuccessful; which might prove acceptable in another. For, as the Syrians imagined in future ages, that some gods were powerful in the hills, who could do nothing in the plains, (1 Kings xx. 23. 28.) so, it seems, there was such a conceit at this time in these countries, that some gods delighted more in one hill than they did in another; for he still brings Balaam to another high place. Such a conceit we see remains to this day in the Romish church, where the lady and the rood of one place are thought far more powerful, and therefore more frequented than those of another.

Peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence.] He said nothing of God's permission before, (ver. 13.) but now was convinced his consent was to be gained; and would not despair of it, but thought it possible that very thing might seem right and good in his eyes (as the Hebrew phrase here is) in a new place, which displeased him in both the former.

Ver. 28. *And Balak brought Balaam to the top of Peor.*] This was the most famous high place in all the country of Moab; where, as Mr. Selden conjectures, Baal had a temple, and was worshipped; and thence called Baal-Peor. So Theodoret and Suidas, Βεὴλ ὁ Κρόνος, Φεγὼρ δὲ ὁ τόπος ἐν ᾧ ἐτιμᾶτο. *Beel signifies Saturn, and Phegor* (or, as we pronounce it, Peor) *the place where he was worshipped.* Just as the Greeks called Jupiter by the name of Olympius, and Mercurius of Cyllenus, &c. And, in all likelihood, by Beth-Peor, (Deut. xxxiv. 6.) which in English is the *house of Peor*, in the land of Moab, is meant the temple of Baal which stood upon the mountain, for so the word *Beth* signifies frequently among the Hebrews, not an ordinary house, but the house of some god: as Beth-Ashtaroth, (1 Sam. xxxi. 10.) and Beth-Baal, (1 Kings xvi. 32.) And there is often mention of Beth-shemesh in the holy writings (Joshua xv. 10. Judges i. 33. and many other places), which signifies *the temple of the sun*; from whence the word Βαίσαμψα, among the Arabians upon the Red Sea, which Stephanus (de Urbibus) expounds, ὁ οἶκος τοῦ ἡλίου, *the house of the sun.* (See Syntagma i. de Diis Syris, cap. 5.)

That looketh towards Jeshimon.] See chap. xxi. 20.

Ver. 29. *And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams.*] He orders the very same sacrifices he did at first, without any difference, (ver. 1.) either not knowing any other method of obtaining their desires, or thinking it in vain to devise any other.

Ver. 30. *And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bullock and a ram upon every altar.*] He was wholly governed by Balaam in this; and though he changed the place, made no alteration in the sacrifice, which was as complete and perfect as any in those times offered.

Here is no mention made of the time when these things were done; but we may be certain all the three forementioned solemn sacrifices, in the three several places, were not offered upon one and the same day. And superstitious people, as all histories tell us, having been as curious in the choice of days as well as places, it is probable that Balak picked out some day or hour which he thought might be more lucky to him than the foregoing.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel.*] Of which he had given him a double proof, chap. xxii. 5, &c. 16, &c.

He went not out as at other times.] See chap. xxii. 3. 15.

To seek for enchantments.] This implies that he had hitherto, in the process of his business, used some wicked arts to effect his ends, or desired to be directed to them; but being not able to obtain any thing, but commands cross to all his designs, he gave himself up wholly to the conduct of God's Holy Spirit, and did not so much as offer to seek for enchantments. In the Hebrew the words are, *to meet with enchantments;* unto which he hoped to be directed, that he might be able to curse Israel: for though he addressed himself to the true God, (whom he calls the Lord, chap. xxiii. 26.) yet it was in a superstitious way; with such rites and ceremonies of worship, as were not of God's appointment; but either devised by evil spirits, or very grateful to them; whereby he hoped to be shewn by what means he might disable Israel, and deliver them into the hand of Balak. For the ancient magic derived from Zoroaster was nothing else, as Plato pretends, (in Alcibiade i.) but the knowledge of Divine things, and the right way of worshipping God: and Apuleius saith the same of it, that it was "diis immortalibus accepta, colendi eos ac venerandi pergnara," &c. *a science acceptable to the immortal gods, very skilful how to worship and honour them; being pious, and knowing in Divine things;* which sufficiently betrays this Divine knowledge (as they call it) to be impious; for Zoroaster instructed his disciples in the worship of the fire, as an emblem, at the best, of the sun; which they looked upon as a visible image of this invisible God, and upon that account worshipped it. After his time, it is manifest, this heavenly knowledge, as they esteem it, degenerated into more uncouth rites, and wicked arts, whereby they pretend to be able to make the gods do what they pleased. Pliny mentions an herb, (lib. xxiv. cap. 17.) which he saith the magicians used, *quùm Deos velint evocare, when they would call out the gods,* and draw them to their purpose. In which power they so gloried, that the witch in Apuleius threatened the gods themselves with the greatest mischief; and boasted she could deprive the stars of their light; and by her charms control, not only the moon, but the sun himself, and the gods of all sorts. And as for mankind, nothing is more known than those magical words, *devovere, defigere, obligare;* which are proper to the black art, as Salmasius observes, (upon Solinus, p. 1091.) which, by incantations, deprecations, direful execrations, herbs, fascinations, so confounded the mind of him who was thus *devoted* (as they term it), that he could remember nothing of what he was about, nor discharge any function of nature. The several species of it are mentioned by Maimonides, who saith the Zabii pretended to exercise this power, not only over particular persons, but over whole provinces, by certain words, and actions, and things, which nobody can understand to have any virtue in them, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 37.)

But he set his face towards the wilderness.] He stirred not from the place where the sacrifice was offered, as he had been wont to do, but only looked towards the wilderness, where the Israelites lay encamped, (chap. xxii. 1.)

Ver. 2. *And Balaam lifted up his eyes.*] To look round about him.

And he saw Israel abiding in his tents, &c.] In the order God had appointed in the second chapter of this book, ver. 52. where he commands them *to pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and by his own standard, throughout their hosts.*

And the Spirit of God came upon him.] From whence Maimonides concludes, he was a prophet of the second rank, who spake by the Holy Ghost, (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 45.)

Ver. 3. *And he took up his parable, and said.*] He pronounced what follows with a loud voice, that all might hear. For so the Hebrew words may be interpreted, *he lifted up his parable.* (See chap. xxiii. 7.)

Balaam the son of Beor hath said.] Though the Spirit of God came upon him, which suggested the words mentioned, ver. 5—7, &c. yet it did not alter the temper and disposition of his mind; which was no less vain and ambitious than it was covetous, and possessed with a hatred of the Israelites; as appears by the counsel which he gave, at last, how to ruin them: this vanity seems to be expressed in these, and in the following words, wherein he magnifies himself more than the Spirit of God.

And the man whose eyes were open, hath said.] Who when he was awake received revelations from God, which was an extraordinary favour; for commonly he appeared to men in a dream. Others translate it, *whose eyes were shut, i. e.* who was in a trance or ecstasy, so that he saw nothing with his bodily eyes, but only with his mind. The Jerusalem Targum thus paraphrases these words (which shews he looked upon them as a boasting of himself), "The man said, who was honoured above his brethren; to whom that was revealed, which was hidden from all the prophets."

Ver. 4. *He hath said, who heard the words of God.*] Mark what he saith, who delivers the words which he received from God.

Which saw the vision of the Almighty.] With whom he was so familiar, that he himself, at last, appeared to him in a vision, (chap. xxiii. 16.) as at first he appeared to him by an angel, (chap. xxii. 35.)

Falling into a trance.] There being in the Hebrew only the word *nophel,* which signifies *falling,* we supply the sense by adding *into a trance;* lest any one should think he fell to the ground, or fell asleep; which seems not to be the meaning; but that he was in a rapture, perceiving nothing by his outward senses. Yet the forementioned Targum takes it as if he had fallen flat on his face; and the LXX. translate it, *he saw the vision of God in sleep;* according to that, Gen. xv. 12. *a deep sleep fell upon Abraham;* where the word *naphela* is thought by some to give a good explication of *nophel* in this place.

But having his eyes open.] His mind being then possessed with a clear apprehension of things, which God revealed to him, when his senses were all locked up, and could discern nothing.

Ver. 5. *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel!*] The same thing expressed in different words; which was an usual elegancy in those countries: wherein he declares his admiration of the beautiful order in which he saw them pitched in the plains of Moab.

Ver. 6. *As the valleys are they spread forth.*] This refers either to the tabernacles, which extended themselves on each side of a wide space, which, like a valley, lay between; or rather to the Israelites themselves, whom he compares to those fruitful valleys which abound with water: for the Hebrew word signifies either *valleys* or *brooks.*

As gardens by the river's side.] Which were far more green and flourishing, cool and pleasant, than those that lay in dry places.

As the trees of the lign-aloes.] Growing in those gardens, or by the river's side; which perfumed the air by their sweet odours. For there are two sorts of *aloes* observed by the ancients; the one a tree which was very odoriferous, called Κάλαμος Ἰνδικὸς, and Ἐρυθραῖος, growing in India and Arabia; and the other a plant or herb, out of which was pressed a purging juice: the former is often joined with myrrh in the Holy Scripture, and was burnt as a perfume, and called by the ancients Ξυλαλόης, (as Salmasius observes in his Exercit. Plin. upon Solinus, p. 1053, 1054, &c.) which is the *lign* or *wood-aloes* here spoken of. And Plutarch, in his Symposiacs, (lib. vi. cap. 7.) saith, some were wont to colour their wine, ἢ ἀλόαις, ἢ κιννα μώμοις, *either with aloes, or with cinnamons* (which is meant of this *wood-aloes*), which gave the wine a pleasant taste.

Which the Lord hath planted.] Which grew naturally of themselves (*solo Dei nutu,* as Bochartus glosses), without any labour, care, or art of man used about them.

And as cedar-trees beside the waters.] The cedar was one of the most goodly trees in those countries, upon many accounts, particularly for its fragrancy; the Greeks being wont to burn the wood of it upon their altars, as the same Salmasius there observes, (p. 951, 952.) By all these metaphors, Balaam sets forth the present and future prosperity of the Israelites, and their fame, which spread itself into all nations round about; and seems to be represented by the sweet odours here mentioned.

Ver. 7. *He shall pour the water out of his buckets.*] I take this to be meant of God's pouring down rain abundantly, out of the clouds, upon the valleys, gardens, and trees, unto which the Israelites are compared; signifying that they should be exceedingly blessed by him: for they stood in need of nothing more than rain in those countries.

And his seed shall be in many waters.] Or, *by many waters; i. e.* be sown in a ground well watered, and consequently bring forth a plentiful crop, (Isa. xxxii. 20.) There are those who refer both these to their numerous posterity; procreation of children being sometimes expressed in Scripture by the metaphors of waters, and fountains, and cisterns, as every one knows. And both the LXX. and Onkelos interpret this of one particular person that should arise of their seed. For thus the former of them renders this part of the verse; "There shall come a Man out of his seed, who shall rule over many nations." And the latter of them paraphrases in this manner; "There shall be a great King, who shall be anointed of his children, and shall have dominion over many people;" which the Jerusalem Targum saith expressly is Christ: for thus this verse begins in that paraphrase; "A king shall arise out of his sons, and their Redeemer from among them," &c. and thus concludes; "and the kingdom of the king Messias shall be magnificently exalted."

And his king shall be higher than Agag.] This seems to

have been the name of all the kings of the Amalekites, (for we read of one called Agag long after this time, 1 Sam. xv. 8, 9.) as Abimelech was the name of the Philistine kings, and Pharaoh of the Egyptian. And at this time, no nation thereabouts was in greater reputation than the Amalekites, (ver. 20.) who thought themselves able to obstruct the Israelites' passage into Canaan; and gave a very early proof of the high opinion of their own power and prowess, by attacking the Israelites as soon as they came out of Egypt. Balaam therefore foretells the king of Israel should be the greatest of all other (for he was acquainted with none higher than Agag); which some think hath a peculiar respect to their first king Saul, who subdued the Amalekites, and took Agag captive. But his successor was far greater than he; and the Jews themselves think this hath its full completion in the Lord Christ.

And his kingdom shall be exalted.] They shall increase and multiply, till their kingdom be greatly enlarged; as it was in the days of David and Solomon, who were but shadows of the great king Messiah.

Ver. 8. *God brought him out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn.*] All the power of Egypt could not detain them in slavery; but they came out from thence with a strong and high hand, (Exod. xiii. 9. xiv. 8.) and are grown a mighty people. See the foregoing chapter, (ver. 22.) where this hath been explained.

He shall eat up the nations his enemies.] Utterly destroy the seven nations of Canaan.

And shall break their bones.] So that they shall never recover their strength.

And pierce them through with his arrows.] Having given them their deadly wound: or, as some translate the Hebrew words, *break their arrows in pieces; i. e.* quite disarm them.

Ver. 9. *He couched, he lay down.*] He prophesies that the Israelites, having conquered the Canaanites, should settle in their land, and take their rest, and live securely: which he speaks of with such confidence, as if it were already done.

As a lion, and as a great lion.] See chap. xxiii. 24. the signification of *ari* and *labi*.

Who shall stir him up?] Give them any disturbance. It is observed of lions, that they do not betake themselves to remote or secret places, when they go to sleep; but lie down any where, (as Oppianus describes them, lib. iii.) as if they understood, that, let them sleep where they pleased, nobody durst meddle with them: (see Bochartus in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 2.) and therefore being applied to the Israelites, signifies such an absolute and secure possession of the land of Canaan, that none should have the boldness to assault, or give them any disquiet: which came to pass chiefly in the days of David and Solomon.

Blessed be he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.] These are the very words wherewith Isaac concluded his blessing of his son Jacob, (Gen. xxvii. 29.) which God now confirmed from the mouth of one of their enemies, who spake, at this time, by his Spirit.

Ver. 10. *And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam.*] He could no longer forbear to express his indignation, to be thus treated by Balaam (whom he had sent for a great way, and entertained for some time), and therefore stopped him from proceeding, for the present, any further in his prophecy.

And smote his hands together.] A token of vehement anger, (Ezek. xxi. 17.)

And Balak said unto Balaam.] It is likely he was so full of wrath, that he could not speak presently, but expressed it only in his looks and actions.

I called thee to curse mine enemies, and thou hast altogether blessed them.] Thou hast not said one word to my purpose, but all quite contrary.

These three times.] Though I have been at great expense, and built altars, and offered many sacrifices, in three several places: but at what distance of time, one from another, doth not appear.

Ver. 11. *Therefore now flee thou unto thy place.*] Get thee home immediately, and stay not a moment longer here; for that is imported in the word *flee*, which indicates that he could not endure the sight of him, while he remained thus angry: and, as he banished him his presence, so he commanded him to make all possible haste out of his country.

I thought to promote thee to great honour.] And to bestow as much wealth upon him as he desired; which is included in the word *honour*, (chap. xxiii. 17.)

But, lo, the Lord.] Whom thou pretendest to obey.

Hath kept thee back from honour.] By not permitting thee to comply with my desire. It is uncertain, whether these words were spoke in anger and scorn, or seriously and in good earnest; believing he was hindered by the Lord's will and pleasure from cursing Israel; which he had more reason to believe, than he had to hope he might obtain liberty to curse them, (chap. xxiii. 27.) and therefore was, without all reason, in this passion against Balaam.

Ver. 12. *And Balaam spake unto Balak.*] Prayed Balak to hear him patiently a few words before he departed.

Spake I not also to thy messengers, which thou sentest unto me, saying.] Did not I, before I saw thee, tell those that came to invite me to thee, the very same which I told thee afterward.

Ver. 13. *If Balak would give me his house full of gold and silver, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do more or less.*] So he told his messengers, (chap. xxii. 18.)

Of my mind.] According as I please.

But what the Lord saith, that will I speak.] So he told Balak himself, (chap. xxii. 38.) All which he recalls to his mind, to shew him that there was no cause for his anger, he having performed as much as he undertook; which was to follow God's directions, as he had done strictly. And it is likely, that by this just representation of what had passed between them, he brought Balak to a cooler temper, so that he suffered him to go on, to deliver what follows.

Ver. 14. *And now, behold, I go to my people.*] And now I will obey thee, as well as God, and be gone to my own country.

Come therefore, and I will advertise thee, &c.] But before I go, permit me to give thee some advice. So the Hebrew word *jaatz* constantly signifies, *to give counsel.* And so the Vulgar here translates it; but took it for the wicked advice, which we read, in the next chapter, was executed after Balaam's departure, and of which he was certainly the author, (chap. xxxi. 16.) and therefore thus translates the next words, *What thy people shall do unto this people.* But the Hebrew text and the LXX. are directly contrary unto this; being, as we translate the words, *What this people*

shall do to thy people. Therefore Onkelos, to take in the foregoing sense, without altering the latter part of the verse, puts in one word, and makes the whole run thus: *I will give thee counsel what to do, and (will shew thee) what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days.* And the Jerusalem Targum more largely and plainly, *I will advise thee what thou shalt do to this people; make them to sin: otherwise thou shalt not have dominion over them; but this people shall domineer over thy people in the latter end of days.*

In the latter days.] In future ages. This shews the foregoing words do not speak of what Moab should do to Israel by his advice; for that was done as soon as he was gone.

Ver. 15. *And he took up his parable and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said,* &c.] This was the preface to his foregoing prophecy: (see ver. 3.)

Ver. 16. *He hath said, who heard the words of God,* &c.] This verse also is the same with the fourth, only a few words added, *And knew the knowledge of the Most High;* which he adds, to shew his intimate acquaintance with the supreme Lord of the world. For he speaks of God in the very same style which Moses doth, calling him both *El,* and *Schaddai,* and *Elijon,* and *Jehovah;* which demonstrates that he was not a stranger to the true God, though corrupted with bad affections, and addicted also to foul superstitions.

Ver. 17. *I shall see him.*] Or, *I do see him* (for the future tense is often used for the present); that is, he saw the person of whom he was going to speak, represented to him in a vision.

But not now.] He saw him not as in being, now at present, but to come in future times.

I shall behold him, but not nigh.] The same thing in other words; but more plainly telling them, they must not expect this person in their time, nor in the next generation, but in remoter ages.

There shall come a Star out of Jacob.] A *star* denotes a great person; and being understood to be spoken of Christ, it denotes his celestial original. And both Onkelos, and Jonathan, and the Jerusalem Targum, take the Messiah to be here meant; and so doth R. Moses Haddarsan, and Bereschith Rabbath, and a great many Christian interpreters, (as Huetius observes, in his Demonstr. Evang. propos. vii. sect. 9.) particularly Eusebius and Cyril of Alexandria: who, in his eighth book against Julian, confutes his exposition of these words, which is this: Τοῦθ' ὅτι τῷ Δαβὶδ προσήκει, καὶ τοῖς ἀπ' ἐκείνου, πρόδηλόν ἐστί που· *That this belongs to David, and to his successors, is sufficiently manifest.* To which St. Cyril replies, that if Balaam had spoken of David, and the kings of Israel, he would have said, *There shall arise stars out of Jacob,* &c. whereas he speaks of one alone, οἷον ἐν ἄστροις ἐκπρεπῆ, *as very illustrious among the stars;* which, it is evident, can be none but Christ. Unto which I shall add the words of a later writer of the Jewish nation, R. Isaac, in his Illumin. Fidei, set forth not long ago by the learned Wagenseil: where he argues, this cannot be understood of David, or any other king of Israel, because none of them ever reigned all over the earth (*i. e.* over all the children of Sheth, whom none of them destroyed), but it is meant, he concludes, of the Messiah; who is compared to a star, because of the perennity of his kingdom, and the splendour of his dominion, and his great acts throughout the world, p. 72 and 80. where he makes this a prophecy of one kingdom alone to be in the world, *viz.* that of the Israelites, who are called "the people of the saints of the Most High," Dan. vii. 87. which is true enough, if he had understood the right meaning of Israelites; who are those, not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

It is not fit to conclude this without one observation more: that so long ago as the time of the Emperor Adrian, this was understood by the generality of the Jews to be a prophecy of the Messiah. For they followed one whose name was *Chocab* (i. e. *a star*), to whom the famous R. Akiba (a doctor, who, they say, had four-and-twenty thousand scholars) applied these words of Balaam, and calling him *Barchocab,* i. e. *the son of a star,* anointed him their king, and carried a sword before him, crying, *Behold the very king Messiah!* This is reported by the Jews themselves in Tzenach David, and several other books: all which, I think, doth not hinder, but that king David may be hereby signified in the first sense; though as a type of the Messiah, the great Son of David, in whom it was completed.

And a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel.] This some think may first have a respect to David, and then to the Messiah, the king of Israel. But the Chaldee paraphrast refers the whole to Christ, whose words are these, *A King shall arise out of the house of Jacob, and the Messiah shall be anointed of the house of Israel.* Nor is it any wonder that Balaam should prophesy of him so many years before he was born; and so plainly, that Moses himself doth not speak in plainer terms: but it is to be looked upon as the effect of God's infinite goodness, who would not have those, that were not of the seed of Abraham, to be wholly ignorant of what he intended to do for all mankind. And this was necessary to be plainly told them, because otherwise they would not have understood it.

And shall smite the corners of Moab.] The latter part of this prophecy, Huetius thinks, belongs to David, as the former part to Christ: which was the opinion of Maimonides, who divided the prophecy between them. And this was indeed literally fulfilled in David, who subdued the Moabites entirely, as we read 2 Sam. viii. 8. Psal. lx. 8. cviii. 9. Some translate these words, *he shall smite through the princes of Moab.* So the LXX. τοὺς ἀρχηγοὺς Μοάβ: which doth not alter the sense. And it is no unusual thing with the prophets, when they intend to speak of something nearer to them, to be transported by the Spirit of God, to speak of things a great deal more remote. As Balaam, here foretelling a great Ruler should come out of Jacob, first speaks of the greatest of all, above fourteen hundred years after this time; and then of David, who reigned about four hundred years after this.

And destroy all the children of Sheth.] They who interpret this of David, take Sheth to have been some great person in that country, or some place of great note, the inhabitants of which are here threatened to be destroyed. But these are mere conjectures, which have no foundation in history; whereas, if we understand it of Christ, and translate the first word, not *he shall destroy,* but (as Castalio and others do) *he shall rule over,* the sense is very remarkable; it being a prophecy, that, in the times of the Messiah, there shall be no longer such a distinction as God now made between the Israelites and other nations (by the peculiar laws

he gave them at their entrance into Canaan), but all mankind, who are equally descended from Seth, shall be united under his government. And thus not only Lyranus, and Abulensis, and others interpret it, but Onkelos also, whose words are, "He shall have dominion over all the sons of men:" for he thought it reasonable, by *the children of Sheth*, to understand all mankind who were propagated from him, who succeeded in the place of Abel that was killed; all the seed of Cain perishing in the flood.

Ver. 18. *And Edom shall be a possession.*] So it was in the days of David, (2 Sam. viii. 14.)

And Seir shall be a possession.] This was a famous mount in the country of Edom, (Gen. xxxvi. 8.) and being the strongest part of the country, may signify here, that no place should be able to hold out, though never so strongly fortified by nature or art. And so we read they all became David's servants, 2 Sam. viii. 14. 1 Chron. xviii. 13.

For his enemies.] *i. e.* For the Israelites.

And Israel shall do valiantly.] For they subdued in those days many other countries; as we read in the forenamed chapters, (2 Sam. viii. 1 Chron. xviii.)

Ver. 19. *Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion.*] This may relate to Christ as well as to David, in whom it was literally fulfilled. And so Baal-Hatturim observes, that (ver. 16.) it is said of Balaam, that he *knew the mind of the Most High*, for he prophesied of the Messiah, when he said, *out of Jacob shall one come that shall have dominion.* The word *jerd*, as the Masora notes, is used only here, and in Psalm lxxii. 8. where the Psalmist describes the universal kingdom of Christ in these words, "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the end of the earth."

And shall destroy him that remains in the city.] Not only rout them in the field, but take their defenced cities: and, it is likely, he particularly aims at some great city, and best fortified, which was the metropolis, and the strongest hold in the kingdom; such a one there was in Edom, as the Psalmist suggests, (Psalm lx. 9.)

Ver. 20. *And when he looked on Amalek.*] On the country which the Amalekites inhabited.

He took up his parable, and said.] See ver. 3.

Amalek was the first of the nations.] The most eminent among the neighbouring nations, or one of the most noble, as Bochart renders it, *gens una è nobilissimis.*

But his latter end shall be, that he perish for ever.] This God commanded Saul to execute, (1 Sam. xv. 3.) according to the doom passed upon them, after their fight with Israel, (Exod. xvii. 14. 16.) and he lost his kingdom for doing his work imperfectly; which the Vulgar Latin takes to be the meaning of the seventh verse of this chapter. Onkelos paraphrases the whole verse in this manner: "Amalek was the beginning of the wars with Israel, therefore his end shall be to perish for ever." The Jerusalem Targum more plainly, "The Amalekites were the first people that made war against Israel; and in the latter days they shall make war against them," &c.

Ver. 21. *And he looked on the Kenites.*] He standing now upon the top of Peor, which was, it is likely, the highest place of the country, (for which reason Balak brought him thither, after he had tried other high places, chap. xxiii. 28.) might see a great way, and possibly behold the very rocks wherein the Kenites dwelt. But what people are meant by this name, is not clearly evident: for there were a people called Kenites, who were part of the nation that inhabited the land of Canaan: (Gen. xv. 19.) these cannot be here intended; for they were too far off from this place. And as for the Kenites mentioned in Judges i. 16. iv. 11. who dwelt among the Israelites when they came into Canaan, they had as yet no fixed state, but were with them in the wilderness. Therefore, it is likely, they were some of the kindred of Jethro (originally derived from the same family that he was of), who remained in Midian; and adjoined so close to the country of the Amalekites, that they are said to dwell among them, (1 Sam. xv. 6.) For it is plain, the word *Keni* in Hebrew is the name of a people, not of a particular person; and there might be a great many of them; some in Canaan, others in Midian; and of these latter, some went with the Israelites into Canaan when they conquered it, and others remained still in their own country: they seem all to have been descended from one Ken, or Kain, mentioned Judges iv. 11. (as Scaliger conjectures in his Elenchus Trihæres. cap. 23.) Jethro's posterity being but one family of this people.

Strong is thy dwelling-place.] They were but a small people, who dwelt upon steep mountains.

And puttest thy nest in a rock.] This is but a further description of their country in other words: for *nest* signifies their *habitation;* only it seems to import that their dwelling was little, in craggy mountains, where they looked upon themselves as very safe and secure, the access to them being very difficult: and from hence, I suppose, they were called Shelamites (as both the Jerusalem Targum and Onkelos here term them, instead of Kenites), *i. e.* peaceable people; because nobody meddled with them, nor they with any body.

Ver. 22. *And the Kenite shall be wasted.*] By little and little diminished.

Until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.] Till at last they were all carried away by the Assyrians, when they overran Syria, (2 Kings xvi. 9.)

Ver. 23. *And he took up his parable, and said.*] Having rested awhile, he sighed, and said aloud, (see ver. 3.)

Alas! who shall live when God doeth this?] What miserable times will those be, when the Assyrians shall overrun a great part of the world! how few will escape their devastation! or, who would not desire rather to die, than live in those days?

But some, I observe, refer this not to what goes before, but to what follows; which relates to the desolations made by the following empires, especially the Roman.

Ver. 24. *And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim.*] Whether this prophecy hath respect (in the word Chittim) to the Greeks or to the Romans, or to both, it was plainly fulfilled, as the learned Huetius observes. But it must be noted, that not only St. Jerome, but Onkelos, and Jonathan, and the Jerusalem interpreter, and the Arabic, understand by Chittim the country of Italy, or some part thereof. And Bochartus proves, by many arguments, that the people of that country did descend from Chittim, (see Gen. x. 4.) Yet it is not likely that Chittim, being the son of Javan who peopled Greece, went so far at first from the rest of his brethren; but his children peopled some part thereabouts: from whence, in aftertimes, when they were

increased, they sent colonies into Italy; particularly Macedonia is called by the name of Chittim, in the Book of Maccabees; (1 Mac. i. 1. viii. 5.) and therefore I take the Greeks under Alexander to be here intended in the first place, and then the Romans in the next; each of them fulfilling the several parts of this prophecy.

And shall afflict Asshur.] This was done by Alexander, who overthrew the Persian empire, which ruled over the Chaldeans and Assyrians. So Theodoret understands the word Chittim, to signify Alexander and his Macedonians, whose country was anciently called Μακέττια, as Hesychius tells us, they being a mixture (as Mr. Mede probably conjectures in his forty-eighth Discourse, p. 377.) of the sons of Madai and Chittim. The Romans, indeed, afterward overthrew the Greek empire, but we do not read that they made war against the Assyrians till the time of Trajan, who subdued them, and reduced them into a province, as Dio relates, (lib. lxviii.)

And shall afflict Eber.] This was done by the Romans, not by the Grecians. For we are to understand by Eber, the Hebrew nation, called the *children of Eber*, Gen. x. 21. So the LXX. translate it, τοὺς Ἑβραίους: the name of Hebrews being as plainly derived from Eber, as that of Jews from Judah. Now they were not afflicted by Alexander in his conquests, but rather kindly treated by him: and therefore this cannot be meant of the Greeks; unless we will think it fulfilled in the time of Antiochus, who descended indeed from the Macedonians, but did not come from that country; nor did he afflict them long, much less make them desolate, as the Romans, under Vespasian and Titus, did; which seems to be here intended.

And they also shall perish for ever.] This doth not refer to Eber, but to the nation that afflicted him, *viz.* the Roman empire; which he prophesies shall not always afflict others, but at last be utterly destroyed itself. Aben Ezra, indeed, refers it to the kingdom of the Seleucidæ, or the Greek empire: but R. Isaac, beforementioned, thinks the destruction of the Romans is intended in this prophecy; only he fancies it is to be accomplished by a Christ not yet come.

Ver. 25. *And Balaam rose up, and went.*] As Balak had commanded him, (ver. 11.)

And returned to his place.] Unto his country, *viz.* Mesopotamia. But he was detained by the Midianites in his passage thither; among whom he was slain, as we read in the thirty-first chapter: for men are said to do that which they design and endeavour to do, (Exod. viii. 18. Numb. xiv. 40.) If this be not the meaning, then, after he came to his own country, he returned to the Midianites, at their entreaty, or by his own inclination; and (either as he was going home, or when he came back) gave that impious counsel, which was executed not long after this, as we find in the next chapter: for that he was the author of it, we are assured by three Divine writers. (See 2 Pet. ii. 15. Jude, ver. 11. Revel. ii. 14.)

It is a strange exposition which Baal-Hatturim gives of his going *to his place;* that is, saith he, *he went down into hell.* But it may serve to confirm the common interpretation of that which is said of Judas, Acts i. 25.

And Balak also went his way.] To Kiriah-Huzoth, I suppose, mentioned chap. xxii. 39.

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *AND Israel abode in Shittim.*] A place in the plains of Moab, (where they lay, while the forementioned things were transacted, chap. xxii. 1.) called Abel-Shittim, chap. xxxiii. 49. but it is usual to cut off the former part of a place's name, for shortness' sake: as in this very book, (chap. xxxii. 38.) Baal-meon for Beth-Baal-meon, as it is called Josh. xiii. 17. and Hermon commonly for Baal-Hermon; and Nimrim for Beth-Nimrim. To which may be added, Salem for Jerusalem, (Psal. lxvi. 3.) This station was the last which the Israelites made, while they remained in the wilderness; in which the rest of the things that follow, to the end of the book of Deuteronomy, were done.

And the people began to commit whoredom.] Both bodily and spiritual; into which they fell not long after Balaam was gone from Balak: though not all the people fell into this guilt, but a great many of them; as appears from what follows, (ver. 4—6.)

With the daughters of Moab.] And of Midian also, as we learn from ver. 6. 17, 18. But those of Moab are here alone mentioned; because, it is likely, they began this wicked practice. I see no ground for what Greg. Nyssen saith, that the Israelites having vanquished the Moabites in a battle, fell in love with the captives which they had taken, being overcome by lust, when they had been victorious in war; as he speaks, lib. de Vita Mosis, p. 186. It is something more probable, that the prophecy of Balaam being spread abroad among the Moabites concerning the great blessings God designed to bestow upon the Israelites, particularly that of the Messiah, it might excite in the women of Moab a desire to have children by the men of Israel, that they might partake in their blessings; unto which they might think they had some title, being descended from the eldest daughter of Lot, the son of Abraham's brother. This might pass for truth, if it were not very evident from the following story, that the daughters of Moab exposed themselves, by Balaam's counsel, to the lust of the Israelites, that by this means they might seduce them to idolatry, and so make them lose the blessing intended for them. For that this was done by Balaam's advice, there is no doubt. (See chap. xxxi. 16.) And the Jews have also a conceit that he ever had been an enemy unto Israel, being one of Pharaoh's privy-council, who advised him to drown their children; as the tale is told in the Talmud, in the title Sanhedrin, cap. *ult.* But this is to make him to have been now of a greater age, than we have reason to believe (*viz.* two hundred and ten years old, according to their own computation), and quite contrary to what others of them say, that he lived but half his time, according to the Psalmist, (Psalm lv. 23.)

Ver. 2. *And they.*] That is, the daughters of Moab.

Called the people.] Invited them to a feast: for the ordinary charms unto idolatry, were good victuals and bad women.

Unto the sacrifices of their gods.] To eat of the sacrifices which had been offered to their gods, particularly to Baal-Peor. These feasts upon their sacrifices were very magnificent among the heathen, being accompanied with music and dancing, and sometimes pompous processions, which

enticed youthful minds to partake of them. Here the Israelites, casting their eyes upon the daughters of Moab (which doubtless on this occasion appeared in the best dress and richest ornaments), were smitten with their beauty, and courted their enjoyment; who would not yield to this motion, but upon condition that they would first worship their gods: whereupon, pulling a little image of Peor out of their bosom, they presented it to the Israelites to kiss it, and desired them to eat of the sacrifices that had been offered to him. Thus the Jewish doctors tell the story. And indeed it hath been observed by the writers of the church, that women have been the most dangerous seducers of men from the true religion; being from the beginning the spreaders of the old heresies. For Simon Magus advanced his heresy, "Helenæ meretricis adjutus auxilio," *being assisted by the help of the harlot Helena.* Nicolaus of Antioch also, *choros duxit fœmineos.* The famous Marcion sent before him some Roman ladies to prepare his way. Apelles, Montanus, Arius, Donatus, did all take the same course; as St. Jerome shews in his book Adversus Pelagianos.

And the people did eat.] Which was an act of idolatry (as to eat of the Lord's sacrifices was an act of Divine worship), whereby they owned themselves the servants of the gods of Moab. (See Exod. xxxiv. 15.)

And bowed down to their gods.] This was still a more plain act of idolatrous worship, expressly forbidden by God in the second commandment.

Ver. 3. *And Israel was joined unto Baal-Peor.*] This seems to signify, that they were devoted to the service of this idol in great affection; with which they performed the forenamed actions. The Jews commonly take this Baal-Peor to have been no better than a Priapus; and the worship of him to have consisted in such obscene practices, or postures at least, as are not fit to be named. Particularly their great commentary upon Numbers saith, that the Israelites being unwilling to enjoy their women upon those terms, they told them they needed only to uncover their nakedness before Baal-Peor, which was all the worship required of them: unto which they easily submitted. This Maimonides relates for a truth, that his worship consisted in revealing their secret parts before him, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 45.) But Solomon Jarchi goes further, making this worship to consist in actions as ridiculous as they were beastly. All which seems to me very unlikely; and so it doth to several men of great judgment, particularly Mr. Selden; who thinks, with great probability, that Peor (as I observed before, chap. xxiii. 28.) being the name of a mountain in the country of Moab, the temple of Baal stood upon it (by whom some understand Saturn, others the sun, which is most likely), and thence he was called Baal-Peor, because there he was especially worshipped; as Jupiter was called Olympius, because he was worshipped in a famous temple, which stood on the mountain Olympus. And every one knows, that anciently they chose the highest mountains, before all other places, for the Divine service; insomuch, that at Jerusalem the temple was set upon the hill of Sion, which the Psalmist saith God preferred before all other places, (Psal. lxxviii. 68.) Or Peor, perhaps, was the name of some great prince (as the same Mr. Selden conjectures), translated into the number of the gods: for the Psalmist saith, (Psal. cvi. 28.) that when they worshipped Baal-Peor, *they ate the sacrifices of the dead;* which seems to signify, that in him they worshipped some dead man, who perhaps was the first institutor of this worship, whatsoever it was. Another great man of our own nation hath said much to strengthen this opinion; having shewn at large, that the ancient heathens were wont to deify the souls of men, and canonize them after death; and these were called Baalim, being accounted an inferior sort of deities, who they fancied were ministers for them to their celestial gods. (See Mr. Mede, book iii. p. 724, &c.) Yet it must be acknowledged, that there are others of great note who take all for truth which the Jewish writers report concerning the filthy worship of Baal-Peor, and imagine that fornication was a part of it; as in future times it was both among the Greeks and Romans, in the worship of some of their gods. For what the Jews found then practised, they fancied was done in these early days; but it is observable, that the more ancient the books of the Jews are, which speak of this matter, the less they say of the impurities in the service of Baal-Peor. For example, the Jerusalem Talmud hath none of that lewd stuff in it, which Solomon Jarchi, upon this place, took out of the Babylonian; which was composed long after the former.

And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.] As appeared immediately, by the severe punishment he inflicted on them, both for their idolatry and for their fornication.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up.] The plain meaning seems to be, that he should *take, i. e.* cause to be apprehended, *the heads of the people, i. e.* the rulers of thousands and hundreds, and other principal persons in their tribes, who had been guilty of the foul idolatry beforementioned; and by *hanging them up,* put a stop to the people's lewdness, when they saw these great men made public examples of God's displeasure. For it is very likely, more of the princes of the people were guilty besides Zimri; especially if it be true, which the Samaritan Chronicle affirms, that the daughters of the chief men of Moab were sent finely dressed to allure the Israelites; and one of the king's daughters among the rest. But, though the LXX. and the Vulgar, and Symmachus, thus understand it, that he commanded the heads of the people to be hanged up; yet a great many other ancient translators, and many famous doctors, take the word *otham* (*them* whom he commanded to be hanged up) not to refer to the *heads* of the people, but to such as had joined themselves to Baal-Peor: and they interpret the foregoing words, as if he had bid him *take unto him* (*i. e.* to his assistance) *the heads of the people,* as they think he did, as is related in the next verse. The judges indeed, there mentioned, seem to be distinct from *the heads of the people;* and Moses did not take them to his assistance, but commanded them to do their duty. Yet it must be acknowledged that there is a great current of interpreters which runs the other way; as if Moses was commanded to order the judges to assemble and call before them such as were suspected; and having examined the fact, accordingly proceed against them, and punish such as had offended. Thus the Samaritan copy reads it expressly, and so Onkelos, and the paraphrast called Uzielides, and the Jerusalem Targum, and the Arabic translation of Saadia Gaon: and both the Talmudists and Karaites agree in this sense, as

Mr. Selden shews at large, lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 1. n. 10. and Joh. Coch upon the Gemara of the Sanhedrin, cap. 4. sect. 4. where he observes that Aben Ezra, and Solomon Jarchi thus interpret it, and takes the meaning to be certain, that the heads of the people should divide themselves into several courts of judgment, and examine who had committed idolatry; and after conviction cause them to be hanged. For there is great reason to think the constitution of judges, by Jethro's advice, continued all the time they were in the wilderness; who might easily find out the guilty in their several divisions.

Before the Lord.] *i. e.* Before the sanctuary; as men who had forsaken the worship of their God, and by his sentence were adjudged to die.

Against the sun.] Openly, that all the people might see, and fear to sin. So both R. Solomon and Aben Ezra expound it. For this was a peculiar mark of the Divine displeasure against idolaters and blasphemers, that they should be hanged up, and publicly exposed, after they had suffered death. For none were hanged alive among the Hebrews; but first stoned (which was the common punishment of the forenamed offenders), and then hanged up in *the eyes of all;* as R. Solomon expounds this phrase *against the sun.*

That the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned from Israel.] By their zeal to vindicate the Divine honour.

Ver. 5. *And Moses said unto the judges of Israel.*] Some take these for the seventy elders, mentioned chap. xi. 25.

Slay ye.] By hanging them up, as some understand it. But the Hebrew word imports killing with the sword; which they commanded their officers to do, with the assistance of such as abhorred the wickedness of their neighbours.

Every one his men.] The seventy elders, being appointed to be coadjutors to Moses in the government, made a division of the people, it is most likely, into so many districts: and each of them having the charge of one, all the people therein are called *his men;* of whom he was to give an account.

That were joined unto Baal-Peor.] Who were so well known, that there was no danger of slaying the innocent.

Ver. 6. *And, behold.*] This which follows is the more wonderful, if the judges had already begun to execute the foregoing command; and argues Zimri to have been very impudently wicked, who thought himself so great a man, that no judge durst meddle with him.

One of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren.] In the camp of Israel, or into the tent where his own family dwelt.

A Midianitish woman.] By which it appears that both nations, Moab and Midian, were in this plot against Israel.

In the sight of Moses.] A high contempt of his authority; and of God's also, whose servant Moses was.

And in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel.] This seems to be a further aggravation of his sin, that he was not content to go to the women who invited them, (ver. 2.) but brought one of them along with him into the camp of Israel; and this he did before the face of all the people, as well as of Moses; and that when they were mourning for this sin, as it here follows.

Who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] This shews, that though there were great numbers engaged in this defection, yet the generality of the people clave unto the Lord, and bewailed the wickedness of their brethren, most earnestly imploring God's mercy towards them.

Ver. 7. *And when Phineas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest,* &c.] A man of great authority, being next to the high-priest, whom he succeeded in his office, as he did Joshua (if we may believe some writers) in the government of all Israel.

He rose up.] His spirit (as St. Luke speaks of St. Paul) was stirred in him; and being inspired with a holy zeal was moved to do what follows.

From among the congregation.] Who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle; or rather, from among the judges with whom he was assembled, being one of them: so Jonathan; he rose up *from the midst of the Sanhedrin.* For, as Bonav. Cornel. Bertramus thinks, Eleazar, after the death of Aaron, appointed his son Phineas to be prince of the Levites; which he thinks appears, not only from his rising up here, from the midst of the judges of Israel, but from the embassy, wherein he was employed by Joshua, unto the Reubenites, &c. beyond Jordan, Josh. xxii. 14. and from 1 Chron. ix. 20. where he is said to be *ruler over the Korahites;* which signifies, he thinks, such a pre-eminence as Eleazar himself had over the Levites, while his father Aaron lived, (de Repub. Jud. cap. 15.) And indeed the Psalmist saith, that Phineas stood up and *executed judgment,* (Psal. cvi. 39.) which seems to import that he acted as a judge, but by an extraordinary motion: which made him kill the offenders with his own hands, without a judicial process against them.

And took a javelin in his hand.] Or a sword, as Josephus calls it; which he snatched out of the hand of Moses, as the tradition is in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 47.

Ver. 8. *And he went after the man of Israel into the tent.*] It is an unusual word in the Hebrew which we translate *tent;* importing a private, secret place like a cave, as *kubba* or *kobba* is thought to signify, which the Arabians call *alcobba;* from whence comes the word *alcove;* which signifies, as Bochart observes, "conclave camerati operis, quo lectus circumdatur:" *a room of arched work, which incloses a bed in it.* (See his Hierozoicon, par. i. p. *ult.*)

And thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman.] This he did, saith Philo, προστάξαντος Μωϋσέως, *by the command of Moses;* but should rather have said, by a Divine instigation; which he followed, when the rest of the judges were afraid (as some conceive) to meddle with so great a man as Zimri was. And upon this fact, the Jews ground that which they call *the judgment of zeal,* which authorized them, who were full of zeal, to punish such as blasphemed God, or profaned the temple, &c. in the presence of ten men of Israel, without a formal process against them. Thus Matthias killed a Jew who sacrificed after the manner of the Greeks; (1 Maccab. ii. 24.) and three hundred others were killed by their countrymen, as is related in the book commonly called the Third Book of Maccabees. And upon the pretence of such zeal, St. Stephen was stoned, and St. Paul intended to be killed, &c. as Grotius observes, (lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 20. sect. 9. and see Selden de Jure Nat. et Gent. lib. iv. cap. 4.) But this judgment (as they call it) seems not to be well grounded upon the fact of Phineas, who was a public person, and had an extraordinary motion, not to be imi-

tated by private men; nor was it followed till the latter times of the state of that nation.

Through her belly.] The Vulgar hath it, *through her secret parts.* And so the Jews in Pirke Eliezer, (cap. 47.) and in other books, such as Pesikta and Siphri; where they make many miracles to have concurred in this fact; particularly, they say, that the relations of Zimri going to fall upon Phineas for killing their prince, the angel of the Lord smote them, and cut them off.

So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel.] It seems a pestilential disease (as Josephus calls it) swept away many of the offenders, who could not so speedily be punished by the judges: but it stopped immediately upon this pious act of Phineas.

Ver. 9. *And those that died of the plague were twenty and four thousand.*] There were but twenty and three thousand who died of the plague itself, as the apostle tells us, (1 Cor. x. 8.) but there were a thousand more taken off in the plague time, or *during the plague,* as the Hebrew words may be read: for, in the twenty and four thousand, Moses comprehends all those who were killed by the sword, *in the day of the plague,* (as the phrase is ver. 18.) whereas St. Paul reckons those only who died of the pestilence, as many have observed, particularly Bochartus, (lib. ii. Hieroz. cap. 34. par. i.) It is probable that from hence it was, that the author of the Samaritan Chronicle took up a conceit, that the king of Moab sent twenty-four thousand damsels to seduce the Israelites; as Hottinger reports his words, in his Smegma Orientale, (cap. 8. p. 448.)

Ver. 10. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] After the plague was stayed, it is likely, Moses went into the tabernacle to give God thanks for his mercy to his people; and then he spake to him what here follows.

Ver. 11. *Phineas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel.*] Though they wept and mourned before the door of the tabernacle, yet that did not prevail so much for mercy as this heroic act of justice.

While he was zealous for my sake among them.] With a fervent and courageous affection vindicated the Divine honour, by a speedy punishment of those notorious offenders.

That I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.] Did not proceed to destroy them by the pestilence, when I was so highly incensed against them. For it is observed by Herodotus himself in his Euterpe, that τῶν μεγάλων ἀδικημάτων μεγάλαι εἰσὶ καὶ τιμωρίαι παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, *for great crimes there are as great punishments sent from God;* which is necessary for the public good: for unless, by such means, a stop be put to open impurities, to murders, and such-like crimes, not only all civil society will be overturned, but nations become so wicked, that they will be fit for nothing but to be rooted out, by the Divine vengeance, as the Canaanites were. Thus Cicero discourses, (Philip. viii.) "In corpore, si quid ejusmodi est, quod reliquo corpori noceat," &c. *In the body, if there be any thing which hurts the rest of the body, it is necessary to cut it off, or to burn it, that some one member, rather than the whole body perish: and so it is in the body of the commonwealth:* "ut totum salvum sit, quicquid est pestiferum amputetur;" *that the whole may be preserved, let that which is infectious be lopped off.*

Ver. 12. *Wherefore say.*] Unto Phineas, or unto all the people.

Behold, I give thee my covenant of peace.] The word *peace,* in Scripture, comprehends all manner of blessings: and therefore this is a solemn promise and engagement to make him and his family prosperous: the particular blessing which he entails upon him, following in the next verse. But some will have this to signify, that he should be the great reconciler of God to his people, and make peace between them hereafter, as he had done at present. Philo seems to think this and the priesthood to be two distinct things; when he saith, *God crowned his piety* διτταῖς δωρεαῖς, εἰρήνῃ καὶ ἱεροσύνῃ, *with two gifts, peace and the priesthood.* And the Jews make peace to consist in a long life of prosperity; which was fulfilled in Phineas's person, who lived till the latter times of the judges, (Judg. xxi. 28.) Pirke Eliezer interprets it, *He gave him the life of this world, and of the next.*

Ver. 13. *And he shall have it, and his seed after him.*] It shall continue in his family.

Even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood.] This is the particular happiness which God settled upon him and his posterity, as long as their state lasted; which was with some limitation, it appears by this, that after some successions in the line of Phineas, the priesthood came, for a time, into the family of Eli, who was descended from Ithamar the youngest son of Aaron: the reason of it is not mentioned in the Scripture; but some great sin, it is reasonable to suppose, provoked God to set aside the line of Eleazar for some years, till Eli's sons also became so wicked, that the priesthood was taken from them, and restored in the days of Solomon to the posterity of Phineas, with whom it continued as long as the priesthood lasted. What sin this was, and when committed, we do not know. Some of the Hebrew doctors are so bold as to say, it was because Phineas would not absolve Jephthah from his vow, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. i. de Success. in Pontif. cap. 2.) But as there is no ground for this, and such-like fancies, which others of them have, so it is more probable that some of Phineas's successors offended, rather than he himself; his posterity for four generations holding the priesthood, before it was translated to Eli, as Josephus and others (mentioned by Selden in the place beforenamed) make account.

Ægidius Camartus, in his book de Rebus Eliæ, cap. 3. sect. 5. and Cornel. Bertram, cap. 15. de Repub. Jud. imagine, that in those confused times, none of the priests were found fit to administer the affairs of the nation, but Eli alone; and therefore he was appointed by God to it, as appears from 1 Sam. ii. 30. But L'Empereur, in his annotations upon Bertram, well observes, that it being the constant course of God's proceedings, to continue his mercies to the Israelites, according to his promise, while they were obedient, but to take them away when they became disobedient; it is highly reasonable to conclude there was some great offence given to God by some of the race of Phineas, which was the cause that they lost this dignity: but so constant was God to his promise, that he preserved his line in a continued succession of twelve persons, from Phineas to Azariah, who "executed the priest's office in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem," as we read 1 Chron. vi. 4. to the 10th: from which time, to the captivity of Babylon, there were nine more, as we read there in the following verses: and after the end of the captivity, unto

the time of Antiochus Eupator, the Jews reckon fifteen more, the last of which, Onias, was killed by Lysias: and after him there were eight of the family of the Asmonæi; the last of which, Aristobulus, was killed by Herod, who after that made whom he pleased.

Because he was jealous for his God.] God, who searches the hearts, saw that this motion proceeded not from any private passion, but out of pure love and fervent affection to him, and from indignation to see his Divine Majesty so affronted. For zeal is a mixed affection of love and anger.

And made an atonement for the children of Israel.] Procured a pardon for all his brethren, αὐτοκελεύστω καὶ ἐθελουργῷ σπουδῇ (as Philo expresses it), *by his uncommanded and spontaneous diligence* to vindicate God's honour, flowing from his sincere devotion to God's service.

Ver. 14. *Now the name of the Israelite that was slain, even that was slain with the Midianitish woman.*] God would have his name stand upon record, partly to make it infamous, and partly to do honour to Phineas, who durst venture to set upon a man who had so great an interest in his tribe, as is mentioned in the next words.

Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince.] Not the chief of the whole tribe, but of a great family in that tribe.

Of a house among the Simeonites.] In the Hebrew the words are, *of a house of a father.* For the tribes were divided into families, and these into houses, every one of which had a head or chief, (see the first chapter of this book, ver. 2.) and Zimri was one of those principal persons, though not prince of all the Simeonites.

Ver. 15. *And the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur.*] This is set down also, to shew how little Phineas feared the great men, either in Israel, or elsewhere: for Zur is reckoned afterward as one of the kings of Midian, (chap. xxxi. 8.) or princes, (Josh. xiii. 21.)

He was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian.] The Hebrew word *ummoth* (which we translate *people*) signifies *nations;* so that if we translate these words exactly, they sound thus, *he was head of nations, of a house of a father in Midian;* that is, chief of divers families, who all sprung from the same father or original in that country.

Ver. 16. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Some time after this, though not long, (as appears from chap. xxxi. 1, 2.) but a little before Moses's death.

Ver. 17. *Vex the Midianites.*] Among whom this pernicious contrivance was hatched: for Balak being so incensed against Balaam, that he bade him begone, in all haste, out of this country, (chap. xxiv. 11.) Balaam would not stay to propound unto him this mischievous advice which was in his head, but went to the Midianites, and there discovered it; which was the same thing, he knew, as if he had acquainted Balak with it, there being a great friendship between the two nations, (chap. xxxii. 4.) It is likely, also, that the Midianites were the first that advised Balaam should be sent for, which made their guilt the greater: but the Moabites did not escape, though (for Lot's sake, perhaps, Deut. ii. 9.) their punishment was deferred till future times, as Balaam prophesied, (chap. xxiv. 17.) and they were also excluded, by a law made immediately after this, from the society of the Israelites, for this very fact, (chap. xxiii. 3, 4.)

And smite them.] With the sword; as we find they did, chap. xxxi.

Ver. 18. *For they vex you with their wiles.*] Have sorely distressed you by their subtle devices.

Wherewith they have beguiled you, in the matter of Peor.] Drawn you in to commit foul idolatry. Here Peor, which was a mountain in Moab, where Baal had a temple, (as I observed, chap. xxiii. 28.) is used for the idol itself, which was there worshipped, being a contraction of Baal-Peor: and so it is chap. xxxi. 18. Josh. xxii. 17.

And in the matter of Cozbi.] And into lewd filthiness with idolatrous women.

The daughter of a prince of Midian.] By whose consent, no doubt, she went upon this wicked design; that, by her noble garb and attendance, she might the more powerfully entice the great men of Israel to idolatry.

Their sister.] Whom the whole family were content to prostitute, that they might compass the destruction of the Israelites: but by *sister* may be meant one of the same country or nation; the same kind of language being used among them that was among the Jews; who called one another brethren and sisters (being descended from the same stock), as Christians did all those that were of their religion.

Which was slain in the day of the plague.] When so many thousands fell by the pestilence.

For Peor's sake.] For worshipping Baal-Peor; into which they were inveigled by the women, who invited them to a feast, and there, by their charms, excited another fleshly appetite in them, which they would not let them satisfy, unless they would both eat of their sacrifices and worship their idol: and perhaps they told them it was not lawful for them to consent to their desire, unless they would be of their religion.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass after the plague.*] Mentioned in the foregoing chapter, ver. 9. 17. though some fancy it refers unto all the plagues that had swept away all the former generation, except two persons. It is likely this may be done in the *eighth* month of the *fortieth* year, after they came out of Egypt.

The Lord spake unto Moses, and unto Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saying.] As God had formerly joined Aaron with Moses, (Numb. i. 1. 17. ii. 1. iv. 1, &c.) so now Aaron being dead, he joins his son Eleazar with him, to shew that he succeeded not only in his place and office, but also in his authority.

Ver. 2. *Take the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel.*] They had been twice numbered before this; once, before the building of the tabernacle, in the first year after they came out of Egypt, when they paid every man half a shekel towards it, (Exod. xxx. 11. 13. xxxviii. 25.) and again, when they were to be encamped, in the second month of the second year, (Numb. i. 1, 2, &c.) And now, all those men who had been then numbered (thirty-eight years ago) being dead (as appears from ver. 64. of this chapter), God commands them to be numbered a third time; partly, that he might demonstrate his faithfulness to his word, in multiplying them vastly, notwith-

standing all their provocations (for their number was within eighteen hundred and twenty as many as they were at the last muster), and partly that the land they were now going to possess, might be the more easily divided among the tribes in just and equal proportions.

From twenty years old and upwards, throughout their fathers' house, all that are able to go to war in Israel.] All this is explained in the first chapter, ver. 2, 3.

Ver. 3. *And Moses and Eleazar the priest spake with them.*] With the heads of the several tribes; who, it is likely, were to assist in this numbering, as they did in the former, (Numb. i. 4. 16, 17.)

In the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying.] See chap. xxii. 1.

Ver. 4. *Take the sum of the people.*] These words are not in the Hebrew; but some words of this kind are to be understood, that they spake with them about numbering the people, *from twenty years old and upwards,* as it here follows.

As the Lord commanded Moses and the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt.] He bade them proceed according to the directions God had formerly given, in the second month of the second year, after they came out of Egypt, (Numb. i. 1.)

Ver. 5, 6. *Reuben, the eldest son of Jacob.*] This numbering being performed as the former was, Moses uses more concise language in the account he gives of it; as he doth in the foregoing verse, and in this, and those that follow; where he sets down the number of every tribe, and the families from whence they sprung, without saying, *Those that were numbered of the tribe of Reuben were,* &c. as he doth, Numb. i. 21, &c.

The children of Hanoch, of whom came the family of the Hanochites, &c.] The four sons of Reuben (whose families here follow) are mentioned both in Genesis xlvi. 9. and in Exodus vi. 14. and are here mentioned again; because he intends to set down the names both of the children and grandchildren of one of his sons, which he did not before.

Ver. 7. *These are the families of the Reubenites.*] The word we translate *families,* rather signifies *nations* (*gentes*) or *kindreds,* as we translate it, Psal. xxii. 27. For all that sprung from those seventy persons who came with Jacob into Egypt, are called by this name of *mispecoth,* which the LXX. here translate δῆμοι, *people;* which were divided into *houses,* as the Hebrews call them, and those *houses* into particular persons: this is plain from Josh. vii. 14. where, for the discovery of him that had sinned in the accursed thing, God commanded the Israelites to be brought by their *tribes,* and then that tribe by the *families* belonging to it; and that family which the Lord took by *households;* and that household man by man.

And they that were numbered of them were forty and three thousand and seven hundred and thirty.] This being compared with Numb. i. 21. it appears this tribe was less than it was eight-and-thirty years ago, by near three thousand men: for some whole households had been destroyed, as it follows, ver. 9.

Ver. 8. *And the sons of Pallu, Eliab.*] He speaks in the plural number, when there was but one son of Pallu, which is very usual in the Scripture language: (see Gen. xix. 29. xxi. 7. xlvi. 7. and in this very chapter, ver. 42.)

Eliab.] He doth not say from him came the family of the Eliabites; for he made only a household in the family (as we call it) of the Palluites.

Ver. 9. *And the sons of Eliab, Nemuel, and Dathan, and Abiram.*] The same must be observed of these, that families did not spring from them; but they were households belonging to the family of the Palluites.

This is that Dathan and Abiram.] They are here again mentioned; partly to set a new brand upon them, for their insolent rebellion against Moses, and partly to shew how the Reubenites came to be so diminished.

Famous in the congregation.] See chap. xvi. 2.

Who strove against Moses, and against Aaron, in the company of Korah.] They joined with Korah, who seems to have been the chief incendiary; for he is mentioned first in chap. xvi. 1.

When they strove against the Lord.] Who had appointed Aaron alone to be the high-priest, and his sons to minister in the priest's office; which these men would have usurped; chap. xvi. 11. where it is said expressly, "they were gathered together against the Lord."

Ver. 10. *And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up together with Korah.*] These words seem to import, that Korah was swallowed up with Dathan and Abiram, as I have observed upon chap. xvi. 32. (See there.) But it must be acknowledged, that these words may receive another interpretation, and that very natural, in this manner: *The earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up,* (*viz.* Dathan and Abiram, and the rest, mentioned chap. xvi. 32.) and then the next words, *veeth Korah,* may be thus translated, *and as for Korah* (who was the great incendiary) *when that company died, i. e.* he died when the company which offered incense died: for there is in many places a defect of a word, to be supplied from the word that follows. This is a very easy construction, and agrees with the Psalmist, Psal. cvi. 17. where he mentions only Dathan and Abiram's company as swallowed up; and then adds, (ver. 18.) "A fire was kindled in their company (*i. e.* in the other company of rebels), and the flame burnt up the wicked;" *viz.* Korah, and those that were with him.

What time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men.] See chap. xvi. 35. If the interpretation now mentioned of the foregoing words be admitted, then Korah must be added to the number of the two hundred and fifty men; which Moses takes occasion to explain in this place.

And they became a sign.] A monument of God's displeasure against those that affront his ministers; to give warning unto all posterity not to follow their pernicious courses.

Ver. 11. *Notwithstanding the children of Korah died not.*] As those of Dathan and Abiram did; but their family continued famous in David's time: for perhaps they left their father, and *departed from the tents of those wicked men;* as Moses by God's command exhorted the congregation, (chap. xvi. 24. 26.) and they obeyed, (ver. 27.)

Ver. 12, 13. *The sons of Simeon after their families,* &c.] His sons are reckoned up here just as they are Gen. xlvi. 10. and Exod. vi. 15. only one of them, *viz.* Ohad, is here omitted; because, either he had no children, or his family was extinct before this time. The first of them also, *viz.* Nemuel, is there called Jemuel; and Jachin, in 1 Chron. iv. 24. is called Jarib; there being some reason, in process of time, for such alterations.

Ver. 14. *These are the families of the Simeonites, twenty*

and two thousand and two hundred.] There was a wonderful decrease of this tribe in the space of thirty and eight years: for they were fewer by above thirty-seven thousand than they were at the last numbering. (See chap. i. 23.) Many of them, it is probable, being in the same crime with Zimri, and the plague falling most heavily upon this tribe, whom Moses in Deuteronomy xxxiii. doth not bless.

Ver. 15—17. *And the children of Gad after their families.*] They are reckoned here next to the Simeonites, because they lay encamped next to them, under the standard of Reuben, (Numb. ii. 10, 11, &c.)

Of Zephon the family of the Zephonites, &c.] They are reckoned up in the same manner, Gen. xlvi. 16. only he that is here called Zephon, is there called Ziphon; and Osni is there called Ezbon; and Arod called Arodi.

Ver. 18. *These are the families of the children of Gad, according to those that were numbered of them, forty thousand and five hundred.*] This tribe also was less by above five thousand than before, (chap. i. 25.)

Ver. 19. *The sons of Judah, Er and Onan.*] These were his eldest sons, but died without issue before the children of Israel went down into Egypt, as it here follows. (See Gen. xxxviii. 1, 2, &c.)

Ver. 20. *And the sons of Judah after their families were,* &c.] Now he reckons those of his sons who made families, which were three: as we read also Gen. xlvi. 12.

Ver. 21. *And the sons of Pharez were Hezron,* &c.] Here he numbers two of Judah's grandchildren, as he did one of Reuben's, ver. 6. only with this difference, that these two made families in Israel, which his grandson did not; they being substituted instead of Er and Onan, who died without children. Or rather, the family of Pharez growing very great, there was a subdivision made of it into the other families, who were all still Pharezites (for Pharez had no other children but these two, to make a family of that name), but called by these two names of Hezronites and Hamulites, because the Pharezites were grown too big to be one family, and therefore parted into two.

Ver. 22. *These are the families of Judah, according to those that were numbered of them, threescore and sixteen thousand and five hundred.*] This tribe was very numerous before, above all the rest; and now this new generation, which sprung up instead of the old (who were all destroyed except Caleb), exceeded them two thousand. So faithful was God to his promise, that this should be a most powerful tribe. (See Numb. i. 27.)

Ver. 23. *The sons of Issachar after their families.*] He and Zebulon are mentioned next, because they lay encamped together, under the standard of Judah. (See Numb. ii. 5—7.)

Of Tola, the family of the Tolaites.] A wonderful fruitful family, and very valiant: there being of this one family twenty-two thousand and six hundred men in the days of David, (1 Chron. vii. 2.)

Of Pua, the family of the Punites.] He is called Phuvah, Gen. xlvi. 13.

Ver. 24. *Of Jashub.*] Who is called Job in the same place.

Ver. 25. *Threescore and four thousand and three hundred.*] This tribe also was exceedingly increased; being near ten thousand more now than they were at their first numbering, (chap. i. 29. ii. 6.)

Ver. 26. *Of the sons of Zebulun after their families.*] There is no change in their names; which are the same, without any alteration, as when they went into Egypt, (Gen. xlvi. 14.)

Ver. 27. *Those that were numbered of them, threescore thousand and five hundred.*] This tribe likewise was increased above three thousand since the former numbering, (see chap. i. 31.) And so the whole camp of Judah was mightily augmented, as that of Reuben was diminished.

Ver. 28. *The sons of Joseph after their families.*] See Gen. xlvi. 20.

Ver. 29. *Of the sons of Manasseh, of Machir,* &c.] This was the only son; but those descended from him, by an usual manner of speaking, are called Manasseh's sons also, being his grandsons. Some think indeed that Manasseh had other sons, which they gather from Gen. l. 22. but, if he had, their families were extinct; but none but Machir and his posterity had any inheritance in the land of Canaan, Josh. xvii. 1, 2. where the grandchildren are called his children.

Machir begat Gilead, and of Gilead came the family of the Gileadites.] They were not a distinct family from the Machirites, but the very same; Machir having no son but Gilead. Therefore that family, which at first was called Machirites, was afterward called Gileadites; or it was indifferently called either by the one or the other.

Ver. 30. *These are the sons of Gilead, of Jeezer.*] Called Abiezer, Josh. xvii. 2.

The family of the Jeezerites, &c.] The posterity of Gilead grew so numerous, that his sons made families, and not only households: so that the name of Gileadites being too general to distinguish them all, they were called, at length, by the name of his sons.

Ver. 31, 32. *Of Asriel, the family of the Asrielites,* &c.] This, and all the rest that follow, are mentioned as the sons of Gilead; for each of whose children there was a lot in the land of Canaan, (Josh. xvii. 2.)

Ver. 33. *And Zelophehad the son of Hepher had no sons, but daughters,* &c.] Whose case is considered in the next, and in the last chapter of this book; where they are ordered to have an inheritance among their father's brethren, but to marry into their own tribe. And their posterity, I suppose, were called after their grandfather's name, Hepherites: for such a family there was, as Moses tells us in the foregoing verse.

Ver. 34. *Numbered of them fifty-two thousand and seven hundred.*] If this be compared with chap. i. 35. it will appear that this tribe was increased above twenty thousand: which is the greatest increase of any other; and made good the prophecy of Jacob concerning the children of Joseph, (Gen. xlix. 22.)

Ver. 35. *These are the sons of Ephraim, after their families.*] He is mentioned after Manasseh, because he was his younger brother: yet in their encampment, this tribe had the standard under which Manasseh marched, (Numb. ii. 18, &c.)

Of Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthelites, &c.] He is mentioned first also in 1 Chron. vii. 20. where the next son Becher is called Bered; and Tahan called Tahath. For time is wont to make great alterations in the names of persons and places.

Ver. 36. *These are the sons of Shuthelah, of Eran, the*

family of the Eranites.] He had, it seems, but one son; whose children (after the usual manner of speaking before noted) were called the sons of Shuthelah; though they made a distinct family, under the name of Eranites.

Ver. 37. *Those that were numbered of them, thirty-two thousand and five hundred.*] Though this proved a very numerous tribe in future times, yet, for the present, they were fewer by eight thousand than they were in the former numbering, (chap. i. 33.) which makes Moses's prophecy, a little after this, the more remarkable, Deut. xxxiii. 17. where he makes the Ephraimites ten to one, in comparison with the Manassites.

Ver. 38. *The sons of Benjamin, after their families.*] This tribe also was under the standard of Ephraim, and therefore mentioned here together with him and Manasseh. When they went into Egypt, the sons of Benjamin were no less than ten, (Gen. xlvi. 21.) half of which either had no children, or they were all extinct before this time; for here are only five named.

Of Bela, the family of the Belaites, &c.] The two first, Bela and Ashbel, are there named as they are here: but the next, Ahiram, is there called Ehi, and in 1 Chron. viii. 1. Ahara; such an alteration doth time make in names.

Ver. 39. *Of Shupham,* &c.] He is called Muppim in Gen. xlvi. 21. and Hupham is there called Huppim.

Ver. 40. *The sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman.*] Though five of his sons were dead without issue, yet two of his grandsons, descended from his eldest son, made distinct families in Israel. And the son of one of them was called after the name of his uncle, the youngest son of Benjamin, (Gen. xlvi. 21.) whose name was Ard; and in 1 Chron. viii. 3. (by a small transposition of letters) is called Adar.

Ver. 41. *There were numbered of them forty-five thousand and six hundred.*] This tribe was grown to be ten thousand more than they were at the last numbering, (chap. i. 37.)

Ver. 42. *These are the sons of Dan.*] Thus he speaks, though he had but one. (See ver. 8.)

Of Shuham.] Called Hushim, by a transposition of letters, Gen. xlvi. 23. Just as the same tree is called *almugim*, 1 Kings x. 8. and *almugim*, 2 Chron. ii. 8. And the same city in which Joshua was buried, called Timnath-Serach, Josh. xxiv. 30. and Timnath-Cheres, Judg. ii. 9. And, to come still nearer, the same man is called Rechum, Nehem. xii. 3. and Cherim, ver. 15. of the same chapter.

These are the families of Dan, after their families.] That is, from these Shuhamites came all the rest of the families of this tribe, which are not here mentioned; but into which this family was subdivided when it grew very great, as it appears from the next words.

Ver. 43. *All the families of the Shuhamites.*] This shews there were more than one of them who had names from some of the children of Shuham.

Were threescore and four thousand and four hundred.] A vast number to spring from one man; when Benjamin, who had ten sons, wanted almost twenty thousand of this number: which is seventeen hundred more than were in this tribe at the last numbering, (chap. i. 39.)

Ver. 44. *Of the children of Asher after their families,* &c.] They all retain the same names which they had when they went into Egypt, (Gen. xlvi. 17.) Only he that is here called Jeshui, is there called Ishui; and another son there mentioned is here omitted; his family, I suppose, being quite extinct.

Ver. 45. *Of the sons of Beriah,* &c.] Instead of him, whose family was quite lost, the youngest son of Asher (Beriah) had two families sprung from him.

Ver. 46. *And the name of the daughter of Asher was Sarah.*] Or Serah, as she is called, Gen. xlvi. 17. He doth not say that a family sprang from her, which Corn. Bertramus (cap. 6. de Republ. Jud.) seems to think probable, instead of some that were lost; but she was a woman, it is likely, as eminent in this tribe as any of her brethren for some virtue or other: insomuch, that the cabalists, in the ancient book Zohar, parting the heavenly region, where the souls of holy women are, into four palaces, make four great women to be a kind of presidents of them, *viz.* Pharaoh's daughter, who educated Moses; and this Serah, the daughter of Asher; with Jochabed, the mother of Moses; and Deborah, the famous prophetess. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 4.)

Ver. 47. *Were fifty and three thousand and four hundred.*] This tribe also fructified exceedingly, wanting but a hundred of twelve thousand more than they were at the last numbering, (chap. i. 41.)

Ver. 48, 49. *Of the sons of Naphtali, after their families,* &c.] There are four of them whose names were not at all changed since they went into Egypt. (See Gen. xlvi. 24.)

Ver. 50. *Were forty-five thousand and four hundred.*] They wanted eight thousand of their number, (Numb. i. 43.) These two tribes, Asher and Naphtali, are mentioned together with Dan, because they were encamped under his standard, (Numb. ii. 25, 26, &c.)

Ver. 51. *These were the numbered of the children of Israel, six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and fifty.*] That is, the whole number amounted to this sum; which was but eighteen hundred and twenty less than they were when they were last numbered, thirty-eight years ago, (chap. i. 46.) So great was the goodness of God, and such his faithfulness to his word, that, when he destroyed all the former generation (who were above twenty years old), he multiplied their posterity so fast, in that space of time, as to make them equal, in a manner, to those that went before them.

Ver. 52. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] After the people were thus numbered, and every family, and the persons it contained, exactly known, then the Lord ordered as follows.

Ver. 53. *Unto these.*] *i. e.* These families beforenamed.

The land shall be divided.] *i. e.* The land of Canaan, into which they were going.

For an inheritance.] Not to be alienated from those families.

According to the number of names.] Of the persons in the several families, from twenty years old and upwards, (ver. 2.) So that minors, who had not attained the age of twenty years when this account was taken, the Jews say, were not to have any share in the land, though they were come to that age at the time of the distribution of it among them. But those minors had possessions, as heirs of their fathers, according to the families.

Ver. 54. *To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt give the less inheritance.*] That is, order Joshua to assign them a share in the land, proportionable

to the number of persons in every tribe: some of which were far greater than others, and therefore to have more land, proportionable to the largeness of their families. But this was not measured merely by the number of acres, as we speak, but by the goodness of the soil: for a little ground, in a rich country, would maintain more persons than twice as much in a barren. So Josephus, lib. v. Antiq. cap. 1. where, after he had said that Joshua made a distribution of the land, κατὰ μεγέθους ἑκάστης τῶν φυλῶν, *according to the bigness of each tribe;* he adds, that in doing this, τιμητοὺς μᾶλλον ἢ μετρητοὺς τοὺς κλήρους εἶναι δεῖν, *it was necessary to consider rather the value than the measure of every portion;* and gives this reason why the tribe of Benjamin had so narrow a portion allotted them, because the ground was so very fertile about Jerusalem. Στενότατος ὁ κλῆρος οὗτος διὰ τὴν τῆς γῆς ἀρετὴν, *This lot was very strait, because of the goodness of the soil.*

To every man shall his inheritance be given.] That is, to every family.

According to those that were numbered of him.] According to the account that had been now taken; not considering who might be born after this (and thereby increase a family), or die (and thereby diminish it) before the division of the land was made. For several died, we may well think, in the wars with the Canaanites, and others were born before the country was conquered.

Ver. 55. *Notwithstanding the land shall be divided by lot.*] When it was divided into so many equal shares as there were tribes (a due respect being had to their number), they were not to choose which share they would have; but that was to be determined by lot. The manner of which they say was this: two urns being placed before him that drew the lots, in one of which were scrolls of parchment, containing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, and in the other, the portions of land; he first put in his hand into the urn wherein were their names, and drew out one, suppose that of Judah; and then he put his hand into the other urn, and drew out the portion that fell to his share. Or, perhaps, there was only one urn, wherein were the several portions of land; and they began suppose with the eldest son of Israel, *viz.* Reuben; and pulling out a scroll, said, *This is the portion of Reuben:* and so with the rest. But which soever way they proceeded there were two distributions made, one of the whole country into twelve parts; and another of each of those parts among the several families that were in each tribe. (See Selden de Successionibus ad Leges Hebr. cap. 21, 22.)

According to the names of the tribes of their families they shall inherit.] This seems to justify what I now said, that they first named the tribe whose lot they would draw out; and that contained his inheritance. But, after all this, it might happen that some of their lots were too scanty for their number, and others too large: in which case Eleazar, and Joshua, and the rest appointed for this office, (chap. xxxiv. 17, &c.) ordered some portion to be taken from those who had too much, and given to those who had too little for their families. This appears from Josh. xix. 9. where a portion out of the lot of Judah is ordered for Simeon; because the one was too large, and the other too small: and the same may be said of Dan, ver. 47.

Ver. 56. *According to the lot shall the possession be divided.*] The first words, which we translate *according to the lot*, being, in the Hebrew, *al pi hagoral*, which literally signify *according to the mouth of the lot* (which is no more than, *as the lot shall declare*), the Jews have a conceit, that the land was divided, not merely by lot, but by *urim* and *thummim*, which Eleazar the priest then put on (as the Talmud describes it in Bava Bathra); and two urns standing before him, in one of which were the names of the twelve tribes, and in the other the names of the portions of land, he looked by the Holy Ghost upon the *urim* and *thummim*, and said, Let such a tribe come up; which being done, he said again, Let such a portion of land come up for this tribe: by which means all the people (before whom this was done) were satisfied that their portion was allotted to them by God; and all cause of murmuring and contention taken away. Thus R. Solomon and others mentioned by Buxtorf in his Hist. Urim et Thummim, cap. 3. and Martinius Mauritius in his late treatise de Sortitione veter. Hebr. cap. 29. sect. 4, 5. where he observes, how ancient the way of dividing goods and lands by lot was in other countries. But there was no need of this solemnity; the division of the land by God's order, after the manner of lots, sufficiently shewing, it was not by man's directions but by God's that such a share fell to them.

Between many and few.] Every tribe having its land assigned them by the lot, it was then divided among the several families, in the same manner (as these words seem to signify), and then every household had their share allotted them, according to the number of persons that were in them; which if they were many, had a greater share; if few, a less. By which means every man had reason to rest satisfied, because such was his lot; that is, such was the good pleasure of God, who directed the lots; as we learn from Joshua xviii. 6. 8. 10. where we read expressly, that in the division of the land, he "cast lots for them before the Lord in Shiloh," that he might order every one his portion.

Ver. 57. *And these are they that were numbered of the Levites, after their families.*] It was fit an account should be taken of this tribe also, that it might be seen how God had blessed them, as well as the rest of the tribes of Israel, with a numerous issue; though he had cut off, in the space of thirty-eight years, all the former generation, from twenty years old and upward.

Of Gershon, the family of the Gershonites, &c.] The principal families in this tribe were three, descended from the three sons of Levi, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari; whose names were not at all altered since their coming out of Egypt until this time, (Gen. xlvi. 11. Exod. vi. 16.)

Ver. 58. *These are the families of the Levites.*] The three forenamed were the principal families, divided into those lesser families which here follow.

The family of the Libnites.] Descended from Libni the eldest son of Gershon; who had another son, whose family is here omitted (*viz.* Shimi), though mentioned Exod. vi. 17. But in this place Moses doth not give a full account of all the families of the Levites, nor is it given in exact order, because they were to have no inheritance in the division of the land; which was the reason that all the families of the other tribes are set down so punctually.

The family of the Hebronites.] From Hebron, one of the sons of Kohath, (Exod. vi. 18. Numb. iii. 19.)

The family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites.]

From the two sons of Merari, who were called Mahli, and Mushi, (Exod. vi. 19. Numb. iii. 20.)

The family of the Korathites.] From the great-grandchild of Levi, (Exod. vi. 21. Numb. xvi. 1.)

And Kohath begat Amram.] Who was grandchild of Levi, and brother to the father of Korah, (Exod. vi. 18.)

Ver. 59. *And the name of Amram's wife was Jochabed, the daughter of Levi.*] See Exod. vi. 20.

Whom her mother (*viz.* Levi's wife) *bare to Levi in Egypt.*] See this there explained.

And she bare unto Amram, Aaron and Moses, and Miriam their sister.] Who was born before Moses, if not before Aaron, (Exod. ii. 4.)

Ver. 60. *And unto Aaron was born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.*] See Exod. vi. 23. where he tells the name of their mother.

Ver. 61. *And Nadab and Abihu died, when they offered strange fire before the Lord.*] See Lev. x. 2. and the third chapter of this book, ver. 4. But Eleazar (who was the eldest next to them) was now alive, and made high-priest; and it is likely Ithamar also, being under twenty years old, when the people murmured upon the report of the spies; and so not cut off with that wicked generation, (chap. xvi. 29.)

All this is here recounted, to shew that the tribe of Levi was preserved, by the blessing of God, as well as the rest of the Israelites; though they were to have no inheritance in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 62. *And those that were numbered of them, were twenty and three thousand,* &c.] So they were a thousand more than at the last numbering, (chap. iii. 39.)

For they were not numbered among the children of Israel.] But by themselves, for the reason following.

Because there was no inheritance given them among the children of Israel.] For God was their inheritance, as he told them, chap. xviii. 20, &c. And therefore they were ordered not to be numbered thirty-eight years ago, no more than now, (Numb. i. 49, &c.) The Jews are something curious in their observations upon these words, *among* (or *in the midst of*) *the children of Israel:* from whence they conclude, that the Levites might have lands out of the bounds of the land of Canaan, though not within it, among their brethren.

Ver. 63. *These are they that were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the plains of Moab,* &c.] By a special command of God, (ver. 1, 2, &c.)

Ver. 64. *But among these there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai.*] See the first chapter of this book, ver. 1, 2, &c. so exactly were God's threatenings fulfilled, as well as his promises.

Ver. 65. *For the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness.*] He had pronounced this irreversible sentence upon the whole congregation, chap. xiv. 23. 28, 29. where he swears they should not enter into the land of Canaan, because they had brought or entertained an evil report of it. (See also Deut. ii. 14, 15.)

And there was not a man left of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.] Whom God promised to spare, because they were of another spirit, (chap. xv. 24. 30. 38.) And their survival was as remarkable an instance of the truth of God's word, as the death of all the rest.

CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *THEN came the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hepher,* &c.] Who are mentioned before, (chap. xxvi. 33.) just as they are here; only their genealogy is here more fully set out, that their father was the grandson of Manasseh the son of Joseph, from whom he was lineally descended, but left no sons behind him. Now these young women hearing Moses say (as he doth in the foregoing chapter), that the Lord commanded the land of Canaan should be divided among those that were now numbered; and observing that only males from twenty years old were numbered, (ver. 2.) presently apprehended, that they, being females, were excluded from having any inheritance among the Israelites, (and so the family of the Hepherites, chap. xxvi. 32. would be extinguished.) This was the ground of what follows: whereby it appears, that every body was immediately acquainted with the laws which Moses received from God; and that there was a faithful register kept of every one that was born in every family and tribe, to prevent all disputes about the true heirs to men's estates.

Ver. 2. *And they stood before Moses,* &c.] To represent before him, and the rest of the judges, who were now assembled, the case which I have mentioned.

Before Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and before the princes, and all the congregation.] These made up the greatest court of judicature that at any time sat. For by *princes* are meant, either the heads of the tribes, or the highest of the judges appointed Exod. xviii. called *the heads of the people,* ver. 25. And by *all the congregation* is meant the seventy elders mentioned in this book, (chap. xi. 24.) For they are called *col ha edah* (the *whole congregation,* and sometimes only *edah,* the *congregation*), as R. Solomon observes: (see Bertram de Republ. Jud. p. 72.) Now at the head of all these sat Moses, and next to him Eleazar the priest.

By the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] Near to which this august assembly, it is likely, was wont to sit when they met together; that Moses might presently, if there were occasion, go and consult with God himself in any difficult matter that came before them. And thus Mr. Selden observes, out of Maimonides, that in future times the great Sanhedrin followed the tabernacle, sitting sometimes in one place, sometimes in another, according as that was settled. As (after they came to Canaan) it was first at Shiloh, then at Mizpeh, and afterward at Gilgal, Nob, Gibeon, the house of Obed-Edom; till at last it was fixed in Jerusalem, (lib. ii. de Syned. cap. 15. n. 4.) As concerning that which the Talmudists say, concerning the proceedings in this case of Zelophehad's daughters, nothing certain can be determined. But they give this account of it: that they first brought this cause into the courts appointed by the advice of Jethro, (Exod. xviii. 21.) and began with the rulers of ten, who knowing not what to say to them, they went to those of fifty, and from thence to the centurions, and at last to the chiliarchs: none of which durst adventure to give judgment, but referred the cause, by reason of its difficulty, to Moses; who brought it to the Schechinah,

as they speak, *i. e.* to the Divine Majesty, (Seld. ib. cap. 16. n. 1.)

Ver. 3. *Saying, Our father died in the wilderness.*] Among the rest mentioned ver. 64, 65. of the foregoing chapter. They seem to have drawn up their cause in the form of a petition; or, as Mr. Selden speaks, in the legal phrase, presented a libel to the court, containing the entire matter of their petition, and that artificially enough.

And he was not one of them that gathered themselves together against the Lord in the company of Korah.] They use the very words of Moses concerning that rebellious company, (chap. xvi. 11.) and instance in this sin, rather than any other; either to shew that their father had a due regard to the authority of Moses (who they hoped therefore would be the more favourable to his posterity), or rather, to insinuate, that he was not guilty of such a crime, as might make men justly forfeit what they had for their children, as well as for themselves. For all the family of Dathan and Abiram perished: and it is taken notice of as a singular mercy, that the children of Korah did not, (chap. xxvi. 10, 11.)

But died in his own sin.] *i. e.* For his own sin: which God had declared should not affect the children, (chap. xiv. 31.) For to that general sin, in which all the people were engaged, these words seem to refer. And so it was *his own sin*, not with respect to the rest of the people (for they were all alike guilty), but with respect to his children; it being a personal guilt, in which they were not concerned.

The Jews commonly say that Zelophehad was the man that was stoned for gathering sticks on the sabbath-day: for which they have no authority, but a fancy of R. Aquiba, who is sharply reproved for it by another considerable rabbi, who saith it is a rash judgment; for if it were true, since the Scripture conceals it, he ought not to have revealed it: but hath reproached a just man, for any thing that appears. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 1. sect. 2.)

And had no son.] As was found when the people were numbered, (chap. xxvi. 33.)

Ver. 4. *Why should the name of our father be done away from among his family.*] One family of the tribe of Manasseh, *viz.* the Hepherites, being in danger to be wholly extinguished. R. Judah will have the word *name* in this place to signify as much as *hereditary possession;* and so he thinks it signifies, Deut. xxv. 6. as Mr. Selden observes out of Pesikta, (lib. de Successionibus, cap. 14.)

Because he hath no son.] Merely for want of issue-male, when he hath left many daughters.

Give unto us therefore a possession among the brethren of our father.] Let us come in for a share among those that are descended from Manasseh: which if they did, the name of their father could not be thereby preserved, but by the son of one of these daughters taking upon him, not the name of his father that begat him, but of his mother's grandfather, *viz.* Hepher; which was ordered afterward by a general law, (Deut. xxv. 6.)

Ver. 5. *And Moses brought their cause before the Lord.*] This was too difficult a cause (though there seemed to be a great deal of reason on their side) to be judged by the great court beforementioned; and therefore it was referred to Moses alone, as other weighty causes used to be: (see chap. xv. 32. xxv. 4.) for neither Eleazar, nor any other person, (before whom it was brought, ver. 2.) are here mentioned as the judges of this matter. And he durst not judge it, though the equity appeared very plain, without bringing it before the Lord for his direction, which he could have upon all important occasions, (Exod. xxv. 22. Numb. vii. 89.)

Ver. 6. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] This shews that the cause was devolved upon Moses alone; for the Lord tells him, and no other person, how it should be determined.

Ver. 7. *The daughters of Zelophehad,* &c.] The Lord approves of their claim, and gives a sentence in their favour.

Thou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren.] Because the word *from them* in the Hebrew is of the masculine gender, some think it signifies, they were to be considered as if they had been sons.

And thou shalt cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them.] So that they were to enjoy what would have fallen to his share had he been alive; "ob indutam defuncti patris personam," as the lawyers speak; *because they stood in the place of their dead father, and represented his person.* And accordingly they put in their claim at the division of the land, and had their portion therein, according to this decision, (Josh. xvii. 2, 3, &c.) How the portion was divided among them, according to the Hebrew doctors, Mr. Selden shews at large in his book de Successionibus in bona defuncti, cap. 23.

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying.*] Upon this occasion he passes this special case into a general law, to be hereafter observed.

If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter.] It being but reason, as Maimonides observes, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 42.) that what a man leaves should come to his family, and to those who are next of kin to him: for the nearer any person is to us, we are inclined, by natural affection, to have the greater regard to him. But all this is to be understood of land: as for money, and moveable goods (which were of his own getting), the father might dispose of them, by his will, to whom he pleased.

Ver. 9. *And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his brethren.*] Unless his father was alive, who, undoubtedly, the Jews say, was the next heir; but not mentioned, because it was not necessary; or, as some say, because it was too sad a thing to speak of a father's burying all his children without issue. See Selden, de Succes. in bona defuncti, cap. 12. where he observes, that, according to the rule, ver. 11. it must come to the father, because he is *nearest of kin* to it. And therefore the Jews interpret this, as if Moses had said, *If he have no daughter, ye shall give inheritance to the next of his kindred* (to his father for instance), *and afterward ye shall give it to his brethren,* i. e. *the children of his father.* And the same is to be said of the grandchildren; unto whom the brethren of a father dying without issue are heirs. For the grandfather stands in the same relation to a father that a father doth to his son.

Ver. 11. *And if his father have no brethren, then ye shall give it to his kinsman that is next of kin to him of his family, and he shall possess it.*] To his brother's children, or

to those who are descended from them, or from his father's brethren. But no consideration was to be had of his mother's kindred (as the Jewish lawyers say), who could never be capable of the inheritance: which they gather, not only from these words, which determine the inheritance to *his family* (*i. e.* the family of the father beforementioned, not to the family of the mother), but from the frequent mention of the father of *Mischpachoth*, which we translate *families*, or rather kindreds of the fathers, in the books of Moses, Chronicles, Ezra, and others. From whence this solemn maxim of the Talmudists, *The family or kindred of the mother, is never called by the name of kindred:* that is, it hath not the effect of a kindred in successions to inheritances. Which is the same with that in the ancient book Siphri, *Families follow the fathers;* as Mr. Selden observes in the place beforementioned; who in the next chapter (cap. 13.) gives an example, drawn up by Maimonides, of such a succession out of the Holy Scriptures. Amram had two sons, Aaron and Moses, as we read Exod. vi. 20. If they had both died without issue, Miriam their sister had inherited. And if she had died in like manner, the inheritance of the family would have reverted to Kohath, the father of Amram: or he being dead, to his three sons, the brethren of Amram, *viz.* Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, as the heirs of Kohath. And there would have been no consideration of primogeniture; both because none of them was the first-born, and because the inheritance was not in the possession of their father, at the time of his death, &c.

And it shall be unto the children of Israel a statute of judgment, &c.] A law whereby to determine such matters in future times, and to be observed inviolably: so that no father should have power to make any other settlement; but if either by word or writing he declared his will to be that his son should not inherit, his act was null and void: as the Jewish lawyers resolve from these very words, *a statute or decree of judgment, i. e.* as I said, a rule whereby to judge of succession into inheritances. If therefore a man made a will, wherein he declared his daughter or brethren, &c. should not inherit, in case he had no son, it was void, because contrary to this law. (See Selden de Successionibus, cap. 24.)

Ver. 12. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mountain Abarim.*] Either these words were spoken after all that follows here, and in the book of Deuteronomy, or they were repeated again, when he had repeated his laws, and enforced them by many excellent discourses, and taught them that famous song, Deut. xxxii. where, in the conclusion of it, (ver. 49.) it is said, that very day he bade him go up this mount Abarim. And there we learn also that Abarim was a long tract of mountains, one of which was called Nebo; and the very top of it called Pisgah. (See Deut. xxxiv. 1.)

And see the land which I have given to the children of Israel.] Take a full view of it, as he did from that high neighbouring mountain, (Deut. iii. 17. xxxiv. 1—4.)

Ver. 13. *And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered.*] Upon Mount Hor, as we read in this book, chap. xx. 23, 24.

Ver. 14. *For ye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin,* &c.] See chap. xx. 1. 12. 24. where all this verse is explained.

Ver. 15. *And Moses spake unto the Lord, saying.*] He did not speak those words which follow, immediately after God bade him go up Mount Abarim and die; but first desired he might be permitted to go over Jordan, &c. (Deut. iii. 24—26.) Unless we can think that he made the prayer there mentioned, as soon as the sentence was passed upon him, at the waters of Meribah, which doth seem not so likely.

Ver. 16. *Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh,* &c.] As soon as he found that God was resolved he should not conduct the people into Canaan, he was concerned for nothing, but for a fitting person to take that charge upon him. For he had a most generous public spirit, wholly intent upon the good of this people.

The God of the spirits of all flesh.] Who hast not only made the souls of all men, but knowest their dispositions, (see chap. xvi. 22.) and understandest who are fit for this weighty employment.

Set a man over the congregation.] To be chief ruler and governor of the people in my place.

Ver. 17. *Which may go out before them, and which may come in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in.*] If the latter part of these words be not a mere repetition of the former (as is usual), then the one relates to the conduct of war, and the other to the management of all their civil affairs. And both of them seem to be a metaphor from shepherds watching over their flocks.

That the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd.] Having none to govern and to take care of them. This is a description of the most miserable condition a people can be in, and became a proverb among the Hebrews, (1 Kings xxii. 17. Zach. x. 2. xiii. 7. Matt. ix. 36.)

Ver. 18. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun.*] Who had been a long time servant unto Moses, and attended upon his person, (Exod. xxiv. 13.) well known to Moses, and perfectly acquainted with his administration.

A man in whom is the spirit.] Of courage and prudence, and the fear of God, with all other gifts necessary in an excellent governor: among which Onkelos reckons the spirit of prophecy; which is not unlikely.

And lay thine hand upon him.] Which was a ceremony usual in blessing, (Gen. xlviii. 14, &c.) and in setting men apart, and consecrating them to an office, (chap. viii. 10.) Upon which followed a more abundant measure of the spirit, as appears from Deut. xxxiv. 9.

Ver. 19. *And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation.*] Being all assembled for this purpose, that all might acknowledge him for the designed successor of Moses, and be witnesses of all that Moses commanded him.

And give him a charge in their sight.] He told him before them all what God expected from him; and bade him be not afraid to execute it. See Deut. xxxi. 7, 8. where he sets down the words of this charge; unto which God presently after added one of his own, (ver. 14, 15. 23.)

Ver. 20. *And thou shalt put some of thy honour upon him.*] Communicate some of thy authority to him at present; and not let him be any longer as thy minister, but as an associate in the government. The word we translate *honour* being *glory* in the Hebrew, it made Onkelos and other

Hebrew doctors imagine these words have respect to that splendour which shone in Moses's face, after he came down from the mount: some of which they suppose was imparted unto Joshua, to make him appear more venerable in the eyes of the people. And R. Menachem observes, that it is not said, impart *thy glory*, but *of thy glory* to him. From whence came that ancient saying, *The face of Moses shone like the sun, but Joshua's only like the moon.* This might have passed for truth, or at least that hereby was meant some great increase of illustrious gifts of mind, which procured him such reverence as Moses had, if it had been said that God put some of Moses's glory upon him; whereas Moses is commanded to do it; which makes the first sense most reasonable.

That all the congregation of Israel may be obedient.] That the people may begin to submit to his authority, and learn to obey his commands, as well as thine.

Ver. 21. *And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest,* &c.] For the encouragement of Joshua to undertake this charge, he assures him he shall never want direction from God what to do when he was in any doubt; but, in the manner he prescribed, most certainly receive it. And what is here said concerning him, belongs to all their succeeding governors. And it is observed by Maimonides, and other Jewish doctors, that the high-priest stood before the kings of Israel out of great respect to them: but no king is said to stand before the high-priest, but only in this case, when he was to consult the holy oracle; that it might appear the honour was given not to the priest, but unto the Divine Majesty, whom he consulted by the priest.

Who shall ask counsel for him, after the judgment of urim.] Because the word *thummim* is here wanting, some understand these words, as if he had said, the high-priest shall ask counsel for him, by the *illumination of the Spirit of God.* So Conradus Pellicanus. But the word *thummim,* in all likelihood, is here to be understood, though not expressed, being always joined with *urim* (except in this and one other place, where *urim* only is named, after a short manner of speaking), in Exod. xxviii. Deut. xxxiii. Ezra ii. Nehem. vii. For they were inseparable from *the breast-plate of judgment,* as it is called Exod. xxviii. 30. (see there) with which the high-priest appeared before God when he consulted him in great affairs concerning the public safety, more especially in times of war; of which we have many instances in Judg. i. 1. xx. 18. 1 Sam. xiv. 18. xxviii. 6. David, indeed, is said to consult God by the *ephod,* but it must be observed that the *breast-plate* was annexed to it; which Abiathar brought along with him when he fled from Saul, who commanded the priests to be slain, 1 Sam. xxii. 2. 9. xxx. 8. 2 Sam. v. 19. And it is further to be noted, that, though David thus frequently consulted God this way, being engaged in wars, yet we never read that Solomon asked counsel by it, being a peaceable king.

Grotius also observes, that Joshua now, and the kings of Judah afterward, therefore *stood before* the priest, that they might be near to the *urim* and *thummim,* which he had upon his breast; without which he could not receive any answer, (De imperii Sum. Potest, &c. cap. 6.)

Before the Lord.] The high-priest never inquired by *urim* and *thummim,* but standing before the Lord; that is, before the ark, where the Schechinah was.

At his word shall they go out, and at his word shall they come in.] That is, saith Grotius, in the place forenamed, at the word of the Lord, *by the judgment of urim,* which goes just before. Others, *at the word of the priest:* which comes to the same. And this the Hebrew doctors understand concerning the people of Israel making war; which is wont to be meant in Scripture, by the words *going out* and *coming in.* And they distinguish between the war that was made by the Divine commandment (against the seven nations of Canaan, and against Amalek), and that which was voluntary against any of their neighbours, or others, as there should be reason. In the former case, they think there was no need to ask whether they should make war or not, because it was commanded; and Joshua and the kings afterward did it when they pleased. But in the other, they were not to make war without this Divine order. (See Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 12. n. 4.) But it is plain from Judg. i. 1. that they consulted the Lord also in the first sort of war (with the people of Canaan), how to manage it to the best advantage.

Both he and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.] By the first word [*he*] the Jews understand Joshua, and all the succeeding princes of Israel, who were bound to advise with God by *urim* and *thummim* before they made war. And by the next words [*all the children of Israel with him*] they understand the priest that was particularly anointed to go with the people to war, (Deut. xx. 2.) And by the last words [*the whole congregation*] they understand the seventy elders, or the great Sanhedrin. So Maimonides, Abarbinel, and a great many others, expound these words (as Mr. Selden shews in the same place), from which they have framed this general maxim, that no private man might consult this oracle, *but the king, and the head of the great Sanhedrin, and he that was appointed by all the people in their name.* And that *col ha edah* [*all the congregation*] signifies frequently the great assembly of the elders and judges. (See also Bertram de Repub. Jud. p. 72.)

Here the Jews start a difficulty, as they account it, why we never read in the whole book of Joshua, that he consulted the Lord after this manner; but as soon as ever he was dead they did, (Judg. i. 1.) From whence Abarbinel concludes, that Joshua was bound to do this only at the first entrance upon his office, that all Israel might know he was Moses's successor, and that God was with him: but that afterward the spirit of prophecy rested upon him, and conducted him without this oracle. But if nothing was done that is not recorded in the Scripture, he might as well have said, that Joshua never consulted the oracle at all; for we do not read he did, though he be here so ordered. R. Levi ben Gersom, therefore, seems to me to speak more reasonably, when he says, that those words in the beginning of the book of Judges do not import that they did not consult God by *urim* in the life of Joshua, but only that after his death the children of Israel would not adventure to proceed in the war of Canaan without the same direction.

And there is something else which they might have observed from this verse, with great reason, which is, how much inferior Joshua was to Moses, though he succeeded him in the conduct of the people. For Moses never made use of the *urim* and *thummim* to consult God by the high-priest, but went directly and immediately to God himself: whereas Joshua was not admitted to such familiarity; nor

had he such frequent revelations from God as Moses had. Yet sometimes God vouchsafed him the honour to speak to him, as we find in the beginning of Joshua, chap. iii. 7. iv. 1. 15, &c. And there was a most illustrious appearance of God to him before Jericho, (chap. v. 13, &c.)

Ver. 22. *And Moses did as the Lord commanded him: and he took Joshua and set him before Eleazar, and before all the congregation.*] According as he was ordered, ver. 18, 19. In this we see the great integrity, the sincere humility, and self-denial of Moses, that he readily submitted to have the government of Israel translated from his own family and tribe unto another, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, whereby his own children were reduced to a mean condition, being not so much as priests, but mere Levites. This demonstrates he acted not from himself, because he acted not *for* himself; but was contented to have the supreme authority placed where God pleased, both in church and state, and to leave his own family in an inconsiderable employment. This shews him to have had a principle which raised him above all other lawgivers, who always took care to advance their own families, and establish them in some share of that greatness which they themselves possessed. This likewise demonstrates, that the future rulers of this nation had no temptation to advance the credit of Moses beyond what it really was, since they were not descended from him, but were of other tribes.

Ver. 23. *And he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge; as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.*] He did all things which the Lord required to create him his successor, as the Jews speak: for thus (by *laying on of hands*) they in aftertimes made a man a member of the Sanhedrin, both of the great and of the small; which continued to the time of the destruction of the second temple; as Mr. Selden shews, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 7. n. 1.)

And this solemn designation of Joshua to the government by the Divine authority, was a clear indication that God continued to be their king, as he became in a special manner when he brought them out of Egypt, (as I observed upon Exod. iii. 10.) and he still reserved it to himself to appoint governors under him out of what tribe he pleased; as he did Joshua at this time out of the tribe of Ephraim; and not Caleb, who was of the tribe of Judah, and also a man as valiant as he was virtuous, (Josh. xiv. 11.) For there was no tribe that could lay claim unto this dignity without the gift of God. And this is one of the principal reasons, why the government of this people, before they had kings, was, as Josephus calls it, Θεοκρατία (that is, *the empire of God*), because he stirred them up judges to rule them when he pleased; which being of his immediate appointment, are so far acknowledged by him, that when they were weary of Samuel's government and desired a king, God declared, that it was not Samuel, but himself, whom they rejected. And another reason was (as our Mr. Thorndike observes), because God, by his oracle of *urim* and *thummim*, prescribed how they were to proceed in their public affairs, (Review of the Rites of the Church, p. 133.)

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Having numbered the people, and appointed his successor to bring them to their inheritance (which he had ordered to be divided among them, proportionable to the number of each tribe), nothing more was necessary than to persuade them to be truly religious, whereby they might be preserved in the enjoyment of it. Unto which Moses is commanded to direct them in this and in the following chapters; which may be thought to have been delivered also in the eighth month of the last year of their travels in the wilderness.

Ver. 2. *Command the children of Israel, and say unto them.*] These commands had been given before, but are here repeated, because this was a new generation, who either had not heard them when they were first delivered eight-and-thirty years ago; or, at least, had need to have their memories refreshed. Some things also are now more particularly explained concerning the sacrifices which were to be offered at certain times: and they are reduced into a certain order; some being *daily*, others *weekly*, others *monthly*, and some *anniversary*; all which were of such importance, that Moses, being shortly to leave them, thought good to repeat most of them once more in the book of Deuteronomy.

My offering, and my bread.] The word *and* is not in the Hebrew; but the words are, *my offering, my bread:* which Isaac Abarbinel thus excellently explains; Concerning offerings for sin, and trespass-offerings, and the rest, I shall not need to admonish you: but concerning my daily sacrifices, which properly of themselves are my *own oblation*, my *daily bread*, or my food, (which the Divine presence, dwelling among them, required, Exod. xxix. 42. 44. 45.) And so others by the word *bread* understand meat or food in general, as we translate it, ver. 24. though it may have a particular respect to the *meat-offering*, which was made of meal, and always accompanied the *burnt-offerings*, which seem here to be peculiarly meant; though some think these words relate to all the sacrifices, some part of which was God's portion.

For my sacrifices made by fire.] The whole burnt-offerings are most properly called *ische (sacrifices made by fire)*, being all consumed upon the altar; where the heavenly fire burnt continually, ready for that purpose.

For a sweet savour unto me.] So the burnt-offering is called, Lev. i. 9. 13. 17. (See there.) I shall only add the paraphrase of the Jerusalem Targum, which is this, "My offering of bread which ye offer on the altar, doth not the fire devour it? And yet it is acceptable to me from you, as an odour in which I am well-pleased."

Shall ye observe to offer unto me.] Be very careful to see it duly performed: this being the food (saith Abarbinel), which, to speak after the manner of men, was offered by God's fire, upon his own altar, for his dinner and supper.

In due season.] For that reason this sacrifice was to be constantly offered, saith the same author, that the Divine fire which came down from heaven to consume the sacrifices might not be disappointed, and burn there in vain without any thing to do.

From this place the Jews endeavour to make out their custom of having *stationary men*, as they call them, to attend the daily sacrifice: taking *moatho* [*in its season*] as if it had been *omatho* [*in its stations*], but chiefly relying upon the first words of this verse, *command the children of Israel*, who could not all be present at the daily sacrifice, and therefore some particular persons were chosen to

represent all the rest. For they thought it very indecent to have a sacrifice made for a man, and he not to stand by it; and therefore the first prophets ordained twenty-four courses of men, chosen out of the priests, Levites, and people, to stand in the temple, when the daily sacrifice was offered in the name of all Israel; and pray that God would accept it for them, as if they were all present. This account the Mischna gives of them in Taanath, and other places; where they say these men were held so necessary, that it was an usual speech among them, *Without stations the world could not stand.* For without sacrifices, that is, the worship of God, the world would be undone; and sacrifices could not be maintained without stations: (see Voysin de Jubilæo, cap. 25. and our learned Dr. Lightfoot in his Temple Service, chap. 7. sect. 3.)

Ver. 3. *And thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire, which ye shall offer unto the Lord.*] That offering which he peculiarly speaks of is the daily sacrifice; which was appointed long ago, before the tabernacle was set up, (Exod. xxix. 38, 39. see my notes there.) And add this, that God's promise to meet them there, (ver. 42, 43.) and afterward to dwell among them, (ver. 45.) seems to depend upon this constant service which he expected should be paid to him; which, if neglected, he withdrew himself from them.

Two lambs of the first year, day by day, continually.] This is expressly required in Exod. xxix. 38. Only here it is added, *without spot*, or perfect in its kind; which was required in all sacrifices, particularly in the first lamb which they offered, when they came out of Egypt, (Exod. xii. 5. see there.)

Ver. 4. *The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even.*] The very words in Exod. xxix. 39.

Ver. 5. *A tenth part of an ephah of flour for a meat-offering, mingled with the fourth part of a hin of beaten oil.*] This is also there explained, Exod. xxix. 40.

Ver. 6. *It is a continual burnt-offering.*] To be continued throughout all your generations every day; as it is expressed Exod. xxix. 42. For it was in the nature of a daily prayer to God, that he would graciously continue his mercy unto Israel (as Abarbinel observes), and increase their corn, wine, and oil, which they acknowledged hereby they received from him.

Which was ordained in Mount Sinai.] There Moses received both this law, and all the rest (which are mentioned in the book of Exodus), concerning the service of God, and the place where it was to be performed, and his ministers, &c. And this sufficiently shews, that he speaks here to those who were so young at the first institution of these laws, that they gave the less heed to them, or had forgotten them. And there are those who think that for eight-and-thirty years they had disused them; which they gather from Deut. xii. 8. But I do not take it to be likely, that sacrifices were wholly omitted during that space; though perhaps not so regularly performed as when they came to Canaan. For to suppose that, is to suppose that the fire from heaven either went out, or burnt continually to no purpose; and that the Divine Majesty had no entertainment set upon his table; and consequently did not keep house, and dwell among them all that time: in short, that there was no worship of God at the tabernacle. All these arguments may convince any man, there were offered at least the daily sacrifice, morning and even, and those on the sabbath.

For a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the Lord.] See Exod. xxix. 41.

Ver. 7. *And the drink-offering thereof shall be the fourth part of a hin for the one lamb.*] So it was ordained also in Mount Sinai, as appears from the same Exod. xxix. 40. And in this very book there is a general rule given to this new generation, that this should be the least quantity of wine which should be offered with a burnt-offering, or peace-offering. (See Numb. xv. 5.) Which was a thing so constantly practised, that the heathen never sacrificed, but they poured wine upon the flesh, as it flamed upon the altar. For though water was sometimes poured upon the sacrifices, yet Nonnus saith (lib. iv. Dionysiac.) it was when men knew not the use of wine; for after that was found out, they never sacrificed without it. (See Fort. Scacchus Myrothec. 2. cap. 42.)

In the holy place.] Upon the altar of burnt-offerings, which stood in the holy place, near to the door of the tabernacle, (Exod. xxix. 42.)

Shalt thou cause the strong wine to be poured out unto the Lord for a drink-offering.] The Hebrew word *schecar* commonly signifies any sort of strong drink, but here the noblest and most generous wine; for it was not lawful to use any other liquor in their sacrifices. The heathens had this reverence to their gods, that they always offered to them the most excellent wine they had; which appears by those words we meet withal so often in Homer (both in his Iliads and Odysses) of men's pouring out upon their sacrifices, —— αἴθοπα οἶνον, or *black wine*, of the deepest colour, red as blood; which was the richest of all other. And Herodian, speaking of the vast profuseness of Heliogabalus, who offered hecatombs of oxen every morning, with great multitudes of sheep, upon which he heaped all manner of spices, adds this also, (lib. v.) οἴνου τε τοῦ παλαιοτάτου καὶ καλλίστου πολλοὺς ἀμφορέας προχέων, &c. *pouring out many flagons of the oldest and most excellent wine on the altars;* so that rivers of wine and blood ran mixed together.

Ver. 8. *And the other lamb shalt thou offer at even,* &c.] All the foregoing verses relate to the morning sacrifice; and this only briefly prescribes, that the other lamb should be offered in the same manner at even, with the very same meat-offering and drink-offering. And as no sacrifice was to precede the morning burnt-offering, but it was to be offered first: so this at even was to conclude all the sacrifices of the day, and none to be offered after it.

A sacrifice made by fire, a sweet savour unto the Lord.] As acceptable to him as the morning sacrifice.

Ver. 9. *And on the sabbath-day two lambs of the first year without spot.*] He doth not mean, that, whereas every morning and evening they offered one lamb, on the sabbath-day they should offer two; but that there should be two lambs offered on the sabbath, over and above the daily offering, as appears from ver. 10. Whether one of them were to be offered in the morning, and the other added at the evening sacrifice, it is not said; but it is most probable the sacrifices on the sabbath were so ordered. For the Jews say, that, at the time of this additional sacrifice in the morning of the sabbath, they sang at the temple the

song of Moses, (Deut. xxxii.) dividing it into six parts, and singing one part every sabbath; so that in six weeks they had finished it, and then began again. And at the evening sacrifice they sang that song of his Exod. xv. at which time the priests sounded the trumpets three times more than they did at the ordinary songs.

And two tenth-deals of flour for a meat-offering, mingled with oil, and the drink-offering thereof.] As the burnt-offerings were double on this day, so a double quantity of flour is ordered for the meat-offering that attended the burnt-offering (for only a tenth part of an ephah, ver. 5. was offered on other days), and consequently there was to be as much more oil and wine than daily. And here it may be fit to note, that, as soon as the drink-offering was poured out, then the song beforementioned began, with the trumpets and other instruments of music; but not till then: for the burnt-offering was not perfect, till the drink-offering, which was to accompany it, was offered; whereby it was completed. (See Dr. Lightfoot in his Temple Service, chap. 7. sect. 2.)

Ver. 10. *This is the burnt-offering of every sabbath, besides the continual burnt-offering, and his drink-offering.*] The daily sacrifice was not to be omitted on the sabbath, but this was to be added to it; and thence, by the Jews, called *musaph*. Of which sort there were seven more, which were to be added to the sacrifice of the day; *viz.* that in the new moon, (ver. 11.) at the Passover, (ver. 19.) and the feast of Pentecost, (ver. 26.) in the beginning of the year, (chap. xxix. 1.) on the day of expiation, (ver. 7.) on the feast of tabernacles there were peculiar sacrifices for seven days together, (Lev. xxiii. 35.) and on the last day of the feast another, (Numb. xxix. 35—37.) All these were called *musaphim*, or *additional* sacrifices to the daily sacrifice.

Ver. 11. *And in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a burnt-offering unto the Lord.*] This solemn sacrifice seems to have been ordained by God, to prevent the idolatry which was usual among the gentiles; who worshipped the new moon with great rejoicings when it first appeared. Otherwise, the first day of every month was no festival; but only a day on which extraordinary sacrifices were offered with blowing of trumpets, as seems to be directed chap. x. 10. (see there:) which was usual at all solemn sacrifices (as I noted before), otherways the feast of blowing with trumpets was only on the new moon of the seventh month, and no other. And therefore it is observable, that there is no mention made of the first day of the month among the festivals appointed in Lev. xxiii. and consequently servile work was lawful on this day; and nothing more required but only the following sacrifices. The Jews at this day say, this solemnity was appointed rather for the women than the men (for which they give a fabulous reason), who are bound to abstain from all works; but the men only from the most laborious, such as ploughing the ground, &c. (See Buxtorf's Synag. Judaica, cap. 22.)

Two young bullocks and one ram, seven lambs of the first year without spot.] All these were burnt-offerings, which were offered besides the daily sacrifice, and besides the two lambs, if the first day of the month fell out to be a sabbath. In which case, and all others, where several solemnities met together on the same day, the daily sacrifice was offered first, and then the rest of the sacrifices peculiar for that day were to be performed, every one in its order. As for example, if the sabbath and new moon, and the feast of trumpets, fell out on the same day, they began with the daily morning sacrifice; after which followed the sacrifices proper to the sabbath; and after that the sacrifice appointed on the new moon; and then, those that belonged to the feast of trumpets: and all was concluded with the evening sacrifice, as Abarbinel observes in his preface to the book of Leviticus.

Ver. 12. *And three tenth-deals of flour.*] That is, three tenth parts of an ephah, (ver. 5.)

For a meat-offering, mingled with oil, for one bullock.] *i. e.* For each bullock there was to be this proportion of flour; which is exactly according to the general rule before given, (chap. xv. 9.)

And two tenth-deals of flour, mingled with oil, for one ram.] This is the proportion there prescribed for a ram, as the other for a bullock, (chap. xv. 6.)

Ver. 13. *And a several tenth-deal of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat-offering, unto one lamb.*] Unto each of the seven lambs beforementioned, (ver. 11.) a meat-offering was to be joined in less proportion than the other, according to the rule there given, (chap. xv. 4.)

For a burnt-offering of a sweet savour, &c.] See ver. 6.

Ver. 14. *And their drink-offering shall be half a hin of wine unto a bullock.*] See chap. xv. 10.

And the third part of a hin for a ram.] See there, ver. 7.

And a fourth part of a hin for a lamb.] See there, ver. 5. They that allegorize these things, think the new moon signifies the resurrection to a new life in the other world, where every one shall receive a reward according to his measure. Thus Procopius Gazæus; in whom they that think such expositions useful may find entertainment.

This is the burnt-offering of every month throughout the months of the year.] There are more sacrifices appointed on the new moons, than on the sabbath itself; because they returned seldomer. And the gentiles multiplying sacrifices on such occasions, if the Jews had not been thus employed in the worship of God, they might have been tempted to pay their services to idols.

Ver. 15. *And one kid of the goats for a sin-offering.*] This sacrifice of a goat for a sin-offering, saith the same Procopius, is coupled with the rest, being a shadow of the passion of Christ, for whose sake all our sacrifices are acceptable unto God the Father.

Unto the Lord.] It is well observed by Grotius, that these words *unto the Lord* were added, to put them in mind at this time of the right object of worship; when they were in danger to offer sacrifice to the moon, after the manner of the heathens. This is the more to be regarded, because a goat being appointed to be offered at two other solemnities, and to be offered for a sin-offering, (ver. 22. 30.) it is not said, *unto the Lord* (though certainly so intended), because there was no danger at those times to direct their sacrifices to a wrong object, as there was upon the new moons; when the heathen offered a goat unto the moon, it being a creature whose horns are like to those of a new moon. R. Bechai long ago observes this: "A goat (saith he) was offered to extirpate the religion of those who worshipped the moon; which makes the Scripture say expressly, *unto the Lord.*" And Maimonides more largely in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 46. where, after he had taken notice

of the difference between sin-offerings and burnt-offerings, the latter of which being wholly burnt, might be properly said to be *unto the Lord*, whereas sin-offerings were commonly eaten by the priests; he adds, that "this sin-offering is peculiarly said to be *unto the Lord*, lest any one should think this goat to be a sacrifice to the moon, after the manner of the Egyptians: which was not necessary to be said of the goats offered at other solemn times, because they were not in the beginning of the month, nor distinguished from other days by any natural sign, but only by the appointment of the law; which uses these words concerning this goat peculiarly, to pluck out of men's thoughts those inveterate and pernicious opinions of the gentiles; who had long sacrificed to the moon at this time, as they did to the sun at his rising, and when he entered into the several signs."

Besides the continual burnt-offering, and his drink-offering.] This is so often particularly mentioned, lest any should imagine it might be spared, when there were such liberal offerings of several kinds.

Ver. 16. *And on the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the Lord.*] See Exod. xii. 6. 18. Lev. xxiii. 5. where it is called the Lord's Passover. (See Exod. xii. 27.)

Ver. 17. *In the fifteenth day of this month is the feast.*] The fourteenth day at even the feast of the Passover was kept, as appears from Exod. xii. 14. But on the fifteenth day began another feast, called *the feast of unleavened bread.* (See Lev. xxiii. 6.)

Seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.] See Exod. xii. 15. xiii. 6, 7. Lev. xxiii. 6.

Ver. 18. *On the first day shall be a holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein.*] See Exod. xii. 16. Lev. xxiii. 7.

Ver. 19. *But ye shall offer a sacrifice made by fire, for a burnt-offering unto the Lord.*] The solemnity was ordained before, and offerings also in general prescribed to be made seven days, (see Lev. xxiii. 8.) but the particular sacrifices not set down till now.

Two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year, they shall be unto you without spot.] The same sacrifices which were appointed to be offered upon every first day of the month, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 20. *And their meat-offering shall be of flour, mingled with oil: three tenth-deals shall ye offer for a bullock, and two tenth-deals for a ram.*] The very same which were appointed on the first day of every month, (ver. 12.)

Ver. 21. *A several tenth-deal shalt thou offer for every lamb, throughout the seven lambs.*] Just as it was in the forementioned sacrifice, (ver. 13.) And though the drink-offerings be not mentioned, they must be understood to be the same; because they always accompanied the meat-offerings of burnt-sacrifices, which were not complete without them.

Ver. 22. *And one goat for a sin-offering, to make atonement for you.*] As it was in the new moon, (ver. 15.) But meat and drink-offerings did not accompany offerings for sin, save only in the case of a leper; who was to bring three offerings, a sin-offering, a trespass-offering, and a burnt-offering for his cleansing, with three tenth parts of an ephah of flour, (Lev. xiv. 10, &c.)

Ver. 23. *Ye shall offer these besides the burnt-offering of the morning, which is the continual offering.*] There are two things that are here to be remarked; that these offerings (as I noted before) should not put by the continual burnt-sacrifice, but be added to it; and that all these were offered in the morning, after the daily morning sacrifice; and were not part of the evening sacrifice, which concluded all.

Ver. 24. *After this manner ye shall offer daily, throughout the seven days.*] Upon every one of the days of unleavened bread, (ver. 17.) which, though it was a great expense, yet was but a fitting acknowledgment of God's wonderful goodness to them, in bringing them out of the land of Egypt, with all their flocks and their herds; which was the foundation of all their happiness afterward, by making them a free people.

The meat of my sacrifice made by fire.] Here is the very same word with that ver. 2. where he calls this sacrifice his *lechem*, which we there translate *his bread*, but here very properly, his *meat* or *food*: which was set upon his table (the altar) every day, and by his fire from heaven consumed; which, according to the language of men, was called his eating of it: as the heathen gods also are said to eat the fat of their sacrifices, (Deut. xxxii. 38.)

Of a sweet savour unto the Lord.] Very acceptable to him; as hath been often observed.

It shall be offered besides the continual burnt-offering, and his drink-offering.] There is the greatest care taken (by the frequent repetition of this) that they should not think to save their daily sacrifice by these others; which were to be added to it, and not to supply the place of it. (See ver. 15.)

Ver. 25. *And on the seventh day ye shall have a holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work therein.*] This last day of the feast was equal to the first, (Lev. xxiii. 7, 8.) and is called *a feast unto the Lord*, Exod. xiii. 6.

Ver. 26. *Also the day of the first-fruits.*] Called *the feast of harvest, the first-fruits of their labours*, Exod. xxiii. 16. and the *feast of weeks*, when they brought the first-fruits of wheat-harvest, (Exod. xxxiv. 22. Deut. xvi. 10.) The Jews in their writings commonly call this feast by the name of *atzereth*, and so doth the Chaldee paraphrase upon this place; though Abarbinel observes, that this alone, of all the three great feasts, is never called so in the Holy Scripture. It is hard therefore to tell, why the Jews call it so in a singular manner; but our learned Dr. Lightfoot hath made several probable conjectures about it; one of which (and most pertinent to this place) is, because there was a *restraint*, as the word signifies, upon the people, from bringing their first-fruits till this feast. If any did, they received them not from them, but laid them by till this day came. (See Temple Service, chap. 14. sect. 4.)

When ye bring a new meat-offering unto the Lord.] Mentioned Lev. xxiii. 16. which were two loaves made of their first corn, ver. 17. where they are called *the first-fruits unto the Lord.*

After your weeks be out.] That is, the seven weeks which they were to number from the morrow after the sabbath, (Lev. xxiii. 15.) *i. e.* after the first day of unleavened bread: when they offered another sort of *first-fruits* (which must be carefully distinguished from those here mentioned), *viz.* of the barley-harvest, which began at the Passover; when they were to bring *a sheaf of their first-fruits unto the priest*, (Levit. xxiii. 10.) the presenting of which sheaf was an

introduction to harvest, and procured them liberty to begin to put the sickle into the corn; which now, after seven weeks, they reaped, and carried in at this feast, when they brought these new first-fruits unto the Lord. All which is a description of that which in the New Testament is called the *feast of Pentecost;* being fifty days, as we read there in Leviticus, after the other great feast.

Ye shall have a holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.] See Lev. xxiii. 21.

Ver. 27. *But ye shall offer the burnt-offering for a sweet savour unto the Lord.*] Over and above the burnt-offering which was prescribed to be offered with the two loaves beforementioned, (Lev. xxiii. 18.) unto which this was an additional sacrifice, plainly distinct from it.

Two young bullocks, one ram, seven lambs of the first year.] The very same that were ordered to be offered upon every new moon, and every day of the feast of unleavened bread, ver. 11. 19, &c. whereas that in Leviticus is *one young bullock, two rams, and seven lambs.*

Ver. 28. *And their meat-offering of flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals unto one bullock,* &c.] The very same that is prescribed to accompany the burnt-offering on the new moon, and in the feast of unleavened bread, (ver. 12. 20.)

Ver. 29. *And a several tenth-deal unto one lamb, throughout the seven lambs.*] So it is ordained before in the former cases, (ver. 13. 21.)

Ver. 30. *And one kid of the goats to make an atonement for you.*] Besides the kid prescribed for the same purpose, when the two loaves were offered, (Lev. xxiii. 19.) which was accompanied with *two lambs for a sacrifice of peace-offerings.* So that there were a great many sacrifices offered at this famous festival; though it did not last so long as that of the Passover.

Ver. 31. *Ye shall offer them besides the continual burnt-offering.*] He still takes care that this daily sacrifice should not be omitted, by reason of such a number of other sacrifices, which were to attend upon it, but not to put it by, (ver. 10. 15. 23.)

They shall be unto you without blemish.] This might have been sufficiently understood, from what was said of the daily offering, (ver. 3.) and of all the other prescribed in this chapter, (ver. 11. 19.) But, lest any profane person might think there was no need to be so scrupulous about these sacrifices, because it is only said, *two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year,* (ver. 27.) these words are also here added, to take away all doubt; *they shall be unto you without blemish, i. e.* as perfect as all the rest are ordered to be.

It is observable, that there is not so much as one *peace-offering* ordered in all this chapter, which was a sort of sacrifice that was most for the benefit of those that brought it to the altar; but all *burnt-offerings* (except a few *sin-offerings*), which were wholly for the honour of God, and acknowledgment of his sovereign dominion over them, and of the duty they owed him. And as the *sin-offerings* were shadows of that great sacrifice of God's own Son, which was one day to be offered for the sins of men, out of his infinite love to them; so the *whole burnt-offerings* (which were always of the most perfect creatures, the finest flour, the choicest fruits of the earth, and the best liquor) were shadows of that excellent degree of piety, which the Son of God intended to bring into the world; which would move men, out of love to God, to give themselves wholly up to him, and devote all they had, even their own lives, to his service.

CHAP. XXIX.

Ver. 1. *AND in the seventh month.*] Which was anciently the first month of the year; but now the seventh, reckoning from that wherein the Passover was kept; which for a special reason was made the first: (see Exod. x. 2.)

On the first day of the month ye shall have a holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.] So it was ordained before, in Lev. xxiii. 24, 25.

It is a day of blowing of trumpets unto you.] In that place of Leviticus it is called *a memorial of blowing of trumpets* from morning until evening; which the Jews fancy was to awaken them to repentance, upon the great day of expiation, which followed on the tenth day of this month. But it was manifestly intended quite contrary, to excite them unto joy and gladness: for *zichron teruah* is a memorial of jubilation, triumph, and shouting for joy; the word *teruah* being never used in Scripture, but for a sound, or shout of gladness; as the Chaldee word *jabbaba,* which is here used by the paraphrast, always signifies. And this agrees with their notion, who think it was a special remembrance of the creation of the world, at which the angels rejoiced. Or, it might be ordained to stir up the people to a grateful remembrance of all God's benefits the year past. Whatsoever was the cause, certain it is, this seventh month was very famous on this account, that more solemn days were to be kept in it than in all the year besides; and upon that account, the people might be awakened, by this blowing of trumpets, to observe them aright.

Ver. 2. *And shall offer a burnt-offering for a sweet savour unto the Lord.*] Over and above all other sacrifices, which were heretofore ordered upon this day, as appears from ver. 6.

One bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year, without blemish.] This is less than was appointed upon the foregoing festivals, (chap. xxviii. 19. 27.) because those very sacrifices were also to be offered upon this day, on another account; as I shall observe on ver. 6.

Ver. 3. *And their meat-offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals for a bullock, and two for a ram.*] This is the proportion appointed, by a general rule, for all sacrifices of this kind. (See the fifteenth chapter of this book, ver. 6. 9.)

Ver. 4. *And one tenth-deal for one lamb,* &c.] So it is there appointed, (ver. 4.)

Ver. 5. *And one kid of the goats for a sin-offering, to make an atonement for you.*] As is appointed in the foregoing festivals, (chap. xxviii. 15. 22. 30.)

Ver. 6. *Besides the burnt-offering of the morning, with his meat-offering.*] It was appointed before, that in the beginning of every month there should be a burnt-offering offered of two bullocks, &c. (chap. xxviii. 11, 12.) which was not to be omitted in the beginning of this month; but these other sacrifices added to the offerings of every new moon: which made this a greater new moon than any other; being the first moon of the old civil year.

And the daily burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and

their drink-offerings.] With which the solemnity of the day began; and then followed the proper sacrifices belonging to it.

According to their manner.] Or, in the order which God appointed: which I observed before (on chap. xxviii. 11.) was this; that, first, the daily burnt-sacrifice was offered; then the sacrifices appointed for the first day of every month; and then those appointed for this first day of the seventh month.

For a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the Lord.] Which was acceptable to the Divine Majesty, when performed according to his directions.

Ver. 7. *And ye shall have on the tenth day of this month a holy convocation.*] This solemn assembly is ordered twice before in the book of Leviticus, (chap. xvi. 29. xxiii. 27.) and here repeated, perhaps, for the sake of Eleazar and Joshua, who were newly advanced to their several offices, that they might take special notice of it, and see it observed.

And ye shall afflict your souls.] That was the special intention of it (as we read in both the forenamed places), that they might receive the benefit of the atonement on this day made.

Ye shall not do any work therein.] It was to be observed as strictly as a sabbath, (Levit. xvi. 31. xxiii. 32.) wherein they were to abstain not merely from *servile work*, but from *all manner of work* whatsoever, (Levit. xvi. 29. xxiii. 28. 30.)

Ver. 8. *And ye shall offer a burnt-offering unto the Lord for a sweet savour.*] Endeavour to procure acceptance of the rest of the sacrifices of the day, with this whole burnt-offering, besides the daily sacrifice; as it follows, (ver. 11.)

One bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year, &c.] The same that were appointed on the foregoing solemnity, ver. 2. (except the monthly offering, ver. 6.) to which was added another ram for a burnt-offering, (Levit. xvi. 5.) as a devout acknowledgment that they owned him alone for their sovereign Lord.

Ver. 9, 10. *And their meat-offering shall be of fine flour,* &c.] The meat-offering attending these burnt-offerings was to be in the same proportion as before ordered, (ver. 3, 4.)

Ver. 11. *One kid of the goats for a sin-offering.*] As was appointed in the foregoing solemnity, (ver. 5.)

Besides the sin-offering of atonement.] Mentioned Levit. xvi. 9, &c. whose blood was carried by the high-priest into the most holy place; which was done in no other sacrifice but that, and the bullock which was offered as a sin-offering for the family of Aaron on the same day, (Levit. xvi. 14.)

And the continual burnt-offering, and the meat-offering of it, and their drink-offerings.] These were no more to be omitted on the great day of atonement, than on any other day; but the service of the day was to begin with the continual burnt-offering; and then followed the burnt-offerings, with the meat and drink-offerings belonging to them, and the sin-offering here prescribed; and then the sacrifice of atonement, and all that is ordered in the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus, for the expiation of the sins of all the people of Israel: which sacrifice the present Jews now wanting, and yet being sensible of the necessity of some satisfaction, but not believing in our blessed Saviour, who hath fully made it for all mankind; they are in a lamentable plunge, and are put to most wretched shifts to devise something to supply the place of the sacrifice of atonement, which was wont to be made for them. One is their *own death;* it being the continual prayer of every one of them, upon their death-bed, "Let my death be the expiation for my sins." Another is (which is so absurd, that Leo Modina saith they do not use it now in Italy, nor in the eastern countries), the killing of a white cock (if one can be got) by the men, and a white hen by the women, on the eve of this day, saying, "Let this cock be an exchange for me; let it come in my stead; let it be my expiation; let it die, but I and Israel live happily;" as Buxtorf shews in his Synagog. Judaica, cap. 25. Which I should not here mention, were it not to shew, that they have the very same notion still of a sacrifice for sin (even now that they can only make an imitation of it), which we have of the sacrifice of Christ, who was put in our place, and offered himself to God in our stead; and that it ought to be pure and innocent, which is offered instead of a sinner.

Ver. 12. *And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month ye shall have a holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.*] See Levit. xxiii. 35.

And ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days.] *viz.* The feast of tabernacles, (Levit. xxiii. 34.) which was after the harvest and vintage, (Deut. xvi. 13.) and kept seven days with great joy and gladness of heart; but they were not bound to abstain from *servile work* all this time, but only on the first day and on the seventh.

Ver. 13. *And ye shall offer a burnt-offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.*] The same kind of sacrifice which was prescribed on the other festivals, to be offered up wholly in honour of God: but here is a far larger proportion than in any other solemnity.

Thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year, &c.] On the other festivals two bullocks sufficed, (chap. xxviii. 11. 19. 27.) and on the festival in the beginning of this month only one was appointed; but here are thirteen; and so they continued to be offered seven days successively, with the decrease only of one bullock every day, till on the seventh day only seven bullocks were offered, which in all made seventy bullocks. The rams also and the lambs were in a double proportion to what was usual throughout the whole festival; which was a vast charge, but more easy at this time of the year than any other, because now their barns were full, and their wine-presses overflowed; and their hearts might well be supposed to be more enlarged than at other times, in thankfulness to God for his great benefits. Yet this very gross, troublesome, and expensive way of serving God, made the best men among them groan, and long for the coming of Christ; in whose days, their own doctors say, *no sacrifices shall remain, but those of thanksgiving, and praise, and prayer.* With which they have been forced to be content for above sixteen hundred years; and, instead of these additional sacrifices unto the daily, have added peculiar prayers (which they also call *musaphim*) unto the common prayers they used every day: (See Buxtorf concerning the feast of the new moon, in his Synagog. Jud. cap. 22.)

Ver. 14, 15. *Their meat-offering shall be of fine flour,* &c.] The same proportions which are ordered, by a general rule, to every sacrifice of a bullock, and of a ram, (chap. xv.)

Ver. 16. *And one kid of the goats for a sin-offering, besides*

the continual burnt-offering, &c.] There is no augmentation of the sin-offering; but it is the same with that on other festivals, (ver. 5.) And all these sacrifices, it appears by this, were to be added to the daily sacrifice.

Ver. 17. *And on the second day ye shall offer twelve young bullocks*, &c.] Here one bullock less, than on the day before, is ordered to be offered; and so on every succeeding day there is still a decrease of one bullock; which is all the difference between the offerings on the seven days of this feast, upon every one of which there was the same number of rams and lambs, without any diminution. Which Moses thought fit to set down distinctly from this verse to the thirty-fifth, that there might be no mistake. But little need be noted upon them.

Ver. 18. *According to their number, after the manner.*] Prescribed ver. 14, 15.

Ver. 35. *On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly.*] There is a peculiar word here used to denote this to be a great day, as I noted upon Lev. xxiii. 36. (See there.)

Ye shall do no servile work therein.] It was to be observed as the first day of the feast of tabernacles, both of them being called a sabbath, Lev. xxiii. 39.

Ver. 36. *But ye shall offer a burnt-offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.*] Here is a peculiar sacrifice appointed upon this day, in the same terms as upon the first day of the feast of tabernacles, (ver. 13.)

One bullock, one ram, seven lambs of the first year, &c.] But though this was an extraordinary day, and a distinct festival, (as I shewed upon Lev. xxiii. 39.) yet here are fewer sacrifices prescribed on this day, than upon any of the foregoing seven. For on every one of them two rams were offered and fourteen lambs; and here but half so many: and seven bullocks were the fewest that were offered upon any of those days (and on the first day thirteen), but here only one. By which God consulted, perhaps, the weakness of mankind, who naturally grew weary both of the charge and of the labour of such services, when they were long-continued: and therefore he made them every day less toilsome and expensive; and put them in mind, likewise, that the multitude of sacrifices did not procure their acceptance with God; and in length of time they would come to nothing, and be utterly abolished, to establish something better in their room.

Ver. 37. *Their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullock, for the ram, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner.*] In such proportions as God had before ordained in the fifteenth chapter of this book, in the beginning of it; as I have often observed.

Ver. 38. *And one goat for a sin-offering, besides the continual burnt-offering*, &c.] This is never omitted upon any festival, (chap. xxviii. 15. 22. 30. xxix. 5. 11. 16. 19, &c.) to put them in mind, that, after all their services, they stood in need of forgiveness.

Ver. 39. *These things shall ye do* (or *offer*) *unto the Lord in your set feasts.*] All these feasts were fixed and stated at certain times; on which God was to be worshipped after the manner here prescribed in these two chapters. For all these offerings (except one sin-offering upon each set day) were wholly burnt-offerings (as I have already observed), which may properly be said to be done, that is, offered *unto the Lord;* neither people nor priests having any share in them.

Besides your vows, and your free-will-offerings, for your burnt-offerings.] Besides these, every man might offer other burnt-offerings; either in performance of a vow, or freely, out of his affection to God. (See chap. xv. 3.)

For your meat-offerings, and for your drink-offerings.] There are five several sorts of meat-offerings; which were left to every man's free-will, to bring as he pleased. See the second chapter of Leviticus, where they are described.

And for your peace-offerings.] These are described in the third chapter of that book: a great number of which, it is likely, men offered voluntarily upon all the forementioned festivals; for otherwise they would have had no means to feast with God at his house, nor to entertain their friends and neighbours, as the custom was at such times of public rejoicing; which they did upon that part of the peace-offerings which was given them, after the fat was offered to God, and the wave-breast and heave-shoulder given to the priest, (Lev. vii. 15, &c. 34.)

Ver. 40. *And Moses told the children of Israel, according to all that the Lord commanded Moses.*] He acquainted all the people (by the heads of their tribes, perhaps, of whom we read in the beginning of the next chapter) with all these commands of God, which concerned his worship and service.

CHAP. XXX.

Ver. 1. *AND Moses spake unto the heads of the tribes.*] There were wont to be extraordinary assemblies of these, or other great men, upon special occasions, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 14. n. 4.) who are sometimes called, as they are here, *the heads of all the tribes, and the elders*, (Deut. v. 23.) and, in other places, *the heads of the people*, (Deut. xxx. 5.) *the whole congregation of the children of Israel*, (Josh. xviii. 1. xxii. 12.) *the chief of all the people*, (Judg. xx. 2.) *all Israel*, (1 Sam. vii. 5.) *all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes*, (1 Chron. xxviii. 1.) *all the elders of Israel, and heads of the tribes, and chief of the fathers*, (2 Chron. v. 2.) *the counsel of the princes and elders*, (Ezra x. 8.) And it is commonly said by the Hebrew doctors, concerning such assemblies, that *wheresoever the children of Israel were met together, or the greater part of them, there the Schechinah* (that is, the Divine Majesty, or the Holy Ghost, as they sometimes speak) *was wont to rest.*

Concerning the children of Israel, saying.] Acquainted them with a matter which concerned all the people; willing them to communicate it to them.

This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded.] It is very probable there had been some case propounded to him about vows; concerning which he here gives such rules, as might direct them in time to come.

Ver. 2. *If a man.*] It is reasonable to think, that this includes the other sex also; provided they be in their own power, and not subject to another, and be in their right mind.

Vow a vow unto the Lord.] Promise solemnly unto God something that is for his honour and service; for that seems to be meant by *unto the Lord:* as, that he will offer some sacrifice at the feast abovementioned, more than is pre-

scribed; or afflict his soul on some other day, besides the day of atonement. (See ver. 13.)

Or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond.] Whether it be a simple vow, or bound also with a solemn oath; which made a double obligation, by calling God to witness the sincerity of his intentions.

He shall not break his word.] In the Hebrew it is, *he shall not profane his word;* for it being solemnly passed to God, it made him vile and contemptible if he did not keep it. The Jewish doctors very prudently advise their scholars not to accustom themselves to make vows, but to content themselves with doing what the law commands, and abstaining from what it forbids; but if they did make them, to look upon it as a high affront to God not to perform them.

He shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.] If the thing be lawful, and possible. And if he appointed no time for the doing of it, he was to think himself obliged to do it presently, without delay, (Deut. xxii. 21.)

Ver. 3. *If a woman also vow a vow unto the Lord.*] As most interpreters think the word *man*, in the foregoing verse, comprehends women, who were in as perfect liberty as the men he speaks of; so the word *woman* here comprehends all men, who are in the same circumstances with those women, whom he here directs in their vows: whom he considers in a threefold state; before they are married, and after marriage, and in their widowhood.

And bind herself by a bond.] By an oath, wherewith she confirms her vow; as it seems to be interpreted ver. 10. 13.

Being in her father's house, in her youth.] That is, being a part of his family, and still under his government, and not married. For the father's power lasts no longer, as Grotius observes, (lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 5. n. 7.) In which condition likewise are all sons, who remain in their father's family, undisposed of in marriage: and all servants, who are manifestly in subjection to their masters; and therefore could no more resolve to do what they pleased, than the women here mentioned.

Ver. 4. *And her father heareth her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound herself.*] The first of these may relate to her simple vow; and the next to an oath wherewith she binds it, to make it firmer; which her father is supposed to hear, either when she spake the words, or when she acquainted him with her vow, as in duty she was bound to do.

And her father shall hold his peace at her.] If he did not declare that he disallowed what she had promised, it was supposed he consented to it: unless he said he would take time to consider, and neither allow nor disallow for the present; in which case, in all reason, she was to wait for his resolution.

Then all her vows shall stand, &c.] It was not in his power afterward to disannul any of them, if he did not contradict them when he was told of them, or after the time he had taken for deliberation.

Ver. 5. *But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth.*] As soon as he comes acquainted with it.

Not any of her vows, or her bonds, wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand.] Though she had bound her vows with an oath, they were not to be performed, when her father had declared his will to the contrary.

And the Lord shall forgive her.] The not performing her vow shall not be imputed to her as a sin.

Because her father disallowed her.] Whose consent was supposed to be necessary, before the vow could be binding; she being, while a part of his family, under his power, and not her own. Some have fancied, that when her father was dead the vow revived, because then she was at her own disposal: but it is plain, her father wholly disannulled the vow, when he did not approve it; so that it could not recover a force it never had, being made without his consent. The same is to be said of a guardian, who was supposed to be in the place of a father, when he died and left his children to his care. And this power was fit to be reserved to parents (as a late learned man, Puffendorf, observes), not only lest women, in their imprudent years, should undo themselves, by vowing more than their fortunes could bear; but also, lest the paternal estate should be burdened by such vows, or the necessary affairs of the family hindered. So that this power did not flow from positive laws, but from natural reason; nobody that is subject to another having any right to dispose of those things which are under that power to which they are subject.

Ver. 6. *And if she had at all a husband when she vowed.*] Was a married woman, or espoused to a husband, though still in her father's house (as it appears from ver. 10. this must be interpreted), when she made this vow, then it was to be considered, not what her father, but her husband (under whose power she now was) should determine about it.

Or uttered aught out of her lips, wherewith she bound her soul.] Said any thing, which she confirmed by an oath.

Ver. 7. *And her husband heard it.*] Either was present when she spake it; or she told it him afterward.

And he held his peace, in the day that he heard it.] Said nothing to signify his disallowance of it: (see ver. 4.)

Then her vows shall stand, &c.] As before, (ver. 4.)

Ver. 8. *But if her husband disallow her,* &c.] See ver. 5. where there is the same case of a daughter under the power of her father, as here of a wife under the power of her husband.

Ver. 9. *But every vow of a widow, or of her that is divorced, wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand against her.*] The reason of this is so plain, that one would think it needed not to have been mentioned, because such women were wholly in their own power, being free from their husbands. Therefore it is very probable he speaks here of a widow, or divorced woman, returned to her father's house, (as the manner frequently was, Lev. xxii. 13.) who might be supposed to recover his ancient power over her, to disannul her vows, as he might before she was married: which is here absolutely condemned; for though she lived with him, she was her own woman (as we now speak), and might dispose of herself and her goods as she pleased, without his consent.

Ver. 10. *And if she vowed in her husband's house, or bound her soul by a bond with an oath.*] *i. e.* Engaged herself in a vow, and perhaps confirmed it with an oath, while she and her husband lived together, or before she was divorced from him.

Ver. 11. *And her husband heard it, and held his peace, and disallowed it not: then all her vows shall stand,* &c.] She was bound, in this case, to make them good after he was dead, or she was divorced from him.

Ver. 12. *But if her husband hath utterly made them void on the day he heard them,* &c.] Then, when she was in her

own power, by his death, or by a divorce, she was not bound to make them good; because, when she made them, her husband, under whose power she then was, had utterly made them void.

Ver. 13. *Every vow, and every binding oath, to afflict the soul.*] This shews what the matter of these vows frequently was; to abstain from such or such meats, though in themselves lawful; or to fast, and eat nothing at all on other days, as well as on the great day of expiation; which was the only fast ordained by the law of Moses.

Her husband may establish it, or her husband may make it void.] There is an excellent discourse of Maimonides', in his More Nevochim, (par. iii. cap. 48.) to shew that this is most reasonable; where he observes, that, as the law prohibited some meats, so pious people sometimes vowed to forbear such as were not prohibited; that by this means they might learn contentment with a little, or continence, and give a check to an immoderate appetite. From whence the saying among the doctors, that *Vows are the hedge of separation; i. e.* a great guard to a holy life. But since, through the vehemence of their affections and passions, many women are prone to act unadvisedly, if vows were wholly in their power, great inconveniences, dissensions, and confusions, might arise in families, whilst this sort of meat is lawful to the husband, but not to the wife; this permitted to the daughter, but prohibited to the mother. For which reason (saith he) this authority was given to the governors of families; in all things to order them, as they saw would be for their profit, or detriment.

Ver. 14. *But if her husband.*] Or, *for* if her husband.

Altogether held his peace at her, from day to day.] When he knew what she had vowed; as it follows in the end of the verse.

He establisheth all her vows, &c.] His silence was to be interpreted a consent to allow what she vowed. There was no need to add the contrary; which is here to be understood: that if he said he did not allow them, then they should not bind her.

Ver. 15. *But if he shall any ways make them void, after he hath heard them.*] Hinder her from performing her vow, after he had given his consent, by saying nothing against it, when he heard her make the vow.

Then he shall bear her iniquity.] God will punish him, not her, for not performing the vow. Paulus Fagius thinks the meaning is, that if the first day he heard of her vow he did not disannul it, but attempted to do it the next day, or the third day after, he should bear the blame, if the vow was not made good.

Ver. 16. *These are the statutes which the Lord commanded Moses between a man and his wife, between the father and his daughter, being yet in her youth, in her father's house.*] It is likely some differences arose in some families about these matters; and therefore these laws were made for the settling the power of husbands over their wives, and parents over their children, while they were young, and continued a part of their family.

CHAP. XXXI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Not long before his death, as appears from the next verse.

Ver. 2. *Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites.*] This had been commanded before, but no time set for it; which now is determined. The Moabites are not mentioned; because the Midianites seem to have been the first or chief contrivers of that mischief which befel the Israelites, by the enticements of their women: (see chap. xxv. 17, 18.)

Afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people.] When he had given a few other directions, concerning their possessing the countries already conquered, and the land of Canaan, (chap. xxxii. xxxiv. xxxv.) and providing for the Levites there, (chap. xxxvi.) God had warned him to prepare for his death before this, (chap. xxvii. 12.) but he first let him have the satisfaction of seeing the Midianites punished; and gave him some time to settle the public affairs, and to make also a long exhortation to the Israelites, to observe all that he had commanded them.

Ver. 3. *And Moses spake unto the people, saying.*] He speedily put this command in execution; which might possibly be in the ninth month of the fortieth year.

Arm some of yourselves unto the war.] He doth not at first determine the number; but as many as pleased might offer themselves voluntarily, to be ready to obey him.

And let them go against the Midianites, and avenge the Lord of Midian.] The Lord bade him *avenge the children of Israel,* (ver. 2.) but Moses bids them *avenge the Lord:* for they had the same interest, and were both injured at the same time, and by the same means. And as God was so gracious as to resent the evil done to Israel, so Moses, in duty and gratitude to God, thought himself bound rather to consider the dishonour that was done to him, whose war this was; not only because undertaken by his command, but in his quarrel (with those who had drawn the Israelites to idolatry), and for the sake of his people.

Ver. 4. *Of every tribe a thousand, throughout all the tribes of Israel, shall ye send to the war.*] When a great many, perhaps all the people, appeared ready to go to war, he ordered, that only a select number should be sent, of a thousand out of each of the twelve tribes.

Ver. 5. *So there were delivered, out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand of every tribe.*] Their officers picked out this number from among the rest; or they were chosen by lot for this service; or they stepped out and offered themselves volunteers (as we speak), which the twenty-seventh verse may seem to countenance, where they are called, *those that took the war upon them.*

Twelve thousand armed for war.] This was but a small number, compared with the whole nation of the Midianites, (who had five kings, ver. 8.) But God would have them rely more upon him, than upon the multitude of a host; and let them see, by their success against this people, that they needed not fear the conquest of Canaan.

Ver. 6. *And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of every tribe.*] He gave them their commission to fight the Midianites.

Them and Phineas the son of Eleazar the priest.] Who was not their commander-in-chief (or their general, as we now speak), for it did not belong to the priestly office to conduct armies: and it is said expressly in the words following, he went *with the holy instruments,* &c. to be ready to perform all such sacred offices, as should be required by the general, who, it is most likely, was Joshua. It is true,

indeed, that Phineas was a man of great courage, and had lately performed a singular piece of service, which had won him great reputation. This hath made some think, he was the fitter to go and to avenge the Lord of Midian, as he had begun to do, (chap. xxv. 8.) In aftertimes also, in the days of the Maccabees, who were of the family of the priests, the armies of Israel were led by them against their enemies. But then it must be considered, that they were also the supreme governors of the people, and there were no other.

With the holy instruments.] By which Jonathan understands the *urim* and *thummim;* which some think Phineas carried along with him, wherewith to consult the Divine Majesty, in case of any difficulty that might arise about the management of the war. And to make out this, they suppose Eleazar to be old and crazy, or labouring under some infirmity; which was the reason that Phineas his son was substituted in his room to perform this office. (See our very learned Dr. Spencer, Dissert. de Urim et Thummim, cap. 6. sect. 2.) But this may be justly doubted, whether Phineas, being only the son of the high-priest, and not yet capable of that office, could be substituted to perform this great charge, which belonged to the high-priest alone. Nor do we find any warrant for consulting the Lord by *urim* and *thummim*, but only before the most holy place, (see chap. xxvii. 21.) And therefore it seems to me far more likely, that he means the *ark*, which was wont to be carried, in following times, into the field, when they went to fight with their enemies, (1 Sam. iv. 4, 5. xiv. 18. 2 Sam. xi. 1.) Yea, Joshua himself, not long after this time, ordered the ark to be carried, with priests blowing the trumpets before it, when he surrounded Jericho, (Josh. vi. 4. 6, 7, &c.) And therefore the *holy instruments* being here joined with *the trumpets to blow in his hand*, it makes it the more probable, that the *ark* may be here meant; there being also something in this very book to countenance this opinion: (see chap. xiv. 44. but especially chap. xxxii. 20. 22.)

But it must be confessed, that it is never thus expressed in any other place of Holy Scripture, but always called the *ark of God*, or of the *covenant*, or the *testimony*, or the like. And therefore, perhaps, they give the truest sense of these words, who take the following words to be an explication of them; that is, the *trumpets* were the *holy instruments*, which he carried in his hand.

And the trumpets to blow in his hand.] Which he delivered to the priests who followed him, to sound an alarm, when they went to fight, according to the direction, chap. x. 8, 9. and as the practice was in future ages, (2 Chron. xiii. 12.)

Ver. 7. *And they warred against the Midianites.*] It is not certain whether the Midianites came out of their country to give them battle; or they first broke into their country, and then fought their army.

As the Lord commanded Moses.] One would think this meant no more, but that they obeyed the commandment of God beforementioned, (ver. 2.) But the Jews think he hath respect to another particular commandment, which they say was given by Moses, when they went out to this war: that they should not, when they besieged any city, begirt it quite round, but only on three sides; leaving one naked, that the besieged might flee away, if they pleased; by which means effusion of human blood was prevented. So Guil. Schickard observes out of Siphri in his Mischpat Hammeleeh, cap. 5. Theor. 18. and Mr. Selden since him, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 15. where he shews they understand this of all wars but those against the seven nations in Canaan and Amalek; towards whom this kindness was not shewn, as appears by the siege of Jericho. But the laws about managing wars, which are mentioned in the book of Deuteronomy, do not seem to have been yet given; though the Jews fancy this law was now given about Midian, and observed ever after.

And slew all the males.] Who were in this fight, and did not save themselves by flight.

Ver. 8. *And they slew the kings of Midian.*] Little kings, called princes, Josh. xiii. 21. where they are said to be dukes of Sihon, *i. e.* great men tributary to Sihon, while he continued king of the Amorites. But after the Israelites had conquered him, they took, perhaps, the title of kings.

Besides the rest of them that were slain.] They made not only a great slaughter of the people, but killed their chief commanders, who led them on.

Namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, &c.] They are particularly named, that all their neighbours might be satisfied of the truth of this history. And he that is called Zur, is thought to have been the father of Cozbi, whom Phineas slew.

Balaam also, the son of Beor, they slew with the sword.] He had seen such good success of his wicked counsel, (which he gave either as he went home, or returning again to them: see chap. xxiv. *ult.*) that, presuming the Israelites were forsaken of their God, he adventured to go along with the Midianites unto this battle; hoping he might curse the Israelites, now that iniquity (*i. e.* idolatry) was found among them; which he could not do while they were free from it. Thus he perished by his own wicked devices; and was so far from having his wish, that he might "die the death of the righteous" (that is, live long), that (as the Jews say) he was slain in the thirty-fourth year of his age. The doctors in the Gemara of the Sanhedrin, (cap. 11. sect. 11.) ask, "What did he here?" To which R. Johanan makes answer, "He went to receive his reward for the death of the twenty-four thousand Israelites, which he had procured," (chap. xxv. 9.) And thus, saith another, "it happened unto him, according to the proverb, *The camel went to desire horns, and they cut off his ears.*"

Ver. 9. *And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captive, and their little ones.*] After they were masters of the field (as we speak) by the overthrow of their armies, they fell upon their cities; and, according to the ancient custom in the most bloody wars, they killed only the men, but no women nor children, (Gen. xxxiv. 25. 1 Kings xi. 16.) And so the law of God afterward required they should do, when they took any city that did not belong to the Canaanites, (Deut. xx. 13, 14.) who were utterly to be destroyed, ver. 16, 17. where he saith, "Thou shalt save nothing alive that breatheth."

And they took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods.] As belonging to them, by the right of conquest, in a just war.

Ver. 10. *And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and their goodly castles, with fire.*] Made the country desolate, that they who fled might have no encouragement to return again; nor be able, without great hazard, to

settle themselves there, where they had not a fortress left to defend them. This was but a necessary care; notwithstanding which they had peopled the country again so well, in the space of about two hundred years, that they were able to oppress the Israelites; as we read Judges iv. 1.

Ver. 11. *And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, both of men and of beasts.*] They had possessed themselves of them before, (ver. 9.) but now they carried them away.

Ver. 12. *And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the spoil.*] Here are three different words to express their booty, which they brought to the camp of Israel: the first of which signifies the women and children that were taken; the second, the cattle and the flocks (though sometimes it includes in it men and women); and the third, their money and goods.

Unto Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and unto the congregation of the children of Israel.] Unto the seventy elders, and princes of the tribes, who were assembled with them, (see chap. xxix. 1.) as it seems to be expounded in the next verse.

Unto the camp at the plains of Moab, &c.] From whence they marched against Midian; and had been encamped there a great while, (chap. xxii. 1. xxvi. 3. 63.)

Ver. 13. *And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp.*] Hearing they were returned victorious, they went to congratulate them, before they came at the camp: for which there was also another reason, mentioned ver. 19. This shews that Eleazar was not so infirm as some suppose; and affords an argument to strengthen their opinion, who think Joshua was now general of the host; otherwise he would have been mentioned, together with Moses and Eleazar, as going to meet them; being chosen his coadjutor, and therefore superior to all the princes that are here joined with them.

Ver. 14. *And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle.*] Who were more to blame than the soldiers, whose duty it was to obey, not to give orders; which they received, no doubt, from the officers, to kill only the men. Here now is an argument to the contrary, that Joshua did not command in chief: but this being only a detachment (as they now speak) from the host of Israel, was led by some inferior officer, the first captain of thousands, perhaps; for if Joshua had been there, Moses would have expostulated with him, or rather, there would have been no cause for this rebuke; he being a man *in whom was the spirit,* (chap. xxvii. 18.)

Ver. 15. *And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive?*] Unless he had commanded them to be killed, one cannot see that they deserved to be chidden; because they proceeded according to the rules of all worthy warriors, who killed only those who could bear arms against them. But either he had given some directions who should be killed, or he expected they should have considered, that the women had killed more by their blandishments, than their husbands could do by their arms, (for they had not killed one man, ver. 49.) and therefore should have been destroyed, as the most mischievous: for so it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 16. *Behold.*] Reflect upon what is lately past, and consider.

These caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord, in the matter of Peor; and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord.] By these they had been inveigled into a heinous sin, and made obnoxious to a very heavy punishment, which God inflicted upon them on that account. For though the Moabitish women had a great hand in it, (chap. xxv. 1.) yet those of Midian seem to have been the chief seducers, (ver. 6. 17, 18.) and, perhaps, he feared might be so again.

Ver. 17. *Now therefore kill every male among the little ones.*] That the nation might be extirpated, as far as lay in their power.

And kill every woman that hath known man, by lying with him.] For these, it is to be supposed, had been the most instrumental in the crime beforementioned; either by prostituting themselves, or their daughters, to the lust of the Israelites; and thereby drawing them to idolatry: in which sin they were so settled, that there was no hope of reclaiming them; but they might rather (if they had been saved alive) have enticed the Israelites to commit the same again.

Ver. 18. *But all the women-children that have not known a man, by lying with him, keep alive.*] Being young, there was some hope they might be brought off from idolatry, and become proselytes to the true religion.

For yourselves.] To be sold as slaves to any other nation, or to be kept as servants, or taken to be their wives, after such preparation as the law required, (Deut. xxi. 16, 17, &c.) This was a peculiar case, wherein a middle course was held between those that were of the seven nations of Canaan, and those that were not. If they were not of those seven nations, the Israelites might take the women and little ones unto themselves: (Deut. xx. 14, 15.) if they were, every thing that breathed was to be destroyed, (ver. 16, 17.) But here the Midianites, being guilty of a very great crime against the Lord, and against his people, are punished more heavily than other nations; though not so heavily as those of Canaan were to be: for they killed all the women that were not virgins, as well as all the males, both little and great; but spared the rest, together with the cattle, &c. Such an execution was made, in aftertimes, upon one of the cities of Israel, upon a high contempt of public authority, in a very great exigency, (Judges xxi. 11.) There is a rule in Deut. xx. 10. that when they came to fight against any city, they should proclaim peace to it; and if they should accept it, they should only make the inhabitants tributaries to them. From whence, a question arising, whether this extended to the seven nations of Canaan? it is resolved by Maimonides, that it did; which he proves from Josh. xi. 19, 20. But so great was the sin of this people, that they neither sent offers of peace to them now, nor were they to make any peace with them hereafter, (Deut. xxiii. 6.) And the reason is there given; because they hired Balaam to curse them: which is as true of the Midianites as of the Moabites. Notwithstanding which, Maimonides determines, that though the Israelites did not send messengers of peace to them; yet if they, of their own accord, sent to desire peace of the Israelites, they were not to reject them: (see Cunæus de Hebr. Repub. lib. ii. cap. 20.)

Ver. 19. *And do ye abide without the camp seven days.*] As unclean persons. For though it was lawful to kill men, in a just war against them, yet διὰ τὴν ἀνωτάτην καὶ κοινὴν συγγένειαν (as Philo speaks), *because of the most ancient and common kindred between all mankind*, it was fit men should use some purification to cleanse themselves from that which looked like a crime, though it was none.

Whosoever hath killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain, purify both yourselves.] The whole army that went to the war, were to stay without the camp seven days; and such of them as had had their hands in blood, or had touched a dead body, though killed by another, were to use a special purification; which was made by the water of separation, mentioned chap. xix. 9, &c.

And your captives.] Or the prey that they had taken; of garments, and other things, mentioned in the next verse: and so the word is translated ver. 26. For we cannot think that the persons they had taken, being gentiles, were to be purified with that water which was peculiar to the Jews.

On the third day, and on the seventh day.] So the law was, chap. xix. 11, 12. And such purifications were common among the gentiles, especially the Greeks, upon the like occasions, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. *ult.* Grotius, lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 24. n. 10.) To whom add our late learned Dr. Spencer, lib. iii. dissert. 3. sect. 1. where he takes this to have been a custom, derived from ancient time, before the law of Moses (which may be questioned): and Bonfrerius, upon this place, hath alleged the very same proofs, and several more; particularly this out of the scholiast upon Sophocles, in his Ajax Mastigoph. ἔθος ἦν τοῖς παλαιοῖς ὅτε ἢ φόνον ἀνδρώπου, &c. *it was the custom among the ancients, when they either killed a man,* or made any other slaughter, to wash their hands in water, εἰς κάθαρσιν μιάσματος, *for the purification of the defilement.*

Ver. 20. *And purify all your raiment, and all that is made of skins,* &c.] With the same water of separation, (or else by washing them in running water, as the manner was in other cases, Lev. xi. 32, 33.) for they might all be supposed to be defiled by dead bodies, and so come under the law, (chap. xix. 14.)

Ver. 21. *And Eleazar the priest said unto the men of war that went to the battle, This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord commanded Moses.*] This law was to be observed hereafter by those who went to war; for though the law before was, as I observed, that he who touched a dead body should be purified with the water of separation; yet nothing is there said of him that killed a man in war, but did not, perhaps, touch his body; which now is brought under the same rule.

Ver. 22, 23. *Only the gold, and the silver, the brass,* &c. *every thing that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire,* &c.] All sorts of metals were to have this peculiar sort of purification; which the other things (mentioned ver. 20.) would not endure. And the same Bonfrerius observes, this was a way of purification among the gentiles as old as Homer's time; but they used sulphur with it. For so he makes Ulysses call to the old women to bring him sulphur, and then fire, that he might fume the house wherein the woers had been killed. Which is observed by Fort. Scacchus also, Myrothec. 2. cap. 30. where he also notes, that Ovid gives a long account why these two, *fire* and *water*, were chosen for the instruments of purification, lib. iv. Fastorum; where he saith particularly of fire,

> "Omnia purgat edax ignis, vitiumque metalli
> Excoquit."——

Nevertheless it shall be purified with the water of separation.] On the third day, I suppose, before it went through the fire.

And all that abideth not the fire, ye shall make go through the water.] All things that could abide the fire, were to be purified both by that and by the water of separation. And such things as could not abide it, were to be purified, not merely by sprinkling them with the water of separation, but by making them go through the water.

Ver. 24. *And ye shall wash your clothes on the seventh day, and ye shall be clean,* &c.] Thus he that sprinkled an unclean person with the water of separation, was bound to purify himself, (chap. xix. 19.)

Ver. 25. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] After they were purified, and come into the camp.

Ver. 26. *Take the sum of the prey that was taken.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *take the sum of the prey of the captivity:* which, it is plain by what follows, signifies the sum of the prey, and of the captives. For all that they took was of three kinds, (ver. 12.) the persons called *captives;* the *beasts,* which are called the *prey;* and *money and goods,* (such as are mentioned ver. 20, 21.) which are called the *spoil.*

Both of man and beast.] Here an account is ordered to be given of two parts of what had been taken; but nothing said of the third (which was the *spoil),* out of which they who had it made a voluntary oblation, (ver. 50. 53.)

Thou, and Eleazar the priest, and the chief of the fathers.] The same, perhaps, with the *heads of the tribes,* chap. xxx. 1.

Ver. 27. *And divide the prey into two parts, between them that took the war upon them, who went out to the battle, and between all the congregation.*] By this partition, a far larger share was given to every one of the warriors, who were but twelve thousand, than to any of their brethren, who were near six hundred thousand: for they had hazarded themselves, which the others had not; who, notwithstanding that, enjoyed some fruit of their labours; because it was a common cause in which they engaged, and the rest seem to have been ready to fight, as well as they, (ver. 3.) This division was made by a special direction of God, but was not the rule in after-ages; as appears from 1 Sam. xxx. 24, 25. nor had been in ancient times, as the Jews interpret Gen. xiv. 24. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 16. p. 747.)

Ver. 28. *And levy a tribute unto the Lord of the men of war,* &c.] The Lord was their sovereign, and therefore had a tribute due to him, out of that which they had taken in war; as a grateful acknowledgment that they owed their success to him.

One soul of five hundred, both of the persons.] *i. e.* Of the women and the children.

And of the beeves, and of the asses, and of the sheep.] The Hebrew word *tzon* signifies *goats* as well as *sheep;* and both being here intended, the LXX. express them both. Here is no mention of *camels,* which it seems their country

was not stocked withal at this time: see ver. 34. and what I have noted upon Gen. xxxvii. 25. This tribute to God was but a very small proportion, in comparison with what their kings challenged in following times, if we may believe the Talmudists; who say, they had all the gold and silver, and such rich things that were taken, and half of the rest of the prey, which was divided between them and the people: (see Selden in the place abovenamed.) But anciently they had only the tenth part: (see Gen. xiv. 20.)

Ver. 29. *Take it of their half, and give it unto Eleazar the priest, for a heave-offering unto the Lord.*] For the maintenance of the priests, among whom this part of the tribute was divided. And it was just a tenth part of what the Levites had, as they had a tenth part of their tithes, which was paid them for their constant support. So the law was, chap. xviii. 21. 24. 26, &c. which was observed in this levy; which is called *trumah*, as the offering for the making of the sanctuary is called Exod. xxv. 2. where we translate it, as here, *a heave-offering*.

Ver. 30. *And of the children of Israel's half, thou shalt take one portion of fifty, of the persons, of the beeves,* &c.] A far larger share is demanded of the people (ten times as much as was paid by the soldiers), because they came more easily by it, without any pains or danger. And they pay it in a very just proportion to the number of those who went to the war, and of those who stayed at home, but were able to go to war, who were above six hundred thousand; (chap. xxvi. 2. 51.) of which twelve thousand, who were employed in this expedition, were the *fiftieth* part.

And give them to the Levites.] Who were far more numerous than the priests, and therefore had a greater proportion of the tribute.

Which keep the charge of the tabernacle of the Lord.] See chap. i. 50. iii. 6—8.

Ver. 31. *And Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the Lord commanded Moses.*] This command is peculiarly to Moses, (ver. 25.) but Eleazar was to assist him in the execution of it, (ver. 26.) and accordingly they took the sum of the prey both of man and beast, and divided it between the soldiers and people; and levied a tribute upon each for the Lord, who ordered it to his ministers.

Ver. 32. *And the booty, being the rest of the prey, which the men of Israel had caught.*] *i. e.* Besides what was necessarily spent for their subsistence, during the war, and while they lay out of the camp, (ver. 19.)

Was six hundred thousand, and seventy thousand, and five thousand sheep.] A vast stock; far exceeding the number of men of war which were in Israel.

Ver. 33. *And threescore and twelve thousand beeves.*] It seems their country had good pasture in it, as well as sheep-walks: for, as Arabia Felix, it is certain, had "agros latissimos et fertilissimos," (as Pliny speaks, lib. vi. cap. 28.) *most spacious and fertile fields;* so Arabia Petræa (in which Midian was) did not wholly want them.

Ver. 34. *And threescore and one thousand asses.*] The countries about Judea abounding with camels also, particularly Arabia, in which Job had a great number, it may seem strange that we read of none here; especially since they had vast numbers in following times, (Judges vi. 5. vii. 12.) and the Ishmaelites (with whom they were associates in trade) had them long before this time, (Gen. xxxvii. 27. 36.) But it is likely they did not yet find it for their profit to feed *camels* (of which they learnt to make a traffic afterward), no more than *mules*, of which we read nothing here, nor indeed in Judea, till the times of David. It may be supposed, that, if they had *camels*, they were of that kind called *dromedaries*, which were famous in this country in after-ages, (Isa. lx. 6.) and that the people, who escaped the slaughter, fled away upon them: and that there were other beasts in this country, besides beeves, and asses, and sheep, and goats, seems to be plain from ver. 30. where, after the mention of these, he adds, *of all manner of beasts*, he should take a portion for the Levites; but of *camels* or *dromedaries*, I suppose, none were found.

Ver. 35. *And thirty-two thousand persons in all, of women that had not known man,* &c.] It appears by this to have been a very populous country, in which were so many virgins.

Ver. 36. *And the half which was the portion of them that went out to war, was in number three hundred and seven-and-thirty thousand and five hundred sheep.*] There is no difficulty in this, or in the following verses; this being exactly the half of the whole number of sheep mentioned ver. 32.

Ver. 37. *And the Lord's tribute of the sheep was six hundred and threescore and fifteen.*] Which is exactly one in five hundred, out of this half of the booty; as God ordered, ver. 28.

Ver. 38. *And the beeves were thirty and six thousand, whereof the tribute was threescore and twelve.*] The very same proportions are observed here, as in the sheep, which appears by comparing this verse with ver. 33. And the two next verses (39, 40.) give the same account of the *asses* and the *persons*, which were as exactly divided; and the Lord had the same portion of them, as ver. 34, 35. compared with these, demonstrate.

Ver. 41. *And Moses gave the tribute which was the Lord's heave-offering unto Eleazar the priest,* &c.] This is recorded to shew how faithful Moses was in performing obedience to God's commands, (ver. 29.) and far from desiring the smallest portion for himself out of so great a booty: which, if he had acted by his own private spirit, he would scarce have avoided.

Ver. 42. *And the children of Israel's half, which Moses divided from the men that warred.*] There is nothing here, nor in the following verses, to ver. 48. but a repetition of what was said concerning the other half beforementioned; to shew that the same exactness was observed both in the division of the prey among the people, and in taking out of it such a portion as God assigned to the Levites; which was one out of fifty; as out of the men of war's part, one out of five hundred, (ver. 28. 30.)

Ver. 48. *And the officers which were over thousands of the host, the captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, came near unto Moses.*] The first words of this verse seem to suppose, that there were other great officers, as well as the general, who were above the captains over thousands, and the captains over hundreds: which is very probable.

Ver. 49. *And they said unto Moses, Thy servants,* &c.] The greatest men speak with the greatest reverence to Moses; who was in the place of God.

Have taken the sum of the men of war which are under our charge.] Made a muster of them (as we now speak) at our return from the war.

And there lacketh not one man of us.] A wonderful victory; which shews the war was *the Lord's,* (ver. 3.) who struck such a terror into them, that one would think they turned their backs, and did not strike a stroke against the Israelites.

Ver. 50. *We have therefore brought an oblation for the Lord.*] For the uses of the sanctuary; either in purchasing sacrifices, or maintaining God's ministers, &c. For *korban* signifies every thing that is given to God, though not sacrificed upon the altar.

What every man hath gotten.] All of them offered something to the Lord out of the spoil he had gotten, according to the piety of ancient times, (Gen. xiv. 20.) For we find no precept in the law for this; and yet it was constantly practised by David in aftertimes, (2 Sam. viii. 11, 12.) and by the officers of his army, (1 Chron. xxvi. 26, 27.) and by other men, Samuel, Saul, Abner, &c. (ver. 28, &c.)

Jewels of gold.] Vessels, as the Hebrew word signifies, or all manner of ornaments made of gold; the particulars of which follow, *viz. chains, bracelets,* &c. but the Jerusalem Targum takes these *jewels* (as we translate it) to have been the golden attire about the heads of their women.

Chains.] These are commonly thought to have been the ornaments of their arms. But they may as well be thought to have been used about their legs, or their necks.

Bracelets.] These, it is apparent, were ornaments about their wrists or hands, (Gen. xxiv. 47. Ezek. xvi. 11.)

Rings.] They were ornaments of the fingers, (Gen. xli. 42. Esther iii. 10.)

Ear-rings.] Nothing more common in those countries, especially among the Midianites and Ishmaelites; as we find Judges viii. 24—26. where there is a different word used to express this ornament; yet the word *hagil,* here used, certainly signifying something *round,* and the ornaments encompassing the arms and other parts being before mentioned, it cannot well be thought to denote any thing but rings in the ears. And so we translate it, Ezek. xvi. 12.

And tablets.] Some ornaments about the breasts. (See Exod. xxxv. 22.)

To make an atonement of our souls before the Lord.] For the guilt of which Moses accused them, ver. 14. or any other, which they had contracted in the war.

Ver. 52. *And all the gold of the offering which they offered up to the Lord,* &c. *was sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels.*] It hath been observed before, that three thousand shekels made a talent: and therefore their offering amounted to above five talents and a half.

Ver. 53. *For the men of war had taken spoil, every man for himself.*] Or rather, *had taken the spoil,* mentioned ver. 12. of which part of the booty no division was made between the men of war and the people, (ver. 26.) but they kept it entirely to themselves, and now very gratefully made a present of a very considerable part of it to the Lord: see ver. 12. where the word *spoil* is used strictly for a part of the booty, distinct from the other two, the *captives* and the *prey:* and so it signifies here.

Ver. 54. *And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold.*] This was said before, (ver. 51.) and therefore the sense here is, that, having received it as an offering to the Lord, they brought it into the tabernacle of the congregation; as it here follows in the conclusion of this verse.

Of the captains of thousands and of hundreds.] It was not their oblation only, but the oblation of every one of the men of war, (ver. 50, 51.) But the commanders received it from the common soldiers, and presented it unto Moses and Eleazar, from the whole host.

And brought it into the tabernacle, for a memorial for the children of Israel before the Lord.] That God might be mindful of them, *i. e.* propitious to them, who were so grateful to him for his benefits.

The Jerusalem Targum upon ver. 50. fancies these officers to have represented to Moses their great chastity, when they made this offering; saying, "We broke into the chambers and closets of the kings of Midian; and there we saw their beautiful and charming daughters, from whom we took the golden ornaments upon their heads, and in their ears, and on their arms, their fingers, and breasts; but did not cast a wanton look upon one of them:" and therefore they hoped this oblation they made would rise up for them, in the day of the great judgment, as a reconciliation for their souls before the Lord.

CHAP. XXXII.

Ver. 1. *NOW the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad.*] Here the children of Reuben, who was Jacob's firstborn, are mentioned in the first place; but in the rest of the chapter (ver. 2. 6. 25. 29. 32.) the children of Gad are constantly first mentioned, because they were the first movers of that which follows, as the Hebrews conjecture.

Had a very great multitude of cattle.] More than any other tribe.

And when they saw the land of Jazer.] Which was lately taken from the Amorites, after they had slain Sihon their king, (chap. xxi. 32.) This city and country belonging to it, were near to the spring of the river Arnon; and there is frequent mention of it in the book of Joshua, and in Isaiah xvi. 8, 9. and Jeremiah xlviii. 34.

And the land of Gilead.] A noble country, so called from the mountain Gilead, which bounded it on the east, as Jordan did on the west, the river Jabbok on the south, and Mount Libanus on the north.

That, behold, the place was a place of cattle.] Which in the fourth verse is called *a land of cattle,* γῆν κτηνοτρόφον, as the LXX. translate it, *fit for feeding of cattle;* being famous for pasture and other grazing ground. For Bashan was in this country, (Deut. iii. 12, 13.) where every one knows the largest and fattest oxen were bred, (Psalm xxii. 12.) and sheep also, (Deut. xxxii. 14.) and therefore is joined with Gilead, (Micah vi. 14.) which, being woody and mountainous in some part of it, was no less famous for breeding goats, (see Cantic. iv. 1.) which delight to browse on such trees as Mount Gilead abounded withal. (See Bochartus in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 51.)

Ver. 2. *And the children of Gad, and the children of Reuben.*] Neither here, nor in the foregoing verse, is there any mention of the children of Manasseh (half of which had their portion in this country), because they were neither the contrivers nor movers of this; but it is most probable had a lot assigned them here, because these countries were too much for the other two tribes alone; and they of Manasseh had much cattle also.

Came and spake unto Moses and Eleazar, and the princes of the congregation.] Who were wont often to assemble to dispatch public affairs, (chap. xxvii. 2. xxx. 1.)

Ver. 3. *Ataroth.*] A place which was part of the portion of Gad; as appears by ver. 34.

And Dibon.] This is mentioned as a place in the kingdom of Sihon, chap. xxi. 30. and was given to Gad also; as we read ver. 34.

And Jazer.] See ver. 1. and 35. where we find this also belonged unto Gad.

And Nimrah.] Called Beth-Nimrah, ver. 36. and given to the same tribe. It is usual, I observed before, for the Hebrews to cut off the first part of the names of places, for brevity's sake, (chap. xxv. 1.) but this place is elsewhere called at length Beth-Nimrah, Josh. xiii. 27. where it is mentioned as a part of Sihon's kingdom, and signifies as much as *domus pardorum, a habitation of leopards*: so Bochartus, who observes, that when both Isaiah xv. 6. and Jeremiah xlviii. 34. speak of the waters of Nimrim, they mean this very place, which was given to Gad; but, in the days of those prophets, mentioned as in the country of the Moabites; who had usurped upon their neighbours the Gadites, and taken this place from them, as they had done Jazer also; as appears from the place abovementioned, (Isa. xvi. 8, 9. Jerem. xlviii. 34.)

And Heshbon.] The principal city of Sihon king of the Amorites, (chap. xxi. 26—28.) and was given to the Reubenites, (ver. 37.)

And Elealah.] This is frequently mentioned with Heshbon, as a place adjoining to it, (ver. 37. Isa. xvi. 9.)

And Sheban.] Called also Shibmah, ver. 37. and Sibmah, Isa. xvi. 8, 9. Jer. xlviii. 31. where it appears to have been a place famous for vines; and in the days of that prophet was fallen into the hands of the Moabites, as were Heshbon and Elealah also.

And Nebo.] Which was given to the Reubenites, (ver. 38.)

And Beon.] There is no mention of this place any where else; but it is probable was part of the Reubenites' portion, being mentioned together with other places that were given unto them; and possibly may be the place called Baal-Meon, (ver. 38.) which they changed into Beon, because of the name of Baal; but the Moabites, when it fell into their hands, restored part of its old name, calling it Beth-Meon, (Jer. xlviii. 23.)

Ver. 4. *Even the country which the Lord smote before the congregation of Israel.*] And gave it to them for a possession, as he intended to do the land of Canaan: (see chap. xxi. 24, 25.

Is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle.] Is very fit for us, (ver. 2.)

Ver. 5. *Wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight.*] A phrase often used by humble petitioners; even by Moses himself, when he speaks to God, chap. xi. 15.

Let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession.] The Israelites in common possessed it hitherto, as belonging to them all, (chap. xxi. *ult.*) but they desire to have it assigned to them, as their particular portion.

And bring us not over Jordan.] We desire nothing in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 6. *And Moses said unto the children of Gad, and the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war.*] Can you think it reasonable, that the rest of the tribes should fight still for what they are to possess?

And shall ye sit here?] And you take up your rest here, and settle in their conquests, which they have already made?

Ver. 7. *And wherefore discourage ye the hearts of the children of Israel, from going over into the land which the Lord hath given them?*] He seems to have suspected that mere cowardice, and a vile love of ease, made them desire to stay where they were, and go no further: which ill example might dishearten all the rest of their brethren, and make them have the same inclination to settle in the land they had conquered; and not engage in a war with the Canaanites.

Ver. 8. *Thus did your fathers.*] *i. e.* They disheartened all their brethren.

When I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land.] See chap. xiii. 3. 26.

Ver. 9. *For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol.*] Men do not go up into a valley; therefore the meaning is, they went up to search the country, (as it is said they did, chap. xiii. 21, 22.) and went on in their search, till they came to the valley or brook of Eshcol, chap. xiii. 23. where they cut down a branch with a cluster of grapes, to shew what fruit the country afforded.

And saw the land.] Had taken a full view of the country.

They discouraged the hearts of the children of Israel.] Represented the people and the cities to be so strong, that they should not be able to deal with them, (chap. xiii. 28, 29.)

That they should not go into the land which the Lord had given them.] And, therefore, persuaded them not to attempt to possess themselves of it. For they said expressly, "We are not able to go against the people, for they are stronger than we," (chap. xiii. 31.)

Ver. 10. *And the Lord's anger was kindled at the same time, and he sware, saying.*] See chap. xiv. 21. 28.

Ver. 11. *Surely none of the men that are come out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward.*] See chap. xiv. 22. 29. 35.

Shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.] See chap. xiv. 23.

Because they have not wholly followed me.] See there, ver. 22.

Ver. 12. *Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh.*] See chap. xiv. 24.

The Kenezite.] A great deal has been said by many to prove that Caleb is called a Kenezite, because his father's name was Kenaz. And this they prove, because Othniel's father was Kenaz, and he was Caleb's brother, (Josh. xv. 17.) his younger brother, (Judg. i. 13. iii. 9.) So that their father must have two names, Kenaz and Jephunneh. But it is very strange, if this be true, that Caleb is no where called the son of Kenaz, but constantly the son of Jephunneh, (even there where Othniel is just before called the son of Kenaz, 1 Chron. iv. 13. 15.) nor is Othniel any where called the son of Jephunneh, but always of Kenaz. And, indeed, there is a demonstration against this opinion; for Othniel married Caleb's daughter, which by the law of Moses was utterly unlawful, whatsoever the practice might have been before the law was given. Therefore, others think it more probable, that Othniel was one of his brother's

younger sons (for uncles and nephews are often called brethren, as Abraham and Lot were), and that from this brother, whose name was Kenaz, Caleb is also called a Kenezite: but this is very absurd; for the name of *Kenezzi* in the Hebrew, denotes the descendants from one who gave this denomination to the family; which one brother could not do to another. It is most probable, therefore, that Kenez was some common ancestor both of Othniel and Caleb, from whom Othniel's father took also his name. Accordingly, we find Jephunneh called a Kenezite in Joshua xiv. 14. where it is said, that "Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite."

And Joshua the son of Nun: for they have followed the Lord.] Fully, chap. xiv. 24. 30. 38.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord's anger was kindled against Israel.*] He had said this before, (ver. 10.) but repeats it again, to make them the more sensible of a thing that was done thirty-eight years ago; and to deter them from giving him the like provocation.

And he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, till all that had done evil in the sight of the Lord were consumed.] See chap. xiv. 31—33. xxvi. 64, 65.

Ver. 14. *And, behold.*] Mark what I say.

You are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord towards Israel.] Are multiplied to as great a number as your fathers, only to succeed them in their sins, and thereby bring down still more heavy punishments upon the nation.

Ver. 15. *For if ye turn away from after him.*] As your fathers did; who refused to go and possess the good land which he had bestowed upon them.

He will yet again leave them in the wilderness.] Lead them back again into the desert, where your fathers perished; and there forsake you.

And ye shall destroy all this people.] Who, following your example, will refuse to go over Jordan, (ver. 5.) to take possession of the land of Canaan.

Ver. 16. *And they drew near unto him.*] As petitioners are wont to do when they are assured of their integrity, and hope to obtain their request, (Gen. xliv. 19.)

And said, We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle.] There are five words in the Hebrew language for folds for sheep and cattle; all signifying a place fenced in, that they might lie safely and be defended from wild beasts. And so this word *gedera* plainly imports: (see Bochartus in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. i. cap. 45.)

And cities for our little ones.] Which stood in need only of repairing and fortifying, (ver. 17.) for they already dwelt in those cities of the Amorites, (chap. xxi. 25.)

Ver. 17. *But we ourselves will go ready armed before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place.*] That is, a considerable number of them, as many as should be thought necessary, (Deut. iii. 18.) in all forty thousand, (Josh. iv. 12.)

And our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities.] Where it was necessary to leave some men to guard them from their bad neighbours, and to take care of their cattle.

Because of the people of the land.] That is, the Moabites, who were the ancient owners of this country, (chap. xxi. 26.) and the Edomites, who had shewed no good-will to the Israelites, as they passed through the wilderness.

Ver. 18. *We will not return unto our houses, until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance.*] Be settled in the possession of the land of Canaan, as we desire to be in this country.

Ver. 19. *For we will not inherit with them on yonder side Jordan, or forward.*] We will not desire any share in the country beyond Jordan, though it lie near to us; nor in that country which lies still further westward.

Because our inheritance is fallen on this side Jordan eastward.] We look upon this as our inheritance (with which we shall be fully satisfied), here in the land of Gilead: which lay eastward of Jordan, and of the land of Canaan.

Ver. 20. *And Moses said unto them, If ye will do this thing.*] Be as good as your word.

If ye will go armed before the Lord to war.] To go *before the Lord*, was to go before the ark; which was the symbol of God's presence, over which his glory resided. And it is to be observed, that these two tribes, Reuben and Gad (together with Simeon), always lay encamped before the sanctuary; as appears from the second chapter of this book, ver. 10. 14—17. And accordingly, when the camp removed, they marched immediately before it; as is particularly noted, chap. x. 18—21. So that here he requires them only to hold their usual place, when they went to the war against the Canaanites; and accordingly it is expressly said, they did (together with half the tribe of Manasseh, who were joined with them) *pass over before the Lord unto battle*, Josh. iv. 12, 13.

Ver. 21. *And will go all of you.*] As many as shall be required, and can be spared, (ver. 17.)

Armed over Jordan before the Lord, until he hath driven out his enemies from before him.] Not only bring us into Canaan, but continue with us, till we have expelled the inhabitants of that country: which he encourages them to undertake, by representing the Canaanites as the enemies of the Lord, who would therefore fight for them.

Ver. 22. *And the land be subdued before the Lord.*] By this expression, and that in the foregoing words, it appears that the ark was carried along with them to the war every where till it was ended; as it was when it begun, at the taking of Jericho, (Josh. vi. 6, 7, &c.)

Then afterward ye shall return, and be guiltless before the Lord, and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession.] Not only be free from all blame in this desire, but have what you desire.

Before the Lord.] By his order and appointment.

Ver. 23. *But if you will not do so.*] If this be not your intention; or if you go back from your word.

Behold.] Observe what I say.

Ye have sinned against the Lord; and be sure your sin will find you out.] Your guilt is exceeding great, and shall be most certainly punished, as it deserves.

Ver. 24. *Build ye cities for your little ones, and folds for your sheep, &c.*] As for the rest of their proposals, about their children and cattle, he consented to them, without any exception.

Ver. 25. *And the children of Gad, and the children of Reuben, spake unto Moses, saying.*] The word for *spake*, in the Hebrew, being *jomer*, in the singular number, instead of *jomru*, in the plural, their doctors take it for an indication that some one principal person spake in the name of all the rest. But there is no need of this; for the singular number in this language is often used for the plural; and

they never spake all of them together, but some one in the name of their brethren. And it had been better, if they had observed, that this signifies one and all (as we now speak) were of the same mind.

Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth.] And as they themselves had proposed, (ver. 17.)

Ver. 26. *Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our cattle, shall be there in the cities of Gilead.*] Here they promise to leave all that was dear to them in this country, and go to serve their brethren.

Ver. 27. *But thy servants will pass over every man armed for war,* &c.] We ourselves will go and fight for our brethren. It hath been often said (ver. 17. 21.) that this doth not signify all the men of war among them should go, but as many as could be spared, and as were thought sufficient. For it is manifest, the far greater half of them were left in this country to defend their wives and children, and look after their flocks and herds; as will appear by computing all the men of war that were found in the tribes of Gad and of Reuben, which were above fourscore and four thousand, (chap. xxvi. 7. 18.) to which if we add half the tribe of Manasseh (who were, in all, above fifty-two thousand), there were much above a hundred thousand men able to bear arms; and not above forty thousand of them marched into Canaan, as was before observed.

Ver. 28. *So concerning them, Moses commanded Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the chief fathers of the tribes of Israel.*] He left this in charge with the principal persons, who had the government of affairs under him; particularly with Joshua, who was not unmindful of it, but remembered these tribes what Moses had said when he was about to attempt the conquest of Canaan, (Josh. i. 13, 14, &c.)

Ver. 29. *And Moses said unto them, If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben will pass with you over Jordan,* &c.] He repeats to these great men, who were to see it executed, what he had said to the Gadites and Reubenites themselves, (ver. 21, 22.)

Then ye shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession.] They had not a right to it till they had performed the condition upon which it was granted, *viz.* till their brethren were in possession of their inheritance in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 30. *But if they will not pass over before you armed.*] Perform their promise, ver. 17.

They shall have possession among you in the land of Canaan.] Take what falls to their share there; and this country be disposed of, as God shall order.

Ver. 31. *And the children of Gad, and the children of Reuben said, As the Lord hath said unto thy servants, so will we do.*] They confirm what they had promised to Moses, ver. 25. and here take all that he had said, as spoken by the order of God, who bestowed this land upon them on the condition often mentioned.

Ver. 32. *We will pass over armed before the Lord into the land of Canaan.*] This they offered at first of themselves, (ver. 17.) and solemnly promised, when Moses accepted their proposal, (ver. 27.) and again here ratify and confirm it before Eleazar, and Joshua, and all the princes, (ver. 28.)

That the possession of our inheritance.] Which we have desired to have for our inheritance.

On this side Jordan.] They were now in the land of Gilead, and so might properly call it *on this side Jordan;* but when they were in the land of Canaan, it was said to be *on that side Jordan.*

May be ours.] Settled upon us and our posterity.

Ver. 33. *And Moses gave unto them.*] Not an absolute grant, but a conditional; if they did as they engaged, (ver. 29—31, &c.)

Even to the children of Gad, and the children of Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph.] This half tribe is not mentioned before, because they did not put in any claim till they saw how those of Gad and Reuben would succeed in their petition: which being granted, it is likely that thereupon they represented also what store of cattle they had; and that the country would be more than enough for those who had desired it. This being found to be true, Moses thought fit to give them a portion in it, rather than any other; because the children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had, by their valour, subdued part of this country, (ver. 39. Josh. xvii. 1.)

The kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan.] See chap. xxi. 24. 29. Which were the first countries that the Israelites possessed; and were the first that were carried captive out of their land, (2 Kings xv. 29.)

The land with the cities thereof in the coasts, even the cities of the country round about.] The land with the cities, within such a compass or limits; and all the towns within that circuit.

Ver. 34. *And the children of Gad built Dibon and Ataroth.*] Repaired and fortified these towns, which are mentioned before, ver. 3. for they were not destroyed, but only their inhabitants, (Deut. ii. 34, 35.) and if they had, there was not time now to rebuild them. Thus Jeroboam is said to have built Shechem, (1 Kings xii. 25.) which was a city before, but gone to decay; and Azariah to have built Elah, (2 Kings xiv. 22.) which he restoreth to Judah as a city formerly belonging to them.

And Aroer.] A city of the Amorites, upon the brink of the river Arnon; as Moses tells us, Deut. ii. 36. iii. 11. iv. 48. It formerly belonged to the Moabites, but was taken from them by Sihon.

Ver. 35. *And Atroth, and Shophan, and Jaazer, and Jogbehah.*] We do not read of any of these towns elsewhere, but only of Jaazer, which seems to be that called Jazer, ver. 3.

Ver. 36. *And Beth-Nimrah.*] Called, ver. 3. Nimrah for shortness' sake; as (it may be further observed) Jemini is put for Benjemini, Esther ii. 5. Sheba for Beer-sheba, Josh. xix. 2. where we find these two mentioned; but they do not signify two several cities, but are two names for one and the same city; as if he had said, Beer-sheba, which is also called Sheba. This is clear to a demonstration; for otherwise there would be more than thirteen cities in the tribe of Simeon, contrary to ver. 6. of that chapter.

And Beth-haran.] A place, some say, between Dibon and Jordan.

Fenced cities, and folds for sheep.] All these cities the children of Gad fortified, and built folds for sheep in the pastures near to them.

Ver. 37. *And the children of Reuben built.*] Repaired and fortified; as I said, ver. 34.

Heshbon and Elealah.] Mentioned above, ver. 3.

And Kirjathaim.] A place where giant-like people formerly dwelt, called Emims, Gen. xiv. 5. who were expelled by the Moabites, as they were by the Amorites.

Ver. 38. *And Nebo.*] This city is mentioned in Jerem. xlviii. 2. when it was fallen again into the possession of the Moabites, as was also Kirjathaim. It seems to have been near Dibon, mentioned together with it, Isa. xv. 1. At least there were in these places two famous temples; for the destruction of which, the prophet represents the people making lamentation. So the LXX. ἀπολεῖται ὁ Νεβῶν, οὗ ὁ βωμὸς ὑμῶν, *Nebo is destroyed where your altar is.* And Hesychius saith of Δεηβὼν (i. e. *Dibon*), that it was τόπος ἔνθα ἵδρυται ἱερὸν Μοαβήτων, *a place where a temple of the Moabites was built.* And St. Jerome suspects that there was an oracle at this place; the word *Nebo* importing *prophecy*, or *divination*, as he speaks.

And Baal-Meon.] Another place, where, it is likely, Baal was worshipped; which made them change the names of these places, as it here follows.

Their names being changed.] For Nebo, as well as Baal, was the name of a god; as we learn from Isaiah xlvi. 1. and seems to have been an Assyrian deity; there being footsteps of it in the names of several great men there; such as Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan, and many others. And it is not unlikely, that they therefore changed the names of these cities into some other, because they would abolish all remainders of idolatry in this country, according to the precept, Exod. xxiii. 13. that they should not take the name of their gods into their mouth: but, notwithstanding this, they still retained their ancient names; as appears from Josh. xiii. 17. Ezek. xxv. 9. so hard it is to alter any thing for the better!

And Sibmah.] See ver. 3.

And gave other names unto the cities which they builded.] If this refer to all the cities here mentioned, it is manifest they either retained or recovered their former names: for we read of them all in future times; particularly in the fifteenth and eighteenth chapters of Isaiah; and Kirjathaim is mentioned in the place I now quoted out of Ezekiel.

Ver. 39. *And the children of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead, and took it.*] Here Gilead is used in a strict sense, not so largely as before, ver. 1. 26. 29. where it is taken for all the country on that side Jordan where Gilead was; but here, for a part of it about Mount Gilead. This is plain from the next verse; and Gilead the son of Machir, one would think, was the person that took it, (Josh. xvii. 1.)

Ver. 40. *And Moses gave Gilead unto Machir, the son of Manasseh.*] *i. e.* To the children of Machir (for he was dead long ago), who had a considerable portion of that half of the land of Gilead, which was given to the half tribe of Manasseh. For one half was given to the Reubenites and Gadites, and the other half to them, Deut. iii. 12, 13. where Gilead signifies all that country properly so called; neither so much as the whole territory, which these tribes demanded, ver. 1. nor so little as was given to Machir, ver. 15. where Moses says, "And I gave Gilead unto Machir;" *i. e.* to that family of Manasseh, which were properly called Machirites, Numb. xxvi. 29. and to that family descended from his son, which from him were called Gileadites. For as Manasseh had only this son Machir, so Machir had only Gilead; but he had many, (chap. xxvi. 30—32.) who all raised families. And as to the Machirites (and I suppose the Gileadites) was given a portion in this country, (Josh. xiii. 29, 30, &c.) so Joshua gave to the rest an inheritance in the land of Canaan, (chap. xvii. 2.) And he gives a reason, in the foregoing verse, why he gave Gilead and Bashan to the posterity of Machir, because they were a warlike people, inheriting their father's valour, who was a man of war; and therefore fit to be placed in the frontiers of that country.

Ver. 41. *And Jair, the son of Manasseh.*] One of the posterity of Manasseh, by his mother's side: for he was the grandson of Gilead, the son of Machir, by his daughter, (1 Chron. ii. 21, 22.) but his father was of the tribe of Judah. It seems he joined with the children of Machir in their expedition against Gilead, (mentioned ver. 39.) and was so successful, that he took several small towns in that country, and so had his inheritance among the children of Manasseh, on this side Jordan, where they now were. There were threescore of them in the whole, which were afterward called cities, (Josh. xiii. 13. 1 Kings iv. 23.) but he had only twenty-three for his possession, (1 Chron. ii. 22, 23.)

And called them Havoth-Jair.] That is, the *habitations of Jair.* For *havah* is a *dwelling*, as Bochartus observes in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 29. And among the Arabians the word *Havoth* properly signifies many tents orderly disposed in a ring or circle; which in those countries made that which we call a village. For *hava* in their language signifies to compass. The same he observes in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 44. p. 466.

Ver. 42. *And Nobah.*] Who he was we find in no other place; but an eminent person, no doubt, in some of the families of the Manassites; either of the Machirites or the Gileadites. For they only, as I take it, inherited on this side Jordan.

Went and took Kenath, and the villages thereof.] At the same time, I suppose, that Jair took the towns abovementioned; of which this was one, (1 Chron. ii. 23.) But, though Jair was the chief conductor in that expedition, yet he kept, as I said, only twenty-three towns to himself: the rest were given to them who accompanied him, of whom, it is probable, Nobah was one.

And called it Nobah, after his own name.] But it retained its old name also: for St. Jerome says, in his time there was a city called Canatha, in the region of Trachonitis, not far from Bosra.

Thus this country being settled upon these two tribes and a half, the land of Canaan was divided, by God's command, for an inheritance to the remaining nine tribes, and the other half of the tribe of Manasseh, (Josh. xiii. 7.)

CHAP. XXXIII.

Ver. 1. *THESE are the journeys of the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt.*] A brief recapitulation of the travels of the children of Israel through the wilderness; whereby the wonderful providence of God over them appears, in their protection and preservation, from the time they departed out of Egypt, till they came to the borders of the land of Canaan.

With their armies.] For they marched in an orderly manner, as armies do. (See Exod. xii. 41. 51. xiii. 18.)

Under the hand of Moses and Aaron.] By whom they were conducted, as the ministers of God, (Exod. xii. 1. 28. 50.)

Ver. 2. *And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys.*] Every removal which they made from the place where they were, unto another whither they journeyed.

By the commandment of the Lord.] This may refer either to their journeys, (which were by God's commandment, chap. x. 13.) or rather to Moses's writing this epitome of their travels, of which God ordered him to give a distinct account: which was no unnecessary work, but most useful to posterity; there being no history extant in the world, as David Chytræus well observes (except that of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ), which contains so many wonderful instances of Divine providence, as this of bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt, and leading them through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness; concerning which Maimonides hath an excellent discourse in his third part of More Nevochim, cap. 50. the substance of which is this: that it being impossible any miracles should continue throughout all generations, due care should be taken that the memory of them be not lost, but faithfully preserved by the history and narration of them in future times. Now there being no greater miracle than the subsistence of the children of Israel in the desert for forty years; a desert full of scorpions and serpents, destitute of water, uninhabited, through which no man had been wont to pass, as Jeremiah speaks, chap. ii. 6. where they ate no bread, nor drank wine, or strong drink, (Deut. xxix. 6, &c.) God would have the particular places set down distinctly where they pitched in that howling wilderness; that all men might be satisfied (who would take the pains to examine things), by what a marvellous providence such a multitude of people were fed every day for forty years together; and none might be able to cavil and say, that they travelled through a country good enough, and pitched in habitable places, where they might plough, and sow, and reap; or where they might have herbs and roots for their sustenance; or where manna ordinarily came down from the clouds for men's support.

And these are their journeys according to their goings out.] As if he had said, Having received this commandment from God, this is a true and exact account, which here follows, of their travels from place to place.

Ver. 3. *And they departed from Rameses.*] See Exod. xii. 37. Here, in all likelihood, they sacrificed the paschal lamb, and were preserved from the destroying angel; which made this place very remarkable: for they seem to have been all summoned hither, to meet here as in a common rendezvous (as they now speak), to be ready to march away when God gave the word of command.

In the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow after the Passover.] Which they had kept in Egypt on the fourteenth, (Exod. xii. 46.)

The children of Israel went out of Egypt with a high hand.] Exod. xiv. 8.

In the sight of the Egyptians.] Who thrust them out, (Exod. xii. 39.)

Ver. 4. *For the Egyptians buried all their first-born.*] They were so terrified with the sudden death of all their first-born, that they pressed them to be gone, lest they should be slain also, (Exod. xii. 33.) And were so employed in mourning for them, and giving them decent burial, that they thought not of pursuing the Israelites till some days after.

Which the Lord had smitten among them.] At midnight, between the fourteenth and fifteenth days, (Exod. xii. 29.)

Upon their gods also the Lord executed judgment.] Which still more astonished them, (Exod. xii. 12. xviii. 11. 2 Sam. vii. 23.) just as he did with Babylon afterward, (Isa. xxi. 9.)

Ver. 5. *And the children of Israel removed from Rameses, and pitched in Succoth.*] Exod. xii. 37. Here they received the command to set apart all the first-born unto the Lord, in memory of God's sparing them when he slew all the first-born of the Egyptians, (Exod. xiii. 1. 12, 13, &c.)

Ver. 6. *And they departed from Succoth, and pitched in Etham,* &c.] See Exod. xiii. 20. where it immediately follows, that they were conducted hither by a miraculous cloud, which ever after led them in all their journeys.

Ver. 7. *And they removed from Etham, and turned again unto Pi-hahiroth.*] So it is expressly recorded, Exod. xiv. 2. Hither they were led on purpose, that they might see the wonderful power and goodness of God, in a place where they had high mountains on each side of them, and the army of Pharaoh behind them, and the Red Sea before them, through which God made them a passage, rather than let them fall again under the Egyptian tyranny. Here is also the singular number for the plural, in the word *turned again,* (as was observed before in another word, chap. xxxii. 25.) but the observation of the Hebrew doctors upon it seems to be frivolous, "That with one heart they did what Moses commanded."

Which is before Baal-Zephon, and they pitched before Migdol.] This is explained in Exod. xiv. 2.

Ver. 8. *And they departed from before Pi-hahiroth, and passed through the midst of the sea.*] See Exod. xiv. 23. Where Pharaoh and his host were drowned; as they could not but call to mind when they read this brief history: which, it might be expected, would also call to remembrance their own distrust of God, notwithstanding which he most graciously delivered them, (Exod. xiv. 11, 12, &c.)

Into the wilderness, and went three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham.] Called in Exod. xv. 22. *the wilderness of Shur:* where they were very much distressed for want of water.

And pitched in Marah.] Where God obliged them, by a new miracle, in making the bitter water sweet, (Exod. xv. 23. 25.)

Ver. 9. *And they removed from Marah, and came to Elim; and in Elim were twelve fountains of water,* &c.] See Exod. xv. *ult.*

Ver. 10. *And they removed from Elim, and encamped by the Red Sea.*] Not by that part of it, where they lately came out of it; but by a more southerly part of it, where it bends towards Arabia. For the Red Sea, which Ptolemy calls the Arabian Gulf, runs a long way, like the Adriatic, now called the Gulf of Venice, or the Baltic Sea, as David Chytræus observes; who compares these three together as much of a length, and all in some places broader, and some narrower. This station is not mentioned in the book of Exodus.

Ver. 11. *And they removed from the Red Sea, and en-*

camped in the wilderness of Sin.] Exod. xvi. 1. where manna first began to rain upon them, with which God fed them forty years.

Ver. 12. *And they took their journey out of the wilderness of Sin, and encamped in Dophkah.*] This and the next station (Alush) are not mentioned in Exodus; because nothing remarkable (it is supposed) fell out in these two places, as there did in the next; and they made no long stay there.

Ver. 13. *And they departed from Dophkah, and encamped in Alush.*] The Jewish doctors find something remarkable here, though Moses saith nothing of it. For, as the sabbath was first commanded at Marah, which was their fifth station, so it was first observed here at Alush, as they fancy, which was their tenth. And more than that, this was the only sabbath, in their opinion, which they exactly kept; the very next being profaned. (See Selden, lib. iii. de Jure Nat. et Gentium, &c. cap. 11. and lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 1.) The author of Sepher Cosri saith, the ancient tradition is, "that at this place the manna first descended," (par. ii. sect. 20.)

Ver. 14. *And they removed from Alush, and encamped at Rephidim.*] See Exod. xvii. 1.

Where was no water for the people to drink.] And thereby an occasion given to the Almighty Goodness to shew his wonderful power, in bringing water out of a rock for them, (ver. 5, 6.) And here also "Amalek lay in wait for Israel, in the way when they came out of Egypt," (1 Sam. xv. 2.) and smote some that lagged behind, (Deut. xxv. 16.) but were vanquished by Joshua in a pitched battle. (Exod. xvii. 8, 9, &c.) And here Jethro also came to see Moses, and gave him advice about the government of the people with more ease both to himself and them, (Exod. xviii.)

Ver. 15. *And they departed from Rephidim, and pitched in the wilderness of Sinai.*] Exod. xix. 1, 2. This was forty-seven days after they came from Rameses, on the first day of the third month; three days after which (*viz.* on the fiftieth day after they came out of Egypt) God gave them his law from Mount Sinai; where Moses was called up to him, and stayed with him twice forty days; and was instructed there how to make the tabernacle, and set it up when it was made, with all the furniture belonging to it. All sorts of sacrifices were ordered while they remained in this place; priests consecrated; laws given about clean and unclean things; and about marriages, and feasts, and the year of jubilee, with several other things, mentioned in the book of Leviticus. Here also the people were numbered; their encampment ordered; a second Passover kept; laws given about the water of jealousy and the Nazarites, with several other matters: and then, after they had lain here eleven months and twenty days, they are commanded to leave this famous station; the most remarkable of all other, (Numb. x. 11, 12.)

Ver. 16. *And they removed from the desert of Sinai, and pitched at Kibroth-hattaavah.*] A place in the wilderness of Paran, three days' journey from Mount Sinai, Numb. x. 23. xi. 34. where there was a dreadful slaughter of the people, that wantonly despised manna, and lusted after flesh. Yet here God was pleased to vouchsafe to send his Spirit upon the seventy elders, for the assistance of Moses.

Ver. 17. *And they departed from Kibroth-hattaavah, and encamped at Hazeroth.*] See chap. xi. 35. where Miriam was punished for her envy at Moses, chap. xii. 1. 10.

Ver. 18. *And they departed from Hazeroth, and pitched at Rithmah.*] A place also in the wilderness of Paran, as appears from this book, (chap. xii. 16.) and was not far from Kadesh-barnea, from whence the spies were sent to search out the land of Canaan. (See chap. xiii. 26.) In which place they lay a long time, (Deut. i. 46.)

Ver. 19. *And they departed from Rithmah, and pitched in Rimmon-Parez.*] This and the following stages are no where else mentioned; and seem to have all been in the wilderness of Paran before spoken of; which was a very long tract of ground, from Elana, a port in the Arabian Gulf, to Kadesh-barnea; which, as David Chytræus computes it, was thirty German miles.

Ver. 20. *And they departed from Rimmon-Parez, and pitched in Libnah.*] This and the rest to ver. 31. are places of which, as I said, we no where else read, and so can give no account of them. They were all uninhabited, and out of the road of all travellers; and perhaps had no names till they were given them by the Israelites; who encamped in so many various places (sometimes in mountains, as appears from ver. 23. and sometimes in the plain), that they might be taught, that God was alike present every where to protect, defend, and provide for them; even there where no man dwelt. The Jews made this use of their travels, here recorded by Moses, through so many unknown places, by which he brought them at last to Canaan; to keep up their spirits under this long captivity (as they call it) wherein they now are, and have wandered uncertainly from mountain to mountain, from kingdom to kingdom, from banishment to banishment (as they themselves speak), till their Messiah come to redeem them: which he will do, when their eyes are opened to see what one of their ancient rabbins (Moses Hadarschan) hath told them, as he is quoted by Paulus Fagius, that "the Redeemer was born before him who reduced Israel into this last captivity."

Ver. 31. *And they departed from Moseroth, and pitched in Bene-Jaakan.*] In Deut. x. 6. Moses seems to say the quite contrary, that they *took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to Mosera.* But there he may be thought to speak of a different place, as Drusius notes upon those words: or if he doth not, it is no wonder if, while they wandered in this tedious wilderness, they went backward and forward from Bene-Jaakan to Moseroth, which he mentions in Deuteronomy; and from Moseroth back again to Bene-Jaakan, which he mentions here.

Ver. 32. *And they journeyed from Bene-Jaakan, and encamped at Hor-hagidgad.*] This place was also called Gudgodah, Deut. x. 7. if Moses speaks there of the same places he doth here.

Ver. 33. *And they went from Hor-hagidgad, and pitched in Jothathah.*] Called Deut. x. 7. Jotbath.

Ver. 34. *And they removed from Jotbathah, and encamped at Ebronah.*] All their removals mentioned from ver. 16. to this and the next place, are an account of their wanderings in the wilderness, from the second year after their coming out of Egypt till the fortieth; in which time all the congregation, above twenty years of age, were consumed, and buried in some part or other of this great desert.

Ver. 35. *And they departed from Ebronah, and encamped at Ezion-Gaber.*] A place on the Red Sea, unto which they were brought before they ended their travels, (1 Kings ix. 26. xxii. 18.) It had its name from the snagged rocks, like to the backbone, which stretched out a great way on that shore, as Bochart observes: which rocks made this part so dangerous, that it was forsaken in aftertimes, and Elah frequented as a safer harbour. (See lib. i. Canaan, cap. 44.) It is not recorded how long they remained in any of these places; but it is likely a considerable time in some of them; for they spent thirty-eight years in these removals.

Ver. 36. *And they removed from Ezion-Gaber, and pitched in the wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh.*] See chap. xx. 1. He doth not mean Kadesh-barnea, which was on the borders of Canaan; but another Kadesh, in the skirts of this wilderness, towards the south, not far from the port I now mentioned (which the Greeks call Elana), on the border of Edom; where Miriam died, and where water was brought out of a rock. (See chap. xx. 8. 14. 16.)

Ver. 37. *And they removed from Kadesh, and pitched in Mount Hor, in the edge of the land of Edom.*] See chap. xx. 28.

Ver. 38. *And Aaron went up into Mount Hor, at the commandment of the Lord.*] See chap. xx. 23, 24. 27. Deut. xxxii. 50. The Hebrew doctors are too conceited in their observation, that, because it is said of him, and of Moses, that they died *al pi (at the mouth)* of the Lord, the Lord took their souls out of their bodies with a kiss. But Maimonides endeavours to make a sober sense of this, by making their meaning to be, that they *expired with the transcendent pleasure of Divine love,* (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 51.)

And died there, in the fortieth year after the children of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the first day of the fifth month.] A few months before his brother Moses.

Ver. 39. *And Aaron was a hundred and twenty and three years old when he died in Mount Hor.*] He was just eighty and three years old, when he and Moses first went with a message to Pharaoh, (Exod. vii. 7.) By which it appears, that they were not long in working all the miracles in Egypt, before they brought the people forth; for now, forty years after, he was but a hundred twenty-three years old.

Ver. 40. *And king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south in the land of Canaan.*] See chap. xxi. 1.

Heard of the coming of the children of Israel.] Had news brought him, that the Israelites were coming towards his country; whereupon he went out to oppose them; and God gave them (as we read there) a glorious victory over him. This shews that Moses intended, in the recital of all these places where they had been, to bring to remembrance the most remarkable passages of God's providence over them; some of which he expressly sets down.

Ver. 41. *And they departed from Mount Hor, and pitched in Zalmonah.*] We read in the twenty-first chapter of this book, ver. 4. that they journeyed from Hor to compass the land of Edom, but are not told there where they pitched; which is here supplied, the name of the place being Zalmonah; which carries in it the signification of an *image;* and therefore here, perhaps, the brazen serpent was erected. (See chap. xxi. 9.)

Ver. 42. *And they departed from Zalmonah, and pitched in Punon.*] Where Bochartus rather thinks the brazen serpent was set up; because after Moses hath given us the history of that, he saith, they set forward and pitched in Oboth, (chap. xxi. 10.) which was the place of their abode next to Punon, as it here follows, Hierozoic. par. i. lib. iii. cap. 12. in the latter end of it.

Ver. 43. *And they departed from Punon, and pitched in Oboth.*] See chap. xxi. 10.

Ver. 44. *And they departed from Oboth, and pitched in Jie-abarim, in the border of Moab.*] See chap. xxi. 11. This name is translated in the margin, *heaps of Abarim;* which may possibly signify many heaps of stones, which lay not far from the mountains of Abarim, (ver. 47.)

Ver. 45. *And they departed from Jim, and pitched in Dibon-gad.*] Here half the name of the first place is omitted; as is usual when the names are long. This may seem not to agree with chap. xxi. 12. where it is said they removed from thence, and pitched in the valley of Zered; near unto which, in all probability, was this Dibon-gad. See what I have noted there.

Ver. 46. *And they removed from Dibon-gad, and encamped in Almon-Diblathaim.*] See chap. xxi. 13.

Ver. 47. *And they removed from Almon-Diblathaim, and pitched in the mountains of Abarim before Nebo.*] We read no where when they came to this mansion: but it is plain they were not far from it, when God bade Moses go into one of these mountains, and take a view of Canaan. (See chap. xxvii. 12.) But this followed their last mansion; and therefore it is most likely this is the place mentioned chap. xxi. 20. See there; where I have observed other places mentioned, ver. 18, 19. of which there is no notice taken in this catalogue. But they seem to have been places where they only touched, and made no encampment in them; which is the thing of which Moses here gives an account.

Ver. 48. *And they departed from the mountains of Abarim, and pitched in the plains of Moab,* &c.] See chap. xxii. 1.

Ver. 49. *And they pitched by Jordan, from Beth-Jeshimoth.*] A place where there was a temple, in all likelihood, to some deity: for so Beth denotes in many compositions; as Beth-Peor (the house or temple of Baal on the top of Peor), Beth-Astaroth, and Beth-Baal-berith, (Judg. ix. 4.) and Beth-Shemesh is often mentioned; where the sun was worshipped. And possibly Jeshimoth may be the same with Jeshimon, (chap. xxi. 20.)

Even unto Abel-Shittim, &c.] Called simply Shittim, chap. xxv. 1. which some fancy had the name of Abel added to it (which signifies mourning), because of that lamentation which was made there, by some, for the grievous sin there committed; and by others, for the heavy punishment inflicted in that place. But it seems to have been anciently called Abel-Shittim, before this time. (See there.)

Ver. 50. *And the Lord spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab,* &c.] After he had prepared them for their entrance into Canaan, he ordered the first and principal work they should there undertake.

Ver. 51. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan.*] Accordingly Moses did deliver this command unto them, (Deut. vii. 1, 2.)

Ver. 52. *Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you.*] Not suffer them to dwell in the land any longer; but either destroy, or expel them; because they were abominable idolaters, devoted to extermination, (Exod. xxiii. 33. Deut. xx. 16—18.) by whom the Israelites would have been in danger to be corrupted, if they were not rooted out.

And destroy all their pictures.] Or their temples, or houses of worship, as Onkelos interprets it. But others (particularly the Jerusalem Targum), understand it of the idols or statues set up in those temples; or some representations of their gods. (See concerning the Hebrew word *maskith*, Lev. xxv. 1.)

And destroy their molten images.] Exod. xxiii. 24. xxxiv. 13. for if they suffered them to remain, they might be enticed to worship them. These were idols, perhaps, in public places, or private houses, out of their temples.

And quite pluck down all their high places.] They could not throw down the mountains, upon which the people of Canaan worshipped; but the meaning is, that they should cut down the groves which were there planted, and demolish all the altars that stood in them. For there were no other temples, at first, but these groves upon mountains; where the ancient heathen worshipped the sun, moon, and stars: unto which they thought the mountains approached nearer than the rest of the earth; and therefore their sacrifices there would be most prevalent. But of this I have said enough elsewhere.

Ver. 53. *And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it.*] Yet he did not intend they should dispossess the old inhabitants all at once, but by degrees; as he himself saith in Exod. xxiii. 29, 30. Deut. vii. 22.

Ver. 54. *And ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families.*] Follow the directions I have already given for the dividing of the land, after the old inhabitants are expelled, (chap. xxvi. 53. 55.)

And to the more ye shall give the more inheritance, and to the fewer the less, &c.] See chap. xxvi. 54. 56.

Ver. 55. *And if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you.*] At the first they could not drive them all out; nor was it God's design, as I before observed. Therefore Joshua would not attempt it while he lived; but left several nations, or part of them, unsubdued, (Judg. ii. 21. 23.) Of which he himself takes notice a little before he died, Josh. xxiii. 4. 7. where he warns them to have nothing to do with them; promising them that God would in time expel them quite, (ver. 5.) But when the Israelites grew slothful and cowardly, and negligently suffered the people of Canaan to dwell among them, and made friendship with them (as they did after Joshua and all that generation were dead), then followed what is here threatened in the next words.

Then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them.] Voluntarily permit to live among you, without endeavouring to dispossess them.

Shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides.] Bring very sore calamities upon you; as grievous and as mischievous as a wound made in the eye, which is a most tender part; or in the side, when a thorn sticks and festers in it. Some are so curious, as, by the first part of these words *(pricks in your eyes)*, to understand their being stimulated to idolatry, by beholding their rites of religion and manner of worship: and the next they take to signify the effect of it in sharp punishments, which should befal them for their forsaking God. Joshua threatened the same before he died, chap. xxiii. 13. Of which an angel, or messenger of the Lord, minded them, Judg. ii. 3. And so it came to pass, as we read there, ver. 14. and throughout that whole book.

And shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.] Make you very uneasy, nay, sigh and groan, in the good land which God gives you, by reason of their oppression, (Judg. ii. 18. iv. 3. vi. 6, &c.)

Ver. 56. *Moreover, I will do unto you as I thought to do unto them.*] As I purposed to do unto them; *i. e.* make you their slaves; as they were to several people whom they served many years, Judg. iii. 8. 14. vi. 2. and many other places. Or make you flee before them; and at last expel you from the land I give you.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] In the same place, where they were when he last spake to him; for they made no other removals till they marched for Canaan.

Ver. 2. *Command the children of Israel.*] Charge them to take notice of this.

And say unto them, When ye come into the land of Canaan, this is the land that shall fall unto you for your inheritance.] Having spoken to them concerning their dispossessing the Canaanites, and dividing their land among their tribes; it was fit to describe the bounds of their country, that they might know whom they were to destroy, and into whose possessions they were to enter.

Even the land of Canaan, and the coasts thereof.] The land beyond Jordan; and the limits or bounds thereof.

Ver. 3. *Then your south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin.*] Mentioned in the foregoing chapter, ver. 36.

Along by the coast of Edom.] Which bordered upon this wilderness, (chap. xx. 1. 14.)

And your south border shall be the utmost coast of the Salt Sea.] From the very tongue of it, as it is expressed Josh. xv. 2. where it appears this was the portion of the tribe of Judah. The Salt Sea is that which is called sometimes the Dead Sea, and in other authors, Lacus Asphaltites: (see Gen. xiv. 3.) The Hebrews call all great lakes by the name of seas; and this is called the Salt Sea, because the water of it is very salt, or, as some express it, bitter; and the Dead Sea, *propter aquæ immobilitatem*, as Justin speaks, lib. xxxvi. *because of the immoveableness of the water*, which is never stirred by the greatest winds. (See Vossius de Orig. et Progr. Idolol. lib. ii. cap. 68.)

Eastward.] Where the eastern and southern borders meet.

Ver. 4. *And your border.*] That is, this south border.

Shall turn.] Not go on in a straight line; but bending towards the west.

From the south to the ascent of Akrabbim.] Or, to Maale-Akrabbim, a mountain on the south end of the Dead Sea, (Josh. xv. 3. Judg. i. 36.) so called, as Bochartus conjectures, from the vast multitude of scorpions

found here: from which mountain also, it is probable, the region called Acrabatena, near to Idumæa, had its name, (1 Maccab. v. 3.) See Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 29.

And pass on to Zin.] Either to a place called Zin, or part of the wilderness of Zin; which lay on the south of the land of Canaan, (chap. xiii. 21.)

And the going forth thereof shall be from the south.] That is, still on towards the south; as appears from what goes before, and follows after.

To Kadesh-barnea.] From whence the spies were sent to search out the land; and are said expressly to have gone up by the south, chap. xiii. 22. 26.

And shall go on to Hazar-Addar.] Or, to the village of Addar, as the Vulgar Latin renders it; which seems to be justified by Josh. xv. 3. where it is simply called Addar. There is indeed a place called Hezron joined with it, which may be thought to be the same with Hazar: but so is another place also called Karkaa; both which may as well be thought to be here omitted, for brevity's sake.

And pass on to Azmon.] A place lying on the west end of the mount of Edom.

Ver. 5. *And the border shall fetch a compass.*] There shall be a greater turn than that mentioned ver. 4. bending still more westward.

From Azmon unto the river of Egypt.] By the *river of Egypt* is properly understood Nile; and so Jonathan here renders the Hebrew word *Nahal* (*river*) by Nilus: which may seem to have taken its name from the word *Nahal;* which the ancients did not pronounce as we now do, but called it *Neel,* as we find in Epiphanius; from whence Nilus was very easily made, as Bochartus observes, Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. v. cap. 15. But if Nile be here meant, it must be the more northerly mouth of it, where Pelusium stood. (See Gen. xv. 18.)

And the goings out of it shall be at the sea.] This border ended at the sea, called the Great Sea in the next verse.

Ver. 6. *And as for the western border, ye shall have even the Great Sea.*] That is, the Mediterranean, or Midland Sea, which lay on the west of Judea; and is called by the Hebrews the Great Sea, in comparison with the Lake of Genesaret and Asphaltites, which they also called seas.

For your border.] On the west, as it here follows.

This shall be your western border.] From the river of Egypt as far as Zidon, which was a part of the promised land, as appears from Josh. xiii. 6. Judg. i. 31. All the cities, indeed, on the shore of this sea were held by the Philistines and others, till the time of David; but the Israelites had a right to them. And the famous Rabbi Juda understands these words, as if they should have the western ocean itself for their portion, as well as the land adjacent to it: for so he expounds these words, as if Moses had said, This shall be your western border; *viz.* the border of the sea, and the isles near unto it. And the Jerusalem Targum more plainly, "And let the Great Sea be your border; *i. e.* the ocean, and the isles thereof, and the cities, and the ships with the ancient waters, that are in the midst of it." See Selden, in his Mare Clausum, lib. i. cap. 6. where he alleges this as a proof, that men anciently thought they might have a dominion over the sea, as well as the land.

Ver. 7. *And this shall be your northern border from the Great Sea.*] From the Mediterranean, which lay on the west.

Ye shall point out for you.] Mark out for your direction.

Mount Hor.] Not that mount where Aaron died; for that was on the south of the land of Canaan, towards Edom; but this was diametrically opposite, on the north of it; and therefore must, in all likelihood, be some part of Mount Libanus, which, with Antilibanus (more towards the Great Sea), bounded the promised land on the north. But there were several parts of Mount Libanus which were called by several names; and probably one of them was called Hor, because of its eminency or height above the rest. So the Vulgar translates it; reading, I suppose, the Hebrew, not *Hor hahar,* i. e. *Hor the mountain,* but *Har hahar, the mountain of mountain, i. e.* the highest mountain. The Jews generally by this Mount Hor understand Amanus, which is a part of Taurus (as Mr. Selden observes in the place beforenamed), which the Jerusalem Targum calls more briefly Manus.

Ver. 8. *From Mount Hor ye shall point out your border to the entrance of Hamath.*] There were two Hamaths; one called by the Greeks Antiochia, the other Epiphania. The former called Hamath the Great, Amos vi. 2. to distinguish it from the latter, which is the city that is always meant, when we read the bounds of Judea were to the *entrance of Hamath* northward; as here and chap. xiii. 21. For it is certain, as Bochartus observes, they did not reach to Antiochia, but came near to Epiphania, (lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 36.) And this makes it probable, that Hor, as I said before, may be a promontory of Libanus; because in Josh. xiii. 5. Hermon is joined with the *entrance of Hamath,* as Hor is here. Now Hermon was certainly a part of Libanus: by some called Sirion; by others Senir, (Deut. iii. 9.) and by others Sion, (Deut. iv. 48.)

And the going forth of the border shall be to Zedad.] Which in Ezekiel's time was reckoned the northern border (together with Hamath) from the Great Sea; just as it is here. (Ezek. xlvii. 15, 16.)

Ver. 9. *And the border shall go on to Ziphron.*] Another town in those parts; of which I find no mention any where else.

And the goings out of it shall be at Hazar-Enan.] Here it ended; which was a place that retained its name till Ezekiel's time, (chap. xlvii. 17.) David Chytræus seems to have given a full account of this northern border in a few words. It extended, saith he, from the Mediterranean, by the mountains of Libanus, to the fountain of Jordan; in which tract are the towns of Hamath, Zedad (in the tribe of Naphtali), Ziphron (in the same tribe at the foot of Libanus), and Hazar-Enan, which he takes to signify a village at the fountain, *viz.* of Jordan.

Ver. 10. *And ye shall point out your east border from Hazar-Enan.*] From the fountain of Jordan, as was said before.

To Shepham.] A place not far from thence; for the river Jordan was certainly the eastern limits.

Ver. 11. *And the coast.*] The limits, or bounds.

Shall go down from Shepham to Riblah.] A place, no doubt, near to Jordan; with which river the eastern limits go along. St. Jerome takes Riblah to be Antiochia; but that was in Syria, to which the promised land did not reach.

On the east side of Ain.] The Vulgar reads it, *the fountain of Daphne.* And, indeed, *Ain* signifies a *fountain;* and both Jonathan and the Jerusalem Targum take Riblah for Daphne; as they do Shepham beforementioned for Apamia. But this is only a vain conceit of the Jews, who would extend their bounds beyond what God gave them. For it is certain the land of Canaan never extended to these places, as Bochartus observes, lib. i. Canaan, cap. 16. And therefore Daphne (which was in the suburbs of Antiochia) cannot be here meant, unless we understand another place, mentioned by Josephus, (lib. iv. de Bello Judaico, cap. 1.) which lay near the lake of Semechonites, through the middle of which Jordan ran. And then Ain must signify another fountain of Jordan, for it had more than one. And thus David Chytræus explains this part of the verse, and the foregoing: The eastern bounds were the river Jordan, near to which were these places; Enan, which had its name from the fountain of the river; and Shepham, not far from thence; Riblah, which was also near to Jordan, lying between the lake of Semechonites and Genesaret.

And the border shall descend, and shall reach unto the side of the sea of Cinnereth eastward.] To the east side of this sea or lake, which had its name from a city so called, Josh. xix. 35. and a country, 1 Kings xv. 20. or else it gave them their names: for David Chytræus will have it called Cinnereth, from the Hebrew word *cinnor,* which signifies a *harp,* or *lute,* the lake being of that shape and figure, about four German miles long, and two and a half broad. It is called the sea of Galilee, or Tiberias, in the gospel.

Ver. 12. *And the border.*] *i. e.* This eastern border.

Shall go down to Jordan.] That is, to the river which was eminently so called, (and was on the east part of Canaan, Gen. xiii. 11.) for it was very small till it came to the lake of Genesaret beforementioned. From whence, being augmented by several torrents and rivulets, it ran in a wider stream, till it fell into the Salt or Dead Sea. (See Bonfrerius out of Josephus, lib. iv. de Bello Judaico, cap. 1.)

And its goings out shall be at the Salt Sea.] There was the end of this border; where it met with the southern, as was observed above, (ver. 3.)

This shall be your land, with the coasts thereof, round about.] As was said before, (ver. 2.) therefore they were not to extend their right any further; this being the country he promised Abraham, when he bade him lift up his eyes, and look from the place where he was, "northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, and walk through the length of the land, and breadth of it," which he assures to his posterity, Gen. xiii. 14—17. which now he lays out for them, with the exact limits of it, in all those four quarters.

Ver. 13. *And Moses commanded the children of Israel, saying, This is the land which ye shall inherit by lot.*] He repeats it so often, that they might know what people they were to dispossess, and with whom they might make friendship; and not to extend their desires beyond the bounds of God's gracious grant to them. By which they were placed in a very fertile and pleasant country, bounded, as appears by the foregoing description, on the south, (ver. 4, 5.) by great mountains, which sheltered them from the burning air of the deserts of Arabia; on the west, by the Midland Sea, which sent to them refreshing breezes; and on the north, by Mount Libanus, which kept off the colder blasts from that quarter; and on the east, the delightful plains of Jordan, abounding with palm-trees, especially about Jericho, which yielded them a great revenue.

Which the Lord commanded to give to the nine tribes, and to the half tribe.] This he had not said plainly before, though it was necessarily inferred, from his granting to two tribes and a half their inheritance beyond Jordan.

Ver. 14. *For the tribe of the children of Reuben, according to the house of their fathers, and the tribe of the children of Gad,* &c. *have received their inheritance.*] Upon condition they performed their promise, to help the rest of their tribes to win their inheritance in Canaan. So those words are to be understood, I observed xxxii. 33. "Moses gave unto them the kingdom of Sihon," &c.

Ver. 15. *The two tribes and a half have received their inheritance on this side Jordan,* &c.] By the gift of God, as they themselves understood it, xxxii. 31. The bounds of which the Jerusalem Targum here undertakes to set down, and makes them extend eastward as far as the great river Euphrates; having respect, I suppose, to Gen. xv. 18. and Exod. xxiii. 30. where he sets down the utmost bounds of the countries he intended to bestow upon them in future times (see there), but here only describes the limits of that land, which they were to enjoy in present possession; and was all that God granted to Abraham, when he brought him out of Chaldea, and made his first promise unto him, (Gen. xii. 1. 7. xiii. 14, 15. 17. xv. 7.)

Ver. 16. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] Having told them what they should divide, it was proper to appoint some persons to take care to see the division made.

Ver. 17. *These are the names of the men which shall divide the land.*] Though the land was to be divided by lot, yet it was fit there should be some persons to oversee the business, and take care there should be no fraud in the drawing of them: and when they were drawn, to prevent all quarrels, by determining what portion those who had too much should give to those who had too little, (xxvi. 54, 55.)

Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun.] These were the principal persons concerned in this great affair; who were so conscientious therein, that they did it in the presence of God, at the door of the tabernacle, (Josh. xviii. 6. 8. 10. xix. 51.)

Ver. 18. *And ye shall take one prince of every tribe, to divide the land by inheritance.*] They are called in the place last named, *the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel.*

Ver. 19. *The names of the men are these: Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh.*] I have nothing to observe upon this and the following verses, to the end of the chapter, but that the tribes are not mentioned in such order as they were at their first numbering, (i. 5, 6, &c.) or at their second, (xxvi. 5, &c.) yet great exactness and a particular direction of God may be noted in their placing here; for they are set down according to their situation which they had afterward in the land of Canaan; as if Moses foresaw who should be next neighbours one to another. For Judah having his inheritance given him first, (Josh. xv.) Simeon, who is here next mentioned, was so near him in the land of Canaan, that he had a portion given him out of the lot of Judah, which proved too large for that tribe, (Josh. xix. 9. Judg. i. 3. 17.) Then Benjamin, who here follows, in the

third place, was so near to Judah, that they never separated when the ten tribes were rent from them. Dan was not far from Judah; and the children of Joseph also were their neighbours. And the rest of the tribes, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, are set down here just in the order wherein their lots fell to them in Canaan, (Josh. xix. 10. 17. 24. 32.) An evidence that Moses was guided by a Divine Spirit in all his writings.

CHAP. XXXV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Moses, in the plains of Moab, by Jordan, near Jericho, saying.*] See xxii. 1. Hitherto nothing had been said of the Levites; but that they should have no lot in the land of Canaan. But now God provides that they should have habitations assigned them to dwell in, though they had no fields, nor olive-yards, &c. as the rest of their brethren had. They might, indeed, have been able to purchase houses for themselves out of the tithes, and other things, which God had long ago bestowed upon them for their portion: but it was not fit that God's ministers should be left without any certain dwelling. And besides, God would have them live comfortably, and not only have houses, but a little ground about them, for their more commodious subsistence.

Ver. 2. *Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their possession.*] Out of their share that shall fall to them in the land of Canaan, and on this side Jordan.

Cities to dwell in.] That they might not be in danger to wander up and down to seek a habitation.

And ye shall give also to the Levites suburbs for the cities round about them.] Some ground lying round about their cities, the reason of which is given in the next verse.

Ver. 3. *And the cities they shall have to dwell in.*] That they may build houses for themselves to dwell in. Which did not make it unlawful for them to hire or purchase houses in any other city, particularly at Jerusalem, or the place where the tabernacle was settled; for we find in Scripture many proofs of their dwelling in other cities, beside these which are here assigned to them. And, in like manner, other people, with their permission, might dwell with them in these cities, without any breach of this law.

And the suburbs shall be for their cattle.] To afford pasture for their oxen and sheep.

And for their goods.] The Hebrew word signifies, not only *all* kind of household stuff, but whatsoever was necessary for them and their cattle without doors.

And for their beasts.] Horses, asses, mules, and all sorts of living creatures, as the Hebrew word signifies. But it was not lawful for them to build houses in these fields, nor plant vineyards, nor sow corn: but they were given them only to make their dwellings more sweet; and that they might have the convenience of cattle about them, for provisions, and all other uses.

Ver. 4. *And the suburbs and cities which ye shall give unto the Levites.*] To be their possession, by as good and full a right, as their brethren of the other tribes had in their lands, which fell to them for their inheritance by lot: see Lev. xxv. 31—33. where they themselves are disabled to alienate either the houses or fields of their cities. But if they sold a house, it was to revert at the jubilee; and the fields they could not so much as sell till that time.

Shall reach from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits round about.] This space was for their out-houses; as stables, places for hay and straw, and such-like things, and perhaps for gardens of herbs and flowers. The Gemara, upon the ninth chapter of Sota, sect. 9. saith, that, under the second temple, the Levites had no suburbs; which were not restored to them after the captivity of Babylon. But there being great care taken that the people shall pay all the *tithe of their ground unto the Levites,* (Nehem. x. 37.) it is unreasonable to think that care was not taken for places to lay them in.

Ver. 5. *And ye shall measure from without the city.*] It is not said, as in the foregoing verse, *from the wall* of the city; therefore I take it to signify from the outside of the suburbs beforementioned.

On the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, &c.] So there was in the whole three thousand cubits round about the city: a thousand for the *suburbs,* properly so called; and two thousand more for their pasture, called properly *the fields of the suburbs,* Lev. xxv. 34. This is the most natural and easy explication of this place.

And the city shall be in the midst.] So that there was exactly, every way, such a circuit of ground about it.

This shall be the suburbs of the cities.] Here the word *suburbs* comprehends the *fields* also. And Maimonides saith, that, by the constitution of the elders, they set forth also a burying-place for every city beyond these limits: for they might not bury their dead within the suburbs or fields; which they ground upon the foregoing verse, which appoints them for other uses, (Schemita ve Jobel, cap. 13.)

Ver. 6. *And among the cities which ye shall give unto the Levites, there shall be six cities for refuge.*] Three in the land of Canaan, and three on the other side Jordan, (ver. 14.) the names of which are set down, Josh. xx. 7, 8. and those on the other side Jordan were set apart by Moses himself before he died, (Deut. iv. 43.) The reason of their being called *cities of refuge,* is given in the next words.

Which ye shall appoint for the manslayer.] Such a *manslayer* as is afterward described; who killed another against his will.

That he may flee thither.] And there be preserved, and kept in safety, if he was not found guilty of wilful murder. The cities of the Levites were appointed for this purpose, rather than any other, because they were a kind of sacred places, inhabited by sacred persons. And here men might spend their time better than in other cities, being among God's ministers; who might make them sensible of the negligence which men were commonly guilty of in such cases, and of such sins as they might have otherwise committed.

And to them ye shall add forty-two cities.] Which had all the same privilege, if we may believe the Hebrew doctors; but not equally with the six. For in the six a manslayer was to have a house to dwell in for nothing; but in the other forty-two, he was to pay for it. And the Levites could not refuse him entrance into the six; but as for the rest, it was in their choice whether they would receive him or not. Thus Maimonides, out of their ancient authors. See Selden, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. juxta Discipl. Hebr. cap. 2. where he observes, that the altar also was a

place of refuge, according to Exod. xxi. 14. but with many exceptions; both with relation to the parts of the altar, and to the persons who fled thither, and to the quality of the offence, and their stay there; which very much lessened the privilege of this refuge.

Ver. 7. *So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be forty-eight cities,* &c.] Accordingly we read Joshua gave them so many, Josh. xxi. 41. Thirteen of which the priests had; and the rest the Levites. And in the days of the Messiah (whom they vainly still expect), other cities shall be added to them (saith Maimonides), which shall belong to the Levites.

Ver. 8. *And the cities which ye shall give them shall be of the possession of the children of Israel.*] And so it is said, Josh. xxi. 3. that "the children of Israel gave unto the Levites, out of their inheritance, these cities and their suburbs." Where we read also, they were given them by lot, as the children of Israel had their inheritance given them.

From them which have many ye shall give many, and from them that have few ye shall give few.] According to the rule in distributing their inheritances to the Israelites, xxxiii. 54.

Every one shall give of his cities unto the Levites according to the inheritance which he shall inherit.] Thus they gave nine cities out of the two tribes of Judah and Simeon, (Josh. xxi. 16.) and but four out of Benjamin, which was a small tribe, (ver. 18.) out of the tribes of Issachar and Asher, four a-piece, (ver. 28. 31.) and out of Naphtali, no more than three, (ver. 32.)

Ver. 9. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*] This being a matter of great importance, that guiltless men should not suffer, nor the guilty escape punishment, the Lord gives Moses further direction about it, as he promised he would in Exod. xxi. 13.

Ver. 10. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them.*] Repeat this command to them; which God himself repeated to Joshua, xx. 1. 2.

When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan.] When they had possession of it, and divided it, and were settled in it: so it is explained Deut. xix. 1, 2.

Ver. 11. *Then shall ye appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you.*] This seems to signify, that all the cities of the Levites were in some sort a protection to the manslayer, as I said upon ver. 6. Such places the temples were among the Athenians, as Sam. Petitus observes in Leges Atticas, p. 12, 13. yet not all of them; for he can find only six; that of Mercy, and that of Eumenides and Minerva, and those dedicated to Theseus (one of them within the city, the other without the walls), and that in Munychia.

That the manslayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares.] Or, as it is Josh. xx. 3. *unwittingly,* Deut. xix. 4. *ignorantly;* that is, besides his intention, having no such design, nor hatred to him, as is there expressly said, and here below, (ver. 22.) This is repeated ver. 15. And the instances of it are such as these, mentioned by Georg. Ritterhusius de Jure Asylorum, cap. 4. If a man cutting wood, the hatchet flying from the helve, should hit a man, and kill him; or a huntsman shooting at a deer in a thicket, should kill a man, whom he did not see lying there: an example of which we have in Adrastus, mentioned by Herodotus, lib. i.

Ver. 12. *And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger.*] From him who had a right to call a murderer to account for the blood he had shed, and is therefore called *the avenger of blood,* ver. 19. who, being stimulated with anger and grief for the death of a near relation, might, in a heat of rage, hastily kill him who was not guilty of murder. And therefore this provision is made for the preservation of an innocent person against the violent prosecution of the avenger. In the Hebrew, the word for avenger is *goel,* which signifying a *redeemer,* plainly denotes that the next of kin to him that was slain is here meant. For to that person belonged the right of redemption of estates, (Lev. xxv. 25.) and of marrying the wife of a kinsman deceased without issue, (Ruth iii. 12, 13.) And consequently such a person, that is the nearest of kin, is here intended to be the revenger of blood: and therefore no man might undertake this office, but he alone who was the next heir to him that was slain; as Mr. Selden observes, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 1. p. 469. Grotius observes the like custom among the ancient Greeks, of private men taking revenge for the death of their relations or friends, (lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 20. sect. 8. n. 6.)

That the manslayer die not.] By a sudden heat of passion. This was a merciful provision (as Maimonides observes), both for the manslayer, that he might be preserved, and for the avenger, that his blood might be cooled, by the removal of the manslayer out of his sight, by his flight to another place, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 40.)

Until he stand before the congregation.] The city of refuge protected him that fled thither, "Salvo tamen juris et justitiæ examine" (as the lawyers speak), *yet so that the matter should be brought to a fair trial before proper judges.* They of the city of refuge examined him before his admittance into the place, (Josh. xx. 4.) But they were not judges, nor could they examine witnesses. And therefore he was delivered, upon demand, to the senate, or court of judgment, of that city where the fact was committed, that they might try whether he were guilty or not of wilful murder. So the Hebrews understand the word *edah, congregation,* in this place (as in many others), to signify the Sanhedrin of Twenty-three, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 5. n. 2. and lib. iii. cap. 8. n. 3.) And as by *congregation* is meant the court where causes were tried, so it is reasonable to interpret it of that court which sat in the city where the fact was committed, and not that in the city of refuge, because there the witnesses were; and it is expressly said, ver. 25. that if the congregation found him to be innocent, he should be *restored to the city of refuge.* Which evidently supposes he was not judged there, but in another place; and none so proper as that before mentioned.

Ver. 13. *And of these cities which ye shall give, six cities ye shall have for refuge.*] They might flee unto any other cities of the Levites; but in these six they were most certain to find protection. (See ver. 6.) And the best provision was made for the manslayer's easy and safe flying thither: for the ways that led thither were to be made very plain and broad (thirty-two cubits wide), and to be kept in good repair; for which they alleged (in the title Maccoth, cap. 2. sect. 5.) those words Deut. xix. 3. "Thou shalt prepare the way," &c. And two students in the law were to ac-

company him; that if the avenger of blood should overtake him, before he got into the city, they might endeavour to pacify him by wise persuasions; and that he might not miss his way to the place whither he intended to flee, there were posts erected, where two or three ways met, with this inscription, *MIKLAT*, i. e. *the city of refuge*, to direct him into that road which led to it. A certain day also was appointed, which was the fifteenth of February, for the repairing of the highways, and of the bridges, which might have been broken by the winter rains or floods.

Ver. 14. *And ye shall give three cities on this side Jordan, and three cities in the land of Canaan.*] This seems not to be an equal partition; the land of Canaan being far bigger than the territory beyond Jordan; for it contained above three parts of four of the tribes of Israel. But it is to be considered, that the country beyond Jordan was as long as the land of Canaan, though not so broad: and they also beyond Jordan might flee to any of the cities in Canaan, if they were nearer to them. And besides, God commanded those in Canaan, if he enlarged their coast, to add three cities more, besides these, (Deut. xix. 8, 9.)

Why six cities are appointed for this purpose, and no more; and why three on one side of Jordan, and three on the other, Philo alleges some mystical reasons; but so far-fetched, that I do not think fit to mention them.

Ver. 15. *These six cities shall be a refuge.*] They all began to be so at the same time, according to the Talmudists. For till those three in Canaan were set out, these three on the other side Jordan (though set out by Moses before they went into Canaan, Deut. iv. 43.) did not receive any manslayer. Which they prove in the forenamed title, Maccoth, cap. 2. sect. 4. from these very words, *these six shall be cities of refuge;* that is, when the other three were appointed, then they all received those that fled to them.

Both for the children of Israel, and for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them.] Both *strangers* and *sojourners* had renounced idolatry, but had not equally embraced the Jewish religion; yet both of them had the same share in this benefit, with the native Israelites; it being a natural right, that every man who was innocent should be protected. The difference between a *stranger* and a *sojourner* hath been often observed, particularly upon Lev. xix. 33, 34. Numb. xv. 15, 16.

That every one that killeth any person unawares may flee thither.] That is, *every one* beforementioned, whether Israelites, strangers, or sojourners. But as for such as were mere gentiles, and not so much as proselytes of the gate, if they killed another, though a gentile, they had not the benefit of this law; because they were not suffered to dwell among them, though they trafficked in the country. And if a proselyte of the gate killed an Israelite, or one that was circumcised, he also, if we may believe the Jewish doctors, was denied protection in these cities. But if he killed one like himself (*i. e.* a proselyte of the gate), then he had the same privilege with the Israelites, as they explain it. (See Selden, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 2. p. 477.)

Ver. 16. *And if he smite him.*] Or rather, *but if he smite him.*

With an instrument of iron, so that he die, he is a murderer.] For it was to be presumed, that he who run at a man with a sword, or any such weapon, intended to do him a mischief; though perhaps he had no malice to him beforehand, but did it in a passion.

So that he die.] He never going abroad after he was wounded, (Exod. xxi. 19, 20.)

The murderer shall surely be put to death.] Be taken away by the judges, though he were in a city of refuge; and, the fact being proved, condemned to die for it.

Ver. 17. *And if he smite him with throwing a stone.*] In the Hebrew it is, *with a stone of the hand.* That is, say the Jews, with a great stone that *fills the hand;* not with a small stone, with which he could not be presumed to intend to kill him; though he chanced to do it, by hitting him in the eye, or some other very tender part.

Wherewith he may die.] With a stone big enough to kill him.

And he die.] So that it appears he died of that blow.

He is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death.] He is as guilty as the forenamed person, who smote with an instrument of iron; and his fleeing to the city of refuge shall not protect him from death.

Ver. 18. *If he smite him with a hand-weapon of wood.*] Such as a batoon (as we now speak), or a club, or any such kind of instrument, as is likely to kill him.

Wherewith he may die, &c.] It made no difference with what kind of weapon or instrument he was killed, whether it were of iron, wood, or stone; if he were killed wittingly and knowingly, it was murder; and the guilty person was to suffer for it. Aul. Gellius hath collected the names of the several weapons, which were mentioned in ancient history; of which there are near thirty, (lib. x. Noct. Attic. cap. 25.) one of which, called *ligula,* he is pleased to explain, being then not common; and saith, it was a little sword, in the form of a *tongue,* like our poniard, I suppose, or dagger, or long knife; which was a dangerous weapon; because men might hide it under their clothes, and kill others while they were in familiar discourse with them.

Ver. 19. *The avenger of blood himself.*] See ver. 12.

Shall slay the murderer.] This is thought by many to be a mere permission, not a precept; but the Jews think otherwise: that the next kin (*i. e.* the heir of him that was slain) stood bound to do his endeavour to avenge his blood. If he would not (saith Maimonides), or if he was not able; or if no such avenger was to be found (*i. e.* the murderer himself was the next heir, or the man slain was a proselyte of justice without issue), he was to be prosecuted, and put to death, by the court of judgment, and that by the sword: (See Selden, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 1.)

When he meeteth him he shall slay him.] He was not bound to stay for the sentence of the court, but might kill him wheresoever he found him. (See ver. 31.)

Ver. 20. *But if he thrust him of hatred,* &c.] Or rather, *for if he thrust him,* &c. that is, if by any other means, besides those mentioned ver. 16—18. he killed a man wittingly, either by pushing him down violently from a high or steep place; or throwing him into the water; or hurling a stone at him; or letting any thing fall down upon his head, though never so slily; if death followed, and it appeared he bore a hatred to him, he was to suffer death, as in the former cases. (See Deut. xix. 11.) Now this was a sufficient proof of hatred to him; if being a neighbour, and they having some difference, he had not spoken to him for three whole days together.

Ver. 21. *Or in enmity smite him with his hand that he die, he that smote him shall surely be put to death.*] If he gave him only a blow with his fist, of which he died, and it was proved he had enmity to him, it was sufficient to make him a murderer; and it warranted the avenger of blood to kill him, or obliged him to prosecute him, so that the city of refuge should not save him.

The revenger of blood shall slay the murderer when he meeteth him.] The civil law declared him to be unworthy to enjoy the inheritance of one that was murdered, if he neglected to prosecute the person that killed him in some court of justice. But the Jewish law allowed, or rather required, a great deal more; that the next of kin should kill the murderer with his own hands, if he met him. And thus the Abyssines, at this day (as Ritterhusius observes out of Alvarez), deliver the murderer into the hand of the next kinsman, to torture him. The reason of which law, among the Jews, was, (as the same Ritterhusius observes, de Jure Asylorum, cap. 4.) because they being all descended from one and the same stock, and equally taking of the same right, they were all concerned in the shedding of the blood of any one of them, especially they who were nearest to him in blood, who seemed to be all struck at and injured in him. So that the law, with great reason, allowed them to avenge the blood of him that was slain. With which these verses of Ovid, he thinks, agree:

"Cum tibi sint fratres, fratres ulciscere læsos.
Cumque pater tibi sit, jura tuere patris."

Ver. 22. *But if he thrust him suddenly without enmity.*] Killed him (after the manner forementioned, ver. 20.) in a violent passion, having no such intention, and being perhaps highly provoked by him, or by chance, as we speak, and unawares, it being proved that there was no enmity between them, no signs of hatred before this fact.

Or cast upon him any thing, without laying in wait.] Happen to hit him with any thing, without design to hurt him: (see Exod. xxi. 13. Deut. xix. 5.)

Ver. 23. *Or with any stone wherewith he may die.*] See ver. 17.

Seeing him not, and casting it upon him, that he die.] Throwing it at something else, or playing with it; and having no thought of him, because he did not see him.

And was not his enemy, neither sought his harm.] Not having any quarrel with him, not threatening, or any other way discovering that he sought to do him mischief.

Ver. 24. *Then the congregation.*] That is, the judgment to whom the trial of such causes belonged: see ver. 12. where I observed, that the elders of the city of refuge judged whether the manslayer, who fled thither, should be received or not, upon a summary hearing of the cause, and such examination as they could make at present. But the full examination of it was reserved to the judges of the place where the fact was committed.

Shall judge between the slayer and the avenger of blood.] They sent for him out of the city of refuge, to be brought before them; who heard what could be alleged against him, and what he could say for himself.

According to these judgments.] Upon trial they proceeded to give judgment according to the foregoing rules; which, in brief, are these: if a man had no intention to kill another, but it was purely involuntary, he was to be acquitted. If there appeared any design upon his life, or such hatred and enmity as might move them to conclude he had an intention to kill him, he was to be put to death. But here the Hebrew doctors (as Mr. Selden observes) distinguish the killing of a man into three kinds: the first was, when, though it was from pure ignorance and error, yet there was some negligence in it, which a prudent man might have avoided. The second, when a man kills another ignorantly, and cannot be blamed for any negligence, because such a thing seldom happens. An example of the first they make to be, when a man, coming down a ladder, falls upon another and kills him. An example of the second, when going up a ladder, a man happens to do the same. The former is more frequent, and therefore they say hath some kind of blame in it; the other seldomer, and therefore hath none. A third kind, when any man kills another out of ignorance and error also; but it approaches nearer to voluntary murder: as when a man, intending to kill one man, happens to kill another with a stone, or otherwise. In none of these cases, they say, the court of judgment could put any man to death. And the cities of refuge were not provided for the second or third sorts, but only for the first; and that when the man died presently, and did not lie and languish of the wound; for if he did, it might be supposed he died by his own negligence, or otherwise, as well as by the wound. In which case, there was no need that the man who wounded him should flee to the city of refuge; nor could the avenger of blood meddle with him, no more than he could with a father, when he gave his son, or a master, when he gave his scholar, correction, and happened to kill him. The same was the case of him, whose office it was to arrest men, by public authority, and bring them before the judges, if he struck a man that refused to go along with him, and killed him: (see Selden, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. juxta Disciplin. Heb. cap. 2.)

Ver. 25. *And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hands of the avenger of blood.*] If the court found the man was killed casually, as the person accused pretended, (Josh. xx. 4.) then they charged the avenger of blood not to prosecute any further.

Both here, and in the foregoing verse, and in the next words to these, by *congregation* is meant the judges of the city, (as I observed, ver. 12.) who were to determine in the presence, and in the behalf of the people, whether the manslayer were capable of the privilege of the city of refuge or not; as we read Josh. xx. 4. 6. Now these things (as a very learned person of our own argues), which were done by the elders (or judges), being said to be done by the *congregation*, or assembly of the people, in whose behalf they were done; it is no wrong to the Holy Scriptures, when we say, that which they report to have been done by the church was acted by the chief power of the apostles and elders, with the consent of the people. For it is manifest in the New Testament, that in the apostles' time all the public acts of the church were passed at the public assemblies of the same. As ordinations, (Acts i. 23. v. 36.) excommunications, (Matt. xviii. 18—20. 1 Cor. v. 4. 2 Cor. ii. 10.) councils, (Acts xv. 4. 22.) and other acts, (2 Cor. vii. 19.) And herewith agrees the primitive custom of the church for divers ages; whereby they gave satisfaction to the people of the integrity of their proceedings, and by the same means obliged superiors to that integrity, by making

the proceedings so manifest, and so to preserve the unity of the church. And from this interest of the people in such acts it is, at this day, that the people of the church of England are demanded, what they have to say against ordinations and marriages to be made. (See Mr. Thorndike, in his Rites of the Church in a Christian State, chap. iii. p. 159, &c.)

And the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled.] They were to send him back again, from the place where he was tried, to the city where he had taken refuge, there to remain till the time prescribed in the next words. This was more merciful than the punishment inflicted by the Attic laws (which plainly shew they were borrowed, in great part, from Moses), for he who slew a man involuntarily was forced to fly his country. So the scholiast upon the last of Homer's Iliads, Ἔθος ἦν παρὰ τοῖς παλαιοῖς τὸν ἀκούσιον φόνον ἐργάσάμενον, φεύγειν ἐκ τῆς πατρίδος, &c. *It was the manner, in ancient times, for a man that had killed another involuntarily, to flee his country; and, betaking himself to some neighbouring place, to sit with his face covered, begging to be expiated.* But this was only for a certain time, as Demosthenes tells us (in his oration in Aristocratem): ὁ νόμος κελεύει τὸν ἁλόντα ἐπ' ἀκουσίῳ φόνῳ ἔν τισιν ὡρισμένοις χρόνοις ἀπελθεῖν τακτὴν ὁδὸν, καὶ φεύγειν, &c. *The law requires him that is condemned of killing a man involuntarily, for some limited time to go away, and keep at an appointed distance, till he can make his peace with the kindred of him that was slain: after which he may return again,* &c.

And he shall abide in it.] Not stir out of the limits of the city, that is, beyond the suburbs, and the two thousand cubits which encompassed them, (ver. 4, 5.) within which bounds he was to keep.

Unto the death of the high-priest, which was anointed with oil.] This looks like a punishment to the manslayer; whereby others were taught to be very watchful over themselves, lest by negligence they chanced to kill any body, and so be forced to leave their own home. But Maimonides takes it for "a prudent charity to the manslayer, and to the relations of him that was slain: for by this means the manslayer was kept out of the sight of the avenger of blood, who might have been tempted, some time or other, to fall upon him, if he had come in his way: but by long absence his anger might be mitigated, at least by the death of the high-priest, the most excellent of all other persons, and most dear to every one in the nation. Which made the public grief so great when he died, that men forgot their private resentments: for nothing could fall out more grievous to all people (saith he) than the death of the high-priest, which swallowed up all other grief." (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 40.) And in the mean time the Jews say, that the citizens of the place were bound to teach him some trade, whereby he might provide himself with necessaries: and he had this comfort also, during his absence from his own family, that the mother of the high-priest sent him many gifts, that he might remain there more contentedly, and not pray for the death of the high-priest. So they tell us, in the place forementioned, Maccoth, cap. 2. sect. 6. where they also observe, that if a man killed the high-priest, or the high-priest himself happened to kill a man involuntarily, they were to stay in the city of refuge as long as they lived: yet they found this temperament, that if one who had been high-priest, but removed from his office, was alive when the slaughter was committed; after his death, both he that killed the high-priest, or any other unawares, and the high-priest himself, who had done the same, were set free from the city of refuge. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 9. sect. 6. and lib. iii. cap. 8. sect. 3.)

There may seem to be some inequality in this law, because, as some high-priests lived long, and others but a short time, so some manslayers fled to the city at the beginning of their priesthood, and others just before their death. But it must be considered, that this could not be better ordered than to make the manslayer's liberty depend upon the death of the high-priest, whensoever it fell out, that a higher value might be set upon him; and that it might represent our deliverance only by the death of the Son of God: of which many great men look upon this as a type, or shadow; though it must be confessed, there is not the least signification of this in the New Testament. And since the great expiation, which the high-priest made every year on the day of atonement, did not procure such men their liberty, I cannot look upon it as the effect of the high-priest's death, but only as that which followed upon it, by virtue of this law. For the high-priest having a great power every where, and particularly in these cities of the priests and Levites, over whom he was the chief, it is possible the manslayer might be confined here by some peculiar act of his authority; which expiring together with himself, he was released.

Ver. 26. *But if the slayer shall at any time.*] During the life of the high-priest.

Come without the border of the city of refuge, whither he was fled.] If he went beyond the bounds of the fields, in which he had liberty to walk, and might not be touched. For if a tree was planted (as the Mischna resolves in Maccoth) within the borders of the fields of the city, though the boughs stretched themselves beyond the borders, yet the manslayer was safe under the tree. In like manner, when churches became places of refuge, the civil law allowed the privilege to extend to the church gate: and the council of Toledo to thirty paces from the church; which pope Nicholas enlarged to forty. Thus, among the heathen, the bounds of the refuge at the temple of Diana at Ephesus were sometimes more, and sometimes less, as Ritterhusius observes in his book beforenamed, where he shews how far it was extended by Alexander, and afterward farther by others. And Tacitus, lib. iii. Annalium, mentions a temple of hers, to which was granted, by several emperors, "duobus millibus passuum eandem sanctitatem," *the same sanctity for two miles round about it.*

Ver. 27. *And the avenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the avenger of blood kill the slayer, he shall not be guilty of death.*] The court of judgment were not to put him to death; though perhaps he was obnoxious to the judgment of God, because he had killed an innocent person: but he was free from the punishment of the law, that manslayers might be the more careful to keep within their bounds; which was a profitable restraint upon them, for the public good. All men seeing how much God hated murder, by the confinement of him who had slain a man unawares, to a kind of imprisonment.

But it may be said, on the other side, that he who killed a manslayer in this case was perfectly guiltless; because

he did not herein act as a private person, but executed a sentence against him, who was condemned by public authority. Which gave no protection to the manslayer, but within the borders of his city of refuge; leaving him to the avenger of blood, if he came out of those bounds, till the death of the high-priest. After which, if the avenger of blood killed him, no doubt he was to be punished as a murderer.

Ver. 28. *Because he should have remained in the city of his refuge, until the death of the high-priest.*] These words give the reason, why the avenger of blood was not to be punished in this case; because the manslayer was guilty of breaking another law, and so in some sort accessory to his own death; for he might have been safe, if he had pleased.

But after the death of the high-priest, the slayer shall return to the land of his possession.] Where he was not only to remain safe, but to be restored to all his honours, if he had any before he fled to the city of refuge.

Ver. 29. *So these things shall be for a statute of judgment unto you.*] A rule whereby to judge between manslayers and murderers.

Throughout all generations.] The like clauses are usual in the ancient civil law: "Hoc perpetua lege sancimus. Hoc generali et in perpetuum valitura lege decernimus," &c.

In all your dwellings.] This the Jews interpret as an obligation upon them to have courts of judgment whereso-ever they dwell. Thus R. Solomon, upon these very words: "They teach us (saith he) the use of courts of judgment, which ought to be even out of the land, all the time that they were used in the land." So the ancient book Siphri, and many others mentioned by our most learned Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 5. n. 1.

Ver. 30. *Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses.*] This direction for their proceedings in this case, was to be the rule in all others of like nature, by examining witnesses, who were to be competent. Upon which account ten sorts of persons were incapable to be witnesses, according to the Hebrew doctors; *viz.* women, servants, minors, fools, the deaf and dumb, the blind, impious, and audacious people, dear relations, and those that had been convicted of bearing false witness: and they endeavour, after their manner, to find reasons against all these in the law itself. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. n. 11.)

But one witness shall not testify against any person, to cause him to die.] This was such an established rule in the civil law, that it saith, "ubi numerus testium non adjicitur, sufficiunt duo;" *where the number of witnesses is not mentioned, two suffices.* "Pluralis enim locutio, duorum numero contenta est:" *for where witnesses in the plural number are spoken of, two are enough to answer the intention of the law.* Which number, therefore, is frequently mentioned expressly in Scripture, as necessary in all cases, (Deut. xvii. 6.) particularly in this of murder, (xix. 15.) Yet, where there was but one witness, or not two who both together saw the man killed; so that he who was accused of the murder could not be put to death, he was thrown into a very strait prison, and there fed with bread and water of affliction, till his bowels were sorely pinched, &c. if we may believe the Jewish doctors, mentioned by Selden, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 1.

Ver. 31. *Moreover, ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer.*] If a murderer would have given all his estate to save his life, or the avenger of blood would have accepted a compensation, or freely let him go, the judges (when they had found him guilty) could not restore him to the city of refuge, but he was to suffer death. For the life of him that was slain, was not (as Maimonides speaks) part of the goods of the avenger of blood, but belonged to Almighty God; who set such a value on a man's life, that he would not suffer any price to be taken for it. (See Selden in the same chapter, p. 470.)

Ver. 32. *And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of refuge, that he may come to dwell in the land, until the death of the high-priest.*] No money was to purchase his liberty to dwell any where else but there, till the time appointed by the law: but this punishment for manslaughter, was as indispensable as death for murder. And therefore, if any man happened to kill another in the city of refuge, to which he was confined, he was forced to flee to another city of refuge, and there abide till the death of the high-priest.

Ver. 33. *So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are; for blood defileth the land.*] By this it appears, that the next of kin was bound to prosecute the murderer unto death, for the good of his country, which otherwise would have had a guilt upon it, and that very grievous. For they are the greatest crimes, as Maimonides observes, which are said to pollute the land, or them, or God's sanctuary, *viz.* idolatry, (Lev. xx. 3.) all the filthiness that is forbidden, xviii. 24, 25. and murder, here mentioned, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 47.)

And the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.] The same Maimonides observes, in the forty-first chapter of that book, "That it is a piece of universal justice, to make a man suffer what he hath made another suffer. If he hath hurt his body, he must suffer for it in his own body; if in his money, his own purse must pay for it; if he have taken away his life, he must die for it himself. And the punishment can neither be mitigated, nor any compensation accepted for it. For which he quotes these words; and upon this account resolves, that if he that was murdered should live a few days or hours after his deadly wound, and, being in sound understanding, should desire he that killeth him might not die for it, declaring that he freely forgave him, his desire was not to be granted, but blood was to be punished with blood: whether he that was slain was a great man or a mean, a freeman or a slave, a wise man or a fool; because there is no sin committed by men greater than this is."

Ver. 34. *Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit.*] By suffering a murderer to live.

Wherein I dwell.] This is given as a reason elsewhere, (see ver. 3.) why they should put all polluted people out of their camps, because God dwelt in them, *viz.* in his sanctuary, which made this land be called the Holy Land, and God's possession, (2 Chron. xx. 11.)

For I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel.] See Exod. xxv. 8. The very same was practised among the Athenians, with some little alteration. For Demosthenes says, it was one of their laws τὸν ἐκ προνοίας ἀποκτείναντα θανάτῳ ζημιοῦσθαι, *that he who out of forethought killed a man, should be put to death.* And he tells us also, that it was not lawful for the judges to take money to remit the

punishment after he was condemned: though if the prosecutors compounded with him or his friends beforehand, and desisted from the prosecution, his life was saved. If he fled from justice, all his goods were confiscated, and he forfeited all the rights of a citizen, both civil and sacred. (See Sam. Petitus's Comment. in Leges Atticas, lib. vii. tit. 1.)

CHAP. XXXVI.

Ver. 1. *AND the chief fathers of the families of the children of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh,* &c.] Not the fathers of those families, whose inheritance had been assigned them already on this side Jordan, in the land of Gilead; but the other half of the tribe of Manasseh, who were to have their inheritance in Canaan, where the daughters of Zelophehad also had their portion, as appears from Josh. xvii. 3, 4, &c.

Came near and spake before Moses, and before the princes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel.] Who were met together in a great assembly, as they used to do about public affairs. (See xxvii. 2. xxxi. xxxii. 2.)

Ver. 2. *And they said, The Lord commanded my lord.*] This shews that one of them was the mouth of the rest.

To give the land for an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel.] See xxvi. 52, 53. For there the foundation of all these doubts was laid.

And my lord was commanded by the Lord to give the inheritance of Zelophehad.] Which would have fallen to Zelophehad, had he been alive.

Our brother.] So they called their near relations.

Unto his daughters.] Who petitioned him for the possession which should have been their fathers', and it was granted them. (See xxvii. 6, 7.)

Ver. 3. *And if they be married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel.*] They being rich, many, it may be supposed, of the other tribes, as well as their own, would court them for their wives: and if they should choose a husband that was not of their own tribe, they represent to Moses the inconveniences which from thence would follow.

Then shall their inheritance be taken from the inheritance of our fathers.] *i. e.* Go out of our tribe, to which it originally belonged.

And shall be put to the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received.] Become a part of the inheritance of that tribe into which they married.

So shall it be taken from the lot of our inheritance.] For it must have descended unto their children, who were of another tribe by the father's side; which alone was considered, and not the mother's, in this case.

Ver. 4. *And when the jubilee of the children of Israel shall be.*] Which was ordained for the preserving estates in the tribes and families to which they originally appertained, (Lev. xxv. 10. 13.)

Then shall their inheritance be put unto the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received.] The jubilee will not help us in this case, by making their inheritances return as other lands do; because they are become the inheritance of another tribe by the right of marriage.

So shall their inheritance be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.] So will their estate go out of our tribe, without remedy, because the jubilee itself will give us no relief.

Ver. 5. *And Moses commanded the children of Israel, according to the word of the Lord.*] Whom, I suppose, he consulted about this matter, (as he did when the first doubt was moved about the inheritance of these women, xxvii. 5.) and received the answer by which he here commanded the Israelites to govern themselves.

The tribe of Joseph.] In whose name the chief fathers of their several families made this representation to Moses; as became men who took care of the concerns of the whole tribe.

Hath said well.] In desiring the inheritance of these women might not go out of their tribe, which was prevented by the following law.

Ver. 6. *This is the thing which the Lord doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them marry to whom they think best.*] They were not confined to any particular persons; but might have their choice among those who were descended from the same stock, as it immediately follows.

Only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry.] Only with these two limitations, that they might not marry a man of another tribe, nor a man of another family in their own tribe. For it is very manifest, that they are tied to marry into the family of their father; and accordingly they did actually marry their cousin-germans, as we now speak, (ver. 11.) For this law was made for the preservation of families (as well as of tribes), as the law for the redemption of lands was. And therefore these words, *the family of the tribe of their father,* are well translated by Grotius, (upon Matt. i. 16.) *familia stirpis paternæ, the family of the stock of their father,* which was that they desired might not perish, (xxvii. 4.) and was the ground of the law, which commanded a man to marry the wife of his brother, who left no issue, (Deut. xxv. 16.) Therefore, there being several families in the tribe of Manasseh, (xxvi. 29—32.) these women could marry only into the family of the Hepherites.

Ver. 7. *So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe.*] For by preserving it in the family to which it was given, it was necessarily preserved in the tribe.

For every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.] And not endeavour to get any part of the inheritance of another tribe, by marrying an heiress in it. Plato himself took care of this, that when a man left only a daughter, his estate should not be carried by her to a stranger, but she should be bound to marry Κατ' ἀγχιστείαν, *one that was nearest of kin to her.* And if there was a want of near kindred μέχρι μὲν ἀδελφοῦ υἱιδῶν, &c. *it should descend to the children of her father's brother, or the children of the grandfather, some of which he ordains should marry her.* (Lib. xi. de Legibus, p. 924, 925. edit. Serrani.)

Ver. 8. *And every daughter that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel.*] Here this law is made general, that all women who were heiresses, as the daughters of Zelophehad were, should do as they are here commanded. And this was one of the Attic laws, which, as Grotius observes, were plainly borrowed from the law of Moses, Μὴ ἐξεῖναι ταῖς ἐπικλήροις ἔξω τῆς ἀγχιστείας γαμεῖν,

&c. *That an heiress should not marry out of her kindred,* but dispose of herself and estate, τῷ ἐγγύτατα γένους, *to one nearest of kin to her;* which was one of the laws of Solon, as Sam. Petitus observes out of Isæus, Pollux, and others, in his Comment. in Leges Atticas, lib. vi. tit. 1. p. 441.

Shall be wife to one of the family of the tribe of her father.] Here she is confined to her family, and not merely to her tribe. But this concerned only such as were heiresses: all other women might marry into what tribe they pleased; as appears by those very books, wherein we read that Aaron himself married the sister of the prince of Judah, (Exod. vi. 22.) And if any object, that this was before the giving of the law, it is evident that Jehoida, a priest, and consequently of the tribe of Levi, married king Jehoram's sister, who was of the tribe of Judah, (2 Chron. xxii. 11.) And long before this, all the tribes of Israel, being in great solicitude how to find wives for their brethren of Benjamin, did not scruple their having them out of any tribe, if it had not been for their oath, (Judg. xxi. 18.) And, to add no more, David himself, of the tribe of Judah, married Michal, the daughter of Saul, who was of the tribe of Benjamin.

The Talmudists add, that even these heiresses might marry into what tribe they pleased, after the first division of the land by Joshua: to which they imagine this law was restrained; it being a common saying among them, "that it did not belong to any age, but that in which it was made." In the following ages they pretend a man might purchase land in any tribe, and possess it alway; or have the inheritance of it by marriage, though he were of another tribe, as Selden shews their opinion to be, (lib. de Successionibus ad Leges Hebr. cap. 18. and lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 4. n. 1. and Buxtorf. de Sponsal. et Divortiis, sect. 44.) But this is well confuted by Grotius in his Annotations upon Matt. i. 16.

Ver. 9. *Neither shall the inheritance remove from one tribe to another tribe.*] This establishes in general what he had said before, (ver. 7.) with particular respect to the daughters of Zelophehad. But Moses ben Nachman, upon these very words, asserts the Talmudic opinion beforementioned, that this concerns only the present time, not future ages. And puts this case (which is the strongest that can be thought of), if a woman were married into another tribe, after which marriage, her father and all her brethren dying without children, the inheritance fell to her, and consequently, saith he, the possession must devolve from one tribe to another, into which she had married. But, according to the letter of these words, the inheritance was rather to descend to the next of her kindred, than by her be carried out of the tribe to which it belonged.

But every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance.] Shall *cleave* or *stick* close to his own inheritance, as the Hebrew word signifies; and as the Greek and Latin express it. The reason of the command was, as Procopius Gazæus observes, to prevent the confusion of tribes. How the Vulgar Latin came to deviate so much from the Hebrew text, and from the intention of this law (as it hath done in this and the two preceding verses), I shall not here examine. It is sufficient to note, that Onkelos hath expressed the Hebrew text word for word; and the LXX. do not depart from the sense of it.

Ver. 10. *Even as the Lord commandeth Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad.*] Accordingly they followed this direction when they came into the land of Canaan, and had received their portion there. Now there being no such words added here, as there are in other cases, *this shall be unto the children of Israel a statute of judgment,* (xxvii. 11.) much less *a statute of judgment throughout your generations,* (xxxv. 29.) it led, I conjecture, the Talmudic doctors into the forementioned opinion, that this law concerned only the present generation.

Ver. 11. *For Mahlah, Tizzah, and Hoglah, and Milkah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad.*] Thus they are called both in xxvi. 33. and xxvii. 1. though they are not there mentioned in the same order; for Tizzah is there named last, who is here named in the second place. Perhaps they are set down here in the order wherein they were disposed in marriage; and Tizzah, who was the younger, was married in the second place.

Were married unto their father's brother's sons.] For Hepher, no doubt, had other sons besides Zelophehad, who had issue-male, though Zelophehad had not. What their names were, or how many of them, we do not know; but some suppose them to have been six; one of which died in the wilderness without issue. See Selden, de Successionibus, cap. 23. where he discourses at large of the portion which fell to them in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 12. *And they were married into the families,* &c.] In the margin, more exactly out of the Hebrew, *to some that were of the families; i. e.* to one of the families of Manasseh, from whom several families descended, (xxvi. 29, &c.)

And their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.] The word for *tribe* signifies sometimes merely a family in a tribe. And so the LXX. (as Grotius observes in the place beforenamed) in this very business, uses sometimes the word δῆμος, and sometimes φυλή; the former of which signifies a part of a whole tribe. And thus Josephus also uses the word φυλή, to signify a *family*. Mr. Selden hath the same observation in his book de Successionibus, cap. 18. that משפחת is sometimes translated φυλή; and then it signifies not a tribe, but πατριὰν, συγγένειαν, *familiam, cognationem, seu genus sanguine proximum; a family, a kindred, or those that are next in blood.* But there is no need of these observations, if the words be translated, as they may, rightly; *And their inheritance remained in the tribe and the family of their fathers.* (See ver. 6.)

Ver. 13. *These are the commandments and the judgments which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses to the children of Israel, in the plains of Moab, by Jordan near Jericho.*] He began to deliver the precepts here intended at chapter xxvi. (see ver. 3.) and continues them to this place. By *commandments,* seem to be meant the precepts about the worship of God, (chap. xxviii. xxix. xxx.) and by *judgments,* the civil laws about dividing their inheritances, and regulating their descent to their posterity, and establishing cities of refuge for manslayers, which are expressly called *a statute of judgment,* (xxvii. 11. xxxv. 29.) Some other things are interspersed, as God's commandment to number the people (which was in order to the assigning them their inheritances proportionable to their families), to execute judgment on the Midianites, and to set down in writing their travels in the wilderness; of which I have given an account in their proper places.

THE

FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

DEUTERONOMY.

THIS book had the name of DEUTERONOMY given it by the Greeks, from the principal scope and design of it; which was to repeat unto the Israelites, before Moses left them, the *chief laws of God*, which had been given them: that they who were not then born when they were first delivered, or were incapable to understand them, or had not sufficiently regarded them, might be instructed in them, and awakened to attend them. (See ver. 1. 5.) In order to this, he premises a short narrative of what had befallen them since they came from Mount Sinai unto this time, in the three first chapters; and then in the fourth urges them, by a most pathetical exhortation, to the observance of those laws which he had taught them, especially the ten commandments, with which he begins the fifth chapter; where he makes a solemn rehearsal of the covenant God made with them in Horeb; and what immediately followed upon the delivery of the law by God himself from Mount Sinai. And then, having earnestly pressed the observation of the first commandment, in the former part of the sixth chapter, and in the latter part of it, and in the several chapters that follow (to the end of the eleventh), reminded them of a great many things which God had done for them, and given them several cautions, lest they let them slip out of their minds, and used many arguments, from several topics (as we call them), to move them to be obedient to all the other commandments; he proceeds in the twelfth chapter, and so forward to the twenty-eighth, to remember them of a great many other laws besides the ten commandments, which he had delivered to them. Some of which he explains; others he enforces with further reasons; and in several places adds new laws for the greater security of the whole, (particularly, he orders the writing of God's law upon stones, when they came into the land of Canaan, chap. xxvii.) and then pronounces those promises which God had made to the obedient, and his threatenings to the disobedient, more largely, and with greater force, than he had done in the twenty-sixth of Leviticus. After which he again remembers them of several wonderful works of God for them, (chap. xxix.) and renews the covenant between God and them; using several arguments to persuade them to a dutiful observance of God's law: which he commands (chap. xxxi.) to be read to all the people in the conclusion of every seventh year, that none might pretend ignorance of it. And then concludes all with a most admirable song, which he orders every one to learn; and with a blessing upon the twelve tribes.

All this was done in the two last months of the last year of Moses's life. But not all at once, as plainly appears by several parts of the book; in which he writes what he delivered to them at several times. Which is the reason of the repetition of the very same thing over and over again: that he might make it sink into their minds by being often inculcated. Some have been so foolish as to make this an objection against this book being composed by Moses. But it shews their great ignorance; all wise men having ever judged it necessary to say, τὰ αὐτὰ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν, *the very same things concerning the same things;* that they might be thoroughly understood, and fixed in the memory of their auditors, and settled in their hearts and affections. Particularly Epictetus (as David Chytræus long ago observed) delivered this as a profitable rule in all studies; Εἰδέναι χρὴ, ὅτι οὐ ῥᾴδιον δόγμα παραγενέσθαι ἀνθρώπῳ, εἰ μὴ καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ λέγῃ τις καὶ ἀκούῃ, καὶ ἅμα χρᾶται πρὸς τὸν βίον. *This must be known* (as a certain truth), *that it is not easy for a man to attain the solid knowledge of any thing, unless he both read and hear the same things every day; and also set himself to the practice of them.* This course Moses took with the children of Israel: spending every day, it is likely, of the latter end of his life in calling to their mind, again and again, what he had taught them; and the reason they had to do accordingly.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *THESE be the words.*] This book contains the words:

Which Moses spake unto all Israel.] All the people could not hear what he said, but he ordered the elders and heads of the several tribes to communicate to the whole congregation what he delivered to them, in the audience of many of the people who were assembled with them. Thus these words are commonly understood. But, considering the great weight of what is here said, I rather think that Moses himself, at several times, spake what here follows in the ears of the people. (See v. 1.)

On this side Jordan.] The Vulgar Latin having translated the Hebrew words [*beeber*] *on the other side Jordan*, it hath furnished some ill-disposed minds with an argument, that Moses was not the author of this book: for he that wrote plainly shews that he was in Canaan when he wrote it. But a very little consideration would have prevented this frivolous objection; there being nothing more certain, than that the Hebrew words signify indifferently, either one side or the other; and may be literally translated, *in the passage over Jordan*, or as they were about to pass over it; as

Huetius observes and proves, by plain examples, that the Hebrews have no other word to express their mind, when they would say either on this side or beyond. (See Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 14.) To which another learned writer, since him, (Hermannus Witsius, lib. i. Miscel. Sacr. cap. 14.) hath added several other places, which evidently shew, that *beeber* is a word that indifferently belongs to either side of any place, (see I Sam. xiv. 40.) and must be determined by the matter in hand, to which it is to be applied. And here, undoubtedly, it is to be rendered *on this side Jordan.* (See iii. 8.)

In the wilderness in the plain.] In the plain of Moab, where they had remained a long while; as appears from the foregoing book, (Numb. xxii. 1. xxvi. 3. 63. xxxi. 12. xxxiii. 48. 59. xxxv. 1. xxxvi. 13.)

Over against the Red Sea.] There is no word in the Hebrew text for *sea;* and therefore the marginal translation is to be preferred, which is, *over against Suph;* which was a place in the country of Moab, (see Numb. xxi. 14.) over against which they now lay encamped; but were so far distant from the Red Sea, that there can be no respect to it here.

Between Paran.] He doth not mean the *wilderness of Paran* frequently mentioned in the foregoing book (for that was as remote from hence as the Red Sea), but some place in the country of Moab, as Suph was, and the rest of the places which here follow.

And Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab.] There was a place called Hazeroth, where they had encamped a long time ago, (Numb. xi. 35. xxxiii. 17.) but it was in another wilderness far from this place, as appears by the account Moses gives of their removals from that place to this, where they now lay, (Numb. xxxiii. 17. 48, 49.) And therefore I take this, and the other three places here mentioned, to have been frontier-towns in the country of Moab, which lay upon the borders of this plain. The last of which, Dizahab, is translated by the LXX. and the Vulgar, as if it signified a place where there were mines of gold.

Onkelos and the Jerusalem Targum, who take Suph to signify the Red Sea, and Paran for the wilderness through which they had come many years ago, &c. are forced to add several words to make out the sense of this verse in this manner: *These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan, &c. reproving them because they sinned in the desert, and provoked God in the plain over against the Red Sea; and murmured in Paran about manna; and at Hazeroth for flesh,* &c. And so they proceed to mention other sins committed in other places; but not in these here named: which they force, from their natural sense, to comply with this conceit.

Ver. 2. *There are eleven days' journey from Horeb,* &c.] Or *eleven days* (we were a coming) *from Horeb, by the way of Mount Seir, unto Kadesh-barnea.* Which cannot be understood of the whole time they spent between these two places, but only of the time they spent in travelling: for they stayed a month at Kibroth-hattaavah, and a week more at Hazeroth, (Numb. xi. 21. xii. 15, 16.) before they came to Kadesh-barnea. This he represents to them, to make them sensible they had been kept in the wilderness so many years as had passed since they came out of Egypt; not because it was a long way to Canaan, but for the reason mentioned in the fourteenth of Numbers. For from Horeb (whither he ordered them to go when they came out of Egypt) they came in eleven days, and took no long journeys, to the borders of the land of Canaan, where Kadesh-barnea lay. So Maimonides; The way was plain and known between Horeb (whither God brought them on purpose to serve him) and Kadesh: which was the beginning of a habitable country; according to what he saith, Numb. xx. 16. (See More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 1. see Numb. xiii. 26.)

By the way of Mount Seir.] The country of the Edomites, (chap. ii. ver. 12.)

Unto Kadesh-barnea.] How they were ordered to come hither, and what they did here, he relates, ver. 6. 19. and so proceeds to give an account of several remarkable things which befel them, unto the time when he wrote these things, which he sets down in the next verse.

Ver. 3. *And it came to pass in the fortieth year.*] After they came out of Egypt.

In the eleventh month, on the first day of the month.] In the first month of this fortieth year they came into the wilderness of Zin, unto another Kadesh, (Numb. xx. 1.) From whence they removed to Mount Hor; where Aaron died on the first day of the fifth month of this year. See there, ver. 28. where it appears, ver. 29. they mourned for him thirty days, that is, till the beginning of the sixth month. In which they fought with king Arad, (Numb. xxi.) and from Mount Hor travelled from place to place (as we read there, and Numb. xxxiii.) till they came to these plains of Moab. In which journeys, and in the rest of the transactions, mentioned in the latter end of the book of Numbers, they spent the other five months of this year; as I have observed in their proper places. And now began the eleventh month, when Moses, being to leave the world before the end of this year, spake all that follows in this book. And this speech (which he begins ver. 6. and continues to the fortieth verse of the fourth chapter), the great primate of Ireland thinks, he made to the people on the twentieth of February, and on the sabbath-day, as the reader may find in his Annals.

That Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the Lord hath given him in commandment unto them.] Made a rehearsal of all that at several times he had received from the Lord, and delivered unto them.

Ver. 4. *After he had slain Sihon the king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.*] About five months ago; for it was after Aaron's death, which was the first day of the fifth month, (Numb. xxxiii. 38.) and they mourned for him all that month. (See Numb. xxi. 21, &c.)

And Og the king of Bashan, which dwelt at Astaroth.] This was a city in the country of Bashan, (Josh. xiii. 31.) and a city it was of very great antiquity, as appears from Gen. xiv. 5. (See there.) From whence some think the famous goddess Astarte had her name, being here worshipped. But whether that goddess took her name from this city, or the city from the goddess, is not certain; as Mr. Selden observes in his Syntagma ii. de Diis Syris, cap. 2. But that the heathen deities were wont to have their names from the groves, mountains, cities, and caves, where they were worshipped, is as certain as it is uncertain from whence Astarte, or Astaroth (as the Scripture name is), was so called.

In Edrei.] His royal palace was at Astaroth (as Sihon's

was at Heshbon), but he was slain in Edrei, (Numb. xxi. 33.)

Ver. 5. *On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab.*] In the plains of Moab; before they passed over Jordan. (See ver. 1.)

Began Moses to declare this law, saying.] To call to remembrance that which any one had forgotten; and to explain that which any one did not understand. So Maimonides expounds these words in Seder Zeraim. "In the end of the fortieth year, in the beginning of the month Shebat, Moses called the people together, saying; The time of my death draws near, if any one, therefore, hath forgot any thing that I have delivered, let him come and receive it; or if any thing seem dubious, let him come that I may explain it. And so they say in Siphri, *If any one have forgotten any constitution, let him come and hear it the second time; if he need to have any thing unfolded, let him come and hear the explication of it.*" For which he quotes this verse; and says that Moses spent all his time in this, from the beginning of the month Shebat to the seventh day of Adar. And what he now said was likely to be more regarded, because these were, in a manner, his dying words; for he lived but till the seventh day of the next month; and seems to have composed this book as a compendium of his whole law, for the familiar use of the children of Israel; from whence it is called Deuteronomy, *i. e.* a second law. (See Huetius in his Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 1.)

Ver. 6. *The Lord our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying.*] Numb. x. 13.

Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount.] From the third month of the first year (Exod. xix. 1.) to the twentieth day of the second year after they came out of Egypt, (Numb. x. 11.) they stayed at Mount Sinai, which is the same with Horeb, they being only two tops of the same mountain, one of them something higher than the other, as they are described by those who have taken a view of them. For Moses was twice with God, for the space of forty days, in this mount: and here the tabernacle and all things belonging to it were made, according to the orders he there received; and then was erected and consecrated; and the people all numbered and disposed under several standards, to march in such order as God appointed, (Numb. ii. 3. 10. 17, &c. x. 14, 15, &c.)

Ver. 7. *Turn you.*] From this mountain.

And take your journey.] Resume your journey, which you have so long intermitted.

And go to the mount of the Amorites.] A mount on the south part of Canaan, inhabited by the Amorites, together with some Canaanites and Amalekites, (Numb. xiv. 25. 43. 45.) But the principal possessors of it were Amorites, as is expressed more than once in this chapter, ver. 19, 20. 44. This is the mountain to which Moses bade the spies go up, Numb. xiii. 17. and so they did, ver. 22.

And unto all the places nigh thereunto.] And so pass into all the neighbouring country which lies near it.

In the plains, in the hills, and in the vale.] This is a description of the country nigh unto this mountain; some of which was champion (as we speak), and other parts of it consisted of hills and dales.

And in the south, and by the sea-side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, and unto the great river, the river Euphrates.] And so go into all the rest of the land of Canaan: the several quarters of which he here sets forth. The southern part lying towards this mountain; the western upon the sea (where the people properly called Canaanites dwelt); the northern towards Lebanon; and the eastern towards the river Euphrates. Which by other authors, as well as Moses, is called the *great river.* So Callimachus, in his hymn to Apollo, v. 103.

Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος——

The great flood of the Assyrian river; which the scholiast observes is meant of Euphrates. And Lucan,

——"Cum Tigride magnus
Euphrates"—— Lib. iii. ver. 253.

Ver. 8. *Behold, I have set the land.*] In the Hebrew, *given the land, i. e.* bestowed it upon you, and am ready to bring you into possession of it.

Before you.] That every one of you may have his share of it. Or, that you may go whither you please, and settle yourselves in it, (Gen. xiii. 9. xxxiv. 10.)

Go in and possess the land.] Therefore make no longer stay here in the wilderness; but go and take possession of my gift.

Which the Lord sware unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, &c.] Gen. xv. 18. xvii. 7, 8. xxvi. 3. xxviii. 13.

Ver. 9. *And I spake unto you at that time, saying.*] About the time of their coming to Horeb, or Mount Sinai. For the story of Jethro, unto which this relates, preceded that immediately, (Exod. xviii.) Many great men place it after the giving of the law: of which, see Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 2. n. 4.

I am not able to bear you alone.] We do not read, before now, that Moses spake thus to the people. But Jethro spake in this manner to him, Exod. xviii. 18. and gave him advice to take some others to his assistance, (ver. 21.) which advice he followed, (ver. 24.) And then spake to the people what Jethro had said to him; and enlarged upon it, in the words we read here, in the following verses: where he gives them the reason why he could not perform the office of a judge alone.

Ver. 10. *The Lord your God hath multiplied you; and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.*] Increased unto a greater number than can easily be told.

Ver. 11. *The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many as you are.*] As if he had said, I am not troubled at your vast increase, but bless God for it; and beseech him to make you a thousand times more numerous than at present you are.

And bless you, as he hath promised you.] In the promise often repeated to their fathers, (Gen. xii. 2. xv. 5. xvii. 5, 6. xviii. 18. xxii. 17. xxvi. 4. xxviii. 14.)

Ver. 12. *How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?*] But how is it possible for one man alone to undergo the labour of hearing all the complaints of such a multitude; and of remedying all their grievances, and determining all their controversies? So the last word signifies, *suits at law* (as we speak), as the two former signify other differences, which arose between one man and another, about such things as are mentioned in the twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third chapters of Exodus. The first word, which we translate *cumbrance,* signifies *tædiosam litigantium serram,* (as Hottinger

interprets it, in his Smegma Orientale, lib. i. cap. 6.) the tedious pleadings of those that manage causes before a judge, by bills and answers (suppose) and rejoinders, &c.

Ver. 13. *Take ye.*] In the Hebrew it is *give ye, i. e.* present unto me such persons as you think fit, according to the following characters.

Wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes.] Men of known wisdom, prudence, and integrity; skilful in Divine and human laws. (See Exod. xviii. 21.) Some take *wise men* to signify such as knew much; and *understanding*, such as had prudence to make use of their knowledge, being men of experience, and they were to be noted for both these; otherwise the people would not have reverenced them.

Ver. 14. *And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do.*] This consent of the people is not recorded before; but sufficiently implied in their submission to this regulation, mentioned Exod. xviii. 26.

Ver. 15. *So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known.*] From among those men that they presented to him, he took, I suppose, such persons among the chief of their tribes, as were endowed with the qualities here named, and were known by all so to be. For obscure persons, either for birth, or experience in affairs, would have been contemned: and therefore he chose the noblest of those that were presented to him (called here the *chief of their tribes*), if they were no less worthy than others. For some such, no doubt, there were among their great men, as might be thought fit for this high employment. And they were the fitter, because, being men of quality (as we speak), they were less liable to be corrupted by bribery. From which Moses took care all judges should be so free, that he expressly requires they should be men *hating covetousness*, (Exod. xviii. 21.) And Solon did not forget to make this a part of the oath, which every judge in Athens took (which is mentioned at large by Demosthenes: in his oration against Timocrates) οὐδὲ δῶρα δέξομαι τῆς ἡλιάσεως ἕνεκα, οὔτ' αὐτὸς ἐγὼ, οὔτ' ἄλλος ἐμοὶ, &c. *I will receive no gift upon the account of my sentence; neither I myself, nor any body else for me, nor others with my knowledge, by any artifice or device whatsoever.*

And made them heads over you.] Set them to govern and rule the people, (as it is expressed ver. 13.) by deciding all causes which were brought before them; as far as they were able to understand them.

Captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens.] It is a question, whether they were commanders over so many families, or persons; as I observed upon Exod. xviii. 25. Hermannus Conringius thinks they were rulers (as the word signifies) over so many fathers of families, understanding by a family that which we now call a household, (De Republ. Hebræorum, sect. 18.)

And officers among your tribes.] The same great man, in the twenty-sixth section of the same book, takes *schotrim* to have been judges, as well as the rest. His great reason is, because the seventy elders were ordered to be chosen out of them, among others, (Numb. xi. 16.) Now it is altogether improbable, he thinks, that such a *prophetical college* as that was, should be chosen out of such mean officers, as the Hebrew doctors make these *schotrim* to have been. But see what I have noted upon Exod. v. 14. and Numb. xi. 16. And let me here add, that if they were judges (and not attendants upon them), they were very mean ones, being put below the *rulers of ten*. But howsoever this be, it is certain some of these judges had greater authority than others, being entrusted with a larger jurisdiction; and, it is likely, greater abilities were required in those over thousands, than in those over tens. As in the great Sanhedrim afterward, the Jews make more things necessary to qualify men for a place in it, than were requisite for those in lower courts; where no man could sit (much less in the highest) unless these seven things were remarkable in him, as Maimonides saith, (Halacah Sanhedrin, cap. 4. sect. 7.) *wisdom, humility, the fear of God, contempt of riches, love of truth, a good fame;* and he was *beloved also of others.*

Ver. 16. *And I charged your judges at that time, saying.*] As the quality of their persons and their endowments made them considerable, so they were dignified with the honourable name of *schofetim*, and were also called elders, which had been a long time a title of honour among the Jews, and in other nations.

Hear the causes between your brethren.] This was a necessary quality in a good judge, to give audience to every one that brought a cause before him; and not to delay any man. But the Jews infer from these words, that it was not lawful to hear any man when his adversary was absent; but both parties were to be there present. And they were also to be heard speak for themselves, if they pleased: which was part of the forenamed oath which Solon ordered all the Athenian judges to take, Ἀκροάσομαι τοῦ τε κατηγόρου καὶ τοῦ ἀπολογουμένου ὁμοίως ἀμφοῖν, *I will hear the accuser and the defender, both alike.*

And judge righteously.] The next thing required of a judge, was to be upright and impartial, not considering what the man was, but his cause. This is implied in the following words.

Between every man and his brother.] *i. e.* Between one Israelite and another.

And the stranger that is with you.] *i. e.* Between an Israelite and a proselyte: whether he were received into the covenant by circumcision, or not. For of this latter sort there were, no doubt, a great number, amongst that mixed multitude, who came with them out of Egypt, (Exod. xii. 38.) And while they were in the wilderness, there was not a distinct court for Israelites and proselytes; but their causes were tried in one and the same, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 3. n. 1.

Ver. 17. *And ye shall not respect persons in judgment.*] Not be swayed by particular affection or interest; but judge sincerely, without respect to relation, or any benefit or injury received.

Ye shall hear the small as well as the great.] Be equally disposed patiently to attend to the cause of a poor man, as of a great; and to do him as speedy and impartial justice. (See Lev. xix. 15.) And here the Hebrew doctors tell us of some singular practices in their courts, to preserve the dispensation of exact justice: for if one of the contending parties came into them richly clothed, and the other poorly, they would not hear them till both were clothed alike. Nor would they suffer one of them to sit, and the other stand; but both of them either sat, or stood. And if they sat, one of them was not permitted to sit higher than the

other; but they sat by each other's side, &c. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. n. 10.)

Ye shall not be afraid of the face of men.] Courage and undaunted resolution is another necessary qualification in a judge; who must not be overawed by what any man can do unto him; but remember (as it here follows) that he is in God's place.

For the judgment is God's.] God gave them their commission by Moses; so that they were his ministers, and acted by his authority: and therefore might be confident he would defend them in the discharge of their office. This shews, that though Moses alone acted by immediate authority from God, yet these always being constituted by him, were to be looked upon as pronouncing sentence in his name; who, after a peculiar manner, was the King and supreme Governor of the people of Israel.

And the cause which is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.] Another quality is humility, in not adventuring to judge of things above their reach. Some think there were certain causes reserved to the cognizance of Moses, (as I observed upon Exod. xviii. 12.) but the contrary appears by these words, that all manner of causes were brought before these judges; and they, not the people, brought such causes before Moses, as they found too hard for them to determine. So that they, not the person whose cause it was, judged of the difficulty of the cause. (See Selden, lib. i. de Synedriis, cap. 16.)

Ver. 18. *And I commanded you at that time all the things that ye should do.*] As he rightly informed their judges, so he instructed the people also in their duty, before they went from Horeb, by delivering to them the judgments which God commanded him to set before them, Exod. xxi. 1. contained in that and in the two following chapters; whereby both they and their judges were to govern themselves.

Ver. 19. *And when we departed from Horeb.*] See Numb. x. 2.

We went through all that great and terrible wilderness.] It may well be called *great* because it extended a great way. For after three days' journey (Numb. x. 12.) they settled at Kibroth-hattaavah; which was in this wilderness of Paran. From whence they went to Hazeroth, which is still said to be in this wilderness, (Numb. xi. 35.) And when they went from thence, they were in the same wilderness, (xii. 16.) where Kadesh was, (xiii. 26. and see xxxiii. 19.) And this wilderness was very *terrible*, or dreadful; because there were no inhabitants in it but wild beasts.

Which you saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites.] All the way you went towards that mountain. (See ver. 7.)

As the Lord our God commanded us.] According to the direction which God gave them, by the motion of the cloud that went before them.

And we came to Kadesh-barnea.] Where they rested at the foot of that mountain, in the wilderness of Paran, (Numb. xiii. 2. 26.)

Ver. 20. *And I said unto you, Ye are come to the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us.*] For this was part of the country which God bestowed upon them for their possession; as appears from Numb. xxxiv. 4. where Kadesh-barnea is mentioned as a frontier-place in their south border. And indeed the Amorites, wheresoever they found them, were to be expelled; as they had already dispossessed them of the whole kingdom of Sihon, who was king of the Amorites, (Numb. xxi. 21. 25, 26.)

Ver. 21. *Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee.*] All the country beyond this mountain, (ver. 8.)

Go up.] For there was a great ascent to it, (Numb. xiii. 17.)

And possess it.] Enter upon the possession of it.

As the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee.] According to the promise made by God long ago, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, (see ver. 8.) which he is now ready to perform.

Fear not, neither be discouraged.] Do not dread either their number or their strength; but trust in the Lord (whose name he repeats four times in these three verses), that he will make good his word.

Ver. 22. *And ye came near unto me every one of you.*] The heads of every tribe, in the name of the whole congregation, whose desire this was.

And said, We will send men before us.] Some select persons.

And they shall search out the land.] Give us an account how it lies, and what kind of country it is.

And bring us word again by what way we shall go up.] Inform us which way to direct our march into it.

And into what cities we shall come.] What cities we shall first attack, to make our way the clearer into the country. Moses also charges the men that went to search the land with many other inquiries, (Numb. xiii. 18—20.) that the people might receive the fullest satisfaction.

Ver. 23. *And the saying pleased me well.*] He thought this a reasonable motion, proceeding only from a prudent caution; whereas, in truth, they were timorous and distrustful of God's promise.

And I took twelve men of you, one of a tribe.] That every body might be satisfied when they heard the report of their brethren, Numb. xiii. 2—4, &c. and God directed him so to do, as we read there.

Ver. 24. *And they turned.*] From Kadesh-barnea.

And went up into the mountain.] Numb. xiii. 17. 21.

And came into the valley of Eshcol.] It appears by the relation, (Numb. xiii. 21—23.) that this was the last place unto which they came when they had ended their search.

And searched it out.] After they had gone through all the quarters of the country.

Ver. 25. *And they took of the fruit of the land, in their hands, and brought it down unto us.*] Both grapes, pomegranates, and figs, (Numb. xiii. 23.)

And brought us word again, and said, It is a good land which the Lord our God doth give us.] So they all said unanimously, and brought along with them a demonstration of it; (Numb. xiii. 27.) only they added, that they were not able to deal with the inhabitants of it.

Ver. 26. *Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God.*] Who bade you go up and not be afraid, (ver. 8. 21.) Which was the greater sin, because he had not only brought them to the borders of the land, but convinced them that he had not deluded them with fair promises of a better country than really it was: for they all saw the goodly fruit which it produced; and ought therefore to have believed he would fulfil his word, and give them the possession of it.

Ver. 27. *And ye murmured in your tents.*] After great lamentations for a whole night together, (Numb. xiv. 1.)

And said, Because the Lord hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt.] Unto which therefore they desired and conspired to return, (Numb. xiv. 4.)

To deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.] Nothing can be more pernicious (as Grotius here observes) than a persuasion that God doth not love us, but hath a design upon us, to destroy us.

Ver. 28. *Whither shall we go up?*] Moses, I suppose, still pressed them to go up, and take possession of the land: to which they gave him this snappish answer.

Our brethren have discouraged our hearts.] The men that you yourself sent to search the land, dispirited us by the report they have brought us. Which would not have had that effect upon them, if they had minded one part of it as much as the other, and calmly considered what Caleb and Joshua said, who made no doubt of success.

Saying, The people is greater and taller than we.] More numerous, and of far greater stature and strength, (Numb. xiii. 28. 33.)

Their cities are great, and walled up to heaven.] The spies only told them, that their *cities were walled, and very great,* (Numb. xiii. 28.) but their fear and confusion of thoughts augmented the danger of attempting the conquest of them: yet Moses himself thinks good afterward to use the same hyperbole, (ix. 1.) which is common in the best authors. For thus Homer, in Odyss. E. ver. 239. speaks of a fir-tree as high as heaven, *i. e.* exceeding tall:

——— ἐλάτη δ' ἦν οὐρανομήκης.

Many other instances may be seen in Bochartus's Phaleg. lib. i. cap. 13.

And moreover, we have seen the sons of the Anakims there.] See Numb. xiii. 28. 33. Const. L'Empereur will rather have it translated *the sons of the giants,* as the LXX. and Onkelos take it. Yet he acknowledges that Anak seems to have been the first parent and propagator of the race of giants after the flood; and, therefore, it may be properly translated as we do. (See Annot. in Itiner. Benjamini Tudelensis, p. 136.)

Ver. 29. *Then I said unto you.*] Moses here at large relates what he said unto their fathers upon this occasion; which he doth not mention in the book of Numbers (where we read only of his falling down before God), that he might awaken this generation to a greater confidence in God, and a dread of his judgment.

Dread not, nor be afraid of them.] Do not consider so much how strong they are, as how powerful the Lord your God is, who hath promised you this good land.

Ver. 30. *The Lord your God which goeth before you.*] In a glorious pillar of cloud and fire.

He shall fight for you.] As he had done hitherto, (Exod. xiv. 14. xvii. 8, &c.)

According to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes.] Why should you think he is less able to bring you into Canaan, than he was to redeem you from Egypt, where you were oppressed by very powerful enemies?

Ver. 31. *And in the wilderness.*] Ever since they came from thence through the wilderness of the Red Sea, (Exod. xiii. 18.) and in the wilderness of Sin, (Exod xvi. 1.) and the wilderness of Sinai, (Exod. xix. 1, 2.) and then through that terrible wilderness of Paran. (See above, ver. 19.)

Where thou hast seen how the Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son.] The long experience they had of his tender care he had over them (which was as indulgent as that of a kind father towards his only son, when he is a child, whom he carries in his arms), should have made them confident of his gracious providence for the future.

In all the way that ye went, until ye came to this place.] He made provision for them in the most desolate places; bringing them water out of a rock; sending bread down to them from heaven; defending them from wild beasts, and from their fiercer enemies, &c.

Ver. 32. *Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God.*] He could not prevail with them to trust God; and go up, as he commanded, in his power and might to possess the land. Nor could all that Caleb and Joshua said at all move them, (Numb. xiv. 7—9.)

Ver. 33. *Who went in the way before you.*] Never failed constantly to direct and guide you in your journeys, (Exod. xiii. 22.)

To search you out a place to pitch your tents in.] But always marked out your encampments where they should be, (Numb. x. 17.)

In fire by night, to shew you by what way you should go, and in a cloud by day.] That they might be able to travel by night, as well as by day: which was most convenient in summer-time, when the sun was very scorching in a wilderness where there was no shelter, (Exod. xiii. 21. Numb. x. 16. 21.)

Ver. 34. *And the Lord heard the voice of your words.*] They not only distrusted God, (ver. 32.) but murmured against their leaders, and against God, in a mutinous manner; consulting to return into Egypt, (Numb. xiv. 1—4.) And moreover spake of stoning Caleb and Joshua for their good advice, (ver. 10.)

And was wroth, and sware, saying.] Which so provoked the Divine Majesty, that he irrevocably determined what follows; confirming it with an oath, (Numb. xiv. 21.)

Ver. 35. *Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land,* &c.] See Numb. xiv. 21. 28, 29.)

Ver. 36. *Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh.*] And Joshua the son of Nun. (See xiv. 24. 30. and see below, ver. 38.)

He shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, &c.] This was as exactly fulfilled as their disinheriting was, Josh. xiv. 9. 12. where the particular portion of land is mentioned which God promised to him, and which Joshua gave him in the mountain where the Anakims dwelt. For such was the wonderful faith and courage of Caleb, that he doubted not to dispossess those whom the rest of the Israelites dreaded as invincible.

Ver. 37. *Also the Lord was angry with me.*] Not at that time, but afterward; when they came into the wilderness of Zin, to another Kadesh, (Numb. xx. 1. 12.)

For your sakes.] By occasion of their fresh discontents and mutinous upbraidings of him, (Numb. xx. 2—4.) which provoked him so, that he spake unadvisedly with his lips, as the Psalmist observes, Psal. cvi. 31, 32. This was a high aggravation of their guilt; that they not only undid themselves, but brought great displeasure upon their worthy leader and governor, whom they wearied with their tumults

and rebellions. Or the meaning may be (which doth not much differ from the account now given), that they murmuring in a tumultuous manner, when they saw the water did not flow out of the rock at the first stroke, he himself also was put into such a commotion, that he began to doubt, and say God would do nothing for such a rebellious people, though he had declared he would. If this be true, he soon recovered himself, and smote the rock again, in confidence God would be as good as his word. But God was so angry at the words he had spoken, that he so far punished him for them, as to deny him entrance into Canaan.

Saying, Thou shalt not go in thither.] Which threatening is renewed a little before his death, (Numb. xxvii. 13, 14.) and he could not get repealed by any entreaties, as we read in this book, iii. 26.

Ver. 38. *But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee.*] *i. e.* Waits upon thee.

He shall go in thither.] So God promised, when he, as well as Caleb, endeavoured to put courage into the people to go and possess the land, (Numb. xiv. 6, 7, &c. 30.)

Encourage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.] Not only go thither, and have his portion there, but be the captain of Israel, and conquer the land for them, and divide it among them. This intimates as if Joshua was afraid he might be excluded as well as his master; being extremely troubled, it is likely, that he was not suffered to reap the fruit of his long labours. Therefore God bids Moses encourage his hope, and command him to take heart (as we speak), for undoubtedly he should do more than go into Canaan. Which may be the reason why his name is not put into the exception, (ver. 35, 36.) together with Caleb's; but they are mentioned separately, because there was something to be said peculiar to each of them.

Ver. 39. *Moreover, your little ones, whom ye said should be a prey.*] See Numb. xiv. 31.

Which in that day had no knowledge of good and evil.] And, consequently, did not provoke God by their disobedience.

They shall go in thither, &c.] Their innocence moved pity towards them: though children, in some cases, were cut off for their fathers' sins.

Ver. 40. *But as for you, turn you.*] From the land of Canaan; to which they were not permitted to go.

And take your journey into the wilderness.] And get you back again into the wilderness, out of which I have brought you, (Numb. xiv. 25.)

By the way of the Red Sea.] Thus they had their desire, in some part, of returning into Egypt, (Numb. xiv. 4.) which was not far from the Red Sea.

Ver. 41. *Then you answered and said unto me, We have sinned against the Lord.*] They repented when it was too late to do them any good. (See Numb. xiv. 40.)

We will go up, and fight, according to all that the Lord our God commanded us.] Now they resolve to encounter those enemies of whom they were before so afraid, as to speak of stoning those who exhorted them not to fear them, (Numb. xiv. 9, 10.)

And when you girded on every man his weapons of war, ye were ready to go up into the hill.] They not only made a stout resolution, but actually prepared themselves for the onset: as if there were no difficulty in that, which a little before they dreaded to think of. So De Dieu translates the last words, *Ye thought it an easy matter to ascend the hill;* or, ye despised going up the mountain; in our language, *made nothing of it.*

Ver. 42. *And the Lord said unto me, Say unto them, Go not up.*] See Numb. xiv. 41, 42.

Neither fight.] Much less think of fighting.

For I am not among you.] By my powerful presence to subdue your enemies, or to defend you from them (so the phrase is often used); for the ark of the covenant, the token of God's presence, did not go with them, (Numb. xiv. 44.)

Lest ye be smitten before your enemies.] Which would be a far greater disgrace than marching away from them.

Ver. 43. *So I spake unto you.*] See Numb. xiv. 42, 43.

And ye would not hear.] No more than before; when he bade them go up.

And rebelled against the commandment of the Lord.] For now it was against his will, as before it was his will, that they should go up.

And went presumptuously up into the hill.] Would venture against the express command of God, which was the highest presumption.

Ver. 44. *And the Amorites which dwelt in that mountain came out against you.*] As soon as they saw the Israelites ascend to assault them, they came down upon them, (Numb. xiv. 45.)

And chased you, as bees do.] Which pursue those that disturb their hives in great swarms, and with great fury, (Psal. cxviii. 12.) For though *bees* have very small bodies, yet they have great spirits, and a vast force, as Bochart observes in many instances, to make out the aptness of this comparison, in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 10.

And destroyed you in Seir.] It seems they fled towards that part of Idumea where Mount Seir was; which they afterward compassed many days, (ii. 1.) when they removed from Kadesh-barnea. And there some of them fell by the sword of the Amorites, who were the fiercest of all the people of Canaan, and might, on that account, be well compared to bees, who cease not their pursuit till they have fixed their stings.

Even unto Hormah.] See Numb. xiv. 45.

Ver. 45. *And ye returned.*] After the Amorites retreated.

And wept before the Lord.] Beseeching him to go along with you, and assist you to conquer the land.

But the Lord would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear unto you.] To consent that they should now go and possess the promised land, or stay near to it; but remained fixed in his resolution, that they should go back again, and wander in the wilderness as long as they lived.

Ver. 46. *So ye dwelt in Kadesh many days.*] God had commanded Moses to lead them into the wilderness, by the way of the Red Sea, the very next morning after their mutiny upon the return of the spies, (Numb. xiv. 25.) But they prevented this, by their early rising next morning to assault the Amorites in the mountain, (ver. 40.) After which they being discomfited, he permitted them to stay some time here to bemoan themselves. But how long, is not certain: for sometime the cloud stayed but two days; sometime a month, sometime a year, before it stirred from the tabernacle; which was the sign of their removal, (Numb. x. 22.) And in some stations, it is likely, they stayed several years: for from the time of their removal

from Kadesh-barnea, till they came to Mount Hor, which was thirty-seven years, we find but nineteen stations. (See Numb. xxxiii. 18—37.)

According to the days that ye abode there.] Some expound it, As long as they did in all the rest of their stations, *i. e.* nineteen years, as the Jews compute in Seder Olam. But, as the learned Dr. Lightfoot thinks, it signifies, *as long as they did at Mount Sinai:* and so they stayed near a whole year, as they had done at Sinai. But the most simple explication seems to be, that they tarried here so long after this, as they had done before it, at least forty days; which was the time the spies spent in searching out the land. Though there is no necessity to confine it to that number, but simply to interpret it, that *as they stayed there many days before this mutiny, so they did as many after it.*

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND we turned,* &c.] From the borders of the land of Canaan, to go southward, till they came to the very shore of the Red Sea. Which, as David Chytræus computes it, was thirty German miles from Kadesh-barnea.

As the Lord spake unto me.] According to the command formerly mentioned, Numb. xiv. 25.

And we compassed Mount Seir.] The mountainous country of Edom; whereof Mount Seir was but a part. For when they came to Ezion-Gaber, which was upon the Red Sea, they were still in the country of Edom, (1 Kings ix. 26. 2 Chron. viii. 17.) For it stretched a long way; from the confines of Canaan, unto Elath and Ezion-Gaber, on the Red Sea.

Many days.] Some think that they were marching to and fro along the borders of this country, all the time they spent from this removal, till they returned to go towards Canaan again. So that by *many days,* they understand the whole thirty-eight years which passed between their departure from Kadesh-barnea till they came over the brook Zered, (ver. 14.) For when they were at Ezion-Gaber (which was farthest from Canaan), they were, as I said, upon the borders of Edom: and so they were when they came back again, seven-and-thirty years after at Mount Hor, (Numb. xx. 23. xxi. 4.) But this must not be understood, as if all the stations mentioned Numb. xxxiii. after they left Kadesh-barnea till they came hither again, were near to the country of Edom: some of them might be remote, though they all lay in that wilderness, which reached from one end of Idumea to the other.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord spake unto me, saying.*] This was in the end of the thirty-ninth year after their coming out of Egypt; when they had spent thirty-seven years going to and fro since their departure from Kadesh-barnea. In all which time he gives us no account what passed, either in the foregoing book, or in this: but only sets down the places of their abode, as I observed in the thirty-third of Numbers.

Ver. 3. *Ye have compassed this mountain long enough.*] *i. e.* The mountainous country of Edom, mentioned ver. 1.

Turn ye northward.] From Ezion-Gaber, which was in the south, towards the north, that is, directly towards the land of Canaan.

Ver. 4. *And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir.*] For they went from Ezion-Gaber to Kadesh, (Numb. xx. 1.) and from thence to Mount Hor, (ver. 22. which was in the edge of the land of Edom, Numb. xxxiii. 37.) and from thence they travelled to compass the land of Edom, (xxi. 4.) *i. e.* the eastern quarter of it. So that though they did not pass *through* the coast of Edom, as we translate it, yet they passed *by* it, and very near unto it; as the particle *beth* frequently signifies, (Gen. xxxvii. 13. Josh. v. 13. 1 Sam. xxix. 1.) Though they may be truly said to *pass through their coast,* if thereby we understand *their border,* or the confines of their country.

And they shall be afraid of you.] Lest, wanting a settlement, the Israelites should seize upon their country. Accordingly we find, they raised all the force they could make to oppose them, Numb. xx. 20.

Take ye good heed to yourselves therefore.] Let not that encourage you to assault them.

Ver. 5. *Meddle not with them.*] Make not the least attempt upon them.

For I will not give you of their land; no, not so much as a foot-breadth.] *i. e.* Not the smallest portion.

Because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.] So Joshua saith expressly, Josh. xxiv. 4. wherein he made good the blessing of Isaac, (Gen. xxvii. 39.)

Ver. 6. *Ye shall buy meat of them for money, that ye may eat,* &c.] If you have a mind to any provision that their country affords, you shall not take it, but purchase it; as they did their very water, (ver. 29.) which was a scarce thing in those dry countries. And so the Israelites offered to do, when they treated with them about a passage through their country, (Numb. xx. 19.)

Ver. 7. *For the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand.*] Or, *though the Lord hath blessed thee,* &c. that is, though there is no need of it, God having abundantly provided you with all things necessary. But if we follow our translation, the sense is plain: *You have wherewith to buy of them what you need or desire; therefore do not take it away by force.*

He knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness.] Hath directed and prospered thee (as the world *knoweth* signifies in many places, Psal. i. 6. xxxi. 7.) in thy travels through a dangerous wilderness.

These forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee; thou hast lacked nothing.] He had mercifully provided for them so constantly, that he let them want nothing necessary for their support. This was the sum of the argument why they should not molest the Edomites, nor take any thing by stealth from them, because they were in no need; and God hath given that country to the children of Esau, as he intended to give Canaan to the Israelites.

Their being in the wilderness forty years, is mentioned also viii. 2. xxix. 5. besides other places of Scripture. For, from the fifteenth day of the first month, in which their fathers came out of Egypt, (Numb. xxxiii. 5.) to the tenth day of the same month in which they went over Jordan into Canaan, (Josh. iv. 19.) there were but five days wanting of complete forty years. I cannot but here note also, that this is one of those places wherein Onkelos mentions the Memra, *i. e.* Word of Jehovah, which can signify nothing but a Divine person: for thus he translates these

words, *The Word of the Lord thy God hath been thy helper; thou hast not wanted any thing.*

Ver. 8. *And when we had passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, through the way of the plain.*] *i. e.* Through the wilderness of Zin.

From Elath, and from Ezion-Gaber.] Two places upon the Red Sea; the last of which [Ezion-Gaber] signifies as much as the spine, or backbone of a man. So called, because there were great ragged rocks in that port (as Bochart observes), like those at Dyrrachium in Macedonia; which had its name also from thence, (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 44.)

We turned.] After they were denied passage through their country, and had gone through those stations mentioned Numb. xxxiii. 41, 42, &c.

And passed by the wilderness of Moab.] See Numb. xxi. 11. Going by the east side of their country, (Judg. xi. 18.)

Ver. 9. *And the Lord said unto me, Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle.*] He would not have them force their way through his country; because the king of Moab refused them a passage, as the king of Edom had done, (Judg. xi. 17.) For their country now was but small, since Sihon king of the Amorites had taken from them all the best of it, which lay between Arnon and Jabbok; of which the Israelites had possessed themselves by the conquest of Sihon. So that they had only that portion remaining which lay upon the Dead Sea; which David, in aftertimes, subdued.

For I will not give thee of their land for a possession.] No more than of Edom, (ver. 5.)

Because I have given Ar.] It is likely the capital city gave name to the whole country about it. At least Ar (which was the chief city of Moab, Numb. xxi. 15. 28.) is put here for all the land of Moab; as Mount Seir for all the land of Edom, (ver. 1.)

Unto the children of Lot for a possession.] Though the Moabites were now a wicked people; yet for their pious ancestor's sake, from whom they were descended, God would not have them dispossessed.

Ver. 10. *And the Emims dwelt there in time past,* &c.] A terrible people, as the very name imports, both for their number, and for their strength, being of a large size, like Anakims. (See Gen. xiv. 5.)

Ver. 11. *Which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims,* &c.] Which seems to have been their name; or else Rephaim: but to distinguish them from others of that name in Canaan, the Moabites called them Emims.

Ver. 12. *The Horims also dwelt in Seir before time.*] They were the ancient inhabitants of Mount Seir; as the Emims were of the country of Moab, (Gen. xiv. 6. xxxvi. 20.)

But the children of Esau succeeded them.] Planted themselves in that mountain.

When they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their land.] When the children of Esau expelled the Horites, or the children of Lot the Emims, is no where recorded; nor who were their leaders in these expeditions. But they seem to be here remembered, as an encouragement to the Israelites to hope that they might drive out the inhabitants of Canaan (who were not stronger than these), as they had already driven the Amorites out of the country of Sihon, as it here follows.

As Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the Lord gave unto them.] Some have argued from hence, that this book was not written by Moses, but by somebody else, after they had got possession of the land of Canaan. But it is manifest, this may relate to what they had done already in dispossessing Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, of their country: which, it is expressly said, Moses had given for a possession to the tribe of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh; and that by God's direction, Numb. xxxii. 33. xxxiv. 14, 15. and in this book, xxix. 8. This hath been observed by many; particularly by Huetius, in his Demonstratio Evangelica, propos. iv. cap. 14. n. 15.

Ver. 13. *Now rise up, said I, and get you over the brook Zered,* &c.] Which elsewhere we translate *the valley of Zered.* (See Numb. xxi. 12.)

Ver. 14. *And the space in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we came over the brook Zered, was thirty-eight years.*] For it is evident, by the story in Numbers, that they came to Kadesh-barnea about the fourth month of the second year after they came out of Egypt. (See upon Numb. xii. 16.) And if we suppose that they removed from hence in the seventh or eighth month of that year, it is certain that they could not come to this brook till the seventh or eighth month of the fortieth year. For Aaron died at Mount Hor on the first day of the fifth month of this year; and we must allow two or three months time, for all that followed between that and this, *viz.* the conquest of king Arad, and of Sihon, and Og, &c.

Until all the generation of the men of war.] So they were called, who were above twenty years old, (Numb. i. 3.)

Were wasted out from among the people.] Utterly consumed, so that not one of them was left, (Numb. xxvi. 64, 65.)

As the Lord sware unto them.] See Numb. xiv. 28, 29.

Ver. 15. *For indeed the hand of the Lord was against them, to destroy them from among the host.*] Some of them, it is likely, died a natural death; but many of them might, in the course of nature, have lived longer, if God had not several ways cut them off before their time.

Until they were consumed.] By one plague or other, which God sent among them: so that a great deal of their time, in the thirty-eight years beforementioned, was spent, it is likely, in burying and mourning for their dead.

Ver. 16, 17. *So it came to pass, when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people, that the Lord spake unto me, saying.*] This was spoken, it is probable, just as they passed over the brook Zered, or in their next station, at Dibon-Gad, (Numb. xxxiii. 45.)

Ver. 18. *Thou art to pass through Ar, the coast of Moab, this day.*] Or rather, to *pass by* the border of Moab: for they were not permitted to come into their country, ver. 9. (See upon ver. 4.)

Ver. 19. *And when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon.*] As they did after the conquest of Sihon king of the Amorites; whose country bordered upon the Ammonites, (Numb. xxi. 13. 24.)

Distress them not, neither meddle with them.] The same command with that about the Edomites and Moabites, (ver. 5. 9.)

For I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon any possession.] As he had said before of the land of Moab, (ver. 9.)

Because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession.] To the descendants of his youngest son; as he had done the country of Moab to the children of the eldest.

Ver. 20. *And that also was accounted a land of giants,* &c.] Was called the country of giants, or Rephaim: for people so called inhabited it.

And the Ammonites called them Zamzummims.] Changed their names, it is probable, from Zuzims, (see Gen. xiv. 5.) as they were called before, into Zamzummims. But why they were called either by the one name or the other, it is but conjectured. Some conceive they were called Zuzims from their swiftness, or nimble running, which, in warriors, was a quality always highly valued; and Zamzummims from their abominable wickedness, or their craft and cunning in doing mischief.

Ver. 21. *A people great, and many, and tall as the Anakims.*] The same description which he gave of the Emims, ver. 10.

But the Lord destroyed them before them.] *i. e.* Before the Ammonites; who expelled them out of their country, and it is like cut off the most of them.

And they succeeded them, and dwelt in their land.] This is so often repeated, to possess the minds of the Israelites with a sense of God's providence, which rules every where; displacing one people, and settling another in their stead; and fixing their bounds also, which they shall not pass without his leave.

Ver. 22. *As he did to the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, when he destroyed the Horites from before them,* &c.] He repeats this (which he had said before, ver. 12.) because it was a fresher instance of God's disposal of countries unto what people he pleases; and nearly touched the Israelites, because they were their brethren.

Ver. 23. *And the Avims which dwelt in Hazerim, even unto Azzah.*] Unto which he adds an instance, which seems to be elder than any of the former, concerning a people called Avims; who inhabited some part of the land of Canaan, whither they were going. For though we do not read of Hazerim in any other place, yet Azzah, *i. e.* Gaza, was in the country of the Philistines; who expelled these Avims. And David Chytræus thinks that Hazerim was a town afterward in the tribe of Judah, called Hazagaddah, Josh. xv. 27.

The Caphtorim which came out of Caphtor.] That is, some people of Cappadocia; who were near of kin to the Philistines. (See Gen. x. 14.)

Destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.] Concerning which, see in the place abovenamed. Unto which I shall only add, that the Avims being expelled out of Canaan by the Caphtorims, went, it is very probable, over Euphrates and settled there; till the king of Assyria brought some of them back again, to plant the country of Samaria; 2 Kings xvii. 31. where we translate this word Avites. (See Bochart, in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 36.)

Ver. 24. *Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon.*] See Numb. xxi. 13, 14.

Behold, I have given unto thy hand Sihon king of Heshbon, and his land, &c.] You yourselves shall do to him, what your brethren the children of Esau did to the Horites, and the Moabites to the Emims, and the children of Ammon to the Zamzummims, and the Caphtorims to the Avims. By which their faith might still be more confirmed, that the people of Canaan, though never so mighty, should not be able to stand before them.

Ver. 25. *This day will I begin to put the dread of thee, and the fear of thee, upon the nations that are under the whole heaven.*] Especially upon the Canaanites, who were struck, no doubt, with terror by this conquest, as they had been by all that befel the Egyptians, (Josh. ii. 10, 11.)

Who shall hear the report of thee.] This explains what he means by the hyperbolical expression beforegoing, *the nations under the whole heaven;* that is, as many as shall hear of these things.

And shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.] As women in travail are.

Ver. 26. *And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth.*] There is a city of this name mentioned by Joshua, xiii. 18. from whence this wilderness had its denomination. Some take it to be the same with that called Jeshimon, Numb. xxi. 20.

Unto Sihon, king of Heshbon, with words of peace.] A friendly message, desiring there might be no quarrel between him and the Israelites, who desired nothing but the common offices of humanity.

Ver. 27. *Let me pass through thy land.*] Which was the direct way to the fords of Jordan.

I will go along by the highway.] Not turning into the fields or vineyards, as it is expressed Numb. xxi. 22. In the Hebrew the word is doubled, *bederech, bederech, by the way, by the way:* which seems to be a vehement affirmation, to assure them they would not stir out of the highway.

I will neither turn unto the right hand, nor to the left.] Not step aside out of the common road (called the king's highway), which was free for all people.

Ver. 28. *Thou shalt sell me meat for money, that I may eat,* &c.] They offered to pay for whatsoever they wanted; which is included in meat and drink.

Only I will pass through on my feet.] Barely have a passage through his country.

Ver. 29. *As the children of Esau which dwelt in Seir, and the Moabites which dwelt in Ar, did unto me.*] He doth not mean that they granted Israel a passage through their country; but that they did not deny to sell them meat and drink for their money, as they passed by their coasts.

Until I pass over Jordan, unto the land which the Lord our God giveth us.] This was said to move Sihon to consent to their desire, by letting him understand they intended nothing against his country; being secure of a settlement in the land of Canaan, unto which they prayed him to let them pass quietly.

Ver. 30. *But Sihon, king of Heshbon, would not let us pass by him.*] Refused to agree to this reasonable demand.

For the Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, &c.] Gave him over to his own inflexible humour, which was set upon violent courses; from which God did not divert him (because he intended to destroy him), but rather ordered things so, that his mind should be enraged and disturbed, and so unable to consider things prudently, and discern what belonged to his peace; which is the utmost that can be meant by *hardening* his spirit, and making his heart *obstinate.* Which, as it is a sin, cannot be ascribed unto God; but, as it is a punishment, might justly be inflicted by him upon Sihon for his former sins.

Ver. 31. *And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land.*] This was said when Moses saw him coming out to battle against them (as it here follows in the next verse); at which time he is said to *begin to give* them his country, because he had absolutely resolved it; and, it is probable, so confounded his forces, that they were as good as already conquered.

Before thee.] Into their power; that they might go into it at their pleasure.

Begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit his land.] In the same sense he bids Moses *begin to possess; i. e.* prepare to take possession of it. (See iii. 2.)

Ver. 32. *Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, to fight at Jahaz.*] See Numb. xxi. 23.

Ver. 33. *And the Lord our God delivered him before us; and we smote him, and his sons, and all his people.*] They won the field, and killed him, his sons, and all that came out to fight with them. And R. Solomon saith his sons were like himself, very great men.

Ver. 34. *And we took all his cities at that time.*] After this victory they took his whole country, as is related Numb. xii. 24, 25. and the cities belonging to it are mentioned xxxii. 34, 35, &c.

And utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city; we left none to remain.] They being part of those wicked people the Amorites; whom God had condemned to utter destruction: for the Amorites came out of Canaan, and took this country from the Moabites and the children of Ammon.

Ver. 35. *Only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves,* &c.] They had the Divine warrant for this, no doubt; as they had for the extirpation of the people.

Ver. 36. *From Aroer, which is by the brink of the river Arnon.*] This river divided Moab from the kingdom of Sihon, (Numb. xxi. 13. 24.) upon which the city of Aroer stood; which was now in the possession of Sihon, though belonging formerly to the Moabites.

And from this city that is by the river.] This some take to be the city Ar, (Numb. xxi. 15.) But I think these words should rather be translated, *even the city in the river;* meaning Aroer still, as a remarkable place, being encompassed with the river, (Josh. xii. 2.) For Ar, I think, was never in the possession of the Amorites, being the capital city of Moab.

Even unto Gilead.] For half of Gilead belonged to the country of Sihon, (Josh. xii. 2.) and was given to the tribe of Gad, (Josh. xv. 2.) And the other half belonged to the kingdom of Og, (as we read in the same place, Josh. xii. 5.) and was given to the half tribe of Manasseh, (Josh. xiii. 31.)

Ver. 37. *Only unto the land of the children of Ammon thou camest not.*] That is, into no part of their country, which was then in their possession: but all that the Amorites had taken from them was given to the Gadites, (Josh. xiii. 25.)

Nor unto any place in the river Jabbok.] To no place beyond that river, which was the border of the children of Ammon, (Numb. xxi. 24. Josh. xii. 2.)

Nor into the cities of the mountains.] Much less into the mountainous parts of the country of the Ammonites.

Nor unto whatsoever the Lord our God forbade us.] The words in the Hebrew are, *And all whatsoever the Lord our God commanded us, i. e.* not to meddle withal.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *THEN we turned, and went up by the way of Bashan; and Og the king of Bashan came out against us,* &c.] See Numb. xxi. 33. where there are the very same words.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord said unto me, Fear him not: for I will deliver,* &c.] The same words in Numb. xxi. 34. Only there he saith, *I have delivered him into thy hand;* that is, resolved to do it. Which may interpret what is said in the foregoing chapter of this book, ver. 31. concerning Sihon.

Ver. 3. *So the Lord our God delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan,* &c.] See Numb. xxi. 35.

Ver. 4. *And we took all his cities at that time, all the cities,* &c. *threescore cities.*] See upon Numb. xxxii. 41.

All the region of Argob.] A small province lying between Jordan and the mountains of Gilead, a little above the sea of Tiberias: which region was afterward called Trachonitis, from the asperity of the mountains.

The kingdom of Og in Bashan.] Belonging to his kingdom in Bashan, (ver. 13. and 1 Kings iv. 13.)

Ver. 5. *All these cities were fenced with high walls, gates, and bars,* &c.] So they are described 1 Kings iv. 13.

Ver. 6. *And we utterly destroyed them,* &c.] For they were Amorites, and therefore under the curse of God; being part of the seven nations of Canaan, devotive to destruction. (See ii. 34.)

Ver. 7. *But all the cattle, and the spoil of the cities, we took for a prey to ourselves.*] As they had done before, when they destroyed Sihon and his people, (ii. 35.)

Ver. 8. *And we took at that time, out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites, the land which was on this side Jordan.*] Which was given to the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, (ver. 12, 13.) If men were not blinded with prejudice, they could not but see from hence, that the word *beeber,* in the first verse of this book, is rightly translated *on this side:* for beyond Jordan (as they would have it signify) in the land of Canaan, these two kings had no possessions; nor did Moses make any conquest there.

From the river of Arnon unto Hermon.] This river was the bounds of their country on the south; and Hermon, which was one of the mountains of Gilead (where it joins to Libanus), was their bound on the north.

Ver. 9. *Which Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion.*] And so it is called in Psal. xxix. 6. and joined with Lebanon: for it was as much a part of Libanus as of Gilead, these two mountains there meeting together. Whence Jeremiah calls Gilead the head of Lebanon, (xxii. 6.) because Libanus begins where Gilead ends.

And the Amorites call it Shenir.] And so it is called Ezek. xxvii. 5. and had this name, as Bochart conjectures, from the multitude of wild cats which were in this mountain: for the Arabians called that creature *sinaur* or *sinar.* (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 14.)

Ver. 10. *All the cities of the plain.*] All the flat country which the LXX. thought was called *Misor;* for they retain here that Hebrew word.

And all Gilead.] *i. e.* All that part of it which belonged to him; which was but half, as I observed before, ii. 36.

And all Bashan.] That part of his country which was properly and peculiarly called Bashan; which being the

most rich and fertile (as the word signifies), gave denomination to his whole kingdom.

Unto Shalchah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.] The former of these is mentioned Josh. xiii. 11. (just as it is here) as the bounds of Bashan towards Mount Hermon, or Lebanon: so Chytræus, "A town in Bashan in the mountains of Libanus near to Machati." And Edrei was the place where they fought with Og, and overthrew him, (Numb. xxi. 23.)

Ver. 11. *For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the giants.*] Or of the Rephaim, a very ancient people in that country, (Gen. xiv. 5.) who were either descended from the Amorites, or mingled with them: and Og was the very last of them; so that he and his people being destroyed, none of them remained.

Behold, his bedstead is a bedstead of iron.] Which was no unusual thing in ancient days, though far later than this. For Thucydides saith, that when the Thebans took Plateæ, they made beds of the brass and iron they found there; which they dedicated to Juno. And beds of silver and gold are mentioned by divers authors, as Huetius observes in his Demonstr. Evangel. propos. iv. cap. 14. n. 7.

Is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon?] This is thought by some to be a considerable objection against Moses being the author of this book: for how should this bedstead, say they, come to the children of Ammon in his days? No doubt they imagine it would have remained in Bashan whilst Og lived: though, in length of time, it might be carried into the country of the Ammonites: as, if Og, fearing the worst, might not send his bed and his best furniture unto the Ammonites, knowing they would be safe among them, because the Israelites were forbid to make war upon them. Or Moses, having conquered the country, and kept all the spoil, (ver. 7.) might not sell this, among other goods, to the children of Ammon, who preserved it in their capital city. Nobody can see an unreasonableness in either of these suppositions of the same Huetius. Nor do I see how the conjecture of another learned person (Andræas Masius, upon the twelfth of Joshua) can be confuted; which is, that the Ammonites drove out that monstrous sort of people, mentioned ii. 21. Og might possibly escape (and so is said here to be left of the remnant of the giants), who, flying hither to the Amorites, was made their king, because of his goodly presence and great valour. But the Ammonites kept his bedstead, and shewed it as a monument of that illustrious victory which they got over the Rephaim, or as they called them the Zamzummims, in that country.

Nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits was the breadth thereof.] This is mentioned, to shew of what a vast stature Og was: for bedsteads being, according to the common custom, made a third part longer than the persons that lie in them, he was six cubits high, as Maimonides computes, that is, as high again as any other man, (More Nevochim, par. ii. cap. 47.) which is very sober discourse, in comparison with what other Jews say of him. (See Schickard, in his Bechinah Happeruschim, p. 120.)

After the cubit of a man.] According to the cubit of ordinary men, saith the same Maimonides (which is a little more than half a yard), not of Og beforementioned. But what need was there, say former objectors, to mention this? since the Israelites saw Og lie dead before them on the ground, and needed not to be told by Moses how tall he was? and therefore they conclude this was written by somebody else, in aftertimes. As if Moses did not write for the benefit of those that come after, as well as for the present generation. Who, that they might be satisfied what a vast man Og was, he left it upon record how large his bedstead was, and where it might be seen; whereby they may judge of his stature. Besides, there were in the present generation great numbers of children, old men, women, and servants, who could not go to see Og lie at length upon the field: but by this means were instructed from what a terrible enemy God had delivered them.

They that question the truth of this relation, may read, if they be able, what the learned Huetius hath at large discoursed concerning men of a portentous bigness in all countries, (in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 3.) of which no man can doubt, who is not resolved to disbelieve all the world. In his Demonstratio Evangelica also he observes, that Homer makes Tityon, when he was dead, to have lain stretched out upon (not nine cubits, but) nine acres of ground:

——— ἐπ' ἐννέα κεῖτο πέλεθρα.

Which hyperbole may excuse the Jewish rabbins, when they say that Og was nine cubits long when he lay in his cradle. (See propos. iv. cap. 8. n. 4.)

Ver. 12. *And this land, which we possessed at that time, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon.*] See ii. 36.

And half Mount Gilead, and the cities thereof, gave I unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites.] See Numb. xxxii. 34, 35, &c. but especially Josh. xiii. 15, &c. where he distinctly relates what portion of this country was given to the Reubenites; and ver. 23, 24, &c. what was given to the Gadites. And it appears, that none of Gilead belonged to the Reubenites; but the Gadites had one half of it, as the Manassites had the other.

Ver. 13. *And the rest of Gilead.*] Which was not given to the Gadites.

And all Bashan, being the kingdom of Og.] That is, all that was taken from Og, of which he was king.

Gave I unto the half tribe of Manasseh; all the region of Argob, with all Bashan.] It is repeated again, lest any one should think that Argob, which was a distinct province in that kingdom, was not given to them by this grant. (See ver. 4.)

Which was called the land of giants.] Where the Rephaims formerly inhabited; of whom Og was the last. (See Gen. xiv. 5. compared with xv. 20. Josh. xiii. 12.)

Ver. 14. *Jair, the son of Manasseh, took all the country of Argob.*] This is one reason why he gave this country to them. (See Numb. xxxii. 41.)

Unto the coasts of Geshuri and Maachathi.] We had no mention of these places before; which were in the northern part of this country, as appears from Josh. xii. 4, 5. xiii. 11. But the people of these places they could not expel, (Josh. xiii. 13.)

And called them after his own name.] Numb. xxxii. 4.

Unto this day.] From hence, likewise, cavils are raised against Moses being the author of this book: when the most that can be concluded from hence is, that, upon the revising of these books by Ezra, he put in these words to certify the reader, that still they retained this name; as somebody, no doubt, added the history of Moses's death

at the end of this book. This the greatest defenders of the authority of these books, as written by Moses himself, make no scruple to allow; particularly Huetius, and since him Hermannus Witzius, in his Miscellanea Sacra, lib. i. cap. 14. sect. 47. But there is no necessity to yield so much; for Moses might say this himself, though it was not long before he wrote this book. For so the holy writers do sometimes mention places, which had their name but newly given them, from a particular fact, that posterity might know the original of it. (See Acts i. 19.)

Ver. 15. *And I gave Gilead.*] All that was not possessed by the Gadites.

Unto Machir.] To the posterity of Machir, (Numb. xxxii. 40.)

Ver. 16. *And unto the Reubenites, and unto the Gadites.*] Here is a more exact description of that part of the country, which was given to the other two tribes.

I gave from Gilead.] Half of which, as I observed, was given to the Gadites, (ver. 12.)

Even unto the river Arnon.] Which was the bounds of the country towards Moab. (See ii. 36.)

Half the valley.] The same word in the Hebrew language, signifies both a *valley*, and a *brook* or *river:* and being translated in the foregoing words, *the river*, it should be so here likewise, *half the river;* that is, to the middle of the river Arnon; by which the bounds of their country are most exactly set. And thus not only the LXX. and the Vulgar, but Onkelos also translates it, *the middle of the torrent;* yea, we ourselves also in the twelfth of Josh. ii. where there are the same words, which in the Hebrew run thus, *unto the river Arnon, the midst of the river:* where the city of Aroer stood, encompassed by the river, as I observed in the foregoing chapter, ver. 36.

And the border.] Something is understood, *viz. went* (as the phrase is Josh. xv. 6, 7, &c.) or *reached*, or some such word. Or the meaning must be, *the country bordering upon that river.*

Even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon.] This river was the other boundary of the country.

Ver. 17. *The plain also, and Jordan.*] The flat country towards the river Jordan: which was the western bounds of this country of Sihon; as the river Arnon was the southern, and the river Jabbok the northern; the country of the children of Ammon being on the east.

And the coast thereof, from Cinnereth.] The word *thereof* is not in the Hebrew: therefore these words may be better rendered *the coast from Cinnereth.* Called *the Sea of Cinnereth*, Josh. xii. 3. xiii. 27. it lying upon a country and a city called by that name, (Josh. xi. 2. xix. 35.) which gave the name to this sea, called in the New Testament, *the Sea of Galilee*, and *the Sea of Genesareth*, and at last *the Sea of Tiberias;* in honour of the emperor Tiberius. (See upon Numb. xxxiv. 11.)

Even unto the sea of the plain, even the Salt Sea.] The Dead Sea, as it is called in other places; which, before the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, had been a most pleasant plain.

Under Ashdoth-Pisgah.] The name of a city in this country, (Josh. xiii. 20.)

Eastward.] Which lay east of the Salt Sea and Jordan; which was the western bounds, as I said, of this country.

Ver. 18. *And I commanded you at that time.*] That is, he gave this charge to the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh beforementioned.

The Lord your God hath given you this land to possess it, &c.] According to their own desire: but on condition they should help their brethren to conquer the land of Canaan. (See Numb. xxxii. 20—22.)

Ver. 19. *But your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle (for I know you have much cattle), shall abide in your cities which I have given you.*] See Numb. xxxii. 16. 24. 26.

Ver. 20. *Until the Lord have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you,* &c.] Brought them to a settlement in the land of Canaan, and given them a peaceable possession of it. After which, we read that Joshua dismissed these tribes, and sent them to their wives and children, Josh. xxii. 4.

Ver. 21. *And I commanded Joshua at that time.*] About that time, when by God's order he appointed Joshua to be his successor, and took him to be his associate in the government, (Numb. xxvii. 18, &c.)

Thine eyes have seen all that the Lord your God hath done unto these two kings: so shall the Lord do unto all the kingdoms whither thou passest.] This seems to be the preface to the charge, which by God's command he gave to Joshua at that time, (Numb. xxvii. 19. 23.)

Ver. 22. *Ye shall not fear them; for the Lord your God fighteth for you.*] This is part of the charge itself; which he had heard him give all the people eight-and-thirty years ago, (i. 21. 29, 30.)

Ver. 23. *And I besought the Lord at that time, saying.*] Being told by God at the same time (Numb. xxvii. 12, 13.) that he should shortly die, and only see the land of Canaan, but not enter into it, Moses made his humble supplication to God that he would not execute the sentence which he had denounced against him. For the word *besought* signifies supplication to one that is offended.

Ver. 24. *O Lord God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand.*] In subduing the two kings of the Amorites.

For what god is there in heaven, or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?] He speaks according to the language of those times, when men worshipped many gods, of several sorts: none of which, he acknowledges, were able to bring to pass such things as the Lord had done.

Ver. 25. *I pray thee let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan.*] To *see* is here to enjoy it, as the rest of the Israelites were to do: for God bade him go up into a mountain and behold it; but threatened he should not enter into it. Which threatening he might well think was reversible, as others had been against the people of Israel upon his prayer for them, though they had more highly offended the Divine Majesty than he had done. For though he doubted at the first, especially when he saw no water come out of the rock at the first stroke; yet he presently recovered himself, and smote it the second time, believing God would relieve them.

That goodly mountain.] Most think that he desired to go so far into it, as to see the place where God intended to settle his Divine presence: which proved to be Mount Moriah. But nothing was known of this, a long time after; unless we suppose it was revealed unto him, that

where Abraham offered Isaac, there the Lord would dwell. It seems to me, that he means that goodly country full of noble mountains: for thus the word *mountain* is often used, particularly Numb. xiii. 29. where the spies say the "Amorites dwell in the mountain," *i.e.* in that mountainous part of Canaan.

And Lebanon.] He desired to go through the whole country, as far as Lebanon; which was the most northerly part of it (famous for goodly cedars), as the mountain before spoken of was in the south of Canaan.

Ver. 26. *But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes.*] See i. 37.

And would not hear me.] Refused to grant my petition.

And the Lord said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter.] This suggests that Moses renewed his petition, after the first denial; and more earnestly begged this favour of God: which he could not obtain; but was enjoined silence. This argues great displeasure; and is mentioned by him as an admonition to the Israelites, to be fearful to offend the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 27. *Get thee up to the top of Pisgah.*] See what I have noted upon Numb. xxvii. 12.

And lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, &c.] Take a full view of the country in all the quarters of it; which might be seen from the top of this mountain, which was called Nebo. (See xxxiv. 1—3.)

Ver. 28. *But charge Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him,* &c.] Bid him not doubt that I will bring my people thither under his conduct, though I deny thee entrance into it.

Ver. 29. *So we abode in the valley over against Beth-Peor.*] It is likely that there was a temple built to Baal-Peor, which fronted this valley; for so Beth signifies, a house or temple of Peor. Which gave the name to a city wherein it stood; which was part of the inheritance of the Reubenites, (Josh. xiii. 20.) In this valley Moses was buried, xxxiv. 6. where he made this most excellent exhortation to all the people.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *NOW therefore hearken, O Israel.*] Having commemorated several benefits which God had bestowed upon them, since their coming out of Egypt, and the giving of the law at Mount Sinai, with several severe punishments which he had inflicted on them for their disobedience to it, Moses proceeds now to exhort them earnestly to the observance of it.

Unto the statutes.] These seem to be such laws as concerned the worship of God.

And the judgments.] And then these were such as concerned their dealings one with another. Which two words comprehend all that is signified by *testimonies* and *precepts* also, in other places.

Which I teach you, for to do them.] Which he was about to set before them; and press upon their practice.

That ye may live, and go in, and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you.] Not perish as their forefathers had done in their rebellion; but be happy, and enjoy what God had promised, and was ready now to bestow upon them.

Ver. 2. *Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it.*] This is thought by some to signify, that they should not make the least alteration in the laws he had given them, about the rites of Divine worship, and abstinence from several meats, and such-like things; which were distinctive marks, whereby they were separated from other nations to be a peculiar people to him. Thus Chaskuni interprets these words, *Thou shalt not add fear, upon the fear of the blessed God.* That is, any other worship to the Divine worship prescribed by these laws, nor diminish that worship: which interpretation seems to be warranted, by what follows, *Thy eyes have seen what the Lord thy God did, because of Baal-Peor.* But in the words beforegoing (which introduce these), *judgments* being mentioned as well as *statutes*, there must be a larger sense of this injunction, which relates to all the laws of God: and the meaning seems to be, Ye shall not transgress any of these precepts, either by doing any thing contrary to them, which was *to add;* or omitting any thing which they required, which was to *diminish.* Thus Grotius interprets it, upon 2 Cor. xi. 24. "Addere ad legem est facere quod lex vetat, diminuere est omittere quod lex jubet." But which way soever we take it, nothing is more certain than that this prohibition preserved these books from any alteration, since the time they were written: for the whole body of the people acknowledging their Divine authority, none of them dared to change any thing, either by addition or diminution. Of which there is a wonderful instance in the people that came out of Assyria (in the room of the Israelites, who were transported thither), to inhabit the country of Samaria; who receiving this law, their posterity have kept it all along to this day, as uncorrupted, as the Jews themselves have done; although they were their mortal enemies, and have been exposed to all the changes and revolutions that can befal a nation during the interval of two thousand and four hundred years. Thus the most learned Dr. Alix observes, in his Reflections upon the Four last Books of Moses, p. 144. And I do not see, why the perfection of the Scripture, without the oral law of the Jews, should not be thought to be established by these words, as another learned person (J. Wagenseil) understands them, in his Confut. Carminis Lipmanni, p. 585. Yet, as the forenamed Chaskuni notes, it does not seem reasonable to conclude from hence, that they were prohibited to add any constitutions as a hedge and fence to the law; or as an explication of it, when the sense was doubtful. (See Mr. Thorndike, in his Rites of the Church in a Christian State, p. 180, &c.)

That ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you.] This justifies the explication I gave of the foregoing words, as respecting all God's laws; and xii. 32. makes it more plain. And, indeed, God being their lawgiver, it was the highest presumption to make any alteration in any of his laws.

Ver. 3. *Your eyes have seen what the Lord did, because of Baal-Peor,* &c.] How he cut off twenty-four thousand by a plague, and by the hand of justice, who had been guilty of idolatry by the enticements of the Midianitish women, (Numb. xxv. 5. 9.) Which seems to be a reason, why they should take a special care about the worship of God; that nothing was done contrary to the laws he had ordained concerning it.

For all the men that followed Baal-Peor, the Lord thy God hath destroyed them from among you.] The judges put to death all those that they knew to be guilty; and the hand of God found out all the rest: so that there was not a man of them left, who was not swept away by the pestilence.

Ver. 4. *But ye that did cleave unto the Lord.*] Did not depart from this worship, but bewailed the apostacy of some of their brethren, (Numb. xxv. 6.)

Are alive every one of you this day.] A singular providence watched over them, to preserve them in such good health, that not one in so many thousands was dead since that time. Nor in the war with the Midianites, wherein they slew all the males, did they lose so much as one man, (Numb. xxxi. 7. 49.)

Ver. 5. *Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments.*] See ver. 1.

Even as the Lord my God commanded me.] Sincerely and uprightly, without adding any thing of myself, or diminishing any thing that he said.

That ye shall do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.] To be the rule of your life, when ye come into the land of Canaan.

Ver. 6. *Keep therefore, and do them; for this is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of all the nations.*] It is your interest to observe them, as you will soon find by experience; which will teach you, that it is not only the wisest course in itself, but will get you the reputation of being a wise people among all your neighbours.

Which shall hear of all these statutes.] There being mention before (ver. 1. 5.) of *judgments* as well as *statutes*, and here only of the latter, Abarbinel thence infers, That even those laws which depended wholly upon the will and pleasure of God, and for which they could give no reason (for such they understood by *chukkim*), would procure them very great honour, if they were carefully observed. For the nations seeing how wonderfully they prospered, would be apt to impute it to these extraordinary prescriptions which they followed. Just, saith he, as a physician, who cures desperate diseases, by some small trifling remedies (as they seem to others), is highly applauded for the profoundness of his knowledge and wisdom. But Maimonides takes this word *statutes* to comprehend all the laws of God; and undertakes to shew, that all the six hundred and thirteen precepts have a wise end in them, for the profit and benefit of those that observe them; either to beget some wholesome opinion in their mind, or to pull out some perverse one; either to institute some good order, or to take away iniquity, &c. (See More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 31.)

And say, Surely this nation is a wise and understanding people.] Who continued in safety, liberty, and prosperity, abounding with all manner of blessings, while they continued all to go up to worship one God sincerely at one place, at certain set times, as if the whole nation was but one family. All the rest of their laws, also, were admirably fitted to unite them unto God, and one to another; and consequently, to make them appear a wise people in the eyes of other nations; whose writers have not only highly magnified Moses, but their lawgivers have transcribed several of his laws into their own constitutions. This appears by the old Attic laws, and those of the twelve tables, as many learned men have observed; nay, the oracle, reported by Porphyry, in Eusebius's Præparatio Evangelica, lib. ix. cap. 10. thus extols this nation:—

Μοῦνοι Χαλδαῖοι σοφίαν λάχον ἠδ' ἄρ' Ἑβραῖοι
Αὐτὸ γένεθλον Ἄνακτα σεβαζόμενοι Θεὸν ἁγνῶς.

The Chaldeans and the Hebrews (who came from Chaldea) *are the only wise people, who worship God, the Eternal King, in a pure manner.* And the oracle of Apollo Clarius, recorded by Macrobius, lib. i. Saturnal. cap. 18. is no less remarkable:

Φράζεο τῶν πάντων ὕπατον Θεὸν, ἔμμεν Ἰαώ.

Acknowledge Jao (so they pronounced the name Jehovah) *to be the highest God of all.* For though Macrobius fancied the sun to be here called Ἰαώ, (nobody can tell why); yet Diodorus Siculus acknowledges Ἰαὼ to be the God, from whom Moses pretended to have his laws, *i. e.* Jehovah.

Ver. 7. *For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?*] Both Onkelos, and the paraphrase of Jonathan, and likewise the Jerusalem Targum, are very significant upon this place: "What people is there who have a god that approaches to them, so as the Lord our God doth to us? At whatsoever hour we cry unto him, he answers us. It is the manner of other people, to carry their gods upon their shoulders, to shew that they are near to them; when, alas! they are afar off, and cannot hear them. But the Lord our God sits on his throne on high, and hears our prayers, whatsoever time we call upon him," &c. To which may be added, that they had a symbol of God's presence continually among them, in the holy place, where he dwelt with them, and Moses, whensoever he pleased, consulted him in all difficult affairs; as their high-priest might do, with the *urim* and *thummim*, in all times to come.

Ver. 8. *And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this law which I set before you this day?*] The true greatness of a nation (it appears by this and the foregoing verse) consists in the sincere worship of God, and in the upright administration of justice. Both which were so provided for by the Divine laws among the Jews, that no nation could compare with them, or was really so great as they were: for, though their country was but small, and they were often oppressed by several cruel enemies, who desired their extirpation, yet they recovered themselves, and kept their laws in their worst condition (when commonly they best observed them): insomuch, that, as a very learned person of our own church long ago observed, after so many changes and alterations as there were in their state, from better to worse, and back again; after so many victories got by them over others, and so many captivities of their persons, and desolations of their country, as others had wrought, they continued still one and the same people, governed by the same laws, under several great and potent monarchies. The successive rise and fall of three, of which they were preserved to behold; and, in their declining state, able to stand out a great while against the fourth, the mightiest that ever was on earth, and that when this monarchy was in its full strength; this

is a plain demonstration of the truth of these words of Moses, That no nation was so great as they. (See Dr. Jackson's first book upon the Creed, chap. 21.)

Maimonides observes, that the word *zaddikim*, which we translate *righteous*, signifies as much as *equal* and *proportionate:* such, saith he, were all these laws of God; in which there was no excess, by the prescription of long pilgrimages, or severe fastings; nor any defect which might open the window to any vice, or make them careless in the practice of virtue. (More Nevochim, par. ii. cap. 39.)

Ver. 9. *Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thou hast seen,* &c.] Their only danger was, lest they should grow careless and unmindful of all the wonderful things that God had done for them: which he, therefore, exhorts them to think of frequently, and to keep in memory, and lay to heart; so that they might preserve the sense of them as long as they lived, and likewise teach all posterity to be mindful of them.

Ver. 10. *Especially the day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb.*] But above all, that memorable day, when the Lord delivered his law to them in Mount Sinai; at which the oldest of them were present, and had seen and heard what he said, and how it was delivered.

When the Lord said unto me, Gather me the people together.] Unto the foot of Mount Sinai; where they stood at such a distance from it as God prescribed, (Exod. xix. 10—13.)

And I will make them hear my words.] See Exod. xix. 9, &c. xx. 1, &c.)

That they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, &c.] For those words which they heard were pronounced in so terrible a manner, as to make them dread to offend his majesty, and to instruct their children to stand in awe of him.

Ver. 11. *And ye came near, and stood under the mountain.*] See Exod. xix. 17.

And the mountain burnt with fire.] See Exod. xix. 16. 18.

Into the midst of heaven.] Into the middle of the air, which is frequently called heaven in Scripture; as the fowls of heaven, are the fowls of the air: but whether the fire flamed up precisely into the very midst of the lower region of the air, or only a great height, is not material; either way the expression is proper enough.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire.*] See Exod. xix. 20. xx. 1. 22.

Ye heard the voice of the words.] See Exod. xx. 19.

But saw no similitude.] Though sometimes the Divine Majesty seems to have appeared in a visible shape, (Dan. vii. 9, 10.) yet, when he came to give them his law, he would not appear in the figure of a man, or any other thing, that might seem to represent him to their outward senses, or their imagination: for it had been dangerous then to manifest himself under any resemblance, when he forbade them to make any resemblance of him. They would have thought he forbade them to make any other resemblance, but that wherein he shewed himself to them; in which they would have concluded it was lawful to represent him.

Only ye heard a voice.] From hence some of the Jews would gather, that the people only heard the sound of God's words, when he spake the ten commandments; but not the distinction of the sound, so as to understand the sense of what he said. Thus Maimonides, in his More Nevochim, (par. ii. cap. 32.) Which is manifestly false, as appears from ver. 10. 13. and Exod. xx. 22. For therefore the day wherein he spake to them in Horeb was so remarkable, as never to be forgotten; because he *made them hear his words, so that they might learn to fear him,* &c. For, though he did not appear in the likeness of any thing to them, yet he vouchsafed to speak to them plainly in their own language, that they might be instructed in their duty; both which was to keep them from idolatry. He did not let them see any shape, that they might not make any image of him, to worship it, or him by it, after the manner of the heathens; but he let them hear his voice, that they might not go and worship any other's gods, which the heathens pretended spake to them.

Ver. 13. *And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments.*] These were the principal laws which they covenanted with him to observe, though afterward he added others, *after the tenor of which he made a covenant with them,* (Exod. xxxiv. 27.)

And he wrote them upon two tables of stone.] See Exod. xxiv. 12. xxxiv. 28.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord commanded me, at that time, to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither you go over to possess it.*] This doth not signify, that they themselves did not hear the *ten words* from Mount Sinai, but were taught them by Moses (as Maimonides fancies in the forenamed place), for it plainly relates to the rest of the laws, which God immediately after gave him, (Exod. xxi. xxii. xxiii.) It being their own desire, that God would speak to them no more by himself, but communicate the rest of his will by Moses, (Exod. xx. 19.) And accordingly he told the people *all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments,* which he delivered to him, (Exod. xxiv. 3.)

All this will appear more plainly from the next chapter of this book, ver. 22, &c.

It is a mere imagination of those Jews, who take the *statutes and judgments* here mentioned for their *oral law,* as Aben Ezra, R. Solomon, R. Bechai, and others do, upon this place; who say, that when God gave Moses the written law he expounded it to him: which exposition he delivered to Joshua, and he to the seventy elders, &c. so that it came down to them in a successive tradition.

Ver. 15. *Take ye therefore good heed to yourselves, (for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire.)*] He gives them a special caution about this, because the nations of the world were so prone to make images of their gods; which he expressly forbids in the second commandment. Upon this text the present Jews ground the third article of their faith, which is, that *God is incorporeal.*

Ver. 16. *Lest ye corrupt yourselves.*] By worshipping any thing but God himself alone. Unto whom they being espoused, the giving Divine worship unto any thing else, was such a corruption as adultery is in a married woman.

And make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure.] See the second commandment, Exod. xx. 3, 4.

The likeness of male or female.] The representation of God in human shape is first forbidden, because it was most common among the heathens. Therefore I cannot think this relates to the Egyptian worship, who honoured oxen as sa-

cred to Osiris, and cows as sacred to Isis. Unto which Mr. Selden thinks the LXX. had respect, when they translated these words, Ὁμοίωμα ἀρσενικοῦ καὶ θηλυκοῦ. (De Diis Syris, Syntag. i. cap. 4.)

Ver. 17. *The likeness of any beast that is on the earth,* &c.] The word *or* is to be here supplied, and in all that follows, in this manner: *Or the likeness of any beast that is on the earth; or the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air:* where *col-tzippor canaph,* which we translate, *any winged fowl,* signifies, all *birds* and *insects* that fly in the air: for in the shape of such creatures also the heathen represented their gods, or some of their qualities: for not only oxen were sacred to Apis, and rams to Jupiter Ammon, but hawks and eagles, and even beetles, to other deities.

Ver. 18. *Or the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground.*] Nothing was more common among the heathen than the worship of serpents.

Or the likeness of any fish that is in the waters.] The famous Dagon, whom the Philistines worshipped, was a fish with a human face, hands, and feet. Certain it is, the Syrians worshipped a fish, as Cicero tells us, in his third book of the Nature of the Gods, *Syri Piscem venerantur;* which Mr. Selden thinks relates to the famous goddess Atargatis; which is a word made out of the Hebrew, *addir-dag,* i. e. *magnificent,* or *potent fish.* (See De Diis Syris, Syntag. ii. cap. 2.) The Egyptians were famous in after-times for worshipping all sorts of animals; and if one could find they were so in the days of Moses, it might be assigned as the most probable reason of his cautioning the Israelites against these things so particularly, they being lately come out of Egypt.

Ver. 19. *And lest thou lift up thine eyes upon heaven.*] From hence, I believe, that common speech among the Arabians was derived, *Take heed how thou gazest on the splendour of the stars:* which is, in the first century of Arabic proverbs, set forth by Erpenius, (Prov. xxviii.) who saith he knew not what to make of it: but I take it to be a caveat against idolatry, to which the ancient Arabians were addicted.

And when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven.] The most ancient idolatry of all other seems to have been the worship of the sun, and the rest of the heavenly bodies, which began among the Chaldeans: for there is not any god, or goddess, among the ancient gentiles, but hath a respect to the *sun,* or the *moon,* as Gisbertus Cuperus hath very plainly demonstrated, in his Harpocrates, p. 87, &c. 108, &c. And a very learned man of our own hath lately said a great deal on the same subject. (See Appendix to the Antiquity of Palmyra, cap. 4. by Mr. A. Seller; and Maimon. More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 30.)

Shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them.] Drawn in, enticed, and deceived (as Onkelos, and the LXX. translate it), either by the instigation of some evil genius, or admiration of their splendour, or imitation of other nations, or a vain opinion that some divinity inhabits such illustrious bodies, or out of a sense of the benefits mankind receive by them: for the chief philosophers themselves were led by their weak reasonings into this error, as appears even by Plato, who saith, it is most just that the heaven should be worshipped with all the gods and demons, and that we should Τιμᾶν τε καὶ εὔχεσθαι διαφερόντως αὐτῷ, &c. as he speaks in his Epinomis. See Eusebius, in his Præpar. Evang. lib. xiii. cap. 18. where he shews how much better the Hebrews speak in this matter; and quotes some words of Plato, out of a work of his, not now extant, for the explication of these words of Moses. And, to make this idolatry seem more reasonable, some of the philosophers asserted the sun to be endued with understanding; and, therefore, is called by Proclus, Πυρὸς νοητοῦ βασιλεὺς, *the intellectual fire,* to distinguish it from other fires which are without understanding: and from thence, in one of the coins of Caracalla, there is over the sun, surrounded with rays, the word *Providentia.* In short, the world had been so long settled in this worship, that it was no easy matter, when the Son of God came, to root it out: for the Essenes (the best sect among the Jews) seem to have had a tang of this superstition, as Josephus represents them, lib. ii. De Bello Judaico, cap. 7. Some, indeed, excuse them, as if they only admired the sun as the most excellent work of God, which they expressed by some kind of adoration: but Josephus expressly tells us, that, early in the morning, they directed to him Πατρίους τινὰς εὐχὰς, as if they beseeched him to rise. And this stuck still in the minds of some who professed Christianity, particularly the followers of Basilides, and the Manichees, who called the sun and moon by the name of gods; and sometimes called the sun Christ, as Theodoret tells us, lib. i. cap. 26. And Epiphanius and St. Austin say the same in more places than one. No wonder, therefore, that Julian the apostate should say, that God produced, Ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ Ἥλιον Θεὸν μέγιστον πάντα ὅμοιον ἑαυτῷ, *out of himself the sun, the greatest god, in all things like unto himself:* for which he quotes Plato, in his famous oration in Praise of the Sun; where he saith, The same sun hath filled the heaven with innumerable other gods, p. 146. Ὅλος οὐρανὸς Θεῶν ἐστιν ἐξ ἡλίου πλήρης, *The whole heaven is full of gods from the sun.*

Which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.] The sense is very plain, that all nations under heaven have the benefit of the sun, moon, and stars, as well as the Jews; who were therefore to worship him alone, who is the Lord of them all, and hath made them to be ministers unto us.

This K. Solomon saw, and yet he could not stick to it, but fell into the vain fancy of the generality of the Jews, that God hath distributed the nations of the world under the government of several stars, which stars are under the government of angels; but the Jews under the government of God alone, and not subject to any planet. Which hath no foundation at all; much less can we think that God appointed the nations of the world to worship the heavenly host, lest they should be atheists, as Clemens Alexandrinus and Justin Martyr fancy from this place; unless they mean, that God for their sins delivered them up to this impiety; which several great men since have thought to be the true meaning of these words: for there are no such words found in the LXX. as they allege, Ὑμῖν δ' οὐκ οὕτως ἔδωκε Κύριος ὁ Θεός σου.

There is one who takes the word *chalak,* which we translate *divide,* to signify the *blandish,* and makes this the sense, that God places these great luminaries in the heavens, to invite and allure all nations to admire and adore him, the creator of them. And, indeed, in the conjugation which the Hebrews call *hiphil,* this word doth signify to

soften and *smooth*, and consequently to allure; but it never signifies so in that they call *kall*.

Maimonides makes the sense of Moses's argument to be thus: God hath made the sun and moon to be ministers; not to be worshipped; according to that, Gen. i. 18. Which made the Psalmist so particularly call upon all the heavenly bodies to praise the Lord, Psal. cxlviii. (More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 5.)

Ver. 20. *But the Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace.*] This is a phrase used also by Solomon, 1 Kings vii. 51. and by Jeremiah, xi. 4. to express the most cruel servitude; wherein God suffered them to be tried, as metals are in a furnace of iron, red hot; for he doth not allude to their making of bricks (as some imagine), which were not wrought in an iron furnace.

To be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are at this day.] These were two powerful arguments to induce them to be obedient: that they were not only delivered from the hardest slavery, but now made God's peculiar people, (see Exod. xix. 5.) whom he had purchased for his inheritance, *i. e.* to be his people for ever.

From this verse Sir John Marsham gathers, that Moses had respect, in the foregoing verses, to the Egyptian superstition; as if he had said, "Excusso servitutis jugo, etiam excutienda sunt Ægypti Βδελύγματα;" *having shaken off the Egyptian yoke, they were also to shake off their abominable idols:* for the invisible God is not to be worshipped by images or symbols. So that when he forbids them, ver. 16. "to make a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male and female," he thinks Moses hath respect to the "boves utriusque sexus sacri," *the sacred beeves of both kinds;* the males to Osiris, the females to Isis. And he mentions "the likeness of any beast that is in earth," ver. 17. because all the Egyptians worshipped not only the creatures beforementioned, but *canem* and *felem*, a *dog* and a *cat:* the Thebans and Saitæ worshipped sheep; the Mendesians a goat; and others of them, wolves and lions: and he adds "the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air," because the Egyptians worshipped a hawk, and the bird called *ibis;* and the Thebans an eagle. In ver. 18. he mentions "the similitude of any thing that creepeth upon the ground;" because about Thebes, serpents were sacred to Jupiter: "and the likeness of any fish that is in the waters," because all Egypt worshipped certain fishes, and some of them the crocodile and the hippopotamus. And as for the sun, moon, and stars, (ver. 19.) the worship of them was common to the Egyptians with all other nations. All this he justifies out of good authors; and it might pass for truth, had we any certainty that the Egyptians in the time of Moses were as sottish as they were in the time of Herodotus. (See Seculum ix. Sect. de Idololatria.)

Ver. 21. *Furthermore.*] Or rather, *but.*

The Lord was angry with me for your sakes.] He remembers this again, (though he had mentioned it twice before, i. 37. iii. 26.) that they might be more deeply sensible of the danger of offending God, since such a man as he was excluded from the good land for one single fault. Or hereby he would magnify the goodness of God to them, who, though great offenders, had a privilege granted to them which was denied him.

And sware that I should not go over Jordan, &c.] He only told him so at the first, (Numb. xx. 12.) but upon Moses's importunate entreaty, that he would revoke the sentence (of which we read in the foregoing chapter of this book), it seems he silenced him, by confirming his threatening with an oath.

Ver. 22. *But I must die in this land, I must not go over Jordan.*] See Numb. xxvii. 12—14. His frequent repetition of this, shews how near it went to his heart. "But ye shall go over, and possess that good land." God's promise to them, he would have them think, was as irrevocable as his threatening against him.

Ver. 23. *Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image,* &c.] For this was the principal thing in the covenant, that they should worship him alone. Which is the reason it is so often repeated, and was, immediately after the delivery of the law from Mount Sinai, mentioned alone, as if it was the only thing that he had said unto them: (Exod. xx. 22, 23.) "Ye have not seen that I have talked with you from heaven: ye shall not make with me gods of silver; neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold."

Ver. 24. *For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire.*] So he appeared upon the mount, when he delivered his laws from thence in a flaming fire, (Exod. xxiv. 17.) The learned Huetius thinks, that from these words of Moses, the ancient Persians took up the worship of fire; at first, only as a resemblance of God, or a symbol of him, (as Maximus Tyrius saith, Dissert. xviii.) but afterward, as God himself, (Demonstr. Evangel. p. 94.)

Even a jealous God.] Who cannot endure any rival in your affection: (see Exod. xx. 5.) These were two awakening arguments to keep them from idolatry; that God cannot endure it, and will be very terrible in his punishment of it.

Ver. 25. *When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land.*] When they were very much multiplied, and had been long settled in the possession of the land of Canaan.

And shall corrupt yourselves.] By the worship of other gods.

And make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing.] Which he had strictly prohibited, and solemnly cautioned them to beware of, ver. 23.

And shall do evil in the sight of the Lord thy God, to provoke him to anger.] By imitating the idolatrous customs of other nations.

Ver. 26. *I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day.*] A solemn kind of asseveration; that, as surely as the heaven and earth shall endure, they should utterly perish.

That ye shall soon utterly perish from off this land, whereunto ye go, &c.] As soon as the measure of your iniquity is filled up, ye shall speedily be destroyed without remedy. Which the Hebrews refer to the captivity by Salmanezer and Nebuchadnezzar, after they had been almost eight hundred years in this country; and so might be said, *to have remained long in the land.*

Ver. 27. *And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations.*] See Levit. xxvi. 33.

And ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, &c.] See Levit. xxvi. 22.

Ver. 28. *And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone,* &c.] The idols of the heathen: to the worship of which he threatens to abandon them, as a punishment for their apostacy from God. And the heathen sometime compelled them to worship their gods, as we read in the third of Daniel.

Which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.] This is a description of the most stupid idolatry, to which they should be delivered, if they fell from God. (See Numb. xxi. 29.)

Ver. 29. *But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God.*] When they were scattered among the heathen, (ver. 27.)

Thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart, and all thy soul.] If they then repented sincerely, and became unfeigned worshippers of the Lord their God alone, he promises them forgiveness.

Ver. 30. *When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee.*] In great distress, by the execution of the foregoing threatenings.

Even in the latter days.] In future times, or in their most declining state. The Jews themselves apply to this present state, wherein they now, and have been many years; as appears by the ancient Nitzacon, set forth lately by Wagenseil, p. 254. where he saith, the whole nation must repent, before God send deliverance unto them.

If thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shall be obedient to his voice.] The great end of punishment was to convert them, and make them more observant of God's commands.

Ver. 31. *For the Lord thy God is a merciful God.*] See Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. Numb. xiv. 17, 18.

He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, &c.] He promises not to cast them off, nor destroy them utterly, (though they were utterly thrown out of their land, ver. 26.) but restore them to his favour, according to the covenant made with their fathers, and confirmed by an oath, Gen. xvii. 19. xxii. 16, 17. (See Levit. xxvi. 44, 45.)

Ver. 32. *For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the days that God created man upon the earth,* &c.] Turn over the annals of the whole world, from one end of it to the other, ever since it was made, and search whether thou canst find any thing like to that which God hath done for you. Which R. Isaac thus glosses in his Munimen Fidei, (lately set forth by Wagenseil, p. 103.) "From the creation of the world, till their going out of Egypt, there were passed two thousand four hundred and forty-eight years; and yet in all that long track of time, there never were seen or heard in any part of the world such prodigious miracles as were wrought to bring them out of Egypt; and afterward, in leading them through the Red Sea; raining manna on them; and the appearance of the Divine Majesty at Mount Sinai," &c.

Ver. 33. *Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of fire, as thou hast heard, and live?*] Here was a double, or rather triple prodigy, never heard of before, that God should speak to them, audibly and distinctly, so long as to inform them in their duty towards himself and one another; and this out of the midst of devouring flames, and without the least hurt to any one of them, (Exod. xx. 18. xxiv. 17.)

Ver. 34. *Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation?*] Another wonder, never before heard of: that God, by two men alone, Moses and Aaron, should demand the delivery of a nation, under the power of another nation far greater and stronger than themselves, and effect it also, by no other means but such as here follow.

By temptations.] This word may be thought to signify the grievous trials of the Israelites, whose miseries were increased after the first attempt for their deliverance; which seemed to them a strange way of proceeding, (Exod. v. 19. 22, 23.) But by *temptations* may, in this place, be, in general, meant miracles, as the Hebrews understand it, and the Chaldee word *tenessin* signifies: this and the two following words being of the very same import with the three words in the New Testament, which we often meet withal (and seem to be taken from hence), Δυνάμεσι, τέρασι, καὶ σημείοις, *with miracles, wonders, and signs,* (Acts ii. 22. 2 Cor. xii. Heb. ii. 4.)

By signs.] Which are mentioned Exod. iv. 9. vii. 9, 10.

And by wonders.] This signifies all the ten plagues of Egypt: for Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go, till God had *multiplied his wonders on the land of Egypt,* as we read, Exod. vii. 3. x. 1, 2. xi. 9, 10.

And by war.] This seems to relate to the overthrow of Pharaoh in the Red Sea; where the Lord is said to *fight for Israel,* (Exod. xiv. 14. xv. 3.) while they, which is the greatest wonder of all, were delivered without striking a stroke.

And by a mighty hand, and a stretched-out arm.] These are phrases which we often meet withal, when Moses speaks of their deliverance out of Egypt, Exod. iii. 19. vi. 6. xv. 12. and many other places. And the Hebrews think, that his *mighty hand* particularly refers to the grievous murrain, and the pestilence, which are called the *hand of the Lord,* Exod. x. 3. 15. And his *stretched-out arm,* to have a particular respect to the killing of the first-born; the angel that was going to smite Jerusalem appearing with a "drawn sword, and his hand stretched out," (1 Chron. xxi. 16.)

And by great terrors.] Wherewith the minds of those were struck who heard of these things, (Exod. xv. 14—16.) Or else he means the frights in which the Egyptians were, while they remained three days in most dismal darkness; (Exod. x. 23.) for the conclusion of this verse signifies, that he speaks of *all that the Lord their God did for them in Egypt before their eyes.*

Ver. 35. *Unto thee it was shewed.*] This was a particular kindness to the Israelites, which God never before manifested to any other nation.

That thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; there is none else besides him.] That they might believe him to be the only true God, and worship none but him. Which two articles, saith Maimonides, (More Nevochim, par. ii. cap. 33.) that God is, and that he is but one, are fundamentals of religion, which were known not only by prophets, but by every body else.

Ver. 36. *Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice.*] See Exod. xx. 22.

That he might instruct thee.] Teach them his will, which was chiefly declared in the ten commandments.

And upon earth he shewed thee his great fire.] He means either that they saw it as they stood upon the earth; or, that it burnt upon the top of the mount in their sight. (Exod. xxiv. 17.)

And thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.] See ver. 11, 12. and Exod. xx: 18, 19.

Ver. 37. *And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them.*] See Gen. xv. 5—7. and many other places in that book, Exod. iii. 15—17.

And brought them out in his sight with a mighty power.] For, as he led them the way out of Egypt in a pillar of cloud, and of fire, (Exod. xiii. 21.) so, when they were in danger by Pharaoh's pursuit of them, he came behind them, and they marched in his sight, (Exod. xiv. 19.)

Out of Egypt.] This is mentioned in Scripture as the highest benefit, never to be forgotten by them. So G. Schickard observes, in his Mischpat Hammelech: (cap. iii. Theor. 10.) That they are put in mind of this in the frontispiece of the decalogue, (Exod. xx. 2.) in the institution of sacrifices, (Levit. xxii. 33.) in the promise of a blessing, (xxvi. 13.) and here, in the enumeration of God's wonderful works; and afterward in the commendation of his love, (Deut. vii. 8.) in his dehortation from ingratitude, (viii. 14.) in his institution of the Passover, (xvi. 6.) in the speech which the reproving angel made to them, (Judges ii. 1.) in the hope he gave them of victory over the Midianites, (vi. 9.) in his answer to their petition for a king, (1 Sam. x. 18.) and on a great many other occasions: for this was, "velut fundamentum et initium reipublicæ," &c. as another learned German speaks, (Gierus on Dan. ix. 15.) the foundation, as we may call it, and the beginning of their commonwealth founded by God; which comprehended in it abundance of miracles, far exceeding all the power of nature.

Ver. 38. *To drive out nations before thee, greater and mightier than thou art.*] So mighty, that they frighted their fathers from attempting the conquest of them, (Numb. xiii. 28, 29. 31.)

To bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day.] That is, as he had given them a late experiment, by overthrowing the two kings of the Amorites, and giving them their land for a possession.

Ver. 39. *Know therefore this day, and consider it in thy heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth, and there is none else.*] Be sensible, therefore, and settle this belief in thy heart, that the Lord is the sole governor of the whole world.

Ver. 40. *Thou shalt therefore keep his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee this day,* &c.] Worship and obey him, as the only way to make them and their posterity live happily in the land, which God was about to give them.

That it may be well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, &c.] Though Moses spake of their long life upon earth, yet the better sort of Jews did not set up their rest here; but from this word *prolong*, extended their hope as far as the other world: for thus Maimonides saith (in his preface to Pereck Cheleck) they were taught by tradition to expound these words, *That it may be well with thee* in the world, which is all good; and *mayest prolong thy days* in the world, which is all long, *i. e.* never ends.

Ver. 41. *Then Moses severed three cities.*] I observed in the preface to this book, that Moses did not deliver all that is contained in this book in one continued speech; but at several times, as appears even by the beginning of the next chapter, where it is said, "He called all Israel, and said unto them," &c. Which supposes, that after this preface in these four chapters, he dismissed them to consider what he had said; and then some time after assembled the people again, to put them in mind of the laws which he so earnestly pressed them to observe. But between these two times (after he had spoken all that is contained in these four chapters, and before he rehearsed the decalogue), he put in execution the command of God lately given, to set apart three cities of refuge on this side Jordan; which he here relates, in the order, I suppose, wherein it was done.

On this side Jordan, towards the sun-rising.] On the east side of Jordan, according to what was ordered, Numb. xxxv. 14.

Ver. 42. *That the slayer might flee thither, which should kill his neighbour unawares,* &c.] See there, ver. 11, 12, &c.

Ver. 43. *Namely, Bezer in the wilderness, in the plain country of the Reubenites; and Ramoth in Gilead of the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan of the Manassites.*] Thus they are set down also in the book of Joshua, xx. 8. xxi. 27. 36. 38.

Ver. 44. *And this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel.*] Now follows the law, which (after the forementioned assignation of the cities of refuge) Moses set before all the people, and pressed them to the observance of it.

Ver. 45. *These are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments.*] As the next chapter contains the law, that is, the ten commandments, which Moses set before them; so, in several following chapters (after new earnest exhortations to obedience), he represents to them the rest of God's will, comprehended under these three words, *testimonies, statutes,* and *judgments:* some of which belong to the Divine service, others to their civil government, and the rest to ceremonial observations, for the better security and preservation of both the former.

Which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, after they came forth out of Egypt.] Which he had formerly delivered to them, after they were come out of the Egyptian bondage, Exod. xxi. xxii. xxiii. and in the following books.

Ver. 46. *On this side Jordan,* &c.] In this and the two following verses he again mentions the place and the time, when and where, he set before them the law, and the testimonies, statutes, and judgments, recorded in the following part of this book: which he repeats, that all posterity might observe the discourses were made a little before he died.

In the valley over against Beth-Peor.] See chap. iii. *ult.*

In the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.] See chap. ii. 24. 31, &c.

Whom Moses and the children of Israel smote, after they were come forth out of Egypt.] In the fortieth year after their departure thence; as appears from Numb. xxi. 24. xxxiii. 38.

Ver. 47. *And they possessed his land, and the land of Og king of Bashan,* &c.] See Numb. xxi. 33, &c.

Ver. 48. *From Aroer, which is by the bank of the river Arnon, even unto Mount Sihon, which is Hermon.*] The mount here called Sihon is not that which was so famous in aftertimes, when David made it the royal seat; for that was on the other side Jordan, and is written with different

letters in the Hebrew; but, in all probability, is a contraction of *Sirion;* which is the name by which the Sidonians called Hermon: for the bounds of this country are so described, (iii. 8, 9. 12.) to extend from the river Arnon to Mount Hermon, which is called Sirion.

Ver. 49. *And all the plain on this side Jordan eastward, even unto the sea of the plain.*] See chap. iii. 17.

Under the springs of Pisgah.] The same place there called Ashdoth-Pisgah. Which is exactly described after the same manner, by Benjamin Tudelensis, in his Itinerary, set forth by L'Empereur, p. 51. where he saith, that Jordan is called at Tiberias the Sea of Genesareth; and, coming from thence with a great force, falls at the foot of this hill into the Sea of Sodom, which is called the Salt Sea.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AND Moses called all Israel, and said unto them.*] That is, summoned all the elders, and heads of their tribes, who were to communicate what he said to the rest: thus it is commonly expounded. But that which he saith, xxix. 10, 11. seems to direct us to another interpretation; that he himself went from tribe to tribe, and repeated these *ten words* (as they are called), placing himself in several parts of their camp, that every one might hear what he said. And this was sometime after he had, in like manner, exhorted them to obedience in the foregoing preface. (See iv. 41.)

Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day.] Mind what I now say unto you.

That ye may learn them, and keep and do them.] That ye may not be ignorant of such important truths, nor negligent in the practice of them; which is the end of knowledge.

Ver. 2. *The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.*] See Exod. xxiv. 3. 5—8.

Ver. 3. *The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers.*] *viz.* Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; with whom he covenanted to give their posterity the land of Canaan; but did not make to them this discovery of his will, which was the matter of the covenant at Horeb.

But with us, even us, who are all here alive this day.] A great part of those who were then at Horeb were now *alive; viz.* all under twenty years old. And if they had been all dead, Moses might have said, *He made it with us;* because they were still the same people, though the particular persons were dead, with whom the covenant was made, not only for themselves, but for their posterity.

Ver. 4. *The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount,* &c.] Openly, clearly, and distinctly; or by himself, without the mediation of Moses; but in no visible shape: for that is expressly denied in the foregoing chapter, iv. 12. 15.

Ver. 5. *I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to shew you the word of the Lord.*] As a mediator, whom God employed to prepare them to meet him, (Exod. xix. 10, 11, &c.) and to prescribe them the bounds, at what distance they should keep, (ver. 12.) and to bring them forth to meet with him, (ver. 17.) and to charge them to keep within their bounds, (ver. 21.) And, on the other side, to represent their desires unto God, after he had spoken to them, (Exod. xx. 19.) So that he was truly a mediator between God and them; and stood also in a middle place, at the foot of the mount, while they stood further off.

For ye were afraid by reason of the fire.] Exod. xx. 18.

And went not up into the mount.] Exod. xix. 17. xx. 21.

Ver. 6. *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.*] This preface to the ten commandments is explained, Exod. xx. 2.

Ver. 7. *Thou shalt have none other gods before me.*] See Exod. xx. 3. It is wisely observed by Grotius, (lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 20. sect. 45.) that true religion was ever built upon these four principles: First, that there is a God, and that he is but One. Secondly, that God is nothing of those things that we see with our eyes, but something more sublime than them all. Thirdly, that he takes care of human affairs, and judges them most justly. Fourthly, that he is the maker of all things whatsoever. Which principles are explained in these first four precepts of the decalogue; the unity of the Godhead being delivered in the first place.

Ver. 8—10. *Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing,* &c.] The second principle, that God's nature is invisible, is contained in this second commandment; being the ground of this prohibition, to make any image of him: which the best of the heathen forbade also for this very reason, Ὡς οὐκ ἐφάπτεσθαι Θεοῦ δυνατὸν ἄλλως ἢ νοήσει, *because it is impossible to conceive God otherwise, but by the mind alone,* as Plutarch reports the sense of Numa among the Romans. And we find the same as plainly said by Antisthenes among the Greeks, in Clemens Alexandrinus, Ὀφθαλμοῖς οὐχ' ὁρᾶται, οὐδενὶ ἔοικε, διόπερ αὐτὸν οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐκμαθεῖν ἐξ εἰκόνος: *he is not seen by the eyes, nor is like to any thing; and therefore none can learn any thing of him by an image.* Nor could the vulgar, I am apt to think, have been kept so long, and so generally as they were, to the worship of them, if it had not been by bold fictions, that some of them were Διοπετῆ, *fallen down from heaven;* and that all of them were Θεῖα, καὶ θείας μετουσίας ἀνάπλεα, *Divine things, and full of a Divine communication,* as Jamblichus speaks. And, to make them more reverenced, while some of them were Ἐμφανῆ, *conspicuous to all the people,* others were kept secret in the inmost part of their temple, as having hidden in them a symbolical presence of God, as Proclus speaks upon Timæus. Which Ezek. Spanhemius justly thinks was done in imitation of what Moses saith concerning God's presence upon the mercy-seat in the holy of holies. (Observationes in Callimachum, p. 586, &c.)

See upon these three verses my annotations on Exod. xx. 4—6.

Ver. 11. *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain,* &c.] This contains the third principle beforementioned, that God takes notice of all things, even of our thoughts, and governs all our affairs: for it is the foundation of an oath, that God knows our very hearts, and is witness to our meaning, as well as our words; and will, if we swear falsely, punish us for it: which is an acknowledgment also both of the justice and the power of God. (See upon Exod. xx. 7.)

Ver. 12. *Keep the sabbath-day to sanctify it.*] They were to keep it in memory, that they might sanctify it, as it is Exod. xx. 8. (See there.) And it was *sanctified,* or set apart for special ends and purposes, that they might give to the

blessed God the seventh part of the week (as Abarbinel speaks upon these words), and might learn the Divine law, together with the *Kabalah*, or traditional exposition of the words, and mark well the niceties of it: for which he quotes a saying out of the Gemara of the Jerusalem Talmud, "Sabbaths and feasts were not given, but to learn the law upon them." Which is the reason, he saith, of another speech of theirs, in their Midrasch, or allegorical exposition upon Exodus, that "the sabbath weigheth against all the commandments;" because it was a principal means to make them known and observed. There is not much said, indeed, in express words, concerning this end of the rest of the sabbath: but common reason told the Jews, it could not be intended merely as a day of ease from labour, but for the solemn service of God, and instruction in their duty to him.

As the Lord thy God commanded thee.] At Marah, say the Jews commonly, where he gave them a *statute and an ordinance.* (See Exod. xv. 25.) But one of them saith better, *At Marah it was designed, and at Sinai it was commanded.* But they do not look back far enough for the original of this commandment: for there being two things in this day, the *rest* of it, and the *religion;* the *rest* of it was in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt, and the overthrow of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, which completed their deliverance; immediately after which they kept their first sabbatical rest. The *religion* was in remembrance of the creation of the world; and so this day had been observed from the beginning by the patriarchs, though we find no mention made of their *resting:* and that may possibly be the meaning of these words, *as the Lord thy God commanded thee;* that is, immediately after he had finished the creation of the world.

Ver. 13. *Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work.*] See upon Exod. xx. 9.

Ver. 14. *But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work,* &c.] The reason why they might not do any work on this day, is given in Exod. xx. 11. which is wholly omitted here; because Moses had another reason to add, for the enforcement of this precept: and refers them (in the foregoing words, ver. 12. *As the Lord thy God hath commanded thee*) to what he had said in the books of Genesis and Exodus: where he had set down the reason which God himself gave with his own mouth, for the religious observation of this day; because *in six days the Lord made heaven and earth,* &c. So that this commandment was designed to establish the fourth principle I mentioned, that God is the maker of all things. To preserve the memory and sense of which (as the author of the answer, Ad Orthodoxos, observes, lxix.) this rest was instituted, to be observed with a more than ordinary sanctity; it being of such great moment, that the first sabbath-breaker was punished with death, because the voluntary violation of it contained in it a denial, that the world was created by God.

That thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou.] Mercy towards men, as well as piety towards God, was a reason for the observation of the sabbatical rest.

Ver. 15. *And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee from thence,* &c. *therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath-day.*] This is a new ground for the observation of the sabbath; because God had given them rest from their hard labour in Egypt. Which obliged them to keep *that seventh day,* which God appointed at the giving of *manna* (being the day on which he overthrew Pharaoh in the Red Sea), as the memory of the creation of the world obliged them to keep one day in seven. So our Mr. Mede hath explained it. (See my annotations on Exod. xiv. 30.) And Maimonides hath something to the same purpose, in his More Nevochim, par. ii. cap. 31. (See upon Exod. xx. 11.)

Ver. 16. *Honour thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.*] In the twentieth of Exodus, ver. 12. see there. To which I shall here add, that the laws of Solon made those children infamous, who did not afford sustenance to their parents, and provide them a habitation. And by the ancient law of Athens, he that reproached his parents was disinherited; if he struck them, his hand was cut off; if he left them unburied, he lost their estate, and was banished his country: and another law punished this ingratitude with death. See J. Meursius, in his Themis Attica, lib. i. cap. 2, 3. where he shews, that by *parents* they understood not only father and mother, but grandfather and grandmother; nay, Τούτων μήτηρ καὶ πατὴρ ἐὰν ἔτι ζῶσι, *i. e. great-grandmother and great-grandfather,* if they were yet alive, as Isæus tells us, Orat. vii. And the ground of all these laws, was a sense they had, as Æschines tells us, That men ought to honour their parents, as they did the gods, Οὓς ἐξ ἴσου δεῖ τιμᾶν τοῖς θεοῖς. (See Sam. Petitus, in Leges Atticas, lib. iii. tit. 3.) Whence Hierocles calls parents, Θεοὶ ἐπίγειοι, *earthly gods.* And Philo, upon the decalogue, Θεοὶ ἐμφανεῖς, &c. *visible gods, who imitate him that is unbegotten, by giving life.* And accordingly, next to the precepts concerning the worship of God, Moses here places immediately the duty owing unto parents.

That thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, &c.] These last words are added to what God spake, Exod. xx. 12. as an explication of the foregoing. Whereby they are excited to obedience, by the promise not only of a long life, but of a happy. I say obedience; for that is included in honour, as the apostle explains it, Coloss. iii. 20. "Children obey your parents in all things;" that is, where God hath not commanded the contrary, and where it is not inconsistent with the public good; which is alway to be preferred, even before the duty that is owing to natural parents. Insomuch, that common reason taught the heathen, that for the good of the society, the son is to lay aside the reverence he should pay to his father, and the father to pay it unto the son, that is, when he is in public office: thus the famous Fabius Cunctator commended his son, for making him light off from his horse, when he met him in his consulship, as Plutarch tells us. And see A. Gellius, lib. xi. Noct. Attic. cap. 1. and lib. xiii. cap. *ult.* and lib. xiv. in the beginning.

Ver. 17. *Thou shalt not kill.*] If a man killed another involuntarily, he was banished by the laws of Athens from his country for a year: but if he killed another ἐκ προνοίας, as Demosthenes speaks, *out of forethought,* and designedly, he was put to death: (see Sam. Petitus, lib. vii. in Leges Atticas, tit. 1. p. 508. 512.) Yea, so detestable was this sin accounted, that even τὰ ἄψυχα, *lifeless things,* such as wood,

or stone, or iron, wherewith a man was killed, Draco ordered to be thrown out of their coasts. (Ib. p. 523.)

Ver. 18. *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*] This crime was also punished with death by the laws of Draco. Solon, indeed, left it to the liberty of the husband, who caught another man in bed with his wife, either to kill him, if he pleased, or to let him redeem his life with a sum of money. But if after this he lived with his wife, he was infamous, as Demosthenes tells us, who saith, she might not come publicly into their temples: if she did, any man might treat her as he pleased, only not kill her: so that she was so odious as to be thrown, Ἔκ τε τῆς οἰκίας τοῦ ἀνδρὸς, καὶ ἐξ ἱερῶν τῶν τῆς πόλεως, *both out of the house of her husband, and out of holy places of the city.* Nor might she go abroad with any ornaments (Μὴ ἐξεῖναι κοσμεῖσθαι, is the law of Solon): if she did, any body might take them away from her, and tear her clothes in pieces, and beat her, only not maim her in any part of her body. (See the same Petitus, lib. vi. tit. 4.)

Ver. 19. *Neither shalt thou steal.*] The laws of Draco punished all theft with death: which Solon thought too severe, and therefore changed that punishment into making satisfaction, by restoring double; yet still making it death, if any man stole above such a value, or took any thing out of the public baths, and such-like places, though of never so little value. (See in the same author, lib. vii. tit. 5.)

Ver. 20. *Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.*] There was an action, at Athens, lay both against false witnesses, and him that produced them; who had a fine set upon them, and were made infamous. And if they were found thrice in the same fault, Τούτους ἔδει καὶ αὐτοὺς, καὶ τοὺς ἐκ τούτων, ἀτίμους εἶναι, *both they themselves, and all their posterity, were made infamous,* as Andocides speaks. (See ib. p. 559.)

Ver. 21. *Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house,* &c.] It is observed by some, that an exact order is observed in the delivery of these precepts: for, first, he places such offences as are consummate, and then those that are but begun, and not perfected. And in the former, he proceeds from those that are most heinous unto those that are less grievous: for those offences are the greatest which disturb the public order, and consequently do mischief unto a great many. Such are those that are committed against governors and rulers, who are comprehended under the name of parents, by whose authority human society is preserved. And then, among those which are against particular persons, those are the greatest which touch a man's life; next, those that wrong his family, the foundation of which is matrimony; then, those that wrong him in his goods, either directly by stealth, or more craftily by bearing false witness. Then, in the last place, those sins are mentioned which are not consummate, being gone no farther than desire; which in Exod. xx. 17. are expressed by one and the same word, but here by two; which we translate *desire* and *covet:* between which I know no difference, unless they express higher and lower degrees of the same sin. The contrary to which is, contentedness with our portion, and thankfulness to God for it; which will not let us covet any thing belonging to another man, with his loss and damage.

Ver. 22. *These words the Lord spake unto all the assembly in the mount; out of the midst of the fire, of the clouds, and of the thick darkness.*] Exod. xix. 16. xx. 18. This confutes the foolish fancy of the Jewish doctors, that the people heard only the first words of God, *I am the Lord thy God,* &c. *thou shalt have no other gods but me; i. e.* they heard him declare his existence, and his unity; but all the rest were reported to them by Moses. Nothing can be more contrary to what he here saith, that *all these words* (that is, the ten words beforementioned) were spoken to *their whole assembly.* (See More Nevochim, par. ii. cap. 33.)

With a great voice.] That is, so loud that it might be heard by the whole camp.

And he added no more.] All the rest of the commandments, which follow in Exod. xxi. xxii. and xxiii. were delivered to Moses alone, and by him to the people, according to their own desire, (Exod. xx. 19. xxi. 1. xxiv. 3.)

And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.] That is, the ten commandments, and no more, (Exod. xxiv. 12. xxxi. 18. xxxiv. 1. 28.) Lest what they heard with their ears should quickly slide out of their minds, he took care to have it engraven with his own hands in these tables.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness (for the mountain did burn with fire), that ye came near unto me; even all the heads of the tribes and elders.*] After they had recovered out of the fright wherein they were at the conclusion of these words: when the thunderings, lightnings, and noise of the trumpet were so terrible, that they removed, and stood afar off, (Exod. xx. 18.)

Ver. 24. *And ye said, Behold, the Lord our God hath shewed us his glory, and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire.*] Here Moses relates more largely what he said in short, Exod. xx. 19.

We have seen this day, that God doth talk with man, and he liveth.] This looks like a thankful acknowledgment of the great goodness of God, in vouchsafing them such a favour as never any men had before, and which they could not expect again. And accordingly Moses makes use of it as an argument to be very observant of God's commands, (Exod. xx. 22, 23.)

Ver. 25. *Now, therefore, why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: for if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die.*] It is an ungrounded conceit of Maimonides (in the place abovementioned), that, when they had heard the first words, they fell into a swoon, and did not recover themselves till all the rest were spoken; which made them conclude, that they should really die, and never come to themselves again (as we speak), if they should hear him speak to them any more. The plain meaning is, that mortal men could not endure to hear him speak in that manner: for the voice was so loud, and accompanied with such flashes of fire, and such claps of thunder, as made them conclude, if it had continued longer, they should have expired.

Ver. 26. *For who is there of all flesh.*] *i. e.* Of all men who are weak and frail, as the word *flesh* denotes.

That hath heard the voice of the living God, speaking out of the midst of fire (as we have) and lived?] There is no instance of such a thing as this, which made them afraid of hearing him speak, in this manner, any more: for they did not mind God's end and intention in this, (which Moses suggests to them in Exod. xx. 20.) but in a confusion of thoughts imagined, that though they had escaped once, the

flames out of which he spake might devour them, if they came near them again.

Ver. 27. *Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God will say; and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it, and do it.*] See Exod. xx. 19. This shews their opinion of Moses, that he could be able not only to endure that without disorder which made them ready to die, but go into the very midst of the darkness out of which those flames came.

Ver. 28. *And the Lord heard the voice of your words when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people,* &c.] As Moses here reports more largely what they said to him than he did in Exodus, so he likewise gives a larger account what God bade him say to them, in answer to their desire.

They have well said all that they have spoken.] It very much becomes them, out of a sense of their meanness and unworthiness, and of the inconceivable majesty of God, to desire he would speak to them by a mediator.

Ver. 29. *Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep my commandments always.*] The words are wonderful emphatical in the Hebrew, *Who will give, that there may be such a heart in them.* Which is an expression of the most earnest desire; but withal signifies, that if what he had done for them would not move them to fear and obey him, it was impossible to persuade them to it. Not but that he could miraculously work upon them, and change their hearts (saith Maimonides), if he pleased, as he miraculously changed the nature of other things; but if this were God's will, to deal with them after this fashion, there would have been no need to send a prophet to them, or to publish laws full of precepts and promises, rewards and punishments; by which (saith he) God wrought upon their heart, and not by his absolute omnipotence. (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 32.)

That it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!] For God desired nothing more than this, which they themselves promised, (ver. 27.) which moved him to vouchsafe such a special privilege to them, as first to speak to them himself, and, at their desire, consent to speak to them by his prophet.

Ver. 30. *Go say to them, Get you into your tents again.*] All this shews that Moses was a mediator between God and them, and between them and God.

Ver. 31. *But as for thee, stand thou here by me.*] He invites Moses unto the nearest approaches unto his majesty; and the most familiar converse with him, (Exod. xx. 21. xxiv. 2. 18.) For this was the highest degree of prophecy, as Maimonides calls it, in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 51. And in his preface to that book, he saith, this is the greatest degree of illumination of a prophet, concerning whom it is said, *Stand thou here with me:* and again, *The skin of his face shone.* Which he supposes signified, that his mind was always full of light; whereas other prophets were some time in darkness, and saw nothing.

And I will speak unto thee all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which thou shalt teach them.] According to their own desire, ver. 27. (See vi. 1.)

And that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess it.] According to their promise in the same, ver. 27.

Ver. 32. *Ye shall observe to do therefore as the Lord your God hath commanded you.*] Being obliged by such singular benefits as no other nation ever had the like, (ver. 24—26.) and having engaged themselves so solemnly to be obedient, (ver. 27.)

Ye shall not turn aside, to the right hand, or to the left.] This is a phrase often used to signify a strict observance of God's laws; neither superstitiously adding to them, nor profanely laying aside any of them, (xvii. 20. xxviii. 14. Josh. i. 7.)

Ver. 33. *Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded.*] That is, observe all his laws, and make them the rule of their lives.

That ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days, in the land which ye shall possess.] Universal obedience, he would have them sensible, was the only way to make them live happy and long in that good land which he was about to bestow upon them. This he inculcates again in the next chapter, vi. 3. For all mankind thought *long life* a very great blessing, as appears by Callimachus's hymn to Diana, ver. 132, 133. when he promises to those whom she favours,

——————— οὐδ' ἐπὶ σῆμα
Ἔρχονται, πλὴν εἴτε πολυχρόνιόν τι φέρωσιν.

i. e. *They shall not come into their grave, till they have reached a great old age.*

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *NOW these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments.*] Which God promised to deliver to him, in the foregoing chapter, ver. 31.; and *commandments* are thought commonly to relate unto the moral laws; *statutes* to rites and ceremonies, which have no natural reason for them; and *judgments* to civil government.

Which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it.] They are the words of God himself, in the place beforenamed, ver. 31.

This, I suppose, was spoken by Moses to them, a little time after he had delivered what is contained in the foregoing chapter; being a preface to the rest of the laws which he received from God in Mount Sinai, as they desired.

Ver. 2. *That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee,* &c.] The prime intention of God's speaking to them by himself and by Moses was, to implant his fear in their hearts, as the true principle of obedience; which so certainly flows from it, if it be preserved in its power and force, that it frequently in Scripture signifies the whole duty we owe to God. But here, more particularly, it seems to signify their adhering to him as the only God: so it is used, 1 Kings xviii. 3. 12. and in the New Testament most plainly, Acts x. 2. 35.

Ver. 3. *Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it.*] Mark therefore so well what I say, as to do accordingly.

That it may be well with thee, &c.] As the only way to be happy, and to grow a mighty nation, and, in short, enjoy all that God had promised to their pious ancestors.

Ver. 4. *Hear, O Israel.*] He repeats it again, because what he was going to say is of the highest importance.

The Lord our God is one Lord.] Being to remind them

of all the laws which God delivered to them by him, and to endeavour to beget a holy fear of him, as the principle of obedience, he most earnestly presses upon them, before he proceeds further, the first of the ten commandments; which is, that there is but one God, who alone is to be worshipped; and that he is their God: whose laws therefore could not be controlled by the authority of any other pretended god.

Many of the ancient fathers, particularly Theodoret and Greg. Nyssen, think there is a plain intimation of the blessed Trinity in these words, *The Lord our God is one Lord:* and some of the Jews themselves have thought, there was something extraordinary in it, that the name of God should be thrice mentioned, as it is in this sentence: which signifies three *midoth*, or properties, they confess; which they sometimes call *three faces*, or *emanations*, or *sanctifications*, or *numerations*, though they will not call them three persons; as Joseph de Voysin observes, in his book against an Anonymous Anti-trinitarian, p. 58. 63. 71, 72. And the cabalists say as much, who, asserting ten *sephiroth* in God (which they take to be something different from the essence of God, and yet not creatures, but *emanations* from it, as Manasseh ben Israel explains their words), they make the three first of them to be more than the other seven; and call them *primordial*. The first of which they call the *Wonderful Intelligence*, and the *First Intellectual Light* (as St. James calls God the *Father of lights*), and the *First Glory*. The second they call, among other names, the *Illuminating Intelligence* (just as St. John saith, the eternal Word "enlightens every one that cometh into the world"), and the *Second Glory*. And the third they call the *Sanctified Intelligence* (so the word מקודש, which is in Pual, must be translated, not *sanctifying*, as Rittangelius takes it,) or they may mean no more than the *Holy Intelligence;* which is the very same with the Holy Spirit. All this we find in the book Jetzira, which they fancy was made by Abraham: from whence we cannot but learn, that they had an obscure notion of the blessed Trinity: and that the apostles used no other language about it, than what was among the Jews. The best of which are so sensible of such things, as I have mentioned, that they think we Christians are not idolaters, though we believe three persons in the Godhead (which they fancy inclines to polytheism), because we believe the unity of God; and therefore may be saved as well as they. So J. Wagenseil shews in his annotations upon Sota, cap. 7. p. 751, &c. and Arnoldus, in his Spicilegia, after him, p. 1218.

Ver. 5. *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart*, &c.] Our blessed Saviour, alleging these two verses, (Mark xii. 29, 30.) looks upon these words as a part of the first commandment: for, after he had said, "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; and, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul," &c. he thus concludes, "this is the first commandment." For, to own him to be the only God, the author of our being and of all things, doth necessarily include in it a love of him above all things whatsoever, which requires us to love him, who hath made them so lovely. This is another principle or spring of obedience, inseparable from the fear of God beforementioned: which doth not drive us away from him, but draw us to him; being such a reverence towards him as children have to their kind parents, which is ever mixed with love to them.

With all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.] For there being no other God but he alone, none else could have any right to their love and service, but he only whose nature is so excellent, that it requires the utmost we can do to testify our regard to him. This one of the Jewish writers hath admirably expressed in this manner; "Whosoever serves God out of love, he gives himself to the study of his laws, and unto good works, &c. which excite him to love God with the most flagrant affection; not for the sake of any thing in this world, nor for the fear of any evil; but he serves God truly, because he is the truth, and the chiefest good, that he may be admitted to communion with him. And a man ought to love him with the most vehement and intense affection; so that he languish with love to him, just as a man that is in love with one he desires to make his wife: wheresoever he is, at home or abroad, when he eats and drinks, when he lies down and rises up, he thinks of her. To which Solomon compares the love of the spouse, who saith, *I am sick of love*," (Cant. ii. 5.) To this purpose, Baal Chasidim, mentioned by Wagenseil, upon Sota, cap. 5. p. 611.

By the *heart* may be here meant the will, which is the original of all that a man doth (as the Jews speak), whether good or evil: by the *soul*, the affections (to which St. Mark adds the *mind, i. e.* the understanding, or rational faculty); and by *might* or *strength*, is meant the power of the body for action; which four all together make up the whole man. And the word *all* added to each of these, doth not exclude all other things from any share in our thoughts and affections, but only from an equal interest in them. The love of God ought to be superior, and direct all our other motions to serve him, as Maimonides expresses it in his preface to Pirke Avoth.

Ver. 7. *And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.*] In the Hebrew the words are (as our margin observes), shall *whet* or *sharpen* them: signifying, as some think, that they should endeavour to make them pierce their hearts. But De Dieu rather thinks it signifies *beat them* into them, as things are hammered on an anvil with repeated strokes. Which the famous Bochartus doth not so well approve; who observes, that the word *sanan*, which in Arabic signifies, in the first place, to *sharpen* or *whet*, signifies also *exquisite docere*, &c. *to teach exquisitely;* so that he who is taught be made thereby more acute and perspicacious. Which is the intention he thinks of the Hebrew word here, lib. ii. Canaan, cap. 17. However it be expounded, it imports the diligence they should use (as we translate it), to instil this principle into their children's minds, that there is but one God; and to work in them a fear and love of his Divine Majesty. To that which goes before (ver. 4—6.) these words have a particular respect. By which it appears, that Moses thought his law was so plain, that every father might be able to instruct his sons in it, and every mother her daughters.

And thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.] As much as to say, they should take all occasions to inculcate this great thing, at home and abroad, night and day; never ceasing their most earnest endeavours, to persuade their children not to

worship any other God; nor to fail to worship the Lord their God with sincere affection.

The Jews have made from hence one of their *affirmative precepts*, that twice a day, at least, they should recite these words, *Hear, O Israel*, &c. which is a very dilute sense of this precept: wherein Moses requires not merely their saying these words (in which there might be a great deal of superstition), but taking all opportunities to imprint them upon the minds and hearts of their children.

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.*] Just thus he commands them to preserve the memory of their deliverance out of the land of Egypt, almost in the same words: see Exod. xiii. 9. 16. where this is sufficiently explained. And it appears to be a proverbial speech from Isa. xlix. 16. There are some learned men, indeed, who take these words literally, notwithstanding St. Jerome hath delivered his opinion to the contrary, that there is no command for *phylacteries*, which are grounded upon these words, particularly Jos. Scaliger, in his Elench. Trihæres. Nic. Serarii, cap. 7, 8. where he thinks God gave this command to the Israelites, to prevent their following the rites of other nations, who armed themselves against dangers with superstitious amulets in their foreheads; which the Egyptians, he thinks, called *totaphot*. But since, neither here nor in Exodus, there are any such words as *thou shalt make thee frontlets*, but Moses only saith the things that he is speaking of *shall be for frontlets between their eyes*, I take it not to be meant literally; though it is likely they intended well who so understood it: for our blessed Saviour doth not seem to reprove the Jews for wearing phylacteries, but for their ostentation, in making them broader than ordinary.

Ver. 9. *And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*] This looks more like a literal command than the former; and it might have been very useful to them, when they went in and out of their house, to read these words, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord*, &c. But the Jews are too scrupulous about the words they should write, and upon what part of the posts and gates they were to put them, &c. as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 13. n. 2.) Though, after all, it may be, this was not intended, but only that they should never let this principle slip out of their mind, but think of it when they went out and came in, as well as when they were in their houses, and by the way; when they rose up, and when they lay down. Yet it must be observed, that other nations used to write their laws upon their gates, as Huetius notes in his Demonstratio Evangelica, (p. 58.) which, it is likely, they did in imitation of the Jews, who, to this day, have written in a parchment these words from ver. 4. to the end of this verse, (with that other passage, chap. xi. from ver. 13. to ver. 20.) which they roll up, and writing on it the name of Shaddai, put it into a piece of cane, or other hollow wood, and fasten it to the doors of their houses, and of each particular room in them; and, as often as they go in and out, they make it a part of their devotion to touch this parchment, and kiss it; as Leo Modena tells us, in his History of the Jews, par. i. cap. 2.

Ver. 10. *And it shall be, when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land, which he sware*, &c.] Of this he speaks with the greatest assurance, there being no doubt to be made, that God would immediately give them possession of the good land promised to them. The only danger was, lest they should be thrown out of it for their disobedience.

Great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not.] For they did not lay all waste, as they did Jericho (for which there was a particular reason), but dwelt in them, after they had destroyed the inhabitants.

Ver. 11. *And houses full of all good things, which thou fillest not*, &c.] In this, and what follows in the rest of the verse, he sets forth the great bounty of God to them; who intended to enrich them with all manner of good things, without any labour of their own to purchase them.

Ver. 12. *Then beware lest thou forget the Lord which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt*, &c.] In prosperity we are too prone to forget our benefactors.

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him.*] Preserve an awful sense of him in thy mind, and be constant in his worship and service; which was never more necessary, than when they enjoyed so many blessings from him.

And shalt swear by his name.] When there was any need for it: as in making covenants with their neighbours, or in bearing their testimony before a judge, they were to swear only by the name of God, not by any idol, nor by the heaven, or the earth, or any thing therein; for they can bear witness to nothing. (See Josh. xxiii. 7, 8.) Nor was it lawful, as Maimonides observes (in his treatise called Shebuoth), to join any other thing with the name of God. But it was all one, whether a man sware by the proper name of God, or by any of his attributes; as, by the name of Him who is merciful, or gracious, or long-suffering, &c. for this is a perfect oath. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 11. n. 2. and see n. 7. concerning other oaths.)

Ver. 14. *Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you.*] This shews that his intention in this chapter is, to press upon them the observation of the first commandment, which our Saviour justly calls the *great commandment*.

Ver. 15. *For the Lord thy God is a jealous God.*] See Exod. xx. 5. Exod. xxxiv. 14.

Among you.] In the Hebrew, *in the midst of you*; to observe all you do, though never so secretly.

Lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.] For this was the most provoking of all other sins: and therefore we never read either in the law, or in the prophets, the word *charon* (i. e. *fury*), or *aph* (*anger*), or *caas* (*indignation*), or *kinah* (*jealousy*), ascribed unto God, but when mention is made of idolatry. So Maimonides observes, More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 36.

Ver. 16. *Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, as you tempted him in Massah.*] Never distrust God's good providence, nor murmur against him in any distress: for this was the temptation at Massah, (Exod. xvii. 2—7.)

Ver. 17. *You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.*] As if he had said, I cannot too often press this upon you; nor can you use too great care in this matter.

Ver. 18. *And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may be well with thee.*] As

they loved themselves, he charges them not to follow their own desires (which is called *doing that which is good in their own eyes),* but govern themselves by his holy will.

And that thou mayest go in and possess the good land.] Or rather, *after thou hast gone in, and possessed the good land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers:* for there was no doubt of their going in; but only of their behaviour there, after they were made so happy, ver. 10—12.

Ver. 19. *To cast out all thine enemies from before thee, as the Lord hath spoken.*] He seems particularly to charge them to drive out the people of Canaan, as God hath commanded, (Numb. xxxiii. 32.) For otherwise they would tempt them to forget this great principle of their religion, that the God of Israel was the only God, and entice them to serve their idols, (ver. 14.)

Ver. 20. *And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you?*] Abarbinel thinks, that their posterity, in future ages, might observe three sorts of precepts in the law, *viz. testimonies,* which in Hebrew are called *eduth,* which were such constitutions as bear witness of some great thing God had done for them, and preserved the memory thereof; such was the Passover. And then, secondly, there were *chukkim (statutes),* which are such precepts the reason of which is unknown. And, thirdly, *mischpatim (judgments),* which are such, whose reason is evident. Now they might desire to know the reason why such several laws were given; and he thinks Moses teaches them to give a distinct answer to their children about each of these.

Ver. 21. *Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.*] As if he had said, tell them the reason why he gave us the first sort of precepts, particularly that about the Passover, was, because we were slaves, and God brought us a state of liberty; which he would have always thankfully remembered, by the observation of that feast which testified what God wrought for us by his power alone. The like may be said of the other two great festivals, which were to preserve the memory of such-like benefits.

Ver. 22. *And the Lord shewed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and all his household,* &c.] Particularly slew all their first-born, and spared those of the Israelites: the memory of which he ordered to be preserved, by giving their first-born unto him, (Exod. xiii.)

Ver. 23. *And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware to our fathers.*] This is the reason, Abarbinel fancies, of giving them the judgments beforementioned: God brought us out, saith he, to place us in this good land, and settle us here under a government of our own. Now civil society cannot be preserved without just judgments: and therefore, that we might live in good order, God gave us these political laws.

Ver. 24. *And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God.*] As for the third sort, which are *statutes,* give your children this answer: that though we do not know the reason of them, yet the benefit of them is manifest; for they lead us to the fear of God. And nothing is so much for our good as that, both for the eternal good of our souls, and for the long life of our bodies. So he interprets the last words of this verse; and so doth Maimonides.

For our good always, that he may preserve us alive, as it is at this day.] The first words in the Hebrew are, *that it may be well with us all our days;* or, more literally, *for good to us all our days:* that is, say our rabbins, (they are the words of Maimonides, par. iii. More Nevochim, cap. 27: where he repeats what I observed before upon iv. 40.) *That it may be well with us in that world which is wholly good; and our days may be prolonged in that world which is wholly long;* or, in short, that thou mayest come into the world which is good and long, which is a perpetual subsistence. As for the last words, they belong, he thinks, to their corporeal subsistence here, which endures but for a time; and therefore he saith, *As at this day;* to shew he speaks of the present world, wherein they should live happily by observing his laws.

Ver. 25. *And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments.*] Their children might say, If there be such benefits in observing the statutes, which lead to the fear of God, and to happiness hereafter, what need we trouble ourselves about the other two? Unto which, Abarbinel imagines, they are taught to give this answer, *It is our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments; i. e.* We cannot be righteous before God, if they have not respect to all his precepts, whether testimonies, statutes, or judgments, which are all comprehended in this word *mitzvoth,* or *commandments.* This is something nice and curious, but there is a great deal of truth in it.

The word *righteousness* also, it must be acknowledged, often comprehends *mercy* in it: and thus the LXX. and the Vulgar Latin here understand it. And to take in this sense, these words may be thus expounded: If we observe to do all these commandments, *God will account us a righteous people, and be kind to us.*

Before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us.] Having a sincere respect to God in all that we do.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *WHEN the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it.*] That is, when he had put them into possession of it.

And hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, &c.] There were ten nations inhabited in this country in the days of Abraham: but three of them were either worn out since that time, or, being but a small people, were incorporated with the rest: for the Kenites and the Kenezites (see Gen. xv. 19.) are not mentioned after that time, and the Rephaim possessed but a little part of Canaan, the great body of them being in Bashan, on this side Jordan, where Moses now was: (see upon Gen. xv. 19.)

Seven nations greater and mightier than thou.] The Amorites alone seem to have been mightier than the Israelites (for there were no less than five kings of them, that dwelt in the mountains, Josh. x. 5, 6. besides those in other parts), and therefore all the seven nations were much superior to them in strength.

Ver. 2. *And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them,* &c.] He still pursues his intention, to preserve in them a due care to observe the first commandment, of which he began to treat in the foregoing chapter: for that is the reason why they were to destroy these seven nations, that they might not be in danger to be seduced by them to serve other gods, (ver. 1.) But whether they were not first to offer them terms of peace, according to the directions in the twentieth chapter of this book, is a question which I have endeavoured to resolve in another place, upon Exod. xxiii. 33. Certain it is, that if they refused their offers, there was the greater reason to be severe to them: and without offering them any terms, God might in justice order the Israelites to destroy them: for every king hath power in his dominions to cut off evil-doers; and therefore much more the King of kings: who might order whom he pleased (as other kings do) to be executioners in his vengeance upon these seven nations, for their abominable idolatries, beastly lusts, and horrid cruelties, and other such-like sins, of which they were guilty.

This was a thing of such moment, that God ordered Moses to give them this charge some time ago, (Numb. xxxiii. 52.) which he now renews.

Thou shalt make no covenant with them.] To suffer them to live with them, in the same country, (Exod. xxxiv. 12.)

Nor shew mercy to them.] For that had been cruelty to themselves and their posterity, to spare such incurable idolaters. How far the Talmudists extend this, see in Dionys. Vossius, upon Maimonides's treatise of Idolatry, p. 139. and Maimonides himself, in the following paragraphs, 4—6.

Ver. 3. *Neither shalt thou make marriages with them: thy daughters thou shalt not give to his sons; nor his daughters shalt thou take to thy sons.*] See Exod. xxxiv. 15. Some of the Jews think they might marry with them, if they became proselytes of justice (as they called those who received circumcision, and undertook to observe the whole law); and that they might think this was not lawful, yet think that they might marry with the children of such proselytes: (see Selden, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. &c. cap. 14, 15.) And the Talmudists say, this law did not extend to proselytes, who might marry with any of these nations, as he shews there, cap. 18.

Ver. 4. *For they will turn away thy sons from following me, that they may serve other gods,* &c.] There was great danger, if they loved their wives, that they might draw them to their idolatry; in which they were so rooted, that there was little hope of converting them to the true religion. Therefore this is opposed to the love of the Lord their God; for the preserving of which in their hearts they are forbidden such marriages, (Josh. xxiii. 11, 12.) And indeed it was but a piece of natural equity, that they should abstain from such familiarity with those who would certainly undo them. Which made Abraham, before this law, charge his son Isaac, not to take a wife from among the Canaanites; and the same care was taken of Jacob. And when this law of Moses was abolished, the apostle warns Christians themselves against such unequal matches, (2 Cor. vi. 14.) The danger of which David had noted, Psal. cvi. 35, 36. "So will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you," &c. (See vi. 15.)

Ver. 5. *But thus shall ye deal with them.*] Or, *therefore thus shall ye deal with them;* that is, to prevent the forementioned mischief, he orders them to leave no relic of their idolatry remaining.

Ye shall destroy their altars.] The very same precept, Exod. xxxiv. 13.

And break down their images.] The very same words with these are in Exod. xxiii. 24. (only there it is said, *quite break down*), and in Exod. xxxiv. 13.

And cut down their groves.] There is the same mention of *asherim* (which we translate *groves*) in the place last named; only another word for cut down (see there). But Mr. Selden, both there and here, understands by *asherim*, wooden images of Astarte, a great goddess worshipped in that country: for which, among other reasons, he gives this, that Gideon is said to have thrown down the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove *that was by it*. So we translate it, Judg. vi. 25. 28. where, in the Hebrew, the last word is *alau*, which signifies *upon it*, and not *by it*: and so the LXX. Ἐπ' αὐτῷ. And therefore the *asherah*, which is said to be *upon* the altar, must not signify a *grove*, but an *image*; and none more likely than that of Astarte. (See de Diis Syris Syntagm. ii. cap. 2. and 2 Kings xxiii. 6, 7.)

And burn their graven images with fire.] As he was commanded to destroy their molten images, (Numb. xxxiii. 52.) that so no sort of image, nor any monument of their worship, might be left in the country, but all so entirely abolished, that they might have no incentive to idolatry. This was the work of the supreme governor, as Grotius prudently observes: for though out of private places it belonged to the lord of the place, or, if he were negligent, to the king, to remove idols, yet none but the supreme power might remove them out of public places, or such persons who were delegated thereby to that office. (See L. de Imper. Sum. Potest. circa Sacra, cap. 8. sect. 3.)

Ver. 6. *For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God.*] This is an argument frequently used, particularly in the book of Leviticus, why they should cleave to God alone; because he had separated them to himself by many peculiar laws, which no other people had but they. (Levit. xi. 44, 45. xix. 2. xx. 7. 26.)

The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.] As he had distinguished them from all other people by peculiar laws, so by special favours and singular privileges which no other nation whatsoever enjoyed. (See Exod. xix. 5, 6.) Some interpret the words *special people*, to signify that they belonged to none but him; and he had no other people but they; whom he had espoused to himself. From whence it is, that, as the Israelites are called God's *people*, so that country is called *his land*, (Psal. lxxxv. 1.) for there he dwelt by his special presence. And the king of that country is called God's *king*, (Psal. xviii. 50.) and he is said to sit on God's *throne*; and to be *Melech le Jehovah, king for the Lord*, (2 Chron. ix. 8.) and the kingdom is called the *kingdom of the Lord*, (xiii. 8.) and therefore with this argument Asa addresses himself to God in the next chapter, (xiv. 11.) for help in time of distress, because *he was their God;* and would not, he hoped, let their enemies *prevail against himself.* And accordingly these enemies are said to be "destroyed before the Lord, and

before his host," (ver. 13.) Jehoshaphat also exhorts the judges in that book to great caution, (2 Chron. xix. 6.) because they *judged not for man, but for the Lord.* And the prophet exhorts, in the following chapter, (xx. 15.) not to be afraid of a mighty host which came against him, because *the battle is not yours, but God's;* the cause in which they fought being his, more than their own.

Ver. 7. *The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you.*] To be his special people, as he calls them in the foregoing verse.

Because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people.] When God declared his love first to Abraham and his posterity he had no child, Gen. xii. 1—3. xv. 1, 2. And when he had, his family continued so small, after there were twelve heirs of the promise, that in the space of two hundred years they were but seventy persons, (Gen. xlvi. 27.) Nor do we read of any great increase of them till after the death of Joseph, which was near fourscore years more, (Exod. i. 7, 8, &c.) So St. Stephen observes, Acts vii. 17. "When the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt."

Ver. 8. *But because the Lord loved you.*] Because it was his good pleasure to single them out from all other people, to receive special tokens of his favour to them.

And because he would keep the oath, which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, &c.] Not for any desert of theirs; but to make good his promise confirmed with an oath, did he work their wonderful deliverance out of Egypt, (Gen. xv. 13, 14. xxii. 16, &c.)

Ver. 9. *Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God.*] He exhorts them therefore to preserve this sense in their mind, that their God is the only God.

The faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments, &c.] Who will not only faithfully keep his word and make good his promises, but do abundantly more than he hath promised to those that cleave unto him alone, and serve no other God: for it appears by the second commandment, that is peculiarly meant by *loving him.*

To a thousand generations.] See Exod. xx. 6.

Ver. 10. *And repay them that hate him.*] Punish all idolaters, who are peculiarly called *haters of God,* as I have often observed. (See Exod. xx. 5.)

To their face.] They themselves should live to see and feel the punishment of their idolatry. So the Chaldee paraphrases it, *Bacajehon, in their life.*

He will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.] Though he do not punish him immediately, yet he will not defer it long, but be avenged of him before he die. Therefore, when he threatens to punish them to the third and fourth generation, the meaning is not that he will only punish their posterity, but them with their posterity; whom they shall see destroyed before their face. For the fourth generation (as Maimonides observes) is as much as the oldest men commonly live to see.

Ver. 11. *Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them.*] All the laws of God, (see vi. 1.) especially this great commandment, to have no other God but him.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and mercy which he sware unto thy fathers.*] As faithfully fulfil his promises to them, as he did to their fathers.

Ver. 13. *And he will love thee.*] Continue his love to them.

And bless thee, and multiply thee.] This was the great promise made to their fathers, that he would make their posterity as numerous as the stars of heaven, and the dust of the earth, (Gen. xv. 5. xxii. 17. xxviii. 14.)

He will also bless the fruit of thy womb.] Preserve them from miscarrying, that so they might multiply.

And the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.] By giving them rain in due season, &c. (See Lev. xxvi. 4, 5.)

The increase of thy kind.] The Hebrew word *segar,* which we translate *increase,* the LXX. Vulgar, and Syriac, render the *herds.* But Onkelos and Jonathan translate it as we do, *the young ones which the mothers bring forth.* (See Bochart. par. i. Hierozoicon, lib. ii. cap. 30.)

And the flocks of thy sheep.] The Hebrew word *ashtaroth* comprehends flocks both of sheep and of greater cattle, as the same Bochart observes, par. i. Hieroz. lib. iii. cap. 43. and in his Canaan, lib. ii. cap. 2. where he observes, that the goddess Astarte, in those countries, was thought to preside over flocks of sheep and herds of oxen.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt be blessed above all people.*] He promises to make them as singular for his favours, as they were in their laws and manner of living.

There shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle.] See Exod. xxiii. 26.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness.*] Or remove from them the common diseases and infirmities of mankind; so that they should die in a good old age (as the Scripture speaks); which tended manifestly to their increase and multiplication.

And will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt (which thou knowest) upon thee.] Neither those blotches or biles which God, by an immediate hand, smote them withal, (Exod. ix. 9. xv. 26.) nor any other which they in that country were subject unto, peculiarly their filthy ulcers, called *Egyptiaca* and *Syriaca,* as Casaubon observes upon Persius, Sat. v. p. 467. with which the priests of Isis were wont to threaten and terrify poor people, if they did not worship her. In opposition to which our very learned Dr. Spencer thinks God made this special promise to his people, to preserve them from all such evil diseases, if they kept themselves pure from that Egyptian idolatry. Which is very ingenious, if the worship of Isis was so ancient as the days of Moses. (See lib. i. de Legibus Hebr. Ritual. cap. 3.)

And will lay them upon all them that hate thee.] And thereby disable them to hurt his people.

Ver. 16. *And thou shalt consume all the people, which the Lord thy God shall deliver thee.*] Utterly destroy all the people of Canaan, when they had conquered them, as he commanded them before, ver. 7.

Thine eyes shall have no pity upon them.] The reason of this severity was, because of their abominable wickedness, as I there observed.

Neither shalt thou serve their gods, for that will be a snare unto thee.] In the Hebrew, *and thou shalt not serve their*

gods, &c. This severity was used to prevent their being enticed by them to their idolatry, if they had suffered them to live among them.

Ver. 17. *If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are more than I; how shall I dispossess them?*] If such a diffidence began to arise in their hearts, as possessed their forefathers, (Numb. xiv.)

Ver. 18. *Thou shalt not be afraid of them, but shalt well remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt.*] He requires them immediately to expel all fear by faith in God; which the remembrance of what God had done for them, if seriously reflected on, might well work in them.

Ver. 19. *The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand*, &c.] Of all these he had put them in mind before, (iv. 34.) and now renews the remembrance of it, that the experience they had of God's power and goodness might banish all fear out of their hearts.

Ver. 20. *Moreover, the Lord thy God will send the hornet among them.*] Raise up enemies which they think not of to infest them, that is, unusual swarms of hornets, and of an unusual bigness, it is like, which came like an army upon them. (See Exod. xxiii. 28.)

Until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed.] Which should pursue those that fled from the Israelites, and sting them to death in their lurking-holes.

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt not be affrighted at them.*] Let all this inspire you with courage.

For the Lord thy God is among you, a mighty God, and a terrible.] The Sovereign of the world, of whose goodness you have had such long experience, dwells among you, and conducts and leads you, wheresoever you go: and who can stand before him? (See Exod. xvii. 7.)

Ver. 22. *And the Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee, by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee.*] Be not discouraged, though they be not destroyed all at once: there is great reason against that, concerning which see Exod. xxiii. 21. where this verse is explained.

Ver. 23. *But the Lord thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed.*] In time he will deliver them all up into thy hand; and thou shalt so overpower them, as to leave none of them remaining.

Ver. 24. *And he shall deliver their kings into thy hand.*] As he did, we read in the book of Joshua, xii. 7—9, &c. where thirty-one kings are enumerated, who were conquered by him.

And thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven.] There shall no memory, of so much as the names of such men, be left any where.

There shall no man be able to stand before thee until thou have destroyed them.] The kings and great men of the country being destroyed, their victory was easier over the rest.

Ver. 25. *The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire.*] This he had required before, ver. 5. but mentions it again, to let them know, that if they did not perform their part of the covenant (of which this was the chief), God would not destroy the inhabitants of Canaan totally. As we find he did not, Judg. ii. 2, 3. and for this very reason, as Joshua had told them, xxiii. 12, 13.

Thou shalt not desire the silver and gold that is upon them.] The Jews are too nice and curious who expound this only of the gold and silver clothes, or the chains, or other jewels of gold and silver, wherewith their images were adorned; because he saith, *upon them*. There is no reason to doubt but he means, that they should be destroyed, if they were entirely made of massy gold and silver; which they were not to convert to their own use: for thus Moses did with the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 20. and Jacob in ancienter time buried all the strange gods, as well as the ear-rings that were in their ears, (Gen. xxxv. 4.) And Josiah, in future ages, burnt every thing that had been employed to idolatry, even the vessels that were made for Baal, as well as the images, &c. and stamped them to powder, (2 Kings xxiii. 4. 6. 14, 15.)

Nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein.] Be drawn into a conceit, that there was something sacred in it, and so tempted to worship it.

For it is an abomination to the Lord thy God.] Whatsoever hath been employed to such idolatrous worship, is so detestable unto the Divine Majesty, that he will not have it converted to any ordinary and common use, but utterly destroyed.

Ver. 26. *Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thy house.*] And therefore he requires them not to bring any of that silver and gold which had belonged to those idols (which he calls *an abomination*) into their houses, to be employed unto any private use whatsoever: so the Jews understand these words, having made from hence one of their affirmative precepts: that no man should seek the least profit or benefit from any thing appertaining to an idol.

Lest thou be a cursed thing like it.] Every thing that was idolatrous was a *cherem*, devoted to destruction, as he saith in the last words, *it is a cursed thing*, which no man might meddle withal, (xiii. 17.) If he did, he became an accursed thing, *i. e.* was devoted to destruction, as the thing itself was. This was apparent afterward in the example of Achan, (Josh. vii.) who took a wedge of gold and a Babylonish garment for his own private use, when it had been made a *cherem* by God's express command, (Josh. vi. 17.) and therefore was stoned to death.

But thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it.] Not only look upon it as useless and unprofitable, but as hateful and execrable in the highest degree, and therefore to be entirely destroyed. All this tended to their preservation in the true religion; which taught them to have every thing contrary to it in the utmost detestation: insomuch, (as Maimonides interprets this precept, in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 37.) that if any man broke such images, or melted them down, and then sold the silver and gold, he committed an abomination; and the price of this being mingled with his other riches, proved the rust of them all. This he thinks is the meaning of bringing *an abomination into their house*. Which was so far from bringing a blessing (as the heathen imagined), that it brought a curse upon all that they had.

The Jews were so sensible of all this, after they had severely smarted for their idolatry, that they thought it unlawful to use any vessel that had been employed in sacrificing to a false god; nay, to warm themselves with the

wood of a grove that was cut down; or to sit under the shadow of it, for coolness' sake, while it was standing; or so much as to use the ashes of the wood that were left after the grove was burnt. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. juxta Discipl. Heb. cap. 7. p. 215, 216, &c.)

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *ALL the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do.*] He seems still to press them to have a special care to observe the ten commandments, and especially the first of them, (vi. 4—6.) For it appears by the latter end of this chapter that he hath a regard to that.

That ye may live.] Long and happily: for *life*, every one knows, frequently signifies all the comforts of life, as *death* signifies all manner of miseries.

And multiply.] Which is the effect of a long and happy life.

And go in and possess the land, &c. or, *after ye go in and possess the land, which the Lord sware unto your fathers.*] See vi. 18.

Ver. 2. *And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness.*] Whereby they were severely punished for the rebellion of their forefathers against him; which should be an admonition to them to be more dutiful. Others expound it of the care of God over them, in providing for them and protecting them, as well as leading them by a glorious cloud all that time; which doth well enough agree with what follows. (See ii. 7.)

To humble thee.] Or, to afflict thee with tedious wanderings up and down, backward and forward, without any certain dwelling-place.

And prove thee.] To try whether they would be better, by being kept so long out of the good land promised unto them.

And to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.] God knew perfectly how they were disposed towards him; but it was fit, that they should know themselves better, and posterity be instructed by their behaviour.

Ver. 3. *And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger.*] He afflicted thee, by suffering thee to want bread to eat, (Exod. xvi. 2, 3.)

And fed thee with manna.] But it was that he might have an opportunity to make a bountiful provision for such a vast multitude of people, as were fed by him every day from heaven, and teach them to depend on his good providence.

Which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know.] Exod. xvi. 15. He made an unusual, as well as an unexpected provision for them.

That he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only.] That it is not only our common food that preserves us.

But by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man live.] But by any thing whatsoever (for so *word* often signifies) which God shall please to command to give us nourishment. This was a wonderful encouragement to obedience, that God would rather work a miracle, than suffer them to want necessaries; and by a light aerial sort of bread, give them as great strength and vigour, as the most solid nourishment was wont to afford them. The remembrance of which could not but excite their posterity to love God, and serve him, if they often and seriously reflected on it.

Ver. 4. *Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.*] These were two other wonderful benefits, which, if well considered, could not but incline them to be obedient to him, who multiplied miracles to nourish and strengthen their faith and hope in him. The Jews, to increase the miracle, say, their clothes enlarged as they grew bigger, from children to men; and so did their shoes also: but there was no need of this; for the clothes and shoes of those men that died might serve their children when they grew up to their stature. And it was sufficiently amazing, without such additions, that their clothes should not so much as decay, nor their feet, by so long travelling in hot and stony places, have the least swelling in them, or, as some translate it, *grow callous.* There are those that refer this last clause not to their *feet*, but to their *shoes*; according to what we read, xxix. 5.

Ver. 5. *Thou shalt also consider in thine heart.*] Often reflect and ponder.

That as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.] All the afflictions which God had sent upon them, he would have them think, were not for their undoing, but for their amendment, and correcting what was amiss in them; and therefore ought to be thankfully acknowledged as well as his benefits.

Ver. 6. *Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.*] Howsoever therefore he dealt with them, it ought to have led them to obedience. In the repetition of this so often, Moses doth but practise his own lesson, which he had taught them, vi. 7. that they should *teach these words diligently to their children*, &c.

Ver. 7. *For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land.*] Therefore there was the greater need they should enter into it with the pious resolution beforementioned, *to fear God and walk in his ways.* Otherwise, they would be in great danger to be corrupted by such plenty and variety of all good things as this land afforded.

A land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills.] The Hebrew word *tehom*, which we translate *deep*, and in the plural number *depths*, signifies sometimes those great caverns of water that are within the ground, which were made by the plentiful rains, which God sent upon this country while they were obedient to him; which both made it fruitful (though now barren), and abounding also with water for their cattle, (Psal. lxxviii. 15. Ezek. xxxi. 4.) But it is here commonly interpreted *lakes*, or *wells* of water.

Ver. 8. *A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates.*] Plentifully stored with all things necessary for the support and pleasure of life.

A land of oil, olive, and honey.] The same word *debas*, which signifies *honey*, signifies also *dates*. And so De Dieu thinks it most reasonable to translate it here, being joined with four other sorts of fruits; and so Kimchi saith, the ancient Jews expounded it in this place, and in 2 Chron. xxxi. 5. where it is said, that *Israel brought in abundance*,

the first-fruits of corn, wine, oil, and honey, or *dates,* as we there translate it in the margin.

Ver. 9. *A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness.*] Be in no want of any sort of provision, which is comprehended under the name of *bread.*

Thou shalt not lack any thing in it.] No other conveniences of life.

A land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.] Where there are useful minerals, as plentiful as stones are in other places. These are the rather mentioned, because there were no such mines in Egypt, where they had long dwelt, and were stored with plenty of other things, (Numb. xi. 5.)

Ver. 10. *When thou hast eaten, and art full.*] After a liberal meal.

Then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.] Give solemn thanks to God, not only for that present repast, but for the plentiful provision he had made for them of all good things, in the land he had bestowed on them. From this place the Jews have made it a general rule, or as they call it an affirmative precept, that *every one bless God at their meals,* that is, as I said, give him thanks for his benefits: for he blesses us when he bestows good things upon us; and we bless him when we thankfully acknowledge his goodness therein: which is a natural duty which we owe to the Fountain and Original of all good.

Ver. 11. *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day.*] He would have their thanksgiving for his benefits leave such a sense of God upon their minds, as should make them careful to yield him an entire obedience.

Ver. 12. *Lest when thou hast eaten, and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein.*] Feasted in stately houses, wherein they enjoyed their ease.

Ver. 13. *And when thy herds and thy flocks are multiplied, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied.*] The sense of these two verses is, when they had great abundance of all good things within doors and without.

Ver. 14. *Then thine heart be lifted up.*] Which is an usual effect of great riches; as Euripides observes in that known saying of his, Ὑβριν δὲ τίκτει πλοῦτος, *wealth breeds pride, scorn, and contempt of others.* This Moses Kotzensis thought so great a sin, that he puts it among the negative precepts; and pretends he was warned in a dream so to do, though Maimonides, and others, had omitted it. And when he awaked, he was confirmed in it, by reading a place in the Gemara upon Sota, (cap. 1,) which saith, wheresoever we find these words in Scripture, *take heed lest,* there is a prohibition, as there is, ver. 11. and here, *to take heed* of pride: *for whosoever is proud, he shall be brought low,* as the Gemara there adds; which are, in a manner, the words of our blessed Saviour, (St. Luke xviii. 14.)

And thou forget the Lord thy God.] This is another common effect of large possessions, which make the owners of them fall into sloth and luxury, and such forgetfulness of the Donor of all good things, that they trust in uncertain riches (as the apostle speaks), and not in the living God, imagining now they can never want; not because God is so good, but because they have such store of good things laid up for many years.

Which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, and from the house of bondage.] No wonder if they forgot all his former benefits, when they were unthankful for the present.

Ver. 15. *Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness.*] See i. 19.

Wherein were fiery serpents.] See Numb. xxi. 6.

And scorpions.] These are commonly joined with *serpents* in Scripture, even in the New Testament, (Luke x. 19. xi. 12, 13.) being found in the same places, especially in this desert of Arabia.

And drought.] The Hebrew word *tsimmaon* signifies a *dry place,* as we translate it, Psal. cvii. 33. Isa. xxxv. 7. And that best agrees with what here follows, *where there was no water.*

Who brought thee forth water out of a rock of flint.] From which one would have sooner expected fire than water, (Numb. xx. 11.)

Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not.] Ver. 3. The great Salmasius, in a treatise on purpose about manna, hath said a great deal to prove that the manna which God sent the Jews did not differ in its form or substance from that which commonly fell in those countries, and doth so at this day: but herein consisted the miracle, that he gave them in a prescribed measure, and so abundantly, as to suffice such a vast number; and that every morning, in all seasons of the year. This made it a Divine manna; for the common fell only in small quantities, and not always, but at some times in the year.

That he might humble thee.] This word is commonly understood of humbling by affliction; which may seem not to belong to manna; for that was a singular benefit, being an excellent nourishment, and of a delicious taste: but they, having nothing else besides this to live upon, were soon tired with it, (as we find Numb. xi. 6.) And much more did it seem an affliction to them, to live upon one thing alone for forty years together; and God intended by it to humble them, at the same time that he was extraordinary kind to them.

And that he might prove thee.] Whether they would be thankful that they were not starved, and submit to his wise providence, and obey his laws; which they had the greater reason to observe, because it was evident they owed their very life and being to him every moment: for without new supplies every day from heaven, they had been famished in that desolate wilderness.

And do the good at thy latter end.] That in conclusion his kindness to them might be more thankfully received, and more safely enjoyed. So Maimonides expounds this passage, in his More Nevochim, (par. iii. cap. 24.) "God was pleased to accustom them to labour in the wilderness, that he might increase their happiness when they came into the land of Canaan. For this is certain, a transition from labour to rest is far sweeter than continual rest. Nor could they so easily have subdued the land, and overcome the inhabitants of it, unless they had endured some hardship in the wilderness. For rest and idleness take away men's courage; but labour and hard fare augments it. And this is *the good* (saith he) which was in the issue to redound to them by this wise dispensation of God's providence."

Ver. 17. *And thou shalt say in thine heart, My power, and the might of my hand, hath gotten me this wealth.*] Such vain conceits are apt to arise in men's minds, if they preserve not a sense of God, and of all his mercies to them.

Ver. 18. *But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth.*] Continually call to mind that they owed all they had, and the increase of it, to his almighty providence; without whom they could never have gotten possession of this land, nor have prospered in it.

That he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, &c.] He would have them sensible of their own unworthiness also (which would make them more grateful to him) of all the blessings God had bestowed on them, and acknowledge them to his mere goodness, and fidelity to his promises; for they had been a murmuring and rebellious people.

Ver. 19. *And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God.*] Luxury and pride (the usual effects of fulness) naturally made them unthankful and unmindful of God: and neglect of God's service made them easily fall to idolatry.

And walk after other gods, and worship and serve them.] The two last expressions are the explication of the first; for then they walked after the idols of the people (as Onkelos paraphrases it), when they worshipped and adored them. It is evident by this, that the drift of Moses, in all this discourse, is (as I observed before) to press upon them the first and great commandment.

I testify against you this day, that ye shall utterly perish.] See iv. 26.

Ver. 20. *As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face.*] He speaks in the present tense, because he was about to destroy them: and when he began, he destroyed them by little and little, (vii. 22.) and there were still more to be destroyed.

So shall ye perish, because ye would not be obedient to the voice of the Lord your God.] It was but just that they should perish as those nations did, because they fell into their sin.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *HEAR, O Israel.*] He begins a new exhortation to them, at some distance of time from the former, but still aiming at the same thing, to represent to them the danger of idolatry.

Thou art to pass over Jordan this day.] That is, shortly, not long hence; for it cannot be meant precisely: all these things being spoken in the eleventh month of the last year of their travels, and they passed not over Jordan till the first month of the next year. Between which and this time Moses died, and they mourned a whole month for him.

To go in to possess nations.] A country inhabited by nations; for the people themselves they were to destroy.

Greater and mightier than thyself.] Whom notwithstanding God would deliver up into their hands.

Cities great, and fenced up to heaven.] As the spies had represented them, (i. 28.) And they were, indeed, very strong cities, whose walls could not easily be scaled.

Ver. 2. *A people great and tall.*] See Numb. xiv. 28. 32.

The children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest.] Who seem to have been the chief of those Nephilim or Rephaim (which we sometimes translate *giants*) in those parts, (Numb. xiii. 22. 28. 33.)

Of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the children of Anak?] A common proverb in those days. The children of Anak being so famous, that the whole nation (as Bochartus thinks) took its name from them. For Bene-Anak (*i. e.* children of Anak), or Pheneanak, is easily changed into Phœnicia. These Anakims were vanquished by Joshua, who drove them out of the cities where they dwelt, and made them flee to the Philistines. Where a remnant of them seemed to have lived till the days of David. For Goliath, and his brethren Lahmi, Sippai, and Ishbibanob, (1 Chron. xx. 4, &c.) were Anakims; and so was that man with six toes on each foot, and six fingers on each hand, (2 Sam. xxi. 16.) for they were all born at Gath; which was one of the cities to which the Anakims fled, (Josh. xi. 22.) Some think that from hence kings, among the Greeks, were called Ἄνακτες, because commonly they chose those to rule over them who were persons of a great stature, and carried majesty in their faces. But it is not improbable (as I observed before) that some of the Anakims fled into Greece, and settled there, when they were driven out of Canaan.

Ver. 3. *Understand therefore this day.*] Settle this therefore in your minds, before you go over Jordan, as undoubted truth.

That the Lord thy God is he that goeth before thee.] Over Jordan, (Josh. iii. 3, 4, &c.)

As a consuming fire.] Before whom none can stand, (iv. 24.)

He shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face.] See Josh. iii. 10, 11. The Hebrews have a conceit, that the fire which burnt upon the altar appeared in the form of a lion; to shew what God would be to their enemies, if the Israelites obeyed him; otherwise, what he would be to them.

So shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them utterly, as the Lord hath said unto thee.] Not the whole seven nations entirely; whom he said God would drive out by little and little, (vii. 22.) but so many, as to make a settlement for themselves in Canaan without much difficulty.

Ver. 4. *Speak not in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out.*] When this is done, do not so much as entertain a thought.

For my righteousness hath the Lord brought me in to possess this land.] Nothing is more dangerous than pride and self-conceit; and therefore, as he taught them before (viii. 7.) to have an humble opinion of their own power, so now not to arrogate any thing to themselves, on the account of their own righteousness.

But for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee.] Lev. xviii. 24, 25. 27, 28.

Ver. 5. *Not for thy righteousness, or the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations,* &c. *and that he may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers,* &c.] It was of great moment (which makes him repeat it again) that they should understand the true causes why God expelled these nations, and gave their land to the Israelites; which were these two: first, the abominable wickedness of the Canaanites; for which they deserved to be rooted: secondly, God's gracious promises to the pious ancestors of the Israelites, with whom he made a covenant, and con-

firmed it with an oath, to plant them there, in the room of the former inhabitants.

Ver. 6. *Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness.*] He repeats it a third time, that, if it were possible, he might root out of the Israelites the opinion of their own deserts, before he rooted the Canaanites out of their country.

For thou art a stiff-necked people.] So far from being righteous, that they were very refractory. Of which God often complained, (Exod. xxxii. 9. xxxiii. 3. 5.) and Moses acknowledges it in his prayer to God for them, (xxxiv. 9.)

Ver. 7. *Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness.*] In order to destroy the opinion of their own righteousness, it was necessary to call to mind some of their most notorious provocations; which he exhorts them carefully to preserve in their mind, as a means to keep them humble.

From the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until you came to this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord.] This appears by the many murmurings we read of in the two first years after they came out of Egypt, and likewise in the last; of which only we have a particular account: but their behaviour, all the rest of the time they spent in the wilderness, was no better.

Ver. 8. *Also in Horeb ye provoked the Lord to wrath.*] Or rather, *even in Horeb* (for there is an emphasis in this, and he speaks it with some indignation); when they had newly received the law, and had a visible appearance of God in great glory upon Mount Sinai, and had entered into covenant with him, they so shamefully revolted from him, that he thought to have destroyed them, (Exod. xxxii. 7, 8, &c.)

Ver. 9. *When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the Lord made with you.*] See Exod. xxiv. 11.

Then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights; I neither did eat bread, nor drink water.] See Exod. xxiv. 18. xxxiv. 28.

Ver. 10. *And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone, written with the finger of God.*] See Exod. xxxi. 18.

According to all the words which the Lord spake with you in the mount.] See Exod. xxxiv. 28.

Out of the midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly.] When the whole body of the people were assembled, and heard God speak these ten words out of the midst of the fire. (See Deut. iv. 10—13.)

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the Lord gave me the two tables of stone,* &c.] That is, having given him the two tables, as was said before, ver. 10.

Ver. 12. *The Lord said unto me.*] Immediately after he had delivered to him the tables, (Exod. xxxi. 18. xxxii. 7.)

Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for the people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves, &c.] See Exod. xxxii. 7, 8.

Ver. 13. *Furthermore the Lord spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people.*] Who will not bend to the yoke of my laws, (Exod. xxxii. 9.)

Ver. 14. *Let me alone.*] Do not make any intercession to me for them.

That I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make of thee a nation greater and mightier than they.] See Exod. xxxii. 10.

Ver. 15. *So I turned, and came down from the mount.*] See Exod. xxxii. 15.

And the mount burnt with fire.] Was all in a flame, in token of God's high displeasure against them; and as if he intended presently to consume them.

And the two tables of the covenant were in my hand.] Exod. xxxii. 15.

Ver. 16. *And I looked, and behold, ye had sinned against the Lord your God, and had made you a molten calf.*] About which he found them dancing, (Exod. xxxii. 19.)

Ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which the Lord had commanded you.] For a few weeks before he had commanded them, with his own mouth, not to make to themselves any graven image, &c. (Exod. xx. 4.) And immediately after commanded Moses to repeat this precept particularly to them, "Not to make with him gods of silver or gold," (ver. 22, 23.)

Ver. 17. *And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes.*] By God's order, no doubt, in token that they had broken his covenant, and were unworthy to be owned by him for his people, (Exod. xxxii. 19.) or that the covenant was made void, and God no longer engaged to them.

Ver. 18. *And I fell down.*] To pray God for pardon; though not presently: but after he had broken the calf in pieces, reproved Aaron, and made a slaughter among the people, (Exod. xxxii. 20, 21, &c.)

As at the first.] When he first heard of their sin, Exod. xxxii. 11—13. and the next morning after he had broken the calf, and done execution upon the offenders, (ver. 30—32.)

Forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread nor drink water.] Exod. xxxiv. 2. 28.

Because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.] He spent this time, very much, in earnest supplication to God, to forgive not only this, but all other sins, whereby they had deserved to be cast off by him. For they provoked him at Marah, (Exod. xv. 23.) and in the wilderness of Sin, (xvi. 2, 3.) and at Massah, (xvii. 2—4.)

Ver. 19. *For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure wherewith the Lord was wroth against you, to destroy you.*] Which God had expressed both before he came down from the mount and after, (Exod. xxxii. xxxiii. 3. 5.) Insomuch, that the Lord removed out of the camp; and would not, for the present, dwell among them, (ver. 7.)

But the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also.] See Exod. xxxiv. 8—10. where the Lord tells him, he expected they should be more faithful hereafter, in observing their covenant with him, particularly this part, of worshipping no other God. (See there, ver. 10—14.)

Ver. 20. *And the Lord was very angry with Aaron, to have destroyed him,* &c.] This shews the heinousness of this sin, which had like to have cost Aaron his life; though he merely complied with the impetuous desire of the people, out of fear and want of courage to resist them.

Ver. 21. *And I took your sin.*] So idols are termed in Isa. xxxi. 7. The object or occasion of sin, as well as the punishment of it, being called by the name of *sin.*

The calf which you had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, and ground it very small, &c.] This he did before he went up the second time into the mount, (Exod. xxxii. 20.)

And I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount.] From the rock which Moses smote with his rod, (Exod. xvii. 6.) which constantly supplied them with drink; which for the present they could not have but mixed with their sin, as we read Exod. xxxii. 20.

Ver. 22. *And at Taberah.*] Besides this great sin committed at Horeb, he puts them in mind of several other, that they might be more humbled, and have no opinion of their own righteousness remaining in them. (See concerning this, Numb. xi. 1—3.)

And at Massah.] As the foregoing sin was committed after the making the golden calf, so this was before it, (Exod. xvii. 7.)

And at Kibroth-hattaavah ye provoked the Lord to wrath.] This provocation was immediately after that at Taberah, (Numb. xi. 33, 34.) All which three places had their names from the sin of the Israelites, or from their punishment.

Ver. 23. *Likewise.*] And yet this was not all.

When the Lord sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, Go up, and possess the land which I have given you.] Numb. xiii. 1—3.

Then ye rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God; and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his word.] Numb. xiv. 1—3. of which unbelief God there complains, ver. 11.

Ver. 24. *Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you.*] To comprise all in a few words, you have been a disobedient people ever since I was acquainted with you. So he suspected they would prove, (Exod. iv. 1.) and upon the first disappointment found it to be true, (Exod. v. 24, 25.)

Ver. 25. *Thus I fell down before the Lord forty days and forty nights, as I fell down at the first; because the Lord had said he would destroy you.*] Having interposed some other instances of their rebellious disposition, besides their making the golden calf, he returns to what he had begun to say concerning his intercession with God for a pardon; which he could not obtain without long importunity. For we cannot from these words gather, as some of the Jews do, that Moses was three times in the mount forty days and forty nights; it being plain, that he speaks here of the same time which he mentioned ver. 18. And if we should think he intended any other, we might conclude he was four times in the mount so many days and nights, because he mentions it over again in the next chapter, x. 10.

Because the Lord had said he would destroy you.] Exod. xxxii. 10. xxxiii. 5. This made him so earnest to obtain an assurance from God, that he would continue to be as gracious to them as he had been: of which he had given him some hope before he went up into the mount. (See Exod. xxiii. 17. xxxiv. 9, 10.)

Ver. 26. *I prayed therefore unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, destroy not thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness,* &c.] He used the same argument in his petition for them, when he went into the mount the second time, which he had urged before he came down the first time from it, (Exod. xxxii. 12.)

Ver. 27. *Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*] The very same he had said there, ver. 13.

And look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin.] He prays that the gracious promise of God to their pious forefathers would move him to overlook the high provocations of their posterity. Which he aggravates in several words, the more to humble them, and to magnify God's mercy in granting them a pardon. The word *stubbornness* seems to relate to their very evil disposition of mind; and their *wickedness* to all their undutiful murmurings; and their *sin* to their idolatry; which is often called in Scripture peculiarly by the name of sin: it being the highest provocation, from whence sprang all manner of wickedness. Thus Jeroboam is said to have *made Israel to sin*, by setting up the calves at Dan and Bethel to be worshipped.

Ver. 28. *Lest the land whence thou broughtest them out say, Because the Lord was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness.*] The sense of this also he had before urged, (Exod. xxxii. 12.)

Ver. 29. *Yet they are thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power,* &c.] They were redeemed by him out of the land of Egypt, and, after a wonderful manner, separated from all other people, to be his peculiar, (Exod. xix. 4—6.) And besides, having repented of this sin in making the golden calf, God had again owned them to be his, and promised his presence should go with them, (Exod. xxxiii. 14.) Insomuch, that Moses there saith, before he went into the mount again, (ver. 13.) "Consider that this nation is thy people." And see ver. 15, 16.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AT that time the Lord said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount.*] After his anger was something appeased, he ordered Moses to come up to him where he had been before, and bring with him two tables of stone like those he had broken, that God might renew his covenant with them. But there was this difference, (as I observed Exod. xxxiv. 1.) that God himself made the former tables, but he bade Moses make these: which signifies some abatement of his favour.

And make thee an ark of wood.] This command was given at his first going up into the mount, (Exod. xxv. 10.) and, perhaps, was renewed again now, upon the occasion of making these new tables which were to be put into it.

Ver. 2. *And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest.*] So we read he told him, Exod. xxxiv. 1.

And thou shalt put them in the ark.] As soon as it was made to receive them.

Ver. 3. *And I made an ark of shittim-wood.*] This looks as if he made an ark before he made the tables; that when he brought them down, it might be ready to receive them. And it hath given some ground to the Jewish doctors, to say that there were two arks; one made by Moses, wherein he put the tables of stone that were broken, and those that

were renewed, until the other was made by Bezaleel: for we read expressly, that *Bezaleel made the ark*, Exod. xxxvii. 1. and here it is said that Moses made it. So that they conclude there were two made; and this made by Moses they fancy was the ark that went before them in their marches and battles; which the other never did by God's order, but only when they entered into Canaan; (Josh. iii.) for when of their ownselves they carried it forth in the days of Eli, God was angry with them, and delivered it into the enemy's hand, (1 Sam. iv. 3, 4. 11.) But Aben Ezra, Nachmanides, and Abarbinel, have confuted this by strong reasons to the contrary, as may be seen in Buxtorf's Histor. Arcæ, p. 35, 36, &c. And as to this place, they are of opinion, that Moses speaks of the ark made afterward by Bezaleel, which Moses is said to have made, because he commanded him to make it. Just as Solomon is said to have built the temple, because he caused it to be built. Or, if it be granted that Moses made an ark before he went the second time into the mount (which this verse seems to countenance), it will not follow that there were two arks in use among the Israelites; for this ark now made was of mere wood, not overlaid with gold, and designed only as a chest wherein to keep the tables handsomely, till the ark could be made by Bezaleel, and then the tables were translated into that, and this chest of Moses laid aside.

And hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount.] See Exod. xxxiv. 4.

Ver. 4. *And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments.*] Exod. xxxiv. 28.

Which the Lord commanded you in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly.] When the whole congregation was gathered together at the foot of the mount. (See ix. 10.)

And the Lord gave them unto me.] To carry down to the people.

Ver. 5. *And I turned myself.*] From the Divine presence, where he had been supplicating for mercy, and had received from thence the tables of the covenant.

And came down from the mount.] At the end of forty days and nights, (Exod. xxxiv. 28, 29.)

And put the tables in the ark which I had made.] Which he commanded to be made by Bezaleel, (Exod. xxxvii. 1.) and put into the tabernacle as soon as it was built, with these tables in it, (Exod. xl. 20, 21.)

And there they be, as the Lord commanded me.] Though Moses mentions his making the ark before his hewing the tables, and going up into the mount, (ver. 3.) yet these words seem to determine that he speaks of the ark made by Bezaleel, according to his directions. For now that they were going over Jordan, the tables were in the ark, which he is said here to have made. Which was certainly *the ark of the covenant*, not that chest, which some suppose Moses to have made to keep the tables in till the other could be fitted for their reception.

Ver. 6. *And the children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth, of the children of Jaakan, to Mosera.*] Not immediately; but after they had passed through several other places, and made some stay in them: for they went from Bene-Jaakan to Gudgodah (or Hor-hagidgad), and so to Jotbath, and the rest of the mansions mentioned Numb. xxxiii. 32, 33, &c. until they came to Mount Hor.

There Aaron died, and there he was buried.] At Mosera, or the top of Mount Hor; which was another part of the same mountain, as Horeb was of Sinai.

And Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead.] The greatest difficulty is to give anaccount how this comes in here, and what connexion this and the following verse have with what went before. All the satisfaction that I can give to it is this, that Moses having told them, that he put the tables of the testimony or covenant into the ark, as a token God was reconciled to them, and that there they still were as the Lord commanded, he puts them out of all doubt of it, by telling them, that though Aaron (who had the special care of the holy place, and all things in it committed to him) was dead, yet Eleazar his son was still alive, who could testify those holy things remained, as when Moses first placed them there, he being consecrated to the priest's office instead of Aaron, and in this very mount, (Numb. xx. 25, 26, &c.) which is the occasion of mentioning this station here, when most of the rest are omitted.

Ver. 7. *And from thence.*] Not from Mosera, but from Bene-Jaakan, as appears from Numb. xxxiii. 32. where a full account is given of their removals, which are but just touched here.

They journeyed to Gudgodah.] Called in the book of Numbers by the name of Hor-hagidgad. And none will think it strange that there is such variation in the proper names of places and of men, in profane writers, as well as the Scriptures, who considers (as Conradus Pellicanus here notes) how differently the names of places are pronounced now, from what they were in former ages; and how much one nation differs from another, when they speak of them; and what alterations are made from the first founders of nations and cities by those that conquer them, and change all names to their own glory. See how names were changed among the Israelites in no long time, Numb. xxvi. 15—17. 23, 24. 35. 38, 39, &c.

And from Gudgodah to Jotbath.] And so to the rest of the places mentioned Numb. xxxiii. 34—36. till they came to Mount Hor.

A land of rivers of waters.] A place where there was plenty of water; which he mentions, I suppose, that they might reflect upon their foul distrust of God's providence a little after, when they murmured for want of water at Kadesh, (Numb. xx. 3, 4, &c.)

Ver. 8. *At that time.*] Not long after Moses came down from the mount the second time; of which he had been speaking, ver. 5.

The Lord separated the tribe of Levi.] To his own special service, as we read Numb. iii. Some think that God renewed his choice of them to the employment here mentioned after Aaron's death, when he confirmed them in their office. But we read of no such thing; and it cannot be inferred merely from these words, *at that time*, which may well relate to the time mentioned, ver. 5.

To bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord.] Here are three parts of their office mentioned in these and the following words. The first of which was to carry the ark; which peculiarly belonged to the Kohathites, (Numb. iii. 27. 31.) when the camp removed from one place to another. Who were good witnesses that the same ark still remained at that day wherein Moses first placed the tables of the covenant; for it never stirred but by their means.

To stand before the Lord.] This is a phrase used of ser-

vants that wait upon their masters, before whom they are said to stand. Thus Gehazi attended the prophet Elisha, (2 Kings v. 25.) And the prophets themselves are thus said to stand before the Lord, (1 Kings xvii. 1. xviii. 15.) Therefore it here signifies that the Levites were separated to be God's ministers, as it follows.

To minister unto him.] As assistants to the priests in the tabernacle, (Numb. iii. 6.) and as a guard to the tabernacle, (ver. 7, 8.) Which was the second part of their office.

And to bless in his name unto this day.] This was the greatest thing of all, and was peculiar to the priests, who were a part of the tribe of Levi, but had the sole privilege among them to bless in the name of the Lord, as we read expressly Numb. vi. 23, 24. If, indeed, it could be made out, that by *blessing in the name of the Lord,* is meant only to *bless the name of the Lord,* that was common to all the Levites, who sang praises and gave thanks continually to him in the temple, as I suppose they did in the tabernacle: but I find no example of the use of this expression in this sense; and therefore it must be restrained to the priests, who were sons of Levi, as well as the rest; and are so called when Moses mentions this part of their office, Deut. xxi. 5.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren.*] Because God would have them only attend to this service, and not look after other affairs; particularly of guarding the sanctuary, and keeping constant watch there, to secure all the holy things, especially the ark, which they took care none should meddle withal. And therefore the people might be sure it remained as Moses left it, when he put it into the tabernacle with the tables of the covenant in it.

The Lord is his inheritance, according as the Lord thy God promised him.] He took care to provide for the Levites, without having any land to plough or sow, &c. (See Numb. xviii. 20.)

Ver. 10. *And I stayed in the mount, according to the first time, forty days and forty nights.*] This doth not signify, that after the separation of the Levites he went up again into the mount, but having confirmed what he said concerning his putting the tables of stone in the ark, which he made after he came the second time down from the mount, (ver. 5.) he returns to what he was speaking of in the beginning of the chapter, and had begun to say before, (ix. 25.) how he prayed to God for them, when he went to carry the tables he had hewn up unto God in the mount, that now he might relate to them the success of his prayers, which follows in the next words.

And the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also, and the Lord would not destroy thee.] As he feared he would, because he had so threatened, ix. 15.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord said unto me, Arise, take thy journey before the people, that they may go in, and possess the land,* &c.] This cannot refer to what he said unto him after the making the golden calf, (as I find some take it from Exod. xxxiii. 1.) for that was before he went up into the mount again; but to what he said at the conclusion of their removals from place to place, (some of which he mentions here, ver. 6, 7.) for then he orders them what to do when they entered into Canaan, which, he saith, *I have given you to possess it,* (Numb. xxxii. 51—53.)

Ver. 12. *And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee?*] Unto whom he hath given tables, wherein he himself hath wrote his will with his own hand, (ver. 4, 5.) and hath graciously pardoned your foul breach of his covenant upon my intercession, (ver. 10.)

But to fear the Lord thy God.] The fear of God sometimes includes in it all religion; but here seems to signify one of the great principles of obedience. (See vi. 2.)

And to walk in all his ways.] Unto which the fear of God inclines men, when their hearts are possessed with it.

And to love him.] Especially if the love of God be in them; which is still a stronger principle of obedience, (vi. 1.)

And to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.] Being constant in his worship and service, and worshipping him alone, (vi. 13. xiii. 3.) For loving him with all the heart and soul, seems here to have particular respect to their having no inclination to serve other gods, (1 Kings viii. 23. 48.) Which the Jews, after they had smarted for their idolatry, understood to be the great commandment. As their father Jacob, they say, taught his twelve sons, when they came about him on his death-bed, saying to them: "Ye perhaps worship the idols which Terah, the father of Abraham, worshipped; or those which Laban, my mother's brother, worshipped; or ye worship the God of Jacob. To whom they all made this answer, with a perfect fear: Hear, O Israel, our father, The Lord our God is one Lord. Whereupon Jacob said, Let his great name be blessed for ever." Thus the Jerusalem Targum upon vi. 4. of this book.

Ver. 13. *To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command this day for thy good.*] Self-love should have inclined them to obedience to God's commands, which he gave them for their good; though he rewarded their obedience to them, as if he had received the benefit thereof.

Ver. 14. *Behold, the heaven.*] Where the sun, moon, and stars shine.

And the heaven of heavens.] And all the glorious regions beyond them.

Is the Lord's thy God.] Are all his possession, as they are his work.

The earth also, with all that therein is.] As well as this earth, and all the creatures that are in it.

Ver. 15. *Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people,* &c.] He would have them sensible, therefore, that the Possessor of heaven and of earth could have no need of them, or of their services, who were a very inconsiderable part of his creatures: but it was his own mere good-will and pleasure which moved him to shew such love to Abraham, as he had done, and to his posterity for his sake, above all other nations on earth.

Ver. 16. *Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart.*] Do not satisfy yourselves therefore with the bare circumcision of your flesh (and the observance of such external rites and ceremonies), but cut off and cast away all your naughty affections, which make you insensible both of God's mercies and corrections, and disobedient to his commands.

And be no more stiff-necked.] As he had often before complained they were, particularly Exod. xxxii. 9. and see ix. 6. of this book. It is a metaphor, as I observed, from oxen, who, when they are to draw in a yoke, and go for-

ward, pull back their neck and their shoulder to withdraw themselves from the yoke. To both which the Scripture alludes, Nehem. ix. 29. And sometime severally we find mention of them, as in the place beforenamed in Exodus, he speaks of their *stiff-neck;* and Zachar. vii. 11. he saith, "they pulled away the shoulder." St. Stephen puts both these together in his character of the wicked Jews that killed our blessed Saviour, Acts vii. 51. that they were *stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart.* Therefore the contrary disposition God promises towards the conclusion of this book, as the greatest blessing he could bestow on them, (xxx. 6.)

Ver. 17. *For the Lord thy God is God of gods, and Lord of lords.*] Superior to all other beings, whether kings on earth or angels in heaven.

A great God, a mighty, and a terrible.] Who can do what he pleases every where; and therefore is to be greatly dreaded.

Which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward.] The most righteous judge of men, who will not connive at your sins because you are circumcised, nor be bribed by any sacrifices to overlook your wickedness, (Exod. xxiii. 8. Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 17.) nor, on the contrary, reject those that uprightly obey him, though they be not Jews. So St. Peter learnt to understand these words, Acts x. 34.

Ver. 18. *He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow.*] Takes their part, as we speak, and defends them against those that would oppress them.

And loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.] Provideth for those who are driven unjustly out of their own country, or, travelling on their honest occasions, fall into want; for he seems here to speak of those who were neither proselytes of justice, nor of the gate, as the Jews speak, but were mere gentiles.

Ver. 19. *Love ye therefore the stranger.*] Be kind and hospitable to such distressed persons: which is a virtue that flows from the love of God, (ver. 12.) to which it is in vain to pretend, if we love not all mankind. This love consists in imitating God's care of such persons, whereof he speaks in the foregoing verse, *viz.* doing them justice equally with others, and affording them food and raiment.

For ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.] This virtue was peculiarly required of the Jews; who had been in that condition, which he commanded them to pity. (See Exod. xxiii. 9. Levit. xix. 33, 34.) And if they had sincerely practised this duty towards aliens, the grace of God shewn to the gentiles in our blessed Saviour, would not have seemed so strange to them as it did.

Ver. 20. *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, him shalt thou serve.*] This was explained before, ver. 12.

To him shalt thou cleave.] Serve, that is, and worship none but him.

And swear by his name.] See vi. 13.

Ver. 21. *He is thy praise.*] Whom thou oughtest therefore to praise; or rather, in whose love and favour thou oughtest to glory; and to think it the highest honour to be his servant, and to have him for thy God, as it here follows.

He is thy God.] Who hath bestowed upon thee all the good things which thou enjoyest.

That hath done for thee all these great and terrible things which thine eyes have seen.] In bringing them out of Egypt, destroying Pharaoh in the Red Sea, leading them through the wilderness, giving them the country of Sihon and Og, &c. Whom therefore they were bound to love and serve, and to confide in his mercy, and not in their own power or righteousness, (viii. 17, 18. ix. 4—6.)

Ver. 22. *Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons.*] See Gen. xlvi. 27. Exod. i. 5. Their family, he would have them remember, was very small about two hundred years ago.

And now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.] Vastly increased them, according to his promise unto Abraham, Gen. xv. 5. Exod. xii. 37. Numb. xxvi. 51. 62. Which alone (as Conradus Pellicanus here notes) was sufficient to fill their hearts with his love, and their mouths with his praise.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *THEREFORE thou shalt love the Lord thy God.*] Who of so small hath made thee so great a nation.

And keep his charge.] A phrase used frequently concerning the Levites, Numb. iii. 7, 8, &c. But here comprehends all the particulars following, *his statutes, and his judgments, and commandments,* which he had charged them to observe. (See vi. 1.)

Ver. 2. *And know you this day.*] Consider seriously what I have said to you, till you be sensible of it, (viii. 5. ix. 6.)

For I speak not with your children, which have not known, and which have not seen.] The words *I speak* are not in the Hebrew: and they may as well be supplied thus, *For not with your children have these things been done,* &c. Which agrees well with ver. 7.

The chastisement of the Lord your God.] The plagues he sent upon the Egyptians.

His greatness.] Which appeared by the many great things he did, only upon the stretching out of Moses's rod.

His mighty hand, and stretched-out arm.] These are more words to express the same thing.

Ver. 3. *And his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt.*] Or, *his miraculous acts,* &c. He uses so many words to make them sensible, how much they were obliged to God for their deliverance out of the slavery of Egypt; which nothing could have effected but God's almighty power, declared in various instances. This is the first argument wherewith he excites their love to God (which he pressed in the foregoing chapter, and begins this again with it), that God had loved them so much, as to work many astonishing miracles, rather than let them continue slaves to Pharaoh.

Ver. 4. *And what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots.*] Who pursued after the Israelites, and overtook them, (Exod. xiv. 6—8.) Whereby the kindness of God appeared, after he had delivered them, in preserving them from being brought back to their slavery.

How he made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you.] See Exod. xiv. 23, 24. 27, 28.

And how the Lord hath destroyed them unto this day.] Brought them so low, that they have not recovered their strength, to attempt any thing against you since that time.

Ver. 5. *And what he did to you in the wilderness, until*

ye came unto this place.] Provided for them, protected and preserved them forty years; giving them possession also of the country of Sihon and Og, two kings of the Amorites. These benefits, if they considered, which they could not but see they owed to his love alone, were powerful arguments to move them to love him.

Ver. 6. *And what he did to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben.*] Numb. xvi. 1, &c. The remembrance and consideration of the terrible vengeance the Lord took upon rebellious people, he uses as another argument to make them obedient. And there was none more remarkable than this upon Dathan and Abiram. He doth not mention Korah; but they would not well forget him, when they thought of his confederates, though he suffered another punishment.

How the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households and their tents, &c.] See Numb. xvi. 32, 33, &c.

Ver. 7. *But your eyes have seen the great acts of the Lord, which he did.*] In Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, (ver. 3—5.) Some of which all of them had seen; and there were none of them who had not seen some.

Ver. 8. *Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day.*] Remembering what had befallen both their enemies and themselves.

That ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither you go to possess it.] In hope that the same God would empower them to subdue the Canaanites, and give them full possession of their country.

Ver. 9. *And ye may prolong your days in the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed.*] This may relate both to the present generation, and to their posterity; who, after their fathers had lived long in the land of Canaan, should succeed them, and enjoy it in future ages. (See ver. 21.)

A land that floweth with milk and honey.] This is a common description, in all authors, of a rich and pleasant country. Particularly in Euripides:

Ῥεῖ δὲ γάλακτι πέδον,
Ῥεῖ δ' οἴνῳ, ῥεῖ δὲ μελισσῶν
Νέκταρι———

And the like Bochartus hath observed in Virgil, Horace, and other writers, (Hierozoic. lib. iv. par. i. cap. 12.)

Ver. 10. *For the land, whither thou goest to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out.*] He uses all manner of arguments to persuade them to obedience; from a grateful remembrance of God's former mercies, (ver. 2, 3, &c.) from the terrible punishment of the disobedient, (ver. 6.) from the benefits that would redound to themselves by their obedience, (ver. 9.) and now he represents to them what a noble country he was going to bestow upon them: but of such a condition as would keep them in a constant dependance upon his favour for the blessing of it.

Where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs.] This doth not signify that the land of Egypt was not so fruitful as the land of Canaan (for their fertility is not to be compared), but that there they reaped the fruits of their labour with more pains. Diodorus Siculus, indeed, and Herodotus, say, that the Egyptians take the least pains of all other men about their corn, insomuch that it may be affirmed, ἀπονητότατα καρπὸν κομίζονται, *they bring in the fruits of the earth without labour,* being at no such trouble about ploughing as other men are, &c. (See in his Euterpe, cap. 14.) Yet it must be considered, that as the Nile, which made this fruitfulness, failed them sometimes, and did not overflow all the flat country, so the upper parts of Egypt had not the benefit of it; nor all the lower neither, without great pains in cutting rivers to bring the water to them. Which Pliny calls *rigua Nili;* for the word *rigua* properly signifies the *little rivers,* and διώρυγες *cuts,* which were made to derive water from the Nile into places at a distance from it, as Salmasius observes, p. 588. in Solinum. Hesychius calls them δοχὰς ὑδάτων, *receptacles of water, ditches,* or *dikes,* which we now call *canals,* as the same author observes, p. 908. And this I find Strabo speaks so plainly in his Geography, (lib. xvii. p. 788.) that his words may serve as a good commentary upon those of Moses: "Nature (saith he) doth much for Egypt by the Nile; but industry and art about that river doth a great deal more. For the higher it flows, the more ground it naturally waters and makes fruitful; Ἀλλὰ ἡ ἐπιμέλεια πολλάκις καὶ τῆς φύσεως ἐξίσχυσεν ἐπιλειπούσης, &c. *but industry sometimes hath prevailed when nature hath failed:* insomuch, that as great a part of the country hath been watered in the smallest rise of Nile, as in the highest. Which was effected, διὰ τῶν διωρύγων καὶ τῶν παραχωμάτων, *by the cuts and banks which were made by art.* For before the time of Petronius (he saith) there was the greatest fruitfulness when the Nile rose fourteen cubits; and when it rose only eight there was a famine: but in the time of his government there was as great plenty when it rose only twelve cubits: and no man felt any want when it rose only eight. This was by the care and industry of the people, who were forced also sometimes to carry water from these cuts, as well as from the river, in vessels, to moisten the ground, when the mud which the Nile left was baked into a crust by the great heat of the sun. So that the ground of Egypt might properly be said to be *watered* by the *foot,* as we water our gardens when there wants rain." Concerning which expression, see Dr. Hammond upon the Psalms, p. 7. col. 2, of the first edition.

Ver. 11. *But the land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven.*] Not a low flat country like that of Egypt; but full of hills, which could not be made fruitful but by rain from heaven, which seldom fell in Egypt; but the Israelites might expect in due season, if they were obedient to God. Who, by this means, after they had ploughed their ground, and sowed their corn, made it spring up plentifully without any further labour or care of theirs. Such a country also was more pleasant and healthy than that of Egypt, whose ground next Nile being overflowed more or less every year, by the rising of Nile to the fall of it, (which was from the solstice to the equinox, or, as some say, a hundred days; see Salmasius upon Solinus, p. 427, &c. 436, &c.) they could not walk abroad into their fields; and many times there followed, after the water was gone off, great sicknesses and diseases, by the smell of the silt which it had left behind.

Ver. 12. *A land which the Lord thy God careth for.*] Takes care that it want not water, by sending showers of rain plentifully from heaven in their proper season.

The eyes of the Lord thy God.] That is, the providence of God; whose majesty dwelt in the sanctuary.

Are always upon it.] To see what is wanting, and to supply it.

From the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year.] At all seasons, to give them both the first and latter rain, (as he speaks ver. 14.) and such weather as might both produce and kindly ripen the fruits of the earth. This he mentions as an argument to obedience; in which, if they failed, he plainly tells them, the land should not yield her fruit, (ver. 17.) For this country was not so fertile of itself, as by the peculiar blessing of God upon it, whilst they kept his laws.

Ver. 13. *And it shall come to pass, if ye will hearken diligently unto my commandments, which I command you this day.*] To *hearken diligently* here signifies, to consider them seriously, and lay them to heart.

To love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart, and all your soul.] He repeats this so often, because it is the great commandment (as our Saviour speaks), and because nothing is more natural than to love our benefactors, God especially (our greatest benefactor, who gave us our being), with all our heart, and with all our soul. (See x. 12.) And being the first and great commandment, it draws along with it obedience to all the rest, and is, in effect, the whole duty of man to God. For constant experience shews us, that whosoever gets the firm hold of this affection, governs a man as he pleaseth.

Ver. 14. *That I will give you the rain of your land.*] As much as is sufficient for such a hilly country.

In his due season.] At the proper times, which here follow.

The first rain.] Before the sowing of their seed, to prepare the ground; and after it was sown, that it might take root in the earth, and spring up.

And the latter rain.] When the corn was grown up towards earing-time; and after it was eared, to make the ears full and plump. This appears from Amos iv. 7. where he speaks of withholding the rain from them, while there were *yet three months to the harvest.* Which is meant of this latter rain, whereby their corn was brought forward, when it was but in the blade to earing, and so on to harvest.

That thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.] Till the corn, and all the fruits of the earth, be brought to maturity.

Ver. 15. *And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle.*] To make them fat; or to give plenty of milk.

That thou mayest eat, and be full.] Eat flesh if they pleased, as well as the fruits of the earth, in great plenty.

Ver. 16. *Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived.*] By the specious colours that other nations put upon their idolatry, (as, the *antiquity* of it, *universal consent*, &c. there being no part of the world at that time, as Maimonides observes, where all were not accustomed to worship images, &c.) whereby the Israelites were in danger to be seduced into an imitation of their neighbours.

And ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them.] By this it is evident that Moses is still pressing them to care in observing the first and second commandments.

Ver. 17. *And then the Lord's wrath be kindled against you.*] For their being *deceived* into idolatry by false reasonings, which persuaded them what they did was lawful, did not excuse them before God; who expected they should have used greater caution, and governed themselves by his plain and express commands.

And he shut up the heavens, that there be no rain.] The contrary to this is called *opening his good treasure*, Deut. xxviii. 12. signifying that they lived upon the royal bounty of the King of heaven, which their sins would hinder from flowing to them.

That the land yield not her fruit, and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the Lord giveth you.] To withhold rain from them was a sore judgment, which quickly brought a famine; which was very grievous to those who used to live so plentifully. And it was frequently attended with various diseases, whereby they were wasted and consumed.

Ver. 18. *Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart, and in your soul.*] See chap. vi. 6.

And bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.] Always in sight; as the rule whereby they should order their steps, lest they trod amiss. This is one of the portions of Scripture, (from ver. 13. to the end of ver. 21.) which the Jews write in their *tephilim*, as they call them, which they use when they say their prayers, which they fancy are thereby made more acceptable unto God. This conceit began, not long before our Saviour's time, in the school of Hillel and Shammai, and took such root in the minds of the most religious, that it hath grown to a great superstition ever since. See upon chap. vi. ver. 8, 9. which is another portion of Scripture, that they wrote in these parchments; though at the first (St. Jerome saith, upon Matt. xxiii. 5.) they wrote only the ten commandments.

Ver. 19. *And ye shall teach them your children.*] This is repeated very often, (iv. 10. vi. 7.) And out of this place, and v. 1. the Jews have framed this as one of the affirmative precepts, *that they ought themselves to learn the law of God, and teach it unto others.* And this they do so diligently, that, as soon as their children are capable to understand any thing, they make them carefully read the holy books; and instruct them so, that, before they can be called youths, they are acquainted with the whole law of God. In which, we must confess, they shame a great many Christians, who scarce understand so much of our religion when they are men and women, as the Jews do of theirs when they are mere children.

From the Hebrew word *limmalethtem*, in this verse, *ye shall teach them*, the Jews have framed a conceit that their Talmud hath its name; signifying *teaching* and *instruction*, as R. Jechiel saith, in his disputation with Nicolaus, p. 9.

Speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, &c.] Taking all occasions to inculcate these precepts upon them, (see chap. vi. 7.) and upon their daughters as well as their sons; though the Jewish doctors commonly fancy there is no command to instruct their daughters in the law. (See Mischna Sota, cap. 3. sect. 3. with Wagenseil's Annotations, and the Gemara there, p. 471. 501.)

Ver. 20. *And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.*] See chap. vi. 9. By this means God's word being so rooted in the hearts of the parents (to use the words of Dr. Jackson), as to bring forth this good fruit in their practice, the seed of it might be sown

in the tender hearts of their children, and be propagated from one generation to another.

Ver. 21. *That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give them.*] Nothing is wont to move men more than love to themselves, and love to their children, whom they love next to themselves.

As the days of heaven upon the earth.] As long as this world shall last. Which the Psalmist, speaking of David, expresses in this manner, "His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven," (Psal. lxxxix. 29.) which doth not signify absolutely *for ever*, but a long time. For thus Baruch says, the Jews in Babylon were commanded to pray for the life of Nebuchadnezzar, and the life of Baltasar his son, ἵνα ὦσιν αἱ ἡμέραι αὐτῶν ὡς αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, *that their days might be as the days of heaven upon earth.* Which is the very phrase of Moses here in this place, importing a very long life. And such hyperbolical expressions, every one knows, are used by the heathen, particularly by Virgil, (Æneid. 1.)

—— "Convexa polus dum sidera pascet."

Ver. 22. *For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments,* &c.] To love the Lord your God. This is still made the condition of all their happiness. (See ver. 13. and x. 20.)

To walk in all his ways.] In observance of his laws, which was the fruit of true love to him.

And to cleave unto him.] So as to serve no other God, but to persevere in the worship of the Lord their God alone. The Jews make this one of the six hundred and thirteen precepts of the law (as they count them) distinct by itself; but they interpret it foolishly; of *sticking to the cabala of their wise men,* whereby they fancy themselves united unto God.

Ver. 23. *Then will the Lord drive out all these nations from before you.*] As he had often promised, (vii. 23. Exod. xxiii. 27.)

And ye shall possess nations greater and mightier than yourselves.] See chap. vii. 1.

Ver. 24. *Every place wherein the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours.*] That is, every place of the promised land; as it is explained in the next words.

From the wilderness.] *viz.* Of Sin, which was on the south of Canaan.

And Lebanon.] Which was its bounds on the north.

From the river, the river Euphrates.] Which was the eastern limits; when in the days of Solomon their empire reached hither; according to the promise unto Abraham in Gen. xv. 18.

Even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be.] Which is called the Mediterranean, or the Midland Sea, which bounded it on the west. See Numb. xxxiv. 6. where it is called the Great Sea; and in that chapter the bounds of their country round about are described.

Ver. 25. *There shall no man be able to stand before you.*] See vii. 24.

For the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you, and the dread of you, upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he said unto you.] For God had promised to terrify the inhabitants of Canaan, and take away their courage, (Exod. xxiii. 27.) And accordingly the spies whom Joshua sent, brought him an account of the great consternation wherein the whole country was, when they were about to enter into it. (Josh. ii. 9. 24.)

Ver. 26. *Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse.*] That is, he proposed them to their choice.

Ver. 27. *A blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day.*] Which he more largely explains, xxviii. 2—4, &c.

Ver. 28. *And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God.*] Which is also more particularly laid before them, xxviii. 15—17, &c. The whole historical part of the Old Testament witnesses the truth of this, that God blessed or cursed them, according as they observed or broke his laws. And if the people of Israel had diligently marked, and considered, and laid to heart, that their happiness or misery were always corresponding to their good and bad behaviour towards God, it would have confirmed their belief of their law, as much as if they had seen all the miracles done before their forefathers, and supplied the want or the rarity of them in after-ages; nay, this would have done more than all the miracles did, which were forgotten in a short time; whereas their own daily experience of the happy fruits of obedience, and the mischief of disobedience, would have sealed these truths unto their conscience.

But turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods which ye have not known.] It was not every sin that turned God's favour from them; but their idolatry and apostacy from him: against which he principally warns them, throughout all these chapters, iv. 3, 4. 15, 16. 23. v. 32. vi. 4. 14. vii. 4, 5. 25. viii. 19. ix. 12. x. 20.

Ver. 29. *And it shall come to pass, when the Lord thy God hath brought thee into the land, whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt put the blessing upon Mount Gerizim, and the curse upon Mount Ebal.*] To quicken them unto a strict care in their obedience, blessings and cursings were to be pronounced with great solemnity at their first entrance into the land of Canaan; as is more fully ordered xxvii. 11, 12, &c. and performed by Joshua, (viii. 33—35.) And Moses seems to enjoin them the like solemnity, every seventh year, xxxi. 10—13.

Ver. 30. *Are they not on the other side Jordan.*] With respect to the place where Moses now was, the mountains he mentions were on the other side of Jordan, in the land of Canaan. In which they had no sooner got footing, but Joshua took care to execute this command; that their hearts might be possessed with a sense upon what terms they were to enjoy it. And he describes the places so particularly, that they might be sure to know them.

By the way where the sun goeth down.] On that side which inclined to the west.

In the land of the Canaanites.] The people particularly so called, who were one of the seven nations; some of which lived here in the east, and others near the Midland Sea. As I have observed upon Gen. xv. 21.

Which dwell in the champaigne over against Gilgal.] Some think these mountains were at such a considerable distance from Gilgal, that they cannot be said to be *over against Gilgal;* because this phrase signifies them not to be far off one from the other. And therefore they translate these words, *looking towards Gilgal.* But it is not

said, that the mountains were over against Gilgal, but the dwelling of the Canaanites (in whose country these mountains were) was over against it.

Beside the plain of Moreh?] Of which mention is made Gen. xii. 6. where the Canaanites are also mentioned as in that land, when Abraham came into it. Which suggests to us, that these blessings were pronounced in that very place where Abraham anciently dwelt, and where he worshipped God, who there appeared to him.

Ver. 31. *For ye shall pass over Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the Lord your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein.*] He would have them be as careful in this matter, as it was certain that they should shortly go over Jordan, to take possession of the country which God was about to bestow on them; which he assures them they should get possession of, and settle themselves therein.

Ver. 32. *And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and judgments which I set before you this day.*] But then do not forget what I have so often said to you, which he thought he could not inculcate enough. (See iv. 40. v. 32. vi. 1. vii. 11. viii. 1, &c.)

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *THESE are the statutes and judgments which ye shall observe to do, in the land which the Lord God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess,* &c.] Now, I suppose, he begins a new exhortation, which he made to them at some small distance from the former. And he enters upon it with the same words, which he used before, vi. 1. ix. 1. which could not be too often repeated, considering the great proneness of the people to neglect their duty.

Ver. 2. *He shall utterly destroy all the places wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods.*] So that no opinion should be left of their being sacred places by any relic or memorial of the old idolatry remaining there. It was not sufficient that the gods which the seven nations worshipped were abolished, but the very places also where they were worshipped were to be made common, and employed to other uses.

Upon the mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree.] These were the places where the ancient heathen chose to worship their gods, imagining their sacrifices were more acceptable upon mountains than in valleys. Lucian himself gives this reason for it, because men were then nearer to the gods, and so more easily obtained audience: Ὅτι τῶν εὐχολέων ἀγχόθεν ἑπαΐουσι οἱ θεοί. And Tacitus saith the same in the last of his Annals. Demons also were wont to haunt woods and shady places, and there appear to men: and were thought also to be the presidents of mountains; others of woods and forests. And accordingly the heathen erected altars to them in these and such-like places, particularly under great oaks, which were held sacred places, where their gods were thought to have a peculiar power. By this law therefore God intended to root out this superstition; and commanded his tabernacle to be built low and humble. And though afterward the temple was set upon a hill, there was only one, and no more: and therefore it could not be thought to be out of any opinion that a hill was more sacred than another place.

And under every green tree.] Nothing can illustrate these words more, than what Pliny saith, in the twelfth book of his Natural History, concerning trees; which thus begins, *Hæc fuere numinum templa,* &c. "*These were the temples of the gods;* and even now the simple people, after the ancient rites, dedicate to God such trees as excel the rest. Nor do we more adore the images glittering with gold and ivory, *quàm lucos, et in iis silentia ipsa, than we do the groves, and the solemn silence therein.*" And then he reckons what trees were peculiarly sacred to Jupiter, Apollo, Minerva, &c. concluding that several of their gods, such as the Sylvani, Fauni, and some of their nymphs, had their names from woods. This was a thing so notorious, that in their most sacred solemnities, they were wont to present the gods whom they worshipped with a crown or garland made of boughs and leaves of such trees in which they were thought to delight; as to Jupiter, a crown of oak; to Apollo, of laurel; to Minerva, of olive; to Venus, of myrtle; to Bacchus, of ivy; to Rhea, Pan, Neptune, and Vulcan, of pine, &c. (See Ezek. Spanhemius upon Callimachus's hymn to Diana, ver. 200.)

Ver. 3. *And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and you shall hew down the graven images of their gods.*] See vii. 5. and Lev. xxvi. 1. He mentions all these so particularly, because this is the very foundation and hinge of the law (as Maimonides speaks), that all opinion of the sanctity of such things should be blotted out of men's hearts, and the memory of them extinguished, More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 29. where he reckons abundance of things of this kind, which were among the old idolaters called Zabii.

And destroy the names of them out of that place.] From this, and such-like places, the Jews have framed this affirmative precept, that *the gentile idolatry is by all means to be destroyed.* For these nations having forfeited their land by their abominable wickedness, and God having bestowed it upon the Israelites, (whom he took for his peculiar people, and among whom he dwelt, and therefore calls this *his land,* see vii. 6.) he, as the King of the country, might enjoin what orders he pleased to have observed. And it was of the highest concernment, that there should not be the least footstep of the old idolatry left in the country; but that he who was the Lord of it, and the Lord of heaven and earth, should be alone acknowledged and worshipped. And there was a greater reason for this than at first sight may be imagined: for, as the host of heaven was worshipped, as the glorious bodies wherein their gods inhabited (which was the reason of the best of the heathen for this worship), so their demons were supposed to dwell in the images and pillars which for that end were erected to them; the sovereign celestial gods being worshipped in the sun, moon, and stars, wherein they were thought to dwell, and these petty deities, the demons, were worshipped in images and columns, which were made for them, and for no other deities, as our Mr. Mede observes, par. i. p. 778.

Ver. 4. *Ye shall not do so unto the Lord your God.*] That is, not serve him upon the mountains, nor in groves, nor under green trees. Which appears to be the sense, both from the foregoing words, (ver. 2, 3.) and from the following opposition in the next verse. And it is very probable, that, during their continuance in the wilderness, none sacrificed in high places, but offered all at the door of the tabernacle, which was not far from them. When they came

into Canaan, and were many of them at a distance from the tabernacle, they did sacrifice in high places; and we do not find them reproved for it while they worshipped the Lord alone, and had priests who officiated there, and in other places, according to the precepts of the law: but when the temple was built, and the ark of God's presence no longer removed from place to place, the prophets required them not to sacrifice any longer in high places, nor any where else, but only at the temple. And they blamed even good kings for not taking away the high places, though no sacrifices were offered upon them to any strange god, but to the true God alone. Which connivance proved in time a great mischief; for here they first began to worship strange gods, the Israelites being very prone to choose mountains, and such shady places (as the rest of the world did), wherein to set up their images, (2 Kings xvii. 10, 11. Ezek. xx. 28. Hosea iv. 13.)

Ver. 5. *But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes.*] Unto one certain place which God intended to set apart; unto which all the tribes should resort, as the only place where they might sacrifice. By which means the notion of the unity of God was preserved, and his worship kept pure and sincere, as long as they kept to this one place, where the priests of God constantly attended, to see his service rightly performed.

To put his name there.] By the *name* of God is meant God himself (as to *call upon his name*, is to call upon him), and therefore the sense is, where he would make his dwelling-place, by settling the ark, and the cloud of glory there, which was the token of his presence. This place at first seems to have been Mispeh, and afterward Shiloh. And when that was destroyed, the ark removed to several places (Kirjath-jearim, Mizpeh, Gilgal, Nob, Gibeon, the house of Obed-Edom), till at last it settled at Jerusalem. Where, when the temple was built, God saith to Solomon, "I have chosen this place to myself, for a house of sacrifice," (2 Chron. vii. 12.) Which is the plain sense of these words, *choose a place to put his name there.*

Even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come.] This explains what he means by the place where he would *put his name, viz.* the place where his sanctuary was settled, which was his habitation; where he placed his majesty (as Onkelos paraphrases), that all might repair thither, to seek his grace and favour.

Ver. 6. *And thither ye shall bring your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices.*] By *sacrifices*, as distinct from *burnt-offerings*, must be meant their *sin-offerings* and *peace-offerings.* And the latter of these were sometimes for mercies received, and sometimes free-will-offerings, or vows, as we read in Lev. vii. 12. 16. Which, if they had been bound, as oft as there was occasion, to bring to one certain place (Jerusalem suppose), though they were at never so great distance from it, it would have been an intolerable expense to devout people. And therefore the Jews think the meaning is, that they were bound to these sacrifices, either for offences committed, or for mercies received, &c. at the next feast at the farthest; and not to defer them beyond that time. (See Dr. Lightfoot in his Temple Service, p. 99, 100. of the first edition.)

And your tithes.] Not those which were to be paid to the Levites, or by them to the priests, but another tithe which was to be set aside, after that to the Levites was paid, and employed as is directed, xiv. 22, 23, &c. (See here below, ver. 17.)

And heave-offerings of your hand.] The *first-fruits*, as the LXX. and Vulgar Latin rightly translate it, *viz.* of corn, and wine, and oil, and other fruits of the earth. Which are called the *heave-offerings of their hand*, because they brought them in their own hand; and having heaved them up to the Lord, they gave them to the priests. (See Numb. xviii. 11, 12. and Deut. xviii. 4. xxvi. 4. 10.)

And your vows, and your free-will-offerings.] Which were comprehended before under the name of *sacrifices*, but here more particularly expressed, to signify, that though they might choose whether they would offer them or not, or whether they would vow them, yet they could not choose the place where they should be offered (if they vowed, or were disposed to it), but must be determined by this law.

And the firstlings of your herds, and of your flocks.] This shews, that the *heave-offerings of their hand* comprehend only the first-fruits of the earth; besides which, these *firstlings* also belonged to the priests, (Numb. xviii. 15—17.)

Ver. 7. *And there ye shall eat.*] Their part of the things beforementioned; the people being wont, in ancient time, before the law of Moses, to feast upon part of the sacrifices of peace-offerings; as appears from Exod. xviii. 12. xxxiv. 13, 14.

Before the Lord your God.] Not in the tabernacle or temple, where only the priests might eat the most holy things, which were peculiarly theirs, (Numb. xviii. 10.) but in some place very near to the sanctuary: it being the custom of other people (and perhaps before the time of Moses) to feast with their gods in their very temples, or near their altars, according to that of the apostle, 1 Cor. viii. 10. Therefore God entertained his people also at his own house, commanding them here, and in other places, to eat their sacrifices *before him* at his sanctuary, and no where else; that is, in some place adjacent to the sanctuary. Whereby they declared that they had communion with him, and not with idols, by partaking with him at his table, that is, his altar: for there could be no need of their eating there, but only to signify this, and to secure them in his religion by feasting in his presence, and thereby owning themselves to belong to him. This is repeated very often in this book, (ver. 18. of this chapter, xiv. 23. 26. xv. 20. xvi. 5.) but especially xxvii. 6, 7. where they are required, before the temple was built, to eat their sacrifices near the altar which was erected after they came over Jordan. This being a profession of the true religion, to eat at God's altar, as to eat of things sacrificed to idols was to profess the heathenish religion. So all have understood it, as Elmenhorstius hath shewn from a great heap of authors, in his Annot. ad Minutium Fœlicem, fol. 69.

And ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee.] This signifies either that they should rejoice at these feasts in the goodness of God, who had blessed the labour of their hands (of which the tithe they brought thither was a fruit), or that, doing thus, God would bless all their future labours, and make them and their families prosper, and take comfort in all their enjoyments.

Ver. 8. *Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day.*] This doth not signify, as if there was no civil government, or that the courts of justice did not sit

and execute judgment between man and man, but relates to the place of offering sacrifice, (as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 15. n. 4.) which, in their wandering condition, they did not so strictly observe as God expected when they came to be settled. Our learned Dr. Spencer thinks it relates also to other old customs, which were rather childish than profane; and therefore tolerated by God for the present. To which he thinks those words of St. Paul have respect, Acts xiii. 18. Many things also perhaps they omitted, which they could not, or did not, observe in the wilderness; as their new moons, and other solemn days; with several rites of purification and cleansing prescribed by the law of Moses.

Every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.] This doth not import that there was no good order kept among them, or that they were left at liberty to sacrifice where they pleased; but that, in such an uncertain state, when they were removing from place to place, many took the liberty in such matters to do as they thought good.

Ver. 9. *For ye are not yet come to the rest.*] This explains what goes before, and gives the reason why God connived at some irregularities, because they were not fixed to a place, but uncertain when they should have a sign to pack up their goods, and be gone to another station.

To the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you.] Where they were to abide, as long as they observed God's commands.

Ver. 10. *And when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit.*] When their condition was altered for the better, God expected that they should be so too.

And when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety.] This intimates, that the fear they were in, while they wandered in the wilderness, of the incursions of their enemies, might make them sometimes offer sacrifice where they ought not, and commit other disorders.

Ver. 11. *Then there shall be a place which the Lord thy God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there.*] God was not pleased (as Maimonides observes) to declare any where in the law where this place should be; but, though he often determines them to one place, (ver. 26. xiv. 23. xvi. 6.) yet he leaves the place undetermined. Which he imagines might be for these three reasons: first, lest the gentiles should get possession of it, and make war upon that account; thinking that this place was the end of the law (as he speaks). And, secondly, lest they, in whose hands it was, should do all they could to destroy it. And, thirdly (which is the truest reason), lest every tribe should desire to have it in their lot, and strife should arise among them about it. (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 45.)

Thither shall ye bring all that I command you, your burnt-offerings, your sacrifices, &c.] All that he mentioned before, ver. 6. This may seem a heavy imposition, that they might not offer them in any place, and at any time: but Maimonides makes this wise reflection upon it; "That God intended to teach them, not to have so high an opinion of sacrifices, as of prayers and deprecations, and such-like parts of Divine worship (*viz.* acknowledging his goodness, praising him, and giving him thanks), which are the things God mainly intends, and may be offered every where. Whereas sacrifices are not of that account with him; which made him limit them to one place where he should appoint them to be offered; and not suffer any but one certain family to discharge this office. These and such-like things were to diminish the value of sacrifices: for which reason the prophets often reprehend men for their too great diligence and zeal in bringing sacrifices, of which God had no need, and did not principally intend as the worship he delighted in: for which he cites 1 Sam. xv. 22. Isa. i. 11. Jerem. vii. 22. Sacrifices being appointed, and one place for them, not for any good in themselves, but only that all idolatry might be abolished, and the belief of the unity of God preserved," (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 32.)

All your choice vows.] In the Hebrew the words are, as our margin notes, *the choice of your vows.* So their peace-offerings, which were vows, were called; because they were to be selected out of those creatures which were perfect, and without the least defect. Whereas those creatures which had something superfluous, or lacking in any part, might be accepted for a free-will-offering, which a man was not bound to make, but brought it merely out of good-will. So we read expressly in Levit. xxii. 23.

Ver. 12. *And ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God, ye and your sons, and your daughters, and your men-servants, and your maid-servants.*] The whole family was to feast with God, and one with another; whereby brotherly love and friendship were increased and strengthened, by their meeting and eating together at one place. And nothing is more joyful, than to see brethren dwell together in unity. (See ver. 7.)

And the Levite that is within your gates, forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you.] See x. 9. This whole tribe (as Maimonides well notes) being devoted to the Divine service, and the study of the law, neither minded ploughing nor sowing, but were wholly consecrated unto God. And, therefore, we find them very commonly reckoned among the strangers, the fatherless, and the widows, because they had no certain possessions; which made it the more reasonable they should constantly be entertained at these feasts, which were kept at God's house, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 31.)

Ver. 13. *Take heed to thyself, that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings.*] Under *burnt-offerings* are comprehended all the other offerings beforementioned; for these were the chief, and the most usual; and if they might not be offered but at a certain place, much less might any other, as every body might understand, without repeating them all again.

In every place that thou seest.] To be beautiful, lovely, and inviting, by its situation, and shady trees, and fountains, &c. Such as are mentioned ver. 2. Which the gentiles chose, perhaps, wherein to sacrifice, because they were more delightful or solemn than other. Whence Ezekiel, vi. 3. mentions rivers and valleys (together with mountains) where there were fine pastures, and springs of water; which were so pleasant and refreshing in those countries, that they fancied the gods delighted in them. So St. Jerome notes upon Jer. vii. that this gentile error, *omnes provincias occupavit,* &c. *spread itself in all parts of the world,* That they should offer their sacrifices at the heads of fountains and delightful groves.

Ver. 14. *But in the place which the Lord shall choose in one of thy tribes, there shalt thou offer thy burnt-offerings.*]

This he had said before, ver. 5, 6. 11. but repeats it again, because of the great importance of it, to prevent all strange worship. Elijah, indeed, offered upon Mount Carmel, after the temple was built, but it was by a prophetical inspiration; and if any one at that time had asked him if they might take that liberty, he would have answered, By no means; but he that offers out of Jerusalem shall be cut off; (Levit. xvii. 4.) as for what I do now, it is an extraordinary case, to convince the lying prophets of Baal, &c. Thus Maimonides in Seder Zeraim.

And there thou shalt do all that I command thee.] Bring their tithes and first-fruits beforementioned, ver. 6. and eat and rejoice before the Lord, (ver. 7.)

Ver. 15. *Notwithstanding, thou mayest kill and eat flesh.*] For common food.

In all the gates.] In any city, town, or house. While they were in the wilderness, indeed, they might not kill their beasts, but only at the door of the tabernacle; and, consequently, they ate nothing but peace-offerings, which had been first presented unto God, and part of them burnt at his altar, (Levit. xvii. 3, 4, &c.) But when they went into Canaan, they were freely indulged to kill their beasts in any place, without bringing any part of them to the altar.

Whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.] Of all sorts of creatures, not prohibited in the eleventh of Leviticus.

According to the blessings of the Lord thy God, which he hath given thee.] Suitable to every man's estate and condition.

The unclean and the clean may eat thereof.] They who were under any legal uncleanness might not eat of the sacrifices; but of common food, at their ordinary tables, they might, as well as others.

As of the roe-buck, and as of the hart.] He instances in these, because there was great plenty of them in that country, as Ælian observes in the end of his fifth book; where he saith they were ἐν μεγίστοις ὄρεσι, *in the highest mountains* of Amanus, Libanus, and Carmel. These creatures might not be sacrificed to God: but they might eat of others which were used in sacrifice (sheep, goats, oxen), as freely as of these which were not.

Ver. 16. *Only ye shall not eat the blood.*] But of the blood of those creatures they might no more eat, than of those that were sacrificed at the altar. But, as there it was to be sprinkled upon the altar, and then poured out at the foot of it, so here it was to be poured on the earth.

Ye shall pour it upon the earth as water.] So that it might sink into the ground and disappear, as water doth when it is poured on the earth. Which is so strictly enjoined, though it was not the blood of an oblation, to prevent those superstitions which were exercised by the old idolaters about the blood of their sacrifices, in which they thought their demons delighted, and by eating of which they hoped to have communion with them, as Maimonides observes, in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 46.

Ver. 17. *Thou mayest not eat within thy gates.*] In their own private habitations.

The tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil.] This cannot be meant of the tithe paid to the Levites, which the people might not eat any where, being appropriated to the Levites alone: he speaking therefore of a tithe which the people might eat, though not at home, yet in the place where the sanctuary was, it must be meant of that which the Hebrews call the *second tithe*, which was set out after that to the Levites was paid. Concerning which he speaks, xiv. 22, 23, &c.

Or the firstlings of the herds, or of thy flock.] These were entirely the priests' portion by an express law, (Numb. xviii. 15. 17, 18.) and therefore could not lawfully be eaten by the people, either at home, or at the sanctuary. Which makes it necessary to understand this of some other *firstlings;* and it is not improbable that it is meant of the females which open the womb: for the males only were the Lord's (as appears from Exodus xiii. and other places), who gave them to his priests; but he would have the first-born females also to be in some sort sacred, by requiring them to be eaten at his sanctuary, where his priests had their share of them. For I see no ground to think, that as there was a *secondary tithe*, so there was a *secondary firstling* set apart by every man to this use.

Nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, &c.] All such things were also wholly the Lord's, (Levit. xxvii. 28.) and given by him to his priests, (Numb. xviii. 14.) But that is only to be understood of what was vowed to God absolutely, without mentioning any particular use to which it was designed. Besides which, they might vow what they pleased to be spent in solemn feasts with the Levites, the widows, the fatherless, and other poor people; and of such Moses here speaks.

Or heave-offerings of thine hand.] These were first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, as I said upon ver. 6. which were also the priests' portion, (Numb. xviii. 12.) Therefore this can be meant of no other first-fruits but such as men freely offered, without any obligation to it, to be spent in this fashion; for he was speaking before of such kind of things; unless we will understand this of the first-fruits of young trees, which might not be eaten in three years after they were planted, but in the fourth year were "to be holy, to praise the Lord withal," (Lev. xix. 24.) which, as Josephus saith, were spent in these sacred feasts. (See there.)

Ver. 18. *But thou must eat them before the Lord thy God, in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter,* &c.] See before, ver. 11, 12.

Ver. 19. *Take heed to thyself, that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth.*] He gives this caution, lest covetousness should make them defraud the Levites of their tithes, and not let them have convenient habitations, or profaneness make them not invite them to the sacred feasts before spoken of. This is repeated xiv. 27. And in this the Jews were so careful, that when there was such increase of the Levites that their cities could not contain them, they assigned them more than were given them at first: for Joshua gave them only forty-eight; but before the captivity of Babylon they had twenty more added to them, as appears from 1 Chron. vi. 65, 66, &c. where, after the mention of the old number, there is an account given of twenty more added to them out of several tribes: for though they could not enlarge the bounds prescribed to their cities, yet, as the number of Levites increased, they might give them new cities. And so they did, that they might not be straitened in their dwellings among them.

Ver. 20. *When the Lord thy God shall enlarge thy border.*] That is, when he had brought them out of this wilderness, where they were encamped round about the tabernacle,

into a spacious country, where they might live far distant from it.

As the Lord hath promised thee.] Which he promised to enlarge even as far as Euphrates, if they were obedient to him, (Gen. xv. 18.)

And thou shalt say, I will eat flesh.] Have a desire to eat it.

Because thy soul longeth to eat flesh.] There were several sorts of flesh that were lawful to be eaten, which they could not have in the wilderness, and therefore might be supposed to desire them very much when they came into Canaan, which abounded with them. And besides, they would have more plenty of such cattle as they now had, which might incline them to keep greater tables.

Thou mayest eat flesh whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.] This was said before, ver. 15. and now repeated with all the rest that belongs to this matter, to let them see God did not intend to abridge them too much of their liberty: for though they might not eat the tithe of their corn, wine, and oil, (and the rest mentioned ver. 17.) at their own home, because they were holy things, and therefore to be eaten in one certain place where God's sanctuary was; yet all sorts of flesh, used at their private tables, he now gives them leave to kill any where, without bringing it to the tabernacle, and offering the blood at the altar, as they were tied to do while they were in the wilderness, (Lev. xvii. 3, 4, &c.) For then the tabernacle was very near to every one of them; but when their border was enlarged, it must needs be at so great a distance from some of them, that it would have been too heavy a burden to oblige them to kill every thing they ate at the tabernacle, and therefore he dispenses with it.

Ver. 21. *If the place,* &c.] The particle *chi* may better be translated here *because;* which makes these words a reason of the allowance given in the foregoing verse, *Because the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to put his name there, is too far from thee, thou mayest kill,* &c.

Of thy herd, and of thy flock.] Such creatures as are now allowed for sacrifice, oxen, sheep, lambs, and goats.

Which the Lord hath given thee.] For food as well as other uses.

As I have commanded thee.] Given thee leave to eat at home, without carrying them to the tabernacle: so it follows, *And thou shalt eat in thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after; i. e.* all manner of things, of which there was great variety, not prohibited by this law.

Ver. 22. *Even as the roe-buck and the hart is eaten, so mayest thou eat them.*] Which were creatures not allowed to be offered to God in sacrifice, (see ver. 15.) and therefore they might less doubt to eat of them, than of such as were peculiarly appointed for that use. From which they might possibly have thought, that out of reverence to God they should abstain; but are here satisfied they might as freely eat of them as of the other.

The clean and the unclean shall eat of them alike.] Whereas, while they were in the wilderness, only such as were clean might eat flesh, because it was sanctified by being killed at the altar; now all are indulged the same liberty, whether "they were removed from holy things (as the Jerusalem Targum expresses it), or were pure to use them, both might eat flesh alike."

Ver. 23. *Only be sure that thou eat not the blood.*] Take great care, as the word signifies in the Hebrew (which is, *be strong*), use thy utmost diligence to prevent this.

For the blood is the life, and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.] See what I have noted upon Gen. ix. 4. Levit. xvii. 11. 14.

Ver. 24. *Thou shalt not eat it, thou shalt pour it out upon the earth as water.*] Since they could not pour it out at the altar, where nobody could meddle with it, they were to pour it out on the earth, that it might sink into it. Or, as the law required in Leviticus, (xvii. 13.) cover it with dust, that the cattle might not lick it up: or, the meaning may be, pour it as a common thing (which *water* is), without any religious rite used about it.

Ver. 25. *Thou shalt not eat of it.*] This is repeated here so often, as it is also in Levit. xvii. to shew the weightiness of this command.

That it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the Lord.] When they neither followed the idolatrous customs which the gentiles used about the blood, nor profanely meddled with that which was peculiar to God, when it was offered at the altar: which was the great reason why they were prohibited to eat blood.

Ver. 26. *Only thy holy things which thou hast, and thy vows, thou shalt take, and go into the place which the Lord shall choose.*] Only he would have them not to forget that the things mentioned ver. 17. they were not to eat at home, but at the house of God, though it was never so far distant from them.

Ver. 27. *And thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, the flesh, and the blood, upon the altar of the Lord thy God.*] No sacrifices were to be offered any where but at the sanctuary, as he had said before, ver. 6. and now reminds them of it, that they might observe it, and do accordingly.

And the blood of thy sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of the Lord thy God.] All their *peace-offerings,* as well as others, were to be there offered, and their blood poured on the altar as a holy thing; whereas the blood of those creatures they killed at home was poured out, as a common thing, like water.

And thou shalt eat the flesh.] After God and his priests had their parts.

Ver. 28. *Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever.*] This was the great commandment, To serve God alone: and the observance of it was the great condition upon which all their happiness depended; which makes him again press their care in this matter.

When thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the Lord thy God.] Please God by a strict obedience to this precept.

Ver. 29. *And when the Lord thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them,* &c.] See ix. 1.

Ver. 30. *Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee.*] It is plain from hence, that in this chapter, as well as in the foregoing, he is still endeavouring to secure them from the idolatrous customs of the country which they went to possess; which is the ground of the following prohibition, about which he could not say too much, they

being so prone to idolatry, and the danger they incurred thereby so exceeding great. There are some of the Jews who think, that by *following them* is meant following their fashions in their clothes, and in their ornaments (as it is explained in the book Siphri), which might entice them to imitate their religious rites, which it appears by the next words are principally intended.

After that they be destroyed from before thee.] It was the most unaccountable folly to worship the gods of those nations, whom they saw expelled their country for their idolatries.

And that thou inquire not after their gods.] They were not so much as to ask what gods they worshipped.

Saying, How did these nations serve their gods?] Nor endeavour to know the manner of their worship. Which was very different, as Maimonides observes, according as their gods differed one from another; for that sort of worship which was acceptable to one god, might not be given to another. As they uncovered themselves (if we may believe him) before Baal-Peor, and threw a stone to Mercury. See his tract concerning the Worship of the Planets, cap. 3. sect. 2, &c. and Dionys. Vossius's annotations there; where he resolves, that, if they uncovered themselves to Mercury, or threw a stone to Baal-Peor, it was not idolatry, because not their proper worship: which is a foolish opinion; for they were not to use any of their religious rites, no more than to offer sacrifice, burn incense, or bow down to any of their idols, which he acknowledges was idolatry. In short, if they gave the idol the worship proper to him, or that worship which was proper to the true God, he acknowledges they were guilty.

Even so will I do likewise.] Though men only resolve to do it, yet they were guilty of committing this sin. The Jews, indeed, make no great account of sins committed in the heart, yet in this case they are very strict, having framed this maxim, as R. Levi Barzelonita observes, Præcept. ccxxvi. which their rabbins industriously inculcate into their scholars, that "the blessed God imputes no thought of any transgression to an Israelite, as if it were the fact itself, except only the thought of idolatry, which is imputed to a man, as if he had committed idolatry." Now it was a reasonable presumption, that he who inquired how the people of Canaan worshipped their gods, intended at least to worship the God of Israel, as they did those idols: and this gave too much cause to suspect, that he had an inclination to worship their idols instead of God: for otherwise he would have rested content with that way of worshipping God which the law had prescribed. Whereupon the Jews have determined (as our Mr. Thorndike hath observed), that there are four ceremonies, which, whosoever performs to any thing but to God alone, must be understood to worship it for God; which are sacrificing, burning incense, pouring out drink-offerings, and adoration. But others there are, by doing which men cannot be concluded to worship any thing but God, till they do it in that way and fashion as is done by those who profess to worship it for God. (See his Principles of Christian Truth, chap. 26.)

Ver. 31. *Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God.*] See ver. 4. of which the reason is here given.

For every abomination to the Lord which he hateth, have they done unto their gods.] For instance: "The Zabii (saith Maimonides), I find in their books, offered to their great god, the sun, seven bats, and seven mice, and seven other creeping things: which alone may suffice to demonstrate how vile and abominable their worship was, and what reason there was so severely to prohibit their idolatry, and every thing pertaining to it." (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 29.)

For even their sons and daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.] This is the great instance of their abominable wickedness. Of which, see Levit. xviii. 21. xx. 2. This was notoriously practised by the Carthaginians, who, it is certain, derived it from the Phœnicians, the ancient inhabitants of this country. Plato mentions it in Protagora, where he saith, "The Athenian laws did not permit them to sacrifice men; but among the Carthaginians it was a holy rite; so that some of them permitted their sons to be offered to Saturn:" which wicked custom at last overspread all nations, even the Grecks themselves, as Joh. Gensius hath demonstrated, lib. de Victimis Humanis, par. i. cap. 11. and par. ii. cap. 6.

Ver. 32. *Whatsoever thing I command you, observe to do it.*] Keep close to the precepts I have given you about my worship, ver. 28. and see iv. 2.

Thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.] They were not to add any other rites of worship of their own devising, or from the idolatrous customs of those countries, nor omit any of those which God had commanded them to use: for if they had used any of the gentile ceremonies, whereby they honoured their gods, it would easily have introduced the worship of the gods themselves, and, if they had omitted any of the rites which God had ordained, some other would have easily stepped into their room which were used by idolaters.

Maimonides, from these words, labours to prove the *eternity of the law of Moses.* But it is very strange, that so great a man should be so blind as not to see what some of his brethren could discern, that God did not bind up himself neither to change nor alter these laws, though he did not permit the Israelites to do it. So the author of Sepher Ikkarim wisely glosses upon these words: (lib. iii. cap. 14.) "The Scripture prohibits us to add unto, or detract from, these precepts, according to our will and pleasure; but what hinders the blessed God either to add or detract, when his blessed wisdom shall think fit? Which he illustrates in the foregoing chapter, by this example among others; A physician prescribes a diet to his patient, for such a time as he judges convenient, which he doth not declare to the sick man. Now when the time comes that the physician hath obtained his end, he changes the diet, and permits his patient what he formerly forbade, and prohibits that which he formerly permitted. Which exactly agrees to what our blessed Saviour had done."

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *IF there arise among you.*] In future times.

A prophet.] One that pretends to have a message from God delivered to him in a vision, or by the word of the Lord: for there was a constant succession of prophets (to whom God revealed his mind several ways) among the Jews, to preserve them in the true worship of God, and

instruct them in their law, and admonish them on some occasions of things to come; which was the more necessary, because there were such kind of persons among the gentiles.

Or a dreamer of dreams.] Who pretended God had appeared to him in a dream, (as he did unto Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 11.) and revealed his mind to him. Such there were in Jeremiah's time, (Jer. xxix. 8.)

And give thee a sign.] Foretell something.

Or a wonder.] By what follows one would think this belongs to the foregoing words, which are to be understood as if he had said, *If he foretell some wonderful thing*, which shall shortly come to pass. Or, it may be interpreted, *shall work a miracle;* unto which the heathen did not so much pretend, as they did to predictions, which were common among them.

Ver. 2. *And the sign or the wonder come to pass whereof he spake unto thee.*] The event confirms the prediction; so that he seem a true prophet.

Saying, Let us go after other gods which thou hast not known, and let us serve them.] And, consequently, he persuade you to worship other gods, which he pretends is demonstrated to be lawful, by the fulfilling of his sign and wonder.

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or dreamer of dreams.*] Notwithstanding, look upon him as a liar, and not as a true prophet: for God cannot contradict himself, nor do any thing to persuade men to forsake him, and give his worship to another. This shews that he still pursues his intention (in this chapter, as well as all the foregoing), to establish them in the belief and worship of one God, according to the first commandment, from which nothing was more likely to seduce them, than false prophets, who were the great instruments of establishing the foulest idolatry in Israel, as appears from 1 Kings xviii. 19. where we read of no less than four hundred prophets of Baal, and four hundred and fifty prophets of the groves, that is, of other false gods, particularly Astarte, as Mr. Selden conjectures, in his Syntagma ii. de Diis Syris, cap. 2. And there could not be a greater demonstration that a man was a false prophet, than if he endeavoured to draw them to the worship of other gods, or if he pretended to speak in the name of any other god, (Deut. xviii. 20.) or if he commanded them to offer such sacrifices as God abhorred. Thus Aristander (as David Chytræus notes) discovered himself to be a false prophet, though he foretold the destruction of Babylon; for he required human sacrifices to be offered: as Tiresias also predicted victory to the Thebans, provided Creon's daughter was offered up in sacrifice; and Chalcas at the time of the siege of Troy, but together therewith commanded the sacrifice of Iphigenia. These, and such-like things, plainly discovered they were not inspired by God, who is the lover of mankind, and cannot delight in their blood.

For the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul.] That there might be an open and public discovery made, whether they sincerely loved God or not, or were steadfast in their religion. So Maimonides in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 24. "God would make known to the nations of the world the measure of your faith, in the truth of his law, and of the approbation wherewith you apprehend it," &c. For it had been a great weakness to suffer even a miracle to shake their faith, after it had been confirmed by so many miracles.

Ver. 4. *Ye shall walk after the Lord your God.*] Follow the will of God (as Maimonides interprets it), declared by himself, (More Nevochim, par. i. cap. 38.) Which is a plainer and more genuine interpretation than that of the Gemara of Sota, cap. 1. sect. 52. where R. Chama expounds it of imitating God, in clothing the naked, visiting the sick, burying the dead, &c. for "beneficence is the beginning and the end of the Divine law." Which is a pious sense, but not here intended.

And fear him.] Worship him alone, (vi. 2.)

And keep his commandments.] The greatest of which is this, (xi. 13.)

And obey his voice.] Which you heard from Mount Sinai, saying, "Thou shalt have no other gods but me."

And ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.] Steadfastly adhere unto his service, and not be drawn from it by any persuasion.

Ver. 5. *And that prophet, or dreamer of dreams.*] These two signify persons who pretended to different sorts of revelations, by visions or by dreams.

Shall be put to death.] This the Jews interpret to signify *strangulation*, unto which, upon good proof of the fact, he was to be sentenced by the great Sanhedrin: for that was a received maxim among them, that "a lying prophet was to be judged no where but by the council of seventy." (See Selden, lib. iii. de Synedriis, cap. 6. n. 1.)

Because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage.] Persuaded you to forsake your God and his service, to whom you owe your liberty, and all your possessions in the land of Canaan.

To thrust thee out of the way which the Lord thy God commanded thee to walk in.] These words express how zealous such impostors were in their importunities, and how restless in their endeavours to draw men to idolatry, pressing them so earnestly, as if they would force them to it.

So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.] *i. e.* The danger of idolatry; by taking away the life of him that would have seduced others unto it.

Ver. 6. *If thy brother, the son of thy mother.*] Who lay in the same womb with him.

Or thy son, or thy daughter.] Who were dearer than a brother.

Or the wife of thy bosom.] Who was still dearer, sleeping in the same bed with him, as the Jerusalem Targum expounds it.

Or thy friend, which is as thine own soul.] Whom thou lovest as thou dost thy life. He puts a friend in the chief place, (as the son of Sirach also doth, Eccles. xxxiii. 19.) which their wives, by the ill choice they made of them, had not always in their affection.

Here is no mention of father or mother, because a child, as the Hebrews fancy, was to have more reverence for them, than to accuse them of any crime whatsoever. As if a greater regard was to be had to them than to God himself. The true reason is, because there was no need to name them; for, if their piety to God was to overcome their love to all those relations beforementioned, it could not be supposed that respect to parents was to come into competition with it.

Entice thee secretly.] In the foregoing verses he speaks of an open seducer, and here of a secret one; there of one that came with authority, and here of one of the ordinary people.

Saying, Let us go and serve other gods.] The Jews think this is meant of one who invited others to idolatry, but did not press them with reasons, as in the former case. Which is not likely; for all men pretend some reason or other for such a great alteration as that to a new religion.

Which thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers.] This aggravates the crime; to entice them to forsake God, who was known to have done such wonders for their fathers, and was so good to them, and go to serve gods with whom they had no acquaintance.

Ver. 7. *Namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee.*] Wheresoever they were (for several nations had several gods), whether in the neighbouring countries, or in remote parts; it made no difference at all, if they were strange gods.

From one end of the earth, even unto the other end of the earth.] The enticer might possibly suggest the universality of the worship to which he invited him, as an argument to embrace it.

Ver. 8. *Thou shalt not consent unto him.*] As many words as there are in this verse, the Jews think there are so many precepts. The first of which is this, not to be led by affection and kindness to yield unto his motion. So they interpret these words, *thou shalt not love him.*

Nor hearken unto him.] I do not see how this differs from the former; but they interpret it, that *they ought to hate him*, as well as his motion. So Maimonides, in his book of the Worship of the Planets, (cap. 5. sect. 6, 7.)

Neither shall thine eye pity him.] This they fancy signifies, that, if he were in danger of death, they should not help him, but let him perish.

Neither shalt thou spare.] When he was brought before the judge, they were not to intercede for him, nor say any thing in his favour, nor assist him to defend himself.

Neither shalt thou conceal him.] Dissemble any thing that might make against him. And, no doubt, God intended by all these words to signify, that he ought to be looked upon as his greatest enemy; upon whom therefore they were to have no mercy, but to prosecute him unto death, as guilty of the highest treason against the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 9. *But thou shalt surely kill him.*] Not privately, as he enticed others, but by a legal process against him in a court of judgment. And that not the highest, but in the court of twenty-three, who might proceed against him, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 6. The only difficulty was, how to prove him guilty who enticed another *secretly* (as the text saith), and not before witnesses. To which the Jews answer, That he who was enticed was to dispose some persons as secretly near to the place of their next meeting, who might hear all he said, and testify it in court.

Thy hand shall be first upon him to put him to death.] He was to be stoned to death, and the accuser was to throw the first stone at him, together with the witnesses, (xvii. 7.) For it would have weakened the credit of his accusation if he had not been the foremost in the execution. (See xvii. 7.)

And afterward the hand of all the people.] Who were to assist in the execution of this sentence.

The first words of this verse, which we translate, *Thou shalt surely kill him*, the Vulgar Latin translates, *Thou shalt forthwith kill him.* And so the Jews understand the Hebrew phrase, *Killing thou shalt kill him; i. e.* immediately have him before the court of judgment. As the LXX. understood it, ἀναγγέλλων ἀναγγελεῖς περὶ αὐτοῦ, *informing thou shalt inform against him*, that is, without delay. And accordingly the Jews add, that, after he was condemned, he was immediately also put to death. Whereas in other crimes the execution was respited, after the sentence was pronounced, for a day and a night, that the man might have time to clear his innocence, if he were able, by any new proofs. Such severity was but needful among a people prone to idolatry, and encompassed on all sides with idolatrous nations.

Ver. 10. *And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die.*] But if, upon admonition, he desisted from his enticement, and repented of what he had said to his neighbour, and resolved himself not to worship other gods, he was not bound to inform against him.

Because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, &c.] See ver. 5. The very attempt of this was criminal, though he did not prevail in his seducement.

Ver. 11. *And all Israel shall hear and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this among you.*] The end of this severity was to preserve the body of the people from the contagion of idolatry. Nothing being more apt to deter men from crimes than such exemplary punishments of them. So Callimachus, in his hymn to Ceres, (ver. 23.) makes this the design of the punishment she inflicted on Erysichthon,

——— ἵνα καί τις ὑπερβασίας ἀλέηται·

that others might shun the like transgression.

Ver. 12. *And if thou shalt hear say in one of thy cities, which the Lord thy God hath given thee to dwell in, saying.*] If the infection was spread into a city, or a considerable part of it, there was still more danger, and greater severity was to be used, to prevent the whole country about it from being drawn away from their allegiance to the Divine Majesty. And therefore, upon such an information as follows in the next verse (which is here meant by *thou shalt hear say*), given to the great Sanhedrin, they were to do as is directed ver. 14.

Ver. 13. *Certain men, the children of Belial.*] So the most profligate wretches are called in Scripture, (Judg. xix. 22. 1 Sam. i. 16. x. 27. xxv. 17. 25.) signifying lawless persons, who had no regard either to God or men.

Are gone out from among you.] Left the worship of God at the tabernacle: for it doth not signify their forsaking the city (in which they continued to seduce men from their religion), but forsaking their communion in Divine service. By which many have well observed that place in St. John may be interpreted, 1 John ii. 19.

And have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city.] The Hebrew word which we here translate *withdraw*, is twice before (ver. 5. 10.) translated *thrust away*; signifying only earnest endeavours to seduce men from their religion. But here it seems to signify also the effect of those endeavours, whereby they had prevailed with men to forsake the God of Israel, or to worship other gods with him.

Saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known.] Strange gods, as they are often called in Scripture, which the nations round about them worshipped, (ver. 7.) but were always abhorred by true Israelites.

Ver. 14. *Then shalt thou inquire, and make search, and ask diligently.*] The great Sanhedrin, who only could take cognizance of this crime, were, upon this information, to send some, on whose fidelity they could rely, to examine the truth of the report which was spread abroad, concerning the defection of a city to the worship of other gods. Who were to use their utmost care and diligence in this inquisition, and, by all possible means, endeavour to find whether or not the information was true. For it was a matter of great concernment, that neither the innocent should suffer, nor apostates go unpunished. But the punishment being so dreadful, there was the greater exactness used to be certain of the crime; and there were likewise a great many *temperaments* (as Mr. Selden calls them) found by the Jewish lawyers (partly from the nicest interpretation of every syllable in these two verses, and partly from the pretended tradition of their elders), whereby they mitigated the sharpness of this law. For they would not proceed upon it to destroy a city, though they found them idolaters, unless the seducers were *two*, or more; and those also *men*, not *women;* because the law here speaks in the plural number, of *certain men*, children of Belial. As if their forsaking God was not a crime, whether they were persuaded to it or not by others. They say, also, it was not to be a mere *town*, or *village*, but a *city;* because the words here are *in one of thy cities*, in which there were more than a hundred houses: if there were fewer, it was no city in their account, and so escaped. They who seduced a city also were to be of the same city; because it is said here, These men of Belial are gone out *from among you.* All which are mere quirks, which have no solid reason in them. They are all mentioned together in the title Sanhedrin, set forth by J. Coch. cap. 11. sect. 4. and by Maimonides more largely, in his Avoda Zara, and our Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 5. n. 2.

But there are other *temperaments* of this law, which have better foundation in reason. As, first, that a city was not to be destroyed, unless the major part of the inhabitants were fallen off to serve other gods. And, secondly, that the law speaks only of lesser cities, not of those which were so large that the greatest part of a tribe lived in it; for God would not have a whole tribe cut off by the senate. Thirdly, they might not destroy any of the six cities of refuge, because they were none of theirs, but God's: and the words of the law are, "In one of *thy* cities, which the Lord hath given thee to dwell in;" whereas these were given for a further purpose. And, fourthly, some add, not a frontier town; because it is said, *in the midst of thee* (so the words are in the Hebrew, which we translate *among you*), to which they subjoin a better reason, because the whole country might have been exposed to be overrun with the gentiles. And, lastly, they except Jerusalem from this law, because it was God's seat; and (as Maimonides will have it) it was not distributed to any particular tribe. Which, how it is to be understood, see Selden in the place abovenamed, sect. 3, 4. where he touches upon all these. But, if Jerusalem was to be excepted from the judgment of men, God took care to have this sentence executed upon it by his own judgment; for he sent Nebuchadnezzar against it, whose soldiers burnt with fire both the house of the Lord, and the house of the king, and all the houses of Jerusalem, (Jer. lii. 13.)

And, behold, if it be truth, and the thing be certain, that such an abomination is wrought among you.] If the inquisitors found, upon due examinations, that there was a plain and evident proof of their guilt, they were to make their report to the great Sanhedrin; who, being satisfied that either the whole city, or the greater part of them, were fallen to idolatry, sent to them two men of extraordinary wisdom (who were candidates for the senatorial dignity) to admonish them, and, by arguments and persuasions, to endeavour to reduce them to the worship of the Lord God of Israel. And if they prevailed, they were pardoned, and no further proceedings against them: but if they continued obstinate, then the Sanhedrin commanded the people of Israel to raise an army, and besiege the place, and enter it by force, if they could not otherways. And when the city was taken, several courts were appointed to try and condemn all that were guilty. Thus Maimonides, in the forenamed treatise, reports the method of proceeding, out of their ancient authors. (See Selden, sect. 6.)

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword.*] The same author there saith, that, in the hearing of their cause, every one who was found guilty of idolatry, after admonition, by two witnesses, was set aside: and if they proved to be the lesser part of the city, they were stoned (according to the law of single apostates), the rest being freed from punishment: but if they were the greater part of it, they were sent to the great Sanhedrin, who adjudged them to be cut off by the sword, together with their wives and children. And thus the whole city was to be punished if there was an universal defection.

Destroying it utterly, and all that is therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword.] In the Hebrew the word is, Thou shalt make it a *cherem*, or *an accursed thing.* And so the LXX. Ἀναθέματι ἀναθεματεῖτε αὐτήν, where the Vulgar translates it as we do, *Thou shalt utterly destroy it;* which is consonant to the notion of the Hebrew word. (See Selden, lib. i. de Synedr. cap. 7. p. 131.) So that if any righteous man had any thing therein at that time, it was to be destroyed, as the very words are in the title Sanhedrin, cap. 11. sect. 5. But it is to be supposed, that all who feared God would remove their effects, together with themselves, from so wicked a place, before sentence was pronounced against them. On the contrary, they say, the goods of the idolaters, wheresoever they were found, whether within the city or without, were to be burnt.

Ver. 16. *And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof.*] Into the market-place, as the Jews interpret it. Or, if it had none, they were to make a spacious place, into which all the spoil and the household-stuff was to be brought, and fire set to it, to consume it, as an anathema, or cursed thing. What temperaments, as they called them, there were to mitigate the severity of this sentence, see Mr. Selden, in the place forenamed, sect. 7.

And shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof, every whit, for the Lord thy God.] For the vindication of God's honour, and preserving men in their allegiance to him. R. Simeon, in the title Sanhedrin, interprets it in this

manner, sect. 6. "Thus saith the Lord, If you do justice upon a city full of idolatry, I will account it, as if you had offered a whole burnt-offering unto me."

And it shall be a heap for ever; it shall not be built again.] The Hebrew doctors do not entirely agree in the interpretation of these words. For some of them say (in that place of the Sanhedrin now named), that they were not so much as to make a garden or orchard in that place. Others of them say, though it might not be restored into the form of a city, yet they might employ the ground in plantations of trees. But there are those who interpret the words so rigidly, that they think it was not lawful to erect any building there, not so much as a dove-house, but it was to lie waste. (See Selden, sect. 8.) If any man did attempt to build such a city, he was to be beaten, as the same great man observes, lib. i. de Synedriis, cap. 13. p. 558.

Ver. 17. *And there shall cleave nothing of the cursed thing to thine hand.*] They were not to take the smallest part of the spoil to their own use. "For as long as the wicked are in the world (say the Jews in the forenamed title Sanhedrin), the fierce anger of God will remain in the world; but when they are removed, the wrath of God also will cease." Now the wickedness of purloining any thing that was a *cherem*, as the Hebrews call it, or *an accursed thing*, appears in the story of Achan, who brought all Israel into danger by it, as we read in the seventh of Joshua. And Saul is an eminent example of it also, for he lost his kingdom for this sin, (1 Sam. xv. 3. 9. 19. 26, &c.)

That the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger.] This explains, in part, what he means in the former verse, when he bids them burn the city and the spoil, *for the Lord their God, i. e.* to pacify the Divine Majesty, who was highly incensed by such a wickedness. The punishment of which was, indeed, very terrible, but very necessary; because the crime was of so high a nature, that it struck at the very foundation of their religion and government.

And shew thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee.] God promises to deal the better with them, for executing this judgment upon such dangerous offenders.

And multiply thee, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers.] They were not to fear any want of people, by cutting off such a multitude; for God promises to increase them by this loss.

Ver. 18. *When thou shalt hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day,* &c.] It was not sufficient that they kept themselves from idolatry, unless they also executed his vengeance upon idolaters: for the inflicting the punishment beforenamed was as right in his eyes, as the observance of any other of his precepts.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *YE are the children of the Lord your God.*] So the Lord had owned them to be, when he sent Moses unto Pharaoh, to command him to dismiss Israel; telling him he was *his son, even his first-born,* (Exod. iv. 22, 23.) This was a good reason, therefore, why they should own no other God but him; and, consequently, follow none of the customs of idolatrous people, but be wholly governed by his laws.

Ye shall not cut yourselves.] This might seem to forbid the making any incisions in their body, as the heathen did (at least in future times), who marked themselves thereby to belong to such and such gods (for the Israelites had received the mark of God in their flesh by circumcision, which obliged them to receive no other), if the following words did not plainly determine this to their cutting themselves for the dead; which hath been sufficiently explained in Levit. xix. 28. Yet it is fit to note, that the Jerusalem Targum expounds this of *incisions here and there for idolatry.* And it may be further observed, that the heathen were wont to cut themselves in pangs of devotion, (as appears by the priests of Baal, 1 Kings xviii. 28.) as well as when they were full of sorrow and grief for the dead, (Jer. xvi. 6.) and in all public calamities, (Jer. xli. 5. xlvii. 5.) All which arose from an opinion they had, that the more they afflicted themselves, the less they should be afflicted by God.

Nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead.] Some of the heathen, saith Theodoret (Quæst. 13. upon this book), cut off all their hair, and offered it to the dead; others shaved their beards; and others their eye-brows and eye-lids, or (which some think is the meaning of *between their eyes*) the hair in the forepart of their head, or near their temples, as R. Solomon interprets it. Which seems to be the meaning of the Jerusalem Targum, which translates it, *Ye shall not make any baldness in the house of your countenance.* And whether it were done with a razor, or they used any art, by plasters or ointments, to make the hair fall off, it was the same crime, as Maimonides saith, that is, a piece of idolatry. For this was practised, not merely to make themselves look ruefully, but there was some respect to their gods in it, which is the reason it is here prohibited. Certain it is, that in aftertimes the gentiles pulled off their hair, or cut it off, and laid it upon the face or the breast of the dead, or in their sepulchres, to pacify the infernal gods. We find instances of it in Homer. And likewise they made incisions in their flesh, and spilt their blood at funerals, with the same intention, to appease the gods below, and make them kind to the dead. (See our learned Dr. Spencer, lib. ii. cap. 12. sect. 2, 3.)

All which shews that Moses still pursues the argument, which he begins at the sixth chapter, and hath continued ever since, to press upon them the strict observance of the first commandment. Insomuch, that he would not have them use any of the rites which were used at their funerals by those that worshipped other gods.

Ver. 2. *For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are on the earth.*] The very same words, in a manner, we had before, vii. 6. as a reason why they should destroy the images of the heathen, &c. Which shews he is still speaking of the idolatrous customs which they should eschew, because they were separated to God as a peculiar people by laws different from all other nations. The author of Sepher Cosri speaks not amiss, That the people of Israel were called God's *Segullah*, because they were elected by him to enjoy special privileges above other people; and brought by him for that end out of the land of Egypt in a wonderful manner, and then had his glory dwelling among them. From whence it is, that he doth not say in the preface to the ten commandments, *I am the Lord of heaven and*

earth, or, *thy Creator*, and therefore thou shalt have no other gods but me; but *I am the Lord thy God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt*, &c. to shew that this law was given peculiarly to them; and that they were tied to it, by virtue of their deliverance out of Egypt, and God's placing his glory among them. Whereas, if they had been bound to it by virtue of their creation, it would have belonged to other nations as well as to them. (Par. i. sect. 27.)

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt not eat any abominable thing.*] All the meats forbidden by God to be eaten are called *abominable*, not merely because his prohibition made them so, but because the gentile superstition had consecrated most of them to their gods. (See upon Levit. xi. 2.) However, after this law was given, the Jews were to look upon them as *abominable;* by which means they were kept from having such free conversation, as otherwise they would have had, with their idolatrous neighbours. So that this law also was intended to preserve them in the true religion.

Ver. 4. *These are the beasts which ye shall eat.*] The original of the difference of meats, see in the learned J. Wagenseil, in his Tela Ignea, p. 553, &c. where he shews it was not to continue for ever. And it is a rational account of this, which I just now gave, that hereby they were preserved from common conversation with other nations, and consequently from their idolatries. But it is a mere fancy, and indeed a proud imagination, which some of the Jews have (particularly the author of Schebet Judah), that as men are more excellent than beasts, because they have better food, so Jews are more excellent than all other men, because they do not feed upon all sorts of animals, but only of some certain kinds; and that after much preparation, by rejecting the blood and the fat, &c. whereby they fancy the flesh is so much altered, that it is not so much flesh as some other food.

The ox, the sheep, and the goat.] These were the only beasts that were offered in sacrifice to God; and therefore are the first that are mentioned as clean for their use.

Ver. 5. *The hart and the roe-buck.*] These, and the rest that follow in this verse, though they might not be offered in sacrifice, were allowed to be eaten; and seem to be mentioned as the principal food in the land of Canaan, (xii. 15. 22.)

And the fallow-deer.] It is not very material what the word *jachmur* signifies, because we are not now concerned in this law about difference of meats; therefore we may follow our translation, as well as any other: and the famous Bochartus hath made it probable, that it signifies either a kind of *deer*, or of *goat*, (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. iii. cap. 22.)

And the wild goat.] So the Hebrew word *akko* signifies (which is no where else to be found), the same author proves in the same book, cap. 19.

And the pygarg.] This is also a kind of doe or goat, (as he shews, cap. 22.) which the Hebrews call *dison*. We find mention of *pygargus* in Juvenal's eleventh satire; where the old scholiast gives this account of it: that it is a kind of deer, "quæ retriores partes albas habet," *whose hinder parts are white*. From whence it had its name among the Greeks, who call the buttocks Πύγη.

And the wild ox.] So we translate the Hebrew word *theo*, or *tho*. But herein Bochartus dissents; because there were no such creatures in Judea, (as he observes there, cap. 26.) which are bred in colder countries. And therefore he reckons this also among his deer or goats, (cap. 28.)

And the chamois.] The Hebrew word *zemer* he also thinks signifies, as the former, a kind of goat or hart; of which there was great variety in those countries. And this he thinks of all other was *maximè ἁλτικὸν, remarkable for jumping;* which is the signification of the word *zemara* in the Arabic language. (See cap. 21.)

Ver. 6. *And every beast that parteth the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, and cheweth the cud, that shall ye eat.*] He forbears to reckon up any more particulars, and only sets down the general marks whereby they might be known; which he had delivered in Lev. xi. 3. (See there.)

Ver. 7. *Nevertheless, these shall ye not eat of those that chew the cud, or of them that divide the cloven hoof*, &c.] These exceptions from the general rule have been explained, Lev. xi. 4—6.

Ver. 8. *And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it is unclean to you.*] See upon Lev. xi. 7.

Ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcass.] See Lev. xi. 8.

Ver. 9. *These ye shall eat of all that are in the waters: All that have fins and scales shall ye eat.*] See Lev. xi. 9.

Ver. 10. *And whatsoever hath not fins and scales*, &c.] See Lev. xi. 10—12.

Ver. 11. *Of all clean birds ye shall eat.*] He doth not name any (as he did of beasts), but by enumerating those of which they might not eat, all the rest were left free to be used for food.

Ver. 12. *But these are they of which ye shall not eat: The eagle, the ossifrage, and the osprey.*] All these are mentioned just as they are here in Lev. xi. 13.

Ver. 13. *And the glede, and the kite, and the vulture, after his kind.*] There are only two of these mentioned in Lev. xi. 14. the last of them, *hadajah*, being there omitted; for it is so near to *haajah*, which goes before, that the transcriber (as Bochart imagines) might there leave it out. But rather, Moses now adds this sort of bird, which was not so like in nature as in name; otherwise he would not have distinctly forbidden it.

Ver. 14. *And every raven after his kind.*] The same words with those Lev. xi. 15.

Ver. 15. *And the owl, and the night-hawk, and the cuckoo*, &c.] All the birds mentioned in this and the three next verses, 16—18. are the very same which are forbidden in Lev. xi. 16—19. And therefore I refer the reader to what I have noted there; only adding, that from hence it appears how false their opinion is, who think the Hebrew word *tzippor* is a general name only for small birds (such as sparrows); for it is evident from this place, that it is a name for all birds whatsoever, even the greatest, such as are here mentioned.

Ver. 19. *And every creeping thing that flieth is unclean to you: they shall not be eaten.*] See Lev. xi. 20.

Ver. 20. *But all clean fowls ye may eat.*] This is not the same precept with that ver. 11. for there he speaks of birds, but here of other winged creatures, which are not birds, but insects, as we call them. And in Lev. xi. he describes the flying creeping things which they might eat; and particularly mentions several sorts of them, (ver. 22.)

Ver. 21. *Ye shall not eat of any thing that dieth of it-*

self.] Unto this discourse about food, it was very proper to add a caution, (which he had given before, Lev. xi. 39, 40.) that, though they might kill and eat any clean creature, yet if it died of itself, it was unlawful to eat it, because the blood was in it.

Some verses ascribed to Phocylides contain this sense so fully, that one would think he had read Moses. (See Jos. Scaliger in Eusebium, p. 88.)

Thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is within thy gates.] The proselytes of the gate (as they called them) who had not embraced their religion, but were not idolaters, and therefore suffered to dwell among them, might eat such meat, having no obligation upon them to observe these laws; for they were not circumcised.

Or thou mayest sell it unto an alien.] To a mere gentile, who might happen then to be in their country. For there were three sorts of people called by the name of *strangers*, being not of the Jewish nation. First, such as had received circumcision, and consequently embraced the Jewish religion, who were called *gere-tzedek* strangers, or proselytes of justice. Others were not circumcised, but yet worshipped the God of Israel, who were called strangers of the gate, or *gere-tosha*, strangers dwelling among them; because they were to abide in their country constantly. But there was a third sort, called *nocherim*, which we here translate *aliens*, who were mere gentiles, and not suffered to have a habitation among them; but only to come and go in their traffic with them.

For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God.] This reason was given in the beginning of this discourse, (ver. 2.) and so it is in Leviticus, in the conclusion of it. (See xi. 44, 45.)

Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk.] Now he plainly returns to caution them against idolatrous customs. For this was practised among the heathens in the end of harvest, when they sprinkled their fields and their gardens with this broth, to make them fruitful. It is mentioned twice before. (See Exod. xxiii. 19. and xxxiv. 26.)

Ver. 22. *Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, which the field bringeth forth year by year.*] This doth not seem to reach unto herbs, as the pharisees interpreted it; of which see Grotius on Matt. xxiii. 4. But though Casaubon and Drusius, and other great men, are of this opinion, yet the contrary is maintained by persons of no small note; because our Saviour, when he determines this case, saith, "These things ye ought to have done, and not left the other undone."

As for the *tithe* here mentioned, I have shewn elsewhere, that it was the manner of the eastern princes to receive the tenth of the fruits of their country, for the maintenance of their ministers and officers; as we read 1 Sam. viii. 15. In like manner, God, the great king of all the earth, and the peculiar sovereign of this country, required a tenth of all their increase for the maintenance of his priests and Levites in his service. After which he ordered also a further tithe to be taken out of the nine parts remaining (which was called the *second tithe*), to be spent in feasts at his tabernacle. And this is, with great reason, thought to be particularly enjoined in these words; for of such tithes he speaks in the next verse. It might seem indeed a little hard, to give another tenth part, after they had paid one already, which they might be tempted not to perform exactly; and therefore he saith, *Thou shalt truly*, that is, faithfully, without any deceit or fraud, *tithe all the increase of thy seed.* And when this was done, he required also, once in three years, a *third tithe*, for the use of the poor, (see ver. 28.) that they might also be entertained at his cost, though not at that time at his house. For it was suitable to his royal greatness, that all his subjects should be feasted by his order at his palace; and that the poorest of them should not be neglected, but some time or other partake of his bounty; as they did at those feasts I mentioned, where their men-servants and maid-servants were to be entertained as well as the Levites, (xii. 12. 18.)

Ver. 23. *And thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there.*] See xii. 5, 6.

The tithe of thy corn, and of thy wine, and of thine oil.] This cannot be meant of the tithe paid to the Levites; of which the people were not to partake, but only the priests, to whom the Levites were to give a tithe. Therefore it must be understood of the second tithe, separated (after the other was paid) for this holy use. The design of which was, that they might be secured in his religion, by eating and drinking in his presence; and thereby professing that they belonged to him, and were his thankful servants.

The observation of R. Bechai upon these words [*thy corn, thy wine, and thine oil*] is something curious, but it hath a great deal of truth in it:—If thou pay the tithe, saith he, then it is *thy* corn; if thou do not, it is *my* corn, and not thine (in like manner, if they paid the tithe of wine and oil); for it is said in Hosea ii. 9. "Therefore I will return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof." For they forfeited the whole, who did not pay the tenth, which was the rent God reserved to himself. And the same R. Bechai represents this as a very merciful law: For it is the fashion of the world, saith he, if a man have ground of his own, to let it out to tenants at what rate he pleases, for a half or third part, to be paid to him: but it is not so with the Almighty, whose the earth is, and who raises clouds, and waters it with rain, and sends down drops of dew, and makes fat the fruits of the earth; and yet requires but one part of ten, for his own uses. This made it highly reasonable, that Moses should admonish the Israelites so often diligently to pay their tithe.

And the firstlings of thy herds, and of thy flocks.] See concerning these, xii. 6.

That thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always.] This justifies what I said, that the design of this was to preserve them steadfast in their religion, by having communion with him, in so solemn a manner, every year: for that is meant by *fearing the Lord always;* continuing in the worship and service of him alone. (See vi. 1.)

Ver. 24. *And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it; or if the place be too far off from thee, which the Lord thy God shall choose,* &c.] If they lived at so great a distance from the sanctuary, or the way was so bad, that it would be very troublesome and chargeable to carry those tithes in kind, here they have a liberty granted them to make money of them, and with that to buy provision for the feast at the sanctuary, when they came thither; as it follows in the next verse. All things, likewise, which would not keep so long as till they could go to the house of God, they were to turn into money; but things that were

not perishable, they were to carry in kind, if they did not dwell too far off from it.

Ver. 25. *Then shalt thou turn it into money.*] Adding a fifth part to it, as the law is, Lev. xxvii. 31.

And bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose.] Put it into a bag by itself, and not mix it with other money, but keep it bound up till the next feast; and then carry it in their hand, to the place where God's house was settled.

God would not have them excused from going to that place with these things in kind upon every slight reason; and therefore made it something chargeable to exchange them into money, by requiring a fifth part to be added. And besides, the elders made a constitution, That this liberty should be allowed to none, but those who lived above a day's journey from Jerusalem, which at last was the fixed place of God's worship. And, that it might be known certainly what was a day's journey, the places at that distance were fixed from every quarter; *viz.* Lydda on the west, the river Jordan on the east, Acrabatta on the north, and Elath on the south, as J. Wagenseil hath observed in his confutation of that blasphemous book, called Toldos Jeschu, p. 22.

Ver. 26. *And thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep,* &c.] Purchase such provision as they most delighted in, of all meats that God's law allowed.

And thou shalt eat there before the Lord thy God.] Make a holy entertainment at the house of God.

And thou shalt rejoice, thou and thine household.] Men-servants and maid-servants, as well as sons and daughters, (xii. 18.) together with the Levites, widows, orphans, and strangers.

Ver. 27. *And the Levite that is within thy gates, thou shalt not forsake him.*] They were always to be invited to these feasts. (See xii. 19.)

For he hath no part nor inheritance with thee.] They being wholly devoted to the worship of God, and the study of the law, as Maimonides observes, in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 39. (See xii. 19.)

Ver. 28. *At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase.*] The opinion of the Hebrew doctors is, That this was not a distinct tithe from that which they call the *second tithe,* paid every year, but the very same, which every third year was not to be carried to the sanctuary, but to be employed to the comfort of the poor, in their own cities and houses. For thus they explain it: That in the third year after the year of release, and in the sixth year, the tithe that was wont to be carried to the place where the sanctuary was, and there spent in feasts before God, was to be spent upon the poor in every town where they that paid the tithe lived; but every first, second, fourth, and fifth year, from the year of release, it was spent in holy entertainments at the house of God. In the year of release itself (which was every seventh year), no tithes at all were paid of any kind, because all lay common. So that every year the owner of the ground set out a second tithe; but he was not bound to carry it every year to Jerusalem; for in the compass of seven years, four of those years only were appointed for their journey thither, and two they stayed at home. (See Selden, of Tithes, and lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. p. 693.) But this is contradicted by other great men, particularly by Bishop Montagu, who asserts these to be two distinct tithes: see p. 332, &c. especially p. 346. and those that follow. And Josephus seems plainly to be of his mind, p. 349. Old Tobit calls it τρίτην δεκάτην, *the third tithe,* i. 8.

The tithe of thine increase the same year.] *i. e.* Of the third year.

And shall lay it up within thy gates.] It was not to be carried to the place where God's house was, but to be spent at home.

Ver. 29. *And the Levite, because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee.*] See ver. 37.

And the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat, and be satisfied.] This tithe was not spent in joy and gladness, as the second tithe was, (ver. 26.) when they went to God's dwelling-place, but merely in the relief and comfort of the poorer sort of people, who otherwise might have been forced to beg, or to serve strangers, and thereby be in danger of being perverted from their religion.

That the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.] This tithe, the Jews say, was called the *consummation of tithes;* because herein the love of their neighbours was most eminently apparent. For it is likely they themselves had no share in this, as they had at the feasts upon the second tithe, but is wholly spent upon the persons here named. Whose hearts could not but be moved to pray to God for his blessing upon them in all their labours, which he here promises to bestow.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AT the end of every seven years.*] It appears, from ver. 9. that this phrase signifies as much as *every seventh year.*

Thou shalt make a release.] Perfectly free their brethren from all their debts which they owed to their creditors. This year was famous not only for this, but for letting servants go free (as some think, Exod. xxi. 2.) and for letting their ground rest, (Lev. xxv. 34.) and for reading this law publicly to all the people, (Deut. xxxi. 10.)

Ver. 2. *And this is the manner of the release.*] It is thus to be understood.

Every creditor that lendeth aught unto his neighbour shall release it.] It was an entire acquittance, not of debts contracted by sale of lands or goods, to those who were able to pay, but of money lent to a neighbour or friend, merely to relieve his poverty, not to carry on trade, or to make a purchase. For nothing could have been more absurd, than to have extinguished such debts, whereby the borrower was enriched.

He shall not exact it of his neighbour or his brother.] Here the word *brother* is added, to explain what is meant by a *neighbour; viz.* an Israelite, or a proselyte entirely of their religion, who had all the privileges of an Israelite. Some think, that by not *exacting* money lent to such a man, is meant no more but only forbearing to demand it in this year, because there was no sowing or reaping in it; or if he did, that he should not have power to recover it by law this year, though afterward he might. But the plain meaning seems to be, that he should be perfectly free from his debt, as a servant, after six years, was from his service:

though, if afterward he grew rich, in good conscience he was bound to pay it.

Because it is the Lord's release.] In the Hebrew the words *schemitta laihova* signify, that this year was *a release to the Lord*, or *for the Lord*. In honour, that is, of him, who made this a year of great charity: in obedience to whom they were bound to be very kind to their poor brethren. But the Jews fancy they were not bound to be so kind as to make this release, till the very last day of the year. So that if a man had borrowed money in the beginning of it, he was not acquitted till the year expired.

Ver. 3. *Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again.*] Of an *alien*, as we translate the word *nocri*, in the foregoing chapter, ver. 21. that is, of one who was neither an Israelite, nor proselyted to their religion, but a mere gentile. The only question is, whether they were not to remit the debts of a proselyte of the gate, who, I think, is no where called their *brother* in the law; and therefore they were not obliged to discharge them from what they owed.

But that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall not touch.] This seems to restrain it wholly to those who were Jews, or had all the privileges of Jews.

Ver. 4. *Save when there shall be no poor among you.*] Whether we follow this translation, or that in the margin of our Bibles, it appears that they were obliged to acquit only their poor brethren; of whom they were not to exact their debts, lest they should be tempted to flee to the gentiles, and forsake their religion: so this was a provision still against idolatry. Or, if we understand it as it is in the margin, *to the end that there be no poor among you*, the sense is the same; that they were by this charity to keep men from extreme necessity, which might force them to go a begging, or to seek for relief in strange countries.

For the Lord shall greatly bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it.] He would not have them think that they might become poor themselves by this means; for he assures them God would prevent that, by sending his extraordinary blessing upon them. Cardinal Cajetan, and some others, understand this verse as if it were all of it a promise, and contained no precept in it; *viz.* That God would take care they should not be burdened by this law, for he would so bless them, that they should have no poor among them; and then they were not obliged to acquit those of their debts, who were able to pay them.

Ver. 5. *Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.*] Particularly this, of releasing their poor neighbours from their debts; which would entitle them to the blessing he promises again in the next verse.

Ver. 6. *For the Lord God blesseth thee, as he promised thee.*] God had many ways blessed them already, and he promises to reward their obedience with greater blessings.

And thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow.] Grow so very rich, that other nations should come to borrow of them; but they be beholden to none.

And thou shalt reign over many nations, &c.] I suppose he means no more than Solomon doth, when he saith, *the borrower is servant to the lender*, (Prov. xxii. 7.) But it may extend to their dominion over many nations, whom they conquered, till they enlarged their bounds as far as Euphrates.

Ver. 7. *If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren in any of thy gates, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother.*] As they might be inclined to do, after the passing of this law; thinking with themselves, that what they lent to such a man they should never have again, but must lose it if he were not able to repay it before the year of release. This seems to be the meaning of this verse, which the Jews interpret not of lending, but of giving alms. It is not much material which way we take it: for he that lent to a poor man, was willing to give what he lent, if he could not pay him before the year of release, after which he could not demand it.

Thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shalt thou shut thine hand from thy poor brother.] Covetousness proceeds from want of pity, tenderness, and compassion towards others in their miseries; unto which nature itself inclines us, especially towards members of the same society. And the Jews had several particular obligations to be tenderhearted, as they were all children of God after a peculiar manner, who had been wonderfully kind and merciful to them, (xiv. 2.)

Ver. 8. *But thou shalt open thine hand wide to him.*] Bountifully supply him with what he wants.

And shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.] The Jews understood this, not merely of affording him food sufficient to satisfy his hunger, and clothes to cover his nakedness and keep him warm, but furnishing him with household goods (if he had been forced to sell all he had), that he might live comfortably. Yea, they proceed so far, as to determine, that the neighbourhood should join together, and make a purse for him, to put him in as good a condition as he was before he fell into this want. They determine also the quantity that every man should give; a very liberal person the fifth part of what he had, if need required; a man of moderate bounty, a tenth part. If any man gave less when the case required more, he was accounted a niggard; or, as they phrase it, a man of an evil eye. But, notwithstanding all these precepts, and their interpretations, the Jews so little minded their poor, that their governors were at last forced (as we now, alas! do) to lay a rate upon the rich for the maintenance of the poor, which they enabled their officers to exact. See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 6. and Maimonides de Donis Pauperum, set forth by a very learned friend of mine, Dr. Prideaux, cap. 7. who argues from this place, that if a poor man wanted a wife, they were bound to provide him one, &c.

Ver. 9. *Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand.*] If such a thought came into their mind, that they should lose what they lent, because the seventh year approached, they were bound to stifle it immediately, and not suffer it to lodge there.

And thine eye be evil against thy poor brother.] This move thee to be unkind and unmerciful to him. So a man of *an evil eye*, signifies in Prov. xxiii. 6. one that grudges what another eats at his table.

And thou givest him nought.] Lending was in this case giving; when a man was very poor, and the year of release so near, that he could have no prospect of his being able to repay him.

And he cry unto the Lord against thee.] Make his doleful complaint unto God, finding no relief from men.

And it be sin unto thee.] God charge it upon thee as an offence against his majesty, yea, a great offence. For so the word *sin* sometimes signifies, (John xv. 24. James iv. 17.)

Ver. 10. *Thou shalt surely give him.*] Not fail to relieve his wants.

And thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him.] They were not only to relieve him, but to do it cheerfully.

Because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.] There is no difference between *all their works*, and all that they *put their hand unto* (for all works are performed by the hand), unless one refer to what they did within doors, and the other to their labours in the field.

Ver. 11. *For the poor shall never cease out of thy land.*] There would always be some or other among them, who stood in need of the forenamed charitable relief, by which they might be preserved from extreme poverty; which God intended to prevent, as is plain from ver. 4. (See Grotius upon St. Matt. xxvi. 11.) The Jerusalem Targum understands this, as if there should have been no poor amongst them, if they had been obedient to God's precepts.

Therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide.] If any one refused to give, or gave less than became him, Maimonides saith, in the forenamed place, the Sanhedrin compelled him to it, and whipped him with the stripes of rebellion or contumacy (*i. e.* very sorely), till he gave as much as they judged he ought to do.

To thy brother, to thy poor, and thy needy, in thy land.] Here are evidently three different sorts of persons mentioned as objects of their charity, which may be looked upon as directing the excellent order of it. For, first, they were to relieve those that were nearest to them in blood, called here their *brethren*. Then, secondly, such as were in great misery. And, thirdly, such as were low in the world, and required some help, but not so much as the former sort. Some indeed will not admit such a difference between the words *poor* and *needy*, but think the last signifies such whose condition was calamitous; about which I think it is not worth while to dispute. I shall rather observe, that God took exceeding great care that none should come to very great want, by the large provision he made for the poorer sort of people; who had the benefit of the *third tithe*, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, which was wholly given to them every third year; and of the sabbatical year, when all that grew of itself was common to every body; and of this release of debts in the same year; and of the large quantity of corn, which they were bound to leave every year, in the corners of their fields, with the ears that fell, and the sheaf that was left, &c.

Ver. 12. *If thy brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee.*] Whether sold by themselves, or by the court of judgment, for theft. But there was some difference between a man and a woman. (See Exod. xxi. 2, 3, &c.) And the same law, they say, was to be observed about those who were sold by their father, or were born of Hebrew slaves.

And serve thee six years, then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free.] He doth not speak of the year of release, as if he were then to be set free, though he had served but one year, or perhaps no more than half a year before that time came, but of the seventh year from the time of his sale: for he was to serve six complete years, unless the *jubilee* happened to intervene, when every one was set free, though he had not served so long; but such servants as were taken in the wars, or were sold by Canaanites, or born of them, might be kept perpetual slaves, unless they were maimed by their masters, with the loss of some member of their body.

Ver. 13. *And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty.*] But bestow something upon him for his more comfortable subsistence when he was a freeman. And this comprehends women as well as men, as appears by the foregoing verse: but then it is to be understood of such as went out free by virtue of this law, after they had served six years, not of such as were redeemed by their friends, or redeemed themselves with their own money, (Lev. xxv. 18.) For such might be supposed not to need their masters' kindness, as they did who had nothing to help them out of their slavery.

Ver. 14. *Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine-press.*] That they might put themselves in a way of living well in the world; which they were not able to do without this assistance, because what they got in their six years' service was wholly for their master, and not for themselves. He doth not prescribe a certain measure to their bounty, but leaves every man to express his affection freely towards God and towards his neighbour. But the Hebrews say, they were bound to give them at least thirty shekels of silver.

Of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee, that shalt thou give him.] Considering how God hath enriched thee, even by his service.

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee.*] And did not bring them empty out of their slavery, but loaded with silver, and gold, and raiment, (Exod. xii. 35.) By which bounty of God to themselves, they might take the best measure of their duty to their poor brethren when they were dismissed from servitude.

Therefore I command thee this thing to-day.] In remembrance of that great benefit, he enjoined this benevolence to poor slaves.

Ver. 16. *And it shall be, if he say, I will not go away from thee.*] Refused to enjoy his liberty, when his six years' service was expired.

Because he loveth thee and thine house.] The phrase in Exod. xxi. 5. being, *saying, shall say, I love my master*, &c. Abarbinel from thence gathers, that it was necessary he should often profess how loath he was to leave his master and his family, and make repeated declarations of his affection to them.

Because he is well with thee.] Lives happily. Out of these words Maimonides infers, that there was to be reciprocal love between the servant and his master; for if the servant loved his master, yet if his master did not love him, his ear was not bored; for he could not take content in his staying with him. But these words suppose his master's kindness to him by his good usage of him.

Ver. 17. *Then shalt thou take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door*, &c.] But first he was to bring

him before the judges, that he might there in open court profess the same that he had done to his master; and thereby make it appear there was no fraud or deceit in the business; and that his master did not keep him against his will, contrary to this law. See Exod. xxi. 6. where all this is explained.

And also unto thy maid-servant thou shalt do likewise.] This relates only to the not sending maid-servants away empty; not to the boring their ears, if they had no mind to be freed; for that was not used, if we may believe the Hebrew doctors, to maid-servants. It was sufficient, if they had a mind to stay with their masters, that they addicted themselves, in solemn words, to their service for ever. But there were many differences between a man-servant and a maid-servant, at least in some cases, (see upon Exod. xxi. 7.) which are explained with great nicety by the Hebrew doctors: with which I need not trouble the reader, because there is no such slavery among us in these days.

Ver. 18. *It shall not seem hard unto thee when thou sendest him away free from thee.*] It is plain by this that he returns to what he was speaking of, ver. 12, 13, &c. concerning their not letting their servants go away empty when they had their freedom: for this was the chief thing that could seem hard to them.

For he hath been worth a double-hired servant to thee.] Who served at most only for three years, and had wages paid him all the time, (Isaiah xvi. 14.)

In serving thee six years.] Twice as long as a hired servant, and for nothing. So that, considering what wages he gave the other, and how small a price, perhaps, they paid for him, they would find themselves gainers by such slaves, and therefore should not think much to give them a gratuity when they send them away.

And the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest.] He encourages them to hope they should be greater gainers otherways by this charity, which would procure God's blessing upon their future labours. This argument he had pressed twice or thrice before in this chapter, ver. 4. 6. 10.

Ver. 19. *All the firstling males that come of thy herd, and of thy flock, shalt thou sanctify unto the Lord thy God.*] All the first-born males were the Lord's, by a law made at their coming out of Egypt; and he gave them to his priests for their portion, (Exod. xiii. 2. 15. Numb. xviii. 15.)

Thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep.] Besides the firstling males, which alone were separated to the Lord, there were also firstling females; which, though they were not sanctified to him as the males were, yet were not to be employed by the owners, as the rest of their cattle, but offered as peace-offerings to God. Of which they themselves had a good share, though some part of them was given to the priests.

Ver. 20. *Thou shalt eat it before the Lord thy God.*] It is evident from hence, that he speaks of such female firstlings as I mentioned in the foregoing verse; for of the males they might not eat, but they belonged entirely to the priests.

Year by year.] At their solemn festivals, when they were first to offer them unto God; and then the feasts upon these peace-offerings followed.

In the place which the Lord shall choose, thou and thy household.] With the Levites and strangers, &c. whom they were to invite to these sacred entertainments: for this is but a repetition of the law twice or thrice mentioned before, xii. 6, 7, &c. 17, 18. 26. xiv. 23. and upon this occasion here again inculcated, because it was of exceeding great moment, to preserve them in the worship and service of God alone.

Ver. 21. *And if there be any blemish therein, as if it be lame, or blind, or have any ill blemish.*] This is another reason why he mentions these feasts again, that he might admonish them what to do with their firstlings, if there were any blemish in them, which made them unfit for sacrifice. These blemishes he had spoken of in Lev. xxii. 21, 22. 24. But here adds the *lame* to those there named. Which the prophet Malachi also mentions (and so do the heathens), as unacceptable unto God, (Mal. i. 8.)

Thou shalt not sacrifice it to the Lord thy God.] No, not to make such a charitable feast at the sanctuary.

Ver. 22. *Thou shalt eat it within thy gates.*] It was free for them to eat it at home: though it is very probable God expected they should invite the Levites and the strangers, the fatherless and the widows, to partake of it, (as they did of the third tithe, xiv. 29.) because, if it had been without blemish, it must have been so employed at the sanctuary.

The unclean and the clean person shall eat it alike.] Whereas, if it had been sacrificed at their feasts, only the clean could have eaten of it.

As the roe-buck and the hart.] See xii. 15. 22.

Ver. 23. *Only thou shalt not eat the blood thereof; thou shalt pour it upon the ground as water.*] He takes all occasions to mention this, because it was designed to preserve them free from idolatry. (See xii. 16. 23, 24.)

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *OBSERVE the month of Abib.*] Which God, by a special order, made the beginning of their year. (See Exod. xii. 2. xiii. 4. xxxiv. 18.)

And keep the Passover unto the Lord thy God.] He now begins in this chapter, to admonish them about their great feasts which they were to keep; whereby the whole nation was preserved in the worship of one only God, which Moses still pursues to press upon them.

For in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt.] In memory of which the feast of the Passover was ordained.

By night.] For then Pharaoh pressed them to be gone, when he saw his first-born slain in the night, (Exod. xii. 29—31.) and then they immediately prepared themselves for their journey, and borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of gold and silver, (ver. 25.) Insomuch that Moses calls this "a night much to be observed unto the Lord," and "that night of the Lord to be observed by all the children of Israel in their generations," (Exod. xii. 42.) though it was day-light before they began their march, as we read there, ver. 22. So that Moses bid them "remember the day when they came out of Egypt," (Exod. xiii. 3.) which comprehends both that which is properly called *day* and *night*.

Ver. 2. *Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God.*] The word *passover* signifies here not

only the *lamb* (which was properly called *pesach*, or *passover*), which was offered the fourteenth day at even, but all the paschal sacrifices which followed after, as appears by the next words [*of the flock, and of the herd*]. Which sacrifices were appointed for all the seven days of unleavened bread, (Numb. xviii. 17—19, &c.) See Bochartus in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50. where he shews at large that the word *passover* is here a general word, comprehending the particulars after-mentioned, (p. 565, 566.) and thus translates these words (which he justifies by many like instances), *Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God*, viz. *of the flock and of the herd.* Which last words are added exegetically, to explain what that *passover* was which they were to offer unto the Lord. Such sacrifices as were offered in the solemn passover of Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxx. 22. and of Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxv. 7—9. where it is apparent, that the king and the princes gave to the people, and to the priests, oxen as well as sheep, *lepesachim*, for the passover-offerings. And thus it is used in the New Testament, John xviii. 28. where it is said, the Jews would not go into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled; *but that they might eat the passover, i. e.* these *passover-offerings*, which were holy things, of which none might eat in their defilement.

In the place which the Lord shall choose to place his name there.] At the sanctuary, as hath been often said, xii. 5. 11, &c. where all sacrifices were to be offered.

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it.*] That is, with the *passover* beforementioned. Which is a demonstration that all the sacrifices *of the flock*, and *of the herds*, spoken of in the foregoing verse, are comprehended under the name of *passover*. For with the *lamb* they could not eat unleavened bread seven days, it being to be eaten presently in the evening when it was offered; after which followed the seven days of unleavened bread, which could not be eaten so long with the passover, unless *passover* signifies all the seven sacrifices.

Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread therewith.] See Exod. xii. 15. xiii. 6, 7.

Even the bread of affliction.] So called, because it was insipid, and also heavy upon the stomach, and not easily digested. Whence it had the name of *matzah*, because it was lumpish, and could not rise as leavened broad doth.

For thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste.] Wanting time to put any leaven to their dough, (Exod. xii. 34. 39.)

That thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.] That their affliction there, and their speedy deliverance from thence, might never be forgotten. For their eating this bread seven days together every year, one would think, could not but make great impressions on their mind; and the more to imprint the sense of God's mercy there, the master of every family, when he brake this bread at the paschal feast, and gave every one a piece of it, said, *This is the bread of affliction which your fathers did eat in the land of Egypt.* So Maimonides and others tell us. (See Exod. xii. 17.)

Ver. 4. *And there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee in all thy coasts seven days.*] See Exod. xii. 18—20. xiii. 3. 7.

Neither shall there any thing of the flesh which thou sacrificest the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.] This is a plain description of the paschal lamb, which was to be eaten in the even wherein it was sacrificed, (Exod. xii. 10.) which he forbears here to call the *passover* (though that name properly belonged to it), because he had called other sacrifices by that name, (ver. 2.) and would not have them confounded.

Ver. 5. *Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*] Not at home, as they did when they first came out of Egypt, and that because it was a sacrifice; which was now required to be offered at the sanctuary, as was said before, (xii. 5. 11.)

Ver. 6. *But at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover.*] From whence Maimonides infers, that even whilst high places were allowed, the passover could not be killed any where but at the sanctuary: if any man did offer it in a private high place, he was beaten, as he saith in his treatise concerning the passover, cap. 1. sect. 3.

At even, at the going down of the sun.] Between the two evenings, concerning which see Exod. xii. 6. After the offering of the evening sacrifice, they began to kill the passover, and continued this sacrifice till sun-set.

At the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.] Then they were preparing themselves for their journey, and had warning to be ready, and eat the lamb with their staves in their hands, as men going forth to travel, (Exod. xii. 11.) though they did not actually go forth till the next morning.

Ver. 7. *And thou shalt roast and eat it in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose.*] See Exod. xii. 8, 9.

And thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents.] Unto their own habitations, which are called *tents*, because they had no other dwellings when these words were spoken. The only doubt is, whether he permits them to go home the next morning after the even beforementioned, or the morning after the whole feast of unleavened bread was over. It seems most reasonable to expound it of the former, that if men's occasions called them home, they were not bound to stay any longer at the place where the sanctuary was, but till they had eaten the paschal lamb; after which they might return home if they pleased. So Bochartus, who from hence proves that the most solemn days of the feast of unleavened bread were not observed like a sabbath, because men might travel home upon the first day of unleavened bread; as the whole nation travelled out of Egypt on this day, from Rameses to Succoth: yet pious people, who were able to bear so great a charge, were wont, no doubt, to stay the whole seven days before they returned home; because the first and last days of the feast were great solemnities. So they did in the passover of Hezekiah and Josiah, 2 Chron. xxx. 21. xxxv. 17. And there being special sacrifices to be offered every day during this festival (as was beforesaid), Solomon ben Virgæ observes, that all the country thereabouts brought their oxen and their sheep to be sold at this time to those who came from far; so that the mountains round about Jerusalem were covered with them, and not a bit of grass to be seen. He adds also, that whosoever did not come up to this feast, all his goods were forfeited and converted to sacred uses, (Schebet Judah, p. 378.)

Ver. 8. *Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly unto the Lord*

thy God.] This is to be understood as if he had said, that after they had eaten unleavened bread six days, they should conclude the solemnity upon the seventh day with a *solemn assembly*, or, as it is in the Hebrew, *with a restraint;* but still continue also on this day to eat unleavened bread. For this feast was to last seven days, and in all the foregoing books they are expressly required to eat unleavened bread seven days, (Exod. xii. 15. Levit. xxiii. 6. Numb. xxviii. 17.)

A solemn assembly.] Which the Hebrews call *atzereth;* of the meaning of which see Lev. xxiii. 36.

Thou shalt do no work therein.] That is, no servile work, as it is explained Numb. xxviii. 25. but they might dress their meat, which the LXX. seems to mean in those words, which they add, πλὴν ὅσα ποιηθήσεται ψυχῇ, *save only such things as shall be done to preserve life.*

Ver. 9. *Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee.*] From the morrow after the sabbath, when they brought the sheaf of the wave-offering, as it is explained in Lev. xxiii. 15. (See there.)

Begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn.] For they began to cut barley at the Passover, as is manifest from hence, that Joshua passed over Jordan to enter into Canaan, in the time of harvest, (Josh. iii. 15.) and this was in the month of Nisan, when they kept the Passover, as appears from Josh. v. 10. which month could not be called Abib, or *the month of new fruits*, if some corn was not then ripe, *viz.* barley. This Josephus confirms, lib. iii. Antiq. cap. 10. which must be understood, as Hermannus Conringius observes, (in his treatise de Initio Anni Sabbatici, &c.) of that sort of barley which was sown in autumn (as it is this day in Frisia), which required a stronger soil than that sown in the spring, and produced a much richer crop. See Mr. Mede's works, p. 355. who observes how very different their climate was from ours.

Ver. 10. *And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God.*] The reason of this name is given in the foregoing verse. And see Exod. xxxiv. 22. It was called also the *feast of harvest.* (See Exod. xxiii. 16.)

With a tribute of a free-will-offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the Lord thy God, &c.] Besides those offerings which are prescribed, Lev. xxiii. 17, 18. Numb. xxviii. 27, &c. The quantity is not directed, but left to every man's piety. And whatsoever it was he brought, it was wholly given to God, and he that brought it had no share in it; but God gave it to his priests.

According as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee.] Though no quantity was prescribed, yet God expected every man should offer proportionably to his estate; and they who had a religious sense of God's goodness in *blessing* their labours, no doubt acknowledged it by a liberal tribute.

Ver. 11. *And thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates,* &c.] This feast was made of such offerings as are mentioned, xii. 7. 17—19.

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt.*] They are often put in mind of this as an argument to charity, particularly towards their servants. (See xv. 15.)

And thou shalt observe and do these statutes.] There was a particular reason for keeping this feast, because it was in remembrance of God's giving them his law from Mount Sinai; where he speaks with them himself.

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine.*] This is the third great feast, at which all their males were bound to appear every year, as we read, Exod. xxiii. 16, 17. xxxiv. 22, 23. Of which he puts them in mind again, Lev. xxiii. 34—36. and here, ver. 16.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant,* &c.] There was the like law at Athens, where king Cecrops ordained (as Macrobius tells us, lib. i. Saturnal. cap. 10.) the master of every family should, after harvest, make a feast for his servants, and eat together with them, who had taken pains with him in tilling his ground; "delectari enim Deum honore servorum, contemplatu laboris," *for God delighted in the honour done to servants, in consideration of their labour.* This, it is likely, he learnt from Moses, for he reigned at Athens much about the same time that Israel came out of Egypt; and was the first, as Eusebius saith, who taught the Greeks to call God by the name of Ζεὺς, (lib. x. Præpar. Evangel.) which we may interpret *the living God.* Though therein he seems to be a little mistaken. For Pausanias saith more than once (both in his Arcadica and his Attica), that Δία ὠνόμασεν ὕπατον πρῶτος, *he was the first that called Jupiter by the name of the Most High,* or Supreme. And the same we read in St. Cyril against Julian, lib. i. (See Joh. Meursius de Legibus Atheniensium, lib. i. cap. 9.)

Ver. 15. *Seven days shalt thou keep a feast unto the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose.*] In order to which, that it might be kept the more solemnly, it is once more enjoined, and all the sacrifices that were to be offered in each of the seven days appointed in Numb. xxix. from ver. 12. to ver. 35. where he orders also the eighth day to be solemnly observed for a special reason. (See there.)

Because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy increase, and in all the works of thy hands.] Thankfulness to God for blessings bestowed was the way to procure more.

Therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.] In God the giver of all good things; whom the whole nation, by the institution of this feast, were incited to bless and praise for the fruits of his bounty to them. And peace-offerings were sacrificed on purpose for this end, (xxvii. 7.) From the repetition of this command, *Thou shalt rejoice,* the Jews infer, that though all festivals were times of joy, yet the feast of tabernacles was to be celebrated with greater joy than all the rest. And accordingly Maimonides tells us, the whole festival was spent in music, and dancing, and singing, night and day.

Ver. 16. *Three times in the year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place,* &c.] This is so frequently enjoined, (see ver. 13.) because it was of the greatest consequence that they should meet as often as they could conveniently, at one and the same place, to worship the Divine Majesty; whereby the notion of the unity of God was preserved among them.

And they shall not appear before the Lord empty.] This is also frequently repeated, where the feasts themselves are enjoined, (Exod. xviii. 15. xxxiv. 20.) And from these and the following words, *That every man should give as he*

was able, &c. came the pious custom in the beginning of our religion, that the people when they came to the Lord's table, offered bread, and wine, and corn, and oil, and such-like things, for the support of God's ministers, and the relief of the poor, every one according to their ability. Which was done in acknowledgment of God as the author of life, and of all good things; for which they, in this manner, shewed their gratitude to him. And the priests, in the presence of all the people, lifted them up, and gave God thanks, and beseeched him to accept them: and out of these, in many places, they made their *agapæ*, or *feasts of charity*, for the poor. Mention is made of these oblations in the Canons ascribed to the apostles, chap. 3, 4. which, though not made by them, yet contain a great many apostolical customs.

Ver. 17. *Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee.*] It was but reasonable, that the more bountiful God had been to them, the more liberally they should offer a grateful acknowledgment to him. For all the forenamed three feasts had relation to the fruits of the earth, which God had blessed them withal, as well as commemorated former great benefits bestowed on their forefathers: the Passover being at the beginning of barley-harvest, Pentecost at the beginning of wheat-harvest, and the feast of tabernacles, when they had gathered in all the fruits of the earth. At which seasons all mankind were ever wont to be full of joy, and to offer sacrifices. So Aristotle tells us, (lib. viii. ad Nicomachum, cap. 2.) Αἱ ἀρχαῖαι θυσίαι καὶ σύνοδοι φαίνονται γίνεσθαι μετὰ τὰς τῶν καρπῶν συγκομιδὰς, *The ancient sacrifices and conventions seem to have been after the gathering-in of the fruits of the earth, as a first-fruit, at which time chiefly they rested from their labours.* And so Strabo, likewise, (lib. x. Geograph. p. 467.) "It is common, both to Greeks and barbarians, to offer their sacrifices with a festival intermission of their labours, &c. καὶ τοῦθ' ἡ φύσις οὕτως ὑπαγορεύει, *and so nature taught them to do,*" that is, to thank God, with rejoicing and cessation from labours. For which he gives this surprising reason, ἥτε γὰρ ἄνεσις τὸν νοῦν ἀπάγει ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρωπινῶν ἀσχολημάτων, τὸν δὲ οὕτως νοῦν τρέπει πρὸς τὸ θεῖον· *for remission of labour abstracts the mind from human affairs, and turns it towards God.* This certainly was the ancient intention of all such festival times, as the heathen themselves could discern.

Ver. 18. *Judges and officers shalt thou make thee.*] To see that these, and all other laws, were duly observed. Moses de Cotzi, upon these words, makes this difference between *schofetim* and *schoterim:* that the former (*viz. judges*) were the senators in the several courts, who decided causes; and the other (*officers*) were no more than ministers attending the court, to keep the people in order, with a staff and a whip, and to execute the decrees and orders of the judges; whom they appointed not only in the court, but in the streets, looking after weights and measures in the market, and correcting offenders. Maimonides also makes them the same with our *apparitors*, or those who, in the Roman law, are called *officiales*, as Constantine L'Empereur observes, p. 362. upon Cornelius Bertram (who mistook them for a sort of judges), and in the digests *executores:* and in the New Testament πράκτορας, *exactors*, Luke xii. 58. Josephus makes them to have been *public criers;* and so we find them employed, xx. 8. Josh. i. 11. But then some of them, at least, seem to have been an honourable sort, like our *heralds*, (Josh. xxiii. 2.) and all of them were men of authority, though but young men (as Maimonides describes them), who had not attained the years and knowledge of the doctors of the law, and therefore unfit to be judges. But the Jews place them next under their wise men, or doctors, and above their scribes and clerks, as Mr. Thorndike observes, in his Review of the Rites of the Church, p. 94. But, that they were certainly only *under-officers*, and not *judges*, there is another argument; which is, that Solomon upon this account commends the ants, that they carefully do their business, though they have no *schoter* set over them, (Prov. vi. 7.) on ῥαβδοῦχος, or ἐργοδιώκτης, to force or affright them into it.

In all thy gates.] That is, in every city, as Mr. Selden observes out of the Jewish writers, lib. vii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 5. sect. 1. where he shews they interpret it, *in all the cities of Israel, both within the land and without, where Israel had any jurisdiction.* Which is so true, that they had consistories wheresoever they were dispersed, for the determining all differences arising out of the law, though not as to the power of life and death, which was seldom granted them by their sovereigns. Thus we learn from Philo, that there was such a consistory at Alexandria; and the little chronicle, called Seder Olam Zuta, tells us of the like in Babylonia. And after the destruction of the temple, it is manifest, not only by the Jewish writings, but by Epiphanius and others, that there continued a consistory at Tiberias for many ages, &c. (See Mr. Thorndike's Rites of the Church, p. 56, 57. and his Review of it, p. 56.)

But though this be granted, yet these words (*in all thy gates*) may suggest also the part of the city where they kept their court, which was in the gate: for there, as I observed, Gen. xxxiv. 24. all public business was transacted in the time of Abraham and Jacob, and continued so afterward. Insomuch, that the highest court in Moses's time met at the door of the tabernacle, (Numb. xi. 24.) the *gate* among the Hebrews being the same with *forum*, as I observed, among the Romans. As we see by 1 Kings vii. 1. where Elisha foretells at what low rates provision should be sold on the morrow *in the gate of Samaria.* Where it is evident there was a place so spacious, that Ahab assembled four hundred prophets there before him and king Jehoshaphat, who had, no doubt, both of them numerous attendants, (2 Kings xxii. 10.) And before this time, David, it is said, upon the news of Absalom's death, went up to *the chamber over the gate*, and wept; which we may well think was the council-chamber, (2 Sam. xviii. 33.) And when Joab advised him to come down, and shew himself publicly, it is said, *he rose and sat in the gate, and all the people came before him*, (xix. 6.) And therefore in these cities, which were so large, there was some place, I make no question, where there were benches for the judges.

Which the Lord thy God giveth thee throughout thy tribes.] In the cities of every tribe there was to be such a court erected, that people might have justice easily and speedily done them. And the Talmudists unanimously agree that the number of judges was proportionable to the greatness of the city wherein they were placed, and of the causes which they judged. Where there were less than a hundred and twenty families in any town or city, there was

seated the lowest court of all, consisting of three judges, which tried only actions of debt, or damages done by man or beast, or defamation, &c. But in cities where there were above a hundred and twenty families, there was placed a higher court, consisting of three-and-twenty judges, who tried capital causes. Josephus, indeed, differs from the Talmudists about the number, for he saith they were but seven. Both of them, it is likely, may say true, with respect to different times and places; for it cannot but be presumed that both he and they understood the state of their country in such public matters. But at the place where God chose to settle his sanctuary, unto which all the country resorted at certain times, there was the supreme court of all, consisting, as the Talmudists say, of seventy persons, besides their president, who judged all manner of causes; and none but they could judge a false prophet, or a city fallen to idolatry. All appeals were made to them; but from them there was none, their sentence being final. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 4.)

Such a court, it is certain, there was in future ages, whose number was according to that of the seventy elders chosen by God himself to assist Moses in the government, and endued with the spirit of judgment to qualify them for that office, (Numb. xi. 25.) In Moses's time they sat at the door of the tabernacle, as I observed before; and afterward at Shiloh, or wheresoever the sanctuary was. Though it may be doubted, whether, after Moses's death, and the death of the elders, there was a court consisting of so many judges. Nay, it is highly probable that this consistory itself was not constantly settled there, according to law, till the time of Jehoshaphat; at least, not the inferior consistories beforementioned, which were to be settled in every city. For if they were, what reason can be given why the judges (Judg. v. 10. x. 4. xii. 14.) and Samuel should ride circuit up and down the country to minister justice according to the law, when the people might have had it every day in their several cities? And for this reason, it is likely, Jehoshaphat himself, desiring to put this law in force, first sent some great men, *who went about through all the cities of Judah*, (2 Chron. xvii. 8, 9.) and then settled judges according to this law *throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city*, as well as in Jerusalem, (2 Chron. xix. 5. 8.) See Mr. Thorndike, in his Rites of the Church in a Christian State, chap. 4. p. 226. where he observes that Josephus, in express terms, rendering a reason of the great lewdness, upon which the war against Benjamin followed, attributes it to this, that these courts of judgment were not established according to this law, (lib. v. Antiq. cap. 2.) But though this, I think, be very evident, yet it is scarce credible that David, after he was set upon the throne of God in peace, did not take care to settle these courts, as he did to regulate a great many other things. And, indeed, we find a plain intimation of it in 1 Chron. xxvi. 29. but succeeding kings, it is probable, were negligent in keeping up this constitution, till the time of Jehoshaphat, who exercised his authority to enforce the exact practice of this law.

And they shall judge the people with just judgment.] According to the rules of this law. The judges, saith R. Solomon, were to judge the people; and the officers, to constrain them to do as the judges commanded.

Ver. 19. *Thou shalt not wrest judgment.*] See Exod. xxiii. 6.

Thou shalt not respect persons.] See Levit. xix. 15. and Deut. i. 17.

Neither take a gift; for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.] The very same is said, Exod. xxiii. 8.

Ver. 20. *That which is altogether just shalt thou follow.*] The words in the Hebrew are far more emphatical (as they are in the margin), *Justice, justice shalt thou follow.* Mind nothing but the justice of the cause, and do it to all persons equally.

That thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.] Be happy, and continue long in the land of Canaan: for nothing contributes more to the establishment of a government, than the exact and impartial administration of justice.

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the Lord thy God, which thou shalt make thee.*] It is evident from this, that his great aim is to keep them from idolatry; which he still pursues, as he hath done from the beginning of his exhortation in this book. And their history teaches us, that it was very needful to inculcate this so often; for, notwithstanding all that Moses could say, they fell immediately after Joshua's death into the idolatrous customs of Canaan, and could never be wholly purged from their idolatry till the captivity of Babylon. And these words may be translated, *Thou shalt not plant thee a grove, nor make any wood* (*i. e.* a wooden image) *near to the altar of the Lord thy God.* So the LXX. For the very word we translate *grove*, sometimes imports the idol in the grove, as well as the grove itself. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 6. and Selden, de Diis Syris, Syntagma ii. cap. 2.) Certain it is, that nothing was more ancient in the east, than altars with groves of trees about them; which made the place very shady and delightful in those hot countries. They are so often joined in Scripture, that it would be tedious to number all the places, (Exod. xxxi. 13. Deut. xii. 3. Judg. vi. 25, &c.) Cadmus is thought by some to have brought this custom into Greece out of the east. And they planted the trees so thick, and they were so large and shady, as to make the place very dark and solemn; whereby a kind of horror was struck into those who went into them. And they became hereby the fitter for the devil to play his pranks there; and for the practice of these obscene and uncouth rites whereby he was worshipped. For the gentile custom had made these places proper to the infernal gods, and anciently consecrated them as sepulchres or temples for their heroes. That the Israelites, therefore, might be preserved from sacrificing to the dead, and from filthy lusts (by both which they afterward polluted themselves), they are forbidden to place a grove near to God's altar, nay, so much as *any tree* (as the words may be translated); for the heathen thought there was a sacredness in trees themselves, which they dedicated to their gods, and honoured several ways. (See xii. 2, 3.) And therefore the Jews say, they might not plant trees in the court of the temple, or in the mountain of the house (as they call it), for the ornament or beauty of God's house. And they gave this reason for it, because it was an idolatrous rite to plant trees near their altars, that the people might there meet together. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 6. p. 186. and Dr. Spencer, lib. ii. cap. 16. sect. 1, 2.) And more lately, Ezekiel Spanhemius (in his most learned observations upon

Callimachus), hath shewn that they planted odoriferous trees in some groves, to make them more inviting. Whence the grove dedicated to Pallas is called by that poet τεθυωμένος ἄλσος, though that may signify only a grove consecrated by many sacrifices. And the vulgar groves were planted with pines, fir-trees, cypress, laurel, olives, vines, and other lovely trees, especially oaks, which grew to a great height, in which both altars and temples were erected. See in Hymn, in Dianam. ver. 38. p. 156. and in Palladem, ver. 61. p. 595. and in Cererem, ver. 38, 39. p. 689. where he mentions the black poplar, as a tree of which her grove consisted, under the shade of which the nymphs delighted to dance at noon. And thence these shady places, consecrated to their gods, were called ψυκτῆρες, because of their refreshing coolness, as he observes out of Athenæus, (ad ver. 47. p. 695.) And indeed nothing is plainer in the Holy Scripture, than that these groves related to idolatry; for all pious princes took them away, and bad ones planted them. (1 Kings xviii. 4. 2 Kings xxiii. 14. 2 Chron. xiv. 3. xv. 16.) And they are frequently joined with statues and images, both here, and vii. 5. xii. 3. 1 Kings xiv. 23, &c.

Ver. 22. *Neither shalt thou set thee up an image.*] The Hebrew word *matzebah* is commonly translated by the LXX. στήλην, *a pillar;* and so we translate it in the margin. For as it was unlawful to set up the statue of a man, or any other creature, so it was as contrary to religion to set up a pillar, or an altar, or any such-like structure, for public assemblies to be held about them, though they worshipped there the true God. So Maimonides reports the sense of their doctors; "A statue or pillar signifies any work raised up, that religious assemblies may be made there, though they be for the worship of the Divine Majesty; for this is a practice among idolaters." And so Pausanias confesses (in Achaicis), that in the most ancient times, among all the Grecians, τιμὰς θεῶν ἀντὶ ἀγαλμάτων εἶχον ἀργοὶ λίθοι, *rude stones had Divine honours given them, instead of statues or images.* (See Selden, lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 6. in the beginning; and Maimonides, of the Worship of the Planets, chap. 6. sect. 8—10. and Dionys. Vossius's annotations there.)

Which the Lord thy God hateth.] Hence it sufficiently appears, that this was an idolatrous practice; which is more odious to God than any thing else. And thus the Israelites we see understood it, being ready to take arms against their brethren on the other side Jordan, when they heard they had erected an altar there (taking it to be such a structure as is here forbidden); but were appeased when they understood, that it was not intended for worship, (Josh. xxii. 18.).

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *THOU shalt not sacrifice unto the Lord thy God any bullock, or sheep, wherein is any blemish.*] Having warned them, as he had done often, against idolatrous practices, he here interposes a caution against profaneness in the worship of the true God: for it was a great disrespect to him, to offer him any thing that was not perfect, the heathens being ashamed of such sacrifices.

Wherein is any blemish.] Of this see Lev. xxii. 20, &c.

Or any evil-favouredness.] In the Hebrew, *any evil thing,* or *matter;* that is, if it had any disease, or was sick.

For that is an abomination unto the Lord thy God.] This is more than is said in Leviticus, where the words are, *for it shall not be acceptable for you.* For here he expresses the greatest disdain and abhorrence of such sacrifices.

Ver. 2. *If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*] In any cities or towns within their country.

Man or woman that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the Lord thy God.] Now he returns to the business of idolatry; which is the *wickedness* here said to be wrought, as appears by the next words.

In transgressing his covenant.] For this was the principal part of the covenant, that they should have no other gods but him; (Exod. xx. 22, 23.) upon this all depended; so that the whole covenant was void, if they served other gods. Which was so foul a sin, that he would have none spared, who were guilty of it. Which is the reason, as Maimonides thinks, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 37.) why he here saith, *man or woman,* because men are naturally more tender towards the female sex, and inclinable to be favourable to them; against which he warns them in case of idolatry, and of profaning the sabbath; in which two cases only he uses these words.

He had shewn in the thirteenth chapter, what they should do with him that seduced others to idolatry, whether he were a pretended prophet, or a private man, (ver. 1. 9, 10.) And then, what should be done with a whole city that was seduced, (ver. 12, 13, &c.) And now he shews how they should proceed against any particular person who apostatized from God.

Ver. 3. *And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven.*] The most ancient idolatry (of which Abarbinel makes account there were ten sorts) was the worship of the heavenly bodies, as I have observed before, iv. 19. and see Job xxxi. 26. The forenamed doctor, indeed, places first the worship of angels; about which I will not dispute, but only observe, that by condemning those who worshipped the host of heaven, though very glorious creatures, Moses suggests plainly enough how vile they were who worshipped images of wood and stone.

Which I have not commanded.] This is a way of speaking in this language, importing the quite contrary, *which God hath forbidden,* and that most strictly. (See Prov. xvii. 21. xxiv. 23. and many other places.)

Ver. 4. *And it be told thee.*] Thou hast had information of such wickedness.

And thou hast heard it, and inquired diligently.] Upon information, they were to make diligent search, whether the report were true or not.

And, behold, it be true, and the thing certain.] They were not to proceed upon rumours, nor yet to slight them; but endeavour to be satisfied, whether or not, there was ground for them; and if upon examination they found there was no doubt of the truth of the thing, to do as is here directed.

That such abomination is wrought in Israel.] So idolatry is frequently called. (See xiii. 14.)

Ver. 5. *Then thou shalt bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates.*] Set them before the court of judgment in the city to which they belonged, (see xvi. 18.) For particular persons were tried and sentenced in the lower courts, but a

tribe or a city, accused of idolatry, only by the highest court of all; as Maimonides and the rest of the Jewish doctors inform us. (See Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 4. n. 3. and cap. 5. n. 1.)

And shalt stone them with stones that they die.] This was the punishment of a particular person, as a city fallen to idolatry was to be killed with the sword; and a false prophet, who seduced others to idolatry, to be strangled. (See xiii. 5.)

Ver. 6. *At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death.*] No man could be convicted but by two witnesses, at least, and those of a competent age, of good fame, and not convicted themselves of having borne false witness, &c. Many other qualifications, of lesser moment, the Jews required in a witness; which Mr. Selden reports, and the reason of them, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. n. 11.

But at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.] Because, though the witness was never so credible, it was possible he might be mistaken. But it was not likely that two or three honest men, agreeing in the same testimony, should all be deceived. Yet in pecuniary matters, the Hebrew doctors say, the testimony of one credible witness was sufficient to put a man to his oath for his purgation. And they set a mark of infamy upon him, who, in such matters as are here spoken of, had such a single witness against him. (See Maccoth, cap. 1. sect. 8. and J. Coch's annotations there.)

Ver. 7. *The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him, to put him to death.*] This was great reason, that they might thereby still confirm the truth and certainty of their testimony, by being the first executioners of the sentence; which no men would easily venture to be, who were not sure they had testified the truth.

And afterward the hands of all the people.] From hence some infer, that he was to be put to death at a public feast.

So shalt thou put away the evil from among you.] See xiii. 5.

Ver. 8. *If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment.*] Now he returns to speak of the courts of judgment, which he had ordered to be erected in all their cities, when they came into the land of Canaan, (xvi. 18.) who might find some causes to be so difficult that they could not determine them.

Between blood and blood.] The Jews, I think, interpret this absurdly concerning menstruous women, and the tokens of virginity, (see Mr. Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 2.) when there is a plain and obvious meaning of these words, That there might be a doubt whether a man had committed wilful murder, or only casual, and, consequently, whether he should have the benefit of the city of refuge, or be taken from it.

Between plea and plea.] As the former words belong to criminal causes, so these to civil; such as suits about debts, or purchases of lands or houses, &c.

Between stroke and stroke.] It doth not seem reasonable to me, that this should be interpreted of the leprosy (which is often called a *plague*, or *stroke*), though the Jews so understand it, for that was to be judged solely by the priests; whereas he speaks also of other judges: therefore the meaning is, concerning any wound or hurt that was done to a man in his body. About which, if the judges could not agree, but were divided in their opinions, either about the fact itself, or about the punishment to be inflicted, an appeal was to be made to a higher court.

Being matters of controversy.] Or contention and strife; that is, disputes arising about them, which could not be determined by the judges in those courts below.

Within thy gates.] Where God commanded judges and officers to be settled, (xvi. 18.) And therefore here he speaks of the inferior courts of judgment, that were in the lesser cities of their several tribes.

Then thou shalt arise, and get thee up unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose.] Where the supreme court was settled in the chief city of the kingdom. While they continued in the wilderness, the captains of thousands, and hundreds, and fifties, and tens (whom Moses constituted by the advice of Jethro), judged the causes of the people under Moses himself, to whom God joined seventy persons for his assistance; all hard causes being brought before him. But this authority of the captains lasted no longer than during their pilgrimage in the wilderness; for when they came to Canaan, the law, as I now observed, required judges and officers to be ordained in every city; who, if there fell any difference about the law, are here ordered to repair to the place where the sanctuary was, for there the highest court sat, as the successors of Moses, and his consistory of seventy elders, (mentioned Numb. xi. 16. 24, &c.) who judged all difficult causes while he lived.

Ver. 9. *And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge.*] Who must be supposed to be resident in this place, where the sanctuary was. And these words, *the priests the Levites*, the Jews understand as if he had said, *the priests of the tribe of Levi*, or *the sons of Levi*; for so he speaks in xxi. 5. And Mr. Selden produces a great many other instances of the like phrase, (lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 8. n. 2, 3.) and shews they are so described (as the Jews think) to exclude all others that had been priests, before God took the sons of Aaron peculiarly to serve him in this office. But the Levites, as well as priests, they unanimously agree, were capable to be members of this great Sanhedrin; which, they all likewise say, did not consist only of priests and Levites, but of any other persons of other tribes, who were fit to be promoted to this dignity. Nay, they say, if there was not one priest or Levite in the court, it was a lawful judicature; for the high-priest himself, no more than any man else, had a place here, merely for his birth, unless his learning in the law was answerable: so Maimonides and others. And those other members who were not priests, nor Levites, they think are comprehended under the word *judge*, which, though it be in the singular number, may be thought to signify more than one, as appears from xix. 17. where it is said expressly, they shall bring the controversy there mentioned, *before the priests and the judges.* And farther, that *judge*, after the manner of this language, may signify *judges*, Constantine L'Empereur gathers from ver. 12. where *priest* in the singular number is used for those who are here called *priests* in the plural. (Annot. in Corn. Bertram, p. 389.)

But howsoever this be, it seems to me, that though the priests and Levites were not the only persons of whom this high court consisted (the members of which might be

chosen out of any tribe where they could find men qualified), yet they are here first mentioned, because they were likely to be the most capable persons to exercise this authority, especially in the first constitution of this commonwealth, when they were newly entered into Canaan. For all other persons were then busily employed in looking after the inheritance that was fallen to them, and settling the affairs of their several families; whereby they were rendered less able to attend unto this weighty office. But the tribe of Levi having no inheritance among them (as is often repeated in these books), and no care about husbandry, and such-like affairs, had a full leisure both to study the laws of God and to judge according to them; especially being appointed by God to *teach Jacob his judgments and Israel his law*, xxxiii. 10. Besides, this court being settled at the place of God's worship, where a great many priests and Levites always necessarily attended, they were most ready, without any inconvenience to themselves, to execute this office of judges, having their maintenance from the public, which no other persons had. But otherwise, as I said, they had no more right than other men to be members of this court, which we cannot certainly say consisted of seventy judges, together with their *nasi, i. e.* their *prince*, or *president;* nor that they always sat at the place here appointed: for there were sometimes great troubles in the land, and they were under the power of their enemies, which extremely disturbed their government, and made it necessary for God to raise them up extraordinary judges, because the power of this court was broken in pieces. So Mr. Selden himself acknowledges, that there were great intermissions of their sitting in the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, and of Herod the Great, (lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 14. n. 3.) And therefore, why not in the times when they were oppressed by the Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and other cruel neighbours, in the days of the judges? and thus Grotius, Hermannus Conringius (to name no more), here understand the word *judge*, who is joined with the priest and Levites.

And unto the judge.] The forenamed authors thus translate this verse, *Thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, or unto the judge that shall be in those days.* Where by *judge* they understand such as Othniel, Ehud, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, Samuel, and others, whom God raised up when they were oppressed by their enemies, and in great confusions, to govern his people; which they did with the highest authority, being equal to kings, save only that they kept not royal state or equipage, but are plainly called by that name, Judg. xvii. 6. xix. 1. xxi. 25. Now, though the priests and Levites (*i. e.* that court, of which they made a considerable part) were the ordinary supreme judges of controversies, yet the judge, when God raised one up, was endued with an extraordinary power above theirs; to whom the people therefore resorted for his decision. For just as all ordinary magistrates among the Romans gave place to a dictator, when they had one, so all the Hebrew magistrates did to such a judge, when God appointed him, who determined all manner of controversies, as, at other times, the other judges, whether priests or others, were wont to do. (See Herman. Conringius de Republ. Ebræorum, sect. 39.)

I know but one objection against this, which is, that those extraordinary judges were not fixed, as far as we can find, in the place where the sanctuary was; unless we may judge of all the rest by Eli and Samuel, who seem to have been settled there. But we must consider that they were not confined by their commission, which was not grounded on this law, to any one certain place, but left at liberty to live where they thought most convenient for the discharge of their trust, in the reformation of the people. And the truth of what I said concerning their supreme power, plainly appears in Samuel, who went up and down the country executing judgment, when Shiloh was destroyed, and had no court, like that which the Jews speak of, to assist him. But when he needed assistance, he appointed his sons to be judges, (1 Sam. viii. 1.) of whom, when the elders complained, (ver. 4.) because they did not discharge their duty well, it was to himself, and not to any other persons; and they desire not a Sanhedrin, but a king to judge them, (ver. 5.) Which petition we do not find that he communicated to the Sanhedrin, but only unto God; nor is any mention made of them in the choice of a king, or, after he was chosen, in the history of their kings, till Jehoshaphat's time, no more than there is in the books of Joshua and Judges; where we read, that when there was no king (that is, judge) in Israel, every man did what was right in his own eyes; which is a sign that there wanted such a court to keep them in order. After the time of Jehoshaphat, who settled judges in every city, (as I observed, xvi. 18:) they continued, it is plain, till the captivity; but what number there was of them we do not know. After the captivity, Ezra and Nehemiah seem to have done all themselves, (see Neh. ix. and x.) Which makes it very probable, that though there were judges appointed according to the direction of this law, yet the exercise of their power was often interrupted by the great changes which were in that nation; and that there was no such Sanhedrin as the Talmudists describe till the time of the Maccabees. For the very name of Sanhedrin plainly shews its original to have been when the Greek tongue was common among the Jews; and that was, when the kings of Syria and Egypt (who were of the Macedonian race) had the chief power in Palestine. (See Conringius, in the forenamed book, sect. 37.)

And inquire.] They were to lay the cause before this high court, and desire their opinion in it.

And they shall shew the sentence of judgment.] They were bound to determine the controversy; and whatsoever sentence they gave, it was to stand good till it was reversed by other judges of the same authority; for the Jews (who understand all this of the great Sanhedrin, and scan every syllable with great nicety) will have the words just before [*that shall be in those days*] to signify that every sentence must hold in the time when it is given: so that if this court determined a matter, which in after-times, by other judges of the same court, should be judged otherways, that second sentence was to stand, being the opinion of those days. For this sentence was, in their judgment, the meaning of the law, by which they were all to be governed; and, if there was no tradition in the case, they judged themselves as well as they could.

Ver. 10. *And thou shalt do according to the sentence which they of that place.*] That is, the high court which sits there, or the judge who is in those days.

Which the Lord shall choose.] The Jews, who understand this only of the Sanhedrin, say, it was not lawful for them

to judge causes, at least not those which were capital, in any other place. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 15. n. 6, 7. 10.)

Shall shew thee.] Shall pronounce.

And thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee.] Some fancy that he speaks to the inferior judges, who brought the cause thither to have the opinion of this highest court, who were then to pronounce sentence according to it; but whoever brought the controversy before this court (when the inferior could not determine it), they gave the sentence, in which he requires the contending parties to acquiesce, and to do according to their determination; which did not concern questions of faith, as if men were to believe whatsoever they should teach them, but such controversies as are mentioned ver. 8. about civil or criminal matters, which they were finally to determine; so that men should not farther controvert the matter, but rest in their decisions. For in all governments there must be an end of suits, somewhere or other; and God required all his people to submit to the sentence of this court: for so the words run in the Hebrew, *And thou shalt do according to the sentence which they shall shew thee, from the place which the Lord thy God shall choose;* that is, from the supreme court of judicature, which resided where God himself did. For if men had been permitted to disagree to their sentence, the very end and use of this court had been taken away; as Maimonides speaks, in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 41.

Ver. 11. *According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee.*] In the Hebrew, According to the *mouth*, or *the word of the law*, which they shall teach thee; that is, according to the interpretation which they gave of the law.

And according to the judgment which they shall tell thee.] That is, according to the order or decree which they made thereupon.

Shalt thou do.] Pay, suppose, the money, which they judged to be due to another man: for he doth not speak of their doing whatsoever they bade them (as if they could control the commands of God), but of obeying the sentence of this court, about those matters which were in question between one man and another, (ver. 8.) who were not to be judges in their own case, but rest in the judgment of those whom God had made the supreme interpreters of his law.

Thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, &c.] They were not to make the least alteration in their sentence: for though they might think it was wrong, and the senate perhaps did really err, and be better informed afterward, (which the law supposes, and in that case orders an expiatory sacrifice, Lev. iv. 13.) yet it was not lawful for any man to act contrary to their present decree, nor to teach the contrary, whatsoever his private opinion might be.

Ver. 12. *And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken.*] This they understand, not barely of a private man, that would not stand to their sentence, but of an elder, or inferior judge, who presumed to contradict it; as Mr. Selden shews, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 3.

Unto the priest.] It is commonly thought, as I observed, ver. 8. that the singular number is here put for the plural; and that the meaning is, if any man would not hearken to the highest court of judgment, which consisted commonly of a great many priests, he should die for his contempt: but they have a great deal of reason on their side, who insist upon the letter of this word *priest*, and of that which follows, or *the judge* (understanding both of single persons), and take the *high-priest* only to be here meant; who seems to be described in the next words, *that stands to minister there before the Lord thy God.* For when God did not raise up *a judge* to govern his people, the high-priest was the supreme governor under God until the days of David; and so he was after the captivity. Hence it is, as Grotius observes, (lib. de Imperio Summarum Potestatum circa Sacra, cap. 9. sect. 4.) that *cohen* is a name common to priests and princes: for, among a great many nations anciently, he shews, the priests had the highest power; particularly among the Cappadocians (Strabo, who was of that country, saith), the sacerdotal dignity was next to the regal; but howsoever this word be interpreted, the crime here mentioned was contumacy, in not submitting to the sentence of the highest authority, whether it were vested in one person or more, whereby the government was in danger to be broken; and therefore God orders such a person to be put to death.

Or the judge.] See before, ver. 9.

Even that man shall die.] The Jews, who interpret this, as I said, of a judge in inferior courts, who presumed to contradict the judgment of the supreme court, have tempered the severity of this law by several explications and exceptions; which have regard, either to the manner of passing this decree by the highest court, which an inferior disobeyed (and that was when a cause came before them upon an appeal, for it was not so criminal to disobey every sentence of the supreme court, but only such as these), or to the place where it was made, which was to be no where else but at God's dwelling-place, or to the things about which the decree was made; which some will have to be only weighty matters: and the act of contumacy also was considered; for he was not put to death, they say, unless in open court he declared a contrary sentence. The death he suffered was strangling; and he could suffer in no other place but where this high court sat. (See Selden, of all these, in the place beforementioned, n. 2—6.) And it may be farther observed, that the prophets themselves were subject to the power and jurisdiction of this high court, by whom they might be sentenced to capital punishment, if they taught contrary to the law of God. But our Mr. Thorndike makes a doubt, whether the constitution which the Jewish writers mention about a rebellious elder (as they call him who taught any thing contrary to the determination of this supreme court), was ever in force or not? For it was made, because of the differences between the schools of Hillel and Shammai, who lived not long before our Saviour's time; when, it appears by the gospel, that nation had lost the power of life and death. (See Rites of the Church, chap. 5. p. 256.)

And thou shalt put away the evil from Israel.] This may refer either to the evil person, or to the great scandal and dangerous example he gave, by resisting the highest authority, and thereby breaking the bond of unity and peace.

Ver. 13. *And all the people shall hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously.*] This punishment was intended to strike a terror into all the people, that they should not

adventure to oppose the supreme authority. And for this end the offender was to be kept in custody, as R. Aquiba understood this, till the next great feast (either of the Passover, or Pentecost, or tabernacles), and then executed, when the whole nation, *i. e.* all the males were present. This Mr. Selden observes (in the forenamed place, n. 7.) is the most received opinion; though R. Jehuda saith, they did not make the sentence sharper by a long delay, but executed it presently: and for the farther publication of it, they sent letters to all the tribes and cities of Israel, to give notice, that such a man was executed at such a time for this crime. (See Selden there, n. 8.)

Ver. 14. *And when thou comest into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein.*] When they had conquered the land of Canaan, and were settled in it.

And shalt say, I will set a king over me.] The Jews commonly, from this and the next verse, fancy that God commanded them to make a king when they came to the land of Canaan, and had a quiet possession of it; following herein the Gemara of the Sanhedrin, cap. 2. Insomuch, that they have presumed to make this an affirmative precept, "a king of the people should be chosen;" and quote this place for it. To which some learned men among Christians have seemed to incline; particularly Petrus Cunæus, lib. ii. de Republ. Hebr. cap. 14. and Guil. Schickardus, in his Jus Regium, cap. 1. Theor. 1. But Abarbinel himself contradicts this; and so doth Josephus, who observes, that God intended they should keep their present government; but if they would have a king, he should be one of their brethren. For thus he interprets this place, (lib. i. Antiq. cap. 8.) that *they should not affect any other government, but love the present, having the law for their master, and living according to it; ἀρκεῖ γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς ἡγεμὼν εἶναι; for it is sufficient that God is your ruler.* And then he adds, But if you desire to have a king, *ἔστω μὲν οὗτος ὁμόφυλος, let him be one of your own nation,* as it here follows in the next verse.

Like as all the nations that are about me.] Such as the Edomites, who had been governed by kings before the days of Moses. (See Gen. xxxvi. 31.)

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee.*] Install, and receive him into the throne.

Whom the Lord thy God shall choose.] They could not elect whom they pleased, but the first king, at least, was to be appointed by God himself, who was their supreme governor. So the people understood it, when they desired Samuel, who was their chief ruler under God, to make them a king, (1 Sam. viii. 5.) but durst not to presume to set one up of themselves. And to confirm them in this opinion, Samuel saith to Saul, (1 Sam. x. 1.) "The Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance;" and saith to all the people, (ver. 24.) "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen." And accordingly, when the lot was to be cast, to shew who was to be their king, Samuel bids all the tribes present themselves before the Lord, (ver. 19.) And when it fell upon Saul, and they could not find him, they inquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered where he was, (ver. 22.) In like manner, when Saul was rejected, the Lord himself appointed David to be anointed their king, and settled that authority in his family. And to determine which of his sons should have it, God himself appointed his immediate successor, *viz.* Solomon. For so David declares to all the princes and the great men whom he assembled before his death; "Of all my sons, the Lord hath chosen Solomon to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord God of Israel," (1 Chron. xxviii. 5.) And again, (xxix. 1.) "David said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young," &c. But though it was thus in the beginning of this kingdom, yet God intended at length to make it hereditary, as appears from ver. 20. of this chapter.

One from among thy brethren shalt thou set over thee.] *i. e.* Saith the tradition, mentioned by the Jews out of Tosiphta, the most select and choice person that could be found, not one of mean extraction or employment. This they fancy is meant by *from among thy brethren.*

Thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.] This the Jews extend to all offices whatsoever, as Maimonides reports their sense. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 20. p. 647.) And by thy *brother* some of them understand one that was an Israelite, both by father and mother; though others think it sufficient, if a king was an Israelite by the mother's side. See there, cap. 22. which in his book de Succession. ad Pontificat. lib. ii. he shews was sufficient for any dignity among the Israelites, but only the priesthood. See also, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 9. n. 6. where he observes the Talmudists say, the great Sanhedrin was to see that no king but one thus qualified was set over the people; which, when there was such a court, may be allowed to be true; though all the power which they ascribe to their Sanhedrin over their kings, is by no means to be admitted; but is an apparent figment: for it is manifest out of the Bible, that their kings had that very power which they ascribe to the Sanhedrin; particularly, it is notorious that Solomon, by his own power, put Abiathar out of the office of high-priest, (1 Kings ii. 6. 26.) which judgment the Talmudists say belonged only to the great Sanhedrin. In like manner other kings judged prophets; which they appropriate to the same court.

Ver. 16. *But he shall not multiply horses to himself.*] There is no certain number determined; but the Jews well resolve, that he was not to keep them for mere pomp and state, but only so many as were for use and service; to draw his chariot, for instance, and for the guard of his person; but he was to take care that he did not burden his people by too many, under this, or any other pretence: and therefore not to keep up a body of horse for war. For among the Jews their armies consisted altogether of footmen; there being no breed of horses in that country; and their people, who were all husbandmen and shepherds, being accustomed to labour, and to run as swiftly as a horse, (2 Sam. ii. 18. xviii. 19. 22, &c.) Certain it is, that in the days of David they had no horsemen in their army; for when Absalom lost the battle and fled, it was upon a mule that he endeavoured to make his escape. And though Solomon was so prodigiously rich, that he was able to maintain forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, (1 Kings iv. 26.) yet succeeding kings could not keep up such an expense; but when they had occasion sent for succours from Egypt, which commonly consisted of horsemen. Now one of the reasons the Jews give why their king was *not to multiply*

horses, is, lest he should be puffed up with pride; for a horse being a stately creature, his rider is often swollen with a high conceit of himself, as more than one of the heathen have observed. (See Bochart, in his Hierozoicon, lib. ii. cap. 9.) Nachmanides gives another good reason, lest he should confide and trust in the power of his horsemen more than in God. (See Schickard, in his Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 3. Theor. 10.) But the chief reason is given by Moses himself in the next words, Lest they should be tempted to go to Egypt, with which country it was dangerous to have familiarity.

Nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses.] Send his people thither to buy horses for him, it being a country that abounded with them, as Judea did with asses. For when Sheshak, king of Egypt (whom the Greek writers call Sesostris), came against Jerusalem, there were threescore thousand horsemen in his army, (2 Chron. xii. 3.) Which shews how they abounded with horses in that country in those days, though in aftertimes they did not care to breed them. They might indeed have horses out of other countries, as well as Egypt, but not so easily, nor so good: which made Solomon send thither, and Pharaoh set a great price upon them; because he knew their value, and that they could not furnish themselves so easily with them elsewhere, (1 Kings x. 28, 29.)

Forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.] Or the first words may be rendered, *forasmuch as the Lord saith unto you*, &c. as he did now by him, that they should not maintain traffic with the Egyptians, at least while they continued idolaters. We read, indeed, that many Jews went thither, and Urijah the prophet fled thither: (Jer. xxvi. 21.) of which the Jews give this account: first, some say this was but a temporary constitution, which was not to last always: secondly, they distinguish about the way of returning thither; conceiving that they might not go thither out of the land of Israel, but they might out of another country whither they were driven. Maimonides thinks they might go thither as merchants, but not fix their dwelling there. But the true meaning is, that they might not voluntarily go thither upon any account, at least while they remained, as I said, so corrupted in their religion and manners, as they were at this present: for there is an express law, Lev. xviii. 3. "According to the works of the Egyptians ye shall not do." (See Schickardus, in the forenamed place, p. 78.) Whence those words of the prophet Isaiah, where, when he saith the land of Israel was *full of horses*, he adds, *their land also is full of idols*, (Isa. ii. 7, 8.) For by multiplying the one, they multiplied the other. And, therefore, though David did reserve some chariots and horsemen, which he took to his conquests, for his own use, yet no great number, (2 Sam. viii. 4.) But still great men rode upon mules, (2 Sam. xviii. 9. 1 Kings i. 33. 38. 41.) as they had done in the days of the judges, (Judg. v. 10. x. 4. xii. 14.)

Ver. 17. *Neither shall he multiply wives to himself.*] This is not a prohibition to take more wives than one, but not to have an excessive number, after the manner of the eastern kings, whom Solomon seems to have imitated: I see no ground for what the Jews say, that he might have eighteen. (See Schickard, in the book abovenamed, cap. 3. Theor. 9. Selden's Uxor. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 8. Buxtorf. de Sponsal. par. i. sect. 40.) For the proof which R. Solomon and Bechin give of it is very weak; which is, that David having already six wives, (2 Sam. v. 13.) the prophet tells him, if he had not offended God, he would *moreover have given him such and such things, i. e.* say they, twice as many wives, (2 Sam. xii. 8.) Much less is there any ground for what they say, that if he took more than his number, he was to be scourged by the authority of the Sanhedrin, as he was, they pretend, for the breach of any of these precepts here mentioned. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 9. n. 5.) Which Grotius, indeed, endeavours to soften, by affirming that these lashes were no disgrace to him, because he received them voluntarily, in token of his repentance; and therefore was not scourged by the common executioner, but by such a person as he himself chose to give this correction; and he received also such a number of stripes as he himself pleased, and no more, (lib. i. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 3. sect. 20.) But this is directly against Maimonides, who saith, in downright words, that the Sanhedrin appointed this chastisement; as Selden observes in another place, (lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 9. n. 5.) And there is no example in the whole book of God of any such jurisdiction which the Sanhedrin had over their kings; but all this may well be looked upon as a mere invention of the Jewish doctors, to magnify the power of their great council.

That his heart turn not away.] From all serious business and employment, whilst he was caressing and studying to please a multitude of women: some understand it, lest they turned his heart away from God, and the duties of piety, of which there was great danger, if he married worshippers of strange gods, as Solomon did. Otherwise, I should think it might be interpreted, of turning his thoughts from minding his people, and their good and welfare; which must needs suffer much, when they were burdened with a great company of wives, who were to be richly maintained and provided for.

Neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.] No more, saith the Sanhedrin, (cap. 2.) than would pay stipends to his servants, &c. Others of them scan the words more nicely; and observe, that, first, he is forbidden to multiply gold and silver *greatly*, that is, to content himself with moderate riches, and not set himself to heap up treasure, which could not be done commonly without great oppression of his subjects. And, secondly, he is forbidden to multiply them *to himself*: but for the public benefit he might lay up money in the treasury at the temple, though in his own coffers, for his private interest, he might not. See Schickard in his Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 3. Theor. 11. where he produces their answer to this question,—How should the king be able to manage a war, or do any other great thing, if he did not furnish himself with good store of gold and silver? He might, say they, fill the public exchequer, though not his own private bags: and that for two reasons; first, lest he should wax proud and haughty, when his purse swelled: and secondly, lest he should be tempted to squeeze his subjects, and exact more from them than they were able to bear; as Solomon seems to have done, whose treasurer the people stoned, (1 Kings xii. 18.)

Ver. 18. *And it shall be, when he sitteth on the throne of the kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book.*] Not only of this book of Deuteronomy, but of the whole law, and that with his own hand, as a means to fix it more in his mind: insomuch, that though a copy was left

him by his father, he was, notwithstanding, to transcribe one himself, as the Jews say, in the Gemara Sanhedrin, (cap. 2. sect. 13.) All this is very agreeable to these words; but whether he was bound, if he had not written a copy before he was king (as every private Israelite, they say, was bound to do), to write two when he sat on the throne, may be doubted; for it cannot, without violence, be drawn from these words; and their authority is not sufficient to warrant it: they give, indeed, a plausible reason for it, that the one he was to carry about with him whithersoever he went, and to read in the other at home: but why one copy might not serve for both these purposes, I do not see.

Out of that which is before the priests the Levites.] He was not to write one word of it out of his memory merely, or any private man's copy, but out of the book which was in the sanctuary, where the original and uncorrupted copy was in the custody of God's ministers: there are a great many rules the Jews give about the right writing of this copy, which may be seen in Guil. Schickardi Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 2. Theor. 5.

Ver. 19. *And it shall be with him.*] Wheresoever he was, either in the camp, or at home, or in any other place, provided it was pure, and free from filth, as the Jews limit it. (See there, Theor. 6.)

And he shall read therein all the days of his life.] Diligently study it, not spending his time, as Maimonides glosses, in drinking and making merry, but in learning the law of God. (See there, p. 53.) From the neglect of this precept, their kings became so ignorant of the laws of God, and of their obligation to observe them, that, in the days of the good king Josiah, he was strangely started at what he heard read out of this book of the law, when it was found in the temple, where it had long lain without any knowledge of it.

That he may learn to fear the Lord his God.] Be preserved in the true religion.

To keep all the words of this law, and these statutes, to do them.] Be acquainted with his whole duty, and perform it constantly. (See Josh. i. 8.)

Ver. 20. *That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren.*] Not imagining himself to be above all laws, nor slighting his subjects as unworthy of his notice, but taking a due care to promote their happiness. "For as the Scriptures (saith Maimonides) provided the king should have great honour done him, obliging all to reverence him, so it commands him to be lowly in heart, and not to carry himself insolently: let him be gracious, and full of clemency to little and great, so shall he go out, and come in, with the love and good wishes of them all." Unto which Nachmanides adds this pious reflection: "If the Scripture deters kings from pride and haughtiness of heart; how unbecoming is it in other men, who are far inferior to them?" &c.

And that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand or the left.] Neither by changing the laws, on pretence of making better; nor by abrogating them, on pretence of their inconveniency: but where the Divine law was not clear, or where nothing was there defined, he might by his authority make new constitutions, as David and Solomon did, as well in sacred as in civil matters.

To the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.] This shews that God intended to establish a successive right in that family to which he chose to give the kingdom, if they continued in a constant observation of his laws. And, indeed, there is no way to establish and perpetuate a family in the throne, like the due observation of laws, though they be but human, not Divine laws: for, as Aristotle truly said, "He that commands the law shall govern all (*i. e.* all things be ordered according to law), δοκεῖ κελεύειν ἄρχειν τὸν Θεὸν καὶ τοὺς νόμους, *seems to command that God should rule, and the laws:* but he that bids a man rule without laws (according to his own will), προστίθησι θηρίον, *sets up a beast to govern.*" And above all things, he ought to endeavour to win the love of his subjects, by humility and clemency; as the same Aristotle taught Alexander, if we may believe R. Jedaja, in his book called Mibchar Happeninim, where he reports a letter of his to that great prince, advising him to gain the affection of his people by a gentle government, which is far better than to rule tyrannically by force and violence: "For to what purpose is it to have possession of their bodies, when the true possession is to be master of their hearts? get possession of their hearts by clemency, and that will draw their bodies along with them."

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *THE priests the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi.*] Or, even the whole tribe of Levi. (See xvii. 9.)

They shall have no inheritance with Israel.] As had been said Numb. xviii. 20. and here in this book, x. 7. Which made it the more necessary Moses should remind the people of that maintenance God had appointed for them; which, unless it was duly given them, religion could not be supported; and consequently the government (of which he had been speaking) would be quite confounded.

They shall eat the offerings of the Lord made by fire.] Not the *burnt-offerings*, which were wholly God's; but all other offerings, of which a share was appointed for the priests the sons of Aaron, (Numb. xviii. 9—11. 18, 19.)

And his inheritance.] That is, the inheritance of the Lord, of whom he spoke before, who had reserved certain oblations to himself, and bestowed them upon the priests: They are mentioned Numb. xviii. 8, 9. and ver. 12—15. where he first speaks of the first-fruits, and the first-born, which were all *brought unto the Lord*, and by him given to them. In like manner, all the tithes of the land are said to be a *heave-offering unto the Lord*, ver. 24. where he saith, *I have given them to the Levites to inherit.* So these two, *the offerings of the Lord made by fire*, and *his inheritance*, comprehend all that belonged to his ministers, whether priests or Levites.

Ver. 2. *Therefore shall they have no inheritance among their brethren; the Lord is their inheritance, as he hath said unto them.*] The Lord had given them that part and portion of the offerings which were peculiarly his own; and therefore is said to be their inheritance, because they enjoyed *his inheritance*, as these holy things are called in the foregoing words. (See Numb. xviii. 20. 24. and Josh. xiii. 14. 33.)

Ver. 3. *And this shall be the priest's due from the people.*] Besides those things that God gave them, which peculiarly belonged to him.

From them that offer a sacrifice.] Of *peace-offerings*, which are sometimes called simply a *sacrifice*, (Lev. xvii.

5. 8. Numb. xv. 3.) in which the people had a considerable interest.

Whether it be ox, or sheep.] Under *sheep* are comprehended *goats* also, as I have observed. (See Lev. iii.)

And they shall give unto the priest the shoulder.] Together with the breast; as we read Lev. vii. 32—34.

And the two cheeks, and the maw.] These were not given to the priests before, but were now added to their portion, being accounted the best part of the beasts: for, as the *cheeks* were the best part of the head, and the *shoulder* and *breast* the best of the other members of the body, so the *maw* was the principal part of the entrails, as Maimonides observes, par. iii. More Nevochim, cap. 39.

By the *maw* is meant the stomach; and in beasts that chew the cud, who have four stomachs, that which is called by the Greeks ἤνυστρον, *viz.* the lowest of them, which had this name, because the digestion which is begun in the other, is here perfected and completed: and it appears that this part of the entrails was accounted by the ancients a great dainty, as Bochartus proves out of Aristophanes, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45. p. 505.

Ver. 4. *The first-fruits also of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thy oil.*] See Numb. xviii. 12. To which it may be useful to add this out of Maimonides (who hath distinctly represented the order wherein all oblations were made), that after the fruits of the earth were gathered, every man was bound to bring a fiftieth part of them, as a first-fruit to the priests, which was called *trumah gedolah, the great oblation,* of which Moses speaks in this place: and next of all, he separated a tenth part of the whole from the rest, which was *maasher rishon, the first tithe,* and given to the Levites, (Numb. xviii. 24.) Then, out of what remained, another tenth part was taken, called *maaser sheni, the second tithe,* which was every third year given to the poor, and in the two intermediate years, spent in feasting at the house of God, (Deut. xiv. 28.) So that, for instance, if a man had pressed out a hundred and two logs of oil, he sent two of them as first-fruits to the priest, and then ten more, as tithe to the Levites, and deducted nine parts more out of the residue for the poor; by which it appears, that one-and-twenty parts of a hundred and two, that is, a fifth part of the whole, was separated for pious and charitable uses. (See Schickard, in his Jus Regium, cap. 4. Theor. 15.)

And the first of the fleece of thy sheep shalt thou give him.] This is comprehended under first-fruits, but never particularly mentioned before now: and though the quantity is not mentioned, yet the Jews have adventured to determine, that less than one fleece in sixty was not accepted. For so they say of all other first-fruits, that a sixtieth part of the whole was the least that any man gave; and he was accounted a covetous man if he gave no more; they that were indifferently good, giving a fiftieth part, and liberal persons the fortieth. By this means the priests were provided with clothes, as by other offerings with food. And the wool also, as they call it, of goats (which were shorn in these countries) is comprehended under *the fleece of sheep.*

Ver. 5. *For the Lord thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the Lord.*] This was the office of a priest, to offer sacrifices unto God, and to bless the people in his name.

Him and his sons for ever.] The family of Aaron, of which he is principally speaking. Who, when they were few in number, all ministered unto God; but afterward they took their courses of attendance. And, as the Jews say, there were eight courses before Moses died; four of the family of Eleazar, and as many of Ithamar's, which in David's time were enlarged into four-and-twenty courses. (See Selden, lib. i. de Succession. in Pontificat. cap. 1.)

Ver. 6. *And if a Levite.*] By a Levite he seems here to mean a priest. (See ver. 1.) For they only could minister unto God, and the Levites ministered unto them.

Come from any of thy gates out of all Israel.] From any city, in any tribe of Israel.

Where he sojourned.] *i. e.* Leave the country where he hath been wont to live.

And come with all the desire of his mind unto the place which the Lord shall choose.] With a sincere affection to devote himself to the perpetual service of God at the sanctuary; so that, instead of coming in his course, he would always wait there, and never stir from that place.

Ver. 7. *Then he shall minister in the name of the Lord his God.*] Attend continually at the altar, to do all the service of the sanctuary. The LXX. translate it, *He shall minister to the name of the Lord, i. e.* to the Divine Majesty, who dwells there.

As his brethren the Levites do.] As all those do who live at that place.

Which stand there before the Lord.] To minister unto him: this was the case of Samuel.

Ver. 8. *They shall have like portion to eat.*] This shews that he is speaking of the priests; for the Levites did not eat of the holy things offered at the altar: and the meaning is, that the rest of the priests who waited there, should allow him the same portion which they themselves had in the sacrifices.

Besides that which cometh of the sale of his patrimony.] Which was to remain proper to himself, and not be divided with other priests at Jerusalem (suppose) where he ministered. The Hebrew words are something obscure, being *beside his sales by,* or *unto the fathers,* that is, such possessions as their fathers purchased, and left to them: for though the priests had no share in the land of Canaan given them at the division of it, yet they might purchase houses, and goods, and cattle; and sometimes they purchased fields, as we read Abiathar had fields of his own at Anathoth, 1 Kings ii. 26. and the prophet Jeremiah, who was a priest also, purchased a field of his uncle's son in his own town, Jer. xxxii. 7, 8, &c.

But the Jews make a quite different construction of these three verses, which they understand in this manner, that if any Levite (*i. e.* priest, for they only ministered before God) came up out of the city where he commonly resided, out of pure devotion to attend at the three solemn feasts, which were held at the place where the sanctuary was (where they were bound to wait, only when their course came, but at these feasts might all come and minister in the sanctuary), his brethren, whose week it was then to attend, should both admit him to minister before God with them, and also give him an equal portion with themselves in the extraordinary sacrifices which were then offered at those festivals, except only those which were peculiarly assigned to them whose week of waiting at the

altar it then was; who, by the ordinance of God, delivered to Moses and Aaron (who, they suppose, are here called *the fathers*), were to have the right shoulder of the peace-offerings. See Lev. vii. 33. where it is said, "He among the sons of Aaron that offereth the peace-offerings and the fat, shall have the right shoulder for his part;" in which none other was to participate. But why this should be called *the sales*, I do not understand, unless we interpret it as Forsterus doth, *venditiones, i. e.* "res venditas à patribus," *things sold by the fathers*, that is, appropriated by them (to the particular priest that offered the sacrifice), as things sold are to those that buy them.

Ver. 9. *When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*] The land of Canaan, which the Lord was about to bestow upon them, according to his promise.

Thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.] Now he returns to warn them again not to fall into the idolatry and the superstitions of the country whither they were going. (See Lev. xviii. 3.)

Ver. 10. *There shall not be found among you.*] So as to be tolerated.

Any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire.] This was the most abominable idolatry practised in that country whither they were going, who consecrated their children in this manner to Moloch, or the sun, of which I have said sufficient, Lev. xviii. 21. Therefore I shall only add here, that this wicked custom seems to have flowed from this country of the Phœnicians and Tyrians unto the Carthaginians; who were guilty of the impiety of sacrificing their children, as they did also here unto Moloch, (Lev. xx. 2, 3.) which spread itself, in a manner, over all the world, as many have shewn; particularly Joh. Geusius, in his treatise de Victimis Humanis, par. i. cap. 11. and it was found among the Americans, when that new world was discovered. (See also par. ii. cap. 5.)

Or that useth divination.] Of which there were many sorts; and one was, by raking into the bowels of their sacrifices, particularly of human sacrifices; by the observation of which they pretended to foretell things, as many authors testify. Yea, they offered little children on purpose, that thereby they might make their auguries, as the same Geusius hath observed in that book, (cap. 21.) Unto which, perhaps, there is a peculiar respect in this place; for I find most of the things here mentioned, joined in other places with *making their children pass through the fire*, particularly 2 Kings xxi. 6. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6. And the prophet Ezekiel seems to intimate, that hereby they divined, when he charges the Israelites with this crime, xx. 26. 31. For he adds, *Shall I be inquired by you, O house of Israel*, who have inquired, that is, by making your children pass through the fire?

But it must be confessed, that the Hebrew words *kosem kosemim* (which we translate *useth divination*), are by many thought to have a peculiar respect unto such as used to divine by casting or drawing of lots. And the word, as our learned Dr. Castell observes, is so used in the Arabian language for *distribution of lots*. Which sort of divination was much in use among the Greeks and Romans; and had been so, it is very likely, in more ancient times among the eastern nations: for nothing is more known than the Sortes Prænestinæ and Pativinæ among the Romans; and the Dodonææ, and Dindymenæ, and many others, among the Greeks, particularly that at Bura in Achaia, where there was a cave in which was the image of Hercules; before which they, who resorted thither to inquire directions in any case, or the success of any affair, used to fall down, and say their prayers, and after that to throw four dice upon the table, and by the letters or marks upon which they fell, the divination was made; as Pausanias describes it in his Achaica. In other places they used them in a different manner, and the ancient Arabians divined by arrows, as our famous Dr. Pocock has shewn in his notes upon Gregor. Abulfaragus's book, concerning the Original and Manners of the Arabians, p. 327, 328, &c. where he describes the manner of it, and shews that it was performed before some idol, and therefore was strictly forbidden, by Mahomet in his Alcoran, as a diabolical invention. In which he seems to have imitated Moses, who may be thought here to forbid such kind of divination; which was in use among the eastern people in the days of the prophet Ezekiel, xxi. 21. where we find the same word *kosem*, which that learned author thinks is illustrated by that Arabian custom.

It is to be noted, also, that they used to divine by a dead man's skull, as our Dr. Windet hath observed out of the Sanhedrin, (cap. 7.) and Maimonides. Which custom the Greeks likewise followed; for Palladius relates how Macarius inquired *πρὸς τὸν ξηρὸν κράνιον, at a dry skull*, &c. (See Windet, in his book de Vitæ Functorum Statu, sect. 1.)

Several sorts of such kind of persons there were among the Edomites, Moabites, and other nations near Judea, who, in the days of Jeremiah, deceived the people with their divinations, prophecies, dreams, enchantments, and sorceries, as we learn from Jer. xxvii. 3. 9.

Or an observer of times, or an enchanter.] Of these I have said enough upon Lev. xx. 26.

Or a witch.] This word signifies worse than any of the former, *viz.* one that doeth mischief unto men or beasts by evil arts: concerning which see upon Exod. xxii. 18. Unto which I shall here add, that the Jewish nation have been extremely addicted to witchcraft, and some of their famous rabbins have been suspected of it. (See J. Wagenseil upon Sota, p. 529.)

Ver. 11. *Or a charmer.*] There are various conjectures about the meaning of the Hebrew words *chober chaber;* which importing something of *society*, or *conjunction*, some translate *fortune-teller*, who by the conjunction of the planets pretends to predict future things; others, one that hath society with evil spirits, which is mentioned afterward in another word. Job Ludolphus seems to me to have given the plainest account of the words, which he translates *congregans congregationem, gathering together a company*. For it was an ancient way of enchantment, to bring various kinds of beasts into one place, which the rabbins distinguish into the *great congregation*, and the *little congregation:* the great was, when they assembled together a great company of the larger sort of beasts; and the less, when they gathered together as great a company of the smaller, such as serpents, scorpions, and the like: but we cannot be certain of this; though Telezius tells us, it is in use at this day in the eastern countries. For so he describes the election of the king of Gingir, that he stood compassed about with lions, tigers, leopards, and dragons, which, by

magical arts, were gathered together as his guard and courtiers. (See Ludolphi Comment. in Hist. Ethiop. cap. 16. n. 116.)

But the common interpretation which the Jews give of *chober chaber* is, that he is one who uses strange words, which have no signification; but he pretends are powerful to charm a serpent (for instance), that it shall not sting, or to preserve from any other harm. So Maimonides, in Avoda Zara, cap. 11. And to this sort of superstition the world was so addicted, that this precept of Moses could not bring the Jews quite off from it; but, when they threw away other charms, they used the words of Scripture instead of them; pretending, for instance, to cure wounds by reading that verse in the law, Exod. xv. 26. "I will put none of these diseases upon thee," &c. So we find they themselves acknowledge in Sanhedrin, cap. 2. sect. 1. And Maimonides saith, in the forenamed treatise, this is forbidden by Moses in this place, as much as any other kind of charm; "for the words of the law are turned hereby to another use than God intended in them; which was not for healing the body, but curing the soul." And I see no reason why it should not be thought as great a crime to use the *Schem Hamphorash* (as they call the name Jehovah) to such purposes; and yet the Jews are so stupid as to imagine Moses wrought all his miracles by the virtue of it. Maimonides, indeed, was so sober as to reject this common conceit, condemning those who think there was a power in the very letters and pronunciation of the word, (lib. i. More Nevochim, cap. 62.)

Or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard.] Of these two see what I have noted, Lev. xix. 31. and Lev. xx. 6.

A necromancer.] In the Hebrew, *one that seeks to, or inquires of, the dead.* It is not easy to tell wherein this differs from one that had a *familiar spirit*, as we translate it. For the woman whom Saul consulted, who had a spirit, called *Oboth*, inquired also after this manner; their spirit, it seems, teaching such persons to call for the dead to appear to them: but some, perhaps, had not such a spirit, who notwithstanding consulted the dead, by going to their graves in the night, and there lying down, and muttering certain words with a low voice, that they might have communion with them by dreams, or by their appearing to them: unto which the prophet Isaiah is thought to allude, viii. 19. xxix. 4. Maimonides, in Avoda Zara, cap. 11. sect. 15. thus describes a *necromancer;* He is one, who, having afflicted himself with fasting, goes to the burying-place, and there lies down, and falls asleep; and then the dead appear to him, and tell him what he desires. Such are they also, who put on a certain kind of garment, speak some uncouth words, and make a fume, and then lie down alone, that the dead, whom they desire, may come to them, and discourse with them in their sleep. To the same purpose Aben Ezra. To this the gentiles were very prone; and it was thought so high an attainment to come to this knowledge, that Julian the apostate, who was ambitious to be acquainted with all the heathen mysteries, secretly practised this Νεκυομαντεία, in the most retired part of his palace, cutting up the bodies of virgins and boys, to bring up the dead to him; which was far more impious than what the Talmudists say (in the title Beracoth), that such kind of people were wont to burn the secundine of a black cat, when she had her first kittens, and, beating it very small, put some of the powder upon their eye, whereupon demons appeared to them. (See Greg. Nazianz. in his invectives against Julian, p. 91. and St. Chrysostom, in his oration upon St. Babylas.) I shall only add, that this was not only privately practised among the gentiles, but there were also public places to which men resorted to consult the dead, particularly at Thesprotis, near to the river Acheron, where Herodotus, lib. v. mentions a Νεκυομαντήϊον; and Plutarch (to name no more) mentions another at Heraclea, which Pausanias, in his distress, went to consult, as he relates in the life of Cimon.

Ver. 12. *For all that do these things are an abomination to the Lord.*] Because they were invented by idolatrous people, if not by the suggestions of evil spirits.

And because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.] Expelled the Amorites, and other wicked inhabitants of the country, where they practised these abominations; which, no doubt, had some relation to idolatry, and therefore were forbidden to the Israelites.

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God.*] This shews there was something of idolatrous worship in all the forenamed practices; which, if they followed, it was, in some degree, to forsake the Lord, on whom they were wholly to depend, and seek to him alone in the ways which he had prescribed in his laws. For this was to be *perfect with the Lord;* to have nothing to do with any other God, nor with the rites and ceremonies that were used in their worship: and therefore the LXX. translate this word sometimes by ἁπλόω, (Job xxii. 3.) as well as by τελειόω; for then they were *perfect* with God, when they kept his worship simple and pure, without the mixture of any foreign religion; which the whole context shews to be the sense, both in the words foregoing and following.

Ver. 14. *For those nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and to diviners.*] The ancient heathen, as Strabo tells us, lib. vi. had these diviners in such esteem, ὥστε καὶ βασιλείας οὐ ἀξιοῦσθαι, *that they thought them worthy of the highest authority.* But God would not have his people so much as to consult such persons: for it appears by these words, that not only they who were diviners (for instance), but they who hearkened to them, were odious to God. For that even the art of divination depended upon some idolatrous opinions and practices, appears evidently, even from the most refined account we have of it in ancient authors: for instance, Ammianus Marcellinus, who, to acquit his master Julian from the suspicion of sorcery, which some said he used, to get the foreknowledge of things future, makes it a principal point of wisdom, not unworthy such a prince, who was a professed lover of all sciences, to offer placatory sacrifices to draw in the spirit of all the elements, to endue him with a spirit of divination: for so his words are in the beginning of his one-and-twentieth book: "The spirit of all the elements, being all way and every way invigorated with the foreperceiving motion of the everlasting (*i. e.* the heavenly) bodies, makes us partakers of the gifts of divining; and the substantial powers, *ritu diverso placatæ, being rendered favourable by respective rites* (*i. e.* such as were proper and suitable to each of them), convey predictions to mortality, as from so many

perpetual springs or fountains, over which (substantial powers) the goddess Themis is said to preside," &c. Which shews that Julian, who called Jupiter the most high God, the King of all, yet courted other inferior powers, by such rites as he imagined would win their favour: which was rank idolatry.

But as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.] But absolutely forbidden it, Lev. xix. 31. xx. 6. where he warns them to have nothing to do with some of the persons here mentioned; and not only instructed them in the way to live happy, but established an oracle among them, to be consulted on all weighty occasions, and governed them by men, whom he had endued with his Spirit, (Numb. xi. 16, 17. 25.) Therefore, if any Israelite practised any of the things here forbidden, though he did not worship any idol, he was scourged by the sentence of the court of judgment. (See Selden, lib. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 7.)

Ver. 15. *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet.*] Since the Jews, as all other nations, were extremely desirous to know things to come, Moses reveals unto them from God a thing future of the highest importance, *viz.* the coming of Christ, and the greatness of his authority; and in aftertimes God revealed to them, by degrees, the time of his birth, his death, resurrection, &c. The Jews, indeed, commonly take these words to be a promise of a constant succession of prophets, that should be among them, to preserve them from going to such diviners as were famous among their heathen neighbours; and thus many Christian interpreters make out the connexion of these words with the foregoing. But though this may be allowed to be intimated, and this promise be acknowledged to be partly verified in those prophets which God raised up, from age to age, after Moses, for further knowledge of his will (as the promise of a Saviour was in part verified in those judges and kings by whom God delivered his people from their enemies), yet it is very evident, that he speaks of a single prophet more eminent than all the rest; and that these words, in their most literal sense, cannot belong to any other person but the Messiah. So that albeit the continuance of prophets among this people, was a means to prevent all occasions of consulting sorcerers or witches; yet the chief ground upon which Moses dissuades them from such practices, according to the literal connexion of these words with the foregoing, *the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee to do so, i. e.* to hearken unto observers of times and diviners, was, the consideration of their late mighty deliverance by Moses; the excellency of their present law, which God had given them for their direction; and their expectation of a greater Lawgiver in future times, when the first covenant should wax old, and prophecy itself for a long time fail, as it did before the coming of this great prophet, the Lord Christ. To this purpose Dr. Jackson, in his third book upon the Creed, chap. 21. parag. 19.

From the midst of thee, of thy brethren.] It was a great honour to them to have such a prophet as is here spoken of, arise out of their nation; but as he was after a peculiar sort raised up by Jehovah, not merely by the external assistances or impulsion of his Spirit, (to use the words of the same excellent person, parag. 9.) but by intrinsic assumption into the unity of his person; so likewise he was raised up in a strict and proper sense *from the midst of them*, being, as it were, extracted out of a pure virgin, as the first woman was out of the man, by the Almighty's own immediate hand.

Like unto me.] This shews he speaks of a single prophet, and not of a constant succession of prophets, there being none of them like to Moses, whom God himself distinguished from them all, (Numb. xii. 6—8.) And accordingly that Divine writer, who added those verses which are at the end of this book (concerning the death of Moses), testifies that there never rose in Israel a prophet like to Moses. (See Deut. xxxiv. 10.) It is commonly thought to be done by Ezra, who hath effectually confuted all the conceits of R. Bechai, Aben Ezra, Abarbinel, and other Jewish doctors, who take either Joshua or Jeremiah to have been this prophet. If Joshua, as some fancy, added these words, then he excluded himself from being the person; nor did Joshua act as a prophet, but as a judge or governor: and Jeremiah is acknowledged by Abarbinel himself to be inferior to Isaiah: for though in his preface to his commentary upon Jeremiah, he mentions fourteen things wherein he was like unto Moses, and saith he prophesied just forty years, as Moses did; yet, in his commentary upon the lesser prophets, he prefers Isaiah before them all, and censures the rudeness of Jeremiah's language, in many things preferring Ezekiel to him. So little do these doctors agree in their interpretation of this prophecy, which can belong to none of their prophets which succeeded Moses (who were all much inferior to him), until *He* came, who perfectly resembled him, but was much superior to him. (See ver. 18.) And thus the ancient Jews understood this prophecy; for though Maimonides only saith, the Messiah should be endued with wisdom greater than Solomon's, and should equal their master Moses, yet those before him proceeded a great deal further. This being a common saying among them, which Abarbinel himself remembers, in his commentary upon the small prophets, "He shall be exalted above Abraham, lifted up above Moses, and higher than the angels of the ministry." Nor is the cabalistical observation, mentioned in Baal-Hatturim, to be quite neglected; which is, that this verse begins and ends with the letter *nun*, which is the numeral letter for *fifty*, importing, that to the prophet here promised should be opened the fifty gates of knowledge, forty-nine of which only were opened to Moses. And that this verse also consists of ten words, to signify, that they were to obey this prophet no less than the ten commandments: which observation, it must be confessed, is weakly grounded, but contains a most illustrious truth, and shews that they believed Moses here speaks of the Messiah.

Unto him shall ye hearken.] As they had engaged themselves to do: it will appear from the following words.

Ver. 16. *According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord,* &c.] So we read Exod. xx. 19. where they made this request unto Moses, saying, *Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.* In which words the whole multitude bound themselves solemnly to hear the words of the Lord, being delivered not immediately from his own mouth, but by Moses, as is more fully expressed in this book, Deut. v. 27—29. where God highly commends this good resolution in them, as Moses here observes again in the next verse.

Ver. 17. *And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken.*] He approved their desire, and resolved not to speak to them any more, as he did from Mount Sinai, with a voice out of the fire and cloud; but by Moses himself while he lived, and afterward by one like to Moses, as it here follows.

Ver. 18. *I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren.*] These words seem to have been spoken to Moses by God, when they desired God would not speak to them any more immediately by himself, but by a mediator. Then God was pleased to promise them a great deal more than they desired, which was to raise up another Prophet like to Moses, who should acquaint them more fully with his mind and will in as familiar a manner as Moses did, without striking any such terror into them, as they were in at the giving of the law, though the words of this prophet came from the mouth of God himself: in which two things the Israelites excelled all other nations (*i. e.* in that they had such an excellent law delivered by Moses, which was to be bettered by an everlasting covenant, made by this Prince of the prophets). In respect of both (as the same Dr. Jackson expresses it), the name of *soothsayer*, or *sorcerer*, was not to be named in Israel, as they were in the nations that knew not God, much less expected such a Mediator. In whom the Spirit of life should dwell as plentifully, as splendour doth in the body of the sun; from whose fulness, ere he visibly appeared in the world, all other prophets were illuminated: so that Moses himself, and all the prophets that followed him, were but as messengers sent from God, to solicit his people to preserve their allegiance free from all commerce or compact with familiar spirits, until the Prince of Glory came in person to visit them, and dwell among them.

Like unto thee.] This is well explained by Eusebius, δεύτερος κατὰ Μωυσέα νομοθέτης, *a second lawgiver, as Moses was:* for in saying not simply he would raise them up a prophet, but *like unto thee*, it must signify, saith he, that this Prophet should be a lawgiver as well as Moses, which none of the prophets were, till our Saviour came. Neither Isaiah nor Jeremiah were the makers of laws, but only called upon them to observe the law of Moses; whereas, when the Lord Jesus came, he gave laws to all the world, and those far superior to the laws of Moses, who only said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery;" but our Lord saith, "I say unto you, Ye shall not lust;" and instead of "Thou shalt not kill," he saith, "Be not angry with thy brother," &c. Whence it was that they who heard him were astonished at his doctrine, and said, that he spake *not as the scribes*, who were expounders of the law, but *as one that had authority*, that is, power to ordain and enact laws, and not only to explain those that were already written, (lib. i. Demonstr. Evang. cap. 7. and lib. iii. cap. 2. lib. ix. p. 443, &c. see also what Joh. Wagenseil hath said upon these words, in his annot. in Lipman. Carm. Memoriale, p. 548.)

And will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.] Reveal the whole mind and will of God, (John xii. 49, 50.) For he was herein like to Moses (though far superior to him), that he was intimately acquainted with God's counsels, being "in the bosom of the Father," (1 John xviii.) and confirmed all that he said to be from God by miracles, and wonders, and signs, far more mighty than those of Moses, and more in number than had been wrought by all the prophets, from the beginning of the world. Particularly, he fed multitudes with a little food, (which made the people cry out, "This is of a truth that Prophet which should come into the world," John vi. 14.) but above all this, gave them *that bread from heaven*, of which the manna which Moses gave them was but a shadow, as he took occasion to shew the people, upon their admiration of that miraculous feast he had made for them, with five barley-loaves, and two small fishes: for he himself was that bread of life, who nourished men's souls with the word of eternal life, which he had in himself, as he shewed by his resurrection from the dead, which he himself predicted, and thereby proved himself the greatest of all the prophets: for though Moses foretold his own death, yet neither he, nor any other prophet whatsoever but our Saviour, spake of his being raised up again. In which he may be thought to be like to Moses, who was raised up by God to be a saviour of his people out of that ark, which, without the special providence of God, had been his tomb. And unto this resurrection of Christ doth the propriety of this phrase, *from the midst of thee*, agree: for this was done, as Dr. Jackson also well observes, in the midst of Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea, not without express notice given of it to the rulers of the people; and such a confirmation it was, that *he was the prophet they should all hear*, that there could not be a greater; as all strangers, both to their religion and ours, must agree, and they themselves cannot deny: for Nachmanides, relating, in a letter of his to the rabbins at Marseilles, how there was a man in those days, in the southern countries, who pretended to be the forerunner of the Messiah, unto whom great numbers both of Jews and Arabs resorted, tells us, that he being apprehended by the king of the country, and asked what miracle he shewed to confirm his commission, he answered boldly, "Cut off my head, and I will come to life again." To which the king of the Arabs replied, "There is no sign greater than this; which, if it come to pass, both I and the whole world will believe thee." Whereupon his head was cut off, and there was an end of all his pretences; though some of the Jews were so mad, as Maimonides there saith, that they still expected his return to life. Thus R. Gedaliah reports in his Schalshelet Hakkabalah.

Ver. 19. *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name.*] This is the proper character of a prophet, to deliver in the name of God what he received from God. This did Moses: but Christ most eminently, as I before observed from John xii. 49, 50. where he saith, *I have not spoken of myself*, but the Father which sent me; *he gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak*, &c. *whatsoever therefore I speak, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.* Which is a perfect commentary upon these words of Moses, who here calls Christ a prophet, not a priest, or a king (though he was to be both), because he would not have the Jews mistake, and expect to find in his person the worldly grandeur of a mighty prince, or the high honour and splendour of Aaron; but have the greatest regard to the heavenly doctrine which he taught them, as he himself (he told them) was taught by the Father: *For I proceeded forth* (saith he) *and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me; and I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things,*

John viii. 28. 42. This was the highest honour of all, to speak God's words, (ver. 47.) in the name of God, (ver. 42.)

I conclude this with the remarkable words of the Midrasch upon Ecclesiastes, who thus expresses the sense of this prophecy, "As was the first Redeemer, such shall be the last Redeemer." Which plainly determine the prophet here spoken of to be one single person; and he no other but the Lord Christ. (See Huetius, in his Demonst. Evang. propos. 7. n. 9.)

I will require it of him.] Severely punish him, so as to destroy him from among his people, as St. Peter interprets it, Acts iii. 23. And so this phrase is used, Gen. ix. 5. xlii. 22. And there was great reason for this severity, seeing they had so solemnly bound themselves to hearken to this prophet, when they desired God not to speak any more to them by himself, but by a mediator, which God then promised, as I observed, ver. 18. A mediator of a better covenant, who should secure them from such dreadful flames, as they then saw, if they would hearken to him, as they promised to do; otherwise, what could they expect; "but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation, to devour the adversaries?" For since "he that despised Moses's law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses, of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God," in the open face of all the world? Heb. x. 27—29. which is a full explication of these words, *Whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him:* or, as Onkelos translates it, *my Word shall require it of him:* where *Memra, Word,* can signify nothing but a Divine person, distinct from him who speaks these words, even that very person to whom the apostle applies them.

Ver. 20. *But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name,* &c.] These words plainly suggest to us, that Moses intended, in the foregoing discourse, to admonish the Israelites to hearken diligently to all such prophets as God should at any time raise up to them; though it be most evident, if we examine the propriety of every word or clause in the whole context, they cannot be exactly fitted unto any prophet but Christ; unto whom the whole discourse is as fully accommodated, as a well-made garment to the body that wears it. They are the words of the same excellent person, so often mentioned, Dr. Jackson, book iii. on the Creed, chap. 21. parag. 1, 2.

Speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him, or that shall speak in the name of other gods.] It was a manifest sign a man was a false prophet, if he spake in the name of Baal, or any other god, but the God of Israel: or if he said, Such a star by its spiritual influence coming upon me, said, Worship me after this manner, or, Thus call upon me, as Maimonides (who gives an account of the several sorts of false prophets) speaks, in his preface to Seder Zeraim. But how should they know a man to be a false prophet, when he spake to them in the name of the Lord? For men might pretend, as some did, that God had sent them, and given them a command, when he had not. To which he answers in the next verses.

Even that prophet shall die.] He was to be strangled, say the Jews, by the sentence of the great Sanhedrin: for it is a tradition of their rabbins, saith the Gemara Babylonica upon that title, that in the business of prophecy there are three sorts of persons, who are to be punished by the judgment of men, and three by the sentence of Heaven. He that prophesied what he did not hear from God, (an example of which we have in Zedekiah, 1 Kings xxii. 11.) or spake what was not said to him, but to another, (an example of which they make Hananiah, Jer. xxviii. 11.) or prophesies in the name of an idol (suppose Baal); all these were to be put to death by the sentence of the court of judgment; but he that suppressed his prophecy (like Jonah), or despised the words of a prophet, or did not observe his own words, was to be punished by the hand of Heaven. (See Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 6. n. 1.)

Ver. 21. *And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken?*] Which was but a reasonable question, there being as great care necessary, not to hearken to falsehood, as to be attentive unto truth. And this relates unto such prophets as came to them in the name of the Lord: for if a man came in the name of any other God, there needed no other mark to discover him to be an impostor.

Ver. 22. *When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord.*] Predicting some wonderful thing to come to pass, as a token he is sent of God to deliver what he speaks to the people.

If the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken.] For if the Lord had sent him, he would have accomplished what he gave as a sign of his mission; which not coming to pass, he was proved to be a false prophet, who spake out of his own heart, and not the word of the Lord. But here the Jews distinguished between a prophet who predicts evil things, as famine, or pestilence, &c. and one that predicts good things, as rain (when there is great need of it), and fruitful years, &c. Though the predictions of the former sort did not come to pass, he was not to be reputed presently a false prophet, because God is very merciful, and often repented him of the evil, as he did in the case of Nineveh: but, in the latter case, if any one of the good things he foretold did not come to pass, he was to be taken for a deceiver; which they understand also of the very time and place, when and where he said the things he predicted would be fulfilled: and here they bring in the example of Hananiah, the son of Azur, mentioned before, Jer. xxviii. 11. and see ver. 8, 9. of that chapter. But this doth not give us the true difference; for both God's promises and threatenings many times depend upon a condition, as appears from that famous place in the prophet, Jer. xviii. 7—9. So that the good things a prophet foretold might not come to pass, and yet he might be a true prophet; because the people proved unworthy of them, and God did not absolutely intend them. Therefore the true meaning seems to be, that if a prophet foretold such a thing as the power of nature cannot produce, and gave it as a sign God sent him, who would justify his mission by doing that wonder, and the thing did not come to pass, he was to be looked upon as not a man of God: for example, when Moses threw his rod on the ground, and said it should become a serpent, if it had not been turned into a serpent, he had been convicted of falsity: or a prophet said fire should come down from heaven, and consume the sacrifice which lay before him, which was the case of Elijah; if it had not come down, he would have been no more owned for a true prophet, than the prophets of Baal. And, as Maimonides well observes, if a

prophet's words were fulfilled in one or more things, he was not to be judged a true prophet, unless every thing he spake in the name of God came to pass: which he proves from those words concerning Samuel, (1 Sam. iii. 19, 20.) "The Lord let none of his words fall to the ground: and all Israel knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord."

The Jews also made this addition to the rule forementioned of trying prophets, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 5. n. 3.) that "whatsoever prophet had the testimony of another undoubted prophet, was to be taken for a true prophet." By which rule they might have known the great Prophet whom God promised to them in the foregoing verses: for John the Baptist, whom the whole nation took for a prophet, testified to them that Jesus was the Christ. And besides all other undoubted marks of his being sent from God, his rising from the dead, which he himself foretold, was enough to satisfy all men of the truth of what he said: for though every prediction of what afterward comes to pass, will not necessarily prove a man to be a true prophet; yet the fulfilling of a great number of things (not one of which fails, as was said before of Samuel), especially of such a thing as this, which was impossible to be brought to pass but by an almighty power, is an uncontrollable evidence of a Divine mission.

R. Solomon, upon this verse, hath a note which is worth our observation, though it be not to the purpose of Moses's words: "A prophet (saith he) that bids thee not observe some of the precepts, is not to be heard, unless he be known to be a man of eminent virtue, and upright life, as Elijah was, who bade them build an altar on Mount Carmel, even when the sacrifices upon high places were forbidden. But there was a necessity for it, that he might restore the true worship of God in Israel." Which should have made them hearken to our blessed Saviour, better than they did, he being so perfectly holy and pure, that he challenged any of them to charge him with sin; especially, when he only laid aside some of their vain traditions, but conformed to all the rites of Moses: so that if in conclusion we should grant that Moses (in the fourteenth and sixteenth verses, &c.) speaks of all the prophets that should succeed him (which it is certain he doth not principally intend), the Jews were impious in rejecting our Saviour, who came as a prophet to them, and had all the marks that a prophet could have of his being sent from God.

But the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously.] For it was an act of high presumption, and arrogant pride, for any man to pretend a commission from God, when he had not sent him. Which was done two ways, as the Jews interpret this, either when a man spake in the name of God that which was false, or when he pretended that to have been spoken to him which was revealed by God to another. (See Jer. xxii. 30.) Both these were impudent impostors, and accordingly to be treated.

Thou shalt not be afraid of him.] Have no reverence or regard to him, though he be never so confident: nor be afraid to lay hold of him, and endeavour to bring him to the Sanhedrin, to have their sentence passed upon him (as the Jews understand it), though he have never so powerful an interest to support him, and preserve him from punishment. Thus Maimonides, in the forenamed preface to Seder Zeraim: "Thou shalt not be terrified, or averted from endeavouring to have him put to death, by his religion, goodness, or knowledge, since in his proud brags he hath spoken false things of God." For to be afraid of such a person, and of his partakers, was to distrust God, who is the defender of those that defend the cause of religion.

CHAP. XIX.

HAVING sufficiently pressed upon the people the great commandment, of loving God with all the heart, and soul, and strength, and him alone, Moses now proceeds to remember them of other precepts belonging to the *second table* (as we now speak), but not in an exact method, nor without interspersing some ceremonial matters. And he begins with what concerns that commandment, *Thou shalt not kill.*

Ver. 1. *WHEN the Lord thy God hath cut off the nations, whose land the Lord thy God giveth thee,* &c.] The very same words we had before upon another occasion, xii. 29. which are now used to signify, that they were not bound to what follows, till God had subdued the land of Canaan for them, and they were settled in it; as the last words of the verse import, *dwellest in their cities, and in their houses.* Accordingly, after the division of the land, God puts Joshua in mind of this business, (Josh. xx. 1, 2, &c.)

Ver. 2. *Thou shalt separate three cities from thee.*] According to an order God had given to Moses, Numb. xxxv. 14, 15. to set aside six cities in all, for the use here mentioned; three on this side Jordan, where they now were, and three on the other side in the land of Canaan. The former part of which command Moses himself had executed, (Deut. iv. 42, &c.) and now gives them a charge to perform the other.

In the midst of thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it.] In the *midst of their land,* signifies no more but *within their land:* for if they had been all three in the very heart of the country, it would have crossed the end and intention of them, which was, that they should be placed so conveniently in several parts of the country, that men might easily and speedily flee to them. And therefore *the midst of the land* may be opposed to the skirts of the country, where they would have been too far distant from some parts of it; or may denote, that they should be set in an eminent place, upon the top of mountains, where they might be seen afar off. And so they all three were, it is apparent from Josh. xx. 7. where they are said to be in Mount Naphtali, Mount Ephraim, and the mountain of Judah.

Ver. 3. *And thou shalt prepare thee a way.*] Make a plain road to them, and keep it in good repair, that, both in winter and summer, the manslayer might without difficulty flee thither. And for his more safe passage, the Hebrews say, where there were any turnings, or two ways parted, they were bound to set up a post, or stone, whereon was engraven, in great letters, the word MIKLAT, *i. e. refuge,* that he might not mistake his way to the place.

And divide the coast of thy land (which the Lord thy God giveth thee to inherit), into three parts.] The Jews un-

derstand it, that they were to be placed at an equal distance, in three several parts of the country, that all might have the same benefit by them; and nobody have a longer journey to go than his neighbour for his safety.

That every slayer may flee thither.] Have the convenience of preserving himself in one or other of them. It is observable, that there were as many of these cities in the two tribes and a half, as there were in all the other nine tribes and a half; in which there seems to be a great inequality. I have given some account of it upon Numb. xxxv. 14. And the Hebrews fancy there was another reason for it, because of the frequent murders which were likely to be committed by the fierce nature of the Gileadites. (See the book of Judges, chap. x. and xi. and Hosea vi. 8.)

Ver. 4. *And this is the case of the slayer which shall flee thither, that he may live.*] Be preserved from the avenger of blood, who otherwise might kill him.

Whoso killeth his neighbour ignorantly, whom he hated not in time past.] These cities were not to be a protection to a wilful murderer, but to an innocent person, who, against his intention, was so unhappy as to kill a man, *belidaath* (as the words are in the Hebrew), *without his knowledge*, being free, that is, from any design to do him the least harm. But as for such as, out of hatred and malice in their hearts, killed another, they were so far from finding safety in these cities, that they were to be pulled from the altar, if they fled thither for sanctuary, as we now speak, (Exod. xxi. 12. 14.) Or, if they would not stir from thence, they might be killed there, as appears by the case of Joab, 1 Kings ii. 28. 30, 31.

Ver. 5. *As when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbour to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the head slippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbour, that he die.*] By this all other like cases were to be judged: that is, when a man was about a lawful business, if any thing happened which he intended not, he was not accountable for it. (See Selden, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 2.)

He shall flee unto one of those cities, and live.] He might get to which of them he could most conveniently, and there be preserved. The Jews, from this word *live*, conclude, without any other ground for it, that a master was bound to go along with his scholar who fled thither; because, without the doctrine of the law, men did not live, but were dead.

Ver. 6. *Lest the avenger of blood pursue the slayer, while his heart is hot.*] With anger, which might boil up to such a degree, as to move him to kill the slayer, before he had examined whether there was a just cause.

It is evident that this verse is to be connected with verse the third (the two next, ver. 4, 5. coming in as a parenthesis, to shew who should be preserved in these cities, and who not), being a reason why the cities of refuge should be placed at an equal distance in the several parts of the country, that the journey might not be too long to any of them, but a man might soon flee thither, before the avenger of blood could lay hold of him.

Because the way is long, and slay him.] If he could not have gotten thither in a short time, he might have been in danger to lose his life, though not worthy of death. For, as the law did not punish him that killed a manslayer, when he found him out of the bounds of the city of refuge, (Numb. xxxv. 27.) so it seems to have indemnified him, if he killed him before he got thither.

Whereas he was not worthy of death, inasmuch as he hated him not in time past.] Which, in his rage, the avenger of blood did not consider; and therefore was guilty before God of shedding innocent blood, though the law did not punish him for it.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt separate three cities for thee.*] To prevent which mischief, God commanded, not merely one, but three cities, and those in several places of the country; where men might find safety, if they made haste to flee to them.

Ver. 8. *And if the Lord thy God enlarge thy coast (as he hath sworn unto thy fathers), and give thee all the land which he promised to give unto thy fathers.*] As far as unto the river Euphrates, (Gen. xv. 18. Exod. xxiii. 31. Deut. i. 7.)

Ver. 9. *If thou shalt keep all these commandments to do them, which I command thee this day, to love the Lord thy God, and to walk ever in his ways.*] This seems to have been the condition, upon the performance of which depended the enlargement of their border. Which is more fully expressed, xi. 22—24. And so the covenant made with Abraham (in Gen. xv. 18.) is to be understood, as including in it this condition.

Thou shalt then add three cities more for thee besides these three.] We do not read of any more added to these, though their border was enlarged in David's and Solomon's time; and that as far as Euphrates. But those nations which they subdued, were only made tributaries to the kings of Israel, who did not people and possess those countries; and consequently there was no occasion for such cities there; unless the Israelites had been the inhabitants of those countries, as they were of the land of Canaan, (ver. 1.)

Ver. 10. *That innocent blood be not shed in thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*] As there would, if, upon supposition of such an enlargement of their borders, there had been no cities nearer to flee unto than these six; which were sufficient only for the land of Canaan, and the land they possessed on this side Jordan, where they now were.

And so blood be upon thee.] The guilt and punishment of blood, in not taking care of the safety of innocent persons.

Ver. 11. *But if any man hate his brother, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him mortally that he die, and fleeth into one of these cities.*] When there was a manifest design of killing another, and known hatred, he that committed the murder was to receive no benefit by his fleeing to a city of refuge. And then a man was judged to hate his brother, when for three days together he had never spoken to him, though they had kept one another company; as I observed before out of Mr. Selden, (lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 2. p. 473.)

Ver. 12. *Then the elders of his city shall send and fetch him thence.*] Demand him of the elders of the city to which he fled; that he might be sent to them, and tried by them, whether he was guilty of wilful murder, or ought to have the benefit of their protection, being innocent of that crime. (Numb. xxxv. 12. 24.) It is likely there were probable reasons given why he was suspected to be guilty of murder; and therefore they desired the matter might be exa-

mined; otherwise, if the case was known to be like that in ver. 5. they did not make this demand.

And deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die.] That is, if they found him guilty of wilful murder; otherwise, they were to *deliver him out of the hand of the avenger of blood, and restore him to the city of refuge,* that he might not die, (Numb. xxxv. 25.)

Ver. 13. *Thine eye shall not pity him.*] Nor take any satisfaction for the life of a murderer, as the law is, Numb. xxxv. 31.

But thou shalt put away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel.] By putting him to death.

That it may go well with thee.] By having no guilt upon them; as they had when they let this crime go unpunished.

Ver. 14. *Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance,* &c.] The Jewish doctors think that this hath respect to the holy land (as they call it), and to the terms or bounds which were set by Joshua in the division of the country, which no man might take away; for that made him both guilty of theft, and also of the breach of this precept; and consequently he incurred a double punishment, and was whipped twice as much as another offender. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 3. in the latter end.) This was a law among the Greeks, as appears by Plato, lib. viii. de Legibus, Μὴ κινείτω γῆς ὅρια μηδείς, &c. νομίσας τὰ ἀκίνητα κινεῖν ἀληθῶς τοῦτο εἶναι, &c. *Let no man presume to remove the bounds of land; looking upon this, as being truly to remove things immoveable, i. e.* to unsettle and overturn all things: Numa Pompilius therefore made this crime capital. Which makes Josephus's explication of these words seem more reasonable than that of the Talmudists, who extend this precept to the grounds of all their neighbour nations who were at peace with them: ὡς πολεμῶν ἐντεῦθεν στάσεων γενομένων, *as being the occasion of wars and insurrections,* which arise from the covetousness of men, who would thus enlarge their territories, (lib. iv. Archæol. cap. 8.) Which may be thought a reason why Moses joins this to the foregoing precept, about punishing murder; and made this one of the curses they were bound to pronounce, and consent to it, at their entrance into the land of Canaan, (Deut. xxvii. 17.)

Which they of old time have set in thine inheritance which thou shalt inherit, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it.] This may seem to determine this precept peculiarly to the preserving the bounds in the land of Canaan; and by *those of old time* they understand Joshua and the elders, who divided the land, and fixed every one his lot. But it was as necessary to be observed in all other countries, as that which was their proper inheritance. For, as Josephus truly observes, "they that remove the bounds of lands, are not very far from subverting all laws."

Ver. 15. *One witness shall not rise up.*] They that gave their testimony in any cause always stood up.

Against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin.] A single witness was not to be admitted, as sufficient to convict a man of any offence whatsoever, whether in civil or in criminal matters. For an inquisition into the fact one was enough; but not for the condemnation of him that was accused. Yet in pecuniary matters, one witness was sufficient to bring a man to purge himself by an oath, (xvii. 6.)

At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.] The accusation shall stand, or fall to the ground.

Ver. 16. *If a false witness rise up against any man, to testify against him that which is wrong.*] In any matter, whether against God, or against man. For though one witness could not condemn another; yet, if it were proved he was a false witness, it was sufficient to condemn himself.

Ver. 17. *Then both the men between whom the controversy is.*] That is, the accuser and the person accused.

Shall stand before the Lord.] They were to come, in cases obscure, to the supreme court, where the sanctuary was settled. Who sat, it is likely, at the door of the tabernacle in Moses's time, (see xvii. 8. 22.) and so might properly be said to try them *before the Lord.*

Before the priests and the judges which shall be in those days.] This they all understand of the highest court, which consisted partly of *priests,* and partly of other great persons, whom he calls *judges;* under which name, the whole court is comprehended in the next verse. (See xvii. 8. and Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 8. n. 2, 3.)

Ver. 18. *And the judges.*] The court beforenamed; who are all (whether priests or others) comprehended under the name of *judges.*

Shall make diligent inquisition.] For it was not easy to prove a man to be a false witness; and therefore the matter was brought before this supreme court.

And, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother.] If, upon strict examination, he was found to have given a false evidence against his brother, in a matter which touched his estate, or his body, or his life.

Ver. 19. *Then shall ye do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother.*] That is, saith Maimonides, if he designed to have taken away his brother's life, he was to lose his own; if to have him scourged, he was to be lashed himself; if to lose a sum of money, he was to be fined the very same sum. (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 41.) But though in most cases a false witness was to suffer the very same kind of punishment, which he intended to have brought upon another, if his testimony had not been disproved; yet in some it was not exactly observed. As, if one falsely accused a priest's daughter of playing the whore, he was not to be burnt, as she should have been, but to be strangled as an adulterer. So J. Coch observes upon the title Maccoth. ad cap. 1. where the whole business of false testimonies is handled. But some foolish decisions were made by the rabbins, in opposition to the Sadducees, as he observes in his Annot. 20. in sect. 6.

Among the Athenians there was an action lay not only against the false witness, but against the person who produced him. Upon whom they set a fine; and they were made infamous. And if they were found thrice guilty of this crime, not only they but their posterity were made infamous throughout all generations; as Sam. Petitus observes, out of Andocides, and others, (lib. iv. in Leges Aticas, tit. vii. p. 359.) It is something strange they were not more severe against such offenders, many of their laws being plainly borrowed from Moses. And among the ancient Romans, by the law of the twelve tables, false witnesses were thrown down from the Tarpeian rock, as A. Gellius tells us, (lib. xx. cap. 1.) which was altered indeed, in latter times, for such punishments as the judges thought

they merited: but he there tells Phavorinus, that, if the old punishment had continued to their days, they should not have had so many false testimonies given as they then saw.

So shalt thou put the evil away from among you.] This may be understood either of the false witness, or of his crime: the guilt of which was taken away by the just punishment of it.

Ver. 20. *And those that remain.*] The remainder of Israel, who see him suffer in his kind.

Shall hear and fear.] The end of punishment is to deter others from such wickedness. (See xiii. 11. xvii. 13.)

And shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you.] Learn to beware by other men's sufferings.

Ver. 21. *And thine eye shall not spare.*] He speaks to the judges, who were not, out of compassion, to moderate the punishment, but make it equal to the damage he intended to another. Examples he gives of this in the words following.

Life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.] Concerning this *lex talionis*, see Exod. xxi. 23—25. Lev. xxiv. 19, 20. And see Grotius on Matt. v. 38. 40. where he well observes, that the party injured might forbear to require this punishment; but the judge, if it were required, could not deny to inflict it.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *WHEN thou goest out to battle against thine enemies.*] Who either invaded them, (as in Judg. xi.) or with whom they had a just quarrel, because of injuries done them, without satisfaction: such as that mentioned 2 Sam. x. 4, &c.

And seest horses.] Which the Israelites wanted, (as I observed upon xvii. 16.) their armies consisting of footmen; who were taken from the plough, or from the sheepfolds.

And chariots.] Which carried a certain number of men in them; and when they were *falcati* (as they called them) were very formidable. For they made terrible slaughters among the enemy, cutting down men as we do grass, with a scythe or sickle. The Canaanites had great numbers of them, Josh. xi. 4. and Judg. iv. 3.

Be not afraid of them.] The Israelites were trained up to confide in God, and not in horses (which their country, as I said, did not afford, and consequently they had no chariots), nor in multitude of soldiers. And we find remarkable instances of this, particularly in Jehoshaphat, (2 Chron. xx. 6, &c. 17.) who followed the example of David, whose words are most memorable, Psalm xx. 7. "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." (See also Prov. xxi. 21.)

For the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt.] That was such an instance of his power, as made it unreasonable to doubt of good success, when he was present with them; as he always was while they continued faithful worshippers of him.

The translation of Onkelos is here very remarkable; which is, *The Lord thy God, his Word is thy help:* which plainly denotes another Divine person, the same with Jehovah.

Ver. 2. *It shall be when ye come nigh unto the battle.*] Are about to give or receive the assault.

That the priest shall approach and speak unto the people.] The Jews say there was a priest appointed for this very purpose, whom they call *Maschuach Milchama, anointed of war*, he being set apart, as they say, to this office by an unction, and that with the same oil which the king was anointed withal. His office was to blow with the trumpets, to make the following speech unto the army, when they were preparing to join battle; and when they first went out, to exhort all new builders, planters, and married men, to return back; and when they were drawn up in battalia, to exhort all that were faint-hearted to leave the army and go home. (See Numb. xxxi. 6.) A great many of the Jewish doctors thus explain this, particularly Maimonides, who may serve instead of all. See Schickard, Jus Regium, cap. 5. Theor. 18. and Hottinger, in his Histor. Eccles. Seculum xvi. par. ii. p. 689, 690, &c. where he produces an excellent discourse out of R. Levi Barzelonita's Catechism, to shew the office of this πολεμόχριστος, *anointed for the war;* and the reason why he was appointed to it. For soldiers (saith he) in the time of war, have great need to be heartened and confirmed in their resolution. And because the more honourable any one is, the more willingly men hearken to him; therefore the law required, that he, who was to encourage others, should be a select person himself, and a priest, to whom they would be apt to pay a great reverence.

Ver. 3. *And shall say unto them,* &c.] Going from one battalion (as we now speak) unto another: or else, ordering the officers (mentioned ver. 5.) to go about and speak every where what he did at the head of the army. And he was to speak in the Hebrew language, and no other, as the Jews say, in Mischna Sota, cap. 8. sect. 1. And they have a conceit, that the Romans learnt both the form of encamping out of Moses's law, and also to make orations to their soldiers before they went to fight, as J. Wagenseil observes out of Shilte Hagibborim: though it is more reasonable to think, that common sense taught those that were leaders of others to encourage them to follow them.

Ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies.] Who often appeared very formidable, by the vast number of their horses and chariots, which the Israelites wanted.

Let not your hearts faint.] So we well translate the Hebrew word, be *soft*, or *tender*. Which though it be a quality highly commendable with respect to God, (2 Kings xxii. 19.) yet the contrary became them towards their and his enemies.

Fear not, and do not tremble.] Trembling, or, as the Hebrew word is, *making haste, i. e.* running away, is the effect of fear.

Neither be ye terrified because of them.] Sometimes a great dread of danger made men run away; and sometimes so dismayed them that they could not stir, much less strike a stroke.

Some of the Jewish doctors fancy, that the four several words here used are opposed to so many actions of their enemies, whereby they hoped to strike a terror into them. *Let not your hearts faint*, when your enemies brandish their swords, and clash them one against another. *Fear not*, when you hear the prancing of their horses, and the terrible rattling of their chariots. *And do not tremble*, when they

shout, as if they were sure of victory. *Neither be ye terrified,* when you hear the trumpet sound an alarm to the battle. So Moses Kotzensis. (See Schickard, cap. 5. Theor. 16. p. 115.) And such a passage Wagenseil observes out of Philostratus, lib. ii. cap. 5. upon the Gemara of Sota, cap. 8. sect. ii. p. 876.

Ver. 4. *For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies.*] Sometimes the ark of God's presence went before them, when they entered into Canaan, (Josh. iii. 3. 10, 11, &c.) and in the midst of them, when they compassed Jericho, (Josh. vi. 9.) So that God was properly then said to go with them, or in the *midst of them,* as the Vulgar Latin here translates it. And at all other times he was present, by his power, to aid them, especially against the people of Canaan, with whom their battles were said to be *the wars of the Lord.*

To save you.] To preserve them by the defeat and overthrow of their enemies.

Ver. 5. *And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying.*] This the Jews, particularly Abarbinel, think was spoken by the priest beforementioned, and then proclaimed by the officers, called *schoterim,* of whom I have observed enough before, xvi. 18. and other places. They that would see more may consult J. Wagenseil upon that title, in the Mischna called Sota, cap. 8. p. 854. But by whomsoever this was spoken, it seems most likely to have been delivered before they drew nigh to the battle, (see ver. 2.) at the first mustering of the army.

What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it?] *i. e.* Hath not yet dwelt in it. For at their first entrance to dwell in a house, they made a feast, which being the first meal they made there, was called *chanach,* or *dedication;* as the same Wagenseil observes out of Michlol Jophi. (See in cap. 8. Sota, sect. 2. annot. 3.) And because a year is allowed to a man to enjoy his wife, before he be obliged to go to the wars, (xxiv. 5.) they allow the same time in these other cases, for the enjoyment of a new house, or of a vineyard; as many have observed, particularly Selden, (lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 13. n. 1. and Schickard, in his Jus Regium, cap. 5. Theor. 16, 17.) And they understand this, not only of a new-built house, but of a house newly come into a man's possession, either by succession, purchase, or gift; yet not of such houses as were not fit for habitation, as Mr. Selden reports their opinion, (lib. iii. de Uxor. Hebr. cap. 3.) In which he seems to have forgot himself; for the Mischna in Sota, cap. 8. sect. 2. saith expressly, this is to be understood of him that built a house, wherein to lay straw, to make a stable, a barn, or a granary; because, as Wagenseil there notes, such places might, in case of necessity, be turned into a dwelling-house.

Let him return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.] This was allowed in those wars only which they made voluntarily, but not of those which were *ex præcepto,* by the Divine commandment, against the seven nations of Canaan and Amalek, in which every man was bound to engage. And so are the other cases, which here follow, to be understood, as all the Jewish writers agree.

Another man dedicate it.] First enjoy it; for this word here does not denote any consecration (as in other places), but beginning to use a thing; which in our English language (as Mr. Selden observes in the place forenamed) we call *taking handsel of it;* and so the Spanish Jews express it in their translation.

Ver. 6. *And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet eaten of it?*] Which he could not lawfully do for the three first years after it was planted. (See Lev. xix. 29, &c.) And in the fourth year, the fruit of it was to be carried to Jerusalem, and eaten there; after which, the fruit of the fifth year was wholly his own, when it was no longer sacred (as the Hebrew word *chillel* signifies), but common for every body's use. Aben Ezra takes the word in the sense of *rejoicing;* as if he had said, "Who hath planted a vineyard, and hath not danced in it;" for that was the custom (he saith) when they first enjoyed the fruits of their vineyards. And to this the LXX. seem to have had respect, when they translated it, οὐκ εὐφράνθη ἐξ αὐτοῦ, *he hath not been made merry by it.* But the other notion is more proper; and the Jews understand it, not only of *vineyards,* but of all other plantations wherein there were fruit-trees fit for food, if there were five of them planted together in good order, such as R. Solomon and Wagenseil have described: and see Selden, Uxor. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 3. p. 334.

Let him also go, and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it.] The ground, both of this and the foregoing proclamation (and of the next also), seems to have been, that the minds of such men were commonly very much disturbed, to think of leaving what they had taken a great deal of pains about, and enjoy nothing of it; which would naturally make them fight with less courage. So R. Solomon. And Josephus much to the same purpose: μὴ πόθῳ τούτων φειδόμενοι τοῦ ζῆν, &c. *lest, out of a longing desire after these things, they should be sparing of hazarding their lives; and, reserving themselves for their enjoyment, not fight manfully.* But many think this was a bare concession to such persons; who, if they could overcome their affection to all things, but the safety of their country, might remain in the camp, and go to battle. Yet Abarbinel disputes strongly against this, and will have all these to be precepts, enjoining such persons, as are here mentioned, not to stay in the army, but to return home.

Ver. 7. *And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her,* &c.] The Jews interpret this law, either of one who had espoused a wife, and not yet brought her home; or of one that had but newly completed his marriage. And whether he had married a widow or a virgin, an old woman or a young, it was the same thing. Yea, they extend it to him who had married his brother's wife; but not to him who had married a person prohibited to him by the law, or him that took his own wife again, whom he had formerly put away, because she was not a *new wife,* as the phrase is, Deut. xxiv. 5. where the time being limited, how long such a man should be free from the war, *viz.* for one year, they extend it, as I said, to the other two cases; that so long men might enjoy a new house, or a vineyard, after the first use of them, as the law allowed them to enjoy a wife before they went to war. (See Selden, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 3. and Schickard, in his Jus Regium, cap. 5. Theor. 17.) And it must be confessed, that this is a law of great equity, founded in nature, that conjugal love should not be disturbed; but have some time to knit into a strong and stable affection,

by an uninterrupted conversation together in its beginning. The Jews were so favourable in this matter, that they say, if five brethren were in the war together, and one of them was slain, leaving a widow without issue, all the remaining four returned home; because every one of them, in their order, in case those before him refused, was to raise up seed to his dead brother.

Ver. 8. *And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say.*] Make this new proclamation throughout the camp.

What man is there that is fearful and faint-hearted?] This some of the Jews understand of a natural timorousness, which makes men quake at every danger; and others refer it to those that were old, in whom that heat and vigour, which make men valiant, were quite abated. Upon which account they would not admit one who had no children to go to war (if we may believe Maimonides), because he was not thought masculine enough; or rather, because they would not cut off all hope of his having posterity. But there are those who understand this of the terrors of an evil conscience. (See Sota, cap. 8. sect. 5.) For they did not do as we are wont in these days (who send the wickedest villains into the wars); but if they knew any man to be guilty of a great crime, thrust him out of the army, lest they should all fare the worse for having him among them. (See Schickard, in his Jus Regium, cap. 5. Theor. 17. p. 124.)

Let him go and return to his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart.] For the cowardice of some might enfeeble the rest. Yet all these who were thus dismissed, were bound (if required) to furnish the army with victuals and water, to clear the ways, and to take up their quarters; as it is in the foregoing place in Sota, cap. 8. where Joh. Wagenseil observes, that they, who restrain these offices only to the fearful, are mistaken.

Ver. 9. *And it shall be when the officers have made an end of speaking to the people, that they all make captains of the armies to lead the people.*] This shews that what I noted, ver. 5. is true; that the foregoing proclamation was made before they marched forth to the war: for how should they march till there were captains chosen, to lead the several *armies* (as those companies, into which they were divided, are called), which was not done till he had spoken all the forenamed things. And if we translate the words as they may be out of the Hebrew [*they shall place* or set *captains of the hosts in the head*, or the front, *of the people*], still it must be supposed, that this was done before they stirred a foot; for no order could be observed without leaders.

Ver. 10. *When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.*] I have often noted, that there were two sorts of war which the Jews undertook: one by the Divine commandment against the seven nations of Canaan; another voluntarily, when they themselves found just cause to make war upon any other neighbouring nation. Now this precept many of the Jews will needs understand only concerning the latter sort of war; for the Canaanites were to be utterly destroyed, without mercy. But Maimonides and Moses Kotzensis take it to belong to both sorts of war. So the former of them in express words: "It was not lawful to make war upon any one whatsoever, before they offered them terms of peace," &c. Only they think the Ammonites and Moabites were to be excepted by that law: (xxiii. 6.) yet they temper it thus; that if those nations desired peace of themselves, it was to be granted to them, though not offered. And the most ancient writers of the Jews say, that Joshua sent three messages to the seven nations of Canaan before he invaded them, though he undertook the war with a command from God to destroy them; *viz.* if they did not submit to the summons which was sent them, either to flee, or to make peace; which was the subject of the two first messages. The next was a denunciation of war against them, as they say in the Jerusalem Talmud, quoted by Mr. Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 13. and see the learned J. Wagenseil, in annot. upon Sota, p. 845. Maimonides was of opinion, that the Gibeonites had not heard of these proclamations, which made them use craft to procure mercy from the Israelites. But P. Cunæus thinks it more probable, that they had refused, at first, to submit to Joshua's summons; but seeing him victorious, they betook themselves to that artifice, mentioned in the book of Joshua, when they could not hope for peace by any other means, (lib. ii. de Republ. Hebr. cap. 20.)

Ver. 11. *And it shall be, if it make thee an answer of peace, and open unto thee.*] Accept of the conditions offered to them, which were three. First, that they should take upon them the observation of the several precepts of the sons of Noah, and consequently renounce idolatry. Secondly, pay them a yearly tribute: and, thirdly, become their subjects. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gentium, cap. 4. and Schickard, in his Jus Regium, cap. 5. Theor. 16.)

Then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee.] Here are two of the conditions beforementioned; and the first was necessarily supposed, because the Israelites were not to suffer any of their gods to remain among them. For though by *serving* the Israelites is not meant being made their slaves, yet it imports that they were to live in due subjection to them as their governors, who might employ them in their public works, as repairing the king's palace, the walls of cities, &c.

Ver. 12. *And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee; then thou shalt besiege it.*] Without any further summons to yield upon conditions of peace.

Ver. 13. *And when the Lord thy God shall deliver it into thy hand.*] Of which they were not to doubt, ver. 4.

Thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword.] Which was a just punishment for their obstinacy; of which the men, who were here condemned to destruction, were the authors, and suffered the more justly, because they were told, no doubt, beforehand, that if they did not yield when conditions were offered to them, they must expect this execution.

Ver. 14. *But the women and the little ones.*] Who had not offended, by rejecting conditions of peace, nor could do any harm. And by *little ones* are to be understood male children, as well as female.

And the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof.] Money, household-stuff, and all manner of goods.

Shalt thou take unto thyself, &c.] This was granted to them as a reward of their service in the war.

Ver. 15. *Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these*

nations.] This clemency to the women and little ones, is limited to those that were not inhabitants of the land of Canaan; who, in the following verses, are ordered to be otherwise treated. For by the laws of war among all nations, the conqueror might use those whom he subdued as he pleased. See Grotius, lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 4. sect. 5. where, among other things, he quotes that saying of Marcellus in Livy, "Quicquid in hostibus feci, jus belli defendit," *Whatsoever I have done with enemies, the right of war defends it.*

Ver. 16. *But of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance.*] The cities of the land of Canaan.

Thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth.] *i. e.* Neither man, woman, nor child, as we speak. But their cattle (except in few cases, when they were appointed to be a *cherem*, i. e. *accursed)* were not to be killed, as appears from Josh. xi. 14. And the slaughter of all the people, is to be understood only in case they did not surrender when they were summoned, but rejected the conditions of peace that were offered to them. After this, no mercy was to be had upon them. (See Exod. xxiii. 32.) In which their condition was worse than any other people's, whose men were only to be slain, (ver. 14.) but not women and children. For which difference there was a great reason, as I shall shew presently; but if we could see none, we ought to consider that it was done by God's command; who, as he is most just and merciful, so hath a greater right over men, than we have over beasts, as Grotius well observes; who alleges many examples of the like practice in the heathen world, both among Greeks and Romans. (See lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 4. sect. 9.)

Ver. 17. *But thou shalt utterly destroy them.*] After they had slighted all offers of peace. Some of the Jews, indeed, have been so merciful as to think this not a command, but a permission; which warranted them to kill all, without any distinction of sex or age; yet did not so enjoin it, but that they might, after they had taken a city, spare such as repented, and offered to become proselytes of the gate. This was the opinion, one would think, which anciently prevailed, as Selden observes, (lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 16.) because we find the relics of these people often mentioned in the Bible. And this is agreeable also to the law of nations, that such as beg mercy should be spared; which flowed from the ancient right which such persons were thought to have to it, as David Chytræus observes out of Thucydides, lib. iii. and the known verse of the oracle,

Μήθ' ἱκέτας ἀδικεῖν, ἱκέται ἱεροί τε καὶ ἁγνοί.

Not to hurt supplicants, who are sacred, and acquitted of their offences. He doth not mention the place where this oracle was uttered; but Ezekiel Spanhemius hath lately observed out of Pausanias, that it was at Dodone. See Observationes in Callimachi Hymnum in Dianam, ver. 123. where he notes, that from hence Jupiter was called Ἱκέσιος, because he was accounted a severe and implacable avenger of all violence done to supplicants. And they are supplicants (says the same Chytræus) who confess their sin, and, acknowledging they deserve punishment, give themselves up to the pleasure of the conqueror; but beg the punishment may be mitigated by mercy and clemency.

Namely the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.] He distinctly mentions the nations which were to be utterly destroyed, that this severity might be extended no further. And so he had done before, vii. 1. where he mentions seven nations, though here are only six, the Girgashites being omitted. The reason of which Maimonides (in Hilcoth Melachim) thinks to be, that they upon the first summons of Joshua fled the country into Africa; and therefore are not named in Josh. ix. 1, 2. among those that "gathered themselves together to fight against Israel." But I take the true reason of this to be, that the Girgashites were a people mixed among the rest; and did not live in a separate part of the country by themselves: but that they opposed Joshua, as well as others, and were delivered into his hand, appears from Josh. xxiv. 11. Now this looks like a great cruelty, to kill so many nations; till we consider who these people were, that God commanded to be utterly extirpated, *viz.* most abominable idolaters, who offered their children to Moloch, as a piece of pious worship; magicians, witches, necromancers; and guilty of all those filthy lusts mentioned in Lev. xviii. For which crimes God thought them not fit to live any longer upon the face of the earth; and therefore commanded them to be utterly destroyed in this war, which was undertaken by his order, and called therefore *the war of the Lord.* And so was that against Sihon and Og, who were likewise Amorites, and upon that score rooted out by God's order, Numb. xxi. *ult.* Deut. ii. 34. For it was mercy to others not to suffer such a wicked generation to live.

Ver. 18. *That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods.*] Here is the great reason given of the forenamed severe execution, that if they had been spared, they would have infected the Israelites with their filthy idolatry. Which some make an argument, why peace was not to be proclaimed to these nations, (ver. 10.) because they were so wicked, that on no terms it was fit to suffer them to live. But they that object this against what was before said, forget, or do not consider, that the great condition of peace with them was, that they should renounce their idolatry; and then there was no such danger in sparing them. And this was so settled in the opinion of the ancient Jews, that, after they had taken a city, they thought, upon these terms, there was room for mercy. So the book Siphri, upon these very words, *lest they teach you to do after all their abominations.* From whence it is to be observed (saith that author), "if they repented, the Israelites might let them live." And so R. Solomon himself; "It is to be understood, that if they repented, and became proselytes, it was lawful to receive them."

So should you sin against the Lord your God.] Both by suffering them to live, and imitating them in their wickedness.

Ver. 19. *When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it, to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof, by forcing an axe against them, for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down.*] It is very plain that he speaks of fruit-trees, such as bear apples, olives, dates, &c. which were to be preserved both in war and in peace: except in a few cases. In war, if the enemy made advantage of them, for their archers to lurk

and shelter themselves behind them, by which the Israelites were much annoyed, then they think they might be cut down, to shorten the siege. And in peace, if they did not bring forth fruit, or if the fruit would not be so profitable as the wood would be for building, and other uses; or if they hindered the growth of better trees: in all these cases they might be cut down, as the Jewish doctors resolve. Who, when they please, mind the reason of a law, and not the bare words; insomuch, that they extend this law to a great many other things, which they say might not be destroyed, if they were useful and profitable. No houses, for instance, nor garments, nor household-stuff; nor were they to stop up fountains, &c. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 15. and Guil. Schickardus in Jus Regium, cap. 5. Theor. 18.)

For the tree of the field is man's life.] The word *life* is not in the Hebrew text; but we add it to make out the sense. In which we follow many good authors among the Jews, particularly Aben Ezra, who observes many such elliptical, *i. e.* concise forms of speech in Scripture. As in 1 Sam. xvi. 20. where an *ass of bread*, is *an ass loaded with bread*. So here *the tree is a man, i. e.* the life or support of man. Just as (xxiv. 6.) it is said, a man should not take the upper or nether millstone to pledge, *ki nephesh hu, because it is his life, i. e.* that whereby he gets his livelihood. But there are a great many who translate the words by way of interrogation (and the Hebrew will bear it), and, joining them with those that follow, make this the sense, *Is the tree of the field a man, that it should come against thee in the siege?* So the Vulgar, the Greek, and the Arabic translation, and the Chaldee paraphrast, and Josephus, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 12.) As much as to say, They need not fear any danger from the trees, as if they were soldiers that could fight against them. And if this sense do not seem dilute (as some have censured it), there is no need of rendering the words by way of interrogation, but only of repeating the word *not* out of the foregoing words, in this manner, *Thou shalt not cut them down, for the tree of the field is not a man*, &c. Of this there are many examples, as Glassius and our Gataker have shewn. And thus R. Bechai among the Jews expounds these words; and the famous Abarbinel, who thus glosses upon them: "It is not decent to make war against trees, who have no hands to fight with thee, but against men only." And this sense Grotius follows, lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 12. sect. 2. where he produces Philo for this opinion, and Josephus, who says, "If trees could speak, they would cry out that it was unjust, that they who were no cause of the war should suffer the mischiefs of it." And thus Onkelos translates these words, and those that follow, *For the tree of the field is not as a man, that it should come against thee in the siege;* that is, they had no cause to fear trees, and therefore should not hurt them. But this is a reason against cutting down any trees whatsoever; whereas Moses speaks only of fruit-trees. From whence Grotius thinks that saying of the Pythagoreans took its original, ἥμερον φυτὸν καὶ ἔγκαρπον, &c. *trees that do not grow wild, and bear fruit, ought not to be hurt, much less cut down.* And yet it seems to be more agreeable to the Hebrew words, than our marginal translation, which makes this sense, *That there are trees of the field sufficient to employ in the siege;* so that they need not cut down fruit-trees to carry it on.

Ver. 20. *Only the trees which thou knowest, that they be not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy and cut them down.*] If it were necessary for the raising bulwarks (as it here follows), or otherways to distress the enemy, they had liberty to cut down trees that did not bear fruit; but not merely to make waste and desolation.

And thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee.] From whence they battered the city, and threw great stones into it; as well as begirt them round, that no provisions might be brought in to them. Thus we find they did in aftertimes, 2 Chron. xxvi. 15. 2 Sam. xx. 15. And they must have some such inventions in Moses's days; or else how could they take cities fortified with such high walls as are mentioned Deut. i. 28.? Or to what purpose should they build bulwarks, and cast up banks, but from thence to batter the city with some engine or other?

Until it be subdued.] From these words the Jewish doctors conclude, that it was lawful to make war even upon the sabbath; because, having set down before a city, they were to proceed till *it was subdued;* which these words suppose might not be in a short time. Only they say, that the siege was to be begun at least three days before the sabbath. Thus these superstitious people, not thinking common reason sufficient to justify them in so plain a case, make the Scripture speak what it intended not for their warrant. See Schickard, in his Jus Regium, cap. 5. Theor. 18. where he alleges Maimonides in his Hilkoth Melachim to this purpose. And Joh. Benedictus Carpzovius produces a plainer out of Hilkoth Schabbath, where he delivers their sense in these words: "A siege is to be begun three days before the sabbath; and then it may be continued every day, even upon the sabbath, until the city be taken: and this may be done in a war that is voluntarily undertaken. For thus our wise men understand these words by ancient tradition, *until it be subdued.*"

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *IF one shall be found slain in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess.*] This follows very properly after the law he had delivered about making war; because then the bodies of dead men were most frequently found. About which the wisest lawgivers took the greatest care that inquisition should be made, how and by whom they were slain. This appears by Plato, who, in his ninth book de Legibus, hath a law something like to this, though far short of the solemnity that is here required to be used; as I shall observe in the conclusion of this statute.

Lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him.] The Hebrew doctors here stick too much to the letter of these words; for they will not have them reach to a dead body hanging in the air upon a tree, or hid in the sand or dust, or floating upon the water, which is extremely absurd.

Ver. 2. *Then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth.*] The great Sanhedrin were to send forth some of their members (so the Jews interpret it) to do what here follows. And indeed it may be thought that none but they could take care of this matter, the doubt being to which of the neighbouring cities (where the other judges lived) it be-

longed. Therefore the paraphrase ascribed to Uzielides saith, "Two of the wise men or elders, and three of the judges, were sent by the great Sanhedrin about this business." (See Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 7. n. 2.)

Yet he observes, in another part of that most learned work, (lib. ii. cap. 7. n. 3.) that there was a sort of elders who were not ordained by laying on of hands, but only were venerable persons for their age and prudence, who, some think, might serve for this employment. And they called such elders *zickne hashuck, elders of the street,* or *vulgar elders.* But none, I think, hath discoursed more critically upon these words, *thy elders,* and *thy judges,* than our Mr. Thorndike; who observes, that there had been judges constituted to determine causes by Jethro's advice, (Exod. xviii.) the greater causes being reserved for Moses alone. For whose assistance God afterward appointed seventy elders, (Numb. xi.) who made up the great court of judgment in that nation. Now they of this great consistory are called *the elders of Israel:* but they of other consistories, or inferior courts, are called barely *elders,* or *elders of such a city.* See Review of the Rites of the Church, p. 70. where he alleges this very place for it; and by *thy elders,* understands the elders of Israel; the lower elders being mentioned in the next verse. And so those of the great consistory are commonly called in the gospel: and in like manner, *the scribes of the people,* and *thy scribes,* signify there those of this high court. Whereas the bare name of *scribes* is extended further, to the inferior doctors of the law. As also the name of *rulers,* and that of *rulers of the people,* are to be understood with the like difference.

And they shall measure unto the cities that are round about him that is slain.] That is, if it were dubious what city lay nearest to the dead body, as it sometimes happened. But commonly, it is probable, at the first view they easily discerned this, and so did not trouble themselves to measure. It is a frivolous dispute in the Mischna, from whence they were to measure; whether from the navel, or the nose, or the forehead: which last seems more rational to Maimonides, who calls it the centre of the body. But they did not (if we believe the Jewish doctors), in their measuring, take notice of any city wherein there was not a court of twenty-three elders; and Jerusalem was always excepted. (See Selden in the place forenamed, n. 3. and L'Empereur upon Bava-kama, p. 173. and Wagenseil upon Sota, p. 899.) If the dead body lay nearest to the country of the gentiles, then they did not measure at all; but it was presumed the man was killed by them.

Ver. 3. *And it shall be, that the city which is next to the slain man.*] From whence it might be presumed the murderer came, or was fled thither, as Abarbinel discourses.

Even the elders of that city.] Who were different from the elders beforementioned (see the foregoing verse), for they returned to Jerusalem when they had seen the body buried, if there was no discovery of the murderer: and then the senators of the city next to the dead body, who were twenty-three, performed what is here ordered.

Shall take an heifer.] That was not above two years old; for if it were a day more, they might not use it for this purpose, as Maimonides and others affirm. Yet the Scripture, in other cases, mentions one of three years old, (Gen. xv. 9. Isa. xv. 5. Jer. xlviii. 5.) as Wagenseil observes upon the Mischna of Sota, cap. 9. sect. 3. annot. 2. If two cities happened to be equidistant from the dead body, they then joined together to provide this heifer.

Which hath not been wrought with.] Never used in ploughing the ground.

And which hath not drawn in the yoke.] This may seem to be included in the foregoing expression, as Maimonides observes; but it is added, he thinks, to signify, that if it had been employed in any other labour, it became improper for this use. Such heifers were accounted by the heathen to be most acceptable to their gods, as appears by Homer, in whom Diomedes and Nestor promise such an offering to Pallas. (See Bochart, lib. ii. Hieroz. cap. 33. p. 1. out of Iliad K. and Odyss. Γ.)

But there was a particular reason for such a one in this case (wherein the heifer was not to be offered), that it might the better represent, as many think, the person that had committed this murder, who was a son of Belial, subject to no law, and deserved to be beheaded as this heifer was. It is not required that it should be without blemish, as those heifers were to be that were offered at the tabernacle: but it sufficed if it had never been accustomed to the yoke. Yet this is not to be taken without all limitation; for if it wanted any member, or were diseased, it might not be employed in this service, as Wagenseil observes out of Maimonides, in the place beforenamed, p. 907.

Ver. 4. *And the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer.*] Their cities, it seems, were commonly seated on hills or high grounds.

Into a rough valley.] The Hebrew word *nachal* signifies both a *valley* and a *torrent.* The LXX., Josephus, and the Vulgar, understand it as we do; and the following words favour this interpretation. But the Talmudists and the rabbins, who generally follow them, take it to signify a *torrent,* which is the sense of Maimonides himself; and the next word *ethan* (which we translate *rough*) they interpret a *rapid* torrent. Chaskuni thinks there is some reason for this in the sixth verse, where they are required to *wash their hands over the heifer* in the water that is of the brook. I see nothing to hinder the putting both senses together; torrents being wont to run down violently from the mountains, through the valleys which lie beneath them, which is the cause that the same word signifies both.

Which is neither eared.] Or rather, *ploughed.*

Nor sown.] Being a stony, craggy ground, representing the horridness of the murder, and the cruelty and hardness of the man's heart who committed it. They that follow the other interpretation of *nachal,* understood the foregoing words, *Ascher lo jeabeth bo,* which we translate, *neither eared,* as if they signified the torrent did not serve to water the neighbouring ground: and these words to be meant of the soil which lay next to the torrent, in which nothing was sown. And, besides this variety, there are those who take *ethan* not to signify either that which is hard or rapid, but the most fertile ground: so R. Bechai, and lately R. Jac. Abendana, in his marginal notes upon Michlal Jophi, where he gives this reason for it; that the inhabitants of each city might be the more careful to prevent such murders, being in danger otherwise to lose the best ground belonging to their inheritance. For the land where the body was found

(if we may believe the Mischna) was never to be sown any more. (See Sota, cap. 9. sect. 5.)

And shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley.] Coming behind the heifer (saith the Mischna), as the murderer was supposed to have treacherously surprised the slain man; and should have been thus used, if he could have been found.

Ver. 5. *And the priests, the sons of Levi.*] See chap. xvii. 9. 18. xviii. 1.

Shall come near.] To see all performed according to the law, and to pray to God for the country in the words prescribed, ver. 8.

For them the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the Lord.] See Exod. xxviii. 1, &c. Numb. vi. 23, &c.

And by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried.] They did not determine all matters whatsoever, but all of this nature; in which the law appointed them to take care things were done according to it. As in the killing the *red heifer;* the examination of the *woman suspected of adultery* by the water of jealousy; the *leprosy,* whether in men, or houses, or garments. Thus the Hebrews explain these words. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 8.) And so Bonfrerius here acknowledges, that they did not come hither as judges, but as directors; and that they might purge themselves, together with the elders, from all guilt of this crime.

Ver. 6. *And all the elders of that city, that are next to the slain man.*] If there were never so many elders in the city, they were all to clear themselves by doing what follows.

Shall wash their hands over the heifer, &c.] In the water of the brook which flowed through the valley; protesting their innocence, in the words prescribed in the next verse. So Chaskuni glosses, "As our hands are clean, so are we from the guilt of this blood." See Wagenseil upon Sota, p. 910. who thinks Pilate had respect to this rite, when he condemned our Saviour, (Matt. xxvii. 24.) notwithstanding all that learned men have said to the contrary.

Ver. 7. *And they shall answer and say.*] Being asked, perhaps, whether they knew any thing of this murder.

Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.] That is, they professed solemnly they knew not who shed it, nor how the man came to be slain. And the Mischna beforementioned adds, that they said, (for how can any one think that elders would be murderers?) "This man did not come into our city that we know of, and dismissed without necessary provisions; nor was seen by us, and permitted to go away without company." Which Maimonides expresses more largely in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 40. where he represents the wisdom of this law in these words: "The elders called God to witness, that they had not neglected to secure the ways, nor to set watches to examine diligently those that travelled, saying (as our rabbins express it), *This man was not killed through any negligence, or forgetfulness, which we are guilty of, in not observing our public constitutions; nor do we know who killed him.* Now, by this inquisition into the fact, by this going forth of the elders, and the striking off the heifer's head, &c. a great deal of discourse necessarily arose about this business, which made the thing public, and was a probable means of discovering the murderer, by some or other who were there, or should hear of all this." And if any one came, and said he knew the author, then they forbore to behead the heifer: but the man being apprehended, if the house of judgment did not put him to death, the king had power to do it: if he neglected it, the avenger of blood might kill him wheresoever he met him. By which it appears, that this solemn process here mentioned tended very much to detect the murderer. Unto which this also contributed, that the place where the heifer's head was struck off might never be ploughed or sowed hereafter (as I noted before), which made the owners of that ground employ their utmost diligence to find out the murderer, that their land might not lie waste for ever; for they might not so much as plant a tree upon it.

Ver. 8. *Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge.*] The priests alone pronounced these words, as the Mischna there saith; though Josephus (who often differs from the Talmudists) saith, Both priests and elders prayed God to be propitious unto them, and to prevent the like evil from falling out again in their region. (See Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 7. n. 5, 6.)

And the blood shall be forgiven them.] These are not the words of the priests, saith the same Mischna, but the Holy Ghost pronounces, That when they observed these rites, the guilt should be removed from them; which, in some sort, would have lain upon them, if they had taken no notice of a murder committed so near to their city, nor made inquisition after it, and expressed their abhorrence of it.

Ver. 9. *So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the Lord.*] Sincerely protesting their innocence and detestation of this fact: which was to be done in the day-time, and not in the night; and the body of the heifer was to be buried, but none of it eaten, or any part employed to other use. If the murderer was found before its head was struck off, it was to be let go into the pasture among other beasts; if after, he was to suffer capital punishment, that is, to be cut off by the sword, as the Mischna beforementioned explains it, cap. 9. sect. 7.

By all this it appears, that no ancient law made such provision for the discovery and expiation of secret murders, as this of Moses. For the very best of them, which is that of Plato, enacts no more than this, that if a man was found dead, and he that killed him, after a diligent search, could not be heard of, public proclamation should be made, that he who was guilty of the fact should not come into any holy place, nor any part of the whole country; for if he were discovered and apprehended he should be put to death, Καὶ ἔξω τῆς τοῦ πεφόντος Χώρας ἐκβληθησόμενον ἄταφον, *and be thrown out of the bounds of the country, and have no burial,* (lib. ix. de Legibus, p. 874.)

Ver. 10. *When thou goest to war against thine enemies.*] To a voluntary war against any of their neighbouring nations, not against the people of Canaan, none of which were to be spared, if they stood out and fought, but destroyed by the Divine precept, which required this war.

And the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thy hands, and thou hast taken them captive.] As the manner was, to make them slaves to their conquerors.

Ver. 11. *And seest among the captives a beautiful woman.*] It was indifferent whether she was a virgin, or a widow, or a wife, according to the Jewish doctors.

And hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife.] The plain meaning is, fell so passionately in love with her, as to desire to marry her, though a stranger, of another nation and religion. It is a common opinion, indeed, among the Jewish doctors, that a baser sort of passion is here indulged; for it was lawful, they imagine, for a soldier to lie with such a captive once to satisfy his lust (which some make to be the meaning of this expression, *hast a desire to her*, or, as it is in the Hebrew, *hast cleaved to her*), but not repeat it, unless he would take her for his wife: which they think was allowed to military men when they were absent from their wives, to prevent greater outrages, which were wont to be committed by the heathen. But the best nations severely prohibited all such abuses, as Grotius observes, lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 4. sect. xix. 1. And though Schickard, in his Mischpat Hammelech, endeavours to make out the wisdom of this law in permitting a Hebrew soldier to enjoy a captive once, (see p. 130, 131. and Mr. Selden, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 13.) yet he cannot but acknowledge that some of the Jews do not allow of this interpretation, but are of opinion, that he might not touch a captive till she became a proselyte, and he took her for his wife. Thus R. Bechai, as Grotius observes in the place forenamed, sect. xix. 2. "God would have the camp of Israel holy, and not defiled with fornication, and other abominations, as the camps of the gentiles." Unto whom Alexander himself gave a better example; who being extremely taken with the beauty of Roxana, did not abuse her as a captive, but vouchsafed to marry her, and make her his wife; for which he is justly commended, both by Arrianus and by Plutarch; and therefore I think it is most reasonable to expound this law, only of taking such a captive in marriage; which Abarbinel also shews is the most ancient interpretation of it, and hath the best authority on its side among the Jews. For though he acknowledges it is the common opinion of their wise men, that a soldier might lie with a fair captive once, whilst she was a mere gentile; yet herein they followed the doctors in the Babylonian Talmud, which is not of so great antiquity as the Jerusalem Talmud, where R. Johannes (in Massecheth Sanhedrin) delivers the quite contrary doctrine, that it was not lawful for any Israelite to lie with such a woman at all, till the conditions, mentioned in the following words of this law, were fulfilled, when he was to make her his wife. And according to the judgment of this R. Johannes, Abarbinel explains this law in a large commentary on this place.

Ver. 12. *Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house.*] The forenamed doctors, who are so indulgent to the soldiers' lust, will have this to signify, that they were to observe the rules of modesty in the camp, and not openly lie with her like beasts, but privately in their tents. Thus Maimonides himself, More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 41. But it is evident Moses doth not speak of any thing done in the camp, but of what was to be done when he returned to his house; where he was to dispose her, in the manner following, to be his wife.

And she shall shave her head.] These and the following words are variously interpreted, some taking these things to be done to her, with a design to abate his affection to her, that he might not marry her at all; and others, to prepare her, and make her fit for his bed. For shaving her head (which every one knows was used in mourning) deprived her of one of her greatest ornaments, and made her less amiable, and consequently might extinguish his affection, which was kindled by her beauty. So Clemens Alexandrinus understands it. (See lib. ii. Strom. p. 398, 399. and lib. iii. p. 456.) And many of the Hebrews are of the same mind, that these things were ordered to lessen his affection to her, by making her appear less lovely in his eyes. (See Schickard's Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 5. Theor. 17. p. 134, 135.) But there are others who take this to have been a kind of purification, and cleansing her from her gentilism; and a token of her becoming a new woman, that she might be meet to be made his wife.

And pare her nails.] This likewise was a piece of cleanliness and neatness. But they who are of the other opinion translate the words, *Let her nails grow*, as our marginal translation hath it, and the Arabic, and Chaldee, and the Hebrew doctors commonly understand it; which was intended to make her look ugly, and to slack his love to her. At least, it was suitable to the condition of a mourner, as she plainly was, it appears by the next verse. The Hebrew words, indeed (which are, *make her nails*), are dubious; from whence arose that dispute we find in the Talmud, between R. Eliezer, who expounds it *pare her nails*, to make them look handsome; and R. Akiba, who expounds it, *let them grow*. The former reasons thus: The hair and the nails are to be used alike. Now her hair is plainly ordered to be cut; and therefore so were her nails to be. But the other doctor turns it quite contrary: What was ordered about her hair, was to make her abominable; therefore this also was intended to make her appear ill-favoured. And, indeed, the Hebrew word being indifferent to either sense, we must judge of the meaning by the circumstances of the place: and here they seem to lead us to R. Akiba's interpretation; which Onkelos, a most judicious paraphrast, follows; and many learned men in later times, particularly Schickard in the book beforementioned, p. 134. and Martinus Gierus de Luctu Hebræorum, cap. 14. sect. 5.

Ver. 13. *And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her.*] Her fine clothes, wherein they suppose her to have been taken captive; instead of which she was to put on sordid apparel, which was the habit of mourners. This still tended to cool his love; the drift of these things being (as the Jews commonly think) to take away from her all that was inviting and tempting, that so such marriages might not be common among them.

And shall remain in thy house.] Nor stir out of doors, but be retired; as persons in a mournful condition are wont to be.

And bewail her father and mother.] Who, perhaps, were killed in the war; or rather, whom she was likely to see no more. And this also the Jews suppose might help to abate his affection to her: sorrow and grief very much spoiling one's beauty.

A full month.] So long the Jews were allowed to bewail their dead relations, or at least those who were eminent, as they did Aaron and Moses. And here I cannot but observe how Philo magnifies this constitution, and plainly shews he was of the opinion of R. Johannes beforementioned, that this captive might not be touched till all these things were performed. Πάνυ καλῶς ἕκαστα διαταξάμενος,

(saith he, in his book περὶ φιλανθρωπίας, p. 545, &c.) "Moses ordered every thing most excellently in this law: first, in not letting the reins loose to men's desires, but restraining them for thirty days. In which time, secondly, a trial was made of his love; whether it was a furious ungovernable passion, or had something of reason in it, which advises us to do nothing suddenly, but after serious and long deliberation. And, thirdly, Ἐλεεῖ τὸν αἰχμάλωτον. This was a merciful law to the captive, that, if she were a virgin, she might bewail her unhappiness, in not being disposed of in marriage by her parents: if a widow, that she had lost her first love, and was now to be married to one who would be her lord, as well as her husband."

And after that.] Upon these words R. Johannes grounded his opinion, that, till a full month was spent in the forementioned ceremonies, he might not lie with her.

Thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.] If he continued, that is, to love her at the end of the month, and she was willing to embrace the Jewish religion, in which, while she remained retired in his house, she was instructed. For the Jewish doctors agree she was to be baptized, and not merely made a proselyte of the gate (*i. e.* renounce idolatry), otherwise he might not marry her. And if she refused to embrace their religion entirely, Maimonides saith, they gave her a year's time to consider of it; at the end of which, if she remained still obstinate, they required her at least to observe the seven precepts of the sons of Noah, and so to become a proselyte of the gate; otherwise she was to be slain. But though she was so converted, no Jew might take her to wife; for such a marriage, Maimonides saith, was counted impious.

Those Hebrew doctors who think a soldier might enjoy her once, at the first taking her captive, have added another conceit to this, *viz.* that there was not only this month's time allowed her to bewail her parents, but that he was to stay two months more, before he *might go in to her and be her husband,* that he might see whether she were with child or not, by his first enjoyment of her. For if she were, a great difference was to be made between that child, and those she might have by him after marriage. Concerning which, see Selden, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 13. where he observes, they make Tamar, the daughter of David, an instance of this; whose mother being a captive, they suppose he lay with her as soon as she was taken, and had this issue by her; but afterward she becoming a proselyte, he made her his wife, and she bare him Absalom. Whereby it came to pass, that there was not such a relation between her and the other sons of David by other women, but that it had been lawful for Amnon to have married her.

But all this is judged by the famous Abarbinel (upon 2 Sam. xiii.) to be very absurd; and neither believes that David would have committed such a fact, as to lie with a woman in her gentilism; nor, if he had, that this child would have been looked upon as a gentile, since he afterward married her mother. And therefore he takes those words of Tamar, ver. 13. "Speak to the king, and he will not withhold me from thee," to be a mere put-off, as we speak, to get rid of his company; which Amnon understood very well, who, knowing he could not have her to wife, proceeded to force her.

Ver. 14. *And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will.*] If at the month's end, or before, his mind was changed, and he did not like to take her for his wife, then he might neither meddle with her any more (as the Hebrew doctors understand it), nor keep her any longer as a slave, nor sell her, or make merchandize of her (as the text here expressly orders), but give her liberty to go whither she herself thought good. This he *lost,* say the Jews, by his short pleasure he took at first. For other captives, whom a man had made himself master of, by the law of war, he might employ in his work as slaves, or make money of them; but one whom he had lain with, he was either to marry, or set her at liberty. This they ground upon the last words of this verse, which I shall shew may have another interpretation. And therefore I shall not insist upon their sense (which depends upon the same words), who think Moses speaks of his not liking her after she was become his wife, her humour, manners, and conversation, being disagreeable to him; in which case he was to give her a bill of divorce, as he might do another wife, but not keep her as a slave.

Because thou hast humbled her.] It must be acknowledged that this is an usual phrase, for having had carnal knowledge of a woman, as the Scripture modestly elsewhere speaks, in the like case. It signifies so in the very next chapter of this book, Deut. xxii. 29. Judg. xix. 24. xx. 2. and many other places, where it is used for violence offered to a woman, which was the greatest *affliction* to her, as the Hebrew word properly signifies. From which I see no reason why we should depart in this place; for it was sufficient affliction and humiliation to a captive woman (as Carpzovius observes, in his annotations upon Schickard's book, which I have so often named), that, after she had been brought into a soldier's house, and kept there a month, having her head shaved, garments changed, &c. in hope of marriage, she was rejected at last, when it should have been consummated. And thus Abarbinel here understands the word *humbled,* not of his lying with her, but of all the forementioned conditions, which were imposed upon her as a preparation for his bed, and of her disappointment after she had submitted to be baptized. And, indeed, the Hebrew word denotes any sort of affliction. (See Exod. i. 11. Psal. lxxxviii. 8. lxxxix. 23. xc. 15. xciv. 5, &c.)

Ver. 15. *If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated.*] That is, less loved; as the word *hated* sometimes signifies, Gen. xxix. 31. Matt. vi. 24. R. Solomon thinks that this case follows the other, because it might so happen, that, if a man suffered himself to be carried with too violent a passion towards such a woman as is beforementioned, it might turn into hatred, when he found her not to be agreeable to him.

And they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated.] Towards which it was likely he would be affected very differently, as he was to his wives.

And if the first-born son be hers that was hated.] As it fell out in the case of Leah and Rachel.

Ver. 16. *Then it shall be when he makes his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved first-born,* &c.] He speaks of sons; for daughters were not to have a double portion. And he speaks of sons (as the Jews will have it) born before the death of their father; to whom he divided his inheritance. For a

posthumous son had not a double portion, as the Gemara upon Bathra saith. (See Selden de Successionibus, cap. 7. p. 29.)

Ver. 17. *But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the first-born.*] Which had his first love, and was to enjoy the effects of it.

By giving him a double portion of all that he hath.] Of all that he was in possession of when he died; but not of that which was his in reversion after his death; as Mr. Selden shews the opinion of the Jewish lawyers is, lib. de Success. cap. 6. p. 24.

For he is the beginning of his strength.] See Gen. xlix. 1.

The right of the first-born is his.] By a very ancient custom, antecedent to the law, which made the first-born the head of the family, and gave him as much more as any of his brethren of the estate belonging to it, that he might be able to maintain and support the dignity of it, (Gen. xxv. 31.) But if there was no son, and the inheritance was to be divided among daughters, the eldest daughter had not a double share of the estate; as Mr. Selden shews in the same book, cap. 8.

Ver. 18. *If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son.*] By a *stubborn* son, the Jews understand one that will not do as he is bidden, and by a *rebellious*, one that doth what he is forbidden. And they imagine this law is annexed to the foregoing, about the marriage of a soldier to a captive woman, because the issue of such marriages commonly proved refractory, or at least gave their parents great trouble. So Schickard observes out of Tanchuma. And they confirm it by an example out of Scripture, *viz.* the two children of David, Absalom and Tamar, who were both born of a captive woman, made a proselyte: the former of which conspired the death of his father; and the other being ravished by Amnon, was the occasion of the death of some of her brethren. (Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 5. Theor. 17.)

Which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother.] Behaved himself not only undutifully, but crossly to them; and with such contempt of their authority, as argued he had not only lost all filial affection and reverence to them, but would, if he could, undo them.

And that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them.] Is never the better for admonitions, reprehensions, and corrections, which they were bound to give him.

Ver. 19. *Then shall his father and his mother lay hold of him.*] It is absurd to say, as the Hebrew doctors do (in their qualifications of this law), that his parents were with their own hands to apprehend him, and bring him before the court; though it seems reasonable enough, that both father and mother should agree in the complaint against him, and desire officers might be sent to lay hold of him. In which one cannot well suppose that they would consent to have such a punishment as follows inflicted upon him, unless he were intolerable.

And bring him unto the elders of his city.] Who were to examine the proofs, and accordingly to pass sentence upon him. Concerning these elders, see ver. 3, 4.

And unto the gate of his place.] Where the court of judgment was wont to sit. (See xvi. 18.) The paternal power among the ancient Romans was so great, that they might put their children to death, as they did their slaves, without any process before a magistrate. And this some have taken to be a natural right; and imagined God would not have commanded Abraham to kill his son, but that it was a part of his inherent power. However this be, they were not thought fit to be long entrusted with it; for God here orders, by Moses, that it should be committed to the public judges, as the most disinterested persons.

Ver. 20. *And they shall say unto the elders of his city.*] This seems to intimate the authority of parents was still so preserved, that their testimony alone was sufficient to convict a rebellious son, without any further proof. The Hebrew doctors, indeed, are of another mind, as I shall shew in the explication of what follows.

This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice.] This is to be understood, say they, of a son that was no less than thirteen years old and a day; and so might be presumed to know his duty, and to be capable of being governed by counsel and good advice; and this is reasonable enough: but what they say concerning the time when he became his own man is monstrously absurd. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. p. 559, 560.) What they say of a daughter, not to be comprehended under this law, may be admitted, because she was not capable to do so much mischief in a family as a rebellious son.

He is a glutton and a drunkard.] These sins are no where made capital by the law of Moses, but when they were accompanied with rebellious disobedience to parents, who were to bring witnesses, as the Hebrew doctors say, that this son had stolen some of their goods, and sold them, that he might spend the money in these vices; under which others are comprehended, which usually attend them; and that he had done this, after he had been admonished and chastised: so that he was not to be punished as this law at last prescribes, till he was grown incorrigible. For, they say, the court was first to order him to be whipped, and not to proceed further till, upon a new complaint, it was proved that he had run into the same riotous courses since that punishment. Then, upon this second testimony (as they call it), the court gave sentence against him, that he should be stoned to death, unless the parents, before the sentence was pronounced, said they gave him their pardon. There are a great many little niceties about the quantity of meat and wine that he ate and drank, and other matters; with which I do not think fit to trouble the reader.

Ver. 21. *And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die.*] This is such a severe sentence, that it inclines me to think, the parents looked upon such a son as so debauched, that he would not only spend all their estate, if he had it, but was inclined to kill them, that he might get it into his own hands. For the sentence of death is denounced, elsewhere, against one that struck his father or mother, (Exod. xxi. 15.) or that cursed them, (ver. 17.) It is not said, indeed, he should be stoned, but *put to death;* which they interpret of strangling; this punishment of stoning being appointed for idolaters and blasphemers of God; next to whom parents are to be reverenced, being in God's place, with respect to their children. (See upon the fifth commandment.) And therefore other nations were very severe in their punishment of such children as are here described; and particularly the Romans, after the power was taken from parents to sell them, or put them to death, and the censure of them committed to the magistrates. (See Hen. Stephen. in his Fontes et Rivi Juris Civilis, p. 18.) And

among the Athenians, Lysias saith (in his oration against Agoratus), He that beats his parents, or did not maintain them, and provide a habitation for them, when they were in want, ἄξιός ἐστι θανάτῳ ζημιωθῆναι, *deserved to be put to death*. The law indeed did not inflict that punishment, but only said, ἄτιμος ἔστω, *let him be infamous;* that is, as they expound it, he might not come into the public assemblies, nor enter into their temples, nor wear a crown in their public festivals; and if any such persons presumed so to do, they were brought before the magistrates, who set a fine upon their heads, and committed them to prison till they paid it. (See Sam. Petitus, in his Commentary upon the Attic Laws, lib. ii. tit. 4. p. 163.) No wonder therefore Moses ordained this punishment, when a son was come to such a degree of profligate wickedness, that he endeavoured to undo his parents. Which some states have thought fit to follow in these latter ages: for David Chytræus saith, he himself saw an example of this severity at Zurich, in the year one thousand five hundred and fifty; where a disobedient son was beheaded, who had cursed his mother, and beaten her.

So shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.] See concerning this before upon xix. 20.

Ver. 22. *If a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death.*] There were several sorts of capital punishments; viz. *strangling, burning, cutting off by the sword,* and *stoning*. Now the Hebrew doctors limit this unto such offenders as were stoned; of which punishment he speaks in the foregoing verse. But there being eighteen sorts of offenders, who were to be sentenced to this death, they put a further limitation upon these words; their tradition being, as they tell us, the *sin worthy of death* (or stoning) is only idolatry or blasphemy. So we read in the Sanhedrin, cap. 6. sect. 4. "All that were stoned were also hanged, according to the opinion of R. Eliezer: but the wise men say none were hanged but the idolater and blasphemer." And they add there, that only men, not women, were thus used; for which I can see no reason, but the sticking to the mere letter of these words; as if the word *man* did not comprehend both sexes.

But if we examine the Scripture, we shall find this not to be true (that no men were hanged but they that were stoned), for the king of Ai was hanged, (Josh. viii. 29.) and five kings more, (x. 26.) and they were not hanged because they were blasphemers or idolaters (for then all the rest of the Canaanites should have been so treated), but because they were such enemies of God, as had rebelliously withstood the gracious summons of surrender. And there are other examples also which confute this; as, the two traitors that murdered Ish-bosheth, (2 Sam. iv. 12.) and the five sons of Saul, (2 Sam. xxi. 9.) It is more probable, therefore, that all those whom the judges thought to be such great offenders, that it was fit to make them very public examples, were hanged up after they had suffered the punishment of death, to which they were sentenced. This seems to be denoted in the word *chatta*, which signifies sometimes a very *great crime*, as appears from Hosea xii. 8. where he speaks of *iniquity, which is sin:* not as if all iniquity were not *sin;* but some acts of iniquity were not so heinous, as to be called by that name.

And thou hang him.] After he had been put to death, as appears by the foregoing words, which speak of his being *put to death* before this suspension: which shews that this punishment was not the same with the Roman crucifixion (as Baronius, Sigonius, Lipsius, and others, have mistaken), for they hanged men alive upon the gibbet; whereby they expired before they were taken down: but this was only hanging up their bodies after they were dead, and exposing them to open shame for a time.

On a tree.] On a piece of timber (saith the Sanhedrin) struck into the ground; out of which came a beam, whereunto his hands were tied, as they tell us in the place beforementioned: and so Schickard, in his Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 4. Theor. 14. So that his body hung in such a posture as crucified men did.

Ver. 23. *His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day.*] This is excellently interpreted by Josephus, lib. iv. Archæol. cap. 8. Μείνας δ' ὅλης τῆς ἡμέρας εἰς θέαντῶν ἁπάντων, ταφῆσθω νυκτός. *Having remained the whole day a spectacle unto all, he was to be buried at night:* for as soon as the sun went down, the body also was taken down. Examples of which we have in the book of Joshua, viii. 29. x. 26, 27. In which he is far more sincere than their rabbins, who say the law was satisfied if they hanged up the body just before the setting of the sun, and presently after took it down again: which exposition seems to have been contrived in favour of their countrymen; for only Israelites, they confess, were to be thus exposed, not *proselytes of the gate,* as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. &c. cap. 12.

For he that is hanged is accursed of God.] The Jews interpret this clause, as if the meaning were, he was hanged *because he blasphemed God.* So Onkelos himself, and the Samaritan versions, with those of the Spanish and Mauritanian Jews, as Selden observes, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. n. 4. and Hottinger, in his Smegma Orientale, p. 96, 97. But though this be a common opinion among the Hebrew doctors, yet the LXX. have taken the sense right, Ὅτι κεκατηραμένος ὑπὸ Θεοῦ πᾶς κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου. *Cursed of God is every one that is hanged on a tree.* And so St. Paul, Galat. iii. with very little difference. For they observed what those doctors did not, that Moses doth not here give a reason why the man was hanged up, but why he was to be taken down from the gallows. Now what consequence is there in this, *Let him be taken down, and buried, because he cursed God?* Every one sees that (though the word *cursed* should be taken in an active sense) this is not a right interpretation of these words: for though it had been good sense to have said, Let him be hanged, because he cursed God; yet not let him be taken down for that reason. Now such persons are here said to be accursed of God, not because they were hanged up, but because of their sin, which deserved they should be thus exposed. So St. Jerome upon Galatians iii. "Non ideo maledictus quia pendet, sed ideo pendet quia maledictus:" *he was not accursed because he was hanged, but he was therefore hanged because he was accursed:* hanging up being a token that the man had committed a horrid crime, whereby he had incurred the high displeasure of Almighty God. So that every one who saw him hang on that fashion was to think with himself, This man was under the curse of God, because of his sin; and unless he had undergone this curse, he could not have been buried, and put into the condition of other

men. But when he had undergone it for his sin, then it had been a sin in the people not to have taken him down, or prolonged his suspension longer than God imposed this curse upon him. And the land had been defiled, if, after this suffering which God had appointed, they had not buried him. To this purpose Abarbinel, who refutes several other accounts of this matter, particularly that of Sol. Jarchi, who thinks he was not to hang longer than till the evening, because it would have been a dishonour to the Sovereign of the world, after whose image man was made. This is followed by many, and even by Grotius himself, who gives no other reason of it, in his book de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. ii. cap. 19. sect. 4. But this is a reason, as Abarbinel notes, why he should not have been hanged up at all. It may be also usefully noted further, that they say in the tract called Sanhedrin, that not only the malefactor, but all the instruments of punishment, were to be buried at the going down of the sun. Even the tree itself, upon which he was hanged, was to be buried, "that no memory of so foul a thing might be left in the world; nor any might say, Behold, this was the tree upon which such a one was hanged."

That the land be not defiled which the Lord thy God giveth thee.] By the stench of the body, after it petrified, as the same Abarbinel expounds it, who observes, that the dead body of no creature corrupts and stinks sooner than that of a man, which is exceeding offensive to the living. For which cause, saith he, the book Siphri determines, not only that all malefactors should be buried as soon as the law here orders (that they might not imitate the manners of the Egyptians and Philistines, and such-like people, who let bodies rot in the air after they were hanged up), but that every man should bury his dead the same day they died, or be deemed to have transgressed a negative precept; which may pass for a very good natural reason of it: but there is something more in it, respecting a legal pollution, under which their whole country lay, as long as an accursed thing hung openly among them; just as all that entered into the tent where a dead body lay, and all that was in it, were made unclean by it, (Numb. xix. 14, 15.) Upon which score St. Paul might well apply this passage to Christ crucified for us; not only because he bare our sins, and was put to death, and exposed to such shame as these sinners were, who were accursed of God; but was also taken down in the evening, in token now the guilt was removed; as the curse upon the man that was hanged ended at the going down of the sun; and as the land of Israel was pure and clean, after the dead body was taken down and buried, with the tree upon which it was hanged. Joh. Coch hath well explained this, in his notes upon the Sanhedrin, cap. 6. sect. 5. whose sense in short is this: *As our blessed Saviour, while he hung upon the cross, was made a curse, and an execration; so, when, according to the law, he was taken down and buried, both he ceased to be a curse, and all they that are his.*

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *THOU shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them.*] They were not to turn away their face, as if they did not see them, and so neglect them. And by *brother* is to be understood, not only an Israelite, but any man that lived among them; this being a matter of common right, and extended to their enemies as well as their friends, (Exod. xxiii. 4.)

Thou shalt in any case bring them again to thy brother.] Not merely give notice to the owner where he saw them, but take care himself to bring them back, that they might not go further astray, and perhaps be quite lost, before the owner could have notice of them. This and many that follow are precepts of humanity, and care of each other's welfare, without which society could not be preserved.

Ver. 2. *And if thy brother be not nigh thee, or thou know him not; then thou shalt bring it to thine own house.*] And preserve it there, till he could send to him, or find who the owner was.

And it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it.] He was to give notice, by the public crier, that such a beast was with him, and that, as the Jews say, three or four times, that the owner might seek after it. But here they are pleased to make a distinction: that they were to do this, if there were marks upon the beast; but if there were none, they were not bound to cry it: which doth not seem to be reasonable. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 4.)

And thou shalt restore it to him again.] He paying the charges of keeping it, from the time it was brought to his house till its being restored. But if nobody could prove a right in the beasts that were lost, they became his who found them, and he might lawfully keep them; for no other owner appearing, they were his that was in present possession of them, who did very piously, if he gave the value of them to the poor (and so the law was in many places); but he was an honest owner of them, if he kept them to himself; as Grotius observes, lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 10. sect. 11.

Ver. 3. *In like manner shalt thou do with his ass, and so shalt thou do with his raiment, and with all lost things, &c.*] In all other cases of like nature, the same law was to be observed.

Thou mayest not hide thyself.] Pass them by with neglect, or pretend they did not see them.

Ver. 4. *Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them.*] Turn away, as if they did not see the danger they were in.

Thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again.] This hath been explained upon Exod. xxiii. 5. I shall only add here a famous example of this sort of piety, in Alphonsus king of Naples; who, travelling upon the road, attended by a great number of courtiers, and seeing a poor ass with a burden fallen into a deep slough (whom all that went before him passed by without any regard), when he came to the place, stopped, and went himself to the driver, and lent him assistance to help the ass out of the dirt. So David Chytræus upon this place.

Ver. 5. *The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.*] The last words of this place plainly indicate, that it was an idolatrous custom, which is here prohibited. For Moses and the prophets are wont to speak in these terms of utmost abhorrence concerning such matters. And nothing was more common among the heathen, than for men, in the worship of several of their gods, to put on the garments

usually worn by women, and women those worn by men; particularly in the worship of Venus, women appeared before her in armour, and men in women's apparel. And thus the words literally run here in the Hebrew; *Women shall not put on the armour of a man* (so the word *celi* frequently signifies *armour*, as well as other sorts of instruments), *nor a man* (στολὴν the LXX. translate it) *the stole of a woman*. (See Selden, Syntag. ii. de Diis Syris, cap. 4.) And thus Maimonides saith he found this precept in an old magical book, that men ought to stand before the star of Venus in the flowered garment of women, and women put on the armour of men before the star of Mars. (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 37.) Servius also, upon the second book of Æneids, mentions a statue of Venus at Cyprus (in which island were anciently many colonies of Phœnicians), to whom the women sacrificed in men's garments, and the men in women's. Many other nations did the same. (See I. Ger. Vossius, lib. ii. de Orig. et Progr. Idol. cap. 27. 31. but especially our learned Dr. Spencer, lib. ii. cap. 17. sect. 1, &c.)

But setting aside all this, every one knows, that if there were no distinction of sexes made by their habits, it would open a door to all manner of impurity; for which reason, if there were no other, this law was very wise and pious.

Ver. 6. *If a bird's-nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground,* &c.] By this place, among others, (particularly Psal. viii. 8.) it appears the word *tsippor* signifies all kinds of birds, and not only the smaller sort, as some have imagined, but he seems particularly to speak of clean birds, such as it was lawful for them to eat. And this precept seems to have been given, to breed in the Jews a sense of a Divine Providence, extending itself to all creatures, and to teach them to exercise their dominion over them without any kind of cruelty.

Thou shalt not take the dam with the young.] R. Menachem, mentioned both by Drusius and Bochartus, was of opinion, that it is not pity towards birds which is intended in this law, but kindness to mankind; whom God intended by this usage of other creatures, to form unto gentleness and commiseration towards one another. But others, I think, have more truly determined, that this is a merciful constitution, with respect to birds as well as men; it being a sufficient affliction, as Maimonides calls it, to the old one to lose her young; it being unreasonable also that men should consider only their own present interest without regard to posterity, to whom the breed ought to be continued, by letting the old one go free. Unto which those verses, commonly ascribed to Phocylides, have respect:

Μηδέ τις ὄρνιθας καλιῆς ἅμα πάντας ἑλέσθω,
Μητέρα δ' ἐκπρολίπῃς, ἵν' ἔχῃς πάλι τῆς τε νεοττούς.

i. e. *Let no man take all the birds together out of a nest; but let the mother go, that thou mayest have young ones again of her.*

Ver. 7. *Thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee.*] For there is a great deal of ill-nature in it, to take away the liberty and the life of any creature, from whom we have received a benefit; as Bonfrerius glosses upon these words.

That it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.] Some of the Jews, from these words, have fancied, that the observation of this single precept was of such great value, as to procure for them even forgiveness of sins, and a long life; which is such a foolish conceit, that it makes all other precepts unnecessary. The plain meaning is, that God would reward them for their kind usage even of brute creatures, if other virtues were not wanting, such as charity towards their poor neighbours. And so the Mischna, in the conclusion of the tract called Cholin, discourses very well: "If in a light precept concerning a thing which is scarce worth a farthing, the law says, *That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest prolong thy days;* how much more may this be expected in the weightier things of the law?"

Ver. 8. *When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof.*] The Jews, I think, are a little too curious, in setting a mark upon the word *thy*, fancying, he saith, not simply *the* roof, but *thy* roof, to except the temple, and the synagogues, and schools, from this rule; which were no private man's house, but belonged to the whole congregation. They say, indeed, the temple had battlements; but not for necessity, but for ornament, because the roof of the temple was not flat, as the roof of another house was; for nobody walked upon the temple, as they did upon their own houses, to take the air, and discourse together, or to meditate and pray (in little closets they had there), which made it necessary to have these battlements, of three foot and a half high (as the Jews say), to prevent any man's falling down, when he did not attend, but was thinking of some other thing. (See Constant. L'Empereur, in his annotations on Codex Middoth, p. 160.)

That the roofs of their houses were flat, which was the ground of this precept, we have many proofs in the Scripture. For hither Rahab brought the spies, and covered them with the stalks of flax, which she laid upon them, (Josh. ii. 6.) Here Samuel communed with Saul, upon the top of the house, (1 Sam. ix. 25.) David also was walking upon the roof of his palace, when he saw Bath-sheba washing herself, (2 Sam. xi. 2.) And in the same place Absalom caused a tent to be spread, that he might go in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel, (xvi. 22. see also Isa. xv. 3. xxii. 1. and in the New Testament, Acts x. 9.) Nor was it the manner of the Hebrews only, but of the Greeks and Romans also, to make the roofs of their houses so that they might walk upon them; and stand there to see any public show, or take the air; as Is. Casaubon shews, in a multitude of instances, lib. iv. in Athenæum, cap. 12. where he observes also out of Pliny and Seneca, that the Roman houses wanted these battlements, which Moses here ordered in this law. By all which we may easily understand those places in the gospel, that speak of proclaiming these things on the house-top, &c. (Matt. x. 27. Luke v. 19.)

That thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.] And be killed by the fall. For his neglect being the cause of his death, it made him guilty before God of his blood, and liable to be punished by the judges for slighting so profitable an institution as this is: which the Jews extend to a studious care about every thing that might bring a man's life in danger. For example's sake: they might not keep a mad dog, nor set up a broken ladder in their house, &c. as L'Empereur observes upon Bavakama, cap. 5.

Ver. 9. *Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers*

seeds.] What he had said concerning their fields, Lev. xix. 19. he now says of their vineyards, which they were not to sow with seeds of a diverse kind: for this was an idolatrous custom, as the reason given against it plainly shews. This Maimonides saith he found in a book of the Zabii, and in one rabbi Josiah, who taught, that "these three things, wheat, barley, and grapes dried in the sun, should be sown together in the ground with one and the same cast of the hand:" which was so senseless a thing, that he could not but think they learnt it from the ways of the Amorites, as his words are, that is, from the wicked idolaters of the country to which the Israelites were going. For wheat being sown properly at one season of the year, and barley at another, and a vineyard being an improper place for the growth of either of them, this custom could not have its original either from God or from man, but from the devil, the author of confusion, who taught them this uncouth rite, in honour of Ceres, perhaps, and Bacchus, whom they joined in the same act of worship.

Lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled.] If the Israelites had followed this custom, it would have made both the corn and the grapes that sprung up from such seed impure, because polluted by idolatry; the very smell of which God would not have to remain among the Israelites, as Maimonides speaks in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 37. (See Dr. Spencer, in his very learned work de Leg. Ritual. Hebr. lib. ii. cap. 18.) Every one also knows, that it was unlawful for the Israelites to eat any of the fruits of the earth, till the first-fruits of them had been offered unto God; which would not have been accepted by him of such things as these, that were expressly forbidden by his law; and consequently the whole crop became unclean to them, and might not be used by them.

Ver. 10. *Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together.*] Lest that law should be violated which we read Lev. xix. 19. "Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind." So some give the reason of it; even Maimonides, in the book forementioned, par. iii. cap. 49. But it seems also to have respect to those magical rites of the idolatrous nations in those countries; who thought their fields would be more fruitful, if, according to some directions which had been given by their gods, they were thus ploughed. For one cannot well think that men, of themselves, would join together two creatures so different in their temper and motions, to draw in the same yoke, if they had not been led to it by some superstition or other. For their strength is unequal, as Aben Ezra here observes, "the strength of an ass is not as the strength of an ox." Whence it was that Ulysses, to make it be believed that he was mad, joined a horse and an ass to plough: and Homer, Odyss. 5. would have oxen ἰσοφόρους, joined together; that is, ἴσως φέροντας καὶ ἕλκοντας, *equally bearing and drawing*, as Bochart observes the scholiast there glosses.

The Jews commonly think this law extends to all other creatures of different species, which might not be yoked together. But some understand it so, that they might join several kinds together; provided one was not unclean, and the other clean. Baal-Hatturim finds this mystery in this prohibition, *That the righteous ought to have no society with the wicked.* And there are those who think the apostle alludes to this, when he saith, (2 Cor. vi. 14.) Μὴ γίνεσθε ἑτεροζυγοῦντες ἀπίστοις, *Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers;* which Bochart himself thinks not improbable. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 13. and cap. 40. p. 401. where there are other reasons of this precept.)

Ver. 11. *Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together.*] The ancients think God intended hereby to teach his people simplicity in their manners. (See Bochart, in the same book, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45. p. 491.) But there was something farther in it, as I have observed upon Lev. xix. 19. to which I refer the reader. And shall only add here, that the Jews carried this so far, as not to sew a woollen garment with linen thread; nor on the contrary.

Ver. 12. *Thou shalt make thee fringes.*] What these were, is sufficiently explained upon Numb. xv. 38, 39. (See there.)

Upon the four quarters of thy vesture.] They wore long garments in those countries, as most people do still at this day. And I suppose the garments of the Jews had usually four skirts: but perchance they sometimes had more or fewer than four; and, in this case, if they had but three, their doctors have resolved they were not bound to make any fringes for them; but, if they had five or six, they were bound to annex them to the four most remote quarters, in which the intermediate were included. But this is a very unreasonable subtilty; the intention of the law being, that they might be put in remembrance of God's commandments by these fringes, which therefore were to be worn in the skirts of their garments, though they had been divided into no wings or quarters at all.

Wherewith thou coverest thyself.] Which they commonly wore: and it seems to signify the uppermost garment, which covered all the rest, and was most seen; whereby they were distinguished from the people of other nations: for that was one end of these fringes, to be a distinctive mark that they were of the Jewish religion. And therefore I do not see any reason in the determination of their doctors, who say, *women-servants* and *little children* were not bound to wear fringes: for though little children could not think of the commandments of God, yet it was fit they should wear the note of their religion. There is no reason neither in their resolution, when they say, that if women and servants (who were bound as much as others to observe the laws of God) would wear fringes, though they were not obliged by their constitutions, yet they might not put them on with the common form of benediction which they used. But I think they observe rightly enough, that these fringes were so peculiar to the Jews, that the Samaritans, though acquainted with the law, did not wear them. Nor do the Jews themselves at this day use them upon their upper garment: for that being no longer four-cornered (because it made them a laughing-stock), they wear only under their other garments a kind of square frock, with the aforesaid tassels or pendants fastened to it; (as Leo Modena relates in his History of the Jews, par. i. chap. 5.) Only in their synagogues or schools, at morning prayer, every man puts over his head a square woollen garment, with the tassels fastened at each corner, which they call *talith.* Concerning which Bartoloccius, in his late Rabbinical Lexicon, tom. i. hath a long dissertation, p. 576, &c.

Ver. 13. *If a man take a wife, and go in unto her.*] Have carnal knowledge of her.

And hate her.] Do not like her; but is desirous to be rid of her.

Ver. 14. *And give occasion of speech against her.*] The LXX. translate it ἐπιθῇ αὐτῇ προφαστικοὺς λόγους, *lay to her charge such things* (for so *words* sometimes signify) *as are opprobrious.*

And bring up an evil name upon her.] Or, as the Hebrew words are, *bring forth a name of evil,* or infamy: which signifies, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 1. p. 321.) the action itself, which he brought against her in the court of judgment. This appears from the words following.

And say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid.] This was the form wherein the action was laid against her (as the same Selden there observes), in these words, as the Jews say; "Having lain with this young woman, not of full age, as her husband, I found not in her the tokens of virginity; and making inquisition into the matter, it appears to me that she hath been guilty of adultery, after I had espoused her: and these are eye-witnesses of her guilt."

Ver. 15. *Then shall the father and the mother of the damsel take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity.*] If the accusation, as they say, was to be made good by witnesses of her adultery, then her defence was to be made, no doubt, by contrary witnesses, who endeavoured to disprove the testimony which was brought against her. For so they are constrained to interpret the words we translate *tokens of her virginity;* as I shall shew upon ver. 17. The Hebrews have many nice subtilties about the word *damsel,* with which I shall not trouble the reader. (See Selden, in the forenamed place, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 1.)

Unto the elders of the city.] The court consisting of twenty-three judges; who had the cognizance of common, capital, and penal causes, in every city.

In the gate.] Where the court sat, as I observed before upon xvi. 18. And this may be added to what I noted there, that by this may be explained those words in the book of Job, v. 4. concerning the children of the wicked, that they are *crushed in the gate, i. e.* lose their cause, and are condemned in the court of judgment, and those of the wise man, Prov. xxii. 22. *Oppress not the afflicted in the gate, i. e.* do him justice, and not let him be overthrown, because he wants money to defend his cause. This appears to be the sense from the very next words, (ver. 23.) *For the Lord will plead their cause,* &c.

Ver. 16. *And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife.*] The Jews say, the mother had no power to espouse her daughter, but the father only, before she was of age. Mischna Sotæ, cap. 3. sect. 8. where Wagenseil notes, that the mother, and brethren also, had some power in this matter; but such, that the daughter, within a time limited, might make the contract void.

And he hateth her.] Hath no affection which a husband ought to have to a wife. If she had no parents alive, the judges appointed her a guardian: and Josephus saith the next of kin were to patronize her, as if they had been her parents.

Ver. 17. *And, lo! he hath given occasion of speech against her.*] See ver. 14. He doth not add what there follows, *and brought up an evil name upon her* (*i. e.* accused her publicly before you of adultery), because it is sufficiently comprehended in this.

Saying, I found not thy daughter a maid.] As such and such give evidence.

And yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity.] I have good witnesses to the contrary; which are here ready to be produced before the court, to disprove the former testimony.

And they.] That is, the witnesses which the father produces.

Shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.] Though such tokens of virginity, as are commonly understood by these words, might always be found in those countries (being very consonant to the opinion of the chiefest Arabian physicians, as Mr. Selden observes out of Avicenna, and of the Africans and other people at this day, as many authors testify, see Joh. Geusius de Victimis Humanis, par. i. cap. 9. and par. ii. cap. 2. and Wierus L. Medicarum Observationem, sect. de Hymene), especially in such virgins as the Jews say were here meant, who were under thirteen years of age; and though all that some physicians and lawyers in these parts of the world have said to the contrary is of no consideration; yet there are weighty reasons to incline us to think, that no man of common sense would bring such an action against his wife, wherein he was sure to be cast, whether his cause was right or wrong, if these were the evidences whereby it was to be tried. For if he accused her falsely, he knew her friends were able to produce the sheet wherein they lay when they were married, with such tokens upon it as would disprove him, and render him guilty of defamation. And if he had a just ground to accuse her, because he knew they could produce no such tokens; yet this was no proof she had been vitiated since she was espoused to him: for she might have been corrupted before; and then he could not attain his end, which was to be rid of her, not by way of divorce (for then he must have given her a dowry, which he was desirous to save), but by having her put to death as an adultress, which ver. 21. shews to be the present case. Such evident reasons as these have constrained the Jews to understand these words, not according to the very letter of them, but figuratively, of such witnesses produced by her parents, as convinced the other of falsity so evidently, that they made it appear as plainly as a piece of cloth that is unfolded, and laid before men's eyes to view it. And they think the Hebrew word *simlah,* which we translate *the cloth,* favours this exposition: for it never signifies *a sheet,* or linen-cloth, (which is wont to be called *sadin,* Judg. xiv. 12. Prov. xxxi. 24.) but such cloth as men's garments are made of, which commonly is woollen, not linen. And so it is used in this book, Deut. x. 18. and in this very chapter, ver. 5. So that the sense is, *They shall produce evident proofs, and lay them before the court, like a piece of cloth, which is spread for all that please to look upon it.* Whether this be the truth or not, I will not dispute, but refer the reader to Mr. Selden, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 1, 2.

Ver. 18. *And the elders of that city shall take that man.*] If they were convinced that he had accused his wife falsely, he was to be delivered into the hands of the officers who executed the sentence of the court.

And chastise him.] Condemn him to receive forty stripes save one, as both Josephus and the Talmudists agree; and it was to be done with a scourge made of thongs of an ox's hide. The woman was dismissed with a solemn benediction; the form of which is set down in the Jewish rituals: and as for the false witnesses against her, they were condemned to be stoned, according to the law, chap. xix. 18, 19.

Ver. 19. *And they shall amerce him in a hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel.*] Who was to receive this satisfaction for the reproach which was thrown upon his family. It is something strange that Josephus should mention only πεντήκοντα σίκλους, *fifty shekels* to be paid to her father, when the Scripture expressly saith a *hundred*, (lib. iv. Archæolog. cap. 8.) But it is supposed, by some, that he means *fifty* besides her dowry, which he was to have given her, if he had put her away: which, that he might save, he designed to take away her life; and therefore was punished double to what it would have cost him, if he had been so wicked.

Because he hath brought up an evil report upon a virgin of Israel.] Laid the most infamous crime to the charge of an innocent virgin; and that out of hatred to her and love to his money. For if he would have put her away, according to the law of divorce, no man could have hindered him, as Maimonides observes: but then he must have paid her *fifty shekels*, which they take to be the dowry of virgins, mentioned Exod. xxii. 16, 17. To keep which to himself, and be rid of her, he brought this scandalous action against her; for which he was thus justly punished.

And she shall be his wife: he may not put her away all his days.] Besides the two former punishments, in his body and his purse, he was deprived of the common benefit which all men had who did not like their wives; which was to sue out a divorce. Here Maimonides calls upon his readers to admire the wise ordination of God, which appears in his *judgments*, as well as in his *works*. For because this man took away his wife's reputation, therefore God ordered him to be rendered vile, by being whipped: and because he basely contrived to save her dowry of fifty shekels, he ordered him to be amerced as much more: and because he indulged his lust, and sought nothing but his pleasure, therefore he was bound to keep her as long as she lived, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 49.)

Ver. 20. *But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel.*] If the witnesses which appeared for her could not prove the falsity of their testimony who appeared against her.

Ver. 21. *Then shall they bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house.*] Where she was to be punished, as a disgrace to her parents, who had taken no better care to preserve her chastity while she lived with them.

And the men of her city shall stone her with stones, that she die.] This was the punishment of such adulteresses, except only of a priest's daughter, who, if she was guilty of this crime, was burnt alive, (Lev. xxi. 19.) And it plainly shews he speaks here of a woman corrupted between the time of her espousals and her husband's completing the marriage: otherwise he could not have had this capital action against her, none being put to death for simple fornication. And this Maimonides saith, in Seder Zeraim, that, from Moses to his time, it was never doubted, the woman he here speaks of was one that proved false to her husband after she was contracted to him.

Because she hath wrought folly in Israel.] A great wickedness; as the word *folly* signifies in Scripture, and as the Vulgar translates it.

To play the whore in her father's house.] Where she remained after her espousals, as in a safe place, till her husband brought her home to his own house.

So shalt thou put evil away from among you.] See chap. xix. 19.

Ver. 22. *If a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die,* &c.] It is not said what death, either here, or Lev. xx. 10. But the Jews say they were to be strangled: which is an opinion so settled among them, that Buxtorf saith he never saw any Hebrew book which assigned any other punishment for adultery but this. Stoning, indeed, was the punishment of her that, after her espousals, played the whore (as was noted before) between that time and her marriage: but after the marriage was completed, if she were guilty of this crime, this was the only punishment, according to their tradition. (See upon Lev. xx. 10. and Buxtorf. de Sponsal. et Divortiis, p. 32, 33. and Grotius, in John viii. 5.)

Ver. 23. *If a damsel, that is a virgin, be betrothed to a husband.*] But not yet known by him: for there was generally some space between the espousals and the bringing her home to her husband's house. And the time allowed was, more or less, according to her age. (See Selden, lib. ii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 8.)

And a man find her in the city, and lie with her.] If he lay with her any where else, the crime was the same; but it was not so easy to corrupt her in her father's house, or among her friends, where she remained till the completion of the marriage, as it was to do it abroad in the city, or in the field.

Ver. 24. *Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city.*] That is, to the court of judgment, which sat there; as I noted upon xvi. 18.

And ye shall stone them with stones, that they die.] After they had been sentenced to this death by the court.

The damsel, because she cried not out.] Which was a demonstration she was not forced, but lay with him by consent.

Being in the city.] Where the neighbours might have heard her cry; and the force, if there had been any, prevented.

The man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife.] For so she was by such a contract, as made her only his. This is supposed to be the case of the woman taken in adultery, mentioned John viii. 5. (See my notes upon Lev. xx. 10.)

So thou shalt put away evil from among you.] See ver. 21, 22.

Ver. 25. *And if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field.*] Where nobody was near, as in the city.

And the man force her, and lie with her.] It was presumed, by the circumstances of the place, that she did not consent, but was under a force; as she also affirmed, and he could not prove the contrary.

Then the man only that lay with her shall die.] Because he only was guilty of a crime, as it follows in the next words.

Ver. 26. *But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there*

is in the damsel no sin worthy of death.] To make her liable to suffer death: for it was her misfortune, as we speak, not her fault, that she was ravished.

For as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him.] He not being able to defend himself.

Even so is this matter.] It is here observed by many (particularly by Grotius and De Dieu), that chastity is equal unto life.

Ver. 27. *For he found her in the field.*] Far distant from all company.

And the betrothed damsel cried.] For help, as she affirmed, and as it was presumed; because, if she had consented, some other place might have been found, more convenient for their purpose than the field.

And there was none to save her.] None appeared to rescue her, as she desired.

Ver. 28. *If a man find a virgin.*] In the field, beforementioned.

Which is not betrothed.] To a husband.

And lay hold of her, and lie with her, and they be found.] There be witnesses of it; or they themselves confess it. This case is different from that in Exod. xxii. 16, 17. in many respects. For that law speaks of one that was drawn in to consent to the man's lying with her by enticing words (which is expressly there mentioned), and fair promises, perhaps, of marriage; but here Moses speaks of one that *laid hold of her, i. e.* deflowered her by force and violence. In this case the man was bound to marry her, if she and her father pleased (for both their consents were required, though the man that deflowered her could not refuse); but in the former case the man himself might choose whether he would marry or not, which he could not refuse in this; and besides, was bound to pay *fifty shekels*, as a mulct upon him for the crime, as follows in the next verse. (See Selden, lib. i. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 16.)

Ver. 29. *Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver.*] Here is another difference between this case and that in Exodus; where the man was bound to settle a dowry upon her; but here to pay a fine unto her father. The reason is plain; because there was no need of settling a dowry in this case, as in the former; for the dowry was settled upon her in that case, lest the husband might lightly and wantonly put her away by divorce, and she have nothing to maintain her; of which there was no danger here, because this law saith expressly, in the conclusion of this verse, that *he may not put her away all his days.* Yet there are those who think it likely, that in this case also he settled a dowry of *fifty shekels* upon her, besides what he paid to her father; for otherwise the condition of a virgin deflowered by force, was worse than hers deflowered by her own consent.

They have some exceptions concerning this payment to her father, which are not very material, nor certain. But this is considerable, that this fine was the same, whether the woman was of noble or of mean parentage, neither more nor less was paid by the law. But in aftertimes, the Sanhedrin, they tell us, added some other mulcts besides this here mentioned; because it seemed so small, that the honour of a virgin was not thought sufficiently repaired by it. Therefore, he that enticed a virgin paid other two; one for the shame and dishonour he had done her; and the other for the loss of her virginity, and vitiating her body. And he that forced a virgin paid a third besides these two, upon the account of the pain unto which he was supposed to have put her. And in these three they proportioned the penalties to the quality of the person, and other considerations, which made them vary. (See Selden, in the forenamed place, p. 123.)

And she shall be his wife, because he hath humbled her.] Though she were blind, or lame, or leprous, he could not refuse her, if she and her father required him to marry her.

He may not put her away all his days.] This was a third part of his punishment for the force he had committed, that he should be forced not only to take her to wife, but constrained also to keep her as long as she lived, and not have the liberty of giving her a bill of divorce, as other men might do, who were desirous to part with their wives.

If it be asked, how it could be known whether she was enticed or forced; they answer, as was observed before, that it was reasonably presumed that he forced her, if the thing was done in the field, or in a place far from inhabitants; but if in the city or town, that she consented, unless the contrary was evidently proved.

Ver. 30. *A man shall not take his father's wife.*] That is, shall not marry her.

Nor discover his father's skirt.] Nor so much as lie with her. For this is a modest phrase, borrowed from the ancient custom in those countries; where the bridegroom, when he brought his bride into the *chuppa*, as they called it, or *bridal chamber*, spread the skirt of his robe over her, to signify his right to her, and power over her, and that he alone might lawfully enjoy her. (Ruth iii. 9. Ezek. xvi. 8.)

And this verse seems to me to be here inserted as a short memorandum, that they should be careful to observe all the laws which he had delivered against incestuous marriages in the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus. (See there, ver. 8. and xx. 11.)

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *He that is wounded in the stones.*] Bruised or compressed in those parts; as the manner was of making eunuchs, who are here spoken of, and were sometimes made that way when they were infants; or by taking them quite away; which was done in some when they were grown up. And there were those who had none of these parts left remaining; as it follows in the next words.

Or hath his privy member cut off.] In whole, or in part; which was not used till they found the other did not effectually answer their purpose in this unnatural practice. Wherein some thought they honoured their gods, particularly Cybele, the mother of the gods, unto whose service her priests devoted themselves by cutting off their genitals. So not only Minucius Felix, Tertullian, and several other of the ancient Christian writers testify, but many also of the pagan. (See Joh. Gensius de Victimis Humanis, par. ii. cap. 1.)

Shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord.] These persons were so much abhorred by some among the pagans, that Lucian saith they were excluded not only from the schools of philosophers, but, which was more, ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερῶν αὐτῶν, καὶ περιῤῥαντηρίων, καὶ τῶν κοινῶν ἁπάντων συλλόγων, *from their holy offices, and their sprinklings, and all common meetings.* So Diocles is introduced speaking in

his Eunuchus. But nobody thinks this to be the meaning here, that they should not entertain such a person as a proselyte; or that he should not come to worship God at the temple: for that was free for all nations if they renounced idolatry. But the meaning of this law is, either to forbid the Israelites to marry with such persons, or not to admit them to bear any office in the Jewish commonwealth. The Hebrew doctors generally take it in the first sense. See Selden, de Jure Nat. et Gent. lib. v. cap. 16. and so do a great many among Christian writers. And there is an eminent example of the use of this phrase in this sense, Neh. xiii. 1—3. But some think it was superfluous to forbid this, because none would marry with such persons as were incapable to perform the marriage duty; and therefore they follow the second sense, it being certain that the Hebrew word *kahal, congregation,* signifies, in many places, not the whole body of the people of Israel, but the great assembly of elders, into which no such person was to be admitted; because they were unfit for government, eunuchs being observed generally to want courage. Thus Simeon de Muis, and others, who seem to have great reason on their side. Yet it is so plain that *the congregation of the Lord,* in the following part of this chapter, signifies the people of Israel, who might not marry with the persons mentioned, ver. 2, 3. 8. that I cannot but think it ought to be so interpreted here. For though such marriages were useless and unprofitable, as Maimonides speaks, yet they made a distinction between those who were made eunuchs by God (that is, born so) and those made by men: and this law, they say, is not to be understood of the former, but only of the latter. Some of which, it is certain, were left in such a condition, that they were desirous of marriage, as appears by the constitution of the Emperor Leo, who did not think it superfluous to forbid marriage with them. For it appears by it, that some women choose such husbands. See also Ecclesiasticus xxx. 20. but especially the book ascribed to St. Basil, De Vera Virginitate, tom. i. p. 719, &c. where there is too free a description of the unextinguishable lust of such eunuchs as were only deprived τῶν διδύμων, whose company he charges virgins to avoid, not only because they hoped to corrupt them without danger of discovery, but were insatiable in their desires. And on the other side, though they were unfit for marriage, yet it appears by many instances in history, that they were not unfit for government, nor wanted courage for the greatest undertakings. I need only refer the reader for this to Xenophon's Cyropædia, lib. vii.

They that follow allegorical senses, free themselves from all these difficulties. (See Filesacus, lib. i. Selectorum, p. 169. 185.) But one cannot think that Moses intended any of those things; though such pious use may be made of his words.

Ver. 2. *A bastard.*] The Hebrews do not understand by the word *mamzer,* one that was begotten in simple fornication, out of the state of marriage; but one that was begotten of such persons as the law forbade them to marry, or lie withal, under pain of being *cut off; viz.* those mentioned in the eighteenth of Leviticus. They only except this single case, if a man lay with a menstruous woman, and begat a child of her at that time, it was not a *mamzer.* See Selden, lib. de Succession. in Bona Defunct, cap. 3. and lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 16. and Wagenseil lately, in his very learned Annotation upon Mischna Sotæ, cap. 4. sect. 1. where he observes, out of a MS. which he calls very precious (Etz-Hachajim in Hilcoth Nidda), that *mamzer,* whether male or female, was excluded from the congregation of the Lord. And they were *mamzers* who were born of any woman whom the law prohibited them to have knowledge of; whether it was by violence or by consent, by error or advisedly, it made no difference.

Shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord.] Nor marry with an Israelite. So all the doctors, none excepted, expound it, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de Successione in Pontific. cap. 2. p. 209. If any man of Israel married such a woman, or any woman of Israel married such a man, and they were found in bed together after espousals, they were both whipped, for violating this precept. But if they lay together without any espousals, this punishment was not inflicted on them.

Even unto the tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord.] That is, *never,* as the Hebrew doctors expound it. And Maimonides (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 49.) gives this reason for it, that people might be deterred from such marriages or conjunctions, which would leave an indelible blot upon their posterity. And, indeed, some heathens anciently put such a mark of infamy upon mere bastards, as to prohibit both males and females to come to their sacred offices. Such a law there was at Athens, mentioned by Isæus; as Casaubon observes upon Athenæus, lib. vi. cap. 6. p. 410.

There were some also of these *mamzers,* who were not manifestly born of such incestuous, or other forbidden mixtures, but were called dubious, because their fathers were not known, or being exposed, and found in the fields, or the streets, neither father nor mother was known. Yet it being uncertain whence they were descended, the Israelites might not marry with them, for fear they should be polluted by those who, perhaps, were born of incestuous parents. But proselytes of justice, they say, might marry with *mamzers;* and, that they might not for ever be excluded from the congregation of the Lord, they contrived this remedy for the restitution of their blood. They might marry a slave (who was baptized and become a Jew), whose children were not reputed *mamzers,* but only slaves: who, being made Jews, and having their freedom given them, might lawfully marry with a Jewish woman; and then they were entirely incorporated into the congregation of the Lord: for *proles sequitur matrem, the issue follows the mother,* (as that MS. of Wagenseil hath it, p. 565.) and there was no regard had to the father.

Ver. 3. *An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord, even to the tenth generation shall they not enter for ever.*] These last words *for ever,* in this verse, the Jews think warrant them to interpret those words *to the tenth generation,* in the foregoing verse, as if he said, *never.* It is certain, indeed, that Moses intended to exclude the Moabites and Ammonites from marrying with the Jews for ever; for so Nehemiah understood him when he quoted this law, xiii. 1. as a reason against the Israelites' marriages with them in his time, when more than *ten generations* were past. But then these words, *for ever,* being omitted in the foregoing verse, where he speaks of *mamzers,* it seems reasonable that they should not be so interpreted; but that, after ten generations were past, all dis-

tinction between them and others should be abolished. This, one would have expected, should have been the sense of those who examine every word so nicely as the Jews do: for here being mention made only of an Ammonite and Moabite, that is, of the males of these two nations, they will not have their women concerned in this law: but say, that an Israelite might take one of them to wife, if she embraced their religion. For thus they expound this whole matter of marriages with proselytes of justice; that is, such of other nations as became entirely of the Jews' religion. With such proselytes of some nations, whether men or women, the Israelites were never to make any marriages: with those of some other nations, they were prohibited only to marry with their men: with others, they were prohibited to marry only for some generations; and there were others, with whom they might marry as soon as they were made perfect proselytes. Of the first kind were the seven nations of Canaan, mentioned Deut. vii. 1. with the males or females of which they might never contract an affinity. To the second kind belong the Ammonites and Moabites; to whose males an Israelitish woman was forbid by this precept to marry: but a man of Israel might marry any of their women, after they professed the Jewish religion; otherwise David, who descended from Ruth, a Moabitess, had been illegitimate. Of the third kind were the Edomites and Egyptians; with whom, and with their children, the Israelites might not marry; but their grandchildren might. And of the fourth kind were all other nations besides these mentioned. This is an abridgment of what our great Selden hath more largely shewn to be the sense of the Jews, in his fifth book de Jure Nat. et Gent. &c. cap. 14. which another excellent person, J. Christoph. Wagenseil hath confirmed, out of his inestimable MS. as he calls Etz-Hachajim, in Hilcoth Nidda, cap. 10. (See Excerp. Gem. in Sota, cap. 1. p. 143.)

Ver. 4. *Because they met you not with bread and water, when ye came forth out of Egypt.*] This seems to belong to the Ammonites, who had no compassion towards the Israelites when they were distressed in the wilderness: but, though they were near of kin to them, did not shew them that civility which is commonly expressed to mere strangers in their travels, (Gen. xiv. 18. xviii. 2. 31. xix. 1, 2.) We do not find any mention of this barbarity of theirs in the foregoing history; but we read how kind God ordered the Israelites to be to them, in not meddling with them, much less distressing them, as they passed by their country, (Deut. ii. 19.) Which aggravated their inhumanity in not vouchsafing this common kindness to the Israelites, of giving them the refreshment of bread and water as they went by them.

And because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor, of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.] As the foregoing passage peculiarly refers to the Ammonites, so this doth to the Moabites; who, with the assistance of the Midianites, invited Balaam, by the promises of a great reward, to come from the eastern country and curse the Israelites. (See Numb. xxii. 5—7.) For these two reasons God laid this prohibition upon his people; in which Maimonides observes the Divine justice in proportioning punishments to offences. For Amalek coming out against the Israelites, when they were newly come forth from Egypt, to cut them off with the sword, God commanded their memory to be blotted out, (xxv. 19.) but the Ammonites being only basely covetous, and the Moabites acting against them only by craft, and not by force, God inflicted no other punishment upon them but this, that his people should avoid all affinity with them, and shew no love to them, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 41.) And the MS. author of Etz-Hachajim, mentioned by Wagensell, in the place forenamed, makes this the ground of the distinction mentioned before between the males and females of those countries: "Their males (saith he) might never marry with an Israelitish woman; but, by a tradition delivered down to us from Moses in Mount Sinai, we hold, that the women of those countries (if they embraced the Jewish religion) might be married to a man of Israel. For the women must be thought, in all reason, not to have been guilty, as the men were, of that which was the reason of this law; it not being the custom for women to bring out bread and water to travellers; nor did they send ambassadors to hire Balaam to come and curse the Israelites." Accordingly we find Ruth, who was a Moabitess, married to Boaz, the ancestor of David.

Ver. 5. *Nevertheless the Lord thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the Lord thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the Lord thy God loved thee.*] Balaam, indeed, did not curse the Israelites as the Moabites desired, and he intended; but no thanks were owing to him for that: but it was to be ascribed to the love of God to his people, who constrained him, against his will, to bless them.

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days for ever.*] By entering into any league with them, much less by taking them into conjugal society: but, on the contrary, they were to look upon them as dangerous enemies; who, being near their neighbours, would watch all opportunities to ensnare or disturb them.

Some of the Jews would have this to be an exception to the general rule, xx. 10. that they might not offer them terms of peace, as they were bound to do to all men, but the seven nations of Canaan: though, if they desired peace, they were bound, they say, to grant it. (See Schickard, in his Mischpat Hammelech, p. 118.) But Grotius hath well observed, upon Matt. v. 43. that God did not give the Jews any right to their country, (as appears from Deut. ii. 19.) and therefore the meaning here is, that they should not make any league with them of mutual assistance, which they called *fœdera*, συμμαχίας.

Ver. 7. *Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite.*] So as never to enter into the society of marriage with them, they being a circumcised people.

For he is thy brother.] Nearer of kin to them than the Ammonites and Moabites; Esau their father being the twin-brother of Jacob. And so Moses calls them, when he delivers God's command to the Israelites not to meddle with them, Deut. ii. 8. "We passed by from our brethren the children of Esau," &c. Here it may be observed, that the word *brother* comprehended more than the Israelites, as our Saviour shews the word *neighbour* did, Luke x. 29, &c.

Thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, because thou wast a stranger in his land.] That is, the Egyptians in a sore famine sustained them, their children, flocks, and herds, very kindly; the memory of which benefit God would not have forgotten, though in future generations they were cruelly oppressed by them.

Ver. 8. *The children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the Lord in the third generation.*] When they had been proselytes for three generations, it was lawful to marry with them. Nay, some of the Jews are so liberal here of their kindness, as to understand by *banim*, not *children* in general, but *sons*, with whom only marriage is forbidden till the third generation; marriage with their daughters being lawful, as they think, as soon as they turned complete proselytes. Upon which account Solomon took Pharaoh's daughter to wife. See Selden, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 14, 15. where he observes, that all this held good only till the captivity of Babylon, when, all these nations being confused, they might marry with any of them if they became Jews. For wars, and colonies, and deportations, had made such a mixture of people, that one could not be known from another. This Wagenseil hath lately confirmed out of several Hebrew authors, whom Mr. Selden did not trouble himself to mention; and particularly out of the MS. Etz-Hachajim, which he most highly commends. (See p. 149. upon Sota.) They all agree, likewise, that none of these laws extended to proselytes, who might marry with any of these nations. (See Selden, ib. cap. 18.)

Ver. 9. *When the host goeth forth against thine enemy, then keep thee from every wicked thing.*] This was a rule to be observed at all times; but then especially, when they had the greatest need of the Divine help (for which wicked people could not reasonably hope), and when there was the greatest danger of being wicked, in a time of such licence as soldiers commonly take. There is a sentence very like this in Agathias, lib. ii. (mentioned by Grotius towards the conclusion of his Prolegomena to the book de Jure Belli et Pacis), Ἀδικία γὰρ καὶ Θεοῦ ἀθεραπευσία φευκτὰ μὲν ἀεὶ καὶ ἀσύμφορα, μάλιστα δὲ ἐν τῷ προπολεμεῖν καὶ παρατάττεσθαι. *Injustice and neglect of God's service are ever to be avoided as most pernicious; but especially in a time of war, and when men are upon the point of giving battle.* Which he proves elsewhere, by the illustrious examples of Darius, Xerxes, and the Athenians in Sicily.

Ver. 10. *If there be among you any man that is not clean, by reason of uncleanness that chanceth to him by night.*] This seems to be only one instance of uncleanness, from which they were to keep themselves carefully; though it was no moral impurity, nor a voluntary pollution. By which it was easy for them to understand how watchful they were to be over themselves, in all other cases, especially such as had an inward turpitude in them.

Then he shall go abroad out of the camp.] There is no such thing required before in Lev. xv. 16. where the same pollution is mentioned. The reason, I suppose, was, that he speaks there of what happened to them in their own houses; where they had private chambers, into which they might retire, and keep themselves from defiling others: but here, of those that were abroad in the army, where it was hard to keep their fellow-soldiers from touching them, without removing out of the camp.

He shall not come within the camp.] This some understand, particularly Drusius, of not coming within the camp of God, and of the Levites, that is, to the tabernacle: but it seems to be an exclusion of him from the whole camp of Israel, as I have expounded it.

Ver. 11. *But it shall be, when evening cometh on, he shall wash himself with water; and when the sun is down he shall come into the camp again.*] See Lev. xv. 16. The end of all this, as Maimonides observes, More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 61. was, that every man might have this fixed in his mind, that their camp ought to be as the sanctuary of God (into which every one knows no man might enter in his uncleanness), and not like the camps of the gentiles, in which all manner of corruption, filthiness, rapines, thefts, and other wickednesses, were freely committed.

Ver. 12. *Thou shalt have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad.*] A place distant from all company; where they might ease themselves, as it is explained in the next verse. For natural modesty directed all men on such occasions to seek privacy; and it tended, as all cleanliness doth, to the preservation of health: which was one reason of ordering them to find a place without the camp, that there might be no offensive smell among them. And hereby, as Maimonides observes, they were distinguished from brute beasts, which commonly ease themselves any where, and before any body. But, besides all this, Moses himself gives us the principal reason of this command, peculiarly respecting the Israelites, (ver. 14.)

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt have a paddle.*] An instrument wherewith to dig up the ground, and cover it again; Epiphanius, Hæres. lxxvii. calls it πάσσαλον σιδηροῦν, *an iron paddle.*

Upon thy weapon.] Their sword, I suppose.

And it shall be, when thou wilt ease thyself abroad.] It was not in their choice when they would do this, but when their needs required: yet the Jews will have it, that they were to accustom themselves to do this business in the morning, as soon as they were up. Thus the Jews at this day, (as Leo Modena tells us, in his history of them, par. i. chap. 6.) afterward washing their hands, that they may go clean to their prayers.

Thou shalt dig therewith.] A hole in the ground.

And shalt turn back, and cover that which cometh from thee.] That there might be no appearance nor scent of it remaining. This is still practised by the Caribbeans; among whom there is never any such thing as ordure seen. So the authors of the History of the Caribbee Islands tell us, book ii. chap. 14. where they observe, also, out of Busbequius, that the Turks use the same cleanliness in their camps, making a hole with a piece of iron, wherein they bury their excrements. And in this matter the Essenes were extremely superstitious; for, as Josephus relates, they would not ease themselves at all on the sabbath-day, because they looked upon it as a labour to dig in the earth, and excrements not fit to be seen on that day.

Ver. 14. *For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp.*] At this time the ark, which was the token of the Divine presence, was settled in the midst of their camp; and, whithersoever they moved, was carried along with them: two standards going before, and two following, and the ark between them in the midst, as appears from the tenth of Numbers. It is likely, also, that it was carried in aftertimes in the midst of them, when they went to war; as some think it was when they went against the Midianites, (Numb. xxxi. 6.) and when they encompassed Jericho. Now this presence of God among them was the reason

why no uncleanness, though in itself natural, might be found in their camp; but, out of reverence to the Divine Majesty, which dwelt between the cherubims over the ark, be removed afar off. And by such actions as these, Maimonides well observes, God intended to strengthen and confirm the faith of the soldiers, that God, dwelling among them, would go along with them, and fight for them against their enemies, as it here follows, More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 41. And thus Abarbinel discourses upon these words: "The camps of the Israelites ought to be holy, having a special providence of God among them: for they do not make war by mere human power and courage, but by the power of God and of his Spirit, on which they depend for deliverance from all evil, and victory over their enemies," &c.

To deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee.] This is the constant sense of this phrase, *of God's being in the midst of them*, to defend, protect, and deliver them from all evil, as I observed before. (See Deut. vii. 21. Josh. iii. 10. Psal. xlvi. 6. Zachar. iii. 15.) Now this cleanliness being commanded with respect to the Divine presence, which dwelt among them, the Jews are strangely mistaken in using such superstitions as they do in every place, when they have no such presence of the Divine Majesty in the midst of them. (See Schickard in Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 5. Theor. 18. p. 144, &c.)

Therefore shall thy camp be holy.] Free from all manner of defilements, though they be only of this sort.

That he see no unclean thing in thee.] In these words, saith Maimonides (in the place beforenamed), he deters them from fornication; which is far worse than the forementioned uncleanness; but too common among the soldiers, when they are absent from their own homes. And therefore, that he might keep them from such impurities, he commands them such actions (he means covering their ordure) as might call to their minds the glorious majesty of God which dwelt among them. But though the Hebrew word, which we here translate *unclean thing*, properly signifies *nakedness*, and all those impure mixtures mentioned in the eighteenth of Leviticus, and therefore by Maimonides particularly applied to such uncleanness; yet Mr. Selden hath well observed, that it signifies all manner of filthiness; and therefore is well so translated by us, both here and in the next chapter, where he speaks of the matter of divorce.

And so it is used by the prophet Nahum, iii. 5. (to name no more), where the *nakedness* of Nineveh, which God saith he would shew to all nations, signifies all the murders, robberies, deceit, and other great wickednesses, which bounded in that city. (See Uxor. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 23.) And thus Abarbinel here extends it to all the horrid sins which were usually committed in the camps of idolaters.

And turn away from thee.] As princes are wont to do, when they see any thing offensive to them. And the meaning is, he would not deliver them from their enemies (as he promised before), but give them up into their hands. I conclude all this matter with the words of R. Zacharias, in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 44. "The pillar of the cloud (in which the glory of the Lord dwelt) encompassed the camps of Israel round about, and made them like a city girt about with a wall, that no enemy might assault them. But this cloud threw all uncleanness out of the camps of Israel, for they were holy:" and he quotes this place for it.

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee.*] The Hebrew doctors understand this of a servant of another nation who was become a Jew. Whom his master, if he went to dwell out of Judea, might not carry along with him against his will; and if he fled from him, when he had carried him, he might not be delivered to him, but suffered to dwell in the land of Israel. Which they understand also of a servant that fled from his master out of any of the countries of the gentiles into the land of Israel; which was to be a safe refuge to him. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. juxta Discipl. Hebr. cap. 8. p. 711.)

Ver. 16. *He shall dwell with thee, even among you.*] Having embraced the Jewish religion.

In the place which he shall choose, in one of thy gates where it liketh him best.] He was not to be abridged of his liberty, but permitted to settle himself where he pleased, in any part of their country.

Thou shalt not oppress him.] For there was an express law against all manner of injuries or hardships put upon strangers, (Lev. xix. 33, 34.)

Ver. 17. *There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a Sodomite of the sons of Israel.*] Or a *whoremonger* of the sons of Israel; as the last part of the verse may be translated, with the same reason that the foregoing words are translated, *no whore* of the daughters of Israel. So Bonfrerius truly observes, and so the Vulgar Latin and the LXX. translate it, and several other versions mentioned by Mr. Selden, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 23. p. 487. Which sort of persons Moses would not have to be tolerated among the Israelites, as they were among the Egyptians; many of which, if we may believe Sextus Empiricus, were so far from thinking it a reproach for women to prostitute themselves, that they looked upon it as honourable, and gloried in it, τὸ τὰς γυναῖκας ἑταιρεῖν, &c. παρὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς Αἰγυπτίων εὐκλεὲς, &c. (lib. iii. Pyr. Hypot. cap. 24. p. 152.)

"And great reason there was for this prohibition, because by whoredom families are confounded and destroyed (as Maimonides observes); and their issues are looked upon by all men as aliens; so that none will own them as their kindred, and their neighbours become strangers to them; than which nothing can be worse for them, and for their parents. For which cause (saith he) all public stews were disallowed among the Israelites; who had this benefit by it, among others, that many brawls and quarrels, fightings and bloodshed, were prevented; which frequently happened, when several men were assembled at the same time, contending for the same woman. For so the Scripture saith, Jeremiah v. 7. *They assemble by troops in the harlots' houses.* For the preventing of these and such-like mischiefs, and that the distinction of families might be preserved, both whores and whoremongers are here condemned; and no other conjunction permitted, but with a man's own wife, publicly married. For if a private marriage had been sufficient, many would have kept women in their houses as their whores, and pretended they were their wives. Therefore, after a man had privately espoused a woman, he was bound publicly to keep his wedding." Thus that great man, More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 49. and see Selden, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. juxta Disc. Hebr. cap. 4. p. 554.

How much more abominable then were such persons as

prostituted their bodies in honour of Venus and of Priapus, and such-like filthy deities! of which sort there were both males and females consecrated to such impure services! and this was practised even in the days of Moses; as appears from the history of those who committed fornication with the daughters of Moab, who exposed themselves in honour of Baal-Peor; for their lying with them was accounted idolatry. And such there were at last among the Israelites, as appears from 1 Kings xiv. 24. 2 Kings xxiii. where we read, that *the houses of the Sodomites* (as we translate it) were by *the house of the Lord.* Which shews they were not vulgar, but consecrated Sodomites, or whoremongers. I need not mention the heathen writers, who tell us this was a piece of religion among them. See our learned Dr. Spencer, lib. ii. de Leg. Hebr. Ritual. cap. 22. and Heideggerus, in his Histor. Patriarch, exercit. i. sect. 2. where he observes, a great many very learned men understand this very place, not merely of vulgar whores, but of such as I have mentioned; which were famous in ancient times among the Phœnicians, Babylonians, and other nations, whom Strabo calls ἱεροδούλους, lib. viii. Geograph. where he saith, (p. 378.) that at Corinth there was a temple so richly endowed, that it maintained πλείους ἢ χιλίας ἱεροδούλους ἑταίρας, *above a thousand of these consecrated whores:* whom both men and women had dedicated to the goddess, Οἱ γὰρ ναύκληροι ῥᾳδίως ἐξανα-λίσκονται, *for seafaring men* (who arrived in great numbers at this port) *parted with their money easily.* And, lib. xii. speaking of Comana, he saith, there were a multitude of women there, τῶν ἐργαζομένων ἀπὸ σώματος, *who maintained themselves by prostituting their bodies;* and most of them were ἱεραὶ, *sacred persons:* this city being a little Corinth, to which great numbers of people resorted at their festivals, διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἑταρῶν αἳ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης ἦσαν ἱεραὶ, *because of the multitude of harlots which were here sacred to Venus,* p. 559. And the like account we find in Athenæus, lib. xiii. Deipnos. cap. 6. where he saith, they that went to pray there, were wont, for the obtaining their petitions, to add, that they would bring some women to be devoted unto Venus; as Xenophon the Corinthian did, when he returned conqueror from the Olympics.

Ver. 18. *Thou shalt not bring the price of a whore.*] If such persons, as are mentioned in the foregoing verse, offered unto God what they had got by prostituting their bodies, it was not to be accepted, but rejected as abominable. For this was a custom among the idolatrous nations, as appears by a great many of their writers; who tell us, they were wont to dedicate some part of that which they received for the use of their bodies at the temples of their pretended deities. Particularly Herodotus mentions it, as done among the ancient Babylonians, lib. i. p. 199. Which explains what we read in Baruch, vi. 42, 43. where see Grotius's Annotations.

Nor the price of a dog, into the house of the Lord thy God.] There was a peculiar reason for this, besides the vileness of this creature, (which Maimonides only mentions, More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 46.) which was, as Bochartus, and some other great men think, because a dog was highly honoured among the Egyptians, from whom the Israelites were lately come. For the Nile was wont to overflow and enrich their country at the rising of the *dog-star,* and a *dog* was the symbol of one of their principal deities, called Anubis, who was represented with a head like that of a dog. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 56. p. 690, &c.) If we can think this vile idolatry was so ancient as the days of Moses, which it is certain prevailed afterward, this may pass for a very likely reason why God would not accept so much as the price for which a dog was sold or exchanged; for so the LXX. expound it: as, for example, if a man gave a lamb for a fine dog, God would not have that lamb offered at his altar; as Maimonides explains it.

For any vow.] There was the greatest obligation lay upon men to make good their vows, wherewith upon any occasion they had bound themselves; but God would have them discharged from such vile obligations as these.

For even both these are abomination unto the Lord thy God.] It is hard to give an account why these two (the price of a whore and of a dog) are associated in the same law; unless it be in opposition to some such rites as those beforementioned among the Egyptians. Who, in after-times, it is certain, had such harlots sacred to Isis, as many think are spoken of in the beginning of this verse; and a dog was no where else sacred as a symbol of Anubis, or Mercury. Though this may be said with some probability, that these two are joined together, because a whore and a dog are both alike impudent. Josephus thinks that the *price of a dog* here mentioned, was money given, ἐπ' ὀχεύσει κυνὸς, *for the loan of a good dog to breed withal,* as Mr. Selden observes in his History of Tithes, p. 57. Where he notes, also, that the Jews would not admit the tenths of usury or of war to be offered. But the Talmudists expound it quite otherwise, as I have done, for the price of a dog, either sold or exchanged for some other thing; which the same great man approves of as the truer interpretation, (lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 4. p. 557.)

Ver. 19. *Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother.*] *i. e.* Unto an Israelite. (See Exod. xxii. 25. Lev. xxv. 36.)

Usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury.] Here the word *nesech* is used for all sorts of usury; whether that which was made by the loan of money, called here *nesech ceseph,* or that which was made by the loan of food, and such-like things, called *nesech okel.* But, commonly, there are two words used to express this matter, *viz. nesech, usury,* and *tarbith,* which we translate *increase.* Which are not two kinds of usury, one more griping, the other more moderate, as some have conceived; for the same usury is called *nesech* with respect to the debtor, to whom it is grievous, and *tarbith* to the creditor, to whom it is beneficial. (See Salmasius, in his book de Usuris, cap. 7. p. 188.) Yet there is some difference between *nesech* and *tarbith;* else one cannot tell why they are so often both mentioned in the same place. And *nesech* properly signifies the interest, as we speak, which was paid for money; and *tarbith,* the interest of corn, and other fruits of the earth; as the same author shews in that book, (cap. 20. p. 614, &c.) And in the next book (de Modo Usurarum) he shews, that, as the LXX. and R. Levi ben Gersom thus understood the difference, so do the ancient fathers, particularly Origen and St. Jerome, (cap. 8. p. 320, &c.)

Ver. 20. *Unto a stranger.*] One that was not an Israelite, whether he dwelt out of their land, or in it; if he were not a proselyte to the law; of whom they might not take any usury, but use him as a brother.

Thou mayest lend upon usury.] Some of the Jews would have this to be an affirmative precept, obliging them to make the usury of a gentile, if they lent him any money. For this Maimonides quotes a passage out of Siphri; which others say he mistook. See J. Wagenseil, in his Annotations upon Lipman's Carmen Memoriale, p. 598. where he shews that he was of this cruel opinion. But this is not the common sense of the Jews, and their wise men have been so modest also as to decree, That though their law did here permit them to take usury of a gentile, yet they were not to practise it, unless it were that they might provide for themselves, that they might live more safely among the gentiles. And they add this reason for this limitation; Lest the Jews, by this way of commerce and traffic, should grow too familiar with the gentiles, and learn their manners: only men that studied the law, and thereby were out of danger of being enticed to their religion, might freely lend them money upon usury; for this very end, as they think, that they might make a gain of it, and enrich themselves. See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 10. where he observes, that the Mahometans forbid usury only among themselves, not to strangers. Which Salmasius shews is thus limited in the Alcoran by these words, *in their own territories.* That is, if Mahometans live among Christians, they may take usury of them; but of Christians who live among them they may not take any, no more than of a Mussulman, as they call themselves.

But unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury.] He repeats this again, that they might not fail to be kind one to another in this matter. And the author of Etz-Hachajim, mentioned by Wagenseil, saith, according to their ancient doctors, this is six times forbidden in the law, not to take usury of their brethren, (p. 601. upon Sota.) And, indeed, as there was nothing more rational than this, that their neighbours making great gain by merchandise (such as the Sidonians, Tyrians, and those that lived upon the Red Sea, and the Egyptians), they should not borrow money of the Israelites for nothing; so it was no less reasonable the Israelites themselves, whose chiefest profit was by husbandry and breeding of cattle, should have money lent them freely by one another, without any interest, their land not being a country of traffic, whereby money might be improved, as in other countries. For, by the laws of other nations, (as Grotius observes on Luke vi. 45.) that usury was odious which was practised upon husbandmen. Abarbinel also is so tender in this point, as to say, that usury hath something in it so unequal (at least as it is commonly practised), that God did not permit the Israelites to exercise it among all their neighbours, but only upon those of the seven nations of Canaan. And thus far he is in the right, that every one who was not a Jew, was not to be deemed a stranger: an Edomite, for instance, is called their *brother* in the seventh verse of this chapter; and, therefore, this precept, *thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother*, is to be extended to Edomites. In like manner, saith he, neither do the Ishmaelites come under the name of strangers, nor other people but those of the seven nations. And this opinion Leo Modena follows in his History of the present Jews, par. ii. chap. 5. where he saith, by the word *stranger*, in this place, none other can be meant but only those seven nations, from whom God commanded them to take away even their lives. And that it is only their present distress, in which they have no other way of livelihood left, that makes them think it lawful to lend upon *usury* to those among whom they live. In which I think he is mistaken; though this doctrine is better natured than that of some of the Jews, who are so full of hatred to us Christians, whom they call Edomites, that they deprive us (as Wagenseil observes in the place abovenamed) of the name of *brethren*, and think it lawful to oppress us with usury. Of which number are R. Bechai, and the author of the old Nitzacon, set forth by Wagenseil (ancienter than that of Lipman's, set forth by Theodoric Hackspan), who was so full of malignity, that he shut his eyes against the light which he plainly saw. For he could not deny that the Edomites were their brethren; and, consequently, that Moses required the Jews not to take usury of them; and that it was anciently unlawful. But then he pretends, that they forfeited this privilege by not coming to help to preserve Jerusalem and the temple from being destroyed, yea, by rejoicing at their ruin. And fearing this would not satisfy, he hath devised this justification of their usury, that the Edomites have made themselves strangers by the neglect of circumcision. (See p. 139.)

That the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand unto in the land whither thou goest to possess it.] Charity to their poor brethren had many promises of a great reward: and this law was made peculiarly for the relief of such persons, as appears by those places beforementioned, both in Exodus and in Leviticus. It extended indeed to all; but chiefly was intended as a provision for the poor and needy, whom they were not to neglect: for God ordered them to live together as brethren, children of the same father. And indeed they were all, rich and poor, descended from one and the same original. And therefore he designed there should be no indigent person unrelieved among this people, upon whom he had heaped so many blessings; and, delivering them from the slavery of Egypt, had planted them in the good land promised to their fathers. To which purpose all those precepts were given, which require them to lend gratuitously to their poor brother; to restore the pledge left with them; to leave the corners of their fields unreaped; not to gather the gleanings of the harvest and vintage; to observe the year of release and of jubilee; and such-like peculiar provisions for the comfort of the poorer sort, that they might share in the happiness which God bestowed upon his elect people.

Ver. 21. *When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God.*] In a thing lawful and possible; and by a person who had power to make, and was not subject to the authority of another who had power to make it void. (See Numb. xxx. 2.)

Thou shalt not slack to pay it.] Lest they should prove less able, and so be unwilling to perform what they had vowed, or should perhaps forget it. If they lost the thing they vowed, while they delayed, they were bound to give the value of it. Which was one difference between a vow and a free-will-offering; that in the latter case (as Maimonides saith), if that which he designed was stolen or dead, he was not bound to make reparation. The same author applies this to a vow a man made of giving an alms to a poor body, suppose a shekel, which he was to bestow immediately, if any poor body was at hand; if not, he was to

separate it, and lay it by till he met with one, &c. (cap. 8. de Donis Pauperum, sect. 1.)

For the Lord will surely require it of thee.] Demand that which thou hast made to be his own.

And it would be sin in thee.] Be punished by God's just judgment upon thee for the wrong thou hast done him.

Ver. 22. *But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.*] God was so very merciful, as Maimonides observes, that if a man was not able to offer him an ox, or a lamb, he accepted of turtles and young pigeons, of which there was great plenty in that country. And if this was beyond his ability, but he had a desire to testify his affection to God by a free-will-offering, he was pleased to accept an oblation of bread baked in an oven, or pan, or any other usual way. And if this was too heavy, he accepted of bare flour, without putting him to the charge of baking it. For he would have men to be easy in his service, and all their offerings to be free and cheerful; and therefore tells them here, that if they vowed nothing at all to him, he would not take it ill of them, nor impute it to them as a sin, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 46.)

Ver. 23. *That which is gone out of thy mouth thou shalt keep and perform; even a free-will-offering, according as thou hast vowed,* &c.] This was to make them consider well beforehand what their ability was, and not rashly resolve and promise anything: for though they were not bound to vow the smallest matter, yet having once vowed, they were no longer free, but bound to make it good, though it proved very chargeable to them. Yet there is a traditional doctrine among them practised at this day, that if any man or woman make a vow which afterward they wish unmade, and it be not to the prejudice of any third person that it should be broke, in this case they may go to a rabbin, or to any other three men, who hearing their reasons why they repent of having made such a vow, and judging them good, they may free them from their obligation, saying to such a person thrice, *Be thou absolved from this vow,* &c. and so he is discharged. Thus Leo Modena, in his History of the present Jews, par. ii. chap. 4.

Ver. 24. *When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure.*] This the Hebrew doctors take to be a law made in favour of poor labourers, who were hired to work in their vineyards in the time of vintage, whom the owners might not hinder from eating as many grapes as they pleased (and the same held good in olives, figs, dates, and all other fruit), as long as they were at work, but not after they had done working. And if their masters would not suffer them so to do, they were to be scourged with forty stripes save one; for it was not reasonable to deny them this liberty, when the very oxen were not to be muzzled whilst they trod out the corn. (See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 2. p. 670.) Which must be confessed to be as good a natured law as that of Plato's was harsh and unnatural, which enacted a servant should receive as many stripes as he ate grapes or figs. (See Eusebius, lib. xiii. Præpar. Evangel. cap. *ult.*)

But I see no reason at all to restrain this indulgence only to hirelings, of whom there is no mention at all in this law; and therefore Josephus seems to me to have justly enlarged this benefit (lib. iv. Archæol. cap. 8.) to all travellers on the highway, though they were not Israelites (to whom, and to proselytes of justice alone, the Jews confine this privilege), but mere strangers of any other nation, who had occasion to pass by a vineyard, and needed a refreshment. Which permission may seem to have caused great inconvenience, if not mischief in it, because they might tread down the vines, and make great waste among the grapes. Therefore by *coming into their neighbour's vineyard,* is not meant going into every part of it, with a liberty to pick out the best grapes; but only stepping aside out of their way into the skirts of the vineyard, which lay near the road, and satisfying their hunger, without entering further into the vineyard. This made it no damage to the owners, considering the great plenty of fruit in that country.

But thou shalt not put any in thy vessel.] They were only to eat for their present necessity or delight, but not to carry any away with them for the benefit of others, or their own refreshment at another time. And, therefore, might not put any in their pouches, or their garments, or bosoms, or so much as carry away in their hands what they could not eat.

Ver. 25. *When thou comest into the standing-corn of thy neighbour's, thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand.*] As the disciples of our Saviour did, when they walked through the corn, (Matt. xii. 1.) which they might have justified by the strictest rules of the pharisaical doctors, who granted this privilege unto Jews, but not unto gentiles.

But thou shalt not move a sickle into thy neighbour's standing-corn.] They might not cut down any corn, but only pluck with their hands as much as was necessary to satisfy their hunger, or for their pleasure.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *WHEN a man hath taken a wife, and married her.*] The Hebrew doctors make a difference between these two; understanding by *taking a wife,* his espousing her to be his wife; and by *marrying her,* his completing the contract, by lying with her.

And it come to pass.] Either after he hath espoused her, or after he hath consummated the marriage.

That she find no favour in his eyes.] *i. e.* He dislikes her; or, as it is expressed ver. 3. *hates her.* Which signifies either an absolute dislike to her, or comparatively with some person whom he likes better.

Because he hath found some uncleanness in her.] This is assigned as the reason and ground of his dislike, which signifies something odious to *him,* though, perhaps, it might not be so to another, whom Moses supposes she might marry after this husband had discharged her. Some of the Jews, indeed, extend this liberty so far, as to fancy they might, without any reason at all, for their mere pleasure, part with their wives. (See Buxtorf. de Sponsal et Divortiis, sect. 89.) But others are more modest, and acknowledge that these words [*matter of uncleanness*] signify some weighty cause. Yet they distinguish between the first wife a man took, who might not be put away but for some uncleanness, and the second, who might be put away for a lesser reason. But there were great differences between the school of Hillel and the school of Shammai (whom the Talmudists so much talk of), about this matter of *uncleanness*: yet both agree it hath a far lower signification here

than in the book of Leviticus, where it signifies adultery, incest, or such-like turpitude. For if adultery had been here meant, she might have been put to death; or the mere suspicion of it tried by the water of jealousy. (See Buxtorf in the book beforenamed, sect. 90. and our Selden, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 20, 21.) Abarbinel thinks the two plainest causes of dislike signified by these words, were either such behaviour as might make her suspected of impurity (as going with her face uncovered, or her breast naked; sporting with young men, or washing in the same place with them, or having her arms bare); or, secondly, when they were of such a different temper, humour, and disposition, that they disliked and nauseated each other's company, and, consequently, lived in continual brawls and contentions. And, besides such moral causes, they allowed also such natural as made a woman offensive; *viz.* leprosy, or some such disease in her body, as he did not discover before marriage. And sometimes they extend this as far as to a stinking breath.

Then let him write her a bill of divorcement.] Whatsoever was the cause of the husband's dislike, this law provides the wife should not be damaged by it, being made rather for her advantage than her husband's; *viz.* to free her (as Dr. Hammond observes) from the pain and vexation of her husband's unkindness, and the danger of seeing another taken in, and preferred before her; and she might be perfectly at liberty to leave one, who did not love her, and take another husband who might possibly delight in her. (See Answer to six Queries, q. iii. chap. 2.) Some think that this custom of putting away wives, which they did not like, prevailed before the law of Moses. Which opinion hath something to countenance it, from the mention of divorces in several places (Levit. xxi. 14. xxii. 13. Numb. xxx. 9.) before the book of Deuteronomy was written, wherein he orders a bill to be given in writing to discharge them. If this be true, it gives a good reason why God was pleased to grant this permission; because they were so settled in this practice, that it was safer still to indulge it to them, than quite to abolish it. Which he did with this caution, That husbands should not discharge their wives with a word, bidding them begone out of doors (*i. e.* putting them away rashly, and in a sudden fit of anger), but first write them a bill containing their pleasure herein. Which being a deliberate act might possibly hinder this divorce; to which they might be prone in a passion, but not after some consideration. The form of this bill is in Mr. Selden, and exactly scanned, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 24. Who observes also, in another place of that book, (cap. 19.) that as, for five hundred years, or more, the Roman state flourished without the use of divorces, so for seven hundred years after the making of this law, there is no mention of any bill of divorce; so for seven hundred years after the making of this law, there is no mention of any bill of divorce among the Jews, that is, till the days of Isaiah, (see chap. l. 1.) and but rarely afterward.

And give it into her hand.] Saying these, or some such-like words, *Behold, this is thy bill of divorce;* otherwise it was not good: and there were to be at least two witnesses unto it, as the Jews say. Who make ten things necessary (which they think to be founded upon the law itself) to make the bill legal. (See Selden, in the same book, cap. 25.)

And send her out of his house.] This Dr. Hammond (in the place abovementioned) looks upon as an obligation upon her husband to furnish her for her journey, to endow her, and make provision for her. For so the word προπέμπειν, *to send out,* signifies in the New Testament, to provide a *viaticum,* 1 Cor. xvi. 6. 11. Titus iii. 13. where it is explained, by *letting nothing be wanting.* But the Jews are of opinion, that the divorce was perfect and legitimate, before he sent her out of his doors: for it was sufficient to give her a bill in such a form, as plainly shewed their matrimony was dissolved; and that she was no part of his family, though he had not actually sent her away. Yet, if he kept her still in his house, after this bill was delivered into her hand, it was presumed they cohabited together, and he was to give her a new bill of divorce.

In all which I can see nothing like a command for putting away their wives, if they were disagreeable; which the Jews would fain extort out of these words. And so they spake unto our blessed Lord, Matt. xix. 7. though in another place they spake of it only as a permission, Mark x. 3. The plain intent of this law being this; That if a man did put away his wife (as they are suffered to do), she might marry another man; but if that new husband died, she might not return to her first husband again. See Buxtorf. de Sponsal. et Divortiis, p. 107, 108, &c. and to shew that Moses rather supposed, than permitted divorces, p. 113, &c.

Ver. 2. *And when she is departed out of his house.*] So that it is publicly known, she is no longer his wife.

She may go and be another man's wife.] The bond of marriage being wholly broken by the bill of divorce, whereby he renounced all interest in her, and expressly said, in the very body of the bill (as we speak), *it may be free to thee to marry with whom thou wilt.* Much more was the bond broken by adultery, for which our Saviour gives a man leave to put away his wife, and take another. See David Chytræus concerning this matter, p. 117, &c. where he reports a very wise resolution of Luther's Pomeranus, and Melancthon, in the case of the criminal person.

Ver. 3. *And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorce, and give it her in her hand, and send her out of his house.*] This shews that no other way of putting away a wife was allowed, but only this. For, as Maimonides well observes, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 49.) if it had been lawful to do it by bare words, or simply sending her out of his house, any woman might have left her husband, and said she was put away; both she, and he that committed adultery with her, pretending a divorce, when her husband had given her none. Therefore the law wisely provided none should be put away, but by such a bill as is beforementioned, whereby an authentic testimony was given of it.

Or if her latter husband die, which took her to wife.] Whereby she became free again, as the apostle hath observed, Rom. vii. 2.

Ver. 4. *Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife.*] One would have thought there could have been no danger of any man's desiring her again, whom he had solemnly sent away with dislike. But such is the levity and fickleness of human nature (the Jews at least were so inconstant), that it seems men sometimes sought after that which they had rejected: and this was the punishment of their injustice, in putting away a wife

without sufficient cause (as by this they acknowledged), that they might not again enjoy her.

After that she is defiled.] This is the reason why the former husband might not marry her again (as the Jews take it), because by her second marriage she was defiled. Which they say she was (so that he could not have her again), though she had been only espoused to a new husband, who had never lain with her. For they make no difference between her second marriage and second espousals, but think a woman contracted such a pollution by her second espousals, that she would not have been so much polluted, if she had played the whore after her divorce. For in that case, they say, he might notwithstanding have married her again; but not after she had been married to another. Thus Mr. Selden reports their opinion, lib. i. Uxor. Heb. cap. 11. where he observes, that the Mahometans, who are wont in many things to ape the Jews, here quite differ from them; allowing a man liberty to take his wife again, though he had divorced her three times.

Now the ground upon which a divorced woman was accounted *defiled*, or *unclean*, after another man had married her, I suppose, was, that this was looked upon as a solemn renunciation of her former husband on her part, who had been renounced by him by the bill of divorce; but he was not absolutely renounced by her till she married another, whereby she was totally alienated from him. This made her unclean, not in herself, nor with respect to her second husband, whom she married, nor with respect to any other man (who might marry her without any pollution), but only with respect to her first husband, unto whom, by this law, she was made unclean; for so all things forbidden to the Jews were accounted, as appears from Acts x. 14, 15. where all meats prohibited by the law are called *unclean*; and God is said to have *cleansed* them, by taking off that prohibition.

For that is abomination before the Lord.] That is, to return to her first husband, and to be his wife again: for this, saith Abarbinel, was to imitate the Egyptians, who changed their wives, and took them again into their houses; which was the occasion of great filthiness. But this intimates, that if she had not been married to any other man, but kept herself free, she might have been his wife again, if he had a mind to be reconciled to her. And this shews also, that God intended to discourage them from putting away their wives, by making them incapable, after they had been married to another, for ever to enjoy them again, though they grew very rich, or otherwise desirable, which inclined many, no doubt, to consider well before they parted with them.

And thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, &c.] The people of the land might, by such a large indulgence, have been tempted to pollute it with many sins, and thereby bring God's judgments upon it. (See Jer. iii. 1.) For, as Isaac Arama glosses, if this had not been prohibited, a gate had been opened unto vile men, *to make a trade of changing their wives*, and thereby filled the land with whoredoms.

Ver. 5. *When a man hath taken a new wife.*] The Hebrews think, (as I observed before, xx. 7.) that, whether he had married a virgin or a widow, he was to have the privilege here mentioned; yea, they extend it to him who had married his brother's wife; but not to him who had married her whom he put away, and might take again, if she had not been married since that to another man. For she could not be said to be *a new wife*.

He shall not go out to war.] See Deut. xx. 7.

Nor be charged with any business.] No public employment was to be put upon him, which might occasion his absence from his wife; not so much as watching, or such-like. For the better understanding of which, it must be remembered, what was said about the fearful and timorous, who were bid to return home from the army, lest they disheartened their brethren, xx. 8. And yet these men were bound to furnish the army with victuals and water, to clear the ways, and take up their quarters; but a new bridegroom was free from all these. Only they made a difference between a war by the Divine commandment, and one undertaken voluntarily: unto the former of which they think this immunity doth not extend, but only to the latter. In the margin these words are translated, *nor any thing pass upon him*, that is, he shall not pay tribute.

But he shall be free at home for one year.] The same time of freedom it was thought reasonable to grant unto builders and planters, because they are joined with new-married men in the speech the priest made before they went to battle, xx. 5—7.

And shall cheer up his wife whom he hath taken.] Make much of her, as we speak, and so endear himself to her by his kindness, that there might be no occasion of a divorce. For the prevention of which this law seems to have been intended; that by so long a conversation together, without any interruption, they might have so perfect an understanding one of another, and such a mutual confidence might be settled, that he might not easily entertain any jealousies of her, when he should be absent in the wars, or elsewhere.

Ver. 6. *No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge.*] This is a law of the same nature with that Exod. xx. 26, 27. for the preservation of mercy, beneficence, and clemency towards the poor, as Maimonides speaks, More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 39.

For he taketh a man's life to pledge.] That is, his *livelihood*; by which he maintains himself and his family, and keeps them from starving. By this reason it was unlawful to take any other thing for a security, by the want of which a man might be in danger to be undone. For instance, they did not allow any man to seize upon the oxen which were at plough. He who broke this law was scourged.

Ver. 7. *If any man be found stealing any of his brethren the children of Israel.*] If he were either taken in the fact, or it was plainly proved against him. So the very words of the Athenian law were, Ἐὰν τὶς φανερὸς γένηται ἀνδραποδιζόμενος, *if a man be an apparent man-stealer.*

And maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him.] This was the end of man-stealing, to make a gain of him, either by exchanging him for some commodity, or selling him for money.

Then that thief shall die.] This crime was punished with death, though stealing of beasts or other things was not, (see Exod. xxi. 16.) because it was very heinous on a double account, both by depriving the community of one of its members, and making him a slave in another country. And, indeed, the most moderate lawyers did not know how to secure men in the possession of things very valuable, but by inflicting such a punishment on those that stole

them. Thus, after Solon had tempered the rigid law of Draco, which punished all theft with death, by ordering in most cases only the payment of double, he enacted the stealing of a great sum of money to be capital; nay, he made it a great crime to steal *dung*, because it was a thing of great value in that country, which was very barren, and needed it for their ground. How much more valuable was a man in all men's account, whom if any man stole, the law was τούτῳ θάνατον εἶναι τὴν ζημίαν, *that death should be his punishment;* as Xenophon reports it. And he was accounted ἀνδραποδιστὴς, a *man-stealer*, who, not only by force or by fraud, carried away a freeman, and sold him for a slave, or suppressed him; but he who inveigled away another man's servant, and persuaded him to run away, or concealed such a fugitive, (as Sam. Petitus observes, out of Pollux and others, lib. vii. Leges Atticas, tit. 5. p. 533.) Which makes me think, not only he that stole *one of his brethren of the children of Israel*, but he that stole a proselyte of any sort, or the servant of a stranger, was liable to the punishment mentioned in this law of Moses.

And thou shalt put away evil from among you.] By these words we may understand the greatness of his crime; for they are never used in this book, but when Moses speaks of the punishment of some enormous sin. (See xiii. 5. xvii. 7. xix. 19, &c.)

Ver. 8. *Take heed of the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently.*] This was the highest legal uncleanness, and therefore the greatest caution was to be used to prevent its contagion.

And do according to all that the priests the Levites.] They were constituted by the law the sole judges, whether a man had the leprosy or not; and were to order his separation from others if he had; and frequently make inspection, whether it spread, or was at a stand, &c. See the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Leviticus; where there are laws about houses and garments, as well as persons, infected with this disease by the hand of God, as the Jews understand it.

Shall teach you.] To *teach* in this place signifies to declare the obligation of the law by the judges of it, the priests the Levites. Thus Jehoshaphat is said to have sent his princes *to teach in the cities of Judah*, and with them he sent Levites and priests, 2 Chron. xviii. 18. where R. Solomon notes, that it was the business of the priests and Levites to teach and instruct, as is here written in this place (which he quotes), and the princes went with them, that none might disobey them, but be constrained by their authority to do according to their command. See Mr. Thorndike, in his Religious Assemblies, chap. 2. p. 22. where he observes, that, in Leviticus, direction is given to the priests how to proceed in judging leprosies; but no provision made till now, that the people should stand to their judgment.

They who imagine that the priest had the care of lepers, as their physicians, forget that no other diseased persons are ordered to repair to them; which is a sign they did not pretend to cure them, but only to preserve others from being defiled by them; and to do what was necessary for their cleansing, when they were healed by God.

As I commanded them, so shall ye observe to do.] They were so to observe the priests, as to mark what God commanded; and accordingly obey them, not against, but according to his command.

Ver. 9. *Remember what the Lord thy God did unto Miriam by the way, after that ye were come forth out of Egypt.*] This seems to be mentioned, that they might not think much to be shut up seven days, when they were but suspected to have the leprosy, and seven days more to make farther trial, and to be put out of the camp, when it appeared plainly they had this disease, (Lev. xiii. 4, 5. 45, 46.) since so great a person as Miriam was excluded so long from the society of God's people, (Numb. xii. 15.) And this may be looked upon as an admonition to take care, lest they spoke evil of dignities (which brought this punishment on Miriam), or disobeyed the commands of the priest, which might bring the like, or some other judgment upon them.

Ver. 10. *When thou dost lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge.*] This was a very merciful provision for the poor, whose houses he would have so privileged, that no man might enter into them without their consent, and there choose what he pleased for the security of his debt: but he was to take what the borrower could best spare.

Ver. 11. *Thou shalt stand abroad.*] Keep without door.

And the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee.] So the debtor, not the creditor, was to choose what pledge he would give; for he best knew what he could, with most convenience to himself, part withal; and if it was sufficient, the lender had reason to be satisfied with it.

Ver. 12. *And if the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge.*] But restore it before night. Which is to be understood of such things as were necessary for the preservation of his life or health, as the following words demonstrate.

Ver. 13. *In any case thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment.*] And not be forced to borrow of others a necessary covering to defend him from the cold; and not be able, perhaps, to procure it. (See Exod. xxii. 26, 27.) Which law seems to have been intended to keep them from taking any pledge of a very poor man. For to what purpose should they every morning fetch a pledge, and every evening carry it back again, which would only create them a great deal of trouble?

And bless thee.] Pray God to bless thee.

And it shall be righteousness unto thee before the Lord thy God.] Procure thee a blessing from God, who will esteem it an act of great mercy: which is often called by the name of *righteousness* in the holy books, Psal. cxii. 9. Prov. x. 2, &c. Nay, such-like actions are properly called *tzedekah*, or *righteousness*, according to the opinion of Maimonides, who observes, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 53.) that this word doth merely signify giving to every man his own. "For when a man pays the hireling his wages, or a debtor pays his creditor, that is not called *tzedekah:* but what a man doth out of pure love to virtue and goodness (as when a man cures a poor wretch of his wounds), is properly called by that name. From whence it is said, concerning the restoring of a poor man's pledge, *it shall be to thee for righteousness.*" That is, saith Dr. Hammond (in his Practical Catechism), that degree of mercy which the law required of every Jew, without which he could not be accounted righteous: but there was a degree of

bounty beyond this called *chasidah*, which was an excess of righteousness or goodness.

Ver. 14. *Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant.*] Either by putting more work upon him than he is able to do, or by detaining his wages when it is done. The latter of these is most properly here denoted, as Const. L'Empereur observes out of D. Kimchi, who, in his Book of Roots, saith, the difference between עשק (which is the word here) and גזל doth not lie in this, that the former signifies to *defraud*, the latter to *take away by violence:* but the former signifies to *detain by force*, and the other to *take away by force what belongs to another.* And for the proof of it, alleges this place in Deuteronomy, which he thus translates, *Thou shalt not detain by force the wages of the hireling.* Which is expressed more clearly, Malachi iii. 5. Annot. in Bava-kama, cap. 9. sect. 7. p. 247.

That is poor and needy.] And therefore the more to be pitied, and not oppressed, either by giving him less wages than another man, when he ought rather to have greater, or by keeping back his hire beyond the time wherein it ought to be paid: for, as the ancient lawyers say, "Minus solvit, qui tempore minus solvit;" as it is observed by Grotius upon James v. 4.

Whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates.] No difference was to be made between a natural Jew and a proselyte of the gate, according to the general law, Lev. xix. 34. For such oppression might tempt them to do very wicked things: for instance, expose or kill their children, when they were not able to maintain them; after the manner of the heathen, who were frequently guilty of this, and thought it no crime when their poverty constrained them to it. See Petrus Petitus, lib. iii. Miscell. Observ. cap. 17. where he produces many proofs of it, both out of Greek and Roman authors.

Ver. 15. *At his day thou shalt give him his hire.*] Which was due to him, either by contract, or by natural equity; and whether he had agreed to serve him for a day, or a month, or a year. At the time when his wages was due, it was to be punctually paid, unless he were willing to have it remain in his hands. For this was not an act of mercy, but of justice, to pay a hireling his wages.

Neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor.] This shews he speaks particularly of one that served for a day's wages, and could not forbear the payment of it, because he was so poor as not to be able to provide himself and family necessaries without it.

And setteth his heart upon it.] Eagerly expects it, as the support of his life. So the Vulgar translates it, *With it he supports his soul*, that is, his life.

Lest he cry unto the Lord.] Make grievous complaints to him who made both rich and poor.

And it be sin unto thee.] God will hear his cry, and severely punish thee. (See James v. 4.)

Ver. 16. *The father shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the father: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.*] This is a rule of common reason, which was anciently expressed in this vulgar saying, *Noxa caput sequitur:* and is excellently expressed by Dion Chrysostom, Ἕκαστος αὐτῷ γίνεται τῆς ἀτυχίας αἴτιος, *Let every man be the author of his own misfortune.* Which Amazia, king of Judah, thought extended to the children of traitors, unto whom he allowed the benefit of this law, as we read in so many words, 2 Kings xiv. 6. 2 Chron. xxv. 4. And not only Philo, but Dionysius Halicarnassæus condemns the custom of those nations who put to death the children of tyrants or traitors. See Grotius, lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 21. sect. 13, 14. where he observes, that God indeed threatens *to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children;* but in this case, "Jure dominii non pœnæ utitur," *he uses the right of dominion, not of punishment.*

Ver. 17. *Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless.*] Nor of the widow, who is joined with them, ver. 19. For such persons commonly have none to stand by them, and plead their cause; and therefore the judges were to take the greater care to see them have justice done, (Exod. xxii. 21. xxiii. 9.)

Nor take the widow's raiment to pledge.] Which is to be understood of one that is poor; as appears from ver. 12. (See Exod. xxii. 21. 26, 27.)

Ver. 18. *But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing.*] The remembrance of their own miserable condition in Egypt, till God took pity upon them, was to work compassion in them towards others in like forlorn estate; otherwise they did not *remember* as they ought. This is often urged as a reason for shewing mercy to strangers, and such-like helpless persons, particularly in Lev. xix. 33, 34. and in this book, x. 19, 20. xv. 15.

Ver. 19. *When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go back again to fetch it.*] There are many merciful laws about the poor. (See Lev. xix. 9, 10. xxiii. 22.) They are all put together by Mr. Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 6. where the exposition the Talmudists give of this law seems to me to be so strict, that it could do little good. For they say a sheaf was not taken to be *forgotten*, unless not only the owner of the field, but all the labourers forgot it: and if none of them remembered it, yet if any man that passed by that way came and gave them notice of it, it was not looked upon as left by forgetfulness. Yet they are so kind as to extend this law, not only to the sheaves of corn left in the field, but to bunches of grapes, and other fruit, which were left behind in their vineyards or orchards. And it seems no unreasonable interpretation of this law, that if an owner of a field, or his workmen, called to mind, before they were gone quite out of the field, that a sheaf was left in such a place, they might go back and fetch it; but not, if they did not remember it till they came into the city. They that would see more cases about this matter, may look into Maimonides de Donis Pauperum, translated by Dr. H. Prideaux, (cap. 5.) and his very learned annotations upon it. Josephus seems to me to have interpreted this law most charitably, lib. iv. Archæolog. cap. 8. where he saith, they were not only not to go back to fetch what they had forgot, but to leave on purpose corn, and grapes, and olives, &c. for the benefit of the poor.

It shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.] Who are commonly put together as proper objects of charity: and are (as Mr. Selden speaks) a kind of paraphrase upon the word *poor.*

That the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hand.] Make their land still very fruitful; which was a reward of their charity.

Ver. 20. *When thou beatest thine olive-tree.*] As they were wont to do, in those countries, with sticks, to bring down the olives.

Thou shalt not go over the boughs again.] Not search the boughs, after they are beaten, whether any be left.

It shall be for the stranger, &c.] Who might go into the olive-yards, after the owner had carried out his fruit, and gather what they found still remaining on the trees.

Ver. 21. *When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward.*] By making a new gathering after the first. But if the poor themselves left any behind, after the usual time allowed for the gathering such fruits or corn as were left for them, it was lawful for the owner to take it himself; and he was not bound, either to pay the poor the price of it, or to leave it for the beasts and birds. For the command is (say the Jewish doctors, who nicely scan these things), that it shall be for the poor, and that it be left for them; but not any thing given them in lieu of it. (See Selden, in the forenamed place, p. 699.)

It shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.] The Jewish doctors, by *the stranger* here mentioned, in this and the foregoing verses, would have only *proselytes of justice* understood, who had entirely embraced the Jewish religion; so that other proselytes, and mere gentiles, had no right to these things. For by the law, say they, concerning the tithe for the poor, (xiv. 29.) the Levite and the *stranger* are put together: and the Levite being a child of the covenant, so must the *stranger* be, who is joined with him. But this restriction confined this charity within such narrow bounds, that they themselves are not satisfied with it: and therefore they add, that though such only as were within the covenant had a right to these things by the law, yet, if proselytes of the gate, or mere gentiles, mixed themselves with the Jews, by the decree of their wise men, they were not to be hindered from gathering their share in these fruits of the earth which were left for the poor. And they give this reason for it, *because of the way of peace,* that is, offices of humanity and charity ought to be extended to all. (See Selden, p. 700.)

Ver. 22. *And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.*] If they had been only *strangers there,* and neglected by the natives of the country, the remembrance of God's mercy in providing for them had been a powerful motive to obey this command: and therefore the remembrance of the slavery and grievous oppressions under which they there groaned was a far greater. (See ver. 18.)

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *IF there be a controversy between men, and they come into judgment.*] It is evident, by the sequel, that he speaks of criminal causes.

That the judges may judge them.] Who were appointed to be constituted and settled in all their gates. (See xvi. 18.)

Then they shall justify the righteous.] Acquit him who is falsely accused of doing any wrong.

And condemn the wicked.] To suffer such punishment as his crime deserves.

Ver. 2. *And it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten.*] For what crimes men were to be beaten, by the sentence of the lower courts, as well as by that of the great Sanhedrin, see Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. n. 7, 8. They were in all, as they reckon, two hundred and seven.

The judge shall cause him to lie down.] By his *officers* who attended the court.

Before his face.] In open court. But he was first to be admonished; and the witnesses were to be produced against him, as in capital causes: after which the judge commanded him to lie down before a low pillar, to which his hands were tied; and he being stripped down to his waist, the executioner stood behind him upon a stone, where he scourged him both on the back and breast, with thongs made of an ox's hide, before the face of the judges: for though one judge be only mentioned, the execution was done before the whole bench, after the sentence was pronounced by one of them.

According to this fault.] For the violation of a *negative* precept he might be scourged before the court, consisting of three judges; but not for the violation of an *affirmative,* which was to be done before the court of twenty-three, as Selden observes in the place forenamed, sect. 6.

By a certain number.] He was condemned to receive more or fewer stripes, proportionable to his crime: and all the time the executioner was scourging him, the principal judge proclaimed these words, (Deut. xxviii. 58.) with a loud voice, "If thou observest not all the words of this law, &c. then the Lord shall make thy plagues wonderful," &c. adding those, xxix. 9. "Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them," &c. Concluding at last with those of the Psalmist, lxxviii. 38. "But he being full of compassion, forgave their iniquities." Which he was to repeat, if he had finished these sayings before the full number of stripes were given. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 13. n. 6. which I find in the title Maccoth, cap. 3. sect. 16. and see G. Schickard, Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 2. p. 57, 58.)

Ver. 3. *Forty stripes he may give him.*] Which was more merciful than the Athenian law mentioned by Æschines, which was inflicted upon criminals, τῇ δημοσίᾳ μάστιγι πεντήκοντα πληγὰς, *fifty stripes by the public scourge.* But none among the Jews were to receive above forty for any crime; fewer they might inflict, though not more.

And not exceed.] Of this they were so careful, that as one of the three judges commanded the executioner to strike, another told the stripes, while the third pronounced the sentences out of the Scripture beforementioned, to admonish him, and every one else, of the justice of the punishment. So Schickard observes, out of Maimonides, in the place abovenamed. For the prevention also of excess in this punishment, they were wont to give but thirty-nine stripes, and no more; though the offender was ever so strong or pertinacious. Thus the Jews generally affirm, and it appears to be true, by what St. Paul saith of himself, 2 Cor. xi. 24. "Of the Jews five times I received forty stripes save one;" which is exactly the phrase of Mischna in Maccoth, cap. 3. sect. 10. where they interpret *forty stripes* by the next number to forty, *i. e.* thirty-nine. For which they give a foolish reason in the Gemara (as Joh. Coch there observes); but Maimonides gives a sober account, that this was ordered, lest the executioner, by carelessness, might exceed the number of forty, beyond which the law required them not to go; but it was lawful to

fall short of it, and therefore they required him to stop at the thirty-ninth stroke. Yet, if any man deserved this punishment twice together, they did sometimes exceed the number of forty, and went so far as to sentence such a malefactor to receive seventy-nine stripes; as Mr. Selden observes in the same place: where he likewise notes, on the other side, that if a man was so weak, that he was ready to faint away, before he had received thirty-nine, the judges ordered the executioner to stay his hand.

Lest, if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee.] Being beaten like a dog, as we speak; that is, so cruelly, that the marks of it remained afterward, to make him contemptible. Which the law was so far from intending, that the Jews say no man was to be reproached afterward with this whipping, or the crime for which he was whipped, because he was still *a brother*, as the word here is. And therefore he was to be restored to the same respect among them that he had before, nay, to any office which before he enjoyed; except he was the president of the Sanhedrin, who was never to be restored to his power, if he had been scourged, nor equally honoured with his inferior colleagues. So Schickard observes, out of Maimonides, in the forenamed book, p. 62.

Ver. 4. *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.*] It was the custom, not only in this country, but among the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, to use oxen in treading out their corn, either with their feet barely, or by drawing a cart, or other instrument, over it. And while they were at work some muzzled them, and others daubed their mouths with dung; others hung a wooden instrument about their necks, which hindered them from stooping down; or put sharp pricks in their mouths; or kept them without drink; or covered their corn with skins, that they might not be able to come at it. (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 40. p. 401.) Which inhumanity God here forbids, and instructs his people, by shewing mercy to their beasts, to be kind one to another, particularly to their servants and labourers, but, above all, to those who laboured in the work of the ministry, for the salvation of souls, as St. Paul argues, 1 Cor. ix. 9. (See Bonfrerius.)

Ver. 5. *If brethren dwell together.*] They are said to dwell together, not only who were in the same family, but in the same country, Gen. xiii. 5, 6.

And one of them die, and have no child.] If he left a child, though he were a *mamzer*, or an apostate, his next brother was not bound to marry his wife; but if he left a child by a slave, or a gentile, he was. If he left his wife with child, and she miscarried, he was bound; but if she brought a live child, after she had gone with it nine months, he was free. And by *a child* is to be understood either a son or daughter. (See Selden, lib. de Successionibus ad bona Defuncti, cap. 14.)

The wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger.] This shews the end of this law was to preserve inheritances in the family to which they belonged.

Her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife.] The Hebrew doctors understand this obligation to lie upon the eldest brother that was surviving; and only of a brother that was by the same father. For though they had the same mother, if they had not the same father, no obligation lay upon him: "For brethren (saith Maimonides) by the mother's side, are not accounted brethren, either in the matter of inheritances, or of marrying a brother's wife: but they are as if they were not brethren; for there is no fraternity which is not from the father." (See Heideggerus Exercit. i. de Œconom. Patriarch 10. 16. and Selden, Uxor. Hebr. p. 80.) But the king, they say, was excepted from this law, as Schickard observes in his Jus Regium, p. 56.

And perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.] This was a law before the time of Moses, among the patriarchs, as we learn from Gen. xxxviii. 7, 8, &c. And it was so well understood to be a bounden duty, that the Hebrew doctors say, it was not necessary there should be any solemn marriage celebrated with such widow; because, unless her husband's brother renounced her, she was esteemed his wife, *min hashamajim*, by the authority of God; and that, whether she had been only espoused by the deceased brother, or his complete wife. Yet by the constitution of their elders, he was to contract with her before two witnesses, and give her a piece of money; before which it was not lawful for him to lie with her. There was to be also a sacred benediction of the marriage; and her dowry assigned her by an instrument. But if he did lie with her before these solemnities, there was no formal contract exacted of him afterward; he was only scourged for contemning the constitutions of their elders, and compelled to settle a dowry upon her. See Selden, lib. i. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 12. where he observes, that, in case a man left several widows, if his brother either married, or renounced one of them, all the rest were free from this law. And if several brethren died, and left every one of them a wife, without issue, the surviving brother might either take or reject them all; or take one or two, and let the rest alone, as he pleased. And if the eldest brother, that married his brother's relict, died also without issue, then the next surviving brother was to marry her; and so forward, according to the case supposed in the gospel. And yet that brother only was admitted to this marriage, who was born before his brother's death; which they gather from the first words of this verse, *if brethren dwell together;* which cannot be meant of one born after his brother's death. They might likewise have concluded, from this phrase, that such of the brethren as had wives already were not bound to take her to wife, but only he that was unmarried; who might be supposed to be meant by *him that dwelt together with his brother*, and was not yet gone to a house of his own. But I fear I have said too much of a matter now quite antiquated, unless it be among some of the Indians and Persians, and among the Tartars that inhabit Iberia and Albania, who still retain this custom; as Huetius observes, in his Demonstratio Evangel. propos. iv. cap. 11. n. 1.

Ver. 6. *And it shall be, that the first-born which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead.*] Shall be reputed the son and heir of the deceased; but there was no necessity to give him his name.

That his name be not put out in Israel.] That a family in Israel might not be lost; for this was a provision for the preservation of families. (See Numb. xxvii. 4.) And therefore, if there was no brother, properly so called, to perform this duty, the next of kin (who is also called a

brother in a large sense) was bound to marry her. See of this word *name*, Numb. xxvii. 4.

Ver. 7. *And if a man like not to take his brother's wife.*] Here now was a great mitigation of that ancient law, which had been before the time of Moses, that a man might refuse to marry his brother's wife, if he did not like her. Which was not permitted before, as appears by the story of Onan, (Gen. xxxviii.) who married Tamar against his mind (as his behaviour towards her demonstrates), which he needed not to have done, if this permission, which here follows, had been then in use.

Then let his brother's wife go up to the gate.] Where the court of judgment sat, as I have often observed. (See xvi. 18.)

Unto the elders.] A court consisting of three elders was sufficient to judge in this matter. And it was of no consequence, whether these three were created elders, according to the solemn form among them, by laying on of hands; but it was sufficient, if they were such as they called *elders of the street*, or common men. (See lib. i. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 15. and lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 7. n. 3.)

And say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel: he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.] She was to put a bill of complaint against him in these words.

Ver. 8. *Then the elders of the city shall call him, and speak to him*, &c.] He being summoned to appear before them, together with the woman (who they say was to be fasting), and two witnesses at the least, she opened the whole matter. And then the question being asked, whether it were three months since her husband's death (which were to be allowed, to see whether she proved with child or not), and whether this man was next of kin; and a satisfactory answer being returned, the judges laid the law before them, admonished them seriously to consider, on each side, their age, or any disparity or incommodity that might be in their marriage, and accordingly to resolve; and then they asked the man, in express words, whether he would marry her, and raise up seed to his brother. If he stood to his first resolution, as it here follows, and said, *I like not to take her;* then the woman read the words foregoing, ver. 7. *My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel*, &c. and then proceeded to do as follows, ver. 9. (See Selden, in the book forenamed, cap. 14.)

Ver. 9. *Then shall his brother's wife come unto him, in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot.*] From his right foot, as the Hebrew doctors say; which was done, I suppose, as a mark of infamy, for his want of natural affection; which made him unworthy to be reckoned among freemen, but rather deserve to be thrust down into the condition of slaves, who were wont to go barefoot.

And spit in his face.] In contempt of him who had despised her. The Hebrew doctors, indeed, expounded this only of her spitting upon the earth, directly before his face, so that the spitting might be seen by the judges. And they give this as a reason, why the king was not subject to this law of marrying his brother's wife, (and they might add the high-priest, Lev. xxi. 13, 14.) because it would have been below his dignity to have had his shoe pulled off (if he had not liked the woman), or to have had her spit before him, as Bartenora's words are: which would have been a better reason, if they had said, it had been very unbecoming for her to have spit in the king's face. See Selden, lib. i. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 10. and Hackspan, lib. i. Miscellan. cap. 7. n. 8. where he observes, the king was bound to all the six hundred and thirteen precepts, but only this of marrying his brother's wife.

And shall answer.] To his peremptory refusal of her.

And say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house.] She was immediately to read these words of the law. And then the judges gave her a writing, signifying his renunciation of her, in the manner now related, that so it might be free for any other man to marry her. See the form of it in Selden, lib. i. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 14. where he hath observed certain niceties about the kind of shoe that was to be pulled off, but gives no account why this ceremony was used.

Ver. 10. *And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.*] As soon as she had loosed his shoe, both the judges, and all the by-standers round about, cried aloud three times, *The shoe is pulled off, the shoe is pulled off, the shoe is pulled off!* And thereupon his family had this name, as a disgrace, for not doing the duty of a brother. Some will have this pulling off the shoe to have been only a mark, that he parted with his right to her; but these words shew that it was in the nature of a brand upon him and his posterity. And so Josephus saith, lib. iv. Archælog. cap. 8. that he went out of the court with a mark of ignominy. Which doth not relate merely to her spitting in his face; for Maimonides saith expressly, (in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 49.) that this action (*viz.* of pulling off the shoe, as well as the other) was a foul and ignominious thing in those days, intended to move men to perform the duty of a husband's brother, that they might avoid such reproach. J. Wagenseil hath given us the exact form of the shoe, which was used on such occasions, in his Annotations upon Sota, p. 664. and see 1212. where he commends Leo Modena's account of this whole business; which differs not at all from that which I have given; only I observe that he saith, when the woman taketh off the shoe from the man's foot, she lifts it up on high, and throweth it against the ground; which I take to be a note of indignation and contempt. And he saith also, it was anciently accounted a more laudable thing to take her, than to release her; and imputes it to the corruption of men's manners, and the hardness of their hearts, that now they look only after worldly ends, either of riches or beauty: which makes very few in these days (especially among the Dutch and Italian Jews) to marry their brother's widow. (See his History of the Rites and Customs of the Jews, par. iv. chap. 7.)

Ver. 11. *When men strive together one with another.*] Fall out (as we speak) and fight, either with their fists or sticks, or other weapons.

And the wife of one draweth near for to deliver her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him.] Who had wounded him, and was likely, I suppose, to be too hard for him.

And putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets.] As a sure means to make him let go his hold of her husband, that he might preserve himself.

Ver. 12. *Then thou shalt cut off her hand.*] This was to be done by the sentence of the court, as a punishment for

her impudence; and for the hurt which, perhaps, the man might have received hereby in those parts whereby mankind is propagated.

Thine eye shall not pity her.] The word *her* not being in the Hebrew text, several of the Jews (and Grotius seems to approve their opinion) interpret this law quite otherwise; as if the woman might both take hold of his secrets for the delivery of her husband, and also cut off the other man's hand; and they should not pity him who suffered thus, nor punish the woman, who might do any thing of this nature, to preserve one so dear to her as her husband: but this is a very forced interpretation. Maimonides is a little more reasonable in his exposition of these words, which he will have to signify, that they should lay a fine or a mulct upon her for her immodesty; which is suitable to their interpretation of that law, Exod. xxi. 24. "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth," &c. (See L'Empereur on Bava-kama, p. 198.) But it is an intolerable presumption in Maimonides to say, that if any one interpret this of a proper abscission of the woman's hand, though he pretend to be a prophet, and say, The Lord hath said unto me these words, *Thou shalt cut off her hand,* are to be understood as the words sound (*i. e.* literally as we speak), and do a miracle to confirm it, he is to be looked upon as a lying prophet, and may be put to death, because it is contrary to the constant tradition of their elders. So he writes Seder Zeraim, translated by our famous Dr. Pocock, p. 15. 38. Upon which principle they killed our blessed Saviour.

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *a stone and a stone:* for their weights were then made of stone, as are ours now commonly of lead or brass.

A great and a small.] To buy in commodities with the great, and sell them out again by the small; which was then and is now an usual way of cheating.

Ver. 14. *Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures,* &c.] In the Hebrew, *an ephah and an ephah:* for this was the most known measure among them, by which all the rest of their measures were made. (See Exod. xvi. 36.) From hence it was that Lucius Ampelius thought Mochos, that is *Moses* (who by ancient writers is called Moschos), was the inventor of weights and measures, because he took such pious care there should be no deceit in them, as the most learned Huetius observes in his Demonst. Evangel. prop. iv. cap. 8. n. 16.

Ver. 15. *But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, and a perfect and just measure.*] Neither too scanty nor too large. See Lev. xix. 35, 36. where all these three verses are sufficiently explained.

That thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.] Justice, as well as charity, was necessary to prolong their happiness in the land of promise, (xvi. 20.)

Ver. 16. *For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously.*] All that any way wrong their neighbours.

Are an abomination to the Lord thy God.] This is an expression commonly used, to declare God's hatred of all idolatrous practices. (See xviii. 9. 12.)

Ver. 17. *Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt.*] The Jews have framed three precepts out of this and the two following verses. One is, that they should *remember what Amalek did unto them.* Which Maimonides, according to their oral tradition, refers to the *mouth,* that they should always be talking of what Amalek did to them. The second, *not to forget it;* which he refers to their *heart:* that they should never let slip out of their mind the hatred Amalek had to them. And the third, that they should *blot out their remembrance from under heaven, i. e.* utterly destroy them, and leave none of them remaining. But none of the Jews have explained this better than Abarbinel; who, inquiring why such severity was expressed against the Amalekites, when the Edomites, who were of the same race, were dealt withal very favourably, (as we read before, xxiii. 8.) observes four reasons given here by Moses himself, why they should remember, when they were settled in the land of Canaan, and able to effect it, to exterminate this nation: for that is the single precept he gives them in charge; only he bids them not forget what Amalek had done to deserve that heavy sentence long ago passed upon them, and remaining on record, (Exod. xvii. 14—16.) confirmed with a solemn oath, though they were not able to execute it till they were settled in the land of promise. The first of these reasons is, because, whereas men undertake war against others, either to defend their own country, or to subdue their enemies' country, the Amalekites came forth against the Israelites without any such cause; for the Israelites did not pass by their country, and consequently gave them no apprehension of an invasion; nor had the Israelites then possession of any land of their own, which might tempt the Amalekites to covet it, and drive them out of it. But they undertook this war, with a petulant malice, only to bring them into slavery again. Which is the thing here intimated in this verse, *Remember what Amalek did to thee,* &c. Unto which he should have added, that their barbarity was much aggravated, by their assaulting them when they were newly delivered from grievous oppressions, and were unaccustomed to war, and without any provocation.

Ver. 18. *How he met thee by the way.*] This the same Abarbinel takes to be the second cause of God's high displeasure against Amalek: that, whereas it is the custom of all countries, before they begin a war, to denounce it by heralds, shewing the grounds of it, they rose up against the Israelites unexpectedly; which was a piece of the basest treachery. Which he thinks is intimated in these words, *he met thee by the way;* that is, on a sudden, by surprise, without any notice by a declaration of war. He might have added, that they did this when the Israelites were in a journey, and had travelled a great way, and in a wilderness, where they stood in need of refreshment; but were very unfit for fighting. Then, saith one of their rabbins, in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 44. "they came in like a bear in their way, to devour the mother with the children."

And smote the hindermost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary.] This he makes the third cause; that they did not offer them a pitched battle, but only fell upon their rear (as we speak), and there cut off such as lagged behind through feebleness and weariness, being unable to march so fast as the rest of their brethren. This is, in a very sober sense, suitable to the use of the word in Josh. x. 19. But what some of the Jews say, that the Amalekites cut off the privy members of certain of the tribe of Dan, in derision of circumcision,

is disowned by others of them, as having no foundation. See Schickard, in his Jus Regium, p. 112, 113. where Carpzovius observes, this was only a fancy of their *midraschim*, or preachers, wherewith they entertained the people in their sermons, on occasion of the ambiguity of the word we translate *cut off the hindermost*. Which R. Zacharias much better interprets, in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 44. where he makes it to signify all that were behind the cloud (which protected those who were under it), as those who went out of the camp, by reason of some uncleanness, to wash themselves. But this is no more than an ingenious conceit; for the laws about cleansing were not then delivered.

And feared not God.] This he makes the fourth cause; that though they feared Israel, whom they durst not look in the face, but cut them off behind, yet they feared not God, who had done such wonderful things for them in Egypt, and brought them thence with a mighty hand, and overthrown Pharaoh in the Red Sea. Which might have made them understand, that he sets up kings and pulls down kings, as Daniel speaks, ii. 21. But instead of considering this, they would have *profaned the glory of the Lord* (as he speaks), by enslaving those whom he had but newly delivered, and continued under the protection of a glorious cloud. Unto all which may be added, that they were originally derived from the same stock with the Israelites; *viz.* from Isaac.

Ver. 19. *Therefore it shall be, when the Lord thy God hath given thee rest from all thy enemies round about, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*] God did not require them to put this command in execution immediately after they were possessed of the land of Canaan, but after they were well settled there: so that there were some ages passed before they went about it; and then God himself put them in mind of it; or rather strictly enjoined it to be performed by Saul their first king: and we do not find them blamed for not doing it in the time of the judges, (1 Sam. xv. 1—3.)

Thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.] So God commandeth Saul in the place now mentioned, *utterly destroy all they have, and spare them not; but slay both men and women*, &c. For by the same justice that one person is cut off, a whole family, or a whole nation, may be utterly destroyed: that other families or nations, seeing or hearing God's judgments upon them, may be moved to flee from that wickedness for which they are punished. They are the words of Maimonides, par. iii. More Nevochim, cap. 41.

If we could believe all that the Talmudists say, we might think there were some among the Jews who endeavoured to mollify the severity of this precept: for they tell a story in Bava-bathra of Joab's master, who taught him to read it thus; Blot out *zechar*, the *male* of Amalek, not *zecher*, the *remembrance*. But at the same time they tell us, Joab thought to have killed him for leading him into an error.

Thou shalt not forget it.] This is not a distinct precept, but only a repetition of the foregoing; to imprint it more on their minds and hearts. And accordingly the Jews pretend to have had their hearts so set upon it, that when the officers were about to proclaim freedom from war to those persons mentioned xx. 5, 6, &c. they always excepted the war against the seven nations and Amalek, in which every body was bound to assist.

I shall end this matter with an observation of Abarbinel, that in this paragraph about Amalek, the injunction which God gave to Moses, Exod. xvii. 14. was fulfilled by him: *Write this for a memorial in a book.* No other book, saith he, is hereby meant, but the book of the law, which when Moses wrote, he was bound to mention this precept about Amalek; which he doth in this place. And if we suppose that he immediately wrote a distinct history of this matter, yet he inserted it afterward into the Pentateuch, both here and in the book of Exodus.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. *AND it shall be, when thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein.*] When they had a settled possession of the several inheritances, which fell to their share in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 2. *That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth.*] This is not meant merely of the first first-fruits they should have after they were settled in Canaan, but of the first-fruits they should have every year; which being the most desirable (as Conradus Pellicanus here observes) of all other, and coveted by every one, *majori aviditate, with a greater appetite than ordinary*, nature itself directed men to offer them to God, the giver of all good things. And these were distinct from that mentioned Lev. xxiii. 10. being of *all* the fruits of the earth. The principal of which being seven, the Jews commonly say, these only were to be carried to God; viz. *wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives*, and *dates*. Some of the doctors say, the first-fruits of all kind of things whatsoever were due; and a question being raised, whether a stranger was bound to pay them or not, some of them say, no; because they could not use the protestation mentioned ver. 3. But the more common opinion is, that they might both bring first-fruits and use the protestation, because Abraham was also the father of strangers, (Gen. xvii. 5.) And it may be, saith R. Bechai, that is pointed at ver. 11. of this chapter; where it is said, "Thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you."

Which thou shalt bring of thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.] In order to which, they say, every owner of land, when he went into his ground, and found any figs, or bunch of grapes, or a pomegranate more forward than the rest, he was to tie a rush about it, and write upon it, *these are first-fruits*. So Wagenseil, and many others, have observed out of the title Biccurim, cap. 3.

And shalt put it in a basket.] The quantity of each, they say, was to be at least a sixtieth part. And they might be all put into the same basket, provided they were not mingled, but preserved distinct; barley being laid at the bottom, and then wheat, and next olives, and above them dates, and then pomegranates; and last of all, figs and grapes, being hung on the outside; and leaves of palm, or other trees, put between every kind of first-fruits.

R. Bechai saith, that the rich brought these fruits in baskets of gold and silver, that is, covered with gold or silver (as Maimonides speaks); and we read of the like golden baskets carried by virgins, in the feast of Bacchus at Athens. (See Ezek. Spanhemius on Callimachus's hymn

to Ceres, p. 733.) Now, if the basket here mentioned was made of these, or any other metal, the Jews say, the priest was to restore it to the owner, when he had emptied it: but if it was a wicker basket, or such-like, the priest had it together with the first-fruits. (See Wagenseil upon Mischna Sota, cap. 7. sect. 3.)

And shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there.] The man himself was to go, as the Jews say, with the basket upon his shoulder: and a great company were wont to go together, who met at the chief city of their province. The time of going was at the feast of Pentecost, (Exod. xxiii. 16.) not before, but at any time after, till the feast of dedication, which was in our November: after which they were not accepted. Of the manner of going up with a bullock before them, whose horns were gilt, and head crowned with an olive garland, with music, and singing in the way the first verse of Psalm cxxii. &c. see Wagenseil, in the place abovementioned; and Selden, lib. iii. de Synedriis, cap. 13. n. 3. with Dr. Lightfoot in his Temple Service.

And here I cannot but think fit to note, that the heathen, in all probability, from hence derived the custom of carrying their first-fruits, as a tithe every year, unto the island Delos, where Apollo was supposed to have his special residence. And this not only from the islands thereabouts, and the neighbouring countries, but from all parts of the world; as the Jews we find every where sent, from the countries where they dealt, a sum of money every year, instead of first-fruits and tithes, unto Jerusalem; which privilege the Romans allowed them, after they had conquered them, as Josephus tells us, lib. vii. de Bello Jud. cap. 13. That heathen custom, now mentioned, is expressed by Callimachus, in his hymn upon Delos, in those remarkable words, ver. 278, 279, &c.

> Ἀλλά τοι ἀμφιετεῖς δεκατοφόροι αἰὲν ἀπαρχαὶ
> Πέμπονται· πᾶσαι δὲ χοροὺς ἀνάγουσι πόληες
> Αἵτε πρὸς ἠοίην, αἵ θ' ἕσπερον, αἵ τ' ἀνὰ μέσσην
> Κλήρους ἐστήσαντο, καὶ οἳ καθύπερθε βορείης.

The sense of which is this: *That first-fruits were sent for tithes every year from all countries, not only from the east, and west, and south, but from the north also.* And they were sent with such joy, as the Jews expressed on this occasion; for all cities, he saith, did χοροὺς ἀνάγειν. And so we read in several authors, that there were θεωρίαι, as they called them, *solemn embassies* sent from several people, by chosen persons, unto Delos, to celebrate there the feast of Apollo with music and dancing, &c. Particularly the Athenians, Peloponnesians, and Messenians, &c. of whom see Ezek. Spanhemius, in his Observations on Callimachus, p. 487. And, which is most strange, the Hyperboreans, a very northerly people, sent *frugum primitias* to this island, as Pliny, and I know not how many other authors, testify. Only what he calls the first-fruits of their corn, and such-like things, they call the first-fruits of their *holy things:* as the same excellent person observes there, (p. 490. 492, &c.) Which was done to testify their honour to this god, and for the maintenance of his priests and other ministers, who attended upon him there. For Delos, of itself, was but a barren isle, the soil being dry and stony, and called therefore by Callimachus, ver. 208. δυσήροτος.

There are other footsteps of this among the heathen; the *mystica vannus iacchi,* mentioned by Virgil in his Georgics, being nothing else (according to Servius), but *vas vimineum, a wicker basket,* in which their first-fruits were carried. (See the same Spanheim, p. 495.)

Ver. 3. *And thou shalt go unto the priest that shall be in those days.*] Who was then in attendance at the sanctuary, and particularly appointed to wait for their coming. When they entered the gates of the city, they sung the second verse of Psalm cxxii. "Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem:" and then they went to the mountain of the temple, and sung the whole hundred and fiftieth Psalm: and as soon as they entered the court of Israel, the Levites began to sing, Psal. xxx. 1. "I will extol thee, O Lord my God," &c.

And say unto him.] The following confession in this verse was made by them with the baskets on their shoulders, to stir them up to humility, as Maimonides interprets it. His words are these: "While they were compelled to carry their baskets on their shoulders, and in that manner to proclaim the Divine benefits, it signified that it was a considerable part of God's worship and service, for a man to be mindful of his afflictions and tribulations, when God had given him ease and rest from them. This the law takes care of, in several places; as when it saith, 'Thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant,' &c. with this intention, that he who lived in riches and pleasure, might be secured from the vices which spring from thence, such as pride, haughtiness, apostacy, and the like. According to what is said in this book, viii. 12. 'Lest thou eat, and art full,' &c. and xxxii. 15. 'Jesurun waxed fat, and kicked,' &c. To prevent which, God commanded the first-fruits to be thus offered every year to his Divine Majesty." (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 39.)

I profess this day unto the Lord thy God, that I am come into the country which the Lord sware unto our fathers for to give us.] This is a thankful acknowledgment of God's faithfulness to his promise, whereby they were put in mind to be faithful unto him, of whom they held this good land, by his gracious and free gift, and held it by this tenure, of paying to him this yearly rent.

Ver. 4. *And the priest shall take the basket out of thy hand, and set it before the altar of the Lord thy God.*] After the foregoing words were said, the basket was taken down from their shoulders, and every one holding his basket by the handle, or the rim of it, the priest put his hands under it, and waved it about, according to the prescription in the law, while the men recited the following words, ver. 5, 6, &c. This waving was a manifest token that it was offered to the Lord of the world, as an acknowledgment that he was in a peculiar manner their Lord and Sovereign, of whom they held this land.

Ver. 5. *And thou shalt speak and say before the Lord thy God.*] Audibly pronounce in the presence of God.

A Syrian ready to perish was my father.] Their father Jacob was not a Syrian by birth, for he was born in the land of Canaan. But one and the same person may be said to be of divers countries (as Bochartus hath observed), with regard either to the place of his nativity, or of his education, or of his life and conversation; which occasioned three countries to be ascribed to our blessed Saviour, *viz.* Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Capernaum. (See his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 5.) Thus Jacob, who was born and bred in

Canaan, is notwithstanding called a Syrian, because he lived twenty years with his uncle Laban, who was a Syrian, (Gen. xxv. 20.) and consequently Jacob's mother was so, as were both his wives, and all his children, who were born there, except Benjamin. But he is more particularly here called a Syrian, to put them in mind of his poverty, when he went first into that country, and there lived as a servant, under a hard master; which is expressed in these words, *ready to perish*, that is, very poor, and reduced to great straits, being forced to flee from the fury of his brother Esau, and to travel on foot to Padan-Aram, (which was comprehended anciently under the name of Syria, Gen. xxxii. 10.) where he was so cruelly used by his uncle Laban, (xxxi. 7. 39—41.) that Onkelos takes these words, which we translate *ready to perish*, in an active sense, for him that *destroys* another. For by the Syrian here he understands Laban, (who is so called, as I noted before, Gen. xxviii. 5.) as if the meaning were, *the Syrian* (that is, Laban) *sought to destroy my father*. For, as he used him barbarously when he was with him, so he followed after him, when he went away, with a mind to ruin him. And thus Manasseh ben Israel understands it, and many others mentioned by Fesselius, which is the sense also of the Vulgar Latin, *Syrus persequebatur patrem meum*.

And he went down into Egypt.] Though he brought him from Laban with great substance, yet as he was still but a sojourner in the land of Canaan, so he was forced by famine to go down into Egypt for sustenance.

And sojourned there with a few.] They were but seventy persons, and lived there as strangers. All which they were now bound to commemorate, for their humiliation before God (which I observed before out of Maimonides), which might move them the more to exalt and magnify the mercy of God to them, who had made them (as it follows) a mighty nation. For this confession consists of these two parts; their own unworthiness, and God's great goodness.

And became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous.] See Exod. i. 7.

Ver. 6. *And the Egyptians evil-entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage.*] The goodness of God unto them in making them so numerous, was the occasion of sorer affliction, than either they or their fathers had endured. (See Exod. i. 9, 10, &c.) The remembrance of this was exceeding useful, to stir up their gratitude to God, not only for their deliverance from the Egyptian slavery, but bringing them into a country of their own, most plentifully stored with all manner of good things.

Ver. 7. *And when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice, and looked upon our affliction*, &c.] Having acknowledged their low, and poor, and distressed condition, now they proceed to an acknowledgment of God's wonderful goodness; which appeared the more in relieving them when they were utterly helpless. (See Exod. ii. 23—25. iii. 7, 8.)

Ver. 8. *And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched-out arm, and a great terribleness*, &c.] See iv. 34. and vii. 19. This is so vehemently inculcated upon them (as Maimonides speaks in the place forenamed), that they should *remember the day they came out of Egypt all the days of their life*, xvi. 3. Exod. x. 2. Which it became them especially to remember at this time, that they might demonstrate the truth of prophecy both concerning punishments and rewards.

Ver. 9. *And hath brought us into this place, and given us this land, even a land flowing with milk and honey.*] As they remember the terrible plagues upon Egypt in the foregoing verse, so they commemorate the singular blessings bestowed upon them in this.

Ver. 10. *And now, behold, I have brought the first-fruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me.*] Thus they concluded this solemn rite, as they began it, (ver. 3.) with an acknowledgment that they held this land of God as the supreme Lord, and that by his free gift.

And thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God.] Having said these words, they left the basket by the altar, as the Jews say, where it had been placed, (ver. 4.) and then the priest set it before the sanctuary, where God dwelt by his special presence there.

And worship before the Lord thy God.] They made a profound reverence towards the holy place, by bowing their bodies as low as they could, and so went out of the temple: so the Hebrew word imports. And this outward act of worship, no doubt, was accompanied, in all good men, with humble thanks to God for his benefits, and prayer for the continuance of them.

Ver. 11. *And thou shalt rejoice in every thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thy house; thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.*] They were to make a feast at the time of offering these first-fruits; and there to entertain the Levites, and the strangers, as well as their own family. These feasts were made out of the provision mentioned, xii. 6, 7. xvi. 10—12. Besides which, the bullock, which went before them when they carried up the first-fruits from their several cities, was offered for a peace-offering, when they came to the sanctuary; as Mr. Selden observes in the place abovementioned, (lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 13. p. 203.)

Ver. 12. *When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase.*] For there was a second tithe to be paid after the first to the Levites, as was observed above, xii. 6. and is plainly spoken of, xiv. 22, 23, &c. Which the Jews call the *consummation* or *finishing of tithing*, as I observed there, ver. 29. And so these words may be translated, *When thou hast finished all the tithes of thine increase.*

The third year, which is the year of tithing.] Every third year, the second tithe beforementioned was to be employed to a peculiar use, (see xix. 28, 29.) as it follows here in the next words. (So the Jews expound it, whose sense our Mr. Mede expresses in a few words.) For two years together they paid the Levites' tithe, and the festival tithe; but in the third year they paid the Levites' tithe, and the poor man's tithe; that is, what was wont in other years to be spent in feasting, was wholly spent every third year upon the poor. (Book i. Discourse xxxii. p. 228.) But there are some that think they were bound every third year to pay this poor man's tithe, besides that to the Levites' and the festival tithe: about which I shall not here dispute.

And hast given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled.] According to the commandment, xiv. 29. (See there.)

Ver. 13. *Then thou shalt say.*] As they were every year to make the foregoing profession when they brought their

first-fruits, so they were to make another profession, which here follows, every third year: "When the course of all manner of tithing (as Mr. Mede there expresses it) was come about."

Before the Lord.] This sounds as if they were to make this profession before the most holy place at the sanctuary. Which seems to confute the common exposition of the Jewish doctors, that this tithe of the third year was not to be spent there, but at home, within their own gates. But it may be supposed, that every man was privately to make this solemn profession, as in the presence of God, who knew the truth of what he said. Or rather, that the next time he went up to worship at God's house, he was bound to make this declaration before the Divine Majesty. Which is the most likely interpretation, because these words, *before the Lord,* are always so used in these books. And unless they had been obliged to this, their covetous and cruel disposition might have inclined them to defraud the poor, which by this means was prevented. For though men might have satisfied themselves in omitting this profession, if it had been left merely to their own private consciences, yet when they were bound to come and make it publicly at God's own house, as they could not avoid it, so few would be found so impudently profane, as solemnly to tell a lie to God himself.

I have brought away the hallowed things.] Things separated by the Divine commandment from their own private use, for the use of the poor.

Out of my house.] From the rest of the fruits of the earth which they had gathered.

And also I have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow.] That is, unto the refreshment of the poor. So the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases ver. 2. which is worth the mentioning: "In the third year, which is the year of tithing for the poor, ye shall give the first tithes to the Levites, and then the tithes of the poor to the strangers, fatherless, and widows, that they may eat in their cities, and be filled."

According to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me.] According to the direction beforementioned, xiv. 29.

I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them.] Neither done contrary to God's precepts, nor forgotten to perform them; either by keeping these tithes to themselves, or by bestowing them otherwise than God appointed.

Ver. 14. *I have not eaten thereof in my mourning.*] After the general profession, mentioned in the verse foregoing, that they had brought all hallowed things out of their houses, and employed them as God directed, they were to make three particular professions, which are mentioned in this verse. And, it is probable, they have respect to some idolatrous customs which were in those days: the first of them is, that they had *not eaten thereof in mourning,* or *in lamentation.* For so the Hebrew word *oni* signifies, very bitter grief, and sore mourning. Such the Egyptians made in harvest-time, when they offered the first-fruits of the earth, and kept the feast of Isis with doleful lamentations. So Diodorus Siculus, and other authors, tell us, particularly Julius Firmicus, who severely reproves their folly, or madness rather, saying, *Cur plangitis fruges terræ,* &c. "Why do you bewail the fruits of the earth? Why weep you at the growth of your seed? &c. You should rather give thanks for these things to the most high God, whose bounty is not to be lamented; but bewail rather your own error," &c. If there was such a custom in the world, when Moses lived, it may very well be thought that he taught the Israelites to disclaim such senseless and impious practices. And as the Egyptians, by this mourning, acknowledged Isis, that is, *the earth,* to be the giver of all these good things; so he required God's people to bring in their harvest with the greatest joy and thanks unto the Most High: for there was no joy so great as that of harvest and vintage; directly opposite to the heathen, who kept the feast of Bacchus also with lamentations. (See our learned Dr. Spencer, lib. ii. de Ritual. Hebr. Leg. cap. 24. sect. 1.)

Nor taken aught thereof for any unclean use.] As some of the old idolaters were wont to do; who separated some part of the first-fruits for magical purposes, and sometimes for carnal and filthy. So Julius Firmicus informs us, who immediately after the mention of their lamentations, when they gathered the fruits of the earth, asks this question, "Quid addis incestum et adulterium?" Which shews that there were unclean rites which accompanied their offerings; and that they made them minister unto Venus. See the same learned author in the same place, sect. 3.

Nor given aught thereof for the dead.] If this be the right translation of the last words, *for the dead,* St. Austin hath given us a likely reason of this clause, which was, to profess they had not imitated the gentiles, who were wont to set meat and drink upon the graves of the dead, as he tells us, Serm. 15. de Sanctis. But it doth not appear that they set any part of their tithe, or first-fruits upon them, nor that they did it only in harvest-time; but rather common bread and wine, which at all times they set upon their graves when they were interred: and therefore it may be translated *to the dead,* (as the same excellent person observes, sect. 3.) And so it is a profession, they had not offered any of the fruits of the earth to heroes (after the manner of the gentiles), particularly to Osiris. For that they honoured them with their first-fruits, appears by a passage in Porphyry, lib. iv. περὶ Ἀποχῆς, sect. 22. where he mentions three laws made by Triptolemus, an ancient lawgiver among the Athenians: one of which is this, Θεοὺς καρποῖς ἀγάλλειν, *To worship the gods with the fruits of the earth.* Which Draco thus expounds, as he shews in the conclusion of that book; Θεοὺς τιμᾶν καὶ ἥρωας ἐγχωρίους ἐν κοινῷ ἑπομένους νόμοις πατρίοις ἰδίᾳ κατὰ δύναμιν σὺν εὐφημίᾳ καὶ ἀπαρχαῖς καρπῶν, &c. *To honour the gods, and the heroes of their country publicly, according to the laws of the nation; and privately, as much as they were able, with speaking well of them, and with the first-fruits, and the annual offerings.* (See Meursius, in his Themis Attica, lib. i. cap. 1.) But however we take this, the giving any part of tithe, either *for the dead,* or *to the dead,* shews there was such a superstitious custom: unto which this clause having a manifest respect, we have reason to think the two former have so likewise.

But I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God, and done according to all that thou hast commanded me.] Performed all that God required, and done nothing contrary to it. All these words from ver. 13. to this place, were to be spoken with a low and humble voice, because they are a sort of commendation of themselves, and of their own integrity; which is not to be proclaimed aloud. But

when they made the foregoing profession, at the presenting of their first-fruits, (ver. 5, 6, &c.) they being an acknowledgment of their own meanness and poor beginnings, and of God's infinite goodness in their advancement, they were to lift up their voice, and say aloud, *My father was a Syrian ready to perish*, &c. Thus the doctors resolve in the Gemara of Mischna Sota, cap. 7. in the beginning of it.

Ver. 15. *Look down.*] Have a gracious regard.

From thy holy habitation from heaven.] This is an humble acknowledgment of the infinite majesty of God, who, though he was graciously pleased to dwell among them by a glorious symbol of his presence in the sanctuary, yet dwelt in a far more transcendant glory in the heavens, the highest of which could not contain him, as holy men acknowledged, (1 Kings viii. 27. 2 Chron. ii. 6.)

And bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us.] Having performed their duty, they had the greater confidence to beg the continuance of God's mercies to them, and to their country; which it had been presumption to expect, if they had not acknowledged him to be the donor of all the good things they enjoyed in the manner before appointed. For this was the end of all oblations, both of this tithe, and of the first-fruits, and any other, to acknowledge God to be the Lord, *of whom all things come* (as David speaks), *and of whose own we give unto him.* (See 1 Chron. xxix. 11—13, &c.)

As thou swarest unto our fathers.] He teacheth them to conclude as they began, (ver. 3.) with a thankful acknowledgment of God's faithfulness to his promise.

A land that floweth with milk and honey.] See xi. 9. The Jerusalem Targum paraphraseth it thus, *A land producing fruits as pure as milk, and as sweet and delicious as honey.*

Ver. 16. *This day.*] This refers to the time when Moses spake all these words unto them.

The Lord thy God commanded thee.] By me.

To do these statutes and judgments.] These two words comprehend the precepts in the foregoing chapters: some of which concern matters of religion, and others of civil government.

Thou shalt therefore keep and do them, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.] Set yourselves sincerely and heartily to the performance of them.

Ver. 17. *Thou hast avouched.*] So the Hebrew word signifies, as Job Ludolphus observes, who renders it, *asseverare, serio affirmare;* being the same with the French word *avouer*, and may be here translated, *thou hast solemnly professed*, or rather *protested.*

The Lord this day.] The word *this* is not in the Hebrew (as it is in the foregoing verse), but he saith simply *hajom* (not *hajom hazeth*), *the day*, or *that day;* which signifies the time when Moses delivered these laws from God.

To be thy God.] Then they owned him to be their king and governor. For so the name Elohim properly signifies dignity, empire, and authority, as Grotius observes upon Exod. xx. Fortunatus Scacchus, before him, expounds these very words: "Which (saith he) have respect to God as their emperor, who had the supreme government of the commonwealth of Israel, with a right and authority of constituting laws, and giving mandates for the establishing of that government." Sacror. Elæochrysm. par. ii. cap. 52. p. 509. (See Exod. xxiv. 3, 4, &c. and xxxiv. 27.)

And to walk in his ways.] By his *ways*, that author understands the moral precepts written on tables of stone.

To keep his statutes.] The ritual precepts.

And his commandments.] Concerning the duties of his worship and service.

And his judgments.] The political precepts belonging to their good government.

And to hearken unto his voice.] In all things which he should declare from his oracle, when they consulted it.

Ver. 18. *And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people*, &c.] At the same time (for the word *this* is not in the Hebrew), the Lord assured the Israelites that they should be his people, in a special manner, provided they made good their promise of keeping his commandments: for the covenant was mutual. (See Exod. xxiv. 3. 7. xix. 5, 6.) It is observable that the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases these two verses in this manner: "Ye have taken the Word of the Lord to reign over you to-day, that he may be your God, &c. And the Word of the Lord reigneth over you, a people dedicated to his name, as his peculiar," &c. Where *Memra, the Word*, cannot be understood otherwise than of the second Person in the Deity.

Ver. 19. *And to make thee high above all nations that he hath made.*] It is a pious note of Conr. Pellicanus, that there is no greater glory to the faithful, than that they are peculiarly grateful, devoted, dedicated, obedient unto God, as his children.

In praise, and in name, and in honour.] These words express his singular kindness to them, in that though all nations were his (being made by him, and he the Lord and governor of them all), yet he promised to have such a special favour to them, that all nations round them should take notice of it, and speak with admiration of their happiness, and the honour he had done them. All this is included in those words beforementioned, Exod. xix. 5, 6. where the last words of this verse are explained, *That thou mayest be a holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken.*

All this Moses called to their mind, that it might prepare and dispose them to renew the same covenant with God, before he left them; which he presses upon them in the nine-and-twentieth chapter of this book, after he had given them some other admonitions, and laid before them the blessings and curses that would come upon them, according to their fidelity or falseness in that holy covenant. Which is the subject of the two following chapters.

CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *AND Moses, with the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying.*] I observed in the preface to this book, and upon chap. iv. 41. and other places, that Moses did not speak all that is contained in this book at once, but at several times; and that he commonly took the elders to his assistance, as is here expressly affirmed; though some things he spake himself alone to all the people, as I observed upon ver. 1.

Keep all the commandments which I command you.] This is a new exhortation to obedience; which he could not press too often, considering the great proneness of this people to break God's laws.

This day.] At this time, and formerly: for it doth not precisely signify *one day;* and the word *this* is not in the original.

Ver. 2. *And it shall come to pass, on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan.*] Here it is evident the word *day* doth not signify precisely the very same day they passed over, but not long after, as soon as they were come to Mount Ebal, (ver. 4.) after the taking of Jericho and Ai, as appears from Josh. viii. 30. For they were to pass over Jordan, *unto the land which the Lord their God gave them* (as it here follows), before they were obliged to do what is here required.

That thou shalt set thee up great stones.] It is not said how many; but some fancy there were twelve, according to the number of pillars which Moses employed (Exod. xxiv. 4.) when he made the covenant between God and his people. But, unless we could certainly determine how much of the law was to be written upon these stones, we cannot give a good guess at their number. For if only the ten commandments, fewer than twelve would serve; if the whole book of Deuteronomy, so many are not sufficient. As for the marginal reference in our Bibles unto Josh. iv. 1. it can have no respect to this place; for those twelve stones were ordered to be taken out of Jordan, and left there, where they lodged that night, which was at Gilgal. (See there, ver. 3. 8. 20.)

And plaster them with plaster.] That being plain and smooth, they might write what is here commanded upon them, which they could not do while they were rough and uneven.

Ver. 3. *And thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law.*] Many think he means the whole book of Deuteronomy; which, because it is long, *great stones* are ordered to be provided for this purpose. Others think only the ten commandments are here intended, which were the principal *words of the covenant,* as Moses calls this law, xxxix. 1. But Josephus (lib. iv. Archæol. cap. *ult.*) is of opinion, that he means the cursings which here follow from verse 15. to the end of the chapter. Which is no improbable opinion; they containing several select precepts, and the last of them seems to respect the whole law of Moses, ver. 26.

But, however we understand this, it is certain, that, before the use of paper was found out, the ancients, particularly the Phœnicians and Egyptians, were wont to write their minds upon *stones,* as a great many authors testify, mentioned by Huetius, who observes, that this custom continued long after the invention of paper, especially if they desired any thing should be vulgarly known and conveyed down to posterity. See Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 2. n. 15. where he observes, that Moses ordered the book of Deuteronomy to be inscribed upon stones. I suppose he means all the *laws* contained in this book (not all the *exhortations* and *historical passages*), which agrees very well with this injunction, that they should write on the stones *all the words of this law.*

When thou art passed over, that thou mayest go in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, &c.] When they were gone over Jordan to take possession of the land of Canaan, and were come to the place where he directed these stones to be set up, and this inscription made upon them. Which place is particularly named in the next verse. And from these words Fortunatus Scacchus thinks he hath reason to assert, that none of the things forementioned are meant by the *words of this law,* here commanded to be written; but that upon the very top of these *stones* (or the *altar* made of them, as he would have it understood) were written only the words of this covenant, whereby the people of Israel confessed themselves to have received the land of Canaan from God, and to hold it on condition of their obedience unto him. For so he interprets the words *write unto them, in summa superficie.* And to make us know what he means by *the words of this law,* he thinks the following words are added, *that thou mayest go in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,* &c. that is, thou shalt declare who brought thee hither, and gave thee possession of this country, and upon what condition; *viz.* that thou shouldest keep the commands given to thee by God in Horeb. And therefore Moses doth not bid them write on the stones the *law of the Lord* nor *the law* absolutely, but the *words of this law.* Where the demonstrative particle *hazoth* limits the sense to the present matter of which he is speaking. Thus he, Myrothec. 2. Sacror. Elæochrysm, cap. 57. where he endeavours to strengthen this interpretation, by observing, that, after this command for writing this law upon the stones, "Moses, and the priests, and Levites, spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed, and hearken, O Israel, this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God," &c. (ver. 9, 10.)

Ver. 4. *Therefore it shall be, when ye be gone over Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones.*] This phrase, *set up,* seems to imply that they were a kind of pillars erected for this purpose, that the inscription might appear more fairly upon them.

In Mount Ebal.] Here the Samaritan Pentateuch hath, *in Mount Gerizim;* which is a manifest corruption, to justify their building a temple there, which they pretend God commanded in these words.

Ver. 5. *And there shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God.*] That they might offer sacrifice to God, and renew their covenant with him.

An altar of stones.] Upon which Josephus himself fancies the forenamed inscription was to be made; and so the Talmudists also, in Mischna Sota, cap. 7. But it is plain, the stones designed for that use were to be set up before the altar was built; the intention of it being (as I shall shew presently), that they might promise to observe the words which were there written.

Thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them.] See Exod. xx. 25.

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt build the altar of the Lord thy God of whole stones.*] Not hewn, nor polished; whereby all manner of imagery was avoided. Such rustic altars of rough stone, piled one upon another, were in use among the heathen, who seem to have imitated this pattern. The form of one of them Fortunatus Scacchus hath given us out of some ancient monuments at Brixia, related by Octavius Roscius. (See his forenamed book, cap. 59. p. 585.) Such altars the Israelites were permitted to build upon some special occasion, as Gideon and Manoah did, (Judg. vi. 24. 26. xiii. 19.) and Samuel, (1 Sam. vii. 17.) and Saul, (1 Sam. xiv. 35.) and David: (2 Sam. xxiv. 25.) and such an one Moses himself built, (Exod. xxiv. 4.) And as Moses there set up twelve pillars, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, when they entered into covenant with God at Horeb, so the forementioned author thinks, at the con-

firmation of it, when they came into Canaan, they built not twelve altars, but heaped up twelve stones, which made one altar, without any cost at all bestowed upon it. And thus Elijah took twelve stones, and on a sudden built an altar with them, when he endeavoured to bring the Israelites back again into the covenant of God, (1 Kings xviii. 31, 32.)

And thou shalt offer burnt-offerings thereon.] As they did at Horeb, (Exod. xxiv. 5.) and as Joshua did when they came into Canaan, and had built the altar here commanded, (Josh. viii. 31.) which *burnt-offerings* were an acknowledgment of God's sovereign dominion over them; and that they held this land of him, as their supreme Lord, from whom they had received it. They kept the Passover as soon as they came into Canaan; but we read of no altar erected, nor burnt-sacrifices offered, till they came to Ebal.

Ver. 7. *And thou shalt offer peace-offerings.*] So Moses also did at Horeb, as we read in the forenamed place, (Exod. xxiv. 5.) and so Joshua did when they came into Canaan. And they were offered as thanksgivings to God, for bringing them into that good land.

And shalt eat there, and rejoice before the Lord thy God.] The sacrificers had a part of the peace-offerings given them, that they might feast with God, in token that they were in covenant with him. (See Lev. vii. 5.) And therefore God ordered these sacrifices to be offered, as soon as they came to this place, where his law was to be inscribed upon the stones beforementioned; that the people of Israel, to whom God promised the possession of the land of Canaan, upon the condition that they observed his laws, might confirm their covenant with him, when they took possession of it; and be given to understand, that God, having performed what he promised, expected that they should be mindful of their obligation, faithfully to observe his Divine laws. So that this altar may be properly called (as the same Fort. Scacchus terms it), "the altar of confederation, or confirmation of the covenant, into which they had entered at Horeb."

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.*] So that they might be read easily. How the Talmudists came to fancy they were written in seventy languages, I cannot imagine: but such a conceit there is among them, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 9. p. 396. for so many languages they think there were in the world. And Bartenora saith, God would have every body that came into their country learn these truths, if he pleased; and no pagan be able to excuse his ignorance, by saying, He had no means to know them. (See Joh. Wagenseil upon Sota, cap. 7. sect. 5. annot. 5.)

Ver. 9. *And Moses, and the priests, and the Levites, spake unto all Israel, saying.*] It seems, by this, that Moses and the elders (ver. 1.) took the priests and Levites to their assistance, to deliver what follows.

Take heed.] Attend to what we say. The Hebrew word is found no where else; and seems to belong to their outward posture.

And hearken.] So as to consider.

This day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God.] These words following after the precept concerning building an altar of confederation, must be understood as relating unto that; and therefore the word *this day* doth not respect only that particular day on which Moses spake this to the people, or the day wherein God declared it, but the day upon which such an altar, for the renovation of the covenant, was to be erected, when Joshua was to speak these words: for then, and not before, the blessings were pronounced to those that observed the laws of God, and the curses against those that broke them; and God had not fulfilled his promises to them till they came over Jordan. Therefore he did not order this altar to be built, and these sacrifices to be offered, whereby they obliged themselves to him, and became his people by a new bond, till their entrance upon the possession of what he had promised.

Ver. 10. *Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do his commandments,* &c.] These words, and the foregoing, are plainly words of a mutual covenant between God and them. Into which covenant they entered three times: first, at Horeb, (Exod. xxiv.) and then just before Moses died, twenty-ninth of this book, (ver. 1. 12, 13, &c.) and when they were come into Canaan, (Josh. viii. 30, 31, &c.) And because the Divine laws delivered to them were confirmed and ratified at all these times, therefore it is that those laws are so frequently called by the name of the *covenant;* and when they transgressed them, they are said to *break this covenant.*

Ver. 11. *And Moses charged the people the same day, saying.*] Which charge, I suppose, the elders, with the assistance of the priests and Levites, delivered throughout the whole camp of Israel, (ver. 1. 9.)

Ver. 12. *These shall stand upon Mount Gerizim.*] This is a mountain upon which Samaria was afterward built.

To bless the people.] By saying *Amen,* when they heard the blessings read by the priests. For it was not the people who stood upon the mountain that blessed (*i. e.* pronounced the blessings), but the priests below, (ver. 14.)

When ye are gone over Jordan.] See ver. 2.

Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin.] These six tribes, who stood upon Mount Gerizim (*i. e.* upon the top, and on the descent of it down to the bottom), were all descended from the sons of free women, Leah and Rachel; and therefore many think appointed to bless, which was more honourable than to curse.

Ver. 13. *And these shall stand upon Mount Ebal to curse.*] This was a mountain opposite to the other; and there lay a valley between them. Abimelech seems to have been made king upon this mountain, when he had killed all the sons of Gideon but Jotham: for it was done *in the plain* (or *by the oak*) *of the pillar, which was in Shechem;* that is, by this pillar, on which the curses of the law were written, (Judg. ix. 6.) whereupon Jotham got upon Mount Gerizim, and then cursed the men of Shechem. Which shews, that the tops of these mountains were not so far distant one from another, but what was said upon the one might be heard by those who were on the top and the sides of the other. And yet there was such a valley between them, that they could not presently come at Jotham to apprehend him, but he had time to flee, and get away, after he had spoken his apologue.

Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.] Four of these were children of the handmaids: and Reuben had lost his dignity by going up to his father's bed; and Zebulun was the youngest of Leah's sons; who was therefore chosen, rather than any of the other, for this less honourable employment. For otherwise there would not have been an equal number of tribes upon each mountain.

Ver. 14. *And the Levites.*] That is, the priests, who are often called *the priests the Levites;* particularly in that very place, where we read of the execution of this command, Josh. viii. 33. And the Levites were among those that stood upon Mount Gerizim, (ver. 12.) who did not pronounce the blessings, but answered *Amen* to them. Yet the Gemara upon Sota, cap. 7. sect. 23. will have it, that as many of the Levites as were fit to minister (that is, all from thirty to fifty years of age, who were fit to carry the ark) stood round about the ark with the priests; the rest of the Levites being upon Mount Gerizim, with the other tribes appointed to have their station there.

Shall speak, and say unto all the men of Israel.] The same Gemara rightly gathers, that the ark with the priests were below in the valley between the two mountains; because it is said, in the place beforementioned, that all Israel and the elders stood about it, Josh. viii. 33. Which could not have been, unless it were placed between the two mountains whereon they stood, upon both sides, from the top to the bottom.

With a loud voice.] That every one that stood on the side or top of the mountains might hear what they said, the priests being placed so, in several parts of the valley, that their voice might reach them all. For which end they were advanced, perhaps, upon a pulpit, (as Ezra afterward was, Neh. viii. 4.) and a signal likewise given when they should say *Amen.*

Ver. 15. *Cursed be he that maketh any graven or molten image.*] The people upon the mountains being to bless as well as curse, the Mischna, in the title Sota, (cap. 7. sect. 5.) rightly explains this; that, first, the priests, turning their faces towards Mount Gerizim, proclaimed with a loud voice, *Blessed be the man that maketh not any graven,* &c. unto which all the people that stood there answered *Amen;* and then turning their faces towards Mount Ebal, they said these words, *Cursed be the man that maketh,* &c. to which they that stood there made the same answer. See also the Jerusalem Targum, which paraphrases these words in the same manner.

An abomination unto the Lord.] Which is odious, and far to be removed from the presence of the Lord, as the same Targum interprets it.

The work of the hands of the craftsman.] A mere device of men, and therefore not to have Divine worship given to it of any sort.

And putteth it in a secret place.] Though he was not a public declared worshipper of images, yet, if he did it privately, in some closet of his own house, or in any other secret place, to conceal his wickedness, though he escaped the punishment of the law, which sentenced open idolaters to death, yet he could not escape the vengeance of God.

And all the people.] The forenamed Mischna and Targum say, that the people on both mountains answered *Amen,* both to the blessings and to the cursings; which doth not agree with what goes before, ver. 12, 13.

Shall answer and say, Amen.] Express their consent to it. For the word *Amen,* as the Talmudists say in Schebuoth, hath sometimes the force of an oath, sometimes only declares consent and approbation, and sometimes is used for the confirmation of any thing. An example of the first they think there is in Numb. v. 22. and they allege this place for an example of the second; and for the third, Jer. xxviii. 6.

Ver. 16. *Cursed be he that setteth light by his father and mother.*] It is observed by interpreters, that, as the precept of honouring parents stands next to the commandment concerning the honour that is due to God, (Exod. xx. 12.) so the curse pronounced against those who dishonoured them, is here placed next to the curse against worshippers of images. And as idolaters were to be put to death, so were those that cursed their parents, (Exod. xxi. 17. Lev. xx. 9.) And I may add, from the foregoing words, that though they did it ever so secretly, they lay under this curse.

And all the people shall say, Amen.] But before this curse was pronounced, they had said *Amen* to the blessing opposite to it [*Blessed is he that setteth not lightly by his father and mother*], as was observed in the foregoing verse. And the same is to be noted concerning the following curses, which were preceded with a blessing, till they were all ended.

Ver. 17. *Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's landmark,* &c.] Against which there is an express precept in the foregoing part of this book, xix. 14. And Pellicanus well observes, that, by this particular instance of God's displeasure against injustice, they were deterred from all encroachments upon their neighbours' possessions.

Ver. 18. *Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way.*] By giving him wrong directions, or misleading him. (See Lev. xix. 14.) Some apply this to giving pernicious advice to simple people; which is certainly worse than misguiding of the blind, because it leads men into sin, as well as into danger.

Ver. 19. *Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow.*] These three I observed before (xxiv. 19.) are commonly put together, as a paraphrase on the word *poor:* whose cause God himself undertakes to plead, (x. 18. and see Exod. xii. 21, 22.) And, therefore, all good lawgivers have taken special care of them, particularly of orphans; concerning whom Plato ordains, that the conservators of the laws should be ἀντὶ γενητόρων, *instead of their natural parents,* and look after them so well, that they should not fare the worse for wanting their fathers. (See lib. viii. de Legibus, fol. 926, &c. edit. Serrani.)

Ver. 20. *Cursed be he that lieth with his father's wife.*] See xxii. 30. and Lev. xviii. 8.

Ver. 21. *Cursed be he who lieth with any manner of beast,* &c.] Exod. xxii. 19. and Lev. xviii. 23. This some of the Jewish doctors, out of an unaccountable pride, apply to the vulgar sort of their own nation (whom they call *the people of the earth*), as if they were no better than beasts, with whom they were not to marry.

Ver. 22. *Cursed be he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother,* &c.] This hath been explained also, Lev. xviii. 9.

Ver. 23. *Cursed be he that lieth with his mother-in-law,* &c.] See Lev. xviii. 17. and xx. 14.

Ver. 24. *Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbour secretly,* &c.] Though it be but with his tongue, whereby he wounds the fame of an absent person. But the word *smite* is often used for killing, (Exod. xxi. 12. Lev. xxiv. 17.) Of which, if a man was guilty, though he committed the murder so

secretly, that he could not be put to death by the sentence of the judges, yet he lay under this heavy sentence of God.

Ver. 25. *Cursed be he that taketh a reward to slay an innocent person*, &c.] This seems to have respect to the judges, who for money not only gave wrong judgment in other causes, but condemned those that were not guilty to death. (See Exod. xxiii. 7, 8. and in this book, x. 17. xvi. 19.)

Ver. 26. *Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.*] The word we here translate *confirm*, is more plainly translated *perform*, in 1 Sam. xv. 11. And so it certainly signifies here; the performing of what God commands, being a kind of establishment of the law, as disobedience is a subversion of it, and, as far as lies in the offender's power, an abolishing it, and taking it away. Therefore, the apostle exactly translates the sense of these words, Galat. iii. 10. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things*, &c. where the apostle adds the word *all* (as the LXX. and the Samaritan did, even in St. Jerome's time), to expound *the words of this law*, to signify not merely all that is contained in these blessings and curses, *but all things which are written in the book of the law.* So that whether this whole book (*i. e.* all the laws contained in it) were to be written upon the pillars, or only these blessings and cursings, the matter comes to the same issue; because all that is contained in this book is comprehended in this last curse, yea, all that is contained in the whole law of Moses. Therefore, it is not very material neither, whether only these curses and blessings were recited upon Mount Gerizim and Ebal, or the whole law of Moses, from one end to the other, about which the Jews themselves differ. But they that are of the latter opinion, think it well grounded upon Josh. viii. 33. where we read how Joshua carefully performed what Moses here enjoined. And, that his words might not be forgotten, Moses seems to have ordered the continuance of this solemnity every seventh year, in the twenty-ninth chapter of this book, ver. 10, 11, &c.

The Mischna in Sota (which I have often mentioned), concludes this matter with these words: When the blessings and the cursings were ended, they brought stones and built an altar, which they plastered over, and wrote upon them all the words of this law in seventy languages. But I have shewn before, that the stones on which the law was written were different from the altar, and were erected before the building of the altar. The Gemara there adds, (cap. 7. sect. 24.) That every one of the Israelites there present stood bound one for another (that is, for the whole company), that they would observe these laws. Which I know not how they extract out of Moses's words; but their doctors frequently mention it in their books, and make this pious use of it, that, by virtue of this security which they gave for each other, every man was bound to reprove his neighbour if he saw him offend, unless he was content to undergo the punishment which was threatened unto the breach of God's laws, and come under the curse, (Lev. xix. 17.) And unto this they apply those words, *they shall fall one upon another*, (as we truly translate, Lev. xxvi. 37.) as if they signified, *every one shall fall by his brother*, that is, by his brother's crimes: for we all promised, say they, (in the Gemara Sanhedrin, cap. 3. sect. 6.) and engaged one for another; and so from that time were punished one for another.

END OF VOL. I.

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COMMENTARY

UPON

THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

DEUTERONOMY

(CONTINUED).

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it shall come to pass.*] In this chapter he repeats, with many enlargements, the reward and penalties which he had promised and threatened in the book of Leviticus, unto the observance or breach of the covenant they had made with God: and here in this verse he promises in general the blessings which are more particularly enumerated in the following verses.

If thou wilt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and do all his commandments, &c.] See vii. 12. where the same thing is said; only here he adds the word *diligently,* to make them attend with the greater seriousness to what he delivered. (See chap. xi. 13. 22.)

That the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth.] By bestowing on them the following blessings. (See vii. 14.) They were already endued with singular privileges above other nations, (Exod. xix. 5, 6.) which by their obedience would be confirmed, continued, and augmented, in greater plenty of all things.

Ver. 2. *And all these blessings shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.*] Blessings that come unexpectedly, and when we are not in pursuit of them, are most welcome, and highly delight us. And such God here promises to bestow on them by his gracious providence, without their laborious and anxious seeking after them. By which very thing he set them above all nations: for what they followed after eagerly, and many times in vain, he undertakes should come to them and prevent their desires.

If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.] So as to observe and do all his commandments; as it is explained in the foregoing verse.

Ver. 3. *Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.*] That is, in all their affairs, within doors or without. Or whether they lived by employments in the city, or by husbandry in tilling the ground. It is not a natural interpretation of these words, which one of the Hebrew doctors gives of them in Bava Metzia, where he expounds, *blessed shalt thou be in the city,* Thy house shall be so nigh unto the synagogue, that thou needest not be troubled by going a long way to it; and *blessed in the field,* Thy ground shall lie so near to the city, that thou mayest quickly bring the fruit it produces to be sold in the market. But if he could have gone on in this manner, it had been something tolerable; but he expounds what follows in a most indecent manner. (See Wagenseil upon the Gemara of Sota, cap. 3. sect. 9. annot. 5.)

Ver. 4. *Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body.*] This seems to be a promise of preventing miscarriages, when they were with child: for a numerous progeny is promised afterward, (ver. 11.)

And the fruit of thy ground.] This signifies they should have seasonable harvest and vintages. For *fruit of the ground* comprehends not only all sorts of corn, but grapes, figs, pomegranates, and such-like fruits which grow on trees.

And the fruit of thy cattle.] By the word *behema* is sometimes meant all sorts of brute creatures, in opposition to men; sometimes tame creatures, in opposition to wild beasts: but here all sorts of domestic creatures (except kine, sheep, and goats), *viz. asses* and *camels.* Which Jacob brought with him, as well as oxen and sheep, when he came from Laban into Canaan. (Gen. xxxii. 5. 7.)

And the increase of thy kine.] The breed of these was very profitable, being a considerable part of the riches not only of that, but of other countries; as appears by what Pausanias saith of them. (See Bochartus, par. i. Hierozoicon, lib. ii. cap. 40. in the beginning.)

And the flocks of thy sheep.] Under the name of sheep, in the Hebrew, are comprehended goats also. All which God promises to increase, that is, to make them very wealthy. And here it may be observed, that the Israelites were generally husbandmen or shepherds, and did not commonly follow any other trades: and therefore no mention is made of them here, unless it be in ver. 6. where he seems to speak of all sorts of business.

Ver. 5. *Blessed shall be thy basket.*] The Jerusalem Tar-

gum refers to the basket wherein they carried up their first-fruits, (xxvi. 2.) But the Vulgar Latin translates it *thy barns:* and so do the LXX. *αἱ ἀποθῆκαί σου,* the place where they laid up their corn and other fruits of the earth. Which God promises both to fill, and to preserve from the fire, or thieves, or other disasters.

And thy store.] The LXX. and the Vulgar translate it, *all that was remaining;* of which they had not present use, but kept till they had occasion for it. So it is a promise that they should never want; but still have something lying by them in store (as we translate it) above what they needed.

Ver. 6. *Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.*] This the Jerusalem Targum interprets, of their entering into their schools, and going home again. But it rather signifies, they should have good journeys when they had occasion to travel, and find all safe when they returned home: or be prosperous both in time of peace and in time of war; when they are said, in the Hebrew phrase, to *go out* against their enemies. Or it may signify, in general, good success in all their affairs; which is expressed by the phrase of *coming in* and *going out,* (xxxi. 2. 2 Sam. iii. 25.) But I see no ground to think that it relates to traffic or manufactures: for they were of little use among a people, whose plain way of living made few things necessary, but what every man could make himself. And therefore we find by Ezekiel, who describes (chap. xxvii.) the great variety of merchandise which was brought to the mart of Tyre, that the Israelites carried nothing thither but wheat, and honey, and oil, and balm, (ver. 17.) which are the commodities the earth itself produceth.

Ver. 7. *The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face.*] God had promised before, that, when they went up to serve him at their solemn festivals, their enemies should not so much as desire their land, (Exod. xxxiv. 24.) and now he assures them, that, when they did invade their country, they should not prevail, but be overthrown by them.

They shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.] He not only promises them victory, but a complete victory. For fleeing *seven ways* (*i. e.* many ways), imports a total overthrow; which made every man shift for himself, as soldiers do when they are entirely routed.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord shall command the blessing upon thee.*] Protect them in their enjoyments by his sovereign power and providence; when otherwise they would have been in danger.

In thy storehouses.] The LXX. translate it *ταμεῖα,* and the Vulgar *cellaria;* which signify places wherein other goods were laid up within doors, as corn was in *barns* without, (ver. 5.)

And in all that thou settest thine hand unto.] In all manner of undertakings and employments.

And he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.] Make them live long therein.

Ver. 9. *The Lord thy God shall establish thee a holy people unto himself.*] Confirm them in that noble relation wherein they stood to him. (See vii. 6. xiv. 2.)

As he hath sworn unto thee.] See vii. 12.

If thou wilt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God.] He had separated them from all people, by peculiar laws and privileges: for this purpose, that they should be governed by him, and be obedient to him.

And walk in his ways.] Nobody can see any reason to make this a special precept (as the Jews do), that *we should walk in the ways of the Lord.* Which contains all the duty owing to him: whether by *his ways* we understand those Divine qualities, of mercy, holiness, goodness, and truth, whereby we approach to him; or (as the word *ways* is commonly used in Scripture) his Divine precepts, whereby he comes (as it were) unto us, and declares his mind and will towards us, by conformity to which we become like him in those Divine qualities: for that is the entire meaning of *walking in his ways;* ordering all our actions according to the direction of his holy will, whereby we resemble him.

Ver. 10. *And all the people of the earth.*] Who were round about them, or should have any knowledge of them.

Shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord.] Be convinced that you are, after a peculiar manner, the Lord's people, (xiv. 1. xxvi. 18.) For wheresoever we read that a person or thing hath the name of God called upon it, or is called by his name, the meaning is, that it is *his.* As the *city called by God's name,* Jer. xxv. 29. is the city of God, where he dwelt, *viz.* Jerusalem. And thus the ark is said to have the name of *God called on it,* 1 Chron. xii. 6. *i. e.* was the Lord's ark, or the ark of the covenant. And as here the children of Israel are said to be the people called by his name, so it is said of the Christian church, Acts xv. 17. For the very same phrase (as Mr. Mede observes) is used of the like relation that men have unto that which is theirs. Thus Jacob saith, Gen. xlviii. 16. that his name should be called on the two sons of Joseph, that is, they should be *his,* as Reuben and Simeon were: which shews these are *words of adoption.* (See Disc. i. p. 7.)

And shall be afraid of thee.] Not dare to do thee any hurt, or fear to have thee their enemy.

Ver. 11. *The Lord thy God shall make thee plenteous in goods.*] Bestow on them abundance of all good things, that their hearts could desire.

In the fruit of thy body.] By giving them a numerous and healthy issue; whereby they should be multiplied like the stars of heaven, or the sand on the sea-shore; according to the promise made to Abraham, Gen. xv. 5. xxii. 17.

And in the fruit of thy cattle.] Which he promised likewise to increase exceedingly.

And in the fruit of thy ground.] Which should afford large crops of corn, and great store of all other fruits every year.

In the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee.] So that they should not need to send unto other countries to procure food (as they did in the days of their father Jacob), but have enough in their own land to support them all, though never so numerous.

Ver. 12. *The Lord shall open his good treasure unto thee, the heaven to give thee rain unto thy land.*] The heaven, or the air, is called the *good treasure of God,* because there he gathers together great heaps of clouds, from whence he enriches the earth with fattening showers of rain: which when he withholds, he is said to shut up this treasure, (xi. 17.) and when he bestows it, to open it; that his people might be sensible of their dependance upon his bounty for

that blessing, as well as others, which he dispenses as he pleaseth.

In its season.] The former and the latter rain, as the Scripture calls it. The former fell in autumn, after the seed was sown, to make it take root and spring up; the latter fell in the spring-time, to bring the seed which was come up to maturity. (See xi. 14.) See the learned Dr. Prideaux, upon Maimonides's treatise De Donis Pauperum, cap. 1. not. 25.

And to bless all the work of thine hand.] By these seasonable showers he blessed their ploughing and sowing, and produced a plentiful harvest: which seems to be meant here by the *work of their hand; viz.* their husbandry; which included all sorts of plantations, as well as tillage, (Gen. ix. 20.)

And thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.] A token of great riches, (see xv. 6.) which all nations looked upon as a blessing: as indeed they are with piety. And therefore Callimachus, in his hymn to Jove, prays him to bestow both virtue and riches upon them, (ver. 97.)

—— Δίδου δ' ἀρετήν τε καὶ ὄλβον.

Which puts me in mind of a pertinent observation of Maimonides, in his preface to Pereck Chelek, in which he treats of the *foundations* of the Jewish religion. "This is the meaning (saith he) of the promises and threatenings of the law, that, if they were obedient to his precepts, he would furnish them with all good things that should further them therein, and remove from them all that hinder them: for no man can serve God as he ought when he is sick, or oppressed with famine, or vexed with wars; therefore God promises to remove all these things, and to give them health and tranquillity, that they might perfect their obedience, and be worthy of the life of the world to come. 'For this is not the end of the law, to make the earth bring forth plentifully, and to prolong men's life upon the earth, and give them healthful bodies; but that by all those things they may be helped and encouraged to perform obedience to it,'" &c.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail.*] This is a proverbial speech, which is explained in the words following: *And thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath.* For the head being the first and chief part of all animals, and the tail the last and lowest, those persons are said to be the *head* who command over others, and those the *tail* who are subject. And therefore this is a promise that they should rule over other nations, as their lords (as they did in the days of David and Solomon); but other nations should not lord it over them.

If that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them.] This was the condition upon which all their happiness depended; as he had told them in the beginning of this discourse, ver. 1.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt not go astray from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand or to the left.*] See chap. v. 32.

To go after other gods to serve them.] This was the principal commandment of the law, to serve no other gods but the Lord alone. Which, while they observed, he was pleased to bless them, and to bear with many other sins which they committed. Upon which account, this commandment is so often repeated, as we find it, in this very book, vi. 14. vii. 4. 16. viii. 19. ix. 16. 28. xi. 3, 4. 30, &c.

Ver. 15. *But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and statutes, which I command thee this day.*] Especially that great commandment, *Not to go after other gods to serve them.*

That all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.] Pursue them so, that they should not possibly escape them. The same phrase is used of the blessings, ver. 2.

Ver. 16. *Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.*] As miserable, that is, every where, as he intended to have made them happy, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 17. *Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store.*] The blessing of the barn was to have it full, (ver. 5.) and therefore the curse upon it was to make it empty.

Ver. 18. *Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land,* &c.] He threatens to consume their children, their corn, and other fruits, with their herds and flocks.

Ver. 19. *Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.*] Have no comfort in any undertaking, either at home or abroad, in peace or in war.

Ver. 20. *The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke.*] It is very hard to know what these three words particularly import; the two first of them being very variously translated. The first of them, *meera,* seems to signify, in general, that God would blast them in all they designed and went about; for although the LXX. and Vulgar here render it *famine* and *want,* yet elsewhere the LXX. render it as we do, Κατάρα, *cursing:* and the next word, *mehuma,* they translate *hunger;* but in other places the LXX. render it by six or seven words, which import the same with our English *vexation, viz.* Ταραχὴν, *trouble* or *disturbance;* Θόρυβον, *tumult;* Σύγχυσιν, *confusion;* Ἔκστασιν, *horror* or *affrightment,* &c. which relate to great disorder, disquiet, and perplexity in their mind. And the last word, *mighereth,* the Vulgar translates as we do, *rebuke;* but the LXX. Ἀνάλωσιν, *consumption;* which are the same in effect. For when God *rebukes a man for his iniquity, he makes his beauty to consume away like a moth,* (Psal. xxxix. 11.) For God's rebukes consist not in words, but in sore afflictions, (2 Kings xix. 3. Psal. xviii. 15, &c.) particularly in disappointments and ill success in their undertakings, and continual fear of worse for the future.

In all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do.] In all their affairs (ver. 8.) they should meet with trouble, perplexity, and defeats.

Until that thou be destroyed.] He threatens that this curse, trouble, and rebuke from God should pursue them, till they had completed their ruin.

And until thou perish quickly.] When God began to punish them, after long patience with them, he was quick in his executions, and many times brought upon them sudden destruction. So he threatens in Zephaniah i. 18. that he would *make a speedy riddance of all that dwell in the land.* And though the whole nation was not rooted out speedily, but by degrees, yet they enjoyed it but a short time, in comparison of what God designed, if they had been obedient;

in that time, they were seldom without some trouble or other, till they were expelled out of their country.

Because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.] And followed after other gods, which was the great crime that brought them to desolation.

Ver. 21. *The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee.*] The pestilence is threatened in Lev. xxvi. 25. where he saith he will *send it among them*, and here adds, that it shall *cleave unto them*, that is, be incurable. And so the author of Schebet Judah confesses, that, after they had been wasted and broken in pieces by wars, they that fled into Spain, in the time of Alphonsus, were swept away in great numbers by a plague; and introduces one applying these very words, as a prophecy of it: which I thought fit to note, though this part of the prophecy doth not belong to what hath befallen them since the last destruction of Jerusalem (as I shall shew hereafter), but to the times before the first destruction; when he often sent a pestilence to destroy them, (2 Sam. xxiv. 15. Jer. xiv. 12. xxi. 6, 7. 9. and many other places of that book, Ezek. v. 12. vi. 11, 12. Amos iv. 10.) But it must be acknowledged, also, that the Greeks call such unseasonable weather as destroys the fruits of the earth, by the name of Λοιμὸς, *pestilence*. So Plato, lib. x. de Legibus, saith, that which is called Νόσημα, *a disease in bodies*, Ἐν δ' ὥραις ἐτῶν καὶ ἐναυτῶν λοιμὸν, &c. is called *pestilence in the seasons of the year*. The murrain also in cattle is called by the same name; which even the pagans thought was sent by the anger of their gods, for the sins of men; as we learn from Callimachus, in his hymn to Diana, where he saith, (ver. 125.) that when she was angry, pestilence ate up their cattle, and hail destroyed the fruits of the earth.

Κτήνεά φιν λοιμὸς μεταβρώσκεται, ἔργα δὲ πάχνη.

As, on the contrary, when she was well-pleased, she sent fruitful seasons, and all manner of happiness, as it follows in that hymn.

Until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it.] Made a great destruction, by sweeping away many people; the rest being reserved for other judgments, which follow in the next words.

Ver. 22. *And the Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation.*] These three words signify sore diseases in men's bodies: the two first of which, *sachepheth* and *kaddachath*, we translate in Lev. xxvi. 16. as we do here; only the second of them we render the *burning ague*, which here we translate *fever*. Unto which is here added *dalleketh*, which signifies such an *inflammation* as is accompanied with itching (according to the LXX. who translate it Ἐρεθισμὸν), which is extremely grievous, because the scratching of it increases the inflammation.

And with an extreme burning, and with the sword.] These two seem to relate unto the indisposition of the air, by extreme heat and drought; as we translate the word *chereb* in the margin of our Bibles; for it signifies both the *sword* and *dryness*; as the first word *charchur* signifies scorching heat, which frequently causes diseases: for it being the doubling of the word *charar*, it denotes the extremity or highest degree of it, as all such words do; of which Bochartus hath given many examples in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. i. cap. 19.

And with blasting and with mildew.] These two relate to the destruction of their corn, and the fruits of the earth, which follows upon the corruption of the air, as famine follows upon the corruption of the fruits of the earth. The first word *schiddaphon*, the LXX. and the other Greek interpreters translate Ἀνεμοφθορίαν, *blasting by biting winds*; though elsewhere the LXX. translate it by Ἐμπυρισμὸν and Πύρωσιν, which signify such *blighting as comes by heat*. And the second word *jerakon* (which comes from *jerek*, herb or grass, or any green thing) seems properly to be expressed by the LXX. who translate it Ὠχραν; for corn, and grass, and herbs, turn pale and wan for want of moisture.

And they shall pursue thee until thou perish.] These plagues upon their bodies, and upon the air, and the corn, and herbs, he threatens shall come upon them one year after another, till they were consumed.

Ver. 23. *And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass.*] That is, as brass, having no more moisture in it than brass hath. It is remarkable, that he doth not say *the heaven*, that is, the air or clouds, but *thy heaven*, that is, the clouds which hung over their country should be dry, though they dropped upon other lands. (See Jer. xiv.)

And the earth that is under thee shall be iron.] Hard as iron, for want of rain to soften it. (See Lev. xxvi. 19.) The observation of Maimonides is worth noting upon this part of the law: "That the Zabii, an ancient sort of idolaters in the eastern countries, thought the fruitfulness of the earth depended upon the worship of the planets, and the rest of the heavenly bodies: and therefore their wise men and their prophets (as he saith he found in their books, particularly in one concerning the husbandry of the Egyptians) taught the people to keep festivals in their honour, because the fruitfulness of the earth, by which men subsist, depends upon their will and pleasure. In opposition to which God ordered Moses to tell the Israelites in his name, that if they worshipped the stars they should have no rain; the earth should be barren, the trees yield no fruit; the season prove unhealthful, and their lives be shortened. On the contrary, if they worshipped him, the Lord of heaven and earth, and him alone, they should have showers from above; the earth should bring forth abundantly, and they should be blessed with healthful seasons, sound bodies, and long life. For it is the very foundation of the law (as his phrase is), to root the forenamed false opinion out of men's minds." (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 30.)

Ver. 24. *And the Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust.*] That is, there shall be such a long drought, that, instead of rain, showers of dust, blown up into the air by the wind, shall fall down from heaven upon them.

From heaven shall it come down upon thee, till thou be destroyed.] This seems to denote something more than the falling of clouds of dust, wherewith the air was filled by high winds; *viz.* showers of ashes, which have sometimes fallen in great quantities, as good historians testify. Nothing is more known than the vast clouds of ashes which Mount Ætna hath often vomited, whereby all the country thereabout hath been laid desolate. And the like hath been thrown out by Mount Vesuvius, which hath reached as far as Rome and Constantinople. (See Bonfrerius.) But if there was any such thing in Judea, it must be a miraculous judgment, there being no such mountains in those parts of the world to make such evomitions.

Ver. 25. *And the Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies.*] He saith the same in effect, Lev. xxvi. 17. For to *smite* in Scripture (as I have before observed) signifies to *slay* or *kill.*

Thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them.] Though they marched out in a great body against their enemies, he threatens that they should soon be dispersed; the hand of the Lord, as well as of their enemies, being against them. For that expression is remarkable, *the Lord shall cause thee to be smitten,* (see ver. 7.)

And shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.] This is something more than is threatened, Lev. xxvi. 33. signifying, not only their dispersion into the remotest parts of the world, but their being tossed up and down like vagabonds, from one country to another, without any certain settlement; which hath been notoriously verified since their last dispersion by the Romans, of which they themselves have given us large accounts in several books, *viz.* Juchasin, Schalscheleth Hakkabala, Schebet Judah, and Zemuch David, wherein they have abundantly confirmed what Tertullian saith of them in his time, " Dispersi, palabundi, et cœli, et soli sui extorres vagantur per orbem;" *That being scattered, straggling up and down uncertainly, banished from their own country, they wander about the world, without any king,* &c. But this belongs to the time of the first captivity, when Nehemiah (chap. i. 8.) confesses these words were fulfilled. (See Jerem. ix. 16. Ezek. vi. 8. xii. 14, 15.)

Ver. 26. *And thy carcass shall be meat unto all the fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth.*] Nothing was accounted a greater calamity among the Jews, than to have their dead bodies lie exposed, to be buried only in the bowels of birds and beasts; and therefore Jeremiah threatens this as the utmost punishment of the king of Judah, xxii. 19. xxxvi. 30. and the Psalmist bewails it as one of the sorest judgments that was befallen them, Psal. lxxix. 2, 3.

And no man shall fray them away.] That is, no man took so much compassion upon them as to chase them away, and to inter the remainders, which the birds and beasts had not devoured.

Ver. 27. *And the Lord shall smite thee.*] Why the Jerusalem Targum should here, in a particular manner, say, *the Word of the Lord shall smite thee,* I cannot imagine; unless it was to suggest, that he, being their conductor out of Egypt, was the person more especially concerned to punish them for their shameful ingratitude to their Deliverer. (See ver. 68.)

With the botch of Egypt.] Some take this to signify the leprosy, unto which they in that country were subject. Others, that *bile breaking out with blains,* wherewith God smote the Egyptians, (Exod. ix. 9, &c.) For that is called *schechin,* as this is.

And with the emerods.] The Hebrew word *apholim,* is no where to be met with but here and 1 Sam. v. 6. 9. 11. and in the rest of that history; which most interpreters (and not without reason) think signifies those painful tumours in the fundament, which sometimes turn into ulcers. (See Bochartus in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 36.)

And with the scab.] The LXX. here translate the Hebrew *garab,* (as they do also Lev. xxi. 20.) ψώρα ἀγρία, *a fierce or malignant scab.* And the Vulgar adds the word *jugis,* to signify that this was no small punishment.

And the itch.] The Hebrew word *cheres* signifies, as is generally thought, a dry itch; which is the most troublesome of all other.

Whereof thou canst not be healed.] This may refer both to the *scab* and to the *itch* beforementioned; which proceeded from such a corruption of the blood, that they were as incurable as the leprosy.

Ver. 28. *And the Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart.*] All these three relate to the mind: the first of them importing such a distraction in their thoughts, that they should not know what course to take, when they consulted for their safety: the second, such a stupidity, that they should not discern the true way, but always take the wrong: the third, that amazement and horror which followed thereupon, when they saw themselves ruined by their own foolish counsels and mad contrivances. A famous instance of which was in the time of Trajan, when they committed such outrageous massacres, both upon the Greeks and Romans (as Dion, a very sober author, relates), in Cyrene and Cyprus (where great numbers of Jews dwelt, after they were driven out of their own country), that the Lord, no doubt, (to use the word of Dr. Jackson on the Creed, book i. chap. 27.) had smote them with the *madness and blindness of heart* here threatened, that they might hereby provoke that puissant emperor's indignation, which otherwise would have slept, but now pursued them throughout his dominions, not only as enemies, or rebels, but *as noxious creatures to human society,* with a revenge suitable to their former outrages. And, indeed, this prediction was verified in their blind credulity, which made them follow every one that pretended to be their Messiah; which always brought great calamities upon them, as R. Gedaliah himself confesses in Schalscheleth Hakkabala; where he mentions no small number of these deceivers, and shews how many Jews perished who followed them. Yet they are but a few, in comparison of a long catalogue, that might be made of those pretended Messiahs. (See the learned Wagenseil's confutation of R. Lipman's Carmen Memoriale, p. 233, &c.) Unto which I shall add only one observation more out of Solomon ben Virgæ, who saith, in some places of Germany, they were possessed with such a *rabies,* that they cut one another's throats, to avoid the oppression of their enemies; and burnt themselves and their neighbours in their houses, setting whole cities on fire, and perishing in the flames. Such was their extreme rage and furious revenge, and those Christians who pressed them to change their religion. Many stories of the like nature that author tells in his book entitled Schebet Judah; where he hath sixty-four relations of the calamities which befel them in that and in other countries. But these words, I doubt not, were fulfilled before in the first desolation of Jerusalem, to which they belong. For though we have not such particular relations as those now mentioned to illustrate them, yet the prophets speak of their being *mad,* by drinking of the cup of the Lord's fury, (Jer. xxv. 16. 18.) and *blind,* (Zephan. i. 17. Lament. iv. 14.) and *astonished,* (Jer. iv. 9. Ezek. iv. 17.)

Ver. 29. *And thou shalt grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness.*] This shews the blindness spoken of in the foregoing verse relates to their mind; which was so

darkened, that in the plainest and clearest things they mistook the way and means of their preservation, (Zephan. i. 17.)

And thou shalt not prosper in thy ways.] But, quite contrary, whatsoever course they took, it turned to their undoing.

And thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore.] One oppression followed upon another (as the same Dr. Jackson observes), and such rapines were committed in several places upon them as only made way for new ones, even when the supreme powers endeavoured to hinder them.

And no man shall save thee.] This was so remarkably fulfilled in these parts of the world, that the magistrates, who had a mind in many places to preserve them from such outrages, as none but Jews can justify, durst not venture to appear for their rescue. And those that did take them into their protection, were the instruments of their further wrongs, by grievous exactions for the maintenance of the war undertaken in their defence. So strangely (as that excellent person forenamed speaks, cap. 29.) did the wisdom of God bring that to pass, which his servant Moses had foretold in this verso, *no man shall save thee:* for even succour itself turned into their sorrow; and it is hard to say, whether men's purposes for their good, or for their evil, brought greater plagues upon them. Thus it was before their first captivity; Pharaoh king of Egypt came to help them, but was not able, (Jer. xxxvii. 7. xlvi. 17.)

Ver. 30. *Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her.*] Take her away from thee before thou canst consummate the marriage. This was a sore affliction, for all nations accounted it a singular blessing to complete a marriage; and, on the contrary, a curse to be defeated of such delightful hopes. Whence Callimachus, in his hymn to Apollo, promising many blessings to the youths who sung and danced before his altar, mentions this in the first place, (ver. 14.)

Εἰ τελέειν μέλλουσι γάμον———

that he would be with them, and prosper them, if they were to be married.

Thou shalt build a house, and thou shalt not dwell therein.] But another take possession of it, (Zephan. i. 13.)

Thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shall not gather the grapes thereof.] So we rightly translate the Hebrew word, which (as the margin notes) is, thou shalt not *profane* or *make common* the grapes thereof; which was not to be done till the fifth year after the plantation. Before which time God threatens another should enter into it, and enjoy the fruits thereof.

Ver. 31. *Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee,* &c.] All these are but particular instances of their grievous oppressions in all countries, where their goods have been confiscated, the bills of debts owing to them all cancelled. Of which the same pious and learned person, Dr. Jackson, gives several instances in the forenamed chapter.

Ver. 32. *Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people.*] This was literally fulfilled when the Jews were banished out of Portugal, in the time of king Emanuel; who ordered their children under nineteen years of age to be taken from them, and brought up in the Christian religion. When infants also were torn from their mothers' breasts, with far more grief and sorrow than they had at their coming out of their womb: and many hundred years before that, when the Goths were lords of Spain, and suffered no parents to have any commerce with their children after the seventh year of their age, but by public decree they were committed to Christians to be educated by them, who married them to their own sons and daughters. (See the same Dr. Jackson, chap. 28. parag. 1, 2.)

And thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long.] Their women filling the heavens with more hideous shrieks than the Egyptians did, when all their first-born were slain in the night. For these were bereft at once of all their dear children in the open sun, in vain begging to have them restored to them. And to increase their calamity, (as that excellent person observes, chap. 29. parag. 15.) many Moors professing Mahometism were transported out of Portugal at the same time, without such violence offered to them. What was the reason? (saith he) God would have a manifest distinction made between the Jews and other people, that this prophecy might be fulfilled.

And there shall be no might in thy hand.] Either to protect or to rescue them from violence. Where I cannot but take notice, with the same doctor, that the Moors then had some power in their hand, which moved the Portugals, perhaps, to abstain from such usage of them, lest the report of it coming to the African Mahometans, they might attempt to avenge their wrongs. But these wretched Jews had no power any where, none to avenge their injuries, which God had ordained they should suffer at all times, and in all places wheresoever they came, without redress.

Ver. 33. *The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up.*] This was remarkably fulfilled, when Salmaneser came and dispossessed the ten tribes; and when Nebuchadnezzar carried the other two tribes away, and placed other people in their room.

There were many strange people also among the Romans, who devoured their labours, before their last destruction by Titus. And ever since they have been subject to depredations of various sorts; having scraped up riches, with great care, which have often fallen into the hands of strangers. Particularly in the time of the famous crusadoes, when divers nations marched in great numbers to recover the holy land from infidels, their business was in their way to rob and spoil the Jews, and to make great slaughter of them, as both Jewish and Christian writers witness; particularly the author of Schalscheleth Hakkabala, and our Matthew Paris.

And thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway.] That they should not only sometimes, or in some ages, or in some one or few kingdoms, but always, in every kingdom whither they removed, (as he speaks, ver. 25.) suffer such violence and wrong, as no other people hath done, must needs be thought to proceed rather from Divine justice than men's inclination to injustice. Which could not but have varied with the diversity of times and places, and the several dispositions of parties, among whom they have been dispersed. And yet the brief enumeration of their particular spoils and hard usage, which Dr. Jackson makes in the forenamed chapter (whose words these are, in the beginning of it), throughout the most civil and best go-

verned states of Europe, will abundantly confirm the truth of Moses's words in this place, *Thou shalt never but suffer wrong and violence alway,* as our old translation hath it. The same is lately observed by an eminently learned person (J. Wagenseil), in his confutation of R. Lipman's Carm. Memoriale, p. 241. where he takes notice, that the Jews no sooner have grown rich, and by degrees become considerable in any country, but some great calamity hath befallen them. This the attentive consideration of their history will justify, particularly as he observes in France, Spain, and England; God not suffering them to be quite destroyed, like the Amalekites, Jebusites, and Philistines, of whom no footsteps remain, but be scattered and tossed about through all Christian countries (for a testimony to the truth of our religion), and there only *oppressed, crushed,* and *squeezed,* as Moses here foretold. One instance of which sore *oppression* I cannot forbear to add out of Schebet Judah, where R. Solomon Virgæ confesses what great miseries they have been exposed unto, by persons pretending to be their Messiah, who have drawn the hatred of all nations upon them; particularly in Persia, he saith, they were most lamentably handled upon this score, being not only stripped of all, but forced to go about like dogs, with a great clog of wood bound to their necks, which exposed them to the scorn and laughter of all men: for while some threw it behind their backs, others would come and throw it down before their feet; some dragging them backwards, and others cruelly beating them with it. This one told him who saw it.

Ver. 34. *So that thou shalt be mad, for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.*] So they were, (as the forenamed doctor observes, chap. 29. par. 6. 15.) when their children were taken from them in Portugal. For some, being not able to rescue or dispatch them, killed themselves; others, who had better opportunity, drowned their children in wells or ditches. And here in England, one of their learned rabbins persuaded four hundred of his company, besieged with him in a strong tower by the furious multitude, to cut their own throats, rather than fall into their enemies' hands; himself confirming his doctrine, by cutting his wife's throat first, then his children's, and lastly killing himself. And thus, in the time of the forementioned crusadoes, the soldiers made such dreadful havoc of the Jews as they went along to the holy land, that many of them made themselves away out of despair; as their own authors, R. Gedaliah and David Ganz, tell us, ad an. 1096.

Ver. 35. *And the Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed,* &c.] This is the same word in the Hebrew [*schechin*] which is used ver. 27. called the *botch of Egypt,* and here *an evil botch,* that is, a very grievous breaking out; which began in those lower parts, and so spread (being incurable, and by no means to be stopped) from the sole of the feet, unto the crown of the head.

Ver. 36. *And the Lord shall bring thee, and the king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known.*] This may seem to have been fulfilled literally, only when Jehoiachim was carried away captive to Babylon, (2 Kings xxiv. 15.) and afterward Zedekiah, (xxv. 7. Jer. xxxix. 7. lii. 11.) For when they returned, they had no more any kings. But the latter part of these words [*a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known*] may incline us to extend this threatening as far as to their last dispersion by the Romans. Since which they have been driven into several countries, far less known to them than Babylon was, (with which they had correspondence before their captivity thither, 2 Kings xx. 12, &c.) and though they have had no king, yet they have set over themselves rulers and governors, who may be comprehended under that name.

And there thou shalt serve other gods, wood and stone.] Either sottishly following the example of the country to which they were carried, (Jer. xliv. 17, 18.) or being compelled thereunto by their cruel tyranny, (Dan. iii. 6.) The author of Schebet Judah observes, that this was the just punishment of their folly in running after idols, that they were sent into other countries to worship those gods which they were so fond of in their own. And he refers it particularly to the time of the captivity of Babylon; in which they continued seventy years, according to the number of years wherein those planets, whom they had worshipped, finished their course: for Saturn, as he computes, finishes his in one-and-twenty, Jupiter in as many; and so he proceeds with the rest, which make up that number. But this is too curious an observation, and the Jews have little skill in astronomy; therefore I pass it by, and only observe, that Manasseh ben Israel also understands this of the Babylonian captivity; for all the punishments mentioned from ver. 15. to ver. 49. were fulfilled under the first temple, and after the ruin of it, till the building of the second; which, though it be not exactly true (some of these predictions having been more completely fulfilled, as I have shewn, in aftertimes), yet is it reasonable to think, that this threatening particularly belongs to what they suffered in Babylon; the very same calamity being again threatened in the sixty-fourth verse, where I shall shew it belongs to their present condition.

Ver. 37. *And thou shalt become an astonishment.*] Their neighbours, he means, who saw or heard of the greatness and strangeness of their various plagues, should be dismayed at the sight, or report of them; wondering that a people, who had been so flourishing, should be made so exceeding desolate. (See 1 Kings ix. 8. Jer. xviii. 16. xix. 8.)

A proverb, and a by-word, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee.] So that when men would express one extremely vile, they should say he was a Jew. The same is threatened by God when he appeared to Solomon, 1 Kings ix. 7. and by Jeremiah, xxiv. 9. which, it is likely, was fulfilled at their first captivity into Babylon; (see Lament. ii. 15, 16.) but hath been notoriously fulfilled in their last captivity (as they call it), since the destruction of Jerusalem and their temple by the Romans: for here in England (from whence they have been banished above three hundred years) their name serves as a perfect measure (to use the words of Dr. Jackson, book i. on the Creed, chap. 30.) to express the height of impiety in any agent, or the depth of an abject, worthless, forlorn condition in any patient. Better we cannot express the most cut-throat dealing than thus, *You use me like a Jew;* or, *none but a Jew would have done this.* And when in common speech we exaggerate wrongs done to the most odious or despised people among us, we say, *I would not have done so to a Jew.*

Ver. 38. *Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in.*] This was fulfilled before they were carried captive to Babylon, when God frequently sent sore famine upon them, as we read in the prophet Isaiah, lii. 19. and Jeremiah, xiv. 1—3, &c. and is often threatened by Ezekiel among other terrible judgments, and by Jeremiah himself, xxix. 17, 18.

For the locust shall consume it.] They were a great plague in those countries, falling sometimes in such vast numbers (from whence they had the name of *arbe*), that they covered the whole face of the earth, and devoured every green thing: for so another of their names imports, which is *chasil*, coming from *chasal*, which signifies to *consume* and eat up; which they did so entirely, that they were looked upon by all people as a plague sent by God, and are therefore called by Joel his *army*, ii. 25. So not only the Hebrews, but the Arabians esteemed them; who say, that some of them on a time fell before their prophet, as he sat at meat, with this inscription on their backs; "I am God, and there is none other besides me, the Lord of locusts, who nourish them; and when I please, send them forth, that they may be food for the people; and, when I please, that they may be their plague, by eating up their food." (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 6.)

Ver. 39. *Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress them.*] Take a great deal of care and pains about them, after they are planted, to make them fruitful.

But shalt neither drink of the wine, nor eat the grapes.] Not enjoy the least benefit by their cost and labour.

For worms shall eat them.] The Hebrew word *tholaath* is a general name for all worms whatsoever: but there is a peculiar sort that infest vines, which the Greeks call ἴπες and ἶκες, as Bochartus observes, in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 27. where he takes notice that the Latins call this worm *volvox*, and *convolvulus;* because it wraps and rolls itself up in the buds, and eats the grapes up when they grow towards ripeness, as the Roman authors explain it.

Ver. 40. *Thou shalt have olive-trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil.*] Though the country abounded with these trees in all parts of it, they produced nothing but leaves, and a show of fruit, which came to no perfection.

For thy olive shall cast her fruit.] Being blasted, as the Jerusalem Targum explains it, in the very blossom; or the buds dropping off for want of rain; or the fruit being eaten with worms. Maimonides observes, that the idolaters in those countries pretended, by certain magical arts, to preserve all manner of fruit, so that the worms should not gnaw the vines, nor either buds or fruit fall from the trees (as he reports their words out of one of their own books, which he names); therefore, to deter the Israelites from all idolatrous practices, Moses here pronounces, that they should draw upon themselves those very punishments which they studied by such means to avoid, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 37.)

Ver. 41. *Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity.*] Which is threatened in many places of the prophets, and fulfilled in several invasions of their neighbours; for the Syrians, no doubt, carried captive more than one little maid, who waited on Naaman's wife, (2 Kings v. 2.) And in other inroads upon them, till the captivity of the whole land. This we may be confident was a frequent calamity, (2 Kings xiv. 26. xv. 37, &c.) But it was never more remarkably fulfilled, than since they crucified our Saviour; their children having been taken from them, (as I have observed before, ver. 32. 34.) and transported sometimes into other places. And who knows whether many of their stock, detained by king Emanuel of Portugal, beforementioned, have not been transported into America? and whether many of the Spanish colonies have not a mixture of the Jewish progeny in them? as Dr. Jackson observes. Manasseh ben Israel, I am sure, endeavours to prove (in his book called Spes Israelis), that some of the ten tribes are in America; though how they came there, he can give no account.

Ver. 42. *All the trees, and the fruit of thy land, shall the locust consume.*] So Onkelos and the Hebrew writers generally translate the word *tzelatzal;* which signifies a peculiar sort of locusts which falls upon trees, as others upon the fields. And it seems to have this name, because these locusts come in such thick clouds, that they darken the sun; the Hebrew word *tzalal* signifying to *overshadow.* The Jerusalem Targum translates it, *all your trees, and the fruits of your land, shall spoilers possess.*

I suppose these several judgments fell in the order wherein they are here mentioned in ver. 38—42. there being first a great dearth, of which we read 2 Kings viii. 1, &c. and Joel i. 10—12, &c. then many invasions of their country, wherein several were carried captive by the bands of Moab upon the Israelites, (2 Kings xiii. 20.) and of the Chaldeans, Syrians, and Ammonites, who came upon Judah, (xxiv. 2.) And we read expressly, that before this, in the days of Ahaz, a great multitude were carried captive by the Syrians, (2 Chron. xxviii. 5.) After which more spoilers came upon them in the days of Jeremiah, xii. 12. and a new famine, xiv. 1, &c. in which this forty-first verse may be thought to be fulfilled.

Ver. 43. *The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high, and thou shalt come down very low.*] There is no sorer punishment to a proud people, than to see those who are not only their inferiors, but much beholden to them (as all strangers were to the Jews, among whom they lived merely by permission), get up above them, and become their superiors. But so it was, that the Jews, by their foolish endeavours to advance themselves, raised a mere stranger to the highest dignity, who humbled them into the lowest condition. For this (as that excellent person I have often mentioned observes) may be applied to Vespasian, who was appointed to command in the wars against the Jews, and, being a person of mean birth and obscure family, had no thoughts of aspiring to the imperial seat; but by the unseasonable desire of the Jews to exalt themselves above all nations, they hoisted him up to the most sublime pitch of greatness, who was ordained by God to pluck them down from their seat, and bring them beneath all people. (See Dr. Jackson, book i. on the Creed, chap. 23. par. 3, 4, &c.) For he quite extinguished their glory, which was their temple at Jerusalem; and likewise shut up and profaned the temple which the Egyptian Jews had built in the country of Heliopolis, after it had stood above three hundred years: but if any one think good thus to apply the words of this verse unto

Vespasian, they must not take this for the literal meaning of them; because it is evident, that by *the stranger* is to be understood those of other nations who lived *among them;* particularly, those gentiles who were brought into the country by the Assyrians, instead of the ten tribes, as some of the best of the Jewish writers expound it. What the doctor also saith, concerning their advancing Vespasian to the imperial dignity, cannot be maintained.

Ver. 44. *He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him; he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.*] Thus the covenant of God, to exalt this people and humble their foes, was quite inverted, as he also observes, (see ver. 12, 13.) all the plagues threatened to those who bare ill-will to Sion, lighting on them and their friends; and all the blessings promised to such as prayed for her peace, being heaped on those that wrought her ruin.

Ver. 45. *Moreover, all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed.*] These punishments, he means, should not cease, but follow one upon another till they had brought them to utter ruin. Which is so evidently fulfilled, that, would but the atheists consider it, and lay it to heart, it would wring from them a confession of the truth of what these Divine oracles have uttered, that *this was a people who had been appointed to destruction.* For, though there be a great many of them remaining, in several parts of the world, yet they have never been suffered to grow into a nation, but in that sense are utterly *destroyed,* as Moses here prophesied.

Because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which I commanded thee this day.] It hath manifestly appeared the hand of God is very heavy upon them for their disobedience to him, there being no other reason why they, who were once so favoured by him, should be so long as they have been more miserable than any other people.

Ver. 46. *And they shall be upon thee.*] That is, the curses beforementioned should remain fixed upon them, and continue unremoved from age to age.

For a sign, and for a wonder.] That all men may take notice of them, and look upon them as extraordinary tokens of God's high displeasure, and take warning thereby to beware of their infidelity and disobedience: for, as that great man often saith, *No sign can be given equivalent to the desolation of the Jewish nation, and their continuing still banished from their own land, and miserably treated in all other countries.*

And upon thy seed for ever.] All the world may clearly see (to use his words again) that the God of their fathers hath cast them off, they having no signs or badges of his ancient wonted favours, whilst innumerable marks and scars of his fearful indignation against their fathers remain unhealed in their children, after more generations than their ancestors had of prosperity in the promised land.

Ver. 47. *Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things.*] Or, *in the abundance of all things;* for this is opposed to the hunger and thirst *in which* (he saith in the next verse) *they should serve their enemies,* as a punishment for their wanton abuse of God's mercies. Which being so exceeding great, justly required not only their obedience, but cheerfulness and delight therein.

Ver. 48. *Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies, which he shall send against thee.*] He doth not call the Lord *their God,* as he did before, now they were abandoned by him for their sins.

In hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and in want of all things.] This shews what he meant before by *abundance of all things,* plentiful provision of food and raiment, and all other things belonging to the comfort of life.

And he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck.] The loss of liberty was as great a misery as any other, which ended also in hard servitude. And it was but just that they should be slaves in the land of their enemies to cruel masters, who would not, in their own country, serve so gracious and loving a father as the Lord their God.

A yoke of iron] Signifies an unsupportable yoke, which could not be broken. (See Jer. xxviii. 13, 14.)

Ver. 49. *And the Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far.*] This evidently belongs to the Romans, as Manasseh ben Israel acknowledges; who thinks, that at this verse begins his prophecy of their calamities under the second temple, as in the foregoing he describes their calamities under the first. And in this, I think, he saith right, that there is scarce any thing mentioned in the following part of this chapter, but what relates to what they suffered under the second temple (as he speaks) and since its destruction; though I cannot say, as he doth, of the foregoing part of it, that it was fulfilled in the calamities which befel them under the first temple; for many things were never so completely fulfilled, as since they crucified our Saviour.

From the end of the earth.] This shews he speaks of the Romans, rather than of the Chaldeans, who did not come *from far,* much less *from the end of the earth;* but out of the north country, which was not very far distant from Judea: whereas the Romans, by whom they were last destroyed, came literally *from far,* and *from the end of the earth;* particularly Julius Severus was called by the emperor Adrian to their destruction out of this island of Britain; wherein Vespasian also had given great proof of his conduct. And Adrian himself, and Trajan, by whom they were still more crushed, after Vespasian had destroyed their city and temple, were both Spaniards by birth. And, therefore, Manasseh ben Israel says peremptorily, in his book, de Termino Vitæ, (lib. iii. sect. 3.) this is to be understood of the soldiers in Vespasian's army, which he brought out of England, France, and Spain, and other remote parts of the world.

As swift as the eagles.] Which every one knows the Romans carried in their ensigns. And these birds are observed to fly upon their prey with great force and violence; to whom, therefore, fierce soldiers (such as the Romans were) are compared, when they set upon their enemies. So Homer describes Achilles falling upon the Trojans,

Αἰετοῦ οἵμαϑ' ἔχων———

In Iliad Φ, where οἵματα signifies ὁρμήματα, *furious assaults,* as the scholiast interprets it. And so he speaks concerning Hector, Iliad X. As David also speaks of Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. i. 23. and the Chaldeans are so described, coming against Jerusalem, Jer. iv. 13. xlviii. 40. xlix. 22. Lament. i. 19. Ezek. xvii. 3. and see Dan. vii. 4. and Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 9. par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 2.

A nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand.] The Roman tongue was more strange to them than the Chaldean, especially the language of many nations, of which the Roman army was composed; and being a people whom their ancestors, perhaps, never heard of. Dr. Jackson justly looks upon the destruction and general desolation of their country, made by the Romans and their tributaries in these western parts of the world, as an everlasting monument of the truth of Moses's prophecy, in this and in the following verses.

Ver. 50. *A nation.*] This word *nation* being used thrice in this and the foregoing verse, Manasseh ben Israel (in the place forenamed) is so critical, as to observe, that this repetition shews Jerusalem was to suffer thrice by the Roman power: first, in the time of Pompey; and, secondly, when Sosius came to the assistance of Herod against Antigonus; and, thirdly, when it was besieged and overturned by Vespasian and his son Titus.

Of a fierce countenance.] So we translate this phrase, Dan. viii. 23. which, in the Hebrew, is a *strong* or *hard face.* Accordingly we translate it *impudent* (or, in our language, *brazen-faced*), Prov. vii. 13. and *hard*, Prov. xxi. 29. and *bold of face*, Eccles. viii. 1. All which set forth a people stern, fierce, undaunted, cruel, and hard-hearted; that had neither mercy nor modesty, but inflexibly pursued their designs; which is the true character of the old Romans.

Which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young.] These are wont to be pitied, being unable to hurt others; but in their wars with the Jews, the Romans spared nobody, their rage and fury extinguishing all reverence to grey hairs, and all tenderness to young babes.

Ver. 51. *And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed.*] For they brought such vast armies, as devoured all the provisions in the country.

Which also shall not leave thee corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.] He repeats it again, in more particular words, to set forth the desolation to be so great, that nothing should remain for their support.

Ver. 52. *And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates.*] The country being wasted, the Jews fled into their fenced cities, where they had laid up some provisions, to enable them to hold out a siege.

Until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustest, throughout thy land.] This was literally fulfilled by the Romans, to whom the best fortified places were forced to yield, as may be seen in Josephus's History of the Jewish War, which is the best commentary on this part of the prophecy. The walls of Jerusalem particularly were razed by Pompey; and Sosius took it again by force in the time of Augustus. But Tacitus tells, that the Jews took such advantage of the covetousness of Claudius, that they purchased of him the liberty to fortify their city again; which they did so well, that *they trusted*, as Moses here speaks, to its strength; which was so great, that Titus could not take it but by a long siege, which concluded in its utter ruin.

He shall besiege thee in all thy gates, throughout all the land which the Lord thy God hath given thee.] He repeats it again, that they might not think to find security in any place whatsoever, though never so strongly fortified, and well provided with all things necessary for its defence.

Ver. 53. *And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee.*] This was fulfilled to a tittle by Vespasian and his son Titus; who, after they had vanquished them in the field, begirt them so close in Jerusalem, that they could not stir out, and rather than surrender, perished by a lamentable famine. For there were vast multitudes of people shut up in the city, which run thither from all parts for safety; who brought the famine sooner upon them, and made it more severe when it came. If we may believe R. David Ganz, it was furthered also by a fire, which the seditious people kindled, whereby fourteen hundred magazines were consumed, stored with provisions to serve two hundred thousand people for twenty years. For this he quotes Josephus; though no such thing is to be found in him.

Ver. 54. *So that the man that is tender and very delicate among you.*] The two Hebrew words for *tender* and *delicate* signify a man that had lived in pleasure, and fared daintily, like the rich man in the gospel.

His eye shall be evil towards his brother, and towards the wife of his bosom, &c.] Grudge every bit which he sees his nearest relations eat, being ready to snatch it out of the mouth of his dear consort and children, and put it into his own: for this is the effect of a ravenous hunger.

And towards the remnant of his children which he shall have.] This imports that they should see many of them die in the siege: for famine forced them to feed on bad food, and that bred pestilential diseases, which swept away many; and increased still more by the carcasses of those that were famished. If any credit may be given to one of their own authors (David Ganz), there were above a hundred and sixteen thousand dead bodies of the rich and honourable men of Jerusalem carried out at one gate of the city, which was that of the Brook Kidron, besides those which were carried out at other gates, and thrown over the walls: and this he pretends to have out of Minchas, the son of Seruk, who was a faithful register in that city. Josephus mentions almost the same number, lib. vii. de Bello Judaico, cap. *ult.*

Ver. 55. *So that he shall not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat.*] This is a description of the sorest famine, which forced them, after they had eaten up their horses, dogs, cats, and such-like creatures, and their very belts and shoes, to eat even their own children; which fathers, who used to live deliciously, Moses prophesies, should eat up themselves privately, and let none share with them.

Because he hath nothing left in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates.] They were so sorely pinched with famine in a long siege, that they had nothing else remaining but their own offspring, and one another, wherewith to satisfy their hunger. Josephus observes, (lib. vii. de Bello Judaico, cap. 18.) that Jerusalem had been taken five times before this; but never suffered so dreadfully as by Titus; whom the Talmudists therefore call by the name of *impious:* which epithet belonged rather to themselves, who having, *with wicked hands* (as St. Peter speaks), crucified and slain their

Redeemer, were, by the just judgment of God upon them for their infidelity, hardened in an obstinate belief and expectation of a deliverer from the Romans, till they were reduced to those extremities.

Ver. 56. *The tender and delicate woman among you, that would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness.*] A description of the greatest softness and delicacy; which both the Chaldees express by a word that signifies the nicest motion, and going so slow a pace, as if they were loath to touch the ground. (See Bochartus, in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 19.)

Her eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son, and towards her daughter.] This is only a higher instance of the cruel effects of their distress by famine: for women, especially of the better sort, are naturally more tender and pitiful than men, and have the most passionate love to their children; which Moses here prophesies should be quite extinguished by hunger. And it was literally fulfilled, both in the siege of Samaria, wherein a woman boiled her son, (2 Kings v. 28, 29.) as a man did in the first siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, (Baruch ii. 3. and see Lament. ii. 20. iv. 10.) But never so exactly fulfilled as in the last siege by the Romans, when a noble woman (which fully answers to this prophecy, such persons being very delicate) did the very same, as Josephus relates in his book of the Jewish Wars, lib. vii. cap. 8. A most unnatural fact, as he observes, which was never committed, either by Greek or barbarian; and which he would not have related, because it might seem incredible, if there had not been many witnesses of it besides himself.

Ver. 57. *And towards her young one that cometh out from between her feet.*] Towards her new-born babe, which is wont to be welcomed into the world with great joy; but in this siege dispatched out of it, to assuage the rage of their hunger. In the Hebrew (as we take notice in the margin) the word we translate *young one,* properly signifies the *after-birth*: and so the LXX. translate it, τὸ χορίον. Which makes this passage most plain; that their hunger should make them so unnatural, as, first, to eat the afterbirth which came from them, and then the child which was wrapped in it.

And towards her children which she shall bear.] The rest of their children, whose cries for food they had no way to stop, but by killing them, and making them their own food. So it follows in the next words.

For she shall eat them for want of all things.] Having nothing else left to eat: for they had devoured, not only the leather of their girdles, and their shoes, and which covered their shields, but the very stale dung of oxen, and such things as the most sordid of all living creatures would not eat. (See Josephus, lib. iii. ἁλώσεως, cap. 16. lib. vii. cap. 7.)

Secretly.] It was not done secretly for any other reason, but lest any body should have a share with them, and so make their hunger return the sooner: and yet it was a hard matter to conceal what they had done of this kind; for the seditious people presently smelling there had been something boiled, got into the house, when she had eaten one half of her child, and found the other half, which she had left till another time; of which she invited them to eat.

In the siege and straitness.] These two words, which are used here, and ver. 53. and 55. may both relate to the grievous miseries they should endure, when they were besieged, (ver. 52.) and may be translated, *in the pressure and straits wherewith thine enemies,* &c.

Wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in thy gates.] We have not such an account of their distress in other cities, as we have of what they suffered in Jerusalem; where ἄπειρον πλῆθος, *an innumerable multitude perished by famine,* (as Josephus tells us, lib. vii. ἁλώσεως, cap. 7.) and ineffable calamities thereupon happened: for in every house, where the least shadow of food appeared, a war immediately began; and the dearest relations fell to blows, snatching away from each other the miserable supports of life. Nor would they let those that were dying expire quietly, not believing what they affirmed, when they told them they had no food in their houses; but the cut-throats came and searched their very bosoms, as they lay drawing their last breath, whether they had not there hid some food.

Ver. 58. *If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law, which are written in this book.*] Among which those words are most remarkable, (xviii. 15. 18, 19.) "A Prophet shall the Lord thy God raise up unto thee, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken, &c. Whosoever will not hearken unto the words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."

That thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD.] That is, fear the great Lord of heaven and earth, and their special benefactor, who is most glorious in himself, and to be most humbly reverenced by us: for the *name of God* is God himself; from whence it is that he is sometimes called *Haschem, the Name,* Lev. xxiv. 11. This shews the reason why Moses repeats this name the *Lord thy God* so often as he doth in the preface to this book, chap. vi.—ix. &c. In some of which there is scarce a verse wherein we do not meet with these words, and it is sometimes repeated no less than three times in one and the same verse, (xii. 18. xvi. 15.) that God might be in all their thoughts, and the fear of him might possess their hearts.

Ver. 59. *Then the Lord.*] If they still persisted in their infidelity and disobedience, after Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, and such unheard-of calamities as they had suffered during the siege of that place, he threatens to bring upon them more astonishing judgments.

Will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance.] Though their great plagues, under Vespasian, by famine, sword, and pestilence, had lessened their numbers exceedingly, yet, by the time of Trajan and Adrian, they had, like traitors taken for awhile from the rack (to use Dr. Jackson's words), recovered strength enough to be put to greater torture; for then they were made a spectacle to the world of the Divine vengeance again, which they brought upon themselves by their rebellion; and shewed therein their natural strength, by their grievous lingering pains in dying: for not only in Mesopotamia, and in Cyprus, but especially in Cyrene, and throughout all Egypt, they broke out into such outrages, ὥσπερ ὑπὸ πνεύματος δεινοῦ τινος καὶ στασιώδους, *as if they had been possessed with some fierce and seditious spirit;* (as Eusebius speaks, lib. iv. Eccles. Hist. cap. 2.) whereupon Marcius Turbo was sent against them, and setting upon them, both by sea and land, with horse and foot, made a vast destruction of them. See Dion, lib. lxviii. and

Xiphilinus, who describe their slaughter to have been so great, that now was fulfilled (as the forenamed Dr. Jackson thinks) what Moses foretold in this place, *The Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, great plagues, and of long continuance.* And, indeed, Eusebius saith in the forenamed place, that Turbo destroyed many thousands of them, πολλαῖς μάχαις ἐν οὐ ὀλίγῳ τε χρόνῳ, &c. *in many battles, and in no small time, the war being protracted a great while to complete their destruction.* And the application of this prophecy to this time may be confirmed by a strange relation which we meet withal in their own books: for in the Jerusalem Talmud, one of their doctors tells us, that, when Trajan came upon them with his army, they were reading these very words of the law, (ver. 49.) "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth," &c. which he understanding (having asked them what they were doing), he cried out, *Here is the man* (pointing to himself), *who am come five days sooner than I intended.* And immediately compassing them about with his legions, slew them all. Then he went to their wives, and offered them mercy if they would submit themselves: but they replied, *What thou hast done to the ground, do to the stubble:* so he dispatched them also, and shed so much blood, that it ran into the sea as far as Cyprus. At this time (so he concludes his story) the horn of Israel was cut off from Israel, never to be restored into its place, till the Son of David come. This passage I find alleged by Joh. Benedictus Carpzovius, out of Massec. Sanhedr. in explication of another matter in Schickard's Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 3. Theor. 10. p. 199.

And sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.] Such as gonorrhœas, leprosies, and burning fevers, as the author of the old Nitzacon, set forth by J. Wagenseil, explains it, p. 131.

Ver. 60. *Moreover, he shall bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee.*] The same diseases he foretells should infest them in, and after, their destruction by the Romans, which had done formerly under the Chaldeans, and other oppressors, (ver. 27.) What these diseases were, Pet. Cunæus, lib. ii. de Republ. Jud. cap. *ult.* hath expressed in these words, "Vitiligines, psorasque et tetra ulcera," &c. *Leprosies, itches, botches, and foul stinking ulcers,* the greatest physicians have anciently ascribed to the Egyptians and Syrians, as plagues proper to those nations; unto which diseases, he observes, the Jews were strangely obnoxious.

Ver. 61. *Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.*] It had been too long to have set down all the diseases and calamities that mankind are subject to: but he tells them, they should not escape any one of them, though very numerous, and be afflicted with them till their destruction was completed. For they were of such long continuance, as was said before, and pursued them so closely whithersoever they went, that they are no longer a nation, but a scattered, forlorn people, abandoned and forsaken by Him that formerly protected them. Of this they themselves are so sensible, that they have confessed the truth of this part of the prophecy in these later ages: for Solomon ben Virgæ having related (in the fiftieth section of his book, called Schebet Judah) how they were transported out of Palestine into Spain, and so miserably handled, that not one of a thousand remained; and then how they were destroyed in Germany and France, where, of innumerable multitudes (equal to the number which came out of Egypt), scarce five thousand survived that calamity; and what he himself saw in Castile and Portugal (where they suffered such things as cannot be expressed, nor conceived, by famine, by depredations, by transportations, and by being sold for slaves, or drowned in the sea), he thus at last concludes his sad story, that they who fled to avoid that dreadful tempest in Castile found the truth of this oracle, *Every sickness and plague, which is not written in the book of this law, shall the Lord bring upon thee, till thou be destroyed.*

Ver. 62. *And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude.*] The multitude of the Jews killed in the wars, was equal to the number of living men in Israel in the time of king David: for Josephus saith, that in the siege of Jerusalem there were destroyed, by pestilence, famine, and other ways, *eleven hundred thousand,* besides above *ninety thousand* carried captive. For they being come from all countries to keep the Passover, the *whole nation* (as his words are, lib. vii. Ἁλώσεως, cap. 17.) were shut up here by a fate, ὥσπερ εἰς εἱρκτὴν, *as in a close prison,* or rather driven thither (as Dr. Jackson speaks) *into a slaughter-house,* after they had been foiled by the Romans in the field. And yet after this they recovered strength (as I observed before), merely to be more tormented, and miserably destroyed: for in the reign of Adrian (who succeeded the emperor Trajan) they shook the Roman empire by their rebellious commotions, as Dion, who lived not long after, relates in his History, lib. lxix. which moved Adrian to exercise the greater severity upon them in their punishment, there being slain of them in battles and skirmishes *five hundred and eighty thousand,* besides a vast number consumed by famine, and sicknesses, and fire, during the time of this lingering war; which Julius Severus, a famous commander, sent for on purpose out of Britain, designedly protracted to a great length, not being willing to try it out in the field in one battle with a desperate multitude. And now, as Moses foretold, they were left *few in number:* for Dion, as if he had intended to expound these words, saith, that Severus so beset and attacked them separately, in several parties, *that very few of them escaped; fifty* of their strongest fortresses being utterly razed, and *nine hundred and eighty and five* of their most noble and populous towns sacked and consumed by fire, with the slaughter of the forementioned number; insomuch, that, as his words are, *all Judea was in a manner laid waste, and left as a desert.* This we may truly call *the last conflict of this nation with death and destruction in their own land;* out of which they were now almost totally expelled.

Because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the Lord thy God.] Who had spoken to them by that great Prophet, his eternal Word, promised in the eighteenth chapter of this book, ver. 15, &c. but they would not hearken to him: for which cause he gave them up to listen unto false Christs, whom they followed to their destruction; particularly Barchocheba, who, in the time of Adrian, took upon him the title of their king, and set up his throne at Bitter, in the tribe of Benjamin, which the Jews had made their chief seat, after the destruction of Jerusalem; and had in it, as

they pretend, four hundred synagogues. Here the Romans made such a slaughter of them, when they took it, that the Jews themselves cannot find expressions tragical enough to represent it. Twice as many, they tell us, perished now as came out of Egypt; great rivers ran with the blood of the slain, which (say some of them) carried great rocks along with it in the stream. With these, and many other such-like hyperbolical speeches, they themselves exaggerate their calamities, as many have observed out of Juchasin and Gittin, particularly Const. L'Empereur, in his annotations on Jacchiades, (Dan. xi. 34.)

But though now they were left few in number in Judea, yet, in other countries where they were dispersed, they multiplied again, that God's plagues might continue to be multiplied upon them, and this prophecy more perfectly fulfilled: for some ages after this, (anno 1009.) they had so incensed Christian people against them, by bringing the Persians upon them, who destroyed the churches dedicated to our Saviour at Jerusalem, that it was resolved, by the common consent of all Christians, that no Jew should live in their territories, but be driven out of them throughout all the world. By which means the greatest part of them died of several kinds of death, or made away themselves, so that "vix pauci residui fierent in orbe Romano," *there remained but a very few of them in the Roman world.* They are the words of Glauber, who relates this, lib. iii. cap. 7.

Ver. 63. *And it shall come to pass, as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought.*] The state of the Jews, from the time of Adrian till the expiration of the Roman empire, cannot be gathered from the Roman writers; but the fathers of the church often mention their miseries. And so do their own authors; particularly the author of Schebet Judah, who saith, "It is not in the power of man to tell all the kingdoms and cities where they were scattered; in which they suffered things so horrid, that it is fitter to pass them over in silence, than to relate them: but therein was verified the Divine prediction, Lev. xxvi. 38. *Ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up,*" (sect. 49.) And Dr. Jackson, to explain this, hath more particularly observed, that as God raised up Cyrus in testimony of his *rejoicing to do them good,* who released them from their captivity in Babylon; so, to give the world a proof of his *rejoicing to destroy them, and bring them to nought,* he advanced Philip Augustus to the crown of France, (about anno 1179.) to defeat all the hopes which some kindness shewn unto them had put into their hearts: for he spoiled their synagogues of all their donatives and ornaments, confiscated all their lands and immoveable goods, and granted a release of all debts due unto them from Christians. (See book i. upon the Creed, chap. 28. parag. 13.)

And ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.] This was wonderfully fulfilled by Adrian; who, after a strange desolation, beforementioned, prohibited, by a public decree ratified with the senate's consent, any Jew to come within sight of Judea. This he did out of a politic respect, lest the sight of their native soil might inspire them with some fresh desperate resolutions to endeavour their settlement there again; but herein he was unwittingly *the angel of God* (as the same excellent person speaks), to keep this wicked race out of that paradise, the good land, out of which he had driven them.

Ver. 64. *And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people.*] That was the effect of Adrian's severe decree, of not coming within view of their own country, which made them disperse all the world over, where they could find any admittance.

From the one end of the earth even unto the other.] Such as were carried captive in Adrian's war were transported by his order into Spain, his own native country, which was then accounted the end of the world westward. And many of them, it is evident by their own books, fled to Babylon, and the countries thereabout, which was as far as they knew eastward. In Spain they continued many years in great abundance, as it were, expecting a wind for their passage to some place more distant from their ancient seat. And who knows whether many of them have not, since the discovery of America, been transported thither, as I before observed? Certain it is, that the Jews themselves are sensible this prophecy was not fulfilled, till this their last dispersion, after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans: for thus R. Isaac, who had occasion to mention these words, (in his Munimen Fidei, lately brought to light by Wagenseil, Perek. vi.) glosses upon them: "In the Roman captivity, the Jews were dispersed and dissipated through all the regions of the east, and of the west: for every nation of which the Roman army consisted, when they returned to their own countries, carried some of them along with them, into Greece, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, and all other countries, which either Christians or Mahometans now possess."

And there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.] Here that excellent person I have so often mentioned (Dr. Jackson) commends it to the reader's consideration, whether this part of Moses's prophecy may not be understood of the convert Jews throughout the pope's dominions, who are often urged to commit idolatry with stocks and stones, upon more tyrannical terms (if they gainsay) than their forefathers were, either by the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Romans, or any whatsoever, that led them captive out of their land.

If it be said, there is a great difference between the heathen idolatry, and the present image-worship in the Roman church, it is granted the idolatry is of a diverse kind; and so it seems Moses meant, when he threatens the Jews, after their final transportation into these western countries, *should serve such gods as their fathers had not known:* for their forefathers, before Moses's time and after, had known the heathen gods too well; but were perfect strangers to this image-worship now in use. And to strengthen this interpretation, it ought to be observed, that these words [*which neither thou nor thy fathers have known*] are omitted in the thirty-sixth verse of this chapter; where he speaks of their *serving of other gods of wood and stone,* as he doth here. But that part of the prophecy belongs to what they did in the first captivity into Babylon, as Manasseh ben Israel observes, who understands these words to be a prophecy of what they have suffered in this last dispersion: for, reciting these words (lib. iii. de Termino Vitæ, sect. 3. p. 131.) as containing the greatest calamity that hath befallen them, he saith, "This we see fulfilled, after a singular manner, in

this present captivity; because of all those evils wherewith the Hebrews have been afflicted in France, and England, and Spain:" for they had been often pressed, either to renounce their religion, or to be undone; and many times chose rather to comply with the idolatrous worship in the Roman church, than to be banished, and have their goods confiscated.

Ver. 65. *And among these nations shalt thou find no rest.*] This was wonderfully fulfilled in the ages which followed that in which Adrian lived; when they both disturbed others, and could find no rest themselves: for in the third century, they raised sedition in the reign of Severus, by whom they suffered very much about the year 202. after our Saviour's birth: and in the next century we are informed by St. Chrysostom, in his second oration against the Jews, (tom. vi. edit. Savil. p. 333.) "That they rebelled again in the time of Constantine; who, causing their ears to be cropped off, dispersed them, καθάπερ τινὰς δραπέτας καὶ μαστιγίας, *as vile fugitives and vagabonds, into various countries, where they carried this mark of infamy along with them, that all might be instructed to make no more such attempts.*" But in the fifth century they made new commotions, and were driven out of Alexandria for their seditious practices, where they had been settled ever since the time of Alexander the Great, and dispersed into several countries, as Socrates observes in his Ecclesiastical History, lib. vii. cap. 16. And in the next chapter relates how miserably they were deluded in Crete, by one who pretended to be Moses come down from heaven to lead them to their own land through the sea; into which many threw themselves, and perished. That expulsion out of Alexandria is mentioned by David Ganz also, one of their own authors. In the sixth century, as Elmacinus tells us, they again rebelled in Palestine against the Romans, who slew a great number of them. And in the seventh, they were expelled from Antioch by Phocas, and out of Jerusalem by Heraclius, and out of Spain (anno 604.) by Sisebutus, or, as some call him, Sisebodus, king of the Goths; and they flying in great numbers into France, were shortly after put to this hard choice, either to renounce their religion, or lose all they had; which persecution, Dr. Jackson observes, in the book often mentioned, (chap. 28. parag. 1.) is recorded by those who wrote the life of Dagobert, as one of the chief memorables of his reign. What their state was in the next three centuries, he saith, he had observed nothing remarkable: nor can I find any thing notable in the eighth, but the appearance of a false Messiah, by whom they were deluded, and brought into trouble. As for the ninth, there were no learned men among them in that age, nor in the Christian world. And in the tenth they were in the same condition; insomuch, that they were fain to make a weaver the head of one of their universities.

Neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest.] They being not able to obtain a long settlement any where; but were tossed up and down, and forced from one country to another: for so it was, that, in the beginning of the eleventh century, about the year of our Lord one thousand, they were so vexed throughout the most part of Europe, that "quid agerent, aut quo se verterent nesciebant," *they knew not what they should do, or which way they should turn themselves,* as the forenamed doctor observes, (par. 4.) out of Papirius Massonus, who hath it out of Glauber. To which I will add this testimony out of David Ganz, in his book called Tzemach David, that, in the latter end of this century (anno 1096.) when there was a famous expedition for the recovery of the holy land, *the Jews felt it a most calamitous time* (as he speaks), being robbed, and pillaged, and killed, by the soldiers as they went along. And, indeed, so much cruelty was exercised upon them, that it moved St. Bernard's compassion, to write to the bishop, clergy, and people of Spire, not to persecute them, much less kill them; or drive them out of their country: "For they are dispersed (saith he) into all lands, that, while they suffer the just punishment of their horrid wickedness, they may be witnesses of our redemption," Epist. 322. And the author of Schebet Judah, mentioning their banishment out of Savoy, Piedmont, Lombardy, Sicily, and other countries, quotes these very words of Moses [*among those nations thou shalt find no rest,* &c.] as a prophecy of that exile; which was accompanied with many other mischiefs: for, as they fled to other countries, an immense multitude of people fell upon them, and pillaged them of all the gold and silver they were carrying away with them, as he relates there, sect. 11.

And the Lord shall give thee a trembling heart.] They being always in dread of some new misery, their condition still growing more dismal in the twelfth century: for as there is a progress in Moses's prophecy of the increase of their calamities; so it proved in the event, that their sufferings grew greater and greater. They themselves (in Tzemach David, and other books) relate, that, in the year 1142. a hundred and twenty of their congregations were utterly subverted and dispersed. And in the year 1170. they were expelled again out of France, and spoiled of their treasure; which was renewed in the year 1198. How they were used here in England, our own chronicles tell us; and the like ill-usage they met withal in Germany and Spain: so that R. Zacut complains of no less than ten grievous persecutions in this one age, to abolish the name of Jews out of the world. This could not but give them a very *trembling heart.*

And failing of thine eyes.] Which looked for some relief; instead whereof they were still more hardly used in the thirteenth century, being, in the year 1253. again expelled out of France, whither they had returned; and again in 1295. when they expected some rest, there was a fresh expulsion, mentioned by R. Levi ben Gersom, who saith they were spoiled of all their goods, and sent away only with their clothes upon their backs. Which he affirms with the more confidence, because it was done in his time, when, he saith, there was such a number of them, that they exceeded those that came out of Egypt. So he writes in his exposition of those words, Numb. xxiii. 10. *Who can count the dust of Jacob?* I will forbear to mention how they were treated here in England (1290.) and in Germany; into which they flying out of France, were most cruelly used.

And sorrow of mind.] Which must needs seize upon them heavily to find their miseries so far from abating, that they still increased in the fourteenth century: when they were banished again out of France, and spoiled of their goods, 1306. and once more 1395. which the Jews call their fourth and last banishment. About the same time they were banished out of Germany, anno 1392. In Castile, indeed, they redeemed their lives with money (which they could not part withal, without much *sorrow of mind*), but in Catalonia, Arragon, and in other parts of Spain, such a terri-

ble storm fell upon them, that they themselves, in Juchasin, say, there were no less than two hundred thousand turned Christians, with heavy hearts. It would be too tedious to mention all that they suffered in the fifteenth century in Germany, Hungary, Polonia, and in Italy, Spain, and Portugal. I will only observe what befel them in the country last named, in the next century, anno 1506. when all that is said in this verse is fulfilled, by that dreadful massacre which was made of them at Lisbon for three days together; where men were not suffered to die of their deadly wounds, but were dragged by their mangled limbs into the market-place, where the bodies of the living and the slain, with others half alive, half dead, were burnt together in heaps. The spectacle was so horrible, that it quite astonished the rest of this wretched people; two thousand of which perished in this barbarous manner. Parents durst not mourn for their children, nor children sigh for their parents, when they saw them haled to the place of torment; so that their hearts, no doubt, were ready to break with grief and sorrow. In short, "Sic eos metus exanimaverat, ut vivi non multum a mortuorum similitudine distarent:" *fear had so dispirited them, that the living in their aspect did not much differ from the dead;* which words of Osorius (in his fourth book de Rebus Emanuelis) our Dr. Jackson, who relates this sad story out of him, looks upon as a paraphrase upon these words of Moses (though Osorius did not think of them), *I will give thee a trembling heart, and failing of the eyes, and sorrow of mind.*

There are those who, by a *trembling heart,* understand the terrors of an evil conscience: so D. Chytræus, p. 131. And by *failing of the eyes* may be understood, the constant disappointment of their hopes, wherewith they were sometimes fed by false Messiahs in several ages; which disappointment bred great sorrow of mind, when after earnest expectation of some good, the quite contrary came upon them.

Ver. 66. *And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee.*] That is, it should be doubtful whether they should live or die the next moment. As it manifestly happened in the forenamed massacre, when they durst not fetch a sigh, and yet could hardly avoid it, at the sight of their parents' or children's tortures, for fear they should suffer the same before the breath was out of their tortured bodies.

And thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have no assurance of life.] So it was then: none of them knowing who would be next seized, in those three days' butchery. And so it was in some of their banishments, which, they were told, should be the best remedy for the evils impending over them, as the author of Schebet Judah speaks, who tells us, (sect. 23.) that the reason which some princes gave for their expulsion out of their territories was, to prevent their being torn in pieces by the people, who were most furiously set against them.

Ver. 67. *And in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even!*] That they might not see those miserable spectacles, which they hoped would end in the night, when men went to rest.

And at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning!] Being afraid of unseen dangers, to which the night might give an opportunity; or, that they might not see their way, when they fled by sea and land, from one country to another, as they were forced to do very often: for Abarbinel, in his Commentary upon Isaiah xl. 11. reckons up four universal banishments, out of the countries where they lived. The first out of England; the next out of France; the third out of Asia, Germany, Tuscany, Lombardy, and Savoy; and the last out of Spain; when he himself was one of those who were constrained to leave that country, and knew not whither to go. He hath given us a lively description of that calamity (like to which, he saith, none had ever befallen them, since they were banished their own country) in his preface to his Commentary upon the Book of the Kings, which he wrote the very next year after their expulsion, (1493.) and the author of Schebet Judah hath transcribed in his own words: "A decree was made and proclaimed publicly, that all the Jews should change their religion, or quit the country in three months' time. Abarbinel had then a place in the court, where he petitioned the king, and besought his ministers and counsellors to revoke the edict, and be content with their estates, which they offered to him; but all in vain: for three hundred thousand, old and young, men and women, and he among the rest, went away on foot upon one day, not knowing whither to go. Some went into Portugal, others into Navarre; where they conflicted with many calamities: for some became a prey, or perished by famine and pestilence. And therefore others committed themselves to the sea, hoping to find a quiet seat in some other countries. But on the sea they met with new disasters; for many were sold as slaves when they came on any coast, many were drowned, many burnt in the ships which were set on fire; in short, all suffered the just punishment of God the avenger (as he speaks): for after all this, a plague came and swept away the rest of the miserable wretches, who were hated by all mankind; so that all that vast number perished by one calamity or other, except a very few." He that would see more of the woful miseries of this people, may look into Schebet Judah, sect. 53. where he shews what befel those who went to seek new habitations in the kingdom of Fess, where they lived a long time upon grass, and ate its very roots, and then died, and their bodies lay exposed, none being so charitable as to bury them.

For the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.] The one of these seems to refer to their dreadful apprehensions in the night; and the other to the lamentable spectacles they beheld in the day. And the simple meaning of the former part of the verse may be, that they should be weary of life, having no comfort either day or night.

Ver. 68. *And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again.*] The Jerusalem Targum translates it, *The Word of the Lord shall bring thee back again.* He, that is, who conducted them out of Egypt in a glorious cloud, would punish them for their foul offences against him, by bringing them again into bondage there. This was first fulfilled after the desolation made by Titus; when there was, as I observed before, (ver. 62.) above ninety thousand carried captive, and many of them transported into Egypt, as Josephus relates, in the conclusion of the sixteenth chapter of the seventh book, concerning the Wars of the Jews. And here Manasseh ben Israel hath a very pertinent observation, that Vespasian transported them into many and various regions: but Egypt is only here named, the more

to reproach the Jews: as if he had said, "Ye shall be carried into that land as captives, out of which ye came in a triumphant manner," lib. iii. de Termino Vitæ, sect. 3. which may incline one to think, that he was of the same mind with our Dr. Jackson, who, observing how cruelly they were used here in England, and many other countries, concludes, that this island, and every place of Europe, wherein their condition of life hath been more hard and burdensome than their forefathers' was in Egypt, may be said to be that Egypt, into which God threatens here to bring them *in ships*.

And, indeed, we do not read of their being carried into Egypt after Vespasian's time; though it is set down here as a punishment to come upon them after a long train of other miseries; and must relate to their rigorous usage, which I have observed in many countries, in several ages, down to these latter times. The Jerusalem Talmud, it must be observed, mentions another *bringing into Egypt* (literally understood), in the Massechta beforenamed upon ver. 59. where they say, that, as God forbade them three times to return into Egypt (which they there set down), so they were forced thither three times for their transgressions against God; first, in the days of Sennacherib, king of Assyria; (Isa. xxxi. 1. 3.) secondly, in the time of Johanan, the son of Kareah; (Jer. xlii. 16.) and lastly, in the time of the emperor Trajan: but this I look upon as a mistake; for Trajan rather killed all those whom he found there, than carried them thither, as I noted before.

With ships.] Which seems to put them in mind how different their condition was now become, from what it was when they came out of Egypt without any ships; for the sea gave them a passage through it, by being made dry land. Their being carried also thither by ships, made their condition the more deplorable, because there were no means of escaping out of them, as there might have been if they had gone by land.

By the way whereof I spake unto thee.] Or, *to the way*, (so the particle *beth* often signifies, Gen. xi. 4. xvi. 22.) that is, to the place, whereof I said, *Ye shall see it no more again:* for it seems to be a manifest allusion to what we read in the seventeenth chapter of this book, ver. 16.

And there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bond-men and bond-women.] Exposed to sale like beasts in the open market; and that at so vile a price, that thirty of them (as both profane and ecclesiastical historians relate) were sold for one small piece of money. Josephus, giving a particular account how the captives were disposed of by Titus, saith, that the most goodly young men he reserved to attend his triumph; of the rest, he ordered those above seventeen years old to be sent bound into Egypt, to labour in the works there; many he distributed in the provinces to perish in the theatre by the sword and wild beasts: and all under seventeen years old he commanded to be sold. But while they were making this distribution, twelve thousand of them died of famine; partly by the hatred of their guards, who gave them no food; and partly by the weakness of others, whose stomachs could not receive it, (lib. vii. cap. 16.) By which a judgment may be made how little worth these vile wretches were, as it here follows. In aftertimes, I have observed, in the course of this Commentary, how they were sold for slaves in some places, and in all used as no better. Benjamin Tudelensis, who went a pilgrimage to visit his countrymen, represents their condition as most miserable throughout the eastern empire. And particularly complains of their hard usage among the Greeks at Constantinople: within the walls of which city they were not suffered to live, nor to come thither, but on occasion of traffic and business; and that only by boat (for they had their habitation in a kind of an island), not a man being permitted on horseback, except only one, Solyman, the emperor's physician. Whose advancement was their sole comfort in that miserable servitude, under which the rest groaned, without any difference of good or bad (as he acknowledges), who were daily beaten and abused in the open streets. Thus he confesses, though his principal design was to set forth the power they retained in the world. (Itinerarium, p. 27, 28. edit. L'Empereur.)

And no man shall buy you.] Though some, as I said before, were sold at a very vile rate, next to nothing; yet others hung upon the seller's hands (as we speak), the market being either so overstocked with their numbers, that none would cheapen the greatest part of them, or they were so contemptible that nobody would give what was asked for such useless slaves: for, as no money could purchase their peace and security from calamities, so neither could the calamities, though continually most grievous (they are the words of Dr. Jackson), redeem their estimation in the world; nor all the blood of their slain (though their massacres were numberless) extinguish that hateful and loathsome conceit which most men had entertained of them. For in the fifteenth century they were become so abominable, that several doctors began to hold it unlawful for Christians to let them live among them. Particularly the famous Thomas Terrecremata, inquisitor-general, forbade all men to have any dealings with them, or to afford them meat or drink, or any thing else. Whence proceed the direful proscriptions which we read of in that age, whereby they were forced out of Spain, Poland, Hungary, and divers other countries; where they were not suffered to live, though with a note and character upon them to distinguish them from all other men.

I conclude my observations on this chapter, with the remark which the same great man (Dr. Jackson) makes, chap. 22. paragr. 6. That the extraordinary blessings and plagues which were to overtake this people, being here set down by Moses; although their blessings might have been more and more admirable than the curses that have befallen them, yet he, either foreseeing or fearing what would be, rather than hoping the best that might be, is almost four times as long in enumerating their plagues as he is in their blessings. And so have the miseries of the latter Jews been four times as long, as the prosperity of their worthy ancestors. And since our Saviour's death, all the plagues, which were in part fulfilled before, have been more than seven times multiplied upon them. For in their former overthrows or captivities, though they suffered the violence of war, yet, after that storm was past, so they did but submit to their conquerors, they lived well enough, nay, usually found more than ordinary favour at their hands; but since our Saviour's death, they have through all ages been more and more miserable; "the memory of the foregoing plagues having been but an invitation to the like, or worse; and their continual bad usage prescribing the lawfulness of their abuse."

CHAP. XXIX.

Ver. 1. *THESE are the words of the covenant.*] The Talmudists in the Gemara of Sota, cap. 7. sect. 24. refer these words to the benedictions and cursings mentioned in the foregoing chapter; which plainly belong to what God delivered unto Moses in Mount Sinai at the first; which he had now repeated in this book, with the addition of several blessings and curses, to make what he said the more effectual.

Which the Lord commanded Moses to make.] That is, to renew. For which end Moses repeated the principal laws of God, and explained them in this book; which is from thence called Deuteronomy: being a compendium of the Pentateuch, a breviary of the covenant, composed for the familiar and daily use of the children of Israel.

With the children of Israel in the land of Moab.] Where he declared to them the law which he had formerly delivered to their fathers, (Deut. i. 5.)

Beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.] This doth not signify that he made a covenant with them, different from the former made at Horeb, (Exod. xxiv.) but only now renewed the same covenant, after they had shamefully violated it more than once. Which was the more necessary, because they were ready to enter into the land of Canaan, and he was just upon his departure from them into another world; and therefore did all he could to engage them in a more firm obedience to God. And for that end, both more fully explained several laws, and added others, and at large laid before them the happiness or the misery that would ensue upon their fidelity or falseness in this covenant.

Ver. 2. *And Moses called unto all Israel.*] This seems to import a new summons which he sent out to them, to attend him, now he was about to conclude what he had to say to them, before he left them. Which he did not, as I have often observed, (see ver. 1.) all at once, in one continued speech, but at several times; and now was about to wind up all in this and in the next chapter.

And said unto them.] He argued with them from the knowledge and experience which they had of the power of God in his wonderful works, particularly three, which were very memorable. Those in Egypt, which he mentions here in the two next verses; and those in the wilderness, ver. 5, 6. and lately in the great victory he had given them over two potent kings, ver. 7, 8.

Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land.] Some of them had seen (when they were young), and others had understood from them (which is here called *seeing*), all the plagues which God brought upon Pharaoh, and upon his court, and upon his whole country. This he had often called to their mind, in his preface to the repetitions of his laws, (vi. 12. vii. 18, 19. xi. 3, 4.) and makes it a great aggravation of their guilt, if they should forsake Him, who had done such wonderful things for them, (xiii. 5. 10.) And now he concludes with the same argument, as most powerful to move them, if they had any sense of their obligations to the greatest Benefactor.

Ver. 3. *The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles.*] Of these he had put them in mind before. (See iv. 34. vii. 19.)

Ver. 4. *Yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.*] They had not so considered and laid to heart God's wonderful works, as to have a lasting sense of them bestowed upon them by God. He gives us an understanding heart, but we must first consider what he hath done for us, as the apostle instructs us, 2 Tim. ii. 7. And he gives us what we do not receive; and so in effect it is not given. Thus he saith himself, that he purged Israel, but they would not be purged, (Ezek. xxiv. 13.)

What the difference is between a *heart to perceive*, and *eyes to see*, and *ears to hear*, need not be curiously inquired. They are, perhaps, but three various expressions of their gross stupidity, or three degrees of it, which was so great, that they had no continued sense of the wonderful works God hath done for them; nor did so much as regard and observe them; no, nor hearken to those who put them in mind of them; which must not be imputed to any want of power in these things to move them, much less of the Divine grace to work upon their hearts by them, but was wholly to be ascribed to their own negligence and perverseness; of which God here complains, and with which he severely upbraids them, that he had not given them this grace: which is a clear demonstration the fault was in themselves. And therefore Maimonides rightly and judiciously explains these words, when he saith, the meaning is, They had not disposed themselves to receive this grace from God.

Ver. 5. *And I have led you forty years in the wilderness.*] By a glorious cloud, which both conducted and protected them, (viii. 2. xi. 5.) Concerning these *forty years*, see chap. ii. 7.

Your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.] See viii. 4. The Jews used no shoes in Egypt, as Bochartus probably conjectures; but being to take a long journey, through a rough way in the wilderness, he commanded them to eat the passover with shoes on their feet, (Exod. xii. 11.) And these very shoes which they put on at that festival, when they were ready to march, God suffered not to decay in all their travels for forty years following. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50.)

Ver. 6. *Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink.*] Not commonly; though, when they passed by some neighbouring country, they might possibly sometimes purchase both bread and wine, or strong liquors: but their ordinary food was the heavenly manna, and their drink was the water that followed them out of the rock. So that the meaning is, they were constantly supported by a miraculous supply from God; who took care of them, and thereby laid a greater obligation upon them to serve him, who graciously fed them without any labour of their own. For they neither ploughed, nor sowed, nor reaped, nor took any other pains for this provision; as they must have done for bread and wine, or other liquors pressed out of dates or figs, &c.

That ye may know that I am the Lord your God.] This he did for them, that he might breed and maintain them in a sense of his omnipotent power, and of his all-sufficient goodness and faithfulness to his promises; which he in-

tended to demonstrate at his first giving of manna to them, (Exod. xvi. 12.)

Ver. 7. *And when ye came into this place.*] For they were now in a part of the country which they conquered, (iv. 45, 46, &c.)

Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, came out against us to battle, and we smote them.] See Numb. xxi. 24. 34, 35. Deut. ii. 30, &c. iii. 2, 3, &c.

Ver. 8. *And we took their land from them, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites,* &c.] See Numb. xxxii. 33. and Deut. iv. 12, &c.

Ver. 9. *Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them.*] Preserve them in memory, so as to make good your engagements which you passed to God in Horeb; which Moses was now about to renew, and lay a fresh obligation on them. For most of them being a new generation, and now going to enter upon the possession of the land of promise, it was necessary to make them sensible of the condition of their tenure, by engaging them in a solemn covenant to observe the laws of God faithfully; which was but a renewal of what was made before at Horeb.

That ye may prosper in all that you do.] See iv. 6. The Hebrew word, which we translate *prosper*, the LXX. translate *act prudently;* for they translate it Ἵνα συνῆτε. And the Vulgar, to the same purpose, *ut intelligatis*, that ye may understand to manage yourselves wisely in all your concerns, by observing the rules God hath given you; which was the way to prosper.

Ver. 10. *Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God.*] The summons which he sent out, (ver. 2.) it seems by this, was to appear at the tabernacle, where they now stood; and from whence he delivered these words to them, by the priests and Levites, (xxvii. 9. 14.)

Your captains of your tribes.] In the Hebrew, *your heads* of your tribes, who were the greatest persons in the nation, called sometimes princes.

Your elders.] These were not only the seventy elders, mentioned Numb. xi. 16. but all the other judges in their several courts, who are often called by the name of *elders* in this book, particularly xix. 12. 18. xxi. 2. 4. 6. xxv. 8.

And the officers.] Who attended upon the judge, to execute their sentence. (See xvi. 18.)

With all the men of Israel.] All the men of their several tribes.

Ver. 11. *Your little ones, your wives.*] Who were all now present, or else were represented by the men of Israel.

And thy stranger that is in thy camp.] Whether Egyptians, that followed them when they came out of Egypt, (Exod. xii. 38.) or other people who embraced their religion, so far, at least, to renounce all idolatry.

From the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water.] The meanest servant, whom they had bought, perhaps, with their money, either in Egypt, or since they came from thence.

Ver. 12. *That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *pass into covenant.* For so covenants were anciently made in the eastern countries, by dividing the sacrifice, and passing between the parts of it; as appears from the manner of God's making a covenant with Abraham in Gen. xv. 10. 17. whence some derive the Hebrew word *berith* (which signifies *a covenant*) from *bara*, which signifies *cutting off;* because something was always sacrificed at the making covenants, and anciently cut in pieces. For the same reason the Romans called a covenant *fœdus*, which they derive *à feriendo*, from striking, that is, killing some beast (particularly a swine), which was done with many ceremonies.

And into his oath.] The Hebrew word which we translate *oath*, rather imports a *curse*, which was annexed to an oath. And so the LXX. Ἐν ταῖς ἀραῖς; for they entered into this covenant with such imprecations upon themselves, as are mentioned xxvii. 15, 16, &c. wishing, perhaps, that they might be cut to pieces, as the sacrifice was (between whose parts they passed), if they did not faithfully perform their engagement.

Which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day.] For the covenant was mutual, as appears by the *burning lamp*, representing the Divine Majesty passing through the pieces of the sacrifice, when God entered into a covenant with Abraham, (Gen. xv. 17.)

Ver. 13. *That he may establish thee to-day a people unto himself.*] Confirm them in all the privileges which they had often forfeited by breaking his covenant; of being his peculiarly above all people, (Exod. xix. 5. Deut. xix. 2.)

And that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee.] Bless them and do them good, as he had solemnly promised.

And sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.] Gen. xii. 2, 3. xvii. 7, 8. xxii. 16, 17. xxvi. 3, 4. xxviii. 13, 14.

Ver. 14. *Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath.*] He means those mentioned ver. 10, 11.

Ver. 15. *But with him that standeth here with us this day, before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here,* &c.] I think the particle *ki* (which begins this verse) should not be translated *but;* for this is the same with what was said before, not distinct from it; and therefore should be translated thus, *As with him that standeth here with us before, that is not here with us this day; i. e.* with all that were absent from the present assembly, and with all future posterity, who were as yet unborn. So the Jerusalem Targum understands the latter part of this verse, *With all generations which shall be after us, as if they stood here with us to-day;* and so Uziclides, as they call him, *With all generations to come, unto the end of the world, as if they stood here with us at this present.* For perpetual leagues are sometimes made between whole nations; for whom some contract in the name and place of all the rest, and bind not only themselves, but their successors. And thus kings give fiefs to their subjects, upon conditions which their families are bound to perform in after-ages, or else lose the benefit of them.

Ver. 16. *For you know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt.*] These words, and those that follow in this and the next verse, come in as an argument to move them to enter into this covenant, and to shew them the necessity of renewing it. For, as God had wonderfully multiplied them in the land of Egypt, so he delivered them from thence no less wonderfully, when they were miserably enslaved; which was such a mercy, as ought never to be forgotten (and therefore frequently mentioned in this book), and laid an obligation upon them to be wholly devoted to him, as his redeemed people, (iv. 20.)

And how we came through the nations whom we passed by.] The Edomites, Midianites, Ammonites, and Moabites, through the skirts of whose countries they passed, and were preserved from receiving any hurt by them.

Ver. 17. *And ye have seen their abominations and their idols.*] They had opportunity in Egypt of seeing too much of their vile idolatries. And so they had as they passed by the country of Moab and Midian, when some of them were seduced to the worship of Baal-Peor; though, if they had not been blinded by their lust, they could not but have seen how contemptible an idol that was, and have abominated it. All the idols of the heathen are frequently called *abominations;* and in Lev. xxvi. 30. they are called, as they are here, *gillulim,* which we translate in the margin *dunghill-gods,* to express the utmost contempt of them. And some think they are so called, not only in regard of their matter, "sed ob formam scarabæi habitantis in stercore," *but for the form of the beetle, which lives in dung;* for so Isis, the great goddess of the Egyptians, was represented, as Plutarch tells us, in his book de Iside et Osiride. But whether in such ancient times, as this of Moses, it may be justly doubted.

Wood and stone, silver and gold.] Generally they were made of wood or stone, which sometimes were silvered or gilded over. And if any of them were made of massy silver or gold, yet, being lifeless things, they were no more able to afford them any help, than the dung on the earth. And it was an abominable thing to look upon dead matter as a god, or to think he made his habitation there (which was the opinion of the better sort of heathen), or would be represented by them, they having no likeness at all unto him.

Ver. 18. *Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe.*] These words are to be connected with ver. 15. as the principal end why he engaged every soul of them to renew their covenant with God, that none of them might revolt from him, to serve any other god. And the order wherein he places these words shews, that idolatry is of a very infectious nature, spreading itself strangely, from single men and women unto families, and at last into whole tribes.

Whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God.] Who had a hankering, as we now speak, after other gods; which might afterward break out into idolatry.

To go and serve the gods of these nations.] When the *heart, i. e.* the mind, will, and affections, are depraved, men easily find occasions to follow, whither they lead them. And by this it appears, that the principal part of the covenant was to keep them close to the worship of one God, and no other; as I have often observed, vi. 4. vii. 2. 25. ix. 1, &c.

Lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood.] Many take a *root* here to signify an *evil principle,* which the apostle calls *an evil heart of unbelief,* Heb. iii. 12. But the words going before in this verse, and those that follow in the next, plainly lead us to take it for any person lurking secretly among them (like a root underground), that was tainted with idolatry, who might poison others therewith, and in time bring forth the fruits of their impiety, which he calls *gall and wormwood:* Where it must be observed, that the Hebrew word *rosch,* which we translate *gall,* properly signifies an herb growing among corn, as bitter as gall. Which in Hosea x. 4. we translate *hemlock;* and commonly in Scripture is joined with *wormwood,* as it is here, Jer. ix. 15. Lament. iii. 19. Amos vi. 12. Unto which idolatry is compared, because it is most ungrateful and distasteful (if I may so speak) unto God, and produces bitter effects, that is, most grievous punishments, unto men.

Ver. 19. *And it come to pass, when he.*] The man spoken of before, under the name of a *root of bitterness.*

Heareth the words of this curse.] Against idolatry, which Moses engaged every one of them to renounce, by making a solemn covenant with God to worship him alone, and dreadful imprecations upon themselves, if they did not make good this covenant, (ver. 12. 14—16. xxvii. 15.)

That he bless himself in his heart.] Secretly fancy none of these curses shall fall upon him, but, quite contrary, promise himself all manner of happiness.

Saying, I shall have peace.] Prosper and be happy.

Though I walk in the imagination of mine heart.] Or, *in the stubbornness of mine heart,* as it is in the margin; that is, resolve to worship what god I best fancy.

To add drunkenness to thirst.] In the Hebrew the words are (as the margin of our Bibles observes) *the drunken to the thirsty;* for both words are adjectives, as grammarians speak; and, supposing a substantive to support them, many think none so proper to be understood as the word *earth.* Which makes this a proverbial speech, *To add the wet ground to the dry and thirsty,* or rather, *the thirsty to the wet.* For the particle *beth,* which in the Hebrew is the note of the accusative case, is put before the word *dry,* or *thirsty;* and, therefore, that is the thing which is to be added to the *wet* or *drunken;* not the *drunken* to the *dry.* And the sense is, *draw others into the same wickedness;* just as if a drunken man should draw sober persons to play the fool with him, and do as bad as himself; or, after one piece of land is overflowed, the water should be let into that which is dry, and spoil that also. For this seems to be the meaning of the whole verse, If a man shall be so presumptuous, as not only to cry peace to himself, when he runs after his own devices, in serving other gods, but endeavours to draw others into the same wicked practices.

There are a great many other interpretations of these words (seven or eight) given by the Hebrew doctors, besides others in Christian writers; which may be seen in Cocceius in his Ultima Mosis, sect. 134. But this seems to be the most easy, at which the Chaldee aims, and the LXX. if the particle μὴ be omitted, which is not in the Hebrew, nor the Chaldee, nor the Vulgar Latin. And if we take the words as we translate them (only inverting them), *add thirst unto drunkenness,* the sense is as easy; *viz.* add more sins to the foregoing, (Isa. xxx. 1.) and to be still inflamed (as the Scripture speaks) with love to more idols, after the service of many of them; "increasing their altars (as Hosea speaks) like heaps in the furrows of the field," (Hos. x. 1. xii. 11.)

Dr. Jackson, in his first book upon the Creed, (chap. 30. parag. 4.) thinks the meaning is, that posterity added to the wickedness of their ancestors. For they being cast out of their good land for their infidelity and disobedience, their posterity (saith he) continue exiles and vagabonds for their stubbornness in like practices; not being willing, to this day, to offer up the sacrifice of a contrite heart for

their disobedience past, but rather *(adding thirst to drunkenness) bless themselves when they hear the words of that curse, promising peace to themselves, though they walk on according to the stubbornness of their forefathers' hearts.*

Ver. 20. *The Lord will not spare him.*] That is, not pardon, or pass by his wickedness without punishment.

But then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man.] These words import the highest degree of anger, that is, the severest plagues, which are the effects of the anger of an incensed majesty.

And all the curses that are written in this book.] Particularly in the foregoing chapter.

Shall lie upon him.] Not only fall, but remain upon him, to his utter ruin, as it follows in the next words.

And the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven.] By his *name* is meant himself; so that this is a threatening of destruction to him and his posterity, till there be no memory of him left.

Ver. 21. *And the Lord shall separate him unto evil, out of all the tribes of Israel.*] Though he offended never so secretly, (for he speaks of one that *blessed himself in his heart,* &c. ver. 19.) God threatens to make him a public and notorious example of his vengeance to all the people of Israel.

According to all the curses of the covenant that are written in the book of the law.] It was a singular condescension in the Divine Majesty to enter into covenant with them; but it contained not only blessings to the obedient, but curses upon the disobedient; the latter of which were as certain as the former.

Ver. 22. *So that the generations to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say.*] That which follows, ver. 24.

When they see the plagues of that land.] This shews that these threatenings are denounced not merely against a simple idolater, but such an one as made it his endeavour to draw others from the worship of God; not being content to be drunk himself with heathenish superstition, but zealous to intoxicate as many as he could with it, and to root true religion out of the nation.

And the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it.] In the Hebrew it is, *The sicknesses wherewith he hath made it sick, i. e.* the heavy punishments which he hath inflicted upon it, and thereby made it a miserable nation.

Ver. 23. *And that the whole land is brimstone, and salt, and burning.*] Or, as it may be translated, *Is burnt up with brimstone and salt.* For these make land barren and unfruitful; as Pliny particularly observes of salt, (lib. xxx. cap. 7.) "Omnis locus in quo reperitur sal, sterilis est, nihilque gignit." *All ground in which salt is found is barren, and produceth nothing.* (See Judg. ix. 45. Psal. cvii. 34. Jer. xvii. 6. Ezek. xlvii. 11. Zeph. ii. 9.)

That it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein.] That neither nature nor art will make it fruitful.

Like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim.] And the country about them, which was the most beautiful of all other in that part of the world, (Gen. xiii. 10.) but on a sudden turned into a filthy stinking lake, where no creature, neither fish nor fowl, can live.

Which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath.] Being highly incensed by their wickedness, (see Gen. xviii. 20. xix. 24, 25.) as he was by the wickedness of the Jews; which was the more provoking, because they had such an example of his vengeance continually before their eyes, and yet went on in their evil ways, till they brought the like judgment upon all Judea. This was more exactly fulfilled in the last destruction of the Jews by the Romans, than in their first by the Babylonians: for the whole land was laid waste, and deserted by its inhabitants, and made a den of thieves; being brought to desolation by repeated returns of wars; more especially in the time of Adrian, when Julius Severus, as I observed upon the foregoing chapter, made such a devastation, that the whole country was turned, in a manner, into a wilderness.

Ver. 24. *Even all nations shall say.*] All that were near them, or came that way from far countries; as it goes before, ver. 22.

Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land?] Which he formerly made so populous and plenteous.

And what means the heat of this great anger?] These exceeding dreadful calamities, which evidently proceeded from a Divine vengeance. For the Jews fought so valiantly, and defended Jerusalem so resolutely (as appears by Josephus), that the author of Schebet Judah had reason to say, That it was not want of arms, the unusual terror of new machines, but the anger of God, provoked by their wickedness, which was the true and only cause of their destruction. And, indeed, Titus himself said as much, That God fought for the Romans, and drove the Jews from their fortifications, Ἐπεὶ χεῖρές τε ἀνθρώπων, ἢ μηχαναὶ, &c. *For what could the hands of men or machines have done against such strong towers?* (See chap. xxxii. 22.)

Ver. 25. *Then shall men say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt.*] This account must be supposed to be given by the pious Jews, or by those who were made sensible, when it was too late, how steadfast God was in his covenant; which contained curses as well as blessings, as was before observed, ver. 21. and see vii. 9, 10. xi. 26—28.

Ver. 26. *For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them whom they knew not.*] This aggravated their sin, that they sought for acquaintance with strange gods, directly contrary to the covenant of God, (xii. 30, 31.)

And whom he had not given unto them.] Or, as it is in the margin, *had not given* (or *divided*) *to them any portion;* that is, never bestowed any benefit upon them, as the Lord their God had done, who brought them out of Egypt. Or, more simply (as Boetius thinks the words will bear), *to whom no worship belonged.*

Ver. 27. *And the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book.*] So Moses foretold them, vii. 4. xi. 16, 17.

Ver. 28. *And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and wrath, and in great indignation.*] Here is one word more to express his displeasure against them, than was used before, when he speaks of the destruction of Sodom, &c. ver. 23. And they all denote the great plagues threatened in Lev. xxvi. and in the foregoing chapter of this book.

And cast them into another land, as it is this day.] This may seem to relate only to their captivity in Babylon; for, after they were rooted out by the Romans, they were scattered into all lands, (xxviii. 63, 64.) But considering what goes before, (ver. 23, 24.) and that they were not

quite *rooted out* (many of them remaining in the land when Nebuchadnezzar conquered them) till the desolation made by the Romans, I think these words relate to them also, and *another land* is only the singular number, as is usual, for the plural. And so the author of Schebet Judah understood it, who, quoting these words [*cast them out into another land*], adds, *which experience now proves to be true.*

Ver. 29. *The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those that are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever,* &c.] The Jews generally take these words to be meant of the punishment of secret sins, (particularly of idolatry, spoken of before, ver. 19.) which belongeth unto God, as the punishment of open sins belonged unto them, in obedience to his law, who commanded them to put to death him that seduced any person to idolatry, and to raze the city that apostatized unto it, (xiii. 5, 6, &c. 12, 13, &c.) And their negligence in doing their duty in this particular, made idolatry spread among them to their utter ruin. But these words may be understood as a farther answer to such inquiries, as that ver. 24. in which, if men persisted, and still asked, But why doth God thus punish his own people with such unusual severity, when there are many idolatrous nations, far worse than they, who continue still in their own land, and are not thus rooted out? Moses bids them silence such demands, and rest satisfied in this, That we cannot give an account of such things as God hath not revealed, particularly why he punishes some people, when he spares others who are as bad; but must mind our own duty, which he hath plainly revealed unto us, that is (as Moses concludes this chapter), *to do after all his commandments which he hath given us in his law,* believing he will greatly reward the obedient, and terribly punish, one time or other, all those that transgress it.

There may be also a more obvious sense of these words, if we translate them as some great men have done, *The secrets of the Lord our God are revealed to us, and to our children.* Thus Onkelos, whose judgment is very valuable; which Grotius follows, and before him Forsterus; and Paulus Fagius represents it as a commodious sense, and makes it the same with the words of the Psalmist, cxlvii. 20. "He hath not dealt so with any nation," &c. For this was a peculiar favour to the Jews, that those things which God before kept secret in his own breast he now manifested to them; that they might know how to order their lives so as to please him. But this made them liable to be punished more grievously than all other people, if they did not observe his will, which he most graciously discovered to them. And if we could give any credit to the Jews, who say that all words in the Bible that have extraordinary points upon them (of which there are but ten in the Pentateuch, and these words, *lanu ulebenu, to us and our children,* are the last of them) denote something peculiar and extraordinary, I should think that they relate to the revelation to be made by Jesus Christ, the great prophet promised to them, (chap. xviii.) unto which, if they did not give heed, the most dreadful punishments would be inflicted on them; as we see they have been for many ages, and are not yet ended.

CHAP. XXX.

Ver. 1. *AND it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee.*] God at the first bestowed great and singular blessings upon them; but when they grew so insensible of his mercy, as to violate the covenant he had made with them, then he sent his curses which he had threatened upon them: which were completed in their expulsion out of the good land, which he had given them; especially in their last expulsion by the Romans, which was rather an extirpation.

And thou shalt call to mind.] In the Hebrew, *bring back to thy heart,* as we observe in the margin of 1 Kings viii. 47. where there is the very same phrase, and there translated, *shall bethink thyself,* that is, reflect seriously both upon the blessings and curses, and consequently consider the truth of God in fulfilling both. In which consideration, repentance and conversion to God begin. (See Ezek. xviii. 28.)

Among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee.] Where they could not choose but often think of all the blessings they had enjoyed in their own land, and might have still enjoyed, if they had not been disobedient; and all the curses which had befallen them till they were driven from thence, and had pursued them ever since. (See Lev. xxvi. 40, &c. Deut. iv. 29, 30, &c.)

Ver. 2. *And shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice, according to all that I command thee this day, thou, and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.*] Repentance was completed by forsaking their idols, and returning to the worship of the Lord their God alone, and by obeying all the rest of his commands, and teaching their children to do the same; and all this with sincerity of heart. This they did, in some measure, after they were carried captive to Babylon; since which time we read nothing of their idolatry. But they fell into other sins, which stopped their ears to that great prophet, the Lord Christ, when he came to them; for which they are punished to this day, and will be till they repent and obey.

Ver. 3. *Then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity.*] That is, bring those that were carried captive back again to their own land. Thus the word *captivity* is used, Psal. xiv. 7. Ephes. iv. 8.

And have compassion upon thee.] These words express the spring of all their happiness, *viz.* the Divine compassion, in pardoning their sins, which had been very provoking.

And will return and gather thee.] This is the effect of his compassion in their restitution, and recollection again into one body after their dispersion.

From all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee.] This was fulfilled in part when they returned from Babylon; for then they who were scattered in other countries, flocked again to them; and will be more completely fulfilled when they shall believe on our blessed Saviour.

Ver. 4. *And if any of thine be driven out unto the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee.*] Unto this promise Nehemiah plainly alludes in his prayer to God, to prosper his endeavours for the restoration of Jerusalem.

(Nehem. i. 8, 9.) And, finding the truth of it confirmed by the king's gracious concession to him, he went about the work, though one, who was accounted a prophet (yea, several of the like quality), dissuaded him from the enterprise, as likely to prove dangerous to his person, (vi. 10—12, &c.) Ezra also tells us how Cyrus made a *proclamation throughout all his kingdom*, which was very large, that all the Jews might return, if they pleased, into their own country, (Ezra i. 1. 4. and see Zechariah vii. 7, 8.) And though, in their last dispersion by the Romans, they be far more scattered, and into more distant regions, than they were in the Babylonian captivity (according to Moses's threatening, xxviii. 64. of this book), yet, if they did now consider the cause of it, and lay to heart their sin in crucifying the Lord Christ, no doubt God would have compassion on them, and wonderfully restore them. For the Jews themselves apply this place (and have long done so) to their present condition, being of opinion that God hath appointed a prefixed time in his own mind, though he hath not declared it, when he will deliver them; but, if they did repent, he would shorten the days of their banishment, and immediately bring them to their own land. Thus the ancient Nitzacon, set forth not long ago by Wagenseil, p. 254. And R. Isaac, since him, and more lately, often insists upon this, in his Chissuk Emuna, published by the very same learned person; particularly Perek. vii. where he saith, "There can be no time prefixed for their deliverance, because it depends upon their repentance; whereby they may cut off the length of this banishment, provided they turn to God with their whole heart, and a full repentance." For which he alleges this place. And he repeats it again, (Perek. xxvii.) as the great comfort they have in this long banishment, that, upon their perfect repentance, God will be merciful to them, and overcome their sins, and perform this promise. Which I find still more lately mentioned in Manasseh ben Israel's book, De Termino Vitæ, lib. iii. sect. 3. where he saith, "Herein all the prophets imitate Moses, being wont, after terrible threatenings, to conclude with some singular consolation. Which made R. Aquiba (as the Talmudists report) fall a laughing, when all the wise men who were with him wept and lamented, at the sight of the ruins of Jerusalem and the temple. Which they wondering at, he said, *After the clouds the sun will break out; and after the end of the evils which Moses threatened, we may hope for good things: for God is not more faithful in fulfilling the one, than in performing the other.*"

But, alas! in all ages hitherto there are no signs of repentance, much less of a perfect one; but they have been strangely hardened in their unbelief, and have bitterly reproached the Lord Jesus and his religion. Abarbinel himself, though a gentleman of a noble family, a well-bred person, and of an excellent understanding, is extremely guilty of this. And since his time Solomon Virgæ, in the age before us, considering the astonishing plagues that have befallen them, and that never any people, as he acknowledges, conflicted with so many miseries and so many ages as they have done, inquires the causes why the Divine Majesty should be so angry with them: he reckons seven; among which he accounts the putting of Jesus of Nazareth to death as one; yet not as a crime, but that which hath enraged Christians against them. For he wickedly illustrates this by that speech of Moses, Exod. viii. 24. which he thus translates, *If we slay and sacrifice the abominable gods of the Egyptians in their sight, will they not stone us?* Which is the highest reproach he could vomit against our Saviour; mingled with the most stupid folly, in giving that as a reason of the Divine anger, which at the most is only a reason in their account of men's indignation. (Schebet Judah, sect. 63.)

The most cruel usage which they have met with in all Christian countries, might thus exasperate and embitter their spirits; and I cannot excuse the violent hatred of Christians to them, and their barbarous treatment of them, though they therein fulfilled the Divine threatenings, as I have shewn upon the twenty-eighth chapter; which being ceased since the reformation of religion, the Jews have not been so virulent against our blessed Saviour; and it is to be hoped will be won to the obedience of faith by our Christian usage of them; when those other stumbling-blocks, which hinder their conversion, are removed out of the way.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it.*] Be again planted in it, as they were at their return from the captivity of Babylon; especially after they had laid the foundation of the house of the Lord, he blessed them exceedingly, Hag. ii. 18, 19. Zech. viii. 7—12.

And he will do thee good.] The prophet Zechary hath given a full explication of these words, viii. 13—15. and the prophet Jeremy before him, (xxxii. 42, 43, &c.) which was fulfilled in the building of the house of the Lord, though great opposition was made to it; and in the compassing Jerusalem with walls, and settling them in a state of liberty, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, lii. 1, 2.

And multiply thee above thy fathers.] The Hebrew words import, that he would *make them greater than their fathers.* Which he did, by their vast increase after they returned from Babylon: (see Zech. viii. 4, 5. and before him, Hos. i. 10.) which is manifest from their διασποραὶ, *i. e. spreading themselves in so many colonies*, through all Asia, both the great and the less; with Egypt, Greece, Italy, and Spain. (See Strabo, lib. xvi. concerning Joppa.) By this means they were very much exalted, as Zechariah prophesied, after their captivity; (xii. 6.) for, as they had their liberty in their own country (God being a wall of fire to them, while Jerusalem had no walls), so they spread themselves, as I said, and had their synagogues in Babylon, Arabia, Syria, and divers other countries beforementioned; and a great many proselytes also joined themselves to them.

Yet one cannot well think that so magnificent a prophecy as this is was entirely fulfilled after their return from Babylon, when they were tributaries to the Persians, and afterward fell under the power of the Grecians, under whom they suffered very much, especially in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes; whose death did not conclude their troubles, as Hermannus Witsius has shewn at large, in his Decaphylon, cap. 10. n. 9—12, &c. where he endeavours to prove that there was no moment of time, after their return from Babylon, wherein they could be said to be *made greater than their fathers*, especially in the days of David and Solomon: and therefore he concludes, that this promise is still to be completely fulfilled. And thus R. Isaac (in his book beforenamed, Chissuk Emuna) argues, (Perek vi.) that God did not bestow benefits upon them equal to those which

their fathers enjoyed, much less superior, while the second temple stood; but all that time was full of straits and calamities; for which he alleges the prophecy of Daniel, ix. 25. And therefore saith, these words of Moses can by no means be thought to be fulfilled, when the tribes of Judah and Benjamin returned from Babylon, and left a vast number behind them, who would not come back with them, but stay there to this day.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart.*] By such singular benefits bestowed upon them, in a miraculous manner, God designed to take away the stubborn refractoriness of their spirits, (called *hardness of heart*, xxix. 19.) and to cut off all their wicked inclinations and dispositions to idolatry and superstition, which had been their ruin; which is called *humbling their uncircumcised heart*, Lev. xxvi. 41. But though God circumcised them, yet their hearts might remain uncircumcised, as appears from xxix. 3, 4. And therefore he calls upon them to circumcise their hearts themselves, (xvi. 10.) by laying to heart his benefits, and following the motions of his grace and holy Spirit, which thereby he put into their hearts: and their neglect of this, and resting merely in the circumcision of the flesh, was that which ruined them again.

And the heart of thy seed.] Accordingly, we find they were freed from idolatry after their return from Babylon; though still they continued in other sins. Which brought this present captivity (as they call it) upon them; another banishment being necessary (saith R. Isaac, in the book beforementioned, Perek. vii.) to purge them from their sins, by the severe afflictions which they now endure, and have long suffered; because their manifold sins, as he expresses it, need much scouring, by contusions and pressures. After which, he saith, they shall sin no more, but that shall be fulfilled which is written in the law, *the Lord thy God shall circumcise thine heart*, &c. quoting these very words of Moses. But, alas! they are not sensible for what sin they suffer. (See p. 96, 97. of Wagenseil's edition.)

To love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.] See vi. 5. This prophecy, the Jews say, shall be fulfilled in the days of the Messiah, according to what Ezekiel saith, xxxvi. 26. *A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put into you*, &c. So R. Isaac, in the place abovenamed, and in p. 83.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecute thee.*] Their very restoration created them many enemies; whose hatred increased with their prosperity in their own land, and made them, when they had power, to persecute them. Whom God remarkably plagued, particularly Antiochus Epiphanes, who died in miserable torments.

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt return.*] This may relate as well to their return unto their own land, as to their turning unto God: of both which he had spoken before. And now, having mentioned their persecution, whereby many of them might be driven out of their country, I suppose he here promises their restoration to it again, when he had cursed their enemies.

And obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do all his commandments, which I command thee this day.] Continue steadfast in their love to him, by a strict observance of all his commandments.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, and in the fruit of thy body*, &c.] The effect of their constant and sincere obedience he promises should be still greater prosperity, in all their undertakings, and in all their enjoyments. (See xxviii. 4; 5, &c.)

For good.] To encourage them to continue faithful in the service of God.

For the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good.] Delight only in blessing them; and not send any curses upon them. (See xxviii. 63. and Jer. xxxii. 41.)

As he rejoiceth over thy fathers.] In whose obedience he delighted, (Deut. x. 15.)

Ver. 10. *If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments*, &c.] Persist in obedience to him.

And if thou turn unto the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.] With a sincere love to all his commands, (ver. 2.) who had *planted them assuredly in their land, with his whole heart, and his whole soul*, as Jeremiah speaks, xxxii. 41. But herein they were defective, after they came out of the captivity of Babylon. For though they never returned again to idolatry, but kept close to the worship of God alone, yet they rested merely in the outward rites of religion, and had not a hearty love to God, and to all goodness; which made them reject the Son of God when he came among them, and fall under those long calamities, which will not end till they *turn to him with all their hearts and souls.*

Ver. 11. *For this commandment which I command thee this day.*] Of hearty love to God, and sincere obedience to all his commands, (ver. 2. 6. 8. 16.)

It is not hidden from thee.] Or, it may be translated out of the Hebrew, *It is not too wonderful above thee;* that is, abstruse and hard to be understood, because above their reach; but easy to be known and acquainted withal, because plainly revealed. Which is as true of the gospel, (unto which St. Paul applies these words, Rom. x. 6, &c.) as it was of the law of Moses: for therein our Saviour hath declared the mind and will of God to us, in such familiar words, that the most simple people may understand their duty.

Nor is it far off.] So that they should go to seek it, and learn it in some distant nation. R. Isaac, in his Chissuk Emuna, cap. 45. had his thoughts so fixed upon what is said ver. 4. that he fancies these words belong to that matter; and that Moses still speaks to them of repentance, *which is of greater value than any other thing, and yet most easily acquired.* Which cannot but make one wonder at their blindness; for, if repentance be so very easy, how comes it to pass that they remain impenitent for so many ages, and thereby, as they confess, prolong their miseries? And yet he repeats the same words in the second part of his work, Perek. lxxx. where he hath the confidence to say St. Paul misapplies this place.

Ver. 12. *It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who will go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?*] R. Jacob Hacsæi, in his preface to that part of the Mischna called Seder Nesim (as Guil. Vorstius observes upon Abarbinel about the Articles of their Faith), hath very fairly expounded this: which he takes to be a proverbial speech, to shew that there is no need of hard, or rather impossible labour, to come at the knowledge

of God's will, as there is in many human sciences, where the mind of man is tired by several propositions and deductions, &c. before he arrive at what he seeks: but all things are plain and easy to be understood, and not hard to be performed. For God had revealed his mind clearly by Moses from heaven, and therefore none had need to go thither to desire God to acquaint them with it, which he had done of his own accord, out of his good-will towards them. And thus Grotius observes upon Rom. x. 6. out of several Greek authors, that they expressed things very difficult, by *going up to heaven*. Maimonides, indeed, to Jesodehatorah, cap. 9. and Abarbinel, in Rosch Amana, cap. 13. make these words an argument for the eternity and unchangeableness of their law, and that there should be no new revelation from heaven: but there is no colour for this from these words, the particle *hu* being of the feminine gender, and therefore doth not refer to God, but to *the command* beforementioned, plainly importing, that men could not pretend ignorance of their duty, nor had any reason to desire that somebody would go to heaven again for those things which Moses had already brought from thence. And thus the apostle most justly accommodates these words to the new revelation from heaven by the Son of God, which was not abstruse and difficult, but as plain and perspicuous as this now made by Moses.

Ver. 13. *Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us?* &c.] Ὡς δεῖσθαι πολυχρονίου καὶ καματηρᾶς ἀποδημίας (to use the words of Philo, in his book concerning Rewards and Punishments), *so as to need long and tedious voyages, laborious and wearisome travels, to fetch it from foreign countries.* Such as the Greek philosophers took, who travelled into Egypt, and the eastern part of the world, to learn wisdom, which God now taught his people in the wilderness, without any pains to attain to it.

Ver. 14. *But the word is very nigh unto thee.*] Being brought to their very doors by Moses, the servant of God; who now delivered to them the mind of God, as the Son of God himself did afterward, when he came and dwelt among them.

In thy mouth and in thy heart.] Made so familiar to them, that they might always have it in their common discourse, to teach it their children; and had now been so often repeated, that it might be well laid up in their memory, never to be forgotten by them, (vi. 6—9. xi. 18—20.) It was also in the mouth of their priests, who were to teach them knowledge, (Malachi ii. 7.) and press it upon their hearts. Here the forenamed R. Isaac, in both the places forenamed, observes, that *Repentance depends on the confession of the mouth and grief of the heart:* but the largest confession and the sorest grief will not avail them, till they repent of their crucifying the Lord Jesus, and shall "confess him with their mouth, and believe in their heart, that God hath raised him from the dead," &c. as St. Paul speaks, Rom. x. 9, 10.

That thou mayest do it.] That they might have nothing to do but to put it in practice; and in order thereunto continually read it, and keep it in mind. In which the Jews were so diligent, that, as Josephus tells the gentiles (lib. ii. contra Apionem), they could as easily recite all the laws of God as tell their names. But here was their error, that they were not careful to do what they knew to be the will of God: and so, when he sent his Son among them, who plainly declared to them more fully the meaning of their holy books, they could not understand and receive that which they read every day. And indeed this is the common error (as Dr. Jackson well observes) of all corrupt minds, to seek that afar off, as if they were strangers to it, which is really in their mouth and in their heart, so that they would but be doers, and not only hearers of the word, as St. James speaks, alluding perhaps to these words of Moses. As St. Paul applies this whole passage to the gospel; which is that word of faith, so preached and published by the apostles, that it may be in all our mouths and hearts, without going to seek for any other infallible teacher.

Ver. 15. *See, I have set before thee this day, life and good, death and evil.*] *Life and good, death and evil,* may be but two words for the same thing, *viz.* all manner of happiness, and all manner of misery; both which he had at large set before them, in the twenty-eighth chapter. Or by *life* may be meant, long life in the land God had promised them; and *good,* all the prosperity they could wish for there: as, on the other side, *death* may signify their being cut off from the land of the living before their time; and *evil,* all the calamities he had threatened while they lived: and so the next verse seems to interpret it. Maimonides from these words observes, that the wills of men are under no force nor coaction, but are free agents; and, therefore, have precepts imposed upon them, with a punishment threatened to the disobedient, and a reward promised to those who keep God's commandments. Of which he treats at large in his preface to his Commentary upon Pirke Avoth, cap. 8.

Ver. 16. *In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and judgments.*] This includes their entire obedience to all God's laws, which are comprehended under these three names. (See vi. 1. 5. vii. 11. x. 12, 13.)

That thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.] This is the explication of the *life and good* which he set before them, if they observed God's laws with sincere affection to them, (ver. 15.)

Ver. 17. *But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear.*] Want of love to God, and of a due esteem of his wonderful love to them, made their heart turn away to other things, and not regard what he had revealed to them from heaven.

And worship other gods, and serve them.] This was the principal breach of the covenant of God.

Ver. 18. *I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish; and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land whither ye go,* &c.] This is the explication of the *death and evil* he set before them, (ver. 15.)

Ver. 19. *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death.*] God, angels, and men, were witnesses that he had done his duty. See iv. 26. viii. 19. and, therefore, is owned by God himself to be "faithful in all his house," (Numb. xii. 7.)

Blessing and cursing.] They are the same with *life and death:* but he uses several words, to make them sensible that both proceeded from God; the one being the effect of his love and favour, and the other of his anger and high displeasure.

Therefore choose life, that thou and thy seed may live.] That is, choose to be obedient, without which they could not be happy. Or he wishes them to set their hearts on the happiness God had promised them, that it might incline them to do as follows.

Ver. 20. *That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and obey his voice.*] Love is the noblest and the strongest spring of obedience.

And that thou mayest cleave unto him.] Obedience to God is the surest preservative from apostacy.

For he is thy life, and the length of thy days.] The author and giver of life; which he preserves and prolongs unto those who are obedient.

That thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.] Which promise confirmed by an oath being faithfully fulfilled, he justly claimed their fidelity to him upon that account: which is the reason it is so often mentioned, (vi. 10. viii. 1. ix. 5. x. 11. xi. 9. 21. xix. 8.)

CHAP. XXXI.

Ver. 1. *AND Moses went, and spake these words unto all Israel.*] By this it seems plain to me, that after Moses had renewed the covenant with the people (mentioned in the foregoing chapter), he dismissed them, and retired to his own tent. But not long after gave them a new summons, (as he had done xxix. 2.) and went again to take his leave of them. The LXX. indeed seem to take the first words, as if the meaning was, that he *went on* with his discourse. For thus they render them, *συνετέλεσε λαλῶν πάντας τοὺς λόγους τούτους, he finished speaking all these words.* For which I see no warrant, nor is it likely he could speak all that here follows at the same time.

Ver. 2. *And he said unto them, I am a hundred and twenty years old this day.*] This shews these words were spoken not long before his death, which was this year, (xxxiv. 7.) Manasseh ben Israel would have us from hence observe, "The singular care God hath of those who serve him with a perfect heart, as Moses did; the days of whose years (saith he) are exactly proportioned. For so these words are expounded in Sota, cap. 1. 'To-day my years are completed; to-day I was born, and to-day I shall die:' for he was born on the seventh day of the month Adar, and on the same day of the same month he died. Thus Enoch (he adds) lived just three hundred and sixty-five years, which are proportioned to the days of the sun's annual course," lib. iii. de Termino Vitæ, sect. 5. But as there is no great weight in this observation, if it were true, so that which he saith of Moses is evidently false: for he did not die this very day, as appears from ver. 14. where he saith, "The days approach that I must die." Therefore the time was not yet come.

And I can no more go out and in.] Discharge the office I have long sustained of your governor and leader; (see Numb. xxvii. 17.) not because he wanted vigour, either of body or mind, (for that is contrary to xxxiv. 7. of this book) but because God did not think fit to permit him to conduct them any farther; as the following words explain it.

Also the Lord hath said unto me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan.] The particle we translate *also*, often signifies *for*; and is so translated by us in divers places; particularly in Isa. iii. 7. Jer. xvii. 8. And being so taken here, the sense of these words is plain and easy; giving a reason why he could no longer take the charge of them, as he had done, because God had otherwise ordered; having told him he should not bring them into Canaan, which they were now ready to enter.

Ver. 3. *The Lord thy God, he shall go over before thee.*] Conduct them by the ark of his presence. (Josh. iii. 5. 11. and see Exod. xxiii. 23. and Deut. ix. 3.)

And he shall destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them.] Exod. xxxiv. 11.

And Joshua, he shall go over before thee.] As their captain and leader when Moses had left them, (iii. 28. Josh. i. 2.)

As the Lord hath said.] When he was appointed the successor of Moses, (Numb. xxvii. 18. 21.)

Ver. 4. *And the Lord shall do unto them as he did to Sihon and to Og, kings of the Amorites,* &c.] See Numb. xxiv. 24. 34, 35.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord shall give them up before thy face.*] As he had promised before, vii. 23. where he saith, *The Lord thy God shall deliver them unto thee.* In the Hebrew the words are, *before thy face.* (See ix. 3.)

That ye may do unto them according to all the commandments which I have commanded you.] *i. e.* Utterly destroy them, and their altars, and images, and groves, &c. (See vii. 2, 3. 5. 27. xii. 1, 2, &c.)

Ver. 6. *Be strong, and of a good courage.*] By faith in God; which their forefathers wanting, were discouraged, and durst not go up and possess the land when God commanded them, (i. 28. 32.)

Fear not, nor be afraid of them.] Be not affrighted, much less dismayed at their multitude, their stature and strength, when you go to fight with them. The second word *(afraid)* only expresses a higher degree of the same passion of fear; signifying, being overcome with it. For that is the import of the Hebrew word *aratz*, which originally signifies to *prevail over* another. This he had said to their forefathers, i. 21. 29. and after repeated to them, iii. 2. 22. vii. 17, 18. 21.

For the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee.] According to the assurance before given them, (xx. 4.)

He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.] This promise, which here is general, in the next verse but one is particularly made to Joshua; and renewed to him by God himself, after the death of Moses, when they were about to enter into the land of Canaan, (Josh. i. 5.) And it is applied by the apostle unto all faithful Christians, to encourage their hope of being conducted through all difficulties and dangers unto their heavenly inheritance, (Heb. xiii. 5.)

Ver. 7. *And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel.*] That they might have the greater reverence to his person and authority, and follow his conduct, as a leader appointed by God.

Be strong, and of a good courage.] He exhorts him to give a good example to all the people; these being the same words he had spoken to them, ver. 6.

For thou must go with this people.] Be their leader and commander-in-chief, by God's special order, (Numb. xxvii. 21.)

Unto the land which the Lord hath sworn unto their fathers to give them.] See viii. 1. x. 13. xxx. 20.

And thou shalt cause them to inherit it.] Put them into possession of it, (iii. 28.)

Ver. 8. *And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee, and will be with thee.*] Josh. i. 9.

He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.] See ver. 6.

Fear not, neither be dismayed.] The same which he said to the people, ver. 6. but was most necessary to be pressed upon him, who, by his undaunted resolution, was to put courage into them. The word we translate *dismayed*, is different in the Hebrew from that ver. 6. which is, *be not afraid:* but the LXX. and the Vulgar use the same word to express both; which denotes such a consternation, as disables a man to do his duty; which is the proper import of this word.

Ver. 9. *And Moses wrote this law.*] Some understand by *this law*, only the book of Deuteronomy; for which I can see no reason, the Scripture calling all that is contained in the five books of Moses by the name of *the law*. St. Paul, for instance, in Galat. iii. 21. asks this question, *Do you not hear the law?* and then quotes what we read in Gen. xvi. 21. And so Nehemiah saith, x. 34, 35. that they brought first-fruits unto God, *as it is written in the law, viz.* Exod. xiii. 12. xxiii. 19. And Josiah put away the workers with familiar spirits, &c. *that he might perform the words of the law,* (2 Kings xxiiii. 24.) which we find Lev. xix. 30. xx. 6. 27. And Hezekiah also, (2 Chron. xxxi. 3.) appointed the daily oblations, and those required at stated times, to be offered, *as it is written in the law of the Lord,* which plainly refers to the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth of Numbers. And Joshua built an altar on Mount Ebal, (viii. 30, 31.) *as it is written in the book of the law of Moses;* which we find no where but in this book of Deuteronomy, (xxvii. 4.)

And delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi.] Concerning this form of speech *the priests the sons of Levi,* see xvii. 9. It is probable Moses had wrote most of these five books some time ago (and so the foregoing words may be translated, *Moses had wrote this law*), but did not finish them till a little before his death, and then delivered them to the priests. But there is no necessity thus to understand it, for he might have had time enough between this and his death to write the whole Pentateuch; it being only said, ver. 14. *Thy days approach, that thou must die;* which doth not imply he was to die in a day or two, but there might be some weeks before his departure.

Which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord.] It was most proper to deliver it unto them, who alone might touch the ark, in which *this law* was to be laid, (ver. 26.) The Kohathites, who were mere Levites, and not priests, did carry the ark in their travels through the wilderness, after the priests had covered it, and put in the staves thereof; (as I have shewn Numb. iv. 5, 6, &c.) but it is evident they served only as ministers to the priests, who, upon great occasions, bare the ark themselves. As when they passed over Jordan, (Josh. iii. 3. 6.) when they compassed Jericho, (Josh. vi. 6.) and when the temple of Solomon was dedicated, and the ark brought into it, (1 Kings viii. 3, 4. 6.) When David, indeed, brought the ark to Jerusalem, it is said the Levites bare it; but at the same time the priests also were summoned to take care of it; which shews the Levites bare it as their servants, (1 Chron. xv. 2. 11. 13—15.)

And unto all the elders of Israel.] As he delivered this book of the law, that is, the whole Pentateuch (as Abarbinel and others of the Jews understand it) unto the priests, commanding them to preserve it safe near the ark; (ver. 24.) so he delivered another copy of this book to the elders of every tribe, as the Jews affirm in Debarim Rabba: where they say (and it is highly probable) that Moses, before his death, wrote thirteen copies of the law (with his own hand as they add), and having delivered one unto the priests, to be preserved in the holy place, gave one to each tribe, which he committed to the care of the elders of it. Thus Maimonides, also, in his preface to Jad Chazakah, as Buxtorf observes, in Histor. Arcæ Fœderis, cap. 5. The intent of which was, I suppose, that all the people of each tribe might resort to it (as the whole nation were to resort to that in the sanctuary), if they doubted of any thing, which might be thought to be amiss, by the errors of transcribers.

Ver. 10. *And Moses commanded them.*] Both the priests and the elders, to take care of what follows.

At the end of every seventh year, in the solemnity of the year of release.] Mentioned xv. 1, &c.

In the feast of tabernacles.] When they had gathered in all the fruits of the earth, and thereby had greater leisure to attend to the hearing of the law read to them; which, when men's minds were also freed from cares by the release of their debts, was likely to make a greater impression upon them.

Ver. 11. *When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose.*] As they were bound to do at this feast, and at Pentecost, and the Passover, (xvi. 16.)

Thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.] This order being directed, not to all Israel, but to a particular person, plainly imports, that the supreme governor, whosoever he was, had this charge laid upon him, to take care these laws should be read at this solemn time, that all the people might hear them; and therefore, I think, the Jews rightly say, that their kings, when they had them, were bound not only to look after this matter, but to read the law themselves to as many (that is) as could hear them, appointing the priests and the Levites to read it in as many other assemblies of the people as were necessary for the fulfilling of this precept. In order to which, a pulpit was set up in the court of the men of Israel on the very first day of the feast (for they did not think fit to defer it till the last, because it is here said, *when Israel is come to appear before the Lord,* not when they were ready to depart, as the Jews observe); the king going up into it, the minister took the book of the law, and delivered it to the ruler of the synagogue, who gave it to the sagan (or vicar of the high-priest), who delivered it to the high-priest, and he to the king; who stood up to receive it, and then sat down to read. All this expresses the reverence with which this holy book was delivered; and likewise the reverence with which they approached to the king; who, they say, began to read at this book of Deuteronomy (which is a compendium of the law), and proceeded, before he stopped, to those words, (vi. 4.) "Hear, O Israel," &c. which having also read, he omitted the rest till he came to chap. xi. 13. "And

it shall come to pass, if thou wilt hearken diligently," &c. reading on to ver. 22. And then skipped to xiv. 22. "And thou shalt truly tithe," &c. reading on to the section concerning the king, (xvii. 14.) and then the cursings and blessings out of the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth chapters, till he had ended all that section of the law. Thus the Mischna, in the title Sota, cap. 7. sect. 8. which Wagenseil hath lately illustrated with most learned annotations; and our Dr. Lightfoot also hath given an account of it long ago, in his Temple Service, chap. 17. sect. 1. where he saith, the king might sit down if he pleased, when he read, but it was esteemed more honourable if he stood; as king Agrippa did when he performed this office. And before he began to read, he made a prayer to God; and all this (he adds) was done *in the court of the women.* Which well agrees with what is said in the next verse, "Gather the people, men and women," &c. But it doth not contradict what I said before, of his reading it in the *court of the men of Israel:* for if the king were of the family of David, it was always done there; if he were not, then in the court of the women, as Wagenseil observes out of Maimonides.

Ver. 12. *Gather the people together.*] All that came to this feast could not meet in one place, but were divided into several assemblies, probably in their synagogues. For as many as the courts of Israel would hold meeting there, it is reasonable to think that the rest assembled in some other holy place. Such were their synagogues, which Philo (in his book of the embassy to Caius) calls *places of secondary holiness.* And Maimonides discourses at large of the holiness of synagogues and schools in his book of Prayer and the Priests' Blessing, cap. 11. (See upon Lev. xix. 30.)

Men, women, and children.] Though the males only were bound to go up to the great feasts, yet many devout women went also voluntarily, as appears by Hannah, 1 Sam. i. 3, 4. And all the women in Jerusalem were likewise bound to attend at these solemnities, with the children who were capable of instruction. (See Nehem. viii. 2, 3.) To whom some person of authority read the law in their court, while the king of the house of David was reading it in the court of the men of Israel.

And the stranger that is within thy gates.] Such as were proselytes to the Jewish religion; not excluding those who were only proselytes of the gate, if they would come to their assemblies.

That they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law.] That by this means they might be instructed in the true way of worshipping God (which is here called his *fear),* and to his worship and service add a careful obedience to all that he commanded in this book, which they might read (and were bound to do so) in their own private houses, and which they heard read every sabbath-day in their public synagogues. For which, indeed, there is no particular command in the law; but they being commanded to teach their children every day at home the things contained in the law, and consequently to read it, (vi. 7, 8. xi. 16.) they thought it most reasonable to have it read on the sabbath in their public assemblies, where some portion of the law was read; but now the whole volume, as an authentic testimony of the whole nation, to the truth of what is contained in these books.

Ver. 13. *That their children which have not known any thing.*] For the early instruction of posterity in the sacred authority of this law.

May hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land, &c.] Be preserved in the true religion, by so solemn an acknowledgment made by the king himself, that God delivered all these laws to Moses. Accordingly we find that Joshua, their supreme governor after the death of Moses, did read all the words of the law, not omitting a word that Moses commanded, before all the congregation, with women, and the little ones, and the strangers, that were conversant among them, (Josh. viii. 34, 35.) But from that time to the reign of Jehoshaphat, (2 Chron. xvii. 7, 8, &c.) which is commonly computed to be five hundred and thirty years, we find no mention of a public reading of it. Nor from that time to the eighteenth year of king Josiah, (2 Chron. xxxiv. 30, 31.) which was the space of two hundred eighty and two years; nor from that time till after the captivity of Babylon, (Nehem. viii. 2, 3, &c.) By which neglect they more easily fell into idolatry, and continued in it, more or less, till that captivity; for a forgetfulness of the law ensued upon this neglect.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die.*] He admonishes him, that the end of his days upon earth was near, when he must resign up his office into the hands of Joshua, who had been before appointed his successor, (Numb. xxvii.)

Call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I may give you a charge.] This was done, I suppose, in the face of all the people, to whom Moses had been speaking, (ver. 1, 2.) to give Joshua the greater authority, and to make him reverenced by them, when they saw he was appointed by God himself to be their governor; as he had been before ordained publicly by God's order, (Numb. xxvii. 18, 19, &c.)

And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tabernacle of the congregation.] In the court of the sanctuary, with their faces towards it; for it was not lawful for any but the priests to go into the sanctuary itself. Some indeed have thought, that, by a special order from God, Joshua was now admitted into it: but this seems to me to be contradicted by the next verse, which saith God appeared in a cloud *over the door of the tabernacle.*

Ver. 15. *And the Lord appeared in the tabernacle in a pillar of a cloud.*] This signifies, that the glory of the Lord (as other places speak) appeared unto them, and unto the people, as it had done upon many occasions, (Exod. xxxiii. 9, 10. Numb. ix. 15. xvi. 42, 43.)

And the pillar of the cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle.] Being a symbol of the Divine presence, whose glory appeared out of the cloud, as it did Numb. xvi. 42. For the cloud was always upon the tabernacle; (Exod. xl. 35. 38. Numb. ix. 18.) but when the Lord would strike an awe into the people, and move them to regard what he said or did, then the cloud stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord came out of the most holy place, and appeared in it.

Ver. 16. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*] Out of the cloud, I suppose, as he did, Numb. xvi. 44.

Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers.] He first admonished Moses again of his departure, in the audience, I suppose, of Joshua, who heard all the following admoni-

tion, to make him more carefully observe the end and design of it.

Sleep is a common word for *death*, either of good men or bad; which was not used merely as a soft expression of that, which the heathen dreaded as the most terrible of all things; but to put them in mind, perhaps, that death should not last always, but they should as certainly rise again, as they *lay down* (so the word is in the Hebrew) to sleep with their fathers.

And this people will rise.] In rebellion.

And go a whoring.] God, who searches all men's hearts, discerned such bad inclinations in this people, that he knew they would fall into idolatry (which is called *going a whoring* from him, as hath been often noted), notwithstanding all the means he had prescribed to prevent it. And therefore he adds one more, which was the learning them the following song; notwithstanding which, he foresaw, that after the death of Joshua, and the elders who survived him, they would forsake him, and worship other gods. (See Psal. cvi. 36. 38.)

After the gods of the strangers of the land.] This is an unusual phrase, signifying no more than what he calls in other places *strange gods*. Though some think it imports peculiarly the gods of the Canaanites, who were the former inhabitants, but, being expelled, became *strangers of the land*. And thus Onkelos seems to have understood it, who translates it, *after the idols of the people of the land*. Which was a high aggravation of their sin, that they should worship such gods as had not been able to protect their servants.

Whither they go to be among them.] This seems to countenance the foregoing exposition. And God charges them in future ages with this, as a very great guilt, that they worshipped the gods of the Amorites, in whose land they dwelt, (Judg. vi. 10.)

And will forsake me.] For he looked upon himself as forsaken (that is, not worshipped), if they worshipped any other god with him, (Exod. xx. 3.)

And break my covenant which I have made with them.] This being the principal thing in the covenant (as I have often observed), that they should worship him alone. (Exod. xx. 22, 23. xxiii. 32, 33. Deut. v. 3, 4, &c. vi. 3, 4, &c.)

Ver. 17. *Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day.*] So we read it was upon their very first apostacy to idolatry, (Judg. ii. 14.) and continued so in all ages, as we read frequently in that and the following books. (See there, ver. 20. and iii. 8, &c.)

And I will forsake them.] Go no longer before them against their enemies, but deliver them up into their hands, (ver. 8.)

And will hide my face from them.] Withdraw my favour and protection. So that they were *devoured*, as it follows, by their enemies, and wild beasts; and *many evils and troubles beset them;* or, as the Hebrew phrase signifies, *came upon them on a sudden*. The prophet Ezekiel expresses this in these words, *My face will I turn from them*, (vii. 22.) The effect of which was, the Divine presence departed out of the sanctuary, and he left it (as he there speaks) to be polluted and defiled by robbers. And so it here follows.

So that they will say on that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us?] For whithersoever they went out, *the hand of the Lord was against them for evil*, as we read Judg. ii. 15. Which was so remarkable a change, that it could not but at last make them reflect upon the cause of it; as we find it did, and moved them to cry unto the Lord for help, (iii. 9. 15. iv. 3, &c.)

Ver. 18. *And I will surely hide my face from them*, &c.] He repeats it again, because they were a people dull of hearing. Or the former words may relate to their first captivity, and these to the last (as they call it), wherein they now are. For they themselves take notice, that these words have been fulfilled by the many calamities which have befallen them since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. This appears from Schebet Judah, where Solomon Virgæ quotes this very verse, to prove that their present sufferings proceed not from nature, but from an angry God, more powerful than nature, as he speaks, sect. 13.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore write ye.*] This shews these words were directed both to Moses and to Joshua, who was to take care, after Moses's death, to see this command observed.

This song for you.] Which follows in the thirty-second chapter.

And teach it the children of Israel.] Make them get it by heart, as we now speak.

Put it in their mouths.] That they might sing it, and thereby preserve it in their memory. For it hath been always thought the most profitable way of instructing people, and communicating things to posterity, by putting them into verse; and especially children and young people are best taught in this way. And the greater moment any thing is of, the more carefully it ought to be preserved; which Plato himself thought could be done by no better means than this. And therefore, having spoken of the songs which he would have composed for the use of the people, he would have it enacted, Δεῖν πάντα ἄνδρα καὶ παῖδα, &c. *that all men and children, whether bond or free, male or female, should be bound through the whole city to sing such songs, and never cease so to do*, &c. (See Eusebius, lib. xii. Præpar. Evang. cap. 32.) And Plato himself, lib. ii. de Legibus; where he gives a great many cautions about this matter, and concludes that Τοῦτο δὲ Θεοῦ, ἢ Θείου τινὸς, ἂν εἴη, p. 657. *this must be the work of a god, or some godlike man.* As if he had been acquainted with what Moses, the man of God, or rather God himself, here ordained, that every one should have this song in their mouths, as a means to preserve them in the worship of God alone. However, this justifies the admirable discipline of the Hebrews in those ancient times, who were taught by such hymns, as the wisest men among the heathen in future times thought the best way of instruction. For which reason, as Aristotle reports in his Problems, (sect. 19. probl. 28.) people anciently sung their laws, as the Agathyrsi (he saith) continued to do in his days, Ὅπως μὴ ἐπιλάθωνται, *that they might not be forgotten.* Particularly the laws of Charondas (as Athenæus informs us out of Hermippus) were wont to be sung at Athens, παρ' οἶνον, *over a glass of wine;* and were therefore written in some sort of verse, or tunable measure, as our incomparable Dr. Bentley hath made it probable, in his late Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris, p. 373. Tully also (to add no more) tells us, that Cato, in his book de Originibus, reports, that it was the custom

among the old Romans to have the virtues and praises of famous men sung to a pipe at their feasts; which he thinks they learnt from the ancient Pythagoreans in Italy, who were wont, *carminibus præcepta quædam occultius tradere, to deliver in verses certain precepts,* which were the greatest secrets in their philosophy; and composed the minds of the scholars to tranquillity, by songs and instruments of music. See upon Numb. xxi. 30. concerning this way of instruction.

That this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel.] Testifying that they were sufficiently warned, and could not complain that they were not taught their duty, and told their danger; and reproving also their ingratitude, and putting them in mind how ill they requited their God, (ver. 21.)

Ver. 20. *For when I have brought them unto the land which I sware unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey.*] See vi. 10, &c. xv. 8, 9.

And they shall have eaten, and filled themselves, and waxen fat.] See viii. 10—12, &c. xxvii. 15.

Then they will turn unto other gods, and serve them, &c.] Against which he had most solemnly forewarned them, in the places beforementioned, and xi. 16. xii. 29, 30.

Ver. 21. *And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness.*] That they are most justly punished for their foul ingratitude and unbelief, with which this song upbraided them; having told them plainly (xxxii. 18, 19.) what would be the effect of their forsaking him; and at the delivery of it, God having solemnly said here, (ver. 17.) that when they went a whoring from him he would *forsake them, and hide his face from them.*

For it shall not be forgotten out of the mouth of their seed.] The calamities which fell upon them, according to what is predicted in this song, brought it to their remembrance when they had forgotten it, or did not regard it. For these words do not seem to be a *precept* requiring them to remember this song, but a *prediction,* foretelling that their miseries should not suffer them quite to forget it.

For I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I sware.] He saw the secret inclinations and designs which were in their hearts; and perceived that at that very present they hankered, as we speak, after idols.

Ver. 22. *Moses therefore wrote this song the same day.*] And so did Joshua, (as he was commanded, ver. 19.) who spake the words of this song unto the people as well as Moses, xxxii. 44.

And taught it the children of Israel.] Commanded them to learn it, (ver. 19.) In order to which, the Jews say, every man was bound to write for himself a copy of it: and more than that, they make it one of the affirmative precepts (as Maimonides tells us), which obliged every Israelite to write out the whole book of the law with his own hand. For so they interpret those words, (ver. 19.) *Write ye this song for you,* as if they were spoken to all the people, and their meaning had been, *Write ye this law for you, wherein is this song;* for they were not to write the law by small parts and sections (as his words are), but all of it entirely. And if a man's parents had left him a copy, yet he was bound to write one himself; or if he could not write, to procure one to be written for him by some other person, &c. (See Schickard's Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 2. Theor. 5.)

Ver. 23. *And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge.*] That is, the Lord, who had hitherto spoken to him by Moses, now spake to him himself, and gave him this charge, to gain him the greater authority. For which end he had ordered Joshua to present himself before him, together with Moses, (ver. 14.)

Be strong, and of a good courage.] Which he repeats to him after the death of Moses, Josh. i. 6, 7.

For thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I sware unto them.] I have appointed thee to be the captain of my people, to lead them into the land of Canaan.

And I will be with thee.] To give him success in all his enterprises. Which words being spoken in the audience of all the people, (as may be supposed from ver. 14.) made them readily submit to the authority of Joshua, and confide in his conduct.

Ver. 24. *And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished.*] The whole book of his laws, which he put together before his death; as I said on ver. 9.

Ver. 25. *That Moses commanded the Levites,* &c.] The priests, who were of the tribe of Levi. (See ver. 9.)

Ver. 26. *Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God.*] Not in the inside of it; for he doth not say, *put it into the ark,* but *in the side of the ark,* that is, on the outside, in a little box, as Jonathan and others expound it. For it is the very same phrase with that, 1 Sam. vi. 8. where the Philistines are said to have put the jewels of gold, which they returned for a sin-offering, in a coffer *by the side of the ark;* where none could put it but the high-priest, because nobody else might go into the holy place where the ark was. And therefore those priests who received the book of the law from Moses delivered it to Eleazar, to be there placed. See Buxtorf. Histor. Arcæ, cap. 5. and Huetius, more lately, in his Demonstratio Evangelica, propos. iv. cap. de Can. Libr. Sacrorum, sect. 8. where he observes, that R. Meir, in both the Talmuds, Abarbinel himself, and many others, have been of opinion, from this very place, that the book of the law was put into the ark itself, being no less precious than the tables of stone which were there. But the Scripture tells us, *there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone,* (1 Kings viii. 9. 2 Chron. v. 10.) and their reason is good for nothing, the two tables far excelling this book, because written by the finger of God; and therefore other great doctors among the Jews rightly place it without the ark, as the very words of Moses import.

That it may be there for a witness against thee.] It was deposited in that place as a public record, that if any one should falsify or deprave any thing in the law (as Abarbinel interprets it), he might be convicted out of this book, which was sacredly preserved to be produced as a witness against him. Or (as the author of Tzeror Hammor expresses it), that if they should be so wicked as to lose the books of the law, this copy, kept under the care of the priests, might remain to testify what was the will of God. As we see it did in the days of Josiah, when it was casually found in the house of God, as they were about the reparations of it: though I cannot say they found it in the side of the ark, but rather upon the roof of the house, or in the rafters;

where the priests had hid it, as some of the Jews think, when Manasseh endeavoured to destroy this authentic copy of the law, as he had done all other that he could find; and when they came to uncover the house, there it appeared.

Ver. 27. *For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck.*] I have been sufficiently acquainted with your perverse disposition.

Behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord; and how much more after my death?] For it was not likely they would have a greater regard to Joshua than they had to him, who had such near familiarity with God, as never any man had.

Ver. 28. *Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes.*] I suppose after Moses had spoke to the people what God ordered, ver. 1, 2, &c. (see there), he dismissed them again, that he might write the book of the law, (ver. 9.) and deliver it to the priests, &c. and then write this song (which follows in the next chapter), ver. 19. 22, &c. which being done, he is ordered here to summon all the elders of the several tribes, (and with them all the people came, ver. 30.) that he might deliver to them, by word of mouth, the song which he had wrote.

And your officers.] I have frequently observed that these *schoterim* (which we translate *officers*) were but ministers to their elders or judges. (See Exod. v. 14. Deut. i. 15. xvi. 18.) Unto which I shall add here only the words of Abarbinel; The office of the *schoterim* was to see that the sentence which the judges had given was observed, and to compel men to it. They who would have more may find a long roll of authors, who are of this mind, both Jews and Christians, in Jo. Benedic. Carpzovius upon Schickard's Jus Regium; who hath also said a great deal to the same purpose, cap. 4. Theor. 14.

That I may speak these words in their ears.] The song which God had suggested to him, and commanded him to write, (ver. 19. 22.)

And call heaven and earth to record against them.] Call the whole world to witness how wicked they are, if they fall from God, after such care to preserve them in his obedience.

Ver. 29. *For I know that after my death you will utterly corrupt yourselves.*] Fall to the foulest idolatry. (Judg. ii. 19.)

And turn aside from the way which I have commanded you.] Departing from that way of God which I have delivered to you by this command. It was a very melancholy thing for Moses to leave the world in this belief, that all his pains would be lost upon them; but he comforted himself in doing his duty to the very last, and omitting no means to secure them from apostacy.

And evil will befal you in the latter days.] This seems to express a foresight, that they would not immediately revolt, but after the death of Joshua, and of the elders who survived him, (Judg. ii. 7. 11, 12, &c.)

Because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.] By making images, after the manner of other nations, and bowing down to them, and worshipping them, Judg. ii. 12, 13. iii. 7. where *the groves* signify the images in the groves.

Ver. 30. *And Moses spake.*] With the assistance of Joshua, xxxii. 44.

In the ears of all the congregation of Israel.] Whom the elders and officers (ver. 28.) had assembled, according to their tribes and families; unto whom they went severally, and spake these words in their hearing.

The words of this song.] Which follows in the next chapter, and much differs, in the raised expressions and loftiness of the style, from the rest of this book hitherto.

Until they were ended.] Omitted nothing, but completely delivered this song to them; or they spake all these words to them, at the same time, with one continued speech. I observed before that the most ancient way of instruction was by poetical compositions, which was more ancient than rhetorical discourses. And as their chief learning did consist of poetry, so the excellency of their poetry was seen in the proper and native subject of this faculty, that is, in matters of sacred use or observation: from whence the title of *vates* descended unto secular and profane poets, who retained the manner of speech used by the former. But, as Conradus Pellicanus here truly observes, (and see my notes on Exod. xv. 1.) the Scripture poetry doth not consist in the cadency and number of syllables, contrived to please the ear, but in brief and weighty sentences, simply and sincerely composed in a lively manner, to enlighten the understandings, move the affections, and stick in the memory. And the ancients (as a great man of our own observes) had this advantage of later poets, "That the fashion of the world (as he speaks), in their times, was more apt to ravish their thoughts with admiration; wonderful events being then more frequent, and their frequency not abating, but rather increasing their wonderment, because their variety was very great, and the apprehension of invisible or supernatural powers in those events was usual and undoubted. So that admiration was then enforced upon men and the breasts of those who diligently observed those events, or were any way disposed by nature to it, were inspired with lively and sublime affections, apt to vent themselves in such poetical phrases and resemblances as we cannot reach, unless we raise our invention by imitation, and stir up admiration by meditation and study. But now our senses being neither moved with such extraordinary effects of God's power, nor our minds bent to observe the ways of his wisdom, so as to be stricken with true observation of them, we have fewer good sacred poems than of any other kind."

Thus Dr. Jackson, book i. on the Creed, chap. 14. David Chytræus also hath an excellent discourse on this subject, to shew that the ancient poetry among the heathen contained the doctrine of God, and of celestial things; all the offices and rewards of virtue, with the punishment of vice; the history of their kings, and the noble acts of famous men, tom. i. of his works, p. 154, &c. where he confirms this out of the verses of Orpheus, who lived (as he computes) about a hundred and fifty years before David; and those of Pindar, Simonides, and the rest, who lived in the time of the war with Xerxes. But Moses led the way to them all; whose mind was raised to that sublimity of thoughts and speech which we find in his songs, by admiration of those strange events which he saw, Exod. xv. Numb. xxi. and here in the next chapter, wherein he was followed by Deborah, Barak, and Hannah, &c. in after-times, Judg. v. 1 Sam. ii.

CHAP. XXXII.

Ver. 1. *GIVE ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.*] He calls angels

and men to bear witness (xxx. 19.) that the Israelites had been admonished of their duty, and warned of their danger; and this, not by words of his own invention, but which were put into his mouth by the Spirit of God. Or (after an elegant form of speech) he calls upon all insensible creatures, every where, to listen to him, that he might awaken the Israelites out of their stupidity, or upbraid them as a people that had ears to hear, and would not hear him. And, as some of themselves have observed, he may be thought to intimate hereby, that if they would not hearken and keep his precepts, the *heavens* were forbidden to give them rain, and the *earth* to bring forth fruit. The gloss also of the Jerusalem Targum is not amiss, that Moses, being shortly to die, calls the heavens and the earth, which endure through all ages, to be witnesses against them when he was gone. But the following observation is too curious: That Isaiah, when he prophesied, *i. e.* being far remote from the heavens, and near to the earth, calls upon the heavens *to hear*, and the earth *to give ear*, or attend: whereas Moses, quite contrary, approaching now very near to the heavens, calls upon them to attend or *give ear*, and, being in spirit remote from the earth, bids it *hear*.

Ver. 2. *My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew.*] Or, *Let my doctrine drop*, &c. For this seems to be a prayer, that his words, which were sent from heaven to them, might sink into their hearts, and soften them, as the drops of rain and the dew do the earth, and produce such fruits of obedience as might make them happy.

As the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.] The aforesaid Targum thus paraphrases this whole verse: *Let the doctrine of my law be as sweet upon the children of Israel as the rain; and the word of my mouth be received by them as the delectable dew: let it be as gentle showers refreshing the grass, and as the drops of the latter rain, descending and watering the blades of corn in the month of March.*

Ver. 3. *Because I will publish the name of the Lord.*] For my song shall be concerning the Lord of heaven and earth, whose glorious perfections I will proclaim; which make him the sole object of your worship.

Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.] Acknowledge therefore the infinite power of our God; and his sovereign dominion over all; and give honour and service to none besides him.

These three first verses seem to be the preface to the song; and now follows the song itself; which Josephus calls Ποίησιν ἑξάμετρον, *a poem in hexameter verse*, (lib. iv. Antiq. cap. 8.)

Ver. 4. *He is the Rock.*] Always endures, and never changes; so that in him we may find at all times a sure refuge.

His work is perfect.] Whatsoever he undertakes, he perfects and completes it.

For all his ways are judgment.] He doth nothing without the greatest reason, and according to the rules of the exactest justice.

A God of truth.] Who is faithful to his promises.

And without iniquity.] And never deceives or wrongs any man.

Just and right is he.] Nor will he punish any man without a cause, or more than he deserves.

Maimonides takes the first words of this verse, *He is the Rock*, to signify the first principle, and the efficient cause of all things without himself. For so the word *Rock* is used, when God bids the children of Israel *look to the rock out of which they were hewn*, (Isa. li. 1.) that is, to Abraham their father, from whom they were descended. And so he thinks it signifies, ver. 18. of this chapter, *Of the Rock that begat thee, thou art unmindful*, i. e. of God, the author of their being. And again, ver. 30. *their Rock (i. e. the Lord) sold them.* (See More Nevochim, par. i. cap. 16.) And then by the next words, *his way is perfect*, he thinks is meant, that as he is the creator of all things, so there is no defect or superfluity in his works. For he takes these words to be the same with those, Gen. i. 31. *God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.* (See there, par. ii. cap. 28. and par. iii. cap. 25.) And as his works of creation are most perfect, so are his works of providence; for he governs the world with the greatest judgment and justice. So he seems to understand the next words, (par. iii. cap. 17.) *all his ways are judgment.* We are ignorant of the methods and reasons of his judgments, yet no injustice or iniquity is to be ascribed to him. But all the evil and all the good that befals any man, or the whole church, proceeds from the just and equal judgment of God. And more largely, cap. 49. "Our narrow minds cannot apprehend either the perfection of his works, or the equity of his judgments; for we apprehend his admirable works only by parts, whether we look upon the bodies of animals, or the celestial spheres: and in like manner we apprehend but a little of his judgments; for that of which we are ignorant in both, is far more than that which we know of either." I conclude this with the words of the author of Sepher Cosri, (par. iii. sect. 11.) "He that believes this, that *all God's works are perfect, and his ways judgment*, will always lead a sweet and pleasant life; all afflictions will be made light to him, nay, he will rejoice that his iniquities are hereby alleviated, and that he shall one day be rewarded for his patience; which he teaches men by his example, and thereby justifies the judgments of God." With respect to which, I suppose, the Jews now begin the prayer which they make at the burial of their dead, with this verse of Moses's song. Which prayer they call *tzidduck haddin*, i. e. *just judgment*, as Leo Modena observes, in his History of the present Jews, par. v. chap. 8.

Ver. 5. *They have corrupted themselves*, &c.] I know not how to justify this translation, nor that in the margin, *He hath corrupted himself.* Maimonides translates them better; making these words a question, and the next words in answer to them, in this manner: *Did he* (i. e. *God*, the *Rock* before spoken of) *do him any hurt?* For the Hebrew word *scecheth*, with *lamed* after it, signifies to hurt, or destroy, Numb. xxxii. 15. 1 Sam. xxiii. 10. (as Joh. Coccius observes, in his Ultima Mosis, sect. 701.) And so the meaning is, *Is God to blame for the evils that befall him?* i. e. *Israel.* Unto which the answer follows in the next words, which we thus translate—

Their spot is not the spot of his children.] In the Hebrew, the first word of this sentence is *lo*, i. e. *not*, or *no*. Which the accent *tipcha* (as they call it) under it, shews is not to be joined with the words that follow (*banau mumam*), but taken by itself, being a denial of the foregoing question. And these words are thus to be translated, *No*,

his children are their blot; i. e. all the evil that befalls them is the fruit of their children's wickedness. And so these words are in effect the same with those of Solomon, Prov. xix. "The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord:" he complains of God, when the fault is in himself. (See More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 12.)

Onkelos translates it thus: *They corrupted to themselves, not to him, children that served idols; i. e.* as Paulus Fagius observes, They hurt themselves, not God, when, leaving him the true God, they turned to idols; for the word *corrupt* is commonly used in Scripture, where it speaks of the sin of idolatry. The Jerusalem paraphrast aims at the same sense.

They are a perverse and crooked generation.] The whole body of them are untoward and untractable, walking contrary to God in all their ways; for there being a gemination (as they speak) of a syllable in the latter of these words *(pethalthol)*, it increases the sense, and makes it the same with the superlative degree among us, importing the highest obliquity imaginable. And these words were never more exactly fulfilled than in the days of our blessed Saviour, who calls them a *wicked* and *adulterous*, a *faithless* and *perverse generation*, (Matt. xvi. 4. xvii. 17.) And in the days of the apostles, who call them Ἀτόπους, *an absurd kind of people*, (2 Thess. iii. 3.) *who pleased not God, and were contrary to all men*, (1 Thess. ii. 15.)

Ver. 6. *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?*] He upbraids them with their senseless folly and foul ingratitude; which in the following words he demonstrates, by representing the obligations he had laid upon them.

Is not he thy father.] Having adopted them in a peculiar manner to be his children, above all other people.

Who hath bought thee?] When he rescued them from the slavery of Egypt.

Hath not he made thee.] Advanced them (for so the word *asa* is translated, 1 Sam. xii. 6.) to be a great and mighty people. (See Psal. c. 3.)

And established thee?] By settling them in excellent order, under the government of most wise and righteous laws. (See the fourth chapter of this book, ver. 7, 8.)

Ver. 7. *Remember the days of old.*] Look back as far as you are able.

Consider the years of many generations.] Consult the most ancient records; which would inform them how God chose their father Abraham long ago, and promised to bless his posterity, as he did Isaac and Jacob in a most eminent manner; and sent Joseph by a wonderful providence into Egypt to preserve them from starving, &c.

Ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.] All this is to express the same thing, that they should advise with those that knew more than themselves; and particularly with *old men* (as the word may be understood which we translate *elders*), who, by the benefit of their great age, had heard and seen more than others, and could tell them how God had dealt with them, ever since he brought them by a wonderful power out of the land of Egypt.

Ver. 8. *When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance.*] He directs them still to look farther back, and they would find that long before Abraham's time God had them in his thoughts, even when he divided the earth among the sons of Noah and their posterity after the flood, (Gen. x. 5. 25. 32.)

When he separated the sons of Adam.] Or, *the sons of men;* who were one people, till he scattered them into several parts of the earth, and separated them into divers nations, by confounding their language, (Gen. xi. 8, 9.)

He set the bounds of the people, according to the number of the children of Israel.] He had then the children of Israel in his mind, before they were a nation; and made such a distribution to other people (particularly to the seven nations of Canaan), within such bounds and limits, as that there might be sufficient room for so numerous a people as the Israelites, when they came to take possession of that country.

How the LXX. came to translate these words thus, *He appointed the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels*, it is hard to say. Bochartus hath made the best conjecture about it (which was hinted by De Muis before him), lib. i. Phaleg. cap. 15. that they had a bad copy before them, which left out the three first letters of Israel; and so they read *Baneel*, the children of God, meaning the Israelites. Instead of which some transcribers put the *angels of God*, because they are sometimes called *his sons*. Which led the ancient Greek fathers, who followed this translation, into great difficulties: and it grew a common opinion, that every nation was under the government of an angel; which seems to be the meaning also of the son of Sirach, Ecclus. xvii. 17. And many others fancying that God divided the nations according to the number of the children of Israel, when they came into Egypt, which was just seventy, they thence gather there were just so many distinct nations, and so many several languages; which is a conceit of some of the Jews, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 9. But Bochart, in the place abovenamed, hath given the plain and simple meaning of this place in these words: "God so distributed the earth among the several people that were therein, that he reserved, or in his counsel designed, such a part of the earth for the Israelites, who were then unborn, as he knew would afford a commodious habitation to a most numerous nation."

Ver. 9. *For the Lord's portion is his people.*] And not satisfied with this kindness, he chose them alone, out of all other nations, to be under his special care, and to enjoy singular privileges, which none other had; and therefore they are called his *peculiar treasure*, (Exod. xix. 5.) This Origen maintains to be true against all the cavils of Celsus, lib. v. p. 250. edit. Cantabr. where he shews how beneficial their laws were; and that they were taught so early to know God, to believe the immortality of the soul, and rewards and punishments in the life to come, as demonstrated they were distinguished from all other people whatsoever. (See p. 260.)

Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.] This is the same thing repeated in other words; alluding to the manner of measuring and dividing lands by *cords*, as the word in the Hebrew is, which we translate *lot*. (See Psal. xvi. 6. and chap. 4. of this book, ver. 20.)

Ver. 10. *He found him in a desert land.*] There he first took the Israelites to be his peculiar people; for so the word we translate *found* frequently signifies. As in Psal.

cxvi. 3. *the pains of hell gat hold upon me;* where in the Hebrew the words are, *found me.* And in the New Testament, (Rom. iv. 1.) *What shall we say then, that Abraham our father hath found?* that is, attained.

In the waste howling wilderness.] Desolate and void of all sustenance; where nothing was to be heard but the howlings and yellings of wild beasts, (Deut. viii. 15.)

He led him about.] Conducted the Israelites from place to place, (Numb. xxxiii. 1, 2, &c.)

He instructed him.] Gave them his laws, (Exod. xx. 1, 2, &c. xxxiv. 1. 10, &c.)

He kept him as the apple of his eye.] Protected and defended them from all dangers with extraordinary care; for there is nothing of which we are more tender than the sight of our eyes; which God hath guarded by several coats and humours, and eye-lids fenced with hairs, to preserve it from hurt. Unto which R. Levi ben Gersom thinks these words allude.

Ver. 11. *As an eagle stirreth up her nest,* &c.] Eagles are observed to have a most tender affection to their young ones; who are here meant by *her nest,* as Bochartus observes (it being a common figure used by other authors, to put *continens pro contento*), whom she provokes to fly (which is meant by *stirring up* her nest) by *fluttering over them* with her *wings stretched out.* Upon which she *takes* them while they are so weak and feeble that they fail in their attempt to fly, and *supporteth* them till they recover strength to commit themselves unto the air. See Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 3. and I. G. Vossius de Orig. et Progr. Idolol. lib. iii. cap. 77. where he observes, that this kindness to her young ones is chiefly found in the *black eagle;* though something of it be seen in others; which may be the reason they lay but a few eggs, because they are not able to educate many young ones with such tender care.

Ver. 12. *So the Lord alone did lead him.*] Numb. xiv. 14. This is an exact resemblance of God's tender care of his people Israel. Whom he solicited, by Moses and Aaron, to aspire after their liberty, when they were oppressed in Egypt; just as an eagle excites her young ones, when they lie drowsy in the filth of their nest, to fly away. And as the eagle flutters over them, with her wings spread abroad, so God by his Spirit moved the Israelites to be obedient to their deliverers out of Egypt. For Moses uses the very same word, when he speaks of the Spirit of God *moving upon the waters,* Gen. i. 2. And as the eagle carries her fainting young ones on her wings, so God supported them when they were weary, and upheld them in dangerous ways. Insomuch, that he is said to carry them in his arms, as a father doth his child, (Deut. i. 31. Hosea i. 1. 3.) See Bochartus in the place abovenamed, cap. 4.

And there was no strange god with him.] To help or assist him: but by his almighty power alone they were protected and preserved. Which made their sin the more heinous, in sacrificing to other gods, (ver. 17.) as if they had been their benefactors.

Ver. 13. *He made him ride on the high places of the earth.*] Brought the Israelites in a triumphant manner to possess a noble country, full of lofty and very fruitful mountains, which were in Canaan, where they lived deliciously. So *to ride* signifies, as Bochartus thinks, *laute et opipare vivere.* Which he justifies by that place in Hosea, x. 11. *I will make Ephraim to ride; Judah shall plough, and Jacob shall break his clods;* that is, saith he, the people of Israel lived in pleasure, when Judah lived laboriously, (par. i. Hierozoic. lib. i. cap. 41.) But *to ride* signifies, also, to subdue and conquer; which may be the meaning here, Psal. xlv. 4. lxvi. 12. and to have dominion and rule, as Maimonides interprets it, in his More Nevochim, par. i. cap. 70. In which sense it is said of God himself, in the next chapter of this book, *He rideth upon the heavens for thy help,* ver. 26. And he rideth upon *Araboth* the highest heavens, (Psal. lxviii. 4.)

That he might eat the increase of the field.] Abundance of corn and fruit.

And he made him to suck honey out of the rock.] Wild honey; which was esteemed an excellent food in that country, and was sometimes found upon the ground, sometimes in the hollow part of trees, and sometimes in the clefts of rocks, as Bochartus observes out of good authors, (Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 15.) This *rock-honey* seems to be spoken of as the best of this kind, being joined with the *finest wheat,* Psal. lxxxi. *ult.*

And oil out of the flinty rock.] No part of this country being barren, but affording something or other for their sustenance; though some say that the olive-tree thrives best in rocky places. Columella himself observes, that it doth not delight either in low places or in high, but "magis modicos clivos amat," *but rather loves the sides of moderately-rising hills,* (lib. vi. cap. 6.) And D. Chytræus notes, that as the most generous wine is produced upon the Rhine, below Mentz, out of the hardest flints; "sic oleæ locis petrosis sterilibus non infeliciter proveniunt;" *so olive-trees grow prosperously in stony and barren places,* (tom. i. p. 173.)

Ver. 14. *Butter of kine.*] The use of butter was very ancient among the Hebrews, though lately known to the Greeks, (as I observed upon Gen. xviii. 8.) and it was accounted an excellent food.

And milk of sheep.] Which the Scripture often mentions, (Isa. vii. 21, 22. 1 Cor. ix. 1. 7.) And under the word *tzon,* as hath been often observed, *goats* also are comprehended, whose milk likewise is mentioned, Prov. xxvii. 27. Aristotle mentions both, and so doth Columella, and a great many others, in Bochart's Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45. where he proves that they made butter of these milks, as well as of cows.

With the fat of lambs.] Well fed. For *carim* properly signifies *pasture sheep,* as the same Bochart there observes, (cap. 43.)

And rams of the breed of Bashan.] A country famous for excellent pasture; being εὔβοτος καὶ εὐανθὴς, &c. as St. Cyril calls it. (See Numb. xxxii. 1. 4.)

And goats.] Of the breed of that country.

With the fat of kidneys of wheat.] The Hebrews call the best of every kind of thing by the name of *the fat.* And the *kidneys of wheat* signify large and plump corn, affording great plenty of flour. Cajetan thinks it signifies wheat as big as a kidney; or rather, having that shape, as our kidney-beans have.

And thou shalt drink the pure blood of the grapes.] Most generous red wine; very clear and bright. So Achil. Tatius, lib. ii. calls wine αἷμα βοτρύων.

Maimonides, in his More Nevochim, par. ii. cap. 47. takes all the expressions in this verse to be metaphorical, signifying (as Onkelos allegorizes them) the possession of

all their enemies' cities and goods, after they had poured out their blood like water on the ground.

Ver. 15. *Jeshurun waxed fat.*] Grew rich, saith Onkelos and the Jerusalem Targum.

And kicked.] Against him who fed him so plentifully and deliciously. It seems to be a metaphor taken from oxen, who, being stirred up with a goad to labour, lift up their heels and kick against him who pricks them forward. So did the Israelites when they were urged and pressed to their duty by the prophets; not only despised, but evil-entreated them.

Why Israel is called *Jeshurun* is not easy to resolve. Jo. Cocceius (in his Ultima Mosis, sect. 973.) derives it from *Shur*, which signifies to *see, behold*, or *descry*. From whence, in the future tense and the plural number, comes *Jeshuru*, which, by the addition of *nun parogogicum*, as they speak, makes *Jeshurun*, that is, *The people who had the vision of God*. I know nothing more simple, nor more probable than this; which highly aggravated their sin, who, having God so nigh unto them, (iv. 7.) and their elders having had a sight of him, (Exod. xxiv. 10.) were so ungrateful as to rebel against him, and worship other gods. Some refer this *kicking* to their revolt from the house of David; when Jeroboam, to preserve his new kingdom, set up the golden calves, to prevent the return of the people to their old master, by going up to Jerusalem to worship.

Thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness.] This variety of expressions is used to signify how exceeding bountifully God had provided for them; and withal, how very wanton and insolent they were grown, as cattle fed in a fat pasture are wont to be. The words *with fatness* (after *covered*) are not in the Hebrew, but are well supplied out of other places, particularly Psal. xvii. 10.

Then he forsook God.] The Jerusalem Targum here hath it, *They forsook the Word of God.*

Which made him.] Advanced them from a desert where he found them, (ver. 6. 10.) into a very rich and plentiful country. This was the lamentable effect of their *plethora*, or fulness; unto which we are all too prone, as an excellent person of our own hath long ago observed. "Even such as seem most upright (saith he) when they wax fat, spurn with the heel, and cast away the memory of their misery, and of God's former mercy, behind their backs. And what was the reason that the Israelites waxed thus full and fat? Only because they did not use that exercise which God had appointed to keep them under, and preserve their hearts from being lifted up: (Deut. viii. 11, &c.) 'Take heed to thyself, lest when thou hast eaten, and filled thyself, &c. then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt,' &c. The daily and lively representation, or recognition of their condition there, should have been as usual to them as their meat and drink, yea, as it were, their thanksgiving before and after meats," as our Dr. Jackson speaks, book xi. on the Creed, chap. 34. And Maimonides himself, mentioning those very words, "Lest when thou hast eaten, and filled thyself," &c. very well observes, that to prevent pride and apostacy, which grow out of great plenty, God commanded them to offer their first-fruits before him every year, with a solemn confession, how poor they were in the beginning, and then raised by God to be a mighty people, (Deut. xxvi. 5, 6, &c.) For which end the Passover was instituted, "That they might remember the day when they came forth out of Egypt all the days of their life," (Deut. xvi. 3.) See More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 39.

And lightly esteemed the Rock of their salvation.] As there was a progress in their insolent forgetfulness of God, expressed in three phrases, which may signify three degrees of their stupidity *(waxen fat, grown thick,* and *covered with fatness)*, so some observe as many degrees of their rebellion: first, they *kicked against God, i. e.* threw off the yoke of his laws, and refused to observe them; secondly, they *forsook God*, and fell into idolatry; and, lastly, they *lightly esteemed the Rock of their salvation*. Where the Hebrew word *nibbel* signifies more than a light esteem; for, if it come from *nebelah*, a dead carcass (as some think it doth), it denotes the greatest abhorrence, nothing being so much abominated among the Jews as a dead carcass, the touching of which was the highest pollution. And thus J. Cocceius and Campeg. Vitringa understand it; who observe that this was never so fulfilled as in their behaviour towards our Lord Christ, who was indeed the Rock of their salvation, and so vilely used by them, as if he had been the most loathsome man upon earth. So Vitringa expounds these words, (in his Observ. Sacr. lib. ii. cap. 9. p. 173.) "instar flagitii tractavit rupem salutis suæ." For this is a word used by God himself, when he would express his utter detestation of Nineveh, and his dealing with her according to her abominable wickedness, Nahum iii. 6. "I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile," &c. and when he speaks of the disgrace he would put upon his own temple, Jer. xiv. 21. The LXX. indeed simply expound the word *ἀπέστη, he departed;* but the last words they expound *ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ σωτῆρος αὐτοῦ, from God his Saviour*, as Onkelos also, *his most mighty Redeemer*. Which, in the most eminent sense, is the Lord Jesus; for none brought such salvation to them, and wrought such a redemption for them, as he did; who is "the stone which God laid in Sion," &c. (Isa. xxviii. 16.) But instead of flying to him, as men in danger do to a rock, or strong fortress, they not only rejected him, but abused and put the highest indignities upon him.

Ver. 16. *They provoked him to jealousy.*] Made him extremely angry with them. For so jealousy is described as the rage of a man, Prov. vi. 34.

With strange gods.] Whom they fell in love withal, and worshipped. This was the ground of his jealousy, their falseness to God, who had espoused them to himself. And the Hebrew word *zar (strange)* we sometimes translate *another*, (Job xix. 27.) So that *a strange god* and *another god* are the very same, (Psal. lxxxi. 9. Exod. xx. 3.) Therefore God saith he will not *give his glory to another*, (Isa. xlii. 8.) and that their sorrows shall be multiplied that *hasten after another god*, (Psal. xvi. 4.)

With abominations provoked they him to anger.] I take this to be a repetition of the same thing, their idols being called *abominations*, because God exceedingly hates them, (vii. 25. 1 Kings xi. 5.) Though R. Solomon and Abarbinel, by *abominations*, here understand those filthy mixtures forbidden in Lev. xviii. with witchcrafts, and such-like wickedness. And Abarbinel refers the first part of this verse to the times under the first temple, when they worshipped the sun, moon, and stars; and the latter part

of it to the times under the second temple, when, though they were free from idolatry, they were corrupted with other abominable filthiness.

Ver. 17. *They sacrificed to devils, and not to God.*] The Hebrew word *schedim*, which we translate *devils*, imports as much as *destroyers;* (as the devil is called, in the book of Revelation, ix. 11.) evil spirits delighting in mischief, and leading those that worship them into perdition. Though some think they are called *schedim* ironically, by way of scorn, the true God being *Schaddai*, the *Omnipotent*, and *All-sufficient;* and these called, by way of mockery, *counterfeit gods*, who had no power to help their worshippers, nor were sufficient to preserve themselves. Either of these accounts of the word is better than that of Manasseh ben Israel, who derives it from שדה *a field*, because they frequent desert places. But then they should have been called *sedim*, not *schedim*, as he must needs know, who was a great master in the Hebrew learning. The LXX. call them here δαιμόνια, and so doth the apostle, 1 Cor. x. 19. because the demons led men into the impiety of worshipping other gods, either themselves or other beings, which they persuaded simple people had some divinity in them; and that not only the stars, but even beasts here upon the earth, nay, onions and garlic, which they did not take to be gods, but things by which, as intermediate causes, their gods were pleased or offended with them, and therefore worshipped them.

To gods whom they knew not.] Or, as the words may be translated, *gods that knew not them*, that is, had never bestowed any benefits upon them: for, as it follows, they were new gods, never before heard of by their ancestors.

New gods, that newly came up.] Such as Jeroboam's calves, invented out of his own brain; and the gods of other nations, Moloch and Baal, which were new to the Israelites, and had not been known among them; for the demon gods were of no great antiquity: Bel, or Baal (as he is called in the Chaldee dialect), the first king of Babel after Nimrod, being the first that ever was deified (as Mr. Mede observes), or reputed a god after his death; whence all other demons were called Baalim, as all the Roman emperors were called Cæsars, from the first emperor of that name. (See p. 776.) Besides which the heathens had another higher sort of demons, which had never been linked to a mortal body, *viz.* those we call angels, who the Israelites were taught to be but ministers unto their God, and therefore not to be worshipped.

Whom your fathers feared not.] That is, did not worship. This was a great aggravation of their guilt, that when they would have other objects of worship, they did not return unto those whom their ancestors had reverenced (the *Teraphim*, for instance, which were the gods of Laban and Rachel), for whose worship they might have pretended tradition; but chose gods whom their forefathers were not acquainted withal; which was a token of a strange proneness to idolatry. And Maimonides, mentioning this verse, observes, that they worshipped not only things that had a being, but mere imaginations: for which he quotes these words of the book Siphri: "It was not enough that they worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, and celestial signs, but they worshipped their shadow." (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 46.)

Ver. 18. *Of the Rock that begat thee.*] God, the author of thy being. See ver. 4.

Thou art unmindful.] Being wholly intent to idols, which they themselves have made.

And hast forgotten God that formed thee.] Into a kingdom of priests, making them his peculiar people, (Exod. xix. 5, 6.)

Ver. 19. *And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them.*] Cast them off as they had done him.

Because of the provoking of his sons and of his daughters.] For so they were till they corrupted themselves, and thereby highly incensed him against them: for nothing can be so provoking as the rebellion of children against a most indulgent parent. Maimonides translates it, *By reason of his anger against his sons and his daughters*, More Nevochim, par. i. cap. 36. where he observes, we never find the word *caas* (which is here used, signifying *indignation*), in Scripture, applied to God, but only when it speaks of idolatry.

Ver. 20. *And he said.*] Resolved.

I will hide my face from them.] See xxxi. 17, 18.

I will see what their end shall be.] Not cease my judgments till I have brought the sorest calamities upon them, and made an end of them, that is, of their polity and government.

For they are a very froward generation.] Incorrigibly wicked.

Children in whom there is no faith.] Who had broken their covenant with him (xxxi. 16.) so often, that they were not to be trusted, when they made profession of repentance. The book of Judges, and, indeed, their whole history, testifies to the truth of this.

Ver. 21. *They have moved me to jealousy.*] See ver. 16.

With that which is not God.] By worshipping God's creatures, or the work of their own hands.

They have provoked me to anger with their vanities.] The same thing, in other words; all the gods of the nations, whom the Israelites imitated, being mere *vanities* (or *things of nought*, as the Jerusalem Targum hath it), as hath been often observed.

And I will move them to jealousy.] He threatens to be even with them, and serve them in their kind.

With those that are not a people.] Who either were not a nation in being at this time, or so obscure, base, and ignoble, that they were not worthy the name of a nation. The Jews interpret it to the Chaldeans; whom God raised up on a sudden, when nobody would believe it, (Habak. i. 5, 6, &c.) to be a terrible scourge to them. (See Isa. xxiii. 13.)

And I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.] The Jews thought all nations so, except themselves. And, in one sense, all the gentiles were really so: for nothing was more foolish than to worship creatures meaner than themselves, (Jer. x. 8.)

The apostle applies this unto the bestowing the blessing of the Messiah, whom the Jews refused, upon the gentile world, (Rom. x. 19.) which strangely enraged the Jews; as we see, when our Saviour first mentioned it, Matt. xxi. 43, 44, &c. and when St. Paul did but speak of going to preach unto them, Acts xxii. 21, 22. and see 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16. And through all ages since it hath made them gnash their teeth to see so many nations subject unto our Saviour, and honour him as God, whom they rejected as the vilest of men.

Ver. 22. *For a fire is kindled in mine anger.*] Great and sore calamities are compared to *fire* in Scripture, (Ezek. xxx. 8.) which God here threatens to send upon them, as the woful effects of his heavy displeasure.

And shall burn unto the lowest hell.] Never cease till they have destroyed them. For *hell* and *destruction* seem to be the same, (Prov. xv. 11.) And therefore the *lowest* hell signifies the depth of misery.

And shall consume the earth with her increase.] Make an utter desolation in the country, (Isa. i. 7.)

And set on fire the foundations of the mountains.] Subvert the strongest fortresses, which were accounted impregnable. Such as Jerusalem (which Rasi thinks is here meant), in whose last destruction this was perfectly fulfilled, as it was in part at the first, (2 Kings xxv. 9.) For Titus himself, as Josephus relates, (lib. vii. de Bello Judaico, cap. 43.) observing the vast height of the walls, the bigness of every stone, the exact order wherein they were laid and compacted, &c. cried out—God was with us in this war, he drove the Jews from these munitions, ἐπεὶ χεῖρές τε τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἢ μηχαναὶ, τί πρὸς τούτους τοὺς πύργους δύνανται: *for what could men's hands or machines do against such towers?* Which calls to mind what is related, not only by St. Chrysostom, Sozomen, Socrates, but by Ammianus Marcellinus himself, a heathen historian (lib. xxiii. beginning), how that when Julian, the apostate, ordered the temple of Jerusalem to be rebuilt, terrible globes of fire burst out, *prope fundamenta, from the very foundations,* which overturned all, burnt the workmen, and made the place so inaccessible, that they desisted from the attempt. The certainty of this hath extorted the same confession from the Jews themselves (David Ganz, in his Tzemach David, and R. Gedaliah, in Schal. Hakkabala), though they pretend the building went on and was finished, but after many years overthrown by an earthquake.

Ver. 23. *I will heap mischiefs upon them.*] Which shall miserably oppress and crush them.

And spend all my arrows upon them.] His judgments and plagues are often compared to arrows shot at them, (Psal. vii. 12, 13. xxxviii. 2. xci. 5.) And he speaks in the language of an archer, who shoots till he hath emptied his quiver, and hath not one arrow left.

Ver. 24. *They shall be burnt with hunger.*] This verse and the next explain what he means by arrows, which are here enumerated. And, first, he threatens a famine, with which he saith they should *be burnt;* either because these judgments are compared to fire, ver. 22. or because extreme hunger parches the inward parts, and makes the visage *as black as a coal,* as Jeremiah speaks, Lament. iv. 8.

And devoured with burning heat.] With fevers, and calentures, as they are called in hot countries.

And with bitter destruction.] With the pestilence; which he calls *bitter,* because it was incurable.

And I will send the teeth of wild beasts upon thee.] This was another of the sore judgments which God threatened to their disobedience. (See Lev. xxvi. 22.) Upon which Maimonides observed, that magicians were wont to promise them, by their arts, to free their cities, fields, and plantations from lions and serpents, and such-like hurtful creatures; unto whose power God delivered them, because they forsook him, and followed idolaters and magicians, (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 37.)

With the poison of serpents of the dust.] Whose bitings were deadly. And they were exposed to them, as well as to wild beasts, when they were forced to fly into wildernesses, and hide themselves in dens and caves; where some of them could not avoid being devoured by wild beasts, and bitten by serpents, which lay lurking in those holes. So Cocceius, in his Ultima Mosis, sect. 1271. where he notes also, that this was fulfilled in part when they were thrown by the Romans to wild beasts in the theatres, as Josephus relates, lib. vi. de Bello Judaico, cap. 16. 20.

Ver. 25. *The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy.*] They could no where be safe; for in the field the sword of their enemies cut them off; and at home they did not think themselves secure in their closest chamber, but died with fear, or made away themselves, lest they should fall into the hands of those that sought to destroy them. (See Lament. i. 20.) Or, perhaps, by the *terror within,* may be meant famine and pestilence, (Ezek. vii. 15.)

Both the young man and the virgin, the suckling, with the man of grey hairs.] He threatens to deliver them into such merciless hands, as would spare none, nor make any difference of sex or of age. This Huetius refers to the last destruction of Jerusalem, in his Demonstr. Evang. propos. ix. cap. 173. and Abarbinel also confesses it was then fulfilled.

Ver. 26. *I said.*] *i. e.* Resolved.

I would scatter them into corners; I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men.] Utterly destroy them, so that not one of them should be found; and if any remained they should skulk, and not dare to appear among men.

Ver. 27. *Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy.*] He that is omnipotent is not capable of fearing any thing: but he speaks in our language, and gives this reason why he did not make them cease to be a nation, because he would not have their enemies insult, and grow outrageous in their insolent language, even against himself. Of which we find an instance, Isa. xxxvii. 28, 29.

Lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely.] Ascribe all this to their false gods (as Cocceius understands it), which are called *strange gods,* (ver. 16.)

And lest they should say, Our hand is high.] Imagine their own power and valour had destroyed the Jews; as both the Assyrians and Chaldeans boasted. (Isa. x. 7, 8, &c. Habak. i. 15, 16.)

And the Lord hath not done all this.] And attribute nothing to the Most High in all the business. Certain it is, the wickedness of the Jews was so exceeding great, that their final extirpation had been accomplished many generations before it came to pass, had the Lord been only just, and respected nothing but their deserts, whom he very often preserved when they might have been justly destroyed, for such reasons as he himself here gives; that his glory might not be impeached among the nations, but they might see by the strange deliverances and restorations of the Jews, that "their God was a God of gods," most worthy to be honoured by all the world, as he himself speaks below, ver. 36. So Dr. Jackson well observes, book i. on the Creed, chap. 22. sect. 4.

The marginal translation of this last clause is also agreeable to the Hebrew, *Our high hand, and not the Lord, hath done all this.* To prevent which wrong construction of

God's judgments upon them, he took such a time for the execution of them (as Conradus Pellicanus well observes), when the world began to be better instructed by the coming of Christ. So that Titus himself said, as I noted before, that it was God, and not the hands of the Romans, that destroyed them. (See xxix. 24. and this chapter, ver. 22.)

Ver. 28. *For they are a nation void of counsel.*] The Hebrew word *abad* (which is commonly translated *perish*, and here we translate *void*) signifies, in the Ethiopic language, *is foolish* or *mad*, as Job Ludolphus observes in his excellent history of that country. Which makes it probable this was the ancient sense of the word among the Hebrews, and gives the best account of this place, which may be thus translated, *They are a nation foolish in their counsel.* Whose counsels led them to such courses as utterly undid them; and when they seemed most wise they madly ruined themselves. And thus those words of Jeremiah may be best translated, "The heart of the king is foolish," (iv. 9.)

Neither is there any understanding in them.] They did not understand what was good for themselves; but imprudently chose that which did them mischief. Some refer this to the enemies of the Jews before spoken of: but that seems not so agreeable to what follows, which relates to the same persons, and most likely expresses God's compassion towards the senseless Jews. Huetius applies this to their stupid blindness at their last destruction; which they were so far from preventing, that they drew it upon themselves, as Josephus shews. (See xxviii. 28, 29.)

Ver. 29. *Oh that they were wise.*] So as seriously to consider God's dealing with them exactly, according to what he foretold them.

That they understood this, &c.] Or, as it may be translated, *Then would they understand this, they would consider their latter end.* They would soon perceive the hand of God in all that is befallen them; and that if they do not change their course, they will, in the conclusion, be utterly undone.

Ver. 30. *How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight?*] Whence should such an amazing change proceed? that the Israelites, who formerly with a handful of men put vast armies to flight, (Lev. xxvi. 8.) should now, though never so numerous, be beaten by one or two of their enemies, fleeing when none pursues them? (Lev. xxvi. 17. 36, 37. Deut. xxviii. 25.)

Except their Rock had sold them.] A little consideration was sufficient to make them understand, that this had been impossible if they had not forsaken their God; who thereupon delivered them up to the will of their enemies. For by their *Rock* is meant God; and his *selling them* is his quitting his interest in them, and giving them up to be slaves to those that hated them.

And the Lord had shut them up.] So that they could not escape the hands of their enemies.

Ver. 31. *For their rock is not as our Rock.*] None of the gods of the heathen (whom he calls *their rock*, because they relied on them for safety) have such power as he that gave us our being. So Maimonides interprets the word *tzur, the spring and fountain of all things.*

Our enemies themselves being judges.] Who were often forced to acknowledge his overruling power and providence, controlling all their designs. As the Egyptians confessed, Exod. xiv. 2. 5. and Balaam, Numb. xxiii. 19. 22. and the Philistines, 1 Sam. iv. 7, 8. and the king of Babylon, Dan. iii. 29.

Ver. 32. *For their vine is the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah.*] I suppose he speaks here of the Israelites, (giving an account why their enemies so shamefully chased them, ver. 30.) who are compared to a vine, which God brought out of Egypt, and planted in Canaan, (Psalm lxxx. 8.) And the prophet afterward calls them *the plant of his pleasure,* (Isa. v. 7.) Which was an ancient resemblance, as appears by this place; where he represents them as such a degenerate people, that they were as bad (nay, *worse,* as the marginal translation is) as the Sodomites, or the people of Gomorrah: and therefore deserved (ver. 26.) to be utterly destroyed, as they were. (See Isa. i. 10. Jer. ii. 21.)

Their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter.] These words represent their actions (called *fruit* in Scripture) to be so wicked that they were not to be endured. And so Josephus describes them before their last destruction, lib. vi. de Bello Judaico, cap. *ult.* where he saith, if the Romans had delayed to fall upon such a wicked people, he thinks either the earth would have opened its mouth and swallowed them up, or a flood drowned their city, or thunder and lightning from heaven destroyed it, as it did Sodom. Πολὺ γὰρ τῶν ταῦτα παθόντων ἤμεγκε γενεὰν ἀθεωτέραν, *for they were a more atheistical generation than they who suffered such things.* And again, (lib. vii. cap. 30.) he saith, that the time when they were destroyed was so fruitful in all manner of wickedness among the Jews, ὡς μηδὲν κακίας ἔργον ἄπρακτον καταλιπεῖν, *that there was no one work of wickedness that was not committed; nor can one imagine any thing so bad that they did not do; endeavouring publicly, as well as privately, to excel one another both in impiety towards God and injustice to their neighbours.*

Ver. 33. *Their wine is the poison of dragons.*] This still represents their fruit, that is, their works, to be most pernicious, being compared to the poison of dragons. Many authors, indeed, say that dragons have no poison in them (as B. Chytræus and others observe); but as the Hebrew word *thaanim* signifies any kind of *serpent,* so it is certain that the *dragons* of Afric and Arabia had a deadly poison in them, though those of Greece had not; as the famous Bochartus shews at large, in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iii. cap. 14. Who also observes, in another place, that the Hebrew word *rosch* signifying both the *head* and also *poison;* the poison of serpents lies partly in their gall, partly in their teeth, and partly in a little bladder under their tongue, (par. i. lib. i. cap. 4.)

And the cruel venom of asps.] The poison of asps is called *cruel,* because it is accounted the acutest of all other, instantly penetrating into the vital parts. Whence the proverb δῆγμα ἀσπίδων, *the biting of asps,* for an incurable wound. For they who are bitten with an asp seldom escape with their life; as Aristotle, Pliny, and a great many other authors observe, in Bochart. par. ii. lib. iii. cap. 5.

Ver. 34. *Is not this.*] That is, the vengeance he is going to speak of in the following verses. For this particle *hu* often refers to what comes after, not to what goes before, as Cocceius observes.

Laid up in store with me.] To be produced in due time.

Sealed up among my treasures?] He speaks of it as a

matter determined or decreed, as deeds are which are signed and sealed, though not presently executed, but kept safely in a cabinet. And the meaning of this verse is, that though he do not speedily punish evil-doers, it is not because he doth not observe them, or forgets what they do; for he hath prefixed a time to reckon with them, as will appear in the issue.

Ver. 35. *To me belongeth vengeance and recompence.*] As the supreme Lord, Governor, and Judge of the world, whose office it is to punish offenders. It is evident the apostle, alleging these words, (Rom. xii. 19.) ἐμοὶ ἐκδίκησις, *Vengeance is mine* (or *to me belongeth vengeance*), exactly follows the Hebrew text, and not the present LXX. which render these words, ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐκδικήσεως ἀνταποδώσω, *in the day of vengeance I will recompense.*

Their feet shall slide.] Though they think themselves unmoveably fixed in their dominion, they shall certainly fall.

In due time.] Not so soon, perhaps, as men may expect; but when the great Judge of the world sees it most seasonable.

For the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.] When they little thought of it, and prided themselves in their prosperity, God suddenly brought down the Chaldeans, who had been the great instruments of plaguing the Jews, (Isa. xlvii. 7—10, &c. Jer. l. 15. 27. 31. li. 6. 8.) And so shall the plagues of Babylon the great "come in one day. In one hour her great riches shall come to nought," (Rev. xviii. 8. 10. 17.)

Ver. 36. *For the Lord shall judge his people.*] Plead their cause, as the Scripture elsewhere speaks, (Jer. l. 34.) and deliver them from the oppression of their enemies; as this phrase is often used in the book of Psalms, (vii. 8. x. 18.)

And repent himself for his servants.] Have mercy upon them (as the Vulgar truly expresses the sense), and turn his hand, which punishes them, upon their enemies. (See Jer. l. 20. li. 24.)

When he sees that their power is gone.] That they are not able to help themselves. That is the *due time* or *season*, beforementioned, for God to interpose, when the enemies of his people think themselves irresistible, there being none able to oppose them.

And there is none shut up, or left.] Some refer this to persons, and others to things; and either way it signifies their condition to be so forlorn, that they could do nothing, either by men or by money, for their deliverance. J. Forsterus translates these words, *custoditum aut neglectum*, i. e. precious or vile. By which wonderful deliverance and restoration, when they were so totally destitute of all help, all the world was given to understand that there is no God like unto the Lord.

Ver. 37. *And he shall say.*] Or, *It shall be said.*

Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted?] It is dubious whether these words be directed to the Jews, or to the gentiles who had oppressed them. It seems most agreeable to take them as a reproach to the enemies of the Jews, who had long bragged of the power of their gods, and ascribed all their success to them, (ver. 27.) who now could not deliver them in their distress.

Ver. 38. *Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink-offerings.*] For the same rites were used among the gentiles as among the Jews; who offered all the fat upon the altar, and there poured out the wine which accompanied the meat-offering, &c. (See Numb xv.) The LXX. refer this to the worshippers themselves, and translate it thus (agreeably enough to the Hebrew), *The fat of whose sacrifices ye ate, and drank the wine of their drink-offerings.* And Onkelos to the same purpose.

Let them rise up and help you, and be your protection.] From the calamity which was unavoidably coming upon them, (Isa. xlvi. 1, 2. 7. Jer. li. 17, 18.)

Ver. 39. *See now.*] Open your eyes now at last, and be convinced, by your sad experience, of your error.

That I, even I, am he.] That it is I, and none but I, who have made these changes in the world: first making you instruments in punishing my people; and now inflicting the like punishments upon you, (Jer. li. 24, 25. 49.)

The words in the Hebrew being, *I, I am he*, the author of the Old Nitzacon was sensible that we Christians might hence observe, that there are two who are here called God, the Father and the Son. And therefore takes care to inform his reader, that there are not *two first principles* of things. Which, as no Christian is so foolish as to affirm, so their own authors have acknowledged more persons than one, here called God. Thus Jonathan, in his paraphrase, plainly supposes another person in the Divinity, whom he calls the Word, when he thus explains this verse; *When the Word of the Lord shall reveal himself to redeem his people, he shall say to all people, I am he that have been, and am, and shall be,* (see Rev. i. 8.) *and by my Word kill and make alive. I smote the people of Israel, and I will heal them in the end of the days.* Which makes these words a plain prophecy of the Messiah, and him to be God. And so the Jerusalem Targum: *See, that I now am he in my Word, and there is no god besides me: I am he who kill the living in this world, and raise the dead in the world to come,* &c.

And there is no god with me.] As I have no superior, so neither have I any equal.

I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal.] If I please to destroy any people for their sins, none can hinder me; and if any repent and implore my mercy, I restore them to perfect safety. R. Isaac, in his Chissuk Emuna, (par. i. cap. 6. sect. 20.) alleges these words as a prophecy of the resurrection of the dead in the days of the Messiah. And in another place, (cap. 10.) he alleges them as an effectual confutation of those ancient heretics who imagined two supreme powers; one of them, the author of all good; and the other, the author of all evil (which I observed upon Lev. xvi. to have been a very ancient opinion): for there could not be, they fancied, the same care which had an influence upon both. To remove which false conceit, God declares, *I kill*, as well as *make alive*, &c. And for the same reason he saith, in Isa. xlv. 7. *I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things.*

Neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.] Nor can any reverse the judgment that I pass upon men.

Ver. 40. *For I lift up my hand to heaven.*] Swear solemnly to do what follows; *viz.* be revenged on his enemies, as well as deliver his people. Thus Abraham anciently sware, Gen. xiv. 22. And when God promised to bring the Israelites into Canaan, he is said *to lift up his hand*, (Exod.

vi. 8. Nehem. ix. 15.) From whence some think the word *promittere* is derived, signifying to engage by stretching out the hand: and that from thence sprang the custom of stretching out, and lifting up their hand, when they sware. Which the gentiles practised, as those known words of Virgil inform us, Æneid. xii.

" Suspiciens cœlum tenditque ad sydera dextram."

When God therefore is said to lift up his hand *to heaven*, the meaning is, he swears by himself; as it here follows.

And say, I live for ever.] As sure as I live.

Ver. 41. *If I whet my glittering sword.*] Make all things ready for the execution of my judgments.

And my hand take hold of judgment.] I begin to punish.

I will render vengeance to mine enemies.] None shall stop my proceedings, to be fully avenged of them.

And will reward them that hate me.] For, as Jeremiah speaks, li. 56. *The Lord God of recompences will surely requite. For it is the vengeance of the Lord:* (as he speaks in the foregoing chapter concerning Babylon, l. 15.) *Take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her.*

Ver. 42. *I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh.*] Make an exceeding great slaughter, (Isa. xxxiv. 5, 6.)

With the blood of the slain, and of the captives.] This signifies none should be spared: for they should be killed who were taken captive, as well as those who fell in the battle.

From the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.] How the Hebrew word *paroth* comes to signify *revenges*, I am not able to give an account; but in that sense we take it both here and in Judges v. 2. The word *para*, from whence it seems to be derived, signifies *to make bare*, or naked. And so the Vulgar Latin here understands it; and thence Joh. Forsterus hath given a probable sense of these words (taking *rosch*, which we translate *beginning*, for *the head*, as it properly signifies, or *the king*), in this manner, *Because of the baring* (*i. e.* making bare) *of the head by the enemy;* that is, the taking away of the kingdom and priesthood from Israel. The LXX. translate it ἀπὸ κεφαλῆς ἀρχόντων ἐχθρῶν, *from the head of the princes of the enemies.* Which is a sense very agreeable, if we could find any word in the Hebrew like to *paroth* that signifies *princes* or *rulers*. But I think there is a more simple sense may be given of these words than any of the forementioned, only by supposing the particle *lamed* to be omitted (as in many other places) before *paroth*, which is this, *From the king to the slave of the enemies.* For they were wont to shave their captives, as every one knows, by way of contempt and scorn. Which is the reason God threatens baldness so often to the Israelites by his prophets, when he was so angry with them, that he gave them up to be slaves. Next to this is the translation of Onkelos, *I will take away* (those words he adds) *the crowns from the head of the enemy.* Which was the making the king's head bare.

This universal slaughter is most notably expressed by Jeremiah, l. 35—37. 43. And some think this prophecy will be then most amply fulfilled, when the Jews shall be called, and made members of the church of Christ. (See Dr. Jackson, book xi. on the Creed, chap. 12.)

Ver. 43. *Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people.*] Here the particle *eth* is omitted before *ammo*, as I supposed, in the foregoing words, *lamed* to be before *paroth*. Which made the Vulgar translate these words, *O ye nations, praise his people.* But the LXX. discerned the true sense, and translate it as we do: the apostle having justified their translation in Rom. xv. 10. where he expresses this, word for word, as they do, εὐφράνθητε ἔθνη μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ, *Rejoice ye gentiles with his people.* But it must here be noted, that before these words the LXX. have some other, which are very remarkable, Εὐφράνθητε οὐρανοὶ ἅμα αὐτῷ, καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι Θεοῦ, *Rejoice ye heavens together with him, and let all the angels of God worship him* (and then follows, *rejoice ye gentiles with his people*), which are not in the Hebrew, nor in the Chaldee, and yet the latter clause of them, προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι Θεοῦ, *let all the angels of God worship him,* are the very words of the apostle, Heb. i. 6. which seem to have been taken from hence out of the LXX. for they are no where else to be found in the Scripture. The margin, indeed, of our Bibles refers us to Psal. xcvii. 7. But there the words of the LXX. are otherwise, προσκυνήσατε αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ, *worship him all ye his angels;* which are in the second person; whereas here, and in the apostle, the words are in the third. We may therefore suppose rather, that the LXX. from ancient tradition among the Jews, added these words, before they translated this verse, to declare unto what time the fulfilling of them should principally belong. For Psalm xcvii. seems to be but a descant (as Dr. Jackson's words are) upon this part of Moses's song; from whence the Jews might learn the scope of it. And accordingly the apostle uses the words of the LXX. here in this place, rather than those of the Psalmist; because he would have the Hebrews understand and consider, that Moses himself had predicted the exaltation of the Son of God, as the Psalmist afterward expounded him.

There is another translation of these words of Moses, which is very agreeable to the apostle in Rom. xv. 10: *Rejoice ye nations, who are his people.* (See ver. 21. of this chapter.) Either way, this is a plain prophecy of the gentiles becoming one body with the people of Israel. And thus Kimchi himself translates it, *Sing ye gentiles, who are his people*: which began to be fulfilled after our Saviour's ascension to the throne of his glory in the heavens, when all the angels of God worshipped him. Hitherto Moses had supposed, in this song, great enmity between them: and that sometimes they had plagued Israel sorely; as at others, God rendered to them according to what they had done unto his people. But now he breaks out into a rapture of joy, to think that they should one day be reconciled, and made one people of God. And the LXX. thus understanding it, might well preface to their translation of this verse, with the words now mentioned, *Rejoice ye heavens together with him.* For if there be joy in heaven, as Procopius Gazæus well glosses, at the repentance of one sinner, how much more for the salvation of the whole world, by destroying the devil's tyranny? Which being to be performed by the advancement of the Son of God into the heavens, the next words might well be added, *Let all the angels of God worship him.* Which they had always done (the same Procopius observes) as their God who created them; but now they praise and extol his humanity, exalted at the right hand of God.

For he will avenge the blood of his servants.] These words seem to express some of the motives that should per-

suade the gentiles to become one body with the Jews (for such the apostles and all the first converts were), God's punishing all those who shed the blood of his *servants;* as the Christian *martyrs* are called in the book of the Revelation. In which confidence the LXX. add another sentence before these words, καὶ ἐνισχυσάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες υἱοὶ Θεοῦ, *and let all the sons of God be strong in him.*

And will render vengeance to his adversaries.] To all such as oppose this blessed union; and first to the Jews, who set themselves against it more than any others (being mad at the apostles for preaching to the gentiles), and then to the Romans, who persecuted all those who embraced Christianity.

And will be merciful unto his land.] This cannot be meant of the land of Israel, which was no longer God's land than any other, but of the whole earth (as Conrad. Pellicanus well explains it), in which that one people of God dwells, reduced (as he speaks) in the whole multitude of the faithful into one catholic church. For they all acknowledge, from the greatest to the least, that one only Omnipotent God, with no less devotion and affection, than Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses did.

And unto his people.] The whole world that believe in Christ, and are his faithful servants; whose blood he will avenge, (Rev. xix. 2.) and then set up his tabernacle with men, and dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and he will be their God; (Rev. xx. 3.) which I mention, because this part of the prophecy reaches unto the last times, and is not yet all fulfilled.

Thus this famous song concludes, which, as the Jews reckon, consists of seventy verses, each of which contains two distinct and entire sentences, and, as they fancy, is a compendium of the whole law of Moses. Nay, some of them (such are the idle conceits of this nation) think this hymn is so perfect a prophecy, that it contains in it the names of all the men in the world; which they undertake to find, and, by that versicle where it is, to tell what fortune he, whose name they seek, shall have in the world. Thus, instead of observing seriously what Moses foretold would certainly befal themselves, their superstition and hardness of heart have led them to vain conjectures concerning other men. See Jo. Wagenseil upon Sota, p. 164, &c. where he saith a Jew undertook to shew him his name in this song, which fell out in a verse that signified prosperity to him. And since him Martinus Mauritius, in his book De Sortitione Hebræorum, cap. 16. sect. 3—5.

Ver. 44. *And Moses came, and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people.*] The very same that is said before he spake this song, (xxxi. 30.) and is now repeated at the conclusion of it, to express his fidelity in his office to the very last.

He and Hoshea the son of Nun.] Who was now his assistant in this work, as he was designed to be his successor after his death. He is commonly called Joshua, but Oshea was his name at the first, (Numb. xiii. 8.)

Ver. 45. *And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel.*] When he had made an end of speaking them, then he added what follows.

Ver. 46. *And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day.*] Apply your minds to press upon yourselves the observation of all these things. For this expression is a little more than letting them *be in their heart,* (vi. 6.) or *laying them up in their heart,* (xi. 18.) For they were so to retain the remembrance of them, as to attend unto them, and consider them.

Which ye shall command your children to observe to do.] This necessary duty of instructing their children is often pressed, (iv. 10. vi. 7. xi. 19.) because without this care their religion would soon be lost; but, by this means, might be preserved and propagated to all generations.

All the words of this law.] Which they might be certain was delivered by God to Moses; there being as many witnesses of God's presence with him, as there were men in their nation. But he had seen so many instances of their unbelief, that he uses all the ways, manners, and forms (as Pellicanus observes), that he could think of, to urge them to obedience: by delivering them tables of their laws written by God himself, by books, by pillars, by blessings, cursings, obtestations, threatenings, long exhortations, songs, phylacteries, and other ceremonies, &c. which he continued to do as long as he had breath, and was able to speak, that they, and their posterity, might be happy.

Ver. 47. *For it is not a vain thing for you.*] You shall not employ your diligence in this matter unprofitably. The Jews upon these words have founded a maxim, which Maimonides often mentions, "That every precept hath its end and use; which (though they do not appear to us) are grounded upon strong causes and reasons." (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 26. and 50.) The design, for instance, of many ceremonial laws cannot now be fully discerned, because they were instituted directly contrary to the idolatrous rites of the Zabii; which are long since utterly abolished, and but imperfectly recorded in those ancient authors that speak of them.

Because it is your life.] The means to make you a happy people. Here are two benefits, saith R. Isaac, which are promised by the observation of this law; a spiritual and a corporal. The *spiritual* in these words, and the *corporal* in the next, *ye shall prolong your days,* &c. And he puts the spiritual first, though, among all corporal blessings, this of long life be the chief, (Chissuk Emuna, par. i. cap. 18.)

And through this thing.] By teaching your children to observe to do all that is commanded in this law.

You shall prolong your days in the land whither you go over Jordan to possess it.] Have the great blessing of a long life in all manner of happiness, which your posterity shall enjoy for many generations in the land of Canaan. By which it appears, that nothing else but contempt of this law could have ejected them out of this country.

Ver. 48. *And the Lord spake unto Moses that self-same day.*] Immediately after he had ended the foregoing song, and given them this admonition at the conclusion of it.

Ver. 49. *Get thee up into this mountain Abarim.*] Which he had pointed him unto before, and told him what he doth now, (Numb. xxvii. 12.)

Unto Mount Nebo.] Abarim was a ridge of hills, whereof Nebo was one. (See there upon Numb. xxvii. 2.)

Which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho.] This is a more particular description of the site of this mountain than he gave before in the book of Numbers.

Behold, the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession.] Which he might easily do from the highest part of the mountain called Pisgah, (Deut. iii. 27.)

Ver. 50. *And die in the mount whither thou goest up.*] After he had taken a view of the land every way.

And be gathered unto thy people.] To Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This signifies, saith R. Isaac, that he should be associated and joined to the souls of the just, who are called *his people.* For the people of Moses were not buried in Mount Abarim; and therefore he doth not speak of gathering his body to their bodies, but of his soul to their souls. (Chissuk Emuna, par. i. cap. 11.)

As Aaron thy brother died in Mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people.] See Numb. xx. 24. 28. xxxiii. 38.

Ver. 51. *Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel,* &c.] Rebelled against his commandment, as he speaks, Numb. xxvii. 14.

Because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.] Numb. xx. 12. xxvii. 14.

Ver. 52. *Yet thou shalt see the land before thee.*] He had earnestly begged of God that he might go over Jordan; but he denied him that favour, (Dent. i. 37. iii. 25. 27.) yet he was pleased to mitigate his punishment, by letting him enjoy a sight of that good country into which he might not enter.

But thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel.] By which the Israelites should have learnt, that as Moses left them short of the promised land, and could not bring them into the possession of it; so his law did not contain a perfect revelation of God's will, but they were to expect something beyond it.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND this is the blessing.*] As Jacob blessed his children, at his departure out of the world, when God had begun to fulfil the promise to Abraham, of giving him a numerous offspring; so Moses having seen them vastly increased, and ready to enter upon the land promised to them, (Gen. xv. 18, &c.) takes his farewell of them, with a blessing pronounced upon the people in general, and upon each tribe in particular. Which is in part *prophetical,* as the blessing of Jacob was, and delivered in the prophetic style, which hath some difficulty and obscurity in it; on purpose, perhaps, to excite their diligent study to inquire into the meaning. (See Gen. xlix. 1. 3.)

Wherewith Moses, the man of God.] Or, *the prophet of the Lord,* as Onkelos translates it: for prophets are called *men of God* in the holy books, (1 Sam. ix. 6—8. 1 Kings xiii. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 17. 2 Pet. i. 21.) because, in the exercise of their sacred function, they did not deliver their own sense, nor the sense of other men, but the mind and will of God who spake by them.

Blessed the children of Israel before his death.] Before he went up into Mount Abarim to die, (xxxii. 49.) he prayed God to bless them; and also foretold their future state and condition. Such had been the ancient custom among the holy patriarchs (as we learn from the example of Jacob), to admonish their posterity upon their dying beds of such things as they thought most imported them: for then they could not but be thought to speak most sincerely; and their words were apt to be entertained with greater respect, and preserved in mind with greater care. Moses therefore, their deliverer, leader, and lawgiver, concludes his life in the same manner; and it is very likely deposited these dying words with them in writing.

Ver. 2. *And he said, The Lord came from Sinai.*] And, in the first place, he endeavours to make them sensible of what God had done already for them: and the chief of all his benefits being the revelation of his mind and will to them, he commemorates that as a common blessing to them all, before he begins to speak in particular to each tribe: for that is meant by *the Lord came from Sinai;* where he appeared in a most particular manner, and from thence promulgated his law with the greatest solemnity, (Exod. xx.) And thus the gentiles took an unwonted brightness in any place to be a token of the Ἐπιφάνεια, *appearance,* or *advent,* of some of their gods in that place. As also a great commotion in any place, they took for another token of it. See the illustrious Spanhemius, in his annotations upon Callimachus's hymn to Apollo, ver. 7. which they seem to have learnt from this appearance of God on Mount Sinai, and the quaking of that mountain, when God appeared on it.

And rose up from Seir unto them, and shone forth from Mount Paran.] There is no difficulty in the foregoing words, it being evident that God came down on Mount Sinai, and thence delivered his commands to the Israelites, and espoused them for his people. But how he rose up from Seir unto them, the country of Edom, and shone from Paran, the country of Ishmael, is not so easy to understand. The Jews, indeed, who are wont to solve all difficulties, by inventing what they please, are not troubled to give an account of these words; which signify, they fancy, that the Divine Glory first resided upon Mount Seir, where God propounded his law to the children of Esau; but they would not have it, because they found these words in it, "Thou shalt not kill;" he went, therefore, to Paran, and offered it to the children of Ishmael, but they refused it also, because they found these words in it, "Thou shalt not steal;" so he came to Sinai, and gave it to the Israelites, who said, "All the words which the Lord hath said will we do," Exod. xxiv. 3. Thus the Jerusalem Targum, and Pirke Eliezer, and some other more ancient authors, with this addition, that he offered the law to all the nations of the world, but they rejected it, because it was written, "Thou shalt have none other gods but me." But this looks so like a fable, that some of themselves are ashamed of it, and have given a better sense of the words, though I cannot say the true one. For thus Abraham Peritsol expounds them, *The true law came out of Sinai to the Israelites, by which the Edomites were so enlightened, that God might be said to rise up to them also: and afterward the celestial influence shone out of this law to the Ishmaelites, who were the better for it.* Thus Const. L'Empereur reports his sense in his Annotations upon Bava-kama, cap. 4. sect. 3. where he endeavours to make out a plainer sense of these words, in this manner: Though the mountain of Paran was nigher to Sinai than Seir was, and first occurred to those that went out of Egypt; yet there was great reason to mention Seir before it, because Moses had respect to the order of their journeys, and not to the site of the places. And their journeys were so directed by Divine Providence, that, fetching a long circuit, forward and backward, they should come to Canaan. In all which turnings and windings they were marvellously preserved and provided for, by the same good Providence

which conducted them. Of this Moses here makes a thankful commemoration, how he led them from Mount Sinai to the borders of the land of Canaan, towards Mount Seir, as is expressly noted by Moses, (compare Deut. i. 19. with ii. 1. and Numb. xx. 14.) From whence, by reason of their infidelity, they were led back again towards the Red Sea, and encamped in the extremity of the wilderness, (Numb. xxxiii. 35.) where Ptolemy places Paran: (though there was another part of it called Paran, near Kadesh, Numb. xiii. 3. 27.) and from thence they were led back again in a long circuit to the east part of the land of Canaan. This may be one reason why these two places are mentioned together with Sinai, that God, who there appeared to them, was with them all the time they wandered about in the wilderness, till he brought them to the borders of Canaan, where they now were. And another may be, because in Mount Seir the brazen serpent was erected by God's order, for the cure of such as were bitten by serpents, when they looked on it; which was an illustrious type of our blessed Saviour, and the salvation wrought by him, (Numb. xx. 4. 9.) And in the desert to which Paran gave the name (because it overlooked the whole, though very large), they received the joyful news that they should march into Canaan: or, as D. Chytræus understands it, in the wilderness of Paran the seventy elders received the Spirit, to make them assistants unto Moses in the government, (Numb. x. 12. xi. 24, &c.) And here, I may add, Moses repeated his law to them, (Deut. i. 1. 5.) who seems, in this verse, to follow a metaphor borrowed from the sun, which first illuminates the air, and then rises, and then spreads abroad his beams; as God by degrees declared his presence with his people, whithersoever they went, first at Mount Sinai, then at Seir, and, last of all, here in the wilderness of Paran.

But it must be acknowledged, that these words may be interpreted in a more simple manner, they being but a farther amplification of what was said in the first words, *the Lord came from Sinai.* When at the same time he *rose up from Seir,* and *shone forth from Mount Paran.* For these mountains were very near one to another; or rather parts of one and the same ridge of mountains, as Con. Pellicanus here observes; and is more clearly made out by a very learned man among ourselves, (Dr. Hyde, in his excellent notes on Abraham Peritsol, Itinera Mundi, p. 73.) for Teman (which is the same with Paran, Habak. iii. 3.) was near to Edom, whose chief city was Bozrah, (Amos i. 12.) as that was near to Sinai.

The ignorance of the Mahometans is much to be pitied, who out of this place imagine they have found as good an authority for the Alcoran, as there is for the law of Moses, and for the gospel of Christ. For thus they interpret these words, *God gave the law from Sinai, and the gospel from Seir* (which they would have to be the same with Galilee, which our Saviour much frequented), *and the Alcoran from Mount Paran;* which they fancy is a mountain not far from Mecca. (See Dr. Pocock upon Greg. Abulfaraji, p. 183. and Guadagnolus Resp. pro Relig. Christiana.) But the last words of this verse, *for them,* are sufficient to confute these conceits; for they plainly shew that the whole verse speaks of the people of Israel.

And he came with ten thousand of saints.] Or, as our Mr. Mede thinks it should be translated, *with his holy ten thousands,* or *myriads;* that is, attended with an innumerable company of angels, who waited on him at the giving of the law. See Psal. lxviii. 7. Dan vii. 10. of which Enoch, perhaps, prophesied in part, Jude 14, 15. And from hence it may be thought, that notion of the Jewish doctors, followed by St. Stephen and St. Paul, that the law was given by angels, had its beginning; (Mede, book ii. p. 437.) that is, they attended upon God, as his ministers, when he himself gave the law.

From his right hand.] With which we are wont to deliver things to other persons.

Went a fiery law for them.] For the law of Moses was given out of the midst of fire, and therefore called *a fire of law,* as the words are in the Hebrew, (Exod. xix. 16. 18. Deut. iv. 11, 12. v. 22—24.) The cabalists (as Reuchlin observes) fancy that God wrote the law in a globe of fire, and sent it to them. But the Jerusalem Targum is more sober, which thus expounds it, *He stretched his right hand out of the midst of flames of fire, and gave the law unto his people.* And Onkelos still better, *The law written with his right hand he gave us out of the midst of fire.* Or, as Campeg. Vitringa would have this latter part of the verse translated, *On his right hand a fire, and out of the fire a law for them.* The meaning being, that God came to Mount Sinai with that fire; for, in Scripture, to be *on the right hand* of any one, is to accompany him, (lib. ii. Observ. Sacr. cap. 4.)

By the conclusion of this verse it is apparent, that the former part of it belongs entirely to God's mercy unto the children of Israel, upon whom he bestowed his law, in most illustrious tokens of his presence. Which makes it highly probable, that his "rising up from Seir upon them, and shining from Mount Paran," belongs to the same matter; that is, the cloud wherein he descended on Sinai, with a vast host of angels, extended itself so far, as to cover the neighbouring mountains of Seir and Paran. Though the meaning may be, as I have shewn, that he continued his presence with them after they went from Sinai, through all their journeys in the wilderness of Seir and Paran, till they came to the place where they now were.

Ver. 3. *Yea, he loved the people.*] All this was the effect of his love and kindness to the people of Israel, whom he owned for his son, and his first-born, (Exod. iv. 22.) and therefore in a tender manner brought them out of Egypt, (Exod. xix. 4.) that he might instruct them in his laws.

All his saints are in thy hand.] Whereby he made them a holy nation, (as it there follows in Exod. xix. 5.) whom he took into his special care and most gracious protection, as this phrase signifies in many places, (Numb. iv. 28. 33.) And Onkelos refers it to the mighty power whereby he brought them out of Egypt: but it may have respect to God's preservation and support of them, when he gave the law in such a terrible manner, that Moses himself quaked, and yet none of them received any harm. As for the change of the person from *his* to *thy,* it is very frequent in this language, particularly in Dan. ix. 4.

And they sat down at thy feet.] The first word (which we translate *sat down*) being no where else found but here and Isa. i. 5. where it plainly hath another sense, hath occasioned various interpretations of this sentence. But most agree in this of Sol. Jarchi, that as scholars sat at the feet of their master round about him, while he taught them their lesson, so the people encompassed the mount where God was, and heard his law, which he thence deli-

vered. But it is a question, whether there was such a custom of scholars in those days; and the people did not sit, but stood at the foot of the mount, (Exod. xx. 18.) Therefore Onkelos understands this of their sitting down, or pitching their tents, where the glorious cloud that led them rested, (Numb. x. 12. 33.)

Every one shall receive of thy word.] This still is commonly referred to the people's receiving the law. But Onkelos thinks it hath respect to their journeys "at the commandment of the Lord," (Numb. x. 13.) For so he interprets it, *They went forward according to thy word.* And so the Jerusalem Targum expounds these and the foregoing words; *Behold, they were led, and came to the foot of his cloud, and went forward and rested, according to the command of his word.* It takes in also the other sense of the word *tucchu* (as it signifies *smiting* in Isa. i. 5.) in this manner, *Though he inflicted many chastisements upon them, yet they did not cease, nor desist from the doctrine of the law.*

Ver. 4. *Moses commanded us a law.*] He commanded them to observe that law which God had given them, when he was about to depart from them. This he did in this very book, (i. 3. v. 1. vi. 1. viii. 1, &c.) He speaks of himself in the third person, which is very usual throughout all this book.

Even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.] As a peculiar blessing which God had bestowed on them, and on their posterity, above all other nations in the world, (Deut. iv. 8.) who, as they had not this law given to them, so they were not bound to observe it; as the Jews themselves conclude from this very place. Nor did they force any body to embrace this law, when they made a conquest of a neighbouring country, but left them to their liberty, provided they would become proselytes of the gate; that is, forsake idolatry, and keep the common precepts enjoined to all mankind. Thus Maimonides interprets the word *inheritance.* (See Schickard, in his Jus Regium, cap. 5. Theor. 17. and Grotius, de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. i. cap. 1. sect. 16.)

The author of Etz-Hachajim, a MS. highly valued by the famous Wagenseil, saith, That when a child began to speak, the father was bound to teach him this verse. In which, instead of מורשת *hereditary,* some of the Jews read מאורסת *espoused;* as if the law were espoused to the Jewish nation. (See Wagenseil on Sota, p. 519. 520.)

Ver. 5. *And he was king in Jeshurun.*] Or, *for he was king,* that is, under God, the supreme ruler and governor of Israel; and therefore in his name, and by his authority, required them to observe these laws. Which plainly shews him to have had the supreme power in all things, both civil and sacred. Which is excellently expressed by our Mr. Thorndike, in his Review of the Rites of the Church, &c. p. 68. where he observes, "That the Israelites, being made a free people by the act of God bringing them out of Egypt, and entitling them to the land of Canaan, upon the covenant of the law, had Moses not only for their prophet and their priest (for by him Aaron and his successors were put into the priesthood, the tabernacle and all belonging to it consecrated), but also for their king, their lawgiver, their judge, and commander-in-chief of their forces, under God, if not rather God by Moses. For we find, that, after Moses's decease, either God by some extraordinary signification of his will and pleasure, stirred up some man in his stead for the time; or, if there was none such, ruled their proceedings himself, by *urim* and *thummin* answering their demands, and directing what to do, and what course to follow, in all the public affairs that concerned the state of that people. Whereupon, when they required Samuel to make them a king, he declared it was not Samuel, but himself, whom they had rejected: because they had rejected him whom God had immediately set over them in his own stead, by whose death the power returned to God, as at the beginning."

Concerning the word Jeshurun, see xxxii. 15. and Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 2. n. 2.

When the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together.] To renew their covenant with God, and to receive his last commands. (See xxix. 1, 2. 9, 10. xxxi. 28, 29.)

Ver. 6. *Let Reuben live, and not die, and let not his men be few.*] In the last clause of this verse, we repeat the word *not* (which is wanting in the Hebrew) without any necessity: for the words may be thus translated exactly, *let Reuben live, and not die, though his men be few.* Which seems to be a confirmation of the prophecy of Jacob, (Gen. xlix. 4.) *that he should not excel,* and yet should live, and not perish; that is, be in some measure a flourishing tribe, though not so numerous as some others. (See there.) And possibly it may be here suggested, that though they passed armed over Jordan before their brethren to settle them there, (according to their engagement, Numb. xxxii. 27. Josh. iv. 12, 13.) yet none of them should perish, but both they, and their wives, and children, that stayed behind them, should be all preserved.

Ver. 7. *And this is the blessing of Judah.*] As much as to say, Judah shall be remarkably blessed. For these words [*this is the blessing*] are used of none of the rest of the tribes, either of Reuben, which went before, or the others that follow after. Here is no mention made of Simeon (who was next to Reuben), because that tribe was included in Judah, with whom their possessions were mixed, (Josh. xix. 1.) and therefore they went together to make expeditions, (Judg. i. 3.) Judah also is here put before Levi, because it was to be the royal tribe, according to the prophecy of Jacob; which Moses was assured God would fulfil, and therefore prays as follows: *And he said, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah.* Grant his petition, when he calls for help against his enemies. So Onkelos paraphrases it, *Hear his prayer when he goes forth to war.*

And bring him unto his people.] Return him home in peace unto his people; as the same Onkelos expounds it.

Let his hands be sufficient for him.] To avenge him of his enemies, as he also explains it.

And be thou a help to him from his enemies.] Suffer them not to prevail over him, but give him the victory, when he fights with them. So the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases these two last passages; *Let his hands exercise revenge upon his enemies in battles, and do thou support and sustain him against those that hate him.* This was notoriously fulfilled in this tribe, which was the most valiant and successful of all other. For in all their wars this tribe was the principal; and the safety of all the rest seems to have depended upon this. (See Judg. i. 1, 2, &c.

xx. 18.) And as these places shew that this was the most considerable tribe before they had kings; so after that it was able, together with Benjamin, to maintain its ground against the other ten tribes, and all other opposers.

Ver. 8. *And of Levi he said, Let thy thummim and thy urim be with thy holy-one.*] Continue in this tribe the high dignity of consulting with thee, and receiving directions from thee, by the high-priest, concerning the public safety. Or, as some take it (because *thummim* is here set before *urim*, which is not in any other place), make them upright and faithful, as well as understanding and knowing, in the discharge of their duty. For though by *holy-one* be principally meant the high-priest, who was in a peculiar manner anointed to be separated to the service of God, especially in this part of it, to approach him with *urim* and *thummim*, (which gave Aaron the name of the *saint of the Lord*, Psal. cvi. 16.) yet it comprehends all the rest of the priests and Levites in conjunction with him; for they were all separated unto the Lord, having signalized themselves (as we speak) by their early zeal for the Lord, when their brethren apostatized to idolatry. Of which Moses takes notice in the next verse, *Who said unto his father*, &c. *I have not seen him*, &c. regarded, that is, no relation when they executed the commands of God against the worshippers of the golden calf. See our learned Dr. Spencer, de Leg. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 7. dissert. 7. where he treats also of these words, as they may be applied to our Lord Christ, the true *holy-one* of God; who is, indeed, a priest for ever, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, &c. (Heb. vii. 26.)

Whom thou didst prove at Massah.] Or, *whom thou hast thoroughly proved.* For the words in the Hebrew are, *Whom in proving thou didst prove;* the ancient interpreters not taking *Massah* for the name of a place (as we do), but for *trying* or *proving.* And so, indeed, the words in the Hebrew seem to import; the particle [*beth*] before *Massah* being different from that before *Meribah* [which is *al*], though we translate them both alike by the word *at.* And thus the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases, *Whom thou didst prove*, or *try, and he stood in the trial;* that is, approved himself perfect or upright, as Onkelos expresses it. This procured that tribe a blessing from the Lord, (Exod. xxxii. 26. 29.) and brought them into *special grace and favour with him*, as the word we translate *holy-one* signifies. For it is not *kadoth*, but *chasid.*

And with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah.] Though God did severely chide and reprove Moses and Aaron (who were the heads of this tribe), when they were tried at the waters of strife, (Numb. xx. 12, 13.) yet they did not forfeit their office by the offence they then committed; and, therefore, Moses prays it might still continue in Aaron's posterity.

Ver. 9. *Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him, neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor know his own children.*] This relates unto the impartial execution of judgment by the Levites, upon the worshippers of the golden calf, without respect of persons: (Exod. xxxii. 26, &c.) and as some will have it, to Phineas's zeal, mentioned in Numb. xxv. But, that it hath any respect to a more ancient judgment, given in the case of Judah and Thamar (as the Jerusalem Targum fancies), there is no ground to believe. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 8. n. 2.)

For they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.] See Exod. xxxii. 28, 29. Abarbinel, and others, make this to be the reason of what follows.

Ver. 10. *They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law.*] Because they were so upright, as to take no notice of their dearest relations in judgment; therefore, they were entrusted with this office of teaching the people the statutes of God, that is, deciding all controversies which arose about any thing in the law. So the Jews expound it; and it is agreeable to what we read in the seventeenth chapter of this book, (ver. 9, 10.) and many other places, as Mr. Selden shews in the place forenamed, p. 372, &c. and our Mr. Thorndike, in his Religious Assemblies, chap. 2. where he observes, the *teaching* here mentioned consisted in declaring the meaning and obligation of the law in matters doubtful; as is apparent from Lev. x. 8—11. For though others might be members of their courts of judgment, yet they consisted chiefly of priests and Levites. As for *teaching* the people in their religious assemblies, that was not so much the office of the priests and Levites as of the prophets. For though the prophets, and the disciples of the prophets, were commonly priests and Levites (who, being most free from the care of estates and inheritances, and by their office, in his ceremonial service, came nearest to God of all other men, were most likely to be endued with an extraordinary degree of knowledge, and of the fear of God), yet it is certain, that the charge of *teaching* the people in their assemblies belonged as well to those prophets who were not priests and Levites as to those that were. (See him, p. 25.) And this was one reason, as Maimonides observes, why the tribe of Levi might have no inheritance in the land, that, being free from the trouble of ploughing and sowing, &c. they might wholly attend to the study of the law, and be able to teach Israel God's judgments, (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 39.)

They shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt-offerings upon thine altar.] This was the peculiar office and honour of the priests alone, to offer incense on the golden altar, and burnt-offerings upon the brazen. The Jerusalem Targum thus paraphrases it, *They shall put incense of precious spice before thee, to pacify thine anger, and offer a most acceptable sacrifice upon thine altar.*

Ver. 11. *Bless, Lord, his substance.*] The word we here translate *substance*, is translated *wealth*, viii. 17, 18. which consisted most in cattle (they having no land to till), which he prays God to increase, that they might have sufficient sustenance for themselves and their family. It is a strange fancy of some of the Jews, that whosoever offered incense grew rich, and therefore no priest was suffered to offer incense more than once, that so riches might be derived to them all. Thus they trifle, while their hearts are set on getting money, and not on growing good. (See Sheringham on Joma, p. 35, 36. and Mauritius de Sortitione Hebræorum, cap. 24. sect. 4.)

And accept the work of his hands.] All their ministry at the altar where the priests officiated; or about the tabernacle, of which the Levites had the care.

Smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.] For they who were enemies to the priests and Levites were enemies to religion, and to all civil government, which was chiefly administered by them, as was before observed. (See xvii. 8—12.)

Ver. 12. *And of Benjamin he said.*] He mentions him next to Levi, because the temple, in which the priests officiated, was partly situated in his lot.

The beloved of the Lord.] Or, being beloved of the Lord, as the LXX. interpret it, Ἠγαπημένος ὑπὸ Κυρίου.

Shall dwell in safety by him.] *i. e.* By the Lord; which signifies the stability of his portion, which had Jerusalem the holy city in it, as we read Josh. xviii. 28. For though Mount Sion was in the tribe of Judah, and so the sanctuary was there, (Psal. lxxviii. 68.) yet the city wherein it stood was not. Nay, the ancients think the altar of burnt-offering was in the tribe of Benjamin, as Kimchi observes upon that place beforementioned in Joshua. (See upon Gen. xlix. 27.) And there are reasons to make one think, that Sion, in the place forenamed, and in others, is to be taken in a large sense, comprehending Mount Moriah also, (on which the temple was built, 2 Chron. iii. 1.) which was in the tribe of Benjamin, and consequently the temple was situated in this tribe.

And the Lord shall cover him all the day long.] The glory of the majestical presence of the Lord shall be a shield over him (to defend him) continually; as the Jerusalem Targum expounds it.

And he shall dwell upon his shoulders.] For the Divine Majesty (saith Onkelos) shall dwell in his country. It being in the temple, and the temple in the tribe of Benjamin, where it stood upon Mount Moriah, as the head of a man doth upon his shoulders; as Dr. Lightfoot glosses in his Temple Service, p. 145. edit. 1. Or the word we translate here *shoulders* may signify, as it is translated in other places, *sides*, (Numb. xxxiv. 11.) or *borders*. And nothing is more certain, than that the Divine habitation was in the borders of Benjamin, whose lot touched Judah's at Jerusalem; and was so united to it, that when the rest fell off from Judah, the tribe of Benjamin always adhered to it.

This being the sense which the ancient interpreters give of this verse, and very agreeable to the words, I shall not trouble the reader with any other; but only mention a conceit of Conradus Pellicanus, who, by *the beloved of the Lord* here understands David, who *dwelt in safety* by Benjamin, though the king of that tribe persecuted him, for God *covered* and protected him continually from violence, &c. It is strange that a man otherwise judicious, and well acquainted with the Jewish learning, should propound this as the best interpretation he could think of, when there is nothing of a blessing upon Benjamin in it.

Ver. 13. *And of Joseph he said.*] This tribe follows next, his lot falling near to Benjamin, who lay between Judah and Joseph.

Blessed of the Lord be his land.] He foretells that this tribe should be situated in a most plentiful country, and enriched by the Divine blessing upon it.

For the precious things of heaven.] Sending fruitful showers from heaven.

For the dew.] Together with the evening and morning dews, which are no less refreshing to the earth than rain.

And for the deep that coucheth beneath.] He means springs of water which burst out of the bowels of the earth, for the use of man and beast.

Ver. 14. *For the precious fruits of the sun.*] Whose kindly heat brings them forth, and makes them grow to maturity.

And the precious things put forth by the moon.] For all fruits are plumped by the moon's cool and fattening moisture in the night, which is digested by the sun in the day. Or, this passage may relate to the several sorts of fruit which are produced every month. So Onkelos interprets it, *It produceth also sweet fruits at the beginning of every month.* For the word *jerachim* in the Hebrew, being in the plural number, signifies *moons, i. e.* months. And so the Jerusalem Targum translates it, *in every new moon*, which comprehends the whole month.

Ver. 15. *And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills.*] Such as Mount Ephraim, and Samaria, and Bashan, which were exceeding fruitful in grapes and olives, and such-like excellent fruit: and called *ancient* and *lasting*, because they were made together with the earth, in the beginning; and not mounts cast up by the art of men. (See Gen. xlix. 20.)

Ver. 16. *For the precious things of the earth.*] This seems to relate to their arable land, which he foretells should bring forth great store of all sorts of corn.

The word *meged*, which we translate *precious*, is repeated five times in these three last verses, signifying that which in its kind is *most excellent and eximious*, as that great man Ezekiel Spanhemius observes upon Callimachus's hymn to Diana, ver. 245. where mentioning several instruments of music among the Greeks, whose names came from the Hebrew, he thinks one called Μάγαδις (which was ἀρχαῖον ὄργανον, as Athenæus saith, but he could not tell whether a wind or stringed instrument) came from this Hebrew word *meged*, for it was not of a Greek original. And in Cant. iv. 13. this word is translated *pleasant*, as all music is; but that especially which was made by this instrument Μάγαδις. For Plato, who took it for a stringed instrument, calls it πολυχορδώτατον, Anacreon saying he had one of twenty strings, as Spanhemius notes upon the hymn in Delum, p. 472.

And fulness thereof.] By the *fulness* of the earth may be meant, either the plenty and abundance of its fruits, or the ripeness thereof, as Bochartus observes in his Canaan.

And for the good-will of him that dwelt in the bush.] That is, of God, *whose majesty* (as Onkelos paraphrases) *dwells in the heavens, and was revealed to Moses in the bush*, (Exod. iii. 2. 4.) That is, the Schechinah there appeared in a most glorious manner, and the Lord told Moses he was there present, whose *good-will*, which is the fountain of all blessings (for to it they owed their deliverance out of Egypt, which God then promised to Moses out of the bush), he wished might be the peculiar portion of Joseph.

Let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph.] The word *blessing* is not in the Hebrew; but this being connected with the foregoing words, may be thought a prayer, that the good-will of God, the fountain (as I said) of all blessings, may rest upon Joseph. Or, as Onkelos translates it, *Let all those things* (beforenamed) *come upon the head of Joseph.* And so the Jerusalem Targum expounds it, *Let all these blessings come, and be made perfect upon the head of Joseph.*

Upon the top of him that was separated from his brethren.] That is, saith the same Targum, *upon him that was made ruler over all the land of Egypt, and splendid in the honour given him by his brethren.* (See this explained upon Gen. xlix. 26.)

Ver. 17. *His glory is like the firstling of his bullock.*] The ancients thought there was so much majesty in the countenance of a bull, especially of a young bullock in its prime, lifting up its head, that they made it an emblem of kingly power, as Bochartus hath shewn out of several good authors in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 29. And accordingly here it signifies, that the tribe of Ephraim should have royal authority established in it. For he doth not compare the person of Joseph to a young bullock, (though he was a goodly man, eminent for his beauty and comely proportions, Gen. xxxix. 6.) but the tribes which sprang from him, as appears from the last words of this verse; whose glory he here comparing to that of a young bullock, and its glory consisting in its strength, the power of the tribes of Joseph is hereby denoted; which was so great, that they were the chief support of the kingdom of Israel, which began in Jeroboam, who was king of ten tribes; after whom there followed a long race of kings till the captivity. There may be also some respect in these words unto Joshua, the first governor of all the people, who was of the tribe of Ephraim; as of Manasseh were Jair, Jephthah, and Gideon, who were famous men among the judges.

It is remarkable also here, that Joseph is compared to the *firstling* of a bullock, because Reuben being set aside for his incest, Joseph had the right of primogeniture, in part, translated unto him, (1 Chron. v. 1, 2.) and, in consequence of it, had a double portion in the land of Canaan.

It is to be noted likewise, that he is said to be like unto the firstling of *his* bullock, because there were not more goodly bullocks any where than in Bashan, (Amos iv. 1.) which fell to the share of some of the children of Manasseh, (Josh. xvii. 5.)

There have been some great men, who, from this place and other conjectures, have fancied that Joseph was worshipped in Egypt after his death, under the form of an ox, by the name of Serapis, which Bochartus hath confuted in the book forenamed, cap. 34.

And his horns are like the horns of an unicorn.] This is a farther description of the power and strength of the house of Joseph: for a *horn* is every where an emblem of mighty power and force, and an *unicorn* (as we translate the word *reem*) is a very strong as well as a stately creature. But Bochartus hath alleged a great many things to prove, that *reem* is a sort of wild goat in Arabia, as big as a deer, and of the same colour, which they now call *gazellas*, (par. i. Hierozoicon, lib. iii. cap. 27.) There were some of them sent lately to the French king by the divan of Tripoli, which had black horns, in shape like those of a goat, only they were round and pointed. But the tallness, strength, and swiftness of this creature, together with its fierce untameable nature, hath made Ludolphus (who at first was of Bochart's opinion) to conclude, upon second thoughts, that the *reem* in Scripture signifies the *rhinoceros*, as the Vulgar Latin here translates the word. See lib. i. Commentar. in Histor. Æthiop. cap. 10. n. 74. which seems not so well to agree with these words of Moses; which suppose the creature here spoken of to have two horns (he using the plural number), with which the two tribes descended from Joseph are very fitly compared. And so David mentions the *horns* of the *reem*, (Psal. xxii. 22.) But whatsoever creature it was, princes and great men were wont to be compared to it, as appears from Isa. xxxiv. 7. where the grandees (as we now speak) of Edom are called *unicorns*, as in the following words they are compared to bullocks and bulls.

With them he shall push the people together.] Throw down all that oppose him, particularly the Canaanites. For these (saith the Jerusalem Targum) are the great men of the Amorites, whom Joshua, the son of Nun, slew; who was of the tribe of Ephraim; and the captains which Gideon, the son of Joash, slew, who was of the tribe of Manasseh.

To the ends of the earth.] Of the land of Canaan.

And they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.] These things shall be performed by the numerous armies of Ephraim and Manasseh. Of these are the benedictions of these two tribes; the younger of which he signifies should be more powerful than the elder, according to the prophecy of Jacob, (Gen. xlviii. 19.)

Ver. 18. *And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out.*] About their business, as the Jerusalem Targum expounds it, that is, their merchandise; which they exercised upon the sea of Gennesaret, where they were situated, and not far from the Mediterranean; in which he prays they might have such good success, as to fill their hearts with joy. There are those who understand this of their *going out* to war against their enemies, which is the exposition of Onkelos. And so this phrase is often used, particularly in Gen. xiv. 8.; and the valour of this tribe is, upon one occasion, celebrated in Judg. v. 18. But Jacob's prophecy determines us rather to the other sense, Gen. xlix. 13. where he represents this tribe as mariners rather than soldiers. Though it must be acknowledged, that there were great numbers among them in David's time, who were expert warriors, (1 Chron. xii. 33.) and that the Israelites generally were not addicted to traffic, the sea-coast being possessed by the Philistines and the Canaanites, save only what belonged to this tribe.

And Issachar in thy tents.] The same Jerusalem Targum expounds it, *Rejoice, ye house of Issachar, when ye come into your schools:* for this was a learned tribe, at least in some ages, as appears from 1 Chron. xii. 32. But Jacob's prophecy rather determines us to another sense, which is, that they should grow rich by feeding cattle, and by husbandry: for which their country being very proper, they chose rather that quiet kind of life than merchandise. Though they were near neighbours to Zebulun, and for that reason, as well as because they were brethren by the same mother, are here put both together in one benediction. This seems also best to agree with the phrase of rejoicing *in their tents;* in which they are said anciently to dwell who fed cattle, Gen. iv. 10. And perhaps the learning that the children of Issachar are said to have had, in 1 Chron. xii. 32. which consisted *in the understanding of the times*, was nothing else but their skill in the proper seasons for sowing, and planting, and pruning, &c. *to know what Israel ought to do* in the management and improvement of their land; which was of great use, especially in that country.

Ver. 19. *They shall call the people unto the mountain.*] Here Moses predicts the house of God should be set upon a mountain; unto which, he saith, Zebulun (for the latter end of the verse shews he speaks particularly of them) should invite the rest of their tribes, by their forwardness and zeal, to go up to worship God at the three great festi-

vals. So the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases, *Behold, the people of the house of Zebulun shall be ready to go to the mount of the holy house of the Lord.* Or, by *the people*, perhaps, he means the gentiles their neighbours, whom they should endeavour to bring to the service of the true God; which was especially fulfilled when Christ came. (Matt. iv. 15, 16.)

There they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness.] Liberal sacrifices, out of their honest gains by merchandise.

For they shall suck of the abundance of the seas.] Import abundance of various commodities, and grow rich by their traffic.

And of treasure hid in the sand.] This is a farther amplification of the same thing, relating particularly to their importation of gold, and silver, and precious stones, which are digged out of the earth. Some think it hath respect to the rich mines which were in this country; but of that I can find no proof.

Ver. 20. *And of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad.*] That is, blessed be God, who hath allotted to him such a large inheritance; which he afterward also farther enlarged, as we read 1 Chron. v. 18—20.

He dwelleth as a lion.] Lives secure and fearless, though encompassed with enemies, whom the Gadites tore in pieces (as it here follows) if they offered to molest them. For this was a very warlike tribe, as we learn from 1 Chron. xii. 8. and therefore here compared to a *lioness* (so *labi* signifies), which equals a lion, if not exceeds him in strength and fierceness; as Bochartus hath observed out of good authors in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 50. And so Onkelos here translates it, *He dwelleth as a lioness.* And the Jerusalem Targum puts in both, after this manner; *He remains quiet, as a lion and a lioness; neither is there people or kingdom that shall stand before them.*

And teareth the arm with the crown of the head.] Kills the princes with their kings, as Onkelos truly expounds it. For by *arms* are meant men of strength and power; and by the *crown of the head* is properly to be understood the chief commander, ruler, or king. And therefore the LXX. also translate *crown of the head* by Ἄρχοντα, prince, or supreme governor.

Ver. 21. *And he provided the first part for himself.*] He first received his portion in the land which they conquered, as Onkelos expounds it. Which he is said here to *provide for himself*, because this tribe (with Reuben, and part of Manasseh) desired to be possessed of the country of Sihon, which was accordingly given to them, (Numb. xxxii. 1, 2. 33.)

Because there, in a portion of the lawgiver.] Which Moses (who was their lawgiver) gave them by God's order; whereas the other nine tribes and a half had theirs given them by Joshua.

Was he seated.] The word in the Hebrew signifies *hid, i. e.* protected, when, going to the war in Canaan, they left their wives, and children, and cattle, without any defence, but God's providence, according to the promise they made to Moses, (Numb. xxxii. 16, 17, &c.) What the Jerusalem Targum, and Onkelos, and several of the rabbins, even Abarbinel himself, here say, of Moses being buried in this tribe (which they make the sense of these words), I think is no more to the purpose, than what the cabalists observe upon this place, that, in the blessing of Gad, the whole alphabet is found, *because Moses our master* (saith Baal-Hatturim) was buried in his territory, who observed the whole law from *aleph* to *tau*, i. e. from the beginning to the end. (See Theodoric Hackspan. Cab. Judaica, n. 10.)

And he came.] He speaks of this as a thing already done, because he certainly foresaw they would perform their engagement.

With the heads of the people.] With the chief commanders of the rest of the tribes of Israel. Or, as the words may be translated more literally, *he came, the heads of the people; i. e.* the Gadites marched in the front before the children of Israel. For so was the agreement between Moses and them, as we read in Numb. xxxii. 17. that they should *go ready-armed before the children of Israel.* Of which engagement Joshua put them in mind when they were entering into Canaan, (Josh. i. 14.) and they stood to it, (ver. 16, 17.)

He executed the justice of the Lord.] Upon the seven nations of Canaan, whom God commanded them to extirpate.

And his judgments with Israel.] Going in the foremost of the Israelites to battle, till the whole country was subdued to them, (Numb. xxxii. 21, 22. 29. Josh. xxii. 1—3, &c.)

Ver. 22. *And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp.*] Courageous as a young lion; so Onkelos. Which was most eminently verified in Samson, who was of this tribe; and whom "the Spirit of the Lord began to move in the camp of Dan," (Judg. xiii. 25.)

He shall leap from Bashan.] The tribe of Dan had no inheritance near Bashan; but he compares them to the young lions of that place. For lions haunted mountains, (Cant. iv. 8.) and this mountain in particular was famous for them, and bred very fierce ones; which every one knows leap upon their prey, when they assault it, and fasten their nails and their teeth in it. (So Bochart observes many ancient authors describe them, par. i. Hierozoicon, lib. iii. cap. 2. p. 739.) And thus did the Danites on a sudden leap from one end of Judah to another, and seized on the city of Laish, near to the fountain of Jordan, calling it by the name of Dan, as we read Judg. xviii. 29.

Ver. 23. *And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favour.*] That is, with the favour of God, which is explained in the next words.

And full with the blessing of the Lord.] The word *full*, as Maimonides observes, signifies that which is most perfect and absolute in its kind, (More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 19.) Such was the country of Galilee, wherein this tribe had their possession, which was πίων τε πᾶσα, καὶ εὔβοτος, &c. (as Josephus speaks, lib. iii. de Bello Judaico, cap. 4.) *fat throughout in all its parts, and very fertile;* planted with all manner of trees, insomuch that it invited him to husbandry, who was averse to labour; and by that means was entirely inhabited, and had no void space in all the country, &c.

Possess thou the west and the south.] The same Josephus makes this tribe to have possessed the east and the north in the upper Galilee, (lib. v. Antiq. cap. 1. p. 142.) which is directly contrary to what Moses here saith; therefore Bochartus (in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 18.) judiciously expounds these words of Moses, not with respect to the whole land of Canaan, but to the Danites before-mentioned. For the portion of Naphtali extended from the south of the city called Dan, or Laish, to the sea of

Tiberias. And so the three Chaldee paraphrasts expound the Hebrew word *jam* (which we translate *west*) by the sea of Tiberias, or Gennesaret, which is the same; for the Hebrews call great lakes by the name of seas. And by this sea is not meant the Mediterranean, but the sea of Galilee, or Tiberias, or Gennesaret; for by all these names it is called, as Mr. Selden observes in his Mare Clausum, p. 21.

Ver. 24. *And of Asher he said, Let Asher be blessed with children.*] With a numerous and beautiful issue.

Let him be acceptable to his brethren.] All the rest of the Israelites shall court them, for their goodly aspect; or (as some rather think) he prophesies this tribe should win the favour and affection of others, by their affability and obliging behaviour; for which Jacob predicts they should be famous, (Gen. xliv. 21.)

And let him dip his foot in oil.] Be planted in a rich soil, full of olive-trees; which should make oil so plentiful, that they might not only wash their faces, but their feet in it. Onkelos translates, *He shall be nourished with the delights of kings.*

Ver. 25. *Thy shoes shall be iron and brass.*] Or, as in the margin, *Under thy feet shall be iron;* which hath made some think these minerals were digged out of Libanus, near to which lay the tribe of Asher; who, according to this exposition, trod upon a soil full of iron and brass. But no author, Bochartus saith, mentions any such thing as the brass of Libanus; and therefore some understand by these expressions, the barbarous people that dwelt in Galilee of the gentiles, who pressed the Asserites, as an iron shoe or fetters do the feet. But the Arabic here by *minal*, which we translate *shoe*, understands a *bolt* or *bar;* and renders this passage, *Thy bolts shall be iron and brass;* that is, as Onkelos expresses it, *They should be as strong as iron and brass.* And so Kimchi, expounding the words of Jonathan, (who interprets it, *Thy habitation shall be as strong*, &c.) saith the meaning is, *Their country should be as well fenced, as if it had been shut up in brazen or iron walls;* and R. Solomon to the same purpose. (See Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. vi. cap. 16.) But I have observed, that the same Bochartus acknowledges in his Phaleg. that Sarepta, (which the Hebrews call Zarephath, 1 Kings xvii. 9.) a city of Sidon, had its name from the brass and iron which were here melted; being in great plenty in that country, as the Hebrews gather from this blessing of the tribe of Asher (who were the inhabitants of those places), *Iron and brass are under thy shoe*, as he there interprets it, (lib. iv. cap. 34.) And so a very learned man, long before him, David Chytræus, expounds these words, and adds this observation; "Nam Sidon et Sarepta, quæ a metallis excoquendis nomen habet, in tribu Asser fuerunt." *For Sidon and Sarepta, which had its name from the melting of metals there, were in the tribe of Asher.*

And as thy days, so shall thy strength be.] The same Chytræus expounds it, *All the time of their life, they should retain the same vigour of body and mind.* Which seems to be the sense of Onkelos, *As the days of thy youth, so shall thy strength be.* And the Jerusalem Targum more expressly, *Such as they were in the days of their youth, such they should be in their old age.* Or simply, these words signify, that this tribe *should grow stronger and stronger;* which Hottinger seems to have aimed at, when he propounded this exposition in his Smegma Orientale, cap. 7. *As are thy days, so are thy riches and wealth.* Masius, quite contrary, upon Josh. xix. 31. interprets these words to signify, that they should have perpetual conflicts with the old inhabitants of the country. All which various interpretations proceed from the uncertain signification of the Hebrew word *daba*, which we render *strength.*

Ver. 26. *There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun.*] And now, having blessed every particular tribe, he concludes with this general demonstration of their happiness, that their God was not like the gods of other nations, but super-eminent in all perfections. And therefore they must needs be blessed (as the same Chytræus explains it), who had him propitious to them, as their father, their keeper, their defender, avenger, and saviour from all their enemies.

Who rideth upon the heavens in thy help.] Who commandeth in the heavens, as well as in the earth; and sends help and succour to thee from thence by thunder, lightning, and hailstones; as we read he did in many places, (Psal. xviii. 8, 9, &c. lxviii. 33—35.) "And as he that rides upon a horse, turns him this way, and that way, as he pleaseth, (they are the words of Maimonides in his More Nevochim, par. i. cap. 70.) so God by his power and pleasure commands the heavens; and is not fixed to them, as the soul of them (which was the foolish opinion of the Zabii), but, as the rider is far more honourable and excellent than the beast on which he sits, and of a quite different species from it; so God is represented by this metaphor (though but in a weak manner), as separate from the heavens, and of a more excellent nature, far transcending them, which are but the instruments he uses, to fulfil his will and pleasure."

And in his excellency on the sky.] Or, as it may be translated word for word, *and in his magnificence, the clouds.* From whence he sends such storms and tempests, as demonstrate his power.

Ver. 27. *The eternal God is thy refuge.*] Or, *dwelling-place;* to whom they might always betake themselves for safety, and never fail of it, (Psal. xc. 1.) In the Hebrew the words are, *The eternal God is the habitation*, or dwelling-place; from whence the Jews have framed this maxim, to preserve all men from having low thoughts of God, as if he was contained in any thing, *God is the place wherein the world dwells, and not the world the place where God dwells.* So Maimonides observes in the place abovenamed, out of Bereschith Rabba.

And underneath are the everlasting arms.] To support all those, with an unwearied power and care, who commit themselves unto him.

And he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee.] As he had carried them through the wilderness with an unwearied care, so he promises God would expel the Canaanites, and make room for them in their country.

And shall say, Destroy them.] Give the Israelites power, as well as authority, to root them out. For to *say* here is as much as to *do*, and therefore signifies *executing their destruction.*

Ver. 28. *Israel, thou shalt dwell in safety alone.*] Live in quiet and peace, separate from all other people: or, the Divine protection shall be sufficient for their security. This Rasi thinks was fulfilled in the days of Solomon: (1 Kings iv. 25.) but others of them think it is still to be fulfilled.

The fountain of Jacob.] That is, his posterity, who

flowed from him as a river from a fountain, (Isa. xlviii. 1. li. 1.) Cocceius thinks these words should be joined to the foregoing in this manner, *Israel shall dwell in safety alone by the fountain of Jacob,* that is, by God. But though this may have some countenance from the ancient interpreters (as I shall observe presently), yet most go the other way; there being the like expression in Psal. lxviii. 26. *Bless the Lord in the congregation, from the fountain of Israel:* or, as it is in the margin, *Ye that be of the fountain of Israel; i. e.* are derived from him as your Father.

Shall be upon a land of corn and wine: also his heavens shall drop down dew.] In a fruitful country, upon which the heavens shall drop down refreshing dews. Onkelos paraphrases the whole thus, *Israel shall dwell securely alone, according to the blessing wherewith Jacob's father blessed them, in a land of corn,* &c. And so the Jerusalem Targum (making more express mention of the word *fountain*), *Israel shall dwell by himself securely, from the fountain of benediction, wherewith Jacob blessed them, in a land producing wine and oil; and the heavens above are commanded to send dews and rain upon them.*

Ver. 29. *Happy art thou, O Israel.*] He was not able farther to express their happiness, and therefore breaks out into admiration of it; exciting them thereby to be deeply sensible of it, and affected with it.

Who is like unto thee.] Who had the Lord for their God, as he said before, ver. 26, &c. and iv. 7, 8.

A people saved by the Lord.] Who have been redeemed by his mighty power. So the Jerusalem Targum, *Whose redemption* (I suppose he meant out of Egypt) *is from the presence of the Lord.* Who had preserved them ever since, and would still protect them, as it here follows.

This R. Isaac (in Chissuk Emuna, par. i. cap. 18.) saith, signifies the spiritual blessings God bestowed on them. For true felicity (saith he) doth not consist in victory over enemies, and plenty of corn, or such-like things, of which he had spoken before in the foregoing verse, but in the salvation of the soul, of which no nation in the world was secure but the Jews; which made Moses (saith he) break out into these words, *O happy people saved by the Lord!* As much as to say, Among all people, is there any saved like to thee? This he saith, because Christians were wont to tell them, that they fixed their minds wholly on the corporal felicity, which their law promised them; which made him look about to find out all that he could draw to a higher sense. And he fixes so much upon these words, that he repeats it again, a little after, that the salvation here promised is everlasting. And yet his eyes could not be opened to see, that this salvation was to be brought to them by the Messiah: and that our Lord Jesus is he, whose gospel is as full of such promises as their law is of the promises of corn, and wine, and oil.

The shield of thy help.] To defend them from all the assaults of their enemies. He adds this, saith the same R. Isaac, to shew that they to whom he promises spiritual blessings, are not thereby put out of hope of temporal; for the people that are saved by the Lord have him also for their *shield* and their *sword,* as it here follows.

And who is the sword of thy excellency!] To cut their enemies in pieces, so that they should glory and boast in magnificent victories over them. Or, as Onkelos translates it, *From his presence are all the victories of thy valiant men.*

And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee.] Find themselves deceived in all their vain hopes of saving themselves or hurting the Israelites. Or, should be so afraid of them, that with feigned stories they should court their friendship, as the Gibeonites did. Or, more simply, should submit to them, though not heartily, yet out of fear, as this phrase is used, Psal. xviii. 44. lxvi. 3. and other places.

And thou shalt tread upon their high places.] Upon the necks of their kings, as both Onkelos and the Jerusalem Targum understand it, taking *bamoth* here for great men, in high stations. And thus Joshua did, as we read Josh. x. 21. But this word commonly signifies, either *strong holds,* or *places of idolatrous worship;* which neither their great men nor their gods themselves should be able to preserve from ruin.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND Moses went up.*] Having thus declared his affectionate concern for the happiness of every one of them, he took his leave of the elders and all the people, and went up whither God had commanded him, (xxxii. 49, &c.)

From the plains of Moab.] In which was their last station before they entered into Canaan, Numb. xxxiii. 48—50. where God delivered several commands to them, Numb. xxxv. 1. xxxvi. 13. and where Moses spake to them what we read in this book, Deut. i. 5.

Unto the mountain of Nebo.] Which was the highest part of the mountain of Abarim, as appears from Numb. xxvii. 12. compared with Deut. xxxii. 49. Near to which there was a city of the same name, (Numb. xxxii. 38. Isa. xv. 2.)

To the top of Pisgah.] Which was the very top of the mountain Nebo. (See Deut. iii. 27. Numb. xxi. 20.)

That is over against Jericho.] A famous city on the other side of Jordan. I see no ground to believe that the people of Israel accompanied him hither (as Josephus tells the story), with so many tears, that Moses wept also; and having beseeched them not to take his departure so heavily, he dismissed them together with the elders, and remained there alone.

And the Lord.] Or, as Jonathan hath it, *the Word of the Lord,* who had accompanied him with his blessed presence through the wilderness.

Shewed him all the land of Gilead unto Dan.] God had often promised him that he should see the good land promised to their fathers, though not be permitted to enter into it, (Numb. xxvi. 12. Deut. iii. 27.) And now fulfils his word, and gives him a full prospect of it; bidding him first look northwards, through the whole land of Gilead (which comprehends all that was given to the two tribes and half on this side Jordan, where they now were) to the land of Naphtali, which was in the upper Galilee, beyond the sea of Gennesaret, as far as to the utmost northern border, which was then called Laish, and afterwards Dan, (Josh. xix. 47. Judg. xviii. 28.) and in latter times Cesaræa Philippi.

The mention of Dan, which was not the name of this place till after that tribe had conquered Laish, in the time of the judges, shews, that this was not written at the same time with the rest of this book, no more than what we read

(ver. 5, 6. 10.) of his death and burial, &c. (unless we suppose Moses to have given an account of his own death and burial by the spirit of prophecy, which is not probable), but it is most likely by Samuel, who was a prophet, and wrote by Divine authority what he found in the records which were left by Joshua and others who succeeded him; who gave an account of Moses's leaving the world, and of all that was done after, till the end of the time of the judges.

Ver. 2. *And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh.*] Having seen the northern parts, he bade him turn his eyes towards the midland country, where Ephraim and Manasseh were situated.

And all the land of Judah.] Which lay southerly.

Unto the utmost sea.] By which some understand the Salt Sea, which lay on the south border of the land of Judah, (Numb. xxxiv. 3.) But then there will be no mention of the western part of Canaan, which lay upon the Mediterranean or Midland Sea, which is hereby meant.

Ver. 3. *And the south.*] And after he had seen the south, which the tribes of Judah and Simeon inhabited, he bade him take a view of the eastern parts of the country, as it here follows.

And the plain of the valley of Jericho.] All the region about Jordan, especially the lovely plain of Jericho; which is very much celebrated by other authors, and lay in the tribe of Benjamin.

The city of palm-trees.] Which is often mentioned in Scripture; sometimes without, and sometimes with the name of Jericho, (Judg. i. 16. iii. 13. 2 Chron. xxviii. 15.) which was so called, because a multitude of palm-trees grew about it, as Strabo (as well as Josephus) testifies in his Geograph. lib. xvi. p. 763. where he describes this plain, as Πεδίον κύκλῳ περιεχόμενον ὀρεινῇ τινι, &c. as encompassed about with mountains, after the manner of a theatre, abounding with palm-trees, and other garden-trees mixed with them, for the space of a hundred stadia. And there was also, he observes, Ὁ τοῦ βαλσάμου Παράδεισος, *the paradise of balsam;* which is a rare aromatic plant, like to the turpentine-tree, whose juice is of great virtue and value, &c. From which odoriferous plant growing here, some think this city had the name of Jericho, signifying sweet-smelling. So R. Judas, in the Gemara of Beracoth, where he mentions this tree as growing about Jericho, and thence derives its name from the Hebrew word *reach,* which signifies *a sweet smell.* This is more probable than the conjecture of D. Chytræus, who imagines Jericho to come from *Jerec,* which signifies the *moon;* and in their German language, he thinks, might be called Luneburgh.

Unto Zoar.] Which lay in the entrance of the Salt Sea.

Ver. 4. *And the Lord said unto him.*] After he had shewed him the land, the Word of the Lord (as the Jerusalem Targum hath it) spake these words to him which follow. And God having been wont to speak to Moses out of the cloud of glory, Josephus conceives that now he was encompassed with it, and from thence heard this voice; which the Jews fancy was so loud, that the people heard it into the camp. Thus at our Saviour's transfiguration upon the holy mount, a glorious cloud overshadowed him and his three apostles, who heard the voice say to them, *This is my beloved Son,* &c. The Samaritans, as Hottinger relates in his Smegma Orientale, cap. 8. p. 456. tell the story thus: That Joshua, Eleazar the priest, and all the elders accompanying him to the mount, fell into such a passion, when they were to take their leave, that they could not be parted from him. Whereupon the pillar of fire came down, which separated them from Moses, so that they saw him no more.

This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed.] Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 15. xv. 18, &c.

I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes.] Which the Lord strengthened, it is likely, with a greater vigour than usual, that he might take a larger prospect, than otherwise he could have done, of this country. Or, as some of the Jews understand it, he laid a map of it before his eyes, wherein every part of it was exactly described. But that might have been done in the plains of Moab, without going up into a mountain; therefore the other is more reasonable, that he strengthened his visive faculty with a greater power, to see the whole country in its length and breadth, &c. And therefore some of the rabbins have been so wise as to put both together, as J. Bened. Carpzovius observes out of several of them, (upon Schickard's Jus Regium, cap. 5. Theor. 16. p. 285.) who thus speak: "God shewed him the whole land, as in a garden plot, forty miles in breadth, and as many in length; and gave his eyes such a power of contemplating the whole land, from the beginning to the end, that he saw hills and dales, what was open, and what was enclosed, remote or nigh, at one view."

But thou shalt not go over thither.] This he had often said to him: and now mentions it, that he might die in a comfortable sense, that he had been as good as his word to him, and consequently carry this belief along with him into the other world, that he would make good the oath which he sware to their fathers, of bringing them into Canaan, and there fulfil all that he had foretold.

Ver. 5. *So Moses, the servant of the Lord.*] So God himself calls him after his death, in the next book, Josh. i. 2. 7. as the most eminent minister of his, that he had hitherto employed in Israel. But the observation of R. Bechai is not well founded, that he is not called *the servant of the Lord* till after he was dead, and then admitted unto the nearest familiarity with the Divine Majesty: for though these very words are not used, yet the Lord calls him *my servant Moses,* which is the same thing, Numb. xii. 7.

Died in the land of Moab.] For this country was still so called, because it anciently belonged to the Moabites, (see Numb. xxi. 26.) from whom Sihon had taken it, as Israel now had taken it from him: so that he really died in the land of Israel.

According to the word of the Lord.] The Jerusalem Targum expounds this very soberly, *According to the sentence of the decree of the Lord;* that is, as the Lord had determined and declared he should, xxxii. 49, 50. And so this phrase is commonly used in this very book, xvii. 6. 10, 11: as well as in other places of the Pentateuch, Numb. ix. 20. xiii. 3, &c. which will warrant this interpretation, That Moses did not die of any disease, nor was worn out with age, but merely because God, the supreme governor of all things, so ordered it. But some of the Jews, not satisfied with this, have far-fetched conceits concerning the death of Moses from these words: for because it is said he died, *al pi, at the mouth* (as the words are literally in the Hebrew) *of the Lord,* Maimonides himself saith, that their wise men

think (and he seems of their opinion), that it signifies the Lord drew his soul out of his body with a kiss. And thus died Aaron and Miriam, but none besides them. Of Aaron indeed it is expressly said he died, *al pi, of the Lord,* but it is not said of Miriam; and yet they will have her to have had the same favour; that is, they died, saith he, of too much love, from the pleasure they had in the thoughts of God; which apprehension of God, conjunct with the highest love to him, he thinks is called *kissing,* (Cant. i. 2.) "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth," (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 51.) But this is not the meaning of the phrase, though, no doubt, Moses departed this life in a most delectable sense and taste of the Divine love, having no unwillingness to die, nor being surprised with death; for he knew the time, and the place, and the manner of it: and as he did not die of any disease (as was said before), or of old age, or by external force, but only by the will and pleasure of God, who took his soul out of his body; so he did not part with it against his will, nor with any fear, but, with a placid mind and composed spirit, committed himself to God, in whose embraces (as we may speak) he expired: and this it is likely the ancient Jews meant, when they said, *his soul departed with a kiss.*

As to the time of his death, the Scripture doth not mention the year, the month, and the day; but the Jews commonly place it in the last month of the fortieth year after their coming out of Egypt, called Adar, and the seventh day of that month. Thus they say, in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 10. and in their Calendar which they now follow; and so Patricides, in Hottinger's Smegma Orientale, p. 457. But our great primate of Ireland in his Annals observes, that it agrees better with the following history, to place his death in the first day of that month; and Torniellus makes the same computation, that it must be either in the latter end of the eleventh month, or in the beginning of the twelfth.

Ver. 6. *And he buried him.*] This refers to the words foregoing; *viz.* the Lord, who commanded his angels to bury him. So Epiphanius, ἐνεταφίασαν οἱ Ἄγγελοι, &c. Hæres. ix. p. 28. and see p. 600. Though in the Scripture active words are very often used passively, and the meaning may be only that *he was buried,* yet there is this to be said for the other sense, that thereupon it is thought, that the contest arose between Michael the archangel and the devil (as St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Procopius Gazæus, and others take it), who would not have had him buried, but opposed it, that he might administer an occasion to the Jews to commit idolatry; though we never find that the Jews were given to the worship of relics, as our most learned Usher observes in his Annals. (See there.)

In a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-Peor.] This valley was in the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, (iv. 46.) who had taken it from the Moabites, as I noted before, and was now possessed by the Israelites. And Beth-Peor was a part of the possession of Reuben, (Josh. xiii. 20.) which was a place where the temple of Peor anciently stood; from whence it had its name: for this idol is not only called Baal-Peor, but simply Peor; (Josh. xxii. 17.) and as Beth-Baal is the temple of Baal, so Beth-Peor is the temple of Peor, as I. Gor. Vossius observes, de Orig. et Progr. Idol. lib. ii. cap. 7.

Now by all these circumstances of his burial, it appears how frivolous that opinion of the Jews is, mentioned in Jalkut, out of Siphri, that Moses did not really die, but was translated into heaven, where he stands and ministers before God; which conceit Josephus himself follows, lib. iv. Antiq. cap. 8. where he saith, that he having dismissed the elders, who went with him to Mount Abarim, and then conversing awhile with Eleazar and Joshua, while he embraced them, νέφους αἰφνίδιον ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ στάντος, *a cloud on a sudden coming upon him,* he was snatched out of their sight into a certain valley: which is not only beside, but contrary to the Scripture, which saith he died, and was buried in the valley. And yet some of the ancient fathers, particularly St. Ambrose and St. Hilary, have followed this opinion, that when Moses is said *to die,* it doth not signify the separation of his soul from his body, but his translation to a better life. See Sixtus Senensis, in his Bibliotheca, lib. v. Annot. 61. where he observes, this is not only against Scripture, but against the sense of almost all ecclesiastical writers.

But no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.] These words, *unto this day,* shew that this passage was not written by Moses, as Josephus and Philo imagine, who say he wrote this by the spirit of prophecy. (See ver. 1.) The reason why his body was concealed most think to have been, lest in future times it should become an object of their worship. So R. Levi ben Gersom: "Future generations, perhaps, might have made a god of him, because of the fame of his miracles: for do we not see how some of the Israelites erred, in the brazen serpent which Moses made?" And the heresy of the Melchisedekians shews this was no vain fear, (as Hermannus Witsius observes, lib. i. Miscell. cap. 17.) if Epiphanius may be believed, who saith, that in Arabia Petræa, διὰ τὰ θεσήμεια θεὸν νομίζουσι, &c. *they thought him to be God, because of his wonders he wrought,* and worshipped his image. What would they have done, if they had had his very body? which he did not desire to be carried into Canaan, and buried among his ancestors, as Joseph ordered concerning his bones: for he understood, it is likely, the mind of God to be, that, as he should not go over Jordan while he was alive, so his body should not be carried over when he was dead; which R. Chama thinks might have proved dangerous, because in the time of their distress (especially at the captivity of the land) the children of Israel might have been prone to run to his sepulchre, and beg him with tears to pray for them, whose prayers had been so prevalent for them in his lifetime: for such a piece of superstition, it seems, crept in among them in latter ages; of which see Wagenseil upon the Gemara of Sota, cap. 1. sect. 52. annot. 2.

But though no man knew where Moses was buried when this was written, yet some Maronite shepherds, we are told, have pretended lately (1655) to find out his tomb, with this inscription in Hebrew, *Moses, the servant of the Lord.* A great stir was made about it, as the same Witsius observes, out of Hornius's Historia Ecclesiastica. But a learned Jew, he saith, so confuted the story, shewing it was another Moses whose tomb they found, that the report presently vanished; and the learned Wagenseil makes some probable guesses, that it was the tomb of Moses Maimonides. (See Annot. 6. in Gemara Sota, cap. 1. sect. 51.) But Bartoloccius, in his late Bibliotheca Rabbinica, tom. iii. p. 928, &c. hath made it very probable,

that Hornius was imposed upon by somebody in this narration, there being no such authors known among the Jews as R. Jakum, or Jacomus ben Gad, who, he saith, confuted this tale.

Ver. 7. *And was a hundred and twenty years old when he died.*] A third part of which time, wanting one month, he had been employed in the government of Israel, as Josephus observes in the conclusion of his fourth book of Antiquities.

His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.] That is, he had all the vigour of youth remaining, there being not so much as a wrinkle in his cheeks: so some of the ancients interpret the last clause: others, he had not lost so much as a tooth out of his mouth. (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 45. p. 506.) Both Onkelos and the Jerusalem Targum refer it to the splendour of his countenance, which continued to the last. From hence it was that the heathen, who were not wholly unacquainted with this story, but had not a perfect knowledge of it, imagined that Moses was troubled to die, when he was so vigorous; for Trebellius Pollio, in the life of Claudius, saith, that the most learned mathematicians were wont to say, that no man lived beyond a hundred and twenty years: for though Moses lived a hundred and five-and-twenty years (so he mistakes), being "Dei, ut Judæorum libri loquantur, familiaris," *a man familiar with God, as the books of the Jews tell us:* yet he complaining that "juvenis interiret," *he died when he was young,* they say he was told by an uncertain God, that no man should ever live longer. This mistake arose from their misinterpretation of those words, Gen. vi. 3. "Yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years:" for Huetius well observes, that this *incertus Deus* was the true God, the creator of heaven and earth; whom St. Paul saith they called also *the unknown God,* Demonstr. Evang. propos. 4. cap. 1. n. 57. And I cannot but add, that this passage out of Trebellius was taken notice of above a hundred years ago, by a learned man I have often mentioned, David Chytræus, to shew that these sacred books were not unknown to the heathen, and that they had a reverence for them.

Ver. 8. *And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days.*] The time of mourning for the dead was longer or shorter, according to the dignity of the person. And the Jews have a tradition which distinguishes between the days of weeping and mourning; the former of which never exceeded a month, which was the time they wept for Moses; the latter never lasted more than a year, as they gather from the example of the greatest doctor they ever had, R. Judah, who composed the Mischna; for whom they mourned twelve months. (See Schickard, in his Jus Regium, cap. 6. Theor. 19. and upon Gen. l. 3. 10. Numb. xx. 29.)

So the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.] They lamented him completely thirty days, and no longer. By which it seems, that *weeping* and *mourning* (whatsoever difference was between them) were anciently of the same length, though the Jews, in the forenamed tradition, are pleased to make the one last much longer than the other.

Now by this, and what follows in the book of Joshua, we may certainly know the truth of what I said (on ver. 5.) concerning the day on which Moses died; for if we add unto these thirty days, which followed immediately upon it, the three days wherein the spies lay hid in the mountain, (Josh. ii. 22.) and allow three or four days more for their going and coming back, and then add the three days they lay by Jordan before they passed over, (Josh. iii. 2.) they make just a month and ten days, from the first day of the last month, when I supposed Moses died, unto the day they got safe over Jordan, which was the tenth day of the first month; whereas, if we reckon as the Jews do, that Moses died on the seventh day of the last month, it would have been the seventeenth day of the first month before they got over Jordan. I observe also, that, though the Talmudists generally make him to have died on the seventh day of Adar, yet there have been some who placed it on the first; for the Medrasch Rabbah, telling the story of Haman's casting lots to find the best time to do execution on the Jews, saith he pitched upon the month Adar, because it had been unlucky to the Jews, by the death of their master Moses therein. But he did not consider, saith that Medrasch, that *as Moses died on the first day of this month, so he was born on the same first day.*

Ver. 9. *And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom.*] To take the government upon him, and manage it prudently, as soon as Moses left them; which was necessary to be mentioned, that it might not be thought they wanted a head to conduct them, as their neighbours possibly might imagine, when the news came of Moses's death; for, as the Samaritans tell the story, (in Hottinger's Smegma Orientale, p. 462.) when they heard the lamentations which the whole congregation made for Moses, they began to rejoice, and gather their forces together to set upon the Israelites, as wanting a leader: but they soon found themselves mistaken, Joshua having taken the charge of them, and being endued with his spirit.

For Moses had laid his hands upon him.] Whereby he committed to him the supreme authority after his departure, and implored the Spirit of God to qualify him for it; for power to execute any office among the Jews was given by laying on of hands, whereby they were ordained and appointed to it. And this was a rite of prayer also, as many have observed, for the obtaining the gifts of the Spirit, which were necessary for the discharge of that office. And, though no words of prayer be mentioned, yet the very *laying on of hands* denotes it, as our learned Dr. Outram observes from this very place, and from 1 Tim. v. 22. lib. i. de Sacrif. cap. 15. n. 8. Of Moses's laying on hands upon Joshua, we read Numb. xxvii. 18, &c. And he was solemnly also, a little before Moses's death, presented unto God, by his own command, xxxi. 14, &c. of this book.

And the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses.] Obeyed him as their supreme governor, according to God's command, delivered to Moses, Numb. xxvii. 20. Deut. xxxi. 23. (See Josh. i. 16, 17, &c.)

Ver. 10. *And there rose not a prophet since in Israel like to Moses.*] This is a plain demonstration, that the promise God makes by Moses, that he would raise up "a Prophet like to him," (Deut. xviii. 15. 19, &c.) was not fulfilled either in Joshua or in Samuel (who it is likely wrote this chapter, as I said before), and the best of the Jews confess, shall not be fulfilled till Messiah come. Thus the author of Sephir Ikkarim, lib. iii. cap. 20. "It cannot be, but

that a prophet shall at last arise like to Moses, or greater than he; for the king Messiah shall be as great or greater: therefore these words are not to be expounded, as if there should never be such a prophet, but that in all the time of the following prophets, till the cessation of prophecy, none should arise like to Moses. But after that, there shall be one like him, or rather greater than he."

Whom the Lord knew face to face.] Or, as De Dieu thinks it should be translated, *Who knew the Lord face to face.* This was one pre-eminence of Moses above all the prophets, that he conversed more familiarly with God than any of them did. See Numb. xii. 8. which place explains this: for *to know him face to face,* was to speak familiarly to God, and to hear God speaking in like manner unto him. And so the Jerusalem Targum expounds these words; only instead of *the Lord,* he saith, *Who knew the Word of the Lord talking with him,* and delivering to him most excellent laws, for the good government of his people. In which laws he still lives, they all remaining upon record to this day, when the laws of all the famous lawgivers, whom the gentiles honoured as gods, are obliterated: but it must be observed, that in this, wherein Moses excelled all the prophets, our blessed Saviour far transcended him: for he was "in the bosom of the Father," (John i. 18.) and spake "what he saw and heard," &c. (Josh. iii. 11. 32.)

Ver. 11. *In all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do.*] The Jerusalem Targum hath it, *Which the Word of the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land.* (See iv. 34. vi. 22. vii. 19.) In these signs and wonders Moses excelled all the prophets, doing more miracles than all that succeeded him, as Maimonides observes, More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 35. But our blessed Saviour excelled him in this, as well as them; doing more wonders than all the prophets put together had done from the beginning of the world, and far greater also than theirs, (John xxi. *ult.*)

Ver. 12. *And in all that mighty hand, and in all that great terror which Moses shewed.*] As the former verse relates to what he did in Egypt, so this hath respect unto their passing through the Red Sea, and to all that befel them in the wilderness, both at the giving of the law, and afterward till this time: so the Jerusalem Targum expounds these words, *In all that strong hand, and in all those great visions, which Moses managed.* And Onkelos to the same purpose.

In the sight of all Israel.] In the place forenamed Maimonides insists much upon this, that Moses wrought all his miracles publicly, the whole congregation being witnesses of them. And so our Saviour commonly wrought his (till they sought to kill him) in their synagogues, at their public feasts, when there was the greatest concourse of the people of Israel: so that in this he was a prophet "like unto Moses," though infinitely superior; which some of the old Jews could not but discern (as I observed upon chap. xviii.) when upon these words of Isa. lii. 13. "He shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high," they thus gloss in Tanchuma, which is an ancient book among them, "This is the king Messias who shall be exalted above Abraham, extolled above Moses, and be very high above the angels of the ministry." Upon which Conradus Pellicanus thus glosses, and concludes his commentary, as I shall do mine, with these words: "What it is to be above the angels, let the Jews explain: we can understand nothing by it, but the very Word of God, which was in the beginning with God, and was God, by whom all things were made, and without him nothing was made, *viz.* the Lord God of hosts: to whom, in perfect unity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory for ever." *Amen.*

Thus ends the Pentateuch, which, as our great primate of Ireland computes, contains the history of two thousand five hundred and fifty-two years and a half, from the beginning of the world to the death of Moses.

THE

BOOK OF JOSHUA.

THIS title doth not necessarily signify that this book was written by JOSHUA, as the five foregoing were by Moses, but only that it contains the acts done by Joshua. Yet there wants not arguments to prove that Joshua was the author of this book: for though Grotius and many other modern writers, with some of the ancients, think they find reasons in the book itself against this opinion; yet the ancient Talmudists, and several of the latter, ascribe it to him, being principally induced thereunto by those words in the last chapter of this book, ver. 26. which I cannot say are an evident proof of it (for those words may relate only to the covenant mentioned in that chapter); but thus they say expressly in Bava-bathra, cap. 1. "Joshua wrote his own book, and the eight last verses of the law;" and then concerning the five last verses of this book, they write after this manner in the same place; "Eleazar wrote the twenty-ninth verse, &c. of the twenty-fourth chapter, as Phineas did ver. 33." And there are men of excellent learning who have undertaken to answer all that can be objected unto this, (particularly Daniel Huetius, in his Demonstratio Evang. propos. 4.) Which objections I shall consider in their proper places, where they seem to arise in this book.

Which the Jews reckon among the first prophets (as they call them), though it contain only a history of what passed till the death of Joshua; which, in all likelihood, he would not neglect to write himself, as Moses did what passed in his time, that every tribe and every family might have an

unquestionable title to their inheritance under his own hand, who had by God's order made a division of the land; and that all posterity might see the promises made unto them by Moses were so punctually fulfilled, that there failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken, but all came to pass; as he observes xxi. 45. and that in a short time: for this book contains the history of the Israelites, from the death of Moses to the death of Joshua; that is, as some compute, for the space of seventeen years, or rather near twenty-seven. (See upon xiv. 10.)

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW, after the death of Moses.*] Thus those books are wont to begin, whose argument relates to the book beforegoing. As the book of Judges is in this manner connected with this of Joshua, and the book of Ruth with that of Judges; and the LXX. make such a preface to join the book of Lamentations with the prophecy of Jeremiah.

After the death of Moses.] I suppose immediately after the days of mourning for him were ended, (Deut. xxxiv. 8.)

The servant of the Lord.] See Deut. xxxiv. 5.

It came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun.] Out of the sanctuary, it is most likely, from whence he had spoken to him a little before Moses's death, and made him a promise of what he orders him now to accomplish, (Deut. xxxi. 14. 23.) and where Eleazar was appointed long before to ask counsel for him, when there was great occasion, (Numb. xxvii. 21.)

Moses's minister.] Who had attended upon Moses from the beginning, in his highest employment, (Exod. xxiv. 13. Deut. i. 38.)

Ver. 2. *Moses my servant is dead.*] He hath finished his work, and can do me no farther service.

Now therefore arise.] Put an end therefore unto your mourning for him, and go about the business which he hath left thee to perform.

Go over this Jordan.] Within sight of which they lay encamped.

Thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.] As he promised when he changed his name from Oshea into Joshua, (Numb. xiii. 16. Deut. i. 38. Deut. iii. 28.)

Ver. 3. *Every place.*] Within the limits mentioned in the next verse.

That the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given you, as I said unto Moses.] He would not have them doubt of what Moses said from him (Deut. xi. 24.) though he were dead.

Ver. 4. *From the wilderness.*] This was the bounds of the country on the south.

And this Lebanon.] Which was the bounds on the north. And Joshua seems now to have been in sight of it; to which the Divine Majesty directed his observation, as the most eminent mountain in those parts of the world.

Even unto the great river, the river Euphrates.] Which was the eastern bounds, and called by other authors the *great river*, as I have observed on Deut. i. 7.

All the land of the Hittites.] Who were a very powerful people in the country, dwelling, together with the Amorites, in the mountainous parts of it; (Numb. xiii. 29.) some of which were of the race of the giants, and are therefore particularly mentioned, to shew that the most terrible people should not be able to stand before Joshua; but he should either destroy them, or expel them, and make them flee their country, as these Hittites did; of whom we read, and of their kings, 2 Kings vii. 6.

Unto the great sea.] The Mediterranean, which was the western border, as it here follows.

Towards the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.] See upon Deut. xi. 24. and other places.

Ver. 5. *There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life.*] Deut. vii. 24.

As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.] To subdue all the people of Canaan before him; as he did the Egyptians, the two kings of the Amorites, and the Midianites before Moses: to counsel also, and advise him in all difficulties, as he had done Moses.

I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.] See upon Deut. xxxi. 6. 8. On which promise they relied in future times, (1 Kings viii. 57.)

Ver. 6. *Be strong, and of a good courage.*] This charge he had given him before the death of Moses; (Deut. xxxi. 23.) and David gave the same to Solomon, (1 Chron. xxviii. 20.)

For unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land which I sware unto their fathers to give them.] He had promised him, in the place beforenamed, that he *should bring them into the land*, &c. and here now adds, that he should settle them in the possession of it, by assigning every one their portion in it; which he did by such a Divine direction, as silenced all disputes about it.

Ver. 7. *Only be thou strong, and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee.*] It requires the greatest courage and resolution, especially in a governor, to be truly pious and religious, by observing the laws himself, and seeing them observed by others.

Turn not from it to the right hand or to the left.] By adding to it, or taking away from it, (Deut. xii. *ult.*) or, more simply, no way deviate from it; for it is a metaphor from men in a journey, who go straight forward in the plain highway, and turn not aside into by-paths, which lead they know not whither.

That thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.] Or *do wisely*, as it is in the margin; for it is the greatest policy to be truly religious.

Ver. 8. *This book of the law.*] The original of which was preserved in the sanctuary; from whence God now spake to him, (Deut. xxxi. 26.)

Shall not depart out of thy mouth.] He was to read in it continually, that he might instruct others, and be thereby an example to all future governors and kings, according to the law, (Deut. xvii. 18, 19.) By which it is evident, that Joshua had a copy of the law; which was then written and extant in his time.

But thou shalt meditate therein day and night.] His other weighty employments were not to hinder him from pondering, as well as reading, the law of God; because it was to be his rule in all his private transactions and public administrations.

That thou mayest observe to do according to all that is

written therein.] Which was not possible, without the serious and attentive consideration beforementioned.

For then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.] Or *do wisely*. Prudence and prosperity go together; but no prudence comparable to the strict observance of the laws of God, upon which the felicity of kingdoms and states depends.

Ver. 9. *Have not I commanded thee? Be strong, and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*] He confirms him in the resolution he had put into him, (ver. 6.) by two arguments, the Divine vocation, and the Divine presence with him. (See Deut. i. 29, 30. xxxi. 6—8.) The latter of which the Targum thus expresseth, *For the Word of the Lord thy God shall be for thy help, in every place where thou goest.* (See ver. 14.)

Ver. 10. *Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying.*] I have often observed, that as *schophetim* were judges, who heard causes in their courts, and pronounced sentence; so *schoterim* were inferior officers belonging to the court, who summoned people to attend, and executed the sentence: for after Moses had mentioned (Deut. i. 15.) the chief of their tribes, captains over thousands, and hundreds, and fifties, and tens, he at last mentions these officers among their tribes; who were employed, it appears by this place, in the *camp*, as well as in the *courts* of justice.

Ver. 11. *Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals.*] They were to make proclamation not only in all the four camps of Israel, but in the several tribes who were under those standards, to provide themselves with such victuals as the country of Sihon and Og, which they had lately conquered, afforded. For being, after three days, (iii. 1.) to remove very early in the morning, perhaps they might not have had time to gather manna sufficient, and to prepare it before they began their march.

For within three days.] See iii. 1, 2.

Ye shall pass over this Jordan.] Which was not so far from Shittim, where they now lay, but they could see it.

And go to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it.] He constantly remembers them of this donation from God; both to strengthen their faith, and to excite their thankfulness. "For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their arm save them; but his right hand, &c. because he had a favour to them," as the Psalmist speaks, xliv. 3.

Ver. 12. *And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying.*] Here he begins to do according to the command of Moses, as God before directed him, ver. 7, 8. For Moses had given this charge to the Reubenites, &c. when he gave them their possession on this side Jordan, Numb. xxxii. 20, 21, &c. and put them in mind of it again, Deut. iii. 18, &c.

Ver. 13. *Remember the word which Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you, saying.*] It is very observable, how gently and not imperiously Joshua exercises his authority, at his first entrance upon his office. For he only puts them in mind of what Moses required from them, and leaves them to reflect upon the promise they made to him.

The Lord your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land.] That is, actually bestowed upon them a country to settle in. For here their wives, and children, and cattle remained (with a sufficient number of persons to look after them), when they marched into Canaan, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 14. *Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed.*] March in the front of them, to shew their forwardness to bring them into the same happy condition with themselves.

All the mighty men of valour to help them.] Such as Joshua picked out; for it is evident they did not all go over, but only forty thousand of them, (iv. 13.) The rest, though fit for war, were left to defend their wives, children, and flocks, while those mighty men of valour went to *help* their brethren.

Ver. 15. *Until the Lord have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you.*] A settled possession of the land of Canaan, as they had of the land of the two kings of the Amorites.

And they also have possessed the land which the Lord your God giveth them.] He would have them look upon the conquest of the land as certain, because God had made a grant of it to their brethren.

Then ye shall return to the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses, the Lord's servant, gave you on this side Jordan, towards the sun-rising.] According to the agreement which Moses had made with them, (Numb. xxxiii. 20—22.)

Ver. 16. *And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us we will go.*] It is likely, this was the answer not only of the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites, but of all the rest of the tribes; before whom Joshua put these two tribes and a half in mind of their duty: which they all engage to perform exactly; these words containing a full recognition of Joshua's authority, and their absolute submission to it.

Ver. 17. *According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee.*] Here they acknowledge his authority to be equal to that of Moses, who was undoubtedly set over them by God, as they now own Joshua to be.

Only the Lord thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.] These words are not a restriction of their obedience, which did not depend upon his successes, but a solemn prayer to God, of whom they desired no other governor than Joshua, that he would make him as victorious as Moses was over all their enemies. Therefore, some translate the words, not *only*, but *may the Lord thy God*, &c. or, *Since the Lord thy God hath promised to be with thee.* The Targum paraphrases these words as he did ver. 9. *Only let the Word of the Lord thy God be thy helper, as he was to Moses.*

Ver. 18. *Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death.*] This seems to be the voice of all the people, and of their elders, or a decree made by the elders, as the Jews understand it: who, looking upon Joshua to be a king, as Moses was, extend this to all the kings of Israel in following times. So Guil. Schickard observes out of Maimonides in his Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 4. Theor. 14. p. 101. But it should rather be said, that Joshua was a king and a prophet as

Moses was; and the law, as Rasi observes, ordered him to be put to death that transgressed the orders of Moses, and of a prophet.

Only be strong, and of a good courage.] He had the greater reason to be courageous, since they resolved, as one man, to stand by him, and never to disobey him. And therefore the word *rak*, which we translate *only*, should rather be translated *therefore*, as it plainly signifies, xiii. 6. where, speaking of the land that remained to be possessed, God promises to drive out the inhabitants, and *therefore* bids Joshua to divide it to the Israelites for an inheritance.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND Joshua the son of Nun sent.*] Or *had sent*, before the directions given to the officers, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, ver. 10, 11. which best agrees with the twenty-second verse of this chapter, and the rest of the story.

Out of Shittim.] Which was in the plains of Moab, where Israel now lay, (Deut. xxxiv. 1.) called Abel-Shittim, Numb. xxxiii. 49.

Two men.] Which were sufficient for the business they went about.

To spy secretly.] So that none were privy to it among the Israelites but Joshua; who, it is probable, did not send them without an order from God, who intended to dispose things so, that they should bring back to him a great encouragement to his faith.

Saying, Go view the land.] Not the whole country of Canaan, but only that part of it which lay about Jericho, as it here follows: whose fortifications they were to observe, and the approaches to it, with the strength that was in it.

And they went.] Over the fords of Jordan, I suppose, mentioned ver. 7.

And came into a harlot's house, called Rahab.] Who kept a public house, or an inn, to entertain strangers: by going into which, they thought they would be less suspected of any design. The word *zonah*, which is commonly translated a *harlot*, the Chaldee paraphrase renders *pundakitha*; which is plainly the Greek word Πανδοχία, signifying she kept a house of public reception. And so St. Chrysostom calls this woman, in his second sermon of repentance, πανδοχεύτριαν· for there is no doubt she kept a public house. But such persons, in those days, made their bodies as public as their houses; and, therefore, she is constantly called Rahab the harlot by the ancients; and even by two apostles, who call her πόρνη, (Heb. xi. 21. James ii. 25.) For so she had been, though now, it is probable, converted by the faith which was wrought in her. Which was so eminent, that she was not only admitted into the society of God's people, but married into a noble family of the tribe of Judah, from whom Christ sprung, (Matt. i. 5.) and is propounded as an example of lively faith unto all Christians, (Heb. xi. 31. James ii. 25.)

And lodged there.] Took up their lodging in her house, by a Divine direction, as appeared afterward.

Ver. 2. *And it was told the king of Jericho.*] Who was not negligent, we may well think, to set a watch to observe who came in and went out of the city.

Saying, Behold, there came men in hither to-night.] In the evening, which was the most proper time to come into the city undiscovered, because then the people, whose business lay out of the city, were generally going home to their own houses.

Of the children of Israel.] As they judged by their habit, or language, or aspect.

To search out the country.] For they could not think they came for any other end.

Ver. 3. *And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which entered into thy house: for they be come to search out all the country.*] He sent some officers with a warrant to apprehend them, and to require her to deliver them up into their hands, as enemies of their country.

Ver. 4. *And the woman took the two men, and hid them.*] Or rather *had hidden* them before the officers came; having heard, it is likely, a rumour that they were discovered, and search would be made for them.

And said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were.] She could not deny that she received such strange guests, but would not own that she knew from what country they came; nor was it her business to make such inquiry, her house being open unto all.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, about the time of shutting of the gate.*] The gate of the city, next to her house, which was wont to be shut (as they are now in all well-governed cities) at a certain hour.

When it was dark.] And consequently few or none stirring in the streets.

The men went out; whither they went I wot not.] She would have them think they went both out of the house and out of the city; though she knew not which way they went, it being dark.

Pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.] Yet it was so little a while since they went out, that she would have them believe they could not, if they made haste, but overtake them before they got over Jordan. For if they were Israelites, it might be certainly concluded they went that way. Nobody can say that Rahab did not tell an untruth; but this may be said in her excuse: that it is no wonder if she thought it lawful, if not necessary, so to do, for the saving of the life of innocent men. Since several great philosophers have been of that opinion, and some of the ancient fathers of the church; particularly St. Austin confesses it to be a very difficult question, cap. xv. ad Consentinum: and Arius Montanus upon this very place, makes it one's duty to elude those who we think intend to do mischief to others: which he pretends to justify by many examples, in a discourse concerning Men's true and certain Duties. But that is too bold an undertaking; since the fathers before St. Austin, and all the Jews, condemn this practice.

Ver. 6. *But she brought them up*, &c.] Or rather, *she had brought them up to the roof of the house.* Which was made flat, so that men might lie or walk upon it in those countries. (See Deut. xxii. 8.)

And hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof.] Covered them all over with the stalks of flax, which I suppose were newly cut, and laid upon the roof of the house to be dried by the sun, till they were fit to be peeled. Or, as some think, these were stalks of flax cut the year before; and made use of now to shew

that nobody was gone upon the roof, where she laid them.

Ver. 7. *And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan, unto the fords.*] Where Jordan was so shallow that men might wade, or so narrow that they might soon swim over it. There the pursuers lay three days, waiting to catch them in their return.

And as soon as they which pursued them were gone out, they shut the gate.] Which, being opened to let the pursuers out, was immediately shut again; that if the spies lurked in the city, they might not escape in the dark; and that no other person might enter, who they might possibly think lay watching an opportunity to get in.

Ver. 8. *And, before they were laid down.*] To compose themselves to sleep; which after their journey they might be glad to take any where.

She came up unto them upon the roof.] To bring them down, it is likely, to a more commodious lodging.

Ver. 9. *And she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land.*] Wonder not that I have taken such care of your preservation; for I believe in the Lord as you do, and know that he hath bestowed this country upon you for your possession.

And that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.] She was the more confident of their success; because she observed the people of the land were struck with such a dread of them, as not to be able to defend their country against them. (See Deut. xi. 25.)

Ver. 10. *For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when you came out of Egypt.*] And there overthrew Pharaoh and his host, after he had smitten him and his country with divers miraculous plagues. The report of which was come to them, as well as their passing through the sea: which, though it was forty years ago, was remembered with astonishment.

And what you did unto the two kings of the Amorites that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.] This was a thing of fresh memory, and could not but strike them with consternation; these two kings being very potent; and their near neighbours and allies. For they were part of the Amorites, who dwelt in the mountainous parts of this country; as was before observed.

Ver. 11. *And as soon as we heard these things.*] As Moses prophesied they would, (Exod. xv. 14, 15.)

Our hearts did melt.] The same phrase in Deut. i. 28. where we translate it *discouraged;* and so it is here explained in the next words.

Neither did there remain any more courage in any man because of you.] The most valiant among them were utterly disheartened.

For the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in the earth beneath.] This is a plain confession of the true God, the creator of heaven and earth; wherein he rules and governs all things according to his pleasure. This is her faith celebrated by the apostle to the Hebrews, which moved her to entertain the spies, and to preserve them with the danger of her own life, if she had been discovered.

Ver. 12. *Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord.*] The Targum hath it, *by the Word of the Lord.* An oath was the greatest security that could be desired for the performance of what they promised. For all nations expected grievous punishments would fall upon perjured persons; which they that feared the Lord, the true God, above all men dreaded. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 11. n. 4.)

Since I have shewed you kindness.] As they could not but acknowledge.

That ye will also shew kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token.] She asked two things of them; first, that she and her whole family might be preserved, as she had preserved them; and then, that they would give her such a token, as should not fail her; but upon the sight of it, the Israelites should abstain from doing them any hurt.

Ver. 13. *And that you will save alive my father and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters.*] This is a particular explication of what she meant by *her father's house,* in the foregoing verse; and shews that she had no husband, nor children.

And all they have, &c.] All her *kindred,* as we translate it, vi. 23. Or the children of her brethren and sisters: or, perhaps, all their cattle, that they could bring with them into her house.

Ver. 14. *And the men answered her, Our life for yours.*] They sware to her (it appears from ver. 17.) and wished they might perish, if they did not preserve her and her family. For they did not doubt but Joshua would ratify what they promised; though without his authority, for the public good and safety.

If ye utter not.] Do not divulge or declare to any one.

This our business.] In the Hebrew, *this our word; i. e.* this agreement they had made with her. Lest others should shelter themselves under her roof, or use that token they intended to give her; and thereby secure themselves from destruction. In this they shewed great prudence and management; taking care that their gratitude might not prove an obstruction to the public justice.

And it shall be, when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.] Upon this condition, they promise, when they had taken Jericho, (for that is here meant by *the land,* ver. 1.) they would keep their word faithfully with her, and be as kind to her as she had been to them.

Ver. 15. *Then she let them down by a cord, through the window.*] Which in those countries were large, as appears by the story of Jezebel, whom her eunuchs threw down out of a window, 2 Kings ix. 30. 33.

For her house was upon the town-wall.] Both the time (which was in the night) and the place were very commodious to contrive their escape; because her house was adjoining to the wall of the city.

And she dwelt upon the wall.] I take the meaning to be, that the apartment she reserved for herself was next to the wall, and built upon it; the rest of her house towards the street being kept for strangers. This gave her the fair opportunity, without any noise, to let them down.

Ver. 16. *And she said unto them, Get ye to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you.*] This was prudent advice, not to go towards Jordan presently, but first to one of the mountains, wherewith the plain of Jericho was surrounded, as Josephus tells us: (lib. i. de Bello Judaico, cap. 12, 13. and lib. v. cap. 4.) and the Scripture itself informs us as much, 2 Kings ii. 15, 16.

And hide yourselves there.] In some of the caves, which were frequent in the mountains.

Three days.] For so long she thought the pursuers might stay about Jordan, waiting for their return.

Until the pursuers be returned; and afterward may ye go your way.] Which she thought probably would be within that time; and perhaps she understood their orders were to stay no longer.

Ver. 17. *And the men said unto her.*] As she was about to let them down; for it was not safe to have this discourse together after they were down; which might have been overheard by the watch.

We will be blameless of this thy oath which thou hast made us to swear.] The meaning is, that it should not be their fault if their oath was not kept; and therefore they now name the token, upon which the preservation of her family should depend; with some other conditions that were reasonable to be observed. Which they mention, to shew how studious they were not to be guilty of violating their oath.

Ver. 18. *Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread.*] It is called a *cord* before, ver. 15. and no doubt consisted of so many threads twisted together, as made it a line strong enough to hold the weight of a man's body, and not break. But there are those who doubt whether the Hebrew word *scheni* signify any thing of the colour, but only *a twined* or *twisted* cord, *funiculum conduplicatum*, or *contortum*; from *shanah* to double. (See Gataker in his Miscellanea, cap. 40.)

In the window which thou hast let us down by.] Or rather, *dost let us down by.* For she was about to do it, but had not done it, when they had this discourse with her. Some refer this to the *window* at which she let them out; but it is most natural to refer it to the *line.* For by that they were let down; and it was to remain in the window, that the Israelites might see it, as the token that that was the house which was to be saved. Procopius Gazæus compares this scarlet line with the blood which Moses ordered to be struck upon the side-posts of their doors, which was a token they should be preserved, (Exod. xii. 7. 13.)

And thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household home to thee.] That is, all their children; and perhaps near relations, such as uncles, aunts, and cousins; as we seem to understand it, vi. 23. And one cannot but think, that great-grandfathers and grandmothers, if she had any alive, were comprehended in these words.

Ver. 19. *And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the door of thy house into the street, his blood shall be on his head, and we will be guiltless.*] They would be bound to preserve none but those who kept in the house. Which was but reasonable, for they did not know how to distinguish them from others, if they were in the street.

And whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him.] They would as soon die themselves, as let any of those perish. An emblem of our safety and salvation, by continuing constantly in the church in faith and holiness. For her house was a very fit figure of the church, especially of the gentiles; who, like her, had gone a whoring after idols, but were converted to serve the living God.

Ver. 20. *And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of the oath which thou hast made us to swear.*] They repeat the condition mentioned ver. 14. as of great importance. (See there.)

Ver. 21. *And she said, According to your word, so be it.*] She agreed to all the conditions they imposed upon her.

And she sent them away, and they departed.] After this mutual agreement, confirmed with an oath.

And she bound the scarlet line in the window.] Immediately, as some think; that the spies might know where to look for it hereafter, and that she might have always before her eyes such a comfortable pledge of her safety. It was more prudent also, as Arius Montanus observes, to do it now, than when the Israelites came to besiege the place; for that novelty might have made the people of Jericho suspect some correspondence.

Ver. 22. *And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned.*] Being furnished, it is likely, with sufficient provision by Rahab. Many think they stayed there but one whole day, and part of other two, which, according to the style of the Scripture, may be called three days: but their only reason for it is to make these three days, and those mentioned in the first chapter, ver. 11. to be the same, which is not probable.

And the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, &c.] Which led to the fords of Jordan. This expresses their diligence, though it wanted success; and, perhaps, there were more ways than one that led thither; in all which they placed themselves, or some other persons, to watch for them.

Ver. 23. *So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain.*] From whence, perhaps, they could see when the pursuers came back; or they had some intelligence of their return; or, as I said before, that they had commission only to search for them three days.

And passed over.] The river Jordan.

And came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things that befel them.] Since they left him. This shews that Joshua sent them so privately, that it was unknown to the people, (as I expounded, ver. 1.) for they give him alone an account of what had happened unto them. (See vi. 17.)

Ver. 24. *And they said unto Joshua, Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land: for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.*] This was part of what they had learned from Rahab, (ver. 9, &c.) who had strengthened their faith by her own.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AND Joshua rose early in the morning.*] The next morning after he had commanded the officers to warn the host to prepare for their removal, (chap. i. 10, 11.)

And they removed from Shittim.] Where they had lain now above two months; for they came hither on the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year after they came out of Egypt. (See Deut. i. 3.)

And came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel.] Which river, as Josephus tells us, was sixty *stadia* from Shittim; but it is so uncertain what his *stadia* or *furlongs*

were, that one can only guess how many of our miles threescore of them made. Most think about seven.

And lodged there before they passed over.] The Hebrew word *jaliun* doth not necessarily signify that they lodged there only one night, for it often denotes a longer time of abode; and, therefore, the Vulgar Latin translates it *morati sunt, they stayed there; viz.* three days, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass, after three days, that the officers went through the host.*] In the end of the three days beforementioned, (chap. i. 10, 11.) he sent the same officers there mentioned to make a new proclamation; for it seems to me most reasonable to take all this story in the order wherein it is related, only supposing the spies to have been sent before the first proclamation made by the officers (as I observed, ii. 1. the words may be translated). And thus our great primate of Ireland understands it: After Joshua was confirmed in his office, (chap. i. ver. 1, 2, &c.) he sent out the spies, and then commanding the people to provide themselves victuals, he marched from Shittim to Jordan; and the third day (after that command to provide themselves victuals) he gave a new command to prepare themselves to pass over Jordan the next day.

Ver. 3. *And they commanded the people.*] By order from Joshua, and in his name and authority.

Saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it.] "Hitherto (saith Kimchi, upon this place) the Levites (that is, the children of Kohath) carried the ark; but now the priests are appointed to that office, for the greater sanctification or honour of it, and because of the miracle which was to be wrought before it. Our rabbins say, that the priests carried it thus three times; now in this place, and when they compassed Jericho, and when Zadok and Abiathar brought it back to Jerusalem, when David fled from Absalom," (2 Sam. xv. 29.) Unto which he adds a fourth, when it was brought into the temple which Solomon built; for the Levites were not permitted to go into the sanctuary, much less into the most holy place, into which it was carried by the priests, (1 Kings viii. 6.)

Then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.] By this it appears the ark was carried in the front of them; whereas usually it was ordered to be carried in the middle of their camps, as we read Numb. ii. 17. But at their first removal from Mount Sinai, which was a time extraordinary, it marched before them for three days, (Numb. x. 33.) and so it did now (and at no other time), when they were to enter into Canaan, for a special reason also, as I shall observe on the next verse. Concerning the phrase *the priests the Levites*, see Deut. xvii. 9.

Ver. 4. *Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits.*] This is a demonstration that it was not usual for the ark to go before the whole army; for if it had, there would have been no need to instruct them at what distance they should keep from it, which would have been constantly observed.

By measure.] It is likely they measured the distance by a line, at which the people were at first set; and then walking in equal paces with the priests, kept at the same distance, though, perhaps, not precisely; for they might chance to move a pace or two faster, or take larger paces; and therefore he saith *about* two thousand cubits.

That ye may know the way by which ye must go.] There was the very same reason for the ark's going before them now, that there was when they came from Mount Sinai; for then it was *to search out a resting-place for them; i. e.* to shew them where they should rest; and now it was to lead them in the way they were to march, unto their long-expected settlement in the promised land. If it had not been for this, it would have been carried in its usual place; but the pillar of the cloud, which hitherto conducted them, having now left them, as R. Solomon observes, this supplied its place, and went before them, as that had been wont to do.

For ye have not passed this way heretofore.] They were to be led in an untrodden path, which the power of God (of whose presence with them the ark was the symbol) made for them.

Ver. 5. *And Joshua said unto the people.*] The night before they went over Jordan, as appears by the latter part of the verse; and, perhaps, he spake this himself, at the head of every one of their tribes, it being of great importance.

Sanctify yourselves.] Other places tell us what was their usual sanctification. (See Exod. xix. 10, 11. Numb. xi. 18.) But, besides the legal purifications, one cannot but think that he intended they should dispose their minds by holy meditations and prayer to God to receive his benefits, and to be more sensible of them when they were bestowed on them.

For to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you.] Which he would have them be in a condition to observe, and to lay to heart; and, in order thereunto, prepare themselves by serious thoughts of God, and of his providence, as well as by washing their bodies, and abstaining from their wives, which were a part of the sanctification here intended.

Ver. 6. *And Joshua spake unto the priests.*] The next morning.

Saying, Take up the ark of the covenant.] Upon their shoulders, for so it was to be carried, (Numb. vii. 9.)

And pass over before the people.] This precept had been unnecessary, if they had been wont to carry it before the people.

And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.] After Joshua had spoken what follows, ver. 7, 8, &c. But it is mentioned now to shew the readiness of the priests, as well as of the people, to obey the commands of Joshua; whom they looked upon as a prophet, as Moses was, who had power to give extraordinary orders from God. Such were these for the priests to carry the ark, and to march with it before the people, not in the midst of their camps.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord said unto Joshua.*] By an audible voice, I suppose, from the sanctuary, near unto which he now was; the priests being about to take out the ark from thence, to carry it before the people.

This day.] The tenth day of the first month, on which the paschal lamb was, by the law, to be set apart, to be offered four days after, (Exod. xii. 3.)

Will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel.] By doing such wonders before them all, as should convince them Joshua was appointed by God to be their supreme governor, who should give them possession of the land of Canaan. (See iv. 14.)

That they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.] See i. 5. From the time of Moses to the days of Saul, God declared, by some extraordinary things, whom he would have to be the supreme governor of his people, whose authority he established by doing wonders.

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying.*] Every thing was done by his order, that it might appear he was powerful with God, who wrought those wonders at his word.

When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan.] Jordan then overflowed beyond its banks; therefore they were not to go to the brink of the river, but of the water.

Ye shall stand still in Jordan.] And there stop till the waters above were suspended, and those below run away; and then they went and stood in the midst of the river, (ver. 17.)

Ver. 9. *And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither.*] To the sanctuary, I suppose, where he now was, (ver. 7.)

And hear the words of the Lord your God.] Which Joshua reported to them from God, who was about to demonstrate himself to be the omnipotent Lord of all creatures, and in a peculiar manner their God, in covenant with them, and full of kindness to them.

Ver. 10. *And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you.*] These are the words of the Lord their God, who is called the *living* God, in opposition to the idols of the heathen; who could do nothing, much less such miracles as demonstrated the God of Israel to be the eternal Lord of heaven and earth, who giveth life to all things; and he is said to be *among them* (or *in the midst of them*) whom he takes into his protection, to defend and preserve them from all evil.

And that he will without fail drive out from before you.] Most certainly make good his promise made to Abraham long ago, (Gen. xv. 18, &c.) because he lives for ever to perform his word.

The Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.] Here all the seven nations are mentioned, (as they are Deut. vii. 1.) though sometimes only six of them are mentioned, the Girgashites being omitted. (See Exod. iii. 17.)

Ver. 11. *Behold, the ark of the covenant.*] So called, because in it were the two tables of the covenant between God and them. It is frequently called *the ark of the testimony,* (Exod. xl. 20, 21. Numb. iv. 5. and here in this book, iv. 16.)

Of the Lord of the whole earth passeth before you.] To take possession of the land of Canaan, which he gave them as Lord of the whole earth, and as particularly engaged by his covenant to bestow upon them. The author of the book Cosri understands this, as if the ark of the covenant was called *the Lord of the whole earth;* because God was so present with it, that where the ark was, there were wonders wrought, which ceased in its absence. (Par. iv. sect. 3.) D. Kimchi and Jos. Albo say the same; and I find Andreas Masius following this fancy; because there is an accent after *the ark of the covenant,* distinguishing those words from what follows, which (say they) are therefore added by apposition. But Bonfrerius hath confuted this very judiciously, observing, that the accent is not of that nature; and, therefore, the LXX. the Chaldee, Vulgar Latin, Symmachus, Aquila, the Syriac, and Arabic, translate it as we do, *the ark of the covenant of the Lord of the whole earth.* (See Buxtorf, de Arca, cap. 1.) And yet, I know not how it came to pass, some have been so bold as to alter our translation in some printed copies, which I have met withal, where these words are thus translated, *the ark of the covenant, even the Lord of the whole earth.*

Into Jordan.] By which miracle they were confirmed in their belief of his promise, when they saw the waters of Jordan flee before him.

Ver. 12. *Now therefore take ye twelve men out of the tribes of Israel.*] To do what he should command them, (iv. 2, &c.)

Out of every tribe a man.] The tribe of Levi was one of the twelve, upon all accounts but only in the dividing of the land: Ephraim and Manasseh being but one, *viz.* the tribe of Joseph.

Ver. 13. *And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of the whole earth.*] Here the ark of the covenant is called the *ark* of Jehovah (not *Jehovah*), who is the Lord, or governor and ruler of the whole earth: in which is comprehended the sea, and the rivers, and all waters, which he commandeth as he pleaseth.

Shall rest in the waters of Jordan.] Dip their feet in the brim of the waters, as it is explained ver. 15.

That the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above.] The waters which now ran in one stream, were divided over against the place where the priests trod; so that the lower part of them ran down the channel towards the Dead Sea; and those above not coming down to supply their place, the ground was left dry.

And they shall stand on a heap.] *viz.* The waters above, towards the head or springs of the river, were made to stand still, as if they were congealed; rising in a heap, piled one upon another, but not running down at all.

Ver. 14. *And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people.*] The priests moved first, and then the people followed them, at such a distance as Joshua had prescribed, (ver. 3, 4.)

Ver. 15. *And as they that bare the ark of the covenant were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water.*] Which had overflown, as it here follows, beyond the bounds of the channel.

For Jordan overfloweth all his banks at the time of harvest.] This is meant of barley-harvest; which began about the Passover, as many have observed; and particularly Hermannus Conringius, in his book De Initio anni Sabbatici. (See upon Deut. xvi. 9.) And it appears by the next chapter, (iv. 19.) that it was in the first month, or the month Abib, when the Passover was to be kept; and therefore must signify that harvest. (See also 1 Chron. xii. 15.) This was likewise a time when the river was more likely to overflow than in wheat-harvest; because now the snow began to melt that was in the neighbouring mountains, especially in Lebanon; at the foot of which was the fountain of Jordan. By which the river was always swollen at this time, and thereby the miracle increased. Such overflowings of other rivers, greater than this, are observed by authors, at certain seasons; with which I shall not trouble the reader.

Ver. 16. *And the waters, which came down from above, stood.*] Stopped, and ran no farther; but were driven back unto those that were coming down.

And rose up upon a heap.] Instead of flowing down the channel, were lifted up into the air; and appeared like a mountain, as the Vulgar Latin translates it.

Very far from the city Adam.] At a great distance from a city then called Adam, which lay upon the river.

That is beside Zaretan.] The former was a small city, and therefore its situation is described by a place of greater note called Zaretan, which lay on one side of it, in the plain of Jordan, as we read 1 Kings vii. 46.

And those that came down towards the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off.] Those waters of the river, which were below, towards the salt sea, into which Jordan emptied itself, ran all thither, and so left the channel perfectly dry, that the people might pass over, which they did, directly over against Jericho.

And the people passed over right against Jericho.] Having that famous city in their view; from whence, perhaps, the people on the walls might, with amazement, see the Israelites walk through the river on dry ground. It was a great refreshment also to the Israelites after their march, to pitch their tents in so goodly a plain as this before Jericho.

Ver. 17. *And the priests, that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, stood firm on dry ground, in the midst of Jordan.*] In one and the same place and posture, with their faces towards Jericho.

And all the Israelites passed over on dry ground.] Keeping, I suppose, the same distance, of two thousand cubits from the ark; for there was room enough on either side to march by it, and not come near it.

Until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.] Which they could not do in a short time, unless we suppose them to have marched all in a-breast, which is not likely. For there was a certain place called, ever after, by the name of Bethabara, to preserve the memory of their passing over there; which is mentioned John i. 28. It made, therefore, the faith and constancy of the priests very remarkable, who remained so long in the middle of the river, till the whole multitude were got over, without fear of that great mountain of waters from above coming tumbling down upon them.

They who look upon this part of the Divine history as improbable, if not incredible, should consider, what a shame it is to have less faith than the heathens: who, lest their gods should be thought less powerful than the God of Israel, forged those stories which the Persians tell of Zoroaster's passing over rivers; and the Greeks of Inachus dried up by Neptune; and other such-like; which Huetius hath collected in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 15. Why then do they call in question the power of the true God; who, either by himself, or by his angels, could easily stop the course of a river which he himself made; and both make the waters rise up in a heap, as high as he pleased; and also stand so reared up, in a firm hardness, as if they had been congealed?

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying.*] It is likely he went to return thanks unto God for so wonderful a mercy; and then God spake to him what follows:

Ver. 2. *Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man.*] He bids him now call together the twelve men formerly chosen, iii. 12.

Ver. 3. *And command you them.*] I suppose Joshua had some of the elders, or heads of the tribes, that joined with him in this office.

Saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan.] Which continued perfectly dry for some space after they were all gone over; that is, till the priests removed from thence.

Out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones.] Some understand this so precisely, as if they were to take them from under the very soles of the priests' feet, which is not probable; but only near to the place where they stood. For the priests did not stir a step from the place where they first stood; and therefore none can tell how they should take these stones from under their feet, and place others in their room, (ver. 9.) while they remained standing fixed in the same place.

And ye shall carry them over with you.] In the sight of all the people, to make the miracle more known among them all.

And leave them in the lodging-place where you shall lodge this night.] As a monument of this miraculous work of God; which remained ever after in Gilgal; the place where they lodged that night, ver. 19, 20.

Ver. 4. *Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had prepared,* &c.] Before they passed over Jordan, (iii. 12.)

Ver. 5. *And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the Lord God into the midst of Jordan.*] This is a Divine order to go back again into the river, to the very place where the priests stood with the ark; by which these twelve men were dispensed withal, to come nearer to the ark than the rest of the congregation.

And take ye up every man a stone upon his shoulder.] Great stones, as big as they could well lift and carry. So the Hebrew word imports, ver. 3.

According unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel.] That they might publish in every tribe this evident testimony of the power of God; which laid the bottom of the river dry for so long a time, that they not only all went over on dry ground, but some of them returned again, and took up these stones, and laid others in their room, (ver. 9.)

Ver. 6. *That this may be a sign unto you.*] A token of what God had now done for them.

That when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones?] It was natural for men, in future ages, seeing great stones (in a place, perhaps, where there were no more), and just twelve of them, laid together, or one upon another, to ask how they came there, and for what end they were brought thither, and by whom.

Ver. 7. *Then shall ye answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off, before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off.*] This was to give them occasion to report, at large, what God had done for them at their entrance into Canaan; that their posterity might be affected with it, no less than themselves.

And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel for ever.] To keep in memory this miracle in all

ages to come, as long as this nation lasted. All people have been wont to erect monuments of stone to preserve the memory of covenants or victories, or other great things. And though there was no inscription upon these stones, yet the number of them, and the place where they lay, which was not stony, was sufficient to signify some memorable thing; which, upon inquiry, would be made known to those that saw and observed them.

Ver. 8. *And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded,* &c.] That is, the twelve men did according to his order, both in taking up the stones and carrying them to the place where they lodged.

And laid them down there.] Which, perhaps, were erected into a kind of pillar, that they might look like a monument of something done thereabout. Or, they were so placed, as to be so many little monuments of God's mercy. (See ver. 20.)

Ver. 9. *And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests that bare the covenant stood.*] This renders it probable, that the other twelve stones taken out of Jordan were set up in Gilgal, as these, taken out of some of the fields thereabouts, were erected in the midst of the river, to testify to all posterity their miraculous passage over it at this place.

And they are there unto this day.] From hence, not only such men as Mr. Hobbes, but Masius, and Grotius, and divers others, have argued, that this book was not written by Joshua, but by some person who lived at a great distance from his time, as these words, they fancy, import. But this is a mere fancy; for if Joshua wrote this book in his old age, or, at least, then added his last hand to it (as it is probable he did), he might as well use these words as one that lived a hundred years after. And, at this rate of arguing (as Huetius observes), Moses must not be the author of the book of Deuteronomy, (where he speaks in the same style, x. 5. xi. 4.) nor St. Matthew the author of the gospel, which he wrote not many years after our Saviour's death; who uses the very same words, xxvii. 8. xxviii. 21. (See Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. cap. 24.)

Ver. 10. *For the priests that bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan.*] It is remarkable in this whole relation, that when the priests are mentioned, these words are still added, *that bare the ark,* or, *the ark of the covenant,* (both in this chapter, ver. 9. 16. 18. and in the foregoing, ver. 13—15. 17.) to shew that this miracle was not to be ascribed to them, but to the power of the Lord, unto whom they ministered.

Until every thing was finished that the Lord commanded Joshua to speak unto the people.] Concerning the taking up of the twelve stones, and placing others in their room; and all that preceded concerning their passing over the river; which, it is likely, he exhorted them to do cheerfully.

According to all that Moses commanded Joshua.] We do not read that Moses gave any particular directions about the foregoing matters; therefore the meaning is, that Joshua strenuously executed all that God ordered, as Moses had admonished him, Deut. iii. 28. and other places.

And the people hasted, and passed over.] This doth not refer to all the people, as if they went a swift pace over the river, out of fear of the waters overwhelming them (as some think), but to such as remained still behind the ark, to attend its motion. Who now seeing all that Joshua commanded was finished, made haste to get over the river, as their brethren had done before them. It is said, indeed, (ver. 1.) that when all the people *were clean passed over,* Joshua gave order about the twelve stones: but the meaning is, when the main body of the people were gone over: for it appears by the next verse, that they had not all entirely passed over until now.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, that when all the people were clean passed over.*] So that none were remaining in the plains of Moab, from whence they came.

That the ark of the Lord passed over, and the priests.] They who went first into the river came last out: it being by the power of the Lord, whose ark the priests bare, that the course of the river was stopped, and a way made for all the people to pass over.

In the presence of the people.] Who beheld the water standing still on a heap, while the ark was in the river; but come tumbling down when it was gone. Which demonstrated that it was God's presence with them, to which alone they owed this miraculous mercy.

Ver. 12. *And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them.*] They were the first that passed over, (according to their engagement, Numb. xxxiii. 20, 21. 27. of which Joshua had put them in mind, i. 13.) ready to encounter any enemy that might have opposed their landing.

Ver. 13. *About forty thousand, prepared for war.*] Or, *ready armed* (as it is in the margin), and prepared to fight, in case they met with any opposition. It is observable, that in the last muster, made not long ago, of those that were fit for war, in their several tribes, there were above *forty thousand* in the tribe of Reuben alone; and above fifty thousand in that of Manasseh, (Numb. xxvi. 7. 34.) And therefore it is likely, Joshua picked out only this number of chosen men; and left all the rest to look after their families and flocks.

Passed over before the Lord unto battle.] Being passed over the river, they stood in battle array before the ark; at the distance, I suppose, of two thousand cubits.

In the plains of Jericho.] Where it might be supposed the people of Jericho would have encamped, to hinder their passage.

Ver. 14. *On that day the Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel.*] As he promised, iii. 7.

And they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.] This wonder gained him the like respect and reverence, that the dividing the Red Sea did to Moses. (Exod. xiv. 31.)

Ver. 15. *And the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying.*] All this business was managed purely by the Divine direction.

Ver. 16. *Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan.*] The midst of which river, where they stood, being the lowest and deepest part of it, they are properly said *to come up* when they left that station.

Ver. 17. *Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan.*] Where they waited for the Divine order, and did not stir till they received it.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord were come up out of the river Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up*

unto the dry land.] Where the waters of Jordan, when it overflowed farthermost, were never wont to come.

That the waters of Jordan returned into their place.] The channel was filled again by the descent of the waters. Which for some time had stood heaped up, and could not stir; but now were let loose to keep their ancient course.

And overflowed all his banks, as they did before.] Which was done, it is likely, by a gradual descent of the water, and not by the tumbling down of that great heap all at once.

Ver. 19. *And the people came out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month.*] In which month they came out of Egypt, upon the fifteenth day of it: so that there wanted just five days of forty years since their coming from thence.

And encamped in Gilgal.] A place very famous in after-times, because of their first encampment here; where they seem to have continued for several years, during the wars of Canaan. Here also they were circumcised (from whence the place had its name, ver. 9.) and kept the first Passover; the tabernacle and the ark remaining here, as long as the Israelites kept their station in this place. See ix. 6. x. 6. 43. xiv. 6. which was, I suppose, till the war was ended; and they had also begun to divide the land. (See xiv. 6.) After which the tabernacle was fixed in Shiloh: (xviii. 1. xxii. 9. 12.) though still Gilgal continued a famous place, as appears from Judg. ii. 1. 1 Sam. xi. 14, 15. xiii. 4, &c.

In the east border of Jericho.] That is, between Jordan which lay behind them, and Jericho which lay before them.

Ver. 20. *And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal.*] We are not told in what form they were pitched; whether they remained single and distinct, or, as Josephus will have it, joined together in the form of an altar. It seems to agree best with the end and intention of them, if we conceive them to have been set down single, but in some order (suppose three in a row), representing, like so many little pillars, the twelve tribes of Israel; who passing over Jordan on dry ground, a man out of each tribe was ordered to bring a stone, and place them here, for a perpetual memorial (ver. 7.) of what God had done for them. For stones, every one knows (especially some sorts of them), are of a very durable nature, and therefore used by all nations in the monuments they have made to preserve the memory of persons and things. Insomuch, that if it be true which Procopius reports (in his second book de Bello Vandalico) concerning the two pillars erected by the Canaanites, who fled into Africa before the face of Joshua, with an inscription signifying their expulsion by him; I conclude it to have been done in imitation of these stones, whereby Joshua preserved the memory of the miraculous way which was opened to him, for their expulsion.

Ver. 21. *And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones?*] See ver. 6. where he had said this, at the time they took up the stones; and now repeats it, when they pitched them. For then he may be thought to have spoken only to the twelve men; but now to all the twelve tribes.

Ver. 22. *And ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.*] That it might not be left to every man's liberty to give what answer they pleased to their children, when they inquired the meaning of these stones, he sets down the very words they should speak unto them; that they might be sure to be duly instructed in the wonderful mercy of God to their nation.

Ver. 23. *For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before ye, until ye were passed over.*] He would have posterity made sensible it was a Divine benefit bestowed on them by the Divine Power: which alone could stop the course of a river, till a whole nation passed over on dry ground.

As the Lord your God did to the Red Sea.] At the same time he would have them take occasion to remember them of another miraculous mercy, like unto this, though superior to it. Which the prophets, in after times, delighted to commemorate together, as appears from Psal. cxiv. 5.

Which he dried up before us, until we were gone over.] What he did for their forefathers he did for them, who reaped the happy fruit of it: just as the saving of Noah and his family in the ark was the saving of all mankind, who sprang from them.

Ver. 24. *That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord.*] All nations round about, who heard of this, might be made sensible of the power of the God of Israel.

That it is mighty.] Which can do all things.

And that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever.] The people of Israel, especially (for whom these wonders were wrought), might religiously worship and serve him: for so the *fear of God* frequently signifies in Scripture: and therefore the LXX. here translate these words, ἵνα ὑμεῖς σέβησθε Κύριον τὸν Θεὸν ὑμῶν, *that ye may worship the Lord your God;* which includes in it all the duty owing to him. And so they translate the last words *for ever*, ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ, *every thing that you do.*

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites.*] These were the principal inhabitants, and the most valiant in all the country; as hath been formerly noted.

Which were on the side of Jordan westward.] This seems to be added, to shew, that, besides the two kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og, whom they had already subdued on the other side of Jordan, eastward, there were other kings of the same nation on that side of Jordan, where the Israelites now were. And it is not improbable, that these kings commanded the Hittites, Hivites, and Jebusites, as well as the Amorites.

And all the kings of the Canaanites, which were by the sea.] *i. e.* The Mediterranean, where the people properly called Canaanites dwelt; though there were colonies of them spread in other places. The LXX. here call them βασιλεῖς της Φοινίκης, *the kings of Phœnicia:* for upon that sea were the principal cities of the ancient Phœnicians, *viz.* Tyre and Sidon. But though the people that lived upon the sea-coast were peculiarly called by this name of Phœnicians, yet they were so powerful, that the whole country was called χώρα τῶν Φοινίκων, *the country of the Phœnicians;* as the LXX. call the land of Canaan, ver. 12. of this chapter.

Heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over.] This sounds like the language of Joshua, or of some other

person then present, when this wonder was wrought; which astonished those that lived in the remotest parts of the country; who little thought of an invasion on that side (which, it is likely, made them not draw any forces that way), imagining the river, especially when it overflowed all its banks, was a sufficient security unto them on that frontier.

That their hearts melted; neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel.] They quite lost their courage; which began to fail them before, as we read chap. ii. ver. 11. Or, as the LXX. expound it, *their understanding failed them;* and they were in such a consternation, that none knew what to advise for their safety. In which the providence of God is much to be observed, that, by this means, the Israelites were securely circumcised (as it here follows); whereas, if the people of Canaan had been courageous and watchful, they had taken them at a great advantage, if they had then fallen upon them; as appears by the story of the Shechemites, Gen. xxxiv. 25. They had leisure also, without any disturbance, to celebrate the Passover, (ver. 10.)

Ver. 2. *At that time the Lord said unto Joshua.*] The next day, which was the eleventh day of the first month; as our primate Usher and others judge most likely.

Make thee sharp knives.] Or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *knives of flints:* which stones were plentiful, it is likely, in the mountains thereabouts. And, after they had marched forty years in the wilderness, it is probable (as Theodoret notes) that they were not provided with such knives as we use, of iron. By the very words also of Joshua it appears he speaks of knives they were now to provide; and not of such as they had already. Nor is it strange such knives should be used, for they were common in the eastern countries, as may be gathered out of the Talmud, in the treatise of the Sabbath; where they say, *in the killing of beasts, they use either a flint-stone* (so they interpret the word *tzur*), *or glass, or a quill.* From whence Theodoric Hackspan concludes, that if sharp stones sufficed for the killing of beasts, there was no need of any other in circumcision. Who observes also, that the Jews say, they might circumcise with any instrument, made either of stone or glass, but not of a quill; because there was danger it might slit and hurt so tender a part. And at this day they do circumcise in the east with knives made of stones, such as Zipporah, it is supposed, used in the circumcision of her son, (Exod. iv. 25.) See this question debated in Sixtinus Amama's Antibarbarus, lib. ii. p. 282. Justin Martyr thinks there was some mystery in the use of these knives. (See his dialogue with Trypho, p. 341, 342.)

And circumcise again the children of Israel the second time.] This doth not signify that they who had been circumcised heretofore, were to be now circumcised again (from whence some have drawn an argument for the repeating of baptism, as St. Austin tells us), but that there had been such a general circumcision heretofore ordered, as there was to be now after a long omission of that rite. And it is probable that it was at Mount Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they came out of Egypt. When they kept a Passover on the fourteenth day of that month, (Numb. ix. 1—3.) and before they kept it, circumcised all that had not been circumcised in Egypt, or since they came out of it. For no uncircumcised person, nor any one who had a son, or a man-servant in his house uncircumcised, was capable to be admitted to it. We do not read, indeed, of the neglect of circumcision in Egypt, or in that year wherein they came out of it; but, considering the great oppression they lay under in that country, and the several distresses they were in, after their deliverance, for three months, till they came to Sinai; and the absence of Moses a long time after they came thither; it is very probable this rite was omitted, till God called upon them (as he did now) to celebrate the Passover; and then they were constrained to take care of it, because otherwise they could not have kept it. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 2. n. 1.)

Ver. 3. *And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel.*] Ordered every one that wanted it to be circumcised; and, it is probable, not only all those that came over Jordan, but such of the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites, as were left on the other side, were circumcised also, and all in one day, that they might be in a condition to eat the passover: nor need it seem strange that it was dispatched in such a short time, for they might employ as many hands as they pleased in this work, there being no necessity that a priest or a Levite should do it, but it might be performed by their fathers or mothers, or any other person.

At the hill of the foreskins.] In the Hebrew, at *Gibeah Naaraboth;* which some take to be the name of the place where they were circumcised; but then that place was so called from the foreskins that were there thrown; which were so many, that being laid upon a heap and covered with earth, they made a little hillock, as the Jews conceive. (See Pirke Eliezer, cap. 29.)

Ver. 4. *And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise.*] The reason of this order, and of the execution of it, is here given.

All the people that came out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt.] That is, all that were then twenty years old, for such only were reputed men of war, and were guilty of the sedition mentioned in Numb. xiv. for which they were doomed to perish in the wilderness.

Ver. 5. *Now all the people that came out were circumcised.*] Not only those that died for their rebellion, but all the rest under twenty years old, were generally circumcised, except some infants, who (as I said upon ver. 2.) might have been neglected during their heavy oppression there.

But all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised.] Never since they removed from Mount Sinai, where it is likely there was a general circumcision, as there was now to be before their celebrating the Passover, which had not been kept since that time.

Ver. 6. *For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed,* &c.] These words seem to give the reason why they were not circumcised, because they were in a wandering condition, while they remained in the wilderness, and did not know when the cloud would remove from the tabernacle to lead them to another place; which if it had done when children were newly circumcised, their lives might have been endangered by motion, while they were sore. This, a great many

think, made Moses dispense with circumcision by God's direction. We do not find him, indeed, consulting God about it; but he was satisfied that God approved of this reason for the omission of it. R. Jose, as Mr. Selden observes, gives this account of the whole business: "The Israelites kept but one Passover all the time they were in the wilderness; the reason was, in that year (which was the next to that wherein they came out of Egypt) their tents were pitched in a place where they might safely circumcise the males that had been lately born, lest the neglect of it should hinder the legitimate eating of the passover. But in all the time following, wherein they wandered in the desert, they did not circumcise their children, because of their incommodious journeys, and the danger of circumcision by the way;" so that they could keep no more Passovers till they came to Canaan. This is a far better reason than what many of them give, who say circumcision was omitted, because the north wind never blew all the time they were in the wilderness; and wounds are very dangerous when it doth not blow. Whence their medical maxim mentioned in the Talmud: "In cloudy days, and when the east wind blows, we neither circumcise nor open a vein." (See Buxtorf. Synagog. Judaica, cap. 4.) But if this matter be well considered, we cannot rest satisfied with the foregoing reason; for all the time they were in the wilderness, children were born, and women lay in; and there was greater danger by their motion, while they were in labour, and when they were newly brought to bed, than there was in their children's being circumcised, who were sore but for a few days; whereas the others were not fit to go abroad, or to travel, in a great many. For which, and for several other reasons, Fortunatus Scacchus thinks this was not the cause why they were not circumcised during their travels in the wilderness; but the true reason was, that they did not look upon the precept of circumcision as obliging them, till they came to settle in the land of Canaan: for in the covenant which Moses made with them at Mount Sinai, there is nothing said about circumcision, unto which they were bound by the covenant made with Abraham, (as our Saviour observes, John vii. 21.) and that runs thus: "I will give unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, &c. Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee, &c. Every man-child shall be circumcised," Gen. xvii. 8—10. (See Sacror. Elæochrysm. Myrothec. 2. cap. 54.)

Ver. 7. *And their children, whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised.*] Now that they were come to their rest in the land of promise.

For they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way.] For the reason abovementioned: to which this may be added, that several great men (such as Theodoret and St. Jerome among the ancients) think that circumcision, being a note of distinction between the Israelites and other people, there was no need of it in the wilderness, when (as Cedrenus speaks) they were *παντὸς ἀλλόγενους κεχωρισμένοι*, separated from all strangers by the wilderness itself. Others think, that the mixed multitude of Egyptians, who, moved by the miracles they had seen done in their country, went out of it with the Israelites, and joined themselves to them, were the cause of this omission; for they could not presently incorporate with them by receiving circumcision; and therefore it was suspended, that these Egyptians might not look upon themselves as quite a different people: but longer than till they came to Canaan they would not have it discontinued, when all, Egyptians as well as Israelites, received it, that they might not be upbraided as a people of a different original. And as the omission of it in the desert made the proselytes who came out of Egypt equal with the Israelites, while they stayed there; so, as a most learned friend of mine (Dr. Alix) suggests to me, it shewed, that there was no absolute necessity of this rite, and that it could not be of eternal obligation.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp.*] Lay still without motion (which would have hindered the healing of the sore), and had not the least disturbance given them by the people of Canaan.

Till they were whole.] Which they were against the Passover; for, reckoning the eleventh day for one, there were four days between their circumcision and the Passover, which was not kept till the fourteenth day at even, when the pain was pretty well over, for it was smartest on the third day. (See upon Gen. xxxiv. 25.)

Ver. 9. *And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.*] It is commonly thought, that by *the reproach of Egypt* is meant nothing else but uncircumcision, with which the Israelites always reproached other people, particularly the Egyptians, among whom they had long dwelt, and with whom they were best acquainted. But our learned Dr. Spencer thinks *the reproach of Egypt* is the slavery to which they had been there long subject, but now were fully declared a free people by receiving the mark of the seed of Abraham, and made heirs of the promised land. This he very often repeats, lib. i. de Leg. Hebr. Ritual. cap. 4. p. 44. 51. 55. And no doubt Joshua now chose, immediately upon their entrance into the land of Canaan, to cause them to be circumcised, not only as a token they peculiarly belonged to him, but to oblige them to be careful to observe all the laws of God; many of which could not, and others were not observed in the wilderness, but were now to be regularly practised, because they held the land of Canaan by this tenure. To this purpose also Theodoret discourses, in his questions upon this book; They were made now lords of the promised land, who were lately slaves in Egypt; for they could not be the legitimate children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and heirs of the promises made to them, till they were circumcised. Ralbag hath another notion of it; That the Egyptians seeing the Israelites wander so long as they did in the wilderness, reproached and flouted them, as if they were brought thither to be destroyed, and not to possess the land of Canaan; from which reproaches God now delivered them, when he assured them, by enjoining their circumcision, that they should shortly enjoy that country which God promised; but which no uncircumcised person might inherit: but the first is the plainest and most unconstrained sense.

Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.] This was the first original of the name, which this place had ever after; for *Galal*, in Hebrew, from whence this word comes, signifies to remove, take away, or devolve. And so here the LXX. translate the word *gallothi (I have rolled away)* by *ἀφεῖλον*, and the Vulgar

Latin by *abstuli (I have taken away);* which makes it strange that Josephus should say (lib. v. Antiq. cap. 1.) that this word *Gilgal* signifies *liberty*, whom Theodoret follows; as if this place was so called, because now they found themselves perfectly freed from the Egyptians, and from all the troubles they endured in the wilderness.

Unto this day.] These words are alleged by some against Joshua's being the author of this book; to which an answer hath been given, iv. 9.

Ver. 10. *And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal.*] Continued their camp there, as they were enjoined, ver. 8.

And kept the Passover.] Which was the second Passover that had been kept since its first institution, the first being observed the second year after their coming out of Egypt at Mount Sinai; after which it had been omitted thirty-nine years, because many of the people were uncircumcised.

On the fourteenth day of the month at even.] According to the command of God, (Exod. xii. 6.)

In the plains of Jericho.] Where the tabernacle was in the midst of their camp, unto which they brought their lamb, for it could be sacrificed no where else, (Deut. xvi. 2.) And therefore hither the Reubenites, and Gadites, and Manassites, on the other side Jordan, came to offer this sacrifice; which was easier for them, than it was in aftertimes to go up to Jerusalem.

Ver. 11. *And they did eat the old corn of the land.*] Which the people of the country had left in their barns when they fled into Jericho, and other strong holds.

The morrow after the Passover.] There is a great dispute among the Jews, whether this were the fifteenth day of the month, which was properly the next day after the Passover, or, as others take it, the sixteenth day, which was the solemn sabbath kept on the first day of unleavened bread, (Lev. xxiii. 10, 11.) when they were to wave the sheaf of the first-fruits before the Lord. The former are in the right.

Unleavened cakes.] That is, they kept the feast of unleavened bread, which was distinct from the Passover, as I observed, Exod. xii. 15, &c.

And parched corn on the self-same day.] This was new corn, which was growing that year they entered into Canaan, of which it was not lawful to eat, till they had offered the sheaf beforementioned, (Lev. xxiii. 14.) and therefore it is made an argument by some, that it was the sixteenth day of this month when this corn was parched.

Ver. 12. *And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land: neither had the children of Israel manna any more.*] Because they had no need of it (as Kimchi and others interpret it), being supplied by the store of old corn which they found in the land of Canaan, and by what was growing upon the ground.

But they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.] After they had offered the sheaf beforementioned, (Lev. xxiii. 11.) So that manna ceased on the sixteenth or seventeenth day of the first month, having continued with them forty years, wanting about a month. So R. Bechai truly interprets these words, (Exod. xvi. 35.) not to signify *forty years* complete, but *near* forty years; for it began to fall on the fifteenth day of the second month, and ceased on the sixteenth or seventeenth day of the first month of the fortieth year after they came out of Egypt; and therefore, to shew that they were not to expound those words, *They did eat manna forty years*, in a strict and precise sense, Moses immediately adds, *until they came to a land inhabited;—they did eat manna until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan;* which was exactly fulfilled, Gilgal being on the *borders of the land*, where it now ceased; but it continued till that time, though they came *to a land inhabited*, when they conquered the kingdoms of Sihon and Og.

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho.*] After he had performed these solemn rites of circumcision and the Passover, Joshua went to take a view of Jericho, and to observe, as generals are wont to do, the approaches to it.

That he lifted up his eyes and looked.] These words signify a sudden apparition of a person to him; for so this phrase is used, when something new and unexpected presents itself, as one is intent upon something else, (Gen. xviii. 1. Dan. x. 5.)

And, behold, there stood a man before him.] Whom he took to be a man.

With his sword drawn in his hand over against him.] He seemed to be a soldier, or rather a great commander, and stood directly opposite to him.

And Joshua went unto him.] Such was his undaunted courage, with which God had inspired him.

And said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?] He demands of him, whether he came to help the Israelites, or the people of Canaan; for whom (it appears by the answer) Joshua suspected he came to fight.

Ver. 14. *And he said, Nay.*] *i. e.* I am not on the side of your adversaries.

But as captain (or *prince*) *of the host of the Lord am I now come.*] By the *host of the Lord* is here meant the whole body of the people of Israel, whom the Lord himself led forth out of Egypt, as his army, (see Exod. xii. 41.) and now appeared in this manner, that he might shew he would still conduct them, as their chief commander and leader, by whom they should be victorious over their enemies: for though many take this to have been a created angel (Michael, suppose, the chief of them), yet it is evident that Joshua did not think him so to be, for he fell down and worshipped him, as we read in the words following.

And Joshua fell on his face to the earth.] With the profoundest reverence.

And did worship.] Which he durst not have given (for God alone is to be adored), nor would an angel have received, without such a check as an angel gave St. John, (Rev. xxii. 10.) if he had not taken him to be the Divine Word that was come to fight for them. So the Chaldee paraphrase upon Josh. x. 42. "It was the Word of the Lord that fought for them," according to God's promise, i. 9. 17. This a most learned friend of mine (Dr. Alix) shews was the judgment of the ancient Jewish church, (see his late book on that argument, p. 234.) and it is most certain was the judgment of the ancient Christians, particularly of Justin Martyr, Eusebius, and Theodoret. (See Valesius in his Annotations upon Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History, lib. i. cap. 2. p. 7.) And therefore our great primate of Ireland fears not to say in his Annals, "Jesus Dominus noster, princeps militiæ patris sui, Josu typico ad Jerichuntem gladio stricto apparens, promittit se popu-

lum defensurum;" that is, *Jesus our Lord, the Prince of his Father's host, appearing to him who was a type of him at Jericho, with a drawn sword, promised to be the defender of the people:* where he seems by the *captain of the Lord's host* to understand our Lord, who commands angels themselves; for they are sometimes called *the host of heaven.* (1 Kings xxii. 19. Luke ii. 13.) And it may very well be thought the meaning here.

And said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant?] Joshua was possessed of such a deep sense of the greatness of this person, that he humbly desires to receive his commands, and he would obey them.

Ver. 15. *And the Captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place where thou standest is holy.*] This is the fullest evidence that can be given of the Divinity of this person that appeared to him; who was so far from reproving him for doing him too much honour, that he commanded him to do much more; for that which he here requires, is the highest acknowledgment of a Divine presence that was used among the eastern nations, as the same Dr. Alix observes. And considering that these are the very same words which were spoken to Moses, Exod. iii. 2, 3. we learn the reason why God commanded this to Joshua; which was, for the strengthening of his faith, that as now he was placed in Moses's stead, so God would be with him, as he had been with Moses. And thus Joh. à Coch discourses very reasonably upon the Gemara of the Sanhedrin, cap. 6. n. 3. "This angel, who suffered himself to be worshipped, and by whose presence the place where he appeared was sanctified, so that Joshua was commanded to put off his shoes, no doubt was He whom all the angels in heaven worship."

And Joshua did so.] Put off his shoes, in token of reverence to that place; which was holy, while that Divine presence remained there, though not after it was gone: and it continued there for some space of time, to give Joshua advice, and to encourage him to hope for his protection and assistance; as appears from ver. 2. of the next chapter.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *NOW Jericho was straitly shut up, because of the children of Israel.*] The Targum understands it as if he spake of the strong fortifications of Jericho, which made it needful Joshua should be encouraged in his enterprise against it. But the words in the Hebrew are literally (as is noted in the margin of our Bibles) *did shut up, and was shut up,* which plainly relates to the strict guards which were kept, that none could get into the city, nor get out of it: so it is explained in the next words.

None went out, and none came in.] They shut up their gates so close, that none could go out to carry intelligence to Joshua; and they were blocked up so close by the Israelites (to which the latter part of the foregoing words may perhaps refer), that none could get in to bring any intelligence or relief to the inhabitants of Jericho.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord said unto Joshua.*] The same person speaks to him (all agree) who is called the *Prince of the Lord's host* in the foregoing chapter; and here is called Jehovah. Which shews he was not a created angel, but God himself; who alone could promise and perform what follows.

See, I have given into thy hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.] Who were gathered together in this place out of several nations: it being a frontier city, which they made as strong as they were able, and defended by the most valiant men they had in the country. (See xxiv. 11.) For we are to suppose that they had refused the offers of peace, which God ordered to be first sent unto them, (Deut. xx. 10.) and, trusting to their forces, took up a desperate resolution not to yield upon any terms.

Ver. 3. *And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round the city once.*] At such a distance, I suppose, that they could not reach them from the city, with their arrows or stones slung against them.

Thus shall ye do six days.] Once every of those days, in such order as is described, ver. 6—9. This looked not like making war; but appeared to the besieged, it is probable, as a pastime.

Ver. 4. *And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns.*] Such trumpets as they used to blow withal in the year of jubilee, (Lev. xxv. 9.) for so the phrase is in the Hebrew, *trumpets of Jobel:* and I have observed elsewhere, that rams' horns not being hollow, trumpets could not be made of them.

And the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times.] The seventh day's march differed in two things from the other six; that they compassed it but once on other days, and made not the least noise, but now seven times, and made a great shout at the end of the last circuit. Concerning this number *seven,* see Drusius upon this place, and upon Lev. iv. 6. Grotius saith of it, in short, (upon 2 Chron. xxix. 21.) *heptas sacris propria; the number seven is proper to sacred things:* as appears by the seven angels and seven trumpets, (Rev. viii. 2.)

And the priests shall blow with the trumpets.] All the time they marched so often round the city. (See Tertullian, lib. ii. adv. Marcion, cap. 21.)

Ver. 5. *And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the rams' horns.*] A loud sound, protracted after a rustic manner, as Bochart interprets it in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 43.

And when ye hear the sound of the trumpet.] And were commanded by Joshua to shout, (ver. 16.)

All the people shall shout with a great shout.] Such as soldiers use when they make an onset upon a place, or when armies meet to give battle.

And the wall of the city shall fall down flat.] Or, fall *under it,* as it is in the Hebrew; which seems to signify, that the foundations of the wall were subverted, so that it sunk and fell into the ditch, or (as the Jews explain it) sunk into the very ground on which it stood, so as to leave no ruins, as in the common fall of walls; in which they suppose another miracle.

And the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.] The whole wall did not fall down, for Rahab's house stood, which was upon the wall, (ii. 15.) But such wide breaches were made every where round about, that the Israelites went straight forward, and found an easy entrance into this city, which the amazed inhabitants had no heart to defend; or rather, the whole wall sunk into the earth, only

Rahab's house was left standing, which made the thing more remarkable. And thus God demonstrated, that it was his wonderful power which overthrew the city, against which they brought no engines nor battering rams, &c. ἀλλὰ μόνη φωνῇ σάλπιγγος κεραίνης, καὶ εὐχῇ δικαίου, &c. as Epiphanius speaks, Hæres. lxvi. n. 83.

Ver. 6. *And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant.*] This is the second time that the priests are ordered to carry the ark, which belonged to the office of the Kohathites. (See iii. 3.)

And let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord.] As the Lord commanded, ver. 4.

Ver. 7. *And he said unto the people, Pass on and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass before the ark of the Lord.*] This explains ver. 3. where he seems to command only *the men of war* to compass the city. But the meaning is, that the whole body of the people should march in this circuit, the men of war going before the ark, and the rest of the people following it, as it is explained ver. 9.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people.*] By the priests, as the LXX. understand it.

That the seven priests, bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns, passed on before the Lord, and blew with the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them.] According to the direction given ver. 6.

Ver. 9. *And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets.*] Here the order of their march explains the command, ver. 7.

And the rear-ward came after the ark.] That is, the rest of the people who had no arms, old men, women, and children, came in the rear of the ark. Concerning the word *measseph* (which we translate *rear-ward*), see Numb. x. 23. From whence may be gathered, that by this *rear-ward* is meant the tribe of Dan; as the Targum, Rasi, and Kimchi, understand it; who by the *armed men* beforementioned, understand the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites, who were engaged by Moses to go "armed before the Lord to war," Numb. xxxii. 20. and renewed this engagement to Joshua, i. 12, &c.

The priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets.] The words *priests* is not in the Hebrew, which made the Vulgar to translate the words in such a manner as if the whole multitude beforementioned made a sound with trumpets, "Buccinis omnia concrepabant." But there being no order for any to blow with trumpets but only the *priests*, our translators have done well to supply that word from ver. 4. as they do also ver. 13. where this is again repeated.

Ver. 10. *And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth.*] They were not to talk to one another as they went along, but march in a profound silence, before and after the Lord, waiting on him, to see what he would do for them.

Until the day I bid ye shout, then shall ye shout.] That is, on the seventh day, after they had compassed the city seven times.

Ver. 11. *So the ark of the Lord compassed the city, going about it once.*] It is uncertain upon what day they began to do this; but it is very probable (as the Jews say in their larger Chronicle) that it was the next day after the seven days of unleavened bread were ended.

And they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.] They spent the rest of the day in the camp to refresh themselves, and lay there the following night.

Ver. 12. *And Joshua rose up early in the morning.*] *viz.* That morning of the first day of compassing the city.

And the priests took up the ark of the Lord.] These words, and those that follow in the next verse, give a particular account of what was done the first day, according to that which was said in general, ver. 8, 9.

Ver. 13. *And the seven priests, bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord, went on continually.*] Without resting or making any stop, in a continued motion, till they had finished their circuit.

And blew with the trumpets.] As soon as they began their motion.

And the armed men went before them, but the rear-ward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets.] Till they had ended their circuit.

Ver. 14. *And the second day they compassed the city once.*] In the same order before described.

And returned into the camp.] As they had done the first day, (ver. 11.)

And so they did six days.] The remaining four days were spent in the same pompous show, without striking a stroke, or speaking a word, that the subversion of the city might be ascribed wholly to the power of God, which secretly undermined the walls, and threw them down.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass on the seventh day.*] The Jewish writers say this was the sabbath, as Raymundus observes in his Pugio Fidei, and Jos. de Voysin in his Annotations upon him, p. 625. But I shall only mention the words of Kimchi, which are these: "The ark of the Lord compassed the city the first time, on the first day of the week: so our doctors, of pious memory, have delivered, that the seventh day whereon the city was taken was the sabbath, though they killed and burnt upon that day; for he that commanded the sabbath to be observed, commanded it now to be profaned for the destruction of Jericho, as he commanded burnt-offerings to be sacrificed on this day:" which is the very instance whereby our blessed Saviour justifies his doing some works upon the sabbath-day. And here I cannot but note, that it was Jehovah, according to this explication, who gave this command to compass the city on this day as well as any other. That great Lord who gave the command to keep the sabbath now dispensed with it: he that spake from Mount Sinai was the person who appeared to Joshua: for, whether this day was the sabbath or not, it is certain, one of the seven days wherein they were thus employed was the sabbath, and consequently their resting on that day was dispensed withal, by the same authority that made the law of the sabbath.

That he rose early about the dawning of the day.] All the six days, I suppose, they rose early, as they did upon the first; (ver. 12.) but upon this day, very early, as soon as they could see, because they had seven times as much work to do as they had upon the other days.

And compassed the city after the same manner seven times.] Not with a continued motion, I suppose, but resting awhile (perhaps after each circuit) to refresh themselves; otherwise, by such motion, they might have been dispirited, and unfit to attack Jericho, when the wall of it fell down before them.

Only on that day they compassed the city seven times.] For so the Lord ordered, ver. 4.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass at the seventh time.*] As soon as they had ended the seventh circuit.

When the priests blew with the trumpets.] Such a long sound as is mentioned, ver. 5.

Joshua said unto the people.] By such officers as he had appointed to give the order, when they heard that unusual sound of the trumpet.

Shout.] In assured hope of victory, as it follows in the next words, *for the Lord hath given you the city.*

Ver. 17. *And the city shall be accursed.*] All the commands given in this, and in the two following verses, could not be delivered just before he bade them shout; but they had been given some time before they began to march the seventh time about the city. And if any thing of these matters was repeated now, it was very briefly, by bidding them remember the orders they had received concerning the city and all that was therein.

I have observed elsewhere, that this word *cherem* (which we translate *accursed*) signifies sometimes the gift itself, which is devoted to God for his uses, (Lev. xxvii. 24.) sometimes that which is devoted to perpetual destruction, by the right which God hath to punish capital enmities to him, as here in this place. And thus, Mr. Selden observes, the great Sanhedrin might devote those to destruction, who in war did not observe such charges as were given them; of which they find an instance in Judg. xxi. 5. (See him, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gentium, cap. 6.)

Even it and all that are therein to the Lord.] As the first-fruits of their victories, in the land of Canaan. All whose inhabitants God ordered to be exterminated; but thought fit to make such an example of the first that refused to submit, as to raze their very city, and command it never to be built again: for that this was done by a particular order from God, appears from 1 Kings xvi. 34. Thus he commanded even such cities in Israel to be destroyed, as should hereafter revolt to idolatry, Deut. xiii. 15—17.

Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house.] Which is explained in the execution of this order, ver. 23.

Because she hid the messengers.] Who sware unto her that she should be preserved: and therefore, both in justice and gratitude, Joshua was bound to take care of her; and, no doubt, had order from God to make good the oath of the spies.

That we sent.] This seems to import, that Joshua sent the spies by the advice or consent of the elders; though it may signify no more but that he sent them upon a public account. (See chap. ii. 1. 23.)

Ver. 18. *And you, in any wise, keep yourselves from the accursed thing.*] Take heed, lest you meddle with any of the spoils which are devoted to God, and appropriate them to your own use.

Lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing.] Bring yourselves under the same sentence of being devoted to destruction.

And make the camp of Israel a curse.] And, more than that, expose the whole camp to the same danger. For many times God takes occasion to punish the whole body of a people for their other sins, when some of them only have hig ly offended him.

And trouble it.] Disturb the course of their victories.

Ver. 19. *But all the silver and gold, and vessels of brass and iron.*] And other metals, I suppose.

Are consecrated to the Lord.] Except the gold and silver of their images, which were utterly to be destroyed, according to an express command of God, Deut. vii. 25, 26.

They shall come into the treasury of the Lord.] Which was in the tabernacle. To the service of which such things were wholly appropriated, and might not be applied to any other use. But it is very probable, that before such things were put into the treasury they were purified, by making them go through the fire: according to the law, Numb. xxxi. 22, 23. The Jews think these things were given to God, because the city was taken on the sabbath.

Ver. 20. *So the people shouted, when the priests blew with the trumpets.*] As they had been commanded, ver. 16.

And it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout.] This is repeated to shew, that this was all that the people contributed to the expugnation of this city: which they wholly ascribed unto God.

That the wall fell down flat.] As the Lord had promised, ver. 5.

So that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.] As it was easy to do, when the garrison was in such a consternation, at the sudden fall of the wall, without any visible force to throw it down; that, in all likelihood, they could make little or no resistance.

Ver. 21. *And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.*] See Deut. xx. 16, 17. Some have observed that there are no *camels* here mentioned, which were not commonly bred in this country; much less *mules*, which were not known in the land of Israel till the days of David. As Bochart concludes from the mention, upon several occasions, of oxen, sheep, and asses; but never of these creatures till his time. But if there were any other animals in Jericho besides these here named, they were all killed; for that was the law of the *cherem*. As for their killing of *infants* and *women*, see Grotius, lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 4. sect. 9. And it must also be remembered, that they were a people guilty of such foul idolatry, that it was fit the whole race of them should be destroyed, as Sodom was; where all the children perished, as well as others. And this was a type of the entire destruction of New Babylon, mentioned in the Revelation.

Ver. 22. *But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country.*] He had given this order before the falling of the wall; when they began their march on the seventh day, the seventh time, and before they shouted.

Go into the harlot's house.] Which, by the wonderful providence of God over her, was left standing, with part of the wall upon which it was built, when the rest sunk into the ground.

And bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath.] With her in the house.

As ye sware unto her.] Chap. ii. 14.

Ver. 23. *And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred.*] By

this it appears, that all related to her, who took shelter under her roof, were preserved from destruction. Such is the great clemency of God, who, for the sake of one excellent woman, spared a great many that had nothing to deserve his favour.

And left them without the camp of Israel.] They were brought out of the house, because it was to be burnt, with all the rest of the city: which was to be laid desolate without inhabitant. And they were carried without the camp of Israel, because it was holy by the presence of the Lord there: which made it unlawful for them to enter into it, till they had abjured their gentile superstition; and by circumcision (and by baptism, as the custom was in aftertimes, if not now) admitted into the body of the Israelites.

Ver. 24. *And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein.*] By the just judgment of God upon it, for the horrible wickedness committed therein. (See Grotius, de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. iii. cap. 12. sect. 2.)

Only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass, and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord.] As had been enjoined before they took the city, ver. 19.

Ver. 25. *And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had.*] It is likely her father and his household gave credit to what she said; and consequently were converted, as she was, to the true religion, by what they had heard before, and now saw with their own eyes, of the wonderful works of God.

And she dwelleth in Israel unto this day.] Was incorporated with the Israelites, and made a member of their body; as all her kindred, it is likely, were: at least, they became proselytes of the gate (as they called those who renounced idolatry, and worshipped the God of Israel), though they were not circumcised. Concerning this phrase *unto this day*, see before, iv. 9.

Because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.] Which proceeded not merely from her humanity, but was a noble act of courageous faith.

Ver. 26. *And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying.*] He made the elders and heads of their several tribes (I suppose) bind themselves by a solemn oath, and they took the same security of all the people; adding a curse upon themselves and their posterity, if any of them broke this oath.

Cursed be the man before the Lord.] This shews that this *cherem*, whereby he adjudged him and his family to destruction who should rebuild Jericho, was a sentence pronounced by the Lord, and not by Joshua, without his order. And so we read expressly in the first book of the Kings, xvi. *ult.* See concerning this *cherem*, Mr. Selden, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 7. p. 505.

That riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho.] Whose ruins God would have remain, as a perpetual monument of his power and of his severity. So Maimonides, in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 50. "This anathema (saith he) was pronounced, that the miracle of the subversion of Jericho might be kept in perpetual memory: for whosoever saw the walls sunk deep into the earth (as he understands it), would clearly discern that this was not the form of a building destroyed by man, but miraculously thrown down by God."

He shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born.] That is, in the death of his first-born.

And in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.] The meaning is, in the progress of the work, the rest of his children should die: and when he had finished it (which was when he *set up its gates*) he should lose the last of them. Which was fulfilled exactly in the days of Ahab, as we read in the place beforenamed, (1 Kings xvi. 34.) Which, by the way, shews this book of Joshua to have been older than the book of the Kings.

We are not to imagine that this anathema reached any farther, than to the builder of Jericho and his family; not to those who should inhabit it after it was rebuilt. For there was a company of prophets who made no scruple to settle here in future times, (2 Kings i. 15.) And if it had been built in any other place, and not on the ruins of the old city (though they had given it the name of Jericho), one cannot think he that built it would have fallen under this curse. Which either he did not mind, or did not believe, otherwise he would not have adventured to restore this city: unto which he was tempted by its pleasant situation, (2 Kings i. 19.)

Ver. 27. *So the Lord was with Joshua.*] Thus God made good his promise to him, i. 5. 9. where the Targum, as I observed, hath it, *The Word of the Lord thy God shall be thy helper.* And so these words run in that paraphrase, *And the Word of the Lord helped Joshua:* that Divine Person who appeared to him, and encouraged him in this undertaking, chap. v. 13, 14, &c.

And his fame was noised throughout all the country.] There was no part of the country which did not hear of their wonderful entrance into it over Jordan; and of the miraculous taking of Jericho; and the execution done there; which made the name of Joshua famous among them, as a captain before whom rivers fled, and the strongest walls fell down flat.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *BUT the children of Israel.*] That is, one among them. Which is an usual form of speech in the Holy Scriptures, to ascribe that to many indefinitely wherein one alone is concerned; because, where men are united in a society, they are all to partake in the good or evil that every of their members doth. Instance of which we find in Gen. viii. 4. xix. 29. xxiii. 6. Judges xii. 7. Matt. xxvi. 8. See Bochart in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 17. p. 212. and a great many more instances he heaps up, par. ii. lib. v. cap. 3. p. 669.

Committed a trespass in the accursed thing.] Offended God by purloining to his own use some of the spoils which were devoted to destruction, or appropriated to God's treasury, with a curse upon him that meddled with them.

For Achan the son of Carmi.] Who is called Achar in 1 Chron. ii. 7. because he having troubled Israel (as the word *Achar* signifies, ver. 25. of this chapter), it is likely, that, in aftertimes, they turned his name into Achar, instead of Achan.

The son of Zabdi.] Who is called Zimri, 1 Chron. ii. 6.

The son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah.] For we find Zerah was the son of Judah, and came with him into Egypt when he was very young; for we read of no children he had, (Gen. xlvi. 12.) And if we suppose him to have

begotten Zabdi when he was seventy years old, and allow as many years before Zabdi begat Carmi, and as many before Carmi begat Achan; we may make account (with Bonfrerius) that Achan was now about fifty years old; an age wherein many men begin to be more covetous than they were in their youth.

Took of the accursed thing.] What it was he himself confesses, ver. 21.

And the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel.] The sin of one member of the body provoked the Divine Majesty to express his displeasure against them all (which they deserved upon other accounts), that they might be awakened to find out, and to punish him who had brought them into great danger.

This preface is made to this chapter, to shew whence the ill success they had at Ai proceeded.

Ver. 2. *And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai.*] Called Hai in Abraham's time, (Gen. xii. 8.) Which Joshua, I suppose, had summoned to surrender, according to the precept in Deut. xx. 10. but they had refused. It was a city about three miles distant from Jericho, as the Jews say in Semoth Rabbah; which Masius takes to signify three leagues.

Which is beside Beth-aven.] Whether Beth-aven here signify a city, or a wilderness, is uncertain. (See xviii. 12.)

On the east side of Beth-el.] A place which was but one league from Ai, as Masius computes, and lay westward of it, (Gen. xii. 8.) for the war was carried on from the east, where Jericho was, to the western parts of the country. It was called Beth-aven in future times, by way of reproach, when the golden calves were set up in it; which made it not a *house of God* (as *Beth-el* signifies), but a *house of iniquity; i. e.* idolatry, which is the import of *Beth-aven.* But it is plain from hence, that these were two distinct places.

And spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai.] How it lay, and how it was fortified, &c. And it seems to have been seated in the hilly country; and belonged to the Amorites, (ver. 7.)

Ver. 3. *And they returned unto Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up, and smite Ai,* &c.] They thought this number would be sufficient, because, as it follows in the end of the verse, *they were but few;* and therefore they would not have all Israel put to the trouble of marching thither. In which counsel a good providence of God interposed; for if the flight of three thousand men put the Israelites into such a consternation, (as we read, ver. 5, 6.) what a condition would they have been in, if all the people had been put to the worse? as they would have been, if they had attacked Ai, while this guilt remained among them.

Ver. 4. *So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men; and they fled before the men of Ai.*] Who seeing so small a number, came out and engaged the Israelites; whose courage quite failed them, so that they seem not to have struck a stroke, but immediately ran away. For God had left them; to whom they owed all their valour and victories.

Ver. 5. *And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men.*] Of the hindmost of them, it is most likely, who could not run away so fast as the rest.

For they chased them from before the gate.] Of the city Ai.

Unto Shebarim.] A place, I suppose, between Ai and Jericho; which the Targum thinks had its name from the rout of the Israelites there.

And smote them in the going down.] Till they came to the plains of Jericho. For Ai standing on a hill, there was a descent from thence thither.

Wherefore the hearts of the people melted.] As wax doth before the fire, (Psal. lxviii. 2.) or as ice before the sun.

And became as water.] Weak and wavering, in uncertain resolutions, not knowing what to do.

Ver. 6. *And Joshua rent his clothes.*] As the manner was when they were full of grief, upon occasion of any great calamity, or the commission of any great crime. Which custom was very ancient, (Gen. xxxvii. 34. xliv. 13.) and continued in the times of the prophets, who make it a crime that men did not rend their clothes when grievous sins were committed.

And fell to the earth upon his face.] To make his supplication to God for mercy.

Before the ark of the Lord.] Not in the sanctuary, but with his face towards it. In imitation of which, the precentor in the Jewish synagogue, at this day, falls down before the chest, wherein they keep the book of the law, when he takes it out to read; as Buxtorf observes in his Synag. Judaica. And on solemn fast-days, as the Mischna tells, such prostrations were usual.

Until the even-tide.] Continued all day in fasting and prayer to God.

He and the elders of Israel.] Who rent their clothes, I suppose, as he had done; and then presented themselves in this mournful manner before God to implore his mercy.

And put dust upon their heads.] This was still a higher expression of great grief, and of a deep sense of their unworthiness to be relieved. Which was very usual in this nation, (1 Sam. iv. 12. 2 Sam. i. 2, &c.) and was imitated by the gentiles: as we see in the example of the Ninevites, (Jonah iii. 6.) and of Achilles, who bewailed the death of Patroclus by throwing dust on his head, and lying down in the dust, as Homer describes it in Iliad Σ. ver. 23, 24.

Ver. 7. *And Joshua said, Alas! O Lord God.*] A form of speech dolefully bewailing their forlorn condition: which did not misbecome so great a captain as Joshua was; for the most generous spirits have the most tender sense of humanity, as Arius Montanus excellently discourses upon this place.

Wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us?] This is not a sinful expostulation with God (for Joshua is not reprehended for it, but graciously instructed), but only a confession of his ignorance, why God should do such wonders for them as he had done, and now let them fall into the hands of those enemies whom they had conquered on the other side of Jordan. And it is as if he had said, I am confounded in my thoughts, being unable to understand why, &c. and consequently, he humbly desired to be informed in the reason of this change of his providence.

Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan!] As far as he could apprehend, they had better have rested satisfied with what they had in posses-

sion, than be thus defeated in their attempt to acquire more.

Ver. 8. *O Lord, what shall I say.*] What course shall I take? or, how shall I answer the reproaches of our insulting enemies?

When Israel turneth their backs before their enemies?] What hope is there of conquering them or preserving ourselves?

Ver. 9. *For the Canaanites, and all the inhabitants of the land, will hear of it.*] They that are at the greatest distance, by the sea-side, will hear the report of our defeat, which will soon be spread over the whole country.

And shall environ us round about.] Be encouraged thereby to gather all their forces together and surround us.

And cut off our name from the earth.] Utterly destroy us.

And what wilt thou do unto thy great name?] And, which was worse, God would lose the glory of all the miracles he had wrought, and be thought unable to accomplish what he had begun to do for his people. This argument Moses had formerly pressed, (Exod. xxxii. 12. Numb. xiv. 16. Deut. ix. 28.) and God himself, in the song which he bade Moses teach the people, makes use of it. (Deut. xxxii. 26, 27.)

Ver. 10. *And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up; why liest thou thus upon thy face?*] These words are not a reproof, but a gracious answer to his prayers; for when a person who supplicates a prince is commanded to rise up from his knees, it is a token of acceptance.

Ver. 11. *Israel hath sinned.*] See ver. 1.

And they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them.] They had promised obedience to all God's commands, (Exod. xxiv. 7.) and assured Joshua they would do whatsoever he bade them, (i. 16—18.) And this was a late command delivered by him from God, that they should not meddle with any thing devoted to God, with a solemn curse.

For they have even taken of the accursed thing.] That which belongs to me, ver. 1.

And have also stolen, and dissembled also.] Not only purloined that which God reserved to himself, but denied it after the fact was done. For I suppose Joshua, after the destruction of Jericho, had made inquiry, whether the silver and gold, &c. were brought into the treasury, and whether they had destroyed all other things, as God commanded; and they all answered, that they had.

And they have put it even amongst their own stuff.] To conceal it from discovery: or, it is an expression of his impudent transgression of God's command, in converting it immediately to his own private use. For in this verse the crime is aggravated in a gradual manner, in that Achan had not only sinned, but against the covenant they had solemnly made with him; and that in a matter of great importance, in which he had lately laid his injunctions upon them: having not only taken to himself what belonged to God, but done it by way of stealth, as if he could not see it; and likewise denied the doing of it; and persisting in the sin, by mixing what he had stolen with his own proper goods.

Ver. 12. *Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed.*] By having a man among them who was fallen under the curse of God.

Neither will I be with you any more, except you destroy the accursed from among you.] These words shew that only one man among them was accursed, though they all suffered for it; and were to continue to suffer, till he was destroyed. For now that they knew there had been such a crime committed among them, they had been as guilty as Achan if they had not punished it.

Ver. 13. *Up.*] He was not still lying on the ground, for God had bid him rise before, and he, I suppose, had obeyed him: but this is a word whereby he quickens him to make all the speed he could, to do as he now directed him.

Sanctify the people.] Call upon them to sanctify themselves; as it here follows.

And say unto them, Sanctify yourselves.] As they did when they were to meet the Lord at Mount Sinai, (Exod. xix. 10, &c.) and as they were lately commanded to do when he led them over Jordan, (iii. 5.) For now they were to appear before his majesty, that an inquisition might be made who he was that had been guilty of this foul crime.

To-morrow.] For he would not have the guilt remain any longer upon them.

For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel.] He speaks in this style, both to awaken them to sanctify themselves, and also to appear before the Lord next morning.

Thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.] Both the person that had violated the anathema, and the thing he had purloined.

Ver. 14. *In the morning therefore ye shall be brought.*] Before the Lord.

According to your tribes.] Some principal persons of every tribe, representing the rest, were set before the Lord.

And it shall be, that the tribe which the Lord taketh shall come according to the families thereof; and the family which the Lord shall take shall come by households; and the household which the Lord shall take shall come man by man.] There is no difficulty in these words, but only to understand how this inquisition was made, and the author of the fact discovered: which is not here expressed, there being no words to signify how the Lord took one tribe, and family, and household, and person, from the rest. The Jews (who are never at a loss in these matters) tell us, that when they stood before the sanctuary, the high-priest was in it with the *urim* and *thummim;* wherein were twelve stones, with the names of the children of Israel engraven in them. And when that tribe, suppose, to which the guilty person belonged, was called, that stone in which was the name of that tribe changed colour; and so it did when the family, and the household, and the person, were called. But this is a mere fancy, of the stones shining, or becoming duskish; by which, I have shewn elsewhere, answers could not be given to inquiries by *urim* and *thummim.* And what others of them say is not much better: for instance, Kimchi, who tells us some are of opinion, that they being made to pass before the ark, the guilty could not stir a foot. (See several other conceits in Buxtorf's Historia Urim et Thummim, p. 304, &c.)

But the plainest account of this matter is this, that they were discovered by casting of lots, in the presence of God;

which was an usual way in aftertimes of discovering noxious persons, (1 Sam. xiv. 41, 42. Jonah i. 7.) So Josephus, lib. v. cap. 1. and Ralbag.

Ver. 15. *And it shall be, that he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire.*] After they had stoned him to death with stones, (ver. 25.)

He and all that he hath.] His children, and his cattle; his tent, and all his goods; as it is explained ver. 24.

Because he hath transgressed the covenant of the Lord.] See ver. 11.

And because he hath wrought folly in Israel.] Committed a very heinous sin.

Ver. 16. *So Joshua rose up early in the morning.*] It is probable he acquainted nobody with these orders; but made all the haste he could to put them in execution: for if they had been known abroad, Achan's guilt might have made him flee from so terrible a sentence.

And brought Israel by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken.] Who, if we may believe the Jews, immediately stood to their arms, and would not lay them down, till they saw the man apprehended and punished who had done this thing.

Ver. 17. *And he brought the family of Judah,* &c.] Every family of that tribe, till that of the Zarhites was taken.

And he brought the family of the Zarhites man by man.] That is, every head of their several households, as he was directed, ver. 14.

And Zabdi was taken.] That is, the lot fell upon his household.

Ver. 18. *And he brought his household man by man; and Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.*] Here the Samaritan Chronicle tells the very same story with the Talmudists, that the stone in the breast-plate of the high-priest, in which was engraven the name of Judah, was darkened when Achan was named. (See Hottinger's Smegma Orientale, cap. 8. p. 505.)

Ver. 19. *And Joshua said unto Achan, My son.*] All great minds are full of tenderness and compassion; and nothing more unbecomes a prince than violent passion: which Joshua was so far from expressing on this occasion, that he speaks to him with the greatest mildness imaginable.

Give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel.] The Samaritan Chronicle, beforenamed, paraphrases this not amiss: *Lift up thine eyes to the King of heaven and earth, and acknowledge that nothing can be hid from him; who knows the greatest secrets.*

And make confession unto him, and tell me now what thou hast done.] Openly confess thy guilt; and relate to me what it is, that thou hast converted to thine own use.

Hide it not from me.] Who thou seest have God at hand, to discover that which none of us know but thyself.

Ver. 20. *And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel.*] Which the Samaritan Chronicle thus expresses; *I acknowledge that I have grievously sinned before God, who knows all secret and hidden things: for I have prevaricated against the covenant of God, and against his ambassador.*

And thus and thus have I done.] Committed this sin, with such circumstances as here follow.

Ver. 21. *When I saw among the spoils.*] He doth not say in what place; but the forenamed Chronicle saith, it was as he entered into one of their temples.

A goodly Babylonish garment.] There are a great many opinions about this garment; which Bochartus most probably judges to have been a *various garment,* as the LXX. translate it; that is, of *divers colours,* wherein were several figures either woven or wrought with a needle: for which sort of work Babylon was famous, insomuch that they were called *painted garments;* which made a most glorious show, and therefore was very inviting to the eye of Achan: who was tempted by its lustre, to reserve one of these garments for his own use, or to sell; for they were of an immense price. See him in his Phaleg. lib. i. cap. 6. where he hath a long dissertation about this garment.

And two hundred shekels of silver.] Which is as much as a hundred German dollars, as Masius observes.

And a wedge of gold.] In the Hebrew a *tongue;* for it had that shape.

Of fifty shekels' weight.] This may be understood two ways; either that it was worth so many shekels in value, that is, fifty dollars; or, that it weighed as much as fifty shekels, that is, three hundred dollars. The last sense Masius thinks most probable.

Then I coveted, and took them.] To his own use; when he should have brought them into God's treasury, (James i. 15.)

And, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent.] Till he could have time to dispose of them to his best advantage.

And the silver under it.] The silver was immediately under the Babylonish garment, and the gold under that: for both silver and gold are here meant, though one only mentioned.

Ver. 22. *Then Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent.*] Lest any one should remove them, and render the fact dubious; and that the children of Israel might be speedily expiated.

And, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it.] They found the Babylonish garment (as was said before) hid in the earth, and the silver and gold under it. The LXX. indeed, understand it, as if the gold and Babylonish garment were uppermost, and the silver under them: for so they translate these words, both here and in the foregoing verse, τὸ ἀργύριον ὑποκάτω αὐτῶν, *the silver under them.* The wedge of gold, perhaps, was wrapped in the Babylonish garment; and so the silver might be said to lie either *under it,* or *under them.*

Ver. 23. *And they took them out of the midst of the tent.*] Where he told them he had buried these things.

And brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel.] For they were all assembled at the tabernacle, waiting to see the issue of this matter.

And laid them before the Lord.] That the fact might be manifest, and the Lord acknowledged to be omniscient.

Ver. 24. *And Joshua, and all Israel with him.*] By an universal consent.

Took Achan the son of Zerah.] He was Zerah's great-grandchild.

And the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold.] Which God would not have put into his treasury, after they had been thus perverted to a private use.

And his sons, and his daughters.] This seems very hard, that they should be executed in such a terrible manner, as here follows, for their father's fault. But the Jews in Pirke Eliezer say, they were punished because they were privy to their father's stealth, and concealed it. Others think this was a necessary severity in the beginning of a new empire, and of a plentiful fortune, upon which they now entered; that they might not wantonly abuse it. But there are those who think this is but a seeming difficulty; Achan alone being stoned (as we read in the next verse, *all Israel stoned him with stones),* and his children brought forth to be spectators of it. And when it is said, in the conclusion of the next verse, *they stoned them with stones,* it relates to his oxen, and asses, and sheep, which were stoned with him. (See Guil. Vorstius, in his annotations on Pirke Eliezer, p. 224.)

And his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had.] This was done, to represent to the people the heinousness of this offence; and to strike such a terror into them, that they should not dare to commit the like.

And they brought them unto the valley of Achor.] Which had its name from him, ver. 26. (See there.)

Ver. 25. *And Joshua said.*] He was the sole judge, as the Jews think, in this matter. And whereas, by the law, none might be condemned out of the mouth of one witness, nor was any judge to sit alone without assistants (according to their doctors), nor any man's testimony to be admitted against himself (because, in a mad fit, he might undo himself), yet their king had this singular prerogative, that he might try a man alone by himself, and condemn him out of the mouth of one witness, nay, from his own confession; as Joshua did here (who was their king or supreme governor) in Achan's case; and as David did afterward in the case of the Amalekite, 2 Sam. i. 15. (See G. Schickard, in his Jus Regium, cap. 4. Theor. 14.) But Joshua is impertinently alleged as a proof of this extraordinary power; for it was God who convicted Achan, and pronounced this sentence; which Joshua only put in execution.

Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day.] The doctors in the Jerusalem Talmud, in the treatise Sanhedrin, cap. 6. fancy there is a peculiar emphasis in these words, *this day.* As if he had said, *In this day thou shalt be troubled, but thou shalt not be troubled in the world to come.* For they think that he having given glory to God, by confessing his sin, had all his punishment here.

All agree Joshua alludes to his name; the word *Achar* signifying to *trouble* or *disturb.* Or rather, his name was changed from Achan unto Achar, because of this disturbance which he gave to all Israel.

And all Israel stoned him with stones.] Which was a punishment of great crimes, as I have observed elsewhere. See Lev. xx. 9. 11—13, &c. as I remember. This is said to be done by *all Israel;* because they were all present, and consenting to it.

And burnt them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.] Burnt their dead carcasses. Why they were both stoned and also burnt, Eliezer in his Pirke, and Vorstius upon him, gives a reason in the place abovenamed.

Ver. 26. *And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day.*] As a monument of his sin, and of God's judgment upon him. Thus they did with Absalom, 2 Sam. xviii. 17. And houses or cities which were destroyed, are said to be turned into a *heap,* (Isa. xxv. 2.) or *heaps,* (Jer. ix. 11.) as a token of their utter ruin.

And the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger.] Was reconciled to his people, after they had executed his sentence against him, that provoked his anger. So the Samaritan Chronicle: *Thus the anger of God was removed from the children of Israel, and he was pleased with what they had done.* (See Deut. xiii. 17.)

Wherefore the name of that place.] Where he was stoned and burnt.

Was called The Valley of Achor, unto this day.] From that time all the people called this place by that name, in memory of this execution done upon Achar: so he was also called ever after this. For though his name was Achan, yet from henceforward they called him Achar, the troubler of Israel. And so he is here called in the Syriac version, and by Josephus, Athanasius, Basil, and others mentioned by Bochartus; as Ezra himself also calls him, 1 Chron. ii. 7. See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 31. in the latter end.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord said unto Joshua.*] Who, it is likely, now consulted God about their progress in this war: which he had not done before, (vii. 2.) being sufficiently authorized by what God had often said to him, and by their success against Jericho: but this late defeat before Ai, might make him think it necessary to take advice of the Divine Majesty, before he attempted any thing farther.

Fear not, neither be dismayed.] Because of the late ill success; of which he now knew the cause; which was removed.

Take all the people of war with thee.] This order may seem strange, since the people themselves thought two or three thousand were sufficient, if God were with them. But God would have them all to share in the spoil of Ai; that they who had obeyed him in abstaining from laying their hands on any thing in Jericho, might be now rewarded for it, by the prey of this city; as it follows in the next verse.

And arise, go up to Ai.] Which it appears by this was in the hill country.

I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land.] He bids him be confident of a complete victory, as if he had already won it.

Ver. 2. *And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst to Jericho and her king.*] Only with such difference, as follows in the next words.

Only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves.] None of the silver or gold, or any thing else, was separated to God's use, nor ordered to be destroyed; but they were to enjoy it all entirely themselves.

Lay thee an ambush for the city behind it.] On the west of it; for they were now in Gilgal, which lay eastward.

Ver. 3. *So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai.*] In obedience to the Divine direction, (ver. 1.)

And Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty men of valour, and sent them away by night.] When they were less liable to be observed.

Ver. 4. *And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, even behind the city.*] Like a great general, he assigns their post to every part of the army.

Go not very far from the city.] Lie as close to it as you can, without being discovered.

But be ye all ready.] To seize upon the city, when all the people were drawn out of it.

Ver. 5. *And I, and all the people that are with me, will approach unto the city.*] As if they intended to assault it.

And it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first.] Which he rationally presumed they would, being flushed with such good success.

That we will flee before them.] Counterfeit a flight, as soon as they appeared.

Ver. 6. *For they will come out after us, till we have drawn them from the city.*] Pursue them, with all their force.

For they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them.] He gives the reason of their flight, without striking of a stroke (as we now speak), that all the people might be enticed out of the city, in pursuit of them, as he concluded they would be; because now there was a greater number of the Israelites than before; which would require their whole power to deal withal.

Ver. 7. *Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city.*] Upon the signal given, mentioned ver. 18.

For the Lord your God will deliver it into your hand.] He would not have them fear to enter the city; which he assured them God would put into their possession.

Ver. 8. *And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, that ye shall set the city on fire.*] The gate where they entered, or some of the skirts of the city; as a token they were possessed of it. For they were to take the spoil of the city before they burnt it, (ver. 28.)

According to the commandment of the Lord shall ye do.] And not transgress, as Achan did.

See, I have commanded you.] Acquainted them with the will of God; in the observance of which they might be confident of success.

Ver. 9. *Joshua therefore sent them forth, and they went to lie in ambush.*] He selected these thirty thousand men out of the rest of the army; and when it was dark they went upon the forenamed design.

And Joshua lodged that night among the people.] The forenamed detachment (as we now speak) was commanded by some great officer, in whom Joshua confided; but he himself lay all night in the body of the army; that he might be ready in the morning to give the necessary orders.

Ver. 10. *And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and numbered the people.*] He first gave orders to the officers (for he could not do it himself alone) to see that none of the people were wanting.

And went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai.] And when he commanded them to march, he was attended by the elders of Israel, leading them on towards Ai. But it is uncertain who are here meant by the *elders of Israel*. Some think, the chief commanders in the army; but they are never called *elders*, much less the *elders of Israel*. But the rulers and judges are called by this name, who, I suppose, waited upon Joshua as a council of war: being men authorized by God to assist the supreme governor, (Numb. xi. 16. 24, 25.)

Ver. 11. *And all the people, even the people of war that were with him, went up and drew nigh, and came before the city.*] The distance between Gilgal and Ai being but three leagues, it is likely, the people being mustered early in the morning, they got thither before noon. Those words, *even the men of war that were with him*, seem to be opposed to the thirty thousand, whom he had sent before to lie in ambush, (ver. 3.)

And pitched on the north side of Ai.] Here the main body of the army lay, behind the hills, it is likely, so that they were not discovered till the evening, or the next day.

Now there was a valley between them and Ai.] Where they of Ai, I suppose, drew up; when they resolved to engage them.

Ver. 12. *And took about five thousand, and set them to lie in ambush between Beth-el and Ai.*] Which places were but a league distant one from the other. (See vii. 2.)

On the west side of the city.] Where the former detachment was ordered to lie, ver. 4. But these seem to have been a distinct party from them, and sent, it is likely, for another purpose; to intercept all those that might think to save themselves, by flying through by-ways, which they were to guard. There are those, indeed, who think that there were but thirty thousand men in all employed in this expedition against Ai; and out of them these *five thousand* men were sent to lie in ambush, that they might, in convenient time, set fire to the city. (See Masius.) But this is so directly contrary to God's command, to *take all the people of war with him*, ver. 1. and to what is said ver. 3. 11. that I cannot think it to be true. One had better say, this party was added to strengthen the thirty thousand men in their undertaking.

Ver. 13. *And when they had set the people, even all the host that was on the north of the city, and their liersin wait on the west side of the city.*] That is, when things were thus disposed about the evening.

Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.] To pray to God, it is likely, for a blessing upon their enterprise.

Ver. 14. *And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw it.*] That is, was informed of their investing the city on the north side of it; which, it is likely, was in the evening, or late that night.

That they hasted.] He called a council, and they speedily resolved to dislodge the Israelites.

And rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people.] The meaning is, all that could fight went out, and their king at the head of them.

At a time appointed.] They had agreed all to issue out at several gates (it is likely) at a certain hour.

Before the plain.] He means, perhaps, the valley which lay between Ai and the camp of Israel; before which they drew up their army to engage the Israelites.

But he wist not that there were liers in ambush against him behind the city.] The king had no intelligence of that strong party, which Joshua had sent to lie behind the city; they keeping, I suppose, their gates shut, (as they did at Jericho, that none could get in or go out, vi. 1.) and suspecting no danger from the western coast where they lay,

but only from the east, whence they knew the Israelites were to march.

Ver. 15. *And Joshua, and all Israel, made as if they were beaten before them.*] At the first onset, Joshua himself turned his back, and all the rest of his army; as if they durst not stand before them.

And fled by the way of the wilderness.] Which lay between Jericho and Ai.

Ver. 16. *And all the people that were in Ai.*] Who were able to fight.

Were called together to pursue them.] I suppose some of the men of war might be left in the city till they saw the Israelites fly, and then they were all called out (as ver. 14. is to be understood) together with those of Beth-el, who were come to their assistance; being near neighbours, and both under the same king.

And they pursued after Joshua, and were drawn away from the city.] They were so eager in their pursuit, that they were drawn to a greater distance from Ai than they would have been, if they had considered the danger of leaving it naked.

Ver. 17. *And there was not a man left in Ai.*] None that were able to fight.

Or Beth-el, that went not out after Israel.] For they of Beth-el, it appears by these words, were come to the assistance of Ai, before any of the army of Israel arrived: for afterward they could not, because the ambush lay between Beth-el and Ai, (ver. 9.)

And they left the city open, and pursued after Israel.] There was not so much as a man left to guard the gates; but all were engaged in the pursuit.

Ver. 18. *And the Lord said unto Joshua.*] God secretly suggested to him, that now was the time for the ambush to fall upon the city; when their army was drawn so far from it, that they could not return soon enough to relieve it.

Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand towards Ai.] He bids him face about (as we now speak) and stop the flight of the Israelites. It is much disputed what the Hebrew word *chidon* signifies; which the Vulgar Latin translates a *shield*. But Bochartus hath taken a great deal of pains to shew, that it every where signifies in Scripture a *spear* (as we translate it), or a *lance*, or some kind of such-like offensive weapon; especially in this place, he thinks, there can be no doubt of it: for it was a weapon he had in his hand, and was to stretch forth towards the city; that it might be a signal to those in ambush to rise and enter the city; and to those who fled to make a stand, and encounter the enemy. To which purpose, nothing could be more proper than a spear, with a flag, it is highly probable, at the end of it (like to our ensigns), which made it more visible. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 8. p. 135, &c.) The LXX. here translate it γαῖσον, which Suidas says signifies a kind of weapon, οἷον δόρατος, *like to a spear.* See the same most learned author, in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 42. p. 744.

For I will give it into thy hand.] As he promised, ver. 1.

And Joshua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand towards the city.] That all Israel might see it; as they did the rod of Moses, when they fought against Amalek.

Ver. 19. *And the ambush rose quickly out of their place.*] Being admonished by some Divine suggestion (as Masius thinks) as well as by the signal, that now was the time to execute their design.

And they came as soon as he had stretched out his hand.] Which they might see from some of the hills, at the back of which they lay. But why they should watch for this sign, or understand what it meant, unless Joshua had received this order, and told it them before they went, cannot be conceived.

And they entered into the city, and took it.] For there was nobody to oppose them.

And hasted and set the city on fire.] In one place; which, it is likely, was on the north side of the city; that both the Israelites and the people of Ai might see the smoke. This the Lord had strictly commanded, (see ver. 8.) which made them make such *haste*, as soon as they had possessed themselves of the city, to set fire to it.

Ver. 20. *And when the men of Ai looked behind them.*] I suppose there was a great shout made by all the Israelites, when they saw the smoke ascend; which made the men of Ai look about them.

They saw, and, behold, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven.] The firing of any out-houses, or barns, was sufficient to make such a smoke; for it is certain the city was not yet burnt. (See ver. 28.)

And they had no power to flee this way or that way.] Either they were so dismayed, that they stood stock-still (as we speak), or found themselves so environed, that they could no way escape. For on the north and east sides, the great army came upon them; and on the west the ambush issued forth against them; and the other five thousand men blocked up their way on the south: which could not but very much amaze and perplex their minds; and the more, to see all their vain-glorious hopes vanished, which their king no doubt had entertained, of stopping the progress of the Israelites, and being the deliverer of his country.

And the people that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers.] Ver. 15. They counterfeited a flight no longer, but now boldly looked their enemies in the face.

Ver. 21. *And when Joshua and all Israel saw.*] By this it is plain the whole body of the men were here; and not only three thousand of them, as some suppose. (See ver. 12.)

That the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended.] Whereby they understood it was taken.

Then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai.] After they had made a stand awhile, and rallied, they fell upon the men of Ai, and made a great slaughter of them.

Ver. 22. *And the other issued out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side and some on that side; and they smote them, so that they let none of them remain or escape.*] By this stratagem they were all entirely cut off.

Ver. 23. *And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.*] Perhaps they were ordered so to do, that he might be made a public spectacle of the Divine vengeance.

Ver. 24. *And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai.*] That is, the men of war.

In the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them.] By this it appears, that they fled before the Israelites as

soon as they turned upon them, having no heart to fight them, (ver. 20.)

And when they were all fallen by the edge of the sword until they were consumed.] This is repeated to express a complete victory.

That all the Israelites returned unto Ai.] From whence they counterfeited a flight.

And smote it with the edge of the sword.] All the people that were left in it, as every one was that was not able to go to war.

Ver. 25. *And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand.*] By which it appears this was no great city; and that they who were sent to view the country had reason to think a small party sufficient to subdue it, (vii. 2, 3.) For the men of Beth-el seem to be included also in this number, being mixed with those of Ai, from whom the Israelites could not distinguish them.

Even all the men of Ai.] The inhabitants of the city (as it follows in the next verse) and the territory about it, great and small, men and women.

Ver. 26. *And Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.*] But kept his arm extended with the spear in it, as Moses's rod was lifted up during the fight with Amalek. Or, the meaning may be, that he himself charged them, and continued to fight as long as there was a man left.

Ver. 27. *Only the cattle, and the spoil of the city.*] *i. e.* Their silver and gold, and household-stuff, &c.

Israel took for a prey unto themselves according unto the word of the Lord, &c.] Who was so far from reserving any of these things to himself, that he made an express grant of them to the Israelites, (ver. 2.)

Ver. 28. *And Joshua burnt Ai.*] After they had gotten all the spoil of it, which had been lost if it had been burnt before by the liers in ambush. (See ver. 8. 19.)

And made it a heap, even a desolation, unto this day.] Laid it waste, so that it was known only by its ruins for a long time after, as it was at the time when this was written. (See ver. 11. 26.)

Ver. 29. *And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree.*] Being the head of a very wicked people, who was fit to be made a public spectacle of God's displeasure. Lipsius, in his book de Cruce, lib. i. cap. 11. produces this as an ancient instance of crucifying notorious malefactors. But that is a great mistake, crucifixion being no Jewish, but a Roman punishment. Nor were crucified persons hanged and strangled, as the king of Ai and Haman were, but fastened alive to a cross, with nails struck into their hands and feet. The LXX. indeed here expound it, *he was hanged,* ἐπὶ ξύλου διδύμου, wherein they seem to have respect to the figure of the cross; but there is no such thing in the Hebrew. (See Numb. xxv. 4.)

Until the even-tide; and as soon as the sun went down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcass down from the tree.] For so God had commanded, Deut. xxi. 22, 23. (See there.)

And cast it at the entering of the gate of the city.] Where he was wont to sit in judgment; and, in all probability, had exercised a great deal of injustice and cruelty.

And raised thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day.] As they did upon Achan, vii. 26. and for the same end, to be a monument of his being hanged near to this place.

Ver. 30. *Then Joshua built an altar unto the Lord God of Israel in Mount Ebal.*] If this mount lay between Ai and Beth-el (as Gerardus Mercator endeavours to prove by many arguments), then this altar, we may well think, was built immediately after the taking of Ai, as soon as they came into possession of this mount: for they looked upon themselves, no doubt, as obliged to fulfil the command of God, given them by Moses, as soon as it was possible. But the Scripture plainly describes this Mount Ebal as near Shechem, for there was only a valley between Ebal and Gerizim, from whence Jotham spake to the men of Shechem, (Judg. ix. 7.) which was a great way distant from Ai. And therefore we must suppose that which is here related not to have been done till they had the country about Shechem.

Ver. 31. *As Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded the children of Israel.*] Deut. xi. 29, 30. xxvii. 2, &c. See in those places.

As it is written in the book of the law of Moses, An altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron.] The altar was built according to the direction given by God in a foregoing law of his, Exod. xx. 25. and repeated in Deut. xxvii. 5, 6. (See there.)

And they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace-offerings.] For now they renewed their covenant with God the third time, as I observed upon that chapter in Deuteronomy, ver. 10.

Ver. 32. *And he wrote there, upon the stones, a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.*] It is a great question what it was he wrote upon these stones. Some fancy all the five books of Moses; others only the book of Deuteronomy; which is more likely than the other; but too long for these stones to contain, or for him to write, *in the presence of all Israel.* Others, therefore, think only the ten commandments, or a compendium of the law of Moses; or, perhaps, the *blessings and cursings:* but Fortunatus Scacchus, with some probability, conjectures, that he only wrote the *words of the covenant,* by which the children of Israel acknowledged they held the land of Canaan of God, as their great Lord; upon condition they observed his laws, to which they and their posterity were obliged. And this he principally grounds upon those words, (Deut. xxvii. 3.) *Thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law.* Where the Hebrew word *hazoth (this)* he thinks hath a particular respect to what he is speaking of; *viz.* their going over Jordan to possess the land which God gave them, upon condition they observed his statutes. (See Sacror. Elæochrysm. Myrothec. lib. ii. cap. 57. p. 570, &c. and my notes upon Deuteronomy, xxvii. 3.)

Ver. 33. *And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side of the ark, and on that side.*] With their faces towards the ark.

Before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord.] Who were to pronounce the blessings and the cursings prescribed by the law. (See Deut. xxvii. 24.)

As well the stranger as he that was born among them.] For the law made no distinction between them, (Levit. xix. 34.)

Half of them over against Mount Gerizim, and half of them over against Mount Ebal, as Moses, the servant of the

Lord, had commanded before.] In Deut. xxvii. 12, 13. (See there.)

That they should bless the people of Israel.] There were cursings, as well as blessings pronounced: but the intent of cursing was, that they might avoid those sins against which they were denounced; and thereby obtain a blessing.

Ver. 34. *And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.*] *viz.* In Deut. xxvii. ver. 15—17, &c. The word *afterward* is not to be neglected, which imports, that after the building of the altar, and the offering sacrifices thereon, and writing the law on the stones, and disposing the people in their place about the ark, then he read the law to them. Which was likely to be heard with the greater attention, when they were thus prepared to receive it, and had solemnly worshipped God, and owned his authority.

Ver. 35. *There was not a word of all that Moses commanded which Joshua did not read before all the congregation of Israel.*] *viz.* All that Moses directed in Deut. xxvii. or, as others will have it, the whole book of Deuteronomy, wherein these blessings and cursings are contained. (See Deut. xxxi. 13.)

With the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.] By the *strangers* here mentioned, (and in ver. 33.) are to be understood such as were proselytes to their religion: and had undertaken to observe this law, as well as themselves; and therefore were to be made acquainted with it. And that they might be moved to have the greater regard to it, Joshua himself, their chief governor, read it to them. So some of the Jews understand it; after the priests had read the blessings and cursings, then Joshua read all the commanding and forbidding precepts in the law.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when all the kings which were on this side Jordan, in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of the great sea.*] By the *great sea*, is meant the Mediterranean; where those people, peculiarly called Canaanites, dwelt, as hath been observed. And the Amorites seem to have been the principal inhabitants of the hilly country, in the south of Judea. (See on Deut. i. 7. 19, 20.)

Over against Lebanon.] The LXX and the Vulgar understand this, as if he spake of those that dwelt near Lebanon.

The Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite.] Thus they are reckoned up in Deut. xx. 17. where the Girgashites are omitted, as they are here. (See an account of it in my notes upon that place: and on chap. xvi. of this book, ver. 10.)

Heard thereof.] Of the taking of Jericho and Ai: for what is said, in the words immediately foregoing, concerning the Israelites meeting at Mount Ebal, is not inserted as a thing wherein these nations were concerned.

Ver. 2. *That they gathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel.*] They entered into a confederacy to oppose Joshua's farther progress in the conquest of their country. But they did not gather themselves to battle, till they heard what Gibeon had done.

With one accord.] The whole country were unanimous in that resolution: and thereupon rejected the summons which Joshua had sent them to surrender themselves and their cities to him.

Ver. 3. *And when the inhabitants of Gibeon.*] Or, *But when*, &c. Gibeon was a city in the mountainous country; for we read afterward of a high place at Gibeon.

Heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai.] They being Hivites (ver. 7.) had at the first rejected the offers of peace which Joshua sent them, as the rest of their nation (ver. 1.) had done. But hearing that Joshua had taken Jericho and Ai, and destroyed all their inhabitants, they repented of that resolution; and consulted how they might, by some means or other, make their peace with the Israelites.

Ver. 4. *And they did work wilily.*] It being too late to surrender their city to Joshua upon such terms, as he is supposed to have offered (for there was no mercy to be shewn them, after they had stood out against the three proclamations, which the Jews say were made to them), they contrived how to put a fallacy upon the Israelites, and by craft and cunning procure their favour. (See my annotations on Deut. xx. 10, 11.)

And went.] They chose some from among them, who went in the name of the rest, towards the camp of Israel.

And made as if they had been ambassadors.] Pretending that they were sent upon an embassy to them, from a far country; as they affirmed, ver. 6.

And took old sacks upon their asses.] Wherein was their provision.

And wine-bottles, old, and rent, and bound up.] Where they were rent.

Ver. 5. *And old shoes clouted upon their feet.*] As if they had been worn out, and patched up, with long travel.

And old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy.] It is observed by Arius Montanus, that nothing is said of the decay of their wine: which they pretended, it is likely, to have drank all up, in so long a journey. For it was not so easy to procure sour wine as mouldy bread.

Ver. 6. *And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel.*] They addressed themselves to him, as the head of the people; and he had his council about him: who, in all probability, are here called *the men of Israel.* Though some conceive, that they had laid hold of every one they met withal, and besecched them to admit them to their friendship.

We are come from a far country.] To sue to you for your friendship.

Now therefore make ye a league with us.] As they might do with those that accepted the offers of peace, which they sent them, (Deut. xx. 11.) and therefore much more with those who came to seek to be at peace with them: and were not inhabitants of the land of Canaan, but came from a far country; which they gave as a reason, why they should make a league with them. And, indeed, they had been to blame, if they had denied their petition: as the Romans were, who, when they were grown great, refused to receive a remote nation into their protection (as Appian tells us), who by their ambassadors submitted themselves to their power, because they did not see they were likely to get any thing by them. Which Bodinus (in his book against Malestret-

tus de Caritate Rerum) censures as a base action, and injurious to Almighty God. "As if (saith he) the majesty of ruling and administering justice, especiallyto miserable and ill-instructed people, were not the greatest gift of God; and the highest honour of which a man is capable in this world."

Ver. 7. *And the men of Israel said.*] This shews that *the men of Israel* beforementioned, were not ordinary persons, but such as had authority to treat with ambassadors.

Unto the Hivites.] Unto those who came from Gibeon, who were really Hivites, as is expressly said, xi. 19.

Peradventure you dwell among us.] Are some of the people of this land; which are commanded to rout out.

And how shall we make a league with you?] Then it is utterly unlawful for us to do what you desire: for God hath often forbidden it. (Exod. xxiii. 32, 33. xxxiv. 12—16. Deut. vii. 2, 3, &c. and other places.)

Ver. 8. *And they said unto Joshua.*] With whom alone they had a desire to treat.

We are thy servants.] This doth not signify that they were ready to yield themselves to be tributaries to the Israelites, or accept of any terms that should be imposed on them: but are only expressions of great humility and civility; acknowledging the Israelites to be superior in power and strength, and therefore desiring their protection in their libercies. Thus Abraham addressed himself to the travellers, whom he entertained as greater persons than himself, (Gen. xviii. 3, 4.) And Jacob calls himself and his household the servants of Esau, (Gen. xxx. 20.) And thus Batricides understood their language here; who says the king of Gibeon wrote a letter to Joshua, wherein he desired security from him; and presented him with great gifts, as Hottinger observes in his Smegma Orientale, cap. 8. p. 507.

And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye?] They being backward to name the country from whence they were sent; it begat a reasonable suspicion in Joshua, that they were some of the people of Canaan.

Ver. 9. *And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come.*] They still avoid giving a particular account of their country, but answer in general terms; in which commonly lies deceit.

Because of the name of the Lord thy God.] To divert him from pressing them to give a more satisfactory answer, they pretend religion had invited them to take this long journey: which they knew would procure them a favourable audience.

For we have heard of the fame of him, &c.] Of his miraculous works, particularly those which he did to deliver them from the Egyptian slavery; which, as it is evident, were come to their knowledge: so it is very reasonable to believe such wonderful things were the motives that made them seek for the Israelites' friendship; they being wrought upon, as Rahab was, to embrace their religion.

Ver. 10. *And all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth.*] They say not a word of the drying up of Jordan, and of the taking of Jericho and Ai: but prudently conceal their knowledge of those things, because they would have it supposed the tidings of those wonders could not yet be arrived at a country so far off, as they pretended theirs to be.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore our elders.*] The principal persons in their country: who were the rulers and governors of it.

And all the inhabitants of our country.] With the unanimous consent of all the people.

Spake to us, saying, Take victuals with you for the journey.] Made choice of us for this embassy; and ordered us to provide ourselves with necessaries for so long a journey.

And go to meet them.] To prevent the Israelites from entertaining any hostile intentions against them.

And say unto them, We are your servants: therefore now make ye a league with us.] The Samaritan Chronicle saith, they had orders to tell Joshua that they would embrace the Jewish religion; and refuse nothing, great or small, that he should desire of them. And, indeed, one would think, by what they said before, that they had a sense of the God of Israel, as superior to all other gods: and consequently, were disposed to become worshippers of him. For which reason he was pleased to dispose things so, that, by their wiles, they should compass their end, and be entertained into the friendship of the Israelites.

Ver. 12. *This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses.*] When it was newly come out of the oven.

On the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy.] This they say to demonstrate that they came from a country far distant from Canaan. Which, though it was not true, yet there are those (particularly Puffendorf) who think it was not culpable, nor properly a lie; being a device to save their lives. For who will reprehend a person (saith he), who by a fiction preserves himself from being killed by an enemy? especially in such a case as this, wherein the Israelites suffered no damage by their craft? for what loss doth he sustain who is hindered from shedding another man's blood, but hath it in his power to despoil him of all he hath, and bring him into perpetual servitude, so disarmed and weakened that he can never rise up against him? Thus he. Which is a doctrine that ought not to be allowed.

Ver. 13. *And these bottles of wine which we filled were new; and, behold, they be rent: and these garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey.*] They use thus many words, to divert him from making any farther inquiry, what the name of their country was (lest some among the Israelites, who had many strangers in their camp, should have been able to disprove them), and mention only the long time they had spent in their journey, that he might be moved to be kind unto those who had taken so much pains to beg the favour of the Israelites.

Ver. 14. *And the men.*] That is, the persons mentioned ver. 7. who were the οἱ ἄρχοντες (as the LXX. here say), the *princes* or *rulers* of Israel.

Took of their victuals.] Not to eat them, but to inspect and examine them, whether their provision was so dry and mouldy as they pretended. For the word we translate *victuals,* is the very same with that we before translate *provision,* (ver. 5.) Which shews he doth not speak of victuals now prepared, but which they brought along with them. Some, indeed, think the meaning is, that they entered into a league with the Gibeonites, by tasting their victuals. But as this must suppose that they had made a feast for the entertainment of these princes, and invited

them to it (which is altogether unlikely), so the making a league with them follows after this, in the next verse, and therefore was not made by taking of their victuals.

And asked not counsel of the mouth of the Lord.] These words may seem to favour the sense now mentioned; that by eating with them (which was a token of friendship) they had performed part of the ceremony which belonged to the making of leagues, without consulting the Divine Majesty about it, but hastily believing an improbable story. (See Gen. xxvi. 30, 31. xxxi. 44, 45.) But the meaning of these words may be no more than this; that they depended wholly upon their own judgment, and that founded on such slight examination of the truth, as only taking their victuals into their hands, and inspecting them, when God was near at hand to give them advice if they would have consulted him; and, it is probable, would have allowed them to make a league with the Gibeonites on such conditions as he directed.

Ver. 15. *And Joshua made peace with them.*] Following the opinion of the princes; who took them to be what they pretended.

And made a league with them, to let them live.] Not merely to spare their lives (which, supposing them to belong to a far country, they had no warrant to take away), but to let them continue in the enjoyment of all they had. For *to live*, in Scripture, signifies to be happy; and therefore he promised not to hurt, but to protect them in their rights and liberties.

And the princes of the congregation sware unto them.] Ratified the league by a solemn oath: the violation of which, in future times, was severely punished, (2 Sam. xxii. 6.)

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they were their neighbours, and that they dwelt among them.*] Speedy news being sent by the pretended ambassadors to Gibeon of their good success (as we may well think), there were great rejoicings made there, as Arius Montanus supposes. The report of which came to the Israelites three days after the league was concluded.

Ver. 17. *And the children of Israel journeyed.*] Not the whole body of the people, but a party was sent to understand the truth.

And came unto their cities on the third day.] On the third day after they began their march thither.

Now their cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim.] The capital city was Gibeon, (called a *royal city*, x. 2.) upon which the other three were dependents. The three first of which fell afterward to the tribe of Benjamin, (xviii. 25, 26.) as the last was in the tribe of Judah, (xv. 60.)

Ver. 18. *And the children of Israel smote them not.*] Though they were not such as they supposed, but Canaanites, who were under the curse of God; yet they did not destroy them, for the reason following.

Because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel.] Some think their oath did not bind them, because it was made upon a false supposition, that the Gibeonites were no part of the seven nations of Canaan. But if this were true, as it is not, (see Grotius, de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. ii. cap. 13. sect. 4.) the princes judged right, that it had been very scandalous, and would have highly dishonoured the name of God, by whom they had sworn, if they had broken their oath. By the keeping of which, the reverence which the Gibeonites had already to the Divine Majesty was very much increased; whereas it had been vile in all people's eyes, if the Israelites had not expressed this great regard unto it.

And all the congregation murmured against the princes.] Or, *But all the congregation murmured*, &c. because they were hereby deprived of the spoil of those cities.

Ver. 19. *But all the princes said unto all the congregation.*] Their unanimity in this opinion was of great moment to quiet the people's discontent.

We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel.] Especially since they had engaged themselves, by a solemn oath, to their great and glorious Lord, who fought for them, and gave them all their victories, (ver. 13, 14.) For so the Targum here expounds these words, *We have sworn by the Word of the Lord God of Israel.*

Now, therefore, we may not touch them.] That is, do them any hurt; which we cannot do without breaking our oath, and forfeiting his favour.

Ver. 20. *This we will do unto them, we will even let them live.*] As they had covenanted, ver. 15.

Lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them.] Lest God be very angry with us for breaking our oath. Which Joshua, as St. Ambrose observes, religiously observed, " Ne, dum alienam perfidiam arguit, suam fidem solveret," *that he might not be guilty of so shameful a thing as to break his faith, whilst he reproved their perfidiousness.* (Lib. iii. de Officiis, cap. 10.)

Ver. 21. *And the princes said unto them.*] But they added this.

Let them live.] Though we let them live, because we must be as good as our word, which is the meaning of the last words of this verse (which must be joined with these), *as the princes had promised them.*

But let them be hewers of wood, and drawers of water.] Yet they shall not be equal to us in all privileges, but we will make them in some sort serviceable to us; in such employments as will save us a great deal of labour.

Unto all the congregation.] They were not to be hewers of wood, and drawers of water, for every private person, but for the benefit of the whole congregation of Israel, who were bound to find wood and water for the service of God at the tabernacle. Which burden it was now resolved should be laid upon the Gibeonites; and thereby the children of Israel eased of it, ver. 23. where they are said to be made *hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of the Lord.* This was no breach of their oath, for they did not make them absolutely slaves, but only a sacred kind of servants (as Josephus calls them), being employed about the house of God, which was in itself honourable, and not base and contemptible. Some think they were afterward called *Nethinim*, which signifies persons given to God for his service; of whom we read in 1 Chron. ix. 2. Ezra viii. 20. and other places.

Ver. 22. *And Joshua called for them.*] For the ambassadors, with whom he had made a league.

And he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, &c.] Imposed upon our belief by a false story.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore ye are cursed.*] Notwithstanding our oath, you must not quite escape that curse of God

which hath long lain upon all the people of Canaan, part of which you are. For a servile state of any sort, to which they were reduced, was no small punishment (called here a *curse*), and so much the more grievous, because it was to be perpetual.

And there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen.] None of them were to continue freemen, but have a servitude imposed upon them: not, indeed, such an one as made them entire slaves, but only condemned them to the laborious employment which here follows.

And hewers of wood, and drawers of water, for the house of my God.] This is the limitation of their servitude; which did not extend to all things, but only to these and such-like (it is probable); to hew stones, for instance, for the reparation of the temple after it was built, and to carry them to those who were employed in that work. Grotius hath well expressed their condition, "Addicti sunt personali cuidam servituti," *they were addicted to certain personal servitude;* whereas, if they had dealt plainly and openly with the Israelites, they might have been admitted only to pay a certain tribute. (Lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 13. sect. 4. n. 3.)

Ver. 24. *And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the Lord thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all its inhabitants, therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing.*] They first give an answer unto Joshua's demand, *Wherefore have ye beguiled us?* Which was done to save themselves, if they could, by any shift, from that destruction which they believed God had decreed against all the inhabitants of their land; and they did not know how to evade it, but by this artifice; which, since it arose from some degree of faith, God suffered to take effect, that they might remain for ever among the Israelites, as an unquestionable witness of their miraculous conquest of the land of Canaan.

Ver. 25. *And now, behold, we are in thy hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do.*] Here they humbly submit to the doom he had passed upon them, or to any other imposition he should think fit to load them withal.

Ver. 26. *And so he did unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not.*] But Joshua would take no farther advantage of their submission, but contented himself with this burden alone; which, by a public decree, he laid upon them. It appears by this, that some gentiles had more goodness in them than many of the children of Israel; who would have destroyed these well-disposed people (if Joshua had not hindered) who were better believers, being struck with a greater fear of God's threatenings than themselves.

Ver. 27. *And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood, and drawers of water.*] He passed this sentence into a law; that, from henceforth, they should be subject to this servitude; in which they served God faithfully even to the times of Nehemiah: who tells us great numbers of the Nethinims (who many great men make no doubt were of the posterity of these Gibeonites) returned from Babylon to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, (Nehem. vii. 46, &c. 73.)

For the congregation, and for the altar of the Lord, even unto this day.] They served the congregation (who otherwise must themselves have done it) by serving the altar with wood and with water. Which, that they might do regularly, it is probable, they were dispersed throughout all the coasts of Israel, where the priests and Levites were settled, and came and served with them in their courses, and (as Conradus Pellicanus thinks) were maintained out of the public stock, and the profits of the altar. For they did not keep possession of their cities, but surrendered them to the tribe of Benjamin and Judah, to whose lot they fell; as we read in the following part of this book.

Concerning these words, *unto this day,* see iv. 9.

At the place which he should choose.] Which was now at Gilgal; afterward at Shiloh; and some time in Gibeon it fell; which was a city given to the priests; (Josh. xxi. 17.) and, as Maimonides saith (in his treatise of the Building of the Temple), after Shiloh was destroyed, the tabernacle was placed in Nob, and then in Gibeon: in which two places it continued fifty and seven years.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass, when Adonizedek king of Jerusalem.*] Who seems to have been the most potent prince in Canaan, and carried in his name an honourable title, which had been anciently given to the kings of this place; who had been famous for doing justice. For, it is probable, that ever since Melchizedeck, who was king of Salem (the same with Jerusalem), and truly king of righteousness, as his name signified; they affected this title, though they did not always answer their character: for this Adonizedek (whose name imports the *law of righteousness*) had none of the virtues that were in Melchizedeck.

King of Jerusalem.] It is probably thought that this city held the name of Salem, which it had in Abraham's time, till the Israelites came into the land of Canaan; and then they called it Jerusalem, when they first took possession of it. Which they did not so fully, but that still the Jebusites dwelt there with the children of Benjamin, (see Judg. i. 8. 21.) who were so weak, that the Jebusites, in time, recovered it wholly to themselves, and expelled the Benjamites; see Judg. xix. 10. where it is called Jebus, though the other name is also acknowledged; because the Israelites called it Jerusalem, while the Jebusites, having prevailed, called it Jebus.

Heard how Joshud had taken Ai.] By which means the Israelites were come nearer to him, than when they took Jericho.

And had utterly destroyed it, (as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king.)] And therefore it highly concerned him to provide, the best he could, for his own safety.

And how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel.] Especially, since one of the prime cities of the country had submitted to the Israelites.

And were among them.] Joined in society with them, or come as we now speak) into their interest.

Ver. 2. *Then they feared greatly.*] All his people thought themselves in great danger; they as well as their king having heard of the terrible execution Joshua had made at Jericho and Ai.

Because Gibeon was a great city.] Having others depending on it.

As one of the royal cities.] The Vulgar Latin takes no notice of the particle *caph (as)*, but saith it was a royal city. And, indeed, that particle doth not always denote *likeness*, but only the truth of the thing spoken of; as in Hosea iv. 4. and many other places of the New Testament, as well as the Old, (John i. 14. Phil. ii. 7.) But I think here it should be expressed, as we do in our translation; because Gibeon was not a royal city, that is, had no king in it that we read of; but was, notwithstanding, equal to those cities that had kings, being governed by elders, (ix. 11.) who were persons of very great authority.

And because it was greater than Ai.] More populous.

And all the men thereof were mighty.] The inhabitants were esteemed men of great valour; which made their revolt to the Israelites the more considerable.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore Adonizedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying.*] All these cities afterward belonged to the tribe of Judah; as appears from the following part of this book.

Ver. 4. *Come unto me, and help me.*] He was the most active in the war, and seems to have been of greatest power; calling the other kings only as auxiliaries to him.

That we may smite Gibeon.] He thought to discourage others from yielding, by making this city an example of their vengeance.

For it hath made peace unto Joshua, and with the children of Israel.] Forsaken the interest of their country, and gone over to our enemies.

Ver. 5. *Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem,* &c.] It is certain that Hebron belonged to the Hittites; as Jerusalem did to the Jebusites. But the Amorites being the most powerful people in Canaan, (as appears from Gen. xv. 16.) had, it seems, brought them under their power, and set kings of their own nation over them. Whence it is, that the Gibeonites, who were originally Hivites, (ix. 17.) are said to be of the *remnant of the Amorites*, (2 Sam. xxi. 2.) because they were fallen under their power, when Joshua conquered their country.

Gathered themselves together.] Had a general meeting, and sent out a summons to all their people, who were fit for war, to rendezvous (as we speak) at the place they appointed.

And went up.] Though they lived in the high country, yet Jerusalem was still higher; where they seem to have all met, according to Adonizedek's desire, ver. 4.

They and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon.] Laid siege to it.

And made war against it.] Began to assault it.

Ver. 6. *And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal.*] Or, *had sent*, as soon as they heard of their march towards them.

Saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants.] They doubted not of his succour, because they were his servants who had put themselves under his protection; but begged it might be speedy, for fear they should be overpowered by such numerous forces as were coming against them.

Come up quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites, that dwell in the mountains, are gathered together against us.] They did not hope to be preserved without his help; nor unless it arrived quickly.

Ver. 7. *So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour.*] These last words are the explication of the former, as if he had said, *All the people of war, even all the mighty men of valour.* For it is not likely he took along with him all the fighting men (some of which were necessary to guard the camp at Gilgal), but only the choicest of them; on whose valour he could most rely, and who could march most swiftly to the relief of their confederates.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord said unto Joshua.*] Before he stirred a foot, he consulted the Divine Majesty about this expedition; who encouraged him to undertake it.

Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.] He promised him an entire victory; which emboldened him to fall upon them undauntedly.

Ver. 9. *Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night.*] Accordingly, Joshua made all the haste he could towards them, marching all night, that he might surprise them in their quarters (as I suppose he did) before they could draw out their army against him.

Ver. 10. *And the Lord discomfited them before Israel.*] The suddenness of the attack, no doubt, put them into great confusion. And besides, God struck a terror into them, which made them seek for safety by flight, rather than fighting.

And slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon.] Near to the city, as the particle *beth* signifies in many places; particularly in the second chapter of this book, where Rahab's house is said to be upon the wall (we translate it, near or adjoining to the wall), and v. 13. where Joshua is said to be *Bejericho*, near to that city, for he was not in it when the Captain of the Lord's host appeared to him. (See Bochart's Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50.)

And chased them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon.] To the place which was called by this name, when this book was written; for there was no such place now; it being built after they were settled in Canaan by Sherah, daughter or grand-daughter of Ephraim; as we read in 1 Chron. vii. 24.

And smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah.] Two cities afterward in the tribe of Judah, (xv. 35. 41.) For, in the great confusion wherein they were, by the hailstones falling upon them (as it here follows), they fled backward and forward, as we speak, sometimes this way, sometimes the quite contrary (for Beth-horon lay northerly, and these other towns in the south), according as the hailstones, by the shifting of the wind, flew in their faces.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon.*] Which was seated on the side of a hill; and seems to have taken its name from this wonderful storm here mentioned: for Beth-horon signifies as much, as the house or place of fury or anger.

That the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them.] The LXX. call them λίθους χαλάζης, *hailstones of a vast bigness;* which some think were accompanied with thunder and lightning. And thus the ancient heathen say, that Hercules was assisted in his war against Albion, &c. (See Vossius, lib. i. de Orig. et Progressu Idolol. cap. 26.)

And that raining of stones is not a fable, but a real truth, see him also, lib. iii. cap. 12. Plutarch also, in the life of Timoleon, relates how a terrible storm, in the face of the Carthaginian army, gave him a great victory over them, with a very few forces which he had to encounter them. They that desire to see more to this purpose may look into Huetius's Quæstiones Alnetanæ, lib. ii. cap. 12. sect. 12.

Unto Azekah.] This storm meeting them at Beth-horon drove them back to Azekah, as I observed on the foregoing verse.

And they died.] They upon whom the hailstones fell were killed by them.

They were more that died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.] For they could not flee from the stones which came from heaven, as they did from the sword of Israel.

Ver. 12. *Then spake Joshua unto the Lord.*] This song, as the Hebrews call it, (see Masius.)

In the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel.] It is not certain at what time of the day he spake what follows. Many think, when the sun was declining; others, rather in the morning. For he marched all night to surprise them, and in all probability fell upon them by break of day; and having routed and chased them for some hours, and killed great numbers of them, and seen others fall by the hailstones, concluded he should destroy them all, if he had but time enough before night came to favour their escape. Which made him pray that he might have light to continue his pursuit, and gain a complete victory over them.

And he said, in the sight of Israel.] It is a frivolous observation of Maimonides, that, because it is not said *in the sight of all Israel* (before whom Moses did his miracles), Joshua was inferior to him, even when God wrought this stupendous miracle at his request: for all Israel did not hear him speak these words, but only some few; as many, perhaps, as were with Elijah at Mount Carmel, when he brought fire down from heaven to consume his sacrifice. But there is no question that Israel signifies all the army; who heard, or were told what he said.

Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon.] He desired it might stand immoveable, in that part of the heavens where he saw it now shining upon Gibeon.

And thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.] There were more Ajalon's than one; and it is not certain which it is he means: but it is most likely that in the tribe of Dan, (xix. 42. Judg. i. 35.) which was farthest from Gibeon; for we must suppose these two places to have been at some distance, otherwise Joshua could not have seen the sun and the moon both appear at the same time; as it is probable they were both now in his eye, when he spake these words. It is not fit to enter into such questions as these; in what sign the sun now was, and whether the moon was in her increase or decrease, &c. They that can make, and are disposed to such inquiries, may consult Bonfrerius.

Ver. 13. *And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed.*] Thus Callimachus represents the sun as stopping the wheels of his chariot, to behold a chorus of nymphs; which so highly pleased him, that it made him prolong the day (ver. 181, 182. of his hymn to Diana):

Ἦλθε παρ' Ἠέλιος καλὸν χορὸν, ἀλλὰ θεῆται
Δίφρον ἐπιστήσας, τὰ δὲ φάεα μηκύνονται.

Where Ezek. Spanhemius excellently notes, that what the poets only fancied might be, was really done in the days of Joshua; and wishes Grotius had not followed some of the Jews, who make this only a poetical phrase to express a long summer's day: for the prophet Habakkuk represents it otherwise, and so do many of the Talmudic doctors. They that can consult Huetius also, in his Alnetanæ Quæstiones, (lib. ii. cap. 12. sect. 27.) will find enough to shame those who disbelieve this history: when they read a great number of stories among the heathen, which shew they thought it within the power of their gods to do such things. And, among other memorable things, he doth not forget the ancient tradition of the Egyptians, related by Herodotus, (in his Euterpe, cap. 142.) concerning the stupendous alteration of the course of the sun. And our Dr. Jackson hath observed, that the heathen people of those times did note this miraculous event, and deliver the tradition of it to their posterity; who, as men are wont to do, endeavour to assign some cause of it. And the poets in ages following ascribe it (with some additions) unto that unnatural murder which Atreus committed: at which the heavens blushed, and the sun stood still. For this bloody fact, if Statius mistake not, was in the time of the Theban war; and that is placed, by good chronologers, about the time of Joshua's conquest of Canaan. (See book i. upon the Creed, chap. 15.) But in this he was deceived, for Atreus lived in the days of the Judges.

Until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.] Till they had gained a complete victory, and utterly destroyed their enemies.

Is not this written in the book of Jasher?] The Targum expounds it, *in the book of the law:* as if the meaning was, that there God had foretold what wonders he would do for his people. But from the marginal translation (which is, *the book of the upright,* or *of righteous men*) others take it for a book where was recorded the wonderful things done by or for the religious heroes. And there are some probable arguments that it was written in verse, to fix these things in the memory of the people. Grotius is of this opinion: for we find mention of it no where else, but only in 2 Sam. i. 18. and there it is mentioned upon account of a song made upon the death of Saul and Jonathan by king David, who caused it to be recorded in this book. Which was not accounted sacred (being written by several hands and in several ages), and so not preserved with such care as this and the other canonical books were. As for their opinion who think this book contained the ancient annals of the Jews more largely than they are recorded in this and the following books, it hath no ground at all; but is invented merely to frame an argument from thence, that Joshua was not the author of this book; but that it was collected in aftertimes, out of this great Chronicle, by somebody who made an abridgment of it. But Du Pin hath well observed, that it is not said here the wars of Joshua were related in the book of Jasher; but only that mention is made therein of the miracle by which the moon stood still.

So the sun stood still.] There is no more mention of the moon; for it was the light of the sun that made the day.

In the midst of heaven.] This doth not necessarily signify that it stood still precisely in the meridian point; but that it appeared visibly to every body, fixed in the same place where it was, when Joshua spake the foregoing

words, to which he was moved, no doubt, by a Divine inspiration.

And hastened not to go down about a whole day.] It may be simply translated, *a whole day:* the particle *caph*, as I observed before, signifying oftentimes nothing of similitude, but the very thing itself. Therefore I look upon Maimonides's explication as ungrounded; who by *kajom thamim (as a whole day)* understands only as the longest day in summer, (More Nevochim, par. xi. cap. 35.) Which was a poor business, it being now summer-time, when this miracle was wrought: and, as Lyra thinks, in the month of June.

Ver. 14. *And there was no day like that before it, or after it, that the Lord hearkened to the voice of a man.*] That is, did at his desire (or rather command) such a stupendous thing as this. Whereby he gave an evident demonstration, that he who did such wonders in Egypt, and at the Red Sea, and the river Jordan, had an absolute power not only over the *elements* (as we call them) and all inferior creatures, but over the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, and stars, whom the heathen worshipped. They have strange love to cavilling, who would hence have it thought this book was not written by Joshua: when, if he wrote it in his old age, there were many days passed since this prodigy, as Huetius well observes in his Demonstr. Evang. p. 186. See various opinions about the length of this day in Sixtinus Amama's Antibarbarus Biblicus, lib. iii. p. 381, &c.

For the Lord fought for Israel.] By throwing stones from heaven upon their enemies; and giving the Israelites strength to pursue them; and stopping the sun's course, that they might not want light for their pursuit; and preserving them from the stones which fell upon their enemies, and not upon them, though mingled with them in the fight.

Ver. 15. *And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.*] The LXX. in the common copies wholly omit this verse; because Joshua did not return to Gilgal, till he had done what follows: and then he speaks of his return, in the same words and syllables, ver. 43. but it is in the edition of Hervasius, 1540. as my most learned friend Dr. Alix informs me; and the meaning of it here, therefore, is no more than this; that he was about to return, till he heard where the five kings were; and that many of the enemies were still remaining.

Ver. 16. *But these five kings.*] Mentioned ver. 3.

Fled.] Escaped the sword of the Israelites by flight; being provided, perhaps, with swift beasts for that purpose; and taking some by-ways, separate from their scattered forces, so that the hailstones did not fall upon them.

And hid themselves in a cave.] Which they knew to have secret lurking-places in it; where they could not be easily discovered.

At Makkedah.] In the confines of that city. Which not being yet taken, Joshua could not command great stones to be rolled upon the mouth of the cave, if it had been in the city itself.

Ver. 17. *And it was told Joshua, saying, That the five kings were hid in a cave at Makkedah.*] It is likely Joshua had given a particular charge about them; and they made no inquiry what was become of them, till it was discovered, that they were in this place.

Ver. 18. *And Joshua said, Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave.*] To hinder their coming out.

And set men by it for to keep them.] He ordered a guard also, to see that none removed the stones.

Ver. 19. *And stay you not, but pursue after your enemies.*] They that brought this intelligence, were, it is likely, some officers in the army; whom he would not have to stop their pursuit of the scattered Canaanites, by looking after these kings; but leave it to others to take care to keep them safe shut up in the cave.

And smite the hindermost of them.] He means all that they could overtake in their flight.

Suffer them not to enter into their cities.] And hinder the rest from retreating into their own cities; by which means they would not remain in a body together; but dispersed here and there, where they could save themselves.

For the Lord your God hath delivered them into your hand.] Given you an opportunity to complete their destruction.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, when Joshua and the children of Israel.*] *i. e.* The children of Israel, by the command and direction of Joshua, who sent out strong parties to pursue them; but he himself seems to have gone to lay siege to Makkedah.

Had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they were consumed.] Till there was none of them to be seen in a body together.

That the rest which remained of them entered into fenced cities.] Those few that escaped got into such fortified cities as they could reach.

Ver. 21. *And all the people.*] Who had been sent out, and engaged in pursuit of the enemy.

Returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah.] Where, no doubt, he had ordered a general rendezvous, as we now speak, of the whole army that had been employed in this war.

In peace.] The LXX. translate it ὑγιεῖς, *sound and safe;* and the Vulgar, "sani et integro numero;" *sound and without the loss of a man.* Which is to be understood of that detachment sent to pursue them, (ver. 19.) who came all safe to the camp, and not a man of them lost, or so much as wounded.

None moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.] There was not so much as a dog that barked at them. For that word *dog* is to be supplied (as Bochartus thinks) according to what we read, Exod. xi. 7. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 55.) It is an expression of the great tranquillity wherein they were, and of an entire victory, there being not so much as a dog left to disturb them.

Ver. 22. *Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave.*] The wisdom of Joshua is here observed by Arius Montanus, who would not do this execution till all the people were returned to the camp to be witnesses of it. And he might have added, that he executed them before he assaulted Makkedah, that the inhabitants of that city might see there was no hope of any succour from those kings who had been very powerful.

Ver. 23. *And they did so, and brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron,* &c.] They are named in the same order as in ver. 3. according to their rank and quality; for next to the king of Jerusalem, who was the chief, the king of He-

bron seems to have been of greatest note; and so of the rest. The same Montanus thinks it probable, that as they brought them forth and set them before Joshua, they said, This is the king of Jerusalem; and then, This is the king of Hebron, &c.

Ver. 24. *And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel.*] That is, all the men of war.

And said unto the captains of the men of war which were with him.] That is, the great officers of the army.

Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings.] Who lay bound, I suppose, prostrate upon the ground.

And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.] Not out of insolence and pride; but in token that these kings and their countries were brought in absolute subjection to them; and that God had fulfilled his promise, (Deut. xxxiii. *ult.*)

Ver. 25. *And Joshua said, Fear not, nor be dismayed; be strong, and of good courage.*] The same that Moses had said to them all long ago, Deut. i. 21. 29. and God had lately said to Joshua, i. 6, 7. 9. and might be said with greater reason now, when they saw their greatest enemies lie prostrate under their feet.

For thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom you fight.] To all the inhabitants of Canaan.

Ver. 26. *And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them.*] After they had trampled upon them he ordered them to be killed.

And hanged them on five trees.] As a mark of infamy, whereby a terror was struck into all others.

And they were hanging on the trees till the evening.] Exposed to this contempt all that long day; which God made on purpose that they might do all the great things beforementioned, and what follows, before the night came upon them. Then their bodies were taken down, not in honour to them, but in honour to the land of Israel, where God now dwelt. So Aben Ezra.

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass, at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid,* &c.] He had given this order as soon as they were hanged, according to the law of Moses, by which he acted before at Ai, (viii. 29.) And with their bodies he cast all the instruments of their punishment (the trees, and whatsoever fastened them unto them) into the cave, as Maimonides saith, and the Samaritan Chronicle here particularly observes.

Ver. 28. *And that day Joshua took Makkedah.*] The same day the king of it was hanged; and it seems to be probable it was on that long day (as I said before) which God made that they might complete their conquest of these kings; and when they had done, take this city also. Our great primate of Ireland indeed, by *that day*, understands the same day that he set down before the city; which he thinks was some time after what is before related.

And smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof he utterly destroyed.] He was slain among the rest, and not taken alive as the king of Ai was.

Them, and all the souls that were therein.] All the fighting men, together with the women and children; because they had refused the offers of peace, sent them from Joshua, before he invaded their land.

He let none remain.] But saved the cattle, which they took, with their goods, for a prey.

And he did to the king of Makkedah as he did to the king of Jericho.] What he did to the king of Jericho is not recorded; but by what is said of other kings, it is probable that he hanged him up after he was found dead.

Ver. 29. *Then Joshua passed from Makkedah.*] This only signifies what was their next expedition; for it is likely they refreshed themselves awhile before they left this place.

All Israel with him.] All that he brought along with him to the relief of Gibeon. (See ver. 7.)

Unto Libnah.] A city which fell to the share of the tribe of Judah, in the division of the land, (xv. 42.) and was one of the cities given to the priests, (xxi. 13. 1 Chron. vi. 57.)

And fought against Libnah.] Laid siege to it, and planted their batteries against it.

Ver. 30. *And the Lord delivered it also, and the king thereof, into the hand of Israel.*] They made an easy conquest of it, because God gave it up into their hand.

And he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein, &c.] The same words whereby the destruction of Makkedah is described, ver. 28. For both these cities favoured the five kings beforementioned, and therefore (as Conradus Pellicanus thinks) were destroyed utterly, not only by the command of God, but by the right of war. But the command of God was the only ground, as it is expressed, ver. 40.

Ver. 31. *And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish.*] Another city which fell to the tribe of Judah, (xv. 39.) and was not far from Libnah.

And encamped against it, and fought against it.] This, it seems, was a stronger city than either of the former; for there is no mention of an encampment against them before they began their assault.

Ver. 32. *And the Lord delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel.*] He doth not add, *and the king thereof,* as he doth of Makkedah and Libnah, (ver. 28. 30.) because he was one of the five kings which he had lately hanged, and they had not, it is likely, set a new one on his throne, (ver. 23.)

Which took it on the second day.] After they began the siege; or, the second day after the taking of Makkedah and Libnah. The former is most likely, because their encampment against it signifies they spent some time before it.

And smote it with the edge of the sword, &c.] These words, and the following, are the very same with what he said before of the two forenamed cities; only he doth not add, *he let none remain,* which is to be supposed.

Ver. 33. *Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish.*] This was a city afterward in the tribe of Ephraim, (xvi. 10.) belonging to the Levites, (xxi. 21.) and not far from Gibeon, as may be guessed from 1 Chron. xiv. 16.

And Joshua smote him and his people, until he had left him none remaining.] If he destroyed his city at this time, he returned to Lachish. And it is probable, he sent forth a detachment to fight Horam and his army; who having routed them, destroyed also their city, and then went on with the siege of Lachish.

Ver. 34. *And from Lachish Joshua passed unto Eglon.*] Which also belonged afterward to Judah, (xv. 39.) and seems to have been as considerable as Lachish; for it

follows, that *they encamped against it, and fought against it*, as they had done against the other. Their king was one of the five who were killed and hanged before, (ver. 23.)

Ver. 35. *And they took it on that day.*] The same day they set down before it; for none came to their relief, as Horam did to help Lachish, which may be one reason that city was not taken till the second day, (ver. 32.)

And smote it with the edge of the sword, &c.] The same he had said of the forenamed cities; only he saith, he *utterly destroyed all* that were therein on the same day, which is the same with those words, *he let none remain.*

Ver. 36. *And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto Hebron; and they fought against it.*] This was also a city of Judah, (as every one knows, xv. 54.) and was seated in the mountainous country, as the former were in the plain, which is the reason he is said *to go up* to it from Eglon.

Ver. 37. *And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof.*] Their king was one of the five whom Joshua had lately killed and hanged. But, it seems, they had set up a new one, being a city of great note, which had other cities depending on it, as it follows in the next words.

And all the cities thereof.] It was not only one of the royal cities, which had other cities subject to it (as Gibeon had, which was a kind of royal city), but of very great power. For these words import, as if there were many cities under its jurisdiction.

And all the souls that were therein: he left none remaining, &c.] In this conquest, Caleb was very instrumental, and signalized himself (as we now speak) by driving out the three sons of Anak (xv. 13, 14.) who were slain there, (Judg. i. 10.) Thus we must understand this history; or else say, as some do, either that Joshua only took the city and destroyed it, but could not take the citadel, or strong fort, on the top of the mountain, (which doth not seem to be exactly true, for we read in the next chapter, ver. 21, 22. that he cut off the Anakims from the mountains, &c.) or that, after he had destroyed it, as is here related, the Anakims came from Gaza, and other cities of the Philistines, whither they now fled, and peopled it again, but were expelled again by Caleb, as some understand xiv. 12. (See Judg. i. 10.)

Ver. 38. *And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir, and fought against it.*] He had not been there before, but having gone as far south and west as he thought fit, (even as far as Gaza, which was in the western coast, ver. 41.) he turned his course towards the camp at Gilgal, which was now north-east from him, and in his way thither took Debir, which also was a city of Judah, (xv. 49.) and one of the cities of the priests, (xxi. 15. 1 Chron. vi. 58.) called also Kiriath-Sepher, and Kiriath-Sanna.

Ver. 39. *And he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof*, &c.] It was a great city (we may gather from hence, like to Hebron), in the conquest of which Othniel the brother of Caleb did great service, and therefore it was given to him, as we read, xv. 15—17. and Judg. i. 11.

Ver. 40. *So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings.*] He forbears to name all the cities he took, and, in short, saith he subdued the whole country that lay south and west (as it is explained in the next verse), of whatsoever sort it was; both the hilly and the low country: for they that describe countries are wont to have respect to two things; the condition and quality of the soil, and then the situation: the first of these he expresses in this verse, and the other in the next. For here he describes it as partly hilly and dry, and partly plain and full of springs.

He left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed.] Which must be restrained to mankind; for they kept their cattle as a prey to themselves.

As the Lord God of Israel commanded.] This is added as a justification of the Israelites, from all imputation of cruelty or severity; for they only executed a Divine sentence against this people for their abominable wickedness, (Lev. xviii. 24, 25, &c.) wherewith the Israelites would have been in danger to be infected, if they had not been extirpated.

Ver. 41. *And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea.*] Which was in the south of Canaan, as appears from Numb. xxxiv. 4. and chap. xv. of this book, ver. 3. where it is mentioned as belonging to the tribe of Judah.

Even unto Gaza.] A city of the Philistines, in the west part of Canaan, towards the south.

And all the country of Goshen.] There was a city in the tribe of Judah of this name, which lay in the mountains, as Hebron did, in the southern part of the country, (xv. 51.) From which city, the region thereabouts was called the country of Goshen: which had excellent pasture-ground in it, and was well watered (like that country in Egypt of the same name), and thence was called Goshen, as Conradus Pellicanus conjectures; because the Hebrew word *geshem* signifies large showers, which make the earth fruitful.

Even unto Gibeon.] Which was in the more northerly part of the country. And therefore, as before he gave an account of his conquest from the south to the west; so here of his conquest from the south to the north.

Ver. 42. *All these kings, and their land, did Joshua take at one time.*] In one expedition.

Because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel.] Which made their conquest easy and speedy. The Targum hath it, *The Lord God of Israel, by his Word, fought for Israel.* That is, by him who appeared to Joshua as the captain of the Lord's host, ver. 13, 14.

Ver. 43. *And Joshua returned, and Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.*] To refresh themselves with the company of their wives and children; and to make those who were left to defend them partakers of their booty; but especially to return solemn thanks to God for their victories at his house, which was now settled at Gilgal.

Our great primate of Ireland thinks, that this war with the five kings, that came against Gibeon, &c. concluded this famous year. In the first part of which Moses took the kingdoms of Sihon and Og on the other side Jordan; and in the latter part of it Joshua conquered a great part of the land of Canaan; and in the middle of it the manna ceased, and they ate of the fruit of the country. So that in the autumn of this year they began to sow, and consequently, from this time, they began to number their sabbatical years. (See him in his Annals, A. M. 2554.) But another great man (Dr. Alix) admonishes me, that this is against the opinion of the ancient Jews, who suppose that the first year of the *semitah* was the fourteenth after

their entrance into Canaan: for the land must have been divided before it was cultivated; and so the sabbath of the land must be seven years after the division.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, that when Jabin king of Hazor.*] This city was the metropolis of the northerly part of Canaan, (ver. 10.) and fell to the share of the tribe of Naphtali in the division of the land, (xix. 36.) Jabin was the name of the king of the Canaanites in this part of the country in future times, and reigned in this very city, (Judg. iv. 2.)

Heard of these things.] Of the conquest Joshua had made of so many kings, and their kingdoms, in the south and the west part of the land.

That he sent to Jobab king of Madon.] This is the name of a place we read of no where else, but was subject, no doubt, unto Hazor, as the rest were.

And to the king of Shimron.] A place afterward in the tribe of Zebulun, near to the country of Naphtali, (xix. 15.)

And to the king of Achshaph.] In the tribe of Asher, (xix. 25.) These two last places Arius Montanus thinks were more remote from Hazor than Madon, and lay towards the south near Mount Tabor, being the only southern people that remained after the five kings were destroyed. But towards the north, and the east, and the west, there were many still left, whom Jabin now gathered together.

Ver. 2. *And to the kings that were in the north of the mountains.*] Or, mountainous country, near Lebanon; for that was in the north part of Canaan.

And in the plains south of Cinneroth.] In the flat country, which lay south of the lake called afterward Gennesaret, now Cinneroth. (See Numb. xxxiv. 11.)

And in the valley.] Some conjecture he means that pleasant valley between Mount Hermon and Mount Gilboa, called the valley of Jezreel.

And the borders of Dor.] A city, with a country belonging to it, in the tribe of Manasseh, (xvii. 11.)

On the west.] Upon the midland sea. Where Josephus mentions (in his second book against Appion) a city called Dora, near Mount Carmel. (See Bochartus in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 41. p. 752.)

Ver. 3. *And to the Canaanite.*] The people peculiarly so called.

On the east, and on the west.] It hath been noted before, that some of this people lived in the east near Jordan; and other of them in the west, near the midland sea. (See Numb. xiii. 29.)

And to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite.] There were other Amorites scattered up and down the country, besides those who were subject to the five kings mentioned in the foregoing chapter, ver. 5. who were all now assembled together by Jabin, with the rest of the Hittites and Perizzites (who were in several parts of the country), that they might make as powerful an army as could be raised.

And the Jebusite, in the mountains.] About Jerusalem, where they kept a strong hold till the time of David; as the Perizzites lived in other mountainous and woody countries, as Bochartus observes.

And to the Hivite under Hermon.] This was a mountain in the north-east part of the country, where some Hivites were settled, as others were about Gibeon. That Hermon was easterly, appears from Psal. lxxxix. 12. whence it is that the Hivites are called Kadmonites, that is, *easterlings*, (Gen. xv. 19.) as Bochart hath observed in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 36. and in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 19.

In the land of Mizpeh.] There were several cities of this name; one in the tribe of Judah, (xv. 38.) another belonging to Benjamin, (xviii. 26.) and two more beyond Jordan in the land of Gilead; one in the tribe of Gad, the other in the tribe of Manasseh, or very near it; which gave name to the country about it, and seems to be here intended.

Ver. 4. *And they went out.*] The kings of all these people.

They and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea-shore in multitude.] A vast army, which could not easily be numbered; or, which covered the place where they were encamped, as sand doth the sea-shore; so that nothing could be seen but armed men, horses, and chariots, &c. It is a proverbial speech in Scripture for vast numbers of men, or great quantities of corn; or exceeding much knowledge and wisdom, as every one knows.

With horses and chariots very many.] This made them the more formidable, because the Israelites were all footmen: who might easily be beaten by a strong body of horse; especially when they had chariots also, which carried men in them, (see upon Deut. xx. 1.) and they had great numbers also of them, as these words intimate. Josephus makes their chariots alone to have been twenty thousand. The land of Canaan, indeed, did not breed horses (as I have often observed), but they might easily procure them out of Egypt, and they trusted much to this kind of forces, wherein the Egyptians excelled most people. (See Deut. xvii. 16.)

Ver. 5. *And when all these kings were met together.*] In some place which the king of Hazor appointed for a general rendezvous. For though this multitude were of different nations, yet they all now combined against the Israelites. But it was a great providence of God, that as all this country was not united under one head, but divided into several petty kingdoms; so they did not all enter into a confederacy at the first against Joshua, but fought severally; only five of their kings joining together. Though now they seem to have seen their error; and therefore, all that remained, joined, as one man, to oppose Joshua's further proceeding.

They came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.] They marched to these waters, and there formed a camp, to prepare, and set themselves in order, to give Israel battle. These waters, all agree, were that lake which Josephus calls Σάμα χωνίτιδα, from the abundance of fishes that were in it: for *Samachon*, or *Semechon*, in the Arabic language, signifies a fish, (as Bochart observes in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. i. cap. 6.) and Joshua here calls the *waters of Merom*; that is, the *upper waters*; for this lake was near the fountain of Jordan, which ran through the lake of Tiberias, and fell into the lake Asphaltites, or the Dead Sea. With respect to which waters, these were called the *upper*, they being *lower*. And here they pitched rather than any other place,

being under the jurisdiction of Jabin, who had called them together: for Hazor, where he reigned, was situate upon this lake, as Josephus tells us, lib. v. Antiq. cap. 6.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord said unto Joshua.*] Who went, it is probable, (as he had done formerly, x. 8.) to consult the Divine Majesty, how he should manage himself upon this great occasion.

Be not afraid of them.] Some collect from hence (even Josephus himself) that Joshua was possessed with some fear, when he heard of such a numerous army, and so well appointed, coming against him. But I do not think it at all probable, that after so many late assurances and signal demonstrations, as God had given him of his presence with him in this war, he should be capable of this passion. (See the first chapter of this book, ver. 2, 3. 6, 7. 9. iii. 7. 9, 10. v. 13—15. x. 8.) Therefore these words were spoken to him, that he might animate the people, whose hearts were apt to fail them, when they saw such terrible enemies.

For to-morrow, about this time.] It is not certain what this time was; but it is likely in the morning after he had marched all night, (as he did against the five kings, x. 9.) that he might fall upon them unexpectedly.

I will deliver them up all slain before Israel.] The LXX. translate it τετροπωμένους, *put to flight.* Which agrees with what follows; for it is certain they were not all *slain,* but many of them fled, and the Israelites pursued them: and therefore other copies of the LXX. have it τετρωμένους, *wounded;* so broken and shattered, that they were all in effect dead men.

Thou shalt hough their horses.] Cut their hamstrings, and thereby render them unfit for future service.

And burn their chariots with fire.] That they might be no more used; no, not by the Israelites themselves.

Ver. 7. *And Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them, to the waters of Merom.*] He did not wait for their motion; but attacked them as they lay in their quarters; for that is signified by the next word.

Suddenly.] When they thought not of an enemy near them; but were consulting, perhaps, how to manage the war against the Israelites.

And they fell upon them.] When they were unprovided to make such resistance as they would have done, if they had been ready to receive them.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them.*] Routed and killed a great many of them.

And chased them to great Zidon.] This, it seems, was a large city, and of great note in these days (for there was no Zidon the less), built by the eldest son of Canaan (as Josephus thinks), from whom it had its name. (See Gen. x. 15.) It lay in the north-west part of Canaan, upon the sea.

And unto Misrephoth-maim.] It is thought by some that this was a place where there were hot waters, which I shall not examine, but only note it is a probable conjecture, from xiii. 6. that it was a place in the country of Zidon where they made salt.

Unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward.] See ver. 3. This signifies, that, in their confusion, some of them fled westward to Zidon and Misrephoth-maim, and others eastward towards Mizpeh.

And they smote them, till they left them none remaining.] As they divided themselves, and fled several ways; so did the Israelites send out several parties, both to the west and to the east, who pursued them so close, that they let not a man of them escape.

Ver. 9. *And Joshua did unto them as the Lord bade him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire.*] We do not read, as Kimchi notes upon this place, of any horses or chariots which the five kings, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, brought into the field; because they went only to besiege Gibeon, and hoped to take it presently by an assault, in which there was no use of horses and chariots; which they did not want, no more than these kings, who abounded in them, and placed their principal confidence in their horsemen and chariots. Which was the reason God commanded them to hough their horses; that is, to cut their nerves and sinews in their hams, which Josephus translates ἀχρήστους ποιεῖν, *to make them useless and unprofitable:* for God would not have his people place their safety and security in this, but in himself alone, as good people always did, (Psal. xx. 7.) Accordingly, when David had conquered Hadedezar, and taken from him a great number of horses and chariots, he disabled all the horses, after this example of Joshua (as if God intended by him to teach all future rulers of his people what to do), reserving only as many as would serve for a hundred chariots, (2 Sam. viii. 4.) And Schickardus observes, out of the Jewish authors, that they were wont thus to enervate all the horses they found in the king's stables after his death, that they might not be of use to his successor. (See his Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 6. Theor. 19. and Bochart's Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 11.)

Ver. 10. *And Joshua at that time.*] Before he thought of returning to his camp at Gilgal.

Turned back.] From pursuing those that fled towards the western coast.

And took Hazor.] Which was in the eastern part of the country, upon the lake beforementioned.

And smote the king thereof with the sword.] This was one reason, it is likely, why he made haste to invest Hazor; because the king thereof, who was the chief author of this war, had escaped out of the battle, and thought to defend himself there.

For Hazor before-time was the head of all those kingdoms.] Not of all the kingdoms of Canaan; but of all those mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. Which was another reason why he fell upon it *at this time;* that by taking the most considerable city of this part of Canaan, all the rest might be disheartened to hold out against him.

Ver. 11. *And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them; there was not any left to breathe.*] See x. 40.

And he burnt Hazor with fire.] Which the Canaanites afterward rebuilt, and possessed it for some time; another king of the same name reigning in it, (Judg. iv. 2.) For the kings of this city were called Jabin in many successions, as the Egyptian kings were called Pharaoh, and the kings of the Philistines Abimelech, &c.

Ver. 12. *And the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take.*] *viz.* Those mentioned ver. 2, 3. whom Jabin drew into confederacy with him; and perhaps were his dependents.

And smote them with the edge of the sword; and he utterly destroyed them.] That is, all their inhabitants.

As Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded.] Deut. vii. 2. and many other places.

Ver. 13. *But as for the cities that stood still in their strength.*] The Hebrew words *all thillam* (which we translate *in their strength*) literally signify *on their heap*, as is noted in the margin of our Bibles; that is, were seated in an eminent place, and therefore of greater strength than those that stood in the plain. Thus Bochart interprets it in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 29. from whence he thinks came the names of Thelasar, (2 Kings xix. 12.) and of Thelabib, (Ezek. iii. 15.) And thus I observe the prophet Jeremiah speaks, xxx. 18. Jerusalem shall be built on her *own heap*, or high hill. But the meaning may be, according to our translation, the cities whose walls were not battered down in the taking of them.

Israel burnt none of them.] Because they intended to dwell in them; and would not be at the charge and pains of building new walls for their safety.

But Hazor only; that did Joshua burn.] Because it was the capital city, and began this war against them; which being laid desolate by the Israelites, without inhabitant, the Canaanites took their opportunity to rebuild it, and settle themselves there again.

Ver. 14. *And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves.*] As the Lord allowed them to do at Ai, (viii. 2.)

But every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, &c.] Because God had often commanded these nations should be rooted out for their abominable wickedness; lest the Israelites should be drawn in to imitate them in their filthy lewdness, as I observed from Lev. xviii. 24—26, &c. See also xx. 22, 23, &c.

Ver. 15. *As the Lord commanded Moses his servant.*] See Exod. xxxiv. 11, 12, &c.

So did Moses command Joshua.] See Numb. xxvi. 19. Deut. xxxi. 7.

And so did Joshua: he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses.] Which is a demonstration that Moses left in writing what we read the Lord commanded in the foregoing books, and that they were not written (as some pretend) in later times: for then it would have been impossible for Joshua to have executed every thing that he commanded, unless he had had the book of the law before him for his direction. But so desirous are some men to weaken the authority of these holy books, that from hence they argue this book of Joshua could not be written by himself, but some other; because he gives himself this high commendation. So the author of Theolog. Polit. who by the same reason might have rejected St. Paul's Epistles as none of his, and Cæsar's Commentaries; for both of them relate their own virtues, and the noble things they did.

Ver. 16. *And Joshua took all that land.*] Belonging to the kings beforementioned.

The hills, and all the south country, and all the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain.] This is a description of his whole conquest, as appears from x. 40.

The mountain of Israel.] It is very uncertain what place this was; but many think it probable to be Beth-el: where God appeared to Jacob as he went to Padan-Aram, and promised to give him this land, (Gen. xxviii. 12, 13.) and where he dwelt, by God's direction, after he came from Padan-Aram, and God appeared again to him there, and made him the same promise, and changed his name from Jacob to Israel, (Gen. xxxv. 1. 9, 10, &c.)

And the valley of the same.] Belonging to the same mountain. But Conradus Pellicanus thinks the singular number is put for the plural, and thus explains the whole verse: The land of Israel was partly in the hill-country, partly in the south towards Egypt, partly in the plain near the great sea, and the sea of Sodom, and the spring of Jordan, near Tabor, in Galilee. And moreover, the mountains of Israel were the two Carmels, Hermon, Gilead, Lebanus, those about Jerusalem, and many other.

Ver. 17. *Even from the Mount Halak.*] Or the stony mountain, as Bochart interprets it, lib. i. Canaan, cap. 5.

That goeth up to Mount Seir.] Which was the bounds of the country of Edom.

Even unto Baal-Gad, in the valley of Lebanon, under Mount Hermon.] As in the foregoing words he expresses the bounds of Joshua's conquest southward; so hither they reached northward. And this seems to be a description of the length of the country which he took from the king of Hazor, and all those that joined with him, as Archbishop Usher understands it.

And all their kings he took, and smote them, and slew them.] So that none appeared to make head against him.

Ver. 18. *Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.*] But those kings were so many, and made such great opposition, that he spent six years (as the forenamed great person computes) in this war before he could finish it.

Ver. 19. *There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel.*] This is the reason the war continued so long, because there was but one city that surrendered on such terms as had been offered them; but all the rest obstinately refused to yield unto Joshua.

Save only the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon.] See viii. 3. Who, if they had truly discovered who they were (which out of fear they concealed), and begged peace, they might have obtained it on such conditions as were proposed to all.

All other they took in battle.] By force of arms.

Ver. 20. *For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle.*] Being a people obstinately wicked, God ordered things so in his providence, that they were emboldened (notwithstanding the wonders they had certainly heard were done for Israel) to fight with them. By which it appears the Gibeonites were a better sort of people, who considered what God had done in favour of the Israelites.

That he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour.] Which they might have found, if they had not been so fool-hardy (as we speak) as to imagine they could withstand those before whom the river Jordan fled, and the walls of Jericho fell down flat.

But that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses.] In many places, particularly in Deut. vii. 2. xx. 16, 17.

Ver. 21. *And at that time.*] That is, in the war beforementioned, and perhaps in the conclusion of it; after he had left none to oppose him in other places, but only in those mountainous countries which were of difficult access.

Came Joshua.] Either from the camp at Gilgal, or from

destroying the kings and their countries, of which he had been speaking in this chapter.

And cut off the Anakims.] Who were a distinct people (Arius Montanus thinks) from the Canaanites; of a fierce, cruel, and tyrannical disposition, who oppressed all their neighbours.

From the mountains.] Where they had settled, and, it is likely, strongly fortified themselves: which moved Joshua to let them alone till he had finished his other conquests. Concerning these Anakims, see Numb. xiii. 22, 23.

From Hebron.] Called also Kiriath-Arba, the city of Arba, who was a great man among the Anakims. (See Bochartus, in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 1. p. 363.)

And Debir.] Called also Kiriath-Sepher, as I noted before.

And Anab.] This, as well as the two forenamed cities, fell to the tribe of Judah, (xv. 50.)

And from all the mountains of Judah.] All the mountainous country which afterward fell by lot to that tribe.

And from all the mountains of Israel.] All the mountainous country which was in the rest of the tribes of Israel, where these people, it is likely, fled for safety.

Joshua destroyed them utterly, with their cities.] Which it seems they had in those mountainous countries of Israel; besides Hebron, Debir, and Anab, in the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 22. *There were none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel.*] He rooted them out of the whole country which the Israelites conquered.

Only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained.] Three cities of the Philistines; unto which either some of them escaped, and there took shelter, or they had been there from ancient time, and the Israelites could not yet expel them. For they did not possess themselves of the country of the Philistines till the time of David; when we find some of these giants still there; particularly in Gath. But, that there were any of them at Ascalon, the famous Bochart shews to be an error in the place beforementioned, (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 1.)

Ver 23. *So Joshua took the whole land.*] Which either the Canaanites or the Anakims possessed; that is, subdued it so that none rose up against him, though many places were not yet in the possession of the Israelites. (See xiii. 1, 2, &c.) For which were many reasons; one of which was, because the Israelites were not yet so many as to be able to people the whole country, and keep the beasts of the field from multiplying upon them: (Exod. xxiii. 29.) and two more reasons are added, Judg. iii. 1. 4.

According to all that the Lord said unto Moses.] Deut. xxxi. 7, 8.

And Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel.] Deut. iii. 28.

According to their divisions by their tribes.] Numb. xxvi. 53. xxxiii. 54.

And the land rested from war.] None of the lords of the Philistines, or any other, adventured to give any disturbance to the Israelites in their possessions; but they enjoyed them quietly: and thereby had liberty to make a division of the country; which God ordered them to go about, chap. xiii.

Now began the seventh year from the time the Israelites first ploughed and sowed in the land: and therefore was the first sabbatical year that they observed after Joshua had brought them to their rest in the land of promise. An emblem (as our great primate of Ireland observes) of that eternal sabbatism, or rest, unto which the true Jesus will bring his people, (Heb. iv. 8, 9.) And from this they were to reckon unto their jubilee, mentioned Lev. xxv. 8. 13. But that was not from their entrance into Canaan, but from the seventh year after the division of the land, as I observed before upon the last verse of the tenth chapter.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *NOW these are the kings of the land, which the children of Israel smote, and possessed their land.*] Before he gives an account of the division of the land, he thinks fit to lay before every one's eyes, as in a table, the land they had conquered; which was to be divided.

On the other side Jordan, towards the rising of the sun.] There they began their conquests, before they passed over Jordan.

From the river Arnon, unto Mount Hermon.] So the bounds of this conquest are described by Moses, Deut. iii. 8. iv. 48. (See there.)

And all the plain on the east.] That is, on the east of Jordan, (see Deut. i. 1.) called the plain of Moab, Deut. xxxiv. 1.

Ver. 2. *Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.*] He was the first king whose land they conquered and possessed. (See Numb. xxi.)

And ruled from Aroer, which is upon the banks of the river Arnon.] See Numb. xxi. 24.

And from the middle of the river.] In which stood the city called Aroer. For Ar never was in the hands of Sihon; but his kingdom was bounded by it, on that side. (See Deut. ii. 36. iii. 16.)

And from half Gilead.] In the Hebrew, *and half of Gilead;* there being nothing to answer to the word *from:* which being left out, the sense is plain, that half of the country of Gilead belonged to Sihon, as the other half did to Og, (ver. 5.)

To the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon.] Thus his country is constantly described; particularly in Numb. xxi. 24. Deut. iii. 16.

Ver. 3. *And from the plain,* &c.] There is nothing answering to the word *from* in the Hebrew; which may most clearly be translated, *and the plain:* and so the LXX. only retaining the word *araba,* which we translate *plain.* This was another part of Sihon's country, a great plain, which lay eastward of the sea of Cinneroth, and the salt sea; by which it was bounded on the west.

The way to Beth-Jeshimoth.] Which, by the next words, is thought to have lain towards the south.

And from the south, under Ashdod-Pisgah.] The meaning seems to be, that on the south it was bounded by Ashdod-Pisgah. (See Deut. iii. 17.) I do but touch these things, leaving them to a very learned friend and brother of mine, who hath most accurately considered every part and place of this country.

Ver. 4. *And the coast of Og king of Bashan.*] The next conquest they made was of the kingdom of Og, who was of the remnant of the giants. (See Deut. iii. 11.)

That dwelt at Ashtaroth and Edrei.] See Deut. i. 4. Some would gather from this place, and from xiii. 12. that

he had two royal seats, one at Ashtaroth, another at Edrei; and that he lived sometimes in the one, and sometimes in the other.

Ver. 5. *And reigned in Mount Hermon.*] At the bottom of which some other people lived, who were conquered by Joshua, (xi. 17.)

And in Salcah.] This was one of his cities, in that part of his kingdom which was next to Hermon, as some conjecture from xiii. 12. But others think it was in the southern part of this country, possessed afterward by the Gadites; which they gather from 1 Chron. v. 11, 12. 16.

And all Bashan, unto the border, &c.] See an account of this, and of all that follows in this verse, Deut. iii. 13, 14.

Ver. 6. *Them did Moses, the servant of the Lord, and the children of Israel, smite.*] These two kings were conquered by Moses before they came into Canaan, (Numb. xxi.)

And Moses, the servant of the Lord, gave it for a possession to the Reubenites, and Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.] See Numb. xxxii. and Deut. iii. 12. xiii. 8. He gives Moses the title of *the servant of the Lord* twice in this verse, to make them sensible that this war against the two kings beforenamed was made by Divine authority; and that their land was afterward given to the Reubenites, &c. by the same authority.

Ver. 7. *And these are the kings.*] They that follow in the rest of the chapter.

Of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel smote on this side Jordan.] In the late wars, beforementioned in this book.

On the west.] Westward of Jordan.

From Baal-Gad, in the valley of Lebanon, even unto the Mount Halak, which goeth up to Seir.] This was the northern and southern bounds of the country of these kings. (See xi. 17.)

Which Joshua gave unto the tribes of Israel for a possession, according to their divisions.] Unto the rest of the tribes, who had not their share on the other side Jordan, (xi. 23.)

Ver. 8. *In the mountains, and in the valleys, and in the plains.*] This is a description of the condition of the country; in which *valleys* and *plains* differ only in this, that the former were such as lay between mountains, and the latter, the flat country, which was remote from mountains.

And in the springs.] Which commonly were at the foot of mountains.

And in the wilderness, and in the south country.] These are joined together, because their wildernesses were southerly, in the hottest and driest part of the land: whereby we are not to understand countries without people; but that were thinly peopled, in comparison with other parts of the land. For we read of houses and towns in the wilderness, 1 Kings ix. 18. xi. 34.

The Hivites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, &c.] This may relate either to the kings, or the countries, forementioned.

Ver. 9. *The king of Jericho, one.*] He is first mentioned, because first conquered.

The king of Ai.] He was the next.

Which is beside Beth-el, one.] The people of which place came to assist the king of Ai; and were conquered at the same time, (viii. 17.)

Ver. 10. *The king of Jerusalem, one.*] Who was the next that opposed Joshua, and therefore next mentioned, (x. 1.)

The king of Hebron, one.] He, and the three next, the kings of Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon, (ver. 11, 12.) joined with the king of Jerusalem, and were vanquished at the same time.

Ver. 12. *The king of Gezer, one.*] He came out to help Lachish, and was smitten at the same time, (x. 33.)

Ver. 13. *The king of Debir, one.*] Mentioned x. 38.

The king of Geder, one.] We read not of him before; but we find several towns in the tribe of Judah of the same or neighbouring name, *viz.* Gederah, and Gederoth, and Gederothaim, and Geder, (xv. 36. 41. 56. 2 Chron. xxviii. 18.) All which, as Bochartus observes, have their name *à sepimento, from the fence that was about them,* (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 36.)

Ver. 14. *The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one.*] We have no mention of these kings before; but we know that Hormah was a city in the tribe of Judah, (xv. 30. Judg. i. 17. 1 Sam. xxx. 30.) and afterward given to Simeon. (Josh. xix. 4.) Arad also was a place in the tribe of Judah, as appears by the story in Judg. i. 16.

Ver. 15. *The king of Libnah, one.*] Mentioned before, (x. 29.)

The king of Adullam, one.] This was a city in the same tribe of Judah, (xv. 35. 1 Sam. xxii. 1.)

Ver. 16. *The king of Makkedah, one.*] See x. 26.

The king of Beth-el, one.] We read not of any king here before; but it seems there was one depending upon Ai, (viii. 17.)

Ver. 17. *And the king of Tappuah, one.*] There were two cities of this name; one in the tribe of Judah, (xv. 34.) the other in the tribe of Ephraim, (xvii. 8.) It is probable the latter is here meant; because the king of it is mentioned next to the king of Beth-el, which was in the confines of Benjamin and Ephraim. And immediately follows the king of Hepher; which was a place not far off, in the tribe of Zebulun.

The king of Hepher, one.] We read of the *land of Hepher,* in 1 Kings iv. 10. Which St. Jerome saith was in the tribe of Zebulun, near Sephorim, or Diocæsarea.

Ver. 18. *The king of Aphek.*] There were two Apheks in this country which Joshua conquered, one in the tribe of Judah, (xiii. 53. 1 Sam. ix. 1. xxix. 1.) another in the tribe of Asher, (Josh. xix. 53.) Which of them is here intended, cannot certainly be determined.

The king of Lassaron, one.] This place is never named any where else in Scripture. But I take it for Saron (as the Vulgar Latin here doth, leaving out the first syllable), which was a city near Lydda, as we learn from Acts ix. 35. And the country about it was very pleasant and fruitful, (Isa. xxxiii. 9. xxxv. 2.) There was another Saron also on the other side of Jordan, in the east, in the country of the Gadites, (1 Chron. v. 16.) of which some think the prophet Isaiah speaks, lxv. 10.

Ver. 19. *The king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one.*] Both these are mentioned before, as conquered by Joshua, (xi. 1.)

Ver. 20. *The king of Shimron-Meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one.*] These two are mentioned in the same place, (xi. 1.) And Shimron was in the tribe of Zebulun; and Achshaph in the tribe of Asher, (xix. 15. 25.) The former hath the addition of Meron to it in this place, to distinguish it from some other Shimron; which some think

was in the tribe of Ephraim, called Shomeron, or Samaria.

Ver. 21. *The king of Taanach, one.*] A city given to the tribe of Manasseh, (xvii. 11.) and in the confines of Zebulun. It belonged to the Levites: (xxi. 25.) but the old inhabitants were not expelled out of it, (Judg. i. 27.)

The king of Megiddo, one.] This city fell to the same tribe, as we read in the same place; and was near the river Kishon; as may be gathered from Judg. v. 19. The Canaanites were not driven out of this city, (Judg. i. 27.)

Ver. 22. *The king of Kedesh, one.*] There were two cities called Kedesh, or Kadish; one in the tribe of Judah, (xv. 23.) the other in the tribe of Naphtali, (xix. 37.) The latter is here meant; for it was a fenced city, as we read there; but the other was of no note.

The king of Jokneam of Carmel, one.] A city in the tribe of Zebulun, at the bottom of Mount Carmel, near the river Belus, (xix. 11.) and one of the cities of the Levites, (xxi. 34.) It had its name from its delightful situation, as Bochart conjectures, lib. i. Canaan, cap. 28.

Ver. 23. *The king of Dor, in the coast of Dor, one.*] A city in the lot of the tribe of Manasseh, (xvii. 11.) which had a large territory belonging to it, called after its name: for it was a royal city, and one of the most ancient in Phœnicia, as Bochart observes. So strong, also, that the Israelites could not get possession of it (or could not keep out the ancient inhabitants), when it fell to the portion of Manasseh, (Judg. i. 27.) Nor could Antiochus Sidetes, in future times, take it, though he laid siege to it with a very great army, (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 41.)

The king of the nations of Gilgal, one.] This Gilgal is not the place where Joshua encamped when he came over Jordan; for there was no city there, nor any king of that country, but the king of Jericho. That place also had its name from the circumcision of the Israelites there, (ver. 9.) We have no mention indeed of any other Gilgal in Scripture; but St. Jerome says, in his time, there was a place called Gelgel, about six miles from Antipatris, which was near the sea, not far from Joppa. Hither, it is likely, merchants from several countries resorted; and thence the chief ruler there was called *the king of the nations of Gilgal.* Some finding mention of *Galilee of the nations,* fancy that it is the place here meant. But that name, for some part of Galilee, was not known in the days of Joshua; being occasioned by Solomon's giving Hiram twenty towns in this country, (1 Kings ix. 11.) So the same St. Jerome.

Ver. 24. *The king of Tirzah, one.*] It is not certain in what part of the country this city was; but it is very probable in the lot of the tribe of Ephraim. For Jeroboam (who was of this tribe) and his successors, made it the royal seat until the building of Samaria, (1 Kings xiv. 17. xvi. 23, 24.)

All the kings, thirty and one.] Some cannot believe that in so small a country there were so many kings. But they should consider, that these kings were only petty princes, or lords of cities, which had a few villages depending on them, the inhabitants of which were their tenants. This appears by ver. 9. where we read of the king of Beth-el; which was so small a place, that he and the king of Ai, joined together, had but twelve thousand subjects, (viii. 25.) For kingdoms, like all other things, were anciently very small in their beginning. See upon Gen. xiv. 1. and Grotius upon the first verse of this chapter, and Masius upon the seventh. Unto which may be added, that Cæsar, in his fifth book of his Commentaries, speaks of four kings here in the county of Kent alone: how many then were there in all Britain? for it appears by Tacitus, that the Silures and the Brigantes had their own kings also. And Cæsar informs us, that in France there were as many kings as princes; and so it was in Spain, as Livy writes. And Vopiscus, in the life of the emperor Probus, relates, that when he was in Germany, "reguli novem ex diversis gentibus," &c. *nine petty kings came from divers nations, and threw themselves at his feet;* as he himself wrote to the senate of Rome, in a letter which is there recorded. In which he calls them *novem reges, nine kings.*

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW Joshua was old and stricken in years.*] To what age he was advanced we cannot certainly know; because we do not know how old he was when they came out of Egypt. Some think three and forty; and then he was fourscore and three when they came into Canaan: and now, it may be gathered by probable conjectures, wanted not much of a hundred.

And the Lord said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.] Which, in his declining age, he could not hope to live to conquer; and therefore he would have him go about another business, (ver. 7.)

Ver. 2. *This is the land that yet remains.*] To be subdued hereafter.

All the borders of the Philistines.] Who lay in the south-west part of Canaan, near the sea.

And all Geshuri.] Which was a city, and a country in the north-east, not far from Hermon, belonging to the lot of the tribe of Manasseh. (See Deut. iii. 14.)

Ver. 3. *From Sihor, which is before Egypt.*] He describes more largely the borders of the Philistines, whose country extended along the sea-coast, south and north, from Sihor, which was a little stream from one of the branches of the Nile, whereby Palestine was bounded on that side. (See Gen. xv. 18. and Vossius de Orig. et Progr. Idolol. lib. ii. cap. 74.)

Even unto the borders of Ekron northward.] A famous city among the Philistines, where Baal-zebub was worshipped, called in the New Testament *the prince of the devils* (or *demons*), because he was the principal god of the people of Palestine. This city was given to the tribe of Judah at first, (xv. 45.) afterward to the tribe of Dan, (xix.) though neither of them could get possession of it.

Which is counted to the Canaanite.] For the Philistines were not original inhabitants of this country, which belonged to the offspring of Canaan, the youngest son of Ham; whereas the Philistines were descended from Misraim, his second son; who expelled the Avites out of this country; as we read Deut. ii. 23. and see my annotations on Gen. x. 14. 19.

Five lords of the Philistines.] Which country was under the government of five *lords,* as they are constantly called in Scripture; in the Hebrew, *seraim,* or *seranaim;* which

seems to be an ancient Phœnician word (the same with *sarim*) for a ruler of a province, or city. The LXX. call them Σάτραπαι, and the Vulgar Latin, *reguli, petty princes.* But they are never called *melakim,* i. e. *kings,* in Scripture, as the rest of the princes of Canaan are. Which inclines me to think that their government was not so absolute, as that of the rest of the kings of Canaan. Only we read in future times, that Achish was king of Gath; having, it seems, in David's days, made himself more absolute than the former lords of that place.

The Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites.] These people had their names from the five principal cities in this country, where they inhabited; which are commonly known.

Also the Avites.] These were a people mixed with them, being a remnant (as I said before) of the ancient inhabitants of this country. But there was no distinct lord of them; there being but five in all; and so many without one over these. Some have confounded them with the Hivites; but their name is quite different in the Hebrew, and so is their country. For the Hivites lived in Hermon in the north; and these here in the west. From whence, though they were driven by the Caphtorites, (Deut. ii. 23.) yet some of them, it seems, remained; as several of the Canaanites did, when the Israelites dispossessed them of their country. See Bochartus, in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 36. who thinks they were not the offspring of Canaan; but it is manifest they inhabited part of the country belonging to him: for Sidon was the first-born of Canaan, who was settled on that coast; and the border of the Canaanites is said to be from thence unto Gaza, (Gen. x. 19.)

Ver. 4. *From the south.*] Of the Philistines' country.

All the land of the Canaanites.] All that tract of land which belonged to the people properly called Canaanites; who lived upon the sea-coast.

And Mearah.] We find no mention of this place elsewhere: some translate it, *a cave.*

That is beside the Sidonians.] Who were in the northern point of that sea-coast.

Unto Aphek.] See xii. 18. where I observed there were two cities of this name; but it is most reasonable here to understand that in the tribe of Asher; whose king though Joshua had slain, he had not taken his country.

To the borders of the Amorites.] Who were in these parts: for they being a mighty people had dispersed themselves, not only in the east, and in the south, but in these northern regions.

Ver. 5. *And the land of the Giblites.*] A people inhabiting a city called Gebal, and the country about it, near to Tyre and Sidon; as appears from Ezek. xxvii. 9. and in 1 Kings v. 18. they are mentioned as stone-cutters, sent by Hiram king of Tyre to king Solomon. (See also Psal. lxxxiii. 7.)

And all Lebanon towards the sun-rising.] They extended their conquests thus far, (xi. 17.) but could not subdue the eastern part of this country.

From Baal-Gad under Mount Hermon, unto the entering into Hamath.] Concerning *Baal-Gad,* see xi. 17. and concerning *the entering into Hamath,* Numb. xxxiv. 8.

Ver. 6. *All the inhabitants of the hill-country.*] In the northern parts of the land.

From Lebanon.] This shews what hilly country he speaks of.

Unto Misrephoth-maim.] A place beforementioned, xi. 8. where, as I observed, some render it *hot waters,* or *baths:* for *sharaph* signifies to burn, and *maim* is waters. And I may add, there are those that think they were *lime-kilns,* others *glass-furnaces;* but most likely *salt-pits.*

And all the Sidonians.] Who were near to the inhabitants of Libanus, westward upon the sea.

Them will I drive out before the children of Israel.] If they persisted constant in his worship and service. Which they did not; and therefore we never read that the Sidonians were conquered by the Israelites: and the people of Lebanon were only made tributaries in the days of David and Solomon.

Only.] Or rather *therefore,* as the word *rak* sometimes signifies. (See chap. i. *ult.*)

Divide thou it by lot unto the children of Israel for an inheritance.] Though they be not yet driven out, yet, since I have promised to expel them, assign all the forementioned countries to the children of Israel by lot, as the inheritance I have bestowed upon them. Which gave them a strong assurance they should have all this land; both because God had given it to them for an *inheritance,* and ordered it to be divided by *lot.*

As I have commanded thee.] Or, as I now command thee, and give thee authority to do.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes, and the half tribe of Manasseh.*] Both that which was conquered, and that which remained unconquered, was to be divided, that every tribe might know what belonged to them, by God's gift; and be encouraged to attempt the conquest of it when they were able; and be preserved from entering into any covenant or society with those who kept their inheritance from them; and likewise hinder the unconquered people from joining their forces together to recover their country; the Israelites inhabiting the cities and fields that lay between them.

Ver. 8. *With whom.*] That is, with the other half of the tribe beforementioned.

The Reubenites and Gadites have received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond Jordan eastward.] See Numb. xxxii. 33, &c.

Even as Moses, the servant of the Lord, gave them.] Which he did by order from God; and therefore they were not to be disturbed in their possession, (Deut. iii. 18.)

Here the words of God to Joshua (ver. 1.) end; and in the next verse the writer of this book begins to describe the country which God ordered to be given to the forenamed two tribes and a half, that there might be no future dispute about this division; but it might be held as good as that which was made by lot among the rest of the tribes.

Ver. 9. *From Aroer, that is upon the brink of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river.*] See xii. 2. and Deut. iii. 16.

And all the plain of Medeba unto Dibon.] These are two cities which the Amorites took from the Moabites, (as we read Numb. xxi. 30.) and the Israelites took from them when they conquered Sihon their king. The former of them was in the portion of the Reubenites; the other of the Gadites: and when the ten tribes were carried captive, they returned into the possession of the Moabites again. For Isaiah speaks of them as belonging to Moab, xv. 2.

and so doth Jeremiah, xlviii. 22. The plain of Medeba seems to be the same with the plain of Moab.

Ver. 10. *And all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, unto the border of the children of Ammon.*] See Numb. xxi. 24, 25, &c.

Ver. 11. *And Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites, and Maachathites.*] Geshur and Maacha were two cites near Mount Hermon, in the extreme bounds of this country northward, whose inhabitants the Israelites could not drive out, (ver. 13.) and yet their land was divided among them.

And all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan unto Salcah.] See all this verse explained, xii. 5. I shall only add, that Maacha was in the tribe of Manasseh, and is the city which Ptolemy calls Epicæros. Which name the Chaldee paraphrast uses both here and xii. 4, 5. and Deut. iii. 14. instead of Maacha, as Bochart observes, lib. ii. Phaleg. cap. 6.

Ver. 12. *All the kingdom of Og in Bashan, which reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, who remained of the remnant of the giants.*] See xii. 4. and Deut. iii. 11.

For these did Moses smite, and cast them out.] These *Rephaim* (which we translate *giants*) were perfectly conquered, and rooted out by Moses. They were smitten in Abraham's time, by Chedorlaomer, (Gen. xiv. 5.) but recovered strength so much, that their country, when Moses conquered it, was called *the land of giants*, Deut. iii. 13.

Ver. 13. *Nevertheless the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites and Maachathites.*] See ver. 2.

But the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites unto this day.] For Joshua growing old (ver. 1.) made no further conquest, but left this people unsubdued, as Moses also had done.

Ver. 14. *Only unto the tribe of Levi he gave no inheritance.*] For the tithes of the whole country were instead of their portion in land, (Deut. xviii. 2.) And this is set down here by Joshua, as formerly by Moses, to shew that they had as indisputable a right to the tithes as their brethren had to the land.

The sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance.] That is, the inheritance of the priests; for the whole tribe of Levi had nothing to do with them. See Numb. xviii. where the portion of the priests and of the Levites is exactly set down; and see ver. 33. of this chapter, and xiv. 3. xviii. 7.

As he said unto them.] See Numb. xviii. 20, 21. where this is distinctly said, both with respect to the priests and to the Levites.

Ver. 15. *And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben inheritance according to their families.*] Having said in general what Moses gave to the two tribes and a half, he proceeds to set down in particular what share each of them had in this country: that so they might no more quarrel among themselves about their portion, than the nine tribes and a half quarrel with them all. And, first, he mentions what part of the land was given to Reuben; which was divided into as many portions as they had families.

Ver. 16. *Their coast was from Aroer, that is on the bank of Arnon,* &c.] See ver. 9. Aroer itself was in the tribe of Gad, (Numb. xxxii. 34.) unto which the portion of the Reubenites reached.

Ver. 17. *Heshbon, and all the cities that are in the plain.*] He means the plain beforementioned, ver. 9.

Dibon.] It is said plainly, in Numb. xxxii. 34. that it belonged to the Gadites; for it was, as Masius well judges, in the confines of both tribes; and so was inhabited by both. Which is to be said also of Heshbon, here ascribed to the Reubenites; but in xxi. 39. is said to be a city of the Levites in the tribe of Gad. And so we read also in 1 Chron. vi. *ult.* And this is still more evident; for Heshbon, which in this verse is reckoned to the Reubenites, in the twenty-sixth verse of this very chapter, is said to be given to the tribe of Gad; which is a demonstration they had it between them.

Bamoth-Baal, and Beth-Baal-meon.] We read of Bamoth not far from this country, Numb. xxi. 19. but no where else of Bamoth-Baal; which, it is probable, was some high place where Baal was worshipped; for we read of *high places* in this country, Numb. xxi. 28. We find mention of Baal-meon in many places, particularly Numb. xxxii. 38. where it is said to be given to this tribe. And the addition of Beth to it, signifies there was some house, that is, temple of Baal in this place.

Ver. 18. *And Jahaza.*] Here they fought with Sihon. (See Numb. xxi. 23.)

And Kedemoth.] From whence Moses sent friendly messengers to Sihon, to desire a peaceable passage through his country, (Deut. iii. 26.)

And Mephaath.] This, with the two foregoing, were Levitical cities in the tribe of Reuben, (xxi. 36, 37. 1 Chron. vi. 78, 79.)

Ver. 19. *And Kirjathaim, and Sibmah.*] These two are mentioned in Numb. xxxii. 37, 38. as given to the Reubenites.

And Zareth-shahar.] We do not read of this city any where else.

In the mount of the valley.] In the mount which overlooked the great plain beforementioned; which may be supposed to be one of the mountains of Abarim, where this city, and perhaps the two former, were seated.

Ver. 20. *And Baal-Peor.*] It seems to have had its name from the filthy idol which was there worshipped by the Moabites, (Numb. xxv. 3. 5. see Deut. xxxiv. 6.)

And Ashdod-Pisgah and Beth-Jeshimoth.] See xii. 3.

Ver. 21. *And all the cities of the plain.*] As well as those mentioned in the mountain which overlooked it, (ver. 19.)

And all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites.] That is, all the forementioned places belonged to the kingdom of Sihon. But they had not all his kingdom given them; for it was shared between them and the Gadites, as appears from ver. 27.

Whom Moses smote with the princes of Midian.] Not in the war with Sihon, mentioned Numb. xxi. but in another war after that, undertaken by a particular command of God, (Numb. xxxi.)

Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba.] Who are mentioned as killed in that war, (Numb. xxxi. 8.)

Which were dukes of Sihon.] This is the reason why they are here mentioned, because, though they lived in Midian, yet they were tributaries to Sihon; and, it is likely, assisted him in his war with Israel, in which though they then escaped, yet afterward they were slain by them.

Dwelling in the country.] It is uncertain whether he meant that Sihon had given them some place in his country to dwell in (that they might be ready on all occasions to assist him with their forces), or that they were settled

in the country of Midian; whereas some of that people were unsettled, and moved from place to place, like to the ancient Nomades. However it was, they were such great men in Midian, that they are called *kings*, Numb. xxxi. 8. as here they are called *princes;* but much inferior to Sihon, whom they served only as great commanders under him. So our translators, I suppose, understood it, which made them render the Hebrew word *nesiche* by the English word *dukes;* which we elsewhere translate *nobles*, in Psal. lxxxiii. 13.

Ver. 22. *Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer.*] He had been a prophet, but degenerated into a soothsayer, or diviner, (see Numb. xxii. 5—8.) and became a prophet again for the sake of Israel.

Did the children of Israel slay with a sword among them that were slain by them.] It is hard to give an account why he is here mentioned; unless we suppose him to have been an adviser of Sihon, and those dukes that joined with him to undertake the war; as it is certain he was of the Midianites to draw in the Israelites to commit idolatry, (Numb. xxv. 17.)

Ver. 23. *And the border of the children of Reuben was Jordan, and the border thereof,* &c.] This river was the bounds of their country westward.

Ver. 24. *And Moses gave inheritance unto the tribe of Gad,* &c.] As he had done to the Reubenites, ver. 15. (See there.)

Ver. 25. *And their coast was Jazer.*] See Numb. xxi. 32. and xxxii. 35.

And all the cities of Gilead.] That lay next to Jazer: for half of Gilead was given to the children of Manasseh, (ver. 31.)

And half of the land of the children of Ammon.] The children of Israel took nothing from them, but were expressly forbidden to meddle with their country, (Deut. ii. 19.) He speaks therefore of that part of their country which Sihon had taken from them, (as he did part of the Moabites' country, Numb. xxi. 26.) and the Israelites, having vanquished Sihon, justly possessed, from Arnon to Jabbok; as Jephthah represents to the Ammonites, when they demanded this land as belonging to them; when the Israelites had enjoyed it near three hundred years, (Judg. xi. 13. 22, &c.)

Unto Aroer.] This was the bounds of that country taken from the Ammonites by Sihon, from Aroer unto Jabbok; for Aroer was seated upon Arnon beforementioned, (Judg. xi. 13.)

That is before Rabbah.] Over against Rabbah, the chief city of the Ammonites' country; which was in the north part of it, as Aroer in the south.

Ver. 26. *And from Heshbon.*] See ver. 17.

Unto Ramath-Mizpeh.] The same with Ramath-Gilead, of which we read xx. 8. and many other places. It seems to be the same place which is called Mizpeh of Gilead, where Jephthah the Gileadite lived, (Judg. xi. 29. 34.)

And Betonim.] We know no more of this place, than that it was, in all likelihood, a city in the north part of this tribe, as Ramath-Gilead was; and Heshbon in the south.

And from Mahanaim.] This was a city built in that place where Jacob saw the camps of angels, (Gen. xxxii. 1, 2.) It was not far from the river Jabbok, as appears from that chapter, ver. 22. This city was very considerable in aftertimes; Ish-bosheth, who reigned over Israel after Saul, having his residence here; and David making some stay here when he fled from Absalom, (2 Sam. ii. 8. 12. xvii. 27.) It was one of the Levitical cities, (xxi. 37.)

Unto Debir.] There was another city of this name in the tribe of Judah, (xv. 15. 49.) But this was (as St. Jerome and Eusebius tell us) a city of the Ammonites upon Jordan.

Ver. 27. *And in the valley, Beth-Aram, and Beth-Nimrah.*] Having mentioned the frontier places, he comes to speak of those cities which were in the midst of the country. And these two are mentioned, Numb. xxxii. 36. The latter of which, here called Beth-Nimrah (*Domus Pardorum*, as Bochart interprets it), is simply called Nimrah in the third verse of that chapter. And the waters of Nimrim (Isa. xv. 6.) seem to have been in the same place; which Moses and Joshua say belonged to the Gadites; but Isaiah and Jeremiah call it a city of the Moabites: who, in the days of those prophets, after the ten tribes were carried captive, recovered those places. (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 7.)

And Succoth.] Which was the place where Jacob fixed, after he had passed over Jabbok, in his return from Padan-Aram, (Gen. xxxiii. 17.)

And Zaphon.] A place which St. Jerome saith lay upon the river Jordan.

The rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon.] That is, all but that which was given to the Reubenites.

Jordan and his border.] For instance, the country bordering upon Jordan.

Even unto the edge of the sea of Cinnereth, on the other side Jordan eastward.] To the extreme part of the lake, in aftertimes called Gennesaret; where the river Jordan came out of it on the south-east.

Ver. 28. *This is the inheritance of the children of Gad after their families, the cities, and their villages.*] Which are not all named, but they were in the region here described.

Ver. 29. *And Moses gave inheritance unto the half tribe of Manasseh,* &c.] The country which they conquered on the other side Jordan, being too large for the Reubenites and Gadites alone, Moses bestowed what follows upon the half tribe of Manasseh; who did not desire it, as far as I can find, (see Numb. xxxii. 1, 2.) but were thought fit to be joined with the other two tribes, because they were very numerous, (Numb. xxvi. 34.) and, it is likely, had great store of cattle, as the other had.

Ver. 30. *And their coast was from Mahanaim.*] Mentioned before, ver. 26.

All Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan.] This kingdom consisted of three parts, (Deut. iii. 13.) half of Gilead, Bashan, and the region of Argob: all which sometimes are comprehended under the name of Bashan, because it was the principal part of his kingdom.

And all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan.] This is an explication of what went before; for these towns were in the forenamed kingdom of Bashan, and not distinct from it. Why they are called *the towns of Jair*, Moses gives an account, Numb. xxxii. 41.

Threescore cities.] Which were in the region of Argob, as we read Deut. iii. 4. 14.

Ver. 31. *And half Gilead.*] The other half that was not given to the Gadites, (ver. 25.) This is also but an explication of what he said at the first; for Gilead was not dis-

tinct from the kingdom of Og king of Bashan; but a part of it.

And Ashtaroth and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.] Royal cities, as is commonly thought, from xii. 4.

Were pertaining unto the children of Machir, the son of Manasseh.] All the posterity of Manasseh came from Machir; for he had no other son beside him, (Numb. xxxii. 29.) unto whose children, that is, to one half of them (as it is explained in the following words), he gave this part of that kingdom, (Deut. iii. 15.)

Even to the one half of the children of Machir by their families.] Among whom Jair and his posterity had the honour to be reckoned, though he was of the tribe of Judah; because he was his grandchild by his daughter, and so instrumental in conquering this country, that he had his inheritance given him here, (1 Chron. ii. 21, &c. Numb. xxxiv. 41, 42.)

Ver. 32. *These are the countries which Moses did distribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab, on the other side Jordan, by Jericho, eastward.*] Which countries, with their bounds and limits, are thus particularly described, that every tribe might rest satisfied with God's appointment, and not invade their brethren's territories.

Ver. 33. *But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance: the Lord God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them.*] This had been noted before in this very chapter, ver. 14. and is again noted, xiv. 3, 4. and again, xviii. 7. Which frequent repetition was for the honour of this tribe; and that the people might have the greater regard to them, and care of them.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AND these are the countries.*] *viz.* Those mentioned in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and following chapters; for this chapter is but a kind of preface to the division of the land.

Which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan.] Which was now conquered by Joshua; as that of Sihon and Og had been by Moses.

Which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, distributed for inheritance unto them.] According to the command given by God to Moses, Numb. xxxiv. 17, 18. where the names of the twelve heads of the tribes, or the princes (as they are there called), are set down, ver. 19, 20, &c.

Ver. 2. *By lot was their inheritance.*] To take away all occasion of controversy, the matter being determined by God.

As the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.] Numb. xxvi. 55, 56. xxxiii. 54.

For the nine tribes, and for the half tribe.] Who were to be provided for in the land of Canaan; as the other, it here follows, had been on the other side Jordan.

Ver. 3. *For Moses had given the inheritance of two tribes and a half on the other side Jordan.*] This seems to argue a strong faith, which the nine tribes and a half had in the promise of God; that they were contented to see their brethren put in actual possession of their inheritance, when they were only in hope of their portion.

But unto the Levites gave he no inheritance among them.] Neither on this side Jordan, nor on the other; as was said before, xiii. 33. and mentioned here again for the reason following.

Ver. 4. *For the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim.*] The privilege of the first-born was transferred from Reuben's to Joseph, (1 Chron. v. 1, 2.) from whose two sons sprung two tribes: so that there were still twelve tribes, without reckoning Levi for one, (Gen. xlviii. 5, 6.)

Therefore they gave no part to the Levites in the land.] Because the children of Joseph succeeded in their room, as the Vulgar Latin translates the foregoing words; that is, to make up the number of twelve tribes.

Save cities to dwell in.] Not for a possession, as Conrad. Pellicanus observes, but only for a habitation: for they could not sell them, as their brethren might their possessions.

With their suburbs for their cattle and for their substance.] See Numb. xxxv. 2, 3, &c.

Ver. 5. *As the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did.*] That is, assigned them cities and suburbs, (xxi. 1, 2, &c.)

And they divided the land.] That is, when Eleazar, Joshua, and the princes had divided it.

Ver. 6. *Then the children of Judah.*] Before they went to cast lots for the division of the land, some of the children of Judah interposed in the behalf of Caleb; coming along with him, I suppose, as witnesses to the truth of what he alleged.

Came unto Joshua in Gilgal.] Where the tabernacle as yet was; for Joshua had not removed his camp from thence; and, accordingly, here the division of the land began to be made; though it was finished at Shiloh, as we read ch. xviii.

And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him.] This shews that he was the principal person concerned in this address to Joshua; though the rest, perhaps, who came along with him, were not only witnesses to the truth of his pretensions, but came to desire Joshua to begin the division of the land; the tribe of Judah, now that the Reubenites were provided for, being the eldest of those that wanted their portion. Among whom, Caleb was not only a considerable person, but one of those princes who were appointed by God to assist in the division of the land, (Numb. xxxiv. 19.) and therefore would not be a judge in his own case, but have it settled before by Joshua, the supreme governor of God's people. Why he is called the Kenezite, is not easy to resolve; nor is it certain, whether Caleb or Jephunneh be called the Kenezite. But it comes to the same, whether the one or the other be so called, and the Hebrew words will bear either construction; yet St. Jerome and the LXX. take it to belong to Caleb, some of whose ancestors were called Kenez; which was certainly a name very common in their family. (See xv. 17. and Judg. i. 13.) And there is no improbability in it, that Kenez was the father of Jephunneh, from whence both he and his son were called Kenezites.

Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses, the man of God.] He gives him this title, that what he ordered might be thought of greater authority, *i. e.* a Divine command.

Concerning me and thee, in Kadesh-barnea.] Which he

was confident Joshua could not but remember, being concerned in it as well as himself. (See Numb. xiv. 24. 30. 38.)

Ver. 7. *Forty years old was I when Moses, the servant of the Lord, sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land.*] He mentions this, partly to shew that Moses took care to send persons of some experience, able to make observations, and judge aright; as well as in their full strength of body, able to travel and take pains. Such, it is probable, were all the rest, as well as he; men grown up every way to maturity, both of judgment and bodily vigour.

And I brought him word again, as it was in my heart.] Delivered my true opinion freely and sincerely, without either fear or flattery, (Numb. xiii. 30.)

Ver. 8. *Nevertheless, my brethren that went with me made the heart of the people melt.*] Numb. xiii. 31, 32. xiv. 1, &c. which did not discourage him at all from speaking the truth.

But I wholly followed the Lord my God.] This testimony God himself gave him, (Numb. xiv. 24.) which he might therefore mention without any breach of modesty, it being the ground of his present petition.

Ver. 9. *And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord my God.*] See Deut. i. 34—36. This was first pronounced by God himself, and that with an oath, Numb. xiv. 21. 24. (See my notes there.) Some think *his treading on it with his feet* was his taking possession, and being admitted the owner of that land; according to the present notion of civil lawyers, who will have *possessio* to be as much as *pedis positio*. But this is only a modern conceit.

Ver. 10. *And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years.*] Thus far he had fulfilled his words, in preserving him alive till the country was conquered, wherein he promised him a certain portion; so that he wanted only actual possession of it.

Even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness.] Which was thirty and eight years.

And now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old.] It seems then that seven years were passed since they came into Canaan, before they began to divide the land; which was not till a year after the war was ended. (See xi. 18.) As for the time that followed between the complete division of the land, and the death of Joshua, it is not set down in this book; nor have we words in it, from whence to make a probable conjecture about it, but only those xxiii. 1. where it is said, *A long time after God had given them rest, Joshua waxed old*, &c. Which shews it is not to be restrained to so short a time as seven, or ten years, but may rather be thought twenty, as Du Pin computes it.

Ver. 11. *As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me.*] As able, both in body and mind, to undertake, and to dispatch any business, as he was forty and five years ago: which was a wonderful blessing of God, and an argument his petition should be granted; because he wanted neither courage nor strength to assault and take the place he desired, if it were still in the Canaanites' hands; or to defend and preserve it, if it were already conquered.

As my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in.] This is a repetition of what he affirmed; as is usual when a thing is certain and undoubted. Concerning this phrase, *go out and come in*, see Numb. xxvii. 17. And this shews the force and efficacy of God's promise, confirmed by an oath; which (as Dr. Jackson well observes) was as remarkable in preserving his life and strength, as in bringing mortality on others, who he sware should not enter into Canaan.

Ver. 12. *Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day.*] The mountainous country where Hebron lay, (xi. 21.) which was the place promised to him, as I observed upon Numb. xiv. 24.

For thou heardest in that day.] The LXX. and the Vulgar Latin refer this to what goes before, and make the sense to be, as if he had said, *in thy hearing*, God promised this country to me.

How the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and strong.] The Vulgar makes the sense to be, *Where the Anakims are*, &c. (See Numb. xiii. 28. 32, 33.) He mentions cities in the plural number; for we read of two other, beside Hebron, which they possessed, (xi. 21.)

If so be the Lord will be with me.] These are not words of doubting; but a pious acknowledgment that nothing could be successfully enterprised, without God's gracious assistance; of which, no question, he was very confident. The Targum hath it, *If so be the Word of the Lord will be my helper:* which is the constant language of that paraphrast in all this book upon such occasions. (See i. 9. 17. vi. 27. x. 42. and xxiii. 3. 10.)

Then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said.] Which, whether it was done now or before, when Joshua conquered the country, is a dispute. (See x. 37.)

Ver. 13. *And Joshua blessed him.*] Acknowledged his deserts, and beseeched God to prosper him in his undertaking, and gave his consent that he should have this country: for then God is said *to bless* a man, when he bestows his benefits upon him; and we do not *bless* others to purpose, unless we do what they desire. Accordingly it here follows.

And gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance.] That is, the country about it: for Hebron itself was a city of the priests, xxi. 11. 13. where it is expressly said, ver. 12. the fields and the villages of it were given to Caleb.

Ver. 14. *Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb unto this day, because he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel.*] God rewarded his fidelity by this singular gift, which he bestowed upon him before the land was divided by lot.

Ver. 15. *And the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-arba.*] See upon Gen. xxiii. 2.

Which Arba was a great man among the Anakims.] Of great authority, as well as strength. So the word *gadol* is used, Gen. xxiv. 35. and so we call men at this day, who are of great power, by the name of *magnates*. He was the father of Anak, (xv. 13. and xxi. 11.) who either built this city, or fortified it, or made it his royal seat (being a kind of prince among them), and perhaps was here buried; which made it be called his city. (See upon Numb. xiii. 33.)

And the land had rest from war.] Which gave them liberty to divide the land. This was said before, (xi. *ult.*) and now repeated, perhaps to shew that what is here re-

ported concerning Caleb was done some time ago, at the end of the war; and now mentioned to shew, that he held this portion of land by a Divine donation, before the country was divided by lot.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *THIS then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah.*] The first lot that came up was for the tribe of Judah; in honour of it, and that the prophecy of Jacob might be fulfilled concerning his pre-eminence among his brethren. The manner of drawing these lots, see upon Numb. xxvi. 55, 56. which it is apparent could not be done without a precedent survey of the whole country. A description of which being laid before Joshua, he, and Eleazar, and the princes, divided it into nine shares and a half, as equal as they could; considering not merely the quantity of ground, but the quality also, and goodness of the soil. This survey is not mentioned here; but it is afterward, xviii. 4. and therefore is to be supposed when they began to divide the land.

By their families.] The lot was only of so much land (bound as follows) for the whole tribe. Unto every family of which a portion was assigned by Joshua, and the rest, who were appointed to see that none were neglected, and that they had every one a just proportion. Therefore the lot for each tribe was not so unalterably fixed and determined, but that it might be enlarged or diminished; by taking from that tribe which had too much, and giving it to that which had too little. (See xix. 9.)

Even to the border of Edom; the wilderness of Zin, southward, was the uttermost part of the south coast.] See Numb. xxxiv. 2. Edom lay upon the wilderness of Zin; and the lot of Judah extended as far as that, which was the south part of the land. And, indeed, the tribe of Judah (as Conr. Pellicanus observes) had half of the south part of the whole land of Canaan for their portion; as the tribes of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) had the north part; with whom the rest of the tribes were intermixed, *viz.* Simeon, Benjamin, and Dan, with the tribe of Judah; and Issachar, Zebulun, Asher, and Naphtali, with the portion of Joseph.

Ver. 2. *And their south border was from the shore of the salt sea.*] The foregoing verse was a short description of the length of Judah's country: now he describes the bounds of it on all quarters; and here saith, that the *salt*, or *dead*, *sea* was the bounds of it on the south-east. For so it was, as here follows.

From the bay that looketh southward.] In the Hebrew, from *the tongue;* which signifies either a *creek*, or a *promontory*, as some understand it, pointing to the south-east. (See Numb. xxxiv. 3.)

Ver. 3. *And it went out to the south side of Maleh-acrabbim.*] There was a mountain so called, from the multitude of scorpions that were there. It lay at the end of this lake, (Numb. xxxiv. 4.) From whence the country of Acrabatene had its name, as Bochart thinks, (see Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. v. cap. 29.) which lay near the country of Edom, (1 Maccab. v. 3.)

And passed along to Zin, and ascended upon the south side unto Kadesh-barnea.] This is the very description of the southern bounds of the promised land, Numb. xxxiv. 4.

And passed along to Hezron.] There is nothing said of this place in the book of Numbers; but it appears to have been a city from the twenty-fifth verse of this chapter.

And went up to Adar.] This place is mentioned in the forenamed Numb. xxxiv. 4. and called Hazar-addar. So that Hezron lay between Kadesh-barnea and this town.

And fetched a compass to Karkaa.] This place is not mentioned in Numbers, or any where else; but lay beyond Adar, not in a right line, but bending towards the west.

Ver. 4. *And from thence it passed towards Azmon.*] This is mentioned in the forenamed place, Numb. xxxiv. 4.

And went out unto the river of Egypt; and the going out of that coast was at the sea.] That is, the Mediterranean Sea. (See Numb. xxxiv. 5.)

This shall be your south coast.] From the tongue of the salt sea to the Mediterranean.

Ver. 5. *And the east border was the salt sea, even unto the end of Jordan.*] Having described the southern limits, he sets down the eastern; which, beginning where the southern did, at the tongue of the salt sea, reached to the other end of it, where Jordan falls into this sea. So that the whole length of this sea, from one end of it to the other, was the eastern bounds of Judah's country.

And their border at the north quarter was from the bay of the sea, at the uppermost part of Jordan.] It had its beginning where the eastern border ended, *viz.* at the mouth of Jordan, where it runs into the salt sea.

Ver. 6. *And the border went up to Beth-hoglah.*] A city in the tribe of Benjamin, (xviii. 21.)

And passed along by the north of Beth-arabah.] Another city in the same tribe, (xviii. 21.) though there was one in this tribe of the same name (ver. 61. of this chapter), which some take to be the same city, which lay in the frontier of both tribes.

And the border.] That is, this northern border.

Went up to the stone of Bohan, the son of Reuben.] We find mention made of this stone again in xviii. 17. where he speaks of the bounds of the tribe of Benjamin. It was but lately laid here, since the Israelites came into this country; but by whom, or of what it was a monument, is not known. It is certain Bohan did not dwell here; for the Reubenites had their portion on the other side of Jordan: but perhaps he performed some famous exploit in this place, or died and was buried here; being one of those that came over Jordan to assist their brethren in the conquest of Canaan.

Ver. 7. *And the border went up towards Debir.*] Which is mentioned in no other place: for it is not the same with that Debir in ver. 15. which was in the south near Hebron, but this in the northern parts.

From the valley of Achor.] Mentioned vii. 24. 26.

And so northward looking towards Gilgal.] Having Gilgal on the north of it. Which is to be understood, not of that Gilgal near Jericho, but of that place called Geliloth, xviii. 17. which was distant from thence, as appears by what follows.

That is before the going up to Adummim.] A place which stood upon a rising ground, which some think was in the tribe of Judah, others of Benjamin.

Which was on the south side of the river.] Or of the brook, which some take to be the brook Cedron.

And the border passed towards the waters of En-shemesh, and the goings out thereof were at En-rogel.] This place, it

is evident, (1 Kings i. 9.) was near Jerusalem; which shews that Gilgal beforementioned was not the place where they were now encamped.

Ver. 8. *And the border went up.*] For it was an ascent from the salt sea to this country; especially when they came nigh to this place.

By the valley of the son of Hinnom.] A famous place on the east side of Jerusalem; and so delightfully shady, that it invited them to idolatrous worship in this valley, whereby it became infamous, (2 Kings xxiii. 10. Jer. vii. 32.) Hinnom, in all probability, was some eminent person, in ancient times, who was the owner of this valley: for it is sometimes called the valley *of the children of Hinnom*, which shews his posterity were planted here. After it was polluted by idolatry, it became a place where they threw all their filth, and excrements, and dead carcasses, and where there was a continual fire, the Jews say, to burn bones, and such sordid things as were thrown here; from whence, they think, it became the name for hell-fire.

Unto the south side of the Jebusite.] *i. e.* The city of the Jebusites.

The same is Jerusalem.] Which is called Jebusi, in the last verse of the eighteenth chapter, and Jebus, Judg. xix. 10. Especially that part of it fortified by the Jebusites, which was called Mount Sion, and lay on the south of Jerusalem.

And the border went up to the top of the mountain.] Which is thought to be Mount Moriah.

That lieth before the valley of Hinnom westward.] It was westward to the valley of Hinnom; and so had that valley on the east of it.

Which is at the end of the valley of the giants northward.] Which mountain had on the north part the valley of *Rephaim* (as the word is in the Hebrew), which was in the tribe of Judah, extending itself from Mount Moriah as far as Bethlehem, as Josephus tells us.

Ver. 9. *And the border was drawn from the top of the hill to the fountain of the water Nephtoah.*] Where this fountain, or well of water was, cannot be known; for it is no where mentioned but here, and in xviii. 15.

And went out to the cities of Mount Ephron.] This place also is unknown; for it cannot be that in the tribe of Ephraim, mentioned 1 Chron. xiii. 19.

And the border was drawn to Baalah, which is Kirjath-Jearim.] Called ver. 60. and xviii. 14. *Kirjath-Baal;* there being, it is likely, a temple of Baal in this place, whose name the Israelites changed into *Kirjath-Jearim;* which signifies *urbs sylvarum*, because of the goodly trees hereabouts, which made it the fitter for idolatrous uses.

Ver. 10. *And the border compassed from Baalah westward.*] Not in a direct line, but bending towards the west.

Unto Mount Seir.] Not that mount belonging to the Edomites, but another of that name.

And passed along unto the side of Mount Jearim (which is Chesalon) on the north side.] This was a woody country, as appears from the name of this mountain, and from Mount Seir also; which signifies as much as *hairy.*

And went down to Beth-shemesh.] A known place in the tribe of Judah, and a city of the priests, (xxi. 16.)

And passed on to Timnah.] Another city in the same tribe, (ver. 17.) but afterward given to the tribe of Dan, (xix. 43.)

Ver. 11. *And the border went out to the side of Ekron northward.*] This city belonged to the Philistines; but fell to the lot of Judah, as did also Ashdod and Gaza, ver. 45—47. But afterward Ekron was given to the Danites, as the forenamed place tells us, xix. 43.

And the border was drawn to Shicron, and passed along to Mount Baalah, and went out unto Jabneel.] It cannot now be known where these three places were; only it appears by what follows, that they were not far from the coast of the Philistines.

And the goings out of the border were at the sea.] That is, the northern border ended at the Mediterranean Sea; where there was a city called Jamnia; which some think the same with Jabneel.

Ver. 12. *And the west border was to the great sea, and the coast thereof.*] All along that coast of the Mediterranean, unto the river of Egypt, where the west border met with the southern, (ver. 4.)

This is the coast of the children of Judah round about, according to their families.] That is, thus their lot was bounded on all sides, in the first draught of it. Which being afterward found too large, it was contracted into a narrower compass, that more room might be made for the tribe of Simeon, who had part of this lot given them; as some other places were added out of it, to the tribes of Benjamin and Dan; as will appear afterward.

Ver. 13. *And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah.*] Or rather, he (that is, Joshua) *had given* him a part in this country, which by lot fell to the tribe of Judah. See the foregoing chapter, xiv. 6, 7, &c. where we read how Caleb petitioned for it, and founded his petition on a grant made to him of it, long ago, by God himself.

According to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua.] God promised it by Moses; and it appears from these words, that Joshua had an order from God to make it good.

Even the city of Arba the father of Anak, which is Hebron.] See xiv. 15. This is here again particularly remembered, and an addition made to it, for this reason; that Joshua having described the bounds of the country of Judah, and intending to set down the particular cities which were included in it, and distributed among them (as he had just before said, ver. 12.) *according to their families;* it might be remembered, that there were two cities, or rather the territories about them, given to two families, antecedent to this distribution made by him, Eleazar, and the princes. Which being a matter fit to remain for ever upon record, and to be known to all posterity, he inserts it here at large, in this description of the portion of Judah; of which, it is likely, every family of that tribe had a map in their houses; that they knowing their limits might both preserve them, and keep within them.

Ver. 14. *And Caleb drove thence.*] Not by his own power alone, but by the confederate army of the tribe of Judah and Simeon, (Judg. i. 3. 9, &c.) in which, it is probable, he had a principal command; and led on that party which assaulted this city. (See x. 36, 37. xi. 21.)

The three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak.] Whom he had seen five-and-forty years ago, and was not at all affrighted at them. (See Numb. xiii. 22. and Judg. i. 10, &c.)

Ver. 15. *And he went up thence to the inhabitants of Debir.*] See x. 38, 39.

And the name of Debir before was Kirjath-Sepher.] See Judg. i. 11, 12. It is called also Kirjath-Sanna, ver. 49. of this chapter; which hath the same signification: for *sanna* (as Bochart observes, lib. ii. Canaan, cap. 17.) in the Arabic language, is *learning*, or *the law*. The Chaldee there calls it Kirjath-arche; which he translates *urbs archivorum, the city where the ancient records of these nations were kept*. All which shews the conjecture of some very learned men is not improbable, who think this city in those times was the seat of learning, as Athens was among the Greeks in future ages: insomuch, that Grotius takes this city to be the same with that which Xenophon calls Φοινίκων γυμνάσιον, *the school of the Phœnicians*. But, as the word γυμνάσιον in Xenophon's days did not signify a school of learning, but a place designed for exercises of the body; so we do not read of any famous place in that country, to which men resorted in his time for study.

Ver. 16. *And Caleb said.*] Made proclamation, I suppose, throughout the army, which he led against Debir.

He that smiteth Kirjath-Sepher, and taketh it.] Assaults this fortress, and possesseth himself of it.

To him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.] With this place, I suppose, for her dowry.

Ver. 17. *And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it.*] He was stirred up by the Spirit of God, it is probable, (as he was when he was made judge of Israel, Judg. iii. 9, 10.) to attack this place with an extraordinary courage; in which the providence of God appeared (as Caleb hoped it would) in bestowing his daughter upon a worthy person, and keeping the inheritance in his own tribe.

And he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.] Some think this was not lawful, because he was her uncle: but this is a mistake, for Othniel was not Caleb's brother, but Kenaz, who was Othniel's father. For Caleb is constantly called the son of Jephunneh, and Othniel the son of Kenaz. Therefore they had not the same father, but were very near of kin; which is all the word *brother* signifies in many places.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, as she came unto him.*] As she was brought from her father's house to her husband's; according to the accustomed manner. (See Selden, in his Uxor. Hebr. lib. ii. cap. 11.)

That she moved him to ask of her father a field.] Desired her husband, unto whom she thought her father at this time would deny nothing, to bestow a field upon her. Or, perhaps, she moved him to give her leave to ask it of her father; as she did, either by his permission, or by his desire; who might tell her, it was more proper for her to ask it than himself.

And she lighted off her ass.] Upon which they rode then in those countries; having no horses, nor mules, till after-times. And her lighting down was in reverence to her father; unto whom she addressed herself in an humble posture.

And Caleb said to her, What wouldest thou?] He seems to have prevented her request; knowing, by her posture, she had something to desire of him. But Ludov. de Dieu takes it quite otherwise; that when she came to her husband's house, she did not alight from her ass, but continued still sitting upon it. Which her father observing, and asking her the reason, why she did not come down and go to her husband; she told him, she had first a thing to beg of him. And thus both the LXX. and the Vulgar translate it, as if she did not alight, but sighed and cried, ἐκ τοῦ ὄνου, from the ass on which he sat.

Ver. 19. *Who answered, Give me a blessing.*] Bestow a gift upon me, as the word *blessing* is used, Gen. xxxiii. 11. or, make my happiness complete.

For thou hast given me a south land.] A dry country; being both mountainous and towards the south; that is, towards the deserts of Arabia, from whence very hot and scorching winds were wont to blow.

Give me also springs of water.] A field hard by, wherein were springs of water: for it was not merely the springs she begged, but the ground in which they were; as appears from the foregoing verse, where she moved her husband to ask *a field*.

And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs.] Whereby that dry ground might be watered and made fruitful. He seems to have given her more than she desired; not only those springs that were in the mountain, but those which were below also. That so neither the rising ground, nor the plain, might want water; as Arius Montanus expounds it.

Ver. 20. *This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah, according to their families.*] Now follows an account of the cities within the lot of this tribe; which were assigned to their several families, after Hebron, which was the principal of them (for here David reigned over the tribe of Judah alone seven years), was given to Caleb. Which the Jews generally think he did not get into his possession till after the death of Joshua; as is related in the book of Judges. (See there, i. 11—13, &c.)

Ver. 21. *And the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah.*] Those that were in the confines; for he doth not seem to number all that were in the heart of the country. So the Jews think, though the truth is, as will appear in the following part of the chapter, he only begins with the outmost cities, but afterward proceeds to those that were in the midst of the country.

Towards the coast of Edom southward.] He begins with those that lay on the south side of the country; which was the border he first described, ver. 1, 2.

Kabzeel.] Where that valiant person Benajah was born, who smote two lion-like men of Moab, (1 Chron. xi. 22.)

And Eder.] Which Eusebius calls Ἐδραί. But he hath no more to say of it; nor of Jagur, and the rest that follow, but that they were in the tribe of Judah: nor shall I go about to inquire further after every particular city mentioned; the number of which is summed up ver. 32.

Ver. 32. *All the cities are twenty and nine, with their villages.*] If the foregoing places be told, there are no less than thirty and eight of them. But there were only twenty and nine of them (as some solve the difficulty), that could be called cities; the other being only villages. Or, the meaning is (as the Jews generally think) that twenty and nine only belonged to the tribe of Judah; the rest being afterward given to the tribe of Simeon, as we find in the nineteenth chapter; where nine of these very cities here mentioned are said to be in that tribe, *viz.* Beer-sheba, Moladah, Hazar-shual, Baalah, Azem, Hormah, Zigleg, Ain, and

Rimmon: which nine, with the twenty and nine here set down as the sum total, make just thirty and eight. And this seems to be the truer account, because the villages of other cities are mentioned ver. 36. and 41. and yet none of them set down by name, as is supposed in the first interpretation of these words.

Ver. 33. *And in the valley.*] Or in the plain below the mountains: but which way I shall not examine; because the geography of this country will be done, I hope, by a better hand.

Ver. 36. *Fourteen cities with their villages.*] There are fifteen in all, if we take the two last for distinct cities. But in all probability there might be one, called indifferently Gederah, or (as we translate it in the margin) Gederothaim. Perhaps there might be a double city, the old and the new: or, Gederothaim was an appendix to Gederah, as the borough of Southwark is to the city of London.

Ver. 37. *Zenan, and Hadashah,* &c.] I suppose these cities, and all that follow to the forty-first verse, lay also in the valley, or plain.

Ver. 41. *Sixteen cities with their villages.*] There are exactly that number; among which Mizpeh, Lachish, Bethdagon, Eglon, and Makkedah, were the chief. They seem to have been in the western part of this country, near the tribe of Dan; for the two first in the former division (Eshtaol and Zoreah, ver. 33.) were afterward given to the Danites, (xix. 41.)

Ver. 42. *Libnah and Ether,* &c.] These two cities, and those that follow unto ver. 45. were in another division of the plain country: among which, Libnah, Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah, were the most noble.

Ver. 44. *Nine cities with their villages.*] But Ether and Ashan were afterward given to the tribe of Simeon, (xix. 7.) which may seem a prejudice to the interpretation which the Jews give of ver. 32. Unless we suppose these two places to be different from them, though called by the same name: as here is mention made of Ashnah, (ver. 43.) and there is one of the same name in the former division, ver. 33.

Ver. 45. *Ekron, with her towns and her villages.*] The Hebrew word for *towns* signifies *daughters;* by which seem to be meant lesser cities, depending on Ekron, with their villages belonging to them. Gath and Askalon, perhaps, were such at this time; though, in future times, they grew up to be of more consideration, which may be the reason they are not here mentioned. For this, and the two following verses, describe the lot of Judah in the west, upon the Mediterranean Sea, which comprehended all from Ekron to the river of Egypt.

Ver. 48. *And in the mountains.*] From the plain he goes to the mountains, and distributes the cities there into five divisions.

Shamir and Jattir, &c.] In this division there were eleven cities, among which was Kirjath-Sanna, (ver. 49.) which had three names. (See ver. 15.)

Ver. 52. *Arab and Dumah,* &c.] In this division there were nine cities, (ver. 54.) which were in the mountainous country, in the middle of Judea; as those mentioned before and those that follow were. And therefore it is not true which the Jews say, that he reckons up only the cities in the skirts of the country, with which indeed he began. (See ver. 21.)

Ver. 55. *Maon, Carmel,* &c.] This, and the two following verses, contain an account of ten cities and their villages in another division, two of which were near together; for Nabal dwelt in Maon, and had great possessions in Carmel, (1 Sam. xxv. 2.) There was another Maon in the deserts of Jeshimon, (1 Sam. xxiii. 1.) as there was another among the Moabites called Beth-Maon, the house or dwelling of Maon. The people of which, called Maonites, and, as some think, Mehunims, (Judg. x. 10. 12. 2 Chron. xxvi. 7.) were very powerful, and some time oppressed the Israelites. And there was likewise another Carmel; for this is not the place where Elijah built an altar, and offered sacrifices when he slew the prophets of Baal, (1 Kings xviii.) but a place far distant from it, where Saul made himself a place when he returned from the conquest of the Amalekites; (1 Sam. xv. 12.) that is, encamped, as some will have it, and divided the spoil, or built a triumphant arch, as St. Jerome interprets: and where Nabal kept so many sheep, as are mentioned in the place forenamed; and is the place the prophets mean (as Bochart conjectures) when they speak of the pastures of Carmel, Jer. l. 19. Amos i. 2. Mic. vii. 14. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 48.)

Ver. 57. *Cain, Gibeah, and Timnah,* &c.] The first of these cities, Conradus Pellicanus thinks, hath the same name with that called Kinah, (ver. 22.) though it be in a different place. And, indeed, in this division, consisting of ten cities, there are two whose names we had before, when he speaks of those in the skirts of the country, *viz.* Ziph and Zanoah. (See ver. 24. 34.) Which shews there were many cities in the same country of the same name.

Gibeah and Timnah] Are known places. (See Gen. xxxviii. 12.)

Ver. 58. *Halhul, Beth-zur,* &c.] In this and in the following verse is contained a small division of six cities; the most eminent of which was Beth-zur, which lay in the road from Jerusalem to Hebron, about twenty miles from it, as St. Jerome tells us.

Ver. 60. *Kirjath-Baal,* &c.] Here are only two cities in this division, the first of which was called Kirjath-Jearim, as we read xviii. 14. and Baala, and Baal-Judah, 2 Sam. vii. 2. 1 Chron. xiii. 6.

Ver. 61. *In the wilderness.*] So the Hebrews call those parts of the country which were but thinly inhabited; as this was, wherein there were but six cities. Of this wilderness of Judah, we read frequently in the following books of Scripture; several parts of which are mentioned in the history of David, when he fled for fear of Saul, and lurked in this country: particularly in the wilderness of Ziph, 1 Sam. xxiii. 14. and of Maon, ver. 24, 25. and of En-gedi, one of the places here mentioned, 1 Sam. xxiv. 1. and there was a part of the wilderness not far from Carmel, beforementioned, 1 Sam. xxv. 14.

Ver. 62. *The city of salt.*] Some take this to be Zoar, the little city unto which Lot was permitted to flee, at the destruction of Sodom: which is called the *city of salt,* either because it stood near the salt sea, or because Lot's wife was hereabouts turned into a pillar of salt.

Ver. 63. *As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out.*] This supposes that Jerusalem belonged to the children of Judah; and so it did in part, though not the whole; for some of it was in the tribe of Benjamin, as shall be observed in its

proper place. The king of this city Joshua had vanquished, together with other four kings of the Amorites who joined in battle with him, (Josh. x. 5. 23.) and in the conclusion of that chapter, he is said (ver. 42.) to have taken *all these kings and their land at one time.* But if Jerusalem was then taken, as well as the land about it, the strong-hold of Zion remained still in the hands of the Jebusites. And the Israelites not being able presently to people all the cities they had taken, the Jebusites recovered the city of Jerusalem, and got possession of it again; from whence the children of Judah expelled them after the death of Joshua, (Judg. i. 8.) But still Mount Zion continued in their hands until the reign of David.

But the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.] That is, in the fort of Zion, which was a part of it; where they were so considerable, that the city was called the city of the Jebusites, and its name Jebus, (Judg. xix. 10, 11.) There can be no doubt, I think, that these Jebusites were of the seed of Canaan, they being constantly numbered among the seven nations devoted to destruction. Yet some of the Jews have a conceit, that the people here mentioned were derived from Abimelech, king of the Philistines; with whom their forefather Isaac made a solemn league; and therefore the children of Judah did not expel them. So Kimchi. But this, it is evident, is a foolish imagination: for why did they expel them at the last, as they did, if they were to be kind to them upon this account?

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *THE lot of the children of Joseph.*] That is, of Ephraim, and that half of the tribe of Manasseh, which was not yet provided for. (See ver. 4.) One cannot but observe the providence of God, in bringing up their lot next to Judah's. For, as he had the prerogative of being made the chief of all Jacob's children, (Gen. xlix. 10.) so Joseph had the privilege of the first-born transferred to his family. And therefore they are considered before any of the other tribes, except Judah.

Fell from Jordan by Jericho.] In the Hebrew, *went forth* from Jordan by the city of Jericho. Which was in the tribe of Benjamin; which tribe lay between the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Ephraim.

Unto the water of Jericho on the east.] This is justly thought to be the water mentioned 2 Kings ii. 19—21. whose spring Elisha healed, by which the plain of Jericho was watered. (See Josephus, lib. v. de Bello Jud. cap. 4.)

To the wilderness that goeth up from Jericho throughout Mount Beth-el.] It appears from xviii. 12, 13. that this was the wilderness of Beth-aven.

Ver. 2. *And goeth up from Beth-el to Luz.*] Beth-el was a place so called, because Jacob there had the famous Divine vision, mentioned Gen. xviii. It was nigh to the city Luz, as appears from the nineteenth verse of that chapter; but was distinct from the city itself, being in the neighbouring fields, where Jacob lay all night; though being so near, it is likely afterward they became one city. But they who would hence infer, that this book could not be written by Joshua, because Luz was built after his death in the land of the Hittites, (Judg. i. 26.) do merely trifle: for it is plain he doth not speak here of that Luz, but of the old one: for the country of the Hittites belonged to Hebron and Beer-sheba, and the neighbouring places in the land of Judah; unto which the author of this book could have no respect here in the description of the land of Ephraim. Therefore, when Luz and Beth-el are said to be the same, (xviii. 13. and Judg. i. 23.) the meaning can be no more, but that in length of time they were united; the inhabitants of Luz going into Beth-el. And of such coalitions of two cities into one, there are six hundred examples, as Huetius speaks in his Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. and therefore, I think Du Pin well translates this whole verse, in this manner, *From Beth-el-Luz the border passeth along to Archi-Ataroth.*

And passeth along unto the borders of Archi to Ataroth.] Or rather, *the borders of Archi-Ataroth,* as both the LXX. and the Vulgar translate it; and as the words are in the Hebrew; this being the same city which is afterward called Ataroth, ver. 7. it being usual to cut off the former part of the names of cities, as Bochartus observes in abundance of instances; and gives this for one, in Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 24.

Ver. 3. *And goeth down westward to the coast of Japhtali.*] It is not known where this place was, being no where else mentioned; but it was in the western part of the land towards the Mediterranean.

Unto the coast of Beth-horon the nether.] See x. 10.

And to Gezer.] This was one of the Levitical cities in this tribe of Ephraim, (Josh. xxi. 21.) And, as Is. Casaubon hath proved at large, it was, in all probability, the city which Josephus and the author of the book of the Maccabees call Gazara; and is mentioned as a neighbouring city to Joppa, Azotus, and Jamnia. (See his annot. upon lib. xvi. Strabonis, p. 261, 262.)

And the goings out thereof are at the sea.] The Vulgar hath it, *at the great sea:* which is certainly here meant; this being a short description of the lot of this tribe from Jordan on the east to the Mediterranean on the west.

Ver. 4. *So the children of Joseph, Manasseh, and Ephraim, took their inheritance.*] According to the following measures. Which give a more particular account of what is before said in general.

Ver. 5. *And the border of the children of Ephraim, according to their families.*] And, first, he shews what was given to Ephraim, reserving the description of Manasseh's portion to the next chapter.

Even the border of their inheritance on the east side.] The north-east. For he describes, though grossly, only the breadth of this lot from south to north.

Was Ataroth-adar, unto Beth-horon the upper.] The first of those was in the south, and the latter in the north.

Ver. 6. *And the border went out towards the sea.*] From Beth-horon the upper this northern border went on one side westward, towards the Mediterranean.

To Michmethah on the north side.] And on the other side eastward towards Jordan. This is very obscurely expressed; but it appears, from what follows, it must be thus interpreted.

And the border went about eastward unto Taanath-Shiloh.] Still proceeded further eastward unto this place; the name of which only is now known.

And passed by it on the east to Janohah.] Another place easterly, of which we are now ignorant. For there are no

records left to make us understand whereabouts in the east it was situated; which was perfectly understood when this country was inhabited by the Ephraimites.

Ver. 7. *And it went down from Janohah to Ataroth, and Naarath, and came to Jericho.*] Not to the very city, for that belonged to Benjamin; but to the country adjoining.

And went out at Jordan.] Which was the eastern bounds of this country.

Ver. 8. *And the border went out from Tappuah westward unto the river Kanah.*] He returns to describe the length of it from east to west; if the river or brook Kanah be the same with the brook Cherith, mentioned 1 Kings xvii. 3. And so not only Adricoinius understands it, but that great man Bochartus; who observes, it was called the brook Cherith, from the Hebrew word *cara*, which signifies to *eat* or *feed*, because here God commanded the ravens to feed Elijah; and it was called Kanah, from the multitude of reeds which grew there (and so the Vulgar here translates it, *the valley of reeds*), in which it may be supposed Elijah lay hid. (Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 14.) But there is so much to be objected against this situation of the brook Kanah, that I must leave it in suspense whether it were in the east, or in the west; and confess, with Conradus Pellicanus, that as none of the Hebrews or Latins have given a satisfactory account of these four last verses, so I do not pretend to it.

And the goings out thereof were at the sea.] Where *sea* alone is mentioned, it is commonly understood to signify the *Mediterranean;* which quite overthrows the opinion, which makes Kanah the same with Cherith. But the Vulgar here took it for the *salt sea* (adding the word *salsissimum*), which favours the forenamed opinion.

This is the inheritance of the tribe of Ephraim by their families.] A gross description of it.

Ver. 9. *And the separate cities for the children of Ephraim were among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh,* &c.] What these separate cities were cannot now be known, because we have not a particular account given of all the cities of this tribe (as we had of Judah), but only of those which were the limits of their country. But they seem to have been some cities in the tribe of Manasseh, which were inhabited by the children of Ephraim, though the territories about them belonged to the Manassites, and were occupied by them. (See xvii. 8, 9.)

Ver. 10. *And they drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day.*] The inhabitants of Gezer were properly Canaanites; who dwelt upon the sea-coast, where Gezer was situated. (See ver. 3.) This is mentioned also Judg. i. 29.

And serve under tribute.] They so far subdued them, as to make them tributaries; and, some fancy, imposed on them the precepts of the sons of Noah. But they ought to have destroyed them, and were forbidden to make peace with them upon any conditions. (See Judg. ii. 1—3.) Unless Grotius's conjecture be true, that the inhabitants of Gezer submitted and accepted the terms of peace, which Joshua was bound to offer them, before he began the war; as the Girgashites, he thinks, also did; who remained even in our Saviour's time: for they delivered up themselves at the first summons to surrender; which is the reason, he imagines, that they are omitted in the enumeration of their enemies, both in xi. 1. and in Deut. xx. 17. (See his annot. on his thirteenth chapter of the second book de Jure Belli et Pacis, sect. 4.)

This city, and the people of it, were destroyed in Solomon's time by Pharaoh, king of Egypt; who made a present of it to his daughter, Solomon's wife; who thereupon rebuilt it, (1 Kings ix. 16, 17.) Till then the Canaanites lived in it; from whence Spinoza would have it concluded, that this book was not written by Joshua, because we find the same thing recorded in the book of Judges, (i. 29.) which is of a later date. But this is a very frivolous cavil; for, as Huetius well observes, if an historian should have said in the life of Tiberius the Germans were not destroyed, the same might, in like manner, have been said in the life of Vespasian; and just so, when Joshua saith the Gezerites were not cut off by the Ephraimites, it did not hinder him that wrote in the following age from saying the same; because they still remained in the possession of their ancient habitation.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *THERE was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh.*] That half of it which had no portion on the other side Jordan.

For he was the first-born of Joseph.] I cannot make any sense of this; and therefore think the particle *ki* should be translated *though*, not *for*. And then the meaning is plain enough, that the lot of Manasseh came up after that of Ephraim (not before it), though he was the first-born of Joseph; for Jacob had preferred Ephraim before him, (Gen. xlviii. 19, 20.)

For Machir, the first-born of Manasseh.] And his only son, from whom sprung such a multitude, that there was no room for them all on the other side Jordan; but part of them were to be disposed of here.

The father of Gilead.] Numb. xxvi. 29.

Because he was a man of war.] This is generally thought to relate to Machir; who had done some famous exploits in the skirmishes they had with some neighbouring people while they were in Egypt, (see 1 Chron. vii. 21, 22.) for he was not alive to fight when they came to Canaan.

Therefore he had Gilead and Bashan.] A share in this country; for some of it was given to the Reubenites and Gadites, xiii. 25. but the Gileadites were also planted here; (ver. 31.) for, inheriting the valour of their progenitor, they were fit to defend this frontier-country.

Ver. 2. *And there was also a lot for the rest of the children of Manasseh by their families.*] A great part of the Manassites being disposed of before they passed over Jordan, now follows the lot which fell to the rest, whose several families he names.

For the children of Abiezer, and for the children of Helek, and for the children of Asriel, and for the children of Shechem, and for the children of Hepher, and for the children of Shemida.] These six families descended from Gilead, as we read Numb. xxvi. 30, &c. Where the first of them, who is here called Abiezer, is there called Jeezer.

These are the male-children of Manasseh, the son of Joseph, by their families.] He uses the expression of *male-children* to introduce what follows concerning the females. And they are called *the children of Manasseh*, because they

inherited in his right; being families descended from him. (See Selden, de Successionibus, cap. 22.)

Ver. 3. *But Zelophehad the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.*] Here he recites their pedigree from the son of Joseph.

Had no sons, but daughters.] And so could not make a family in Manasseh; and consequently have no share in the land.

And these are the names of his daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, &c.] See Numb. xxvi. 33.

Ver. 4. *And they came near before Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the princes.*] To whom God had committed the care of dividing the several lots, (xiv. 1. Numb. xxxiv. 17, 18.)

Saying, The Lord commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren.] See Numb. xxvii. 6, 7.

Therefore, according to the commandment of the Lord, he gave the man inheritance among the brethren of their father.] Or, an inheritance was given them, according to this commandment of God to Moses, by Eleazar and Joshua, and the rest who were appointed to divide the land. For after the lot had determined what land every tribe should have, Eleazar, Joshua, and the princes, considered how many families there were in the tribe, and how large they were; and accordingly divided it among them. So Numb. xxvi. 55, 56. imports.

Ver. 5. *And there fell ten portions to Manasseh.*] For there were six portions given to six sons: but the portion of Hepher, the last of them, being divided into five parts among his five daughters, there were ten portions in all. (See Selden, de Succession. cap. 23.) Which ten portions being assigned to so many families, Eleazar, Joshua, and the princes, were not concerned any further in dividing these ten portions into lesser, among several households; but that, I suppose, they agreed among themselves.

Besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side Jordan.] Mentioned before, ver. 1.

Ver. 6. *Because the daughters of Manasseh.*] That is, of Zelophehad, descended from Manasseh.

Had an inheritance among his sons.] Being considered as heirs to their father.

And the rest of Manasseh's sons.] Which were not of the six families beforementioned.

Had the land of Gilead.] On the other side Jordan, as hath been often said; and is again repeated, to prevent all contentions that might arise about their portions.

Ver. 7. *And the coast of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethah, that lieth before Shechem.*] This was the south border, which went from a city called Asher, to another called Michmethah; which was over against a city in the tribe of Ephraim, called Shechem.

And the border went along on the right hand unto the inhabitants of En-tappuah.] And so to those that lived in the land of Tappuah, leaving Tappuah itself on the right hand.

Ver. 8. *Now Manasseh had the land of Tappuah.*] All the territory adjoining to this city belonged to the tribe of Manasseh.

But Tappuah, on the border of Manasseh, belonged to the children of Ephraim.] But the city itself, which lay on the confines of their country, was one of those separated cities spoken of in the foregoing chapter, (ver. 9.) in which the children of Ephraim dwelt.

Ver. 9. *And the coast descended unto the river Kanah, southward of the river.*] Concerning this place, see ver. 8. of the foregoing chapter.

These cities of Ephraim are among the cities of Manasseh.] That is, the cities on the coast beforementioned were inhabited by the Ephraimites, as well as Tappuah; though they were in the tribe of Manasseh. For these two tribes were nearer of kin than any other; and so greater friendship was intended to be established between them.

The coast also of Manasseh was on the north side of the river.] By the coast of Manasseh, is meant the cities inhabited by the Manassites; which were all on the north side of this river. As all those on the south side of it, though belonging to the Manassites, were inhabited by the children of Ephraim.

And the goings out of it were at the sea.] The coast mentioned in the beginning of the verse, ended at the Mediterranean Sea.

Ver. 10. *Southward it was Ephraim's, and northward it was Manasseh's, and the sea is his border.*] These words express how these two tribes lay, with respect to each other: Ephraim on the south, and Manasseh on the north; and both bounded on the west by the Mediterranean.

And they met together in Asher on the north, and in Issachar on the east.] Though on the south the tribe of Manasseh was wholly joined to the tribe of Ephraim, yet on the north-west, towards the great sea, it had the tribe of Asher on the confines of it; and on the east (towards Jordan and the sea of Tiberias) the tribe of Issachar. So Conradus Pellicanus rightly explains these words. For both the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh could not touch these other tribes.

Ver. 11. *And Manasseh had in Issachar, and in Asher.*] As Ephraim had some towns in the tribe of Manasseh, so Manasseh had some in the tribes of Issachar and Asher, unto whom, in the north-west, and the east, they were near neighbours.

Beth-shean and her towns.] This was a place not far from the sea of Tiberias beforementioned, and near Jordan.

And Ibleam and her towns.] It appears by 2 Kings ix. 27. that it was not far from Megiddo, mentioned in the latter end of this verse.

The inhabitants of Dor and her towns.] Concerning Dor, see xi. 2. whose inhabitants (as also those of the other cities following) are here mentioned; because, it seems, they possessed the people (whom they ought to have destroyed), as well as their cities and towns, making them their slaves.

And the inhabitants of Endor and her towns.] The city whither Saul went to consult with the witch. It was not far from Mount Tabor; which was in the confines of the tribe of Issachar.

And the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns.] This city lay not far from the other; and was one of those given to the Levites, (xxi. 25.)

And the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns.] This was near the former; not far from the brook Kishon, (Judg. v. 19.)

Even three countries.] Or rather, three parts of those countries beforementioned.

Ver. 12. *Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities.*] Through want of faith in

God, and of zeal to perform his commands; which made them slack in their attempts to expel the inhabitants of this country.

But the Canaanites would dwell in that land.] Finding themselves strong enough to maintain it, against [illegible] ble endeavours as they used to conquer it.

Ver. 13. *Yet it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute.*] When they were more numerous and expert in war, not only the Manassites, but they of other tribes also, brought the Canaanites to be tributaries to them.

But did not utterly drive them out.] In which they grievously offended against God's command, (Deut. xx. 16—18.)

Ver. 14. *And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua.*] Both they of Ephraim, and they of Manasseh, (ver. 17.)

Saying, Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I am a great people.] They were discontented with their lot, which they thought too strait for them; because they were so very numerous, that the country which was assigned them was little enough for one of them.

Forasmuch as the Lord hath blessed me hitherto.] Multiplied them exceedingly, as appears from Numb. xxvi. 34. 37.

Ver. 15. *And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great people.*] Though he was their flesh and blood, yet Joshua would not humour them; but returns their argument upon them, that since they were so great a people, they should do as here follows.

Then get thee up to the whole country.] Which was in the highlands, (ver. 18.) which is full of trees; for *Aba*, as Bochart observes, signifies very thick woods, (lib. ii. Canaan, cap. 9.)

And cut down for thyself there.] Make it habitable.

In the land of the Perizzites.] Who were a rough uncivilized people, living in these mountainous forests, as Bochart gathers from this place; and thinks they had their name from thence. Because they did not live in cities and towns, but in those *Pagi* that were in the woods; which the Hebrews call Pherazoth; from whence the Pagani, the people who lived in those places, were called Pherazim: lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 36.

And of the giants.] There were some of the *Rephaim* (as the Hebrew word is) still remaining here; or it was a place where they had been wont to dwell.

If Mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee.] If that noble mount which was given them for their portion, with the rest of the land beforementioned (which is included in the name of Mount Ephraim, the principal part being put for the whole) did not afford them room enough, he exhorts them to enlarge their bounds, by taking in those woodlands beforementioned.

Ver. 16. *And the children of Joseph said, The hill is not enough for us.*] They still insisted, that if they could get possession of the woody mountain, and destroy all the inhabitants, and cut down all the trees, it would not be sufficient to contain them.

And all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley.] But if it would, they further allege, they had no hope to conquer it; because, before they could come at it, they must encounter those that lived in the valley below it, who were too strong for them.

Have chariots of iron.] Before which they were not able to stand: for he doth not mean chariots made of iron, but armed with iron; which the ancients called *currus falcati*, in Greek δρεπανοφόρος having a kind of scythes of two cubits fastened to long axle-trees on both wheels; which [illegible] swiftly through a body of men, made great slaughter, mowing them down like grass or corn. Xenophon gives a description of them in his Cyropædia, lib. vi. and Quintus Curtius, lib. iv. cap. 9. Vegetius also, de Re Militari, lib. iii. cap. 24. Bonfrerius hath heaped up abundance on this subject; and so hath Joh. Conradus Dietericus in his Antiq. Biblicæ, p. 329, &c. where he observes Xenophon imagined Cyrus to have been the inventor of these chariots; which had been in use among the Canaanites eight hundred years before.

Both they who are of Beth-shean and her towns, and they who are in the valley of Jezreel.] Which cities, it seems, lay near to this mountain, unto which Joshua directed them, and both of them possessed by the Canaanites.

Ver. 17. *And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, even unto Ephraim and Manasseh.*] He was not moved, by their objections, from his resolution; but told them,

Thou art a great people, and hast great power.] That, by their own confession, they were very numerous; and consequently of great power.

Thou shalt not have one lot only.] And therefore need not be straitened in their habitation; which they said was not sufficient for one tribe.

Ver. 18. *But the mountain shall be thine.*] For they should have the mountain added to their portion; which he could not enlarge any other way, it being settled by a Divine decree.

For it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down.] Or, *though* it be a wood, yet they could cut it down, and grub it up; and then it would afford a commodious habitation.

And the goings out of it shall be thine.] They should have the product of it: or, all the country below in the valley (ver. 16.) should be theirs also.

And thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong.] He answers all their objections (ver. 16.) with an assurance that they should be able, with God's help, to dispossess the present inhabitants, notwithstanding their great force and power: for so God had commanded them to believe, and not to be afraid of their chariots, which now seemed so terrible to them. (See Deut. xx. 1.)

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the whole congregation of the children of Israel.*] All their elders and heads of their tribes, who represented the people of Israel; and are sometimes meant by the *whole congregation*, as Corn. Bertram hath shewed in many instances, particularly in 1 Chron. xiii. 1, 2, &c. (See L. de Repub. Judaica, in the latter end of cap. 6. and cap. 11.) But here it may well signify the whole body of the people, who accompanied the ark to settle it in a new place.

Assembled together at Shiloh.] A place in the tribe of Ephraim, not far from Jerusalem; and, as the great primate of Ireland thinks, the same with Salem. But I do not find any ground for that opinion.

And set up the tabernacle of the congregation there.] Which had hitherto remained in Gilgal; but now, by God's

order, no doubt, (for he was to choose the place of his own residence, Deut. xii. 5. 11. 14, &c.) was removed thither; together with the camp of Israel, which tarried so long in Gilgal, merely because the tabernacle was there. If it be inquired, what token God gave of his choice of this place [illegible] perhaps it was by giving some extraordinary token of his approbation, by accepting their sacrifices; or, it may be, they consulted him in this case by the oracle of *urim* and *thummim*. For when he made choice of Mount Sion, an angel bade the prophet Gad tell David he should set up an altar in the thrashing-floor of Ornan; and there God answered him by fire, &c. (See 1 Chron. xxi. 18. 26.) Now the reason of its being translated to Shiloh, it is likely, was because it would have been too far, after the division of the land, for all the tribes of Israel to go to Gilgal, to perform all that the law required to be done at the tabernacle. Which was now indispensably to be performed, though while they lived in the wilderness they did not live by these rules, (Deut. xii. 8—10.) and, perhaps, while they continued unsettled in Canaan could not exactly observe them. This place also was very convenient for all the tribes to resort unto; and likewise very safe, being guarded by the two powerful tribes of Judah and Ephraim. And it was, as I said, in the lot of the latter; for it was fit it should be where Joshua was; who, being of this tribe, lived among them. Here it is thought the tabernacle continued for the space of three hundred and fifty years, till the days of Samuel; but our primate beforementioned reckons no more than three hundred and twenty-eight years.

And the land was subdued before them.] Or rather, *for* the land was subdued, &c. that is, continued quiet, without any opposition from the old inhabitants, since the conquest mentioned xi. 23.

Ver. 2. *And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance.*] For whom no lot had been drawn at Gilgal. The reason of which was, perhaps, because the last mentioned tribes, of the house of Joseph, were not satisfied with the division which was begun to be made there. And therefore Joshua stopped his proceedings till he had made a new survey of the whole country. In order to which, God commanded him to remove hither; from whence, being in the middle of the country, they might do it more easily; and also give the children of Joseph greater content, by settling God's house among them.

Ver. 3. *And Joshua said unto the children of Israel.*] Unto the *congregation* beforementioned, ver. 1.

How long are you slack to go to possess the land, which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?] He doth not blame them for not taking possession of the land which was conquered, without God's direction, by a lot (for that was expressly commanded), but for their being so slow to consider of, and propound some means of making such an equal division, as they desired; that they might take possession of the land, where their lot should fall.

Ver. 4. *Give out from among you three men for each tribe.*] He therefore himself propounds a method for their satisfaction; and such a one as they could not dislike, *viz.* that they should choose three men (for he would not appoint them, but only give them orders what to do) out of each of the seven remaining tribes that were not provided for; or rather, out of the nine tribes and a half; that they who had already received their portion, might be willing to resign up some part of it, if they found, upon the survey, there was not sufficient left for their brethren.

And I will send them, and they shall rise, and go through the land.] Give them orders to go immediately through the whole country; both that which was divided, and that which was not.

And describe it.] Set down not only the dimensions of it, but its condition and quality; whether barren or fruitful, mountainous or plain, &c.

According to the inheritance of them.] Making so many parts in the description, as there remain tribes that want their inheritance. Thus the next verse teaches us to explain it.

And they shall come again to me.] Make their report to him, when they had done, that he might judge of it.

Ver. 5. *And they shall divide it into seven parts.*] Of equal extent, with a just respect, as Josephus observes, not merely to the quantity of ground, but the goodness of the soil. But there was no respect to the greater or lesser number of persons in each tribe; for then these men had given each tribe their portion, and there had been no need of a lot. Their business was to divide the country into seven equal portions, and leave God to appoint which portion should fall to each tribe: who would have no reason to complain, when the division was made by themselves.

Judah shall abide in their coast on the south, and the house of Joseph shall abide in their coasts on the north.] But the lot of Judah, which was southerly, and the lot of Ephraim and Manasseh, which, with respect to the former, was northerly, were not to be altered. But these tribes were to remain undisturbed in their possessions, unless it should be found that they had more than they needed, and others had less. For this was the very reason of making a new and more exact survey of the country, than had been made before the first division; that there might be an allotment made more to every one's satisfaction, when they had a more perfect account of all the land. Accordingly, it is evident, that the tribe of Judah (by common consent, no doubt) parted with some of their portion to the Simeonites, and the Danites, whose lot appeared to be too scanty, (xix. 29. 41.)

Ver. 6. *Ye shall therefore describe the land into seven parts, and bring the description hither to me.*] When the men, who were appointed to measure the country, had divided it into seven parts, he orders that the description thus divided should be laid before him.

That I may cast lots for you here before the Lord.] Whereby their possessions were settled and established by a Divine authority. For the lots being drawn before the sanctuary, God was desired to declare what portion every tribe should have. Accordingly, it was their duty to look upon it as a sacred appointment, and to be contented with it; for it was done at the very door of the tabernacle, as we read, xix. *ult.*

Ver. 7. *But the Levites have no part among you, for the priesthood of the Lord is their inheritance.*] He declared, what had been often said before, that in this division of the land, the priests and Levites were to have no share; God having otherwise provided for them. (See xiii. 14. 32. xiv. 3.)

And Gad, and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh,

have received their inheritance beyond Jordan, &c.] And, as for the rest, no care was to be taken of them in this division; because Moses had provided for them before they came over Jordan.

Ver. 8. *And the men arose, and went away.*] Being chosen by their brethren (as Joshua directed, ver. 4.) to act in their name.

And Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go, and walk through the land, and describe it, &c.] Before they went, Joshua gave them a charge to do the business they went about with care and fidelity; using their best diligence to be truly and fully informed: and at their return, give him an account, that he might put an end to all disputes, by desiring God to assign every tribe their portion.

That I may here cast lots for you before the Lord in Shiloh.] These words sound as if he gave this charge to them in the presence of God, before the sanctuary, that they might be excited to execute his orders with greater diligence.

Ver. 9. *And the men went and passed through the land.*] Through the whole country which they had conquered.

And described it by cities.] Set down the name of every city, and its villages, and the territory about it, with its situation. For so, I suppose, Joshua charged them.

Into seven parts in a book.] In which were seven maps, as we now call them; which made a chorographical description of all the cities, towns, mountains, plains, woods, and all other conditions of the soil.

And came again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh.] For the tabernacle being removed hither, the camp followed it, as I observed, ver. 1. And here it remained till the land was divided among the seven tribes. Which could not be done in a short time; for Josephus saith they were seven months in taking this survey, and making the forenamed description.

Ver. 10. *And Joshua.*] With the assistance of Eleazar and the princes, (xiv. 1.)

Cast lots for them in Shiloh before the Lord.] As he told them he would, ver. 6. The manner of it, see upon Numb. xxvi. 55, 56.

And there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel, according to their divisions.] That is, according to the divisions made by the surveyors; which were so just and equal, that all consented the lot should determine what part should belong to them.

Ver. 11. *And the lot of the tribe of Benjamin came up.*] The providence of God so ordered it, that his children should have the first lot of these seven, next to the children of Joseph, they two being the only sons of Rachel, Jacob's beloved wife.

According to their families.] To be divided according to their families.

And the coast of their lot came forth between the children of Judah.] Who lay on the south of them.

And the children of Joseph.] For the Ephraimites lay on the north of them. And it is observable, that in the blessing of Moses, Benjamin is placed between Judah and Joseph (Levi having no inheritance among them), which prophecy of Moses by this lot was exactly fulfilled concerning him, (Deut. xxxiii. 12.)

Ver. 12. *And their border on the north side was from Jordan; and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north side.*] Just thus the south border of Ephraim proceeded from Jordan by Jericho, which was in the tribe of Benjamin. (See xvi. 1. 7.)

And went up through the mountain westward.] Through the mountainous country, which lay on the north of Jericho, it went up to the western part of the country.

And the goings out thereof were at the wilderness of Beth-aven.] A place near Beth-el, which in aftertimes (when they committed foul idolatry there) was called Beth-aven, a house or place of iniquity, (Hosea iv. 15. x. 8.)

Ver. 13. *And the border went out from thence towards Luz, to the side of Luz (which is Beth-el) southward.*] On the south side of that city. (See xvi. 2.) The Jews think there were two Beth-els; one here named in the confines of Benjamin and Joseph, where Jacob had the vision of the ladder reaching up to heaven, and the other Beth-el near to Ai, (viii. 6. 17.)

And the border descended to Ataroth-adar.] Called in the place forenamed, (xvi. 2.) Archi-Ataroth.

Near the hill that lieth on the south side of the nether Beth-horon.] A city in the tribe of Ephraim, (xvi. 3.) called *the nether,* because there was a higher hard by it in the mountain adjoining. Though others will have the two Beth-horons to have been at a great distance; one in the mountains of Ephraim, the other in the valley near Jordan.

Ver. 14. *And the border was drawn thence.*] In a line bending westward, as appears by what follows in the end of the verse; which tells us the western border began from Beth-horon the nether.

And compasseth the corner of the sea southward, from the hill that lieth before Beth-horon.] I cannot give any account of this border, according to our translation: for, it is certain, it did not compass any corner of the Mediterranean (and no other sea can be here meant), nor came near unto it. Therefore, by *peath,* which we translate *corner,* must be understood *the side* of the sea. As if he had said, It ran along in a parallel line to the sea. So the Vulgar hath it, *over against the sea;* and the LXX. to the same purpose. And the word *southward* is joined by the Vulgar, not to the *sea,* but to the next words, *southward from the hill that lieth before Beth-horon.*

Southward.] That is, the hill was to the south of Beth-horon, as we read in the verse before.

And the goings out thereof were at Kirjath-Baal (which is Kirjath-Jearim), a city of Judah.] See xv. 60.

This was the west quarter.] Here the *peath* beforementioned (for it is the same word we before translate *corner*), the west side, or quarter, ended: for that is meant by *its goings out.*

Ver. 15. *And the south quarter.*] The same word again in the Hebrew, *viz. peath.*

Was from the end of Kirjath-Jearim, and the border went out on the west.] Did not go directly south, but bordered something towards the sea, till it came to *the well of waters of Nephtoah,* as this verse concludes. (See xv. 9.) By considering of which, and the foregoing and following verses, it will be unnecessary to say much of this south border of Benjamin, it being the same with the north border of Judah. For the very same places are named here that are there, and in the same order; with this difference only, that in describing this border, he proceeds from the west towards the east; but in describing that of Judah

from the east towards the west. So that Kirjath-Jearim is there the north limits of Judah, as it is here the south limits of Benjamin.

Ver. 16. *And the border came down to the end of the mountain that lieth before the valley of the son of Hinnom,* &c.] See xv. 8.

And descended to En-rogel.] See xv. 7.

Ver. 17. *And was drawn from the north, and went forth to En-shemesh, and went forth towards Geliloth.*] See there; where this place is called Gilgal.

Which is over against the going up to Adummim, and descended to the stone of Bohan, the son of Reuben.] See there, and ver. 6.

Ver. 18. *And passed along towards the side of Arabah northward; and went down unto Arabah.*] Called Beth-Arabah, xv. 6. and so the LXX. have it here in this verse.

Ver. 19. *And the border passed along to the side of Beth-hoglah northward.*] Leaving Beth-hoglah on the north of it, (see xv. 6.)

And the outgoings of the border were at the north bay of the salt sea.] Its utmost progress was to the tongue or bay of the salt sea, which is on the north part of it.

At the south end of Jordan.] Where Jordan ends towards the south; being swallowed up by the salt sea.

This was the south coast.] That is, hither it reached, and here it ended.

Ver. 20. *And Jordan was the border of it on the east side.*] Till, near Jericho, it met with the bounds of the tribe of Ephraim and Manasseh.

This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, by the coasts thereof round about.] That is, a description of its bounds on all sides.

According to their families.] Which was divided among as many families as were in that tribe.

Ver. 21. *Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, according to their families, were Jericho.*] Having given a description of the bounds of the country, he sets down the principal cities in it. The first of which was well known, *viz.* Jericho; the territory of which remained, though the city itself was destroyed. And perhaps there were some houses there, though without walls or gates; which seem to be the only things which Joshua commanded should not be built, (vi. 26.)

And Beth-hoglah.] A city nigh to Jericho; not far from the river Jordan.

And the valley of Keziz.] Rather, *Emer-Keziz;* for he speaks of a city, not of a valley. Or, it may be interpreted, Keziz in the valley; that is, in the plain of Jericho.

Ver. 22. *And Beth-Arabah.*] This city is reckoned to Judah, (xv. 61.) being, it seems, in the confines of both tribes. It stood also in the plain of Jericho, signifying as much as *domus campestris,* a habitation in the fields: for there were large fields about it, as Bochartus supposes; from whence a place in Assyria, for this reason, was called Oraba, as he shews, lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 21.

And Zemaraim.] A city, it is probable, built by Zemari, the tenth son of Canaan, (Gen. x. 18.) There was a mountain also called by this name, from this city, it is likely. For though it is said to be in Mount Ephraim, 2 Chron. xiii. 14. it might also, in part, belong to Benjamin, as Betharaba and the next cities did belong to two tribes.

And Beth-el.] A city in the confines of the tribe of Ephraim and of Benjamin, which seems to have belonged to both.

Ver. 23. *And Avim, and Parah, and Ophrah.*] We know no more of these cities but their names.

Ver. 24. *And Chephar-haammonai, and Ophni.*] These also are unknown cities.

And Gaba.] This is often named in Scripture, and called Gibeah, being that place where the foul fact was committed which almost ruined this tribe, (Judg. xix.) And is called Gibeah of Saul, because it was his native country, where he made his residence after he was king, (1 Sam. x. 26.) And it was one of the cities of the priests, (Josh. xxi. 17.)

Twelve cities with their villages.] Which seem to have been in the eastern part of their country.

Ver. 25. *Gibeon, and Ramah, and Beeroth.*] The first of these is well-known from the story of its ancient inhabitants, related in the ninth chapter of this book. It was also a city of the priests, (xxi. 17.) and seated on a hill, as its very name imports. Ramah also was an eminent city on the north side of Jerusalem, as Bethlehem was on the south. So that Jerusalem was in the road from the one to the other; as appears from the man that went from Bethlehem-Judah to Ramah, (Judg. xix. 2. 11. 13.)

Beeroth also is notorious upon this account, that it was one of the cities which cunningly joined with Gibeon to deceive Joshua and procure a peace with them, (ix. 17.)

Ver. 26. *And Mizpeh.*] There were several cities of this name, as I have noted before, (xv. 38.) And this was in the confines of the tribe of Judah; so that it seems to have belonged both to them and to Benjamin, as several others did.

And Chephirah.] Another of the cities depending upon Gibeon, (ix. 17.)

And Mozah.] An unknown city.

Ver. 27. *And Rekem.*] This is a city mentioned both by Eusebius and St. Jerome; but they do not say where it was, nor so much as name the two next, Irpeel and Taralah.

Ver. 28. *And Zelah, Eleph.*] Two cities, of which no more than the names are remaining. Eusebius and St. Jerome mention the former as in the tribe of Benjamin, but say no more.

And Jebusi, which is Jerusalem.] See xv. 63. where it is reckoned to the tribe of Judah; for both that tribe and Benjamin had an interest in it. The old city belonged to the tribe of Benjamin; unto which an addition being made, it belonged to Judah (as some make account); that is, the north part, with Mount Moriah, was in the portion of Benjamin; but the south part, wherein Mount Sion was, belonged to Judah.

Gibeath.] This was a distinct city from Gaba, (ver. 24.) and I suppose near to Jerusalem.

And Kirjath.] The very name imports a city: which, Eusebius and St. Jerome say, was under the metropolis of Gibeath forementioned. Πόλις ὑπὸ Μητρόπολιν Γαβαθά.

Fourteen cities with their villages.] Which were in the western part of this tribe.

This is the inheritance of the children of Benjamin.] Which was one of the smallest, with respect to the quantity of ground which they possessed; but the soil was the richest of all other tribes, as Josephus informs us.

According to their families.] All the families of the Ben-

jamites were disposed of into these great cities, and the territories belonging to them; in which, it is probable, there were lesser cities, not here named. For we find two cities of the priests in this tribe which are not among those here set down, *viz.* Anathoth and Almon, (xxi. 18.)

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND the second lot came forth to Simeon, even for the tribe of the children of Simeon.*] Both the LXX. and the Vulgar leave out the latter part of these words, as if they were superfluous; and only say, *the second lot came forth to Simeon.* But I suppose the words following in the Hebrew are intended to shew, that though their inheritance was within that of the tribe of Judah (as the next word tells us), yet those cities were not all that were given to this tribe, but they had another share by lot that fell to them: and God disposed it so, that the very next lot to Benjamin came up for them; Simeon being the eldest son of Jacob that was unprovided.

According to their families.] Which was divided by Eleazar, Joshua, and the princes, among their several families.

And their inheritance was within the inheritance of the tribe of Judah.] So we well translate it; for though the word in the Hebrew be *betoch (in the midst)* of the inheritance of Judah; yet it signifies no more than *within.* For the lot of Simeon did not lie in the very heart (as we speak), but in the skirts, of the country of Judah: from whose northern and western border some part was cut off, and given to the Simeonites; for the reason mentioned ver. 9.

Ver. 2. *And they had in their inheritance Beer-sheba, and Sheba.*] Or rather, *Beer-sheba,* which is *Sheba:* for they were one and the same place; sometimes called at length Beer-sheba, and sometimes contracted into Sheba: nothing being more common than to cut off the beginning of the names of towns and places, as Bochartus hath shewn in many instances, in his Phaleg. lib ii. cap. 24. which he repeats in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 15. And certainly it is so here; for otherwise it would not have been said, (ver. 6.) there were thirteen cities in all, but fourteen; for there are so many if Sheba be distinct from Beer-sheba. Which was the last city in the south belonging to the land of Israel. From whence the common saying, *from Dan to Beer-sheba,* to express the whole length of the country; from Dan in the north to Beer-sheba in the south.

And Moladah.] This is mentioned before, in the account we had of the lot of Judah, (xv. 26.)

Ver. 3. *And Hazar-shual.*] A place where there was abundance of foxes.

And Balah.] The same that is mentioned in the south of Judah, (xv. 29.)

And Azem.] It signifies, in Hebrew, *great strength.* We read of it no where else but in this place, and 1 Chron. iv. 29. where it is called Ezem.

Ver. 4. *And El-tolad.*] Called there *Tolad;* the first syllable being cut off, as I said ver. 2. it often is.

And Bethul.] Called there *Bethuel.* Which some will have to be the same with Bethulia, where Judith dwelt; because she was of the tribe of Simeon. But that is a mistake; for this was in the south of Judah, and that a city in Galilee.

And Hormah.] Which is mentioned in the same place, 1 Chron. iv. 30. and was one of the cities to whom David sent part of the spoil he took from the Amalekites, (1 Sam. xxx. 30.)

Ver. 5. *And Ziklag.*] A neighbouring city, as appears from both the forementioned places.

And Beth-marcaboth, and Hazar-susah.] It is a very probable conjecture of Bochartus, that these were two of the cities where Solomon kept his chariots and horses, (1 Kings x. 26.) For the former of these signifies *the house of chariots;* and the other, *the village of horses.* For it is called Hazar-susim, in the plural number, 1 Chron. iv. 31. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. 2. cap. 9.)

Ver. 6. *And Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhen.*] They seem to be the same cities, called in aftertimes Beth-birei, and Shaaraim, (1 Chron. iv. 31.)

Thirteen cities and their villages.] See ver. 1.

Ver. 7. *Ain, Remmon, and Ether, and Ashan.*] One of these towns is otherwise called in 1 Chron. iv. 32. *viz.* Etam, not Ether; and a fifth is added. Which shews all the cities and towns belonging to Simeon are not here mentioned, no more than all those belonging to Benjamin; as I observed on ver. 28. of the foregoing chapter. Ashan also is thought by Bochart (in the place beforenamed) to be the same with Chor-Ashan in 1 Sam. xxx. 30. by cutting off the first syllable.

Four cities and their villages.] Which are mentioned separate from the rest; either because they were in another part of the country, or because they were not properly cities, but only *chatserim (large villages),* as they are expressly called 1 Chron. iv. 32. that is, towns which were without walls. Here, indeed, they are called cities; but that must be understood largely, to make it agree with the Chronicles, for towns of more than ordinary bigness.

Ver. 8. *And all the villages that were round about these cities.*] Here the word *chatserim (villages)* is opposed to cities; and signifies all the towns, great and small, that lay about all the cities beforementioned.

To Baalath-beer Ramath.] This is the name but of one city, called simply Baal in 1 Chron. iv. 33. and is that city in the tribe of Judah, mentioned xv. ver. 24. or ver. 29. As far as which city the bounds of the tribe of Simeon reached. Some think this is the city which Solomon built, *i. e.* repaired, and made larger and stronger, (1 Kings ix. 18.)

On the south.] This doth not relate to the situation of the city beforementioned; but of the inheritance of this tribe, which was on the south of Judah.

Ver. 9. *Out of the portion of the children of Judah was the inheritance of Simeon.*] For which reason the bounds of this tribe on all sides are not described as of the foregoing; because that was sufficiently done in the description of the possession of Judah; out of which the inheritance of this tribe was taken.

For the part of the children of Judah was too much for them.] They who were sent to make a new survey of the whole land, found that the former surveyors had not measured it exactly; but left one division too big in proportion to the rest, which fell to the tribe of Judah: who had now, therefore, a large slice cut from them, because they had too much, and others too little.

Therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of them.] Within that lot, which was at first given to the tribe of Judah: yet not absolutely

given, but so that if it appeared there was not sufficient for the rest of their brethren, and they had more than enough; that error should be corrected by taking something from them and giving it to another tribe, as it was now in this new allotment.

Ver. 10. *And the third lot came up for Zebulun, according to their families.*] He was not the next brother; for Issachar was born before him. But he is mentioned before Issachar, both in the blessing of Jacob, Gen. xlix. 13. and of Moses, Deut. xxxiii. 18.

And the border of their inheritance was to Sarid.] No more is said of this place by Eusebius, but that it was ὅριον Ζαβουλών, *the bound or limit of Zebulun;* and St. Jerome saith the same. And, by what follows, it seems to have been the south-west border.

Ver. 11. *And their border went up towards the sea.*] That is, the Mediterranean, which was in the west.

And Maralah, and reacheth to Dabbasheth.] These were cities in the western borders, as appears by the following words.

And reacheth to the river that is before Jokneam.] See xii. 22.

Ver. 12. *And turned from Sarid eastward, towards the sun-rising.*] This is a description of the south border; which went from Sarid in the west unto Jordan in the east.

Unto the border of Chisloth-Tabor.] A city near Mount Tabor in the tribe of Issachar, ver. 18. For as, on the west, the Zebulunites were contiguous to the tribe of Manasseh; so, towards the east, they were to the tribe of Issachar.

And then goeth out to Daberath.] A city also in the tribe of Issachar, (xxi. 28.)

And goeth up to Japhia.] It is uncertain where this city was, though some think it to be the strong city which Josephus calls Japha, (lib. ii. de Bello Jud. cap. 25.) and places it in Galilee near Jotapata.

Ver. 13. *And from thence passeth on along on the east to Gittath-Hepher.*] This seems to be a description of the eastern border. We read of *the land of Hepher*, 1 Kings iv. 10. which was near the sea of Galilee. There this city was, in which Jonah the prophet was born, (2 Kings xiv. 25.)

And Ittah-kazin.] This city, it is likely, was upon the same sea of Galilee, called Gennesaret; which the Vulgar calls *Thacasin.*

And goeth out to Remmon-methoar, to Neah.] Here the eastern border ended (for that is meant by the phrase *goeth out*), at the sea of Gennesaret. So Josephus expressly affirms. (See Gen. xlix. 13.)

Ver. 14. *And the border compasseth it on the north side to Hannathon.*] Here begins the description of the northern border; which, from the last-named place, went in a bending line towards Hannathon; a city, it is supposed, in this tribe.

And the out-goings thereof are in the valley of Jiphthah-el.] Here the northern border ended. But we know no more of this valley of Jiphthah-el, than that it was in the tribe of Asher, in the confines of this tribe, (ver. 27.)

Ver. 15. *And Kattath, and Nahallal, and Shimron, and Idalah, and Beth-lehem.*] It is not certain whether these cities belonged to Zebulun, or are set down as places upon which this tribe bordered. Of the two first I can give no account; but we read of Shimron as a principal city, which had a king in it conquered by Joshua. (See xii. 20.) And Idalah is mentioned by St. Jerome (de locis Hebraicis,) and called *Jadela;* as if it were compounded of *jad* (which signifies a *place*, Deut. xxv. 12.) and *ela* (a *goddess*), being the place where Venus was worshipped, as Bochartus conjectures, lib. i. Canaan, cap. 3. As for Beth-lehem, we are not to take it for the place where our Saviour was born; which is called Bethlehem-Judah, to distinguish it from this, which was far from it.

Twelve cities with their villages.] Here are more cities than *twelve;* therefore some of them are mentioned only as the boundaries of this country. There is no doubt but those mentioned ver. 13. were in this tribe; and many think those five here mentioned in this were so also. Jokneam likewise belonged to it; but which were the rest to make up the number twelve cannot be determined.

Ver. 16. *This is the inheritance of the children of Zebulun, according to their families, these cities with their villages.*] That is, these were the bounds of it; but all the cities belonging to it are not here set down: for we read of two, Kartah and Dimnah, (xxi. 34, 35.) which are not here named. And, indeed, twelve cities do not seem sufficient for sixty thousand men; (Numb. xxvi. 27.) therefore they were only the principal; and all, perhaps, that the measurers of the land had noted in their book.

Ver. 17. *And the fourth lot came out for Issachar, for the children of Issachar, according to their families.*] Thus far there is some kind of order observed in these lots: Issachar being brother to Zebulun by the same mother.

Ver. 18. *And their border was towards Jezreel.*] This was one of the royal seats of the kings of Israel in aftertimes, (1 Kings xxi. 1.) which Eusebius and St Jerome place in the tribe of Manasseh; but ought to be accounted belonging to this tribe, as the next place is agreed to be. There was another in the tribe of Judah, (xv. 56.)

And Chesulloth.] Mentioned ver. 12. which both the forementioned authors place in the tribe of Issachar, under the name of Acheseloth.

And Shunem.] Where that noble lady lived who entertained Elisha at her house, (2 Kings iv. 8. 12.) And where Abishag, the wife of David, in his old age, was born, (1 Kings i. 3.)

Ver. 19. *Haphraim, and Shihon, and Anaharath.*] He doth not describe the borders on all sides of this tribe; but only sets down some principal cities; for it lying between Manasseh and Zebulun, the situation of it was sufficiently known. And they do but guess, who say these six cities named in the foregoing verse and in this were in the southern border.

Ver. 20. *And Rabbith, and Kishion, and Abez.*] These three cities, and the two next that follow, ver. 21. they will have to constitute the western border.

Ver. 21. *And Remeth and En-gannim.*] Here, as I said, they imagine the western border ended.

En-haddah, and Beth-pazzez.] These two, and the three next, ver. 22. they will have to be the northern border.

Ver. 22. *And the coast reacheth to Tabor.*] That is, this northern border; for Mount Tabor was in the north; and this city was hard by it, and received its name from the mount, or gave its name to it.

And Shahazimah, and Beth-shemesh.] Here ended the

northern border. There was another Beth-shemesh in the tribe of Naphtali, (ver. 38.) and another in the tribe of Judah, (xxi. 16.)

And the out-goings of their border were at Jordan.] This makes it probable the former account of its other borders is not true; because it leaves no city for the eastern border near Jordan, nor any for the middle of the country.

Sixteen cities with their villages.] This shews that Tabor was a city; otherwise there would be but fifteen.

Ver. 23. *This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar, according to their families, the cities and villages.*] These were their principal cities; but it is likely there were others: for we read of two not here mentioned, xxi. 28, 29. Dabareh and Jarmuth; yet there are those who think Jarmuth is but another name for Remeth, here mentioned ver. 21. which to me doth not seem probable.

Ver. 24. *And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher, according to their families.*] No reason can be given for this order; unless it be, that God was pleased to place this tribe, being descended from the handmaid of Leah, not far from Zebulun, one of Leah's sons. As for Gad, the elder brother of Asher, he was provided for before, on the other side of Jordan.

Ver. 25. *And their border was Helkath, and Hali, and Beten, and Achshaph.*] We know no more of the three first of these cities than their names. But the last of them was very considerable; mention being made of the king of Achshaph, xi. 1. xii. 20. The first of them also we find was a Levitical city, (xxi. 31.) called Hukok, in 1 Chron. vi. 75. It appears, likewise, by the mention of Carmel in the next verse, unto which this border reached, that these cities lay in the west near the Mediterranean Sea.

Ver. 26. *And Alammalech, and Amad, and Mishael, and reacheth to Carmel westward.*] Or, *by the sea*, not far from Ptolemais; to distinguish it from the other Carmel, in the tribe of Judah, near Hebron. (See xv. 55.) Here the great prophet Elijah sometimes dwelt, and confuted the Baalites by a stupendous miracle. But we are as ignorant of the three cities mentioned in this verse, as we are of the other in the foregoing.

And to Shihor-libnath.] Whether this was a city (some fancy Ptolemais), or a promontory, or a muddy river (for there are those different opinions about it), I cannot determine.

Ver. 27. *And turneth towards the sun-rising.*] It turned from the sea towards the east; and so northward, bending towards the west again. For there are no borders or sides of this tribe described: but from the south part of the sea it turned eastward, and then northward, in the form of a bow, towards the north part of the same sea, where Zidon was, (ver. 28.)

To Beth-Dagon.] There was a place of this name mentioned before in the tribe of Judah, xv. 41. where it is thought there was a famous temple of Dagon, the god of the Philistines.

And reacheth to Zebulun, and to the valley Jiphthah-el.] And so touched upon the north border of the tribe of Zebulun; in which the valley of Jiphthah-el lay. (See ver. 14.)

Towards the north side of Beth-emek, and Neiel.] Where these were, is not known. Only Eusebius and St. Jerome say, Beth-emek lay in a valley, or low place in this tribe; as the word seems to import.

And goeth out to Cabul on the left hand.] On the north side (called the *left hand*) of this city, which lay in the tribe of Asher, this border ended. Some have been so frivolous as from hence to argue, that this book was written long after Joshua's time; because the land of Cabul (1 Kings ix. 13.) was not known till the days of Solomon, when Hiram gave this name to the land, which Solomon presented him withal. As if there were no difference between the land and the city of Cabul: when one of them was a little region, containing twenty towns, and the other a small place in the confines of Ptolemais; both of them in the tribe of Asher. They are plainly distinguished by Josephus, who calls one of them γῆν Χαβαλῶν, *the land of Cabul;* and the other κώμην, *the village of Cabul;* as Huetius hath observed, propos. iv. Demonstr. Evang. p. 186.

Ver. 28. *And Hebron.*] Called *Elbon* by the LXX. and by the Vulgar *Abran;* to distinguish it, I suppose, from that Hebron in the land of Judah.

And Rehob.] There were two cities of this name in this tribe. (See ver. 30.) One of them was a Levitical city, (xxi. 31.) and the Canaanites kept possession either of that or the other, (Judg. i. 31.)

And Hammon.] There was a Levitical city of this name in the tribe of Naphtali, (1 Chron. vi. 76.) called Hammothdor in xxi. 32. of this book.

And Kanah.] There were two cities of this name; one in the upper Galilee, which was Kanah the greater; and the other in the lower Galilee, called Kanah the less. He speaks here of the greater, which was near to Sidon. The lesser was that wherein our Saviour turned water into wine, and of which Nathanael and the Syrophœnician woman were.

Even unto great Sidon.] See before concerning this city, xi. 8.

Ver. 29. *And then the coast turneth to Ramah.*] Another city on the northern part of the Mediterranean Sea.

And to the strong city Tyre.] This translation is questionable: for we never read one word of the city Tyre (unless it be here) until the days of David; though we often read of Sidon in the books of Moses; even in the prophecy of Jacob. And, as Bochartus observes, Homer himself, who speaks frequently of Sidon and the Sidonians, never names Tyre, (lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 35.) Therefore, it is highly probable, some other place is meant by Tzor (as our margin notes the word is in the Hebrew), which was a fenced city, as we render the word here translated *strong*, (ver. 35.) And there were several cities, perhaps, called by this name of Tzor or Tyre, besides that famous one in future times; particularly Palætyrus; as much as to say Old Tyre. And it is no improbable conjecture of Campegius Vitringa, that into these two places, Sidon and Tzor, many of the people of Canaan fled, to secure themselves when Joshua invaded them: for Tzor signifies not only a *rock*, but any strong fortified place; from whence it is possible the Latin word *turris*, and then our English *tower*, is derived. Certain it is, that these two were famous cities, ἔνδοξοι λαμπροὶ, as Strabo calls them, lib. xvi. where he saith they were so anciently, and not only in his time; insomuch, that it was uncertain which was the metropolis of the Phœnicians. But it is certain he speaks of the New Tyre, which was built in an island; but the old one was on the continent. (See his Observationes Sacræ, lib. i. cap. 1.)

And the coast turneth to Hosah.] Declined a little towards a city of this name.

And the out-goings of it are at the sea, from the coast of Achzib.] It ended at the country which belonged to Achzib; for so *hebel* (which we here translate *coast*) signifies. In proper speaking it signifies a *cord*, whereby ground was measured; and thence was used to signify the portion of ground itself, which was measured by that cord or line. Thus we read of Hebel Argob, the region of Argob, Deut. iii. 13. and Hebel Hajam, the region of the sea, Zeph. ii. 5. Achzib, according to St. Jerome, is that place, which, by Pliny and others, was called in aftertimes Ecdippa.

Ver. 30. *Ummah also, and Aphek, and Rehob.*] It is probable these were three cities in the heart of the country of Asher.

Twenty-two cities with their villages.] There are more than this number here mentioned, though we do not reckon Carmel nor Jiphthah-el, one of which was a mountain, the other a valley. Therefore some of them were only the boundaries of this tribe, but did not belong to their possession.

Ver. 31. *This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher, according to their families, these cities with their villages.*] That is, these were the most eminent cities, though it be probable there were some other. For we read of one called Abdon, xxi. 30. not here mentioned.

Ver. 32. *And the sixth lot came out for the children of Naphtali, even for the children of Naphtali, according to their families.*] Here the younger son of Bilhah, the handmaid of Rachel, is preferred before the elder, who was Dan, (Gen. xxx. 6. 8.) as Zebulun was before Issachar. Such was the method of Divine Providence in that nation, to shew them that they ought not to value themselves too highly, as they were prone to do, upon their external privileges.

Ver. 33. *And their coast was from Heleph, from Allon to Zaanannim, and Adami, Nekeb, and Jabneel, unto Lakum.*] He doth not say what coast this was; but by what follows, it appears to be the northern border where these cities were situated, near Lebanon and Sidon, and the rest of the northern part of Asher's country: for Naphtali comprehended the upper Galilee.

And the out-goings thereof were at Jordan.] This border ended at this river; and at the very fountain of it, which was at the foot of Libanus.

Ver. 34. *And then the coast turneth westward to Aznoth-Tabor, and goeth out from thence to Hukkok.*] The southern border began at the former of these cities; and ended at the latter.

And reacheth to Zebulun on the south side.] Touched on the confines of the tribe of Zebulun; so that the north side of Zebulun was the south side of Naphtali.

And reacheth to Asher on the west side.] This is a short account of their western border, which went as far as to the borders of the tribe of Asher.

And to Judah upon Jordan towards the sun-rising.] It was not near Judah, there being several tribes between them. Therefore the meaning is, this tribe had communication with that of Judah by the river Jordan. So the word *upon* in our translation must be interpreted (though there be no preposition at all in the Hebrew before Jordan), which river afforded them convenience of carrying merchandises to Judah, or bringing them from thence. And thus some think the prophecy of Moses was fulfilled, (Deut. xxxiii. 23.) *Possess thou the west and the south.* Which doth not signify that they had any land in the south; but that they trafficked with it, by the means of Jordan.

Ver. 35. *And the fenced cities are Ziddim, Zer, and Hammath, Rakkath, and Cinnereth.*] These were northern cities, it appears by that mentioned in the midst, Hammath, or Hamath, which was the utmost bounds of the land of Israel northward. (See Numb. xiii. 21. xxxiv. 8. 1 Kings viii. 65.) It seems to have had its name from the youngest son of Canaan, who, it is likely, built it, as his eldest son did Sidon, (Gen. x. 18.) It continued a famous city a long time; for in the days of David, we read how the king of it cunningly made his peace with him by a great present, (2 Sam. viii. 9, &c.)

Rakkath,] Which follows that, is, in the opinion of some of the Jews, the same with Tiberias. So the author of the book De Cippis Hebraicis, set forth by Hottinger. Whence the Talmudists, as he observes, say, Rakath is Zipporia; which was called Rakath, because it was seated upon the bank of a river. It was also called Mœsia, and at last Tiberias; though other Jewish authors make Rakkath different from that city.

Cinnereth.] A place upon this sea of Tiberias; in which there were fine gardens, and a kind of paradise. Whence it was called Geneser; as much as to say, *the gardens of princes* (*Gannoth-Sarim*). And it had the name of Cinnereth, from its sweetness and pleasures, as the Jews say; (Cod. Megill.) "Kinnereth is Ginser. And why is it called Cinnereth? because its fruits are as sweet to the taste, as the sound of a harp is to the ear." (See Hottinger in his annot. on the forenamed book, p. 36.)

As for the two first cities, Ziddim and Zer, I can say nothing of them.

Ver. 36. *And Adamah, and Ramah, and Hazor.*] We may guess where these cities were by the last of them, Hazor, to which they were neighbours. (See concerning it, xi. 1.)

Ver. 37. *And Kedesh, and Edrei, and En-hazor.*] The first of these was a Levitical city, (xxi. 32.) in which that famous captain, Barak, was born, Judg. iv. 6. where it is called Kedesh-Naphtali, to distinguish it from those of that name in other tribes. Of the other two cities we know nothing.

Ver. 38. *And Iron, and Migdal-el, and Horem, and Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh.*] Every one knows there was another Beth-shemesh in the tribe of Judah; and that this city and Beth-anath the children of Naphtali could not conquer, (Judg. i. 33.) But we know no more of them, nor of the rest; save only that Eusebius says, there was a large village, called Magdal-el, between Dora and Ptolemais.

Nineteen cities with their villages.] Six of which were fenced cities, certainly belonging to this tribe; and there are as many more mentioned as make up twenty-three. Some of which therefore must be accounted as bordering cities; or only large villages, and not properly cities.

Ver. 39. *This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali, according to their families, the cities and their villages.*] This must be understood (as in the account of the forementioned tribes) of the principal cities; for

there were more besides these, as appears from xxi. 32. where Hammoth-dor and Kartan are numbered among the Levitical cities in this tribe, which are not mentioned here.

Ver. 40. *And the seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan, according to their families.*] They were the only remaining tribe that was to be provided for.

Ver. 41. *And the coast of their inheritance was Zorah, and Eshtaol, and Ir-shemesh.*] He doth not describe their lot by its borders; but mentions the cities that were in it. Some of which at first were given to Judah; out of whose share, it being too large, some cities were taken for the Danites, as others were for the Simeonites. And it is certain the two first of these fell to Judah, in the first division of the land, (xv. 33.) Both very eminent places, for the birth, and burial, and mighty motions of Samson: for at Zorah he was born, (Judg. xiii. 2.) between Zorah and Eshtaol he was buried, (Judg. xvi. *ult.*) and here the Spirit of God began to move him, at certain times, (xiii. 25.) It is probable, also, that Ir-shemesh was in the tribe of Judah at the first; it being of the same signification with Beth-shemesh: for one signifies the *city of the sun;* the other, the *house,* or *place of the sun.*

Ver. 42. *And Shaalabbin.*] Which the Amorites kept in their possession, Judg. i. 35. where, by a small change of letters, it is called Shaalbim; and in some copies of the LXX. translated ἐν ᾧ καὶ αἱ ἀλώπεκες, and in others ἐν Θλαβιν. And in our present LXX, both these are retained. For a fox in the Arabian language is called *thalab,* and in the Phœnician (which is half Arabic) *saalab;* as Bochartus observes in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 13. and in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 34. p. 684.

And Ajalon.] Another city which the Amorites kept from them, as we find in the same place, Judg. i. 35. And was one of the Levitical cities, (xxi. 23.) and that famous place mentioned x. 13.

And Jethlah.] We know no more of it than that it was a city in this tribe.

Ver. 43. *And Elon, and Thimnathath, and Ekron.*] It is certain that the last of these three cities was at first given to Judah, (xv. 45.) But Thimnathath was not the same with Timnath in the same tribe, (xv. 10. 57.) but quite different from it; as Gibeath, I observed in the foregoing chapter, was from Geba. For Samson went down to this city Timnath, (Judg. xiv. 5.) which shews it was in a valley; whereas Judah went up to Timnath to shear his sheep, (Gen. xxxviii. 11. 13.) which shews it was upon a hill. Concerning Elon I can say nothing, unless it be the same with Holon in the tribe of Judah, (xv. 51.)

Ver. 44. *And Eltekeh, and Gibbethon, and Baalath.*] Some think that the first of these is the same with that city in the tribe of Judah, called El-tekon, xv. 59. and the last the same with that called there Baalah, ver. 29. As for Gibbethon, the Danites seem not to have got possession of it, or to have lost it again; for it was in the hands of the Philistines after the days of David, (1 Kings xv. 27. xvi. 15.) and yet appointed one of the Levitical cities, (Josh. xvi. 21. 23.)

Ver. 45. *And Jehud, and Bene-berak, and Gath-rimmon.*] Where Jehud was I find not; but Βαρακαὶ is mentioned by Eusebius as a village near Azotus (or Ashdod), and St. Jerome saith in his time was called Bernea. Which may incline us to his opinion, that Geth-rimmon was no other than the city of Gath, so often mentioned in Scripture as one of the principal cities of the Philistines. It is reckoned among the Levitical cities xxi. 24. as Gibbethon was ver. 44. though in the hands of the Philistines.

Ver. 46. *And Me-jarkon, and Rakkon.*] It is not certain where these places were, but very likely near to the place next mentioned.

With the border before Japho.] This place was afterward called Joppa, being the principal port-town in all Judea (mentioned by Pompon. Mela, Strabo, and Pliny), and continues so to this day, retaining the name of *Japha,* which in Hebrew signifies *fair* or *beautiful.* It is not certain that it was a part of the tribe of Dan, though Eusebius calls it a sea-town of the lot of Dan; for these words may signify no more, but that their portion comprehended the border which lay before this place.

Ver. 47. *And the coast of the children of Dan went out too little for them.*] These words, *too little,* are not in the Hebrew, where there is nothing answering to them. But the words run thus, *the coast of the children of Dan went out from them;* that is, they were dispossessed of it in some parts by their powerful neighbours, the Amorites, who forced them into the mountains, and would not let them dwell in the valley, (Judg. i. 34.) This put them to such straits, that they were constrained to enlarge their border some other way, which they did by the means following. I shall only further note, that this is no strange phrase; for in the year of jubilee lands are said to *go out,* when they returned to their first owners, from the present possessors, (Lev. xxv. 28. 30, 31. 33.)

Therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem.] A city not far from Jordan, called Laish, in the book of Judges, before it was taken by the Danites. In aftertimes, when it fell into the hands of the Romans, it was called Paneas; and made the metropolis of Iturea and Trachonitis. And from Philip, also, son of Herod the Great, who very much enlarged and adorned it, it was called Cæsarea Philippi, in honour of Tiberius Cæsar.

And took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein.] Were not disturbed in their possession.

And called Leshem-Dan, after the name of Dan their father.] Thus conquerors were wont to change the names of places which they subdued. This was done after Joshua's death; and is related more largely in the book of Judges, chap. xviii. where there is an account of the whole expedition. From whence some argue this book was not written by Joshua; whereas no more can be inferred from it than this, that, in aftertimes, Ezra, or some other, thought good to put in this verse here, to complete the account of the Danites' possessions. But any one may see, as Huetius observes, that if this verse were taken away, all that is said of this tribe coheres perfectly; and there is no breach at all in the context of the foregoing with the following verse after this. Which is an argument, that this short account of their taking Leshem were not the words of the writer of this book, but inserted afterward by some other person. For if they were taken away, this relation of the Danites' lot would be more like the account of the lot of all the rest.

Ver. 48. *This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.*] The number of them is not set down, as in

the foregoing tribes; of which it is to no purpose to inquire the reason.

Ver. 49. *When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts.*] That is, after every tribe had their portion assigned to them.

The children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them.] We cannot but observe the wonderful modesty of this great man, who received his portion last of all; and then, not by lot, but by their gift; who were already possessed of the whole land.

Ver. 50. *According to the word of the Lord, they gave him the city which he asked.*] God, indeed, had ordered that he should have a portion, and that he should choose it; but he was content to stay for it till every body else was served. We do not expressly read of this command; but many things were said and done which are not recorded. And he being as faithful and upright as Caleb, (and, besides, chosen to be the captain of God's people), we cannot but think, that when God ordered what Caleb should have, he gave the same direction about Joshua. And so much is implied in those words of Caleb himself, when he demanded his portion of Joshua, (xiv. 6.) "Thou knowest the thing the Lord said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea."

Even in Timnath-serah, in Mount Ephraim.] He did not choose the best place in all the country, but a convenient place in his own tribe; which was seated on the north side of a hill called Gaash; as we read in the latter end of this book.

And he built the city, and dwelt therein.] Repaired it, I suppose (for in all likelihood there was a city there before), and made a convenient habitation for his family and kindred. But we read nothing of them; for as he did not affect to make himself king of Canaan, so he contented himself with a little, and made no large provision for his posterity. We have no mention made of his sons or daughters; but (as Conrad. Pellicanus speaks) all the Israelites were his children.

Ver. 51. *These are the inheritances, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, divided for an inheritance by lot in Shiloh before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*] It is usual, after so long an account, to recapitulate in what they had done, and by what authority; which he doth in this verse.

So they made an end of dividing the country.] Every tribe had the place of their settlement appointed to their satisfaction; so that there was no further division made of the land.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying.*] From the tabernacle, at the door of which he, and Eleazar, and the princes had been making a division of the land; as the last verse of the foregoing chapter tells us.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge.*] This was the proper time for it; when they were all met together to receive their several portions of land, after an exact survey of the country.

Whereof I spake to you by my servant Moses.] In Numb. xxxv. 9—11, &c. where he treats of them at large; and repeats it again, Deut. xix. 1, 2, &c.

Ver. 3. *That the slayer that killeth any person unawares, and unwittingly, may flee thither.*] Such places, every body knows, there were among the heathen; but commonly they were their temples, and their altars, as many have observed; particularly Joh. Gentius lately, in his book De Victimis Humanis, par. iii. cap. 21. p. 483, &c. But there were also some cities that had this privilege, as Dilherrus (who thinks herein the gentiles imitated the Jews) observes out of Tacitus, lib. iii. Annal. where he saith the principal cities of Greece contended before Tiberius about this matter, De Jure Asylorum. (See Dissert. de Cacozelia Gentilium, cap. 3.)

And they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.] Protect such persons from him who studied to avenge the blood of the slain. Concerning whom, see Numb. xxxv. 12.

Ver. 4. *And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city.*] Desiring to be admitted and protected there.

And shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city.] That is, the judges, who sat in the gate beforementioned, (Deut. xvi. 18.)

They shall take him into the city unto them.] Being satisfied he was such a person as he pretended.

And give him a place that he may dwell among them.] Assign a convenient habitation for him; these cities being appointed by God for that purpose, and given unto those who inhabited them, on this condition, that they should entertain such persons when they fled to them.

Ver. 5. *And if the avenger of blood pursue after him.*] Desiring he might be delivered up into his hands.

Then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hands.] But defend him from his assaults.

Because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.] It was a casual slaughter, without any design of doing him hurt, as far as appeared to them. If the avenger pursued the slayer so closely, that they had not time to examine the matter at the gate of the city, they were not to let him stand there; but take him in (and afterward hear his cause, and judge it), lest the avenger should kill him before he was admitted into their city.

Ver. 6. *And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment.*] The avenger might bring him before another tribunal, to be tried whether he killed the man by chance or not. (See Numb. xxxv. 24, 25.)

And until the death of the high-priest, that shall be in those days.] If that court found him not guilty of wilful murder, he was restored to the city of refuge; but confined to live there till the death of the high-priest. (See in the same place.)

Then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and his own house, &c.] See Numb. xxxv. 28.

Ver. 7. *And they appointed Kedesh in Galilee in Mount Naphtali; and Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and Kirjath-Arba (which is Hebron) in the mountain of Judah.*] It is commonly observed, that as these three cities were seated on high and eminent places, that they might be seen afar off; so they were at such a distance from each other, that all the country might more easily have the benefit of one or other of them. For Kedesh was in the north; and Hebron in the south; and Shechem between both. Thus they fulfilled the command of God, Deut. xix. 8.

Ver. 8. *And on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward.*] On the east of Jericho, in the land of the two tribes and half; which was almost as long as the land of Canaan, though not so broad.

They assigned Bezer in the wilderness, upon the plain, out of the tribe of Reuben; and Ramoth Gilead out of the tribe of Gad; and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.] These cities were assigned by Moses before he died, (Deut. iv. 43.) but had not the privilege till now. And it is observable, that if Bezer stood in a flat country, the other two, Ramoth and Golan, were in the high.

Ver. 9. *These were the cities that were appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.*] For the safety of all sorts of persons, as is manifest from Numb. xxxv. 15.

That whosoever killeth any person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.] It is observable, that all these cities belonged to the Levites; who, by their authority, might defend the man from unjust usage; and by their wisdom, direct the elders to judge aright concerning his cause; and also give him good instructions while he lived among them, until the death of the high-priest.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *THEN came near.*] After the cities of refuge were settled.

The heads of the fathers of the Levites.] So the princes of the several tribes (who divided the land, together with Joshua and Eleazar) are called, xiv. 1. and in the conclusion of this verse. And, therefore, the chief persons descended from Kohath, Gershon, and Merari (who were the fathers of the Levites), are here meant by the *heads of the fathers* of that tribe.

Unto Eleazar, and unto Joshua, and unto the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel.] Appointed by God to see the land divided, called the *princes* of the tribes, Numb. xxxiv. 18.

Ver. 2. *And they spake unto them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, The Lord commanded by the hand of Moses, to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof, for our cattle.*] This command is registered in Numb. xxxv. 2, &c. and is set down before the mention of cities of refuge (which are commanded in the following part of the chapter), though, it seems, that command was executed before this.

Ver. 3. *And the children of Israel gave unto the Levites out of their inheritance, at the commandment of the Lord, these cities and their suburbs.*] Not only Joshua, Eleazar, and the princes, but all the people of Israel acknowledged this obligation, which God had laid upon them; and accordingly these words import, that the people separated so many cities as he commanded by Moses (which were to be forty and eight, Numb. xxxv. 7.) for the habitation of the Levites. Which cities are here named, and distributed among them in this chapter.

Ver. 4. *And the lot came out for the family of the Kohathites.*] After the cities were set out, which should belong to them, then they were divided by lot among the several families of the Levites; as the whole land was among the tribes. And the first lot came out for the noblest family in the tribe of Levi; for Moses and Aaron were descended from Kohath.

And the children of Aaron the priest, which were of the Levites.] The family of Aaron being priests, were the principal among the Levites; and therefore were first and very honourably provided for.

Had by lot out of the tribe of Judah, and out of the tribe of Simeon, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen cities.] It was by a special providence, that the share which fell to the priests was in those tribes that were nearest to the city; which God intended should be the fixed place of his worship and service in future times; that the priests might be ready to give their attendance there, without much trouble.

Ver. 5. *And the rest of the children of Kohath.*] All his descendants were not *priests*, but Aaron and his family alone; the rest were bare Levites.

Had by lot, out of the families of the tribe of Ephraim, and out of the tribe of Dan, and out of the half tribe of Manasseh, ten cities.] These three tribes were nearest to the three forementioned; so that the Kohathites were not far separated one from another.

Ver. 6. *And the children of Gershon had by lot, out of the families of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.*] Among the sons of Levi, Gershon is mentioned as the eldest, Exod. vi. 16. Numb. iii. 17. but the lot came up first to the children of Kohath, the priests being descended from him.

Ver. 7. *And the children of Merari, by their families, had out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.*] This is only a general account of the tribes in which their several lots fell, and of the number of cities bestowed on their several families.

Ver. 8. *And the children of Israel gave by lot unto the Levites these cities with their suburbs.*] The children of Israel, as I said before, gave them; and the lot divided them.

As the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.] Who ordered both how many cities they should have, and how large the suburbs of them should be. (See Numb. xxxiv. 3, 4.)

Ver. 9. *And they gave out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, these cities which are mentioned by name.*] Here now follows a particular account of the names of those cities, which were said before in general to have been given out of these two tribes. Which are put together, because the lot of Simeon was taken out of the lot of Judah.

Ver. 10. *Which the children of Aaron, being of the family of the Kohathites,* &c.] One of the families of the Kohathites, and the eldest of them; for they descended from Amram, the eldest son of Kohath. (Exod. vi. 18. Numb. iii. 19.)

For theirs was the first lot.] They had the honour to be first provided for, as was said before, ver. 4.

Ver. 11. *And they.*] That is, Eleazar, Joshua, and the princes.

Gave them the city of Arba, the father of Anak, which is Hebron, in the hill-country of Judah, &c.] See of this city, xiv. 15. xv. 13.

Ver. 12. *But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof,*

gave they to Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, for his possession.] The priests had only the city and suburbs, which were their possession, as much as the fields and villages were Caleb's, on whom they were bestowed before, (xiv. 13, &c.)

Ver. 13. *Thus they gave to the children of Aaron the priest, Hebron with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer.*] It was given them with this condition, that they who slew a man unawares should be entertained here, and have a place given them to live securely among them, (xx. 4.)

And Libnah with her suburbs.] This is to be understood to belong to them no otherwise than Hebron did, unto which they had no right beyond the city and suburbs: and, therefore, the fields and the villages of Libnah they had nothing to do withal; and the same is to be noted of all the following cities of the priests.

Ver. 14. *And Jattir with her suburbs, and Eshtemoa with her suburbs.*] These are mentioned as belonging to Judah, xv. 48. 50.

Ver. 15. *And Holon with her suburbs.*] Called Helin, 1 Chron. vi. 56.

And Debir with her suburbs.] See xv. 15.

Ver. 16. *And Ain with her suburbs.*] A city in the tribe of Simeon, (xix. 17.) but taken out of Judah, (xv. 32.)

And Juttah with her suburbs.] See xv. 55.

And Beth-shemesh with her suburbs.] Unto which city the providence of God directed the kine, which drew the cart wherein the Philistines put the ark when they sent it home, there being a great many priests in it, to receive it with due care and reverence, (1 Sam. vi. 12, 13.)

Nine cities out of these two tribes.] For the tribe of Judah was very large; and the command of God was, that *from them which had many cities they should give many,* (Numb. xxxv. 8.)

Ver. 17. *And out of the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with her suburbs, Geba with her suburbs.*] See xviii. 24, 25.

Ver. 18. *Anathoth with her suburbs.*] The city of the prophet Jeremiah, who was a priest, (Jer. i. 1.)

And Almon with her suburbs.] Called Alemeth, in 1 Chron. vi. 60. For there were greater alterations than this made, by length of time, in the names of places.

Four cities.] Which were a great many out of so small a tribe; but the soil of it, as I observed before, was very rich.

Ver. 19. *All the cities of the children of Aaron the priests, were thirteen cities with their suburbs.*] As was said, ver. 4.

Ver. 20. *And the families of the children of Kohath, the Levites which remained of the children of Kohath.*] Who were mere Levites and not priests.

Even they had the cities of their lot out of the tribe of Ephraim.] Part of them were planted there, and part of them in two other tribes, as it follows, ver. 23, &c.

Ver. 21. *For they gave them Shechem with her suburbs, in Mount Ephraim, to be a city of refuge for the slayer.*] See xx. 7.

And Gezer with her suburbs.] See xvi. 3. 10.

Ver. 22. *And Kibzaim with her suburbs.*] Which is called Jokmeam in 1 Chron. vi. 68.

And Beth-horon with her suburbs.] We read of both the Beth-horons in the description of this tribe, the upper and the nether, xvi. 3. 5. the first of which seems to be here meant.

Ver. 23. *And out of the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with her suburbs; Gibbethon with her suburbs.*

Ver. 24. *Ajalon with her suburbs, Gath-rimmon with her suburbs: four cities.*] The four cities mentioned in these two verses we find before in this tribe, xix. 42. 44, 45.

Ver. 25. *And out of half of the tribe of Manasseh.*] That half of it which was settled in Canaan.

Taanach with her suburbs.] See xvii. 11.

And Gath-rimmon with her suburbs.] In 1 Chron. vi. 70. these two cities are called Aner and Bileam; so much were names changed in a long tract of time. Or, they being dispossessed of the two cities here mentioned, by the invasions of their enemies (who perhaps demolished them), these two others were given in lieu of them.

Two cities.] Which was a just proportion to the other whole tribes, who gave four.

Ver. 26. *All the cities were ten, with their suburbs, for the families of the children of Kohath that remained.*] Who were not of the children of Aaron, the priests, (ver. 5.)

Ver. 27. *And unto the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, out of the other half tribe of Manasseh.*] Which had their inheritance on the other side of Jordan.

Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer.] See xx. 8. From whence the neighbouring country was called Gaulonitis.

And Beeshterah with her suburbs.] Called Ashtaroth in 1 Chron. vi. 71. by a very light change, only leaving out the first letter.

Two cities.] The same number that was given out of the other half of this tribe, (ver. 25.)

Ver. 28. *Out of the tribe of Issachar, Kishon with her suburbs.*] See xix. 20. Called Kedesh, 1 Chron. vi. 72.

And Dabareh with her suburbs.] Not mentioned before in this book, but in 1 Chron. vi. 72.

Ver. 29. *And Jarmuth.*] Called Ramoth, 1 Chron. vi. 73.

And En-gannim.] See chap. xix. 21. called Anem, 1 Chron. vi. 73.

Ver. 30. *And out of the tribe of Asher, Mishal with her suburbs.*] Called Misheal, xix. 26. and Mashal, 1 Chron. vi. 74.

And Abdon.] Mentioned in that place in the Chronicles; but not in the nineteenth chapter of this book. (See ver. 31. of that chapter.)

Ver. 31. *Helkath with her suburbs.*] See xix. 25. Called Hukok, 1 Chron. vi. 75.

And Rehob.] Mentioned there, and Josh. xix. 28.

Ver. 32. *And out of the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in Galilee, to be a city of refuge for the slayer.*] See xx. 7.

And Hammoth-dor with her suburbs.] Called simply Hammath, xix. 35. and Hammon, 1 Chron. vi. 76.

And Kartan with her suburbs.] Called Kirjathaim in 1 Chron. vi. 76.

Three cities.] This being a smaller territory, it seems, than the rest of the tribes forementioned, who gave four.

Ver. 33. *All the cities of the Gershonites, according to their families, were thirteen cities with their suburbs.*] As was said before, ver. 6.

Ver. 34. *And unto the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites.*] The remaining families of the Levites; for there were three heads of them; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

Out of the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with her suburbs, and Kartah with her suburbs.] Of the former, see xix. 11. and of the latter, ver. 16.

Ver. 35. *Dimnah with her suburbs, Nahallal with her suburbs.*] See xix. 15, 16.

Four cities.] There are but two mentioned, 1 Chron. vi. 77. with quite different names; the other two, it seems, being lost before that time.

Ver. 36. *And out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with her suburbs.*] Which was one of the cities of refuge, (xx. 8.) though not here mentioned, as the rest are in the foregoing part of this chapter; and in ver. 38.

And Jahazah with her suburbs.] These, and the two cities in the following verse, Kedemoth and Mephaath, are mentioned as cities in this tribe, xiii. 18. And so they are in 1 Chron. vi. 78, 79, as Levitical cities.

Ver. 37. *Kedemoth with her suburbs,* &c.] Some have urged against the integrity of the Hebrew text, that this and the foregoing verse are not to be found in some ancient copies of the Bible; and, indeed, the Masorites acknowledge as much. But it is evident that they are found in copies of very great antiquity; and the context shews, that they ought to be here; as Bishop Walton observes in his Considerator Considered, chap. 6. sect. 14. And Hottinger also (who answers this cavil more largely) observes, that they are in a most accurate MS. of the Duke of Rohan's, written 1495. (See his Thesaurus Philolog. lib. i. cap. 2. quæst. 4. p. 181, &c.) The Masorites, who take notice of this omission, acknowledge, in the margin of this verse, that it was to be found in several copies.

Ver. 38. *And out of the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer.*] See xx. 8.

And Mahanaim with her suburbs.] This city was made by Abner the royal seat for Ish-bosheth, Βασίλειον ἐποίησε, as Josephus speaks, lib. vii. Antiq. cap. 1.

Ver. 39. *Heshbon with her suburbs, Jazer with her suburbs: four cities in all.*] These, with the foregoing, are mentioned 1 Chron. vi. 80, 81.

Ver. 40. *So all the cities for the children of Merari,* &c. *were by their lot twelve cities.*] As was said in general before, ver. 7.

Ver. 41. *All the cities of the Levites, within the possession of the children of Israel, were forty and eight cities with their suburbs.*] So God ordered by Moses, Numb. xxxv. 7. And it is a demonstration that Moses was divinely inspired to make such an appointment; before they knew whether, without straitening the other tribes, they could afford so many cities to the Levites. For when Joshua and Caleb went up to search the land (with the rest, mentioned Numb. xiii.) they could have no opportunity to take the dimensions of the country; whereby Moses might know there would be room enough to allow the Levites so large a proportion as this; but he was directed to it by a Divine foreknowledge.

Ver. 42. *These cities were every one of them with their suburbs round about them.*] *viz.* Two thousand cubits on every side, round the city, as is ordered Numb. xxxv. 5. Which must be owned to be a great proportion for this tribe; which was the smallest of them all. But God would have an ample provision made for his ministers; and they had none of the land belonging to these cities, as was before observed, but only room for themselves, and for their cattle.

Thus were all these cities.] Disposed and settled according to the Divine commandment. Six of which were cities of refuge; and the other forty-two had the same privileges, if the inhabitants pleased, and at the cost of those that fled thither for safety. (See upon Numb. xxxv. 6.)

Ver. 43. *And God gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers.*] He gave them a right to the whole country (which was distributed among them, as he appointed, by a lot which he ordered and directed), and he gave them the actual possession and enjoyment of the greatest part of it; and he gave them power to subdue the rest (if they continued obedient to him) as soon as it was convenient. Which was exactly according to his promise and oath made to them; for they not being numerous enough to people the whole country, at their first coming into it, he never intended to expel all the old inhabitants at once, but by degrees; as we read expressly, Exod. xxiii. 29, 30.

And they possessed it, and dwelt therein.] Went every man to his lot, and peopled the country, as far as at present they were able.

Ver. 44. *And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers.*] None molested them in their possessions; but they ploughed, and sowed, and reaped, &c. without any disturbance.

And there stood not a man of all their enemies before them.] For whosoever had opposed them, were overthrown and destroyed by them; and, as it follows,

The Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand.] Which is not to be understood, as if all the people of Canaan were absolutely under their power; but that, as long as Joshua lived, not a man appeared to fight with them, but was delivered up unto them.

Ver. 45. *There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.*] Which they themselves (he tells them afterward, xxiii. 14.) knew very well, and could not but confess. But it must be understood according to the explication of ver. 43. For the time of fulfilling some part of his promise was not come; and the completing of what was begun depended upon their obedience to him. "But (as Conradus Pellicanus here admonishes) we are taught by this the truth of the Divine promises; and it ought to establish the belief of the faithful, that it do not fluctuate; though the promises of God seem to us to be fulfilled very slowly."

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *AND Joshua called the Reubenites, and Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.*] Who came as auxiliaries to their brethren when they passed over Jordan; as they had engaged to do, when they received their inheritance on the other side of it, (i. 12—14, &c.)

Ver. 2. *And said unto them, Ye have kept all that Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you; and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you.*] Numb. xxxii. 20, &c. Deut. iii. 18, &c. In this and the following verses, he commends them for their obedience unto God and unto him; and for their fidelity to their promises; and their constancy and patience in their piety to God, and love to their brethren.

Ver. 3. *Ye have not left your brethren these many days*

unto this day.] Seven years (some think as many more) they had continued in their service; as long as the war lasted with the Canaanites; yea, till they had seen their brethren settled in the lots fallen to them.

But have kept the charge of the commandment of the Lord your God.] During which time they never refused what was expected from them for the help of their brethren. (See xi. 18. xiv. 10.) This was a great proof of their patient obedience, in staying so long from their wives and children.

Ver. 4. *And now the Lord your God hath given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them.*] Which he had done for them before, i. 13.

Now therefore return to your tents.] So he calls their houses, because this was the common word used for a long time in the wilderness, to signify a habitation.

And unto the land of your possession, which Moses, the servant of the Lord, gave you on the other side Jordan.] It was but reasonable and just that they should go and enjoy what God had given them, now their brethren were in a quiet possession of their portion; and that their fidelity in performing their promise, should be rewarded with the like, in dismissing them, when they had done their business. For they engaged to serve no longer, than till they had driven the Canaanites out of their country, (Numb. xxxii. 21.)

Ver. 5. *But take diligent heed to do the commandment of the law, which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you.*] That is, to observe all his precepts (as they had done this of aiding their brethren), and for that end, preserve in mind all that God had done for them. (See Deut. iv. 9.)

To love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul.] Especially to worship the Lord alone with sincere affection; which Moses inculcated above all things, before he left them, (Deut. vi. 5. 13, 14. x. 12. xi. 13. 22. xx. 9. xxx. 6. 20.)

Ver. 6. *So Joshua blessed them, and sent them away.*] He not only praised and commended them; but dismissed them with a solemn prayer to God for his blessing upon them. And he seems first to have dismissed with his blessing the Reubenites and Gadites; and then to have blessed the Manassites by themselves.

And they went unto their tent.] In order to pack up their goods, and make themselves ready for their departure.

Ver. 7. *Now, to the one half of the tribe of Manasseh, Moses had given possession in Bashan; but unto the other half thereof gave Joshua among their brethren on this side Jordan westward.*] This is repeated to shew why he mentioned only half the tribe of Manasseh, ver. 1. and to introduce what follows.

And when Joshua had sent them away also unto their tents.] As he had done the Reubenites and Gadites.

Then he blessed them.] This seems to signify that he gave a peculiar blessing to the Manassites; that is, rewarded their services, by some present which he made them: for so the word *blessing* (I observed before) sometimes signifies, (2 Kings v. 15.) And he did this the rather, because the Manassites were near of kin to the children of Ephraim (of which tribe he himself was), and were now to be separated from the rest of their brethren in Canaan.

Ver. 8. *And he spake unto them, saying.*] This speech seems to be directed to the Reubenites and Gadites, as well as to the Manassites; though they had a peculiar concern in it.

Return with much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle, and with silver, and with gold, &c.] As much as to say, Part with your brethren contentedly and well-pleased; laden with the spoils which you have got in the wars against the people of Canaan. For they had their share in the prey, as well as the other seven tribes and half; and carried it away to their own country.

Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren.] He orders them, when they came home, to let those that stayed on the other side Jordan, to defend their wives, children, and cattle, to have a share in the spoil which they had gotten. For this was thought an equal thing by God himself in the war they had with the Midianites, before they came over Jordan; when twelve thousand went out to fight; who had one half of the spoil; the other half being divided among all the congregation that stayed at home, (Numb. xxxi. 27.) And it is very reasonable to think, that now the same proportion was observed; the forty thousand who went to help their brethren in the war, having one half of the spoil; and their brethren who stayed to guard their possession, the other half: so that the warriors had the far greater share, as there was reason; because they had hazarded their lives in the enterprise. But in David's time it was made a law, that they who went to fight, and they that stayed to guard the stuff, should have an equal share in the prey, (1 Sam. xxx. 24, 25. see Gen xiv. *ult.*)

Ver. 9. *And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go into the country of Gilead,* &c.] This shews that he gave them all his blessing in Shiloh, where the sanctuary was; and sent them from thence, under the Divine protection, to their own country: which is here called *the country of Gilead,* because that was an eminent part of their country, divided between the children of Gad and Manasseh; and here comprehends all the rest of the land where the Reubenites lived.

Ver. 10. *And when they came to the borders of Jordan.*] Or, *they came* (for the word *when* is not in the Hebrew) unto the banks of that river.

Which are in the land of Canaan.] This seems to import that they built the altar, mentioned in the end of the verse, before they went over Jordan, in the land of Canaan. Which is not at all likely; for it would not have answered their intention: which was to shew, that Jordan did not make such a separation between them and their brethren, but that they were one people with those in Canaan; where the altar of God was in Shiloh. Therefore I take this to be a short manner of speech; signifying, that they came to the borders of Jordan in the land of Canaan; and passed over into their own country on the other side of the river. And so the Hebrew word *Gelilath* (which we translate *borders*) seems to signify, a certain place near Jordan, to which they came. The Vulgar Latin translates it *heaps;* the LXX. in the Vatican copy, retains the word Γαλααδ (or Γαλιλὼθ, as other copies more truly have it), taking it for some noted place, which was near to their passage over Jordan.

The children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, built there an altar by Jordan.] The word *there* hath made it thought that they built this altar in the land of Canaan beforementioned; but the particle *sham* rela tes to time as well as place, and may be translated *then* as well as *there*. Examples of which there are in Judg. v. 21. Prov. viii. 27. compared with ver. 30. Eccles. iii. 17. and most plainly, Isa. xlviii. 16. And thus it is to be here interpreted, that, before they went any farther, they stayed by Jordan till they had built this altar on the borders of their own country: for so the next verse teaches us to expound it, and will admit of no other sense; where it is said, they had "built an altar over against the land of Canaan."

A great altar to see to.] Which made a great show, being very high and conspicuous, that it might be seen afar off. For being built, not by a private person, but by the whole body of a great people, they thought they could not make it too stately and magnificent. And herein it differed so much from the altar made by Moses, that they thought, perhaps, it would administer the less occasion to their brethren to suspect it was intended for sacrifice.

Ver. 11. *And the children of Israel.*] That were in the land of Canaan. This is an instance of such a short manner of speech as I take that in the foregoing verse to be; which must be made out by some such supplement as is there mentioned. For the Reubenites, Gadites, &c. were *the children of Israel*, as well as those settled in the land of Canaan.

Heard say.] This is an argument the altar was not built on their side of Jordan; for then they would have seen what they were doing, and hindered the building; whereas they heard nothing of it till it was built.

Behold, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, have built an altar.] By a common consent.

Over against the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, at the passage of the children of Israel.] Either there where they now passed over Jordan, or where they all passed over when they entered Canaan, or at the usual place where every body was wont to pass over, that they might take the more notice of it. And here also were the *Geliloth* beforementioned, like those on the other side, which seem to have been great banks cast up to keep Jordan from overflowing too far.

Ver. 12. *And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole congregation of the children of Israel.*] Not all the people of the land, but their elders and heads of their tribes, who, in the foregoing books, are often called by the name of *colledath (all the congregation)*. See Numb. xxvii. 2. xxxii. 2. and chap. xviii. of this book, ver. 1.

Gathered themselves together at Shiloh.] It seems they had been separated, being gone to settle in their several cities.

To go to war against them.] To consult about it. For they imagined them to be apostates from their religion, which, as it required them to worship the Lord alone, and no other god, so at no other place but that which he himself had chosen. Where he allowed but one altar, as there was but one God. (See Deut. xii. 5, 6. 11. 13. 18. 26, 27. xiii. 12, &c.) That altar, also, where he commanded sacrifices to be offered, was to be but three cubits high, (Exod. xxvii. 1.) so that they went not up to it by steps; (Exod. xx. 26.) whereas this was a high altar, like those among the heathens, who loved to sacrifice on high places (*i. e.* mountains), and also upon high and lofty altars, which advanced their sacrifices nearer heaven. And this, perhaps, was one thing that incensed the congregation now assembled, and made them think their brethren were lapsed to idolatry; either intending to worship other gods, or the God of Israel in an unlawful place and manner.

Ver. 13. *And the children of Israel sent unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead.*] Their zeal did not so transport them, but that they prudently considered it was fit to be rightly informed of the matter of fact; and, if any thing was amiss, to endeavour to set it right by counsel and arguments, before they betook themselves to arms: in order to which they sent the embassy here mentioned.

Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest.] A person of very eminent authority among them, and more likely to be received with due regard, (Numb. xxxi. 6.)

Ver. 14. *And with him ten princes, of each chief house a prince, throughout all the tribes of Israel.*] Which were nine and a half; so that a prince was chosen out of the half tribe of Manasseh, as well as out of the other nine.

And each one was a head of the house of their fathers among the thousands of Israel.] That is, they were *chiliarchs*, as the LXX. call them, and the chief among such *rulers of thousands* in the several tribes, (Exod. xviii. 21.)

Ver. 15. *And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh.*] Who, hearing of their coming, held a congregation, it is likely, of the chief persons among them, to receive their message.

Into the land of Gilead.] So he calls here, and ver. 13. the country of the two tribes and half; by the name of an eminent part of it, which is put for the whole, as I observed upon ver. 9.

And they spake unto them, saying.] Made the following speech in the assembly of the two tribes and half, by the mouth of Phinehas.

Ver. 16. *Thus saith the whole congregation of the Lord.*] The representatives of the whole people of Israel, in whose name this embassy was sent.

What trespass is this that you have committed against the Lord God of Israel.] They were not able to express the heinousness of it.

To turn away this day from following the Lord.] So soon after they had seen his wonderful works, and received such a charge from Joshua, as he gave them at their departure from Canaan, (ver. 5.)

In that you have built you an altar.] Which they supposed was for a sacrifice.

That you might rebel this day against the Lord?] Which was direct opposition to his express command, immediately after he gave them the law from Mount Sinai, (Exod. xx. 24. And see the places beforenamed upon ver. 12.)

Ver. 17. *Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed to this day.*] He instances in this, being himself an actor in the punishment of it, though it deserved still greater punishment. For that is the meaning of *we are not cleansed;* have not sufficiently suffered for that sin; there being some remaining (he feared) that were

infected with those idolatrous inclinations, whom God might justly cut off.

Although there was a plague in the congregation of the Lord.] Which destroyed twenty and four thousand, (see Numb. xxv. 9.)

Ver. 18. *But that you must turn away this day from following the Lord?*] Commit more sins of that nature. For, whether they intended to worship other gods, or to worship the God of Israel in a manner he did not allow, it was, in his esteem, idolatry.

And it will be, seeing you rebel to-day against the Lord.] It must be acknowledged, that they were a little too hasty in concluding their brethren to be rebels, before they had asked them for what purpose they had erected this altar, which should properly have been the first question; but their pious fear, lest God should be offended, made them immediately fall into this vehement expostulation.

That to-morrow.] That is, quickly, or speedily.

He will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel.] With you for committing this sin, and with us for not punishing it.

Ver. 19. *Notwithstanding.*] Or rather, *and now*, as the LXX. translate the Hebrew particle *veac*.

If the land of your possession be unclean.] They imagined the Reubenites, and Gadites, and Manassites, might take their land to be less holy for want of an altar, and such a token of the Divine presence, as there was in the tabernacle. This appears to be the sense by what follows: which our Mr. Mede carries something further, in his observations concerning the appropriation of some place for the worship of God: which so universally prevailed, from the beginning, that it was believed, in those elder times, that those countries and territories, wherein no place was set apart for God's worship, were unhallowed and unclean. This, he thinks, may be rightly gathered from these words. (See book ii. upon Eccles. v. 1. p. 433.)

Then pass ye over to the land of the possession of the Lord, wherein the Lord's tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us.] This expresses a wonderful zeal for God and the common good, wherewith they were at present possessed; which made them desire rather to give up some of their own land to them, than have them fall from their religion.

But rebel not against the Lord, nor rebel against us.] They desire them not to break the common bond that tied them to each other, as well as unto God, which was the same religion.

In building an altar, beside the altar of the Lord our God.] Which was, in effect, to forsake the Lord.

Ver. 20. *Did not Achan the son of Zerah.*] Descended from Zerah, (vii. 17, 18.)

Commit a trespass in an accursed thing.] This was a fresher instance than that of Baal-Peor, (ver. 17.)

And wrath fell upon all the congregation of Israel? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity.] See vii. 1, 2, &c. In this he explains what he said, ver. 18. that the whole congregation was in danger to fall under the Divine displeasure by their apostacy.

Ver. 21. *Then the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, answered and said unto the heads of the thousands of Israel.*] Some of the heads of their tribes made the following reply, in the name of all the rest.

Ver. 22. *The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods.*] In the Hebrew, *the God of gods, the Lord; the God of gods, the Lord.* Where there are three names of God, Elohim, and Jehovah; signifying, that they owned no other God but him whom their forefathers worshipped, by what name soever he was called; that God, who is infinitely above all creatures, the fountain of all other beings: and they double the expression of their devotion to him, that they might signify their earnestness and vehemency to purge themselves from the crime objected to them.

Some of the ancient Jews thought a great mystery is contained in these words: for the Midrasch Tillim upon the fiftieth Psalm (quoted by Mart. à Raymund, in his Pugio Fidei, par. iii. distinct. i. cap. 4.) thus discourses: "What did they see that they mention these words twice, *El, Elohim, Jehovah; El, Elohim, Jehovah?* They said, *God, God, Jehovah*, the first time, because by these the world was created; and they said, *God, God, Jehovah*, the second time, because by these the law was given." Where he plainly insinuates a plurality of persons, saying, *behen (by these)* the world was created, &c. and refers to the first words of Genesis, where it is said *Elohim* created in the beginning the heaven and the earth. No wonder then that Christians have been of the same opinion, and thought these three names denoted the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: as the author of the old Nitzacon (three hundred years before that of R. Lipman's) acknowledges, p. 59. Unto which he gives no answer, but only this, That these three belong to one God; which we also acknowledge.

He knoweth.] They appeal to Him who searcheth the hearts of men, and their most secret designs.

And Israel they shall know.] By seeing their constancy in the religion of their ancestors.

If it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord (save us not this day).] They turn their speech on a sudden (as is usual in great passion) unto God himself; desiring they may not live, but be immediately destroyed by him, if they intended either to throw off his worship and service, or to worship him any other way than according to his appointment.

Ver. 23. *That we have built us an altar to turn from following the Lord, or if to offer burnt-offerings thereon, or meat-offerings, or if to offer peace-offerings thereon, let the Lord himself requite it.*] That is, they desire God to punish it, (for so that phrase *requite it* signifies, Deut. xviii. 19.) if they intended to offer any sort of sacrifice whatsoever upon this altar; which they acknowledge had been to turn from their religion.

Ver. 24. *And if we have not rather done it for fear of this thing.*] The Hebrew word *deaga* (which we translate *fear*) signifies such anxiety in their mind, as gave them much trouble; till they thought of this way to give themselves ease.

Saying, In time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have you to do with the Lord God of Israel?] They were afraid a time might come when they should be looked upon as aliens, who had no right to come to the tabernacle, and the altar, to offer sacrifice there. The Targum hath it, *What have you to do with the Word of the Lord God of Israel?*

Ver. 25. *For the Lord hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben,* &c.] Divided us from you by the river Jordan.

Ye have no part in the Lord: so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the Lord.] Make them lose their religion (which is called the *fear of God*), by pretending they are none of the Lord's people. It was not likely, one would think, such a thing should happen; but they did not know what length of time, and their distance from them, might do, to make them forget their relation unto them, and unto God; their country being no part of the land of promise, as Canaan was. Here again the Targum hath it; *Ye have no part in the Word of the Lord.*

Ver. 26. *Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt-offering, or for sacrifice.*] They again disclaim that, before they give the true reason of what they had done.

Ver. 27. *But that it may be a witness between us and you, and our generations after us.*] For it had been an ancient way of preserving the remembrance of things, by raising such structures to testify to them, Gen. xxx. 48. and used afterward by Joshua himself, xxxiv. 27.

That we might do the service of the Lord before him with our burnt-offerings, &c.] Have the privilege to come and worship God at the tabernacle, by offering such sacrifices as the rest of the Israelites did.

That your children may not say unto our children, in time to come, Ye have no part in the Lord.] That they might not be thrust away from the altar when they brought their sacrifices, under a pretence that they were none of God's people, because they did not live in the land which he promised to their fathers. Here the Targum uses the same language again, *No part in the Word of the Lord.*

Ver. 28. *Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they shall so say to us, or to our generations in time to come, that we may say again.*] Have a reply ready, if such a thing as we fear should happen.

Behold, the pattern of the altar of the Lord which our fathers made.] Which they could not have exactly imitated, if they had not been acquainted with it, and worshipped God there with their brethren.

Not for burnt-offering, nor for sacrifice.] They thought this could not be too often repeated, that they might not be misunderstood.

But it is a witness between us and you.] A public testimony that we ought not to be excluded from the worship of God among you, being of the same communion with you.

Ver. 29. *God forbid that we should rebel against the Lord, and turn this day from following the Lord, to build an altar for burnt-offerings,* &c.] They utterly renounce all such intentions as they were suspected to have; protesting again most solemnly they meant not to rebel *against the Word of the Lord,* as the Targum again expresses it.

Ver. 30. *And when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation, and heads of the thousands of Israel which were with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben,* &c. *spake, it pleased them.*] They not only acquiesced in their answer, but were very glad to hear it.

Ver. 31. *And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said unto the children of Reuben,* &c.] He spake to them in the name of all his company.

This day we perceive that the Lord is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the Lord.] He thankfully acknowledges the gracious presence of God with them, in preserving the Reubenites, &c. from so great a sin, as they feared they had committed; and all the people of Israel from such heavy judgments as it would have deserved.

Now you have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the Lord.] Who would have punished them for this schism, if they had been guilty of it, and not censured for it. This whole verse runs thus in the Targum: "This day we perceive that the Schechinah (or Divine Majesty) is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the Word of the Lord; whereby you have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the Word of the Lord."

Ver. 32. *And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead,* &c.] Under Reuben and Gad the half tribe of Manasseh is included, both here and ver. 25. 32, 33. as under the *land of Gilead* is included the whole country of these tribes. The LXX. thought good to add here (and in all those verses) expressly, *and the half tribe of Manasseh;* though not in the Hebrew.

And brought them word again.] Informed them how they found things among their brethren.

Ver. 33. *And the thing pleased the children of Israel.*] They were satisfied in the account they gave them; and approved of what their brethren had done.

And they blessed God.] As Phinehas had done, that their brethren had not offended the Divine Majesty as they suspected.

And did not intend to go up against them in battle.] Laid aside that intention (which was in their mind, ver. 12.) and pursued it no further.

To destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and the children of Gad dwelt.] For so they thought they were bound to do by the command, Deut. xiii. 12, &c. which extended to a whole country, as well as a city.

Ver. 34. *And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, called the altar Ed.*] That is, *a witness;* for the reason following.

For it shall be a witness between us, that the Lord is God.] That we own no other God but Jehovah, and him only will we worship, as he hath commanded. So the LXX. ὅτι Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς αὐτῶν ἐστι, *that the Lord is their God.*

In all this whole relation from ver. 10. to the end of the chapter, there being no mention of Joshua, who is not once named, either as sending these ambassadors, or receiving the report which they brought back, some have thence entertained a conceit, that Joshua was dead before this happened; and consequently, that he could not be the author of this book. But it is manifest such persons have a great desire to weaken the authority of these holy books, or else they would not draw such consequences from such frivolous observations. For it is evident, that all this came to pass not long after Joshua had dismissed these tribes, with good counsel, and with his blessing: for they returning immediately after this to their own country, went no further than Jordan before they erected this altar; upon which those great persons went to expostulate with them, and heard their apology, and came back and reported it. All this is told in one continued and coherent history (as it were with one breath), without the least signification of any considerable time that passed between one part of it and the other. And the LXX. were so well satisfied of

this, that they took the answer of the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites to have been brought to Joshua; for they say he imposed the name of *Ed* upon the altar. So their words are in the Vatican edition, which is most common among us, Καὶ ἐπωνόμασεν ὁ Ιησοὺς τὸν βωμὸν, &c.

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, a long time after, that the Lord had given rest to Israel from all their enemies round about.*] Some take it to have been fourteen years after their conquest of the country, (xi. 23.) and seven years after the division of it. (See xiv. 10.)

That Joshua waxed old and stricken in age.] This was said of him before the land was divided, (xiii. 1.) and a portion thereof given unto him: where he built a city; which took up so much time, that probably he was now in the last year of his life.

Ver. 2. *And Joshua called for all Israel.*] Sent out a summons to them to come to him at Timnath-serah, where he lived, as the Jews will have it; but rather to Shiloh, where they might appear before God, as well as before him, and have the greater regard to his words.

And for their elders, &c.] The word *and* is not in the Hebrew text, and therefore these words are an explication of what he means by *all Israel:* not all the people (who could not, without great inconvenience, come thither, and could not all hear him if they did), but their elders; that is, the great Sanhedrin, as they were called in future times; and *for their heads,* that is of their tribes and families; and *for their judges,* who were settled in all the lesser cities; and *for their officers,* who attended upon the judges to execute their sentence.

And said unto them, I am old and stricken in age.] He would make them sensible that this might be the last time he should be able to speak to them, which might move them to give greater attention unto what he said.

Ver. 3. *And ye have seen.*] Or rather, *behold, ye have seen;* for so the particle *ve* (which we translate *and*) sometimes signifies: Gen. xxiv. 31. "Behold, I have prepared the house," &c.

All that the Lord hath done unto all these nations, because of you.] For your sake; that he might make room for you in their country, by expelling them out of it.

For the Lord your God is he that hath fought for you.] See chap. i. 9. xi. 8. 10. 42. xi. 6. The Targum here saith, (as in x. 42.) *The Lord your God, his Word fought for you.* (See xiv. 12.)

Ver. 4. *Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea westward.*] The meaning is, he had divided among them the whole land of Canaan, from Jordan in the east to the Mediterranean in the west; as well that part of the land which remained still unconquered, as that out of which they had expelled the ancient inhabitants.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord your God he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight,* &c.] This relates unto those who *remained* unsubdued (mentioned in the beginning of the foregoing verse), whom they should undoubtedly conquer and possess their country, if they adhered to God in faithful obedience, as he exhorts them in the following part of this chapter.

Ver. 6. *Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do.*] Or (as it may be translated), *by observing and doing.*

All that is written in the book of the law of Moses.] Which was the condition upon which God promised to continue them in the possession of this land. By this it is evident, that the book of the law of Moses was extant in those days, and that the people read it.

That ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left.] See upon Deut. v. 32.

Ver. 7. *That ye come not among these nations, these that remain amongst you.*] Have no familiarity with them, especially by marriage.

Neither make mention of the name of their gods.] With any sort of respect to them. (See Exod. xxiii. 13. and Deut. xii. 3.)

Nor cause to swear by them.] Not make a gentile swear by the name of his god; which was utterly unlawful, as Selden observes out of Maimonides in Avoda Zara. (See lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 13.) For this was to suppose they had knowledge of men's thoughts, and power to punish those that forsware themselves. And the forbidding this was also to secure them from making leagues and covenants with the gentiles, which they would not look upon as binding without an oath.

Neither serve them.] By offering sacrifices, or praying, or making vows to them, though never so secretly.

Nor bow yourselves to them.] As all inward reverence, so all outward respect likewise was forbidden to be paid to them, especially open and public acts of worship. Interpreters here observe a gradation, from familiarity with them to the most gross idolatry, in which their friendship with these people concluded.

Ver. 8. *But cleave unto the Lord your God, as you have done unto this day.*] A remarkable instance of which they had all lately given, when the nine tribes and half were so unanimously resolved to punish idolatry, with the extirpation of those that were guilty of it, (xxii. 33.) and the other also most zealously disclaimed all inclinations to it, (ver. 22. 29.)

Ver. 9. *For the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations, and strong.*] The seven nations of Canaan, who dwelt in strong cities, and brought mighty armies against them, with horses and chariots, and were some of them gigantic persons, (xi. 4. 22.)

But as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.] None that gave them battle; though from some of their strong cities they had not yet driven them. (See xxi. 44.)

Ver. 10. *One man of you shall chase a thousand.*] He gives them hope of a good success for the future, as they had hitherto. (Lev. xxvi. 8.)

For the Lord your God is he that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.] But he would not have them ascribe it to their own courage, but to the Divine power, (Deut. xxxii. 30.) Here again the Targum hath it, *the Word of the Lord,* &c. as ver. 3.

Ver. 11. *Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God.*] It highly, therefore, concerned them to keep close to the worship and service of God alone,

with sincere love to him; since all their happiness depended upon his favour to them; for that this is meant by *loving* God, appears from the following verse; and from Deut. vi. 4, 5. x. 12. xi. 22.

Ver. 12. *Else if you do in any wise go back.*] From God, and fall to idolatry.

And cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you.] Embrace their errors, as the Vulgar translates it; which they might easily do by making friendship with them, as the phrase properly signifies.

And shall make marriages with them.] Which was the effect of their familiarity with them.

And go in unto them, and they to you.] The same thing that was said before in other words, which only signify the consummation of marriage; which was strictly forbidden them, Exod. xxiii. 32. xxxiv. 12. 15, 16. Deut. vii. 3.

Ver. 13. *Know for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you.*] As he had hitherto done, and promised still to do, if they would be obedient, (ver. 8, 9.) The Targum saith, *The Word of the Lord will no more drive*, &c.

But they shall be snares and traps unto you.] Remain in the land to inveigle and seduce them into further impiety. (See Exod. xxxiv. 12. Deut. vii. 4. 16.)

And scourges in your sides.] Bring sore chastisements upon them; for this alludes to the lashes that were given offenders upon their sides, (Ecclus. xxx. 12. xlii. 5.)

And thorns in your eyes.] Most grievously afflict them. (See Numb. xxxiii. 55.)

Until ye perish from off this good land, which the Lord your God hath given you.] For, with the love and favour of God, they forfeited also their inheritance which he had bestowed on them.

Ver. 14. *Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth.*] Shall die shortly, as all men must one time or other; therefore hearken to the words of a dying man.

And ye know in all your hearts, and in all your souls.] Are all fully convinced.

That not one thing hath failed, of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you, &c.] See upon xxi. 45. And God was as good as his word ever after, as Solomon acknowledges, 1 Kings viii. 56.

Ver. 15. *Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you which the Lord your God promised you, so shall the Lord.*] When he ceased to be *their God.*

Bring upon you all evil things, &c.] According to what Moses had predicted at large, Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii. In my annotations upon which last chapter, I have demonstrated, that not one thing hath failed of all the threatenings there mentioned, but all literally fulfilled to a tittle: for God's faithfulness is no less visible in fulfilling his threatenings than his promises.

Ver. 16. *When ye have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods*, &c.] This was the principal thing in the covenant, that they should have no other gods but him alone; as I have observed from a great number of places in the book of Deuteronomy.

Then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you; and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.] See Deut. xxviii. 20.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel.*] It is likely that Joshua, living longer than he expected when he made the foregoing speech to them, called the people together once more, to give them good advice before he died; as Moses made a great many speeches to them (I observed upon the book of Deuteronomy) before his departure from them: or, perhaps, it was the usual custom of Joshua to take occasion often to call them together, and put them in mind of their duty. And these two exhortations, which he made to them in the latter end of his life, he thought fit to record.

To Shechem.] Some will have this place to be the same with Shiloh, called here Shechem, because it was in the country of Shechem, and not far from it. The LXX. also call it Σηλὼ, both here and ver. 25. It is plain also, by the latter end of the verse, that they assembled there where God dwelt, which was in Shiloh: yet all this is not sufficient to make us think they were not summoned to the city called Shechem: for there is no good reason for calling Shiloh by this name, it being (as St. Jerome saith) ten miles from Shechem: and all other copies of the LXX. but the Vatican, having Συχὲμ, not Σηλώ. And as for their appearing before God at this place, I shall give an account of it in the end of this verse; and now only say, that it is likely Joshua, who was the supreme governor of God's people, being old and infirm, caused the ark, for this time, to be brought to Shechem, being near to him, that he might renew the covenant with the people in that place where Abraham first settled, when he came into the land of Canaan, and where he built an altar, and God established his covenant with him, (Gen. xii. 6, 7.) and where the patriarchs were buried, (Acts vii. 15, 16.) and where he was about to lay the bones of Joseph (ver. 32. of this chapter), and where the Israelites, at their first entrance into Canaan, renewed their covenant with God, (Josh. viii. 30, &c.) For Ebal and Gerzim were hard by Shechem.

And called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers.] The same persons mentioned xxiii. 2. Which places give us a distinct account of the persons concerned in the government of the Israelites; as Const. L'Empereur observes, in his annotations upon Bertram de Repub. Judaica, p. 362. 395, 396.

And they presented themselves before God.] At his tabernacle; which was, as I said, for the present brought hither. For it is plain, as Cornel. Bertram observes, (L. de Republ. Judaica, cap. 15. p. 249.) the kings or chief rulers of Israel had a power to carry the ark from the place of its constant residence when there was a great occasion for it, (1 Sam. iv. 3, 4. 2 Sam. xv. 24.) And now, at this great assembly of the whole nation by their representatives, there was a just reason for its being brought hither (seeing Joshua could not conveniently, by reason of his great old age, go to Shiloh), that it might be a more solemn meeting, being held in the presence of God. Mr. Mede hath another notion of this matter; for he thinks that there was a *proseucha*, or *praying-place*, erected by the Israelites (at least by the Ephraimites, in whose lot Shechem was) after they had subdued the country, that they might resort hither to call upon God, when they were not able to go as far as

the tabernacle. Many such places he makes account there were; of which see more on ver. 26.

Ver. 2. *And Joshua said unto all the people.*] That were there present, *viz.* the elders, heads, judges, and officers, mentioned in the foregoing verse, who were to report his words to all the people.

Thus saith the Lord God of Israel.] This is an argument that Joshua spake all that follows by a Divine impulse; for he begins his speech in the solemn form used by the prophets *(thus saith the Lord)* and introduces God himself speaking in his own person. From whence it may be inferred he was a prophet, as well as the ruler of God's people.

Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood.] That is, of the river Euphrates.

In old time.] A long time before they came from Ur of the Chaldees into Haran, (Gen. xi. 28. 31.)

Even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor.] These were Terah's two eldest sons, (Gen. xi. 26.)

And they served other gods.] All agree that Terah was an idolater living in that country, from whence, as many think, idolatry first came, (Gen. xxxi. 19.) The Jews, in Schalsch. Hakkabala, say he was a priest: see Hottinger in his Smegma Orientale, cap. 8. p. 290. Others of them say, he was a statuary, who made images of several materials, λέγων τούτους εἶναι θεούς, *saying, These were gods;* as Suidas speaks, who, together with Epiphanius, is of this opinion. (See Bochartus, in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 5.) Abraham himself also, most agree, was bred up in the same idolatry; though some few deny it; as Hottinger observes in the same place; where he alleges the words of Maimonides, who saith, He was converted to the worship of the Creator of all, in the forty-eighth year of his age; and that his father Terah also repented, and worshipped the true and only God. (See upon Gen. xi. 31.)

Ver. 3. *And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood.*] From that idolatrous country where he was born and educated. Which is mentioned as a singular obligation upon the Israelites to adhere unto God, who singled out the father of their families, so many ages ago, to be his worshipper. This Maimonides, having occasion to mention these words of Joshua, represents in very pathetical expressions: "How great is the benefit (saith he) that we receive by these precepts, which have freed us from such a grand error in which our father was educated, and converted us to the true belief of God? by teaching us that he created all things, and that he is to be worshipped, and loved, and feared, and he only; and that there is no great labour required to do his will, but only the love and fear of him, in which two all his worship is perfected," &c. (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 29.)

And led him.] From Charran, after his father's death.

Throughout all the land of Canaan.] Till he came to Shechem (where the Israelites now were assembled), and so to Beth-el; and so on still towards the south of the land of Canaan, (Gen. xii. 6. 8, 9.)

And multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.] In order to the fulfilling of his promise, (Gen. xv. 5.) he bestowed a son upon him, when he was a hundred years old, (Gen. xxi. 1, 2, &c.)

Ver. 4. *And I gave unto Isaac, Jacob and Esau.*] Who had a very numerous issue, (Gen. xxv. 24, &c.)

And I gave unto Esau, Mount Seir to possess it.] He and his brother being grown so rich, and their cattle so increased, that there was not room for them both in the land of Canaan, where they sojourned, (Gen. xxxvi. 6—8.)

And Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.] Though Esau left the land of Canaan entirely to him, yet the time was not come when God intended to plant his posterity in it; but they were forced to go down into Egypt, where they suffered a cruel bondage, (Gen. xlvi. 6. Exod. i. 11, &c.) So the LXX. explain it.

Ver. 5. *I sent Moses also, and Aaron.*] And when they were multiplied exceedingly, (Exod. i. 7. 14. 20.) these two great persons were sent to deliver them from that bondage, (Exod. iii. 10. iv. 14.)

And I plagued Egypt, according to that I did amongst them.] Smote it with those signs (as the LXX. explain it) which are related in that book of Exodus.

And afterward I brought you out.] By those wonderful plagues they were, at last, constrained to let the Israelites depart, as they desired, (Exod. xii. 31, &c.)

Ver. 6. *And I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came unto the sea.*] When he had brought them out (as is related Exod. xii. 40.) they were led by God through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea, (Exod. xiii. 18.) by which they encamped, and were in very great straits, (xiv. 9.)

And the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen into the Red Sea.] Imagining them to be in such difficulties, that they could not escape out of their hand, (Exod. xiv. 3.)

Ver. 7. *And when they cried unto the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians.*] So that when they had overtaken them, they could not see where they were, (Exod. xiv. 10. 19, 20.)

And brought the sea upon them, and covered them.] Insomuch, that they marched after them into the sea, where they were overwhelmed, (Exod. xiv. 27, 28.)

And your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt.] Or, *upon the Egyptians.* He appeals to them for the truth of this, who had seen them lie dead upon the sea-shore, (Exod. xiv. 30, 31.) For their elders, to whom he now speaks, (ver. 1.) were all then there: and now not only men of great dignity, but (many of them at least) of great age.

And ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.] Forty years, Numb. xiv. 33. where he gave them a law, and fed them miraculously, &c.

Ver. 8. *And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan.*] Towards the latter end of that time, (Numb. xxi. 20, 21.)

And they fought with you, and I gave them into your hand, &c.] See there, ver. 23, 24. 33, &c.

Ver. 9. *Then Balak, the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose, and warred against Israel.*] He did not actually draw out his forces, and fall upon them, but he prepared them and made them ready, with an intention to drive them from his coast, if Balaam could have disabled them by his curses; which sufficiently appears from Numb. xxii. 11. David Camius therefore notes pertinently, "the design or contrivance is reputed the work itself."

And sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you.] See Numb. xxii. 5, 6, &c.

Ver. 10. *But the Lord would not hearken unto Balaam.*]

Who had a great inclination to do what Balak desired; and one would think by this, begged of God to give him leave to use his arts to do the Israelites mischief: and when this was denied him, yet obtaining licence to go to the king of Moab, he went with these intentions, and with hope he might prevail with God to suffer him to prosecute his design, (Numb. xxii. 32.)

Therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand.] He all along pronounced nothing but blessings on them, instead of curses, notwithstanding all the attempts that were made to the contrary, Numb. xxiii. and xxiv. Which was to be ascribed to the overruling power of God, who hindered him from hurting them.

Ver. 11. *And ye went over Jordan.*] Having vanquished the two kings of the Amorites on the other side of it, and got quit of all other enemies (the Moabites and Midianites), God in a wonderful manner brought them into Canaan, by drying up the river Jordan to give them a passage over it.

And came unto Jericho.] Which was the first place they besieged, being the nearest city to Jordan.

And the men of Jericho fought against you.] We do not read of any sallies they made upon the Israelites; but they shutting their gates, to defend the city against them, it is likely, flung stones from their wall upon them.

The Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.] After which, it appears by this book, that they fought with all the seven nations of Canaan; who engaged them in several bodies, and at several times: which was done so lately, that there was no need he should repeat all the particulars mentioned in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth chapters. But by the division of their land among the Israelites, it was very well known to them, that (as this verse concludes) *God had delivered them into their hands.* It is observable, that the Girgashites are here particularly mentioned, as fighting against Israel with the rest of the seven nations; which makes Grotius's observation doubtful, of their surrender at Joshua's first summons; (see xvi. 10.) but if that be not true, it is manifest some of them remained unsubdued, and had a settlement in Canaan in our Saviour's days: when we read of the country of the Gergesens, the inhabitants of which were not Jews, as appears by their breeding swine. (See Constant. L'Empereur in his annotations on Bava-kama, p. 180.)

Ver. 12. *And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out from before you.*] This may signify, either that before the Israelites came into those parts, God sent hornets, which so infested them, that many of them were forced to leave their country, and flee into other places; or, that when they came to give them battle, these hornets made such assaults upon them, as facilitated the victory. This God promised in Exod. xxiii. 27, 28. Deut. vii. 20. and here Joshua remembers how true he was to his word. The Book of Wisdom calls them προδρόμους, the *forerunners* of God's host; and Kimchi saith, they flew in the eyes of the Canaanites, and made them so blind, that they could not see to fight.

Even the two kings of the Amorites.] Sihon and Og, whose country was first infested with them; and afterward the kings of Canaan, and their people, felt their fury: for this is a short expression, like that which I observed xxii. 10.

But not with thy sword, or with thy bow.] These swarms of hornets, it seems, did greater execution than the armies of the Israelites. We do not read of their assaulting the Canaanites in any of the battles that Joshua fought with them; for he did not think fit to mention it particularly in the foregoing account of his victory, but now in general, when he was to sum up all the mercies of God to them.

Ver. 13. *And I have given you a land for which you did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them.*] As Joshua had observed before, (xi. 13.)

Of the vineyards and olive-yards which ye planted not do ye eat.] According to his promise, Deut. vi. 10, 11.

Ver. 14. *Now therefore fear the Lord.*] The fear of God commonly signifies his worship and service, unto which he exhorts them in the following words: which seem to relate to all outward acts of worship; as this to the inward reverence they owed to him in their minds, as the only God.

And serve him in sincerity and truth.] Worship no other God together with him, nor mix any idolatrous rites with those prescribed by him; but serve him constantly and purely according to his law, *which is the truth,* (Psal. cxix. 142.)

And put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood.] See ver. 2. This intimates, that there were now some idolaters among them, though secretly in private, and not openly; for they had lately expressed so unanimously such a zeal against any appearance of idolatry, that one cannot think there was any known worshipper of other gods now in the nation.

And in Egypt.] Where they began to be corrupted in their religion, as is often suggested by the prophet Ezekiel, xx. 6—8. 18. xxiii. 3. 8. 19. 21. 27.

And serve ye the Lord.] He repeats it again, as a thing of the greatest moment, that they should worship the Lord alone.

Ver. 15. *And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve.*] He could not think they would turn atheists, and have no God at all; and he was unwilling to suppose that they would prefer any other god to him, who had obliged them by such benefits as are beforementioned: which he expresses in this rhetorical form of speech; which is as much as if he had said, If you like not the Lord's service, tell me whom ye will serve? Where do you hope to find a God comparable to him?

Whether the gods that your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood.] That had some colour for it, because of its antiquity; but was condemned by Abraham their father, who forsook that religion, and was blessed for it by God with the inheritance he had now given them in the land of Canaan.

Or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell.] That was so absurd, as to need no confutation; for those gods could not defend their servants that worshipped them.

But as for me, I and my house, we will serve the Lord.] He declares his firm resolution (let them take what course they pleased), together with his whole family (as far as he could oblige them), to worship the Lord alone.

Ver. 16. *And the people answered and said.*] All the elders and others there present, and all those to whom they reported what Joshua had said, made this answer.

God forbid that we should forsake the Lord.] The He-

brew word *Chalila* (which we translate *God forbid)* imports a great abhorrence and abomination of that which is mentioned with it.

To serve other gods.] Which they now looked upon as the greatest madness.

Ver. 17. *For the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight,* &c.] They gave such powerful reasons why they should serve none but the Lord alone; that if they had always preserved them as fresh in their minds as they were now, they could never have gone after other gods.

Ver. 18. *And the Lord drave out from before us all the people.*] That is, of Canaan.

Even the Amorites which dwelt in the land.] In the Hebrew, *and the Amorites;* that is, together with the two kings of the Amorites, whom they had driven before out of the land on the other side of Jordan.

Therefore will we also serve the Lord.] Follow the example of Joshua, their leader, (ver. 15.)

For he is our God.] As they were convinced by their wonderful deliverance out of Egypt; all the great signs he wrought there, and after they came from thence; and the care he took of them in the wilderness, and all other places; and now by their late victories over most potent enemies, whom he had driven out of their country, and put the Israelites in possession of it.

Ver. 19. *And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord.*] This is far from signifying an utter impossibility of it; (for that would have contradicted his exhortation, ver. 14.) but that they were so very prone to idolatry, that they would not be able to persevere steadfast in their resolution, unless they took care constantly to reflect upon, and lay to heart, what they had now acknowledged, (ver. 17, 18.) which he was afraid they would not do.

For he is a holy God, he is a jealous God.] Who, having no equal (that is meant by *holy),* will endure no rival; and therefore they who communicated the worship proper to him, unto any other besides him, or with him, were deemed to deny his incomparable sanctity, and said in Scripture to *profane* his holy name, as Mr. Mede observes, (see book i. disc. 2.) It is a just remark which Mr. Alix here makes, in his excellent book of the Judgment of the Jewish Church against the Unitarians, chap. ix. that here is a plain idea of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, the words in the Hebrew being, *he is the holy Gods;* like that Eccles. xii. 1, *Remember thy Creators.* And, indeed, this is a place anciently noted by the Christian doctors (whom the Jews call heretics), who asked R. Samlai, as the Jews themselves tell us, what he had to answer unto these words, Ye cannot serve the Lord, *Ki Elohim Kedoshim Hu, because he is the holy Gods?* Who had nothing to reply, but that Joshua doth not say, *They are the holy Gods,* but *He is the holy Gods.* Which is the very same that we affirm, that he is Three in One. This is in Bereschith Rabba, mentioned by Raymond in his Pugio Fidei, and by J. Wagenseil, in his confutation of Lipman's Carmen Memoriale, p. 129.

He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.] But make those who assume any other deity into fellowship with him in worship, feel how he resents such dishonour done to his Divine Majesty.

Ver. 20. *If you forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods.*] Either the gods of the Amorites, beforementioned, or those that their fathers anciently served.

Then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.] Alter the course of his providence towards you, and send as many curses upon you as he hath done blessings; according to the prediction of Moses in Deut. xxviii. 63.

Ver. 21. *And the people said unto Joshua, Nay, but we will serve the Lord.*] They desire him to entertain a better opinion of them; for they persist in their well-grounded resolution, (ver. 16—18.)

Ver. 22. *And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves, that ye have chosen the Lord to serve him.*] This solemn profession, which they had thus deliberately and publicly made, he tells them, would testify against them, and condemn them, if they proved false to God.

And they said, We are witnesses.] Here they renew that choice of God for their king, which their forefathers made when they came out of Egypt (in the nineteenth and twenty-fourth chapters of Exodus), and acknowledged they should be self-condemned if they did not make it good.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore put away (said he) the strange gods that are among you.*] See ver. 14. This is an argument that he was a prophet, as I said upon ver. 2. that he saw their inward disposition, and the secret affection they had to idols. For though there was no public idol worshipped, yet he knew, by the spirit of prophecy, that they had their *penates* (as the Romans called them), *household gods;* or, rather, gods which they worshipped secretly in their closets, as our Dr. Spencer observes, lib. iii. dissert. 1. cap. 3. These being the very same words which Jacob used to his household, when he suspected them of the same crime, though there was no open idolatry practised among them, (Gen. xxxv. 2.)

And incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel.] Settle your affection upon the Lord alone, who you profess is your sovereign, to whom the whole nation hath infinite obligations, (ver. 16—18.)

Ver. 24. *And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice we will obey.*] They repeat their professed resolution a third time, which made it more binding; and a stronger witness against them, if they forsook the Lord.

Ver. 25. *So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day.*] Engaged them to make good this solemn profession, by renewing the covenant they had formerly entered into, both in the time of Moses, and in his time: wherein they promised to worship him alone, and be obedient to him; and he promised to do for them as he had formerly done; that is, be their constant protector and benefactor. There are those who think this covenant was now established by sacrifice, as it was when they came out of Egypt, (Exod. xxiv. 4, 5.) and when they came into Canaan, (Josh. viii. 31.) But, as there is no mention of an altar, or any offering, so it is not likely that Joshua would offer any sacrifice but in the place which God had chosen, which was Shiloh: for though we suppose the sanctuary to have been brought hither for a little time, yet it was not the settled place of the Divine residence.

And set them a statute and an ordinance.] It is commonly interpreted, that he propounded to them in brief the precepts of the law; which are the conditions of the covenant: but it may be expounded, that he enacted this covenant to have the force of a statute and ordinance, or judgment, as it is in the Hebrew.

In Shechem.] So that it was called hereafter the covenant or statute in Shechem, where they all made repeated professions of love to God.

Ver. 26. *And Joshua wrote these words.*] From whence, as I observed in the preface, the Talmudists gather Joshua to have been the author of this book. As if these words signified, that he, after the example of Moses, committed to writing all that we read in this book, and added it at the end of the five books written by Moses, as it is now annexed to them. But it must be confessed, that one cannot certainly infer more from these words than that he wrote the words of the foregoing covenant; and this he did, as it here follows, in the very book of the law of God, that it might be preserved in everlasting remembrance.

In the book of the law of God.] Which was laid up by Moses's order, in the side of the ark, (Deut. xxxi. 24—26.) From whence he took it, and wrote in it all that had passed between him and the people, that they might look upon this as a sacred transaction, as indeed it was, and most carefully observe it: and perhaps he wrote it also in that copy of the law of God, which the princes had for the use of every tribe. (See upon Deut. xxxi. 9.)

And took a great stone, and set it up there.] As a monument of the covenant now made. Which was an ancient way of preserving the memory of things past, as appears by what Jacob did, Gen. xxviii. 18. and they themselves had lately done, iv. 3. 20, 21, &c. Upon this stone, it is probable, there was an inscription, signifying what it meant.

Under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord.] This is one argument Mr. Mede uses (in the place I mentioned upon ver. 1.) to prove that the sanctuary, properly so called, cannot be here meant, because it was unlawful to plant any trees near it, (Deut. xvi. 21, 22.) and therefore he understands hereby a *proseucha*, or *praying-place*, which, in memory of Jacob, was here at Shechem. And he doth plainly shew, there were both such places, and also synagogues, in several parts of the country; the former being in the fields, open on the top; the latter in cities, covered as our houses are. And I may add, that we do read of sanctuaries, in the plural number, that were among them in aftertimes, (Amos vii. 9.) Yet it must be acknowledged, that the argument he uses from the place I mentioned in Deuteronomy is not cogent: for though they be prohibited there to plant a grove of any trees near God's altar, after the manner of the gentiles, this did not make it unlawful to set up the sanctuary under a tree that had been planted before; especially when it was done only for a short time, and not to make it the settled place for its constant abode.

But there are those who avoid this seeming difficulty, by referring these words, *in the sanctuary of the Lord* (as they may be translated), not to the *oak*, but to the words going before, *the book of the law of God;* which was in the sanctuary. And thus, it is certain, words are sometimes to be connected, not with those immediately preceding, but with those which are more remote. A notable instance of which we have in Gen. xiii. 10. where those words in the end of the verse, *As thou comest unto Zoar,* cannot be joined to *the land of Egypt,* just beforementioned, but to *the plain of Jordan,* in the very beginning of the verse.

Ver. 27. *And Joshua said unto all the people, This stone shall be a witness unto us.*] As Laban said concerning the heap of stones which he and Jacob raised, (Gen. xxxi. 48. 51, 52.)

For it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us.] All those speeches which had been delivered by Joshua in the name of God, (ver. 2, 3, &c.) and all that the Israelites had answered to him: that is, the covenant between God and them; which being renewed before this stone, it is said, by an elegant figure, to have *heard* what was spoken; because it would remain to testify and declare to all posterity the engagements that lay upon them. Thus the prophet calls to all creatures, *Hear, O heaven,* &c.

It shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God.] To accuse them; as much as if it had *heard* what they said, and could *speak* against them.

Ver. 28. *And so Joshua let the people depart, every one unto his inheritance.*] And the sanctuary of the Lord returned to its settled place, which was in Shiloh.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass, that after these things.*] Not long after, in all probability.

Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died.] Leaving this honourable character behind him, which Moses also had, that he had served the Lord faithfully.

Being a hundred and ten years old.] Of the same age with Joseph. How many of these years he spent in Canaan, as the chief ruler of God's people, men's opinions are very widely different: for some say he lived twenty and eight years after they came over Jordan (which is the opinion of the Jews in Seder Olam); though others will not allow so much as the odd eight years, but say it was only seven. There is a middle opinion maintained by others, that he was their governor seventeen years. (See Bonfrerius.)

Ver. 30. *And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah.*] Called in Judg. ii. 9. *Timneth-heres;* because of the image of the sun engraven on his sepulchre, in memory of that famous day, when the sun stood still till he had completed his victory. (Chap. x.) So several of the Jewish authors say, particularly he who wrote the book put out by Hottinger, under the title of Cippi Hebraici, p. 32. where he saith, his father Nun was buried here, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh. (See also his Smegma Orientale, cap. 8. p. 523.) And thus Tully saith, a sphere and a cylinder were put upon the tomb of Archimedes.

On the north side of the hill Gaash.] So called, as the Jews fable, because it trembled and quaked, at the burial of Joshua, whose death the people did not enough bewail. Which fancy, it is likely, came into their head, because there is no mention here of any days of mourning for him, as there were for Aaron and Moses. In which St. Jerome and other of the fathers think there is a mystery; *viz.* that under the law, when the kingdom of heaven was not yet opened, they had reason to mourn and weep for the death of their friends; but under the gospel, wherein is revealed by the Lord Jesus (of whom Joshua was a figure) the

wonderful love of God to men, &c. there is no reason for mourning and lamentation, but rather for rejoicing.

Of this hill, see Const. L'Empereur upon Benjamin's Itinerarium, who calls Montpelier by this name of Har-Gaash, the trembling hill, p. 142, 143.

Ver. 31. *And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua.*] No idolatry appeared among them publicly while he lived, (whatsoever private superstition might be practised, ver. 14. 23.) for all that wicked generation which came out of Egypt (except the younger sort) were consumed in the wilderness, before Joshua took the conduct of them. And God kept them there so many years, as wasted them also, for this reason, among others, that they might forget the idolatrous custom of Egypt, unto which it early appeared, by their making the golden calf, they were strongly inclined. Thus St. Chrysostom discourses: (lib. i. advers. Vitæ Monast. vituper.) God, saith he, that the children of Israel might unlearn the evil customs of Egypt, brought them καταμόνας ἐπὶ τῆς ἐρημίας, *to lead a solitary life in the wilderness*, forming their minds, as in a monastery, far from those who had corrupted them. And he destroyed there all the elder sort, that none might enter into Palestine, but they who had not seen the superstitious impieties of the Egyptians, καὶ μηδένα διδάσκαλον ἔχειν τῆς τοσαύτης πονηρίας, *and that they might have no master left among them to teach them such kind of wickedness.*

And all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and which had seen all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel.] These elders had been chosen by Moses, who knew them to be men of great piety; that had not only seen, but observed and kept in mind all God's wonderful works; and would put others in mind of them, and teach them to serve and obey the Lord.

From this place the Jews labour to establish all their oral traditions; which Moses, say they, delivered to Joshua, and he to these elders, and they to the prophets, and they to others, (see Maimonides in Seder Zeraim, set forth by our most learned Dr. Pocock, p. 34.) for which there is no foundation.

Ver. 32. *And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought out of Egypt.*] It is a needless pains which the Jews bestow in reconciling this place with Exod. xiii. 19. where it is said, *Moses took the bones of Joseph with him.* For there is no contradiction between these two places, the children of Israel doing what Moses required them to do; who could not carry them away himself, but saw them brought out of Egypt. Yet thus they gravely discourse about this matter in the Talmud: (tit. Sota, cap. 1. sect. 47.) "When any one begins a thing, but doth not bring it to perfection, and another comes and finishes it, the Scripture speaks of him who completes it, as if he alone had done it."

Buried they in Shechem.] Which was one reason, perhaps, for gathering the great assembly abovementioned, that they might the more solemnly deposit the bones of this great man, in that portion of land which his father Jacob had given him; see Gen. xlviii. 22. where it seems they thought it most agreeable to lay him, rather than in the cave of Machpelah. It may be reasonably thought, also, that the bodies of the rest of the sons of Jacob, from whom the twelve tribes descended, were brought into Canaan, to be there interred, as Josephus relates from ancient tradition, lib. ii. Antiq. cap. 4. And St. Stephen confirms it, Acts vii. 16. For though Joseph excelled them all in dignity, and gave this special charge about his body, yet, no doubt, every tribe had as great a regard to the head of it, and would be inclined to do the same for their fathers that Joseph desired for himself. But whether they buried them in the sepulchre at Machpelah, or in some eminent place in their own tribe, as Joseph was, there is none that gives us any account.

In a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of silver.] See Gen. xxxiii. 18, 19. This shews they did not bury him in the city of Shechem, but in a field near it, which was his own ground: for so the ancient manner was, not to bury in cities and towns, but in the adjacent fields or gardens.

And it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.] Of the Ephraimites, who gave Shechem to the Levites for a city of refuge, (xxi. 20, 21.)

Ver. 33. *And Eleazar the son of Aaron died.*] Who imitated Joshua (if we may believe the Samaritan Chronicle), in calling all the elders and princes of the tribes to him before he died, charging them strictly to obey all the commands of God. After which he put off his sacred garments, and clothed his son Phinehas with them. This is so far from being improbable, that it is likely all the elders did the same, as far as their authority could reach; being very desirous their posterity might continue firm and steadfast in the worship of God alone.

And they buried him in a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son.] In the Hebrew the words are, *in the hill of Phinehas;* that is, a hill called by his name. It being the manner, as I have noted elsewhere, to call places by the name of their eldest son.

Which was given him in Mount Ephraim.] It is a question to whom this hill was given: most probable to Eleazar, who, being the high-priest at the time of the division of the land, they thought fit to give him a peculiar portion, distinct from all the cities of the priests; none of which were in the tribe of Ephraim, but all in the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Simeon, as we read xxi. 9. 17. 19. And they gave it Eleazar in this country, that he might be near to the tabernacle (which was in Shiloh), and near to Joshua, to be ready on all occasions to advise him, and consult the oracle for him. But against this there lies a great objection, that no Levite or priest was to have any portion in the division of the land: and therefore it is the most received opinion among the Jews, that either Eleazar or Phinehas had this inheritance in the right of his wife. So the Gemara Babylonica on Bava Bathra, and a great many others, mentioned by Mr. Selden, in his book de Successionibus ad Leges Hebr. cap. 18. where he observes another example of this *marital succession*, as he calls it; that is, the husband succeeding his wife in her estate after her death, in 1 Chron. ii. 21. where the twenty-three cities which Jair possessed, Kimchi saith he had by his wife.

These five last verses, it is evident, were not written by Joshua: but this is no argument he did not write this book; no more than that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, because there is the like account given of his death

and burial in the conclusion of it, by some other author. (See Deut. xxxiv. 1.) The Talmudists, I observed, say, in Bava Bathra, that Joshua wrote his own book, and the eight last verses of the Pentateuch. And they say in the same place, (cap. 1.) as to what is written here, ver. 29. it was done by Eleazar; and what is said, ver. 33. it was wrote by Phinehas: or rather, these five verses, from 29. to the end, were written by Samuel; who, being a prophet, was moved and directed by God to continue the history of this people from the death of Joshua to his own time.

THE

BOOK OF JUDGES.

THIS book is called by the name of SHOPHETIM, or JUDGES, because it treats principally of the great things done by those illustrious persons, who were raised up by God, upon special occasions, after the death of Joshua, till the time of making a king, to judge, that is, to rule the people of Israel, and to deliver them from their oppressions. It consists of two parts; the one containing the history of the Judges, from Othniel to Samson, which ends with the sixteenth chapter (the history of the two last judges, Eli and Samuel, being not recorded here, but in the following book); the other containing several memorable actions, which were performed in or about the time of the Judges; with which the holy writer would not interrupt their history, but reserved them to be related by themselves in the conclusion, *viz.* in the seventeenth, and the following chapters, unto the end of the book.

It is but conjectured who was the writer of it. Some think Ezra; but it is more probable the prophet Samuel, who was the last of the judges; and, by the direction of God, brought down their history unto his own days, when they desired a king to be set over them. The Talmudists, in Bava Bathra, (cap. 1.) are of this opinion; which Kimchi, Abarbinel, and other great authors follow. And, indeed, there is reason to think, that he who wrote the conclusion of the book of Joshua was the writer of this book also; in the second chapter of which he inserts part of that which is written there. And it is manifest it was written before the second book of Samuel, where mention is made of a passage in this book; which would not have been so commonly known, if it had not been published here, 2 Sam. xi. 21. out of Judg. ix. 53. David, also, in Psal. lxviii. 7, 8, seems to allude unto what we read in the song of Deborah, v. 4. (See Du Pin.) Certain it is, it was written before David's reign; for the Jebusites were possessed of Jerusalem when this author lived (ver. 21. of the first chapter), who were driven out of it by David, (2 Sam. v. 6.) and therefore this book was written before that; and is of wonderful use, as Procopius Gazæus observes, to represent unto us the mighty power of true religion to make a nation happy, and the dismal calamities which impiety brings upon it. And therefore, saith he, St. Paul thought fit to propound a great many examples to us out of this very book; such as Gideon, and Barak, and Samson, and Jephthah, who did marvellous things by the power of faith.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW after the death of Joshua.*] And of Eleazar, it is probable (for this book gives an account of what followed after those things that are mentioned in the foregoing), but how long after cannot be certainly determined: but we have reason to think it was not till they were multiplied so much, as to be able to people more of the country than they had yet in possession.

It came to pass, that the children of Israel.] There was no person appointed by Joshua to succeed him in the government, as he was appointed by Moses to be his successor; but the government was left in the hand of the elders. For it is a mere fiction which we meet withal in the Samaritan Chronicle, that at the last assembly (mentioned Joshua xxiv.) he chose twelve of the chief of the tribes, and cast lots which of them should hold his place when he died; and that the lot fell upon one whose name was Abel, and his nephew; to whom he assigned his authority, and set a crown upon his head. (See Hottinger, in his Smegma Orientale, cap. 8. p. 522.)

Asked the Lord, saying.] Inquired of him by *urim* and *thummim*, as the manner was in all cases that concerned the whole congregation of Israel. For which end, it is to be supposed, that some who represented the body of the people (their elders, perhaps, or heads of their tribes) were sent to Shiloh, where the sanctuary was, and desired Phinehas the high-priest to represent their case to God, and beseech his directions. Here the Jews raise a question, why we never read that Joshua, in all his wars, consulted God by the oracle, but the elders immediately after his death did. To this they give several answers. (See Numb. xxvii. 21.)

Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?] They being increased, as I said, to such a number, that they were able to people more of the country; and beginning to be straitened for want of room, thought of enlarging their possessions; but would not adventure without God's approbation and direction to do any thing: and therefore desired he would tell them who should make the first attempt; that the rest, being encouraged by their success (of which they did not doubt, if they had his warrant for what they did), might make the like. For it is evident by these words, *go up for us*, that all the tribes on this side Jordan were concerned in this matter.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord said, Judah.*] *i. e.* The tribe of Judah, who were very populous, and no less valiant.

Shall go up.] And assault the mountainous country, which was the lot of this tribe. According to the prophecy of Jacob, Gen. xlix. 9. where, comparing Judah to a lion's whelp, he saith, "From the prey, my son, thou art *gone up.*"

Behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.] That is, all the land belonging to their lot. By this it seems plain, that the answer by *urim* and *thummim* was given by a voice which uttered these words. Here Abarbinel endeavours to give satisfaction to the question beforementioned, why Joshua did not inquire in this manner, though it be expressly said, (Numb. xxvii. 21.) that "he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, and ask counsel of the Lord, after the judgment of *urim.*" He thinks he did so all the time after that, till Moses's death, to shew he was made the leader of God's people, for none but such could inquire by *urim:* but, after his death, he was endued with the spirit of prophecy, as Moses was, and so had no need to inquire in that manner, being immediately directed by God in his proceedings. But, after his death, there being none endued with the prophetical spirit, the children of Israel were constrained to have resort to this oracle. Which is an account very much below the judgment of so great a man; for Moses, being a prophet, did frequently ask counsel of God at the sanctuary, which was the same as if he had inquired by *urim.* Therefore the true answer is, that Joshua did thus inquire of the Lord in the case of Achan: and it is highly probable he did the same in the management of his war, and other great occasions, though it be not expressly mentioned in so many words.

Ver. 3. *And Judah said to Simeon his brother.*] They were brethren by the same father and mother; and also nearly joined in their situation, the lot of the tribe of Simeon being taken out of that of Judah, (Josh. xix. 9.)

Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites.] Which people, with the Perizzites (as is further declared in the next verse), still possessed a considerable part of the lot which fell to Judah.

And I likewise will go with thee into thy lot.] To drive them out of that part of the country which was the portion of Simeon.

So Simeon went with him.] They joined their forces together in this expedition, under the conduct, no doubt, of some eminent leader. And who so fit as Caleb? who, though an old man, was full of vigour, and fit for war, (as he himself declared not long ago, Josh. xiv. 10, 11.) and had not yet got possession (as appears by the sequel) of the portion which, by God's commandment, was assigned him.

Ver. 4. *And Judah went up.*] They were the principal persons concerned in this expedition, and therefore only mentioned, though the children of Simeon also went up with them.

And the Lord delivered.] We meet with no such religious expression (which occurs often here in these holy books) in any heathen writer.

The Canaanites and Perizzites into their hand.] Though most of the people properly called Canaanites dwelt by the Mediterranean Sea, yet many of them were scattered up and down in other parts of the country, (as I observed upon Numb. xiv. *ult.*) and particularly in these mountains and woody places, where the Perizzites dwelt. (See Josh. xvii. 15, 16.)

And they slew of them in Bezek ten thousand men.] In the country near to Bezek, which was a city in the tribe of Judah, not far, some think, from Bethlehem. Here they chose to make their rendezvous (as we now speak) of their forces, and wait to receive the children of Judah, that, if they were worsted, they might easily find a strong place of retreat.

Ver. 5. *And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek.*] He was the king, or lord of this place, as his name imports, whom they surprised, as the word *found* signifies, (see Bochart. Hieroz. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 21.) by a sudden assault upon this city, whither he seems to have fled when he had lost the field. Theodoret makes this king the same with Adonizedek, (mentioned in Josh. x.) but as their names are different, so he was king of Jerusalem, and this of Bezek, where he was overcome; but the former in Gibeon, who was killed also with the sword, and then hanged on a tree; but this had only his thumbs and toes cut off, and so brought to Jerusalem, where he died.

And they fought against him.] Took the city wherein he thought to have defended himself, and the remainder of his army, which escaped hither.

And they slew the Canaanites and Perizzites.] Put all the people of those two nations, whom they found there, to the sword.

Ver. 6. *But Adoni-bezek fled.*] He made his escape.

And they pursued him, and caught him.] They found which way he went, and pursued him so close, that they overtook him before he could get to the strong fortress of the Jebusites; where, it is likely, he hoped to secure himself.

And cut off his thumbs and his great toes.] That he might be made incapable of war hereafter, being unable to handle arms, by reason of the loss of his thumbs; or to run swiftly (which was a noble quality in a warrior), by the loss of his great toes. This had been his own practice, it appears by his confession in the next verse, which made them think it reasonable to serve him in his kind.

Ver. 7. *And Adoni-bezek said, Threescore and ten kings.*] In those days the chief person in every city had a kingly power; as we learn from the history of Joshua, who found many kings in Canaan when he conquered it. And seventy such petty princes Adoni-bezek had subdued; who were not kings of so many several cities, but some of them, it is likely, kings of the same place, who successively opposed him, and were dethroned by him.

Having their thumbs and great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table.] He was proud and insolent, as well as cruel, treating those kings whom he conquered as if they had been dogs.

As I have done, so hath God requited me.] Justice was defined by the Pythagoreans to be τὸ ἀντιπεπονθὸς, *to make others feel the hurt they had done, by their suffering the like punishment.* Which Harmenopulus calls ταυτοπάθεια, *suffering the very same;* as Grotius notes, lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 20. n. 32. Now, Adoni-bezek's acknowledgment of God's justice in this punishment, hath made some think he was a penitent, and became a convert to the true religion: for he speaks of God in the singular number, and not of the gods, as the heathen manner was;

which might possibly be the reason why they spared his life, and did not kill him. Certain it is, his pride and arrogance was very much humbled by his punishment, which extorted this confession from him. For it carried in it (as Mr. Mede observes on these words) the very stamp and print of the sin for which it was inflicted.

And they brought him to Jerusalem.] Which, as it follows in the next verse, was now in the possession of the children of Judah: though the Jews think they had not yet taken the city; but having begirt it, they brought him prisoner thither, and he died in the time of the siege.

And there he died.] After he had lived some time, perhaps, to perfect his repentance.

Ver. 8. *Now the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and taken it.*] We do not read of its being taken by Joshua, though it seems to me highly probable, that when he took the king of Jerusalem he also took his city, and did to it as he did to the rest of the cities of those kings, mentioned Josh. x. 3. 23. But when he was gone to conquer other parts of the country, it is likely the old inhabitants returned again and took possession of it; for the land was not then divided among the Israelites: after which, this city falling in part to the share of Judah, they dispossessed the Jebusites that dwelt there of all but the strong fortress on the top of Mount Sion, which held out till the days of David. (See upon Josh. x. 1. and xv. 63.)

And burnt it with fire.] As Joshua had done to Jericho, Ai, and Hazor: this being a city, it is probable, deeply infected with idolatry; from which they thought fit entirely to purge it before they rebuilt it.

Ver. 9. *Afterward the children of Judah went down.*] From Jerusalem (I suppose) which stood high.

To fight against the Canaanites that dwelt in the mountain.] There were several mountains round about Jerusalem, (Psal. cxxv. 2.) and we often read of the mountains of Judah, which were possessed, it seems, by the old inhabitants till after the death of Joshua.

And the south.] Towards the wilderness of Paran.

And the valley.] Or the flat country about those mountains, some of which are mentioned in the following verses.

Ver. 10. *And Judah went up against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron.*] This shews the old inhabitants of the country had returned to this place after it had been destroyed by Joshua, as we read it was, Josh. x. 36, 37. Who were now again expelled by the children of Judah after his death, this city being in their lot.

Now the name of Hebron before-time was Kirjath-Arba.] As much as to say, the city of Arba, who was the father of Anak. (See Josh. xiv. *ult.* xv. 13.)

And they slew Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.] These were the three sons of Anak, as we read there, Josh. xv. 14. where it is said that Caleb drove them out from thence: for he was the conductor of the children of Israel in this expedition, (as I observed upon ver. 3.) and had great reason to go up against this city, because this part of the country was given to him by a particular direction of God, (Josh. xiv. 13, 14. xv. 13.) But he did not conquer it till after the death of Joshua, as this place shews us.

Ver. 11. *And from thence he went against the inhabitants of Debir,* &c.] Another city which had been taken by Joshua in the beginning of the war; (Josh. x. 38, 39.) but, while he was gone to bring under other parts of the country, was reinhabited by the Canaanites, who were not expelled till after Joshua's death: when Caleb (to whom it was given, together with Hebron, for his portion, Josh. xv. 15.) drove them out again and possessed himself of it.

Ver. 12. *And Caleb said.*] Hence it still appears that the children of Judah fought under the conduct of Caleb as their general.

He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.] This, and the three following verses, 13—15. have been explained upon Josh. xv. 16, &c. where the portion of Judah being described, there is a particular mention of what was given to Caleb, and how he disposed of it. Which relation seems to have been taken out of this book, and inserted there by the authority of Ezra, for the fuller illustration of all that belonged to that tribe, whether by lot or peculiar donation before the division of the land. For any one may see that the description of Judah's lot is entirely coherent (as Huetius truly observes), if all between the twelfth and the twentieth verses were left out. And that all things here mentioned were not done till after the death of Joshua, is so evident, by the narration which is here made of all that fell out after that time, as to leave no doubt of it.

Ver. 16. *And the children of the Kenite, Moses's father-in-law.*] See Numb. x. 29. where Hobab, the son of Jethro, was invited by Moses to accompany him into the land of Canaan, and in all probability accepted the invitation, as I there observed.

Went up out of the city of palm-trees.] That is, Jericho, which was in a flat country. (See Deut. xxxiv. 3.) Here it seems they were pleased to settle themselves at their first coming into Canaan, where Moses promised, that whatsoever goodness God should shew to the Israelites, they should have their share in it: and there was no sweeter place in that country than this about Jericho, in the territory of which they dwelt, for the city itself was destroyed.

With the children of Judah.] Admiring the courage and success of this tribe, they seem to have contracted a particular friendship with them, and to have accompanied them in this expedition into the high country.

Into the wilderness of Judah, which lieth in the south of Arad.] In the southern part of the land of Canaan, where Arad was, (Numb. xxi. 1.) which, as Procopius Gazæus here observes, was a city of the Amorites, near to the wilderness of Kadesh, which is Paran: in his time it was a village four miles from Malaathon; but twenty from Hebron.

And dwelt among the people.] They removed from the city of palm-trees, which was in the tribe of Benjamin, and settled themselves among the people of Judah. Yet not all of them; for some went into the northern parts among the tribe of Naphtali, as appears from iv. 10, 11. What should be the reason of their forsaking so pleasant a place, as that where they were first settled, is but conjectured. Some think it was the love of solitariness and retirement; which they gather from Jer. xxxv. 6, &c. Or, as I said, out of their great affection to the children of Judah; under whose protection they hoped for greater safety than in other places.

Ver. 17. *And Judah went with Simeon his brother.*] Having finished, as far as they were able, the conquest of what belonged to the tribe of Judah, they went to assist the Simeonites, according to their mutual engagement, (ver. 3.)

And they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath,

and utterly destroyed it.] Some think this was the name both of a city and of a small region; but whereabouts it was situated is not known.

And the name of the city was called Hormah.] From the utter destruction beforementioned. Some think this was the same place with that mentioned Numb. xxi. 2, 3. But there he speaks of more cities that were laid waste; here but of one.

Ver. 18. *And Judah took Gaza with the coast thereof, and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof.*] These three cities were in the land of the Philistines, upon the sea-coast; which the Israelites did not hold long, before the Philistines recovered them again. For the Israelites contenting themselves with taking these cities, without destroying the people (as they did in other places, and ought to have done here), and only making them tributaries, it was not hard for them to regain their liberty.

Ver. 19. *And the Lord was with Judah.*] The Targum here uses the same language, which we find all along in the book of Joshua, when he speaks of God's presence with him: (see Josh. xiv. 12.) *And the Word of the Lord helped the house of Judah.*

And they drave out the inhabitants of the mountain.] God gave them such success wheresoever they went, that it ought to have encouraged them to go on with their enterprise; which they did not, as the following words tell us. This mountain, it is very likely, was Mons Casius, which was near to Gaza.

But could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.] Here now the fountain of all the ensuing evils which befel the Israelites begins to be opened. In that, either through sloth, or covetousness, or distrust of God's power, or more lenity than the law of Moses allowed, they did not attempt those people that were stronger than ordinary; or, being unfaithful to God, failed in their attempt; or, having some success, only brought them under tribute. And it is most likely, they were so affrighted at the iron chariots (which were in use in the plain country, though not in the mountains), that they were quite disheartened; and did not remember what God had promised them (ver. 2. of this chapter), and how undauntedly Joshua set upon those that came thus dreadfully appointed, (Josh. xi. 4. 6.) Concerning these chariots, see Josh. xvii. 16. 18. where I have observed they are frequently mentioned in profane authors. And see Dilherrus, tom. i. Disput. Academ. p. 129.

Ver. 20. *And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said, and he expelled thence the three sons of Anak.*] Thus ends the account of the wars of the tribe of Judah: which concludes with a repetition of what part in their country was given to Caleb; because he was their leader (as I have often said), and this was his reward, *viz.* the country about Hebron; the city itself belonging to the Levites.

Ver. 21. *And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem.*] This tribe, and that of Judah, had an interest in Jerusalem: but though both of them joined together, they could not drive the Jebusites out of the south part of it, where they had a strong fortress upon Mount Sion. (See Josh. xv. 63.) Nay, of that part of the city which belonged to Judah, they were not dispossessed till the forenamed expedition.

But the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin to this day.] That is, they kept possession of that fortress, from which they were not able to drive them; but they dwelt there in the days when Samuel wrote this book, being not expelled till the reign of David. And they seem also to have dwelt with the Benjamites in that part of the city belonging to them; which though conquered, yet the inhabitants were not destroyed, but only brought under tribute. For this was very agreeable to the lazy and covetous humour which now began to prevail in Israel.

Ver. 22. *And the house of Joseph.*] *viz.* The tribe of Ephraim, (Josh. xvi. 1.)

They also went up against Beth-el.] They, following the example of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, endeavoured to enlarge their border by taking Beth-el.

And the Lord was with them.] As the success demonstrated. The Targum hath it, (as before, ver. 19.) *The Word of the Lord was their helper.*

Ver. 23. *And the house of Joseph sent to descry Beth-el.*] They proceeded very cautiously; sending spies (as we read in the next verse) to view the strength of the place, and to discover how it might be best approached.

Now the name of the city before was Luz.] See Gen. xxviii. 19. Josh. xvi. 2.

Ver. 24. *And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city.*] Whom they apprehended, as he passed by the place where they lay to make their observations, and get intelligence.

And they said unto him, Shew us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city.] Where it may be most easily entered. For they did not inquire the way to the gate, which was common and plain enough; but for the weakest part, where the walls were lowest, or most out of repair, or had the least guard. Or, they desired him, perhaps, to shew them some private way to get into it, which none knew but the inhabitants.

And we will shew thee mercy.] As they spake civilly and gently to him when they apprehended him, so they make him a promise of kind usage, when they got into the city, by sparing his life, and all belonging to him, as they did Rahab and her family: which, it is highly probable, he begged of them, being fallen into their hands; and it was not unlawful for them to grant, if he changed his religion, or left the country, as we find he afterward did.

Ver. 25. *And when he shewed them the entrance into the city.*] Notice, I suppose, was immediately sent to the army, which lay not far off.

They smote the city with the edge of the sword.] Came upon them on a sudden, and assaulted them where they least expected it; so that they found little resistance.

But they let go the man, and all his family.] Did them no harm; but gave them their liberty, as well as lives, to go whither they pleased.

Ver. 26. *And the man went into the land of the Hittites.*] A colony of this nation, I suppose, had planted themselves heretofore in some of the neighbouring countries, Syria, or Arabia, or some of those that fled upon Joshua's invading the land, settled themselves there. To whom this man thought good to go with his family, being, perhaps, of the same nation.

And built a city.] Which is an argument, that the chil-

dren of Ephraim were so kind as to dismiss him and his family, with all their goods and estate.

And called the name of it Luz.] To preserve the memory of the place from whence he came. The founders of cities are mentioned with honour by all authors; and this seems to be so intended.

Which is the name thereof unto this day.] It kept this name to the time of the writing of this book, and long after. For it seems to be the same city mentioned by Josephus in Arabia (not far from Judea), which he calls Λούσσα, (lib. xiv. Antiq. cap. 2.) And Bochartus observes, that this place had its name originally from the great plenty of almonds growing there; from whence also it may be Lusitania had its name, (lib. i. Canaan, cap. 35.)

Ver. 27. *Neither did Manasseh.*] He speaks of that part of this tribe which was seated on this side Jordan.

Drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and her towns, &c.] Hitherto several of the Israelites had shewed some valour, and expelled some of the Canaanites. But now he begins to shew how cowardly others of them were; for these do not seem to have attempted any thing against the places here mentioned, or any where else. Beth-shean was a city not far from Jordan. See Josh. xvii. 11. where the rest of the cities here named in this verse are mentioned.

But the Canaanites would dwell in that land.] Not only in the cities, where they might have been straitened and kept under, but in the towns and villages, where they had the same liberties with the Israelites, and perhaps held some of the ground belonging to them. For so some think the word *dwell* signifies; that they enjoyed all the benefits that any others had. And this they demanded as their right; which the Hebrew word *jaal* imports; a settled resolution not to quit that land. (See Josh. xvii. 12.)

Ver. 28. *And it came to pass, when the Israelites were strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.*] Herein they acted contrary to the law, whereby they were enjoined to destroy them, when they were able. And being strong enough to make them tributaries, they might, no doubt, have utterly expelled them out of the land. But they found more profit in making them pay tribute; and it cost them less pains to bring them into some subjection, than to destroy them. And this seems to be here noted, as the common fault of all the children of Israel, that, when they grew strong, they did not use their power to destroy or expel the Canaanites: but let them live quietly under them, upon payment of tribute.

Ver. 29. *Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer.*] See Josh. xvi. 10. It is very probable, they did not so much as exact a tribute from them (which is not here mentioned), but made a covenant of friendship with them; which was still a higher crime. And this the next words seem to import.

But the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.] Which is a form of speech not used in the foregoing exceptions. And *to dwell* among a people, signifies a quiet settlement, with the enjoyment of all their rights. As in 2 Kings iv. 13. when Elisha offered the Shunamite to do her any kindness at court, she expresses herself satisfied with her condition, in these words, *I dwell among my own people.*

Ver. 30. *Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol.*] Which was the greater crime, because this last city was ἀφωρισμένη Λευίταις, *one of those that were separated for the Levites,* as Eusebius speaks. (See Josh. xxi. 35.) Yet they did more than the Ephraimites; for though they let them *dwell among them,* they made them pay tribute.

But the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries.] They troubled themselves no further than to make them pay a tribute to them; when they might, with a little more pains, have expelled them. This laziness, or covetousness, or whatsoever it was that made them act in this manner, brought them into a dangerous snare.

Ver. 31. *Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho.*] A city near the Mediterranean Sea, called by Strabo and others Ace; and afterward Ptolemais, as Eusebius saith, who observes, that the Asherites did not drive out the Ἀλλοφύλους from hence. Procopius saith the same.

Nor the inhabitants of Sidon.] Which every one knows was another great city upon the same sea.

Nor of Ahlah, nor of Achzib.] We find no mention of the former of these elsewhere; but the latter is in Josh. xix. 29. and was called in aftertimes *Ecdippa,* as Eusebius relates.

Nor Helbath, nor Aphik, nor of Rehob.] The two latter of these we read of in Josh. xix. 28. 30. but nothing of the former, unless it be the same with Helkath, mentioned there, ver 25.

Ver. 32. *But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out.*] They seem to have entered into a league of friendship with the Canaanites; so that they were mixed with them as if they had been the same nation, which was most strictly forbidden by the law of Moses: for they did not so much as make them tributaries; but the Asherites seem to have submitted to the basest condition of all the other tribes: for it is not said, as of the other tribes, that the people dwelt among the Asherites; but that the Asherites dwelt among them. As if the Canaanites remained still the lords of that country, and the Asherites were only permitted to live among them.

Ver. 33. *Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath.*] Both these cities are mentioned as in the lot of Naphtali, Josh. xix. 38.

But they dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land.] Imitating the Asherites, in letting the old inhabitants live promiscuously with them; or rather contenting themselves with the liberty to live quietly among the Canaanites.

Nevertheless, the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath became tributaries to them.] In this they were more valiant than the Asherites, that they brought these two cities under contribution, and made them acknowledge them for their lords.

Ver. 34. *And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain.*] The condition of the Danites was the worst of all the tribes: for they could neither expel the old inhabitants of their country, nor make them tributaries, nor so much as possess it together with them; but the Amorites distressed them sorely, by penning them up in the cities that were in the mountainous parts of their country, not suffering them to dwell below in the plain.

For they would not suffer them to come down into the valley.] Being very strong, it is likely, in chariots of iron (which were of use, I observed, in the flat country, though they could do no service in the mountains), which the Danites so dreaded, that they durst not venture to encounter them.

Ver. 35. *But the Amorites would dwell in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and Shaalbim.*] And, to add to their affliction, would not let them enjoy all the mountainous country, but possessed these three cities there: which constrained the Danites to seek for larger quarters in other parts; and seems to have been the occasion of that expedition mentioned Josh. xix. 47. where, ver. 41. we read of the two last-mentioned cities. (See my notes there.)

Yet the hand of the house of Joseph.] That is, the Ephraimites, who were next neighbours to the Danites, in one part of their country.

Prevailed.] Against the Amorites, as the LXX. expound it, Ἐβαρύνθη ἡ χεὶρ οἴκου Ἰωσὴφ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀμορῥαῖον, *The hand of the house of Joseph was heavy upon the Amorites;* for they came to the assistance of their brethren, when they were grievously distressed.

So that they became tributaries.] They brought the Amorites so much under, that they made those three cities beforementioned pay tribute to the Danites, if not all the low countries which they inhabited; for he saith, in general, *They became tributaries,* speaking of all the Amorites thereabouts.

Ver. 36. *And the coast of the Amorites was from the going up to Akrabbim, from the rock, and upward.*] We find mention of the going up to Akrabbim in Josh. xv. 3. (See my notes there.) And the Vulgar by the *rock* (in Hebrew, *selah*) understands the city called Petra, which was upon the borders of Edom, and by Amaziah called Joktheel, in 2 Kings xiv. 7. Some take these words to signify the large extent of the country which the Amorites inhabited; but I take them rather to denote, that the children of Ephraim gave such a check to their insolence, that they were confined to this country, which reached from Akrabbim and Selah, to the mountains here mentioned. By this it appears, the Israelites let so many of the old inhabitants remain in Canaan, that they settled themselves among them; insomuch, that, in the days of Solomon, we read of a remnant of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, (1 Kings ix. 20, 21.) and in far later ages, as I have often observed, the Gergesenes remained in the days of our Saviour, (Matt. viii. 28.) though it is likely they were all become proselytes so far as to worship the God of Israel, though not entirely of their religion.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND an angel of the Lord.*] The Jews by an *angel* here understand a prophet, who was sent by God as his *messenger;* which the word *angel* imports: and they commonly take it to have been Phinehas, who was employed on this message. But I see no reason to depart from the natural signification of the word, when there is no absurdity in it, and it is not usual to speak in this metaphorical style: for there can no instance be given, that I remember, of a prophet called *an angel of the Lord;* which I take to signify more than an angel, which appeared from heaven on this occasion; that is, *the angel of the covenant.*

Came up from Gilgal.] Angels are not commonly said to *come up,* but to *come down;* which is one reason, I suppose, why this angel hath been taken for a prophet. But if we consider whence he was seen to come, and why from Gilgal, this phrase will appear to be most proper; of which I shall give an account presently.

To Bochim.] This was not the name of the place before, but was given it on this occasion, (ver. 5.) In all probability it was Shiloh; for there was no other place where all the people of Israel were wont to assemble, as they were now when this angel appeared to them, (ver. 4.)

And said, I made you to go out of Egypt.] These words evidently shew, this was not a created angel, but an uncreated; even that very person who appeared to Joshua hard by Jericho, Josh. v. 13, 14. which I have shewn there was God himself: for who but God could speak in this style, *I made you to go out of Egypt?* No prophet, nor any created angel, durst have been so bold; but would have prefaced to this speech in some such words as these, *Thus saith the Lord, I have made you to go,* &c. Supposing, then, this angel to be the same with him that then appeared, it was fit for him to appear now as coming from Gilgal, to put them in mind of that illustrious appearance of God near that place, and the assurance he then gave them of his presence with them in the conquest of the land, and the solemn covenant they made with him, by the renewing of circumcision in that place: which upbraided them with their base ingratitude to God, and their sloth in not endeavouring to expel the Canaanites.

And have brought you into the land which I sware to your fathers.] Of which he had given them possession.

And I said, I will never break my covenant with you.] If they proved not false to him, he assured them they should always find him present with them, to make good his promises to them. This Joshua told them they knew very well, that not one good thing had failed which he promised; and bade them be confident he would still continue the same faithful God. (See Josh. xxi. 45. xxiii. 14.)

Ver. 2. *And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land.*] Or rather, *But ye shall make no league,* &c. For this was the condition of the covenant on their part, Deut. vii. 2. and long before that, Exod. xxiii. 32. xxxiv. 12. and again more lately, Josh. xxiii. 12.

Ye shall throw down their altars.] See Exod. xxxiv. 13. Deut. vii. 5. xii. 3.

But ye have not obeyed my voice; why have you done this?] That is, you can give no account of your disobedience to such plain, and express, and repeated commands.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you.*] God, therefore, resolved to make good the threatenings pronounced in his covenant; as hitherto he had performed his promise. (See Josh. xxiii. 13.)

But they shall be thorns in your sides.] To vex and gall them, as Joshua there told them.

And their gods shall be a snare unto you.] As Moses had foretold them, (Exod. xxiii. 33. xxxiv. 12.) For they were taken, by their conversation with idolaters, as beasts are in a toil, and drawn to the worship of their gods, which was their ruin.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass, when the angel of the Lord*

spake all these words unto all the children of Israel.] By this it appears they were all met at some solemn festival, as they were bound to do three times every year (for otherwise it cannot be conceived what should occasion such an assembly of the whole congregation), and, consequently, the place where these words were spoken to them was Shiloh.

That the people lift up their voice, and wept.] They made doleful lamentations; some, it is likely, when they reflected on their sin; others, when they thought of their danger.

Ver. 5. *And they called the name of that place Bochim.*] Which signifies *weepers*. It is possible the place where the angel, or where they stood, was called by this name, in memory of this great goodness of God; which, for the present, mightily wrought upon their hearts, as appears by what follows.

And they sacrificed there unto the Lord.] This shews it was the place of public worship where they now were; and offered upon this occasion whole burnt-offerings unto God, by way of supplication and prayer to him, with thanksgiving for his goodness in calling them to repentance. Some think, indeed, that they offered expiatory sacrifices to make atonement for their sin: but they would not have been called simply *sacrifices*, which commonly are meant of whole burnt-offerings, or peace-offerings, by which they acknowledged him to be the Lord, and promised to serve no other god.

Ver. 6. *And when Joshua had let the people go.*] Or, *Now when Joshua had broke up that last great assembly which he held before his death;* (xxiv. 28.) so some expound it. But the next words seem to direct us rather to understand it of his dismission of them, after he had cast lots, and divided the land among them, (Josh. xix. 51. xxi. 43.)

The children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.] To take possession of that land which fell to their share, and settle themselves in it. And they went with a resolution, no doubt, to serve the Lord only; as, we cannot but think, he exhorted them before they parted: for the lots were cast in Shiloh before the Lord, as we are often told in the book of Joshua, xviii. 6. 8. 10. xix. 51. From whence they going to take possession of their lot, it is reasonable to think he did not dismiss them without his blessing, and with a solemn charge to observe the laws of God, such as he gave to the two tribes and half, (xxii. 5, &c.) And this is the reason why the author of this book repeats this out of the book of Joshua, to shew when their apostacy began, and how it came about: for though they went to their possessions well-disposed, yet their love of the world, and study of their own private advantages, so increased, that they made them forget the public good, and take little care of their religion.

Ver. 7. *And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua.*] According to his exhortation, and their solemn promises, a little before he died, (Josh. xxiv. 14—16, &c.)

And all the days of the elders that out-lived Joshua.] Such as Eleazar, and the rest mentioned Josh. xix. 51. who were men of great authority, as well as piety; and often, no doubt, admonished them of their duty, and put them in mind of their promises made to Joshua in Shechem, where he made a covenant between God and them, and wrote it in the book of the law of God, (xxiv. 25, 26, &c.)

Who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel.] Both among the Egyptians, and in the wilderness, and in Canaan; which Joshua had represented to them as a motive to fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity, (Josh. xxiv. 5, 6, &c. 14, 15.) Of these things the elders, we may reasonably suppose, frequently reminded them, and thereby kept them steadfast in their religion. (See Josh. xxiv. 21.) For whatsoever bad inclinations they had in them, they were restrained, by the reverence they bare to these great men, from breaking loose from God while they lived.

Ver. 8. *And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died,* &c.] After he had made that excellent speech to them beforementioned, and engaged them in a solemn covenant to be God's people. (See Josh. xxiv. 29.)

Ver. 9. *And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres,* &c.] This is mentioned only to shew that they honoured him after his death, by attending his funeral, as they had done in his life. (See Josh. xxiv. 30.)

Ver. 10. *And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers.*] I suppose he means, not only all those who had seen the works of God in Egypt and the wilderness, but those also who had seen Jordan dried up, the walls of Jericho fall down, and the sun stand still at Joshua's word, and their enemies smitten down with hailstones, &c. Which had made such impressions on their hearts, that they generally continued in the service of God while they lived; and kept others in obedience to him.

And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord.] But the next generation did not regard the Lord, nor mind their religion; but only studied to settle themselves, on any terms, in their possessions, by making peace with the Canaanites, whom they should have driven out.

Nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.] Which they did not keep in mind, as they ought to have done; being wholly intent to their earthly concerns, in building houses, planting vineyards, and improving their lands. Unto which they were invited by the peace they enjoyed; by which men's minds are wont to be corrupted; as the Greeks and Romans were in future ages. According to those known words of the Roman satirist:

"Nunc patimur longæ pacis mala."——

Ver. 11. *And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord.*] By this forgetfulness of God and of his works, and by their familiarity with the people of Canaan, they soon learned to do as they did, and that openly and publicly, not fearing the dreadful sentence of God against such evil-doers, who were most odious to him, whatsoever excuses men make for them. So that phrase, *in the sight of the Lord*, may be interpreted.

And served Baalim.] The gods of the nations whose land they possessed, who were called by this general name, which signifies *lords*. For among the heathen, as St. Paul observes, there were *gods many, and lords many*. In Hebrew he would have said *many Baalim*, who were their deified great men, as Mr. Mede hath shewn, (p. 776. of his works.) For Baal (in Chaldee, *Bel*) the king of Babel next after Nimrod, was the first that was deified, and reputed a god after his death, from whence they called all other de-

mons by the name of Baalim; as from the first Roman emperor who was called Cæsar, all that followed him were styled Cæsars. Baalim, therefore, being the general name of the gods of Syria, Palestine, and the neighbouring countries, there were as many Baals as there were nations: for example, Baal of the Sidonians, and Baal of the Amorites, of the Moabites, and Ammonites, and the rest of the people thereabouts, who had their Baalim. (See also Selden, de Diis Syris, Syntagm. ii. cap. 1.)

Ver. 12. *And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods of the people that were round about them.*] By *other gods* may be meant the gods of the people of Canaan; which did not content them, but they worshipped also the gods of other neighbouring nations, none of which had bestowed any benefit upon them. This was a very high aggravation of their sin; that when all other nations made to themselves such gods as they thought had done them good, or could be helpful to them, they forsook the greatest Benefactor to their nation, who had made them a free people, and worshipped such gods as had done nothing for them, nor had been able to preserve those that worshipped them from destruction.

And bowed themselves unto them.] They did not only own them for gods, but publicly adored them.

And provoked the Lord to anger.] Who had told them he was a jealous God, and could not bear any rival, (Exod. xx. 1, 2.) It is not easy to give an account what moved them to forsake their God after such wonderful things as he had done for them, and their most solemn engagements to him. It is not unlikely that one reason was, the unusual rites prescribed in his Divine service, much different from all other nations; and several laws that made them unlike all the rest of the world, who hated them upon this account. This they could not bear, desiring to be conformable to other people and to gain their friendship. For Hosea saith, viii. 12. they looked upon the great things of the law *as a strange thing.*

Ver. 13. *And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.*] Especially they worshipped the sun, and the moon, or Venus; which some understand by Astarte. In the next chapter it is said they worshipped *Baalim and the groves,* iii. 7. For in those groves several goddesses, under the name of Ashtaroth, were worshipped, as Mr. Selden conjectures in his Syntag. ii. de Diis Syris, cap. 2. where he shews there were many Astartes among the heathen, as there were Baals; and therefore the Scripture speaks of them in the plural number (as the LXX. here doth, ταῖς Ἀστάρταις), because of the multitude of images representing Juno, or Venus, or Diana, which had the name of Ashtaroth, signifying (as some think) as much as *Beatas, blessed.*

Ver. 14. *And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel.*] Brake out in very dreadful effects upon them.

And he delivered them into the hands of the spoilers that spoiled them.] Carried away their cattle and their goods.

And he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about.] Who carried away their persons, as well as their goods, and made them slaves. For that seems to be the meaning of *selling them,* which is a phrase often used in this book, (iii. 8. iv. 2.) and in other places, (Deut. xxxii. 30. Psal. xliv. 12, &c.) This was a just punishment of God upon them, that, as they served the gods of the people round about them, (ver. 12.) so they should be slaves to all those nations round about them.

So that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.] Being so far from being able to make any further conquests, that they could not defend themselves.

Ver. 15. *Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil.*] They had ill success in all their affairs, whether private or public business.

As the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them.] See Deut. xxviii. xxx. 17, 18. xxxi. 16, 17. and many other places.

And they were greatly distressed.] As soon as they slackened their endeavours to drive out the Canaanites, and made leagues with them (as we read in the foregoing part of this chapter), God began to withdraw himself from them, and would not drive out their enemies from before them, (ver. 3.) But when by this means they were ensnared to worship their gods, (as he foresaw they would, ver. 4.) then he gave them up into the hands of those enemies, with whom they had made friendship, and suffered them to tyrannize over them, and use them cruelly.

Ver. 16. *Nevertheless, the Lord raised up judges,* &c.] Extraordinary rulers and governors, whose authority, I take to have been chiefly in time of war; they being raised up (by a particular inspiration and excitation from God), as it here follows, *to deliver them out of the hands of those that spoiled them.* So that commonly, when they had wrought deliverance for the people, and their army was dismissed, they became private men again; as appears by the story of Jephthah, who would not undertake to lead them against the Ammonites, unless he might be their governor when the war was done; (Judg. xi. 9.) and of Gideon, who refused to rule over them, when they offered the government to him, after the conquest of the Midianites, (viii. 22, 23.) Their business, therefore, principally was to preserve the people's liberties, to restore them, together with God's true religion, and to prescribe what was to be done in such cases; being a kind of dictators, whose power continued as long as there was occasion for it. Yet it must be acknowledged, that some of them had an established authority for their life over those whom they had rescued from slavery (not over the whole commonwealth of Israel, part of which was some time in peace, when another part was oppressed), and managed political matters, when they were too hard for the ordinary judges to divide them. (See Deut. xvii. 9.) Thus we read that Deborah, a prophetess, judged Israel, and that the people came to her for judgment, before she excited Barak to vindicate their liberties: but commonly they seem to have contented themselves with this, not minding judgment; as Samuel, the last of them, chiefly exercised his authority in matters of justice, 1 Sam. vii. 15, &c. where he is said in his house at Ramah to have judged Israel, and ended their controversies, and done right to every man: and when, by reason of age, he could do this no longer, he committed it to his sons. (See Corn. Bertram. de Repub. Judaica, cap. 9. p. 109, &c.)

Ver. 17. *And yet they would not hearken to their judges.*] Not constantly; but revolted again, (ver. 18, 19.)

But they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them.] Worshipped them publicly; which

is commonly called going a whoring from God, who had espoused them to himself.

They turned quickly out of the way.] As soon as the judge was dead, who had wrought deliverance for them.

Which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord.] In the days of Joshua, and the elders which survived him, (ver. 7.)

But they did not so.] Whom the next generation would not imitate.

Ver. 18. *And when the Lord raised them up judges.*] This is the constant phrase wherein he speaks of these great men, whose spirit was stirred up by an extraordinary motion from God, to undertake things beyond the reach of human wisdom or power.

Then the Lord was with the judge.] Endued him with heroical courage, and gave him wonderful success. Here the Targum continues the same language, *The Word of the Lord was the helper of the judge.* (See chap. i. 19. 22.)

And delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge.] As long as he ruled over them, and kept them in obedience to him. This signifies, that if they did not exercise their authority, yet the effects of it remained all the days of their life.

For it repented the Lord because of their groanings, by reason of them that oppressed and vexed them.] He altered the course of his providence, when they not only sighed and groaned under their oppressions, but cried unto him for help, and promised amendment, as we find they did, iii. 9. 15. vi. 7, 8, &c.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, they returned.*] To their former idolatry.

And corrupted themselves more than their fathers.] Who lived in the former judge's time, and had sorely smarted for this sin, till God, upon their repentance, sent them deliverance.

In following other gods, to serve them, and bow down to them.] They either multiplied more strange gods, or devised still new rites of worship contrary to God's law. The common service they paid to every one of them was building temples to their honour, setting up altars, planting groves, burning incense, and sacrificing beasts.

They ceased not from their evil doings.] In the Hebrew, *Would not let fall their own inventions;* but retained them, notwithstanding all that God had done to bring them off from their idolatry.

Nor from their stubborn way.] But obstinately persisted in their evil courses, as if nothing had been done to reclaim them.

Ver. 20. *And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel.*] This highly incensed the Divine displeasure, and provoked him to punish them more grievously.

And he said, Because the people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, &c.] By making leagues with the Canaanites, and not throwing down their altars, &c. Arius Montanus very well observes, that this verse expresses what great reason there was for God's being exceeding angry with them. First, because they had forsaken him, to whom they owed their being a nation. Secondly, because they had violated that covenant, which was not a new or obscure thing, but made long ago with their fathers, who, it was very well known, had reaped the benefit thereof. And, thirdly, because (as this verse concludes) *they had not hearkened unto God's voice; i. e.* though he had often admonished them, by his prophets, of their duty, and chidden and threatened them; yet they would not mind what he said, but in a most rebellious manner gave themselves up to the impieties of other nations.

Ver. 21. *I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them.*] That is, not presently, or so soon as he intended, if they had pleased him. (See ver. 23.)

Of the nations which Joshua left when he died.] For God never intended they should be all rooted out at once, as hath been often noted from Exod. xxiii. 29, 30. yet their expulsion had been more speedy, if they had obeyed him, than now he resolved it should be. Nor could it well be otherwise; for, by being delivered into their enemies' hands, to spoil and to enslave them, their increase was thereby hindered; so that they were not able to people all the land so soon as they might have done if they had been obedient: for then God promised to multiply them exceedingly, (Deut. vii. 13, 14, &c.)

Ver. 22. *That by them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not.*] That it might appear, whether they would continue firm, as their fathers resolved, in the service of God, (Josh. xxiv. 16. 24.) or revolt from him to serve other gods.

Ver. 23. *Therefore the Lord left these nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.*] This was one reason they were not all cast out at once, by the victorious hand of Joshua; for if none of them had been left remaining, there would have been no temptation to worship their gods; which would have been all abolished with them. Another reason is given of this, in the place beforementioned, Exod. xxiii. 29, 30. and Deut. vii. 22.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *NOW these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them.*] Having said in general, that God thought fit not to drive out all the Canaanites, that he might try the care and fidelity of his people in his service, (ii. 22.) he now names the particular nations that remained unsubdued.

Even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan.] Such as were born since the war was ended; and had seen none of the wonderful works of God in the conquest of the land; God intended to prove them, whether they would worship him, when they saw what they must expect if they did not; *viz.* that he would let the Canaanites, their mortal enemies, loose upon them.

Ver. 2. *Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know to teach them war.*] There was another reason why they were left remaining, as was observed before in the last verse of the foregoing chapter: but this had been sufficient, if there had been no other; that the Israelites might not grow sluggish for want of some to awaken and exercise their courage, and to keep up martial discipline among them; and that they might, by having powerful enemies so near them, betake themselves to God constantly, and depend upon his help and succour, by whose power their fathers had brought them under.

At the least such as before knew nothing thereof.] If this

was not needful for all, it was at least for such as had never handled arms; that they might be trained up to be ready upon occasion to fight with their enemies. For they being wholly bred to husbandry, and feeding of cattle, would have had no military discipline among them, if they had not had the Canaanites so near to them.

Or this may be the meaning of this verse, *They shall know what it is to be left to themselves:* for their fathers fought by a Divine power, but now they shall learn what it is to fight like other men, without God to go along with them.

Ver. 3. *Namely, the five lords of the Philistines.*] See upon Josh. xiii. 2, 3. and Judg. i. 18. where it appears, that *three* of them had been, in some measure, conquered; but it seems had recovered their country again, by the sloth of the Israelites.

And all the Canaanites.] These were a particular people of that country (as hath been often said), near to the midland sea, many of which still remained scattered up and down the land.

And the Sidonians.] Who lived in the territory belonging to the famous city of Sidon; who was one of the sons of Canaan, (Gen. x. 15.)

And the Hivites that dwelt in Mount Lebanon.] A famous mountain in the north part of Canaan.

From Baal-Hermon unto the entering in of Hamath.] See in Josh. xi. 3. xiii. 5.

Ver. 4. *And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken to the commandments of the Lord,* &c.] That their virtue might appear, if they did not imitate these people; or their baseness, if they did.

Ver. 5. *And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites.*] The Israelites soon discovered their bad disposition, in suffering all sorts of the wicked people of this land to remain and dwell with them; as if they were still the possessors of this country, and the children of Israel but intruders among them.

Ver. 6. *And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons.*] Which was not only directly contrary to the law of God, (Deut. vii. 3.) but a higher breach of their covenant with him, than the mere making leagues with them.

And served their gods.] As Moses, in the same place, foretold they would, (Deut. vii. 4.) if they contracted such marriages with them.

Ver. 7. *And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgat the Lord their God.*] They grew in time so very wicked, that they not only worshipped other gods, together with the Lord; but quite forgot him, and worshipped them alone.

And served Baalim and the groves.] Some here take *groves,* literally, for the trees themselves that composed those shady places, which were anciently consecrated to *heroes;* being, some time, the place of their sepulchre; where their *manes* were supposed to haunt. For Baalim were the same with *heroes;* and trees were accounted sacred things, by the ancient heathen, who consecrated them to this or that deity, and trimmed them up with ribands, and adorned them with lights, and made vows to them, and hung the spoils of their enemies upon them. Insomuch, that travellers were wont to stop when they were to pass by them, as if they had been the habitation of some god. But Mr. Selden thinks, that by *groves* are to be here understood the *images* of their gods in the groves; as it is certain they must signify in some places. (See upon chap. vi. 25.) And he probably conjectures, that there were several goddesses, under the name of Ashtaroth, worshipped in them. (See the place mentioned above, in his De Diis Syris, Syntag. ii. cap. 2.)

And it is evident, that these deities, whatsoever they were, were different from Baalim; for the prophets of Baal, and the prophets of the *groves,* were distinct persons, in 1 Kings xviii. 19.

Ver. 8. *Therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel.*] This expression we had twice before. (See chap. ii. 14. 20.)

And he sold them.] See in the same place.

Into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia.] Of that country which lay between the two great rivers of Euphrates and Tigris. So the first enemy that oppressed them were the Syrians; who, either out of hatred, or desire to enlarge their dominions, came over Euphrates and invaded them.

And the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years.] He forced them to buy their peace upon hard terms, and brought them under tribute to him; but did not impose garrisons upon them; so that they more easily recovered their liberty, when one appeared to head them. When these eight years began (that is, how long after the death of Joshua), is variously disputed; but it is certain it was in the next age (which in Scripture signifies about three-and-thirty years) after Joshua and the elders that survived him (during whose time they served God and lived in freedom). For Caleb's younger brother, as it here follows, was the first judge whom God raised up to them.

Ver. 9. *And when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.*] Returned to him, and acknowledged him to be their only God, of whom they earnestly begged pardon, and implored help with fervent prayer; beseeching him to deliver them from this cruel servitude; as he did Jacob their forefather, from the bondage of Laban the Syrian.

He raised a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them.] All the judges are called by the name of *saviours,* or *deliverers,* in Nehemiah ix. 27. because they rescued them from the oppression of their enemies, when they could not help themselves.

Even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.] So he is called, i. 13. concerning which, see Josh. xv. 17.

Ver. 10. *And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him.*] He had an extraordinary motion from God to take upon him the government of the people; which none durst presume to do, but such as were appointed by God, who was their king. Josephus thinks that God appeared to them, or some way revealed his will to them, in these matters; so that they were sure they acted by his authority. The Chaldee paraphrast seems to favour the latter opinion, who calls this spirit, *the Spirit of prophecy.* Certain it is, that they had not only an inward incitement to undertake the deliverance of God's people, but were endowed with extraordinary courage and conduct; and it is likely with a singular gift of Divine eloquence, to persuade the people to forsake their idolatry, and vindicate their liberty.

And he judged Israel, and went out to war.] This was

the first part of the office of a judge, to plead their cause, and avenge them of their oppressors; as this phrase of *judging* is used, Deut. xxxii. 35, 36. and other places. Though here being set before going to war, it may be thought that he first rectified what was amiss among them, and especially reduced them to the worship of the Lord alone; and then went to fight against their enemies.

And the Lord delivered Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand.] They overthrew and entirely routed all his forces, and, as the words seem to import, took or slew the king himself.

And his hand prevailed against Chushan-rishathaim.] So that he could not recover his strength to oppress them any more.

Ver. 11. *And the land had rest forty years.*] It doth not suit with my design to enter into chronological disputes; and therefore I remit the learned reader to the Canon Chronicus of Sir J. Marsham, lib. ii. where he supposes the idolatrous generation to have risen in the thirty-fourth year after the death of Joshua; who lost their liberty, and fell under the oppression of Chushan, for the space of eight years, and after their deliverance from it, lived happily forty years. Which will appear in the sequel to be more reasonable, than to interpret these words as if they signified, *The land rested in the fortieth year after Joshua first settled them in peace and quiet.* So our great primate of Ireland: (vide A. M. 2599.)

And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.] It is not certain in what part of these forty years of rest he died; nor is it material whether in the beginning, middle, or end of it.

Ver. 12. *And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord.*] Fell into the sin of idolatry after Othniel was dead.

And the Lord strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against them, because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord.] As he raised up deliverers to Israel when they were penitent; so he stirred up enemies to them, and gave them power also to oppress them, when they revolted from him. And the next enemy to the Syrians were the Moabites; for since they worshipped the gods of the people round about them, (chap. ii. 12.) it was fit they should be punished by those very people.

Ver. 13. *And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek.*] Persuaded these two nations, who were his near neighbours (Moab lying between them), to associate themselves with him in this war. Unto which they were easily inclined; especially Amalek, who had an old grudge to the Israelites.

And went and smote Israel.] Either by a sudden invasion, or in a pitched battle.

And possessed themselves of the city of palm-trees.] That is, Jericho, as appears from Deut. xxxiv. 3. Judg. i. 16. Which, though it was destroyed by Joshua, yet the place where it stood remaining, it is likely they made fortifications, and placed a strong garrison there, that they might the better keep the whole country in subjection. For, as the country thereabouts was very fertile (of which they deprived the Israelites, and sent the riches of it to their own country, which was not far off), so they hindered all communications between those on this side Jordan, and those on the other side, but what they pleased to allow; and maintained a correspondence with their own people, from whom they could receive more forces, if there were need, by having the command of the passages over Jordan. By which means also they thought to secure their retreat, if there should be occasion, to their own country.

Ver. 14. *So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.*] He ruled all this time as an absolute master over them, and imposed what burdens he pleased upon them; of which, it is likely, the Ammonites and Amalekites had a share, as a reward of their help and assistance.

Ver. 15. *But when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.*] Humbled themselves before him, acknowledged their offence, begged his pardon, and beseeched his help; as before, ver. 9.

The Lord raised them up a deliverer.] As he had done before. (See ver. 9.)

Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjamite.] Which tribe was the most immediately oppressed (the country of Jericho being in it), and therefore one of them was very proper to be their deliverer.

A man left-handed.] The Hebrew words *itter jad jemini* are very obscure, being used no where else but here, and xx. 16. In both places the LXX. translate them ἀμφοτεροδέξιος, whom the Vulgar follows, "qui utraque manu pro dextra utebatur," *who could use both hands, as we do our right.* This the Hebrew phrase will bear, which literally signifies, as we translate it in the margin, *shut of his right hand; i. e.* who did nothing with it, but used his left, though he could use both alike: or, as Josephus will have it, τῶν χειρῶν τὴν ἀριστερὰν ἀμείνων, *who of the two could use his left hand best.*

And by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon king of Moab.] Some understand by this the tribute that was laid upon them; but it rather signifies a voluntary present, above their ordinary payments; whereby they hoped to mollify him, and make him favourable to his loving subjects: for *mincha* is used for such offerings as were presented to God to obtain his favours.

Ver. 16. *But Ehud made him a dagger.*] Privately prepared this weapon, intending to make use of this opportunity for their deliverance.

Which had two edges, of a cubit length.] Therefore Josephus calls it ξιφίδιον, *a little sword;* which was long enough to do execution, but so short as to be easily concealed.

And he did gird it under his raiment.] Which the LXX. and the Vulgar take to have been a military garment; but the Hebrew word *mad* signifies any sort of raiment.

Upon his right thigh.] To avoid all suspicion (for men use to wear their swords on their left side), and that he might more readily draw it out, and use it with his left hand, when he should find occasion.

Ver. 17. *And he brought the present to Eglon king of Moab.*] Was admitted into his presence, and delivered the present with his right hand, as men usually do; which he could use, I suppose, as well as his left, though not, perhaps, with so much strength.

And Eglon was a very fat man.] Which made him unwieldy, and less able and ready to rise up, and avoid or defend himself from a sudden stroke. The LXX. translate it ἀνὴρ ἀστεῖος σφόδρα, *an exceeding civil or courteous man;* which made it the more easy for Ehud to give the blow,

when he embraced him, perhaps, or stooped, when he rose out of his seat to receive his message, in an obliging manner.

Ver. 18. *And when he had made an end to offer the present.*] Which was done (as appears by this) with such ceremony as was in use in those days.

He sent away the people that bare the present.] It was brought by some of his retinue (consisting, it is likely, of several things), who being all withdrawn, and gone some part of their way homeward with him, he bade them go forward, and leave him to dispatch some private business which he pretended: for such designs, as he had in his mind, seldom succeed where many are engaged in them.

Ver. 19. *And he himself turned again.*] As if he had forgotten something, or had met with some new instructions by the way.

From the quarries that were by Gilgal.] Some understand by the word we translate *quarries*, a place where they digged or hewed stones; others, the twelve stones which Joshua placed in Gilgal. But the LXX. and the Vulgar take it for *graven images;* for so, indeed, the word *pesil* commonly signifies in Scripture, and so we translate it in the margin of our Bible: which when Ehud beheld, his spirit was mightily stirred within him (as Conradus Pellicanus explains this passage), and he proceeded no further in his return home, but went back, with a resolution to revenge this affront to God, as well as the oppression of his people. For it is to be supposed, the Moabites had set up these *graven images* in this place, rather than any other; which had been famous for the presence of God for a long time in it.

And said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king.] Being admitted again into the king's presence, he desired a private audience of him.

Who said, Keep silence.] He bade Ehud say no more till all his attendants were withdrawn, whom he would not have to hear the message.

And all that stood by him went out from him.] It may seem strange, that a prince should trust himself alone with one of that nation, who he knew groaned under his yoke; but his mind was blinded by the present, and by the compliments wherewith it was delivered; and God deprived him, at this time, of his wonted prudence. For, as Solomon observes, "There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord:" who intended he should be destroyed, (Prov. xxi. 30.)

Ver. 20. *And Ehud came unto him.*] Approached nearer to his person.

And he was sitting in a summer parlour.] In a *cool room* (as the Hebrew word imports), where he was defended from the heat of the sun, and enjoyed the fresh air.

Which he had made for himself alone.] Where he was wont to retire from all company, when he had a mind to sleep, perhaps in the heat of the day, or to dispatch business with which he entrusted nobody.

And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee.] Which in some sense was true, but not in that wherein the king understood it; who thought he had met with some Divine apparition in the way, or been at some oracle; for he doth not say he had a message from Jehovah the God of Israel (whom he would have despised, perhaps, as Pharaoh did), but from Elohim, which was a common name to all gods, (xxiv. 2. 15.)

And he rose out of his seat.] Out of reverence as to God, whose words, he supposed, he was to hear. A remarkable instance of the ancient veneration men paid to whatsoever carried the name and authority of God in it, and reproaches those who now behave themselves irreverently, even in his worship and service. (See Numb. xxiii. 18. 2 Kings xxiii. 3.)

Ver. 21. *And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh.*] If the king had his eye upon his hands, it was upon the right, and not the left, so that he might more unobservedly employ it as he designed.

And thrust it into his belly.] So that it pierced his heart (as Josephus understands it), or some other vital part; upon which he immediately died, without speaking a word, or making a noise to alarm his servants who were without. Nothing can justify this fact but an order from the Lord, which he not only pretended, but really had. (See ver. 26.)

Ver. 22. *And the haft also went in after the blade.*] The thrust he made was so violent, that not only the blade of the dagger, but the handle also, went into his bowels.

And the fat closed up the blade.] And the haft, so that they could not be seen.

So that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly.] But left it there, because he could take no hold of it.

And the dirt came out.] All agree that the word *parschedona*, which is no where found but here, signifies the dung or excrements; which came not out at the wound (for that was closed), but at the usual place; it being common for bodies to purge after they are dead, especially such corpulent ones as his was, in whose bowels, no doubt, there were violent convulsions made by this sudden stroke.

Ver. 23. *And Ehud went forth through the porch.*] It is very uncertain what the Hebrew word *misredona* signifies, which we translate *porch*. Some take it for the guard-chamber (as the LXX. seem to understand it), or a place where the king's servants sat; through which he passed boldly, that he might give no suspicion of any mischief he had done: or, as Kimchi explains it, the place where the people sat, who waited for audience.

And shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them.] As he came out of the parlour, he not only shut the doors after him, and locked them; but, it is likely, took the key away with him. There seem to have been double doors, an inward and an outward, as is usual.

Ver. 24. *And when he was gone out, his servants came.*] Seeing Ehud was gone from the king, his attendants came into the antechamber (as we speak), to be ready at the king's call, to wait his pleasure.

And when they saw, that, behold, the doors of the parlour were locked, they said, Surely he covereth his feet in the summer parlour.] They concluded he was easing nature, as this phrase is commonly understood here, and in 1 Sam. xxiv. 3. for when they were about that business, the long garments which they wore in those countries were so disposed as to cover their feet. (See Gataker in his Cinnus, lib. ii. cap. 3.) But it may be understood, I think, of laying himself down to sleep, which they were wont to do in those countries in the heat of the day; (2 Sam. iv. 5.) and then, lying down in their clothes, it was necessary to cover their feet for decency's sake, to keep their garments from slipping up, and exposing those parts which should not be

seen. And this suits better with the story than the other; for they thought fit to wait a great while before they entered the chamber, that they might not disturb his rest; whereas the other business being soon dispatched, would not have occasioned their waiting so long. (See the Arabic and Syriac version, both here and upon 1 Sam. xxiv. 3.)

Ver. 25. *And they tarried.*] Waiting in the antechamber.

Till they were ashamed.] Till they were in a great confusion, not knowing what to think should be the cause that he slept longer than ordinary.

And, behold, he opened not the door of the parlour.] At which it is likely, after tedious expectation, they knocked, and had no answer.

Therefore they took a key and opened them.] For in kings' courts, there were more than one who had keys to the same room.

And, behold, their lord was fallen down dead on the earth.] Perhaps they did not at first perceive that he was killed; which might something retard their pursuit of Ehud.

Ver. 26. *And Ehud escaped while they tarried.*] Their long expectance of the king's awaking out of sleep, gave him the advantage of making his escape.

And passed beyond the quarries.] From whence he returned to do this exploit, (ver. 19.) which had been murder, if he had not had a Divine warrant for what he did: unto which none can pretend now, without blaspheming God as the author of sin; but then was evident, by the wonderful gifts of wisdom, and courage, and might, wherewith such men were divinely inspired. (See Grotius, de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. i. cap. 4. sect. 19. n. 4.)

And escaped unto Seirath.] Gilgal was so near to the garrison which the Moabites had in those territories, that he did not think himself safe till he was got out of the tribe of Benjamin into the mountainous country of Ephraim, where this town was, upon the confines of the tribe of Benjamin.

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass, when he was come.*] To Seirath.

That he blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim.] To summon those who were disposed to recover their liberties, to take arms and follow him.

And the children of Israel went down with him from the mount.] A considerable body of men, no doubt, presently met together (being before prepared, it is likely, by his emissaries), and marched after him into the country of Benjamin, where the Moabites were settled.

And he before them.] He led them on as their captain; and had many more, in all probability, joined him as he marched further into the country.

Ver. 28. *And he said unto them, Follow after me.*] Be not afraid to venture your lives, as I will do, for the liberty of your country.

For the Lord hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand.] He was assured that God, who had succeeded his enterprise, and deprived the Moabites of their supreme head (whereby, no doubt, they were in great confusion), would accomplish what he had begun, and give them a perfect deliverance: with this belief he endeavoured to possess their souls, as if the thing was already done, which he knew would inspire them with such courage as could not be withstood.

And they went down after him, and took the fords of Jordan.] He proceeded prudently, as well as courageously; and therefore led them directly to the fords of Jordan, of which they possessed themselves; that the Moabites who had settled themselves in that part of Judea, (ver. 13.) might not be able to save themselves by retreating into their own country, nor they in Moab be able to come to their assistance.

And suffered not a man to pass over.] To carry or bring any intelligence.

Ver. 29. *And they slew of the Moabites at that time about ten thousand men.*] Who had taken possession of the city of palm-trees, (ver. 13.) and posted themselves thereabouts, to keep the Israelites in subjection.

All lusty men.] In the Hebrew it is, *all fat men;* that is (as some understand it), men of estates, or very wealthy persons: men of quality, or of the better sort (as others expound it), who chose to transplant themselves hither, because of the richness and deliciousness of this country; but it may be interpreted *strong men,* as our translation imports, who were culled out from among the Moabites, to keep the Israelites in greater awe.

And all men of valour.] Who had given proof of their undaunted spirit in war.

And there escaped not a man.] But they were all cut off, either by those that guarded the fords, and intercepted their passage into their own country, or by the other part of the army of Israel who fell upon them, and drove them thither.

Ver. 30. *So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel.*] This doth not signify that they brought the country of Moab under their subjection, as the Moabites had brought theirs, but that they freed themselves from the yoke they had laid upon them, and served them no longer. (See ver. 14.)

And the land had rest fourscore years.] Which the same great man, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, thus interprets: ad A. M. 2679. "Et quievit terra anno octuagesimo, post quietem priorem ab Othniele restitutam." *And the land had rest in the eightieth year, after the former restored to it by Othniel:* but there is another way which some learned writers among the Jews suggest, of bringing the years of servitude and of peace, mentioned in this book, into such a compass, as may agree with what is said in 1 Kings vi. 2. concerning the number of years that passed from the deliverance out of Egypt to the building of Solomon's temple: for they suppose that there was scarce any of the judges who ruled over the whole country of Israel, but some in one part, and some in another; so that at the same time there were several judges in several parts of the land; and peace in one part, when there was war in another. Accordingly our learned chronologer Sir J. Marsham (who follows this opinion) understands here by *the land which had rest fourscore years,* not the whole land of Israel, but the eastern part of it, which had shaken off the yoke of Moab; but in the meantime the Philistines invaded the western parts, as it here follows, and were repulsed by Shamgar, while the eastern countries enjoyed perfect peace. This I take to be the clearest account of these words, *the land had rest fourscore years;* that is, the eastern part of the country, which had shaken off the yoke of Moab, not the whole land of Israel: for, as the Philistines invaded the western parts, so Jabin afflicted the northern (as it follows

in the next chapter), while the oriental tribes remained in peace.

Ver. 31. *And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath.*] It is not said of what tribe he was, and it is in vain to inquire about it; but it is probable he was one of those tribes that bordered upon the Philistines, because what he did was against them, and those were Judah, Dan, and Ephraim: nor is there the least signification how long he judged them; but he succeeding Ehud, his government was in some part of the fourscore years beforementioned: and, perhaps, it was not long before that time wherein Jabin oppressed Israel in the northern parts, as may be probably gathered from ver. 6.

Which slew of the Philistines six hundred men.] Now some of the people of Canaan made an attempt upon the Israelites, in the western parts, to bring them under their power. And these words sound as if Shamgar alone made opposition to them, and slew the number mentioned; being excited by the mighty power of God, which gave him unwonted courage and strength; for he was raised up, as the two foregoing great men had been, by a Divine inspiration, to be their judge, as appears by the last words of this verse.

With an ox-goad.] The Vulgar takes the Hebrew word *malmud* for a *plough-share*, and the LXX. favour this interpretation: but if we may judge by the derivation of the word, our translation is more probable; wherein we follow Kimchi and other learned Jews, who take it for the instrument whereby oxen are provoked (and, as it were, put in mind of their duty) when they draw the plough lazily. And thus Lycurgus is said to have overthrown the forces of Bacchus, without any other arms but βουπλῆγι, *an ox-goad.* So Homer describes the Bacchæ as put to flight ἀνδροφόνοιο Λυκούργου βουπλῆγι. (See Bochartus, lib. i. Canaan, cap. 18.)

And he also delivered Israel.] From hence it appears that he was a judge as well as the two former, though some both ancient and modern have questioned it; for this is the very phrase whereby they are described, ii. 9. 15. And the first words of this verse signify as much; which say, that *after him* (i. e. Ehud) was Shamgar, who succeeded him; that is, in the office of a judge, as the words naturally signify: and the great slaughter he made of the Philistines argues the same; for it manifestly was an heroical act, like that of Samson, who slew a thousand with the jaw-bone of an ass: neither of which could have been performed but by a Divine power wherewith they were possessed. It is not said here, indeed, how long he continued to judge them, nor from what oppressions he delivered them; but he is a deliverer who preserves a nation from being oppressed, as well as he who rescues them from oppression when they groan under it: and that it is likely was the case of Shamgar, who, when the Philistines came to invade his country, gave them a repulse with the loss of six hundred of their men; which, it is probable, discouraged them from further attempts. And this being done without any weapon but an ox-goad, it is likely he was at plough when the Philistines made this inroad to plunder and spoil the country; feeling a strong impulse upon him to oppose them, though he had no other arms, nor any to assist him, but such of his servants as were, perhaps, at plough with him. Thus some great men among the ancient Romans were called from the plough to be their dictators. But I will only add a strange passage out of the Midrash upon Lev. xvii. 3. who, mentioning these words, *and he also delivered Israel*, saith, "Thus he saved them by the hand of other judges, who being but flesh and blood, yet fell into slavery again; but in the age to come (*i. e.* of the Messiah) I in my own substance will redeem you, and ye shall not be reduced into servitude any more. According to what Isaiah saith, xlv. 17. *But Israel shall be saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation,*" &c. (See Raymund in his Pugio Fidei, p. 510.)

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *AND the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.*] See iii. 12.

After the death of Ehud.] And of Shamgar. Concerning whom there is no further mention made, because he did nothing more than this one memorable act; religion being reformed by Ehud, who left it so at the time of his death; when, it is likely, the Philistines, seeing their chieftain gone, made the forenamed inroad upon the Israelites; but they being not yet openly fallen into idolatry, God was pleased to raise up Shamgar to give them a repulse, before they could possess themselves of any part of the country, as the Moabites had done. After which blow, given them by this single champion, it was a long time before we read of any disturbance they gave them; though Shamgar, it is probable, lived but a short time after this noble achievement. And then, when Ehud and he had been some time dead, the Israelites forgot the wonderful works of God, and returned to their old sin: for so the words in the Hebrew are to be understood, which run thus, *and Ehud was dead:* for that particle *ve,* which we translate *and,* oft-times signifies *because;* and here makes these words the reason of their relapse, *because Ehud was dead,* who had been the great instrument of bringing them back to God, and keeping them, while he lived, in his service.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord sold them.*] Delivered them up to be made slaves. (See iii. 8.)

Into the hands of Jabin king of Canaan.] Of that part of the country where the people, properly called Canaanites, now dwelt under his government.

Who reigned in Hazor.] In the region belonging unto Hazor; for the city itself was burnt by Joshua, (Josh. xi. 10.) and the king of it also slain, as we read there, xii. 9. whose name also was Jabin, (Josh. xi. 1.) of whose posterity it is probable this Jabin was; whose name was common to all the kings of that country, as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt. It is possible, indeed, that Hazor might be rebuilt, as some other cities were, and possessed by the ancient inhabitants; but there is no need to suppose that; for he might reign in Hazor, just as the Moabites possessed Jericho; that is, the region appertaining to it. And according to the opinion I mentioned in the foregoing chapter, ver. 30. Jabin is supposed to have invaded and brought under only the northern tribes; those in the east remaining at the same time in peace, after the expulsion of the Moabites; twenty years after which (Sir John Marsham makes account) Jabin's dominion over the northern tribes began. The text, indeed, makes no such distinction, *the children of*

Israel in general being represented as sold under Jabin for their sins; yet it is said, ver. 10. that Barak gathered his army out of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, which are the tribes supposed to be alone oppressed by Jabin. Other tribes, indeed, joined with them, and they that did not, are very much blamed for it by Deborah in her song, even the Reubenites, and they beyond Jordan, (v. 14—16.) for it might very well be expected, that they who lived in peace and ease should be ready to assist their brethren who were heavily oppressed.

The captain of whose host was Sisera, who dwelt in Harosheth of the gentiles.] If we suppose that Hazor lay in its ruins, then Harosheth was the royal city, wherein Jabin dwelt, as well as Sisera. Which is called *Harosheth of the gentiles,* because people of several nations fled hither to be under his protection, when they heard that he had possessed himself of that country, and kept the Israelites out of it.

Ver. 3. *And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, for he had nine hundred chariots of iron.*] His power was so increased, that they had no hope to redeem their liberty but by the help of the Lord. It may seem strange, that in this petty kingdom they should be so strong in chariots, when Mithridates had but a hundred in his army, and Darius no more than two hundred, as good authors inform us. (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 9. p. 156.) I suppose they placed their chiefest strength in these, being not able to set out a great number of horsemen.

And twenty years they mightily oppressed the children of Israel.] Who groaned under a long servitude; during which time Jabin squeezed them, I suppose, by heavy exactions, which enabled him to raise greater forces than he had at first, when he brought them under his power. For God's anger increased by their frequent revolts from him; and he punished them more severely than he had done before by the Moabites; the Canaanites being the old inhabitants of the land, who hated them mortally, and kept them under a sorer as well as a longer oppression, than the Moabites had done.

Ver. 4. *And Deborah the prophetess.*] Such a one as Miriam, endued with Divine gifts of wisdom to instruct, direct, and govern others. For she was not only instructed with the knowledge of Divine things, but also was excited by the Holy Spirit (as Kimchi here notes) to declare the will of God to the people (which was the proper office of a prophet), as appears by the following part of this history. Her name in Hebrew signifies a *bee;* which hath been given (as learned men have observed) by other nations, to illustrious women. As among the Greeks, the nymph, said to be the nurse of Jove, is called Melissa; and the wife of Periander king of Corinth had the same name.

The wife of Lapidoth.] Or, as others translate it, *a woman of Lapidoth;* taking this word to signify a place, not a person. But our translation seems the most natural, and is to be preferred to that of R. Solomon and others, who translate it *a woman of splendours;* that is, an illustrious woman.

She judged Israel at that time.] Had the supreme authority over them; being so well known to be divinely inspired, that it procured her universal reverence, and submission to her judgment.

Ver. 5. *And she dwelt under the palm-tree of Deborah.*] Or, as the LXX. and the Vulgar understand it, *she sat under the palm-tree,* when she administered judgment. Whence the tree was called by her name; because it was the place where all resorted to her.

Between Ramah and Beth-el.] That is, in the confines of the tribes of Benjamin and Ephraim. For Ramah was a city in the tribe of Benjamin, and Beth-el in the tribe of Ephraim.

In Mount Ephraim.] In one of the mountains in the borders of that country; for though the tree was near both tribes, yet it stood in the tribe of Ephraim. The Jews (as appears by the Chaldee paraphrase) from hence conclude she was a very great woman, who had noble plantations in Jericho, Ramah, Beth-el, and other places; that is, of palms, saith R. Solomon, in Jericho, of vineyards in Ramah, and of olive-yards in the plain of Beth-el. And from her dwelling in a mountain, and being a prophetess, and a governess, and other things, some learned men imagine the story of the Theban sphinx was invented by the Greeks. (See Bochartus, lib. i. Canaan, cap. 6.)

And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.] For direction and the ending of differences, by deciding causes; which none could do with such satisfaction as she did. By which it appears, that though Jabin oppressed them sorely, yet it was rather by rigorous taxations, than infringing all their laws; the course of which he did not stop, but suffered to be administered by their own officers. And he took the less notice of it, perhaps, because the supreme judicature was exercised by a woman; from whose power and authority he thought there was no reason to apprehend any danger. It may be probably hence gathered, that there was no such Sanhedrin in these days, as the Jews conceive there always was in the most early times: for why should they go to her for judgment, if there were a court of seventy eminent persons, then sitting at Shiloh?

Ver. 6. *And she sent and called.*] A plain act of authority, which was owned by the whole nation.

Barak the son of Abinoam.] Concerning whom we know no more (for, that he was Deborah's husband, or, as others say, her son, are ungrounded conceits of some of the Jews), but that he was born or dwelt in a famous city in the tribe of Naphtali, as it follows in the next words.

Out of Kedesh-Naphtali.] There were several cities of this name. One in the tribe of Issachar, (1 Chron. vi. 72.) another in the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 23.) and therefore, for distinction's sake, this is called Kedesh-Naphtali; which was a city of great note, in the upper Galilee, belonging to the Levites, and a city of refuge.

And said unto him, Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, saying.] She could not think he doubted of the commission she now gave him from God; which he received as an oracle.

Go, and draw.] The Vulgar takes the word *draw* to signify gathering forces together: but the LXX. take it to be of the same import with the foregoing word; signifying that he should go till he drew near to Mount Tabor.

Towards Mount Tabor.] A noble mountain in Galilee, not far from Kedesh, in the tribe of Zebulun, and in the confines of Issachar and Manasseh; which had a very large plain at the top of it, as Josephus tells us, who calls it Staburium, lib. iv. de Bello Jud. cap. 2. where he

might draw up an army, and exercise them very conveniently.

And take with thee ten thousand men.] Who were moved to list themselves under him, by the proclamation of this commission, which he brought with him from God.

Of the children of Naphtali, and of the children of Zebulun.] She thought he need go no further than these two tribes, which were nearest to him; but others also offered their service out of Manasseh and Issachar, as appears from ver. 14, 15.

Ver. 7. *And I will draw unto thee.*] These are the words of God (which Deborah pronounced in his name), signifying, as Arius Montanus understands the word *draw*, that he would, by his secret providence, incline Sisera to come within his power to destroy him; as hunters (unto whom warriors are compared) entice wild beasts to fall into their toils.

To the river Kishon.] Which was near Mount Tabor; having its beginning at the foot of it.

Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude.] Wherewith he intended to encompass this mountain; and block up Barak till he forced him to yield up himself unto him.

And I will deliver him into thine hand.] This shews Deborah to have been endued with the highest gift of prophecy; which was to foretell certainly things to come.

Ver. 8. *And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then will I go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go.*] He is commended for his faith in God by the apostle, Heb. xi. 32. as well as other great worthies in ancient time; though it was so weak and imperfect, that he made conditions with God's messenger, and absolutely refused to obey unless they were granted. He had great reason, he thought, for it; because he might want her advice in doubtful matters, and her authority also, both to gather soldiers, and to keep them together in good order, and to inspire them with courage. The LXX. here add a great many words, which make this the reason of his backwardness; that without her he should not be able to know the best time of giving Sisera battle.

Ver. 9. *And she said, I will surely go with thee.*] She saw he had faith enough to undertake the enterprise, and therefore consented to his proposal.

Notwithstanding the journey that thou takest.] In the Hebrew it is, *the way that thou takest.* Which may signify the course which he had resolved upon, not to go without her.

Shall not be for thine honour.] Though his faith was accepted, yet the weakness of it something eclipsed his glory.

For the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.] It is a great part of the glory of a conqueror to take the general of the enemy's army, or to kill him with his own hand; which she tells him should be denied him, as a small punishment of his backwardness to do as he was bidden; and as he would not go without a woman, so a woman should take away this honour from him.

And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.] She made no delay, but immediately accompanied him to his own city; where he began, I suppose, his levy of men.

Ver. 10. *And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh.*] He caused proclamation to be made of God's command, and his own intentions, in these two tribes; who resorted to him in great numbers.

And went up with ten thousand men.] He picked, I suppose, ten thousand men out of those who flocked to him; and went up with them to Mount Tabor.

At his feet.] That is, they followed him as their leader. Though it may signify that they were all *footmen;* there being no horses in Judea, which they brought out of other countries. This made the victory the more glorious, by the overthrow of a great many chariots and horses in the opposite army.

And Deborah went up with him.] To encourage him and his forces, now they were gathered.

Ver. 11. *Now Heber the Kenite, who was of the children of Hobab, the father-in-law of Moses.*] See Numb. x. 29. This is interposed to explain what follows concerning Jael, who was Heber's wife.

Had severed himself from the Kenites.] Who went along with the children of Judah, to settle among them, (Judg. i. 16.) What the reason was of Heber's leaving them, as they all left the plain of Jericho, is not known; but there was a special providence of God in it.

And pitched his tent.] The Kenites lived after the manner of the Midianites (from whom they descended), in tents, not in houses.

Unto the plain of Zaanaim.] A place in the tribe of Naphtali, (Josh. xix. 33.) where there was a plain, or (as the LXX. expound the Hebrew word *alon*) a grove of oaks, under the shadow of which their tents were pitched.

Which was by Kedesh.] Though they loved to live in the open fields, yet not far from a city.

Ver. 12. *And they shewed Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to Mount Tabor.*] They could not want intelligence of a thing done so publicly as this was; and the words seem to import, that Sisera had *many* who informed him of all that passed.

Ver. 13. *And Sisera gathered together all his chariots, even nine hundred chariots of iron.*] In which (as I said ver. 3.) their main strength consisted. But they being unfit for service in mountainous countries, as I have often observed, it is probable they placed them so below the mountain as to coop up Barak there; by seizing all the avenues, and hindering all provisions from being brought to him.

And all the people that were with him.] As great a number of footmen, as came to him upon the summons he sent forth, to require them to appear on this occasion. For so the word *gathered together* signifies in the Hebrew (as we observe in the margin of our Bibles), *gathered by cry or proclamation.*

From Harosheth of the gentiles, unto the river Kishon.] With whom he marched from that city to this river; which descended, as I said, from the foot of Mount Tabor.

Ver. 14. *And Deborah said unto Barak, Up.*] Make no delay.

For this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand.] She speaks of the victory as already gained, that she might work in him a full assurance thereof. This doth not contradict what was said ver. 9. that God would *sell Sisera into the hand of a woman:* for both were true; he and his army were delivered into the hand of Barak, to be routed by him; but he, in his flight, fell into Jael's hands to be killed. How long this was after Sisera encamped at the river Kishon, we have no means to know;

but it was upon some day when Deborah knew the army of Sisera lay secure in their quarters, or were about fortifying the passages more strongly; or were to be joined with greater forces; or some other way might be taken at advantage.

Is not the Lord gone out before thee?] As a general doth before his army; to animate, and raise their courage.

So Barak went down from Mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him.] It is not said that Deborah went with him any farther than to Mount Tabor: where, it is likely, his faith was grown so strong, that he durst undertake any thing without her presence with him.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord.*] Who conducted Barak, as he did his army, (ver. 14.)

Discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host.] They did not expect such a bold sally as this, which struck a sudden terror into them; for he fell upon them, it is likely, before they were aware, which put them into the greater confusion. The Lord also struck a terror into them (as the word *hamam* imports) by a noise of thunder and lightning; as the word is used 1 Sam. vii. 10. and also in Josh. x. 10. where we read the Canaanites were discomfited by great hailstones falling down upon them: or he made a terrible sound of horses and chariots rattling in their ears, by the ministry of his angels, in the clouds; as he did in the days of Elisha, (2 Kings vii. 6.) which seems to be acknowledged by Deborah, in her song in the next chapter, (ver. 20.)

With the edge of the sword.] This terror and confusion wherein they were, exposed them to be slain easily.

So that Sisera lighted down off his chariot.] Which he thought did not make haste enough to carry him out of danger; and, besides, made it known where he was.

And fled away on his feet.] As a common soldier, that he might not be discovered; and that he might likewise secure himself, by his speedy running: for anciently valiant men were wonderful swift of foot, as it is noted of Asahel, 2 Sam. ii. 18. and every one knows it was the character of the famous Achilles among the Grecks.

Ver. 16. *But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the gentiles.*] He resolved to follow his blow to the very gates of their own city.

And all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword.] In the pursuit, he and his men cut off all they overtook.

And there was not one of them left.] Which was their whole army; not one escaping to carry the news of their defeat to Jabin. Or, there was not one man to be seen in the way to Harosheth; but they were all scattered to shift where they could for themselves.

Ver. 17. *Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael wife of Heber the Kenite.*] Only Sisera, by his swift running, got, as he thought, into a place of safety, in the tent of Jael; her husband, perhaps, being abroad in the field, and she only at home. Women also had their apartment by themselves, in a tent of their own, as appears by Gen. xxiv. 67. see there, and Gen. xxxi. 33. where he imagined no search would be made for him.

And there was peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.] It seems Heber was a considerable person, who had a great family, and many dependants; like that of Abraham, Gen. xiv. 14. How he came to escape the sore oppression under which the Israelites groaned (being incorporated into their nation and religion), and to live at ease in a time of great distress, we can but conjecture. Perhaps their manner of life, retired from towns and company, made Jabin not fear any danger from them; and if they still kept close to their religion, when the Israelites were apostates, God inclined the heart of Jabin to be favourable to them, and give no molestation to his harmless neighbours; who, perhaps, purchased their freedom from vexation, by their frequent incursions.

Ver. 18. *And Jael went out to meet Sisera.*] She watched, it is likely, to hear the event of Sisera's expedition; and seeing him come with great speed towards her house, went out, to invite him there to repose himself.

And said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in; fear not.] She assured him there was nobody in the tent to do him any hurt. Which was true; and it is not certain that she now intended to do, what afterward she did.

And when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a mantle.] Being weary, he desired to take some rest; when it was proper to throw a covering over him, to preserve him, being very hot, from taking cold. What kind of covering this was, which the Hebrews call *semicha* (and we translate *mantle*), is not very material. They say it was a thick covering, which hath flocks of wool on both sides; such as our double rugs. (See Bochart, lib. i. Canaan, cap. 42.)

Ver. 19. *And he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink, for I am thirsty.*] By the heat of the fight, and his long running.

And she opened a bottle of milk.] Out of respect to him, she brought him the best liquor she had, and of the best sort; for it appears by ver. 25. of the next chapter, that the cream was not taken off from it. It is possible also she might design, by this draught, to throw him into a sounder sleep; for milk, when largely drank, flies up into the head, and causes drowsiness. But however that be, it is certain milk was anciently accounted the most agreeable nourishment, which Hippocrates calls ἀδελφὸν καὶ συγγενὲς to human bodies. And therefore the most warlike nations lived upon it, more than any other food; as Hermannus Conringius hath shewn at large in his book de Habitus Germanorum Corporum causis.

And gave him drink, and covered him.] He rose up to drink; and then lying down again, she covered him as before.

Ver. 20. *Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent.*] Because he doth not say, Stand *I pray thee* (as he did before when he asked for drink), some fancy (particularly Arius Montanus) that he spake this imperiously; laying his commands upon her, as a confederate of his master: but I see no ground to think, that, when he was in such need of her friendship, he would take upon him so much as to give her a charge to do any thing, but rather entreat it of her.

And it shall be, when any man doth come and inquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here?] Who was not of their own family.

That thou shalt say, No.] They imagined there was no harm in telling an officious lie to deceive an enemy; that they might preserve a friend or ally, as he was.

Ver. 21. *Then Jael Heber's wife took a nail of the tent.*]

Or one of the great pins wherewith the tent was fastened to the ground. For she had no better instrument at hand (sword, or such-like weapon, being not usually kept in women's tents), and this she knew how to use more readily than any other; being accustomed, it is likely, when they removed from one place to another, to take up her tent, and to fasten it again by striking such nails into the earth.

And took a hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples.] Where it would most easily enter (being the thinnest part of the skull), and most speedily dispatch him.

And fastened it into the ground.] Upon which he lay (not on a bed), with a carpet, or some such thing under him; as the manner was in those countries.

For he was fast asleep and weary.] His weariness made him sleep soundly.

So he died.] She might as well have let him lie in his profound sleep, till Barak came, and took him; if she had not felt a Divine power moving her to this, that the prophecy of Deborah might be fulfilled. Nothing but this authority from God, of which she was certain, could warrant such a fact as this. Which seemed a breach of hospitality, and to be attended with several other crimes; but was not so, when God, the Lord of all men's lives, ordered her to execute his sentence upon him.

Ver. 22. *And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him.*] As she had done Sisera, (ver. 18.).

And said unto him, Come, and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest.] Before he made any inquiry, she knew he was desirous, above all men, to take Sisera; and, perhaps, she knew, by an inspiration, that he was in quest of him.

And when he came into the tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples.] He lay in the place and posture wherein he was killed, that Barak might see the prophecy of Deborah made good.

Ver. 23. *So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel.*] So that he was not able to oppress them any longer, but they were restored to perfect liberty.

Ver. 24. *And the hand of the children of Israel prospered and prevailed against Jabin king of Canaan.*] They prosecuted this day's victory with new successes; wherein his forces were overthrown in other battles, and his cities taken.

Until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.] To the utter ruin of this kingdom of the Canaanites in Hazor: for Jabin himself, as Arius Montanus thinks, was slain at the brook Kishon, Psal. lxxxiii. 9. (though, it must be confessed, that may be meant only of his forces), so that we hear of none of his name in future times. And herein the Israelites seem to me to have begun to be sensible of their duty; which was to extirpate the people of Canaan, and not merely to bring them under tribute, (Deut. vii. 2—4.)

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *THEN sang Deborah, and Barak the son of Abinoam, in that day, this song.*] It was composed by Deborah, (ver. 7.) being a prophetess, one of whose special gifts was to sing God's praises, (1 Chron. xxv. 1—3.) and commanded to be sung by the authority of Barak; who was now, I suppose, become a judge, upon this great deliverance God had wrought by him. For it is not to be thought that these two persons alone sang this song; but all the elders of the people were called together in one assembly to sing it with them; and they afterward delivered it to the people. It was likely it was composed and sung after they had completed their victory by the destruction of Jabin's kingdom. For the prophets were taught such sublimity of thought and speech, as is used in these songs, by their admiration of such wonderful events as they observed.

Ver. 2. *Praise the Lord for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves.*] It is evident to all, that this hymn is expressed in another kind of language, than the historical part of this book; and in a language so majestic, in such variety of elegant figures, and such native expressions of those affections which the occasion required, that none of the ancient Greek or Latin poets have equalled; at least it appears, there was a most excellent spirit of poetry among the Hebrews, especially such of them as were divinely moved, when the Greeks lay in dark ignorance.

And first she excites all the people to give thanks unto God, and acknowledge his wisdom and power, in taking vengeance of their oppressors, and in moving the hearts of so many especially in Naphtali and Zebulun, voluntarily to list themselves to fight against the Lord's enemies: where it is to be noted, that she very wisely excites them so to ascribe the victory unto God, as not to forget the instruments he used to obtain it; for that she knew would be a great encouragement to others in time to come, to engage themselves in such enterprises, when they saw these men so highly praised, and looked upon as employed by God in his service.

Ver. 3. *Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes.*] Next, she calls upon all the neighbouring potentates to give attentive heed unto her song; whereby they might understand what God had done for Israel, and learn from thence not to oppress them, when it was in their power; for fear of the same vengeance which God had taken upon Jabin.

I, even I, will sing unto the Lord; I will sing praises to the Lord God of Israel.] Who she would have the world know was superior to all in power, and would defend his people, while they depended on him alone.

Ver. 4. *Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of Edom.*] This is but a repetition of the same thing; Edom and Seir signifying the country where the posterity of Esau dwelt, who refused to give Israel a passage through their land, as the Lord led them into Canaan; and therefore he conducted them from thence another way, and made them encompass that land: (Numb. xxi. 4. Deut. ii. 1.) and when they had left it behind them (which is here called *marching out of Edom*), then he wrought for them astonishing things, as it follows in the next words.

The earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water.] These are poetical phrases, to express the great consternation in which all those countries were, when they saw Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan, overthrown on a sudden by the Israelites, and utterly destroyed. (See Numb. xxi. 21, &c.)

Ver. 5. *The mountains melted from before the Lord.*] All the inhabitants of those mountains.

Even that Sinai, from before the Lord God of Israel.] Just as Sinai trembled and quaked at the giving of the law.

In these two verses she turns her speech unto God, and commemorates his wonderful acts in former times, with which she compares the glorious deliverance he had given them now: as much as to say, his power was not at all decayed, but he was as terrible to his enemies in her days, as he had been in former times.

Ver. 6. *In the day of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael.*] The sense of this verse will be very plain, if we translate these words, as I think the Hebrew will bear, *from the days of Shamgar*, &c. After his death they fell into sin and great misery. And Jael is here mentioned, not as a judge (as Rasi and Ralbag fancy), but as a great woman of a masculine and valiant spirit, who yet could do nothing to hinder those spoils that were committed.

The highways were unoccupied.] The people being corrupted in their religion, broke out into all manner of violence, and turned highway-robbers; so that men durst not travel in the common road upon their occasions, but were fain to seek for by-paths, because the highways were infested by thieves: or this may be meant of robberies which Jabin's soldiers committed, after he had brought them in subjection to him; who took no care to protect the Israelites, but suffered their country to be ravaged by his troops.

The travellers walked through by-ways.] In the Hebrew (as in the margin of our Bibles is observed) the words are, *the walkers of paths:* by which we may understand men accustomed to travel, who, though they went in great companies together, yet durst not venture in the direct road, but went about through *crooked ways* (as the Hebrew word signifies, which we translate *by-ways*), by which means commerce was very much obstructed.

Ver. 7. *The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel.*] Men were not safe in their own houses; which were broken open, if they lived in villages, and therefore they forsook them, and fled to walled towns, and fortified places.

Until that I Deborah arose.] This some of the Jews take to be a proud and arrogant expression, for which the Holy Spirit was taken from her: but Rasi (who reports this conceit) soberly acknowledges, that they are not words of boasting, but of joy and gladness.

That I arose a mother in Israel.] A judge or ruler of God's people. For, as men that governed were called fathers of their country, so it was proper for her, being a woman, to call herself a *mother in Israel;* among whom she did such great things, and governed with so much prudence, that it made her famous in other countries. For very learned men think, as I noted above, that the story of Sphinx among the Greeks was made out of the history of Deborah, she being a judge among the Bœotians, as Deborah was in Israel. (See Bochart in the book beforenamed; and Hermannus Witsius more lately, in his Miscellanea Sacra, lib. i. cap. 23.)

Ver. 8. *They chose new gods.*] That is, the Israelites, after the death of Ehud, forsook the Lord, and served Baalim and Ashtaroth, (as they had done formerly, ii. 13. iii. 7.) or perhaps they introduced the worship of some other gods, whom they had not served before, fancying they might be more powerful than their former had proved.

Then was war in the gates.] This was the fountain of all their calamities; for God immediately delivered them into the hand of some enemy or other, who possessed themselves of their cities and strong holds; for that is the meaning of *war in the gates.* Their enemies seized on their cities and fortresses; for their strength was in their *gates;* where sat also the courts of justice.

Was there spear or shield seen among forty thousand in Israel?] They were generally disarmed, for the securing their subjection to the Canaanites; as afterward the Philistines took the same course with them, (1 Sam. xiii. 19.) Here the Targum makes a strange excursion in mustering up the many thousand commanders, and sword-men, and spear-men, and archers, &c. that were in the army of Sisera.

Ver. 9. *My heart is towards the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people.*] It seems there were some of the greatest men in the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun, who, of their own accord, hazarded their lives, among the common people, in this service: towards whom she expresses a singular affection; and, with the praises of God, mixes the commendation of those who were his instruments in this deliverance.

Bless ye the Lord.] This is added, like a prophetess, who, when she commends the most deserving men, carries their thoughts up to God, who gave them that courage and good success. Abarbinel had a conceit came into his head, as he tells us, when he was commenting on these words, that by *chokkee Israel* (which Kimchi interprets as we do, *the great men of Israel*), are meant the *scribes,* whose office it was to register all notable passages, particularly the causes of wars, and their events; whom Deborah exhorts to bless the Lord, and when they wrote the history of this war, to ascribe the success to the Divine favour. But it is not likely they had such scribes in these ages, as it is likely they had in future times; much less such plenty of them now in these confused days, that Deborah should make a particular address to them to do their duty.

Ver. 10. *Speak.*] *i. e.* Give thanks to God.

Ye that ride on white asses.] She calls upon such men, as the governors beforementioned, to proclaim aloud the praises of God. There were no horses in Judea, but what were brought out of other countries, so that the greatest persons rode on asses, as appears by the Scripture story; but in this country they were commonly of a red colour, (whence an ass hath the name of *chamor,* as Bochart observes, lib. ii. Hieroz. cap. 12.) and therefore white asses (or, as he translates this word, *whitish,* or that were of a colour inclining to white) were highly esteemed for their rarity, and used only by honourable persons; who could not appear in any splendour during their servitude under Jabin, but now were restored to their dignity; for which she would have them praise the Lord.

Ye that sit in judgment.] With whom she exhorts the judges to join, who now sat in the gates, as they were wont to do, which were not possessed by their enemies, (ver. 8.) Or perhaps this belongs to the foregoing clause, it being

probable that these judges rode about the country on white asses to do justice. (See upon x. 4.)

And walked by the way.] All the merchants who now travelled safely about their business, which they durst not do before this deliverance; (ver. 6.) for which, therefore, they were bound to praise the Lord.

Ver. 11. *They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water.*] Together with the princes, judges, and merchants, she would have the shepherds praise the Lord every time they came to water their flocks; remembering how they were disturbed formerly by the archers, that lurked in woods or thickets, and shot whole quivers of arrows at them and at their cattle, which now they brought safely to the springs of water.

There shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord.] Who had taken a just vengeance on their oppressors, and most graciously delivered them from their tyranny; for *righteousness* frequently signifies the great goodness of God.

Even the righteous acts towards the inhabitants of his villages in Israel.] She would have the meanest peasants (as we speak) bear them company in the praises of God; for now they lived as quietly in their open villages, as if they had been in the strongest cities.

Then shall the people of the Lord go down to the gates.] She sums up all in these words; that the whole country was bound to praise the Lord, who had given the law its free course; every man having liberty to go down safely to the gate of his own city, where judgment was administered.

Ver. 12. *Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake; utter a song.*] Having called upon all others to praise the Lord, she now excites herself, with the most earnest and zealous affection (expressed by the repetition of the same thing four times), to celebrate his wonderful works, by composing a song in his praise.

Arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.] She calls upon Barak to go in triumph, carrying (as the manner was in ancient times) his principal captives and spoils along with him unto the house of God: for one cannot think she meant merely a secular pompous show; since the Romans themselves in their triumphs marched to the capitol, and there offered sacrifice to Jupiter. Some ask, what captives he had to lead, when the whole army of Sisera was cut off? (iv. 16.) To which the answer is easy, That when Barak, after he had routed their army, pursued his victory as far as Harosheth, he brought several persons, and perhaps of the best quality, captive with him, out of that country.

Ver. 13. *Then he made him that remaineth have dominion over the nobles among the people.*] Or, *then he shall make him that remaineth*, &c. that is, when Barak triumphed, that small remnant of Israel (as the best of the Jews interpret *him that remaineth*) who were not utterly dispirited by the oppression of Jabin, but had some courage left in them, triumphed together with him over the nobles of Canaan.

The Lord made me have dominion over the mighty.] She, who was but a weak woman, triumphed also over the most powerful enemies.

Ver. 14. *Out of Ephraim was there a root of them against Amalek.*] Now she makes a catalogue of those who any way assisted in this war, as Homer doth of those people who equipped ships for the war against Troy: and I find no sense of these words so plain as this, that the Amalekites coming to assist Sisera, as they had done the Moabites, (iii. 13.) a small party of the Ephraimites (called here *a root*) opposed their passage, and hindered them from joining their forces with the Canaanites. Peter Martyr by a *root* understands a great captain among them, as in Isa. xi. 10. the word is thought to be used. But a most learned friend of mine (Dr. Alix) admonishes me, that Amalek doth not only signify the people descended from Amalek, but a mountain in the tribe of Ephraim, mentioned xii. 15. And, if we understand it so in this place, it makes this clear sense far easier and more natural than the other, *out of Ephraim was their beginning* (so the word *root* may be interpreted) *about Amalek.* That is, the Ephraimites, who came to the assistance of Barak, began their listing of men near to this mountain. And so the particle *beth* (I observed upon Josh. x. 10.) signifies as well *near* or *about*, as *in* or *against.*

After thee, Benjamin, among thy people.] Following the example of the tribe of Benjamin; who seem to have all of them engaged in this quarrel, with whom a few of the Ephraimites joined.

Out of Machir.] An eminent family in Manasseh; which is put here for all that tribe on the other side Jordan, where Machir was settled, (Numb. xxxii. 39. Josh. xiii. 31.) Which made their zeal the more remarkable, in coming so far to the aid of their brethren; when they heard they were engaged in this enterprise.

Came down governors.] Some of the principal persons of that country; who, no doubt, had their followers, that accompanied them in this expedition.

And out of Zebulun they that handle the pen of the ready writer.] They were nearer to Mount Tabor than any of the forenamed; but are therefore highly commended, that though they were better skilled in books than in arms, yet offered their service to Barak on this occasion: for *scribes* in Scripture signify men of letters, that studied the law, and expounded it.

Ver. 15. *And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah.*] Came and offered their service, when they heard that Barak, by her order, had summoned their neighbours Zebulun and Naphtali to come to him, (iv. 10.)

Even Issachar.] And the people of that tribe followed the example of their princes.

And also Barak.] The Hebrew *chen* (translated here *and also*) signifies *as*, or *like unto;* that is, they were as forward as Barak to march into the field, though they had no summons.

He was sent on foot into the valley.] That is, when he was sent down from Mount Tabor, by the order of Deborah, (iv. 14.) to fall upon Sisera in the valley; whither he went on foot, against his chariots and horsemen: or, he went with his footmen (as the LXX. translate it), and engaged that vast number of chariots, which were of greatest use in the valley.

For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart.] But the Reubenites were so divided in their counsels, that they stayed at home (as if they were separated from their brethren in their affections, as they were in their situation, beyond Jordan), which begat many sad thoughts in the hearts of the rest of the Israelites; who could not understand the reason of it.

Ver. 16. *Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear*

the bleatings of the flocks?] It was a shameful and an unaccountable thing, that they should wholly mind their private business (which was feeding cattle, Numb. xxxii. 1.) and neglect the public good.

For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of hearts.] And therefore she could not sufficiently bewail it; which she doth, by repeating what a great trouble it was to all their brethren; who were not able to discover the reason, and give any account of their being no more concerned than their beasts, for their common religion and liberties.

Ver. 17. *Gilead abode beyond Jordan.*] She complains also of the Gileadites, who were men of valour; and notwithstanding sat still, and would not step over Jordan to help their brethren. Under the name of Gilead, are comprehended the Gadites, who had half of Gilead, (Josh. xiii.) as the other half was given to the children of Machir. Who did come to the aid of their brethren; at least their governors engaged with them, (ver. 14.) Which hath moved some to read these words interrogatively, *Did Gilead abide beyond Jordan?* as if she still upbraided the Reubenites; who had not this to allege for themselves, that they were far off, beyond Jordan; for so were the Gileadites (that is, those descended from Machir), who they suppose comprehended the rest; and yet the best and most worthy of them came to join with their brethren, in the common cause of the nation.

And why did Dan remain in ships?] She reproves this tribe, which was near the sea (the famous port of Joppa belonging to it), that they minded nothing but their merchandise; while their brethren hazarded their lives in the field.

Asher continued on the sea-shore.] This tribe also bordered upon the Mediterranean; Tyre and Sidon being part of their portion. Which they did not possess; yet, no doubt, they held several other lesser places upon that sea; from which they would not stir in this common danger.

And abode in his breaches.] Or, *in his creeks,* as it is in the margin; and as the LXX. take it, who expound the Hebrew word *miphratsim (fractures)* by διεξόδοις, *outlets,* or small havens; where vessels lay, to go out to sea. Some take the words to signify, that they were busy in repairing the breaches made in their walled towns, by length of time, or other ways.

Ver. 18. *Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeoparded their lives unto the death.*] They were the only people (which was much for their honour) who unanimously despised life, in comparison with the liberty of their country and religion. For the Hebrew word *charaph* doth not signify merely to expose one's self to danger; but to expose one's self to reproach, as we observe in the margin of our Bibles: and here denotes that they *made no account* of their lives, &c.

In the high places of the field.] They went down from Mount Tabor (where they were drawn up in a large plain, as I observed on iv. 6.) with a resolution to conquer or die.

It is observable, that, in this narration, there is not a word said of Judah, or Simeon, or Gad (unless comprehended under Gilead, as I said before); and that as Reuben, Dan, and Asher are taxed for their cowardly carelessness in this case, so Ephraim, Benjamin, part of Manasseh, and Issachar did afford some assistance; but nothing comparable to what Zebulun and Naphtali did; who, as one man, engaged to hazard their lives and fortunes (as we now speak) for the regaining of their liberty; which was the more highly commendable, because they were but a handful of men, when they first engaged, in comparison with the vast army which they undertook to assault.

Ver. 19. *The kings came and fought.*] When the Israelites conquered Canaan, Hazor had several kingdoms subject to it, or depending on it, (Josh. xi. 10.) And now, it is likely, there were divers kings, who were, at least, Jabin's confederates; and came to join their forces with his, to reduce the Israelites to his obedience.

Then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo.] These were two cities belonging to the Manassites, but in the tribe of Issachar; (Josh. xvii. 11.) between which, as Rasi understands it, the army of Sisera lay; reaching from Taanach to Megiddo, by which the river Kishon ran.

They took no gain of money.] The simple sense seems to be, that they were kings of such bravery, as fought not for money, but for glory and dominion; so Rasi and Ralbag among the Jews understand it; They fought not for pay, but came *gratis* (as we speak) to the assistance of Jabin. But the Vulgar takes it otherwise; They got nothing but blows, no spoil or prey at all, as they expected. And Kimchi still much differently (which the words will bear), They came so enraged against the Israelites, that they would have spared no man's life, though he offered great sums of money for his redemption; because they thirsted only after their blood.

Ver. 20. *They fought from heaven.*] But, on the other side, God fought for the Israelites, by sending thunder, and lightning, and hailstones from heaven upon the Canaanites (as he did in the days of Joshua); and, perhaps, as P. Martyr conjectures, raising a great dust, which a stormy wind blew so violently into their eyes, that they could not see. As Livy saith it fell out to the Romans, in the great battle at Cannæ.

The stars in their courses fought against Sisera.] Some take these words literally, and render the words, not *in their courses,* but *in their exaltations, i. e.* with all their power and strongest influences: whence the saying of Rasi, on this place, *The head, or beginning of the stars is in heaven; but the feet, or the end of them, is upon the earth.* That is, hither they send their influences. But others think these words signify, that all this was done by the ministry of angels, who are here called *stars,* (as in the book of Job, xxxvii. 7.) because he is speaking of heaven; from whence they came to raise this terrible tempest, and, by other means which we are ignorant of, to trouble the host of Jabin, as they did that of Pharaoh in the Red Sea: and this they did in such rank and order, as is observed in that heavenly host.

It may be also thought, that, this fight lasting till night, the stars may be said to fight against Sisera, because they shone brightly to give light to the Israelites to pursue their victory.

Ver. 21. *The river Kishon swept them away.*] It so swelled at this time, that, though otherwise it was very shallow, many of them were drowned in it; being carried away with a rapid stream: for so the word *jerapham* signifies, which we translate *swept them away.* It is no where else found; but frequent among the Arabic authors, among whom it is

commonly used in this sense; as Bochart shews, lib. i. Canaan, cap. 16. and 42. It is likely there was a great flood, which was made by that sudden violent rain, which fell in the forenamed tempest.

That ancient river, the river Kishon.] It is an elegancy used by orators themselves (as we find in Cicero) to repeat the same words, when there is great occasion. And here she makes an addition to the same word; by calling Kishon that *ancient river;* because of some other great exploit performed there in ancient time; the memory of which is now lost. But *Kedumim* some take to be a proper name, and another name of the same river Kishon.

O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.] This is an elegant apostrophe (or turning of her speech) to herself; whose happiness she applauds, in beholding the most powerful enemies quite vanquished, by her commission which she gave from God, and by her prayers to him: for none can doubt that she implored help from heaven, while Barak fought with Sisera.

Ver. 22. *Then were the horse-hoofs broken.*] They could not save themselves by flight, their horse-hoofs being broken in stony places, when they ran away as fast as they were able.

By the means of their prancings.] The more haste they made the worse speed (as the common saying is), for they running full gallop (so the Jews interpret the Hebrew word *dahar* [*prancings*] to signify the *swiftest course*), they trod the harder on the ground, and were in the more danger to break their hoofs.

The prancings.] The Hebrews wanting a superlative degree in their language, are wont to double a word (as Peter Martyr here observes); and therefore *prancings, prancings,* he thinks, are not here an ornament of speech, but signify the most vehement motion, when a horse is in his full speed.

Of their mighty ones.] Of their best and strongest horses: for the word *abbirim* in Hebrew, as Bochart observes, signifies not only strong bulls, but horses also. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 6.)

Ver. 23. *Curse ye Meroz.*] Most interpreters, both Jewish and Christian, understand by Meroz a city not far from the place where the fight was. Which seems to be proved by the following words, where he speaks of *the inhabitants thereof.* But R. Sol. Jarchi thinks Meroz signifies a potent person in those parts, who being able to give great assistance to Barak, and living near Mount Tabor, refused to do any thing. And this is the opinion of the Talmudists (whom Jarchi is wont to follow), as Mr. Selden shews out of the Gemara Babylon, lib. i. de Synedriis, cap. 6. p. 123, &c. where they fancy that this great man was excommunicated by Deborah, with all his adherents; and hence they fetch the ground and original of the excommunication in use among them: which is an idle conceit; there being no such thing as excommunication practised among them, till they had quite lost their civil government, and it was in the hands of the heathen.

Saith the angel of the Lord.] She would not have it thought that this curse proceeded from her anger, but from the authority of God, who, by his angel, which spake to her, denounced it against Meroz. And who should this angel be, but the Captain of the Lord's host, mentioned Josh. v. 14.? (See there.)

Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof.] They that take Meroz for a person, by *inhabitants* understand those that dwelt near him, and were his dependants or associates; which is very forced.

Because they came not to the help of the Lord.] The battle was the Lord's, as the Scripture elsewhere speaks, and therefore they that refused to engage in it, refused to maintain his cause: and the people of this place are so heavily cursed, when all others that came not in to help their brethren are only discommended, because they lived so near, that they might easily have joined their forces with them, whereas some others lived a great way off, which might something excuse them.

To the help of the Lord against the mighty.] According to this translation of the last word, she means their most powerful enemies; but the Hebrew may as well be translated *with the mighty;* that is, with other valiant men, who freely offered their service in this enterprise. This aggravated their guilt, that when they had such noble examples of zeal from others, who were less able to help, they would afford no assistance.

Ver. 24. *Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be.*] On the other side, she desires Jael may be ever praised; or rather foretells she shall always continue famous, and her husband too, in future generations.

Blessed shall she be above women in the tent.] This is thought to be a wishing, or promising her all happiness in her domestic affairs. But P. Martyr thinks it may be interpreted, *Blessed shall she be for what she did in her tent.* Which was no less glorious, than what others did in the field.

Ver. 25. *He asked water, and she brought him milk.*] Her prudence is first commended, in treating him with great respect, that he might entertain no suspicion of danger.

She brought forth butter.] Milk from which the cream (of which butter is made) was not separated.

In a lordly dish.] The Hebrew word *sephel* (which we translate *dish*) is no where else found, but in the story of Gideon in the next chapter, vi. 38. where we translate it *a bowl.* From whence Bochart rightly concludes, it signifies a large and wide vessel, (par. i. Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. 49.) which explains the word *lordly* or *princely;* which doth not signify that she had any gold or silver vessel in her tent (which was not agreeable to their manner of living), but that she brought him milk in the best vessel she had, and that very capacious: for out of such great men were wont to drink, as Pet. Martyr observes out of Cicero against M. Antony.

Ver. 26. *She put her hand to the nail.*] Next her courage and fortitude is celebrated: and by *hand* is to be understood her left, wherewith she held the nail, as with her right hand the hammer.

And her right hand to the workmen's hammer.] A lively description how she went about this work; just as if she had been fastening her tent.

And with her hammer she smote Sisera.] The Hebrew word *halam,* which we translate *smote,* signifies such a blow as makes a contusion.

She smote off his head.] The word *machak,* which is commonly translated *cut off,* cannot have that signification here; because there is not the least indication in this story

of her cutting off his head from the body, but only of *striking it through*, as here it must be understood.

When she had pierced and stricken through his temples.] Here are two words more, *machatz* and *chalaph*, signifying *penetrating* and boring quite through. And the place is specified where his head was perforated, which was in his temples, the softest part of it, which gave the easiest entrance to the nail.

Ver. 27. *At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down.*] In the Hebrew, *between her feet*, &c. which some of the Talmudists have abused to a lewd sense; justly censured by Kimchi: who observes, that this is according to the style of the Hebrew language, which reduplicates words, that they may more strongly affirm what is said; and these words, *he bowed, he fell*, signify (he thinks) such a fall that he never rose up again. But taking all these expressions together [*he bowed, he fell, he lay down*], they seem to me to import, that, at the first stroke, he started and lifted up his body; but being very much stunned, he soon laid down again.

At her feet he bowed, he fell.] Then I suppose she repeated her stroke, which perfectly disabled him to move.

Where he bowed, there he fell down dead.] And at the third stroke, it is likely, she fastened his head to the ground. But this repetition doth not certainly argue that she gave so many blows (though it may pass for a probable conjecture); for it is an usual elegancy in such composures, wherein she intended to set out this fact of Jael's with the highest encomiums. Some may fancy, indeed, that it deserved reprehension, rather than commendation, upon many accounts; being a breach of the laws of hospitality, and of the peace which was between her family and Jabin, &c. But this fact is not to be measured by the common rules which are to govern us, it being an extraordinary, heroic, and Divine work, unto which she was excited by God; whose people Jabin oppressed with a cruel servitude, from which God ordered Barak to be their deliverer; who, having defeated all his forces in a miraculous manner, Jael understood there was a Divine hand in this victory, and was moved by the same spirit which stirred up Deborah and Barak, to help, by this act, to complete their shameful overthrow. For nothing could be more dishonourable, than for a great captain to fall thus by the hand of a woman.

Ver. 28. *The mother of Sisera looked out at a window.*] Was in earnest longings and expectations to see him return victorious.

And cried through the lattice.] Either fear of some miscarriage, or impatient desire, made her cry out with a lamentable voice; as the word *jabab* in the Hebrew signifies.

Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?] Having such numerous forces, they promised themselves an easy and speedy victory over a handful of the Israelites; and therefore wondered what retarded his coming back, with all his chariots, in triumph.

Ver. 29. *Her wise ladies answered her.*] The Vulgar takes the Hebrew words to signify, *one of the wisest of his wives* (who was not so apt to despair as his mother) replied to her. For it is well observed by Terence, in his Adelphi (as Pet. Martyr here notes), "Multo satius est, ea evenire nobis quæ de absentibus suspicantur uxores quam ea quæ parentes." *It is much better that those things should happen to their absent husbands, which their wives suspect, than those which their parents fear.* But I see no reason to depart from our translation, which is the same with the LXX. *αἱ σοφαὶ ἄρχουσαι, the prudent noble women that attended her*, &c.

Yea, she returned answer to herself.] Upon better consideration, her hopes exceeded her fears.

Ver. 30. *Have they not sped?*] She did not think it possible they should miscarry.

Have they not divided the prey?] She was willing to be confident they had got the victory; and therefore imputed their stay to the time that must needs be taken up in making an equal division of the spoil. For those days were not like to ours, wherein every man keeps to himself what he can lay his hands upon; but after the battle, they were obliged to bring all that they had gotten to the general of the army; who considered every man's quality and desert, and accordingly distributed the prey among them.

To every man a damsel or two.] Young virgins are by all historians and poets reckoned as a principal part of the soldiers' prey. And she puts here an unusual word for a *damsel*, which is *racham;* for it properly signifies *a womb*, and seems here to be spoken by way of contempt, as if they were good for nothing but to serve their filthy appetites.

To Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needle-work, of divers colours of needle-work on both sides.] These were the richest part of the spoil, being highly esteemed by all people, as Pliny observes, lib. viii. cap. 48. where he mentions great variety of them, both in his own and in ancient time: for he takes notice, that Homer mentions *pictas vestes*, as he calls them, *painted garments*, which shined with flowers and trees in beautiful colours; which the Phrygians afterward wrought with needles; and Attalus invented the interweaving gold in them: but for divers-coloured garments, Babylon was above all places famous; from whence they had the name of *Babylonish garments*, which were much valued even in those early times, as appears by the story of Achan, Josh. vii. 21. and they were of such account in aftertimes, that every one was not permitted to wear them, but only the greater sort of persons (as Pet. Martyr observes out of the Roman laws), which may be the reason that here they are appropriated to Sisera as his part of the spoil.

Meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?] That is, of the chief commanders, to whom the spoil, as I said, was brought to be divided. In the Hebrew the words are, *for the necks of the spoil;* which Kimchi expounds, *the head of the prey.* As if she had said, These are to be put in the head of the prey; and therefore fit to be given only to the general of the army.

Ver. 31. *So let all thy enemies perish, O Lord.*] From hence she takes occasion to convert her speech to God, beseeching him, that all his enemies may be thus disappointed of their vain hopes.

But let all them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.] Increase in power and force, as the sun doth from the time of its rising till it comes to its meridian height.

And the land had rest forty years.] These forty years are to be computed from the time of Ehud, as our great primate

thinks, who thus translates these words, *The land rested in the fortieth year*, after the former rest which was restored to it by Ehud. (See him ad A. M. 2719.) But it is far more reasonable to compute them from the conquest of Jabin by the northern tribes; after which, the whole country lived in peace for the space of forty years, till the Midianites, as it follows, sorely oppressed them.

I conclude this chapter as Conradus Pellicanus doth; "Let some Homer or Virgil go now, and compare his poetry, if he be able, with the song of this woman. And if there be any one that excels in eloquence and learning, and hath more leisure than I, celebrate the praises and learning of this panegyric more copiously."

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord.*] After the death of Deborah and Barak (who kept them, I suppose, in the true religion), they relapsed to idolatry.

And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years.] Because it is not said, that *the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel*, (as in chap. ii. 14. iii. 8, &c.) nor that he *sold them* into the hand of Midian (which is the expression, iv. 2. and other places), Pet. Martyr thinks they were not altogether so bad as they had been formerly; and therefore God was pleased to shorten the tyranny of the Midianites over them; who, being their old enemies, as they came through the wilderness, and having been, in a manner, utterly destroyed by the Israelites, (Numb. xxxi.) were very much disposed to take a sharp revenge: for that those Midianites who were neighbours to Moab are here meant, is evident from their situation, which was beyond Jordan, (vii. 24, 25. viii. 4.) and by the people that joined with them, who were the *children of the east*, (ver. 3.) whereas the other Midianites, where Jethro lived, were in the *south*, near the Red Sea. Some fancy, indeed, that the Midianites, neighbours to Moab, being cut off by Moses, there was no such nation. But it must be considered, that some of them saved themselves by flight into other countries, and, after the Israelites were settled in Canaan, returned again; and, in near two hundred years' time, may well be thought to have repeopled their country, especially by the help of other people, who came, it is likely, and planted among them; and being seated in the same country, are all called Midianites.

Ver. 2. *And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel.*] They brought the Israelites in subjection to them, and were the fourth nation that oppressed them, after the Mesopotamians, Moabites, and Canaanites.

And because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made them the dens that are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds.] They betook themselves to these places for safety; for, I suppose, they did not now make them, but made them their retreat. And by the first word *minhareth*, is meant those hollow places in the rocks upon the mountains, where men might hide themselves, and make them their habitation; there being cracks and holes in them here and there, to let in light, as the Hebrew word signifies. And the second word *maharoth* denotes such caves as were in the fields, made either by nature, or by art and labour; which being dark, were fit only to hide their goods and provision in them. And the third word *mitzaroth* signifies such fortresses, as secured themselves, and families, and cattle, and all they could carry thither. But this shews their condition was very lamentable, in that they were driven from their houses in the villages, and cities too; at least the richest of them durst not trust themselves there, but fled to strong holds for safety.

Ver. 3. *And so it was, that when Israel had sown.*] They did not disturb them in seed-time, but let them be quiet till they had ploughed and sowed their land.

Then the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east.] This shews, that some of the same people joined with the Midianites, that did formerly with the Moabites, when they oppressed Israel, (iii. 13.) For by the *children of the east*, are meant some of the people of Arabia, as Procopius notes, who observes Josephus to be of the same mind: for Arabia lay east of Egypt, where the Israelites learnt to speak in this manner.

Even they came up against them.] Entered the land of Israel with such armies as might destroy the fruits of the earth; as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 4. *And they encamped against them.*] The Vulgar translate it, *They pitched their tents among them;* which signifies them to have been an Arabian people, or such as lived after their manner.

And destroyed the increase of the earth.] Having formed a camp, they sent out parties from thence well armed to destroy all the corn, and the rest of the fruits of the earth.

Until thou come unto Gaza.] That is, they made an universal devastation from one end of the country to the other; for they came from the east, and destroyed all till they came to the western coast, where Gaza was.

And left no sustenance for Israel.] Whom they intended to famish.

Neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass.] Their camels and other cattle, which they brought along with them, having eaten up all; for they were so numerous, as we are told in the following verse, that they overspread the whole country.

Ver. 5. *For they came up with their cattle.*] Not merely an army of men, but of cattle of all sorts, came on purpose to make this destruction.

And their tents.] With their whole families, that they might be able to consume the more.

And they came up as grasshoppers for multitude.] Or, as *locusts* (as the word *arba* is commonly translated), which have their very name from the vast numbers wherein they were wont to come, and were most devouring creatures.

For both they and their camels were without number.] No country more abounded with camels than Midian; (as I observed before out of Bochart's Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 2.) and they are only peculiarly mentioned, because the Midianites were more famous for them than for horses or other beasts.

And they entered into the land to destroy it.] Their very design was to depopulate the country by this means.

Ver. 6. *And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites.*] For the fruits of their land being thus destroyed, their money was drained from them to purchase corn from other countries.

And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.] Who never failed to help them, when they truly turned to him.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, because of the Midianites.*] Though the poverty which pinched them was that which moved them to cry unto God for relief, yet he was so gracious as to send one to make them sensible of their sin.

Ver. 8. *That the Lord sent a prophet unto the children of Israel.*] Whom the Jews fancy to have been Phinehas, which is not probable, men not commonly then living to the age of two hundred years, which he must be of, and more, if he were the prophet now sent to them. It is far more likely, that God still continued other prophets among them, beside the high-priest, to put them in mind of their duty, and to call them to repentance when they forsook him. And it appears by the foregoing story, that there was a woman who had the spirit of prophecy; which shews that, at least, upon special occasions, he raised up such persons among them.

Which said unto them.] At some great festival, it is likely, when they were all assembled.

Thus saith the Lord God of Israel.] This is the style in which the prophets commonly spake.

I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage.] All the prophets put them in mind of this, as the greatest obligation upon them, to be entirely devoted to God's service. See Exod. xix. 4—6. where God himself tells them for what purpose he had delivered them from that bondage. And see Josh. xxiv. 5, 6.

Ver. 9. *And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians.*] Who, when they pursued them to bring them back into slavery, were all drowned in the Red Sea.

And out of the hand of all that oppressed you.] That endeavoured to oppress them; such as the Amalekites, Sihon, and Og, who opposed their passage to Canaan.

And drave them out from before you, and gave you their land.] By the hand of Joshua, who settled them in the land which God promised to them. All this is said to put them in mind how faithfully God had performed his covenant with them, and to upbraid them with their own infidelity.

Ver. 10. *And I said unto you, I am the Lord your God.*] See Exod. xx. 1. Deut. v. 6. vi. 4.

Fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell.] Do not worship them, nor imagine they can do you any harm, (Deut. vii. 12—14. Josh. xxiv. 14, 15.)

But ye have not obeyed my voice.] Which was the cause of all the evil that had befallen them, and would still continue, if they did not now hearken unto him, as they desired him to hear their cry. This, no doubt, the prophet pressed upon them, in more words than are here set down, these being only the heads of his speech.

Ver. 11. *And there came an angel of the Lord.*] The Israelites laid the application of the prophet's speech to their heart (it is to be supposed), and began to reform their ways, which moved him to send an angel to appoint them a deliverer; for he is called *an angel of the Lord*, both here and ver. 12. 20—22.

And sat under an oak.] In a grove of trees (as Arius Montanus understands it), where there was one great well-spread oak, in which there was a seat.

Which was in Ophrah.] The city where Gideon was born and lived, (viii. 27.)

That pertaineth unto Joash the Abi-ezrite.] This is added to shew what Ophrah he means; for there was another in the tribe of Benjamin, (Josh. xviii. 23.) whereas the family of Abiezer belonged to the tribe of Manasseh, (Josh. xvii. 2.)

And his son Gideon thrashed wheat.] The Hebrew *chabat*, in this place, signifies to *thrash* out with a stick or rock, as Kimchi here observes. And so the LXX. ῥαβδίζων. But the common way of thrashing corn out of the ear was by treading it with oxen, which they called *dash*, 1 Chron. xxi. 20. This Gideon did not use, partly for privacy, but chiefly because he had but a little to beat out.

By the wine-press.] Where none would suspect his thrashing of corn.

To hide it from the Midianites.] Who watched narrowly all the thrashing-floors of the Israelites, who might have bought sheaves of their neighbours, or, perhaps, sown and reaped a little corn, in some private fenced places, where the cattle of the Midianites did not come to eat it up.

Ver. 12. *And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him.*] Gideon, I suppose, turning his face that way, beheld him sitting under the oak.

And said unto him, The Lord is with thee.] He did not take him to be one of the Midianites by his posture, and manner of appearance, and was made more certain of it by this salutation. Wherein he doth not pray God to be with him, but declares him to be with him (as appears by Gideon's answer), that is, to assist him to be the deliverance of his people. The Targum here translates it, *The Word of the Lord is thy help.* Whereby it appears, the ancient Jews did not look upon this angel merely as a heavenly messenger sent from God, but as the Lord himself, as he is called, ver. 14. 16. 23—25. 27. Which is confirmed by the following verse, as the same Targum translates it.

Thou mighty man of valour.] He was naturally courageous, but made more so by a Divine inspiration, and yet did not disdain to mind husbandry, as the greatest persons did in ancient time. Insomuch that Pliny saith, The earth brought forth its fruit more happily and abundantly, "cum imperatorum clarissimorum manibus tractaretur," *when it was cultivated by the hands of the most famous commanders:* for they had more skill and industry in their management, than the ordinary people.

Ver. 13. *And Gideon said unto him, Oh, my Lord.*] The Hebrew word *bi* (which we translate *O*, or *I beseech thee*) may literally be translated, *with me;* by way of interrogation: as much as to say, *How can that be?* It appears by the word *Adonai (Lord)* which is used to all great men, that he did not yet think him to be an angel, but some person of extraordinary quality, who wished well to the Israelites.

If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? And where are all the miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt, &c.] He thought their present condition sufficiently shewed that their whole nation was forsaken by God; who had thrown them into that slavery, out of which he delivered their fathers, and did not appear, by any miraculous works, to be present among them as he was in Egypt, but left them to be devoured by the Midianites.

Here the Targum makes Gideon's answer to have been this, *Is the Schechinah of the Lord our help? Whence then hath all this happened unto us?* Which paraphrase shews that they took the Word of the Lord to be the same with

the Schechinah of the Lord, who had most gloriously appeared for their help. (See ver. 16. and Josh. xiv. 12.)

Ver. 14. *And the Lord looked upon him.*] This shews it was not a mere angel, but the same Jehovah, who appeared to Joshua (v. 13, 14.) in the likeness of an angel, and now cast a gracious aspect upon him: for to have respect unto a man, or unto his sacrifice, is graciously to accept him, and to be favourable to him; as the Lord now declared he was, by his very countenance, which had great kindness in it.

And said, Go in this thy might.] This seems to intimate that Gideon was immediately inspired with a great courage, by that gracious aspect of the Lord upon him.

And thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites.] See those wonders renewed, which appeared in the deliverance of their fathers out of Egypt, of which Gideon said there was no token, (ver. 13.)

Have not I sent thee?] Is not this a sufficient authority, that thou hast a commission from God? great care is taken throughout all this book, to shew that the judges all acted by a Divine warrant.

Ver. 15. *And he said unto him, Oh, my Lord.*] Still he took him to be only some extraordinary man.

Wherewith shall I save Israel?] He doth not reject the commission, but modestly declines it (as Theodoret observes), considering his own meanness, in comparison with many others.

Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh.] And consequently of little power to raise forces, to oppose so potent an enemy: the word we translate *my family*, is in Hebrew *my thousand:* for the Israelites were distributed, by Jethro's advice, into hundreds and thousands; and the thousand to which Gideon belonged, was the meanest of all the rest in that tribe. The Jews will have it, that Gideon was the *chiliarch*, or chief commander of this thousand; others say, his father Joash, who, it appears by the story, was a considerable person; but it is uncertain whether he had such a government.

And I am the least in my father's house.] This shews that Gideon had no such command as the Jews imagine.

Ver. 16. *And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee.*] Do not consider thy poverty, but the power of God, which shall accompany thee: here the Targum thus paraphrases, *My Word shall be thy help;* who was the same that appeared to Joshua, with a sword in his hand.

And thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.] Defeat them as easily, as if he had but one man to deal withal.

Ver. 17. *And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight.*] Am so highly favoured as to have this honour.

Then shew me a sign.] He doth not so much make a doubt, as desire to be confirmed in his belief.

That thou talkest with me.] That thou hast brought this commission from God, and that I shall be able to destroy the Midianites. He said this (as Conr. Pellicanus thinks) not because his faith wanted confirmation, but that he might make others believe, who would require a sign before they joined with him.

Ver. 18. *Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee.*] Stay here till I go home, and return.

And bring forth my present.] So we rightly interpret the Hebrew word *mincha;* which, though it signify *a meat-offering* (as we observe in the margin), yet there was nothing of a sacrifice intended here, nor was Gideon a priest, or this a place of sacrifice.

And set it before thee.] He intended to entertain him, by making a feast for him.

And he said, I will tarry till thou come again.] It was a great thing he was to undertake, and so God graciously condescended to give him all manner of satisfaction about it.

Ver. 19. *And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour.*] For expedition's sake he made such cakes, they being soonest prepared: for it is a mere fancy of the Jews, that this was done about the Passover in the days of unleavened bread.

The flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it unto him under the oak, and presented it.] Set it before him on a table, and desired he would be pleased to eat: in which he followed the example of Abraham and Lot, and seems to have entertained him nobly, according to the way of feasting in those days; for a whole kid (part of which was boiled, and the other part, perhaps, otherwise prepared), and so many cakes, as an ephah of flour would make, was enough for several guests; and therefore so much set before one man, was to shew his great respect to him.

Ver. 20. *And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes.*] He did not taste of them, intending to turn them into a sacrifice unto God.

And lay them upon this rock.] Which was near the grove of oaks, in the higher part of the city of Ophrah, as Bertram conjectures, in his book de Repub. Judaica, cap. 15.

And pour out the broth.] As Elijah, in aftertimes, bade them pour water upon his sacrifice.

And he did so.] He obeyed him; though, it is likely, he thought it strange he should command him thus to dispose of the good cheer he had prepared for him.

Ver. 21. *Then the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand.*] For he appeared, I suppose, in the form of a traveller, who were wont to walk with a staff in their hand.

And touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock.] He did not smite the rock with his staff (by which stroke the fire might have been thought to be stirred up), but only gently touched the flesh and the cakes with it.

And consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes.] Together with the broth, that was poured on them; which was as great a miracle (if not greater) as if fire had come down from heaven, as in the sacrifices which Moses, and Elijah, and others, offered: by which the faith of Gideon was mightily strengthened, that the miracles done in ancient times (which he inquired after, ver. 13.) were not ceased, and that God would be as good as his word to him, for this was a token of God's acceptance of him.

And the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight.] Went up into heaven, as the Chaldee paraphrase interprets it.

Ver. 22. *And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the Lord.*] He was convinced, by this wonder, that he was not a mere prophet that appeared to him.

Alas, O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face.] He speaks as a man in a fright, and cuts off part of his words; for his meaning was, *I*

shall die: such was the opinion of good men in those days, that if they saw apparently an inhabitant of the other world, he came to call them away from this: as appears more fully in the story of Manoah and his wife, in the thirteenth chapter of this book: and this opinion was very ancient, as may be gathered from the words of Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 30. and they were confirmed in it, perhaps, by the words of God to Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 20.

Ver. 23. *And the Lord said unto him.*] Though the angel disappeared, and nothing was to be seen, yet the Lord, who appeared in that form to him, made him know he was still present with him, by speaking the following words in an audible voice.

Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.] He bids him fear no harm, but quite contrary, expect all manner of good (which is comprehended in the word *peace*), and that in this world, where he should still continue, to work that deliverance which he promised by him: from such places as this the ancient Christians rightly gathered, that the Son of God appeared, upon some great occasions, in old time; which is not incredible, but a matter of easy belief, if we be persuaded that he did really appear in our flesh, which he took of the Virgin Mary, and dwelt among us for a long time, and then ascended in it to heaven, where he lives for ever: for why should we think it strange, if, for a short time, he appeared some time in human shape, as a prelude to what he intended in the fulness of time? "Fuit sane id majus quod nobis præstitit," &c. (as Peter Martyr speaks.) *It was indeed a greater thing which he did for us at last;* but he that did the greater, may well be granted to have done the less, and there is no reason to doubt of it.

Ver. 24. *And Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord.*] Not for sacrifice (which had been directly contrary to the law of God), but as a monument of that heavenly vision, and of the mercy promised to him, in that place where he built the altar; *viz.* where the angel stood and touched the flesh and unleavened cakes, and consumed them: such an altar the Reubenites made, Josh. xxii. 10, &c.

And called it Jehovah-shalom.] That is, *the Lord here pronounced peace to me,* (ver. 23.) or (as we understand it in the margin), *the Lord grant peace:* which he had the greatest reason to expect, when God had declared it, at that very time when he looked for death.

Until this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites.] It was remaining when Samuel wrote this book.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass the same night.*] After the angel's appearance.

That the Lord said unto him.] In a dream, it is most likely, because it was in the night.

Take thy father's young bullock.] In the Hebrew the words are two, *par, shor,* signifying a bullock full-grown; which his father, it is probable, had fatted up for a sacrifice to Baal.

Even the second bullock.] Our translation supposes there was but one bullock, which he was ordered to take (because we read in the next verse, that this alone was sacrificed); but in the Hebrew, and the LXX. and the Vulgar (and our margin also), the words are, *and the second bullock;* which was next to the first in age.

Of seven years old.] Which was calved, as Arius Montanus observes, when their oppression under the Midianites began; and was now ordered to be sacrificed, in token that it should end with this bullock's death.

And throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath.] Which was in his ground, and built, perhaps, at his charge; but was for public use, as appears from ver. 28.

And cut down the grove that is by it.] Or rather, *upon it;* for so the Hebrew word *alau* signifies; and so the LXX. translate it ἐπ' αὐτῷ, upon the altar beforementioned. And therefore by *ashereh,* which we translate *grove,* must be meant the image in the grove, which stood upon the altar. And so the word is used in other places, (1 Kings xxiii. 6.) Which Mr. Selden probably conjectures was the image of Ashtaroth, or Astarte; for she was worshipped together with Baal, ii. 13. where they are said to have worshipped Baal and Ashtaroth (for there was more than one Astarte), which is the same with iii. 7. where it is said they worshipped Baalim and the groves. (See Syntag. ii. de Diis Syris, cap. 2.) There could be no hope of deliverance till religion was reformed; with which therefore God orders him to begin.

Ver. 26. *And build an altar unto the Lord thy God upon the top of this rock.*] Where the angel appeared to him; from whence Bertram thinks the Israelites learnt to sacrifice in high places; if it were not rather a custom derived from the gentiles.

On the top of this rock there was a fortress, as I take it; which, it is likely, had been built to secure them from the Midianites. For the word for *rock* is not the ordinary one, *viz. tzor,* or *sela,* but *mahoz;* which signifies a strong hold.

In the ordered place.] Which St. Jerome took to be the place where the flesh and unleavened cakes were laid in order upon the rock; (ver. 20.) but it may signify, as we translate it in the margin, *in an orderly manner.*

And take the second bullock, and offer a burnt-sacrifice.] If there were two bullocks which he took, it is hard to say what became of the first. Arius Montanus supposes it was offered for himself, and for his family; but this *second* is only mentioned, because it was the sacrifice that was offered for the whole nation, to implore God's mercy to them; for sacrifices were a kind of prayer and supplication. Gideon was no priest, but by God's special order was required to do this; which otherwise would have been a presumptuous sin.

With the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down.] This was also an extraordinary command, whereby things employed to idolatry were converted to a sacred use: otherwise, God had ordered them all to be utterly destroyed, (Deut. vii. 5. xii. 3.)

Ver. 27. *Then Gideon took ten men of his servants.*] In whom he could confide; and this number was as many as was necessary to make a congregation for public worship; and was sufficient also to execute what God had commanded.

And did as the Lord had said unto him.] Broke down the altar of Baal, cut down the grove, and built an altar unto the Lord, and offered the burnt-sacrifice.

And so it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day.] Without endangering a tumult, which might have ended in a fray.

That he did it by night.] When he was likely to meet with no opposition. In this he gave an early proof of his faith in God, for it was a bold undertaking: but prudence

is not excluded in the execution of the Divine commands: yet the greater speed men make, the more acceptable it is; and some think his zeal moved him to do this the very same night wherein God appeared to him.

Ver. 28. *And when the men of the city rose early in the morning.*] And came to worship Baal, before they went about their business.

Behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove cut down that was by it.] They were very much surprised to see such an alteration.

And the second bullock was offered.] Which they knew was designed for a sacrifice to Baal.

Upon the altar that was built.] Not upon the altar of Baal which was thrown down, but on a new one which was built in another place; upon which the flesh of the second bullock was still flaming, being not quite consumed, when they came thither.

Ver. 29. *And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing?*] Their superstition made them very solicitous to find out the author of this impiety, as they accounted it.

And when they inquired and asked.] Here are two words in the Hebrew, importing that they made a diligent inquisition; examining many persons what they knew of it.

They said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing.] Who gave this information, we are not told; nor how the discovery was made: perhaps some had seen him that morning stand by the sacrifice; which it is likely he would not forsake, as long as he durst attend it. Or some of his servants might let fall such words as gave suspicion: or, the altar and image standing in Joash's ground, and his bullock being offered, they thought that none, without the knowledge of his family, could come to attempt it: and, besides, it is probable that Gideon was known to be no zealous servant of Baal; and when all were so very much concerned for the demolishing of his altar, he expressing no concern at all, they confidently charged him with the fact.

Ver. 30. *Then the men of the city said to Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die; because he,* &c.] It seems they were all zealous idolaters; and thought him worthy of death who dishonoured those who were accounted gods.

Ver. 31. *And Joash said unto all that stood against him.*] That is, against his son; demanding to have him produced and punished.

Will ye plead for Baal? Will ye save him?] *i. e.* Will you take upon you to avenge his quarrel, and to be his patrons? Doth it belong to you to be his defenders and deliverers? It seems to have been a popular tumult, which he endeavours to repress; by representing to them, that such crimes were not to be punished by them, but by the magistrates of the city; and that they would bring themselves in danger of what they intended to do to Gideon, if they did not desist; as it follows in the next words.

He that will plead for him, let him be put to death.] That is, Let me tell you, he that thus moves sedition in this cause, by my consent, should be put to death himself. And, it is likely, Joash was a magistrate in the city; who terrified them by declaring what his opinion would be, if they came to be tried for this riot.

While it is yet morning.] That is, immediately. For it was early in the morning (ver. 28.) when they came in this manner to Joash.

If he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar.] If the magistrates neglected to punish the pretended crime, Baal, he tells them, in case he were a real god, would take care to do himself right; and therefore they need not be so much concerned about it: and so some understand the latter part of this verse, *He deserves to die presently, who is an adversary to Baal: but let the execution be done then by Baal himself. For if he be a god, he will take care of his own honour; and you need not trouble yourselves about it.* It is likely Joash had been convinced by his son, that God had given him a commission to deliver his people; and to begin it with this reformation: which made him appear thus boldly in his son's cause; because he knew it was the cause of God.

Ver. 32. *Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal.*] In 2 Sam. xi. 21. he is called *Jerubbesheth;* for so some called Baal, in contempt, by the name of *Besheth,* that is, *shame* and *confusion;* which well expresses the nature of such idols.

Saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.] This is the reason why he gave him this name; which is as much as to say, *the adversary of Baal;* or, *him whom Baal hath a quarrel withal;* upon the account of the affront put upon him, in throwing down his altar. The Phœnicians called him Jerombalus, as appears by Sanchoniathon, whom Eusebius often quotes, as he is translated by Philo-Byblius into Greek: and Porphyry saith, he received certain commentaries from Jerombalus, the priest of the god Jevo. Which can be nothing but the books of Moses, which contain the laws delivered by Jehovah; as Huetius justly observes in his Demonstr. Evangel. propos. iv. cap. 2. for the remains which we have of his writings plainly taste of the doctrine of Moses.

Ver. 33. *Then all the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, were gathered together.*] As they were wont to do every year, to waste the country, (ver. 3—5.)

And went over.] The river Jordan.

And pitched in the valley of Jezreel.] Which alarmed Gideon, and gave him occasion to execute his commission; it being not far from Ophrah; for Jezreel in the tribe of Judah is not here meant, (mentioned Josh. xv. 36.) but Jezreel in the tribe of Manasseh, or Issachar, which is frequently spoken of in the book of the Kings, being one of the royal seats of the kings of Israel; where there was a noble valley, running from the east to the west, mentioned Josh. xvii. 16. Hosea i. 5.

Ver. 34. *But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon.*] Or (as the words are in the Hebrew, and as the LXX. translate it), *clothed Gideon:* which is a phrase St. Paul uses to signify a man is replenished with that wherewith he is said to be clothed; or that he is fully possessed of it. So was Gideon with courage, and all other qualities necessary in a great commander.

And he blew a trumpet, and Abi-ezer was gathered unto him.] Came and offered their service to fight under his banner. This was a wonderful change, if the city of Ophrah, who were lately so incensed against him, that they would have killed him for destroying their idol, now not only submitted to him, but were ready to join with him against all his enemies: but though this be not incredible, that they were converted from the idolatrous worship of

Baal, when they saw no hurt befal Gideon for throwing down his altar, &c. yet this may be meant only of the rest of the Abi-ezrites, and especially those of his own kindred and family.

Ver. 35. *And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, who also were gathered after him.*] That is, the rest of his tribe; whose hearts God moved to resort unto him.

And he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali.] After his own tribe was come in, he invited these three who bordered upon the tribe of Manasseh northward to come to his assistance: but he did not send unto the tribe of Ephraim, who were neighbours to the Manassites on the south; which afterward begat a quarrel, as we read chap. viii.

And they came to meet them.] One of the copies of the LXX. refers this to Gideon, that he went up to meet those of the three tribes beforementioned; but others refer it to them who came up to meet Gideon; and so the Hebrew words seem to import. But which way soever we take it, they all joined their forces together; and from hence Sir J. Marsham infers, that the oppression fell only on this part of the country; though the whole story represents all the Israelites as in a miserable condition, and as submitting to his government, after he had delivered them.

Ver. 36. *And Gideon said unto God.*] In a prayer, which, I suppose, he made unto him.

If thou wilt save Israel by my hand, as thou hast said.] He did not doubt of God's intentions, who had promised to be with him: for in pursuit of his commands he had done one great thing already, in throwing down Baal's altar; and had also blown a trumpet and listed soldiers; and had likewise seen wonderful effects of God's power, in consuming the flesh and the cakes that were laid upon the rock, by fire coming out of it: therefore he desired only a confirmation of his faith; and that, perhaps, for the sake of those who were to go with him, who might possibly be timorous: or he might desire by some sign to know, whether at this time he would make him victorious over the Midianites, or he was to wait for some other opportunity.

Ver. 37. *Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor.*] Where they were wont to thrash corn; which was done in the open air, not in barns, as we do now.

And if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by my hand, as thou hast said.] He supposed that the dew which distilled from heaven was a Divine gift, (as the Scripture often testifies, particularly Gen. xxviii. 28.) which he desires might be so governed by God, that though it commonly fall every where, it might now, by his extraordinary providence, water only his fleece.

Ver. 38. *And it was so: for he rose up early in the morning, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl-full of water.*] When there was not a drop upon the earth round about it. The word *sephel*, which here we translate *bowl*, was used in the foregoing chapter, ver. 25. Which see.

Ver. 39. *And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once.*] Though God did not chide him for his former desire, nor charge him with any distrust of his power and will to do what he promised; yet Gideon was afraid lest he should be very angry at his renewing the same request, because it looked like a diffidence in God's word. But if we consider, that it was for the farther and fuller satisfaction of those that were to go with him, it may be excused; and as he promises that he will ask no more signs, so we do not find the Lord took it ill of him that he asked this.

Let me prove thee, I pray thee, with the fleece.] This is a bad word, when it denotes men's infidelity, that no sign will be given them; but a good one, when it signifies an humble desire to have such a sign granted them, as here it doth.

Let it be dry now only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew.] Upon these words Ralbag hath this observation, "The former miracle was not sufficient for his conviction, because it is in the very nature of wool to draw moisture to it; and therefore he desires this second miracle, which is contrary to the first."

Ver. 40. *And God did so that night.*] For some dewdrops in the morning, other in the night. And here God was pleased, not in the morning, but in that very night when he asked this sign, to sprinkle all the floor with dew, and let none fall upon the fleece. So ready (saith Bochartus) is God to hear our prayers; which his benefits do not so much follow, as go before them, or immediately accompany them.

For it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.] Not upon all the country of Israel, but upon all the floor, or the land thereabout. By these quite contrary signs his faith was fully confirmed; and perhaps there was some need of it, when he saw the number of his followers reduced to a small handful of three hundred men, (vii. 10.) There are those who think he chose a fleece of wool for that purpose, not only because it was ready at hand, but the better to express how the earth was shorn by the Midianites, as the sheep had been by him; and when he begged the dew (a sign of the Divine favour) might fall upon the fleece, it was to represent the kindness of God to him; and when he begged it might fall upon the whole ground, it represented his favour to all the people: and, lastly, that these two miracles, opposite one to the other, do notably set forth the state of that nation, who were moistened with the dew of heaven (the knowledge of God) when the rest of the world were dry; and now are dry, when the rest of the earth are filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *THEN Jerubbaal (who is Gideon), and all the people that were with him, rose up early.*] The very next morning, I suppose, after the last miracle.

And pitched beside the well of Harod.] It is but conjectured where this well was; *viz.* not far from Mount Gilboa.

So that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh.] The Vulgar takes the word Moreh to signify high; and then this high hill can be no other than the forenamed Gilboa. Here Pellicanus observes, that prudence and diligent forecast is to be used, even when we are under the Divine conduct; for he thinks Gideon acted like a skilful commander, when he quartered his army so, as to have the enemy on the north of him, rather than the east or the south.

In the valley.] Of Jezreel, as was said before, vi. 33.

which had Hermon on the north, and Gilboa on the south of it.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand.*] They were but thirty-two thousand, against an innumerable army of the enemies, (ver. 3. 12.) which was a vast disproportion; and yet God would not use the service of such a company, lest it should obscure his glory; as it follows in the next words.

Lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.] He knew their humour, and foresaw they might be so vain as to ascribe the victory to their own power and prowess, and not to him who intended to shew to all the world it was his miraculous work.

Ver. 3. *Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people.*] According to the command of Moses, Deut. xx. 8.

Whosoever is fearful and afraid.] The word which we translate *afraid*, is in the Hebrew *harod*: from whence some have conjectured the well where they pitched (ver. 1.) was called by the name of *Harod*, because here a great fear came upon most of Gideon's army.

Let him return and depart early.] As soon as he can: or, as a great many understand it, *make what haste he can to his home;* it being a metaphor, they think, from the flying of a bird.

From Mount Gilead.] Not that mountain which is so often mentioned in Scripture; for that was on the other side of Jordan, and in the most eastern part of their country (as appears from the story of Jacob, when he returned from Padan-Aram), but another mountain on this west side of Jordan, in the tribe of Manasseh: the name of whose grandson Gilead (from whom all the tribe descended) was given, it is probable, in memory of him, to some mountain in this country; which was called Mount Gilead, just as another mountain in the tribe of Ephraim was called Mount Ephraim. This seems to me a far more rational account of these words, than theirs who translate them *towards Mount Gilead*, or *about it;* or devise some other such-like explication of the particle *min* (which we rightly translate *from*), as may consist with their opinion, that the mount on the other side Jordan is here intended. Gataker hath collected many interpretations of this kind in his Cinnus, lib. ii. cap. 18.

And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand.] As God thought there were too many, so they thought there were too few, to fight with such a host as came against them: and therefore, though they were at the first forward to list themselves under Gideon, yet, when they saw no greater number come in, as they expected, their hearts failed them; for they trusted not in God, but in their own strength.

And there remained ten thousand.] Who had more courage, and were resolved to venture their lives in the cause. Ralbag thinks the greater number that went away were men of bad lives, whose consciences made them afraid; and that these who remained were better men, which made them valiant and undaunted. And they were just the same number that went down with Barak from Mount Tabor, in their last deliverance, (iv. 10.)

Ver. 4. *And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many.*] The more valiant they were, the more they might be apt to ascribe to themselves.

Bring them down unto the water.] Which, it is likely, ran from the well or fountain of Harod, and made a brook.

And I will try them for thee there.] Give thee a proof who are fit for the service. The Hebrew word *tzaraph* signifies to scour, purge, and purify; as fullers do cloth from its filthiness, or as refiners do gold and silver from their dross. So God intended to purge Gideon's army, from all such persons as he judged unmeet for the undertaking.

And it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.] He intended by such a voice as now spake unto him, to declare who should go with him, and who should not.

Ver. 5. *So he brought down the people unto the water.*] Where it was proper to purge them.

And the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.] They were thirsty, we may well suppose, by the heat of the weather, and by their march, which made them greedily betake themselves to the water: where he bid Gideon observe the different postures which they used in quenching of their thirst. The LXX. here translate it πᾶς ὃς ἂν λάψῃ τῇ γλώσσῃ αὐτοῦ, *Whosoever licketh up the water with his tongue.* Which is the very word the great philosopher uses in his History of Animals, lib. viii. cap. 6. where he saith, those creatures whose teeth are continued close together, sup up water as horses and oxen do; but such as he calls καρχαρόδοντα, *that have teeth like a saw,* do λάπτειν, which is of the same signification with our English word *lap*, and the French *laper*, as Bochart observes.

Ver. 6. *And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men; but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.*] Some ascribe it to the sloth and laziness of these three hundred men, that they would not stoop down to drink as the rest did; others to their timorousness, and the great fear they were in of being suddenly surprised by their enemies, which is the opinion of Josephus and Theodoret; both which great authors think, that God chose these three hundred men, on purpose because they were poor-spirited, that the victory might be acknowledged to be entirely owing to himself: and Grotius is of this mind, who thinks they lapped, just as the dogs do of the river Nile, as they run, for fear of the crocodiles. (See Sixtiri Amama's Antibarbarus, lib. iii. p. 385.) But it is evident that all the fearful persons were dismissed before; and it is not likely that courageous men were lazy; therefore I take it, as others do (particularly Procopius Gazæus), to be a token of their temperance, and of the nobleness of their spirit, which made them so desirous to engage the enemy, that they would not stay to drink; but though they were very thirsty, contented themselves to moisten their mouth with a little water; whereas the rest indulged themselves so far, as to drink their belly-full. And it is the opinion of Ralbag, among the Jews, that their lapping standing, was a sign of their alacrity and fortitude. R. Solomon, and Kimchi, also think, that the rest had been worshippers of Baal, and, by bowing their knees to drink, were discovered, which is a far-fetched conceit.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand.*] It was sufficient to let all the world see God saved them and not men, that he employed only three hundred persons in this service, yet it was necessary these three hundred should be men of extraordinary faith and courage (such as Gideon had) to embolden them to this enterprise.

And let all the other people go every man unto his place.] He had sent away above two-thirds of his army before, and now of that third part he keeps only the thirtieth.

Ver. 8. *And the people took victuals in their hands.*] They that returned home left so much provision as would serve to maintain three hundred men for some time.

And their trumpets.] If we suppose every thousand men to have ten trumpeters belonging to them, it was easy to furnish three hundred men with every one a trumpet, which we read (ver. 16.) they had, that they might, when they sounded, make a noise, as if they were a greater number than really they were. It is hard to say, how Josephus came to say, that they carried in their hand κριοῦ κέρας, *a ram's horn*, which they used ἀντὶ σάλπιγγος, *instead of a trumpet*, (lib. v. Antiq. cap. 8.) for rams' horns are not hollow: and the LXX. only call them κερατίνας, not saying of what they were made. It may be supposed, indeed, that rams' horns were made hollow for this use, as the Jews make them at this day.

And he sent all the rest of Israel, every man, unto his tent.] Who, it is probable, did not go so far, but that they were ready to join with those who pursued the Midianites after their defeat, (ver. 23, 24.)

And retained those three hundred men.] Kept no more with him than this number whom God had chosen to accomplish his promise.

And the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.] It seems his small handful of men lay encamped upon a hill, where the Midianites thought it not safe to assault them, not knowing what number they were, nor how entrenched, and therefore they lay still in the valley of Jezreel.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass the same night.*] After he had reduced his forces to this small number.

That the Lord said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host of the Midianites.] Who lay in the valley below him.

For I have delivered it into thy hand.] There, he means, he should understand, and be fully satisfied by what he should hear, that his victory over them was as sure as if he had already obtained it.

Ver. 10. *But if thou fear to go down.*] As he had some reason, having now such a slender company with him.

Go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host.] Every man is more afraid alone, than when he hath a trusty companion with him; yet it was not fit to carry more than one, whose fidelity was known to him; for secret designs are not to be committed to many.

Ver. 11. *And thou shalt hear what they say.*] Hear the discourse that some of them would have with another.

And afterward shall thine hand be strengthened to go down unto the host.] Whereby he should be encouraged to attack that great army, with so small a number as he had remaining with him. This shews how exceeding acceptable his faith and obedience was to God, in sending away as many of his army as he bade him dismiss; for now he gives him a further confirmation of his faith without asking.

Then went he down with Phurah his servant.] Faith had quite expelled all his fear.

Unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host.] To the out-guards, as we now speak, who seem to have consisted of fifty men, as the LXX. think the Hebrew word *chamuschim* signifies; for they translate it τῶν πεντήκοντα.

Ver. 12. *And the Midianites, and Amalekites, and all the children of the earth.*] Who joined with them in this invasion.

Lay along in the valley.] Of Jezreel beforementioned, into which Gideon now went down.

Like grasshoppers for multitude.] See vi. 5.

And their camels were without number.] Both Midian and Amalek, and the countries about them, abounded with camels, which were serviceable to them in their wars, as well as in carrying burdens. (See Bochart, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 2.) And in them they placed their principal riches, as he observes out of Leo Africanus, who saith, that when the Arabians would express the great wealth of their prince, they do not say, he hath so many thousand pounds of gold or silver, but so many thousand camels.

As the sand by the sea-side for multitude.] So the Hebrews are wont to express a vastly great number. The certain knowledge of their number, it is likely, never came to the knowledge of the Israelites; but we read of a hundred and twenty thousand men that were slain, and fifteen thousand that escaped, with their two princes, viii. 10. And how many were taken captive, is not recorded.

Ver. 13. *And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow.*] Which troubled his thoughts, I suppose, when he was awake, as the dream of Pharaoh, and his butler, and baker, and of Nebuchadnezzar, in aftertimes, disturbed them.

And said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley-bread.] Or, as the Vulgar translates it, *A loaf baked in the ashes*, which was the meanest of all other bread, and hastily prepared.

Tumbled.] Came tumbling down like a bowl from the mountain.

Into the host of Midian.] Through all the guards, into the very middle of the army, which was a sign that Gideon should break through all opposition.

And came unto a tent.] The principal tent, which was pitched for their kings, or their general, in the midst of the host.

And smote it, that it fell.] This seemed strange to the man, that so small a thing as a cake, or a loaf of bread, should throw down a tent, which was not shaken by a strong wind.

And overturned it, that the tent lay along.] It not only fell, but was so shattered that it could not be reared up again; which was a lively emblem of the utter overthrow of the Midianites, and their numerous host, by Gideon, and his small company, as his fellow-soldier interpreted it.

Ver. 14. *And his fellow answered and said.*] It appears by the example beforementioned, that God sometimes sent dreams into the minds of pagan people, who were much concerned to find an interpreter of them: but here, by a single providence, one of his comrades was inspired to tell the meaning immediately.

This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash.] The barley-cake was a fit emblem of Gideon and his soldiers, who were a small number, as a cake is made of a little flour kneaded together; and was mean also, and contemptible, in comparison with the Midianites, as a barley-cake is in comparison with wheaten bread: but the man could not have understood this, unless God had suggested it to him, for the confirmation of Gideon's faith and resolution.

A man of Israel.] *i. e.* A great commander; for so the Hebrews truly interpret the word *isch*, who (as L'Empereur observes out of R. Schamaja) called the governor, or chief commander of those who guarded the temple, *isch har habeth, the man of the mountain of the temple.* (Cod. Middoth, cap. 1.)

For into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.] All their confederates. Nothing is more vain than our common dreams, yet God hath sometimes admonished men that way of future things, as many of the heathen themselves acknowledge (and those, the wisest of them, such as Hippocrates). But that a common soldier should give such an exact interpretation of another soldier's dream, and that against themselves, and their own nation, is very extraordinary.

Ver. 15. *And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof.*] He understood the Midianitish language, it is likely, having been long a subject to that nation; or, perhaps, it did not differ much from the Hebrew.

That he worshipped.] Gave humble thanks to God for his goodness, in giving him new encouragement to proceed in his undertaking.

And returned to the host of Israel.] So he calls it (though it scarce deserved that name), because God intended to do the same by this small number, as if they had been a great host.

And said, Arise, for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.] He bids them make no doubt nor delay, for God had given fresh assurance of success.

Ver. 16. *And he divided the three hundred men into three companies.*] Under three commanders-in-chief, as the Hebrew *raschim* imports, which signifies *heads.*

And he put a trumpet into every man's hand.] That they might make a sound of a great army.

With empty pitchers.] Earthen pitchers, which had no water in them; wherein they hid their lamps till they should think fit to light them.

And lamps within their pitchers.] Or, rather, *torches;* for, no doubt, they were made of pitch, or wax, and rosin, and such-like things as would burn long, and not be blown out by the wind, as lamps made of oil only are apt to be.

Ver. 17. *And he said unto them, Look on me and do likewise.*] Follow my example.

And, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp.] Where he began the assault.

It shall be, that as I do, so shall ye do.] I suppose he told them what he would do, *viz.* after they heard him blow the trumpet (as it follows in the next verse), they should do the same, and then break their pitchers and light their torches, &c.

Ver. 18. *When I blow with a trumpet, I, and all that are with me.*] It is likely he commanded one of the three troops with whom he began the attack, as the next verse imports.

Then blow ye the trumpet also on every side of all the camp.] By this it appears that they did not fall upon them all in one place, but some on one part of their camp, some on another, that they might strike the greater terror into them, and put them into confusion.

And say, The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.] The word *sword* is not here in the Hebrew, where these words run thus, *for the Lord, and for Gideon:* but there being mention of the *sword*, ver. 20. it moved our translators to add it here also: and it is not to be thought contrary to the design of God, (who would have the victory ascribed to himself, ver. 2.) that Gideon here joins his own name with God's when they went to fight; for, as he puts God in the first place, and names himself only as his minister, so it is likely he had directions from God for it, who knew the name of Gideon, of whose extraordinary courage, no doubt, the Midianites had heard, would be very formidable to them.

Ver. 19. *So Gideon and the hundred men that were with him.*] The Vulgar took a hundred to be put for the whole host of Gideon, and therefore saith, *The three hundred men that were with him:* but the LXX. expressly follow the Hebrew; and it is most probable that he led only a hundred men himself, the rest being commanded by some other valiant captains.

Came to the outside of the camp.] It is not said on what quarter; but it is probable on the east part of their camp, as the second troop set upon them on the north-east part, and the third on the south-east: for this way they knew they would bend their flight when they were routed, and endeavoured to escape; their own country, and the fords of Jordan, lying on the east: and if they ran westward, there were Israelites enough to pursue them, and cut them off.

In the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch.] That is, a little after midnight: for there were three watches among the Hebrews and the rest of the eastern nations, as Bochart observes out of Kimchi, R. Solomon, and others; the night being divided into three parts: and when the first third part was ended, they that had watched went to sleep, and another company succeeded them, till the morning watch. The Romans afterward divided the night into four parts, from whence we read, in the gospel, of the fourth watch.

And they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands.] Though Gideon placed his hope in God alone, yet he did not neglect such prudent stratagems as are used in war, but made an appearance of a greater number of men than he had with him: for, hearing three hundred trumpets sound, the Midianites could not but apprehend a great army was come to assault them: the breaking of the pitchers also made a clattering noise, and the torches then, on a sudden, flaring in their eyes, was very amazing, especially when they heard them shout, *for the Lord, and for Gideon:* he chose also to make his attack at midnight, when they were in a dead sleep, and expected no disturbance.

Ver. 20. *And the three companies.*] The former words were concerning Gideon and his men, who began the attack; whose example the rest of the three companies followed, as he required, ver. 17, 18.

Blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hand, and the trumpets in their right hand to blow withal.] So that they made no use of their swords, in the first onset; both hands being full of something else.

And they cried, The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.] But this stratagem had been of no efficacy, if God had not struck such a terror into them, when they heard these words, as quite confounded them: and yet these words do not import, as I said before, that the victory was divided between the Lord and Gideon; for it is most likely (as Pet. Martyr observes) that God suggested even this stratagem to Gideon, and made it successful.

Ver. 21. *And they stood every man in his place round about the camp.*] Not one of the three hundred men stirred a foot from his place, but stood there without striking a stroke; as if they had been only torch-bearers, to give light to their army, to see their way to the camp, and to do execution.

And all the host ran, and cried, and fled.] They did not stand in their ranks to repel the Israelites; but brake up their camp (as the Hebrew word *jaratz* may be translated), and cried out with a lamentable voice, fleeing as fast as they could to their own country.

Ver. 22. *And the three hundred men blew the trumpets.*] That is, continued to blow them without ceasing.

And the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host.] Being suddenly awaked out of their sleep in the middle of the night, and hearing such a noise, as if a vast multitude were falling upon them, they were in such disorder (which was increased by the clattering of the pitchers, and the blaze of the torches), that they could not distinguish their friends from their enemies, but killed one another; every man falling upon him that was next to him, whom he fancied to be one of Gideon's army. Thus the Philistines were defeated by Jonathan, (1 Sam. xiv. 16. 20.) and the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites, in the days of Jehoshaphat, (2 Chron. xx. 22, 23.)

And the host fled to Beth-shittah in Zererath, and to the border of Abel-meholah, unto Tabbath.] We find none of these places mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, but only Abel-meholah, in 1 Kings iv. 12. xix. 16. which being in the tribe of Manasseh, not far from the river Jordan, may support a conjecture, that the rest of the places were in the way thither.

Ver. 23. *And the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher.*] He had sent to these tribes at the first raising of his army, and also to Zebulun, who, being neighbours, came to join him, (vi. 35.)

And out of all Manasseh.] Who were the forwardest in this enterprise, being his own tribe.

And pursued after the Midianites.] Though they had been lately disbanded by God's order, yet it is likely they lay ready, if there should be occasion, to help to complete the victory.

Ver. 24. *And Gideon sent messengers throughout all Mount Ephraim.*] He was desirous that others should have some share with him, in finishing this work; though he alone, with some few began it, and were exposed to all the danger. Would to God (saith P. Martyr on this occasion) that we were of this spirit in the church of Christ, that when any noble work is begun, we would call in all to help to perfect it: but, alas! such are our sins, we oft-times do all we are able to hinder one another.

Saying, Come down against the Midianites.] He invites them to come to his assistance against the common enemy; which his small handful of men were not sufficient to destroy, though they had entirely routed them.

And take before them the waters.] He would have them make such haste, as to possess themselves of the fords, before the Midianites could get to them.

Unto Beth-barah and Jordan.] It is very probable, that Beth-barah is the same place with Beth-abara in St. John's gospel, (i. 28.) being the place where the Israelites passed over Jordan, when they first entered Canaan: and then by Jordan must be meant all the fords upon this river, from Beth-barah to the lake of Gennesaret.

Then all the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and took the waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan.] Posted themselves all along the river, from the lake beforementioned unto Beth-barah.

Ver. 25. *And they took two princes of the Midianites.*] Two great commanders, as the word *sarim* signifies, which we translate *princes.*

Oreb and Zeeb.] From hence some gather that the Midianitish language did not much differ from the Hebrew: in which *Oreb* signifies a *crow*, and *Zeeb* a *wolf*; from which creatures, and such-like, it seems very anciently great men thought fit to take the names of their families: as the Romans did afterward, (among whom we read of the Corvini, and Gracchi, and Aquilini, &c.) either as omens, or as monuments of their undaunted courage and dexterity in military achievements.

And they slew Oreb upon the rock Oreb.] It is likely that there he was taken hidden in some hole, and from his slaughter there the rock had its name in future times.

And Zeeb they slew at the wine-press of Zeeb.] Where he also, in like manner, being taken and slain, gave name to this place.

And pursued Midian.] Did not content themselves with this, but pursued them to the other side of Jordan; whither some of them had escaped, before they would obey Gideon's summons.

And brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon.] As the manner was in aftertimes, when they would gratify a great conqueror with a welcome spectacle: for thus Pompey's head was offered to Cæsar, and Cicero's to Mark Antony.

On the other side Jordan.] Over which we read (viii. 4.) Gideon passed, in the pursuit of the enemy.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the men of Ephraim said unto him.*] When they presented the heads of the two princes unto him.

Why hast thou served us thus?] They thought themselves slighted by their brethren of the tribe of Manasseh; which they took the more heinously, because they looked upon themselves to be every way superior to them, by the blessing of Jacob.

That thou calledst us not when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites.] As he had done other meaner tribes, (vi. 35.) who were not so able to assist him as themselves.

And they did chide with him sharply.] Spake very angry words, as if they would have come to blows.

Ver. 2. *And he said, What have I done now in comparison with you?*] Proud men love to be praised; and therefore he magnifies their service as far surpassing his own.

Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim, better than the vintage of Abi-ezer?] A common proverb, I suppose, in those days, whereby they were wont to commend the smallest action of one, as superior to the greatest of another: and here it is most fitly applied; for it is as if he had said, These scattered parties that you have gleaned and picked up (as we now speak) at the fords of Jordan, are far more than those which I and my whole host (as it is called, vii. 15.) have destroyed.

Ver. 3. *God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb.*] Which he was content they should think more considerable than all the common men that he had vanquished.

And what was I able to do in comparison with you?] To yield unto others the glory which they affect, wonderfully appeases their highest displeasure.

Then their anger was abated towards him when he had said that.] According to that of Solomon, Prov. xv. 1. This is an argument of the singular modesty and prudence of Gideon, and no less conspicuous in him than his courage; which is a mixture that rarely meets together, but is absolutely necessary to make a truly great man; who never appears so great, as when he treats insolent men with humility, and angry men with meekness.

Ver. 4. *And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over.*] Or rather, *had passed over;* for he was gone over Jordan before Oreb and Zeeb were taken; but it is not related till now, that what concerned the Ephraimites might be told altogether without interruption.

He and the three hundred men that were with him.] Not one of which was lost.

Faint, yet pursuing them.] Tired with a long march, and eager pursuit; which notwithstanding they continued, being more solicitous for the public safety than their own.

Ver. 5. *And he said unto the men of Succoth.*] A city in the tribe of Gad, mentioned in Gen. xxxiii. 17. and other places.

Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto the people that follow me.] A small request, considering their great merits.

For they be faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna.] He gives two reasons for his request; because his men were faint with a whole night's labour for the public safety, and he had not made his victory so complete as he hoped to do, if his men were refreshed and enabled to pursue the enemy.

Kings of Midian.] It is no wonder we read of more kings than one in this country, there being five in Moses's time, (Numb. xxxi. 8.) and more than five times five in Canaan, which was divided into many petty kingdoms: and therefore, if we take Oreb and Zeeb also to have been kings, there is no improbability in it.

Ver. 6. *And the princes of Succoth said.*] The rulers and governors of the city, who had the chief authority among them; as Oreb and Zeeb had in the army of Midian, for it is the very same word in the Hebrew.

Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thy hand, that we should give bread unto thy army?] They bid him first take those kings captives, and bring them thither with their hands bound behind them, before he made any demands of them. It is a bitter sort of taunt or derision, arising from irreligion; which made them think there was nothing of God in this victory, and that he would not be able to perfect it.

Ver. 7. *And Gideon said, Therefore when the Lord hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand.*] As he was confident he would.

Then will I tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness, and with briers.] This city was near to a wilderness, in which there were plenty of thorns and briers; with which he threatens to *thrash* their flesh, as the word is in the Hebrew: which some think signifies, that laying briers and thorns on their naked bodies, he intended to bring the cart-wheel over them (as the manner was of thrashing out their corn) to fasten them deep in their flesh, and then crush them to death: such a kind of punishment David inflicted on the Ammonites, (2 Sam. xii. *ult.*)

Ver. 8. *And he went up from thence.*] He would not stay to avenge this repulse at present, but sacrificed his private resentments to the public service, and therefore went on after the enemy.

Unto Penuel.] Another city in the tribe of Gad, not far from Succoth; unto both which Jacob gave their name, (Gen. xxxii. 30. xxxiii. 17.)

And spake unto them likewise.] Desired some provision of them, for the same reason.

And the men of Penuel.] *i. e.* The principal persons of the city.

Answered him as the men of Succoth had answered him.] It is very likely they were idolaters; and therefore hated Gideon, who began to reform religion: and, trusting to the strength of their tower, despised the small forces he had with him.

Ver. 9. *And he spake unto the men of Penuel, saying, When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower.*] In which they confided; and perhaps pointed to it, when they gave him their rude answer.

Ver. 10. *Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor.*] We read of this place no where else; and therefore it is but a conjecture that it was in the confines of the tribe of Gad. St. Jerome saith, there was a castle in his time called Carcaria, about a day's journey from the city Petra; and Eusebius saith the same.

And all the hosts with them.] That is, all the troops or regiments, as we now speak, that fled with them.

About fifteen thousand men, all that were left of all the hosts of the children of the east.] This moved those of Succoth and Penuel to mock at Gideon; that he should think with three hundred men, and they fatigued (as we now speak), to vanquish fifteen thousand; and that he should make demands to them, as if he had his enemies already in his power.

For there fell a hundred and twenty thousand men that drew sword.] Besides all the people that attended their baggage.

Ver. 11. *And Gideon went up by the way of them that dwelt in tents.*] He fetched a compass, by the country of the Arabians called Scenitæ, because they dwelt in tents: and so he came upon the back of Zebah and Zalmunna; where they suspected no danger.

On the east of Nobah and Jogbehah.] Two cities, the last of which is expressly said to be in the tribe of Gad, Numb. xxxii. 35. and the former in the tribe of Manasseh, on the borders of Gad, as may be gathered from this place.

And smote the host: for the host was secure.] He fell upon them, it is very probable, in the night, as he had done upon their main army at the first: and they having fled as fast as they could, the day, and part of the night before, were gone to take their rest; supposing they had been out of all danger of disturbance, now they were got so far from the place of battle.

Ver. 12. *And when Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued after them.*] We read of no refreshment that he and his men had all this time; but either they met with some by the way, or God miraculously supported them.

And took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and discomfited all the host.] Having routed their army, the two kings could make little resistance.

Ver. 13. *And Gideon the son of Joash returned from the battle before the sun was up.*] The Hebrew words *milmahaleh hachares* are so variously translated by very learned men, that it hath made it uncertain whether he returned after sun-rise, or a little before it set (as Kimchi among the Jews, and Mercer among Christians understand it), or, as our translation, *before sun-rise:* so the Vulgar, with Junius, and Tremellius, and others. And then it shews, both that Gideon had smote the army in the night, and that he made such haste to return, that he came to Succoth before they were aware, by break of day.

Ver. 14. *And caught a young man of the men of Succoth, and inquired of him.*] Surprised him in the field, and examined him who were the principal men of the city.

And he described to him the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, even threescore and seventeen men.] He wrote down (as the Hebrew word for *describe* signifies) the names, and, perhaps, the dwellings of the great men of the city, and of the judges; who were the persons that derided him, and whom alone he intended to punish; not all the people, who were not in the guilt.

Ver. 15. *And he came unto the men of Succoth.*] Got into the city very early; and called those men before him, who had put the late affront upon him.

And said, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, with whom you upbraided me.] He kept these two kings alive, on purpose that the princes of Succoth might see the Lord had delivered them into his hand; and made their jeers turn to their own shame.

Saying, Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna in thy hand, that we should give bread unto thy men that are weary?] He repeats their own words to them, (ver. 6.) that he might reproach them with their inhuman usage of him; when he was in distress, and had done such wonders for their preservation.

Ver. 16. *And he took the elders of the city.*] Under this name of *elders*, all their great men are comprehended.

And thorns of the wilderness, and briers.] Which he had ready at hand.

And with them he taught the men of Succoth.] He thrashed or tare them (as he threatened, ver. 7. and as some copies here have it), and by this severe correction taught them better manners, and more wisdom. It is not said that he tormented them till they expired, (as some think he did, see ver. 7.) for then it would have been as plainly said, as it is in the next verse of the men of Penuel.

Ver. 17. *And he beat down the tower of Penuel, and slew the men of the city.*] It is not said the princes and elders, and therefore this looks as if the whole city had been guilty of the affront put upon him, and consequently punished by him. But the *men of the city* in this story, hath signified only the principal persons in it, as I interpreted ver. 8. (see ver. 15, 16.) and therefore it is probable no other men are here meant, who fled into the tower, perhaps, for safety (knowing their own guilt, and the danger they were in of suffering for it), and were there slain.

Ver. 18. *Then said he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of men were they whom ye slew at Tabor?*] Where Gideon brought them before him to be judged, is uncertain: and when it was that they slew some Israelites at Tabor, we can but guess. It is probable he brought them out to receive their sentence after he came home: and that some who hid themselves in dens and caves, which were in the mountains, (vi. 2.) being found out, were slain by the Midianites. And Gideon's brethren being missing, he desired to find out, whether they were the persons whom they slew.

And they answered, As thou art, so were they.] They were very like him, and perhaps resembled him in their countenance; as brethren frequently do one another.

Every one resembled the children of a king.] By this it appears, that Gideon was of a goodly presence; carrying greatness and majesty in his aspect: and that kings took care in those days to match only with graceful persons; by whom they might hope to have children like to themselves.

Ver. 19. *And he said, They were my brethren, even the sons of my mother.*] Though, perhaps, not by the same father.

As the Lord liveth, if ye had spared them alive.] As generous men are wont to do comely and graceful persons; who look like men of quality, as we now speak.

I would not slay you.] For not being of the race of Canaan, he was not bound by the law to cut them off.

Ver. 20. *And he said unto Jether his first-born, Up, and slay them.*] It was not unusual for great persons to do execution upon offenders in ancient times; no more than it unbecame them to sentence them to death: and therefore they had not, as now, such as the Romans called *carnifices*, public executioners; but Saul bade such as waited on him kill the priests; and Doeg, one of his great officers, did it, (1 Sam. xxii. 17, 18.) And Samuel himself is said to have hewed Agag to pieces in Gilgal; and Benaiah, the general of the army, to have fallen upon Joab at the horns of the altar. Accordingly Gideon would have had his son do this execution, that he might be early animated against the enemies of Israel; as Hannibal is reported, when he was a boy, to have been incensed against the Romans.

But the youth drew not his sword; for he feared, because he was yet a youth.] They were men, it is likely, of great stature, and of a fierce and stern countenance, who (as appears by the story) feared not death; which made the youth afraid even to look upon them.

Ver. 21. *Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, Arise thou, and fall upon us: for as the man is, so is his strength.*] They

thought it more honourable to die by the hand of Gideon, who was a man of as great strength as dignity; and would sooner dispatch them, than a stripling could do.

And Gideon arose, and slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the ornaments that were about their camels' necks.] As well as all the ornaments which they wore themselves. The word *saharonim* is found no where but here, and ver. 26. and in Isaiah iii. 18. where we translate it *round tires like the moon*. So our margin also in this place, *ornaments like the moon;* following the LXX. who translate it μηνίσκους, *little moons*. So ancient was this custom of wearing ornaments of this figure; which was spread afterward over many nations. Huetius thinks it came originally from the Phœnicians, who were the worshippers of Astarte, *i. e.* the moon; and went from them to the Arabians, who were very anciently devoted to the moon, who propagated it to the Turks; and the Brachmans also are wont to adorn their heads in the same figure; as he observes in his Demonstr. Evangel. propos. iv. p. 197.

Ver. 22. *Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also.*] They would have made his dominion over them hereditary.

For thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.] They pretended to make this offer out of gratitude to him; but, in truth, they were disposed now (as their posterity were afterward) to throw off the Divine government; being desirous to set a king over themselves, like the rest of the nations round about them. And now they thought was a fit opportunity; when such an extraordinary judge was raised up, as had done wonders beyond all his predecessors; and might, they thought, be ambitious enough to establish the supreme authority in his family.

Ver. 23. *But Gideon said, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you.*] He absolutely rejected their offer; because he looked upon God as their king, who appointed what deputy he pleased to rule them: and therefore he accounted this to be an attempt to alter the government of God without asking his consent.

The Lord shall rule over you.] As he hath done hitherto. This shews that these two could not consist together; a successive dominion of kings and such governors as they now had by the Divine appointment. Such a one was Gideon, raised up by God when they needed a deliverer; and therefore he durst not accept of the authority they offered him, because it was a thing sacred, and proper only to the Divine Majesty to order who should govern: whence it is that the judgment which was administered among that people was called *God's judgment*, Deut. i. 17. and Solomon is said to sit upon *the throne of the Lord*, 1 Chron. xxix. 23. and the kingdom of his posterity is called *the kingdom of the Lord*, 2 Chron. xiii. 8. because, before kings were settled in Israel, the Lord was their king; from whom the government was derived to the house of David by a special act of God.

Ver. 24. *And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you.*] Which he thought, after such a great offer from them, they would not deny him.

That ye would give me every man the ear-rings of his prey] He doth not ask all the ear-rings they had got; but from every man one, or as many as he pleased.

For they had golden ear-rings, because they were Ishmaelites.] The Chaldee paraphrast well expresses it, *because they were Arabians*, who are called the *children of the east*, (vi. 3.) and generally wore such ornaments, as I observed upon Exod. xxxii. 2. Ishmaelites, also, and Midianites, were so near neighbours, and so mixed together, that the Scripture speaks of them as one people. (See upon Gen. xxxvii. 28.)

Ver. 25. *And they answered, We will willingly give them. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the ear-rings of his prey.*] They made no difficulty to grant his request; but, as we speak, no sooner said than done.

Ver. 26. *And the weight of the golden ear-rings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold.*] It is easy to compute what this makes of our money, by considering the value of a shekel, and the proportion that silver holds to gold. Of which see the very learned treatise of the Bishop of Peterborough, concerning Scripture Weights and Measures, chap. 4.

Besides ornaments.] Of which see above, ver. 21.

And the collars.] The Hebrew word *hanetiphoth* is thought to signify *little pots of precious ointments*. For *neteph* signifies a *drop*, or a *tear;* the most precious of which is balsam. Among the spoils of Darius (as Arius Montanus observes) historians mention boxes of ointments set with precious stones, and curiously wrought with elegant art.

And purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian.] Who were distinguished from other men, as kings are now, by robes peculiar to them.

And beside the chains that were upon their camels' necks.] All these, I take it, fell to Gideon's share, by the custom of war, without asking. For it was the ancient manner, as Grotius observes, to give the commander-in-chief the best of the spoils they had taken.

Ver. 27. *And Gideon made an ephod thereof.*] He would not have them think that he requested the ear-rings for his own private gain; but to employ them religiously in the service of God, by making a monument of his victory, as obtained solely by the miraculous mercy of God, for the restoring of his true religion among them. It is commonly said, that so much gold could not be laid out upon an *ephod;* and therefore some take this for a short expression, to signify the breast-plate, with the *urim* and *thummim;* that he (being now supreme governor) might consult God at his own house, in such difficulties as might occur: and they think it probable that he made also a private tabernacle with cherubims: for how else could he employ such a quantity of gold? An *ephod* being only fine linen embroidered with it, &c. which would not cost much. (See Exod. xxviii. 6.) Theodoret and St. Austin seem to incline to this opinion; for which I refer the reader to our Dr. Spencer, in his most learned work De Leg. et Rit. Hebr. p. 881. But I do not see how Gideon can be excused from apostacy from God, if he set up an oracle in his own house; nor was there any need of it, Shiloh being not far from him, in the tribe of Ephraim, which adjoined to this of Manasseh. Therefore I take this *ephod* to have been only a monument of his victory, and of God's great mercy, which conquerors were wont to erect: but he would not follow the common custom in erecting a pillar, and hanging up trophies, or any thing of that nature; but chose to make an *ephod*, as a token that he ascribed his victory only to God, and triumphed in nothing, but only in the restoration of the true religion by his means. As for the gold that was laid

out upon it, the reader may observe, that it is said *he made an ephod thereof;* that is, out of this offering; but not that it was all spent in this.

And put it in his city, even in Ophrah.] This is to be well noted; because I think it shews that Gideon did not make this that he might have resort to God thereby on all occasions at home; for he went and dwelt at another place, (ver. 29.) It was kept here therefore as a monument of God's appearing to him, and of the sacrifice the angel here offered, and of all the wonders that followed, by the power of God who dwelt in the sanctuary. There are those who think, that because God bade Gideon build an altar, and offer his father's second bullock in Ophrah, (vi. 26.) he thence concluded, he might take upon him to have priestly garments made, and the high-priest came to minister at Ophrah upon extraordinary occasions. But he understood religion better than to make such conclusions, unless he had received a Divine command for this, as he did for the building of an altar.

And all Israel went thither a whoring after it.] This, I suppose, was after his death, when the people began to return to idolatry; and had this fancy, among others, that God would answer them here where this ephod was, as well as at his tabernacle in Shiloh, where he dwelt.

Which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and his house.] Occasioned the ruin of him and of his family. For though they perished after his death, yet he may be said to have suffered with them, because his name and memory, which is preserved in men's posterity, was in a manner extinct in Israel.

Ver. 28. *Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more.*] To oppress the Israelites; or, perhaps, to disturb any of their neighbours.

And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon.] The country was in quiet in the fortieth year after the former rest restored to it by Deborah and Barak, as our primate Usher understands it, in his Annals ad A. M. 2759. and in his Chronologia Sacra, par. i. cap. 13. where, in more words, he thus interprets it: *In the fortieth year after the rest restored by Deborah and Barak, the land began to rest again in the days of Gideon, after he had subdued the Midianites, who had oppressed them seven years.* But the plainest account is, that after seven years' oppression by the Midianites, the country was in peace forty years in the days of Gideon, who was their deliverer; and died, as we read ver. 32. in a good old age.

Ver. 29. *And Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and dwelt in his own house.*] Having refused to be a king, and dismissed his army, he went from Ophrah (as I understand it), and lived not so publicly as he had done, but in a private house of his own in the country.

Ver. 30. *And Gideon had threescore and ten sons, of his body begotten.*] These last words are added to shew, that they were none of them adopted sons.

For he had many wives.] According to the manner of those times. And this is said to lessen the wonder of having so many children; many women bringing two or three at a birth, and one woman having had above twenty children by one man.

Ver. 31. *And his concubine.*] The difference between a wife and a concubine hath been often noted. Their wives administered the affairs of the family, the concubines meddled not with them; but, as the word signifies, were only admitted to their beds: and their children did not inherit, though they were married to them; for they were not harlots, but a secondary sort of wives.

That was in Shechem.] A famous city in the tribe of Ephraim, adjoining to that of Manasseh; where, going frequently to judge the people, he took a wife of this sort, who lived constantly with her father in this city, and not in Gideon's family.

She also bare him a son.] Beside the seventy beforementioned, as Josephus understands it.

Whose name was Abimelech.] His name is here set down when nothing is said of the names of the rest, because the following story depends upon it. And perhaps his mother gave him this name (signifying *my father a king*) out of pride and arrogance, that she might be looked upon as the wife of one who was thought to deserve a kingdom, though he did not accept it: which afterward, it is likely, inflamed the mind of this son to affect the royal dignity.

Ver. 32. *And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age.*] This is a phrase often used in Scripture, to signify that such persons lived long and in great prosperity and happiness.

And was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites.] Which was accounted a great blessing in those days.

Ver. 33. *And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again.*] He preserved them, it seems, in the true religion while he lived; but they had no great affection to it, it appears, by their revolting from it as soon as he was dead.

And went a whoring after Baalim.] This seems to have been a general name of all the gods which they worshipped, particularly of demons, which were all called Baalim from the first demon, or deified king in the world, Belus or Baal, as Mr. Mede thinks, book iii. p. 777.

And made Baal-berith their god.] They worshipped a new god, which was not known to them before, nor ever mentioned but here and in the next chapter: who was reputed, as some think, the god that punished those who broke their covenants and contracts; or, as others, was so called because his servants covenanted to maintain his worship and service. But Bochartus, by a more probable conjecture, interprets it Baal of Berith, *i. e.* of Berytus. That Baal which was worshipped in that famous city which had its name from Beroe, the daughter of Venus and Adonis, who was there worshipped, as Nonnus tells us. This he takes to be the Baal here mentioned; for Baal is of the feminine gender as well as of the masculine, as appears from St. Paul, Rom. xi. 4. and many places of the LXX. which Bochartus mentions, lib. ii. Canaan, cap. 17.

Ver. 34. *And the children of Israel remembered not the Lord their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side.*] Out of the hand of the king of Mesopotamia, and then of the Moabites, and after that of the Canaanites, and now lately of the Midianites and the children of the east.

Ver. 35. *Neither shewed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, namely Gideon.*] No wonder they were so ungrateful to his family when they were so forgetful of God: the fear of whom is the foundation of all virtue.

According to all the goodness which he had shewn unto Israel.] In hazarding his life freely, and working for them a glorious deliverance; and in leaving them in their liberty, by refusing the despotic power which they offered to put into his hands; and in governing them so prudently many years, that he left them in peace, and in the possession of God's true religion, when he died.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went.*] From his father's house, where it is likely he was educated.

Unto Shechem.] The place of his nativity.

Unto his mother's brethren.] Though the word *brethren* has many times a large signification, yet it is reasonable here to understand it properly, of his uncles by the mother's side; for his other near kindred are mentioned in the words following.

And communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying.] Discoursed with them, and with all the rest of his cousins, and his near kinsmen, descended from his grandfather.

Ver. 2. *Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem.*] By the *men* of this city are to be understood, the chief persons of authority in it, as in the foregoing chapter the *men of Succoth* signify the princes and elders of that place.

Whether is better for you, either that all the sons of Jerubbaal (which are threescore and ten persons) reign over you, or that one reign over you.] He wickedly supposed that the sons of Jerubbaal were ambitious of the kingdom which their father refused; and therefore prays them to consider, what horrible divisions and confusion it would make, if so many were permitted to pretend to the government; and how much better it would be to choose one of them from among the rest; pointing then (in the next words) to himself. He uses the argument of Homer, mentioned by Aristotle, οὐχ' ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη, &c. It is better to be subject to the rule of one man than of many.

Remember also that I am your bone and your flesh.] Since there must be a king, he represents himself, as the most desirable to them of all other single persons, he being of the same tribe, and their fellow-citizen.

Ver. 3. *And his mother's brethren spake of him in the ears of the men of Shechem, all these words.*] They were ready enough to promote his design, hoping for preferment under him. But neither he nor they considered, that it did not belong to them to set a judge over the people, much less a king, which was to shake off the government of God.

And their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, He is our brother.] This consideration of their interest in him, prevailed with them against the clearest reason. For if it had been in any person's power to appoint a king, but God alone, the men of Shechem had it not in them, but all the men of Israel ought to have been consulted.

Ver. 4. *And they gave him threescore and ten pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-berith.*] Out of the public treasury, which was in this temple. It is uncertain what is meant by *pieces of silver;* but, in all probability, more than shekels; for they would have been but a small present to make a man a prince. Therefore the Vulgar translates it so many pound weight of silver, which learned men approve of, particularly Stanislaus Grepsius, in his book de Siclo et Talento. For seventy shekels were too little for his occasions; and so many talents too much for them to give. And thus Josephus interprets Gen. xxxvii. 28. where it is said, Joseph was sold to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; that is, for so many pound weight of it.

Wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light persons.] The Hebrew word *rekim*, which we translate *vain*, signifies *empty;* that is, poor and needy persons: and the other word, *pochazim*, idle, vagabond fellows, that could settle to no business, but wandered about the country; who being commonly men of loose lives, were fittest for his purpose. Therefore Kimchi understands by them *light-headed persons* (as we speak), who have no settled principles, but are disposed to do any thing, though never so wicked. Such Zephaniah saith the prophets in his time were, (iii. 4.) *light and treacherous.*

Which followed him.] As a constant guard to him.

Ver. 5. *And he went into his father's house at Ophrah.*] With this wicked crew to attend him; who, I suppose, beset the house, that none might escape out of it. I supposed that he had a house in the country, viii. 29. for I could not see with what propriety he could be said to go and dwell in his house at Ophrah, in which he had always lived. But this was the house of the family, where all his children lived.

And slew his brethren the sons of Jerubbaal, being threescore and ten persons.] All of them except Jotham. Thus Romulus slew his brother Remus, as Tully observes, (lib. iii. de Officiis) "Specie quadam utilitatis," *under the specious pretence of the public good;* that the kingdom would be governed more happily by one, than by two persons.

Upon one stone.] Some understand this, as if he intended to make them a great victim to Baal; for a stone was sometimes used for an altar, 1 Sam. vi. 14, 15. And so they take this to have been done in revenge of the sacrifice of the bullock prepared for Baal upon the rock, (vi. 25, 26.) which crime of Gideon, as these idolaters accounted it, they designed to expiate by the sacrifice of all his sons that they could lay hold on. For that the men of Shechem joined in this impious slaughter, is manifest from ver. 18. and 24. of this chapter.

Notwithstanding, yet Jotham, the youngest son of Jerubbaal, was left; for he hid himself.] Either he had some notice of their intention, and saved himself by flight, or, when they came to seize them, got into some secret place in the house, where they could not find him; or, by some that pitied his youth, he was preserved from falling into their hands. So the LXX. and the Vulgar translate it, *He was hid.*

Ver. 6. *And all the men of Shechem gathered themselves together, and all the house of Millo.*] None seem to have understood these words better than Corn. Bertram, in his little book de Republ. Jud. cap. 9. where by *col-baale Shechem* he understands all the principal men or lords of that city; *principes civitatis, the princes of the city,* by whom it was governed: and by *col-beth Millo,* all the citizens, who in a full assembly (for *Millo* signifies *fulness*) agreed upon what follows: and so we read in the next chapter, (x. 18.) that the *people and princes of Gilead* consulted together,

who should fight for them; that is, all the citizens met together, with their elders, (as these princes are called, xi. 5.) to advise about this matter: for when the Canaanites, and other people, ruled over the Israelites and oppressed them, they contented themselves with setting such a power over them, as should make them pay what tribute they imposed, and other taxes; but left them to their own government and laws, as appears from viii. 14. where we read of the *elders of Succoth* in the time of the Midianites.

And went.] To the place where they were wont to meet for public business.

And made Abimelech king.] Voted him their king, in full senate.

In the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem.] Or the *oak* (as St. Jerome commonly translates this word *elon*), where Joshua set up a pillar as a token of the covenant between God and them, Josh. xxiv. 26. That is, in a very remarkable place, as the manner was to do such things: but here, I suppose, they proclaimed him king, after they had chosen him in the common hall of the city: and some think they intended hereby to declare, that they would not forsake the worship of God, to which they were engaged, but only to join the worship of Baal with him: but see what I have noted of this pillar, Deut. xxvii. 13. And after all it must be confessed, that the Hebrew word *mutzab* doth not certainly signify a *pillar;* for I cannot find it so used in any other place of Scripture: and therefore St. Jerome translates this passage thus, *By the oak which stood in Shechem,* and the LXX. ἐν βαλάνῳ τῆς ὀτάσεως, which seems to signify as if it was the place where they had their stations, or solemn assemblies. See Mr. Mede's Discourse xviii.

Ver. 7. *And when they told it Jotham.*] Who had some friends among them, that took care to inform him of what passed: but it is an amazing thing, that in all Israel there should none be found to revenge the murder of this noble family: of which no account can be given, but that, with the sense of God and religion, they had lost all goodness and virtue. (See viii. 34, 35.)

He went.] From the place where he lay hid.

And stood on the top of Mount Gerizim.] Which overlooked the city of Shechem. (See Deut. xxvii. 12, 13.)

And lifted up his voice and cried, and said unto them.] This was not on the same day that Abimelech was inaugurated, but some time after; when he, it is probable, was absent, and all the people met (as Josephus saith) at a public festival; which was a fair opportunity for him to declare his mind to them.

Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.] It is a form of adjuration, whereby he not only intreats, but obliges them to be as attentive to him, as they desired God would be to their requests.

Ver. 8. *The trees went forth on a time.*] By this it appears, that such fictions as these, wherein the most serious truths are represented, were in use among the Jews (as they are still in the eastern countries) long before the time of Æsop, or any other author that we know of. And they made choice of them for two reasons; because men would suffer themselves to be reprehended this way, when they would not endure plain words; and they heard them also with delight and pleasure, and more easily remembered them than a rational discourse. So A. Gellius observes of Æsop's Fables, that they slid into the mind and affections of men, *cum audiendi quadam illecebra,* with a certain enticement to hear them, (lib. ii. cap. 29.)

To anoint a king over them.] This was two hundred years (as Mr. Selden observes in his Titles of Honour) before the first kings of Israel (Saul and David) were anointed. Which shews the great antiquity of this custom; and that it was the same to anoint a person, and to declare him king.

And they said unto the olive-tree, Reign thou over us.] By this they would easily apprehend he meant his father Gideon; to whom all the Israelites had offered the kingdom, when he was in a most flourishing condition, and had newly triumphed over their enemies.

Ver. 9. *But the olive-tree said unto them.*] In this reply he represents his refusal of the offer, and the reason of it.

Shall I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man.] He makes the trees speak after the manner of men; who, when they are in a plentiful condition, and live at ease, are not willing to take upon themselves a great deal of care and trouble, especially when they think themselves to have honour enough already; as Gideon had, in being such a glorious conqueror over mighty enemies. God and man are said to be honoured by oil, because it was offered in sacrifice to God, and fed the lamps of his house; and priests were wont to be anointed with it among men. (See Lev. ii. 1. 4. Numb. xv. 4. 6, &c.)

And go to be promoted among the trees?] This is a most lively representation of the duty of a good man; who, for the public good, denies his own quiet and tranquillity. For the Hebrew word we translate *promote,* signifies (as is noted in the margin) action and agitation to and fro; shewing how a man must bestir himself who executes the kingly office; and what solicitude and continual carefulness is the concomitant of authority, when it is duly administered.

Ver. 10. *And the trees said unto the fig-tree, Come thou and reign over us.*] He intends to represent the same mind to be in all Gideon's sons that was in their father: for as Gideon refused the kingdom himself, so he did for his posterity, saying, *I will not rule over you, neither shall my son, or my son's son* (*i. e.* any of mine) *rule over you,* (viii. 23.) Therefore Abimelech had most vilely slandered them in suggesting that they affected a regal power over the people.

Ver. 11. *But the fig-tree said unto them, Shall I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?*] No fruit is more luscious than a fig, which makes this an apt representation of the sweet content, or rather full pleasure, that may be enjoyed in a private life, which it would be folly to exchange for the troubles and cares which men meet withal in the managery of public affairs, if they be not drawn to it purely out of love to the public good.

Ver. 12. *Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou and reign over us.*] All these are noble trees, setting forth the same thing, that better men than Abimelech had refused that of which he was ambitious.

Ver. 13. *And the vine said unto them, Shall I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?*] The same thing is repeated for the fuller illustration of the thing intended, according to the manner of all such ways of speech: for A. Gellius, in the place beforenamed, makes the birds among the corn, when it was to be reaped, say the same thing more than once to their dam before she bade them be gone. As for wine *cheering God*

and man, it is a form of speech imitated by the heathen, particularly by Virgil, lib. ii. Georg. ver. 101. where speaking of noble vines, or wine, he saith, they were "Mensis et Diis accepta secundis." For wine, as the Hebrew doctors note, was not only used in their sacrifices, as it was also among the heathen; but Jarchi saith, Till the drink-offering was poured out, they did not begin the hymn that was then sung to God. (See upon Numb. xv. 5.)

Ver. 14. *Then said all the trees unto the bramble*, &c.] The meanest of all trees, good for nothing but to be burnt, aptly representing Abimelech, from whom they could receive no benefit, but much trouble and vexation from his ambitious cruelty.

Ver. 15. *And the bramble said unto them, If in truth ye anoint me king over you.*] This well sets forth Abimelech's distrust of the sincerity of the Shechemites; for which he had great reason, having no title to the kingdom but the great achievements of his father, and he the basest of all his sons.

Then come and put your trust in my shadow.] Be assured of my protection, if you live quietly under my government. This represents how ridiculous Abimelech was, in imagining that he should be able to maintain the authority of a king; for a bramble doth not spread itself so as to afford any shelter or shadow, it being a kind of a thorn, which the Hebrews call *atad*. From whence, as Avenarius observes, came the word *aphris* among the Greeks, and in Dioscorides the word ἀταδίμ. And from hence he thinks was derived the word οὐτάω, and οὐτάζω, which signify *to wound*, as a thorn doth when it pricks.

And if not, let fire come out of the bramble.] It is a wood that easily catches fire, as Forsterus observes out of Josephus, lib. v. Antiq. cap. 11.

And devour the cedars of Lebanon.] This represents the vengeance Abimelech would take of the greatest of them, if they proved unfaithful to him.

Ver. 16. *Now therefore.*] Here follows Jotham's application of this apologue, as the Greeks call it, unto his purpose.

If ye have done truly and sincerely in that ye have made Abimelech king.] If his preferment was a righteous act.

And if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his hand.] And if they had requited Gideon and his family according to his merits, which were exceeding great.

Ver. 17. *For my father fought for you, and adventured his life far.*] Put it in great hazard.

And delivered you out of the hand of Midian.] When they were sorely oppressed by them, and could not help themselves.

Ver. 18. *And ye are risen up against my father's house this day.*] This shews the men of Shechem consented to the murder, and assisted Abimelech in it.

And have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons.] For they intended the slaughter of Jotham, as much as of the rest, if he could have been found.

Upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maid-servant.] For concubines were often put to do the work of the house

King over the men of Shechem.] Who could not pretend to make him king over all Israel: no, nor over the whole tribe of Ephraim, but only of their city and territory.

Because he is your brother.] Without any title to it, but because he was a native of their city.

Ver. 19. *If you have done truly and sincerely.*] Like honest and upright men.

With Jerubbaal and his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him rejoice in you.] He wishes they may be happy in one another.

Ver. 20. *But if not, let fire come from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo.*] This is not a prediction, but an execration or curse, as appears from the opposition to the foregoing wish, and from ver. 57. where it is called Jotham's curse. Which was not causeless, but like that of Joshua's, (Josh. vi. 26.) which was fulfilled, as this was. Not by fire, properly so called, breaking forth from Abimelech, but by his rage and furious revenge, which is fitly compared to fire, in allusion to what is said of the bramble, (ver. 15.)

And let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech.] He wishes they may mutually destroy each other, which came to pass by the righteous judgment of God, who hears the cries of the oppressed.

Ver. 21. *And Jotham ran away, and fled.*] As he might easily do, I have shewn upon Deut. xxvii. 13. The first word signifies, he made what haste he could away, as soon as he had done speaking; and the second, that he stopped not till he had got to a place of safety.

And went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.] It is not certain where this place was, whether in the land of Israel, or out of it. It is probable, that it was in the tribe of Judah, about eight miles from Eleutheropolis, as both Eusebius and St. Jerome affirm.

Ver. 22. *When Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel.*] It is not said, *over all Israel*, who, it cannot be thought, would submit to the ambitious tyranny of so cruel a man as Abimelech was. And if Beer was in the tribe of Judah, we may be sure they did not own him for their king; for then Jotham could not have dwelt in safety there. The meaning therefore is, that he called himself king of Israel, and reigned over a great part of them, who were so desirous of a king (it appears by their offer made to Gideon), that they were content with him, rather than have none at all.

Ver. 23. *And God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem.*] At the three years' end, I suppose, God ordered things so in his providence, that they grew jealous and distrustful one of another, and fell into dissensions and discords.

And the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech.] Conspired against him. So true is the observation of Grotius upon these words, that nothing is more unstable than the popular breath which is won by evil arts, and that men hate the wickedness which hath done them service.

Ver. 24. *That the cruelty done to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon their brother Abimelech, which slew them.*] By this means God intended to punish Abimelech for the cruel murder of his brethren, whose blood cried for vengeance on him.

And upon the men of Shechem, which aided him in the killing of his brethren.] And to punish the men of Shechem, who enabled him to commit that wickedness, and helped him in it.

Ver. 25. *And the men of Shechem set liers in wait for*

him, on the top of the mountains.] They were not yet broken out into open hostility against him; but there being a misunderstanding between them, Abimelech, I suppose, left the city in anger; but they thought he would return again, and thereupon set men to lie secretly on the top of the mountains over which he was to pass, to seize his person.

And they robbed all that came that way by them.] That the report coming to Abimelech's ears (as Arius Montanus understands it) how insecure his subjects were who passed that road, he might make the more speed, as good kings are bound to do, to clear the way from those thieves which infested it, and thereby give them an opportunity to seize him.

And it was told Abimelech.] What robberies were committed, and, perhaps, that they lay in wait for him.

Ver. 26. *And Gael the son of Ebed.*] We have no means to know who this Gael was, nor whence he came. R. Solomon thinks he was a gentile, and not one of the Jewish nation.

Came with his brethren.] He passed accidentally that way (as P. Martyr thinks) with his brethren and his attendants, about some business they had in that country: but the common opinion is, that he was a known enemy of Abimelech's, who hearing the men of Shechem were at defiance with him, came to offer them his service against him.

And the men of Shechem put their confidence in him.] That is, put themselves under his protection.

Ver. 27. *And they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trod the grapes.*] Their first action under this new commander, was to go out of their city into their vineyards, which were in the fields, and gather their grapes, and press them, which they durst not do before, though the vintage was ripe, for fear of Abimelech; who being told how things stood there, had raised forces I suppose against them, but durst not now disturb them in their business, they being defended by Gael.

And made merry.] As they were wont to do in time of vintage, and now especially, when they were full of joy in hope to be rid of Abimelech's tyranny. The LXX. of the Vatican edition retain the Hebrew word, and translate it they made Ἐλλουλίμ, whereby some understand songs, as others dances: both are expressed by the Vulgar, and other copies of the LXX. have χορούς; for their merriment consisted very much in dances, with music and songs; which, as Max. Tyrius observes, were among the Greeks first used, and in honour of Bacchus, when they pressed out their grapes. (See Dr. Spencer, lib. iii. dissert. i. cap. 9.)

And went into the house of their god.] It is most likely into the temple of Baal-berith; there to offer their first-fruits, or such other sacrifices as were customary at that festival.

And did eat and drink.] Upon that part of the sacrifices which fell to the share of the people, who, perhaps, engaged in a covenant against Abimelech.

And cursed Abimelech.] Some think they only scoffed at him with taunts and reproaches, as men used to do in their cups: but the LXX. translate it κατηράσαντο, which signifies *cursing*, as we translate it; that is, they wished their god would confound him. And so we translate this word, Lev. xx. 9. Prov. xx. 20. A marvellous change, that they who lately gave him a great sum of money to advance him to the throne, should, in that very house from whence they took it, reproach him with imprecations of the Divine vengeance upon him.

Ver. 28. *And Gael the son of Ebed said.*] In the midst of this jollity, Gael (being elevated, I suppose, with wine) burst forth into this insulting language.

Who is Abimelech.] That is, he is but the son of a maid-servant, (ver. 18.)

And who is Shechem.] Some think he means the city of Shechem is as noble as he is base: why, therefore, should they be subject to him? but it seems, by what follows, to be rather the same thing repeated, *Who, I say, is the Shechemite?*

That we should serve him?] Suffer him to rule over us, and use us as he pleases.

Is he not the son of Jerubbaal?] Who threw down the altar of that god whom you worship.

And Zebul his officer.] Hath he not set one of his servants over you to be your governor?

Serve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem.] If we must be servants, let us restore the dominion of the old lords of this city, and subject ourselves to those who are descended from the ancient stock of Hamor; who was the father, as it were, of the Shechemites.

For why should we serve him?] But what reason can be given for our subjection to this upstart; who is famed for nothing, but his ambition and cruelty to his own brethren? this shews pretty plainly, that R. Solomon's opinion is true, that Gael was a gentile; who would have been glad to see the authority of the Canaanites restored. For though he suggests it only as comparatively more desirable than Abimelech's rule over them, yet, it is likely, he thought they might as well receive their government, as they had done their religion.

Ver. 29. *And would to God this people were under my hand!*] He wishes they would make him their king, at least their commander-in-chief: which it seems they had not yet resolved upon; some being still for Abimelech, and others not trusting to a stranger.

Then would I remove Abimelech.] That he should trouble them no more; but flee the country, as he was driven out of their city.

And he said to Abimelech, Increase thine army, and come out.] Some take this to be only a vapouring speech (as if Abimelech was present), when he knew he might boast and insult without danger, because he did not hear him; but it may as well be thought that he bid Abimelech's friends go and tell him what he said; that he wished him to reinforce his army, and come out (of the intrenchments wherein perhaps he was) and give him battle: for he pretended to scorn to set upon him by surprise, but desired to decide the quarrel in open field.

Ver. 30. *And when Zebul, the ruler of the city, heard the words of Gael the son of Ebed, his anger was kindled.*] It is likely he had carried fair (as we speak) with Gael hitherto; thinking it in vain to oppose a popular commotion, till their fury was a little calmed; but he could not bear these insolent thrasonical words of Gael, which perhaps were not spoken in his presence, but brought to him by some that heard them.

Ver. 31. *And he sent messengers unto Abimelech privily, saying.*] He had some wit in his anger, and did not openly declare his resentments; but gave secret intelligence to

Abimelech how matters stood, with his advice how to proceed against Gael.

Behold, Gael the son of Ebed, and his brethren, be come to Shechem.] Where, no doubt, he informed him what entertainment he had found, and in what reviling terms he had spoken of him.

And, behold, he fortifieth the city against thee.] This was no sign that Gael desired, as he boasted, to meet Abimelech in a pitched battle; but that he rather provided for his own defence, in case he should be assaulted.

Ver. 32. *Now therefore up by night, thou and the people that are with thee, and lie in wait in the fields.*] His advice is, that, for fear of discovery, he should march with all his forces in the night, towards Shechem; and lurk in the fields till morning light.

Ver. 33. *And it shall be, that in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, thou shalt rise up early, and set upon the city.*] Surprise them, before they were better provided.

And, behold, when he and the people that are with him come out against thee.] As Gael had boasted he would do.

Then thou mayest do to them, as thou shalt find occasion.] He could give him no farther advice; but that then he should dispose his forces to the best advantage against him.

Ver. 34. *And Abimelech rose up, and all the people that were with him by night, and they laid wait against Shechem in four companies.*] He divided his army into four battalions (as they now speak), and disposed them in four places, as the Vulgar understands it: perhaps on the east, west, north, and south sides of the city.

Ver. 35. *And Gael the son of Ebed went out.*] Of his house.

And stood in the entering of the gate of the city.] To see, it is likely, if his soldiers were upon their guard.

And Abimelech rose up, and the people that were with him, from lying in wait.] Out of their lurking-places, where they had lain undiscovered all night.

Ver. 36. *And when Gael saw the people, he said to Zebul.*] Who, it seems, accompanied him, or, as governor of the city, was there to see every one do their duty.

Behold, there come people down from the top of the mountains.] Which were adjoining to the city, *viz.* Mount Gerizim, and Mount Ebal.

And Zebul said, Thou seest the shadow of the mountains as if they were men.] It being early in the morning, the trees, and all things else, cast long shadows, which being moved by the breath of air, which commonly accompanies the sun-rising, Zebul persuaded him he took for men marching down from the top of the mountains. Some think he spake this in mockery, that he was afraid of shadows; but delivered it in such a serious tone, that Gael believed he spake in earnest; by which it is plain that Zebul notably dissembled his resentments, and behaved himself as if he was on Gael's side; who was strangely infatuated, to trust one that was servant to Abimelech, and placed by him as governor of the city, whose pretences of friendship were reasonably to be suspected.

Ver. 37. *And Gael spake again, and said, See.*] Observe attentively.

There come down people by the middle of the land.] Now it was visible they were men; for they were come down to the middle of the mountains.

And another company come along by the plain of Meonenim.] It is likely the other two companies of the four, into which his forces were divided, appeared in other places, the more to distract the thoughts of Gael: and it is probable that Abimelech had seized the ambush, which they had laid for him on the top of the mountains, (ver. 25.) that they could carry no tidings of his coming. We read of this place no where else, and so I can give no account of it: but the Vulgar takes *elon* to signify not the *plain*, but *an oak;* and translates these words, *by the way which looks towards the oak;* which, in some copies of the LXX. are rendered, *the oak of those that look towards*, or *that regard times*, as we have it in the margin of our Bibles; as if it were like the oak at Dodona, among the Greeks, where they made divinations.

Ver. 38. *Then said Zebul unto him, Where is now thy mouth, wherewith thou saidst, Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?*] Now Zebul pulls off his mask, and puts him in mind of the brags which he made, (ver. 28.)

Is not this the people that thou hast despised?] But now, he supposes, was afraid to encounter.

Go out, I pray thee, and fight with them.] He upbraids him with cowardice, unless he now shewed himself a man with his sword, as the other day with his tongue.

Ver. 39. *And Gael went out.*] It may seem strange that he did not first leave Zebul dead upon the spot behind him: but he was afraid of him, he having, as appeared afterward, a strong party in the city; and it was dangerous to have two enemies to deal withal, one without, and another within.

Before the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech.] As unprovided as he was he would not decline the fight, and was followed by the principal persons in Shechem.

Ver. 40. *And Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him.*] Towards the city.

And many were overthrown and wounded.] Some were killed, and others wounded.

Even unto the entering of the gate.] Where the rest, and Gael himself, got into the city, and there secured themselves: so the Vulgar, for explication's sake, *He pursued him and drove him into the city.*

Ver. 41. *And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah.*] It appears, by the next verse, this place was not far from Shechem; whither Abimelech thought fit to retreat, and there watch for an opportunity to be revenged of the Shechemites.

And Zebul thrust out Gael and his brethren, that they should not dwell in Shechem.] Because they were not able to defend it against Abimelech. Zebul had the stronger party on his side, otherwise he could not have expelled him; but Gael had so many adherents, that they durst not put him to death, for his ill management, as no doubt they called it, in the late fight.

Ver. 42. *And it came to pass, on the morrow, that the people went out into the field.*] Finding that Abimelech was retreated, as not strong enough, they imagined, to assault their city, they went about their business into the field; which, at that time of the year, after the vintage, was to plough and sow their lands, and dress their vines, and other trees: some will have it, that they went out to fight Abimelech again, which is not probable.

And they told Abimelech.] He wanted not some to carry him intelligence of it.

Ver. 43. *And he took the people.*] His forces, which lay in and about Arumah.

And divided them into three companies.] One of which (the next verse informs us) he commanded himself, and committed the other two to the conduct of their commanders.

And laid wait in the field.] With that company which he commanded, whom he ordered to lie close, and not discover themselves.

And looked, and, behold, the people were come forth out of the city.] He set some to spy when the people were come out, and set about their business.

And he rose up against them, and smote them.] His men came, on a sudden, out of their ambush, and killed many of them.

Ver. 44. *And Abimelech, and the company which was with him, rushed forward, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city.*] Made all the haste they could to get between them and home: and accordingly they posted themselves at the entering of the gate of the city; whereby they hindered those in the field from getting into it, and likewise those in the city from coming out to their relief: so that they were dispersed about the fields, where the other two companies picked them up, as it here follows.

And the two companies ran upon all the people that were in the fields, and slew them.] Which was a great disheartening, no doubt, to those in the city, to see so many of their fellow-citizens cut off.

Ver. 45. *And Abimelech fought against the city all that day.*] Having destroyed so many of the citizens in the morning, he made his battery against the city itself, the rest of the day.

And took it.] In the evening, I suppose, either by an assault, or by surrender.

And slew the people that were therein.] It is not said what became of Zebul, who, it is likely, went over to him, and directed him in his attack upon the city; leaving his own party, in whom he put no confidence, to perish with the rest.

And he beat down the city.] Laid the houses and walls level with the ground.

And sowed it with salt.] Salt makes land barren, and therefore Ralbag refers this to the ground about it or in it; that was wont to be employed for sowing any sort of grain, or planting vineyards, &c.: for, as Pliny observes, "Omnis locus in quo reperitur sal, sterilis est et nihil gignit," (lib. xxxi. cap. 7.) *All places in which salt is found are barren, and bring forth nothing.* Therefore Abimelech endeavoured to make this city a perpetual desolation. (See Bochart. Hierozoicon, p. 1. lib. iii. cap. 16.) But unless the soil had been salt of itself, his sowing salt there would not have made it barren; but would have soon recovered its fruitfulness: therefore all he intended was to shew his hatred of them, by wishing their city might lie waste, and be a perpetual desolation.

Ver. 46. *And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard that.*] By these last words, it is plain this tower was not in the city, but at some distance from it: for otherwise, it would not have been said that they *heard* of the destruction of Shechem, but that they saw it with their eyes; yet it is likely, that this tower of Shechem was kept by a garrison of the Shechemites.

They entered into a hold of the house of the god Berith.] They durst not trust to the strength of the tower, but took sanctuary rather in a strong fortress of the temple of the god mentioned ver. 4. which was built, in all likelihood (according to the common custom of the world), upon one of the mountains hard by, and had near it this fortified strong hold; wherein they kept their treasure, (ver. 4.) It may be compared to the Roman capitol, and to the temple of Jerusalem, in aftertimes; which Josephus describes as an impregnable place.

Ver. 47. *And it was told Abimelech, that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together.*] In the forenamed fortress.

Ver. 48. *And Abimelech got him up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with him.*] Some think this to be the same mountain which the Psalmist mentions lxviii. 15. and take it to have been near to Shechem, which had many mountains about it, (ver. 36.)

And Abimelech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees.] Which grew there in great abundance, for Zalmon seems to have had its name from the shadiness of the place.

And took it and laid it on his shoulders, and said unto the people that were with him, What ye have seen me do, make haste and do as I have done.] He, in some measure, imitates his father's speech to his three hundred men, before he went to fight, (vii. 17.)

Ver. 49. *And the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put them to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them.*] Which was done with such expedition (as he ordered in the foregoing verse), that they within had no time to provide against it.

So that all the men of the tower of Shechem died also, about a thousand men and women.] Who perished in the fire and smoke, as the Vulgar here adds: but the Hebrew and LXX. say nothing of smoke, but only of fire: yet, it is highly probable, that many were choked by the smoke, which was very great and smothering, the wood being green: here the prediction, or rather imprecation of Jotham, ver. 20. was exactly fulfilled.

Ver. 50. *Then went Abimelech unto Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it.*] This was a city, which, as Kimchi observes, had revolted from Abimelech; but it is uncertain whereabout it lay, though most think it in the territory near Shechem.

Ver. 51. *But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city.*] It was a place so large, that it could contain not only all the men of the city and their wives, but their servants also: who all betook themselves hither, as a place not easy to be taken, though the city could make little resistance.

And shut it to them.] Shut to the gate, and, I suppose, blocked it up so that it could not be opened.

And gat them up to the top of the tower.] Which was flat, as their houses were, with battlements round about it: here the besieged thought fit to stand in great numbers, that they might do what they could to beat him off, if Abimelech attempted to burn them, as he had done others in a neighbouring tower.

Ver. 52. *And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it.*] His rage was insatiable; for, not content to have overthrown the Shechemites, and beat down their city, and burnt their strong hold, and taken Thebez, he beset their tower also; where, if he had not perished, none can tell how far his revenge would have proceeded.

And went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire.] Being flushed with great success, he was so bold and hardy as himself to make this dangerous attempt.

Ver. 53. *And a certain woman cast a piece of a mill-stone.*] Which they had carried up among other stones and logs, and whatsoever they thought might offend the enemy: the Hebrew word *rechab* properly signifies the upper mill-stone, which moves (and, as it were, *rides*) upon the lower.

Upon Abimelech's head.] Being directed, no doubt, by a special providence of God, as the stone was out of the sling that killed Goliah, and the arrow wherewith Ahab was shot.

And all to break his scull.] Made such a fracture in it, that he concluded it to be mortal. Thus Plutarch relates that Pyrrhus, at the siege of Thebes, was killed by a woman, who threw a tile upon his head: but Abimelech's death by a stone is the more remarkable, because it carried some stamp of his sin upon it; for he slew all his brethren on one stone.

Ver. 54. *Then he called hastily.*] Fearing he should immediately expire.

Unto the young man his armour-bearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword and slay me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him.] Though he knew she had given him his death's wound, yet he would have posterity think otherwise; for he thought it dishonourable to die by the hand of a woman: a foolish piece of vain-glory, wherewith he concluded his life as he had led it; for she had given him a mortal blow.

And his young man thrust him through, and he died.] Just when he imagined he was upon the point of conquering all opposition to him.

Ver. 55. *And when the men of Israel.*] That is, all that were in his army.

Saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place.] Disbanded themselves, having none to head them.

Ver. 56. *Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren.*] Which was as much as in him lay, to root out the memory of his father, unless it survived in himself, who took a course to make his name infamous.

Ver. 57. *And all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads, and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.*] These two verses conclude this story with a Divine admonition, That no man should think such things came to pass by chance, but God, the Judge of all, punished both Abimelech and the men of Shechem according to their deserts, and made them the instruments of each other's destruction: and it is remarkable, that this punishment overtook them speedily, within less than four years after their crime was committed.

It was not the business of this holy writer to tell us what became of Jotham, no more than what became of Gael and Zebul: but only to shew, that *as men have done, so God requites them;* with which he ends this part of his history.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND after Abimelech.*] Who was not a judge, much less appointed by God, but an usurper, who took upon him to alter the Divine government, and made himself a king.

There rose up.] It is not said that God stirred him up, as he did the foregoing judges; but it is so understood, because God would not have saved Israel by one that took upon him this high office without his order: and, therefore, as Peter Martyr well observes, in the conclusion of the foregoing chapter, that as, after many good judges God had given them, he suffered the cruel tyrant Abimelech to interpose himself, that their virtues might shine more illustriously by his wickedness; so, after he was gone, God was pleased to raise up to them good judges again, who learnt moderation by the punishment of his vain ambition: and, in all likelihood, the dreadful end of Abimelech and his partakers, who made him king, affrighted the Israelites from presuming to make another, of their own heads.

To defend Israel.] Or, *to save*, as it is in the margin: for this was the great office of a judge, to deliver the people from the oppression of their enemies: we do not find indeed from what enemies they were delivered by this judge; but they may be said to *save* and *deliver*, who preserve men's liberties from being invaded, as well as they that vindicate and restore them when they are lost: and therefore we well translate it, *To defend Israel.* He may be thought also to have delivered them from those confusions and disorders they were in, by the disagreement between Abimelech and those that made him king: for both sides had many partakers, which made great divisions, and dangerous combinations among the people; but were all happily ended by the prudent management of this governor. Serrarius also adds, that he might be said to *save* or deliver them, because he restored the purity of their religion, by abolishing the worship of idols: for we read, that after the death of Gideon, "they went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god," (viii. 33.) which they continued in the reign of Abimelech; but were now brought back to the worship of the true God, and remained in it, in the days of this and the following judges; otherwise there would not have been occasion to say, (ver. 6.) that after the death of Jair, "the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord:" but how far this is true, will appear upon ver. 8.

Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo.] So the Chaldee paraphrast understands the word *Dodo*, to be the proper name of his grandfather, as *Puah* was of his father: but there are those that by *Dodo* understand *his uncle, viz.* Abimelech forementioned: which seems to me unreasonable; for he was of another tribe, and his relation to such a man no good qualification, one would think, for this great trust.

A man of Issachar.] A mean tribe; which did not hinder his advancement by God to the highest dignity: and by this expression, *a man of Issachar*, he seems to have been of no great family, in that tribe.

And he dwelt in Shamir in Mount Ephraim.] After he was made a judge he settled in this place for the convenience of the people; it being in the midst of the land.

Ver. 2. *And he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.*] There are no memorable acts of his recorded; for the principal intention of the holy writer of this book, was to shew what great calamities befel the Israelites when they forsook God's worship, and how graciously he delivered them, in a marvellous manner,

when they returned to it: as I suppose they did, in the beginning of this man's government, and continued steadfast therein; so that they were not infested by their enemies.

Ver. 3. *And after him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years.*] This is the first judge that was raised up from among those that lived beyond Jordan.

Ver. 4. *And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty asses' colts.*] For the noblest persons rode on these beasts, (see ver. 10.) and that not only in Judea, but in Arabia, and in other countries, even among the Romans, as Bochartus hath at large observed in his Hierozoicon, p. 1. lib. ii. cap. 13. And it is highly probable, that this is here mentioned, because these persons were ordered by their father to ride circuit up and down the country, to minister justice according to the law; as Samuel did when he judged Israel, 1 Sam. vii. 16. For the courts of judicature appointed by the law (Deut. xvi. 18.) were not yet settled; nor, in all likelihood, settled in every city, till the days of Jehoshaphat, as Mr. Thorndike observes in his Rites of the Church, chap. 4. p. 226.

And they had thirty cities.] Of which they were the governors, as the Vulgar understands it.

Which are called Havoth-Jair unto this day.] This Jair, as our most learned primate of Ireland observes in his Annals, (ad A. M. 3504.) was of the posterity of that Jair who called the cities which he took in Argob by his own name Havoth-Jair, the towns or villages of Jair, (Numb. xxxii. 41. Deut. iii. 14.) After whose example, these thirty sons of this younger Jair, (who, to distinguish him from the elder, seems to be called Bedan, 1 Sam. xii. 11. 1 Chron. vii. 17.) called these cities which they possessed by the very same name.

Which are in the land of Gilead.] In the same country, where the other cities anciently called by this name lay: from which, it is likely, they were distinguished by some such addition as this, *the new Havoth-Jair.*

Ver. 5. *And Jair died, and was buried in Camon.*] Which, it was probable, was the place where he dwelt while he judged Israel.

Ver. 6. *And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord.*] Or, as the forenamed primate thinks it must be interpreted, *had done evil again,* &c. as was said viii. 33. and now is repeated, to shew the cause, why God delivered them up into the hands of their enemies: for he supposes this was before the death of Jair, as I shall note on ver. 8.

And served Baalim and Ashtaroth.] As they had frequently done in former times, ii. 13. iii. 7, &c.

And the gods of Syria.] They added to their former idolatries the worship of new gods; particularly those of Syria, which were, as Mr. Selden observes (in his Prolegomena to his book de Diis Syris), beside Bel, or Baal, and Astarte, Dagon, Moloch, and Thammuz.

And the gods of Zidon.] Their supreme gods were Baal and Ashtoreth, as the same great man observes, (in his ii. Syntagma de Diis Syris, cap. 2.) But it is likely they had more, such as Asaroth, Asarim, and Asarah; being the very same with Ashtoreth.

And the gods of Moab.] The principal of which was Chemosh, (1 Kings xi. 7.)

And the gods of the children of Ammon.] The chief of which was Milcom, (1 Kings xi. 5.) where Ashtoreth is mentioned as the goddess of the Zidonians.

And the gods of the Philistines.] They had more, it seems, beside Dagon; whose names are not mentioned in Scripture.

And forsook the Lord, and served not him.] Their hearts were possessed with the love of so many gods, that they quite forgot the Lord, and did not worship him at all; though they were wont formerly only to worship other gods together with him. This was such a strange apostacy, that one cannot but inquire into the reason of it, and (besides what I have noted upon ii. 12.) one reason may possibly have been, that the solemn reading of the law to all the people, once in seven years, was neglected: for we do not read that it was publicly done from the time of Joshua to the reign of Jehoshaphat, which was above five hundred years: it doth not follow, indeed, that it was not done, because it is not recorded; but if we consider how prone they were to return to idolatry, after the death of every judge, and how soon after the death of David (even in the reign of his son Solomon) it began to appear among them, it may incline one to think there was not sufficient care taken about this matter.

Ver. 7. *And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon.*] Two of those nations, whose gods they chose to serve.

Ver. 8. *And that year they vexed and oppressed the children of Israel.*] That is, the Ammonites vexed them in the east (as we are told in the conclusion of the verse), while the Philistines vexed them in the west: for their idolatry being strangely increased, so was their punishment, by the invasion of their enemies on both sides, as the foregoing verse tells us; which is a preface to the following histories of their oppression by the Philistines and the Ammonites, both at the same time; but, to avoid confusion, he first relates the story of the Ammonites, who are at last named in the foregoing verse.

Eighteen years.] Their invasion began in the same year, but they did not end at the same time, for the Ammonites domineered over them only eighteen years; but the Philistines forty, (xiii. 1.) I must not here omit the construction which our primate Usher makes of these words, which run thus in the Hebrew, and he translates in this manner, *They vexed and oppressed the children of Israel that year,* (viz.) *the eighteenth year.* For the oppression, he thinks, began the fifth year of Jair, and continued till the twenty-second, which was his last. (See his Chronol. Sacra, p. 1. cap. 13.) But this is said only to solve a difficulty, which is, that if we suppose this oppression to have begun after the death of Jair, and to have lasted eighteen years (as our translation imports), it will be impossible to make the years of the government of the judges agree with what we read, 1 Kings vi. 1. that Solomon began to build the temple at Jerusalem, in the four hundred and eightieth year after they came out of Egypt: but there is a more easy way of accounting for this difficulty, by supposing that several of the judges were contemporaries, as will be apparent in this very history; (see upon xi. 25.) and if we do not take these words *eighteen years* to signify the continuance of the Ammonitish oppression, it is no where mentioned any where else; as the duration of all other oppressions is.

All the children of Israel that were on the other side Jordan, in the land of the Amorites.] Which belonged to the Amorites, till Moses dispossessed them, (Numb. xxi.) and gave the land to the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

Which is in Gilead.] The principal part of which was Gilead; out of which Jair sprang, being of the tribe of Manasseh; who, like a good man, used all his endeavours to purge the Israelites from idolatry; as Tola, I suppose, had done before: but they being, after the death of Gideon, fallen from God, and continuing in their idolatry all the reign of Abimelech, our forenamed primate supposes these judges were not able to reform them; but they rather grew worse, as is related ver. 6. And therefore God permitted the Ammonites and Philistines to begin to afflict them, as was said before in the fifth year of Jair; but not so as to make them subject to their power: for Jair held the government eighteen years after they began their inroads, but then their vexations and oppressions grew intolerable, and they not only afflicted his own country Gilead, but endeavoured to make their brethren, on the other side Jordan, to feel the weight of their power, as it follows in the next verse. This is said very plausibly, but cannot be admitted without some violence to the natural sense of the beginning of the verse; and also to the course of this history, which doth not mention their departure from God, and these oppressions of their enemies, on both sides, till after the death of Jair.

Ver. 9. *Moreover, the children of Ammon passed over Jordan to fight against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim.*] Who were the tribes that lay next to Jordan.

So that Israel was sore distressed.] For while the Ammonites afflicted those countries in the eastern part of Canaan, the Philistines made ravages in the countries of Zebulun, and Asher, and the rest of the tribes that lay on the western coast: for so the LXX. explain those words in the foregoing verse, *In that year,* ἐν τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, *in that same year,* the Philistines in the west, and the Ammonites in the east, vexed and oppressed the children of Israel.

Ver. 10. *And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.*] All the rest of the gods mentioned ver. 6. are comprehended under the name of Baalim: which were so many and various, that they had quite drawn their affection from their own God; as they now sorrowfully acknowledge.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord said unto the children of Israel.*] By some prophet, I suppose.

Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians.] See Exod. xii.

And from the Amorites.] Who would have hindered their passage to the land of Canaan, (Numb. xxi.)

And from the children of Ammon.] Who were confederate with the Moabites to oppress them, (Judg. iii. 13.)

And from the Philistines?] In the days of Shamgar, (iii. *ult.*)

Ver. 12. *The Zidonians also.*] We never read of any invasion they made upon the Israelites; but only in general, that God left them, among other people, unsubdued, to prove the children of Israel, (iii. 3.) who took their opportunities, in all likelihood, to afflict them.

And the Amalekites.] Who joined both with the Moabites and the Midianites to oppress them, (iii. 13. vi. 3.)

And the Maonites did oppress you.] Maon is the name of a nation; the plural of which, *Meunim,* occurs in many places, particularly in 2 Chron. xxvi. 6, 7. where they are called in Greek Μιναιοι· a people in Arabia, both in that which we call Felix, and in that called Deserta. Which latter was not far from the Moabites and the Ammonites; with whom interpreters are apt to confound the Meunites, as if, by a transposition of letters, they were the same with the Ammonites: which hath misled us in our translation of those words, 2 Chron. xx. 1. *And with them from the Ammonites,* which makes no sense; but if we read *with them from Meunim* (as it is in Greek ἐκ Μιναίων), all runs clearly, and makes perfect sense: and thus we ought to translate that place, 1 Chron. iv. 41. where we take *Meunim* to signify dwellings, and render the words thus, *The habitations which were found there;* as if where there were tents (which are mentioned before) there were not habitations, which are the same: therefore *Meunim* is the name of a people (as the LXX. understood it) who dwelt in tents, being Arabians: who being neighbours (as I said) to the Moabites and Ammonites, joined with them in their invasion of the land of Israel, and helped to oppress them: But they are plainly distinguished from the Ammonites, in the first place mentioned, and 2 Chron. xxvi. 6—8.

And ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand.] When they were utterly unable to help themselves.

Ver. 13. *Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods.*] But all these deliverances proved ineffectual to keep them steadfast in the worship of God.

Wherefore I will deliver you no more.] He threatens therefore to leave them under the power of their enemies, which now sorely distressed them, as they justly deserved; but it was with an intention to awaken them to a more serious and hearty repentance, otherwise he resolved not to deliver them.

Ver. 14. *Go and cry unto the gods you have chosen, let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.*] A bitter reflection both upon them and upon their gods, like to that in the song of Moses, (Deut. xxxii. 37, 38.)

Ver. 15. *And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned.*] In worshipping such gods as could not save them.

Do thou unto us as seemeth good unto thee.] They submit to such punishment as he thought fit to inflict, confessing they deserved no favour; which shews their hearts were for the present very sensible of the folly wherewith they were reproached in the foregoing verse.

Deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.] They acknowledged that they deserved the severest punishment, but beseech him to have so much pity on them, as not to punish them this way, by letting these cruel enemies insult over them any longer.

Ver. 16. *And they put away the strange gods from among them.*] Gave open proof of their repentance by renouncing all idolatry.

And served the Lord.] And returned to the worship of the Lord, and of him alone, which is the most remarkable repentance and reformation that we read of hitherto in this history of the Judges; and it seems to have been so serious, that for a long time they did not relapse; for we read nothing of their idolatry in the time of those three judges that followed Jephthah.

And his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.] Nor do we read before of such an expression of the Divine compassion towards them. Every one knows the Divine nature is not capable of *grief*, properly so called; but the meaning is, he quite altered his former intentions, and in much mercy resolved upon their repentance to deliver them. So Maimonides observes, that the word *nephesh*, which we translate *soul*, signifies *his will*, Jer. xv. 1. *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, my soul could not be towards this people;* that is, it could not be his will to save them. And so here, *his soul was grieved;* that is, saith he, his will ceased from afflicting Israel any longer; for it was said before, that God's providence had deserted them, and he refused to relieve them till they called upon him and seriously repented; and then their miseries being very great by the sore oppressions of their enemies, he took pity on them, and willed their cruel afflictions should not continue. (See More Nevochim, par. i. cap. 41.)

Ver. 17. *Then the children of Ammon were gathered together.*] In the Hebrew, *were cried together;* that is, a proclamation went out, requiring all their dispersed troops, which were ravaging the countries of Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim, to return back to their camp, on the other side of Jordan.

And encamped in Gilead.] Or, *against Gilead;* for both Arius Montanus and Peter Martyr think that they laid siege to Gilead, the chief city in those parts: by taking which, they hoped to be masters of all that country; and then, with greater forces, go over Jordan again, and conquer the other tribes beforementioned.

And the children of Israel assembled themselves together, and encamped in Mizpeh.] There were two Mizpehs on the other side Jordan, one in the tribe of Gad, the other in the half tribe of Manasseh, as I observed upon Josh. xi. 3. the latter of which may be probably thought to be the place where they now assembled, Jephthah, who was afterward chosen their captain, being one of this tribe. How many of the Israelites here encamped, and whether any of those in the land of Canaan, or only those of the two tribes and a half, cannot now be known; but upon their repentance, they seem to have recovered their ancient courage, and to have taken a resolution to drive the Ammonites out of their country, insomuch that thereupon the Ammonites seem to have left the siege, and to have made a retreat into their own land, either to recruit their army, and raise more forces, or for some other reason; for thither Jephthah sent messengers to them, after he was chosen general of the Israelites; and there he fought them, when they would not yield to his convincing arguments, that they unjustly invaded the Israelites, as appears in the following chapter.

Ver. 18. *And the people and princes of Gilead.*] Who were most nearly concerned in this matter, their country lying nearest to the Ammonites.

Said one to another.] Entered into a consultation, in a grand assembly of all the people, and their rulers. (See ix. 6.)

What man is he that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon?] Will be our leader. It seems to me a probable conjecture of Peter Martyr, that they consulted God also about this matter, who directed them, perhaps, to go to Jephthah.

He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.] They resolved, whatsoever the mind of the rest of the tribes should be, that he should command all the Gadites and Manassites that inhabited the land of Gilead.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *NOW Jephthah the Gileadite.*] A man of the same country with Jair, their last judge.

Was a mighty man of valour.] A warlike person, of great courage and conduct.

And he was the son of a harlot.] Or, *but he was*, &c. Some, by the Hebrew word *zonah*, understand a concubine, but it never signifies so in Scripture; but, as we translate it, a *harlot;* and sometimes one that kept a public house; for such people were wont to make their bodies as common as their houses, to all comers. (See Josh. ii. 1.) But several of the Hebrew doctors think that this word may signify either one of another tribe, or a stranger, one of another nation: and so Josephus himself here understands it, that he was ξένος περὶ τὴν μητέρα, *a stranger by his mother's side.* And Saidas Batricides saith, his mother was an Ishmaelite, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. de Successionibus, cap. 3. Now such were called νόθαι by the Greeks, as Grotius observes, who were born of a wife that was not a citizen. But among the Jews, if such persons embraced the law, their children were not stained, but capable to inherit among the rest of their brethren; and therefore Jephthah complains of his expulsion, (ver. 7.) looking upon himself as unjustly dealt withal, which could not have been said, had he been a bastard.

And Gilead begat Jephthah.] One of the posterity of Gilead, the son of Manasseh, was his father, who was called after the name of his great ancestor.

Ver. 2. *And Gilead's wife bare him sons.*] He took a wife also of the Jewish nation, who bare him several sons.

And his wife's sons grew up, and they thrust out Jephthah.] When his father was dead; for till then the inheritance was not to be divided; and, if he had been alive, he would not have suffered them to be so injurious to Jephthah, who was the son of a wife whom he loved extremely, as Josephus relates, lib. v. Antiq. cap. 9.

And said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house.] Have no share of his estate.

For thou art the son of a strange woman.] This explains the word *zonah*, to be the same with a *woman of another country;* for there is no reason to think, that by *another woman* (as the words are in the Hebrew) he means a woman of another tribe, as the Chaldee paraphrast, R. Bechai, and others, expound it. (See Selden, in the place beforenamed, and Buxtorf, de Sponsal. et Divortiis, p. 61.)

Ver. 3. *Then Jephthah fled from his brethren.*] When they were so unkind as to drive him from his father's house, he did not think fit to stay in their country.

And dwelt in the land of Tob.] We read no where else of this country, which, it is likely, was not far from Gilead, upon the borders of the Ammonites, in the entrance of Arabia Deserta; or, perhaps, it is the same with the country called Ish-tob, 2 Sam. x. 6. 8. which was in Syria, and so near the Ammonites, that they hired forces from thence, as well as from other Syrians, to fight with king David. We find some footsteps of this land, it is very probable, in

the second book of the Maccabees, chap. xii. 17. where we read of Τουβιήνοι Ἰουδαῖοι, i. e. *Jews who dwelt in the land of Tob.*

And there were gathered vain men to Jephthah.] Or empty men; for the word *rekim* signifies poor and needy persons, men of no estates, such as resorted to David when he fled from Saul, (1 Sam. xxii. 2.) So I suppose it to be here understood (not that they were profligate persons), for the word *pochazim, light men,* is not here added, as it is in the story of those who followed Abimelech, ix. 4. Therefore Grotius doth not seem rightly to have represented Jephthah, when he saith, he was one of those who "ex prædonum ducibus justi duces facti sunt," (lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 3. sect. 3.) For these were not highwaymen, as we call them, that lived by prey; but only men of small or no fortune, who were glad of an occasion to join themselves to so gallant a man as Jephthah was. And so the word we translate *gathered,* imports that they listed themselves under him of their own accord, being invited to it by the great fame of his humanity and valour. But Grotius herein follows the Vulgar, who adds the word *latrocinates,* without any authority, either from the Hebrew, Chaldee, or LXX.

And went out with him.] Made excursions upon the enemies of the Israelites thereabouts, and got what booty they could from them for their subsistence, just as David did when he was forced to flee into the land of the Philistines, (1 Sam. xxvii. 8—11.)

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass in process of time.*] In the Hebrew it is *after days, i. e.* as primate Usher understands it (in the place abovenamed), after those years mentioned x. 8. *viz.* eighteen years, in the conclusion of which, when Jair was dead, the Ammonites took the following resolution; but there is no good ground, as I have shewn there, for this interpretation; therefore by *after days* I understand some time after their retreat into their own country, which I mentioned x. 17.

That the children of Ammon made war against Israel.] They only came in parties before to rob and spoil them; but now, finding the Israelites began to take courage, and had formed a camp in Gilead, (x. 17.) they raised an army, intending to conquer them and possess themselves of their country.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, when the children of Ammon made war against Israel.*] The Vulgar interprets it, *pressed hard upon them.*

The elders of Gilead.] Who are called princes, x. 18.

Went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob.] Some of the principal persons of the country were sent in the name of all the inhabitants of Gilead, in an embassy to him, to invite him to return to them.

Ver. 6. *And they said unto Jephthah, Come, and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon.*] They did not pretend to make him their king (remembering, perhaps, what had befallen the men of Shechem and Abimelech), but only the leader of their army.

Ver. 7. *And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, Did ye not hate me, and expel me out of my father's house?*] This signifies, that his brethren ejected him by the assistance of the public authority (unless we suppose that they were of the number of elders that were sent to him); or the elders, who saw the wrong his brethren did him, connived at it, and did not interpose, according to their office, to do him right, whereby they made his expulsion their own act.

And why are ye come unto me now when you are in distress?] As much as to say, What reason have you to expect that I should hearken to you, since I know it is only your distress which moves you to recall me?

Ver. 8. *And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore we turn again to thee now.*] This may relate either to what immediately goes before, and then the sense is, We confess we are in distress, and therefore implore thy help (which, if thou wilt afford us, thou shalt command us all for ever); or to the beginning of the foregoing verse, and the meaning is, We are sensible of the injury that was done thee, and therefore are come to repair it, by inviting thee to be our head; for that is meant by their *turning again to him:* they had altered their mind, and not only revoked that unjust act, but offered him a recompence.

That thou mayest go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.] Of the tribes on their side Jordan; for they could promise nothing for the tribes in the land of Canaan, some of which were oppressed now by the Philistines, as they were by the Ammonites.

Ver. 9. *And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver them before me, shall I be your head?*] He offers to be the general of their army, if, after he had vanquished their enemies, they would, in good earnest, make him their governor in chief, and not throw him off when they had no further need of him. In which agreement he supposed the consent and appointment of God, by whose aid alone he hoped to be victorious.

Ver. 10. *And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, The Lord be witness between us, if we do not according to thy word.*] They solemnly call God to witness their sincerity, confirming what was agreed by an oath, and wishing God to revenge it, if they did not perform what they promised.

Ver. 11. *Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead.*] Unto his own country.

And the people made him head and captain over them.] In a full assembly of the people, with the princes, (ix. 6. x. 18.) he was made general of their army; with an assurance he should be their head, after the war was successfully ended.

And Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord.] The people had done their part, but Jephthah would undertake nothing, without God's approbation, before whom, in a solemn prayer, he laid all that he had said unto them; and it is likely that God answered him by some prophet, and authorized him to undertake the conduct and government of the people; (see x. 11.) for if he had done it without a Divine warrant, the Spirit of the Lord would not have come upon him, as we read it did, ver. 29.

In Mizpeh.] Where the children of Israel had gathered themselves together to oppose the Ammonites, x. 17. and where Jephthah chose to fix his habitation, after the conquest of them, ver. 34. of this chapter; for that Mizpeh, where all the tribes, we often read, met before the Lord, was on this side Jordan, not far from Jerusalem, either in

the tribe of Judah, or of Benjamin. It is thought probable, by some learned men, that there was some *proseucha*, a *praying-place*, or place of Divine worship, here at Mizpeh, (see Josh. xxiv. 26.) where Jephthah uttered his words; which otherwise, they think, could not be said to be done *before the Lord:* but this is not a sufficient ground for such an opinion; for the Divine presence (as Rasi here observes) was in that place where all the people assembled upon a public concern. (See 1 Sam. xi. 15.) Kimchi observes the same upon the twentieth chapter of this book, ver. 1. where his words are, "In every place, in which Israel, or a great part of it, is assembled, the Divine presence dwells." (See my notes there.)

Ver. 12. *And Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the children of Ammon.*] Now he plainly acts as a chief governor, in appointing an embassy to go from him to the king of the Ammonites; which power he would not have assumed, if it had not been given him by God.

Saying, What hast thou to do with me.] That is, what is the ground of thy quarrel? Or, for what reason is this invasion made?

That thou art come to fight against me in my land?] This is the language of the supreme governor of the country, unto whom all were subject, as their lord; and demonstrates him to have been a most pious prince, that would first debate matters fairly, before he came to blows, according to the sense of a number of great men in future times, mentioned by Grotius at large, lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 23. sect. 7. Unto which he was not bound, having taken arms only in his own defence; yet, to prevent the effusion of blood, he argues the case with the king of the Ammonites, who ought rather, if he thought himself injured by the Israelites, to have sent, before he took arms, to require satisfaction.

Ver. 13. *And the king of the children of Ammon answered to the messengers of Jephthah, Because Israel took away my land when they came out of Egypt.*] This is a mere colour and pretence, the land being none of theirs, when the Israelites conquered it, but the land of Sihon king of the Amorites: for, as to the country of the Ammonites, God expressly charged the Israelites not to meddle with it, (Deut. i. 19.) for he would give them none of it. It is true, this land, which they now claimed, had formerly belonged to the Moabites, but Sihon had made a conquest of it, and driven them out of it, as we read Numb. xxi. 26. The king of Ammon, therefore, could not call it *his land*, unless he was also king of Moab at this time, which is not improbable: whence it is, that, in the following dispute between him and Jephthah, there is a promiscuous mention of the Moabites, together with the Ammonites, as if they were but one people, (ver. 15. 17, 18.) and Chemosh, which was the god of the Moabites, is called (ver. 24.) the god of the king of Ammon: unto which may be added, that the land which Sihon conquered did not entirely belong to the Moabites, but some of it to the children of Ammon, as is expressly said, Josh. xiii. 25. where we read, that to the Gadites was given *half of the land of the children of Ammon;* therefore some part of Sihon's kingdom (where the Gadites were settled) had formerly belonged to the Ammonites.

From Arnon even unto Jabbok, and to Jordan.] These are the bounds of the country to which they laid a claim; the river Arnon on the south, and the brook Jabbok on the north (which we may call the length of the country), and Jordan on the west; unto which afterward is added the eastern bounds, when it is said, ver. 22. *from the wilderness unto Jordan;* which is the wilderness through which the Israelites entered into the territories of Sihon.

Now therefore restore these lands.] Which belonged to the Moabites and Ammonites.

Again peaceably.] The messengers of Jephthah had declared that he desired not war, but peace; which the king of Ammon tells him he must not expect, unless he resigned these countries to him.

Ver. 14. *And Jephthah sent messengers again to the king of the children of Ammon.*] This is an argument of a very peaceable disposition, and a high commendation of a warlike spirit, that he was still desirous to end this controversy by reason, and not by the sword.

Ver. 15. *And said unto him, Thus saith Jephthah.*] This is his reply; which seems to be delivered as from a man in authority.

Israel took not away the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon.] He denies the matter of fact upon which they grounded the war: for the Israelites found this country in the possession of Sihon.

Ver. 16. *But when Israel came out of Egypt.*] He proves the truth of what he affirmed, by a short history of what passed after they came out of Egypt; when the king of Ammon said (ver. 13.) they took this land from him.

And walked through the wilderness unto the Red Sea, and came to Kadesh.] This is not to be understood of Kadesh-barnea, but of that Kadesh mentioned Numb. xx. 1. 14. which was in the borders of Edom; unto which they came directly from the Red Sea: nor of their coming to the Red Sea, in the first year after they passed through it, mentioned Numb. xxxiii. 10. but of their last coming to it, in that station they made at Ezion-geber (after many stations in other places), which was upon the shore of the Red Sea; from whence they immediately marched to this Kadesh, (Numb. xxxiii. 35, 36.)

Ver. 17. *Then Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land.*] This shews, they were so far from invading any body's country, that they humbly begged leave to pass through Edom, engaging to do no violence, but to pay for every thing they wanted. (See Numb. xx. 14, &c.)

But the king of Edom would not hearken thereto.] Notwithstanding which, they were not provoked by their inhumanity to quarrel with them.

And in like manner they sent to the king of Moab, but he would not consent.] We do not read of such a message sent to the Moabites: but when they came from Ezion-geber into the wilderness of Moab, we find a command of God to them not to distress the Moabites, nor to contend with them in battle: which intimates there was some occasion for it; which was their refusal to grant them a common civility.

And Israel abode in Kadesh.] Put up all these affronts, and abstained from all violence, continuing quiet in the place where they had pitched their tents.

Ver. 18. *Then they went along through the wilderness, and compassed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab.*] When they were denied a passage the direct way, they

chose rather to fetch a great compass, and travel many miles with great labour and toil, (see Numb. xxi. 4.) than give others the least disturbance.

And came by the east side of the land of Moab, and pitched upon the other side of Arnon.] See Numb. chap. xxi. 13.

But came not within the border of Moab: for Arnon was the border of Moab.] This is a demonstration that they did no injury to the Moabites, into whose country they did not enter. For they went no further than Arnon, which divided their country from the Ammonites.

Ver. 19. *And Israel sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, the king of Heshbon.*] Where his royal palace was. (See Numb. xxi. 25, 26.)

And Israel said unto him, Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy land unto my place.] Being denied passage through Edom and Moab, they sent a friendly message unto him, craving the favour of being permitted to go through his country unto Canaan. (Numb. xxi. 21, 22.)

Ver. 20. *But Sihon trusted not Israel to pass through his coast.*] Was jealous they would seize on his country.

But Sihon gathered all his people together, and pitched in Jahaz, and fought against Israel.] He contented not himself to refuse (as his neighbours had done) to grant a passage through his country, which they could not demand, but raised all his forces, and proudly marched to drive them away from his borders, (Numb. xxi. 23, 24.)

Ver. 21. *And the Lord God of Israel delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they smote them.*] It was plainly an act of God to give the Israelites the victory; for they were unprepared for war, and tired with a long march about the land of Edom and Moab.

So Israel possessed all the land of the Amorites, the inhabitants of that country.] They did not dispossess the Moabites, but the Amorites, who then inhabited that country, which became the possession of the Israelites, by the right of a just war, in their own defence.

Ver. 22. *And they possessed all the coasts of the Amorites, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and from the wilderness even unto Jordan.*] This is a description of the length and breadth of the land, from south to north, and from east to west: (see above, ver. 13.) None of which was then in the possession of the Moabites or Ammonites; who could not therefore charge the Israelites with taking any of their land from them.

Ver. 23. *And so now the Lord God of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel.*] This is a new title to this land; which they not only took in a just war, but was also given them by God, who made them victorious, and then bestowed it upon them.

And shouldest thou possess it?] It was absurd to think that they should take the pains to conquer it, and God should give it to them, that they might put the Moabites again in the possession of it, with whom they had no alliance; but, quite contrary, they had denied them the common right of mankind.

Ver. 24. *Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess?*] He doth not call Chemosh a god; but only argues from the opinion that they had of him, which all nations had of their gods, that they owed their conquests to them, to whom therefore they gave thanks for all their victories. Now he appeals to them, whether they would not keep what their god had given them, and look upon it as rightfully possessed by them.

So whomsoever the Lord our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess.] By the very same title whereby the Moabites possessed the country wherein they now lived; from whence they drove out the ancient inhabitants. (Deut. ii. 10, 11.)

Ver. 25. *And now, art thou any thing better than Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab?*] This is a third argument, that when this conquest was newly made by the Israelites, the then king of Moab (as potent as the present) laid no claim to this country, nor demanded to have it restored to him; but only was afraid they should invade the land he still possessed.

Did he ever strive against Israel.] Dispute their title with them.

Or did he ever fight against Israel.] Endeavour by force of arms to recover this country, as not belonging to them but to him.

Ver. 26. *While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that be along by the coast of Arnon, three hundred years,* &c.] In the last place he pleads prescription, and that for *three hundred years;* in which long space of time none of the kings of Moab pretended a right to this country, much less contended it with them; which argument was irrefragable. For if such a long undisputed possession cannot make a right to a country, it is impossible there should be any end of wars between kings and princes. But all mankind look upon those wars as unjust, which are made for recovery of countries wherein people have settled quietly for many ages; though, perhaps, in the first acquisition of them, their title was not good. Therefore it is not necessary to examine, whether Sihon had a just cause of war when he conquered this country; nor is it of importance, with respect to this, to examine whether the Israelites had held this conquest just three hundred years; for if a few be wanting, it is not material: but with respect to something else it is of great consequence, for the explaining of what we read 1 Kings vi. 2. that Solomon began to build the temple in the four hundred and eightieth year after they came out of Egypt. Which space is divided by these words of Jephthah into two intervals: the first of which contained three hundred and forty years; for they had possessed this country three hundred years, and they came out of Egypt forty years before its conquest: during which time they had been slaves to the Mesopotamians, Moabites, Canaanites, and Midianites. Now, if the years wherein they were oppressed by these four nations, and the years of peace and quiet which they enjoyed, be put together, from the first year of Chushan-Rishathaim to the last year of Jair, they produce a little more than three hundred years; so that no time is left for Joshua's conquest of Canaan, and his life after it, and for the generation that outlived him. But, by supposing that some of these things fell out in the very same time (as for example, during the fourscore years' rest in the eastern parts of the land after Eglon's death, they were oppressed twenty years in the north by Jabin), this difficulty is removed, and all comes right; as Sir John Marsham hath demonstrated in his Canon Chronicus: where he shews, that, from the death of Moses to this invasion of the Ammonites, there were three hundred years; allowing five-and-

twenty years (as Josephus computes) for Joshua's government after they came into Canaan, and thirty-five years to the following generation that survived him. (See Seculum xi. Æra Exodi. And concerning the other interval, see here, xii. 14.)

Why therefore did ye not recover them within that time?] This question could not be answered, that in so long a time they should hear nothing of their claim till now.

Ver. 27. *Wherefore I have not sinned against thee, but thou dost me wrong to war against me.*] Upon all these reasons he concludes, the Ammonites had no cause to make this war; but were injurious in it to the Israelites.

The Lord the Judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon.] The meaning is, that if they were not moved by these reasons, but the controversy must be decided by arms, he committed his cause to God, the righteous judge of the whole world, who, he doubted not, would do him right. By *this day* he doth not mean that God would determine the right, by giving him the victory then, when he spake these words (for he was not yet ready to give them battle), but that God would judge of the justice of his present plea, and accordingly give sentence, when the matter came to be tried in a battle.

Ver. 28. *Howbeit the king of the children of Ammon hearkened not to the words of Jephthah which he sent him.*] He would not yield to arguments, being obstinately resolved to fight it out.

Ver. 29. *Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah.*] The people had chosen him for their leader, and promised to continue him their chief governor, as they had already made him; and now God publicly declares his approbation of their choice; and made him their judge, as he had done others before, (iii. 10.) by endowing him with an extraordinary measure of courage and wisdom, and all other qualities necessary to render him fit to be the ruler of his people.

And he passed over Gilead and Manasseh.] Went through the whole country of Reuben and Gad (which are comprehended in *Gilead*), and likewise the half tribe of Manasseh, and levied what men he could among them.

And passed over Mizpeh of Gilead.] Went to the extreme part of the country northward, where Mizpeh was, towards Mount Lebanon and Hermon.

And from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon.] He marched from thence, with such forces as he had gathered, towards the enemy's country.

Ver. 30. *And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into my hand.*] He did not make a doubt of it, but thought he might be more assured of victory, if he made a religious vow beforehand, of being very grateful to God for it. Which was the custom of the ancient Romans, as we find in Livy; who frequently tells us, that their generals were wont to vow to Jupiter, or Apollo, or others, part of the spoil they should take in war; or to build temples in their honour. And thus the Israelites, when king Arad came against them, as they were going towards Canaan (a little before the conquest of this country now in controversy), vowed to make his country a *cherem*, if God would deliver it into their hands. (See Numb. xxi. 2.)

Ver. 31. *That it shall be, that whatsoever.*] This comprehends all sorts of creatures, as the Hebrew doctors commonly observe.

Cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me.] The Vulgar adds the word *first*, which must be understood; otherwise he would have been obliged to devote many things to the Lord, which might possibly come out of his house.

When I return in peace from the children of Ammon.] Come back victorious.

Shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering.] If it was a thing fit to be offered: for if a dog or a swine should have happened to come out first to meet him, that was not lawful to be offered. But the great question is, Whether it was not as unlawful to offer his daughter, who seems to be comprehended in this vow? And it is said afterward, (ver. 39.) that he did unto her according to it. Josephus, and the Chaldee paraphrast, and several famous rabbins, think that he did offer her, being deceived by a mistake of the sense of that law, Lev. xxvii. 28. And though he might have been absolved from his vow by the high-priest, yet they tell an idle story, that they stood so much upon a punctilio of their dignity, that he would neither go to Phinehas, nor Phinehas vouchsafe to wait upon him. Which is a tale not to be found in the Talmud, but in some lesser writer, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 11. where he shews, that the two Kimchis, father and son, with R. Levi ben Gersom, and others, interpret these words quite otherwise; and take the particle (which we translate *and*) to be a disjunctive; that is, as much as *or*. So Kimchi's words are, *It shall be consecrated to the Lord, if it be not fit for a burnt-offering; or it shall be offered for a burnt-offering, if it be fit for it.* And so they think she was devoted to God, and separate from all secular affairs, that she might give herself continually to prayer and holy exercises. Which opinion hath several difficulties in it, as he there observes; and it must be confessed, the stream of interpreters runs the quite contrary way: for though they call this *votum temerarium*, as Tertullian doth, a *rash vow*, or a *foolish incautious vow*, as Theodoret, St. Austin, and others; yet very great numbers (and indeed most of the ancient Christian writers) think that he did really offer her: though it cannot be denied, that there are great difficulties in this interpretation also; no such thing having ever been done in Israel; but such sacrifices declared abominable unto God: which it is a wonder he should not know, nor the people neither; who, one would have expected, should have hindered such a barbarous sacrifice. All that can be said in answer to this is, that they having been long accustomed to idolatrous worship, and he having lived out of his own country, and being a soldier, had forgotten their law, or retained but a very imperfect knowledge of it. But they that would see this matter largely discussed, may consult Ludovicus Capellus, who hath a long dissertation on purpose about it; and I shall say something more of it upon the latter end of this chapter.

Ver. 32. *So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them.*] He was not far from them before, (ver. 29.) but now he drew his army up to them, and engaged them.

And the Lord delivered them into his hand.] And thereby declared the Ammonites were in the wrong, (ver. 27.)

Ver. 33. *And he smote them from Aroer.*] Which was a city upon the banks of the river Arnon; or rather in the river, being encompassed with it.

Till thou come to Minnith.] Another city up in the country.

Even twenty cities, and unto the plain of the vineyards.] They chased them a great way, and destroyed their cities as they went along, till they came to the plain here mentioned. Or, as it is in the margin, unto Abel; a city, perhaps, which was very strong, called Abel-Keramim, as the LXX. understand it.

With a great slaughter.] Both in the field and in the cities.

Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.] So that they infested their country no more.

Ver. 34. *And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house.*] From which he went forth when he began this expedition, (ver. 29.)

And, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and dances.] She was the first person of his family whom he saw at his return, who came, accompanied with some of her neighbours, to welcome him home, and congratulate his victory with music and dancing. So the old manner had been, Exod. xv. 20. and continued afterward, 1 Sam. xviii. 6.

And she was his only child: beside her he had neither son nor daughter.] In the Hebrew the words are, he had not *from himself* either son or daughter; intimating, perhaps, that though his wife had children by another husband, or he had adopted children, yet he had none descended from his own body but this only daughter, which made her the dearer to him.

Ver. 35. *And it came to pass, that when he saw her, he rent his clothes.*] As the manner was when any great calamity befel them. (See Lev. x. 6.)

And said, Alas! my daughter, thou hast brought me very low.] Quite spoiled my triumph.

And thou art one of them that trouble me.] Which was the more afflictive, because he expected from her the greatest comfort and pleasure.

For I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back.] That is, made a vow which he could not retract. It is likely he told her what it was, though that be not here expressed; or by his deep sorrow at the first sight of her, she understood it was upon her account: but in this he was grossly mistaken, which way soever we interpret this vow; whether of separating her from company, or of offering her for a burnt-offering; for he was bound to neither, yea, he was bound not to offer her in sacrifice, which was a thing abominable. As for the other, there was no such power by their law granted to parents, to shut up their children, and separate them from all society with men, as Mr. Selden observes, there being not the least footstep of any such thing in the whole body of their Talmud, or in their lawyers.

Ver. 36. *And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon.*] A rare instance of religion, courage, obedience to her parents, and love to her country.

Ver. 37. *And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me.*] Grant me only one request; which was not inconsistent, she thought, with his vow; for he did not say he would execute it immediately.

Let me alone two months.] Leave me at liberty so long.

That I may go up and down upon the mountains.] Which were fit places for her purpose, being solitary, and far from company.

To bewail my virginity.] For it was accounted a great infelicity in that nation to die without issue.

I and my fellows.] Other virgins, her companions. This some take for an argument, that she was not to be sacrificed; for then she would have bewailed her death, rather than her want of posterity. But this is no concluding argument; for she might possibly look upon it as an honour to be a sacrifice unto God.

Ver. 38. *And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months, and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains.*] They that think she knew she was to be offered, infer from hence, that she looked upon it as a greater calamity to die without issue, than merely to die.

Ver. 39. *And it came to pass, at the end of two months, she returned to her father.*] Having had time to bring her mind unto a perfect resignation to her father; or rather, to confirm herself in the resolution she had at first, cheerfully to submit unto whatsoever he had vowed.

Who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed.] That is, saith Kimchi, he made her a house, and brought her into it, and there left her secluded from the company of all men, and from all secular affairs. That is the meaning, he thinks, of the first part of his vow, *It shall surely be the Lord's.* And so Ralbag, a little more fully, She was separated from the company of men; for if she had had a husband, she could not have served the Lord alone, but must have served her husband also, as all wives are bound to do. Selden indeed saith, that he doth not see what law gave him this power to keep her from marriage; there being nothing of it in all their books, as was said before. But there is something like it in 2 Sam. xx. 3. where David shut up his concubines, and made them live in widowhood till their death. And he might take the liberty to do this (though no law gave him such power) rather than take away the life of his daughter, which was against law; for it condemned such sacrifices. But the truth is, there was no necessity of doing either, if he had understood or considered the law; for he might have paid a price for her to the priest, which the law prescribed, when a son or daughter was consecrated to God, (Lev. xxvii. 2, 3, &c.) Nay, they who consecrated themselves, might redeem themselves: and about this very case of Jephthah there was anciently a dispute between two famous doctors, Simeon ben Lakish and R. Johanan; the former of which maintained, that he ought to have paid the price or value of her according to the law; but the other maintained, he was not bound to do so much as that, because the vow was to offer a burnt-offering, in which his daughter could not be comprehended. For other animals only were capable of being offered in sacrifice. As for those words, Lev. xxvii. 28, 29. upon which Lud. Capellus hath founded his opinion that she might be sacrificed, Maimonides hath better restrained them to the sons and daughters of the Canaanites, devoted by God to destruction. But who can think that

God would have the Hebrew children so devoted as those slaves were, upon whom a curse was denounced before they entered into Canaan? Beside, if Jephthah was bound to offer his daughter, who should be employed in that work? Should the priests? But their business was rather to persuade and deter him from what he had imprudently vowed. Should the magistrates? But they could not be ignorant that God had forbidden such sacrifices. Should Jephthah himself? But this would have argued him as void of common sense, as of natural affection. And who can think (as Theodoricus Hackspan goes on) that since God allowed cities of refuge, whither a manslayer might flee and be safe, when he had unwittingly killed a man, that the same privilege might not have been allowed to a son or a daughter, who was perfectly innocent (as this virgin was), *viz.* to save their lives by flight, or by paying a ransom?

The Jews are very doubtful in this matter; for some say Phinehas lost his priesthood, and it was translated to the family of Ithamar, because he did not absolve Jephthah from this vow: but others of the eastern writers say, he was forbid to release him by the spirit of prophecy; and Jephthah, when he was admonished by his friends to go and advise with him how to save his daughter, was forbid by an angel to go. (See Selden, lib. i. de Succession. ad Pontificatum, cap. 2. fol. 117, &c.) But the Targum upon this verse blames Jephthah for not consulting Phinehas; for if he had, he would have redeemed her for a sum of money.

And she knew no man.] This is looked upon, by those who think she was only consecrated to the Lord, as an argument of it; that after the performance of his vow, it is said, *she knew no man;* that is, as long as she lived, she continued a virgin.

And it was a custom in Israel.] They that think she was sacrificed, take these words as separate from those that follow, and interpret them, upon this a sanction was made, that none should hereafter, by the like error, offer human sacrifices. So the Targum. (See Selden in the place forenamed.) But there was no need of this statute; nor is it likely that the fable among the Greeks, concerning the sacrifice of Iphigenia by Agamemnon, was devised out of this sacred story, as Lud. Capellus conjectures; who fancies also this Jephtigenia, that is, the daughter of Jephthah (from whence might come Iphigenia), was not sacrificed upon the altar, but only slain; though the vow was, he would offer a burnt-offering. But we refer these words to what follows in the next verse.

Ver. 40. *That the daughters of Israel.*] They of that country.

Went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.] Some interpret the Hebrew word *thannoth* to signify they went to *discourse* with her, or to comfort her; though the most ancient interpreters (as Bochartus observes, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. i. cap. 9.) translate it as we do, θρηνεῖν, as the LXX. have it, to *make lamentation.* But quite contrary the learned Lud. de Dieu, different from the rest (except Sixtinus Amama, who hath the same notion), interprets it to *praise her.* Which signification he plainly derives out of the Arabic language; and beside, we ourselves in this very book (ver. 11.) seem to follow it, by translating it *rehearse.* And thus that excellent man explains this whole matter:—"She was not slain; but, as appears sufficiently from the foregoing words, was devoted to perpetual virginity; in which she deserved greater commendation than her father. For he, as soon as he saw her come to meet him, repented of the vow he had rashly made, and tore his clothes, lamenting the miserable condition into which he had brought himself and her: but she most courageously comforted her father, and, congratulating his victory, desired him not to be troubled about her, for she was ready to submit to what he had vowed. Upon the account of which heroic virtue, whereby she obliged the whole country, they could do no less than celebrate her praise every year."

Four days in the year.] One day in every quarter of the year they went to celebrate her fame with verses composed in her praise, as Grotius supposes. But whether they went to the place where she was retired, and there sang them before her, or in some other public place; and whether while she lived, or after her death, is uncertain, as De Dieu observes.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND the men of Ephraim gathered themselves.*] In the Hebrew, *were called,* by a public cry, or proclamation, to arm themselves.

And went northward.] To the country of Manasseh, on the other side Jordan. For this sufficiently shews that Mizpeh was in that country, and in the northern part of it, towards Lebanon and Hermon, as I observed before, xi. 29. Pet. Martyr thinks they did not march orderly thither, being not gathered together (as far as appears) by the authority of the magistrate, but in a tumultuous manner, as seditious people are wont to do.

And said unto Jephthah.] By this, and by what follows, it appears they came to Mizpeh, where Jephthah dwelt.

Wherefore passedst thou over.] They do not mean *over Jordan,* for there he was already; but from hence to the coast of the Ammonites. (See xi. 30. 32.)

To fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee?] Their pride made them take it ill, that they had not a share in the glory of the late victory. Just as formerly they quarrelled with Gideon upon the like occasion, (viii. 1.) which shews they were a haughty tribe.

We will burn thine house upon thee with fire.] Their pride put them into such a strange rage, that they seem to threaten to burn him as well as his house.

Ver. 2. *And Jephthah said unto them, I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon.*] He answers their furious language with great mildness; and first tells them, that he did not undertake this war till he was forced to it by the Ammonites, who sorely distressed them, (x. 9.)

And when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands.] In the second place he denies their charge, and affirms the contrary, that he had begged their assistance, but they refused to give it him: yea (as the word we translate *called* signifies), he had cried aloud to them with earnest importunities to help them in their distress.

Ver. 3. *And when I saw that you delivered me not.*] That there was no hope of your help to preserve us from ruin.

I put my life in my hand.] Exposed myself to the utmost

hazard; for he had but a small part of the people of Israel with him to fight with their powerful oppressors. This phrase seems peculiar to the Hebrews and the eastern writers; for among all the Greek and Roman writers, Isaac Casaubon saith he never met with it but once in Xenarchus; whom Athenæus alleges, introducing in one of his plays a man full of fear and trembling—ἐν τῇ χειρὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἔχοντα.

And passed over against the children of Ammon.] With such forces alone as he could get on his side Jordan, (xi. 29, 30.)

And the Lord delivered them into my hand.] God approved his undertaking by giving him a great victory.

Wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day to fight against me?] Who had defended and preserved them. For if the Ammonites had vanquished Jephthah, they would soon have passed over Jordan and fallen upon the Ephraimites, as they had before attempted, (x. 9.)

Ver. 4. *Then Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim.*] When he saw they were not pacified by this fair and peaceable apology, but still continued their menaces, he betook himself to arms, and raised as many men as he could to oppose them.

And the men of Gilead smote them.] Put them to flight, and made a great slaughter of them.

Because they said, Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim.] That which provoked them to kill so many of them was their scoffing language (added to their threats), whereby they reproached the men of Gilead, (who were the chief managers of the late war, xi. 29.) as if they were but the scum and dregs of the tribe of Ephraim; *i. e.* of those descended from Joseph, among whom they were the principal.

Among the Ephraimites, and among the Manassites.] That is, that dwelt in the land of Canaan; who looked upon the Gileadites, and the rest of the Manassites, on the other side Jordan, and in the most northerly part of it, as the refuse of their nation. But it must be acknowledged, that the words in the Hebrew are capable of another sense, and may be thus translated: *Therefore* (so the particle *ki* is often translated) *they said, Fugitives of Ephraim are ye;* that is, having smote them, the Gileadites called the Ephraimites *run-aways.* And the truth is, thus they (not the Gileadites) are called in the next verse: and then the following words may be thus translated, *Gilead got between the Ephraimites and the Manassites.* It is very probable, that the Manassites in Canaan joined with the Ephraimites in this presumptuous attempt upon the Gileadites; who being well acquainted with their own country, got between them and the river Jordan, to intercept their passage over it, as we read in the following verse.

Ver. 5. *And the Gileadites took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites.*] So that none could pass over at these fords, without their leave.

And it was so, that when those Ephraimites who were escaped.] They are the very same words in the Hebrew, which are used in the foregoing verse, *The fugitives of Ephraim.*

Said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead.] Who were set to guard the passages.

Said, Art thou an Ephraimite.] They examined him what countryman he was; whether a Reubenite, Gadite, Manassite, on their side Jordan, or one of the Ephraimites on the other.

If he said, Nay.] For fear would make him deny it.

Ver. 6. *Then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth.*] To find the truth, they put him to this test; whether his pronunciation of some words was like that of the Gileadites: for people of the same nation, who speak the same language, differ very much in their pronunciation of it, in several parts of the country: as in Greece, all spake Greek; but the Ionians, Attics, Dorians, and Æolians, spake it very differently. And so they did among the Romans; for at Prænestе, which was not far from Rome (as Pet. Martyr observes out of Plautus), instead of *Ciconia,* they said *Konia.* And so the Ephraimites said *sibboleth,* but could not pronounce *shibboleth.* There were many other words like this which they could not frame their mouths to speak, as the Gileadites did; but this was chosen, it is likely, because it was very fit for the purpose; *shibboleth* signifying not only an *ear of corn,* but also *floods of water,* (Psal. lxix. 2.) so that the test they put them unto was this, to bid them say, *Let me pass over the water.*

And he said Sibboleth; for he could not frame his mouth to pronounce it right.] If he was an Ephraimite, he presently discovered himself; for he could not pronounce the letter *schin;* which proceeded, I suppose, from the long use and custom of that people to pronounce otherwise, so that they could not frame the organs of speech to pronounce as the Gileadites did: which we see at this day among all nations; who, in different provinces, very much differ in their speech, though they use the very same language.

Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan.] Otherwise they let him go; for they used this mark of distinction on purpose, lest they should kill any of another tribe.

And there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.] In the fight, and at the passages of Jordan, this number perished: which was a just punishment to take down their pride and insolence, in despising so great a man as Jephthah, and threatening to destroy his house, after so glorious a victory, whereby he had saved all the people of Israel; and reproaching their brethren also, whom they invaded without any cause, and seem to have intended to drive them out of their country.

Ver. 7. *And Jephthah judged Israel six years.*] After this humiliation of the Ephraimites, all the tribes, whom the Ammonites had oppressed (on the other side Jordan, perhaps, in the land of Canaan, as well as the Gileadites, and the rest on their side), submitted themselves unto him as their judge; and he continued six years in the government.

Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.] The Jews have several foolish conceits concerning his death and burial; because it is said, *he was buried in the cities of Gilead,* as the words are in the Hebrew: which they would have understood, as if he rotted (as a punishment for offering his daughter), and one piece of him, when it dropped off, was buried in one city, and another in the next city, &c.; when the plain meaning is expressed in our translation, that he was buried *in one of the cities,* that is, in Mizpeh, where he lived. (See Gen. xix. 29.) And so Aben Ezra and Ralbag interpret it: though the latter of these rabbins could not forbear to incline to one of the Talmudical fables; that he having no issue to

propagate his name, ordered his body to be cut into several pieces, and buried in so many cities of Gilead; that every one might preserve his memory. Other fancies there are, in which men indulge themselves; and Peter Martyr hath thought fit to interpose his conjecture, that the word *Iram*, which we translate *cities*, may possibly be the proper name of a city in Gilead, wherein he was buried.

Ver. 8. *And after him Ibzan of Beth-lehem judged Israel.*] It is not said upon what occasion he was made judge; for, perhaps, he was raised up by God immediately after Jephthah's death, only to preserve them in the true religion, which was in some measure restored. Some of the Jews fancy him to have been the same with Boaz, who married Ruth the Moabitess, but without any ground at all that I can find.

Ver. 9. *And he had thirty sons and thirty daughters.*] A numerous issue was accounted a great blessing in those days: and though we read of no memorable act that this judge did, yet this is set down to shew that he was a person eminently favoured by God.

Whom he sent abroad.] The Vulgar refers this to his daughters, for whom he provided husbands, and sent his daughters to their houses, as the manner was, (Gen. xxiv. 67. xxxi. 50.)

And he took in thirty daughters from abroad for his sons.] This completed the blessing of God in the gift of so many children; who all lived to the state of men and women, and were all disposed by him in marriage, for that was in the power of parents. (See Gen. xxiv.)

And he judged Israel seven years.] Not all the Israelites, but those that Jephthah had judged; and none disputed his authority, but he ruled over them thus long.

Ver. 10. *Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Beth-lehem.*] There were two Beth-lehems, one in the tribe of Zebulun, and the other in the tribe of Judah; the latter of which, it is generally thought, is here meant, where he was born and buried.

Ver. 11. *And after him Elon, a Zebulonite, judged Israel: and he judged Israel ten years.*] It is observed by many, that Eusebius, in his Chronicon, passes by this judge, because he saith the LXX. do not mention him, though the Hebrew text doth: but, as all our present copies of the LXX. now mention him; so did those whom a very ancient writer used, *viz.* Theophilus Antioch. lib. i. ad Autolicum; and, which is more to be wondered at, those copies also which Eusebius himself followed in his tenth book, de Præpar. Evang. cap. 14. as our primate Usher hath observed in his Chronologia Sacra, par. i. cap. *ult.*

Ver. 12. *And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in Aijalon in the country of Zebulun.*] These last words were added to distinguish this Aijalon here mentioned from another in the tribe of Dan, (i. 35.)

Ver. 13. *And after him Abdon the son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Israel.*] The place where he was born shews that he was of the tribe of Ephraim, whom God at last honoured with a judge of their own country, after their pride had been humbled by Jephthah: for Pirathon is expressly said, ver. 15. to be in the land of Ephraim.

Ver. 14. *And he had forty sons, and thirty nephews.*] That is, grandsons.

That rode on threescore and ten asses' colts.] See ver. 10. This is said, to shew that God blessed him not only with a numerous posterity, but let them all grow up to be men. (See x. 4.)

And he judged Israel eight years.] The intention of this book is chiefly to shew how God punished them for their sins, and delivered them upon their repentance: but nothing remarkable of this kind falling out in the time of these three last mentioned judges, he omits to relate their other acts, which was beside his purpose.

Here it may be fit to note, that the other interval of the two mentioned upon xi. 26. consisting of a hundred and forty years, (which, added to three hundred and forty, in the foregoing interval, make up the four hundred and eighty years mentioned 1 Kings vi. 2.) it is evident that the latter part of them, *viz.* eighty-four years, was made up by the reigns of Saul and David, who each reigned forty years, (2 Sam. v. 4. Acts xiii. 21.) and the four first years of Solomon: therefore the remaining fifty-six years are made up of part of the eighteen years wherein the Ammonites oppressed Israel after the death of Jair, and the years wherein these four last named persons and Samuel judged Israel.

Ver. 15. *And Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died, and was buried in Pirathon, in the land of Ephraim, in the mount of the Amalekites.*] Some think this mount retained the name of *Mount Amalek* (as the words are in the Hebrew) from ancient times; the Amalekites having possessed it heretofore, when the Canaanites were the inhabitants of this country; but it may as well be thought (since all that is said is but conjecture) that it was so called from some famous overthrow, which the children of Ephraim gave the Amalekites in this place; for in the time of the judges they more than once joined with others against the Israelites. (See iii. 13. vi. 3. but especially see what I have noted upon v. 14.)

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord.*] As he complained before, x. 6. when he began to speak of what befel them thereupon.

And the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.] This is the sixth oppression, and the longest that they ever lay under: which is thought, by a great man I have often mentioned, to have ended seven months after the death of Eli, when the ark was brought back out of the land of the Philistines; and, by the same reason, it began so many months after he entered upon the government, after the death of Abdon. (See Usherii Annales, ad A. M. 2848. and his Chronologica Sacra, p. 1. cap. 12, 13.) But, I think, Sir John Marsham hath since that more rightly judged, that this oppression by the Philistines is not different from that mentioned x. 7, 8. but one and the same; they vexing and oppressing the Israelites in the west, when the Ammonites oppressed them in the east: for though the oppression of the Philistines lasted longer, yet it began at the very same time with the other; which made their distress the greater: and therefore that preface (x. 7.) belongs not only to what immediately there follows, concerning the Ammonites and Jephthah, but to what is here related concerning the Philistines and Samson: which the holy writer could not speak of both together without confusion; and therefore first relates the

issue of the war with the Ammonites, and then relates the other part of the history concerning the Philistines, which he here begins: and by this synchronism all difficulties may be solved, and the years, which seem redundant, brought within their true compass. (See his Canon Chronicus, sect. 11. p. 293.)

Ver. 2. *And there was a certain man of Zorah.*] See Josh. xix. 40, 41.

Of the family of the Danites.] Sometimes the word *family* is used for a *tribe.* (See Josh. vii. 17.) Or, the meaning may be *of a family among the Danites:* from among whom it was very proper to have a deliverer raised up to them, for the Danites were near neighbours to the Philistines, who oppressed them.

Whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not.] Was not likely to have any children.

Ver. 3. *And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman.*] As he did to Gideon, (vi. 12.) in human shape; as the relation shews in the following verses, 5. 8, &c.

And said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not; but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son.] The greatest men of this nation were born of barren women; as Isaac was anciently, and Samuel and John the Baptist in future times.

Ver. 4. *Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink.*] She was to live as the Nazarites did, (Numb. vi. 2, 3.) while she carried him in her womb, and, perhaps, while she nursed him; because, as it follows in the next verse, he was to be a perpetual Nazarite unto God, from his conception to his death, (ver. 7.) which he could not have been if she had drank wine or strong drink; because a child in the womb and its mother live by the same nourishment.

And eat not any unclean thing.] It is likely they were too negligent in those days, in observing the precepts about meats; otherwise there would have been no need to mention this.

Ver. 5. *For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb.*] See upon Numb. vi. 4.

And he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines.] He did not perfectly deliver the Israelites from the yoke of the Philistines, but it was done after his death by Samuel; who put an end to this forty years' tyranny, by his famous victory at Eben-ezer, (1 Sam. vii. 13.) as the same Sir J. Marsham observes: who supposes Eli to have died in the midst of this servitude; that is, twenty years before this victory. Samson therefore only sorely galled the Philistines, but they still continued to oppress the Israelites, as they did when he was born; for it appears by these words, that when the angel spake to them, they were under *the hand,* that is, the power of the Philistines, and so continued all his days: for it is said, xv. 20. that he judged Israel twenty years, *in the days of the Philistines;* that is, while they tyrannized over Israel: from which tyranny he was so far from being a complete deliverer, that he himself was taken and bound by them; nor had he ever any command over the Israelites.

Ver. 6. *And the woman came and told her husband.*] The angel seems to have appeared to her in the field, and she acquainted her husband with it when she came home.

Saying, A man of God came unto me.] So they called prophets.

And his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible.] That is, venerable, or full of majesty; for so the *men of God,* I suppose, sometimes appeared; as may be gathered from the story of St. Stephen, who, being full of the Holy Ghost, when he stood before the council of Jerusalem, his face shone *as if it had been the face of an angel,* (Acts vi. 15.)

And I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name.] The lustre of his countenance struck such an awe into her, that she made no inquiry who he was, nor whence he came, and he was not pleased to tell her. Though the Vulgar (against both the Hebrew text, the Chaldee, and the LXX.) hath it, *She asked him who he was, and whence he came, and what was his name, but he would not tell her.*

Ver. 7. *And he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive and bear a son; and now drink no wine, nor strong drink,* &c.] She recites the words of the angel unto her husband; who, as Josephus fancies, hearing her highly commend the person who appeared to her for his beauty and majesty, began to suspect her chastity; which is a conceit for which there is no ground, but much against it.

Ver. 8. *Then Manoah entreated the Lord, and said, Oh, my Lord, let the man of God whom thou didst send come again unto us.*] To make good the forenamed conceit, Josephus makes this to be the prayer of his wife, that he might satisfy the jealousy of her husband; directly contrary to what is here expressly said, that Manoah made this request. (See lib. v. Antiq. cap. 10.)

And teach us what we shall do unto the child which shall be born.] He did not in the least question his wife's chastity; no, nor blame her credulity, but desired himself to see the person (if God pleased) who had brought this good news to them, and to be informed how they should educate the child.

Ver. 9. *And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah.*] Who, it appears by this, desired only further satisfaction in that which he already believed.

And the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field.] Where, I suppose, (ver. 6.) he appeared to her before: and, I think, all interpreters agree, that it was on the very same day.

And Manoah her husband was not with her.] This is no sign of his jealousy, but rather quite contrary, that he had a great opinion of her virtue.

Ver. 10. *And the woman made haste, and ran, and shewed her husband, saying, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me that came unto me the other day.*] The word *other* is not in the Hebrew, but it may be translated, *to-day.* And, perhaps, he appeared to her at the first in the morning, and now in the evening.

Ver. 11. *And Manoah arose, and went after his wife.*] Who led him the way, to shew him where the man was.

And came to the man.] Whom his wife had desired to stay a while, till she called her husband to him, as Josephus probably enough conjectures: but I cannot imagine how he came to add, that when her husband saw him, οὐ δ' οὕτως ἐπαύετο τῆς ὑπονοίας, *he was not instantly rid of his suspicion;* for there is nothing like it in the following words.

He said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman?] And told her, she should have a son.

And he said, I am.] The same Jewish writer adds, that Manoah prayed him to tell him what he had said to his wife; but the angel replied, it was enough that he had told it her.

Ver. 12. *And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass.*] These words may be no more than a wish, that what he foretold might prove true; though some look upon them as a prayer to God to make them good.

How shall we order the child? and how shall we do unto him?] The Hebrew word *mischpat*, which we translate *order*, signifies here the rule whereby he should live.

Ver. 13. *And the angel said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware.*] This general answer might have been sufficient; but that they might be the more careful, he adds, in the next verse, all the particulars he had mentioned to his wife, ver. 4. and something more largely.

Ver. 14. *She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine.*] *i. e.* Neither grapes nor raisins.

Neither let her drink wine nor strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing.] This seems to lay a charge upon him as well as her, to see this abstinence observed.

All that I commanded her let her observe.] Breed him up a Nazarite all the days of his life.

Ver. 15. *And Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, I pray thee, let us detain thee until we have made ready a kid for thee.*] He desired him to stay and accept an entertainment from them, which was anciently given to strangers, especially when they appeared like more than ordinary persons, (Gen. xviii. 3, 4, &c.) and was continued to these days, (Judg. vi. 18.) Some think he intended to offer a sacrifice of peace-offerings, and feast the man of God with that part which belongs to him that brought it to be offered.

Ver. 16. *And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread.*] He was persuaded to stay, but not to taste of his meat; for the word *bread* comprehends all provision of food.

And if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord.] Or, *But* if thou hast a mind to express thy thankfulness, offer a *burnt-offering*, which must be wholly sacrificed unto the Lord. A prophet (as Manoah took this to be) might warrant men to sacrifice, though they were not priests, nor at the tabernacle, as Elijah did at Mount Carmel.

For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the Lord.] As he did shortly after, when he appeared to be more than an angel.

Ver. 17. *And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour?*] He desired they might shew themselves grateful to him, by making him some present, which they could not do, unless they knew his name, and where he dwelt. So Josephus interprets *doing him honour*, ἵνα χάριν αὐτῷ καὶ δωρεὰν παράσχωσι, *that they might give him thanks, and bestow some gift upon him.*

Ver. 18. *And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is secret?*] Or rather (as it is in the margin) *it is wonderful;* so the LXX. θαυμαστὸν, *admirable.* Whose essence (for that is meant by *name* in Scripture) is to be admired, but cannot be comprehended. This shews it was the Lord himself; that is, the Word of the Lord, who was to be the Messiah; unto whom the prophet Isaiah gives the same name of *Pele*, the *wonderful*, (Isa. ix. 6.)

Ver. 19. *And Manoah took a kid with a meat-offering.*] Which usually attended the burnt-offering, as we read in the book of Leviticus.

And offered it upon the rock unto the Lord.] He did not offer it, properly speaking, but laid it upon the rock, as on an altar, to be offered unto the Lord. And so the LXX. προσήνεγκε, *he brought it to be offered;* he laid τοὺς ἄρτους καὶ τὰ κρέα ἐπὶ τῆς πέτρας, *he laid the bread and the flesh upon the rock.*

And the angel of the Lord did wondrously.] The word *angel* is not in the Hebrew, and therefore this is to be referred unto Jehovah, immediately foregoing, who appeared in the form of an angel, and now acted suitable to his name *Pele, wonderful;* unto which the word *maphli (did wondrously)* plainly alludes; that is, he brought fire, it is probable, out of the rock, as in the days of Gideon. So Josephus; for we read of no fire that Manoah brought, and yet there was a flame, in which the angel went up into heaven.

And Manoah and his wife looked on.] Which shews that Manoah was only a spectator of what was done, but did not offer the sacrifice.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, when the flame went up towards heaven from off the altar.*] So that part of the rock is called where the flesh and the bread were laid, being, I suppose, a very great stone, flat at the top like an altar.

That the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar.] In which he went up ὥσπερ ὀχήματος (as Josephus speaks), *as in a chariot.*

And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground.] Being astonished when they saw him, whom they took only for a prophet, to be an angel of the Lord; and, perhaps, worshipping the Divine Majesty, who had appeared in such an illustrious manner to them, and praying him to preserve their lives, which they thought in danger by such a sight.

Ver. 21. *But the angel of the Lord did no more appear to Manoah and his wife.*] There being no further occasion for it.

Then Manoah knew that it was an angel of the Lord.] By the wonderful things that he did, and ascending up to heaven in a flame, which demonstrated his celestial nature, which could not be hurt by fire.

Ver. 22. *And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.*] This has been an old opinion among the Israelites. (See upon vi. 22.)

Ver. 23. *And his wife said unto him, If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hand.*] She seems to have had a better consideration of the thing than her husband, and strongly argues him out of his fears, as altogether unreasonable: and, first, she makes God's acceptance of a sacrifice from them a plain demonstration of his favour to them; and his acceptance of it appeared by his kindling a fire himself, whereby it was consumed; and by the ascension of the angel in the flame, as if he went to carry the sacrifice unto God, and present it to him in heaven.

Neither would he have shewed us all these things.] Concerning the birth of a son, and the manner of his education, and his beginning the deliverance of Israel from their oppressors, of which there was no hope, if God intended to take away their lives from whom this son was to issue.

Nor would he at this time have shewn us such things as these.] Appeared again and again unto them, to acquaint them with these things, at a time when such visions were rare, and when they were in such distress, that God seemed to have abandoned them to the will of their enemies. These were two unanswerable arguments that they had no reason to think God would take away their lives, but continue them, for the fulfilling his promise.

Ver. 24. *And the woman bare a son.*] We have no direction whereby to know the time of his birth, but only this, that the angel said before he was conceived, (ver. 5.) that he should *begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines.* Which is a plain indication they were then under their power; that is, the forty years' oppression of the Philistines was begun; and, consequently, since his twenty years' judicature was in *the days of the Philistines,* (xv. *ult.*) that is, during their tyranny, he was born in the beginning of it: for we cannot well suppose that he began to be their deliverer before the eighteenth year of his age, as primate Usher observes in his Annal. ad A. M. 2849.

And called his name Samson.] Which, Josephus saith, signifies ἰσχυρὸν, *strong,* or *robust;* but whence he derived it I cannot imagine. Some think from *Shemesh,* which signifies *the sun,* which is a body of mighty force. So St. Jerome, who thinks Samson is as much as *their sun;* a great *light of Israel,* as David is called.

And the child grew, and the Lord blessed him.] As he grew up there plainly appeared in him extraordinary endowments of body and mind, which the Lord bestowed on him.

Ver. 25. *And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him.*] To do some unusual things, beyond mere human power, which were specimens of an heroical virtue. The Targum translates it, *the spirit of fortitude or courage,* &c.

At times.] Upon certain occasions, when it would be visible to the people, that God intended to work deliverance by him.

In the camp of Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.] See chap. xvi. 31. There was no army of the Danites encamped where Samson displayed his valour; but this is the name of a place, called *Machana-Dan (the camp of Dan),* in which, perhaps, Samson lived. The reason of this name is given afterward in the eighteenth chapter, ver. 12. where there is a history of an expedition of the Danites; which, though placed after this, yet was really before the times of Samson. But this camp, it appears by that place, did not lie between Zorah and Eshtaol, but in the tribe of Judah, or in the very borders of it: therefore the word *and* must be here supplied; *in the camp of Dan, and between Zorah and Eshtaol,* towards which that camp lay. If this be not allowed, we must suppose, that the six hundred men mentioned xviii. 11. made their encampment between Zorah and Eshtaol, before they marched out of their own country, and gave that place the same name which the other had near Kirjath-jearim, where they encamped the first night.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AND Samson went down to Timnath.*] A city in his own tribe, as we read Josh. xix. 47. (see there) but fallen, it is probable, into the possession of the Philistines, near to whose country it lay, who, at this time, oppressed the Israelites, and made them their tributaries, which did not hinder, but rather promote, all manner of commerce between them.

And saw a woman of Timnath, of the daughters of the Philistines.] That is, he fell in love with her; according to the vulgar saying among the Greeks, ἐκ τοῦ ὁρᾶν τὸ ἐρᾶν, *from looking comes loving.*

Ver. 2. *And he came up, and told his father and his mother.*] This was a part of the honour they thought was owing to their parents, to advise with them about their marriage, of which they did not treat, but left it to their parents. So it seems, by this, to have been in ancient times, though their children were of age (as Samson is now supposed to be), and, according to the later doctors among the Jews, fit to contract marriage themselves. (See Selden, lib. ii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 3. and see above, xii. 9.)

And said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore get her for me to wife.] This was when Samson was about twenty-two years old, as primate Usher computes it, who thinks Eli judged Israel at this time in civil affairs; but Sir J. Marsham makes account, as I observed, he died in the middle of this servitude.

Ver. 3. *And his father and his mother said unto him, Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren.*] That is, in their own family.

Or among all thy people.] In the whole tribe of Dan.

That thou shouldest go to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?] Which was against the law of Moses, in Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3. For though they were none of the seven nations of Canaan, yet they were under the same condemnation, and their land was given to the Israelites.

And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well.] His mother, some think, expressed such dislike to the motion, that he applied himself wholly to his father, and beseeched him to favour his choice, because he was deeply in love with her.

Ver. 4. *But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the Lord.*] He felt some Divine motion in him, which carried him to this place to seek a wife; but his parents knew not of it till he told them (as some think), and then readily consented.

That he sought an occasion against the Philistines.] Which he knew this treaty of marriage would give him, whether it succeeded or miscarried.

For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.] They were still, as they had been several years, under the power of the Philistines, who treated them, it is likely, with such scorn and contempt, as if they had been their slaves.

Ver. 5. *Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath.*] He overcame them by his importunity; or, perhaps, told them, as I said before, what a motion he felt from God to desire this match.

And came to the vineyards of Timnath.] Unto which he turned aside, upon some occasion not here mentioned.

And, behold, a young lion roared against him.] Came with full mouth (as we speak) to devour him. By this, and many other places, it appears, there were lions in Judea, from whence several places had their names, as Lebaoth, Josh. xv. 32. and Beth-lebaoth, xix. 6. Every one also knows, that a young lion, come to his full strength, was the fiercest of all other. And so *cephir* (Kimchi observes) is used for a lion grown bigger than *gur*, which signifies a lion's whelp.

Ver. 6. *And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him.*] The same Spirit mentioned in the last verse of the foregoing chapter; which endued him with extraordinary courage and undauntedness of mind, together with a supernatural strength of body.

And he rent him as he would have rent a kid.] That is, as easily and speedily. The Hebrew word certainly signifies to *tear in pieces*, and therefore, if it be true what Josephus saith, (lib. v. Antiq. cap. 10.) that he throttled him with his hand (ἄγχει ταῖς χερσὶ), the meaning is, that, after he had strangled him, he rent him in pieces.

And he had nothing in his hand.] If he had encountered him being armed with some weapon, it had been a bold action; but when he was naked to receive his assault, was a miraculous resolution: by which he was encouraged to undertake greater things, as David was by the same power given him.

But he told not his father nor his mother what he had done.] Being afraid, perhaps, that this action might come to the ears of the Philistines, which might make them jealous of him.

Ver. 7. *And he went down and talked with the woman.*] Discoursed with her about marriage, which he propounded to her.

And she pleased Samson well.] All things were agreed, and she was espoused to him: but before the espousals she was converted to the Jewish religion, and made an entire proselyte, as R. Levi ben Gersom, and Moses Mikotzi, and other Hebrew doctors say; and then it was not unlawful to marry a stranger, as Joshua, they say, did Rahab. (See Selden, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 15. and Buxtorf, de Sponsalibus et Divortiis, sect. 31.)

Ver. 8. *And after a time.*] In the Hebrew it is *after-days;* that is, a year, as that phrase often signifies, and is so translated by us, Exod. xiii. 10. where *mijamim jamim* is rightly translated *from year to year.* (See also Gen. iv. 3. and chap. xi. of this book, ver. 4.)

He returned to take her.] To complete his marriage: which was not wont to be celebrated between a man and a young virgin till twelve months after the espousals (as the Hebrew doctors say), that she might have so much time to adorn herself, and make herself every way fit for marriage. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Uxor. Hebr. cap. 8.) But if in that twelve months' time she lay with any other man, it was accounted adultery, and punished with death, because she was really his wife.

And he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion.] Which was now a mere skeleton, the flesh being all consumed: and so the Syriac interpreter here renders it.

And, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion.] Bees are observed, by Aristotle and others, to abhor stinking smells, and to abstain from flesh; which hath made some think it strange that a swarm of bees should breed in the carcass of a lion: but they did not consider that time had consumed the flesh, or it was eaten up by birds and beasts, and nothing but the bare bones remained; in which the bees did not breed, but settled themselves, when they swarmed, as they have done sometimes in dead men's sculls and in their tombs. (See Bochart, in his Hierozoicon, p. 2. lib. iv. cap. 10. and Vossius de Orig. et Progressu Idolol. lib. iv. cap. 72.)

Ver. 9. *And he took thereof in his hand.*] Or, as the Syriac translates it, *it dropped into his hands*, from the combs, that is, which they had made either in the belly, as St. Ambrose thinks, or in the breast, as Josephus, or (which Vossius rather thinks) in the head, or in the mouth of the lion, as the LXX. and Vulgar understand it: though Bochartus thinks that, instead of ἐν στόματι, *in the mouth*, it should be read in the LXX. ἐν σώματι λέοντος, *in the body of the lion.*

And went on eating.] Which was not unlawful, in case of hunger, though it was found in a carcass; because such ceremonial laws, as forbid such things, were not observed in cases of necessity: as appears by David's eating the shew-bread, and Elijah's eating food brought him by ravens.

And came to his father and mother.] From whom he had turned aside for a while, as he did when they first went to Timnath, (ver. 5.)

And he gave them, and they did eat.] Wild honey being delicious food in that country, as many places shew, (Deut. xxxii. 13. and Psal. lxxxi. 16.)

But he told them not that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.] For then, perhaps, they would not have eaten it.

Ver. 10. *So his father went down unto the woman.*] (Together with his wife and his son) to demand her, who was espoused to Samson, to consummate the marriage.

And Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do.] According to the custom of all countries: which feast was called by the Jews *the nuptial joy*, with which no other was to be intermixed; and all labour ceased, as long as it lasted. (See Selden, lib. ii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 11. p. 172.)

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, when they saw him.*] What a goodly person he was.

That they brought thirty companions to be with him.] Her friends, out of respect to him, brought this great number of bridemen to honour his nuptials: but some of the Jews think they had a further end in it, that they might serve as a guard to him, if he should attempt any disturbance; of which, they fancy, the Philistines were afraid, when they saw he was a man of might.

Ver. 12. *And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto you.*] This shews how ancient the custom was (which we find afterward among the Greeks), of proposing questions to be resolved in their compotations and feasts; that they might not be spent merely in dull eating and drinking, but there might be something to exercise and whet the wits of the company: and they called such riddles as these, which were contrived to puzzle men's thoughts, by the name of γρίφος, which the scholiast upon Aristophanes defines to be παροίνιον ζήτημα, *a question put among their cups.* Athenæus discourses largely of such problems, as they also called them, in his Deipnosophists. (See Bochart, in his Hierozoicon, p. 2. lib. iv. cap. 12.)

If you can certainly declare it within the seven days of the feast.] So long the nuptial solemnity was wont to continue in ancient times, (Gen. xxix. 27.) They could not shorten the days, as the Jewish doctors tell us, but they might lengthen them; as they did at Tobit's marriage, when the solemnity continued fourteen days, though according to custom they were bound to keep but three, she being a widow, as Selden observes in the forenamed book, p. 185. and Buxtorf in his Synagoga Judaica, cap. 35.

And find it out, then I will give you thirty sheets, and thirty change of garments.] The Greeks followed this example, and gave rewards to him who resolved the question proposed, but set a mulct on those that could not.

Ver. 13. *But if you cannot declare it, then you shall give me thirty sheets, and thirty change of garments.*] Most take *sidinim* (from whence the word *sindon* seems to come) for such linen cloths as the whole body may be wrapped in; and therefore properly translated *sheets:* and *change of garments* signify new robes, which they might change for the old: but of the word *sindon*, see Braunius de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 7. n. 7.

And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it.] They agreed to the conditions, and bade him propound it.

Ver. 14. *And he said unto them, Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.*] The opposition is manifest in the first part of the riddle, but not in the second; for weakness is opposed to strength, not sweetness, whose opposite is bitterness, or sharpness: but Bochartus hath ingeniously observed, that these two words are sometimes confounded; for, in the Arabic language, the word *mirra*, which signifies *strength*, comes from *marra*, which signifies to be *bitter:* and so it is among the Latins, where *acer*, a sharp man, is as much as a valiant man, who eagerly (as we speak) engaged his enemies: and this very word (as he and others have noted) is used of lions, whom Ovid in his Fasti calls

"—— Genus acre leonum."

And therefore the riddle is truly this: *Food came from the devourer, and sweetness from that which is eager and sharp;* i. e. *fierce.*

And they could not in three days expound the riddle.] Whereupon (it appears by what follows) they applied themselves to his wife, and desired her (with good words, it is likely, at first) to try what she could do by her caresses, to persuade him to unriddle it to her.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, that on the seventh day.*] Which was the last day of the feast; when they were in danger to lose their wager.

They said unto Samson's wife, Entice thy husband, that he may declare to us the riddle.] By letting her know it; who they expected would tell it them.

Lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire.] From entreaties they now betake themselves to threatenings, and those very terrible; which they concluded would make her as pressing upon them as they were upon her.

Have ye called us.] This signifies that they were invited by her friends to the feast.

To take what we have?] To make us pay very dear for our good cheer.

Is it not so?] Will not your kindness conclude in rudeness, by stripping us of our raiment?

Ver. 16. *And Samson's wife wept before him.*] She added tears to her entreaties.

And said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me.] This was prudent enough, to pretend to doubt of his affection, because he concealed this secret from her; for a new married couple are usually so kind as freely to unbosom themselves one to another.

And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father and my mother.] With whom he had been long acquainted.

And shall I tell it thee?] Whom he did not yet so well know as to be sure she could keep a secret.

Ver. 17. *And she wept before him the seven days, while the feast lasted.*] That is, the rest of the seven days of the feast which remained after the third, she importuned him continually with tears, and upbraided him, I suppose, with want of kindness to her, as the foregoing verse imports.

And it came to pass, on the seventh day, that he told, because she lay sore upon him.] Made him very uneasy by her importunity, which he could not resist, though he had conquered the lion.

And she told the riddle to the children of her people.] For whom she had more affection than for her husband, or feared their displeasure more than his.

Ver. 18. *And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day, before the sun went down.*] Just before the time was expired, which was prefixed for the solution of the riddle.

What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion?] This is a compendious answer to the latter part of the question, which sufficiently comprehends the first: and St. Ambrose thinks, that, as soon as this answer was out of their mouth, Samson immediately interposed and said, *What is more perfidious than a woman?* which he had out of Josephus, who saith the same; and something like it follows in the next words.

And he said unto them, If ye had not ploughed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.] The meaning is, that without the assistance of his wife (whom he compares to a young heifer, which is not yet subdued to the yoke of obedience) they had continued still as ignorant as they had been all the time of the feast. Ralbag, indeed, and some others, take the word *ploughed* in a lascivious sense; as if he meant that they had lain with his wife, or otherwise they had not got the secret out of her. But the words will not bear this interpretation; for he doth not say, *If ye had not ploughed my heifer* (which might have been so interpreted), but, If ye had not ploughed *with my heifer;* which plainly implies using her help to find out what they desired. (See Bochart. par. i. Hierozoicon, lib. ii. cap. 41.)

Ver. 19. *And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him.*] Which he had not always; but at special seasons it moved him, and gave him power to do extraordinary things, which otherwise had not been warrantable. (See ver. 6. and xiii. *ult.*)

And he went down to Askelon.] A city of the Philistines.

And slew thirty men of them.] As they were making merry, it is probable, either in the field, or the city, at some public solemnity, when great companies used to be gathered together, and to appear in their best apparel.

And took their spoil.] Whatsoever they had about them;

and perhaps they that fled left a great many things behind them.

And gave change of garments unto them that expounded the riddle.] Together with the *sheets* he promised; which he purchased, perhaps, with the spoil.

And his anger was kindled.] Against his wife for betraying him, and against his companions for their underhand dealing.

And he went up to his father's house.] Left his wife with her own relations, and went to live at home with his father. It is plain by the whole story, that Timnath lay low, there being a descent from his father's house to it, unto which they went up from thence, (ver. 1, 2. 5. 7. 10.)

Ver. 20. *And Samson's wife was given to his companion.*] She it seems was as angry as he; and looking upon herself as forsaken, was easily persuaded to marry one of his bridemen.

Whom he used as his friend.] With whom he was more familiar, and treated him with greater kindness than he did the rest that honoured him with their company. For he, I suppose, was the principal brideman, who was called by the name of *the friend of the bridegroom*, as we read in the gospel of St. John, iii. 29. (See Selden, lib. ii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 16. p. 200, &c.) This usage, no doubt, incensed Samson the more afterward against them; for he saw there was no faith in any of them.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass within a while after.*] In the Hebrew the word is *mijamim;* which in other places signifies *after a year,* (see xiv. 8.) when his anger was appeased.

In the time of wheat-harvest.] Which was about the feast of Pentecost; a time of great joy.

That Samson visited his wife with a kid.] Which was no contemptible present, as appears by the story of Judah and Tamar, Gen. xxxviii. 17. For it was a delicious food, not only in Judea, but in other countries, as Bochartus hath shewn in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 2.

And he said, I will go in unto my wife into the chamber.] He attempted, with the usual freedom which husbands have with their wives, to go into her apartment, and enjoy her company.

But her father would not suffer him to go in.] For the reason following in the next verse.

Ver. 2. *And her father said, I verily thought thou hadst utterly hated her.*] He thought he had good grounds to conclude he would never come near her more, having not heard from him a whole twelvemonth.

Therefore I gave her to thy companion.] Whom it is likely she loved, having contracted an acquaintance with him by the friendship he had with her husband, (xiv. *ult.*) For though she was (as the Hebrew doctors suppose) a proselyte to the Jewish religion, yet she was not so well instructed as to know that it was not lawful, by their law, to marry another, till Samson had given her a bill of divorce; which he had not done, intending to return again to her.

Is not her younger sister fairer than she? take her, I pray thee, instead of her.] He had no mind to quarrel with Samson; and therefore endeavoured to assuage his anger with the offer of his other daughter, who was more beautiful than her who had forsaken him. This, indeed, was contrary to the law of Moses; but the Philistines, it seems, continued their old abominable customs, which God intended, by giving his law, to abolish, (Lev. xviii. 24. 27. 30.)

Ver. 3. *And Samson said concerning them, Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure.*] He seems to have turned away in scorn and indignation, without making a reply to his father-in-law; but told the next persons he met, that he would be revenged of the Philistines for the wrong that had been done him; and that they might blame themselves for the mischief he intended them. By which it appears, that the people of that place approved of this marriage, and perhaps honoured it by their presence; whom Samson resolved therefore to chastise, not as a private person, but as appointed by God to vindicate the oppression of the Israelites. Which Grotius thinks he did *ex naturali jure,* as a piece of natural justice. (See lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 20. sect. 8. n. 3.)

Ver. 4. *And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes.*] Some make a difficulty to believe this, because foxes are subtle creatures, and not easily caught: but they should consider such things as these, which Bochartus hath represented, that this country abounded with foxes, from whence several places had their names, particularly one in the tribe of Dan, (see chap. i. 35. and Josh. xix. 42.) and that under this name of foxes may be comprehended a creature very like a fox, called *thoes,* which go together in herds; so that two hundred (as good authors report) have been seen in a company together. And next, it is not said he caught these at one time, or in a day and a night; but there might be a week or a month's time allowed for the accomplishment of his design; in which his servants, and neighbours, and friends, no doubt, assisted him, if he desired it; so that such a number might be caught in a short time: for they were not caught, as some imagine, only by hunting, but in snares and nets, as he demonstrates in his Hierozoicon, lib. iii. cap. 13. where, in answer to such as ask why he chose foxes rather than dogs, or some other creatures, he thinks it is sufficient to say, that he brought about two ends; by the same means freeing the country from a great many noxious animals, by which he did much hurt unto their enemies.

And took firebrands, and turned tail to tail.] Which he tied together with a cord; yet not close, but at a distance, that they might run the better.

And put a firebrand in the midst between two tails.] Which he so fastened, that it should not fall off by their motion.

Ver. 5. *And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines.*] Near unto which he let them loose; and they naturally ran into it to hide themselves from the fire; of which they are observed to be afraid. Beside, being coupled, they could not run into their holes.

And burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn.] By this it appears, that it was in the midst of wheat-harvest when this was done; some corn being cut, and other still standing; but all consumed. For the fire

being once begun, the foxes were the more affrighted, and desiring to run from it, this still carried it to another place, where there was corn left, till they had burnt it quite up: beside, it is observed by the same author, that foxes do not run straight forward, but they make many turnings, by which means they destroyed the more.

With the vineyards and olives.] Foxes are observed to love grapes, and Solomon speaks of them as noxious to vineyards, (Cant. ii. 15.) whither they ran to satiate their hunger, after they had been long kept up by Samson. Some think, that as part of the three hundred foxes were sent among the corn, so the other part among the vines and olives: or, perhaps, being all let into the corn, and finding the flame increasing there, they went to seek shelter in the vineyards, whither they carried the fire.

Bochartus observes a very famous monument of this fact of Samson's, in Ovid's fourth book of his Fasti; where he saith, the Romans were wont every year, in the middle of April, to let loose some foxes in the Circus, with burning torches fastened unto their backs. The original of which custom, he justly thinks, could not be from so small an occasion as Ovid mentions, from the report of an old man he met withal. But that it was derived from hence, may well be questioned; because, though it fell out at the same time of the year that Samson did this thing, yet one can give no reason why the Phœnicians (from whom the Romans must be supposed to borrow it) should celebrate the memory of this mischief which Samson did them, in such a representation of it. (See him, in the place beforementioned, p. 856, 857, &c.)

Ver. 6. *Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this?*] The owners of the corn, or perhaps the country in general, made an inquiry after the author of this mischief.

And they answered, Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion.] Some of those who heard Samson's threatening words, (ver. 3.) it is likely, gave this information.

And the Philistines came up, and burnt her and her father with fire.] I suppose they burnt their house, and them in it. Whereby that very calamity came upon her, which she sought to avoid by betraying her husband, (xiv. 15.)

Ver. 7. *And Samson said, Though you have done this.*] The words in the Hebrew are a concise form of speech, *If ye had done after this manner;* that is, punished them sooner for the injury done him, it might have seemed love of justice; but now they did it only out of love to themselves.

Yet will I be avenged of you.] Or, *but I will surely* take a farther revenge of you. Unto which, no doubt, he was moved not by his own private spirit, but by that Spirit which raised him up to deliver God's people from their oppressors.

And then I will cease.] That is, unless they gave him further occasion, there should be an end of this quarrel.

Ver. 8. *And he smote them hip and thigh.*] It is hard to understand the meaning of this; of which Josephus only saith, that he slew many of them, ἐν πεδίῳ τῶν Παλαιστινῶν, *in a field of the Philistines;* but saith not a word concerning the import of *hip and thigh.* But the Chaldee paraphrast interprets it, He smote both *footmen and horsemen,* the one resting on their legs (as the Hebrew word *schock* signifies), and the other on their thighs, as they sat close to their horses. They that think this to be forced, take the meaning to be, that he smote them both on their legs and their thighs, as they fled away, so as to disable them from any service, though he did not kill them. I omit other interpretations.

With a great slaughter.] The word is *with a great stroke,* and so the LXX. translate it, which agrees well with the last interpretation, that he sorely wounded them.

And he went down.] With respect to the country of the Philistines he went up (as appears by the next verse), but from the mountainous part of Judea, where he was, he first went down.

And dwelt in the top of the rock Etam.] A strong place in the tribe of Judah (as Josephus relates), to the top of which no more than one man could come abreast, as we speak. By all this, and by what follows in the rest of his history, it is plain that Samson had no commission from God, nor was moved by him to raise an army, and make open war (as Gideon, and Jephthah, and others did), for the deliverance of Israel from the yoke of the Philistines, but only to weaken them, and to keep them in awe, that, out of dread of him, they might be less cruel in their oppression. And this, no doubt, he understood to be all that God intended to do by him, from the words of the angel, (xiii. 5.) "He shall begin to deliver Israel."

Ver. 9. *Then the Philistines went up and pitched in Judah.*] With a great number of men, as if they intended an absolute conquest of their country.

And spread themselves in Lehi.] A place so called afterward, from the jaw-bone wherewith Samson smote them.

Ver. 10. *And the men of Judah said, Why are ye come up against us?*] Since they paid their tribute (as Josephus observes) and had committed no offence against them, not having taken part with Samson in any thing he had done, they might well expostulate with them about this invasion.

And they answered, To bind Samson are we come up.] They soon satisfied them that they had no quarrel with them, but only with Samson, whom, if they would deliver up bound to them, they would withdraw their army.

To do to him as he hath done to us.] Punish him for the injuries he had done them; or rather, put him to death, as he had killed many of them.

Ver. 11. *Then three thousand of the men of Judah went to the top of the rock Etam.*] In the Hebrew it is *went down; i. e.* into the cave where he was in the top of the rock: for it is said, ver. 13. that they brought him *up* to the Philistines, whereas from the top of the rock it was *down.*

And said unto Samson, Knowest thou not that the Philistines are rulers over us?] And therefore not to be offended by us.

What is it that thou hast done unto us?] To provoke them to come against Judah.

And he said unto them, As they did unto me, so I have done unto them.] He saith nothing of any motion he had from God to do what he had done, but only tells them, that he had merely requited the wrong he had received from the Philistines.

Ver. 12. *And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hands of the Philistines.*] They came with a little army, to shew they could by force take him; but they rather desired he would

quietly resign himself to them, that they might deliver him bound to the Philistines.

And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me yourselves.] He doth not upbraid them with their base cowardice, in coming so many against one man, and that to give up their deliverer into their enemies' hands, but consents to their desire, on condition that they would solemnly engage to do him no hurt themselves; for he was unwilling to shed the blood of his brethren, as he might have done, if they had attempted any thing against him.

Ver. 13. *And they spake unto him, saying, No, but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hands; but surely we will not kill thee.*] They promised to do as he desired, if he would submit to be bound and delivered unto the Philistines, who would not be otherwise satisfied.

And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock.] To put him absolutely into the power of the Philistines: for two cords, and those fresh and new, wherewith they bound him, were sufficient to shew their real desire to comply with their demands.

Ver. 14. *And when they came unto Lehi.*] Where the Philistines had spread themselves, (ver. 9.)

The Philistines shouted against him:] As soldiers used to do, when they had gotten a great victory, their mischievous enemy being fallen into their hand.

And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him.] Or, *But the Spirit of the Lord*, &c. Their joy was instantly quashed; for, by the mighty power of God, the cords immediately snapped in sunder.

The cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire.] Which is consumed in a moment.

And his bands loosed from his hands.] The Hebrew, to express how speedily and easily they were loosed, saith, *they melted*, or were dissolved, as wax is by the fire.

Ver. 15. *And he found a new jaw-bone of an ass.*] Of an ass that had not been long dead. So the word *terijah* signifies, which Kimchi here saith is an Arabic word, signifying moist and fresh, and, therefore, not so brittle as one that is dry, and hath laid long in the air and the sun. (See Bochart, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 15.)

And put forth his hand and took it.] The providence of God laid it in his way, that he might not be wholly unarmed, when he had a numerous company of enemies to deal withal.

And slew a thousand men therewith.] The Philistines, no doubt, were strangely amazed to see the cords fall so easily, and suddenly, from his hands, and to see him come boldly, or rather furiously, towards them, which put them in a confusion, and gave him such advantage against them, that he made this great slaughter among them; wherein was fulfilled the promise of Moses, Lev. xxvi. 8. where he saith expressly, "One man of you shall chase a thousand." It is not unlikely, also, that the Philistines might fear the men of Judah, on this occasion, would join with him, which made them turn their backs and expose themselves to slaughter. But it was by a wonderful strength which God infused into him, that he was able to pursue them so long, till he had done such execution, which is incredible only to those who do not consider the power of God, who can raise our powers to what degree he pleases, and enfeeble the spirits of those who oppose his designs: so that they shall have no power to help themselves. It may not be amiss also here to note, that there are instances of men, who, by their natural courage, have made great havoc among their enemies: for Flavius Vopiscus reports, that Aurelian, in the Sarmatic war, slew forty-eight men with his own hands in one day; and in divers days, nine hundred and fifty: upon which the boys made a song, and shouted in their dances, after a military manner, *Mille, Mille, Mille, Mille, Mille, Mille, decollavimus. Unus homo, Mille, Mille,* &c. *Mille, Mille, vivat, qui Mille, Mille occidit.* And, upon another occasion, another little song was made of him, which Salmasius found thus disposed in ancient MS.

Mille Sarmatas, Mille Francos
Semel et Semel occidimus
Mille Persas quærimus.

Ver. 16. *And Samson said.*] Then he composed a triumphant song.

With the jaw-bone of an ass, heaps upon heaps; with the jaw-bone of an ass have I slain a thousand men.] This seems to have been the beginning, and, perhaps, the end of the song. In which words, *Belehi hachamor chamorcha morathaim*, every one may observe a graceful allusion; *chamor* signifying both an *ass*, and also a *heap*.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, that when he had made an end of speaking.*] Of reciting the song beforementioned, which contained more than these few words, as this phrase seems to import.

That he cast the jaw-bone out of his hand.] Which he held there while he was speaking.

And called that place Ramath-lehi.] That is, the projection, or casting away, of the jaw-bone, as the Chaldee and Kimchi interpret it, for so the word *rama* signifies, to throw any thing from one. It is called, ver. 9. and 14. simply *Lehi;* it being usual to leave out the beginning of names, as I have often observed, Salem being put for Jerusalem, and Shittim for Abel-Shittim, &c.

Ver. 18. *And he was sore athirst.*] By his great toil in the fight, and by his speaking so long, and so earnestly, as it is likely he did afterward.

And he called on the Lord, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant.] This is an express confutation of the fancy of Josephus, that God sent this thirst upon him, as a punishment for not giving him the glory of his victory, but ascribing it to his own strength; for which I can see no colour: for though God be not mentioned in his song, but only the jaw-bone, yet that was in itself so weak an instrument, that his acknowledging twice it was the only thing wherewith he slew so many, was a sufficient signification, that he ascribed not the victory to human power, but to the power of God, whose Spirit he felt come mightily upon him, when he set upon them: but what is there tacitly insinuated, is here in so many words expressed.

And now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?] It seems he was very faint, for want of some refreshment, which made him so earnestly implore relief from God, who, he knew, would not fail to supply him in so great a necessity: for the remembrance of former benefits, when we thankfully acknowledge them, is a mighty support to faith, in the expectance of future; beside, he

represents himself to God as a *servant* of his, who had taken all this pains, not to satisfy his own revenge, but by his instigation, and for the deliverance of his people.

Ver. 19. *And God clave a hollow place that was in the jaw.*] The Hebrew word *mactes* properly signifies the socket in which the great teeth in the jaw are fastened, (as Bochartus evidently proves, par. i. Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. 16.) one of which teeth he made drop out, and then caused water to come forth out of that hollow place: but our great primate follows those who think God made a cleft in some part of the earth, in that place called Lehi, from whence he made a fountain of water to spring up. And so Josephus saith, he brought it, κατά τινος πέτρας, *out of a certain rock.*

And there came water thereout.] From this cavity he caused water to issue (whereas blood is wont to flow when a tooth is plucked out), just as he brought water out of a rock in the wilderness, and made the meal and the oil to multiply in the widow of Sarepta's vessels.

And when he had drunk.] It is probable he took up the jaw, when he saw the water bubble out of it, and let it run into his mouth till he had quenched his thirst.

His spirit came again, and he revived.] He was so spent, it seems, that he was ready to die, till God sent him this water, unto which his power gave such a spirit, that it was as reviving as a draught of wine.

Wherefore he called the name thereof En-hakkore, which is in Lehi.] Or, as Bochart, I think, more truly renders it, *Enhakkore-asher Belehi;* that is, the fountain of him that called, which is in the jaw. (See him in the abovementioned place, p. 205.)

Unto this day.] Some have imagined, that the fountain continued in Lehi unto the time that this book was written: but Bochart there observes, that these words, *unto this day,* are not to be joined with those next before; for they are separated by an accent which divides them; and therefore the meaning is, that it is called to this day by the name forementioned.

Ver. 20. *And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.*] All his time they remained under the power of the Philistines, who, they confess, (ver. 11.) were *their rulers,* as they continued to be for forty years together, (xiii. 1.) of which these twenty were a part. In which he was not able to perfect their deliverance, but only began it by several small defeats he gave the Philistines, and several damages he did them: but, after all, he left the Israelites under their dominion; nor was there any deliverer arose till Samuel, who, I observed before, completed what Samson began, (1 Sam. vii. 13.)

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *THEN went Samson to Gaza.*] His late victory made him despise the Philistines, as Josephus thinks (καταφρονῶν τῶν Παλαιστινῶν), and adventure to go, in a bravery, into one of their principal cities, which lay in the south part of their country, towards Egypt. But it seems to me more likely, that he went thither secretly and unobservedly, in the dusk of the evening, or in a disguise, that he might the better spy in what posture they were, and what advantage he might possibly have of them.

And saw there a harlot.] Who kept, it is likely, a public-house to entertain strangers; but was as public herself; which had been the condition of Rahab. So Josephus ἐν τινὶ τῶν καταγωγῶν διέτριβε, *he took up his lodging in one of the public inns of the city.*

And went in unto her.] Was ensnared by her beauty to lie with her.

Ver. 2. *And it was told the Gazites.*] The magistrates of the city.

Saying, Samson is come hither.] By this it appears his coming thither was not publicly known; but by some means or other discovered: perhaps by the woman herself, into whose house he went, who gave private information of his being there.

And they compassed him in.] The meaning is not that they beset the house; for the next words shew the contrary; that they intended to seize him as he went out of the city.

And laid wait for him all night at the gate of the city.] Especially in that gate which led to his own country.

And were quiet all night.] Made no noise, for fear he should be alarmed, and contrive some way of escape; or desperately set upon them, and break through the guards.

Saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him.] He would fall into their hands they imagined, having no apprehension of danger.

Ver. 3. *And Samson lay till midnight.*] When he was admonished, perhaps by a dream, to be gone; or had some intelligence from his servants (whom he set to watch) that they lay in wait for him.

And arose at midnight.] In the dead time of the night, when nobody was stirring; and the soldiers themselves, perhaps, asleep: imagining he would lie till morning.

And took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all.] He did not stay to break them open, but plucked up the posts out of the ground, with the doors hanging upon them fast barred; which so astonished the guards, that they had no heart to follow him.

And put them upon his shoulders.] He seems to have carried them a little way in his hands, and then lifted them up to his shoulders, and carried them before their faces in triumph. Which argued a mighty strength, and no less confidence in God.

And carried them up to the top of a hill that is before Hebron.] Some take this hill to have been near Hebron; which was twenty miles from this place. But it is more probable (as Peter Martyr conjectures) it lay between Gaza and Hebron; within the view of both: that inhabitants of the one city might behold them to their confusion; and they of the other to their encouragement to hope for deliverance.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass afterward.*] How long after is not known.

That he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.] It is certain that Sorek was a place in the land of Judea; famous for choice vines, (as Bochart observes, from Gen. xlix. 11. Isa. v. 2. Jer. ii. 21.) and not above a mile and a half from Eschol; whence the spies brought a bunch of grapes, for a sample of the fruitfulness of the country. Unto this place Samson retired to refresh himself, perhaps, after his labours, with the delights of it; and there saw a woman, with whom he fell in love. But whether she was a woman of Israel, or one of the daughters

of the Philistines, (who now were rulers of the country of Judah, xv. 11.) and whether he loved her as his wife, or kept company with her as a harlot, is not here signified. St. Chrysostom and others are of opinion, that he was married to her. But then, one would think, there should have been some brief mention of their wedding solemnities; or of his bringing her home to his own house. And the Philistines would not have been so bold as to attempt to draw her into their party, and bribe her to betray him into their hands. Which argues she had not the affection of a wife to him; but was a mercenary woman, that would do any thing to get money. And so Josephus understands it, Παρέβαινε δὲ ἤθη τὰ πάτρια, &c. *He forsook the institutions of his country*, and followed the degenerate manners of strange people, ἐρασθεὶς γυναικὸς ἑταιριζομένης, *being enamoured with a harlot among the Philistines:* which was the beginning of all the evils that befel him. For he did not keep her company for a night; but dwelt with her, and gave up himself so entirely to her, that he doated on her.

Ver. 5. *And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her.*] There were five of them in all, (as we read, iii. 3.) who, it is likely, all joined together to make a purse (as we speak) wherewith to corrupt her; and sent their agents to make large offers to her, if she would come into their interests.

And said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him.] It is probable, that he had often declared that the source of his strength was a secret, known only to himself; which they hoped he might, with her blandishments, entice him to reveal unto her.

That we may bind him, and afflict him.] That she might not startle at the proposal, they tell her, they had no intention to kill him; but only to keep him fast in chains, and afflict him; so as to make him humble, and bring him low, that he might not be able to do them more mischief.

And we will give thee, every one of us, eleven hundred pieces of silver.] By which is commonly understood so many shekels; which made in all five thousand five hundred, which make almost two Hebrew talents. For the Jews make it a rule, that where *pieces of silver* are mentioned, the meaning is shekels. (See Gen. xxiii. 15.)

Ver. 6. *And Delilah said unto Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, where thy great strength lieth.*] She did not bluntly ask him this question, but, as Josephus very probably tells the story, the next time they were eating and drinking together, and he was caressing her, she fell into an admiration of all his wonderful deeds, and highly extolled them; desiring him to tell her how he came so much to excel all other men in strength.

And wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.] So that he should not be able to help himself.

Ver. 7. *And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withes that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man.*] Her last words, perhaps, made him suspect something. However, ἔτι φρονεῖν ἰσχυρὸς ἦν (as Josephus speaks), *he was yet strong in his understanding*, and not perfectly besotted on her; and therefore did not trust her with this important secret, but answered her deceitfully. Which cannot be excused from being a downright lie; unless we suppose he only jested with her, not believing she would take such an improbable thing for a truth.

Ver. 8. *Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withes which had not been dried.*] It seems they lurked somewhere thereabout, that they might be informed speedily of what passed. And they took care to provide the withes themselves, that there might be no defect in them.

And she bound him with them.] Καθεύδοντα μεθύοντα, &c. She bound him hard with the withes, when he was asleep, and full of drink, as Josephus speaks.

Ver. 9. *Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber.*] In another room of the house, near to that where Samson slept, she had placed a band of soldiers (as Josephus also interprets it), who were ready, upon notice, to seize him. This is an argument that Delilah was not his wife; for in his own house, where he had his servants about him, it had not been possible for her to have placed soldiers secretly in any room without their knowledge.

And she said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson.] One would think they might have set upon him when he was in a deep sleep. But the plot was otherwise laid between them and Delilah; and they thought it not safe to come near a sleeping lion, for fear he should chance to awake, and tear them in pieces.

And he brake the withes as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire: so his strength was not known.] They found he was as subtle as he was strong; having deluded both her and them.

Ver. 10. *And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.*] The Hebrew writers rightly observe, that she did not say this to him immediately after the other; but at the next opportunity she took occasion to complain of his want of kindness in not acquainting her with what she desired to know; as if she was not able to keep the secret of a friend, which it was not fit for any body else to understand, as Josephus expresses it.

Ver. 11. *If they bind me fast with new ropes that were never occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man.*] He persists in his resolution to delude her.

Ver. 12. *Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith.*] This looked more like truth than the former, and she took care, no doubt, to have the strongest ropes that they could get. And then made him a new entertainment, where he ate and drank till he was heavy with sleep; and then she took the opportunity to bind him as she had done before.

And said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson (and there were liers in wait in the chamber).] In the inner room, where they were formerly disposed so secretly, that Samson knew not of it; for if he had, he would have discovered her treachery.

And he broke them from off his arms like a thread.] Which deterred them from breaking out upon him.

Ver. 13. *And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked, and told me lies; tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound.*] She prays him now to deal sincerely with her; for she persisted as resolutely in her attempts to draw the secret from him as he did in concealing it; which he still continued to do.

And he said unto her, If thou weavest the locks of my head.] The Nazarites being bound never to cut their hair, did not, I suppose, let it hang loose, but curled it up in

locks, or plaited and broidered it after the manner of a chain: and Samson's hair was distributed into seven of these plaited locks. (See Dr. Spencer concerning this, lib. iii. cap. 6. dissert. 1. p. 585.)

With the web.] He seems to direct her to wrap these seven locks about a weaver's beam (as the Chaldee understands it), or to weave them one within another, so that they should be but one lock, and then he should be like another man, which is here to be understood. And in this he comes a little nearer to the truth, but still deceives.

Ver. 14. *And she fastened it with a pin.*] That they might keep tight and not be unloosed.

And said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep.] This shews that she had taken the former advantages of him in his sleep.

And he went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web.] And thereby appeared as strong as ever he was. For, as the Vulgar understands it, she fixed this pin in the earth; or, as the LXX. in the wall. But there is nothing like it in the Hebrew text.

Ver. 15. *And she said, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thy heart is not with me? Thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth.*] She now uses her utmost art to overcome him; by telling him, I suppose, she would cast him off, because he did but pretend to love her; as appeared by his not trusting her: but, notwithstanding her importunate desire to be gratified in a small request, he had no less than three times put a cheat upon her.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him.*] Repeated this often, from day to day, most earnestly pressing him to give her a proof of his real affection, by disclosing this secret.

So that his soul was vexed unto death.] He was upon such a rack by two contrary passions struggling in him, love to her, and care not to lose his strength, that he was weary of life. That is, very melancholy, and unconcerned what became of him.

Ver. 17. *That he told her all his heart.*] God having forsaken him, because he had abandoned himself to sensual pleasure, his love of the harlot prevailed over his care of himself.

And said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon my head; but I have been a Nazarite from my mother's womb.] These words were spoken with a greater seriousness than any of the former; which made her conclude he had given her a true account. For thus Josephus paraphrases, *I am under the care of God; by whose providence being born, I nourish my hair; for God forbade that I should ever have it cut off. All my strength lying in the increase and continuance of this hair,* (lib. v. Antiq. cap. 10.)

If I be shaven, then will my strength go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.] There have been men of wonderful strength, whose memory is preserved in history; particularly by Pliny, lib. xii. Natural. Histor. cap. 20. and more are collected by Caspar Schottus, in his Mirabilia Naturæ et Artis, lib. iii. cap. 36. And now, at my present writing of this, there is more than one person in this city of extraordinary strength. But there is a demonstration that Samson's strength wholly depended upon the power of God, and was not inherent in himself; but came upon him when there was need, as long as he preserved himself consecrated unto God, by not shaving his head, and observing all other things belonging to the vow of a Nazarite. Which was a thing so notorious, that the heathens were not ignorant of it; but from hence devised (as learned men have observed), the fable of Nisus, the king of Megara; upon whose hair the fortune of his kingdom depended. (See Huetius, in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, lib. ii. cap. 12. sect. 28. and our Dr. Jackson, in his first book on the Creed, chap. 15. parag. 3.)

Ver. 18. *And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart.*] Which she perceived, as I said, by the manner of his speaking.

She sent and called the lords of the Philistines.] Who still, it seems, waited thereabouts, to see what would be the success of their design; which she gave them hopes she should at last accomplish. This could not but have been discovered by some of Samson's servants, if he had had a family there, as he would if he had been married. I look upon this, therefore, as a proof that this woman was not his wife.

Saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewn me all his heart.] She was afraid they would not have hearkened to her any more, having been so often deluded; which made her give them this full assurance.

Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hands.] Which they never did before; but now shewed her the reward was ready, if she performed her work.

Ver. 19. *And she made him sleep.*] Having given him, as Delrio thinks, a sleeping potion. Others think she had drawn him in to drink wine (which Josephus supposes she had done in former entertainments), unto which he not being accustomed, he was intoxicated with it. And having broken the law of the Nazarites in this point, was justly delivered up by God to suffer all that followed.

Upon her knees.] Resting his head, I suppose, upon her knees. Or, perhaps, she set him upon her knees, and with her arms about his neck, expressed the greatest affection to him, and care of him.

And she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head.] Which he did so gently, being a man of art, as not to awake him.

And she began to afflict him.] Not by any sensible pain; but by weakening him, and bringing him low (as the Hebrew word is often interpreted). For as soon as the razor touched his head, his strength began to be diminished.

And his strength went from him.] When all the locks were shaved off, his strength quite failed him.

Ver. 20. *And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep.*] She cried so loud, and also shook him so much (out of pretended kindness to him, that he might escape the danger), that she roused him out of his sleep.

And he said, I will go as at other times before, and shake myself.] She had so often said those words, that he was in no fear; but thought to do as he had done before, that is, prepare himself to fall upon them.

And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him.] Being newly awakened out of a profound sleep, and scarce come to himself, he did not miss his hair; and so had no apprehension that God had deserted him.

Ver. 21. *But the Philistines took him.*] But he soon

found he had no power at all left to resist his enemies; who laid hold on him, and took him prisoner.

And put out his eyes.] By a just judgment of God, as the Mischna observes in the title Sota, cap. 8. where they say he followed the delight of his eyes, and so he was punished with the loss of them. Which the Jews are wont to call *measure for measure.* They did not put him to death, much less cut him in pieces, as their hatred and fury might have provoked them to do; for they had promised Delilah they would only bind him, and afflict or humble him, (ver. 5.) and in those days all men made some conscience of keeping their word.

And brought him down to Gaza.] To be exposed there to scorn, where he had exposed them to shame, by carrying away the gates of their city. It was a place also of great strength, where he would be kept secure; and it was remote also from his own country.

And bound him with fetters of brass.] Put very strong and heavy fetters upon his legs.

And he did grind in the prison-house.] As slaves were wont to do. See upon Exod. xi. 5. and St. Jerome, Isa. xlvii. 2. where this is turned to another sense, according to the conceit of many of the Jewish doctors; but without any ground, for it is threatened there as a punishment to Babylon, and so it was inflicted here as a piece of drudgery, unto which Samson, as other prisoners, was condemned.

Ver. 22. *Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again, after he was shaven.*] Or (according to the marginal translation), *As when he was shaven.* That is, grew in time to the same length it was of before Delilah cut it off: so that though his Nazariteship was interrupted by the shaving of his head, yet it was renewed, by letting his hair grow, and observing all other rules belonging to it. He could not offer sacrifice indeed for his expiation (as the law was in case of an interruption), but repented, no doubt, of his folly, and began his Nazariteship again, with prayer to God for a pardon of his former violation of it: and in this state of penitence he continued some time; for his hair would be a good while in growing again to its former length: when, being restored to the condition wherein he was before he lost the favour of God, together with his hair, the Divine Majesty was reconciled to him, and restored his former strength; which grew and increased, as his hair did.

Ver. 23. *Then the lords of the Philistines gathered themselves together.*] Not immediately after the taking of Samson, but after he had been some time in prison, as appears by the verse foregoing: for it is likely they made great preparation for the solemnity mentioned in the next words,

For to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice.] To give thanks to their god at a festival, which they appointed, I suppose, on purpose to express their joy for their taking Samson prisoner: or, as Josephus thinks, ἑορτῆς οὔσης τοῖς Παλαιστινοῖς δημοτελοῦς, *there being a public festival kept among the Philistines* (which all nations had at certain seasons), they made it more famous, by greater sacrifices than ordinary, and by greater feasting and rejoicing, which were expressions of their thankfulness to their god; who is called Dagon, because, as R. Solomon, and many others think, he was in the form of a fish (for *dag* signifies a fish) from the navel downward, and upward in a human shape. Certain it is, this god had a human shape in the upper parts, for we read 1 Sam. v. 4. of his head, and the palms of his hands; though nothing is there said of his feet. It is certain, also, that the Syrians abstained from fish, as Porphyry notes; at least from the fish of that lake hard by which the temple of the famous goddess Derceto stood, not far from Askelon: in which, as Lucian saith, in his Dea Syria, ἰχθύες ἱεροὶ τρέφονται, *sacred fishes were bred.* This Derceto was the same with Venus, as many learned men think, whom the Sidonians called Atarge, and others Artage; but most commonly Astarte, which, in the Scripture, is Ashtaroth, the goddess of the Sidonians, (1 Kings xi. 5. 33. 2 Kings xxiii. 13.) and of the Philistines also, (1 Sam. xxxi. 10.) whom the Israelites imitated, (1 Sam. vii. 3, 4.) And, worshipping the gods of those who ruled over them, no wonder they followed their wicked manners, and gave themselves over to fornication: which is the best account that can be given of Samson's living in this sin, without reprehension; the nation being depraved, and having lost their ancient discipline, which corrected this vice; for their law permitted no harlot to be in Israel.

For they said, Our god hath delivered Samson, our enemy, into our hands.] All nations had this sense, that they owed all they enjoyed unto God: and especially made their acknowledgments to such gods as they worshipped, for the victories they got over their enemies.

Ver. 24. *And when the people saw him.*] For he was publicly exposed to all men's view, in his fetters, I suppose, and grinding in the prison.

They praised their god.] Some hymns, perhaps, were composed on this occasion; which they sang in praise of Dagon.

And said, Our god hath delivered into our hands the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us.] This was part of their song, which the Greeks call *Pæan:* and they give the very same epithet to Samson, that Homer doth to Hector, whom he frequently calls ἀνδροφόνον, *the slayer of men.*

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry.*] As they used to be with good cheer, music, and such-like entertainments, at their festivals.

That they said, Call for Samson.] The lords of the Philistines ordered him to be sent for.

That he may make us sport.] It is uncertain whether they meant, that they would make themselves sport with him, by flouts and jeers; or that they would have him make them sport, by ridiculous gestures and speeches: Josephus takes it in the first sense.

And they called for Samson out of the prison-house, and he made them sport.] Perhaps they made him dance in his chains, or played with him at some such sport as we call blind-man's buff: but it is hard to believe that such a generous spirit as his would submit to do any thing that should make them laugh; therefore they made themselves all the sport they could, by their abuses of him, which he was forced to suffer.

And they set him between the pillars.] That he might be the more visible to every one in the place.

Ver. 26. *And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand.*] And led him about, as he was directed.

Suffer me that I may feel the pillars upon which the house standeth.] Which supported the roof of it, as appears from ver. 29.

That I may lean upon them.] To rest himself, pretending he was weary, as Josephus expounds it.

Ver. 27. *Now the house was full of men and women, and the lords of the Philistines were there.*] Some think this house was one of their temples, wherein they met to praise their god, and then to feast, as the manner was, upon the sacrifices which were offered on such occasions. (See ix. 27.) And, indeed, no private house can be thought to have had a room wide enough to contain such a number of people: but their temples were, in many places, large enough, and made so on purpose that a vast number might assemble in them; particularly that of Diana at Ephesus is celebrated for its greatness, as well as for its beauty and riches; (see Pliny, lib. xxxv. Nat. Hist. cap. 14.) all the people round about, from all parts, running thither at several solemnities, as many have noted: but others think it was some theatre, like those in aftertimes, built by the Romans, some of which were of a prodigious bigness: see Pliny, in the same book, cap. 15. where he mentions two theatres built by C. Curio, who was killed in the civil wars, on Cæsar's side. They were made of wood, so ample as to contain all the Roman people (as he speaks), and contrived with such art, that each of them depended upon one hinge: which moved Pliny to admire at the madness of the people of Rome, who would venture into a place, for their pleasure, where they sat "tam infida instabilique sede," *in such an uncertain and unstable seat;* for if that hinge had slipped, there had been a greater slaughter, than at the battle of Cannæ. This I mention, to silence the cavils of those who fancy no such capacious building could be made, as relied only on two pillars; which is not so strange as this admirable fabric of Curio.

And there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.] Every one knows that the roof of their houses and temples were flat, so that men might stand or walk there: but how they should see Samson from thence, we cannot conceive, unless we suppose there were windows to open upon occasion, whereby to look into the house; or perhaps there were battlements at the top, in the inside (as in our cathedrals), where this great company of men and women stood: by whom we are to understand the vulgar sort; for the lords of the Philistines, and persons of quality, were in the body of the house.

Ver. 28. *And Samson called upon the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God.*] A most ardent prayer, proceeding from the anguish of his soul, as Josephus observes; nothing being more grievous than to be mocked, and exposed to public scorn, which he calls δεινότερον τῶν κακῶν, *the sorest of all evils:* but whether he spake these words within himself, or, as some think, with an audible voice, cannot be determined.

That I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for the loss of my two eyes.] If this had proceeded from a spirit of private revenge, God would not have heard his prayer (for he doth not love to gratify men's passions); but that is a proof that this desire proceeded from God, (as St. Austin understands it, lib. i. de Civ. Dei, cap. 21.) who intended to punish the Philistines for oppressing Israel, as well as abusing Samson, and depriving him of his eyes.

Ver. 29. *And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up,* &c.] On which the weight of the roof relied.

Ver. 30. *And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines.*] He is not to be thought properly a self-murderer; for he was moved by an heroical spirit from God himself, to make himself a sacrifice (as I may call it) for the good of his country: and it is no more than great soldiers do, who are content to lose their lives, in defence of a post where they are placed, for the preservation of the army to which they belong. (See Grotius, in his book de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. ii. cap. 19. sect. 5. n. 4.)

And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and all the people that were therein.] But it was not by his might, but by a miraculous power of God, that this house was subverted, whereby all their mirth and jollity was extinguished in a moment.

So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.] This last act was the greatest of his whole life: for he not only slew more, but persons of greater note (their principal rulers and governors), and destroyed one of their temples (as most authors take this house to have been), together with their god: which must needs put those that survived into the greatest consternation and confusion.

This was a thing known to the heathen; for it is a very probable conjecture of some great men, that hence the Greeks framed the fable of their Hercules, who lived about his time, and whose name is the same with Samson's, if it be derived from *Schemesh, the sun:* for Hercules is as much as *Or-chol,* that which enlightens all, *i. e. the sun.* Of him it is reported, by Herodotus, That being bound in Egypt, he was brought in a pompous manner to be sacrificed to Jupiter; and resting awhile, till he could be placed on the altar, he broke out and slew all that were present.

Ver. 31. *Then his brethren, and all the house of his father.*] By *brethren* are commonly meant in Scripture the nearest kindred; and by *the house of his father* is meant, all the rest of his relations: or, perhaps, after the birth of this child, God bestowed the blessing of other children upon Manoah and his wife; as he did upon Hannah, after the birth of Samuel.

Came down, and took him.] By the permission of the Philistines, who had so much humanity (as all nations anciently had) as not to prohibit enemies from burying their dead: but the Israelites were now in subjection to the Philistines, and did not join with Samson in any of his enterprises; which he performed solely by himself: and beside, the Philistines were much humbled and mollified, no doubt, by this late disaster.

And brought him up.] With some pomp, or solemnity, it is likely; he being a very great man, and famous for his wonderful exploits.

And buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol.] These were two cities in the tribe of Dan, (Josh. xv. 33.) but on the frontiers of the tribe of Judah, as some gather from Nehem. xi. 29.

In the burying-place of Manoah his father.] To be buried in the sepulchres of their ancestors was accounted a great blessing by all nations, as Ezekiel Spanhemius notes upon Callimachus's hymn to Diana, ver. 131, 132. And we have examples of it in Scripture, Gen. xlvii. 29, 30. Nehem. ii. 3. 5. as the contrary was accounted a curse, 1 Kings xiii. 22.

And he judged Israel twenty years.] This was said before, xv. 20. and here mentioned again to shew that he continued to judge Israel (that is, to vindicate them from their oppressors, for we read of no other act of a judge) till he died. When he did as great an act as any he had done all the time of his judicature (or rather greater) for the humbling of the Philistines, who domineered over the Israelites, and restoring them to their liberty: which, though he could not effect, yet he did so much towards it, by the many mischiefs he did them, that not many years after his death they had the courage to betake themselves to their arms, and fight the Philistines, whom they overthrew, and subdued; so that they came no more to molest the Israelites all the days of Samuel, under whose government, as I observed before, they recovered their liberty from the long oppression of this people, (1 Sam. vii. 10. 13.)

CHAP. XVII.

HERE begins the second part of this book, which gives an account of several memorable transactions in or about the time of the Judges; whose history the author would not interrupt by intermixing these matters with it, but reserved them to be related apart by themselves, in the five following chapters: wherein he first gives an account how idolatry crept into the tribe of Ephraim; which he doth in this chapter: and then, secondly, how it was propagated among the Danites, in an expedition they made, wherein they sacked Laish: (chap. xviii.) and then, thirdly, he relates a most foul adultery committed in the tribe of Benjamin: (chap. xix.) after which follows the destruction of that tribe for countenancing that fact: (chap. xx.) and, lastly, the restoration of it, (chap. xxi.)

Ver. 1. *AND there was a man of Mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah.*] When this man lived, and did what follows, we may with some certainty gather from ver. 6. which tells us, there was no king in Israel at this time; that is, no supreme governor, with a power to keep the people to their duty. Which anarchy happened (as primate Usher and other great men observe) between the death of those elders who survived Joshua, and the first oppression of Israel by Chushan: in which space of time, it is manifest, the Israelites first fell from the worship of God, and polluted themselves with idolatry, see ii. 13. iii. 7. where we read the "children of Israel forsook the Lord, and did evil in his sight," *i. e.* committed idolatry: the beginning of which defection from God is described briefly in this chapter.

Ver. 2. *And he said unto his mother.*] Who seems to have been a rich widow, that lived with her son Micah.

The eleven hundred shekels of silver.] There is no mention of shekels in the Hebrew; but our interpreters followed the rule I mentioned, that where *pieces of silver*, or *silverings*, are spoken of, the meaning is *shekels*.

That were taken from thee.] Of which she was robbed: or, as the Vulgar understands it, which she had separated, or set apart; that is, devoted and consecrated to a holy use, but somebody had stolen and perverted to their own use.

About which thou cursedst.] Adjured all her family to discover the money; with some sort of curse upon them, if they knew where it was, and concealed it. (See Dr. Hammond upon St. Matt. xxvi. annot. 1.)

And spakest of also in my ears.] He was present, when she made this solemn adjuration.

Behold, the silver is with me; I took it.] He confessed the truth, for fear the curse should light upon him.

And his mother said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my son.] She prayed the curse might be turned into a blessing upon him for his ingenuous confession.

Ver. 3. *And when he had restored the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the Lord.*] This, some think, is the meaning of her *cursing* beforementioned. She confirmed, with an oath, the consecration of the money to God, after the manner of those who vowed any thing unto him, (Lev. xxvii. 28.)

From my hand.] Resolving not to keep it for my own use: or, thou shalt have it as a gift from me.

For my son, to make a graven image, and a molten image.] For the convenience of Micah and his family; that he might make some resemblance of God, whereby to worship him at home, without the trouble of going, upon all occasions, to the tabernacle at Shiloh. For it appears by the name Jehovah, to whom she consecrated the silver, that she did not intend to forsake the Lord God of Israel, but only to worship him by an image; unto which the Israelites had very early inclined, (Exod. xxxii.) and afterward generally relapsed into it in the days of Jeroboam.

Some are of opinion that her meaning was, her son might make either a graven or a molten image, which he pleased; but it is manifest he made both, from xviii. 18. where they are evidently mentioned as distinct. But that these were a representation of the two cherubims which covered the ark, I dare not affirm; for they being of different kinds, one a graven, the other a molten image, seems to import the contrary; for the cherubims were both alike. But see our most learned Dr. Spencer, lib. iii. cap. 3. dissert. 7. sect. 4.

Now therefore I will restore it unto thee.] She resolved to return it into his hands, for the use beforenamed.

Ver. 4. *Yet he restored the money to his mother.*] These words seem to signify, that at the first he only brought the money to her, offering to restore it; but she bid him keep it: which he refused to do; but would have her take it again into her hands, which she did.

And his mother took two hundred shekels of silver.] Some think she reserved the rest for her own private use, contrary to her vow: but it is more probable, that she gave them to her son, to make the ephod and teraphim, and other things belonging to that Divine service, which they intended to set up in their house.

And gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image, and a molten image.] It is not certain whether this silver was melted, and then the images made of it; or that for this sum of money the founder sold these images to him, made perhaps of brass, silvered over. And this is most probable, because they would have been very small, if they had been made only of two hundred shekels of silver.

And they were in the house of Micah.] Placed in some

room of his house, where he intended to worship, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 5. *And the man Micah.*] This seems to import, that hereupon he looked upon himself, and was accounted, a very considerable person.

Had a house of gods.] The Hebrew words *beth Elohim* may well be translated *a house of God;* as Peter Martyr here understands it. And so the phrase is used in other places, Gen. xxviii. 22. and in the next chapter of this book, ver. 31. For his intention was to make an imitation of the house of God at Shiloh at his own home; which may also be truly called *a house of gods* (as we translate it), because, whatsoever his intention was, to worship God by images, was accounted by him the worshipping of other gods.

And made an ephod.] That the Divine service in his house might be performed with a greater resemblance of what was done at the tabernacle in Shiloh, he made priestly garments, as Peter Martyr understands it: who takes the *ephod* to comprehend not only the breast-plate adjoining to it, but the rest of the vestments used by the high-priest; for he intended, it appears by the next words, to set up an oracle in his own house. But whatsoever resemblance this *ephod* had in its shape and form to the *ephod* of the high-priest, it had none of that rich work in it which the high-priest's *ephod* had, nor no girdle or breast-plate belonging to it; being no more such a garment as that golden ephod, than his Levite was a priest; or his teraphim, an urim and thummim.

And teraphim.] Of this word I have said enough, upon Gen. xxxi. 19. where I have shewn, they were images whereby the eastern people consulted God, and hoped to receive answers from him. And therefore I take Micah's meaning to have been, to set up a holy oracle in his house, where the priest wearing an *ephod*, and other sacred habiliments, should consult God by these *teraphim*. But, as Mr. Selden well observes, (in his Syntagma i. de Diis Syris, cap. 2.) the worship of the true God, and of idols, were here blended together by him. For the *ephod* and the Levite (whom he afterward provided) were intended, no doubt, for the service of the true God; but the graven and molten image, and the *teraphim*, belonged unto demons (as he speaks), by which the children of Dan, in the next chapter, desire the Levite to inquire of God for them; for they neither trusted to the *ephod* alone, which related to God, nor to their *teraphim* alone, which were an invention of their own; but thought it necessary to join both together in Divine worship. And thus began idolatry in Israel, by the superstition of an old woman, who put this into her son's head. Many of the Jews fancy she was Delilah; who having got so much money of every one of the lords of the Philistines, thought it was fit to employ some of it to express her devotion. But this is an idle conceit, which hath no ground, but only her being named in the foregoing chapter; which relates a history of things long after Micah's time.

And consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest:] In the Hebrew it is, *filled the hand* of one of his sons; that is, as many think, the eldest son of his family, into whose hands he put sacrifices to be offered unto God. For that was the rite of initiating priests, as we find Exod. xxxi. 24. Lev. viii. 27

Ver. 6. *In those days there was no king in Israel.*] That is, this was before the time of the judges, when these things fell out; in whom there was a sovereign power to correct abuses, and especially to suppress idolatry; which power being now wanting, it was the reason Micah took upon him to make himself a private temple in his own house; because the ways (as Grotius conjectures) were dangerous when there was no supreme governor, being infested with thieves, or not kept in good repair, which made travelling uneasy. This last is more probable than that robbers infested the country; for it was now a time of peace, when the Levite travelled from one part of the land to the other securely enough; and the Danites sent spies a long way to search out the country of Laish without danger; and afterward marched with a great body to seek a new settlement; which, one would think, should rather have been employed in clearing their country where they were from such pestilent cut-throats, as some suppose to have infested it.

As for the name of king, it was given to the judges; just as it was to Moses, who was their supreme governor; but was not properly a king, as Hermannus Conringius observes, in his book de Rep. Hebr. sect. 49, &c.

But every man did that which was right in his own eyes.] And there can be no worse state of things (as Pet. Martyr here observes) than for every one to be left unto his own will and pleasure; as they were now, when they left the Lord their God: for being *without the true God*, they were also *without a teaching priest, and without law*, as the prophet Azariah's words are, 2 Chron. xv. 3. where he seems, in that and the following verses, to describe the lamentable state of things in these times, after the death of Joshua, and the elders that outlived him, to the days of Samuel.

Ver. 7. *And there was a young man came out of Bethlehem-Judah.*] There was another Beth-lehem in the tribe of Zebulun, (Josh. xix. 15.) and therefore this is called Beth-lehem-Judah, to distinguish it from that.

Of the family of Judah, who was a Levite.] By his mother's side he was of the tribe of Judah. Which is the most easy explication, notwithstanding what Kimchi saith to shew that genealogies are not derived from the mother. For here is no account of his genealogy, which is mentioned afterward, xviii. 30. from his father; but it is noted that his mother was of the tribe of Judah, to shew how he came to live at Beth-lehem, which was no Levitical city.

And he sojourned there.] Lived there as a stranger (for so the word *gour* signifies in the next verse), not as a citizen, and inhabitant of the place.

Ver. 8. *And the man departed out of the city from Bethlehem-Judah, to sojourn where he could find a place.*] By this it appears he was a kind of vagabond, who rambled about from place to place to find a subsistence; for though there was sufficient provision made for the Levites, by the tithes of the land, yet we may well think they were not duly paid in a time of such confusion, that every man did what he list; there being no judge to see them do their duty.

And he came to Mount Ephraim, to the house of Micah, as he sojourned.] As he travelled about the country, he came hither, to beg an alms, perhaps, or, at best, to seek for some employment.

Ver. 9. *And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou?*] He examined him, as the manner was, unto what country he belonged, and what was his business.

And he said unto him, I am a Levite of Beth-lehem-Judah, and I go to sojourn where I may find a place.] He was looking out for a maintenance somewhere or other, to support him in his necessitous condition.

Ver. 10. *And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me.*] He desires him to seek no further, but stay there, and settle with him in his house.

And be unto me a father and a priest.] The prophets, and other great men, were called anciently by the name of *father*, as Elisha calls Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 12. and the king of Israel calls Elisha, 2 Kings vi. 21. and the king of Syria is represented as speaking to him in the same language, 2 Kings viii. 9. and king Joash, xiii. 14. Therefore Micah's meaning is, he would make him the director and governor of his family, and reverence him accordingly, if he would undertake to perform all sacred offices among them.

And I will give thee ten shekels of silver by the year.] Next to honour, he promises him money, and all things needful for his support.

And a suit of apparel.] Or, as it is in the margin, a *double suit*. For so the LXX. and the Vulgar, ζεῦγος ἱματίων, *a couple of garments*. And there being something of order signified in the word *herech*, which we translate *suit*, many understand hereby a winter and a summer suit of clothes: and De Dieu hath justified this interpretation of a double garment out of the Ethiopic language, where this word signifies a companion; whence it may be probably concluded, that here is intended not one suit only, but two at least. With whom agrees Hottinger in his Smegma Orientale, cap. 5. p. 88. where he observes, that all, in a manner, are of opinion, that more suits of apparel than one are signified by this word; but whence to fetch that signification is not to be found but in the Ethiopic language, where it signifies a companion, a friend, another self, as his words are.

And thy victuals.] His constant diet at his table.

And the Levite went in.] Accepted of his offer, so far as to go into his house, and see how he liked every thing.

Ver. 11. *And the Levite was content to dwell with the man.*] After some time he resolved to settle in his house.

And the young man was unto him as one of his sons.] He treated him with such affection, that he was the more willing to stay there.

Ver. 12. *And Micah consecrated the Levite; and the young man became his priest.*] A wonderful presumption in them both; Micah having no authority to consecrate, nor the Levite (who was not of Aaron's family) being capable of the priestly office. But such was the confusion of those times, for want of a judge, that Micah's superstition had no check upon it; and the Levite's poverty and ambition tempted him to accept of the preferment proffered to him: his youth also made him the more ignorant.

And was in the house of Micah.] Continued with him to execute the priest's office.

Ver. 13. *Then said Micah, Now I know that the Lord will do me good, because I have a Levite for my priest.*] Who he thought had more right to the office, and would be more acceptable to God, than his own son, whom he had consecrated before, ver. 5.

By this it is evident, that he did not intend to forsake the Lord; but his mind was so blinded, that he took one small benefit for a sufficient sign of his favour, when he was guilty of so many heinous offences against the Divine Majesty: first, in making idols, and then in making one of his sons a priest; and after that, in drawing a poor young man into the same crime with him; and in taking upon him to consecrate a base Levite to be a priest; of which office he was not capable, if he had had power to consecrate one, which he had not. But both of them were intruders into that which belonged not to them; and thereby drew upon themselves a curse, rather than a blessing.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *IN those days there was no king in Israel.*] These words seem to be repeated, to suggest the reason of such enormous practices as are before mentioned, and here follow in this chapter.

And in those days.] When there was no judge in Israel. That is, saith the author of Tzemach David, in the interval between the government of Jair and Jephthah. Which is an idle opinion; and yet he saith he should be of it, did he not reverence his masters, who are of another mind; which is the truer: that these days were before there was a judge in Israel, between the death of Joshua and the elders that survived him, and the time of Othniel, who was the first judge that God raised up unto them. So Josephus, lib. v. Antiq. cap. 2.

The tribe of the Danites.] Or rather, *a tribe*, &c. For so the word *schebet* is sometimes used for a *family* in a tribe; as in the twentieth chapter of this book, ver. 12. it is said, "the tribes of Israel sent messengers to all the tribes of Benjamin," *i. e.* to all the families of the tribe of Benjamin; and in Isa. xix. 13. De Dieu observes the same: who also truly notes, that when the whole tribe is spoken of, it is not said *Schebet hadani*, as it is here, but *Schebet Dan*. Therefore *hadani* here, and in other places, signifies a family derived from that tribe.

Sought them an inheritance to dwell in.] Some of that tribe, which was very much straitened by the old inhabitants of the land (who pent them up in a narrow compass, which was not sufficient for them), inquired where they might find a commodious settlement in some other place.

For unto that day all their inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel.] They had an inheritance allotted them, as well as the rest of the tribes, (Josh. xix. 40, &c.) but by their sloth, and for want of that brotherly assistance which other tribes should have afforded them, they could not get possession of a considerable part of it; but were forced by the Amorites to content themselves with the mountainous part of their country, leaving them none of the champaigne (as Josephus observes), nor all the mountains neither. (See the first chapter of this book, ver. 34, 35.) Wanting room therefore for all their people and cattle, and being unable to deal with the Amorites, they sent some, as it here follows, to seek for a dwelling somewhere else.

Ver. 2. *And the children of Dan sent of their family five men from their coasts.*] It is no improbable conjecture of Arius Montanus, that there were five families of the Danites; out of each of which one man was chosen to make the following discovery.

Men of valour.] Who could not be daunted if they were

taken for spies. Some think also men of quality; such as those whom Moses sent to spy out the land of Canaan.

From Zorah, and from Eshtaol.] Which places are the first named in the account of the lot of their inheritance, (Josh. xix. 41.)

To spy out the land.] They were sent εἰς μεσόγειον (as Josephus speaks) *into the midland country* (for the Danites were seated near the Philistines towards the sea-coast), to see if they could find out a convenient place for them.

And to search it.] To inquire into the condition of it, and of the inhabitants.

And they said unto them, Go, search the land.] They had a commission from their elders to go whither they directed them, in the plain country wherein Laish stood, (ver. 14.)

And when they came to Mount Ephraim.] These two tribes joined, as I observed upon i. 35.

To the house of Micah.] To the place where his house stood.

They lodged there.] Not in Micah's house, but in some place of Mount Ephraim, not far from it; as we may guess by the next verse.

Ver. 3. *And when they were by the house of Micah.*] Near to which, it is probable, there was a public inn, for the entertainment of such as came from the neighbouring parts to worship, or to ask counsel of the oracle at Micah's house.

They knew the voice of the young man the Levite.] Having been acquainted with him heretofore, when, it is probable, he was in their country; for he had led a wandering life.

And they turned in thither.] Went into Micah's house, at his invitation, or to salute him, and inquire of his welfare.

And said unto him, Who brought thee hither?] Far from that city of the Levites, I suppose, to which he belonged.

And what makest thou here?] What business hast thou in this place?

And what hast thou here?] How dost thou live and maintain thyself? For they knew he had been poor.

Ver. 4. *And he said unto them, Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his priest.*] He told them the agreement between Micah and him, mentioned in the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 5. *And they said unto him, Ask counsel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our way we go shall be prosperous.*] They were as ignorant, it seems, as he; and thought God would give an answer there, as well as at his own house.

Ver. 6. *And the priest said unto them, Go in peace.*] Whether he had any answer from the teraphim, or feigned it out of his own head, is not certain; but he encouraged them to proceed in their design.

Before the Lord is your way, wherein you go.] He pretended to have this answer from the Lord, who, he assures them, would direct, guide, and protect them in their proceedings; for that is the meaning of their way *before the Lord:* under his eye; that is, his care and providence, who would dispose all things for their good success. Now, if the Levite did not devise this answer, which he thought would please them, but heard a real voice from the teraphim, which promised them prosperity, then it was permitted by God, to serve the ends of his providence, just as Nebuchadnezzar was encouraged by his diviners, to undertake the siege of Jerusalem, (Ezek. xxi. 21, 22.)

Ver. 7. *Then the five men departed, and came to Laish.*] Called Leshem in Josh. xix. 47. where this story is briefly told, by way of anticipation: see my notes there. It was a city which lay at the foot of Libanus, near the fountain of Jordan, as Josephus saith in the place abovenamed.

And saw the people that were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians.] Had no fear of any enemy, no more than the Zidonians, who were a powerful people, in a strong city; whose customs, I suppose, they imitated.

Quiet and secure.] Because they knew nobody of whom they had any fear.

And there was no magistrate in the land, that put them to shame in any thing.] To punish them for any thing they did, which made them live as they pleased. There are very various interpretations of these words, of which De Dieu hath given the best account.

And they were far from the Zidonians.] Who might have otherwise come to their assistance, upon any sudden invasion, they following the manners and customs of that people; but they were a day's journey from them, as Josephus there saith.

And had no business with any man.] No traffic or commerce with any of their neighbours, nor they with them. This disposition laid them open to be a prey to any resolute invader.

Ver. 8. *And they came unto their brethren in Zorah and Eshtaol.*] From whence they were sent, ver. 2.

And their brethren said unto them, What say ye?] They asked them what account they brought of their journey.

Ver. 9. *And they said, Arise, that we may go up against them.*] This shews, that they were particularly directed to make a discovery of Laish.

For we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good.] Γῆν ἀγαθὴν καὶ πάμφορον, as Josephus expresses it, *a goodly country, and very fertile.*

And are ye still?] Their brethren did not seem at first to believe them, which makes them stir them up by this question, and the following exhortation.

Be not slothful to go, and to enter to possess the land.] They speak as if they had no more to do, but to march thither, and take possession of the country.

Ver. 10. *When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land.*] They use two arguments to excite them to the enterprise; that it was easy, and would be very advantageous.

And God hath given it into your hand.] They add the encouragement the priest had given them, (ver. 6.) which was the greatest of all.

A place where there is no want of any thing that is in the earth.] This magnifies the goodness of God to them, in discovering a country to them abounding with all manner of good things, which they very much wanted in the mountains wherein they were pent up. (See ver. 1.)

Ver. 11. *And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and Eshtaol.*] Either family is here put for a tribe, or the singular number for the plural; there going out of some of the families of the Danites, the following number.

Six hundred men, appointed with weapons of war.] Carrying their wives, and children, and household-stuff with them; for they nothing doubted of making a settlement there. (See ver. 21.)

Ver. 12. *And they went up, and pitched in Kirjath-jearim, in Judah.*] Not in the city itself, but in the fields belonging to it, as appears from the last words of this verse. See concerning this place Josh. xv. 9. 60. which lay in the north part of the tribe of Judah, and so lay in the road to Laish.

Wherefore they called the place Mahaneh-Dan, unto this day.] See xiii. *ult.*

Behold, it is behind Kirjath-jearim.] On the west of it, towards the Mediterranean Sea, which is called the hinder most sea, Deut. xi. 24. as, on the contrary, the east is called Kedem, which imports as much as *before*. Here the Danites encamped the first night, after they came from Zorah and Eshtaol.

Ver. 13. *And they passed thence unto Mount Ephraim.*] The second day's march was to this place, still more northward.

And they came to the house of Micah.] Unto the town or village where Micah lived; for they did not yet come to his house, but afterward, (ver. 15.)

Ver. 14. *Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish.*] In the Hebrew language he is said oft-times to answer who speaks first, as in 1 Kings i. 28. and many other places.

And said unto their brethren.] Who knew, perhaps, that they called at this place by the way, and asked them, who dwelt there?

Do ye know that there is in these houses.] *i. e.* In that town or village, *viz.* in Micah's house, which was the chief in the town. (See ver. 12.)

An ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image?] Which the Levite had shewn them, or told them were in the house.

Now therefore consider what ye have to do.] Whether it might not be expedient to carry those sacred things along with them, which they fancied would be an assurance of the Divine presence with them: for from thence they had received an answer of peace, when they went to spy the country whither they were now going, (ver. 6.)

Ver. 15. *And they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man the Levite, even unto the house of Micah.*] To that part of the house where the Levite had his apartment, not to the sacred place where the forenamed idols were.

And saluted him.] Or, asked him of his health and welfare, as the Hebrew phrase signifies, *Asked him of peace.*

Ver. 16. *And the six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate.*] Whither the five men brought the Levite out to them, or he, hearing there was such a company there, came out to view them, after the salutation was over.

Ver. 17. *And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, and came in thither.*] Having brought him out, they returned back to the place where they knew the images, &c. were.

And took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate, with the six hundred men, &c.] That is, while the Levite was discoursing with them, and wishing them, perhaps, good success, they robbed the chapel, and took away all the furniture of it. Some think Micah, also, was with him at the gate, entertaining them with meat and drink. But that is confuted by what follows.

Ver. 18. *And these went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image.*] They not only took them, as is said before, but brought them out openly before the Levite's eyes, who saw them in their hands, and thereupon expostulated with them.

Then said the priest unto them, What do ye?] Will you be guilty of such a sacrilege; or, will you thus requite me, who have been very kind to you?

Ver. 19. *And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thine hand upon thy mouth.*] Keep silence, and make no noise. So this phrase is used thrice in the book of Job, xxi. 5. xxix. 9. xxxix. 37. and in the book of Proverbs, xxx. 32. and the prophet Micah, vii. 16.

And go with us, and be unto us a father and a priest.] They invite him to serve them in the same quality as he did Micah, promising him the same authority, reverence, and affection that he had from him: and, moreover, they represent to him, in the next words, how much more advantageous it would be to minister unto so great a part of a tribe than to one private person.

Is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel?] They were not a tribe, but only a part of it; yet so considerable a part being a great family, they are called a *tribe and a family;* that is, a whole family in that tribe.

Ver. 20. *And the priest's heart was glad.*] To think he should so very much mend his condition; for the same arguments which prevailed with him to dwell with Micah, were far stronger now (*viz.* covetousness and ambition) to move him to go along them.

And he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image.] Under which is comprehended also the molten image, which the five men brought out of the house with the other, (ver. 17, 18.)

And went in the midst of the people.] Who undertook to guard him from any assault that might be made on any side to bring him back: or he went, perhaps, with those sacred things (as they accounted them) in the midst of the people, in imitation of the ark, which was so placed when the camp of Israel marched, (Numb. x. 21.)

Ver. 21. *And so they turned and departed.*] From his house.

And put the little ones, and the cattle, and the carriage before them.] Both for safety, if any should pursue them, and that they might march no faster than they were able to bear it.

Ver. 22. *And when they were a good way from the house of Micah.*] Who did not immediately miss the Levite and his idols, and spent some time in assembling his neighbours.

The men that were in the houses near to Micah's house.] If there was not a town there before, it is likely the place of worship which Micah set up made many resort thither, and settle their habitation there.

Gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan.] Hoping to recover what they had taken away.

Ver. 23. *And they cried to the children of Dan.*] Desiring them to stop their march till they had spoken with them.

And they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, What

aileth thee, that thou comest with such a company?] Accordingly they made a stand, and faced about, asking him what he would have, and what he meant to bring a little army with him, as if he intended an assault.

Ver. 24. *And he said, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away.*] By *gods* he means the symbols of the Divine presence; for he was not so sottish as to believe that he could make his god, he being a worshipper of Jehovah, (xvii. 3. 13.)

And what have I more? and what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee?] He thought it a strange question to ask what he ailed, when they had taken away that which he valued above all things in the world.

Ver. 25. *And the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us.*] They that were next to him advised him not to say a word more, lest, if the whole army should hear his reproaches, mischief might follow.

Lest angry fellows run upon thee, and thou lose thy life, and the life of thy household.] There are always such fierce and furious men among soldiers, who are incensed to bloody executions upon the least provocation; and these being men going to make their fortune (as we speak) it is likely were generally of such a violent temper.

Ver. 26. *And the children of Dan went their way.*] Turned about again, and pursued their march, with neglect and scorn of Micah.

And when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his house.] His zeal was not so great for his gods, but he loved his life better.

Ver. 27. *And they took the things which Micah had made, and the priest which he had.*] *i. e.* They kept them and carried them along with them.

And came unto Laish.] They seem to have made three days' march in this expedition, encamping first at Kirjath-jearim, and the next night at Micah's house, and coming the next day to Laish.

Unto a people that were at quiet, and secure.] Whom they found in the posture the spies had described them, ver. 10. having no scouts abroad to bring them notice of any approaching danger, nor any guards of the passes to their city, or at its gates; so that they were easily surprised.

And they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire.] Killed the people of the country and city, unto which they set fire, when they had taken, I suppose, the spoil of it. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Moses concerning this tribe, Deut. xxxiii. 22. (See there.)

Ver. 28. *And there was no deliverer, because it was far from Zidon.*] See ver. 7.

And they had no business with any man.] Which deprived them of all intelligence.

And it was in the valley that lieth by Beth-rehob.] A city near to Hamath, in the most northerly part of the country. (See Numb. xiii. 21.)

And they built a city, and dwelt therein.] Larger, perhaps, than the former; which being not big enough to contain them, they thought fit to burn it and build a better.

Ver. 29. *And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of their father Dan, who was born unto Israel.*] They gave it this name, that it might be remembered they belonged to the people of Israel, though they lived at a great distance from their own tribe, in the very extremity of the north of Judea (whereas the tribe of Dan had their lot in the south-west); from whence came the common saying afterward, when they would express the whole length of the country, *from Dan to Beer-sheba.*

Howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first.] This seems to signify, that they did not burn the whole city, but so much as might strike a terror into the inhabitants, and make their conquest more easy; for he speaks of it as still the same city, though it lost its old name.

Ver. 30. *And the children of Dan set up the graven image.*] Together with the molten, no doubt, and made use of the ephod and teraphim here, as Micah had done in his house; fancying, I suppose, it was by a Divine direction from this oracle, that the five men had such good success, when they went to spy out this land, (ver. 5, 6.)

And Jonathan.] This was the name of the Levite who came along with them.

The son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh.] So not only the Hebrew, but the Chaldee, and the LXX. (both in the Roman edition, and in that of Basil, and in the Palatine MS. as Hottinger observes), which will not let us doubt it is the true reading: though the Vulgar hath put Moses instead of Manasseh, according to an idle conceit of some of the rabbins, who say, the letter *nun*, in the middle of the word, is not written even with the rest, but suspended above the rest of the letters, to shew, that though he was indeed the son of Moses, yet he should rather be called the son of Manasseh, because he did the works of Manasseh, and not of Moses; that is, was an idolater. So Kimchi (as the same Hottinger observes), who therein follows the Talmudists, in Bava Bathra. (See his Thesaurus Philologicus, lib. i. cap. 2. quæst. 4. and Bartoloccius, in his Kirjath-sepher, tom. i. p. 114.) And thus they made this Jonathan to be the grandchild of Moses, for Gershom was his son: but it is not likely he would have been left in so poor a condition, if he had been so nearly related to their great lawgiver; nor would he have had so ill an education. And, being now but a youth, it is not probable that he was the son of that Gershom, but of some other, who had the name of his famous ancestor given him, though his father's name was Manasseh: but it is wholly uncertain from what family of the Levites this man was derived; and these names, no doubt, were common to more than those who first bare them.

He, and his sons, were priests of the tribe of Dan.] Of that part of the tribe who settled here at Laish.

Until the day of the captivity of the land.] Some cavillers have endeavoured to frame an argument from hence, that this book was written in later times, after the ten tribes were carried away by Salmanassar; or, as some of the Jews in Seder Olam interpret the *captivity of the land*, to signify that by Nebuchadnezzar: but Kimchi and Ralbag very well object against this, that it is altogether unlikely these images should have been suffered to continue in the days of David; who was a man after God's own heart, and set himself to advance true religion to the utmost of his power, all the country over, from Dan to Beersheba: therefore Kimchi, with great reason, concludes, that by the *captivity of the land* is meant the taking of the ark by the Philistines, and carrying it captive into the temple of Dagon: which is confirmed, as our famous Selden observes (Syntag. i. de Diis Syris, cap. 2.) by the next verse, which saith, that, till Shiloh was destroyed,

these images remained. And this taking of the ark, the Psalmist expressly calls a *captivity*, when he saith, Psal. lxxviii. 60, 61. "He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, &c. and delivered his strength into captivity, his glory into the enemy's hand." As for the interpretation of Ralbag, who takes this captivity to have been in the days of Jabin, king of Canaan, it is not worth confuting.

Ver. 31. *And they set up Micah's graven image, which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.*] Which was all the time of the judges mentioned in this book; who, though zealous reformers, could not, it seems, extend their authority to the very skirts of the country, where idolatry still lurked in this corner of the land: for scarce any one of the judges ruled over the whole country of Israel; but only over such tribes as they delivered from imminent danger. This appears by the armies which Barak and Gideon raised; and in the double oppression they lay under, at the same time, in the west and in the east, by the Philistines and the Ammonites; when Jephthah was raised up against the latter, and Samson against the former: no wonder therefore that none of them could make a general reformation, nor abolish the idolatry in this place: but God used the Philistines as instruments to put an end to it; for when they destroyed Shiloh, where the true house of God was, they destroyed *this house of gods*, (as they esteemed it, see xvii. 5.) being a resemblance of it: and perhaps, as they brought the ark into the field against the Philistines, so the Danites brought these images, with the ephod and teraphim, and the priest, who was slain with Hophni and Phinehas; or, as Huetius thinks, carried captive into the land of the Philistines, with a great many other Israelites. But this place remained still so famous for the resort of people thither to worship, that when Jeroboam set up his golden calves, he erected one of them here in Dan, as another in Beth-el: where, there having been a real appearance of God, in ancient time, to Jacob, the people were easily made to believe there had been the like in Dan, in the time here mentioned.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel.*] In the time beforementioned, xvii. 6. xviii. 1. (See there.)

That there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of Mount Ephraim.] He seems to have been a stranger in this country, as the other Levite was, who sojourned in the land of Judah, (xvii. 7.)

And he took him a concubine out of Beth-lehem-Judah.] That is, a wife of the secondary sort, without such solemn espousals, or a dowry, as those called *wives* had. So the Talmudists generally think. But Abarbinel, following Rasi, thinks, that a *concubine* was taken with espousals, and only wanted a dowry, or a jointure (as we speak). Certain it is, such persons were really wives; and it was adultery in any other person that lay with them, but he who had married them. As this man had this woman, for he is expressly called her husband in the next chapter, (xx. 4.) and her father is called his father-in-law in this chapter, (ver. 47.) See Selden, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 7. and Buxtorf, de Sponsal. et Divortiis, p. 11, &c. where the opinion of Abarbinel is largely represented.

Ver. 2. *And his concubine played the whore against him.*] Was false to his bed, into which she admitted some other person.

And went away from him unto her father's house in Beth-lehem-Judah.] To escape the punishment unto which she was liable as an adulteress: but there are those who, by the word *tizneh*, which we translate *played the whore*, will have no more to be meant, but that she was froward and contumaciously disobedient; so that she could not endure his company, but forsook him: the Chaldee plainly inclines this way; and the LXX. translate it ὠργίσθη αὐτῷ, *She carried herself like a fury to him*; and Josephus ἀλλοτρίως εἶχε, *She behaved herself untowardly*.

And was there four whole months.] Or, as others take it, *A year and four months.* For *days* in Scripture frequently signify a year: but the LXX. and Josephus take it for so many days as made four months.

Ver. 3. *And her husband arose, and went after her.*] His anger was over by this time, and his affection to her revived: perhaps also he heard she repented, and was become a better woman.

To speak friendly to her.] In the Hebrew, *To speak to her heart*; that is, to make her sensible of his kindness to her, notwithstanding her offence, and to assure her of his pardon.

And to bring her again.] To his own habitation, from whence she went away.

Having a servant with him, and a couple of asses.] And for that end came attended with a servant, to carry her and her baggage (as we now speak), with necessary provisions.

And she brought him into her father's house.] She seems to have been as ready as he for a reconciliation.

And when the father of the damsel saw him, he rejoiced to see him.] Embraced him with great affection and joy.

Ver. 4. *And his father-in-law, the damsel's father, retained him.*] Would not let him go away, as soon as he desired.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass on the fourth day, when they arose early in the morning, that he arose up to depart.*] With an intention to leave him, and return to his own house.

And the damsel's father said unto his son-in-law, Comfort thy heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way.] Her father had no mind to part with him so soon, hoping, by keeping him longer in his house, their conjugal love and affection would be more confirmed: and devising this way to detain him, by desiring him to take a short repast with him, before he began his journey; for this is meant by *a morsel of bread*, under which all sort of provisions are comprehended: wherewith he desired him *to comfort*, or, as the word literally signifies in the Hebrew, *support his heart*; which in English we express exactly by *stay his stomach with a morsel*, &c. For, in many authors, the *heart* signifies the stomach, as several have observed, particularly Gataker, in his Cinnus, lib. ii. cap. 16.

Ver. 6. *And they sat down, and did eat and drink both of them together.*] He made him a great feast, at which they sat a long time.

For the damsel's father had said unto the man, Be content, I pray thee, and tarry all night, and let thy heart be merry.] For he was earnest with him not to think of going away that day, but to spend it joyfully with him and with his daughter.

Ver. 7. *And when the man rose up to depart, his father-in-law urged him; therefore he lodged there again.*] He pressed his stay so hard, that when he offered to be gone, he prevailed with him to lodge there another night.

Ver. 8. *And he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart: and the damsel's father said unto him, Comfort thy heart, I pray thee.*] Stay till after dinner.

And they tarried till afternoon, and they did eat both of them.] He prolonged the entertainment, so that the sun began to decline before they had done.

Ver. 9. *And when the man rose up to depart, he, and his concubine, and his servant.*] Who had made all ready for their journey.

His father-in-law, the damsel's father, said unto him, Behold, now the day draweth towards evening, I pray you tarry all night: behold, the day draweth to an end.] In the Hebrew the words are, *It is the pitching time of the day;* that is, when men pitch their tents, to take their rest.

Lodge here, that thine heart may be merry.] He prays him that they may rejoice together one night more.

And to-morrow get you early on your way, that thou mayest go home.] He promises not to detain them longer than this night, but to let them go away as early as they pleased next morning, without any entertainment.

Ver. 10. *But the man would not tarry that night.*] Suspecting his father would use still the same kind artifice, or some other, to keep him longer with him.

But he rose up and departed, and came over against Jebus (which is Jerusalem), and there were with him two asses saddled, and his concubine also was with him.] He carried away all that he brought, (ver. 3.) and his wife also, whom he went to invite again to dwell with him.

Ver. 11. *And when they were by Jebus, the day was far spent; and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn in unto this city of the Jebusites, and lodge in it.*] The famous city of Jerusalem (anciently called Jebus) had been taken by the children of Judah, (i. 8.) but the Jebusites still kept the strong fort of Sion, till the time of David, and thereby so commanded the lower town, that they forced the children of Judah and Benjamin to let them dwell with them there; (i. 21. Josh. xv. *ult.*) and it appears by this place, that they were the ruling party, and therefore it is called *this city of the Jebusites.* (See Josh. x. 1.)

Ver. 12. *And his master said unto him, We will not turn aside hither into the city of a stranger, that is not of the children of Israel.*] This is an argument that he was not like the other Levite, mentioned in the seventeenth chapter; for he would not take up his lodging among idolaters: and it also shews, that the greater part of the inhabitants were Jebusites, and the children of Israel had little or no power there; yea, it is possible that this happened so long before the days of the judges, that Jerusalem was not yet taken by the children of Judah.

We will pass over to Gibeah.] Which was possessed by the children of Israel, *viz.* the Benjamites.

Ver. 13. *And he said unto his servant, Come, and let us draw near to one of these places to lodge all night, in Gibeah, or in Ramah.*] The servant, I suppose, made some objection against Gibeah, and therefore he put him to his choice, either to go thither, or to Ramah; which was also a city belonging unto Benjamin, both of them lying northward of Jerusalem, and not far from it.

Ver. 14. *And they passed on, and went their way; and the sun went down upon them when they were by Gibeah, which belongeth to Benjamin.*] This is noted, to distinguish it from another Gibeah which belonged to Judah, (Josh. xv. 57.)

Ver. 15. *And they turned aside thither, to go in and to lodge in Gibeah.*] Being unable to reach Ramah, unless they would have travelled in the night, which had not been safe.

And when he went in, he sat him down in a street of the city.] There being, I suppose, no public inn in the town, unto which strangers might resort.

For there was no man that took them into his house to lodging.] They were grown so lewd in this place, that there was no humanity left among them; but the ancient custom of hospitality, in entertaining strangers, was quite abolished: or, if any had so much goodness remaining as to be inclined to it, they durst not make any invitation of a stranger to their houses, for fear of drawing mischief upon themselves, from their debauched neighbours.

Ver. 16. *And, behold, there came an old man from his work out of the field at evening.*] Before it was quite dark, *which was also of Mount Ephraim,* where this Levite dwelt, *and he sojourned in Gibeah.* Being but a sojourner himself, he had the more compassion on a stranger.

But the men of the place were Benjamites.] This was one of the cities given to the priests, Josh. xxi. 17. But the priests did not inhabit them alone, especially now when they were but few, and therefore let other persons, who were not priests, dwell there together with them.

Ver. 17. *And when he had lifted up his eyes, he saw a way-faring man in the street of the city.*] Who looked as if he was at a loss for a lodging.

And the old man said, Whither goest thou? and whence comest thou?] These were the usual questions made to travellers.

Ver. 18. *And he said unto him, We are passing from Beth-lehem-Judah towards the side of Mount Ephraim; from thence am I: and I went to Beth-lehem-Judah.*] This is a full answer to one part of his question, giving him an account where he commonly lived; though his occasions carrying him to Beth-lehem-Judah, he now immediately came from thence.

But I am now going to the house of the Lord.] This is an answer to the other part of his question: for Shiloh, where the house of God was settled, was in the tribe of Ephraim; (Josh. xviii. 1.) and thither, like a good man, he intended first to go, and give thanks to God, for restoring his wife to him; and, perhaps, to offer an expiation for her sin; and then to return to his own home, on the side of Mount Ephraim.

And there is no man that receiveth me to house.] Whereby he was in danger to lie in the street all night.

Ver. 19. *Yet there is both straw and provender for our asses; and there is bread and wine for me, and for thy handmaid, and for the young man which is with thy servant.*] He uses very civil and humble language, and also signifies he did not desire to be chargeable to any body; being so well provided with all things necessary, that he need not be a burden to him that would entertain him.

There is no want of any thing.] But only of a lodging.

Ver. 20. *And the old man said, Peace be with thee.*] He

saluted him kindly, after the usual manner that friends and neighbours greeted each other.

Howsoever.] Do not speak of that.

Let all thy wants be upon me; only lodge not in the street.] I had rather entertain thee at my charge, than suffer thee to lie in the street.

Ver. 21. *So he brought him into his house, and gave provender for their asses.*] Took care both of them and of their beasts, at his own costs, as the words seem to import.

And he washed their feet.] As the custom was in those countries after travelling.

And did eat and drink.] Sat down to supper.

Ver. 22. *And, as they were making their hearts merry.*] Eating and drinking very freely.

Behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial.] See Deut. xiii. 13.

Beset the house round about.] That none might go out; *and beat at the door;* as if they would force their entrance: which made the master of the house come to ask them what they would have.

And they spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring hither the man that came into thy house, that we may know him.] These last words are capable of a good meaning, as if they designed only to examine him, and know who he was, and whence he came, &c. but the old man being acquainted with their wicked manners, understood their lewd intentions, and accordingly gave them the following answer. (See Gen. xix. 5.)

Ver. 23. *And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, nay, I pray you, do not so wickedly; seeing this man is come into my house, do not this folly.*] He endeavours to divert them from their purpose with kind words and humble entreaties; urging withal, the title the man had to his protection by the laws of hospitality, and the greatness of the sin they were about to commit.

Ver. 24. *Behold, here is my daughter, a maiden, and his concubine, them will I bring out now, and humble ye them, and do with them as seems good unto you: but unto this man do not so vile a thing.*] His earnest desire to preserve the laws of hospitality from violation (which was a thing very sacred in those days), made him forget the care he ought to have had to preserve his daughter's purity. He hoped also, perhaps, that they were not grown yet so wicked as to offer this injury to a neighbour, though they regarded not what they did to strangers, which made him offer them the man's concubine also, supposing it better than to let them do violence to her husband. He must be considered as in a confusion of thoughts, (like Lot, see Gen. xix. 8.) and so not to have minded so much what was right, as what was least wrong.

Ver. 25. *But the men would not hearken to him.*] And the Levite also, I suppose, absolutely refused to have the old man's daughter or his concubine exposed to their lust: whence arose a quarrel, insomuch that they threatened and designed to kill him, (as he himself tells the story, xx. 5.) which, it is likely, moved the old man to persuade him not to be so obstinate; but for the preservation of his life, which was in great danger, to yield a little to them: and persuading the men of the city not to be so furious, they came at last to compound the matter; and finding the Levite so resolutely bent to defend himself, were content only to have his concubine (whose beauty they admired, as Josephus saith, when they saw her come into their city), and to let him and the old man's daughter alone. Unto this they agreed, of two evils choosing the least.

So the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them.] With her own consent, it is probable; for she thought her husband would lose his life, and she not preserve herself.

And they knew her, and abused her all night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go.] Lest the light should discover who they were that had been so villanously wicked.

Ver. 26. *Then came the woman, at the dawning of the day, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her lord was, till it was light.*] She fell down dead, ὑπὸ λύπης καὶ αἰσχύνης (as Josephus speaks), with *grief* at what she had suffered, and *shame* to look upon her husband; and, it may be added, with the excessive abuse of her body.

Ver. 27. *And her lord rose up in the morning.*] So the women in these old times called their husbands, out of reverence to them, as the head of the wife. (See 1 Pet. iii. 5.)

And opened the door of his house, and went out to go his way.] Imagining, perhaps, that they intended to keep her, and he did not know where to find her, but must seek somewhere else by what means to recover her.

And, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down at the door of the house, and her hands were upon the threshold.] She being stretched out at length; as people are sometimes, when they fall down with weariness upon their faces into a profound sleep.

Ver. 28. *And he said, Up, and let us be going.*] Supposing her to be only in a deep sleep, he began to rouse her up, and to speak comfortably to her (as Josephus takes it), knowing she was under a force, and did not willingly submit to their filthiness.

But none answered. Then the man took her up upon an ass, and the man rose up, and gat him into his place.] When he saw she was dead he made no outcry; but (as Josephus observes) prudently carried her away, as fast as he could, to his own home.

Ver. 29. *And when he was come to his house, he took a knife, and laid hold upon his concubine, and divided her, together with her bones.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *according to her bones;* that is, some of the pieces were bigger, some lesser, according as the joints would suffer her body to be divided.

Into twelve pieces.] That every tribe might have a limb of her, Benjamin not excepted. Among whom it was to be hoped there were some who would resent so foul a fact, though committed by their own brethren.

And sent her into all the coasts of Israel.] Giving the messengers a charge (as Josephus observes) to relate how she had been abused, which was the cause of her death. He knew not what other course to take to have justice done; for, as Josephus there observes, (lib. v. Antiq. cap. 2.) there was no settled court of judicature established according to the law. Which is the reason he gives (chapter the fifth of that book) why Eglon attempted to subdue the Israelites, because they were all in disorder, the laws being not put in execution.

Ver. 30. *And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen, from the day that the chil-*

dren of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt.] They not only condemned the fact, but were highly incensed at it, as a crime beyond all that had been heard of since they were a people: for it was a mixture of adultery and murder, with an attempt of sodomy, and that upon a Levite; a person consecrated to the Divine service, in some lower ministries.

Consider of it, take advice, and speak your mind.] These are either the words of the messenger, or rather of the people themselves, who exhorted one another not to pass over this deed, only with expressing their abhorrence of it; but to consider, and consult one with another what was to be done, and to declare their opinion freely, how so heinous a crime was to be punished. And accordingly we find, in the beginning of the next chapter, that, by common consent, the whole body of the people met together to advise about this matter.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND all the children of Israel went out of their cities.*] The principal persons, who were appointed to represent the rest.

And the congregation was gathered together.] This *congregation* consisted of the captains of thousands and hundreds, &c. which had been established by Jethro's advice, together with the principal citizens, as Corn. Bertram probably thinks, whom they called to this assembly.

As one man.] Except the people of Jabesh-Gilead, (xxi. 5. 8.) and they of the tribe of Benjamin, who had no sense of this wickedness. For there was a general summons, no doubt, issued out by command of their rulers, to require every one to meet at a certain place, mentioned in the following words, or otherwise to forfeit their lives.

From Dan even to Beer-sheba, with the land of Gilead.] That is, all Israel on this side Jordan, and on the other, were of the same mind in this matter.

Unto the Lord to Mizpeh.] There was a place of this name in the land of Gilead, as we read, xi. 11. but this Mizpeh here mentioned was in the confines of Judah and Benjamin, for which reason it is sometimes ascribed to the former, Josh. xv. 38. and sometimes to the latter, Josh. xviii. 26. being a place very conveniently situated for a general meeting of all the people, who often assembled there in future times, (1 Sam. vii. 5—7. 16. x. 17.) And it was not far from Shiloh, which made it the more convenient; because from hence they might, upon any occasion, immediately go to consult the Divine Majesty; which they intended to do now, when they had dispatched the business for which they met here, which was to examine the crime of which the Benjamites were accused; and if there were good proof made of it, to consider how to punish it as it deserved. Whence it is that Josephus saith, this congregation met in Shiloh, Εἰς τὴν Σιλοῦν συλλεγέντες καὶ πρὸ τῆς σκηνῆς ἀθροισθέντες, as if it were the same with Mizpeh. And, indeed, in this history, there is a little difference made, because they were so near one to another. (See ver. 26. xxi. 2.) But Mr. Mede thinks that here was a famous place of prayer, which is the *house of God* mentioned in those two verses. For so the author of the first book of Maccabees saith, (iii. 46.) That when the holy city and sanctuary lay desolate, by the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes, the people assembled together at Maspah, to make their supplications unto God, Ὅτι τόπος προσευχῆς εἰς Μάσφα τὸ πρότερον τῷ Ἰσραὴλ, *because at Maspah had been, in former times, a place of prayer, for Israel;* and therefore some of the Jewish doctors say, the first synagogue was built here, and make this the original of all those which were so frequent in aftertimes: for here, say Kimchi and Abarbinel, all the remaining kings of Canaan assembled (after the battle at Gibeon) to fight with Israel, (Josh. xi. 3.) And here Joshua finished his victories over the Canaanites, (ver. 8.) and therefore here, it is probable, he built an altar unto the Lord, in memory of so great a deliverance. But this conjecture is founded upon a plain mistake; for the land of Mizpeh, where Joshua completed his victories, was far from this, in the most northern parts of Canaan, near Lebanon, beyond the fountains of Jordan.

Mr. Mede, also, and Corn. Bertram think, that hither they brought the ark upon this great occasion, and so might properly be said to be gathered *unto the Lord.* But this seems to me improbable, that they should remove the ark hither, when it was so near them in Shiloh, to which they might as well go, as bring it to them. And as for that phrase, *unto the Lord,* it is no argument that either the ark was here, or so much as a place of prayer; for where all the people of God were assembled in any place, there God was in a special manner present; as when they all assembled to make David their king, it is said he made a league with them *in Hebron before the Lord,* though there was no ark nor altar there, (2 Sam. v. 3.)

I see no reason therefore to believe, that the Israelites were now gathered to Mizpeh as *a place of prayer* (for Shiloh was appointed for that purpose, which was very near it), but as a fitting place for such a great assembly to meet, and consult what was to be done in the present case. That was their business here; and when they had occasion to inquire of God, and to fast (and pray, no doubt), they went to Shiloh, to the house of God. (See ver. 26. and 28.)

Ver. 2. *And the chief of all the people, even of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God.*] The word we translate *chief,* is in the Hebrew the *corners,* who were the strength and support of the people, as the corner-stones are of a building; *viz.* the heads of their tribes, rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, fifties, and tens; who kept the people in some kind of order (now that they wanted a supreme governor, and the courts of justice were unsettled), and, it is likely, brought them along with them to this general assembly; which, in all probability, met in the open air, as they anciently did among the Romans, Athenians, and other people, as many learned men have observed. And Lycurgus, as Plutarch tells us, gave this reason for it, that noble rooms, adorned with pictures and statues, and such-like ornaments, did not contribute εἰς εὐβουλίαν, *to right counsels,* but rather did hurt, by distracting their minds, and turning them from their business: but the true reason was, because vast multitudes met together, which no house would contain, and therefore they assembled in the field; as Livy tells us, when the cause of Appius Claudius was heard, the people were cited to come into the *campus Martius.* (Lib. vi. cap. 20.)

Four hundred thousand footmen that drew sword.] That

is, together with so many of the people (for there could not be so many chieftains), that came ready armed, to do as they should be directed. I have often observed, that the armies of the Jews were all infantry, there being no horses bred in their country. There are those, who, by the *corners of the people*, understand, not their chiefs, but *all the tribes of Israel* (making the next words the explication of these), who made up this great number of four hundred thousand; because, saith Cocceius, all the people, gathered together, is like a house that hath corners. But I shall not trouble the reader with various interpretations.

Ver. 3. *Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel were gone up to Mizpeh.*] They could not be ignorant of such an universal concourse of the whole nation, except themselves, nor of the cause of their meeting; but when they were told of it, would take no notice of it, being stupidly insensible of the crime that had been committed among them, or foolishly confident of their own strength; or rather, imagining their brethren would attempt nothing by war against them.

Then said the children of Israel, Tell us, how was this wickedness?] The Hebrew word *dabru (tell)* being in the plural number, denotes, that they spake to more than one; and therefore, in all probability, not only the Levite, but the good old man (his host) and his servant were there, to give an account of the fact.

Ver. 4. *And the Levite, the husband of the woman that was slain, answered and said, I came into Gibeah that belongeth to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to lodge.*] He relates from the beginning how it was; and they confirmed it, by their testimony to the truth of it. He being called her husband, it proves she was his legal wife.

Ver. 5. *And the men of Gibeah rose up against me.*] A great number of them, who were not restrained by the rest; and therefore he imputes the crime to them all.

And beset the house round about me by night, and thought to have slain me.] For he resolved to lose his life, as Ralbag here observes, rather than submit to their abominable desires.

And my concubine have they forced, that she is dead.] But though he preserved himself, he could not deliver her from them; but they abused her to death.

Ver. 6. *And I took my concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel: for they have committed lewdness and folly in Israel.*] Such a very heinous crime, as he thought the whole nation was bound to censure.

Ver. 7. *Behold, ye are all children of Israel; give here your advice and counsel.*] They all detested, he presumed, such foul wickedness, and therefore desires them to consider and resolve how to punish it. This could not be debated by all the multitude; therefore some of the principal persons, I suppose, were deputed to sit in council, and hear the cause, and then report their opinion to the several tribes.

Ver. 8. *And all the people arose as one man, saying, We will not any of us go to his tent, neither will we any of us turn into his house.*] The report being made from the great council, and their opinion declared, the people all agreed to keep in a body till they saw justice done, according to their resolution.

Ver. 9. *And now, this shall be the thing we will do to Gibeah; we will go up by lot against it.*] This seems to be a popular motion, who are in love with equality, and therefore desire, by their officers, that it may be determined by lots who shall go to war, and who shall stay at home to make provision for the army; for they did not know how long they should continue abroad, and it was not easy to provide for such a multitude.

Ver. 10. *And we will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred out of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to fetch victuals for the people.*] So one man took care that nine of his brethren wanted nothing; and ten took care of ninety, &c. In the whole, there were forty thousand of the four hundred thousand who went out to forage for the army.

That they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have done in Israel.] That the rest might be wholly intent upon punishing the inhabitants of Gibeah according to their deserts.

Ver. 11. *So all the men of Israel were gathered together against the city, knit together as one man.*] Nothing could contribute more to their good success, than this unity and concord among the officers and soldiers, who all agreed to put this resolution in execution.

Ver. 12. *And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin.*] But first it was thought prudent and just, by the rulers of the people, to send an embassy to their brethren, to desire them to hearken unto reason; and therefore there was a select number chosen out of every tribe, who went to every city of Benjamin (it is probable), to offer such terms of peace as might prevent the war upon Gibeah. Or, they sent this message to every family in Benjamin, which were originally ten, for Benjamin had so many sons; from whom sprang such a number of people, that it made R. Solomon say, From Rachel were descended twelve tribes: for there were two sons of Joseph which made two tribes, besides these ten families of Benjamin, who were so powerful and valiant, that it puffed them up with pride, and was the cause of their ruin.

Saying, What wickedness is this that is done among you?] In the first place, they were ordered to represent the greatness of the crime that had been committed among them.

Ver. 13. *Now therefore deliver us the men, the children of Belial, which are in Gibeah.*] This was agreeable to the law of nations, by which the Philistines had thus demanded Samson of the Israelites, who had done them mischief, (xv. 10.) See Grotius, who gives a great many other examples of it out of Pausanias, Strabo, and other authors. (Lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 21. sect. 4.)

That we may put them to death.] If the Benjamites themselves would not do justice upon them.

And put away evil from Israel.] According to the direction Moses had given in his law, (Deut. xiii. 5.) For the sin is taken away when it is duly punished.

But the children of Benjamin would not hearken to the voice of their brethren the children of Israel.] They seem to have been as unanimous in the defence of this wickedness, as the rest of the tribes were in their endeavours to have it punished. For, quite contrary to all their brethren, who, upon the hearing of this crime, met together, examined into it, sent messengers to desire the malefactors might be delivered to be punished, before they would enter upon a

war, they most perversely refused to come to their assembly, or deliver up the malefactors, or so much as excuse the fact, much less deny it, but prepare themselves to protect such lewd criminals with all their power. One can scarce think that there were no good men left among them, but they were so few, that they had no authority; and the generality were so depraved, that they took part with the evil-doers. Perhaps they took it ill that the other tribes should meddle with the concerns of theirs; but if they had had any goodness in them, they would have saved them this labour, by calling the offenders to an account themselves: which they not doing, made the whole tribe guilty of the crime of a few, and provoked God justly to give them up to pursue their own destruction.

Ver. 14. *But the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together out of the cities unto Gibeah, to go out to battle against the children of Israel.*] Instead of hearkening to their brethren, or giving any reason of their refusal to satisfy their desires, they prepare themselves to fight with them.

Ver. 15. *And the children of Benjamin were numbered at that time, out of the cities, twenty and six thousand men that drew sword.*] So the Chaldee expressly mentions twenty-six thousand, but the Vulgar saith only twenty-five thousand, and the LXX. of the Roman edition twenty-three thousand; but other copies have twenty-five thousand, as Josephus also hath: who imagined, I suppose, that the number of twenty-six thousand would not agree with the account which follows, of twenty-five thousand and one hundred slain in the last battle and in the pursuit of them, (ver. 35. 45.) and six hundred only escaped, (ver. 47.) which make the number of twenty-five thousand seven hundred. But they should have considered, that the two former battles could not be fought without loss on the Benjamites' side, when so many fell of the Israelites, (ver. 21. 25.) And the other thousand men may well be supposed to have then perished, or some of them to have been left to defend their cities, where they were afterward slain, (ver. 48.)

Beside the inhabitants of Gibeah, which were numbered seven hundred chosen men.] Who were left, it is likely (or at least part of them), to defend that city, while the rest beforementioned went out to battle.

Ver. 16. *Among all this people there were seven hundred chosen men left-handed.*] Who could use their left hand as well as their right in any exercise. (See iii. 13.)

Every one could sling stones at a hair's breadth, and not miss.] Such excellent marksmen there have been in other countries; particularly in the islands called Baleares, where they were bred from children to hit a mark with a stone slung out of a sling, or else to lose their breakfast, as Strabo relates. (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 10.) This extraordinary skill in their arms (for it is likely they handled other weapons with the like dexterity) and their natural courage emboldened them, with such a small number, to undertake a war against such a vast multitude of their brethren. Which warlike disposition of theirs was prophesied of by Jacob, when he saith, "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf;" which is an undaunted fearless creature, (Gen. xlix. 27.)

Ver. 17. *And the men of Israel, beside Benjamin, were numbered four hundred thousand that drew sword: all these were men of war.*] This is mentioned again, to shew that they all persisted steadfast in their resolution, (ver. 2. 8.) to see justice done upon the men of Belial before they would return to their own home.

Ver. 18. *And the children of Israel arose, and went up to the house of God.*] In Shiloh, which was not far from Mizpeh, *and asked counsel of God,* by *urim* and *thummim,* as they did, i. 1. The Targum hath it, They asked counsel *by the Word of the Lord.* Some of their principal persons, that is, were sent to desire God to direct them, as he was wont to do in all great affairs concerning the safety of their commonwealth. For so God himself ordained, that the high-priest should appear before him with the breast-plate of judgment, to ask counsel of him for them in all their weighty concerns. (See Exod. xxviii. 30. Numb. xxvii. 21.)

And said, Which of us shall go up first against the children of Benjamin? And the Lord said, Judah shall go up first.] The same question and answer which we read in the beginning of this book; there being a pre-eminence, we may observe all along, given to the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 19. *And the children of Israel rose up in the morning, and encamped against Gibeah.*] These words seem to tell us, that Judah was only to lead the van (as we now speak), and stand in the front of the battle, to make the first assault; but that all the rest went up with them.

Ver. 20. *And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin.*] When the Benjamites heard that Israel were encamped against Gibeah, they came to the relief of it; and the Israelites marched out of their camp to engage them.

And the men of Israel put themselves in array to fight against them at Gibeah.] The battle was near that city.

Ver. 21. *And the children of Benjamin came forth out of Gibeah.*] Those forces which were left in Gibeah for its defence issued out upon the Israelites in their rear, as their brethren fought them in the front.

And destroyed down to the ground of the Israelites that day twenty and two thousand.] Since God bade them go up, it may seem strange that they should receive such a defeat. But it is to be observed, that he did not promise them success; of which the Jews give these reasons: some of them say, that they sought him imperfectly, and therefore he gave them an imperfect answer. So D. Kimchi—they did not ask him if he would favour their enterprise, as they did at the last, when they said, *Shall we go up, or shall we desist?* That is, if we shall not succeed, we will cease the war. And then a clear and full answer is returned, *Go up, for to-morrow I will deliver them into thy hand,* (ver. 28.) But Abarbinel thinks they did not ask counsel in a due place, nor by the proper person; but by some other than Phinehas the high-priest, of whom there is no mention till the third time they went to consult the oracle, (ver. 28.) But a better reason is given in Pirke Eliezer, where they say, God was angry with the Israelites for their neglect of him, in suffering spiritual adultery among them, while they were very earnest to punish carnal. So they make God's answer to have been, when they inquired of him the reason of the miscarriage, *Ye are zealous against the adultery of the tribe of Benjamin, but not against the idol of Micah,* (cap. 38.) And, indeed, they fell early into idolatry after the death of Joshua, and the elders that survived him (as we read in the second chapter of this book), with which, though the Benjamites were defiled as well as others, yet he used them as

scourges to punish the rest; intending, in due time, to take a terrible vengeance on them, both for that and all their other sins.

Ver. 22. *And the people, the men of Israel, encouraged themselves.*] Exhorted one another, not to be disheartened by their loss, but to renew the fight; for they knew they had a good cause, which made them the bolder to hope for victory.

And set their battle again in array, in the place where they put themselves in array the first day.] They were not so superstitious as to imagine the place wherein they fought was unlucky, and that with the change of it they should change their fortune (as they now speak), but confidently resolved to encounter them in the same spot of ground where they were overthrown before. Though there are those that think the ground was not well chosen, and that they were the more easily defeated, because they fought so near Gibeah; whose name imports, that it was situated on high, which gave them greater advantages to annoy the Israelites.

Ver. 23. *And the children of Israel went up, and wept before the Lord until even.*] They seem to have been sensible that this was one cause of their loss, that they had not more solemnly sought the Lord, as they now do; but with greater grief for their loss than for their sin.

And asked counsel of the Lord.] The Targum here uses again the same phrase; Asked counsel *by the Word of the Lord, saying, Shall I again go up to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother?* They seem to imagine that God did not approve of their going to war among themselves, who were all brethren.

And the Lord said, Go up against him.] Here is a leave to go up, but without any promise of success; which they should have desired.

Ver. 24. *And the children of Israel came near against the children of Benjamin the second day.*] Near to Gibeah.

Ver. 25. *And Benjamin went forth against them out of Gibeah the second day, and destroyed down to the ground of the children of Israel eighteen thousand men; all these drew sword.*] They had now destroyed forty thousand, which was a much greater number than the Benjamites had in their whole army.

Ver. 26. *Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up.*] Not only all the warriors, but other people.

And came unto the house of God, and wept, and sat there before the Lord.] Upon the bare ground, as they used to do in very great sorrow.

And fasted that day before the Lord until even.] Afflicted their souls for their sins, which they had not done before; at least, not with such seriousness as now they did.

And offered burnt-offerings.] This had not been done before. That is, they had not made such solemn supplications to God, as now they did by these offerings. (See upon Lev. i. 3.) And in particular, it is evident, that, in ancient time, burnt-offerings were offered as prayers for forgiveness of sins, that so they might obtain God's blessing, (Job i. 5.) And Balaam (who, no doubt, understood the ancient rites of religion) offered these offerings to obtain power from God to help Balak, and destroy the Israelites, (Numb. xxiii. 3. 15, &c.)

And peace-offerings before the Lord.] These were offered to acknowledge benefits received (which ought to accompany our prayers), and some of them also were a kind of prayer to God for the benefits they hoped still to receive. (See upon Lev. vii. 16.)

Ver. 27. *And the children of Israel inquired of the Lord.*] The same expression is again in the Targum, *by the Word of the Lord.*

For the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days.] They had inquired of the Lord before, but not as they ought to have done; and therefore no mention is made till now of the presence of God continuing among them. For, confiding in the justice of their cause, and their vast forces, they seem to have made but slight and perfunctory addresses to God before they undertook the war.

Ver. 28. *And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days.*] To *stand before it,* is as much as to minister unto God before the ark, where he resided. (See upon Deut. x. 8. xviii. 7.) Some think this is here set down to direct us to the time when this war was made, which was not long after the death of Joshua, (as I said before, xix. 1.) otherwise Phinehas must have been now (if this were after the time of the judges) above three hundred years old, which is far beyond the age to which men then lived; for it was above so many years since he did that noble fact mentioned in Numb. xxv. Saidus Batricides, therefore, more justly makes him to have been high-priest only twenty-five years; and the Chron. Alexandr. mentions three other priests between him and Eli, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. i. de Succession. in Pontif. cap. 2.

Saying, Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease?] This is a plainer query than either of the former (as Pet. Martyr here observes); for at first they only asked what tribe should first go up, presuming the war was fit to be made, (ver. 18.) and the second time only, whether God would have them renew the fight, (ver. 23.) But now they ask, whether they should proceed in the war, or desist from any further attempt? that is, saith he, they leave it wholly to God's pleasure; desiring to do no more, if he did not think good to accompany them with his blessing.

And the Lord said, Go up; for to-morrow I will deliver them into thy hand.] Accordingly he condescended to give them a gracious answer, assuring them of a speedy victory.

Ver. 29. *And Israel set liers in wait round about Gibeah.*] This seems to intimate, that, in the former onsets, they had relied too much upon their numbers: but now, though they were encouraged by God himself, they grew more humble and less audacious in their enterprise, laying ambushes secretly in several places on several sides of the city.

Ver. 30. *And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in array against Gibeah, as at other times.*] I suppose they appeared in the same place mentioned ver. 22. as if they intended to renew the fight there. And this was, perhaps, the third day after the last battle; one having been spent in going to Shiloh, and another in fasting and prayer there. Or, by *the third day* may be meant the third day of battle.

Ver. 31. *And the children of Benjamin went out against the people, and were drawn away from the city.*] The children of Israel pretending to avoid fighting, and to flee from them; as we read in the next verse they had agreed.

And they began to smite of the people, and to kill, as at other times.] In the two former battles.

In the highways, of which one goeth up to the house of God.] That is, to Shiloh.

And the other to Gibeah in the fields.] So called, to distinguish it from this Gibeah; which, as I said, stood upon a hill, as the other did in lower ground.

About thirty men of Israel.] Whom they killed in the rear of their army, as they retreated.

Ver. 32. *And the children of Benjamin said, They are smitten down before us, as at the first.*] From this flight they presumed they should get a new victory over such cowards.

But the children of Israel said, Let us flee, and draw them from the city into the highways.] But this was only a stratagem of the Israelites, to draw them away from Gibeah into a more advantageous place of setting upon them.

Ver. 33. *And all the men of Israel.*] All that were posted in a certain place, whither they designed to draw the Benjamites.

Rose up out of their place, and put themselves in array at Baal-Tamar.] The sight of such a body of men appearing unexpectedly ready to encounter them, must needs be a great surprise to the Benjamites, who thought of nothing but pursuing those that run away from them.

And the liers in wait of Israel came forth out of their places.] At the same time, they that were placed in ambush behind them, rose up to assault the city.

Even out of the meadows of Gibeah.] Whether it be translated the *meadows*, or the *plains*, or the *flat ground*, that lay before the city, it is not material; for the sense is the same. (See Lud. de Dieu.)

Ver. 34. *And there came against Gibeah ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel.*] Some look upon these as a detachment (as they now speak) from the main body at Baal-Tamar, who marched to assault the city on one side, while the liers in wait assaulted it on the other.

And the battle was sore; but they knew not that evil was near them.] The Benjamites fought stoutly; but were not sensible of the danger they were in to be destroyed.

Ver. 35. *And the Lord smote Benjamin before Israel: and the children of Israel destroyed of the Benjamites that day twenty and five thousand and a hundred men: all these drew the sword.*] This is a general account of the fight, and of the Benjamites' loss; the particulars of both are related in the following verses.

Ver. 36. *So the children of Benjamin saw that they were smitten.*] There was an apparent overthrow given them by the Israelites: the manner of which is described from the beginning of the action of this day, to the conclusion, in the following part of this chapter.

For the men of Israel gave place to the Benjamites.] Seemed to flee before them; as was before related.

Because they trusted to the liers in wait, which they had set beside Gibeah.] Resolving not to fight till they saw their ambush had executed what was commanded against the city.

Ver. 37. *And the liers in wait hasted, and rushed upon Gibeah.*] Which they did with all speed, as soon as they saw the Benjamites withdrawn a good way from the city; and fell upon the inhabitants on a sudden.

And the liers in wait drew themselves along, and smote all the city with the edge of the sword.] Having entered the city, they spread themselves into the several parts of it, and killed all they found therein.

Ver. 38. *Now there was an appointed sign between the men of Israel and the liers in wait, that they should make a great flame with smoke to rise up out of the city.*] They had agreed beforehand, that when the city was taken by the liers in wait, they should set it on fire; whereby the Israelites might know when it was time to face about, and fight with the Benjamites.

Ver. 39. *And when the men of Israel retired in the battle, Benjamin began to smite and kill of the men of Israel about thirty persons; for they said, Surely they are smitten down before us, as in the first battle.*] Till that sign was given, they retreated as if they were beaten, and lost some men; whereby the Benjamites were deceived into secure hopes of a new victory.

Ver. 40. *But when the flame began to arise out of the city with a pillar of smoke, the Benjamites looked behind them, and, behold, the flame of the city ascended up to heaven.*] It is likely the Israelites shouted when they turned about to fall upon the Benjamites; which made them look back to see what unexpected supplies they had received.

Ver. 41. *And when the men of Israel turned again, the men of Benjamin were amazed.*] At this sudden change from flight to fighting.

For they saw that evil was come upon them.] They being beset by the Israelites both behind and before.

Ver. 42. *Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel.*] Whom they had pursued; but now ran away from them.

Unto the way of the wilderness.] For they were beset on all other sides.

But the battle overtook them.] That is, the men of war pursued them so closely that they could not escape.

And them which came out of the cities they destroyed in the midst of them.] Or, *they that came out of the cities, viz.* of Israel, helped to cut them off.

Ver. 43. *Thus they inclosed the Benjamites round about, and chased them, and trode them down with ease.*] For they made no resistance, but only sought where they might flee for safety.

Over against Gibeah towards the sun-rising.] There is another translation of the latter part of this verse, in the margin of our Bibles, with which I shall not trouble the reader, because it makes no alteration in the sense, which is to shew where the greatest slaughter of them was made.

Ver. 44. *And there fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men.*] In the wilderness, eastward of Gibeah.

All these were men of valour.] Stout soldiers, as appears by the two defeats they had given to the numerous army of the Israelites.

Ver. 45. *And they turned, and fled towards the wilderness, unto the rock of Rimmon.*] The remainder of the army of Benjamin endeavoured to save themselves, by flying to a strong inaccessible place which was in that wilderness.

And they gleaned of them in the highways five thousand men.] They could not flee thither in a body, but scattered up and down in the highway; where they picked up five thousand more, and slew them.

And pursued hard after them to Gidom, and slew two thousand of them.] And following them very close, as far as to a place called Gidom, they killed two thousand more.

Ver. 46. *So all which fell that day of Benjamin were twenty and five thousand men that drew sword.*] For they slew in the first conflict eighteen thousand; and in several parties, as they fled towards the rock Rimmon, seven thousand more, which make up this sum. (See ver. 15.)

All these were men of valour.] Who would not surrender themselves, but chose rather to be killed.

Ver. 47. *But six hundred men turned, and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon.*] These seem to have turned into some nearer way unto the strong hold than the rest: or, being with the foremost, and more nimble than others (for it was accounted a rare quality in a soldier to be swift of foot), got thither before the Israelites could overtake them.

And abode in the rock Rimmon four months.] From whence they durst not adventure to stir, unless it were to fetch provisions; which they might easily do, the rage of the Israelites being in a little time slaked by so great a destruction, and turned into compassion.

Ver. 48. *And the men of Israel turned again upon the children of Benjamin.*] Left their pursuit of them in the wilderness, and turned towards the country of Benjamin.

And smote them with the edge of the sword, as well the men of every city as the beast.] Those beforementioned were *men that drew the sword;* that is, soldiers. But there were a great many husbandmen, and shepherds, and others; whom, in their fury, they also slew.

And all that came to hand.] Even women and children. For they had devoted to destruction all that came not up to Mizpeh, when they were summoned, (xxi. 5.) which none of the Benjamites did; for which reason they slew the men, women, and children, of Jabesh-Gilead, (xxi. 10.)

Also they set on fire all the cities that they came to.] This was as terrible an execution, as if they had been gross idolaters, whom they were commanded thus to punish. (See Deut. xiii. 15, 16.)

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *NOW the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpeh.*] When they first assembled there, before they began the war against Benjamin, (xx. 1, &c.)

Saying, There shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife.] They did not think of destroying the whole tribe when they took this oath; but only obliged themselves not to marry with them, no more than with the seven wicked nations of Canaan, because they refused to punish that villanous fact which had been committed among them, and resolved to defend the malefactors. This made the Israelites to abominate them, as people with whom it was not fit to contract an affinity.

Ver. 2. *And the people came to the house of God.*] Went up to Shiloh.

And abode there till even before God, and lifted up their voices, and wept sore.] Some days after their fury was over, and they coolly considered what they had done in the heat of war, their joy and triumph for their victory was turned into mourning and lamentation for the loss of so many of their brethren; for instead of a feast, they seem to have kept a fast; as they did before the last battle, (xx. 26.)

Ver. 3. *And said, O Lord God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be this day one tribe lacking in Israel?*] This is an usual way of expressing great grief, wherewith they bewail the loss of a whole tribe, which they saw no means how to repair, because there were no women left in the tribe of Benjamin, with whom they in the rock of Rimmon might marry; and they had sworn that none of the other tribes should give their daughters to them; so that they must either marry with strange people, which was against the law, or remain unmarried, whereby the tribe would be extinct. They seem also to lament their own excessive wrath; for why should the women be destroyed with the men, who had no share in the management of public affairs; nor could be supposed guilty of refusing to make satisfaction for the injury done to the Levite's concubine?

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people rose early, and built there an altar.*] There seems to have been no need of this, there being one settled altar at the house of God, according to the law of Moses; and then it was unlawful to build another. But some think it was gone to decay in those bad times; which is very improbable, for they lately offered sacrifices there, (xx. 26.) And the daily sacrifice, no doubt, was continued in Israel, either to the Lord, or the other gods they joined with him. It is more likely, therefore, that they erected a new altar upon this present occasion, when such a multitude of sacrifices were to be offered by all the people of Israel, that the ordinary altar was not sufficient to contain them. Thus Solomon did when he dedicated the temple, 1 Kings viii. 64. And by the direction of God, it was frequently done in other places; and not only at the house of God, as by Samuel, 1 Sam. vii. xi. xiv. and David, 2 Sam. xxiv. and Elijah, 1 Kings xviii.

And offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings.] As they had done before the last battle. For God having made them victorious, they thanked him for it, and prayed him to continue his mercy to them; particularly begging his direction, it is probable, in the present strait wherein they were, about restoring the tribe of Benjamin.

Ver. 5. *And the children of Israel said, Who is there among all the tribes of Israel that came not up with the congregation unto the Lord?*] When summons went out to call them together, under a great penalty upon those who absented themselves. (See xx. 1.)

For they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the Lord to Mizpeh, saying, Surely he shall be put to death.] This great oath was in the nature of a *cherem*, as the Hebrews call it; whereby it was lawful for the *whole congregation* to devote those to destruction, who did not obey public orders in time of war, or great distress. (See upon Lev. xxvii. 29.)

This oath, I take it, was made by the great assembly of their rulers (called *the whole congregation*) before they summoned the people to Mizpeh; as the other oath (mentioned ver. 1.) was made after the people were come thither, upon the Benjamites' refusal to do justice.

Ver. 6. *And the children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said, There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day.*] They still continued to lament their too great severity against Benjamin, and begin to consult how to repair the breach they had made.

Ver. 7. *How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing we have sworn by the Lord.*] The Targum continues its usual style, *by the Word of the Lord.*

That we will not give them of our daughters to wives?] This was the question debated in their common council, (see ver. 16.) how to bring themselves out of this difficulty, into which they were brought by their oath, which, being rashly made, it might be thought ought not to be kept. But they had such a reverence to a solemn oath, that they resolved to do all that was possible to find a way to keep their oath, and yet not to let the Benjamites be without wives.

Ver. 8. *And they said, What one is there of the tribes of Israel that came not up to the Lord to Mizpeh?*] Some in the council proposed to make an inquiry into all their tribes, whether they could find any that had not regarded the other oath they had made, (ver. 5.) And it appeared (as the next words tell us) that, *Behold, there came none to the camp from Jabesh-Gilead to the assembly.*

Ver. 9. *For the people were numbered, and, behold, there were none of the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead there.*] A rare instance of piety, that none of the whole congregation of Israel (who were now numbered) departed home, till they had been at the house of God, to give thanks for the victory he had given them.

Ver. 10. *And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying.*] This was the first result of their consultations.

Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead with the edge of the sword.] This was a city on the other side of Jordan, in the tribe of Manasseh; who were ordered to be slain, as public enemies, because they had not obeyed the order of the whole congregation; and, by refusing to join with them against the Benjamites, had made themselves partakers of their crimes.

With the women and the children.] In this, their anger transported them again beyond reason; for these had not offended. And if it be said they were all under the *cherem*, I do not see how they could justify their sparing all virgins, as we find they did by a public decree; unless we suppose, that God (before whom they now were) dispensed in this case, because of the public necessity.

Ver. 11. *And this is the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man.*] The Hebrew doctors here raise a difficult question, as they account it, how they could know those who had lain with man, from those that had not: D. Kimchi fancies, that all the women were ordered to pass before the ark, and they who were stopped there, and could go no further, were taken for virgins. Others, that they passed before the crown of the high-priest, and they who had known a man, turned yellow or pale. But these are idle conceits, and I will mention no more of them, which are still more extravagant; when the plain account is, That they slew such as were not commonly reputed to be virgins, and saved those that were. (See Wagenseil, in his Confutation of Lipman's Carmen Memoriale, p. 400.)

Ver. 12. *And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead four hundred young virgins, that had not known man by lying with any male; and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh.*] Which shews, that the making them pass before the ark is a foolish conceit; for they were looked upon as virgins before they came to Shiloh, where the ark was.

Which is in the land of Canaan.] Which the city of Jabesh-Gilead was not; but in the land taken from the two kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og.

Ver. 13. *And the whole congregation sent some to speak to the children of Benjamin that were in the rock Rimmon, and to call peaceably to them.*] To give them the public faith, that they might safely return, and be received kindly by the Israelites.

Ver. 14. *And Benjamin came again at that time.*] All the six hundred men, who had saved themselves in that fortress.

And they gave them wives, which they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-Gilead.] Which they thought they might lawfully do, notwithstanding their oath, because it obliged those only who were present in the assembly where it was made, not the absent, as they of Jabesh-Gilead were.

And yet so they sufficed them not.] For still two hundred wanted wives.

Ver. 15. *And the people repented themselves for Benjamin.*] This gave occasion to a new lamentation, whereby they testified to the Benjamites how sorry they were for what had been done.

Because that the Lord had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.] For the punishment of their crime was approved by God, though they executed it with too much severity.

Ver. 16. *Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin?*] This made them enter into a new deliberation in the council of the elders, how to get wives for the two hundred men remaining, since there were none in the tribe of Benjamin, and no more to be found among themselves, without breaking their oath.

Ver. 17. *And they said, There must be an inheritance for them that are escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel.*] These words, *there must be,* are not in the Hebrew, where the words run thus, *The inheritance of them that are escaped, is for Benjamin,* &c. That is, the children of Benjamin must have that part of the country which was given them by the Divine lot for their inheritance, and we must not give it to any other persons; for then a tribe would be lost in Israel. This was all that some in the council said, who proposed no means whereby this tribe should be restored, but only asserted it must be done, leaving others to consider how.

Ver. 18. *Howbeit we may not give them wives of our daughters: for the children of Israel have sworn, saying, Cursed be he that giveth a wife to Benjamin.*] These persons, who spake next in the council, only increased the difficulty, by putting them in mind not to think to help their brethren by breaking their oath.

Ver. 19. *Then they said.*] Then some rose up in the council, after a long debate, and gave the following advice.

Behold, there is a feast of the Lord in Shiloh yearly.] All the three great festivals were to be observed in the place where God settled his habitation, which was now at Shiloh, where all the people assembled to praise God, and to feast one with another. And though some think the feast of the Passover to be here meant, yet it is more commonly, and with more reason, concluded, to be the feast of tabernacles, which was a time of exceeding great joy, because they had

newly gathered their vintage; and then they dwelt in booths, behind which the Benjamites might conveniently lurk, and watch their opportunity to carry away the virgins. This feast of tabernacles, also, was the only season wherein the Jewish virgins were allowed to dance.

In a place which is on the north side of Beth-el.] This is not a description of Shiloh, whose situation was better known than any other (being the place where all Israel went to worship), but of the place where they met to dance, which was not in the city, but in the fields, where they had more liberty, and a freer air.

On the east side of the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah.] This place is thus particularly described, that the Benjamites might know exactly where they might most advantageously lie concealed, to obtain their purpose.

Ver. 20. *Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin.*] They had some authority who made this order; and Josephus calls them the γερουσία, the *senate of the elders*, whom Bertram makes bold to call the Seventy, as if the great Sanhedrin (as the Jews call them) was now settled: but I have shewn elsewhere that is not probable, though it be certain, from ver. 16. that there were some chief persons in every tribe, whom the people obeyed when there was no judge in Israel, who all seem to have been assembled on this occasion.

Saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards.] Which were nigh to the place beforementioned, and, it is likely, encompassed the place where they danced.

Ver. 21. *And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances.*] As they supposed they would, because it was the custom to express their joy in this manner: and though the women were not bound to come up to these solemn feasts, but only the men, yet some devout women did voluntarily frequent them, as we learn from the story of Hannah. And they that lived at Shiloh, and the places adjacent, no doubt, observed such times, as the men did, being near to the house of God; though it must be confessed, that parents were not wont to bring young virgins unto these feasts.

Then come ye out of the vineyards.] When they saw them so engaged.

And catch ye every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh.] By *the daughters of Shiloh*, perhaps, are not meant only such as lived in that city, but thereabouts, who all met on this occasion.

And go ye to the land of Benjamin.] Carry them away to your own country; which they might the more easily do, because men and women did not, in those days, dance together, but women by themselves. Thus they thought they kept their oath, because they did not give them wives, but only suffered them to take them, and to keep them when they had them. The great Grotius endeavours to acquit them of violating their oath by this rule, That the signification of an oath is not to be extended, "ultra receptum loquendi morem," *beyond the received manner of speaking;* therefore they were not perjured, who, when they had sworn not to give wives to the Benjamites, permitted those who were stolen to live with those that carried them away. "Aliud enim est dare; aliud amissum non repetere:" *For it is one thing to give, another not to demand that which is taken away to be restored.* (See lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 13. sect. 5.) But this seems to me to be far from justifying them in this matter; for they did not merely permit them to take these virgins, but advise and direct, nay, order and *command* (as the word is in the foregoing verse), to take and carry them away. And, therefore, what Josephus saith to salve this business is not true, that it was done, οὔτε προτρεπομένων οὔτε κωλυόντων, *the Israelites neither exhorting to it, nor prohibiting it.*

Ver. 22. *And it shall be, when their fathers or their brethren.*] Any of their nearest kindred.

Come unto us to complain.] Desiring them to do them right; which shews they were men of authority.

That we will say unto them, Be favourable unto them for our sake.] Do not prosecute them for what they have done, because it was by our advice, who did not know otherwise how to provide them with wives.

Because we reserved not to each man his wife in the war.] If there be any fault it is ours, whose rage carried the slaughter too far, and left no women to preserve their tribe. They advise them therefore to let their anger cease now (as Josephus speaks), because they had let it break out ἀμέτρως, *beyond all bounds* already.

For ye did not give unto them at this time, that ye should be guilty.] They put them in mind, that if there was any guilt, it was not in them that had kept their oath, and did not give wives to the Benjamites, nor could help their taking them. How Josephus came here to add to this speech, that they said they would tell them, they should have taken care to set a better guard upon their daughters, I cannot imagine; for, at such time of mirth, they always thought themselves secure from danger.

Ver. 23. *And the children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught.*] That is, they carried away two hundred, for so many they wanted. With this is commonly compared, by interpreters, the rape of the Sabine virgins by Romulus: but there was a great deal of difference; for those were strangers, over whom Romulus had no power, and therefore was the cause of a war; but these were Israelites, subject to the authority of the elders, and was done to make peace and quiet. Though the truth is, the elders, in advising this, did wrong to those parents, whose children were taken away without their consent; but this they thought better than directly breaking their oath, or letting the title perish; for the preservation of which they were constrained to do some hard things: but in one thing they did very well, that they permitted them to take wives only *according to their number;* that is, every man a wife, and no more. So that though polygamy was tolerated, yet they did not advise or countenance it; no, not for the more speedy restitution of a tribe. It might happen, some of these young virgins were heiresses, and so their estates would be translated into another tribe: but the Jews say, that law against marrying into another tribe, and inheriting land in another tribe, did not belong to future ages, but only to that wherein the division of the land was made. (See our great Selden, de Success. ad Leges Hebr. cap. 18. where he alleges this very example of it, fol. 59.)

And they went and returned unto their inheritance.] In the land of Benjamin.

And repaired their cities, and dwelt in them.] And tilled the land, as Josephus adds; so that in time this tribe was

restored, εἰς προτέραν εὐδαιμονίαν, *to its former flourishing condition.*

Ver. 24. *And the children of Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe, and to his family; and they went out from thence, every man to his inheritance.*] To look after his own private affairs, the public concerns being now at an end.

Ver. 25. *In those days there was no king in Israel.*] There were elders, (ver. 16.) who had some authority, and there was a high-priest; (xx. 28.) yet for want of a king (as our great primate Usher observes, in his book of the Power of the Prince) all things went to wreck, and were in great confusion: and by a king, as Corn. Bertram observes, (de Rep. Jud. cap. 9.) is meant a supreme governor, such as Moses and Joshua were, and after them the judges: so this word is used Deut. xxxiii. 5. The meaning of these words therefore is, That in those days there was none who had so much power over all the Israelites as to keep them in order, and not only admonish them of their duty, but make all their tribes observe it, by punishing all public wrongs, and all whoredoms, and idolatries: and, consequently, there was no great Sanhedrin, as the Jews speak of in future times, which they would fain find in all ages foregoing.

Every man did that which was right in his own eyes.] For want of such a supreme authority, every tribe, and every city; nay, which is more, every private man (as Bertram there glosses) committed many horrid things, which were not publicly punished. This was the cause of Micah's idolatry, as was noted before, (xvii. 6.) and of the Benjamites' filthiness, (xix. 1.) and now of these enormous things done by all the Israelites, in killing all the Benjamites without distinction, when the law required the children should not suffer for their parents' offence; in binding themselves by such a rash oath, to give them none of their daughters to be their wives; in killing all the women of Jabesh-Gilead, who were not virgins; and now in permitting, nay, ordering this rape, rather than break a rash oath; which should teach men to be thankful for that authority which is over them, to preserve them from such-like enormities: for which end (as the same primate there observes) the custom was, among the ancient Persians, to let the people loose to do what they list, for five days after their king died, that, by the disorders which were then committed, they might see the necessity of having a king to govern them, and when they had one, to be more obedient to him.

THE

BOOK OF RUTH.

THIS book is a kind of appendix to the book of Judges, and a manuduction to the book of Samuel; and therefore fitly placed between them. It hath its title from the person whose story is here principally related; which, indeed, is wonderful. For she left her own country, kindred, and relations, which the Jews say (though I confess without any good proof of it) were not only honourable, but royal, out of her great affection to her mother-in-law, and her religion; to live with her in the land of Israel, in a poor and mean condition. It is very probable, the same person who wrote the book of Judges was the author of this also, *viz.* Samuel; who, by adding this to the end of that book, brought down the history unto his own times; and gave us withal, the genealogy of David, from Pharez the son of Judah, that it might evidently appear Christ sprang out of that tribe, according to Jacob's prophecy, Gen. xlix. 10. but by a gentile woman (that all nations might hope in his mercy), full of faith, and of earnest desire to enter into that family; which made her despise the pride of her own nation, and choose to live despicably among the people of God.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled.*] These words direct us to the time when the things contained in this book fell out, though we cannot certainly tell what judge then ruled. David Ganz will have it to have been in the days of Ibzan, mentioned Judges xii. 8. because he was the only judge born at Beth-lehem; from whence he concludes him to have been the same with Boaz. But that is so weak a reason, that Guil. Vorstius, in his annotations upon him, thinks rather it was in the days of Deborah and Barak. I shall not mention his arguments, there being a great man of our own (the most learned Usher) who places this history in the times preceding; either in the days of Ehud, when the Moabites oppressed Israel, or rather of Shamgar, who succeeded him. Which is the opinion likewise of Du Pin, who takes these things to have been done about twenty-eight years after the death of Joshua. (See Usserii Chronol. Sacra, par. i. cap. 12.)

That there was a famine in the land.] This inclines me to think these things came to pass in the days of Gideon, for that is the only time that we read of a famine in the days of the judges; when the Midianites, Amalekites, and the children of the east, "came and destroyed the increase of the earth, and left no sustenance for Israel, nor for their cattle." (Judg. vi. 3, 4.)

And a certain man of Beth-lehem-Judah.] There were two Beth-lehems, as I have often noted: one in the land of Judah, the other in the tribe of Zebulun; (Josh. xix.

15.) They had their name from the great fruitfulness of the place where they were situated; which argues this famine to have been very sore, that even in these places there was a scarcity of provision.

Went to sojourn in the land of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.] He carried his whole family with him into the neighbouring country of Moab, which was near to the land of Judah, at the end of the salt sea; and it seems had now plenty in it, when the land of Israel was famished.

Ver. 2. *And the name of the man was Elimelech.*] Who, if we may believe many of the Jewish doctors, was a noble and potent person in his country.

And the name of his wife Naomi.] They make her also of a noble extraction, she being (as the Talmudists say in Baba Bathen) the niece of Naasson, prince of the tribe of Judah, and daughter of his brother Salmon.

And the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-Judah.] The name of Ephrathites is given them, because they were not only born, but, I suppose, bred up, and lived in the same place with their father; which, from its great fruitfulness, was called Ephrata, as well as Beth-lehem.

And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.] Settled their habitation in that country, which had not been lawful, unless it had been in a public calamity, or some great private necessity, as Maimonides observes. (See Guil. Schickard, in his Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 3. Theor. 10.)

Ver. 3. *And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons.*] She a widow, and they fatherless. This, Josephus thinks, was after he had been there ten years; but the most, if not all others, think he died a little after he came into this country.

Ver. 4. *And they took them wives of the women of Moab.*] Which was not lawful, unless they had first become proselytes to the Jewish religion; as Aben Ezra concludes they were, from those very words from whence others prove the contrary, ver. 15. where it is said, *Orpah returned unto her people, and unto her gods.* This is a testimony, saith he, that she had been converted to Judaism. But the Chaldee paraphrast is quite of another opinion, and saith they transgressed the commandment of the Lord, by taking to them strange wives. And so the Midrasch upon Ruth, as Buxtorf observes in his book De Sponsalibus et Divortiis, sect. 31.

The name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth.] Who do not seem to have been of such great quality, as the Talmudists fancy, but of the common rank; otherwise they would not have been bestowed upon strangers.

And they dwelt there about ten years.] After their marriage.

Ver. 5. *And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them.*] For their days were cut short, saith the Chaldee paraphrast, because they married strange women; and for the same reason (if it be true) they may be thought to have died without issue, for there is not the least intimation that either of them had any.

And the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.] In a very melancholy condition, being in a country of strangers.

Ver. 6. *Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab.*] She packed up her goods, and made herself ready to leave the country of Moab, and her daughters accompanied her, it being the custom to conduct those whom they loved, some part of their way when they went a long journey.

For she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people, in giving them bread.] They were such near neighbours, that they soon had intelligence in Moab what was done in the land of Israel.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was.*] The necessity which forced her thither no longer remaining.

And her two daughters-in-law with her.] Who loved her as their own mother.

And they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.] This relates unto Naomi, for her daughters had never been there.

Ver. 8. *And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law.*] When they were come to the borders of the country of Moab, she said the following words.

Go, return each to her mother's house.] She desires them to accompany her no further, but go back to their own home. And it seems it was usual in Moab, as well as in Israel, for widows to dwell with their parents. And the women here also had apartments distinct from the men, where the daughters lived with their mothers, as the sons with their father.

The Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead, and with me.] She dismissed them with her blessing, praying God would be as good to them, as they had been good wives to their husbands, and good daughters to her.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord grant that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband.*] And that they might be happily settled in houses of their own, with good husbands; whom she wishes they might long enjoy in peace and quietness.

Then she kissed them.] As was usual, when friends took their leave one of another, or when they met together.

And they lifted up their voice, and wept.] Were all extremely grieved to think of parting.

Ver. 10. *And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.*] They resolved to accompany her to Beth-lehem.

Ver. 11. *And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters; why will you go with me? Are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?*] This shews, that the custom of men's marrying their brother's widow, when he left no issue (which was before the law of Moses, Gen. xxxviii.) was so ancient, that it was derived into other countries, who were not descended from Abraham.

Ver. 12. *Turn again, my daughters, and go your way; for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have a husband also to-night, and should also bear sons,*

Ver. 13. *Would you tarry for them till they were grown? Would you stay from having husbands?*] She persists in the same argument, and presses it home, that she was too old to marry, and they too young not to marry again: but should she marry immediately, and be sure she should have children, nay, sons, it would be unreasonable for them to wait till they were fit to be their husbands.

Nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me very much for your

sakes, that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me.] She would have them by no means think of any such thing; and likewise represents to them, what a mean condition God had reduced her unto, which was the more heavy, because she was able to do nothing for them.

Ver. 14. *And they lifted up their voices, and wept again.*] It gave them great trouble, whether they thought of going with her, or of parting from her.

And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law.] Took her leave of her. The Jews observe three sorts of *kisses*, which were usual and commendable among them, all others being wanton: one in token of reverence to any person's dignity, (1 Sam. x. 1.) A second at the meeting of friends, (Exod. iv. 27.) A third at their parting, of which they give this as an example. Unto which R. Tanchuma adds a fourth, saluting of near relations, (Gen. xxix. 11.) which is, in a manner, the same with the second. Drusius thinks there was another, which he calls the *kiss of prayer*, which was in use in the primitive church, and taken, he thinks, from the Jews: but Buxtorf saith, he can find no such thing in all their books. (See Lex. Talmud. in the word *Nesikah*, fol. 1408.)

But Ruth clave to her.] Would not part from her, but steadfastly resolved to go with her to her own country.

Ver. 15. *And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back to her people, and to her gods.*] The principal of which was Chemosh, as we read Numb. xxi. 29. 1 Kings xi. 7. By this it appears, Orpah was not made a proselyte to the Jewish religion, but still continued to worship the gods of her country. Yet this did not make such a difference in the family (as diverse religions commonly do now), but that she loved her husband entirely, and had a great affection to his mother, even after his death.

Return thou after thy sister-in-law.] This may seem strange, that she should, in effect, press her to go and worship idols; but her intention was to try her, and to persuade her to do nothing rashly, especially not to change her religion, without due consideration, and weighing well her reasons for it: for if she had been led merely by her affection to her, to embrace also her religion, she might have revolted from it when she died, or when she saw her condition very desolate.

Ver. 16. *And Ruth said, Entreat me not to return from following thee: for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge.*] Be content, that is, with any condition in her company.

Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.] This is a resolution to embrace the Jewish religion entirely, so as to be incorporated with the Israelites, as if she had been a native among them.

Ver. 17. *Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.*] She resolves that nothing but death shall make a separation between them, and not that neither, wholly, for she would lie by her in the same sepulchre: and this she confirms with an oath, or solemn imprecation upon herself, that worse might befal her than any thing Naomi could suffer, if she did not faithfully adhere to her: which form of speech we find afterward in many places, (1 Sam. iii. 17. xiv. 44. xx. 13. 2 Sam. iii. 9. 35, &c.)

Ver. 18. *And when she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, she left speaking to her.*] She said not a word more to her of her leaving her, when she saw she had a settled and well-grounded resolution to become a proselyte to the true religion. So the Chaldee paraphrast explains it, representing Naomi as declaring to her at large, that there was a great number of precepts (no less than six hundred and thirteen) to be observed by those who would be of her religion. In particular, the rest of the sabbath, to which they were obliged, and to worship one God alone, &c. Unto all which she answered, *Whatsoever thy people observe, I will do the same, as if I had been one of them from the beginning.*

Ver. 19. *So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem.*] Which shews they were but in a mean condition, having no servant to wait on them, nor an ass to carry them.

And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them; and they said, Is this Naomi?] It being reported by them who knew Naomi that she was returned, all the people ran out of their houses to see her, and beholding a great change in her garb and countenance, they could scarce believe it was she. But the Arabic and Syriac versions take it quite otherwise, *that all the city rejoiced, and said, This is Naomi.* And the LXX. whom they follow, to the same purpose, ἤχησε ἡ πόλις, *the city rang* with the news, and they asked if this were Naomi; for several had never seen her before, or did not remember her, but had only heard much of her.

Ver. 20. *And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara.*] She told them her old name was not suitable to her present condition, which required she should rather be called by a contrary; from whence some gather, that Naomi was not the name given her at first by her parents, but a popular name commonly given her by her neighbours, because of her comely presence and courteous behaviour.

For the Almighty hath dealt bitterly with me.] This is the reason of the new name of Mara, whereby she would be called, which signifies *bitter*. Josephus saith that Naomi, in their language, signifies εὐτυχίαν, *prosperity*, and Mara ὀδύνην, *grief* and *pain*.

Ver. 21. *I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty.*] The Targum takes this to relate unto her husband and children, with whom she went out to the country of Moab, which now were taken away from her; but it is reasonable to extend it to the estate they carried along with them for their support in a strange country, where they lived to spend it all.

Why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?] God is said to *testify* against any persons when he passes sentence upon them, and judges them, by sending afflictions upon them; at which Naomi doth not murmur, but only humbly acknowledges God had inflicted grievous punishments upon her, which she thought testified his displeasure.

Ver. 22. *So Naomi returned, and Ruth her daughter-in-law with her, which returned out of the country of Moab.*] As much as to say, This is a brief account of Naomi's return to her own country, together with her daughter-in-law, who would accompany her.

And they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley-harvest.] The time of their return is also noted, which was about the Passover; for after the offering of the sheaf, mentioned Lev. xxiii. 10, 11. on the second day of unleavened bread, they began to cut barley: whence the

Chaldee paraphrast thus explains these words, *They came to Beth-lehem in the entrance of the Passover; and on that day the children of Israel began to mow the sheaf that was to be waved, which was of barley.*

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth.*] So *gibhor chail* is well translated; for riches make men mighty and powerful. Though the Chaldee would have it signify a man *mighty in the law*, by which they do not mean a man of great wisdom and goodness, but, as that paraphrast explains it upon 1 Chron. iv. 22, 23. after the manner of the Jews (whose heads are full of their Academies and Sanhedrins), he was the *rab* or chief ruler of the academy of wise men at Beth-lehem.

Of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.] Whose ancestors are mentioned in the conclusion of this book, and his descendants also, who lived at Beth-lehem as he did.

Ver. 2. *And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me go into the field, and glean ears of corn.*] This is a great argument of her modesty and dutiful affection to her mother-in-law, that she would not go any whither, no, not to earn something for their support, without her leave.

After him in whose sight I shall find grace.] Either she did not know that poor strangers had a right to glean, as well as the poor of Israel, (Lev. xix. 9, 10.) or out of her great piety she would not challenge it as a right, but as a favour, which she would thankfully acknowledge.

And she said, Go my daughter.] This is a sign of Naomi's low condition, otherwise she would not have suffered her to go and seek for a supply of their needs among the poorest sort of people.

Ver. 3. *And she went, and came.*] Into a field, where she saw some reapers.

And gleaned in the field after the reapers.] Gathered up the scattered ears of corn, which fell from them, and were left behind them.

And her hap was to light on a part of a field belonging to Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.] By the direction of God's good providence (not by any man's guidance) she came into a piece of ground which belonged to the great man beforementioned.

Ver. 4. *And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem.*] It is remarkable, that he followed her into the same field.

And said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee.] Such was the piety of ancient times, that they were wont to pray God to prosper the honest labours of those that they saw employed, who made a return of the like prayers for them, which the gentiles themselves practised, especially in harvest-time, which they would not begin, by putting the sickle into the corn, till Ceres had been invoked, as Virgil informs us in his Georgics, lib. i. ver. 347, 348.

This is the first time that we meet with this religious salutation, *The Lord be with you;* which we afterward find was familiar, and was continued even to our Saviour's days, when the angel saluted the blessed Virgin after this manner, (Luke i. 28.)

Ver. 5. *Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers.*] To see them do their work, and that they had provision fit for them; and, it is likely, to pay them their wages. Josephus calls him ἀγρονόμος, and the Chaldee calls him *rab*, the *master, ruler,* or *governor* of the reapers.

Whose damsel is this?] Either she did not appear, when all the city came to see Naomi; or Boaz did not take so much notice of her, as to know her again.

Ver. 6. *And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab.*] He did not know her name, perhaps, but he describes her as a stranger, that, out of love to her mother-in-law, and her religion, had left her own country, and come to dwell among the Israelites. So the Chaldee paraphrast makes him answer, *She is become a proselyte.*

Ver. 7. *And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.*] What she might have demanded by the law as her right, she asks a courtesy, which, no doubt, moved the man to be the more obliging to such a modest and well-bred woman.

So she came.] That is, he admitted her; for, perhaps, they were not bound to let the poor come immediately into the fields, as soon as the reapers had cut down the corn, and bound it up in sheaves, but when it was carried off. They might choose also, among the poor, whom they thought most worthy, or most necessitous.

And hath continued even from the morning until now.] That is, all the day; for I suppose it was in the afternoon, when the heat of the day was over, that Boaz came to visit his reapers. So the servant describes her as a very diligent woman, who had not intermitted her labour, but only for a little time, to eat, or to rest herself.

That she tarried a little in the house.] The meaning is, she went and stayed awhile in the tent which was pitched in the field, for such as were weary to refresh themselves; or for other necessary occasions. So Aben Ezra expounds the word *house;* in which some think Boaz found her resting herself, and wondering to see a stranger there, inquired who she was.

Ver. 8. *Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter?*] A form of speech calling for attention to what is said.

Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence.] He would not have her go to glean in any other field, nor to stir from thence to supply any of her wants, as appears by what follows.

But abide here fast by my maidens.] Who reaped as well as men (as the next verse shews), and their company was the fittest for her on all accounts. Some think this was a labour too hard for women, and therefore they will have it, that his maidens only came to bring provisions for the men, as Virgil describes Thestylis to have done, in his second Eclogue, ver. 10.

Ver. 9. *Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them.*] Observe their motions, and follow them.

Have I not charged the young men that they touch thee not?] Give thee no molestation, as the Vulgar understands it. And so the word *touch* sometimes signifies, *to do harm to others,* (Psal. cv. 15.) But the Chaldee paraphrast extends it further, that they should *not come near her,* but

keep at a distance from her, and consequently offer no incivility or rudeness to her, which was too common among rustics, especially when they were full of mirth, in harvest and vintage-time.

And when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.] There was excellent water at Beth-lehem, (2 Sam. xxiii. 15.) which either the reapers, or some that attended them, had brought in vessels into the field, to quench their thirst when they were dry.

Ver. 10. *Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground.*] A posture of the greatest reverence and submission, either in civil or religious worship, and was used when they would express their most grateful sense of any favour done them. (See Gen. xxiii. 7. 12. xxvii. 29, &c.)

And said, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?] To *take knowledge* of any person, is to shew kindness, in the Scripture language, and is the effect of *finding grace*, that is, favour with any one; which was the greater in Boaz, because he had never seen her before, or was not acquainted with her.

Ver. 11. *And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath been fully shewn me all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of her husband.*] Naomi had related to some friends, who had informed Boaz at large of her great affection to her mother.

And how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people whom thou knewest not heretofore.] To be a proselyte to their religion (as the Chaldee paraphrast explains it), upon which account the greatest kindness was due to her.

Ver. 12. *The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee.*] He looked upon it as a very high act of faith and virtue in her, to leave all that was dear to her in this world to become a member of their church; which he prays God amply to requite. The Chaldee paraphrast makes her say here, "That she was come from a strange people, who were made unworthy to be admitted into the congregation of the Lord:" but he answers to her, "Our wise men say, That the men of Moab only, not the women, are excluded from our society," &c. (See what I have noted upon Deut. xxiii. 5.)

Of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.] To seek for protection, and commit thyself unto his care and good providence; which was a pious confidence so pleasing to God, that the Chaldee paraphrast makes Boaz say, "In this thy righteousness thou shalt be delivered from the judgment of hell, and thy portion shall be with Sarah, Rebekah, Leah, and Rachel;" that is, she should have an eternal recompence. This phrase, of trusting under the wings of the Divine Majesty, is often used by the Psalmist, Psal. xvii. 8. xxxvi. 7. lvii. 1. lxi. 4. lxii. 7. xci. 4. All which places speak of the *shadow*, or the *covert* of his wings, which seem to be a metaphor taken from the cherubims, who spread their wings from one side of the holy place unto the other, upon which the Divine Majesty sat; which protection and safeguard was represented in the cloud which covered the Israelites in the wilderness, (Numb. xiv. 14.)

Ver. 13. *Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thy handmaid.*] She humbly begs the continuance of his good opinion of her (though she acknowledges herself, in the next words, to be very unworthy of it), for it had given the greatest consolation to her in her desolate condition.

Though I be not like to one of thy handmaidens.] So obscure she means, being a stranger, and of a country under an ill character among them, that she was not equal to one of his meanest servant maids.

Ver. 14. *And Boaz said unto her, At meal-time come thou hither.*] He enlarges his favour to her, and orders her at the time of repast to come and eat among his servants. I cannot devise how the ancient Jews came to apply these words to the kingdom of the Messiah, and to his suffering condition here in this world; but so it is, that the Midrasch, upon this place, makes these words, *Come thou hither*, to signify as much, as *come to thy kingdom;* and the *morsel dipped in vinegar*, to denote *the reproaches and torments of the Messiah:* which is an argument that they expected such a king, as should be exposed to such sufferings as our blessed Saviour endured, who saith, in the Psalmist, "They gave me vinegar to drink," (lxix. 21.) which, perhaps, was the original of this application of Boaz's words to the Messiah, whose coming they longed for, and found it foretold in more places than we are aware of.

And eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar.] Under the name of *bread* is comprehended all the provision which was made for the reapers, with which they had vinegar for sauce, it being very cooling and refreshing in hot seasons, as the time of harvest was. So Pliny observes, lib. xxiii. cap. 1. "Aceto summa vis est in refrigerando;" which cooling quality is taken notice of by Rasi, and others, upon this place.

And she sat beside the reapers.] With the women, that is, who reaped.

And he reached her parched corn.] This seems to signify, that Boaz himself ate with them, or stood by them, to see they were well provided; and took a particular care of her, unto whom he reached some parched corn, which was an usual, and no mean food in those countries, as appears from 2 Sam. xvii. 28. But it may be understood of the servant set over the reapers, (ver. 5.) or some of them, who, observing her modesty, that she did not carve for herself, reached to her some of the provision made for them.

And she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.] There was such plenty (Boaz being a great and a good man), that more was set before them than they could eat; at least, she left some of that which was carved to her. This meal, I suppose, was after the heat of the day was over, in the afternoon; for then they dined, but their best meal was a supper.

Ver. 15. *And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not.*] For that looked something like filching, to come among the sheaves. But Josephus takes the sense to be, that she should be permitted, if she pleased, to cut down corn herself for her own use, which is not likely.

Ver. 16. *And let fall also some of the handfuls on purpose for her, and leave them that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.*] As if she was too bold, in gathering what belonged not to her.

Ver. 17. *So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat*

out that she had gleaned.] It seems they did not in those days carry home their gleanings as they gathered them in the ears, but beat the corn out with a rod; and freeing it from the chaff, carried it away pure, with less trouble than otherwise it would have given them.

And it was about an ephah of barley.] An *ephah* is commonly taken to be about a bushel of our measure. See my notes on Exod. xvi. 36. where it appears, that an *ephah* contained ten omers, and that an omer was sufficient for one person's food for a whole day; therefore Ruth now had gathered as much as would keep her and her mother five days.

Ver. 18. *And she took it up, and went into the city; and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned.*] That is, wondered at the quantity.

And she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved, after she was sufficed.] Josephus thinks this is spoken of Naomi, that set before her daughter-in-law some remainders of the victuals that her neighbours had brought her in Ruth's absence; but it rather signifies Ruth's care of her mother-in-law, whom she had in mind, when she was feasted with the reapers with more than she could eat, (ver. 14.) and therefore brought what she left home for her refreshment.

Ver. 19. *And her mother-in-law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee.*] For she concluded, that without the special favour of some person to her, it had not been possible for her to have made such a day's work.

And she shewed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to-day is Boaz.] Whose near relation to them Ruth did not yet know.

Ver. 20. *And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law, Blessed be he of the Lord.*] Or rather, *Let him be most blessed;* for *lamed* prefixed to Jehovah increases the sense, as in Gen. x. 9. (See there.)

Who hath not left off his kindness to the living, and to the dead.] Continued to be kind to the relicts of Elimelech and his son, as he had been to them when they were alive.

And Naomi said, The man is near of kin to us, one of our next kinsmen.] In the Hebrew, *one of our goels,* to whom of right it belonged to redeem the land, and raise up the name of his dead brother, by marrying his widow, according to the command, Lev. xxv. 25 Deut. xxv. 5. (See upon the fourth chapter of this book, ver. 5.)

Ver. 21. *And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men.*] Though the word *nearim* be of the masculine gender, yet it signifies all young people, and particularly the maidens, to whom he bid her keep close, (ver. 8.) And so both the LXX. and the Chaldee here expound it; and so Naomi, it appears by the next verse, understood it.

Until they have ended all my harvest.] Not only the barley-harvest, in which they were now employed, but the wheat-harvest, which followed it. (See ver. 23.)

Ver. 22. *And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter-in-law, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field.*] She advises her to accept his kindness, and not to be found gleaning in any other field, where she might not be so welcome; and beside, it would look like a distrust of his kindness, if not a despisal of it, should she not do as she was invited.

Ver. 23. *So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean, unto the end of barley-harvest, and of wheat-harvest.*] Which continued many days; and in all that time she found, no doubt, the same kind entertainment, which is not here repeated.

And dwelt with her mother-in-law.] Constantly came home to her at night, after she had done her labour. Or the meaning is, when harvest was ended, she did not gad abroad, but kept her mother company at home; for so the Hebrew, *she sat with her mother-in-law.*

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *THEN Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee.*] A settlement in a house of her own, with a good husband.

That it may be well with thee?] That she might live more comfortably than she could do with her. The Chaldee understands it, as if she confirmed it with an oath, that she would give herself no rest till she had married Ruth.

Ver. 2. *And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast?*] She puts her in mind of what she had told her before, (ii. 20.)

Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the thrashing-floor.] The corn being gathered, thrashed or trodden out, it was next of all winnowed, to separate it from the chaff; and this was commonly done in the evening, when the heat of the day was over, and cool breezes began to rise. (See Gen. iii. 8.)

Ver. 3. *Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee.*] Frequent bathings were necessary in those countries, where they continue to this day for cleanliness; and anointing for smoothing their skin, and making them appear more amiable.

And put thy raiment upon thee.] Her best clothes, as the Vulgar expresses it; or her ornaments, as the Chaldee.

And get thee down to the floor.] To some place near it, where she might see, and observe what was done.

But make not thyself known unto the man.] She would have her conceal herself, so that Boaz might not see her; nor, as some understand it, any man else.

Until he shall have done eating and drinking.] Upon such occasions they made feasts for the labourers in the harvest.

Ver. 4. *And it shall be, when he lieth down, thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie.*] To sleep, after the feast was done, and the guests were gone.

And thou shalt go in.] To the thrashing-floor, where he lay down, as we read ver. 7.

And uncover his feet, and lay thee down.] She was not to lie by his side, for that had been immodest; but at his feet, in the posture of an humble supplicant.

And he will tell thee what thou shalt do.] Either he presently understood her meaning, when she told him who she was, or explained it unto him; and Naomi did not doubt he would comply with her desires, and put her into a legal way of accomplishing them.

Ver. 5. *And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.*] She put a great confidence in her mother's

prudence and piety, and trusted God would give good success to her design; which seemed not very modest, but had no other intentions than what was agreeable to the law of God, and accordingly prospered.

Ver. 6. *And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her.*] Concealed herself, but observed when he came into the thrashing-floor, and where he lay down to sleep.

Ver. 7. *And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry.*] This is a sign he had made a great feast, that he and his reapers, and perhaps other neighbours, might rejoice together; and (as the Targum understands it) praise God for his goodness in giving them plenty, after the famine that had been in the land. For so the words there are, *His heart rejoiced, and he blessed God, who had heard his prayer, and removed the famine from the land of Israel.*

He went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn.] Such was the plain way of living in those ancient times, that the most wealthy persons looked after their own business, both in the field and at home; which made Boaz not go to his house, but lie perhaps upon the straw in the floor where his corn had been winnowed, to secure it from thieves, till it could be laid up in his barns. These thrashing-floors were covered at top to keep off rain, but lay open on all sides, that the wind might come in freely for the winnowing of the corn; which being done, I suppose they were shut up at night with doors fitted to them, that, if any body lay th (r he might be kept warm; and the corn, as I said, be secured from the danger of robbers.

And she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.] Before the doors were shut up, she came in so softly, that none perceived her, and when he was asleep, lay down at his feet, not naked, as it is supposed she was, but in her clothes, which we do not find she put off; for she had no intention of lying with him, but only of giving him an opportunity to consider what the law required of him. This, indeed, looks like a dangerous practice, which her mother-in-law put her upon, exposing both her and him to great temptations, and therefore many have condemned it as a very perilous adventure; but the known piety both of Boaz and Ruth, who were not now in their youthful years (at least Boaz was of a great age), made Naomi confident no sin would be committed by them.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid.*] It is a sign he went to bed sober, though merry, in that he waked so soon, and was not drowsy, but apprehensive of something extraordinary; for going to sleep alone, he perceived another in bed with him. Or, all this is to be ascribed to a Divine motion, which secretly suggested such thoughts to Naomi, and awaked Boaz at a time when men used to sleep most soundly.

And turned himself.] Being much troubled, he turned himself about to feel who or what it was. The Hebrew word *jilaphet*, which we translate *turned himself*, is variously interpreted, and hath an unusual signification put upon it by the Targum, and the Gemara Sanhedrin, (cap. 2. n. 4.) where the modesty and chastity of Boaz is highly extolled, and compared with that of Joseph.

And, behold, a woman lay at his feet.] He perceived by her clothes, and (when she spake) by her voice, that it was a woman.

Ver. 9. *And he said, Who art thou?*] He had no thoughts of abusing her, as the Targum observes, but only inquires who she was, and what her business was there.

And she answered, I am Ruth thy handmaid.] She humbly acknowledges her meanness, and then acquaints him with her business.

Spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid.] In the Hebrew, *Spread thy wing;* which is a phrase importing taking a person into one's protection and tuition; and here not a common one, but such as was matrimonial. Therefore the Chaldee plainly renders it, *Let thy name be called upon thy handmaid, by taking me for thy wife.* See of this phrase upon Deut. xx. 30. From hence, at this day, when two persons are married among the Jews, the man throws the skirt of his *talith* over his spouse, and covers her head with it, as Buxtorf observes in his Synagoga Judaica, cap. 39.

For thou art a near kinsman.] This is the reason of her address to him; which may be rendered, as we translate it in the margin, *one that hath right to redeem;* for so the word *goel* signifies. (See the foregoing chapter, ver. 20.)

Ver. 10. *And he said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter.*] He was so far from being incensed at her boldness, that he wishes her all happiness.

For thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning.] He doth not condemn her as immodest, but commends her true kindness both to her mother and to her husband, which appeared now more than before, by her endeavours to preserve his name and family.

Inasmuch as thou followedst not young men.] This is a high commendation, that she did not seek a husband to satisfy her lust, but to preserve the memory of him who was dead.

Whether poor or rich.] That is, of any sort.

Ver. 11. *And now, my daughter, fear not.*] He would not have her think he had an ill opinion of her because she took this course, or be in doubt whether her motion was acceptable to him; or that, being a stranger and poor, he would despise her.

I will do unto thee all that thou requirest.] That is, take her to be his wife.

For all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.] She had behaved herself so, as to gain a general report of extraordinary virtue, as the Hebrew word *chajil* imports; which signifies one that doth things *strenuously*. The words we translate, *all the city of my people*, in the Hebrew are, *all the gate of my people:* by which we rightly understand, all that entered in at the gate; that is, the whole city. But *the gate* being the place where justice was wont to be administered, the Chaldee paraphrast interprets it, *It is manifest unto all that sit at the gate of the great Sanhedrin of my people, that thou art a just woman*, &c. This shews that Boaz was truly a very excellent person, *who thought great virtue to be a great portion.*

Ver. 12. *And now, it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.*] This, I suppose, was well enough known to Naomi; but she understood his disposition so well, that she thought it would be in vain to make any application unto him.

Ver. 13. *Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part.*] He resolved to make no longer

delay than was absolutely necessary; but promises in the morning she should have right done to herself, and to her deceased husband, either by the next kinsman, or by himself. Some of the Jews take the word *Tob*, which signifies *good*, and we rightly translate *well*, to have been the name of the other kinsman, who was called Tob: and indeed, it is likely, this was a name among that people, from whence, by the addition of *iah* to it (which was very common) came Tobiah. Rasi saith he was the brother of Elimelech; but there is no reason to believe this: for, when it had been proper to mention his name in the next chapter, ver. 1. we only read that Boaz called him *Peloni almoni (Ho, such a one)*, which were words used when they called any one indifferently.

But if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth.] He confirms his promise to her with an oath, that, if the other person refused, he would marry her.

Lie down until the morning.] Having given her this security, and thereby quieted her mind, he bids her take a little bodily rest; which was very needful, having been, no doubt, full of restless and anxious thoughts, what would become of her all the former part of the night.

Ver. 14. *And she lay at his feet until the morning.*] In the same place where she lay down at first; having no other design, but only humbly to implore his justice and kindness unto her deceased husband.

And she rose up before one could know another.] That is, before it was light; so that if any body had seen her, they could not have known who she was.

And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.] Some think he spake this to his servants: but they were not yet stirring; and if they were, they could not discover whether she was man or woman. It was spoken therefore to her, whom he would have to be careful both of her own fame and of his; for, as Josephus here notes, *Great caution is to be used to prevent such rumours, especially when there is some ground for them,* καὶ μάλιστ' ἐπὶ γεγονόσι.

Ver. 15. *Also he said, Bring the veil that thou hast upon thee, and hold it.*] The Hebrew word *mitpacath* is variously interpreted, it signifying any kind of covering. The LXX. translate it περίζωμα, by which they seem to have meant that which we call an *apron*, or a *kirtle*, which is bound about one. The Vulgar, *pallium;* but it is by us most properly rendered *a veil;* which modest women were wont to throw over their heads, to cover their faces.

And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her.] He would not let her go away without some token of his love to her; and nothing was more ready at hand in the thrashing-floor than the corn that lay there. It is not certain how much this *measure* contained, but, no doubt, in the whole, he gave her as much as she could well carry; and was so kind also, as himself to lay it upon her shoulder. Some fancy that this load was too heavy for her, but barley is far lighter than wheat: and the Chaldee paraphrast here saith, "Strength was given her from before the Lord to bear it." And then adds, "Immediately there was a prophecy, that from her should proceed six righteous persons;" each of which should be blessed with *six benedictions;* "David, Daniel, his three companions, and the king Messiah."

And she went into the city.] The Chaldee saith, *Boaz went* into the city; and the Hebrew favours this interpretation. For the word for *went* is in the masculine gender, as in the next words it is in the feminine.

Ver. 16. *And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter?*] It was so early in the morning when she returned home, that Naomi could not well discern who it was that desired the gate might be opened; but perceived it was a woman, whom she calls her daughter, as they used to do in civility, it appears, by Boaz's language, ver. 10. But the Vulgar takes it quite otherwise, that she asked her, *What hast thou done, my daughter?* That is, how hast thou succeeded? And, indeed, the answer favours this; and the Hebrew words will bear it, if *mi* be interpreted not *who*, but *what.*

And she told her all that the man had done to her.] How kindly he had treated her; and what promises he had made her.

Ver. 17. *And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me.*] Then she shewed her the present he made her.

For he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law.] Without some token of my affection. Some imagine barley (which is not so valuable with us as wheat) was too mean a thing to bestow upon her. But they do not consider, that in those countries it was a better sort of corn than it is in these parts of the world; for bread was commonly made of it, and that not only by the poor, but the better sort: of which we find examples, both in the Old Testament and the New. See 2 Sam. xvii. 28. 2 Kings iv. 42. And in the gospel we read of barley-loaves, wherewith Christ fed the multitude; particularly John vi. 9. And, indeed, Pliny saith this was the most ancient food. (Antiquissimum in cibis Hordeum, lib. xviii. Nat. Hist. cap. 7.)

Ver. 18. *Then said she, Sit still, my daughter.*] She bids her trouble herself no farther, for she had done enough.

Until thou know how the matter will fall.] But wait and expect, till she saw the issue: which the Targum expresses piously, in this manner, *Till thou knowest how this matter will be determined from heaven, and wonderfully disposed.*

For the man will not be in rest till he have finished the thing this day.] She knew him so well to be a man of his word, that he would immediately go about the business, according to his promise, (ver. 14.)

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *THEN went Boaz up to the gate.*] Where there was a great concourse of people; and where the judges sat. So the Chaldee paraphrast, *He went to the gate of the house of judgment, where the Sanhedrin sat.* (See my note upon Deut. xvi. 18.)

And sat him down there.] Among the elders, as the forenamed paraphrast will have it: but that is not likely, for he called the other kinsman to come and sit down by him.

And, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by.] See iii. 12.

Unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here.] When they could not think of a man's name, or did not think fit to name it, they used these words, *Peloni almoni;* which Daniel contracts into one word, *Palmoni*, (viii. 13.) and is the same with the Greek ὁ δεῖνα.

And he turned aside, and sat down.] Supposing Boaz had some business with him, he did not go on his way, but turned aside to speak with him. This was about noon (as Josephus saith), when greater multitudes were wont to be assembled in such public places, than at other times of the day.

Ver. 2. *And he took ten men.*] He would have a sufficient number of witnesses of what he did; which, as Maimonides observes, was very necessary in the espousal of a person to one's wife. For, saith he, if it had been enough to do it privately, many would have taken a harlot into their houses for a time, and pretended she was their wife; therefore it was ordained, that, after any man had espoused a woman, he should marry her publicly, after the example of Boaz, of whom we read, *he took ten men*, &c. (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 49.)

Of the elders of the city.] How many elders there were in every city, is not certain; insomuch that Bertram conjectures, there were as many as there were captains of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and tens, in every city. Josephus, indeed, saith, there were seven, (lib. iv. Antiq. cap. 6.) which perhaps was the determinate number in his time. But anciently, one would think, there were more, because here Boaz mentions *ten elders* (who were the same with judges) in the city of Beth-lehem, which made Bertram (de Republ. Judaica, cap. 9.) the more confident, that, as the captains of thousands, &c. in every city, were the elders of that city, so there were as many in every city, of the one as of the other. As for what the Talmudists say, that there were three judges in pecuniary causes, and three-and-twenty in capital, it must belong, if it be true, to later times.

And said, Sit you down here. And they sat down.] To hear the cause he intended to bring before them.

Ver. 3. *And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's.*] He calls him their *brother*, because he was near of kin to them. And he mentions Naomi's return out of the country of Moab, to intimate, that her poverty constrained her to sell her estate, which her husband left her. That interest she might part withal, to supply her necessities, but it could not take away the right of redemption; for, as Mr. Selden observes in his book de Successionibus, cap. 16. both Elimelech the father, and Mahlon the son (unto both which Boaz was of kin), gave this patrimony to their wives before they died (for otherwise they could not have had the possession of it): or rather, the former gave his interest to Naomi, and the latter his to Ruth; which, how it was done, Maimonides shews in his treatise de Donationibus, cap. 6.

Ver. 4. *And I thought to advertise thee of it, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people.*] Before those that sat in the gate of the house of judgment, and before these elders, as the Targum expounds it; that is, the ten elders beforementioned, that the bargain might be firmly made, and the estate legally passed over to him.

If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it; but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know.] That is, understand thy mind in this matter.

For there is none to redeem it besides thee, and I am after thee.] That is, no other kinsman remaining of that family but they two.

And he said, I will redeem it.] For it is likely it lay convenient for him.

Ver. 5. *Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead.*] For they both had an interest in it; but Boaz prudently conceals the name of Ruth, till he had consented to buy the land, and then tells him whom he must take along with it.

To raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.] According to the law mentioned Deut. xxv. 5, &c. as it is commonly interpreted. But it was rather (in Mr. Selden's opinion) the fulfilling of the law, mentioned Lev. xxv. 24, 25. lib. de Successionibus ad Leges Hebr. cap. 15. where he observes, that this phrase, *to raise up the name of the dead*, (which is mentioned also, ver. 10.) is quite different from that mentioned in Deuteronomy; being no more, as R. Solomon notes, (upon iii. 9.) than if he had said, that the name of *her dead husband may be had in remembrance, so that when she came into that field, men might say, This is the wife of Mahlon.* There is a long discourse also in Abarbinel, upon Deut. xxv. to prove, that this doth not belong to that law, of a man's raising up seed to his brother. (See Buxtorf, de Sponsal. et Divortiis, sect. 27.) But if it do, Grotius thinks that law only obliged ὁμοπάτριοι, *brethren by the same father* to marry the brother's widow; but custom, in process of time, obliged the next of kin to do it. (See upon Matt. xxii. 24.)

Ver. 6. *And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar my own inheritance.*] He had a wife and children already, which made him afraid to marry a poor woman with a small parcel of land, which would not provide for the children he might have by her, without diminishing his own inheritance of which he was possessed. To which the Chaldee paraphrast adds, that it might have made great contentions in his family: for thus he makes him speak, *I cannot redeem it* (viz. *on that condition*), *for I have a wife already; and it is not fit for me to bring another into my house, for fear brawling and quarrelling arise in it, and lest I hurt my own inheritance.* In like manner the Midrasch, upon this book, makes him discourse. But Rasi interprets the words, as if the meaning was, that he *should bring a blot upon his posterity*, by marrying a Moabitish woman (which he thought was forbidden by the law), for children are called a heritage, Psal. cxxvii. 3. But in this he acknowledges the man was mistaken, as many of their ancient doctors were, for the law did not forbid the marrying a woman of that country. But the plainest sense is (as Mr. Selden observes), that many inconveniences might arise in his family by this marriage, not only by the disagreement of his wives, but by the difficulty of providing for so many children as she might bring him, and of giving them good education, and by distracting his inheritance, and such-like things; which he prudently considered as good reasons of his refusal. (See lib. i. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 9.)

Redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it.] Which is thus paraphrased by the Targum, *Do thou therefore redeem it, because thou hast no wife, which hinders me from redeeming.*

Ver. 7. *Now this was the manner in former times in Israel, concerning redeeming, and concerning changing.*] There was no law, that we can find, about the following rite, but only custom, which had long prevailed; when men redeemed lands that had been alienated, or gave possession of them to another person.

For to confirm all things.] To make the bargain valid.

A man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour; and this was a testimony in Israel.] A sufficient evidence, that he transferred all his right unto that person to whom he delivered his shoe. It is not easy to give an account of the original of this custom; but the reason of it is plain enough, it being a natural signification that he resigned his interest in the land, by giving him his shoe, wherewith he used to walk in it, to the end that he might enter into it, and take possession of it himself.

The Targum, instead of his *shoe*, hath the *right-hand glove;* it being the custom, perhaps, in his time, to give that in room of the shoe. For it is less troublesome to pull off a glove than a shoe, and deliver it to another, though it hath the same signification; as now the Jews deliver a handkerchief to the same purpose. So R. Solomon Jarchi affirms, *We acquire, or buy, now by a handkerchief, or veil, instead of a shoe.*

Ver. 8. *Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee.*] After the accustomed manner.

So he drew off his shoe.] And gave it Boaz, in token that he parted with all his right to him. The Jewish doctors, indeed, differ very much about this matter; for some say, he that parted with his right to redeem the land pulled off his shoe, and gave it to him that bought it; but others, that he who bought it, gave his shoe to him that sold it. The truth is, the text may be either way understood, but it seems to me most reasonable to think, that he who parted with his right parted with his shoe also. See Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. juxta Disciplin. Hebr. cap. 5. where he observes again, how different this was from the rites used, when one renounced his brother's wife. And Abarbinel looks upon this as a demonstration, that the plucking off the shoe here mentioned, is not the same with that in Deut. xxv. For Ruth doth not here appear to loose his shoe, (as the brother's wife is there ordered to do, ver. 9.) much less did she come to spit in his face; of which there is not one word in this ceremony; which he shews wholly belongs to the sale of lands, or to their redemption, and bringing them back again into the family to which they belonged. This appears from the following words, where mention is made of nothing but of a purchase of Elimelech's estate.

Ver. 9. *And Boaz said unto the elders, and to all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.*] She had the first right in the land after the death of her husband, and her two sons after her; which she entirely parted withal by this contract unto Boaz, to whom the other kinsman had passed over his right of redemption, by the political ceremony of plucking off the shoe.

Ver. 10. *Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife.*] He had her by the right of the same purchase, and did not succeed into the right of a brother, mentioned in Deut. xxv.; for he was not brother to Elimelech, but only a remote kinsman of the same family, as Abarbinel there observes, who could not enjoy the land, while she lived, unless he would take her with it; to whom it belonged as long as she lived, and was to go to her issue when she died.

To raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.] That the parcel of land which he bought, might still be called by the name of Mahlon, whose wife Boaz married.

That the name of the dead be not cut off from his brethren, and from the gate of his place.] That his name hereby might be remembered, not only in his own family, but in all the city of Beth-lehem; for by *the gate of his place*, is meant all the people that entered in at the gate.

Ye are witnesses this day.] Both that he bought the land, and Ruth together with it, at such a time.

Ver. 11. *And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses.*] After this open declaration, there was no need of any instrument in writing to confirm the purchase.

The Lord make the woman that is come into thy house like Rachel and like Leah.] Such a solemn benediction of those who were going to be married was very ancient, as we learn from Gen. xxiv. 60. and the Jews continue it to this day, which, they say, was always in the presence of ten grave persons, at the least, (as Mr. Selden observes, lib. ii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 12.) conformable to this example of Boaz, (ver. 2.) and the eldest of them pronounced the benediction, which was a ratification of what was agreed: so our Mr. Thorndike excellently observes, that the benediction, which we Christians use in marriage, is a sign of the allowance of the church presupposed, as this benediction of Boaz and Ruth presupposeth the act to be allowed by the elders, or consistory, who sat in the gate of Bethlehem. See Rites of the Church in a Christian State, p. 241. In the Review of which he observes, that this seems to be confirmed by the opinion of Epiphanius, who saith, Our Lord was invited to the marriage of Cana in Galilee, that, as a prophet, he might bless the marriage; which, it is certain, the church hath always practised, to signify, that the marriage was approved to be made according to the laws of God. And therefore Conradus Pellicanus (an eminent man at the beginning of the Reformation) here well notes, that *prayers and benedictions are never to be omitted in marriage.*

Like Rachel and Leah.] That is, very fruitful.

Which two did build up the house of Israel.] Were blessed with a numerous posterity. They do not mention the two handmaids, because these were Jacob's principal wives (and Rachel chosen first, as she is here placed), whose servants bare children, not for themselves, but their mistresses. (See Gen. xxx. 3.)

And do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem.] These two are but different names of the same place, where Boaz and Ruth also lived, who seems now to have been present, as Josephus represents her, and who they prayed might be a great example of all virtue in that city.

Ver. 12. *And let thy house be like the house of Pharez (whom Tamar bare unto Judah), of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman.*] Both Boaz, and all the Beth-lehemites, derived their original from Pharez, whose family was very illustrious in Israel; and therefore they could not have wished Boaz a greater blessing, than to have as noble an issue as he was to Judah.

Ver. 13. *So Boaz took Ruth.*] Carried her home to his own house, with all the solemnity, it is likely, which was usual in such cases.

And she was his wife.] And all other rites, which were

observed in those days, being performed, they were completely made man and wife.

And when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son.] A year after their marriage, as Josephus saith

Ver. 14. *And the women said unto Naomi.*] After Ruth's delivery.

Blessed be the Lord, who hath not left thee this day without a kinsman.] The Hebrew name of *goel* (which we translate *kinsman)* properly belonged to Boaz, and not to his son, who was now born: and yet the child seems to be here meant, which made the Arabic translator render it, *hath not left thee without an heir,* who being to succeed his father, what he had done might be ascribed to his son.

That his name may be famous in Israel.] They hoped God would make him an eminent person among them.

Ver. 15. *And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life.*] Such a comfort, as to make her, in some sort, young again.

And a nourisher of thine old age.] And in old age take care of her, and support her.

For thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him.] For they hoped he would inherit his mother's virtues, and particularly her affection to Naomi, which was so surpassing, that it made her a greater blessing to her, than a great many sons of her own body would have been; for they would scarce have been able, out of so small a fortune, to maintain themselves; whereas this being the son of a rich father, could afford her also a plentiful maintenance.

Ver. 16. *And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her own bosom, and became nurse unto it.*] Brought it up with a most tender affection, for his mother gave him suck: and then Naomi took him from her, and educated him as her own child.

Ver. 17. *And the women her neighbours gave it a name.*] It did not belong to the neighbours, but to the father or mother, to name the child; but they advised Naomi to call it by a name suitable to their foregoing discourse. (See Luke i. 39, &c.)

Saying, There is a son born unto Naomi.] Unto whom they had promised such great comfort from this child, that it moved them to desire it might have the following name.

And they called his name Obed.] That is, one who should be very serviceable unto her; for *Obed* signifies δουλεύων, *a servant,* as Josephus interprets it. By which name, saith he, Naomi called the child κατὰ συμβουλίαν γυναικῶν, *by the advice and counsel of the women,* ἐπὶ γηροκομίᾳ αὐτῆς τραφησάμενον, *as one appointed to take care of her in old age.* The Targum thus paraphrases upon this name, *Who served the Lord of the world with a perfect heart;* a piece of which service consisted in giving due honour unto parents. Some make it a question, why this child was not called Mahlon, according to the law which seems to require it? But this hath been answered already, that what Boaz did, was not in obedience to the law in Deut. xxv. for he was not the brother of Mahlon (in which case the child must have borne Mahlon's name), but only a remote kinsman.

He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.] For whose sake this whole book seems to have been written, that it might be certainly known from whom he was descended, the Messiah being to spring from him; which is the reason why the following genealogy is annexed for the conclusion of this book.

Ver. 18. *Now these are the generations of Pharez.*] He begins no higher, because every one knew that Pharez was the grandson of Jacob, and he the son of Isaac, &c.

Pharez begat Hezron.] In the land of Canaan, before they went down into Egypt, as we read Gen. xlvi. 12.

Ver. 19. *And Hezron begat Ram.*] So he is called in 1 Chron. ii. 6. but in the New Testament, Aram, (Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33.)

And Ram begat Amminadab.] These two were born in the land of Egypt, where Amminadab also begat Nahshon.

Ver. 20. *And Amminadab begat Nahshon.*] Who was prince of the children of Judah, when they came out of Egypt, as the author of the book of Chronicles observes, (1 Chron. ii. 10.) which is confirmed by Moses, in his words, Numb. i. 7. vii. 12. x. 14. where we find, that, in the second year after their coming out of Egypt, he was the principal person in his tribe.

And Nahshon begat Salmon.] Who was born in the wilderness, in all probability, and was called also Salma, (1 Chron. ii. 11.)

Ver. 21. *And Salmon begat Boaz.*] Of Rahab, whom he took to be his wife after the taking of Jericho, (Matt. i. 5.)

And Boaz begat Obed.] Here the Targum makes Boaz the same with Ibzan, Judg. xii. 8. (which is altogether improbable), in whose days he saith the famine, spoken of in this book, happened; from which they were delivered by the prayers of Boaz.

Ver. 22. *And Obed begat Jesse.*] Who was also called Nahash, as some think, and is expressly affirmed by the Targum, because Zeruiah and Abigail are said to be David's sisters, 1 Chron. ii. 16. and Abigail is said to be the daughter of Nahash, 2 Sam. xvii. 25. But David's mother, perhaps, had a former husband, whose name was Nahash, by whom she had these daughters.

And Jesse begat David.] Unto whose time there being but four generations; and Salmon, the first of the four, married Rahab, after their entrance into Canaan; from thence, to the fourth year of king Solomon, there being four hundred and forty years, (as appears from 1 Kings vi. 2.) it must necessarily follow, that, unless we suppose some other coming between (for which we have no good warrant), these four persons, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, and Jesse, begat a child in their old age. And, indeed, Boaz supposes himself to be no young man, when he spake those words to Ruth, iii. 10. And Jesse was counted an old man, when David his son was a youth, (1 Sam. xvii. 12.) and therefore, that account which primate Usher hath given of this matter, in his Chronologia Sacra, par. i. cap. 12. seems very reasonable, that taking out of that number of four hundred and forty, the seventy years that David lived, and the four first years of Solomon's reign; then, from their coming into the land of Canaan, to the nativity of David, there remain three hundred sixty and six, as Aben Ezra observes in the conclusion of this book. Now these years may be thus commodiously distributed, if we suppose Rahab to have borne Boaz in the forty-second year after they entered Canaan; and if we assign a hundred and two years before he begat Obed; and a hundred and eleven to Obed, before he begat Jesse; and as many to Jesse before he begat David; which make the just sum of three hundred

sixty and six. And this is nothing strange; for long after this time, we read of very old men who might be capable to beget children at the age now mentioned; particularly Jehoiada the high-priest, who lived a hundred and thirty years, (2 Chron. xxiv. 15.) And in our days, Thomas Parr lived a hundred and fifty-two years, and begat a child when he was a hundred and five years old, as the same primate there observes, and produces a great many other examples of persons who lived to a great age, very vigorous. And, if we could believe the Jewish doctors, they tell us in Juthasm, that Ruth lived to the time of Solomon, and sat with Bath-sheba, when he caused a seat to be set for her at his right hand, (1 Kings ii. 19.) I shall only add, that Bonfrerius hath largely confirmed this opinion of these persons begetting the children here mentioned in their old age, and confuted those who explain this otherways, by supposing three Boazes, and other devices, in his commentary upon the first verse of this book. Only he (and Serrarius, also, who before him was of the same mind) has made a different distribution of the three hundred sixty-six years beforementioned, by supposing other years of their age, wherein these four persons begat their sons; which is not at all material.

I shall end all with the Targum's paraphrase on the last words of this book; which are, *Jesse begat David king of Israel.* Which some Latin copies following, from thence Cardinal Cajetan concludes, this book was written not only after the birth of David, but after he was made king of Israel; that is, after he was anointed by Samuel to be king of Israel.

THE

FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

THE two books which bear the name of SAMUEL, are thought by the Talmudists, in Bava Bathra, to have been composed, in part, by himself (that is, the first twenty-four chapters of the first book), and the rest by Gad and Nathan the prophets. And so Procopius Gazæus saith, that this book is called by the Syrians the Prophecy of Samuel. This opinion the Talmudists found upon the 1 Chron. xxix. 29. where it is said, "Now the acts of David, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer." By which words it is evident, that Samuel did write a book, and that it contained some of the acts of David, which, it is very probable, are these that we read in this book. Besides which there were two other books, written by two other prophets, who continued his history to the end of his life. It must be confessed, indeed, that three distinct books are mentioned in that place of the Chronicles; and we cannot be sure that we have in those two books all that was contained in those three; but only an extract of the substance of them, which perhaps might be made by some following prophet, and divided into two books, which were called by the name of Samuel, because he was the most eminent person of the three, and his acts are here recorded in the first place. Certain it is, this work was extant before the book of the Kings was written; for mention is there made, of what we read in this history, 1 Kings ii. 27. And in the book of the Chronicles several things are repeated, which we find here, in the very same words. It is highly probable, also, that Samuel having undertaken to write the history of the Judges (to which as an appendix he added the book of Ruth), would not leave it imperfect; but added in this book what concerned Eli and himself; who were the last judges of that nation.

See the preface to the book of Judges.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim.*] Either he was born at this place, or lived there (perhaps both), which is called Ramah, ver. 19. of this chapter; and here Ramathaim (in the dual number, as the grammarians speak), because it was built upon two hills, which made it appear like a double city. The title of Zophim seems to be added to it, because it being a high place, there was a watch-tower in it: where, upon occasion, men were set to observe who approached from all parts round about. Or, as St. Jerome, and others think, because here was a school of the prophets, who were wont to seat themselves in such places as were remote from company, and fit for contemplation; which made Elijah and Elisha frequent Mount Carmel. And thus the Chaldee paraphrase translates these words, *There was a man of Ramathaim, a disciple of the prophets.* Who in the book of Ezekiel are called *watchmen:* and from hence some think came the Greek word Σοφός: which was the title of astronomers at the first, who from high places contemplated the stars.

Of Mount Ephraim.] This is added to distinguish this from other places, which had the name of Ramah, in other tribes; particularly in that of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 25.

And his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu.] It appears by this genealogy, that Samuel was a Levite, of the family of the Kohathites; as we read 1 Chron. vi. 33, 34, &c. See Mr. Selden, in his book de Succession. in Pontif. lib. i. cap. 18. where he confutes those who fancy Samuel was a priest, yea, the high-priest, as Petavius himself imagined.

The son of Zuph, an Ephrathite.] Ephrata is the same with Beth-lehem, which was in the tribe of Judah. Therefore Zuph is not called an Ephrathite, because he was descended from the Beth-lehemites (for he was a Levite), but

because he dwelt in that place; as the Levites were dispersed through all the tribes. So Mr. Selden there speaks (from the Hebrew doctors, and the Targum), "Domicilii ratione, non sanguinis;" he is called an Ephrathite, *on the account of his habitation, not of his blood.*

Ver. 2. *And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah,* &c.] Hannah seems to have been his first wife, who proving barren, his earnest desire of children moved him to take another, as Abraham had by Sarah's consent; which was not in those times disallowed by God; who saith himself, that he had given to David many wives, (2 Sam. xii. 8.) which shews it was not then a sin in them to have more than one. (See Grotius, in his book de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. ii. cap. 5. sect. 9, 10.)

Ver. 3. *And the man went up out of his city.*] For though Ramah stood high, yet Shiloh stood higher: and he first went down the hill from Ramah, before he could go up to the other.

Yearly to worship, and to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh.] Where the tabernacle now was, and where all sacrifices were to be offered, and no where else. Hither all the people were bound to resort, at the three great festivals, (Deut. xvi. 16.) and not to appear before the Lord empty. Accordingly Elkanah not only *worshipped* God, with prayers and thanksgivings, but *offered* such sacrifices as were suitable to the festival: and it is likely presented other gifts, according to his ability, as is there required, ver. 17.

And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there.] Ready to offer such sacrifices as were brought to the altar. Whose service Elkanah did not refuse to use, because they were notoriously profane; but reverenced their office, as still priests of the Lord, from whose impure hands he vouchsafed to accept the offerings of pious people.

Ver. 4. *And when the time was that Elkanah offered.*] His peace-offerings, which were wont to accompany others at the great festivals. For instance, at the Passover, they offered not only the paschal lamb, but several other sacrifices, as I noted upon Deut. xvi. 7; all the seven days of unleavened bread having peculiar sacrifices belonging to them. (See Numb. xxviii.) And so there were on the seven days of the feast of tabernacles, (Numb. xxix.) Now, on some of these days, Elkanah offered such sacrifices as might make a feast for his family and friends, according to the law, Deut. xii. 12.

He gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all his sons and daughters.] The males only were bound to appear before God at these festivals; but devout persons were wont to bring their wives also with them, and their daughters as well as sons; especially when they dwelt so near the house of God as Elkanah did, whose habitation at Ramah was not above seven miles from Shiloh. It doth not appear that there was any peculiar court at the tabernacle (as there was afterward at the temple) for the women to worship in by themselves; but they came in with their husbands, and performed their duty close to them.

Portions.] Of that part of the peace-offerings which belonged to him that offered them. Which was the whole, except the fat which belonged to the Lord, and the breast and right shoulder which belonged to the priest. (Lev. vii. 34.) With the rest the sacrificer made a feast for himself, his family, and friends; giving to every one a portion of the sacrifice; whereby they had communion with the Lord, by partaking with him of his sacrifice, which had been offered to him at his altar.

Ver. 5. *But to Hannah he gave a worthy portion.*] Or a double portion; in token of his extraordinary respect and kindness to her.

For he loved Hannah: but the Lord had shut up her womb.] Or, *though the Lord,* &c. Her barrenness did not make him love her less, but rather more; because he would support and comfort her under that affliction.

Ver. 6. *And her adversary also provoked her sore, to make her fret, because the Lord had shut up her womb.*] It added to her affliction, that Peninnah set herself against her; and was wont to twit her with her barrenness, saying, when her husband sent her a more liberal portion of the holy things than she received, Though he be so kind to you, yet you bring him no children, as I do; which gave her great vexation.

Ver. 7. *And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, so she provoked her.*] She constantly took this occasion to upbraid her with her barrenness, when her husband expressed such extraordinary kindness to her.

Therefore she wept, and did not eat.] Her grief was so great, that it made her turn the festival into a fast. So Tertullian understands it, who (in his book de Jejuniis, cap. 7.) saith, God rewarded her fasting and prayers with what she desired, vouchsafing, "inanem cibo ventrem filio implere, et quidem propheta;" *to fill her belly empty of meat with a son, and he a prophet.*

Ver. 8. *Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons?*] In him we have an example of a most excellent husband, who patiently tolerated the insolent humour of Peninnah, and comforted dejected Hannah with words full of tender affection. Which was truly, in St. Peter's language, to dwell with his wives, κατὰ γνῶσιν, *according to knowledge,* as Victorinus Strigelius here observes. We cannot from the last words of this verse conclude (as some of the Hebrew doctors do) that Peninnah had ten sons (which was not such a pleasure to her as the affection he had for Hannah would have been), for they may signify, according to the common language of holy Scripture, only a great many sons.

Ver. 9. *And Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk.*] The kind words of Elkanah seem to have persuaded her to eat and drink cheerfully. In whom we have an example of an excellent wife; who, sensible of her husband's kindness, endeavoured to please him by complying with his desires, and avoiding all things that might be grievous to him.

Now Eli the priest.] He was both the high-priest and also the judge at this time of the Israelites, being born in the end of Gideon's judicature, and died in the middle of the Philistines' tyranny over the Israelites, twenty years before the great victory Samuel got over them at Eben-ezer, as Sir John Marsham computes, who rightly observes, that whensoever his judicature began (which is not recorded) it consisted only in hearing and judging causes by his pontifical authority. For he wrought no deliverance for Israel

that we read of: but was such a judge as Samuel's sons were, (viii. 1.) and as Samuel himself was after Saul began to reign. When all the days of his life he continued to go about the country and do justice, which he administered also when he came home at his own house, (vii. 15. 17.)

Sat upon a seat by a post.] The Hebrew word is *upon a throne;* it being a seat raised up to some height to make him conspicuous to all that entered into the house of God, where he sat at the door of it. The Jews, in Seder Olam, and in Jalkut, have a conceit that Eli was this very day, when Hannah came to pray, made judge of Israel: so that from hence they date the beginning of his judicature. But this is a weak conjecture, built merely on this phrase, *sat on his seat.* Where, as Abarbinel observes, he sat as the high-priest, and not as a judge. And this was no new thing, but according to custom, that he might preserve good order there; give his advice to those who had occasion to consult him; resolve their doubts, and give them his blessing. And he thinks that Samuel was born ten years or more before the judicature of Eli.

In the temple of the Lord.] It is not unusual to call the tabernacle by the name of a temple: as the temple, when it was built, is called a tabernacle. (See Jer. x. 20. Lament. ii. 6.) Yet the Talmudists, from the Hebrew word *hachil* (which is here used), say, that when the tabernacle was removed from Gilgal to Shiloh, the sides of it were built of stone, and covered at the top with curtains, having no solid roof. And from hence they fancy it is called *beth,* the *house of the Lord,* (ver. 24.) which Maimonides interprets *a house of stone.* But there is no certainty of this: for such words as these have a larger sense. And indeed we are taught as much by the 1 Kings iii. 2. where it is expressly said, that there was *no house built unto the name of the Lord,* until the days of Solomon: and 2 Sam. vii. 6. where Nathan speaks in God's name to David, in these words, " I have not dwelt in a house since I came out of Egypt." (See L'Empereur, in his preface to Codex Middoth.)

From the first words of this verse, it appears that Hannah rose up to go to the temple at the time of the evening sacrifice, for it was after they had dined.

Ver. 10. *And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore.*] Her grief returned when she was alone, and thought of her barrenness; which made her pray with great vehemence, and many tears, for a child.

Ver. 11. *And she vowed a vow.*] As was usual, when they earnestly longed to obtain what they sought with prayers and tears.

And said, O Lord, if thou wilt indeed look upon the afflictions of thy handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thy handmaid.] These are three various expressions of the same thing: whereby she declares, though with great humility, how much she was concerned, to obtain her request, of being delivered from her barrenness: for that is the meaning of *looking upon her affliction,* and *remembering her.* (See Gen. viii. 1. Exod. iii. 7. 16.)

But wilt give unto thy handmaid a man-child.] She thrice calls herself his handmaid, out of a profound sense of her meanness and his majesty: and desires a man-child, because only such could wait upon the Lord in the service of the tabernacle; as she intended her son should do, if God bestowed one upon her.

Then will I give unto the Lord all the days of his life.] The Levites were not bound to serve at the tabernacle until they were twenty-five years old; and not after they were fifty: but she devoted him to the ministry there from his childhood, as long as he lived.

And there shall no razor come upon his head.] She vowed he should be a Nazarite; part of whose description this is, (Numb. vi. 5.) And so the best of the Jewish doctors interpret it; for the exposition of the Chaldee paraphrast is very forced: but from hence the opinion of the Talmudists is confuted, who say, (in the Mischna, in the title Sota, cap. 3.) that a man might devote his child to be a Nazarite before he was of age; but a woman could not. Nor doth any of them take notice of this example of Hannah; which hath made some think, that possibly they looked upon this as done by an extraordinary motion, and therefore not to be a rule to others; especially since she did it before her child was born. (See J. Wagenseil, in his learned notes upon that book, p. 448.)

Ver. 12. *And it came to pass, that as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth.*] The inward anguish of her soul, it is probable, made the motions of her mouth and her countenance very different from what is usual.

Ver. 13. *Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard; therefore Eli thought she had been drunk.*] Hearing her say nothing, but only seeing her lips move a long time; with such gestures, it is likely, of her body, hands, and eyes, as argued a very great commotion; he took her to be disordered with the wine she had drunk liberally at the forenamed feast. For it is apt to make one talk much, and the great agony wherein she was might something distort her face.

Ver. 14. *And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee.*] He seems to bid her go to bed and sleep; and then come and pray to God.

Ver. 15. *And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord; I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: and have drunk neither wine nor strong drink.*] Of the difference between *wine* and *strong drink,* see Numb. vi. 3. 5. Great affliction of spirit makes one distaste meat and drink

But have poured out my soul before the Lord.] An usual expression for sincere and fervent prayer.

Ver. 16. *Account not thy handmaid for a daughter of Belial.*] This is a phrase signifying the most lewd persons, that regarded neither God nor men. (See Deut. xiii. 13.)

For out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.] The accusation against her being very foul, she purgeth herself from it very earnestly; but in a modest manner, and with due respect to the office which Eli held in the church.

Ver. 17. *And Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of heaven grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him.*] Her sober and respectful answer convinced the old man of his error; and moved him to dismiss her with his blessing, and a solemn prayer to God that he would grant her request.

Ver. 18. *And she said, Let thy handmaid find grace in thy sight.*] For which she returned him most humble thanks, and desired the continuance of his prayers.

So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.] She departed from the temple

with such satisfaction and assurance her own prayers and his would be heard, that there remained no more any token of sorrow and grief; but she ate her meat, and looked cheerfully.

Ver. 19. *And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the Lord, and returned, and came to their house in Ramah.*] I suppose she acquainted Elkanah with her prayer and with Eli's blessing: and it is likely that he now made a solemn vow to God if he would be pleased to fulfil her petition. (See ver. 21.)

And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the Lord remembered her.] According to her prayer, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, when the time was come about, after Hannah conceived.*] The usual time that women go with child before they be delivered.

That she bare a son, and called his name Samuel.] Sometimes fathers, and sometimes mothers, gave the name to their children. (See upon Gen. iv. 26.)

Saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord.] This was the reason of his name: which she gave him, that he as well as she might keep in mind the interest God had in him; from whom she obtained him by ardent prayers. For *Saulmeel* (which is contracted into Samuel) signifies *asked of God*, as we translate this word in the margin of our Bibles. He was born (as Sir John Marsham computes with great probability) in the time when the Philistines domineered over Israel for forty years together, (see Judges x. 7. xiii. 1.) but in what year cannot certainly be determined.

Ver. 21. *And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice.*] At the feast of the Passover, or some other of the three great festivals. He is a great example of piety; who carried his whole family to worship God with him at those solemn times which the law enjoined.

And his vow.] Which it is likely he made, either when he saw his wife was with child, or, perhaps, before, when she told him what hope she had her prayer would be heard, and he worshipped God, (ver. 19.)

Ver. 22. *But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up till the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever.*] She was not bound by the law to go up with her husband: and, therefore, though she was wont to go, she resolved, as became a prudent woman, to stay at home till the child was strong enough, not only to accompany her, but to be left at the house of the Lord, and be capable of being instructed in the service of God.

Ver. 23. *And Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good: tarry until thou hast weaned him.*] Interpreters here note the sweet agreement that ought to be (according to the example of this happy couple) between husband and wife.

Only the Lord establish his word.] We do not read of any thing the Lord had spoken about this child: unless Elkanah looked upon what Eli had said as spoken by God, because he was God's high-priest. Or the Hebrew words may be translated, *the Lord establish his work; i. e.* perfect what he hath begun, by making the child grow till he was fit for his service. For the word *dabar* signifies any *matter* or *thing* as well as *word*.

So the woman abode.] At home.

And gave the child suck till she weaned him.] She herself was his nurse, and suckled him, after the example of Sarah. (See upon Gen. xxi. 7.) And, it is likely, continued to do so (out of her great affection to him) several years. Some think three; but it is not improbable six or seven, as Lyra conjectures. And so long I remember one to have sucked, in the place where I was born.

Ver. 24. *And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine.*] As they were not to appear before the Lord empty; so, upon this occasion, they brought an ample offering to him; to testify their gratitude to the Divine Majesty. And it is highly probable, that one of these bullocks was wholly offered to God as a burnt-offering, and the other two were peace-offerings; or, as some will have it, one a sin-offering, and the other a peace-offering. Which had a large measure of flour for a meat-offering, and of wine also attending it; that they might rejoice together before the Lord, when they feasted with him upon the peace-offering.

And brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh: and the child was young.] In the Hebrew the words are, *hanaar-naar*, the child was a child, *i. e.* wholly at their disposal.

Ver. 25. *And they slew the bullock, and brought the child to Eli.*] They first performed their duty to God, by offering a whole burnt-offering to him; reserving the rest, I suppose, till they had acquainted Eli with God's goodness to them, that they might all rejoice together.

Ver. 26. *And she said, Oh, my lord! as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord.*] Many take these words, *as thy soul liveth*, for an oath; whereby she assures him, that, as certain as he was alive, she was the person whom he saw in that place praying, and took for a distempered woman. But others (particularly D. Kimchi) think there is nothing of an oath in them, they being only a form of well-wishing to him; as if she said, I wish thee a long life, that thou mayest educate my son.

Ver. 27. *For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him.*] She had told him nothing of what she prayed for, when he reproved her, but only in general, that she was extremely afflicted for want of something, which she earnestly begged of God. But now she acquaints him with it, and with her vow she made, if God granted her desire; which she was now come to accomplish.

Ver. 28. *And therefore also I have lent him unto the Lord.*] Or, *restored* him to the Lord (as the Targum expounds it), from whose gift she received him.

As long as he liveth he shall be lent unto the Lord.] Or, as the words may be translated, *all the days that he shall be desired for the Lord.* That is, as long as God should think fit to employ him in his own house; which was till he made him a judge, (vii. 15.) Then he was not fixed at Shiloh, but went about the country to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh; and then settled at his own house in Ramah, as we read there, ver. 17.

And he worshipped the Lord there.] This shews that Elkanah was with Hannah, and gave his consent to this dedication of their child, to such service as God should think fit to employ him in: which he humbly prayed God to accept.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND Hannah prayed, and said.*] Hymns are wont to be comprehended under the name of *prayers,* (Psal. lxxi. 20.) to the composition of which holy souls were sometimes raised by Divine inspiration, in their devout meditations upon the extraordinary goodness of God to them. And, indeed, it was the most ancient way, as I have observed heretofore, of preserving the memory of things to posterity: poets being more ancient than historians, or orators, as Lactantius observes, lib. vii. Div. Instit. cap. 23. Nor were the western people less famous for this than the eastern: the Germans, for instance, having their most ancient annals in verse; as Hermannus Conringius hath shewn out of a great many authors, in his preface to Corn. Tacitus, de Germanorum Moribus.

My heart rejoiceth in the Lord.] She was acted by the same spirit which moved St. James to give this direction, chap. v. ver. 13. "Is any afflicted, let him pray, (as she did, i. 10.) is any merry, let him sing psalms," as she now doth: for she was lately extremely sad and sorrowful, and could not eat: but now, by the goodness of God, is filled with joy; which made her burst out into this thanksgiving.

My horn is exalted in the Lord.] She who was bowed down and dejected, now lifts up her head and triumphs: for *exalting the horn* signifies the height of glory.

My mouth is enlarged over my enemy.] She was now furnished with a full answer to Peninnah, who upbraided her with her sterility.

Because I rejoice in thy salvation.] All this joy and triumph arose from the goodness of God to her; who had delivered her from the reproach of barrenness: which raised her, as appears by the sequel, to the expectation of far greater things.

Ver. 2. *There is none holy as the Lord.*] The *holiness* of God signifies his peerless perfections; as Mr. Mede hath shewn in many parts of his works. (See p. 11.)

For there is none besides thee.] Which perfections are peculiar to himself: for though the Scripture vouchsafeth sometimes unto the gentile *demons* the name of *gods,* yet it never calls them *holy ones.*

Neither is there any rock like our Rock.] See upon Deut. xxxii. 31.

Ver. 3. *Talk no more so exceeding proudly.*] This was good advice to Peninnah, and such-like persons; not to insult over others who are not so happy as themselves.

Let not arrogance come out of your mouth.] Or, as the Targum interprets it, *forbear reproaches.* For so the Hebrew word *atat* signifies, *hard words.*

For the Lord is a God of knowledge.] None knows what he intends, who perhaps will exalt those who are now abased. Or, he knows how to bring to pass such things as men think to be impossible.

And by him acts are weighed.] Or, *by him works are prepared:* even when there is no disposition in nature to them.

Ver. 4. *The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girt with strength.*] Now the great sense she had of God's power branches out itself into an humble acknowledgment of this glorious attribute, in divers instances. And, first, in vanquishing the most victorious: for *bows* were a principal part of warriors' weapons, (Psal. xliv. 6.) and their *girdles* being a principal part of the military habit, is elegantly translated to signify strength and warlike prowess. Whence Virgil calls feeble persons unmeet for war, *discinctos, ungirt,* as Servius observes. (See Bochart, in Canaan, lib. ii. cap. 13.) Whence the apostle, among the spiritual armour, exhorts the Ephesians to be *girt about with truth,* (Ephes. vi.) For to *gird* and to *arm,* to be *girt* and to be *armed,* are the same thing in Greek and Latin authors. (See also Psal. xviii. 39. lxv. 6.)

Ver. 5. *They that were full have hired themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased.*] To complain of hunger. This vicissitude of human affairs, especially the sudden turns there are sometimes, from a great height of prosperity to a very low condition, and on the contrary, are very wonderful, and seriously to be pondered; that no man may be proud, nor any man despair. The instances of these in history are to be found in a great many authors, besides what our own experience may furnish us withal.

So that the barren hath born seven.] That is, many children. She reflects upon the great change which God had made in her own condition. And Procopius Gazæus notes, that here, "Hymno prophetiam admiscet;" *she mingles prophecy with her hymn of praise,* and foretells the fecundity of the church: for the number *seven* denotes a multitude.

And she that hath many children is waxen feeble.] The Jews fancy, that every time Hannah bare a child, two of Peninnah's children died. But this seems rather to have a general respect to those that have been fertile, and grow barren when God pleaseth.

Ver. 6. *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.*] The same thing is repeated in different words; and the sense is, the power of life and death is in the hands of God: whom he pleases he takes out of the world, and whom he pleases he continues in it; raising men up even from the grave, when they were dropping into it. (See Deut. xxxii. 39. Psal. xxx. 3.)

Ver. 7. *The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and raiseth up.*] She acknowledgeth the power and wisdom of God, in making men of different eruditions; some poor, and others rich; yea, in making the same men who were very poor to become very rich; and they who were mean and contemptible become great and eminent. Theodoret treats excellently of the wise providence of God, in not making men all alike; but some of a lower, some of a higher rank: Oration vi. against the heathens.

Ver. 8. *He raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill; to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.*] Instances of this kind in the Holy Scriptures are Joseph and Daniel; the one a prisoner, the other a captive: but preferred to the highest dignity, by the kings of Egypt and Babylon. And in these later ages, Victorinus Strigelius observes a memorable instance of the truth of these words, in Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary; who was brought out of prison, and set on the throne, not by sedition, nor by civil war; but by the unanimous consent of all the estates of the realm, in grateful memory of the benefits they had received by his father, the great Hunniades.

For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them.] These words contain the reason of all that precedes in the five foregoing verses: for the very earth being founded, upheld, and supported by the

Lord, no wonder that all the inhabitants of it are in his power, to dispose of them as he thinks good.

Ver. 9. *He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness.*] Pious affections in those days rose up, many times, to the height of prophecy: whereby God continued in that nation his true religion, in the midst of their idolatrous inclinations. Accordingly, here Hannah begins to predict the deliverances of the Israelites (who were God's *holy ones*, or *saints*, by being peculiarly separated to him and his service) from the hand of the Philistines, and other enemies: who she prophesies should stumble and fall, as men do in the dark, when the Israelites, by God's direction, succeeded in their enterprises.

For by strength shall no man prevail.] As appeared afterward in Goliath.

Ver. 10. *The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them.*] As he did literally when Samuel fought with the Philistines, (vii. 10.) and when David also vanquished them, (Psal. xviii. 13.) Procopius Gazæus applies this to the assumption of Christ, with the mission of the Holy Ghost, and the happy success of the apostles' preaching, and to Christ's second coming.

The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth.] As he did when he subdued the Philistines, who lived in the extremity of the country of Judea westward: and now sorely oppressed the Israelites.

And he shall give strength unto his King.] That is, to David. Of whom she prophesies; who was most properly God's king, whom he appointed in the room of Saul; who by his disobedience forfeited his kingdom and was rejected by God.

And exalt the horn of his Anointed.] God commanded Saul to be anointed by Samuel, x. 1. but it was upon condition, which he not fulfilling, the same person was commanded to anoint David, xv. 29. xvi. 1. Upon which the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and rested on David, xvi. 13, 14. Whom God so wonderfully protected, that all the subtlety and power of Saul could not destroy him: and when he came to the throne, God wonderfully *exalted him*, as she here speaks: by enlarging his dominion very far, and making him such a glorious prince (higher than the kings of the earth), that he was the most eminent type of the great King of all, our Lord Christ, to whom these words in the fullest sense belong. "For who doth not see, (saith St. Austin, in his seventeenth book, de Civitate Dei, cap. 4.) that the spirit of this woman (whose name was Anna, which signifies *grace*) prophesied of the Christian religion, the city of God, whose king and founder is Christ; and of the grace of God, from which the proud are estranged, that they may fall; but the humble are filled with it, that they may rise:" which is the chief import of this hymn. And, indeed, this is the first time that the name of Messiah (or *Anointed*) is found in Scripture: there being no such word in all the foregoing books of Moses, Joshua, the Judges, or Ruth. And therefore it is the more to be remarked: this prophetess being the first that mentions the Messiah, in this song: with which the song of the blessed Virgin hath such a perfect resemblance, that one cannot but think Hannah had a respect to something higher than the quarrel between her and Peninnah, and the son which God had given her, or the great acts of David: for the words are too magnificent to be confined to so low a sense. And therefore Kimchi upon these words ingenuously acknowledges the King here mentioned is the Messiah, of whom Hannah spake either by prophecy or tradition. For there was a tradition among them, that there should a great King arise in Israel: and she seals up this song, with the mention of that King, who should save them from all their enemies.

It may be thus paraphrased:

1. Great is the goodness of God to me, which makes my heart leap for joy; great is the honour he hath done me: so that my mouth, which had nothing to answer when my enemy upbraided me, now boasts of the favour of God to me, who to my exceeding great joy hath bestowed a son upon me.

2. For the Lord is incomparable in all perfections, which none have but himself alone: whose excellences are so transcendent, that there is none in whom we can find so secure a sanctuary in all our troubles as we have in him.

3. Do not vaunt and brag therefore any more on this fashion, nor speak contemptuously of others: for as nothing can be hid from him, so he knows how to bring to pass the strangest things: nor can any man hinder it (let their pride, and confidence, and power, be ever so great), but his counsel shall stand.

4. The strength of armed forces is good for nothing, if not prospered by him: who brings down those who were mighty conquerors; and advances those who were their miserable slaves.

5. The rich have been seen to fall into such decay, as to want their necessary food: and poor starved wretches have come to great plenty. As likewise barren women, as I, have had a numerous offspring, and they that had many children lost them all.

6. No man can keep himself alive when God calls him away from hence: and he unexpectedly restores men to life, when they were in the very jaws of death.

7. It is according as he orders, that some men are rich, others poor: and the very same men who now are in a low condition, he raises up to greatness and splendour; and, on the contrary, abaseth those that walk in pride.

8. They that are in the most sordid plight he advances, when he pleases, to the most glorious state: for what can hinder him from shaking the very foundations of the earth, and overturning all things, which are upheld and supported only by his almighty power?

9. The best way therefore is, by piety, to secure the favour of God; who, by preserving all his faithful servants from falling, will fill their mouths with his praises: but confound the wicked, who now boast themselves, when with amazement they are thrown down into a miserable condition. For let not any man be so vain as to imagine, that by his strength he can maintain himself in his high station; or keep down good men from rising up to glory.

10. They that oppose God shall be broken in pieces; he will strike a terror into them, and make them fall flat before him. For it is he that is the Judge of the world; and there is no corner of it where men can hide themselves from his sentence. He will advance the king whom he shall choose, even the Lord Christ; and make him great in spite of all opposers: who shall not be able to hinder his exaltation, or the growth and increase of his kingdom.—

Ver. 11. *And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house.*] When the festival was ended.

And the child did minister unto the Lord.] As soon as he was capable.

Before Eli the priest.] According as he appointed him.

Ver. 12. *Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial.*] Very wicked men, (see Deut. xiii. 13.) being impious, covetous, guilty of violence, and filthy lusts.

They knew not the Lord.] They were not professed atheists; but they minded not the Divine service, nor took any care to do God honour; being ignorant (as Kimchi expounds it) of his law.

Ver. 13. *And the priest's custom was, when any man offered sacrifice.*] Brought his peace-offerings to be offered at the altar.

That the priest's servant came, while the flesh was seething, with a flesh-hook of three teeth in his hand.] The person who brought the peace-offerings having the largest share in these sacrifices, there were certain rooms, when the temple was built, both in the court of the women, and of the men, wherein they had liberty to boil the flesh, in order to feast with God at his own house: which Christians afterward imitated in their *feasts of charity*. The like rooms there were at the tabernacle, in the outward court of it. (See L'Empereur, in his Annot. upon Codex Middoth, cap. 2. sect. 6. p. 80, 81.)

Ver. 14. *And he struck it into the pan, or kettle, or cauldron, or pot.*] There were several sorts of vessels for this use; according as the flesh to be boiled was little or much.

All that the flesh-hook brought up the priest took for himself.] This was a new custom, which they profanely introduced: for, not content with the right shoulder and the breast, which were theirs by the law, (Lev. vii. 32.) they would take what they pleased of the rest, that belonged to the people: at least, so much as a fork with three teeth brought up, when they struck it into the pot where the flesh was boiling.

So they did in Shiloh, unto all the Israelites that came thither.] This aggravated their crime, that they made a constant practice of it: and did not only on some occasions commit such wickedness.

Ver. 15. *And before they burnt the fat.*] Which entirely belonged unto God, (Lev. ii. 16. vii. 23. 25.)

The priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest.] This was a high contempt of God, to demand their part before God had his. For the noblest guests at feasts were always served first.

For he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.] The flesh-hook did not always bring up the best; therefore, as soon as the sacrifice was cut up, they came and took the choicest pieces.

Ver. 16. *And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth: then he would answer, Nay; but thou shalt give it me now: if not, I will take it by force.*] This argues the very height of imperious impiety, that such submissive language should not prevail with them to have so much respect to God, as to let him have his portion in the first place: though they offered the priest more than his share, after God was served. None knows to what pitch of wickedness a man may arrive, when once the sense of God is extinguished, and gone out of his mind.

Ver. 17. *Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord.*] Having many grievous aggravations.

For men abhorred the offering of the Lord.] Nothing brings religion so much into the contempt of the people, as the open profaneness of those who are the ministers of it.

Ver. 18. *But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child.*] Though very young, yet he carefully performed such offices at the tabernacle as he was capable to discharge: and did not follow the bad example of his familiars and domestics, as we may suppose Hophni and Phinehas were.

Girded with a linen ephod.] We do not read any where of any peculiar garments appointed for the Levites in their ministration, but only for the priests; and this was none of them, as appears from Exod. xxviii. 40, 41. And therefore the ephod which the priests are said to wear in chap. xxii. of this book, ver. 18. were quite different from the ephod ordered in Exod. xxviii. for Aaron the high-priest alone: which had a curious girdle belonging to it, and the breast-plate with precious stones inseparable from it; and was wrought with gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, (Exod. xxviii. 6.) But the ephod which the priests, or any other persons are said to wear, is (for distinction's sake) always called *ephod bad*, an *ephod made of fine linen:* which was not a sacred but an honorary vestment (as I may call it), being a short garment hanging upon the shoulders down to the middle of the back, but without any girdle or curious work in it; which having some likeness to that of the high-priest's, was used by the inferior priests to make them more respected as special ministers of God; and by other great persons upon some solemn occasion, as David did, (2 Sam. vi. 24.) and Eli (seeing such a great appearance of God in him) ordered Samuel to do; though it was not a habit appertaining to the Levites, much less to him who was not of age, according to the exact rules of the law, to serve in the tabernacle. Thus Kimchi and Ralbag understand it. And the LXX. in 2 Sam. vi. 15. translate it στολὴν ἑξαλλον, an *eximious garment*. (See Jo. Braunius de Vest. Sacerd. lib. ii. cap. 6. p. 602.)

It seems no improbable conjecture of Fortunatus Scacchus, that from hence was derived the *latus clavus* among the Romans, which was a vestment proper to their senators and presidents. It was first brought from the Etruscans, by Tullus Hostilius, when he conquered them: whose ancient language agrees so much with the Hebrew, that one may well think they had many things from them. (See Myrothec. cap. iii. 43.)

Ver. 19. *Moreover, his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.*] The ephod being used, I suppose, only in the service of God, it was provided at the public charge. But for his ordinary wearing, Hannah took care, at her charge, to provide him a coat, and other things, it is likely, suitable to it, that she might still express her piety in contributing to his maintenance at the house of God. And it is very probable, that this little coat was woven with her own hands; as the ancient tradition is, that Christ's seamless coat was woven by the blessed Virgin. And so in Joma the doctors say, (cap. 3.) that a priest might use a garment in his ministry, which was made by his mother. (See Braunius, lib. i. cap. 17.)

Ver. 20. *And Eli blessed Elkanah and Hannah his wife,*

and said, The Lord give thee seed of this woman, for the loan which is lent unto the Lord.] He gave them this benediction by a Divine suggestion; and thereby verified what she uttered in her prophetical song, (ver. 5.)

And they went to their own home.] Their affection to their son did not make them stay there, and neglect their domestic affairs.

Ver. 21. *And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters.*] None are losers by what they lend unto the Lord.

And the child Samuel grew before the Lord.] Not only in stature, but in wisdom also and virtue, (see ver. 26.) Of so great moment it is to season the minds of children early with a sense of God and of religion: which is likely to continue with them, and improve, as they grow in years.

Ver. 22. *Now Eli was very old.*] Which made him listless and unactive.

And heard all that his sons did unto all Israel.] Yet wanted not information of all the forementioned enormous practices of his sons.

And how they lay with the women that assembled.] Whose impiety and luxury proceeded so far, as to move them to debauch those women who came to worship God. Of the word *assembled*, see Exod. xxviii. 8. Unto which may be added, that the Hebrew word *tzaba* signifies not only a great many gathered together, but also a *station:* that is, stated times of attendance, which devout women observed for fasting and prayer. For that was their business at the temple; unto which they resorted at certain times for these ends.

At the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.] These words sound as if they committed this lewdness in the presence of all the people. But such beastiality would not have been suffered: and therefore this refers to their *assembling* at the door of the tabernacle: from whence they led them to some private room about the tabernacle (as there were many afterward about the temple), where they defiled them.

Ver. 23. *And he said unto them, Why do you these things?*] Beforementioned, ver. 14—16. 22.

For I hear of your evil doings by all this people.] Their wickedness was so notorious, that there was a general complaint of it; which should have moved him to greater severity, than merely to reprove and chide them with such gentleness and lenity, as these and the following words import. Which proceeded partly from the coldness of old age; partly from his too great indulgence to his children; and partly (as Corn. Bonavent. Bertram conjectures) from his being more intent upon the defence of their civil liberties, than the restoring ecclesiastical discipline.

Ver. 24. *Nay, my sons; it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people to transgress.*] By making them neglect and despise the service of God, (ver. 17.) and tempting them to lewdness, (ver. 22.) This is the language of a tender father, not of a zealous judge; who ought to have passed a public censure upon them, for their public crimes, by turning them out of their office, or some sharp punishment; which his office gave him authority and power to inflict upon such infamous offenders.

Ver. 25. *If a man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?*] If one neighbour do an injury to another, the business may be composed by the judge; who, interposing his authority, either takes up the difference, or sees the person satisfied who was offended. But if one injure the judge himself (which was the present case), who shall take the confidence to speak in his behalf? Was it ever heard that any one interceded for a man to his prince, when he intended to kill the prince himself? Eli argued well; but he should not have referred their punishment unto God, when it was in his power to punish them himself.

Notwithstanding, they hearkened not unto the voice of their father; because the Lord would slay them.] The words may be rendered out of the Hebrew, *But they would not hearken to the voice of their father; therefore the Lord resolved to slay them.* But, according to our translation, the sense is right enough: for when men have long sinned grievously against many admonitions (which it may be supposed their father had given them), whereby they become incurable; God deprives them of that prudent consideration and discretion, which would save them from destruction. So Rasi upon these words, *The sentence of judgment was already sealed against them.*

Ver. 26. *And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord and with men.*] The words in the Hebrew are, *he went on*, or grew great and tall, and *was good*, that is acceptable, *both to God and men.* The meaning is, he made a great progress in wisdom and goodness, as well as increased in stature: so that God was well pleased with him, and he was well esteemed by the people. The same is said of our Saviour, Luke ii. 52. where Theophylact thus glosses, Τουτέστι, καὶ τῷ Θεῷ εὐάρεστα ἔπραττε, καὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐπαινετά; *i. e. He did those things that were well-pleasing to God, and were praised by men.*

Ver. 27. *And there came a man of God unto Eli.*] That is, a prophet, who was divinely inspired to deliver the following message to him. Some say this was Phinehas, others Elkanah; without any ground.

And said unto him, Thus saith the Lord.] This is the constant language of prophets.

Did I plainly appear.] In the Hebrew, *manifestly reveal myself.*

Unto the house of thy fathers.] Unto Aaron, who was the head of the family of priests. (See Exod. iv. 27.)

When they were in Egypt, in Pharaoh's house?] In miserable bondage. As much as to say, Have I conferred such favours upon you, and do you thus requite me? It is the way of the prophets, when they call men to repentance, to aggravate their sins by an enumeration of God's great benefits unto them. (See Isaiah i. 2, &c. and Micah vi. 3—5.)

Ver. 28. *And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest.*] The highest dignity in the nation.

To offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me?] These were the several parts of the priest's office: and the last contains the greatest of them all, which belonged only to the high-priest; who alone appeared before God to consult him by *urim* and *thummim*, when he wore the golden ephod, with the breast-plate annexed to it; for they were inseparable, (Exod. xxviii. 6. 12. 28.)

And did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?] There were none of the sacrifices offered at the altar of which the

priest had not some share, (see Numb. xviii. 8—10, &c.) For even of the burnt-offerings, which were wholly consumed on the altar, the skin was, by an express law, given to the priest, (Lev. vii. 8.)

Ver. 29. *Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice, and at my offerings, which I have commanded in my habitation.*] As refractory oxen were wont to do, when they were pricked with a goad, to stir them up to work at the plough: which signifies the highest irreverence and contempt of God's authority. (See Bochart, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 29. latter end.)

And honourest thy sons above me, &c.] By suffering them to continue in the priest's office, and profanely to feast themselves with the best of the sacrifices, before God was served.

Ver. 30. *Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said, indeed, that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now saith the Lord, Be it far from me.*] God revokes the decree he had made in favour of him and his family, of being high-priests throughout all generations. Which office was first settled upon Eleazar, the eldest son of Aaron, and upon his posterity; for the very same promise is made to Phinehas the son of Eleazar, (Numb. xxv. 15.) which is here said to be made to Eli, who was descended from Ithamar, the youngest son of Aaron: unto whom the high-priesthood was translated from the family of Eleazar, for some sin or other: as now it was resolved it should be translated back again from the family of Ithamar, to that of Eleazar; because of the horrid sins of the sons of Eli. For what cause Phinehas, or his posterity (for there are various opinions about the time), lost the priesthood, and how they recovered it in the time of David, see Mr. Selden, lib. i. de Success. ad Pontificat. cap. 2, 3. and Constant. L'Empereur, in his annot. on Bertram de Repub. Jud. p. 411. Some think, that after Phinehas, those three persons mentioned in 1 Chron. vi. 50, 51. Abishua, Bukki, and Uzzi, succeeded in the priesthood; and then came in Eli: but of this there is no certainty. Procopius Gazæus here observes, that this verse, "Latenter totius Judaici sacerdotii finem innuit;" *doth secretly intimate the abolishing of the whole Jewish priesthood.* For this promise, saith he, *Thy house, and the house of thy father, shall walk before me for ever,* was not made to Ithamar, but to Aaron; and, therefore, he shews here what should befal the whole tribe. Such conditional decrees are frequent in Scripture; particularly in Jer. xviii. 7—10.

For he that honoureth me I will honour, and he that despiseth me shall be lightly esteemed.] A remarkable instance of which we have in the records of the Christian church: for Eusebius tells us, in the time of that persecution which he mentions in the eighth book of his Ecclesiastical History, some of the pastors of the church, who had not governed the flock of Christ as they ought to have done, were condemned to be keepers of camels, and of the Emperor's horses (a punishment among the Romans in those days, as Valesius observes), ἡ θεία κατακρίναση δίκη, &c. *The Divine justice judging them worthy of no better employment.* (Cap. 12. de Martyribus Palestinæ.)

Ver. 31. *Behold, the days come, that I will cut off the arm of thy father's house.*] Our arm being the instrument whereby we perform all things; this threatening signifies, that not long hence God would utterly take away all power and authority from him, and from his family; both as he was a priest, and as he was a judge.

That there shall not be an old man in thy house.] But his posterity should die, as it follows, (ver. 33.) *in the flower of their age,* which was accounted a great judgment in that nation. So Manasseh ben Israel, who observes, in his book de Termino Vitæ, p. 87. that the Gemara upon Jebamoth mentions a certain family in Jerusalem, none of which commonly lived above eighteen years. Of which they inquiring the reason of R. Johanan ben Zachæi, he bade them search, if they were not of the family of Eli, upon which God had passed this sentence, that they should die in the *flower of their age:* and it was discovered that they sprang from him.

Ver. 32. *And thou shalt see an enemy in my sanctuary.*] The marginal translation seems most literal, *Thou shalt see the affliction of the tabernacle.* As he did, for he saw the tabernacle deprived of the ark, which was the glory of it; and lived to hear the ark was taken by the Philistines, (iv. 4. 11.) But his family was not thrown out of the priesthood till the days of Solomon.

In all the wealth which God shall give Israel.] The Hebrew words may be translated, *After all the good God hath done to Israel.*

And there shall not be an old man in thy house for ever.] He repeats the foregoing threatening, to shew the certainty of it. But some by an *old man* understand an *elder.* So the Talmudists in the Gemara of the Sanhedrin, cap. 1. where they make the meaning to be, that if any of his family did live long, they should never come to honour. For so they tell the story; that R. Johanan missing of some preferment that was designed and endeavoured for him, and taking it very heavily, the doctors that were his relations prayed him not to be troubled; For we are (said they) of the family of Eli, of whom it is said, *there shall be no old man of thy house for ever;* that is, none be promoted to any dignity.

Ver. 33. *And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from my altar, shall be to consume thy eyes, and to grieve thy heart.*] It was not a favour to let any of them live, but a punishment to those who were grieved to see the high-priesthood taken from their family, and those that belonged to it reduced to great poverty. It is usual in Scripture, to say that of the parents, which properly belongs to their posterity.

And all the increase of thy house shall die in the flower of their age.] This doth not belong to all the posterity of Ithamar, but only to the family of Eli.

Ver. 34. *And this shall be a sign to thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas; that in one day they shall die both of them.*] See iv. 11. 17.

Ver. 35. *And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do all that is in my heart, and in my mind.*] This seems to be meant of Zadok, who was anointed in the room of Abiathar, (1 Chron. xxix. 22.)

And I will build him a sure house.] The high-priesthood continued in his line till the captivity of Babylon, as appears from Ezek. xl. 16. and a long time after it, as Josephus shews, lib. x. cap. 4. and our famous Selden, lib. i. de Success. in Pontif. cap. 5, 6. where he shews their perpetual succession till the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. But Procopius Gazæus here notes, that though

this, according to the history, is meant of Zadok, who was put into the priesthood by Solomon, and in whose line it continued; yet it belongs to none, in the highest sense, but to our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered himself to the Father for us, and is our great high-priest for ever.

And he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.] By the *anointed of God* here is meant the king; for whom the high-priest consulted God on great occasions: and therefore is said to *walk before him;* because he directed him in his proceedings, and shewed him what he ought to do, in all difficult cases.

Ver. 36. *And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thy house.*] The remainder of his family, who were not cut off.

Shall come and crouch to him for a piece of silver, and for a morsel of bread.] The Hebrew word which we translate *crouch,* signifying to bow and to worship, the Vulgar understands these words, as if they were spoken not of their coming to beg of the high-priest, but to pray to God in so poor a condition, as not to be able to bring more than a farthing, or mite, to the treasury, and nothing but a bit of bread (not so much as a bird, much less a sheep or bullock) for a sin-offering. But the Chaldee takes the words as we do, for humbling himself to the priest beforementioned, begging a small relief of his great poverty, to which he was reduced. The Hebrew word for a piece of silver is *agorah,* which signifies a minute piece of silver, in the very derivation of the word, as many think. So the meaning is, he should humbly beg, though ever so small a relief.

Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priests' offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.] Begging of the high-priest that he might enjoy the meanest pension that was allowed to those priests who were prohibited to officiate. For so the words may be translated, *Somewhat belonging to the priesthood.* (See 2 Kings xxiii. 9. Ezek. xliv. 13.) This seems to have been fulfilled in the days of Abiathar, who, for treason, was not only put out of his office, but sent to live upon his own farm in the country; and not suffered to live upon the portion given to priests at the temple, (1 Kings ii. 26, 27.) By this means his posterity fell into extreme want; in which the just judgment of God may be observed; that the children of those who were so wanton, that they would not be content unless they had the choicest parts of the sacrifice for their portion, should fall into so low a condition, as to beg their bread.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AND the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli.*] Performed such services at the tabernacle as Eli directed, being now about twelve years old, as Josephus thinks.

And the word of the Lord was precious in those days.] God did very rarely in those days reveal his mind to any person. (See ver. 21.)

There was no open vision.] Here *vision* includes all the ways whereby God revealed himself to men. Which he did then so seldom, that whatsoever revelation there might be privately to some pious persons, there was none then publicly acknowledged to be a prophet, unto whom the people might resort to know the mind of God. Which was the cause that Samuel, being twice called by God to attend unto him, thought it had been Eli who called him: for they were so unacquainted in these days with the prophetical spirit, that we read of no more than two prophets in all the days of the Judges, (iv. 4. vi. 8.)

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass at that time.*] After the man of God mentioned in the foregoing chapter (ver. 27.) had been with Eli; perhaps that very night after he had delivered his message.

When Eli was laid down.] To sleep.

In his place.] In the court of the tabernacle, where there were divers rooms for several uses of the priests; as there were afterward at the temple.

And his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see.] Clearly to do his duty, after it grew duskish: which made him, it is likely, go to bed betimes, and leave directions with Samuel what to do, until it was time for him to repose himself. And this might be the reason that Samuel ran so hastily to him, when he thought he called for him, that he might know what he wanted, men of his age, and dim-sighted, being less able to help themselves.

Ver. 3. *And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was.*] The lamp in the great shaft of the golden candlestick, which bent towards the most holy place (called the western lamp), never went out; but some other of them did go out when it was morning. (See upon Exod. xxvii. 20, 21.) The meaning therefore is, that, ere it was day, the Lord called Samuel. (See Dr. Lightfoot of the Temple, chap. 14. sect. 4.)

And Samuel was lain down to sleep.] In the court of the Levites, as the Targum explains it; or in some other place near to Eli, that he might be ready to assist him on any occasion. The words seem to import, that he had watched most of the night, (for so some were to do, Psal. cxxxiv. 1.) and towards morning went to repose himself. For thus the words run in the Hebrew, and in the LXX. and Vulgar: *Before the lamp of God went out, and Samuel lay down to sleep in the temple of the Lord,* &c. Insomuch, that Victorinus Strigelius translates the words thus, *And Samuel went to lie down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, before the lamp of God went out.*

Ver. 4. *That the Lord called Samuel.*] Out of the most holy place. So the Targum: *A voice was heard out of the temple of the Lord.*

And he said, Here am I.] It is likely Eli lay nearer the tabernacle than Samuel did, and yet heard nothing: but the voice passing him by, was directed to Samuel, who alone heard it. These words, *Here am I,* are a form of speech, signifying attention to what was said, and readiness to do what should be commanded.

Ver. 5. *And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me.*] He thought Eli had some ministry wherein to employ him, and therefore started up presently, and ran to know what his pleasure was. Which shews the great readiness and promptness of his obedience, which made him come, yea, run at his first call.

And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.] He thought he might dream.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel rose, and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me,* &c.] He was sure there was nobody yet

come to the temple, it being night and the doors shut, and therefore concluded it could be none but Eli that called him: and it is probable, the voice was like that of Eli's.

Ver. 7. *Now Samuel did not know the Lord.*] He had not yet learned to *know discipline from before the Lord,* as the Targum interprets it: that is, how God was wont to teach and instruct men in his will; which the next words explain.

Neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him.] He was unacquainted with the way wherein God made known his mind unto the prophets, because he had never spoken to him before: so that he did not know how to distinguish between the voice of God and of a man. Maimonides expounds it, He did not understand that the Lord was wont to speak with a soft, whispering voice; which was therefore called *Bath-col.*

Ver. 8. *And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he rose, and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child.*] This repetition of the voice so oft, awakened Eli to think that this was no fancy of the child's; and, therefore, since he knewtha t he did not call him, he concluded the Lord did; and by this means he was disposed to give credit to what Samuel should tell him, as an oracle of God.

Ver. 9. *Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.*] He tells him, in effect, that it was the voice of God which he heard; and instructs him how to behave himself, when he called again; and to answer, that he was ready to perform whatever he commanded.

So Samuel went and lay down in his place.] Which was not far, as I said, from the place where Eli lay.

Ver. 10. *And the Lord came, and stood.*] This word *stood* (Kimchi thinks) denoteth some glorious appearance of God to him; because this is the same word which is used in Numb. xxii. 22, 23. 31. where the angel is said to *stand* to oppose Balaam's proceedings. And so the Targum: *The Lord was revealed, and stood and called,* &c.

And called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel!] Only he repeats his name, to move the greater attention.

Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.] He omits the name of the Lord, in his answer which Eli directed him to make: either out of fear, or uncertainty, whether it was the Lord that spake to him, or not.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord said unto Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.*] Which in our language we express thus: *It shall stun all that hear it:* as a man is, when a clap of terrible thunder strikes his ears, which even deafens him, so that he can hear nothing else. This was fulfilled, when the doleful news came that the ark was taken, and both Eli's sons slain, and he fell down and brake his neck, &c.

Ver. 12. *In that day I will perform against Eli all the things that I have spoken concerning his house.*] By the man of God in the foregoing chapter.

When I begin, I will also make an end.] He doth not mean that he would begin and make an end at once; but that he would persevere in his punishments, and not desist when he began, till all his threatenings were fulfilled, *viz.* in the death of Eli, and of his sons; and the slaughter of eighty-five priests of this family by Doeg, and the thrusting Abiathar (who escaped that slaughter) out of his office, and so depriving that family of its dignity and honour.

Ver. 13. *For I have told him, that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth.*] For he could not be ignorant of the crimes committed so publicly; and of which there was such a general complaint.

Because his sons made themselves vile.] Or, they made light of God and of his people; having no regard to either of them. Or, they made the service of God vile in the eyes of the people; as the words may be translated, and as the LXX. understand them.

And he restrained them not.] He did not *frown upon them,* as it is in the Hebrew. Which doth not signify, that he shewed no sign of displeasure against their wickedness (for he did chide them, though too gently, for it), but he did not severely reprove them; and when that would not restrain them, turn them out of their office, or suspend them until they were reformed. For which cause God passed this severe sentence upon the whole family; that they should lose the dignity of the high-priesthood, and be made as vile and contemptible as they had rendered God's service.

Ver. 14. *And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.*] By *iniquity* is meant the *punishment* of iniquity; which he threatens should not be removed, or mitigated, by any sort of sacrifices, or oblations, that could be brought to the altar; but only (as the Gemara upon Rosch Hashanah ventures to say) *by the law, and by the retributions of the saints.* By the *law,* they mean not merely the study of the law, but the practice of it, by observing God's commands; and by *retributions of the saints,* works of charity, bounty, and liberality, beyond what the Divine law required. (See Dr. Windet, de Vita functorum Statu, p. 193.)

Ver. 15. *And Samuel lay down until the morning, and opened the door of the house of the Lord.*] This was one of the works of the Levites, to open and shut the door of the court of the Lord's house.

And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision.] Having no commaud from God to do it; and being loath to grieve the old man by telling him bad news.

Ver. 16. *Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I.*] The old man being so solemnly threatened by the late message from God to him, was afraid he was concerned in what the Lord had now said to Samuel.

Ver. 17. *And he said, What is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me,* &c.] He adjures him to declare to him all that he had heard, and conceal nothing; which obliged him to satisfy his desire, as Micaiah and our blessed Saviour did in the like case.

Ver. 18. *And Samuel told him every thing, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good.*] This sentence being denounced by a child, who had his dependance upon Eli, far from any secular cunning, being unable to discern between the voice of the Lord and the voice of his tutor, till he instructed him, was a great deal more terrible to Eli than the message

of the prophet had been, and wrought a greater effect upon him. For he humbly acknowledged the justice of God, and submitted to his sentence (as many of the fathers think) with a truly penitent heart. For now he knew (as our Dr. Jackson observes), that the sentence was irreversible, being confirmed by an oath, (ver. 14.) and the humility and modesty of Eli's answer, persuaded that excellent person, that the fearful sentence denounced against him extended no further, than to the irreversible deposition of him and his family from the priesthood, unto a poor and mean estate, wherein they were to live hereafter. (Consecration of the Son of God, chap. 18. parag. 5.)

Ver. 19. *And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him.*] There were manifest tokens that God favoured him, as he did Joseph, (Gen. xxxi. 2.) The Targum hath it, *Memra, the Word of the Lord was his help:* or he revealed more and more of his mind to him: so that Israel knew God intended him for the office mentioned in the next verse.

And did let none of his words fall to the ground.] A metaphor from arrows shot out of a bow, which hit the mark. And they may refer either to the words of Samuel, or of God; which is the same. This proved him to be a prophet, or a man divinely inspired.

Ver. 20. *And all Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba.*] The whole country of Judea. (See Judg. xx. 1.)

Knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord.] Settled to be a constant prophet, who supplied the want of *urim* and *thummim*, when the ark was taken from them.

Ver. 21. *And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord.*] Having begun to appear in Shiloh, he continued this great favour: for he revealed himself to Samuel, not by dreams and visions, but by speaking to him in an audible voice, as he had done, ver. 4, &c. And indeed he seems to have been the first prophet, that was raised up to be a public instructor and governor of God's people. Others there had been before him; but not with so high an authority, and public approbation. And therefore St. Peter saith, (Acts iii.) "All the prophets from Samuel spake of those days:" as if he was the first eminent prophet whom the Lord raised up to them after Moses.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *AND the word of Samuel came unto all Israel.*] The revelation of God's mind and will, which had been very scarce among them in former days, (iii. 1.) now grew very plentiful: for, as Samuel himself was ready to instruct every one that came to him, so he set up colleges of the prophets (as we read in the following parts of this book), who in time were settled in divers parts of the country, for the better preserving and spreading the knowledge of God among the people, (x. 5. xix. 18—20, &c.) Which made Abarbinel discourse in this manner, upon the foregoing words: "In the days of Eli the word of the Lord was scarce, and vision was seldom: but when Samuel appeared, not only he prophesied frequently, but many of the Israelites, by his means, were endued with the same spirit, according to these words, *And the Lord appeared more frequently in Shiloh* (so he understands them), *because the Lord was revealed to Samuel in Shiloh.* Which signifies, that the influence of the spirit which descended upon Samuel in Shiloh, reached unto others, because of its abundance, who were disposed to receive it: so that they also prophesied."

And Israel went out against the Philistines to battle.] This was in the middle of that forty years' dominion that the Philistines had over the Israelites, mentioned Judg. xiii. 1. unto which they were encouraged, perhaps, by the death of the lords of the Philistines; and the great slaughter which Samson had made of them at his death, (Judg. xvi. 27. 30.)

And pitched besides Eben-ezer.] Thus this place was called when this book was written; and so denominated from the famous battle which Samuel fought with the Philistines, twenty years after this, (vii. 12.)

And the Philistines pitched in Aphek.] In a place in the tribe of Judah, as we read Josh. xv. 53. upon the confines of the Philistines' country. But see xxix. 1. of this book.

Ver. 2. *And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines,* &c.] Though Samuel was established a prophet, and it was so publicly known, that all Israel came to consult with him (as the foregoing verse seems to import), yet the elders did not take his advice about this war; as Ralbag thinks. Whose opinion is more probable than theirs, who think they did advise with him, and that he bade them fight, on purpose that the sentence upon Eli's sons might be fulfilled.

Ver. 3. *And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us to-day before the Philistines?*] They thought the justice of their cause was sufficient to entitle them to the favour of God, though they themselves were wicked. Thus Brutus cried when he fell, "O Jupiter! what is the cause of so great calamity?" not reflecting upon his horrible exactions in Cyprus; and his great ingratitude to Cæsar, whom he slew in the senate.

Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh, that when it comes among us, it may save us out of the hands of our enemies.] This was as foolish as the other, to confide in God's help, when they lived in open disobedience to him.

Ver. 4. *So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the Lord.*] This being done without any warrant from God, provoked him, rather than procured his presence with them. But they seem to have done it in imitation of Joshua marching with the ark against Jericho; for which he had a Divine authority, but they had none. Strigelius, therefore, well applies to this the observation of Polybius, that "many not studying to imitate the lives of excellent men, but only some of their extraordinary actions, have done nothing but expose their own folly to the world."

Which dwelleth between the cherubims.] Or, *upon the cherubims,* as the Chaldee, the LXX. and the Vulgar here translate it. But Lud. de Dieu is not satisfied with this sense; for he thinks the Divine Majesty did not sit upon the wings of the *cherubims,* but under them; in the space between them and the ark, which was his footstool: and therefore he translates these words, *who inhabiteth the cherubims;* which were as a canopy over the Schechinah.

But I have followed the ancient translation, in my notes upon Exod. xxv. 22.

And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.] Which they were ordered to bring out of its place (into which the Levites might not enter), and to accompany it unto the army.

Ver. 5. *And when the ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout.*] As if they had already gotten the victory.

So that the earth rang again.] It was so loud, that it might be heard a great way off. (See 1 Kings i. 40. and what I have noted there.)

Ver. 6. *And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, What means the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews? And they understood that the ark of the Lord was come into the camp.*] They sent to get intelligence, or were informed of it by some deserters.

Ver. 7. *And the Philistines were afraid: for they said, God is come into the camp.*] The symbol of God's presence; which perhaps they imagined the Israelites worshipped as their God.

And they said, Woe unto us, for there hath not been such a thing heretofore.] In all their battles that they or their neighbours had fought with the Israelites, they never heard of such a thing as this; which they thought must produce some extraordinary effect.

Ver. 8. *Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods?*] They fought with men before, but now with God, before whom none could stand. The Hebrew words *Adirim Elohim*, which we translate *mighty Gods*, are translated by Theodoret, *the strong God:* which agrees with what goes before, *God is come into the camp:* and with the Targum, *Who shall deliver us out of the hand of the Word of the Lord*, &c.

These are the Gods.] Or, this is the God.

That smote Egypt with all the plagues in the wilderness.] They seem not to have perfectly understood the sacred story; but thought all those plagues which are there spoken of had fallen on the Egyptians, while the Israelites were in the wilderness; where they were when their last plague befel them, by their being drowned in the Red Sea: but Jonathan thus paraphrases it: *Who smote the Egyptians with all manner of plagues; and did wonders for his people in the desert.*

Ver. 9. *Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, ye Philistines!*] These words were spoken by their great commanders, as the foregoing words in all likelihood were; who understood what had been done in foreign countries.

That ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men, and fight.] When they were recovered out of the fright, which seized on them at first, they considered, that notwithstanding the power of their God, they had made the Israelites subject to them, and also overthrown them in a late battle; and therefore their present danger should only raise their courage, and make them fight more valiantly.

Ver. 10. *And the Philistines fought.*] They gave battle to the Israelites.

And the Israelites were smitten, and they fled every man unto his tent.] They were so routed, that they did not flee to their camp with an intent to renew the fight, (as they did before, ver. 3.) but dispersed themselves to their own home. And hitherto many of them dwelt in tents, as I observed before. (See Josh. xxii. 14. Judg. vii. 8. xx. 8.)

And there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen.] There fell but four thousand in the former battle, before the ark came among them, (ver. 2.) so little did the bare presence of the ark profit wicked men, that it rather did them hurt.

Ver. 11. *And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.*] It is likely that (as Josephus saith) Eli parted with the ark from the tabernacle very unwillingly; but when he could not help it, he charged his sons, who went along with it, to lose their lives rather than lose it.

Ver. 12. *And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day.*] Some of the Jews have a fancy that this man was Saul: for no other reason, that I can find, but because he was of that tribe, and a proper man, who, it is likely, could run swiftly. How far Shiloh was from Aphek, or from Eben-ezer (both which were in the tribe of Judah, as Shiloh was in Ephraim), near to which this battle was fought, is not certain; but not so distant but that a man might run the same day from the one to the other.

With his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.] According to the manner of those who bewailed any great calamity. (Josh. vii. 6. Job ii. 12. Ezek. xxvii. 30.) From which last places, it appears, it was a custom among other nations. And is most lively expressed by Virgil in Æneid xii. ver. 609—611. where Latinus is represented as rending his clothes, and throwing dust upon his grey hairs, when he lamented his private and the public losses. Tiraquellus hath heaped up a great many examples of this, in his annotations on Alex. ab Alexandro, lib. iii. cap. 7.

Ver. 13. *And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the way-side: for his heart trembled for the ark of God.*] He had caused a seat, I suppose, to be set for him, by the side of the gate that entered into the city, (ver. 18.) that he might hearken after news; being extremely concerned, above all things, for the ark of the covenant of God.

And when the man came into the city.] He passed by Eli, and said not a word to him, though he saw him sitting there; because he was loath he should be surprised with such sad tidings. Or, perhaps, he came into this city at some other gate.

And told it, all the city cried out.] Looking upon themselves as put out of the Divine protection, because they had lost the symbol of his presence, and the book of the covenant, the blessings of which they could no longer claim.

Ver. 14. *And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What means the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli.*] They about him had not the heart to resolve his question, but brought the man speedily to acquaint him with the truth.

Ver. 15. *Now Eli was ninety-eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see.*] He was not able to discern the sadness that was in the people's countenances, but only heard their shrieks and lamentations.

Ver. 16. *And the man said, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to-day out of the army.*] The man represents himself as an eye-witness of what had passed, that

he might gain the more credit to what he said: and adds, that he brought the freshest news.

And he said, What is there done, my son?] He asked if they had fought, and with what success.

Ver. 17. *And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken.*] He hid nothing from him; but reserved the worst news till the last.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward, by the side of the gate.*] At the entrance of the city, where his chair was set.

And his neck brake, and he died.] Though he was too indulgent a father, yet he was highly commendable in this, that he was not so much affected with the loss of his sons, and the slaughter of the people, as with the loss of the ark of God. For he kept up his courage, and did not fall, till he heard that mentioned. The more public any concern is, the more it is laid to heart by men of worthy spirits. Such a one was Eli, with whom God was angry upon his sons' account; otherwise he was adorned with many virtues, as Procopius Gazæus observes.

For he was an old man, and heavy.] Being oppressed with grief he swooned away; and being both very old, and very unwieldy, his fall was the more dangerous, and the vertebræ of his neck the more easily displaced.

And he judged Israel forty years.] This aggravated the calamity of his family, that, having been so long in the highest station, it fell into great afflictions in a moment. (See upon chapter the first, ver. 9.) The Jews observe, in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 13. that on the day he died, God forsook the tabernacle in Shiloh, having delivered his strength into captivity, &c. (Psal. lxxviii. 60, 61.)

Ver. 19. *And his daughter-in-law, Phinehas's wife, was with child, near to be delivered: and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains came upon her.*] The great anguish of her mind brought on her labour: and, as Josephus thinks, two months before her time. Which doth not well agree with what is said in the beginning of this verse, that she was *near to be delivered.* The Hebrew word which we translate *bowed herself,* signifies she *fell on her knees.* For so the manner was in those countries: which Ludolphus confirms in his Ethiopic History, and his commentary upon it, (lib. i. cap. 14. n. 101.)

Ver. 20. *And, at the time of her death, the women that stood by her.*] Assisted at her labour.

Said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast born a son.] The mention of which they thought would have revived her; according to what we read in the gospel of St. John, xvi. 21.

But she answered not, neither did she regard it.] Being so overcome with sorrow and grief, that she minded nothing that was said or done about her.

Ver. 21. *And she named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law, and her husband.*] Only having a little recovered her spirits, she lamented this chiefly, that God was gone from them: for so the word *glory* frequently signifies in Scripture, (Psal. cvi. 20. Jer. ii. 11.) The Hebrew word אי also signifies the same with לא *not,* as Ludolphus observes, in his commentary upon his Ethiopic History, (lib. i. cap. xvi. 106.) And so Bochartus here translates *Ichabod,* by *inglorious,* or without glory: that is, saith he, without the true God, (par. i. Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. 34.)

Ver. 22. *And she said, The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of God is taken.*] She seems to have expired with these words; which she repeats again, because this chiefly lay at her heart; as the concerns of religion do in all pious spirits.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AND the Philistines took the ark of God.*] Why God suffered the ark of his presence to fall into the hands of those uncircumcised people, Abarbinel gives four or five reasons. The Israelites were such great sinners, that they were unworthy of his presence among them. The idolatry of Micah remained to this day in the land; therefore he fulfilled his threatening, (Lev. xxvi. 19. 31.) The sin, also, of the priests highly provoked him to deliver up the ark, which was in their hands, when they were killed. And the Israelites greatly offended in carrying the ark into the battle, without asking counsel of God: who resolved to demonstrate his power even among the enemies of Israel.

And brought it from Eben-ezer.] Where the Israelites were encamped before the battle, (iv. 1.) and whither it is possible they fled, to save the ark, when their army was overthrown.

Unto Ashdod.] One of the five cities of the Philistines, where some of the Anakims were left unsubdued by Joshua, (Josh. xi. 22.) and was in future times the principal city of the country, called Azotus. And perhaps it was so now; which might be the reason the ark was carried thither, rather than to any other city; being situated also in the middle of the five principalities; and having a famous temple in it (mentioned in the next verse), whither all the country resorted.

Ver. 2. *And when the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon.*] The heathen were wont to offer part of the spoil that they took in war unto their gods: and what could there be more acceptable than this to Dagon, who seemed to have triumphed over the God of Israel? thus we read, in after-ages, how conquerors triumphed not only over the people whom they vanquished, but over their gods also. As Isaiah represented Bel and Nebo carried captive, when Babylon was taken, (xlvi. 1, 2.) And Jeremiah saith the same of Chemosh, the god of Moab, and Malcolm, the god of Ammon, (xlviii. 7. xlix. 3. and see Dan. xi. 8.) Thus the Romans did very frequently, as Bochartus shews, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 34. Yet there are some who imagine, that their setting the ark by Dagon (on the side of him), signified that they intended to do some honour to it, as having the presence of God in it. Concerning Dagon, see what I have noted upon Judg. xvi. 23. and Mr. Selden, Syntag. ii. de Diis Syris, cap. 3. where he confutes those who think Dagon hath his name from *dagan,* which signifies *corn* (as if he were the inventor of it), and confirms the opinion of those who think

he had his name from *dag*, which signifies a *fish;* fishes and pigeons being sacred to him. Some take this idol to have been the same among the Syrians, with Triton among the Europeans, or with Neptune, or (as Scaliger will have it), with Venus, who was worshipped under the name of Atergatis, and Adargatis: which are only the corruption of the Hebrew words *Addir-daga*, i. e. *magnificent fish*, as Mr. Selden there observes; though Bochart thinks this was a different goddess from Dagon, (par. i. Hieroz. lib. i. cap. 6.)

Ver. 3. *And when they of Ashdod arose early in the morning.*] To go to pray at the temple.

Behold, Dagon was fallen with his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord.] In a posture of the most humble adoration: which was prostration; acknowledging the God of Israel to be above all gods. In this some of the Jews think there was a miracle in a miracle, as they speak: for whereas the ark was set by Dagon (*i. e.* on one side of him) when Dagon fell, it was not right forward, but he was turned about with his face towards the ark. (See Buxtorf de Area Fœderis, p. 171.)

And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.] Looking upon it as a mischance.

Ver. 4. *And when they rose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen with his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord.*] Which shewed his former fall was not by chance, but by the power of God, before whom he could not stand.

And the head of Dagon, and both the palms of his hands, were cut off upon the threshold.] It is likely Dagon stood on high, upon some pedestal or altar; from whence he was not only thrown down, but his head and his hands thrown out of the door with the greatest contempt: being cut off upon the threshold of the temple. A token (as most interpreters think) that this idol was void of wisdom and power, his head and his hands (which are the seat of those qualities) being gone. Some have a fancy that Dagon had feet also upon his tail: from whence the LXX. it is likely, here add, that both his feet were cut off also: which hath no ground at all in the Hebrew text. (See Selden, in the forenamed book; and Vossius de Idolol. lib. ii. cap. 16.)

Only the stump of Dagon was left him.] In the Hebrew the words are, *only Dagon was left to him:* that is, saith Kimchi, nothing but the form of a fish remained; all that resembled a man being broken off. Thus the Lord shewed there was no god besides him: his ark, though taken captive and carried into a strange land (as St. Chrysostom discourses, Orat. v. adversus Judæos), throwing down their idol twice, and thereby demonstrating, that the Israelites were not overthrown for want of any power in their God to defend them, but for the iniquity of those that worshipped him.

Ver. 5. *Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon unto this day.*] Out of reverence to it; looking upon it (as Abarbinel glosses) as a holy thing, by the touch of Dagon's head and hands. So foolishly did they pervert the meaning of God, that, instead of thinking Dagon to be no god, they honoured the very threshold of his temple as if it had some divinity in it. For it is an idle conceit which the Jews have in Jalkut, that forsaking Dagon they worshipped his *threshold*. (See Buxtorf, in his Hist. Arcæ, cap. 19. p. 172.) This superstition continued for some ages, as Bochartus gathers from Zephan. i. 9. where God saith he will punish those *that leap on the threshold*, after the manner of the Philistines, as he expounds it, after the Targum, par. i. Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 36.

From those words, *unto this day*, Hobbes and such-like writers frame an argument, that this book was not wrote by Samuel; not considering that these things happened when Samuel was but a youth, and that this was written when he was old; so that there was a considerable space of time between them.

Ver. 6. *But the hand of the Lord was heavy upon them of Ashdod.*] Since they were so blind as not to see his hand in throwing down their god, &c. he smote them with such sore plagues in their own bodies, as made them sensible of his power.

And he destroyed them.] With a pestilence, I suppose, of which many died. (See ver. *ult.*)

And smote them with emerods, even Ashdod, and the coasts belonging to it.] Not only the people of the city, but of the villages belonging to it, were smitten with this plague. About which interpreters differ very much: some taking this disease for a dysentery, which was so violent that it rotted their guts, and made them fall down and come out. Whereupon others think it was that which we call *procidentia ani, the falling of the fundament;* but most interpreters, both ancient and modern, take it as we do, for the *emerods*. For it was some disease in the hinder-parts, as appears from the words of the Psalmist, lxxviii. 66. as they are commonly understood. See my notes on Deut. xxviii. 27. and Nic. Fuller Miscell. lib. v. cap. 3. especially Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. i. cap. 36. where he gives a large account of the Hebrew word *apholim*, which is used only here and in the forenamed place of Deuteronomy.

At the end of this verse, the Vulgar and the LXX. also add, that a great number of mice started up out of the earth, and overrunning their fields, made great waste there. But, as Lyra well observes, this gloss in all likelihood being written in the margin, out of chap. vi. ver. 4, 5. it crept at last into the text, though it be neither in the Hebrew, nor the Chaldee, nor Syriac, nor Arabic. (See Bochart, in his Hierozoic. par. i. lib. iii. cap. 34.)

Ver. 7. *And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god.*] Now their eyes were opened to see, that though they had vanquished the Israelites, they could not stand before the God of Israel. And it seems no unreasonable conjecture, that they speak here, and in the following verse, concerning the ark, with a note of distinction; calling it *the ark of the God of Israel*, (ver. 8. 10, 11. vi. 3.) and *the ark of the Lord*, (vi. 8.) For other nations had such arks, and for the same use, to put their mysteries in them: as in this were the tables of the covenant alone. Clemens Alexandrinus relates what trash and other filthy stuff was in the μυστικαὶ κισταὶ, the *mystical coffers* of the heathen. From whose superstition, that the Israelites might be preserved, God, perhaps, appointed this ark to be made by Moses. (See his Προτρεπτικὸς λόγος, p. 13, 14.)

Ver. 8. *They sent therefore, and gathered the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel?*] They desired a general council

might be held, to consult what to do in this case; whether to keep the ark, or how to dispose of it.

And they answered.] *i. e.* The lords of the Philistines (who in the language of that country were called *Sarnim*, the same with *Sarim* in the Hebrew) came to the following resolution.

Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about thither.] They seem to be possessed with a superstitious conceit, that there was something in the place which was offensive to him; and that he might be better pleased with another: just as Æneas and his people indicted their beds and their houses, of the disasters that befel them; and Cadmus forsook his own city,

——— "tanquam fortuna locorum
Non sua se premeret"———.

as if the ill luck which hunted him had been the place's, not his own: as our Dr. Jackson observes, out of Ovid, in his Original of Unbelief, chap. 18. parag. 4.

Gath was the next city to Ashdod, northward of it: in which some of the Anakims also remained. (Josh. xi. 21.)

Ver. 9. *And it was so, that, after they had carried it about, the hand of the Lord was against the city with a very great destruction.*] A great many died of the pestilence, as they had done at Ashdod.

And he smote the men of the city, both small and great, and they had emerods in their secret parts.] They that did not die were sorely tormented by *emerods;* which was a disease they had never known before; as some understand the last words. Or, they had those the physicians call *blind emerods:* which do not swell outwardly, but lie hidden within; and are the most grievous and hard to be cured of all other.

Ver. 10. *Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron.*] The last city of the Philistines northward: where in after-times (if not now) the famous god called Baal-zebub was worshipped, (2 Kings i. 2.)

And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people.] These seem to be the words of the governors of the city; who had learned, from the experience of the other great cities, that no place was secure from the stroke of the God of Israel.

Ver. 11. *So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines.*] As they of Ashdod had done, (ver. 6.)

And said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to its own place, that it slay us not, and our people.] Destroy the whole city.

For there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; and the hand of God was very sore upon them.] Which made them desire it might be sent out of the country, and not to the other cities in the south, Gaza and Askelon.

Ver. 12. *And the men that died not were smote with emerods: and the cry of the city went up to heaven.*] This is the explication of the foregoing words: some were struck with the pestilence as soon as the ark came thither, and others lingered under intolerable pains, which made them cry out in an inexpressible manner: for this is an hyperbolical speech; things that are exceeding great beyond expression, being said to reach up to heaven, (Deut. i. 28.) Thus Virgil, lib. ii. Æneid. in many places, ver. 223. 338. 488.

"Clamores simul horrendos ad sydera tollit.
——— Sublatus ad æthera clamor.
——— Ferit aurea sydera clamor."

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND the ark of the Lord was in the country of the Philistines seven months.*] The Hebrew word *sadeth*, which we translate *country*, signifying a *field* (as the LXX. here translate it, ἐν ἀγρῷ), Theodoret, and Procopius Gazæus, think, that the Philistines, being so plagued by the ark in their cities, sent it into the *open fields:* but were disappointed of their hope, of being freer from the hand of God there, than in their cities; for mice sprung up out of the ground, and wasted their corn and their fruits, as the LXX. here add, at the end of this verse, as they did in the foregoing chapter, ver. 6. καὶ ἐξέζεσεν ἡ γῆ αὐτῶν μυίας, *and their land bubbled up mice.* But the Chaldee hath no such thing; and saith expressly, The ark was *in the cities of the Philistines seven months.*

Ver. 2. *And the Philistines.*] That is, the lords of the country.

Called for the priests.] Who were best skilled in sacred rites and ceremonies.

And the diviners.] Who were a kind of prophets, pretending to know the will of God, and to foretel future events. See Deut. xviii. 12. of this word *kosemim*, which we translate *diviners.* From whence Bochartus thinks the Roman word *Casmilli* is derived, being as much as *Kosme-el*, the *minister of God.*

Saying, Tell us what we shall do to the ark of the Lord?] They never called it the *ark of the Lord* till this time: but now were struck with some apprehension that the Lord was above all gods.

Tell us wherewith we shall send it to its place.] They did not call them to be resolved by them whether they should send it home or not, (for upon that they seem to have been resolved already, ver. 11.) but in what manner it should be sent, and whether accompanied with any presents to obtain his favour.

Ver. 3. *And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel.*] Against which resolution they had nothing to object, but rather approved it.

Send it not empty.] They answer directly to the question, first in general, that it must not be sent back without some offering.

But in any wise return him a trespass-offering.] Concerning the Hebrew word *asham*, which we translate *trespass-offering*, and how it differs from a sin-offering, see upon Lev. v. 15. It seems to be presented by the Philistines as an acknowledgment that they had offended the God of Israel, by bringing his ark from its proper place, for which they begged his pardon by this offering.

Then ye shall be healed, and it shall be known to you why his hand is not removed from you.] It seems their plagues still continued (notwithstanding their resolution to send home the ark), but they hoped by this offering they would be removed; and the reason would appear why they were removed no sooner: for these diviners were not sure

from whence these plagues came: but by this means they thought they should either be healed, or know the ark was not the cause of their sickness.

Ver. 4. *Then said they, What shall be the trespass-offering which we shall return to him?*] It is very observable what reverence they had to their priests and prophets, without whose advice they would do nothing: and therefore desire to be particularly informed what the trespass-offering should be, that they might not send one that was improper. All nations thought their gods were to be appeased when they were angry, by honorary gifts, as many have observed: particularly Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 36. And of that opinion they were in these ancient times. But wise men still gave it in charge, "Ne quis impius oblatis donis Deum placare audeat:" that *no wicked man should presume to attempt to appease God by the offering of gifts*, as Cicero speaks, lib. ii. de Legibus.

They answered, Five golden emerods, and five golden mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines.] Who were five, and were to be at the charge of offering one for each of them. This also was a custom among the ancient heathens, to consecrate unto their gods such monuments of their deliverances, as represented the evils from which they were freed. As they dedicated to Isis and Neptune a table, which contained the express image of the shipwreck, which they had escaped: and slaves and captives, when they had regained their liberty, offered their chains. Which Christians in the fifth century began to imitate, as Bochartus observes (in the forenamed place) out of Theodoret. Accordingly the Philistines, hoping shortly to be delivered from the *emerods* and *mice*, wherewith they were sorely afflicted, sent the images of them unto that God from whom they expected deliverance. And this is still practised among the Indians, as Tavernier relates in his travels to their country, p. 92. where he saith, that when any pilgrim goes to a pagod for the cure of any disease, he brings the figure of the member affected; made either of gold, silver, or copper, according to his quality; which he offers to his god, and then falls a singing, as all others do after they have offered. Mr. Selden also hath observed, that *mice* were used among the ancient heathen for lustration and cleansing, de Diis Syris, Syntag. i. cap. 6.

For one plague was on you all, and on your land.] The plague of *emerods* upon their own bodies; and the plague of *mice* upon their land.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore ye shall make images of the emerods, and images of your mice which mar the land.*] By this it appears, that their country was infested by *mice*, which had eaten their corn in the field, and other fruits of the earth. Which is a plague which divers ancient authors mention, as sent upon several countries, by the anger of their gods: particularly upon a city in Mysia, and upon the country of Troas, as is observed by Huetius, in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 12. And Bochart hath collected a great many more examples of such devastations in Spain, Italy, Thrace, &c. made by mice; which have the name of *achbar* in Hebrew (as he thinks), signifying *a destroyer of the field*. (Hieroz. par. i. lib. iii. cap. 34.)

And ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel.] That is, acknowledge him, by this present to him, to be the inflicter of these plagues, and to have power to remove them; begging his pardon, and seeking for healing from him. For thus this phrase signifies in the like case, Rev. xvi. 9. where St. John complains, that after many plagues men did not *repent, to give glory unto God:* that is, by repenting, to acknowledge his sovereign authority, justice, holiness, &c.

Perhaps he will lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods, and from off your land.] For they had all suffered; their gods as well as themselves, and their land.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? When he had wrought wonderfully among them.*] These words seem to import, that some of them were loath to send the ark away with such presents; and objected against it: which moved the priests and diviners, to bid them take heed, lest they brought upon themselves the fate of Pharaoh, and his people. With whose history these men were acquainted; and being discreet persons made a good use of the examples of former times: and believed as much as many of the Israelites did, or rather more.

Did they not let the people go, and they departed?] When it was too late, they consented to what was demanded. The Jews say in Jalkut, that the Philistines at first said among themselves, This is the God who smote the Egyptians with ten plagues: but they are all ended. Whereupon God said, "Do you imagine I have not one plague more? I will send such a one upon you, as never was from the beginning of the world," &c. (See Buxtorf. Hist. Arcæ Fœderis, cap. 19.) If they had any such thoughts, their priests pertinently enough put them in mind of the Egyptians: that they might not make themselves like them in hardness of heart; as God had made them like in their plagues.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore make a new cart, and take two milch-kine, on which there hath come no yoke.*] Both these were in honour of the ark; that they employed nothing about it which had ever served for any other use. And there was another reason also for the latter of these; that they might be the more certain they were led by the God of Israel, if they went directly unto his country: for kine unaccustomed to the yoke are wont to run back, and turn out of the way into which they are put.

And tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them.] This would make it still more wonderful, if they did not return to their calves, when they heard them bleat after them; which they naturally would have done, if a greater power had not drawn them a contrary way.

Ver. 8. *And take the ark of the Lord, and lay it upon the cart; and put the jewels of gold, which you return him for a trespass-offering, in a coffer by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go.*] They had either heard, or by their present sufferings were made to fear, that it was dangerous to look into the ark; and therefore they did not open it, to put their present within it; but put it in a coffer by the side of it. It is probable the word *argaz* (which we meet withal no where else), in the language of the Philistines, signifies either a *coffer*, or a *purse*, or a *wallet*, as Josephus translates it: and Bochartus thinks it likely, that these golden jewels were put into little bags, which hung on either side the ark.

Ver. 9. *And see, if it go by the way of its own coast.*] Without any guide: and being set (as Josephus saith) in a place where three ways met.

To Beth-shemesh.] A city in the tribe of Judah, in the confines of both countries.

Then he hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us.] From some unknown cause.

Ver. 10. *And the men did so; and took two milch-kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home.*] The men of Ekron did all this, as the priests had directed.

Ver. 11. *And they laid the ark of the Lord upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their emerods.*

Ver. 12. *And the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand, or to the left.*] Though they had no driver, nor visible director; and had such strong attractives to draw them back, and there were so many other ways in which they might have gone; yet they went directly towards Beth-shemesh, without the least deviation; lowing all the way after their calves, which had been taken from them: unto whom their natural affection would have inclined them to return, if by a higher hand they had not been led forward to the land of Judah.

And the lords of the Philistines went after them to the borders of Beth-shemesh.] To observe (as the priests advised, ver. 9.) whether of themselves they would go thither.

Ver. 13. *And they of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat-harvest in the valley.*] Which being about Pentecost, it shews the ark was taken captive in the latter end of the foregoing year. (Compare this with ver. 1.)

And they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it.] Come back to them in such a wonderful manner, without any visible conductor.

Ver. 14. *And the cart came into the field of Joshua, a Beth-shemite, and stood there.*] This was another marvellous thing, that the kine went no further; being come into a territory of a city of the priests, (for so Beth-shemesh was, see upon Josh. xxi. 16.) who were to take care of the ark of God.

Where there was a great stone.] Which seems to have been the boundary of the two countries.

And they clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt-offering unto the Lord.] The great stone, I suppose, serving instead of an altar; whereon they offered a whole burnt-offering of praise and thanks to God for his goodness: for they thought in reason that this cart, and these kine, should never be converted to any common use, and therefore employed them in making this sacrifice. In which the priests did not sin, though cows were not, by the law, allowed to be offered to God, and no offering was to be made, but in the place which God had chosen. For this was to be understood of ordinary offerings, not of such as an extraordinary occasion might require; and besides, the ark being here, God was so also (who as yet appointed no place for its future residence, now Shiloh was destroyed), and so their sacrifices, they thought, in reason, might be here acceptable to him. And they the rather chose to offer these cows to God, because they belonged to him, and therefore were to be his sacrifices; they having drawn his ark, and been particularly directed by him.

Ver. 15. *And the Levites took down the ark of the Lord, and the coffer that was with it, wherein the jewels of gold were.*] It was not the business of the Levites to take down the ark; but of the priests: who after they had disposed it to be fit for the Levites to take it upon their shoulders, the Kohathites were to carry it. (See Numb. iv. 15.)

And put them upon the great stone.] Where, it is probable, they had before offered up the kine, instead of an altar.

And the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed sacrifices, the same day unto the Lord.] The *sacrifices* (which they are said to *sacrifice*) were *peace-offerings;* which they added to their whole burnt-sacrifices, that they might make a feast upon them; as an expression of their great joy to see the ark returned to them in such a miraculous manner.

Ver. 16. *And when the five lords of the Philistines.*] Who stood upon the borders of their country, (ver. 12.)

Had seen it.] Beheld all the forenamed wonders.

They returned to Ekron the same day.] And reported, no doubt, what they had seen: which convinced them, that their plagues came from the God of Israel

Ver. 17. *And these are the golden emerods, which the Philistines returned for a trespass-offering unto the Lord; for Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Askelon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one.*] Each city of this country, I suppose, was at the charge of presenting one emerod. Which cities are not reckoned in the order wherein they lay; but Ashdod being the city to which the ark was first brought, it is mentioned first. But from south to north they lay in this order Gaza, Askelon, Ashdod (which as I said was in the middle of them), Gath, and Ekron.

Ver. 18. *And the golden mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both of fenced cities, and of country villages, even unto the great stone of Abel, whereon they set down the ark of the Lord; which stone remaineth to this day in the field of Joshua the Beth-shemite.*] As the golden emerods were made at the public charge of those cities, so were the mice also: unto the making of which the villages likewise contributed. For their fields being principally afflicted by the mice, as the cities were by the emerods; and they being all sharers, some way or other, in the public calamities, it was thought reasonable they should all join in this trespass-offering: which was an offering of the whole nation, as far as ever their coast extended, and that was to the great stone mentioned ver. 14. which is there called *Eben-gedolah,* the *great stone;* but here *Ebel-gedolah,* the *great weeping,* from the lamentations which were here made upon the following occasion, mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 19. *And he smote the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the Lord.*] Which God had forbidden, not only to the common people, but to the sons of Levi also, (Numb. iv. 20.) But their curiosity made them forget their duty: being desirous either to see whether the Philistines had taken out the tables of the covenant; or that they might have a view of such an ancient sacred monument, written by God's own hand. Out of this story, as Bochartus ingeniously conjectures, the Greeks forged the fable of Bacchus; who was very angry with the Athenians, because they did not receive his mysteries with pomp, when they were brought out of Bœotia into Attica; and smote them with a sore disease in their secret parts. In his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 18. in the latter end.

Even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men.] This translation is made by an unaccount-

able transposition of the words: which in the Hebrew lie exactly thus, *He smote of the people, threescore and ten men, fifty thousand men.* Which the Gemara, with Jarchi and Kimchi, and the Targum, expound, *He smote all the Sanhedrin, which were seventy men, and fifty thousand of the common people.* (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 19. n. 3.) But as it is a question whether there was any such Sanhedrin in these days, and it is certain there was not at Beth-shemesh; so it is not likely it was such a populous place, nor is there any particle to couple the last sum with the foregoing. Therefore Bochart's interpretation is far more reasonable, which is this, He smote *threescore and ten men; fifty out of a thousand men.* God was so indulgent, that is, as not to slay all that were guilty, but only seventy of them; observing this proportion, that out of a thousand offenders, he smote only fifty persons; that is, a twentieth part. So that of fourteen hundred that deserved punishment, he smote only seventy men; which is the twentieth part of that number. And this interpretation is very easy, only supplying the particle *mem* before *eleph*, making the sense to be *out of a thousand.* And he instances in many places of Scripture, where this particle is manifestly wanting, to make out the true meaning. See his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 36. p. 370. where he shews that Josephus thus understood these words, lib. vi. Antiq. cap. 2. where he saith God smote Ἑβδομήκοντα τῶν ἐκ τῆς Βηθσάμης κώμης, *seventy of those of the village of Beth-shemesh.* And thus Abarbinel also understands the first words, that he smote at Beth-shemesh only seventy men; the other number, he thinks, refers to those who were slain in the country of the Philistines; the story whereof is now finished. For the particle *beth*, he thinks, signifies as much as *with*, in this manner: *Together with the seventy of Beth-shemesh, he smote in all fifty thousand, because of the ark.* But Bochartus's interpretation is most natural; which is highly applauded by another person of very great learning, Johan. Wagenselius, who, in his annotations upon the Gemara of Sota, (cap. 7. sect. 15.) saith, "Ipsa veritas militat," *Truth itself defends this opinion* of Bochartus. And indeed it cannot be conceived, there should be so many as our translation supposes, to be slain at Beth-shemesh, and the coasts thereof, being but a village; or if there had, it is very improbable that God would smite so many at once: for there would have been none left to make lamentation. Therefore, as the Romans decimated the soldiers that had offended; that is, put every tenth man to death; so God here punished half so many for this offence of looking into the ark.

And the people lamented, because the Lord had smitten of the people with a great slaughter.] It was a great slaughter, considering the smallness of this place; as Abarbinel glosses upon these words, who takes it, as Josephus doth, for a village. And it is not strange that some should be smitten with death; for it was always accounted, in all nations, a great profaneness for any one that was not initiated to look into their mysteries; to prevent which hereafter God made so many examples of his displeasure in this place. Instances of those among the heathen, who were struck blind, or upon whom some other calamity fell upon such account, the illustrious Spanhemius hath noted in his observations upon Callimachus's hymn in Lavarum Palladis, ver. 34. yea, though they did it ignorantly, as he shews upon ver. 78. 82. p. 606. (See also Huetius, in his Alnetanæ Quæstiones, lib. ii. cap. 12. p. 200.)

Ver. 20. *And the men of Beth-shemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? and to whom shall he go up from us?*] They seem by this to be sensible of their rashness, and acknowledge the holiness of God to be such, that they were not worthy of his Divine presence among them; but desires that some who could do him honour better than they, might take the ark into their care. But Abarbinel thinks they were only struck with a great fear, as the Philistines were when God plagued them; which made them send the ark from one place to another, as they of Beth-shemesh now sent to those of Kirjath-jearim, to come and fetch the ark to their city; fearing more of them should die, if it stayed with them at Beth-shemesh.

Ver. 21. *And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the Lord; come ye down, and fetch it unto you.*] This was a city which stood upon a hill, and therefore they desired them to *come down* from thence. And being a strong place, there they thought the ark might be secure, in case of any new incursions of their enemies. See concerning this city, Josh. xv. 9, 10. where it is called also Kirjath-Baal, xviii. 14. and Baalah, or Baal-Judah, 2 Sam. vi. 2. 1 Chron. xiii. 6.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *AND the men of Kirjath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the Lord.*] They cheerfully received the message; and were so far from thinking themselves in danger by entertaining it, that they thought it a blessing, and kept it with them till the reign of David.

And brought it to the house of Abinadab in the hill.] In the highest part, I suppose, of the city: as David afterward placed it upon Mount Sion.

And sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord.] Which belonged to the Levites: therefore Abinadab was of that tribe, otherwise he could not have consecrated (*i. e.* set apart, or solemnly appointed) his son to *keep the ark, i. e.* to attend it, and see that no rudeness was offered to it; as well as to keep a guard about it, to defend it from violence. If it be inquired why they did not carry the ark to Shiloh, its ancient seat, the answer is, that the Philistines had destroyed that place; and the tabernacle, upon the death of Eli, was removed from thence unto Nob, where it remained till the death of Samuel. And after his death it was carried to Gibeon, where it remained fifty years, according to the account of the author of Seder Olam Rabba. All which time the ark was in Kirjath-jearim, till David brought it first to the house of Obed-Edom, and then to his own city. After which the tabernacle still remained at Gibeon till Solomon's temple was built, 1 Chron. xvi. 39. 2 Chron. i. 3. where we read, that, even after the death of his father, Solomon sacrificed at Gibeon, the tabernacle being there.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, the time was long; for it was twenty years.*] This is not to be understood of the whole time that the ark remained here; for it continued, as I said before, in this place, till the time of David, (2 Chron. vi. 3.) which

was about forty-six years; therefore it refers to the following words.

And all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.] Or rather (as Dr. Lightfoot translates them), *Then all the house of Israel*, &c. Their idolatry had taken such deep root in them, that neither the loss of the ark, nor the slaughter of so many Israelites, wrought upon their hearts. But it was twenty years before they minded the ark, or took any notice of it. Then they were awakened to some sense of their duty, and began to seek the favour of God, and lament their apostacy from him. (See his Annot. on this place, and upon Acts iii. 24. p. 758.) And one reason why they did not regard the ark, was, perhaps, because it was now seated in the borders of the country of the Philistines, of whom they were afraid. And this is the sense of Abarbinel. For though others think, that from the day that the ark came to Kirjath-jearim, the Israelites began to lament their sins, and to turn to God; having heard of the miracles that had been done in the land of the Philistines, &c. yet he doth not approve of this opinion; but will have their lamentation to begin after the ark had been twenty years at this place, where it remained many more years than twenty.

Ver. 3. *And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel.*] Who were assembled at some solemn festival; or were summoned by him to attend him; for after the death of Eli he began to judge Israel.

If you return to the Lord with all your heart.] By this it appears, that his reproofs and instructions, and the representation he had made of their sin, and of their danger, had touched their hearts, and made them begin to lament themselves, and seek his favour; whereupon he exhorts them to give this following proof of their sincerity.

Then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you.] By the *strange gods* I take Baalim to be meant; which are frequently joined with Ashtaroth, as they are in the very next verse to this, where their obedience to this exhortation is reported. (And see upon Judg. ii. 12, 13. 17. iii. 7. viii. 33.)

And prepare your heart unto the Lord.] By serious resolutions.

To serve him only.] As it follows in the next verse.

And he will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines.] Who had now oppressed them, less or more, for the space of forty years.

Ver. 4. *Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only.*] There was now, I suppose, a general reformation made in the worship of God.

Ver. 5. *And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh.*] A place where they had been wont anciently to assemble upon great occasions. (See upon Judg. xx. 1.)

And I will pray for you unto the Lord.] To accept of their repentance, and pardon their sins, and establish them in their good resolution to serve the Lord alone; and to deliver them out of the hand of the Philistines. For all which he could have prayed alone by himself; but he thought their public prayer would be more effectual.

Ver. 6. *And they gathered in Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord.*] This being a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, as appears by the latter part of these words, interpreters commonly expound the former part of them, as belonging to the same matter. And some think, as the Targum doth, that by *pouring out water*, is to be understood the tears of contrition, which were drawn from the bottom of their hearts, and fell from their eyes before the Lord. Others think they washed their bodies in water, signifying the purification of their souls from the filthiness of sin. And others (which Bochartus himself thinks more probable), that this water was poured on the ground, in token of the expiation of their sin, which they desired and hoped might be remembered no more: as water poured on the ground could no more be seen. Unto which they think a place in Job alludes: (xi. 16.) but we no where find any such rite as this among the Jews, either in ancient or later times. And the conjecture of Fortunatus Scacchus seems more ingenious, that an altar being to be erected to offer sacrifice, they poured out water to cleanse the ground, that it might not be set up in an impure place, (Myrothec. Elæochrysm. Sacr. ii. cap. 31.) But after all, I think the interpretation which Constantine L'Empereur hath given of these words (in his annot. on Codex Middoth, cap. 2.) is far more reasonable; which is, that they *poured out water* in token of joy, after they had fasted and confessed their sins (for he translates the words, "Postquam jejunarunt," *after they had fasted on that day*), as they were wont to do in the feast of tabernacles: unto which he refers those words in Isa. xii. 3. in which the prophet foretels the joy that should be in the days of the Messiah, by saying, "Ye shall draw waters with joy out of the wells of salvation:" alluding to a known rite among the Israelites in the feast of tabernacles, unto which our Saviour is thought to allude, John vii. 37, 38. And there is the greater reason for this interpretation, because Samuel had just before promised them, that the Lord would deliver them from the Philistines, if they heartily repented: which made them rejoice in hope of it, because they did now sincerely turn to him.

And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.] When they were reconciled to God, he reconciled them one to another, by determining their differences and doing right where any one was wronged: or he declared the law to them whereby they were to be judged; and, perhaps, punished some gross idolaters, or other great offenders.

Ver. 7. *And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together at Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel.*] Being ignorant of the true reasons of this meeting, the Philistines imagined the Israelites assembled to consult about war, and so resolved to be beforehand with them, and surprise them.

And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.] Being unarmed, I suppose, or not prepared to give them battle.

Ver. 8. *And the children of Israel said unto Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hands of the Philistines.*] According to the promise made to them, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 9. *And Samuel took a sucking lamb.*] For after a lamb was eight days old, it was fit to be sacrificed unto God, (Exod. xxii. 30. Lev. xvii. 27.) The Hebrew word *tale* is the name for the youngest sheep, as *ajil* is for the eldest, and *chebes* for one between both.

And offered it for a burnt-offering wholly unto the Lord.]

Whereby he supplicated the Divine mercy, as the son of Sirach explains it: (Ecclus. xlvi. 16.) "He called upon the mighty Lord, when his enemies pressed him on every side, *ἐν προσφορᾷ, by the obligation of a sucking lamb.*"

And Samuel cried unto the Lord God of Israel; and the Lord heard him.] Which is a demonstration, that though he was not a priest, nor this place appointed for sacrifice, yet, as a prophet, he had authority from God to build an altar any where, and to make his supplication in this manner. Thus other holy men, Gideon and Manoah, were warranted to offer extraordinary sacrifices in places which God had not before appointed. And it is probable that God answered Samuel, as he did Manoah, by fire consuming the sacrifice, in testimony of God's acceptance, (Judg. xiii. 20.) And thus we read of an altar he built in another place, ver. 17. as Elijah did in following times.

Ver. 10. *And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering.*] Before it was consumed.

The Philistines drew near to battle against Israel.] Hoping to find them unprepared. The son of Sirach saith, they of Tyre joined with the Philistines in this action, (Ecclus. xlvi. 17.)

But the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.] They were affrighted, like men out of their wits, with thunder and lightning; which killed many of them before the Israelites could come up to fight them. For, together with this horrible tempest, Josephus saith there was an earthquake, and that the earth opened in several places, and swallowed up some of them, who, like blind men, ran into those gaps.

Ver. 11. *And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued after the Philistines.*] Having Samuel to lead them, as their captain, according to Josephus.

And smote them, until they came under Beth-car.] A place in the confines of the tribe of Judah. This victory was the more wonderful, because we do not find the Israelites came appointed with any weapons to Mizpeh; but, as far as can be gathered by the relation of the fight, they smote them with their own weapons; which the Philistines threw away when they fled, and which were found among those that were slain by the lightning.

Ver. 12. *And Samuel took a stone, and set it up between Mizpeh and Shen.*] So Jacob and Joshua had done, as monuments of God's mercy to them, and their obligations to him.

And called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.] That is, thus far we have gotten the better: for they were not utterly destroyed, but driven quite out of their coasts, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 13. *So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel.*] He put an end to the forty years' tyranny of the Philistines, mentioned Judg. xiii. 1. (See my notes there, and upon ver. 5. of that chapter, and Judg. xv. 20.)

And the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.] As in this battle he gave them such an overthrow, that they were quite driven out of the country of Israel: so, during Samuel's government, until Saul was made king, we never read that they attempted with an army to invade them; but then they did, (xiii. 19.)

Ver. 14. *And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel.*] They not only expelled the Philistines, but recovered also several places of which the Philistines had possessed themselves, during their dominion over them.

From Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines.] Ekron was in the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 45.) which the Philistines now forsook out of fear, as some think: or were driven out of it for the present, though it was not long before they got possession of it again.

And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.] Not by compact and covenant; but by the inclination of both sides, they abstained from all hostile actions. The Amorites were not the only remainders of the old inhabitants of Canaan; but being the most powerful among them, they had long given name to the rest, (Gen. xv. 16.) And now the Philistines were thus subdued, none of them, who used to infest the Israelites, durst stir to give them any molestation, but sat quiet and still.

Ver. 15. *And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.*] From these words Mr. Hobbes and his followers draw an argument that this was written by somebody after the death of Samuel. Which is a very weak proof: for the sense may be no more than this: that Samuel was so diligent in the discharge of his office, that he gave himself no rest, but sat to judge causes every day.

Ver. 16. *And he went from year to year in a circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.*] Ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις τούτοις, *in all these sanctified places*, as the LXX. translate these last words (though there be no such thing in the Hebrew), because, as Mr. Mede conjectures, here were *proseuchas*, i. e. *places of prayer*, in those ancient days. But we may more certainly gather from hence, that there was no such high court then established (which they called the Sanhedrin in following ages) to judge all causes; at least, not such inferior courts as were appointed by the law in Deut. xvi. 18. as the high court is in Deut. xviii. 8. For if there had, there would have been no need of Samuel's riding circuit every year about the country to do justice, as other judges had done. (Judg. v. 10. x. 4. xii. 14.)

Ver. 17. *And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house: and there he judged Israel.*] The power of the judges was greatest in war: but when it was over, they still retained such an authority, that all difficult causes (at least) were brought before them. They were consulted also in all political affairs: and, that they might know where to resort to Samuel, when he had ended his circuit, he kept his constant station at Ramah.

And there he built an altar unto the Lord.] There being no declaration yet made where God would have the ark to be fixed, after the destruction of Shiloh, he built an altar where he himself constantly resided. Because it was fit, when they consulted about any public business, concerning the good of the commonwealth of Israel, that there should be a public invocation of God's direction and blessing: which was done by sacrifice, as appears from ver. 9.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when Samuel was old.*] The Jews in Seder Olam Rabba, and other books, make

Samuel to have lived no more than fifty-two years; when he could not be said to be old. Therefore Abarbinel forsakes the doctors in this, and shews their proofs of it to be very weak; and thinks that he rather lived until he was seventy, if not eighty years old. But less than seventy, he affirms, none of the prophets or good men lived.

That he made his sons judges over Israel.] When he could not well sustain all the labour, he took them to assist him: both when he went his circuit, and in hearing causes at home. Or, perhaps, when he was old, he went circuit no more; but settled them in a convenient place (as it follows in the next verse) where people might have justice done them, either by him or by them.

Ver. 2. *Now the name of his first-born was Joel, and the name of his second Abijah; they were judges in Beer-sheba.*] As his constant residence was at Ramah, so he ordered theirs to be at Beer-sheba. Whereby, as Corn. Bertram observes, (cap. 9. de Repub. Jud.) the country was divided into two parts, for the greater convenience of the people; that the causes of all those who dwelt between Dan and Mount Ephraim, might be brought to be judged by Samuel at Ramah; and the causes of those between Mount Ephraim and Beer-sheba, might be judged by his sons.

Ver. 3. *And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.*] Covetousness made them take bribes, (contrary to the law, Exod. xviii. 8.) and they made them *pervert judgment*. (See Exod. xxiii. 21. Deut. xvi. 19.) Procopius Gazæus here asks this question: Why God did not punish Samuel as he did Eli, for the wickedness of his sons? Unto which he answers, that Samuel's sons were not so bad as Eli's: for taking bribes privately, was not like open profaning the tabernacle, and making the worship of God contemptible. And, besides, it is possible Samuel might be ignorant of this corruption in his sons: who did not live near him, but he in Ramah, and they at Beer-sheba.

Ver. 4. *And all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah.*] All the great men who were dissatisfied with the management of affairs came to Ramah: which was one of the places where Samuel judged the people, and determined their controversies, (vii. 16, 17.)

And they said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: make us a king to judge us like all the nations.] The weakness of Samuel's body, and the ill disposition of his sons' minds, they make their pretence of demanding what they had long desired to have. The Gemara of the Sanhedrin, cap. 2. sect. 6. according to the tradition of R. Eliezer, saith, the elders were in the right in *desiring a king to judge them:* for, according to the opinion of some of their doctors, this was one of the three things God commanded to be done, when they came into Canaan, that they should make them a king. The only error was, which arose, they say, from the perverseness of the vulgar people, that they desired a king like *all the nations.* But these are mere fancies; for God gave no such command, as their best authors, Bechai, Nachman, Ralbag, and others, acknowledge. But their own pride and vanity suggested these desires to them, that they might not want that outward pomp and show which was among their neighbours. Fear also of a potent enemy, who was about to invade them, might make them think a king necessary to lead them on successfully to encounter him, (ver. 20. and xii. 12.) But above all, this proceeded from their insensibility of the great honour they enjoyed above all mankind, in being under the peculiar government of God: for whom they had so little regard, that he saith, (ver. 7.) they *despised him;* that is, made nothing of such a King as they could not see. But that he had the supreme power over them was apparent, in that when they prayed Samuel to make them a king, immediately he prayed to God; shewing it was not in his power to do it, but in God alone.

Ver. 6. *But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord.*] To give him direction what to do in this case: but thus far the elders were in the right, that they came to the prophet to ask a king: for none, as I said, could make one, but the Lord alone, who was their sovereign.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord said, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee.*] These are the words of an angry sovereign, (Hos. xiii. 11.) being as much as to say, Let them have their will. Which he indulged to them, partly to punish them, and partly to preserve them from apostacy from their religion. For being as violently set upon having a king, after the manner of the Egyptians, as they had been to follow their gods, they might have thrown off the law itself, and conformed entirely to the customs of other nations, if they had not been humoured: for they were so set upon it, as appears from ver. 19. that after the prophet had represented to them, how much they would lose by having their desires granted, they persisted in them, saying, "Nay, but we will have a king," &c. Which expresses a resolution to have one whatsoever became of them.

For they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.] These words shew that Samuel took it very heavily, that they should be dissatisfied with his government: but God tells him, he himself had more reason to be angry: for, in truth, they had thrown off his authority, who was their king: (as Samuel tells them afterward, xii. 12.) and therefore was highly offended they should desire any other. Which the Jewish doctors abovementioned (ver. 5.) justly make an argument that God did not command them in the book of Deuteronomy to make them a king; because he was displeased when they desired to have one. For the supreme Lord of the world was their sovereign; who governed them by judges, whom he raised up and extraordinarily inspired, when he saw occasion: as he had before conducted them by Joshua and Moses, who never ordained any thing of moment without a special command for it from God: who reserved to himself the sole power of establishing laws, and appointing magistrates, and making war, as appears by the war against the Midianites, Numb. xxxi. For there is no truth in their opinion, who imagine that the government of the Israelites, before they had a king, was an aristocracy. Josephus, indeed, seems to say so, in one or two places of his Antiquities: but, in his book against Appion (a very learned gentile), wherein he writes most accurately, he makes it a distinct sort of government, different from all other; which he truly calls by a new name, Θεοκρατία, *the government of God,* (lib. ii.) For God exercised the supreme authority among them, by his express command. Which being without example, that it may not seem incredible to those who are

wont to detract from the sacred history, it may be fit to observe, (to use the words of Hermannus Conringius, in his animadversions on Machiavel's Princeps, cap. 6.) that the demons, who were worshipped as gods by the gentiles, attempted to imitate this, by setting up a like government. So that memorable history of the original of the commonwealth of the Cyrenians in Egypt, mentioned by Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Pausanias, Justin, and others; and that history of the beginning of Heraclea in Pontus, which Justin relates, lib. xvi. cap. 3. For this republic being raised by the express command of demons, was, upon that account, they say, exceeding flourishing. No less memorable is the republic of the Mexicans in America, erected by the command of their demon Vitzipultzi: who, above all others, endeavoured to imitate the miracles wrought by God for the Israelites. Many others, he there shews, pretended to this: though all was transacted by themselves.

Ver. 8. *According to all the works that they have done, since the day that I brought them out of Egypt unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.*] No wonder they desired another sort of ruler than Samuel, for they had chosen other gods. And this had been their wicked humour ever since they were delivered from the tyranny of Pharaoh.

Ver. 9. *Now therefore hearken unto their voice.*] Since they had no greater regard unto God and his minister; he resolved to let them exchange his government for such a one as the nations had, who often oppressed them.

Howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.] He continuing still their king, God was so very gracious as to order Samuel to lay before them at large, into what servitude they were going to throw themselves by casting off the government of judges set over them by God himself; and subjecting themselves to the power of such kings as ruled in other nations.

Ver. 10. *And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king.*] How ill God took it, looking upon it as a rejection of himself; who had hitherto governed them most graciously, and often delivered them from the heaviest oppressions. For he either stirred up some person, by an immediate signification of his will and pleasure, to be their judge: or, when there was none, he was ready to rule their proceedings himself, by *urim* and *thummim*, directing them what course to follow in the public concerns of the nation. These two things plainly demonstrated (as our Mr. Thorndike hath well observed) that God was their king, whom they now cast off. (See Review of the Rites of the Church, p. 68. 133.)

Ver. 11. *And he said, This shall be the manner of the king that shall reign over you.*] And, moreover, he declared what kind of government they chose instead of God's. There are various opinions about the *jus regium, the royal power*, here mentioned. Which containing divers particulars that seem arbitrary and unjust, interpreters have chosen to expound the Hebrew word *mishpat*, not by *jus*, but by *mos* and *consuetudo*; that is, not by *right*, but by *manner* and *custom*. And so the words may be translated, as Joseph Scaliger observed long ago from many instances, (Epist. xv.) particularly Gen. xl. 13. and in this book, xxvii. 11. (See Petavius also upon Epiphanius, Hæres. lv. n. 9.) But there is no necessity of this, as Grotius rightly observes, and from him Conringius. For Samuel doth not speak of a just and honest right of a king to do these things (for his right is quite otherwise described in that part of Moses's law which concerns the king's duty), but such a right as the kings of the nations had then acquired: for they desired such a king as their neighbours had; who were all under the absolute dominion of their princes. Which Aristotle calls, δεσποτικὴν ἀρχήν· lib. v. polit. cap. 10. Οἱ περὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν ὑπομένουσι μὲν δεσποτικὴν ἀρχὴν οὐδὲν, δυσχεραίνοντες, *They of Asia endure a despotic government, nothing at all complaining.*

He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself.] To attend him as the guards of his body, and in other offices. This shews that he speaks of an arbitrary power, which kings in those days used. And therefore Abarbinel observes, that Samuel doth not say absolutely, *I will shew you the manner or right of the king* (as if it were a right belonging to all kings), but *that shall reign over you;* that is, of such a king as you desire, who will administer affairs in this fashion.

For his chariots, and to be his horsemen.] To look after his chariots and his horses. For so the word *paras* signifies (as Lud. de Dieu and Bochartus have observed), and these words should be thus translated, *For his chariots and his horses.*

And some shall run before his chariots.] Be his footmen.

Ver. 12. *And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties.*] Others should be disposed of to military offices, higher or lower, as pleased him, (xiv. 52.) who were to be perfectly subject to him, and displaced by him when he thought good.

And will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest.] Others should be made husbandmen, to plough his ground and reap his corn on his own terms; when, perhaps, their labour was necessary about their own fields.

And to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.] Others he would make artificers: which was not very agreeable to that nation, who were inclined from their beginning rather to look after the breed of cattle.

Ver. 13. *And he will take your daughters to be confectioners, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.*] He would exercise, he shews, as arbitrary power over the women as over the men; whom he would make to serve in such employments as he thought fit, either for nothing, or such wages as he pleased to give them.

Ver. 14. *And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.*] Bestow them on such of his courtiers as he thought good to raise to great estates. Which is not to be understood as if he should challenge a right to take their lands from them (for the contrary appears from the story of Ahab, who without a very wicked contrivance could not possess himself of Naboth's vineyard), but that he should take the fruit of them when he thought it necessary, especially in time of war, to gratify his soldiers. To this case Abarbinel confines the sense of these words.

Ver. 15. *And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards.*] This was part of the *jus regium* in the eastern countries, (see my notes upon Gen. xxviii. 22.) to have the tenth part of the fruit of the land for the king's share: and if they contented themselves with this portion they were accounted good kings. As Cypselus, king of

Corinth, is observed by Aristotle to have exacted no more of his subjects than the tenth of their fruits. Such capitations and taxes, as Bodinus speaks, (lib. vi. de Republ. cap. 2.) which are usual now, being unknown in those days.

And give to his officers, and to his servants.] This revenue being brought into his exchequer, he therewith paid his bedchamber-men, and other servants, their salaries. I call them *bedchamber-men*, because the Hebrew word (which we translate *officers*) signifies *eunuchs* (as the LXX. here translate it), who commonly attended them in their chambers. And it was the more grievous to have such men maintained out of this revenue, because they were strangers: for it was not lawful for the Jews to make any of their nation an eunuch. This revenue itself also proved a heavy burden upon the Jews, because this tenth part was exacted out of the remainder, after the tenth part had been paid to the Levites, as Kimchi and Abarbinel observe.

Ver. 16. *And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men.*] The most beautiful and proper persons he could find.

And your asses, and put them to his work.] Either at the plough, or for carriage, or any other employment wherein they were necessary.

Ver. 17. *And he will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.*] So subject to him, that, if he pleased, they should be no better than his slaves. I know none that hath discoursed this whole matter so perspicuously and fully, as the late learned Puffendorf, whose words I shall translate, as I find them in his book, De Rebus Gestis Philippi. This people, saith he, had hitherto lived under governors raised up by Divine instinct, who had exacted no tribute of them, nor put them to any charges. With which government they being not contented, but desiring to have a king, like other nations, that should live in pomp and splendour, and keep standing forces about him, to be ready to resist any invasion; Samuel informs them what it was they desired, that they might consider, when they understood it, whether they would persist in their choice: if they would have a king magnificently attended, then he tells them, the king will take their sons, and put them in his chariots, &c. (ver. 11.) If they would have him keep up constant forces, then he must appoint them for colonels and captains, and employ those in his wars who were wont to follow their family business, (ver. 12.) And since, after the manner of other kings, he must keep a stately court, they must be content that their daughters (ver. 13.) should serve in several offices; which the king would think below the dignity of his wives and daughters. Many ministers also in several employments, both in war and peace, must have salaries to support them; which must be paid out of their fields and vineyards, (ver. 14.) For which services, he tells them, the king will exact the tenth of all belonging to them, that he may maintain his royal expenses. In one word, if you will have a king, he must be maintained, after a royal manner, out of your estates.

Ver. 18. *And ye shall cry out in that day, because of your king which you have chosen.*] This shews, that, in all the foregoing verses, Samuel describes the uncontrollable power which the eastern princes exercised over their subjects; who were patiently to bear whatsoever their princes imposed upon them, without any power to help themselves. For, as Grotius observes, this *mishpat* doth not signify a true right, but such a fact as hath *effectum juris (the effect of right), viz.* an obligation of not resisting: which is the reason that Samuel adds these words; that the people, loaded with intolerable oppressions, should implore the help of God: because there was no human remedy left for their relief. (See lib. i. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 4. sect. 3.) This plainly confutes the fancy of the Jews concerning their Sanhedrin, and their power to scourge princes: for, as Samuel consulted nobody in making a king, but God alone; so, when he was made, he got such a power, that it is ridiculous to think that high court could control him.

And the Lord will not hear you in that day.] But leave them under this heavy yoke; because they would not hearken unto him, when he represented to them what would be the effect of that power which they desired him to set over them.

Ver. 19. *Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel: and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us.*] This description of the government of the eastern kings did not deter them from persisting in their desires. But they peremptorily demanded a king, though Samuel told them that this *demand* was a throwing off the government of God. Who always heard their cry, when they were oppressed by their enemies; but now would leave them without any help, when they groaned under the oppression of their kings. Which obstinacy, as an excellent person of ours (Dr. Jackson) speaks, did prognosticate that incurable and desperate disease, which had its fatal crisis in their rejecting Christ: who was both priest and prophet, and their lawful king. In casting off whom they could not but cast off God, that he should not reign over them. And so a great admirer of his paraphraseth the seventh verse of this chapter: *Let it not grieve thy spirit that they grow weary of thee: but let them have their will, for so will they serve the Lord and thy Redeemer.*

Ver. 20. *That we may be like all other nations.*] Strange blindness! that they could not see it was their singular felicity, that they were not like other nations: but had God for their governor, who never failed, in time of need, to raise up men of wonderful worth to be their deliverers. It was their vain-glorious humour, therefore, that made them think they were inferior to other nations, unless they saw a prince set over them shining in gold and jewels, living in a sumptuous palace, attended with guards richly clothed, appearing in great pomp and state, as they did in other countries; which they fancied would be for the glory of their land.

To judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.] There was anciently a respect to their military virtue, in the choice of their kings; the very word *rex*, among the Romans, having its original from their abilities to govern armies, and keep them in good order and discipline. Such were all those great men whom God had raised up, as there was occasion, to judge Israel. Who had been so successful when they fought for them, that they were always victorious; which they could not promise themselves their kings would be; the very first of which was slain in battle.

Ver. 21. *And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord.*] As he had told all the words of the Lord unto the people, (ver. 10.)

Ver. 22. *And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king.*] Such as they desired, like those of other nations: for so it appears in the following history many of them were, as Samuel had predicted. Witness the words of the people to Rehoboam, concerning Solomon's government, (1 Kings xii. 4.) And the tyrannical words of Jezabel to Ahab, about Naboth's vineyard, (1 Kings xxi. 7.) And all the violence of Manasseh, who shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem with it, (2 Kings xxi. 16.) And what David himself did, in the matter of Uriah, when he had defiled his wife, (2 Sam. xi. 15, 16.)

And Samuel said unto the men of Israel.] To the elders of the people, who had attended him about this matter.

Go ye every man unto his city.] He bade them leave the business unto him; and God, he doubted not, would set a king over them.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *NOW there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite.*] In this genealogy there is no difficulty but one; which is, that in two places of the Chronicles it is said, that Ner begat Kish, (1 Chron. viii. 37. ix. 39.) But by *begetting* there must be meant, the giving him his breeding and education. For it is evident Ner was Kish's brother, (1 Sam. xiv. 51.) D. Kimchi will have it that he had two names, Abiel and Ner.

A mighty man of power.] This seems not to be meant of his wealth or interest in his country, (for Saul himself saith he was of a mean family, ver. 21.) but of his great strength, courage, and fortitude; which is therefore mentioned, because it hath been often observed, that *fortes creantur fortibus.*

Ver. 2. *And he had a son, whose name was Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly; and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people.*] They desired a king like the rest of the nations, who looked upon persons of an heroic stature and countenance to be marked out for empire. Whence the saying of Euripides, Εἶδος ἄξιον τυραννίδος; and that of Curtius, "Quippe hominibus barbaris in corporum majestate veneratio est." But no words are more memorable, to this purpose, than those of Pliny, in the conclusion of his fourth chapter of his panegyric to Trajan, where he saith, the strength and talness of his body, the nobleness of his aspect, the dignity of his mouth, the gracefulness of his speech, &c. "Nonne longe lateque principem ostentant?" Do they not every where proclaim a prince? This was a thing so carefully provided for in ancient times, to have a goodly race of kings, that the Lacedemonians set a fine upon their king Archidamus (as Plutarch tells us in the beginning of his book, περὶ παιδῶν ἀγωγῆς) for marrying a wife of a low stature; who was likely to bring them, *οὐ βασιλέας ἀλλὰ βασιλίσκους, not kings but kinglings,* to reign over them.

Ver. 3. *And the asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost.*] Wandered out of their pasture.

And Kish said unto Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go and seek the asses.] It is no wonder that he was employed in this inquiry, for I suppose he had the charge of looking after his father's cattle: which was an employment the greatest men did not disdain in ancient time: as we learn from the history of Hercules and Paris, and others among the Greeks. And in Judea asses were a considerable part of their substance: for the greatest persons rode upon asses till the time of Solomon, when horses began to be multiplied, (Judg. x. 4.)

Ver. 4. *And they passed through Mount Ephraim, and they passed through the land of Shalisha, but they found them not; then they passed through the land of Shalim, and there they were not,* &c.] They searched, that is, all the mountainous country of the tribe of Ephraim, which lay next to Benjamin, after they had first gone through that tribe, as it here follows:

And they passed through the land of Benjamin, &c.] Or, *they had passed through the land of Benjamin;* where hearing no tidings of them, they went into the next country, to see if they were strayed thither.

Ver. 5. *And when they were come to the land of Zuph.*] A territory in the tribe of Ephraim, where some of Samuel's ancestors had lived, (i. 1.) and Ramah, where Samuel now dwelt, seems to have been in it; as we may gather from the next verse.

Saul said to his servant that was with him, Come, let us return.] Being uncertain whither to go next, after they had sought so many places in vain.

Lest my father leave caring for the asses, and take thought for us.] Be afraid that we are lost. The Hebrew word, as Dr. Hammond observes, (upon Psal. xxxviii. 18.) signifies solicitude of mind, mixed with grief and sorrow.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto him, Behold now, there is in this city a man of God.*] A prophet.

And he is an honourable man.] A person of great fame, and held in high esteem.

All that he saith comes surely to pass.] Which procured him such honour.

Now, let us go thither; peradventure he can shew us our way that we should go.] To find the asses.

Ver. 7. *Then said Saul to his servant, But, behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man?*] This was a part of the honour they did to great men in those countries, to make them a present, when they had occasion to address themselves to them. Particularly prophets were thus honoured; being *men of God;* before whom they were not to appear empty. Thus also they demonstrated their reverence to their king, in the next chapter of this book, (ver. 27.)

For the bread is spent in our vessels, and there is not a present to bring to the man of God: what have we?] Provision for their table was as acceptable a present as money: which appears from what Jeroboam's wife brought to Ahijah the prophet, (1 Kings xiv. 3.)

Ver. 8. *And the servant answered Saul again, and said, Behold, I have here at hand a fourth part of a shekel of silver; that will I give to the man of God to tell us our way.*] A small present, but as acceptable as the widow's mite; being all they had left in their travels.

Ver. 9. *Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God.*] By consulting a prophet.

Thus he spake, Come, let us go to the seer: for he that is now called a prophet, was beforetime called a seer.] Though the word *nabi* (a *prophet*) had been anciently known, as appears by the books of Moses; and used in Samuel's days,

as appears from many places in this book; yet the more common word, which now prevailed, when Saul was anointed king (for in all languages words are in and out of fashion, in several times), was *roeh* (a *seer*). But in following years, when Samuel wrote this book, *nabi* was become the more usual word in all men's mouths. This is a fair account of these words, from whence some argue, that Samuel was not the author of this book, nor Moses the author of the Pentateuch: where Abraham is called *nabi;* (xx. 7.) which shews that this was no new word in these days, as they would have this place understood. But it might be sufficient to answer unto this, that *nabi* did not signify, in ancient times, one that foretold things to come; but only one that was familiar with God, and was instructed in his will, that he might instruct others. But now, in Samuel's time, it came to be appropriated to the revealing future things, and foretelling what should come to pass, or revealing secrets, which none could know but God.

Ver. 10. *Then said Saul to his servant, Well said; let us go. So they went to the city where the man of God dwelt.*] That is, to Ramah.

Ver. 11. *And as they went up the hill to the city, they found young maidens going down to draw water.*] At the fountain, which (as usual) was at the bottom of the hill.

And said unto them, Is the seer here?] Of which there might be some doubt; because some time he was wont to go circuit about the country.

Ver. 12. *And they answered them, and said, He is; behold, he is before you: make haste now.*] That is, they could not fail to find him, if they lost no time, but went speedily to the city, before he went to sacrifice; when it would not be proper to interrupt him.

For he cometh to-day to the city.] He either lived without the gate of the city; or returned from his country circuit.

For there is a sacrifice of the people to-day.] Either at some solemn festival (the new moon some imagine), or upon some special occasion of prayer and thanksgiving to God; for the people of that city, or for all Israel.

In the high place.] All sacrifices were regularly to be offered before the ark, in the place which the Lord should choose. But while this choice stood suspended, because Shiloh was laid desolate, and no other place appointed; they sacrificed in other places, where neither the ark, nor the tabernacle was: the tabernacle being void of the ark, which was its principal furniture; and the ark being without a house for God to dwell in. What place then, in this condition, could be more commodious, than those cities where the priests and Levites lived; to which the people went for instruction? and they chose the highest parts of those cities for this purpose. Corn. Bertram (cap. 11. de Repub. Jud.) imagines, that from this example high places came to be in use in after-ages (unless we suppose them to be the relics of the Canaanites, or more ancient people), for this is the first time we read of a high place among the people of God. Yet we read before of the thing, though not of the name. See Judg. vi. 20. xiii. 19. and so early as Abraham's time we read (Gen. xxii.) he was directed to Mount Moriah to offer his son. The same learned man also thinks, that this was the beginning of synagogues and schools, as our Mr. Thorndike doth in his Religious Assembly, p. 29. For though, when the ark was settled, it became unlawful to offer sacrifices in high places; yet it was no offence to continue there for public prayer, and the praises of God, and the learning of the law.

The Jewish doctors take this *high place* to have been some house, where, after they had sacrificed, they feasted when they had done. And so the Targum here translates these words, *the house of feasting.*

Ver. 13. *As soon as ye come into the city, you shall straightway find him.*] For on this day he appeared publicly.

Before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice.] That is, the feast upon the sacrifice, which were peace-offerings; the greatest part whereof belonged to him that brought the sacrifice; wherewith he entertained his friends.

And afterward they eat that be bidden.] The guests of him that offered the sacrifice; who, at this time, I suppose, was Samuel. For God having told him, that he should that day see the man whom he intended for their king, it is likely he appointed more sacrifices to be added unto those which were usually offered at such times, at his own charge. That there might be the greater feast, unto which he invited the people, (ver. 24.) that is, the principal of the people; and placed the guests, (ver. 22.) and carved at the table, (ver. 23.) which are all tokens that he was at the expense of the sacrifice, and made this feast for his friends.

Ver. 14. *And they went up into the city: and when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out against them, for to go to the high place.*] Met them directly in his way to the feast: for so God in his providence had disposed things; as it follows in the next words.

Ver. 15. *Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *He revealed or uncovered the ear of Samuel;* as is noted in the margin. Now that was done in order to tell him something; and therefore the meaning is, God told him a secret; using, in all likelihood, a whispering voice.

Ver. 16. *To-morrow, about this time, I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin.*] This shews still that all was done by God's direction.

And thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines.] Who had grievously oppressed them for forty years together: and though driven out of the country by Samuel, yet were ready to invade them again; as they did, it appears, by the following history.

For I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.] Though he would not hear their cry to relieve them from the oppression of their kings, (viii. 18.) yet he was so gracious as to make those kings instruments of their deliverance from the oppression of their cruel neighbours.

Ver. 17. *And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him.*] With such a low voice as he heard the day before, (ver. 15.)

Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! the same shall reign over my people.] The word we translate *reign*, signifies something of coercion and restraint, as is observed in the margin; and denotes, he should rule them with an absolute, uncontrollable power, sternly and rigidly, after the manner of the eastern monarchs. Which was, as I said,

a punishment for throwing off the kind and gentle government of God.

Ver. 18. *Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate.*] He came up to him, as he was going out of his house.

And said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is.] It is an argument that Saul had led a very private life, since he had never seen Samuel, who went about into so many places to judge the people.

Ver. 19. *And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I am the seer: go up before me unto the high place.*] This seems to be spoken out of respect to him.

For thou shalt eat with me to-day; and to-morrow I will let thee go, and tell thee all that is in thine heart.] All that he desired to know. This shews it was a supper, not a dinner, to which he invited him; otherwise he might have dismissed him as well after dinner, as the next morning. But the custom of that country was to make their entertainment in the evening, when business was over.

Ver. 20. *And as for thy asseswhich were lost three days ago.*] This satisfied him he was a prophet, that he knew what he came to him for, though he had not told him.

Set not thy mind on them, for they are found.] He frees his mind from all care about the asses; that he might eat and drink the more cheerfully at the feast.

And on whom is all the desire of Israel? is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house?] The meaning is, all Israel desire a king, and there is none fitter for it than thyself; whose family God is resolved to advance.

Ver. 21. *And Saul answered and said, Am I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin?*] He thought no person more unfit for the dignity; both because the tribe of which he was had been lamentably impaired in the time of the Judges, (chap. xx.) and his own family was very inconsiderable in this little tribe.

Wherefore then speakest thou so unto me?] He concluded therefore, that Samuel did but jest with him.

Ver. 22. *And Samuel took Saul and his servants and brought them into the parlour, and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden.*] He convinced him he was in earnest, by setting him uppermost at the table, in the most honourable place among the guests.

Which were about thirty persons.] The principal persons, I suppose, of the city, who were witnesses of the extraordinary respect which he paid him.

Ver. 23. *And Samuel said unto the cook, Bring the portion which I gave thee, of which I said, Set it by thee.*] The master of the feast distributed to every one their portion; or ordered what dish should be set before them: and Samuel had commanded the cook (before they sat down) not to set one dish upon the table, but keep it till he called for it.

Ver. 24. *And the cook took up the shoulder, and that which was upon it.*] The left shoulder and breast; for the right shoulder and the right breast belonged to the priest. (Lev. vii. 33, 34.)

And set it before Saul.] As the principal place was given him at the feast, so the principal dish also was set before him, to express still the great regard he had to his person.

And Samuel said, Behold that which is left!] Reserved on purpose for his entertainment.

Set it before thee, and eat.] Let it stand, as it is set before thee, and eat of it, as thy portion.

For unto this time hath it been kept for thee, since I said, I have invited the people.] The plainest translation of these words, is that of Lud. de Dieu, *Eat, because till this appointed time it hath been reserved for thee, when I said, I have invited certain persons.* That is, besides the thirty persons, he told the cook he had invited some others (which were Saul and his attendant) for whom he would have this shoulder to be reserved. For by inviting *the people*, he understands only these two persons; the word *people* sometimes signifying (as he shews) very few. He thinks, indeed, the feast was not made by Samuel, who brought along with him only these two guests: but that seems to me not to agree with the whole story.

And Saul did eat with Samuel that day.] Who entertained him very nobly; for the left shoulder was always accounted the best part of the sacrifice: being the same with that which the priest had for his portion. And therefore set before the king, if he was present at the feast, and thence called by Josephus Μερὶς Βασιλικὴ, *the royal portion:* for the arm and shoulder, as Philo discourses, were the symbols of strength and fortitude.

Ver. 25. *And when they were come down from the high place into the city, Samuel communed with Saul upon the top of the house.*] Concerning his advancement to the royal dignity, and his administration of the government.

Ver. 26. *And they rose up early: and it came to pass, about the spring of the day.*] Before the people of the place were stirring.

That Samuel called Saul to the top of the house, saying, Up, that I may send thee away.] According to his promise, (ver. 19.)

And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad.] For Samuel intended, out of respect to him, to conduct him part of his way. But went without any of his usual attendants; that what he did, might, for the present, be kept a secret.

Ver. 27. *And as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid thy servant pass on before us (and he passed on), but stand thou still awhile, that I may shew thee the word of the Lord.*] Which he would have none to hear but himself: because he now meant only to give him private satisfaction, that God had chosen him to be the king of his people; before whom afterward he was publicly chosen by lot.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *THEN Samuel took a vial of oil.*] It was the business of a prophet to anoint a king, as Abarbinel observes upon Exod. xxx. Which he proves from this example of Samuel's anointing Saul, and afterward David; and Nathan's anointing Solomon, and the prophet (which the Hebrew doctors say was Jonah) anointing Jehu, (2 Kings ix. 1. 6.) This unction seems to have been in the open fields: but that it was done at a fountain, because Solomon was there anointed, cannot be proved (as the Hebrew doctors would have it) from that single instance; which will not make a general rule. Nor can it be proved, that this was sacred oil taken from the tabernacle, but rather common: for Samuel was no priest, and therefore could not meddle with that which was kept there; nor was he now near unto that place.

And poured it upon his head.] There is no order of God, that we read of, for the anointing of kings: but it had been an ancient custom, two hundred years before this time, as appears from the parable of Jotham. (See on Judg. ix. 8.) And it was now used by Samuel, that their king might be like the kings of other nations, as they desired. In aftertimes they were far superior to them, if we may believe the Hebrew doctors; who say the family of David had the privilege to be anointed with the same holy oil, wherewith the high-priest was anointed. For though the law appropriated it unto him, yet there was a dispensation with the law, manifested by some prophet. For certain it is, that Solomon was anointed with oil taken from the tabernacle, (1 Kings i. 39.) Only, they say, there was a difference in the form of anointing: the king being anointed in the form of a crown encircling his head; but the high-priest in the form of a cross, by one line drawn with the oil running down his forehead, and by another drawn by the oil between his eyebrows; which they call in the form of the Greek letter *chi*, having no mind to mention the name of the cross. (See Selden's Titles of Honour, p. 144. De Success. in Pontific. lib. ii. cap. 9. Schickard's Jus Regium, cap. 1. Theor. 4.)

And kissed him.] In token of subjection and reverence to him; according to the custom of ancient times, (see Gen. xli. 40.) and in those following, (Psal. ii. 12.) This the Jews call *neshikah shel gedolah, the kiss of greatness or majesty;* in our language, the kiss of homage.

And said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?] That is, doubt not, but by authority from God thou art made the ruler of his people. This was a thing not easily to be believed, and therefore he gives him three or four signs, in the following verses, to confirm his faith. But it must not be imagined, that now he was inaugurated; for that was done afterward, according to this prophetical prediction: which was kept so private, that it shewed he intended no more now, than to assure Saul he should be made king, and publicly installed their sovereign.

Ver. 2. *And when thou art departed from me to-day, thou shalt find two men by Rachel's sepulchre, in the border of Benjamin, at Zelzah: and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father,* &c.] He foretelling Saul so exactly how many persons he should meet, and the place where, and what they would say to him, was an argument that he was a prophet; and therefore was to be believed in what he said to him from God concerning the kingdom. Rachel's sepulchre was in the way to Beth-lehem, (Gen. xxxv.) which was in the tribe of Judah, but in the border of Benjamin.

Ver. 3. *Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to the plain of Tabor, and there shall meet thee three men going up to God to Beth-el.*] This had been a religious place ever since the days of Jacob: as if, by God's appearance to him there, it had been consecrated for prayer and sacrifice: and the tabernacle being now without the ark, and the ark in no determined place, they sacrificed in high places (as Samuel we read did in the foregoing chapter), and particularly here at Beth-el; where Jeroboam afterward settled one of his calves. But Fortunatus Scacchus thinks it no improbable conjecture, that they had no altar, but sacrificed upon the bare ground. (Myrothec. Elæochrysm. Sacr. lib. ii. cap. 5.)

One carrying three kids, and another three loaves, and another carrying a bottle of wine.] Intending to offer sacrifices of peace-offerings.

Ver. 4. *And they will salute thee, and give thee two loaves of bread; which thou shalt receive at their hands.*] This may be looked upon as a third sign, or an appendix to the second. And it is the more remarkable, because this present which they made him, was a figure of that honour which the people did him when he was declared their king. And if these loaves were two of the three which they were going to offer in sacrifice (as some think they were), the present was the more noble. But though this may be justified, by supposing them to be given to one that was faint with travelling, and which they might recruit at Beth-el; yet we may as well think, as Kimchi doth, that they were two loaves which they brought along with them for their own use in their journey: which they freely imparted unto Saul; and Samuel bade him not refuse; but learn thereby, when he had abundance, to be kind to those who were in want.

Ver. 5. *After that thou shalt come to the hill of God.*] So called, because they were wont to sacrifice here; or because here was a school of the prophets, who were called *men of God.* Some take this to be Gibeah, others Kirjath-jearim.

Where is a garrison of the Philistines.] This makes it probable the hill beforementioned was Geba, or Gibeah: for there they had a garrison, (xiii. 3.) which doth not contradict what was said vii. 13. For though the Philistines were subdued, and made no invasions upon the Israelites while Samuel lived; yet they might retain some strong holds, out of which they could not drive them.

And it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets.] Here it seems was a college of prophets, settled for the instruction of youth in the knowledge of the law and of piety (who were called *the sons of the prophets),* where, though the Philistines also had a garrison, yet in this they were better than many Christians (as Grotius observes), for they spared those places (when they conquered them) where learned men lived, and were dedicated to the study of religion. (See lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 11. sect. 10.)

Coming down from the high place.] Perhaps they came from a sacrifice, which had been offered in the high place: and now praised God for his benefits, in the following manner.

With a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them.] With variety of instrumental music; among which the *nevel* (which we translate *psaltery)* was the chief: having its name, as the Jewish doctors fancy (in the Midrasch, upon Psalm lxxxi.) from hence—that it put down all other instruments of music, as much as a wise man doth a fool. Bartoloccius, in his Kirjath-Sepher, par. ii. fol. 185, &c. gives an account of this, and the rest of the instruments here mentioned. With which I do not think fit to trouble the reader; but only note, that this music was used in prophesying, because the minds of the prophets were thereby composed, and made apt to receive soft and good impressions, as Grotius here observes from many examples.

And they shall prophesy.] Sing the praises of God, as the word *prophesy* sometimes signifies, (Exod. xv. 21. 1 Chron. xxv. 3.) In what manner this was done, it is not so easy for us now to define or specify (as Mr. Mede speaks). But one of them seems to have been the precentor, to usher in the verse or ditty; and the rest to have answered, Τὰ ἀκροτελεύτια, *the extremes,* or *last words* of the verse. (See him, book i. discourse xvi. p. 78.)

Ver. 6. *And the Spirit of God shall come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them.*] This was the highest assurance of all the rest, that Samuel anointed him by God's authority; who vouchsafed suddenly to inspire him with such thoughts and affections, that he became like one of them, *viz.* a psalmist: able in an instant to compose hymns in the praises of God; or to accompany them in their melodies, which he had never learnt. For he was not bred in the school of the prophets.

And shalt be turned into another man.] Endued with extraordinary prudence and courage, and such-like qualities, as fitted him for the government and conduct of God's people.

Ver. 7. *And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do as occasion shall serve thee.*] As if he had said, I cannot give thee particular rules about every thing that is to be done by thee: but doubt not to undertake the government of the people: for God's Spirit shall guide thee to do that which the present occasion requires.

For God is with thee.] Be confident of good success in all thy undertakings, for God will be with thee, when thou goest out against thine enemies. The Chaldee paraphrast understands the foregoing words as if he had said, *make all things belonging to a king,* and then adds, *for the Word of the Lord will be thy help.*

Ver. 8. *And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal.*] A place which had been famous for many great things done there, when they first came to Canaan: and lay conveniently for all the tribes beyond Jordan to meet, now they dwelt there.

And, behold, I will come down to thee, to offer burnt-offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace-offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come unto thee, and shew thee what thou shalt do.] This looks like another sign, which he gave him, of God's presence with him, in future times, if he were obedient to his commands. For it cannot be understood of his going immediately to Gilgal; and staying there seven days: for the people were first to be called together to Mizpeh, where he was made king, (ver. 17.) and after the defeat of the Ammonites he was confirmed in the kingdom at Gilgal, (xi. 14, 15.) And then the next year, a war breaking out with the Philistines, all the people met at Gilgal, and Saul with them; waiting for Samuel to come, as he had appointed, to offer sacrifice; which Saul, being impatient of staying so long for him, offered himself, &c. (xii. 4. 8, 9.) and thereby forfeited God's favour; whose prophet had assured him he would not fail to come to meet him here. But then these words must not be pointed as they are now, but as the Hebrew text will bear; retaining the same words, and only altering the pause or point in this manner: *Thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal: and, behold, I will come unto thee to offer burnt-offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace-offerings, seven days.* Here is to be a pause; and then another sentence begins thus: *Thou shalt tarry till I come unto thee,* &c. As if he had said, See, in any case, that thou tarry till I come, *and shew thee what thou shalt do.* Which Samuel, perhaps, knew not himself at present: but intended to ask counsel of God; and being fully instructed in this great business, then come to consecrate him (as Dr. Jackson conjectures), and establish him in his kingdom; by a solemn sacrifice for seven days, such as Solomon used at the consecration of the temple. (See his Third Sermon on Jer. xxvi. 19.; and the very same he repeats in his book of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, chap. 17. parag. 4.)

Ver. 9. *And it was so, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all these signs came to pass that day.*] So great was the goodness of God, that he immediately fulfilled the last and chief of these signs: for he was no sooner gone from Samuel, but he felt another spirit come into him of wisdom and fortitude, to qualify him for the government of God's people. Which afterward God took away from him, because of his sins, xvi. 14. (See Psal. li. 12.)

Ver. 10. *And when he came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he prophesied among them.*] He mentions not the other signs particularly, because they were not of such general concernment unto others; but for his own satisfaction: whereas this of the prophets meeting him, and his conversion into a prophet, was of great and universal concernment; to make the people reverence him as their king, when they heard how God had honoured him with such an extraordinary gift from heaven.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said one to another, What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?*] It begat wonder in all those who knew his education, that he should on a sudden be inspired as they were, who were bred up in the school of the prophets: for though it was in the power of God alone to bestow the gift of prophecy upon men, yet commonly he endowed none with it, but such as were trained up in those studies which might dispose them for it. For had it been usual to invest those with this spirit, who had not been educated in such a course as might fit them to receive it, we cannot think it would have been so great a marvel now, as to give rise to this proverb. Which must not be understood, as Procopius Gazæus observes, as if Saul had perpetually the gift of prophecy; but that he received such a spiritual gift, whereby he at present prophesied; and was endued with prudence also to govern the people of God. Thus the seventy elders, who were to assist Moses, prophesied; but not always. It is observed by Erasmus, That this became a proverb, when they saw, "aliquem indecenter alieno gregi admixtum," *any man indecently mingled with company that were strangers to him.* Or, when they saw a sudden change wrought in any person; as Gregory Nazianzen applied it when he was chosen a bishop: "Saul prophesied so much beyond expectation, and when nobody thought of it, that the miracle became a proverb."

Ver. 12. *And one of the same place answered and said, But who is their father?*] This wonder was presently satisfied by a prudent person among them, who bade them consi-

der who it was that made prophets: not men, nor merely good education, but God alone; who was the father of all the children of the prophets (*i. e.* of their disciples), to teach them by his Spirit. Which he could bestow when he pleased upon any man, and make him a prophet, without the help of any other master: which was the cause of Amos, vii. 14. And that is the meaning of the word *father* in this place, which signifies the same with *master* or *teacher*. (See upon Gen. iv. 20, 21.)

Ver. 13. *And when he made an end of prophesying, he came to the high place.*] Herein he differed from the prophets who met him; that he prophesied but for a short time, this not being his office: and when he had done, he went up to the high place from whence they came down. Where was, I suppose, a place of worship, unto which he went up to give thanks to God for his gifts, and to pray to him to prosper him in the government he designed for him.

Ver. 14. *And Saul's uncle.*] Who met him here in the high place, or in his way home.

Said unto him and to his servant, Whither went ye?] How came you to stay so long before your return?

And he said, To seek the asses: and when we saw that they were no where.] In no place where they sought them.

We came to Samuel.] To be informed by him.

Ver. 15. *And Saul's uncle said, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you?*] What discourse they had with him.

Ver. 16. *And Saul said unto his uncle, He told us plainly that the asses were found. But of the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel spake, he told him not.*] Lest he should seem to have been seeking so high a dignity: and because hitherto Samuel thought fit it should be kept a secret between them two.

Ver. 17. *And Samuel called the people together.*] How long after he departed from Samuel we are not told; but now resolved to declare God's choice of Saul to be their king more publicly.

Unto the Lord to Mizpeh.] Which was a very famous place, where they used to meet upon great occasions, (see chap. vii.) and God was pleased to be present (as hath been before observed) wheresoever there was a general assembly of his people, for the common good. (See upon Judg. xx. 1.) Yet one cannot well imagine, that every person of the whole body of all Israel were called hither unto this convention: but by *the people* we are to understand all the elders and heads of their tribes, who governed and represented the rest: and accordingly that which follows is to be interpreted.

Ver. 18. *And said unto the children of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hands of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, of them that oppressed you.*] He commemorates the benefits they received from him, ever since they were in Egypt; from whence he brought them; and suffered none of the kingdoms that lay in their way to Canaan to obstruct their passage: and since they came there delivered them from many heavy oppressions.

Ver. 19. *And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and tribulations.*] By raising up judges, whensoever they cried to him for help: who never failed to conquer all their enemies.

And ye have said unto him, Nay.] When he desired them to continue under his government, they refused, and would not be denied what they asked.

But set a king over us.] They would not any longer be governed by God, but have a king settled over them; to whom they might resort for help.

Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands.] Into which their tribes were divided. This was a wonderful obstinacy and stupidity, that, after God had given them time to consider what it was they desired, and what difference there was between his government, and that of the kings round about them, they should not relent; but persist to the last in their resolution; and imagine that a king could save them, though God was not with him.

Ver. 20. *And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to draw near.*] Unto the place where the lots were to be drawn, in the presence of the heads of their tribes and families, who represented all the rest.

The tribe of Benjamin was taken.] This is a phrase used in the seventh of Joshua, about the discovery of him, who had offended in the accursed thing: which all agree was by lots. And so Rasi and Ralbag understand it here: though Kimchi imagines God told him by *urim* and *thummim*, out of what tribe and family their king should be taken. Which is not probable, because the ark was not now at Mizpeh; before which the high-priest was to stand, when he consulted the Divine Majesty by *urim* and *thummim*.

Ver. 21. *When he caused the tribe of Benjamin to draw near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken.*] The holy writer shortens this account of casting lots: but it is pretty evident they were cast four times: in the first the tribe of Benjamin was taken; in the second the family of Matri in that tribe was taken: but there being several households in that family, it was cast a third time, that they might know in what house their king was, and that of Kish was taken: and in his house, by a new lottery, Saul was taken: and he took this course, as to prevent all dispute, so to give him the greater authority over them, as a person divinely appointed; according to what God had said, Deut. xix. 15. And it is very observable, that Plato himself acknowledges a government appointed by lots to be Θεοφιλῆ ἀρχήν, *a government beloved of God*, (lib. iv. de Legibus.)

Here interpreters are wont to inquire, why their first king should be chosen out of the smallest tribe, sprung from the youngest son of Jacob, and out of the smallest family in this tribe: especially since Judah all along had the preeminence among his brethren, and the great King was promised to spring from him. To which this seems to be a reasonable satisfaction; that this king being extorted by their undutiful importunities, and given them in anger (as I before observed), God was pleased to express his dislike of it by this choice: whereby he also intended to take them off, from depending on their king (whose power was small) so much as on himself.

And when they sought him, he could not be found.] Having withdrawn himself, either out of feebleness of spirit (as some think), or rather out of modesty, he declined so high an authority, unless imposed upon him: or, perhaps, being affrighted when he heard Samuel still representing God as offended with them, for asking a king: which was to reject his government.

Ver. 22. *Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, if the man should come thither. And the Lord answered.*] From hence Abarbinel argues, that God directed them, both by lot, and by *urim* and *thummim*. Which if it be true, then, though the ark was not there, yet they inquired of the Lord in the usual way, and he was pleased to give answers any where, in great and weighty cases. As Abiathar inquired of the Lord with the ephod for David, at Keilah and at Ziklag, (xxiii. 9. xxx. 7.)

Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff.] Or, among the carriages. Here the Jews observe, that *whosoever flies dominion, him dominion follows.* For when they told Saul he was chosen king, he said he was not fit for that office, and bade them inquire again by *urim* and *thummim:* which they make the meaning of the word *further.* And while they were going to make this inquiry, he went and hid himself, till the oracle discovered him. (See Buxtorf, Hist. Urim et Thummim. cap. 3. p. 307.)

Ver. 23. *And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people, from the shoulders and upwards.*] A princely person, and of a majestic aspect: as Corn. Nepos describes Iphicrates in the account he gives of his life, cap. 3. "Fuit et animo magno et corpore, imperatoriaque forma, ut ipso aspectu cuivis injiceret admirationem sui." *He was great both in mind and body, having a form so imperial, that his very aspect struck every one with admiration of him.* And thus P. Cunæus observes, that not only barbarous people, but the most polite nations did, "Majestatem corporis venerari," *look upon a majestic body with veneration,* lib. i. de Repub. Hebr. p. 85. Which appears by what Homer saith of Agamemnon, Iliad. iii. ver. 166. and Virgil of Æneas and Turnus: the latter of which he describes just like Saul, lib. vii. ver. 782.

"Ipse inter primos præstanti corpore Turnus
Vertitur, arma tenens, et toto vertice supra est."

Ver. 24. *And Samuel said unto all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen.*] Though the people were resolutely bent to have a king, yet they were sensible none could make one but God. And therefore they came, in the beginning of this business, to ask one of his prophets. But Samuel could not constitute one without Divine direction and appointment, as appears by the first verse of this chapter, where he saith, *the Lord hath anointed thee;* and the lot whereby he was publicly chosen was cast *before the Lord,* (ver. 19. 23.) And accordingly here he tells them, *the Lord hath chosen him.* Thus afterward the Lord commanded David to be anointed, (xvi. 1. 3.) and among all his sons Solomon was particularly appointed by God to succeed him, (1 Chron. xxix. 5.)

That there is none like him among all the people?] Such was his stature and his aspect, that, as Josephus expresses it, ἐξεῖχέ τε ἁπάντων, καὶ τὸ ὕψος ἦν βασιλικώτατος, *he excelled, and was most kingly in his height,* (lib. vi. Antiq. cap. 5.)

And all the people shouted.] All that were then present, except some profane fellows, who were so far from owning him for their king that they despised him.

And said, God save the king.] In the Hebrew, *let the king live,* that is, be prosperous. The same form of words was used in after-ages when they made kings, (1 Kings i. 34. 39. 2 Kings xi. 12. 2 Chron. xxiii. 11.) All this being done at Mizpeh, when Samuel set up the great stone called Ebenezer, it is not improbable that Saul was there declared their king.

Ver. 25. *Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord.*] The right of the king, which he had laid before the people, upon their first desire to have one, (viii. 11.) he now wrote in a book, and laid up before the Lord: that it might be a witness against them, that all the evils which hereafter befel them, were drawn upon them by their own desires. For what Petrus Cunæus saith, that he wrote the words mentioned Deut. xvii. 16, &c. is altogether unlikely: they being laid up before the Lord long ago, when the law was put by the side of the ark, (Deut. xxxi. 26.) Josephus said a great deal better, (lib. vi. Antiq. cap. 5.) Τὰ μέλλοντα συμβήσεσθαι κακὰ γράψαι, &c. *The prophet having written the evils that should befal them, he read them in the ears of the king, and then laid up the book in the tabernacle of God, to be a testimony unto future ages of what he had foretold.* A duplicate of this writing, it is likely, he left with the elders of the people.

And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.] The people were not dismissed by Saul, who would not presently take upon him to exercise his authority. For Samuel was there, who had been for many years their supreme governor. That is, sixteen years (as Sir J. Marsham computes) before the inauguration of Saul: and he lived eighteen years after, as Josephus saith, in the latter end of the sixth book of his Antiquities; during which time he exercised the power of a judge.

Ver. 26. *Saul also went home to Gibeah.*] In this he still shewed his humility: going to his own home, which was no princely palace.

And there went with him a band of men, whose heart God had touched.] A company of stout valiant men, of great resolution: whom God inclined to follow him, as his guard. Or, were moved, perhaps, by the authority of Samuel (who was a man of God), to go and attend him.

Ver. 27. *And the children of Belial said.*] Some very lewd men (see upon Deut. xiii. 13.) who hated all government: and being, it is probable, men of some rank and quality, were proud, and despised a person of such a small family.

How shall this man save us?] They would not vouchsafe so much as to call him by his name; but insolently contemned him, as one of no note, who had no power to deliver them.

And they despised him, and brought him no presents.] As the manner was to do unto their kings in the eastern countries, when they first tendered their service to them. Which was a token of their benevolence, subjection, and joy. Thus the Psalmist represents the people offering gifts to the Messiah, Psal. xlv. and lxxii.

Jonathan thus expresses it in this place, They did not come to wish him a happy reign.

But he held his peace.] This was an act of great prudence: which declared he was endued with an extraordinary spirit; which enabled him to dissemble his knowledge of the scorn they put upon him. For if he had taken notice of it, he must have punished it; and it had not been safe to begin his reign with any thing of severity: therefore he wisely ordered himself, as if he did not observe their neglect. Corn. Bertram thinks, in his book de Repub.

Jud. cap. 10. that these men refusing to be governed by Saul, he retired for awhile, and led a private life: leaving Samuel to administer all affairs, as he had done for many years. But whether that be true or not, it is evident Saul, in the beginning of his reign, was endued with a spirit of singular wisdom and moderation: and was none of those princes whom Dion Prusæus describes, (Orat. de Regno, p. 5.) μακαρίζοντας ἐξουσίαν μετ' ἀνοίας, *who bless and praise power, joined with folly and want of understanding.*

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *THEN Nahash the Ammonite.*] He was either the king of the children of Ammon, or the captain of his host; who laid siege to Jabesh-Gilead, as Josephus saith, about a month after Saul was chosen king: but had levied war against them before, (xii. 12.) which was the occasion of their desiring a king.

Came up against Jabesh-Gilead.] He renewed, it is likely, their old pretensions to this country: which they had made in the time of Jephthah. For Jabesh-Gilead was in the tribe of Manasseh on the other side Jordan; bordering upon the Ammonites: who laid a claim to this country, which the Israelites took from Sihon and Og, as we read in Judg. xi.

And all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee.] Be his subjects, but not slaves, with whom no covenant was made.

Ver. 2. *And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this condition I will make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes.*] He would not put out both their eyes, because that would have made them unserviceable to him; but only the right, which (as many learned men have observed) was most useful in war; the left eye being covered with their shields, which they held in their left hand: so Procopius Gazæus, *the left eye is covered with the shield; with the right we see our enemies.*

And lay it for a reproach upon all Israel.] This is the only reason he gives for such insolent treatment, that all Israel might know what they were to expect, if he could prevail over them.

Ver. 3. *And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days, that we may send messengers into all the coasts of Israel: and then, if there be no man to save us, we will come out to thee.*] It may seem strange, that either they should submit so soon to such base conditions; or that Nahash should grant them so much respite, when he saw them so abject, and inclined to yield to him. But the reason of both is visible: for Saul they thought was not able to help them; having not yet taken upon him the government, but living privately; (see ver. 5.) and Nahash, it is like, was loath to drive them to desperation, by denying them this short space to expect relief, which he thought could not possibly come to them, though Saul should appear and endeavour to levy an army; for that he imagined could not be done in so few days.

Ver. 4. *Then came messengers to Gibeah of Saul.*] So called, because Saul was there born, and bred, and dwelt.

And told the tidings in the ears of the people: and all the people lifted up their voices, and wept.] As men despairing of relief.

Ver. 5. *And, behold, Saul came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What aileth the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh.*] By this it appears (as I noted in the conclusion of the foregoing chapter), that some men, not only refusing to submit to him, but despising him, he went and lived retired, and led a rustic life: exercising no authority over the people; but leaving all to Samuel's management.

Ver. 6. *Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon him when he heard these tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly.*] But now he resolved, by an impulse he felt from heaven, to shew that God had chosen him to be their king. Who, upon this occasion, gave him an extraordinary measure of courage, zeal, and military skill.

Ver. 7. *And he took a yoke of oxen.*] Which he had newly brought out of the field, (ver. 5.)

And hewed them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the coasts of Israel, by the hand of messengers, saying, Whosoever comes not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen.] He herein begins to give a proof of his resolution, by this terrible threatening; and by the representation he made of the execution he intended, if he was disobeyed. Whereby it appears, that the kings of Israel assumed such an absolute power as Samuel described chap. viii. One part of which consisted in making war, and raising soldiers, by their sole authority, and punishing those that did not come to the army at their summons. For we never read that they consulted the oracle before they went to war; nor that they are reproved by the prophets for that neglect. In like manner they made laws, which is the act of a sovereign. For though they could not alter the laws of Moses, but were to govern themselves by them; yet, in things not determined there, or were not clear and plain, they made what laws they thought good; as appears by David, and Solomon, and other of their best princes.

And the fear of the Lord fell upon the people.] They were no less affected with the cutting these oxen in pieces, than they had been with the using the Levite's concubine in like manner, (Judg. xix. 19.) as Bochartus notes: who observes something like this among heathen people, (Hierozoic. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 33.)

And they came out with one consent.] God, who put courage into Saul, possessed the people also with a fear of offending him; now that he asserted his royal authority over them. For he names himself before Samuel (the kingly dignity being superior to the prophetical), but wisely mentions him also, that they who did not reverence himself as their king, might follow the prophet, whom all reverenced.

Ver. 8. *And when they numbered them in Bezek.*] Of this place, see upon Judg. i. 6.

The children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.] It is thought by some, that the Philistines invaded them in the west, as the Ammonites did in the east, (just as they had done formerly in the time of Jephthah, Judg. x. 7, 8.) which is the reason so few of Judah came in at this summons; being engaged elsewhere against another dangerous enemy. But they would not wholly neglect to come to his assistance in this other war, but shewed their forwardness to obey him, as much as they were able. Bertram, also, Altingius, (in his Shilo, lib. iii. cap. 11.) and others, take it as an honour done to

this tribe, which had the pre-eminence, that they were numbered by themselves. But Sir J. Marsham looks upon it as the beginning of a schism, (Secul. ix.)

Ver. 9. *And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say to the men of Jabesh-Gilead, To-morrow, by that time the sun shall be hot, ye shall have help,* &c.] The morrow after their return, before noon.

Ver. 10. *Therefore the men of Jabesh said.*] Unto Nahash the Ammonite.

To-morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us that which seemeth good to you.] In case, that is, relief did not come to them by that time: of which they pretended to have no hope. Most look upon this as spoken ironically and in mockery: but Grotius takes it for a stratagem, to make them secure: according to the opinion of those times, that they might delude an enemy by deceitful words: as Elisha did the Syrians, 2 Kings vi. 18, 19, &c. (See lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 1. sect. 17.)

Ver. 11. *And it was so on the morrow, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the host in the morning-watch, and slew the Ammonites till the heat of the day.*] He set upon them, I suppose, on three sides, and the men of Jabesh issuing out on the other, they were so distracted that they could make little resistance: but the Israelites got into the midst of them very early, and made a great slaughter of them till noon.

And it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.] This is added to shew, with what a complete victory Saul began his reign: whereby God established his authority.

Ver. 12. *And the people said unto Samuel.*] Who, it appears from hence, accompanied Saul in this expedition, to encourage him with hopes of good success.

Who is he that said, Saul shall not reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death.] Great successes make great alterations in the affections of the people; who quietly saw Saul contemned a little while ago; but now would have inquiry made after those sons of Belial, who spake opprobriously of him, (x. 27.)

Ver. 13. *And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day.*] He prudently dissembled his knowledge of their despisal of him, before the kingdom was confirmed to him: but this moderation, now that he was wonderfully victorious, argued greater wisdom and goodness. For nothing is more glorious than to be humble and meek in the height of power.

For to-day the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel.] Besides the policy he exercised in pardoning offenders (whereby he laid the strongest obligations upon them to be faithful to him), it was a piece of piety to imitate God, who had been so good to them all.

Ver. 14. *Then Samuel said unto the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, to renew the kingdom there.*] New kingdoms are not easily settled. And this place was famous upon many accounts, as Mizpeh was, where Samuel first declared him king. Particularly, Samuel was wont to judge the people here, (vii. 16.)

Ver. 15. *And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king, before the Lord in Gilgal.*] He had been anointed in Ramah; and chosen by lot in Mizpeh; but still some disdained to own him as their king: which made him content himself for a time (as I said before) with a private life. But now, after this signal token of God's presence with him, in the late victory, he was, by common consent, acknowledged by all the people for their king. Which is the meaning of these words, *they made Saul king;* for it is certain, it was neither *they* nor Samuel that could make a king; but God alone: who ordered Samuel to anoint him, and then made the lot to fall upon him; and now inclined the hearts of all the people to submit to his authority.

The LXX. here say, ἔχρισε Σαμυὴλ, &c. that *Samuel here anointed Saul king over Israel.* And Josephus, (lib. vi. cap. 6.) that he again anointed Saul, Τῷ ἁγίῳ ἐλαίῳ, *with holy oil.* But there is not a word of this anointing in the Hebrew text, no, nor in the Vulgar Latin: and the Targum very well expresses it, *they made Saul to reign, i. e.* would not let him any longer lead a private life; but prayed him to take the government upon him according to God's ordinance, and promised subjection to him. Gilgal seems to have been chosen for this purpose, rather than any other place: because there was a sanctified piece of ground, as Abarbinel speaks, where, when they entered into Canaan, the ark first stood: which now, perhaps, they brought hither, and offered sacrifice before it.

And there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace-offerings before the Lord.] Who was present, as I observed before, (see Judg. xx. 1.) in such great assemblies of the body of the people: with whom both they and their king made a covenant of obedience to him, by offering of the sacrifices.

And there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced together.] By feasting upon the peace-offerings: giving thanks to God for the late victory, and for settling the kingdom.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND Samuel said unto all Israel.*] In the presence of Saul, as appears from ver. 3. 5.

Behold, I have hearkened unto you in all that you said unto me, and have made you a king.] This speech was made before they parted from Gilgal: where they had renewed the kingdom.

Ver. 2. *And now, behold, the king walketh before you.*] To rule and govern them, (Numb. xxvii. 17.)

And I am old and grey-headed.] And therefore very willing to be discharged from the government of you.

And, behold, my sons are with you.] Reduced also to the state of private persons; being the king's subjects, no less than you.

And I have walked before you from my childhood to this day.] He appeals to them whether he had not always discharged his duty faithfully, from the very beginning; when God had made him a prophet to instruct and guide them. For now they might freely accuse him, if they had any thing to allege against him: both he and his sons being now become subjects to a more sovereign authority.

Ver. 3. *Behold, here I am: witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed.*] He offers himself to be tried, and to give a public account of his administration: being ready to answer any thing that could be objected against him.

Whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken?] He desires them to testify, if he had ruled after the manner of

the eastern kings: under which government they chose to put themselves.

Or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed?] If they knew of no open violence, he bids them mention any fraud or circumvention, of which he had been guilty.

Or of whose hands have I received any bribes to blind mine eyes? and I will restore it you.] He challenges them to prove so much as the receiving any gift, in any cause that came before him; and he would make full satisfaction.

Ver. 4. *And they said, Thou hast not defrauded, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand.*] They acknowledged him to be perfectly an upright judge: who could not be charged to have done any thing amiss.

Ver. 5. *And he said unto them, The Lord is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found aught in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.*] Of his innocence; and that they had no reason to complain of his government.

Ver. 6. *And Samuel said unto the people, It is the Lord that advanced Moses and Aaron, and brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.*] D. Kimchi refers this to the foregoing words; as if he had said, *the Lord that did such wonders by Moses and Aaron is witness*, &c.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore stand still.*] The Jews observe, that they were wont to *stand*, when they heard the word of God. Though those words, Exod. xx. 18. are but a slender proof of it.

That I may reason with you before the Lord of all the righteous acts of the Lord, which he did to you and to your fathers.] He would not dismiss them, till, having obtained this honourable testimony from them, he had represented to them the great benefits they had received from God, and their ingratitude to him.

Ver. 8. *When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the Lord, then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron, which brought your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place.*] Any one may easily discern, this is but a compendious narrative of what God did for them, from their first coming out of Egypt, till they were settled in Canaan; no more than that *their fathers cried unto the Lord, when Jacob came into Egypt*, and the Lord sent these two persons to deliver them. For many things intervened between both these; till at last God settled them in their rest, in the good land he promised to give them.

Ver. 9. *And when they forgat the Lord their God, he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the host of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab; and they fought against them.*] This is a short history of the calamities which befel them, for their idolatry, after they came there: some few of which he only mentions; without observing exactly the order in which they came upon them: but these were the people who longest oppressed them.

Ver. 10. *And they cried unto the Lord, and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken the Lord, and have served Baalim and Ashtaroth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee.*] This they did very often. (Judg. iii. 9. 13. iv. 3. vi. 7. especially x. 10. 15, &c.)

Ver. 11. *And the Lord sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwell safely.*] This is perfectly agreeable to the history of the book of Judges; which acquaints us, that as often as they repented, and besought his pardon, &c. he raised up deliverers unto them: the latest of which he only mentions. In which account there is no difficulty, but only about Bedan: of whom we no where read. But see my notes upon Judg. x. 4. unto which may be added, that the Chaldee paraphrase here hath it, *he sent Gideon and Samson*, &c. whom most take to be the person here meant, and called Ben-Dan (the son of Dan), because he was of that tribe: and by contraction called Bedan; just as instead of Saulmeel (asked of God), they called him who writes this book Samuel, for shortness' sake. Who mentions himself as one of their deliverers; because the signal overthrow he gave the Philistines, which drove them out of their country, was fresh in their memory.

Ver. 12. *And when ye saw that Nahash, the king of the children of Ammon, came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us; when the Lord your God was your king.*] They would not stay till God raised them up a deliverer, or commanded Samuel, who was their judge, to fight with him: but would have a king like other nations, always at hand to fight their battles. (See upon viii. 5.) The word *nay* seems to signify that Samuel told them, that God would be with them to deliver them; or that he offered himself to be their leader under God: but they refused his offer, and continued to demand a king.

Ver. 13. *Now therefore behold the king whom you have chosen, and whom you have desired!*] He could not upbraid them too often with this, that they would not be content with the government of God, which was peculiar to them; but chose to be like other people.

And, behold, the Lord hath set a king over you.] Though they chose to have a king like other nations, and be governed by God no longer; yet he still puts them in mind they could not make one, but he was set over them by God; as I have before observed.

Ver. 14. *If ye will fear the Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord.*] According to the covenant they lately made with him: (xi. 15.) all virtue springs from the fear of God.

Then shall both ye, and your king that reigneth over you, continue following the Lord your God.] That is, be defended by him; and *continue a happy people:* notwithstanding they had thus rejected him. This appears to be the meaning, by what is opposed to it in the following verse.

Ver. 15. *But if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord; then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers.*] He would suffer their enemies to oppress them, as they did in the days of the Judges: or send other plagues upon them.

Ver. 16. *Now therefore stand and see the great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes.*] For a visible demonstration of the truth of all that Samuel had said.

Ver. 17. *Is it not wheat-harvest to-day?*] A very clear day, and in no disposition to rain. Which was not wont to fall in harvest-time; but in the autumn, and in the spring: called the later and the former rain.

I will call upon the Lord, and he shall send thunder and

rain; that you may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king.] By this he shewed how he could in an instant deprive them of all the comforts of life; as they deserved, for their rejecting him and his prophet: who was so powerful, as by his prayers to produce such wonders.

Ver. 18. *So Samuel called upon the Lord; and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day.*] A very horrible tempest, accompanied, it is likely, with lightning; when all was serene, and no sign appeared of it.

And all the people feared the Lord and Samuel.] This struck such a terror into them, that they were afraid God would destroy them, as he did Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and that Samuel would not intercede for them.

Ver. 19. *And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king.*] Till now they seem not to have been sensible of their sin, in desiring an alteration in the form of their government: therefore it was a miraculous storm, full of horror, which extorted this confession from them; not only of this, but all their former sins.

Ver. 20. *And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not; ye have done all this wickedness; yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve him with all your heart.*] He would not have them despair of recovering God's favour; and directs them the best way to it: by continuing so sensible of their wickedness, as to be moved to true repentance and steadfast obedience.

Ver. 21. *And turn ye not aside: for then shall ye go after vain things, which cannot profit.*] He warns them above all things against worshipping other gods, whom he calls *vain things which cannot profit;* by a scheme of speech in the Hebrew language, signifying, *they do a great deal of mischief.* Thus in Prov. xx. 23. the wise man saith, *a false balance is not good;* that is, is very bad and hateful to God; as it goes before, of *divers weights.* And thus heathen writers speak, particularly Homer, Odyss. ξ. ver. 85.

Οὐ γὰρ σχέτλια ἔργα θεοὶ μάκαρες φιλέουσι.

The blessed gods do not love wicked actions; i. e. they hate and detest them.

Nor deliver, for they are vain.] He presses them to persist in the worship of God alone; whom if they forsook and went after other gods, in vain did they expect help and deliverance from them, for they were void of all power.

Ver. 22. *For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake; because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.*] The steadfastness of God in his affection to them, notwithstanding their provocations, was a mighty motive to faithful obedience.

Ver. 23. *Moreover, as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will instruct you in the good and right way.*] Not only pray for them, but teach and instruct them: which were the two great offices of a prophet. They had highly disobliged him; but he imitated God, who pardoned them, and so did he.

Ver. 24. *Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.*] All his prayers and instructions would not do the business, without their serious considerations. And what more worthy their constant thoughts than the great benefits they had received from God: particularly his tender mercy in not casting them off when they shaked off his government.

Ver. 25. *But if you will still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both you and your king.*] As it proved, not only in this, but in several future reigns.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *AND Saul reigned one year.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *the son of one year in his reign or kingdom.* A very learned prelate of our own (in his Demonstration of the Messiah, par. ii. p. 240.) takes the meaning to be, that *after the Philistines were subdued by Samuel, a year passed, when Saul began to reign; and after this he reigned two years free from their yoke.* As for his being called *the son of one year* in the Hebrew, it is well translated by us *reigned one year;* because he was *born,* when he was made king, and changed into another man: for thus (as Bochartus hath observed) the day of an emperor's inauguration among the gentiles was called his *birth-day,* viz. *natalis regni, the day when he began his reign.*

And when he had reigned two years over Israel.] So Ralbag interprets the Hebrew words; and thereby confutes the strange fancy in Seder Olam Rabba, that Saul reigned but two years in all. Whereas the meaning is, after this he reigned two years free from the oppression of the Philistines: but when they were ended, the Philistines got the upper hand again, and enslaved the Israelites, as appears by this chapter.

Ver. 2. *Saul chose him three thousand men.*] In the first year of his reign he performed those things mentioned in the foregoing chapter: and when he had reigned two years, these things fell out which we read in this chapter. Which is much better than Dr. Lightfoot's exposition, that he had been king one year from his first anointing at Ramah, to his second at Gibeah: and after that he reigned two years more before the Lord cast him off, and anointed David. Symmachus and Procopius Gazæus, not much otherwise. Who by *son of one year* think the simplicity of his mind is denoted: which he preserved for some time, *i. e.* till he had reigned two years over Israel, and then he began to be depraved and forsaken of God.

Whereof two thousand were with Saul in Michmash, and in Mount Beth-el, and one thousand men with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin.] There was another Gibeah in the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 57.)

And the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent.] The forementioned number being sufficient for his guard, and to preserve the country in peace, and to oppose any sudden inroad of their enemies: he would not be burdensome to his people, by keeping great forces.

Ver. 3. *And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines.*] Who, though subdued by Samuel at Eben-ezer, and driven out of the country; yet kept some strong holds, as I observed, x. 5.

That was in Geba.] This was a distinct place from Gibeah, though both in the tribe of Benjamin: as is evident from Josh. xviii. 24. 28.

And the Philistines heard it.] And thereupon (as the following words import) denounced war against Israel.

And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land of Israel, saying, Let the Hebrews hear.] He gave them notice by a proclamation, what Jonathan had done, and what was the effect of it: and thereupon summoned them to come to Gilgal.

Ver. 4. *And all Israel heard say, that Saul had smitten the garrison of the Philistines.*] This shews that Jonathan acted by Saul's order: who was desirous to free his own tribe from such intruders.

And that Israel also was an abomination with the Philistines.] Who were highly incensed to take revenge.

And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal.] Where Samuel had appointed to meet him, (x. 8.)

Ver. 5. *The Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand of the sea-shore for multitude; and they came up and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Beth-aven.*] A prodigious army, and very formidable, by reason of their chariots and horsemen, which were also very numerous, (see Josh. xi. 4.) But it is not likely the Philistines alone could bring so many into the field: no, nor after other nations thereabout were associated with them, it is credible that they should make up thirty thousand chariots of war. For none ever had so many; Pharaoh himself pursuing the Israelites only with six hundred, (Exod. xiv. 7.) Therefore most of them were no more than carriages, which were necessary for the baggage of such vast multitudes of people: which is a better account, in my judgment, than to say there is a mistake made by transcribers in later times: as Bochartus himself thinks, (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 9.) because in the Syriac and Arabic copies there are only found three thousand. Which is too great a number, without the help of the foregoing exposition; for in the vast army of Mithridates there were but a hundred chariots, and in Darius's two hundred, and in Antiochus Epiphanes' (of which we read 2 Macc. xiii. 2.) but three hundred.

Ver. 6. *When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the people were distressed).* Though their wonderful success against the Ammonites had encouraged them to obey the summons of such a prosperous leader, as Saul had been; yet when they saw the vast army of the Philistines, how well they were appointed, and themselves unprovided, their hearts failed them, and they slunk from him as fast as they had flocked to him.

Then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.] One part of the people endeavoured to secure themselves in lurking places: where it was not easy to find them.

Ver. 7. *And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead.*] Another part of them fled as far as they could from present danger, into the country of the two tribes and a half.

As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.] All that were left with him were in great fear, seeing so many of their brethren desert him.

Ver. 8. *And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel appointed.*] He mistook Samuel's meaning, (as I shewed upon x. 8.) who told him he would come and offer sacrifice seven days: and then adds, *thou shalt tarry till I come.* So two interpreters, who are ancient in respect of our times (Rupertus and Angelomus), have observed an amphibologia in Samuel's words in that place, which may be construed two ways; and it was Saul's folly to make choice of the wrong sense. For the last words there are as much as if he had said, *be sure to tarry till I come, and shew thee what thou shalt do.* And indeed common reason might have taught him, that if the war was to be undertaken, it was to be managed likewise by the counsel of the Lord: and therefore he ought not to have sacrificed, or done any other solemn act, before the prophet, who was God's ambassador in this business, came to instruct him.

But Samuel came not to Gilgal.] So soon as Saul expected him.

And the people were scattered from him.] That third part of the people who were left began to go away, when they saw Samuel did not come to advise and assist him in this dangerous condition.

Ver. 9. *And Saul said, Bring hither the burnt-offering unto me, and peace-offerings. And he offered the burnt-offering.*] And would have proceeded to offer the peace-offerings, if Samuel's coming had not prevented him.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass, that, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him.*] Welcome him thither: which he did in honour of the prophet.

Ver. 11. *And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together to Michmash.*] These looked like weighty reasons; but could not excuse his presumption in not waiting for Samuel, who assured him he would come thither.

Ver. 12. *Therefore, said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt-offering.*] He pretends it was much against his inclination: but pleads necessity for what he did, least his enemies should have set upon him before he had commended himself to God and begged his blessing. By which it appears, that burnt-offerings were of the nature of a prayer to God: whom they acknowledged hereby to be the Lord of all. Whence it is that we read so often of Abraham and Isaac, that they "built altars (which were for sacrifice) and called upon the name of the Lord." The gentiles also, as well as the Jews, invoked God by their sacrifices, as Mr. Mede hath shewn from Homer and other authors, book ii. p. 464.

Ver. 13. *And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee.*] When God advanced Saul to be king, he was little in his own eyes, and then a great man in the sight of God. But now he began to take upon him, and thought it was fit the prophet should wait for the king rather than the king for the prophet: and distrusted Samuel's word, who bade him tarry till he came. And so intruded upon the priest's office; or, at least, caused the priest to do that unseasonably which was reserved for Samuel to do, when God thought fit to send him: who had all along transacted all matters between God and Saul. In short, his folly and disobedience consisted in this, that he intrenched upon the priest's office, or upon the prophet's,

or upon both: and would not wait Samuel's coming, nor confess his fault to him when he came; but made excuses, and laid the fault upon all but himself, (ver. 11.)

Abarbinel hath expounded this a little more distinctly, by observing the command which Samuel gave him, when he anointed him, x. 8. where he tells him, first, he would come and offer sacrifice; secondly, he bids him wait for him seven days; and, lastly, saith he would direct him what to do. Now Saul transgressed every part of this command: for he offered sacrifice himself, which God intended should be offered only by the prophet; and he did not stay till the end of the seventh day, but offered on the seventh day in the morning; and he intended to begin the war without any direction from Samuel what he should do. He thinks, also, that those words, *seven days* (in that place), may refer to the words going before, *viz. peace-offerings* so many days. For Saul was bound, as it follows, to tarry till Samuel came, though he stayed more than seven days before he came.

For now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.] This suggests that the intention of Samuel's coming to offer sacrifice at Gilgal for seven days, was to confirm Saul in the kingdom, (as I observed upon x. 8.) if he had not foolishly deprived himself of that blessing: but here the Hebrew doctors take notice of a difficulty, which is, how God could intend to establish the kingdom upon him *for ever*, without contradicting the prophecy of Jacob, who had promised the sceptre to the tribe of Judah. Which Ralbag thinks is sufficiently answered, by saying that *for ever* signifies no more than a long time; as it doth in the words of Hannah in the beginning of this book, chap. i. 22. and in Exod. xxi. 9. and many more places. And so others interpret these words, *as long as his posterity lasted.*

Ver. 14. *But now the kingdom shall not continue.*] He predicts that God would not let his family enjoy the kingdom: because of other sins which he foresaw he would commit.

The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.] God had not yet commanded David to lead his people, but he fully intended to do it, if Saul did not repent, and obtain a pardon of him for his offence. Whereby he had not provoked him so far, as to have an irreversible sentence passed upon him (as many great men have thought), but it might have been revoked if he had not persisted in his folly, and committed a much greater offence against the Divine Majesty, in the war against Amalek. Then Samuel tells him, the Lord *would not repent:* which not being added here, it makes it probable he was capable of a pardon, notwithstanding this denunciation: if he had begged it with repentance, and better obedience for the time to come.

Ver. 15. *And Samuel arose, and gat him up from Gilgal unto Gibeah of Benjamin.*] The place of Saul's birth, and where he lived; which I look upon as a sign that Samuel did not intend to desert him, as he did afterward, nor looked upon him yet as forsaken by God.

And Saul numbered the people that were present with him, about six hundred men.] A strange alteration since the last year, when against the Ammonites he had three hundred thousand men with him, besides those of Judah, (xi. 6.)

Ver. 16. *And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people who were present with him, abode in Gibeah of Benjamin.*] They followed Samuel; and it was a strong place, where they could defend themselves better than in the open field: and here, it is likely, he hoped to increase his forces, being in his own tribe.

But the Philistines encamped in Michmash.] A place not very remote from Gibeah; but in the tribe of Ephraim.

Ver. 17. *And the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines, in three companies.*] They sent out parties *three* several ways, to ravage the country, there being none to oppose them.

One company turned the way that leadeth to Ophrah.] There was a city of this name in the tribe of Benjamin, (Josh. xviii. 23.) but many take this rather to be that in the tribe of Manasseh, where Gideon was born, (Judg. vi. 11.)

Unto the land of Shual.] So called, because it abounded with foxes, as Bochart observes.

Ver. 18. *And another company turned the way of Bethhoron.*] Both the upper and the nether cities of this name were in the tribe of Ephraim, (1 Chron. vii. 24.)

And another company turned to the way of the border that looks to the valley of Zeboim, towards the wilderness.] The Chaldee paraphrast translates these words, *the valley of vipers;* for *tzeboa* signifies a sort of speckled serpent, wherewith this valley abounded, and lay towards the wilderness of Jericho in the tribe of Benjamin. Thus also a great number of the Hebrew writers translate *Zeboim;* which Junius takes for a city in this tribe. (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iii. cap. 7.)

Ver. 19. *Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords and spears.*] To this miserable condition the Philistines had reduced them during the forty years' tyranny over them, of which we read, Judg. xiii. 1. But after Samuel had put an end to it, by the great overthrow he gave the Philistines at Eben-ezer, it seems something strange they had not restored their artificers. But the sloth of the Israelites appears in their whole story; and it was not easy, in so short a time, for men to learn this trade, which the Philistines wisely destroyed, as the Chaldeans, when they destroyed Jerusalem, carried away all the smiths to Babylon, that they who remained in the land might not arm themselves again, (2 Kings xxiv. 14.)

Ver. 20. *But all the men of Israel went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.*] Not to the country of the Philistines, for that was too far off from some parts of the land of Israel; but to their garrisons, which they held among them, even after Samuel had driven the main body of them out of the country, as I observed upon x. 5.

Ver. 21. *Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads.*] Thus Pliny tells us in his Natural History, lib. xxxi. cap. 14. that in the league which Porsanna made with the Roman people, after the expulsion of their kings, it was expressly covenanted, "Ne ferro, nisi in agricultura uterentur;" *that they should not make use of iron, but only in the tilling of their fields.*

Ver. 22. *So it came to pass, that in the day of battle, there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul, and Jonathan his son, was there found.*] The Jews being very much addicted to feeding cattle, very much neglected mechanical arts, as appeared when Solomon built the temple. For there were so few skilled in architecture among the Israelites, that he was constrained to send to another nation for them. And so Rasi thinks it was in the trade of smiths; there being no iron mines in the land. But that was not the true reason, as Kimchi observes; for the Philistines, as was said before, had transplanted the smiths, when the Israelites were under their dominion. In their oppressions also, which they lay under, their enemies were wont to disarm them, as appears by the song of Deborah, (Judg. v. 8.) But though they had no sword nor spear, yet they had bows and arrows, and slings; which the men of Gibeah could anciently manage to a wonderful advantage, as we read, Judg. xx. 16. And besides these, they anciently used clubs to beat down their enemies; and before the invention of spears with iron points, they had sharp stakes hardened in the fire, as many authors inform us.

Ver. 23. *And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the passage of Michmash.*] Some refer this to the garrison mentioned ver. 3. which Jonathan having smitten, they that escaped joined with the army at Michmash. But it refers rather to the garrison mentioned in the beginning of the next chapter, (ver. 1.) and the last word relates not to *the passage*, but to the *garrison*. As if he had said, *The garrison of the Philistines in Michmash went out to the passage.* For Michmash, as Rasi observes, was upon a high hill, as Gibeah was; between which was a valley, called here *a passage.* Into which the garrison descended, to invite the Israelites to battle; or, as the Targum translates the first word, the *captain-general* of the Philistines went out into the valley; to view the ground, we may suppose, and form a camp there.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the garrison of the Philistines that is on the other side.*] Of the valley, mentioned in the foregoing verse. This had been a very rash attempt, and very criminal (he having no order from his father, who commanded in chief), if he had not had a Divine incitation to it. Which he felt upon the sight of the Philistines appearing, as if they intended to assault Gibeah; and upon the information he received of the great spoil which the three parties made of the poor people in the country, (xiii. 17.)

But he told not his father.] Lest he should have hindered him from this enterprise, into which he felt himself moved by God.

Ver. 2. *And Saul tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah.*] In some intrenchments he had made without the city.

Under a pomegranate-tree, which is in Migron.] Where he pitched his tent.

And the people that were with him were about six hundred men.] His forces were not augmented since he came to Gibeah, as might have been expected, (xiii. 15, 16.) But, as Vegetius observes, (lib. i. de Re Militari, cap. 8.) "in omni conflictu non tam prodest multitudo, quam virtus:" *in all conflicts valour doth more service than multitude.*

Ver. 3. *And Ahijah the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas.*] It seems Phinehas (who was slain with Hophni) left two sons; Ichabod, who was born after his death; and Ahitub, who was born before: and left a son, who is here called Ahijah, and in xxii. 9. Ahimelech; who left a son called Abiathar, xxiii. 6.

The son of Eli, the Lord's priest in Shiloh.] These last words, *the Lord's priest in Shiloh*, manifestly belong to Eli, who was the high-priest while the tabernacle was in Shiloh.

Wearing an ephod.] Or rather, *the ephod;* which comprehends the breast-plate, with *urim* and *thummim*, for they were inseparable from it. These Ahijah, being high-priest, now wore: for these words, as Ralbag observes, belong to him. (See Selden, lib. i. de Success. ad Pontif. cap. 3.) Saul being now in great distress sent for Ahijah, to consult God for him, as there should be occasion: and, as appears by the eighteenth verse of this chapter, had commanded him to bring the ark with him from Kirjath-jearim.

And the people knew not that Jonathan was gone.] This makes Josephus's opinion probable, that he went away in the night: which was prudent upon another account; that he might not be spied presently by the Philistines.

Ver. 4. *And between the passages, by which Jonathan sought to go over unto the Philistines' garrison, there was a sharp rock on one side, and a sharp rock on the other.*] So that there was no way to come at the Philistines, but by climbing up one of these rocks, (ver. 12.) which were thought inaccessible: and therefore not fortified, as the other passages to Michmash were, with such strong guards as Jonathan could not encounter.

The name of the one was Bozez, the name of the other Seneh.] Which were such famous precipices, that they had names bestowed on them: the original of which will not be worth our inquiry; but the latter seems to have taken its name from the thorns that grew upon it.

Ver. 5. *The fore-front of the one was situate northward over against Michmash, and the other southward over against Gibeah.*] By this we understand how these two places lay, towards which these rocks pointed.

Ver. 6. *And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, let us go over to the garrison of the uncircumcised.*] He speaks of them with contempt, as strangers to the covenant of God.

It may be the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.] He speaks with some diffidence to his servant; but was inwardly persuaded of a certain victory, by the Divine assistance.

Ver. 7. *And his armour-bearer said unto him, Do all that is in thine heart: turn thee.*] Which way thou wilt.

Behold, I am with thee according to thy heart.] He resolved not to forsake his master in any undertaking, though ever so dangerous: being such a servant as Gideon had, (Judg. vii. 10.)

Ver. 8. *Then said Jonathan, Behold, I will pass over to these men.*] He resolves to lead the way.

And we will discover ourselves unto them.] At break of day.

Ver. 9. *If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come*

unto you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them.

Ver. 10. *But if they say thus, Come up to us; then we will go up: for the Lord hath delivered them into our hand; and this shall be a sign unto us.*] Which he could not have known without an instinct from God, who often suggested such thoughts unto good men: as we see in the example of Abraham's servant, Gen. xxiv. 14, &c. And there is something like this in the beginning of Herodotus's fifth book concerning the Pæones, and the Perinthians: where he saith, the Pœonians went to war by a Divine direction with the Perinthians; and were ordered, if the Perinthians, being opposed to them, provoked them by name to fight, then they should invade them; but if they did not, they should abstain from fighting. Now while they faced one another there happened a threefold single combat: and the Perinthians being victors in two of them, began to sing a song of triumph, and insult over the Pœonians; who thereupon said one to another, *νῦν ἂν εἴη ὁ χρησμὸς ἐπιτελεσμένος ἡμῖν, νῦν ἡμέτερον τὸ ἔργον. Now is the oracle fulfilled to us, now is our business:* and so shouting, and falling upon the Perinthians, they vanquished them, and left few of them remaining.

Ver. 11. *And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines.*] At the bottom of the rocks.

And the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of their holes where they had hid themselves.] See xiii. 6. They imagined it was not courage, but necessity, which forced them to come within their view, as they sought for food.

Ver. 12. *And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armour-bearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing.*] They mocked at them, thinking they durst not attempt to climb up to them.

And Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, Come up after me; for the Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.] Now he gives him the same assurance which he had before in his own mind.

Ver. 13. *And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and his feet, and his armour-bearer after him.*] Not in the view of the Philistines, but by some difficult way, which none was ever known to go: and so, perhaps, they came behind them and surprised them.

And they fell before Jonathan; and his armour-bearer slew after him.] The first onset was made by Jonathan (as he led the way up the precipice), who rushed upon them with such a fury, that he threw them down to the ground, and then his armour-bearer killed them. So some understand this: which was a more wonderful action than that of Horatius Cochlites (as Victorinus Strigelius observes), who alone maintained a passage at a bridge, against all the forces of the enemy: and caused the bridge to be broken down behind him. But that shews, since natural courage made a man so daring, it is not incredible that Jonathan made such an attempt by Divine incitation.

Ver. 14. *The first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armour-bearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plough.*] *viz.* In one day. That is, saith Kimchi, in a very small space of ground: which De Dieu will have to be half a furrow in length. (See him.)

Ver. 15. *And there was a trembling in the host, in the field, and among the people; the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled.*] News being brought of this slaughter to the host of the Philistines which lay in the field, it put them into a great consternation: for they were asleep (it is likely), this being done very early in the morning, as Josephus thinks, (lib. vi. cap. 7.) And all the people that attended the host, as well as the garrison, and spoilers who had been ravaging the country, (xiii. 17.) were very much affrighted: imagining a great army had been at hand to fall upon them; of which these two were but the scouts. Whose exploits, perhaps, were also magnified beyond the truth.

And the earth quaked.] Some think there was a real earthquake, which increased their fear: but it may be no more than a metaphorical expression, for the great tumult they were in.

So it was a great trembling.] In the Hebrew, *a trembling of God;* that is, which God sent upon them: called by the heathen a *panic fear,* which they thought came from their gods; and made the stoutest men quake. So Pindar excellently expresses it in his Nemea, ix. ver. 63.

——— Ἐν γὰρ
Δαιμονίοισι φόβοις
Φεύγονται καὶ Παῖδες Θεῶν.

When men are struck with Divine terrors, even the children of the gods (i. e. the most heroic spirits) *betake themselves to flight.* And the army of the Philistines consisting (as I observed on xiii. 5.) of different nations, it made the confusion and trembling the greater: because they either did not understand, or suspected one another.

Ver. 16. *And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked.*] For it was seated on a high hill, which overlooked the country about it.

And behold the multitude melted away.] Were scattered; so that fewer and fewer were seen in a company together.

And they went on beating down one another.] Not being able, in this confusion, to distinguish their friends from their enemies.

Ver. 17. *Then said Saul unto the people that were with him, Number now, and see who are gone from us. And when they were numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armour-bearer were not there.*] He easily missed Jonathan, I suppose, but could not imagine he would fall upon the Philistines, without a good number of men to assist him: which he knew he had not. This made him call the high-priest, to inquire of God, that he might be informed what was the matter, and what he should do.

Ver. 18. *And Saul said to Ahijah, Bring hither the ark of God: for the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel.*] How could he bid him bring the ark, when it was at Kirjath-jearim, in the house of Abinadab? To this Abarbinel answers, that he doth not speak of the ark in which the tables of the law were kept (for he doth not say, *bring the ark of the covenant hither*), but a little coffer, wherein the ephod was kept; that is, the breast-plate with *urim* and *thummim.* These the priest brought along with him, that Saul might consult God upon occasion, as David did, 1 Sam. xxx. 8. Therefore the LXX. translate it, προσάγαγε τὸ Ἐφοὺδ, *bring hither the ephod.* And so Rasi and Kimchi. (See Buxtorf. Hist. Arcæ, cap. 3. and our learned Dr. Spencer, de Leg. et Rit. Heb. fol. 859.) But this doth not seem a solid interpretation, there being but one ark men-

tioned in Scripture, which is not always called the *ark of the covenant*, but the *ark of the Lord*, or the *ark of God*, as it is called when it came into the camp of Israel, and was taken by the Philistines, (chap. iv. ver. 6. 11. 17, 18, &c.) Therefore here, I suppose, Saul commanded the ark itself to attend him; when he wanted the advice and assistance of Samuel.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, that while Saul talked with the priest.*] Desiring him to inquire of God what was become of Jonathan and his armour-bearer; and what was the meaning of that tumult in the host of the Philistines.

That the noise that was in the host of the Philistines went on and increased: and Saul said to the priest, Withdraw thine hand.] He was going to take the *urim* and *thummim*, as the forenamed authors understand it, when Saul, hearing the tumult grow greater and greater among the Philistines, bade him forbear: there being no need, for he concluded they were routed; and therefore resolved, without any further deliberation, to go and pursue them. Or, as others understand it, the priest having stretched forth his hand to God in prayer for his advice, Saul called upon him to desist: for it was plain what they had to do without any inquiry.

Ver. 20. *And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled; and came to the battle: and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture.*] This Josephus thinks fell out (as I noted above) because their army consisted of divers nations, who did not know one another, and so fell into great confusion.

Ver. 21. *Moreover, the Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp from the country round about.*] As some, it seems, did; either out of fear, compulsion, or design.

Even they also turned to be with the Israelites that were with Saul and Jonathan.] And helped to destroy the Philistines.

Ver. 22. *Likewise all the men of Israel that had hid themselves in Mount Ephraim.*] And other places mentioned xiii. 6.

When they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle.] Pursued them closely.

Ver. 23. *So the Lord saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over unto Beth-aven.*] These words seem to imply, that the fight continued till they came to this place, which lay westward from Michmash, (xiii. 5.) and there the Philistines threw down their arms; and fled as fast as they could towards their own country.

Ver. 24. *And the men of Israel were distressed that day.*] When they should have been full of joy and triumph.

For Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until the evening, that I may be avenged of my enemies. So none of the people tasted any food.] That they might not lose time, nor make the least stay in the pursuit of their enemies, who fled before them. The king had the same power that the great Sanhedrin had, who, the Jews say, might devote those to destruction, who did not obey the charge that was given them in war. (See Selden, lib. iv. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 6.) But this was a very indiscreet act of Saul, unbecoming an excellent captain; for instead of pursuing the Philistines with vigour, they fainted for want of refreshment. Therefore great commanders always took care their soldiers should be moderately fed, that they might not be tired in a long conflict. So Vegetius informs us: (lib. iii. de Re Militari, cap. 9.) "Veteribus seculis mos fuit, parco cibo curatos milites ad certamen educere, ut citatiores sumpta esca redderet et longiore conflictu non fatigerentur inedia." And there was the same need of taking a little refreshment if they could get it, when they were engaged in a long pursuit of their enemy.

Ver. 25. *And all they of the land came to a wood; and there was honey upon the ground.*] Which dropped from the hollow trees, or the clefts of rocks, where bees made their combs in that country; and sometimes upon the very ground; as Bochart hath shewn in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 12. where he observes this was not peculiar to Judea, but usual in other countries.

Ver. 26. *And when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped; but no man put his hand to his mouth: for the people feared the oath.*] Wild honey was so copious in those countries, and flowed so plentifully, that it gave occasion to that hyperbolical speech in the book of Job, xx. 17. where we read of *brooks*, or *torrents, of honey and butter*.

Ver. 27. *And Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath.*] He and his armour-bearer being engaged in fight, (with whom some others joined, ver. 21.) long before Saul and his small army came to join him.

Wherefore he put forth the end of his rod, and dipped it in a honey-comb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened.] That is, his spirits and strength, which were quite spent by long abstinence from meat, so that he could scarce see, were restored to him, and he was made fresh and lively to proceed in pursuit of the enemy. For, as Gerh. Vossius observes, (lib. iv. de Orig. et Progr. Idol. cap. 79.) the eyes are wont to grow dim with long hunger: and as all meat and drink refreshes and enlivens, so wine and honey do it above all other more speedily: for their spirits are both very subtile, and soon diffuse their strength through the body. It is also observed by learned men, that honey is an excellent medicine for sore and weak eyes: but that is nothing to this purpose; such cures being not performed by eating of it, but by anointing the eyes with it.

Ver. 28. *Then answered one of the people.*] That came with Saul to the pursuit.

And said, Thy father charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food to-day. And the people were faint.] And yet forbore to take any refreshment, for fear of the curse.

Ver. 29. *Then said Jonathan, My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey.*] Which did not cause so long a stay, as to hinder the pursuit of the enemy.

Ver. 30. *How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely this day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?*] They would have been able to pursue them more swiftly, and to have done greater execution upon them, than they could when they were faint. Thus men, by their rashness, hinder what they would have.

Ver. 31. *And they smote the Philistines that day from*

Michmash to Ajalon.] A city in the tribe of Dan, (Josh. xix. 42.) which bordered upon the country of the Philistines.

And the people were very faint.] Otherwise they might have pursued further.

Ver. 32. *And the people flew upon the spoil.*] Like a ravenous bird, which wanted food.

And took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew them on the ground: and the people did eat them with the blood.] Raw, or but half roasted or boiled, their hunger being so sharp, that it made them forget their duty.

Ver. 33. *Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the people sin against the Lord, in that they eat with the blood.*] All the people were not so profane, but only some part of them.

And he said, Ye have transgressed: roll a great stone unto me.] Our learned Dr. Spencer thinks, they did not *eat with the blood*, as we translate it, but *upon*, or *by the blood;* which was an idolatrous custom in the east, to invite the familiarity of demons, as hath been noted on Lev. xix. 26. And therefore Saul, to keep the people from thus defiling themselves, commanded a great stone to be brought to him, that there they might kill their beasts at that one place, and then feed upon them. (See de Leg. et Rit. Hebr. p. 334.) But this doth not seem probable that they should now practise those idolatrous rites, when God had wrought such a wonderful deliverance for them; and they were so impatient to eat, that they had not time to think of such ceremonies.

Ver. 34. *And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people.*] He speaks unto his officers.

And say unto them, Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep.] This is a sign they had not all offended; having not yet killed their beasts.

And slay them here, and eat; and sin not against the Lord in eating with the blood. And all the men brought every man his ox with him that night, and slew them there.] As many as they had occasion to use.

Ver. 25. *And Saul built an altar unto the Lord.*] To offer sacrifices of peace-offerings, and give thanks to God for this great victory. Though others think it was not for sacrifice, but only a monument of God's mercy, in this late deliverance.

The same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord.] In the Hebrew the words are (as is observed in the margin of our Bibles), *that altar he began to build unto the Lord; i. e.* he laid the first stone himself. We read of his offering before in Gilgal; but that, perhaps, was not upon an altar erected by himself, but was built before by others.

Ver. 36. *And Saul said, Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil them until the morning, and let us not leave a man of them.*] Having thus refreshed themselves, in the evening Saul propounded to them to renew the pursuit: hoping to cut off their whole army, when they were asleep in the night.

And they said, Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee.] Their good success made them as forward, as before they were backward to follow him.

Then said the priest, Let us draw near hither unto God.] It is likely he stood before the altar (if it were for sacrifice) and put them in mind, that it was dangerous to undertake any thing without God's advice: which he was there ready to ask for them: in the Targum it is, *Let us inquire by the Word of the Lord.*

Ver. 37. *And Saul asked counsel of God.*] By *urim* and *thummim.*

Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel?] Hitherto Saul had some goodness left in him: for he hearkened to the priest, when he admonished him of his duty, which he neglected. The Targum here again hath it, *Saul asked by the Word of the Lord.*

But he answered him not that day.] Though perhaps the priest had often begged an answer, yet he received none.

Ver. 38. *And Saul said, Draw near hither all the chief of the people; and see wherein this sin hath been this day.*] He concluded some sin had provoked God, not to regard his supplication: which he desired might be found out and punished.

Ver. 39. *For, as the Lord liveth, that saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die. But there was not a man among the people that answered him.*] Though many knew that Jonathan had transgressed his father's charge, (ver. 28.) yet none would discover it.

Ver. 40. *Then said he unto all Israel, Be you on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side. And the people said, Do what seemeth good unto thee.*] He had gained great authority among the people (it appears by this, and by ver. 36.) since his wonderful success.

Ver. 41. *Therefore Saul said unto the Lord God of Israel, Give a perfect lot. And Saul and Jonathan were taken: and the people escaped.*] The word *lot* is not in the original, but only *give perfect*, that is, declare who is innocent. So the word *give* sometimes signifies to *pronounce*, (Deut. xiii. 1, 2.)

Ver. 42. *And Saul said, Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken.*] This looks like virtue in him, that, for good example's sake, he would not exempt himself, though a king, from the same trial to which he exposed all the people.

Ver. 43. *Then said Saul to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, I did but taste a little honey, that was in my hand, and, lo, I must die.*] This shews a very great mind, that he neither denied what he had done, nor excused it by his ignorance, nor refused to die: though he looked upon it as very hard. So Josephus represents it, εὐγενῶς καὶ μεγαλοφρόνως, &c. *with a generous and great mind*, he told his father the truth; and desired not to be spared, (lib. vi. Antiq. cap. 7.)

Ver. 44. *And Saul answered, God do so and more also: for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.*] This demonstrates Saul to have been of a rash and of a rigorous temper. With whom learned men are wont to compare Titus Manlius; who caused his son's head to be cut off, for fighting the enemy, when he had a fair advantage, contrary to order, as A. Gellius tells us, (lib. ix. cap. 13.) But in this regard Saul was to be commended, as Josephus also observes, that he had a greater regard to his oath, than to his kindred and natural affection.

Ver. 45. *And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.*] They did not rescue him by force and violence, but by their petition to Saul, and the reason they gave for it. Jo-

sephus saith, that " by their prayers and vows to God they delivered him:" who, perhaps, signified by the priest, that he approved the people's desire. They were too forward indeed to swear directly against Saul's oath: but of the two, his being the most rash, God was pleased to annul it, and absolve him from it. Thus Josephus understands it, *They rescued him from the anger of his father,* καὶ εὐχὰς ὑπὲρ τοῦ νεανίσκου ποιοῦνται τῷ Θεῷ, ὡς τὸν αὐτὸν ἀπολύσαι τοῦ ἁμαρτήματος, *and made their prayer to God for the young man, that he would loose him from his sin.*

How that phrase, *not a hair of his head,* &c. was used, appears from 2 Sam. xiv. 11. 1 Kings i. 51.

Ver. 46. *Then Saul went up from following the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own country.*] He pursued them no further, but let them go quietly to their own homes.

Ver. 47. *And Saul took the kingdom over Israel.*] Ruled with greater authority over his people after this victory: for the Philistines had enslaved them, (as I observed xiii. 2.) But by this deliverance they were freed from their yoke, and Saul recovered his kingdom.

And fought against all his enemies on every side.] He did not invade them (as may be gathered from the next verse), but repelled them, and kept them within their own limits.

Against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines.] These were the principal enemies wherewith they were encompassed. And by the *kings of Zobah* are meant those that ruled in that part of Syria, which is called *Aram-Zobah;* which lay towards Euphrates: having that river for its eastern bounds, and Damascus and the land of Canaan for its western. For it appears to be near to the Israelites, by the frequent wars which David and Solomon had with the kings of this country, (2 Sam. viii. 3. x. 6. 2 Chron. vii. 3.) and the aid which the Syrians of Damascus sent them, (2 Sam. viii. 5.) and their flying thither when they were routed. (1 Kings xi. 24.) And the cities which Solomon built in the wilderness, (1 Kings ix. 17, 18.) are said to be in Hamath-Zobah, 2 Chron. viii. 34. which demonstrates it was upon the confines of Judea.

And whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them.] He got the better of them. And in his days the Reubenites also made war with the Hagarites, and possessed their land, till the time of the captivity, (1 Chron. v. 10. 18—20.)

Ver. 48. *And he gathered a host, and smote Amalek.*] Which war is at large described in the next chapter.

And delivered Israel out of the hand of them that spoiled them.] The six forementioned nations.

Ver. 49. *And the sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishui, and Melchi-shua,* &c.] These were only fit to accompany him in his wars, and upon that account are only mentioned here, and xxxi. 2. though he had another son (Ish-bosheth), who is mentioned in 1 Chron. viii. 33. under the name of Esh-baal.

Ver. 50. *And the name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz; and the name of the captain of his host was Abner, the son of Ner, Saul's uncle.*] For Ner was brother to Saul's father, as the next verse tells us. It seems to me observable, that we never read of more than one wife that Saul had, though David had many. It is possible he did not think it prudent, in a new-erected kingdom, to follow the example of the eastern kings in every thing.

Ver. 51. *And Kish was the father of Saul; and Ner, the father of Abner, was the son of Abiel.*] As Kish also was, (xi. 1.)

Ver. 52. *And there was sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul.*] Who could not perfectly subdue them; as appears from their renewing the war, (chap. xvii. &c.)

And when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man.] Who behaved himself with vigour and courage in the wars.

He took him unto him.] To be one of his guard, or to be preferred in the army.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *SAMUEL also said unto Saul, The Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken unto the voice of the words of the Lord.*] Being so highly obliged to God, above all other men in the nation, it highly concerned him to be very careful to observe his commands; especially having lately been disobedient, (xiii. 13.)

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.*] See my notes upon Deut. xxv. 17, 18.

Ver. 3. *Now go, and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.*] This heavy sentence was pronounced against them long ago, (Exod. xvii. 14.) and renewed at their entrance into Canaan, with a charge not to forget it, (Deut. xxv. 19.) and now ordered to be put in execution.

Ver. 4. *And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.*] The word *Telaim* signifying lambs (which it is likely were very plentiful in this place), the Targum translates it, *he numbered them by paschal lambs:* as if the Passover was kept at this time. And so Rasi fancies that it being unlawful to number the people, he commanded every man to take a lamb out of the flock, and numbered them. But David Kimchi, and others, take this as we do, for the name of a place called Telem, in the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 24.) For there is no place mentioned in Scripture called Telaim; nor any so near it in sound as this. (See Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 11. n. 5. and Bochart's Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 43.) I have often observed that their armies consisted of footmen, they having no horses in Judea. And in two regards they were more useful than horsemen, as Vegetius observes, (lib. ii. de Re Militari, cap. 1.) first, because " possunt ubique prodesse," *they may be serviceable every where,* which horsemen cannot. And, secondly, a great number of them, " sumptu et expensa minore nutritur," *is maintained at less expense and charge.*

Ver. 5. *And Saul came to a city of Amalek.*] To the metropolis of the kingdom, whose name, perhaps, was Amalek. For so the words may be understood, *he came to the city Amalek.*

And laid wait in the valley.] Or *fought them in the valley,* as we translate it in the margin: for they came out to give him battle.

Ver. 6. *And Saul said to the Kenites.*] Who were of the posterity of Jethro: some of which were of the tribe of Judah, others in Naphtali; and some, it seems, dwelt among the Amalekites in the rocky part of that country, (Numb. xxiv. 21.)

Go, depart, get ye down.] For they dwelt on high.

From among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them.] For some of the Amalekites, it is likely, would flee to them for shelter.

For you shewed kindness to the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt.] Some of their ancestors did, which the Israelites did not forget, (Exod. xviii. 12. Numb. x. 31.)

And the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.] And went, it is likely, into the land of Judah.

Ver. 7. *And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt.*] That is, their whole country, of which this was the extent; from Havilah in the north-east, to Shur in the south-west. These two, Havilah and Shur, are constantly opposed, as the most opposite terms of Arabia, as Bochartus hath observed, in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 6.

Ver. 8. *And Saul took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.*] That is, all that could be met with: but some fled, no doubt, as soon as they saw him victorious; and saved themselves in other countries. Accordingly we read of good numbers of this people afterward.

Ver. 9. *But Saul and the people spared Agag.*] Whosoever proposed it, they all agreed in it, not to kill Agag: and Saul, it is most likely, was the chief author of this counsel. Who, θαυμάσας τὸ κάλλος καὶ τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ σώματος (as Josephus speaks), *being struck with admiration of him as a very goodly and proper person, thought fit to save him.* Not following herein the command of God, but his own private fancy and affection, (lib. vi. Antiq. cap. 8.) Others think he intended to lead him in triumph. (See ver. 12.)

And the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and of the lambs.] Interpreters wonderfully vary about the sense of the word *hamisnim*, which we translate *fatlings:* as may be seen in Bochartus's Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 43. fol. 430. where he shews it signifies cattle in their full strength.

All that was good.] Of their household goods (I suppose), apparel, and such-like things.

And would not utterly destroy them.] As they had been commanded by God; but took them as a prey unto themselves.

But every thing that was vile and refuse, that destroyed they utterly.] All that was not worth the keeping. Which is a wonderful instance of the baseness of human nature, when governed by covetousness, or any such-like affection.

Ver. 10. *Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying.*] Immediately before Saul returned from his expedition.

Ver. 11. *It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king.*] Whom he resolved now to throw down from his throne. (See ver. 29.) For repentance in God, imports only the will of a change, and not of every change, but of the Divine sentence pronounced, which the Scripture calls repentance. So Procopius Gazæus, "Pœnitentia Dei, est dispensationis ipsius mutatio," *God's repentance is the change of his own dispensation.*

For he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandment. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night.] Beseeching him to pardon Saul.

Ver. 12. *And when Samuel rose up early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel.*] A city in the mountains of the tribe of Judah, where Nabal dwelt, who is called the Carmelite, xxvii. 3. (See Josh. xv. 55.)

And, behold, he set him up a place.] Either for the dividing of the spoil, as the Targum understands it; or marking out a camp, as Kimchi; or he erected a triumphal arch, as St. Jerome: having brought Agag with him, to make his triumph greater. Which arch, it may be thought, was in the form of a hand: for in the Hebrew the word we translate *place* is *jad*, which signifies a *hand.* Or, as Rasi will have it, he here built an altar: which Elijah in future times repaired, (1 Kings xviii. 30.) But this is a very gross mistake: for this Carmel was very remote from that mount which Elijah frequented, as Bochartus hath observed, (par. i. Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. 48.) It may be rather thought, to be some building erected in the form before-mentioned, to signify that they overcame the Amalekites with a strong hand.

And is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.] In a long pomp, I suppose, as a mighty conqueror.

Ver. 13. *And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said to him, Blessed be thou of the Lord.*] A form of salutation, wishing him all happiness from God: who had ordered him to undertake such a piece of service, as he had done him.

I have performed the commandment of the Lord.] He was so insensible of any fault he had committed, that he boasts of his performance.

Ver. 14. *And Samuel said, What means then this bleating of the sheep,* &c.] Which he had commanded him utterly to destroy, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 15. *And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites.*] He lays the blame upon the people, when it is evident he himself was principally in fault, (ver. 9.)

And the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.] This was a plausible pretence, it being the custom all the world over, to give part of their spoils in war unto their gods; if there had not been an express command for destroying every thing in this war: so that nothing should be spared, either for himself, or for them.

Ver. 16. *And Samuel said unto Saul, Stay.*] This sounds as if Saul was going away: being abundantly satisfied in his noble achievements.

And I will tell thee what the Lord hath said unto me this night.] When he cried to him without ceasing, (ver. 11.) Though Samuel was a prophet, saith Procopius Gazæus, yet speaking to a king, he begs leave he may do it freely.

And he said, Say on.] He hoped, it is likely, to hear himself commended for his piety.

Ver. 17. *Then Samuel said unto Saul, When thou wast little in thy own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Is-*

rael?] It is of great use for men to remember what they were: as Placilla the wife of Theodosius (Strigelius here observes) said to her husband, Αεί σε προσήκει λογίζεσθαι, τί μὲν ἦσθα πάλαι, τί δὲ γέγονας νῦν, &c. *It behoves thee always to think what thou wast heretofore, and what thou art now. For calling these things to mind, thou wilt not be ungrateful to thy benefactor: but govern the kingdom thou hast received according to the laws; and by that means honour him that bestowed it upon thee.*

Ver. 18. *And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amakelites.*] He was employed in a very honourable expedition, to destroy the declared enemies of the Lord.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst flee upon the spoil.*] With great greediness, as a hungry bird or beast doth upon his prey.

And didst evil in the sight of the Lord?] The command was as plain as words could make it: so that there was no reason but his own base covetousness, why it was not obeyed.

Ver. 20. *And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of the Amalekites, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.*] A strange stupidity! to imagine such a partial obedience could be pleasing unto God.

Ver. 21. *But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief things that should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.*] This was a mean thing, to throw all the blame on the people, whom he should have governed better: and it was worst of all, to let them pretend religion for their disobedience.

Ver. 22. *And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*] This most Divine admonition is inculcated by all following inspired writers, David, Solomon, and the prophets. (See Psal. l. 13, 14. li. 16, 17. Eccles. v. 1. Isa. i. 11, 12, &c. lxvi. 3. Jer. vii. 21, 22, &c. Hos. vi. 6. Micah vi. 6—8. Zach. viii. 16.) And some of the heathen have said excellent things to this purpose.

Ver. 23. *For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.*] Or, *following after divination:* which is opposed to prophecy, as idols are to God.

And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.] The words *aven* and *teraphim* signify all manner of idolatry. From which though Saul was free, yet his obstinate disobedience made him liable to such punishment as idolaters deserved. For as they were to be cut off, so he was to be dethroned, as it here follows.

Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he also hath rejected thee from being king.] As idolaters were to lose their lives, so he and his posterity lost the kingdom. And it is observable, that he was at last slain by the hand of an Amalekite, (2 Sam. i. 8.)

Ver. 24. *And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy word; because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.*] It is not certain whether he led the people into this sin, or they led him. I look upon this only as an excuse (he having no reason to fear the people, who were all at his command), and that he was not yet thoroughly sensible of his guilt.

Ver. 25. *Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin.*] By deprecating God's displeasure.

And turn again with me.] To Gilgal; from whence he came forth to meet Samuel.

That I may worship the Lord.] And by Samuel's prayers obtain a pardon.

Ver. 26. *And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.*] The prophet looked upon God's sentence as peremptory; and therefore peremptorily denied his request.

Ver. 27. *And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle.*] It was a four-square garment covering the breast and the back; knit at the shoulder, but open on the sides, as Jo. Braunius hath shewn, lib. ii. de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr. cap. 5. n. 8. On this Saul laid hold, that he might stop Samuel from going away.

And it rent.] A sign the motion of Samuel was violent; he being full of indignation against Saul.

Ver. 28. *And Samuel said, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.*] That casual rent, he took to be an apt representation of his destiny.

Ver. 29. *And also the Strength of Israel.*] The word we translate *Strength* imports *victory* (as is observed in the margin), and therefore these words should be translated, *He that gives victory,* and disposes kingdoms, or *the triumphant King of Israel.*

Will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.] Sometimes, God is said *to repent of the evil, i. e.* to alter his intentions of inflicting punishment. But in this case there was no room for it, because of the oath of God, that Amalek should be cut off. This made Saul's sin unpardonable; it being of the like nature (to use the words of Dr. Jackson) as if a judge or inferior magistrate, being entrusted to do justice in a matter, unto which his sovereign lord had peremptorily and determinately sworn, should upon a bribe, or other sinister respect, neglect his duty, and (as much as in him lay) make his master forsworn. For an inferior judge to do this, deserves more bodily deaths than one. And therefore though God did repent that he had made Saul king (for he had the kingdom only by mere promise, not by a promise confirmed by an oath), yet he would not repent his deposition, nor reverse the sentence against him; because, by his preposterous indulgence unto Amalek (God's sworn enemy), he did by this fact incur the sentence of deposition by oath.

Ver. 30. *And he said, I have sinned.*] Now he makes a downright acknowledgment of his guilt; without any alleviations of it, from the fear he was in of the people, or any other thing, (ver. 24.)

Yet honour me, I pray thee, before my people, and before Israel.] He submitted to the sentence, and only desired while he was king he might not lose his honour with those that waited on him, and with the rest of his subjects.

And turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God.] He speaks as if he thought, that, unless it were for Samuel's sake, he was afraid God would not regard him.

Ver. 31. *And Samuel turned again with Saul.*] He said before he would not: (ver. 26.) but upon his importunity (and ordered perhaps by God), he altered his mind. For

he spake before only his present thoughts, which upon further reason he might change.

And Saul worshipped the Lord.] In the company of Samuel, that the people might not despise his authority while he held it.

Ver. 32. *Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither unto me Agag the king of the Amalekites.*] This he spake to the people, in the presence of Saul, that he might see what he ought to have done himself.

And Agag came unto him delicately.] Or, walking in state; for though he was at the point of death, saith Kimchi, he could not forbear to come to Samuel in a haughty manner: but this word seems to relate to *softness*, rather than *pride*; and signifies that he came to him with a soft pace, treading gingerly (as we speak) after a nice and delicate manner.

And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.] Being spared by Saul and his soldiers, he feared no hurt from a prophet.

Ver. 33. *And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women.*] This shews he had been a bloody tyrant, and was now cut off, not merely for the sins of his ancestors four hundred years ago, but for his own merciless cruelty.

And Samuel hewed Agag to pieces.] He commanded it to be done by the public executioner of justice: or, perhaps, did it himself. (See Judg. viii. 20.) This doth not prove that Samuel continued a judge after Saul was anointed: but he was authorized to do this by a special command from God.

Before the Lord in Gilgal.] For here they had been praying, and offering sacrifice: and God was present in all the great assemblies of his people. (See Judg. xx. 1.)

Ver. 34. *Then Samuel went to Ramah.*] Where he commonly lived, (vii. *ult.*)

And Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul.] Which was the place of his birth, and constant abode, (x. 26. xiv. 2.)

Ver. 35. *And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death.*] He was wont, it is likely, to make him frequent visits: but now he forsook him, as a man abandoned by God.

Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul.] Yet he had still so much love to him, or to his country, as to lament the sad condition into which he was fallen.

And the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.] In testimony whereof he utterly cast him off; and all Samuel's tears could not procure a reversal of the sentence pronounced against him.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel?*] Since God had told him so plainly, and positively, that the sentence against him was irreversible, it was in vain to mourn and to pray (as some think he did) for his restitution to God's favour.

Fill thy horn with oil, and go to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.] It might increase his sorrow, perhaps, to think that if Saul should die suddenly, there was none yet appointed by God to succeed him. Which might be one reason why now God declared his pleasure about that matter.

Ver. 2. *And Samuel said, How can I go?*] That is, with safety.

If Saul hear it, he will kill me.] For he was enraged at the sentence passed upon him, though at that present he seemed to submit unto it.

And the Lord said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord.] Which he, being a prophet, might do any where: all the ritual laws being subject to the prophets.

Ver. 3. *And call Jesse to the sacrifice.*] To an eucharistical feast upon the sacrifice: unto which they might invite their neighbours and friends.

And I will shew thee what thou shalt do; and thou shalt anoint him whom I will name unto thee.] God promises to direct him so to manage the business, that he should come into no danger. From whence it may be gathered, that it was not the holy oil wherewith he anointed him, for that was kept in the sanctuary: unto which place he could not have gone to fetch it, but it would have been known, and raised suspicions of what he was going to do. (See Fort. Scacchus, in his Myrothecium, lib. iii. cap. 46.)

Ver. 4. *And Samuel did that which the Lord spake.*] Took a horn of oil, and an heifer.

And came to Beth-lehem: and the elders of the town trembled at his coming.] They went out, I suppose, to meet him, but trembled when they saw him.

And said, Comest thou peaceably?] They were afraid that he came to reprove them for some sin that was in their city; or that he fled to them for security against Saul's anger, which might bring them into danger.

Ver. 5. *And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord.*] That was one intention of his coming; and though there was another (to anoint David) he was not bound to declare it: for where there are two ends of any action, one may without any injury to truth declare the one, and conceal the other. As Moses did, when he told Pharaoh they must go and sacrifice to God in the wilderness; but suppressed their intention to march to the land of Canaan.

Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.] See upon Exod. xix. 10.

And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.] It is likely Jesse might be an elder; but if he were, his sons were not: but he gave them a particular invitation, and took care they should come prepared. Samuel was not a priest, but being a prophet he had authority from God, in extraordinary cases, to perform the office of a priest, in offering sacrifice.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, when they were come.*] After the sacrifice was over, while they were making ready the feast, that was to follow upon it, Samuel took Jesse privately into a room, and there, it is likely, acquainted him with his commission: whereupon he called for his eldest son to come to him.

That he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the anointed of the Lord is before me.] Beholding a goodly person, handsome and tall (as appears by the following verse), he concluded within himself, that this was the person God designed for his anointed.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord said unto Samuel.*] By a secret, inward suggestion.

Look not on his countenance, nor on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.] All have not a noble spirit, who have a noble aspect; as appeared by Saul. Which should have made Samuel not conclude so hastily, from a goodly appearance.

Ver. 8. *Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel.*] That he might have a full view of him.

And he said, Neither hath the Lord chosen this.] God had suggested to him, as he did concerning the former, that he did not approve him.

Ver. 9. *Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the Lord chosen this.*] He is called Shimeah, 2 Sam. xiii. 3. and Shimma, 1 Chron. ii. 13.

Ver. 10. *Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel.*] Not all at once; but seven in all, one after another in order; David being the eighth.

And Samuel said unto Jesse, The Lord hath not chosen these.] These words shew that he had acquainted Jesse with his business: but these four of his sons, among whom he was to anoint one to be king, were no more qualified for it, than the three first: for he had eight sons in all, (xvii. 12.)

Ver. 11. *And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest; and, behold, he keeps the sheep.*] And so was not at home. The most excellent commanders were anciently taken from the plough, or from feeding sheep, as Pliny observes, lib. xviii. Nat. Hist. cap. 5. "Fortissimi viri, et milites strenuissimi ex agricolis gignuntur." And so Vegetius, lib. i. cap. 3. de Re Militari, discusses this point, whether the best soldiers came out of the city or country: and resolves, "aptiorem armis rusticam plebem," &c. *that the country people are most fit for arms;* who live in the open air, and are bred up to labour, and endure heat, and neglect the shade; being unacquainted with baths, ignorant of delights, of a simple mind, contented with a little; having their bodies hardened to the enduring all labour; who are used by the country life to carry burdens, dig trenches, and such-like labour. And therefore he concludes, that the strength of an army is to be supplied out of the field, for so it is, that the less men are acquainted with the delights of life, the less they fear death. Moses was thus bred a long time in the service of Jethro: and Saul looked after his father's cattle.

And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.] By this it appears, all this was transacted between the sacrifice and the dressing of the feast upon it.

Ver. 12. *And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy.*] His hair was red, which in ancient times was accounted beautiful, as Bochartus observes from this place. With which agree the words of Festus, who having said that *rutilus* signifies *red,* adds, "cujus coloris studiosæ etiam antiquæ mulieres erant;" *of which colour women also were studious in ancient times.* (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 34.) But it must be confessed, that the Hebrew word *admoni* doth not signify only *red,* but also *bright* and *shining;* as Bochartus himself acknowledges those words, Lament. iv. 7. are to be understood, where he saith of the Nazarites, *ademu azem mippinim, they were more shining in body than pearls.* And I think these words are so to be interpreted concerning David, that he had a clear complexion; or was very fair (as we speak) and lovely.

And withal of a beautiful countenance.] Or, had *beautiful eyes,* as the words are in the Hebrew, "Oculis speculis et liberalibus," as Conradus Pellicanus here glosses.

And goodly to look to.] Of a pleasant aspect; full of sweetness and clemency, as the same author understands it. All this is said to signify that he was a goodly person, and had greatness in his countenance.

And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.] The Jews observe upon these words, that it was necessary to anoint the first of a family, that was advanced to the kingdom; but it was not necessary to anoint his children that succeeded him: unless upon occasion of a dispute, by a contrary faction. (See Selden, de Success. in Pontificat. lib. ii. cap. 9.)

Ver. 13. *Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him.*] He did not hereby invest him actually with the kingly power: but this anointing was only a designation of him to succeed Saul after his death. So David always understood it; looking upon Saul as the Lord's anointed as long as he lived; that is, as the king of Israel. (See Judg. ix. 8.)

In the midst of his brethren.] It had better have been translated, *from the midst of his brethren;* that is, he singled him out from the rest, and privately anointed him. For it is manifest by what is said before, that Samuel was afraid to have it known, and therefore did not anoint him publicly in the midst of his brethren. And by Eliab's treatment of David after this, (xvii. 28.) it plainly enough appears he did not know him to be the king elect of God's people.

The Jews in Seder Olam Rabba (cap. 13.) say, David was twenty-nine years old when he was anointed: which certainly is false, if it be understood of this first unction by Samuel (whereby God elected him, as in the two following Judah and Israel received him for their king); for after Saul's death he reigned forty years, and lived till he was seventy. So that he was thirty years old when he began to reign: part of which time he spent in the service of Saul; and after that was sorely persecuted by him. How long that persecution lasted is uncertain: but it continued so long, that it makes the opinion of Abarbinel probable, that David could not be above twenty years old, if so much, when Samuel anointed him.

And the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.] A spirit of prudence to behave himself wisely upon all occasions; with a spirit of courage, so that he durst grapple with a lion and a bear: and the spirit of prophecy, in which he was very eminent afterward. In short, a spirit fit for a prince.

And Samuel went up, and went to Ramah.] Having no further commission from God at Beth-lehem.

Ver. 14. *But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul.*] Which came upon him when he was first made king, and continued with him till this time; (x. 11. xi. 6.) yet he did not lose his courage, but his prudence and skill in government.

And an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.] He grew melancholy, timorous, and suspicious: so that he started where there was no danger, as the Hebrew word seems to

import; and thereby became very unfit for business, being sometimes furious and distracted; always full of anxiety and solicitude of mind: sighing and trembling like a man in the dark, as Abarbinel explains it. For his blood and spirits were thick and heavy, having lost their usual purity and splendour.

Ver. 15. *And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee.*] His courtiers could not but observe a strange disturbance in him: which they looked upon as so unusual, that they ascribed it to the hand of God.

Ver. 16. *Let our lord now command thy servants, that are before thee, to seek out a man who is a cunning player upon the harp.*] An instrument always highly esteemed; as those were who could play well upon it. It is called *cinnor* in the Hebrew, from whence, no doubt, the Greek Κιννύρα is derived.

And it shall come to pass, that when the evil spirit from God is upon thee.] When a melancholy fit seized him.

That he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.] It being a bodily disease, they hoped by this means he might receive some relief: and, perhaps, they had seen some experiment made of it upon men in the like condition; for music wonderfully alters the spirits, and consequently the blood: and hath a peculiar virtue in it to cheer and delight those that are sad, and compose those that are furious, as Saul sometimes was.

Ver. 17. *And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now one that can play well, and bring him to me.*] For none durst deny his attendance on him, as Samuel had described the manner of the kingdom, (viii. 11, 12, &c.)

Ver. 18. *Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen the son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person.*] It is likely this was some friend or acquaintance of David's, who had a mind to bring him to court: and therefore reckons up all his good qualities, as well as his skill in music; together with his success in all affairs. Which though he managed with great prudence, yet he could not have been so constantly prosperous if God had not blessed him.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, saying, Send me David thy son, which is with the sheep.*] This message, it is likely, might possess Jesse with some fear that the secret was discovered.

Ver. 20. *And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David his son unto Saul.*] But by this present he hoped to ingratiate his son in his princely favour. The word *laden* is not in the Hebrew, but only *an ass of bread.* Which is a phrase used in other authors, as Bochartus hath observed out of Athenæus: who mentions this phrase in Sosibius, ἄρτων τρεῖς ὄνους καναηλίνους, *three great asses of loaves,* (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 34.)

Ver. 21. *And David came to Saul, and stood before him.*] Ministered unto him among the rest of his servants.

And he loved him greatly; and he made him his armour-bearer.] Which was an honourable preferment.

Ver. 22. *And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favour in my sight.*] This was an extraordinary token of his kindness, that he would not keep his son to wait upon him without his consent.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand.*] Josephus seems to have thought that he also sung hymns and psalms to the harp; for his words are, (lib. vi. Antiq. cap. 9.) λέγων τε τοὺς ὕμνους καὶ ψάλλων εν τῇ κιννύρᾳ, &c. But the illustrious Spanheim shews that the word ψαλμὸς is often used for the sound of the harp. So the scholiast upon Aristophanes's Aves, ψαλμὸς κυρίως ὁ τῆς κιθάρας ἦχος. (See his observation on Callimachus's hymn in Apollinem, ver. 12.) And so Nero truly said, (which Tacitus mentions in his Annals, lib. xiv. cap. 14.) "Antiqui duces cithara cecinerunt," *the ancient great commanders sang to the harp.* So Cornelius Nepos reports of Epaminondas, that he was an excellent musician.

And Saul was refreshed, and was well.] All authors are full of the power of music, both to stir up passions, and to allay them; according to the several kinds of it. Athenæus (lib. xiv.) praises it for the virtue that is in it, καὶ τὰ ἤθη παιδεύειν, καὶ τοὺς θυμοειδεῖς καὶ τὰς γνώμας διαφόρους καταπραΰνειν, *to regulate men's manners, and to allay and soften those that are furious, and disturbed in their minds.* Such songs Aristotle calls μέλη καθαρκτικὰ, *purgative songs;* apt to cleanse the mind from turbid motions, (lib. viii. Polit.) See Gerh. Vossius concerning this in his book de Artibus Popularibus, cap. 3. sect. 13. where he shews how diseases of the body have been cured by music, as well as of the mind: and sect. 45, 46. he shews the power of it over brute creatures. Bochartus also enumerates many famous artists among the ancients, besides Orpheus and Amphion (whose history is dressed up fabulously), that are celebrated, not by poets, but by good historians, for their wonderful skill in moving men's passions by music. (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 44. p. 461, &c.) And long before these, the great Erasmus hath observed the force of music in curing diseases, and quite altering the passions of men's minds, in his preface to Arnobius upon the Psalms. Which may be found among his epistles, lib. xxviii. p. 1655.

And the evil spirit departed from him.] For a time: there being lucid intervals in such distempers as his was; which frequently returned again.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Philistines gathered their armies together unto battle.*] In what year of Saul's reign this was, we are not told: but Josephus thinks it was not long after the things related in the foregoing chapter. For so his words are, χρόνοις δὲ ὕστερον οὐ πολλοῖς, *not many years after,* &c. For the Philistines having received a great defeat (chap. xiv.) resolved to be revenged, and thought they had a fair opportunity, when they heard that Saul was distracted.

And were gathered together at Shochoh which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim.] See Josh. xv. 35. By this it appears, that the Philistines invaded the country of the Israelites, and possessed themselves of some parts of it. That place here called *Ephes-dammim,* by taking away the letter *aleph,* is called *Pas-dammim,* 1 Chron. xi. 13.

Ver. 2. *And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah.*] A place, I sup-

pose, in the same tribe, for their armies were not far one from another.

And set the battle in array against the Philistines.] As ready, and desirous to fight them.

Ver. 3. *And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and the Israelites on a mountain on the other side: and there was a valley between them.*] After they had faced one another some time, and neither side thought fit to engage and begin to fight, they drew up their armies upon two opposite mountains, which were parted by a valley.

Ver. 4. *And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath of Gath.*] For to this city the Anakims fled when Joshua rooted them out of the land of Canaan, (Josh. xi. 22, 23.) And here they propagated a race of *giants*; that is, people of great stature and strength.

Whose height was six cubits and a span.] A great number of authors write of such men of vast stature in ancient times. See Magius de Gigantibus, and Casp. Schottus; but especially Hermannus Conringius, in his book de Antiquo Statu Holmstadii, and in another book, de Habitu Corporum Germanorum; where he shews the ancient Germans were of a vast size, as Cæsar relates in his book de Bello Gal. where he calls them "immani corporum magnitudine homines," *men of a huge greatness of body.* And Pomponius Mela and others say the same. In short, they were generally seven feet high. And now at this day, there is a whole nation on the north side of the strait of Magellan, "immani corporum vastitate," as he there observes, p. 37.

Ver. 5. *And he had a helmet of brass upon his head; and he was armed with a coat of mail.*] With plates of brass, laid one upon another like fishes' scales. So Bochartus, in his Phaleg. lib. iii. cap. 13.

And the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass.] This shews he was a man of vast strength: who was able to walk and to fight with such prodigious armour: which was impenetrable. Yet this is not to be understood, as Fortunatus Scacchus thinks, as if the coat weighed so much, for it would have been insupportable; but that it cost so much, or was valued at five thousand shekels of brass, (Myrothec. vol. ii. p. 33.)

Ver. 6. *And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders.*] That he might be no where vulnerable. For the target defended his neck as well as his shoulders.

Ver. 7. *And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron.*] This was one of his offensive weapons: by which the largeness of his sword may be measured.

And one bearing a shield went before him.] Which was proportionable, no doubt, to his bulk: and was carried before him when he made his challenge, for the greater state's sake; but, when he fought, I suppose, was used by himself.

Ver. 8. *And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel.*] They were divided, it seems, into several bodies, called here *armies:* and they could hear one another from the mountains on which they were encamped; and Goliath came down into the valley, and there challenged any body to come and fight with him in the sight of both armies.

Why are ye come out to set your battle in array?] He charges them with presumption, in offering to make war with the Philistines, who were so much superior to them.

Am not I a Philistine, and you servants of Saul?] Who doubted of this, that he was a Philistine, and they Saul's subjects? The meaning thereof is, as Abarbinel explains it, that he was one of the lords of the Philistines, a chief ruler in Gath, subject to none; and yet would condescend to fight with any of Saul's servants: who, in comparison with him, he looked upon as no better than slaves. The Targum will have it, that he brags of his great deeds: particularly that he had killed Hophni and Phinehas with his own hand, and taken the ark of God captive; and therefore wonders at their presumption, that they should come to fight with those who had gained such victories over them. Which is not likely, for they had since that been beaten twice by the Israelites.

Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.] He propounds the deciding of their quarrel by a single combat: which seems to have been done out of a bravado, rather than from any examples of those ancient times, of ending quarrels in this manner: for though it looks like a charitable design to prevent much bloodshed; yet no nation sure was willing to venture its whole well-being upon one single man's good success. We read, indeed, as I observed upon xiv. 10. of two or three single combats, before the armies of the two nations engaged, but they were not intended to be decisive of the quarrel between them. This therefore was, as I said before, a high rant of Goliath's, proceeding from the high opinion he had of his matchless strength: which made him brag, as if he was the support of the whole nation: which must stand or fall together with him.

Ver. 9. *If he be able to fight with me and kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us.*] These conditions were never accepted, though Saul sought for a man to fight: but quite contrary, they were so far from being agreed on by either side, that the Philistines did not yield themselves slaves to the Israelites upon the death of Goliath; but fled to their own country, and there defended themselves against them, and fought many battles with them.

Ver. 10. *And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together.*] He expresses the utmost contempt of their whole army: in which he signifies there was not a man that durst look him in the face.

Ver. 11. *When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.*] For though Saul had not quite lost his courage, but gathered an army to fight the Philistines; yet it was not so undaunted as it had been before the Spirit of God forsook him: and the people's spirits sink, when their leaders flag and are dismayed.

Ver. 12. *Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Beth-lehem of Judah, whose name was Jesse.*] He being chosen by God to combat with Goliath, the Divine writer gives an account who he was, and what relations he had.

He had eight sons.] In the first book of the Chronicles (ii. 13—15.) there are but seven mentioned: one being dead without children, as R. Solomon thinks; or being only an adopted son.

And the man was accounted an old man in the days of Saul.] And therefore excused from going to the war.

Ver. 13. *And the three eldest sons went and followed Saul*

to battle: and the names of his three sons that went to the war were Eliab the first-born, &c.] These, I suppose, were men of the greatest experience and strength; and therefore fittest for the service.

Ver. 14. *And David was the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul.*] David being young, was not put to the hardships of war: but the eldest only undertook to serve their prince and their country in this time of common danger.

Ver. 15. *But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem.*] In the beginning of this war, as Josephus thinks, Saul sent David home to his father, ἀρκούμενος αὐτοῦ τοῖς τρισὶ υἱοῖς, &c. *contenting himself with three of his sons,* who came to his assistance, with the hazard of their lives.

Ver. 16. *And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.*] This is an argument the Philistines could not force the camp of the Israelites: otherwise they would not have spent so much time in this bravado. Unless we suppose, as Abarbinel doth, that all this time more forces were marching to this place, as their general rendezvous, both from the country of the Philistines, and from the land of Israel: for such great armies could not suddenly be got together. Or some wise men on both sides were treating all this time, to see if they could bring matters to an accommodation. It is a mere fancy of R. Jonathan, in the Gemara of the Mischna, title Sota, that Goliath drew near morning and evening, that he might disturb the Israelites at their morning and evening prayers, and hinder them from reciting them.

Ver. 17. *And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to thy brethren.*] For he did not know but provision might be scarce with them; or, as some will have it, he was informed they were under some hardship, and desired to know how they did. But having other sons at home with him, it was by a Divine direction that he sent David from the sheep upon this errand.

Ver. 18. *And carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand.*] Whose favour might be very serviceable to them.

And look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.] Some think that they went to war, in those days, at their own charge, and were not paid by the king. Provision therefore beginning to fail, Jesse's sons had sent to him for a supply, and by a certain token. Which their father bids David take with him, to know if it were theirs. So some expound the word *pledge.* But others think that if they had borrowed money, or pawned any thing for it, he ordered David to redeem it: or that he should bring something from them, that might certify him of their health. Others translate the word not *pledge* but *business:* and take the sense to be, Bring me word what they do; how they behave themselves; what company they keep, and whom they associate themselves withal.

Ver. 19. *And Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel were in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.*] They were now drawn up in battalia (as we speak) ready to engage: not in the valley, but hard by it, on the side of the mountain, where they faced the Philistines, and shewed themselves resolved to fight, if they came down from the other mountain.

Ver. 20. *And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him: and he came to the trench as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.*] By the *trench,* may be meant the *carriages* (as we translate the word in the margin), wherewith the host was surrounded, instead of a trench made about it.

Ver. 21. *For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army.*] This is the reason of what follows.

Ver. 22. *And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage.*] He left the provision which his father had sent his brethren with his servant, it being no time to present it to them, when they were just going to engage.

And ran unto the army, and came and saluted his brethren.] Acquainting them, no doubt, with their father's care of them.

Ver. 23. *And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion (the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name) out of the army of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them.*] Though the armies stood ready to engage, yet the vanity of Goliath made him once more desire the matter might be determined by a single combat.

Ver. 24. *And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.*] They that could look the whole army of the Philistines in the face (among whom they knew Goliath was), one would think should not flee at the sight of one man. But the meaning is (as the next words shew), they could not endure to hear his opprobrious words against them, and his blasphemous words against God.

Ver. 25. *And the men of Israel said, Have you seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up.*] They bewailed among themselves their sad condition; that all the people of Israel should be set at nought, and vilified by one man; who despised both them and their God, (ver. 45.)

And it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.] To make his family *free in Israel,* was to make them noble. And the Targum translates it, make them *free princes in Israel:* particularly free from paying any tribute or taxes, which was a royal privilege; of which see Selden, lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gentium, cap. 14. fol. 740. Here some observe, that Saul had lost his wonted *piety;* for he sent not to Samuel, nor consulted the high-priest, nor offered sacrifice: but only proclaimed a great reward to him that should fight with Goliath, and kill him. Which shewed he had not lost all *prudence:* for thus Caleb won Kirjath-sepher, by offering his daughter in marriage to him that should take it. And David himself afterward encouraged his soldiers to assault the strong fort of Zion, by promising to make him commander-in-chief of all his forces, who should first enter it. Thus Mathias Hostius observes, the Athenians offered a hundred talents to him that should bring Xerxes to them alive or dead: many more instances of this way of exciting men to valiant exploits he gives in his history of this monomachia.

Ver. 26. *And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Israel?*] He de-

sired them to repeat the king's promise; signifying that he would undertake to encounter Goliath.

For who is this uncircumcised, that he should defy the armies of the living God?] He would not have them think he was moved by the hope of the reward (which was not to be despised) so much as by zeal for God, and for his country: which suffered by the reproaches of one, who was not in covenant with God: and therefore he did not fear him, nor would suffer him any longer to make such proud boasting.

Ver. 27. *And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done unto the man that killeth him.*] They all confirmed what was before said.

Ver. 28. *And Eliab his elder brother heard when he spake unto the men: and his anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither?*] His passion made him forget that he came by his father's order, to see how they did, &c.

And with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness?] This intimates, that he was fitter to look after sheep, than to fight a giant.

I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down to see the battle.] Vain-glory he thought brought him to the battle: and now made him offer to run such a desperate adventure.

Ver. 29. *And David said, What have I done? Is there not a cause?*] He justifies his discourse; since no man, no, not Eliab himself, had the courage to wipe off the reproach which Goliath cast upon them all.

Ver. 30. *And he turned from him to another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the same manner.*] He told them he would undertake to fight Goliath; and they told him what would be his reward if he killed him.

Ver. 31. *And when the words were heard that David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul; and he sent for him.*] They had been spoken to so many, that at last they came to Saul's ear: who desired to hear himself what he said.

Ver. 32. *And David said unto Saul.*] Who had told him what he heard reported of his resolution.

Let no man's heart faint because of him; for thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.] In assured hope of victory.

Ver. 33. *And Saul said unto David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.*] This Saul spake out of kindness to David, whom he would not have to hazard himself against an old soldier, when he was inexperienced in war.

Ver. 34. *And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep; and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock.*] Not both together (as Castalio supposes in his translation), but at several times; and it is likely more than once.

Ver. 35. *And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered him out of his mouth: and when he rose up against me, I caught him by the beard, and smote him, and slew him.*] Sometimes he pursued the lion and killed him in his flight: or, if he turned again to devour him, he boldly caught him by the beard and killed him. And in like manner we are to understand he encountered the bear.

Ver. 36. *Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear.*] The author of Halicoth Olam, by a strange fetch, concludes from hence, that he killed a lion with two of her whelps, and a bear with one of her cubs. (Par. iv. cap. 3.)

And this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.] He encourages himself by three arguments. His mastery over such terrible creatures as a lion and a bear: which made him not fear this great beast, Goliath. Who was not one of God's people: whom he had insolently set at nought as varlets and slaves, (ver. 8.) though they were the servants of the living God.

Ver. 37. *David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear.*] In the Hebrew it is, *out of the hand of the lion, and out of the hand of the bear.* And Aristotle observes, that bears have paws, Χερσὶν ὁμοίους, *resembling hands.*

He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.] To silence all objections, he declares that he was possessed with a full persuasion, that God would deliver this Philistine into his hands, as he had done the lion and the bear: for he felt himself full of that spirit which then assisted him. Abarbinel thinks, that he repeats this so often, because Saul did not seem to believe it, or did not attend to it: and therefore he saith over again, ver. 37. what he had said, ver. 36. And tells him it was not by his own strength, but by the mighty power of God, that he overcame those furious beasts: as he doubted not he should do this Philistine by the same power. Whereupon Saul prayed God to prosper him.

And Saul said, Go, and the Lord be with thee.] As he believed he would.

Ver. 38. *And Saul armed David with his armour,* &c.] Not that which he was wont to wear himself (for he was so tall it would not have fitted David), but he ordered them to bring out of his armoury a helmet and a coat of mail, as it here follows.

Ver. 39. *And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.*] He was not accustomed to wear such things, not being used to go armed: and, therefore, begged leave to lay them aside; as likely rather to encumber him, than facilitate his enterprise. Which Machiavel, in his Princeps, cap. 13. applies to the danger of employing mercenary soldiers; for "aliena arma aut ex humeris decidunt, aut sunt tibi oneri, aut te constrictum tenent."

Ver. 40. *And he took his staff in his hand.*] His shepherd's staff.

And chose him five smooth stones out of the brook.] Or rather *five cleft stones:* not whole and entire, but broken. For the word signifies *partitions;* and, therefore, denotes the stones to have been ragged; and sharp pointed were most fit for his purpose. (See De Dieu.)

And put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip.] Which hung by his side.

And his sling was in his hand.] A sort of weapon, in the management of which some were wonderful skilful in ancient days. (See Judg. xx. 16.) And Livy, with other authors, mention slingers that could hit a mark at a very great distance: particularly the Phœnicians, who, as Bo-

chartus observes, were famous slingers; from whom this art was derived to the Baleares. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 44.)

And he drew near to the Philistine.] It seems David made the first motion towards him, to shew he was in no fear of him.

Ver. 41. *And the Philistine came, and drew near to David; and the man that bare the shield went before him.*] As he was wont to do, (ver. 7.)

Ver. 42. *And when the Philistine looked about and saw David.*] He expected some tall, robust person to encounter him; and, therefore, at the first did not mind David, who was but a stripling.

He disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.] He contemned him upon three accounts: as being a youth, unaccustomed to war; and being beautiful, seemed more fit to dance with women, than to fight with men; and he came also unarmed. (See xvi. 12.)

Ver. 43. *And the Philistine said, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And he cursed David by his gods.*] So the Romans were wont to do, saying, "Dii Deæque te perdant:" as Goliath, it is likely, now wished, that Dagon and Ashtaroth, and the rest of his gods, would confound David.

Ver. 44. *And the Philistine said unto David, Come unto me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.*] For in his hand David was no more than a little lamb in the hand of a butcher.

Ver. 45. *Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts.*] By a commission from Him who commands all creatures in heaven and earth: and in a full assurance that he will deliver thee into my hand. Concerning the word *chidon*, which we translate a *spear*, see Bochart in his Hieroz. par. i. p. 138.

The God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.] The leader and protector of those armies whom Goliath had set at nought.

Ver. 46. *This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand; and I will smite thee, and take thy head off from thee.*] Which Goliath thought impossible, he having no sword by his side.

And will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the earth.] David did not rashly and vainly boast beforehand of the victory, as Goliath hath done: but, being full of faith (as Pellicanus here notes), praised the Divine omnipotence, and prophesied of an assured victory.

That all the earth may know there is a God in Israel.] Superior to all other.

Ver. 47. *And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not by sword and by spear.*] They might learn, if they pleased, that the Lord needed not human force to effect his designs. David did not want courage: but he ascribes all to God; in whose power and might he went forth, and not his own.

For the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hand.] The battle was properly the Lord's against the seven nations of Canaan: because he had commanded them to be extirpated. But in all other battles he disposed of the victory as he pleased. Strigelius here notes out of Sophocles the profane spirit of Ajax; who was therefore punished with madness: because his father Telamon piously admonishing him, as he went to war, to fight bravely, but to expect victory from God; he impiously answered, that "cowards might overcome by the help of God, but he doubted not to overcome without him."

Ver. 48. *And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew near to meet David.*] Having nothing but victory in his thoughts, as Pellicanus here observes, he arose, and marched gravely, and pompously, covered over with armour, and fearing nothing.

That David hasted, and ran towards the army to meet the Philistine.] But David, being loaded with no armour, nimbly ran towards him, and knocked him down; before he had so much as drawn his sword out of his sheath.

Ver. 49. *And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and smote the Philistine in his forehead.*] Which either was bare (he perhaps contemning David so much, as not to pull down his helmet over his face), or else was thrown with such a force, that it pierced his helmet first, and then his forehead: or went in at the place which was left open for his eyes. However it was, the Divine hand directed it: for though there were men so wonderful skilful as to hit a mark that was fixed and immoveable, though small and at a distance; yet none had such admirable skill as to be sure to hit a mark that was in motion, as Goliath's body was at this time.

And the stone sunk into his forehead.] Pierced into his brain, so that he immediately, as it here follows, *fell upon his face to the earth.*

Kimchi thinks, that when he said to David, *Come, and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air,* he looked up, and his helmet then fell from off his head.

Ver. 50. *So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him.*] So true is that of Vegetius, (lib. i. cap. 6.) "Utilius est fortes esse milites, quam grandes." *But it was not mere fortitude and valour that prevailed,* but the Spirit of God.

But there was no sword in the hand of David.] This was so wonderful a thing, that so great a victory should be obtained without the usual warlike weapons, that it was thought fit a special mark should be set upon it.

Ver. 51. *Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine.*] That he might complete his victory, and make it notorious to all the army.

And took his sword, and drew it out of its sheath.] He was strong, not merely by nature, but by the power of God: otherwise he could not have well managed the sword of a giant.

And slew him, and cut off his head therewith.] It is likely the stone had only stunned him; but his life was still in him after this blow in his forehead: and therefore now he quite dispatched him.

And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.] Having lost all their courage with his life.

Ver. 52. *And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted.*] As they used to do when they had got the victory.

And pursued the Philistines, till they came to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron, &c.] They pursued them to their own country (which was in a valley), even to the gates of their principal cities; as Gath and Ekron were.

Ver. 53. *And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and spoiled their tents.*] They acted like good soldiers; who did not first fall upon the spoil; and thereby let the enemy escape.

Ver. 54. *And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem.*] After he had shewn it to Saul, (ver. 57.) and exposed it to all the people, (xviii. 6.) Jerusalem was now become a noted city, which was the reason, I suppose, why he brought his head hither: though it is only said, he brought it to that place; where it having been shewn as a spectacle, perhaps was reposited somewhere else.

But he put his armour in his tent.] Which, I suppose, was set up for David, upon this occasion; when he prepared himself to encounter the Philistine. And when his tent was taken down after the battle, the armour was deposited in the tabernacle, as his sword was, to remain there for a trophy.

Ver. 55. *And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, Whose son is this youth?*] Such cavillers as Spinosa from hence argue, that this chapter was not written by him that wrote the former: for how is it possible, say they, that Saul should not know David, who had lately attended on him in his court? But this is very frivolous; for in such a multitude of business as kings have, and among so many new faces which they see every day, it was easy to forget a man he had seen and conversed withal now and then; especially when he was crazed, and had a disease in his head, as Saul had. Besides, David came now in another kind of apparel than he did when he was sent to wait upon Saul at court: for he appeared now as a shepherd, in a rustic habit, (ver. 40.) and his countenance, it is likely, was much altered by the heroic motion he now found in himself to fight with Goliath. And after all, Abarbinel observes, he doth not ask who David was, but who was his father: which he might easily forget when he had been disturbed with melancholy, and with the public affairs.

And Abner said, As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell.] He being a military man, and therefore much abroad, had not seen David when he was at court, or taken no notice of him.

Ver. 56. *And the king said, Inquire then whose son this stripling is.*] It was natural to desire to know whence such a young man came, who so much excelled all other men.

Ver. 57. *And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him unto Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand.*] He thought it was best the king should learn from his own mouth who he was: especially after such a glorious exploit.

Ver. 58. *And Saul said, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Beth-lehemite.*] More discourse, no doubt, passed between them, as appears by the next words; but this was all that was proper to be recorded, in answer to Saul's question.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit unto the soul of David, and he loved him as his own soul.*] Such was the prudence and modesty of his discourse and behaviour, after such an heroic action, that he entirely gained Jonathan's affection.

Ver. 2. *And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more to his father's house.*] Saul also resolved to shew greater respect unto him than before. For it appears by this that he had not lived always at court, after he came first thither; but often went to his father, when Saul was well, and had no use of him.

Ver. 3. *Then Jonathan and David made a covenant.*] Solemnly entered into a mutual friendship.

Because he loved him as his own soul.] Such excellent men there were among the heathen, between whom there was ζεῦγος φιλίας, as Plutarch calls it, *a yoke of friendship*, wherein they were so joined together in love and amity, as to have one common interest. He mentions (in his book περὶ πολυφιλίας) Theseus and Perithous; Achilles and Patroclus; Orestes and Pylades; Pythias and Damon; Epaminondas and Pelopidas: but none of them comparable to these two, Jonathan and David: who entered into the most sacred bonds of mutual assistance and defence to the very death; and kindness to their posterity after either of them was dead. Which was a singular providence of God, who by this means preserved David, in that sharp persecution which shortly after arose against him at court.

Ver. 4. *And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it unto David.*] That he might appear like a courtier.

And his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.] That he might look like another Jonathan; and all might take notice they were no longer two, but one. For he put him into the garb both of a courtier and of a soldier; or rather, great commander.

Ver. 5. *And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him.*] Upon military expeditions: none of which he refused, though ever so hazardous.

And he behaved himself wisely.] Shewed as much prudence in his conduct as he did courage.

And Saul set him over the men of war.] Not over all; for Abner was general, as we speak, of all his forces: but he made him captain of his guard; or gave him some other great command in his army.

And he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.] Except a few, who envied his preferment.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, as they came.*] Marched along, in a great cavalcade (as they now speak), from the place of battle.

When David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine.] I suppose, Saul and the whole court thought fit to honour David, by accompanying him to Jerusalem, when he carried Goliath's head thither.

The women came out of all the cities of Israel.] All the neighbouring cities.

Singing and dancing to meet king Saul with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music.] As the custom was in times of great rejoicing.

Ver. 7. *And the women answered one to another as they played.*] They sang as well as played on musical instruments: and they sang alternately, as they did Exod. xv. 21. And the burden of the song seems to have been that which follows.

And said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.] For his slaying Goliath was the cause of the flight of the army of the Philistines, and the great slaughter of them.

Ver. 8. *And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom?*] He began to be jealous they would advance him to the throne, in a little time: having so highly magnified him above their king.

Ver. 9. *And Saul eyed David from that day forward.*] Narrowly observed him, whether he had any such design to make himself king. Or, as it is commonly interpreted, he looked askew upon him, as one he envied and hated, and was afraid of; as the LXX. translate it.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul.*] Which had formerly haunted him, (xvi. 14.) and now, by his discontent, anger and melancholy was brought again upon him.

And he prophesied in the midst of the house.] Before the whole court. This prophesying is generally understood, only of his imitating the motions, actions, and gestures of the prophets; which sometimes were very different from those of other men: (see 2 Kings ix. 11.) but I do not see why this word should not retain the signification here, which it hath in other places: that he sung Divine songs. Which perhaps he the rather did, that David might suspect no danger from him. Abarbinel thinks, that his mind being disturbed with various roving thoughts about his own condition, and about David, he foretold that David should be heir of his kingdom.

And David played with his hand, as at other times.] To compose and quiet his disturbed spirits.

And there was a javelin in Saul's hand.] Which he had provided on purpose, as the following words shew, to dispatch David.

Ver. 11. *And Saul cast the javelin, for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it.*] This argued he was so full of fury, that he designed to kill him in his own house, before all his courtiers, when David was waiting upon him, and doing him service.

And David avoided out of his presence twice.] Had his eye upon him, and shunned the blow, both now, and at another time mentioned xix. 10.

Ver. 12. *And Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul.*] Who was as unsuccessful in all his designs, as David was prosperous.

Ver. 13. *Therefore Saul removed him from him.*] From his court.

And made him a captain over a thousand.] Instead of captain of his guard (which required his attendance at court), he gave him a command abroad: where he hoped he might be killed in some expedition; or he might have an opportunity privately to take away his life.

And he went out and came in before the people.] As the leader of that thousand men.

Ver. 14. *And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways.*] None could find any fault in his conduct, whithersoever he went.

And the Lord was with him.] Made all his undertakings prosperous.

Ver. 15. *Wherefore, when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.*] His fears increased as he saw David still grow so prudent that no exception could be taken to his behaviour.

Ver. 16. *But all Israel and Judah loved David.*] This is to be understood (as Corn. Bertram thinks, de Repub. Jud. cap. 10.) as if he had said, The Israelites in general loved David, but especially they of the tribe of Judah.

Because he went out and came in before them.] This phrase signifies in other places to administer all things belonging to one's charge with full authority. So Moses speaks of himself, Deut. xxxi. 2. and of Joshua his successor, Numb. xxvii. 21. And so I suppose it signifies here, that David had an absolute power under Saul, over those whom he commanded: and managed it so well that he gained every body's affection.

Ver. 17. *And Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab, her will I give thee to wife.*] He at last bethinks himself of the promise he had publicly made unto him that should kill Goliath. The performance of which David did not demand, but in modesty left it to Saul's own conscience. Who now intended nothing less, it appears by the sequel, than to be as good as his word.

Only be thou valiant for me, and fight the Lord's battles.] He would not have him think upon this marriage of coming again to live at court: but to continue a military life, and fight for his country, whereby he hoped to be rid of him.

For Saul said, Let not mine hand be upon him.] Now he seems to have some sense of honour, and to lay aside those base thoughts of murdering him himself.

But let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.] By whose hand God's just judgment so ordered things that Saul himself fell.

Ver. 18. *And David said unto Saul, Who am I? and what is my life.*] The hazarding his life, he tells him, could not deserve so high an advancement.

And what is my family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?] This was not a refusal of the honour, but an acknowledgment how unworthy he was of it.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David.*] When all things were ready for the marriage.

That she was given to Adriel the Meholathite to wife.] A most high affront to David, and the greatest injury that could have been done him: which he wisely dissembled. How Jonathan resented this usage we are not told. It is likely his duty to his father made him entreat David to take it patiently; and to look upon Saul as one that was sometimes beside himself, and did not know what he did.

Ver. 20. *And Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David: and they told Saul, and the thing pleased him.*] Not out of any love to David, or desire to perform his promise: but because he hoped by her means to bring his ends about of destroying David.

Ver. 21. *And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.*] He hoped his daughter, in obedience to him, might be persuaded to bring him into some snare that he would lay for him: or, that being exposed to great dangers (which he was to undergo, as a condition of having her to wife) he might perish in some of them.

Wherefore Saul said unto David, Thou shalt be this day

my son-in-law.] That is shortly, within a time, it is likely, prefixed by Saul.

In the one of the twain.] By marrying one of his daughters. He had two; and though he was disappointed in one of them, yet his promise was fulfilled, if he married the other.

Ver. 22. *And Saul commanded his servants, saying, Commune with David secretly.*] It seems David was not forward to embrace Saul's offer; having been so grossly abused: therefore Saul ordered his courtiers in private discourse to take occasion to persuade him to it.

And say, Behold, the king hath delight in thee, and his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's son-in-law.] The affection of the king and of the whole court, was a mighty argument to induce him to it.

Ver. 23. *And Saul's servants spake these words in the ears of David. And David said, Seemeth it a light thing unto you to be a king's son-in-law, seeing I am a poor man, and little esteemed?*] Having no estate, and of small credit: and therefore unable to endow her according to her quality.

Ver. 24. *And the servants of Saul told him, saying, In this manner spake David.*] In the Hebrew, *according unto these words;* that is, they reported his words faithfully; that he was as sensible of his own meanness, as of the honour that was offered him.

Ver. 25. *And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any dowry, but a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of his enemies.*] This custom hath prevailed in latter times in some countries, to give their daughters in marriage to the most valiant men; or those who should bring them so many heads of their enemies. Alex. ab Alexandro reports of a people in Carmania, that if any were desirous to marry, it was necessary he should first bring the king the head of an enemy, (lib. i. cap. 24.) Vincent le Blanc reports the like of others, (par. i. cap. 30.) But why did Saul desire the foreskins of the Philistines', and not their heads? To this Procopius Gazæus answers, that Saul did not know but David might cut off the heads of his own subjects and bring them instead of the Philistines, and therefore he asked so many foreskins, which the Israelites had not, that he might be sure he had killed so many enemies. As for portions, the Hebrew custom was not like that of the Romans, who required the wife to bring a portion to her husband, "ut onera matrimonii tanto æquius sustineat," *that he might be able to bear the charges of matrimony more equally.* But among the Hebrews the husband endowed the wife, and received nothing at all with her. And so the custom was among the people of that land before they came into Canaan. For Sichem bade Dinah's relations require what dowry they pleased, and it should be settled upon her, he desiring nothing of them but her, (Gen. xxxix. 17.) And so it was in the case of David. (See Wagenseil upon Sota, cap. 4.)

But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.] Who he knew would be extremely enraged against David, by putting this great indignity upon them, as they all counted it, of cutting off their foreskins.

Ver. 26. *And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son-in-law.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *the thing was right in David's eyes;* that is, he thought fit to accept the offer upon these conditions.

And the days were not expired.] Which were appointed to be fulfilled (as it is in the Hebrew) before the marriage took effect: so that he had time to perform what was agreed instead of a dowry.

Ver. 27. *Wherefore David arose and went, he and his men, and slew of the Philistines two hundred men: and brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's son-in-law.*] He gave Saul double of what he had demanded: partly to shew his sense of the honour he had done him, and partly to express his love to his daughter, and to declare his intention to venture his life freely to do him service.

And Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife.] There being no way to avoid it, after the marriage had been so solemnly treated and ratified.

Ver. 28. *And Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David.*] He was convinced of it, by the success which he constantly gave him.

And that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him.] Which was a great disappointment to him.

Ver. 29. *And Saul was yet the more afraid of David.*] Having thus advanced him; and seeing no hope of bringing his designs to pass against him.

And Saul became David's enemy continually.] He was every day more resolved to destroy him. Such strange blindness did his anger and hatred, and such-like passions, bring upon him, that he set himself against him, who he saw and knew had God for his friend.

Ver. 30. *And the princes of the Philistines went forth.*] To fight with the Israelites: who had highly incensed them by David's late action, as well as by former losses. And they thought, perhaps, that David would make use of the benefit the law allowed, Deut. xxiv. 25. of not going to war in a year after he was married.

And it came to pass, after they went forth, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul.] By discovering, I suppose, the designs of the Philistines, and preventing them: for we do not read that they came to a battle.

So that his name was much set by.] He was very highly esteemed.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David.*] When he could not destroy him by craft, he declares open enmity to him; and commands his son and his whole court to make him away: some of which he thought would obey him. It is strange that he should speak to Jonathan to murder David, if he knew the friendship he had for him; and he could not well be ignorant of it, since he had so publicly declared it, as we read xviii. 3, 4. But he imagined his love to a father would overcome his love to a friend. And there was a great providence of God in his disclosing his mind so freely to Jonathan, whereby David came to be certainly informed of his danger.

Ver. 2. *And Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David.*] He continued to take much delight in his company: and therefore would not lose the pleasure of his friendship by suffering him to be killed.

And Jonathan told David, saying, My father seeketh to

kill thee. Now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself.] He hoped, I suppose, to find his father better disposed in the morning: and in the mean time would have David secure himself in some close place where nobody could find him.

Ver. 3. *And I will go out.*] The next morning.

And stand beside my father in the field.] In which, it is likely, Saul used to walk in the morning, and take the fresh air. Thereabouts he advised David to lurk in some secret place, that he might speedily acquaint him with the issue of his discourse with his father.

And I will commune with my father concerning thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee.] Let him know how he left his father inclined.

Ver. 4. *And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father.*] A noble act of friendship, to adventure to commend him to one who was his declared enemy.

And said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his work hath been to thee-ward very good.] He represented to him what a sin and dishonour it would be to kill such a faithful servant as David had been: who never offended him; but studied by all good offices to please him.

Ver. 5. *For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine.*] Especially he puts him in mind of that hazardous enterprise wherein he slew Goliath.

And the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel.] By which means the whole realm was delivered out of their enemies' hand.

Thou sawest it, and didst rejoice.] He desires him to remember that he himself was a witness of it; and could not then but applaud David, and rejoice in what God had done by him.

Wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, and slay David without a cause?] Having mollified Saul by so many arguments, he beseeches him to revoke the order he had given ver. 1. and in downright terms tells him, if he did not, he would bring innocent blood upon his own head.

Ver. 6. *And Saul hearkened to the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, As the Lord liveth, he shall not be slain.*] Some think he sware deceitfully; that Jonathan, believing he had no ill intentions towards David, might not persuade him to fly, but bring him to court again, where he might have an opportunity to kill him. But I rather think he spake what he really meant at this present: though this alteration proceeding not from any affection he bare to David, but from a sense (which Jonathan's discourse had wrought in him) how base a thing it would be, to slay a man of such worth, and who had done him such service, he soon forgot it, and returned to his old bent.

Ver. 7. *And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan shewed him all these things: and Jonathan brought David unto Saul, and he was in his presence, as in times past.*] When he was in his favour.

Ver. 8. *And there was war again: and David went out and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled from him.*] All these battles were only between parties, for David commanded no more than a thousand men, (xviii. 13.) And if the whole army of the Philistines had been gathered together, Abner would have commanded the army of Israel against them; for he was captain of the host.

Ver. 9. *And the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, and he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand.*] The more services David did his country, the more did Saul's hatred and malice increase against him. For this new victory, in all likelihood, made him melancholy and mad to see him so prosperous.

And David played with his hand.] He did not omit his duty to Saul, though he knew his danger.

Ver. 10. *And Saul sought to smite David to the wall with his javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall.*] His wrath and fury made him forget his oath: so dangerous it is to be possessed with such passions.

And David fled, and escaped that night.] He got out of the palace, before Saul's order (which it is likely he gave) could be executed, to apprehend him.

Ver. 11. *Saul also sent messengers unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning.*] As he went out of the door of his house. By this it is apparent, when Saul missed his blow, he was the more enraged, and implacably pursued his destruction.

And Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain.] She had intelligence either from her brother Jonathan, or some other friend at court: or perhaps she saw suspicious persons hovering about the house.

Ver. 12. *So Michal let down David through a window.*] Which did not look towards any of the doors which were narrowly watched.

And he went, and fled, and escaped.] Having most of the night, it is likely, to travel in.

Ver. 13. *And Michal took an image.*] In the Hebrew, a *teraphim.* But it doth not signify such as were made for a superstitious use (which David would not have suffered in his house), but a simple image of a man's head; such as we now use for blocks, whereon to comb our perukes. Abarbinel thinks (whom Abendana follows) that women were wont in those days to make such figures in the likeness of their husbands; that when they were absent from them, they might have them in their image, to look upon them, as still present with them. Of which sort of teraphim (which were images in the likeness of men) was this of Michal's; who, dearly loving her husband, had got one made in his likeness. But whatsoever becomes of this, the conceit that teraphim were little puppets (as I may call them), which the high-priest had in his breast-plate (called *urim* and *thummim*) is plainly destroyed. For this place shews that teraphim was a large image representing a man: and therefore fitter for a bed, than for a breast-plate.

And laid it in the bed.] Where David was wont to lie.

And put a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster.] It is hard to determine what the word *cebir* signifies, which we translate *pillow;* for there is great variety of opinions among interpreters about it. But Bochartus hath with much probability resolved that it signifies *great.* And the meaning is, she put a great deal of goats' hair upon his bolster; for though the word *goats* is only mentioned in the Hebrew, yet the word *hair* must be supplied, as a great many other places of Scripture testify. (See his Hierozoicon,

par. i. lib. ii. cap. 51. p. 623.) For in those countries goats had long hair, which was shorn, as the wool of sheep is, and served for many uses; and it is not unlike man's hair, as he there observes. It was also of divers colours, so that she might choose some fine goats' hair (which was ready at hand, being used to be spun) of the same colour with David's.

And covered it with a cloth.] As if David had been sick.

Ver. 14. *And when Saul sent messengers to take David.*] He not coming out of doors, where they watched for him, Saul sent other messengers to take him in his house.

She said, He is sick.] Her affection to David made her tell an untruth; whereby he gained more time to get to a place of safety.

Ver. 15. *And Saul sent messengers again to see David.*] As if they came to visit him, and see how he did.

Saying, Bring him to me in the bed, that I may slay him.] Such was his insatiable rage, that he could not stay to see whether he would die of his sickness; but when he was able to make no resistance, resolved to dispatch him.

Ver. 16. *And when the messengers were come in, behold, there was an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster.*] An image dressed up with goats' hair, resembling a man.

Ver. 17. *And Saul said unto Michal, Wherefore hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped?*] He did not expect to be served so by a daughter, whom he had married to David, that she might betray him.

And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill thee?] This was another fiction of her own; for it is not likely that she endeavoured to detain him, or that he threatened to kill her if she did.

Ver. 18. *So David fled, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him of all that Saul had done unto him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth.*] A place near to Ramah, as the next verse shews.

Ver. 19. *And it was told Saul, Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah.*] Ramah seems to have been the place from whence Samuel was descended, called (in the first chapter, ver. 1.) Ramathaim-zophim, for the reason I gave there. And Naioth was a neighbouring place belonging to it, and perhaps the suburbs of it: where the sons of the prophets either had their ordinary residence, or were wont sometimes to retire thither for greater privacy.

Ver. 20. *And Saul sent messengers to take David.*] His implacable hatred had abolished all respect and reverence to Samuel (under whose protection David now was), and to the college of the prophets, which was a kind of sanctuary unto those who fled to it.

And when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them.] To govern them.

The Spirit of the Lord came also upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.] That is, praised God in hymns, which the prophets composed and sang to him, (1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2. 4.)

Ver. 21. *And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent again the third time, and they prophesied also.*] A strange obstinacy, to contend so long with the Spirit of God: who quite diverted the minds of his messengers from David, by inspiring them with Divine thoughts.

Ver. 22. *Then went he also unto Ramah.*] Not out of devotion, but to destroy David.

And came to a great well that is in Sechu.] Where company commonly was to fetch water.

And he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? And they answered and said, Behold, they be at Naioth in Ramah.] It is a probable opinion of Conrad. Pellicanus, that *Naioth* signifies the *habitation* or *college* where the prophets dwelt in Ramah.

Ver. 23. *And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah.*] He directed his way towards that place.

And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him also, and he went on prophesying until he came to Naioth in Ramah.] His messengers did not prophesy till they came thither; but God inspired Saul as he was on the way unto that place. So that from Sechu, I suppose, till he came there, his evil spirit was gone, and he praised God as the prophets did. This was to convince him, that he laboured in a vain pursuit after David, whom the Spirit of God powerfully defended.

Ver. 24. *And he stripped off his clothes also.*] His royal robes (as R. Solomon and other Jewish doctors expound it), appearing like an ordinary man; or perhaps in the prophetical habit. Or it may be meant only of his upper garment, whatsoever it was. For when the Germans are said by some to have appeared naked, Tacitus interprets it, "rejecta veste superiore," *throwing off their upper garment.* But the first I take to be the truest account; and, as Procopius Gazæus here notes, "Habitus ille regni ablationem significabat;" *this throwing off his royal habit signifies the taking away his kingdom from him.*

And prophesied before Samuel in like manner.] This seems to denote, that his messengers had also stripped themselves when they prophesied. And Abarbinel will have it, that they all still foretold the crown should be set upon the head of David.

And lay down naked all that day, and all that night.] As a man in an ecstacy, that had not the use of his senses. But by *naked* is meant only, as before, stripped of his royal robe.

Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the prophets?] This gave occasion to renew the proverbial saying, which had been in use long before. (See x. 12.)

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan.*] By Saul's being thrown into a trance (mentioned in the verse beforegoing), God's providence gave David time to escape; and he went from thence to Gibeah, where Jonathan was.

What have I done? and what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?] Such violent and unwearied persecution must arise from some extraordinary cause or other; which he desires to know: for he could not accuse himself of any kind of fault, that should embitter Saul against him.

Ver. 2. *And he said, God forbid; thou shalt not die.*] He would have him think there was no such danger as he suspected.

Behold, my father will do nothing, either great or small,

but he will shew it me; and why should my father hide this from me? it is not so.] These words signify that Jonathan knew nothing of his father's design; and that he had sent the messengers forenamed, without his privity, to seize David. Yet it is strange he should not know of his sending to his house to apprehend him. Therefore some think Jonathan, out of dutiful affection to his father, dissembled the matter: and would not have David think him so very wicked as he was.

Ver. 3. *And David sware moreover, and said.*] That it was certainly so.

Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes, and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.] He was willing to believe that Saul might conceal his intentions from Jonathan; for the reason here mentioned.

But truly, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.] But by a most solemn oath he endeavours to persuade him that he was in extreme danger of losing his life.

Ver. 4. *Then said Jonathan to David, Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee.*] Both to find out Saul's intentions, and to save David's life.

Ver. 5. *And David said unto Jonathan, To-morrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat.*] There were solemn sacrifices every new moon, and then a feast upon them. And David being one of the king's family, by marrying his daughter, used to eat with them at these festival times: and he thought it possible that Saul, who lately pursued him in a fit of rage, when the evil spirit was upon him, might now be mitigated by the Spirit of God coming upon him at Naioth: and so might inquire after him, and receive him into favour again, as he had formerly done. But he durst not trust to this opinion, till he had tried his mind and affection to him, after the manner here propounded.

But let me go, that I may hide myself in the field.] He desires, with his approbation, to retire to his father's house, and the field thereabouts, with which he was well acquainted.

Till the third day at even.] That is, till the next day but one after the new moon, as appears from ver. 27. 35.

Ver. 6. *If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Beth-lehem, his city: for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.*] It is likely this was a custom among pious families to meet together once a year, and praise God for his mercies towards them all.

Ver. 7. *If he say thus, It is well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him.*] If he approved of Jonathan's licence, he might hope he was pacified: but if he still stormed and raged, he might probably conclude his destruction was decreed; and that his hatred continued so implacably, that he must be forced to leave his country.

Ver. 8. *Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant.*] In giving him a faithful account how he found his father disposed towards him.

For thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the Lord with thee.] It was Jonathan's motion, that they should make a solemn covenant before God (who is the avenger of all falseness) of mutual friendship, (xviii. 3.)

Notwithstanding, if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldest thou bring me to thy father?] A marvellous assurance of his integrity, which made him freely offer himself to die, without troubling his father any further, if he knew any guilt in him.

Ver. 9. *And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee.*] Do not speak after this manner.

For if I knew certainly that evil was determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell thee?] He disclaims all thoughts either of killing him himself, or letting him fall into the hands of his father, if he could prevent it. For who could imagine a man so solemnly engaged, and who had already shewn himself such a faithful friend, would not discover any design he knew against him?

Ver. 10. *And David said, Who shall tell me?*] He desired to know who should bring him advice how matters stood.

And what if thy father answer thee roughly?] And not suffer thee to come to me thyself.

Ver. 11. *And Jonathan said unto David, Come, let us go into the field. And they went both of them into the field.*] To take their measures about this matter.

Ver. 12. *And Jonathan said unto David, O Lord God of Israel, when I have sounded my father any time to-morrow, or the third day, and, behold, if there be good towards David, and I then send not unto thee, and shew it thee.*] The first words seem to be an exclamation: and the rest, as if he had said, Shall I who love thee so much, be thought capable of breaking my word with thee? All these verses are full of passion; and the words are broken, concise, and interrupt: as the words of lovers are wont to be, especially when they are disturbed.

Ver. 13. *The Lord do so, and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father to do thee evil, then I will shew it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace; and the Lord be with thee, as he hath been with my father.*] In this case he advises him to get away, and preserve himself as well as he could: praying God to make him as successful as his father had been; and bring him to the kingdom.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt not only, while I yet live, shew me the kindness of the Lord.*] The kindness promised him before the Lord, or the greatest kindness. The words in the Hebrew run plainly thus, *And wilt thou not, if I be then alive* (*viz.* when God had advanced him to the throne, as he did his father) *wilt thou not shew me the loving-kindness of the Lord?* He made no doubt, but rather strongly affirmed his belief of it.

That I die not.] After the manner of those kings, who were wont to cut off the children of their predecessors: unto whose throne they were advanced.

Ver. 15. *But also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever.*] The covenant they had made was not merely personal, but reached to their posterity.

No, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David, every one from the face of the earth.] When he had the greatest power, and none to oppose his will.

Ver. 16. *So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the Lord even requite it at the hand of David's enemies.*] They had made a league of personal friendship, a little after the slaughter of Goliath: and now they make a friendship between their families; and Jona-

than wished that God would requite it, if any of his family proved David's enemies. This he renewed afterward, and added further articles to the league, that Jonathan should be next to himself, (xxiii. 18.)

Ver. 17. *And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him.*] Or he made him swear again by the love he bare to him.

For he loved him as he loved his own soul.] The greatness of his love to him made him think he could never do enough to secure his friendship to all generations.

Ver. 18. *Then Jonathan said unto David, To-morrow is the new moon; and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty.*] The place where he used to sit with Saul at table.

Ver. 19. *And when thou hast stayed three days, then thou shalt go down quickly.*] It is commonly interpreted, of staying so long with his kindred at Beth-lehem, or some other place of retirement. But in the Hebrew the words are, *thou shalt three times* (or three days) *go down to a very low place:* and the meaning seems to be, that if Jonathan did not come the first day, he should take it for granted he knew nothing; and come again the second; and if he brought him no news then, come the third.

And come to the place where thou didst hide thyself when the business was in hand.] When they were discoursing of this very matter; how to discover Saul's affection towards David. Or, when he did David's business with his father, and interceded so effectually for him, that Saul promised not to kill him.

And thou shalt remain by the stone Ezel.] It is thought to be a stone that shewed men their way, where several roads met: because the word imports *going* or *travelling.*

Ver. 20. *And I will shoot three arrows, as though I shot at a mark.*] For when he came there might be passengers going to and fro: which would deprive them of the privacy they desired. Therefore this seems to have been given as a sign that the coast was clear.

Ver. 21. *And, behold, I will send a lad, saying, Go find out the arrows. If I expressly say to the lad, Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them; then come thou: for there is peace to thee, and no hurt, as the Lord liveth.*] So that he might securely appear, and shew himself.

Ver. 22. *But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way: for the Lord hath sent thee away.*] He would not have him venture to discover himself; but look upon this as a sign that God would not have him appear at court.

Ver. 23. *And as touching the matter that thou and I have spoken of, behold, the Lord is between thee and me for ever.*] As a witness, and an avenger, if we keep not the covenant we have made of perpetual friendship.

Ver. 24. *So David hid himself in the field: and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat.*] He did not immediately hide himself in the field, but when the time came that he had appointed: for he first went to Beth-lehem, (ver. 6. 28.)

Ver. 25. *And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall.*] The Israelites sat at meat (as did the Greeks and Romans in aftertimes) in a half round, or circle: which they called *sigma*, from the ancient figure of that letter, which was thus, ς. Now the middle place, in this fashion of sitting, was most honourable among this people, as our Mr. Thorndike gathers from this very place. Upon which R. Solomon saith, "Saul sat in the head of the couch next the wall." For supposing them to sit in a round, or half circle, as the manner always was, we must needs conceive that the back or middle of this half circle must be towards the wall, for all conveniences. (See his Religious Assemblies, p. 62.) It may be also here observed, that the custom of lying along, leaning on their elbows, was not yet introduced, in these ancient times; but they sat at meat as we do. (See Bochartus, Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 5. p. 598.)

And Jonathan arose.] When his father came into the room: and after Saul had taken his place, it is likely, sat on his right hand.

And Abner sat by Saul's side.] On his left hand, I suppose, being his cousin, and the general of his army.

And David's place was empty.] Which, it is probable, was next to Abner's.

Ver. 26. *Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day.*] Made no inquiry after David.

For he thought, Something hath befallen him, he is not clean; surely he is not clean.] What this *mikrah* or *accident* signifies, which we translate *something hath befallen him*, see upon Lev. xv. 16.

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass on the morrow, which was the second day of the month, that David's place was empty: and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse.*] His calling him the *son of Jesse* argued both scorn and displeasure against him.

To meat, neither yesterday nor to-day?] By this it appears, the Jews anciently observed two days, in the beginning of every month, with festival joy. The reason was, because the new moon being proclaimed according to its appearance, and it appearing unequally, sometimes in the afternoon, sometimes in the evening, sometimes at midnight, therefore they observed two days, as Scaliger and others have observed. And they who were not clean the first day, might observe the second: for that sort of uncleanness here spoken of lasted but one day.

Ver. 28. *And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Beth-lehem.*] Which he, being next to the king, had power, I suppose, to grant: as appears, from his demanding of Jonathan an account what was become of him.

Ver. 29. *And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for my family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there.*] The eldest brother let all the rest know that their company was expected.

Now, if I have found grace in thine eyes, let me go away, I pray thee, and see my brethren: therefore he cometh not to the king's table.] He expresses in many words, the great importunity of David for leave to go and visit his relations: which he thought might make the king not take it ill that he had granted it.

Ver. 30. *And Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of a perverse rebellious woman.*] Or, as it is in the Hebrew, *thou son of perverse rebellion.* That is, a very perverse rebel.

Do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thy own confusion.] Made him his friend, to his utter undoing.

And unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness?] For

the world would think that he was none of his son; because he loved him entirely, whom Saul hated extremely.

Ver. 31. *For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom.*] He was fully satisfied that David, if he lived, would be king of Israel. Which, if he knew by Samuel's anointing him, it was madness to imagine that he should be able to overthrow the counsel of God.

Wherefore now fetch him to me; for he shall surely die.] He could not expect to be obeyed, since his son loved him so much: but his fury made him lay this command upon him.

Ver. 32. *And Jonathan answered Saul his father, Wherefore should he be slain? what hath he done?*] He declines his command, by desiring to know what his guilt was.

Ver. 33. *And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him.*] It is not said, as it is of David, xix. 10. *to smite him to the wall:* and therefore some think he intended only to wound him, not to kill him: but the word *smite,* in Scripture, commonly signifies to kill, and there is no reason to take it otherwise here: Saul's fury being so great, that he minded not what he did. One would think that he used a *javelin* or lance as a sceptre: for it was always ready at hand.

Wherefore Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David.] That it was his unalterable resolution. Which is implied in that phrase, (ver. 31.) *he is the son of death,* as Constantine L'Empereur observes upon Bava-kama, p. 90.

Ver. 34. *So Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.*] Here are two reasons why he fasted: first, because he was extremely afflicted for David; and, secondly, his father had put Jonathan to shame, by his foul language, and by throwing a javelin at him: for so the words run clearly in the Hebrew; *for he was grieved for David, and because,* &c. the copulative *and* being wanting, as in many other places.

Ver. 35. *And it came to pass in the morning.*] Of the third day.

That Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him.] According to their agreement, (ver. 20, 21.)

Ver. 36. *And he said to the lad, Run, find out the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.*] Which was the sign given to David of Saul's ill intentions, (ver. 22.)

Ver. 37. *And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, Is not the arrow beyond thee?*] He cried so loud, I suppose, that David might hear him what he said.

Ver. 38. *And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, stay not.*] So desirous he was to be alone with David.

And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.

Ver. 39. *And the lad knew not any thing; only Jonathan and David knew the matter.*] The meaning of all this.

Ver. 40. *And Jonathan gave his artillery to the lad, and said unto him, Go, carry them into the city.*] That he might be left alone with David.

Ver. 41. *And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place towards the south.*] On the south of the stone Ezel: on the north side of which Jonathan shot his arrows, that the lad might not chance to stumble upon David.

And fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times.] After three bows, he fell on his face; out of reverence to him, as the king's son, and his excellent friend. Arrianus saith, (lib. iv.) that this prostration was introduced by Cyrus: but he is confuted by this action of David; which shews it to have been a far more ancient posture.

And they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded.] Being to become an exile from his friend, from his wife, from his kindred, and the people of God; and from all sacred solemnities.

Ver. 42. *And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever.*] As much as to say, doubt not that I will faithfully keep my covenant with thee; as I doubt not of thy perpetual steadfastness in it, when I am dead. And this must be our satisfaction, in this sad separation.

And he arose and departed.] That is, David left Jonathan.

And Jonathan went into the city.] I suppose their discourse continued but a short time; for fear of being discovered.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *THEN came David to Nob.*] It is hard to tell where this city was; for it is not reckoned among the cities of the priests, either in the tribe of Judah, or of Benjamin, or of any other. But D. Kimchi saith, his father took it for Jerusalem; and perhaps it was near to it: where the tabernacle being fixed, the priests resorted thither in great numbers, and settled there. In Neh. xi. 32. we find mention of a city of this name, in the tribe of Benjamin: whither Saul, perhaps, brought the tabernacle, being his own tribe.

Unto Ahimelech the priest.] Intending here to commend himself and his cause to God; and to beg his direction and protection. Ahimelech is no where called the high-priest, but always *Ahimelech the priest,* or simply *the priest:* (ver. 4—6. 9.) yet, being the son of Ahitub, (xxii. 9. 11.) who was the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, he is generally supposed to have been the brother of Ahijah, (mentioned xiv. 3.) and he being dead, to have succeeded him in the high-priesthood.

And Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David.] Seeing him alone; and having heard, perhaps, something of the king's displeasure against him.

And said unto him, Why art thou alone, and no man with thee?] A man of David's quality, he knew, never went without attendants. And the truth is, David had some persons with him, as the fourth verse tells us, and appears from our Saviour's words (in the second of St. Mark), where he mentions "David and those that were with him." But he had no such persons as used to be his guard; and he left those that were with him at some distance, that Ahimelech might not see them.

Ver. 2. *And David said unto Ahimelech the priest, The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me,*

Let no man know any thing of the business whereon I send thee, and what I have commanded thee.] We are not from hence to take an example of speaking untruths (as Conradus Pellicanus here glosses), but the wickedness of the world is the more to be deplored, which sometimes puts a necessity upon excellent men to lie, that they may preserve their lives, which cannot be safe without it.

And I have appointed my servants to such and such a place.] Here he acknowledges he had servants with him: but he had disposed them into several places, that the king's business might be the better concealed.

Ver. 3. *Now therefore what is under thy hand?*] He desires to know what he was able to do for him, to supply his wants.

Give me five loaves of bread in my hand.] Particularly he desires to satisfy his hunger, and enough for his servants.

Or what there is present.] That is, any other victuals.

Ver. 4. *And the priest answered, There is no common bread under my hand; but there is hallowed bread, if the young men have kept themselves at least from women.*] It was the ancient custom among other nations, for the priests to keep themselves even from the lawful use of women, before they performed their office: as Porphyry informs us, lib. iv. Περὶ Ἀποχῆς, sect. 7. Therefore Ahimelech requires this of David's soldiers, or companions, that being to eat of the holy bread, which none but priests might eat, they should eat it with the same purity, which was required of the priests.

Ver. 5. *And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out.*] As many days as the Lord himself required for the sanctifying of the people, when he appeared on Mount Sinai, at the giving of the law, (Exod. xix. 15.)

And the vessels of the young men.] That is, *their bodies:* so the word *keli* here signifies, as σκεῦος doth in 1 Tim. iv. 4.

Are holy.] That is, separated from women.

And the bread is in a manner common.] He adds, that he need not scruple to give them the hallowed bread; for it was not so holy as when it was upon the table of the Lord: but became, in a manner, or in some part, common bread; being now the food not only of the priest, but of his whole family.

Yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel.] The marginal translation is more plain, *especially when there was other that day sanctified in the vessel.* He means, new bread was set upon the table of the Lord: so that no wrong was done to him. By the *vessel* is meant the dish on which the bread was placed, mentioned Exod. xxv. 29.

Ver. 6. *So the priest gave him hallowed bread; for there was no bread there but the shew-bread that was taken from before the Lord, to put hot bread in the day that it was taken away.*] In this neither Ahimelech nor David committed any sin: for invincible necessity dispensed with all these ritual laws; as the Jews themselves confess. Particularly R. Levi, who saith, in a great famine they might eat an ass's head, which was an unclean creature. And they justify this by the words of the law, (Lev. xviii. 5.) *he shall live in them*, not, He shall die in them. From whence they gather, that in danger of life such laws were not to be observed. And so Procopius Gazæus observes, that wise men among the ancient people of God, had less regard to these bodily precepts of the law: and that Abiathar, in granting leave to David and his men to eat of the pontifical bread, *plusquam vulgus sapiebat, was much wiser than the vulgar people.* He calls him Abiathar, not Ahimelech, who granted this indulgence; for so doth our blessed Saviour, Mark ii. 26. and there is a learned friend of mine, who hath a Dissertation ready for the press, to prove that Abiathar was at this time high-priest. Though it is commonly thought he was only the *sagan*, as the Jews in later times call him who was the high-priest's vicar: and upon that account was a secondary high-priest; though that name of high-priest did not belong to Abiathar in the highest sense. And besides this, there is no incongruity in saying, that was done *in the days of Abiathar the high-priest* (as our Saviour speaks), which was done in Abiathar's days, though done somewhat before he came to the high-priesthood. As things may be said to have been done in the days of Henry VIII. or any other king of England, which came to pass before he began to reign.

Ver. 7. *Now, a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the Lord.*] It is not to be imagined that he was detained here by force and constraint: but by some vow he had upon him; or other religious performance, to which he had obliged himself.

And his name was Doeg, an Edomite.] His native country was Edom: but he was proselyted to the Jewish religion.

The chiefest of the herdsmen that belonged unto Saul.] The Hebrew word *abir* signifies a *potent man*, or prince; and is sometimes attributed to God. And therefore here signifies, that he was set over all the herdsmen, as their inspector and governor. Such there were in Syria, as Bochartus observes, out of Diodorus Siculus; who mentions one that was προεστὼς τῶν βασιλικῶν κτηνῶν, *pecoris regii præfectus.* And so the Targum, and Kimchi, and others, here translate it.

Ver. 8. *And David said unto Ahimelech, Is there not here under thy hand either spear or sword? for I have not brought my sword nor any weapon with me.*] He left them all behind, that he might the better conceal himself, and pass for a private man.

Because the king's business required haste.] But he pretended to Ahimelech, it was because he had not time to go to his house: the king pressing him immediately to be gone about his business.

Ver. 9. *And the priest said, The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod.*] Behind the place where the garments of the priests were laid up: of which the ephod and its appurtenances were the chief.

If thou wilt take that, take it; for there is no other save that here. And David said, There is none like unto that; give it me.] Which he thought he might use, though it had been laid up in God's treasury as a monument of his wonderful mercy: because he was in great necessity to provide for his own defence.

Ver. 10. *And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul.*] Out of the country of Israel.

And went to Achish the king of Gath.] A miserable condition! to be forced to flee to those for protection, who, he had reason to think, were his bitter enemies. For this was the city of Goliath whom he had slain, and whose sword he had now about him. But perhaps he thought he should

not be known; or he knew Achish to be a very generous person; or being now in disgrace with Saul, he thought the Philistines might take him for Saul's enemy, and engage with them against him. Thus Themistocles being banished his own country, fled first to Admetus the king of the Molossians, with whom he had been at enmity, and then to the king of Persia.

Ver. 11. *And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land?*] Either they meant a chief commander in Israel, who was respected as the king: or they had heard of his being designed to be king instead of Saul, which made him persecute him.

Did they not sing of him one to another in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?] By this it appears they had good information of what was done in the land of Israel: and so might know what was reported, that Samuel had anointed him to be their king.

Ver. 12. *And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish king of Gath.*] This discourse deeply affected him, and made him think himself not safe there.

Ver. 13. *And he changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gates, and let the spittle fall down upon his beard.*] He counterfeited himself to be out of his wits, or to be a fool, who never had any. For he wrote upon the gates, and slavered, as fools are wont to do.

Ver. 14. *And Achish said unto his servant, Lo, the man is mad, wherefore have ye brought him unto me?*] Some of the courtiers had presented him unto the king: who seeing him a goodly person, had listed him, perhaps, as an officer in his service.

Ver. 15. *Have I need of madmen that ye have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?*] He would not have his court troubled with fools or madmen. For it is likely he did not believe this to be David; or if he was, he was now become good for nothing: and come out of his own country because he was beside himself.

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *DAVID therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave of Adullam.*] Which was a strong hold (1 Chron. xi. 13.) in the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 35.) unto which tribe he belonging, might hope to find some friends there.

And when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him.] Either to comfort him, or to secure themselves from the fury of Saul: who they thought might probably wreak his hatred to David upon them.

Ver. 2. *And every one that was in distress.*] All needy people, pinched with want, who heard that David was there.

And every one that was in debt.] Perhaps David might not know they were such persons: or if he did, intended not to protect them from their creditors, if they had been able to pay them. It was the manner in ancient times, among the Gauls, for those who were in debt or oppressed, to betake themselves to the service of some great men: by whom, as they were maintained, so they devoted themselves to live and die with them. Thus Cæsar tells us, lib. vi. de Bello Gall. cap. 13. "Plerique cum aut ære alieno aut magnitudine tributorum, aut injuria potentiorum premantur, sese in servitutem dicant nobilibus," &c. And these they called *Soldurii:* and the men that came to David seem to have been such as resolved to live and die with him.

And every one that was discontented.] In the Hebrew, *bitter of soul;* that is, lay under sore afflictions.

Gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them.] They listed themselves under him, as their commander: who was forced to take this course in his own defence, that he might not be suddenly surprised. But Grotius observes, (lib. i. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 4. sect. 6.) that David did not entertain these men into his service, till, in the judgment of Jonathan, and by many other certain arguments, his life appeared to be in imminent danger. And then he neither assaulted any city, nor sought for any occasion to fight: but avoided it, by seeking for lurking-places, sometimes in the deserts, sometimes among strange people: always taking care not to hurt his countrymen.

And there were with him about four hundred men.] Among whom, I suppose, his own kindred were the chief.

Ver. 3. *And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab.*] For the Moabites were at difference with Saul, (xiv. 47.)

And he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you.] He the rather hoped for this kindness to be shewn to his aged parents (who were not able to travel up and down, as he was likely to do), because he was descended from a Moabite by the mother's side, especially if Ruth the Moabitess were of the royal family, as the Jews imagine.

Till I know what God will do with me.] Who, he doubted not, would make good his word to him.

Ver. 4. *And he brought them before the king of Moab; and they dwelt with him all the time that David was in the hold.*] All the time of his exile: when he wandered here and there, and had no certain place of abode: being haunted by Saul from place to place; seldom suffering him to rest. So Pellicanus expounds the Hebrew word *metzudah:* which signifies also a *strong hold.*

Ver. 5. *And the prophet Gad.*] Who being bred under Samuel, and knowing he had anointed David to be king, resolved to accompany him in his banishment: which was a great comfort to him.

Said unto David, Abide not in the hold.] This doth not signify any particular strong place, where he now was: but, in general, all those places where he thought himself secure, in the neighbouring countries.

Depart, and get thee into the land of Judah.] Where he would have him publicly appear; as one that confided in God, and in his own innocence.

Then David departed, and came into the forest of Hareth.] Where there were many secret lurking-places: unto which he might upon occasion resort.

Ver. 6. *And when Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that were with him.*] He was not so well beloved, as to have early intelligence of David's listing men: which made him reproach those that attended him, in the following verse.

(Now Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah.] Or, in a *high place,* as *Ramah* signifies. Otherwise the first words must be interpreted *near Gibeah,* or in the territories of Gibeah.

Having his spear in his hand.] By his *spear* is to be understood his *sceptre*, according to the phrase of those times. For so Justin, (lib. xliii. cap. 3.) speaking of the first times of the Romans (which was about the reign of Saul), saith, "Per ea adhuc tempora, reges hastas pro diademate habebant, quas Græci sceptra dixere," &c. *In those days, kings hitherto had spears as signs of royal authority: which the Greeks call sceptres.* For in the beginning of things, the ancients worshipped spears for immortal gods. In memory of which religion, spears are still added to the images of the gods. And thus the kings of Argos (as Pausanias tells us in his Bœotica) called their sceptres spears.

And all his servants were standing about him).] His usual guards, and the principal officers of his court.

Ver. 7. *Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites.*] Ye men of my own tribe: of whom he seems to speak with disdain.

Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds?] Bestow preferment upon them all, more or less; if not lands of inheritance. For so the words are to be translated, *give you fields*, &c. or *make you captains*, &c.

Ver. 8. *That all of you have conspired against me.*] To conceal David's designs from him, if not to assist him in them. The spirit of jealousy always possesses those who are engaged in such bloody designs as he had against David: which all good men abhorred.

And there is none of you that sheweth me my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse; and there is none of you that is sorry for me.] He suspected Jonathan had made a league with David; but did not certainly know it, much less what it was: and was very much vexed, that none were solicitous enough for him (so the word signifies, as De Dieu observes, which we translate *sorry for him*), to make a discovery of it to him.

Or sheweth me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait as at this day.] His jealousy carried him so far as to make him suspect Jonathan not only sided with David, but had encouraged him to take up arms, and to appear openly, as having many friends and partakers: for since he threw the javelin at Jonathan, it is likely he absented himself from court, or did not appear so frequently, or looked discontented when he came into his presence.

Ver. 9. *Then answered Doeg the Edomite, which was over the servants of Saul.*] The rest being silent, he undertook to inform the king who were false to him: or being a forward man, and hating David, prevented all the rest of his fellow-servants.

And said, I saw the son of Jesse.] He speaks as contemptibly of him, as his master had lately been wont to do, not vouchsafing to call him by his name, (xx. 27. 30.)

Coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub.] He represents him, as if he came to take advice of Ahimelech, and lay his designs accordingly.

Ver. 10. *And he inquired of the Lord for him.*] Some think Doeg in this slandered Ahimelech, because we read nothing of it; and David speaks of his false tongue: but this may as well be true as that which follows is. And Doeg's wickedness consisted in representing things wrong: concealing the truth, and saying nothing of David's pretences to Ahimelech; but insinuating as if he were in a plot with David against the king. Whereas, the good man was made to believe that David was going about the king's business, and upon that account assisted him.

And gave him victuals, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine.] And very innocently, as he very well knew: but represented these as acts whereby he abetted David in his conspiracy: which are the lies of which David accuses him, nothing being farther from the truth.

Ver. 11. *And the king sent to call Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests that were in Nob: and they came all of them to the king.*] By *his father's house* is meant all the house of Eli, whom God had threatened to cut off.

Ver. 12. *And Saul said, Hear now, thou son of Ahitub.*] He shews not the least respect to him, but rather the utmost contempt: calling him in his rage *the son of Ahitub.*

And he answered, Here I am, my lord.] But he did not forget his respect to the king.

Ver. 13. *And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?*] A very rash charge, unless there had been proof that he did these things with an evil intent, which there was not.

Ver. 14. *Then Ahimelech answered and said, And who is so faithful among all thy servants as David, which is the king's son-in-law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thy house?*] The oracle was consulted only upon public occasions, not for any private business. And therefore the sense of Ahimelech's apology for himself is this: Since David was held by all to be a most loyal subject, as well as a person of great honour, and in high favour with the king, having married his daughter; what could he think but that David was sent by the king (as he said he was) upon some business of public concern; to command his forces, suppose (as he had often done), in some expedition against his enemies? And, doubting what course to take, came to advise with God, as he had done heretofore. For this was not the first time (as he saith in the next verse) that he had consulted the Divine Majesty for him, in difficult cases, concerning the good of the kingdom.

Ver. 15. *Did I then begin to inquire of God for him?*] He desired that might not be an argument against him; for he had theretofore done the same thing without any imputation of guilt.

Be it far from me.] That which he was charged withal; conspiracy against the king, (ver. 13.)

Let not the king impute any thing to his servant, or to his father's house; for thy servant knew nothing of all this, more or less.] If there was any bad design, he pleads perfect ignorance of it.

Ver. 16. *And the king said unto him, Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou, and thy father's house.*] A mad resolution: for what had the rest of the priests done to deserve such a bloody execution?

Ver. 17. *And the king said unto the footmen that stood about him.*] In the Hebrew it is, *to the runners;* that is, to those who used to go before him, and to follow him when he went abroad.

Turn, and slay the priests of the Lord; because their hand

is also with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it me.] Such was the power their kings exercised (as Samuel told them they would), that, without a formal process against a man accused of a crime, they commanded him to be cut off at their pleasure.

But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the Lord.] Such was their reverence to God and religion in ancient times: which kept them in their wars from doing any hurt to the priests of their enemies, as Grotius observes, lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 11. sect. 10. And therefore Theodoret here justly praises the guards of Saul, that they chose rather to expose themselves to the enraged fury of Saul, than execute it upon the priests of God.

Ver. 18. *And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests.*] He who was the informer, he made also his executioner.

And Doeg the Edomite turned, and fell upon the priests, and slew that day eighty-five persons.] Kings never want some to execute their commands, though never so bloody. Saul was little better than a madman; and yet had those at his beck who would do as he bade them, because he was their king. It was excellently, therefore, said by Justin Martyr, Εὐχώμεθα τοὺς βασιλεῖς καὶ ἄρχοντας, μετὰ τῆς βασιλικῆς δυνάμεως, καὶ σώφρονα τὸν λογισμὸν ἔχοντας εὑρεθῆναι, *Let us pray that kings and rulers, together with a royal power, may be found having a sober mind.*

That did wear a linen ephod.] *i. e.* Ministered unto God: but we are not to understand by the *ephod* such a garment as the high-priest wore, for this is distinguished from that by the matter of it, which was merely *linen*: and nothing else but a linen robe, which was an honourable kind of garment, which others who were not priests were permitted to wear; as I observed before upon chap. ii. ver. 18. and see Braunius, lib. ii. de Vestitu Hebr. Sacerd. cap. 6.

Ver. 19. *And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both man and woman, and suckling, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.*] His fury transported him to deal worse with them than he did with the Amalekites; some of which he spared, though God commanded him to destroy them all. But he did this to terrify all the Israelites from giving the least assistance to David: and make them forward to come and tell him, if they knew where he was. In all this was fulfilled the word of the Lord against the house of Eli by the prophet, in the second chapter of this book; and by Samuel, when he was a child, in the third chapter. Abarbinel thinks, that, at this time, the Gibeonites were slain; upon which account there was a sore famine in the days of David. For Josephus saith, (lib. vi. cap. 14.) that Doeg slew in all three hundred eighty-five persons; taking some men, as wicked as himself, into his assistance.

Ver. 20. *And one of the sons of Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David.*] For he could be safe no where else.

Ver. 21. *And Abiathar shewed David that Saul had slain the Lord's priests.*] Which confirmed David in his belief of the hatred he bare him, and his resolution to destroy him.

Ver. 22. *And David said unto Abiathar, I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul.*] For he knew he was none of his friend, and a man that loved mischief.

Ver. 23. *Abide thou with me; fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life.*] He comforts him with the assurance, that he would take as much care of him, as of himself.

But with me thou shalt be in safeguard.] For he was sure God would make good his promise of protecting him, till he was made king of Israel.

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *THEN they told David, saying, The Philistines fight against Keilah.*] Or, *they had told David*, &c. For this was done before Abiathar came to him to tell him of the slaughter of the priests, ver. 6. where it is said, he *fled to David to Keilah.* Which was a city in the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 44.) Which the Philistines now besieged; being encouraged thereunto, perhaps, by the news they heard that David was forced to flee his country.

And they rob the thrashing-floors.] Which was commonly without their cities; for the convenience of wind, to separate the chaff from the corn. (See Ruth iii. 2. 15.)

Ver. 2. *And David inquired of the Lord.*] It is probable by the prophet Gad, who we read before, xxii. 5. was now with him. For there is no mention yet of Abiathar's having the *ephod*; though some think it is mentioned, ver. 6. to shew how David inquired of God.

Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the Lord said unto David, Go and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah.] A remarkable instance of David's love to his country: unto which he did not become an enemy, when he was banished from it.

Ver. 3. *And David's men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah.*] In that part of the country where they then were.

How much more, then, if we come to Keilah, against the armies of the Philistines?] His men argued against this expedition, because they did not think themselves safe in their own country, where they hoped they had some friends: and therefore thought they should be in greater danger, if they made the Philistines their enemies.

Ver. 4. *Then David inquired of the Lord yet again.*] Not for his own satisfaction, but for theirs: as we read in the history of Gideon that he did.

And the Lord answered him and said, Arise.] Make no delay.

Go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thy hand.] Here he expressly assures him of victory.

Ver. 5. *So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.*] He seems to have pursued the Philistines to their own country: from whence he brought their cattle. Or else we must suppose these cattle were the booty they had among the Israelites; which is not so probable, because then David would have restored them to their owners.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, that when Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an ephod in his hand.*] Or rather, *with the ephod.* For he being left, I suppose, to keep the sanctuary, while his father and the rest of the priests went to wait upon Saul, as soon as he heard of their slaughter, took this principal

vestment of the high-priest, viz. *the ephod*, unto which the *urim* and *thummim*, with the breast-plate, were annexed, and carried it unto David. Unto whom he hoped to be the more acceptable, when he appeared capable to serve him in that high office. And accordingly he calls upon him, (ver. 9.) to *bring hither the ephod;* as he did afterward, (xxx. 7.) But the *ephod* could do no good, without the *urim* and *thummim*, which were inseparable from it. And that he speaks of the high-priest's *ephod* is manifest, because he doth not call it a *linen ephod*, such as the priests wore; but *the ephod*. The only difficulty is, that Saul after this seems to have consulted God by *urim*, (xxviii. 6.) But perhaps he made a new one, in the room of that which Abiathar carried away: but God would not own it, nor any other way give him advice. Aben Ezra, indeed, here notes, that there wants that which they call the *he hajediah*, that is, the demonstrative particle *he*, to shew that he means the high-priest's *ephod*, and therefore it was only a *linen ephod*. Which led him into this absurd opinion, that in some cases God answered without *urim* and *thummim;* being consulted merely by an *ephod*.

Ver. 7. *And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah.*] So remarkable an action could not but come presently to Saul's ears; who was not at all mollified by it, but rather more resolutely bent upon David's destruction.

And Saul said, God hath delivered him into my hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars.] The men of Keilah could not but open their gates to their deliverer; but Saul fancied that he sought for safety in a place, that would only secure him from running away from him.

Ver. 8. *And Saul called all the people together to war.*] Raised a great army.

To go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.] He pretended, it is likely, he would go, and be avenged of the Philistines: but his inward intention was to go against David.

Ver. 9. *And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him.*] This intimates that Saul did not openly declare, when he raised his army, he would besiege Keilah; but made a show of some other design.

And he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring hither the ephod.] Which no doubt he put on: otherwise he could not have inquired of the Lord by it.

Ver. 10. *Then said David, O Lord God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake.*] Some think that David put on the ephod, and then asked the Lord's advice: but that is a great mistake; for the high-priest was the person appointed by God, to ask counsel of him for the supreme governor, (Numb. xxvii. 21.) Therefore David spake these words by the mouth of Abiathar.

Ver. 11. *Will the men of Keilah deliver me into his hands? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the Lord said, He will come down.*] He seems to have been in a great fright, and some confusion of spirit, when he spake these words: which made him not only to ask two things together (which the Jews say was not usual), but also out of due order. For the first question should have been, *Will Saul come down?* and then the other should have followed, *Will they deliver me into his hand?* God therefore put him into the right method, by answering to the last question first: as the Jewish doctors observe in the Gemara of the Codex Joma.

Ver. 12. *Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?*] Hence the Talmudists gather, that he who asked out of order was bound to ask again.

And the Lord said, They will deliver thee.] He saw the base disposition of their hearts, whatsoever gratitude they pretended to David for their deliverance. For that is a rare virtue; not to be found in those in whom self-love prevails. It is not easy to be resolved, how they inquired of God, the tabernacle not being there. It is likely David had some tent, wheresoever he was, wherein he was wont to pray to God, and meditate his praises; and there God was pleased to answer him.

Ver. 13. *Then David and his men, which were about six hundred.*] His forces were increased two hundred, since the famous victory over the Philistines at Keilah.

Arose, and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go.] Sometimes to one place, sometimes to another: according as they found any hope of safety. So Hackspan interprets this phrase in his Disputationes, p. 403.

And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah.] Now he began to have better intelligence of David's motions, since the slaughter at Nob: which made the people afraid to fall under his displeasure.

And he forbore to go forth.] Not knowing as yet where to find him.

Ver. 14. *And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph.*] Where it was not easy to come at him.

And Saul sought him every day; but God delivered him not into his hand.] As he foolishly fancied he would, (ver. 7.) though God very manifestly had forsaken him, and was with David.

Ver. 15. *And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life.*] That he was restless in his endeavours to destroy him.

And David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood.] Where he could better defend himself than in an open country.

Ver. 16. *And Jonathan, Saul's son, arose, and went to David into the wood.*] Being a very private place, they had, it is likely, by some intelligence which passed between them, appointed a meeting there.

And strengthened his hand in God.] In his promise to him. What Hecuba saith in Euripides, is most true in this friend of David's, and in Saul his father:

> Ὁ μὲν πονηρὸς οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν κακός·
> Ὁ δ' ἐσθλὸς, ἐσθλός· οὐδὲ συμφορᾶς ὕπο
> Φύσιν διέφθειρ' ἀλλὰ χρηστός ἐστ' ἀεί.

A bad man is nothing else but bad. But a good man is still good: nor because of any calamity doth he lose his nature; but is always good.

Ver. 17. *And he said, Fear not; for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee: and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I will be next unto thee.*] He doth not mean, that he would succeed him in his throne; but be the principal person in the kingdom, next to David. Which, I suppose, had been agreed between them.

And that also Saul my father knoweth.] For he remembered what Samuel told him, xv. 28. and by his wonderful successes concluded he was the person of whom Samuel spake.

Ver. 18. *And they two made a covenant before the Lord.*] Solemnly renewed the covenant, which they had formerly made. This is the third time that we read of their making a covenant. (See xviii. 3. xx. 16.) In none of which there is any mention of a sacrifice, no more than there is in the covenant between David and the elders of the people, (2 Sam. v. 3.) and between Solomon and Hiram; (1 Kings v. 12.) which is an argument that eating together of a sacrifice, or going between the parts of a sacrifice, was not essential to the making a covenant: though it must be acknowledged, the rite was so ancient of dividing the parts of the sacrifice, that hence is the phrase which is so frequent in Scripture of *cutting a covenant, i. e.* entering into it.

And David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.] For he did not accompany his father, in his search after David.

Ver. 19. *Then came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, and said, Doth not David hide himself with us in the strong hold in the wood, in the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon?*] These people were of the tribe of Judah; among whom David thought himself the safer, because he was of the same tribe. But they were afraid to be served as those at Nob: which made them come and discover the place where he was, very particularly, and precisely.

Ver. 20. *Now therefore, O king, come down, according to all the desire of thy soul to come down.*] Which they knew was very great.

And our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand.] For being neighbours to it, they knew all the avenues of the wood where he was: and how to come at him.

Ver. 21. *And Saul said, Blessed are ye of the Lord; for ye have compassion on me.*] This signifies, that the generality of people did not favour him in his design: which made him so joyfully receive the Ziphites' intelligence.

Ver. 22. *Go, I pray you, and prepare ye.*] Dispose all things so, that I may take him.

And know and see his place where his haunt is.] Inform themselves perfectly, in what hill, or wood, or cave, he hid himself.

And who hath seen him.] He would have them certainly informed, that he might not go after him in vain.

For I am told he dealeth very subtilely.] So that it was not easy to catch him.

Ver. 23. *See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking-places where he hideth himself, and come to me again with the certainty, and I will go with you.*] He seems to be very diffident, having been so oft disappointed: and by this means gave David time to get intelligence, and remove to another place.

And it shall come to pass, that if he be in the land, I will search him out through all the thousands of Judah.] Their tribes were divided into thousands; (see Judg. vi. 15.) among some of whom he supposed he would lurk: and he would not cease searching for him till he found him.

Ver. 24. *And they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul.*] As he had directed them, ver. 22.

But David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon.] Having heard what the Ziphites had undertaken, he disappointed their design, by going into another place, with which, it is likely, they were not so well acquainted. For Maon was a distinct wilderness from Ziph: though both in the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 25. *Saul also and his men went to seek him.*] Hearing, I suppose, by the Ziphites, whither he was gone.

And they told David.] He also had intelligence brought him, that Saul was coming against him.

Wherefore he came down into a rock.] Some craggy place.

And abode in the wilderness of Maon.] Not thinking himself safe there, he went into another part of the same wilderness.

And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon.] So that he came to the very place where he was.

Ver. 26. *And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them.*] Saul's forces being far more numerous, he divided them into several parties; who marching several ways, were about to encompass the whole mountain: so that it should be impossible for David to escape them. Who therefore made haste to get away before he was quite surrounded.

Ver. 27. *But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land.*] A marvellous providence of God, who stirred them up at this very time to make an irruption into the land of Israel, for the preservation of David when he was in extreme danger.

Ver. 28. *Wherefore Saul returned from following after David, and went against the Philistines.*] It was very probable David would in a little time have fallen into his hands, had not the messenger, who, I suppose, was sent by his council, desired him with all speed to come and oppose the Philistines, who were the most dangerous enemies.

Therefore they called the name of that place Sela-hammah-lekoth.] That is, *the rock of divisions.* Either because Saul was distracted here between two counsels, whether to pursue David, or go immediately against the Philistines; or, because God divided Saul from David, when he was coming up close unto him.

Ver. 29. *And David went up from thence, and dwelt in the strong holds at En-gedi.*] A place in the tribe of Judah, not far from the Dead Sea: which Solomon in his Song celebrates for the famous vineyards which were there: and St. Jerome and Eusebius say there was excellent balm at En-gedi: from which the wilderness near it took its name, where David found secure lurking-places.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines.*] Who either retreated upon Saul's march towards them, or he drove them out of the land.

That it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi.] The very place was not told him

where David was, but only in general that he was in that wilderness.

Ver. 2. *Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel.*] Men of valour, and whom he thought he might trust.

And went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.] In craggy and bushy places, where none but wild goats lived; but he imagined David might there skulk: and, therefore, resolved to be at the pains of searching for him there.

Ver. 3. *And he came to the sheep-cotes by the way, where there was a cave.*] In which the sheep rested in the heat of the day. Unto which place David was directed by God's guidance: for Saul would not suspect that he would abide in the highway unto those rocks, where he was going to look for him.

And Saul went in to cover his feet.] See upon Judg. iii. 24.

And David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.] Where they could see him by the light at the entrance of it: but he could not see them, because it was dark in the remote parts of it. Some of these caves were exceeding large: Strabo in his sixteenth book mentions one that would contain four thousand men.

Ver. 4. *And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thy hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee.*] We do not read any where that God made a promise to deliver Saul into David's hand: but so they interpreted what Samuel had said, that God would take the kingdom from Saul and give it to David. And they, having a desire to return to their own habitations, and likewise to have preferment under David, desired him to make use of the opportunity which now presented itself of destroying his enemy, and advancing himself.

Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privately.] Which he might easily do, if he were asleep: as that phrase may be interpreted, *he went in to cover his feet.* This robe was long, coming down to the feet: as the Hebrew word *meil* signifies.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, that afterward David's heart smote him.*] He was inwardly troubled.

Because he had cut off Saul's skirt.] For it looked like an indignity unto a prince to have his royal robe disfigured: "Tantam intelligebat personæ illius sanctitudinem" (as Grotius speaks), *such he understood was the sacredness of his person.* And that very deservedly; for the supreme powers being obnoxious to many men's hatred, ought to be secured in the discharge of their office. Of which the Romans took care in the very tribunes of the people, that they should be ἄσυλοι, *inviolable,* (lib. i. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 4. sect. 7.)

Ver. 6. *And he said unto his men.*] When he returned unto them, and they grew angry, he had only cut off the skirt of his robe, and not killed him.

The Lord forbid that I should do this thing.] Which they desired.

Unto my master.] For I must own him, as long as he is alive, to be my lord and master; unto whom I am bound to be faithful.

The Lord's anointed.] Whom God hath appointed to be king as long as he lives.

To stretch forth my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.] Set up by God, who alone could throw him down. For he was as much constituted king by God while he lived, as David was after his death. And his *anointing* made his person sacred: for the very heathens looked upon their kings as holding the place of God. So Artabanus the Persian (as Plutarch relates in the life of Themistocles), *This is the very best of our many excellent laws,* Τὸ τιμᾶν βασιλέα καὶ προσκυνεῖν, ὡς εἰκόνα Θεοῦ τὰ πάντα σώζοντος, *that we should honour and adore our king, as the image of God, who preserves all things.*

Ver. 7. *So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul.*] Who still had a desire to kill him, though David would not: which he hindered by his wise and pious persuasions.

But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went his way.] To his camp: which he had left to take some repose in the cave, having a guard to attend him, who stood without while he covered his feet within.

Ver. 8. *David also arose afterward.*] When Saul was gone.

And went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king.] A bold attempt, to adventure to come into the presence of such an enraged enemy. But his innocence and confidence in God emboldened him, especially having so strong an evidence to give him of his integrity.

And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.] See xx. 41.

Ver. 9. *And David said unto Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt.*] He wisely endeavours, at the entrance of his speech, to mollify Saul, by transferring all the blame of his persecution, from him, unto the sycophants and false accusers that were about him.

Ver. 10. *Behold, this day thy eyes have seen that the Lord had delivered thee into my hand in the cave.*] Out of which he followed Saul.

And some bade me kill thee, but my eye spared thee.] A phrase for taking pity and compassion upon those whom we have in our power to hurt.

And I said, I will not put forth my hand against my lord, for he is the Lord's anointed.] He acknowledgeth him both to be his king, and appointed by God so to be.

Ver. 11. *Moreover, my father.*] So he was by the marriage of his daughter; and as he was supreme governor, the father of his country. Or if he had not been so, yet this word was proper to be used, that he might soften and sweeten him into more tender usage to him.

See; yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand.] He offers him a demonstration of the truth of what he declared: and prays him to observe it.

For in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see.] Let it convince thee.

That there is neither evil nor transgression in my hand.] That he had no bad design against him, nor ever attempted to do him any harm. For if he had, it had been as easy to cut his throat, as to cut off the skirt of his robe.

And I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.] This was a great aggravation of Saul's guilt (which makes David repeat it), that he sought the life of one who had no way offended him, and when it was in his power would not hurt him.

Ver. 12. *The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee.*] If he still persisted to persecute him. But he doth not, by these words, *avenge me of thee*, pray God to punish him for the injuries he had done him; but only to vindicate and deliver him from his violent and unjust persecution. So the Hebrew word *nakam* often signifies.

But my hand shall not be upon thee.] He persisted in his resolution not to avenge himself; but leave it to God to do him right.

Ver. 13. *As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked; but my hand shall not be upon thee.*] Men may be known by their actions. And this is as if David had said, Were I so bad as I am represented, I should now have shewn it: but I will never have my hand in such crimes. Or thus, It is for wicked men to do this: but I am none of them.

Ver. 14. *After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue?*] He turns every stone, as we speak, to appease Saul's rage; and tells him in conclusion, that it was below him, and a disparagement to him to raise armies against such a mean person as he was.

After a dead dog, after a flea?] He represents himself as contemptible as it was possible, that he might convince Saul it was not for his honour to take so much pains to kill him if he could: for what an inglorious thing was it for a king, with so many armed men, to triumph over a dead dog? As if a lion should hunt after a flea. "Which (as Bochartus glosses) if it be sought, is not easily found; and if it be found, is not easily caught; and if it be caught, is a poor prey, especially for a prince."

Ver. 15. *The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thy hand.*] He thought he could not repeat this too often, that as hitherto, so he resolved hereafter to leave it to God to judge which of them was in the right, and not avenge himself. It may seem strange that Saul, who came with such an enraged mind to seek for David, should hear him make so long a speech to him with patience, and not furiously fall upon him as soon as he saw him. But we may well think, that at the first he was surprised to see him follow after him out of the cave; and more astonished to find, after a few words, that it was in David's power to kill him, if he had pleased: which he knew he had, by a long persecution of him, provoked him to do.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David?*] Though he stood at such a distance, that it is likely he could not know him by his face, yet he very well knew his voice.

And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.] His heart being mollified at present, by this unparalleled kindness of David, in sparing his life, when he could have taken it away.

Ver. 17. *And he said unto David, Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.*] Most men have their good moods. And Saul now could scarce avoid being touched with a deep sense, how very unjust and unkind he had been to one who truly loved him.

Ver. 18. *And thou hast shewed this day, how that thou hast dealt with me: forasmuch as, when the Lord had delivered me into thy hand, thou killedst me not.*] The demonstration of his kindness was so clear, that he could not but acknowledge it, and be affected with it.

Ver. 19. *For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away?*] *i. e.* He will certainly destroy him to save himself. The kindness of David therefore was unusual, and without example.

Wherefore the Lord reward thee good, for that thou hast done unto me this day.] Herein David had imitated God; who doth good to the evil: from whom Saul prays David might receive his reward for the good done to him.

Ver. 20. *And now I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thy hand.*] These wonderful providences of God over David, and David's no less wonderful virtue, at last convinced Saul that God designed him to be the king of his people, and that none could hinder his establishment.

Ver. 21. *Swear now therefore unto me by the Lord, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.*] As he had endeavoured to destroy David; and as kings frequently destroyed the family of those into whose thrones they were advanced.

Ver. 22. *And David sware unto Saul.*] Who should rather have sworn unto David, he would suffer him to live quietly; yea, have invited him to return home, and assured him of his protection. But David did not require this: resolving to trust to God, and not to him. Some question how David kept this oath, when he hanged up seven of Saul's sons, (2 Sam. xxi.) But they should consider, that he did not this of himself, but at the desire of the Gibeonites, unto whom God required satisfaction should be given for Saul's bloody endeavours to destroy them.

And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.] *viz.* Of En-gedi. For he durst not stay in such an open place as he now was in, knowing Saul's inconstancy, and the hatred he had to him, and the fury he was in when the evil spirit came upon him. It is dangerous to trust a reconciled enemy: and the old saying is very wise, *μέμνησο ἀπιστεῖν, remember not to be too credulous.* And so the son of Sirach, (Ecclus. xii. 10, 11.) "Never trust thine enemy: though he humble himself, yet take good heed, and beware of him."

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *AND Samuel died.*] According to Josephus (lib. vii. latter end) he governed Israel after the death of Eli twelve years, and lived eighteen in the reign of Saul, and then died. But according to Sir J. Marsham, he judged Israel sixteen years before Saul's inauguration; and after he was made king lived eighteen.

And all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him.] Such was his virtue, and such was the love the people bare to him, that the whole nation bewailed his loss, and that many days, as Josephus saith, Καὶ ἐπὶ πολλὰς ἡμέρας ἔκλαυσεν.

And buried him in his house at Ramah.] The place where he was born, and had long lived: where, it is likely, there was a place belonging to his house in which his family was interred.

And David arose, and went into the wilderness of Paran.]

Which was in the southern parts of Judea, near to Arabia: into which he might presently flee, if there were occasion. The Mahometan writers (as Hottinger observes) make Paran a part of Arabia Deserta: so that now it was that David dwelt *in the tents of Kedar:* which was the same with Paran, as our learned Fuller observes in his Miscellanies.

Ver. 2. *And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel.*] There were two Carmels: one in the north near the sea, in the confines of Asher and Zebulun, to which Elijah was wont to resort; and another in the south near Hebron, in the tribe of Judah, which is here meant. See Josh. xv. 55. both concerning Maon and Carmel.

And the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats.] A very wealthy man.

And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.] They pulled off the wool at Rome, and in the neighbouring countries (as Bochartus observes), but not in Greece, nor Judea; where they sheared it, as we do now.

Ver. 3. *And the name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife was Abigail; and she was a woman of great understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish, and evil in his doings.*] Uncharitable, and perhaps oppressive in his dealings.

And he was of the house of Caleb.] Descended from a worthy ancestor, but very unlike him. In the Hebrew the word is *Calebi, a Calebite,* of the family of Caleb. But the word *Caleb* signifying a *dog,* some of the ancient interpreters understand the word here, as if the holy writer insinuated he was of *dog-like* dispositions and manners. Whence the LXX. translate it, ὁ ἄνθρωπος κυνικὸς, *a dogged man,* or a cynic. And so the Syriac and Arabic.

Ver. 4. *And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep.*] For the wilderness of Paran was not far from Nabal's house.

Ver. 5. *And David sent out ten young men.*] To shew his great respect to him.

And David said unto the young men, Get ye up to Carmel.] For it was a mountain, as the other Carmel was.

And go to Nabal, and greet him in my name.] Present his service to him, as we now speak; and wish him continued happiness, as it is in the following words.

Ver. 6. *And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity.*] In the Hebrew the words are only, *to him that liveth:* unto which we add *in prosperity;* because *life* in Scripture signifies happiness, as *death* signifies misery.

Peace be both to thee, and peace be unto thy house, and peace to all that thou hast.] A most affectionate and comprehensive salutation; wherein he wishes well to him (both his soul and body), and to his whole family, and to all that he possessed, either at home or abroad: and some think in the first words he wishes all this might be perpetuated as long as he lived. There could not well be a higher compliment, as we now speak; for *peace* comprehends all manner of blessings, in the holy language.

Ver. 7. *And now I have heard that thou hast shearers.*] Whom he entertained that day.

Now, thy shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there aught missing to them all the while they were in Carmel.] He represents the good demeanour of those who belonged to him, while they were in his neighbourhood. And suggests, that he would not have had so many sheep to shear, if his men had been like others in their condition. But though they were soldiers, and in great necessity, they never took any thing from him.

Ver. 8. *Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee.*] He desires him to be informed of the truth of this from his own servants.

Wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes (for we come in a good day); give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh unto thy hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David.] Most humble words, and full of respect: mixed with strong arguments; from their harmless and friendly living in his neighbourhood; and from the present festival which he kept, when men's hearts use to be open and bountiful: and they did not desire delicates, but any thing that was at hand, which he could spare.

Ver. 9. *And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all these words in the name of David, and ceased.*] Added nothing of their own, but waited for his answer in silence, as Maimonides interprets it, in his More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 116.

Ver. 10. *Nabal answered David's servants and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse?*] A most rude and brutish answer to such a civil message and humble request.

There be many servants now-a-days that break every man from his master.] He reproaches them all as a company of fugitives and vagabonds; and taxes David secretly, with infidelity to his master Saul.

Ver. 11. *Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be?*] A most foolish speech; when he had just before called David the son of Jesse: which shews he knew well enough who he was.

Ver. 12. *And David's young men turned their way, and went again, and told him all these sayings.*] They did not stand arguing with him, or entreating him: but slighted him, as much as he did them.

Ver. 13. *And David said unto his men, Gird you on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword.*] Being resolved, in his passion, to be revenged on Nabal.

And there went up after David about four hundred men, and two hundred abode by the stuff.] For he had with him six hundred men in all; as we read before, xxiii. 13.

Ver. 14. *But one of the young men.*] Belonging unto Nabal.

Told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed on them.] Some of his servants were wiser and better than he himself, which makes good that saying of Seneca (in his third book de Beneficiis), "Nulli præclusa est virtus, omnibus patet," &c. *Virtue is shut up from none; it lies open to all.* It admits all, it invites all; free men and servants, kings and exiles. It makes not choice of such a house, or of such an estate: but is content with a man himself.—For who can choose but admire the wisdom and fidelity of this shepherd? who admonished his mistress of the danger her family was in; as he rationally concluded from the rude abuse that had been put upon David: whose merits he honestly set before her.

Ver. 15. *But the men were very good to us, and we were not hurt, neither missed any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields.*] They confirm

every word that David's messengers had told their master, (ver. 7.)

Ver. 16. *They were a wall unto us, both by night and day, all the time we were with them keeping sheep.*] They add more than David's men had said of themselves, that they not only did them no hurt, but were a guard and defence to them against robbers, and against wild beasts.

Ver. 17. *Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household.*] This they understood, either from the young men whom David sent, who let fall some words signifying how highly he would resent the indignity done to him; or they concluded it from what they had observed of the nature of David; who was very kind, but would not put up rude affronts.

For he is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him.] So wilful and obstinate, that they durst not speak to him of this matter: fearing he would be more insolent to them than he had been to David.

Ver. 18. *Then Abigail made haste.*] For she was so prudent a woman as not to neglect the good advice of a servant.

And took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and a hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them upon asses.] This shews he was a great man, who had such plenty of provisions in his house. For it is not to be imagined, that she would rob the shearers of a festival day to gratify David.

Ver. 19. *And said unto her servants, Go before me: behold, I come after you.*] They carried the present; that David beholding it, might be a little mitigated before she came to him.

But she told not her husband Nabal.] Who, it is likely, would have persisted in his folly: or been so long before he would have been persuaded to be wiser, that it would have been too late to prevent the danger.

Ver. 20. *And it was so, as she rode upon the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill.*] By a way full of bushes, so that David saw not her, nor she him, till they met together.

And, behold, David and his men came down against her.] From another hill, I suppose.

And she met them.] In the bottom, between the two hills.

Ver. 21. *(Now David had said, Surely in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missing of all that pertained to him; and he hath requited me evil for good.*] This he said to himself: or to his men, as soon as the messengers came back; or as they were upon the road to Nabal's house.

Ver. 22. *So and more also do God unto the enemies of David.*] He means to himself: but being unwilling to pronounce his own name, or any other whom he respected, together with a curse, he transfers it to an enemy: by a figure called *euphemismus*. Or, as some take it, the meaning is, *let my enemy destroy me, if I let Nabal and his family escape*. But the former is the plainest interpretation; it being common in the Jewish language (as Joh. Cocceius observes), when they speak of any evil to themselves, to translate it to another person. Of which he gives instances out of Maccoth, and Bava Bathra. (See him upon the Gemara Sanhedrin, cap. 4. sect. 18. annot. 1.)

If I leave to him before the morning light.] He intended to fall upon them in the night, when they were in a dead sleep, after great jollity.

Any that pisseth against the wall.)] That is (as the generality of interpreters think), *so much as a dog;* this being, they take it, like that saying of Aurelian, mentioned by Vopiscus, who, going to a city, and finding the gates shut against him, said in his wrath, "Canem in hoc oppido non relinquam;" *I will not leave a dog in this town.* But Bochartus excepts to this interpretation, that all dogs do not piss against the wall, but only the males; and that not till they be six or eight months old, as Aristotle and others observe. And therefore (to omit his other reasons) he takes this phrase to be a periphrasis of a man, as the Hebrews expound it, particularly Ralbag. So that it is as much as to say, *I will not leave a man alive.*

Ver. 23. *And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground.*] Both out of reverence to him as a great man, and as an humble supplicant, for pardon of a great offence.

Ver. 24. *And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be.*] She applies herself to him, in a speech full of art and prudence; and first begs, like a kind wife, that she might suffer, not her husband, who was not so wise as he should be.

And let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thy handmaid.] She desires him patiently to hear her reasons.

Ver. 25. *Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal; for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him.*] She represents him as a man that offended out of folly rather than malice; which might a little excuse his rudeness. There are many such allusions in Scripture, as there is here of Nebala and Nabal. (See Gen. v. 25. xlix. 8. 16. 19. Zeph. ii. 4.)

But I, thine handmaid, saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.] If any were to be punished, she had desired it might be herself; yet she had this to say in her own behalf, that she knew nothing of the message sent by David.

Ver. 26. *Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the Lord hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand.*] This is wonderfully artificial, to presume so much upon his goodness and clemency, as already to conclude, she had diverted him from his purpose: or rather, that God had interposed, by his good providence, to hinder him from shedding blood.

Now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.] That is, may thou have no worse enemy than he. Or, may thy enemies have no more power to hurt thee, than Nabal hath. This is another argument to persuade him to mercy; that Nabal was so inconsiderable, that, as he would do him no good, so he could do him no evil.

Ver. 27. *And now this blessing.*] That is, this present or gift. The same phrase in xxx. 26. 2 Kings v. 15.

Which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given to the young men that follow my lord.] To appease their anger: or, as unworthy of David's acceptance.

Ver. 28. *I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine hand-*

maid.] She still speaks as if she had been the offender; because she desired none might suffer but herself.

For the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house.] She prays him to be good to her, as God would certainly be to him.

Because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days.] She puts him in mind of all his heroical acts against the Philistines, and other enemies; and that hitherto he had been blameless, and done no hurt to the Israelites: and therefore hoped he would do none to her, and her family.

Ver. 29. *Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul.*] Saul she means restlessly endeavoured to take away his life.

But the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God.] Be preserved. For those things which we would not have lost, nor scattered about, we are wont to bind up in bundles.

And the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling.] As we bind up things to preserve them from being thrown about, and lost; so we put things into a sling, that they may be cast out of sight, or a great way from us.

Ver. 30. *And it shall come to pass, when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel.*] Nothing could be more obliging than this, at every word to call him her lord, and to acknowledge his title to the kingdom; and her belief that he would certainly enjoy it.

Ver. 31. *That this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart to my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself.*] She reserves the most Divine argument to the last; that he would have a clear and quiet conscience, and not be disturbed with a remembrance that he had shed the blood of the innocent, or otherwise avenged himself: which belonged unto God.

And when the Lord hath dealt well with my lord, remember thine handmaid.] Thou wilt thank me for my advice.

Ver. 32. *And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me.*] He was so moved with this pathetical speech, that, in the first place, he acknowledges the good providence of God, which directed her to come so seasonably to prevent the effects of his anger. Whereby he was absolved from his oath, which he had sworn, to cut off Nabal's family. And indeed it was null in itself; for no man can oblige himself to do an evil thing; as this would have been: there being a double guilt in it, as Philo observes, if he had shed their blood. To which may be applied the words of Seneca, that in such cases, "scelus est fides," *to keep one's word, is a wicked thing.* See Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. ii. cap. 13. sect. 6. where he observes, that Cicero mentions the like case with this in the vow of Agamemnon. And Procopius Gazæus here well resolves, that this oath of David was the effect of anger; but his sparing Nabal the effect of reason and prudent counsel.

Ver. 33. *And blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with my own hand.*] Next he commends her, and her wise counsel; for which he beseeches God to bless her: for she had preserved him from a very outrageous piece of revenge; which might have afflicted him all his days.

Ver. 34. *For in very deed, as the Lord God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal, by the morning light, any that pisseth against the wall.*] It may seem strange, that his anger should not cool in so much time as passed between the return of his messengers and Abigail's meeting him: but the affront was great, and his soldiers it is likely inflamed his rage, and he resolved to make Nabal an example to others, not to use him so rudely.

Ver. 35. *So David received of her hand that which she brought, and said unto her, Go in peace unto thy house: for I hearkened unto thy voice, and accepted thy person.*] Both she herself, and what she said, and what she brought, were most welcome to him. So happy a thing it is (as Euripides speaks in his Heraclidæ, ver. 359.) to fall into the hand of a wise, and not a foolish enemy. For the latter, if he get the better, exercises nothing but cruelty: but with the former there is room for mercy, justice, moderation, and pardon. Such an enemy Abigail met withal; unto whom Nabal's offence was not more provoking to the destruction of his family, than the admiration of Abigail's virtue to its preservation.

Ver. 36. *And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house like the feast of a king: and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken.*] Had eaten and drank too liberally, at a very great feast, which he made for his shearers.

Wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, till the morning light.] Said not a word of what had passed, because he was not capable to understand the mercy of God to him.

Ver. 37. *But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal.*] When he had slept himself sober.

And his wife told him of these things, that his heart died within him, and he became as a stone.] He fainted away, and was as cold as a stone; out of the dread of the danger which he imagined still hung over him. For it is a frigid interpretation of Rasi and Kimchi, that he was troubled to hear of the great present that his wife had made to David.

Ver. 38. *And it came to pass, that about ten days after, the Lord smote Nabal, that he died.*] It seems he lay so long dispirited, in a stupid senseless condition; and then God put an end to his life, either by some disease, or by a sudden stroke.

Ver. 39. *And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the Lord, who hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the Lord hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head.*] He doth not rejoice so much in his death (who was a worthless wretch) as in the justice of God: who shewed him, that, if men would have patience, they should see right done them; so that they need not go about to avenge themselves.

And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.] Being a woman of admirable prudence, as well as beauty, (ver. 3.) and one that expressed a high esteem of him, he sent some to treat with her about marriage with him.

Ver. 40. *And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee unto him to wife.*] This was their business: which, no doubt, they delivered in many more words, which signified the great esteem and affection which David had for her; whom he knew to be a woman of such great wisdom, that she had respect not merely to his present, but to his future condition. Otherwise he would not have adventured, being now very poor, to court one that had such riches.

Ver. 41. *And she arose, and bowed herself with her face to the earth.*] In reverence to the very name of David: whom she highly honoured, as a man of an heroic spirit; and who she was fully persuaded should be king of Israel, (ver. 30.)

And she said, Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.] She sent him an answer in these words; which shew her humility to be as great as her other virtues: for to wash one's feet was the lowest sort of service.

Ver. 42. *And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of hers that went after her.*] That she might come attended suitable to her quality and his. (See Grotius, Gen. xxx. 3.)

And she went after the messengers of David.] Though she did not long deliberate about the matter, but soon consented, yet it is not likely she followed them immediately: but stayed some decent time before she went to David.

And became his wife.] She had a strong faith in God to marry a man who had nothing to live upon, but was forced to wander from place to place, and beg the assistance of his friends. But she verily believed he would at last come to the throne, as she had before expressed: and could make some provision for him out of her own estate.

Ver. 43. *David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and they were also both of them his wives.*] At the same time: according to the corrupt custom of those days, wherein they had perverted the law of nature, which is admirably expressed by Euripides in his Andromache, (ver. 177, &c.)

——— οὐδὲ γὰρ καλὸν,
Δυσὶν γυναικοῖν ἄνδρ' ἕν' ἡνίας ἔχειν, &c.

It is not good for one husband to govern two wives: but he should be content with one, who would live happily.

And again, (ver. 909.)

Κακὸν δ' ἔλεξας, ἓν' ἄνδρα δίσσ' ἔχειν λέχη.

Thou hast said, it is an evil thing for one man to have two wives. For where there are more than one they seldom agree, but breed great trouble to their husband. It is commonly thought, that Ahinoam was his wife before he married Abigail. (See upon xxvii. 3.)

Ver. 44. *And Saul.*] Or rather, *for Saul*, the particle *vau* being often so used.

Had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Phalti the son of Laish.] Here is the reason why David took another wife; because Saul had deprived him of his former: but it was no good reason for taking two, which were more than he had before. He was not forced from Michal, and therefore we read afterward that he took her again. And the Jewish doctors are of opinion, that this Phalti was a very pious man, and would never touch her, because she was another man's wife: which was the reason David received her again. (See 1 Sam. iii. 15.)

Which was of Gallim.] A town near Accaron, as Eusebius and St. Jerome tell us: which had its name from Gal, a heap of stones; it being, I suppose, a stony place.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Ziphites.*] The old enemies of David, (xxiii. 19.)

Came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon?] He thought he might safely return thither, Saul having so lately made peace with him. The Ziphites also could not but hear how he had obliged Saul, and what declaration Saul had made, that he knew David would be king of Israel, (xxiv. 20.) Which David thought might discourage them from meddling any more. But quite contrary, they being afraid, if he came to be king, he would remember and revenge their ill usage of him, went to excite Saul to destroy him.

Ver. 2. *Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, with three thousand men of Israel with him.*] The same number he had the last time he pursued after him, (xxiv. 2.)

To seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.] The inconstancy, falseness, and implacable rage of this prince is inconceivable. Who, having not long ago been obliged to David for his life, and had acknowledged his error, and made David swear he would be good to his posterity, yet openly declared himself again to be his enemy, and sought to kill him.

Ver. 3. *And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the way.*] That is, by the way that went to the wilderness.

But David abode in the wilderness; and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness.] He thought at first his intelligence had not been true; but he was credibly informed that Saul's wrath was broke out again, and that he intended to come thither.

Ver. 4. *And David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.*] A good captain always hath scouts abroad: who assured him his information was true, and that Saul was not far from him.

Ver. 5. *And David arose, and came to a place where Saul had pitched.*] Within sight of it; where he might observe how they lay.

And David beheld where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of the host.] Who, it is likely, lay near him.

And Saul lay in the trench.] Or rather, *in his chariot*, for so the LXX. translate the Hebrew word by λαμπήνη, or as some editions have it, ἁπήνη: which signifies a chariot drawn by mules, as Bochartus shews out of Homer and other authors, par. i. Hierozoicon, lib. ii. cap. 19.

And the people lay round about him.] He was enclosed, I suppose, with the carriages; as our marginal translation is of the foregoing word.

Ver. 6. *Then answered David, and said to Ahimelech the Hittite.*] A valiant man of that nation, who was a proselyte to the Jewish religion: and not only followed David, but was always near to his person.

And to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab.] Who were the sons of David's sister, (1 Chron. xi. 16.) whose father is no where mentioned; being a man, I suppose, of no note.

Saying, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp?] That is, which of these two.

And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.] Either Ahimelech declined it, as too hazardous an enterprise; or Abishai, being a hot forward young man, offered himself, while the other stood deliberating.

Ver. 7. *So David and Abishai came to the people by night.*] A bold attempt, for two men to come into the midst of an army of three thousand chosen men, who were not without a watch, though they were now asleep. But a strong confidence in God's promise that he would preserve him, overcame all fear of danger.

And, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster; but Abner and the people lay round about him.] To secure his person from any sudden assault.

Ver. 8. *Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thy hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.*] Though David would not kill him himself, when he had the like opportunity; (xxiv. 4.) yet Abishai thought he might give him leave to do it: and he undertook to stick him to the ground at one thrust, so that he should make no noise by crying out.

Ver. 9. *And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed and be guiltless?*] Being made king by God's special appointment, he looked upon it as a high crime to do him any hurt; because he was a sacred person.

Ver. 10. *David said furthermore, As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish.*] God, who made him king, after a solemn manner, could only depose him: and that he could do several ways; either by a sudden stroke, or in the course of nature, or letting him fall in battle.

Ver. 11. *The Lord forbid that I should stretch my hand against the Lord's anointed.*] What he permitted another to do, when he could hinder it, was as if he had done it himself. But he abhorred to meddle with that, which belonged to God, as he had before said.

But I pray thee, take now the spear that is at his bolster.] As a witness what they could have done, if respect to God, whose anointed he was, had not withheld them.

And the cruse of water, and let us go.] This was set there, either for him to drink, if he was thirsty, or to wash himself; which was prescribed by their law in case of many pollutions.

Ver. 12. *So David took the spear and the cruse of water.*] By the hand of Abishai: who, like an excellent soldier, was perfectly subject to his commander, to forbear, or to do whatsoever David enjoined him.

And gat them away, and no man saw it, or knew it, neither awaked; for they were all asleep: because a deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them.] The Jewish doctors, in Bereschith Rabba, observe, that there are three sorts of that they call *tardama*, which is the Hebrew word for *deep sleep* in this place. The first, mere sound sleep, which God sent upon Adam, (Gen. xi. 21.) The second is the deep sleep of prophecy, which he sent upon Abraham, (Gen. xv. 12.) The third is this here mentioned, which they call the sleep *marmorita* (it should be printed *marmota*, as Bochart observes), which is a little creature more drowsy than a dormouse. (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 38.)

Ver. 13. *Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of a hill afar off (a great space being between them).*] So that he was in safety, and yet his voice might be heard.

Ver. 14. *And David cried unto the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner?*] Art thou still asleep?

Then Abner answered, and said, Who art thou that criest unto the king?] And disturbest his repose.

Ver. 15. *And David said unto Abner, Art thou not a valiant man, &c.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *Art not thou a man?* That is, in place of authority, as well as of great courage and valour.

Wherefore hast thou not kept thy lord the king?] Observed better military discipline, for the preservation of Saul's person.

For there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord.] Came into the camp with that intention, and had a very fair opportunity.

Ver. 16. *This thing is not good that thou hast done.*] A soft way of speaking: but his meaning was, that he was very faulty, as appears by what follows.

Ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the Lord's anointed.] Guarded him better from any danger. It is probable they despised David's small forces, which made them so grossly negligent.

Now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster!] He sets before them the tokens of their carelessness; and of the opportunity he had to kill Saul.

Ver. 17. *And Saul knew David's voice, and said, Is this thy voice, my son David?*] He was in great confusion of mind, and knew not what more to say to him.

And David said, It is my voice, my lord, O king.] He humbly acknowledgeth his authority; and the allegiance he owed him: though he had done him so many injuries.

Ver. 18. *And he said, Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done, or what evil is in my hand?*] Being conscious of his own innocence, David expostulates with him in a long speech: and desires, in the first place, to know what crime he had to accuse him of: especially since he lately acknowledged that he was more righteous than himself, (xxiv. 17.)

Ver. 19. *Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of thy servant.*] Having no answer to that question, he desires him to be so patient, as to suffer him to argue awhile with him.

If the Lord have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering.] For God is not implacable, but willing to be reconciled, if I have offended him. Or the meaning may be, If, for any offence against God, there be just cause for this anger, I refuse not to die, and expiate the faults with my blood. Or the words may refer to Saul, as if he had said, Offer to God some sacrifice, that he, being appeased, may free thee from this pertinacious melancholy.

But if they be the children of men, cursed be they before

the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord.] From having any settled abode in his own country; which he foresaw he should be forced also to leave, as we read he did in the next chapter.

Saying, Go, serve other gods.] That was the effect of their actions, though they did not say so in so many words. For they banished him into a nation of another religion, as Mr. Mede expounds these words. (See book iii. p. 823.)

Ver. 20. *Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord.*] God seeing it, and being the avenger.

For the king of Israel cometh out to seek a flea.] Which was neither for his profit nor for his glory. (See xxiv. 14.)

As when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.] Hunt a poor bird from mountain to mountain, with a great deal of labour, which is not easily caught, and worth nothing when one hath it: the Hebrew word *kore* is no where to be found, but here and in Jer. xvii. 11. from both which places we learn it was a mountainous bird of no great value: in taking of which, the fowler spent his pains to little purpose. And it was one of those birds that sits upon the eggs of other birds; as the words of Jeremiah import, "She gathereth what she hath not brought forth," that is, eggs which she did not lay. From which it is apparent, that this word doth not signify a *partridge*, which is a bird of price, and doth not sit on other birds' eggs; but, as Bochart hath taken a great deal of pains to shew, was a bird with a long bill and short feet, called *rusticula*. I will not mention the opinions of interpreters about it, for they are very various, and the same men are not constant to themselves; for R. Solomon, who here takes it for a *partridge*, in that place of the prophet Jeremiah takes it for a *cuckoo*. (See Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. i. cap. 12.)

Ver. 21. *Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David.*] He invites him to come to the court again; which is more than he did at their former meeting.

For I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.] This is a very ingenuous confession, wherein he condemned himself as a great offender against God and against David. In which for the present, no doubt, he was very serious, and both ashamed and sorry for what he had done.

Ver. 22. *And David answered and said, Behold the king's spear! let one of the young men come over and fetch it.*] He durst not venture to go and present it himself to Saul, though it was the testimony of his fidelity and affection to him. For he did not know but the evil spirit might come on a sudden upon him, and make him change his good resolution.

Ver. 23. *The Lord render to every man according to his righteousness and faithfulness: for the Lord delivered thee this day into my hand, but I would not stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed.*] He repeats what Saul had confessed, the more to affect his heart with it: and tells him he doubted not the Lord would deal with him accordingly, howsoever Saul used him.

Ver. 24. *Behold, as thy life was set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be set by in the sight of the Lord, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation.*] He prays God to deal with him as he had done with Saul; and then he doubted not to come out of all his troubles.

Ver. 25. *And Saul said unto David, Blessed be thou, my son David; thou shalt do great things, and also shalt still prevail.*] He perceived it was in vain to contend any longer against David, whom God designed for great things (as he saw by his most worthy and noble actions), and would still have the better of him, until he came to the throne: for possibly Saul looked upon the taking away his spear, which I observed (upon xxii. 6.) was his sceptre, as an omen the royal authority should be translated to David.

So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.] To Gibeah, from whence he came, (ver. 1.) but David did not think fit to accompany him, remembering how fickle he was, and therefore, notwithstanding all those good words, not to be trusted.

CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *AND David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul.*] Whose heart he believed was not altered, though he had felt lately some compunction for what he had done against him. But David had the greatest reason to believe he would never be able to compass his design, having God's promise he should be king of Israel; therefore these words were spoken in a melancholy fit, when he was under some great depression of spirit.

There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.] He thought, that as long as he remained in any part of Saul's dominions, he would never cease his persecution: but by going into an enemy's country, he would be forced to be quiet.

Ver. 2. *And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred men that were with him, unto Achish, the son of Maoch, king of Gath.*] It is not certain that this was the same Achish mentioned xxi. 10. with whom David took shelter at his first flight from Saul. He seems rather to have been another, who is distinguished from the former by the name of his father. But whichsoever he was, he had either invited David to come thither for his security (hoping to make use of his valour or his prudence in his wars), or David had sent ambassadors before to treat with him, and had his royal word, that he should be protected by him. And it appears afterward, that he had David in great esteem; for he gave him a town for his own inheritance, (ver. 6.)

Ver. 3. *And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, even David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail the Carmelite, Nabal's wife.*] It was a very capacious place that could contain so many men and their families; some of which might be numerous. And Achish was very generous to receive so many strangers and old soldiers into his royal city, as might have made themselves masters of it. Ahinoam being here mentioned before Abigail, hath made many think she was his wife before he took the other.

Ver. 4. *And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath; and he sought no more again for him.*] Unto which, it is likely, he was inclined; if he had not found it to be in vain.

Ver. 5. *And David said unto Achish, If I have now found*

grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?] This he said, that he might avoid envy. For perhaps he might have too much the port of a king; having so many men at his service, and being attended, no doubt, with a considerable number of them about his person. In a private town also he might more freely exercise his own religion; without any offence to the Philistines, who worshipped other gods.

Ver. 6. *Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day.*] Either out of his royal bounty, or on condition of some service he should do him.

Wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.] In the division of the land of Canaan it was first given unto the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 31.) and afterward to that of Simeon, who had a portion out of the land given to Judah, (Josh. xix. 5.) But the Philistines kept possession of it, so that neither of them enjoyed it: till now it became by Achish's gift the peculiar inheritance of David and his successors.

Ver. 7. *And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was a full year and four months.*] How long he wandered up and down, till he settled here, we are no where told: but it is probable the persecution of Saul lasted a great while.

Ver. 8. *And David and his men went out, and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezerites, and the Amalekites: for those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt.*] The Geshurites and Gezerites were both of them relics of the Canaanites, whom God commanded to be rooted out. (See Grotius.) The Amalekites who were near had been destroyed by Saul, but not these that were afar off: or, perhaps, these were some that fled into these remote parts when they heard Saul was coming against them. And the following words (ver. 11. of David's killing all) must be understood, that he left none alive whom he found in these parts: but there still were Amalekites in other places, (xxx. 1.) Abarbinel imagines all the people here mentioned were at enmity with Achish, and hated him and his people: so that when David smote them he made no complaint about it.

Ver. 9. *And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.*] To give an account of his actions, and to present him, I suppose, with part of the spoil.

Ver. 10. *And Achish said, Whither have ye made a road to-day?*] For David, it is likely, constantly kept his men in exercise upon some expedition or other.

And David said, Against the south of Judah, and against the south of the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites.] He answers Achish cunningly, in such ambiguous words, that he might understand him as if he had assaulted the land of Judah; whereas he only fell upon those people who bordered on those parts which he mentions. For these countries lay on the south of Judah: and the Jerahmeelites were a part of Judea, and the Kenites of the family of Jethro were their neighbours and confederates.

Ver. 11. *And David saved neither man nor woman alive to bring tidings to Gath, saying, Lest they should tell on us, saying, So did David, and so will be his manner all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.*] Who had people of some countries thereabouts; perhaps tributaries to them, and under their protection: whom they might fear David would serve in the same manner, had they known how he dealt with these.

Ver. 12. *And Achish believed David, saying, He hath made his people utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant for ever.*] The enmity between him and his own people being, as he thought, irreconcilable, he must make him his friend by faithful service for ever.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass in those days.*] While David was in the country of the Philistines.

That the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel.] Mustered all their forces to invade the land of Israel, being encouraged, it is probable, by the banishment of David, the death of Samuel, and the frenzy of Saul.

And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go with me to battle, thou and thy men.] Achish seems to have been the principal person in the country, and the commander of all their forces. For we read of no other king among them but he: who required David, who was now one of his subjects, to assist him in this warfare against his own native country.

Ver. 2. *And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do.*] He answered in doubtful words, which might be taken in different senses.

And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of my head for ever.] Achish understood him that he would do his best to serve him: and thereupon promised, if he did, that he would make him captain of his guard, or some great officer, near to his person.

Ver. 3. *Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city.*] This was noted before, (xxv. 1.) but repeated here again, to shew that Saul now was sensible of his loss, wanting his advice in a time of great distress.

And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.] According to the Divine commandment, (Lev. xx. 27.) which, perhaps, he had executed in the beginning of his reign, when he was governed by Samuel: or if he did it since, it was to shew that he had some zeal for God left, whereby he kept up his authority among the people.

Ver. 4. *And the Philistines gathered themselves together.*] Met at an appointed place.

And came and pitched in Shunem.] A place in the tribe of Issachar, as we learn from Josh. xix. 18.

And Saul gathered all Israel together, and pitched in Gilboa.] A mountain near the valley of Jezreel, not far from Shunem: as that place in Joshua informs us. So that they seem to be pitched, as they were before the great battle was fought when Goliath fell, upon two mountains, with a valley between them.

Ver. 5. *And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines.*] Of which he had a full view from Mount Gilboa.

He was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.] For the Spirit of God having forsaken him, his courage very much failed him, when he saw how numerous the Philistines

were, and heard, perhaps, that David was among them; and reflected upon all the evil he had done unto him.

Ver. 6. *And when Saul inquired of the Lord.*] This seems to contradict what is said 1 Chron. x. 14. that he *did not inquire of the Lord:* which was the reason that *he slew him.* But Kimchi and others thus reconcile these two places; that since he did not continue to inquire of him, but went to a witch, it was all one as if he had not inquired at all; for he did it faintly, coldly, and indifferently: resolving, if he was not heard there, to go to some other place for counsel. See Buxtorf, Hist. Urim et Thummim; who observes, out of Samuel Laniado, a learned Jew, that "he whose heart is perfect with God, lifts up his eyes unto him, and fixes them on him; hoping in him, though he doth not presently hear him: and perseveres in his hopes, firmly settling a resolution to wait upon him. But so did not Saul, who was remiss and negligent, saying, If God will not hear me, I will go and consult a familiar spirit."

The Lord answered him not.] Because he had killed his priests, as R. Solomon here notes. And by this means, as R. Levi ben Gersom here farther observes, had nobody capable of the Holy Spirit to consult God for him.

Neither by dreams.] By which he prayed, perhaps, that God would inform himself.

Nor by urim.] Kimchi thinks that he sent to Abiathar to inquire about the event of this war: for he had the urim with him. It is observable, that the Scripture never saith that God answered by thummim; for that is comprehended under urim: which is always put first when they are joined together, and here it is mentioned alone. (See xxiii. 6.)

Nor by prophets.] A college of which, no doubt, was still remaining at Ramah; whom Samuel had educated. It will not be amiss to observe, that the same ways of inquiry were among the gentiles, as appears by what Achilles saith, in the council of the Greeks, who met to consider about the plague Apollo had sent among them: (Iliad. i. ver. 62.)

Ἀλλ' ἄγε δή τινα μάντιν ἐρείομεν ἢ ἱερῆα,
Ἢ καὶ ὀνειροπόλον, (καὶ γάρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν)
Ὅς κ' εἴποι———

Where he reckons three sorts of men, a *prophet*, or a *priest*, or an *expounder of dreams;* who might tell why Apollo was so angry with them.

Ver. 7. *Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her.*] In this he acted like a distracted man, who now approved what he had condemned. He mentions a *woman* rather than a *man;* because the weaker sex were most addicted to these practices (being most easily deceived by evil spirits), among whom such a person he thought might be soonest found.

And his servants said unto him, There is a woman that hath a familiar spirit.] There are always some flatterers in courts, who will never contradict their princes; but are ready to comply with them in their worst designs. And it appears by this, that though this sort of divination was not publicly practised, yet it was known that there were some who privately continued to consult the dead. I say *publicly*, because it is very probable that before Saul executed the law against them, there were those that made profession of having familiar spirits, as there were among the heathen. For Plutarch, in the life of Cimon, speaks of Pausanias' going to a Νεκυομαντεῖον (*an oracle of the dead*) at Heraclea, where he called up the soul of Cleonice.

At En-dor.] A place in the tribe of Manasseh, (Josh. xvii. 11.) not far from Shunem, as Salianus observes: and part of the mountain of Gilboa was over against En-dor, and another part of it against Shunem. This woman, the Jewish doctors say, was the mother of Abner.

Ver. 8. *And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and went, and two servants with him.*] He put off his royal apparel, and clothed himself like an ordinary man, having but a small attendance; that he might not be suspected to be what he was. These two servants, the Jewish doctors say, were Abner and Amasa.

And they came to the woman by night.] They could not go the direct way, for then they must have passed through the army of the Philistines: and therefore they fetched a compass, and travelled also by night, that they might not be discovered. And it is likely they went on foot, that less notice might be taken of them; and they might go and return through by-ways, which made their journey the longer. In the night also it was, that women went about such magical practices. For, as Psellus observes in his book of Demons, it is the common opinion of the Greeks, that none of the terrestrial demons dare appear in the day-time. Ἑλληνικῆς γάρ ἐστι δόξης τὸ μηδένα τῶν ἐνύλων δαιμόνων διαρρεῖν τὰς τοῦ ἡλίου αὐγάς. Nay, he saith all those things were performed after the summer solstice; when the days grew short, and the nights increased.

And he said, Divine unto me by the familiar spirits, and bring me him up whom I shall name unto thee.] This consulting the dead, was a very ancient practice among the gentiles, as appears from Homer: but long before him, mentioned by Moses himself, who forbids it in Deut. xviii. 10. Notwithstanding which, the Israelites, who had a Divine oracle, and holy prophets to guide them, fell into this foul sin, as they did into most of the gentile abominations.

Ver. 9. *And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those who have familiar spirits, and wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?*] For so the law was, (Lev. xx. 27.) And Saul seems by the woman's speech to have executed it, for she saith he had *cut them off;* whereas it is only said, that he had *put them away:* as if he had failed in his duty, and merely banished such persons, when he should have put them to death.

Ver. 10. *And Saul sware unto her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.*] An oath was so sacred a thing in those days, that they entirely relied upon it, and ventured their lives upon its credit.

Ver. 11. *Then said the woman, whom shall I bring up to thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.*] It is a wonderful thing that he should believe a woman should have power to disturb the rest of Samuel, and bring him thither at her command. But he was forsaken by God, and grown delirious.

Ver. 12. *And when the woman saw Samuel.*] Here interpreters are very much divided; some imagining it was Samuel himself that appeared; others, a spectre, which by

the power of the devil, appeared in his likeness. Several of the ancient fathers are of the former opinion, and particularly Justin Martyr; who, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, alleges this as a demonstration of the immortality of the soul, p. 333. And most of the Roman church are now of the same mind. But Tertullian saith, (in his book De Anima, cap. 57.) "God forbid we should believe the soul of any holy man, much less of a prophet, should be brought up by the power of the devil." Of this persuasion are a great number of the ancients, particularly St. Cyril of Alexandria, who thinks it the greatest absurdity to believe that a wretched woman should call up Samuel's soul; the demons, with whom such people deal, having no such power. And so St. Jerome calls this *Samuelis phantasma*. Yet there are vast numbers of modern authors, who think that by God's permission, or dispensation, the soul of Samuel might appear; which Sir John Marsham himself takes not to be improbable. (See Chron. Canon. xiii.) But the very letter of the text seems to me to be against this opinion; which speaks of bringing him *up*, and his *coming up* out of the earth; whereas, if it had been Samuel, he should rather have come down from heaven. This apparition, therefore, was one of those fallacious spirits, whom Porphyry speaks of (lib. ii. De Abstinentia), "who put on any shape, and counterfeit (as his words are) the gods, and demons, and the souls of the dead;" Γένος ἀπατῆλης φύσεως παντόμορφον καὶ πολύτροπον, ὑποκρινόμενον καὶ θεοὺς, καὶ δαίμονας, καὶ ψυχὰς τεθνηκότων. Which a very learned person (Joh. Wagenseil) hath confirmed, by this reason, which to me seems very solid; that since God was not pleased to answer Saul (as he confessed) either by prophets, or by dreams, or by urim and thummim, but had withdrawn himself wholly from him, it is not probable, that he would send Samuel himself to him from the dead (and none else could do it), and that at the call of a witch, when he would not favour him with any revelation from a living prophet, or any other way. (Confut. Carm. Lipmanni, p. 198.)

She cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.] She cried out for fear of Saul, when she perceived, by the reverence the spectre paid him, who he was. For so Abarbinel interprets it, he bowed with his face to the ground, in honour of Saul, whereby the woman concluded he was the king.

Ver. 13. *And the king said unto her, Be not afraid.*] Do not imagine I come with any design to discover thee, and bring thee to punishment.

For what sawest thou?] But tell me what appeared to thee.

And she said, I saw gods ascending out of the earth.] By the word *Elohim* the Jews understand a *judge;* for so judges are called in Psal. lxxxii. 1. 6. Peter Martyr therefore interprets it not amiss, *a person very majestic, like a judge or a king.* And so R. Esaias, mentioned by Vorstius upon Pirke Eliezer, (p. 113.) who by *Elohim* understands "hominem insignis atque excelsæ staturæ," *a man of an eminent and high stature;* as the Scripture calls high trees and mountains, *trees and mountains of God.* And he is said *to ascend out of the earth.* For so the heathen endeavoured (as Homer, Virgil, Statius, and other ancient poets tell us) to bring up the dead out of the earth, to give them answers to their doubts. Which wicked custom prevailed long among the Jews; for Isaiah alludes to it in xxix. 4. when he saith, they should be brought so low, as to speak like a familiar spirit out of the ground, and whisper out of the dust. And it is evident likewise from Isa. lxv. 4. that they were wont to go to the sepulchres of the dead, there to consult them. For that is the meaning of *sacrificing in gardens,* (ver. 3.) for there they were wont to bury their dead.

Ver. 14. *And he said unto her, What form is he of?*] This is an argument he saw nothing, but afterward heard a voice.

And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle.] Such as kings wore, and also prophets, who had very great authority, (xv. 27. 2 Kings ii. 8. 13.) The Hebrew word *meil* signifies as much as the Greek ποδήρης, a long garment which came down to the feet.

And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.] By the description which the woman gave of him, he concluded it was Samuel; and thereupon made his reverence to him.

Ver. 15. *And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, and brought me up?*] This shews it was an evil spirit, personating Samuel, who spake these words. For it is not in the power of witches to disturb the rest of good men, and to bring them into this world when they please. And Samuel, we may be sure, would never have acknowledged such a power in magical arts, the credit of which the devil endeavoured to support.

And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams; therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known to me what I shall do.] Some think he omits inquiry by urim, because, in truth, he neither did nor could make use of that: Abiathar having carried it away to David. But this doth not agree with ver. 6. which supposes he did inquire by urim. He should rather, by repentance, and prayer, and sacrifices, and doing right to David, have besought the favour of God, as Pellicanus here well observes.

Ver. 16. *And Samuel said to Saul, Wherefore dost thou ask me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and become thine enemy?*] Nothing could be more senseless than to imagine Samuel could do any thing for him, when the Lord, whose servant Samuel was, would not regard him.

Ver. 17. *And the Lord hath done to him.*] That is, to David, mentioned in the conclusion of the verse.

As he spake by me.] Still the evil spirit personates Samuel, that Saul might be deceived into a belief that it was really he who spake to him.

For the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thy hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even unto David.] As Samuel had foretold long ago; and now it was ready to be accomplished.

Ver. 18. *Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord.*] This relates (Abarbinel thinks) to his sin in Gilgal, (chap. xiii.)

Nor executed his fierce wrath upon Amalek.] This was his next sin, whereby he highly provoked God's anger against him: for he was not sensible he had offended his express command, but justified his conduct, till Samuel

took a great deal of pains to convince him; and then told him he would rend the kingdom from him, (xv. 28.)

Therefore hath the Lord done this unto thee this day.] He doth not mention his sin in killing the Lord's priests; because this decree of taking the kingdom from him was passed before that sin was committed.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines.*] Samuel himself could no more know this, than an evil spirit; unless God had been pleased to suggest it: which he might think good to do to this ghost, which personated Samuel, that he might terrify Saul. Or, he saw the Philistines to be so numerous, and Saul so feeble and dispirited, that he doubted not the victory would be on the Philistines' side; and therefore confidently pronounced it. But the former is more probable, that God used this evil spirit to declare his mind at this time: so that he spake nothing but by his direction.

And to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me.] If we take the word *to-morrow* strictly, Eustathius, archbishop of Antioch, his argument against Origen is good, that this could not be Samuel who spake, because his words are false: there being more than a day between this and the fight, as many have clearly proved from the story itself. But the meaning may be no more, than very shortly thou shalt be as I am, that is, dead. For, as many have well observed (particularly Hackspan, in his disputation concerning Angels and Demons), by these words, *be with me*, "mors simpliciter notatur, non vero peculiaris mortem secutus status;" *death is simply noted, but not the state which follows after death.*

And the Lord shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.] He would not have him think his army should be able to defend him. Abarbinel observes, that he reckons up three judgments, in the very order wherein they fell out (which shews all was spoken by God's order); first, that the host of Israel should be delivered into the hand of the Philistines; then, that Saul and his sons should be slain; and, lastly, that the Philistines should come and dwell in their cities, (xxxi. 7.) which he takes to be the sense of the last words, which otherwise are only a repetition of the first.

Ver. 20. *And Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.*] No wonder he fainted away, being weak in body for want of food; and extremely afflicted in mind by this dismal message, which Samuel, he thought, brought him from God.

Ver. 21. *And the woman came unto Saul.*] These words suggest that Saul was in some private room, where he alone heard the words that were spoken by the apparition.

And saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thy handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have put my life in thy hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me.] She had exposed herself to extreme danger: for what we carry in our hand may easily fall out, or be snatched from us.

Ver. 22. *Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee, and eat; that thou mayest have strength when thou goest on thy way.*] For without some refreshment she saw it would be impossible for him to get to his camp again.

Ver. 23. *But he refused, and said, I will not.*] He chose rather to die there than by the Philistines.

But his servants, together with the woman, compelled him.] Pressed him so hard, that he yielded to them.

And he hearkened to their voice.] Who knew nothing of what he had heard, but thought he had fainted away only for want of food.

So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed.] As the manner (I observed before) then was; and not to lie along when they ate.

Ver. 24. *And the woman had a fat calf in the house.*] The Hebrew word *marbek* is well translated *fat*, as Bochartus confesses, though it properly signifies (as he demonstrates) a calf that treads out the corn, and is fatted up by that means. (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 31.)

And she hasted, and killed it, and took flour and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof.] Because there was no time to let it ferment.

Ver. 25. *And she brought it before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they arose up and went away that night.*] Before the break of day; that none might discover they had been with such a woman.

CHAP. XXIX.

Ver. 1. *NOW the Philistines gathered all their army to Aphek.*] There were three places of this name; one in the tribe of Judah, another in Manasseh, and a third in Asher. Which last seems to be here meant, where the sons of Eli were slain. (See iv. 1.)

And the Israelites pitched by a mountain which is in Jezreel.] A valley which was overlooked by the mountain Gilboa: from whence the Israelites came down (xxviii. 4.) to draw up their army here.

Ver. 2. *And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds and by thousands.*] When they took a view of their army, the great men appeared, some at the head of a hundred, some of a thousand soldiers.

But David and his men passed on in the rear-ward with Achish.] Who seems to have been the general of the army: and to have made David and his men his life-guard, according to his resolution, xxviii. 2.

Ver. 3. *Then said the princes of the Philistines, What do these Hebrews here?*] Who they were afraid would prove false to them, and take part with their own countrymen.

And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, who hath been with me these days, or these years.] The meaning is, *I may say years, not days:* for he had been with him part of two years: and, if he had not formerly known him, his predecessor had, (xxi. 10.) and it is likely he had held correspondence with him before he came to him.

And I have found no fault in him since he fell unto me unto this day?] This intimates, that he looked on him as revolted from Saul; and, by the experience he had of his fidelity, he thought he might be still trusted.

Ver. 4. *And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him.*] In an angry tone.

Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him.] At Ziklag, which they were contented he should possess.

And let him not go down with us to the battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us.] And thereby do them more mischief than the army of the Israelites.

For wherewith should he reconcile himself to his master? should it not be with the heads of these men?] That is, of the Philistines. They reasoned wisely, according to the common practice of mankind; and well it was for David, that they were such politicians: for hereby God delivered him out of a very great strait; either of being an enemy to his country, or false to his friends, and to his trust. And by the same good providence he was sent back to rescue his wives, and the wives and children of his men, who were taken captive.

Ver. 5. *Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?*] They remembered that he was their old enemy, who killed Goliath: and was highly magnified for it above Saul himself.

Ver. 6. *Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, as the Lord liveth.*] He swears by the God whom David worshipped, that he might be the more believed: or, perhaps, he had learned something from David of the true God, though he worshipped others with him.

Thou hast been upright, and thy going out and coming in with me in the host is good in my sight.] He commends him as an unblameable person in his private conversation; and as an excellent commander in his army.

For I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day.] A very honourable testimony from a foreign prince.

Nevertheless the lords favour thee not.] Unto whom Achish was forced to yield: for he was not an absolute king; but the lords of the country still retained a great authority.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the lords of the Philistines.*] From the effects of whose envy and jealousy he could not preserve him.

Ver. 8. *And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant, so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king?*] He had told him before that he found not the least fault in him: therefore this question may seem impertinent. But David was to act his part handsomely upon this occasion; so that, though he was inwardly pleased, he would not have them suspect he was glad to be dismissed: and therefore, since the king was satisfied with his fidelity, asks why he might not be trusted to fight against his enemies, and that his lords would give him a reason? But Abarbinel thinks he never intended this; but being chosen by Achish to be *the keeper of his head*, (xxviii. 2.) he resolved only to discharge this office; but not to join in the battle against Israel.

Ver. 9. *And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou art good in my sight, as an angel of God.*] He had learned something, as I observed before, (ver. 6.) of the Hebrew religion: and it appears by this, of their language also. And the meaning is, he looked upon David as a man sent down from heaven to him: all things prospering that he took in hand.

Notwithstanding, the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go with us to battle.] They seem to have made such an order in council: which the king durst not contradict.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore now rise up early in the morning.*] Lest any mischief should come to him, if he delayed his departure.

With thy master's servants that are come with thee.] This intimates, that the lords of the Philistines would not trust them, because they looked on them still as Saul's subjects.

And as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.] He advises them to lose no time, but, as soon as they could see their way, leave the army, and march to Ziklag.

Ver. 11. *So David and his men rose up early in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines.*] For now they were in the Philistines' camp, in the land of Israel, at Aphek, (ver. 1.)

And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.] To the battle to the Israelites, who were pitched there, (ver. 1.)

CHAP. XXX.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day.*] So many days' journey it was from the camp of the Philistines to this place. (See the beginning of the next book, ver. 2.)

That the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smote Ziklag, and burnt it with fire.] To revenge themselves for what David had done to them, (xxvii. 8.) which they might easily do, when he and his men were absent; and but a small, if any, guard left in the place.

Ver. 2. *And had taken the women captives that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way.*] Towards their own country. This may seem strange, that David having killed all he could meet with, and spared none, neither men nor women, (xxvii. 9. 11.) they should not serve his people in the same kind. But though they sought revenge, yet they desired booty much more: being a poor and very covetous people; who intended to sell them for slaves, and make money of them.

Ver. 3. *And David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burnt with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captive.*] This befel David when he seemed to be in the greatest security: having escaped the fury of Saul, and also the service of the Philistines; who were likely to make Saul pay very dear for his ill usage of David. But such is the state of this world, we are often surprised with sudden unexpected troubles; and, as the proverb is, "Many things fall out between the cup and the lip."

Ver. 4. *And David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no power to weep.*] For such calamities are enough to break the heart of the most courageous and undaunted spirits.

Ver. 5. *And David's two wives were taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.*] This is set down distinctly, to aggravate David's loss.

Ver. 6. *And David was greatly distressed: for the people*

spake of stoning him.] As the cause of this calamity, in leaving the city unguarded: or in provoking the Amalekites so grievously as he had done, in the slaughter of all he could find.

Because the soul of the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters.] Grief took away the use of their reason.

But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.] Who had never failed him in the greatest distresses: but done great things for him, and promised to do greater.

Ver. 7. *And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, Bring me hither, I pray thee, the ephod.*] From these words Petrus Cunæus (lib. i. de Rep. Heb. cap. 14.) concludes, that the kings of Israel might make use of the *ephod*, as well as the high-priest: because David saith, *Bring me hither*, &c. But this doth not signify that he himself meant to use it; but only that he desired it might be used for him: according to what is said of Joshua, in Numb. xxvii. 21. that he should stand before Eleazar the priest, *who should inquire for him*, &c.

And Abiathar brought thither the ephod unto David.] From these words the same Cunæus, in an epistle of his to Caspar Barlæus, (Epist. Ecclesiasticæ, 506. p. 767.) argues for his forenamed opinion, because it is not said he brought it *le David*, but *el David;* the former of which, he thinks, might have signified for his use; but this denotes, it was for him to use himself: which he endeavours to confirm from the high privilege which the king had above other men, of sitting in the house of God, &c. But this is confuted lately by a man very learned in these matters, (John Braunius, lib. ii. de Vest. Hebr. Sacerd. cap. 20. n. 32.) who well observes (as Buxtorf also doth), that in the foregoing words David doth say, Bring the ephod, *li*, i. e. *pro me*, or *mea causa, for me*, or *in meam gratiam, for my sake.*

Ver. 8. *And David inquired at the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop?*] He inquired by Abiathar. So all the Hebrew doctors, as Buxtorf observes in his Hist. Urim. cap. 3.

Shall I overtake them?] This shews it is a vain observation of the Jews, that they were not to ask two questions together: for David still continues to do so here, as he had done at Keilah: though God, they say there, had set him right in his inquiry, and taught him to do otherwise.

And he answered him, Pursue; for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.] He answers both questions at once, and tells him also more than he asked; that he should regain all that he had lost: which, no doubt, was a mighty encouragement unto him in his pursuit.

Ver. 9. *So David went, he and the six hundred men that were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed.*] They that were left to look after the stuff, (ver. 24.) who were so tired, that they were not able to march any farther.

Ver. 10. *So David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred abode behind, who were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.*] Grief, it is likely, made them neglect to take necessary refreshment before they came out.

Ver. 11. *And they found an Egyptian in the field.*] They knew him to be so by his habit: or, perhaps, they did not know whence he was, until he came to himself and told them. But finding him in the garb of a soldier, they thought he belonged to the Amalekites.

And brought him to David.] Half dead.

And they gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water.] Natural compassion might move them to this: but they had another motive, which was the hope of making some discovery, by his means, where the enemies were.

Ver. 12. *And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins.*] Did all they could to comfort him up, and revive his spirits.

And, when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him; for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights.] Having nobody near him to look after him: and being so sick, he could not look after himself. This is to be understood as Matt. xii. 40. of one whole day, and part of two others: as appears from the next verse, where he saith, *Three days ago I fell sick.* In the Hebrew, *I fell sick this third day; i. e.* this is the third day since I fell sick.

Ver. 13. *And David said, To whom belongest thou? and whence art thou? And he said, I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick.*] A barbarous act, to leave him there to perish, when they had camels good store for the carriage of men, as well as of their spoil, (ver. 17.) But this inhumanity cost them dear: for by this means they lost their own lives. Such is the wonderful providence of God (as Conr. Pellicanus here piously observes), which governs all the desires, and thoughts, and counsels, and works, and whatsoever is done among men, both the good and the bad.

Ver. 14. *And we made an invasion upon the south of the Cherethites.*] They are the same with the Philistines. For the Arabians call their country (as Bochartus observes) Keritha, and the Syrians call it Creth. Whose inhabitants the Hebrews call Crethi, or Crethim. And to put all out of doubt, *the south of the Cherethites* here mentioned, is, in the sixth verse explained, *the land of the Philistines.* Who were excellent archers, as we may gather from xxxi. 3. (See there.)

And upon the coast that belongeth to Judah.] The south coast of that tribe.

And upon the land of Caleb.] We read no where else of this land: which, in all probability, signifies that south part of Judah which was given to Caleb, and which his posterity inherited, (Josh. xiv. 13.)

And we burnt Ziklag with fire.] With which they seem to have ended their expedition.

Ver. 15. *And David said, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, Swear unto me by the Lord, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hand of my master.*] Who, it is likely, had otherwise been cruel to him: and, therefore, he had no mind to serve him any longer. Besides, his service, I suppose, was no better than slavery.

And I will bring thee down to this company.] For he heard them say, it is likely, where they would stay and rest themselves.

Ver. 16. *And when he had brought him down.*] Who had given him security, no doubt, by his oath, as he desired: and that, as I observed before, was such a sacred thing in ancient times, that all men relied upon it.

Behold, they were spread abroad upon the earth, eating and drinking, and dancing, because of the great spoil they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah.] They had laid aside their arms, and were feasting and making merry; as men are wont to do, when they have had great success in their enterprises.

Ver. 17. *And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day.*] He came upon them in the evening, when they were refreshing and resting themselves with mirth and jollity: being secure that no danger was near them; because the Israelites and the Philistines (among whom they thought David was) were ready to engage; so that he could no more come to revenge himself, than the Philistines could for the injuries done to them. And it is probable David let them fall asleep, when they had eaten and drunk liberally; and at peep of day fell upon them, and hunted them until the evening, which begun the next day.

And there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, that rode upon camels.] The country of Arabia, where this people lived, abounded with camels: one sort of which run very swiftly. They were used also by some nations in battle: as Vegetius observes, lib. iii. de Re Militari, cap. 23. (See Stewechius's Annotations on him.)

Ver. 18. *And recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away; and David rescued his two wives.*] Which are here particularly mentioned, because he had the greatest concern for them.

Ver. 19. *And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither son nor daughter, neither spoil, nor any thing they had taken to them.*] According to the word of God, (ver. 6.)

Ver. 20. *And David took all the flocks and the herds.*] Which had been taken by the Amalekites from the Philistines, and other places.

Which they drave before those other cattle.] His soldiers drave them before those cattle that had been taken from David and his men.

And said, This is David's spoil.] Not that he challenged it all to himself: but that it was acquired by his valour and conduct; which they now magnified, who lately spake of stoning him. For some think they sung a triumphant song, and that this was the burden of it: which they repeated at the end of every verse.

Ver. 21. *And David came to the two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom he had made also to abide at the brook Besor.*] That they might look after their stuff.

And they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that were with him.] To congratulate their happy success: and to receive their wives and children, who had been carried captive.

And when David came unto the people, he saluted them.] He was glad to see them, and inquired how they did (as it is in the margin), for he had left them very weak.

Ver. 22. *Then answered all the wicked men, and men of Belial, of those that went with David, and said.*] It is likely David told these two hundred men, when he saluted them, that they should lose nothing by their not being able to go along with him: which made these men, who had no conscience, but were only greedy of prey, to say what follows.

Because they went not with us, we will not give them aught of the spoil which we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that he may lead them away, and depart.] This was a savage resolution of such as feared not God, nor regarded men: since it was not the choice of their brethren to stay behind, but mere necessity and inability to travel further.

Ver. 23. *Then said David.*] Who still preserved his authority over the most wicked among them.

Ye shall not do so, my brethren.] He overrules them: but thought fit to do it in a friendly manner.

With that which God hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand.] As much as to say, When God hath been so good to us, we ought not to be unkind to our brethren.

Ver. 24. *For who will hearken unto you in this matter?*] No equal persons, he was confident, would be of their opinion, if the matter was referred to them.

But as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: their parts shall be alike.] Polybius explains the order of dividing the spoils of war, (as Grotius observes, lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 6. sect. 17.) some of which was allotted those who remained in the camp. But the proportions were various in several places. In some, a simple portion was given to a footman; a double to a centurion; and a treble to a horseman. In other places they varied from this: but howsoever the division was made, the commander-in-chief was allowed to take the best of the spoil to himself: as David perhaps now did: and then left the rest to be equally divided among his men. But the Talmudists say, that, in aftertimes, the king had all the royal furniture that was found in the tent of the conquered prince given unto him for his share.

Ver. 25. *And it was so, from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.*] The equity of this law appears from hence: that by common consent these two hundred men were left behind to look after their baggage: and they were part of the same body of men, linked together in the same common society: and were hindered by mere weariness from going to fight, which otherwise they would have done; and their will was accepted for the deed; and they were in the same common danger; for if the four hundred had been routed, their enemies would soon have cut them off.

This law may seem to have been ordained before by God himself in Numb. xxxi. Which if it were, it may be thought strange that David should not allege that law to quiet the present contention. But it is evident this was a very different case from that: for threescore thousand who stayed at home, had no more among them than the twelve thousand had who went to the battle, (ver. 27. of that chapter.) And what was then done was not ordained to be observed as a statute through all generations. This therefore was a new law, but perpetually continued to the time of the Maccabees; as appears from the second book of their history, chap. viii. ver. 28. 30. And Osiander observes, that it pleased the Romans to do the same, as Festus tells us. (See Josh. xxii. 8.) But the most ancient custom among the Romans was (as Godescalcus Stewechius shews at large, upon Vegetius de Re Militari, lib. ii. cap. 7.) to burn part of the spoils, as an offering to their

gods; and for the rest, sometimes the soldiers were permitted to keep what every man had got to himself: and sometimes, if the necessities of the commonwealth required, they were all brought to the quæstor, to be put into the public treasury. Out of those which every man kept to himself, they were wont, when they came home, to have some of them upon the posts of the gates to their houses: which it was lawful to remove when a house was sold to another man.

Ver. 26. *And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil to the elders of Judah, even to his friends.*] By this it seems plain, that he had reserved some part of the spoil to himself: out of which he made presents to his friends: some of which were of the best quality in the tribe of Judah.

Saying, Behold, a present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the Lord.] In the Hebrew, *a blessing for you*, &c. So he calls the *present*, because it was a token that he wished all prosperity to them: who had been kind to him in his banishment, and helped to maintain and protect him: and whom he was desirous still to oblige, that they might more readily receive him, when he had a right to take possession of the kingdom.

Ver. 27. *And to them which were in Beth-el.*] This seems to be the same place with that which is called Baalath and Kirjath-baal, Josh. xv. 9. 60.

And to them which were in South Ramoth.] A place in the tribe of Simeon, (Josh. xix. 8.) called *Ramoth in the south*, to distinguish it from Ramoth-Gilead, which lay northward. By which it appears he had other friends, who sometimes gave him shelter, or subsistence, besides those in his own tribe.

And to them which were in Jattir.] A town in the mountainous part of the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 48.)

Ver. 28. *And to them that were in Aroer*, &c.] Not that on the other side Jordan, (mentioned in Numb. xxxii.) but some other place, in the tribe of Judah, or some neighbouring tribe, where the other places here mentioned were: for we no where read, that David ever fled, during Saul's persecution, into the country beyond Jordan.

Ver. 29. *And to them which were in Rachal, and to them which were in the cities of the Jerahmeelites.*] These people lay on the south of Judah, (xxvii. 10.) where, it is likely, Rachal also was.

And to them that were in the cities of the Kenites.] Who were near to the Jerahmeelites, it appears from the forenamed place.

Ver. 30. *And to those that were in Hormah.*] This was a city in the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 30.) afterward given unto the tribe of Simeon, (Josh. xix. 4.)

And to them that were in Chor-ashan, and to them that were in Athach.] It is probable that these two places were also in the same tribe.

Ver. 31. *And to them which were in Hebron.*] Which was certainly a city of Judah: (Josh. xv. 54.) where David was first made king, and reigned over that tribe, (2 Sam. ii. 1, 2, &c.)

And to all the places where David and his men were wont to haunt.] Either to lurk among them, or to get provisions, or intelligence from them.

CHAP. XXXI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Philistines fought against Israel.*] *i. e.* Gave them battle: and as they began the quarrel, (xxix. 1.) so they seem to have begun the fight.

And the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa.] They fled thither from the valley of Jezreel, and were there slain in great numbers.

Ver. 2. *And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons.*] Who were the leaders of the army: which the Philistines thought would never rally again, if they were slain or taken.

And the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, Saul's sons.] It seems Ish-bosheth was not there, being no warlike man; or he escaped out of the battle by flight, as Abner and other great men did: or perhaps he was left at home to manage domestic affairs. Jonathan seems to have deserved a better fate: but the providence of God suffered him to be slain, that David might more easily come to the throne. For though he had freely consented to it, yet he was such a favourite of the people, that many of them might have stickled for him.

Ver. 3. *And the battle went sore against Saul.*] They pursued him so close, that there was no hope he could escape.

And the archers hit him; and he was sorely wounded of the archers.] In the Hebrew the words are, the archers *found him:* which signifies, in that language, to rush upon one on a sudden. Bows and arrows were the principal weapons of this nation; in the use of which they were very dexterous, and did terrible execution. Which is the reason, some think, that David, when he came to the throne, taught the Israelites the use of the bow, (as we read in the next book, chap. i. ver. 18.) that they might not be inferior to the Philistines, nor fall into the like disaster that Saul had done. And when he had made peace with the Philistines, he took some of their archers, with whom he was well acquainted, to be the keepers of his body: which are those so often mentioned in the following books, under the name of *Cherethites*, 2 Sam. viii. 18. xv. 18. xx. 7. 1 Kings i. 38. 44. 1 Chron. xviii. 17. in all which places, where the Hebrew hath the word *cerethi*, the Chaldee paraphrast interprets it *archers*. (See Bochartus, in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 15. p. 459.)

Ver. 4. *Then said Saul unto his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith.*] For though he had received many wounds, yet they were not mortal; at least, not for the present.

Lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me.] He was afraid they might put him to some ignominious death, or make sport with him, as they did with Samson.

But his armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid.] Dreaded to think of killing his king.

Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.] And killed himself, as appears by the next words.

Ver. 5. *And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.*] Some of the Jews think this was Doeg.

Ver. 6. *So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-*

bearer, and all his men, the same day together.] That is, all the men that attended upon his person.

Ver. 7. *And when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley.*] Of Jezreel.

And they that were on the other side Jordan.] Or rather on *this side Jordan;* for the Hebrew word signifies either side. And there was no occasion for those beyond Jordan to flee.

Saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled.] Being afraid, I suppose, to be carried captive.

And the Philistines came and dwelt in them.] The consternation being so great, that there were none to oppose them.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in Mount Gilboa.*] It was contrary to military discipline, presently to fall upon the spoil, which they did not till the next day.

And they cut off his head.] As David had done the head of Goliath.

And stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about.] They sent the news of this great victory; and perhaps his head and armour in token of it.

To publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people.] That they might give thanks to their gods for the victory they had obtained.

Ver. 10. *And they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth.*] As the sword of Goliath was laid up in the tabernacle.

And they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan.] To expose it, as we do the bodies of great malefactors, to public shame and reproach. And thus it appears, by ver. 12. they did with the bodies of his sons.

Ver. 11. *And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul.*] They lived on the other side Jordan; for the people on this side were fled.

Ver. 12. *All the valiant men arose, and went all night.*] To avoid discovery.

And took the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, from the wall of Beth-shan.] Which was a city in the tribe of Manasseh, not far from Jordan and the sea of Gennesaret: out of which the Manassites could not expel the old inhabitants, (Judg. i. 27.) To this place they of Jabesh might march in a night's time, and accomplish their design. Aristotle reports, in the fifth book of his Ethics (as Strigelius here observes), that the temples of the Graces were built in the very midst of the cities of the Greeks, that all men might be admonished to be grateful. Of which virtue the men of Jabesh-Gilead gave a most noble example: who, being delivered by Saul in the beginning of his reign from the Ammonites, when they were in danger to lose their eyes, (chap. xi.) now repay his care of them when he was dead, by not suffering his carcass to want the honour of burial.

And came to Jabesh, and burnt them there.] Some think they burnt their flesh, which was rotten and putrid: others, that they poured upon their flesh aromatic hot spices, such as Joseph ordered for the embalming of his father: or, as the Targum understands it, *they burnt upon,* or *over them.* Where Kimchi notes, that the paraphrast had respect to the custom delivered down from their ancestors, of burning the beds and other utensils of the dead upon their graves; or to the burning of spices. Certain it is, there was no such custom as this among the Jews, of burning the bodies of the dead. Though some think that these people imitated the heathenish custom, affecting singularity, as appears from the story of the Benjamites, Judg. xxi. 8. where we read, they alone would not come to the assembly of the whole nation. Such a singularity Gierus thinks they were now guilty of: and, therefore, in a parallel place to this, 1 Chron. x. 11. there is no mention made of this *burning:* either because it was an unwonted practice, or unworthy to be remembered.

Ver. 13. *And they took their bodies, and buried them under a tree in Jabesh.*] In this also there seems to be some of the superstition of the gentiles: among whom trees were accounted sacred things.

And fasted seven days.] Expressed great sorrow: of which this was a token. Lucian saith, in his book de Lucta, that the Greeks were wont in their funerals neither to eat nor drink for three days. But this is not to be so understood: but that they fasted for seven days together till the evening (as the manner of fasting was among the Jews), and eat nothing all day.

THE

SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass, after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites.*] The fight between Saul and the Philistines fell out, when David was in pursuit of the Amalekites.

And David had abode about two days in Ziklag.] Which it seems the Amalekites had not quite burnt; contenting themselves with the spoil.

Ver. 2. *It came even to pass on the third day.*] After his coming into Ziklag.

That, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head.] As the manner of deep mourners was. (See 1 Sam. iv. 4.)

And so it was, when he came to David, that he fell on the earth, and did obeisance.] Honoured him as his king.

Ver. 3. *And David said, From whence comest thou? And he said, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped.*] Some of the Jews have a conceit, that this was Doeg's son; of which, though there was no proof, yet the objection against it is of no value. For Doeg was an Edomite, and this person an Amalekite, which seems inconsistent with his being the son of Doeg. But it is to be considered, that all Amalekites were also Edomites: though all Edomites were not Amalekites. For Amalek was Esau's grandson, by his son Eliphaz, (Gen. xxxvi. 15, 16.)

Ver. 4. *And David said, How went the matter? I pray thee tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.*] He relates the matter very orderly; that first the Israelites were routed and fled; and then in the pursuit of them many were slain; and in conclusion, Saul and Jonathan his son. Which two he only mentions; thinking that David was principally concerned in them.

Ver. 5. *And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan are dead?*] He might easily know that the Israelites were beaten; but not so easily that these were in the number of the slain.

Ver. 6. *And the young man that told him, said, As I happened by chance upon Mount Gilboa.*] One would think by this, that he was not a soldier, but a countryman, who had occasion to go that way.

Behold, Saul leaned upon his spear.] Endeavouring to run it through his body.

And, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him.] So that he feared he should fall into their hands, before he could dispatch himself.

Ver. 7. *And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me: and I answered, Here am I.*] He looked round about him, to see if there were any near him of his servants.

Ver. 8. *And he said unto me, Who art thou? and I answered, I am an Amalekite.*] He did not dissemble his country, though he knew Saul had no reason to be a friend to it.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me.*] He would have him lean so hard upon him, with the whole weight of his body, that the spear might run through him; which he had not strength to make it do. This is not a likely story: for Saul, in all probability, would have been as unwilling to be killed by an Amalekite, as by a Philistine.

For anguish is come upon me.] The Hebrew word *schabatz* is variously translated. By some, *trembling;* by others, *convulsions;* by the LXX. σκότος, *darkness.* Kimchi saith it was a disease, which some say was the *cramp:* but in Scripture, as Braunius observes, (lib. i. de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr. cap. 17. sect. 9.) it never signifies any one of these things, but some ornament in a garment. And therefore our marginal translation is better, *my embroidered coat* hinders the spear from going far into my body: or his *coat of mail,* as Diodate translates it: for it consisted of little rings one within another, which made it hard to penetrate. And thus Ralbag among the Jews understands it.

Because my life is yet whole within me.] He was not mortally wounded.

Ver. 10. *So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure he could not live after he was fallen.*] This is contrary to what Saul said just before, that *his life was whole in him* (unless he meant that the Philistines would instantly come upon him and kill him), and it was as false that he slew him; for it appears by the foregoing relation, that Saul killed himself: and that not with a spear, but with his sword, (xxxi. 4.) But this the young man said to excuse himself, if David did not approve the fact.

And I took the crown that was on his head, and the bracelets that were on his arms, and have brought them hither unto my lord.] Saul was the first that had the ensigns of royal authority; for the judges had none; but were mere ministers of God (during his pleasure), who was their king and governor. And it is not likely that Saul wore his crown when he was in the fight (for that had been to set out himself a mark for the Philistines to shoot at), but it was carried along with him into the field, by some that attended him; to be ready to put on, if he had gotten the victory, and triumphed. The Jews think that Doeg, his armour-bearer, had it in his custody: who, before he killed himself, gave it to his son (this young Amalekite), and bade him carry it to David; hoping he might thereby ingratiate himself with him.

Ver. 11. *And David took hold of his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him.*] That is, all his attendants. Every one knows that this was a token of very great sorrow, and of a violent passion: which all nations used, as we learn from Homer, Herodotus, Virgil, and other ancient authors.

Ver. 12. *And they mourned and wept.*] The whole company made great lamentations, and shed many tears.

And fasted until even.] Till the evening sacrifice was offered: though Buxtorf (in his Synag. Judaica) thinks they abstained from all meat and drink till the stars appeared.

For Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.] He had great reason to mourn for Jonathan, who was his great friend; but some think he should have rejoiced to hear of Saul's death, who was his bitter enemy. But there were many reasons for his bewailing his death, as a public person, who was lately reconciled to him; and might possibly have returned to a better mind, if he had lived longer. However, the manner of his death very much affected him; and the more, because he heard perhaps of his being just before to consult a witch, and gave no tokens of his repentance. The Jews say, in both the Talmuds, that he mourned for Saul, as the prince of the great Sanhedrin; and for Jonathan, as the father of it. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 16. sect. 4.)

Ver. 13. *And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he said, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.*] He had told David once before who he was, in the relation he made of his discourse with Saul, (ver. 8.) But being astonished at the news, he did not attend unto that circumstance, or had forgot it. Besides, a good judge ought to examine things strictly, and not to trust unto the first answer.

Ver. 14. *And David said, How, wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thy hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?*]

Who, it is possible, might have recovered, and been carried off by some of his own men; the Philistines, by some extraordinary providence of God, being diverted from their pursuit. And it was the greater presumption of this young man to do it; since one of Saul's own servants durst not venture upon such a fact.

Ver. 15. *And David called one of the young men.*] One of the guards of his body.

And said unto him, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died.] There was a known law, that no man should be condemned out of the mouth of one witness: and the Jews tell us, that no judge was to sit alone, but to have some other joined with him: and that no man's testimony was to be taken against himself. But this was the singular prerogative of their kings, that they might alone hear any man's cause, and condemn him; and that out of the mouth of one witness, or from his own confession. Of which Maimonides gives this case of the Amalekite as an instance: which he looks upon as an extraordinary example, and as the king's process. (See Schickard, de Jure Regis, cap. 4. Theor. 14. and my notes upon Josh. vii. 25.) But after all, it looks something hard, that a man should be put to death for doing what Saul himself desired, and when he was sure (if this man said true) that he could not live. Abarbinel therefore thinks, that this man being an Amalekite, David supposed he might kill Saul out of revenge, for the slaughter he had made of his people.

Ver. 16. *And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head: for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the Lord's anointed.*] That is, thou art the cause of thy own death; or, the blood thou hast shed is the reason of thy death.

Ver. 17. *And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his son.*] He and his servants had lamented them before, (ver. 12.) but now David composed a song for a public and universal lamentation.

Ver. 18. *(Also he bade them teach the children of Judah.*] Among whom he now was; and over whom he first reigned. This comes in as a parenthesis between the former verse and what follows; to shew his early endeavours to promote the good of the people.

The use of the bow.] While he made lamentation for the dead, he did not neglect the care of the living: that they might be provided with better means to defend themselves. For they now looking upon him as the king God designed should rule over them, he ordered they should immediately learn the skill of using bows and arrows, in which the Philistines excelled them. (See what I have noted, 1 Sam. xxxi. 3.) Some indeed make this the title of the following song, which they were to sing among their military exercises: but the former seems a more natural interpretation; which Conradus Pellicanus proposed in the beginning of the Reformation. The Jews, saith he, hitherto used only slings and swords; but now were taught to shoot with bows and arrows: for it did not misbecome them to learn the art of defending themselves from infidels. And indeed the benefit of having good archers in an army is so great, that Cato took the pains to describe it in his book of Military Discipline, as Vegetius tells us: who says, that Scipio hoped for no success in Africa against the Numantines, "nisi in omnibus centuriis lectos sagittarios miscuisset," *unless he had mingled some choice archers with every company of soldiers, commanded by a centurion,* (lib. i. cap. 15.) And as this was done among the footmen, so in the next book he makes it the qualification of a captain of horse, "sagittas doctissime mittere," *to shoot arrows most skilfully,* (lib. ii. cap. 14.)

Behold, it is written in the book of Jasher).] That is, this order for teaching the children of Judah the use of the bow was more largely recorded there. But what book this was is very uncertain: yet Victorinus Strigelius adventures to say, "Haud dubie fuit historia ecclesiastica, qualis nunc est Eusebiana, aut Theodoretica:" *Without doubt it was an ecclesiastical history, like that which we now have of Eusebius or Theodoret.* (See my notes upon Josh. x. 13.) I should rather say, that *Jasher* signifying *right,* it was a book concerning the right art of making war: upon which subject the ancient Romans wrote many books: particularly Cato, Cornelius Celsus, Frontinus, and Paternus; which were abridged, as he himself tells us, by Vegetius de Re Militari, lib. i. cap. 8. Procopius Gazæus thinks these words declare, "Hanc historiam ex multis libris collectam esse;" *that this history was gathered out of many prophetical books.*

Ver. 19. *The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places.*] The flower of the nation; their choice young men: together with Saul and his sons.

How are the mighty fallen!] What a slaughter is made among the valiant men!

Ver. 20. *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon.*] The city Gath seems to have been the metropolis of the Philistines' country; and Askelon next to it. Where it was in vain to wish this might not be published: for it was done already. Therefore these are only expressions of great sadness and sorrow, that this overthrow should be published, which he could not but wish had never been heard of.

Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.] According to the manner of those countries; where the women celebrated, with songs and dances, the victory of the men over their enemies. (See Exod. xv. 1, &c. Judg. xi. 34.)

Ver. 21. *Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings.*] Fruitful fields, from whence offerings might be brought to the house of God. These are poetical expressions, from the common language of mankind: who are wont to speak with abhorrence of those places, and to curse them, where any calamity hath befallen their friends.

For there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away.] They were forced to throw away their shields, that they might run the faster away; which was a great disgrace to them.

The shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.] As if he had been a common soldier. So these words are generally interpreted, as spoken of Saul. But the words, *as though he had,* are not in the Hebrew; where there is only, *not anointed with oil:* which may as well relate to the *shield,* as the Jews interpret it, and thus explain it:—By the holy oil men were set apart for some great office; as that of priests, and sometimes kings. Now when any person, in a sudden danger of the state, was chosen to be captain-general of their army, they were wont to anoint him: that by this sight he might be animated to

fight the Lord's battles courageously. And such a person was called, *The anointed of war:* nay, sometimes (they say) their armour was anointed, to increase their confidence: just as the vessels of the tabernacle were which the priests used: unto which they think David alludes in these words. See Guil. Schickardus, cap. 1. Theor. 4. of his Jus Regium: where Carpzovius observes, that these words Isa. xxi. 9. favour this interpretation: and are alleged by Rasi and Ralbag, as parallel to this place. But he confesses he can find no where that their shields, or other warlike instruments, were anointed with holy oil, to make them fight with greater boldness.

Ver. 22. *From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back.*] By this it appears, that Jonathan was a very skilful archer (as perhaps some other great men were), though the common people were not trained up to the use of the bow. Which Jonathan so well managed, that as he always hit his mark, so his arrows pierced into the very entrails of the most mighty men.

And the sword of Saul returned not empty.] Always did great execution (as we now speak) upon those whom he fought withal.

Ver. 23. *Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives.*] Courteous and kind to their people: which is a great virtue in princes. To David, indeed, Saul expressed a great deal of ill nature: but that proceeded from Saul's jealousy, and fear that he would supplant his family, and place himself in the throne. And this highly advances the glory of David, that he commends his greatest enemy for what was praiseworthy in him: as Cæsar, they say, could not but shed some tears when Pompey's head was brought to him, though we read of nothing that he spake in his praise.

And in their death they were not divided.] Jonathan stuck close to his father in the battle; and demonstrated he was engaged in no conspiracy against him, as he had sometime charged him.

They were swifter than eagles.] In pursuing their enemies. For this, I have often observed, was a requisite quality in an excellent warrior: therefore, in the choice of soldiers, Vegetius saith, "Et velocitas requirenda est et robur;" *Both swiftness and strength were to be required,* (lib. i. de Re Militari, cap. 8.) The great advantages of being a swift runner, he enumerates in the next chapter.

They were stronger than lions.] In overthrowing their enemies, when they overtook them.

Ver. 24. *Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights; and put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.*] He would have the women bear a part in this lamentation over Saul, who adorned them with the rich spoils of their enemies. The word *other* before *delights* is not in the Hebrew; but the meaning seems to be, that they delighted in fine clothes, which they did not want while Saul lived. And *scarlet* was every where accounted the most precious colour: the emperor's mantle being of scarlet, as Braunius observes, lib. i. cap. 15. de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr.

Ver. 25. *How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thy high places!*] Of his own country, which he valiantly defended.

Ver. 26. *I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me.*] His grief was as great for his death, as the pleasure had been which he took in his company while he lived.

Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.] No less ardent, sincere, and sweet, than the highest conjugal affection. Which ought to be (as Strigelius here glosses) ardent without simulation, sincere without any suspicions, and sweet without morosity or disdain.

Ver. 27. *How are the mighty fallen.*] This is repeated three times in this song: being an interlocutory verse.

And the weapons of war perished!] All military glory gone from Israel.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, that after this David inquired of the Lord.*] By Abiathar the high-priest, as he had often done before, (1 Sam. xxvi. 9. and other places.)

Saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?] Which was his own tribe, where he had most friends; and therefore it was proper, he thought, to address himself to them, who were best affected to him. But though he had a right to the kingdom by God's designation, yet he would not enter into possession, nor take upon him the administration of affairs, without God's advice and direction.

And the Lord said, Go up.] He approved of his going up into that tribe; and thereby gave him hope of success.

And he said, Whither shall I go up?] He asked these questions distinctly, as the Jews say the manner was to do, and not two questions at once. (See upon 1 Sam. xxiii. 11. and see what I have further noted, xxx. 8.)

And he said, Unto Hebron.] Which was a principal city in that tribe; and in the middle of it: where the people might more conveniently and easily resort to him, than in Ziklag. Which was his own town by the gift of Achish, and at first in the lot of Judah. (See 1 Sam. xxvii. 6.)

Ver. 2. *So David went up thither, he and his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail, Nabal's wife, the Carmelite.*] Who being hitherto companions in his troubles, were now advanced to be partakers of his prosperity. This Theogena the wife of Agathocles (as Strigelius observes) made the character of a good wife, who in marriage enters into society with a husband, in all things, both good and evil.

Ver. 3. *And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household.*] He took care to provide for his followers, and their families, according to every one's merit. But this, it is likely, was not done till he was settled: for to go up with so many armed men, had been to frighten them into compliance.

And they dwelt in the cities of Hebron.] Which was given to the priests to be a city of refuge, (Josh. xxi. 11, 12.) and therefore could not contain all David's followers; but only him and his court. The rest were disposed of in the cities depending upon Hebron.

Ver. 4. *And the men of Judah came.*] The principal persons, who represented the rest.

And there they anointed David king.] Who had been anointed privately by Samuel some time ago; but that was only a designation of him to the kingdom: into which he was now solemnly inaugurated by this public unction.

Over the house of Judah.] Who would not presume to

know the sense of all Israel: though they hoped they would follow this example; as they afterward did, and anointed him again, (chap. v. ver. 3.)

And they told David, That the men of Jabesh-Gilead were they who had buried Saul.] Which it seems he had not heard of while he was in Ziklag; but now (by some discourse about Saul's death) that noble action was related to him; which is recorded, to their honour, in 1 Sam. xxxi. 11—13.

Ver. 5. *And David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-Gilead, saying, Blessed be ye of the Lord, that ye have shewed this kindness to your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him.*] This demonstrates, both the great piety and the great prudence of David. For he testified the true kindness he had for Saul, though his virulent enemy: and by wishing so heartily the men of Jabesh might be rewarded for what they had done, he invited them (who were Israelites on the other side of Jordan) to own him for their king.

Ver. 6. *Now the Lord shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing.*] He doth not content himself merely with praying God to reward them (which he repeats again), but promises that he would take care of them, by defending them from the Philistines, if they should offer to invade them, for entering their country without leave, and taking from thence the trophies of their victory.

Ver. 7. *Now, therefore, let your hands be strong, and be ye valiant.*] As they had been to a high degree, (1 Sam. xxxi. 12.)

For your master, Saul, is dead.] Or, *though your master, Saul, be dead.*

And also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.] He would not have them discouraged, because they wanted one to head them; for he, being invested with the royal dignity by the tribe of Judah, would look upon himself as bound to protect them also: though they had not owned him for their sovereign.

Ver. 8. *But Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host.*] A man of the greatest authority in Israel, after Saul was dead, being general of all their forces.

Took Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul.] Called Esh-Baal, 1 Chron. viii. 33. as there are several other names which end indifferently, either in *Bosheth*, or *Baal*. For instance, Gideon is called Jerubbaal, Judg. ix. 1. and Jerubbesheth, 2 Sam. xi. 21. and Mephibosheth is called Meribbaal, 1 Chron. viii. 34. For *Bosheth* signifies *shame* and *confusion;* and Baal being an infamous idol, the Holy Scripture makes these names end promiscuously either in *Baal*, or *Bosheth*, or *Besheth*.

And brought him over.] The river Jordan.

To Mahanaim.] A place in the tribe of Gad, (Josh. xiii. 26.) So called from the appearance of a host of angels to Jacob, as he came to Padan-Aram, with his household, (Gen. xxxii. 1.) Here Abner thought he might most securely do what follows, being at a distance from David, under whom he could not promise himself that command and authority, which he hoped to maintain under Ish-bosheth.

Ver. 9. *And he made him king over Gilead.*] Over all the tribes on the other side Jordan; which are comprehended under this name.

And over the Ashurites.] The Chaldee paraphrast understands hereby, the tribe of Asher; who, though remote from Mahanaim, were forward to acknowledge him.

And over Jezreel.] A large and noble valley, on the borders of Zebulun, Issachar, and Naphtali: who are all comprehended under this word.

And over Ephraim, and over Benjamin.] Under whom the Simeonites are comprehended.

And over all Israel.] All the tribes on this side Jordan, save the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 10. *Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign.*] Therefore he was born that very year in which Saul was made king; for he reigned forty years, as St. Paul tells us, Acts xiii. 21.

And reigned two years.] Before there was any hostility between him and David. So Ralbag expounds it, who makes this cohere with ver. 12. it being a mere fancy of the Jews, in Seder Olam Rabba, that the throne was vacant, and there was no king in Israel for five years. Victorinus Strigelius's conjecture is far better; who, after he had given the foregoing interpretation of Ralbag, adds, that after the war broke out between David and Ish-bosheth, and David waxed stronger and stronger, (iii. 1.) Ish-bosheth being an unactive prince, and unfit to command, Abner took the administration of the government upon himself, and managed the war the other five years which passed before David came to the throne of Israel. These five years the Scripture doth not reckon as a part of Ish-bosheth's reign; because he had the mere name of a king, but no authority at all.

But the house of Judah followed David.] Stuck close to him, and were entirely at his command.

Ver. 11. *And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.*] So long, therefore, Ish-bosheth reigned over Israel. Unless we will suppose, either that the Israelites were five years deliberating whether he or Mephibosheth should be king (whose right it was by the laws of succession), or that he reigning two years immediately after the death of Saul, they were five years deliberating whether they should own David or not: neither of which is probable, as Ralbag thinks; who judiciously observes, that those words, *he reigned two years*, are to be joined with ver. 12. *And Abner, the son of Ner, went out*, &c. That is, saith he, the two first years of his reign there was no war between the house of Saul and David: and there had been no open war, if Abner had not been the author of it, &c.

Ver. 12. *And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul.*] The principal officers about the king.

Went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.] They passed over Jordan into the country of Benjamin, where Gibeon was, (Josh. xviii. 25.) to fight with Judah, and to bring them into the obedience of Saul's son. It is observable, that David did not begin any hostility; but waited to see how God would dispose things in his favour.

Ver. 13. *And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out.*] To oppose the designs of the Israelites; for Joab was the chief commander of David's forces; whom the principal officers of his household attended.

And they met together by the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool.] The two armies faced one an-

other (as we now speak), being parted only by the pool that was between them.

Ver. 14. *And Abner said unto Joab.*] I suppose David had commanded Joab not to begin the quarrel, but only stand upon his defence. For he had sworn to Saul, that he would not cut off his seed; and therefore would not willingly engage against Ish-bosheth, (1 Sam. xxiv. 21.)

Let the young men arise, and play before us.] He desires that some soldiers might be picked out from the rest, and make the two armies sport, as the gladiators were wont to do in aftertimes among the Romans: whereby also they might make a trial of their courage and strength. So Josephus saith, Abner was desirous to learn, πότερος αὐτῶν ἀνδρειοτέρους στρατιώτας ἔχῃ, *which of they two had the bravest soldiers.*

Ver. 15. *Then there arose, and went over.*] The pool of Gibeon.

Twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ish-bosheth the son of Saul.] They still were forward to begin the hostility; and Abner chose this number out of Benjamin, for the honour (I suppose) of his own tribe, and because they were a valiant sort of people, as appears by the story in Judg. xx.

And twelve of the servants of David.] Whose valour, no doubt, had been tried in other exploits.

Ver. 16. *And they caught every man his fellow.*] That is, the servants of David, last mentioned, caught each of them every one of the Benjamites that was his opposite.

By the head.] That is, by the hair of his head, which they wore very long in those days.

And thrust his sword in his fellow's side.] That is, David's men killed every one of the Benjamites with whom they were engaged: so, some say, Josephus understood it; though I can find no such thing in him.

So they fell down together.] All the twelve men of Benjamin fell down dead together.

Therefore was the place called Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon.] The Hebrew words signify, *the field of strong men;* as hard and firm as a rock.

Ver. 17. *And there was a very sore battle that day.*] The men of Israel, enraged at the loss of their valiant men, maintained a furious fight the rest of that day.

And Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David.] But still success followed the men of Judah.

Ver. 18. *And there were three sons of Zeruiah there.*] She was David's sister: and therefore these were his nephews.

Joab, Abishai, and Asahel.] All three very valiant men, and great commanders, as appears from 1 Chron. xxvii. 7. where the last of them is mentioned as one of David's twelve captains over four-and-twenty thousand men. (See also chap. xi. 26. of that book.)

And Asahel was as light of foot as a wild roe.] I noted in the foregoing chapter, and in other places, that to be swift of foot to pursue an enemy, was a quality highly esteemed in warriors. And therefore Plato, I remember, would have this to be one of the exercises wherein youth should be trained up, *viz. racing:* Ἔστι γοῦν πάντων πολεμικώτατον ἡ σώματος ὀξύτης πάντας· ἡ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ποδῶν, ἡ δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν χειρῶν, &c. (lib. viii. De Leg. p. 852. edit. Serrani.)

Ver. 19. *And Asahel pursued after Abner.*] Being desirous of the glory, either of taking or killing the greatest man in Israel.

And in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left from following Abner.] Nothing could turn him aside to pursue any other design: but he went right forward, having Abner only in his eye.

Ver. 20. *Then Abner looked behind him, and said, Art thou Asahel? And he answered, I am.*] He speaks to him civilly, having no mind to kill him.

Ver. 21. *And Abner said unto him, Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take his armour.*] That he might not return without some spoil, he bids him take one of his attendants, his arms and all; and be content with this glory of carrying away such a prisoner. Thus Kimchi expounds it. Others think he bids him try his valour upon one of his servants, and disarm him, and not venture to encounter him, who was an old soldier.

But Asahel would not turn aside from following him.] Being possessed with a vain desire, of more glory than it was reasonable to expect.

Ver. 22. *And Abner said again to Asahel, Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how shall I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?*] Who was a fierce man, and he knew would study revenge.

Ver. 23. *Howbeit he refused to turn aside: so Abner, with the hinder end of his spear, smote him under the fifth rib, that the spear came out behind him.*] Pierced quite through his liver and bowels. (See xx. 10.) So R. Johannes, in the Gemara Sanhedrin, cap. 6. sect. 7. saith the fifth rib is the place where the liver and the gall are seated.

And he fell down there, and died in the same place.] He died immediately upon the spot (as we speak), not being able to go so much as one step further. So dangerous it is to confide in a man's own natural strength, or to refuse offers of peace, or despise a flying enemy, as Pellicanus here observes. The old saying was, "If an enemy fly, make way for him."

And it came to pass, that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died stood still.] Ceased the pursuit: fearing perhaps the same fate; or that Asahel's body should be exposed to any indignity.

Ver. 24. *Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner; and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that lieth before Giah, by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon.*] They were not so nimble as Asahel, and therefore could not overtake Abner: yet so furious, that the death of Asahel could not stop them till they came to this place.

Ver. 25. *And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together to Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the top of a hill.*] Some of this tribe, of which Abner was, and who were valiant people, as I observed before, rallied, as we now speak; and stood in a body, as if they would renew the fight.

Ver. 26. *And Abner called to Joab.*] Who was on the top of another hill, (ver. 24.)

And said, Shall the sword devour for ever?] There ought to be a measure set to our anger: which ought to go down with the sun, as the apostle speaks.

Knowest thou not that it must be bitterness in the end?] In civil wars, as Cicero speaks (in his fourth book of his familiar Epistles), all things are miserable, and nothing more miserable than victory itself: which makes the con-

queror do many things against his will, to satisfy those by whom he conquers. Therefore he saith in another place, "Extremum omnium malorum est belli civilis victoria;" *victory in a civil war is the greatest of all evils.* Such was this; as he puts him in mind in the next words, that they who killed one another were brethren.

How long shall it be ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?] They were all descended from one common father: and all worshipped one and the same God.

Ver. 27. *And Joab said, As God liveth, unless thou hadst spoken, surely then in the morning the people had gone up every one from following his brother.*] He wishes he had been of this mind in the morning; for then there had been no fighting at all, if he had not desired it, (ver. 14.) So Dr. Lightfoot paraphrases this verse, *If thou hadst not said what thou didst in the morning* (Let the young men arise, and play before us), *surely the people had gone every one from his brother; and there had been never a blow struck, but that thou didst provoke it.*

Ver. 28. *So Joab blew the trumpet.*] Caused a retreat to be sounded.

And all the people stood still, and followed after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.] Neither at that time, nor any other.

Ver. 29. *And Abner and his men walked all that night through the plain, and passed over Jordan.*] They made all the haste they could home: being fearful to trust themselves near to the army that had beaten them.

And went through all Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim.] Some think by Bithron is meant the mountain of Bethor, mentioned Cantic. ii. 15.

Ver. 30. *And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together.*] Returning from the pursuit, every one resorted to the company to which he belonged.

There lacked of the servants of David nineteen men and Asahel.] This is an argument that the twelve men of Judah, who began the fight in a combat with as many of Benjamin, were not killed: for if they were, then there would have been no more than seven men killed in the battle: which is not probable.

Ver. 31. *And the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, so that three hundred and threescore men died.*] This loss was not great in itself: for it is likely David had given order his men should be as sparing as they could, in killing their brethren; who were, he knew, to be his subjects.

Ver. 32. *And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which was in Beth-lehem.*] I think Josephus takes this right: who saith, Joab and his men lodged all night in the place of battle, and buried their dead; and then next morning carried Asahel to be buried among his ancestors.

And Joab and his men went all night.] Having buried Asahel, they marched all the next night towards Hebron.

And they came to Hebron at break of day.] Where they gave David an account of all this action.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *NOW there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David.*] Their enmity continuing throughout the whole reign of Ish-bosheth, it is likely there were many bickerings and skirmishes between Israel and Judah; but no pitched battle that we read of. The contrary rather seems to be affirmed in the foregoing chapter, ver. 28.

But David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul weaker and weaker.] In all their rencounters (as we now speak) David had the better: and it is likely many of the Israelites fell off to him: which very much added to his strength, and weakened the house of Saul.

Ver. 2. *And unto David were sons born in Hebron.*] He had no children it seems during his exile: or, if he had, they were daughters.

His first-born was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess.] She was his wife before Abigail, and brought forth his first-born son: who proved a great affliction to him.

Ver. 3. *And his second, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.*] Of whom we have no further account any where: only he is called Daniel in 1 Chron. iii. 1. And the Hebrew doctors give this reason of both names: He called him, say they, when he was born, Daniel (which was his *fundamental*, that is, his primary name), because, said he, *God hath judged* or *vindicated* me from Nabal. And afterward he called him Chileab, as much as to say, *like to his father:* because in his countenance he resembled David. And this he did, for this reason, to silence the mockers of that age: who said Abigail had conceived by Nabal, whose son this was. For the confuting of which calumny, God was pleased to order that the fashion of his face should be perfectly like to David's.

And the third, Absalom, the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur.] We read of the Geshurites in the foregoing book, (xxvii. 8.) upon whom, it is there said, David made an inroad; and brought away this fair captive, a little before Saul's death. And when he came to Hebron, and she was sufficiently instructed and prepared to be a proselyte, he made her his wife. Thus the Jews tell the story: which doth not seem to be true, because it is said in that invasion he slew all the women. We must look therefore for other Geshurites, whom we find in the north, as the forenamed were in the south. (See Deut. iii. 14. Josh. xii. 5.) How David came by the daughter of the king of these people, it is not easy to tell. Perhaps he thought it policy to make a friend of the king of Geshur, who lay near to Ish-bosheth, and might be a curb to him, and give him a diversion, if he attempted any thing against Judah: and therefore married his daughter.

Ver. 4. *The fourth, Adonijah, the son of Haggith: the fifth, Shephatiah, the son of Abital.*] Of the former of these, we read in the beginning of the next book, how his ambition led him to destruction (as Absalom's did), but nothing of the other.

Ver. 5. *The sixth, Ithream, by Eglah, David's wife.*] This only being called his wife (though the rest were so likewise) hath led the Jews into an opinion, that Michal, who was his first wife, is here called Eglah: because she was a lovely woman, in whom he much delighted, when he first married her. It is said, indeed, in vi. 23. *she had no child until the day of her death:* but the meaning of that is, she was barren after she had taunted David for dancing before the ark; not that she never had a child before that time.

These were born to David in Hebron.] During the six

years and a half that he reigned there. I do not know what weight there is in the observation of Conradus Pellicanus on this place, but leave it to the judgment of the reader: God so dispensed things, that men in those days, of many wives, seldom produced many children, "quasi natura reclamante rei indignitatem," *as if nature abhorred the indignity of the thing*, and approved the conjunction of one man with one woman. He did well to say *seldom*; for we read of one who had threescore and ten sons by many wives (*viz.* Gideon), though they came to nothing.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul.*] Went up and down through all the tribes of Israel, to strengthen his interest, and confirm them in their allegiance to Ish-bosheth: as the same Pellicanus expounds it.

Ver. 7. *And Saul had a concubine, whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Ajah.*] By whom he had two sons, (xxi. 8.)

And Ish-bosheth said to Abner, Why hast thou gone in to my father's concubine?] The Jews look upon it as a very great crime for any man, though never so great, to marry the widow of the king: for it was esteemed an affectation of the kingdom; as appears in the case of Adonijah. Therefore Ish-bosheth had reason to be angry with Abner, though he was so unseasonably.

Ver. 8. *Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth.*] He was grown so haughty, and thought his merit so great, that he thought he might do any thing without reprehension.

And said, Am I a dog's head.] He thought Ish-bosheth used him not as a captain of the host of Israel, but as if he had been a keeper of dogs. So the word *head* signifies, as the Jews generally explain it. Rasi for instance; *I am treated as if I was a commander that hath only the custody of dogs.* To the same purpose Kimchi: and R. Esaias more largely (as Bochart observes), *When I am leader of all Israel, thou hast cast contempt upon me, as if I was only set over a company of dogs.* So the Syriac here translates *dog* in the plural: *captain of a pack of dogs.* Which was a vile employment, because a dog is generally accounted the vilest animal, (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 56.)

Which against Judah do shew kindness this day to the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David.] He insolently reckons up his great services to him and to his family, when he could have ruined him, if he had pleased, by making David king, as easily as he had done him.

That thou chargest me with a fault concerning this woman?] He upbraids him with ingratitude, in taking notice of such a small fault (as he accounted it) of lying with Rizpah. For, as Peter Martyr thinks, he did not intend to have her for his wife; but used her as his harlot.

Ver. 9. *So do God to Abner, and more also, except, as the Lord hath sworn to David, even so I do to him.*] These words shew he knew very well God had unalterably resolved to bestow the kingdom of Israel upon David; and yet his ambition led him hither to oppose not only David, but the Lord himself.

Ver. 10. *To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel, and over Judah, from Dan even to Beer-sheba.*] A wonderful change! which the study of revenge wrought in him: that he who lately went about the country, confirming the Israelites in their opposition to David, now resolved to bring them all over to him. "Such is the genius of many great courtiers, who are irritated upon slight occasions: and rather rule over kings, than are ruled by them." They are the words of Conradus Pellicanus.

Ver. 11. *And he could not answer Abner again; because he feared him.*] He was afraid to provoke him to a higher degree, by answering him again: and therefore now was silent when it was too late.

Ver. 12. *And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf.*] Having thus incensed his master, he thought it not safe to delay the execution of what he had threatened. Yet thought it neither safe nor prudent to go himself to David, until he tried his inclinations by messengers, whom he privately sent to treat with him.

Saying, Whose is the land?] This was as much as to say, that he owned him to be lord of all the country, by God's special gift.

Saying also, Make thy league with me, and, behold, my hand shall be with thee, to bring about all Israel to thee.] He desires all enmities might be forgotten, and that David would make a league of friendship with him: and then he undertook, having a great power over Israel, to make them all his subjects.

Ver. 13. *And he said, Well, I will make a league with thee.*] He soon agreed to the motion; with which he could not but be well pleased. But some think he did ill, to make a league with such a wicked man; especially since he did not inquire of God, whether he should do it or not. But this is more than any body can tell; for many things were done that are not recorded.

But one thing I require of thee, that is, Thou shalt not see my face except thou first bring Michal, Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face.] This was a very reasonable condition, if Abner was able to effect it; both upon David's own account and hers: for she was his first and beloved wife; and she was by force given to another man: who could not lawfully enjoy her; David having given her no bill of divorce. And therefore Phalti, the Jews think, being a good man, never knew her: (as I observed on the foregoing book, xxv. 44.) so that she lived unhappy, in a double state of separation, from David and from her present husband. There was something of policy also in this demand; that he might ingratiate himself with the Israelites, by shewing great love to the house of Saul.

Ver. 14. *And David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, saying.*] We do not read what answer Abner gave to David, when he required the forenamed condition of him. But it is probable he let David know, as the truth was, that it was not in his power to bring Michal without Ish-bosheth's consent, whose sister as well as subject she was: at least, it was not safe to attempt it; and therefore he advised him to send to her brother, who could not easily deny what he desired: which Abner also, it is likely, undertook to represent as a most just demand.

This counsel of Abner David followed, and it had the success he wished.

Deliver me my wife Michal, which I espoused to me for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.] Whom he purchased of Saul with the hazard of his life.

Ver. 15. *And Ish-bosheth sent, and took her from her husband.*] He is called *her husband*, says the Gemara Sanhedrin, (cap. 7. sect. 2.) because he loved her with a conjugal affection: though he did not enjoy her. This was an honourable action of Ish-bosheth, to restore David his lawful wife: like to which Strigelius here notes in several great men. Particularly in the famous Scipio, who restored Allucius's wife to him, who had been taken by his soldiers: and Pausanius, general of the Lacedemonians; who, after the fight at Platea, sent Coa, who was a captive, unto her relations.

Even from Phaltiel the son of Laish.] Called Phalti in 1 Sam. xxv. 44. The word *el* is here added, say the Jews, because God interposed all the time he had her to keep them from sin. For he put a sword between Michal and him when he went to bed to her, signifying he should be cut off if he lay with her. Kimchi and Ralbag follow this fancy of the Talmudists: but others dislike it, and think that David had given her a bill of divorce. Unto which he being compelled by Saul's violence, and not doing it willingly, they think it was null; and that David might lawfully take her again, though Phalti had enjoyed her. But Abarbinel confutes both these opinions, and thinks that Saul was not so impious as to take a wife from her husband, and give her to another: nor David in such need of a wife as to send for Michal, if she had lived in wedlock with another man. And therefore he observes, that Saul is not said (in 1 Sam. xxv. 44.) to *give her to wife* unto Phalti, but only *to give her:* that is, to commit her to his care and custody in the absence of her husband, that she might live virtuously, and not follow after David. For he supposes Phalti to have been an old, grave, and pious man, who might be trusted with her, as he was with the children of Merab, the other daughter of Saul, who sent them to Phalti to be educated, and to bear Michal company. As for his being called *her husband* (in this verse and the next), he observes the word is not *baalah*, but only *ishah*, which is used, he saith, for one that is the keeper and overseer of another person.

Ver. 16. *And her husband went with her along weeping behind her to Bahurim.*] Being very loath to part with her company, which was delightful to him.

Then said Abner unto him, Return. And he returned.] Abner intended to have the honour of presenting her unto the king: and would not have the old man appear to disturb their meeting with his tears.

Ver. 17. *And Abner.*] Having seen David, and given him assurance of his fidelity, as David him of his friendship.

Had communication with the elders of Israel, saying.] Went back to persuade all to do as he had done: and by bringing over the great men to David, he doubted not the multitude would follow.

Ye sought for David in times past to be king over you.] For after the slaughter of Goliath he was very gracious in the eyes of all the people, and was much beloved by them, (1 Sam. xviii. 5. 16.) And when he was forced to fly, a great many of Israel came over to him while he dwelt at Ziklag: of the Benjamites, 1 Chron. xii. 2, &c. and the Gadites, ver. 8, 9, &c. and the Manassites, ver. 19, &c. and after he came to Hebron more went over to him out of all the tribes of Israel, ver. 23. and the following part of that chapter. And it is highly probable, that as soon as Saul and Jonathan were dead, they all generally inclined to make David their king: if Abner, by his great authority, had not set up one of the family of Saul.

Ver. 18. *Now then do it.*] Fulfil your own desires and intentions.

For the Lord hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies.] We no where read these words recorded; but, it is likely, Samuel had often spoken them: if not at length, yet they are included in the words of God to Samuel, when he commanded him to anoint David king over Israel; (1 Sam. x. 1. 12.) for this was the intention of giving them a king, that he might fight their battles, (1 Sam. viii. 29.)

Ver. 19. *And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin.*] Where he had more interest than among the rest, being of that tribe: whom it was necessary to take some pains withal to gain their affection to David. Therefore he seems to have spoken, not only with their elders, but to have gone through the several families in the tribe: who were much devoted to the house of Saul, and had stuck close to it; and were the first that attempted any thing against David, (ii. 15.)

And Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel.] He went and reported to David privately the sense of all the people.

And that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin.] Particularly he related how all Benjamin stood affected to him: whom he brought over so effectually, that they never forsook the house of David when all the rest of the tribes did.

Ver. 20. *And Abner came to David in Hebron, and twenty men with him.*] Now he appeared publicly, and declared himself for David.

And David made Abner, and the men that were with him, a feast.] Not merely as a token of kindness, but to make a league with him, (as he had desired, and David promised, ver. 12, 13.) Into which it had been an ancient custom to enter by eating and drinking together, Gen. xxvi. 30. xxxi. 44. and other places.

Ver. 21. *And Abner said, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel together unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee.*] He intended to bring all the chief men of Israel to own him for their king, as he had done; and promise to be his faithful subjects: which he knew he could effect, because they had already declared their mind in the private conferences he had had with them, (ver. 17, &c.)

That thou mayest reign over all that thy heart desireth.] That is, over all the tribes of Israel.

And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.] They parted as good friends do, with wishes of all happiness on both sides.

Ver. 22. *And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a troop, and brought a great spoil with them.*] In those times of distraction between Judah and Israel, we may well think their neighbours, who were enemies to both, the Philistines, Edomites, Moabites, and others, made many inroads upon the country to get spoil. When Joab and the great men about David watched, and at this time had overtaken them, in their return home, and recovered a great booty from them

But Abner was not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.] Though Abner

was not there when Joab returned victorious, yet he seems to be but just gone a little way out of the city, (ver. 26.)

Ver. 23. *And when Joab and all the host that were with him were come.*] That is, the captains of the host, or principal officers, were come to give an account of their success.

They told Joab, saying, Abner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.] Some officious courtiers informed him of what had passed in his absence: as it is likely they were wont to do of all that the king did. For he that commanded all the forces, had in effect every body else at his command.

Ver. 24. *Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone?*] He chides the king, as if he did not understand his own interest; but was to be taught by him. Which high presumption he was constrained to endure, because of his great power with the military men.

Ver. 25. *Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out, and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.*] It is likely that Joab himself did not believe, that Abner came with a design only to learn how David's affairs stood, and to make his advantage of it: but he would have David believe so, that he might have the better colour for his wicked design of dispatching Abner.

Ver. 26. *And when Joab was gone out from David.*] He seems to have gone out in a huff; not staying for an answer.

He sent messengers after Abner.] In the king's name, I suppose, as if he had something further to communicate to him: for otherwise it is not credible that Abner would have returned.

And brought him back from the well of Sirah.] It is not certain where this well was: but it is probable not far from Hebron. Josephus saith, twenty furlongs distant from thence.

But David knew it not.] Gave him no such order, as he pretended.

Ver. 27. *And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab.*] Who waited for him at the entrance of the city.

Took him aside in the gate.] Which being a public place, where men met to do business, and where the courts of judgment sat, it made Abner suspect no danger.

To speak with him quietly.] Especially since he took him by the hand in a friendly manner, to have some discourse with him.

And smote him under the fifth rib, that he died.] Immediately, without speaking a word. (See the foregoing chapter, ver. 23.)

For the blood of Asahel his brother.] This was one reason; but the chief was, his fear that Abner would overtop him, if he brought all Israel to submit to David; being a man longer versed in military affairs than himself; and who had governed Israel in the time of Saul's distraction, and since Ish-bosheth was made king by him. So Josephus: He was afraid lest Abner should receive from David, *πρώτην τάξιν, the highest place above himself.* Upon which he makes this reflection, *ὁσάκι πηλίκα*, &c. *What will not men dare to do, who are covetous, ambitious, and will be inferior to none, for to obtain what they desire? They will commit a thousand crimes: and rather than lose what they have got, they will not fear still to commit greater wickednesses.*

Ver. 28. *And afterward, when David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the Lord for ever from the blood of Abner the son of Ner.*] He lifted up his hands to God (as Josephus explains it), and with a loud voice cried out publicly, that God knew he was innocent in this matter: and therefore trusted he would not let him and his kingdom suffer for it.

Ver. 29. *Let it rest on the head of Joab.*] The guilt and punishment lie upon him; who was the sole committer of this murder.

And on all his father's house.] His indignation at the fact seems to have transported him too far; making him wish all Joab's family might suffer for it: which was against the law of God, (Deut. xxiv. 16.) that children should not suffer for their father's sin. It may be looked upon, therefore, as a prophetical prediction, rather than as a private imprecation: or as words spoken in a great passion; which made him think the punishment could not be too sore, or too lasting, for so horrid a crime. In the guilt of which Joab endeavoured to involve the king, by sending for Abner back in the king's name (as Josephus takes it), and so might be thought to have killed him by his order.

And let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue.] Which was such a very noisome disease, that, by the law of the Jews, it made the very bed on which a man, that had it, lay, or the seat on which he sat, unclean. In short, he was no less abominable among them than a menstruous woman. (See Lev. xv.)

Or that is a leper.] How filthy he was accounted, see Lev. xiii. where by the law he was secluded from all society.

Or that leaneth on a staff.] By reason of some great weakness, or lameness: having the gout, as Pellicanus takes it.

Or that falleth on the sword.] This, in our language, signifies *that maketh away himself.*

Or that lacketh bread.] Is a beggar, and ready to starve.

Ver. 30. *So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.*] It seems Abishai was near at hand, ready to assist in the murder; if there had been any need of his help.

Ver. 31. *And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him.*] To the whole court.

Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner.] These were all outward expressions of very great sorrow: which Joab himself was forced to make a show of.

And David himself followed the bier.] Was the chief mourner. In which the Jews think David's passion made him again exceed his bounds: for Maimonides saith, it was not lawful, by their constitutions, for a king to accompany a dead corpse to the grave; but he ought to mourn at home. This is their doctrine in Sanhedrin, cap. 2. sect. 13. and the Gemara there, cap. 2. n. 5. (See Cocceius's Annotations.) But a famous writer among them (Mikotzi) saith it was indifferent: the king might do as David did, if he pleased: for which he quotes R. Jehuda. Therefore, though perhaps it was not commonly done, yet David, to purge himself from all suspicion of this crime, and to shew his extreme great grief for it, thought fit to do Abner this

public honour. (See Guil. Schickardus, in his Jus Regium, cap. 4. Theor. 13.)

The word we here translate *the bier*, is, in the original, *the bed:* on which persons of quality were wont to be carried forth to their graves, as ordinary people were upon that which we call a *bier*. And kings were sometimes carried out upon beds very richly adorned; as Josephus tells us Herod was, in the latter end of his first book of the Jewish Wars, Κλίνη μὲν ὁλόχρυσος, &c. *The bed was all gilded, set with precious stones, and a purple cover curiously wrought*, &c.

It is but a fancy that they were wont to follow the *bier*, and not to go before it: to signify that they looked upon their dead friends not as lost, but only gone before them, "Præmissi, non amissi," as Seneca speaks.

Ver. 32. *And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept.*] By this it appears he was buried in pomp, and with a long train of people attending his corpse, as there did the widow's son in Luke vii. 14. When they came to the grave, and laid the corpse there, it was the custom to make great and loud lamentations; which are sometimes called *howlings* in the prophetical language. And commonly before the word *weeping*, there is mention in Scripture of *lifting up the voice* in doleful cries. This is as ancient as Abraham's time; (Gen. xxi. 16.) and we find Joseph weeping so loud, upon a different occasion, that all the house of Pharaoh heard him, (Gen. xlv. 2. 14, 15.) The forms of lamentation are noted by the prophets, (Jer. xxii. 18. Micah v. 16.)

Ver. 33. *And the king lamented over Abner, saying.*] Josephus looks upon what follows as a kind of epitaph upon Abner, whom David buried magnificently, as he speaks, Θάψας δ' αὐτὸν μεγαλοπρεπῶς καὶ ἐπιταφίους συγγραψάμενος ᾠδήνους, &c.

Died Abner as a fool dieth?] By a *fool* in Scripture is often meant a wicked man, a malefactor; and so the sense, according to this translation, is, Did he die by the hand of justice, for some notorious crime committed by him? Or, Did he die by his own folly? No such matter. But the words may be translated out of the Hebrew, *How like a fool died Abner?* Or, *Should Abner have died like a fool?* That is, what pity is it, that such a valiant man should die on this fashion! By treachery, without any power to defend himself.

Ver. 34. *Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters.*] He was not a prisoner, but had both hands and feet at liberty, and yet could make no use of them for his own preservation. Victorinus Strigelius thinks that David, in these words, distinguishes him from those criminals, whose hands being tied behind them, are carried to execution; and from those idle soldiers, who, being taken captive in war, have fetters clapped upon their legs, to keep them from running away. He was none of these; neither a notorious offender, nor a coward: but perfidiously murdered by one in seeming friendship with him. But the plain meaning seems to be, that if his enemy had set upon him openly, he had been able to make his part good with him.

But as a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou.] That is, before a secret murderer.

And all the people wept again over him.] Upon this speech of the king, which was mournfully spoken, they were so affected, that it drew tears more plentifully from them.

Ver. 35. *And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day.*] This was a custom among the Hebrews, whose friends were wont to come, after the funeral was over, to comfort those who had buried their dead, and send in provisions to make a feast. It being supposed, that they themselves were so sorrowful, as not to be able to think of their necessary food. (See Jer. xvi. 5. 7, 8. Ezek. xxiv. 17. and Grotius upon that place.)

David sware, saying, God do so to me, and more also, if I taste bread, or aught else, till the sun be down.] He resolved to keep a strict and rigid fast, which did not end till the sun was set. Hence it appears that they buried their dead in the day-time.

Ver. 36. *And all the people took notice of it.*] Of his great grief.

And it pleased them; for whatsoever the king did, pleased all the people.] They were pleased with the honour he had done this great man: whereby he so ingratiated himself with the people, that they were disposed to put a kind construction upon all his actions, as wise and well becoming him.

Ver. 37. *For all the people.*] Of Judah, or all those that were about the king.

And all Israel, understood that day, that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner.] That he neither ordered it, nor consented to it, nor any way approved it, but was heartily grieved for his death.

Ver. 38. *And the king said unto his servants.*] Who, perhaps, were not sensible enough of this loss; or thought he bewailed it too much.

Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?] He bids them consider his birth, and his power, authority, and valour, with all his other excellent qualities: and they would not think it strange that he buried him with so much pomp, and mourned so heavily for him.

Ver. 39. *And I am this day weak.*] In the Hebrew it is *tender;* that is, his kingdom was young (as we speak), and not settled and confirmed.

Though anointed king.] Or, as the words may be translated, *and anointed king.* That is, not born to a kingdom, but newly called to it, without any hereditary right to the authority; which made it more slender, than if it had been of long standing. This seems to have been the reason why he did not punish Joab for this murder, because he himself was not well established. He had also been very faithful, and stuck close to him in his adversity; and had a mighty power among the military men (as I said before), and was also an excellent soldier himself; which made him very necessary to David in a time of civil war and discord between Judah and Israel. Therefore prudence made him defer his punishment till a better opportunity. As God himself ordinarily doth not call men to an account immediately for their sins, but takes a time to do it more severely, than if it were done presently.

And these men the sons of Zeruiah are too hard for me.] He and his brother had got such an interest in the soldiery, and among the people both in the court and country, that he knew not how to deal with them. Yet he not only sufficiently shewed that he detested their actions, but that he

did not stand in awe of them. For he commanded Joab to attend Abner's funeral, with his clothes rent, and in sackcloth: and to his face commended Abner highly, and condemned his murder of him, (ver. 31. 33, 34.) which was a great mortification to him; and a kind of penance which he made him do for his crime.

The Lord shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.] He was confident God would punish him as he deserved, if he could not do it himself. And this may be looked upon as a prayer, that God would not suffer him to escape his vengeance.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *AND when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble.*] Having lost his supporter and defender; and hearing he was gone over to David, as appeared by his dying in Hebron.

And all the Israelites were troubled.] Because by his death the treaty with David was broke off; or there was none to manage it with such authority and prudence as Abner had: and they foresaw some great change (which they knew not how it would end) by the loss of this great man. For so Plato observes, from long experience, Ὅταν μέλλει κακῶς πράττειν πόλιν, ἐξαιρεῖται τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας ἐκ ταύτης τῆς πόλεως ὁ Θεός: *When any calamity is to befal a city, God is wont to take away excellent men out of that city.*

Ver. 2. *And Saul's son had two men that were captains of bands.*] Captains, perhaps, of two companies of guards about the king.

The name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the tribe of Benjamin.] The king's own tribe, which made him repose the greatest trust and confidence in them.

For Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin.] Though it was now in the hand of the Philistines, yet it belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, (Josh. xviii. 25.)

Ver. 3. *And the Beerothites fled to Gittaim.*] When Saul was slain, several Israelites left their cities and fled, and the Philistines took possession of them: among which, this city, it seems, was one forsaken by its inhabitants, (1 Sam. xxxi. 7.) There was a place called Gittaim, in the same tribe of Benjamin, (Nahum xi. 53.) But it is not likely that was the place here mentioned: for the Beerothites would, in all probability, fly further off from the Philistines.

And were sojourners there to this very day.] When this book was written, they were not returned to their own country: being commodiously settled, I suppose, in the other place. Why this is here related, it is hard to say: perhaps it was to shew that these were two soldiers of fortune (as we now speak), whose necessity forced them to seek for a support; which they met withal at the court of Ish-bosheth, where they came to preferment.

Ver. 4. *And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan.*] That is, the tidings of their death, mentioned 1 Sam. xxxi.

And his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee.] Being in a very great fright.

He fell, and became lame; and his name was Mephibosheth.] This seems to be related, to shew what it was that emboldened these captains to do what follows: because he who was the next avenger of blood was very young; and besides was lame and unable to pursue them.

Ver. 5. *And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ish-bosheth, who lay on a bed at noon.*] As the manner was, and still continues, in hot countries.

Ver. 6. *And they came thither into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat.*] In the Hebrew, *carrying wheat.* Which they either brought into the king's granaries, for the use of his household, or carried forth for the supply of their soldiers, who were maintained at the king's charge.

And they smote him under the fifth rib: and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.] They gave him a mortal wound, and nobody suspecting them, they easily made their escape.

Ver. 7.] *For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bedchamber.*] In a private room; into which he was wont to retire from company, when he had a mind to repose himself.

And they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head.] The privacy of the place gave them the opportunity to do all this without discovery.

And gat them away through the plain all night.] From Mahanaim to Hebron it was, for the most part, a flat country, till they came to ascend the mountain, on whose side Hebron stood.

Ver. 8. *And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul, thine enemy, which sought thy life; and the Lord hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.*] For they were all now extinguished, except his grandson Mephibosheth, who was of no account because of his lameness.

Ver. 9. *And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite.*] One of them only spake to the king, but related what they both had done, and therefore he directed his speech to them both.

And said unto them, As the Lord liveth, who hath delivered my soul out of all adversity.] Together with his thankful acknowledgment of God's care of him hitherto, in all his straits, he suggests to them that he needed not the help of such men as they, for his future preservation and preferment by wicked acts.

Ver. 10. *When one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead (thinking to have brought good tidings), I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who thought I would have given him a reward for his tidings.*] He put them in mind of the story of the Amalekite (chap. i. of this book), which they could not but have heard, and thereby might have learnt what reception they were likely to find with David.

Ver. 11. *How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person.*] For so Ish-bosheth was, in respect of them: to whom he had done no wrong; but preferred them to a place of trust and honour.

In his own house upon his bed?] This aggravated their crime; and made it vastly different from that of the Amalekite.

Shall I not therefore require his blood at your hand, and take you away from the earth?] As persons unworthy to

live; who had slain their master, and he a king, in his own house, when he was taking his repose under their safeguard.

Ver. 12. *And David commanded his young men.*] Who were of his guard; ready at hand to execute his commands.

And they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet.] By David's order, no doubt; they having slain their master with their *hands*, and made their escape from justice with their *feet*.

And hanged them up over the pool of Hebron.] Exposed them in an open, public place.

But he took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.] It seems David had done Abner the honour to make him a particular sepulchre: where he privately interred the head of Ish-bosheth. Whose body, no question, was buried by the Israelites, with such honours as were suitable to his dignity.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *THEN came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron.*] That is, ambassadors were sent from every tribe, by a common agreement among them.

And spake, saying, We are thy bone and thy flesh.] They were not overcome by the arms, but by the piety and justice of David, to acknowledge him their king: for which they gave several reasons. The first is general; that he was qualified by the law of God, (Deut. xvii. 15.) which required they should choose one of their brethren, and not a stranger. Now he was of the same blood with them, being descended from the same common father, Israel.

Ver. 2. *Also in time past, when Saul was king, thou wast he that led out and brought in Israel.*] They were induced also by his valour and conduct, which he had shewn, they well remembered, in the reign of Saul: when he was so successful in many expeditions, that he became the darling of all the people, (1 Sam. xviii. 5. 15, 16. 30.)

And the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be captain over Israel.] This was the chiefest argument of all; that God they knew had designed him long ago to be their king: having said by the prophet Samuel, that he should *feed*, that is, rule and govern them, and fight their battles. We do not read these words any where recorded before now: but Samuel having anointed him, no doubt frequently spake of his office, under the name of the *pastor of the people*.

And it is the first time we find a governor described by this name in Scripture: though much used afterward by the prophets, who speak in this language; particularly Ezek. xxxiv. 23. and many other places. Whence our Lord Christ is called the *good Shepherd*, and *the great Shepherd;* that is, ruler of his people: and both the Greeks and the Romans have borrowed this word, to express a supreme governor. And truly such rulers as take care of their people, as a shepherd doth of his flock, are Divine blessings: whom Isaiah calls *nursing fathers*, xlix. 23. On the contrary, they who lay heavy burdens on their people, fleecing, or rather flaying, them by cruel oppressions, are called by the prophets *roaring lions, hungry bears*, and *devouring wolves*, Ezek. xix. 2. xxii. 27. Nahum ii. 11, 12. Habak. i. 8. Zephan. iii. 3. Prov. xxvii. 15.; *companions of thieves*, Isa. i. 23.; *whales, dragons*, or rather *crocodiles*, Ezek. xxix. 3. Psal. lxxiv. 13, 14.; *leopards*, Jer. v. 6. and such-like odious names.

Ver. 3. *So all the elders of Israel came to the king in Hebron.*] He gave the messengers such a kind reception, and so thankfully declared his acceptance of the offer they made him, that, upon their return with his answer, the elders of Israel came to wait upon him. By whom some understand the senators of the great Sanhedrin: but that is a fancy which I have often confuted. The plain meaning is, that the chief persons of authority, in every tribe, came in the name of the rest of that tribe, whom they represented.

And king David made a league with them in Hebron.] It is not said what the contents of this league or contract was. The Jews think it was principally, that there should be an act of oblivion of all the injuries which the people of Israel had done to Judah, or they to them, in the reign of Ish-bosheth. But this is too narrow a sense: it is more probable, that he assured them he would govern them justly and kindly, according to the law of God; and they promised to obey him sincerely and faithfully, according to the same law.

Before the Lord.] The ark of God's presence was not in Hebron; and therefore it is a question how it could be said, that he made a league *before the Lord*. But see what I have said of this, Judg. xx. 1.

And they anointed David king over Israel.] They desired the high-priest to anoint him, whose office it was: and thereby expressed their consent he should reign over them. So Procopius Gazæus interprets these words, (as he doth ii. 4.) *Iterum suffragiis*, &c. All the tribes again chose him, by their votes, to be their king. He was anointed three times; first by Samuel, in his father's house; (1 Sam. xvi. 13.) then when the tribe of Judah owned him for their king; (chap. ii. of this book, ver. 4.) and now when all Israel did the same. For which Abarbinel gives this reason: "David's unction was repeated so often, that it might be the foundation, and root, and principle, of all his posterity;" who needed no unction, being anointed in him: unless there was any controversy about the succession.

Ver. 4. *David was thirty years old when he began to reign; and he reigned forty years.*] It is uncertain how old he was when he was first anointed by Samuel; and how long after he came to the court of Saul; and how long he was in exile from it. About which men's opinions are very different: for some think, as the Jews do in Seder Olam Rabba, that he was near nine-and-twenty years old when Samuel first anointed him: and consequently but one year in exile. Others (which is the truer opinion) that he was twenty years old at his first unction, and so almost ten years in exile. But it is sufficient for us to know, what we are here told, that he was thirty years old at his second unction in Hebron, immediately after Saul's death.

Ver. 5. *In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.*] By this it appears, that immediately after his third unction, he made his attempt upon Jerusalem, as it here follows, otherwise he could not have reigned there so long.

Ver. 6. *And the king and his men went to Jerusalem.*] His first warlike enterprise, after he was their king, was against Jerusalem, which he resolved to reduce out of the

hands of the Jebusites; who hitherto possessed a noble part of it, *viz.* the fort of Zion, which they held, though the Israelites dwelt in the other part of the city.

Unto the Jebusites, the inhabiters of the city.] That is, of that part of the land. (Josh. xv. 63. Judg. i. 21. xix. 10, 11.)

Which spake unto David.] When he came to set down his army against the fortress.

Saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither.] They imagined their fortress to be so impregnable, that, by way of contempt and scorn, they told him, the blind and the lame were able to defend it against him, and all his forces. So Bochartus translates these words, "Non huc accedes," &c. *Thou shalt not come up hither, but the blind and the lame will drive thee away;* i. e. the most feeble and cowardly among us. Which he thinks is so plain a sense, that he wonders men of great learning should seek for any other. (Lib. iv. Phaleg. cap. 36.) But so it is, a great many by *the blind and the lame* understand the images of their gods (particularly our learned Gregory hath a whole dissertation about it). As if they had said, Our gods, whom ye call blind and lame, that have eyes and see not, feet and walk not, (as it is Psal. cxv.) they shall defend us: and you must overcome them, before you overcome us. Luther himself thus explains the sense: "These blind and lame (saith he) were the idols of the Jebusites; which, to irritate David, they set upon their walls, as their patrons and defenders: and they did as good as say, Thou dost not fight with us, but with our gods; who will easily repel thee." As for the fancy of R. Eliezer, in his Pirke, cap. 36. it is altogether groundless; which is, that when Abraham bought the burying-place, in Machpelah, of the children of Heth, he sealed a covenant with them, that when his seed should possess the land of Canaan (as they believed they would), they should not possess the city of Jebus. Which covenant they now engraved upon brazen statues, and set them upon their walls; saying, Thou canst not enter here, unless thou break the oath of Abraham. (See also Bartoloccius, in his Kirjath-sepher, par. ii. p. 89, &c.)

Ver. 7. *Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David.*] Their taunts and jeers did not discourage David, but he assaulted the fort and took it, and made it his royal seat.

Ver. 8. *And David said on that day.*] When the assault was made.

Whosoever getteth up into the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, &c.] i. e. *Cuts off their pipes of water,* or their cisterns into which the water fell; for the Hebrew word *tzinnor,* which we translate *gutter,* is no where found but in this place, and in Psal. xlii. 7. and by St. Jerome is translated *fistulæ.* But I know not how we come to transpose the words, *he that smiteth the Jebusites,* behind the other, which in the Hebrew are first. *He that smiteth the Jebusites, let him throw down into the ditch* (which was by the wall) *both the blind and the lame, which David extremely hates.* Thus Bochart translates the words in the place abovenamed, which, if it be admitted, there is no need to add those words (out of 1 Chron. xi. 6.) to make out the sense, *he shall be chief and captain:* for the sense is complete without them.

Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not enter into the house.] Or, as it is in the margin, *Because they had said, even the blind and the lame, He shall not come into the house.* That is, because they had taunted him with the blind and lame, as if they could defend the fort, and hinder him from coming into it; therefore he was highly provoked to wish they might be thrown down headlong from their walls into the ditch. And then by *the house* is meant, neither the house of David, nor the house of the Lord (as many take it), but that very fort wherein the Jebusites had dwelt; from which hereafter they were excluded. And indeed it is a very large word in the Hebrew, signifying any place. If we could admit the fancy of R. Eliezer, that the Jebusites engraved the oath of Abraham upon brazen statues, whereby they pretended that fort was secured to them and their posterity, such an abominable forgery must needs highly incense David, whose soul hated such impudent frauds.

Ver. 9. *So David dwelt in the fort, and called it, The city of David: and David built round about, from Millo and inward.*] The fort was not wide enough to contain the whole court, and all his guards, and others that had occasion to come hither: and therefore he built round about it from Millo. Which some take for that low place which lay between the fort and the city: which was now filled with people, and thence called Millo.

Ver. 10. *And David went on, and grew great.*] He proceeded to enlarge his dominions, as well as his royal city.

And the Lord God of hosts was with him.] This was the cause of his great prosperity, that God, who commands all the armies of heaven and earth, directed and blessed him in all his enterprises.

Ver. 11. *And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers unto David.*] To compliment him upon his succession to the throne, and taking Jerusalem. Which was a great honour; for Hiram was a potent prince, and yet courted David's friendship; because he saw how prosperous he was. And this friendship continued all David's days, unto the reign of Solomon. When his son, of the same name, expressed the same affection to him, that his father had done to David.

And cedar-trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David a house.] Hearing David intended to settle in the fort he had taken, Hiram sent him both materials and artificers to build him a palace. For the Jews being given to feeding cattle, and husbandry, were not very skilful in manufactures.

Ver. 12. *And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel.*] For he had both subdued his enemies, and raised him up friends.

And that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake.] It is an excellent reflection which Conradus Pellicanus made long ago upon these words: "This is the greatest grace of a king, that he certainly believes himself to be made a king by God, for the sake of the people: and let him often call to mind, the people were not created or ordained by God for the king."

Ver. 13. *And David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron.*] The difference between a wife and a concubine, the Talmudists generally say, was, that the latter had neither dowry settled upon her, nor was taken with all the rites and solemnities of marriage: yet was a wife of a lower rank, as well as the former which had both. See Selden, lib. de Successionibus, cap. 3. and what I have already noted, Gen. xxii. 24

and elsewhere. How many David had of both sorts, it is not certain: but we read of six *wives* he had before, iii. 2, &c. And the Jews, after their way, endeavour to prove from xi. 8. of this book, that he had eighteen in all: which number it was not lawful for the king to exceed; unless he divorced any of them, and took others in their room. (See Schickard, de Jure Nepo, cap. 3. Theor. 9. and Grotius, de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. ii. cap. 5. sect. 9. and my notes on Deut. xvii. 17.)

And there were yet sons and daughters born to David.] It was looked upon as a piece of political wisdom in princes, to endeavour to have many children: that, by matching them into many potent families, they might strengthen their interest, and have the more supporters of their authority.

Ver. 14. *And these be the names of them that were born to him in Jerusalem; Shammuah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon.*] These are the very same names with those in 1 Chron. iii. 5. only a little variation in the first.

Ver. 15. *Ibhar also, and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia.*

Ver. 16. *And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphalet.*] Here are only seven sons mentioned in these two verses: but in 1 Chron. iii. 8, &c. there are nine. Of which Kimchi gives this account; that here he mentions only the sons he had by his *wives;* but there are some added which he had by his *concubines:* which doth not well agree with what there follows, (ver. 9.)

Ver. 17. *But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel.*] So that now Israel and Judah were united under one head, they thought it behoved them to bestir themselves: whereas they seem to have been quiet while the war lasted between Israel and Judah in the time of Ish-bosheth, hoping they might destroy one another.

All the Philistines went up to seek David.] They raised all the forces they were able, to find out David and fight him, before he was settled in his new kingdom. The friendship between him and king Achish was so great, that one would have thought they should have lived in peace. But either Achish was dead, or the lords of the Philistines, who were very powerful, overruled him, as they did when they forced him to send David out of their army, (1 Sam. xxix. 6, &c.)

And David heard of it, and went down to the hold.] Intelligence being brought him of their motions, he went from the fort of Zion, to some other strong place below; where his army might conveniently have their rendezvous.

Ver. 18. *The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.*] Which in Josh. xv. 8. we translate the *valley of giants,* lying westward of Jerusalem; which perhaps they thought to assault.

Ver. 19. *And David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into my hand?*] Though David went into a strong hold, he did not trust to that, nor intend merely to stand upon his defence: yet would not give them battle, till he was encouraged by God to do it.

And the Lord said, Go up; for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thy hand.] A full assurance of victory took away all fear of their great numbers, which is expressed by their *spreading* themselves in the forenamed valley.

Ver. 20. *And David came to Baal-perazim.*] For thither the Philistines marched from Rephaim, where they first pitched: as appears from 1 Chron. xiv. 11.

And David smote them there.] Routed their army, and slew a great many of them in that place.

And said, The Lord hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters.] Overpowered and scattered them; as waters, when they make a breach in a bank, overflow and carry all before them.

Therefore he called the name of that place Baal-perazim.] That it might put him and his posterity in mind of God's great power and goodness, which he shewed in this place, where the Philistines were put into such a consternation, that they forgat, when they fled, to carry away their gods with them; as it here follows.

Ver. 21. *And there they left their images.*] Which they had brought into the field with them; to be carried before their host, as a token of the presence of their gods with them. Thus we read in 2 Chron. xxv. 14. that the Edomites had their gods along with them when they fought with Amaziah. And perhaps they learnt this from the Israelites, who carried the ark (the symbol of God's presence) in their army when they went to fight with these Philistines: who saw it, and took it, as the Israelites now did their images, 1 Sam. iv. 4, 5, &c. But behold here the difference between the ark and these images. For when the ark fell into the hands of the Philistines, it sorely plagued them, as we read in the foregoing book: but their images had no power to hurt the Israelites, nor secure themselves from being burnt by them, as it here follows.

And David and his men burnt them.] According to the command of God, Deut. vii. 5.

Ver. 22. *And the Philistines came up again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.*] They saw that their all lay at stake, and therefore they mustered up their whole strength; and perhaps procured the assistance of other people, to try their fortune (as we now speak) in another battle. So Josephus relates, that the Syrians and Phœnicians joined them, and came up, τριπλασίῳ στρατῷ, *with an army three times as big as the former.*

Ver. 23. *And when David inquired of the Lord.*] Though he had been so successful, yet he would attempt nothing without God's direction; to whom, he knew, he owed the former victory.

He said, Thou shalt not go up.] That is, not directly; to fight in a pitched battle, as they did before. So the following words explain it.

But fetch a compass behind them.] Where they suspected no danger.

And come upon them over against the mulberry-trees.] A place well known to David; who was taught by God himself, not to expect victory always by main strength; but sometimes to make use of stratagems.

Ver. 24. *And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry-trees.*] In the Hebrew it is *beroshe,* which should not be rendered *in the tops* (for men do not walk on the tops of trees), but *in the beginnings:* in the very entrance of the place, where the mulberry-trees were planted; where God intended to make a sound, as if a vast number of men were marching to fall upon the Philistines. There is no doubt but the Hebrew word *rosch* signifies not only the *head,* but the beginning of any thing. So Bochart observes, in his Phaleg. lib. iii. cap. 22. as in Nahum iii. 10. *the top* (as we translate it) the head *of every street,* is the beginning of those streets.

And Isa. li. 20. Jer. xxii. 6. Gilead is called *the head of Libanus*, because Libanus begins where Gilead ends.

Then bestir thyself.] Fall upon the Philistines.

For then shall the Lord go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.] By making such a noise of a mighty host coming to assault them, that they should be amazed, and have no apprehension of David's army coming behind them.

Ver. 25. *And David did so, as the Lord commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer.*] He pursued them to the very confines of their own land; for Josephus saith concerning Gazer, ἤδε ἐστὶν ὅρος αὐτῶν τῆς χώρας, *that it was the border of their country.*

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AGAIN, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.*] Having defeated the Philistines, and enjoying some peace, he thought it a seasonable time to fetch up the ark, and settle it in an honourable place: and for that end summoned the principal persons in Israel to attend it. Or, as others will have it, the most mighty men in all Israel, to the number of *thirty thousand;* to be a guard to it, in case any of their enemies should attempt to disturb the solemnity he intended.

Ver. 2. *And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him.*] Not only those thirty thousand, but a vast number of the common people, as we learn from 1 Chron. xiii. 2. 5.

From Baale of Judah.] Which is the same with Kirjath-jearim, 1 Chron. xiii. 6. called Baalah, Josh. xv. 9. and Kirjath-Baal, Josh. xv. 60. xviii. 14. and here *Baale of Judah,* because (as this place shews) it belonged to that tribe. But some think there is a great difficulty here, where it is said they went *from Baale,* when in 1 Chron. xiii. 6. it is said they went *to Baalah.* But there is no disagreement in these two places: for they must go to it, before they could come from it: and here he speaks of their motion from thence, after they had gone to it.

And brought from thence the ark of God.] Where it had been a long time in the house of Abinadab, whose son was sanctified to attend it. (See 1 Sam. vii. 1.)

Whose name is called by the name of The Lord of hosts.] Or, *because of which the name is proclaimed, the name of the Lord of hosts.* For by reason of the mighty miracles which were done before the ark, the name of the Lord was highly extolled and magnified, not only among the Israelites, but the Philistines. And by this, saith Abarbinel, it was made known, that God dwelt among the Israelites: so that not only the Philistines were affrighted when this ark of God's presence came among them, (1 Sam. iv. 7, 8.) but the men of Beth-shemesh also, (vi. 20.)

That dwelleth between the cherubims.] The learned Lud. de Dieu thinks the most simple and genuine construction of all these words to be, by referring the word *ascher (which)* not to the ark, but unto God, and translating them thus: *who is called the name, the name of the Lord of hosts, sitting on the cherubims, upon it.* Which, saith he, is an egregious commendation of the ark, that it is the ark of that God, who, being incomprehensible and unbounded in his essence, is called absolutely *the name,* (see Lev. xxiv. 11. 16.) even the name of the Lord of hosts, who sitteth on the cherubims over the ark.

Ver. 3. *And they set the ark of God upon a new cart.*] Which ought to have been carried upon the shoulders of the Kohathites; (Numb. vii. 9.) for which reason no waggons were allowed to them, as there were to the rest of the Levites, to carry several parts of the tabernacle. And so David himself saith afterward it ought to be carried, 1 Chron. xv. 2. 15. And so, after the following miscarriage, it is plain from the thirteenth verse of this chapter it was so carried. How they came to forget themselves now, so as to put it upon a cart, one can but conjecture. They seem to have imitated the custom of other nations, who were wont to carry their mysteries in a chest upon a cart, drawn by oxen, or kine, as the Philistines did the ark itself, (1 Sam. vi. 7, 8.) Who not being punished for putting it upon a *new cart,* the Israelites followed their example the more securely. And, that they were wont also to carry their mysteries in a great deal of pomp (as David here did, ver. 5.) is manifest from abundance of authors. Sanchoniathon mentions an image in a shrine in Phœnicia, drawn after the same manner; in Eusebius's Præpar. Evangel. lib. i. cap. 15. (See our very learned Dr. Spencer, p. 816.) But that they learnt this from the Jews, not the Jews from them, seems to me most probable: though I can give no account how they came to put the ark now upon a *new cart,* unless it were in imitation of the Philistines.

And brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah.] Or, on the hill, as we read 1 Sam. vii. 1.

And Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart.] It seems Eleazar (who was sanctified to take care of the ark, as we read in the abovenamed place) was dead, or stayed at home to look after his father, who was now grown aged: so these two took upon them to be the *bubulci* (as Bochart calls them) who drave the oxen.

Ver. 4. *And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God.*] That is, when it was brought out of his house, the people flocked together to attend it.

And Ahio went before the ark.] He led the oxen, I suppose; and Uzzah went behind the cart, to take care the ark fell not out.

Ver. 5. *And David, and all the house of Israel, played before the Lord.*] Who was present where the ark was.

On all manner of instruments made of fir-wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.] Where Rasi notes, that these words *becol atze beroshim,* do not signify any particular instrument, but (as we translate it) the wood of which the following instruments are made; *viz.* either fir or box. As for the instruments themselves, it will be to no purpose to describe them. The learned reader may see an account of every one of them, in Bartoloccius's Kirjath-sepher, tom. ii. p. 190, &c.

Ver. 6. *And when they came to Nachon's threshing-floor.*] It is commonly thought that Nachon was the name of a man: but Bochartus thinks it rather the name of a place; so called by anticipation, for the stroke upon Uzzah. For *nacha* signifies *to smite,* and *Nachon* signifies *percussion;* so this floor was called ever after *the floor of percussion;* because God smote Uzzah in this place. And accordingly in 1 Chron. xiii. 9. it is called *the floor of Chidon;* which is the very same: for *Chid* signifies *destruction.*

Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.] There is no greater difference among interpreters about the signification of any word, than this word *sametu*, which we translate *shook it*. That which is nearest to the truth, Bochartus thinks, is our marginal translation, *they stumbled*. Yet this is mere guessing, for it hath no foundation either in the Hebrew or the neighbouring languages. But from the Arabic he takes this to be the sense; that the oxen, coming into a dirty place, stuck in the mire; and could not get out their feet: which Uzzah seeing, and fearing the king and the people, by this accident, might be stopped too long in their procession, *took hold of the ark:* intending, perhaps, to carry it, together with his brethren, to Mount Zion, which was not far off: but this should have been done at first; and because he did it not, he was punished by God.

Ver. 7. *And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error.*] Or, *for his rashness*, in touching the ark: some think it was because he was not a Levite, and therefore should not have touched it. But it is pretty plain that he was; being the brother of Eleazar, who was consecrated to look after the ark: which was the office of a Levite, (1 Sam. vii. 1.) But being a Levite, he was guilty of a double error: first, in not carrying the ark upon his shoulders, together with his brethren; and secondly, in touching it; which he ought not so much as to have seen: but it being covered by the priests, the Levites were to take hold of the staves, and carry it, (Numb. iv. 15.)

And there he died by the ark of God.] Or, *before the Lord*, as it is expressed 1 Chron. xiii. 10. because the ark was the symbol of God's special presence. Some think he was suddenly choked; others that his arm and his shoulder, upon which he should have carried the ark, were dried up; others that he was blasted with lightning. But all these, and the like conjectures, are uncertain: it is enough to know, that he died suddenly, not from any natural cause, but struck by the hand of God. See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 13. who truly observes, that though his intention, perhaps, was good, yet that would not excuse an offence against the express law of God. Abarbinel also adds this as a cause of his punishment, that he wanted faith in God: who would not have suffered his ark to fall into the dirt; but supported it himself, without Uzzah's help.

Ver. 8. *And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah.*] He took it very heavily: and was angry (as the word signifies), that there was any cause for such a breach; that is, such a destruction. For it detracted much from his authority and esteem, to have such an accident in the beginning of his reign, and at such a solemnity of great joy: which was hereby disturbed and interrupted. Perhaps he was troubled, being afraid that he also might suffer, for taking no better care about the carrying of the ark.

And he called the name of the place Perez-Uzzah to this day.] In memory of this dreadful stroke: whereby the Levites and all others might be admonished of their duty.

Ver. 9. *And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and said, How shall the ark of the Lord come to me?*] By this it appears he had some fear, that he himself was in danger: and therefore durst not bring the ark into his city. Either thinking, in great humility, that he was unworthy to have it so near him: or that he did not sufficiently understand how to treat it. Which he understood better afterward, as we learn from 1 Chron. xv. 2. 13—15.

Ver. 10. *So David would not remove the ark of the Lord unto him into the city of David; but David carried it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite.*] He is not called a Gittite from his being born or dwelling in Gath (which was a city of the Philistines), but from Gath-rimmon, a Levitical city, (Josh. xxi. 24, 25.) For it is certain Obed-Edom was a Levite, (1 Chron. xv. 18. 21. 24. xvi. 5.) who, I suppose, was willing to entertain the ark: resolving to treat it with such reverence, that he might not offend the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 11. *And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obed-Edom three months.*] A short time, in comparison with that which it continued at Kirjath-jearim. But all this time it was without the tabernacle. Which from Gilgal being removed to Shiloh, after the death of Eli, was carried to Nob; and after the death of Samuel, to Gibeon: where it remained till Solomon's temple was built, and then carried thither, as we read 1 Chron. xvi. 39. and 2 Chron. i. 3.

And the Lord blessed Obed-Edom, and his household.] Made them exceeding prosperous in all their affairs.

Ver. 12. *And it was told David, saying, The Lord hath blessed the house of Obed-Edom, and all that pertaineth to him, because of the ark of God.*] They could not tell to what to impute the extraordinary happiness that attended him, but to his religious care about the ark.

So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom into the city of David.] Hoping God would bless him, and his city, as he had done Obed-Edom, and his house.

With gladness.] All the people, I suppose, again accompanied him, playing on all manner of musical instruments, as they did before, ver. 5.

Ver. 13. *And it was so, that, when they that bare the ark had gone six paces.*] Without any mark of God's displeasure, as before, ver. 7.

He sacrificed oxen and fatlings.] As a thanksgiving to God for his goodness, upon an altar erected on purpose, on this extraordinary occasion. Some think he repeated these sacrifices seven times, at the end of every six paces. The word we translate *fatlings*, is, in the Hebrew, *meri:* whose signification is uncertain. For some take it for a *lamb*, others for a *ram*, and others put a different meaning on it. But Bochartus, with great probability, thinks it was a kind of ox, being commonly joined with oxen in Scripture, not only here, but in 1 Kings i. 9. 19. 25. Isa. i. 11. xi. 6. Nor doth 1 Chron. xv. 26. contradict this, where it is said, they offered *bullocks and rams*. For those are not the same sacrifices as these, which were offered by David; whereas those in the Chronicles were offered by the Levites. (See his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 19.)

Ver. 14. *And David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod.*] He laid aside his royal ornaments, and was girded only with a simple ephod: which was, I observed upon 1 Sam. ii. 18. an honorary garment, used by those who were no priests. He is said to dance *before the Lord*, because the ark was the symbol of the Divine presence. And from hence, it is

probable, the heathen learnt to dance before their gods: as Callimachus mentions the *chori*, and dancings of youth at the altar of Apollo. And as there were παιδικοὶ χοροὶ, so there were also ἀνδρικοὶ, and among the Lacedemonians of old, men also. And Plato observes, that, among the Egyptians, all kinds of music, and songs, and dances, were consecrated to their gods, (lib. iii. de Legibus, p. 799.) See that great man, Ezek. Spanhemius's observations on Callim. Hymn. in Apollinem, ver. 8.

Ver. 15. *So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.*] Such Ὀλολυγμοὶ, as the Greeks call them, were used before their gods: of which the great man now mentioned, gives a large account in his observations upon Callimachus's hymn ad Delum, ver. 258. where he observes, that ὀλολύζειν anciently signified to shout for joy: and in like manner the Latin word *ululare* is used by Statius for *exultare*. And this sort of rejoicing is at this day used by the Abyssines, in the evening of our Lord's resurrection: when men and women clap their hands, and dance to several instruments of music, till morning light: and all this in their churches. Which in all likelihood came from the Jews, who still dance in some of their festivals. See Ludolphus, in his comment upon his Historia Ethiopia. p. 381. where he observes, that David, in all probability, did not now dance alone, but in company.

Ver. 16. *And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked out through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.*] Imagining that he debased himself, by stripping himself of the ornaments of majesty, and dancing among the common people. But she understood not, as Procopius Gazæus here glosses, *ardoris stimulos, those stings of Divine love* which David declared to her afterward.

Ver. 17. *And he brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in its place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it.*] The ancient tabernacle made by Moses remained still, as I observed before, at Gibeon: from whence David did not think fit to fetch it, because he intended shortly (as Pellicanus well observes) to build a temple to settle it in. For the present, therefore, he only hung some curtains round about it, after the fashion of the tabernacle. (See vii. 2.)

And David offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the Lord.] To implore the continuance of his mercies to them; and to thank him for those they had received.

Ver. 18. *And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord.*] He prayed God to bless them; and pronounced them blessed in his name.

Ver. 19. *And he dealt among the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.*] The Talmudists have a conceit, that the Hebrew word *eshpar*, which we translate *a good piece of flesh*, signifies the sixth part of a bullock: deriving it from three words put into one; *viz. echad* one, *shesh* six, and *par* a bullock. But every one sees this is a very forced fancy; and it is not in itself credible, that he could, among such a multitude, deal a sixth part of a bullock to every one; or that they could well carry it away, with the bread and wine. Bochartus more reasonably thinks (as some of the Jews do) the word is derived from *shapar*, which signifies *decorus:* and so the meaning is, as we translate it, he gave to every one a *handsome* or *decent* portion of flesh. (See his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 18.)

So all the people departed every one to his house.] Well satisfied with their prince's bounty to them, and his piety to God.

Ver. 20. *Then David returned to bless his household.*] As he had done the people.

And Michal, the daughter of Saul, came out to meet him, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to-day.] This she spake ironically, by way of derision and contempt.

Who uncovered himself to-day.] Stripped himself of his royal robes, and put on a linen ephod, (ver. 14.)

In the eyes of the handmaids of his servants.] The women, perhaps, bare a part in these dances, as they did in Exod. xv. or at least were spectators of all the solemnity: from which none were excluded, though ever so mean.

As one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!] Throws off all his clothes, and cares not who sees him, nor with what company he dances. This was spoken by way of reproach, that he mixed himself with the multitude; and seems to intimate that he had immodestly exposed himself, as shameless fellows do: which is not credible. But thus in a fit of passion she aggravates this action as very mean, yea, base, and much below himself. For no doubt David kept himself within the rules of modesty, when he was thus jocund, being about a sacred business; and did according to the command of God, who required the Israelites to rejoice in their feasts, (Deut. xii. 7. xvi. 1.) not with a futilous, lascivious, and petulant joy, but with a pious and moderate: as having God himself present. And thus Plato observes, lib. vii. de Legibus, that some dances are ἐμμελῶς, *with modest and decent motions of the body:* others πλημμελῶς, *immodest and wanton.* The latter of which, none can imagine David would be guilty of before God: but danced with composed and decent, not desultorious and light motions, such as vain fellows are wont to use. For as it is joy that excites men to leap and dance, so Divine joy moves them to do it after a manner becoming the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 21. *And David said to Michal, It was before the Lord, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, and appointed me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel: therefore will I play before the Lord.*] Who had done so much for him, that he thought he could not shew himself thankful enough to so great a benefactor. He thought fit to take down her pride, by putting her in mind, how God had rejected all her family, and advanced him to the throne of Israel.

Ver. 22. *And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in my own eyes.*] He thought nothing too mean for him to stoop unto; if thereby he could do any honour unto God. Otherwise, to dance in the streets before all the people had been very unbecoming the majesty of a king: as Nero (we are told by Suetonius) and Caligula were condemned for it, among the Romans. For among them it was not usual, nor was it done in honour of their gods. Whereas in David's time the greatest persons thus expressed their joy and thankfulness to God, by public leaping, dancing, shouting, and clapping their hands.

And of the maid-servants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour.] The more he humbled himself to do honour unto God, the more he was confident he should be magnified, and had in honour by his people. The esteem of the meanest of which, upon that account, he valued far more than all the vain-glorious praises Michal could bestow on him, for taking state upon him, and neglecting God's service.

Ver. 23. *Therefore Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child unto the day of her death.*] Which is thus explained, in the Gemara Sanhedrin, cap. 2. sect. 8. She had children before this fact, but none after it as long as she lived. (See iii. 5.) David, perhaps, quite left her bed.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies.*] Enjoyed himself in the palace Hiram had built for him, (v. 11.) having no disturbance from the Philistines, or other neighbouring nations.

Ver. 2. *That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.*] Like a religious prince, he spent much of his time in pious meditations: and among other things reflected upon the meanness of God's habitation, in comparison with the splendour of his own. Which he thought ought not to be endured, and therefore resolved to build a stately house for God to dwell in.

Ver. 3. *And Nathan said unto the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart: for the Lord is with thee.*] He spake that as a prudent man, not as a prophet. For (as Procopius Gazæus here observes) the prophets did not see all things; but those only which the Divine grace revealed to them: as Samuel was ignorant which of Jesse's sons was to be anointed, till God told him. But Nathan had great reason for what he said, because he observed that the Lord had an extraordinary kindness for David, and prospered him in all that he went about. And David withal being a prophet as well as himself, he might presume this intention was suggested to him from God.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying.*] God would not suffer him long to remain in an error; but corrected it the very next night.

Ver. 5. *Go and tell my servant David.*] He speaks very kindly of him: though he did not approve of his design.

Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me a house for me to dwell in?] The meaning is, he should not build one. But this manner of speech declared his mind something sharply: to reprove him for his forwardness (without asking God's consent), not only in designing, but in making a vow, that he would forthwith build God a house. For it is probable, that upon Nathan's approving his intention, he made that vow mentioned Psal. cxxxii. 3—5. "Surely I will not go up to my bed, nor give sleep to mine eyes, &c. till I have found out a place for the Lord, a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob."

Ver. 6. *Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, unto this day.*] As much as to say, How comest thou to design me a fixed house, since neither I, nor any one else, thought of one from the time you have been a people?

But have walked in a tent and a tabernacle.] Contented myself with a moveable house, consisting of a tent and a tabernacle: in which I was always present to conduct and lead my people from place to place. By a *tent* is meant the inward hangings of the house, which were of curious work: and by the *tabernacle*, the boards to which they were fastened; and the badgers' skins, &c. wherewith all was covered.

Ver. 7. *In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel.*] That is, *of the judges of Israel*, as it is interpreted, 1 Chron. xvii. 6. For the word *shibte* signifies not only *tribes* but *sceptres;* and, consequently, supreme governors and rulers: such as the judges were who had the supreme authority in Israel. And so the following words explain it.

Whom I commanded to feed my people Israel.] He did not command the tribes, but the supreme governors of them, to *feed*, that is, to rule his people, and take care of their happiness. Here, again, *feeding* is governing; (as I observed, v. 2.) and the Hebrew word for *feed* being *raga*, as some pronounce it (in the Syriac, *rega*), very learned men thence derive the Latin words *regere* and *reges:* kings being designed by God to be the pastors of their people.

Saying, Why build ye me not a house of cedar?] God was the properest judge what house was agreeable to him, and he never signified that he disliked his present, and desired a more stately habitation.

Ver. 8. *Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David.*] He would not have him think he took it ill that he should design what he never signified to be his desire; but owned him to be his faithful servant, and therefore accepted his pious intentions: as we read expressly 1 Kings viii. 18. which is signified in this message.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people Israel.] Therefore he needed not to make any doubt, but that God accepted his gratitude in designing to make him a house.

Ver. 9. *And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest.*] In the time of his banishment, when he was remarkably preserved by God.

And have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight.] Both those in Israel and those in the neighbouring countries.

And have made thee a great name, like to the name of the great men that are in the earth.] Famed in all the countries round about as a potent prince and a mighty warrior: and perhaps as a holy prophet, greatly beloved of God and of all his people.

Ver. 10. *Moreover, I will appoint a place for my people Israel.*] Or, *I have constituted* (or established) *a place for my people; viz.* the land of Canaan.

And will plant them.] Make them take root there.

That they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more.] No longer wander, as they did in the wilderness.

Neither shall the children of wickedness.] The idolatrous people round about them.

Afflict them any more, as beforetime.] When they were in the land of Egypt.

Ver. 11. *And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel.*] In whose days they were

sorely afflicted by the Moabites, Canaanites, Midianites, and other people.

And have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies.] Given him a quiet possession of the whole kingdom of Israel; which never was in so happy a condition as now. A flourishing people is a great blessing to the king that governs them: and therefore mentioned in this verse, as God's kindness to David. But this promise was with some exceptions, in case they became disobedient: which provoked God to chastise them.

Also the Lord telleth thee, that he will make thee a house.] A family, or royal offspring, that shall reign for many generations; which was a special favour of God to David: there being none of the Roman emperors, till the time of Antoninus, whose children from the reign of Julius Cæsar succeeded them in the empire, but only Vespasian.

Ver. 12. *And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee.*] To sit upon his throne.

Which shall proceed out of thy bowels.] This shews that he speaks of one who was not yet born, *viz.* Solomon: and that Absalom, Adonijah, and the rest who pretended to the kingdom, were not designed for it: being already proceeded from him.

And I will establish his kingdom.] He reigned a long time himself; and so did his posterity after him.

Ver. 13. *He shall build a house for my name; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.*] The latter part of this verse can belong to none but the Messiah; if the words *for ever* be taken in their full extent.

Ver. 14. *And I will be his father, and he shall be my son.*] This the apostle shews is meant of Christ, Heb. i. 5. For though Solomon was called Jedidiah, in token that he was beloved of God, yet, in the complete sense of the words, Christ only is intended: who *is God's beloved Son, in whom he is well-pleased.*

If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men.] This is a mixed prophecy, some part of which belongs to Christ, and the other part to Solomon, and his successors in the kingdom of Israel: who, it is plain, is solely intended in these words. And by *the rod of men, and the stripes of the children of men*, is meant gentle correction; such as parents give their children.

Ver. 15. *But my mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.*] He promises not to translate the kingdom into another family; as he took it from Saul, to give it to David: but the kingdom shall continue in his line.

Ver. 16. *And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*] That is, saith Kimchi, for a long time, between four and five hundred years, which was a rare thing, and seldom known, that the kingly authority continued in any one family so long. But this is chiefly intended of the kingdom of Christ, as Procopius Gazæus here observes: from whence the Jews said, (John xii. 34.) "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever." This is confirmed by the rule which Maimonides lays down in his More Nevochim, that though *olam* alone doth not necessarily signify eternally, yet when it is joined with *ath*, either before or after it, it doth so signify. And that is the case here; this kingdom is said to be established *ath olam*: which can belong to none but Christ; for David's kingdom had an end, but Christ's hath none; (par. ii. cap. 28.)

Ver. 17. *According to all these words, and according to this vision, so Nathan spake unto David.*] This shews the integrity of the prophet; who was not ashamed to retract his own words when he was better taught of God. And, as Dionysius observes, in an epistle to Novatus, μεῖζον ἔσται τοῦ σφάλματος τὸ κατόρθωμα, *the correction of his fault was more eminent and remarkable than the fault itself.*

Ver. 18. *Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord.*] That is, before the ark; which, as I have often said, was the symbol of his Divine presence. Sitting, among the heathens, was thought a posture proper enough in the Divine service; as Vossius hath observed, lib. ii. de Orig. et Progressu Idololat. cap. 34. "Quippe index animi magis compositi, et hoc agentis;" *being an indication of a more composed mind, and attending to what they were about.* But among the Israelites none were allowed to sit in the temple, except the king: unto whom this was indulged, if we can believe the Talmudists: whose general maxim was this, "It was not lawful for any one to sit in the court of the house of God; but only for the king of the house of David." (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 13. sect. 4.) But they have framed this notion merely from this single passage; there being no other place in the whole Scripture to support this assertion, that the king might sit at prayer: but, on the contrary, on the sabbath, and on festival days, when he came to the temple, he stood by the exterior pillar of the inward court of the house of God; as may be learnt from Ezek. xlvi. 1, 2. compared with 2 Kings xi. 14. and 2 Chron. xxiii. 13. Nor is there any other posture of worship mentioned in Scripture, but standing, or kneeling, or falling on the face. And therefore Abarbinel ingenuously confesses, that this is not the opinion of all their doctors, several of which in this forsake the Talmudists; and allege a weighty reason for it: because the angels themselves, who are higher than kings, are not permitted to sit before the Lord: but Isaiah saith, vi. 2. that the seraphim stood about the throne; and Micaiah saith, he saw the host of heaven stand before the Lord, 1 Kings xxii. 19. and see Zech. iii. 7. From which they conclude, if there be no sitting allowed above, by what right was it granted to the kings of David's family here below? Many great men, therefore, translate the Hebrew word *jashab*, not *sat*, but *remained* before the Lord: particularly Vetablus, upon 1 Chron. xvii. 16. And others, who allow the king might sit in the temple, yet confess he might not sit at prayer: and therefore expound this place thus: *He took his seat in the tabernacle before the ark;* and then he made the following prayer, standing up, as the manner was, when they worshipped God.

And he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?] He begins his address to God in a very becoming manner; with a most profound debasement of himself, and confession of his own unworthiness, to receive such blessings as God had already bestowed on him.

Ver. 19. *And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come.*] Next, he magnifies the loving-kindness of God, who did not think it enough that he had made

him a great king, but promised his posterity, and at last the Lord Christ, should sit upon his throne. So Abarbinel himself expounds these words, *a great while to come:* intimating, saith he, the Messiah, the son of David.

And is this the manner of men, O Lord God?] He acknowledges there was no example of such kindness to be found in this world: where kingdoms are not perpetuated, as Abarbinel observes; but this is the manner of angels, who always continue in their dignity.

Ver. 20. *And can David say more unto thee?*] There was nothing he could desire beyond this. (See 1 Chron. xvii. 18.)

For thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant.] But he thought he might leave all to God, who loved him and took care of him (for that is to *know him*) as his faithful servant.

Ver. 21. *For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things.*] For God, he knew, would fulfil his own promise made by Samuel and by Nathan: to the making of which he had no other motive but his own good will; from whence alone all the great things proceeded which he had done for him.

To make thy servant know them.] That David might know how much God loved him by what he did for him.

Ver. 22. *Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God.*] He could not therefore but acknowledge his omnipotent power and the greatness of his goodness, which bestows such benefits upon unworthy creatures.

For there is none like the Lord, neither is there any god besides thee.] According to what Hannah had said in her song, wherein she prophesied of him, (1 Sam. ii. 2.)

According to all that we have heard with our ears.] Which their forefathers had reported of the wonders he had done, by Moses and Joshua, and in the time of the Judges.

Ver. 23. *And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people unto himself.*] He seems to imitate the words of Moses in Deut. iv. 7. 34.

And to make him a name.] That all the world might know how powerful he was.

And to do for you great things, and terrible, for thy land.] To introduce them into the land of Canaan.

Before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods?] Some understand by *gods* their rulers: but their gods were no more able to save the nations whom he drove out, than their kings and rulers were.

Ver. 24. *For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, Lord, art become their God.*] This is the sum of the covenant (as P. Martyr observes) between God and them: that they should be his obedient people, and he would bless them, and bestow all manner of good things upon them.

Ver. 25. *And now, O Lord God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said.*] After his thankful acknowledgments, he makes his humble prayer to God, that he would perform his promise to him. For though he did not doubt of it, yet it became him to make it his request.

Ver. 26. *And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee.*] Yet he did not desire it merely for his own sake; but that God might be glorified in what he did for him: and men might always acknowledge, that the God of Israel was the Lord of heaven and earth; and faithful in his promise to the house of David.

Ver. 27. *For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee a house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.*] That he might not be thought too bold in his request, he professes he should not have taken this confidence, if God himself had not encouraged it, by his own most gracious promise to him.

Ver. 28. *And now, O Lord God, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant.*] He professes his belief of the unchangeableness of God's nature, and of the truth of all that he said: upon which he relied with an unshaken faith.

Ver. 29. *Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue before thee for ever: for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it; and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever.*] Since God had been so gracious as to make such promises, and his word could not fail; he grows more confident to repeat his petition, which he had made before. Which is not the vain repetition, condemned by our Saviour: but proceeded from the abundant affection of a heart devoutly affected; which could not sufficiently acknowledge the goodness of God, and express his full assurance that he would fulfil his word. To this purpose Abarbinel; David did not multiply prayer for want of faith, because he distrusted the power of God; or thought his will was mutable; or that he doubted of his prophecy concerning him: but rather, this shews that he steadfastly rested assured of all this.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND after that it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them.*] In the beginning of his reign they invaded him twice, (v. 17. 22.) But now David invaded their country, and made a conquest of it: and brought it in subjection to the Israelites.

And David took Metheg-Ammah out of the hand of the Philistines.] That is, the famous city of Gath, and the territories thereof, (as it is expounded, 1 Chron. xviii. 1.) which is called Metheg-Ammah, because it stood upon Mount Ammah: and was as a bridle to the whole country, whereby it was kept in obedience. So our translators understand the word *Metheg* in the margin of our Bibles. But R. Solomon takes it for a goad, or a staff; this city domineering over the Philistines. For we read of no king in any of their other cities: either in Gaza, or Ashdod, or Ekron, or Askelon; but only in this: where Achish formerly reigned, but, it is likely, was dead. There are several other interpretations in Bochart's Hierozoicon, lib. ii. cap. 18. par. i.

Ver. 2. *And he smote Moab.*] Now was fulfilled the prophecy of Balaam, Numb. xxiv. 17.

And measured them with a line.] Having conquered the whole country, he took an exact survey of every part of it.

Casting them to the ground.] Laying level their strong holds and fortified places.

And with two lines measured he to put to death.] He divided the country into three equal parts; condemning two of them to be destroyed.

And with one line he saved alive.] A third part he preserved, that he might not be quite dispeopled. This severity, the Jews say, he exercised because they had slain his parents, and his brethren, whom he committed to the custody of the king of Moab during his exile, (1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4.) But, in truth, because the Moabites had always been implacable enemies to the Israelites: their kindness to David, beforementioned, proceeding from their hatred to Saul.

And so the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.] And paid David a constant tribute, which continued all his days, and in the reign of Solomon: and after the kingdom was divided, it was paid to the kings of Israel; till after the death of Ahab they refused to pay it, as we read 2 Kings iii. 4, 5.

Ver. 3. *And David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob.*] Who is called also Hadarezer: for the change of these two letters, *daleth* and *resch*, is very frequent, as Bochartus hath shewn in many instances, par. ii. Hierozoicon, lib. ii. cap. 7. Nicolaus Damascenus, in a fragment of his, recorded by Josephus, (lib. vii. Antiq. cap. 6.) simply calls him Adad: which was a common name of the kings of Syria: who, according to the manner of the eastern princes, took their titles from the celestial bodies, as Sir John Marsham observes; and Adad was the name of the most glorious of them, *viz.* the sun, as Macrobius tells us: who truly saith, it signifies *unus*, one.

King of Zobah.] Zobah was a part of Syria, whose eastern border was Euphrates, as the western was the land of Canaan, and the kingdom of Damascus. It is frequently called Aram-Zobah in Scripture; of which Bochartus, in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 7. where he observes the nearness of Zobah to Judea, from the frequent wars the Israelites had with that people, in the days of Saul, 1 Sam. xiv. 47, and David, chap. x. of this book; and Solomon, 2 Chron. viii. 3. and they of Damascus came to help them, which is a sign they were near them (ver. 5. of this chapter), and Rezin fled from thence to Damascus, (1 Kings xi. 24.) And especially he observes, that the cities Solomon built in the wilderness, *viz.* Palmyrene, and others, (1 Kings ix. 17, 18.) are said to be in Hamath, 2 Chron. viii. 4. which shews the situation of Zobah.

As he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates.] That is, as David went to extend the limits of his kingdom (according to the ancient prophecy, Gen. xv. 18.) towards the river Euphrates, he smote this king, who came out, perhaps, to oppose him. See 1 Chron. xviii. 3. where it is said, *he went to establish his dominions by the river Euphrates:* which seems to relate to David, not to Hadadezer.

Ver. 4. *And David took from him a thousand chariots.*] The word *chariot* is not in the Hebrew: but it is well supplied by our translators, out of 1 Chron. xvi. 4. in which book many things are explained, which are briefly related here.

And seven hundred horsemen.] Here again is an ellipsis, as in the foregoing words: for in 1 Chron. xviii. 4. it is said seven thousand. But as after *a thousand* something is to be understood, *viz. chariots:* so after *seven hundred* something is to be understood, *viz. captains* (as Abarbinel explains it), under whom a great many others served; so that commanders and soldiers made, in all, seven thousand. Such an ellipsis is observed in this very book, v. 8. *whosoever smites the Jebusites, and the blind, and the lame,* &c. It is not said what shall be their reward; which is plainly mentioned 1 Chron. xi. 6. where it is said, *he shall be chief.* (See L'Empereur on Bava-kama, cap. 7. sect. 7.)

And twenty thousand footmen: and David houghed all the chariot horses.] Here again is the same ellipsis, for there is no word in the Hebrew for *horses.* Yet the meaning can be nothing else, but that he cut the hamstrings of the horses that drew their chariots, and made them unserviceable hereafter. (See Josh. xi. 9.) Thus, in x. 18. David is said to have slain seven hundred chariots; that is, the horses of so many chariots: and in Psal. lxviii. 18. by *the chariots of the Lord,* some understood *horsemen:* and lxxvi. 6. *the chariot and horse,* &c.; that is, as well the horses that drew the chariot, as they that rode in it. (See Bochartus, in his Hieroz. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 6.)

But reserved of them for a hundred chariots.] For his guard, I suppose, not for war: God having commanded them not to multiply horses, Deut. xvii. 16. (See there.)

Ver. 5. *And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succour Hadadezer king of Zobah.*] For they were neighbours to him, as I observed on ver. 3.

David slew of the Syrians of Damascus twenty thousand men.] Which facilitated the conquest of their country: which follows in the next verse.

Ver. 6. *Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus.*] *Aram-Damasek,* which we translate *Syria of Damascus,* was that part of Syria which lay between Libanus and Antilibanus; whose chief city was Damascus, situated in a valley called by several names in Scripture, as Bochartus notes; *viz.* Hoba, Gen. xiv. 15. the valley of Aven, and Beth-eden, *i. e.* the place of pleasure, Amos i. 5. and Hadrach, Zech. ix. 1. It was watered by five rivers; the two principal of which descended from Mount Hermor, *viz.* Abana and Pharphar, (2 Kings v. 12.) The last of which ran by the walls of Damascus; the other ran through it, and divided the city into two parts.

And the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts.] In token of their subjection to him.

And the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went.] Kept him from all the dangers to which he was exposed in these wars.

Ver. 7. *And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.*] The Hebrew particle *el,* which we translate *on,* may better be translated *with;* that is, in the custody of Hadadezer's servants, who were officers in his treasury: for it is not likely they brought them into the field of battle.

Ver. 8. *And from Betah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, David took exceeding much brass.*] These two cities are called by very different names in 1 Chron. xviii. 6. though perhaps of the same signification in the language of that country, with these in the Hebrew language. Or there were four cities, perhaps, from whence he took much brass; two here mentioned, and two in the book of Chronicles. It is the opinion of some learned men, that these cities were situated at the foot of the Mount Libanus, between Emath and Damascus: which mount, they say, abounded with brass. But Bochartus could find no mention of the brass of Libanus in any ancient or modern writer. And the

kingdom of Sobah lying about Palmyra, he takes the city called Berothai to be the same with that which Ptolemy calls Βαράθημα in Arabia Deserta; which is very remote from Libanus, (par. ii. Hierozoicon, lib. vi. cap. *ult.*)

Ver. 9. *When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer.*] This city was also in Syria, and was called afterward Epiphania, as St. Jerome says, and lay north of Judea. (See Bochart, in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 37.)

Ver. 10. *Then Toi sent Joram his son.*] Called Hadoram, 1 Chron. xviii. 10.

Unto king David.] At Jerusalem, I suppose.

To salute him, and bless him.] To congratulate his good success in the war with Hadadezer; and to wish him continued prosperity.

Because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him (for Hadadezer had wars with Toi).] And was too hard for him.

And Joram brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass.] As a present to king David: whose friendship he sought by this embassy.

Ver. 11. *Which also king David did dedicate unto the Lord.*] As he did what he took from Hadadezer.

With the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all people that he had subdued.] These words seem to import, that he was so far from multiplying silver and gold to himself, (which Moses forbade, Deut. xvii. 16.) that he put all this spoil, or the greatest part of it, into God's treasury: for the building of the temple, which he designed, and his son was to accomplish, (vii. 13.)

Ver. 12. *Of Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah.*] Here he reckons up all the countries, besides Hadadezer's, from whence he brought spoil to the treasury of God.

Ver. 13. *And David gat him a name when he returned from smiting the Syrians.*] His victory over that people, (mentioned ver. 5.) when they came to succour Hadadezer, gained him a great reputation, as a potent prince, and a mighty warrior.

In the valley of Salt, being eighteen thousand men.] There is nothing in the Hebrew answering to the word *being:* which therefore should be translated, *in the valley of Salt eighteen thousand men.* That is, he slew of the Edomites so many, besides the two-and-twenty thousand of the Syrians. So we read expressly, 1 Chron. xviii. 12. and in the title of the sixtieth Psalm it is said, they were Edomites, not Syrians, who were slain in this valley. Only in that place of the Psalms, there is mention of no more than twelve thousand slain: which makes some think it speaks of a distinct battle from this. But Abishai, who began the fight, perhaps, slew six thousand, and then Joab, coming in with his reserve, slew twelve thousand more; which, in all, make eighteen thousand. By the *valley of Salt*, Epiphanius understands the Dead Sea, which was formerly a famous valley, or rather it was a valley near that sea. But neither of these opinions has any good foundation, as Salmasius shews: who takes this *valley of Salt* to have been in the country of Edom, where this battle was fought; and to be called by this name, either from the salt springs which were therein, or from the salt that was digged up there. (See his Exercit. Plinianæ, cap. 35. p. 613, 614.)

Ver. 14. *And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons.*] Having conquered the whole country, he garrisoned the strongest places in it, with his own men; to keep them in subjection to him. Some of the Jews translate these words, *he put captains or commanders in Edom;* that is, great men to govern them, and, as his deputies, to keep them under and raise tributes, &c.

And the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went.] God's providence continued still over him to protect him, as formerly, (ver. 6.) in all these expeditions.

Ver. 15. *And David reigned over Israel.*] He had no disturbance at home, whilst he made wars abroad: but all Israel obeyed him.

And David executed judgment and justice to all his people.] And having finished his foreign wars, he applied himself to the civil government of his people, according to the law of God: which he executed duly by himself, or by his judges. Or rather, while he was engaged in so many wars abroad, he did not neglect his people at home; but took care that justice should be administered to them. And so he performed both parts of such a king as the Israelites desired, (1 Sam. viii. 20.)

Ver. 16. *And Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was over the host.*] According to the promise made to that person, who should first enter the strong fort of Zion, when he assaulted it, (1 Chron. xi. 6.)

And Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahilud, was recorder.] The Hebrew word *mazkir*, importing something of keeping in memory, or bringing to remembrance, moved our translators to render it *recorder*, or *remembrancer*, as if he wrote the acts of every day, which afterward were digested into annals. But this sure was not so considerable an employment as to make him that had it the prime civil officer in the kingdom, as Joab was the military. Therefore Victorinus Strigelius takes him to have been the chancellor of the kingdom: which is more likely than their opinion, who take him for the master of requests, who presented petitions, and put the king in mind of them.

Ver. 17. *And Zadok, the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech, the son of Abiathar, were the priests.*] These two were the chief of the family of priests; next to the high-priest, which was Abiathar: called *second priests* in 2 Kings xv. 18. The former was of the family of Eleazar, (1 Chron. vi. 5.) the other of Ithamar. And Zadok is put first, as more acceptable to David than the other: and therefore, it is likely, constantly attended at court; the family of Eli now beginning to decline, as in the next reign the other was advanced to the high-priesthood, and Abiathar and his posterity quite thrown out. (See Selden, lib. i. de Success. ad Pontific. cap. 4.) Cornelius Bertram hath a peculiar conceit, that as Abiathar was always acknowledged by David as God's high-priest, and accordingly took care of the ark at Jerusalem, so Zadok, as principal priest among the rest, was set over the tabernacle at Gibeon. But Abarbinel's opinion is farthest from truth, that Zadok was now high-priest, and Abiathar but his vicar: which is directly against the Scripture, which shews Abiathar to have been high-priest until the days of Solomon. Yet to justify this, he thinks fit to tell a fabulous story out of Joma, and other books, which say that David removed Abiathar from his office when he fled from Absalom. For commanding him to inquire of God for him, by

urim and *thummim*, God was pleased to give him no answer; but Zadok inquiring, had an answer. Whereupon David concluded the Spirit of God was gone from Abiathar, and that it was time to fulfil the prophecy against the house of Eli: and so thrust him out of his office. For which they have no other ground but this, that David spake first to Zadok, chap. xv. of this book, ver. 24. (See J. Wagenseil upon Sota, p. 1608, 1609.)

And Seraiah was the scribe.] Secretary of state, as we now speak; or, as others imagine, clerk of the council, who set down all acts and decrees; others, the keeper of the public accounts. But the Hebrew word *sopher* (which we translate *scribe*) importing something of learning (as the word *scribe* in the New Testament doth), I take him to have been his prime counsellor in the law, who always attended him. Constantine L'Empereur thinks there were two sorts of scribes, an ecclesiastical and a civil; and here understands the latter: and would have him signify no more than the *muster-master* of the army. (See his Annot. on Bertram de Repub. Jud. p. 383, &c.)

Ver. 18. *And Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites.*] Or, the *Crethites* and the *Plethites*, as some pronounce these words. What they were is variously conjectured. The most idle conceit is that of some of the Jewish doctors, who take them for the members of the great Sanhedrin, nay, for *urim* and *thummim*. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 15. p. 601. and cap. 16. p. 668.) Certain it is that they were soldiers, as appears from xv. 18. xx. 7. 1 Kings i. 34. where they are mentioned as present at the proclaiming king Solomon against Adonijah: which could not have been done safely without some armed force; and if they were not the persons, there were none. Yet they were not common soldiers, but the constant guards of David's person; like the prætorian bands among the Romans. So Josephus calls them σωματοφύλακες, *keepers of the body*, who never departed from the place where the king was: as we may be satisfied by this, that they had a peculiar commander, and were not under Joab, the captain of the host; but are distinguished from his soldiers, xx. 6, 7. Some make them men of a gigantic stature, but I know no ground for that; though, no doubt, they were proper men, as we speak, robust, and of tried fidelity: who, in the rebellion against David, did not desert David, but stuck close to him, (xv. 18.) It is further probable, that they were selected out of a certain nation or family. For the Cherethites inhabited part of Palestine, and were indeed the same with the Philistines, as I observed upon 1 Sam. xxx. 14. and see Zeph. ii. 5. The Pelethites, it is likely, were a family in Israel: for we find two of the name of Peleth mentioned in Scripture: one of the tribe of Reuben, Numb. xvi. 1. another of Judah, 1 Chron. ii. 33. Their arms were bows and arrows, and slings, if we may believe the Chaldee interpreter, who calls them archers and slingers: as Procopius Gazæus calls them *jaculatores et sagittarios*. Which may be confirmed by this conjecture, that the Philistines having sorely galled the Israelites, in the fatal battle with Saul, by their archers, David took care not only to have his people instructed in the use of the bow, but also procured some archers from the Cherethites, who were a part of the Philistines, to be his guard: as some princes now get the Switzers. (See my notes upon 1 Sam. xxxi. 3. and upon the first chapter of this book, ver. 18.) The number of them may be probably gathered from the targets and shields of gold that Solomon made, which were five hundred, (1 Kings x. 16, 17.) and were for the use of his guard, (2 Chron. xii. 9—11.) and kept in the guard-chamber.

They that would see more of them, may look into a little treatise of Opitius, which is wholly upon this subject: and Fortunatus Scacchus treats largely of them in his Myrothecium, iii. cap. 16—18. where he hath this singular opinion, p. 181. that the Cherethites were inferior to the Pelethites: but, I think, with reason concludes, that they were the king's domestics, and lay in his palace, or about it, in the night: which he gathers from 1 Kings i. 33. where David bids Nathan, and Zadok, and Benaiah, take with them the servants of their lord, and make Solomon king; and accordingly they took the Cherethites and the Pelethites with them; (ver. 38.) and from the story of that brave man Uriah, who would not go to his own house to his wife, when Joab and the host lay in the field; but went and slept at the door of the king's house *with the servants of his lord;* that is, with these Cherethites and Pelethites, (chap. xi. of this book, ver. 9.)

And David's sons were chief rulers.] So the Hebrew word *cohen* often signifies, not only a *priest*, but a *prince;* as many learned men have observed: particularly Hackspan, in his Miscellanea, lib. i. cap. 5. sect. 15. but especially Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 16. p. 671, &c. where he shews, that the Hebrew word signifies *any minister*, either of God or of man: as, in the twentieth chapter of this book, (ver. 26.) Ira, the Jairite, is said to be a *cohen*, which we translate *chief ruler* about David; and so the Chaldee, and the Spanish Jews, *a principal officer*. But by the law, neither he nor David's sons could be priests. There can be, therefore, no doubt of this, that they were the principal officers in the court of David, the prime ministers of his household: such as, among us, are the lord high-chamberlain, steward, treasurer, &c. as appears from 1 Chron. xviii. 17. where this matter is thus explained, *they were at the hand of the king:* waiting on him, as chief officers in his court, or, as Cornelius Bertram explains it, "publicos et primarios ministros," *the public and principal ministers of state*. (See Bochartus, lib. ii. Canaan, cap. 17.) And this was the reason, they say, of Absalom's discontent, that he was not one of these Αὐλάρχαι; or, had not a place according to his mind.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?*] Having ended his wars, and settled his kingdom and court, now he considers what private obligations he had; especially to the house of Saul, but above all to Jonathan. For he promised Saul, with an oath, that he would not cut off his seed, (1 Sam. xxiv. 21, 22.) and had made a covenant of friendship with Jonathan and his posterity for ever; confirmed also by an oath, (1 Sam. xx. 14—17. 42. xxiii. 18.)

Ver. 2. *And there was of the house of Saul a servant, whose name was Ziba.*] He had been employed in some business in Saul's family; but being a Canaanite (as some

of the Jews will have it), he did not recover his liberty with the death of Saul, but still continued in servitude under David.

And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he.] He was in such an inferior station, that David did not know him; though some among his courtiers did.

Ver. 3. *And the king said, Is there yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet.*] Here David, like a good man, and a worthy friend, and a noble prince, thinks how he may perform his promise to Jonathan, 1 Sam. xx. 14. where he obliged himself to shew *the kindness of the Lord*, that is, great kindness, to his posterity.

Ver. 4. *And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said, He is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar.*] A place on the other side Jordan, in Mount Gilead, (see xvii. 27.) where, it is likely, his friends thought him safe: being far from David; whom they looked upon as an enemy. (See ver. 7.)

Ver. 5. *Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.*] It is likely he sent Ziba to bring him to court, and to assure him of the king's kindness.

Ver. 6. *Now when Mephibosheth.*] Called also Meribbaal, 1 Chron. viii. 34. ix. 40.

The son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come to David, he fell on his face, and did reverence.] As the manner was when men came into the presence of the king, or the king's son: for thus David himself did to Jonathan, (1 Sam. xx. 41.)

And David said unto him, Mephibosheth! And he answered, Behold thy servant!] The king spake in a very friendly manner to him: and he answered as humbly.

Ver. 7. *And David said unto him, Fear not.*] This intimates that he had apprehensions David might have an evil eye upon him, as one that had a pretence to the kingdom.

For I will shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father.] Which he had purchased before he was king, or acquired afterward, or was descended to him from his father: but had been confiscated (as D. Kimchi observes) to the king's exchequer, because Ish-bosheth and the house of Saul had rebelled against David, who was the Lord's anointed. And accordingly afterward David gave all this land to Ziba, when he accused Mephibosheth of treason against him, xvi. 6. (See Selden, de Succession. ad Leges Hebræorum, cap. 25. fol. 89.)

And thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.] As one of his own children, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 8. *And he bowed himself.*] In token of his thankfulness.

And said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?] This is a high expression of his unworthiness of any favour. For a dog was accounted a vile and unclean creature, and a dead dog was of no use at all. See iii. 8. 1 Sam. xxiv. 15. where David spake thus to Saul, as Helena (Bochart observes) did to Hector. There being no greater expression of humility than this, for one to be so abject as to call himself a dog. In like manner, he that calls another so, (as Abishai doth Shimei, and Ulysses doth the wooers, to whom he calls ὦ κύνες, Odyss. x.) expresses the utmost contempt of him.

Ver. 9. *Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul, and to all his house.*] Some understand by his *master's son* the son of Mephibosheth, (called Micah, ver. 12.) because Ziba was not to provide for Mephibosheth himself, who was to be maintained by the king at his royal table. But it may as well be thought to be meant of Mephibosheth, who had this estate given him for such uses as he should think fit to appoint.

Ver. 10. *Thou therefore, thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruit, that thy master's son may have food to eat.*] This may seem to favour what was said before, that he was to manage the land for the benefit of Micah the son of Mephibosheth and his household, who were to be maintained out of the product of it: but the following words, I think, shew the contrary.

But Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread always at my table.] Now he declares publicly what he had said privately to Mephibosheth. Who being the person here plainly called *his master's son* (*i. e.* the son of Jonathan), it inclines me to conclude that he is understood before by that name: whose family was to be maintained by the fruit of the estate that David gave him, though he himself was to eat always with David.

Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.] Who were sufficient to manage a very great estate.

Ver. 11. *Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so will thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.*] Those words, *said the king*, are not in the original text: so that these words may be thought to be Ziba's: who said he would keep a table for Mephibosheth also, if David pleased, and entertain him royally, the land being sufficient to afford it. But I do not see how he could call it *my table;* which must be the language of David: who now repeated what he had said before, that Ziba should take no care of Mephibosheth.

Ver. 12. *And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Micah.*] Who had many sons, from whom issued a numerous progeny, which lasted many generations, (1 Chron. viii. 34, 35, &c. ix. 40, 41, &c.)

And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants unto Mephibosheth.] And consequently accountable to him for all that they received out of the estate: which, it appears by this, was settled upon him.

Ver. 13. *So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem.*] Ziba went to take care of his land, which was at Gibeah of Benjamin, but Mephibosheth stayed with the king, that he might partake of his bounty.

For he did eat bread continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.] Though he could not go, yet he was carried thither; for so the words may be translated, *though he was lame*, &c. This defect and blemish did not hinder him from being entertained by the king with the greatest kindness: which procured him, though despicable in his person, honour from the people, as one in great favour with their king.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass after this, that the king of the children of Ammon died.*] Who, it appears by the next verse, was Nahash: to whom Saul gave a very great defeat at Jabesh-Gilead, (1 Sam. xi.)

And Hanun his son reigned in his stead.] For it seems that was an hereditary kingdom, as most were in those countries and times.

Ver. 2. *Then said David, I will shew kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, for his father shewed kindness unto me.*] All generous minds are full of gratitude and compassion, as Strigelius here observes out of several heathen authors. But there is no example of it greater than in David, who remembers ancient benefits received from Nahash, and pitied his son who had lost such a father. What those benefits were is uncertain. Some of the Jews say he fled to him, when he durst not stay with Achish, and he received him kindly; others, that he entertained his relations, when the king of Moab, to whom David committed them, slew some of them: but it is most probable, that, being an enemy to Saul, who had given him a great overthrow, he proved a friend to David when he was persecuted by him, and sent him relief and assistance, and perhaps offered him his protection.

And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father.] According to the present custom among princes, who send some of their courtiers to condole the loss of those with whom they live in friendship.

And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon.] Where they had audience of Hanun, and delivered their message: which his court sinistrously interpreted, as appears by the next verse.

Ver. 3. *And the princes of the children of Ammon.*] Who bare a great sway in all public affairs.

Said unto Hanun their lord, Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee?] They measured his affection by their own: who having no kindness for David, imagined he had as little for them.

Hath not David rather sent his servants to search the city, and to spy it out?] Nothing so well meant but may be ill interpreted; and is wont to be so by men who love nobody but themselves!

To overthrow it.] They persuade him that these ambassadors came only to observe where the city was weakest, and might be most successfully assaulted and taken.

Ver. 4. *Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off one half of their beards.*] He was not only very credulous, but very ill natured; for otherwise he would have civilly dismissed them, whatsoever his courtiers suspected, or kept them in an honourable custody till the truth had been discovered. But this was the highest disgrace that could be put upon them: for all people thought their hair a great ornament, and never shaved their heads or their beards but in case of mourning: which was forbid to the Israelites, (Lev. xix. 27. Deut. xiv. 1.) And therefore, when he had caused one half of their beards to be cut off, they abhorred to cut the other; which made them look ridiculously. (See Isa. xv. 2. Jer. xli. 5. xlviii. 37.) We learn what a foul disgrace, yea, a heavy punishment, this was in ancient times, from Nicolaus Damascenus, mentioned by Stobæus, tit. 42. who says, that among the Indians the king commanded the greatest offenders to be shaven, κελεύει κείρασθαι ὡς ἐσχάτης τιμωρίας, as the heaviest punishment he could inflict upon them. And Tacitus saith, that there were few adulteresses among the ancient Germans, whose punishment was left to the husbands: and they were wont to cut off their hair, and turn them naked out of doors, and whip them through the streets. (See Georg. Ritterhusius de Jure Asylorum, cap. 10.) And at this day this is the greatest indignity that can be offered to any man in Persia, to cause his beard to be shaved off: as Tavernier relates in his Indian Travels, p. 121. where he tells us the sophi caused an ambassador of Aurengzebe to be thus used, telling him he was not worthy to wear a beard, and thereupon commanded it to be shaved off. Which was just like this act of Hanun. And Aurengzebe most highly resented the affront that was offered him in the person of his ambassador, as David did this which was offered him in his.

And cut their garments to the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away.] Long garments down to the heels were worn in those countries, especially by honourable persons: and therefore the king of Ammon still put a further indignity upon them, in cutting their garments short, even to the middle: whereby those parts were exposed which required to be covered. For the Israelites did not wear breeches, as we do: so that their long garments being cut to the middle, their nakedness might be seen. (See Isa. xx. 4.)

Ver. 5. *And when they told it unto David, he sent to meet them, because they were greatly ashamed.*] Therefore he sent, no doubt, clothes to cover them, together with the following advice.

And the king said, Tarry at Jericho.] Which was the first place to which they came in the land of Canaan: and now a private village, where they might obscure themselves, till they were fit to appear in public.

Until your beards be grown, and then return.] For it was a reproach in that country to have no beard. And though it was well known how they came to be deprived of them, yet it was not fit that persons of their quality should appear unlike all other men.

Ver. 6. *And when the children of Ammon saw that they stank before David,*] They wanted not intelligence how heinously David resented the barbarous usage of his ambassadors: which is expressed by a phrase, which signifies that they were become very odious to him. (See Gen. xxxiv. 30.)

The children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob.] They distrusted their own strength, and therefore hired auxiliary forces of their neighbours: particularly those of Beth-rehob, which was a city belonging to the Canaanites rather than the Syrians (as Bochart observes), who were only borderers upon it.

And the Syrians of Zobah, twenty thousand footmen.] Concerning Zobah, see viii. 3.

And of king Maacah a thousand men.] Maacah also was a city in Palestine, beyond Jordan, in the tribe of Manasseh, as Rehob was in the tribe of Asher, (Josh. xiii. 11. xix. 28.) but the Canaanites kept them out of the possession of both, (Josh. xiii. 13. Judg. i. 31.) Therefore Bochartus confutes

those who think Aram-Maacah was the country of Comagena: for though Aram commonly signifies Syria, which was divided into many countries, yet the Scriptures shew these places were not in Syria. But the people of them were called Syrians, because they imitated their manners: as the woman in the gospel is called Syro-Phœnician, though she was a woman of Canaan, Matt. xv. 22. Mark vii. 26. (See his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 6. latter end.)

And of Ish-tob twelve thousand men.] Or, of the *men of Tob:* a country unto which Jephthah fled from his unkind brethren. (See Judg. xi. 3.)

Ver. 7. *And when David heard of it, he sent Joab, and the host of the mighty men.*] He did not think it prudent to stay till they assaulted him in his own country, but went and invaded theirs.

Ver. 8. *And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate.*] They drew up their army either before Rabbah, the metropolis of their country, or before Medeba (in the borders of it), where their confederates were pitched, (1 Chron. xix. 7.)

And the Syrians of Zobah, and of Rehob, and Ish-tob, and Maacah, were by themselves in the field.] They kept their mercenary forces in the field, and would not let them come into their cities.

Ver. 9. *And when Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind,*] In the Hebrew, *the face of the battle,* &c. *i. e.* they had divided their forces; the Syrians appearing before him, and the Ammonites behind him.

He chose of all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians.] He also, like an expert commander, presently divided his army into two bodies, and picked out the best soldiers to engage the Syrians, who, it seems, were the strongest, or most valiant.

Ver. 10. *And the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put them in array against the children of Ammon.*] He was also an experienced captain, who seems to have to deal with that body of the enemies which was behind them, as Joab with those before him.

Ver. 11. *And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me; but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee.*] Send a detachment, as they now speak, from the strongest body to that which proved weaker.

Ver. 12. *Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God.*] The words were not spoken, I suppose, to Abishai alone; but to all the army by their officers; that they might not be disheartened at the sight of such numerous forces, as in a manner encompassed them: but be so much the more resolute, for the preservation of their country.

And the Lord do that which seemeth him good.] If they did their duty, he trusted God's providence would favour them: however, it would be some comfort, that they had done their best.

Ver. 13. *And Joab drew nigh, and the people that were with him, unto the battle against the Syrians: and they fled before him.*] He did very prudently in assaulting the mercenary army first; for they that are hired to fight generally have a great care to save themselves: having no regard to the cause for which they fight.

Ver. 14. *And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled.*] On whom they principally relied.

Then fled they also before Abishai, and entered into the city.] They seem not to have struck a stroke; but provided also for their safety, in the city near to which their army was drawn up.

And Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem.] Here is no account of the number of the slain, which, I suppose, were few or none, because they did not fight, but flee. The year also seems to have been so far spent, that it was not a season fit for laying a siege to the city. (See the next chapter, ver. 1.)

Ver. 15. *And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they gathered themselves together.*] Fearing David would fall upon them for assisting his enemies, they resolved to be beforehand with him; and therefore levied a new army to invade him.

Ver. 16. *And Hadadezer.*] Who was the king of Aram-Zobah, in Mesopotamia.

Sent, and brought out the Syrians that were beyond the river.] *i. e.* Beyond Euphrates; which was the bound of his territories eastward. (See viii. 3.)

And came to Helam.] A place, I suppose, on the borders of Hadadezer's country, westward.

And Shobach, the captain of the host of Hadadezer, went before them.] Commanded both his forces and theirs which came to his assistance.

Ver. 17. *And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam.*] In this expedition David seems to have commanded his army in his own person.

And the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him.] They seem to have begun the fight.

Ver. 18. *And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew the men of seven hundred chariots.*] That is, seven thousand men, who belonged to those seven hundred chariots, as it is explained in 1 Chron. xix. 18.

And forty thousand horsemen.] In that place of the Chronicles it is said *forty thousand footmen.* Which teaches us how to explain the words here; *viz.* that they were mixed together, horse and foot: and that in all there were slain forty thousand of them, part horsemen and part footmen.

And smote Shobach, the captain of their host, who died there.] Was slain upon the spot (as we speak); being a valiant man, who chose to be killed, rather than fly.

Ver. 19. *And when all the kings that were servants of Hadadezer saw that they were smitten before Israel.*] There were several petty kings that were subject to Hadadezer: who was the most powerful prince thereabout.

They made peace with Israel, and served them.] As, I suppose, Hadadezer himself also did: whereby God fulfilled his promise to Abraham (which was renewed to Joshua) of enlarging the dominion of his posterity, as far as Euphrates. (See Gen. xv. 18. Josh. i. 2—4.)

So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more.] But left them to shift for themselves: insomuch that, as it follows, David conquered their country.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, that after the year was expired.*] In the Hebrew, *at the return of the year:* that is,

in the spring-time, he sent forth his armies to do that which he could not do in the conclusion of the former year; when the season was not fit for action, as I observed upon the fifteenth verse of the foregoing chapter. For the year ending with the month Adar, the next year began in the month Nisan: which was a fit time to march into the field to make war; and so commonly employed, that it seems to have had its name (as Bochartus observes) from *Nisim*: which signifies military ensigns, which were wont to be advanced in that month. And, in like manner, the month we call March, had its name among the Romans from Mars, their god of war: because then they began their military expeditions. (See his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50.)

At the time that kings go forth to battle.] These words, *to battle*, are added for explication's sake: but they are not in the Hebrew; in which language *to go forth* signifies to go forth to war. (See Gen. x. 11. Isa. xlii. 13. Zech. xiv. 3. and other places, mentioned by the same great man, par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 2.)

That David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel.] All his soldiers.

And they destroyed the children of Ammon.] Laid waste their country, and killed all the people they could meet with.

And besieged Rabbah.] The royal city of the Ammonites, (Deut. iii. 11.)

But David tarried still at Jerusalem.] He committed the care of this war to Joab, and did not himself go out to fight: as he had done before against Hadadezer.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass in an evening-tide.*] In the afternoon, when the sun was declining.

That David rose from his bed.] Where he had lain down to sleep, in the heat of the day; as the manner was in those countries, (iv. 5.)

And walked upon the roof of his house.] To take the fresh air: for their roofs were flat. (See Deut. xxii. 8.)

And from the roof he saw a woman washing herself.] In her garden, where she bathed; or in her chamber, the casements being open. The first is most probable: and that she washed to cleanse herself from such legal impurities as are mentioned Lev. xv. 19. which is more likely than that she did it for pleasure, or merely to cool herself in a hot day, as some understand it. The fourth verse sufficiently explains this matter.

And the woman was very beautiful to look upon.] Of a delicate shape, and lovely countenance and complexion. Thus Jupiter is said to have seen Proserpina washing herself, and exposing her whole body to his view: which inflamed his lust after her.

Λουομένης ὅλον εἶδος ἐδέρκετο Περσεφονείης.

As Nonnus hath it in his Dionys. (See Spanhemius ad vers. 53. Callim. Hymn. in Lavacrum Palladis.)

Ver. 3. *And David sent and inquired after her.*] That if she was a single woman he might take her for his wife.

And one said, Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?] This seems to be the answer of him who was sent to inquire about her, that he need not trouble himself any farther, for she was another man's wife. Who is called a Hittite, because he was so by nation, but a proselyte to the Jewish religion: and for his valour made one of the king's guard among the Cherethites and the Pelethites, which was the reason, perhaps, that he had a house so near the king's.

Ver. 4. *And David sent messengers to her, and took her.*] Notwithstanding he was informed she was another man's wife, he sent messengers to her to invite her to his palace: into which he received her. This was a very great crime, being done deliberately and advisedly: and is here recorded for several great ends and purposes. First, that the best men may be sensible in what need they stand continually of the Divine assistance: which, therefore, they ought to pray for earnestly, and watch as well as pray, that they fall not into temptation. And we should all learn from hence, that they are but men whose examples are set before us; and therefore we must live by rule, and not merely by example. And that we ought to take heed of sloth and idleness: being always well employed, and not giving ourselves liberty to gaze upon temptations.

And she came in unto him, and lay with him (for she was purified from her uncleanness).] Which shews the reason why she conceived so quickly. (See Grotius.)

And she returned to her house.] Early in the morning, I suppose, that she might not be discovered. The Talmudists are so desirous to excuse their ancestors from all blemishes, that they say David committed no sin in lying with Bath-sheba: but only in causing Uriah to be killed. For, when any man went to war, he gave his wife, they pretend, a bill of divorce: so that if he was killed in the war, it was not adultery in another man, who lay with her, as soon as the bill was given. This monstrous opinion is seriously maintained by R. Samuel Laniado against Abarbinel; who honestly acknowledges, and strenuously proves, David was guilty of a very foul adultery: which was the more criminal, because it was with the wife of a faithful servant of his, who then served him in his wars. (See Buxtorf. de Sponsal. et Divort. sect. 43, &c. and Selden, in his Uxor. Hebraica, lib. iii. cap. 19. p. 441.)

Ver. 5. *And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, saying, I am with child.*] She was afraid of infamy, and, perhaps, of the severity of her husband; who might cause her to be stoned: and therefore prays David to consult her honour and her safety.

Ver. 6. *And David sent unto Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.*] With an account of the state of the war; which David, it is likely, desired.

Ver. 7. *And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.*] Some think (particularly P. Martyr) that these were such ordinary questions, as betrayed this was not the business for which he commanded him to be sent: but the last words import, that after the common questions of Joab's and the people's health, he inquired how the siege went on; what approaches they had made to the city; what hopes they had of taking it; in what time; with other things of like nature, which were of importance.

Ver. 8. *And David said, Go down to thy house and wash thy feet.*] As the manner of travellers was: this being a great refreshment after their journey.

And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king.] In token of his extraordinary favour and kindness to him: and that, eating freely of good cheer, he might be the more desirous to enjoy the company of his wife. Abarbinel thinks this was a very sinful contrivance of David, to endeavour to have

his child thought the child of Uriah: or, at least, it was very much below his dignity, he thinks, to have one of his own progeny pass for an ordinary man.

Ver. 9. *But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.*] Like a true soldier, he lay all night in the guard-chamber (with the Cherethites and Pelethites), and not with his wife. By which means God's providence so ordered it, that the crime of this prince (who had been so admirably instructed in his duty) should not be concealed, as he intended.

Ver. 10. *And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down to his house.*] They that carried the mess of meat after him gave David this information.

David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? wherefore then didst thou not go down to thine house?] He still pretended kindness to him, and great care of him: telling him he expected no service of him here; especially after a journey.

Ver. 11. *And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents.*] It seems they still continued the custom which we read of 1 Sam. iv. 4. of carrying the ark into the field, as a token of the Divine presence with them, and favour to them: and that they might consult the Divine Majesty in any difficult cases.

And my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open field.] Where they lay upon the ground in their tents. It is an idle conceit of Laniado, beforementioned, that Uriah was guilty of treason, in calling Joab *my lord*, in the presence of David: for which he pretends David might lawfully put him to death.

Shall I then go unto my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.] These are not two oaths, but the repetition of the same: which was pronounced with such vehemence, that David's heart, it might have been expected, should have been deeply touched, to think how he had abused so brave a man: and made him reflect how vilely he indulged himself in sinful pleasure, whilst this man and the rest gloriously endured all manner of hardships, and refused the most innocent pleasure, for the service of their country: but he was so corrupted for the present, that he was troubled to find Uriah so true a soldier.

Ver. 12. *And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to-day also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day and the morrow.*] He still pretended more kindness to him in giving him time to rest himself after his journey: and perhaps pretended, also, that he himself could not sooner finish his dispatches.

Ver. 13. *And when David had called him.*] Invited him to supper the night before he went away.

He did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.] The Hebrew word doth not certainly signify that he was quite drunk; but that he drank so much, that he was very merry. However, Plutarch observes, that brave men, even when they have drunk too much, preserve their modesty and gravity: just as good horses are orderly, even when their reins are let loose. This was an addition to David's sin, that he endeavoured to intoxicate Uriah, and thereby make him forget his oath beforementioned.

Ver. 14. *And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.*] Who, if he suspected any thing of the adultery, as some think he did (and therefore, resolving it should be discovered, would not go home to his wife), yet was so trusty a servant, he would not open the letter, to find what was in it.

Ver. 15. *And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.*] Thus one sin begets many, depriving men of the use of their understanding. For he might better, as Abarbinel observes, have told Uriah the truth, and begged his pardon, and obliged him to stay with him until the child was born, and then secretly put it out to nurse: whereby the matter might have been so managed, that it should not have been commonly divulged, or not certainly believed. But his eyes were blinded; and his very nature was altered, and become base and degenerate, now he had given himself up to sensuality. For he that formerly spared Saul, when he could have destroyed him, and no one have known who did it, seeks the death of a faithful servant after a most unworthy manner.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where valiant men were.*] Ordered him to attack a part of the city which he knew would be valiantly defended: or, to make good a breach, out of which the best men they had in the city would issue out against them. Joab was herein also deeply guilty, in complying with such a command: unless we suppose that he might imagine Uriah had committed some great crime; for which David, consulting Uriah's honour, would not punish him openly.

Ver. 17. *And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab.*] They seem to have made a sally out of the city upon the Israelites, when they saw they were preparing for an assault.

And there fell some of the people of the servants of David, and Uriah the Hittite died also.] This was a further aggravation of David's sin, that he not only exposed an innocent and a valiant faithful servant to be killed, but other persons also with him, who might have lived to do good service to their country: for it is not to be imagined that one person alone was set in the forefront, where the service was hottest, (as David ordered, ver. 15.) but there was a party of stout men with Uriah, whom he led on.

Ver. 18. *Then Joab sent and told David all things concerning the war.*] How it was managed, and what ill success they had in one engagement.

Ver. 19. *And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king.*] Especially this last action.

Ver. 20. *And if so be the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?*] All good kings are careful to preserve their subjects; and therefore it must be supposed David would be angry when he heard of this loss; till he reflected upon the reason why they were exposed to such danger.

Ver. 21. *Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth?*] These are still the words the king might be supposed to say; How came Abimelech to lose his life? Was it not by venturing too near the wall? He calls him the son of Jerub-

besheth, who in the book of Judges is called the son of Jerubbaal: of which see upon the second chapter of this book, ver. 8.

Did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? Why went ye so nigh the wall?] Having such an example, to make you more cautious.

Then say, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.] Which he knew would soon pacify him.

Ver. 22. *So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for.*] The whole process of the war hitherto, but more particularly the event of the last engagement, as it here follows.

Ver. 23. *And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate.*] The account he gives of the last action is this: that the Ammonites made a sally, and were too hard for the Israelites, whom they put into some disorder; but they, plucking up their courage, rallied again, and beat the Ammonites back, following them to the very gate of their city.

Ver. 24. *And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and some of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.*] These shooters were either archers, or such as managed the machines (which perhaps they had in these days, as they had afterward among the Romans), out of which they shot arrows and stones. Vitruvius says, that out of their *catapultæ* and *scorpiones* they shot arrows, and out of their *balistæ* they shot stones. Others say the quite contrary, as Goteschalchus Stewecius shews, in his learned commentary on the fourth book of Vegetius, lib. de Re Militari, p. 446, &c.

Ver. 25. *Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee.*] That is, be not disheartened by this loss. David shewed no sign of displeasure, expecting to hear the news he desired of Uriah's death.

For the sword devoureth one as well as another.] Makes no distinction between good and bad.

Make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it.] He would have this defeat make them more resolute, to assault the city with greater force, till they were masters of it.

And encourage thou him.] *i. e.* Joab and his soldiery.

Ver. 26. *And when the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.*] But not long: for then David could not have taken her soon enough into his house to cover his adultery. The common time was seven days, (1 Sam. xxxi. 7.)

Ver. 27. *And when the mourning was past, David sent, and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.*] This whole business *was evil in the eyes* of God (as the words are in the Hebrew), not only his adultery, and the murder of Uriah; but also his taking Bath-sheba to be his wife. For, according to the Hebrew doctors, it was utterly unlawful for any man to marry the wife of one whom he had defiled. Which hath made some of the Jews so laborious to excuse David from the crime of adultery. For Laniado himself acknowledges, that if David had committed adultery with Bath-sheba, she had been perpetually prohibited, and unlawful to him, as his words are. But though this ought not to have been done, yet, being done, the marriage held good; and the children he afterward had by her were legitimate. (See Buxtorf. de Sponsalibus et Divortiis, sect. 43.)

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Lord sent Nathan unto David.*] To awaken him out of his sleep, and give him a sight of his sins.

And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.] This was a prudent and respectful way of awakening David by an apposite parable: which was so managed, that the prophet did not condemn David, but made him condemn himself. And many have very pertinently observed from hence, that there is never more use of wisdom and discretion than in the contrivance of reprehension: especially of princes and great persons, whom the ministers of Christ ought to admonish and reprove in an humble and reverend representation of their sins to them, not with rude exprobations of them, and declamations against them. It is not necessary to apply every word of this parable to David's case (as the beginning of it is exactly fitted), because in parables several things are added, which serve only to make them decorous and handsome. Yet Abarbinel (as I shall shew in the conclusion of it) hath endeavoured to give an account of every part of it.

Ver. 2. *And the rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds.*] As David had many wives and concubines, with which he might have been well satisfied.

Ver. 3. *But the poor man had nothing, save only one little ewe-lamb.*] Perhaps Uriah had only one wife, with whom he contented himself, or rather was highly pleased, she being mild and gentle as a lamb.

Which he had bought, and nourished up.] They frequently purchased their wives in those days; giving to their parents a sum of money for them. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Uxore Hebr. cap. 20.)

And it grew up together with him, and with his children: it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.] That is, was exceeding dear to him, and beloved by him. This is a resemblance not unlike the truth, unto those who understand how fond many persons were anciently, not only of lambs, but of several other creatures, which they suffered to eat with them at their tables, and to lie with them in their beds, as Bochart shews in his Hieroz. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 43.

Ver. 4. *And there came a traveller to the rich man.*] This may be applied to David's straggling affection, which he suffered to wander from his own home, and to covet another man's wife. The Jewish doctors say it represents that which they call *jetzer hara, the evil disposition*, or desire that is in us, which must be diligently watched and observed when we feel its motions. For they have this ingenious observation concerning it, in Bereschith Rabba and other books: "In the beginning it is but a traveller; but in time it becomes a guest; and in conclusion, is the master of the house." For he, say they, who is called a *traveller* in the beginning of this verse, is called *isch, a man*, in the conclusion of it.

And he spared to take of his own flock, and his own herd,

to dress for the way-faring man that was come to him.] Wherewith he might have satisfied his appetite.

But took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.] He touches not in this parable upon the murder, for that was committed to cover the adultery, which led the way to the other crime. And Abarbinel gives a reason why it is not mentioned in his explication of the parable: which is this:—The rich man, saith he, plainly signifies David; his flocks and herds, David's wives and concubines: the poor man represents Uriah, who, he thinks, was a widower, and had several children alive by a former wife, when he married Bath-sheba. Whom he compares to a lamb which he bought, because he solemnly espoused her; and with tender affection he cherished her, and she grew up with him, and with his children, which he had by his former wife. This lamb being taken by the rich man from the poor, to gratify a wanton appetite, signifies David's taking Bath-sheba and lying with her. And it would have made the resemblance more complete, if he had added, that the rich man killed the poor man, from whom he took the lamb. But this is omitted, Abarbinel thinks, in the parable, that David might not readily apprehend Nathan's meaning; and so be induced unawares to pronounce a sentence of condemnation upon himself. And then he had a fixed opportunity to shew him, that if the rich man who took away the poor man's lamb deserved death, according to his own judgment, how much more did he deserve it, who had not only taken another man's wife, but also caused him to be slain by the enemies of Israel?

Ver. 5. *And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die.*] Punishments sometimes extended beyond the law, because of the great atrocity of the crime.

Ver. 6. *And he shall restore the lamb fourfold.*] This was agreeable to the law, (Exod. xxii. 1.).

Because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.] Because he took away the lamb, he condemned him to make restitution fourfold: and because he had no pity (it being his only lamb), he condemned him to die. Kimchi will have it, that the word signifies twice fourfold; because it is in their dual number: so that this punishment also is beyond the law. But all the ancient interpreters are against him. But the Jews here observe that these words were ominous: so many of David's sons perishing, as he said the rich man should restore lambs, *viz.* the child he had by Bath-sheba, Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah. (See Bochartus, in his Hieroz. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 40.)

Ver. 7. *And Nathan said unto David, Thou art the man.*] Who had pronounced a dreadful sentence against himself. Though reproofs of men in authority are to be managed very mannerly, as to the form wherein they are delivered; yet as to the matter they are to be plain and downright, so that they may be made sensible of their guilt.

Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and delivered thee out of the hand of Saul.] Who sought to hinder his advancement to the kingdom, by destroying him. Thus he aggravates David's sin, from the obligations he had to God: who had preferred him to the highest dignity, when he was in a low, and sometimes a desperate condition.

Ver. 8. *And I gave thee thy master's house.*] His kingdom.

And thy master's wives into thy bosom.] For the wives of a king went along with his lands and goods unto his successor: it being unlawful for the widow of a king to be wife to any but a king; as appears by the story of Adonijah. But this doth not signify that David married any of them; but only that they were delivered into his possession, as all other things belonging unto Saul were. So Maimonides: and more than this, the Jewish doctors say, no subject might have so much as the horse of the king, no more than his sceptre and crown: much less his widow, or one divorced by him, who was to remain a widow to the day of her death. So the same Maimonides: The wife of a king is to be married to none else; for even the king cannot legally marry the widow of his predecessor, or one divorced by him. (See Selden, lib. i. de Uxore Hebr. cap. 10. and Carpzovius upon Schickard's Jus Regium, p. 441.) But there are those, who, to avoid all controversy about this matter, interpret the word *nase*, not *wives*, but mere *women*, belonging unto Saul.

And gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah.] Dominion over all the twelve tribes.

And if that had been too little, I would moreover have given thee such and such things.] He need but have asked, and God would have given him all that he could reasonably desire: but he ought not to have taken what he pleased himself. The Jews refer this to the wives he would have given him: and gather from hence, that their king might have eighteen wives, and no more. (See upon Deut. xvii. 17.) But it is evident these words, *such and such things*, do not signify a certain number of any thing, but indefinitely other benefits of any kind: as Theod. Hackspan observes out of many like places, particularly Isa. vii. 20. (See his Disput. 4. n. 3.)

Ver. 9. *Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight?*] These words, and David's own confession, (ver. 13.) might have ashamed the Talmudists, one would think, from framing excuses for David's sin, and absolving him from any guilt. Bartoloccius hath given a large account of their lewd prevarication in this matter, in his Kirjath-sepher, tom. ii. p. 102, 103, &c.

Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword.] For he contrived his death, which was as bad as if he had killed him himself.

And hast taken his wife to be thy wife.] After he had first committed adultery with her.

And hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.] This highly aggravated his crime, as Abarbinel observes, that he caused him to be slain by the professed enemies of God; who triumphed in the slaughter of so great a man. And in this, Laniado himself confesses David sinned, though in nothing else.

Ver. 10. *Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house.*] That is, as long as he lived there should be slaughters in his family. Which was fulfilled in the violent death of his children, Amnon, and Absalom, and (about the time of his death) Adonijah.

Because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.] Which, it appears by this repetition, was a very great offence, but not greater than his adultery, as Procopius Gazæus thinks it was.

Ver. 11. *Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house.*] That is, his own family: which was notoriously fulfilled in Absalom's conspiracy against him.

And I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.] For Absalom had a tent spread in the house-top, and there went in unto them, (xvi. 21, 22.) Which is said to be done before David's eyes, because, though he did not see it, yet it was done so publicly that he could not but know it, and yet was not able to hinder it.

Ver. 12. *For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.*] For it was notorious to all how David fled in haste from his son, and left his concubines behind him, (xv. 14—16.)

Ver. 13. *And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord.*] This confession was made in a few words; but, no doubt, with many sobs and great grief, compunction and contrition of heart.

And Nathan said unto David.] Not presently, but after he had bewailed his sin so bitterly that his repentance appeared to be hearty.

The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.] He was guilty of death upon a double account, as an adulterer and as a murderer, as Procopius Gazæus observes. But upon his repentance the prophet pronounces an absolution to him, thus far, that he should be pardoned the guilt and part of the punishment. That is, he should not perish eternally (as Rasi and others interpret the words, *thou shalt not die*), nor here suffer the death he had deserved. For though when God gave them a king like other nations, he did not intend that he should be above all law, and not be bound to the laws he himself had given (as Abarbinel observes), yet he was not subject to the punishment of the law, which no magistrate could inflict, because he was the supreme: but God reserved his punishment to himself, and threatens to inflict it when inferior officers could not. Which threatening did not take away from him the power of pardoning and releasing the punishment, but he left that entire to himself, and here uses it; but in such a manner, that he freed David only from the punishment of death, and the loss of his kingdom: otherwise he was to suffer a great many and sore calamities as long as he lived. (See J. Benedict. Carpzovius upon Schickard's Jus Regium, cap. 2. Theor. 7. p. 137.) Whereby it appears how false the doctrine of the Talmudists is concerning the power of the great Sanhedrin, who they say had power to scourge their kings, &c. Which we never find was attempted, though Saul and David, and especially Manasseh, committed most heinous sins, which deserved severe correction.

Ver. 14. *Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.*] This was an additional punishment, to be inflicted presently: because his sin was highly aggravated, in that the nations about them might thereby be tempted to have him and his Divine law in great contempt: which they saw no more regarded by the best men that professed it. Or, they might blaspheme God, as a respecter of persons, who had rejected Saul, and yet kept David on the throne, who had done worse than he. Or, the Ammonites, perhaps, insulted over Israel and their God, when they had killed Uriah and others with him. Yet Procopius Gazæus here well observes, there was some mercy mixed with this punishment; for if the child had lived, it would have been a standing monument of his adultery. And therefore it may be thought, that, in favour of David, God took him away, that he might remove his reproach.

But this verse suggests a wonderful thing to us, that David remained many months insensible of what he had done (so bewitching is sensual pleasure); for the child begotten in adultery was born before Nathan came to rouse him out of his lethargy.

Ver. 15. *And Nathan departed unto his house: and the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.*] Of some sudden sore distemper: which appeared, at first, as if it were mortal.

Ver. 16. *David therefore besought the Lord for the child.*] He thought the threatening might not be absolute: the will of God being not always manifested entirely at once, but he reserves still something to himself. As when he commanded Abraham to offer his son: and when he told Hezekiah he should die.

And David fasted, and went in.] To his closet, I suppose, or some place of retirement.

And lay all night upon the earth.] Humbling himself greatly for his sin, which had deserved this, and far sorer punishment. Salvian (in his second book, De Gubern. Dei) describes this admirably:—He put off his purple, saith he, threw away his royal ornaments, laid down his diadem, wholly stripped himself of his kingship, and appeared as a penitent, in a squalid, rueful garb; fasting, lying on the ground, confessing, mourning, repenting, deprecating, &c. and yet, with all his humiliation and compunction, he could not obtain a revocation of this punishment. By this, and the story of Absalom, it appears that David was a great lover of his children: many of which proved great afflictions to him.

Ver. 17. *And the elders of his house.*] The principal officers belonging to the court.

Arose, and went to him to raise him up from the earth.] By their earnest entreaties, to have a care of his own health.

But he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.] As he was wont to do at other times, when the principal persons of the court sat at table with him. But it is not to be thought that David ate nothing all the time the child was sick, but only after he began to despair of his life; or perhaps, all the time he ate nothing till the evening; and then abstained from all delicate food, and contented himself with coarser fare.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, that on the seventh day the child died.*] Either the seventh day after its birth, before it was circumcised, or the seventh after it fell sick. This was the first beginning of the Divine animadversion upon him (as Salvian speaks), "Fuit utique primum, sed non solum," *it was indeed the first, but not the alone:* for there followed a long train of exceeding great troubles.

And the servants of David feared to tell him the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice; how will he then vex himself, if we tell him the child is dead?] Thus they whispered and reasoned among themselves, so that he might not hear them, as appears by the next verse.

Ver. 19. *And when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead.*] He guessed what the matter was.

Therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead.] They would not acquaint him with it abruptly, for fear he should fall into too great a passion.

Ver. 20. *Then David rose up from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel.*] Put off the habit of a mourner, and prepared himself decently to appear before God. For it is certain the Jews were wont to wash before they went into the house of God, either their whole body, or their hands; which was usual among the gentiles also. And some have imagined the Jews learnt it from them; because we find no mention of it, as they say, till the time of Judith, xii. 7. (See Dr. Spencer, dissert. 3. cap. 2. sect. 11.) But that is a mistake; it being mentioned not only here in this place, but in the book of Psalms, xxvi. 6. For God having anciently commanded them to wash themselves, before they appeared in his presence at Mount Sinai, (Exod. xx. 20.) they thence, it is likely, concluded it was fit to prepare themselves for all their holy assemblies after the same manner.

And came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped.] This was done like a truly good man, who, before he would go to his own house, went to God's, and there gave him thanks, we may suppose, for the pardon of his sin, and not cutting him off as he had done his child. He acknowledged also the justice of God, and did not complain of his severity. He submitted to his holy will, and beseeched him, perhaps, that the remaining afflictions might be moderated, and made profitable to him.

Then he came to his own house; and, when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.] I suppose he was in some retired room of his own house, where he lay upon the earth mourning, and would not eat: from whence he would not remove to any other part of it, till he had been first at the house of God, and there worshipped.

Ver. 21. *Then said his servants to him, What is this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the child when he was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread.*] His great officers, who sat at the table with him, I suppose, said this.

Ver. 22. *And he said, While the child was yet alive I fasted and wept; for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious unto me, that the child may live?*] They thought him preposterous in mourning while the child was alive, and cheering up himself when it was dead. But he shews what reason he had for both: it being possible God might be so kind as to reverse the sentence of death which he had pronounced against the child, upon David's humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer to him for mercy.

Ver. 23. *But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*] But now God's will being declared to be absolute, it was in vain to solicit for the child's life; which he could not hope to see restored by fasting and prayers, or any other means: but he must rather prepare to go to it, than think of bringing it back to him. Maimonides says, that they did not lament infants who died before they were thirty days old, but carried them in their arms to the grave, with one woman and two men to attend them; without saying the usual prayers over them, or the consolations for mourners. But if an infant was above thirty days old when he died, they carried him out on a small bier, and stood over him in order, and said the prayers and consolations. If he was a year old, then he was carried out upon a bed. This custom Gierus thinks David followed, in making no mourning for his child when it was dead: though there is no ground to think such customs as Maimonides describes were used in these early days. (See L. de Luctu Ebræorum, cap. 3.)

Ver. 24. *And David comforted Bath-sheba his wife.*] Who, no doubt, was deeply afflicted for the loss of her child: which was a strong bond while it lived, to tie David's affection to her: but being dead, she might fear he would no longer have any concern for her; but, perhaps, divorce her, as having been the occasion of great evil to him. It is observable, that there is not one word said of Bath-sheba in all this relation, either concerning her guilt or her punishment. She was punished, I suppose, in the calamities that befel David: who enticed her, not she him, to commit the foul sin of adultery, and was innocent in the murder of Uriah.

And went in unto her, and lay with her.] Which it was not lawful to do, as Maimonides observes, while the days of mourning lasted: for then they might not so much as marry, though they did not lie together. But those days being ended, he enjoyed her company. The same Gierus hath collected a great deal to this purpose, in the forenamed book, cap. 21.

And she bare him a son, and called his name Solomon.] Some think his mother first gave him this name, as soon as he was born.

And the Lord loved him.] As the Lord told him, it is likely, by Nathan the prophet: who comforted him, after his great humiliation, with this good hope, that notwithstanding his sin God would have a kindness for this son, and make him very famous. Such is the wonderful goodness of God to truly-penitent sinners, who testify the sincerity of their repentance by humble submission to whatsoever punishments God thinks fit to inflict upon them (as David did to the death of the former child), and thereby incline the Divine Goodness to shew further mercy to them.

Ver. 25. *And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and called his name Jedidiah.*] But David hereupon sent to give his child another name; signifying the love which he was assured God had to him. But the Scripture never calls him by this name, but always Solomon: which name the people loved, because he built the house of the Lord in peaceable times.

Because of the Lord.] Because he had so graciously declared his love to him. For the name imports, as is noted in the margin of the Bible, *beloved of the Lord.*

Victorinus Strigelius translates the first words of this verse thus, "Tradidit eum in manum Nathan;" &c. *He committed him to the hand of Nathan the prophet;* that he might educate him, and bring him up in piety, and in the knowledge of all things necessary for a prince to be acquainted withal. For the most excellent natures are apt to err in many things (as he observes) without learning; and therefore, though Hercules had a very great genius, yet he was put into the hands of learned men to instruct him; as appears by the verses of Theocritus, which recite his

masters. Thus Alexander was bred up by Aristotle in all manner of learning: and if Constantine, together with his piety, had not been furnished with a great deal of knowledge, he could not have managed the cause of Christ against the Arians so well as he did in the council of bishops.

Ver. 26. *And Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the city.*] That part of the city where the royal palace was; which lay upon the water that ran by the city, as the next verse seems to interpret it. It is not to be imagined that Joab continued the siege so long, as till David had two children by Bath-sheba: but this was done after the death of Uriah; when David commanded them to make their assault stronger against the city, (xi. 25.)

Ver. 27. *And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters.*] That part of this city which lay upon the water: the other part, which was the heart of the city, being yet untaken. But it being supplied with water from this part, of which Joab had got possession, it could not hold out long, but would be forced to surrender, because Joab cut off their water from them. So Josephus understood it, τῶν ὑδάτων αὐτοὺς ἀποτέμνόμενος, lib. vii. cap. 7. And thus some learned men translate the last words of this verse, by adding the particle *mem* before *eth*, *He took from the city the waters.*

Ver. 28. *Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it; lest I take the city, and it be called by my name.*] As, from the conquest of Africa, Scipio was called Africanus. By this it appears, that though Joab had many faults, yet he loved his prince, and endeavoured to raise his glory.

Ver. 29. *And David gathered all the people together.*] All that were fit for war.

And went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it.] The army being reinforced with such great recruits, they did not merely block up the city to starve it, and force it to surrender, but took it by storm, and permitted the soldiers to plunder and take the spoil of it; as Josephus writes, διαρπάσαι τοῖς στρατιώταις ἀφῆκεν.

Ver. 30. *And he took the king's crown from off his head.*] This was the king's part of the spoil: and the Talmudists also say, that all the household-stuff of the conquered king belonged to the king that was victorious. (See Grotius, lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 23. sect. 24.)

The weight whereof was a talent of gold.] Or rather, the *price*, or *value* of it: as the Hebrew word frequently signifies, and not only *weight*. (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 37. p. 380.) And so it is to be taken here; for who was able to carry on his head such a weight as a talent, which they say was a hundred twenty-five pounds?

With the precious stones.] Which made the value of it so great. Josephus here saith, that there was one stone of great price, ἐν μέσῳ, *in the middle* of the crown; which he calls a sardonyx. The original of which fable Bochartus hath ingeniously conjectured in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. v. cap. 7. where he mentions other conceits of the Jews about this stone.

And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance.] This passage is thus rendered by Josephus, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἄλλα σκύλα λαμπρὰ καὶ πολύτιμα εὗρεν ἐν τῇ πόλει. *He found more and other prey in the city very splendid, and of great price.*

Ver. 31. *And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kilns.*] Some of the inhabitants he caused to be sawn in sunder; over others horses drew harrows with great iron teeth; others were drawn over sharp sickles, or sharp stones, which perhaps he means by *brick-kilns:* for so some interpreters understand it, that he dragged them through the place where bricks were made; and there grated their flesh upon the ragged pieces of broken bricks. Though some will have this word *malken* to signify the place where the Ammonites offered their sacrifices to their god Moloch, or Malcome (as he is often called), and made the people there to pass through the fire. So the Vulgar translates it, *fornacem Moloch, the furnace of Moloch.* This dreadful punishment was to terrify other countries from violating the right of nations, by abusing public ambassadors. Though many have thought it too severe, and looked upon it as an argument, that David did this in the state of his impenitence: when the mild and gentle Spirit of God was departed from him, and he was become cruel and furious, as well as lustful.

And thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon.] This will not let us think that he punished so cruelly only those who advised the using of his ambassadors shamefully, or applauded it (as many it is likely did, that lived in Rabbah), for he treated all the cities in the country in the same rigorous manner.

So David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.] After they had brought all the country into subjection to him, and secured the possession of it. For it is not likely all the country people, women and children, were thus used; but only the military men, who had levied war against David, and called the Syrians to their assistance, and since put him to the trouble and charge of a long siege of Rabbah.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass after this, that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name was Tamar, and Amnon the son of David loved her.*] Now begun a sad scene to be opened, of the calamities which Nathan foretold David should befal his house, (xii. 10.) It is the common opinion of the Jews, that in the war king David had with the king of Geshur, he took his daughter captive; who being very beautiful, he lay with her once (as they fancy the law, Deut. xxi. 11. allows), and begat of her this daughter. And afterward, she becoming a proselyte, he married her; and begat Absalom. So this daughter being begot while her mother was a gentile, they fancy she was not his legal child; and consequently Amnon might have married her. (See Selden, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 23. and Cocceius upon the Sanhedrin, cap. 2. n. 8. annot. 7. of which more upon ver. 13. see there.)

Ver. 2. *And Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin: and Amnon thought it hard to do any thing to her.*] The passion of his mind disordered his body, because he could not compass his desire: for she being a virgin, was under a strict guard (as

virgins used to be), so that it was difficult for him to enjoy her company. For *to do any thing to her*, signifies to do what he desired: as *to do* signifies not only in the Hebrew, but in other languages.

Ver. 3. *And Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother.*] That is, his cousin-german, who are often called brothers in Scripture.

And Jonadab was a very subtle man.] To find means to compass an end.

Ver. 4. *And he said unto him, Why art thou, being the king's son.*] And the eldest son who was next heir to the crown, (iii. 2.)

Lean from day to day.] In the Hebrew the words are *morning by morning*. For whatsoever diversions he might find in the day, he had restless nights, which made him look pale and wan when he arose.

Wilt thou not tell me?] For men are not wont to hide any thing from their friends.

And Amnon said unto him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister.] From these words the Jews are wont to argue, that Tamar was nothing of kin to Amnon; for he calls her not his sister, but his brother Absalom's sister. But this is a very frivolous observation, for in the two next verses he calls her *my sister;* and ver. 7. David calls him *her brother;* and see ver. 11.

Ver. 5. *And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick.*] He advises him to feign himself to be so ill, that it constrained him to keep his bed. Instead of doing the true office of a friend, he flatters his passion to his utter undoing.

And when thy father comes to see thee.] As he knew he would when he heard of his sickness: for, as I observed before, he was a great lover of his children.

Say unto him, I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it at her hand.] He would have him pretend that his stomach was so nice and squeamish, that he could like nothing that his servants dressed; and therefore desired his sister, who understood how to make delicate dishes, might come and prepare something that he could relish.

Ver. 6. *And Amnon laid down, and made himself sick.*] He easily followed bad counsel, to attain a bad end.

And when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand.] She was peculiarly noted, I suppose, to be very curious in making these *lebiboth*, as the Hebrew calls them: which the Greeks translate κολλυρίδας, and are by interpreters thought a delicious sort of cakes: though some take κολλυρὶς to have been an excellent broth, or some other supping meat, which cannot be meant here, because she is said, ver. 8. *to bake the cakes.*

Ver. 7. *Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat.*] He suspected no fraud; and Jonadab was so wicked as not to discover it, and thereby prevent the mischief.

Ver. 8. *So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house (and he was laid down). And she took flour, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes.*] She shewed herself an obedient daughter, and a kind sister.

Ver. 9. *And she took a pan.*] Wherein they had been baked.

And poured them out before him.] Into a dish.

But he refused to eat.] Pretending he had no appetite.

And Amnon said, Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him.] He commanded all his servants that attended him to leave him alone; that he might take some rest.

Ver. 10. *And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thy hand.*] He removed, I suppose, into an inner room (where he thought he might more privately enjoy her), and pretended to be so refreshed by the change, that his stomach was come to him.

And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother.] Her innocence made her think herself safe; especially with a brother.

Ver. 11. *And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister.*] She sat down it is likely, suspecting no evil, upon his bedside to minister unto him: which gave him the opportunity to lay violent hands upon her.

Ver. 12. *And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me.*] She having not strength enough to get from him, resists him with strong reasons: praying him to consider first that she was his sister. Unto which relation she hoped he would have such a reverence, as not to meddle with her, though she were willing: much less offer violence to her, which was abominable to do to a stranger.

For no such thing ought to be done in Israel.] Whatsoever other nations did (among whom idols were worshipped with filthy lusts), she prays him not to defile the church of God, whose glory was holiness and purity. The Jewish doctors say, this gave such a scandal, that the people began to speak thus one to another: If the king's daughter be thus used, what will become of the children of private men? And if men be so bold with chaste women, what will they be with those that are wantonly inclined? And at this time, they say, a decree was made, that two young people should not be alone together. (Gem. Sanhedrin, cap. 2. n. 8.)

Do not thou this folly.] That is, this wickedness. She prays him to consider the foulness of the sin; which would highly provoke the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 13. *And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go?*] She beseeches him, beside the sin against God, to consider the disgrace it would be to her: who should not be able to look any body in the face; nor would any body think of marrying her.

And as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel.] Utterly lose his reputation; and be looked upon as a man void of all sense of religion, honour, or humanity.

Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee.] The Jews commonly fancying that she being begot, as I said before, of a captive woman before David married her, there was no such kindred between her and Amnon, but that he might lawfully have her to wife. But others think, that she, being a young woman, unacquainted with the law, imagined that they who had not the same mother might lawfully marry; or that the power of the king was so great, that he might dispense with the law in this case: or rather, she said any thing that came into her mind, which she thought might deliver her from the present danger: and this I take to be the truest interpretation. For Abarbinel hath at large confuted the opinion of her being begotten of Maacah before

marriage, when she was a gentile. For, as the Scripture saith no such thing, so he thinks it altogether improbable, that such a man as David would have any thing to do with her, till she became a proselyte. And therefore, he saith, she spake these words, not as if she thought it lawful for the king to give her to Amnon for his wife; but that she might get rid of his solicitations by fair speeches. For she having urged him with the foregoing arguments, *viz.* the heinousness of the action itself, the dishonour it would be to her, and no less reproach to himself, and he persisting still blindly in his wicked resolution, she adds these words to give him hope, that he might have satisfaction without acting so brutishly, if he did but ask his father's consent. As if she had said, If thou art so sick with love, that thou art ready to die, speak to the king, unto whom thy life is very dear, and he will preserve it, by granting thy desire: for though by the law thou canst not enjoy me, yet he will rather choose to let me have thee, than see thee die. This, saith Abarbinel, is the sense of these words, *he will not withhold me from thee.* Which she said to withhold and divert him from his purpose at that time. Which R. Samuel Laniado (who endeavours to support the forenamed opinion of their doctors) doth but very weakly oppose. (See Buxtorf. de Sponsal. et Divortiis, sect. 20. and my notes upon chap. iii. 3.)

Ver. 14. *Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice; but, being stronger than she, he forced her, and lay with her.*] As the nightingale in Hesiod sung in vain to the ravenous hawk (as Strigelius glosses upon these words), so Tamar said all this to a deaf man, who was wholly under the power of his furious lust, which would not suffer him to mind either God, or men, or himself.

Ver. 15. *Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her.*] The Jews are much concerned to give a reason of this hatred. And Rasi and others say, that in her struggling with him to resist his attempt upon her, she hurt those parts wherewith he offended: which extremely enraged him. This is not improbable; but others think it a better account to say, that she reproached him so bitterly with what he had done, that he could not endure to hear it; and perhaps his own conscience began to fly in his face.

And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone.] He doth not so much as speak one kind word to her, nor call her sister (as Pellicanus observes), but in a rude manner bids her be gone, as if she had been a common strumpet.

Ver. 16. *And she said unto him, There is no cause.*] For this hard usage.

This evil is greater than the other that thou didst unto me.] It was not a greater sin, but it did her the greater mischief, because it published her shame, and made that known to all which was done secretly.

But he would not hearken to her.] This was very barbarous, to thrust her out of doors immediately, and in the day-time, without consulting how to cover, if it were possible, so foul a fact. So Josephus, He would not let her stay till night, but commanded her to be put out while it was day-light, ἵνα καὶ μάρτυσι τῆς αἰσχύνης παραπέσοι, that she might meet with witnesses of her shame.

Ver. 17. *Then he called his servants that ministered unto him, and said unto them, Put now this woman out from me, and bolt the door after her.*] This was a new violence to her, to be turned out of doors with such contemptuous language, as if she had been an impudent intruder.

Ver. 18. *And she had a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins apparelled.*] This was such a garment as Joseph, the beloved son of Jacob, wore. (See upon Gen. xxxvii. 3.)

And his servants brought her out, and bolted the door after her.] A high contempt of a king's daughter, which they knew her to be by her apparel, if by nothing else. But their dependence on their master overruled all the respect due to her.

Ver. 19. *And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was upon her.*] Both these were expressions of the greatest grief, which she was not able to suppress.

And laid her hands on her head, and went on crying.] Bewailing her calamity. *Laying her hands on her head* was also a token of great trouble and grief; she covering thereby her face, as one ashamed. Thus Jeremiah saith, the children of Israel should go forth from Assyria, *with their hands upon their head;* (xi. 37.) that is, saith Abarbinel, "like a woman who bewails her misfortune; and there is none to deliver her." St. Jerome and Theodoret more plainly, they shall go forth with their hands on their heads, "in signum pudoris et doloris," *in token of their shame and of their grief.* Spreading forth their hands is the same. (Lam. i. 17.)

Ver. 20. *And Absalom her brother.*] Unto whose house she went.

Said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee?] A modest expression for the foul rape he had committed: at which he conceived great indignation; and therefore, in scorn, doth not call him her brother Amnon, but *Aminon.* So the words are in the Hebrew, *Hath Aminon thy brother been with thee?*

But hold thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; regard not this thing.] He seems to desire her to put up the injury in silence; that it might not bring too much disgrace on their family; but, indeed, that he might dissemble the revenge he intended, upon occasion, to take of him.

So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house.] She would see nobody, I suppose, but only those that waited on her in her brother's family.

Ver. 21. *And when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth.*] But, out of his great indulgence, inflicted no sort of punishment upon him, that we read of: πρεσβύτατος γὰρ ἦν υἱὸς αὐτῷ (as Josephus observes), *for he was his eldest son,* which made him spare him.

Ver. 22. *And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad.*] Never said a word to him about this matter, when they met together.

For Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.] Though he hated him in his heart, yet he never expressed the least resentment. So the particle *ki* should be translated, not *for,* but *though.* By this means Amnon was lulled asleep into a belief that Absalom would not trouble him for what he had done, because he did not threaten, nor so much as expostulate with him, nor take any notice of what had passed. Though in reason he ought to have been more afraid, that he was meditating a terrible

revenge: according to the fable of the little mouse, who, when the dunghill-cock came into the parlour, clapping his wings, and making a great noise, was very much affrighted at it, but minded not the cat which came gently creeping towards her; whom her mother chid for her folly, telling her there was no danger from the fluttering, clamorous cock; but from the silent cat she was to expect present death. So Victorinus Strigelius glosses upon this place.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass after two years.*] In all which time Absalom had said nothing to Amnon about his abused sister; that he might think he was ignorant of it, or did not regard it, or had forgot it.

That Absalom had sheep-shearers in Baal-hazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king's sons.] For the time of sheep-shearing was a kind of harvest in those countries; and therefore full of joy; which they expressed by making a feast upon those days. We read of it early in the book of Genesis, *viz.* of Laban's going to shear his sheep; (xxxi. 19.) and Judah, after his mourning for his wife's death, went to refresh himself at a sheep-shearing with his friends, (xxxviii. 12, 13.) And it was at a time of such joy, that David sent to Nabal for some relief, (1 Sam. xxv. 8.)

Ver. 24. *And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold, now, thy servant hath sheep-shearers: let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants, go with thy servant.*] He had no mind the king should go; but invited him, to avoid all suspicion.

Ver. 25. *And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all go.*] For he seems to have invited all his family: when he beseeched him and his servants to go with him.

Lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him.] Gave him thanks for his invitation, and prayed God to bless him.

Ver. 26. *Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with me.*] To cover his design, he pretended, I suppose, a special kindness for him: or at least desired the king to do him the honour, to let him have the company of his eldest brother.

And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee?] Being the next person in the kingdom to the king, it is likely David thought it would make the entertainment too chargeable.

Ver. 27. *But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.*] Who might have taken exceptions, if Amnon alone had been entertained by him: therefore his importunity prevailed to have the company of them all.

Ver. 28. *And Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon is merry with wine.*] And had no thoughts of any danger.

And when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant.] He encourages them to hope, that he, being the king's son, and next heir to the crown when Amnon was gone (for Chileab seems now to be dead), would stand between them and danger of being called to an account for what they did.

Ver. 29. *And the servants of Absalom did as Absalom had commanded: then all the king's sons arose, and gat every one upon his mule and fled.*] Fearing he might destroy all the royal family; for ambition was as strong in him as revenge; which appeared afterward in his endeavours to dethrone his father. *Mules* began to be much in use in David's days (as Bochart observes), who appointed Solomon to be carried on his own mule, and declared king, (1 Kings i. 33.) And Solomon had a present of them made to him, (1 Kings x. 23.) And they were not used only to ride on, but for carriage of burdens, (1 Chron. xii. 40.) and to draw chariots, as the LXX. understand, Isa. lxvi. 20. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 19.)

Ver. 30. *And it came to pass while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left.*] He that saw Amnon killed, presently ran away in a great fright, imagining all the king's sons were so served.

Ver. 31. *Then the king arose, and tare his garments, and lay on the earth; and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent.*] This was a natural expression of great grief, to throw themselves not upon their beds (as Maimonides observes), but upon the ground. Otherwise, they turned their beds upside down, and so lay as hard as if they lay upon the ground. (See Gierus de Luctu Hebr. cap. 18. sect. 8.)

Ver. 32. *And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother, answered and said.*] Who was noted before to be a very subtle man, (ver. 3.) and understood all the intrigues (as we now speak) about the court.

Let not my lord suppose they have slain all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead.] This he spake not from any certain intelligence he had received from Absalom's house; but from rational conjecture, out of what he had learnt concerning Absalom's resentment.

For by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined, from the day that he forced his sister Tamar.] He had talked, I suppose, among his familiars, that he would take a time to revenge the injury done his sister, though for the present he took no notice of it. Which Jonadab, being a prying man, had some way or other discovered.

Ver. 33. *Now therefore let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead.*] He affirms this with the greater confidence, because he never heard (though he was of a very inquisitive temper) of any quarrel Absalom had with the rest of the king's sons, but only Amnon.

Ver. 34. *But Absalom fled.*] With all his servants who committed the murder. For he soon found it was not in his, nor any body's power to protect them.

And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes and looked.] Round about him.

And, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill-side behind him.] They did not think fit to keep the direct road from Baal-hazor to Jerusalem (for what reason we cannot now know), but went about; so that they came not before the watchman, but behind him.

Ver. 35. *And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come: as thy servant said, so it is.*] Hearing a company was coming, he went out, it is likely, to descry who they were; and seeing the king's sons, made haste and carried David the good news.

Ver. 36. *And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the king's sons came.*] They trod upon Jonadab's heels, as we now speak.

And lifted up their voice and wept; and the king also and all his servants wept very sore.] See iii. 32. But we read of no public funeral and lamentations which he made for him, as he did for Abner.

Ver. 37. *But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai, the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur.*] For no city of refuge in his own country could give him protection, having committed a designed murder; therefore he fled out of the kingdom to his mother's father. (See iii. 3.)

And David mourned for his son every day.] Either for the loss of Amnon or for Absalom: who was lost, as to any comfort he could have from his company. It seems to be meant of the latter; for it is said he was comforted for Amnon: and therefore his continued affliction for three years together was upon the account of Absalom.

Ver. 38. *And Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years.*] This is repeated to shew, that he found such favour with his grandfather, that he went no further; but continued with him three years in safety. Geshur, it appears from xv. 8. was a part of Syria.

Ver. 39. *And the soul of David longed to go forth unto Absalom.*] He had a vehement desire to see him. Though some, even of the ancients, translate the words, *he ceased to pursue after Absalom:* as if he had at first endeavoured to seize him, either in his flight to Geshur, or afterward, when at any time he went abroad. But ours appears to be a true translation, from the beginning of the next chapter: where David's heart is said to be *towards Absalom.*

For he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.] He was unwilling to want the comfort of both his sons; and since it was impossible to bring Amnon back again, he longed to bring back Absalom: but he had committed so horrid a crime, that he durst not venture to restore him in his favour.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *NOW Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived the king's heart was towards Absalom.*] That he longed to see him, and have him restored to his own country; if it could be contrived by some handsome pretence for it: which Joab therefore endeavoured to bring about, knowing he was dear to the people, as well as to David: and he might by his reduction ingratiate himself with Absalom, whom he looked upon as next heir to the crown.

Ver. 2. *And Joab sent to Tekoah.*] A city in the tribe of Judah, (2 Chron. xi. 5, 6.) but at a distance from Jerusalem: and the further off the better for his purpose; because the case which the woman was to represent to the king, could not easily be inquired into, if he desired to know the truth. The Jews say it was in the tribe of Asher; the place where the prophet Amos was born.

And fetched thence a wise woman.] A woman was the fittest for this purpose; especially a widow: who was proper to move compassion. And a grave woman, as Josephus calls her (πρεσβύτις), was still more proper.

And said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself now to be a mourner, and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead.] Who put on no ornaments, nor used any ointment; but appeared in a sordid neglected condition.

Ver. 3. *And come to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. So Joab put the words into her mouth.*] And, in all probability, introduced her into the king's presence; and then left her to manage the matter with him, according to her prudence. Or, as seems to be suggested, (ver. 21.) he stood by at some distance, whilst she addressed herself to the king.

Ver. 4. *And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king, she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance.*] This was the humblest posture of reverence.

And said, Help, O king!] Relieve a poor distressed widow.

Ver. 5. *And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, I am indeed a widow woman, and my husband is dead.*] Which made her the greater object of pity.

Ver. 6. *And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and there was none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him.*] This, and the foregoing, and the next verse, represent her condition as very lamentable: that she had lost her husband, and one of her sons, and was in danger to be deprived of the other: which was all she had.

Ver. 7. *And, behold, the whole family is risen against thine handmaid, and they say, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him.*] Put him to death, as the law required, (Numb. xxxv. 18, 19.)

For the life of his brother which he slew; and we will destroy the heir also.] These words, if spoken by the kindred, shew it was not love to justice, but a desire to have the inheritance, which moved them to prosecute the murderer.

And so they shall quench my coal which is left.] Deprive me of the little comfort of my life which remains (and is in a manner buried as a coal in the ashes), and ruin my family.

And shall not leave to my husband neither name nor remainder upon earth.] Utterly extinguish her husband's memory. In all this she intended to frame a case as like to David's as she could devise: by determining which in her favour, he might judge how much more reasonable it was to preserve Absalom. But there was a wide difference between her case and his, how plausible soever their likeness might appear. For her son she pretended was slain in a scuffle with his brother, and was no premeditated murder, as Absalom's was. It was also in the field, where there were no witnesses whether it was wilful or not: whereas all the king's sons saw Amnon barbarously murdered by his brother. And in this last passage the difference is as great as in any; for David's family was not in danger to be extinguished, if Absalom were lost also: he having many children, and also many wives, whereby he might have more. And therefore in that likewise this case differed from hers who was a widow.

Ver. 8. *And the king said, Go to thine house, and I will give charge concerning thee.*] He promises he would take care the matter should be thoroughly examined, and justice done her.

Ver. 9. *And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, the iniquity be on me, and on my father's house; and the king and his throne be guiltless.*] She desires a speedy sentence might be given in her favour, which, if it proved wrong by her misinforming the king, she prays

the guilt might light on her and her family, and the king and his be innocent.

Ver. 10. *And the king said, Whosoever saith aught unto thee, bring him unto me, and he shall not touch thee any more.*] If any one endeavoured to lay hold on her son, he bids her bring that person before him (for which end he commanded his officers to be assistant to her), and he would punish him so that none should dare to meddle with him any more.

Ver. 11. *Then she said, I pray thee, let the king remember the Lord thy God.*] She seems to desire him to confirm what he had said by an oath. For men swore by *remembering* (or making mention of) the name of the Lord. Others think she only prays him to remember how merciful and gracious God is, and had been to himself, even in pardoning the murder of Uriah.

That thou wouldest not suffer the avengers of blood to destroy any more.] In the Hebrew, *to multiply to destroy:* that is, after she had lost one son, to take away the life of the other, as the next words explain it.

Lest they destroy my son.] Or, *let them not destroy my son,* which remains.

And he said, As the Lord liveth.] Though it was a bold request in the woman to desire him to confirm what he said by an oath; yet, such was his pity, to her, that, to send her away entirely satisfied, he solemnly swears he would preserve her son.

There shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth.] He should not suffer the least harm upon this account.

Ver. 12. *Then the woman said, Let thy handmaid, I pray thee, speak one word unto my lord the king. And he said, Say on.*] Now she designed to open her meaning in this parable, and plainly desire the king to make her case his own. But it would take up some time, and therefore she bespeaks his favour to hear her patiently.

Ver. 13. *And the woman said, Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing.*] As that which she had hitherto been speaking of.

Against the people of Israel?] Who were in danger to lose Absalom, the heir of the crown; which was far worse than the private loss of her son.

For the king doth speak this thing as one that is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home his banished.] In the sentence he had pronounced for her, he had condemned himself, because he had not called Absalom from his exile. This looks like too bold a speech: but the sense is no more than this; Do not judge otherwise in thy own case, than thou hast done in mine. For all the world allows (as Strigelius here observes) the reasonableness of that saying, *Odi sapientem qui sibi non sapit.* Her reasoning indeed was infirm, his case and hers being very unlike upon several accounts, which I before observed. But though the supposed killing of her son was casual, but Amnon's murder designed; and she had no more sons, and David had many, &c. yet David perceiving how the people stood affected towards Absalom (otherwise he knew this woman durst not have spoken after this manner), and it being his own desire, as much as theirs, to have him recalled, he overlooked all the differences there were in his case, and did not go about to shew her the weakness of her discourse.

Ver. 14. *For we must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again.*] She pleads for further pity towards him, from the consideration of our common mortality; and represents that death comes on apace, and we need not hasten it: and when we are dead, we can no more be recovered, than water when it is spilt on the ground, which is presently sucked up and seen no more. This is also a weak, though plausible argument; for by this reasoning all malefactors should be spared, because it will not be long before death cuts them off: but when we have a mind to a thing, all reason seems strong to persuade us to it. Some apply this to his mourning for Amnon; as if she had said, Dost thou still weep for thy other son? he must have died; and now he is gone, thy tears cannot call him to life again. But this is not probable, because it is said in the conclusion of the foregoing chapter, *He was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.*

Neither doth God respect any person.] If this be a right translation, the meaning is, that David himself was mortal, though a great king. But I think the Hebrew words, *issa nephesh,* never signify respect to persons; but the word *panim* is used in that sense, not *nephesh,* which signifies the *soul,* as the other doth the *face,* or countenance. Therefore these words should be translated, *God doth not take away the soul,* or *life.* She argues from the sparing mercy of God, who doth not presently inflict the punishment of death when men have deserved it. And perhaps she had in this a particular respect to Absalom, whom God had not cut off, but let him live; and therefore she desires David to imitate God.

Yet doth he devise means that his banished be not expelled from him.] Or, according to the foregoing words, *But he doth devise means,* &c. God provided many cities of refuge, she means, to which he that slew another unawares might flee: where, though he was banished from his habitation for a time, he was not quite expelled, but might return again after the death of the high-priest. From whence she argues, that kings being the images of God, nothing could more become them than clemency and mercy; in mitigating the punishment of offenders, though there was just cause of anger against them. Which still was short of the present case; for God was not so merciful as to provide for the safety of a wilful murderer. But such specious arguments are good enough, when men are willing to be persuaded: and nothing more moving than the example of God, who doth not delight in the death of a sinner.

Ver. 15. *Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king, it is because the people have made me afraid.*] This sounds as if the people talked so discontentedly about Absalom's banishment, that it was another motive to her to make this address to the king. But it doth not seem to me to be likely that the people were dissatisfied, because he was not recalled: but rather David was afraid the people would be dissatisfied if he did recall him. I said indeed before, (ver. 13.) that David imagined by her speech that they were desirous of his return from banishment; but he did not think so before: and whatsoever their desires might be, they did not express any discontent because he was not; for then there would not have been any need of this woman to bring that about which he desired more than they. Therefore I think the last words should be translated, not *because,* but *though the people made me afraid.* That is, those she advised withal

told her it was too bold an attempt: but this did not discourage her; because she presumed the king would be so good as to give her a favourable audience, and not be angry with her, since what she said was well intended. So the next word is to be translated *but*, not *and*.

But thy handmaid said, I will now speak unto the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his handmaid.] This is, notwithstanding the fears which some put into her, she resolved to make this petition: and she gives her reason for it in the next verse.

Ver. 16. *For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the men that would destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God.*] Clemency and kindness are the properties of good kings; and such she saith she knew the king to be, who would take pity upon her and her son, in whose preservation her life was bound up. And when she calls the land of Israel *the inheritance of God*, who dwelt among them there, she secretly puts the king in mind how dangerous it was to let Absalom (unto whom she had adventured to apply her case) to continue in an idolatrous country; where God was not worshipped, as he was in the land of Israel.

Ver. 17. *Then thine handmaid said, The word of my lord the king shall now be comfortable.*] Thereupon she grew confident that the king's answer would be according to her heart's desire: it being the highest glory of a prince (as the emperor Titus was wont to say) not to send any petitioner away sad and sorrowful. And, indeed, the king's great patience, in attending to so long an address, might make her presume to receive a gracious answer.

For as an angel of God, so is my lord the king, to discern both good and bad.] To discern between just and unreasonable petitions, as well as patiently to hear both those things which are grateful, and those which are less acceptable. And therefore she doubted not of such a kind answer as the angels bring, who are messengers of Divine mercy.

Therefore the Lord thy God will be with thee.] To direct him to judge aright and to shew mercy. There is a great deal of artifice in all this. For to presume upon the kindness of another, and to expect gracious answers from their noble qualities, is very moving: men being very loath to defeat those who think so highly of them, according to that of Aristotle, in the second book of his Rhetoric, "We love those that admire us."

Ver. 18. *Then the king answered and said unto the woman, Hide not from me, I pray thee, one thing that I shall ask thee. And the woman said, Let my lord the king now speak.*] As much as to say, And I will answer truly.

Ver. 19. *And the king said, Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?*] His prudence made him suspect that a woman durst not have adventured upon this speech, but by the counsel and contrivance of some greater person. And none more likely than Joab, whom he knew to be a cunning man and a friend to Absalom.

And the woman answered and said, As thy soul liveth, my lord the king, none can turn to the right hand or to the left from aught that my lord the king hath spoken.] As much as to say in our language, *it is even so*. And therefore she did not seek by any windings or turnings this way or the other to dissemble the matter, but plainly confessed it, as it follows. Concerning the phrase, *turn to the right hand or left*, see upon Gen. xxiv. 49.

For thy servant Joab, he bade me, and he put all these words in the mouth of thy handmaid.] The sense of them, which he left her to manage to the best advantage.

Ver. 20. *To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing.*] The meaning is, Joab instructed her, that having obtained pardon for her son, she should turn about the face of her speech (as the words are in the Hebrew) another way, and transfer it to Absalom, as a parallel case with her own. And so Josephus expresses her sense, lib. vii. Antiq. cap. 8. "When she had thanked the king for his pity towards her, she said, But that I may be more certain of thy clemency, receive thy own son into thy favour; for how is it possible for me not to doubt of the favour thou promisest me, when thou still sufferest thy own son to lie under thy indignation for the like fault?"

And my lord the king is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are done in the earth.] That is, in the whole kingdom, where nothing could be hid from him, but he knew all men, and their counsels; and likewise knew what was fit to be done in answer to their desires. She still persists in her admiration of the king, that she might the more incline him to grant her request.

Ver. 21. *And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, and bring the young man Absalom again.*] The king turned from her to him (who seems to have stood in some part of the room while she delivered her petition), as the principal agent in this business, whom he was pleased to gratify in his request.

Ver. 22. *And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself.*] As the woman did when she entered into his presence to present her petition, (ver. 4.)

And thanked the king.] For favours are to be no less humbly acknowledged than humbly begged.

And Joab said, To-day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant.] He looked upon it as a mark of the king's great kindness, who was not angry, but granted so bold a request, in which he was mistaken; for though he passed by the murder of Amnon, yet he remembered Joab's murder of Abner to his dying day.

Ver. 23. *So Joab arose, and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.*] St. Ambrose mentions this as an instance of the wonderful affection which parents have to their children, though degenerate and wicked; by which we may raise our thoughts to comprehend a little of the inconceivable love of our heavenly Father (as Strigelius here meditates) towards his own eternal Son, and towards mankind for his sake.

Ver. 24. *And the king said.*] When he heard he was come to Jerusalem.

Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face.] His affection to him did not so blind his eyes, but he still saw it would not be for his honour to let him come into his presence.

So Absalom returned to his own house.] This intimates as if he came not only to Jerusalem, but to the king's court.

And saw not the king's face.] Which was some humiliation to him, and put him upon repentance; for he saw he had not a full pardon, being not entirely restored to the king's favour. The people also were convinced by this how detestable his crime was in the king's account; and that he

would not easily pass by the like in any other person, since he could not endure the sight of a son, whose hand was defiled with the blood of his brother.

Ver. 25. *But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for beauty: from the sole of the foot even to the crown of the head there was no blemish in him.*] For his father and mother were both very lovely persons: but this proved the occasion of his ruin; for he grew proud, because he was so much admired; and forgetting his cruel murder of his brother, it tempted him to rely upon the favour of the people in committing of a greater crime, which was seeking the life of his father.

Ver. 26. *And when he polled his head (for it was at every year's end that he polled it; because the hair was heavy on him, therefore he polled it).*] It is not certain tha the cut his hair once a year: for the words in the Hebrew are, *from the end of days to days,* without any particular designation of the time. And therefore the Targum translates it, *at stated times;* that is, when it grew too heavy, which might be once in two years, more or less, as Bochartus observes.

He weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels after the king's weight.] In those days hair was accounted a great ornament, and the longer it was the more it was esteemed. And therefore no wonder Absalom nourished his with much care, and let it grow to great length, which made him look more like a goodly person. Insomuch that, in after-ages, they were wont to use art (as perhaps they did now) to make the hair grow, and grow thick and strong (as the same Bochartus hath shewn); and they anointed their hair also with fragrant oils, of myrrh, cinnamon, and such-like; and after that powdered it with the dust of gold: all which made it very ponderous. So that Absalom's hair weighed, when it was cut off, two hundred shekels: which he demonstrates was no more than three pounds and two ounces of our weight. This is not at all incredible, considering that he let it grow as long as he was able to bear the weight of it; which was increased, it is likely, by such additions as I have mentioned; for a king's son would not want any thing that might add to his splendour. Josephus also informs us, that such ostentation was in use among the Jews in those days; for, speaking of the noble guard which attended king Solomon, with long hair flowing about their shoulders, he saith that they scattered in their hair every day ψήγματα τοῦ χρυσίου, *little particles of gold,* which made their hair shine and sparkle by the reflection of the sun's rays upon the gold. As for their interpretation, who think that Absalom's hair did not weigh thus much, but was sold for two hundred shekels, Bochartus shews how absurd it is to imagine a king's son would sell his hair, or that any one would buy it, especially at that rate, there being no perukes worn in those days. And besides, the text confutes it, *he weighed the hair of his head,* &c. whereas, if it had been sold, the buyer would have weighed the money, not Absalom; as Abraham did when he bought the field of Ephron, (Gen. xxiii. 16.) and Jeremiah when he bought the field in Anathoth, xxxii. 9. (See his epistle to Michael Faukellius, at the end of the third edition of his Geographia Sacra.)

Ver. 27. *And unto Absalom were born three sons, and one daughter, whose name was Tamar: she was a woman of a fair countenance.*] How the LXX. in the Vatican edition came to add here, that Tamar was afterward the wife of Rehoboam, and bare him Abijah, I cannot tell, but I suppose it was from some Jewish tradition.

Ver. 28. *So Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face.*] He lived privately, having the company only of his own family. For, it is likely, he was, by the king's command, confined to his house, where he had few visitants, being under the king's displeasure.

Ver. 29. *Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king.*] He did not employ his privacy so well as he should have done; but had ambitious designs in his head, if he could be restored to the king's favour, and enjoy greater liberty; for which he intended to make Joab his intercessor.

But he would not come to him: and when he sent again the second time, he would not come.] Josephus thinks that Joab only took time to consider whether he should do what was desired: but Absalom was in haste, and could not endure any delay, and therefore did as follows. Or, perhaps, Joab thought he had done enough, and was afraid the king might be angry if he pressed him further.

Ver. 30. *Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is near unto mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it on fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire.*] He had those still about him who were ready to execute any command, though never so unjust; as they did when he bade them kill Amnon. And it appears by this what a daring person Absalom was, who durst affront such a man as Joab after this manner.

Ver. 31. *Then Joab arose, and went to Absalom unto his house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire?*] This carried Joab presently to his house, to expostulate with him about the damage he had done him; for which we do not find he offers any satisfaction; which may make it seem strange that so furious a man as Joab should not immediately revenge himself, by ordering his field to be burnt, or some such way: but he was so wise as to consider, that being the king's son he might some time or other be reconciled to his father, and do him a prejudice.

Ver. 32. *And Absalom answered Joab, Behold, I sent unto thee, saying, Come hither, that I may send thee to the king.*] He seems to have no sense of any injury he had done Joab, but thought he had just cause to complain that he would not come to him.

To say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur?] These were words too insolent to be sent to the king; therefore one would think he only expressed himself thus to Joab.

It had been better for me to have been there still.] He might have found means to return thither, if he had not had other designs in his head; which made him desire to have his full liberty.

Now therefore let me see the king's face; and if there be any iniquity in me, let him kill me.] He could not but know there was iniquity in him: but he pretends, if the king would not pardon it, he had rather die than not see his father's face.

Ver. 33. *So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom.*] These passionate expressions, that he was weary of life, while he continued banished from the king's presence; nay, that he desired to die, so he might but see him, moved Joab to intercede for him, and David to receive him into his favour.

He came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king.] Begging pardon, as Josephus explains it, for the sin he had committed.

And the king kissed Absalom.] In token of reconciliation. Josephus saith the king raised him up from the ground, καὶ τῶν γεγονότων ἀμνηστίαν ἐπαγγέλλεται, *and promised him an oblivion of what was past.* Which was a great weakness in David: for impenitent persons become more wicked by a full pardon of their offences; as Absalom did. Who being thus received into the king's favour, became more gracious with the people: who before looked upon him as an excommunicated person, and would have nothing to do with him.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass after this.*] When he thought he had established himself in his father's good affection.

That Absalom prepared himself chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.] He took great state upon him, and made him, as we now speak, a splendid equipage: being royally attended, as the next heir to the crown (for we hear nothing of Chileah, who it is likely was dead), designing to draw the eyes of the people to him. Who, as they were much in love with his beauty, so were mightily taken with this unusual fine sight of chariots and horses; which the law did not allow: but David was so indulgent that he took no notice of it.

Ver. 2. *And Absalom rose up early in the morning.*] He accustomed himself to rise betime in the morning, to make a show of his great care for the public good.

And stood beside the way of the gate.] Not of the king's palace, some think, but of the city, where was the seat of judgment. But since he speaks of coming to the king for judgment, it is likely he sat in his own palace, at the gate of which Absalom was wont to stand.

And it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment.] Who reserved all weighty causes for his own hearing: and appeals were made to him from the other courts, as Corn. Bertram observes, cap. 10. de Republ. Judaica.

Then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou?] He kindly inquired where he dwelt; and, it is likely, what he was, and of what family, &c. as if he intended to take a particular care of him.

And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel.] That is, of such or such a tribe, and of such a city in that tribe as he named to him.

Ver. 3. *And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right.*] He was so officious as to look into their cause awhile, and examine it: flattering every one into an opinion, that in his judgment he had right on his side. So that if their cause went against them, they might conclude that if Absalom had been judge, it would have gone otherwise.

But there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee.] The king he pretended was old, and unfit to judge causes, until some others had first heard them, and opened the matter to him. And his sons (who, being principal officers in his family, see chap. viii. *ult.* were the fittest to bring business to him) were men of pleasure, and did not mind public affairs. Thus he struck not only at his father, but at all his brethren; and principally, it is likely, at Solomon; who he was afraid would be preferred before him by his father, being a beloved son, and born of an Israelite, whereas he was begot of a stranger, the daughter of the king of Geshur. Who, it is probable, might put him upon this course; and his banishment for three years had also exasperated him: and his being secluded for two years more from seeing his father, was so far from bringing him to any sense of his guilt, that it more enraged him against his father, and all his family.

Ver. 4. *And Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man that hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!*] Though he was admitted to come to court, and see the king, yet he had no office there, as the rest of the king's sons had: which he took ill, and endeavoured the people should do so too; by magnifying his care, if he were in authority, to do them speedy justice.

Ver. 5. *And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance.*] To honour him as the king's son.

That he put forth his hand, and took him.] About the neck, I suppose, in token of great familiarity and kindness.

And kissed him.] A most vile piece of flattery: but people are pleased with such unwonted compliments. For so Plato observes, that when any person intended to make himself a tyrant in a popular state, he no sooner entered upon the government, but προσγελᾷ τε καὶ ἀσπάζεται πάντας ᾧ ἂν περιτυγχάνει, *he smiled upon all, and kindly saluted them, wheresoever he met them:* avowing that he hated tyranny, and promising great things, both privately and publicly, καὶ πᾶσιν ἵλεώς τε καὶ πατρῷος εἶναι προσποιεῖται, *seeming to be mild, gentle, and fatherly unto all,* (lib. viii. de Republ. p. 566. edit. Serrani.)

Ver. 6. *And after this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment.*] He continued this course a long time: till he had inveigled the people, and gained their hearts to him. For, as Aristotle observes in his Politics, (lib. v. cap. 4.) all changes in commonwealths are made by one of these two ways, ὅτε μὲν διὰ βίας, ὅτε δὲ δι' ἀπάτης, *either by force and violence, or else by deceit and craft.* Now there is not a more famous instance in history of the latter than this of Absalom, who, by flattering speeches, and large promises, cunningly alienated the hearts of the people from his father.

So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.] Robbed his father of the affections of the people, and possessed himself of them: some admiring his beauty and gallantry; others his courtesy and civility: others being taken with his magnificent promises of the noble things he would do if he were their king. Just as Virgil saith, in book vii. of his Æneids, that Turnus drew the hearts of some to follow him in the wars, because he was a most graceful person; others, because he was descended from an ancient royal race; and others were moved by the noble acts he had done: (ver. 473, 474.)

> "Hunc decus egregium formæ movet atque juventæ,
> Hunc atavi reges, hunc claris dextera factis."

Thus Absalom was young and wonderfully beautiful, descended from kings by his father and mother's side; and though he had done no great things, yet boasted of what he would do, when he had opportunity. Ludov. de Dieu

thinks there is a peculiar meaning in this phrase, that he drew their affections to him, concealing in the mean time his intentions: upon John x. 24.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass after forty years.*] One would think, that in the copy which Josephus used, it was written *arba*, four, not *arbaim*, forty years: for his words are, μετὰ δὲ τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς καταλλαγὴν τεττάρων ἐτῶν ἤδη παραληλυθότων, *four years after his father was reconciled to him.* But there are no warrants now for this reading: but the forty years here mentioned are not to be understood, as if this happened after David had reigned forty years, that is, in the last year of his reign: for he was now very vigorous, which he was not a little before he died: but, as our great primate of Ireland in his Annals understands it, forty years after David was anointed by Samuel. That is, when he was threescore years old, ten years before he died. Then his son conspired against him between the feast of the Passover and Pentecost; as some gather from Barzillai's presenting him with parched corn and new fruits, when he fled from Absalom, (xvii. 28.) And so Strigelius. But the Talmudists in Seder Olam, and other books, will have these forty years to commence from the time that the Israelites asked a king to reign over them. And, after all, Abarbinel is of opinion, that the plainest sense is after forty years of David's reign; so that it was about the latter end of his life, when this great calamity befel him, though not in the very last year of it. For it is not said *in the fortieth year*, but *about the end of forty years.* (See Buxtorf. Anticritica, p. 1004.)

That Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron.] Now he pretends religion, as before he did the public good.

Ver. 8. *For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the Lord will bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then will I serve the Lord.*] With a solemn sacrifice.

Ver. 9. *And the king said unto him, Go in peace.*] It is much he should dismiss him without any suspicion; when he had deferred so long to perform this vow, and made such court to the people, as he could not but be informed.

So he arose, and went to Hebron.] Which was a high place, where they were wont to sacrifice till the temple was built. And it being the place of his birth, where the royal seat had been in the beginning of David's reign, he thought it the most commodious city, next Jerusalem, for his purpose.

Ver. 10. *And Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel.*] To try how the people stood affected to him.

Saying, As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron.] This was the signal which was to be given, that they should take arms. For as soon as they heard the sound of the trumpet (which he took care should be blown in all the tribes), these spies were to proclaim that Absalom was crowned in Hebron. Whereupon, all his partakers, it is likely, shouted, *God save king Absalom!*

Ver. 11. *And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called.*] Invited by him to feast with him upon his sacrifice. And it is likely they were principal persons of the city; whom he drew in, to avoid suspicion.

And they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.] Of his design; but went only to wait upon him, as the king's son; who did them the honour to invite them to a holy feast. Among these two hundred men, the Jews fancy were all those of the grand Sanhedrin, who thought they had been called by David's order to attend his son. For which there is no ground; though Mr. Selden has produced a great deal out of the Talmudists concerning this matter, lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 16. But I have shewn elsewhere, there was no such Sanhedrin in these times.

Bartenora upon Sota hath a conceit, that Absalom begged of the king (for he had stolen his heart before he stole the people's) that he would grant him liberty, under his hand, to choose two persons whom he liked best, to be his companions; which being obtained, he went with this writing from two to two, till he had gathered two hundred; part of which were the men of the great Sanhedrin, whose examples others followed; all believing they had been warranted by David to attend his son.

Ver. 12. *And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh.*] None are more capable to do mischief to kings, than those that know their secrets; having been of the privy-council. And it is supposed by the Jews, that Ahithophel was incensed against David for abusing Bath-sheba, whom they take to have been his grand-daughter, she being the daughter of Eliam, (xi. 3.) and Eliam being the son of Ahithophel. (xxiii. 34.)

While he offered sacrifices.] Or rather, after he had offerred sacrifices, while he sat at dinner, he sent for him to come to him.

And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.] Most of which, it is likely, intended no harm at the first, but came merely to do honour to the king's son, and to partake of his bounty. Nay, Abarbinel is of opinion, that neither Absalom, nor the elders of Israel, nor the rest of the people, who were misled by them, had any intention to divest David of his crown and dignity, much less to take away his life; but only to substitute Absalom as a coadjutor to him, for the executing of the royal authority during David's life, and to be his successor after his death. And, indeed, as it was very monstrously unnatural in Absalom to design the destruction of such a kind father, so it is not very probable that he should gain such a number as he had to assist him in such a villanous enterprise. And yet, notwithstanding this, David looked upon this as a treason against his life, as appears from ver. 14. and xvi. 11. because he knew, whatsoever they intended, they would be carried further, though they meant no more than Abarbinel supposes. And more than that, if this opinion of his were true, it is evident, they themselves did proceed so far as to design (contrary to their first intentions) to kill David for their own greater security. For so Ahithophel advised, and they all consented to it, (xvii. 2, 4.) which shews how dangerous it is to go out of the right way; for they do not know into what precipices they may fall. And it should be a warning to all men never to begin any thing that is wrong, which may lead them to commit that in the issue which they abhorred at the first; when they find they cannot be safe in one wickedness, unless they commit a greater.

Ver. 13. *And there came a messenger unto David, say-*

ing, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.] Some of the two hundred men, who went innocently along with him from Jerusalem, it is likely, sent this intelligence. Which did not come presently: but when the conspiracy was plain and open, by a great concourse of people to him; and the elders of Israel, and the military men (who are called *all Israel*, as Fortunatus Scacchus thinks), declared for him.

Ver. 14. *And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom.*] Though Jerusalem, at least the fort of Zion, was a strong place, yet they could not have time to lay in provision to endure a siege: and beside, he was not willing to be cooped up there; but chose rather to go into the country, where he hoped to find friends and followers.

Make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.] He knew Absalom would lose no time to accomplish his end; and therefore requires them immediately to be gone, and prevent a surprise. He was desirous also to preserve Jerusalem from being sacked: being the royal city; upon which he had bestowed much cost.

Ver. 15. *And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint.*] One seems to have spoken in the name of the whole court: and it was some comfort to him, that he had a company of such faithful servants about him, as were ready to execute whatsoever he commanded.

Ver. 16. *And the king went forth, and all his household after him.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *all his household at his feet.* Which shews that he went on foot, and would not make use of his mule; being in a mournful state, and desirous to move his people's compassion to him.

And the king left ten women, that were concubines, to keep the house.] For their sex, and their quality, might be thought to be a sufficient protection to them. What became of his wives is not here related; it is probable they went along with him to take care of him, as the other were left to take care of the house.

Ver. 17. *And the king went forth, and all the people after him.*] That is, all the people of Jerusalem, who were well-affected to him.

And tarried in a place that was far off.] At a good distance from the city, where, it is likely, he put the people that came out confusedly after him into good order, and waited to see what other friends would come to him.

Ver. 18. *And all his servants passed on beside him.*] His household servants, I suppose, marched on both hands of him.

All the Cherethites and all the Pelethites.] Who these were, I have shewn at large upon viii. 18. and it is possible they now brought up the rear.

And all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.] These marched in the front of his little army; but who they were it is hard to tell; for we read nothing of them before. Some take them to have been proselytes born in Gath of the Philistines, who came with Ittai to David; being attracted by the fame of his piety, and happy successes. Others take them to be Jews, who had fled to David in his exile, when he was at Gath; and accompanied him ever after, not only in the time of Saul's persecution, but after he came to the crown of Judah and Israel.

Ver. 19. *Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us?*] He seems to have been the commander of those six hundred men beforementioned. And the Jews make him the son of Achish king of Gath; who out of religion and friendship came to David.

Return to thy place.] That is, to Jerusalem.

And abide with the king.] For so Absalom was by usurpation.

For thou art a stranger, and an exile.] Who upon that account might hope to be civilly treated; at least, being none of David's family, and a new comer, he thought it was not fit to engage him in their broils.

Ver. 20. *Whereas thou camest to us but yesterday, should I make thee this day go up and down with us?*] He was newly settled at Jerusalem; and therefore David thought it unreasonable he should be so soon unsettled again.

Seeing I go whither I may.] Especially since he knew not whither he should betake himself for safety; and therefore would not have Ittai expose himself to such uncertainties. (See concerning this phrase, 1 Sam. xxiii. 13.)

Return thou, and take back thy brethren.] Some understand by his *brethren*, the six hundred men that came from Gath: but it is not probable David would part with such a guard as they were, in this time of extreme danger, unless they had desired to be gone; therefore he rather means those persons that attended him, or were of his family, who came to sojourn with him in Judea.

Mercy and truth be with thee.] In the Hebrew the words are, *with thee mercy and truth.* Which some take to signify, *thou art a right honest and good man.* But our translation seems better, which makes them a form of a blessing, or prayer to God, that he would requite the kindness and fidelity of Ittai, by shewing mercy to him, and faithfully fulfilling his promises made to those who came to put their trust in him.

Ver. 21. *And Ittai answered the king, and said, As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in whatsoever place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or in life, even there also will thy servant be.*] A marvellous fidelity in a stranger, when a son was a rebel against him. And David's humanity is no less admirable in offering to dismiss him so freely, yea, earnestly pressing him to return, because he was a stranger; though he was in the greatest need of all the assistance he could get to defend him.

Ver. 22. *And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over.*] There was not a word more to be said, now he had sworn he would not leave him.

And Ittai the Gittite passed over.] The brook Kidron, as it follows in the next verse.

He and all his men, and all the little ones that came with him.] This shews that his whole family were come, as I noted before, to sojourn in this country.

Ver. 23. *And all the country.*] About Jerusalem.

Wept with a loud voice,] Being extremely afflicted to see their prince, under whom they had lived in great peace and prosperity, reduced to such extremities.

And all the people passed over.] All that continued faithful to David in those parts.

The king also himself passed over the brook Kidron.] He stayed till the last, that he might take notice who appeared for him, as they passed over before him.

And all the people passed over towards the way of the wil-

derness.] And when they were over, they marched through the wilderness, that lay between Jerusalem and Jericho.

Ver. 24. *And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites went with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord.*] That is, all the Kohathites that were at Jerusalem, whose office it was to carry the ark, and take care of it.

And they set down the ark of God.] When they came to David, they set down the ark in the place where he was, to signify that God would be with him, and accompany him; and that the people might thereby be excited to follow him, who had the token of the Divine presence with him.

And Abiathar went up.] To the top of the Mount Olivet.

Till all the people had done passing out of the city.] From the mount he could behold, when the people, who would follow David, were come out of the city. And then, I suppose, he came down; and desired that the ark and the king might move up the hill also.

Ver. 25. *And the king said unto Zadok.*] The Talmudists have a fancy that the king spake to Zadok, not to Abiathar, because he had removed Abiathar from the high-priesthood; upon this account, that, he consulting by *urim* and *thummim*, God gave no answer; but when Zadok inquired, God did answer. Whereupon David understood the Spirit of God was departed from Abiathar, and therefore turned him out of his office; which is notoriously false, for he was not turned out till the reign of Solomon.

Carry back the ark into the city.] For he did not think it decent to have it wander about with him he knew not whither, as Abarbinel observes: and perhaps he thought God might be angry with him, should he let it be carried out of its place. As if he trusted in the ark, which was but the token of his presence, more than he did in God himself, who had preserved him in the persecution of Saul when he had no ark with him.

If I find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation.] It was not for the honour of the ark, as I said, to take it out of the place which he had made for it: which he calls *God's habitation*, because there he dwelt by this special token of his presence in it. And if he had a favour to him, he knew he could preserve him without the ark, as well as with it; and bring him again to worship him in his proper place.

Ver. 26. *But if he say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seems good in his sight.*] He was very sensible of his own ill deservings; and humbly submits to whatsoever punishment, even the heaviest, that God would think fit to inflict upon him.

Ver. 27. *And the king said also unto Zadok the priest.*] He is frequently called by Josephus, *the high-priest:* particularly in lib. vii. Antiq. cap. 6. where he saith David made him, Ἀρχιερέα μετ' Ἀβιαθάρη, φίλος γὰρ ἦν αὐτῷ, *high-priest together with Abiathar: for he was his friend.* But hereby we are only to understand that he was the *sagan*, as the Jews call the vicar or deputy of the high-priest: who is called the *second priest*, 2 Kings xxv. 18. (See Selden, de Success. in Pontif. Hebræ. lib. i. cap. 4.)

Art thou not a seer?] A very wise man, or a prophet, who could not but discern in what state things were likely to be, and that he might serve David better by staying in Jerusalem than going along with him.

Return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.] This was another reason for sending back the ark: for as it was not fit to keep it with him, and the priests and Levites also to attend it, so they might do him more service elsewhere than in his camp.

Ver. 28. *See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness.*] He put an entire confidence in them, that they would not betray him, by acquainting them where he meant to rest awhile, to wait for intelligence from them.

Till there come word from you to certify me.] What Absalom designed; and accordingly he intended to steer his course.

Ver. 29. *Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem; and they tarried there.*] Mention being made both here and also ver. 33. of Zadok before Abiathar, it seems to intimate some preference to him, and to justify what Josephus saith, that he was the king's friend; and being constantly with him, was more honoured than Abiathar.

Ver. 30. *And David went up the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and went barefoot.*] Dejected, as Salvian glosses, into the condition of a servant; or rather in the habit of a mourner. For *covering the head* was a token of shame and confusion, and great trouble: and so was going *barefoot*. Which was used on the great fast, or day of expiation, as we find in Codex Joma, cap. 8. though the doctors say, they might put on woollen or linen socks, but no leathern shoes. And this was observed also in funerals, as Buxtorfius shews in his Synagoga Judaica, cap. 49. which was a custom in the days of Ezekiel, (xxiv. 17.) Nor were the heathen strangers to it: but in times of great calamity went *barefoot*, as that excellent person Ezekiel Spanhemius observes in his notes upon Callimachus's hymn, ad Cererem, ver. 125.

And all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.] Going barefoot also, it is most probable, as the king did: whose example they followed.

Ver. 31. *And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom.*] This touched him very nearly; because he was a very wise man, and one whom he took for his friend, (Psal. lv. 13.)

And David said, O Lord, I pray thee turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.] He prays that he might give foolish counsel; or that it might be contemned and looked upon as foolish; or that it might miscarry in the execution.

Ver. 32. *And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshipped God.*] Looking towards the ark in the house of God: which he could see from the top of the mount.

That Hushai the Archite came to meet him.] There was a city in the tribe of Ephraim called Archi, (Josh. xvi. 2.) where this person, in all likelihood, was born and bred, and coming to Jerusalem, became one of David's privy-council; being famous for wisdom; otherwise Absalom would not have so readily entertained him, and admitted him to his secrets.

With his coat rent, and earth upon his head.] Which were expressions of great sorrow. Joh. Braunius hath demonstrated, the garment called *ketonah* was round, like our surplices, with sleeves to put the hands and arms into it. Which was worn by great persons, not only among the Jews, but the Egyptians, Tyrians, and Assy-

rians, he observes, (lib. ii. de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr. cap. 2. sect. 13, 14.) which may incline us to a belief, that Hushai was no mean man, but a person of quality.

Ver. 33. *Unto whom David said, If thou pass along with me, then thou wilt be a burden to me.*] For he was not provided with maintenance for his own family: and Hushai, being no soldier, but a counsellor, could not be so useful to him in the field as he might be at the court.

Ver. 34. *But if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king.*] So he was to call him, because he had taken upon him that title.

As I have been thy father's servant hitherto, so will I now also be thy servant.] He would have him pretend he would be as faithful to him as he had been to David; and it was very well known he had done him good service. This was not honest; but it was according to the policy practised in those days, and indeed in all ages. Which Procopius Gazæus approves so far as to say, that "a lie which is told for a good end, is equivalent to truth." But I dare not justify such doctrine; though what Hushai undertook to do was not to get money, or to do others hurt, but to preserve a good king, and a prophet, and a friend.

Then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.] God he thought had sent this man, in answer to his prayer, (ver. 31.) if he would but follow his direction.

Ver. 35. *Hast thou not with thee there Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, that whatsoever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.*] Whom he looked upon as trusty persons, and faithful to his interest: and so they proved.

Ver. 36. *Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear.*] They were not with their fathers in Jerusalem, but lay close in a place not far off, ready to carry any message that was sent by them. (See xvii. 17.)

Ver. 37. *So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.*] Where Hushai, I suppose, waited for his coming: having got thither before him, and so ordered his affairs, that it was not known he had been to offer his service to David: or, those that knew it, out of reverence to him, and affection to David, did not discover it.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *AND when David was a little past the top of the hill.*] *viz.* Mount Olivet, (xv. 30.)

Behold, Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and a hundred bunches of raisins, and a hundred of summer-fruits, and a bottle of wine.] They put their wine into bottles, or bags, some of which were large vessels, and contained a great deal of wine. Such, no doubt, was this, which had liquor in it, proportionable to the rest of the present.

Ver. 2. *And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses are for the king's household to ride on.*] For his wives and children, if they were weary with travelling on foot; as they now did.

And the bread and summer-fruits for the young men to eat.] For the refreshment of the king's attendants.

And the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.] This argues great consideration of David's condition: to which he suited his present; which in a wilderness came very seasonably, and was very noble. Perhaps the bunches of raisins were intended for David's own support.

Ver. 3. *And the king said, And where is thy master's son?*] He desired, I suppose, to know whether this present was from himself, or from Mephibosheth.

And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, To-day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father.] This seems to be a fiction; but well contrived: for the family of David being so broken, he might think it probable the crown would fall to him.

Ver. 4. *Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth.*] We read ix. 2. that Ziba was but a servant (see there), but now David makes him a freeholder; giving him a great estate: which, if he said true, was forfeited to the king for treason, as it had been before in the time of Ish-bosheth, and thereupon given to Mephibosheth. But in this David seems to have been too credulous, and rashly condemned Mephibosheth before he heard what he could say for himself: but he imagined, perhaps, that Ziba durst not tell so notorious a lie, which might shortly be disproved. And beside, a man that comes to relieve another who is in great distress, easily wins his good opinion.

And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.] He pretends to value the king's favour more than the gift he had bestowed upon him.

Ver. 5. *And when king David came to Bahurim.*] A city in the tribe of Benjamin, (xix. 16.) into the territories of which David was now come: though not as yet into the town itself, as appears from ver. 14. The Targum calls it Almoth; which is of the same signification with Bahurim; the one importing *young men*, and the other *youth*.

Behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he went.] Out of an inveterate hatred to David; whom he looked upon as the great enemy of his family.

Ver. 6. *And he cast stones at David.*] In contempt of him. Or, as some fancy, to reproach him with the adultery he had committed; for which he deserved to have been stoned.

And at all the servants of king David.] This shews it was done only in contempt of them: as if they had been a company of dogs.

And all the people, and all the mighty men, were on his right hand and on his left.] He was under such a strong guard, that Shimei's rage was little less than madness: for he could not hurt David, but might have been immediately killed himself.

Ver. 7. *And thus said Shimei, when he cursed, Come out, come out.*] As much as if he had said, Get thee out of the kingdom; from whence thou deservest to be expelled. So the words are in the Hebrew, *Go out, go out:* the doubling of which words expresses his vehement detestation of him.

Thou man of blood, thou son of Belial.] So they called all those that made their will their law. But R. Levi ben Gersom thinks he hath respect in these last words to the

adultery committed with Bath-sheba; as, in the first, he might have to the killing of Uriah.

Ver. 8. *The Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul.*] This was perfect railing: for David had shed none of their blood; but he maliciously imputes to him the death of Abner, and of Ish-bosheth.

In whose stead thou hast reigned.] In effect, he calls him an usurper.

And the Lord hath delivered thy kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man.] He still vomits out the same reproaches, with a most wicked spirit, which the Greeks call ἐπιχαιρεκακία, *rejoicing in iniquity*; to see Absalom so prosperous in his horrid rebellion.

Ver. 9. *Then said Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king?*] See iii. 8.

Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.] There was admirable discipline observed in this small army, none of which durst stir without David's order or leave. And this, according to human reason, was a just motion which Abishai made; he being very near of kin to David, as Shimei was to Saul; and therefore a fit person to stop the mouth of such a mad dog, by cutting off his head.

Ver. 10. *And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah?*] He speaks this with some indignation; and reflects upon Joab, as well as Abishai, who had been the occasion of these reproaches.

So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David.] God neither bade him curse David, nor excited him to it; but finding his heart full of malice and rage, gave him an opportunity to vent it, as a punishment unto David. Unto which the good king humbly submits; looking upon it as coming from the hand of God, who delivered him up to this contempt. And in this David's virtue was admirable; for it is not an easy thing to stifle all motions to revenge, when it is easy to take it, and there is a high provocation to it. It is an observation, indeed, of Cicero's (Orat. de Auruspicum Responsis), that "perditi hominis profligatique maledictis, nullius gloria dignitasque violatur;" *by the reproaches of a wicked, profligate fellow, no man's glory or dignity is hurt or violated.* But David doth not scorn these curses, out of mere greatness of spirit, as coming out of the mouth of a base wretch, not worthy to be regarded; but acknowledges the justice of them, and bears them with a singular patience, out of humility and reverence to God, who had so ordered it.

Who shall then say, Why hast thou done so?] He doth not mean, who should ask Shimei such a question, but who should take upon him to find fault with God, who had just reason to suffer this? Though Grotius thinks David excuses Shimei in these words. For, speaking concerning the respect that is to be used to kings, in not giving them public reproaches, he excepts those which are given by a prophet, who had a special command from God for it. Upon which account he saith, when David was openly upbraided by Shimei as a murderer, he had no excuse to make for him but this, that perhaps God had commanded him to do it; shewing that this alone could make it lawful to speak evil of the king, if God, in a special manner, enjoined it. (Lib. de Imperio Summar. Potest. circa sacra, cap. 9. sect. 19.)

Ver. 11. *And David said unto Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more may this Benjamite do it? Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him.*] His passion seems not to have been at all stirred by this impotent railer, and endeavours to quiet the spirits of others, calmly reasoning himself and them, with admirable consideration, into an humble patience: for what were the revilings of a stranger to the murderous intentions of a son? And how could he withstand God, who inflicted this punishment upon him for his sins?

Ver. 12. *It may be the Lord will look upon my affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day.*] He durst not be confident, being conscious of his ill deservings; but he had some hope, that God would be as gracious to him as this man was malicious.

Ver. 13. *And as David and his men went by the way.*] Taking no notice of him.

Shimei went along on the side of the hill over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust.] Neglect of him made him more outrageous: which gave David occasion to exercise the greater patience under so long a vexation.

Ver. 14. *And the king, and all the people that were with him, came weary.*] Not only with their journey, but with grief.

And refreshed themselves there.] At Bahurim, (ver. 5.)

Ver. 15. *And Absalom, and all the people of the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him.*] As soon as David was got into the wilderness, he took possession of Jerusalem, and the king's palace.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, that when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom.*] Among others that came to welcome him to Jerusalem.

That Hushai said unto Absalom, God save the king, God save the king.] He not only owned his authority, but with great affection seemed to desire its countenance. Which was an egregious piece of flattery and dissimulation.

Ver. 17. *And Absalom said, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? why wentest thou not with thy friend?*] Absalom had not so little sense as not to consider, that no man ought to forsake a friend in his distress: though at the same time he did not reflect, how he had not only forsaken, but forced away his own father. So that one might have said to him, *Is this thy duty to thy father?*

Ver. 18. *And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but whom the Lord, and this people, and all the men of Israel choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide.*] The voice of the people he pretends to look upon as the voice of God; and that he was bound to prefer the public good before his own private obligations or affections.

Ver. 19. *And again, whom should I serve? should I not serve in the presence of his son? As I have served in the presence of thy father, so will I be in thy presence.*] He gives a second reason; that he should not offend against David, in giving good counsel to his son.

Ver. 20. *Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, Give counsel among you what we shall do.*] I suppose Ahithophel was made president of the council (as we now speak), who required the rest to deliver their opinions after he had delivered his.

Ver. 21. *And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto*

thy father's concubines, which he hath left to keep the house.] It appears by this he was a profane politician, who did not regard by what means, how wicked soever, he compassed his ends. The Hebrews think, also, that by this counsel Ahithophel gratified his own revenge, because David had lain with his grand-daughter, as I before noted.

And all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father.] That he and his father were become irreconcilable enemies. For Ahithophel involved him in a greater sin than that for which he killed Amnon: it not being so foul a crime to lie with his sister, as it was to commit incest with his father's wives.

Then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong.] When they were possessed with an opinion, that the father and son could never come to an accommodation. Which might have been hoped between such near relations; and then the people had been in an ill condition: for David might not have been reconciled to them, though he was to his son. But after this detestable crime there was no likelihood that they would ever be friends again.

Ver. 22. *So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.*] Who were strangely depraved, in that none of them should cry out against such abominable wickedness.

Ver. 23. *And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, was as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God.*] It was so sure and safe, that it was commonly followed, without any doubting of the success. Such was this counsel which he now gave: for there was no greater danger to him and all Israel, than for Absalom to repent, and submit to his father: therefore he endeavoured, as I said, to make them irreconcilable, by doing his father the highest injury. Such was this to which he advised, as we learn by Jacob's resentment of it in his son Reuben, and many other examples, for which I refer to Grotius. He made the breach therefore thus wide, that it might never be healed: for if it had, David might have called him and others, in due time, to an account for their treason.

So was all the counsel of Ahithophel, both with David and with Absalom.] While David was in prosperity he gave him faithful counsel: but now in his distress as wisely consulted his ruin. For, as Procopius Gazæus observes, "accommodavit se rebus præsentibus:" *he was one of those who complied with the present state of things;* and now, with great reason, advised to make haste to dispatch David: fearing lest natural affection should work a reconciliation, and he should be punished for his perfidiousness.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *MOREOVER, Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve thousand men.*] Out of the whole multitude of the Israelites that followed Absalom: a thousand choice men, I suppose, out of each tribe. For he knew it would take up too much time to gather all the forces of Israel together, and give David an opportunity to escape.

And I will arise and pursue after David.] It seems he was a soldier as well as a counsellor: or, at least, he thought his counsel so sure of being successful, that he undertook himself to put it in execution. He was afraid, also, that if Absalom should command them himself, natural affection might make him spare his father, and not take away his life; or perhaps work an agreement between them: and so leave him in danger, as I said before, to be called to an account for his rebellion.

This night.] The next, I suppose, after David went away. For speed was the main thing on which he depended.

Ver. 2. *And I will come upon him while he is yet weary.*] With a long march.

And weak-handed.] Before he had got more forces together.

And I will make him afraid.] Strike a terror into him by this sudden attack; and in the night, when he was ill provided.

And all the people that are with him shall flee.] Finding how unable they were to resist such a force.

And I will smite the king only.] And spare all the people, whom he would not pursue.

Ver. 3. *And I will bring back all the people unto thee.*] By this means he doubted not to make an end of the war presently, and to bring all Israel to be his subjects.

The man whom thou seekest is as if all returned.] By smiting David, with whom alone was his quarrel, the whole nation would come into him: there being no other to whom they should submit when he was dead.

So all the people shall be in peace.] Thus they should have a peace without war; by taking and killing him; which would preserve both the people which were with Absalom, and those with David. They should all be saved, and he alone destroyed.

Ver. 4. *And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel.*] For it was very sound advice; it being dangerous to deliberate long about such wicked designs; which must be executed speedily. So Tacitus well observes, "Scelera impetu, bona consilia mora valescunt;" *Wicked counsels prevail by sudden violence, but good by delays.*

Ver. 5. *Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he saith.*] It was a proverb, it is likely, before Solomon's time, that *in a multitude of counsellors there is safety:* by which Absalom resolved to govern himself. But the providence of God is chiefly to be here noted; who made Absalom irresolute and doubtful, even in that counsel which was approved by all the elders of Israel, and was, evidently, the wisest that could be given.

Ver. 6. *And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner.*] Relating what he had said, ver. 2, 3.

Shall we do after his saying?] Follow his advice.

If not, speak thou.] He gives him full liberty to speak freely, if he were of another opinion; which he might deliver without offence, either to him or any body else.

Ver. 7. *And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath given, is not good at this time.*] He confessed him to be a man of extraordinary judgment; but no man is wise at all times: and he thought now he was in an error for the following reason.

Ver. 8. *For (said Hushai) thou knowest thy father and his men, that they be mighty men.*] Old soldiers, who are

aware of the danger wherein they are; and will provide against it, that they be not easily surprised.

And they be chafed in their minds.] So extremely provoked and exasperated, that it would be dangerous to fall upon them with so small an army as Ahithophel proposed. For such desperate persons would sell their lives at a dear rate.

As a bear robbed of her whelps in the field.] All men know that a bear is a very fierce creature: and good authors, particularly Aristotle, observe, that she-bears are fiercer than the male; especially when they have whelps to take care of, as the same philosopher writes, lib. vi. Hist. Animal. cap. 18. But most of all enraged, when their whelps are killed, or taken away from them; which is mentioned often in Holy Scripture, Prov. xvii. 12. Hosea xiii. 8. where Kimchi observes, that they bring forth their whelps wrapped up in a very thick skin, which it costs them a great deal of pains to free them from; and therefore grieves them more, when they find they have laboured in vain. (See Bochart, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 9.)

And thy father is a man of war, and will not lodge with the people.] Of such experience in warlike affairs, that as his men would defend him stoutly, and with great fury, so, when all was done, it was probable Ahithophel would not know where to find him; for great captains having disposed their force to the best advantage, and set their guards, oftentimes retire themselves from the camp, and lodge in some secret place.

Ver. 9. *Behold, he is hid now in some pit, or in some other place.*] Some cave, or other lurking-place; as he was in the days of Saul, who was never able to catch him.

And it shall come to pass, when some of them.] That is, of Absalom's forces.

Be overthrown at the first.] As might well be supposed, if David's men should come on a sudden upon them, out of an ambush, and put the first ranks into disorder, if not make a slaughter among them.

That whosoever hears it will say, There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom.] This news would presently be spread through the whole army, and fear make them think the slaughter greater than it was.

Ver. 10. *And he also that is valiant, whose heart is as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt.*] For men are apt to conjecture of successes by the beginning; and it is a great encouragement to men to fight when they prosper at the first onset; and mightily disheartens those that are beaten. Lions are not only very strong, but very furious creatures; and therefore valiant men are said to have the *hearts* of lions, and the *faces* of lions, (1 Chron. xii. 8.) and the army of locusts to have the *teeth* of lions, (Joel i. 6.) But no men are so terrible, but they may be terrified, when they are suddenly and unexpectedly surprised by men as terrible as themselves; and far more incensed and justly enraged.

Vossius thinks that the word *lebi*, which in Hebrew signifies a *lion*, comes from the word *leb*, which in that language signifies the *heart*; as much as to say, *Cordatus*, a hearty creature, full of courage: whence the Greeks call a valiant and generous man, θυμολέοντα and λεοντόθυμον. (See him, lib. iii. de Orig. et Progr. Idol. cap. 52. and Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 2.)

For all Israel know that thy father is a mighty man, and they that be with him are valiant men.] Who would pursue any advantage with the greatest courage and resolution.

Ver. 11. *Therefore I counsel, that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, even as the sand that is by the sea in multitude.*] He means all the fighting men throughout the country, which were very numerous. In which advice, his chief aim was to gain time for David to raise an army by the help of his friends; for all Israel could not presently be gathered together, and put into order of battle.

And that thou go to battle also in thy own person.] Which would encourage the people to fight valiantly, when he was at the head of them; and would win him great glory, in owing his victory to his own conduct, and not to other men's.

Ver. 12. *And so shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew falls upon the ground.*] He compares the multitude of their soldiers to the drops of dews, which cover the face of the whole earth; so that if David was in the field, he could not escape, but he would fall into the hands of some or other of them.

And of him, and of all the men that are with him, there shall not be left so much as one.] For his army would be so large as to spread itself over all the country, and ferret David and his men out of all their holes, by searching every one of them. This counsel was very plausible to one who relied upon the greatness of a host; and Hushai was also so cunning as to speak as if he would accompany him.

Ver. 13. *Moreover, if he be got into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the river.*] He represents a further advantage of such a multitude; that if David quitted the field, and got into the strongest of their cities, encompassed with high walls, and a deep ditch, they were enough to begirt it round, and, by ropes put about the walls, draw them down and all the houses of the city, into the ditch that run about it. There was no such thing, that we read of, practised in war; therefore some by *chabalim* (which we translate *ropes*) understand *troops*, or *bands* of men, who by machines drawn with ropes could batter down walls and houses: or rather, this is a bragging hyperbolical speech, that they should be so numerous as to be able to do this, if there were no other way to reduce the city.

Until there be not one small stone found there.] Much less any man remaining there.

Ver. 14. *And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.*] For so it would naturally seem to men that had a bad cause, and were cowardly, having nothing but their numbers to depend upon.

For the Lord had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that God might bring evil upon Absalom.] But the chief reason was, that God blinded their eyes, and infatuated their judgments, that they could not discern what was best, but take that course which would ruin Absalom. Such is the wonderful overruling providence of God, in more cases than we are aware of; for, as St. Hilary speaks, concerning the rage of heretics, "Si quantum audet impietas, tantum consuleret prudentia, dif-

ficile esset veritatis causam agere;" *If wickedness were as wise and prudent in counsel, as it is bold and daring in attempts, it would be hard to maintain a good cause.*

Ver. 15. *Then said Hushai to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus have I counselled.*] He acted the part of a true friend to David, but not of a trusty servant to Absalom, whose counsels he betrayed.

Ver. 16. *Now therefore send quickly, and tell David.*] Carry him this intelligence with all speed.

Saying, Lodge not this night in the plain of the wilderness, but speedily pass over.] The river Jordan.

Lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that are with him.] For fear Absalom should change his resolution, and incline again to the counsel of Ahithophel; who being a man of great authority, might persuade him his advice was the truest.

Ver. 17. *Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by En-rogel.*] A place near Jerusalem, (Josh. xv. 7, 8.) which the Targum translates the *fuller's well;* because, as Kimchi says, the fullers there trod their cloth with their feet; for he derives *rogel* from the word *regel*, which signifies a *foot.*

(For they might not be seen to come into the city).] Their fathers charged them to stay in this place; because it would have been difficult to send them out of the city without being discovered.

And a wench went and told them.] Pretending, perhaps, to go thither to scour some clothes.

And they went and told king David.] After a little stop in their way, as it here follows.

Ver. 18. *Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom.*] Some of whose troopers, who were scouting thereabouts (as Josephus understands it), discovered them before they had gone two furlongs.

But they went both of them away quickly, and came into a man's house in Bahurim.] They suspected they were discovered, and therefore turned out of the public road (as Josephus explains it) and made haste to this village, and perhaps to that man's house where David refreshed himself, (xvi. 5. 14.)

Which had a well in his court; whither they went down.] For at that time of the year their wells in many places were dry, or had little water in them. And it would not be easily suspected that they would stay in an open court.

Ver. 19. *And the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon.*] Corn newly thrashed out, which she pretended to dry in the sun.

And the thing was not known.] By this means they lay undiscovered.

Ver. 20. *And when Absalom's servants.*] Who were sent to pursue them.

Came to the woman of the house.] For some had informed them that they had turned this way.

They said, Where is Ahimaaz and Jonathan?] They were known persons, being the sons of the most eminent among the priests; or, perhaps, they described them to her, so that she could not but know whether two such persons came thither, or passed that way.

And the woman said unto them, They be gone over the brook of water.] Which came, I suppose, from the fountain of En-rogel. It seems to have been a common opinion in those days, that these officious lies, for the safety of innocent persons, had no hurt in them; for we find many instances of them, which cannot be justified. (See upon Josh. ii. 5.)

And when they had sought them and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.] For the woman told them, as Josephus says, that they made no stay at her house; but after they had asked for a little drink, made haste away. Though if they pursued them speedily, she believed they might overtake them.

Ver. 21. *And it came to pass, after they were departed, they came up out of the well, and went and told David.*] As soon as the pursuers were returned back to Jerusalem.

And said unto David, Arise, and pass over the water: for thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you.] And they did not know but he, by his great wisdom, might overrule the counsel of Hushai (with which, no doubt, they also acquainted David), and persuade Absalom to hearken to his; and then David was in extreme danger.

Ver. 22. *Then David arose, and all the people that were with him, and they passed over Jordan: by the morning-light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.*] By this it appears, that they passed over in the night, either at the fords, or in boats: and that not one of them miscarried in the passage, or ran away from him.

Ver. 23. *And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed.*] Soon after Ahimaaz and Jonathan were gone to David, it publicly appeared, that the counsel of Ahithophel was rejected, and Hushai's entertained.

He saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order.] Settled his affairs, and disposed of his estate.

And hanged himself.] Being confident that David would get the better of Absalom; and that then he should be put to death for his treason; which made him choose to be his own executioner. So we understand it; though some of the Jews will have it that he died of grief, being choked with a quinsy. For it is not likely, they think, so wise a man as he would hang himself: but, being full of anguish, anger, and vexation (arising not merely from his pride, which enraged him to see any man's counsel preferred to his; but to the foresight, as I said, of danger, if David prevailed, as he was sure he would), these passions cast him into so violent a distemper, that he was strangled by it. And so some interpret the word ἀπήγξατο, in Matt. xxvii. 5.

And died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.] Where perhaps he would not have had the honour to be interred, if he had been executed, by David.

Ver. 24. *Then David came to Mahanaim.*] A place in the tribe of Gad. (See chap. ii. 8. of this book.)

And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.] As soon as he had gathered them together, which required some time: during which David had opportunity to strengthen himself by gathering an army also. Which was after the death of Ahithophel (who saw what delays were made by gathering Israel together, and what the consequence would be), and after relief was sent him by several persons: particularly by Shobi of the children of Ammon, (ver. 27.) who were neighbours to this part of the country of Israel, though at a good distance from Mahanaim.

Ver. 25. *And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa was a man's son whose name*

was Ithra, an Israelite.] By religion, though by birth an Ishmaelite. (See 1 Chron. ii. 27.) Abarbinel thinks the quite contrary, that he was an Israelite by birth, but had lived long in the land of the Ishmaelites. And by *the son of a man* he understands an illustrious person.

That went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash.] That is, he married one of the daughters of Jesse, who is here called Nahash. For, as Kimchi observes, many persons had two names: and this signifies *a serpent.* From whence it is, that when Isaiah saith, xiv. 29. *out of the serpent's root* (or *the root of Nahash) shall come forth a cockatrice,* or *basilisk;* the Chaldee paraphrase expounds it, *out of the root of Jesse shall come forth the Messiah.* Who was typified by the brazen serpent in the wilderness.

Sister to Zeruiah, Joab's mother.] So Amasa was cousin-german to Joab: and David was uncle to them both. Absalom, one would think, should not have trusted in such an office so near a relation of David: but he himself was much nearer; and he took Amasa to be as ambitious as himself.

Ver. 26. *So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead.*] Waiting an opportunity to fight David.

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi, the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon.*] This was a comfort to David, to see himself honoured in his distress by one of a strange country: which he had made his enemy by the terrible execution he had made among them, (xii. 26, &c.) But it is thought, that this Shobi, the brother of Hanun, abhorring the base affront which he put upon David, was preserved by him, and made king of the country in the room of Hanun. And shewed his gratitude for so great a kindness, by coming to his relief, and perhaps to his assistance in his extreme necessity.

And Machir the son of Ammiel of Lo-debar.] Who bred up Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, till David sent for him, (ix. 5.)

And Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim.] Who was a man of great wealth, (xix. 32.) and of as great goodness: for he maintained David while he was in those parts.

Ver. 28. *Brought beds, and basons, and earthen vessels.*] All manner of household stuff, which they now wanted.

And wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse.] All sorts of provision, which were necessary for the sustenance either of man or beast. And they brought it of their own accord, without asking, which was a token of their affectionate loyalty. The word *kali* is twice repeated among these provisions, and is first joined with *wheat, barley,* and *flour.* And properly signifies, *tostas fruges, parched corn,* as we well translate it. And in the latter end of the verse, after *beans* and *lentiles,* it must signify, as Bochart observes, "tostum aut frictum aliquod legumen, *viz.* frictum cicer," *some parched or fried sort of pulse,* to wit, *fried vetches:* which grew plentifully in Judea; as it was common among both Greeks and Romans in their food, as Bochart shews, in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. i. cap. 7. where he observes that it is called *kali* by the Arabians to this day. And here we may learn, by the way, from this story, and the present made him by Abigail, and by Ziba, what was the ordinary victuals used in those days. Grain and pulse made up a great part of it, which were the common food of the ancient Egyptians. And the Romans, in their best times, when they most of all applied themselves to agriculture, did scarcely live upon any thing else: whence came the illustrious names of Fabius, Piso, Cicero, and Lentulus.

Ver. 29. *And honey.*] Milk and honey in those times were reckoned the greatest delicacies, and were the food of kings and great persons; as the same Bochart observes, lib. iv. cap. 11.

And butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat.] The making of *butter,* I have observed elsewhere, was early known in these countries; and so was *cheese.* For, as the author now mentioned observes, though these words *saphoth lachar* be very variously interpreted, yet the Chaldee and Syriac, as well as all the Hebrews, understand by *saphoth, cheese* made of cow's milk: from the Hebrew and Chaldee word *saphar,* which signifies to *strain;* cheese being made by pressing the whey out of the curds. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 33.) Here is no mention of any flesh-meat but sheep, which were very plentiful in those countries: and so was fish also, but we never read any mention of its being eaten, till the latter times. For it is supposed by learned men, that the ancients despised it, as too light and delicate for strong stomachs. Whence they observe that Homer never speaks of it, nor any Grecian writer of the heroic times.

For they said, The people are weary, and hungry, and thirsty, in the wilderness.] Where there was scarcity of provision, and therefore they needed refreshment, when they were come out of it. Which moved these good people to bring them beds to rest themselves in, after their journey: and all these good things which this rich country afforded, to satisfy their hunger: and it is highly probable, bottles of wine were not wanting, to make their entertainment more noble.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND David numbered the people that were with him.*] And found them sufficient to make a considerable army.

And set captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds over them.] Formed them into regiments and companies (as we now speak), and set proper officers and commanders over them.

Ver. 2. *And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab.*] Who was the general of the whole host: but now David intended to command in chief himself (as we read in the end of this verse), and therefore committed only a third part of the army to the conduct of Joab.

And a third part under the hand of Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite.] Order and discipline is of more force in a battle than great numbers: therefore David disposes his little army, for so it was in comparison (Josephus saith but four thousand men), into three bodies, under three eminent commanders: who were to succour one another as they saw occasion.

And the king said unto the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also.] Which he thought would be a great

encouragement to them, and make them fight the more valiantly.

Ver. 3. *But the people answered, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us.*] They did not think it advisable that he should hazard himself: for which they give a good reason. That if they should be routed, and half of them slain, Absalom would not think himself a conqueror as long as David was alive: who might raise new forces, and give him battle again. And, as Josephus adds, they might possibly think the king had another army to guard his person.

But now thou art worth ten thousand of us.] Whose person, therefore, ought not to be exposed to danger.

Therefore now it is better that thou succour us out of the city.] By sending them, if there were need, a fresh supply of men, which he kept with him as a reserve in the city: and provision also, with counsel and advice, as occasion required.

Ver. 4. *And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do.*] He submitted to their opinion; for it was not a time now to oppose the sense of his people.

And the king stood by the gate-side, and all the people came out by hundreds, and by thousands.] Whom, Josephus saith, he exhorted to be faithful and courageous, remembering what he had done for them, *νικὴν αὐτοῖς ἐπευξάμενος, praying God to make them victorious.*

Ver. 5. *And the king commanded Joab, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom.*] If they got the better, he prayed, or rather required them, to spare Absalom's life: though he did not deserve it, yet because David desired it, whose affection was wonderfully great to him as his son; and in hope, perhaps, to reclaim him and bring him to repentance. He considered him also as a rash *young man*, and therefore an object of his and their pity.

And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.] So that no private soldier might voluntarily kill him.

Ver. 6. *And the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim.*] Josephus saith, that Joab drew up his men, *ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ μεγάλῳ, in a large field, which had a wood behind it.* Which is called the *wood of Ephraim*, not because it belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, for they had no possessions on this side Jordan, where the battle was fought: but the Gileadites gave it that name in memory of the great slaughter Jephthah made of the Ephraimites hereabout, mentioned Judg. xii.

Ver. 7. *Where the men of Israel were slain before the servants of David.*] They who fought for Absalom being called *the men of Israel*, it looks like an argument that David's army was principally gathered out of his own tribe of Judah. But it will appear from xix. 11. that this is not true: and therefore by *Israel* we are to understand the tribes on the other side Jordan, who pursued David into the land of Gilead, where he had got together a small army.

And there was a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand men.] For the fight was obstinate, as Josephus thinks, both sides having great reason to stand stoutly to it, lib. vii. Antiq. cap. 9.

Ver. 8. *For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country.*] Thereabout, both in the field and in the wood.

And the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.] Some think the wood is said to devour them, because they fell into pits, or stumbled upon stumps of trees, or pressed one another to death as they came into strait places, or were killed by wild beasts. But the most simple meaning is, that there were more slain in the wood than in the field. That is, more in flight than in the fight: so Josephus, *ὡς φεύγονται πεσεῖν πλείονας ἢ μαχομένους. For they could not run away so fast in the wood as in the open field.* Many also being weary, it is likely, got into lurking-places, and were there killed like wild beasts.

Ver. 9. *And Absalom met the servants of David.*] In this flight through the wood, he chanced to meet with some of David's soldiers, who would not kill him, nor so much as stop him, much less seize him: for so it seems they understood David's commandment, that they should not meddle with him. But though they let him go, yet God met with him, and put a stop to his flight, as it here follows.

And Absalom rode upon a mule.] Full speed, as fast as it could carry him.

And the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak.] His neck, I suppose, stuck fast between the boughs of this oak.

And he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away.] He hung there, having nothing to support him: and his neck was so wedged between the boughs, by the swift motion of the mule, that he was not able to disengage himself. I do not see any colour for their opinion who think he hung by his hair, which being very long, was wrapped about the boughs of the tree: nor is it probable he was without a helmet, which covered his hair. And besides, it is said afterward, that Joab smote him *while he was yet alive*, in the middle of the oak, (ver. 14.) Which had been no wonder, if he had only hung by his hair; which would not have killed him: whereas when Joab came to him, he was only not quite dead, but very near it. Yet that great man Bochartus, in his epistle about the weight of Absalom's hair, supposes it to have been so thick, and so strong, that the weight of his whole body could not break it when he hung thereby. Though in his last work he saith, "Hæsit inter ramos arborum, et jumento prætergresso pependit inter cœlum et terram." *He stuck between the boughs of trees, and his beast going from under him, he hung between heaven and earth.* (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 11.)

Ver. 10. *And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak.*] But not dead.

Ver. 11. *And Joab answered to the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest him; and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle.*] A military belt, which was much esteemed, (1 Sam. xviii. 4.)

Ver. 12. *And the man said, Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in my hand.*] In ready money (as we speak) paid down beforehand.

Yet would I not put forth my hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee, and Abishai, and Ittai.] It was a thing notoriously known, not only to him, but to all the army.

Saying, Beware that none touch the young man Absalom.] Do him no hurt; but leave me to punish him.

Ver. 13. *Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against my own life.*] Not only been false and disobedient to the king, but brought his own life in danger; and therefore not have been true to himself.

For there is no matter hid from the king; and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against me.] He knew the genius of Joab so well, that he was sure he would have been as forward as any, both to inform the king of what he had done, and to have him punished for disobeying his sovereign. Joab also knew this to be so true, that he doth not rebuke him for this bold saying.

Ver. 14. *Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee.*] Lose time in such discourse.

And he took three darts into his hand.] From the Hebrew *spatim*, which we translate *darts*, comes the Latin word *spatha:* which was a sort of weapon among the ancient Gauls, as Bochartus shews, called by the Chaldee *gisæ;* from whence the Latin *gesum:* which Festus saith, was *grave jaculum, a heavy dart*, being made all of iron. (See his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 42.)

And thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak.] Not through that part which is strictly called *the heart* (for then he would have died immediately, and there would have been no need of his soldiers falling upon him, as we read they did in the next verse), but through the midst of his body; which did not kill him outright, but there was still some life remaining in him.

Ver. 15. *And ten young men that bare Joab's armour.*] Who waited upon his person, as general of the army.

Compassed about, and smote Absalom, and slew him.] Surrounded him, and thrust their spears or swords through him; and so put an end to his life. Joab, I suppose, thought himself not safe as long as Absalom was alive. For some unquiet people, he thought, who were deeply engaged in this rebellion, would move new disturbances to set him on the throne. Therefore he did not as David commanded, but as he imagined he should have commanded. Kimchi hath a conceit that some of Absalom's crimes are legible in his punishment: for he was thrust through with three darts, having stolen the heart of the king, and then of the two hundred men that followed him out of Jerusalem, and then of all Israel. And as he committed incest with his father's ten concubines; so ten young men compassed him about, and killed him.

Ver. 16. *And Joab blew the trumpet.*] Sounded a retreat.

And the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.] This was done like a good man: for he knew the people were drawn into this rebellion, and would return to their duty, now they had none to head them. Thus Cæsar, after the defeat of Pompey, and the scattering of his army, cried, "Miles parce civibus;" *Soldiers, spare your fellow-citizens.*

Ver. 17. *And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood.*] They would not bring his body to be disposed of by his father's order, lest it should too much move his passion.

And laid a great heap of stones upon him.] So that after a sort he was stoned: as the law ordered a rebellious son to be, (Deut. xxi. 20, 21.) Adricomius, in his description of the holy land, saith this heap remained to his days; and all travellers, as they went by it, were wont to throw a stone to add to the heap, in detestation of his rebellion against his father.

And all Israel fled every one to his tent.] See 1 Sam. iv. 10.

Ver. 18. *Now Absalom in his life-time had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale.*] This *dale* is mentioned Gen. xiv. 17. and was not far from Jerusalem: there he thought to perpetuate his memory (which had better been forgotten) by a very magnificent structure; as Rasi, and several other Jewish doctors fancy: and some that have been in the holy land, tell us of such a noble fabric in the valley of Jehoshaphat. But this is a supposititious monument, as Wagenseil observes upon Sota, p. 221. For Josephus, who is more to be believed than these later authors, saith, that it was only a pillar, lib. vii. Antiq. cap. 9. where he calls it, στύλος λίθου μαρμαρίτου, *a pillar of marble;* which he saith was two furlongs from Jerusalem: in a place where the king's horses run races, as some say, and other exercises used to be performed.

For he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance.] We read before, xiv. 27. that he had three sons and one daughter: but, as Kimchi and other Hebrew doctors say, they were all dead: so that he had no hope to make his name survive him by any other means but this.

And he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day Absalom's Place.] In the Hebrew the word which we translate *place* is *jad*, which signifies *a hand.* As much as to say, *his work:* though Kimchi observes, that this word sometimes is the same with *makom*, a *place*, as in Isa. lvi. 5. And when this book was written, it bare Absalom's name: though it is likely it did not last very long: for such works of vanity are commonly short-lived. Of which the most famous instance we meet with in history is recorded by Pliny, lib. xxxvii. Natural. Hist. cap. 6. where he saith, Demetrius Phalereus had as many statues erected to him in Athens as there are days in the year, *viz.* three hundred and sixty; "nondum anno hunc numerum dierum excedente;" which is more, he thinks, than ever man had. But they were all thrown down, and broken in pieces, before a year was expired.

Ver. 19. *Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run and bear the king tidings, how the Lord hath avenged him of his enemies.*] By this it appears Ahimaaz did not return to Jerusalem after he carried intelligence to David, but stayed with him, and was in this battle; for the priests bore arms as well as other men: and particularly performed the office of trumpeters to the army, (2 Chron. xiii. 12.) And here it is observable what strict discipline was kept in those days: that no man durst stir to carry the news of what had been done without the leave of the commander-in-chief.

Ver. 20. *And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day.*] Some reward, no doubt, was wont to be given to him that brought good tidings, especially of a great victory: which made him so desirous to be the messenger.

But this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead.] Which he knew would be unwelcome news to David, and procure no good to Ahimaaz.

Ver. 21. *Then said Joab to Cushi.*] An Ethiopian by birth, as some think, but had embraced the Jewish religion: and

it is probable, was one of those ten young men who attended on Joab, and was present when Absalom was killed; and helped perhaps to dispatch him, (ver. 15.)

Go tell the king what thou hast seen.] He mentioned, it is likely, the particulars: which he would not put in writing, but have him deliver by word of mouth. For he himself would not relate what he had done to Absalom.

And Cushi bowed himself unto him, and ran.] It was a great honour to be a messenger of such good tidings, as the defeat of the king's enemies.

Ver. 22. *Then said Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, yet again to Joab, But, howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cushi.*] We cannot tell what made him so earnest to carry tidings, unless it was hope of reward, and confidence that his own swiftness would make him the first messenger of good news. For Josephus saith, he told Joab he would relate nothing to the king, but περὶ μόνης τῆς νικῆς, *only concerning the victory:* ἡσυχάσειν δὲ περὶ τῆς Ἀβσαλώμου τελευτῆς, *but say not a word about the death of Absalom.*

And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing thou hast no tidings ready?] Concerning the particulars of the fight, which he had not time to acquaint him withal. He calling him *my son*, it signifies he had a great affection to him, and therefore had denied his first request: for Joab knew the king better than Ahimaaz did; who had a mind to run, because he imagined the king would be pleased to hear he was out of danger: whereas Joab knew the king loved Absalom so dearly, that nobody would be acceptable to him that could not assure him he was safe.

Ver. 23. *But, howsoever, said he, let me run.*] He did not understand Joab's kindness, and therefore presses him again to grant his desire.

And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cushi.] There were two ways from hence to the place where David was: one over the mountains, which was the shorter way; the other by the plain, which, though the longer, according to the proverb, proved the nearest. Or, as Josephus understands it, Ahimaaz ran a more compendious way, which he alone knew, ἐπιτομοτέραν ἐμβαλὼν τῶν ὁδῶν, μόνος γὰρ αὐτὴν ἐπιγίνωσκεν.

Ver. 24. *And David sat between the two gates.*] The gate was a very large place, where public meetings used to be; and had an inward and an outward door, between which David sat to hear news.

And the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall.] Over the gate there was a watch-tower, from whence they might see round about, whether any were coming, and from what quarter.

And lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone.] Whom he spied at some distance, but could not discern who he was.

Ver. 25. *And the watchman cried, and told the king: and the king said, If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth.*] He took it for a sign that he was a messenger sent from Joab, and that he brought good news: for if they had been routed, there would have been more than one seen running away.

And he came apace, and drew near.] So that, in a little time, he could discern who he was.

Ver. 26. *And the watchman saw another man running; and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold, another man running alone. And the king said, He also brings tidings.*] More news than the former.

Ver. 27. *And the watchman said, Methinks the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok.*] Who was remarkable, it seems, for his speed in running.

And the king said, He is a good man, and comes with good tidings.] He was one true to the king's interest, and therefore, he concluded, would not bring bad news.

Ver. 28. *And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, All is well.*] He was in haste to let the king know the good success they had in the battle, and therefore seems to have said at a distance, before he came up to him, *Peace;* which is the word in the Hebrew, signifying all happiness and prosperity.

And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king.] When he approached nearer to him.

And said, Blessed be the Lord thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.] Like a truly religious man, he ascribes the victory they had got unto the Lord; who still shewed his mercy unto David, and continued to be *his God; i. e.* his benefactor.

Ver. 29. *And the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe?*] He would not express his joy until he heard that Absalom was preserved.

And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant.] This seems to signify that Cushi was one belonging to the court.

I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was.] He dissembled his knowledge of Absalom's death; and perhaps in this said true, that he did not know the particular manner of it; though it appears plainly (from ver. 20.) that he knew he was dead.

Ver. 30. *And the king said unto him, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.*] He would not have him go away until Cushi came, supposing he might find more of the truth, by examining them both together.

Ver. 31. *And, behold, Cushi came.*] Not long after Ahimaaz had delivered his message.

And Cushi said, Tidings, my lord the king: for the Lord hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.] He said no more than Ahimaaz had done; thinking it would be unacceptable news to mention Absalom's death.

Ver. 32. *And the king said unto Cushi, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cushi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is.*] This was a decent manner of speech to inform him that he was dead.

Ver. 33. *And the king was much moved.*] So that we do not find he inquired after the manner of his death, nor after any of the particulars of the victory.

And went up to the chamber over the gate.] See xix. 8.

And wept.] Being extremely disturbed, he retired as far as he could from all company, ἐπὶ τὸ ὑψηλότατον τῆς πόλεως (as Josephus speaks), *to the highest part of the city*, where he bewailed his son, knocking his breast, and tearing his hair (as the same author's words are), καὶ παντοίως αὐτὸν αἰκιζόμενος, *afflicting himself all manner of ways.*

And, as he went up, he said.] When he came into the

chamber, it was not so easy to know what he did, or hear what he said, because he shut up himself privately; but as he went up the stairs, he thus bemoaned the loss of his son.

O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!] No words can be more passionate; and it is likely his wish, that he had died in Absalom's stead, was only the effect of excessive love to him, and grief for him, which made him vent himself in expressions which were not considerate. But Pellicanus (in which he follows St. Austin) thinks this was a deliberate wish, because Absalom died impenitent, and might have lived to be a better man; but if David had died, he had good hope of his own salvation. But I take this not to be well-grounded; for if David had died, in all likelihood his son would not have been sorry for it, but triumphed in his good success, and proved a wicked tyrant over a base people. The stupidity of the Jewish doctors is inconceivable, who fancy Absalom would have cut his hair, by which he hung, with his sword, had he not seen hell gaping for him, if he fell down; which made him choose to die in the oak: but his father, by his lamentation over him, crying seven times, *my son, my son*, delivered him from the seven gates of hell, and brought him into paradise. (See Bartoloccius, in his Kirjath-sepher, tom. ii. p. 128, &c. 162.)

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom.*] For Joab was now come to the city himself, to give the king an account of the fight; and it is likely Ahimaaz, or Cushi, informed him how heavily the king took the news of his son's death.

Ver. 2. *And the victory.*] That is, the joy for the victory.

That day was turned into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day, how the king grieved for his son.] They had so great a regard to their prince, that when they heard of his affliction, they were afflicted with him; and instead of triumphing, they also made lamentations.

Ver. 3. *And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city.*] Not by the gate where David was, but by some secret way, that he might not see them. Just like thieves, who are afraid to be discovered and punished for what they have done.

As people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle.] As if they had lost the day, and not been victorious.

Ver. 4. *And the king covered his face.*] Such was the custom of deep mourners (as Kimchi here observes), that they might neither see, nor be seen. As being ashamed (saith R. Levi) any should behold their rueful looks.

And the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!] It is observed by many learned men, that the oriental people expressed their passions with greater vehemence than we are wont to do in these parts of the world. Where crying out aloud with a doleful voice, called *howling* in Scripture, is not usual; but was common among the Jews, as we see before in David, (iii. 32.) and at the laying the foundation of the temple after the captivity, when they that wept with a loud voice, drowned the voice of those that shouted for joy, (Ezra iii. 12, 13.)

Ver. 5. *And Joab went into the house of the king.*] It seems by this, that David was removed before Joab came from the top of the gate, and gone to his house, where he was wont to reside.

And said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants.] Making them hang down their heads, as if they had committed such a crime that they were ashamed to look men in the face.

Which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines.] Of all that was dear unto him.

Ver. 6. *In that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends.*] In whose preservation he seemed to take no pleasure, but only to grieve for the loss of a rebellious son.

For thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither princes nor servants.] Neither himself, nor Abishai, nor Ittai, nor any of the great officers and faithful soldiers, who had adventured their lives for him.

For this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well.] This was spoken by Joab too sharply, and insolently; yet it was something necessary at this time to awaken David out of a strange lethargy, which made him take notice of nobody, but behave himself as if he had no concern for any person in the world, but for Absalom alone, who was gone out of it.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably to thy servants.*] He wishes him to go and shew himself to his people, and acknowledge their good service, praise their courage, and congratulate their happy success: giving the honours and largesses that were due unto them, or promising them rewards proportionable to their merits.

For I swear by the Lord, if thou go not forth.] Unto the people, and declare how sensible he was of their services.

There will not tarry with thee one man this night.] He resolved, and confirmed it with the most solemn oath, that he would lead his whole army away from him, and leave him alone. David seems to have answered nothing to all this discourse, which moved Joab to conclude with these harsh words.

And that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befel thee from thy youth until now.] For during the cruel persecution of Saul, as well as in this exile, he had a good company of faithful persons with him. Josephus expresses this threatening very well, τότε σοι πικρότερον, καὶ ἀληθὲς ποιήσω τὸ πένθος, *I will make thee weep for something* (as we speak), *and more bitterly than ever.*

Ver. 8. *Then the king arose, and sat in the gate.*] Where the concourse of people used to be about business. For the *gate* was a spacious place, and the same thing with the exchange, or the forum among the Romans. The market for commodities was held here, as we learn from the prophecy of Elisha, who foretold corn should be sold at such a rate the next day in the gate of Samaria, (2 Kings vii. 2.) which was a very large place, since Ahab assembled there four hundred false prophets, (1 Kings xxii. 10.) In these gates also there was some building, wherein were seats for the elders and judges: for Boaz having a cause to be heard, *went up to the gate*, and sat down there, (Ruth iv.

1, 2.) And so many public assemblies being held here, it makes it probable that the *chamber over the gate* (mentioned in the foregoing chapter), where David went to weep, was the place where the privy-council were wont to meet.

And they told unto all the people.] That were in the city and elsewhere.

Saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king.] To congratulate to him his safety, and to receive the tokens of his favour.

For all Israel had fled, every man to his tent.] Until the people heard the king appeared publicly, and no longer bewailed Absalom.

Ver. 9. *And all the people were at strife through all the tribes of Israel.*] Who should be forwardest to bring back the king: blaming one another's slackness in it.

Saying, The king saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines, and now he is fled out of the land for Absalom.] They call to mind what benefits they had received by his means, in their deliverance from many enemies; especially the Philistines, who had grievously oppressed them: and also their great ingratitude to him in driving him out of Jerusalem, and forcing him to flee over Jordan, for the sake of Absalom.

Ver. 10. *And Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle.*] We do not read of his being actually anointed: but they chose him for their king, and obeyed him as if he had.

Now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?] They spake this to their elders; who seem to have been dubious what to do until they heard the sense of the people.

Ver. 11. *And David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests.*] By their sons, whom he had with him.

Saying, Speak unto the elders of Judah.] The priests were men of great authority, especially the high-priest and his deputy, and most proper to be employed to deal with the elders.

Saying, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house?] That which made them so cold, was, I suppose, the sense of their guilt in joining with Absalom: who began his conspiracy in Jerusalem itself, and perfected it in Hebron, both cities of Judah. Whose revolt was the baser, because he was of their tribe, and had long shewn his great kindness to them, (1 Sam. xxx. 26, &c.) the conscience of which made them afraid to bring him again to Jerusalem.

(Seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, even to his house).] These last words, *even to his house*, seem to be but a repetition of what was said before, *to his house;* viz. at Jerusalem: the other words being a parenthesis.

Ver. 12. *Ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh.*] That is, he had much kindred among them.

Why are ye then the last to bring the king back?] He expresses the greater kindness to them, lest they should be so desperate as to defend Jerusalem against him.

Ver. 13. *And say unto Amasa, Art not thou of my bone, and of my flesh?*] That is, his sister's son: whom he bids them particularly court; for, being general of Absalom's forces, he might through shame and fear be very loath to look his uncle in the face.

God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the room of Joab.] He solemnly promises to prefer him to the highest command in the kingdom: for now he thought it a fit time to depress Joab; who was grown insufferably insolent and imperious. For he had slain Abner most perfidiously in cold blood; and killed Absalom against the king's command; and now lately insulted him in his sorrow: threatening (if we may believe Josephus) *τὴν βασιλείαν ἑτέρῳ παραδοῦναι, that he would depose him, and deliver the kingdom to some other person.* This promise David endeavoured to perform; bidding Amasa take upon him to assemble all the men of Judah, (xx. 4.) yet leaving Joab (ver. 7.) the command of his own legion. Which he took so heinously, that he killed Amasa; and was captain of the host again, more out of fear than any favour David had for him: for if Amasa had lived, David would have humbled him. For Amasa had a great interest in Israel, over whom he had commanded in chief; especially in the tribe of Judah, whose heart he bowed to receive David again, as it here follows.

Ver. 14. *And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man.*] Either this disposition was wrought in them by Amasa; or the kind words delivered from David by Zadok and Abiathar overcame them.

So that they sent this word unto the king.] By some messenger of their own.

Return thou, and all thy servants.] Assuring him they were ready to receive him, and return to their obedience.

Ver. 15. *So the king returned, and came to Jordan.*] Began to return back, and came as far as Jordan: which parted the country where he was from the land of Canaan.

And Judah.] That is, the elders of Judah.

Came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.] This was an expression of their great affection, to come thus far to attend him, and to furnish him, I suppose, with accommodations in his journey: for Gilgal was near Jordan; on the other side of the river.

Ver. 16. *And Shimei, the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, hasted, and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David.*] Hoping David would receive him kindly in such good company.

Ver. 17. *And there were a thousand men of Benjamin with him.*] He was nobly attended, to shew how powerful he was, and what an interest he had in his country: and yet came to implore the king's mercy. Perhaps he was a captain of a thousand in his own tribe: who came with him to intercede for his pardon.

And Ziba, the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him.] See ix. 10.

And they went over Jordan before the king.] They were so officious as to go further than the men of Judah, to the other side of Jordan, where the king was: before whom they passed over.

Ver. 18. *And there went over a ferry-boat.*] Prepared, as many suppose, by the men of Judah. Josephus will have it a *bridge;* composed, perhaps, of many boats joined together.

To carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good.] To carry over what he pleased to order.

And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan.] As soon as he landed.

Ver. 19. *And said unto the king, Let not my lord the king*

impute iniquity to thy servant, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely in the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart.] Resent it so deeply, as to be revenged of him.

Ver. 20. *For thy servant doth know that I have sinned.*] He professes himself sensible of the crime he had committed, and was sorry for it.

Therefore, behold, I come the first this day of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king.] To shew by his example what the rest should do: and, as the Hebrew doctors gloss upon it, they would all see in him an instance either of David's clemency, or severity; and accordingly behave themselves. He was not properly of the house of Joseph, but of a tribe near of kin to it: so that at this time, it seems, they looked upon themselves as members of the same body; being descended from the same mother: and they continued so till the kingdom was rent. For Benjamin is placed between Ephraim and Manasseh (the two sons of Joseph) in Psal. lxxx. 2. and they marched under the same standard, Numb. ii. 18, 19, &c.

Ver. 21. *But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the Lord's anointed?*] He would have gone and done execution upon him, at that time when he cursed, (xvi. 9.) and now he imagined there could be no reason to spare him.

Ver. 22. *And David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah.*] It seems Joab joined with his brother: who thought to govern all the king's motions as they pleased. But he bids them, in a disdainful manner, stand aside, and not meddle in this matter.

That ye should this day be adversaries unto me?] Hinder me from following my own inclinations, and set my people against me. For by following this advice, he might have alienated the hearts of all Israel from him, and made them fear the like punishment for their revolt.

Shall any man be put to death this day in Israel?] In a time of universal joy, he would not have any family have cause to make lamentation. It was accounted an ill omen among other nations, if any man was put to death on the king's birth-day: and this was a second *natalis imperii, birth-day of David's empire;* which he would not have sullied with any cloud of sorrow.

For do I not know that I am this day king of Israel?] He had power to punish, or to pardon, as he pleased: and being restored to his kingdom, would not enter upon it with blood.

Ver. 23. *Therefore the king said unto Shimei, Thou shalt not die: and the king sware unto him.*] That he would not put him to death. But this did not oblige him not to give such a charge as he did to Solomon, to do justice upon him for any new disobedience. Nothing is more glorious than mercy and clemency, as the heathens themselves were sensible. Cæsar saith in a letter of his to Oppius and Cornelius (which is among Cicero's Epistles), "Hæc nova est vincendi ratio," &c. *This is a new way of conquering, to fence ourselves by mercy and liberality,* (lib. ix. Epist. ad Atticum.)

Ver. 24. *And Mephibosheth the son of Saul.*] That is, his grandson.

Came down to meet the king, and had neither dressed his feet.] But wholly neglected himself, as they used to do in a time of public sorrow. For the not dressing his feet signifies (as Schickard and others understand) that he had not cut the nails of his toes; but let them grow, as he did his beard. It may be understood of his not washing his feet; the neglect of which made men very sordid. For in those countries, they lying upon beds when they ate (as Scaliger observes in his sixth book de Emend. Temporum), put off their shoes, and washed their feet, "ne pulverosis pedibus strata inquinarent," *lest they should defile the carpets with their dusty feet.* Besides, in hot weather the smell of their feet without washing was offensive.

Nor trimmed his beard.] He not only let the hair grow, but took no care to put it in good order. For the words in the Hebrew are, *he had not done any thing to his feet, nor any thing to his beard.*

Nor washed his clothes.] His shirt, nor any of the linen which he wore. As for their woollen garments, they were not wont to wash them.

From the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace.] This long-continued mourning argued him to be really afflicted for the king's exile.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king.*] It is manifest from the foregoing verse, that he came down from some other place to Jerusalem to meet the king: but could not meet him sooner, as others had done, because Ziba had got his estate, and, it is likely, would not furnish him with an ass, no more than he had done when David fled away.

That the king said unto him, Wherefore wentest thou not with me, Mephibosheth?] As prudence, as well as gratitude, obliged him.

Ver. 26. *And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle my ass, and ride thereon, and go to the king; for thy servant is lame.*] He had ordered an ass to be made ready for him, to carry him to David: instead of which, Ziba saddled it for himself; and went with that false story, which is mentioned xvi. 3.

Ver. 27. *And he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; but my lord the king is an angel of God.*] To discern between truth and falsehood.

Do therefore what is good in thy sight.] And therefore he submits himself entirely to his judgment, and trusted to his kindness.

He had great reason so to do, as he confesses in the next words.

Ver. 28. *For all my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king; yet didst thou set thy servant among those that did eat at thy own table.*] The undeserved benefits he had received from David made him absolutely resign himself to his will and pleasure.

What right therefore have I yet to cry any more to the king?] He did not challenge any thing as his right, nor thought it decent to trouble the king further with his complaints.

Ver. 29. *And the king said unto him, Why speakest thou any more of thy matters?*] As if he had said, Enough, enough; I desire to hear no more of the injuries done me by the house of Saul.

I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land.] Some of the Hebrew doctors understand this, as if he now parted the estate formerly given to Mephibosheth between him

and Ziba; partly out of shame, lest he should appear too rash and hasty of belief in giving all to Ziba, and partly out of suspicion that the too great wealth of Mephibosheth might make him ambitious. But they acknowledge this sentence to be unjust, Ziba making no defence for himself. And some of them say, a voice from heaven was heard thereupon, saying, That God would make the like division of David's kingdom, between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. But if we carefully attend to the words, they carry another sense in them; being as much as if he had said, *My first grant shall stand;* when he decreed that Mephibosheth should be lord of the land, and Ziba should manage it for him, ix. 10. (See Selden, de Successionibus, cap. 25. fol. 89, 90. where he makes out this very clearly.)

Ver. 30. *And Mephibosheth said unto the king, Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house.*] Nothing could be more generously spoken, nor signified greater affection, than that he was content to be a beggar, now that the king was restored to his kingdom.

Ver. 31. *And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim.*] A place in Mount Gilead.

And went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan.] Merely to bring him on his way so far, and then return.

Ver. 32. *Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even fourscore years old.*] Which was a great age in David's days, (Psal. xc. 10.)

And he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very great man.] And had a very large heart, which moved him to supply the wants of David, and all his family and attendants, as long as he stayed at Mahanaim, which was a considerable time. Pliny relates, that Crassus denied any man to be rich, who was not able to maintain a legion, lib. xxxiii. Natural. Hist. cap. 10. where he mentions one that entertained all Xerxes' army at a feast: but here was a far more rare example of virtue in Barzillai, who maintained not a prosperous prince in all his glory, but a distressed prince in his exile, when no hope appeared of a reward.

Ver. 33. *And the king said unto Barzillai, Come over with me, and I will feed thee with me at Jerusalem.*] Entertain him at his own table, as a singular friend.

Ver. 34. *And Barzillai said unto the king, How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem?*] He excuses himself, by several reasons, for not accepting the king's kindness; and the first is, because, as he was unfit for travel so far, so, for so short a time as he had to live, it was not prudent to change his dwelling.

Ver. 35. *I am this day fourscore years old; and can I discern between good and evil?*] These general words are explained by the particulars which follow.

Can thy servant taste what I eat and drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing-men, and singing-women?] His second reason is, that the king's kindness would be ill bestowed upon one that had no relish left of any of the pleasures of a court.

Wherefore then should thy servant be a burden unto my lord the king?] A third is, that instead of doing the king any service he should prove a burden to him; for old men must have some to wait on them, and take care of them.

Ver. 36. *Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king.*] Express his dutiful affection to him, as far as he was able.

And why should the king recompense me with such a reward?] Since he had but done his duty to his sovereign, he did not expect to be so highly rewarded for it.

Ver. 37. *Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in my own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother.*] He beseeches him, for a fourth reason, not to press him to go further; but suffer him to enjoy that which old men naturally desire; to die in the place where they have lived, and to be buried with their ancestors.

But behold thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king, and do unto him what shall seem good unto thee.] That he might not seem rude in refusing the king's gracious offer, he desires him to translate his kindness to his son, and bestow upon him what he pleased.

Ver. 38. *And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do unto him that which shall seem good unto thee.*] He would not have it left to his choice what he should do for Chimham; but desires the good old man to say what he would have for him, and it should be done. We do not read what Barzillai asked, or what David did for him: but there being mention made in Jer. xli. 17. of *the habitation of Chimham,* and that near to Beth-lehem, it is a very reasonable conjecture of Grotius, in his annotations on that place, that David, having a patrimony in the field of Beth-lehem, the place of his nativity, "Jus ibi habitandi, et fructus quosdam suos faciendi dedit Chimhamo," he bestowed it upon Barzillai's son; and from thence this place took the name of Chimham, which remained until the days of Jeremiah.

And whatsoever thou shalt require of me, that will I do for thee.] He promises withal, that when Barzillai was gone home, if he had any occasion to petition him, his request should be granted.

Ver. 39. *And all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was gone over, the king kissed Barzillai, and blessed him.*] They parted with great kindness, and the king prayed God to requite what Barzillai had done for him.

And he returned to his place.] With great satisfaction, that he had seen his sovereign in his way to be restored to his kingdom.

Ver. 40. *And the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went with him.*] As one of his near attendants.

And all the people of Judah conducted the king, and also half the people of Israel.] That is, the elders and great men both of Judah and Israel. To gratify his own tribe, David marched on, not expecting the coming of all the great men of Israel, who were making themselves ready to wait upon him.

Ver. 41. *And, behold, all the men of Israel came to the king, and said unto the king.*] When the other half of the Israelites were got together, they thus expostulated with the king.

Why have our brethren, the men of Judah, stolen thee away, and have brought the king and his household, and all David's men with him, over Jordan?] That is, why did they make such haste, and not expect our consent and assistance, who were as zealous as themselves to bring the king back? They seem to take it ill, that not only David and his family, but all *his men, i. e.* his soldiers and guards,

should be brought over Jordan; as if they would force their way, whether the Israelites would or no.

Ver. 42. *And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, Because the king is near of kin to us.*] Being of their tribe, which justly required they should be more forward than others in his service.

Wherefore then be ye angry with us?] For our affection to him.

Have we eaten at all of the king's cost? or hath he given us any gift?] We get nothing by it, but have only done our duty, and testified our great affection. Abarbinel thinks these words, *given us any gift*, import expiation and pardon; as in Gen. xviii. 26. Numb. vi. 26. and are as much as if they had said, Hath he granted us a pardon for what we did in the business of Absalom? Whereby they suggested, that the Israelites were the principal actors in that rebellion, and needed an act of oblivion, though they did not.

Ver. 43. *And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said.*] The words are not as before, *all the men of Israel:* which is a sign some of them were cooled, though most of them continued violent.

We have ten parts in the king.] By the *king* is here meant the *kingdom: ten parts* of which they say were theirs (whereas there were eleven tribes besides Judah), because Simeon, being intermixed with Judah, it is likely, now came along with them.

We have also more right in David than you.] As David was a private person, Judah had more interest in him than the rest, because he was of their tribe: but, as he was a king, the Israelites had more, being the far greater part of his subjects.

Why then did ye despise us, that our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king?] They looked upon it, therefore, as a great neglect, if not contempt, of them, that they had not the precedence in this business.

And the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.] More vehement: or, they were too hard for them in their argument. David did not think fit to interpose; which made the men of Israel think he favoured Judah, and thence arose a new rebellion.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND there happened to be there.*] When this contention fell out between the men of Israel and Judah.

A man of Belial, whose name was Sheba the son of Bichri, a Benjamite.] Who perhaps was of kin to Saul, as Shimei was, (xvi. 5.) and one of the commanders in Absalom's army, next to Amasa. For so Victorinus Strigelius understands the Hebrew words, *isch Bichri*, to signify *unus ex proceribus*, a nobleman, of great power and authority among the people: like Catiline at Rome.

And he blew a trumpet, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse.] As much as to say, Let the men of Judah have him to themselves. He cares not for us, and we care not for him.

Every man to his tents, O Israel.] He wishes all the men of Israel, since David expressed no more regard to them, to go to their homes, and trouble themselves no further in bringing him back.

Ver. 2. *So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri.*] Instead of going home, they followed their seditious incendiary: taking it in snuff (as we speak) that the king did not expect till they, who were the majority, came to conduct him: but relied solely on the men of Judah, as if they were able, without the rest of Israel, to re-establish him in his throne.

But the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem.] Not a man of them stirred from him, but conducted him from Jordan to Jerusalem. And we must not think that all the men of Israel forsook him: but a very great number of them. For Shimei, in all likelihood, and his thousand men, stuck to him, though of the same tribe with Sheba; otherwise David would have punished him, when this rebellion was quelled.

Ver. 3. *And David came to his house at Jerusalem, and the king took the women his concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in ward.*] Shut them up close under a guard, *and fed them.* Nobody came to them, but only to bring them daily provision for their sustenance.

But went not in unto them.] Never lay with them; but looked upon them as become impure to him, having been defiled by his son.

So they were shut up unto the day of their death, living in widowhood.] They were not fit for any body else, being royal wives; and therefore he did not give them a bill of divorce, but shut them up close, that no man might enjoy them. And indeed it was not prudent to let them be so much as seen abroad; which would have renewed the remembrance of Absalom's filthiness.

Ver. 4. *Then said the king unto Amasa, Assemble me the men of Judah.*] He makes good his promise to Amasa, which was a great encouragement to others in the tribe of Judah, to stick fast to their king. And by this means also the seditious Israelites might be the sooner brought to reason, when they saw their old general in the field against them.

Within three days.] Because the business required speedy dispatch.

And be thou here present.] To receive his orders.

Ver. 5. *So Amasa went to assemble the men of Judah: but he tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him.*] He was not treacherous unto David (as the Jewish doctors in the Sanhedrin say Joab represented him, and made it the reason of his killing him), but he found difficulty in the business; because the people had a high opinion of Joab, and would not easily be brought to serve under a new general. This Amasa, it is likely, was loath to report to the king, because it would diminish his authority, and represent him as incapable to serve the king in the office wherein he had placed him.

Ver. 6. *And David said to Abishai.*] He persisted in his resolution to depress Joab; but employed his brother, who was the next great commander in the army. Whom he doth not create captain of the host; but for fear this delay should prove prejudicial, bids him take such forces as he found ready in Jerusalem, and pursue Sheba.

Now shall Sheba the son of Bichri do us more harm than did Absalom.] If he had time to gather an army: the people being highly incensed by the provocation the men of Judah had given them.

Take thou therefore thy lord's servants.] The guards

that attended David, and the standing forces, which were always kept on foot.

And pursue after him, lest he get him fenced cities, and escape us.] So that they must be put to the trouble of laying a long siege to the place where he was.

Ver. 7. *And there went out after him Joab's men.*] A body of men whom he particularly commanded.

And the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men.] See upon viii. 18.

And they went out of Jerusalem to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.] For David thought himself safe enough in the love of the city of Jerusalem, and the rest of the people thereabout.

Ver. 8. *And when they were at the great stone which is in Gibeon.*] The place of rendezvous (as we now speak), appointed by Amasa for the men of Judah. Which was, as Josephus saith, a hundred furlongs from Jerusalem.

Amasa went before them.] As their commander-in-chief.

And Joab's garment that he had put on.] As soon as Amasa arrived at the army, Joab also came there as a volunteer, of his own accord: or rather, was there before with Abishai. Yea, Josephus takes it, as if David had spoken those words ver. 6. unto Joab, telling him it was not safe to delay, and therefore bids him take such forces as they had ready, and go with his brother Abishai. Ἰωβὸς δὲ οὐκ ἔτι μέλλειν ἔκρινεν, ἀλλὰ τόν τε ἀδελφὸν καὶ τοὺς ἑξακοσίους παρέλαβε, &c. *He resolved not to stay to gather more forces: but with his brother, and six hundred men, and all the force they had in Jerusalem, marched out to pursue Sheba.*

Was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle with a sword fastened to his loins in the sheath thereof.] He had no armour on, but such a garment as soldiers wore, closely girt to him: and upon it a belt, in which a sword hung by his side. Yet Josephus saith he had a breast-plate, θώρακα ἐνδεδυμένος, as well as μάχαιραν περιζωσάμενος, *begirt with a sword.*

And as he went forth.] To meet Amasa, πολλὴν δύναμιν ἀναγόντος, *who led numerous forces* to that place, as the same author speaks.

It fell out.] He had hung it so, that it might drop out of the sheath when he pleased. And it fell out just as he went to salute and embrace Amasa: who seeing him stoop to take it up, imagined it was only to put it into the sheath again.

Ver. 9. *And Joab said unto Amasa, Art thou in health, my brother?*] He inquired in a friendly manner of his welfare.

And Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him.] This is the custom still among the eastern people, the Indians: who take one another by the chin, or the beard, when they would give a hearty salute; and say *bobba, i. e.* father; or *bii, i. e.* brother, as the author of the voyage to the East Indies relates, at the end of Peter de Valle's Travels, p. 410.

Ver. 10. *And Amasa took no heed to the sword that was in Joab's hand.*] Which he thought he had put into his sheath, and did not observe that he held it in his left hand, which it seems he could manage as well as the right.

So he smote him therewith in the fifth rib.] See iii. 17.

And shed out his bowels to the ground, and struck him not again, and he died.] He gave him such a wound, that his very bowels gushed out; and there was no need to give him a second stroke.

And Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri.] Hereupon Joab immediately, without any order, resumed his command, and Abishai durst not oppose him, but yielded it up to him. For his authority was so great among the soldiery, that none of Amasa's men durst stir to avenge his death; the Cherethites, and Pelethites, and all David's guards submitting to him: and besides, all Amasa's men were not yet come up, but followed by degrees, as appears by the rest of the story.

Ver. 11. *And one of Joab's men stood by him.*] By the command of his master; who knew this would make some disorder among Amasa's soldiers.

And said, He that favoureth Joab, and he that is for David.] He cunningly joins these two together, as if their interest was inseparable.

Let him follow after Joab.] He was grown so insolent, because David durst not punish him; that, as it made him venture upon this bloody fact, so he presumed, that though the sight of Amasa's dead body might stop the march of those that came by it; yet, upon the declaration his officer made, that now he was become general of the army, their love to him was such, that they would make no scruple to follow him.

Ver. 12. *And Amasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway.*] He seems not to have been quite dead, though senseless: but had so much life, that he rolled to and fro in his own blood, which was a doleful sight.

And when the man saw that all the people stood still.] Joab was deceived in his measures, for the people hated this fact as much as they loved him. And therefore as many as saw it would move no further till the body was removed out of the way: so that they who were behind went without any stop after Joab.

He removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still.] This was a prudent officer; who expected no orders, but of his own accord removed that out of sight which hindered their pursuit of Sheba.

Ver. 13. *And when he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.*] They that were behind, it is likely, did not know that Amasa was killed, and so marched on without any scruple.

Ver. 14. *And he went through all the tribes of Israel.*] That is, Sheba rambled about the country, from one city to another, to excite the people to take up arms against David. But Josephus refers this to Joab, that he followed Sheba from place to place, till he came where he was.

Unto Abel, and to Beth-Maacah.] Or rather unto Abel Beth-Maacah: for they were one and the same place, as appears by the next verse. And so Josephus, who saith it was a strong city, well fortified, in the tribe of Naphtali, in the northern parts of Judea, upon the borders of that part of Syria where Maacah was, (x. 8.) In this city Sheba at last settled himself, and resolved to defend it: being unable, I suppose, to raise such an army as to keep the field.

And all the Beerites.] Among whom he had been before he came hither, and got some considerable forces among them. For they were of the city Beeroth (it is probable) and the parts adjacent: which was in the tribe of Benjamin, of which he was a member, and perhaps dwelt in this city, (Josh. xviii. 25.)

And they were gathered together, and went also after him.] Unto Abel Beth-Maacah.

Ver. 15. *And they came.*] That is, Joab and his men pursued him thither.

And besieged him in Abel of Beth-Maacah, and they cast up a bank against the city.] Raised fortifications round about it, from whence to batter it.

And it stood in the trench.] That is, Joab's army had advanced so far that they had filled up the trench: and there stood at the very foot of the wall.

And all the people that were with Joab battered the wall, to throw it down.] Some battered it with engines from the forts: while those at the bottom of the wall undermined to throw it down. So Josephus.

Ver. 16. *Then cried a wise woman of the city.*] A woman of great understanding, who also could speak well. Many such there were in Israel, it appears by her of Tekoah, and Abigail, and the mother of king Lemuel.

Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee.] She prays those that were at the bottom of the wall to stop their proceedings awhile: and desires Joab to come, and hear what propositions she had to make to him.

Ver. 17. *And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, Art thou Joab? And he answered, I am he.*] She was unwilling to treat with any one, but him who had power to agree to what she propounded.

Then she said unto him, Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear.] He did not despise her because she was a woman; but, as became a wise man, gave her a favourable audience, and attended to what she said.

Ver. 18. *Then she spake, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter.*] According to this translation of the words, she praises the city of Abel as famous, time out of mind, for wisdom and giving sound advice: and now, she would have him believe, was not without persons of great prudence and fidelity also (as it follows in the next verse), who would not willingly offend their king. But there is another translation in the margin of our Bibles, which I take to be more literal, by referring the word *barishonah* not to *old time*, but to the *beginning* of the siege. As if she had said, When the people saw thee lay siege to the city, they said, Surely they will ask us if we will have peace, and then we shall soon come to an agreement and make an end. Whereby she secretly remembers Joab of a rule in the law, Deut. xx. 10. which commands them to offer peace to the cities of other nations when they came to besiege them; and therefore much more to a city of their own, as Abel was. To this purpose R. Solomon Jarchi; and it agrees well with what follows, that they were a peaceable people and faithful to their prince: and therefore would not have refused to yield, upon summons, to him. R. Levi ben Gersom gives another sense of them; That Sheba and his company, when they first came into the city, asked if they would follow him, and said no more: to whom the men of the city answered, We are peaceable and faithful; that is, we cannot join with thee and rebel against king David. But there is a late writer, who thinks the words will bear this sense: This was a common saying in old time, If any one asked whether Abel was a place of justice and judgment, or a den of thieves; the answer was, They are an upright people. And therefore she asks Joab, why he went about to destroy a city so famous for virtue. Thus Mayerus in his Annotations on Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 14.

Ver. 19. *I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel.*] She speaks in the name of the whole city: which was of a peaceable temper; and had been faithful to David in the time of the late revolt.

Thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel.] A great city, which had many towns depending on it; and therefore called *a mother*.

Why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?] Do an injury to the public; by depopulating a part of the country, which is God's peculiar.

Ver. 20. *And Joab answered and said, Far be it, far be it, that I should swallow or destroy.*] Do you the least hurt, if I can avoid it. He disclaims any ill intentions twice, saith R. Solomon; as if he had said, Far be it from me, far be it from the king, to design any such thing.

Ver. 21. *The matter is not so.*] You are not rightly informed.

But a man of Mount Ephraim.] He is said before (ver. 1.) to be of the tribe of Benjamin: but he lived, I suppose, in Mount Ephraim.

(Sheba, the son of Bichri by name), hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city.] And leave all Sheba's party at liberty to go home, without any punishment.

And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.] She had reason to be confident that both the citizens and soldiers would be glad to save themselves, by giving up him, who had brought them into imminent danger.

Ver. 22. *Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom.*] Desired they would all meet in the common hall; where she told them what terms she had made for them with Joab: unto which they immediately consented.

And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab.] It seems his party was not strong in the city; or, seeing it likely to be taken, they were glad to accept of the conditions the woman had made for them.

And he blew the trumpet, and retired from the city, every man to his tent.] Raised the siege, and went home.

And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.] To give him an account of his good success.

Ver. 23. *Now Joab was over all the host of Israel.*] Now that David was restored to his kingdom, and established in it, he settled all the great officers who were to govern under him: and continued Joab in the chief command of the army, which was so much at his devotion, that he found it dangerous to displace him.

And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Chereth-ites, and over the Pelethites.] As he was also before, (viii. *ult.*) being a very valiant man, (xxiii. 20.) whom Solomon made commander-in-chief of the whole army (as now he was captain of the king's guards) after the death of Joab.

Ver. 24. *And Adoram was over the tribute.*] Treasurer, or receiver of the king's revenue. Which office was not settled before; because, in the beginning of his reign, it is likely David had no great revenue.

And Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder.] See upon viii. 16.

Ver. 25. *And Sheva was scribe; and Zadok and Abiathar were priests.*] It is uncertain whether Sheva be the same with Seraiah mentioned viii. 17. or, Seraiah being dead, or displaced, this man came in his room. Concerning these priests, see viii. 17.

Ver. 26. *And Ira also the Jairite.*] He had his original in the country of Jair the Gileadite on the other side Jordan; (Numb. xxxii. 41.) who is not mentioned before, but now was made a great officer.

Was a chief ruler about David.] The Hebrew word *cohen* (as hath been often observed) signifies any minister, either sacred or civil: a priest or a prince. Instances of the last are many, and the Targum thus expounds it here, *Rab le David*, a prince, or great man about David. And so the *priest of On*, Gen. xli. 50. and the *priest of Midian*, Exod. ii. 26. signify the priest or ruler of On and of Midian. As, in Job xii. 19. we, following the Chaldee, translate it, *God leadeth princes away spoiled.*

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *THEN there was a famine in the days of David, three years, year after year.*] The Jewish doctors commonly say this famine was before the rebellion of Absalom. But Abarbinel will have it, that things are related here in the order wherein they were done; so that this was after that rebellion was ended.

And David inquired of the Lord.] For what sin so grievous a punishment was inflicted: suspecting (as Abarbinel thinks) God might still punish him for those sins he committed in the matter of Uriah.

And the Lord answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house.] God soon comforted him, by letting him know that this punishment was upon the account of Saul and his family, who had been deeply engaged in blood.

Because he slew the Gibeonites.] When he slew the whole city of Nob (saith the same Abarbinel) where the Gibeonites lived, and served as hewers of wood and drawers of water to the priests, whom Saul then cut off, (1 Sam. xxii. 18, 19.) But the same great man hereupon inquires, why God did not send this famine rather for the slaughter of the priests than of the Gibeonites? Of which he gives this account, that the slaughter of the priests was punished before, by the slaughter of Saul and of his sons in the battle with the Philistines, (1 Sam. xxxi.) and now he was punished in the sons of his concubines, and all Israel suffered with them by famine, because they did not hinder him from murdering the Gibeonites, by remembering him of the oath which was made to them; nay, perhaps they approved of what he did, being glad to see the land rid of foreigners. But why this judgment was not executed before, may seem strange, till we consider, as he observes, that the counsels of God are profound; and he hath excellent reasons why he punishes sinners not now, but hereafter: and knows which of their children are most worthy to be punished, and bear the iniquity of their fathers. And the longer he stays before he strikes, the more evident it is, that he doth not forget what the evil men have done, though he doth not presently declare his anger against it. He observes, also, that the Gibeonites being drawers of water, God put the Israelites in mind of their offence, by withholding rain from them: just as his refusing to answer Saul by *urim*, was a suitable punishment for his murdering the priests who consulted God by that oracle.

Ver. 2. *And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites, and the children of Israel had sworn unto them; and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah).*] Which transported him to violate a solemn oath: as many since have done, under pretence of the public good.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for thee?*] He asks them what satisfaction they desired, for the wrong that had been done them. Which may seem strange, unless we suppose, as Josephus doth, that God told him when he consulted him, not only for what crime he sent this punishment, but that he should take, δικὴν ἣν αὐτοὶ θέλουσιν, *such a revenge for it, as the Gibeonites would have.* Besides, they had never made any complaint to David of the injury which had been done them: who might therefore be the kinder to them, and give them leave to name the recompence that should be made them.

And wherewith shall I make an atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord?] Pray to God to be pacified also; and to restore plenty unto Israel again.

Ver. 4. *And the Gibeonites answered unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel.*] Except those that they afterward mentioned. For they seem to have been people truly proselyted to the Jewish religion, who desired nothing but equal justice; that men should suffer as they have done: and therefore Saul having not taken away their money, but their lives; they desired only that the lives of some of his family might pay for it.

And he said, What you shall say, that will I do for you.] If they had desired money, or any thing else that was in his power, they might have had it.

Ver. 5. *And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us, that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel.*] He intended, if not to kill, yet to banish them all: which had been worse than death; for it would have deprived them of the liberty of worshipping the true God.

Ver. 6. *Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us.*] Some imagine, that at the first they demanded all the house of Saul to be delivered up unto them: but upon cooler thoughts they demanded only seven persons.

And we will hang them up unto the Lord.] To appease his anger, and vindicate his honour. Some think this was a barbarous custom in those days (which certainly prevailed in future times) to hang men up, to appease the anger of their gods, in time of famine. Which Johannes Geusius fancies the Gibeonites had formerly used, and now propounded it to David, as a means to make the earth more fruitful, (De Victimis Humanis, par. i. cap. 14. p. 310, &c. and par. ii. cap. 14. p. 312.) which he imagines to be the reason why it is observed (ver. 2.) that the Gibeonites were "not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites:" to shew whence this horrid superstition proceeded; of which some tang still remained amongst them. The Vulgar here translates it, "ut crucifigamus eos," *that we may crucify them.* Which misled Serrarius and some

others into this error, that crucifixion was a punishment anciently among the Jews: which Casaubon, Selden, and several other great men, have shewn to be false.

In Gibeah of Saul.] To make the punishment the more remarkable and shameful: this being the city where he lived, both before and after he was king, (1 Sam. x. 26. xi. 4.)

Whom the Lord did choose.] This aggravated his guilt, that he was so highly favoured by God, and yet obeyed not his commands: but spared the Amalekites, whom God commanded him to destroy; and killed these poor Gibeonites, whom he was bound by the oath of God to preserve.

And the king said, I will give them.] This seems to be contrary to the Divine law, (Deut. xxiv. 16.) that the son should not die for his father's fault. To which some of the Jewish doctors thought it sufficient to answer, "It is better that one letter should be taken out of the law, than that the name of God should be publicly profaned:" that is, that one precept, rather than an oath, should be broken. But there is no need of this; for, as Abarbinel judiciously observes, the law in Deuteronomy is to be understood of proceedings in human courts; not of the Divine judgments: for God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation, (Exod. xx. 5.)

Ver. 7. *And the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, because of the Lord's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.*] Not merely his affection to Jonathan, but his dread of breaking the oath he had made to him, moved him to preserve Mephibosheth; lest he himself should incur the same punishment which Saul fell under, for breaking the oath made to the Gibeonites.

Ver. 8. *But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Ajah.*] Who was a concubine of Saul, as we read afterward, ver. 11.

Whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth.] After whose name, perhaps, Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan was called.

And five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up.] In the Hebrew, *whom she bare, i. e.* which were born: according to an usual manner of speaking among the Hebrews; of which see Dr. Hammond upon Luke xvi. note *b*.

For Adriel.] It is plain from hence, that by *was born* is meant, as we translate it, was *brought up*. For Michal was not the wife of Adriel, but was given to Phaltiel, (1 Sam. xxv. 44.) Merab her elder sister being married to Adriel, (1 Sam. xviii. 19.) by whom she had these five sons, whom Michal brought up, and therefore they are called her children. Thus the Jews say, in the Gemara Sanhedrin, cap. 2. *Merab brought them forth, and Michal educated them.* And the like we read (as they allege for the proof of this) Gen. xxx. 3. l. 23. (See Selden, de Uxore Hebr. lib. i. cap. 6.) Kimchi also here alleges the words of the women in Ruth iv. 17. *There is a son born to Naomi;* who was not the mother of it, but only laid it in her bosom, and became nurse to it, as is said in the precedent verse. Thus also Rasi, Ralbag, and a great many other Jews, following the Chaldee paraphrase. And we have an example of this in the heathen writers. For Agamemnon and Menelaus are called sons of Atreus, because their father being dead, he took care to bring them up. So Eustathius on the second book of the Iliads: Plisthenes (who was their father) being dead, the youths being bred up by Atreus, *αὐτοῦ παῖδες ἐκλήθησαν, they were called his children.*

The son of Barzillai the Meholathite.] This last word is intended to distinguish him from the other Barzillai the Gileadite: for this was of the tribe of Benjamin, to which Abel-Meholah belonged.

Ver. 9. *And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the Lord.*] In a conspicuous place, where they might be seen by all that passed by. David did not command his officers to hang them up, but delivered them to the Gibeonites, that they might dispose of them as they pleased.

And they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley-harvest.] That is, say the Jews, on the sixteenth of Nisan, a little after the Passover.

Ver. 10. *And Rizpah the daughter of Ajah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock.*] It is probable, she both made a tent of it to dwell in, and spread it upon the ground to lie upon.

From the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven.] From the sixteenth of Nisan (as the Hebrew doctors understand it) until the seventeenth of Marchesvan; that is, from the middle of our March to the middle of October; when God shewed he was reconciled, by sending showers down upon the earth; which might be, for any thing we know, in the middle of summer. And, indeed, Abarbinel thinks this opinion of their doctors is not true; but that the plain meaning is, they hung from the beginning of harvest until God was entreated for the land, and was pleased to send them rain; for want of which they suffered by famine. And he thinks it probable, that not long after they were hung up, they had plentiful showers by the good providence of God, though it was summer-time; whereby it appeared God was appeased: but by their hanging there several days, it is manifest this was not a legal punishment (and therefore David committed it to the Gibeonites, and did not execute it by his own officers), but an extraordinary one, inflicted by those who were not bound by that law, Deut. xxii. 24. which in this case was violated.

And suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.] She had servants no doubt to attend her, who kept a constant watch day and night to fright away the birds and beasts.

Ver. 11. *And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Ajah, Saul's concubine, had done.*] Which did not displease him, nor the Gibeonites neither (as far as appears), but was accounted a laudable thing, which excited David to the imitation of her. I observed before, that Saul had but one wife, and we read of no more than this one concubine, which shews his moderation in some things, which was praiseworthy.

Ver. 12. *And David went and took the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his son, from the men of Jabesh-Gilead, which had stolen them from the street of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa.*] See 1 Sam. xxxi. 10. This noble act of Rizpah moved David to do some honour to the carcasses of her sons, and to the whole house of Saul: and for that end he sent for the bones of Saul and Jonathan, to in-

ter them and those children of Saul's with their ancestors. Which piece of generosity demonstrated that he had no personal enmity to the family of Saul.

Ver. 13. *And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his son.*] From under the tree where they were buried in Jabesh, (1 Sam. xxxi. 13.)

And they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.] Which seems to have been done some time after they were taken down, when nothing but their bones remained; and then they had all seven an honourable interment, as it here follows.

Ver. 14. *And the bones of Saul and of Jonathan his son.*] Together with those now mentioned.

Buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah.] Which was in that tribe, (Josh. xviii. 28.)

In the sepulchre of Kish his father.] It was accounted very desirable to be buried with their parents, as appears by old Barzillai, (xix. 37.)

And they performed all that the king commanded.] They that were employed in this business gave them a solemn burial, with all the mourning that was usual in the funerals of kings; as the Hebrew doctors expound it.

And after that God was entreated for the land.] When satisfaction was given to the Gibeonites for the injuries done to them, God restored plenty to the country.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, the Philistines had yet war again with Israel.*] That is, after all the wars beforementioned in this book with the Philistines, they again disturbed David's repose in the latter end of his reign. Some, indeed, will have these wars to have been presently after the war with the Ammonites was ended; before the rebellion of Absalom. But Abarbinel, I think, well resolves, that the history of this war is not misplaced, but that it fell out not long after the famine beforementioned.

And David went down, and his servants with him.] It is not said where this battle was fought (as the place of the other three following is mentioned), but it is likely to have been near to the country of the Philistines; unto which *David went down;* for it lay low, towards the sea-side.

And fought against the Philistines: and David waxed faint.] Being in his declining years; or rather of a great age, and much worn out by various troubles and afflictions.

Ver. 16. *And Ishbi-benob, which was of the sons of the giant.*] That is, of Goliath; who by way of eminency is called *the giant;* though Bochartus thinks the Hebrew word *rapha* signifies any giant; and so these words should be translated, *of the race of the giants, i. e.* of the Anakims who fled into this country, particularly to Gath, when Joshua expelled them from Canaan, (Josh. xi. 22.)

(The weight of whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass in weight).] This is to be understood of the head of his spear, which weighed half as much as that of Goliath, (1 Sam. xvii. 7.)

He being girded with a new sword.] The word *sword* is not in the Hebrew; nor is there any thing remarkable in his having a new sword; therefore it should be translated, *with a new kind of weapon,* or rather, *with a new belt;* which had been bestowed upon him as a reward of some great exploit which he had done; or as a token of some new honour, or command, conferred upon him in the army. (See xviii. 11.)

Thought to have slain David.] Being stronger than he, and having him at an advantage; when, by some accident, he was separated from his army; as Josephus understands it.

Ver. 17. *But Abishai succoured him.*] Came in seasonably to his relief.

And smote the Philistine, and killed him.] The words leave it doubtful whether he was slain by Abishai or by David. Our translation seems to incline to the former; but if David was not the person that killed him, I do not see how that can be verified, which is said in the end of this chapter, that all these giants *fell by the hand of David and of his servants;* for he slew none of them, unless it were this.

Then the men of David sware to him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle.] They had advised this before, when they went to fight with Absalom, (xviii. 3.) but now they peremptorily decreed it, and solemnly confirmed it with an oath.

That thou quench not the light of Israel.] Lest he should be killed, and thereby they should lose the glory of having such a king reign over them; for good kings are called the *light* of their people, 1 Kings xi. 36. xv. 4. because, by their wise government, conduct, and courage, they made their people happy and illustrious.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass after this, that there was a battle again with the Philistines at Gob.*] Which was also called Gezer, as Abarbinel thinks, 1 Chron. xx. 4. Or, they were so near one another, that the battle was in the confines of both.

Then Sibbechai the Hushathite.] One of David's worthies, (1 Chron. xi. 29.)

Slew Saph, which was of the sons of the giant.] One of the same race of the Rephaims; who seem to be descended from the Anakims.

Ver. 19. *And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines.*] This was a place, it seems, very proper for armies to draw up in; for here they fought twice.

Where Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim a Beth-lehemite.] He is simply called the son of Jair, 1 Chron. xx. 5. and is reckoned among David's worthies, 1 Chron. xi. 26. and there said to be the son of Dodo; who, I suppose, was his grandfather.

Slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite.] The word *brother* is supplied out of 1 Chron. xx. 5. where his name is said to be Lahmi.

The staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.] See 1 Sam. xvii. 7.

Ver. 20. *And there was yet a battle in Gath.*] In the territory belonging to it.

Where was a man of great stature.] The LXX. translate it, *a man of Madon:* who was born, that is, in a place called by that name.

That had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, twenty-four in number.] If we may believe Tavernier, (in his relation of the Grand Signior's Seraglio, p. 95.) the eldest son of the emperor of Java, who reigned in the year 1648, when he was in that island, had six fingers on each hand, and as many toes on each foot; all of equal length.

And he also was born to the giant.] Was one of the Rephaim of that country.

Ver. 21. *And when he defied Israel.*] In imitation of the great giant Goliath, confiding, as he did, in his monstrous strength.

Jonathan the son of Shimeah, the brother of David, slew him.] We read of this brother of David in 1 Sam. xvi. 9. where he is called Shammah. But this son of his is not reckoned among David's worthies, 1 Chron. xi.

Ver. 22. *These four were born to the giant in Gath.*] Here *Rapha* seems to signify *Goliath*, the most famous giant; if one of them had not been his brother.

And fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.] The first of them was slain by David (Abishai assisting), the rest by the great men who were about him. (See ver. 17.)

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *AND David spake unto the Lord the words of this song, in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of his enemies.*] It is commonly thought David penned this psalm towards the end of his life, after all the victories mentioned in the foregoing chapter. Thus Rasi, in the time of his old age, and Kimchi, in the conclusion of his day: but Abarbinel, who contends earnestly that all things fall out in the order wherein they are related in this book, is of a quite different opinion here; and will have it that he composed this song in his youth, in the midst of all his straits and difficulties; out of which, when God delivered him, he sung this song of praise unto him. So that by the words *in the day that the Lord delivered him*, he thinks is meant, that every time he received any deliverance from God, his usual method was to acknowledge it thankfully in the words of this song, which was composed at first for his own private use: but in the end of his days, he thought fit to communicate it to others; and therefore put it into the book of Psalms, that it might serve for the use of those which might be in the like straits, and receive the like mercies. And then also he reviewed it, and made several alterations in it; which, little and great, amount, as he observes, to seventy-four in number. And this he did, as he thinks, to make his meaning plainer; and that the people might not mistake it. And there is some ground for part of what he saith; for the eighteenth Psalm is directed to the chief musician, which shews it was then intended for public use: whereas here is nothing said of that, and therefore it is probable it remained for some time a piece of private devotion.

And out of the hand of Saul.] He may be thought to be comprehended under the name of his *enemies:* but they (as the same Abarbinel observes) were properly the people of other nations, who made war upon him; of whom he speaks in Psalm cxxxix. 21, 22. "Do not I hate them that hate thee, &c. I account them mine enemies." Now though Saul cruelly persecuted David, yet it did not become David to call him his enemy, and one that he hated: for he loved Saul, and therefore doth not number him among his enemies; but, in a particular manner, to distinguish him from them, adds, *and out of the hand of Saul.*

Ver. 2. *And he said, The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer.*

Ver. 3. *The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.*] This great heap of metaphors, as Strigelius observes, is a large paraphrase upon the first commandment, declaring God alone to be his confidence: in whom he placed all his strength, safety, security, and happiness. The consequence of which is, that we should love God with all our heart, and soul, and strength; (as Moses adds after that precept, Deut. vi. 4, 5. x. 12.) and therefore David adds that, when he reviewed this Psalm, and begins it thus; "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength," &c. Psal. xviii. 1. (See my paraphrase upon that Psalm, where I have sufficiently explained these verses.)

Ver. 4. *I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.*] See in that Psalm, where there are the very same words. Upon which the forenamed Strigelius piously observes; That as the Πανοπλία of a soldier doth him no service, unless he put it on to defend himself and offend his enemy, so no protection or help from God is to be expected (who is so powerful as before described), unless we apply ourselves unto him by prayer and praises.

Ver. 5. *When the waves of death compassed me about, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.*] These words in this verse differ from the words in Psal. xviii. but the sense is the same: that he was in a sinking condition, and saw no way to escape; being overpowered by troops of ungodly men, who, like a torrent, threatened to sweep him away.

Ver. 6. *The sorrows of hell compassed me about, and the snares of death prevented me.*] He was so entangled in their snares, that he had no more power to help himself, than a dead man bound head and foot in his grave. For so the word *sheol*, which we translate *hell*, here signifies.

Ver. 7. *In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God.*] He did not despair when he was at this plunge, but made his addresses to Him who is omnipotent; most earnestly beseeching him to deliver him, as he had often done.

And he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.] There is very little difference between these words and those in Psalm xviii. The meaning of which is, that God gave him a gracious answer from his sanctuary, or from heaven (of which the sanctuary was a type), and shewed that he was sensibly touched with his affliction.

Ver. 8. *Then the earth shook and trembled.*] The terror which God struck into his enemies is compared to an earthquake: which makes every body tremble, as it did the gaoler, Acts xvi. 29.

The foundations of heaven moved and shook.] In Psalm xviii. the words are, *the foundations of the hills:* which explains what he here means by *heaven; viz.* mountains lifted up to heaven. Or, he represents the dread which fell upon his enemies, by the consternation which an earthquake causes, when it is accompanied with thunder, lightning, and hail from heaven, in a great tempest. We do not read that there were literally such storms, tempests, and earthquakes, for David's deliverance: but if there were, it need not seem strange, when profane history informs us of God's interposing after this manner in some cases. For Strigelius observes out of Livy, that in the eighth year of the second Punic war, when Hannibal and the Romans were drawn up in battle and ready to fight (upon which the fortune of the city of Rome depended), there fell such a shower of rain and hail, as confounded both armies: so

that being scarce able to hold their arms they retreated unto their camps. And on the next day, in the very same place, the like tempest parted them: and as soon as they came into their camps, there was a wonderful serenity and tranquillity.

Because he was wroth.] Highly displeased at their enmity to David.

Ver. 9. *There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled at it.*] These are very high metaphors, to express the most flaming degree of anger, and the dreadful effects of it.

Ver. 10. *He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet.*] The Divine Majesty appeared in a glorious cloud, descending from heaven; which at the bottom was all dark, but above bright and shining, with an amazing lustre.

Ver. 11. *He rode upon a cherub.*] To *ride*, in the Hebrew language (as Maimonides observes), is to rule, to govern, to manage with an absolute power, that on which one is said to ride; and to dispose of it as he pleases. (More Nevochim, par. i. cap. 70.) And therefore to *ride upon a cherub*, or to make the clouds his chariot (which is the very same, because angels were wont to appear in bright clouds), is to send his heavenly ministers whither he thinks good, to execute his pleasure.

And did fly.] Made haste to succour and relieve David, when he was in great distress.

And he was seen upon the wings of the wind.] A rapid wind shewed that he was present to overturn all opposition. (See 1 Sam. v. 24.)

Ver. 12. *And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.*] This is still a description of the angelical powers, who surrounded him on all sides, as his ministers, ready to be employed, which way he thought fit to send them. For Andreas Cæsariensis truly observes, in his commentary on the Revelation, that whensoever we read in the sacred books of clouds, or thick darkness, we are always to understand, ὑπουργὸς τῶν θείων πραγμάτων, *some ministry ready to serve in Divine affairs.*

Ver. 13. *Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled.*] Those heavenly ministers going forth from his glorious presence, sent hailstones and lightnings (as in the days of Joshua, x. 11.) in the face of his enemies.

Ver. 14. *The Lord thundered from heaven, the Most High uttered his voice.*] Thunder is called the voice of God, in Psal. xxix. Which he sent forth in such terrible cracks, accompanied with flashes of fire, that quite daunted his enemies.

Ver. 15. *He sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them.*] These were the weapons whereby they were vanquished; lightnings were the darts and arrows that made them turn their backs and run away.

Ver. 16. *And the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.*] This is the description of a great earthquake, which rent it in sunder, and made such breaches in it, that the very bottom of it was discovered. And this was the effect of God's just indignation against his enemies.

Ver. 17. *He sent from above, he took me.*] He sent his angels to rescue and protect David.

He drew me out of many waters.] Delivered him from innumerable dangers; compared to waters breaking out upon a country, to overflow it.

Ver. 18. *He delivered me from my strong enemy.*] First from Goliath, and afterward from many others, as we read in the foregoing chapter, xxi. 16, 17, &c.

And from them that hated me.] The Philistines, the Syrians, and other nations, whose hatred to him made them set themselves against him, to destroy him.

For they were too strong for me.] Their forces were more numerous than his, and would have overpowered him, if the Lord had not been his helper.

Ver. 19. *They prevented me in the day of my calamity; but the Lord was my stay.*] When he was in a weak condition, unable to defend himself, Saul suddenly came upon him, and had destroyed him, if the Lord had not been his support. (See 1 Sam. xxii. 9. xxiii. 14. 26. xxiv. 2, 3, &c.)

Ver. 20. *He brought me forth also into a large place.*] When his house, for instance, was beset by Saul's officers, who watched to kill him as he came out in the morning, he escaped by the help of his wife, and got to Samuel and Ramah, where he was at liberty to go whither he pleased. (1 Sam. xix. 11. 18.)

He delivered me, because he delighted in me.] In many other straits he afterward delivered him; because he had a kindness for him, and resolved to make him king of Israel.

Ver. 21. *The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.*] God knew also that he was innocent of what he was accused; and had no design to do Saul any hurt. (1 Sam. xxiv. 11, 12, &c. xxvi. 23.)

Ver. 22. *For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God.*] He took no unlawful courses to preserve himself; but when Saul fell into his hands, he would not hurt him, because he was God's anointed. (See there, 1 Sam. xxiv. 11—13. and xxvi. 19, &c.)

Ver. 23. *For all his judgments were before me.*] He made God's commands the rule of his actions.

And as for his statutes, I did not depart from them.] In Psal. xviii. the words are, *I did not put away his statutes from me:* that is, bid them stand aside, and give way to his interest; but strictly observed them.

Ver. 24. *I was also upright before him, and kept myself from mine iniquity.*] This is still spoken with respect to Saul. For though he offended afterward grievously against God's laws, yet he chose rather to suffer any thing than do Saul any harm; and nothing could tempt him to that iniquity, unto which he was invited by fair opportunities, (1 Sam. xxiv. 4. xxvi. 8, &c.)

Ver. 25. *Therefore the Lord has recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness in his eye-sight.*] According to David's prayer; which is very remarkable, 1 Sam. xxvi. 23. where he desires God to deal with him as he had dealt with Saul, with whose blood he would not defile his hands, when it was in his power to take revenge.

Ver. 26. *With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright.*] This is the common method of God's providence, to do good to those that do good to others: and to do them

justice, who do not swerve from the rules of righteousness, when they are injuriously treated by their neighbours.

Ver. 27. *With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure.*] Faithfully keep his promises to those who are faithful to him.

And with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unsavoury.] Declare how much he distastes and abhors those that take deceitful courses to bring about their ends. In Psal. xviii. the words are, *with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward;* that is, he ensnares those in their own devices, who perversely take crooked ways to compass their designs: which unexpectedly end in their destruction.

Ver. 28. *And the afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down.*] He is wont to deliver poor helpless people, who humbly depend on him, and not on any unlawful means for safety: but he contrives ways to lay those low who (proud of their power) insolently oppress them.

Ver. 29. *For thou art my lamp, O Lord; and the Lord will lighten my darkness.*] David himself was an instance of this; whom from a despicable, God raised to an illustrious condition: and when he concluded he should perish, (1 Sam. xxvii. 1.) advanced him to royal splendour and greatness.

Ver. 30. *For by thee I have run through a troop: by my God I have leaped over a wall.*] Now he seems to celebrate the wonderful works of God, after the persecution of Saul was over, and he was made king. When numerous enemies assaulted him; but he broke and scattered them all. And particularly (which seems to be meant by the last words) he scaled the highest walls, whereby his enemies thought themselves securely defended. (See chap. v. of this book, ver. 6, 7, &c.)

Ver. 31. *As for God, his way is perfect.*] By the *way of God,* here seems to be meant his counsels, proceedings, and methods of his providence: which for the present may appear to us perplexed, but in the issue will be seen to be perfectly just, and agreeable to his promises; as it here follows.

The word of the Lord is tried.] The experience of all good men tells us, that he never failed to be true to his word: which is freer from all deceit, than the most refined gold is from dross.

He is a buckler to all them that trust in him.] So that none can hurt those that put themselves under his protection, with a pious confidence in him.

Ver. 32. *For who is God, save the Lord?*] For none can defeat his intentions, or resist his will.

And who is a rock save our God?] There are none so powerful, as to be able to hurt those whom he will protect; or to defend those whom he will destroy. Of this word *rock,* see Deut. xxxii. 4. 31.

Ver. 33. *God is my strength and power.*] What great men would Scipio and others have been, if they had been possessed with such a sense of God, as to have acknowledged that all their courage, and conduct, and mighty victories were owing to his power. But no warrior was ever like to David, who had God in all his thoughts, and acknowledged all his great acts to be performed by the Divine aid.

And he maketh my way perfect.] Removed all obstacles out of his way, to the completing of his conquests. (See v. 10.)

Ver. 34. *He maketh my feet like hinds' feet.*] This is commonly thought to relate to the swiftness of *hinds;* and so I have taken it in my paraphrase on the Psalms: but Bochartus hath made it probable, that it hath respect to the firmness of their treading; which is very remarkable, as he shews in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 17.

And setteth me upon my high places.] He was enabled to pursue his enemies with great celerity, and without tripping: even unto such places, as for their height and cragginess were thought inaccessible.

Ver. 35. *He teaches my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.*] He ascribes all his strength and dexterity to God: who enabled him to wrest the strongest bow out of his enemies' hands, and break it in pieces.

Ver. 36. *Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation.*] And when he was in great dangers, God protected him: as he did in the battle mentioned in the foregoing chapter, (ver. 16, 17.) when Ishbi-benob had slain him, if Abishai had not stepped in for his timely succour.

And thy gentleness hath made me great.] These wonderful deliverances he could ascribe to nothing but the tender mercy of God to him, when he was unworthy of his favour.

Ver. 37. *Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; so that my feet did not slip.*] When he was in great straits, and beset with difficulties, God opened a wide passage; and made all things succeed according to his desire. For that seems to be meant by his *feet did not slip,* but he went on smoothly.

Ver. 38. *I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again till I had consumed them.*] He got complete victories over the Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, and Ammonites. (See chap. viii. and x. of this book.)

Ver. 39. *I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise.*] Gave them such a blow, that they were not able to renew the fight.

Yea, they are fallen under my feet.] Submitted themselves unto him and served him. (See x. 19.)

Ver. 40. *For thou hast girded me with strength to the battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me.*] This was remarkably fulfilled in the rebellion of Absalom; when he was in a feeble condition, and had but few followers: but God gave them courage to fight, and such success in the battle, that they routed his army; and all Israel was brought under his obedience. (See chap. xviii.)

Ver. 41. *Thou hast also given me the necks of my enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me.*] This also was literally fulfilled, when Sheba raised a new rebellion; and his head was thrown over the wall of Abel to Joab, (chap. xx.)

Ver. 42. *They looked, but there was none to save.*] In Psal. xviii. it is, *they cried:* which may signify, that they sought for help from their allies and confederates: but to no purpose.

Even unto the Lord, but he answered them not.] And it was too late, when other help failed them, to seek for help from God: for he had deserted them, and would not hear their prayers.

Ver. 43. *Then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth.*] In Psal. xviii. the words are, *as the dust before the wind.* He so entirely vanquished them, that they had no

more power than the small dust of the earth: which is tossed up and down with every blast of wind.

I did stamp them as the mire of the street, and did spread them abroad.] In the forenamed Psalm, *I did cast them out as the dirt in the street:* that is, made them as contemptible as the dirt in the street, which every one tramples under his feet.

Ver. 44. *Thou hast also delivered me from the strivings of the people, thou hast made me the head of the heathen.*] The first part of these words relates to the union of the people of Israel and Judah under his government, after long contentions between them, (v. 1, 2, &c.) The other part to the enlargement of his kingdom, by subduing his neighbouring heathen people under him, (chap. viii. 10.)

A people whom I have not known shall serve me.] Such as the Syrians of Zobah, and Rehob, and Ish-tob, and Maacah: of which David, it is likely, had no knowledge, till they came to help the Ammonites, (x. 8.)

Ver. 45. *Strangers shall submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient to me.*] The very report of his victories made some heartily submit themselves unto him: and others dissembled their hostility, and offered him their service, (x. 19.)

Ver. 46. *Strangers shall fade away.*] Fall as withered leaves do from the trees.

They shall be afraid out of their close places.] Distrusting their strong holds, that they came creeping out with fear, to surrender up themselves into his hands.

Ver. 47. *The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock.*] To him he desires all the praise may be ascribed; in whose eternal power alone he still confided.

And exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation.] He desires again the Lord might be magnified with the highest praises: who had not only preserved him from perishing, but exalted him to be king of Israel. For so the last words are in the Hebrew, *exalted be God, the rock of my salvation.* Who safely preserved and delivered him; and now advanced him most graciously to the highest dignity.

Ver. 48. *It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me.*] He did not avenge himself, but left it to God to plead his cause: who not only punished those that were injurious to him, but brought many nations under his empire.

Ver. 49. *And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me.*] In these words David made some small alteration, when he inserted this hymn into the book of Psalms for public use. Of which, Abarbinel endeavours to give a reason; but he seems too curious in his observations. The plainest and most certain of which is this; that the first part of these words respect the nations whom he subdued; who were properly his enemies: and the latter the children of Israel, when they rose up against him to dethrone him.

Thou hast delivered me from the violent man.] After he had delivered him from Saul, who violently persecuted him a long time.

Ver. 50. *Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name.*] He resolved to make his thankful acknowledgments unto God every where: so as to make those nations whom he had subdued sensible that he ascribed all his victories unto him. In honour of whom he would sing this perpetual song.

Ver. 51. *He is the tower of salvation for his king.*] As he was a king by God's appointment, and not by usurpation; so he trusted in him for the support of his authority.

And sheweth mercy unto his anointed, unto David, and to his seed for evermore.] And he hoped the same mercy which had promoted him to this dignity, would be continued to him and to his posterity till the coming of the great king Messiah: whose kingdom shall have no end. (See vii. 12, 13.)

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW these are the last words of David.*] He spake other words recorded in the next chapter, and in the next book, before he died: but these were the last words that he spake by the Holy Ghost, as Abarbinel expounds them. Who observes, that after he had composed the book of Psalms, and added the hymn mentioned in the foregoing chapter unto it, then he spake these words; after which the influence of the Holy Spirit resided on him no more. The Chaldee paraphrase (which was always highly esteemed by the Jews) takes these words, as if they were a prophecy of the Messiah: for so it expounds them; *These are the words of the prophecy of David, which he prophesied of the consummation of all things, in the day of consolation, which is to come.*

David the son of Jesse said.] He remembers his low condition, when God was pleased to make choice of him to be a king.

The man who was raised up on high.] From feeding his father's sheep, to rule the people of Israel.

The anointed of the God of Jacob.] The Chaldee hath it, *Anointed by the Word of the God of Jacob.*

The sweet Psalmist of Israel, said.] Who was inspired to compose many delightful hymns in the praises of God.

Ver. 2. *The Spirit of God spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.*] He would not have those hymns, nor what he spake now, looked upon as human compositions: but as proceeding from a Divine influence, conferred upon him by the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 3. *The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me.*] By Nathan or by Samuel.

He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.] Or, as we render it in the margin, *Be thou ruler over,* &c. which the Chaldee expounds of the Messiah in this manner, *The faithful God spake* (so he interprets the word *Rock*), *I will constitute to me a king, he is the Messiah, who shall arise, and reign in the fear of the Lord.* But this relates first to David, the type of Christ; who was taught to rule justly, and in the fear of God: that is, in the exact observance of all the Divine laws. Or, as Abarbinel interprets it, *When he that rules men is just, then the fear of the Lord will rule and have dominion in the earth:* for all the people are apt to tread in the steps of their king: so that when he that rules is just, it is as if he did not rule, but the fear of the Lord ruled in the earth.

Ver. 4. *And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun ariseth.*] The dominion of the just (as the same Abarbinel interprets it) shall be as the morning light, when the sun ariseth, and the light continually increases.

Even a morning without clouds.] Which hinder the rays of the sun from piercing through unto the earth.

As the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.] We have in this translation quite transposed the Hebrew words, where they run thus, *From splendour and from rain, grass out of the earth.* The sense of which Abarbinel thinks is this, It shall be such a morning, in which there is sometimes sunshine, and sometimes showers of rain, to make grass spring out of the earth.

Ver. 5. *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.*] Which he thus interprets; Although the kingdom of a just man, by little and little, grows and increases; and sometimes is clouded, and sometimes the light shines upon it: the kingdom of David shall not be so, but God hath made a perpetual covenant, &c.

For this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he makes it not to grow.] Or, as he interprets it, This is all my salvation, and my desire, that he would not make it grow or shoot up (for that supposes it to be buried), but that, as was said before, it may always remain in an equal manner ordered and conserved.

It must be acknowledged, that there are no words so obscure in this book as these two verses. The sense of which Ludovicus de Dieu seems to me to have most clearly opened:—The stability and perpetuity of his kingdom, saith he, David amplifies by a comparison from three natural things, which are very grateful to men, but not constant and stable; in a settled order and sure. For the sun arises, but goes down again; and the morning may be clear, but clouds afterward arise; and the tender grass springs up, but withers away. Not so, saith he, is my kingdom before God. It is flourishing, like all these, but perpetual: for he hath made an everlasting covenant with me; though some afflictions have befallen me; and he hath not made all my salvation and desire to grow. So he makes the first *caph* of similitude to stand for three; and to be repeated thrice in this manner:—

"The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake concerning me; The just man ruleth among men: he ruleth in the fear of God. And as the sun ariseth, with a shining light; as the morning is without clouds, by reason of its splendour; as from rain the tender grass springs out of the earth: yet (or truly) so is not my house with God. Because he hath made an everlasting covenant with me; disposed in all things, and well kept and preserved in that order. Although he doth not make all my salvation and desire to grow (that is, though some adversities happen to me and my family), yet that always remains, which, in the covenant of God made with me, is in all things orderly, disposed, and preserved."

Ver. 6. *But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands.*] The kingdom of impious men shall not be like the kingdom of the house of David: being so far from being like to grass, which is useful, that they are rather like thorns: which are rejected as hurtful and pernicious. That is, such wicked men are not fit for human society.

Ver. 7. *But the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron, and with the staff of a spear.*] If any body will meddle with them, it must be at his peril. For so the word *jimmale* (which we translate *fenced*) signifies *shall be filled*, with the iron and the staff of a spear. Spears are never used to cut down thorns; but iron gives one a sore wound, like that which a man receives from a spear, when it runs into his body, iron and wood withal. So the same De Dieu very judiciously.

And they shall be utterly burnt with fire in the same place.] Therefore men burn them with fire, in the same place where they grow: and so wicked men are destroyed, where they think themselves most secure. Which the Targum applies to the judgment of the great day, saying, *Their punishment is in the hand of man; but they shall be burnt up utterly, when the house of the great judgment appears: that they may sit on the throne of judgment, to judge the world.*

Ver. 8. *These be the names of the mighty men whom David had.*] Now follows a catalogue of those valiant men who helped to raise David to his dignity, and preserve him in it: being continually with him in all his wars. There is a list of them in 1 Chron. xi. very different from this in several things. But Abarbinel thinks that it creates no difficulty, if we do but observe, that there he distinguishes them into three classes: those that had always been with him; and they that came to him to Ziklag, a little before he was made king of Judah; and they that came to him to Hebron, after he was made king of all Israel. All whose memories were fit to be preserved: but here, in this book, the Divine writer intended only to mention the most excellent heroes, who were always with him in his wars: and for whose sake he composed the precedent song of praises to God.

The Tachmonite that sat in the seat.] Or, as it is translated in the margin, *Josheb-boshebat the Tachmonite:* for so he is called in 1 Chron. xi. 11. *Ishobeam;* which may well be thought the same name abbreviated. He *sat in the seat* (as we translate it here) in the council of war; next to Joab: being, it is thought, his lieutenant-general. For that he was one of the Sanhedrin, who sat in the seat of judgment, as some would have it, is not probable: though it is likely these were men of great wisdom as well as valour: and this man being called a Chachmonite, Abarbinel thinks it was because he was a man of learning, being given to study as well as fighting; for in Hebrew the word *chacham* signifies *a wise man:* as this was no question in military affairs, if not in affairs of state, and other sorts of wisdom.

Chief among the captains.] The principal commander, as I said, under Joab. Who is not here mentioned, though he was a great man, inferior to none of these: but had stained himself by the base murder of two great persons, Abner and Amasa. Which some take to be the reason why he had not the honour to be put into the number of those worthies who served David.

(The same was Adino the Ezrite).] It is thought he had two names, and was of the family of the Ezrites: though Abarbinel will have his name to have been Adinohaezri.

He lift up his spear.] These words are supplied out of 1 Chron. xi. 11.

Against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.] In that place of the Chronicles it is said he killed three hundred: that is, after the slaughter he made in one battle of eight hundred; but killed in another (as Kimchi understands it) three hundred.

Ver. 9. *And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the*

Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David.] He was a Benjamite, for Ahoah was one of his sons, (1 Chron. viii. 4.)

When they defied the Philistines.] As Goliath had done the Israelites, (1 Sam. xvii. 1.)

That were there gathered together to battle.] In Pasdammim, as we read 1 Chron. xi. 17. which is the same with Ephes-dammim, 1 Sam. xvii. 1.

And the men of Israel were gone away.] Fled from before the Philistines, as it is explained 1 Chron. xi. 13.

Ver. 10. *He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary.*] With the slaughter that he made.

And his hand clave unto his sword.] Being all besmeared with blood; which drying by the heat of it, made the sword cleave to his hand.

And the Lord wrought a great victory that day.] Like that of Shamgar, Judg. iii. *ult.* and of Samson, xv. 13. where I have shewn these are not incredible stories; God inspiring men with wonderful courage, and striking a terror into their enemies. There were men in ancient times of prodigious strength, mentioned by Pliny, lib. vii. Nat. Histor. cap. 20.

And the people returned after him only to spoil.] They that fled rallied again, when they saw the wonders he did: and followed after him, not to fight, but only to partake of the spoil.

Ver. 11. *And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite.*] Who is not expressly mentioned in the book of the Chronicles; but plainly implied to be engaged in this great action. For it is said, 1 Chron. xi. 14. that *they set themselves*, &c. that is, Shammah and Eleazar, who joined in this enterprise. But this place in Samuel teaches us, that Shammah, the son of Agee, had the chief hand in it: and therefore it is ascribed to him.

And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop.] Or, as we translate it in the margin, *for forage.* For so Ralbag interprets the Hebrew word *chajja* (which Kimchi takes to be a city), that they came to get some sustenance out of the field.

Where was a piece of ground full of lentiles.] In the Chronicles it is, *full of barley.* In which there is no difficulty, one part of the field being sown with *lentiles*, and the other part with *barley.*

And the people fled from the Philistines.] Fearing to defend the place.

Ver. 12. *But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines.*] So that they could neither burn the corn, nor carry it away, nor tread it down.

And the Lord wrought a great victory.] By his hand: who was one of the three most mighty men, though not particularly named in the book of the Chronicles. It being the manner of the Scripture, as the Jews observe, to propound that briefly in one place, which hath been at large explained in another: as this action of Shammah is here in this book.

Ver. 13. *And three of the thirty chiefs.*] Or, as it is in the margin, *three captains over the thirty.* Not the three beforementioned, but the three that follow: who were not so great as the first three; but yet greater than any of the thirty whom they commanded.

Went down, and came to David in the harvest-time.] Or rather, as the Hebrew words are, *at harvest.* That is, saith Abarbinel, the Philistines came to destroy the fruits of the earth, that they might famish the Israelites: whereupon David raised an army to protect and defend them in reaping of their harvest when they went about it.

Unto the cave of Adullam.] A place where he had hid himself under the persecution of Saul, (1 Sam. xxii. 1.) and where he now fortified himself against the Philistines: who in the beginning of his reign came with great forces against him. For it is plain from 1 Chron. xi. 15. that there was a rock or strong hold there.

And the troop of the Philistines pitched in the valley of Rephaim.] See 2 Sam. v. 17, 18.

Ver. 14. *And David was then in the hold.*] As in the place abovementioned; near Adullam, (1 Sam. xxii. 4.)

And the garrison of the Philistines was then in Beth-lehem.] They had possessed themselves of this place, and put a garrison into it.

Ver. 15. *And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the waters of Beth-lehem, which are by the gate!*] The weather being very hot (as it used to be in harvest-time), David was very thirsty, and said to some about him, how glad he should be of a draught of the waters of Beth-lehem: where he was born, and had lived a long time; and therefore had been accustomed to them, and knew how very pleasant and refreshing they were. But he did not speak this, as Abarbinel observes, to the end that any men should venture their lives, to fetch him some of this water.

Ver. 16. *And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that was by the gate, and brought it to David.*] This they did without David's knowledge; and the forenamed author observes three wonderful things in this action. First, that three men could break through the whole host of the Philistines: and when they had so done, durst stay to draw water out of the well: and then carry it away with a high hand, through the same host, and bring it to David. To which he might have added a fourth thing, that they attempted this at the very gate of Beth-lehem: where, no doubt, the garrison of the Philistines kept the strongest guard.

Nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord.] Not in that place, where it was brought to him: but kept it (as Abarbinel thinks) till he had opportunity to go to the altar, and there poured it out unto God. Some fancy that now was the feast of tabernacles, when they used to draw water, and pour it out: and David made use of this for that purpose. (See 1 Sam. vii. 6.) There are mystical senses which the Jews please themselves withal about this water, with which I shall not trouble the reader.

Ver. 17. *And he said, Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it.*] He looked upon it no longer as water, but as the blood of those men who fetched it with the peril of their lives: and the blood of every thing belonged to the Lord; and was proper to be offered unto him. Some carry this so far to another sense, that they imagine David hereby shewed it was not material water he longed for; but the Messiah, who had the water of life. Who he knew should be born at Beth-lehem: which the Philistines therefore should not be able to destroy.

These things did these three mighty men.] They all joined in this hazardous exploit: but now follows what they did singly.

Ver. 18. *And Abishai the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three.*] The chief of those three mighty men beforementioned. (See 1 Chron. xi. 20.)

And he lifted up his spear against three hundred, and slew them, and had the name among three.] That is, was most eminent and famous of those three.

Ver. 19. *Was he not most honourable of them? therefore he was their captain.*] That is, no doubt, he was worthy to be the leader of them.

Ver. 20. *And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel.*] He was descended from valiant ancestors: whom he far excelled. Kabzeel was in the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 21.)

Who had done many acts.] As Abishai also had done (for he succoured David when a giant had like to have killed him), but their greatest acts only are here mentioned.

He slew two lion-like men of Moab.] The Hebrew word *ariel* signifies *a lion of God*, that is, *a great lion*. And it was the name among the Moabites for a very valiant man; who at this day, among the Arabians, is called *Assedollabi*, a lion of God, as Bochartus hath observed out of a great many authors in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. iii. cap. 1.

He went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow.] This action was the greater, because in the time of snow lions are fiercer for want of prey, and are then also fullest of heat and vigour. But it is not likely that Benaiah went to encounter this lion merely to shew his bravery; but, as some think, this was a lion that had done much mischief to the country; which moved him to expose himself to this combat with it. But Bochartus doth not think this likely; for he needed not have hazarded his life, but have called others unto his assistance, to destroy this ravenous beast. He thinks, therefore, that in a deep snow, the lion took shelter in a cave (for so the word we translate *pit* sometimes signifies), and that Benaiah being abroad in that snowy season, came into the same place to defend himself from the severity of the weather; where he was necessitated to enter into a combat with the lion; whom he found there, and came with open mouth to devour him. He compares him to Alexander the Great, upon whom a lion of great bigness running, he gave him such a wound as killed him. So did Lysimachus with another. (See Hieroz. par. i. lib. iii. cap. 5.) Abarbinel observes three great things in this action. First, that he slew a lion, which is the fiercest of all wild beasts: secondly, he slew him in a pit, where he could not turn himself as he pleased: and, thirdly, in a time of snow, when his hands and feet were cold and numb; which hindered their vital operations.

Ver. 21. *And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man.*] A person of great stature. (See 1 Chron. xi. 23.)

And the Egyptian had a spear in his hand.] See there.

And he went down with a staff.] Such as men used to walk with.

And plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear.] This shews him to have been both a fearless person, and of great skill and dexterity, in managing a combat either with man or beast.

Ver. 22. *These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among the three mighty men.*] Who the third was is not said plainly, either here or in the book of the Chronicles.

Abarbinel thinks he might possibly join with the other two, but did no mighty matter by himself; and so is not mentioned. But perhaps Adina, the son of Shiza, might be the third; because it is said, 1 Chron. xi. 42. that he was "a captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him." Which seems to signify that he was above the thirty, as Abishai and Benaiah were.

Ver. 23. *He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three.*] Was not comparable to Adino, and Eleazar, and Shammah, who were like lions; as these were like lions' whelps, as Strigelius glosses.

And David set him over his guard.] See chap. viii. 18.

Ver. 24. *And Asahel, the brother of Joab, was one of the thirty.*] Now follow the names of thirty valiant men, but not equal to the worthies beforenamed. Asahel seems to have been the chief of the thirty; and so some translate the words, *he was above the thirty:* and so might be the last of the three of the second order of worthies.

Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem.] Concerning whom we find nothing recorded but this: That he was born and bred (it is likely) in the same place with David.

Ver. 25. *Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Harodite.*] The first of these is called Shammoth in 1 Chron. xi. 27. and he is said to be an Harorite. Which is a very small variation, *resch* being put in the place of *daleth*, as is very common in Scripture, according to the various pronunciation of words in divers parts of the country. There is a greater difference in the name that follows, and in many others; it being common, as Abarbinel observes, for men to have two names. But it is plain the same persons are here mentioned that are in the book of Chronicles; though there (as he notes) are more added. For the author of that book reckons up all the chief commanders in the army; so that, though they were not heroical persons in themselves, yet, being great commanders over others, Ezra thought fit to mention them. But here, in the book of Samuel, the prophet only numbers those that were of themselves great heroes, not minding the chief commanders in the army who were not so.

Ver. 26. *Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikketh the Tekoite.*] None of the memorable acts of these, or of the following worthies, are recorded; therefore all that I can say of them is this: That when God intended to raise a king to a great height, as he did David, he raised up the spirits of several great men to assist him. Thus he did with Alexander the Great, who had Clitus, Parmenio, Antigonus, Ptolemæus, Seleucus, Craterus, and other brave men to accompany him in all his enterprises; but David (it may be truly observed), in a less kingdom, had far more.

Ver. 27. *Abiezer the Anethothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite.*

Ver. 28. *Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite.*

Ver. 29. *Heleb the son of Baanah a Netophathite, Ittai the son of Ribai out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin.*

Ver. 30. *Benaiah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash.*

Ver. 31. *Abi-albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite.*

Ver. 32. *Eliahba the Shaalbonite; of the sons of Jashen, Jonathan.*

Ver. 33. *Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite.*

Ver. 34. *Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite.*

Ver. 35. *Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite.*

Ver. 36. *Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite.*

Ver. 37. *Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, armour-bearer to Joab the son of Zeruiah.*

Ver. 38. *Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite.*

Ver. 39. *Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all.*] Here are only thirty and six named; therefore Joab is supposed, by Abarbinel, to be the other; who was the head of them all.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.*] Because they had followed Absalom, says Abarbinel, and afterward Sheba the son of Bichri: for which they had not been yet sufficiently punished. But it is more likely, it was for their luxury, now that plenty was restored to them, after the sore famine that fell upon them upon the score of the Gibeonites.

And he moved David against them.] Or, *David was moved;* that is, by Satan, as it is expounded in the first book of the Chronicles, xxi. 1. But Abarbinel thinks it is as if he had said, The anger of the Lord, which was kindled against Israel, moved David, &c. That is, the same sin which made God angry with Israel, was the cause that David was seduced in this thing, that they might be punished.

To say, Go, number Israel and Judah.] To give command that an account should be taken of the number of all the people.

Ver. 2. *For the king said to Joab the captain of the host.*] Accordingly it no sooner came into his heart, but he gave orders about it to the principal commander of his army.

Which was with him] Who always, when they were in war, attended on him.

Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba.] From one end of the country to the other. For Dan (as I have before observed) was the utmost bounds of it in the north, as Beer-sheba was in the south.

And number ye the people, that I may know the number of the people.] Joab was to take proper officers with him, to assist him in this business; so that there might be an exact account given. (See ver. 4.)

Ver. 3. *And Joab said unto the king, Now the Lord thy God add unto the people (how many soever they be) a hundred-fold, and that the eyes of my lord the king may see it.*] It appears by this, that Joab was a great courtier, as well as a great captain, who knew how to divert the king from what he did not like, if good words and wishes would have done it.

But why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?] For which he thought there was no reason; and as it would be troublesome and chargeable, so there might be much danger in it; as he expresses it in 1 Chron. xxi. 3.

Ver. 4. *Notwithstanding the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host.*] Who joined, it seems, with Joab to divert the king from this purpose: in which he was fixed and immoveable.

And Joab and the captains of the host went out from the presence of the king to number the people of Israel.] It is most likely, that their inferior officers went with the captains to expedite the business.

Ver. 5. *And they passed over Jordan.*] They went first into the eastern part of the country; and so by the northern coasts to the west; and then to the south.

And pitched in Aroer.] These words seem to import, that they pitched their tents in the field; and thither summoned the neighbouring towns to come into them; which was very troublesome, and at last proved grievous; as appears by the book of Chronicles.

On the right side of the city that lieth in the midst of the river of Gad, and towards Jazer.] We no where read of such a river; which, in the margin, is translated the *valley of Gad.* But Jazer was a town in that tribe, (Numb. xxxii. 35.)

Ver. 6. *And they came to Gilead, and to the land of Tahtim-hodshi.*] It is in vain to seek after this land, which is not mentioned in the book of Joshua, but it is likely was near to Gilead; and had been lately recovered, some think, from other people, and now inhabited by the Israelites. (See the margin of our Bibles.)

And they came to Dan-jaan, and about to Zidon.] Not to the city of Zidon, for that was not in their power, but to the coast about it.

Ver. 7. *And came to the strong hold of Tyre.*] To the territory near it.

And to all the cities of the Hivites, and Canaanites.] Who lived in those north-west parts of the country.

And they went out to the south of Judah.] Having taken account of all the towns upon the sea-coast (which was in the west), they turned to the south, into the tribe of Judah.

Even to Beer-sheba.] Which was in the utmost limits of the country on that side.

Ver. 8. *So when they had gone through all the land.*] But not numbered all the people; for the work grew so tedious, that they omitted Levi and Benjamin, as we read 1 Chron. xxi. 6.

They came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.] They could not well dispatch it in less time; an account being to be taken of every city and village in the whole country.

Ver. 9. *And Joab gave up the number of the people unto the king.*] All the officers brought in their particular sums to Joab; who cast them up, and they amounted in all to the number following.

And there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword.] They did not, it seems, reckon women and children, and old men; nor such as were not fit for war.

And the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.] There is a great difference between this account and that in the Chronicles. For there (1 Chron. xxi. 5.) the men of Israel are said to be three hundred thousand more than are here mentioned; and, on the contrary, the men of Judah are said to be thirty thousand less. Of the former of which there is a plain account, that in this book the standing legions are not numbered: which were very well known, they serving under twelve commanders so many months;

(1 Chron. xxvii. 1, &c.) but in the book of the Chronicles all these are taken into the number there mentioned. For the Jews observe in Halicoth Olam, that there being twenty-four thousand who waited every month (which makes in all two hundred eighty-eight thousand), allowing a thousand officers (as we cannot well allow less) to every twenty-four thousand, there will be the twelve thousand wanting; which, added to the eight hundred eighty-eight thousand, make just three hundred thousand: which, added to the eight hundred thousand here mentioned, make up the eleven hundred thousand mentioned in the Chronicles. The like account Bochartus gives of the next difficulty, that if twenty-four thousand legionary soldiers be added of the tribe of Judah to the four hundred and seventy thousand, it comes near to five hundred thousand, (Hieroz. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 38.) But others think there is no need of this; it being usual in Scripture to mention a round sum: either of men or of years, when some were wanting. So that though there were no more than four hundred and seventy thousand, yet they might be said to be five hundred thousand. Or, as they say in Halicoth Olam, the tribe of Benjamin (who were neighbours to Judah) are reckoned here in this book, who were omitted in the Chronicles. (1 Chron. xxi. 6.)

Ver. 10. *And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people.*] When he ordered it, he was possessed with other thoughts; and did not seriously reflect upon what he had done, until God touched his heart with a sense of his guilt after the sin was committed.

And David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in that I have done.] It is made a great doubt by interpreters what this sin was, and wherein the heinousness of it consisted. The common opinion is, that as there was something of vanity and ostentation in him, when he had a mind to know how populous his country was, so it quite made him forget the half shekel that was due upon such occasions, by the appointment of the law, Exod. xxx. 12. And this was no small sin, not to pay God his dues, in such plenty and abundance as they now enjoyed. But if that was the meaning of Moses, it cannot well be thought that David was either ignorant, or unmindful of it, having made the law his study day and night. Bertram therefore thinks his fault was, that he numbered those who were under twenty years old, contrary to the order in the law, Exod. xxx. 14. xxxviii. 26, &c. but I see no foundation for this; but rather the quite contrary is asserted in the book of the Chronicles. Therefore Dr. Lightfoot fancies David had a covetous project in his mind, to lay a capitation tax (as we now speak) upon every poll throughout the kingdom. But such conjectures being without ground, some reject all other interpretations, and rely upon this; that the numbering of the people was a thing contrary to the fundamental promise made by God to Abraham, that his seed should increase so, as to be like the stars for multitude: which is given as a reason why the number of the people was not taken exactly, 1 Chron. xxvii. 23. and seems to imply, that there was a general notion received among the Jews, that since God promised to increase them beyond number, none ought to go about to take the number of them, for this might seem to savour of infidelity, and mistrust of God's promise. But those words on which this reason relies (in 1 Chron. xxvii. 23.) only give a reason why David did not number all from twenty years old, and under: which if he had gone about to do (*i. e.* reckon the whole nation), it might have seemed to cross the promise: but since it was only those who were above twenty years old whom he ordered to be numbered, I cannot look upon it as a contempt or mistrust of God's word: but, after all, I think we must content ourselves with what Ralbag says (whom Abarbinel after the examination of other opinions follows), that David being the anointed of the Lord, and the sweet singer of Israel, made flesh his arm, and confided in the number of his people: in which such a king as he should not have placed his confidence, but in the Lord his God; whom none can resist, and can save by few, as well as by many. Unto which Abarbinel adds, that the greatness of a sin is not always to be measured by the sin itself, but by the quality and dignity of him that committeth it: as Moses and Aaron were punished for a small sin, which excluded them from the good land: which was not proportionable to the sin, but to the condition of the offenders, who should have given a better example to the people. Thus he.

And now, I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.] Since he condemned himself, and begged pardon, he hoped he might escape the punishment which he deserved. But he was deceived; because not only he, but his people, had offended, and upon other accounts deserved to be punished.

Ver. 11. *For when David was up in the morning, the word of the Lord came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying.*] The words seem to import that David was not touched in conscience, till Gad came and told him how angry God was with him. He is called David's *seer*, because he was his domestic prophet, (who is the same with a *seer*, 1 Sam. ix. 9.) with whom he was wont to advise in all difficult cases, (1 Sam. xxii. 5.) and kept a record of his memorable acts, (1 Chron. xxix. 29.)

Ver. 12. *Go and say unto David, Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three things; choose one of them, that I may do it unto thee.*] Now it had been a proper time, as Abarbinel observes, for David to have fallen down before God, and deprecated his displeasure in those words, (ver. 10.) "I have sinned greatly in what I have done," &c. But he saw the sentence was passed upon him absolutely; and therefore he submits unto it.

Ver. 13. *So Gad came and told him.*] That he was sent by God with a message to him.

And said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land?] In the book of the Chronicles only *three* years of famine are propounded; which is far more likely than *seven:* for it better agrees with the three months' flight before his enemies, and the three days' pestilence. And therefore, not only Grotius, but Bochartus also here read *three years*, following the LXX. who have ἔτη τρία, whom most of the ancients follow, as Bochartus observes in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 38. Yet Josephus here hath *seven* years: and many think that Gad at first propounded seven years: but afterward, at David's prayer, shortened them to three. Other solutions are in every interpreter, who adhere to this reading of *seven* years. (See Buxtorf's Vindic. Verit. Hebr. par. ii. cap. 2. and cap. 8. p. 523.)

Or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy

land?] These were the three sore judgments wherewith God commonly afflicted them for their sins; who now was so gracious, as to give him his choice which of them he would suffer: for one of them was peremptorily resolved.

Now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.] There seems to be no great need to take time to consider which of these to choose; the last being the shortest, and an immediate stroke from the hand of God, who is full of tender mercy and compassion. But in this Gad expresses the clemency of God, who would not hastily inflict any punishment upon him.

Ver. 14. *And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait; let us now fall into the hand of the Lord (for his mercies are great), and let me not fall into the hand of man.*] He seems to leave it to God to send either famine or pestilence (for both come from God's hand), and desires only that men might not be the instruments of his punishment. For as they are wont to be cruel, so they make no distinction between good and bad, but destroy all alike. This is admirably expressed by the son of Sirach, in Ecclus. ii. 17, 18. *They that fear the Lord will prepare their heart, and humble their souls in his sight, saying, We will fall into the hands of the Lord, and not into the hands of men; for as his majesty is, so is his mercy.*

Ver. 15. *So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel.*] The symptoms of which were very diverse, if we may believe Josephus. For some, he saith, died suddenly in intolerable pain: others wasted away, and left nothing to be buried but skin and bones, their bodies being consumed by the disease: others were suddenly choked, or struck blind, &c.

From the morning.] For that time when Gad delivered the message, and David made his choice; which was in the morning, as we read before, (ver. 11.)

Even to the time appointed.] There are those who by *the time appointed* understand to the end of three days, mentioned by Gad, as the time appointed by the Lord for the continuance of this plague. But this is quite contrary to what follows, that God repented him of the evil; and commanded the angel that smote the people to stay his hand. Therefore the LXX. translate it better, ἕως ὥρας ἀρίστου, *until dinner-time:* and so Procopius Gazæus. Certain it is, that *moed* signifies some part of that day when the plague began: and that must be either noon, or the evening. But, as Bochartus hath observed, the morning and evening are the parts of the day most opposite in Scripture (of which he gives many instances), and therefore so he here understands it, that it continued from morning to the evening. For *moed* properly signifies an assembly: and therefore the *time moed* he thinks is the time when the people met for evening prayer; about the ninth hour of the day. Which prayer, before the building of the temple, was made at the tabernacle, or in their synagogues. And therefore the tabernacle is frequently called *ohel moed:* and the synagogues are called in Psal. lxxiv. 18. *Moade El.* So that he makes account this pestilence lasted no more than nine hours: which was the eighth part of three days.

And there died of the people, from Dan to Beer-sheba, seventy thousand men.] If it had raged three days, and in every nine hours had killed so many, above the third part of those who had been numbered would have died by this plague. But, as Kimchi here observes, by the great mercy of God, the time was contracted. It is a frivolous observation of some of the Jews, that because it is not said seventy thousand *anashim*, but only *isch*, which commonly signifies a single person, that Abishai died of this plague, who was worth seventy thousand of the common people. Nor doth the observation of Grotius seem to be altogether true; who, in his second book, (de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 21. sect. 17.) saith, "Hæc pœna erat non populi, sed Davidis;" *This was the punishment, not of the people, but of David:* quoting that saying of an ancient Christian writer (Quæst. ad Orthodoxos), Πικροτάτη τιμωρία τῶν ἡμαρτηκότων βασιλέων, ἡ τιμωρία τοῦ λαοῦ, *The bitterest punishment of delinquent kings, is that which is inflicted upon their people.* But it is certain the people here had also offended: for it is said in the very beginning of this chapter, that God was angry with Israel. And as for what David saith, (ver. 17.) *These sheep, what have they done?* it is spoken out of his great affection to them; whose offences he did not know so well as his own: and therefore desired they might be spared, and he punished.

Ver. 16. *And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented him of the evil; and said unto the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough; stay now thine hand.*] God did not change his mind, but only revoked that which he had decreed upon a certain condition; which was, that three days' pestilence should come upon the country, unless David and the people repented; which he seeing they did, (1 Chron. xxi. 16.) he shortened the time, and would not let the angel proceed above an eighth part of it.

Ver. 17. *And David spake unto the Lord, when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done?*] Like a good man, he reflected only on his own sin, in numbering the people; but did not think of theirs in deposing him lately, and setting up Absalom (which Theodoret, Procopius Gazæus, and others, think was the crime for which they were punished), which he had forgiven, but God thought fit to punish; who by their silence may be thought to have approved the fact of David. And besides, the loss of so many people was a punishment of the king himself, as was before observed.

Let thy hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.] That is, against his kindred, who did not dissuade him from the vanity of numbering the people, but perhaps encouraged him in it.

Ver. 18. *And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him.*] By the express command of the Lord, (1 Chron. xxi. 18, 19.)

Go up, rear an altar unto the Lord in the thrashing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.] This thrashing-floor was on the Mount Moriah; the place where Abraham offered up his son, and where the temple was built by Solomon. (See 2 Chron. iii. 1.) Of which Eupolemus, a heathen writer, takes notice, saying, that God shewed David by an angel the place where the temple should be built. (See Eusebius's Præpar. Evang. lib. ix. cap. 30.) The Jews will have it, that it was here Abel and Cain offered their sacrifices; (see Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. p. 199. 431.) nay, that it was the place where Adam was created; according to a saying of their doctors, "Adam was created out of the place of his expiation." (See G. Vorstius upon Pirke Eliezer, p. 163.)

Ver. 19. *And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the Lord commanded.*] That is, he went the next moment after he received the command.

Ver. 20. *And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on towards him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground.*] As the manner was, and still is, in the eastern countries.

Ver. 21. *And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come up unto thy servant?*] It may be he thought it too great an honour; and therefore desired to know the meaning of it.

And David said, To buy the thrashing-floor of thee, to build an altar unto the Lord, that the plague may be stayed from the people.] By offering a sacrifice to appease his anger; as he himself had ordered, (1 Chron. xxi. 26, 27.)

Ver. 22. *And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, here be oxen for burnt-sacrifices, and thrashing-instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood.*] For when the angel appeared there, he was thrashing wheat, which he offered likewise to David for a meat-offering, (1 Chron. xxi. 20. 23.) And the *instruments of the oxen* were their yokes, and such as they drew after them to press forth the corn.

Ver. 23. *All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king.*] The words in the Hebrew are, *these things gave Araunah the king unto the king.* From whence some infer, that before the taking of Jerusalem he was the king of the Jebusites; or, a man of the greatest authority among them, like a king; or was descended from the blood royal of the Jebusites, as Dr. Lightfoot expresses it. But neither the Greek, nor the Syriac, nor the Arabic copies have the word *king:* nor was it in many of the Vulgar till Sixtus's correction; nor in the Chaldee paraphrast in the time of Kimchi, who cites it thus; *Araunah gave to the king what the king asked of him.* And, as Bochartus observes, Araunah (or Ornan) being mentioned fourteen times in the holy books, it is a wonder he should not be styled a king, but only here. (Hieroz. par. i. lib. i. cap. 38.) But it is likely he was a very rich man, as Josephus reports: whom the king spared when he took the fort of Zion; either because he was a lover of the Israelites, or had done some good office unto David.

And Araunah said unto the king, The Lord thy God accept thee.] He thought himself abundantly satisfied, if God pleased to grant David's request; which he beseeched him to do; for no doubt he was a proselyte, earnestly desiring the happiness of the nation, into which he was incorporated.

Ver. 24. *And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord my God of that which cost me nothing.*] Whence is that of Solomon, (Prov. iii. 9.) "Honour the Lord with thy substance;" which the Greek thus translates, Τίμα τὸν Κύριον ἀπὸ τῶν δικαίων πόνων. *Honour the Lord out of thy honest labours;* that is, out of that which thou hast acquired by thy honest industry.

So David bought the thrashing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.] In the Chronicles we read, according to our translation, that he gave him *six hundred shekels of gold by weight,* which Bochartus thus reconciles; that in one place he speaks of shekels of gold, and in the other of shekels of silver. Whose proportion is twelvefold; so that fifty shekels of gold are in value as much as six hundred shekels of silver. He quotes a place out of Plato in his Hipparchus, which proves that gold and silver held this proportion. And then he thus translates this place in Samuel, He bought the floor and the oxen *beceseph,* for money; *viz.* for *fifty golden shekels.* So the word *ceseph* often signifies *money* in general, of whatsoever metal it be; as appears from this very history, wherein David tells Ornan that he will buy the field of him, *beceseph malo,* which we translate, *at its full price,* 1 Chron. xxi. 24. And then it follows, he gave Ornan *shikle zahav, shekels of gold, mishkall shesh meoth, in value six hundred vulgar, or silver, shekels.* See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 38. where the word *mishkall* he acknowledges commonly signifies *weight;* yet here denotes *value:* as in 2 Sam. xii. 30. The design of Ezra being to shew, that the fifty shekels he gave for the floor and oxen were not silver (which were most common), but shekels of gold; every one of which was worth twelve of silver: so that those fifty shekels were equivalent to six hundred silver ones.

But there is a shorter way of solving this difficulty, by supposing, that for the thrashing-floor and the oxen he gave only fifty shekels of silver: but all the ground about it (out of which the courts of God's house were afterward made) cost him six hundred shekels of gold.

Ver. 25. *And David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings.*] Burnt-offerings were prayers to God that he would remove this plague: and peace-offerings were acknowledgments of God's goodness, who had already given David hopes of this mercy.

So the Lord was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.] As plainly appeared by God's sending fire down from heaven to consume the sacrifices: and the angel also, who appeared with a flaming sword over Jerusalem, being commanded to put it up into his sheath, (1 Chron. xxi. 26, 27.) From hence David concluded God would be more placable in this place than any other; and therefore took counsel to build the temple here.

THE

FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THESE two following books contain the history of the kings of Israel and Judah, from the beginning of Solomon's reign down to the captivity of Babylon: for the space of near six hundred years; taking into the account the history of the two foregoing books. It is highly probable that they were composed by Ezra, who extracted them out of the public records: which were kept of what passed in that nation; as we read of the book of the acts of Solomon, in this very book, xi. 41.: and frequently of the books of the kings of Israel, and of the kings of Judah; and of the book of Jehu, in which was written the acts of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 34. And Isaiah, we read, wrote the acts of Uzziah, first and last, 2 Chron. xxvi. 22.: out of which, and such-like books, Ezra composed this brief history. In which there are several things that heathens themselves have taken notice of, as Huetius observes in his Demonstratio Evangelica, propos. iv. where he answers the trifling objections which some have made against the antiquity of these books.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW David was old and stricken in years.*] For he was seventy years old, as we learn from 2 Sam. v. 4, 5.

And they covered him with clothes, but he got no heat.] His blood was so chilled, that he could not be warm in his bed, much less when he was up. Dr. Lightfoot thinks he was struck with a dead palsy.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore his servants.*] His physicians, it is most likely, that attended him.

Said unto him, Let there be sought for my lord the king.] Those are the words of the prime physician, in the name of the rest.

A young virgin; and let her stand before the king.] Or, minister unto him in the day-time: for the very sight of a beautiful virgin very much excites the natural spirits.

And let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy bosom.] Become his wife, and in the night lie in the same bed close to him.

That my lord the king may get heat.] For nothing more effectually procures heat and healthful concoction than the application of a young body, even of a puppy, to the stomach all night: as Galen observes, in his fifth book of the Power of simple Medicines. For συμφυλότερα, καὶ οἰκειότερα πολὺ, *this warmth is nearer of kin to us, and more proper, than any other that can be invented:* as Victorinus Strigelius hath taken notice.

Ver. 3. *So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king.*] She being young, sprightly, and willing to be taken into his bed: for his other wives were grown too old to put any life into him.

Ver. 4. *And the damsel was very fair.*] Of an amiable countenance.

And cherished the king, and ministered to him; but the king knew her not.] Did not enjoy her as his wife; but she remained still a virgin: being his bedfellow only to keep him warm.

Ver. 5. *Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king.*] Taking advantage of his father's age and weakness (who he thought could not oppose it), he resolved to take possession of the kingdom: but the crown, as the Jews fancy, would not fit him.

And he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.] Just as Absalom had done, when he began to conspire against his father, 2 Sam. xv. 1.

Ver. 6. *And his father had not displeased him at any time, in saying, Why hast thou done so?*] This was one of David's great faults, extraordinary indulgence unto his children: of whom he was so fond, that he seems to have overlooked their errors, and never to have chidden them for any thing they did amiss. And now in his old age this wickedness was more apparent; he growing naturally more remiss, careless, and sluggish.

And he also was a very goodly man.] And so the more likely to draw the people after him. For a noble aspect was always a qualification for the royal authority; as appears by the history of Saul, David, and Absalom.

And his mother bare him after Absalom.] He pretended to the crown, because Absalom being dead, he was next to him in order of birth. (See 2 Sam. iii. 3, 4.)

Ver. 7. *And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest.*] Whom, it is likely, he knew to be two discontented persons: the former upon the account of David's putting Amasa in his place; and the other because he saw Zadok in greater favour than himself.

And they, following Adonijah, helped him.] Furthered him in his design, as a means to secure themselves with the next heir.

Ver. 8. *But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which belonged unto David, were not with Adonijah.*] The three first of these are well known to have been great favourites of David: and therefore Adonijah knew would not be for his turn. The two next, it is likely, were persons of note, who were perfectly in David's interest: and Shimei possibly may be the person whom Solomon preferred to a great office, (iv. 18.) though Abarbinel thinks he was Shimei who cursed David. (See upon the next chapter, ver. 8.) The *mighty men* here mentioned are those named in 2 Sam. xxiii. and his guards, who had served under David so long, and done such mighty acts in his reign, and under his conduct, that Adonijah had no hope of drawing them in to his party.

Ver. 9. *And Adonijah slew sheep, and oxen, and fat cattle.*] Of the Hebrew word *meri*, which we translate *fat cattle*, see upon 2 Sam. vi. 13.

By the stone of Zoheleth which is by En-rogel.] The Hebrew word *Zohel* signifies a *slow motion*, as Bochart observes in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. i. cap. 9. from whence this stone had its name: the fullers here pressing out the water, which dropped from the clothes that they had washed in this well, called *Rogel*. Josephus saith the king's gardens lay near this well: which, out of him, is also affirmed by Procopius Gazæus.

And called all his brethren the king's sons.] Whose names are mentioned in 2 Sam. iii. 4, 5. and more largely in 1 Chron. iii. 4, 5, &c.

And all the men of Judah the king's servants.] Except those beforementioned, ver. 8. and again excepted, ver. 10. But all the rest of the family of David, and the principal persons of the tribe of Judah, with the high-priest, and the captain of the host, being present, there seemed to be nothing wanting to the making of him king, but only his anointing. For this seems to have been a federal feast; wherein they sware allegiance to Adonijah.

Ver. 10. *But Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.*] It was a feast, I suppose, upon a great sacrifice: unto which none came but they who were invited.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign.*] It seems they were so bold as to proclaim him king.

And David our lord knoweth it not?] For it was secretly contrived between him and Joab, and the rest: without the privity of David or Bath-sheba.

Ver. 12. *Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thy own life, and the life of thy son Solomon.*] Whom he knew they would endeavour to cut off: as the person designed by David to be his successor.

Ver. 13. *Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, sware unto thy handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? Why then doth Adonijah reign?*] We do not read any where else of this oath; but no doubt he had solemnly sworn to her, that he would make her son his successor: God himself having designed him to that honour; as appears from 2 Sam. vii. 12. where God promises by Nathan to set upon his throne a son that should proceed from him: which plainly signified, none of his sons already born was to be the person. But more plainly, 1 Chron. xxii. 8—10, &c. he declares that God told him Solomon should reign after him, and build him a house, and thereupon he commanded all the princes of Israel to be assistant to him, ver. 17. and see xxviii. 5, 6. All this, I doubt not, was known to Adonijah; which made his crime the greater, in setting himself against the decree of Heaven: and he himself confesses as much in the next chapter, ver. 15.

Ver. 14. *Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words.*] Which he knew would quicken the king, to give speedy orders about this matter.

Ver. 15. *And Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the chamber.*] Being the king's wife, she had the privilege to come into his bedchamber, without asking leave, as Kimchi observes. Whereas Nathan did not appear before the king till they told him he was there to wait upon him, (ver. 23.)

And the king was very old.] And could not discern who it was that entered into the chamber.

And Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king.] And informed him, it is likely, that Bath-sheba was come into the room to speak with him.

Ver. 16. *And Bath-sheba bowed, and did obeisance to the king.*] First bowed her head, and then her body: as the manner was even for their wives, as well as other persons.

And the king said, What wouldest thou?] She had signified, I suppose, to Abishag, that she had some petition to make to him.

Ver. 17. *And she said unto him, My lord, thou swarest by the Lord thy God unto thy handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne.*] David sware this, as Abarbinel thinks, when Absalom his eldest son rebelled against him. And the rather, because Nathan had told him (as I observed before), a child should proceed from him that should sit upon his throne: who therefore was then unborn. But all the rest, except Solomon, were born before this promise; and therefore he concluded were none of them designed by God to be his successors.

Ver. 18. *And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knowest it not.*] This she saith, that she might not seem to accuse David of breaking his oath: and that she might aggravate the crime of Adonijah, in presuming to usurp the throne while his father was alive, and without his knowledge.

Ver. 19. *And he hath slain oxen, and fat cattle, and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called.*] She very submissively calls herself his handmaid, and her son his servant: the more to win upon his affection unto those that humbly depended upon his pleasure.

Ver. 20. *And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit upon the throne of my lord the king after thee.*] This she said all Israel expected from the king, that she might free him from all fear of such a rebellion as Absalom raised; the people not being joined to Adonijah, but continuing in suspense, till the king had declared his mind about his successor. Thus Abarbinel. And this power of naming a successor continued for some time after him, as appears by the story of his grandson Rehoboam: who, though no great man, yet took upon him this authority of nominating a successor, and made of his youngest sons, *viz.* Abijah, king after him. (See 2 Chron. xi. 20. 22, &c.) But this custom did not last long; not being in use among their neighbours: as the story of the Moabites shews, 2 Kings iii. 27. Yet it was the manner of excellent princes among the Romans to appoint their successor, whom the people gladly received. So Augustus did: and M. Aurelius commends Nerva for so doing.

Ver. 21. *Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son So-*

lomon shall be accounted offenders.] Guilty of death for aiming at the kingdom.

Ver. 22. *And, lo, while she talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in.*] To confirm what she had said, according to his promise, (ver. 14.)

Ver. 23. *And they told the king, saying, Behold Nathan the prophet.*] Whereupon Bath-sheba, it is likely, withdrew, as if she supposed he had some private message to deliver unto David.

And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground.] The prophets themselves, as well as other men, gave the profoundest reverence to the king (as Maimonides observes), that they might teach all his subjects their duty. Nor was the high-priest excepted. (See Schickard de Jure Regni, cap. 4. Theor. 13.) The Hebrew word is used for *religious* worship, in Psal. xlv. 12. xcv. 6. but very often only for *political,* and that very anciently, in Gen. xxiii. 7. Ruth ii. 10. 2 Sam. xvi. 14. and many other places.

Ver. 24. *And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?*] He knew very well he had given no such order; but he said this to awaken the king, to consider how presumptuous Adonijah was.

Ver. 25. *For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen, and fat cattle, and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captain of the host, and Abiathar the priest: and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, God save king Adonijah!*] By this time Nathan had received perfect intelligence, what was the design of that great feast; and they had not only consulted to raise Adonijah to the throne, but actually proclaimed him king. Which was more than Bath-sheba had told him.

Ver. 26. *But me, even me thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called.*] For he knew they were all faithful to king David; and would follow his directions.

Ver. 27. *Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not shewed it unto thy servant, who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?*] In a matter of this importance, he could not believe the king would act without his advice: whom he was wont to consult on other occasions; and who had acquainted him with the mind of God concerning Solomon.

Ver. 28. *And king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba.*] Who was withdrawn, as I said, into another room, upon the coming in of Nathan: or stood at a distance in the room where they were.

And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king.] To understand his pleasure.

Ver. 29. *And the king sware, and said, As the Lord liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress.*] Unto whom he was so much indebted, that it could not be thought he would take his name in vain: but she might trust him now that he so solemnly sware again to her.

Ver. 30. *Even as I sware unto thee by the Lord God of Israel, saying, Assuredly thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day.*] He had not forgotten his former oath, which he now renews; and resolves immediately to put it in execution.

Ver. 31. *Then Bath-sheba bowed her face to the earth, and did reverence to the king.*] Most humbly acknowledged his goodness; by a lower reverence than she made before, (ver. 16.)

And said, Let my lord the king live for ever.] There could be no higher expression of love and thankfulness, than to desire never to see Solomon on the throne, if it were possible for David always to enjoy it.

Ver. 32. *And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king.*] They were such trusty and resolute persons, that he knew would not fear to execute his commands.

Ver. 33. *And the king said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord.*] His constant guards, the Cherethites and Pelethites. (See ver. 38.)

And cause Solomon my son to ride upon my own mule.] The rest of David's sons were wont to ride upon mules, when they went abroad, (2 Sam. xiii. 29.) And Absalom rode upon a mule, when he was hanged in the oak, (xviii. 9.) But David had a mule peculiarly reserved for himself alone; on which Solomon being set, it was the beginning of his royal authority: for no private person whatsoever, as Abarbinel observes, might ride upon the king's mule. He also further notes, that David ordered him to ride upon a mule, and not upon a horse, because a horse is prepared for battle, (Prov. xxi. 31.) but a mule is a quiet creature: signifying the peace, tranquillity, and security, which they enjoyed in Solomon's reign. But the first is the more pertinent observation: for it was capital (as Maimonides observes) to ride upon the king's horse or mule; or sit in his throne; or use his sceptre, &c. without the king's order. As, on the contrary, to have the honour to ride upon his horse, by his order, was accounted the highest dignity among the Persians, as appears by the story of Mordecai in the sixth chapter of Esther.

And bring him down to Gihon.] A fountain on the west side of Jerusalem, which divided itself into two streams, as some say, and made two pools: that of Siloam, and that of Solomon, mentioned by Josephus, (lib. vi. de Bello Judaico, cap. 38.) But Kimchi, and Abarbinel also, take them only for different names for one and the same rivulet; which was called Gihon, and also Siloam, as the Targum hath it. Hither they were ordered to bring down Solomon; for it is a maxim among the Jews, that they do not anoint a king, but near a fountain: though they have no authority for it, that I know of, but from this chapter: where we read of Adonijah's going to En-rogel, (ver. 9.) and Solomon's being brought to Gihon; which was a fountain or brook near Jerusalem: for thereabout a great number of people used always to be; whom they would have to observe it. The Jews give another reason for it, in the Talmud; that it might be a signification and good omen of the perpetuity of the kingdom: which should continue like a fountain, which runs perpetually. (See Schickard, in his Jus Regium, cap. 1. Theor. 4.) But from what is said here of Solomon, we cannot safely make a general conclusion, that all kings were anointed at fountains. For Saul the first king was not; and in the history of David, who was anointed three times, there is no mention of it.

Ver. 34. *And let Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, anoint him there king over Israel.*] One of them poured out the oil, and the other anointed him, as the forenamed

Schickard thinks it probable. Or, as others will have it, Zadok (as vicar of the high-priest, who in his absence performed all his offices) did both: and Nathan the prophet was witness of the Divine revelation and promise, that Solomon should succeed in the kingdom. For Abarbinel is of opinion, that no king was anointed but by the authority of a prophet: which is hard to be proved out of Scripture, as Carpzovius observes. (See ver. 39.)

And blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon!] Proclaim him to be the king of Israel. The history of Absalom shews that he was proclaimed king by the sound of the trumpet, (2 Sam. xv. 10.) And when God proclaimed his law, and himself the king of Israel, the sound of the trumpet preceded with great vehemence, (Exod. xix. 16.) And hence many places in the Psalms are explained, which say, God went up with the sound of a trumpet, when, after the manner of kings, he triumphed over his enemies, (xlvii. 5. xcviii. 6.)

Ver. 35. *Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne.*] Attend upon him to Jerusalem, and give him actual possession of the throne.

For he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.] To have the same authority over all the people that David had.

Ver. 36. *And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, Amen.*] Gave his consent in the name of all the rest: and I suppose sware allegiance to him.

The Lord God of my lord the king say so too.] They all said the same, ver. 47. Nothing doubting God would establish his authority.

Ver. 37. *As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David.*] He knew David loved his children so passionately, and desired their happiness so much, that he was assured he should not offend him with this wish. In the Targum it is, *As the Word of the Lord hath helped my lord the king*, &c.

Ver. 38. *So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites.*] This (and in ver. 43.) is the last time that the Cherethites and Pelethites (whom Procopius Gazæus here calls *funditores et sagittarios, slingers and archers*) are mentioned in the holy Scriptures: for we read no more of them after the death of David. Which makes it probable, that in their room, David himself, in the conclusion of his reign, had appointed those troops which we read of in 1 Chron. xxvii. to attend upon him every month under their several commanders: which is the conjecture of Corn. Bonaventura Bertram, de Republ. Judaica, cap. 10. p. 133. And these are they he thinks who guarded Joash, (2 Kings xi. 4, &c.) called *Ceri*, or *Cerim*, i. e. *Ariates* (not much different from *Crethi*) and *Ratzim*, which he translates *Cursores*. But I leave this to better judgments.

Went down, and caused Solomon to ride on the king's mule, and brought him to Gihon.] According as king David had ordered, (ver. 34.)

Ver. 39. *And Zadok the priest.*] Here the anointing of him is attributed to the priest alone. And indeed the unctions which are said to be made by a prophet, as Samuel anointed Saul and David, were private, but not public: which was always done by the priest, as Fortunatus Scacchus hath endeavoured to shew in his third Myrothecium, cap. 49, 50. It must be confessed, that the prophet anointed Saul in Gilgal when he was publicly declared king: but then they offered sacrifice, which could not be without the priest: and the Israelites made a covenant with David when they anointed him in Hebron, which must be by feasting upon a sacrifice offered by the priest. Yet a great many of the Jews are confident that no man, no, not the high-priest, could anoint a king, but only a prophet, as Samuel did David, and Nathan (Abarbinel here affirms) did Solomon, and Ahijah did Jeroboam.

Took a horn of oil.] A vessel of oil, as the Arabic translates it: which vessel was made of an ox's horn, as Bochartus observes, lib. ii. Hierozoicon, cap. 37. par. i. They commonly made cups of such horns; whence the Greek word κεράσαι, *to mingle wine with water.* (See Fortunatus Scacchus, Myrothec. i. cap. 48.)

Out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon.] This made his unction more solemn, and his person more sacred, because anointed with holy oil. Though the Jews are generally of opinion, that it was not necessary to anoint their kings with this holy oil made by Moses. And, indeed, they all agree there was no necessity of anointing them at all (the son being sufficiently anointed by the unction of his father), unless there arose a controversy about the succession of the crown. Thus Solomon was anointed because of the function of Adonijah, Joash because of Athaliah, and Jehu because of Joram. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Success. in Pontif. cap. 9. and Schickard's Jus Regium, cap. 1. Theor. 4.) Fortunatus Scacchus also hath spent a whole chapter, of a good length, to shew that a private unction might be made with any oil: but a public, by oil taken from the tabernacle. Whence it is said of David, *with my holy oil have I anointed thee.* Yet he thinks that this oil, preserved in the tabernacle for that purpose, was not the same with the oil made by Moses, wherewith the high-priest alone was anointed. This he confirms by no contemptible arguments, in his Myrothecium iii. Sacror. Elæochrysm. cap. 48.

And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon!] After the unction followed the acclamation of the people. (See ver. 34.)

Ver. 40. *And all the people came up after him.*] From Gihon unto Jerusalem.

And the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy.] To see a king settled by David's appointment: which they hoped might prevent all contests about the succession.

So that the earth rent with the sound of them.] An hyperbolical expression, to signify the very loud noise the people made with their shouts and their pipes: which were instruments that had their name among the Hebrews from the many holes that were in them: as the illustrious Spanhemius observes upon Callimachus's hymn ad Dianam, ver. 244. where he notes great variety of them.

Ver. 41. *And Adonijah, and all the guests that were with him, heard it as they had made an end of eating.*] But, perhaps, were not yet risen from the table. (See ver. 49.)

And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, Wherefore is this noise of the city being in an uproar?] By this time Solomon was got into Jerusalem; from whence they could hear the shouting, and the sound of the trumpet and music. Which Josephus saith was accompanied with a great feast: which is agreeable to 1 Chron. xxix. 21, 22.

Joab was most concerned to inquire what the matter was; for if the city was in an uproar, as he seems to suspect, it was his business, as captain of the host, to suppress it.

Ver. 42. *And while he yet spake, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came.*] He had been employed by David to bring him intelligence, (2 Sam. xv. 27.) and it is likely was now left in Jerusalem by his father's order, to bring him news of what passed there.

And Adonijah said unto him, Come in; for thou art a valiant man, and bringest good tidings.] Or rather, *thou art a virtuous man:* for so the word we here translate *valiant* is rendered in Prov. xii. 4. And so the Targum in this place, *thou art a man that fearest to sin:* and being a good man, he hoped brought good tidings, like himself.

Ver. 43. *And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king.*] He tells him (according to his character) he would not flatter him, but tell him the plain truth: that David had not only declared Solomon should succeed him in the throne, but actually made him king: and related the whole history of his proceedings in the following words.

Ver. 44. *And the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride on the king's mule.*

Ver. 45. *And Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, have anointed him king in Gihon.*] By authority from God, which Nathan, I suppose, pronounced; and then Zadok anointed him.

And they are gone up from thence rejoicing, so that the earth rang again. This is the noise that ye have heard.

Ver. 46. *And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom.*] He was in actual possession of the kingdom: though his father was alive. For to sit upon the throne was proper to the king: and none else, on pain of death, might be placed there. So Valerius Maximus speaks of the Persians, lib. v. cap. 16.

Ver. 47. *And moreover, the king's servants came to bless king David, and said, God make the name of Solomon greater than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne.*] See ver. 37.

And the king bowed himself upon the bed.] Worshipped God, and prayed it might be so.

Ver. 48. *And also thus said the king, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which hath given one to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it.*] He gave a solemn thanks to God for the happiness of seeing Solomon begin his reign with such affection of his people, as they expressed by their joy at his inauguration. Jonathan, it appears by this, had been a diligent observer of every thing that had been done in this matter: for he omits nothing, but gives them a full and faithful account.

Ver. 49. *And all the guests that were with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way.*] They rose from table where they were sitting, and departed every man to his own home in great haste, that it might not be known they had been with Adonijah; who wanted those marks of royalty which were bestowed on Solomon: for he neither rode on the king's mule, nor was he anointed, nor sat on the throne of the kingdom: nor do we read of any forces that he had with him to maintain his title. Yet Fortunatus Scacchus thinks Adonijah wanted none of the marks of royalty, (insomuch that Bath-sheba told David he reigned, ver. 18.) but this one alone. Which defect threw down all the regal majesty of Adonijah, scattered all his forces, and translated the possession of the kingdom to Solomon, as soon as he was consecrated by this holy unction, (lib. iii. Myrothec. cap. 47. p. 571.)

Ver. 50. *And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold of the horns of the altar.*] He thought he had committed a crime worthy of death, by usurping the kingdom without his father's consent, and against the known design of God: and therefore he fled to the altar for safety and protection. It being a privileged place, not by the appointment of the law, but by the custom of all nations. It is a question to what altar he fled; whether to that at the tabernacle in Gibeon, or to that newly built in the thrashing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. Some think to this last, which was nearest; and it is expressly said of Joab in the next chapter, (ver. 29.) that he fled to the tabernacle of the Lord; which is not said here.

Ver. 51. *And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, Let Solomon swear to me today, that he will not slay his servant with the sword.*] He offered to surrender himself, and make no opposition, if he might but be secured of his life: which he humbly begged by taking sanctuary at the altar. These words, *to-day,* signify that he desired him from henceforth he would not punish him for what was past.

Ver. 52. *And Solomon said.*] He did not swear unto him, as he desired, but only declared.

If he will shew himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of him fall to the earth.] He gave him a full pardon for what was past; on condition he behaved himself as became a good subject for the time to come.

But if wickedness be found in him, he shall die.] If he did any thing (as Abarbinel glosses) which shewed that he had still a rebellious mind, this pardon should signify nothing, because he had broken the condition of it.

Ver. 53. *So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon.*] He owned him for his sovereign.

And Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house.] There to lead a private life, and not go abroad with such an equipage as he had done, (ver. 5.)

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *NOW the days of David drew nigh that he should die.*] As he himself was sensible.

And he charged Solomon his son, saying.] After the example of Abraham, the father of the faithful, (Gen. xviii. 19.)

Ver. 2. *I go the way of all the earth.*] And so was unable to govern any longer.

Be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man.] In wisdom and in courage.

Ver. 3. *And keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies.*] Under these four words are comprehended all the laws of Moses: *statutes* being such constitutions as had not their foundation in reason, but in the will and pleasure of God: as not to sow two

seeds of different kinds together, &c. (See Drusius and Grotius upon Numb. xix. 2. and Masius upon Josh. xxiv. 25.) *Commandments* were moral duties, which had a manifest reason; as, not to steal, &c. *Judgments* were the laws belonging to civil government, in things between one man and another: such as are mentioned Exod. xxi. and the following chapters. And *testimonies* were such laws as preserved the remembrance of some great things; and testified to them the loving-kindness of the Lord; as, the sabbath, the passover, and all the rest of the feasts.

As it is written in the law of Moses.] Which their kings were bound not only to read, but to write a copy of it with their own hands, for their own use: that they might learn to fear the Lord, &c. (Deut. xvii. 18, 19.)

That thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself.] Or, *that thou mayest do wisely*, &c. as it is in the margin. For there is no policy like true religion and piety.

Ver. 4. *That the Lord may confirm his word, which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their ways, to walk before me in truth with all their heart, and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man upon the throne of Israel.*] To engage him to keep the charge of the Lord, he represents unto him the gracious promise which God had made him, to perpetuate the kingdom in his family without interruption, (2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. Psal. cxxxii. 12.) provided his children sincerely and heartily served God, in faithful obedience to his commands.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did unto me.*] After he had given him this general charge, he proceeded to direct him to do some particular pieces of justice and kindness. And, first of all, bids him remember how Joab had used him: how insolently, for instance, he had treated him in his great affliction, and threatened a new rebellion, (2 Sam. xix. 7.) and lately had set up Adonijah to reign, while he was yet alive. Or this may refer to what follows.

And what he did to the two captains of the host of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew.] For this was a great dishonour to David, who had given Abner safe conduct; and passed his word to Amasa that he should be commander-in-chief of all his forces: and therefore he might say *it was done to himself.* But it is an idle conceit of the Jews, in Jalkut, and in other books, which refer these words, *what he did to me*, unto his shewing the letter which David wrote him concerning Uriah, unto the great commanders in the army, (2 Sam. xi. 15.) and thereby exposed the king as a murderer of one of his best subjects. D. Kimchi mentions this upon this place.

And shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet.] This was a high aggravation of his crime, that he did not only shed that blood in peace (speaking to them in a friendly manner when he shed it), but after he had done he was not at all ashamed of it, but appeared with their blood upon his belt, and in his shoes: as if he thought it a glory to him, that he had slain them in a battle with them.

Ver. 6. *Do thou therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.*] It was not safe to give any countenance to so bold a man as Joab, who was of great authority among the soldiers: in a new kingdom, and a young man being king. Therefore, if there was a fair occasion, and he could do it prudently, he advises Solomon to cut him off. For David had not remitted his former crimes (nor could he by the law), but only deferred the punishment of a man who was very powerful, and very serviceable in his wars. Though Abarbinel is of opinion he was not cut off for those old crimes: but the new one in following Adonijah could not be forgiven; because he had deserved so ill before on other accounts. But some move a doubt how Solomon, being but a youth, could cut off Joab; which David durst not do, when he most flourished. Which will easily be resolved, if it be considered that now it was a time of peace, when Joab was less necessary: and Solomon's reputation grew continually, (ver. 12.) and so he was more respected than Joab; who now declined in his interest, by reason of his age.

Ver. 7. *But shew kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table.*] As Mephibosheth had done: who, it is likely, was now dead, for otherwise he would not have forgotten him. David's gratitude here is very remarkable; which extended itself to all the sons of Barzillai: who only desired him to be kind to Chimham, (2 Sam. xix. 37.)

For so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother.] That is, such kindness they shewed to David, inviting him to Barzillai's house, who sustained him in his great distress, (2 Sam. xix. 32.)

Ver. 8. *And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite.*] These words, *thou hast with thee*, are understood by Abarbinel as if David had said, I see that thou art very familiar with Shimei; whom thou lovest and advisest withal. But, that he might not trust him, he remembers him how bitterly he was cursed by him in his distress: and therefore might do as much by Solomon, if he should fall into the like trouble. And he thinks Solomon, being young, might the more easily be drawn in to hearken to such a crafty man's counsel; because he did not follow Adonijah: for he takes him to be the Shimei mentioned in the foregoing chapter, (ver. 8.) But the plain sense of his having *Shimei with him*, is, that he was in his power, being one of his subjects.

Which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim.] See 2 Sam. xvi. 5—7.

But he came down to me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.] See 2 Sam. xix. 18, 19, &c.

Ver. 9. *Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring down unto the grave with blood.*] His intention was not, as Abarbinel glosses, that he should put him to death for his cursing him: but he admonishes Solomon not to trust him, nor follow his advice; but if (saith he) he do to thee as he did to me, that is, any ways offend thee, do not forgive him as I did. *But bring down his hoar head*, &c. that is, though he be an old man, let not that move thee to clemency towards him; but punish him according to his deserts. And David knew his humour so well, that he did not doubt he would give Solomon occasion to cut him off, and that he was so wise as not to spare him. In short, he did not bid him cut him off for cursing him; but only that he should cautiously observe him: and if he com-

mitted any new offence worthy of death, not pardon him as he had done.

Ver. 10. *So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David.*] The author beforementioned is a little too conceited in his interpretation of the first part of these words: which he will have to signify, not that David died (which is the common import of this phrase), but that his soul rested in the other world, with those just and good men that had been before him. But he observes well enough, that the latter part of this verse informs us he was not buried in the sepulchre of his father, (as Saul was, 2 Sam. xxi. 12, &c.) for that was in Beth-lehem: but, he being a great king, was buried in the chief city of the kingdom; which he himself had founded, and where was the throne of the house of David, (Psal. cxxii. 5.) He tells also, out of Josephus's Antiquities, (see lib. vii. cap. 12.) that there was a great vault over his sepulchre, in which was hid an immense treasure: unto which nobody knew the way, but those that understood the artifice wherewith it was built. Out of this vault they took, in the time of Antiochus, so much money as made him withdraw his army from them. Which Procopius Gazæus also mentions. And Herod took out of it a great many talents for the building of the temple: but in following times there was no man to be found to whom the secret was communicated, how to open it; so that no more money was taken out from that time. What credit is to be given to this I shall not determine, but suspect its truth.

Ver. 11. *And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty-three years reigned he in Jerusalem.*] The very same account is given in 1 Chron. xxix. 27. But in 2 Sam. v. 5. it is said he reigned seven years and six months in Hebron, (and the same is said before, chap. ii. ver. 11.) which, with the three and thirty years in Jerusalem, make forty years and a half. To solve this difficulty (as some of the Jews esteem it) they have devised this conceit: that David had a leprosy six months, to punish him for his adultery with Bath-sheba: all which time he being as a dead man, it is not accounted to his reign. But they did not consider that the six months was part of his reign in Hebron, before he committed that adultery in Jerusalem. Which shews that this is a frivolous fancy; and the true account of this matter is, that the Scripture is wont to reckon only complete years (as Kimchi observes upon that place of Samuel), and therefore omits the six months, being but a part of the year. (See vi. 38.)

Ver. 12. *Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established greatly.*] This Abarbinel thinks may refer to the second solemn investiture of Solomon by all the estates of the realm. Who confirmed that which had been done by a few (though by David's order) at Gihon, (1 Chron. xxix. 22, 23.)

Ver. 13. *And Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, Comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably.*] She had some reason to distrust him: because by her means he had lost the kingdom.

Ver. 14. *He said moreover, I have something to say unto thee. And she said, Say on.*] He did not pretend to come to make her a visit; but about some business.

Ver. 15. *And he said, Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine.*] By right of primogeniture.

And that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign.] The kingdom, he pretends, was his by the inclination of the generality of the people to him, as David's successor.

Howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and become my brother's: for it was his from the Lord.] Lest she should imagine he meant any harm, or was inwardly disgusted at his being disappointed of the kingdom, he calls Solomon his brother; and entitles God to the change: and therefore would not have her think he affected another change; which would be to oppose the Lord.

Ver. 16. *And now I ask one petition of thee, deny me not. And she said, Say on.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *turn not away my face:* which signify, that he should be very much ashamed if she did not grant his petition.

Ver. 17. *And he said, Speak, I pray thee, to Solomon, the king (for he will not say thee nay), that he give me Abishag the Shunammite to wife.*] Both he and she surely were not ignorant, that it was unlawful for any man to marry his father's wife: but they thought, because David knew her not, the marriage was not completed.

Ver. 18. *Bath-sheba said, Well, I will speak for thee to the king.*] For she did not understand the drift of this desire: but was only forward to do courtesies to a man, fallen from very great hopes.

Ver. 19. *Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her.*] For the high honour to which he was advanced, did not make him forget the honour due to a parent: unto whom he was also much indebted for his preferment to the kingdom.

And sat down in his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother.] In the Hebrew it is, a *throne* to be set for her: it being a seat in the form of a throne, though not so glorious as the king's.

And she sat on his right hand.] Which was the most honourable place, next to himself, (Psal. xlv. 9. cx. 1.)

Ver. 20. *Then she said, I desire one small petition of thee; I pray thee, say me not nay.*] It is likely it was the first petition she had made to him; and, as she thought, would cost him nothing: which made her call it, *a small petition.*

And the king said, Ask on, my mother; for I will not say thee nay.] If the thing were fit, and safe to be granted.

Ver. 21. *And she said, Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife.*

Ver. 22. *And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also.*] He gently reprehends her ignorance: for it is as if he had said, Do you call this a small petition? You had as good ask the kingdom for him.

(For he is my elder brother).] And hath that pretence to the kingdom: unto which he would add this.

Even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah.] Who were all in this plot. So the Hebrew words, in the opinion of Lud. de Dieu, are better rendered by the Chaldee paraphrast, than by any other interpreter, *Was not he, and Abiathar, and Joab, in this counsel?* The LXX. more plainly, *With him are Abiathar the priest, and Joab the chief commander of the army:* that is, they are his accomplices, and have laid their heads together to give him this counsel.

Ver. 23. *And king Solomon sware by the Lord, saying, God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this word.*] Made this request, which he knew came originally from him.

Against his own life.] For he looked upon it as a treasonable design, to ask David's wife might become his. For, according to the custom of the Hebrews, no man who had been servant of the king, might serve any other master; nor might any man ride upon the king's horse; nor sit on his throne, nor use his sceptre: as they say, in the title Sanhedrin, cap. 2. sect. 2. 5. Much less might any private person marry the king's widow: who belonged only to his successor. Therefore God gave David all the wives of Saul, (2 Sam. xii. 8.) All which the Gemara upon that place (cap. 2. sect. 14.) applies unto this history of Adonijah; whose desire to marry the king's widow (which was not lawful for any private person) was looked upon as an affecting the kingdom. So Coccius glosses upon that place. And, indeed, Adonijah seems to have understood well enough, that Abishag was wholly in the power of Solomon; and did not return to her father's house after the death of David: but remained with him in his possession, as one of those things that were appropriated to him. Which moved Adonijah (as Abarbinel observes) to desire her of Solomon; and not address himself to her, or to her relations; but to him, because she belonged to the crown. (See Selden, lib. i. de Uxor. Hebr. cap. 10.)

Ver. 24. *Now therefore, as the Lord liveth, which hath established me in the throne of my father, and hath made me a house.*] That is, a royal family.

As he promised.] In 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.

Adonijah shall be put to death this day.] He repeats the oath, to signify it was his unalterable resolution he should not live; but be put to death, without delay: which in such cases is very dangerous.

Ver. 25. *And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him that he died.*] For such executions were there done not by mean persons, but by men of eminence: who at the king's command cut off offenders. (See Judg. viii. 20.)

Ver. 26. *And unto Abiathar the priest the king said, Get thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields.*] This was a city of the priests, (Josh. xxi. 28.) where he commanded him to lead a private life, either in that part of the suburbs which fell to his share, or in some land which he had purchased, as Jeremiah afterward did, (Jer. xxxii. 6—8.)

For thou art worthy of death: but at this time I will not put thee to death.] He seems now only to reprieve him, that he might keep him upon his good behaviour: for if hereafter he gave just cause, he might put him to death, as well as now put him out of his office.

Because thou barest the ark of the Lord God before David my father.] He was faithful to him in the rebellion of Absalom: when he brought the ark from Jerusalem to accompany him, (2 Sam. xv. 24. 29.)

And because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted.] Underwent all the hardships that David inured, all the time of his exile under Saul, (1 Sam. xxii. 20, 21, &c.)

Ver. 27. *So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord; that he might fulfil the word of the Lord, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.*] Which might partly move Solomon to deprive him. (See 1 Sam. ii. 31, &c.)

Ver. 28. *Then tidings came to Joab.*] That Adonijah was put to death, and Abiathar banished.

(For Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he had not turned after Absalom).] The reason of which, Abarbinel thinks, was, because Solomon was very young, and not fit, he thought, to manage public affairs: and his mother also had a blot upon her.

And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the Lord.] Which was at Gibeon. (See the foregoing chapter, ver. 51.) This makes it appear that Joab had a hand in the counsel beforementioned, (ver. 22.) as Solomon suspected.

And caught hold on the horns of the altar.] Which were four, at each corner thereof: in height, as the Jews say, five hand-breadths; that is, a common cubit. Here he thought to save himself, according to the custom of all nations, who fled to their altars, when they were guilty of any great crime, and were in great danger. But Jewish doctors say, Joab was mistaken in two things. First, in fancying there was security from thence for a wilful murderer: and, secondly, in that he looked for safety by taking hold of the horns of the altar, whereas the refuge of the altar (as Kimchi saith) was on the top of it only. But I look upon this as frivolous; Rasi's opinion is better: that as God appointed them cities of refuge whither the manslayer should flee when they came into the land of Canaan, (Exod. xxi. 13.) so, while they were in the wilderness, the camp of the Levites served for that purpose. And the following words (ver. 14.) declaring, that if a man committed a presumptuous murder, he should be taken from the altar and put to death; it not only confirms what he saith, but intimates, that even in the land of Canaan the altar continued a refuge for those that fled to it. But then this question arises, why Joab (who, as the Jews fancy, was president of the great Sanhedrin, and understood the law) should think to find shelter here, being a wilful murderer? To which the Jews answer, that he hoped hereby to save his estate, which otherways would have been forfeited. So they say in the Gemara Sanhedrin, cap. 6. n. 7. He hoped to be condemned by the judgment of the Sanhedrin, and then his goods would go to his heirs: whereas if he was cut off by the king they would fall to him. (See Coccius there, Annot. 2.) Others say, he hoped to obtain burial by this means. But I take these to be mere conceits. It is more probable, that, as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, he hoped to obtain a pardon, as Abiathar had done, by consecrating himself to God and to his service: as he did, he thinks, by this solemn ceremony. For the laying hold of the altar had a vow in it for the future, as well as the hope of present safety. Which may be argued from the name of the altar: which made that which touched it to be holy. (See his treatise of the Temple, chap. 34. sect. 3.)

Ver. 29. *And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled into the tabernacle of the Lord; and, behold, he is by the altar: then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, Go fall upon him.*] Which punishment, as Abarbinel observes, was not inflicted on him for killing Abner and Amasa: though the remembrance of that innocent blood which he shed moved him not to pardon the faults he had newly committed: first, in setting up Adonijah to be king while his father was living, which was no better than rebellion; being done with-

out David's order: and, secondly, in this new attempt to pretend to the kingdom, by advising him to beg Abishag for his wife. Solomon did not punish him for the former, because he had pardoned Adonijah: and therefore would not be severe against his adherents. But he renewing his traitorous designs, he thought fit to cut them both off: and Joab thought he deserved no less, as appears by his flying to the altar. Which was an acknowledgment that he was guilty of that crime which Solomon charged upon him, in being one of the wicked counsellors of Adonijah, and therefore deserved to die. Thus he.

Ver. 30. *And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the Lord; and said, Thus saith the king, Come forth.*] The forenamed author thinks that Benaiah had a mind to bring him to Solomon, and try to get his pardon, so far as to have him only deposed from his office, as Abiathar was.

And he said, Nay; but I will die here.] Which he said, that he might bring Solomon into the people's hatred for staining the house of God with blood.

And Benaiah brought the king word, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me.] This interpreters generally take to be but the repetition of the same thing in different words: but Abarbinel takes them for two distinct answers of Joab, in which he refuses to come from the place where he was; and pronounces the sentence upon himself, and desires no pardon. For those words, *thus saith Joab*, respect (he thinks) the sentence which he pronounced on himself, that he would die: and those words, *thus he answered*, signify he would not come from the altar.

Ver. 31. *And Solomon said to Benaiah, Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him.*] Kill him at the very altar, where he resolves to die: after which he would not deny him burial suitable to his quality, (ver. 34.) But many think he did not kill him at the very altar; but dragged him from thence, and then slew him. For what need was there to defile the holy place with blood? And so the command is, Exod. xxi. 14. Though others are of opinion, that Solomon did think fit to have him killed at the very altar; to let all men see that no place, though ever so holy, should secure any man from the hand of justice.

That thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed.] He means the blood of those two persons mentioned in the next verse: whose murder (as I said before) was not the immediate reason of Joab's death: but the words of Solomon are to be understood (Abarbinel thinks) as if he had said to Benaiah, Do not imagine thou shalt offend God, by killing Joab at the very altar, but rather perform an acceptable service to him: by cutting off a man who deserves to die, not only upon the account of Adonijah; but of the innocent blood which he shed heretofore. So the business of Adonijah was the principal cause of his death: the other only the secondary; which he remembers, that he might warrant Benaiah to kill him in the tabernacle.

From me, and from the house of my father.] The crimes of Joab in killing those two men could not be punished by the house of judgment, because there were no witnesses of that murder: but David might have done it by such proofs as satisfied him of his guilt. Yet he omitted it, because Joab was so potent in the army: and so Solomon feared the guilt might stick upon his family, if it were not wiped off by this execution upon Joab.

Ver. 32. *And the Lord shall return his blood upon his own head.*] Make him alone bear the punishment of his iniquity.

Who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father not knowing thereof, to wit, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah.] His crime was the more heinous, because it brought a suspicion upon David, as if it had been done by his order: which calumny he laboured to wipe off, by the unfeigned grief he expressed for Abner, (2 Sam. iii. 37.)

Ver. 33. *Their blood therefore shall return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever.*] Why doth he repeat what he said before? Abarbinel answers, it is not a mere repetition; but Solomon pronounces that the curse of David should come upon him: so that Joab's own death should not expiate the guilt; but his posterity should suffer for it in future generations, according to what David said, 2 Sam. iii. 28, 29.

But upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall be peace for ever before the Lord.] He prays and prophesies that his family and kingdom might never suffer upon this account, now that the sin which had not been punished in David's lifetime, had received a just punishment from him.

Ver. 34. *So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him.*] He is said *to go up*, because Gibeon, where Joab was at the tabernacle, was a high place.

And he was buried.] It is not said who took care of his burial; but it is likely Benaiah. (See ver. 21.) Because Joab was a man of dignity, and one of the royal family.

In his own house in the wilderness.] He did not bury him in the house, but in some ground belonging to it, and accounted a part of the habitation, which was in the wilderness; so they called those parts of the country, which were but thinly inhabited. And Abarbinel is of opinion, that here Joab had built a hospital, where he provided, in several rooms, a bed, a table, and a candlestick, for poor travellers.

Ver. 35. *And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host; and Zadok the priest did he put in the room of Abiathar.*] It is evident that Zadok was a great man before this; at least the vicar of the high-priest Abiathar: who was, as some of the Jews fancy, deprived by David himself, or suspended from his office, upon his anointing Adonijah. But no such anointing is mentioned in the story of Adonijah; nay, it is most likely (as I before observed) that he wanted it. And therefore he remained high-priest till now that Solomon removed him, and translated that great office from the family of Ithamar to that of Eleazar, (according to the threatening against Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 30.) in which it continued till the time of the captivity; no notice being taken of Jonathan the son of Abiathar, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, ver. 42. and in 1 Sam. xv. 27. See Selden, de Succession. in Pontif. lib. i. cap. 4, 5. and Grotius, de Imperio Sum. Potestat. where he observes, (cap. 10.) that the *sagan*, or vicar of the high-priest, had rather a hope, than a right, to succeed in the office of high-priest. For Maimonides saith, the Sanhedrin chose him out of the family of Aaron; but here it is plain the king disposed of that office. For otherwise it could not be said truly, that Solomon put Zadok in the

room of Abiathar; by the same authority that he put Benaiah in the room of Joab. Bellarmine, indeed, for fear kings should be thought superior to the high-priest, saith, Solomon did this not as a king but as a prophet. (Lib. ii. de Pontifico, cap. 29.) But Solomon was not yet a prophet; and all they who had royal authority in the time of the Macedonians, and Romans, and the posterity of Herod, challenged to themselves this power of making a high-priest; though they left to the Jews an *αὐτονομία (the government of themselves by their own laws)* in other things.

Ver. 36. *And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Build thee a house in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither.*] It was fit to confine such a turbulent man as Shimei was; and not suffer him to go about whither he pleased, throughout the tribes of Israel, where he might stir up sedition. But it was very kind to confine him to such a pleasant place as Jerusalem, and the suburbs of it: which made Abarbinel renew his conceit (from those words of David, *thou hast with thee Shimei*), that Solomon had a great love to him, and made him his familiar. But it is more reasonable to think that Solomon suspected his fidelity; and therefore would have him always in his eye, in the royal city.

Ver. 37. *For it shall be, that on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die.*] He mentions the brook Kidron, because that was in the way to Baharim; where Shimei dwelt: as appears by comparing 2 Sam. xv. 23. with xvi. 5. But Solomon's intention was, that if he went out of Jerusalem any way, to a greater distance than Kidron was from thence, he should die for it. For when he went to Gath after his servants, he went directly the quite contrary way; that city lying westward of Jerusalem, as Kidron did eastward.

Thy blood shall be on thine own head.] He should be guilty, and nobody else, of his death: for it was in his power to preserve his life.

Ver. 38. *And Shimei said unto the king, The saying is good.*] He confesses the king's kindness in this injunction; and that he was beholden to him, for laying no greater burden upon him.

As my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do.] Which he confirmed by an oath, (ver. 42, 43.)

And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days.] Three years, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 39. *And it came to pass, at the end of three years, that two of Shimei's servants ran away unto Achish the son of Maacah, king of Gath: and they told Shimei, saying, Behold, thy servants be in Gath.*] Achish had been so great a friend to David, that though David had conquered the Philistines, yet he suffered Achish still to retain the title of king, and to be only tributary to him: so that there was a friendly correspondence between his city and Jerusalem; where Shimei might easily hear, by somebody or other who had been at Gath, that his servants were there.

Ver. 40. *And Shimei arose, and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants.*] In three years' time he thought Solomon might have forgotten his injunction; or he presumed he would not hold him strictly to it: especially since he did not go from Jerusalem for his pleasure, but to recover what he had lost; which he thought was pardonable. For these servants, it is likely, were worth a great deal of money: where with he had purchased them.

And Shimei went, and brought his servants from Gath.] Where Achish would not protect them; being in friendship with the Israelites.

Ver. 41. *And it was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again.*] If Solomon had not constant spies about Shimei, to watch his motions; yet such a journey as this could not be well undertaken so secretly, but some or other would observe it, and inform against him.

Ver. 42. *And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Did I not make thee swear by the Lord, and protested unto thee, saying, Know for certain, that on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, thou shalt surely die? and thou saidst unto me, The word that I have heard is good.*] He repeats their agreement; and only adds that he made Shimei solemnly swear that he would stand to it, and did thankfully accept it.

Ver. 43. *Why then hast thou not kept the oath of the Lord, and the commandment that I have charged thee with?*] He lay under a double guilt, of breaking his oath to God, and of disobeying the king's command.

Ver. 44. *And the king said moreover to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness that thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father.*] He knew upon what wicked principles he cursed David, and what inward hatred and malice he had to him: and what villanous designs against him, if he could have accomplished them.

Therefore the Lord shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head.] Upon which, if he reflected, he could not but see the justice of God, in letting him fall into other crimes, which deserved death.

Ver. 45. *And king Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the Lord for ever.*] To which Shimei wished confusion: but the Lord turned his curses into blessings, as David hoped, (2 Sam. xvi. 12.)

Ver. 46. *So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; which went out, and fell upon him, that he died.*] He went out from the presence of the king, and carried Shimei along with him: and then did execution upon him.

And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.] By the removal of these bad men beforementioned: and by the alliances he made, mentioned in the next chapter, &c.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AND Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter.*] To be his wife. Which was not unlawful, if she was first made a proselyte to the Jewish religion; as in all probability she was. For though his wives drew him in to worship strange gods; yet the gods of the Egyptians are not reckoned among them, (xi. 5, 6, &c.) which is a sign she was not a worshipper of other gods. Hitherto also Solomon loved the Lord, as it is said, ver. 3. and was beloved of him, as his appearing to him in Gibeon shews, ver. 5.

And brought her into the city of David.] Unto his palace at Jerusalem: which was after he had begun to build the temple, as they say in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 15.

Until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the Lord.] After which he built a house on purpose for this wife to dwell in, (ix. 24. 2 Chron. viii. 11.) But first he built God's house, then his own, and then the walls of Jerusalem.

And the wall of Jerusalem round about.] If David encompassed it with a wall, as some think is signified, 2 Sam. v. 9. Solomon made another wall, and thereby made it stronger than David left it. Or else, he repaired the wall which David had built, and raised it higher.

Ver. 2. *Only the people sacrificed in high places, because there was no house built unto the name of the Lord, until those days.*] This is a short account of the happiness of Solomon's reign hitherto, that there was nothing in it blameable, but only the people's sacrificing in high places. Which having been ancient places of worship (in groves or woods, on the top of hills), the people continued to resort thither, to perform that worship which God had appointed. So that there was no fault in the worship itself, but only in the place of it. And he gives the reason why the people took this liberty, because there was not a house built, to be a settled place for worship; the tabernacle also had been removed from place to place a long time; and was not fixed till it came to Jerusalem. Concerning *high places*, see upon Deut. xii. 2. Cornel. Bertram, indeed, fetches the original of them from the cities of the Levites, where they kept schools, and had places for prayer; and where he thinks the people at last sacrificed in the highest part of the city. (De Repub. Judaica, cap. 15.) But this custom seems, more likely, to have been derived from the ancient patriarchs, and was imitated by the gentiles as well as Jews.

Ver. 3. *And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in all the statutes of David his father.*] Following his directions, who commanded him carefully to observe all God's laws, ii. 2, 3.

Only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places.] Which David his father had never done (as far as appears by his history), which renders Solomon's fault the greater, in following the common practice of all the nations, rather than the example of his pious father.

Ver. 4. *And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was a great high place.*] Because the tabernacle was there, and the great brazen altar which Moses made. For after Shiloh was destroyed, it was carried to Nob; and the priests being there slain by Saul, it was carried to Gibeon, (2 Chron. i. 3.) where the Jews say, there was the greatest synagogue in all the land.

A thousand burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.] It is not easy to apprehend how so many sacrifices should be consumed upon an altar, which was but five cubits square; for I suppose he speaks of Moses's altar, which was of no larger dimensions. But Kimchi hath well observed, that we must not fancy they were all offered upon one day; but during the time he stayed at Gibeon, before he returned to Jerusalem. Yet if we suppose this was at some of the great festivals, none of which lasted above seven days, it must be acknowledged a wonderful thing, that so many should be consumed, though offered both at morning and evening sacrifice. The Jews therefore do acknowledge a miracle herein, as there were many, they say, continually at the temple; which are disbelieved, because the Jews are accounted fabulous writers. But if well considered, some of them at least carry good reason in them. For instance, they say the smoke of the sacrifices went always directly up to heaven in a steady pillar, and was not blown about with every puff of wind, as smoke commonly is. For if it had not been so, when there was a vast number of sacrifices offered, no man would have been able to stand in the court of the Lord's house. The fire also upon the altar was exceeding quick and devouring, being celestial fire, which dispatched the sacrifice sooner than ordinary fire would have done. So Dr. Lightfoot observes, in his treatise of the Temple, chap. 34. sect. 1. From whence it was called Ariel, the lion of God, because it was so devouring. And therefore, after the return from their captivity from Babylon (as L'Empereur observes out of the Gemara), the altar was made larger; because the fire burnt more slowly, when they wanted that heavenly flame, which was strong and powerful. (Annot. in Cod. Middoth. cap. 1. sect. 1. p. 103.)

Ver. 5. *In Gibeon God appeared to Solomon in a dream by night.*] Perhaps he thought he saw the Divine glory shine round about him: or else the meaning is, God revealed himself in a dream, as the Targum here expresses it, *The Lord was revealed to Solomon by night;* when men have often seen that represented to them, which they found true when they were awake; as Tully shews by many instances; especially out of Aristotle's famous story of the two men that travelled together to Megara; one of which being killed in his inn, the other, who lay in a friend's house, had all the fact represented clearly and distinctly to him in his dream, as if he had seen it done; so that he found out the murderers in the morning. (See lib. i. De Divinatione, cap. 24—26, &c.)

And God said, Ask what I shall give thee.] He heard a voice speaking to him, and bidding him ask what he desired, and it should be bestowed upon him. This voice he took to be from God (as appears by his answer), who herein shewed himself very gracious to Solomon, and also made a trial of his inclinations.

Ver. 6. *And Solomon said, Thou hast shewn unto David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit upon his throne, as at this day.*] Thankful acknowledgments of mercies already received (as St. Chrysostom notes), invite new blessings to be bestowed upon us. *Uprightness of heart*, here ascribed to David, doth not signify that he was without fault (for the contrary is evident, that he was guilty of great transgressions against the moral law), but it is spoken in opposition to Saul, who was rejected for controlling the orders of God.

Ver. 7. *And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father; and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or how to come in.*] There are those, particularly Rasi, who think he was but twelve years old when he spake these words; and therefore calls himself *naar*, a child. But Abarbinel hath shewn, that they ground this upon an uncertain computation; and that, if he was but a child of twelve years old now, he must have begun to reign when he was but seven or eight years old: for he had sat some time upon the throne, as appears by the foregoing story, when he had this dream. And his

father calls him *a wise man*, when he left the throne to him, (chap. ii. 6. 9.) And, from many other strong arguments, he concludes him to have been at least twenty years old when he began to reign; and therefore calls himself here a child, with respect only to his skill in managing public affairs; as is signified in the last words, *I know not how to go out*, &c. i. e. to govern so great a people, for want of experience. Thus Benjamin is called a child, Gen. xlvi. 20.; and Moses calls Joshua by the same name, Exod. xxxii. 10. though they were above thirty years old: and the sons of Eli, when they ministered as priests, 1 Sam. ii. 17.

Ver. 8. *And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered or counted for multitude.*] And consequently great abilities were required to do exact justice to them all.

Ver. 9. *Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge so great a people?*] That is, without the Divine guidance and assistance, he thought it impossible to understand what was law in all cases; so as dexterously to dispatch business, and decide all differences. For young men, as Aristotle observes, are unfit for government; because in them, τὸ βουλευτικὸν ἀτελὲς, *their consultive power is very imperfect*, as he speaks in the first book of his Politics, cap. 7. And therefore, in his book ad Nicomachum, he will not so much as admit a young man to the lectures of politics; τῆς πολιτικῆς οὐκ εἶην ἀκροατὴς οἰκεῖος ὁ νέος. But this is not universally true, as we see not only in the example of Solomon, who was extraordinarily accomplished by God in his youth for the greatest things; but by some examples among the heathen, of young men who managed the weightiest affairs with as much prudence as they who were of the greatest experience. Witness Scipio and Octavianus Augustus. But such persons were rarely found: so that Solomon himself saith, "Woe to the land whose king is a child," (Eccles. x. 16.)

Ver. 10. *And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.*] For it was a token of a virtuous mind and a public spirit, that desired above all things the honour of God, and the good of his people.

Ver. 11. *And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies.*] Which are things of which men are naturally most desirous.

But hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment.] As far transcending long life, wealth, and victory over enemies.

Ver. 12. *Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.*] For other wise men gather their knowledge by study, and observation, and other helps (as Abarbinel here notes), but Solomon had his by inspiration: so that he went to bed an ignorant man, but awaked in the morning like an angel of God. At once, as his words are, he who was like other men, was made like the Son of God. For he had not only the skill of government imparted to him; but a general knowledge of all other things, as the following history tells us. Whence he fancies he calls himself Agur, (Prov. xxx. 1.) because in him there was a *collection* of all manner of wisdom and knowledge, and this imparted from God. Which is the reason, he imagines, why he does not call himself *Oger*, which is an active word, but *Agur*, which is a passive: because he did not gather all his wisdom himself, but it was given him from the hand of God.

Ver. 13. *And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour.*] These are absolutely promised him: but here is no mention of long life; for that depended upon the condition of his steadfast obedience to God, as it follows in the next verse.

So that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.] He promises he should excel all the kings that were in his time, in riches and renown: though there were richer in future ages, as Alexander and others were.

Ver. 14. *If thou wilt walk in my ways, and keep my statutes and commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.*] This God himself mentions, in the first place, (ver. 11.) as the greatest worldly blessing; especially when accompanied with great riches and honour: which Solomon was not to expect, unless he continued obedient to God.

Ver. 15. *And Solomon awoke; and, behold, it was a dream.*] He saw and heard all the foregoing things so clearly and distinctly in his sleep, as if he had been awake: and did not know till he awoke that all was done in a dream; which was one way of God's revealing himself to his prophets. But Maimonides, I think, is here a little too curious; for from these words, *Behold it was a dream*, he concludes this was an inferior degree of prophecy from what others had in dreams. For they that prophesied in dreams, do not call it afterward a dream; but simply say, it was a prophecy. So when the patriarch Jacob awoke out of a dream of prophecy, he did not say it was a dream, but saith absolutely, *Surely God is in this place*, &c. Gen. xxviii. 16. (More Nevoch. lib. ii. cap. 45.)

And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord.] Which was there in a tabernacle which David pitched for it, (2 Sam. v. 17.) though the tabernacle which Moses made remained at Gibeon; where Solomon had been to worship.

And offered burnt-offerings, and offered peace-offerings.] Giving thanks to God, that he had been pleased to speak with him, and reveal himself to him.

And made a feast for all his servants.] Upon the sacrifices of peace-offerings, it is likely, which he had offered; whereby he endeared himself unto them. For nothing more wins men's affection than bounty, affability, clemency, and such-like virtues.

Ver. 16. *Then came two women that were harlots unto the king.*] They kept a house of public entertainment, as the Targum translates it, and perhaps were also common women: but then, the Jews suppose, they were not Israelites, but strangers; and so not comprehended in the law, Deut. xxiii. 17.

And stood before the king.] As they used to do, who brought any cause before a court to be judged.

Ver. 17. *And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a son with her in the house.*] This case, as Abarbinel thinks, should have been first brought into some of the inferior courts,

near the place where they lived; and if they could not have determined it, then to the great Sanhedrin: and if they found it too hard for them, then they should have brought it to the king; who otherwise might have easily erred, no inquisition having been made into the matter, if a Divine Spirit had not directed him. But this opinion of Abarbinel is grounded on another fancy, that there was a great Sanhedrin in these days, which cannot be proved.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, that the third day after I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also.*] Of another son; which being born so soon after the other, they could not be distinguished by their age.

And we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house.] So that there was no witness of what passed between them; but all relied on their own credit; which made the case more difficult.

Ver. 19. *And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it.*] Some marks upon the body, it is likely, discovered that it was smothered: and Kimchi here notes, that if it had died of a disease it would have cried, and the neighbours been called in, and the thing been known.

Ver. 20. *And she rose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thy handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom.*] This made the matter obscure; for how should she know what her companion did, when she was asleep?

Ver. 21. *And when I arose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead; but when I had considered in the morning.*] When it was perfect day; which it was not when she arose to suckle the child.

Behold, it was not my son which I did bear.] There was some resemblance, it is likely, in the features of the two children; so that the neighbours did not know the one from the other: but the mother, who had carefully observed it, knew by some tokens that this dead child was none of hers.

Ver. 22. *And the other woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is mine. Thus they spake before the king.*] One affirming what the other denied; but having no evidence to make proof of what they said.

Ver. 23. *Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living.*] From hence the Jews argue, that the judges before they pronounced sentence were bound to sum up the evidence that had been given on both sides: that it might be seen they had observed and understood their allegations, and accordingly gave judgment. For thus Solomon doth in this case, where there was no more than he repeated; there being no witnesses on either side.

Ver. 24. *And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword to him.*] As much as to say, Here is nothing but affirming on one part, and denying on the other, without any proof: I must therefore try some other way to decide this controversy.

Ver. 25. *And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.*] For both pretended to it, and this he thought the best way to end the dispute. For he knew the woman, whose the child really was, would be moved with such tender compassion to it, that she would never suffer it to be divided: and so he should discover the true mother. Thus interpreters commonly expound it. But Abarbinel thinks this would have been no extraordinary proof of Solomon's wisdom above other men's; nor have begot such a fear in the Israelites as this judgment did. Therefore he thinks Solomon made a discovery of the truth, antecedent to this experiment; by observing the countenance, the manner of speech, and all the motions of the women, whereby he discerned the secrets of their hearts, and penetrated to the bottom of the business; which this command to divide the child discovered to all.

Ver. 26. *Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king (for her bowels yearned upon her child), and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: but the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it.*] Natural affection clearly discovered the truth, without any other evidence.

Ver. 27. *Then the king said, Give her the child, and in no wise slay it: for she is the mother of it.*] As appeared by the pity which her love excited to it.

Ver. 28. *And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged, and they feared the king.*] Very much reverenced, and stood in awe of him.

For they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment.] That is, saith Abarbinel, the wisdom proper to God; which searches the reins, and trieth the hearts. Therefore they *feared him*, persuading themselves, they could not have a thought of any evil design against him, which he would not discover.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *So king Solomon was king over all Israel.*] Reigned with the full consent of all the tribes of Israel.

Ver. 2. *And these are the princes which he had.*] The principal officers employed under him.

Azariah the son of Zadok the priest.] He was the son of Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok; and therefore was Zadok's grandson, (1 Chron. vi. 8, 9.) But such are usually called sons in Scripture, as Rasi observes upon Gen. xx. 12. And Zadok, it is probable, in his old age, bred him up in his house as his child. It is not said here what office he had, unless we translate the word *priest*, as we do in the margin, *chief officer*, or prime minister of state. But this Abarbinel thinks is a mistake; and he takes him to have been one of the scribes, together with those two that follow in the next words, Elihoreph and Ahiah. For thus he thinks the words should be translated, *Azariah the son of Zadok the priest, and Elihoreph, and Ahiah the son of Shisha, were scribes;* there wanting a *vau* before Elihoreph, as is frequent in Scripture, (Exod. i. 1, 2.) And these three secretaries had each their several employments. One, he thinks, was in matters of judgment; the other in the revenue; and the third was concerned in writing annals, keeping the records, and was a public register.

Ver. 3. *Elihoreph and Ahiah the sons of Shisha, scribes: Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the recorder.*] Or master of requests. So Rasi understands the word *hammaskir:* one that heard all men's causes, and brought them before the king.

Ver. 4. *And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the host; and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests.*] That is, the principal, or high-priests. Kimchi thinks this was not that Abiathar whom Solomon ejected, and placed Zadok in his room, (ii. 35.) but another of that name. But Ralbag takes him to be the same that was thrust out of the priesthood; yet suffered to minister, when Zadok was not well, or could not attend: and Abarbinel approves of this opinion. Or, perhaps, Solomon permitted him, upon his petition, to come to Jerusalem, not to officiate as high-priest, but to live upon the altar, (according to the prediction, 1 Sam. ii. 36.) and he retained the name and title of high-priest, though Zadok only enjoyed the office. L'Empereur thinks he is here joined with Zadok, because in the beginning of Solomon's reign he did discharge the office of high-priest: and after he was deposed, he retained the title of that dignity as long as he lived, because of his precedent function. (Annot. upon Bertram de Rep. Jud. p. 420.)

Ver. 5. *And Azariah the son of Nathan was over the officers.*] That is, the twelve officers mentioned below, (ver. 7, 8, &c.) who gave accounts unto him, who was their overseer.

And Zabud the son of Nathan was principal officer, and the king's friend.] The word *cohen* signifies here, as it doth 2 Sam. viii. 18. *minister of state,* among whom Zabud was the chief: one whom the king entrusted with the management of all affairs, and with his most secret counsels, he being always with him, as Abarbinel observes. Dr. Hammond notes upon St. Matt. ix. Annot. 2. that the king's friend was an officer of nearness to the king: as Mr. Selden observed before him, in his Uxor. Hebr. lib. ii. cap. 16. p. 201, 202. For Nathan having bred up Solomon, (see 2 Sam. xii. 25.) it was easy for him to get his sons preferred by him to the highest dignities under him, when he came to be king; especially since he was very instrumental in placing him upon the throne.

Ver. 6. *And Ahishar was over the household.*] Lord high-chamberlain (as we speak in our language), who took in, and displaced officers in the family.

And Adoniram the son of Abda was over the tribute.] Which was imposed on the people for the support of the government. Such contributions were raised several ways in several kingdoms: but good and wise princes took care not to lay burdens on such things as were necessary for the livelihood of the poor; and that they were not too heavy upon any thing: as Solomon's were, if the people's complaints were just, after his death: but perhaps this word *tribute,* which we translate *levy* in the margin, may refer not to the levying of money, but of men. Concerning which we read in the next chapter, ver. 13, 14. where Adoniram is said to be over the levy: and so he might be over both, of men and money.

Ver. 7. *And Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: each man in his month made provision.*] The country being divided into twelve parts, there were so many persons (called Nitzavium, because there they were placed) constituted to buy provisions for the king and his family, at the best hand, and every thing in its proper season; to be sent to the place where the king resided, by every one in his month. By which means there was great plenty for all that belonged to the court; both for his house, and his stables of horses; for domestics, and for all foreigners that came thither about business, or to hear his wisdom: who were there entertained without any grievance to his people.

Ver. 8. *And these are their names: The son of Hur.*] He tells only the name of the father, who it seems was more illustrious than the son: unless we translate these words, *Ben-Hur.*

In Mount Ephraim.] And the territory belonging to it: which must be understood of the rest of the places mentioned in the following verses.

Ver. 9. *The son of Bekar.*] Or *Ben-Bekar,* as those that follow may be translated: though it is probable, as I said before, that the fathers are named, not the sons, because they were very illustrious persons, and better known: who managed, perhaps, this affair by their sons.

In Makaz, and in Shaalbim, and Beth-shemesh, and Elon-beth-hanan.] It is not material in what country these places were; and therefore I shall not inquire after them.

Ver. 10. *The son of Hesed, in Aruboth; to him pertained Sochoh, and all the land of Hepher.*] There were more Sochos than one, as we find Josh. xv. 35. 48. It is uncertain which is here meant. The land of Hepher possibly may be the portion given to the daughters of Hepher, (Josh. xvii. 3, &c.)

Ver. 11. *The son of Abinabab, in all the region of Dor; which had Taphath the daughter of Solomon to wife.*] Solomon had no daughters marriageable when these officers were made: but in process of time this man, and Ahimaaz mentioned ver. 15. had behaved themselves so well in their office, that Solomon did them the honour to give them two of his daughters to be their wives.

Ver. 12. *Baana the son of Ahilud; to him pertained Taanach and Megiddo, and all Beth-shean, which is by Zartanah, beneath Jezreel, from Beth-shean to Abel-meholah, even unto the place that is beyond Jockneam.*] These places have been named in the foregoing books: where I have noted as much as I can find about them. Here the author names the person himself that was employed (as he doth in some of the following verses) and not merely the father. The reason of which I cannot give, unless it were that he was a very noted person.

Ver. 13. *The son of Geber, in Ramoth-Gilead: to him pertained the towns of Jair the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead: to him also pertained the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, threescore great cities with walls, and brazen bars.*] These countries beyond Jordan are also well known, being often mentioned in the foregoing books.

Ver. 14. *Abinadab the son of Iddo had Mahanaim.*] And the territory belonging to it, which was very fertile: but this seems to some not to bear proportion to the rest, being not a twelfth part of the whole country. Therefore they follow the marginal translation, *to Mahanaim:* that is, all the territory from the places beforenamed unto this place.

Ver. 15. *Ahimaaz was in Naphtali; he also took Basmath the daughter of Solomon to wife.*] As Abinadab had married another of his daughters, (see ver. 11.)

Ver. 16. *Baanah the son of Hushai was in Asher and in Aloth.*] This man, perhaps, was the son of Hushai, the friend of David; and therefore preferred by Solomon.

Ver. 17. *Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah in Issachar.*] It appears by this, and the foregoing and following verses,

that some of these officers had whole tribes assigned them for their province.

Ver. 18. *Shimei the son of Elah in Benjamin.*] Concerning this person, see chap. i. ver. 8.

Ver. 19. *Geber the son of Uri was in the country of Gilead, in the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan.*] That is, in the rest of the country of Gilead beforementioned, ver. 13.

And he was the only officer which was in the land.] There is nothing in the Hebrew answering to those words, *he was:* therefore this doth not relate to the officer beforementioned; but the meaning is, as Abarbinel expounds it, that besides all those officers beforenamed, there was another who took care of strangers, who were going to court, or coming from it: as the other twelve took care of his family, and all belonging to it. This officer made provision in that country where the king then dwelt; and therefore is not named, because he was not fixed and settled in his office, as the others were; but chosen by the citizens of that city, where the king resided.

Ver. 20. *And Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude.*] The same Abarbinel thinks this and the next verses explain the reason why this officer was appointed: first, because Israel and Judah were so great a people; and secondly, because strangers came from several regions, to bring presents, or about other business. And therefore it was necessary this officer should set a reasonable price upon all things sold in the market, that they might not exact upon any body, when they saw a multitude of buyers, which might tempt them to sell their commodities too dear.

Eating and drinking, and making merry.] In perfect security; and being well-pleased and highly satisfied.

Ver. 21. *And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms, from the river to the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt.*] The bounds of his kingdom were Euphrates on the east, the country of the Philistines on the west, and Egypt on the south. For so God promised that their dominion should be extended, *from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates,* (Gen. xv. 18.) And accordingly David conquered so far, and Solomon maintained his conquests.

They brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.] This explains what went before: which is not to be understood as if all those countries had no other king than Solomon; but that their kings were tributaries to him, and made him presents in token of their subjection.

Ver. 22. *And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and sixty measures of meal.*] By *meal* is meant a coarser sort of flour for inferior servants: and the measure here spoken of contained ten ephahs. So here was bread enough provided for near three thousand persons, as some compute it.

Ver. 23. *Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and a hundred sheep.*] This and the foregoing verse Abarbinel thinks are added, to satisfy some questions that arise about the constitution of so many officers: for why might he not be supplied out of the neighbouring cities and towns? which he shews here could not be; because of the vast quantity of provision which was necessary for one day. And it is observable, that oxen are here mentioned in the first place (both those fatted at home, and those fatted in the pastures), being anciently esteemed the most noble meat: as appears by Homer's heroes. Who, as Dioscorides notes, never had any thing in their feasts, no, not at marriages, but fat oxen. See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 32. where he mentions the great entertainments made by Agamemnon, Menelaus, Nestor, Alcinous. Nor did they that courted Penelope, though the most voluptuous of all men, eat any other meat.

Besides harts, and roe-bucks, and fallow-deer.] Which were meats highly esteemed among the Jews, and mentioned next to the foregoing, Deut. xiv. 4, 5.

And fatted fowl.] Many restrain the word *Barburim* to birds, or fowl, as we do: and some think they were capons: Kimchi and others say, *fatted fowl* out of Barbary; from whence they had the name of *Barburim.* But the name of Barbary was not known in Solomon's time: and therefore Bochart thinks the word should be translated, *the choicest of all fatted things,* (Hieroz. par. ii. lib. i. cap. 19.) and so Gousset, in his late Commentaries of the Hebrew Tongue.

Ver. 24. *And he had dominion over all the regions on this side the river.*] It might be objected to what was said before, that all the country of Israel could not afford such a constant supply of provisions: which he prevents by this observation, that his dominion extended to a great many other regions, from whence they might be furnished with more than his own country afforded.

From Tiphsah even unto Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river.] This is an explication of what is said ver. 21. that he reigned from the river, that is Euphrates, to the land of the Philistines: for Tiphsah is the same with the city Tapsæus; where there was a bridge, and a ferry over Euphrates, as Strabo testifies in many places: (see lib. xvi. p. 747.) and the very name implies as much, for פסח is *transire, to pass over,* in the Hebrew language.

And he had peace on all sides round about him.] None of his neighbours gave him any disturbance: so that the Israelites had nothing to divert them (as Abarbinel observes) from improving their lands, and increasing their rents; whereby there was a greater plenty of all things. Machiavel magnifies those who by force of arms achieved mighty things, and raised themselves to a great height of glory: but Hermannus Conringius well corrects him with this observation, that Solomon among the Jews, and Numa Pompilius among the Romans, got a more lasting name in all future ages by the art of peace. For which he refers to Cicero, lib. ii. de Officiis.

Ver. 25. *And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba.*] This he saith (the same author thinks) to shew the great plenty of corn, and wine, and oil, as well as of cattle and all other things: *vines* and *fig-trees* are particularly mentioned, because they were planted in Judea more than any other trees; for the sweetness of their fruit, and the benefits of their shade.

All the days of Solomon.] That is, till the end of his life. When some adversaries were stirred up against him: but for so short a time, in his old age, that he had peace the far greater part of his reign, (1 Chron. xxii. 9.)

Ver. 26. *And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots.*] In 2 Chron. ix. 25. it is said he had but four thousand. But there is no disagreement between these two places; for he speaks here of his horses, and

there of their stalls or stables; there being ten in every stable, which make forty thousand, as Abarbinel observes. But this doth not satisfy Bochartus, who rather inclines to Jacobus Capellus's opinion, that the Hebrew word *arbaim* here signifies *four* not forty, (Hierozoicon, lib. ii. par. i. p. 155, &c.) But this is without example; therefore others think that in the Chronicles the author speaks of those stalls for horses which he had in Jerusalem for his constant guard, which were but four thousand: whereas here he speaks of those which were dispersed throughout his whole kingdom.

And twelve thousand horsemen.] Which were distributed, it is likely, in every tribe; to keep them in peace, and to be ready to oppose any enemy that might invade them: wherein Abarbinel thinks that Solomon did not offend against the law in Deuteronomy, which commanded them not to multiply horses, (xvii. 16.) because he did it not out of pride and vanity; but to preserve peace, by keeping all his neighbours in awe. And he professes not to trust in them, Prov. xxi. 31.

Ver. 27. *These officers provided victuals for king Solomon, and for all that came to king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.*] This is repeated, to shew their diligence, exactness, and care, which were remarkable: especially since they took care of his stables, as well as of his household, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 28. *Barley also and straw.*] Barley was anciently horse-corn, as appears by many places in Homer; which Bochartus hath observed in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 9.

For the horses and dromedaries.] The Hebrew word *rechesh* signifies swift horses, as Abarbinel thinks. (See Esther viii. 14.) But others take them for *mules*, as we translate it in the margin. Bochartus thinks it certain, that this word imports a kind of horse, Micah i. 13. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 6. 21.)

Brought they unto the place where the officers were.] Or rather, *where the beasts were.* For there is no word for *officers* in the Hebrew.

Every man according to his charge.] Which lasted for a month, every year.

Ver. 29. *And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much.*] Knowledge of all manner of things; and prudence in the administration of the government.

And largeness of heart.] A mind very comprehensive of all sort of knowledge; and a heart to do a vast deal of good.

Even as the sand that is on the sea-shore.] As the sand there encloses a vast body of waters; so his mind contained an ocean of knowledge, as the lord Bacon somewhere observes.

Ver. 30. *And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country.*] Some, by these eastern sages, understand the Chaldeans: who were rather a northern people, as Jeremiah describes them, (i. 14.) and were not famous for learning in Solomon's time; nor began to be so till the reign of Nabonassar: nor are the Tyrians here meant, as Pineda imagines; for they were a western people: but the Oriental Arabians; who were famous for wisdom in ancient times, as appears by the book of Job. And in after-ages Porphyry reports (as St. Cyril tells us, lib. x. contra Julianum), that Pythagoras travelled into this country, to improve himself in learning: where were many of those wise men called *magi*, as well as among the Persians. Thus Conringius in his Supplementum 5. ad L. de Antiq. Academicis. But after all, Abarbinel takes the word *kedem* not to signify *east*, but *ancient time.* And so *the children of kedem* are those who were born in the days of old: when men lived some hundreds of years; and so improved themselves in knowledge (especially in astronomical learning), far more than it was possible for men to do, after their lives became very short. This makes our wisdom defective, as was observed by Hippocrates in his Aphorisms, "Art is long, and life is short." But Solomon, by a special gift of God, was more knowing than they who lived above ten times as long as he did. But this is a forced sense, as appears by the next words, concerning Egypt.

And all the wisdom of Egypt.] Which country was celebrated for wisdom in Moses's time, as appears from Acts vii. 22. and in aftertimes Macrobius calls Egypt, *matrem artium, the mother of arts.* But it was famous, especially, for the knowledge of the motions of the heavenly bodies: for he saith, (lib. i. Saturnal. cap. 15.) "Primos omnium cœlos scrutari et metiri ausos fuisse;" *that they were the first who attempted to search and measure the heavens:* for which the great serenity of their air gave them opportunity. As for their civil prudence, it is sufficiently indicated in the words of Isaiah, xix. 11.

Ver. 31. *And he was wiser than all men.*] Of that age wherein he lived. But some extend this to all men that were before him, or should come after him. For in Midrasch Koheleth (upon Eccl. vii. 24.) they thus gloss, "Wiser than *col Adam, all men* (this is the first Adam), and than Ethan (this is Abraham), and than Heman (this is Moses)." But Maimonides discreetly confines the words to the men of that age, whom he mentions, Ethan, Heman, &c. and will by no means allow him to have been wiser than Moses. (See More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 4.)

Than Ethan the Ezrahite, than Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda.] If these were the sons of Zerah the son of Judah, mentioned 1 Chron. ii. 6. then it is not true that Solomon is compared only with the wise men of his age; for these lived long before him. And the two former are thought to have been endued with the spirit of prophecy, being the authors, as some think, of two psalms. For Psalm lxxxviii. is said to be an instructive Psalm of Heman the Ezrahite, and the next (lxxxix.) of Ethan the Ezrahite. Of this opinion is Dr. Lightfoot. But it is more probable that other men are here meant; for we read of Heman, the grandchild of Samuel, 1 Chron. vi. 33. who was also a prophet, 1 Chron. xxv. 5. and in the same time there was one Ethan, a Levite of the posterity of Merari, 1 Chron. vi. 46. who is joined with Heman and Asaph as principal singers, 1 Chron. xv. 17. Now the forementioned psalms may more reasonably be ascribed to them; there being express mention of David and his kingdom in one of them: and then Solomon is compared only with the wise men of his own time, and not with those that lived before Moses. They that think otherwise of these men, were misled by the Jews, who would have some psalms to have been composed before David. This they began to suppose (as a most learned friend of mine, Dr. Alix, hath observed to

me) after the times of the apostles, as Justin Martyr affirms in his Apology, p. 76.

The sons of Mahol.] This confutes those that make them the sons of Zerah: unless we suppose him to have had two names, as it must be confessed was common among the Jews. And this last name might be given him, because he was a skilful musician: for *Mahol* signifies a *pipe.*

And his fame was in all nations round about.] All the neighbouring countries heard the fame of his wisdom.

Ver. 32. *And he spake three thousand proverbs.*] Being an excellent moral philosopher, as well as a natural. St. Jerome thinks these are those we read in the book of the Proverbs, which doth not contain so many: but is more probable than what Josephus affirms, that he wrote three thousand books of Proverbs: which is an extravagant conceit; for the Scripture mentions only three thousand proverbs, many of which we must confess to have been lost, as other composures of his are.

And his songs were a thousand and five.] He was a great poet also: for anciently wise men were wont to give good instructions in songs; which made them to be more easily remembered. But none of these compositions were thought to be divinely inspired, but only the *song of songs:* which was therefore joined to the sacred books. The rest were not adapted to stir up a sense of piety; as the Psalms of David were: who is therefore called the *sweet singer of Israel,* 2 Sam. xxiii. 1.

Ver. 33. *And he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall.*] That is, of all sorts of plants, from the greatest to the smallest. For *ezub* (which we commonly translate *hyssop)* seems to be the same with the Ethiopian word *azub,* which signifies *mint;* and is more agreeable to this place, being more directly opposed to the cedar than hyssop: which hath a stalk, and sometimes of great strength, as De Dieu and Job Ludolphus have observed. And for this reason Hottinger (in his Smegma Oriental. p. 580.) takes it for the wall-flower, which is less than hyssop. But Bochartus maintains hyssop to be here meant; of which the Jews reckoned four sorts: and one of them may well be thought to grow upon walls. Though there is no necessity, he thinks, to put that interpretation upon the word *bekir,* which we translate *on the wall:* which may signify, as the particle *beth* doth in many places, *near* or *hard by* the wall. Of Jerusalem, that is, which was encompassed with mountains: and the Arabians observe that hyssop grew in the mountains, especially about Jerusalem. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50.) From Solomon's great skill in the properties and virtues of all plants, Nachmanides makes bold to conclude that he wrote a book of medicine.

And he spake also of beasts, and fowl, and creeping things, and fishes.] This shews the vastness of his learning; which comprehended the whole history of animals, as well as of plants; whose nature and qualities he understood. Some Jews fancy that Aristotle saw these books, and published them in his own name, in his Historia Animalium. It is a rule given by those who write books of civil prudence, that they who apply themselves to the management of public affairs, should not follow other studies; which by their delight may draw their minds too much from business: but Solomon had so vast a genius, that he pursued all manner of knowledge, while he governed his kingdom with great prudence. For he composed a great number of songs, and discoursed of all sorts of creatures, both in the sea and in the land: which belonged to contemplative, not to practical studies. So that in his days the wish of Plato was fulfilled, that "either philosophers might be kings, or kings be philosophers."

Ver. 34. *And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.*] It is a conceit of Kimchi, that kings came from all parts of the countries round about to hear his wisdom; and their people, when they returned, came to their kings to learn what Solomon had said. But this is not the literal sense of the words; nor is it probable that any but the queen of Sheba came in person to hear his wisdom. For they would have been mentioned, as she is. Therefore the plain meaning is, that people came from all the neighbouring nations, being sent by their kings, who heard of his fame. Nay, their own natural desires might carry them to him. For, as Dion Prusæus observes, (Orat. de Regno, p. 6.) there is no spectacle so grateful as a wise and good king. All men flock to see him, and partake, τῆς καλῆς διανοίας καὶ ἀγαθῆς, *of his good and pious mind.* Especially if he be mild and gentle, there is no spectacle so sweet and lovely; insomuch, that they who see him are loath to leave him (as he speaks a little before), and they that hear him, ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἰδεῖν, &c. *are desirous to see him,* more than children are to find their unknown father.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AND Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto king Solomon.*] That is, he sent ambassadors to condole with king Solomon on the death of his father (as the manner was), and to congratulate his accession to the throne. Eupolemus calls this king Suron (as he is called Huram in the book of the Chronicles), and makes mention of those letters which were sent by these ambassadors. (See Eusebius in his Præpar. Evang. lib. ix. cap. 33, 34.)

(For he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father); for Hiram was ever a lover of David.] And therefore was desirous to continue in friendship with his son.

Ver. 2. *And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying.*] There were three embassies passed between them, as Abarbinel observes; for Hiram began, and Solomon returned it; and then Hiram sent to him again, ver. 8. But two only are mentioned in 2 Chron. ii. 3. 11. For Ezra there (as he observes) minded only what concerned the building of the temple; and so omitted the first embassy, which was no more than a compliment.

Ver. 3. *Thou knowest how that David my father could not build a house to the name of the Lord his God, for the wars which were about him on every side, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet.*] This was one reason; but not the chief: for God commanded him to desist, when he had it in design.

Ver. 4. *And now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent.*] Nothing to make him fear any disturbance.

Ver. 5. *And, behold, I purpose to build a house unto the name of the Lord my God.*] For his worship and service.

As the Lord spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build a house unto my name.] This he spake by the prophet Nathan, 2 Sam. vii. 13.

Ver. 6. *Now therefore command them.*] That is, his servants who were skilled in such work.

To hew me cedar-trees.] Which were the most firm and durable, as well as most fragrant of all other.

Out of Lebanon.] Which was, if not all, yet a great part of it within the dominion of Solomon. Who therefore doth not ask trees of him which were his own; but only that his servants should hew and prepare them for his use, which they understood better than the Israelites.

And my servants shall be with thy servants.] To assist them, as they should be directed by them; and to receive the timber from them, and convey it to Solomon, when it was prepared.

And unto thee will I give hire for thy servants, according to all that thou shalt appoint.] Pay them what wages they pleased to demand for their work.

For thou knowest there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like the Sidonians.] Both Tyre and Sidon were now under one and the same king, and both of them very ingenious in mechanics; especially the Sidonians: whom Homer calls πολυδαιδάλους, excellent artists in divers things. For he ascribes to them all the neater sort of work, both in his Iliads and his Odyssey, as Bochartus observes, in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 35. By which arts they grew very rich, in a time of long peace, which they enjoyed, as we learn from Judg. xviii. 7. where the Sidonians are made the example of those that lived very securely. But as for the Israelites, they did not mind manufactures, but applied themselves wholly to agriculture and feeding of cattle. There had been most admirable workmen among them, who knew how to cut and engrave precious stones, to cast and work up metals, &c. but this was before they came into the land of Canaan, in the time of Moses, when Bezaleel and Aholiab excelled in many different arts, which were necessary for the work of the tabernacle. But the Scripture acquaints us, that they had their skill by inspiration from God; and it doth not appear that they had any successors; so that in the time of Solomon there were no professed artificers who could undertake the work of the temple.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass, that when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly.*] Which demonstrates a more than ordinary friendship which he had for king David and the people of Israel.

And said, Blessed be the Lord this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people.] If he was not become a proselyte to the Jews' religion (which one would have expected should have been recorded if he had), yet he had a great veneration for the God of Israel, who was properly called the Lord: and, it is likely, he worshipped him together with his own God.

Ver. 8. *And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for: and I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir.*] The word which we translate *fir*, others think signifies *pine* or *cypress*. For fir seems not so fit for this work, being a light wood, and not durable, and apt to take fire. Their conjecture is most reasonable, who think it was a kind of *cedar:* and therefore comprehended under that name, ver. 6. where Solomon desires of him only, that his servants might hew him *cedar-trees.*

Ver. 9. *My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea.*] The Mediterranean Sea; in which his city stood.

And I will convey them by sea in floats.] Some think they were tied together, and drawn in the water by vessels; as the manner now frequently is: but they wanted not vessels wherein to convey them; for Diodorus Siculus saith, (lib. vi.) that Sidon had in his time, τριήρεις καὶ πεντήρεις πλείους τῶν ἑκατὸν, *more than a hundred three-oar and five-oar vessels belonging to it:* and that city was but two thousand furlongs from Tyre, as Strabo saith.

Unto the place that thou shalt appoint me.] Which was Joppa: a famous sea-port in the country of Israel, (2 Chron. ii. 16.)

And will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them.] When they were landed in that place.

And thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household.] For, living in barren islands, they wanted corn; though they had plenty of money; being great merchants. And in aftertimes, it appears, they were supported by provisions from Judea, (Acts xii. 20.)

Ver. 10. *And Hiram gave Solomon cedar-trees, and fir-trees, according to all his desire.*] That is, he agreed to give him all that he desired: but the trees were not yet cut down and prepared.

Ver. 11. *And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil.*] In 2 Chron. ii. 10. it is said twenty thousand baths of oil. How *corim* and *bathim* differ I shall not examine; but that place in the Chronicles plainly speaks of what was given to the workmen, who had other things besides (there mentioned) to support them in their labours: but here the prophet speaks of what was given for the use of Hiram's family, as Kimchi and Ralbag solve this seeming contradiction. Abarbinel hath another solution. (See Buxtorf's Vindicæ Hebr. Veritatis, par. ii. cap. 2. p. 424.)

Thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.] During their lives.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom as he promised.*] His wisdom appeared more and more in all his transactions.

And there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together.] It was lawful in ancient times, before the law of Moses was given, to make leagues with strangers to their religion for their mutual benefit: as appears by the story of Jacob and Laban, Isaac and Abimelech (though some doubt whether he was an idolater), and the law of Moses made no alteration, as Grotius observes, lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 16. sect. 9. If Hiram therefore worshipped other gods, Solomon might notwithstanding make a league with him, (insomuch that Hiram calls him brother, ix. 13.) he being none of the seven nations of Canaan.

Ver. 13. *And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men.*] To cut down the trees which Hiram's servants were to hew.

Ver. 14. *And sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses; a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home.*] That they might not be tired with their labour; nor neglect their own families while they were employed abroad.

And Adoniram was over the levy.] Took care to raise them, and to see them disposed according to Solomon's order. (See iv. 6.)

Ver. 15. *And Solomon had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens.*] *viz.* Porters, carters, seamen, and such-like.

And fourscore thousand that were hewers in the mountains.] That is, hewers of stone, for timber was hewed by Hiram's servants in Lebanon. And these hundred and fifty thousand were not Israelites, as the thirty thousand beforementioned were; but strangers of other nations, as may be gathered from ix. 21, 22. It may seem strange to some, that so many men should be employed about the building of so small a place as the temple was: but they must consider that there were many other works besides which Solomon designed, and which he finished; (ix. 15.) for which we read of no other preparation of materials but what was now made.

Ver. 16. *Besides the chief of Solomon's officers which were over the work, three thousand and three hundred, which ruled over the people that wrought in the work.*] In 2 Chron. ii. 18. they are said to have been three thousand and six hundred: for three hundred were overseers even of the three thousand three hundred, who were to oversee the rest. That is, superior officers, who surveyed the whole, as Kimchi observes. Or, as Abarbinel takes it, there were three hundred supernumeraries, who were employed in the more exquisite sort of work: or when any of the other failed, were ready to supply their places.

Ver. 17. *And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house.*] All things being now prepared, Solomon himself seems to have been present at the laying of the foundation of the house; which was not only very strong, but also very magnificent. For he caused stones of great bigness to be laid for the foundation, and some of great price, (such as marble, some think, see vii. 10.) and those also hewn and polished, not rough, that they might lie more regularly and even: which shews the nobleness of his mind, in making that which was not exposed to open view suitable to that which was seen.

Ver. 18. *And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them.*] It seems Solomon's servants learned of Hiram's; or at least were directed by them to assist in the work.

And the stone-squarers.] Or the Giblites, as it is in the margin, who are mentioned in Josh. xiii. 5. being Phœnicians, inhabitants of Gabala, a promontory mentioned by Pliny, (see Psal. lxxxiii. 7.) who were the most excellent artists in those parts.

So they prepared timber and stones to build the house.] Made all ready not only to lay the foundation, but to build the house.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt.*] These years are variously computed by the Jewish doctors; with which I shall not trouble the reader: but only observe, that they are plainly divided into two intervals, by the words of Jephthah to the Ammonites, Judg. xi. 26. where he tells them the Israelites had dwelt in the land of Canaan three hundred years. Unto which if we add the forty years wherein they wandered in the wilderness, there were three hundred and forty years past at that time, since they came out of Egypt. And so the other interval from thence unto the building of the temple was a hundred and forty years: which is not hard to make out, according to Sir John Marsham's computation. (See my annotations on that place of the book of Judges.)

In the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel.] But why did he not begin the work sooner, according to the command of his father David, who left him all things necessary, gold, silver, brass, &c. for the building of it; and also a draught of it: so that he might have begun when he began to reign? To which Abarbinel answers, that Solomon would not make use of what his father had prepared, but resolved to build the house at his own cost and charge; and put into the treasury of the Lord's house, that which David had dedicated to this work; (vii. 51.) and therefore he stood in need of four years' time, to gather so much gold and silver as was necessary to defray the charges of this work.

In the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord.] Either to lay the foundation of it, or to build upon the foundation beforementioned.

Ver. 2. *And the house which king Solomon built for the Lord.*] For his worship and service: and wherein his Divine presence might dwell among them, (ver. 13.)

The length of it was sixty cubits.] Forty of which belonged to the holy place; and twenty to the most holy.

And the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits.] The length and breadth of it was twice as big (Abarbinel and others observe) as the tabernacle of Moses: which was in length but thirty cubits, and in breadth but ten. Whereas the temple was twenty cubits wide through the whole, and sixty long: besides the porch. When it is said the height was thirty cubits, it must be understood of the holy place: for the holy of holies was only twenty. (See ver. 20.) And so the height of the holy place was three times more than it was in the tabernacle: for his temple was to resemble a high tower; having chambers above it, in three stories one above another, as the Jewish doctors observe. (See 1 Chron. xxviii. 11.)

Ver. 3. *And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house.*] He gives no account of the height of it: but in 2 Chron. iii. 4. Ezra seems to say, it was a *hundred and twenty cubits.* Which words Kimchi imagines relate to the porch alone: but Abarbinel wonders how this could come into his head; when this height belongs to the whole house. For if it belonged only to the porch, then nothing is there said of the house itself: and besides, it immediately follows that he *overlaid it with pure gold.* Which is not true of the porch (for that was not overlaid with gold) but only of the house of God. Which, from the foundation to

the covering of it, was thirty cubits high; and above that covering were three stories of chambers, which were ninety cubits: and so in all the height of the house was a hundred and twenty.

Ver. 4. *And for the house he made windows of narrow lights.*] Or, as it is in the margin, *broad within and narrow without.* By which means the house was better secured from the weather; and yet had lights enough. See Casaubon upon Athenæus, p. 363. where he observes, the Greeks call such windows τοξικὰς, "fenestras longas et angustas, ad emittenda tela, quam ad lucem admittendam factas;" *long and narrow windows made to shoot out weapons, than to let in light.* And he translates these Hebrew words, *fenestras, prospectu clausas,* viz. from the outward part.

Ver. 5. *And against the wall of the house.*] Or, *joining to it,* as it is in the margin: for the beams were not fastened in the walls of the house, as we read in the next verse; but a wooden wall, some think, went round the house, unto which these chambers were fastened.

He built chambers round about, against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the oracle.] But not of the porch where the entrance into the house was. It appears out of Ezekiel and Josephus, as Peter Martyr observes, that there were twelve of these chambers on the south side, and as many on the north; and six on the west.

And he made chambers round about.] In the Hebrew, he made *ribs:* by which some understand galleries. Which encompassed all the forenamed chambers, as our ribs do the entrails of our bodies. Without which there could not have been a convenient passage to the several chambers: which were made to serve the priests to lay their garments in, and wherein they rested, and ate of the sacrifices, and other uses.

Ver. 6. *The nethermost chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad.*] It appears by ver. 10. that they were but five cubits high, and built over one another three stories, increasing in breadth, every story, one cubit, by the contrivance which follows.

For without in the wall of the house he made narrowed rests round about.] In the margin we translate it, *narrowings* or *rebatements.* By which seem to be meant, that the wall to which they were adjoined was thicker below and above narrower: so that there was more space to make the upper chambers wider.

That the beams should not be fastened to the walls of the house.] But in that outward wall which I mentioned before, made of wood: for he would have no holes made in the wall of the temple. (See L'Empereur upon Codex Middoth, p. 147, 148. and Dr. Lightfoot of the Temple, p. 40.)

Ver. 7. *And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither.*] So fitted for their several uses and places, that they might be joined together, without any other labour, by putting them one by, or upon, another.

So that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was in building.] The sense is plain, that the stones were laid without any noise, there being nothing to be done but to join them together. But the Jews are so foolish as to fancy, that they were not hewn nor planed by any instrument before they came thither; but a worm called *samir,* which God created on purpose, did the business: and that the stones of their own accord came to the temple; and there the angels laid them in their place and order. (See L'Empereur upon Codex Middoth, p. 183.) Which fable arose from somebody that did not understand the word *samir,* which signifies a very hard stone called *smiris* (as Bochartus hath observed), with which stones might be cut and polished as diamonds are. (See Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. vi. cap. 11.) An emblem this was, as all interpreters note, of that peace and quiet which should be in the Christian church, where all things should be done without contention. "Utinam Deus hoc tandem aliquando elargiatur, ut omnes in domo suo idem dicamus et sentiamus," as P. Martyr prays upon this place.

Ver. 8. *The door of the middle chamber.*] By which they were to go into the middle row of chambers.

Was in the right side of the house.] On the south side, which in Hebrew is called the *right side,* because, when men look towards the east, the south is on their right hand. Some think there was the like door in the north; but it is more likely, that one door served to carry them round to all the chambers.

And they went up with winding stairs into the middle chamber.] That they might take up the less room.

And out of the middle into the third.] There was the like pair of stairs into the third story.

Ver. 9. *So he built the house, and finished it.*] That is, the walls of the house.

And also covered the house.] He also covered the top of it.

With beams and boards of cedar.] In the margin, the *vaultings and the ceilings* of cedar. That is, the roof was an arch within, which made it look more noble, though without it was flat.

Ver. 10. *And then he built chambers against all the house five cubits high.*] The word *then* is not in the Hebrew; and being omitted the sense is plain, that he gives an account of the height of these chambers, as before (ver. 6.) of the breadth. But it is very briefly; and we are to understand that those below, and those in the middle, and those above, were every one of an equal height; *viz.* five cubits. So they were fifteen cubits in all: which was five less than the height of the house, for that was twenty cubits. Otherwise there would have been no room for the windows: which, I suppose, were above all these chambers, in the top of the house.

Ver. 11. *And the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying.*] By the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite, as the Jews say, in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 20. For it is not said that God appeared to him now, as he did iii. 5. and ix. 2, 3. In which latter place it is said God appeared to him, *the second time:* which is a proof (as Abarbinel notes) that now God did not appear to him, but spake to him by a prophet.

Ver. 12. *Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father.*] See 2 Sam. vii. 13. Here Abarbinel makes a query, why this prophecy is inserted in the middle of the work, which might seem to have been more proper in the beginning, or after it was ended: but Solomon laying the founda-

tion, and raising the building very firm and strong, which might last to many generations, God would not have him presume upon its duration, unless he and the people of Israel were obedient to him: and therefore told him he had better not proceed, nor be at any further charge, unless he intended to be a good man, and observe all his laws. And the continuance of this house, and of God's presence among them, depending on this, plainly signified, that let him build it ever so strong it should be demolished, if he proved disobedient.

Ver. 13. *And I will dwell among the children of Israel.*] As he had done in the tabernacle, (Exod. xxv. 8.)

And I will not forsake my people Israel.] But protect them in the good land he had given them.

Ver. 14. *So Solomon built the house, and finished it.*] God spake the foregoing words, while he was building it, that he might desist, if he did not intend to be obedient to him. But these words import, that notwithstanding this admonition, he went on to build the house, as magnificent and durable as he intended; resolving to keep God's commandments.

Ver. 15. *And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar.*] He wainscotted, as we now speak, the whole house with cedar.

Both the floor of the house, and the walls of the ceiling.] Or, as we translate it in the margin, From the floor of the house, unto the walls of the ceiling. That is, from the bottom to the top.

And he covered them on the inside with wood.] The word *them* is not in the Hebrew. Which if we retain, it relates to the walls of the ceiling: that is, to the top of the house, which in the inside was covered with wood, (ver. 9.)

And covered the floor of the house with planks of fir.] Or, with another sort of cedar, which was a great deal firmer and more lasting than fir. (See chap. v. 8.)

Ver. 16. *And he built twenty cubits on the sides of the house.*] The *house* here meant is the most holy place: for he had spoken of the other part of the house, called the sanctuary, in the foregoing words.

Both the floor and the walls with boards of cedar.] Or, as the foregoing verse, from the floor to the walls of the ceiling.

He even built them for it within, even for the oracle, even for the most holy place.] Here he explains what he meant by the *house* in the beginning of the verse. And this was most properly *the house* of all the parts of the temple: because here the Divine Glory inhabited, and from hence God gave answer, when he was consulted. It is called *Debir:* as the outward house is called *Hechal.*

Ver. 17. *And the house.*] That is, the holy place, as the next words explain it.

That is, the temple before it.] The part of the house which was before the most holy place. In the Hebrew the words are *before my face:* that is, before the place where the Divine Glory appeared.

Was forty cubits long.] As long again as the most holy place. (See ver. 2. 16.)

Ver. 18. *And the cedar of the house within was carved with knops.*] Of an oblong figure, like an egg, as Forsterus thinks, comparing this place with 2 Kings iv. where there is the like word, and there translated *gourds.*

And open flowers.] Not buds, but flowers, spread and full-blown.

All was cedar; there was no stone seen.] This relates, I suppose, to the knops and flowers, which were all of cedar: and so doth not contradict 2 Chron. iii. 5.

Ver. 19. *And the oracle he prepared in the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the Lord.*] In the innermost part of the house he fitted the most holy place to receive the ark of God. It seems to be called the innermost part, because it was furthest from the entrance into the building. The Jewish doctors have a conceit, that this signifies a room which he made under ground (under the floor of the oracle), where the ark might be hid, in case the house should be laid desolate. And he made this cave in very deep and winding burrows, putting a stone upon the mouth of it, upon which the ark stood. Here Josiah they fancy hid the ark, and the pot of manna, and the rod of Aaron, and the holy oil, where they were found after their return from Babylon. For which story there is no foundation; and it contradicts what they all acknowledge, that there was no ark in the second temple. It is far more reasonable to think, that by *debir,* which we translate *oracle,* is here meant the partition which separated the holy place from the most holy: which Solomon is here said to have prepared or established, *in the midst of the house,* as the words are in the Hebrew. This Gousset hath made probable: though it appears from ver. 23. (where the cherubims are said to be *within the oracle*), that this word signifies not only the partition which made the separation, but the place itself, which was separated thereby from the sanctuary, to be God's dwelling-place.

Ver. 20. *And the oracle in the fore-part.*] That is, in the innermost part beforementioned: which is also called the fore-part, because it was before him that entered into the house.

Was twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof.] It was a perfect square.

And he overlaid it with pure gold.] Not merely gilt it, but covered it with plates of gold: for the gold amounted to six hundred talents, as Ezra saith, 2 Chron. iii. 8.

And so covered the altar.] Of incense, which was before it in the holy place.

Which was of cedar.] Or, *he covered the altar with cedar,* that the gold might the better lie upon it.

Ver. 21. *So Solomon overlaid the house with pure gold.*] That is, the most holy place (called the oracle in the foregoing verse), which he made as sumptuous as he could for the Divine residence.

And he made a partition by the chains of gold.] The most holy place was separated from the sanctuary by a partition: before which there was a veil also, which hung upon golden chains. Thus this passage is to be understood, for the partition itself did not depend upon chains.

And he overlaid it with gold.] That is, overlaid the partition.

Ver. 22. *And the whole house he overlaid with gold.*] This is meant of the sanctuary, which was overlaid with gold, as well as the oracle.

Until he had finished all the house.] Some think the very chambers, which were without the house, were likewise made thus splendid. But I see no ground to affirm it.

Also the altar, that was before the oracle, he covered with gold.] That is, the altar of incense; thence called the *golden*

altar: which was in the upper end of the sanctuary, near the entrance in the oracle. This he covered with cedar, (ver. 20.) and now overlaid with gold.

Ver. 23. *And within the oracle he made two cherubims of olive-tree, each ten cubits high.*] These were different from those made by Moses, which were of solid gold: and arose out of each end of the mercy-seat; being of one piece with it, and looking one upon the other, (Exod. xxv. 18, 19.) But these were made of olive-wood; or, as it is in the Hebrew, of *tree of oil.* For many such sorts of wood there were besides olive; as pine, cedar, &c. And these two are plainly distinguished; olive and oily-wood, in Nehem. viii. 15. Here it may be proper to note, that the word *debir* (which we constantly translate *oracle*) comes from *debar,* which signifies to *speak;* because God, who dwelt between the cherubims, declared his mind from hence, when he was consulted by the high-priest with *urim* and *thummim:* and it still retained this name (though we never read of any answer by *urim* and *thummim* while this temple stood), because it had been the place from whence God had been wont to speak to the high-priest. I have observed elsewhere, that there might be the use of *urim* and *thummim* in this temple, though it be not recorded: but it is highly probable, that upon their rejecting the government of God, and turning the theocracy into a human government by kings, God ceased to direct and govern them by that Divine oracle. During the reign of David, indeed, there is some footsteps of it, their new government by kings being not yet well established: so that we may think there was a mixture of the theocracy still with it, as may be gathered from 2 Sam. ii. 1. iii. 19. 23. xxi. 1. But after that, there is not the least glimpse of it; but they inquired of God by the prophets, 1 Kings xxii. 3. 2 Kings iii. 11. 29. xxii. 14. where the high-priest himself, being sent by king Josiah to inquire of God, went to Huldah the prophetess. Which is a demonstration, that the answer by *urim* and *thummim* ceased, when God's government was cast off by them: to which that oracle properly appertained.

Ver. 24. *And five cubits was the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing to the uttermost part of the other wing was ten cubits.*] Whereas those of Moses were only so long as to cover the mercy-seat; which was but two cubits and a half in length, (Exod. xxv. 17.)

Ver. 25. *And the other cherub was ten cubits: both the cherubims were of one measure and one size.*] So that they filled the whole breadth of the house, which was twenty cubits.

Ver. 26. *The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was it of the other cherub.*] They stood upon their feet, upon the floor of the house, (2 Chron. iii. 13.) each being ten cubits high, as was said at the first, (ver. 23.) that is, half as high as the house.

Ver. 27. *And he set the cherubims within the inner house.*] With their faces towards the sanctuary: so that they looked upon him that entered into the oracle.

And they stretched forth the wings of the cherubims.] Or rather (as in the margin) *the cherubims stretched forth their wings.*

So that the wings of the one touched the one wall, and the wings of the other touched the other wall.] That is, the south and the north walls of the house. Whereas the wings of those cherubims that Moses made stretched from east to west: for they looked one upon the other over the mercy-seat.

And their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.] Where they must needs meet, being five cubits long on each side, (ver. 24.) and the house twenty cubits wide.

Ver. 28. *And he overlaid the cherubims with gold.*] So that there were four cherubims in the most holy place of Solomon's temple. Two lesser made by Moses of massy gold; and two larger made by Solomon, overlaid with gold. Those made by Moses were part of the mercy-seat, and inseparable from it; these of Solomon seem to have spread their wings over it, being added only for the greater ornament and glory of God's house. So Abarbinel observes, that Solomon did not make a new ark, which was the only thing made by Moses, which Solomon did not imitate and make more glorious. But this he durst not presume to open, and to take out the book of the law, and put it into an ark of his own making. It being unlawful for him to touch it, and therefore he let it remain, with its cover, the mercy-seat, and the cherubims belonging to it; and only placed these new cherubims over it, as a covering to it, for the greater beauty of the house.

Ver. 29. *And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers, within and without.*] Both in the most holy place, and in the sanctuary.

Ver. 30. *And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, both within and without.*] This hath the same meaning with the foregoing words: that the floor of the whole house, both the inner and outward part, was overlaid with gold, which made it wonderfully splendid and magnificent.

Ver. 31. *And for the entrance of the oracle he made doors of olive-tree.*] Or some tree that was oily. (See Dr. Lightfoot of the Temple, p. 87.)

The lintel and side-posts were a fifth part of the wall.] These words are very obscure; for the words *of the wall* are not in the Hebrew, but only *a fifth.* Which may be understood to signify, that they held the proportion of a fifth part of the doors. But there are those who think the meaning is, that this gate was the fifth in number belonging to the house. The first they make account was that which let into the court of the people; the second, into the court of the priests; the third, was the door of the porch; the fourth, of the holy place; and this fifth of the oracle. And accordingly they interpret these words, ver. 33. *the fourth.*

Ver. 32. *The two doors also were of olive-tree.*] Or, as it is in the margin, *the leaves of the doors:* explaining what sort of doors they were, *viz.* folding-doors; as it follows, ver. 34.

And he carved upon them carvings of cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims and palm-trees.] The meaning seems to be, that he laid plates of gold upon the doors of the house, and gilt the cherubims, trees, and flowers.

Ver. 33. *So also he made for the doors of the temple.*] That is, of the holy place.

Posts of olive-tree, a fourth part of the wall.] See ver. 31.

Ver. 34. *And the two doors were of fir-tree.*] Or, of a kind of cedar; as was before observed.

The two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding.] Whereby they took up less room, when they were opened.

Ver. 35. *And he carved thereon cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers; and covered them with gold fitted upon the carved work.*] This was said before, ver. 32. therefore repeated, I suppose, to signify that both sides of the doors were thus carved and covered with gold. I have not meddled with the mystical signification of any of these things: in which men's fancies differ very much; though in one thing they all agree: that by the *cherubims*, which were so plentiful in every part of the house, the hosts of angels are represented, there attending upon the Divine Majesty, as his ministers to execute his pleasure.

Ver. 36. *And he built the inner court.*] Which was that wherein the priests officiated.

With three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar-beams.] That the people who were in the outward court might see what the priests did: the wall which separated the priests from the court of the people being but three cubits high (as most understand these words); for the cedar was not laid upon the top of the wall, but was the facing of it within side. The priests likewise from hence might speak and deliver any message from God to the people.

I conclude this account of Solomon's works with an observation of Abarbinel: That this Divine writer doth not mention several things belonging to the house of God, as the *altar of burnt-offering*, the *candlestick*, the *table*, the *laver*, (though they were ten times as many as Moses made, see 2 Chron. iii.) because his intention was only to explain the great things which he did, and such as wrought in men admiration: not things in which there was no majesty, nor any great cost bestowed upon them. Therefore he takes notice of the great and precious stones (that is, stones of great price) wherewith he laid the foundation of the house, (ver. 17.) and the rest of the things mentioned in this chapter; which were very chargeable, and which shewed the greatness of his mind, his wisdom, prophecy (as his words are), and riches: but other things, as the court of the temple, &c. he passes over compendiously. But this observation is not altogether true; for though this Divine writer does not take notice of every thing made by Solomon in this chapter; yet in the next, I think, he omits nothing, save only the brazen altar of burnt-offering, which is not mentioned in this book among Solomon's works; but taken particular notice of in 2 Chron. iv. 1. where its large dimensions are described. All other things, as the lavers, the candlestick, the table, &c. are here mentioned in the following chapter.

Ver. 37. *In the fourth year was the foundation of the house laid, in the month Zif.*] He repeats this (which was said ver. 1.) to subjoin in the next words, how long the house was in building.

Ver. 38. *And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul (which is the eighth month).*] As Zif was the second.

Was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it.] Every thing was completely finished, according to his design; without any need of addition or alteration.

So was he seven years in building it.] And a half: but the lesser number is omitted, as is usual in these books, and in other authors: particularly half a year is omitted in the reign of David, who is only said to have reigned forty years. (See the second chapter of this book, ver. 11.) And considering the curiosity of the work, and the scarcity of men of skill, it is no wonder that it was so long before it was perfected: but rather the alacrity and diligence of Solomon (as Abarbinel notes) is to be admired; who finished this work with all the speed he could make; when he was almost as many more years in building his own house, which was not so costly and sumptuous. An account of which is given us, in the beginning of the next chapter: where the author tells us he built two houses, and sets down the dimensions of one of them.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *BUT Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house.*] He did not begin to build his own house till he had finished the house of God; that nothing might hinder that holy work. This appears from ix. 10. where we read he was twenty years in building both.

Ver. 2. *And he built also the house of the forest of Lebanon.*] The forenamed house was in Jerusalem: near to which he built another, in a cool, shady mountain; which made it resemble Mount Lebanon. And here he dwelt in summer, as in the other in winter. But it is not likely it was in Mount Lebanon; for that was in the very extremity of his kingdom, where he would not have set his throne; (as he seems to have done in this house, ver. 7.) for that was too far distant from the usual place of his residence. And for the same reason he would not have there placed the golden shields that he made; as we find he did, x. 17. It was therefore near to Jerusalem, (appears from xiv. 25, 26.) and called by the name of the Forest of Lebanon: just as many pleasant and delightful places in that country were called Carmel. Because it was in a lofty place like Lebanon; and the trees which grew there made it very shady and cool.

The length thereof was a hundred cubits.] Which was not longer than the house of God, if we take in all the courts belonging to it.

And the height thereof thirty cubits.] The height of the first story was so many cubits: upon which, in all likelihood, there was another of the like height.

Upon four rows of cedar pillars.] Which supported the building; and made four walks under it.

With cedar-beams upon the pillars.] Upon which was laid the floor of the next story.

Ver. 3. *And it was covered with cedar above upon the beams, that lay on forty-five pillars, fifteen in a row.*] So there were but three rows of pillars in the second story, which were sufficient for the support of the roof. And we may guess from hence that there were threescore pillars below.

Ver. 4. *And there were windows in three rows, and light was against light.*] Directly opposite one against the other, which we call thorough lights.

In three ranks.] Or, on three sides of the house, the south, the north, and the east; that it might have the freer air. On the west side was the porch, and so no windows were there. Others interpret it, the windows were exactly one under another in three rows.

Ver. 5. *And all the doors and posts were square with the windows.*] The figures of the doors and of the windows were one and the same; *viz.* square.

And light was against light in three ranks.] This is meant of the smaller windows that were over the doors; which, it is likely, were also square.

Ver. 6. *And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits.*] This was for his guard, and for people to walk in who came about business (as well as for state and ornament), and therefore was covered to keep them dry in rainy weather.

And the porch was before them.] That is, before the pillars of the great house, before spoken of.

And the other pillars and the thick beams were before them.] That is, they were directly opposite one to the other. Or, if we follow the marginal translation (*according to them*), the sense is, that it had its pillars and beams just like the great house; and, it is likely, rooms built upon those beams for his servants.

Ver. 7. *Then he made a porch for the throne where he might judge, even the porch of judgment.*] So it was called, because here he sat to hear and determine the causes that people brought before him. With whom he would not have his house cumbered; but made this porch without the house, where he dispatched such business.

And it was covered with cedar from one side to the other.] In the Hebrew, *from floor to floor:* that is, from the ground to the roof of the porch.

Ver. 8. *And his house where he dwelt had another court within the porch, which was of the like work.*] There was a court between the porch and the house, which may be called the inner court; and then another beyond the porch, which may be called the outward. So that it stood between two courts, which were both alike.

Solomon also built a house for Pharaoh's daughter.] Near, I suppose, to his own house; she being a person of the highest quality, and his first wife.

(Which he had taken to wife).] See iii. 1.

Like unto this porch.] Not for figure, or bigness; but for the materials of which it was built.

Ver. 9. *All these were of costly stones, according to the measure of hewed stones, sawed with saws, within and without.*] All the forementioned buildings were polished on both sides: so that they appeared both within and without; that is, both on the inside which was towards the palace of Solomon, and on the outside which was towards the great court.

Even from the foundation unto the coping.] From the bottom of the building to the top of it.

And so on the outside towards the great court.] Not only on the front of the house, but on the back side of it, towards the great court.

Ver. 10. *And the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones; of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits.*] By costly stones (mentioned here and in the foregoing and following verses) are not to be understood precious stones; but stones that being bigger and firmer, and better polished than others, were of greater price: as Bochartus explains it, both here and v. 17.

Ver. 11. *And above were costly stones (after the measure of hewed stones), and cedars.*] The roof was finished after the same manner; with stones and cedar-beams.

Ver. 12. *And the great court round about.*] *viz.* Of Solomon's palace.

Was with three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar-beams.] Just like the inner court of the house of the Lord; (vi. 36.) and so the following words are to be understood.

Both for the inner court of the house of the Lord.] Or rather, *as for the inner court of the Lord's house;* for so the particle *vau* sometimes signifies.

And for the porch of the house.] Of Solomon's own house.

Ver. 13. *And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre.*] For though he was an Israelite by birth, yet he dwelt at Tyre: and it is likely had the privileges of that city, and so was one of king Hiram's subjects. And therefore in 2 Chron. ii. 13. that king saith he sent him to Solomon: that is, granted his request, that this man might come and serve him. And accordingly Solomon sent for him, and fetched him to Jerusalem.

Ver. 14. *He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali.*] She herself was of the tribe of Dan, (2 Chron. ii. 14.) but her first husband was of the tribe of Naphtali; by whom she had this son.

And his father was a man of Tyre.] When she was a widow she married a man of Tyre; who is called Hiram's father, because he bred him up, and was the husband of his mother.

A worker in brass.] And in stone, and purple, and a great many other things, as we read in the place abovementioned But *brass* is only mentioned here; because he is going to speak only of such works.

And he was filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all work in brass.] He had an excellent genius to this work; and besides the instructions of his father, it is not improbable that God endued him with great skill in contriving, and also working all manner of work of this sort.

And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work.] He presently found him to be an excellent artist; and so employed him in all his business.

Ver. 15. *And he cast two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high a-piece.*] In 2 Chron. iii. 15. it is said, he made two pillars of thirty-five cubits high: which doth not contradict these words, it being evident that there he speaks of both the pillars (as Abarbinel observes), which were thirty-five cubits. But here he speaks of them singly, which were each but eighteen cubits. Both of them, indeed, made thirty-six cubits; but one cubit must be allowed for the basis of each, which is not considered in the book of Chronicles. This seems a better solution of this small difficulty than that of L'Empereur, in his preface to Codex Middoth, where he saith, one of these writers speaks of the common cubit, and the other of the sacred, which was double to the common. Each pillar, therefore, he thinks, was eighteen sacred cubits, but thirty-five common; to which one common cubit must be added for the basis. But this distinction of common and sacred cubits is not allowed by every body.

And a line of twelve cubits did compass either of them about.] So they were four cubits in thickness. (See Dr. Lightfoot, of the Temple, p. 61—63. and L'Empereur's preface to Benjamin Tudelensis.) Eupolemus, a heathen writer, takes notice of these pillars, and says they were as

high as the temple. (Eusebius, lib. ix. Præpar. Evang. cap. 34.)

Ver. 16. *And he made two chapiters of molten brass, to set upon the top of the pillars: the height of the one chapiter was five cubits, and the height of the other was five cubits.*] This account of them Ezra also gives, 2 Chron. iii. 15. Yet in 2 Kings xxv. 17. they are said to be but three cubits. But it is to be observed, that it immediately follows in that place, there was *a wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapiters;* which in all made five cubits; and are all here comprehended in the word *chapiter.*

Ver. 17. *And nets of checker-work, and wreaths of chain-work, for the chapiters which were upon the top of the pillars.*] This curious work encompassed the chapiter, and contained, as it were, the pomegranates afterward mentioned; which might be seen through these nets.

Seven for the one chapiter, and seven for the other chapiter.] Some think that each chapiter was adorned with leaves, and flowers, and fruit, in four orders; which were bound about with three chains. But it is very hard to explain this work, which is so very briefly described. (See Dr. Lightfoot, in the forenamed place.)

Ver. 18. *And he made the pillars.*] That is, he finished them in this manner. (See the same author, p. 63.)

And two rows round about upon the one net-work, to cover the chapiters that were upon the top with pomegranates: and so did he for the other chapiter.] There were two rows of pomegranates; which took up one of the five cubits, whereof the chapiter consisted.

Ver. 19. *And the chapiters that were upon the top of the pillars were of lily-work.*] In imitation of lilies.

In the porch.] Such as were in the porch of the temple.

Four cubits.] The other four cubits were of lily-work, except the middle.

Ver. 20. *And the chapiters upon the two pillars had pomegranates also above, over against the belly which was by the net-work.*] This is very obscure, because shortly delivered. But the meaning seems to be, that the lily-work being above and below, at the top and the bottom of the chapiters, the middle cubit (called the belly) was all covered with pomegranates.

And the pomegranates were two hundred, round about upon the other chapiter.] In the book of Jeremiah, lii. 23. it is said that there were ninety-six on a side; but all of them, upon the net-work, were a hundred in all; which Abarbinel thus explains: The pomegranates on the net-work were towards the four quarters of the world, being twenty-four towards each quarter; which in all made ninety-six. And in each angle there being one great pomegranate, they made up the number a hundred.

Ver. 21. *And he set up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name of it Jachin; and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz.*] It is generally thought, that these pillars were made and erected only for ornament; because they supported no building. But Abarbinel's conjecture is not improbable, that Solomon had respect to the pillar of the cloud, and the pillar of fire, that went before them and conducted them in the wilderness, and was the token of the Divine providence over them. These he set at the porch or entrance of the temple (Jachin representing the pillar of the cloud, and Boaz the pillar of fire), praying and hoping that the Divine Light, and the cloud of his glory would vouchsafe to enter in there; and by them God and his providence would dwell among them in this house.

Ver. 22. *And upon the top of the pillars was lily-work.*] This seems to have been said before, (ver. 19.) but the next words, *So was the work of the pillars finished,* shew that this was a new addition, to crown all, after the pillars were erected, as Abarbinel observes.

Ver. 23. *And he made a molten sea.*] The Hebrews call any great collection of waters by the name of a *sea.* So the lake of Gennesaret, and others, are called in the gospel; and here it signifies a great vessel, containing abundance of water. Which served for the washing of the sacrifices, and of the priests and Levites; who washed their hands and their feet; not in it, but with water drawn out of it by pipes or conduits.

Ten cubits from the one brim to the other: and it was round about.] Of a circular figure.

And its height was five cubits.] Beside the height of the oxen whereon it stood.

And a line of thirty cubits did compass it about.] For the diameter being ten cubits, this must be the compass of it. This sea was filled with water by the Gibeonites; who were afterward called Nethinims.

Ver. 24. *And under the brim round about there were knops compassing it.*] They were in the shape of an egg; on the top of every one of which was an ox head; from whose mouth water gushed out: so Abarbinel gathers from 2 Chron. ii. 3. where they are called oxen, from the figure of their head.

Ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about.] So there were three hundred of these knops in all; the sea being thirty cubits round.

The knops were cast in two rows when it was cast.] They were not carved afterward, but cast at first, when the sea was molten. And there being two rows of them, Abarbinel thence concludes there were six hundred in all, one under another. From whence water might flow out of the sea, to wash a great number at a time.

Ver. 25. *And it stood upon twelve oxen.*] Oxen were used not only for drawing the plough, but for carrying burdens upon their backs; as they are still employed among the Indians. Whence Solomon placed the figure of these creatures under his molten sea, as the supporters of it. There was so little danger of their being worshipped, that the meanness of the use to which they served, had made some believe that Solomon made them in contempt of the golden calf, which the Israelites worshipped in the wilderness; and placed them under the sea, that the people might see there was nothing worthy of adoration in these figures. Josephus, indeed, thinks Solomon offended in making these images: but this is confuted by the glory of the Lord filling the temple after it was finished. Which shewed that he approved of all this work; which it is likely was done by his instruction: but some great men think Josephus is in the right.

Three looking towards the north, and three looking towards the west, and three looking towards the south, and three looking towards the east.] This seems to import that this sea was square (the oxen looking towards the four quarters of the world), whereas it is said before, (ver. 25.) that it was round all about. And so it was (as the Jewish interpreters, particularly Abarbinel and Ralbag, expound

this) in the brim of it, it was perfectly round, and so it continued in the two upper cubits: but below the brim (in the three lower cubits) it was square. And, as Kimchi thinks, in the two upper cubits there were no knops; but in the three lower, just above the oxen that supported the sea.

And the sea was set above upon them, and all their hinder parts were inward.] Under the sea, that they might not be seen.

Ver. 26. *And it was a hand-breadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies.*] In the shape of lilies: that is, not plain and straight, but bending downwards, after the manner of those flowers. (See Dr. Lightfoot, of the Temple, p. 230, &c.)

It contained two thousand baths.] A *bath*, being of the same bigness with an *ephah*, (Ezek. xlv. 11.) is thought to contain eight gallons: so that this sea contained five hundred barrels; that is, it had thus much water constantly in it. But if it had been filled up to the brim, it would have held three thousand baths, as we read 2 Chron. iv. 5. which quantity they were not wont to put into it, lest with the wind it should run over. Or, as the most learned of the Jews reconcile these two places, these words in the book of the Kings are to be understood of moist things; but those in the Chronicles of dry; which being heaped up, it would contain a third part more than of things liquid. With which some compare those words of our Saviour, (Luke vi. 38.) "Good measure heaped up, shaken together, and running over."

Ver. 27. *And he made ten bases of brass.*] Tables or stands upon which the lavers (mentioned below, ver. 38.) were to rest. (See Dr. Lightfoot, of the Temple, p. 228, &c.)

Four cubits was the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth, and three cubits the height thereof.] They were made so broad that the lavers might stand more firmly, being each four cubits; but not so high, that the priests might more easily reach to wash the sacrifices in them, (2 Chron. iv. 6.)

Ver. 28. *And the work of the bases was in this manner: they had borders.*] To keep up the lavers from falling.

And the borders were between the ledges:] It is not easy to apprehend what he means by *ledges;* because, as P. Martyr observes, we have no such work in these days.

Ver. 29. *And on the borders that were between the ledges were lions, and oxen, and cherubims.*] Oxen are called *cherubims* in Ezek. x. 14. Therefore the meaning here is, that, besides lions and oxen, there were other cherubims (the figures of eagles perhaps) which adorned these borders.

And upon the ledges there was a base above.] This is so darkly expressed, that I do not apprehend the meaning; unless it be this, that the upper ledge was over the heads of these animals; and the under ledge was that upon which their feet rested, as the next words signify.

And beneath the lions and oxen were certain additions of thin work.] Under these figures there was some other work added (which was not cast together with them), and drawn very thin.

Ver. 30. *And every base had four brazen wheels.*] They run upon wheels like a coach, or chariot; so might easily be removed from place to place, as the convenience of the priests required.

And plates of brass.] Between the wheels and the bases. (See Dr. Lightfoot in the same book, p. 226.)

And the four corners thereof.] For they were square, (ver. 27.)

Had undersetters.] In the Hebrew, *shoulders.* Which were fitly so called, because, as burdens are borne upon men's shoulders, so were the lavers upon these; which supported them, when set upon the bases, and kept them from falling when they run upon the wheels.

Under the laver were undersetters molten, at the side of every addition.] These were molten with the bases, when they were cast.

Ver. 31. *And the mouth of it.*] The bases seem to have been hollow at the top; that the feet of the lavers might enter in, and be fastened there: and this he calls the *mouth* of it.

Within the chapiter and above.] Nothing of a chapiter is mentioned until now: therefore it is hard to know what is meant by it. Many take it for a smaller basis, rising out of the greater; in which was the mouth, or hollow place before spoken of.

Was a cubit.] In height. See ver. 35. where it is said, *on the top of the base was a round compass half a cubit high.* Which seems to be meant of this chapiter, which rose but half a cubit above the base, the other half being below it.

But the mouth thereof was round, after the work of the base, a cubit and a half.] This was the wideness of it.

And also upon the mouth of it were gravings with their borders, four-square, not round.] Though this hollow place, called the mouth, was round within; yet on the outside it was square, and had borders which were engraved.

Ver. 32. *And under the borders were four wheels; and the axle-trees of the wheels were joined to the base; and the height of a wheel was a cubit and half a cubit.*] So that the bottom of the base was not far from the ground.

Ver. 33. *And the work of the wheels was like the work of a chariot-wheel.*] Only the hinder-wheels and the fore-wheels were all of a height.

Their axle-trees, and their naves, and their felloes, and their spokes, were all molten.] Cast together with the wheels.

Ver. 34. *And there were four undersetters to the four corners of one base: and the undersetters were of the very base itself.*] He mentioned the undersetters before, (ver. 30.) Now he relates the number of them; and that they were of the same piece with the base itself; being cast together with it, and not made afterward.

Ver. 35. *And on the top of the base there was a round compass of half a cubit high.*] See ver. 31.

And on the top of the base, the ledges thereof, and the borders thereof, were the same.] Cast altogether at the same time.

Ver. 36. *For on the plates of the ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved cherubims, lions, and palm-trees, according to the proportion of every one, and additions round about.*] In the Hebrew, According *to the nakedness* of every one: which seems to signify that these figures were as big as the void spaces in the plates would admit.

Ver. 37. *After this manner he made the ten bases; all of them had one casting, one measure, and one size.*] They were cast in the same mould; and all of the same bigness and shape.

Ver. 38. *Then made he ten lavers of brass.*] Which were to stand upon the bases forementioned.

One laver contained forty baths.] See ver. 26. From

whence it will appear that each of these lavers contained ten barrels of water.

And every laver was four cubits.] Some think that they were of this height. But these words rather relate to the diameter of them, which was four cubits: and then their compass was twelve cubits.

Upon every one of the ten bases one laver.] The bases being exactly fitted to receive them: for they were each four cubits in length and breadth, (ver. 27.)

Ver. 39. *And he put five on the right side.*] That is, on the south side, (see vi. 8.)

Of the house.] That is, of the court where the priests ministered.

And five on the left side of the house.] That is, on the north side of that court.

And he set the sea on the right side of the house eastward, over against the south.] That is, in the south-east: so that as soon as the priests entered (which they did at the east gate) they might have water to wash their hands and their feet.

Ver. 40. *And Hiram made the lavers, and the shovels, and the basons: so Hiram made an end of all the work that he made king Solomon for the house of the Lord.*] These seem to have been the last things that he made: and so he finished all the work, which he recapitulates, with the addition of some other not mentioned before. *Shovels*, for instance, or *besoms*, wherewith they cleansed the altar from the ashes, that they might not hinder the fire from burning: and *basons*, wherein the priests received the blood of the sacrifices that were offered.

Ver. 41. *The two pillars, and two bowls of the chapiters that were on the top of the two pillars; and the two networks, to cover the bowls of the chapiters that were on the top of the pillars.*

Ver. 42. *And four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, even two rows of pomegranates for one net-work, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters that were upon the pillars.*] Being to sum up all the works he had finished, he now adds the number of pomegranates that were upon the pillars: which had not been mentioned before.

Ver. 43. *And ten bases, and ten lavers upon the bases.*

Ver. 44. *And one sea, and twelve oxen under the sea.*

Ver. 45. *And the pots.*] Pots or caldrons were those vessels, wherein they boiled those sacrifices which were divided between the priest and the people that offered them: that is, *peace-offerings*, that they might eat them before the Lord, and feast with him upon his own meat.

Shovels, and basons.] They are mentioned before, but here I suppose have a different signification (though in the Hebrew the words are the same) from what they had in ver. 40. And the first word signifies *flesh-hooks*, wherewith they took the meat out of the pots: and the second the *platters*, or dishes, into which it was put, to be set before them.

And all these vessels, which Hiram made to king Solomon for the house of the Lord, were of bright brass.] Or polished brass: or, the purest and finest that could be got. The Syriac and Arabic translators render it, *Corinthian brass*. But it is not credible, that it was known in the days of Solomon.

Ver. 46. *In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay-ground between Succoth and Zarthan.*] In the Hebrew the words for *clay-ground* are, *in the thickness of the ground*. That is, the earth was stiff and glutinous, and upon that account more fit to make moulds of all kinds. And in a plain country, such moulds were more easily fixed than on the sides of hills, or steep places.

Ver. 47. *And Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because they were exceeding many: neither was the weight of the brass found out.*] In the Hebrew, *it was not searched*, or inquired into; because it would have been very troublesome to take an exact account of it.

Ver. 48. *And Solomon made all the vessels that pertained unto the house of the Lord.*] He made them all new, except the ark, the mercy-seat, and the cherubims annexed to it.

The altar of gold.] That is, the altar of incense, which stood in the holy place before the oracle.

And the table of gold, whereon the shew-bread was.] That is, all the table-work: there being no less than ten, (2 Chron. iv. 7, 8.) Upon one of which, in all probability, which was more noble than the rest, the shew-bread was placed. Unless we suppose the table which Moses made was preserved for that use; and Solomon added the rest for the greater ornament of the place. And (as Josephus writes) the gold and silver basons were set upon them; together with a vast number of phials.

Ver. 49. *And the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right side, and five on the left, before the oracle.*] He made ten candlesticks instead of one which was in the tabernacle of Moses: because the place was more capacious; and the vessels were not to be removed from place to place as they were before: and therefore there might well be more of them.

The flowers.] Which were wrought upon the candlesticks.

The lamps, and the tongs, of gold.] Wherewith to take coals from the altar of burnt-offering.

Ver. 50. *And the bowls, and the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and the censers, of pure gold.*] The use of these is visible. The first being to keep oil for the lamps; the next to trim them: the *basons* (which were a hundred, as we learn from the book of Chronicles) were to receive the water of sprinkling, and the blood of the sacrifices which was sometimes brought into the most holy place: the *spoons* served to take up the oil: the *censers* were for offering incense; though some translate this word *dish-pans*, wherein the incense was kept. There were other censers of silver, which received the coals from the altar upon all days but the tenth of Tisri (which was the great day of expiation), when the golden censer received them, and by it the most holy place was incensed. On other days it was not employed, but at the altar of incense; where the coals were poured out of the silver censer (which received them from the altar of burnt-offering) into the golden, to burn the incense: as the Talmudists say, both in Codex Joma and Tamid. Where they also say, that the foregoing word *capoth*, which we translate *spoons*, signifies a vessel which contained the *incense* that was to be offered upon the coals in the golden censer. See Braunius, in his Selecta Sacra, lib. ii. cap. 5. where he hath learnedly explained both these words, *caph* and *machtah*, which we translate *spoons* and *censers*, where he hath demonstrated the latter signifies the instrument that received the coals from the altar of burnt-offering, and the former that which had the incense in it to be poured upon them.

And the hinges of gold, both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy place, and for the house, to wit, of the temple.] This shews the vast riches of Solomon, and his great piety: which made him spare no cost to beautify the house of God, and the meanest thing belonging to it. Whereby the people, who were much taken with outward splendour, were preserved from idolatry: for they could go no where and see a place comparable to this of Solomon; there being then nothing in the whole world like to it for riches and glory.

Ver. 51. *So was ended all the work that king Solomon made for the house of the Lord. And Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated; even the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the house of the Lord.*] I observed upon vi. 1. that Abarbinel thinks he would use none of the things that were dedicated by his father; but do all at his own cost and charges. Yet others think these words mean no more, but that all the remaining silver and gold, which David left, and was not spent in this work, Solomon would not employ to his own uses; but religiously preserved in the treasury of the temple. Where the altar of burnt-offering, which Moses made, and some other things, which were now of no use (far better and larger being made), were also laid up, as the tabernacle itself was. For the temple being built, there was no further occasion for the tabernacle; and yet it was fit to preserve it, as a place that had been holy to the Lord.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND Solomon assembled the elders of Israel.*] That is, the judges in their several cities.

And all the heads of the tribes.] Every tribe had one or more principal ruler in it.

And the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel.] The principal persons of every family in those tribes.

Unto king Solomon in Jerusalem.] Where the house of the Lord was now fixed.

That they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion.] For thither David had brought it from the house of Obed-Edom, and made a tabernacle for it, (2 Sam. vi. 12. 17.) until a fixed house should be prepared for it, which was now built upon a neighbouring mountain.

Ver. 2. *And all the men of Israel.*] All the forenamed persons, with their attendants, which, no doubt, were numerous.

Assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.] Here the Targum thus paraphrases, *In the month which anciently was called the first month, but now is the seventh:* and called *Ethanim*, because more sacred solemnities (which were the support and strength of their religion and government) were appointed in this month than in any other. And among the rest the feast of tabernacles; which is here meant, as Kimchi, and Abarbinel, and others think. And upon the occasion of this assembly the Jews observe, in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 15. that "the Schechinah doth not dwell but in the congregation."

Ver. 3. *And all the elders of Israel came.*] All the forementioned great persons were called *elders*, and are here comprehended under that name.

And the priests took up the ark.] The ark had been carried by the priests three times before this: when they went over Jordan; when they encompassed the walls of Jericho; and when David sent it back, when he fled from Absalom, (2 Sam. xv. 29, 30.) It was the office of the Levites to carry the ark upon their shoulders, except upon special occasions: and now they could not, because it was not lawful for them to enter into the holy place, into which it was to be carried, and then into the most holy. It is said, indeed, 2 Chron. v. 4. that *the Levites took it up:* but the meaning is, that they took it up and carried it to the temple, and then the priests took it up, (ver. 6.) and carried it into the holy place.

Ver. 4. *And they brought up the ark of the Lord, and the tabernacle of the congregation.*] Together with the ark, they brought up the tabernacle. But the question is, what tabernacle, whether that made by Moses, which was in Gibeon, (2 Chron. i. 3.) or that made by David, which was at Jerusalem, (2 Sam. vi. 17.) I think the latter is never called *the tabernacle of the congregation*, as the former frequently is. But it may be probably thought that both of them were now carried into the temple, and laid up there; to avoid all danger of superstition and idolatry: and that no worship might be performed any where, but only at this house of God, which he now dedicated to him.

And all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle.] *viz.* The altar of incense, and the table, and the candlestick, and every thing belonging to them: which remained in the tabernacle, when the ark was removed from it.

These did the priests and the Levites bring up.] The priests brought up the ark; and the Levites carried the tabernacle, and the vessels of the sanctuary.

Ver. 5. *And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark.*] When it was brought into the house of God, and settled there; for it is not likely such a multitude of sacrifices as follow, could be offered in the way from Mount Sion to the temple, as some were when David brought it from the house of Obed-Edom to Jerusalem, (2 Sam. vi. 13.)

And sacrificed sheep and oxen, that could not be numbered for multitude.] That is, a vast number; which might have been told, but not easily; as was said before of the weight of the brass employed about the vessels of the house of God, vii. 47. (See there.) Here is no mention of Solomon's dancing before the ark as David did; for all holy men were not alike moved by God; their tempers and conditions being very different. Solomon was now in a state of great tranquillity, and constant pleasure: but David had been disturbed by the stroke upon Uzzah, a little before his great transport of joy, at the safe conduct of the ark to Jerusalem.

Ver. 6. *And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place.*] Before the glory of the Lord filled the house, the priests were permitted to enter into the oracle: but afterward none but the high-priest might approach so near unto the Divine presence, which dwelt there: and he but once a year.

Even under the wings of the cherubims.] Which Solomon

had made. For the cherubims made by Moses were fixed to the mercy-seat, and inseparable from it: and stood together with the ark under these cherubims.

Ver. 7. *For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark, and the staves thereof.*] For they were very large, stretching forth their wings from one side of the house unto the other, (vi. 22. 24, &c.)

Ver. 8. *And they drew out the staves, that the end of the staves were seen out in the holy place before the oracle.*] By the *holy place* is here meant the most holy, where the ark was under the cherubims: which covered both the ark and the staves. But the staves were so drawn out that the ends of them might be seen: whereby the high-priest was directed in the way he should go just before the mercy-seat on the day of expiation; when he went between these two staves to sprinkle the blood before God. See 2 Chron. v. 9. and Buxtorf. in his Arca Fœderis, where he explains both this and the next verse, and gives a large account of drawing out the staves, (p. 96, 97.)

And they were not seen without.] In the sanctuary.

And there they are unto this day.] And in this posture.

Ver. 9. *There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.*] The very same words, in a manner, are repeated, 2 Chron. v. 10. But it is commonly observed that both these places seem to contradict the apostle's words, Heb. ix. 4. For it is said here in these books, that nothing was in the ark save only the two tables of stone: but that there, the pot of manna and Aaron's rod were also in the ark. For so they generally interpret those words ἐν ᾗ, *in which, i. e.* in the ark, στάμνος χρυσῆ, *the golden pot containing the manna*, &c. Many learned men have endeavoured to reconcile these places several ways, which Andreas Sennertus hath collected in a treatise on purpose about it. Which might have been spared by this easy observation, that the preposition ἐν doth not always signify *in*, but *by:* and so the place in the Hebrews is to be rendered, not *in which*, but *by which*. Bochartus hath given a great many instances of such use of the particle *beth* in the Old Testament, (Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 50.) And indeed it is never said there that the pot of manna was laid up in the ark, but "before the Lord and before the testimony;" (Exod. xvi. 33, 34.) and the same is said of Aaron's rod, (Numb. xvii. 4.) Which signifies no more than putting them by the ark. (See Huetius, Demonst. Evang. p. 322.)

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place.*] That is, the oracle, where they had set down the ark.

That the cloud filled the house of the Lord.] In this cloud was the glory of the Lord (ver. 11.) which now filled the temple, as it had anciently done the tabernacle, when it was first erected, (Exod. xl. 34.) Only there the cloud covered the tabernacle without, and the glory of the Lord shined within: but here the house itself was filled with the cloud, out of which the glory of the Lord broke; and after it had filled the whole house, settled in the most holy place.

Ver. 11. *So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.*] By this it appears that the cloud filled the sanctuary, as well as the most holy place: for in the sanctuary the priests ministered at the altar of incense. And it appears also by the next verse, that, at the first, nothing but a dark cloud filled the house, which was very astonishing: but afterward the glory of the Lord (as I said) broke out, which was more amazing. Insomuch, that Moses himself was not able to enter into the tabernacle of the congregation, when this cloud and glory first appeared, (Exod. xl. 35.)

Ver. 12. *Then spake Solomon.*] When he saw the priests come out of the house of God in great consternation, he uttered these words which follow, with his face turned towards the altar, to compose and comfort them. This shews that the cloud filled the house before Solomon prayed: whereas in 2 Chron. vii. 1—3. it appears the Divine glory did not fill it till after he had prayed. Which Abarbinel reconciles with very good reason:—The cloud, in which was the glory of the Lord, or the fire, came into the temple before Solomon prayed: which made him say here, *the Lord dwelleth in thick darkness.* Which he beholding, prayed to God, who gave such a sensible token of his presence there. Now when he had made an end of his prayer, then the fire that was in the cloud broke forth, and consumed the sacrifices on the altar: and the glory of the Lord filled the house, as it is recorded in the book of Chronicles.

The Lord said that he would dwell in thick darkness.] As much as to say, Be not afraid; but look upon this cloud as a token of God's presence and protection: and that he owns this for his house where he intends to dwell, according to what he said, Lev. xvi. 2. This cloud is called *thick darkness*, because it hindered the sight of any other thing that was in the holy place; either the altar, candlestick, or table. Nothing was seen but the glory of the Lord when it broke out, which dazzled their eyes rather than enlightened them. And it is observable, that the better to represent this, the high-priest when he went into the most holy place was to fill it with a cloud of smoke by the incense he offered, which made the place dark, (Lev. xvi. 12, 13.) that he might not lose his life by the splendour of the Divine Glory.

Ver. 13. *I have surely built thee a house to dwell in.*] He turns his speech from them to God; and expresses his hope that he would be pleased to continue in this house: which he perceived by this glorious cloud he intended to make his habitation.

A settled place for thee to abide in for ever.] Not like the tabernacle, which was a moveable habitation; but a place wherein he hoped he would settle, and never remove from it. From hence the Jews call this Beth-haolam, the eternal house, or the house of ages. Which was not like Gilgal, Shiloh, Nob, and Gibeon (as Abarbinel explains it), which did not last long, though God for some time dwelt there: they not being in the place which the Lord had chosen to place his name there: which was in Mount Moriah.

Ver. 14. *And the king turned his face about.*] From the court of the priests to the court of the congregation, having the altar on his back.

And blessed all the congregation of Israel.] In that form, perhaps, which God himself prescribed, (Numb. vi. 23, 24, &c.)

(And all the congregation of Israel stood).] Both out of reverence to God, and respect unto the king.

Ver. 15. *And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it, saying.*] He acknowledges the goodness of God in his gracious promise; and his faithfulness in fulfilling it. Which promise was made by Nathan, unto whom the word of the Lord came about this matter, (2 Sam. vii. 4.)

Ver. 16. *Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build a house, that my name might be therein.*] He had often told them that they should worship him in the place which he would choose; but he never declared his choice of a place till David's time, (2 Sam. vii. 6.)

But I chose David to be over my people Israel.] See 2 Sam. vii. 8. to whom he shewed the place which he would make his dwelling, and where he would be worshipped.

Ver. 17. *And it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of the Lord God of Israel.*] This is, as I said before, where God would dwell among them, and be graciously present with them. (See 2 Sam. vii. 2.)

Ver. 18. *And the Lord said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build a house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart.*] He accepted and commended his good intentions, but would not let him put them in execution. This honour he reserved for his son, as it follows in the next words.

Ver. 19. *Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son, that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name.*] See 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.

Ver. 20. *And the Lord hath performed the word that he spake; and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised, and have built a house for the name of the Lord God of Israel.*] He concludes as he began, with a thankful acknowledgment of the faithfulness of God in performing his promise.

Ver. 21. *And have set there a place for the ark.*] The token of God's presence among them.

Wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers.] That is, the tables of the covenant: which by a figure are called *the covenant*, because they contained it.

When he brought them out of the land of Egypt.] And told them, that by the tenure of this covenant they were to hold the land of Canaan.

Ver. 22. *And Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord.*] Having spoken the foregoing words with his face towards the people, and blessed them; now he turned about again with his face towards the altar, to make a solemn prayer to God.

In the presence of all the congregation of Israel.] Being advanced upon a scaffold which he had made, of three cubits high, (as we read in 2 Chron. vi. 13.) so that all might see and hear him.

And spread forth his hands towards heaven.] Which was a solemn posture of prayer among other nations. And it is evident both from that place in the Chronicles, and from ver. 54. of this chapter, that when he had stood awhile with his face towards the altar, he fell down upon his knees, and spread forth his hands towards heaven.

Ver. 23. *And he said, O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their hearts.*] He acknowledges the transcendent excellences of the Divine Majesty; and particularly again commemorates his faithfulness to those who serve him sincerely.

Ver. 24. *Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thy hand, as it is this day.*] This relates to that part of God's promise to David, that his son should build him a house. (See ver. 15, 16, &c.)

Ver. 25. *Therefore now, Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel.*] He looked upon that as an earnest he would fulfil the other part of his promise to David, which he made at the same time, concerning his kindness to his posterity, (2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.)

So that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me.] He speaks like a wise man, who was fully acquainted with the mind of God: whose promise concerning the inheritance of the kingdom he acknowledges depended upon this condition, *if they took heed to their way*, &c.; that is, continued in the faith and worship of God, as David did. But if they proved idolaters, then they made themselves unworthy of this privilege to the seed of David (as Abarbinel speaks), and lost the inheritance of the kingdom, because they were none of his children. And therefore, after Solomon and Jeroboam also turned away from God and followed idols (as he goes on), God might justly have taken the divided kingdom away from their children. And when all Israel forsook the Lord, and worshipped the gods of the nations round about them, he did forsake their land, and would no longer dwell among them, nor continue the kingdom to them.

Ver. 26. *And now, O Lord God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father.*] This is not an unnecessary repetition; but (as Abarbinel notes) God, when he spake to David of building the temple by his son, promised two things: first, the stability of his kingdom in his family; (2 Sam. vii. 16.) and secondly, that he would shew the greatest kindness and friendship to them; such as a father doth to his son, (ver. 13.) Solomon here begs of God in this prayer both these benefits: the first in the foregoing verse, and the other in this.

Ver. 27. *But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?*] He would not have the people possessed with such gross imaginations as were among the heathens; who fancied their gods were confined to their temples. No, saith Solomon, the heaven itself, no, not the highest heaven, can comprehend his infinite majesty.

Ver. 28. *Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day.*] But he would have them know that God, who could be confined no where, was in a special manner present here, to grant the requests of those who piously made their supplications to him, as he now did, in this place.

Abarbinel observes upon ver. 39. that Solomon uses

three words in this verse, which in some places signify the very same thing: but being all used here together, he thinks have distinct meanings. For the word *rinnah* (which we translate *cry*), he thinks, signifies setting forth with a loud voice the praises of God: concerning which their wise men in Beracoth say, "Let a man first commemorate the praises of God, and then let him pray." Then the word *tepillah* (which we translate *prayer*), he thinks, signifies men's judging and condemning themselves before God for their offences: confessing they are unworthy to have their petitions granted. And the other word *techinah* (*supplication* we translate it) imports men's petitions to God for what they want, and deprecating his displeasure, &c.

Ver. 29. *That thine eyes may be open towards this house night and day, even towards the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there.*] He prays that God would have a gracious respect unto all that came to make their petitions there. For as, in the former verse (as Abarbinel observes), he prays God would hear his own petitions: so in this, that he would hear all other pious worshippers.

That thou mayest hearken to the prayer which thy servant shall make towards this place.] He beseeches God to hear him, if he looked towards this place in his prayer; though he was not present at the temple to prefer his petition. For thus pious men were wont to direct their prayer, when they were far distant from it; nay, when the temple was demolished, (Dan. vi. 10.) And when they were at the temple, they could only look towards the most holy place: for the people came no nearer than into the outward court of the temple, and the priests no further than to the next court to it. Save only when they went to order the lamps, and burn incense morning and evening, and renew the shew-bread: otherwise they also stood and officiated at a distance in the court appointed for them, called the court of the priests. So both people and priests stood in their several courts, and worshipped with their faces towards the temple, where the ark and mercy-seat were. From whence came the expression of worshipping the Lord *towards his holy temple:* that is, towards the place where the mercy-seat was. And also the expression of *worshipping towards his footstool:* for if the glory of the Lord sat upon the cherubims, under which the ark stood, then it was his footstool. (See Psal. xcix. 5. cxxxviii. 2.)

Ver. 30. *And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray towards this place.*] Here, as the same Abarbinel observes, he desires, whether there was one or many that prayed, he would hear them.

And hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place.] He directs the people's mind up to heaven, the place where he dwells in the highest majesty and glory: of which the bright cloud in the temple was a token and resemblance.

And when thou hearest, forgive.] For sins unpardoned would hinder his blessing from descending on them; and therefore, in the first place, he implores forgiveness of them.

Ver. 31. *If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear.*] This seems to relate to such as were accused of denying that which was said to be deposited with them by their neighbour. Who were to purge themselves by an oath, there being no witness to convince them.

And the oath come before thine altar in this house.] It was the custom of all nations to touch the altar when they made a solemn oath: calling God, that is, to witness the truth of what they said, and to punish them if they did not speak the truth.

Ver. 32. *Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.*] He desires God to hear the complaint of him who was defrauded, or unjustly accused: and shew who had right on his side; by punishing the offender, and acquitting the injured person.

Ver. 33. *When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name.*] Acknowledge him to be God alone, and renounce all false gods.

And pray, and make supplication to thee in this house.] Or, towards this house; expecting help from God alone.

Ver. 34. *Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them back into the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.*] Deliver them out of the captivity into which their enemies had carried them, and restore them to their own country. The Jews think the Schechinah was always in captivity with them, and brought them forth from thence.

Ver. 35. *When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee.*] As God is said to *bring the wind,* (Psal. cxxxv. 7.) so he doth the rain *out of his treasures.* Which when he shuts up, no showers can fall, till he open them again.

If they pray towards this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them.] That had been the frequent fruit of their affliction in former ages; though as soon as God had delivered them, they revolted from him; as we read in the whole book of Judges.

Ver. 36. *Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk.*] These words are better translated in 2 Chron. vi. 27. (where the Hebrew words are the very same with these here) *When thou hast taught them the good way wherein they should walk.* He doth not desire their pardon, till their affliction had taught them better obedience.

And give rain upon thy land which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.] He first desires their amendment, and then that the times and seasons might be amended.

Ver. 37. *If there be in the land famine.*] Which arose sometimes from other causes, besides want of rain.

If there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar.] These two creatures, locusts and caterpillars, made great desolations where they swarmed, (Exod. x. 4, 5. Psal. cv. 34, 35.) Mildew, also, the heathens themselves were sensible was a punishment sent from heaven. And therefore Numa Pompilius (as Strigelius observes) ordained a solemn festival called *rubigalia,* in the beginning of May, to pray for their preservation from this *rubigo,* as they called it, which corrupted their corn. (See Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xviii. cap. 29.)

If their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities.] In *their gates;* whereby they were so straitened, that none could go in, or out.

Whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness, there be.] The

word *plague* signifies some extraordinary stroke by the hand of God.

Ver. 38. *What prayer and supplication shall be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel.*] Who in national calamities were wont to beseech God's mercies with public fasting and prayer; which, if they neglected, he entreats him not to reject the supplications of any particular person who besought his favour for himself and family.

Which shall know every man the plague of his own heart.] We are taught by Ezra, in 2 Chron. vi. 29. to understand these words of any private trouble or grief which any man laboured under: for so the words are there, *when every one shall know his own sore, and his own grief.* That is, shall make his secret moan for any affliction which lies heavy upon his spirit.

And spread forth his hands towards this house.] That is, pray as Solomon now did to God. (See ver. 22.)

Ver. 39. *Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest.*] He would have the people know that God could not be deceived with words; but have them expect an answer from him, according to the sincerity of their hearts, in their professions of repentance.

(For thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men).] This sense begets in men the greatest awe of the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 40. *That they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land that thou gavest unto our fathers.*] That they might learn by his great goodness, to worship him alone religiously all their days: and by that means possess in peace and plenty the good land he had bestowed upon them.

Ver. 41. *Moreover, concerning a stranger that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake.*] To become a proselyte to the true religion, and worship God alone, though he was not circumcised, and thereby bound to keep the whole law. Such strangers came to pray at the temple, though they might not offer any sacrifices, except only a burnt-offering. And therefore we may observe, that in the New Testament the Greeks are said to come to a feast, ἵνα προσκυνήσωσιν, *that they might worship*, not that they might keep the Passover, (John xii. 20.) And the like is said of the eunuch, Acts viii. 22. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 4, 5.)

Ver. 42. *(For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and thy stretched-out arm).*] All the stupendous wonders he had done: which declared him to be above all gods; the most High, and Holy One.

When they shall come, and pray towards this place.] In the court behind that of the Israelites: which was made on purpose for the religious uncircumcised gentiles. Such, saith Victorinus Strigelius (whose words I think fit here to transcribe), were Naaman the Syrian; Nebuchadnezzar, and his son Evilmerodach; Darius the Mede; Cyrus the Persian; Cornelius, and the Ethiopian eunuch, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles; and many such-like heathens; who were members of the true church. By which means, and by the dispersion of the Jews among other nations, many heathens were called to the acknowledgment of the only true God. (See Josephus's last book of Antiquities, chap. 2.)

Ver. 43. *Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for.*] He had the same sense with St. Peter, that "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him," (Acts x. 35.)

That all the people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel.] By this it is evident, that truly good men in ancient time desired all the gentile world might be incorporated with them: unto which, in our Saviour's time, the Jews were unaccountably averse.

And that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.] Hath thy glorious presence in it.

Ver. 44. *If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and pray unto the Lord towards this city which thou hast chosen, and towards the house that I have built for thy name.*] Some of the Jews wonder that Solomon should mix his prayer for strangers with those for the people of Israel, and not rather finish first what he had to desire for the Israelites, and then pray for the gentiles. If there be any thing in this, it was to shew that God made no difference between them and pious people of other nations. It is here remarkable, that they were not to make war, without a warrant and commission from God, upon the neighbouring nations. Not to satisfy their ambition and vain-glory, but by his command, or upon just and necessary reasons; which would warrant them to implore and expect God's blessing upon their arms.

Ver. 45. *Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and supplications, and maintain their cause.*] Shew the justice of it, by making them victorious.

Ver. 46. *If they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not), and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy.*] The weakness of human nature, and its proneness to sin, doth not excuse wilful offences against God; especially apostacy from him, which was the cause of all their calamities.

So that they carry them away captives into the land of the enemy, far or near.] A good cause sometimes miscarries for the iniquity of those that are engaged in it.

Ver. 47. *Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication to thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, we have done perversely, we have committed wickedness;*

Ver. 48. *And so return to thee with all their heart, and all their soul, in the land of their enemies which have led them away captive.*] In these, and in the foregoing words, (ver. 47.) he gives a full description of true repentance. Which begins in the serious reflection which men make upon their past lives, and their present miseries into which their sins have brought them. Which begets an unfeigned sorrow and resolution of amendment, with earnest supplication for mercy and grace: confessing themselves unworthy of it, and condemning themselves for their sins, and the high aggravations of them (expressed here by *doing perversely, and committing wickedness*), which at last concludes in their quitting that wicked course of life, and their sincere conversion to the service of God.

And pray unto thee towards the land which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the

house which I have built for thy name.] The very looking towards this place, with earnest imploring the mercy of God, and desire of his helps, was to own him that dwelt here, and acknowledge him alone for their God. Which was a means (as that excellent person Dr. Alix admonishes me) to keep them from idolatry; all the nations of the world turning their faces towards the east, when they worshipped; but the Jews to the west, where the holy place was. And for this cause, when the temple and the holy city were destroyed, and the ark of the testimony was gone; yet good men looked and prayed towards the place where it was wont to be, as appears by the prophet Daniel. And therefore Solomon much more supposes they would do so, when they were all standing. Which may seem, as Mr. Mede observes, to have been done out of the use of all mankind, without any special precept to that purpose; which is no where to be found. Nature having taught mankind, as in their addresses to great persons, to look unto their face; so in their addresses to the Divine Majesty, to look that way, or towards that place, where his presence is more demonstrated than elsewhere. From whence he concludes, that to worship towards the place, where there is any sign or specification of his presence, is no idolatry. (See his Discourse upon Psal. cxxxii. 7.)

Ver. 49. *Then hear thou their prayer and supplication in heaven thy dwelling-place, and maintain their cause.*] In the Hebrew *their right:* which they had forfeited by their disobedience; but he prayed it might be restored unto them upon their repentance.

Ver. 50. *And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them that have carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them.*] Treat them mercifully while they continued their slaves; and give them their liberty to return to their own land. Solomon enlarges much upon this in the following verses, as a thing of the greatest importance. Because he knew that they, as well as all men else, were prone to offend God, (ver. 46.) and might provoke him to expel them from this land. Towards which the Jews now at this day turn their faces, when they pray to God; but to no purpose: for it only demonstrates they have so provoked God by a crime more heinous than ever was committed, that he will have no regard to their petition.

Ver. 51. *For they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron.*] Wherein they wrought with cruel labour. (See Deut. iv. 20.)

Ver. 52. *That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee.*] He brings two arguments for the Divine compassion towards them. First, that it might not lose the glory of what he had formerly done for them; and then, that it might appear he dwelt in this house, and had respect unto the penitent prayers that were here made to him.

Ver. 53. *For thou didst separate them from all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord our God.*] See Exod. xix. 5. Here he adds a third argument; the peculiar laws that he had given them; whereby they were distinguished from all people: in the observance of which he beseeches him to preserve them. It was not a mere angel that brought them out of Egypt, but the Divine Λόγος conducted them; to whom therefore this prayer of Solomon's was directed. For the Schechinah or Divine Glory that settled in the temple, and there was worshipped, was this Divine Person, and not an angel personating God.

Ver. 54. *And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying this prayer and supplication unto the Lord, he rose up from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees, with his hands spread up to heaven.*] See ver. 22.

Ver. 55. *And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying.*] Now he turned about again, with his face the other way, from the altar to the people.

Ver. 56. *Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.*] He celebrates again the faithfulness of God, which continued now, as it had done in the days of Joshua. (See Josh. xxi. 45. xxiii. 14.)

Ver. 57. *And the Lord God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us.*] Of which there was no doubt, if they cleaved steadfastly unto him, as it follows in the next words.

Ver. 58. *That he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers.*] This was the greatest blessing he could ask for them; as the means to preserve them in his favour.

Ver. 59. *And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the Lord, be nigh unto the Lord our God day and night.*] Be ever acceptable to him.

That he maintain the cause of his servant.] That is, of Solomon, and his successors.

And the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require.] That is, according to his and their necessities.

Ver. 60. *That all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else.*] That by his signal favours to the Israelites, all the world might be invited to acknowledge him to be God alone.

Ver. 61. *Let your hearts therefore be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in his statutes, and keep his commandments, as at this day.*] When they were perfectly free from all false worship, and served God alone; as he exhorted them to continue still to do, with sincerity of heart.

Ver. 62. *And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifices before the Lord.*] Which was a solemn act of worship, whereby they acknowledged him to be their God. And these sacrifices seem to have been laid upon the altar before Solomon begun his prayer, ready to be offered: and when he had done, fire came from heaven (as we read 2 Chron. vii. 1.) and consumed the sacrifices. Which was another token of God's presence in this house; as the cloud had testified, and hereby was further confirmed: for the fire from heaven declared how acceptable the sacrifices were that were offered in that place.

Ver. 63. *And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace-offerings,*

which he offered unto the Lord.] Besides the burnt-offerings beforementioned.

Two-and-twenty thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep.] Which could not be all offered upon that day when he made his prayer, but while the feast lasted, which was in the whole fourteen days, ver. 65. (See upon iii. 4.) The heathen imitated these sacrifices in their hecatombs, which they offered of a hundred beasts of a kind; as, suppose, a hundred oxen, a hundred goats, and a hundred swine. They are described by Julius Capitolinus, in the life of the emperors Pupienus Maximus and Balbinus; the last of which, he saith, was so transported with joy, being fuller of fear, that he offered a hecatomb; which was such a sacrifice as this. A hundred altars of turf were raised in one place, at them a hundred swine and a hundred birds were killed. But if it were the sacrifice of an emperor, a hundred lions, a hundred eagles, and a hundred of other such kind of animals were offered: but no such ravenous creatures were ever offered to the true God.

And all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the Lord.] By this prayer of Solomon, and by the sacrifices, whereby all the people supplicated and gave thanks to God, this house was set apart for God's worship and service. For then a thing or place is said to be *dedicated,* when it is first employed to that use unto which it is hereafter designed. Concerning which see Selden, lib. iii. de Synedriis, p. 204, &c.

Ver. 64. *The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that was before the house of the Lord.*] That is, the court of the priests, which he did not consecrate (for that was done before), but employed it to holy uses, and, as it were, honoured it by religious acts, (as Mr. Mede speaks upon Lev. xix. 30.) And so the name of God is said to be *hallowed,* or sanctified by us, when we use it holily and reverently. Thus they explain it in the Gemara, he *hallowed it;* that is, he set up another altar there, as L'Empereur observes upon Codex Middoth, cap. 3. sect. 1.

For there he offered burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of peace-offerings.] In the middle of the court he erected several altars, for the reason following: and, indeed, the whole court was little enough upon this occasion, as Dr. Lightfoot acknowledges in his book of the Temple, p. 192, 193.

Because the brazen altar that was before the Lord.] Near the door of this court.

Was too little to receive the burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings.] Therefore, by a special licence from God, he set up other altars; which were to serve only during this present solemnity, when such a vast number of sacrifices were to be offered. But afterward no other altar was to be allowed, but that one brazen altar where God by Moses appointed all sacrifices should be offered; that they might be preserved in the worship of one only God. Therefore the Jews say these other altars which Solomon erected were of stone; which were soon pulled down again. But Fortunatus Scacchus hath said a great deal to make it probable that he did not erect any altars besides the brazen, but sacrificed upon the ground, (Myrothec. ii. cap. 56.)

Ver. 65. *And at that time Solomon made a feast, and all Israel with him.*] Such solemnities were usual among the heathen, when they celebrated the presence of any of their gods, as the illustrious Ezek. Spanhemius hath observed upon Callimachus's Hymn to Apollo, (ver. 13.) where he justly makes account that they derived this custom from this famous festival of king Solomon: which Josephus sets out admirably. (See lib. viii. Archæolog. cap. 2.)

A great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt.] Hamath was the utmost bounds of Judea to the north, called afterward Epiphania, and by the inhabitants at this day is called Hama. Sometimes the bounds of this kingdom this way are said to be the great river Euphrates; as by the *river of Egypt,* which was the south bounds, is commonly understood *Nilus.* So *Nahal* is translated by Jonathan, and the Jerusalem interpreter upon Numb. xxxiv. 5. And, indeed, the word *Nilus* comes from thence, for the Hebrew word was anciently pronounced not *Nahal,* but *Neel:* from whence the Greek Νεῖλος, and the Latin *Nilus,* as Bochartus observes in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. v. cap. 15. But here the *river of Egypt* is that little stream which discharges itself into the sea, by the Lacus Sirbonides, between Mount Casius and Rhinocolura, the last town of Palestine. It is called by Joshua, (xiii. 1.) Sichor, the same with Nile, because it was but a branch from the *alveus pelusiacus* of that great river. (See Gen. xv. 18.)

Before the Lord, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days.] It appears by 2 Chron. vii. 9. that the feast of the dedication of the altar lasted seven days; and then the other seven days were the feast of tabernacles, which followed after the other.

Ver. 66. *On the eighth day he sent the people away.*] So Ezra likewise saith, 2 Chron. vii. 10. but adds, that it was the twenty-third day of the seventh month: whereas the last day of the feast of tabernacles (which was the eighth from the beginning) was the twenty-second. Therefore Solomon took his leave of them on the last day of the feast, which was the two-and-twentieth day of the month; and they went home the next day. By this also it appears, these fourteen days of feasting were not kept all together, without intermission: for the great day of expiation was on the tenth of this month; seven days before which, I suppose, the feast of dedication was kept, and then they rested till the fifteenth, when the feast of tabernacles began.

And they blessed the king.] Gave him thanks for his kindness, and prayed God to make his reign prosperous.

And went to their tents joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness that God had done for David his servant, and for his people Israel.] In the book of Chronicles it is added, *and unto Solomon:* but that is here included in the goodness of God to David, on whom God bestowed such a successor. With whose magnificent entertainment they were abundantly satisfied; and rejoiced exceedingly, that God had done such great things for David and his family; and made all Israel happy in the great peace and plenty which they enjoyed, together with God's holy religion so gloriously established among them.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire that he was pleased to do.*] We

are taught by Ezra (2 Chron. vii. 11.) to understand these words in this manner: *Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord*, &c.; and concluded all with the foregoing prayer, and the great festival which he kept.

Ver. 2. *That the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared to him in Gibeon.*] When he appeared to him in a dream: and so it is said, 2 Chron. vii. 10. *the Lord appeared to Solomon by night.* Which he had done once before, and no more: for that which he spake to him vi. 11, 12. was by a prophet. (See there.)

Ver. 3. *And the Lord said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication that thou hast made before me.*] This shews that the first verse is to be understood as I have there observed; for otherwise, we must suppose this appearance of God to Solomon was eleven years after he had finished the house of the Lord. Which is not likely; but it is more natural to think it was the very next night after he had dismissed the people.

I have hallowed this house which thou hast built.] By the glorious cloud which came into it and filled it; and by the fire which, descending from heaven to consume the sacrifices, testified his acceptance of them.

To put my name there for ever.] Besides those visible tokens of his presence there, he now declares by word of mouth, that he owned this for his house; and would always dwell in it, if they kept his covenant, as the Targum here interprets it.

And mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually.] By his *eyes* and his *heart* he means his gracious providence, and his tender love and affection, should always have regard to what was done there; and it should be most acceptable to him.

Ver. 4. *And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, to keep my statutes and my judgments.*] In all things relating to religion and civil government, which David commonly did: though some time, and in one thing, he foully miscarried.

Ver. 5. *Then will I establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.*] See 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.

Ver. 6. *But if you shall at all turn from following me, you and your children.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *if in turning you turn from me:* which signifies more than their *at all turning from him.* Rather it should be translated, *if they altogether turned from following him;* that is, fell to idolatry: for he did not intend to forsake them for every offence; but only when they forsook him, as the next words explain it.

And will not keep my commandments, and my statutes, which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them.] There was a general corruption of their manners, when they fell to idolatry.

Ver. 7. *Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them.*] This shews that he speaks in the foregoing words of a general apostacy from him.

And this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight.] No longer continue his gracious presence there, which he had promised, ver. 3.

And Israel shall be a proverb.] So that when men would express how unhappy any one was, they should say, "As miserable as the Jews."

And a by-word among the people.] Who mocked at their calamity.

Ver. 8. *And at this house, which is high.*] Renowned for its riches, and splendour, and great resort unto it.

Every one that passeth by it shall be astonished.] To see such a marvellous change; for Pliny testifies that Jerusalem was the most famous city in the east, as Grotius observes.

And shall hiss; and shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and to this house?] Out of scorn and derision shall ask what is the matter, that this famous place, which boasted so much of the favour of God, is laid in ruin.

Ver. 9. *And they shall answer, Because they forsook the Lord their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and worshipped them, and served them; therefore hath the Lord brought upon them all this evil.*] The Jews were forced to give this account of their calamity.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass in the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the Lord, and the king's house.*] The former of which was seven years in building, the latter thirteen, (vi. 38. vii. 1.)

Ver. 11. *(Now Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar-trees, and fir-trees, and with gold, according to all his desire).*] See chap. v. 8. 10. where mention is made of these trees, but nothing said of gold: but in the fourteenth verse of this chapter we find that Hiram sent him a hundred and twenty talents of gold. Which it is not likely he gave Solomon; who rather purchased so much of him for wheat and oil, and such-like things which Hiram's country wanted; though it abounded with gold. For the Tyrians were great merchants, fetching gold from Ophir, (ver. 27, 28.)

That then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.] They were near, or adjoining to the country of Galilee (as the particle *beth* frequently signifies), but were no part of the land of Canaan, when it was divided among the Israelites: for that could not be alienated, being God's heritage. They were therefore cities out of the territories of Israel, as appears from Josh. ix. 27. but had been conquered partly by Pharaoh, who gave them to Solomon, as part of his daughter's portion; and partly by Solomon himself, who had power to dispose of them; especially since at that time they were not inhabited by the Israelites. (See 2 Chron. viii. 2. and Grotius, de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. i. cap. 3. sect. 12. n. 3.) Hotoman, indeed, a famous lawyer, thinks that Solomon did not give Hiram a propriety, and perpetual right in these cities; but only the possession and enjoyment of them till the debt was satisfied, which Solomon had contracted, by the assistance which Hiram afforded him in building the temple. But his ground is not solid: for, as our Selden also hath shewn, (lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 16.) the kings of Israel might dispose of those lands which they had conquered in a voluntary war, without the consent of the senate. Bochartus also is of the same mind, that these cities were no part of the country of Judea: but Abarbinel confirms Hotoman's opinion, that the revenues of these cities were given to him till the debt was discharged.

Ver. 12. *And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not.*] Were not suitable to his desire, and the genius of his people; for the soil being fat and very deep (as is generally thought), it required great labour to till it, and was not pleasant to dwell in.

Ver. 13. *And he said, What cities are these that thou hast given me, my brother?*] These are not words of contempt; for it is not likely that Solomon, who had been highly obliged to Hiram (and was in his own temper very generous), would give him that which was of little value. But his meaning is, these cities were not such as would serve his purpose; which made him return them to Solomon again, (2 Chron. viii. 2.) who, no doubt, made him some other recompence, which gave him better satisfaction. Abarbinel thinks, that Solomon having agreed to give Hiram so many measures of wheat and oil, as are mentioned, v. 11. with which he had supplied him every year; now that this work was ended, gave him this country, out of which he might raise this provision for his household himself. Which Hiram did not like, because his people were addicted to merchandise, not to agriculture: but did not upon this account break off friendship with Solomon, as appears by the following history.

And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day.] It is commonly thought that Hiram called them, by way of contempt, *Cabul;* which signifies *a dirty country:* or, as Josephus will have it, *displeasing* (as we translate it in the margin of our Bibles). For *Chabulon,* he saith, in the Phœnician language, signifies as much as οὐκ ἀρέσκον, *that which doth not please,* (lib. viii. Archæol. cap. 2.) But the LXX. seem to have understood the word better; who translate it ὅριον, the *term* or *bound:* as if *Cabul* were the same with *Gebul; caph* and *gimel* being frequently changed, as Bochartus observes; who approves of this signification of the word. For *Chabulon* was that tract of ground which bounded the lower Galilee: extending from Tiberias unto this place, as Josephus himself saith, lib. iii. de Bello Judaico, cap. 2. (See Bochartus, in his Canaan, lib. ii. cap. 4.)

Ver. 14. *And Hiram sent to the king sixscore talents of gold.*] It may be better translated, *and Hiram had sent,* &c. See ver. 11. where the reason is given why Solomon offered him so rich a country: Which, though he did not like, yet these words, Abarbinel thinks, signify, that notwithstanding Hiram continued his generous friendship with Solomon, and after that sent him all this gold; or, it was sent him as his share in their traffic to Ophir, mentioned in the conclusion of this chapter.

Ver. 15. *And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised.*] That the raising of a great tribute upon the people, and employing so many men in his works, might not seem strange, he here shews the cause of it; which was his great and numerous buildings; suitable to the high dignity to which God had advanced him. But Mr. Selden hath shewn, by many instances, that the word *mas* is used, not only for pecuniary tribute, but for corporeal labour. And thus he interprets these words, *this is the cause of requiring the labour and work of so many men.* Which when he had declared, *iz.* his great buildings, then he proceeds (ver. 20.) to relate who they were that he employed in this service, (lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 14.)

For to build the house of the Lord, and his own house.] Of which an account hath been already given.

And Millo.] Which was a large and very beautiful place (as Abarbinel takes it), near to Zion; where the Israelites were wont to meet, and take their pleasure: and because it was *full* of people, was therefore called *Millo;* which signifies *fulness,* or repletion. Now David had built round about Zion, *from Millo inward,* (as we read 2 Sam. v. 9.) but had left the structure of Millo itself imperfect; which Solomon now completed, with a particular respect to Pharaoh's daughter, whose house was near to it, (ver. 24. of this chapter.) In this place some think there was a strong fortress built, which they gather from xi. 27. and 2 Chron. xxxii. 5. But others will have it to signify that deep valley or ditch (it may be called) which was between Mount Zion (the city of David) and Mount Moriah, on which the temple stood. Therefore, that there might be a convenient passage from the king's palace to the house of God, Solomon joined these two mountains by a bridge or a causeway, which could not be done without filling up the valley, or making great arches; some think the one, and some the other.

And the wall of Jerusalem.] Which was a great structure. For there were three walls, one within another, as Abarbinel and Joseph ben Gorion explain it: the inner wall compassing the house of God and the house of the king; the middle wall compassing the houses of the prophets and great persons; (which explains 2 Kings xxii. 14.) and the third compassed the houses of all the people.

And Hazor.] Which had been a very eminent city, and the head of some kingdoms before the conquest of Canaan, (Josh. xi. 10.) and was given to the tribe of Naphtali, (Josh. xix. 36.)

And Megiddo.] A city in the tribe of Manasseh, (Josh. xvii. 11.)

And Gezer.] In the tribe of Ephraim, (Josh. xxi. 21.)

Ver. 16. *For Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city.*] For the Israelites could not dispossess the Canaanites, but they continued in Joshua's time, and after, to dwell in Gezer, (Josh. xvi. 10. Judg. i. 29.) And it seems David and Solomon did not expel them, but continued them under tribute; until Pharaoh, upon some provocation (which is not recorded), utterly extirpated them, and burnt their city. This was done, I suppose, before the marriage of Solomon with Pharaoh's daughter; and was the very first expedition that the Egyptians made out of their own country, as Sir John Marsham thinks, in his Can. Chron. Seculum 14.

And given it for a present unto his daughter, Solomon's wife.] It is likely he had begun to repair the city: and now upon the marriage of his daughter restored it to Solomon, who perfectly rebuilt it.

Ver. 17. *And Solomon built Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether.*] This is, having finished the building of Gezer, he built the lower Beth-horon, which was in the tribe of Benjamin; (Josh. xviii. 13, 14.) and Ezra tells us also (in 2 Chron. viii. 5.) Beth-horon the upper, which was in the tribe of Ephraim, (Josh. xvi. 5.) but not here mentioned: either because it was not of so great consequence, or did not need so much reparation as the other.

Ver. 18. *And Baalath.*] There was a city of this name in the tribe of Dan, (Josh. xix. 44.) But it is likely this

was a city near Tadmor, where Baal had been formerly worshipped: for Baal was one of the gods of that people, it appears in the following observation.

And Tadmor in the wilderness.] This word *Tadmor* signifies in Hebrew as much as *Palma* in Latin. From whence it was called by the Romans Palmyra; which was one of the most splendid cities in the eastern countries: which gave name to the Palmyrenæ Solitudines, mentioned by Pliny and Ptolemy. There have been lately, after twelve hundred years' obscurity, several noble inscriptions found in this place by some that travelled into this wilderness: but Bochartus hath one of far greater antiquity, of two Phœnician gods, Aglibelus and Melachbelus, *viz.* the summer and the winter sun: in his Geogr. Sacra, par. ii. called Canaan, lib. ii. cap. 8. p. 811. where he calls this Tadmor a city of Phœnicia.

In the land.] Of Hamath Zobah (a part of Syria), as Ezra seems to expound it, (2 Chron. viii. 3, 4.) which country Solomon had conquered.

Ver. 19. *And all the cities of store that Solomon had.*] Where he laid up corn against a time of need; or arms and ammunition, in case of war. Some will have them cities where he kept his treasure, which is not likely.

And cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen.] Which he had in great number, (iv. 26.)

And that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.] So that whithersoever he went, he had a house for his entertainment in every part of his country. Behold, saith Abarbinel, the reason of the tribute (ver. 15.) is given from all these buildings: and after he had finished them, he laid no further tribute upon his people: who murmured at these impositions, as we find, after he was dead: but in these public buildings a great number of hands were employed, whereby idleness was expelled, manufactures were learnt, the poor were relieved, all the meaner people exercised, cities adorned, diseases driven away, and no place left for envy and sedition: while the subjects found the treasure that was raised employed for the benefit of so many of them; as Bodinus discourses, in his book De Republica, lib. xi. cap. 2. where he observes how Augustus, having settled the empire in peace, kept the people in their duty by this means; repairing many temples, decayed by time, or burnt by fire: laying out vast sums upon the chapel of Jupiter Capitolinus, and other public edifices; insomuch, that he gloried, "he left Rome a marble city, which he found a brick."

Ver. 20. *And all the people that were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel.*] But by this time were become, I suppose, proselytes to the Jewish religion, as the Gibeonites were, or at least renounced their idolatry.

Ver. 21. *Their children which were left after them, whom the children of Israel also were not able to destroy, upon them did Solomon levy a tribute of bond-service unto this day.*] He was able to have rooted them all out, as the law required; but that command did not take place after they had submitted, and made peace with the Israelites, (as those words suppose, Josh. ix. 19.) And they seem now to have been in so poor a condition, that Solomon did not lay any tribute of money upon them; but only of burdensome labour. Of these were the seventy thousand that bare burdens, and eighty thousand that were hewers in the mountains; mentioned v. 15. Thus Mr. Selden, in the place abovementioned, explains these words, *they were not able utterly to destroy:* which was not for want of power, but because they had made a covenant with them, and did not consume them, (as it is in 2 Chron. viii. 8:) But they would not receive them into peace with them, till they became proselytes of the gate: and when they had done so, they became tributaries; and therefore such persons, by virtue of their covenant, Solomon now commanded to this service. (See lib. vi. de Jure Nat. et Gentium, cap. 14.)

Ver. 22. *But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen.*] By this means he spared the children of Israel, whom he did not employ in any servile labours about his public works; but put them into nobler offices, as it here follows. Yet this implies that his royal power might have laid such loads on them, if he had not designed to rule with great gentleness over them.

But they were men of war.] Which was accounted an honourable employment.

And were his servants.] Officers in his court.

And his princes.] Governors of provinces.

And his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen.] Commanders of his guards.

Ver. 23. *And these were the chief of the officers that were over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.*] In 2 Chron. viii. 10. they are said to be but two hundred and fifty. For the Hebrew doctors commonly say that there were of these officers but two hundred and fifty Israelites: the other three hundred were proselytes. But the plainest account of this is given by Abarbinel, that there were only two hundred and fifty set over those that wrought in the temple: the rest were employed in looking after his public works in other places. And it must be observed, also, that there were far greater numbers employed when the temple work was carried on with great speed, as we read before, (v. 16.)

Ver. 24. *But Pharaoh's daughter came up out of the city of David unto her house which Solomon had built for her: then did he build Millo.*] There was not the like necessity for building Millo that there was for building the walls of Jerusalem, and the cities beforenamed: but he did it (as Abarbinel observes) in honour, and for the pleasure of Pharaoh's daughter; who was to remove unto a house near to it. And the reason she did not continue in the house where David had dwelt, we are told in 2 Chron. viii. 11. which was, because it was a kind of holy place, where it was not fit for her to remain; the ark of God having dwelt there.

Ver. 25. *And three times in the year did Solomon offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings upon the altar which he built unto the Lord.*] The meaning is not, that he offered sacrifices no oftener; but that he never failed to keep the three solemn festivals, which God commanded to be observed by every body, when he offered sacrifices suitable to those great mercies which were then commemorated; and to the great blessings God had bestowed upon his family.

And he burnt incense upon the altar that was before the Lord.] In the holy place, before the oracle. Where he could not burn it himself; but he gave it to the priests at

his own charge, to be offered with a particular respect to him. This, it is likely, he did every day, morning and evening.

So he finished the house.] This was said before, but now repeated; because, after he had kept the three great festivals there, it was not only consecrated, but all Divine offices had been performed in it; and there was nothing more to be added.

Ver. 26. *And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber.*] This name *Ezion-geber* signifies *spina viri;* it lying in a rocky, ragged shore, running out into the sea like the back-bone of a man. So Arrianus (as Bochartus observes) in his Periplus describes the inmost part of the Sinus Arabicus (where Ezion-geber lay) as very dangerous, because of the rocks and shelves. Which makes it less strange, that the ships of Jehoshaphat were broken there in pieces, in the very port, before they put out to sea, (2 Kings xxii. 48.) Insomuch that in aftertimes this port was forsaken, and they frequented Elath. Josephus will have Ezion-geber to be the same with Berenice, a city on the African shore, over against Syene; others have different conjectures: when the Scripture plainly teaches us that it was a port of Idumea, not far from Aela upon the Red Sea; and not far distant from the wilderness of Zin. For the Israelites removed their camp from this place to that wilderness, as we read Numb. xxxiii. 36.

Which is beside Eloth.] Or *Elath,* for it is called by both names: and by the Greeks and Romans, Aela, and Ailat, and Elat, and Elana, &c. Which was a port known in the days of Moses, (Deut. ii. 8.) belonging to the Edomites; and, as St. Jerome saith, to the Egyptians: for it was *ambigui juris,* lying on the confines of both countries. Insomuch that Sir John Marsham thinks Solomon and Hiram now built ships there, with the good leave of Pharaoh; the Egyptians now not minding merchandise, but were set upon conquering countries: but David having conquered Edom, (2 Sam. viii. 14.) I rather think became master of this port; where Solomon built a navy of ships in his own right, and went thither himself to see it, (2 Chron. viii. 17.) It continued in the possession of the Israelites about a hundred and fifty years, till, in the time of Joram, the Edomites recovered it, (2 Kings viii. 20.) But it was again taken from them by Azariah, and left by him to his son, (2 Kings xiv. 22.) but lost again by his grandson Ahaz, from whom the king of Syria took it, (2 Kings xvi. 6.) The Syrians held it a long time, till, after many changes under the Ptolemies and the Seleucidæ, it came into the hands of the Romans; who quartered there the tenth legion, as St. Jerome tells us. (See Bochartus, in the second part of his Geographica Sacra, called Canaan, lib. i. cap. 44.)

On the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.] What the Hebrews call the sea of Suph, other nations call the sea of Edom, from the country which it washes, *viz.* Idumea; as appears from this place. From whence the Greeks (not knowing the reason of the name) call it ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν, *the Red Sea:* the word *Edom* signifying *rubrum* or *rufrum, red* or *yellow,* as Bochartus and Ludolphus have observed.

Ver. 27. *And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon.*] The navy was Solomon's, who had servants of his own on board the ships, to go and traffic at Ophir: but they had no skill in navigation, and therefore Hiram sent as many Tyrians as were necessary to man the ships; they having been always bred at sea.

Ver. 28. *And they came to Ophir.*] It is certain there was a place called Ophir, or as the LXX. call it Σόφιρ (which word Josephus also uses instead of Ophir), and by others called Ὀρφῆν, which was in Arabia Felix. But this cannot be the place here meant, as Bochartus hath demonstrated by many arguments, in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 27. This one is sufficient, that it was a three years' voyage to Ophir here mentioned; whereas the other was very near the place where the navy was prepared. And besides, they fetched ivory from Ophir, whereas there are no elephants in Arabia; therefore we must search for it somewhere else: and there is little doubt it was in India: but in what part of it, is not so easy to be determined. The famous Bochartus thinks it was Taprobana; which is the same with that now called Zeilan, or Seilan. For what the ancients say of Taprobana, that the moderns say of Zeilan; as he hath shewn in a very large diagram of both countries, in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 46. And, indeed, Grotius before him concluded, there was no better way to guess where this place was, than by considering what commodities were brought from thence, and inquiring of merchants (who have been in the remote parts of the world) where not only gold, and silver, and precious stones, but ivory, and all the rest that were fetched from Ophir, are to be found now. And, in a letter to his brother, he desires him to make this inquiry for him. (See Epistol. 483.)

And fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents.] It is said in 2 Chron. viii. 18. that they brought four hundred and fifty: but we may well suppose that thirty talents might be spent in the charges of the voyage to and fro; so that only four hundred and twenty came to Solomon's coffers. Or rather, as Abarbinel thinks, Solomon gave the servants of Hiram, who managed the ships, thirty talents for a gratuity. Or, as Laniado (who delights to contradict Abarbinel), the Jerusalem talent was bigger than that of Ophir: so that four hundred and fifty Ophir talents made but four hundred and twenty Jerusalem talents. It is easy also to say, that there came of gold refined only four hundred and twenty into Solomon's treasury; though the whole mass was four hundred and fifty.

And brought it to king Solomon.] It is no improbable conjecture of Abarbinel, that Solomon at first trafficked in the ships of Hiram; which voyage brought him for his share the hundred and twenty talents mentioned ver. 14. of this chapter: which Hiram is said to have sent to him, as the profit (that is) of his adventure. Which was so great that Solomon resolved to build a navy of his own; at which Hiram was so far from being offended, that, like a true friend, he furnished him with mariners to manage the ships; and they brought him this great quantity of gold at their return from their first voyage.

The imperial laws forbid noblemen to exercise merchandise as a thing below them: and therefore it much less becomes a king; as Bodinus discourses, lib. vi. de Republ. cap. 2. But we must not measure antiquity by our own times: and that author well adds, that though he would not have kings now to be merchants, yet if he might have his choice, "Mercatorem eum malo quam tyrannum," &c. *I had rather a prince should be a merchant than a tyrant;*

and noblemen should rather trade than oppress and make a prey of their tenants.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND when the queen of Sheba.*] Josephus thinks she was queen of Meroe, which was anciently called Saba. But a great many of his countrymen more rightly understand this matter; who say she came from Aljemin, which was the south part of Arabia Felix, near the Red Sea; and so our Saviour calls her the *queen of the south*, which is the signification of *Jemin* in Hebrew; and in Arabic, with the addition of *Al*, is called *Aljemin*.

Heard of the fame of Solomon, concerning the name of the Lord.] Theodoret thinks she was a religious woman, as far as the light of nature guided her; and if we may believe the Hebrew tradition, she had some tincture of revealed religion from her pious ancestors: for they think she was descended from Abraham by Keturah, one of whose sons begat Sheba, (1 Chron. i. 32.) Now she came to hear of Solomon's fame by the ships that went to Ophir: for they sailed by her coast, and in all likelihood spread his fame there, as they did in all other places where they touched, proclaiming his magnificence, and especially his wisdom, and his glorious temple which he had built for the worship of his God: whose praise they set forth as far above all gods.

She came to prove him with hard questions.] To try whether he was so wise as report made him; by propounding difficult questions to him, which none but a man divinely illuminated could resolve, as Abarbinel understands it.

Ver. 2. *And she came to Jerusalem.*] The fable of Agatharcides is confuted by this, which saith the royal dignity among the Sabæans was but a kind of captivity. For after the inauguration of their king, it was forbid, by an ancient oracle, that he should stir out of his palace upon pain of stoning: but there he enjoyed himself in all manner of pleasure.

With a very great train.] Royally attended.

And with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones.] These presents which she brought to Solomon are a great argument she came from Arabia Felix, which abounded with such things, but none of them are in Meroe: nor can Meroe be said to be the ends of the earth, from whence our Saviour saith this queen came, there being many large countries in Africa beyond Meroe, but none beyond the Sabæans in Arabia, whose country lay upon the sea. See Bochartus, in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 26. where he shews they abounded in gold, having such plenty of it from Ophir, that they exchanged it for brass and iron, &c. giving double, or thrice the weight of them. And yet the Abyssine Christians (who say her name was Marqueda) are very confident she came from their country; where it is as constant a tradition that she had a son by Solomon, from whom their kings are derived. So Ludolphus observes, in his notes upon the confession of Claudius king of Ethiopia, where he saith, this was "the faith of his father the Israelitish king."

And when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.] Had the liberty to propound whatsoever she desired to be resolved about; either in natural, I suppose, or Divine things.

Ver. 3. *And Solomon told her all her questions.*] That is, answered them to her satisfaction.

There was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not.] There was nothing so secret, which he did not reveal to her.

Ver. 4. *And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom.*] Had fully discovered the wonderful variety of wisdom wherewith he was endowed.

And the house which he had built.] Both for God and for himself; the magnificence of which was admirable.

Ver. 5. *And the meat of his table.*] Where it is likely she was entertained while she stayed at Jerusalem.

And the sitting of his servants.] At their table.

And the attendance of his ministers.] Who waited on him at his table, and in his chamber, and other places.

And their apparel.] Which was different, I suppose, according to their several offices; but all very stately.

And his cup-bearers.] Who filled out his wine, and brought and delivered it to him; with such ceremony as made his grandeur appear in that small thing.

And his ascent by which he went up to the house of the Lord.] From his own palace; of which L'Empereur gives an account, upon Codex Middoth, p. 50. But the ancient interpreters understand by the word *olatho* not his *ascent*, but his *burnt-offering*, which he offered in the house of the Lord. And it is very likely, she saw the service of God's ministers in his house, as well as Solomon's in his own house; and was made by Solomon to understand the meaning of every thing that was done there. Which must needs put her into an ecstacy of admiration, as it here follows. And thus the LXX. translate these words, καὶ τὴν ὁλοκαύτωσιν αὐτοῦ ἣν ἀν ἔφερεν ἐν οἴκῳ κυρίου, whom P. Martyr, Victorinus Strigelius, and others, follow in these words: "Et holocausta ejus, quæ in domo Domini offerebat;" *and his burnt-offerings, which he offered in the house of the Lord.*

There was no more spirit in her.] She was perfectly astonished. For as he discoursed of all sorts of natural things, so he was no less skilful in political government; and transcended in the knowledge of Divine matters, as his book shews us; having all things likewise in such order both in his house, and every where else, that it was amazing. A very great man of our own observes, that such things as these—the apparel, the sitting and attendance of his servants, were justly admired by her as an indication of Solomon's wisdom. For they are the outworks which preserve majesty itself from approaches and surprisals. And whatsoever prince departs from these forms, and trappings, and ornaments of his dignity and pre-eminence, will hardly be able, at some time, to preserve the body itself of majesty from intrusion, invasion, and violation.

Ver. 6. *And she said unto the king.*] When she had recovered herself out of her astonishment.

It was a true report that I heard in my own country of thy acts, and of thy wisdom.] They did not deceive her, who, by their reports of him, moved her to take this long journey.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit, I believed not the words, till I came, and mine eyes had seen it.*] She thought they might magnify things too much, as travellers are wont to do; especially when they speak of their own country.

And, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.] This was very extraordinary; for commonly men find things fall far short of their expectations.

Ver. 8. *Happy are thy men.*] His subjects.

And happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.] Especially those that were about his person, and ministered unto him; who had opportunity every day to hear his wise sayings and discourses.

Ver. 9. *Blessed be the Lord thy God.*] One would think, by this, that she became a proselyte before she returned to her own country; whither she carried better things than she presented to Solomon (which the next verses mention); the treasures of heavenly wisdom. Philostorgius, indeed, saith, that in his time the Sabæans sacrificed to the sun and moon, and certain demons of their own country; and yet ἐκ περιτόμου τὸ ἔθνος, &c. *the nation was circumcised after the Jewish manner on the eighth day.* Which rite they received, one would think, from this queen, and retained it a long time, though they continued their old superstition. It is possible, indeed, that the Jews who lived among them, might persuade them to it. For the same Philostorgius saith, οὐκ ὀλίγον πλῆθος Ἰουδαίων αὐτοῖς ἀναπέφυραι, *no small number of Jews was mingled with them.*

Which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.] A most excellent admonition both to the people and to the king; that they should think themselves highly obliged to God, who had given them such a king; and he should think God made him king to govern his people justly. This sense the wise heathen had, that governors were set over men by God for their good: as Aristotle told Alexander in a letter to him, wherein he exhorts him to keep in mind, that his kingdom was given him by God for the sake of mankind, εἰς εὐεργεσίαν, οὐ πρὸς ὕβριν, *that he might do them good, and not abuse them.*

Ver. 10. *And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold.*] Though we do not find that the ancients speak of any mines of gold in the Sabæans' country; yet they abounded with it, being near to that Ophir which I before mentioned, and is spoken of in the book of Job, xxii. 24. xxviii. 16. (in an age when they were not acquainted with the Indian Ophir, which was very remote from them.) And several other places there were also near to them, who had plenty of gold, as Bochartus shews in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 27. p. 159, &c.

And of spices very great store, and precious stones.] This country was famous for myrrh, frankincense, and cinnamon (Josephus adds balsam, also), as Bochart observes, out of many authors in the same book, cap. 26. p. 149. 153. For their very fires were made of cassia and cinnamon. Precious stones also he shews were so common in this country, that they adorned their cups, and their beds, and their stools, &c. with them. (See him, p. 150.)

There came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.] For it seems the Jews maintained no trade with this country.

Ver. 11. *And the navy also of Hiram that brought gold from Ophir.*] This is meant of Ophir in India, mentioned ix. 28. From which Hiram's navy is said to bring gold, though the ships were Solomon's, because Hiram's servants had the management of them.

Brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug-trees, and precious stones.] It is very uncertain what these almug, or algum-trees were (as they are called by a transposition of letters in 2 Chron. ii. 8.) Our famous Dr. Castell thinks it was the wood called *sanctulum*, which is proper for all the uses mentioned in the next verse, and is still in India. And R. D. Kimchi upon that place in the Chronicles saith it was a red wood which is now called *brezil.* By which cannot be meant the wood that comes from Brazil, for that country was not known in his days; but probably he calls it *brezil*, from the Hebrew word *barzel*, which signifies *iron;* it being of such a dark colour. And such a wood there is now in the kingdom of Java, as Gousset observes out of Thevet, and other authors, in his Comment. Linguæ Hebr.

Ver. 12. *And the king made of the almug-trees pillars for the house of the Lord, and for his own house.*] Or rather *rails* (as we translate it in the margin of our Bibles), which were made on either side the causey which went up from the king's house to the house of the Lord. Compare this with 1 Chron. xxvi. 16. 18. and 2 Chron. ix. 11. and see Dr. Lightfoot of the Temple, p. 125. where he only quotes Ralbag, who saith he made battlements, *i. e.* rails, on either side, that men by them might stay themselves as they went along the highway of that ascent.

Harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug-trees, nor were seen unto this day.] This account of almug-trees is mixed with the story of the queen of Sheba, because she is said (ver. 5.) to have admired the ascent (as we translate it) which Solomon made to the house of the Lord. Which appeared the more magnificent, because the rails thereof were made of this rare wood. Which Abarbinel fancies was *coral*, which grows in the very sea, and they had never seen before; nor did any come after.

Ver. 13. *And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty.*] By their mutual presents, which she made to him, (ver. 10.) and he at her departure made to her, they testified their friendship to each other; desiring by these to be remembered. And Solomon desired to know what would be most acceptable to her, among all the rarities she had seen, which he bestowed upon her: besides, he generously added more things of value, which it is likely she had not in her own country.

So she turned, and went to her own country, she and her servants.] Accompanied, it is probable, with many of the Israelites, who went and planted themselves there: from whom sprung those Jews, who, Philostorgius saith, were mixed with the Sabæans in no small numbers, as I observed, ver. 9. But the Jews of whom he speaks were such as settled there after the last captivity; and it was not lawful for a Jew, while the temple stood, to settle in a place, from whence he could not come three times a year to worship at Jerusalem.

Ver. 14. *Now the weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold.*] The history of the queen of Sheba being ended, he returns to give an account of Solomon's riches and magnificence; which he had begun to set forth before. And first he relates what a vast quantity of gold was brought

into his country every year; not only from Ophir, but from other countries, unto which perhaps the queen of Sheba opened him a passage.

Ver. 15. *Besides that he had of the merchantmen.*] Who paid custom for the goods they brought from several countries; or, as Abarbinel thinks, the *men of Hattarim* (as the words are in the Hebrew) signify a certain nation, *viz.* the Tartars (as they are now called), who brought commodities from the north country to the people of Israel, as others did from the south.

And of the traffic of the spice-merchants.] There is no reason thus to translate these words, as the same author thinks: but they signify in general all sorts of traders, who brought in merchandise, by sea or land.

And all the kings of Arabia.] Who sent him presents.

And of the governors of the countries.] Which David or he had conquered, and placed governors there; who gathered his tribute, and sent it to him every year.

Ver. 16. *And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred shekels of gold went to one target.*

Ver. 17. *And he made three hundred shekels of beaten gold; three pound of gold went to every shield.*] These *targets* and *shields* seem to have been made for state and pomp; to be carried before him, upon some special occasions. Though we do read in the Roman authors of some great captains to whom golden shields were granted, as a reward of their great valour: and these perhaps might be intended for the same purpose. But then we must not think that the shields weighed but six hundred shekels (which would have been so small as to be of no use), but that each cost six hundred shekels of gold; as Fortunatus Scacchus observes, Myrothec. iii. cap. 3.

And the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.] Where, it is likely, he kept his most precious treasure. See concerning this house, vii. 2. which Josephus saith the queen of Sheba admired above all things she saw in Judea: the vast multitude of cedar pillars that were in it, making it look like the forest of Lebanon: from whence some think it had its name.

Ver. 18. *And the king made a great throne of ivory.*] We never read of ivory until about Solomon's time; who, perhaps, brought elephants out of India, and took care to have a great deal of ivory brought with them. Insomuch, that we read of *ivory palaces*, (Psal. xlv. 9.) whose walls were overlaid with ivory; which was more precious than gold in ancient times, as Pliny tells in many places.

And overlaid it with the best gold.] Not entirely, so as to cover the ivory (for then it might as well have been made of wood), but here and there; as P. Martyr reasonably conjectures. Which made the throne appear more beautiful by the mixture of gold and ivory; with which, at due distances, it was studded. In this throne he sat when he administered justice, and gave audience to ambassadors, and the like.

Ver. 19. *The throne had six steps.*] Was advanced to a just height, that he might be seen and heard by all.

And the top of the throne was round behind.] Making a half circle over his head.

And there were stays on either side of the place of the seat.] Like one of our great chairs, which have rests to lean one's arms upon, on either side.

And two lions stood beside the stays.] As their supporters.

Ver. 20. *And twelve lions stood on the one side, and on the other upon the six steps.*] Upon every step a lion stood reared up, on each side, as if he was falling upon his prey: which many interpreters think had a mystical meaning in it, as every thing else had belonging to this throne; with which I shall not trouble the reader. Grotius thinks he offended in making these figures; and having once begun to transgress the law, he grew still worse and worse.

There was not the like made in any kingdom.] That is, in those times there was none to be compared with it; but in after-ages there were perhaps more glorious. For Athenæus saith, the throne of the Parthian kings was of gold, encompassed with four golden pillars, beset with precious stones, (lib. xii. Deipnos.) And the Persian kings, he saith, sat in judgment under a golden vine (and other trees of gold), the bunches of whose grapes were made of several sorts of precious stones.

Ver. 21. *And all king Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.*] Who brought in such plenty of gold, that it made silver of less value while he lived.

Ver. 22. *For the king had at sea a navy of Tarshish with the navy of Hiram.*] These words are added to give a further account how Solomon came to have gold in such abundance: for he trafficked for it in another fleet, besides that which went to Ophir. That fleet, it is plain, was Solomon's, and sailed out of his own port Ezion-geber, (ix. 26.) though it was manned by Tyrians, because they understood the sea. Whereas this navy here spoken of belonged to Hiram, and went out of his port at Tyre; and Solomon had only the liberty to trade in it to Tarshish. Which was a place wherewith the Tyrians had very ancient commerce; and therefore Hiram was the chief in this voyage, as Solomon was in that to Ophir.

Once in three years came the navy of Tarshish, bringing gold, and silver.] It was not so far off, that they could not return in less than three years: but, as Abarbinel supposes, they went thither in the end of one year, and stayed there the next to vend and to buy their commodities; and then returned in the beginning of the third year. Bochartus hath made it very probable that this place was Tartessus in Spain, where gold and silver in ancient times, if we may believe Strabo and others, whom he quotes, were plentiful. But I do not find any proof that ivory, apes, and peacocks, were the commodities of that country. (See his Phaleg. lib. iii. cap. 7.)

And ivory.] The Hebrew word *senhabim* is of doubtful signification: but the word *sen*, or *shen*, certainly signifying a *tooth*, interpreters have supposed that *habim* signifies an *elephant;* and both together import elephants' teeth, *i. e. ivory*. But it is hard to give an account of this word *habim:* therefore Bochartus rather thinks that the whole word *senhabim* signifies an *elephant:* which best agrees with what follows, apes and peacocks, all three signifying living creatures: and, indeed, *ivory* itself, in this chapter, is simply called by the name of *sen:* where he speaks of Solomon's throne, ver. 18. (See his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. i. cap. 20.)

And apes.] The Hebrew word *kephim* is both by the ancients and moderns translated *apes:* which creature Pliny calls *cephos;* and saith they were seen but once at Romo

in his days, and that they came out of Ethiopia. So that if Tarshish was in Spain, they that sailed thither trafficked in Afric also before they came home. (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iii. cap. 31.)

And peacocks.] The LXX. do not adventure to translate the Hebrew word *thuccijim:* but the Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic, and Latin, translate it as we do, *peacocks:* and so do the most learned among the Jews, as Bochartus shews in a long dissertation; where he probably guesses this creature had its name by a small transposition of letters from *Cuthajim;* as much as to say a bird of Cuth, or a Persian bird. Which transpositions are so usual, that we have an instance of it in this chapter: the trees here called *almugim,* being called in the Chronicles *algumim.* See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 23. where he shews how beautiful a creature this is: which might well be brought from foreign countries to Judea, where there were none of them.

Ver. 23. *So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom.*] The latter of which he begged of God; who graciously promised to add the former; which he did to admiration.

Ver. 24. *And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.*] That is, the great men of the neighbouring countries came, as the queen of Sheba did, to be acquainted with his wisdom; which they heard was a Divine gift.

Ver. 25. *And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules.*] This shews that he speaks, in the former verse, of the great men of the earth; who made these presents to him, when they came into his country.

A rate year by year.] This seems to signify that they so highly prized his wisdom, that they courted his friendship; and voluntarily sent him a certain present every year, as a token of the continuance of it.

Ver. 26. *And Solomon gathered together chariots, and horsemen.*] In a time of profound peace, he thought it a piece of wisdom to be ready for war, as a means to preserve the peace. Though the surest way to enjoy the happiness wherein he lived, had been to observe strictly the commands of God.

And he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.] Four hundred of these chariots, Josephus saith, were presented from the kings and princes beforementioned: and he had a thousand of his own before. But what need was there for so many stables for his horses as seem to be mentioned, iv. 26. *viz.* forty thousand? The word is not *stables,* but *stalls;* every horse having a stall, not a stable to himself: and some chariots had two, some four horses belonging to them. And yet even thus there were too many: therefore we must suppose they did not always stand in one place; but sometimes in one country, sometimes in another. Where it was necessary there should be stalls for them, when he removed from city to city.

Whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem.] The former part of these words relates to the chariots, which were kept in the country, in the cities Solomon built for them, (ix. 19.) and the latter to the horsemen, which were always with the king in Jerusalem; as Abarbinel understands these words. Thus Solomon took care they should not be burdensome to his people, by keeping them all in one place: but they were distributed through the country, only a great body of horse in the royal city.

Ver. 27. *And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones.*] As common as pebbles.

And cedars made he to be as the sycamore-trees which are in the vale, in abundance.] Ordinary things, like willows, that among us grow numerously in low grounds.

Ver. 28. *And king Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt.*] Here he again openly transgressed the law of God (as Grotius observes), presuming he had no need of those cautions, which were given against this by Moses in the book of Deuteronomy, (xvii. 16.)

And linen yarn.] Most think *byssus,* fine linen, is hereby meant; which was a great commodity in Egypt.

The king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.] It is acknowledged by all interpreters that these, and the following words in the next verse, are very obscure.

Ver. 29. *And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means.*] These words Bochartus seems to me to have cleared with the greatest perspicuity, by taking the Hebrew word *mikveh,* not for *linen yarn,* or fine linen; but for the *toll* or *custom* that was taken for the horses that were brought out of Egypt. And thus he translates the whole; *Horses were brought up to Solomon out of Egypt; and as for the toll or custom, the merchants of king Solomon hired it at a price* (that is, redeemed it of the king of Egypt for so much constantly); *and a chariot coming out of Egypt went out for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty; and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring by their hands.* The sense of which words is plainly this, that noble horses being found in those times in few countries but Egypt, Pharaoh would not suffer them to be carried from thence without a great tribute, which he exacted from them; which was six hundred shekels for a chariot, and a hundred and fifty for a horse. This must not be understood to be the price at which they were bought, but the custom paid for them; otherwise every horse would have been of the same value, which is absurd. Solomon, therefore, bringing many thousand horses out of Egypt, prevailed with his father-in-law to free him from this grievous tribute, and to accept of a certain sum of money to be paid him every year instead of it. Thus being freed from the custom, which was demanded of all others; all the kings of the Hittites and Syrians bought their chariots and horses of Solomon's merchants, who could afford to sell them cheaper than they could have them in Egypt. (See Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 9.)

By the *kings of the Hittites* are meant the rulers of some of that nation, who were driven out by the Israelites; and lived in the north-east of the land of Canaan, or in some part of Arabia. (See Judg. i. 26.)

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND king Solomon loved many strange women (together with the daughter of Pharaoh).*] It was not a

fault in him that he married Pharaoh's daughter; she being a proselyte, as is generally supposed, to the Jewish religion. But in marrying so many other women besides, he committed two sins against the law; one in multiplying wives, and another in marrying those of strange nations, who still retained their idolatrous religion; which was expressly against their law, as the next verse declares it. The Jewish doctors, indeed, are so very desirous to excuse Solomon, that they say these strange women were proselyted: but Mr. Selden well observes, that then it had been no sin to have married with some of them; and yet Nehemiah says it was a sin, xiii. 26. (lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 15. p. 625, 626. and Buxtorf. de Sponsal. et Divort. p. 40, 41.)

Women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites.] Some think Solomon would not have taken wives out of these nations, had it not been out of some political principle: which some think was, that he might by their means gain intelligence of the state of those countries: others, that he might extinguish the old enmity which was between the Israelites and those nations; to which he might probably hope to put an end, by contracting these marriages with them. But good intentions will not justify the doing unlawful things.

Ver. 2. *Of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.*] This relates particularly to the Hittites and the Zidonians beforementioned; and consequently the rest of the seven nations of Canaan, with whom they were forbidden to make any marriage, (Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3.) for the weighty reason here mentioned. For though they might marry wives of other nations, if they embraced the Jewish religion; yet of the seven nations of Canaan they might not, though they were converted to their religion: lest the venom might lurk and lie hid; and at last break out, and infect them. Great was the foresight of Moses (wherewith God endowed him) in giving this precept (as Grotius notes); for the not observing it undid the Israelites, and was the foundation of their utter ruin.

Solomon clave unto these in love.] He not only married them, but had a great affection to them; whereby his heart was easily alienated from God.

Ver. 3. *And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines.*] Of these princesses, few or none had the name of queens, as Abarbinel observes; but they only who were of the highest esteem with him, or who were of royal extraction. He thinks Solomon enjoyed every one of these once, and then shut them up, that nobody might touch them afterward. (See Buxtorf. de Sponsal. et Divort. p. 48, 49. and Hackspan's Miscellanies, lib. i. cap. 6.) But it seems to me more probable, that he kept so many wives merely for state and pomp; after the manner of the eastern princes; but never used many of them. Just as they do now in China, where the emperor hath a great multitude of wives, chosen out of the prime beauties of the country: many of which he never saw in his life; as Father la Compte tells us in his history of China, par. i. p. 62. The same is said of the Great Mogul, that he hath as many women as will make up a full thousand (which is Solomon's number), as the author of the Voyage to the Indies tells us, in the end of P. le Valle's History, sect. 20. p. 469. It must be considered, also, that Solomon had not brought them to this number in the beginning of his reign, but towards the latter end; when his riches increasing, he made vast expenses; and studied to outdo all other kings, in magnificence of all kinds.

And his wives turned away his heart.] He was so delighted in their company, that they turned away his thoughts from serious business; yea, from God himself.

Ver. 4. *For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods.*] For, indulging himself too much in pleasure, he weakened both his body and his mind: and growing old betime, began to doat upon other gods; which he suffered his wives to worship privately, and at last openly to exercise the religious rites of their own country.

And his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father.] He did not forsake the Lord, but joined other gods with him. Which a man of his sense could never have done, (who had solemnly acknowledged in his prayer, that there was no god like to the Lord, yea, that there was no god else, viii. 23. 60.) if his mind had not been enervated, and his understanding darkened by sensual pleasures.

Ver. 5. *And Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians.*] He worshipped Astarte, of which see in the book of Judges, ii. 13. and 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4.

And after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.] This god was the same with Moloch; whom he calls an abomination, because highly detested by God: who had given them a particular caution against worshipping the host of heaven, (Deut. iv. 10.) Now Moloch signifies the prince of that host, as I may call it, the sun; the king of heaven, as the moon was called the queen: in this all agree, that Moloch comes from *melech*, which in the Hebrew language signifies a *king*, and is of the same import with Baal and Adonis (which signify *lord*), which were worshipped by many nations, as Moloch was: who was not the peculiar god of the Ammonites; but the god whom they principally worshipped.

Ver. 6. *And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as David his father did.*] And yet Abarbinel thinks he did not commit idolatry by offering sacrifices to these false gods; but was only persuaded by his wives so far as to learn the manner after which they worshipped their gods, by being present at the rites of their religion. Which was a dangerous piece of learning; which he might have known without being present at their sacrifices.

Ver. 7. *Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab.*] Concerning Chemosh I have said enough elsewhere. (See Numb. xxi. 29.)

In the hill that is before Jerusalem.] He set up an altar upon the Mount of Olives; where all the city of Jerusalem might see what they did. This contradicts Abarbinel, and shews he was more than a spectator of their worship: which he encouraged by building an altar for it. And indeed that author is much to blame in abusing his excellent parts, to find excuses for such a foul crime.

And for Moloch the abomination of the children of Ammon.] In the same place, I suppose, Moloch was worshipped: for he would not adventure to permit strange

worship to be exercised in Jerusalem itself; though his posterity did. And so from little beginnings followed great mischiefs.

Ver. 8. *And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense, and sacrificed unto their gods.*] For what was granted to one, the rest would be apt to claim; or else complain of unkindness to them. It is an astonishing thing that a man of his wisdom should not rather have converted them all to his religion, than be seduced by them so much as to favour theirs. But he took no pains with them, having given up himself wholly to his pleasures; and growing conceited perhaps of his great wisdom, thought he could reconcile his religion with theirs; and find a good meaning in all their superstitions. Abarbinel observes, in several places, that it is never said Pharaoh's daughter turned away his heart from the Lord, or that he set up an altar for her: which is an argument she was proselyted to the true religion, and continued in it. As the rest might have been, if he had made it his business, and had not grown indifferent, and thought all religions alike. Which hath been the disease of some great wits.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared to him twice.*] First at Gibeon, in the beginning of his reign, iii. 5. and then at Jerusalem, after the building of the temple, ix. 2. There was another time when a message came to him, by the word of the Lord, vi. 12. But we do not read that God appeared to him more than twice; which was enough to establish him in his faith, fear, and love.

Ver. 10. *And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods.*] For in both those visions the happiness God promised him was declared to depend upon his observation of God's statutes, as David his father did. (See iii. 14. ix. 4, 5.) And when he had begun to build the temple, he admonished him, that he had better desist than go on in that work, unless he intended to keep all his commandments, vii. 12, 13.

But he kept not that which the Lord commanded.] Which was the greater crime, because he had so oft admonished him of his duty, and done such great things for him.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon.*] Either by some prophet, or by a vision: wherein he appeared to him as terribly as before he had done kindly, and pronounced this doom upon him. The former I think is most probable, that God would not vouchsafe to appear to him any more; but sent this message by Ahijah, or some other prophet.

Forasmuch as thou hast done this, and thou hast not kept my covenant, and my statutes, which I commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it unto thy servant.] Tear it in pieces, and give the greater part of it to one of his own subjects, *viz.* Jeroboam. This was enough to astonish any man, to hear that all his splendour should be so soon eclipsed, if he were not perfectly stupified: and it is likely it did make him reflect upon his folly; and, as many think, moved him to write the book of Ecclesiastes.

Ver. 12. *Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.*] Though this was some mitigation of the punishment, that in his days the kingdom should continue entire; yet he humbled him by letting him know this favour was not granted for his sake, but for his father's, who had served him faithfully.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for thy servant David's sake.*] In memory also of David's faithful service he adds another mitigation of the punishment: that the whole kingdom should not be torn from his son, but he would leave him one tribe, over which he should reign: which was that of Judah, unto which Benjamin was an appendix, being much mixed with it.

And for Jerusalem's sake, which I have chosen.] To be the place of his habitation, in the temple built there by Solomon, which he would suffer to remain to his posterity.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed in Edom.*] Though God did not execute the forementioned threatening till after his death, yet he began to afflict Solomon by raising up three adversaries against him; who disturbed his repose, in his old age, when he most desired to be quiet. The first of them is here mentioned, who had a mortal hatred to Solomon, ever since the death of David, who had endeavoured to destroy him with every male in the country. But God restrained his wrath from attempting any thing against Solomon, as long as he observed God's commands.

Ver. 15. *For it came to pass, when David was in Edom.*] To conquer the country: which he did entirely, and put garrisons into it, (2 Sam. viii. 14. 1 Chron. xviii. 12, 13.)

And Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain.] It is not to be supposed that the Edomites slew none of the Israelites in the defence of their country: and those are they, it is probable, unto whom Joab, after he had done his business, went up to give an honourable interment.

After he had smitten every male in Edom.] That is, all he could find; for some fled, as Hadad did.

Ver. 16. *(For six months did Joab remain there with all Israel.*] That is, with all his army.

Until he had cut off every male in Edom).] Intending to extirpate the nation.

Ver. 17. *That Hadad fled, he, and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad being yet a little child.*] He being very young, some of his father's servants took him and hid him, and themselves with him, in some secret place; and when Joab was busy in giving a solemn burial to the Israelites, they took that opportunity to carry Hadad into Egypt.

Ver. 18. *And they arose out of Midian.*] But first they went into Midian, that they might send from thence to know if Pharaoh would give them entertainment and protection.

And came to Paran.] Which was in the way to Egypt. For the wilderness of Paran lay between Edom and Egypt.

And they took men with them.] To attend Hadad; that he might appear like a young prince.

And they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt.] He invited him not only to come into his country, but to his own palace.

Which gave him a house, and appointed him a table, and gave him land.] According to the manner of generous princes, who pity noble persons that are in distress; Pharaoh not only assigned him a house, and kept a table for

him, that he might want nothing; but moreover gave him land, that out of its revenues he might provide himself an equipage suitable to his quality.

Ver. 19. *And Hadad found great favour in the eyes of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen.*] This argues a high esteem of him, for the princely qualities which it is likely appeared in him. Though sometimes the affections of kings are unaccountable, and they prefer those who do not deserve it.

Ver. 20. *And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house.*] The queen had as great a fondness for the child, as the king had for his father; and would have him nursed and weaned in Pharaoh's palace.

And Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.] He was educated among the king's children, as if he had been of them; which gave Hadad, no doubt, great reputation.

Ver. 21. *And when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead.*] Whom he dreaded more than David; having done that terrible execution upon his country, of destroying their males for six months together.

Hadad said to Pharaoh, Let me depart, that I may go to my own country.] Which he hoped to recover, now that the great enemies of it were dead, and Solomon young.

Ver. 22. *Then Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, that thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered, Nothing: howbeit let me go in any wise.*] Nothing would satisfy him, but to go and attempt the regaining the dominion of Edom. Which some fancy he did, by the intercession of Pharaoh, who persuaded Solomon to let him reign in Edom, paying him a tribute; which now in the end of Solomon's reign he denied to pay, and rebelled against him. But this proceeds upon a supposition, that when David died Solomon was married, which is not true. Nor is it certain that he was the same Pharaoh whose daughter Solomon married, that had been so kind as to educate Hadad. It seems to me more likely, that though Hadad ventured to his own country, he durst not attempt any thing till Solomon began to decline in the favour of God, and of his people too. For if Hadad had moved any change of government, Solomon had forces enough to suppress him; and in his vigorous age, no doubt, would have done it; he being so great a prince, and having so many chariots and horsemen always ready, that I am apt to think Hadad did not so much as enter into his own country, but lived somewhere near it; watching an opportunity to get possession of it; which he found in the conclusion of Solomon's reign.

Ver. 23. *And God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah.*] When he saw his army beaten by king David, 2 Sam. viii. 3.

Ver. 24. *And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobah.*] Some of those that fled, when David defeated Hadadezer, enlisted themselves under Rezon; who became their commander. And it is probable, he lived after the manner of the Arabians, by plunder and robbery, all the days of David, and the best part of Solomon's reign.

And they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus.] Not in the days of David, who had put a garrison into Damascus, and brought the people under tribute, (2 Sam. viii. 5, 6.) And so they continued subject unto Solomon; till he, doating upon strange women, minded not the defence of his conquests. Which Rezon took the advantage of, and invaded and got possession of Damascus, and reigned there, as Hadad did in Edom.

Ver. 25. *And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon.*] This is not to be understood of the whole reign of Solomon, which for the most part was peaceable, (as was observed before, iv. 20. 25.) but of all the days which remained of his life, from the time that his wives publicly exercised their idolatry, unto the day of his death.

Beside the mischief that Hadad did.] This signifies, as Abarbinel thinks, that Hadad durst not have rebelled against Solomon, if Hadad had not led him the way; but seeing what success he had in Edom, he and his men seized on Damascus.

And he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.] In combination with Hadad he defied Israel, and made himself king, not only of Damascus, but over all the country thereabout.

Ver. 26. *And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant.*] In a public employment.

(Whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow-woman), even he lifted up his hand against the king.] Not against king Solomon, that we read of, but against his son; to whom he gave great disturbance, as soon as Solomon was dead.

Ver. 27. *And this was the cause that he lifted up his hand against the king: Solomon built Millo, and repaired the breaches of the city of David his father.*] This was the occasion of Jeroboam's advancement, as it follows in the next verse. For Solomon being engaged in many buildings, chose fitting persons to oversee his works; among which Jeroboam was one. Who took this opportunity to work in the people a disaffection to Solomon and his government, as Abarbinel and other of the Jews imagine. For he represented, say they, the building of Millo as a work of vanity, only to gratify Pharaoh's daughter: and the breaches of the city of David they take to have been only open places, at which people might enter and come easily many ways to the king's palace; whereas, being stopped up by Solomon, access was not so easy, but they were forced to go about. This was represented as a grievance, especially since such heavy burdens were laid upon the people to maintain these expenses. But the text suggests nothing of this.

Ver. 28. *And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour.*] Of great courage and strength of body.

And Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious.] Very diligent in the business wherein he had employed him, of looking over his works.

He made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph.] Gave him greater preferment, which was to look after the revenue of a whole province—the tribe of Ephraim, and, as some think, Manasseh also. This was a high obligation upon him; but it made him, the Hebrew doctors think, only more presumptuous to instil discontent into the people, who were unnecessarily burdened to support Solomon's vanity in such vast buildings as he undertook. If Jeroboam was guilty of joining with the people in

their murmurings, and increasing them, this cannot properly be called lifting up the hand, that is, rebelling against Solomon: but was a preparation for it, and disposed the people to the revolt which afterward followed.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem.*] Where he had been, it is likely, to give up his accounts, and was returning to his charge.

That the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way.] Met with him as he was going along. Some of the Jewish doctors will have this prophet to be one of those who came out of Egypt with Moses, and therefore must be five hundred years old. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. p. 668.) Which, if it could be believed, made him the fitter person to reprove Jeroboam afterward for the sin of the golden calves, and also for the rebellion which he had seen punished in Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

And he had clad himself with a new garment.] That he might make the better appearance at court, when he waited on the king.

And they two were alone in the field.] The prophet, I suppose, took Jeroboam aside to speak with him privately: for it cannot be thought that Jeroboam had no servants to attend him; but they were bid to stay where they were, until the prophet and he went to confer about some private business.

Ver. 30. *And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces.*] An emblem of what followed, or rather a prediction of it: for there were two ways in those ancient days of foretelling things; one in express words, the other in signs and resemblances; according to the manner of the eastern people in the eldest times. Many instances we have of it, after this of Ahijah. As Zedekiah made himself a pair of iron horns, and said to Ahab, "With these shalt thou push the Syrians," &c. (xxii. 11.) Elisha also foretold the victories of Joash, by shooting arrows and stamping on the ground so many times, (2 Kings xiii. 18, &c.) Jeremiah foretold the pulling down of Jerusalem's pride, by the rotting of his girdle, where it was buried by Euphrates; and a great many more in the Old Testament, which continued in the New; Agabus foretelling the bonds of St. Paul, by binding his own hands and feet with St. Paul's girdle.

Ver. 31. *And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces; for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee.*] Whence it is called frequently *the kingdom of the ten tribes.*

Ver. 32. *(But he shall have one tribe.*] Besides his own. Or Benjamin and Judah may be looked upon but as one tribe; both of them having a share in the city of Jerusalem, and lying near one to the other.

For my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel).] See above, ver. 13.

Ver. 33. *Because they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon.*] It seems by this, that some of the people, at least of Solomon's court, followed his bad example.

And have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father.] This was a great aggravation of his sin, that he had so good a father; who had given him an excellent education under Nathan the prophet, (as I observed, 2 Sam. xii. 25.) and a most pious example; having never gone after other gods, but celebrated the praises of the Lord with the highest strains of love and devotion.

Ver. 34. *Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand.*] No, not the kingdom of the ten tribes; which Solomon held as long as he lived. These and the following words explain the threatening, (ver. 32.) of *rending the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon,* not to be meant of taking any part of it from him, during his life.

But will make him a prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, because he kept my commandments and my statutes.] This was an admonition to Jeroboam not to molest Solomon in his lifetime, by raising rebellion against him; and also to walk in God's ways as David did, and not fall into idolatry; for which sin God resolved to punish Solomon so severely, as to rend the greatest part of his kingdom from his posterity.

Ver. 35. *But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes.*] He bids him not doubt of what he promised; but he must stay for it till Solomon was dead.

Ver. 36. *And unto his son will I give one tribe.*] He saith *one* tribe, though there were two; because (as Abarbinel observes) they had their portion and possession together in Jerusalem; and, though two tribes, were both called by the name of Judah; because of the eminence and glory of that tribe; which was so great, that, before the division of the kingdom, Judah is often mentioned as distinct from the rest of Israel. (See 1 Sam. xi. 8. 2 Sam. v. 5.)

That David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen to put my name there.] By a *light* is meant a succession of kings, who are called the light of the people, (as David is, 2 Sam. xxi. 17.) because they cheer them by their comfortable influence, when they govern well. And these are said to be *before God* in Jerusalem; because there he dwelt where they reigned.

Ver. 37. *And I will take thee.*] From that condition wherein he was, and place him on a throne, as here follows.

And thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth.] Have a very flourishing kingdom.

And shalt be king over Israel.] But not reign in Jerusalem.

Ver. 38. *And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I commanded thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David.*] The same promise that he made to David, 2 Sam. vii. 16. only he doth not say he would establish *his kingdom for ever.*

And will give Israel unto thee.] Make them his obedient subjects.

Ver. 39. *And I will for this.*] For their sin, mentioned ver. 33.

Afflict the house of David.] By this rending the greatest part of the kingdom from them.

But not for ever.] For in the days of the Messiah, saith Rasi, the kingdom shall be restored to the house of David.

And he might have added, that few returned out of their captivity but the house of Judah, who were delivered in a wonderful manner from Babylon.

Ver. 40. *Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam.*] A sign of his dotage; that he could entertain a thought of endeavouring to defeat the purpose of God! But how he came to know what was secretly transacted between Ahijah and Jeroboam alone, is a great question. Perhaps the prophet made no scruple to report what he had delivered in the name of the Lord. Or, Jeroboam himself, being puffed up with this assurance, could not contain, but told it to some of his confidants, who spread it abroad. Or, his servants, though they heard not a word spoken, yet seeing the rending of his garment into twelve parts, and the giving ten to him, might speak of it: the meaning of which Solomon easily understood; being told (by the same prophet, perhaps) that the kingdom should be rent from him, and given to his servant, ver. 11.

And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt.] This was a common refuge for discontented people. And it may seem strange that the king of Egypt, being nearly allied to Solomon, either his father-in-law, or brother-in-law (for many think the father of Solomon's wife was dead), should give such persons entertainment. But it is to be considered that *kingdoms are never married;* and princes commonly regard only their own interest.

Unto Shishak king of Egypt.] All the kings of Egypt had the title of Pharaoh, even from the time of Abraham: but we never find any of them, till now, called by his proper name, to distinguish from other Pharaoh's; unless Remesis (Gen. xlvii. 11.) be the name of a king, not of a country. Now all agree that this is the great king who is called by the Greeks Sesostris: who having subdued Ethiopia, extended his conquests into Asia, as far as the Assyrians and Medes, as Josephus tells us, who calls him Sethosis, lib. i. contra Apion.

And was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.] Being protected by Shishak: who, it is likely, was now projecting the great conquests he made afterward.

Ver. 41. *And the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon?*] All the kings of Israel, as Abarbinel thinks, maintained some wise men, who wrote all that passed in their reign. Perhaps this was begun by Solomon (for we read not of any book of the acts of David), and out of these annals, the sacred writer of this book took what he thought most useful, and omitted the rest, which he did not judge so necessary and instructive.

Ver. 42. *And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel.*] There seems to have been no need to say he reigned in Jerusalem, since he reigned over all Israel; if it had not been to shew the great tranquillity of his reign. Which was such, that he did not go out to war as other kings, but lived quietly in his royal city.

Was forty years.] He lost the great privilege of long life, which God promised if he performed such sincere obedience as David did; unto whose age he did not attain.

Ver. 43. *And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father; and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.*] Thus concludes the history of this great man; without any the least mention of his repentance; though he saw terrible punishments coming upon his family. Which should have moved him (one would think) to pull down the high places he had built for idolatrous worship, and abandon all his strange wives; and done some remarkable honour to the Lord God of Israel. Which if he did, the Divine writer did not think fit to record it, but to leave all in uncertainty, and leave a blot upon his memory; that all posterity might have a frightful example of human weakness, and learn thereby to watch and pray, lest they enter into temptation.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND Rehoboam went to Shechem.*] A multitude of children was accounted a great blessing among the Israelites: but if Solomon had any more besides this son and two daughters, mentioned iv. 11. 15. this holy writer would not do him the honour to mention them, but passes them by in silence: nor doth he vouchsafe to acquaint us (as is usual) in the beginning of his story, from whom Rehoboam was descended by the mother's side; but in the conclusion mentions it twice (xiv. 21. 31.) that she was an Ammonitess, one of an infamous nation. Howsoever, though he was not entirely an Israelite, he pretended to the kingdom; being the eldest, if not the only son of Solomon, to whom it belonged by the law then established; which ever after continued in Judah. That which follows shews this was the opinion of all the people.

For all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.] To acknowledge him for their sovereign, as rightful successor to Solomon. They met for this purpose at Shechem, because it was the most convenient place, being in the middle of the kingdom: or, as others think, because it was in the tribe of Ephraim; where they could speak their minds more freely than they durst at Jerusalem, which was in the tribe of Judah. And this hath some colour in it, from what follows; that they sent for Jeroboam to meet them there, who would not venture to come to Jerusalem.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it.*] The words *of it* are not in the original, but only that he *heard:* either of this meeting, or of the death of Solomon, or both: for he could not hear of this meeting without hearing of his death.

(For he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt).] As hath been related in the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 3. *That they sent and called him.*] At the same time that he heard of this meeting, and the occasion of it, a message came to him from the assembly, to desire his assistance.

And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying.] By *all the congregation* is meant all their elders, and heads of their tribes; who chose Jeroboam to be their speaker.

Ver. 4. *Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.*] They begin with a complaint against the former government; but promise to submit to Rehoboam as their king, and be his faithful subjects, if he would promise to ease them of those burdens which his father had imposed

on them. Which were not so heavy as they represented them; considering the peace and plenty they enjoyed, (iv. 25.) and the vast riches he brought into the kingdom: so that silver was nothing accounted of in his days, (x. 21.) But people are more sensible of the smallest pressures, than of all their enjoyments: and most sensible of the least burden, when they are at perfect ease. Such were the tributes he exacted for his buildings, the expenses of his family, and maintenance of chariots and horsemen, which were all for the honour of the nation, and employed great numbers of them. Abarbinel thinks it is possible, when war was raised by Hadad and by Rezon against him, in his latter days, the tribute might be increased, and occasion their grumbling. But howsoever that be, it is observable that they make no complaints at all of Solomon's idolatry, and the strange worship he introduced; about which they were not concerned, but rather complied with him. (See xi. 33.)

Ver. 5. *And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people departed.*] He desired time to consider, in so weighty a business; pretending, I suppose, he would examine the truth of their allegations: otherwise it had been dangerous to send them away without any answer, when it was evident they were disgusted.

Ver. 6. *And king Rehoboam.*] By this it is plain he had a title to the kingdom; though they had not yet made a recognition, as we speak, of his authority.

Consulted with the old men that stood before Solomon his father, while he yet lived.] Solomon was so wise, as in his best days not to depend solely on his own wisdom; but had other wise men, with whom he advised, as his counsellors, in all matters of moment.

And said, How do ye advise, that I may answer this people?] Being men of great experience, who had learned, no doubt, much wisdom under so wise a king as Solomon, he had reason both to consult such sages, and to depend upon their advice, as likely to be most prudent and safe.

Ver. 7. *And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people to-day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.*] This was most solid advice, to get possession of the kingdom, and then he might govern as his father had done. And he might easily be possessed of it, by condescending to them for once, and giving them such an answer as they desired; which would oblige them to him for ever. For to be *their servant one day*, signified no more than to court them with good words, and kind promises, to be an easy governor of them: which would win their hearts, and make them submit cheerfully to him; and give him the same power which his father had.

Ver. 8. *But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they gave him.*] He was proud and vain, I suppose, and scorned to court his people; expecting obedience unto him, as an absolute monarch.

And consulted with young men that were grown up with him, and stood before him.] He had made some of his familiars, who had been bred up with him and attended him, to be now of his privy-council: men inexperienced, and who understood not the humour of the people; which is a frequent fault of new kings, who, to shew their power, presently change their counsellors, and put in new officers; to gratify all their dependants; not considering who are wisest, but who have been their companions.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto them, What counsel give ye, that we may answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?*] It is likely he told them what the old counsellors had said; who, they thought, were too timorous, and therefore give more bold and fierce advice.

Ver. 10. *And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying.*] They were not so young but they might have had more wit (if they had not been men of pleasure); for Rehoboam being one-and-forty years old when he began to reign, (xiv. 21.) and these men growing up with him, were about the same age.

Thus shalt thou speak unto the people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter to us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins.] They advise him to threaten to lay burdens upon them as much heavier than his father's, as the loins are thicker than the little finger: words of infamy, madness, stupidity, and full of lies, as Abarbinel here glosses: for he magnifies himself, as if his power excelled his father's, unto whom he was nothing comparable. And if it had been true, it did not become him to boast on this fashion; but he ought rather to have highly magnified the glory and majesty of his father.

Ver. 11. *And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke.*] What a senseless stupidity was this (as the same author proceeds) to grant the accusation to be true which they brought against his father, and not rather to have excused and defended so excellent a prince, from whom they could not but acknowledge they had received exceeding great benefits?

My father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.] This is still worse, to accuse his father of such severity (which the people did not), that he treated the Israelites like beasts: for a *whip is for a horse*, as Solomon observes, Prov. xxvi. 3. And who could endure to hear him say, that he would treat them far more severely, and tear their very flesh in pieces? For that is meant by *scorpions*, whips with rowels in them (as we speak), which Abarbinel calls *iron thorns*. (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 32.) Ralbag simply calls them thorns tied to a whip, which grievously pricked and tore the flesh. (See Carpzovius upon Schickard's Jus Regium, cap. 2. Theor. 7. p. 143.) What people could bear this with patience, or endure to come under the yoke of such a furious prince?

Ver. 12. *So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come again the third day.*] In which time wiser thoughts, one would have expected, should have taken place: but Solomon had observed, that "there is no counsel, nor understanding, nor wisdom, against the Lord," (Prov. xxi. 30.) whose doing this was, as it follows, ver. 15.

Ver. 13. *And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the counsel of the old men which they gave him.*] He answered them like a tyrant, not like a king.

Ver. 14. *And spake to them after the counsel of the young men.*] Which was most suitable to a prince of a high and violent spirit.

Saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.] He thought, it is likely, to have frighted them into obedience by this blustering language, which justly made him odious.

Ver. 15. *Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people of Israel.*] Who desired to be eased of their burdens.

For the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying, which the Lord spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.] God infatuated his counsels to bring about his own design. Otherwise, he could not have been so blinded, as not to see how basely he reflected upon his father; and how unlikely it was that the people would submit to such a power as he intended to exercise over them. But, as Livy excellently speaks, "fatis urgentibus rempublicam, omnia salutaria monita spernuntur." And here one cannot but observe the vast difference there is between the sacred and profane historians. The intention of the former is to possess men's minds with a sense of Divine Providence, which secretly rules in all public, as well as private affairs. Machiavel himself, though far from being religious, was sensible of an overruling power interposing in all things, which few historians acknowledge so as they ought: but rather write, as if they would not have their reader think of any thing but the wisdom, strength, and policy, of those that manage affairs, without any consideration of the care God takes of them. Of this Hermannus Conringius thinks Polybius himself to have been guilty, whatsoever excuses Casaubon makes for him. (De Civili Prudentia, cap. 14.)

Ver. 16. *So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David?*] They renounce all interest in him, and in his family.

Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse.] So they call David in a contemptuous and scornful manner. Wherein they have left us an exact picture of an ungrateful world, as Victorinus Strigelius here speaks. For no eloquence is able to express the great merits of David to the children of Israel.

To your tents, O Israel. Now see to thy own house, David. So Israel departed to their tents.] They left Rehoboam, and bade him look to his own affairs; for they would have nothing to do with him. Thus other kingdoms have been overturned by the folly of heady young men: as an old poet observes in Tully's book de Senectute, cap. 6. where he quotes these verses out of Nævius in a play of his, in which one asks,

"Cedo, qui vestram Rempublicam tantam amisistis tam cito."

Tell me, I beseech thee, how you came to lose such a famous commonwealth so quickly?

Unto which he brings in another returning this answer,

"Proventabant oratores novi, stulti adolescentuli."

There arose up new orators, a company of foolish youths.

Upon which Cato makes this remark; *viz.*

"Temeritas est florentis ætatis, prudentia senescentis."

Rashness is the property of youth, prudence belongs to old age.

Ver. 17. *But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.*] As several of the Simeonites also did; who were very nearly situated to Judah.

Ver. 18. *Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute.*] This was a new piece of imprudence, to send one to treat with them, when they were so highly exasperated; and to send him (with promises, perhaps, of easing them, when it was too late) who had the principal care of those tributes, of which they complained. For people hate those that are the instruments of their oppression, or any way employed in it.

And all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died.] There was a general uproar against him; in which they committed this barbarity against the law of all nations; which prohibits any violence to be done to a king's ambassador. But in their rage, the king feared (it appears by the next words) they would have no respect to himself.

Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.] This seems to be a further imprudence; for he should have maintained his ground and kept footing (as we speak) in the country of Israel; from whence it might not have been easy for them to expel him: *but fear is as bad an adviser as fury.* This is the first time that we read of a king riding in a chariot; for we never read that either Saul, or David, or Solomon, rode in them: but after the division of the kingdom, there is frequent mention of the use of them both by the kings of Judah and Israel.

Ver. 19. *So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.*] Would no longer be governed by any of David's race; who had been their deliverer from their powerful enemies. The remembrance of which might have made them more patient; and not so forward to revolt from a family to which they had been so much obliged. But old kindnesses are laid asleep, and people are strangely forgetful of benefits, as Pindar speaks, in Isthmia, ode 7.

Ἀλλὰ παλαιὰ γὰρ εὖδει
Χάρις, ἀμνάμονες δὲ βροτοί.

This defection from the family of David is justly called a *rebellion,* as Salianus notes in his Annals; for though God willed this defection as a punishment of sin, yet they did wickedly who were the authors of it. And though the family of Solomon deserved such a punishment, yet the people had no just reason to forsake their legal prince. For they had no order from God for it: and Rehoboam's answer to them did not deserve such a resentment; much less so sudden and inconsiderate. Nor did the prophetical prediction warrant it: which might have been fulfilled some other way, than by such a violent throwing off his government.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again.*] The great men had seen him, and needed not to be informed of his return; (ver. 3.) but now the news was spread over all the country.

That they sent, and called him to the congregation.] From his tent, unto which he was gone, as other people were, (ver. 16.)

And made him king over all Israel.] Without any condition, that we can find, though it is likely he promised to ease them of all their burdens.

There was none that followed the house of David but the tribe of Judah only.] Which comprehends Benjamin also, being one with it, as was observed before, (xi. 31, 32.) And it was by the singular providence of God, that they were not also tempted to desert such a haughty prince as Rehoboam was.

Ver. 21. *And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, a hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.*] This was a very potent tribe, especially assisted by Benjamin, and wanted not affection to the house of David, which they had expressed upon all occasions; and were ready now, with a very numerous army, to fall upon the Israelites, before their new king was settled in his throne, and bring them back to their rightful king.

Ver. 22. *But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying.*] A person, known to be a prophet, was sent to them from God with a message, before they marched to the country of Israel.

Ver. 23. *Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah.*] God himself owns him for no more than king of Judah.

And to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying.] Unto those mentioned ver. 17.

Ver. 24. *Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up to fight against your brethren the children of Israel: turn every man to his house; for this thing is from me.*] Who was resolved to maintain what he had done. It was the intention and design of God to make Jeroboam king; but he did not stay for his appointment, but usurped the kingdom by the help of certain vain fellows, who raised a sedition against Rehoboam. (See 2 Chron. xiii. 5—7.) And besides, God did not promise to set his posterity upon his throne (as he did to David and Solomon), unless he kept his commandments, which he did not: and therefore, though he saith *the thing was from him*, yet the setting his son upon the throne after him, and the succeeding kings, was not *from him;* but in Hosea he saith, (viii. 4.) *They have set up kings, but not by me: they have set up princes, and I knew it not; i. e.* did not approve it.

They hearkened therefore to the word of the Lord, and returned to depart, according to the word of the Lord.] Now Rehoboam was cool, and began to be wise, in not resisting the counsel of God, who had taken the kingdom from him; but submitting to his decree, and bearing it patiently. The people, at least, were of this mind, and persuaded him not to engage in a war, wherein God would appear against him. According to the counsel of Menander mentioned by Strigelius, Μὴ θεομάχει, μηδὲ προσάγου τῷ πράγματι χειμῶνας ἑτέρους, τοὺς δὲ ἀναγκαίους φέρε. *Fight not against God; neither do any thing to bring upon thyself new storms and tempests: but bear those that are necessary, and cannot be avoided.*

Ver. 25. *Then Jeroboam built Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein.*] For there it is likely they chose him king; and therefore he enlarged and beautified it (which is meant by *built*), to be his royal seat.

And he went out from thence, and built Penuel.] But this did not satisfy him, he removed from thence to another city, which he also built; and so became a builder as well as Solomon, with whose buildings he is thought to have found fault.

Ver. 26. *And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David.*] Though God had told him he would build him a sure house, (xi. 37, 38.) if he kept his commandments, yet he did not trust to his promise; but after he had been some time possessed of the kingdom, began to fear a revolt of the people, if he permitted them to worship God according to the law; and so contrived to make an alteration in religion.

Ver. 27. *If the people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.*] All the people of Israel being bound at the three great feasts to go up to Jerusalem to worship; as also, upon other solemn occasions, devout persons going thither to offer gifts and sacrifices; he was afraid they would be so taken with the splendour and magnificence of the temple, and of the royal city, and recal to memory the famous acts of David and Solomon, who were buried there; and the king would find such means to oblige them, and the priests and Levites so solicit them to unite themselves again to Judah (who appeared to have the better cause, having the temple in possession where God dwelt), that they would be drawn not only to forsake him, but to kill him. For besides all this, their belief of one only God was the principal cause of union among them: and next to that was their worshipping God at one only place. Therefore, instead of consulting God, and committing himself to him, who could and would have preserved him in the kingdom he had given him, notwithstanding all these dangers; he took counsel, as it here follows, of such as were governed only by reasons of state, and devised how to establish himself by wicked inventions.

The Talmudists, after their manner, add another reason why he took the following resolution. For, saith R. Nachman, (in the Gemara of the Sanhedrin, cap. 11. n. 46.) the custom being that none should sit in the court of the temple, but only the king of the house of David, he thought with himself, that if the people saw Rehoboam sit, and him stand, they would conclude the former to be king, and Jeroboam but his servant. Another reason is alleged by Kimchi: when the year of release came, Jeroboam said within himself, it is written, (Deut. xxxi. 10, 11.) "At the end of every seventh year thou shalt read this law in the ears of all Israel," &c. Now if I attempt to read it, the people will say, The king who is in *the place which God hath chosen* (i. e. *Jerusalem*) must read first, and so I must read it after him, which will be a disgrace to me; and if I read it not at all it will be worse, for I shall be thought profane. But these, and such-like, are frivolous reasons, for his resolution to draw the people from the worship of God according to the law, at his own house at Jerusalem.

Ver. 28. *Whereupon the king took counsel.*] Of some secular politicians, who, if they could but preserve the civil government, cared not what became of religion. The Jews in the place abovementioned, in the Sanhedrin, tell the story in this manner; That he summoned a council, consisting partly of pious, partly of wicked men; whom he asked whether they would subscribe to all that he or-

dered. They answered, Yes. Then he said, he would be constituted their king: to which they consenting, he asked if they would obey him. To which there being a ready compliance, he added, Even though I command you to serve idols? at which the pious men startled, and were full of indignation; but their wicked neighbours whispered to them, saying, Do you think Jeroboam will honour idols? he saith this only to try your obedience. And so even Ahijah himself was drawn in, by this fraud, to subscribe to what he proposed, that they would be obedient in all things without exception.

And made two calves of gold.] One egg, as Bochartus speaks, is not more like to another, than these calves were to that which Aaron made. Only, as the Jews say in Sanhedrin, *till Jeroboam's time the Israelites sucked but one calf; but from that time they sucked two.* They were of the same matter with Aaron's, and made for the same reason: his, because Moses was absent; and these, because the holy city (where the temple, the altar, the priests of God were) they could not come to with safety. And as Aaron, so Jeroboam learnt this calf-worship in Egypt, where he lived for some years. The LXX. translate these words, δύο δαμάλεις χρυσᾶς, *two she-calves;* and so doth Josephus: and the prophet Hosea also speaks of them in the feminine gender, (x. 5.) by way of contempt and despisal, as Bochartus thinks. It is not improbable (as some learned men have conjectured), that he made two calves, in imitation of the Egyptians, with whom he had conversed, who had a couple of oxen which they worshipped; Apis at Memphis, the metropolis of the upper Egypt; and Mnevis at Hierapolis, which was the chief city of the lower.

And said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem.] Or, as some expound the Hebrew words, *You have gone long enough to Jerusalem.*

Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt.] The very same words that Aaron had spoken, Exod. xxxii. 4. and they had the same meaning. For he would have them think, that there was no need of going up to Jerusalem, three times a year, with labour and charge; when the true God, who brought their fathers out of Egypt, dwelt among them there no less than at Jerusalem. For God is every where in his essence (it is likely he told them), and cannot be included in any place; and if they required any special symbols of his presence, behold, here they were in those calves which he set up. As if every man had power to devise, out of his own head, a symbol of God's presence. (See Vossius, de Orig. et Progr. Idolol. lib. i. cap. 3.)

Ver. 29. *And he set the one in Beth-el, and the other put he in Dan.*] The former of which was in the south, the latter in the north of the country of Israel; and as Beth-el was in every body's opinion a sacred place (having been consecrated by Jacob, when God appeared to him there more than once), so Dan had been famous for the teraphim of Micah: unto which there had been great resort, a long time, (Judg. xviii. 30.) For such reasons as these, it is likely, he waved his royal city, which was Shechem; and chose these two places for the residence of the Divine Majesty: for so he pretended that these calves represented God; whom he did not forsake, but worshipped him in these symbols of his presence.

Ver. 30. *And this became a sin.*] Led them into foul idolatry: for that was the sin which Jeroboam is so often accused of: and the settling a calf in Dan was a high aggravation of their sin; there being no pretence for two calves; nor for placing one there, where God had never been extraordinarily present.

For the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.] Which place being in the extreme part of the country, yet the people were so zealous in their idolatry, that they travelled to offer sacrifice there; so that they who thought it grievous to go to worship God at Jerusalem, did not think much to go a great deal further to worship an idol. This seems to me the simplest meaning; which others take to be, that they who dwelt in Beth-el were so zealous, that they would go as far as Dan to worship the other calf.

Ver. 31. *And he made a house of high places.*] That is, saith Abarbinel, he made a house or temple at Dan; wherein there was not one altar only, as there was at Jerusalem, but a great many high places.

And made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.] The Hebrew words *miketzoth haam* should not be interpreted *the lowest of the people;* but, as the same Abarbinel expounds it, *out of all the people;* he made any body a priest, though he was not of the sons of Levi. And Bochartus hath justified this exposition, by a great many examples of the use of these words in other places. To this Jeroboam was forced, because the Levites would not serve his impiety, (2 Chron. xi. 14.) and therefore he expelled them all, and seized on their cities and lands. Whereby, as he eased the people of paying their tithes, there being none to demand them; so he gratified them by making priests out of every tribe and family; even *in the extremest part of the country,* as the Hebrew words signify. Thus as he transferred the kingdom from the house of David, so he transferred the priesthood from the family of Aaron, and let it loose, that any body might be admitted to that honourable employment. Which was a very popular thing, and ingratiated him, no doubt, with the Israelites. And Cornel. Bertram thinks, that as he had priests, so he had Levites also of the same stamp; that is, some to officiate under the priests, as they did. The former he called *cohenim,* as they were called in Judah; the other he called *cemarim,* who ministered as the Levites did; but in black, not in white garments, and thence had their name. (De Republ. Judaica, cap. 16.)

Ver. 32. *And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah.*] That is, the feast of tabernacles; which by the law was to be celebrated on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. This he altered, and, as Abarbinel thinks, might possibly give this reason for his impious presumption; that this feast being instituted by God after the gathering of their fruits, which were sooner ripe about Jerusalem than in the northern parts of the country; he pretended the eighth month would be a better time for it than the seventh; because then they would be every where gathered. But his chief intention in this change, was to alienate the people from the rites observed at Jerusalem.

And he offered upon the altar.] This was a high presumption, to invade the priesthood himself, and offer sacrifices to his gods. A crime which none of the kings of

Judah were guilty of, but only Uzziah; who was smitten with a leprosy, for meddling with the priests' office, 2 Chron. xxvi. 19.

(So he did in Beth-el), sacrificing unto the calves that he had made.] What he had done in Dan, he did also in Beth-el; for hitherto hath been related only what he did in the remotest place.

And he placed in Beth-el the priests of the high places which he had made.] There he also built a house, or temple; and set up many altars in it, where these priests officiated as they did in other *high places.*

Ver. 33. *So he offered upon the altar he had made in Beth-el the fifteenth day of the eighth month.*] There he began this new festival, and consecrated it himself.

In the month which he had devised of his own heart.] Out of his own will and pleasure (as the Targum translates it), against the express ordinance of God.

And ordained a feast unto the children of Israel.] To be observed, I suppose, every year in Beth-el, as the feast of tabernacles was at Jerusalem. And it is likely it lasted as many days; unless he effected to make alterations in every thing, and ordained more, or fewer days, as he thought good.

And he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.] He presumed to perform the highest part of the priest's office, which was to burn incense. Which he had not done in Dan, as Abarbinel thinks, but only in Beth-el; which was in some regard the metropolis of his kingdom, and head of the tribe of Ephraim; to which place the prophet, mentioned in the next chapter, came, and not to Dan. He observes also that the Scripture saith thrice he offered upon the altar, speaking of different times and places. First it is said, ver. 30. that he offered upon the altar; that is, at Dan, where all Israel went to worship. Secondly, he offered again in Beth-el, in the beginning of this verse. And then it is said here in conclusion, that he ascended the altar in Beth-el, not to offer sacrifice, but to burn incense, which he had not done in Dan. And when he burnt incense on the feast-day he had instituted, the man of God came from Judah, and prophesied against the altar, as it follows in the next chapter.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, that there came a man of God out of Judah.*] That is, a prophet; for none are called men of God, but prophets. And so this man is called below; (ver. 18.) whence Kimchi concludes David was a prophet, because he is called a man of God. And this prophet is thought by the Jews to be Iddo; whose vision against Jeroboam is mentioned 2 Chron. ix. 29. But this is an evident mistake; for Iddo was alive in the days of Ahijah the son of Rehoboam, (2 Chron. xiii. 22.) whereas this prophet here spoken of, was killed immediately after this prophecy. Therefore they were not the same; unless we suppose that what is here related fell out in the latter end of Jeroboam's reign.

Tertullian in his book De Jejunio, cap. 16. calls him Sameas; where Rigaltius observes that Josephus calls him Jadon, and Epiphanius Joam.

By the word of the Lord unto Beth-el.] By a particular command of God.

And Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.] Upon that feast-day which he had instituted. See the last verse of the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 2. *And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord.*] Declared it, and the worship there performed, to be idolatrous; which he spake by authority from God.

And said, O altar, altar!] Some think he mentioned the altar twice, to signify that he prophesied against that in Dan, as well as against this in Beth-el.

Thus saith the Lord, Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name.] The prophets saw things future, as if they were present. And though this was not to come to pass till above three hundred and sixty years after this time, yet this man of God foretells it, as if it were to be done ere long. And the prediction is the more wonderful, because he tells out of what family he should spring, and what should be his name.

And upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall he burn upon thee.] The meaning is not that he should burn the priests alive; but the execution of this prophecy explains it: that he should slay the priests of the high places, and then burn their bones, as he did the bones of those that had been buried, and thereby defile this altar. (2 Kings xxiii. 15, 16. 20.)

Ver. 3. *And he gave a sign the same day.*] To confirm this prophecy.

Saying, This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken.] A proof that he spake from God, and not from himself.

Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.] This could not be done, but by the power of God; who hereby demonstrated he had sent this prophet to speak these words; which were presently fulfilled.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass, when Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Beth-el.*] In the presence of the king himself, when he was about the solemn service of his gods.

That he put forth his hand from the altar.] Where he stood, (ver. 1.)

Saying, Lay hold on him.] As he himself would have done, had he been near him.

And his hand which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.] The muscles and sinews shrunk, so that it was stiff and rigid, and he perfectly lost the use of it. Which prodigy was a new token, that the prophet's words would be fulfilled.

Ver. 5. *And the altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord.*] Which so amazed all the people, that we do not find any body went about to lay hold on him; but Jeroboam himself was, for the present, astonished at the miraculous power of God.

Ver. 6. *And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Entreat now the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me.*] A marvellous change! He that just now threatened, humbly supplicates him that smote him.

That my hand may be restored me again.] He was convinced that healing must come from the same hand that gave the wound; and that it was in vain to seek to his gods.

And the man of God besought the Lord, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.]

He did not intend his destruction, but his reformation; and therefore granted his request. Whereby a new miracle was wrought for his conversion.

Ver. 7. *And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward.*] A strange insensibility of God's great mercy to him, which did not lead him to repentance, when it moved him to so much gratitude as to desire to reward him that was the instrument of his cure. His hand was restored, but not a good mind.

Ver. 8. *And the man of God said to the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place.*] For he had a charge from God (as it follows) not to communicate with them, who were apostates from their religion.

Ver. 9. *For so it was charged me by the Lord, saying.*] The same Divine authority, which sent him thither to do what they had heard and seen, gave him this following charge.

Eat not bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.] The reason is plain, why he should not eat or drink with them; because that was to have familiar society with idolaters. But why he should not return the same way that he came, is not so evident. Some think it was to represent, that even the way to Beth-el was abominable; and therefore not to be frequented: or, to shew how much we ought to abhor that which leads to evil. But it seems to be a proverbial speech; signifying that he should be constant and steadfast in executing the charge committed to him. For he that doth any thing without success is said to return by the way that he went, (Isa. xxxvii. 29. 34.) And therefore, not to return by the way that he went, is to do his business effectually.

Ver. 10. *And so he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el.*] To shew (as many think) how God detests the way to idolatry; and would have it to be forgotten.

Ver. 11. *And there was an old prophet.*] One who had many years been a prophet before this apostacy; whose name the Jews say was Micah: who was a worshipper of the true God, though he dwelt among this idolatrous people. A great many take him to have been a false prophet: but Theodoret proves that he was a true, though guilty of telling a lie to the man of God. (See Hermannus Witsius's Miscellanea, tom. i. p. 142, &c.)

In Beth-el.] He was originally of Samaria, as we learn from 2 Kings xxiii. 18. But removed hither, it is likely, since this revolution, that he might see what Jeroboam designed.

And his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Beth-el.] In the Hebrew it is, *his son came and told him*, &c. that is, one of his sons came first, and told all the foregoing passages; and afterward came all the rest of them, and confirmed what he had related.

The words that he had spoken to the king, them they also told their father.] By this it appears they were present when Jeroboam stood at the altar, and therefore joined in that idolatrous worship; though their father did not, and yet was so timorous that he durst not reprove it.

Ver. 12. *And their father said unto them, Which way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went that came from Judah.*] They had the curiosity to observe what way such a remarkable person went to his own country; imagining, perhaps, their father would have a mind to discourse with him.

Ver. 13. *And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass, and he rode thereon.*] In the way they directed him.

Ver. 14. *And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak.*] Weary, I suppose, with a long journey; and faint for want of victuals.

And he said, Art thou the man of God that came from Judah? And he said, I am.

Ver. 15. *Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread.*] He had a mind to have a further trial of the truth of what the man of God had said; and so, in a crafty deceitful manner, enticed him back; contrary to his commission.

Ver. 16. *And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place.*] It seems he was forbidden so much as to go into any of their houses; lest he should be tempted to eat with them.

Ver. 17. *For it was said to me by the word of the Lord, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.*] For which reason he refused to accept of the king's invitation.

Ver. 18. *And he said unto him, I am a prophet as thou art.*] He pretended, as Abarbinel thinks, that God had revealed the very same to him concerning the altar in Beth-el, that he had threatened.

And an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back.] And he further pretended that he found him here by the direction of an angel. For he did not tell him that he learned from his sons what had passed; but pretended he had it by prophecy; and that an angel, in the name of God, commanded him to bring him back to his house, and refresh himself there.

To thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water.] He persuaded him, I suppose, that the meaning of God's charge, *thou shalt not eat bread, nor drink water in this place*, was to be understood of sinners and idolaters, with whom he might not communicate: but he being a prophet, was not to be comprehended in that command. And therefore the angel said, Bring him back *to thine house:* not to the habitation of any idolater, but to his dwelling-house, which was undefiled. Thus Abarbinel.

But he lied unto him.] All this was a fiction, which God suffered for the trial of the good man; whether he would believe him, or a man he did not know.

Ver. 19. *So he went back with him, and did eat bread and water in his house.*] He thought it possible that God might, in pity to him, revoke his prohibition; because he was hungry and weary. But he ought to have believed the revelation he had himself, of which he was certain; and not trusted to what another pretended was revealed to him; which he could not be sure was true. And it is said emphatically, ver. 22. *The Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread*, &c. If God had, in compassion to him, thought fit to recal that word, he would have done it to himself; and as plainly allowed him to refresh himself, as before he had forbidden it. So Abarbinel well observes, "Nothing that a prophet receives from God is to be altered, unless that prophet hath another word from God revoking the former." As Abraham had;

to whom God saith, (Gen. xxii. 2.) "Take thy son, &c. and offer him for a burnt-offering," &c. But when he was going to do it, he heard that command repealed, (ver. 12.) "Lay not thy hand upon the lad," &c. He would not receive a contrary command from the mouth of any prophet, but from the mouth of God alone; from whom he received the first command.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, that as they sat at the table, the word of the Lord came to the prophet that brought him back.*] God would not vouchsafe to speak to him, who had disobeyed his voice; but rather to the other, though in his name he had feigned an untruth.

Ver. 21. *And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying.*] He seems to be in a great agony; from the consideration of what he had done, and of what the prophet from Judah was to suffer.

Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee.] To disobey God's mouth, was to disobey the word spoken by his mouth.

Ver. 22. *But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in this place of which the Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcass shall not come into the sepulchre of thy fathers.*] This was all his punishment; that he should shortly die, and not be buried among the Jews.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, for the prophet whom he had brought back.*] It is remarkable, that no punishment is here threatened to the old prophet for telling him a lie. Because, as Abarbinel thinks, he meant no harm to the other prophet; but fancied that his saying, he might not eat or drink with them, was only to excuse himself from going with Jeroboam to his house. And besides, it might have turned to the great advantage of the prophet who came from Judah, if he had steadfastly persisted in his resolution, and not given credit to what the old prophet said against it.

Ver. 24. *And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him.*] Not far from Beth-el there was a wood; out of which the two she-bears came, that tare two-and-forty children in pieces, (2 Kings ii. 24.) Out of which wood, it is probable, this lion came, and slew this prophet.

And his carcass was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcass.] This was to admonish all the prophets to observe God's commands strictly; and to shew Jeroboam what he might expect, since God spared not a lesser offender. But, as God shewed his severity, in taking away this prophet's life, which was his punishment; so he remarkably shewed his approbation of the prophet; in that the lion stood quietly by his carcass, and did not devour it; nor do any hurt to the ass on which he rode. As if he was merely sent by a Divine appointment, to execute what God had threatened; but could not move one step beyond that commission. For when the prophet had suffered what God intended, he takes even his dead body into his protection; and would not let it be violated, as is observed below, ver. 28.

Ver. 25. *And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcass cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcass: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt.*] As a wonderful thing; that the lion should neither fall upon his prey, nor hurt them who passed by; but suffered them to go on quietly.

Ver. 26. *And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God, that was disobedient to the word of the Lord.*] Disobedience in great cases hath been thus punished by men in authority. For the Athenians put their ambassadors to death, whom they had sent into Arcadia, though they had performed their business very well, to their content, ἐπεὶ ἑτέραν ὁδὸν ἦλθον, καὶ οὐ τὴν προστεταγμένην, *because they came another way, and not that which they were prescribed.* Which is the very case before us, (Ælian. lib. vi. Var. Hist. cap. 5.)

Therefore the Lord hath delivered him unto the lion, who hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake unto him.] The lion did not rend his body in pieces, but only gave him one wound, which killed him. In the Hebrew the word is, *he broke him,* that is, his bones, and so slew him speedily.

Ver. 27. *And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled him.*] Hearing the lion stood as quiet as a lamb, and neither meddled with the carcass, nor hurt any that passed by, he did not fear to take up the body of the prophet that came from Judah; believing the lion had order to do no other mischief, but kill him.

Ver. 28. *And he went, and found his carcass cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcass: the lion had not eaten the carcass, nor torn the ass.*] Here is a cluster of miracles; that the lion, contrary to his nature, did not eat the carcass, nor kill the ass, nor meddle with the travellers that passed by, nor with the old prophet and his ass: and that the ass stood so quietly, and was not frighted at the sight of a lion, and betake itself to flight; and more than this, the lion stood by the carcass a long time, until this strange news was carried into the city; as a faithful keeper of the prophet's body, that no other wild beasts should meddle with it. Which made the miracle more illustrious; and plainly shewed all this did not happen by chance.

Ver. 29. *And the prophet took up the carcass of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came into the city to mourn, and to bury him.*] To make a solemn funeral for him.

Ver. 30. *And he laid his carcass in his own grave.*] Which was the greatest honour he could do him.

And they mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother!] He and his sons made the usual lamentation over him; of which this was the form, we find, in aftertimes, (Jer. xxii. 18.)

Ver. 31. *And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake unto his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones.*] This he ordered, not merely out of affection to the prophet, but to secure himself from the judgment that he had threatened, ver. 2.

Ver. 32. *For the saying which he cried by the word of the Lord against the altar in Beth-el, and against all the houses of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.*] This Abarbinel looks upon as an argument that this man was a prophet of the Lord;

that he foretold the same thing that the man of God, who came from Judah, did. And, as he thinks, something more; *viz.* the destruction of all the high places by Josiah, which is not before mentioned.

Ver. 33. *After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way.*] By all these wonderful works (for the singular number is put for the plural) Jeroboam was not at all changed; but continued in his idolatry.

But made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places.] He did not reform in any one thing; but still went on in making any body priests. (See xii. 31.)

Whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places.] Without any respect to his tribe, or family; or, indeed, to his condition.

Ver. 34. *And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and destroy it from the face of the earth.*] Brought dreadful punishments upon his family (for so *sin* sometimes signifies the *punishment* of sin), and these not vulgar punishments, but utter extirpation.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AT that time.*] Some time after those woes were denounced against him; but the phrase doth not denote any precise time.

Abijah the son of Jeroboam was sick.] Being stricken by the hand of God with some disease.

Ver. 2. *And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself.*] Put on such apparel as the common people wear.

That thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam.] He would have her go on this errand, because he was sure she would report things truly to him: but yet would not have her known to be his wife, because he would have the prophet speak more freely and indifferently: or, perhaps, he was afraid he should threaten too heavily, if he knew who she was.

And get thee to Shiloh; behold, there is the prophet Ahijah, which told me I should be king over this people.] This looks like great stupidity, that he should think to deceive a prophet, who could tell him future events: and therefore much more discover things present.

Ver. 3. *And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child.*] They that went to inquire of a prophet used to make him some present, as a token of their respect to him. (See 1 Sam. ix. 7.) And by such oblations the prophets supported themselves. This present which she made him was of such things as might make him think her to be a countrywoman, rather than a courtier.

Ver. 4. *And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah: but Ahijah could not see; for his eyes were set by reason of his age.*] In the Hebrew, his eyes *stood for his hoariness.* He seems to have had a film, or a cataract, grown over his eyes.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her; for it shall be, when she cometh to thee, that she shall feign herself to be another woman.*] He was as fully instructed how to treat her, as if he had seen and known her.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam, why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings.*] He discovered her before she appeared, that she might give the greater credit to his words.

Ver. 7. *Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel; Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel.*] Raised him from a private person to be the king of the ten tribes.

Ver. 8. *And rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee; and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes.*] Though David committed some great sins, yet he was upright in his religion, and never started aside in the least unto other gods. In which piety, God expected Jeroboam should have continued, as he admonished him, when he first sent Ahijah to him, (xi. 38.)

Ver. 9. *But hast done evil above all that were before thee.*] King Saul was not so bad; nor Solomon: who, though he was drawn aside himself, yet did not study to make his people idolaters.

For thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images.] Or, *even molten images;* that is, the golden calves. Which he did not think to be gods, but only representations of God: and yet God looked upon this worship which was paid to him before these images, as the worship of other gods: which are called *devils* in 2 Chron. xi. 1 .

To provoke me to anger.] That was the effect of this idolatrous worship.

And hast cast me behind thy back.] Neglected me and my service. For those things we cast behind our backs which are nothing worth; and for which we have no regard or concern what becomes of them.

Ver. 10. *Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam.*] Severely punish it.

And will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall.] That is, not leave a man of his family alive, as Ralbag interprets it. (See 1 Sam. xxv. 22.)

And him that is shut up and left in Israel.] That is, married or unmarried, as De Dieu expounds these words upon Deut. xxxii. 36. all sorts of men, of whatsoever state or condition they be. Others refer this to treasures shut up in secret places, and to flocks left in the field; or, to men taken captive, or that have escaped. As much as to say, There shall be an universal destruction. And thus Bochartus glosses (comprehending all these), "I will cut off every male, whether he be a captive, or a free man; whether he live in the city, or in the country; be married or single." (See his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 66.)

And I will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam.] All his posterity.

As a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone.] Which servants remove so carefully, that they suffer not the least speck to remain.

Ver. 11. *Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.*] That is, none of them shall be buried.

For the Lord hath spoken it.] This is God's irrevocable decree.

Ver. 12. *Arise thou therefore, get thee unto thy own house;*

and when thy feet enter the city, the child shall die.] This was a sign that all the rest of his threatenings should be fulfilled.

Ver. 13. *And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him; for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave.*] All the rest were to be buried in the bowels of dogs, and of fowls of the air, (ver. 11.)

Because in him is found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.] He was the only person of that family that disliked the worship of the calves, and perhaps intended to remove them when he had power; and suffer the people to go up to Jerusalem to worship, trusting God would preserve him in his kingdom. Some of the Jews say, that he broke down a hedge which his father had made, to keep people from going to Jerusalem, at the three great feasts.

Ver. 14. *Moreover, the Lord shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam.*] This king was Baasha, (xv. 27, 28.)

That day.] As soon as he was made king, (ver. 29.)

But what? even now.] What did I say (*that day*)? even just now. It is as sure as if it were now done. The Chaldee takes it otherwise; He shall destroy the house of Jeroboam; both that which liveth now at this day, and that which shall be born in time to come. But Kimchi puts no stop at this word *vemah* (*and what*), but continues it with what follows, in this manner, *What is this which shall now happen, to that which shall come hereafter?* that is, the present calamities shall be nothing to the future. Which agrees well enough with what follows, concerning the continual troubles that should be in Israel; and at last their captivity.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord shall smite Israel.*] For their consenting to that idolatrous worship which Jeroboam set up.

As a reed is shaken in the water.] That is, they shall be in perpetual commotions by civil wars: having no quiet, but frequently changing their kings. Thus Bochartus excellently expounds it, in an epistle to our bishop Morley, p. 106, &c. The reason of this expression was, that several of their kings were afterward killed, and new families started up; and between so many kings of so many families and tribes, their minds fluctuated and wavered; and they knew not where to fix themselves, and rest in quiet: therefore their condition is thus described in 2 Chron. xv. 5. "There was no peace to him that went in, or to him that came out," &c.

And he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers.] Which he began to do first by Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, (2 Kings xv. 29.) and then finished it by Shalmaneser, (2 Kings xvii. 5, 6, &c.)

And shall scatter them beyond the river.] That is, Euphrates: they being carried (as the forenamed places tell us) into the country of the Medes.

Because they have made their groves.] In which they placed the images of their gods. For they were not contented with the calves, but fell to grosser idolatry; which was commonly practised in groves. (See Judg. iii. 7.)

Provoking the Lord to anger.] For nothing was so detestable to him as this sin.

Ver. 16. *And he shall give Israel up.*] Into the hands of the heathen.

Because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin.] Perverted the whole nation: who by his authority and example were led into idolatry.

Ver. 17. *And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah.*] A city in the tribe of Manasseh: which had been famous in ancient times, (Josh. xii. 24.) and became the royal seat, and continued so for some time, (xv. 33.) being found more convenient, I suppose, than Shechem, where Jeroboam first settled.

And when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died.] It seems the king's house was near the gate of the city: for it is said, ver. 12. that as soon as she entered into the city, the child should die. And so it did, when she came to the threshold of the door of the palace.

Ver. 18. *And they buried him; and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet.*] Whereby he confirmed all the rest of his threatenings against the house of Jeroboam and the people of Israel.

Ver. 19. *And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned.*] How he behaved himself in war, and in peace.

Behold, they are written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.] Not in that book in the Bible called Chronicles; but in such a book as that wherein the acts of Solomon were recorded, day by day, xi. 41. (See there.)

Ver. 20. *And the days that Jeroboam reigned were two-and-twenty years: and he slept with his fathers; and Nadab his son reigned in his stead.*] His sleeping with his fathers seems to be a phrase signifying only that he died, as all before him did: not that he was buried with them, (as it is said of Rehoboam, ver. 31.) for they were private men, and he a king; who, no doubt, was magnificently interred by his son.

Ver. 21. *And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began to reign.*] And therefore was born a year before Solomon came to the crown: for he reigned but forty years, xi. 42.

And he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there.] A great honour to him, of which he was not worthy; and therefore God shortened his days, and did not let him reign so long as Jeroboam.

And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess.] It is much that David should suffer Solomon to marry one of this country; unless she was proselyted, as the daughter of Pharaoh is supposed to have been. He himself, indeed, had married the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; but the son he had by her proved so wicked, that it might have been a caution to him not to marry his son, especially him he intended for the heir of his crown, to a stranger. Who, if she was proselyted, yet many think she did not so change her religion, but that she instilled ill principles into her son, and corrupted him. Nay, was one of those women that enticed Solomon to idolatry; for women of Ammon are reckoned among his strange wives.

Ver. 22. *And Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed.*] By joining other gods together with him. Which is an amazing thing, that, at the beginning of his reign, Rehoboam should do well for three years, (2 Chron. xi. 17.) and then forsook the law of God, (2 Chron. xii. 1.)

and fell off from his worship, into such gross idolatry, as exceeded that of Jeroboam's.

Above all that their fathers had done.] Above all that had been practised in the time of the judges.

Ver. 23. *For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree.*] They multiplied altars on every high hill; and set up images; and built temples for them: which I take to be meant by *groves*. For they could not be under every green tree; nor could they be said to be *built*, but to be planted; therefore it is reasonable to interpret them temples, or places of Divine worship. As among the heathens, Strabo testifies (Geograph. lib. ix.) that the poets called their temples by the name of groves (ἄλση καλοῦσιν τὰ ἱερὰ πάντα), though they had no trees about them; because the custom was to have trees planted about their sacred places. In which the Israelites set up altars; directly contrary to the law: which intended to preserve unity in religion, by allowing one altar only.

Ver. 24. *And there were also Sodomites in the land.*] This kind of wickedness often attended idolatry, (xv. 12. 2 Kings xxiii. 7. Rom. i. 21. 28.) For among the heathens the most filthy things were practised in these shady dark places (their *groves*) by the worshippers of Venus, Bacchus, and Priapus. And such there were, it appears by the place now quoted, (2 Kings xxiii. 7.) among the Israelites: who, out of devotion to some false god or other, prostituted their bodies, contrary to nature, to be abused in honour of those gods, directly against the law, (Deut. xxiii. 17.) For when Josiah purged the temple, he is said to cast out the *Sodomites:* where by *Kedeschim* our Selden understands the priests of Astarte. (Syntag. ii. de Diis Syris, cap. 2.)

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass, that, in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.*] Ῥοβοάμος δ' αὐτῷ παρέδωκε ἀμαχητὶ τὴν πόλιν. *And Rehoboam* (as Josephus writes) *delivered up the city to him, without striking a stroke.* For he had a vast army (as we read, 2 Chron. xii. 2.) wherewith he conquered Asia, as Herodotus tells us, who calls him Sesostris. For Josephus acknowledgeth he relates the same expedition that the Scripture doth, but under a different name. It may seem something strange, that Shishak being so nearly allied to Rehoboam should come up against him, and take his royal city: but as kingdoms are never married, so Jeroboam, it is likely, who had lived long in Egypt, stirred him up to invade him, and thereby established himself in his new kingdom: for we read not a word of any cities in Israel that he took, but only the fenced cities of Judah; (2 Chron. xii. 4.) Jeroboam and his country remaining undisturbed. Besides, it must be remembered he was not the son of Pharaoh's daughter, but of an Ammonitess: and therefore there was no kindred between Rehoboam and Shishak.

Ver. 26. *And he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all.*] These riches which David and Solomon had treasured up, tempted Shishak, it is probable, to this expedition against Jerusalem: for he did not intend to keep this city, but only to spoil it.

And he took away the shields of gold which Solomon had made.] Which were in the house of the forest of Lebanon, (see x. 16, 17.) which it seems he also plundered. This was a speedy vengeance for their sins; that so soon after Solomon's death, the splendour wherein he left Jerusalem should be extinguished. For Rehoboam served God three years; was corrupted in the fourth; and in the fifth was punished.

Ver. 27. *And king Rehoboam made in their stead brazen shields, and committed them into the hands of the chief of the guard.*] In the Hebrew the word for *guard* is *runner:* so called because they went before the king and behind him.

Which kept the door of the king's house.] These shields were not of much value; and so were committed to men in a mean office: whereas the golden ones were kept, as I said, in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

Ver. 28. *And it was so, when the king went into the house of the Lord, that the guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard-chamber.*] He did not quite forsake God, but still continued to worship in the temple: and, perhaps, he now left the high places (after he had been thus chastised by the king of Egypt), and frequented the house of God better. Shields were carried before him thither for pomp's sake, that he might not be contemned by his people; and that there might be no occasion for sedition, if they were disposed to it, when they saw him so well guarded.

Ver. 29. *Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] He refers those that desired a larger account of him to the public Annals, as he had done when he concludes the history of Jeroboam, ver. 19. (See there.)

Ver. 30. *And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days.*] This doth not seem to agree with what we read xii. 22. where God commanded Rehoboam and his people not to go to fight with Israel: and they obeyed his voice. But this is easily satisfied, by observing that the Jews were commanded not to make war upon the Israelites; but they are not commanded not to defend themselves, if the Israelites made war upon them. And this was their case; the Israelites vexed them with continual incursions and depredations; though the house of David did not assault them, but only repelled their violence; or, perhaps, upon the borders, they were continually endeavouring to get ground one of another; though they never came to a set battle.

Ver. 31. *And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and his mother's name was Naamah, an Ammonitess.*] The repetition of this about his mother hath something remarkable in it, (see ver. 21.) though it is hard to know what it is. Abarbinel thinks, it is as much as to say, He did not repent at last; but as he lived, so he died, in the idolatry of his mother.

And Abijam his son reigned in his stead.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *NOW, in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned Abijam over Judah.*] Which seems to disagree with what is said below (ver. 9.) concerning Asa, that he began to reign the twentieth year of Jeroboam, and Abijam reigned three years. But it is usual, both in Scripture and in other authors, to reckon part of a year for a whole year. So Abijam began to reign in some part

of Jeroboam's eighteenth year, and continued his reign the whole nineteenth, and died in the twentieth: and so was reckoned to have reigned three years, as it here follows.

Ver. 2. *Three years reigned he in Jerusalem.*] This was a very short time, as Abarbinel observes; but it was because he walked in the way of his father; which provoked God to cut him off.

And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.] The same author fancies she was the daughter of Absalom, (as he is called 2 Chron. xi. 21.) who rebelled against his father David; and so was a bad daughter of a bad father. She is called by another name, 2 Chron. xiii. 2. viz. *Michaiah the daughter of Uriel.* But he thinks that is the name of the family, and this her proper name. Others think this is a mere fancy, and with great reason; for Abishalom is a different name from Absalom, as David's son is always called. And they think he had two names, as his daughter also had. But Pellicanus seems to me to have given the plainest account of this, that Maachah was his grandmother, and Micaiah his mother.

Ver. 3. *And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him.*] See xiv. 22—24.

And his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father.] They ought all to have remembered David, and trod in his steps; who was the founder of the royal family; and never turned aside to the worship of other gods, as this man did; though together with them he worshipped the Lord God of Israel, who is therefore called *the Lord his God.*

Ver. 4. *Nevertheless, for David's sake, the Lord his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him.*] He continued the kingdom in the posterity of David: which is the meaning of giving him a *lamp.* (See xi. 36.)

And to establish Jerusalem.] Whereby Jerusalem was established as the place of God's worship.

Ver. 5. *Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.*] He was not without other sins; but none so enormous as this: and therefore not remembered, as this about Uriah is very often, to his dishonour.

Ver. 6. *And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life.*] This was said before, (xiv. 30.) and therefore may seem to come in here impertinently: because he is not speaking of Rehoboam, but of his son Abijam: who was a valiant young man in the days of his father, and always fought his battles with Jeroboam. Which being related before in the history of Rehoboam, is here repeated, as Abarbinel thinks, to shew that Abijam was the cause of these wars. And these words, *all his days,* he thinks, relate to Abijam, who continued the war between his father and Jeroboam with great success: as we read 2 Chron. xiii. 17. Bochartus thinks a plainer account may be given of this, by supposing that Rehoboam signifies this son of his; children and fathers being one and the same in a moral account. Thus Abraham is said to have purchased the sepulchre of the sons of Emor; which was indeed purchased by Jacob: and the Israelites say to Rehoboam, (xii. 16.) "What portion have we in David?" That is, in Rehoboam the grandchild of David? In like manner, he thinks, it may be said, *there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam;* that is, between Abijam the son of Rehoboam and Jeroboam: whom Abijam grievously afflicted. (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 43.) But this doth not seem to be the true account; because the war between Abijam and Jeroboam is distinctly mentioned in the next verse. Therefore the meaning of these words is, that though God was pleased, for David's sake, who walked uprightly before him, to continue a *lamp,* that is, a successor to him in Jerusalem; yet these successors were vexed with continual wars (as appeared both in the reign of Rehoboam and of Abijam), and did not enjoy their kingdom peaceably.

Ver. 7. *Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] See xi. 41. Ezra saith they were recorded in the book of the prophet Iddo, 2 Chron. xiii. 22. from whence he took what he thought fit.

And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.] He continued the war, which had been between his father and Jeroboam, and managed it very gloriously, as Ezra shews in the book of the Chronicles.

Ver. 8. *And Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 9. *In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah.*] In some part of that year. (See ver. 2.)

Ver. 10. *And one-and-forty years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.*] This was the name of his grandmother, who is called his mother, as Reuel is called the father of Jethro's daughters, Exod. ii. 18. when he was their grandfather. Which example Kimchi here alleges to explain this. And thus Abarbinel: The sense is not, that Maachah brought forth Asa (for she was his father's mother), but she brought him up and gave him his education: which made his piety the more remarkable, that he was not tainted with her principles of religion as his father was. But why his mother should not be mentioned, but his grandmother, which was not at all needful (because it was evident, by what was said before, that Maachah was the mother of Abijam his father), is unaccountable. And therefore others think that this was the name of his mother; which was the same, as her father's also was, with that of Abijam's.

Ver. 11. *And Asa did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, as did David his father.*] He made him his pattern: worshipping the Lord alone, and taking away all idols, as it here follows.

Ver. 12. *And he took away the Sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his father had made.*] Of which see xiv. 23, 24. But still some secretly remained; and therefore when it is said he *removed all idols,* the meaning is, all that he could discover, for some lurked privately, (xxii. 46.)

Ver. 13. *And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from being queen.*] He took away her guards, all the ensigns of royal dignity, and reduced her to the condition of a private person. But the word *being* is not in the Hebrew; which others translate, *he removed her from the queen:* that is, from his wife; that she might not be infected with her idolatry. He put her therefore out of the court, where she gave a bad example.

Because she had made an idol in a grove.] The word we

translate *idol*, is *Miphlezeth*, which imports something of terror and horror; either because it was of a frightful aspect, or brought dreadful judgments upon its worshippers. St. Jerome understands by it Priapus, or Baal-Peor, to whom the women were much devoted. Theodoret takes it for Astarte, or Venus: and, indeed, in the northern countries, Priapus and Venus were painted together; as Johan. Gensius observes in his book De Victimis Humanis, par. i. cap. 9. Whatsoever it was, it was placed in a grove; in which shady places all the works of darkness, even sodomy itself, were practised.

Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron.] He cut it down, and having burnt it, stamped it to a powder, and then threw it into the brook Kidron; as Moses did with the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 20. (See 2 Chron. xv. 16.)

Ver. 14. *But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the Lord all his days.*] He did take away all the high places wherein they sacrificed to strange gods, (2 Chron. xiv. 3.) but not those wherein God alone was worshipped: for his authority was not great enough to do this; the people having so universally and so long taken this licence, that none durst attempt to abolish this inveterate custom till the days of Hezekiah: who, seeing the calamities that were coming upon his country, endeavoured to prevent them by a thorough reformation. But though Asa did not venture to do this, yet his heart was sincerely affected to the right worship of God; and he suffered sacrifices to be offered to none else.

Ver. 15. *And he brought in the things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the Lord, silver, and gold, and vessels.*] According to the piety of ancient times, his father had vowed some part of the spoils he took in the war with Jeroboam unto the Lord; but had not time to make good his vow, or upon some account or other neglected it. Asa's son therefore made his vow good; and also himself brought in what he had devoted unto holy uses, (for so the words are in the Hebrew, *he brought in the holy things of his father*, &c.) having gotten great spoil in his war with the Ethiopians, (2 Chron. xiv. 13, 14.)

Ver. 16. *And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.*] There having been no mention hitherto made of Baasha, this may seem not to stand in its proper place. But Abarbinel thinks it is here inserted, that as this Divine writer had shewn what his virtues were, so he might now mention his faults. The chief of which was occasioned by this war: which moved him to send to Ben-hadad for help, when he should have relied upon God; as it is related largely, 2 Chron. xvi. 7, &c.

Ver. 17. *And Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah.*] After Asa's great victory over the Ethiopians, a great many of the Israelites fell off to him from Baasha: who thereupon resolved to make war upon Judah, and thereby prevent a further defection of his subjects.

And built Ramah.] A city in the tribe of Benjamin: which either belonged to the kingdom of Israel, or he had taken from Judah and fortified it; for that is meant by *building* it, as appears by what follows.

That he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.] That he might hinder all communication between his people and the people of Judah. For this place lay in the confines of both kingdoms; and in such a strait, that, a fortification being made there, none could pass to and fro without a licence from Baasha.

Ver. 18. *Then Asa took all the silver and gold that was left in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hands of his servants; and king Asa sent them to Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying.*] This was held lawful, in case of extreme danger, to employ sacred things for the defence of one's country. But here was no such necessity in this case; for God had appeared so wonderfully for Asa, against a more powerful enemy than Baasha, that he ought to have confided in him for help; as the prophet Hanani told him, 2 Chron. xvi. 7, &c.

Ver. 19. *There is a league between me and thee, and between my father and thy father.*] In the latter end of Solomon's reign the Syrians were enemies to him, (xi. 24, 25.) But when he was dead, and the kingdom was divided, both Judah and Israel made peace with the Syrians: having enough to do, to settle themselves in their own dominions.

Behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.] This was a wicked piece of policy, to tempt him with money to break his word, which perhaps he had sworn to observe.

Ver. 20. *So Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the hosts which he had.*] Always in a readiness, for some expedition, or for the defence of his country.

Against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maachah, and all Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali.] By this it appears, that he fell upon the northern part of the kingdom of Israel, which was nearest to Damascus; whilst Baasha was busy at Ramah, which was in the more southern part of his dominion.

Ver. 21. *And it came to pass, that when Baasha heard thereof, that he left off building of Ramah.*] By this means Asa compassed his ends; it not being safe for Baasha to continue the work he was about, for fear Ben-hadad should make larger conquests than he had already done.

And dwelt in Tirzah.] Which was become the royal city, (see xiv. 17.) where Baasha settled himself; though he intended, I suppose, when he had finished Ramah, to have dwelt there some part of the year; that by his presence the passages might have been the better secured.

Ver. 22. *Then king Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah (none was exempted).*] He summoned all the people of the country; who were not disabled by age, or sickness, or some other way.

And they took away the stones, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded, and king Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah.] They were inhabited before, but he enlarged, and perhaps fortified them. Which he judged better than to perfect the fortification of Ramah; which would have been a perpetual bone of contention (as we speak) between Judah and Israel.

Ver. 23. *And the rest of the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] See xi. 41.

Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.] He had the gout, as the Gemara of the Sanhedrin

explains it, (cap. 6. n. 7.) which made him less active than he had been before this disease seized him.

Ver. 24. *And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers, in the city of David his father: and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 25. *And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years.*] Part of two years, as appears from ver. 28. 33.

Ver. 26. *And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.*] By the worship of the golden calves.

Ver. 27. *And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar.*] That is, of a family in the tribe of Issachar.

Conspired against him: and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines (for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon).] It was a city in the tribe of Dan, (Josh. xix. 44.) and given to the Levites, (xxi. 23.) who quitted it, as they did the rest of their cities, when Jeroboam would not suffer them to execute their office, (2 Chron. xi. 14.) and the Philistines it is likely seized upon it, being adjoining to their country. But Nadab now endeavoured to recover it out of their hands, as of right belonging to him.

Ver. 28. *Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his stead.*] What was the pretence for this conspiracy we are not told; but it is likely he had many joined with him in it; otherwise it had not been easy to slay him, when he was in the midst of his army before Gibbethon.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass, when he reigned, that he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the Lord, which he spake by Ahijah the Shilonite.*] His intention was not to fulfil this prophecy, (mentioned xiv. 10.) but to secure himself in his usurped throne, by cutting off all that had any title to it. But by this means God fulfilled his own intentions; and that as speedily as Ahijah the prophet had foretold, (xiv. 14.)

Ver. 30. *Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel to sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger.*] Which caused great miseries in Israel; especially in the beginning of that kingdom, when they reigned by force, not by succession. Whereas in Judah the son succeeded the father, by right of blood, according to the promise made to David.

Ver. 31. *Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] His acts could not be many; yet more were recorded in the public Annals than are here mentioned, (xi. 41.)

Ver. 32. *And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.*] We read the very same words before (ver. 16.) in the history of Asa; which are now repeated in the history of Baasha, to shew the reason why Asa was his enemy, which he would not have been (but his friend) had he feared God after his cutting off the whole house of Jeroboam. But he would make no covenant with him, notwithstanding he had fulfilled the word of God, because he walked in the sins of Jeroboam. Thus Abarbinel.

Ver. 33. *And in the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years.*

Ver. 34. *And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.*] Which makes it evident, that he did not cut off Jeroboam's family because they were idolaters, but because he aspired to the throne; which, when he possessed, he endeavoured to establish himself in it by the same wicked policy which Jeroboam used. For he reformed nothing in religion; but continued to worship the calves which Jeroboam had set up, to keep the people from going to worship at Jerusalem.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *THEN the word of the Lord came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying.*] This is a prophet that lived till the end of Jehoshaphat's reign. (See 2 Chron. xix. 1. xx. 34.) And his father Hanani was a prophet before him, (2 Chron. xvi. 7.) Nor was there wanting a succession of prophets during the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, as Abarbinel hath observed through every reign, their names being set down in Holy Scripture: he hath shewn in a catalogue he hath made of the kings, and the prophets in their time; too long to be here transcribed.

Ver. 2. *Forasmuch as I have exalted thee out of the dust.*] It seems he was of a mean family in the tribe of Issachar. Perhaps, but a common soldier, or some small officer in the army which laid siege to Gibbethon; but being bold and daring, formed a conspiracy against Nadab.

And made thee prince of my people Israel.] God's providence interposed, that nothing should hinder the success of his design against Nadab; because he intended to make use of him to punish the house of Jeroboam.

And thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger by their sins.] Continued them in their idolatry, against which he ought to have shewn the greatest zeal, because it provoked God's anger against the family of Jeroboam.

Ver. 3. *Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.*] So that neither any of his own children, nor the children of any of his relations should remain; but his name be quite put out.

Ver. 4. *Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.*] The very same threatening that was pronounced against Jeroboam and his posterity by Ahijah, (xiv. 11.)

Ver. 5. *Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*

Ver. 6. *So Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah: and Elah his son reigned in his stead.*] He was not slain, as Nadab was; but died, as Jeroboam did; and his son suffered like his, (ver. 9, 10.)

Ver. 7. *And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the Lord against Baasha, and against his house.*] This command of God being given to Jehu, (ver. 1.) he executed it, and delivered this message to Baasha some time before he died. Which is said to be done *by the hand of Jehu*, because he was the minister of God in this business.

Even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the Lord, in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like to Jeroboam; and because he killed him.] That is, killed Nadab, who was Jeroboam's son: or rather (as Abarbinel judiciously observes) this relates to the whole house of Jeroboam beforementioned; which Baasha destroyed, not because they were idolaters, and that he might fulfil the word of the Lord (as perhaps he pretended), but to satisfy his own ambition, being guilty of the very same crime that Jeroboam was: and therefore was no better than a murderer in the slaughter he made of his family; and accordingly is threatened to be punished for that very act, which was committed, not in obedience to God, but to serve himself.

Ver. 8. *And in the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel.*] This seems to contradict what Ezra saith in 2 Chron. xvi. 1. that Baasha built Ramah in the thirty-sixth year of Asa. Of which I shall give an account in my notes on that place. For the present it may suffice to say, that Ezra doth not speak of the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign, but of the thirty-sixth year after the division of the kingdom. For it could be, at the most, but the twenty-sixth year of Asa's reign when Baasha died.

In Tirzah, two years.] Not complete; but one entire year, and part of another: as appears from ver. 10. 15.

Ver. 9. *And his servant Zimri (captain of half of his chariots).*] A considerable commander in his army, who had a great interest in the soldiery.

Conspired against him as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, steward of his house in Tirzah.] He seems to have been a debauched young man, who stayed at home following his pleasures, whilst his army was besieging Gibbethon, (ver. 15.) Which gave Zimri, who it is likely was captain of his guard, the better opportunity to kill him.

Ver. 10. *And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his stead.*] Here was a speedy execution of the vengeance threatened against him by Jehu, that God would make his house like the house of Jeroboam, (ver. 3.) For as Nadab the son of Jeroboam reigned but two years, (xv. 25.) so Elah the son of Baasha reigned no more: and then, as Nadab was killed with the sword, so was Elah. Thus, as Abarbinel notes, there was a wonderful likeness between Jeroboam and Baasha, in their lives, and in their deaths; in their sons, and in their family.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he slew all the house of Baasha: he left not one that pisseth against the wall.*] That is, not a man. (See xiv. 10.)

Neither of his kinsfolk, nor of his friends.] He not only destroyed all that were descended from Baasha, as Baasha had done the family of Jeroboam; but he extended the destruction, and increased it, as Abarbinel speaks; for he killed all that were of kin to Baasha, with all his friends, which Baasha did not: this seems to be contained in the threatening of Jehu, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 12. *Thus Zimri destroyed all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake against Baasha by Jehu the prophet.*] See ver. 1, 2. 7.

Ver. 13. *For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son.*] This shews that Elah walked in his father's ways; though it be not before mentioned.

By which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their vanities.] So the golden calves are called, being (as Forsterus well translates the word) "Commentitia numina," *gods of their own devising.* (See 1 Sam. xii. 21.)

Ver. 14. *Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] Here is no mention of *his might;* (as there is of his father's, ver. 5.) for he was, as I said, a man of pleasure.

Ver. 15. *In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign seven days in Tirzah: and the people were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines.*] Which had been besieged many years ago, when Baasha slew Nadad, (xv. 27.) But was then relieved, or afterward retaken by the Philistines, while the Israelites were in a distracted condition; but now again invested.

Ver. 16. *And the people that were encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king.*] Had success in his conspiracy, and made himself king.

Wherefore all Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp.] Just as the Roman army, in aftertimes, made their chief commander emperor.

Ver. 17. *And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him.*] All the army that were at the siege.

And besieged Tirzah.] Where Zimri, a more dangerous enemy, was.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken.*] Which he was not able to defend against a powerful army; from whom he suspected no opposition; but hoped they would have let him reign as quietly as they did Baasha.

That he went into the palace of the king's house.] Into the strongest part of the house.

And burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died.] He was afraid, I suppose, of suffering some shameful punishment, if he had been taken alive; and therefore chose to die desperately in this manner. So Sardanapulus ended his life.

Ver. 19. *For his sins which he sinned in doing evil in the sight of the Lord, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin.*] Though he lived but a very short time after he usurped the crown, yet he gave sufficient demonstration of his resolution to continue the idolatry of Jeroboam; and therefore was abandoned by God.

Ver. 20. *Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and the treason which he wrought, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] It is likely, other acts that he did before he conspired against Elah were recorded in that book; together with the manner how he wrought his treason.

Ver. 21. *Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts.*] For when it is said, (ver. 16.) *all Israel* made Omri king in the camp; the meaning is, only the whole army, and they that attended them.

Half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king.] For they did not like to have a king imposed upon them by the soldiery; and Tibni had as good a title as the other, being also a valiant man; who succeeded

Zimri, perhaps, in his command, as captain of half his chariots.

And half followed Omri.] As already advanced to the royal dignity; and a greater man than Tibni; being captain of the whole host.

Ver. 22. *And the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath.*] For Omri had the advantage of having the army on his side.

So Tibni died.] In this civil war (into which they fell by God's just judgment upon them) many of the people, in all likelihood, died together with him.

And Omri reigned.] Without competitor. The Jews in Seder Olam Rabba, whom Rasi and others follow, say it contributed much to his advancement, that Asa king of Judah married his son Jehoshaphat to Omri's daughter. For which they have no other ground, but that it is said, 2 Chron. xviii. 1. he joined in affinity with Ahab.

Ver. 23. *In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years.*] These twelve years of his reign are to be computed not from the thirty-first of Asa's reign; for it is evident he began to reign in the twenty-seventh year of Asa, (ver. 15.) and his son began to reign in the thirty-eighth year of Asa, (ver. 29.) Therefore the twelve years are to be computed from the beginning of Omri's reign: which was, as I said, the twenty-seventh of Asa's. From which time (as Abarbinel observes) the contest continued between Omri and Tibni, unto the thirty-first year of king Asa. In the end of which Tibni died; and then Omri reigned over all Israel, whereas he reigned but over half the people before. And Tibni being extinct, all the foregoing years are accounted to Omri; *viz.* from the beginning of Asa's seven-and-twentieth year, when Zimri died, to the end of this eight-and-thirtieth year, which make twelve years.

Six years reigned he in Tirzah.] Half of his time he made this his royal seat; which was, as some think, all the time his contention with Tibni lasted, and some time after.

Ver. 24. *And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built upon the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill Samaria.*] The king's house in Tirzah being burnt, as we read ver. 18. he built a royal palace in this city, which he also built upon this hill; and called it after the name of him who was the owner of it before he bought it, *viz.* Shemer, from whom it had the Hebrew name of Shomeron. Which was ever after made the royal seat of the kings of Israel.

Ver. 25. *But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all that were before him.*] For he not only walked in the way of Jeroboam, but, it is likely, began to introduce other idolatries, which his son Ahab established among them. Or, he compelled the people to worship the calves; and by severe laws restrained the people from going up to Jerusalem: which, as some think, are meant by *the statutes of Omri,* (Micah vi. 16.)

Ver. 26. *For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger with their vanities.*] Though he had seen Elah, and all the whole house of Baasha destroyed by his predecessor for their idolatry, and Zimri himself perished in the same sin, (ver. 13. 19.) yet he persisted in their iniquity, and brought down the wrath of God upon him, and upon his family, as the foregoing kings had done.

Ver. 27. *Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might which he shewed, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] It seems he was a valiant man, which Elah was not; concerning whose *might* there is no mention, as I noted upon ver. 14.

Ver. 28. *So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria.*] Which now began, as I said, to be the royal city of the kingdom of Israel, as Jerusalem was of Judah.

And Ahab his son reigned in his stead.] Who was so eminent upon several accounts, that we have a long account of him in the following part of this book.

Ver. 29. *And in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years.*] In this space of time Asa saw six kings of Israel buried; whilst Judah flourished under one and the same king: which no doubt was a great advantage to them.

Ver. 30. *And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him.*] Was more idolatrous than his father Omri: for he brought in the worship of Baal (as it follows in the next verse), that is, of the sun, and of all the host of heaven.

Ver. 31. *And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing to him to walk in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.*] He was not satisfied with the worship which Jeroboam had invented, though highly displeasing to God. For so the words are in the Hebrew, *was it a light thing?* As much as to say, It was a most heinous crime; and yet Ahab resolved to be more wicked. For Jeroboam did not quite forsake the Lord God of Israel, but worshipped him by a representation of his own invention: and this more out of policy than any love to this kind of worship. But Ahab, out of pure love to strange gods, forsook the Lord, without any such reason for it as Jeroboam had; the people being now sufficiently estranged from Jerusalem.

That he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Eth-baal.] Called in profane writers Ithobalus.

King of the Zidonians.] Who had been old idolaters.

And served Baal, and worshipped him.] That god, whom the Chaldeans and Babylonians called Bel, the Phœnicians (of whom the Zidonians were a part) called Baal: which in Hebrew signifies *lord.* Which anciently was the name of the true God, as Mr. Selden observes; but when the world grew wicked, was given to the sun by the Phœnicians: who, as Philo-Byblius tells us, reputed the sun to be μόνον οὐρανοῦ θεόν, *the only god of heaven.* And at last this name was given to other stars, and to their dead kings, whose memory was dear to them. And various rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices were devised in their honour, as that great man observes, (Syntag. de Diis Syris, ii. cap. 1.) who understands these words of the Phœnician Belus or Baal, who was the very same with the European Jupiter: and Zidon being situated on the sea, their Baal was called by the Greeks the Sea Jupiter. So Hesychius, Θαλάσσιος Ζεὺς ἐν Σιδόνι τιμᾶται, *the Sea Jupiter is worshipped at Sidon.* But our Mr. Mede is very confident, that the Baal whose worship Jezebel brought with her from Zidon was a deified king of the Phœnicians: as Baal was the first king of Babel who was deified after his death. Whence all the souls of men who were canonized after death were

called Baalim. (See book i. discourse xlii. and his Apostacy of the later Times, par. i. chap. 3.) Whence it came, that there were not more Jupiters among the Europeans, than there were Baals among the Syrians. And hence so many mountains, and springs, and woods, and cities, were called by the name of Baal, when Joshua conquered Canaan; as Baal-Meon, Bamoth-Baal, Baal-Gad, Baal-Thamar, Baal-Zephon, and many more. In which places, no doubt, Baalim were worshipped, and from thence they had their names.

Ver. 32. *And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.*] He built a temple for this god in the royal city, and set up an altar, where he sacrificed to him. Which was more directly to worship other gods than Jeroboam did: who pretended the worship he performed to the calves was to the true God, whom he honoured in them.

Ver. 33. *And Ahab made a grove.*] Which was another piece of idolatry; which God commanded to be abolished, (Deut. vii. 5.)

And Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.] In this grove, it is likely, all manner of impurities were practised: for Jezebel was a filthy woman.

Ver. 34. *In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite.*] A man that lived in the very seat of idolatry; and, it is likely, was deeply infected with it.

Build Jericho.] A place which, being under a *cherem*, was never to be rebuilt; because it was devoted to God, as the first-fruits of the conquests of Canaan. Which this man either did not know (because ignorant of the law, which now was little read), or was so impious as not to regard the words of Joshua, believing no other god but Baal.

He laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.] But he found to his cost, that the sentence which Joshua pronounced against the rebuilder of this city proved true; for his eldest son died when he laid the first stone of it: and so all the rest of his children, one after another, as the building advanced; till at last his youngest son died when it was finished. A most remarkable instance of the certainty of Divine threatenings; and that God never forgets what he hath said, but continues always the same. This sentence being pronounced more than four hundred and forty years ago, and now fulfilled exactly in all its circumstances: which might have been a warning to the whole nation, not to despise the long-suffering and patience of God, who, though he had not yet carried them out of their good land, according to the word of Ahijah, (xiv. 15.) would certainly do it, if they continued in their impenitence.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *AND Elijah the Tishbite.*] The care of God over this people (as I noted before) was so great, that in every king's reign, from the first to the last, there was one or more prophets to instruct, admonish, and correct them. And now in the reign of Ahab (when there was the greatest need of it), God raised up an extraordinary prophet far exceeding all others, whom Abarbinel calls the *prince of the prophets,* next unto Moses. Whose original being not known (for here is no mention of his father or mother), some of the Jews have fancied him to have been an angel sent from heaven to reduce them to the true religion. So Abarbinel relates, upon the book of Judges, as Joh. Frischmuthus observes, in a dissertation about Elijah. Whose name, which in the Hebrew is *Elijahu,* carries something Divine in it; being compounded, as Ægid. Camartus imagines, of three of the names of God, *viz.* Eli, and Jah, and Hu. There is no doubt the two first are the names of God, but there is reason to question the last, though a great man of our own, Edm. Castellus, in his Polyglot Lexicon, doth put Hu among the Divine names; and so do the cabalists. He was indeed a very eminent messenger of God, sent to call the Israelites to repentance; from whence our learned Dr. Lightfoot thinks he had the name of Tishbite: from the Hebrew word *shub,* which signifies to *return;* for he was sent to be the converter of the nation. (See him upon St. Luke, i. 17.) Other conjectures there are about this name, which Frischmuth hath collected; and Dionysius Petavius hath delivered his opinion about it upon Epiphanius, (Hæres. lv. n. 3.) who saith Elijah was ἐξ ἱερέων of the priests, and grandson to Zadok. But Kimchi seems to have given the plainest account of this name of Thishbite from Thesbe, a town or region where he was born: just as Ahijah is called Shilonite, from Shilo, where he was born, or dwelt.

Who was of the inhabitants of Gilead.] It is not certain that he was a native of this country; but only that he came and settled among the Gileadites, being born, as some think, in the tribe of Benjamin, though most are rather of opinion in the tribe of Gad.

Said unto Ahab, As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.] To make his words the more regarded, he swore solemnly by the eternal God, whose minister he was (for that is meant by *standing before him*), and to whom he had prayed, that there should be no moisture from the clouds for three years and a half ensuing, unless it was by his prayers. Thus St. James teaches us to expound these words, *these years,* (James v. 17.) And Abarbinel makes out the connexion of this chapter with the foregoing in this manner:—Elijah admonished Ahab to lay to heart the punishment of Hiel the Beth-elite, saying, Fear the Lord lest he be angry with thee, as he was with Hiel, for breaking his command. But Ahab despised his admonition, and said, That was a chance; for you say we are all idolaters, and yet the threatening in the law of Moses (Deut. xi. 16, 17.) is not come upon us. Whereupon Elijah, in a great anger, said, *As the Lord liveth there shall be no dew,* &c. Which story is told with more circumstances in the Talmud.

Ver. 2. *And the word of the Lord came to him, saying.*] The king being incensed at this threatening, God took care to secure Elijah from his fury, by the following direction.

Ver. 3. *Get thee hence.*] For he saw that Ahab intended to lay hold of him.

And turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.] This brook Bochartus takes to be the same with Kana, mentioned by Joshua,

xvi. 5. xvii. 9. So called from the plenty of reeds (for *Kana* signifies a *reed*), in which the prophet lay hid while he stayed in this place.

Ver. 4. *And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook: and I will command the ravens to feed thee there.*] This seems so strange, that some will have the word *orebim* not to signify *ravens*, but *merchants:* because they find the word *orebe* in Ezek. xxvii. 17. signifying merchants that traded in the market of Tyre. But, as Bochartus hath observed, they are never called simply *orebim.* Nor is their opinion better, who think Arabians to be here meant: for there were none thereabout; and Elias's lurking-place would soon have been discovered to Ahab, if merchants, or any other people that travelled that way, had been acquainted with it. We must therefore acknowledge a miraculous care which God took of Elijah, as all the ancients do, none excepted. (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 13.) Nor did such things seem incredible to the heathen, who tell us as strange stories. For example, that Jupiter was fed in his cradle by bees: and Janus, the son of Apollo and Evadne, with honey by dragons: and Midas, when an infant, had corn put into his mouth, as he lay asleep, by ants: Æsculapius nourished by a goat; and a great many more mentioned by that excellent person Huetius, in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 17.

Ver. 5. *So he went, and did according to the word of the Lord: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.*

Ver. 6. *And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.*] God amply provided for his servant; sending him not only bread, but flesh also, that he might make a good meal: and this twice a day, at dinner and supper. This provision some of the Jews fancy (in Gemara Sanhedrin, cap. 11. n. 76.) the ravens brought from Ahab's house; others fancy, from Jehoshaphat's; as if he was fed with royal dainties. But Bochartus thinks it is better to say, that they had this provision from some of the seven thousand persons who had never bowed to Baal. But it is best of all to confess we cannot tell whence they had it; God, perhaps, making meat ready prepared on purpose for him. They who object that these were unclean creatures, who polluted the meat which they touched, should consider, that all this was done by an extraordinary dispensation. And St. Chrysostom fancies, there was this moral instruction in it; that Elijah should learn to be more mild and gentle towards the deluded Israelites, by these birds, who were cruel to their young, but kind to him. And indeed it is very wonderful, as Victorinus Strigelius here glosses, that the ravens, who do not feed their own young ones, should constantly feed the prophet. For such is the ἀστοργία of these creatures, as naturalists report, that they forsake their young before they be fledged: whom God feeds by worms, which are produced by the dung, and out of the carcasses that have been brought into their nests, until they be able to fly, and provide for themselves. I think he hath this out of St. Ambrose, lib. x. epist. 82. The Psalmist is thought to allude to it, Psal. cxlvii. 9. And God himself in Job xxxviii. 41.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass, after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain.*] In the Hebrew it is, *at the end of days*, that is, of a year; as that phrase, I have shewn, is often used.

Ver. 8. *And the word of the Lord came to him, saying,*

Ver. 9. *Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there.*] It was a place between Tyre and Zidon, but belonged to the territory of the latter; and so was not in the land of Israel, but inhabited by gentiles.

Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.] He had appointed and disposed her, just as he did the ravens, ver. 4. For she had no command from God for it; (it appears from ver. 12.) and this was an extraordinary providence, that a poor widow and a gentile should support him; though, in all likelihood, she was not a stranger to the true religion, but a pious woman of another nation.

Ver. 10. *So he arose, and went to Zarephath: and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering sticks.*] Which shews she was but in a poor condition.

And he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.] For he knew, by a Divine inspiration, this was the woman that was to sustain him.

Ver. 11. *And as she was going to fetch it.*] This shews she was a good woman; being ready to succour a stranger.

He called unto her and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand.] Which was very natural to desire, having asked for water: but he said it to move her to acquaint him with what follows.

Ver. 12. *And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth.*] By this it appears she knew the Lord God of Israel; and that Elijah was a prophet; or, at least, one of his worshippers.

I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and I am gathering two sticks.] By *two sticks* is meant a few: as *two* frequently signifies, (Isa. xvii. 6. Jer. iii. 14.)

That I may go and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.] The famine, it seems, was sore in that country, as well as in Israel. For they of Zidon had their provision from the Israelites; and besides, it is likely, had no rain: but were punished as their neighbours were; being all alike idolaters.

Ver. 13. *And Elijah said unto her, Fear not.*] Be not afraid of being famished.

Go and do as thou hast said: but make me a little cake thereof first, and bring it unto me, and after that make for thee and for thy son.] A very hard command: whereby he tried her faith and obedience.

Ver. 14. *For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain on the earth.*] This was a miracle, which they that were not Christians did not think incredible: as Huetius shews in the same book, and the chapter abovementioned, ver. 4.

Ver. 15. *And she went, and did according to the saying of Elijah.*] By which it is evident that she trusted in the Lord God of Israel.

And she, and he, and her house did eat many days.] Some by *many days* understand a full year: as it is in the margin. But it rather signifies *two years:* for one year was

past before he came from the brook Cherith, (see ver. 7.) And therefore they lived upon this meal and oil two years more, till the end of the famine.

Ver. 16. *And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.*] But what they took out for their daily use, was immediately supplied by the power of God.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, after these things.*] After this demonstration of the power and goodness of God.

That the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.] He expired and died.

Ver. 18. *And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God?*] Some take the meaning to be, *wherein have I offended thee?* but the following words seem to imply, that in a great agony of spirit she asked him, wherefore he came to her house, if this were his intention?

Art thou come to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?] This she thought was hard, to requite his entertainment at her house with such a punishment for her sins. For then sins are said to be *called to remembrance* before God, when he punishes them.

Ver. 19. *And he said unto her, Give me thy son.*] He reached out his hands, and bade her put him into his arms.

And he took him out of her bosom.] It seems he was but a little child: who the Jews think afterward proved a prophet; *viz.* Jonah.

And carried him up into a loft where he abode.] The LXX. translate it ὑπερῷον, *an upper room:* which he had to himself for his study, meditation, and prayer; as Elisha afterward had in another place, (2 Kings iv. 10.)

And laid him upon his own bed.] By this it appears it was a private room, where he lodged.

Ver. 20. *And he cried unto the Lord.*] Prayed most earnestly.

And said, O my God, hast thou brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?] He humbly expostulated with God; representing what an addition it was to his other afflictions, that this widow should suffer, who had been so kind to him; and suffer in her son, the great comfort of her life; and that while he was in her house.

Ver. 21. *And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come again into him.*] He lay prostrate in prayer before God, and stretched out himself upon the child, as if he would inspire him with a new life. And this he did three times; believing God would be moved by his importunity, to do what he desired.

Ver. 22. *And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.*] Hereby it appeared not only that this was done by God, to whom Elijah prayed; but that he did it for Elijah's sake.

Ver. 23. *And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.*] There was no need, one would think, to bid her observe and lay to heart the great power and mercy of God, in restoring her son to life. But the best of us must be awakened to our duty.

Ver. 24. *And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know thou art a man of God.*] She believed it before; (ver. 18.) but when she saw he did not cure her child when he lay sick, but suffered him to die, she began to doubt of it. But her faith revived, together with her son, and was mightily confirmed.

And that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.] She believed all that he delivered as the mind of God; and gave up herself entirely to his instructions. The benefit of which she enjoyed, till God sent Elijah to meet Ahab; resolving to send rain upon the earth, as it follows in the next chapter.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, after many days.*] See upon ver. 15. of the foregoing chapter. Grotius expounds it, *after six months,* upon St. Luke iv. 25.

That the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying.] Our Saviour saith, and so doth St. James, that the drought continued three years and six months, (Luke iv. 25. James v. 17.) which doth not disagree with these words, which are thus to be explained. At the beginning of the drought, it is likely, Ahab imputed the want of rain to natural causes, and so did not seek to slay Elijah: but after six months neither the former nor the latter rain falling in their season, he began to be enraged at him as the cause of the drought: which forced Elijah, at God's command, to save his life by flight. And from that time the three years here mentioned are to be computed; before the word of the Lord came to him: he being one year at the brook Cherith, and two years at Sarepta; in the end of which year God took pity upon the country, having fulfilled the words of Elijah, (xvii. 1.) I see no ground for Abarbinel's observation, that the famine continued three years, to shew that it was a punishment inflicted for the sins of three families: Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and his son Nadab; Baasha, and his son Elah; Omri, and his son Ahab. The observation of Grotius is far better upon St. Luke iv. 25. (See there.)

Go, and shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.] He would not destroy the earth because it was inhabited by wicked men (as Abarbinel speaks), and yet would have them know that Elijah's prayers procured mercy for them.

Ver. 2. *And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab: and there was a sore famine in Samaria.*] Which made it the more dangerous for him to appear in Ahab's presence; lest being so sorely afflicted, he should, in his rage, cause him to be killed before he could deliver his message to him.

Ver. 3. *And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house.*] Some, both Jews and Christians, think this was Obadiah the prophet; for which I can find no ground but what is said in 2 Chron. xvii. 7. that Obadiah was one of the princes whom Jehoshaphat sent to instruct the people. And Ezra, from the next words, infers he was not a prophet.

(Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly.] Was a truly religious man, and worshipped the Lord alone with great affection to his service; which one would have expected should have made Ahab discard him, if not persecute him.

But, I suppose, he was so very useful a servant to him, in the management of the affairs of his family (which he ordered with singular prudence and fidelity), that he connived at his not worshipping Baal, nor the calves; especially since he did not (we may well think) go up to Jerusalem to worship; with which defect God was pleased to dispense, as Ahab did with his religion.

Ver. 4. *For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord.*] There were schools of the prophets, it is likely, still remaining in Israel unto her time; but she endeavoured to destroy them, and those who were bred up in them; that there might be none to instruct the people in the true religion. For such, I suppose, are here meant; not those that were endued with the extraordinary gift of prophecy: for Elijah saith, ver. 22. that he only was left a prophet of the Lord; though that may signify no more, but that he knew of nobody beside.

That Obadiah took a hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave.] Which was an act of great piety and zeal, whereby he hazarded his own life.

And fed them with bread and water).] Sent them meat and drink privately every day.

Ver. 5. *And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into all the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks; peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.*] Many were dead for want of grass, which he hoped they might find growing in such moist places, enough to preserve the rest.

Ver. 6. *And they divided the land between them, to pass through it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.*] Ahab would make this search himself, lest it should not be done faithfully by others, who might be persuaded by prayers and entreaties, or the presents of those who had any grass, not to discover it. Only he trusted Obadiah.

Ver. 7. *And as Obadiah went in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou my lord Elijah?*] He shewed by the profound reverence he made to him, how much he honoured him.

Ver. 8. *And he answered, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.*] The prophet also approved the honour Obadiah did his master, whom he owned for his *lord*, though he was a very wicked man. (See ver. 10.) For kings, by their office, are sacred persons: and therefore are to be had in great veneration (though bad men) even by the high-priest, and by the prophets, who did not approach them, as the Jews observe, without due reverence. And it is a famous saying of R. Jedaiah, "Do not dwell in a city, where no reverence or fear is paid to the king."

Ver. 9. *And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me?*] For that he concluded would be the effect of such a message delivered by him to Ahab, as he shews in the following discourse.

Ver. 10. *As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee.*] That is, to all the countries thereabout, with whom he was in league. For it is a very foolish conceit of some of the Jews (which the best of them disown), that Ahab was as great an emperor as Nebuchadnezzar, or Ahasuerus, who ruled over all nations.

And when they said, He is not there, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not.] These words incline me to think, that he sought him only throughout all his own dominions; through every tribe, which is called a *nation*; and every government, which is called a *kingdom*. For how could he take an oath of any but his own subjects? It may be said, indeed, that there might be such compacts between him and the Moabites, Edomites, Ammonites, and other neighbouring nations, that they should harbour none of his rebellious subjects: and that if he required it, they should swear they knew of none in their country. But such a treaty is so unusual, that I see no reason to suppose it.

Ver. 11. *And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.*

Ver. 12. *And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the Lord shall carry thee whither I know not.*] Snatch thee away from hence, as sometimes the prophets were suddenly transported by an invisible power to places far distant from that where they were at present, (2 Kings ii. 16. Ezek. iii. 12. 14. Acts viii. 39, 40.) And, in all likelihood, there had been instances of it before this time; which made Obadiah fear it might fall out so in this case.

And so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me.] Because he did not seize and secure Elijah when he was in his power; but let him escape.

But I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth.] Therefore he hoped the prophet would take care to preserve him, because he was not like the rest of the court.

Ver. 13. *Was it not told my lord what I did, when Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord, how I hid a hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?*] Sometimes a virtuous man may speak the truth of himself; though it be in his own praise.

Ver. 14. *And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here: and he shall slay me.*] When it would expose him to manifest danger of losing his life.

Ver. 15. *And Elijah said, As the Lord of hosts liveth.*] He who commands all creatures in heaven and earth.

Before whom I stand.] Whom I serve, as one of his ministers.

I will surely shew myself unto him to-day.] He feared not to shew himself to Ahab; for a greater king than he, the Lord of all things, he knew would preserve him.

Ver. 16. *So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah.*] The solemn oath of Elijah made Obadiah readily obey him; and assured him Ahab should not be disappointed, but certainly find him.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?*] He troubles a country, who confounds all things in it, and puts them out of order. In such a condition Israel now was, by a grievous famine; which made them not know which way to turn themselves. And this he ascribed to Elijah.

Ver. 18. *And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord.*] They trouble a nation who break the laws of God; not they that defend them.

And thou hast followed Baalim.] There were more Baals than one worshipped by the heathen, as I observed before: and it is very probable, that Ahab worshipped all the host of heaven, as well as the sun. (See xvi. 30, 31.)

Ver. 19. *Now therefore send, and gather all Israel unto Mount Carmel.*] That he might prove, in the face of all the people, that it was not he who troubled them.

And the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred.] By the *prophets of the groves* (as we translate it), Mr. Selden understands the prophets of Astarte, the great goddess of the Zidonians; which he proves by comparing many places of Scripture together, (L. de Diis Syris, Syntag. ii. cap. 3.) Maimonides hath a peculiar notion, that the prophets of Baal, and of the *groves*, were such as had drunk in the opinion of the ancient Zabii; who made images to receive the influences of the stars; golden ones for the sun, and silver ones for the moon, &c. which gave to men the gift of prophecy, and shewed what was good for them. The same they said of trees; which were some under the influence of one star, some under the influence of another; and were planted in their names, and worshipped after several manners, and infused special virtues into the trees, and made men prophets. This he avers he found expressly in their books. (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 29.)

Who eat at Jezebel's table.] So high an esteem they had of these prophets, that she kept a table on purpose for them, to do them honour with the people.

Ver. 20. *So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel.*] I suppose the Israelites sent the great men of their several tribes to represent them; and the prophets readily assembled at the king's command; who did not distrust their power, and was promised rain, I suppose, by Elijah, if he did as he desired.

Ver. 21. *And Elijah came to all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions?*] Like lame men, who tread not firmly, but dubiously; not knowing which to choose, the Lord or Baal; and therefore joining both together.

If the Lord be God, follow him: if Baal be God, follow him.] As much as to say, There cannot be more gods than one. That is the first article of your faith; "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord," (Deut. vi. 4.) If the Lord be he, then stick to him: if Baal, then reject the other. This is most rational: for both of them cannot be God.

And the people answered him not a word.] Either not knowing what to resolve, or being ashamed.

Ver. 22. *Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but the prophets of Baal are four hundred and fifty men.*] He was the only prophet that appeared in behalf of the Lord, and yet feared not to contest with a great multitude who came to defend Baal.

Ver. 23. *Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under.*] He propounded a plain way to decide this controversy, and settle the people's minds in their belief. To whom he first propounded it, that they might approve of it, if they thought it a sure way to discover the truth.

Ver. 24. *And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God.*] That is, he that sendeth fire to consume the sacrifice, which is presented to him.

And the people answered and said, It is well spoken.] They looked upon this as a reasonable proposition; because they knew that sacrifices had been approved by God, in this manner; and they were very desirous to make the experiment, and be satisfied, by this means, who was the true God. Thus Moses's sacrifice was approved, (Lev. ix. 24.) and Gideon's, (Judg. vi. 21.) and David's, (1 Chron. xxi. 20.) and Solomon's, when he consecrated the temples, (2 Chron. vii. 1. 3.) By this means, in all these cases, God had shewn that he accepted the sacrifices, and that the persons who offered them were his servants.

Ver. 25. *And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal.*] Having the people's approbation, he turned to Baal's prophets, and desired them to agree to this trial.

Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first.] No doubt they produced both the bullocks, as he propounded at the first; (ver. 22.) and if there was any advantage in choosing one, and dressing it before the other, he desired they might have it.

For ye are many.] And he being a single person, was willing to give them the precedence.

And call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.] It may be translated, call on the name *of your god, viz.* Baal. Or else, it may relate to their Baalim, which were many, as they themselves were: and desire them all to try their power, by putting no fire under the sacrifice; but expecting it to come down from heaven.

Ver. 26. *And they took the bullock which was given them.*] The choice of which was left to them.

And dressed it.] Flayed it, and cut it in pieces, and laid it upon the wood. Which they durst not refuse to do, because the people thought it a reasonable motion which Elijah made; and they had utterly lost their credit with the people, if they had not accepted it. And perhaps they did not distrust the power of Baal; which Ralbag thinks was Mars, a fiery planet; but rather the sun, which far exceeds all the other heavenly bodies in heat. Which they thought might possibly exert its power, upon this great occasion, and burn up their sacrifice. At least they might hope that Elijah might not be able to bring fire down from heaven, because he sacrificed in a high place, not at the temple: which was contrary to the law of God, who therefore would not hear him; and then they should stand upon equal ground with him, though they obtained no fire to consume their sacrifice.

And called upon the name of Baal from morning even until noon.] When the sun was in its greatest strength.

Saying, O Baal, hear us! But there was no voice, nor any that answered.] Not the least flash of fire.

And they leaped upon the altar which was made.] Or, they danced about it, after the manner of the ancient Salii. Or, as Bochartus interprets it, "Quasi furore prophetico extra se rapti, incompositis motibus huc illuc ferebantur;" *They ran about hither and thither, as men in an ecstacy with a prophetical fury, which put them into uncouth and disorderly motions.* For it appears they acted like prophets from ver. 29. who sometimes acted as men beside themselves. (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 50.) Abarbinel thinks this leaping or dancing was a rite used in the worship of the sun: which puts all things in motion.

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass at noon.*] When the morning sacrifice was ended.

That Elijah mocked them.] He did not think it unlawful, or unseemly to jeer them, and their god; that he might awaken them out of their stupidity, and expose them to all the by-standers as corrupters of religion, and deceivers of the people.

And said, Cry aloud; for he is a god.] He bade them raise their voices; for they believed he was a god, but might be something deaf, or a great way off from them, and so could not hear what they said, unless they cried louder.

Either he is talking.] Busy about dispatches: either in sending ambassadors, or giving audience.

Or he is pursuing.] Some notion (as the Hebrews understand it); being in a deep study, or deliberating about some weighty business. It is commonly understood, He is hunting, or pursuing enemies.

Or he is in a journey.] Not at home; but travelling to some other place; whither they must send after him.

Or peradventure he sleepeth.] As they used to do in those hot countries after dinner.

And must be awaked.] With loud noises.

Ver. 28. *And they cried aloud, and cut themselves, after their manner, with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.*] They did more than Elijah bade them: hoping to move him with their own blood, in which, perhaps, they thought he more delighted, than in the blood of beasts, or in their cries. For many nations offered human sacrifices to their gods: and their priests, when they were possessed with a sacred fury, were wont to slash themselves till their blood gushed out. Thus among the Romans the priests did in the worship of Bellona: in which "Sacerdotes non alieno, sed suo cruore sacrificant," &c. *The priests sacrificed not with another's blood, but with their own.* (See Lactantius, in his Divin. Institut. lib. i. cap. 21.) For cutting their shoulders, and running their drawn swords through both hands, they run about like mad men. And so Apuleius saith, they that carried about the Syrian goddess, after many other things, took out their knives or swords and cut themselves. (See lib. viii. Metamorph. p. 172, 173. and Pricæus and Rigaltius upon that place.) But our Mr. Mede hath a peculiar notion, which is, that Baalim being the deified souls of dead men, therefore the prophets of Baal cut themselves in his worship; because this was a funeral rite or ceremony, (Lev. xix. 28. xxi. 5. Deut. xiv. 1.) and therefore retained in the service of such gods, in token that they were but deified men. (See upon xvi. 31.)

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass, when mid-day was past, and they prophesied to the time of the offering the evening sacrifice.*] When all was done, they fell into a fury, and raved, as if they were possessed with an invisible power; singing hymns and praises to Baal. For that is sometimes meant by *prophesying;* (1 Chron. xxv. 2, 3.) or, it may be simply meant, they still continued praying to Baal; (ver. 26.) for that was part of a prophet's office.

That there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.] No more tokens of regard to their praises than to their prayers; nor any, the least intimation, that Baal was a god, that minded what they said or did.

Ver. 30. *And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And they came near unto him.*] They had stood hitherto by the prophets of Baal, to attend them in their sacrifice. Now Elijah calls them to him, that they might be witnesses of what he could do.

And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.] I suppose Carmel had been one of the most eminent high places in the whole kingdom: where the people, as they had been long accustomed, offered sacrifices to God in ancient times. But the worshippers of Baal had broken down the altar, and set up one of their own. For there were two sorts of high places, I have before noted, some for the worship of the true God, which continued in Judah, even under religious princes: others for the worship of idols; which good kings took away when they let the other remain. On the contrary, Ahab broke down the altars of God in the high places, and allowed none but those for Baal.

Ver. 31. *And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob.*] That he might shew he worshipped the God of the patriarchs, and no other: and that all the people, though divided in civil government, ought to be united in the same religion, and have but one altar for them; being the sons of one man, who was very dear to God, as it here follows.

Unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name.] He purged his family from all idolatry; and then God appeared to him, and talked with him, and called him by a new name; importing the power he had with God, (Gen. xxxv. 2—4. 10. 13. 15.)

Ver. 32. *And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord.*] Which he might do, being a prophet; for such persons were free from the lesser laws, that they might preserve the greater.

And he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.] That is, a large trench; for *two measures* are thought to be the third part of an ephah.

Ver. 33. *And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood.*] To be a whole burnt-offering.

And said, Fill four barrels with water.] Which they might have out of the brook at the foot of the mount, (ver. 40.) or out of the sea, which was not far off.

And pour it on the burnt-sacrifice, and on the wood.] From hence some gather the altar was hollow, into which this water run.

Ver. 34. *And he said, Do it the second time: and they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time: and they did it the third time.*] That is, they did it till all was full of water, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 35. *And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.*] This seems to prove the altar was hollow, and that there was a trench also round about it: both which were as full of water as they could hold, to make the miracle more conspicuous and convincing. For what more contrary than fire and water?

Ver. 36. *And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice.*] When the people of God were offering their solemn prayers to God at the temple in Jerusalem. This is a noted time for great things that were then done. (See upon Lev. ix. 24.)

That Elijah the prophet came near.] To the altar.

And said, Lord God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.] He desires him to demonstrate at once by this miracle, that he was the only true God, and that Elijah was

his prophet, and that he had done nothing (in bringing, for instance, a long famine upon them) but by his command. Such miracles were proper, either where a new religion was to be set up, or the old one restored, after a general depravation.

Ver. 37. *Hear me, O Lord, hear me.*] He was the more earnest and fervent in his prayer, as Abarbinel thinks, because he had undertaken to make this experiment of God's power, without any particular command from God of his own accord; nothing doubting but he would appear to vindicate his own honour; though he offered sacrifice in a high place, which was against the law.

That this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their hearts back again] God turns men's hearts, though they be not turned; because he not only doth that which evidently tends to convert them, and is sufficient to do it; but for the present also so affects them that they are converted: though they will not take care to continue in that pious bent, but start back again from him.

Ver. 38. *And the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.*] It is called the *fire of the Lord*, because it was sent from him out of heaven to testify that he was the only God (as the people could not but acknowledge), and it was of such unusual force, that it consumed not only the flesh of the bullock, and the wood, but the very stones, and the dust, and all the water that had been poured out there in great quantity.

Ver. 39. *And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces.*] Worshipping the Lord of heaven and earth.

And said, The Lord is God; the Lord he is God.] This repeated acknowledgment shews how deeply they were affected at present, with the demonstration God had given, that he only was to be worshipped. Which extorted this public confession from them: but they soon forgat their own convictions, and continued in their idolatry.

Ver. 40. *And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let none of them escape.*] The prophets of the groves, I suppose, were not there: Jezebel, on whom they attended, (ver. 19.) not suffering them to appear. It is likely they were Zidonians, which she brought along with her from her own country, when Ahab married her, and were peculiarly under her command.

And they took them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.] As perverters of the law, and teachers of idolatry; upon whom the people, in that fit of zeal wherein they now were, readily executed the sentence Elijah pronounced against them. And Ahab could make no opposition; being himself also, it is likely, astonished at the stupendous miracle.

Ver. 41. *And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink.*] They had fasted and prayed all the day till the even sacrifice was over, that they might have rain; or, that God would decide the controversy in question.

For there is a sound of abundance of rain.] He bade him be solicitous no longer; for plenty of rain was coming.

Ver. 42. *And Ahab went up to eat and drink.*] From the river that was at the bottom of the mount, he went up to a place on the side of it, where a tent was pitched for him, that he might refresh himself, now that the sacrifice was finished; and by Elijah's prayer he obtained rain, which he assured him he heard coming. By these two verses it is apparent, that Ahab himself was present to see how this contest between his prophets and Elijah, that is, between Baal and God, would end. And in all probability was as much convinced as the people, that the Lord was the only God.

And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel.] The prophet went a great deal higher, where he could see the Mediterranean Sea; and would neither eat nor drink, till he actually saw the rain gathering.

And he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees.] He fell upon his knees, and bowed his head to the very ground; so that it touched his knees: in token of great humility, and most earnest desire, that God would remember his people, and send them rain.

Ver. 43. *And he said to his servant.*] Who, some of the Jews say, was the widow of Sarepta's son. But he was too young to wait upon him.

Go up now, and look towards the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.] It is not easy to give an account of these phrases, so often here used, *he went up*. First Ahab went up, and then Elijah, and now he sends his servant, and at last he bade his servant (ver. 44.) go up to Ahab. It is most likely there were several risings in this mountain, some higher than other. Elijah went to the top of them; but there was another higher, to which he bade his servant go up. Or Elijah, perhaps, was near the top; and he sent his servant to the very top of all: and then bade him go down from thence, and go up to that part of the mount, where Ahab was eating and drinking.

Ver. 44. *And it came to pass, that, at the seventh time, there arose a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, and say to Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.*] For he saw such abundance of rain coming, as would cause floods, and render the way, for the present, unpassable, if he did not make haste home.

Ver. 45. *And it came to pass, in the meanwhile, that the heavens were thick with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain.*] While the servant went to Ahab, and his chariot was making ready, that little cloud spread itself, and in a great thickness covered the face of the sky.

And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel.] He did not go to Samaria; for Jezreel, I suppose, was nearer: and there he had a palace, (xxi. 1.)

Ver. 46. *And the hand of the Lord was upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab.*] They wore loose and long garments in this country; and therefore girded them up when they had occasion to run, that they might not hinder them. And God now gave Elijah more than human strength, so that (though he was an old man, xix. 4.) he was made able to run as fast as Ahab's chariot drove, like one of his footmen. In which he shewed his readiness to do the king all the honour imaginable, and that he was far from being his enemy, but only desired he would become a worshipper of the true God, which was, he could not but see, the Lord God of Israel.

Unto the entrance of Jezreel.] He thought it not prudent, it is likely, to venture into the city, lest Jezebel should seize him, but stopped at the gate of the city, or of the palace, and retired to some private place.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done.*] How he had called for fire from heaven, and had made rain to fall upon the earth.

And withal, that he had slain all the prophets with the sword.] That is, all the prophets of Baal, for they only are mentioned, xviii. 22. 25. and the prophets of the groves (who are said to be four hundred, xviii. 19.) were still in being, as appears from xxii. 6.

Ver. 2. *Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let God do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time.*] This shews the great folly of rage; which gave him notice of his danger, and admonished him to avoid it: or, perhaps she thought him as courageous as she was furious; and that he would not flee; and then she knew her power would be greater than his.

Ver. 3. *And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belonged to Judah.*] Whither her power did not reach; being in another kingdom.

And he left his servant there.] Because he intended to go into the wilderness, where he resolved to spend the rest of his days, and die; and he would not have the youth put to the same straits, in which he was like to be. We read of no command from God to fly; nor doth he forbid it; but left him to his own prudence. Which made him think it in vain to hope for Ahab's protection; who he saw would continue an idolater, and by his example make the people revolt to the worship of Baal. Though some are of opinion it was a fault in Elijah to run away, and not to depend upon God to preserve him, in his pious endeavours to keep the people in the true religion; who had so solemnly acknowledged the Lord to be God.

Ver. 4. *And he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness.*] This wilderness was that wherein the Israelites wandered forty years; and he now travelled as many days.

And came and sat down under a juniper-tree.] Which some look upon as a sign he did not value life; because the shade of this tree (under which he not only sat, but lay down and slept) is thought to be very noxious, as Virgil observes.

And he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough: now, O Lord, take away my life.] He thought he could do God no further service; and therefore desired to be discharged from his office by death; for all that he could say or do proved ineffectual.

For I am not better than my fathers.] Unto whose age, it is likely, he had lived.

Ver. 5. *And as he lay and slept under a juniper-tree, behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.*] Perhaps he was faint with his day's journey, for want of food at the end of it.

Ver. 6. *And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals.*] It should be translated, *upon hot stones*, as Bochartus shews in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 33.

And a cruse of water at his head: and he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.] Being weary, and wanting rest.

Ver. 7. *And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, saying, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.*] Without extraordinary strength; he being an old man, and much tired with one day's journey.

Ver. 8. *And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb the mount of God.*] It was a journey of not above four or five days, if so much; but he went about by private ways, that he might not be discovered; and, perhaps, rested sometimes, and lay hid, if there was any danger of his being seen. The Jews have made a comparison between him and Moses, in twenty-four particulars. But Abarbinel shews they were very different, and Moses had the superiority, especially in this thing here mentioned. For he is of opinion that Elijah ate and drank every day, when he could meet with food, as he might in several places of the wilderness. But ordinary food would not have enabled him to travel so long as he did: but it was by the power of that celestial food which the angel brought him, that he held out, it giving him vigour beyond all that he could receive from any other nourishment. But in this Moses went beyond him, that he had no food at all; being supported by a miraculous power, forty days and forty nights, without any sustenance of meat and drink.

Ver. 9. *And he came thither into a cave, and lodged there: and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and said to him, What doest thou here, Elijah?*] As much as to say, I have no business for thee here. This is not a place wherein to do me service. Which was a secret reproof for flying so far away: Judea, Samaria, or Damascus, being fitter places for him to be employed in.

Ver. 10. *And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts.*] He professed that he had not wanted zeal for the Lord's service; but been moved with great indignation against idolatry.

For the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, and thrown down thine altars.] He calls the altars that had been erected in high places by the ancient patriarchs, or other pious people in following times, God's altars: because they sacrificed upon them to him alone, and not to idols.

And slain thy prophets with the sword.] So Jezebel had done, xviii. 4.

And I, even I only, am left.] There were many prophets besides him: but none of them appeared publicly in defence of religion, but he alone.

And they seek my life, to take it away.] These words answer the question, *What doest thou here?* He fled thither to save his life.

Ver. 11. *And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord.*] Where the Schechinah, I suppose, appeared unto him, after some preparations for it.

And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks.] He heard a sign of the Divine presence coming, before he went out of the cave. For his angelical ministers, which attended his majesty, passed by the mouth of the cave in a mighty terrible wind; which had those dreadful effects here mentioned.

Before the Lord.] These words shew, that, in exact speaking, it was not the Lord that passed by when this wind blew, but his ushers, as I may call them, who went *before the Lord:* so it here follows.

But the Lord was not in the wind.] The Schechinah did not yet appear.

And after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake.] The Divine Presence still did not manifest itself.

Ver. 12. *And after the earthquake a fire.*] Lightning and thunder, just as there was at the giving of the law, which Elijah endeavoured to restore.

But the Lord was not in the fire.] Still he heard nothing from God; who by these things prepared him to receive his majesty with the greatest humility and composure of spirit.

And after the fire a small still voice.] At the last the Lord himself came, as he perceived by the whispering of a voice; which bade him listen and attend to what the Lord should say unto him. There are many pious meditations, which this appearance of the Divine Majesty hath suggested to interpreters. Particularly Strigelius looks upon it as representing the Divine Nature to be inclined not to terrify and destroy, but placidly to invite and preserve. God easily lays aside his anger (as Nazianzen speaks in his oration upon his father), and delights to exercise mercy. For he is compelled to anger by us, *πρὸς δὲ τοῦτο τὴν ὁρμὴν ἔχει, but to mercy he is very prone,* as we may speak, and by his own nature bent unto it, &c. To the same purpose Ralbag discourses among the Jews. Others look upon all this as a figure of the gospel dispensation, which came not in such a terrible manner as the law did, with storms, thunders, lightnings, and earthquakes, (Exod. xix. 16. Heb. xii. 18, &c.) but with great lenity and sweetness, God speaking to us by his Son, in the most mild and gentle manner. And herein also some think he intended to shew Elijah that he had all the elements ready armed at his command, if he pleased to make use of them, to destroy idolaters: but by that *still voice* he declared the Divine patience and tenderness, which he would have him to imitate, by bridling his anger, to which he was by nature very prone.

Ver. 13. *And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entrance of the cave.*] He first covered his face, in token of great reverence to God, not being able to look upon the Divine Glory which now appeared; and then went out of the cave, (as God had commanded him, ver. 11.) and stood in the entrance of it, to listen to what God would say to him.

And, behold, there came a voice to him.] From the Schechinah, or Divine Glory.

And said, What doest thou here, Elijah?] The same words are repeated which he had heard before, ver. 9. Only there they were spoken by the angel, but here by the Lord himself.

Ver. 14. *And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.*] He makes the same answer that he had done before, ver. 10. He was so full of anger (as Ralbag thinks) that he did not apply his mind as he ought to understand the vision, and therefore only repeats his former words. But God informs him in the following verse, that he would take care to chastise the Israelites in due time for their apostacy from him; and for that end bade him go and anoint Hazael, &c.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord said unto him, Go, return thy way to the wilderness of Damascus.*] He bids him return the way he came to Horeb; till he came to the way that led to the wilderness of Damascus, and go thither.

And when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king of Syria.] As much as to say (as the forenamed author expounds it), Since thou art so angry with the Israelites for their impiety, go and anoint one to be king of Syria, who shall be a scourge to them. But this was not done presently, nor did he himself anoint Jehu; but ordered that it should be done by his successor Elisha; though it may be doubted whether any of them were anointed, except Jehu. For the word *anoint* may be no more than appoint him king, as kings were constituted in Israel by unction. Hence, by a metaphor, it is accommodated to the preferment of men to all dignities: as in Psal. cv. 15. "Touch not mine *anointed;*" and Cyrus is called the Lord's anointed, Isa. xlv. 1.

Ver. 16. *And Jehu the son of Nimshi.*] He was grandson of Nimshi, (as appears from 2 Kings ix. 2.) who are frequently called *sons* in the holy books.

Anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat, of Abel-meholah, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.] This last was the chiefest command (to anoint, that is appoint, Elisha to be his successor), for the other two were to be performed by him, not by Elijah; who ordered Elisha to do it in convenient time; and first he appointed Jehu king, and afterward Hazael.

Ver. 17. *And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu, shall Elisha slay.*] This is not to be understood, as if the sword of Hazael should do execution before the sword of Jehu, and the sword of Jehu before that of Elisha: but it only signifies, as Abarbinel observes, that God in his providence had appointed three persons to punish the Israelites, according to their deserts. Thus he intended Hazael should destroy them in battle; which he mentions first, because it is a general calamity. But Jezebel, and the children of Ahab, and the priests of Baal, not going out to fight, and consequently not falling in battle, God ordered Jehu should cut them off in that manner as he did, with all the worshippers of Baal. But he did not inflict evil upon all the people of Israel, because he was to be their king. And though he slew idolaters, he did not meddle with little children, whose disposition he did not know: but they were reserved to be punished by Elisha, who foresaw they would prove idolaters. Thus he, with too much subtilty: but in general he saith well, that the Scripture doth not mention these things according to the time wherein they fell out; but according to the decree of God, who appointed every one to execute that which was proper for him to do.

Ver. 18. *Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel.*] This seems to be a correction of Elijah's mistake, who imagined that he alone was the only true worshipper of God that remained in Israel. Though Abarbinel will have it relate to what goes immediately before, that all the Israelites should not be destroyed: for he had a great number (*seven thousand* being put indefinitely for many thousand) of pious people in Israel, who had never worshipped Baal; and should not therefore be hurt either by Hazael, or otherways.

All the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him.] Every one knows that

bowing the knee was an act of worship; and so was kissing the idol: which was done two ways: either by applying their mouth immediately to the image (as Cicero against Verres relates of the image of Hercules), or kissing their hand before the image, and then stretching it out, and, as it were, throwing the kiss to it. Concerning which rite of adoration Salmasius hath given a large account in his annotations upon Flav. Vopiscus, in the life of the emperor Probus; where he observes such kisses were called *labrata oscula;* and from hence the phrases *oscula jacere,* and *basia jactare,* and *manu venerari,* and *manu salutare:* which he shews out of many authors are used for this way of adoration: the same he notes in his Plin. Exercit. p. 936. where Pliny saith, " in adorando dextram ad osculum referimus, totum corpus circumagimus;" *when we worship, we kiss our hand, and turn about our whole body.*

Ver. 19. *So he departed thence.*] From Mount Horeb.

And found Elisha the son of Shaphat.] In his journey towards Damascus.

Who was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth.] His servants managed the rest, and he himself drove the last. This shews him to have been a great man; who, according to the manner of those ancient times, looked after his business himself; and was taken from the plough to be a prophet, as the Romans took some from thence to be dictators and consuls. For nothing was in greater esteem than agriculture among the ancient Greeks and Romans, as well as among the Hebrews. In Homer, we see kings and princes living upon the fruits of their lands and their flocks, and labouring with their own hands. Hesiod hath made a poem on purpose to recommend the country life and labour to his brother. It would be too tedious to shew how the Carthaginians and Persians, and indeed all other ancient nations, did not think that to do nothing was to live nobly; but they studied how to cultivate their lands, and employed themselves, as well as their servants, in that business. Whence such persons, who were of the best quality, were called αὐτουργοὶ, *men that did their work themselves,* and did not commit the care of it to others, but ploughed with their own hands. So Quinctius Cincinnatus is said by Dionys. Halicarn. lib. x. to have returned from his consulship, to lead, τὸν αὐτουργὸν βίον, *a rustic life, as he did before it.* As the learned Jac. Perizonius observes upon Ælian's Var. Histor. lib. i. cap. 31. As for the rest, the Greeks ascribe this invention of yoking oxen together to plough withal either to Ceres, and Triptolemus, or Bacchus (or some other great person); though Moses, who was before them all, was well acquainted with it; (Deut. xv. 9.) and Job before him, (Job i. 3. xlii. 12.).

Abarbinel thinks these twelve yoke of oxen with which Elisha was ploughing, denoted that he should be leader of the twelve tribes of Israel.

And Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.] He put upon him the prophetical habit; which was his inauguration. Or, as some understood it, this was a token that he must become his servant, and attend upon him; and consequently succeed in his office. For servants were wont to carry their masters' shoes after them, and their garments. And accordingly he waited upon him, as appears from two phrases, in the last verse: first, he *went after him;* and secondly, he *ministered unto him.*

Ver. 20. *And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah.*] To desire him to stay a little.

And said, Let me kiss my father and my mother.] Take his leave of them.

And then I will follow thee.] For he understood that to be the meaning of his throwing his mantle upon him.

And he said unto him, Go back again.] Return to thy oxen; and do as thou desirest.

For what have I done unto thee?] He asks him whether he thought he had done any thing to hinder him? And so this was said to try whether he understood his meaning, and was inclinable to attend him. But Abarbinel thinks these words signify, that he had conferred a great dignity upon him; which required him to dispatch his business immediately; and taking leave of his father and mother, to come after him without any delay; since he had done such a great thing to him. Which illustrates the words of our Saviour, Matt. xix. 21.

Ver. 21. *And he returned back from him.*] Went home, and then came to those that were ploughing.

And took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat.] He made a feast for his servants, neighbours, and friends, before he parted with them; in token of the joy he conceived at his new calling. Which shews he was not a poor peasant, such as our ploughmen are; but a man of condition, who was able to make a great expense upon occasion.

And he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.] Glad to leave his estate, his friends, and all that he had; glad to serve God in a lower station first, before he executed the office of a prophet.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND Ben-hadad king of Syria.*] Ben-hadad is as much as the *son of Hadad.* Which Hadad was of the seed-royal in Edom, and escaped into Egypt when David slew all the males in Edom; (xi. 16, 17.) but infested Solomon in his latter days, and endeavoured to recover his kingdom; in which he not succeeding, it is probable he established himself in Syria.

Gathered all his host together.] The father of this king had taken several cities from the Israelites, (ver. 34. xv. 20.) and perhaps had made them tributaries to the Syrians; which tribute Ahab refusing to pay, he made war upon him.

And there were thirty and two kings with him.] Such petty princes as those in the land of Canaan before the conquest of it by Joshua; who were under the protection of the king of Syria, and bound to serve him in his wars. But he had better have been without them, and employed his own natural subjects only, who had done his business more successfully, (ver. 24.) because it was their own.

And horses and chariots.] It is not said what number; which is an argument it was not very great.

And he went up and besieged Samaria, and warred against it.] He did not actually besiege it; for his army was routed before he could do it. Therefore the sense is, *he went up to besiege Samaria,* and assault it. Which is like that speech, Gen. xxviii. 10. *Jacob went out from*

Beer-sheba and went to Haran. Which Rasi interprets, *He went out to go to Haran.* For it presently follows, that God appeared to him in the way.

Ver. 2. *And sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith Ben-hadad.*] He speaks in a haughty style; just like the messengers of the Assyrian monarch to Hezekiah, *Thus saith the great king, the king of Syria.*

Ver. 3. *Thy silver and thy gold are mine; thy wives and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine.*] This message is explained by the king of Israel's answer.

Ver. 4. *And the king of Israel answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have.*] He was content to be his vassal, and to hold all that he enjoyed of him; for so he understood his demands. But Ben-hadad intended more: or, from his submissive answer, took occasion to enlarge his demands; requiring the property of all he had, which he resolved (as appears from his second message, in the next verses) to take into his own possession.

Ver. 5. *And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh Ben-hadad, saying, Although I have sent unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver unto me thy silver, and thy gold, thy wives, and thy children;*

Ver. 6. *Yet I will send my servants unto thee to-morrow about this time, and they shall search thy house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their hand, and take it away.*] He tells him the meaning of his first demand, that he should deliver all he had into his hands. Unto which, if he now consented, it should not suffice; but he would send some of his officers to take all, and to ransack every corner of his palace, and carry away from him and from his courtiers (who are meant, I suppose, by his *servants*) whatsoever was valuable: or, perhaps, by *servants* he means all his subjects.

Ver. 7. *Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said.*] Summoned a general council of all the great men to advise what to do.

Mark, I pray, and see how this man seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children, for my silver and my gold, and I denied them not.] But now nothing will content him but my utter ruin, and enslaving of our country. In this Ahab shewed some sparks of virtue remaining in him; in that while Ben-hadad desired only what he had in his own disposal, that is, all his private goods, he agreed to it: but when all the people, and the public good were concerned, he would do nothing without their consent.

Ver. 8. *And all the elders, and all the people, said unto him, Hearken not unto him, nor consent.*] They promising unanimously, I suppose, to stand by him, and defend him against so insolent an enemy.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king.*] Of whom he speaks in as humble a manner as he did at first, (ver. 4.)

All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do: but this thing I may not do.] For his people would not yield to it.

And the messengers departed, and brought him word again.] Delivered this answer to Ben-hadad, that Ahab stuck to his first concession, according as he understood his demands, but would not consent to more.

Ver. 10. *And Ben-hadad sent unto him, and said, The gods do so to me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me.*] He wishes he may perish, if he did not bring such an army against the king of Israel, that if every soldier in it should take a handful of his country, nothing of it would be left remaining. Others explain it thus; I will not leave a bit of Samaria standing. But the other is most natural; and this is included in it.

Ver. 11. *And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.*] A speech like that, "Do not sing a triumph before the victory."

Ver. 12. *And it came to pass, when Ben-hadad heard this message (as he was drinking, he and the kings in the pavilions), that he said unto his servants, Set yourselves in array: and they set themselves in array against the city.*] Whilst the treaty lasted between him and Ahab he was remiss: but now he commands his army to be put in order, and that they should invest Samaria, and plant their batteries against it.

Ver. 13. *And, behold, there came a prophet to Ahab king of Israel, saying.*] One of those that had been hid; but was now commanded by God to appear and carry a message to Ahab. Which the prophet thought he might do safely, when he brought him such good news, as that which follows.

Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day.] Hereby God shewed, that, as he hated idolatry, of which Ahab was notoriously guilty, so he hated also insolent proud boasters, who imagine they have no superior; and that they can carry all things as they please, by their own power.

And thou shalt know that I am the Lord.] Have a new demonstration that he was the Lord of all things. For Ahab had no such message brought by any of Baal's prophets; which was sufficient to convince him, that the Lord, who could foretell and do such wonderful things, was the only God.

Ver. 14. *And Ahab said, By whom?*] He gave some credit to his word; and only asks by whom this deliverance should be wrought: for he knew he had not forces enough to encounter and overthrow such powerful enemies.

And he said, Thus saith the Lord, Even by the young men of the princes of the provinces.] The *princes of the provinces* were the governors of the several provinces, into which the kingdom was divided. And their *young men* seem to signify their servants, or their pages (as we speak), that waited on them. As much as to say, Not by old experienced soldiers, but by youths; who, perhaps, had never seen a fight, but had always lived at court.

And he said, Who shall order the battle?] Or, who shall begin the fight (as some understand these words), they or we? Shall we make a sally, or expect till they assault us?

And he answered, Thou.] He bids the king begin, and lead them on. Which was commanded, to encourage the young men, and to try whether Ahab would thus far trust God or not.

Ver. 15. *Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty-two; and after them he numbered all the people, even all the children of Israel, being seven thousand.*] All that he could get

together: for these surely were not all the men of war in Israel.

Ver. 16. *And they went out.*] Of Samaria.

At noon.] When they knew the Syrians were at dinner, taking a repast; if not debauching themselves, as their king was.

And Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty-two kings that helped him.] Being perfectly secure that the Israelites durst not appear to disturb him.

Ver. 17. *And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first.*] And Ahab, no doubt, at the head of them.

And Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him, There are men come out of Samaria.] The meaning is, that upon their first coming out, Ben-hadad hearing a bustle, sent to know what was the matter: and they told him a small party was come out of Samaria.

Ver. 18. *And he said, Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive.*] It was against the law of nations to apprehend those that came to treat of peace: but he, in his insolent pride, bade his people not trouble themselves to examine what they came for, but to take them alive; which he thought they might easily do, being so few.

Ver. 19. *So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them.*] The young men only appeared at first; but the rest of the army came out a little after.

Ver. 20. *And they slew every one his man.*] Who came to apprehend them.

And the Syrians fled, and Israel pursued them.] At which the Syrians were so amazed, by the suddenness of the attempt, that they fled: imagining them to be stronger and better prepared for war than they were.

And Ben-hadad the king of Syria escaped on a horse with the horsemen.] He was possessed with the same fear; and did not endeavour to make his men rally again, but fled away together with them.

Ver. 21. *And the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.*] He went out, by the prophet's order, at the head of the young men, when they first issued out of the city. But now he went out further than he had done at the beginning, and overtook the chariots and horsemen; among whom he made a great slaughter.

Ver. 22. *And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said, Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest.*] He bade him make what preparations he was able, and take care that nothing was wanting to oppose the designs of the Syrians against him; who would certainly return, and renew the fight the next year.

For at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee.] At the time when kings used to go out to war. Of which see 2 Sam. xi. 1.

Ver. 23. *And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, Their gods are gods of the hills, therefore they were stronger than we.*] They did not know the God of the universe, but only worshipped particular gods; who they thought ruled over particular countries, and distributed several parts of those countries among them; (some being gods of the woods, others of the rivers, &c.) and they imagined the God of the Hebrews to be ὀρειβάτης, as Pan was called by the heathen. For they had heard, perhaps, that their law was given from heaven upon a mountain, and there God appeared to them: and the country of Israel also was very hilly: where, upon one eminent hill, God's temple was built, and he was worshipped. And it was known, that the Israelites delighted to sacrifice in *high places:* insomuch, that when they could not come at them, they sacrificed on the house-tops, (Jer. xx. 13.)

But let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.] For, besides that the Syrian gods, they thought, had more power in a flat plain country, wherein they delighted; there also they should have more service of their horses and chariots, which could not fight so well upon mountains.

Ver. 24. *And do this thing; Take the kings away, every man out of his place, and put captains in their rooms.*] He had made the thirty-two kings, who were his tributaries, chief commanders in his former army: which his counsellors represented to him as a great error; and therefore advised him to displace them, and put his own captains in their stead, who would fight better. For they fought for their country, which the other did not: and besides, the kings, it is likely, were too delicate to be warriors; and were not so obedient to discipline as his captains would be.

Ver. 25. *And number thee an army like the army thou hast lost, horse for horse, chariot for chariot; and we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.*] For his army they knew would be superior; and they should have the advantage of the ground.

Ver. 26. *And it came to pass, that, at the return of the year, Ben-hadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, to fight against Israel.*] This was a city in the tribe of Asher: which, it is probable, was one of those that Ben-hadad's father had taken from the king of Israel, (ver. 34.) Not far from which was the plain of Galilee, where he intended to fight.

Ver. 27. *And the children of Israel were numbered, and were all present, and went against them.*] That is, as many as could be got together were numbered, and put in order to give them battle.

And the children of Israel pitched before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.] The Hebrew word *chasiph* is no where found but in this place; which Kimchi and others translate *a little flock.* But there is no need to add the word *little:* for the flocks of goats are always small; never so great as those of sheep. For they love to ramble, and are scattered up and down, as Bochartus observes, who translates these words, *two flocks of young kids;* denoting their contemptible number, and that they were weak, feeble, and timorous, like those fugacious creatures, as he speaks, Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 51.

Ver. 28. *And there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the Lord, Because the Syrians have said, The Lord is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys: therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.*] This man of God, the Jews say, was the prophet Micaiah.

Ver. 29. *And they pitched one over against the other seven days; and so it was, that on the seventh day the battle was joined.*] It may seem strange that they should look upon

one another so long, and watch for advantages, without coming to any action: for the Syrians had so much advantage in their numbers, that one would think they should have immediately encompassed the Israelites, and destroyed them all. But, perhaps, the Israelites were pitched upon a rising ground, and the Syrians durst not attack them till they came down into the plain.

And the children of Israel slew of the Syrians a hundred thousand footmen in one day.] In all probability they surprised them, by a sudden unexpected assault: and God dismayed them, and struck such a terror into them, that they could make no resistance.

Ver. 30. *And the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; and there a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand of the men that were left.*] The wall of the city, under which they lay, to be ready to defend it, fell down; either by the Israelites' batteries, or by an earthquake; and killed or maimed a great number of them that fled thither for safety.

And Ben-hadad fled into the city, into an inner chamber.] In the Hebrew the words are, *into a chamber within a chamber;* that is, into a very secret place, where he thought he should not be easily found.

Ver. 31. *And his servants said unto him, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of Israel are merciful kings.*] Better natured than other kings unto those who were in distress; they retaining still something of the temper of that good king David; who was full of humanity and tenderness, unto which true religion disposes men above all other things.

Let us, I pray thee.] One of his principal courtiers spake this in the name of the rest.

Put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads; and go out to the king of Israel: peradventure he will save thy life.] This it seems was the posture in those times, wherein supplicants presented themselves, when they petitioned for mercy; as among the Greeks and Romans they came in a mournful manner, with a branch of olive in their hands. The sackcloth upon their loins was a token of great sorrow for what they had done; and halters about their necks, a token of their subjection to what punishment he pleased to inflict.

Ver. 32. *So they girded sackcloth on their loins, and put ropes upon their heads, and came unto the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live.*] He now as humbly petitions Ahab, as Ahab a little while ago had petitioned him, (ver. 4.) and he begs of him life. Such are the strange turns of human affairs, which the ancient historians among the heathens have observed, as admonishments to men not to bear themselves high in a prosperous condition, nor trust to their present fortune (as they called it), not knowing, "quid serus vesper vehat," *what might fall out before the day was done.*

And he said, Is he yet alive? he is my brother.] He rejoiced to hear that he did not perish in the battle; and not only pardoned him at the first word, and gave him his life; but expressed as great affection to him, as if he had been his brother. This was folly, not mercifulness or good-nature. It had been enough not to have tormented him; but to let him not only live, but own him for a brother, was stupid inconsideration. For a man that lately treated him so disdainfully could never make a true friend.

Ver. 33. *Now the men did diligently observe whether any thing would come from him, and did hastily catch it: and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad.*] They were wise persons whom he employed in this embassy; who watched attentively whether any kind word would drop from his mouth, on which they might lay hold, and make their advantage of it, before he could retract it. And they catched at the word *brother*, and said, Thy brother Ben-hadad lives, and implores this favour, that he may live.

And he said, Go ye, bring him.] This was strange rashness, to make such haste, as not to advise with his privy-council what to do in such a case.

Then Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into the chariot.] It seems that Ahab was still in the field.

Ver. 34. *And Ben-hadad said unto him, The cities which my father took from thy father I will restore.*] The word Ben-hadad not being in the Hebrew, Osiander and some others think that Ahab, who was so kind as to take him up into his chariot, made this speech to him when he came there, that he would not only give him his life, but his kingdom also, which he had now power to take from him; and be so far from diminishing his power, that he would restore all that had been taken from him by his father. Which senseless kindness was the thing that provoked God to pronounce that heavy doom upon him, ver. 42. But the next words do not well agree with this: therefore I take these to be Ben-hadad's words to Ahab, whereby he endeavoured to smooth him up and sweeten him, by offering to become his subject (as the next words signify), and making restitution of all that had been taken from his predecessor.

And thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria.] Some think by *streets* he means *market-places*, where commodities were sold, the toll of which should belong to Ahab. Others think he means *courts of judgment*, where he should maintain a jurisdiction over Ben-hadad's subjects: others, that we now call a *piazza*, of which Ahab should receive the rents. But commonly interpreters think he means *fortifications*, whereby he might bridle the chief city of the kingdom of Syria; that they might not make new irruptions into the land of Israel: *citadels*, as we now speak, to keep them in awe, and to be a check to them, if they attempted any thing destructive to the Israelites. Yet, after all, Gotf. Vallandus hath said a great deal to prove that the Hebrew word signifies *palaces*, which he being allowed to build, was a great token of subjection. We do not read of any such things that were built by the Syrian kings in Samaria: nor of any cities they took from the Israelites; unless those taken from Baasha, (xv. 20.) who was not Ahab's father.

Then said Ahab, I will send thee away with this covenant. So he made a covenant with him, and sent him away.] Wherein he discovered his great weakness: for his covenant was soon broken, as we read in the last chapter of this book.

Ver. 35. *And a certain man of the sons of the prophets.*] This the Jews will still have to be Micaiah: which is not likely, for he is called *a prophet of the Lord*, not one of the *sons of the prophets.*

Said unto his neighbour in the word of the Lord, Smite me, I pray thee.] He bade him give him such a blow as might wound him, (ver. 37.)

And the man refused to smite him.] Because it looked like inhumanity to strike an innocent person, who had done him no wrong.

Ver. 36. *Then said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the Lord, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee.*] This may seem too severe a punishment, till these two things be considered. First, that the prophet commanded him to smite him, and that *by the word of the Lord.* Not of his own will, and from his proper private motion; but God required it. As if he had said (so Theodoret glosses on it), οὐκ ἐγώ σοι, &c. *It is not I that require this of thee, but the Spirit that is within me.* And accordingly the punishment was inflicted, because he *obeyed not the voice of the Lord.* And secondly, the prophet commanded this in God's name, not to an ordinary man, but *El Reehu:* which should not be translated, *to his neighbour,* but, as St. Jerome, *to his companion.* And so the Targum, and other ancient interpreters, *to his fellow;* that is, a prophet bred in the same school with himself: who well understood the weight of these words, I command thee in *the name of the Lord.*

And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew him.] The Jews say in the title Sanhedrin, and other places, that some prophets were put to death by the hand of man, and others by the hand of God. They that prophesied what they were not told by God, or they that prophesied in the name of idols, were to be put to death by the judges: but they who concealed their prophecy, or rejected a prophecy, their death was by the hand of God.

Ver. 37. *Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man smote him, so that in smiting he wounded him.*] The intention of this was, that he might find the freer access to Ahab, as a soldier well deserving; and that he might the better feign his story: for in such a matter the king was not to be dealt withal in downright words.

Ver. 38. *And the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and disguised himself with ashes upon his face.*] As a man in a very mournful condition. The Hebrews understand it, that he covered his face with a veil, or a handkerchief, or bound it about with a fillet (for one cannot tell how *ashes* should cover it), in token that he was wounded. So that the king could not know who he was. (See Bochart's Canaan, lib. ii. cap. 8.)

Ver. 39. *And as the king passed by, he cried to the king; and said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle.*] He pretended that he had adventured his life in the late fight; being engaged in the hottest service.

And, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then thy life shall be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver.] He pretended, I suppose, that his captain having a prisoner of great quality, charged him with him; telling him that he should be answerable for him with his life, if he let him escape; or redeem his life with a greater sum of money than he was able to pay.

Ver. 40. *And as thy servant was busy here and there.*] Endeavouring, in the fight, to do the best service he was able every where.

He was gone.] In the Hebrew, *he could not be found.*

And the king of Israel said unto him, So shall thy judgment be; thyself hast decided it.] Thou hast pronounced thy own sentence; according to your agreement, so shalt thou suffer. He had forgot how he had dismissed a greater person willingly, else he could not have been so hard-hearted as to condemn one that had offended unwillingly. But he soon made him think of it.

Ver. 41. *And he hasted, and took away the ashes from his face.*] Threw away his disguise immediately; by pulling off the cloth wherein his face was wrapped.

And the king of Israel discovered him that he was of the prophets.] Some of the by-standers perhaps knew him, when they saw his bare face: or, by the very motion of his eyes before he spake (which he did immediately), he sufficiently discovered what he was.

Ver. 42. *And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let a man go out of thy hand whom I appointed to utter destruction.*] For the battle was the Lord's; and the victory being obtained purely by the Divine power, and the singular favour of God, Ahab ought not to have resolved how to dispose of Ben-hadad without God's leave; but have consulted him (who had put him into his hands) what he would have done with him: for he was God's prisoner; who was to have his part of the spoil, which he would please to choose.

Therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.] The former part of this decree of God was fulfilled three years after, when Ahab was killed in a battle against the Syrians, (xxii. 1—4, &c.) But the latter part was deferred until the reign of Hazael, who fulfilled it by the wars he had with the Israelites, (2 Kings x. 32, 33.)

Ver. 43. *And the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria.*] This heavy sentence turned all their joy for the late victory into mourning: Ahab being much troubled for what he had done, and for what he was like to suffer.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel.*] After all those wonderful things which God had done, in giving such victories to Ahab, he coveted the vineyard of a neighbour of his. Which is peculiarly noted, as Abarbinel thinks, to have followed the foregoing history, to set forth the extreme great wickedness of Ahab: who spared Ben-hadad, as Saul did Agag king of the Amalekites, and killed Naboth, that he might get his vineyards. This was a high aggravation of his crime, that he basely murdered a just Israelite, and let an impious enemy escape.

Hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.] Not far from it, if not adjoining to it: being planted on the same rising ground, whereon the palace stood; for vines throve best in mountainous places.

Ver. 2. *And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs.*] For a flower-garden, as some understand it.

Because it is near my house, and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give the worth of it in money.] This was a fair proposal; but the law was against it.

Ver. 3. *And Naboth said to Ahab, The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.*]

As it is natural to all men to value and love the ancient possessions that have been in their family; so the law of Moses prohibited the alienation of lands from one tribe to another, unless a man was reduced to poverty; in which case he might sell it till the jubilee; but then it was to return to him. (See Lev. xxv. 15. 25. 28.) Now, as Naboth was in no need, so he considered that if he should, out of respect to the king, and merely to do him a pleasure, part with his vineyard, he should never get it out of his hands at the jubilee; being made part of the ground belonging to the royal palace. This makes it probable that Naboth was one of the seven thousand, who observed the law strictly.

Ver. 4. *And Ahab came to his house heavy and displeased.*] Just as he had done, after the prophet had pronounced the severe sentence against him, (xx. 43.)

Because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken unto him; for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers.] Made him a peremptory denial; which he could not bear.

And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.] He was so vexed to be denied by a subject, that he fell into such a passion, as made him sick, and took away his stomach, and made company unacceptable to him. In short, he was very melancholy.

Ver. 5. *And Jezebel his wife came to him, and said, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?*] She soon found his mind was more out of order than his body; and therefore desired to know what had disturbed him.

Ver. 6. *And he said, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard.*] He doth not acquaint her with his reason, but reports his answer, as if he gave him a surly refusal. Which was far otherwise; Naboth representing it as a religious duty, (ver. 3.) founded upon the law of God, not to part with the inheritance of his fathers, which was allotted to them by Joshua, never to be alienated. For in truth they that possessed them were only usufructuaries (*i. e.* enjoyed the profits of them), God himself being the true proprietor, (Lev. xxv. 23.) who charged their land with no other payments but tenths and first-fruits to his ministers: after which he gave them an entire possession of it, to remain in their several families for ever, without any alteration, which none could make but himself.

Ver. 7. *And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel?*] Is this like a king, to torment thyself in this manner? as Ralbag glosses. Or, Doth it become a king to beg and pray, and not rather command? Thou knowest not thine own power, but actest like a minor, who hath no authority. Or, as Abarbinel understands it, Canst thou expect things should go well in thy kingdom, if thou hast neither will nor power to do any thing in such a small matter as this?

Arise, and eat bread, and let thy heart be merry: and I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.] She would not have him trouble himself, but leave her to accomplish his desires.

Ver. 8. *So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal.*] These seals were wont to be worn upon one of the fingers of their hand, (Jer. xxii. 24.) and never to be taken off night nor day, but when they used them. Which shews she was an audacious woman, that durst steal this from Ahab's finger (for it doth not appear he knew of these letters), and write what she pleased in his name; that is, use his kingly authority to what purposes she thought good.

And sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city dwelling with Naboth.] The Israelites, it seems, after their separation from Judah, kept up the civil polity which was ordained by Moses (though they forsook his religion), having elders and judges in their several cities, as they had here at Jezreel: where they had not only elders, but also nobles; that is, captains of thousands, and hundreds, as Bon. Bertram observes, cap. 12. de Repub. Judaica.

Ver. 9. *And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast.*] As if there had been some grievous crime committed, or some great calamity had befallen them; which all the people were to bewail, and purge themselves from that sin, lest they also should become guilty. And, consequently, they were to see the crime punished very severely: for such days of fasting were spent in punishing offences, and doing justice, and praying to God for pardon. Some ask, where it was kept? And Vitringa thinks it might possibly be in the very streets of the city: where Ezra kept his fast, (Nehem. viii. 1—3.)

And set Naboth up on high among the people.] In this religious assembly of the people. For he being a person of an illustrious house (as Josephus reports), was ordered to be set in an honourable place: that so it might not be thought they condemned him out of hatred, but with grief and respect to his person, being constrained merely by the evidence given against him. Yet, others will have it, that the reason he was set in an eminent place, was only because all people accused and arraigned were wont so to appear before the judges; that all the people might see them, and hear what was alleged against them, and the proofs of it, and their defence.

Ver. 10. *And set two men of Belial.*] Men of no conscience, that would swear any thing for money.

Before him, to bear witness against him, saying.] Such was the Roman custom also (which was most rational), that the accused should *have the accusers face to face:* as Festus saith, Acts xxv. 16. But some think that she need not have put herself to this trouble of proceeding in such a formal manner against Naboth in a court of justice; for by the *jus regium* mentioned 1 Sam. viii. 14. she might have taken his vineyard from him by Ahab's absolute power. But that is a great mistake; for Samuel only meant that their kings would take the fruits of their vineyards upon occasion for their use, but not the possession of the vineyards themselves; for so all the land might have become the king's: and that *jus regium* Josephus calls a mere tyranny.

Thou didst blaspheme God and the king.] The Hebrews so much abhorred this crime of blasphemy, that they would not express it by its proper name, but said *bless*, instead of *curse;* as here and in the book of Job. Now it was death by the law of Moses to blaspheme God, (Lev. xxiv. 16.) and by custom it was death to blaspheme the king, which is forbidden in those words, Exod. xx. 28. And perhaps they might stretch that law hither, which forbade any man,

upon pain of death, to curse his father or his mother; (Exod. xxi. 17.) for the prince is the father of his country. But, to make all sure, they accused Naboth of both, of treason against God and against the king; that so the people might be the better satisfied to see him stoned. But there is this difference to be observed between these two: that if a man had only blasphemed God, he was to be tried by the great court at Jerusalem (as the Hebrew doctors tell us), and his goods came to his heirs: but when any man was executed for treason against the king, his estate went to the exchequer, being forfeited to him against whom the offence was committed. And therefore it was that they accused Naboth of this crime, on purpose that his estate might be confiscated, and Ahab enjoy his vineyard. And they accused him of blasphemy against God for other reasons: that justice might be done the sooner upon him; or, as the Talmudists speak, to increase their indignation. (See Selden, de Successionibus, cap. 25. fol. 87, 88.)

And then carry him out.] Not merely out of the assembly, but out of the city, (ver. 13.) For in the wilderness, and before the conquest of Canaan, they executed punishments without the camp, (Lev. xxiv. 23. Josh. vii. 24.) and afterward without the gate of the city: whereby they intended to testify, that they would take the evil out of the midst of them, and not suffer wickedness to remain among them. So it is explained, ver. 13. (See Grotius, Matt. xxvii. 32.)

And stone him, that he may die.] For this was the punishment of blasphemy: as we see by their attempt to stone our Saviour, and their killing St. Stephen in this manner.

Concerning this punishment, see Sanhedrin, cap. 6.

Ver. 11. *And the men of the city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants of his city.*] The principal inhabitants.

Did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as she had written in the letters which she had sent unto them.] Perhaps she sent private messengers to tell them by word of mouth what she expected from them, and how she would reward them; as well as public letters to authorise what they did. And princes never want instruments to execute their pleasure. But it is much there should be none among the judges, and great men, that abhorred such villany: which argues the great corruption of their manners by idolatry.

Ver. 12. *They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.*

Ver. 13 *And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him.*] As the witnesses used to do in courts of judgment; testifying to his face the truth of the accusation brought against him.

And the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king.] This signifies no more but that they had the impudence publicly to testify a falsity. Though Bertram, in the book beforementioned, (cap. 12.) from these words, *in the presence of the people,* argues, "Potestatem populi;" *the power of the people in this kingdom:* because these suborned witnesses gave their testimony before them. So that it was a mixed government, like ours, consisting of the power of the king, of the nobles, and of the people. If this be true, it argues all the people of that place to be very wicked; in that none of them excepted against the testimony of such persons, which ought not (as Maimonides observes) to have been admitted.

Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.] And his sons with him, as many gather from 2 Kings ix. 26. they being condemned as accessories to his crime.

Ver. 14. *Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead.*] They knew that the order came from her; and therefore let her know they had obeyed it.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.*] But by what title did he take possession? The Hebrews, I observed before, think it was by the right of confiscation; which was practised in all such crimes against the king. (See upon 2 Sam. ix. 7. and Grotius, upon Josh. i. 18. and upon this place.) Though others think he took possession for want of heirs; his children being condemned with him.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.*] He could not but know how Naboth died; and therefore, by this, consented to that wickedness, which was committed also by his authority, (ver. 8.)

Ver. 17. *And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying.*] Some lesser prophets were employed in the late messages sent unto him, (xx. 13. 28. 35.) But upon this great occasion God sends Elijah, whom he dreaded, not merely to reprove him, but to condemn him to a punishment suitable to the crime he had committed.

Ver. 18. *Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria.*] That is, who reigns in Samaria, (ver. 1.)

Behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it.] That he might be sure not to lose his labour, he tells him where he might find him.

Ver. 19. *And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?*] He expresses in brief the barbarity of this fact: as if he had said, Was it not enough that thou hast taken away his life, but thou must seize on his estate, and go thyself in person to take possession of it?

And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.] He declares the cause of this judgment upon him, but doth not assign the place; for the dogs licked Ahab's blood in Samaria, (xxii. 38.) Therefore these words should be translated, *as the dogs licked,* or, *in like manner* as they licked Naboth's blood, so shall they lick thine: mark what I say, *even thine.*

Ver. 20. *And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O my enemy?*] As much as to say, Wilt thou never suffer me to be quiet? How darest thou to appear in my presence again, with such terrible threatenings?

And he answered, I have found thee. Because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord.] They that sell themselves are wholly under the power of their masters: so was Ahab under the power of sin; a perfect slave to his sinful lusts and passions, which hurried him into the foulest crimes.

Ver. 21. *Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that piss-*

eth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel.] See upon xiv. 10.

Ver. 22. *And I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin.*] These two families were utterly extirpated, (see xv. 29. xvi. 11, 12, &c.) as he prophesied Ahab's should be.

Ver. 23. *And of Jezebel also spake the Lord, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.*] In the territory where Naboth was judged, and unjustly condemned.

Ver. 24. *Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat: and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.*] See xiv. 11.

Ver. 25. *But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord.*] Made himself a perfect bond-slave to all manner of wickedness.

Whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.] Which did not excuse him, yet something mitigated his punishment: for she died more miserably than he.

Ver. 26. *And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites.*] There was no abomination which the people of Canaan committed (who are here called the Amorites, according to the ancient language, Gen. xv. 16.) which he did not imitate.

Whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel.] As he intended to cast out the whole family of Ahab: who, by God's judgments upon the Amorites, might have taken warning not to tread in their steps.

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass, when Ahab heard these words, that he rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.*] All these were expressions of very great sorrow and heaviness; which were usual in mourning. And the last words the Chaldee paraphrast translates, *he went barefoot.* But it is rejected by the greatest part of interpreters, who take it as we do, for such a slow pace as signified he was reduced to great weakness and feebleness of body, by fasting and grief; or that he had no heart to go about any business. The Jews tell us in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 43. that he sent to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, who came and gave him a certain number of stripes every day; and that three times in a day. But without this fabulous addition, here is enough to signify that he was extremely cast down, and very much troubled; I cannot say for his sin, but for the heavy punishment God had laid upon him. It is likely, indeed, for the present he might have some sense of his sins; but it did not last to bring him to true repentance; that is, to make him forsake them. For we read not so much as of any restitution of the vineyard; much less of his forsaking idols.

Ver. 28. *And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,*

Ver. 29. *Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me.*] Which neither Jeroboam nor Baasha had done, but obstinately went on, without the least token of sorrow, when the same doom was passed on them.

I will not bring the evil in his days; but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.] Such a power there is in hearty repentance and reformation of life to obtain a pardon, that God remitted part of Ahab's punishment, at least deferred it, upon this imperfect repentance. Which argued some degree of belief of what the prophet said: and accordingly it was his son's blood, not his, which was licked up by the dogs in that portion of ground where Naboth's was, (2 Kings ix. 25, 26.)

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *AND they continued three years.*] Not complete, but part of three years. (See 2 Chron. xviii. 2.)

Without war between Syria and Israel.] Though God was very angry with Israel, and intended to plague them by the Syrians; yet his anger being deferred for some time upon Ahab's humiliation, Elijah did not cause Hazael to be anointed king of Syria, who was to be the executioner of God's wrath, because it was prolonged for the reason now named. Thus Abarbinel.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass that, in the third year, Jehoshaphat king of Judah came down to the king of Israel.*] For there was an affinity made between him and Ahab, (2 Chron. xviii. 1.) Jehoshaphat's son having married Ahab's daughter, (2 Kings viii. 18.)

Ver. 3. *(And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye that Ramoth-Gilead is ours, and we be still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria)?*] Some think Ben-hadad had not made good his covenant to restore all the cities the Syrians had taken from Israel, (xx. 34.) whereof this, it is likely, was one.

Ver. 4. *And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-Gilead?*] He acted now like a prudent man; who, before he resolved upon a war, desired to know whether he might depend upon Jehoshaphat for his assistance in it: for his forces, in comparison with the Syrians, were very small, (xx. 27.)

And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.] He professes himself entirely at his service; as if they were but one person and people.

Ver. 5. *And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to-day.*] But he desired first, that the prophets who were in Israel might be forthwith consulted, whether God approved of their design, and would give them success in it. So good men were wont to do, (Judg. i. 1. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2.)

Ver. 6. *Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men.*] Some think these were the prophets of the groves, who were not slain with the prophets of Baal, because they are just the same number, (xviii. 19.) But perhaps there were schools of the prophets kept up still in Israel, in imitation of those in Judah, wherein men were bred up, who pretended to have this gift. But it is plain they were false prophets; for Micaiah calls them Ahab's prophets. (See ver. 23.)

And said unto them, Shall I go up against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.] They speak, as if they were inspired by the Lord, and in his name promise good success; for they knew Jehoshaphat regarded not Baal, nor Astarte, but only the Lord.

Ver. 7. *And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of him?*] He

doth not reject these as no prophets of the Lord, though he suspected them; and therefore desired to know, if there was any other that was accounted a prophet of the Lord, from whom he might receive further satisfaction. And indeed it is not likely that Ahab would adventure to send for such prophets as were professed servants of Baal, from whom Jehoshaphat, he knew, would receive no advice: but they professed themselves to be servants of the Lord; for whom Elijah's late miracle had wrought in Ahab some respect. And Dr. Jackson seems to me to have produced a good argument for this, from Jehoshaphat's continuing his resolution of accompanying Ahab to battle, notwithstanding all that Micaiah had said against it. Which he would never have done, had he believed that Micaiah alone belonged unto the Lord, and his adversaries unto Baal, (book ii. upon the Creed, chap. 18. parag. 2.)

Ver. 8. *And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man (Micaiah the son of Imlah) by whom we may inquire of the Lord; but I hate him: for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.*] We ought to love those who speak the truth, not those who speak what pleaseth us.

Ver. 9. *And the king of Israel called an officer, and said, Hasten hither Micaiah the son of Imlah.*] He would not deny Jehoshaphat's desire of hearing him, as well as others; lest he should fly off from his kind offer, (ver. 4.)

Ver. 10. *And the king of Israel, and the king of Judah sat each on his throne, having on their robes.*] Their royal apparel, and all the ensigns of majesty.

In a void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria.] Where the people used to meet, and causes were heard by the courts of justice. (See upon 2 Sam. xix. 8.)

And all the prophets prophesied before them.] Continued to encourage them in their design.

Ver. 11. *And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron; and he said, Thus saith the Lord, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them.*] Such was the manner, it seems, of prophets in ancient times, by external signs to represent future events: as Isaiah and Jeremiah continued to do in future ages, (Isa. xx. 2. Jer. xxvii. 2.)

Ver. 12. *And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-Gilead, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the king's hand.*] Every one of them accorded in the same sense; that he should certainly be victorious.

Ver. 13. *And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah, spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good.*] So mightily did the opinion of *universality* sway with the superstitious people, that the messenger thought he could persuade Micaiah not to dissent from the rest, lest he should fall under the censure of singularity, peevishness, and privacy of spirit. And thus it is in the church at this day, as the same excellent doctor there observes.

Ver. 14. *And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak.*] He seems as yet to have no revelation about the matter; but when the question was put to him, God taught him what to answer.

Ver. 15. *So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall we forbear?*] The very same question that had been asked the rest of the prophets, (ver. 6.)

And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.] And he gave the very same answer in the same word that the other prophets had done; (ver. 12.) but spake them in such a manner, that Ahab plainly discerned he derided and mocked. It being as if he had said, To what purpose shall I contradict your prophets? For you have a mind to go, and do so; try the truth of their prediction.

Ver. 16. *And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord?*] He had not adjured him at all, but now he doth; and would do it again, and again, if he did not speak seriously, and tell him what God said to him; which Micaiah had not yet done. For he doth not use the common preface of prophets to the foregoing answer, *Thus saith the Lord:* because he did not speak in God's name, but in his own.

Ver. 17. *And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills.*] Routed, and flying from their enemies to the hills for safety.

As sheep that have not a shepherd.] In a most miserable condition, as sheep are without a shepherd to look after them: they being neither strong, nor cunning, nor nimble and swift of feet; but exposed to the injuries of all creatures, when they are left to themselves without a shepherd; which is very often repeated in the Scriptures, as if it were a proverbial speech among the Hebrews. (Numb. xxvii. 17. 2 Chron. xviii. 16. Zech. x. 2. xiii. 7. Matt. ix. 36.)

And the Lord said, These have no master.] They have lost their king and governor: who was represented by the *shepherd* beforementioned.

Let them return every man to his house in peace.] All go home, and think no more of war; having lost their ruler. This was an exact representation of what followed.

Ver. 18. *And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?*] He had always been wont to bring threatening messages from God to him: and therefore was not (as the Jews imagine) the prophet who brought him that gracious message, when Ben-hadad treated him so insolently, (xx. 13.)

Ver. 19. *And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord.*] If thou dost not delight only in lies, hear what have further to say from the Lord.

I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host o heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left.] This is a parabolical speech, as Abarbinel calls it, signifying that there was a greater King than Ahab, who would judge him according to his works. And in a vision he saw him sitting on a throne, for that purpose, and attended by the heavenly host, as Ahab was by his prophets: some on his *right hand*, by which many think he means the good angels; and some on his *left hand*, by which are meant the bad, who are the executioners of his judgments when he pleases.

Ver. 20. *And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?*] It is not to be thought there was any such consultation before the Divine Majesty, who should be employed to persuade him to undo himself: but these representations are contrived to

bring down invisible things to the meanest capacities of men. Who were to know that the Lord resolved to let Ahab be deceived and perish at Ramoth-Gilead, rather than any other place: that he who let Ben-hadad escape, might be punished by Ben-hadad.

And one said on this manner, and another on that manner.] This is said, only to signify that God hath many ways of bringing men to ruin, when he declares it.

Ver. 21. *And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him.*] This is not to be understood literally; but that there are evil spirits who are very forward to entice men to their own destruction, and have power so to do, if the Lord do not hinder them.

Ver. 22. *And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith?*] God was not ignorant of what he could and would do: but this is said, to represent more familiarly to vulgar understandings, by what means Ahad was led into destruction.

And he said, I will go forth, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.] Suggest to them that which will deceive him.

And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.] God permitted this lying spirit to follow his own inclinations, which he knew would have success, and prevail with Ahab to believe he should prosper in this war; wherein God intended he should be destroyed. For the prophets had observed how prosperous Ahab had been in former wars with the king of Syria: which made them forward to promise the same success in this also. And Ahab was as forward to believe it, as they were to assure it.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets.*] They were properly Ahab's prophets, not the Lord's; who only employed them to mislead him.

And the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.] The Lord had decreed he should perish in this war; and in order to it, stirred up the spirit of the prophets (as Abarbinel speaks) to prophesy according to their own inclination; and him to believe them, and rush into his own ruin.

Ver. 24. *And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near.*] He seems to be the chief of Ahab's prophets: the head, perhaps, of the whole college.

And smote Micaiah on the cheek.] By way of reproach and scorn, Jer. xx. 2. Mark xiv. 45. and other places.

And said, Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee?] He was confident he had the Spirit, and could not imagine how it should depart from him, and enter into Micaiah, bidding him contradict all that he and his brethren had prophesied.

Ver. 25. *And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber.*] Into a secret place, (xx. 30.)

To hide thyself.] For fear he should be seized and punished as a false prophet, and the cause of Ahab's death.

Ver. 26. *And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son.*] It seems he was in custody, when he was sent for by the messenger to come to Ahab.

Ver. 27. *And say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in prison.*] He ordered him, I suppose, to be kept a closer prisoner than before.

And feed him with the bread of affliction, and the water of affliction, till I come again in peace.] He would not have him starved, but fed with coarse bread and bad water; till he came home and brought victory along with him. And then perhaps he intended to put him to death.

Ver. 28. *And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me. And he said, Hearken, O people, every one of you.*] He desires all the people to mark, and be witnesses of what he said; and take this for a sign whether he was a true prophet or not.

Ver. 29. *So the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-Gilead.*] Nothwithstanding the long declaration Micaiah had made of God's decree (which was altogether concerning Ahab), Jehoshaphat gave some credit to the other prophets, who spake in the name of the Lord, as well as he. (See upon ver. 7.)

Ver. 30. *And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle.*] Like a private man.

But put thou on thy robes.] Appear like a king.

And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle.] He knew they would aim most at him, as the author of this war; and therefore he would not be known; but gives Jehoshaphat the honour (as he pretended) of leading the army, and appearing as the chief commander of it. But this seems a very odd compliment, to pray him to expose himself to the danger which he shunned. Therefore others render it *Put on these robes* (which he then offered him); after my example, lay thy cloak, the garment of a chief commander, aside: and put on these robes. For he brought a double change of raiment into the field; that neither of them might be known by their clothes.

Ver. 31. *And the king of Syria commanded his thirty-two captains, who had rule over his chariots.*] Which were divided, it is likely, into so many distinct bodies.

Saying, Fight neither with small nor great.] With common soldier, or officer, belonging to Jehoshaphat.

Save only with the king of Israel.] Whom he looked upon (as I said) as the sole author of the war, into which he had drawn Jehoshaphat.

Ver. 32. *And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, Surely it is the king of Israel.*] Which shews, that whatsoever his robes were, he looked like more than a common man.

And they turned aside to fight with him: and Jehoshaphat cried out.] Unto the Lord for help, who delivered him, and moved them to depart from him, as we read in 2 Chron. xviii. 31.

Ver. 33. *And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel.*] By calling upon the Lord for help; or, perhaps, some of them knew him.

That they turned back from pursuing him.] Which was to be ascribed to the secret providence of God, as Ezra tells us in the place abovenamed; who resolved as wonderfully to preserve Jehoshaphat, as to destroy Ahab.

Ver. 34. *And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness.*] The Lord, no doubt, directing the arrow to that part, where it should penetrate into his vital parts. The LXX. *into his breast, through his lungs;* for it entered between his upper and lower armour.

Wherefore he said to the driver of his chariot, Turn thy

hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.] He bade him drive to some place where he might look after his wound, which was very painful to him.

Ver. 35. *And the battle increased that day; and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even.*] There was a sharp fight after this: insomuch that the king, for fear his soldiers should run away, would return into the field, notwithstanding his wounds, and be supported in his chariot, to encourage his army, till the even parted them, and then he died.

And the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot.] It could not be staunched by any means they could use, but ran out of his body into his chariot.

Ver. 36. *And there went a proclamation throughout the host, about the going down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country.*] I suppose Jehoshaphat ordered a retreat to be sounded; and the Syrians, it is likely, were content to be gone, having slain their capital enemy. By this proclamation, the prediction of Micaiah was exactly fulfilled, according to his vision, (ver. 17.)

Ver. 37. *So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria.*

Ver. 38. *And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up the blood (and they washed his armour), according to the word of the Lord which he spake.*] The dogs licked up the blood, which was mixed with the water, wherewith his chariot and armour were washed: the LXX. add the word ὗες, as if *swine* as well as dogs had licked it up. But as there is no such word in the Hebrew, so neither is it in the Chaldee, Arabic, or Syriac; no, nor in the Latin translation. And it is very absurd; swine being not commonly kept in this country.

Ver. 39. *Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house that he made, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] It appears by this short history, that he had several noble qualities in him, and would have been a great man, if he had not been incurably addicted to idolatry. But it is not to be imagined that the house here mentioned was built of ivory; but only inlaid with it.

Ver. 40. *So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.*] See ver. 51.

Ver. 41. *And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.*

Ver. 42. *Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi.*] The intention of the Divine writer of this book was, as Abarbinel observes, principally, and in the first place, to give us the history of the kings of the house of David, with which he begins, and then joins to it the history of the kings of Israel. Thus, having finished the history of Asa king of Judah, he recounts the affairs of Israel under Ahab; who being dead, he returns to the history of the kings of Judah, who were the chief objects of his history.

Ver. 43. *He walked in all the ways of his father Asa; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the Lord: nevertheless the high places were not taken away; the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.*] This error was so deeply rooted, that the best of their kings, till Hezekiah's time (as I noted before), connived at it: and a great man of ours thinks the prophets accidentally gave countenance to it. Who had this power, that if they dispensed with any positive precept of the law, that precept was to cease for a time. Nor can any other reason be given of the toleration of high places, before the temple was built, and after that of Elijah's sacrificing upon Mount Carmel, and the forbearance of circumcision in the wilderness. (See Mr. Thorndike's Review of the Rites of the Church, p. 107.)

Ver. 44. *And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.*] He did not take advantage which Ahab's death gave him, to seize upon the kingdom of Israel, and take it from his son.

Ver. 45. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he shewed, and how he warred, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] See xi. 41.

Ver. 46. *And the remnant of the Sodomites, which remained in the days of Asa his father, took he out of the land.*] He made a narrower search after them than his father had done, who is said to have removed them; but some remained without his knowledge, (xv. 12.)

Ver. 47. *There was then no king in Edom: a deputy was king.*] The king of Judah deputed one to govern the Edomites; who was the viceroy (as we now speak) of the king of Judah. This continued from the days of David, who began this dominion over them, (2 Sam. viii. 14.) unto those of Jehoshaphat; whose son lost this authority, (2 Kings viii. 21.)

Ver. 48. *And Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold.*] These ships were not to go to Tharshish, but to Ophir. But they are called *ships of Tharshish*, from their form: for they were made after the mould of those ships which traded to that place. And all such ships, wheresoever they were built, were called *ships of Tharshish.* Thus Abarbinel. Which seems not to agree with 2 Chron. xx. 36, 37. (See there.)

But the ships were broken at Ezion-geber.] Before they sailed.

Ver. 49. *Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships: but Jehoshaphat would not.*] He had contracted an amity with this king, and engaged himself so far, as to let him join with him in this navy; (2 Chron. xx. 35, &c.) but being better instructed by his ill success, and by the reproof of a prophet, he would not continue this league with him.

Ver. 50. *And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 51. *And Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah.*] This seems not to agree with the account we have before that Jehoshaphat began his reign in the fourth year of Ahab, and Ahab reigned two-and-twenty years. Now if we take four from twenty and two, there remain eighteen; and so Ahaziah began to reign in that year, not the seventeenth of Jehoshaphat. But this is easily and truly solved: for the years which the kings of Israel reigned, are taken from the years of the kings of the house of David: so that if any one reigned in the latter end of the reign of a king of the house of David, and the beginning of the following year, he is said to have reigned two years. An instance of which is in the very next words of this verse.

And reigned two years over Israel.] Not complete, as ap-

pears from 2 Kings iii. 1. but part of two years: for Ahaziah died before his second year was ended.

Ver. 52. *And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother.*] Who was still alive, to keep him in his idolatry.

And in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.] He was in nothing amended, by all that had befallen his father, and the family of Jeroboam.

Ver. 53. *For he served Baal, and worshipped him.*] Which worship had been introduced by his mother Jezebel: beyond the impiety of Jeroboam.

And provoked to anger the Lord God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.] Taking no warning by the hand of God against his father, which was very remarkable; nor believing the dreadful threatenings of Elijah against his mother, and their whole family.

THE

SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *THEN Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab.*] They paid them no more tribute, but utterly disclaimed their authority over them; which they had owned ever since the days of David, (2 Sam. xiii. 2.) Whereas Edom (which, it seems, in the division of the kingdom, fell to Judah, as Moab did to Israel) continued still under the dominion of the king of Judah, (1 Kings xxii. 47.)

Ver. 2. *And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria.*] By this lattice, the Jews understand some net-work that was in the dining-room; which being decayed, and he leaning upon it, it fell down, and he together with it.

And was sick.] Was bruised, and, perhaps, fell into a fever.

And he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease.] Many think this god was called Baal-Semin, the Lord of heaven; whom the Jews, by way of contempt, called Baal-zebub; *i. e.* the lord of a fly, as a god that was nothing worth; or rather, because his temple was full of flies: whereas the temple at Jerusalem, though so many sacrifices were offered there daily, never had a fly in it; as the Jews relate in Pirke Avoth. But it is not likely, the king of Israel would have called this god, for whom he had a great reverence, by a contemptible name; which signifies, therefore, no more than Μυιώδης μυίαγρος, ἀπόγυιος, among the Greeks; which were the titles of Jupiter and Hercules; because they were thought to free their countries from flies, with which the Ekronites were pestered, lying in a moist and hot soil, near to the ocean. Theodoret, Procopius, and others, think they worshipped this god in the image of a fly: but the latter of them doubts whether it was the name of a demon, or of an old woman canonized for a goddess. And after all, Mr. Selden thinks the reason of this name cannot be found. But the most probable conjecture is, that he was so called from the cure of a contagious disease. For Pliny tells us, that there being a great pestilence in Africa, which was brought among them by a multitude of flies, it was extinguished by the killing of them all after they had sacrificed to the god Achore. He should have said, the god worshipped at Ekron; from whence that word *Achore* plainly came, (lib. x. Nat. Hist. cap. 27.) And if this was the original of the name, it is no wonder that Ahaziah sent to inquire of him about his sickness, since he was thought so powerful as to cure the pestilence.

Ver. 3. *But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a god in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?*] There are two negatives in the Hebrew text which increase the sense, *Is it not because there is no God, none in Israel?* That is, Do you not plainly declare, that you think there is no God, none at all, in Israel? that he knows nothing, nor can do any thing? Which makes you send to Ekron, as if there was a more knowing and mighty, if not the only, God there.

Ver. 4. *And now therefore thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not come down from the bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.*] Unto Mount Carmel, it is very probable: for he was presently after this sitting on the top of a hill, (ver. 9.)

Ver. 5. *And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said, Why are ye now come back?*] He knew by their speedy return, that they had not executed his command, and asked the reason.

Ver. 6. *And they said unto him, There came up a man to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn back unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Is it not because there is not a god in Israel, that thou sendest to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt not come down from the bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.*] Elijah was a man of such a venerable presence, and spake to them with such authority, in the name of the Lord, that they were overawed thereby to obey him, rather than the king.

Ver. 7. *And he said unto them, What manner of man was he that came to meet you, and told you these words?*] He was not so angry at them for not obeying him, as desirous to know who he was that was so presumptuous as to stop their journey.

Ver. 8. *And they answered him, He was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said,*

It is Elijah the Tishbite.] Some think he is said to be *a hairy man,* because he had long hair on his head and his beard, like the Greek philosophers: but it is more probable, it was because he was clad with a hairy garment, which the prophets were wont to use, (Isa. xx. 2. Zech. xiii. 4. Matt. iii. 4.) And, indeed, the leathern girdle shews what kind of garment he wore. (See Dr. Hammond, upon the place last mentioned, annot. *d.*) This was the simplest and most ancient garment; and therefore the old heroes are said to have been clothed in the skins of lions, or tigers, or bears, &c. And, perhaps, by this rude habit the prophets expressed their great grief for the sad condition the Israelites were in, when they came to call them to repentance.

Ver. 9. *Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty: and he went up unto him.*] Not to the place where he was, but so near that he might hear him deliver his message.

(And, behold, he sat upon the top of a hill), and he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down.] Sent him with an order, to command him to come down to him. But the prophet thought he did but mock him, when he called him *a man of God,* as appears by the punishment he inflicted on him. For it is as if he had said, Thou that callest thyself a man of God, come down, or I will fetch thee. He would not be at the pains to go to the top of the hill; but thought it sufficient to require him, in the king's name, to come down, and surrender himself into his hands.

Ver. 10. *And Elijah answered and said unto the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.*] If I be a man of God, as thou sayest, but dost not think, then I am not bound to obey the king, but God (as Abarbinel glosses upon these words), nor am I subject to his power, but unto God's; who will make thee know that he judges in the earth. And immediately he and his men were consumed with lightning, according to Elijah's word. Who chose to destroy them by fire from heaven (as he goes on), because he had at Mount Carmel called for fire to consume the sacrifice. Which miracle they slighting, and coming now in a proud manner to carry him by force to Samaria (where he knew Jezebel would put him to death), he called for fire to consume them.

Ver. 11. *Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty: and he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly.*] This man was more insolent than the former, charging the prophet to obey without delay, and not make him stay; or think to dally with him. And, by the following words, it appears, this was the voice of the whole company.

Ver. 12. *And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.*] He knew that evil was determined against him by Ahaziah, and therefore defended himself, in this manner, from his cruelty; that he might be afraid to meddle with him, when he saw the Divine vengeance so terrible against those that came to apprehend him.

Ver. 13. *And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight.*] He humbly entreated him, on his bended knees, to spare his life, and the lives of those that accompanied him, who did not come willingly, much less of their own accord: but were commanded by their lord and master to make known his pleasure to him.

Ver. 14. *And, behold, there came fire from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight.*] He was sensible of the hand of God against those that came with such a command before, and acknowledges he was at Elijah's mercy; but hoped he would take compassion upon him, since he owned him really to be a man of God, and believed his power; as appeared by his falling down most reverently before him, and beseeching his pity, and calling those with him *his servants.*

Ver. 15. *And the angel of the Lord said unto Elijah, Go down with him; and be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.*] This is a great instance of the prophet's faith and obedience to God; who he trusted would protect him from the wrath of the king, and the malice of Jezebel. Of whom he had great reason to be afraid, having ordered the prophets of Baal to be slain, and now sent the king an unwelcome message, and done terrible execution upon two of his captains and their companies. The first of which made him fly the country, (1 Kings xix. 3.) Jezebel threatening his destruction; and had constrained him to conceal himself for a long time, and not come to Samaria: which was the reason, as Abarbinel observes, that we hear nothing of him in the war of Benhadad against Israel, (1 Kings xx.) nor in the war of Ahab against Ben-hadad, (chap. xxii.) But now, having a command from God for it, as he had in the case of Naboth, he boldly goes to the king, and confirms with his own mouth that ungrateful truth, which he had already told him by his messengers.

Ver. 16. *And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, (is it not because there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word?) therefore thou shalt not come down from off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.*] There was more discourse passed between them, no doubt, than this: but this was the conclusion of all, that the sentence which God had pronounced against him was irreversible; and therefore he should not think of living much longer, but make use of the time remaining to repent of his sins.

Ver. 17. *So he died, according to the word of the Lord, which Elijah had spoken.*] It is likely he told him the very day when he should die.

And Jehoram reigned in his stead, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son.] Therefore this brother of his succeeded him. Who began to govern in this second year of Jehoshaphat's son; but was king before, (iii. 1.) only very young, and, as some of the Jews think, under the care of Jehoshaphat. But Kimchi seems to have better reconciled this seeming difference, That Jehoshaphat declared his son Jehoram king while he lived, and he reigned with him seven years. The occasion of which is intimated in 2 Chron. xx. 3. "He gave the kingdom to Jehoram, because he was the first-

born," and gave gifts to the rest of his sons. Who being many, began to strive about the succession to the kingdom: which belonging to the first-born, Jehoshaphat, to quiet them all, declared Jehoram king together with himself, and he reigned with him seven years. When it is said therefore that Ahab's Jehoram reigned in the second year of Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram, the meaning is, the second year that he reigned with his father Jehoshaphat who was then living.

Ver. 18. *Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] They were but few, because he reigned a very short time; but yet, according to custom, they were recorded in a public register. Of which, see on 1 Kings xi. 41.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind.*] By a mighty sound of wind which the angels raised, who came to fetch him: of which translation he himself had some notice, by the spirit of prophecy.

That Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.] Unto this place he retired before his assumption to heaven, it having been (as Abarbinel discourses) a place of great holiness; where the Israelites made their first encampment, after they entered the land of Canaan; and where Joshua had set up twelve stones, taken out of Jordan, in memory of their miraculous passage over that river. Here also Joshua circumcised the Israelites, and kept the first passover, and set up the tabernacle, and the ark of the covenant, which remained here a long time.

Ver. 2. *And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Beth-el.*] Another place in ancient time very holy, God appearing here to Jacob more than once, (Gen. xxviii. 19. xxxv. 6. 9.) This Elijah said to try Elisha; for he did not intend to conceal his assumption into heaven, and to have no witnesses of it. His humility indeed was great, but it was not fit to obscure the glory of God, which herein miraculously appeared.

And Elisha said unto him, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they two went down to Beth-el.] They were not wont anciently to swear by the name of God (out of the reverence they bare to him), but by some lesser thing which depended on it; as Joseph did by the life of Pharaoh; that is, as true as that Pharaoh lives. And Elisha puts both here together, *as sure as God liveth, and thou livest,* I will not leave thee. (See Grotius, de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. ii. cap. 13. n. 2.)

Ver. 3. *And the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came forth to Elisha.*] In these very corrupt times, and in that place where the golden calves were worshipped, God did not wholly forsake the Israelites; but continued the schools of the prophets among them. For by the *sons of the prophets* are meant the scholars of the prophets, whom they educated, and trained up in religion and piety; and God, by degrees, bestowed on some of them the spirit of prophecy. This was a great testimony of God's love to an apostate people; among whom he left prophets to recover them from their idolatry. For even in the chief place of impiety (which was Beth-el) they were not wanting. And it is still more remarkable, that prophets of greater excellency for their miracles were continued in Israel than were in Judah; because they needed them more, to turn their hard hearts from the worship of idols; and to support the pious persons that remained among them, and preserve them from deserting their religion. For it seems to me very probable, that these *sons of the prophets* were such ministers to the prophets, as the evangelists were to the apostles: whom the prophets sent to publish their prophecies and instructions to the people, where they could not go themselves. And perhaps they taught them the law of God, and explained it to them; of which there was great need in those idolatrous times.

And said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?] It was revealed to some of them by God, and they told it to the rest of the company of the prophets. Who allude to their manner of sitting in their school, when they say God would *take away Elijah from his head:* that is, deprive him of his instructions. For, it is well known, that the scholars sat below at their master's feet, and the master above over their head, when they taught them.

And he said, Yea, I know it; hold you your peace.] Say no more of it: I would not be disturbed with the thoughts of it. Or, let not my master know that I understand it.

Ver. 4. *And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee.*] He doth not lay his commands upon him, (as he did unto a former servant, 1 Kings xix. 3.) but only entreats him, and in a more tender manner than he did before, to accompany him no further.

For the Lord hath sent me to Jericho.] Another remarkable place, as Abarbinel observes, to which he went: that, as Moses, when he turned his face towards this place, (Deut. xxxiv. 1.) departed this life; so this should be the last place wherein Elijah would remain, before he left the world. A place also famous for many miracles done there.

And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.] He hoped for some great blessing from him, when he was carried up to heaven; and therefore continued firm in his resolution, to attend that wonderful change.

Ver. 5. *And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho, came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold you your peace.*] Here was another school, where the same holy Spirit revealed the mind of God to them; as it had done at Beth-el. And it is a probable opinion of Kimchi, who affirms there were the like schools in other cities of Israel.

Ver. 6. *And Elijah said unto him, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me unto Jordan.*] Another place, where God had wrought great wonders. Not far from which, as Kimchi notes, the great prophet Moses died; and therefore God intended to translate Elijah near to this place.

And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.] From Jericho to the river Jordan.

Ver. 7. *And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off.*] They were confident the time of his assumption drew near, and were very desirous, if it were possible, to see the manner of it: but were not ad-

mitted to accompany him to the place, where he was taken up to heaven, as Elisha did; for they took this view at Jericho, (ver. 15.)

And they two stood by Jordan.] The rest being forbidden, I suppose, to go thither with him.

Ver. 8. *And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together.*] This mantle of his is mentioned five times in these books; thrice in this chapter, and twice in 1 Kings xix. 13. 19. In all which places it is called *adareth:* which is a word signifying a royal robe, as well as a prophetical, (Jonah iii. 6.) The LXX. in all the five places now mentioned, translate it μηλωτὴ, which properly signifies the prophetical mantle to be made of lamb-skin: being an upper garment thrown over the shoulders, and some think coming down to the heels.

And smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.] God made a dry path in the middle of the river, whose waters stood on each side of it.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken from thee. And Elisha said, Let, I pray thee, a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.*] They are much mistaken, who imagine he begged as much more of the Spirit as Elijah had; for that had been very arrogant. He only desired to have such a portion of it, as the first-born in a family had of his father's estate. That is, as much more of his spirit, as any of the rest of the sons of the prophets: for the portion of the first-born was double to that of the rest of the children. In short, he did not desire to excel his master, but his school-fellows. (See P. Fagius upon Deut. xxi. 17.)

Ver. 10. *And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing.*] Such gifts were rarely bestowed.

Nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.] Mark, this is a sign whether thou shalt have what thou desirest or not.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked.*] Of the happy state, it is likely, to which Elijah was going.

That, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.] Angels appeared before them, in the form of a bright chariot and horses, running towards them upon the ground; which coming between them, separated them one from the other. For Elijah mounted the chariot, and in a great gust of wind governed by angels, was transported into heaven. That is, saith Abarbinel, into the air: for he being a stranger to Christianity, could not conceive how an earthly body could live among the celestial inhabitants; and therefore, according to the gross imaginations of the Jews, imagines he is still upon the earth, in the garden of Eden. But these are ignorant conceits. The plain sense is, that his body being transformed in his passage towards heaven, he was carried up to live among the angels.

The heathens themselves did not disbelieve such things: as appears by the story of Æganympha, who was made immortal by Jupiter; and of Driope by the Hamadryades: and Bacchus assured Cadmus, that by the help of Mars he should live for ever in the isles of the blessed, whither they said Alcumene was snatched up by Mercury, at the command of Jupiter, &c. (See Dan. Huetius in his Alnetanæ Quæstiones, lib. ii. cap. 12. n. 30.)

Ver. 12. *And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father!*] So they called their masters and instructors.

The chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.] And he alludes to what he beheld; and very fitly compared Elijah to chariot and horsemen, which the Israelites wanted in their armies; but he was instead of them by his counsels and prayers; whereby they might have obtained great victories, if they would have been obedient to his word.

And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.] To express his sorrow for so great a loss.

Ver. 13. *And he took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him.*] This dropped from him as he went up to heaven: in token of the spirit that should be given to Elisha, according to his promise.

And went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan.] Whose waters were come together again, after he and Elijah got over.

Ver. 14. *And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah?*] That is, let him shew his presence with me, and his power, as he did with Elijah. But we do not translate these last words exactly, two words being left out; *viz. aph-hu,* which the LXX. put into one, ἀφφώ, of which I know not the sense. And the Chaldee translates it, *receive my petition;* without any reason; those words carrying in them nothing of that signification. The best account of them is that which I meet with in a short dissertation by Joh. Frischmuthus, de Orig. et Prosapia Eliæ. where he observes, that Elisha having asked this question, *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?* answers himself in these words, "Aph-hu, etiam ille adhuc superest;" *yea, he is yet in being.* Thus Abarbinel expresses the sense: *Though Elijah be not here, yet his God is.* The servant is wanting, but not the Lord. The blessed God is still present, and will supply his place.

And when he also had smote the waters, they parted hither and thither; and Elisha went over.] Just as Elijah had done a little before, (ver. 8.)

Ver. 15. *And when the sons of the prophets, which were to view at Jericho, saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves down to the ground before him.*] In token of their reverence to him, as the father of the prophets.

Ver. 16. *And they said unto him, Behold now, there are with us fifty strong men.*] Fit to undertake such an expedition as they propose.

Let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master; lest peradventure the Spirit of the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley.] They had but an imperfect notice of what God intended, when they asked Elisha if he knew the Lord would take his master from him. For they imagined he might not be quite taken away; but only for a time: or, that if his spirit were taken into heaven, his body might possibly be thrown upon some of the neighbouring mountains or valleys.

And he said, Ye shall not send.] For he knew it would be to no purpose.

Ver. 17. *And when they urged him until he was ashamed, he said, Send.*] He was afraid they should think he wanted

love to his master; or, was so ambitious to enjoy his place and authority, that he was loath he should be found alive.

And they sought him three days, but found him not.] In that time they searched every place, where they thought it likely he might be cast.

Ver. 18. *And when they came again to him (for he tarried at Jericho), he said unto them, Did not I say unto you, Go not?*] By this he settled his authority, in that he foretold them their labour would be lost.

Ver. 19. *And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth; but the water is naught, and the ground barren.*] Things did not thrive in that soil; but the people and the cattle miscarried, and the fruit fell off from the trees, as the margin translates it. Which curse, Abarbinel thinks, had been upon this place ever since the time of Joshua.

Ver. 20. *And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein: and they brought it to him.*] He would have a new cruse, that had never been used; and brought by them, together with the salt, that there might be no suspicion of fraud (as Abarbinel observes), nor the virtue ascribed to any thing that was in the cruse before, but merely to the power of God. The Jews also in Michilta say, that his putting salt into it, made this a miracle in a miracle: for it makes water less potable, and ground more barren.

Ver. 21. *And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land.*] He wrought the miracle at Jordan, as the forenamed author observes, for his own sake; that he might make an experiment, whether the Divine influence which was upon Elijah was derived unto him. But this at Jericho he wrought for the sake of the sons of the prophets who dwelt there; that they might know the hand of the Lord was with him.

Ver. 22. *So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha, which he spake.*] By this the people of the city (who besought this favour from him, ver. 19.) saw that he was a man of God, to whom they owed obedience.

Ver. 23. *And he went up from thence to Beth-el.*] That he might visit the sons of the prophets who were in that city, and comfort them for the loss of Elijah; by letting them see the Spirit of God was upon him. It is very properly said he *went up* thither, because it stood upon a hill, and there was an ascent from Jericho thither; (Josh. viii. 3. 17.) though Elijah and he, going another way, are said to go down to Beth-el, (ver. 2.)

And as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city.] The word *naarim* signifies *grown youth*, as well as little children. For Isaac, when he was twenty-eight years old, is called *naar*, (Gen. xxii. 5. 12.) and Joseph, when he was thirty, (xli. 12.) and Reboboam when he was forty, (2 Chron. xiii. 7.) And this is to be understood here of adult persons, who had a hatred to the prophet.

And mocked him.] By the instigation of their parents, or of Baal's priests (as they will have it, who take them for mere children), who stirred them up, and taught them to jeer at his bald pate, and so laughed at the ascension of Elijah.

And said unto him, Go up thou bald head, go up thou bald head.] Their repetition of these words expresses their earnestness and vehemence in their contempt of him. For, as hair was always accounted a singular ornament, so baldness was disgraceful. Insomuch that Cæsar, as Bochartus hath observed, could not bear with those who jeered him upon this account; and thought it the highest honour the senate did him, in decreeing he should always appear with a wreath of laurel upon his head.

When they call upon Elisha to *go up*, they flouted, as Abarbinel thinks, at the ascension of Elijah to heaven; the news of which had been brought thither, and reported by the prophets of that place. Which the idolaters laughed at, and bade Elisha go up to heaven also, that they might not be troubled with him. Thus I find also the author of the questions and answers, ad Orthodoxos, understands these words: which were spoken, πρὸς διασυρμὸν τῆς τοῦ Ἠλίου ἀναλήψεως, *to reproach the assumption of Elijah:* as if they had said, λαμβανέτω καί σε πνεῦμα, *Let the Spirit take thee also,* and cast thee upon some inaccessible mountain; that we may be rid of thee, as we are of him. (Respons. 80.)

Ver. 24. *And he turned back, and looked upon them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord.*] This contempt of him, not as a man merely, but as a prophet, provoked the anger of God; who moved Elisha to lay a curse upon them, and punish them, as Moses did Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and St. Peter did Ananias and Sapphira.

And there came two she-bears out of the wood.] Who it is likely had been robbed of their whelps: which made them the more fierce and outrageous.

And tare forty and two children of them.] This was done by an extraordinary direction of God; who moved the bears at that moment to come out of the wood, when Elisha pronounced the curse; and to make such a great havoc among them, when two or three would have satisfied their hunger.

Ver. 25. *And he went from thence to Mount Carmel.*] Where it is probable he had many disciples: among whom he intended to be awhile retired.

And from thence he returned to Samaria.] To testify against their idolatry. And it is highly probable there was a college of prophets even in Samaria, as there was in Beth-el and Jericho, whom he went to encourage.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *NOW Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria, the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years.*] Ahaziah his brother reigned two years, and began his reign in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat: (1 Kings xxii. 51.) that is, part of the seventeenth year, and part of the eighteenth, which was accounted for two years. In the latter end of which Jehoram his brother began to reign: when Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, had two years reigned with his father. (See i. 17.)

Ver. 2. *And he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord, but not like his father, and like his mother; for he put away the image of Baal which his father had made.*] He did not break it in pieces, as he would have done if he had heartily hated it, but only put it away out of the temple; being afraid, lest

the judgments of God should fall upon him, as they had done upon his father. And the king of Moab being now in rebellion against him, Jehoshaphat perhaps refused to help him, whilst he was a worshipper of Baal. It is much that his mother, who had brought this worship with her from the Zidonians, should suffer him to remove this image; but she was a little daunted, perhaps, at the many disasters which had befallen their family, and was contented with worshipping Baal in private.

Ver. 3. *Nevertheless, he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.*] It was easier to remove the image of Baal than to put away the calves; for that was new, but the other had been of long standing; and the most likely course they could think of to maintain the division of the two kingdoms.

Ver. 4. *And Mesha king of Moab was a sheep-master.*] The riches not only of private men, but also of kings, in ancient time consisted much in sheep and cattle: which, I have observed before, they looked after themselves: and their sons kept their sheep, as Bochartus shews in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 44. And thus the greatest part of the world lived, during the space of near four thousand years. Which did not hinder them from being, at the same time, a brave and warlike people, as appears by the ancient Romans, who were thus bred; and subdued all Italy, and at last made themselves masters of the world. For this sort of life was the cause of their great strength, making their bodies robust, and hardened to labour, and accustomed to a severe discipline. There cannot be a greater instance of this than we have in Cato the Censor, who passed through all the great offices of the republic of Rome, had governed provinces, commanded armies, was a great orator, lawyer, and politician; who did not disdain to write a treatise concerning all the ways that are necessary for the improving lands, and how stables and houses were to be built for several sorts of cattle, and how presses were to be made for wine and oil, &c. Insomuch, that any one may see he was perfectly acquainted with country business, and that he did not write for ostentation, but for the use and service of mankind.

And rendered to the king of Israel a hundred thousand lambs, and a hundred thousand rams, with the wool.] This was a prodigious number, and being rendered unshorn, made them more valuable. But we are to consider that these countries abounded with sheep; insomuch, that Solomon offered a hundred and twenty thousand at the dedication of the temple, (2 Chron. vii. 5.) and the Reubenites drove from the Hagarites a hundred and fifty thousand, (1 Chron. v. 21.) For they frequently brought forth two at a time, and sometimes twice a year, as that great man Bochartus shews in the same book, cap. 46. and produces a famous place in Pliny, which shews that this was the most ancient tribute. For he saith in the Censorian Tables, all the rents of the people are called pastures, "quia diu hoc solum vectigal fuerat," (lib. xviii. Nat. Hist. cap. 3.) But Ludolphus hath observed two things for the illustrating this history of the king of Moab, which seem to be very considerable. First, that this was not annual tribute, but satisfaction for damages which the Israelites had sustained in the war with them, or by their revolt from them, as the LXX. understand it. And then the word *ajil* should not be translated a *ram*, but a *wether*; for one ram will serve a great many sheep, (lib. i. Comment. in Histor. Æthiop. cap. 3. n. 30.)

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.*] As was said before, chap. i. 1. and here again repeated, only to introduce the following history.

Ver. 6. *And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time, and numbered all Israel.*] As soon as he was settled in his kingdom, his first business was to raise an army to reduce Moab to obedience.

Ver. 7. *And he went.*] After his army was raised, he went out of Samaria.

And sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up: I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses.] He returned the very same answer to him which he had given to Ahab his father, when he desired his assistance against Syria, (1 Kings xxii. 4.) wherein he had been so unsuccessful, that it should have made him more cautious how he joined with his son; especially since he seemed to have been afraid to have to do with his brother Ahaziah, (1 Kings xxii. 49.) But Jehoram having reformed some things, (ver. 2.) it made him, perhaps, have a better opinion of him: and by shewing kindness to him, he might hope to persuade him to proceed further. And besides, the Moabites had lately invaded his country, (2 Chron. xx. 1. 10.) which might move him to embrace an opportunity to chastise them for it.

Ver. 8. *And he said, Which way shall we go up?*] Jehoshaphat having agreed to join with him, it is likely the king of Israel asked this question, and Jehoshaphat made the following answer.

And he answered, The way through the wilderness of Edom.] Which he chose, because he would have the assistance of the Edomites, who were his tributaries. And it is probable Moab was but weakly fortified on that side.

Ver. 9. *So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom.*] There was no king at this time in Edom, as we read in the last chapter of the foregoing book, (ver. 47.) but a viceroy appointed by the king of Judah. Yet such are called kings, 1 Kings xx. 1. (See Grotius.) And Jehoshaphat, I suppose, now required him with his people to help him in this war.

And they fetched a compass of seven days' journey.] That they might come upon the backs of the Moabites, where they did not expect them.

And there was no water for the host, and for the cattle that followed them.] That drew their carriages. For either there was a great drought in those parts, or they had mistaken their way.

Ver. 10. *And the king of Israel said, Alas! that the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.*] He doth not cry to God for help, but only bewail the straits into which they were fallen; which his own guilt made him imagine God had contrived for their destruction.

Ver. 11. *And Jehoshaphat said, Is not there a prophet of the Lord, that we may inquire by him.*] This was spoken like a pious man; but it was a fault that he did not inquire before

for direction in this war; as he did in that with the Syrians, (1 Kings xxii. 5.)

And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah.] That is, was his servant, and ministered unto him.

Ver. 12. *And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the Lord is with him.*] For no doubt he had been informed how Elijah had chosen him to be his successor; and how he attended him till he was taken up to heaven; and what wonders he had already done.

So the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom, went down to him.] It is uncertain whither they went; but it is very observable, first, how much they honoured the prophet, for whom they did not send to come to them, but went to him. And secondly, how desirous the prophet was to do good, in that he followed the camp into this wilderness. For it is not likely they went back to Samaria to wait on him (where the story last left him, in the last verse of the foregoing chapter), which would have been a seven days' journey; and the army might in the mean time have been lost. Besides, ver. 16. shews he was not far from th em; and the servant in the foregoing verse speaks of him as present; saying, *Here is Elisha.*

Ver. 13. *And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother.*] He refuses with great disdain to entertain any discourse with him; and bids him confer with those who he knew could do him no service.

And the king of Israel said, Nay.] That is, I will not consult them; but do thou give us counsel how we may be brought out of this great distress.

For the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.] Though he refused to do any thing for his sake, yet he beseeches him to have respect to the other two kings, who must perish as well as he, if he did not help them.

Ver. 14. *And Elisha said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand.*] It is observable, that the sons of the prophets are said to sit before their masters the prophets when they instructed them; (iv. 3. 8. and see the foregoing chapter, ver. 3.) but the prophets themselves stood before the Lord, their master, when he sent them upon any message. (See Corn. Bertram. de Rep. Jud. cap. 16.)

Surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look towards thee, nor see thee.] He saith nothing of the king of Edom, who was a dependant upon Jehoshaphat; whose piety he esteemed, and had some respect to all that belonged to him.

Ver. 15. *But now bring me a minstrel.*] One that could play well upon an instrument of music.

And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.] Every one knows that some sort of music wonderfully quiets and composes the spirits, when they are disordered, and raises them when they are flat and heavy. And therefore holy men did not neglect such helps to make them so sedate and cheerful, that they might be fit to receive Divine inspirations. But it is likely he that played now to Elisha, sung withal some hymn in the praises of God, and of his wonderful works, whereby the spirit of the prophet was sweetly composed, which had been disturbed, perhaps more than was fit, by his indignation at the king of Israel. And from hence we may conclude there were excellent musicians in Israel, as well as in Judah, where David had settled Divine music in great perfection. And it is very probable, what the heathen boast of their muses, was from hence derived.

Then the hand of the Lord came upon him.] That is, God wrought in him; and he felt himself moved by a Divine inspiration.

Ver. 16. *And he said, Thus saith the Lord, Make this valley full of ditches.*] This shews they were in a place where the army was encamped in a valley, in which he ordered them to be set at work, to dig large ditches to hold water enough for them all.

Ver. 17. *For thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts.*] The words belonging to one of our senses are frequently applied to another: as, to *see wind* is to feel it, or hear it. And the meaning is, there should no wind stir to blow up clouds (as the south wind commonly did), nor should they see any rain fall; and yet they should have plenty of water in that valley, for themselves and all belonging to them. I suppose it fell upon the mountains at a distance from them, and came pouring down into the lower ground.

Ver. 18. *And this is but a light thing in the sight of the Lord: he will deliver the Moabites into your hand.*] Of which, I suppose, they had no hope, being much dispirited for want of water.

Ver. 19. *And ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop up all the wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones.*] Prophets were to be obeyed, when they commanded things contrary to a positive precept, as some part of this was, (see Deut. xx. 19.) Which they had power to dispense withal for a time, though not always, so as to annul the precept, as Maimonides expounds this matter in his preface to Seder-Zeraim. But some think this usage so severe, that they take the prophet's meaning to be no more than this: that God would give them such an entire victory, that they might be able to do all this if they pleased; and the Moabites were so ill neighbours, that it is very likely they did this execution upon them, (ver. 25.)

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat-offering was offered.*] When the people of God were praying at Jerusalem, at the time of the morning sacrifice, Elisha joined his prayers with them for this blessing.

That, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.] Whether it came from a sudden collection of a vast number of clouds, which poured down rain in abundance in the land of Edom, or from some rocks which God caused to gush out water; it came by a miraculous power, when there was no natural cause to produce it.

Ver. 21. *And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and stood in the border.*] Intending to defend themselves; but not to march out of their country to give the enemy battle.

Ver. 22. *And they rose up early in the morning.*] The next morning, I suppose, after the water filled the valley.

And the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood.] On the east side of their country.

Ver. 23. *And they said, This is blood: the kings are surely slain, and they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil.*] They knew there was no water there a few days before, and that there had been no rain; and therefore (the sun shining directly in their eyes, which made it look red) they concluded it could be nothing else but blood. And what blood could it be, but that of the three kings' army, who had fallen out, by reason, perhaps, of their different religion; or vexed at the straits they had brought one another into? And the Moabites easily believing what they wished, imagined they had nothing to do but to go and gather spoil, and not to fight at all.

Ver. 24. *And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them.*] They entirely routed and dispersed them.

But they went forward smiting the Moabites, even in their country.] But they did not content themselves with this victory, but pursued them so close, that they got into their country with them, and there made a greater havoc of them.

Ver. 25. *And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it: and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees.*] According to the permission given them by the prophet, ver. 19. intending, I suppose, to depopulate the whole country.

Only in Kir-haraseth left they the stones thereof.] They left no walls standing, but only these of the royal city, which was exceeding strong. (See Isa. xvi. 7. 11.)

Howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it.] They raised such batteries against it, that they drove them who defended it from the wall, and made great breaches in it.

Ver. 26. *And when the king of Moab saw the battle was too sore for him.*] That he was not able to defend the place any longer.

He took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through even unto the king of Edom: but they could not.] He made a sally with seven hundred stout men upon the quarters of the king of Edom (which it seems were the weakest), hoping to break through them and escape. But they were repulsed, and forced to retreat.

Ver. 27. *Then he took his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall.*] Hereupon the king of Moab took his eldest son and made him a sacrifice before them all, as the last desperate remedy, hoping thereby to obtain powerful help from his god, through so precious a sacrifice of the dearest thing he had unto him. For it is well known, not only by the Holy Scriptures, but heathen writers, that in great distress they were wont to offer their own children upon their altars. Eusebius, lib. v. Præpar. Evangel. and Lactantius, lib. i. Div. Instit. cap. 21. mention several nations who used these sacrifices: and Cæsar, lib. vi. de Bello Gallico, saith of the Gauls, that when they were afflicted with grievous diseases, or in time of war, or great danger, *they either offered men for sacrifices, or vowed they would offer them.* For they imagined God would not be appeased, "Nisi pro vita hominis reddatur vita hominis," *unless the life of a man was rendered for the life of a man.*

Abarbinel, indeed, thinks that he offered the eldest son of the king of Edom, whom he took prisoner in the late sally. But it could not be said of him, that this son was to reign in his stead; for the king of Judah made whom he pleased his deputy over Edom. And this would not have made the three kings withdraw the siege, but prosecute it with greater fury. And Abarbinel acknowledges, that their wise men in Pesikta and the Sanhedrin understand it as I do: and that some of them think he offered him, in imitation of Abraham, to the God of Israel, hoping to move him to be favourable to him. Which no less man than Grotius follows. And indeed it is highly probable, that this custom of offering human sacrifices sprung from the offering of Isaac, from whence the Moabites, who were neighbours to Canaan, learnt it.

And there was great indignation against Israel.] Or, as it may be translated, *great repentance upon* (or *in*, or *among*) *Israel.* That is, they were extreme sorry and troubled at this barbarous sacrifice, and wished they had not pushed on the war so far; which ended in such a horrid action, which brought an odium upon them.

And they departed from him, and returned to their own land.] Hereupon they raised the siege, by common consent, and returned home, for fear any such thing should be done again.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *NOW there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying.*] It is observed by St. Jerome, that Elijah and Elisha had no wives: "Et virgines multi filii prophetarum;" *and many of the sons of the prophets were virgins:* but it is plain by this place that they were not all so; but had liberty to marry if they pleased.

My husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord.] Was a worshipper of the true God, and not of Baal, nor the calves: which was the reason, it is likely, of his poverty; such men being discountenanced among the idolatrous Israelites.

And the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be his bondmen.] Because she was not able to pay his debts: in which case the Hebrews had such a power over their children, that they might sell them (being looked upon as their goods) to pay what they owed; and the creditor might force them to it. And Huetius thinks that from the Jews this custom was propagated to the Athenians; and from them to the Romans. The Hebrew doctors have a fancy, that this prophet was Obadiah, (mentioned 1 Kings xviii. 3.) and that the creditor was Jehoram the son of Ahab. Which is utterly ungrounded.

Ver. 2. *And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me: what hast thou in the house?*] Towards the discharge of thy husband's debt.

And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil.] Which was a thing of great use; both for the service of God and of men.

Ver. 3. *And he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.*] As many as she could get, and not small vessels.

Ver. 4. *And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee, and upon thy sons.*] That none might come in to disturb her in what she was about.

And shalt pour out.] Of the pot of oil which she had.

Into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.] And call for another that was empty.

Ver. 5. *So she went from him, and shut the door upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out.*] Believing she should by this means be relieved.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son.*] Who brought her the empty vessels; for the other son was employed in setting aside those that were full.

Bring me yet a vessel.] For she was confident the pot of oil would still afford more.

And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.] When there was no vessel to receive it.

Ver. 7. *Then she came and told the man of God: and he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children upon the rest.*] We must first do justice; and then expect God's blessing upon the provision we make for ourselves and our family.

Ver. 8. *And it fell out on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem.*] A city in the tribe of Issachar, (Josh. xix. 18.)

Where was a great woman.] Who had a great estate, and it is likely kept a great house.

And she constrained him to eat bread.] Was very importunate with him to take a repast at her house, and prevailed with him to accept of her kindness.

And so it was, that, as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.] She made him so welcome, that he made no scruple, when he had occasion to go that way, to step in there and refresh himself: which it is likely she invited him to do.

Ver. 9. *And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive.*] By her frequent conversation with him.

That this is a holy man of God.] Not only a prophet; but a person of great sanctity.

Which passeth by us continually.] For Shunem was in his way as he went from Carmel (which was not far from hence) to Beth-el and Jericho, and other places of the sons of the prophets.

Ver. 10. *Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall.*] A private room remote from the house, where he might retire; and without noise or disturbance give himself to prayer and meditation, and follow his sacred studies.

And let us set up for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick.] Furnish it with all things necessary for a single person.

And it shall be, that when he cometh, he shall turn in thither.] Take up his lodging there, if he think good.

Ver. 11. *And it fell out on a day that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.*] And it appears by the story, that he became their constant guest.

Ver. 12. *And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he called her, she stood before him.*] Waiting to know what he wanted. But he having been so kindly entertained by her for some time, sent for her to give her thanks, and to desire to know what he should do for her.

Ver. 13. *And he said unto him, Say now unto her.*] He seems to me to have whispered to Gehazi, to ask her the following question. Whereupon she withdrew, thinking he had some business with him before he could speak with her.

Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care.] Been exceeding kind to us, in taking care we should want nothing.

What is to be done for thee?] That is, wherein can I serve thee? For he was very desirous, as all good men are, to be grateful.

Wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?] It seems the prophet had a great power at court since the late victory over the Moabites. And therefore, if she had any suit to make to the king, he doubted not to effect it; or had any grievance to complain of, which she suffered by the soldiers, he offered to get it remedied.

And she answered, I dwell among my own people.] Whatsoever vexation any might suffer by the soldiers upon the borders, she tells him she lived safely and quietly among her friends and good neighbours; being so free from want that she needed not petition the king for any thing.

Ver. 14. *And he said, What is then to be done for her?*] This answer being returned to his master by Gehazi, Elisha asked him, what he thought might be most welcome to her. Which he might easily know, going about the house and observing all things there, which Elisha did not, who lived retired.

And Gehazi said, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old.] He knew women were desirous above all things to have children: which she neither had, nor was like to have, by reason of her husband's age.

Ver. 15. *And he said, Call her.*] This shews she withdrew presently, when he first sent for her, (ver. 12, 13.)

And when he had called her, she stood in the door.] Either out of modesty or reverence; or being afraid to disturb him.

Ver. 16. *And he said, About this season, according to the time of life.*] The next year, after thou hast gone the usual time.

Thou shalt embrace a son.] From the word *Habeketh*, which we translate *thou shalt embrace*, some of the Hebrew doctors conjecture that this son proved afterward the prophet Habakkuk: which is a mere fancy, rejected by Abarbinel and others; who make account Habakkuk prophesied in the time of Manasseh or Josiah.

And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thy handmaid.] Do not jest with me.

Ver. 17. *And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that time that Elisha said unto her, according to the time of life.*] It is likely he named the very day when he should be born; and it fell out exactly as he had said.

Ver. 18. *And when the child was grown, it fell out on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers.*] Either for pleasure, or to inquire of his health. This shews still the truth of that which I have often observed, that great men in ancient times (for the quality of his wife shews this was no mean person, ver. 8.) followed their country business themselves; looking after their corn and their cattle, and labouring with their own hands for their health, and the increase of their estates, by their industry in their improvement.

Ver. 19. *And he said unto his father, My head, my head!*] Either walking so far, or staying long in the sun (which shone hot in harvest-time), put him into a fever, which grievously affected his head.

And he said to a lad, Carry him home to his mother.]

That she might look after him, and do what was proper for his ease.

Ver. 20. *And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees until noon, and then died.*] It seems he went out in the morning to his father, and was seized with such a sudden violent pain, as in a few hours killed him.

Ver. 21. *And she went up, and laid him upon the bed of the man of God.*] Hoping for help by him, whose master she had heard (no doubt) had restored a child to life.

And shut the door, and went out.] Kept it as private as she could, that her husband might not know the child was dead; which would have been a great grief to him.

Ver. 22. *And she called to her husband, and said.*] By a messenger which she sent to him.

Send me now, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again quickly.] So as not to hinder his business.

Ver. 23. *And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon, nor sabbath.*] It appears by this, that the prophets were the public instructors of the people; and their houses were a kind of school or synagogue, unto which they resorted upon the days here mentioned, to be taught their duty, out of the law of God, and to be resolved in their doubts. And the prophets accordingly were constantly in some certain place upon these days, to give the people their instruction.

And she said, It shall be well.] In the Hebrew, *it is peace.* That is, she prays him to believe that she went for no hurt; but for his and her benefit.

Ver. 24. *Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee.*] She ordered him to make all the haste he could, as fast as the ass would go; without any respect to her, unless she called to him to drive more softly.

Ver. 25. *So she went and came to the man of God to Mount Carmel.*] This is a place which he, and Elijah also, much frequented: which makes it credible there was a school of the prophets here; it being a mountain full of trees, which made it fit for sacred exercises. As soon as Elijah was taken from him, Elisha fetched a circuit by Jericho and Beth-el to come hither; and from thence went to Samaria. For which no good reason can be given, but that it was to visit the places which his master had frequented, and instruct those who studied there, as Elijah had been wont to do.

And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite.] He was surprised to see her coming at an unusual time.

Ver. 26. *Run now, I pray thee, to meet her.*] To shew his respect to her.

And say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thine husband? is it well with the child?] He bids him make particular inquiry after all that were most dear to her.

And she answered, It is well.] Some translate it, *It shall be well.* But there is no need of that. For they were well in part; that is, she and her husband. And she did not think fit to tell Gehazi all the truth, but to deliver it to the prophet himself.

Ver. 27. *And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet.*] After the manner of a most humble supplicant; resolving not to let him stir till he granted her request.

And Gehazi came near to thrust her away.] Believing his master did not expect such abasement, especially from her, who had been so kind and friendly to them.

And the man of God said, Let her alone; her soul is vexed in her.] Do not disturb her, for she is too full of grief already.

And the Lord hath hid it from me.] God had not shewn him the cause of it, that he might have prevented it.

And hath not told me.] The prophets did not know all things, but only what God was pleased to impart unto them. (See 2 Sam. vii. 3.) For the Spirit was not in them after the manner of a supernatural faculty, or infused habit (as we speak), whereby they might act what and when they pleased; Moses himself, the great prophet, not being able to determine some things till he had consulted the Divine Majesty, (Numb. xv. 13, 14.)

Ver. 28. *Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?*] As much as to say, she was well satisfied without a son: and did neither desire one, nor was forward to believe she should have one when freely promised: but to lose him after he was bestowed upon her, was an unspeakable affliction to her.

Ver. 29. *And he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins.*] That he might travel with greater expedition.

And take my staff in thy hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any man salute thee, answer him not again.] Lest they should enter into discourse, and stop his speed.

And lay my staff upon the face of the child.] He thought it might work a miracle, as Moses's rod and Elijah's mantle did: and if the woman had had a faith strong enough, it might have been sufficient. But she distrusted it, and would have Elisha go himself. Abarbinel thinks he had no thoughts of reviving the child by this means, but only ordered his staff to be laid upon it, to preserve him from putrefaction: which is a low conceit.

Ver. 30. *And the mother of the child said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.*] This seems to me to signify, that she did not confide in what he ordered Gehazi to do; but thought his presence necessary to touch the child, and pray to God to restore him.

And he arose, and followed her.] Being overcome by her importunity, and his own kindness to so great a friend.

Ver. 31. *And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice nor hearing.*] No sign of life appeared, as Gehazi, I suppose, expected.

Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked.] He speaks of death as a sleep: in which he continued, notwithstanding he had done as Elisha commanded. And it is likely that power was withheld which might have accompanied the staff, because the prophet changed the method of his proceeding in working this miracle; when the woman would have him go himself, and did not pray to God, that upon the laying on of the staff he might revive.

Ver. 32. *And when Elisha came into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.*] Where his mother had left him when she went to Elisha, (ver. 21.)

Ver. 33. *He went in therefore, and shut the door upon*

them twain, and prayed unto the Lord.] He shut the door, that he might not be disturbed by any body in his prayer to God.

Ver. 34. *And he went up.*] Upon the bed.

And lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands; and he stretched himself upon the child.] This could not be done all together, because his face and body were much larger than the child's, but successively: he laid his mouth upon the child's mouth, and his eyes and hands upon the child's eyes and hands, as Elijah had done in the like case, in token that God inspired his soul again into him, at his earnest prayer.

And the flesh of the child waxed warm.] Not from the external heat of Elisha's body, but from an inward principle of life, which was restored, and began to move in him.

Ver. 35. *And he returned.*] From the bed.

And walked in the house to and fro.] Took a turn or two in the house to refresh himself, after the pains he had taken in prayer, and otherways, for the child's recovery.

And went up, and stretched himself upon him.] As he had done before. For this miracle was not wrought in an instant, but gradually: by continued vehement prayer to God.

And the child sneezed seven times.] A sign of health, whereby his head was purged, in which his pain lay, (ver. 19.)

And the child opened his eyes.] After his sneezing he looked upon Elisha, and it is likely spake to him.

Ver. 36. *And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her: and when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son.*] She came only to the door of the room, till he bade her take up her son, and then she came in, as it follows.

Ver. 37. *Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself down to the ground.*] Giving thanks to God, and to him, with a most profound reverence.

And took up her son, and went out.] Publishing, no doubt, this wonderful work of God to all her family; who made it known abroad.

Ver. 38. *And Elisha went again to Gilgal.*] Where he was with Elijah, a little before he was taken up into heaven, (ii. 1.) For those places, wherein he had been with his master, he loved to visit; that he might work wonders there, and confirm them in a belief that he was a prophet.

And there was a dearth in the land.] A great scarcity of provisions.

And the sons of the prophets were sitting before him.] Which was the posture of disciples when their masters taught them, who sat above, and their scholars below, as I observed, ii. 3. and see Acts xxii. 3. whence Bertram observes, their schools and academies were called *ishiboth*, that is, *sessions*.

And he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.] This shews that they lived together in *society*, and after their lectures were wont to eat together with their master: who ordered his servants to prepare some food for them; which was very plain and common, such as the gardens or fields would afford; without much labour, and of small price.

Ver. 39. *And one went into the field to gather herbs.*] They went into the fields, I suppose, to gather what green things they could find; because there were no pot-herbs in their garden at home, by reason of the drought.

And found a wild vine, and he gathered thereof wild gourds his lap-full.] This is thought to have been coloquintida, which hath a leaf something like that of a vine, and purges vehemently.

And came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew them not.] Neither he that gathered them, nor they that shred them, knew what they were; but took them to be the leaves of a wild vine.

Ver. 40. *So they poured out for the men to eat: and it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot: and they could not eat thereof.*] It was so bitter and distasteful, that they concluded there was some venomous herb in the pot. Perhaps they might know it by the taste to be what it was: an herb that purges extremely, and is poison, if not qualified and taken in a moderate quantity.

Ver. 41. *But he said, Then bring meal: and he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat: and there was no harm in the pot.*] Which alteration was not from any virtue in the meal, but from the power of God. Therefore, the Jews justly reckon this as the eighth miracle which Elisha wrought, after he was made a prophet.

Ver. 42. *And there came a man from Baal-shalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the first-fruits.*] This was a seasonable present, it being a time of dearth, when bread was very scarce. And it being called *biccurim* (which was the name for the first-fruits belonging to the priests), it is likely this was not such a present as men were wont to make when they came to ask a prophet any question, and to be resolved of their doubts, (like that, 1 Kings xiv. 3.) but a free-will-offering for the better subsistence of the prophet. Unto whom it is probable, pious people gave that portion, which was assigned by God for the priests, to whom they could not now carry their first-fruits, they being in the land of Judah. And I suppose the schools of the prophets might be partly maintained by this means.

Twenty loaves of barley.] Which were not very large; for then it would not have been a miracle, that they sufficed for a hundred men.

And full ears of corn in the husk thereof.] Which being parched, they were wont to eat. (See Ruth ii. 15.) But Dr. Hammond approves rather of our marginal translation, and thinks these words should be rendered, He brought ears of corn *in a satchel, or scrip.* (See Matt. x. annot. *e*.)

And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat.] That is, to the sons of the prophets, with whom he then was, when this present was brought to him.

Ver. 43. *And his servitor said, What! shall I set this before a hundred men?*] Just as the apostles said unto our blessed Saviour, when he intended to feed a far greater multitude with less food. By this it appears there were a great many scholars, who lived in this community; and that they used a frugal diet.

And he said again, Give the people, that they may eat.] That is, do as I bid you, and make no objections.

For thus saith the Lord, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof.] As the multitude left of the loaves our Saviour caused to be set before them, John vi. 11.

Ver. 44. *So he set before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the Lord.*] Something like

this was done by his master Elijah, for the woman of Sarepta, in time of famine; whose barrel of meal and cruse of oil wasted not for many days, till God sent rain upon the earth, (1 Kings xvii. 14. 16.)

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *NOW Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria.*] Commander-in-chief of his whole army, whom we call general.

Was a great man with his master.] In great favour with him.

And honourable.] In high esteem with all the people.

Because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria.] He had been victorious in such battles as he had fought; which this Divine writer would have the Israelites look upon as the Lord's doing.

He was also a mighty man of valour.] Being the person (as the Jews say in Midrasch Tehillim) who drew the bow at adventure and killed Ahab, (1 Kings xxii. 34.)

But he was a leper.] Which did not exclude him from the society of men, in that country, where the Jewish law was not in force. But it was a great blemish to him, and also like to prove deadly; there being no cure for this disease, which was very common in Syria, as I have elsewhere noticed.

Ver. 2. *And the Syrians had gone out by companies.*] The word which we translate *company*, doth not signify an army; but such troops (or parties, as we call them) as made excursions and inroads into the enemy's country, to get booty.

And had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little young maid.] Young men and maids were a desirable part of the prey which they got; whom they sold for money, or employed them in their own service.

And she waited on Naaman's wife.] Either she was his part of the spoil in that expedition, or they made a present of her to him (being beautiful, perhaps, and ingenious), or he bought her of the soldiers.

Ver. 3. *And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord was with the prophet that is in Samaria!*] The history left him last at Gilgal; but he used to be in several other places; and when she was taken captive was at Samaria.

For he would recover him of his leprosy.] She related, it is likely, the wonderful things which he had done; and therefore was confident he could work this cure.

Ver. 4. *And one went in and told his lord, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.*] Her words being related to Naaman, he went and told the king his master what she said, and begged his leave to go to the prophet in the land of Israel. The following words warrant this sense.

Ver. 5. *And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.*] That he might honourably reward the prophet, and those that attended him.

Ver. 6. *And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now, when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent my servant to thee, that thou mayest cure him of his leprosy.*] The beginning of the letter is omitted, as not pertinent to the matter in hand. It is likely it contained the usual compliments; after which he desired him, together with this letter, to receive his servant Naaman, and to cure him of his leprosy; that is, to take care he might be cured by the prophet. But this not being plainly expressed, the king of Israel apprehended that the intention of this demand was only to pick a quarrel with him, and seek an occasion, or rather a pretence, for a war with him.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive.*] He rent his clothes either as one in great affliction and trouble, or (as some will have it) because he looked upon it as blasphemy, to ascribe that power to him which belonged to God alone. For none but he could cure a leprosy; which he expresses by killing and making alive. Every body, even beasts, can kill; but when one is killed, to make him alive again (thus these words must be understood in conjunction) is the work only of the Almighty.

That this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?] To cure this disease was as hard as to raise a dead man to life; for the skin was dead, and the leprosy fretted and eat into the flesh.

Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.] Though he had seen what miracles Elisha had wrought, yet he either had forgot them, or thought this beyond his power; or, was loath to see still more demonstrations of his power with God; and so did not send to him upon this occasion.

Ver. 8. *And it was so, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.*] As the word prophet commonly signifies a man that declares things which none could know but God, who reveals them by his Spirit; so here it signifies a man endued with a Divine power, who could do that which no man could effect unless God was with him.

Ver. 9. *So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.*] Expecting, I suppose, that the prophet would come out to him; or rather out of reverence to the prophet, unto whom he sent a message, letting him understand the cause of his coming; for the prophet presently answers him, though by his servant, not by himself.

Ver. 10. *And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying.*] It is not to be thought that Elisha took state upon him; but it is to be ascribed to the retired sort of life which the prophets led, that he did not shew himself to Naaman. We see an instance of this in the foregoing chapter, where we read that he did not so much as speak with the great woman who entertained him at her house, and built an apartment on purpose for him; but let her understand what he had to say by his servant Gehazi, (ver. 12, 13, &c.)

Go and wash in Jordan seven times.] Thus lepers were sprinkled, by the law of Moses, seven times, (Lev. xiv. 7, &c.) But it is plain, by the next verse, Naaman expected the prophet would have been so civil as to come out to him, or invite him to his house, and discourse with him: neither of which the prophet thought fit to do; partly for a trial of his faith, and partly to let him know that this was not so difficult a thing as the king imagined, but so easy for him to effect by the power of God, that he need

not come out to talk with him about it: let him but go to Jordan and wash there seven times, and the cure should be performed. Jordan had no more virtue in it (as he rightly saith afterward) than other rivers; nor was the earth of Israel better than that of Syria (though he begged two loads of it), but God presided more particularly over this country, and his power here appeared: and in this appeared the more, because water being cold, was very bad for this disease: the root of it being a white waterish humour, as Abarbinel notes, which would naturally, by this means, be increased.

And thy flesh shall come again to thee.] For the leprosy had eaten into it, and consumed it in part, as it did Miriam's, (Numb. xii. 12.)

And thou shalt be clean.] Freed from this filthy disease.

Ver. 11. *But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, I thought, Surely he will come out to me, and call upon the name of his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.*] He was as angry with the prophet, as if he had scorned and mocked him. First, he thought himself despised, in that he did not come to him and salute him: and then he thought it a thing ridiculous to go and wash in Jordan; for what could that water do more than any other? Thus men slight common and easy things, and admire those that are rare and difficult; and in their passion reject that which God himself propounds to them, if it be not agreeable to their humours, and their conceits. In which passion, if he had continued, he had been a leper to his dying day.

Ver. 12. *Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters in Israel?*] The valley of Damascus, which lay between Libanus and Antilibanus, was washed by five rivers; the two principal of which descended from Mount Hermon, *viz.* Abana and Pharpar; the last of which run by the walls of Damascus, and the other run through the city, and divided it into two parts, as Bochartus observes.

May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned, and went away in a rage.] He did not consider that he was now under the direction of a prophet, who was supposed to speak from God, who might have prescribed what method he pleased for his cure; which was to come from his Divine power alone, and not from the virtue of any water whatsoever.

Ver. 13. *And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?*] Happy are they who have such excellent servants as these, who both had the courage to speak the truth to their master, and the prudence to order it with all submission and reverence. For *my father* was a title of honour in that country; by which name they called their lords: as kings were called the fathers of their country. And these servants, perhaps, had heard the young maid talk much of the power of the prophet, which made them very desirous their master would not refuse his advice; which they urge him to follow with great reason; by representing to him that it was the advice of a prophet, who was guided by God to give him these directions. And, as it was not fit for servants to say to their masters, when they order a thing, Why so? Why not otherways? so much less should a man say to God, or his minister, who speaks in his name; especially when he commands things that may be done without much trouble, or any pain. For if he had bade him cut and burn, as chirurgeons many times do in grievous sores, he would have submitted to it: and therefore it was unreasonable not to comply with his prescriptions, when he required him only to go and wash himself in the river Jordan, which was a thing very easy, in his way home, and would put him to no pain.

Ver. 14. *Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God.*] He shewed himself a person of great probity and discretion; who was not in such a rage but he could hear reason; and did not refuse good counsel from his servants; but suffered himself to be convinced and overruled to yield unto it.

And his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.] God was not so angry with him, as he was with Elisha; but upon his repentance, and obedience to his directions, vouchsafed him a perfect cure; there being no mark left of his leprosy, but his skin as clear and smooth as that of a little child. This was the only cure of a leprosy that we read of, till Christ the great prophet came into the world.

Ver. 15. *And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him.*] Now Elisha seems to have admitted him into his presence.

And said, Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel.] He returned to give thanks to God, as the good Samaritan did to our Saviour; acknowledging the God that Elisha worshipped to be the true God, and that there was no other.

Now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.] A reward, or rather a token of his gratitude to him; for the Hebrews call all gifts a *blessing*: the Hebrew word *barac* signifying not only *benedicere*, but *benefacere*.

Ver. 16. *And he said, As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused.*] He did not think it unlawful to take it, for he received gifts from others. But he would have strangers to their religion know how good the God of Israel was; who made his servants so good, that they did the greatest good to mankind for nothing. Which generous piety was apt to invite others to the worship and service of this great and good God. For it gives great authority to a teacher of virtue not to be covetous. (See Lactantius, lib. i. Div. Instit. cap. 4.)

Ver. 17. *And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth?*] As much as two mules could carry or draw.

For thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering, nor sacrifice to any other god, but unto the Lord.] Though he refused to accept his present, yet he doubted not he would present him with two burdens of earth, which he intended to employ in erecting an altar, whereon he would sacrifice to no other god but the Lord. He judged it reasonable to have an altar out of God's land, because he saw he peculiarly dwelt in Israel. And though he might have taken enough as he went along in his way home, yet he desired it as a gift from the prophet; fancying, perhaps, that he would put a greater virtue into it by his blessing; as he had done into the waters of Jordan: therefore Ralbag

thinks he desired to have this earth out of Elisha's house where he dwelt; and Abarbinel thinks, from under his very feet in the place where he stood; of which there is no certainty. But it is plain he desired to receive it from the prophet, who had convinced him that there was no god like to his; who had such power, and made men so virtuous, as to be above the love of money.

Ver. 18. *In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there.*] This was the god of the Syrians, but no author informs us what god this was, nor whence so called. Only many conjecture, because *Rimmon* in Hebrew signifies a pomegranate, that *Venus* is hereby meant, to whom such fruit was sacred. But Scaliger understands this to be *Jupiter*, the thunderer, as they called him. And our Selden thinks it is derived from *rum*, which signifies *high*. Whence Hesychius saith, ὁ Ῥαμὰς signifies ὕψιστος θεὸς, *the most high God.*

And he leaneth on my hand.] Or *shoulder:* which he does out of state; or, perhaps, out of weakness, for his support. In the additions to the book of Esther, mention is made of two young women that waited on that queen, upon one of which she leaned, and the other held up her train, (xv. 4.) And it was not only the custom among the Persians and Syrians, but the Israelites also, as we read in this book, (vii. 2. 17.)

And I bow myself in the house of Rimmon.] Together with his master; who could not well bow, if Naaman stood upright, and did not bow his body with him.

When I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing.] He hoped he might, without offence to the Divine Majesty, whom he alone resolved to worship, keep the great office he had under the king his master, and consequently bow himself when he went with him into the temple of Rimmon: he who sees into the hearts of men, knowing it was no act of worship to that god; but only a necessary respect to his master. And so the word is used for civil honour, as well as religious adoration. Thus Lud. de Dieu hath clearly rendered this whole verse, *In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant; when my master enters into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, he leans upon my hand, and so I bow myself (that is, together with him) in the house of Rimmon: when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing.* Let him not take offence, since I intend not to worship Rimmon; as appeared by his sacrificing only to the God of Israel. An Israelite, indeed, was forbidden to bow before an idol, whatsoever his mind or intention was in that act: but a stranger was not bound by this law, as Mr. Selden shews the opinion of the Jews is, (lib. ii. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 11.) Therefore, when Naaman went into the temple, not of his own accord, but merely to wait upon his master, and perform the duty of his office; since he professed himself a worshipper of the most high God alone, and brought earth out of his land, and sacrificed only upon the altar made of it: all he thought might understand he did not worship Rimmon, but only paid his respects to the king when he bowed with him.

Ver. 19. *And he said unto him, Go in peace.*] The prophet did not condemn this, but bade him not trouble himself about this matter; for he did not offend against God's law, which was not intended for such as he was: though there are some of the Jews who think that these words, *go in peace*, relate to the verse foregoing; that he need not to trouble himself about carrying earth with him out of the land of Israel to make an altar (for it doth not appear he gave him any), and so left this matter of bowing in the house of Rimmon undetermined. And no less a person than Bochartus hath a large dissertation about this whole matter; wherein he endeavours to defend their opinion, who think Naaman begs pardon for what he had done in times past, not for what he should continue to do; and renders these words (as Dr. Lightfoot also doth), *when I have bowed*, &c. But this seems to me altogether improbable; for then he would not have mentioned what he did as the king's servant; but simply the idolatry he had committed in worshipping Rimmon. Besides, the Oriental versions, as well as the Greek and the Vulgar, and the Hebrew doctors generally, as well as Christian interpreters, understand it as we do, that he speaks of the future act of bowing; which, being only a civil action, and he declaring himself publicly to be a worshipper only of the God of Israel, he hoped would not be imputed to him as a sin. And so the famous Buxtorfius, in a letter to Theod. Hackspan saith, "Omnes, quotquot vidi, interpretes referunt ad futurum," &c. *All interpreters, as many as I have seen, refer this to the future, and not to the time past.* And so doth the Chaldee paraphrast himself: and I am very much of the same opinion.

So he departed from him a little way.] About a mile from the city, as the Jewish doctors understand it.

Ver. 20. *But Gehazi, the servant of the man of God said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman the Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought; but, as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.*] He seems to be angry that his master had been so kind to one that needed not his charity, and was also one of another nation; and therefore, in his passion, swore he would take something of him. Which covetousness plunged him into a great many other sins, as the apostle observes it usually doth, (1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.) Dr. Lightfoot thinks the Hebrew text hath divinely omitted a letter in one word, that it might the more brand him for this villany. *I will run*, saith he, *after Naaman, and take* מומה *a blot*, instead of מאומה *somewhat.*

Ver. 21. *And Gehazi followed Naaman: and when Naaman saw him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well?*] Behold the honour he gave to the prophet, in doing such honour to his servant; which testified he had a great sense of God, and of his goodness to him, in his heart.

Ver. 22. *And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there is come to me from Mount Ephraim two of the sons of the prophets.*] It seems there was a school there, as well as at Jericho, Beth-el, Carmel, and other places.

Give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of raiment.] To relieve their poverty. This was the first fruit of his covetousness, which put him upon inventing such a wicked slander of his master. For why should Elisha desire so much silver for two young scholars? Which might tempt Naaman to think, that though he publicly declined to take a gift from him, yet he secretly desired it. (See Dr. Hammond on St. Matt. vi. annot. *k.*)

Ver. 23. *And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him.*] It is likely Gehazi pretended to keep strictly to his master's orders, and would have but one, till Naaman's generosity pressed and overcame him to take more.

And he bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of raiment, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him.] As servants do before persons of honour.

Ver. 24. *And when he came to the tower.*] To the place where Elisha lodged: or, as some will have it, to a *secret place*, where he laid up what he had got.

He took them from the men, and bestowed them in the house; and let the men go, and they departed.] For he was afraid his master should see them.

Ver. 25. *And he came in, and stood before his master.*] As servants were wont to do, to see if their master wanted any thing.

And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither.] This was another impudent lie, wherein he thought to deceive his master, though he was a prophet. Which was an impious endeavour to deceive the Spirit of God, whose minister Elisha was: like that lie of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts v. 3, &c.

Ver. 26. *And he said, Went not my heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee?*] Did not God represent to my mind, as if I had been present, how Naaman came to meet thee, and what thou saidst to him, and what he gave thee? For, no doubt, he recited all that had passed between them; to convince him of his folly (in thinking to cheat him), and put him to shame and confusion.

Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and vineyards, and olive-yards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants?] Which Gehazi designed to purchase with the two talents: at a very unseasonable time, when the nation, for their sins, were in danger to be carried captive out of their land. Which, though it did not fall out till above a hundred and fifty years after this, yet great devastations followed the death of Elisha.

Ver. 27. *The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever.*] Unto many generations, as the word *for ever* frequently signifies. But the Hebrew doctors say this relates only unto his children that were then born; who were conscious to his crime, and approved of it. (See more of this, viii. 4, 5.)

And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.] He punished him with the worst sort of leprosy, which was incurable. For his sin was exceeding great, or rather he was guilty of many sins besides those already mentioned; being a thief, and taking that to himself which was given to others. Nay, he was a sacrilegious person, in robbing the sons of the prophets, who were men belonging to God, in a special manner. The Hebrew doctors reckon seven sins, for which God punished men with the plague of leprosy, and endeavour to prove it out of Scripture; and Gehazi was guilty of more than one of them, and therefore justly punished in an extraordinary manner. They are, an evil tongue, shedding of blood, a false oath, uncovering of any forbidden nakedness, inflation of spirit, rapine, and envy.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND the sons of the prophets.*] That were at Gilgal; for that is the place last mentioned where the prophet was, (iv. 38.) and was also near to Jordan, mentioned in the next verse.

Said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee.] They had their colleges sometimes in cities (as in Beth-el), and sometimes in the fields, and sometimes upon mountains. It is probable this was in the fields; where Elisha, for the present, was resident among them.

Is too strait for us.] Their number of scholars was so much increased under so eminent a master as he was, that there was not room enough for them.

Ver. 2. *Let us go, we pray thee.*] They were so much under his government, that they did not take the liberty to go any whither without his leave.

Unto Jordan.] Near to which many trees grew.

And take from thence every man a beam.] A piece of timber.

And let us make us a place there, where we may dwell.] A tabernacle large enough to contain them all. From whence we may gather, that the sons of the prophets did not spend all their time in studying the law, meditation, and prayer, and such holy exercises; but also employed themselves in some manufactures, as the apostles did in aftertimes, some of which were tent-makers, (Acts xviii. 3.) like to these here mentioned.

And he answered, Go ye.] He consented to their design, the place which they chose being very commodious for students. As St. Jerome observes, who, in more places than one (see his epistles to Rusticus and to Paulina), compares the monks of his time with these sons of the prophets, "Qui habitabant in agris, et solitudinibus, et faciebant sibi tabernacula prope fluenta Jordanis."

Ver. 3. *And one said, Be content, I pray thee; and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.*] They thought their design would prosper the better under his conduct; and that if any one questioned what they did, his authority would overawe them.

Ver. 4. *So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood.*] They began to go about their work.

Ver. 5. *But as one was felling a beam, the axe-head fell into the water.*] Being not well fastened to the helve; or rather the helve breaking.

And he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed.] Good men are religiously careful that none suffer by their kindness to them. This shews, that as these sons of the prophets wrought with their own hands, going themselves to cut down wood to build withal, so (some of them at least) they were but poor, being not furnished with tools for their work, but forced to borrow.

Ver. 6. *And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick.*] To serve, I suppose, instead of a helve.

And cast it into the water, and the iron did swim.] A double miracle, as the Jews understand it, that iron, which was sunk down to the bottom, rose up; and then went to the stick, and was joined to it, at its helve. For to what end should he throw a stick into the water, but that it should serve this purpose?

Ver. 7. *Therefore said he, Take it to thee. And he put out his hand and took it.*] It fell near the river-side, or was brought thither when it rose up.

Ver. 8. *Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.*] He did not rely merely on the number of his forces, but secretly resolved, by the advice of his council, to place them in such posts where he might hope to surprise the Israelites. It may seem strange, that after such a great benefit lately received in the cure of Naaman, the king should send him, who was captain of his host, to fight against Israel. But who can tell how long this was after that time, when Naaman might be dead? or, perhaps, Naaman might have lost his place; because he refused to worship Rimmon; and no benefit will reconcile inveterate enemies.

Ver. 9. *And the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down.*] And had laid an ambush for him there.

Ver. 10. *And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of.*] He sent some spies to see whether Elisha gave him true information.

And saved himself there, not once or twice.] By this means he frequently saved his soldiers from falling into the hands of the Syrians; who lay in wait for them in such places, where they would certainly have gone, if they had not been told of the danger.

Ver. 11. *Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sorely troubled for this thing; and he called his servants.*] With whom he had consulted how to carry on this war, (ver. 8.)

And said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel?] Betrays my counsels to him; for he could not think he should meet with such constant disappointments, unless it were by treachery.

Ver. 12. *And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words thou speakest in thy bedchamber.*] It is likely Naaman had spread the fame of the prophet so much in this court, that some of them made further inquiry after him; and heard more of his miraculous works; and thence concluded he could tell the greatest secrets, as well as to do such wonders as were reported of him.

Ver. 13. *And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him.*] A very foolish design. As if the prophet could not as well know this, as he did the rest of his other counsels.

And it was told him, saying, He is in Dothan.] A city in the tribe of Manasseh; not far from Shechem and Samaria.

Ver. 14. *Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host.*] That the people of Dothan, being affrighted at the sight of such a number of soldiers, might not dare to defend the prophet.

And they came by night, and compassed the city about.] That no intelligence might be carried to Samaria.

Ver. 15. *And when the servant of the man of God was risen early.*] As students were wont to do.

And was gone forth.] Out of the door of the house, which stood high; the city being built upon a hill.

Behold, a host compassed the city both with horses and chariots: and his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?] Perhaps the Syrians had assured the inhabitants they intended no harm to them; but only came to take Elisha. Which the young man hearing, it put him in great fear; for being but newly come to his master in the room of Gehazi, and having perhaps seen none of his wonderful works, he gave himself and his master for lost men.

Ver. 16. *And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.*] Faith drives away fear; but it was hard for the young man to believe this, till he had more experience of God's providence over his prophet: and therefore Elisha prays he might have a demonstration of it.

Ver. 17. *And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire.*] He beheld the camp of God there, (as the angels are called Gen. xxxii. 2.) ready at hand to defend his master. Legions of angels, (Matt. xxvi. 35.) which were far more numerous and powerful than the host of the Syrians which he saw compass the city; but did not see this heavenly host till God opened his eyes, and represented them to him. The ancients think that the angels, when present with us, appear where they please, and are invisible where they please, though present. Now this appearance of theirs in this place is called the opening of his eyes; because it had the same effect. For he beheld the mountain (on which, I suppose, the city stood), where he saw none but Syrians before, was now full of fiery chariots and horses, which, as it here follows, had encircled Elisha.

Round about Elisha.] That is, he saw in this vision, as if Elisha was in the midst of this glorious camp of angels; who defended him so that none could penetrate and break through unto him.

Ver. 18. *And when they came down to him.*] He seems to have gone out of the city to them, under the Divine protection; intending to go to Samaria. And they seeing him, asked him the way to the man of God.

Elisha prayed unto the Lord, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness, according to the word of Elisha.] So that they might not be able perfectly to distinguish one thing from another.

Ver. 19. *And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city.*] Some think we are not bound to speak truth to an enemy; but there is no need that this should be asserted here. For it was true that they were not in the way to find Elisha; whom they should not see till they came to another city.

Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek.] As he really did. But their minds were struck with blindness, as well as their eyes; or else they would not have committed themselves to the conduct of a stranger, to follow him in an enemy's country, they knew not whither.

But he led them to Samaria.] This shews they were not wholly blind, for then they could not have been led by him; but were dark, as we speak, and could not clearly discern who it was that led them, nor whither they were going. Here the Jews cry, Behold, a double miracle! Elisha's servant saw that which appeared to nobody else;

and the Syrians could not discern that which every body else saw.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, Lord, open the eyes of these men, that they may see. And the Lord opened their eyes, and they saw; that, behold, they were in the midst of Samaria.*] To their great astonishment, no doubt, when they found that he had made them all captives, whom they came to carry away to Syria.

Ver. 21. *And the king of Israel said to Elisha, when he saw them, My father.*] This miracle touched him with great reverence to the prophet.

Shall I smite them? shall I smite them?] This repetition of the question expresses his eager desire to fall upon them, and kill them, if the prophet would have permitted.

Ver. 22. *And he answered, Thou shalt not smite them.*] There was a command to destroy the people of the seven nations; yet not if they yielded to them. But as for other persons, who were taken in the war, they were not bound to destroy them; but it was humanity rather to spare them. Whence it is, that the prophet here forbids the king to smite these, who were not under the curse of the people of Canaan.

Wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword, and with thy bow?] As much as to say, Thou wouldest not be so cruel, as in cold blood to kill those whom thou thyself hadst taken prisoners in a battle. Much more then are those to be spared, who are not thy captives, but God's. Thou hast not taken them with thy sword, or with thy bow: but he hath brought them to thee, and delivered them into thy hand; not that thou mayest kill them, but use them kindly. To this purpose Ralbag. (See Selden, de Jure Nat. et Gent. p. 745.)

Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.] And tell him what civility and kindness there is among the people of God. This is a rare example of that which St. Paul recommends to us, Rom. xii. 20. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink," &c.

Ver. 23. *And he prepared great provision for them: and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master.*] This is a new wonder, that the hearts of the Israelites should so yield unto the command of the prophet, as not only to spare, but to entertain bountifully their old enemies.

And the bands of the Syrians came no more into the land of Israel.] Great hatreds are sometimes overcome by unexpected and undeserved benefits; as many of the heathens have observed, that this is the noblest way to conquer them, particularly Valerius Maximus: "Speciosius injuriæ beneficiis vincuntur, quam mutui odii pertinacia pensantur;" *injuries are more gloriously overcome by benefits, than requited by pertinacious mutual hatred.* But the sense of benefits in bad natures doth not last long; for in the very next verse we read, how the king of Syria besieged Samaria. Which seems to contradict what is said here, that the Syrians came no more into the land of Israel. But the meaning of that is (for no man can think that any author whatsoever would contradict himself in the same breath), either that for this time they retreated quite, and laid aside all thoughts of war, though afterward they broke out again into hostility: or (which is the plainest) that their bands made no more incursions and inroads; but they resolved to come and fall upon them, not in small parties, and by ambushes, (as they did before, ver. 8.) but with a formed army, wherewith they laid siege to Samaria.

Ver. 24. *And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria.*] The name of Ben-hadad was common to all the kings of Syria, as Pharaoh was to those of Egypt.

Gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria.] It seems the Israelites had not forces to appear against him in the field: so that he marched directly to Samaria, and laid siege to it.

Ver. 25. *And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver.*] The siege lasted so long, or they were so ill provided for it, that there was a great scarcity of food in this city: insomuch that an ass's head was sold for so many shekels as make five pounds of our money. A great sum for the head, when the whole body was little worth; and it being an unclean creature, it was not lawful for the Israelites to eat (yea, was accounted unclean by the Arabians), unless in case of extreme necessity. See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 13. where he observes out of Plutarch, that there was such a scarcity in Artaxerxes's army, when he was among the Cadusii, that an ass's head was sold for threescore drachms.

And the fourth part of a cab.] A *cab* was a very small measure of corn; containing, as the Jews say, as much as twenty-four eggs would hold. It is never mentioned in the Scripture, but only here; though very often in the Talmud, in the title Kiddushim. (See Imbonacius, in the Biblioth. Mag. Rabbin. tom. v. p. 349.) All agree, it was such a measure as I have mentioned; so that the fourth part of it was no more than six eggs would contain, called a *log*, as Bochartus thinks.

Of dove's dung.] So the Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic, and LXX. translate the Hebrew word *hirjonim:* and so a great many of the Jewish doctors, Jarchi, Kimchi, Ralbag, understand it. Though it be very hard to believe, that *dove's dung* should be so plentiful in a city as to be sold in any quantity, or that men should eat it; when every one knows there is no nourishment in such excrements, and less in that of doves than in others, as is observed by Bochartus: who, after he hath confuted many other opinions, hath made it very probable, that *fitches* or *lentiles* are here meant; which were the vilest of all food, and yet sold at this dear rate. For that some sort of food is here meant, is plain from what goes before. (See his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. i. cap. 7.)

For five pieces of silver.] Which the same author computes to be as much as nine French livres.

Ver. 26. *And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall.*] To see if they kept their guards well; or, to observe how the enemy lay.

There cried unto him a woman, saying, Help, my lord, O king!

Ver. 27. *And he said, If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-press?*] Some take the first words to be a curse, and translate them as we do in the margin, *Let not the Lord save* (or help) *thee.* Like that among the gentiles, "Dii deæque te perdant;" *may thou perish.* Thus Josephus understands them to be the words of a man in a great passion, and full

of fury, that she should implore relief from him, who could do nothing for himself. For he thought she had cried to him for victuals, as appears by the last words.

Ver. 28. *And the king said unto her, What aileth thee?*] When she had pacified his anger, or it cooled of itself, he asked her the cause of her cry.

And she answered, This woman.] Who stood by her.

Said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow.] Thus began the prophecy of Moses to be fulfilled, Deut. xxxviii. 54, 55, &c.

Ver. 29. *So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.*] Either that she might save him, or that she might eat him alone, and thereby preserve her life the longer.

Ver. 30. *And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes.*] Out of great grief at what the woman had said; or, perhaps, out of indignation at the prophet, with whom the next verse shews he was very angry.

And he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh.] His royal robes, which were uppermost, being torn, they saw sackcloth (in token of great humiliation) next to his skin. For these idolatrous kings were not so profane, but they observed some of the ancient rites of religion: among which this was one; to abase and afflict themselves, in times of great calamity, by putting sackcloth upon their naked body.

Ver. 31. *Then he said, God do so to me, and more also, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.*] Such was the arbitrary power which these kings exercised; which took away men's lives, without any formal process against them; and the reason of this furious resolution seems to be, either because Elisha had hindered him from smiting the great host of the Syrians, when he had them cooped up in Samaria, (ver. 20—22.) which might have disabled them from bringing him into these straits: or, because Elisha did not employ his interest in God, as he expected, to give them deliverance. Therefore he swore he should not live till night.

Ver. 32. *And Elisha sat in his house.*] In the school, where the sons of the prophets came to be instructed by him.

And the elders sat with him.] We often read in Ezekiel of the elders of Israel sitting before the prophet to hear him, (viii. 1. xxii. 24.) And so some understand it here, of the chief persons in Samaria, who were come to consult him. But it rather signifies his chief scholars, some grave persons, who applied themselves to the study of Divine things, and were now with him.

And the king sent a man from before him.] Commanded one that attended him to go, and execute the sentence he had pronounced against Elisha.

But, ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head?] He understood, by the spirit of prophecy, the wicked intentions of the king; who was like his father Ahab, that had murdered many of the prophets of the Lord.

Look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?] He charged them to lay hold of him before he came into the room, and not suffer him to enter; for the king would immediately follow him, to revoke his order. So he foresaw, by the same spirit of prophecy, that the king repented of what he had decreed, and was coming to revoke it; and therefore he only required the elders to do that which he knew the king would do himself, *viz.* stop the messenger at the door, and let him proceed no further. This will not warrant private men to apprehend public officers; nor to use such words to princes as the prophet here doth to Joram, whom he calls *the son of a murderer*, by a Divine motion. Which authorized him to represent him as the impious son of a very impious father.

Ver. 33. *And, while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, this evil is of the Lord, what should I wait for the Lord any longer?*] Some imagine that the messenger being come, spake these words in the king's name. But it seems more reasonable to think the king, who was also come, spake them himself, in a fit of raging despair. He could not but acknowledge, that the Lord had brought them into this distress. Upon which Elisha exhorted him to wait till he would please (who only could do it) to deliver them. But he impatiently answered, he had waited so long in vain, that he had no hope left, since they were driven to such extremity, that women ate their own children. Or, these words may be thus interpreted (taking the former part of them to be spoken by the prophet, and the latter by the king); *And he said* (that is, the prophet said), Acknowledge the hand of God in this evil, which comes from him. To which the king replied, And what else can I expect from the Lord, unless it be such plagues? No, saith Elisha in the very next words, ye shall have plenty here to-morrow.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *AND Elisha said.*] Unto the king, who followed the messenger, (see foregoing chapter, ver. 32, 33.) and spake such words as Elisha here satisfies him were very unreasonable.

Hear ye the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord, To-morrow, about this time, shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel.] The Hebrew word *seah* signifies a certain measure, containing the thirtieth part of an *omer:* which is about a peck of our measure.

In the gate of Samaria.] Which was the market-place, as well as a place for other public meetings, (see 2 Sam. xix. 8.)

Ver. 2. *Then a lord, on whose hand the king leaned.*] Some think this was the messenger which the king sent to see execution done upon Elisha. Whosoever he was, he was greatly beloved by the king; for when he went abroad he leaned on him, which was a sign he was dear to him. For this state kings in those countries took upon them, to lean upon some favourite. As queen Esther, the Jews say, had a young lady on whom she rested her right hand, after the manner of the eastern kings. (See upon ver. 18.)

Answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might this thing be?] He was incredulous, and seems to have laughed at what the prophet said: looking upon it as unlikely, as that God would rain corn from heaven, as once he did manna.

And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not eat thereof.] A just punishment of his unbelief. And such will be the portion of those that believe not the promise of eternal life.

Ver. 3. *And there were four leprous men.*] The Jews will have these to have been Gehazi and his three sons; as they say in Gemara Sanhedrin, p. 416. edit. J. Coch.

At the entering of the gate.] Of the city of Samaria. From whence lepers were thrust out, as anciently out of the camp, (Lev. xiii. 46. xiv. 3. Numb. v. 23.) But they got as near the gate of the city as they could, for fear of the enemy. It appears by this that the Israelites observed the ceremonial law, though they were gross idolaters.

And they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die?] For the city could no longer supply their wants, having not sufficient for themselves.

Ver. 4. *If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there.*] Lepers might sometimes come into their cities, if there was a great occasion, keeping their due distance from every one; as appears, some think, from Gehazi's talking with the king himself, in the next chapter, (viii. 4.) but more plainly from this place. (See Grotius upon St. Luke vii. 12.)

And if we sit still here, we die also.] The besiegers having carried away all the food thereabout.

Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians.] Who possibly might take compassion upon miserable people, though enemies to them.

If they save us alive, we shall live.] They will not let us starve, but give us food.

And if they kill us, we shall but die.] They knew the worst that could happen to them was to lose their lives; which they should certainly do where they were; and therefore they chose an uncertain evil before a certain.

Ver. 5. *And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians.*] In the close of the evening, as appears from ver. 9. 12.

And when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria.] Unto their trenches.

Behold, there was no man there.] Not a man to guard them, nor so much as a centinel to watch them.

Ver. 6. *For the Lord had made the host of Syria to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host.*] By the ministry of angels he made such a rattling like that of chariots, and prancing of horses, that the Syrians imagined a great army was not only marching towards them, but ready to fall upon them.

And they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of Egypt, to come upon us.] Those people of the land of Canaan called Hittites, who dwelt about Hebron and Beer-sheba, were rooted out by the Israelites. But either some of them fled, and settled themselves in some neighbouring country, and there grew very populous; or else, we are to understand by the kings of the Hittites (as Josephus doth), the kings τῶν νήσων, *of the isles*, lib. ix. Antiq. cap. 2. As if *chittim* was the same with *cetim*, as all isles, he saith, are called. Every one of which had a king; as Egypt itself was then divided into several kingdoms; whose help, the Syrians thought, the king of Israel had procured.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore they arose, and fled in the twilight.*] Being but newly gone when the lepers came thither.

And they left their tents, and their horses, and their asses.] Asses were employed in war as well as horses; at least for carrying of their baggage. So Bochartus observes out of Pollux, χρεία δ' εἰς πολέμους σκευοφόρων μὴν ὄνων, *asses are of use in war to carry burdens.* There were several people, also, that fought upon asses, as others did upon horses; which he proves out of Ælian and other authors. (See Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 13.)

Even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.] They thought of saving nothing but themselves; their fear being so great, that they left all they had behind them.

Ver. 8. *And when these lepers came into the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it.*] They had satisfied their hunger in the first tent, so that they had nothing now to do, but to get what treasure they could find, and secure it.

Ver. 9. *Then they said one to another, We do not well.*] When they had both well refreshed and enriched themselves, and also secured their booty, they began to reflect upon the distress of their brethren; and condemned themselves for making no more haste to impart unto them the discovery they had made of the enemy's flight, and the plenty of all things they found in their camp.

This is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace.] Do not publish the goodness of God to us all.

If we tarry till the morning-light, some mischief will come upon us.] The Syrians might possibly recover out of their fright, and return when they saw none pursue them: or, some of them might be lurking thereabout, and come and kill them.

Now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household.] Impart this joyful news to the city. For every good citizen is in duty bound to discover every thing that is for the public safety.

Ver. 10. *So they came, and called to the porter of the city.*] To him that was the chief commander at the gate of Samaria.

And they told them.] Him and the guard that was with him.

Saying, We came into the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were.] Standing without any body in them; but full of provision and riches.

Ver. 11. *And he called the porters.*] Of the king's house.

And they told it to the king's house within.] Reported it in the court, till it came to the king's ears.

Ver. 12. *And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew you what the Syrians have done to us.*] What their stratagem is.

They know that we be hungry, therefore are they gone out of the camp, to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they shall come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.] His long sufferings had made him suspicious and cautious; and this was no improbable conjecture.

Ver. 13. *And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it; behold, I say, they are even as all*

the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed), and let us send and see.] He repeats his advice twice, that it might make the greater impression on the king. The sense of which is this: that they were almost consumed with hunger, and must shortly die, as all the horses and the Israelites had done, whom the famine had killed. Therefore, if these horses and men were taken by the Syrians, there would be no great loss of them; for they would be lost if they remained in Samaria.

Ver. 14. *They took therefore two chariot-horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.*] Whether they were gone or not. Some understand the horses of two chariots, which might in all be five: but it is more probable the king would venture no more than two horsemen, which he thought enough; who took two of the horses of his own chariots to make discovery.

Ver. 15. *And they went after them unto Jordan.*] Finding the camp empty, as the lepers had related, they pursued them as far as this river.

And, lo, all the way was full of garments, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste: and the messengers returned, and told the king.] The certainty of their flight to their own country.

Ver. 16. *And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the Lord.*] They found such store of provision in the tents of the Syrians, that it made this sudden change in the price of corn, according to Elisha's prediction.

Ver. 17. *And the king appointed the lord, on whom his hand leaned, to have the charge of the gate.*] To take care the people did not run out tumultuously, and leave the city empty; nor commit any disorder in the gate, being very eager to get victuals.

And the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died.] They came out in such crowds, and pressed upon him so hard, that they threw him down, and trod him to death.

As the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him.] See ver. 2.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to-morrow at this time in the gate of Samaria.*] By this it should seem there was a market kept in the gate of Samaria, where provisions were sold: and this lord was set to see good order kept, that they might neither take them by force, nor make any disturbance.

Ver. 19. *And the lord answered the man of God, saying, Now, behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.*] This part of the history is repeated, because it is a most remarkable fulfilling of a Divine prediction, whereby their belief of God's providence, ordering all things in a wonderful manner, was confirmed.

Ver. 20. *And so it fell out unto him: for the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died.*] Before he could enjoy the benefit of that plenty which God had bestowed upon them. Which did not at all alter their hearts; but they continued so obstinately deaf to all the prophet's admonitions and miraculous works, that in the next chapter we read of another long famine coming upon them.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *THEN spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he restored to life.*] See iv. 35, 36.

Saying, Arise, and go thou and thy household, and sojourn where thou canst sojourn.] In some country out of the land of Israel.

For the Lord hath called for a famine.] He had already ordered and decreed it.

And it shall come upon the land seven years.] Continue as long again as that in the days of Ahab, which lasted three years and a half. For as their iniquities increased, so did their punishments. Some of the Jews will have this to be the terrible famine spoken of by Joel the prophet; who they fancy lived in these days. And four years of it, they say, were caused by noxious creatures, which ate up all the fruits of the earth; and the other three by a drought, for want of rain.

Ver. 2. *And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God.*] Who by this monition hath left us an example of a grateful mind, which never thinks it can sufficiently requite benefits received; and she was abundantly satisfied, that what he predicted would certainly come to pass.

And she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.] This country was so near, that she might easily remove her family thither, and likewise hear sometimes from her own country. They were idolaters, indeed, but they suffered those that were not to live quietly among them, as their forefathers had done; who entertained Abraham and Isaac with much friendship, and did not trouble themselves about their religion; as Jacob, in like manner, sojourned a long time among idolaters in Mesopotamia. This shews the severity of God's anger against Israel, that he accounted them worse than the Philistines; who had plenty among them, when the Israelites were almost starved.

Ver. 3. *And it came to pass, at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house, and for her land.*] Which some think her kindred had seized, as if she had been dead. But it is more likely that she carried her relations along with her into the land of the Philistines; and it was the custom here, as in other places, that they who left their country had their goods confiscated. (See Grotius.)

Ver. 4. *And the king talked with Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.*] Some of the Jews think, that the king seeing Gehazi, asked him how he came to be leprous; and thereupon he related to him the history of Naaman the Syrian: which moved the king, either to satisfy his curiosity, or pass away the time pleasantly, to desire to hear all the other miracles Elisha had wrought; but he had no intention to be convinced by them, and turn to God. But then here arises a question, how Gehazi came to be admitted to speak with him; being a leper, who was not to come into any company, much less into the king's presence. This difficulty, some think, cannot be solved without affirming, that this fell out before Gehazi left Elisha's service; such ὑστερολογία, as the Greeks call

it, being frequent in Scripture; and the Jews, in Seder Olam Rabba, place this famine before the story of Naaman, which spoils what they say of the occasion of this discourse. But there is no need to assert this: for either Gehazi upon his repentance might be restored to health; or he might speak with the king at a due distance, as he walked in the field for his recreation; and desired to be entertained with a relation of Elisha's miracles. Thus Naaman conversed with Elisha's family at a distance; and the lepers called to our Saviour, as he went along the highway, (Luke xvii. 12.)

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he restored a dead body to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he restored to life, cried to the king for her house, and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life.*] By a wonderful providence she came to present her petition, and brought her son with her, in that very nick of time, when Gehazi was telling the story of his restoration to life; that the king might be the more fully satisfied of the truth of what he related from her own mouth.

Ver. 6. *And when the king asked the woman, she told him.*] That is, confirmed what Gehazi had said.

So the king appointed unto her a certain officer.] In the margin, *an eunuch;* that is, one of his bedchamber.

Saying, Restore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field.] Not only her house and land, but all the profits that had been made of them, and brought into his exchequer.

Since the day that she left the land, even till now.] This was a high act of justice, and an argument of some goodness left in a bad man, that he would not gain any thing by her calamity.

Ver. 7. *And Elisha went to Damascus.*] In the time of the famine, I suppose he went thither, as the woman did to the Philistines.

And Ben-hadad king of Syria was sick: and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither.] Who having cured Naaman, had raised a great opinion of his power with God, in that country.

Ver. 8. *And the king said unto Hazael.*] Who was the captain of his host.

Take a present in thy hand, and go meet the man of God, and inquire of the Lord by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?] They who consulted prophets, were wont always to carry a present with them, in token of the honour they paid them; as appears by many instances, particularly of Jeroboam's wife in this book. It is probable, also, he begged his prayers for his recovery, acknowledging him to be a man of God.

Ver. 9. *And Hazael went to meet him.*] As he was coming into Damascus.

And took a present with him of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him.] This was a very noble present; which, whether he accepted or refused, is not mentioned in the holy Scripture. Abarbinel thinks he accepted it, because nothing is said to the contrary, as there is in the case of Naaman, who presented him with silver, and gold, and raiment, and such-like things of value. Whereas this was only a provision of food, such as bread, and wine, and fruit, and fowl; which was a fit present for him to make to the prophet, who might be presumed to be weary with his journey, and as fit for him to accept for his refreshment.

Ver. 10. *And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover; howbeit, the Lord hath shewed me that he shall certainly die.*] His disease was not of such a nature as would endanger his life, if he did not lose it by some other means; as the prophet foresaw he would. For Josephus saith, his disease was only a deep melancholy, into which he fell upon the shameful flight of his army, when no enemy was near them. This affected his body, and took away his appetite; but might have been cured.

Ver. 11. *And he settled his countenance steadfastly, until he was ashamed; and the man of God wept.*] The most simple sense is, He looked upon Hazael so long, with a settled countenance, that Hazael was ashamed, and he himself fell a weeping. Perhaps he fastened his eyes upon him as a man astonished, and that in an ecstacy saw some dreadful thing represented to him. Others interpret it, he turned away his face on one side, until he was ashamed, because he wept; which he would not have had Hazael seen. Others, he settled his countenance, not to weep; but he could not refrain from tears.

Ver. 12. *And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.*] This last expresses the highest degree of barbarous cruelty; for which there was no occasion, if he did but kill the women with child, for the child in the womb would die with them, without ripping them up. Therefore a late learned man, looking on this as a thing unheard of, will have the word *haroth*, not to signify women with child, but castles or fortified places which he should demolish: though he cannot but acknowledge, that the cutting up women very naturally follows *slaying their young men, and dashing their children*, which goes just before. And he should have taken notice, that the very first evil he mentions that Hazael should do to them, is *setting their strong holds on fire.* (Gousset Comment. Linguæ Hebraicæ, p. 216.)

Ver. 13. *And Hazael said, But what! is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?*] This is commonly understood as a disclaiming of such barbarity, which he abhorred as a beastly thing. But the words in the Hebrew sound otherways, being a submissive form of speech, wherein the speaker undervalues and debases himself, as appears from 1 Sam. xxiv. 15. 2 Sam. ix. 8. and run thus; *But what is thy servant? a dog.* As much as to say, A mean and contemptible creature, who can never have power to do such great things; which none but a prince can do.

And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.] This was as much as declaring and appointing him king of Syria: which Elijah ordered him to do; and was as much as if he had anointed him. (See 1 Kings xix. 15.)

Ver. 14. *So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master, who said to him, What saith Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that thou shouldest surely recover.*] He told him only the first part of his answer, and that not sincerely, as he intended. For he did not say he *should* surely recover, but that he *might* recover; his disease being in itself not mortal.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass on the morrow.*] His eager desire to reign would not suffer him to expect his master's death, but he made haste to dispatch him the very next morning after he came from Elisha.

That he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water.] The covering of his bed, which (as many think) was made of goats' hair; or, some other thick cloth, that would suck up a great deal of water.

And spread it upon his face, so that he died.] He being feverish (as Josephus thinks) and complaining of heat, Hazael pretended to cool him by this means; but indeed choked him; by thrusting the cloth, perhaps, into his mouth: so that he could make no noise, nor did any sign of violence remain upon his body; but the murder was committed so secretly, that it was thought he died a natural death. But nothing can be concealed from God, who took care to have the villany recorded to posterity, by revealing it to his prophet.

And Hazael reigned in his stead.] Being in great favour with the people, especially with the soldiery; and Ben-hadad, it is likely, leaving no son.

Ver. 16. *And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign.*] All the seeming contradictions between this verse and chap. i. 17. and chap. iii. 1. are thus briefly reconciled by Huetius:—Jehoram beginning to reign with his father Jehoshaphat in his seventeenth year, and Joram king of Israel in his eighteenth, the first year of Joram king of Israel will fall out in the second year of Jehoram, king of Judah: whose father dying in the twenty-second year of his reign, Jehoram, king of Judah, began to reign alone in the fifth year of Joram king of Israel. (See Demonstr. Evang. propos. iv. p. 204.)

Ver. 17. *Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.*] Part of which was with his father, as I now observed, and the rest by himself. Dr. Lightfoot observing three dates of the beginning of his reign, gives this account of it:—The *first* was when he was made viceroy with his father, at the time he went out of the land for the recovery of Ramoth-Gilead. The *second* was when his father went upon his expedition with Jehoram, king of Israel, against Moab (chap. iii. of this book), from which time, he thinks, the beginning of his reign is fixed here, and in 2 Chron. xxi. 20. For after this time, Jehoshaphat was little at Jerusalem, but abroad either in his own land (which he perambulated that he might reduce the people to the true religion), or in Moab, to bring them into subjection, (2 Chron. xix. 20.) And *lastly*, at his father's death he was completely king of Judah, 2 Chron. xxi. 1. (See Harm. of the Evang. Prolegom. sect. 6.) So that the clearest solution of the difficulty mentioned in the foregoing verse is this (as Dr. Alix, a great man in this learning, and all others, hath observed to me), that Joram had three beginnings of his reign. One in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, when his father designed him to be king; the second in the twenty-third year of his father, when he was crowned; and the last when his father (after he had reigned five-and-twenty years) died; and he reigned alone a little more than four years. Thus Solomon was made king before his father died, and again after his death, as Abarbinel observes. (See 1 Kings ii. 12.)

Ver. 18. *And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab; for the daughter of Ahab was his wife.*] *viz.* Athaliah, ver. 26.

And he did evil in the sight of the Lord.] Being seduced by his wife to forsake the religion of his pious father and grandfather. Thus Ahab himself was led to the worship of Baal by his wife Jezebel. So dangerous it is to marry with idolaters; for this wife of Jehoram, in all likelihood, was the author of that cruel policy of murdering all his brethren, for fear they should disturb him in his kingdom. (2 Chron. xxi. 2—4.)

Ver. 19. *Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake.*] Though he punished them severely, (see 2 Chron. xxi. 14—17, &c.) yet he would not cut them all off, but had patience with them a long time, upon the account of that excellent servant of his, king David; unto whom he had made a promise, as it here follows, and to his seed after him, of a perpetual kingdom.

As he promised him, to give him always a light, and to his children.] A succession in this dignity (as I have expounded it before), which was completed in the Messiah, whose kingdom shall have no end.

Ver. 20. *In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themselves.*] After they had been subject to Judah a hundred and fifty years, ever since the time of David, who subdued that country. This was a great dishonour to him; but by this means the prophecy of Isaac was fulfilled. (Gen. xxvii. 40.)

Ver. 21. *So Joram went over to Zair.*] This word *Zair* is written differently from *Seir;* and therefore doth not signify any part of the country of Edom; but some city near to it.

And all the chariots with him.] With as great a force as he could raise, to reduce them to obedience.

And he rose by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him about.] The Edomites were not wanting in their own defence, but had surrounded him with an army; through which he broke in the night, and routed them.

And the captains of the chariots: and the people fled into their tents.] To their own camp; where, it is likely, they were intrenched.

Ver. 22. *Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah.*] Notwithstanding this victory, they could not recover their dominion over this country; but Edom continued a kingdom under its own king.

Unto this day.] When this book was written, which was not long after this revolt. And they were not brought again under the power of the Jews till after the captivity of Babylon: when Hyrcanus the son of Simon conquered them, and they received circumcision; and came to have a free commerce with the Jews. Insomuch that Herod the son of Antipater, who was an Edomite, obtained the kingdom of Judea; and endeavoured to pass for a Jew, because they had received circumcision under Hyrcanus.

Then Libnah revolted at the same time.] Which was the reason, perhaps, why he could not pursue his victory over the Edomites, and regain their country; because he had enough to do at home, there being a defection of his own subjects from him. For this was a considerable city in the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 42.) and belonged to the priests, (Josh. xxi. 13.) Which example, it is likely, other neighbouring cities followed. For the reason why they revolted, was because he attempted to set up his idolatrous worship

among them; contrary to the law of God and of the kingdom. (See 2 Chron. xxi. 10, 11.)

Ver. 23. *And the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] See 1 Kings xi. 41.

Ver. 24. *And Joram slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David.*] But not in the sepulchre of the kings, as we read 2 Chron. xxi. 20.

And Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

Ver. 25. *In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab, did Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign.*] In the conclusion of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth: as appears from ix. 29.

Ver. 26. *Twenty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem.*] But in 2 Chron. xxii. 2. it is said, he was forty-two years old when he began to reign: which seeming contradiction was anciently solved in this manner (by the author of Seder Olam Rabba, whom a great many Jewish and Christian writers follow): that the forty-two years mentioned in the book of Chronicles are not to be computed from the birth of Ahaziah, but from the time of the decree of cutting off the house of Omri: which was in the thirty-first year of Asa, when Omri began to reign, who reigned six years, and after him Ahab twenty and two; and Ahaziah his son two years, and Joram twelve: all which put together make forty-two years. This Dr. Lightfoot hath expressed more plainly thus: "The forty-two years have not relation to the age of Ahaziah, but to the kingdom of the house of Omri. And therefore the words of the original are not to be translated, *Ahaziah was forty-two years old;* but *Ahaziah was the son of forty-two years,* as Seder Olam translates it. And the reason why his reign is thus differently set down from all other kings of Judah is, because he was a branch of the house of Omri by his mother's side, (ver. 18.) and therefore was fit to be reckoned not by the line of the kings of Judah, but by the house of Omri and Ahab." But there is an easier and more likely reconciliation of these two places, by Kimchi, Abarbinel, and others, which is, that Joram being invaded by the Arabians, and also diseased, made his son Ahaziah king, together with himself, when he was forty-two years old. In this condition things remained twenty years; and then his father dying, they made him king alone, when he was forty-two years old: thus a great number of Christian interpreters also understand it. But then they suppose that Jehoram being thirty-two years old when he began to reign, reigned eight years (as it is said ver. 17.) after his father's death, that is, happily and prosperously; but after that, falling into the hands of the Arabians, and growing sickly, he reigned ingloriously twenty years, till he was sixty years old, his son administering affairs all this time for him: but since the LXX. in the book of Chronicles read not forty-two, but twenty, many learned and good men think the ancient Hebrew copies agreed thereunto: but by the carelessness of transcribers, forty came in instead of twenty. Which it is better they think to acknowledge plainly, than to use forced and constrained interpretations, as the preceding seem to them to be. Perizonius hath lately censured them all, in these words, "Si quid ego video aut intelligo, multo rectius divinitati et auctoritati Scripturæ S. consulant, qui vitium istic librariorum in re per se levi agnoscunt, quam qui difficultatem volunt tollere, contortis, violentis, et absonis interpretationibus: quæ ab ipsa Scripturæ locutione, et clarissima Syntaxi longissime recedunt," &c. And then instances in this very place, and the foregoing expressions of it. (Prefat. in Ælian. Var. Histor. * * * * 2.)

And his mother's name was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri king of Israel.] So she is called also in 2 Chron. xxii. 2. that is, Omri's grand-daughter; who are often called daughters, as I have before observed. For it is certain Athaliah was the daughter of Ahab; but perhaps educated by Omri his father, and upon that account may be called his daughter. He was the youngest son of Jehoram, all whose other children and his wives were carried away by the Philistines and Arabians, when they made an inroad upon Judah, 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17. where he is called Jehoahaz.

Ver. 27. *And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the Lord, as did the house of Ahab.*] Not only worshipped the calves, but also Baal.

For he was the son-in-law of the house of Ahab.] And so corrupted in his religion, by the affinity he made with that wicked family. Into which Jehoshaphat married his son, hoping, perhaps, to unite thereby the two kingdoms again: but it proved the ruin of his family; as appears by the book of Chronicles.

Ver. 28. *And he went with Joram the son of Ahab to the war against Hazael king of Syria in Ramoth-Gilead.*] Just as Jehoshaphat went with Ahab to the same place: which Joram, it seems, endeavoured to recover to Israel, as his father had done.

And the Syrians wounded Joram.] Not mortally, as they did Ahab: but so, that he was fain to leave the field to be cured of his wounds in Jezreel.

Ver. 29. *And king Joram went back to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds the Syrians had given him in Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria.*] Leaving his army at Ramoth-Gilead.

And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.] By this means the secret providence of God so ordered it, that they were both killed by Jehu, as a punishment of their idolatry,

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets.*] The prophet Elijah was commanded to do this which Elisha was now about to do; but Ahab's humiliation had moved God to defer the judgment pronounced upon him and his family; and so the execution of it was left to Elisha, who did not go himself because he was better known, and his business required secrecy; or, being old, he was unfit for such a journey: for the last time we read of him he was at Damascus. This young man, who was now attending him, the Jews in Seder Olam Rabba say, was Jonah the son of Amittai: which is the opinion also of Abarbinel, and other Hebrew doctors.

And said, Gird up thy loins.] Which implies he was to make expedition, and dispatch his business before it could be discovered.

And take this box of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-

Gilead.] Where Joram had left his army; and, as some think, they had now possessed themselves of it.

Ver. 2. *And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi.*] Who some think was left commander-in-chief of the king's army.

And make him rise up from among his brethren.] From the other officers of the army, (ver. 5.)

And carry him to an inner chamber.] Lest the rest of the captains should make any opposition, and apprehend him.

Ver. 3. *Then take the box of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel.*] The Jews think none of the kings of Israel were anointed, but only those of the house of David: nor all they neither, but only when there was a question about the succession. For had it not been for the faction of Adonijah, there had been no need of Solomon's unction. For which reason Jehu was anointed, because the succession to the kingdom of Israel was to be translated out of the right line of the family of Ahab unto another family, which had no right to the kingdom, but merely by this appointment of God: who not only by his word, but by this solemn rite, constituted him king of Israel.

Then open the door and flee, and tarry not.] Lest by any means what he had done should be discovered, and they might lay hold on him as a traitor.

Ver. 4. *So the young man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-Gilead.*] This argued a great faith in this young prophet, that he undertook so readily the execution of this command. For there was no small danger to anoint a new king; as Elisha himself plainly suggests; when he bade him flee away, as fast as he could, as soon as he had done.

Ver. 5. *And when he came, the captains of the host were sitting.*] In council, I suppose, how to carry on the war, or about some other business. Though some fancy they were at dinner.

And he said, I have an errand to thee, O captain.] Looking upon Jehu.

And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain.] This shews that Jehu was the head of them, who asked the question in the name of the rest.

Ver. 6. *And he arose, and went into the house.*] Into a private room, (ver. 2.)

And he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him.] The oil being poured on his head, the Jews say he anointed him with it (as the manner was) in the form of a crown: in token that he was the head of the people, and had the supreme power over them committed to him.

Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the Lord, even over Israel.] They were still the people of the Lord by right and by profession, though they worshipped other gods with him. And it belonged to him to appoint what ruler he pleased over them; which he did by his prophet. Without which authority, if Jehu had taken the government upon him, he had been an usurper.

Ver. 7. *And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master.*] Now he acquaints him what God required of him upon this promotion.

That I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel.] To execute God's judgment on the house of Ahab, which he pronounced long ago, for their cruel murders of his prophets, and other good men in Israel; particularly Naboth. In this Jehu acted not out of a spirit of private revenge, for he had no quarrel with the house of Ahab, but as God's minister, who by his prophet authorized him to do what follows.

Ver. 8. *For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; and I will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel.*] See upon 1 Kings xxi. 21.

Ver. 9. *And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah.*] See 1 Kings xiv. 10. xvi. 3.

Ver. 10. *And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her.*] See 1 Kings xxi. 23.

And he opened the door, and fled.] See ver. 3.

Ver. 11. *Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord.*] Returned to the council-chamber, where they continued sitting, (ver. 5.)

And one said unto him, Is all well?] They seeing the prophet look like a man in a fright, thought he brought some bad news.

Wherefore came this mad fellow unto thee?] So they call him, because he came in so abruptly upon them, when they were sitting in council; and because he fled away so hastily; and because they observed some motions in him which argued great disturbance. Though some think they, being profane idolaters, spake these words in scorn and contempt.

And he said unto them, Ye know the man, and his communication.] They might know him to be a prophet by his habit, and by his way of speaking, as one that had authority. And prophets they knew commonly came to speak something concerning religion. By which general answer he thought to have satisfied them, and put by their further inquiry, that he might take time to deliberate of the most opportune season to declare this message of God to him.

Ver. 12. *And they said, It is false, tell us now.*] They were confident he came about some matter of great importance, which he seeming unwilling to discover, they pressed him the harder to tell truth.

And he said, Thus and thus spake he unto me, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel.] It is likely the spirit of courage, as well as of prudence, entered into Jehu, when he was anointed, so that he took heart to tell them boldly what the prophet had said. And the oil perhaps was still fresh upon his head, wherewith he anointed him, which he shewed to them.

Ver. 13. *And they hasted.*] God also moved the hearts of all the captains, immediately, without any consultation, to acknowledge him for their king.

And took every man his garment, and put it under him.] They made a kind of throne of their very garments, and raised him up above the rest of the company.

Upon the top of the stairs.] They did not stay till they came down into the street, but forthwith, upon the very top of the stairs of the place where they were sitting, acknowledged him for their sovereign, by spreading their garments under his feet, to tread upon. So De Dieu understands the words. There is a late author who guesses these were winding-stairs in a turret, on the top of which

tower they placed Jehu, that all the people might see him, and hear him proclaimed their king. (Gousset in his Comment. Linguæ Hebraicæ, p. 173.)

And blew with the trumpet, saying, Jehu is king.] They proclaimed him to be appointed by God to be king of Israel, which used to be done by the sound of the trumpet. (1 Kings i. 32.)

Ver. 14. *So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against Joram.*] Contrived, with the rest of the captains that commanded the army, how to destroy Joram. For which they had the fairer opportunity, because he was gone from the army to Jezreel, as it here follows.

(Now Joram had kept Ramoth-Gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Syria.] That is, kept a strong garrison there, upon the frontiers of his kingdom; and left his army also thereabout (for they are meant by *all Israel),* for fear Hazael should make any new attempt to recover it.

Ver. 15. *But king Joram was returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria).*] This was said before, but here repeated, to shew how Jehu came to effect his design so easily. Which was because Joram was absent from his army: among whom if he had continued, it is likely, some of them, if not all, would have adhered to him, and fought for him.

And Jehu said, If it be your minds.] If they were all agreed that he should be their king.

Then let none go forth nor escape out of the city.] This shews that Ramoth-Gilead was in the possession of the Israelites. From whence he would have none to be sent, nor suffered to go forth, but the gates be narrowly watched.

To go to tell it in Jezreel.] For he knew that secrecy and speed were necessary to the execution of such great designs as he had in hand.

Ver. 16. *And Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel (for Joram lay there). And Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram.*] This is repeated, to shew that Joram continued at Jezreel, whither he went from Ramoth: and that Ahaziah, who came to visit him, continued also with him.

Ver. 17. *And there stood a watchman on the tower of Jezreel.*] These watchmen seem to have been set on high places, in time of peace, as well as war, wheresoever the king was, that he might not be surprised. For David at Jerusalem was admonished by the watchman that his sons were safe, when he feared they had been lost, (2 Sam. xiii. 34.) as afterward, that news was coming from the army that fought against Absalom, (xviii. 24, 25.)

And he spied the company of Jehu as they came, and said, I see a company.] A troop, or squadron of horse, as we now speak.

And Joram said, Take a horseman, and send to meet them, and say, Is it peace?] He was afraid the Syrians had got the better of his army; or some more of his subjects had revolted, as Libnah had done.

Ver. 18. *So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.*] The messenger spake in the king's name; but he spake to a greater king, who bade him not to trouble himself about peace or war, but follow him. Which he durst not refuse, seeing such a company of soldiers with Jehu.

And the watchman said, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again.] Which put them in doubt what to think.

Ver. 19. *And he sent out a second on horseback, which came unto them, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.*] To the same question the same answer was returned; that it did not concern him, whether they were friends or enemies; but his safest way was to follow Jehu.

Ver. 20. *And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi.*] Who was his grandfather, but a more eminent person, it is likely, than Jehoshaphat his father; and so he was commonly called his son.

For he driveth furiously.] He was noted, it seems, for fierceness and eagerness in pursuing his designs. But the Chaldee paraphrast takes it quite otherwise, that *he drove slowly;* as if he would entice Joram to come out of the city and meet him, having no mind to engage in an assault or siege of Jezreel.

Ver. 21. *And Joram said, Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And Joram king of Israel, and Ahaziah king of Judah, went out each in his chariot, and they went out against Jehu.*] Not to fight him, but to meet him before he came to the city, that if there was any sedition he might compose it by his authority; or, perhaps, in honour of Jehu, who he saw would deliver the news himself, and not entrust a messenger with it.

And met him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.] By a special providence of God, which brought them together in that place.

Ver. 22. *And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu?*] Seeing him look sternly, I suppose, he began to suspect some danger.

And he answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel, and her witchcrafts, are so many?] He means her idolatries, wherewith she bewitched the people, still continued, and were multiplied. Some think, indeed, that she added corporal fornication to her spiritual, and used evil arts to provoke men to filthy lusts. And, indeed, all manner of lewdness was wont to accompany idolatry; and in Rev. ii. 20. they who are compared to Jezebel are said to entice Christians to fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols; unless by fornication we there understand idolatry, and by eating things sacrificed to idols, having communion with idolaters.

Ver. 23. *Joram turned his hands.*] The hand of him that drove the chariot.

And fled.] Towards Jezreel; where if he had kept, and inquired what Jehu came for, he might have defended himself for some time against him.

And said to Ahaziah, There is treachery, O Ahaziah!] Which he discovered too late, having no forces to resist those of Jehu.

Ver. 24. *And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms.*] Or shoulders; it being, I suppose, a chariot open behind.

And the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot.] God so ordered it, that he shot him quite through the heart, so that he died immediately.

Ver. 25. *Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain, Take him, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite.*] Part of which Ahab had made a garden; but the rest remained a field.

For remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father.] With the rest of his guard, when he went to take possession of Naboth's vineyard. In the Hebrew the words are exactly thus: *Remember, thou and I were among those who rode two and two together after Ahab,* &c. That is, he was attended by his guard, who were wont to ride in pairs, two and two, and Jehu and Bidkar rode at that time together, and heard Elijah's words.

The Lord laid this burden upon him.] This punishment, which is frequently by the prophets called *a burden*, Isa. xiii. 1, &c. was denounced against Ahab, and extended to his son, 1 Kings xxi. 19. where these very words are not recorded; but Elijah said more than is there set down, which Jehu well remembered.

Ver. 26. *Surely, I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the Lord.*] Some think that Jezebel contrived the death of Naboth's sons, together with their father, that they might lay no claim to the possession of their father. But these words may signify no more (as Grotius and others have observed) than the poverty to which they were reduced. For all punishments and miseries are called *blood* among the Hebrews; (Lev. xvii. 4.) and to take away their estate, upon which they should have lived, was in effect to take away their blood, in which is the life of every creature; as we say now of grievous oppressors, that they suck the blood of others; and commonly call them blood-suckers.

And I will requite it in this plat, saith the Lord. Now therefore take and cast him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the Lord.] Without any burial; that, according to the prophecy, he might be eaten by the fowls of the air, (1 Kings xxi. 24.)

Ver. 27. *But when Ahaziah king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden-house.*] Which was built upon part of Naboth's vineyard.

And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. And they did so, at the going up to Gur, which is by Ibleam: and he fled to Megiddo.] He could not get to his own country, and so sheltered himself at Megiddo, which was not far from Samaria, whither his servants carried him, as a safer place (for he was not mortally wounded), and there he hid himself for fear of Jehu, as we read 2 Chron. xxii. 9.

And he died there.] Not at Megiddo; but being searched for and taken in Samaria, he was brought to Jehu at Jezreel, where he commanded him to be slain. Which seems to be beyond his commission; but as he was an idolater, so he was of the bloody house of Ahab by his mother's side, who was Ahab's daughter: (viii. 18.) and his destruction was of God, (as the author of the second book of Chronicles observes, xxii. 7.) who prompted Jehu thus to understand his command. Thus Abarbinel understands those words, *he died there.* Not in Megiddo, mentioned before, but in that execution of God's judgments on the house of Ahab.

Ver. 28. *And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers, in the city of David.*] Which honour Jehu permitted to be done him, because he was descended from the good prince Jehoshaphat. (See 2 Chron. xxii. 9.)

Ver. 29. *And in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.*] See the foregoing chapter, ver. 25.

Ver. 30. *And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window.*] In the Hebrew it is, *she put her eyes in paint;* that is, in *stibium,* which made the eyes look black, and was accounted beautiful; and also dilated the eyebrows, and made the eyes appear big; which, in some countries, was also thought very amiable. (See Grotius.) This was not intended to tempt Jehu with her beauty; but to keep up her dignity and state to the very last: for she was extremely proud.

Ver. 31. *And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?*] She thought, perhaps, he would not meddle with a woman; and therefore took upon her to rebuke and upbraid him with what he had done against her son; bidding him remember what became of Zimri, who was cut off by Omri his father-in-law, the founder of Ahab's family.

Ver. 32. *And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side, who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs.*] Who, according to the custom of the eastern countries, were wont to attend upon queens in their chambers.

Ver. 33. *And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down.*] See how suddenly courtiers change with the fortune of their master.

And some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trod her under foot.] With his horses. This some of the Jewish doctors, particularly Ralbag and Kimchi, look upon as a punishment, according to the *lex talionis, like for like.* As she had done, so she suffered. For she caused Naboth to be stoned; and now she was condemned to be stoned herself: for there were two ways of stoning; either by throwing stones at malefactors, till they had knocked them down and killed them; or by throwing them down upon the stones from a high place, and breaking them to pieces. As Amaziah did with the captives he took of Mount Seir, 2 Chron. xxv. 12. (See Selden, lib. i. de Synedriis, cap. 5. p. 76, &c.)

Ver. 34. *And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her.*] That is, go and take care of her body, to see it decently buried.

For she is a king's daughter.] And was also the wife and the mother of a king, which moved him to have this regard to her, as all men naturally have to royal dignity; forgetting, in the mean time, what Elijah had prophesied against her in his hearing. Which he might easily do when he was merry, it is like, with eating and drinking liberally.

Ver. 35. *And they went out to bury her; but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands.*] All the rest being eaten by the dogs. For it is probable, when the horsemen were gone, who trod her under foot, the footmen stripped her, and left her naked in her own blood; exposed to the hungry dogs, that came out of the city and devoured her.

Ver. 36. *Wherefore they came again, and told him: and he said, This is the word of the Lord, which he spake by his*

servant Elijah the prophet.] Which he now called to mind, as he did his prophecy concerning Ahab and his sons.

Saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel.] See 1 Kings xxi. 23.

Ver. 37. *And the carcass of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field, in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel.*] No memory of her, nothing whereby to know there had been such a woman as Jezebel, should remain of her; suppose a picture, or effigies, to which men might point, and say, This is Jezebel. In our language, perhaps we should have said, *they shall not say, Here lies Jezebel:* for no monument was made for her, she having no sepulchre but in the belly of dogs. These words are not mentioned in 1 Kings xxi. being sufficiently included in what is there recorded: but perfectly remembered by Jehu; who now more largely recites the words of Elijah.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND Ahab had seventy sons.*] It is likely that grandsons are comprehended under the name of *sons*, as is usual in Scripture; though, by several wives, he might have as many sons as Gideon had.

In Samaria.] Unto which place the ruler of Jezreel had carried them, when they heard how Jehu had killed Joram; for fear they should fall into his hands: or, perhaps, during the war with Syria, their father had sent them thither, as a place of security (it being a strong city), in case of any ill accident that might happen.

And Jehu wrote letters, to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel.] The chief noblemen of the kingdom, who, I suppose, were fled thither with the king's sons; and perhaps were met to deliberate what to do in this juncture, whether or not to set up one of Ahab's sons to be their king.

And to the elders.] The principal persons in Samaria.

And to those who brought up Ahab's children, saying.] These are called *omanim (nourishers)*, because they had the care of his children from their infancy, and were now their *governors*, as we call them; who were of his kindred, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 2. *Now, as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons are with you, and there are with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour;*

Ver. 3. *Look even out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house.*] This he said, because, perhaps, he heard they were consulting about a successor to Ahab. Or rather, he insults over them, and denounces war against them with scorn and derision, being secure of the event, that they were not able to oppose him.

Ver. 4. *But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, two kings stood not before him: how then shall we stand?*] They were timorous persons, bred up it is likely in ease and delicacy. For this argument had little in it; those two kings being unarmed, without any forces; which they were furnished withal to defend themselves, and their master's sons.

Ver. 5. *And he that was over the house.*] The high steward, as we call him, of the king's household.

And he that was over the city.] The governor of the city, who had all the soldiers under his command.

And the elders, and the bringers up of the king's children.] All the senators, and the great men that were entrusted with the care of the king's children.

Sent to Jehu, saying, We are thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou that which is good in thine eyes.] They basely submit to his pleasure, without making any composition: which it is likely they thought it to no purpose to endeavour, and did not expect such rigorous usage from him.

Ver. 6. *Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye be mine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take the heads of your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time (now the king's sons, being seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, which brought them up).*] This is repeated, to shew the vile spirit of these great men; that could destroy so many royal persons, of whom they had the care, and who had offended nobody.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets.*] They seem not to have deliberated about the matter, though in itself so horrid; but instantly obeyed him.

And sent him them to Jezreel.] Following after themselves, as appears from ver. 11. expecting, perhaps, to be thanked for what they had so readily done; but, quite contrary, came to the same miserable end.

Ver. 8. *And there came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in two heaps at the entering of the gate until the morning.*] The gate was the place of public concourse for judgment, and other business; so that the laying them there was to expose them to public view, that every one might know there was none of Ahab's posterity left to reign over them.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people.*] Who were there gathered together, gazing upon this amazing sight.

Ye be righteous.] Be not troubled; for none of you are to blame in all this.

Behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him; but who slew all these?] If any were guilty, he acknowledges it was himself. But since they had slain so many, why should he be to blame for slaying one? since he had authority from God for what he did.

Ver. 10. *Know now, that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the Lord, which the Lord spake concerning the house of Ahab.*] In these words he throws all the guilt from off himself; being only God's instrument to punish the house of Ahab, as he had foretold by Elijah. And therefore he resolved to proceed, till he had utterly extirpated all that depended on him.

For the Lord hath done.] As if he had said, This is not my doing, but the Lord's: whose command I obey.

That which he spake by his servant Elijah.] He mentions what he denounced, rather than what Elisha commanded, (ix. 8.) because the words of Elijah were publicly known; whereas Elisha's were spoken in private, and not by himself, but by one of the sons of the prophets, (ix. 7—9.)

Ver. 11. *So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men.*] Whom he had advanced to great offices, or dignities.

And his kinsfolks.] All that had any relation to him.

And his priests.] Who had served him in his idolatrous worship, and confirmed him in it.

Until he left him none remaining.] In that place: but there were still some left in Samaria, (ver. 17.)

Ver. 12. *And he arose and departed, and came to Samaria.*] Having finished his work in Jezreel, he went to prosecute it in the chief city of the kingdom; which most needed reformation.

And as he was at the shearing-house in the way.] In the Hebrew the words are, *in the house of the shepherds' binding.* For they bound the feet of their sheep when they sheared them; and this was the place where the shepherds of Samaria were wont to do it.

Ver. 13. *Jehu met with the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who are ye? And they answered, We are the brethren of Ahaziah, and we are going to salute the children of the king, and the children of the queen.*] That is, the children of Joram, and the children of Jezebel. But the *brethren of Ahaziah* were carried captive before this, as we read 2 Chron. xxi. 17. therefore by *brethren* we must understand his brother's sons, as it is explained in 2 Chron. xxii. 8.

Ver. 14. *And he said, Take them alive. And they took them, and he slew them at the pit of the shearing-house, even two-and-forty men; neither left he any of them.*] They were allied to the family of Ahab by the mother's side, (viii. 18.) and therefore he thought his commission (ix. 8, 9.) extended thus far; being afraid, also, it is likely, that they might, if they lived, be avenged of him for the death of Joram, Ahaziah, Jezebel, and their children, whom they were going to see.

Ver. 15. *And when he was departed thence, he lighted upon Jehonadab the son of Rechab, coming to meet him.*] A very pious and prudent person, as appears by his precepts to his sons, in the thirty-fifth of Jeremiah. Who hearing what Jehu had done, came, I suppose, to congratulate with him his happiness in fulfilling God's commands; and to encourage him in his proceedings to destroy idolatry. Scaliger, indeed, in his Elench. Trihæres. cap. 24. against Serrarius, endeavours to prove that this Jehonadab was not he that gave those precepts to his sons; but another in the days of Jeremiah: for it is not likely, he thinks, that a man addicted to such a quiet life as he instituted would come to meet Jehu; and therefore this was some military person of great note, who Jehu thought might be serviceable to him. But this is a weak argument; for why might not Jonadab, though he loved retirement, come to congratulate Jehu's zeal against idolatry, and Jehu be glad of such a man's company, whose known piety would gain him greater respect than the attendance of any great captain could procure him?

And he saluted him.] Some think that Jehonadab saluted Jehu, and spake the words following. But it seems plain to me that they are the words of Jehu, who saluted him, as soon as he saw him, and inquired of his welfare.

And said, Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?] The king professed great love to him, and asked him if he loved him as sincerely, and approved his actions, as he did Jehonadab's institutions.

And Jehonadab answered, It is.] The expression is double in the Hebrew, *Yes, yes;* to signify a vehement affection. Or, as a late learned writer (Gousset, in his Comment. Hebr. Linguæ) will have it, the former is spoken by Jehonadab, who said *It is;* and the other by Jehu, who answered, *Is it? then give me thy hand,* &c.

If it be, give me thine hand.] In token of friendship (Gal. ii. 9.) and of fidelity: as it was among the Romans, it appears by many places in Virgil: for instance, Æneid. iii.

"Ipse pater dextram Anchises, haud multa moratus,
Dat juveni, atque animum præsenti pignore firmat."

And he gave him his hand, and he took him up to him into his chariot.] Which was a great honour, and a token of high esteem, to ride with the king in the same chariot.

Ver. 16. *And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord.*] To vindicate his honour, and fulfil his commands.

So they made him ride in his chariot.] He speaks in the plural number *(they made him)*, because the servants, I suppose, opened the door, and helped him up in the chariot, when Jehu gave him his hand.

Ver. 17. *And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him.*] Utterly rooted out his family.

According to the saying of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.] This is mentioned again; both to shew his warrant for what he did, and his exactness in fulfilling God's command.

Ver. 18. *And Jehu gathered all the people together.*] That is, all the heads of them, who represented the rest.

And said unto them, Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu shall serve him much.] His zeal for the Lord exceeded its bounds; for he ought not to have taken any indirect course to fulfil his will: as he did in counterfeiting as much zeal for Baal, as he professed to Jehonadab he had for the Lord. God doth not stand in need of any man's sin to compass his ends: but Jehu made bold to dissemble deeply for the service of God; in which he cannot be excused.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests, let none be wanting.*] By *servants* he doth not here mean his worshippers; but, being joined with *prophets* and *priests*, they signified some that *ministered* with the priests in the worship of Baal: like the Levites among the people of God.

For I have a great sacrifice to do to Baal.] He might possibly mean a sacrifice not of beasts, but of men; even of all the worshippers of Baal; but he intended they should understand him otherwise, and therefore these words were spoken to deceive.

Whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live.] He thought that some, who considered what slaughter he had made of the family of Ahab (who introduced the worship of Baal, whom he pretended more highly to honour than Ahab had done), might suspect his design; and therefore he terrifies them with the fear of death, if they did not come to this great sacrifice.

But Jehu did it in subtilty, that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal.] By destroying his prophets, and ministers, and priests; who being all cut off, his worship would fall to the ground. But the next verses extend this further, to all the worshippers of Baal in the whole country.

Ver. 20. *And Jehu said, Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed it.*] The last day of the feast of tabernacles, the great day of the feast, is called by this

name of *Atzarah;* which we translate a *solemn assembly:* when it was not lawful to do any servile work, but wholly attend to the service of God, (Lev. xxiii. 36.) Such a day he now caused to be *sanctified* (as the word is in the Hebrew) for the service of Baal.

Ver. 21. *And Jehu sent through all Israel.*] To give notice of this great feast; and to require every one, upon pain of death, to be present at it.

And all the worshippers of Baal came, and there was not a man left that came not. And they came into the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was full, from one end to another.] If this be meant of the whole number of Baalites throughout the kingdom, it seems scarce credible that the temple of Baal should be so large as to hold them all. But two things are to be considered; first, that this house or temple comprehended all the outward courts of it (as it did at the temple of Jerusalem), which were very spacious; and secondly, the number of his worshippers was much diminished since the death of Ahab: for Jehoram his successor had no great kindness for the worship of Baal, (iii. 2.) and men are apt to follow the example of their king. Besides, it is likely, Hazael king of Syria had destroyed many of them in his wars with Israel.

Ver. 22. *And he said to him that was over the vestry, Bring forth vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments.*] By *all the worshippers of Baal,* are not meant all the people that came to worship him: but his ministers and priests, who alone wore vestments of a different kind from the rest of the people; and so it was among the Jews, and all other nations.

Ver. 23. *And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal, and said unto the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the servants of the Lord, but the worshippers of Baal only.*] He calls those that worshipped the golden calves the *servants of the Lord:* because they worshipped the Lord by them, and abhorred the worship of Baal: whose sacrifice he pretended to fear might be profaned, if any strangers should be present at it. According to the common saying among the heathen, *Procul, o procul este profani.*

Ver. 24. *And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt-offerings.*] When they had begun their sacred offices.

He appointed fourscore men without, and said, If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, he that letteth him go, his life shall be for the life of him.] This was but a small number for such an execution. But, it is likely, though no more appeared, yet there were others ready at hand to support them, if need were, in the undertaking. Or rather, these were set at the several gates of the outward courts; that if any endeavoured to make their escape, they might kill them. But the next verse seems to signify there was a greater body of men that went for that purpose into the temple.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass, as soon as they had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, that Jehu said to the guard, and to the captains.*] Of those troops that he had set to keep the peace, as he pretended, and prevent all disturbance.

Go in, and slay them, let none come forth. And they smote them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out.] There is nothing in the Hebrew that answers to the word *them:* nor is it likely that the captains and soldiers troubled themselves to cast their bodies out of the temple; where they were rather buried in its ruins. But the meaning is, having done this execution, the guard and captains rushed out of the temple in great haste, and immediately ran to the city of the house of Baal, as it here follows.

And went to the city of the house of Baal.] That is, a place near to Samaria, where Baal had another temple; which gave name to the place: or rather, there were great buildings adjoining to the temple of Baal in Samaria, where the prophets, and priests, and their servants lived, called a *city,* because they were so large.

Ver. 26. *And they brought forth the images out of the house of Baal, and burnt them.*] They worshipped several other lesser gods (whose images they had in this temple), together with the supreme god, whom they called Baal; as the others were called Baalim. So Servius writes upon the first of the Georgics, that *veteri ritu, according to ancient custom,* after the priests had invoked the special gods, to whom the sacrifice was intended, "generaliter omnia numina invocabantur," *all the gods were invoked,* lest any of them should think themselves neglected.

Ver. 27. *And they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal.*] Demolished his temple, and the image of Baal in it: which was either the sun, or Belus.

And made it a draught-house unto this day.] It was turned into a jakes, as we now speak, a place where men went to ease nature; which was the highest contempt that could be put upon it.

Ver. 28. *Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.*] So that he was never worshipped more in this country; but they were perfectly freed from this sort of idolatry. Which must be acknowledged to have been a very great work: all the eastern people, and particularly the Syrians and Zidonians, and other neighbouring nations, being addicted to this worship, and had been so from ancient time; as what I observed before shews, (1 Kings xvi. 31.) from the many cities, woods, mountains, and fountains, which before Joshua's time were known by the name of Baal: and there is mention of Baal-shalisha in this book, iv. 42.

Ver. 29. *Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and in Dan.*] Which he still worshipped; being afraid, as his predecessors were, that if he took them away, as he had done Baal, the people would return to the house of David. For which reason all the following kings of Israel continued this false worship till their captivity; when these calves were carried away with them. So they say in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 22. "In the twentieth year of Pekah came Tiglath-pilneser, and took away the golden calf that was in Dan, and departed;" which they endeavour to prove out of 2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21. And a little after, "in the twelfth year of Ahaz, the Lord stirred up the spirit of the king of Assyria, and he carried away the golden calf in Beth-el, and departed: fulfilling what is written, Hosea x. 6."

Ver. 30. *And the Lord said unto Jehu.*] By some prophet; either Elisha, or the young man that was sent to anoint Jehu; or some other.

Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the

fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.] His partial obedience was not without its reward: which had been greater if he had been as zealous in all things as he was in this one instance; the following history shews the truth of this prediction: the kingdom continuing in his posterity, till the days of Zachariah, who was the fourth from Jehu, (xv. 8.) and reigned only so long, as to make good this prophecy.

Ver. 31. *But Jehu took no care to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.*] This admonition from God (which sufficiently shewed he was not well pleased with him) did him no good; but policy prevailed against religion, and persuaded him to continue the old idolatry when he had destroyed the new.

Ver. 32. *In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel.*] He took several of their frontier towns, I suppose, and thereby opened a way to make great ravages in their country. For though Jehu was a valiant man, yet God did not prosper him, because he was not a sincere servant of his.

Ver. 33. *From Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer (which is by the river Arnon), even Gilead and Bashan.*] This fully explains what was said in the foregoing verse, that God *cut them short*. For Hazael took all their country beyond Jordan: the whole kingdom, which the Israelites took from Sihon and Og. Thus these countries which the Israelites first conquered were the first that they lost.

Ver. 34. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] Which was extant in those days when this was written; and related his history more at large: of which this is a brief abridgment.

Ver. 35. *And Jehu slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 36. *And the time that Jehu reigned over Israel was twenty and eight years.*] Longer than any of the kings of Israel his predecessors.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she arose, and destroyed all the seed-royal.*] There were many of them cut off by Jehu, as we read in the foregoing chapter; and not a few by others, 2 Chron. xxi. 4. xxii. 1. but now their destruction was completed by Athaliah: who, as she was ambitious of government, so she was enraged to see Ahab's family cut off; and therefore resolved to do as much by the house of David: and perhaps she was afraid Jehu should come and kill her because she was of the house of Ahab; and therefore endeavoured to strengthen herself by getting into the throne, which she could not compass without the destruction of the royal family. For she was *a wicked woman*, as she is elsewhere called, and had played the harlot with another man, by whom she had children; as the Jewish doctors gather from 2 Chron. xxiv. 7.

Ver. 2. *But Jehosheba the daughter of king Joram.*] Not by Athaliah, but by another wife. For Athaliah would not have suffered her daughter to be married to the high-priest, nor would he (in all likelihood) have married the daughter of such a woman.

Sister of Ahaziah.] By the father's side.

Took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from the king's sons that were slain.] Some think that he was thrown among them, and thought to be dead; but she snatched him away, and brought him to life: or, as P. Martyr understands it, his nurse threw him among the slain on purpose to save his life, and came afterward and stole him away. But the plain meaning seems to be, that they being all ordered to be slain, she secretly stole him away, and preserved him.

And they hid him.] That is, she and her husband Jehoiada, the high-priest, to whom she was married, (2 Chron. xxii. 11.)

And his nurse, in the bedchamber, from Athaliah, so that he was not slain.] It appears, by the next verse, that this *bedchamber* was in the house of the Lord; that is, the temple. Which doth not in the Scripture always signify the sanctuary; but, in a larger sense, comprehends all the courts belonging to it. So Kimchi observes, that *the whole mountain of the house is called the house of the Lord.* And this chamber here spoken of was in the outward court of all, called, by Josephus, πρῶτον ἱερὸν, *the first holy place.* For in the inner court nobody lay, nor might any woman come into it. (See L'Empereur, upon Codex Middoth. cap. 2. sect. 3.)

Ver. 3. *And he was with her in the house of the Lord six years.*] The ministers of God were so true to Jehoiada, that he lay thus long undiscovered.

And Athaliah did reign over the land.] Not *de jure* (as the lawyers spake), but *de facto*. For if we may believe the Jews, it was not lawful for a woman to reign over them. So Maimonides, in the treatise Melachim: "They do not place a woman on the throne," because it is said, Deut. xvii. 15. *If thou wilt set a king over thee*, and not a queen. "And so in all the prefectures in Israel, they place none but men." She being therefore an usurper, it may seem strange she held the throne so long as six years, against the constitution of the kingdom. But, in after-ages, there is an example of one that held it longer. For Alexandra, the widow of Jannæus, after the death of her husband, possessed herself of the throne, and reigned nine years, as Josephus relates, lib. xiii. Antiq. cap. 24. (See Schickard, in his Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 2. Theor. 3.)

Ver. 4. *And the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched.*] Jehoiada was not a mere private man, but a person of great authority in the kingdom, who, knowing Athaliah was an usurper, and that he had the right heir to the kingdom in his possession (which if he had not, his own wife had a better right than Athaliah), thought he had sufficient warrant to dethrone her, and set up him that had the undoubted title to the crown. Which he did when he was seven years old; because then he grew so big, that he could not well be longer concealed; and it was fit also he should be educated in a royal manner; which he could not be while he lay hid.

The rulers over hundreds.] The names of five of them are set down in 2 Chron. xxiii. 1. who were all, some think, of the tribe of Levi. For they of that tribe were the persons principally employed in this undertaking, as appears by the sequel. But we learn from that place in the Chronicles, ver. 2. that whosoever they were, they went about

all Judah, and gathered not only the Levites, but *the chief of the fathers of Israel.*

With the captains of the guard.] The chief commanders of the soldiery, and those that had been the former king's guard: for it is not likely he durst call those who were the guard of the present queen.

And brought them to him into the house of the Lord.] Into that part of it where Joash was kept, where Jehoiada discoursed with them.

And made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the Lord, and shewed them the king's son.] He discovered to them the true heir of the crown, and they entered into a covenant to restore him: which they bound with an oath of secrecy.

Ver. 5. *And he commanded them, saying, This is the thing that ye should do.*] These words, and those that follow, are certainly spoken to the priests and Levites (with whom those captains beforementioned were to join), as men whom Jehoiada had perfectly under his command, and whom he could trust: to whom he gives the following orders.

A third part of you that enter in on the sabbath, shall even be keepers of the watch of the king's house.] The priests and Levites took their turns in their attendance at the temple; and their course was finished in the space of a week. Every week a course went out, and another came in. Now they who now entered upon their week of attendance (which was on the eve of every sabbath) were divided by Jehoiada into three parts; one of which he here orders to guard the king's house: that is, that part of the temple on the north where he lodged, and was now educated.

Ver. 6. *And a third part shall be at the gate of Sur.*] That is, the east gate of the temple, towards the city; which was the principal (and, at the first, the only) entrance into the house of the Lord. This is called *the gate of the foundation*, 2 Chron. xxiii. 5. (and by five other names, if we may believe the Talmudists), where another part were ordered to guard it. Abarbinel thinks this eastern gate was called *Sur*, being as much as to say, *go back;* because no unclean person durst enter into this gate: and the *gate of the foundation*, because it was, as he speaks, the *gate of the first sanctuary.*

And a third part at the gate behind the guard.] The other third part he set at the south gate, which looked towards the royal palace; and through which Athaliah was wont to come, and therefore had a guard near this place. Behind which these Levites were placed by Jehoiada, to observe their motions.

So shall ye keep the watch of the house, that it be not broken down.] They were to take special care, that the house of the Lord was not any way profaned; suffering none to come nearer to it than they ought: and particularly watching those out of the palace, that they did not defile it. So De Dieu thinks the word *massach* (which we translate *be not broken down*) ought to be understood, being as much as *be massach*, by pulling away those that shall dare to pollute the holy place, and would come in to hurt the king. Or, as other learned men have interpreted it; they were to keep *the watch of the house at the breach:* which the wicked sons of Athaliah (which she had by another man) had made, as we read 2 Chron. xxiv. 7. Dr. Lightfoot thinks, that, besides these three parts for the design which Jehoiada intended, there were three more (six in all) for the ordinary service of the temple. For he would not have that neglected, while he took care of the affairs of the kingdom. (See his book of the Temple, chap. 20.)

Ver. 7. *And two parts of all you that go forth on the sabbath.*] It is well known, that David divided the priests into twenty-four courses, to attend the service of the temple in their turns: every one of which courses ministered their week from sabbath to sabbath. So Josephus saith expressly, he ordained each should minister eight days, ἀπὸ Σαββάτου ἐπὶ Σάββατον, *from one sabbath to another*, (lib. viii. Antiq. cap. 2.) For that course which went out did not depart till the sabbath was over; and that which came in entered when it began; as the learned Mr. Whiston in his late Chronology expounds the words of Josephus, p. 156.

Even they shall keep the watch of the house of the Lord about the king.] He adds two parts of those who had finished their course, and went off to go home into the country, whom he would have to stay at Jerusalem, and assist the rest beforenamed; especially in strengthening that part of the temple that lay towards the palace; or rather to be the king's guard, when he came out of his lodgings (where he was at present) into the court of the Lord's house.

Ver. 8. *And ye shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand: and he that cometh within the ranges, he shall be slain.*] By *the ranges* is to be understood, if not the ranks of men that stood about the mountain of the house of the Lord, the ranks of trees that grew on either side of the causey, or the rails that were set on either side of it, for the stay and safety of those that passed upon it. (See Dr. Lightfoot in the same place.)

And be ye with the king as he goeth out, and as he cometh in.] When he went out to walk, or do any other thing; and when he returned to his apartment.

Ver. 9. *And the captains of the hundreds did according to all that Jehoiada commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with those that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest.*] To shew they were all disposed according to his order.

Ver. 10. *And to the captains of the hundreds did the priest give king David's spears and shields, that were in the house of the Lord.*] They did not come armed into the temple, lest they should give any suspicion; but Johoiada furnished them with such weapons as the temple afforded; particularly with the spears and shields, which king David had used, and dedicated after all his wars as monuments of God's *goodness* to him; and perhaps several spears and shields of great men, which he had taken as spoils in his wars.

Ver. 11. *And the guard stood, every man with his weapon in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, along by the altar and the temple.*] The guard within the court mentioned ver. 7. stood from the south part of the temple towards the palace, to the north part of it, where the king lay hid, about the great altar of burnt-offering (which was at the east gate) and the sanctuary; and then the king was brought forth, and placed below the altar, that all might see him.

Ver. 12. *And he brought out the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony, and they made him king, and anointed him.*] Having produced Joash, he put the crown on his head (which I suppose was kept in

the sanctuary), and then put the book of the law into his hand, according to Deut. xvii. 18, 19. which is called the *testimony*, because God therein testified what he would have the king and them all do. And thereupon he declared him to be king of Israel, and then anointed him: which it was not necessary to do (and therefore he is said to be *made king* before it was done), being the son of a king, had not Athaliah disturbed the succession, and pretended to the kingdom. Therefore, to settle all things, he was anointed as Solomon and Jehu were. But there is a doubt what is meant by *eduth*, which we translate *testimony;* supposing it comes from the root, which signifies to *testify*. But there are those, particularly Forsterus, Avenarius, and others of greater note, who derive it from the Hebrew word *adah*, which signifies to *clothe, put on*, and *adorn;* and so take *eduth* for some royal ornament, which was a mark of kingly dignity: and that, it is probable, might be a bracelet which Jehoiada put upon the young king, together with the crown. This conjecture is countenanced by what we read of the Amalekite, who brought the bracelet on Saul's arm to David, as well as the crown that was on his head. (See Fortunatus Scacchus Myrothec. iii. cap. 41.)

And they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king!] The guards and the people (as the next verse explains it) testified their joy by clapping their hands and shouting, as they did at king's Solomon's coronation, (1 Kings i. 34. 39.) For *clapping of hands* was a token of joy, as appears by many places, (Psal. xlvii. 1. Isa. lv. 12.)

Ver. 13. *And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guards, and of the people.*] Who were now assembled to see their king.

She came to the people into the temple of the Lord.] Into the outward court where they were met together. And she seems in a great fright to have come alone, or but few attendants with her.

Ver. 14. *And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a pillar, as the manner was.*] Some of the Jews, and many great men among Christian writers, understand by this pillar the brazen scaffold which Solomon erected at the dedication of the temple, (2 Chron. vi. 13.) But the plainest meaning seems to me, that he stood by the post of the east gate in the inner court, where the station of the king was. Which Vitringa hath made probable, in his Synagoga Vet. p. 31, &c. where he observes, that the king alone entered at the east gate on the sabbath and the new moons; but on the other days at the south or north gate, where the people entered; which he gathers from Ezek. xlvi. 1, 2. He *stood*, I suppose, only to be better seen by the people; otherwise sitting was a posture of authority.

And the princes, and the trumpeters by the king; and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets.] This made her soon apprehend the danger she was in, as it here follows. For the people, when they saw their young king, expressed their joy, it is likely, in some such acclamations as the people of Rome made at the inauguration of Claudius, "Claudi Auguste, Principem te, aut qualis tu es semper Octavianus, te respublica requirebat, tu frater, tu pater, tu amicus, tu bonus senator, tu vero princeps," as Trebel. Pollio relates in his life. For though Joash had done nothing praiseworthy, being but a child; yet they rejoiced in the felicity which they promised themselves in his reign, under the government of such a man as Jehoiada.

And Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, treason!] Adding, as Josephus relates, Take that boy and kill him; meaning Joash, in whose behalf this conspiracy, as she called it, was made against her. But she spake like a distracted woman, there being nobody on her side to execute any of her commands.

Ver. 15. *And Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of hundreds, and the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges.*] Through which they had suffered her to come, being a queen, contrary to the order, ver. 8.

And him that followeth her kill with the sword.] If any body appeared to abet and rescue her, he commanded him to be slain.

For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the house of the Lord.] From whence they dragged her, until they had brought her down to the bottom of the causey, and there they slew her.

Ver. 16. *And they laid hands on her; and she went by the way by the which the horses came into the king's house: and there she was slain.*] That is, saith the same author (chap. 5. sect. 2. of the Temple), they got her out of the mountain of the house, and brought her down the causey; and when she came near the horse-gate, through which the horses went up out of the stables of Millo, when the king had occasion for them, there they slew her.

By the which the horses came into the king's house.] There was another horse-gate in the main wall of the city, (Jer. xxxi. 39.) but that was distinct from this; which was peculiar to the king's horses: and therefore a distinctive character is set upon it, that it was the horse-gate *towards the king's house*, (2 Chron. xxiii. 15.) So it should be rendered, rather than *by the king's house:* for neither of these gates was near his house, but at a distance from it; and we may call this gate here spoken of, the back-way to the king's house at the stable-gate.

Ver. 17. *And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people.*] He first takes care about religion, and engaged them in a solemn covenant to root out idolatry, and to restore the true worship of God, and continue in it.

Between the king also and the people.] That they should be his obedient subjects, and he should govern them by the law. This was directly agreeable to the apostolic precept, "Fear God, and honour the king."

Ver. 18. *And all the people of the land went to the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly.*] Accordingly they began immediately to make good their covenant, in destroying the worship of Baal: which had been introduced among the people of Judah by Jehoram, (viii. 18.) and was continued by Ahaziah, (ver. 27.)

And slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altar.] To which it is possible he fled, as a place of refuge; or they dragged him hither to make him a victim to his god.

And the priest appointed officers over the house of the Lord.] Levites to keep the door, lest any one who was unclean should enter into it. (See more, 2 Chron. xxiii. 18, 19.)

Ver. 19. *And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the*

captains of the guards, and the people of the land.] Brought them out of the temple, that they might conduct the king to his palace, as it here follows.

And they brought down the king from the house of the Lord, and came by the way of the gate of the guard to the king's house.] By that gate of the king's palace, where a guard was to be kept for his safety.

And he sat on the throne of the kings.] Which was the accomplishment of his inauguration.

Ver. 20. *And all the people of the land rejoiced.*] Applauding what Jehoiada had done.

And the city was in quiet.] Nobody appeared in defence of Athaliah.

And they slew Athaliah with the sword beside the king's house.] Not far from it: the people having so little kindness for her, that they suffered her to be slain without any opposition. In the Chronicles, indeed, the words are, *the city was in quiet after that they had slain Athaliah,* (2 Chron. xxii. 21.) Which may import there was some bustle before, when she was apprehended; but after her death there was no stir: nor do we read they were so much concerned for her as to bury her.

Ver. 21. *Seven years old was Jehoash when he began to reign.*] Being so very young, he was very unfit for so weighty a charge; but he was under the direction of so excellent a counsellor, that while Jehoiada lived, all things went well, and the nation was very happy, as we read in the next chapter. But that good man being dead, he was seduced by some greatmen about him to idolatry: (2 Chron. xxiv. 17, &c.) which shews him to have been a weak prince, who wanted judgment in things of greatest moment.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *IN the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash began to reign; and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba.*

Ver. 2. *And Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him.*] This history shews of what advantage it is to have good instructors and counsellors about a king. For Jehoiada preserved Joash in good ways while he lived: but when he was dead, Joash changed his manners, and was persuaded by the flatteries of some of his courtiers to fall into idolatry; and he killed the son of this pious Jehoiada, who reproved him for it, (2 Chron. xxiv. 17. 21.)

Ver. 3. *But the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.*] These private altars (on which they sacrificed to the true God), I observed before, were not removed by the best of their kings till the reign of Hezekiah. And this king was too young, and his authority too weak (though he had Jehoiada to assist him), to attempt to break such a long-continued custom, especially when some of the princes in their hearts were idolaters.

Ver. 4. *And Jehoash said unto the priests.*] The house of God being suffered to run to decay, in the time of Athaliah and her son; Joash, in gratitude to God, who had preserved him there, resolved to have it repaired; and, in order to it, commanded what money should be set apart for that purpose.

All the money of the dedicated things that is brought into the house of the Lord.] That had been, or should hereafter be brought and dedicated to the service of God and of the temple.

Even the money of every one that passeth the account.] This and the following money he commanded the priests and Levites to go through the kingdom, and gather it for the repair of the temple, as we are told, 2 Chron. xxiv. 5. They were not to expect till the people should bring it in, but go and gather it, every man of his acquaintance, where he knew it to be due. And so the foregoing words are to be translated, not *that is brought,* but *to be brought* into the house of the Lord. Which money arose three ways; the first is here mentioned, *the money of every one that passeth* (for the words *the account* are not in the Hebrew), which some understand of the offering which pious people of other nations made, who came to worship at Jerusalem: (1 Kings viii. 41.) or rather, of those who were come to twenty years of age, and being past that, were to pay half a shekel. This had been much neglected in the time of Athaliah (as the Jewish doctors think), but now being carefully gathered, there was enough to maintain the daily sacrifice (which was supported out of this money), and to carry on also the reparation of the temple. Though Abarbinel thinks it was wholly applied to the reparation; and the people voluntarily offered for the maintaining of the daily morning and evening sacrifice.

The money that every man is set at.] This was the second way: by the money that every man who had vowed himself to God, was to pay, by the estimation that the priest should make for his redemption; according to that law, Lev. xxviii. 2, 3. For so the words are here in the Hebrew, *the money of a man whose taxation is the money of his soul:* that is, who is taxed such a sum of money, whereby his soul might be freed from the vow wherewith he had bound himself. For till this money was paid, his life was not his own, but God's.

And all the money that cometh into any man's heart to bring into the house of the Lord.] This was the third sort of money for the reparation of the temple; that which any man would give freely for that service which they were to receive of them.

Ver. 5. *Let the priests take it to them, every man of his acquaintance, and let them repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found.*] This money, thus collected, he entrusted with the priests, and commanded them to see it employed to the use for which it was given.

Ver. 6. *And it was so, that in the three-and-twentieth year of king Jehoash, the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house.*] They were both dilatory and careless in gathering the money, (2 Chron. xxiv. 5.) and did not bring in what they had gathered to begin the work. Whereupon the king revoked his former order, and entrusted other men (as it here follows) with this work. Thus are things seldom done well, that are committed to the care of many.

Ver. 7. *Then king Jehoash called Jehoiada the priest, and the other priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? Now therefore receive no more money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house.*] He ordered two things; first, that they should gather no more money of the people; and se-

condly, that they should not have the care of seeing the temple repaired; but pay what had been gathered into other hands.

Ver. 8. *And the priests consented to receive no more money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the house.*] They submitted to the king's new orders, and wholly committed the business to those whom he thought fit to employ.

Ver. 9. *But Jehoiada the priest took a chest.*] By the king's order, (2 Chron. xxiv. 8.)

And bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the Lord.] On the right side of the gate that went into the court of the priests: not far from the altar which was within the court, as appears from 2 Chron. xxiv. 8. Dr. Lightfoot thinks these two texts do not relate to the same time. For at the first the chest was set in the very court of the priests near to the altar, as it is here said in this place: so that the money still passed through the priests' fingers; who took it of the people and put it into the chest which was in their court, where the people could not come at it. But the money not coming in so fast as was expected this way; he removed the chest, or made another, and set it without the court, at the entrance of it, where every one might have access unto it. And he proclaimed through all the country they should bring in their money thither: which came in so plentifully, that there was enough for the repair of the house, and for other uses also.

And the priests that kept the door put therein all the money brought into the house of the Lord.] There was a proclamation made, that all the people should bring in their half-shekel, which Moses commanded every one of such an age to pay: and they brought it to the priests who stood at the door that let into their court, and saw them put it into the chest, (2 Chron. xxiv. 9.)

Ver. 10. *And it was so, when they saw there was much money in the chest, that the king's scribe and the high-priest came up, and they put up in bags, and told the money that was found in the house of the Lord.*] The high-priest would have a witness of his actions, lest he should be suspected of any fraud, as perhaps others had been; and would not open the chest without the assistance of the king's secretary of state; nor would he open it in the temple, but had it brought by the Levites into the king's office; and there the secretary and the high-priest, or any officer of his, emptied the chest, and told the money, and then put it up in bags, which it is likely they sealed; and then they sent the chest into its place again. This they did every day, as we read 2 Chron. xxiv. 11.

Ver. 11. *And they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, and had the oversight of the house of the Lord.*] These bags of money were delivered (by the king and Jehoiada, 2 Chron. xxiv. 12.) not to the priests, whom the king had found tardy, and perhaps faulty, in converting the money to their own uses; but to some select persons, who had this peculiar business committed to them, to see the reparation, and to employ good workmen, and to pay them their wages.

And they laid it out to the carpenters and builders that wrought upon the house of the Lord.] To buy materials for the work, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 12. *And to masons, and hewers of stone, and to buy timber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the Lord, and for all that was laid out for the house to repair it.*] For all other things, of what kind soever they were, which they found necessary for the reparation.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit, there were not made for the house of the Lord bowls of silver, snuffers, basons, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money that was brought into the house of the Lord.*] Though these were wanting, yet the money was limited to the reparations of the house; and the king ordered that no vessel of any sort should be bought for the temple, till the temple itself was put into a good condition. So the LXX. render it, *there shall none be made for the house any vessels*, &c. (that is, he commanded there should be none made), but all given to the forenamed workmen, as long as there needed any reparations. So it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 14. *But they gave that to the workmen, and repaired therewith the house of the Lord.*] The masons and carpenters, and such-like workmen, had all the money, to be laid out according to their discretion, upon the reparation of the temple alone, till the work was finished. And then they gave an account of what money remained in their hands, and that was laid out to purchase such vessels as are before mentioned, for the service of the temple, (2 Chron. xxiv. 14.)

Ver. 15. *Moreover, they reckoned not with the men into whose hands they delivered the money to be bestowed on workmen; for they dealt faithfully.*] They were so confident of the honesty of the overseers, that they took no account of the money they had paid the workmen; who were also men of such clear reputation, that what they laid out was not questioned. This was a rare example of fidelity in managing the public money; and there was one man in Greece, Aristides, who was so trusty in the opinion of all the people.

Ver. 16. *The trespass-money and the sin-money was not brought into the house of the Lord: it was the priests'.*] This money was not applied to the aforesaid use; but put into the hands of the priests, that sacrifices for trespasses and sins might be offered for those that gave it.

Ver. 17. *Then Hazael king of Syria went up and fought against Gath, and took it.*] This was a city of the Philistines, but taken by king David, and added to the dominions of Israel, (2 Sam. viii. 1. 1 Chron. xviii. 1.) and now taken from them by Hazael.

And Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem.] Having made himself master of this place, he plainly declared, by the disposition of his affairs, that he intended to make an attempt upon Jerusalem. This fell out after Jehoash had forsaken God, and fallen to idolatry; as appears by the book of the Chronicles; where a much different relation is made of the expedition of the Syrians. Insomuch that Abarbinel thinks (which is approved by several Christian writers) there were two expeditions. In the first of which Hazael came up in person against them, as is here related; but they purchased peace of him: and then in the end of the year, after they had killed Zachariah, the war was renewed; though Hazael did not come himself, but sent a small army, which they were not able to oppose, which destroyed a great many of the people, and sent great spoils to Damascus, (2 Chron. xxiv. 23. 25.)

Ver. 18. *And Jehoash king of Judah took all the hallowed*

things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria; and he went away from Jerusalem.] The preservation of his kingdom, he thought, warranted this; but he had brought these dangers upon himself by his apostacy from God.

Ver. 19. *And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 20. *And his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash in the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla.*] The Syrians had left him labouring under great diseases at this place called Millo: where his servants slew him in his bed, as we read 2 Chron. xxiv. 25. There was another place called Millo, hard by the king's palace at Jerusalem: therefore, to distinguish this from that, this is called *Millo that goeth down to Silla;* as Abarbinel thinks.

Ver. 21. *For Jozachar the son of Shimeath.*] He was called by another name also, *viz.* Zabad.

And Jehozabad the son of Shomer.] This was his father's name, it is likely, and his mother was called Shimrith, who was a Moabitess; as Shimeath was an Ammonitess, (2 Chron. xxiv. 26.)

His servants, smote him, and he died.] They were friends of Jehoiada (as Josephus thinks), who took this revenge upon Joash, for the death of Zachariah the son of Jehoiada, as is expressly noted, 2 Chron. xxiv. 25.

And they buried him with his fathers in the city of David.] But not in the sepulchre of the kings, (2 Chron. xxiv. 25.) For though they did him so much honour as to bury him in the royal city, yet not all the honour that was usual; because he had forsaken God, and slain one of his prophets.

And Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.] His servants did not kill him, with an intention to usurp the kingdom: but only to revenge the blood of Zachariah. For they suffered his son to succeed Joash peaceably, who slew those that had slain his father, (2 Chron. xxv. 3.)

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *IN the three-and-twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years.*] Some have raised a doubt about this account, because Joash began to reign in the seventh year of Jehu, (xii. 2.) who reigned but twenty-eight years; (x. 36.) from whence if seven years be deducted, there remains no more than one-and-twenty, not three-and-twenty years, as is here said. To which Kimchi and Abarbinel answer, There were two incomplete years: for when it is said Joash reigned in the seventh year of Jehu, it must be understood of the beginning of his seventh year; and in like manner, when he speaks here of the three-and-twentieth year of Joash, it must be understood of the beginning of the same year. And so they are called three-and-twenty, when they were but one-and-twenty perfect years. But it is better to say (as my worthy friend Dr. Alix thinks) that there was an interregnum of a year between the death of Jehu and the first of Jehoahaz.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.*] Was not reclaimed by the severe punishments God inflicted on him.

Ver. 3. *And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel; and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, all their days.*] The word *their* is not in the Hebrew; so that it may be translated all *his* days, as it is explained ver. 22.

Ver. 4. *And Jehoahaz besought the Lord, and the Lord hearkened unto him.*] Not for his sake, but for the sake of the pious ancestors of this people, with whom he had made a covenant of great mercy to be shewed to their posterity; which in their great distress he now afforded them. (See ver. 23.)

For he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them.] Intending their utter ruin, which God would not yet permit, but bear longer with them.

Ver. 5. *(And God gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians.*] Some understand by this *saviour,* an extraordinary captain, whom God raised up to fight their battles with great success. But it being said, that while Hazael lived he oppressed them, (ver. 22.) it is more reasonable to understand by this *saviour,* the son of Jehoahaz; who, when Hazael was dead, delivered them from their bondage, (ver. 25.) And, perhaps, he did this in his father's lifetime, who made him joint sovereign with himself.

And the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as aforetime.] They lived quietly and securely, not only in their fortified towns, but in the villages and the fields.

Ver. 6. *Nevertheless, they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin, but walked therein.*] Neither their miseries, nor God's mercies to them, made any alteration in them; but they continued in those sins which had ruined the house of Jeroboam, and many of his successors.

And there remained the grove also in Samaria).] We read of a grove which Ahab planted in honour of Baal, 1 Kings xvi. 33. But his worship being utterly destroyed by Jehu, I cannot but think that he cut down that grove: and therefore the grove here mentioned had in it the image of some other god.

Ver. 7. *Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots.*] With the men belonging to them.

And ten thousand footmen.] This explains what he means by *the people* in the foregoing words; not all the people of Israel, but the soldiers, or men of war; of which there were no more left than this small number.

For the king of Syria had destroyed them.] God left them in his hand to make this destruction among them, killing some, and carrying others captive.

And had made them like the dust by thrashing.] By perpetual wars and captivities; which made very great depopulations.

Ver. 8. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] The judgments of God upon him were the most remarkable, because he was a *man of might:* and was so far from being able to stand before the Syrians, that they beat him to dust.

Ver. 9. *And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria, and Joash his son reigned in his stead.*] Called in the next verse Jehoash.

Ver. 10. *In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned sixteen years.*] A difficulty seems to arise, by comparing this verse with the first: where it is said, Jehoahaz king of Israel began to reign in the twenty-third year of Joash king of Judah, and reigned seventeen years: from whence it follows, that Jehoash began to reign not in the thirty-seventh, but in the thirty-ninth, or fortieth year of Joash king of Judah. But this only shews the truth of what I said upon ver. 5. that he reigned with his father three years: after God was so gracious as to raise up a deliverer to them; who was this son of his, by whom peace was restored to them. This we note in the margin, he reigned *in concert with his father*, (xiv. 1.)

Ver. 11. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin: but he walked therein.*

Ver. 12. *And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] They were all recorded in the book so often mentioned; (see 1 Kings xi. 41.) and his fight with Amaziah is particularly related, and set down at large, in 2 Chron. xxv. 17, 18, &c.

Ver. 13. *And Joash slept with his fathers, and Jeroboam sat upon his throne.*] From whence some of the Jewish doctors gather, that he reigned with his father at least one year; though Abarbinel denies it, but without reason.

And Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.] He doth not here conclude this history of Joash; for he afterward relates great things done by him. But being to speak of the death of Elisha, upon which those things depended, he interposes that before he proceeds further to relate his acts.

Ver. 14. *Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died.*] This was in the tenth year of Joash, as they say in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 19. and from thence gather how long Elisha continued a prophet in Israel, *viz.* from the nineteenth year of Jehoshaphat till this time; which was sixty-five years.

And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face.] This was no sign of his hearty affection to him (for he would not hearken to his word), but he bewailed himself, and his people, who were in danger shortly to lose so great a defender.

And said, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!] They are the words of Elisha concerning Elijah, when he was taken up to heaven, (ii. 12.) signifying the great authority he had maintained among them (which is included in the word *father*), and that by his counsel and prayers they had obtained glorious victories over their enemies.

Ver. 15. *And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows: and he took unto him bow and arrows.*] This was to represent the wars he was to have with the Syrians.

Ver. 16. *And he said to the king of Israel, Put thy hand upon the bow; and he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.*] This was to represent that they were not to trust in their arms, and their valour; but in God alone, who would give them the victory.

Ver. 17. *And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it.*] Part of Syria lay east or north-east from Judea: and the Syrians also had possessed themselves of all the land of Israel eastward; (x. 33.) from whence he signified, by what follows, Joash should expel them.

Then Elisha said, Shoot: and he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, the arrow of deliverance from Syria.] A sign the Lord would wound the Syrians by the arms of the Israelites, and give them a glorious deliverance from their tyranny.

For thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek.] In the territories belonging to it, (of which, see 1 Sam. iv. 1. xxix. 1.) The Syrians had taken Gath; and Aphek, I take it, was not far from it: so that it was as much as to say, they should drive them out of the country; as it follows.

Till thou hast destroyed them.] Not all the people of Syria, but all their forces wherewith they infested Israel.

Ver. 18. *And he said, Take the arrows: and he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground: and he smote thrice, and stayed.*] That which he represented before by the shooting of an arrow, he represents again by smiting upon the ground with the arrows; *viz.* victory over the Syrians, whom he should overthrow and cast down to the ground in battle.

Ver. 19. *And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times, then shouldest thou have smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed them: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.*] By the former sign the king of Israel might have understood that this was intended to signify the same thing; and I suppose the prophet spake so, as to give him to understand he would have him smite a good many times. And he was angry at his sloth and unbelief, which made him stop at the third stroke; for if he had done it oftener, he should have utterly disabled them. He had before represented great victories which he should obtain; but not till now, how often he should overcome; which he was admonished by God to let him know by this sign. And it is probable the prophet himself did not know, till he saw how often he smote on the ground.

Ver. 20. *And Elisha died, and they buried him: and the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.*] Which was the usual time when people went out to war, as I have shewn upon 2 Sam. xi. 1. (see there); but whether it was the next spring after his death, or some years after, is doubted: but the words seem plainly to import it was the next spring.

Ver. 21. *And it came to pass, as they were burying a man.*] Carrying him to his grave.

They spied a band of men.] A party of the Moabites, who were coming towards the place where they were to lay the corpse.

And they cast him into the sepulchre of Elisha.] Which being near to the place where they then were, they rolled away the stone, and laid the body by Elisha's; for fear, if they proceeded to the sepulchre prepared for this man, they should fall into the hands of the Moabites.

And when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha.] From hence some conclude, that this invasion of

the Moabites was some years after Elisha's death; when his flesh was consumed, and only his bones remained.

That he revived, and stood upon his feet.] By which miracle God did the highest honour to his prophet, and confirmed both the truth of what he had promised the king, and the belief of a future life. For this was something more than he had done in Elisha's lifetime, when he could not without many prayers, and stretching himself with great application upon the body of the child, raise it to life again; whereas now, upon touching of his dead body only, God restored a man, in an instant, to perfect health; for he stood upon his feet, and, it is likely, walked home with those that brought him to be buried. It is a poor conceit of Abarbinel and others, that he was a wicked man, whom God rather would raise to life again, than suffer his dead body to rest by such a holy person as Elisha. It had been enough, if this had been the reason, to have thrown this dead body out of Elisha's sepulchre, and let it lie upon the ground.

Ver. 22. *But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.*] None of these things which Elisha promised were accomplished while Hazael lived; but after his death, Joash the son of Jehoahaz (as it here follows) vanquished Ben-hadad the son of Hazael.

Ver. 23. *And the Lord was gracious unto them, and had compassion upon them, and respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*] For whose sake he spared them, and would not let the oppression of the Syrians continue so long as to ruin them.

And would not destroy them, neither cast he them out of his presence as yet.] But allowed them a longer space for repentance.

Ver. 24. *So Hazael king of Syria died, and Ben-hadad his son reigned in his stead.*] The name of Ben-hadad had for a long time been common to the kings of Syria, and now was renewed in another family.

Ver. 25. *And Joash the son of Jehoahaz took again, out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war.*] He took all the country on the other side of Jordan in the days of Jehu; (x. 33.) besides which he made further conquests on this side Jordan, in the days of Jehoahaz: whether Jehoash recovered all is not certain; but what his father lost, it is here said he regained.

Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.] It is not recorded where these three battles were fought; but the success of them was so great, that he retook all that his father had lost.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *IN the second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, reigned Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah.*] This was, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, the thirty-eighth year of his father Joash king of Judah; three years current before his death. For his father had thrown himself into such a miserable condition by his apostacy, and his murder of Zachariah, (xii. 17, 18.) that he was become unfit to manage the kingdom. (See Harm. of the Evang. Proleg. cap. 6.)

Ver. 2. *He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.*] Joash king of Israel reigned sixteen years, (xiii. 10.) therefore Amaziah reigned fourteen years while he lived, and after his death fifteen years; which make twenty-nine. (See ver. 17.)

Ver. 3. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, yet not like David his father: he did in all things according as Joash his father did.*] For both of them in the beginning of their reigns did very well; but both in their latter end fell into idolatry. Both of them also, as Abarbinel observes, contemned God's prophets, who spake to them in the name of the Lord.

Ver. 4. *Howbeit the high places were not taken away; for yet the people did sacrifice and burn incense on the high places.*] Even in the best part of his reign, before he fell to idolatry, this licence continued, which had been long practised against the law of God. In this he imitated his father, (xii. 3.)

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, when the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, that he slew his servants which had slain the king his father.*] He durst not venture upon this piece of justice presently, till he was well settled in his authority, and had divested those of all power who were the friends of those murderers. Who seem to have continued still at court, for they are called *his servants.*

Ver. 6. *But the children of the murderers slew he not: according to that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.*] In this he acted like a good man, and was not moved to cut off the children, contrary to law, for fear they should make a faction against him, and take revenge for their father's death.

Ver. 7. *He slew of Edom.*] He alone, and the men of Judah, made the following slaughter: having, at the command of a prophet, abandoned the help of the Israelites, though he had purchased it with a great sum of money; (2 Chron. xxv. 7—10.) the Edomites had revolted from Judah in the days of Joram, (viii. 10.) and now Amaziah endeavours to reduce them.

In the valley of Salt.] A place mentioned 2 Sam. viii. 13. where see what I have observed concerning the reason of this name.

Ten thousand.] And he took as many captives. (See 2 Chron. xxv. 12.)

And he took Selah by war.] The metropolis of Arabia Petræa; which took its name from hence: for *Selah* is the same with the word *Petra*, a *rock;* upon which the city stood. From this rock he seems to have thrown down the ten thousand whom he took alive, and broke in pieces, as is said in the forenamed place, 2 Chron. xxv. 12. *Hagar* signifies the same, as Bochartus observes, by which name the Arabians called it, from the rocky mountain which hung over this place, which St. Paul calls by the Arabic name *Hagar.*

And called the name of it Joktheel unto this day.] Which name imports, *obedience of God,* or *to God:* because, having taken it, he settled, as some imagine, the laws and statutes of Moses in this place; or rather, he acknowledged, by giving it this name, that the possession of this place was a reward of his obedience to the man of God, who required

him to dismiss all the forces he had hired of the Israelites, (2 Chron. xxv. 10.)

Ver. 8. *Then Amaziah king of Judah sent a messenger to Jehoash, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us look one another in the face.*] Being flushed with his great victory over the Edomites, and incensed by the damages the Israelites had done him, (2 Chron. xxv. 13.) he sent this challenge to the king of Israel, saying, Let us set our armies in battle-array one against the other, and try our strength. Which some think he did only to try their military skill and prowess; not to revenge injuries, or get his own again. Which, if he had intended, he would have assaulted the Israelites on a sudden; and not given them such a fair warning to stand upon their defence. But it is more probable, that, being encouraged, as I said, by his late victory, he resolved to be revenged for the slaughter of his ancestors by Jehu, (chap. ix.) and for the late spoil the Israelites had made in his country; (2 Chron. xxv. 10. 13.) but he resolved to have satisfaction in a fair and honourable way, and not by surprise. And the words may be thus understood: *Either give me satisfaction, or let us try it out in a battle.* It is probable, also, he might think of conquering the kingdom of Israel, if he did not satisfy him, and bring it back to the house of David: for so Jehoash understood him, as Josephus thinks, and the sequel shews.

Ver. 9. *And Jehoash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon.*] He compares himself to a cedar, and Amaziah to a thistle; which is a poor shrub, not worthy of that name; but having drawn blood on some poor traveller, and sorely afflicted him (as Amaziah had done the Edomites), grew very proud, and would be no longer one of the shrubs, but equal to the most goodly trees.

Saying, Give me thy daughter to my son to wife.] Make an affinity with me, and let us be one kingdom. So some understand it, that Jehoash thought he would have him join his great kingdom, which was ten tribes, unto his poor one of two tribes; that, being united, there should be but one king over them all; and they should try their fortune in a pitched battle, which of them two should be the king. But this seems to be too much strained. He only intimates, that if he should desire a friendly alliance with him, he despised it as below him, as much as a thistle is below a cedar.

And there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trod down the thistle.] This represents how easily his soldiers (who are compared to wild beasts) would repress his insolence.

Ver. 10. *Thou hast indeed smitten the Edomites, and thine heart hath lifted thee up.*] This hath made thee proud.

Glory in this, and tarry at home.] Be content with the honour thou hast won, and be quiet.

For why shouldest thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?] He admonishes him to desist from this needless provocation of his neighbours; which might end in his ruin.

Ver. 11. *But Amaziah would not hearken: therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up, and he and Amaziah looked one another in the face.*] Encountered one another in a fight.

At Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah.] See 1 Sam. vi. 12.

Ver. 12. *And Judah was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every man to their tents.*] So their houses were called, from their having no other habitations for a long time in the wilderness; and in Canaan many continued in such dwellings. Josephus saith, the people of Judah did not strike a stroke; but being possessed with a panic fear, when they saw a formidable army set in battle-array against them, ran away.

Ver. 13. *And Jehoash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh.*] I suppose his ancestors are mentioned to shew that this was the greater disgrace to him; being descended from a race of kings, which Jehoash was not.

And came to Jerusalem.] Bringing Amaziah with him; and letting the inhabitants know (as Josephus saith) that he would slay him before their eyes, if they did not immediately open their gates unto him; which was accordingly done.

And broke down the wall of Jerusalem, from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits.] That the city might lie open to his invasion, if they should break the conditions he imposed upon them.

Ver. 14. *And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages.*] The sons, I suppose, of the principal persons of the city, for a security that they would be quiet, and give him no disturbance.

And returned to Samaria.] For he had enough to do to defend himself from the Syrians; and therefore did not intend a conquest of the kingdom of Judah, nor set a garrison in Jerusalem: but contented himself with the spoil of it; and perhaps made them tributaries to him. This was a heavy punishment upon Amaziah for going after other gods, (2 Chron. xxv. 20.)

Ver. 15. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] There were many other things which happened in this war, as Abarbinel observes, besides these here compendiously related; for which he refers to a record which was very well known in those days, but now is lost.

Ver. 16. *And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel, and Jeroboam his son reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 17. *And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah, lived after the death of Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, fifteen years.*] But in no great credit with his people; for Rasi thinks he lived most of his time in Lachish, whither he was forced to fly (as it follows), by reason of a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem.

Ver. 18. *And the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] He mentions nothing of *his might* which he shewed; being a weak prince, who lost the reputation of his country.

Ver. 19. *Now they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem.*] Their city having been exposed to reproach by the great breach made in their wall, and spoiled of its best ornaments, and some of their children carried away as hostages for their good behaviour, he became very odious to the great men of the city; all this being brought upon them by his pride, and rashness, and apostacy from God, (xxv. 27.)

And he fled to Lachish.] The conspiracy, it seems, grew so strong, that he could not resist it; but was forced to seek for safety by flight, in a fortified city upon the borders of the Philistines.

But they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there.] They sent to have him privately murdered (as Josephus reports it), which some undertook and effected.

Ver. 20. *And they brought him on horses.*] In a chariot.

And they buried him in Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David.] They did him some honour when he was dead, though they hated him when he was alive.

Ver. 21. *And all the people of Judah took Azariah.*] Called *Uzziah* in the next chapter, ver. 30. and in 2 Chron. xxvi. 1. Both signify the same thing; one being as much as *the help of God*, the other *the strength of God.*

(Which was sixteen years old), and made him king instead of his father Amaziah.] But this was twelve years after Amaziah's death: for he was made king in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam, (see upon xv. 1.) who began to reign in the fifteenth of Amaziah, (ver. 23.)

Ver. 22. *He built Elath.*] Repaired it.

And restored it to Judah.] It was a city belonging to Edom, (Deut. ii. 8. 2 Chron. viii. 17.) which king David, I suppose, took when he conquered this country; but in the days of Joram the Edomites revolted, and recovered Elath.

After that the king slept with his fathers.] It is a probable opinion of Abarbinel, that the king his father, after the great slaughter of the Edomites, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, took this place; but did not annex it to the kingdom of Judah, by reason of his succeeding troubles. Which Azariah did, by building a wall about it, and fortifying it; whereby he secured the possession of it.

Ver. 23. *In the fifteenth year of Amaziah king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and reigned forty and one years.*] Which was much longer than any of the kings of Israel: Jehu himself, the first of his family, reigning but twenty-eight years, which was longer than any before him, as I observed, x. 36.

Ver. 24. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*] As he had the name, so he trod in the steps of him who first corrupted Israel with idolatry.

Ver. 25. *He restored the coast of Israel, from the entering of Hamath to the sea of the plain.*] As Joash his father had restored many cities which Ben-hadad had taken; so Jeroboam restored a large territory which other kings had taken from them; *viz.* all the country from Libanus on the north, to the lake Asphaltites on the south.

According to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher.] The prophet Jonah encouraged them to this war, promising them success in it. Whose words are not here set down; but this place shews that God was very merciful to them, though a very wicked people, still in continuing prophets among them, when Elisha was dead. And this prophet, the Jews fancy, was the son of the woman of Sarepta, whom Elijah raised from the dead. For which I cannot find they have any ground, but this poor conceit, that he is called the son of *Amittai*, i. e. *of truth*, say they: because his mother said to the prophet, when he restored her son to her, *Now I know the word of God in thy mouth is truth*, (1 Kings xvii. 24.) But this is fully confuted from this single observation, that he is said to be of Gath-hepher, which was far from Sarepta, towards Tiberias in the tribe of Zebulun, as St. Jerome tells us.

Ver. 26. *For the Lord saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter.*] He shewed them this favour, not for any goodness that was in them; but in compassion to their misery, which was greater than could be expressed.

For there was not any shut up, nor any left.] Men of all sorts were destroyed: or, as some interpret it, they had lost all they had in their houses, and all that was in the field. But see of this phrase, 1 Kings xiv. 10. xxi. 21.

Nor any helper for Israel.] None to relieve, much less to deliver them.

Ver. 27. *And the Lord said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.*] But since the Lord had not yet decreed to root them out of their own land; therefore he saved them, even by this wicked prince, for the present, from their enemies; who would otherwise have made an utter end of them.

Ver. 28. *Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, which belonged to Judah, for Israel,* &c.] Or rather, *by Israel*, as Abarbinel expounds it; by the hand or power of Israel they were restored. For when David fought against the Syrians, and brought them in subjection to him, he put garrisons into Damascus and Hamath, (2 Sam. viii. 6, &c.) Which the Syrians afterward recovered when they rebelled against Judah: but Jeroboam possessed himself of them again, and by his valour made them as subject to Israel as they had been to Judah.

Ver. 29. *And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, even with the kings of Israel; and Zachariah his son reigned in his stead.*] He was the third king of Israel of Jehu's race, and so might be said to sleep with his fathers of Israel.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *IN the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.*] Here is a great difficulty, in the solving of which interpreters much vary: for Amaziah the father of Azariah lived but fifteen years after the beginning of Jeroboam's reign; (xiv. 17.) therefore Azariah began his reign, not in the twenty-seventh, but in the beginning of the seventeenth of Jeroboam. Some think Jeroboam reigned with his father eleven years: others, that there was an interregnum: that is, the throne was vacant eleven, or rather twelve years, between the death of Amaziah and the inauguration of Azariah. Dr. Lightfoot makes no doubt of the truth of this: that Azariah being but sixteen years old in the seven-and-twentieth of Jeroboam, he was but four years old at his father's death; and the throne being empty for eleven or twelve years, the government was managed by some of the grandees in his minority. But Ralbag will have these twenty-seven years of Jeroboam not to be those which were past, but those which

were to come; and the meaning is, Azariah was made king when Jeroboam had yet twenty-seven years to reign; before the family of Jehu came to an end. For after this Jeroboam reigned twenty-six years, and his son six months; which make twenty-seven imperfect years. This Abarbinel thinks is the literal sense: but the other is more agreeable to the constant account of the reigns of other kings. (See Mr. Whiston, in his late View of the Chronology of the Old Testament, p. 91.)

Ver. 2. *Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Jecholiah of Jerusalem.*] In which time, which was longer than any king of Judah or Israel reigned, he did many great things; which are recorded in 2 Chron. xxvi. from ver. 5. to 16.

Ver. 3. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Amaziah his father had done.*] He governed well in the former part of his reign, and was prospered by God; (2 Chron. xxvi. 5.) but offended in the latter end of it, as Amaziah his father had done.

Ver. 4. *Save that the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and offered incense still on the high places.*] Which was a common error (as I have often observed) which continued through the reign of the best of their kings, till the time of Hezekiah.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord smote the king, so that he was a leper to the day of his death, and he dwelt in a several house.*] The cause of this stroke is related at large in 2 Chron. xxvi. 16, &c. And by a *several house* the Jews understand a house in the country, which was *domus libera:* where he might have liberty to take his pleasure, but not to meddle with public affairs.

And Jotham the king's son was over the house, judging the people of the land.] Over *the king's house,* as it is in 2 Chron. xxvi. 23. That is, he lived in the palace, and managed all the affairs of the court, and of the kingdom. This was in the seven-and-twentieth year of Azariah, when he was smote with the leprosy (as Rasi makes account), and he continued a leper twenty-five years, during which time Jotham took upon him the administration of the government, his father being incapable of it.

Ver. 6. *And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 7. *So Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David; and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.*] He was not buried in the very *city of David,* but in the *field of the burial which belonged to the kings,* (2 Chron. xxvi. 23.) In which field, it is probable, the sepulchre of the kings was: wherein they would not bury Azariah, because he was a leper; but yet very near to the sepulchre, where his ancestors lay interred.

Ver. 8. *In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months.*] Some are confident the throne was vacant two-and-twenty years between the death of Jeroboam and the inauguration of his son; either through wars from abroad (which Jeroboam might have provoked against his house, by the conquest of Hamath and Damascus), or through war at home, which appears, they think, from this disastrous end of Zachariah, ver. 10. (See Dr. Lightfoot, in his Prolegomena to his Harmony of the Evangelists, sect. 6.) But there are few that follow this opinion, though one most learned in these, as well as other things (Dr. Alix), thinks there was an interregnum of twenty-four years. If there be any difficulty in this account, most think it is sufficiently solved, by saying, that it was the thirty-eighth year, from the time that Azariah began to reign with his father.

Ver. 9. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*] Therefore God cut him off speedily; the time approaching, when he intended to put an end to the kingdom of Israel.

Ver. 10. *And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.*] It is uncertain who this Shallum was, or what was the pretence of his conspiracy, and of his possessing himself of the throne; but it is pretty plain, I think, that he laid his treason privately and secret, (ver. 15.) and then made an open assault upon the king's person in the face of all the people.

Ver. 11. *And the rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they are written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.*] We read of nothing that he did; therefore the meaning is, that his behaviour in the six months' time wherein he reigned, how he managed things, and provoked this conspiracy, are recorded elsewhere: the author of this book intending only to give a brief account of the remaining kings of Israel.

Ver. 12. *This was the word of the Lord which he spake to Jehu, saying, Thy sons shall sit on the throne of Israel, unto the fourth generation. And so it came to pass.*] How unfaithful soever they proved to God, he faithfully kept his promise which he made to Jehu: whose sons Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam, and Zachariah, succeeded him in the throne of Israel. But this Shallum put an end to that family, and fulfilled the prophecy of Hosea, i. 4. "I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel." For though Jehu had a command from God to destroy the house of Ahab, yet he did it with such ill affections, and for such wrong ends, that God avenged that blood by this man, who slew Zachariah, and the rest of his posterity, if there were any: at least, he made the kingdom to cease in this family, and not long after in all Israel; who were rooted out, and never restored to their country, as Judah was.

Ver. 13. *Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine-and-thirtieth year of Uzziah, king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria.*] We are not told how he reigned, but it is likely he followed the steps of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin.

Ver. 14. *For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum, the son of Jabesh, in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.*] Josephus thinks Menahem was general of the army of Israel, which besieged Tirzah when Zachariah was slain: and he hearing what Shallum had done, came and served him in his kind, and made himself king.

Ver. 15. *And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and the conspiracy which he made, behold, they are written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.*] A larger account was given of his conspiracy, and the occasion of it, and his success in it, in that book; where some other memora-

ble acts, which it seems he did in a month's time, were recorded.

Ver. 16. *Then Menahem smote Tiphsah, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it.*] Some take this Tiphsah to be the same with that mentioned in 1 Kings iv. 24. But that lay upon the river Euphrates, whereas this was near to Tirzah; which was once the royal city of Israel: to the siege of which Josephus thinks Menahem returned after the slaughter of Shallum; not as general of the host, but as their king: but they knowing he had no title to the kingdom, would not open their gates to him. Therefore he took it by force, and spoiled it, and all the territory about it, until he came to Tiphsah, which he used more cruelly.

And all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.] By which barbarity he thought to terrify the whole kingdom, that none might dare to withstand him.

Ver. 17. *In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah, king of Judah, began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, and reigned ten years in Samaria.*] He seems to have reigned with such fury, that none durst oppose him; but he possessed the throne ten years before God cut him off.

Ver. 18. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*

Ver. 19. *And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land.*] That is, the land of Israel. He was governor of Babylon, who, together with Arbaces the Mede, slew Sardanapulus, the last of the Assyrian kings, and translated the empire to the Chaldeans. For he reigned over Babylon and Nineveh, and Arbaces over the Medes and Persians. He was the first king of Assyria that invaded Israel, and began their transportation out of their own country; as Abarbinel gathers from 1 Chron. v. 26. And this is the first time that we find any mention of the kingdom of Assyria, since the days of Nimrod, who erected a small kingdom here, (Gen. x. 11.) And they were no great people, one would think, when the seventy-second psalm was penned, where they are reckoned as auxiliaries to the children of Lot, against the Israelites, together with other small nations; but now they had a great and powerful empire.

And Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him, to confirm the kingdom in his hand.] By this great present he not only turned away the army of Pul from him, but purchased his friendship; so that he helped to establish his authority. Which was very tottering, by reason he was not only an usurper, but had exercised extreme great cruelty upon his people, which no doubt made him extremely hated, (ver. 10.)

Ver. 20. *And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria.*] By this means, I suppose, he thought to ingratiate himself with the common people; upon whom he laid no tax, but charged only the rich, according to the proportion of their wealth. For the Hebrew words do not import that he made every rich man in Israel pay fifty shekels; but that he gave to the king of Assyria so many shekels for every man, that is, for every one in his army. So they run exactly, *to give to the king of Assyria fifty shekels of silver for each man.*

So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land.] At that time he departed; but it is likely he afterward returned, in the reign of Pekah, and made the deportation beforementioned.

Ver. 21. *And the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*

Ver. 22. *And Menahem slept with his fathers, and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.*] This shews him to have been a mighty man, that, notwithstanding his violence and cruelty, he left the kingdom in his family: which the two foregoing kings could not do. But it is evident, there was an interregnum of a year between the reign of Menahem and Pekahiah: for Pekahiah did not begin his reign till the fiftieth year of Azariah (as it here follows), and Menahem died the year before; for he began to reign in the thirty-ninth of Azariah, (ver. 17.) and reigned but ten years.

Ver. 23. *In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah, the son of Menahem, began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned two years.*] His reign was short; both because he himself was wicked, and his father also was an usurper.

Ver. 24. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*] He was the wicked son of a wicked father; and so perished (as it here follows) by such a conspiracy as his father made against Shallum.

Ver. 25. *And Pekah the son of Remaliah, a captain of his, conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieh.*] These were two valiant men, who some think were in the conspiracy with him against Pekahiah. But Abarbinel rather thinks they were two eminent courtiers, who were always about the king.

And with him fifty men of the Gileadites.] Who were his guards, and, perhaps, assisted him in his treason.

And he killed him, and reigned in his stead.] He was a great commander under Pekahiah; for the Hebrew word *shalish* signifies more than a bare *captain*. Therefore Josephus calls him a *chiliarch*, or an officer over a thousand men. And the word carrying in it the notion of three, some later writers have therefore thought him to be the third person in the kingdom, next the king. No question he was some considerable person, who had soldiers at his command to execute his designs.

Ver. 26. *And the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.*

Ver. 27. *In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years.*] This is the fifth king that reigned over Israel during the reign of Azariah king of Judah.

Ver. 28. *He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*

Ver. 29. *In the days of Pekah king of Israel.*] In the last year of his reign, as the Jews say in Seder Olam Rabba.

Came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria.] He was the son of Pul, and is called by other authors Phul, or Phul-Assur, and here Tiglath-Pul-Assur: the former part of this name being taken from the river Tigris, which is called by the inhabitants Diglito; from whose borders this king came.

And took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah.] Two strong towns mentioned 1 Kings xv. 20. (See there.)

And Janoah.] A city in the tribe of Ephraim. (See Josh. xvi. 6.)

And Kedesh, and Hazor.] Which were in the tribe of Naphtali, (Josh. xii. 22. xix. 36.)

And Gilead.] Which was on the other side Jordan.

And Galilee, all the land of Naphtali.] The upper Galilee; which was possessed by this tribe, and by Zebulun.

And carried them captive to Assyria.] This was the second deportation of the ten tribes; the first being made by Pul, as I said before, who carried away the two tribes and half beyond Jordan; and this second was made by his son, who carried away two other tribes: then, nine years after, followed a third, in the days of the next king, (xviii. 9.) when the remainder of the ten tribes were carried away from their own land. The tribe of Judah still remained; but about eight years after the former, part of that was carried away by Sennacherib, when he took all their fenced cities; (xviii. 13.) which, with respect to the whole country, the Jews call the fourth deportation. Then a fifth followed, (xxiv. 15.) and a sixth; (xxv. 1, &c.) the last is mentioned, xxv. 25. Thus they are reckoned up by Abarbinel; and in this second (the Jews say, in Seder Olam Rabba), Tiglath-pileser carried away the golden calf which was in Dan. But see a more exact account of Judah's captivity in Mr. Whiston's learned Chronology of the Old Testament, p. 52.

Ver. 30. *And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah.*] Who Hoshea was, or what was the ground of his conspiracy, is not recorded; but we may suppose it to have been because he governed ill, and, by his cruel war with Judah, had brought the king of Assyria upon his own kingdom, (2 Chron. xxviii. 16.) and thereby lost a great part of it.

And smote him, and slew him.] As Pekah had served Pekahiah.

And reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of Jotham king of Judah.] These words create a difficulty; for it is said, ver. 33. that Jotham reigned but sixteen years. Which Seder Olam Rabba thus reconciles (for none can think any writer whatsoever would so soon contradict himself), that this conspiracy was begun in the latter end of Jotham's reign, but not put in execution till four years after his death. So that these words are to be understood as if he had said, *Twenty years after Jotham began to reign over Judah Pekah was slain.* Dr. Lightfoot gives another account of it; that the wickedness of Ahaz was so great, that the holy writer would not mention him on this occasion, but rather speaks of his good father, as if he were yet alive, in which he follows R. Solomon Jarchi. But this hath no show of truth in it; since so much is said of Ahaz in the following part of this history. A late very learned writer (in his Short View of the Chronology of the Old Testament, p. 47.) hath given a better account of it, in these words: "Because there had been yet no mention made of Ahaz's reign, therefore the old epocha of his predecessor Jotham is still made use of." But the plain truth is, that Jotham reigned four years with his father Azariah.

Ver. 31. *And the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.*] In that book which is now called by the name of Chronicles his war with Judah is recorded, (2 Chron. xxviii.)

Ver. 32. *In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel, began Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign.*] Why he should be all along called Azariah, and here only Uzziah, and ver. 34. no account can be given; unless it were to shew he had two names, as I have observed, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1. And it appears by the book of Chronicles, that Uzziah was as much used when that book was written as the other.

Ver. 33. *Twenty-five years old was he when he began to reign.*] Alone by himself; for he reigned some time with his father during his leprosy. (See Dr. Lightfoot in his Prolegom. to the Harm. of the Evang. sect. 6.)

And he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok.] It is not said of what place, as is usual: this Zadok being so well known, that there was no need to set down his dwelling.

Ver. 34. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord.*] Οὐδεμίας ἀρετῆς ἀπελείπετο, he wanted no virtue belonging to a good prince, as Josephus writes; (lib. ix. Antiq. cap. 11.) being (saith he) "pious towards God, just towards men, and studious of the public good."

He did according to all that his father Uzziah had done.] That is, according to all the good he had done; but did not imitate him in invading the priests' office.

Ver. 35. *Howbeit, the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still in the high places.*

He built the higher gate of the house of the Lord.] Which was between the house of the king and the house of the Lord, (xviii. 20.) It was built by Solomon; but this king added a noble structure to it.

Ver. 36. *Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] See 2 Chron. xxvii.

Ver. 37. *(In those days the Lord began to send against Judah Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah).*] These two kings entered into a confederacy against Judah, and made preparations for war before Jotham died; but he was so happy as to be laid in his grave in peace; their design being not executed until the reign of the next king.

Ver. 38. *And Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.*

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *IN the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham king of Judah began to reign.*

Ver. 2. *Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem.*] He was a little more than twenty years old. (See upon xviii. 2.)

And did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord his God, like David his father.] As might have been expected from the good education which, no doubt, so pious a man as Jotham his father gave him; who left him an excellent example.

Ver. 3. *But he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel; yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out be-*

fore the children of Israel.] He was far worse than any of the preceding kings of Israel; for he imitated those abominable idolaters whom God rooted out of the land of Canaan: who it is most certain sometimes burnt their children in the fire, as sacrifices to their gods, (Deut. xii. 31.) and the children of Israel it is as certain imitated them, (Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. xxxiii. 37. 39.) But whether Ahaz did that, or only made his son pass through the fire by way of lustration (as they called it), cannot be determined. It is no argument that he did not offer him as a burnt-sacrifice, because Hezekiah outlived him; for he had more sons, it is likely, than him. See, concerning this horrible impiety, what I have noted upon Lev. xviii. 21. and upon Deut. xviii. 10.

Ver. 4. *And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.*] He added this to all his other sins (of consecrating his son to Moloch by passing him through the fire, if not offering him in sacrifice), that he himself sacrificed in high places, and on hills, and under every green tree; by his example encouraging this practice, which other kings had only tolerated. So we read, that people sacrificed in high places, even in good kings' reigns, xii. 3. xiv. 4. xv. 4, &c. but, as they sacrificed to God in those reigns, so we never read till now that any of those kings sacrificed there themselves, as this king did; who not merely suffered this, but gave countenance to it by his own practice, and thereby strengthened this licence of private sacrificing, contrary to the law of God; and, which was worst of all, sacrificing to other gods: it being very probable that he fancied some deity to inhabit under every well-spread flourishing tree.

Ver. 5. *Then Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him.*] This seems not to agree with 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, &c. where these two princes are represented as getting great victories over him. To which Abarbinel answers, that these things happened at different times. For the wars mentioned in the book of Chronicles were made severally by these two kings, wherein they prospered; being the ministers of Divine Providence. But when now they joined their forces together, and not only came against other cities, but against Jerusalem, God was pleased to make them miscarry.

Ver. 6. *At that time Rezin king of Syria.*] When he broke up the siege of Jerusalem, upon intelligence he received that Tiglath-pileser was coming to its relief.

Restored Elath to Syria.] This was a considerable port upon the Red Sea.

And drave the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there to this day.] This city had been recovered to the dominion of Judah by Azariah, (xiv. 22.) who took it from the Syrians; who now took it from them again, that they might not quite lose the fruit of their expedition against Jerusalem.

Ver. 7. *So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria.*] There is a learned man of our own, who hath lately given another account of the name of Pileser, than that abovementioned, (xv. 29.) For he thinks it is compounded of the names of two of their gods; Pil being the same with Bel, and Azer or Azar was the name of a planet worshipped by the Persians, *viz.* Mars: and they much affected to have the names of their gods in their own names; which was a common thing also among the Jews: for which reason the name of Tiglath was added, which was the name of Tigris (as I observed before), which, as all great beneficial rivers, mountains, and trees, was accounted sacred among the heathen. (See Dr. Hyde, Histor. Relig. Vet. Persar. cap. 3.).

Saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me.] He not only put himself and all he had into his protection; but made himself his subject, to hold all he had of him by his favour. For that is the meaning of *I am thy servant and thy son;* that is, he was content to be his vassal, if he would be his protector.

Ver. 8. *And Ahaz took the silver and the gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria.*] These treasures had been sent some years ago by Jehoash to the king of Syria; (xii. 18.) but it seems they were well replenished again by the piety of his successors, Amaziah, Azariah, but especially Jotham.

Ver. 9. *And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it.*] It is very uncertain when king Ahaz sent to desire this help. If it was when they were preparing to besiege Jerusalem, it was the effect of his great infidelity; for God had been so gracious to him, as to promise by the prophet Isaiah that those kings should do him no hurt, (Isa. vii. 4.) giving him a sign also to strengthen his faith. Others think, it was after the king of Syria and the king of Israel had miserably harassed Ahaz's country, though they could not take Jerusalem, as we read 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6, &c. Whensoever it was, the king of Assyria gave a powerful diversion to the king of Syria, invading his country, and besieging the chief city of it, of which he made himself master.

And carried the people of it captive to Kir.] A place in the country of the upper Media, as Josephus tells us: from whence he brought some people to plant in Damascus.

And slew Rezin.] Who was the last of their kings; for the Syrians never got up again, as the Jews observe in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 20. Whether he was legal successor to Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, or an usurper, is not certain.

Ver. 10. *And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria.*] To compliment him upon his success; and perhaps to do him homage, and to request him to do as much against Pekah as he had done against Rezin. For some think that after this he went and took all those places from Israel which are mentioned in the foregoing chapter, ver. 29. And after all he fell upon Judah itself, and made great spoil there also, as is suggested in 2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21.

And he saw an altar that was in Damascus.] A beautiful altar, both for the matter and form of it.

And king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof.] Not only the height, and breadth, and shape of it; but all the carvings, I suppose, with the figures and images wherewith it was adorned.

Ver. 11. *And Urijah the priest built an altar, according*

to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so Urijah the priest made it against the king came from Damascus.] He took care to have it done exactly according to the pattern; directly contrary to the command of God, who had appointed what kind of altar he would have, (Exod. xxvii. 1, 2, &c.) and that no other should be made of any matter or figure whatsoever. But there are always some men to be found, that will comply with the most wicked commands.

Ver. 12. *And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar.*] That is, liked it, and approved of it, as made perfectly agreeable to his mind.

And the king approached to the altar, and offered thereon.] The morning sacrifice: which he was so presumptuous, perhaps, as to offer himself. But not to God; for we are told expressly, 2 Chron. xxviii. 23. that he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus. A wonderful blindness! to worship those gods, and expect help from them, who could not preserve their own country from ruin.

Ver. 13. *And he burnt his burnt-offering.*] Some understand it, that he burnt it with spices.

And his meat-offering, and poured his drink-offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace-offerings, upon the altar.] These were all prescribed by the law of Moses: but he offered them in a wrong place, and unto other gods.

Ver. 14. *And he brought also the brazen altar, that was before the Lord, from the fore-front of the house, from between the altar and the house of the Lord, and put it on the north side of the altar.*] By these words, it is plain that Urijah had little more modesty than Ahaz: for he had placed Ahaz's altar behind the altar of the Lord, between it and the east gate of the court of the priests. But when Ahaz came, he removed Solomon's altar out of its place, which was before the sanctuary, and set it towards the north side of the court; that he might bring up his own, and set it there, where the altar of the Lord had stood. (See Dr. Lightfoot of the Temple, chap. 34. latter end.)

Ver. 15. *And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the great altar.*] Which he had now erected in the place of God's altar.

Burn the morning burnt-offering, and the evening meat-offering, and the king's burnt-sacrifice, and his meat-offering, with the burnt-offering of all the people of the land, and their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt-offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice.] He makes a solemn injunction, that all the public sacrifices, of what sort soever they were, whether made by himself or by the people, should be constantly offered upon his altar. Which he calls *the great altar*, because it was much bigger, I suppose, than the altar of God.

And the brazen altar shall be for me to inquire by.] He would not have it thought that he intended wholly to lay aside the altar made by Solomon: but rather to do it great honour, by reserving it for his own private use; when he pleased to inquire of God by it. But there being no mention of the name of the Lord, some think the meaning is no more, but that he would have it stand where he had set it; till he considered what to do with it: and they fancy that he made the famous dial of Ahaz with the brass of it. So they understand the Hebrew words *li lebaker*—I will take care of it, and order what shall be done with it. And therefore, according to this interpretation, he laid it quite aside. But the other seems more agreeable to the Hebrew phrase, *it shall be to me to inquire*, or *seek*, or *pray*: a private altar for his proper use: whereby he pretended to have still some regard to it, though he had degraded it.

Ver. 16. *So did Urijah the priest, according to all that king Ahaz commanded.*] Whatsoever good inclinations he had, they were all overruled by the commands of the king, with which he entirely complied.

Ver. 17. *And king Ahaz cut off the borders of the bases.*] See 1 Kings vii. 28, 29.

And removed the laver from off them; and took down the sea from off the brazen oxen that were under it, and put it upon a pavement of stones.] This was done out of contempt, that the sea might not appear so great and stately, nor be so useful to the priests, as it was before. For he intended quite to abolish, not only to deface, the service of God at the temple. So we read in 2 Chron. xxviii. 24. that he *shut up the doors of the house of God*, that none should worship there.

Ver. 18. *And the covert for the sabbath that they had built in the house.*] There is a vast variety of opinions concerning this *musach* (which we translate *covert*), and why it is called the *covert for the sabbath*. The most probable is, that it was a covered place, where the king sat in the porch of the temple, or at the entrance of it, upon the *sabbath*, or other great solemnities, which were called by that name. Thus Procopius Gazæus: This Ahaz took away, intending not to trouble himself to come to the temple; but to sacrifice any where: in every corner of Jerusalem, and in the several cities of Judah, which he would have be thought as holy as Jerusalem, (2 Chron. xxviii. 24, 25.) And it is a probable conjecture of a very learned man of our own, that Ahaz did this to express his hatred and contempt of the *sabbath*: for the worship of idols and violation of the sabbath are frequently joined together in Scripture, especially in Ezek. xx. 16. xxii. 8, 9. xxiv. 37, 38. and in a remarkable place in the Maccabees, i. 44. (See Spencer, de Leg. Hebræor. lib. i. cap. 1. 12.)

And the king's entry without, turned he from the house of the Lord.] The passage through which the king came from his own house to the temple, he turned another way.

For the king of Assyria.] That he might ingratiate himself with him, by contemning his own country religion, and approaching nearer to his. But Procopius takes it the quite contrary way; that he did this *for fear of the king of Assyria*. Which moved him to make a shorter passage into the house of the Lord, that he might flee thither instantly for safety, in case of any danger: which is not probable, because he profaned it, and shut up the doors of it.

Ver. 19. *Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 20. *And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David; and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.*

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *IN the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years.*] This doth not agree with xv. 30. where it is said he began to reign in the twentieth year of Jotham, which was the fourth of Ahaz. To this Ralbag thinks it sufficient to

say, that till the twelfth year of Ahaz he was but a servant of the king of Assyria; nor was reputed a king, but only a governor under him. And so Abarbinel. And it is no improbable conjecture of Dr. Lightfoot's, that Ahaz gave him a great deal of trouble, after the death of Pekah, in revenge of the slaughters he had made in Judah: so that he kept Hoshea out of the throne a great while, and upon this account is called the king of Israel, (2 Chron. xxviii. 19.) as well as because he walked in the ways of those kings. Our learned chronologer Mr. Whiston thinks there was an interregnum, for the space of full twelve years, from the death of Jeroboam the second. Which he takes to be most probable, and almost certain, from those words of Hosea, who prophesied in that king's time: "Now (or ere long) they shall say, We have no king, because we feared not the Lord; what then should a king do to us?" Hos. x. 3. (See his Short View of the Chronology of the Old Testament, p. 48.)

And he reigned in Samaria over Israel nine years.] *viz.* After his peaceable possession of the throne: for, from the time that he pretended to it, upon the slaughter of Pekah, he reigned seventeen or eighteen years; *viz.* twelve in the time of Ahaz, who reigned sixteen years, and six in the time of Hezekiah, (xviii. 10.)

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel that were before him.*] For he did not hinder his people from going to worship at Jerusalem: but, as the Hebrew doctors say, took away the guard that Jeroboam set in the passage, to keep men from going to the solemn feasts there. And one of the golden calves being carried away captive, his devotion, it is likely, was not great for the other remaining. And yet, notwithstanding, God exterminated Israel in his days: to shew (saith Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 22.) that it was not merely for the sake of their kings, upon whom the Israelites cast all the blame of their depravation, that they were carried captive. (See ver. 17—19, &c.)

Ver. 3. *Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria.*] Some take this to be but another name for Tiglath-pileser. For which I find no ground, and rather think Shalmaneser was his son, and successor in the kingdom of Assyria.

And Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents.] Made himself a tributary to him; and presented him with gifts in token of his subjection to him, and as an earnest of his future obedience.

Ver. 4. *And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year.*] He designed to shake off his yoke, and be no longer his subject, as he found by two undeniable evidences. First, that he had sent to treat with the king of Egypt; and denied him the usual tribute, which he was bound to pay him every year. St. Jerome calls this king of Egypt Sua, and Josephus calls him Soan, and the LXX. Segor, who is the same with the famous Sabacon, an Ethiopian mentioned by Diodorus Siculus and Herodotus. (See Sir J. Marsham, Can. Chron. sect. 16. and our famous Usher, in his Annals, vid. A. 3989.)

Therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.] He first besieged Samaria, and when he had taken it made him a close prisoner: the history of which follows.

Ver. 5. *Then the king of Assyria went up throughout all the land.*] He first possessed himself of the country of Moab (as the same great primate observes), that he might leave no enemies at his back; and destroyed their two chief cities, Ar and Kir-hares, according to the prediction of Isaiah, xvi. ver. 1. and the last: and then he invaded the kingdom of Israel, and possessed himself of it.

And went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years.] Josephus rightly observes two expeditions of this king against the land of Israel: first, when he made Hoshea tributary to him; and now, when he made himself master of the whole country, and besieged the capital city, (lib. ix. Antiq. cap. 13.)

Ver. 6. *In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor, by the river of Gozan.*] There is no reason that any should imagine these Israelites were carried into Colchis, Iberia, Armenia the less, and the farthest Scythia, when the Scripture saith so expressly that they were carried into Assyria, and the cities of the Medes; and when the very places are to be found into which they are said here to be carried in those countries, *viz.* Chalac, and Chabor, and Gozan: for what was Chalach (as Bochartus observes) but Ptolemy's Chalachena, or the north of Assyria? and Chabor is plainly enough the same with his Χαβώρας, a mountain between Media and Assyria. Between which mountain and the Caspian Sea there is the city Gauzania, that is Gozan, between the two channels of the river Cyrus.

And in the cities of the Medes.] Whither Tiglath-pileser had carried others of them out of Galilee.

Ver. 7. *For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had served other gods.*] This they had done a long time: for, from the beginning of Jeroboam's schism to the carrying Israel captive was two hundred and sixty-three years.

Ver. 8. *And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom God cast out from before the children of Israel.*] Of the Amorites and other impious people, whom he expelled from the land of Canaan to make room for them.

And of the kings of Israel, which they had made.] *viz.* The golden calves, whose worship the kings of Israel had ordained, to keep them from going up to worship God at Jerusalem.

Ver. 9. *And the children of Israel did secretly those things which were not right against the Lord their God.*] Besides the public impiety authorized by their kings, they privately exercised idolatry, according to their own fancy.

And they built them high places in all their city.] They were not content to worship upon hills and mountains, but they raised high places in all cities to offer sacrifice.

From the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.] In all places, both those that were desert, and those that were inhabited; or both in the country and in the city. For the *towers of the watchmen* are thought to be those little houses which the country people built, wherein to watch their flocks and their fruits, and preserve them from wild beasts or robbers.

Ver. 10. *And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree.*] The Hebrew word

Asherim, which we translate *groves*, should be rendered idols of that name, as Selden hath observed, Syntag. de Diis Syris, ii. cap. 2. where he plainly demonstrates this word doth not signify the grove, but the *numen* or *deity* placed in the grove. For how should groves *be set under every green tree?* as it is here said the *Asherim* were. And thus Kimchi saith in the root *Ashur*, that every wooden thing that was worshipped was called *Asherah*. And Procopius Gazæus observes, that this word, which the LXX. here translate ἄλση, *groves*, others every where translate Ἀσταρώθ, which word, saith he, δηλοῖ τὴν Ἀστάρτην, Ἀφροδίτην, denotes *Astarte*, that is, *Venus*.

Ver. 11. *And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen, whom the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger.*] For, as the son of Sirach expresses it, *they sought out all wickedness, till the vengeance came upon them.* (See Ecclus. xlvii. *ult.*)

Ver. 12. *For they served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, Ye shall not do these things.*] They worshipped many other gods, which were mere idols, against the express command of God, (Exod. xx. 23. Deut. iv. 15, 16, &c.)

Ver. 13. *Yet the Lord testified against Israel and Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers.*] I have before noted, that Abarbinel, in his commentary on these books, hath observed one or more prophets that were in every king's reign, both in Israel and Judah, from the time of Saul to Zedekiah, in whose time Jerusalem was laid desolate. These admonished them of their duty, as it here follows, and endeavoured to preserve them in God's true religion, or to recover them when they apostatized from it; particularly in the days of this very king, when Israel was carried captive, they had the prophets Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, and Micah: and in the days of the last king when Judah was carried captive, they had Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments, and my statutes, according to all the laws which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.] As he had given them his laws by Moses; so he continued a succession of prophets after him, whom he sent to call upon them to observe these laws.

Ver. 14. *Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like the neck of their fathers.*] A metaphor taken from refractory oxen, that will not bow down their necks to the yoke. Even so the Israelites refused to submit to the yoke of God's laws.

That did not believe in the Lord their God.] This was the original of all the sins they committed: they did not believe God's prophets, but hearkened to deceivers.

Ver. 15. *And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them.*] By his servants the prophets.

And they followed vanities.] So idols are called, which, as the apostle speaks, are *nothing;* having no power to do either hurt or good.

And became vain.] Like the idols they worshipped; senseless, sottish, and good for nothing.

And went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them.] See Exod. xxiii. 24. 32. and many other places.

Ver. 16. *And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove.*] The making a grove was a greater impiety than is commonly imagined. For in their groves they worshipped Baalim, as appears from Judg. iii. 7.; that is, heroes, to whom those groves were consecrated, being their sepulchre. And here many filthy rites were practised, in honour of Venus, Bacchus, and such-like deities.

And worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.] They grew worse and worse, not contenting themselves with the worship of the two calves, &c. but worshipped the stars of heaven, (against which Moses had given them a particular caution, Deut. iv. 19.) Saturn, Jupiter, Venus, and the moon, but especially Baal, which was the sun.

Ver. 17. *And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments.*] Which were the most abominable sins of the heathen. (See Lev. xviii. 21. xix. 26. xx. 2, 3, &c. Deut. xviii. 10. and upon ver. 3. of the foregoing chapter.)

And sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.] They were so industrious to do wickedly, and so incessant in it, as if they had been slaves that were sold to that drudgery.

Ver. 18. *Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight.*] From the holy land, where his temple was, in which he dwelt among them.

Till there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.] Unto whom adhered part of Benjamin and the Levites; who, as it here follows, imitated the wickedness of Israel; but yet had some mixture of good kings among them. Whereas all the kings of Israel persisted in the sins of Jeroboam; and therefore, before their removal out of their land, they suffered great calamities, no less than nine of their kings being killed (as Abarbinel notes) before their last king was carried captive.

Ver. 19. *Also Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.*] Followed the idolatrous devices of the ten tribes; as they did most notoriously in the last reign of Ahaz: whose son Hezekiah indeed made a noble reformation; but it lasted no longer than his time, so extremely was this nation corrupted.

Ver. 20. *And the Lord rejected.*] With loathing and abhorrence, as the word imports.

All the house of Israel.] The whole ten tribes.

And afflicted them, and delivered them into the hands of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight.] See x. 32, 33. xiii. 3. 7.

Ver. 21. *For he rent Israel from the house of David.*] Here was the foundation of their ruin.

And he made Jeroboam the son of Nebat their king; and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the Lord, and made Israel sin a great sin.] Of which he was the author; but they were too forward to comply with him.

Ver. 22. *For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did: they departed not from them.*] They were so inclined to idolatry, that a long succession of God's judgments upon them could not reclaim them.

Ver. 23. *Until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets.*] Unto whose admonitions and threatenings they had no regard.

So was Israel carried away out of their own land to As-

syria unto this day.] As they *sold themselves to do evil,* (ver. 17.) so God delivered them up to be slaves to those whose gods they had worshipped, (ver. 16, 17.)

Ver. 24. *And the king of Assyria brought men.*] This was not done by Shalmaneser, but by his son Esar-haddon, (Ezra iv. 2.)

From Babylon.] Which was then subject to the king of Assyria; but not long after revolted.

And from Cuthah.] A city of Chaldea, as Abarbinel expounds it: and so doth our Dr. Hyde out of several Persian writers, (Hist. Relig. Vet. Pers. cap. 2.) But it rather here signifies a country called Cush also (which, perhaps, had its name from the forenamed city), from whence the greatest part of this colony being brought, the people in aftertimes were called Cuthæi. For the same author truly observes, that the country called Cush was, in the Babylonish dialect (afterward called the Chaldean), called Cuth. For they were wont to change the letter *schin* into *thau.* In this country, in the land of Shinar, Cush first settled; and his posterity spread itself into Arabia.

And from Ava.] The Avites were a very ancient people, who were driven by the Caphtorim out of Hazerim; and went and settled beyond Euphrates. (See upon Deut. ii. 23.)

And from Hamath.] This was a city of Syria, on the borders of Canaan; which was now subject to the king of Assyria, by a late conquest of it, (xvi. 9.)

And from Sepharvaim.] There is a city called Siphara, on the side of which the river Euphrates runs, not far from the sea. From this mixture of nations it was, that afterward there happened such a confusion of laws, and manners, and rites of religion, as was in this country.

And placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they possessed Samaria.] That is, the whole country, wherein the ten tribes formerly dwelt.

And dwelt in the cities thereof.] Which were not destroyed, I suppose, but left standing, with a design to send new inhabitants into them.

Ver. 25. *And it was so, at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the Lord; therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which slew some of them.*] And did not the Israelites also want the fear of the Lord, as Abarbinel here notes, and yet were not devoured by lions? To which he answers, that though the Israelites also served idols, yet they did not deny the Divine power and providence; but imagined these idols to be the intermediate causes by which the Divine influences might be conveyed unto them: for it is plain Jeroboam did not deny the Lord, (1 Kings xiii. 6.) but acknowledged his power. But these new inhabitants believed the idols which they worshipped to be true gods; and therefore were destroyed by lions, because they did not acknowledge the power and providence of God over all inferior beings, whose land this was; and hereby he vindicated his ancient inheritance and possession to himself.

Ver. 26. *Wherefore they spake unto the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them; because they know not the manner of the God of the land.*] They took the God of Israel to be of the same kind with their own, who affected a particular country and people, and would be honoured with peculiar rites, which were acceptable to him, and none else. The Syrians had the same conceit of *topical* gods, as I observed upon 1 Kings xx. 23. and see below, xviii. 35.

Ver. 27. *Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests, whom ye brought from thence, and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land.*] The Jews in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 38. tell the story thus: that the king of Assyria called the elders of Israel together, and said, All the while you dwelt in the land of Samaria, it was not infested with lions; what is the reason that my people are devoured by them? To which they answered, Our lord the king, this land will not receive any uncircumcised nation. Let two of you go then (replied the king) and circumcise them, and teach them the book of the law. So R. Dosithæus and R. Zachariah were sent, who did the business. Here they make bold to go beyond the Scripture, in making two great doctors to have been sent, when there was but one. Though it is very probable there were some associates who accompanied this principal priest: for the text saith, when the king bade them *carry one of the priests* thither, he added, and *let them* dwell there. Which signifies he did not go alone: though he alone was to teach them, as it follows, *the manner of the God of the land.*

Ver. 28. *Then one of the priests, whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught them how they should fear the Lord.*] That is, how they should worship and serve him. From whence many learned men conclude, that he brought the book of the law with him, without which he could not fully instruct them how to worship God, and govern themselves: which book they suppose was written in the Babylonian character, because it was to teach a colony of that nation. This is opposed by a late learned man, who earnestly contends, that the book of the law was not brought to them till the time of Sanballat; and therefore this priest instructed them without the book, only by tradition. Which is not probable; for they would have had little regard to him, if he had not produced the authority of that holy book, delivered to them by that great lawgiver Moses, the man of God: for, that he taught them the right way of worshipping God according to the law, as it was practised in Judah, is very likely; being sensible that God abhorred the other worship which Israel practised; for which he had thrown them out of their land.

Ver. 29. *Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt.*] It seems the people of Israel, who are here called Samaritans, had built little temples in the high places; wherein these new inhabitants worshipped the gods of the country from which they came, (that is, the *gods of Assyria,* Ezek. xxvii. 7.) together with the God of Israel.

Ver. 30. *And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth.*] The Jewish doctors do but trifle in their exposition of this word, which they say signifies *a hen and chickens.* The word plainly imports, *the tabernacles of daughters,* or of *young maidens:* who were consecrated to Venus, whose name Mr. Selden probably conjectures was derived from *Benoth.* The old idolaters, it is evident, did prostitute their daughters in honour of Venus, as not only Strabo, Herodotus, and other profane writers testify; but some think is suggested in holy Scripture, Lev. xix. 29. And

therefore they of Babylon are said to make the *tabernacles of daughters;* that is, chapels wherein their daughters were prostituted to every one that came to worship Venus, as the manner was in Babylon, from whence the forenamed authors testify this filthiness had its original. (See Selden, de Diis Syris Syntag. ii. cap. 7. and Vossius, de Idololatr. lib. ii. cap. 22.)

And the men of Cuth made Nergal.] Which the Jews would have to signify *a cock.* But their conjecture is better, who think it signified *fire.* For the men of Cuth are those that were afterward called Persians; who, it is certain, anciently worshipped the fire. (See Selden, cap. 8.) But the famous Bochartus ingenuously confesses he doth not know what *Nergal* was; but that there is a sort of palm-tree called *Nergil* by the Persians, Arabians, and Indians, of which they report strange things. From whence, perhaps, the Persians gave the name of *Nergal* to this idol, as in Syria their god was called *Rimmon,* from the pomegranate. (Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. i. cap. 16.)

And the men of Hamath made Ashima.] I know no ground the Jews have to say, this word *Ashima* signifies a *smooth goat.* Our great Selden modestly acknowledges he doth not know what god it was, (ib. cap. 9.) But a late author takes *Ashima* to be the same with Mars: because among the ancients *A S* signified the same with Ἄρης among the Greeks; and *schemah* is as much as hearing or obedient, (Jo. Gensius de Victimis Humanis, par. i. p. 92.) And this *A S* he conjectures is the same whom the Romans called *Hesus,* whom Lucan mentions in his Pharsalia, lib. i. ver. 443.

——— "Horrentque feris altaribus Hesus."

But, after all, I think my learned friend Dr. Alix hath made the most probable conjecture, that *Ashima* is the name of God, whom the Hebrews call *Hashem, the name:* from whence *Ashima,* I doubt not, is derived. Accordingly Aben Ezra saith, in his preface to the book of Esther, that he saw in a Samaritan Pentateuch, Gen. i. 1. *Bara Ashima,* instead of *Bara Elohim.* Which Bochart censures as a falsity, because no such word is to be found in the whole Samaritan Pentateuch; but it might be then in some paraphrase upon it.

Ver. 31. *And the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak.*] Nobody knows what these were; for no credit is to be given to the Jews, who say, the former was in the shape of *a dog,* and the other of *an ass.* Selden thinks they were the same idol called by different names, but was not able to give an account of them.

And the Sepharvites burnt their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim.] These were the same gods with Moloch; unto whom the same sacrifices were offered. The Jews, after their vain fancies, make one of them to have been in the form of a *peacock,* and the other of a *pheasant:* but in all probability they were but different names of Moloch, which was the sun, as is evident from xxiii. 10, 11.; and the addition of *Addir,* which signifies magnificent or potent, makes Adrammelech as much as the mighty Moloch; and of *Ana,* which signifies to answer, makes Anammelech as much as oracular Moloch. For Moloch, and Melech, and Milcom, are all the very same in the language of different people, signifying a *king:* the sun being by them accounted *the king,* as the moon *the queen of heaven.* And there is nothing more known than that the gentiles burnt their children in sacrifice to him. But whether these people did so, or only made them pass through the fire to purify them, may be questioned; though the words seem to import the former: which was the practice of the Phœnicians, Syrians, Tyrians, Carthaginians, Cretans, Arabians, and many other nations; and is still practised by the Americans, and other gentiles.

A learned writer of our own, Dr. Hyde, in the book beforementioned, had a quite different apprehension of these words: for he will have Adrammelech to signify *the king of the flock, Adre* being as much as *Greges;* and Anammelech he thinks is much of the same signification, *Ana* being as much as *Pecus,* in the Persian language: always signifying collectively in the plural number, the lesser cattle, sheep and goats. Of which he imagines these gods had the care, and were therefore worshipped; the riches of those people consisting much in cattle. They were also celestial constellations (as he there observes), which they imagined promoted the breeding and growth of cattle.

Ver. 32. *So they feared the Lord.*] Worshipped the Lord God of Israel.

And made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places.] I suppose these sacrifices were offered to the God of Israel, but in high places, and by priests of their own making. As for their sacrifices to the gods of their several countries, no doubt they brought priests along with them, to perform the service belonging to them.

Ver. 33. *They feared the Lord, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence.*] That is, after the manner of the ten tribes, who worshipped the Lord, and the golden calves together with him, and sometimes Baal, and other gods, (ver. 16.)

Ver. 34. *Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the Lord, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the Lord commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel.*] These, and the following words, give an account of the children of Israel; who, being carried captive out of their own land (as hath been related), were not at all amended thereby; but still neglected all the laws which God had given them, and did not worship him alone; and therefore in truth *they feared not the Lord.*

Ver. 35. *With whom the Lord had made a covenant, and charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor save them, nor sacrifice to them.*] Whose sins he aggravates (and thereby justifies his severe proceedings against them) by representing them as a select people, who were in a strict and gracious covenant with him, obliging them not to shew the least respect to any other god but himself.

Ver. 36. *But the Lord, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power, and a stretched-out arm, him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice.*] This was a benefit, one would think, that should never have been forgotten; but eternally engaged them to his service, who delivered them from so vile a slavery.

Ver. 37. *And the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, which he wrote for you, ye shall*

observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods.] This is repeated again, being so very often mentioned in the book of the law, that they should worship no other god.

Ver. 38. *And the covenant that I have made with you ye shall not forget; neither shall ye fear other gods.*] Which was the principal thing in the covenant.

Ver. 39. *But the Lord your God ye shall fear; and he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies.*] As he did whensoever they renounced idolatry, and promised to worship him alone; as we read throughout their whole history in these holy books.

Ver. 40. *Howbeit they did not hearken, but they did after their former manner.*] They soon revolted, when they solemnly protested to repent; and did just as they had done before, as the same books testify.

Ver. 41. *So those nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.*] Just thus did the nations who came in their room into the country of Samaria: they joined their own gods with the Lord God of Israel, and continued so to do, they and their posterity, unto the time this book was written, and long after. For, as Mr. Mede hath observed, this medley of religions lasted above three hundred years, till towards the end of the Persian monarchy. At which time Manasse, brother to Jadda the high-priest of the Jews (that were returned to their own land), married the daughter of Sanballat, governor of Samaria. And after his example, other Jews of the best rank having married strange wives, contrary to the law, and being loath to leave them, betook themselves thither also; whom Sanballat entertained, and made his son-in-law their priest. And when Alexander the Great subdued the Persian monarchy, he obtained leave of him to build a temple upon Mount Gerizim, where Manasseh exercised the office of high-priest. This was very prejudicial to the Jews, and the occasion of a schism; whilst those who were discontented or excommunicated at Jerusalem were wont to run hither. Yet by this means the Samaritans (having gotten one of the sons of Aaron for their priest, and so many Jews being mingled among them) were brought to throw away all their false gods, and worship the God of Israel only. Yet so, that though they seemed to themselves to be the true worshippers of God, they retained a smack of idolatry; worshipping God under a visible representation, *viz.* that of a *dove*. Just as their predecessors, the ten tribes, worshipped the same God under the similitude of a calf, (book i. discourse 13.) And indeed this inclination to have some sensible representation of God was so universal, that they who had none, were thought by the gentile world to worship nothing.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass, in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign.*] The third year of those nine which are mentioned before, xvii. 1. (See there.)

Ver. 2. *Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem: his mother's name also was Abi, daughter of Zachariah.*] Unto this it is objected, that Ahaz lived but thirty and six years; (xvi. 2.) and therefore, according to this account, begat Hezekiah when he was but eleven years old, which seems incredible. To which Capellus in his Chronologia answers, that he reigned two or three years with his father; which is not likely, for the text saith he was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, after his father's death, which is beforementioned. And the solution of the Jews, mentioned by St. Jerome, is not much better, who say, he did not begin to reign presently after his father's death, but there was an interregnum for some years; because of a sedition that was in Jerusalem. But as there is no proof of this, so it is improbable that Hezekiah, who was a grown man, and beloved of the people, should not presently succeed his father. Calvisius's account is still worse, who will have Hezekiah to have been only the adopted son of Ahaz: which spoils the descent of our Saviour from David, as Bochartus observes: who therefore plainly admits that he did beget Hezekiah, when he was eleven or twelve years old. For so it may be understood, that he was but just entered upon the twenty-fifth year of his age, when he began his reign; and so but twenty-four complete. Therefore his father begat him about the twelfth year of his age. For if, from thirty-six years, four-and-twenty be taken, there remain twelve. And if we suppose, as we may very well, that Ahaz was near one-and-twenty years old when he began to reign, and near seventeen years older before he died (for the Scriptures, no more than other writers, do not take notice whether the year be perfect or imperfect), then he might be near fourteen years old when he begat Hezekiah. But take it according to the first account, that he was but eleven or twelve years old, Bochartus hath given a vast number of instances of persons that procreated children at that age. For ripeness for procreation is not to be precisely determined, either by physicians, philosophers, or lawyers (who have been pleased to fix the time); but consideration is to be had of the climate wherein men live, of the temper and constitution of their bodies, of their diet, and many other things; as he observes in an epistle to Nicol. Carbonellus, in his additions to the last edition of his Phaleg. p. 920.

Ver. 3. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did.*] A character which is not given, I think, to any of the kings of Judah, since the reign of Asa, (1 Kings xv. 11.)

Ver. 4. *He removed the high places.*] Which none of his predecessors had the courage to attempt. But the carrying of the ten tribes captive, I suppose, mightily awakened both him and all the people, for the present (while it was fresh before their eyes), to observe the law of God very strictly.

And brake the images, and cut down the groves.] Which his father Ahaz had multiplied, (xvi. 14. 2 Chron. xxviii. 2. 24, 25.)

And brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made.] Which had been piously preserved as a monument of God's wonderful mercy to them in the wilderness; as Gideon intended his *ephod* should be of another deliverance, (Judg. viii. 27.) But as they went a whoring after that, so they did after this, as the Jews phrase it in Avoda Zara: and therefore Hezekiah broke it in pieces; that is, as the Talmudists there explain it, ground it to powder, and then scattered it into the air, that nothing of it might

remain to be worshipped as a relic by superstitious people. And yet there is a fable that some fragments of it did remain until Josiah's time; and at this day, as Sigonius relates in his history of the kingdom of Italy, they shew this brazen serpent entire at the church of St. Ambrose, in Milan. But the wiser Romanists are ashamed of it, and acknowledge it is not the serpent made by Moses (which being broken in pieces by Hezekiah, was never restored), but another made in imitation of it. (See Buxtorf. Histor. Serpentis Æneï, cap. 6.)

For unto this day the children of Israel had burnt incense to it.] When this superstition began, we are not told; but nobody gives a better account of it than David Kimchi, whose words are these:—From the time that the kings of Israel did evil, and the children of Israel followed idolatry, until the reign of Hezekiah, they offered incense to it. For it being written in the law of Moses, *whosoever looks upon it shall live*, they fancied they might obtain blessings by its mediation, and therefore thought it worthy to be worshipped. It had been kept from Moses's days in memory of a miracle, just as the pot of manna also was; and Asa and Jehoshaphat did not extirpate it when they rooted out idolatry, because in their reign they did not observe that the people worshipped this serpent, or burnt incense to it, and therefore they left it as a memorial. But Hezekiah thought fit to take it quite away, when he abolished other idolatry, because in the time of his father they worshipped it as an idol. And though pious people among them accounted it only to be a memorial of a wonderful work, yet he judged it better to abolish it, though the memory of the miracle were lost together with it, than suffer it to remain, and leave the Israelites in danger to commit idolatry hereafter with it.

And he called it Nehushtan.] Some think Hezekiah called it by this name; others, that the Israelites called it so; the words signifying indifferently *it was called Nehushtan, viz.* by way of contempt and scorn. For the letter *nun* at the end of a word, the Jews say, is added by way of diminution. And *nechosheth* signifying brass, this is as much as to say, this serpent was mere brass or copper, and had no power in it, no profit, no ability to help, no divinity; and therefore not to be worshipped with Divine honour. Thus Kimchi: It being called by this name signified as much as if Hezekiah had said, "How could it come into any man's heart to think that this serpent could do any thing, which is mere brass?" Or, as Ralbag expounds it, "This serpent hath no more virtue in it than the common brass in their houses." For he takes *an*, in the end of the word, to be the same with *am, ipsorum*. But there is a great and good man of our own, who, having endeavoured to shew that the destruction of the old serpent the devil was fore-shadowed by the lifting up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, concludes that Hezekiah was moved with the greater indignation against the worship of it, because in truth it never was a type of our Saviour and Redeemer, but a figure of his grand enemy. This made him express such detestation of it, as is imported, he thinks, in the word *Nehushtan*. The signification of which is not to be found in our lexicons: for though *nechosheth* signify no more than brass, yet *Nehushtan* imports no less than our English words, *foul fiend, the old dragon, or Satan*. (See Dr. Jackson, Humiliation of the Son of God, chap. 31. parag. 6.)

Ver. 5. *He trusted in the Lord God of Israel.*] And not in the help of foreign forces, as his father Ahaz did; (xvi. 7.) nay, which that good king Asa called in to his assistance, (1 Kings xv. 18, 19.)

So that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.] Since the time that the kingdoms of Judah and Israel were divided.

Ver. 6. *For he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses.*] He continued to observe God's laws through the whole course of his reign, to the conclusion of it; and did not like some of his predecessors, who began well, but fell off in the end of their days, as Joash and Amaziah did, (xii. 2. xiv. 3. 2 Chron. xxiv. 2. 19. xxv. 14.)

Ver. 7. *And the Lord was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.*] His prosperous success in all his enterprises, which was a visible token of God's presence with him, emboldened him to throw off the yoke of the king of Assyria, to which Ahaz had basely submitted; (xvi. 7.) which was not properly rebellion in Hezekiah, for Ahaz could not subject his kingdom to the Assyrian monarch, but only for his own time: his son was not bound to be his slave. Therefore the meaning is, he owned not the authority of the Assyrian king over him, but looked upon himself as a free sovereign in his own kingdom, independent upon him. In this, perhaps, he was a little too forward, being very much lifted up by his victories; but it is plain he was not able to maintain himself free from all subjection to the king of Assyria, (ver. 14.)

Ver. 8. *He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.*] We had this phrase before, xvii. 19. (See there.) And these words seem to signify that he smote them all the country over, and recovered from them more than his father had lost, (2 Chron. xxviii. 18.) According to the prophecy of Isaiah, xiv. 18. where he bids the Philistines not to rejoice, because the rod that smote them was broken; (that is, Uzziah was dead, who had sorely afflicted them, 2 Chron. xxvi. 6, 7.) for out of his root should come another, that would more grievously gall them, which was Hezekiah.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass, in the fourth year of king Hezekiah (which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel), that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it.*] We had an account of the taking of Samaria before; and therefore the mentioning of it here again may seem needless. But, as now the year of Hezekiah's reign is set down wherein it was taken, so Abarbinel thinks the intention of the Divine writer was to connect these two histories together; the taking of Samaria, and the ascent of Sennacherib against Jerusalem; who, eight years after the destruction of the former, with great pride and confidence imagined he should do as much by the latter.

Ver. 10. *And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah (that is the ninth year of Hoshea), Samaria was taken.*

Ver. 11. *And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel into Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.*] As was before related, (chap. xvii. 6.) but could not be too often re-

peated, to make posterity dread the judgments of God, that were fallen upon them for their sins; as it follows again in the next words.

Ver. 12. *Because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed his covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them.*] See xvii. 34, 35.

Ver. 13. *Now, in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria.*] He was the son of Shalmaneser, and succeeded him in his kingdom after his death; as we read in the book of Tobit, i. 15.

Come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.] That is, took a great many of them, (2 Chron. xxxii. 1.)

Ver. 14. *And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish.*] This shews he had not taken all the fenced cities, for Lachish was a city of Judah, (Josh. xv. 39.) which is mentioned before in this book, (xiv. 19.) and was not yet taken, though siege was laid to it. Which, when he had taken, he intended to go up against Jerusalem; (2 Chron. xxxii. 2.) which moved Hezekiah to divert him from his purpose, by begging his pardon, as it here follows, for what he had done in shaking off his yoke.

Saying, I have offended.] In denying to be subject to him, which no doubt was the reason of this invasion.

Return from me: that which thou puttest upon me I will bear.] Though he had made great provision against him, as we read 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4, &c. yet he durst not venture to abide a siege; but chose rather to divert him, by submitting to such conditions as he would impose upon him.

And the king of Assyria appointed to Hezekiah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold.] This was a great burden, though it was not a yearly tribute, but only a present payment; which his weakness forced him to submit unto.

Ver. 15. *And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord.*] Which in public necessities they thought it was lawful to make use of, for their preservation. Yet the Talmudists reckon this one of the three ill things that Hezekiah did, in cutting off the golden plates, mentioned in the next verse. (See Selden, de Synedr. lib. ii. cap. 1. n. 4.)

And in the treasures of the king's house.] Which had been so exhausted before, that he was forced to raise the money by other means, as it follows, ver. 16.

Ver. 16. *At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.*] It is very probable, that when Ahaz defaced the temple, and shut up the doors of it, (xvi. 17. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 2. 4.) he cut off this gold; which Hezekiah took care to repair; but was now constrained to cut it off himself. Upon which words Procopius Gazæus seems to me to have very well observed; that Hezekiah, finding he had not sufficient treasure of his own, to answer the imposition laid upon him, was driven by necessity to make use of things sacred, lest the enemy should burn the city and the temple. But what was thus employed, pious kings were wont to restore, as soon as they were able, out of the spoils of war, when it was ended.

Ver. 17. *And the king of Assyria sent Tartan, and Rab-saris, and Rab-shakeh, from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem: and they went up and came to Jerusalem.*] Some of the Jews think that Sennacherib, having received the tribute from Hezekiah, went to his own land; but because Hezekiah did not continue to send it every year, after some time returned to Judea again, and besieged Jerusalem. But there is not a word of this, either in this book, or the Chronicles, or in the prophet Isaiah: therefore it is more probable, that, having received the money he demanded, he made his expedition into Egypt, of which Herodotus and others, and some think Isaiah also, speak, as Sir John Marsham observes, (Isa. x. 26. 28.) But as he was the first king of Assyria that invaded Egypt, so he went no further than to the entrance of it, to Pelusium, which he could not take, and so at his return broke his faith with Hezekiah; and notwithstanding his present, wherewith he pretended to be satisfied, laid siege to Jerusalem.

And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field.] They took up their head-quarters, as we now speak, by the conduit or canal, into which water was derived from the upper fish-pond or pool; which was in the highway to the field, where the fullers, after they had washed their clothes in that pool, were wont to spread them.

Ver. 18. *And when they had called to the king.*] They were so bold as to demand audience of the king himself, that they might treat with him in person for a surrender.

There came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.] Though he would not vouchsafe to go himself, yet he sent his *major-domo*, as they now speak, and his *secretary*, or a principal doctor of the law, and the *master of the requests*. For since the king of Assyria sent three messengers, he thought fit to send as many. Isaiah, indeed, mentions only Rab-shakeh, as sent by the king of Assyria: which Seder Olam Rabba thinks is meant of the first legation; but in the second, when he besieged Libnah, (xix. 8.) he joined Tartan and Rabsaris with him. It is very uncertain what officer Shebna was; for he is said Isa. xxii. 15. to be *over the house*, and the LXX. sometimes make him *treasurer*, sometimes *scribe*, and Mr. Selden thinks he might be *præfectus prætorio*. (Lib. de Succes. in Pontif. p. 142.)

Ver. 19. *And Rab-shakeh said unto them.*] He was the chief speaker, being an eloquent man; and, as the Hebrew doctors will have it (whom Procopius follows), an apostate Jew. Which is not altogether improbable; both because he could speak readily in the Hebrew tongue, and when he blasphemed the Divine Majesty, the king and his nobles rent their clothes; which was not usual, unless he that uttered such blasphemous words was an Israelite. Some think his name imports that he was the principal *cupbearer* to the king of Assyria.

Speak ye now to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria.] He assumed to himself the style of the *great king*, because of his great conquests and large dominions.

What confidence is this wherein thou trustest?] As much as to say, it was the greatest folly to think any body could defend him from so great a king.

Ver. 20. *Thou sayest (but they are but vain words), I have counsel and strength for the war.*] In reason, he thought Hezekiah should not stand out against his master, unless he had all things necessary for his defence: but he did delude his people, if he told them, that he wanted neither skill to manage war, nor power to execute good counsels.

Now, on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?] He derides him, as full of vain hopes; and upbraids him with his rebellion. Of which he was thought formerly to be guilty, but could not now be justly accused of it, when he had submitted to him with such a great present. These are therefore words of the highest pride and insolence.

Ver. 21. *Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt.*] He thought it probable he would seek for succour from Egypt, being a neighbouring country; which would be ready to assist him, that they might be revenged of the king of Assyria for his late invasion. But he represents Egypt as very weak, and utterly unable to help him; being sorely crushed, though not destroyed, by Sennacherib.

On which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.] He represents the power of Egypt to be as brittle as the cane or reeds that grow on the banks of the Nile (to which he seems to allude), on which if a man leaned, they brake, and the splinters run into his hand. Such is Pharaoh, saith he, a man gets no help, but mischief, by relying upon him; as he doth who takes one of those canes for his staff to support him.

Ver. 22. *But if ye say unto me, We trust in the Lord our God: is not that he whose high places and altars Hezekiah hath taken away; and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?*] This weak arguing proceeded from his ignorance of that God and his law, in whom Hezekiah trusted. Which made him call those crimes, which were his greatest virtues; in prohibiting their offering sacrifice in any other place but that which God appointed.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.*] He seems to challenge him to come out, and fight with his master: and, if he could give security to make that use of them, he would furnish him with two thousand horses, provided he was able to find so many men to sit upon them. Which are words of the highest contempt, and undervaluing of his power. Or, the meaning may be, he would lay a wager with him, he could not find men to sit upon so many horses; for few were good horsemen in Judea, where horses were scarce.

Ver. 24. *How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants.*] Much less stand before his whole army.

And put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and horsemen?] With which Egypt abounded above most other countries; who sometimes furnished the Israelites with horses, but none like Egypt. For which reason Moses forbids them to multiply horses, lest it should cause them to return to Egypt; (Deut. xvii. 16.) and the prophet reproves them severely for going to Egypt for help, and staying upon horses, &c. (Isa. xxxi. 1. 3.)

Ver. 25. *Am I now come up without the Lord against this place to destroy it? The Lord said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.*] If he had not been a Jew, yet he had learned the name of their God; and pretended his master was come up against Jerusalem, by a commission from him. Which were vain words; (as he calls Hezekiah's, ver. 20.) for there were none of his prophets among the Assyrians. But, perhaps, he concluded from what the Assyrian king had done to Samaria, God intended he should do so to Jerusalem.

Ver. 26. *Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rab-shakeh, saying, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language (for we understand it); and speak not with us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall.*] I suppose Eliakim perceived the people to be frighted with his big words, and therefore entreated him, in the name of the other commissioners sent to treat with him, to speak no longer in the Jews' language, but in his own: for he was not sent to treat with the people, but with them who understood the Syrian tongue very well.

Ver. 27. *But Rab-shakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men that sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?*] To make them know that he will reduce them to the greatest extremity, if they do not submit unto him? for it is an hyperbolical speech, importing such straits as were never known.

Ver. 28. *And Rab-shakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.*] He seems to have raised both himself and his voice higher, that he might be better heard by all.

Ver. 29. *Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you; for he shall not be able to deliver you out of my hand.*] He repeats, with the greatest assurance, the power of his king, and the weakness of Hezekiah: representing from thence how they were deluded with empty promises, if he persuaded them he should be able to preserve them.

Ver. 30. *Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.*] This was the highest presumption to persuade them not to place their hope in God, as if his master was stronger than he.

Ver. 31. *Hearken not to Hezekiah: but make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern.*] Having represented to them the miseries unto which a siege would reduce them, he invites them to a surrender upon advantageous conditions.

Ver. 32. *Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land; a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil-olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not to Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The Lord will deliver us.*] If they would seek the favour of the king of Assyria, by making him a present, and delivering themselves up to his mercy, he promises they should be transported to a better country than that to which the Israelites were carried: and, in the meantime, every one enjoy his own possessions. But he was afraid Heze-

kiah's avowed confidence in God would prevail with them, to trust to him for deliverance, which makes him so often desire them not to depend upon that.

Ver. 33. *Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?*] He argues very popularly and strongly, if his supposition had been true, That the God of Israel, the God of the whole earth (yea, of heaven and earth), was like those of all other nations, who presided only over one country or city.

Ver. 34. *Where are the gods of Hamath and of Arpad?*] Those were cities or countries, which the king of Assyria had conquered.

Where are the gods of Sepharvaim.] Mentioned before, xvii. 31.

Hena, and Ivah?] Some think these were the gods of Sepharvaim; which is confuted by the place beforenamed. They were rather cities, whose gods could not protect them.

Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?] That is, have the gods of Samaria been able to do more than the rest?

Ver. 35. *Who are they among all the gods of the countries that have delivered their country out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?*] He desires an instance of one god, that had been able to save his country when his master invaded it: and therefore it was best for them to yield their city up to him, since God himself could not preserve it, unless he could do more than any other had done, which he concluded was unlikely. It must be acknowledged that Rab-shakeh was an excellent orator, as well as a soldier, not inferior in eloquence to Julius Cæsar.

Ver. 36. *But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.*] This was a very wise order, because he might have made some advantage by a sudden answer; and it was no less pious: for Hezekiah believed God would answer for himself, not in words, but in such deeds as would demonstrate he was above all gods.

Ver. 37. *Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah, with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rab-shakeh.*] It was the custom of the Jews to rend their clothes, when they heard a man blaspheme God's name: and if we will believe them, when the witnesses of a blasphemy did but repeat the words before the judges, they rent their clothes. Accordingly Hezekiah, when his commissioners gave an account of Rab-shakeh's words to him, he did so, (xix. 1.) But they have determined, that they were not bound to rend their clothes, unless he was an Israelite that blasphemed. Therefore they have resolved, as I said before, that Rab-shakeh was an apostate Israelite. And this custom was common to all nations (as appears from Homer, Herodotus, and Virgil), who expressed great grief in this manner.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes.*] See the last verse of the foregoing chapter.

And covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord.] He fasted and mourned, and went into the temple to pray. Sometimes they put on sackcloth next to their skin, instead of a shirt: but here it seems to signify only, that he was clothed in this vile habit, in token of his great trouble and sorrow.

Ver. 2. *And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe.*] See xviii. 18.

And the elders of the priests.] The principal persons among the priests.

Covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz.] In the same mournful habit to beg his prayers to God for them.

Ver. 3. *And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy.*] They represent to him the great straits in which they were, and the reproaches cast upon them: and (which was worst of all) the blasphemy they had heard against God.

For the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.] And the present danger wherein they were of perishing, unless speedily relieved: like that of a woman, whose child being fallen down, after many throes, to the place of birth, she was so spent that she had no strength left to bring it forth. Or, as Procopius Gazæus expounds it, "We are in pain to hear such blasphemous words, and have no power to punish those wicked wretches as they deserve."

Ver. 4. *It may be the Lord thy God will hear the words of Rab-shakeh.*] So as to take notice of them, and punish him.

Whom the king of Assyria hath sent to reproach the living God; and will reprove the words which the Lord thy God hath heard.] Reprove him for the words (as the Targum expounds it), the which he had spoken against God. But Lud. de Dieu, following R. Solomon Jarchi, thinks that the word we translate *reprove*, signifies to prove, and, by arguments, to demonstrate. And so refers it to Rab-shakeh in this manner: "It may be the Lord will hear all the words of Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria hath sent to reproach the living God: and that openly with a bold face, fearing nothing, because all things succeed according to their hearts' desire." And he saith, he shall wonder if this sense displease any body.

Wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left.] That Judah might not be carried captive, as Israel had been.

Ver. 5. *So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.*] And delivered the foregoing message to him.

Ver. 6. *And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.*

Ver. 7. *Behold, I will send a blast on him.*] A pestilential blast, which destroyed his army in one night: (ver. 35.) others translate it *a spirit;* which is the same. For God sent an angel, who smote them with that pestilence.

And he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land.] The report, perhaps, was renewed after that stroke, that Tirhakah (of whom he had heard before, ver. 9.) was coming against him; which made him haste away, with the small remains of his army, to his own country.

And I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.] Which was fulfilled, ver. 37.

Ver. 8. *So Rab-shakeh returned.*] Not with the host that he brought with him, (xviii. 17.) but he himself returned to give his master an account of what he had done; and left Rabsaris to carry on the siege, and straiten the city, till he could come with the whole army against it.

And found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.] Being unable, I suppose, to make himself master of it.

Ver. 9. *And when he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, He is come out to fight against thee.*] Whether he fought with Tirhakah or not, and what the success was, doth not appear. But it is to be noted, that there were two countries called Cush (which we translate Ethiopia); one in Africa beyond Egypt, the other in Arabia, which is the Ethiopia here meant. For the king of the other was far off, and must have marched through Egypt before he could come to fight with Sennacherib. But this was near, and was able to raise a powerful army, as appears by the vast forces which Zerah brought against Asa, (2 Chron. xiv. 9.) And thus 2 Chron. xxi. 16. as Bochartus observes, must necessarily be understood, where the Arabians, whom God stirred up against Jehoram, are said to be near to the Ethiopians, which cannot be true of those beyond Egypt. (See his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 2.)

He sent messengers again to Hezekiah, saying.] Among which Rab-shakeh was the chief.

Ver. 10. *Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying.*] They could not come to the speech of him; but sent him a letter containing the words following, (ver. 14.)

Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.] He had heard, I suppose, that Hezekiah declared he trusted in the Lord, and had assurance from him, that he the king of Assyria should not prevail against him.

Ver. 11. *Behold, thou hast heard what the king of Assyria hath done to all lands, by destroying them utterly.*] This letter is of the same import with the former message, presuming the God of Israel was like the gods of other countries, and had no more power than they to preserve his worshippers.

And shalt thou be delivered?] Such questions imply a strong denial; and therefore it is as much as to say, Thou shalt be delivered no more than they were.

Ver. 12. *Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed.*] He argues from the long successes his ancestors had enjoyed: none of the gods, whose countries they had destroyed, making opposition to them for some ages.

As Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Thelasar?] These were places well known in those days; there was a Gozan and Hara in Media, as Bochartus observes, lib. iii. Phaleg. cap. 14. Where Rezeph was is uncertain; but Ptolemy mentions such a city in Syria, where St. Jerome places Thelasar: and there were more cities than one in those countries called Adana, which is the same with Eden.

Ver. 13. *Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?*] Places beforementioned, xviii. 34. Nothing can be further observed of this, but that the fury of Rab-shakeh increased: so that what he had uttered in words, he now more deliberately set down in writing: affirming boldly, that their God was a deceiver, if he promised them deliverance.

Ver. 14. *And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord.*] He could approach no nearer than to the outward court of the temple: where, at the entrance of the priests' court, he looked towards the sanctuary, God's dwelling-place, and laid this letter before him.

Ver. 15. *And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said, O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.*] Here he directly thwarts the blasphemous opinion of the Assyrians beforementioned, (xvii. 27. xviii. 35.) that the God of Israel was but the particular Lord of that country; not the universal Sovereign, which Hezekiah acknowledged him to be, because the Creator of the whole world.

Ver. 16. *Lord, bow down thine ear, and hear; open, Lord, thine eyes, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God.*] That is, sent Rab-shakeh. He speaks in such language as men use, when they earnestly beseech others not to neglect their supplication; but vouchsafe to attend, and to give a gracious answer to them.

Ver. 17. *Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands.*] Do not boast of more than they have done.

Ver. 18. *And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone; therefore have they destroyed them.*] They had prevailed, he acknowledges, over their gods, as well as over men; but it was because they were not so good as men, being mere wood and stone.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hands, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only.*] He beseeches him to distinguish himself upon those idols; by giving them such a deliverance as might demonstrate to all the world that he was *the living God* (as he is often called), superior to all others, who were not able to save their worshippers.

Ver. 20. *Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard*] He knew by the spirit of prophecy, that Hezekiah had represented his case to God in the temple; who bade Isaiah assure him his petition was granted.

Ver. 21. *This is the word that the Lord hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.*] These words comprehend the whole city. For by *the daughter of Zion* he means the people that inhabited the upper part of the city, where the king's palace stood: and by the *daughter of Jerusalem*, the people of the lower part of the city; and all that was not comprehended under the name of Zion. They *shaked their heads at him;* which is the same with *despising*, and *laughing him to scorn.* For *shaking the head* is the posture of those that mock at others, (Psal. xxii. 7. Matt. xxvii. 39.) He calls Zion a *virgin*, because this

fortress, since David conquered it, had remained inviolable, and had never been taken by any enemy. Joash, indeed, king of Israel, took Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of it; (xiv. 13, 14.) but I think the fort of Zion had never been taken.

Ver. 22. *Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice.*] So Rabshakeh did, xviii. 28.

And lifted up thine eyes on high?] As those do who have haughty thoughts of themselves; and overlook others with contempt and scorn, (Prov. xxi. 4.)

Even against the Holy One of Israel.] God is called *the Holy One*, with respect to his peerless perfections; and *the Holy One of Israel*, as having a peculiar respect to them above all people, who therefore should be defended by his almighty power.

Ver. 23. *By thy messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir-trees thereof; and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, and into the forest of his Carmel.*] This is an admirable description of the boastings of a king puffed up with great success, and is as much as if he had said, What place is there into which I cannot make my way? when I have gone, even with my chariots in great number, to the top of high mountains; to Lebanon itself, through the most difficult passages, which I have opened and planed for them? Who shall hinder me from cutting down its tallest cedars and fir-trees (perhaps he means their princes and great men), and, when I have done, from marching and taking up my quarters in the extremest borders of the land, climbing up to the top of Carmel (which was towards the Mediterranean Sea), or entering into all the fruitful places of the country, by making an entire conquest of it? For so Carmel often signifies, not a mountain, but a fruitful field, in the language of this prophet, Isa. x. 18. xvi. 10.

Ver. 24. *I have digged and drunk strange waters.*] He brags that he had marched with his vast army through strange countries, and in the driest places, where it was thought his army would die with thirst; but he digged till he found water.

And with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places.] This is commonly thought to signify, that he had gone dry-shod with his whole army over great rivers, whose streams he turned another way; and so had taken the strongest fortresses, surrounded with deep waters and great ramparts. But Bochartus hath made a plainer paraphrase upon these words, which he thus translates: *I have dried up the rivers of Egypt.* As much as to say, "I will enter as easily into Egypt, in which you confide, as if, when I come thither, all the rivers wherewith it is environed, should be dried up." (See his Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. v. cap. 15.) For the Hebrew word *masor* (which we translate every where *besieged places*, or *defences*, or *fortresses*) should rather be taken for the singular of *Mesoraim*, which by contraction is called *Mitzraim*, that is, *Egypt*. And if this be allowed, the sense then here is, as I said before, *I have dried up all the rivers of Egypt:* which was the highest vaunt he could make of his power, and numerous forces. Thus Isa. xix. 6. *The brooks of defences shall be dried up;* is interpreted by Kimchi, *The rivers of Egypt shall be emptied and dried up.* And more plainly, Micah vii. 12. where *from the fortress to the river* is so obscure, that it is not to be understood; but *from Egypt to Euphrates* is such clear sense, that one cannot but think it should be so translated; for those were the bounds of the land of Canaan.

Ver. 25. *Hast thou not heard long ago how I have done it, and of ancient times that I have formed it?*] These are the words of God, in answer to those empty boasts:—But what is this to what I have done? Hast thou not heard how I brought my people dry-shod through the Red Sea? How in ancient times, I say, long before thou or thy ancestors were born, I did this by my own strength alone, without the help of nature or art? For so the word *jatzar*, which we translate *formed*, is used Gen. ii. 8. and other places.

Now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps.] And it is I that have now brought thee to do all these things of which thou braggedst. Thou couldest not have done one of them without my leave, who therefore permitted it, that I might punish those cities by thy hand, which I had devoted to destruction. (See Isa. x. 5, 6. 13—15.)

Ver. 26. *Therefore were their inhabitants of small power; they were dismayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the house-tops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up.*] This was the reason, that the people of those cities whereof thou spakest (ver. 12, 13.) were so very feeble, and unable to oppose thee; because I delivered them into thy hand.

Ver. 27. *But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.*] As much as to say, There are none of thy motions hidden from me. For before thou camest from thy own country, I knew with what design thou marchedst out, and what thou hast done since wheresoever thou hast entered; and understand with what rage and fury thou art come up to destroy my dwelling-place.

Ver. 28. *Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult is come up into my ears.*] I have heard the noise thou makest with thy furious threatenings, and with thy great army which hath entered Judea.

Therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way that thou camest.] He compares his absolute power over him to that of a fisherman, who, let a fish tumble ever so much in the water, hath it fast by a hook he hath fixed in his nose; or to a man upon a horse or a mule, whom he can turn which way he pleases, when he hath a curb in their mouths. Even so, saith God, will I do with thee: draw thee back, press thou ever so much to compass thy designs, into thy own country, without any success.

Ver. 29. *And this shall be a sign unto thee.*] This is spoken to Hezekiah.

Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof.] This was not a sign of the truth of his prophecy, because it was to come after that was fulfilled; but a token of God's extraordinary favour and love to them, when Sennacherib was gone; and they were in fear of another enemy, *viz.* a grievous famine. For though he had trodden

down or eaten up all the corn with his army, yet they should find sufficient left to maintain them this year, which was the fourteenth of Hezekiah. And though the next was the sabbatical year, in which they were to let the land rest, and neither sow nor reap, yet he promises enough should grow up of itself to sustain them, without any culture, out of the corn scattered in the former year. And then, in the sixteenth year, God assures them of liberty to till their land as they were wont, and that they should sow and reap as in a time of peace, when no enemy appeared, nor there was any fear of any. But until the corn sprung up and was ripe that year, they lived upon what grew of itself in the sabbatical year, without tillage. Which demonstrates the wonderful providence of God over this people, in taking care they should want nothing in those years, without any care of their own, if they believed in his word. See Lev. xxv. where the precept about this sabbatical year is delivered; and was observed by this people, from the first conquest and division of the land of Canaan, forty-seven years after the coming out of Egypt. (See Dr. Alix, Reflections on the Old Testament, par. ii. chap. 1.)

Ver. 30. *And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.*] He pursues the metaphor from corn that is sown in the ground; signifying, that they should have firm possession of their own country; and therein increase, and multiply, and flourish exceedingly.

Ver. 31. *For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion.*] For they who were now shut up in Jerusalem should be at liberty: and they who escaped the enemy's fury in the country, and fled thither for refuge, should go out of Mount Zion to their own possessions.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this.] His great love to his own honour, and to his people, shall do these wonders; to vindicate his glory from that contempt which was cast upon it by Sennacherib.

Ver. 32. *Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with a shield, nor cast a bank against it.*] He promises the king of Assyria should be so far from possessing himself of the city at this time, that he should not assault it, by shooting so much as an arrow in it: no, nor appear with his army against it, or raise bulwarks to besiege it. Or, as the Hebrews understand it, they should not cast a stone out of their engines against it. Rabsaris, I observed ver. 8. continued the siege; but whatsoever he did before, after this message of Isaiah he made no attempt upon them.

Ver. 33. *By the way that he came, by the same way he shall return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord.*] He confirms what he said before, (ver. 28.)

Ver. 34. *For I will defend this city to save it.*] To preserve it from destruction.

For my own sake, and for my servant David's sake.] Upon which account he had formerly spared them, when they deserved to be punished, (1 Kings xi. 12, 13.)

Ver. 35. *And it came to pass that night.*] The Jews in the Gemara Sanhedrin, (cap. 11. n. 20.) say, that in the very night after they set down before Jerusalem, and were so weary that they made no attempt upon the city, this which follows fell out. Others think it was the same night that Hezekiah received Sennacherib's railing letter; which is more probable than the opinion of our Dr. Jackson, who will have it that it was the same night, about two years after. (See upon the Attributes, sect. 3. chap. 26.) However it was, the blow was the more remarkable, because it was given in that very night, wherein he had lifted up himself against the God of heaven; as Belshazzar afterward did, and had his fatal stroke given him in like manner. (See Dan. v. 30.)

That the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred fourscore and five thousand men: and when they arose in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.] By *a pestilential disease*, as Josephus calls it, λοιμικὸν νόσον, such a vast number were suddenly cut off. It is a question, whether this destruction was made in the army that besieged Libnah, or in that host which Rab-shakeh brought up against Jerusalem. Josephus thinks the latter; for it is probable Rab-shakeh was come with his whole host against Jerusalem, which before was straitened by Rabsaris; and κατὰ τὴν πρώτην τῆς πολιορκίας νύκτα, *the first night after they had begirt the city* (as the Jews say, I observed, in Sanhedrin), the angel of the Lord made this great slaughter among them: lib. x. Antiq. cap. 2. where a little before, in the end of the first chapter, he takes notice of a horrible lie which Herodotus reports from the Egyptians: who say their king, being also a priest, by his prayers to his god, brought this destruction upon the Assyrians, as they lay before Pelusium: a great army of rats coming in the night, and gnawing all their bow-strings in pieces, so that they could not fight. So studious they were to pervert the truth, and corrupt the sacred story.

Ver. 36. *So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.*] Being afraid that Tirhakah should come and destroy the remainders of his broken army, (ver. 9.)

Ver. 37. *And it came to pass as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god.*] The LXX. here call this god Nesorach; and upon Isaiah, where this story is again told, Asarach. But what any of these names signify, Mr. Selden acknowledges he cannot tell, having in all his reading never met with any thing that might explain it. But Kircher adventures to say it was the image of a *ship*, representing the ark of Noah: the relics of which, Josephus tells us, some reported were, in his time, in the neighbouring mountains of Armenia. And a later writer, Beyerus (in his additions to Selden, de Diis Syris), thinks it signifies as much as the *bird of Noah*, that is, a dove, which was worshipped by the Assyrians: or, as others conjecture (for they can do no more), this word is derived from *nes*, which in Chaldee signifies a province, and *rac*, which signifies a king; that is, Jupiter the king, and conservator of that province.

That Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword.] Which they might the more easily do, when he suspected no danger. The reason of it was, because (in his danger, we may suppose) he had vowed that he would offer them up unto his god: therefore they sacrificed him, to prevent being sacrificed themselves. One of them seems to have been called after the name of a god worshipped in those countries, (xv. 11. 31.)

And they escaped into the land of Armenia.] Which was not far off; and where there were mountains of very difficult ascent, and inhabited by a warlike people.

And Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.] Who was the king that sent a colony to people the country of Samaria, (as I observed before from Ezra iv. 2.) and the rather, because he feared Hezekiah might have taken possession of it, after such a defeat as his father Sennacherib had received. His name is curtailed several ways: for in the book of Tobit he is called Sar-chedon, (i. 21.) the first syllable of his name being cut off; and the LXX. cut off the next, calling him Aser-dan; and Isaiah cuts off both, calling him Sargon, (xx. 1.)

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *IN those days was Hezekiah sick unto death.*] This is set down after the death of Sennacherib; but with this general note only of the time, wherein this sickness fell out, *in those days*. Which, as primate Usher observes in his Annals, doth not relate to what went just before (to the time when the king of Assyria invaded the land), as is evident from ver. 6. of this chapter; where he promises to add fifteen years to his life, and also to deliver him from the king of Assyria. Which deliverance, therefore, was after this sickness, which was in the latter end of his fourteenth year; to which if we add fifteen, they make up the whole twenty-nine years of his reign.

And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said, Thus saith the Lord, Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.] That is, his disease was, in its own nature, mortal, and could not be cured by any human remedy: therefore he wished him to settle his estate, and, as we speak, to make his will; how all things in his house should be disposed when he was dead.

Ver. 2. *Then he turned his face unto the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying.*] That is, towards the wall of the sanctuary, as the Targum expounds it. (See Dr. Hammond upon Acts x. annot. *b*.) He thought, as it was not beyond the power of God to restore him, so he had not peremptorily decreed that he should die: but there was a tacit condition in the message, (as in other cases, Jonah iii. 4.) otherwise he would not have prayed to be spared.

Ver. 3. *I beseech thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.*] He was not conscious to himself that he had omitted any thing which was to be done for the restoring the true worship of God. In which he had been so exact, as to take away the high places, which had continued ever since the time of David, and none durst remove them: and therefore he presumed to beg that he might live, to settle and establish what he had begun to do.

And Hezekiah wept sore.] One reason was, as many think, that he had not yet a son to succeed him on the throne. For he lived after this fifteen years; and when he died Manasseh was but twelve years old, who therefore was born after this sickness.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came unto him, saying.*] It is doubtful whether we are to understand the middle of the court *of the king's house*, or the middle of *the city*; for the one is in the text, the other in the margin of the Hebrew Bibles. But it is not material which we follow; for the meaning is, that he was not gone far before he was ordered to go back, and carry a new message that his prayer was heard.

Ver. 5. *Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, The God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, and seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee; on the third day thou shalt go up into the house of the Lord.*] Recover his strength so fast, as to be able in three days' time to go to the temple, and give God thanks for his cure; which appears by this to have been miraculous.

Ver. 6. *And I will add unto thy days fifteen years.*] More than he could have lived according to the course of nature.

And I will deliver this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for my own sake, and for my servant David's sake.] For this sickness was that year when he threatened to destroy it. (See upon ver. 1.) It was a great encouragement to faithful obedience, that God so often mentions David's services with such a kind remembrance of them.

Ver. 7. *And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs: and they took and laid it on the bile, and he recovered.*] There might be some natural virtue in this cataplasm, to soften and ripen a hard humour, as this seems to have been (some think a plague-sore), but it was a supernatural power which made so speedy a cure; of which God used this as a sign.

Ver. 8. *And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day?*] He did believe, no doubt, what the prophet said, otherwise he would have been sharply reproved. But he made bold to desire a confirmation of his faith, as good men had done in other cases: particularly Gideon, who threw down the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove at God's command, and blew the trumpet, and gathered an army, which were arguments of a strong faith; and yet, after all this, desired a sign from God, that God would deliver Israel by his hand. (Judg. vi. 25. 34. 36, 37, &c.)

Ver. 9. *And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he hath spoken; Shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or back ten degrees?*] Sometimes God, who is a free agent, intending to convince men by great wonders that he is to be believed, is so graciously condescending, as to give them leave to choose what they would have him do, or when, that his power may be the more notorious, and no room left for doubting. So he did with Pharaoh, Exod. viii. 9, 10. and with Ahaz, Isa. vii. 11. and here with his son Hezekiah.

Ver. 10. *And Hezekiah said, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.*] It was comparatively small, because to go forward was the natural course of it; but to return back was a miracle, both in the thing and in the manner of it.

Ver. 11. *And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord; and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.*] It is observed by many modern interpreters, that there is not a word here spoken concerning the sun's going back; but only of the shadow upon the dial, which might by the power of God go either forward or backward, the sun still holding its course, as it

was wont to do. And the *degrees* or *lines* in the dial may signify either hours, or half hours, or, as some think, quarters. (See Vossius, de Orig. et Progressu Idol. lib. ii. cap. 9.) Now the going back being three times mentioned in this chapter, and always spoken of the shadow, therefore they conclude the miracle was wrought upon the dial only, not upon the very body of the sun. It is said, indeed, in Isa. xxxviii. 8. *So the sun returned ten degrees;* but they think that may be meant of the *shadow of the sun* (as it goes before), God so disposing the rays of the sun, and ordering the light, that no shadow should be projected, but where the prophet foretold. This I thought fit to represent; but must add, that the ancient Jews, and Christians too, took the words of Isaiah to signify that the sun itself went back, and not merely the shadow. Whom primate Usher in his Annals follows, whose words are these: *The sun and all the heavenly bodies went back; and as much was detracted from the next night as was added to this day.* (A. M. 4001.) Which was done, I suppose, on a sudden, by the power of God, and lasted not long before all was restored again to their usual place; so that no change was made in the state of the heavenly bodies. But, that there was some change for the present, was observed both in the northern part of the world at Babylon, (from whence Merodach-Baladan sent to inquire about this wonder, 2 Chron. xxxii. 31.) and also in the southern, in the land of Egypt. As we may gather from a remarkable passage in Herodotus, who tells us in his Euterpe, cap. i. 42. that the Egyptians had observed strange alterations in the motions of the sun; so that it had risen four times, ἐξ ἡθέων, *out of its usual course,* ἐντεῦθεν νῦν δὶς καταδύεται, ἐντεῦθεν δὶς ἐπαντέλλαι, &c. *it rising twice where it now sets, and setting twice where it now rises;* and yet, οὐδὲν τῶν κατ' Αἴγυπτίων ὑπὸ ταῦτα ἑτεροιωθῆναι; *and yet no change at all made among the Egyptians by these things,* neither in the earth, nor the river, nor any thing else. This is a plain evidence that their neighbours (and many others, it is like) had heard of the unusual motions of the sun (though without any alteration in the heavenly bodies, which were soon returned to their former station), but had not a perfect knowledge of them, or had corrupted their knowledge; for to those two mentioned in Scripture, in the time of Joshua and Hezekiah, the Egyptians added two more, and make them to have been near the same time. But the Jews themselves have been thus fabulous, who say in the chapter *Chelek,* that the day on which Ahaz died was but two hours long; but now when Hezekiah's life was prolonged, God restored those ten hours which were then wanting, and so brought time even. (See Schickard, in his Bechinah Happeruschim, p. 122.). They also believe this miracle was wrought a little before sun-set; but that excellent person, whom I have often mentioned, Dr. Alix, thinks it evident it was before noon, about our ten of the clock.

Ver. 12. *At that time Berodach-Baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon.*] Who is called Merodach-Baladan in Isa. xxxix. 1. Merodach was the name of an idol among the Babylonians, as Baal or Bel was another; together with Adan or Adonis, as Sir J. Marsham observes. Josephus calls him Βαλάδας, and so doth Berosus. He was but a tributary to the king of Assyria, till Nebuchadnezzar came to reign, who cast off the yoke of Assyria, and made that monarchy subject to him.

Sent letters.] Some think to make a league with him against the king of Assyria: and, it is likely, to inquire about the wonder done in the land, (2 Chron. xxxii. 31.)

And a present unto Hezekiah.] As the manner was when they sought any one's friendship.

For he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.] And therefore in these letters, I suppose, he also congratulated his happy recovery to health.

Ver. 13. *And Hezekiah hearkened unto them.*] He gave them a friendly and benign audience (as Abarbinel explains it), being glad at their coming, as Isaiah tells us, (xxxix. 2.) because he knew them to be enemies to Sennacherib. And the words seem to import that they came about some weighty business, to which he consented.

And shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures.] He was so pleased, or rather transported with joy, at the honour the king of Babylon had done him, that he not only gave them a gracious audience, as was said before, but ordered his officers to shew them all the rarities he had in his treasures. For though his country had been lamentably harassed by the king of Assyria, and he had endeavoured to appease him with great gifts, (xviii. 14, 15.) yet there were many good things remaining in Jerusalem; and great presents had been made to Hezekiah, since the stroke from heaven upon Sennacherib's army, (2 Chron. xxxii. 23.) The precious ointment here mentioned, is called, by Kimchi and other Hebrew doctors, *apharsemon;* which they say was the true balsam; not to be found any where, but near to Jericho.

There was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominions, that Hezekiah shewed them not.] There were other valuable things in other parts of the realm, besides those in his own palace at Jerusalem, which he thought worth their seeing, and therefore ordered his officers to shew them to these ambassadors.

Ver. 14. *Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon.*] He answers to the last part of Isaiah's question, but not a word of the first, what their business with him was? and he calls that a far country from whence they came (though it was not very remote), to express the great honour that was done him, by a prince at such a distance from him.

Ver. 15. *And he said, What have they seen in thy house?*] He knew well enough what they had seen; but had a mind to hear whether Hezekiah would confess the truth, or excuse his folly.

And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in my house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.] He honestly relates the truth; being insensible of how dangerous a piece of vanity he had been guilty; in shewing strangers those treasures, which he might well think would invite them to endeavour to make themselves masters of them.

Ver. 16. *And Isaiah said to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord.*] How he resents this action. Which was the more blameable, because he had lately received such great benefits from God, and seen such an astonishing wonder as he wrought for the confirmation of his faith; whereby he

should have been moved not to glory in any thing but the goodness of God to him, nor confide in the friendship of great princes, but only in the power of the Almighty.

Ver. 17. *Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up unto this day.*] There had been several great kings in Judah who had overcome many enemies, and got great spoils, some remainders of which were still in their stores: but Isaiah foretells all should be carried away to that very place, from whence he had been complimented by those ambassadors.

Shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord.] The most pertinent observation that I can make upon these words, is that of Dr. Jackson (in his Answer to John's Question), where he saith, that whosoever will consider the state of things in this time, and the small power which the Babylonians now had, in respect of their mighty neighbour the king of Assyria (whom the Jews had reason to fear above all other princes); the accomplishment of this prophecy of Isaiah was, according to human conjecture, far more unlikely and improbable, than if a man should in the last age have taken upon him to foretell, that the duke of Saxony, or some such prince in Germany, should conquer France and Spain, and lead them captive to Dresden. But the word of the Lord stands fast for ever; and Isaiah was proved a hundred and twenty-five years after to be a true prophet.

Ver. 18. *And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away.*] That is, his posterity descended from him.

And they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.] Wait upon him as his servants, (xxiv. 15.) This was partly fulfilled in Daniel and his companions, (Dan. i. 1.)

Ver. 19. *Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?*] As if he had said, Thanks be to God it is no worse; let him do his pleasure. Have I not reason to be thankful, if, according to his promise, he deliver me from the king of Assyria, (ver. 6.) and not only prolong my days, but let me enjoy firm peace and true religion as long as I live? Some take this to be a careless speech, as if he did not concern himself what became of his posterity, so he himself did live happily. But this is inconsistent with such a pious mind as he had; which, no doubt, was sensible of the vanity and pride for which the prophet reproved him; and submitted to the punishment of it, which might have been immediately inflicted, if God had not been very merciful unto him.

Ver. 20. *And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city.*] If he brought water into the city by private passages, whereby the enemy was deprived of the benefit of it, while the city enjoyed it (as Grotius understands it), it was certainly a work of admirable contrivance. (See 2 Chron. xxxii. 3.)

Are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?] The same great person here observes, that the book of the Chronicles spoken of here, and in other places, were journals, as these books were annals. Out of which journals Ezra took many more passages in his book of the Chronicles, not omitting what he had written in these annals.

Ver. 21. *And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.*] Here is no mention of his burial with his fathers in the city of David: but Ezra, in 2 Chron. xxxii. 33. tells us they buried him "in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David," and that all the people "did him honour at his death."

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *MANASSEH was twelve years old when he began to reign; and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Hephzi-bah.*] The years wherein he was captive in Babylon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.) must be comprehended in this number.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel.*] He set up the gentile worship again: for being young, he was easily drawn aside by the princes and nobles, who never heartily joined in Hezekiah's reformation; but were in all probability displeased at it; and so revolted as soon as he was dead. For one cannot conceive how such a sudden change should be made in religion, and such gross idolatry restored, but from the general corruption of the great men, who had the management of this young king.

Ver. 3. *For he built up the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed, and he reared up the altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel, and worshipped all the hosts of heaven, and served them.*] The sun, the moon, and the stars, as Procopius Gazæus explains it.

Ver. 4. *And he built altars.*] To the gods of the neighbouring nations.

In the house of the Lord.] In the very sanctuary itself; for the outward courts are mentioned in the next verse.

Of which the Lord said, In Jerusalem will I put my name.] Where God appointed, that he himself alone should be worshipped, (2 Sam. vii. 13.)

Ver. 5. *And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord.*] The inner court, which was that of the priests, and the outward, which was that of the people, were profaned, together with the sanctuary.

Ver. 6. *And he made his son pass through the fire.*] In 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6. it is said he caused *his children* to pass through the fire; which was a most abominable practice, strictly forbidden by Moses upon pain of death, (Lev. xviii. 21. xx. 2, 3.)

And observed times, and used enchantments.] See Lev. xix. 21. Deut. xviii. 10, 11.

And dealt with familiar spirits, and wizards.] See Lev. xix. 31.

He wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.] For there were none before him who committed such things as these; which were the highest provocations of God's displeasure.

Ver. 7. *And he set a graven image of the grove which he had made in the house.*] The Hebrew words in this place are *Pesel haasherah*, which our Selden hath well resolved (by comparing this with other texts) signify a wooden image of Ashtaroth, or Astarte. (Syntagm. ii. de Diis Sy-

ris, cap. 2.) For Baal and Astarte were chief gods of the Sidonians, whose worship was introduced by Ahab; whom Manasseh imitated, (ver. 3.)

Of which the Lord said unto David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever.] I observed before what God said to David, and what he said to Solomon is recorded, 1 Kings viii. 29. ix. 3. But Manasseh endeavoured to make the name of the God of Israel to be forgotten; by placing other gods in his house.

Ver. 8. *Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them.*] This promise was included in the choice God made of Jerusalem to fix his dwelling-place there: which was a security to them against all their enemies, if they proved obedient to him.

Ver. 9. *But they hearkened not.*] They had always been a rebellious people.

And Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel.] But in his reign their wickedness was grown to such a height, that it exceeded all that the people of Canaan had done; whom God expelled to make room for the Israelites. For he broke all the laws of Moses, and worshipped more idols than they did. We never read of horses consecrated to the sun till his time, (see xxiii. 11.) who in all probability brought in that idolatry.

Ver. 10. *And the Lord spake by his servants the prophets, saying.*] Abarbinel makes account that Hosea, Joel, Nahum, and Habakkuk, all prophesied in his days. And some think Obadiah also, and Isaiah: who, as the Jews say, was sawn asunder by him.

Ver. 11. *Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him.*] The whole people of Canaan are comprehended under the name of Amorites; who were most eminent of all the seven nations. (See Gen. xv. 16.)

And hath made Judah also to sin with his idols.] They were too much inclined to idolatry, by the long corruptions that had been among them; but he made them far worse than otherwise they would have been. For, as Jeremiah charges them, in the next reign but one, "according to the number of their cities were their gods, and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem, they set up altars to that shameful thing, to burn incense to Baal." (Jer. xi. 13.)

Ver. 12. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle.*] The report of it shall strike terror and horror into men, as Procopius Gazæus expounds it. (See 1 Sam. iii. 11.)

Ver. 13. *And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria.*] A metaphor from those who set out men's lots and portions, by drawing a line to divide them: and is as much as to say, he would give to Jerusalem the same measure that he had done to Samaria; that is, pull it down to the ground; consume some of them by famine, others by the sword, and carry the rest into captivity, as the same Procopius glosses.

And the plummet of the house of Ahab.] As they imitated his sin, so they should have his punishment; whose house was utterly destroyed. It seems to be a metaphor from builders, who measure with a line and a plummet what part of a building shall stand, and what be demolished.

And I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down.] That is, leave no more people in it than you see any thing in a dish after it is emptied, and wiped, and turned upside down; as the manner is when it is perfectly cleansed. So the meaning is, I will cleanse her of all her inhabitants, and leave none remaining. The Hebrew word which we translate *dish*, the LXX. translate ὁ ἀλάβαστρος, *an alabaster box* of precious ointment, as the Chaldee translates it *selucta*, in which the Greek word λήκυθος lurks, (as the illustrious Spanhemius observes upon Callimachus's hymn in Palad. ver. 13.) signifying that Jerusalem was once in high esteem with God, like a precious ointment; but having lost its savour, he would reject her as a man doth such ointment when it is nothing worth.

Ver. 14. *And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance.*] That is, Judah, who alone was left when the ten tribes were gone.

And deliver them into the hands of their enemies, and they shall become a prey, and a spoil unto all their enemies.] As their brethren, the children of Israel, had been.

Ver. 15. *Because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger from the day that their fathers came out of Egypt, even unto this day.*] God now intended to punish them for all their former rebellions, ever since they were a people; which Manasseh had completed, whose sin was so great, that it is sometimes mentioned as the sole cause of their captivity. (See Jer. xv. 4.)

Ver. 16. *Moreover, Manasseh shed innocent blood very much.*] Upon which words Procopius Gazæus thus glosses: "He chiefly destroyed those who opposed themselves to his impiety, and denounced the Divine anger against him (that is, the prophets). They say he caused the prophet Isaiah to be sawed in sunder." So the Jews say in the Babylonian Talmud, in the treatise Jebamoth, and Justin Martyr in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, and St. Jerome upon Isa. xx. 27. Nay, the words of the apostle, Heb. xi. 37. ἐπρίσθησαν are commonly referred to this, as primate Usher observes in his Annals, ad A. M. 3306.

Till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another.] Top-full, as we speak. For it is a metaphor from measures wet or dry, when they are filled up to the brim.

Besides his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.] That is, besides his abominable idolatry.

Ver. 17. *Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] All that he did in his captivity, and after, was written in the journals, from whence Ezra took what we find in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11, &c.

Ver. 18. *And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.*] Some think this was the place where Uzziah was buried, (2 Chron. xxvi. 23.) and that he chose to be buried here, as unworthy, because of his manifold sins (of which he repented), to be laid in the common sepulchre of the kings of Judah.

Ver. 19. *Amon was twenty and two years old when he*

began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem.] Which is the number of years to which the sons of those kings arrived, who provoked God to anger; as some of the Jews observe in the son of Jeroboam, the son of Baasha, and the son of Ahab. (1 Kings xv. 25. xvi. 8. xxii. 51.)

And his mother's name was Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.

Ver. 20. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh did.*] He imitated him in all things but in his repentance, as is observed, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 23.

Ver. 21. *And he walked in all the ways that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them.*] For he was bred up in idolatry, and solemnly consecrated by his father to the service of Moloch, (ver. 6.)

Ver. 22. *And he forsook the God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the Lord.*] As Hezekiah, and Jotham, and others of his pious ancestors had done. There are two doctors also in the chapter *Chelek*, the one of which saith, he burnt the book of the law; the other, that he lay with his own mother.

Ver. 23. *And the servants of Amon conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.*] As he forsook God, whose servant he ought to have been; so his servants forsook him, and murdered him in his own palace.

Ver. 24. *And the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon.*] It was a thing of such pernicious example to kill their king, though very bad, that the people would not suffer it to go unpunished.

And the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.] The common people seem to have been better disposed than the great men; who, it is probable, were engaged in the conspiracy against Amon. But it is not likely that the common people took upon them to constitute a king, but their elders and great men met, together with the people, upon such occasions as this, to declare to whom the right of succession belonged. Therefore, by the *people of the land*, must be meant the people assembled in the common council of the nation.

Ver. 25. *Now, the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] There is nothing said here of him, but that he was a gross idolater: which was not the ground of the conspiracy against him; but it is likely was related in the book here mentioned.

Ver. 26. *And he was buried in his sepulchre, in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.*] He was buried either in his father's sepulchre, or in one that he made for himself in the same place.

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *JOSIAH was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath.*] Who it is likely was a good woman, and took care to instil early good principles into him.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand, or to the left.*] In him was verified the words of Solomon, (Prov. xx. 11.) "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right." For when he had reigned eight years, *while he was yet young*, as Ezra observes, he began to reform all abuses in religion, (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3, &c.)

Ver. 3. *And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam the scribe, to the house of the Lord, saying.*] This was in the eighteenth year of his reign, not of his age, as we are told, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8.

Ver. 4. *Go up to Hilkiah the high-priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the Lord.*] He ordered him to give him an exact account of what money had been offered by pious people, for the reparation of the house of the Lord; as had been done in the reign of Jehoash, (xii. 4, &c.)

Which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people.] They were the Levites, as we learn from 2 Chron. xxxiv. 9.

Ver. 5. *And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the Lord: and let them give it to the doers of the work which is in the house of the Lord, to repair the breaches of the house.*] They entrusted certain persons with the money, who were to oversee the work, (whose names are recorded in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12.) and they delivered it to the workmen to buy materials for the reparation of the house, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 6. *Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.*] *Builders* (as distinguished from *carpenters* and *masons*) were such as laid the timber and the stone together, which the other had prepared.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit, there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully.*] They were men of such approved honesty (like those in the days of Jehoash, xii. 15.) that there was no need to call them to an account how they laid out the money.

Ver. 8. *And Hilkiah the high-priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord: and Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.*] The book of Deuteronomy, saith Procopius Gazæus. But it was rather the whole book of the law written by Moses; that authentic copy which by God's command was laid up in the most holy place, (Deut. xxxi. 24, &c.) About which the Hebrew doctors made great difficulties in their explication of this place, particularly R. Lipman in his Nitzacon, out of which Hottinger hath alleged a long passage concerning this matter, in his Historica Ecclesiastica, N. T. sect. 16. par. iv. p. 137. where he justly thinks it a wonder that Josiah should so early fear God, and begin to reform religion, if he had never seen the book of the law before this time. And how should the people have kept such a Passover, and the priests been so well instructed in the rites of it this very year? (2 Chron. xxxiv. 19.) For the copies of the book now found could not be so soon made and dispersed every where as to teach them these things. It is most likely therefore, nay certain, that though this was the original book, yet the Jews had many copies of the law among them, though some of them perhaps imperfect or corrupted. For they report that Manasseh blotted the name of Jehovah out of all the books he could find. Hil-

kiah, therefore, rejoiced that he had found the original, by which all might be corrected. Which had been hid, it is probable, from the impious fury of their idolatrous kings, in some secret place of the temple, where it was now found when they were about to repair it: and the finding it at this very time, when Josiah was making a reformation of religion, could not but be looked upon as a remarkable providence, which very much affected him, as we read afterward.

Ver. 9. *And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, saying, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the Lord.*] He gives him an account that he had executed his commands, given him ver. 4—6.

Ver. 10. *And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book: and Shaphan read it before the king.*] Some part of it. It is said, indeed, in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30. that "they read in the ears of the people all the book of the law." But that was done afterward, and was done by parcels, not all at one time. And so it follows here, xxiii. 2. that Josiah read, that is, caused some by his order to read, all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the Lord, in the ears of all the people.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.*] Being very much affrighted when he heard the dreadful threatenings against the transgressor of the law, read out of the book of Deuteronomy. At which the book opened, either bythe special providence of God, or by the design of Shaphan, who had read the book before he brought it to the king, (ver. 8.) The Jerusalem Talmud, and from thence Abarbinel, saith, that he happened to read the place where the punishment of their king is denounced, (Deut. xxviii. 36.) or, that he observed the time drew near, when the punishments God threatened would be inflicted, for their long offences against this law. According to what the king himself here saith, ver. 13. "Great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us," &c. By all which it is plain, the king had not written a copy of the law with his own hand, according to the command, Deut. xvii. 8. Disuse often cancels the most excellent laws. For it is too probable they had a long time neglected also to read the law publicly every seventh year, (Deut. xxxiv. 9, 10.)

Ver. 12. *And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying.*] Shaphan was a servant of the king, being secretary, or some such officer; but Asaiah, I suppose, was one that waited on his person, and was always about him.

Ver. 13. *Go ye and inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people.*] Of Jerusalem.

And for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according to all that which is written concerning us.] I suppose he sent them to inquire whether there were any hopes his anger might be appeased, and by what means.

Ver. 14. *So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harha, keeper of the wardrobe.*] It is certain that both Jeremiah and Zephaniah prophesied in the reign of Josiah; therefore it may seem strange that they did not resort to one of them. Of which Abarbinel gives this account, That Jeremiah was at this time absent from Jerusalem, being gone to convert the ten tribes; or rather, being at his own house in Anathoth. And the same he supposes of Zephaniah, that he was not near at hand; and therefore they went to Huldah, who lived at Jerusalem; and the rather, as some suppose, because women are more inclined to pity and compassion than men. But this is an absurd reason, as Abarbinel well observes: for the prophets did not speak according to their own inclinations, but as God dictated to them. The Jews have a tradition in Massecheth Megillah, that eight prophets descended from Rahab, whereof Huldah was one. And Kimchi upon this place saith, Our doctors write, that three prophesied in the days of Josiah; *viz.* Jeremiah in the streets or villages, Zephaniah in the synagogues, and Huldah among the women.

Now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college, and they communed with her.] The Hebrew word *mishneh*, which we translate *college* (and which the Targum takes to signify a *school*), is, in the margin of our Bibles, translated *the second part*. For there were three walls about Jerusalem, as Abarbinel observes. Within the *first* of which lived artificers, and the common people; within the *second*, the better sort, the wise men, prophets, and prophetesses, lived; and within the *third*, was the mountain of the Lord, as they speak. Now of the middle part of Jerusalem they think the holy writer here speaks, in which Huldah dwelt.

Ver. 15. *And she said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you unto me.*] He speaks in the prophetical style, and with great boldness tells him the plain truth.

Ver. 16. *Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read.*] All the plagues threatened in Deut. xxviii. and other places.

Ver. 17. *Because they have forsaken me, and have burnt incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands: therefore, my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.*] This was the answer to the king's inquiry; that the decree of God was peremptory and irresistible, against Judah and Jerusalem, for their extirpation; and he adds the reason thereof.

Ver. 18. *But to the king of Judah which sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard.*] As far as they concerned his person.

Ver. 19. *Because thy heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and went before me: I also have heard thee, saith the Lord.*] Here are *four* tokens, as some observe, of a true repentance and conversion unto God. First, softness of heart; which is opposed to that hardness which arises from unbelief of God's threatenings; because faith makes men tenderly affected with them. Secondly, great

humility, arising from a sense of his unworthiness of any mercy. These two were inward: the other were outward tokens of this inward sense; which were rending his clothes, and weeping for his own, and for the public offences; which moved God to take some pity upon him, though he resolved to destroy the nation.

Ver. 20. *Behold, therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers.*] The time hasting for their utter destruction, God would let him live but a short time; which was a mercy to him, that he might not see the miseries that were coming upon them.

And thou shalt go unto thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.] Though he was slain in battle, (xxiii. 29.) yet *he went to his grave in peace;* because, as the next words explain it, he did not live to see the calamities which were inevitably threatened to come upon the nation; but left his kingdom in a peaceable condition. For the Egyptians, who slew him, gave them no long disturbance, and the Babylonians were not yet ready to come up against them.

And they brought the king word again.] Who immediately set himself to do all the good he could for his time; though he could not prevent the evil that was coming.

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.*] Whom he acquainted with what he intended to do; and, I suppose, had their consent, which gave the greater authority to what follows.

Ver. 2. *And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the prophets.*] Jeremiah and Zephaniah were the principal prophets; and, it is likely, there were many more who are not mentioned.

And all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant.] He ordered some to read (xxii. 10.) in several places, so that all might hear; for it is not likely that one man's voice could reach so great a multitude.

Which was found in the house of the Lord.] And, some of the Jews say, was found lying open at that very place, where those words presented themselves, (Deut. xxviii. 36.) which awakened the king to cause all the law of God to be read to them.

Ver. 3. *And the king stood by a pillar.*] Unto which his throne adjoined; wherein the king was placed when he came to the temple, as the Hebrew doctors will have it. The king's seat, saith Jacob Juda Leo, was in the court of the Israelites, at the entrance into the court of the priests, by a marble pillar. There he sat when he came into the temple to worship God: there Joash was made king by Jehoiada: (xi. 14.) there Hezekiah read before the Lord the blasphemous letter which the king of Assyria sent him; (xix. 14.) and there Josiah now made a covenant with God that he would serve him. (See Vitringa Proleg. ad lib. de Synag. Veteri. cap. 4.)

And made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes.] That is, all his laws of all sorts.

With all their heart, and with all their soul.] He made this covenant in his own name, and in the name of all the people, whom he engaged faithfully to God's service.

To perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book: and all the people stood to the covenant.] They gave their consent to the covenant; standing before the Lord as he did, and not stirring from the place where he propounded it unto them.

Ver. 4. *And the king commanded Hilkiah the high-priest.*] It was very proper to commit the reformation of the house of God to the high-priest; and those who ministered under him. Some will have Hilkiah to be the father of Jeremiah, as is asserted by Greg. Abulfaragius, in his Histor. Dynastarum, p. 68. Which is an error; for Jeremiah was a priest of Anathoth, whither Abiathar was banished, of the seed of Ithamar, from whom it is likely he was descended, (1 Kings ii. 26.)

And the priests of the second order.] They that were under the high-priest; especially the sagan (as the Targum here hath it), who was the vicar of the high-priest, and stood at his right hand when he officiated, as the Jews tell us in Joma, where they say a man could not be made a high-priest unless he had been first a sagan.

And the keepers of the door.] Whom the Jews call *amarcelim;* which word we find xii. 10. where the Targum expounds it, *priests that were treasurers:* that is, such Levites as had the custody of the sacred money, which was for the repair of the temple. And the Hebrew phrase is not much different, *the keepers of the thresholds;* that is, the entrance into those chambers (as Hottinger thinks) wherein were kept such things as were of public use in the temple. Of which there were seven; wherein the priests' garments were laid up, and other such-like things.

To bring forth out of the temple of the Lord all the vessels that were made for Baal.] The word we translate *vessels*, or *instruments*, signifies all the various furniture belonging to Baal, and the rest of the false gods, which served either for offering of incense, or sacrifices, or the vestments of the priests, &c.

For Baal.] Who was the principal idol, whose worship Ahab first introduced, and Manasseh restored after Jehu had abolished it, as was said before, xxi. 3.

And for the grove.] I observed before, that by a *grove* is meant the *image* or *idol of the grove;* which Ahab had brought in also. (See there, xxi. 3. 7. and here below, ver. 6.)

And for all the host of heaven.] That is, the planets, and the rest of the stars, which the Sabæans, and Chaldeans, and other eastern people, worshipped. Whom the Jews impiously imitated, though they had been taught, in the very beginning of their law, that the sun, the moon, and all the stars, were all created by their God.

And he burnt them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them into Beth-el.] Which place (where, as Kimchi speaks, was the very foundation of idolatry) he polluted and profaned, by casting this filth there; that they who were wont to worship the calves in that place might avoid it, and not come near it.

Ver. 5. *And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem.*] These idolatrous priests are called *chemarim*

in the Hebrew, because they were clothed in black garments: (as Kimchi gives the reason, both upon this place and upon Zephan. i. 4.) whereas the priests of the Most High were clothed in white; especially those whose genealogy was not questioned. They, indeed, who could not make out their descent, were clothed in a black habit, to distinguish them from undoubted priests: and so were they who had any defect or blemish in their body, as appears from the Talmud in Middoth. And indeed it is certain, that they among the heathens, who sacrificed to the infernal gods, were clothed with such vestments, as appears by Canidia in Horace, lib. i. sat. 8. and Medea in Apollonius Rhodius, lib. iii. ver. 861.; from whence some think they had the name of μελανηφόροι, which we find in some ancient inscriptions. And thus the Egyptians bewailed Osiris, all which was suitable to their mighty sacrifices; wherein they were sad for the absence of the sun, who was meant by Osiris, as Gilbertus Cuperus observes in his Harpocrates, p. 129. And here now we have found the original of these *chemarim*, priests clothed in black. For it was a black ox which represented Osiris among the Egyptians, and it was covered ἱματίῳ μέλανι βυσσίνῳ, *with a black silk garment;* from whence, in all likelihood, the priests came to be so clothed.

Them also that burnt incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon.] Here Baal is distinguished from the sun; and therefore signifies the same with Belus, who was a deified king: and indeed it is highly probable, that not only Baal, but Moloch and Adonis, were the names only of some very potent kings, who were adored when they were dead, and in time were thought to be real gods.

And to the planets, and to all the hosts of heaven.] The Hebrew word *Mazaloth*, which the LXX. pronounce *Mazuroth*, is thought by Procopius Gazæus to be the name of a star, and most likely the evening star: which others take to signify a constellation, as we translate it in the margin; or all the twelve signs. For the Jewish astronomers call the zodiac, *ophan-hamazaloth*, the circle of the signs.

Ver. 6. *And he brought out the grove from the house of the Lord, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron.*] By the *grove*, as I have observed before, is meant the *image of the grove*, or, in plainer words, *Ashtaroth:* for so Procopius Gazæus saith, that where the LXX. translate this word the *grove*, others render it Ἀσήρωθ, or Ἀστάρωθ; that is, Ἀστάρτη, or *Venus*. For τῆς Ἀφροδίτης τὸ ξόανον ἔνδον ἑστησαν ἐν τῷ θείῳ νεῷ, *they had set up the statue of Venus in the temple of God.* (See Selden, Syntag. ii. de Diis Syris, cap. 2.)

And burnt it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people.] Which by the law were impure and unclean; and such he declared these ashes to be, and actually made them to be unclean, that none might touch them; much less gather them up as sacred relics. And so Kimchi expounds this place, He brought forth the wooden statue of Diana, which Manasseh had placed there, (xxi. 7.) and having burnt it and stamped it to powder, scattered the ashes on the graves of the idolaters, in detestation and contempt of their idolatry.

Ver. 7. *And he brake down the houses of the Sodomites, which were by the house of the Lord.*] From this some gather they were come to such a height of wickedness, that there were those among them who exposed their bodies to be abused contrary to nature, in honour of those filthy deities which they worshipped. For these public houses were near the temple of the Lord; and therefore these were persons consecrated to impurity, contrary to Deut. xxiii. 17. (See 1 Kings xiv. 24.) And so the ancient interpreters here understand corporal filthiness: only the Chaldee translates it, *the houses of things consecrated to idols.* R. Solomon Jarchi thinks it probable, that among those who worshipped the statues of the moon, or Venus, there were those who prostituted themselves to filthy mixtures. But Mr. Selden, by *Kedeschim* (which we translate *Sodomites*), understands the priests of Astarte, whom St. Jerome, upon Hosea iv. calls *exsectos*, upon pretence of greater purity, depriving themselves of those parts that serve for procreation of children.

Where the women wove hangings for the grove.] For Asherah, or Astarte, beforementioned; as Selden expounds it in the forenamed place. These hangings, or curtains, encompassed the image, and made a kind of *house* for it, as the Hebrew word imports, which the Greeks called καίσκους and ναΐδια, *little temples* or *habitations.* Into those tents the worshippers went, and there committed all manner of lewdness; for they had not arrived to such a degree of impudence, as not to seek for privacy in their filthiness.

Ver. 8. *And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah.*] Would not suffer them to dwell there, to corrupt the people.

And defiled the high places where priests had burnt incense.] He made them, saith Kimchi, receptacles of impurity, by casting dead carcasses there, and other such-like unclean things; that so he might remove out of the people's hearts all idolatry: for where sweet odours were wont before to be, there was nothing but stench.

From Geba to Beer-sheba.] That is, throughout the whole country; for Geba was in the northern parts, and Beer-sheba in the southern. (See 1 Kings xv. 22. Judg. xx. 1.)

And brake down the high places of the gates that were in the entering in of the gate of Joshua, the governor of the city, which were on a man's left hand at the gate of the city.] The high places of the gates seem to have been erected there, to offer incense to those tutelar gods, unto whom their idolatrous kings had committed the protection of their city. And Kimchi thinks that the governor of the city had his private household god, and a portable altar whereon he offered to his domestic idol. Which Josiah did not spare: but let the greatest men see his impartial zeal against all idolatry.

Ver. 9. *Nevertheless the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem, but they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren.*] He mixed mercy together with severity. For though he did not suffer those priests, who had offered incense in those high places, (directly contrary to the law, Deut. xii. 11.) to offer sacrifices at God's altar; because they had defiled themselves with that sinful worship, though to the true God; yet he permitted them to partake of the bread of the priests, which comprehends all those parts of any sacrifice that were the priest's portion. He mentions, indeed, only the meat-offering, which was to be of *unleavened bread;* (Lev. ii. 4, 5. 11.) but that is put by a synecdoche for all other offerings belonging to the priests. So that they were put into the con-

dition of those priests that had any blemish; who might not *offer the bread of their God:* (Lev. xxi. 17—21.) but they *might eat the bread of their God, both of the holy and most holy,* (Lev. xxi. 22. Ezek. xliv. 10.)

Ver. 10. *And he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom.*] By throwing all manner of filth into it, as well as by throwing down the altars on which they sacrificed their children, as the Syriac and Arabic seem to understand it.

That no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Moloch.] Though a great number of the Hebrew doctors think that their *passing their children through the fire,* was nothing more than making them pass between two fires, whereby they were consecrated to that idol; yet it is certain, as I have shewn before, (xvi. 3.) that they offered their children sometimes as burnt-sacrifices to idols; which was a thing so horrid, that perhaps they invented this instead of it, to make them pass through two fires: or, perhaps, the opinion of Maimonides may be true, that they did not burn their children to Moloch, as they did to other idols; but the entire worship of Moloch was absolved, by making children only pass through the fire to him; as his words are in his book of Idolatry, cap. 6. sect. 5.; which may be confirmed from Jer. xix. 5. where he saith, *they burnt their sons with fire unto Baal* in Topheth. (See Selden, Syntag. i. de Diis Syris, cap. 6. where he largely treats of this.)

Ver. 11. *And he took away.*] That is, he destroyed, as the Hebrew word signifies, ver. 5. where we translate it, *he put down the chemarim;* that is, destroyed or slew those priests, as Bochartus interprets it. So Lev. xxvi. 6. we translate the same word, *I will rid evil beasts out of the land;* that is, destroy them. The LXX. here translate it κατέκαυσε, *he burnt* the horses; as before, κατέκαυσε χωμήριμ, *he burnt the priests.* Though, perhaps, in both places it should be κατέπαυσε, *he made to cease,* as the Hebrew word literally signifies.

The horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun.] That is, had consecrated to the sun; as Lev. xx. 2. they are said to give their children to Moloch. A great number of authors tell us, that among several nations these animals were sacred to the sun (as hawks and some other creatures were), because of their swiftness in their course. But it is uncertain whether they were kept to be sacrificed to the sun (as they were among the Massagetæ, Persians, Armenians, and other people mentioned by Bochartus), or only to be led forth in pomp (as some of the Jews speak) every morning to meet the rising sun. Or, as others take it, the worshippers of the sun got upon these horses early in the morning, and rode out to adore the sun at its rising. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. xi. cap. 10.)

At the entering in of the house of the Lord, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain.] Or, the eunuch, who was some great officer in the court.

Which was in the suburbs.] So the Targum interprets the word *Parvarim;* which most translations retain as the name of a place, unto which the street in which these horses were kept reached; from the chamber of Nathan-melech. He was the principal officer, perhaps, that looked after them; and had the oversight of all those stables which were built from the temple gate to Parvarim. And perhaps he rode out himself every morning upon one of them, to salute the rising sun in the king's name.

And burnt the chariots of the sun with fire.] The ancients fancied the sun itself was carried about in a chariot (as Bochart observes in the place abovementioned), and therefore chariots as well as horses were dedicated to it. Which he makes an argument, that they were not mere brazen, silver, or golden statues of horses that are here meant; but real living horses to draw those chariots. (See Vossius, de Orig. et Prog. Idol. lib. xi. cap. 4.) Some of those who think they were only "imagines equorum et quadrigarum," (as Selden speaks, Syntag. ii. de Diis Syris, cap. 8.) *images of horses and chariots,* made of some metal or other, imagine they were represented in the shape of griffins, as the famous M. Spoon thought. (See Dr. Hyde, de Relig. Vet. Pers. p. 117.)

Ver. 12. *And the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made.*] They were not satisfied with the public altars they had made, in a vast number of high places: but the roofs of their houses being flat, they made altars there, (see Jer. xix. 13. xxxii. 29. Zephan. i. 5.) and particularly upon the king's palace, where they worshipped the sun, moon, and stars. But this could not privilege them from destruction, that they were on the top of the king's house.

And the altars that Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, did the king beat down, and brake them down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron.] It is said in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 13. that when Manasseh repented, he *took away all the altars he had made in the mountain of the house of the Lord:* and I suppose those in the courts of the priests and of the people were then removed. But Amon set them up again in the very place where Manasseh had erected them; and so they are here called his altars.

Ver. 13. *And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of Corruption.*] That is, Mount Olivet, (1 Kings xi. 2.) which was anciently called *Harmischah,* the *mount of Unction;* because of the olives that grew there in great plenty; but, by way of contempt and scorn, was called by the prophets *Harmaschith,* the *mount of Corruption,* because of the idols that were placed there, whereby the people were corrupted in their religion.

Which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon.] It is not to be doubted but these detestable idols had been taken away by such religious kings as Asa, Jehoshaphat, and Hezekiah; but they were restored again by their impious successors, in the very same place, and the same figure with those ancient ones; and so are here called those that Solomon made, because he was the first author of them, or at least permitted them to be made by his wives, and connived at their worship, as R. Levi thinks.

Did the king defile.] By dead men's bones, and other unclean things, which he threw into those places.

Ver. 14. *And he brake down the images, and cut down the groves.*] Wherein the images were.

And filled their places with the bones of men.] Which he

caused to be digged out of their graves, and burnt; being the bones of idolatrous priests, (ver. 16.)

Ver. 15. *Moreover, the altar that was at Beth-el.*] For this city and the territories thereof had been under the power of Judah, ever since the reign of Ahijah, (2 Chron. xiii. 19, 20.)

And the high places which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place, he brake down, and burnt the high place, and stamped it small as powder, and burnt the grove.] That is, he burnt the golden calf, as Mr. Selden thinks; for Asherah commonly signifies some image, as he shews in his discourse about Astarte, whose image it is likely this was; for the golden calf, as the Jews think, was carried away before this. But that is not certain: and Selden's opinion is probable, that the golden calves were made of wood gilded over, and thence called golden, which were easily burnt. (Syntag. i. de Diis Syris, cap. 4.)

Ver. 16. *And as Josiah turned himself.*] Looking round about him; being resolved to trust no man's eyes but his own, in discovering the monuments of idolatry.

He spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount.] It is not said whose sepulchres they were; but it is probable of the idolatrous priests (for in the Chronicles he is said to have burnt their bones), and of the prophets and great men, who had been instruments to promote Jeroboam's idolatry.

And sent and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burnt them upon the altar, and polluted it.] For nothing was more unclean than that which had touched dead men's bones.

According to the word of the Lord, which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.] Who foretold three hundred and sixty years ago these very things should be done by a king called Josiah, (1 Kings xiii. 2.)

Ver. 17. *Then he said, What title is that that I see?*] There was one stone, or pillar, I suppose, more eminent than the rest, with the name of the persons buried under it: and therefore called a *title*, because there was an inscription engraven upon it, according to the custom among the Jews (as now among us), to preserve thereby the memory of those they loved.

And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el.] The king was the more curious (as Rasi, and Kimchi also, tell the story out of the Midrasch) to know whose grave that was; because on one side of it he saw nettles and thistles grow, and on the other side myrtles and other odoriferous plants; signifying that there lay a true prophet and a false. For which there is no ground, but their fabulous fancy.

Ver. 18. *And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones.*] It is pertinently observed by Joh. Wolfius, that if pious persons in those days had had the same opinion about relics which now is in the church of Rome, the king would not merely have ordered his bones to lie quiet and undisturbed, but put them into golden boxes, and carried them to Jerusalem, to be there religiously worshipped by the people.

And they let his bones alone, and the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria.] That is, out of the country of Samaria.

Ver. 19. *And all the houses also of the high places.*] What these houses were, whether places for worship, or for the habitation of the priests of the high places (mentioned in the next verse), is uncertain. It is most likely the former; because they provoked God to anger.

That were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger.] In such cities of Samaria as were in the possession of the king of Judah; for upon the fall of the Assyrian empire, many of the cities, no doubt, became subject to their old masters.

Josiah took away, and did unto them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el.] That is, he brake them down, and burnt them, and stamped them to powder. (ver. 15.)

Ver. 20. *And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars.*] There were some priests of the high places (of whom we read before, ver. 8, 9.) that he did not kill; for they were such as sacrificed only unto God in the high places. But those whom he slew, were either the priests of Jeroboam who worshipped the calves, and had no right to the priesthood, (but had invaded it by the favour of their king), or such priests of the order of Aaron as sacrificed to Baal, or other false gods.

And burnt men's bones upon them.] Which was the highest pollution of those altars, (ver. 13, 14.)

And returned to Jerusalem.] Having made a progress through all the country, to abolish idolatrous worship where it was practised; he returned to Jerusalem, there to restore the solemnities of true religion.

Ver. 21. *And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the Passover unto the Lord your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant.*] Which he had bound them and himself to observe, (ver. 3.) and now tried them whether they would *stand to the covenant*, as they promised, by making a proclamation through the whole kingdom that they should keep this feast, which was a commemoration of the greatest benefit God ever bestowed on them, before the giving them the law, for it made them a free nation.

Ver. 22. *Surely there was not held such a Passover, from the days of the judges, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, and of the kings of Judah.*] Since the time of the prophet Samuel, the last of their judges, there had never been such a great concourse of people at any Passover, nor such a multitude of sacrifices offered; nor such an exact observation of the rites and ceremonies belonging to this feast. For in the time of Hezekiah many were absent; and many had not purified themselves as they ought: but now, as Ralbag expounds it, they were all turned to the Lord, and there were no idolaters nor apostates among them. (See Selden, lib. i. de Syned. cap. 12. p. 478.)

Ver. 23. *But in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, wherein this Passover was held unto the Lord in Jerusalem.*] In the same year that he took care to have the temple repaired, (xxii. 3.) and to purge it from all idols, (xxiii. 4.) he restored the true worship of God to such purity, as it had not been in for some ages.

Ver. 24. *Moreover, the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards.*] Of which see what I have noted upon Lev. xix. 31. xx. 6.

And the images.] In the Hebrew the *teraphim*, which were very ancient among idolaters, as I have observed upon the book of Genesis, xxxi. 19.

And the idols.] Of which there were many sorts, that are all comprehended in this word.

And all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah, and in Jerusalem.] What these abominations were is not certain, but it is likely they were such as Ezekiel saw and describes in aftertimes; when God shewed him what odious things they committed secretly. (See Ezek. viii. 6. 9, 10. 13. 15, &c.)

Did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law, which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord.] He had his spies, it is probable, to discover all secret idolatry, as well as public, which, being found out, he abolished, as abominable unto God.

Ver. 25. *And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.*] He doth not compare him with David and Hezekiah (as Procopius Gazæus here notes), but with other pious kings, such as Asa, Jehoshaphat, and Jotham; who were far inferior to him in piety. And Hezekiah himself was not so exact, and did not make such a thorough search as he did, after all idolatrous practices. The nation also was so much corrupted since his days, by his son Manasseh, who reigned a long time, that it made the work of reformation more difficult in the time of Josiah. Yet in some regard Hezekiah excelled him; and therefore the same character is given of him xviii. 5. which is here given of Josiah; because of his trust in God, in the time of his greatest distress, for which he was very eminent. But as to repentance, Josiah was most exemplary.

Ver. 26. *Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal.*] Though Josiah was most sincere in what he did, and omitted nothing to restore the purity of God's worship among them; yet he could not procure the preservation of the nation from destruction, but only a forbearance of it for a time. For the people were so corrupted by Manasseh, that they rather complied with Josiah in his reformation, than heartily desired it, out of an inward affection to it. The innocent blood also shed by Manasseh was unpardonable, (xxiv. 3, 4.) Of which the people it is likely approved, and so fell under an irreversible sentence of destruction. (See Ezek. xxiv. 6.)

Ver. 27. *And the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem, which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.*] He peremptorily decreed that they should be carried away captive, as the ten tribes had been; and that his Divine presence among them should not save them; but he would abandon his own dwelling-place, and, removing from them, leave them a prey to their enemies: which we find livelily represented in Ezek. x. 18, 19. where the prophet saw the glory of the Lord departing from his house, and carried away by the cherubims.

This may seem strange, as Abarbinel observes, that God should thus visit the sins of Manasseh, of which he had repented; and not be reconciled after Josiah had abolished all monuments of idolatry, and the Israelites had kept such a Passover, as is beforementioned: unto which he answers, that though it be said Manasseh repented, yet it is not said he turned to God with all his heart, and with all his soul, as Josiah did. For Manasseh repented only when he was in great distress; and though he repented, the people did not; but fell to their idolatrous practices as soon as he was dead, following his wicked son Amon. Nay, he thinks in the days of Josiah they were little better, as he gathers from the eleventh and twelfth of Jeremiah. To which may be added what we read in the prophet Zephaniah, who lived in the days of Josiah, and threatened in the name of God, "I will utterly consume all things from off the land, and consume both man and beast," (Zeph. i. 2, 3.) For they were still private idolaters, though they complied with the public reformation; swearing by the Lord, and by Malcom; and when the high places were taken away, worshipping the host of heaven upon the house-tops, (ver. 5.)

Ver. 28. *Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 29. *In his days Pharaoh-Nechoh king of Egypt.*] Whom Herodotus, in his second book, calls Νεκὼς, and mentions the fight which he had with the Syrians, ἐν Μαγδόλῳ. (See Usher's Annals, ad A. M. 3394.)

Went up against the king of Assyria.] Who was then king of Babylon; for he had subdued the Assyrians, and brought them under his empire. There are those, indeed, who think this happened before that time, and that this king of Egypt went to revenge the injuries done them by Sennacherib; and he hoped for the better success, because he was much weakened by that slaughter the angel had made of his army; and because the Medes and Babylonians had rebelled against the Assyrians. But why Josiah should go to help the Assyrians no account can be given. Our forementioned primate hath better expounded it, that as the king of Persia, having subdued Babylon and Assyria, is called the king of Assyria; (Ezra vi. 22.) so here the king of Babylon, having subdued Assyria, is called king of Assyria. Besides that, Babylon was anciently accounted a part of Assyria; and the land of the Chaldeans is said to be founded by the Assyrians, (Isa. xxiii. 13.) And thus Josephus expressly saith, (lib. x. Antiq. cap. 6.) Μήδους πολεμῶν καὶ τοὺς Βαβυλωνίους, οἱ τὴν Ἀσσύριον κατέλυσαν ἀρχήν. *The king of Egypt came to fight the Medes and Babylonians, who had overturned the Assyrian empire.*

To the river Euphrates.] To besiege Carchemish, which lap upon that river, as we read 2 Chron. xxxv. 20. which city was possessed by the Assyrians in the time of Sennacherib; (Isa. x. 9.) but their empire being overthrown, it returned under the power of the Babylonians.

And king Josiah went against him.] Being afraid he intended to invade his country in his passage; or to divert him from his expedition against the Babylonians, with whom he was in league. It is likely the latter was the reason; for the king of Egypt assured him he had no quarrel with him, and yet he would fight him, (2 Chron. xxxv. 21, 22.)

And he slew him in Megiddo.] Gave him a mortal wound; of which he died, not till he came to Jerusalem, (2 Chron. xxxv. 24.)

When he had seen him.] At the first brunt, as soon as they had joined battle. (See xiv. 8.)

Ver. 30. *And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo.*] Mortally wounded (as I said before), which befel him, the Jews think, because he did not ask counsel of the Lord, by the prophet Jeremiah.

And brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre.] With such lamentations, as we no where read were made for any other king, (2 Chron. xxxv. 25.) which continued so long that it became a proverb, (Zech. xii. 11.)

And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.] He is called Shallum, Jer. xxii. 11. and was younger than Jehoiakim, as appears by this, that he was but twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and reigned but three months: after which Jehoiakim being made king, was twenty-five years old, (ver. 31. 36.) But the people preferred Jehoahaz before him, because perhaps he was the more warlike person. And they *anointed* him, as Abarbinel thinks, because, perhaps, he was not the first-born, and his title questionable. For they anointed persons only when there was a controversy about the succession. Ralbag, also, is of opinion, that the people by force made him a king against his will; which he will have to be the import of that phrase, *they took Jehoahaz*, &c.

Ver. 31. *Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.*] His father Josiah had four sons, and this was the youngest of them, as appears from 2 Chron. iii. 15. where he is called Shallum, as he is by the prophet Jeremiah. Which name our great primate thinks seemed to the people to be of an ill omen (for Shallum king of Israel reigned but one month), which made them change it into Jehoahaz; which proved not much more fortunate to him, for he reigned but three months, ad A. M. 3371.

Ver. 32. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done.*] After the example of Ahaz, Manasseh, Amon, and such-like wicked kings; his mother, perhaps, having infused ill principles into him.

Ver. 33. *And Pharaoh-Nechoh put him in bands at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem.*] When he returned from his expedition against the Babylonians, he deposed this prince, as an usurper; or hearing that he intended to be revenged of him for his father's death; or that he was of a turbulent spirit, and so put it out of his power to give him any disturbance.

And put the land to a tribute of a hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.] In token of their subjection to him.

Ver. 34. *And Pharaoh-Nechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father.*] For the eldest son Johanan, in all likelihood, was dead.

And turned his name to Jehoiakim.] As the manner of conquerors was, to change the names of those whom they had subdued, in token of their absolute power over them. (See Dan. i. 7.) And the forenamed primate thinks he gave him this name, that he might testify he ascribed his victory over the Babylonians to Jehovah, the God of Israel; who, he said, excited him to that expedition, (2 Chron. xxxv. 21, 22.)

And he took Jehoahaz away, and he came to Egypt, and died there.] According to the prophecy of Jeremiah, whom God sent to call this new king and the people to repentance, (xxii. 1—3.) "Weep ye not for the dead (*i. e.* for Josiah), neither bemoan him, but weep sorely for him that goeth away (that is, for Shallum), for he shall return no more, nor see his native country, &c. but he shall die in the place whither they shall lead him captive," &c. (Jer. xxii. 10—12.)

Ver. 35. *And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money, according to the commandment of Pharaoh.*] For the treasures of the Lord's house, and of the king's, it seems were empty.

He exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give it to Pharaoh-Nechoh.] Proportionable to every man's estate.

Ver. 36. *Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah.*] In the very beginning of his reign Jeremiah was sent to him with a message from God, to bring him to repentance, Jer. xxvi. 1—3. xxvii. where he seems (ver. 12.) to have told his brother Zedekiah that he should be king, if Jehoiakim was disobedient; and exhorts him not to be so.

Ver. 37. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done.*] See ver. 32. For he killed the prophet Urijah, and was at the charge to fetch him out of Egypt, whither he fled to save his life, (Jer. xxvi. 20, 21, &c.) And if it had not been for Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, who had been a great man in his father Josiah's court, he had served Jeremiah in the same manner, ver. 24.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *IN his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up.*] He is called by heathen writers, Nabo-col-assar: and, as primate Usher thinks, Nebopolassar was his father. He begun his reign in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, as Jeremiah tells us; (xxv. 1.) when, having smote the army of Pharaoh-Nechoh, at Carchemish, near Euphrates, (Jer. xlvi. 2.) he came up to make the Jews tributaries to him, as they had been to Pharaoh.

And Jehoiakim became his servant three years; and he turned and rebelled against him.] He omits his being bound in chains, and carried to Babylon, which was in the fifth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, and the eighth of Jehoiakim, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6. where, having been kept awhile, and promising fidelity to Nebuchadnezzar, he restored him to his kingdom, in which he served him three years; and then in his ninth year rebelled against him, by the instigation, it is probable, of Pharaoh, who began to gather strength again. But this proved fatal to him, for Pharaoh was not able to help him, (ver. 7.)

Ver. 2. *And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it.*] These were all subject to Nebuchadnezzar, whom he sent to chastise Jehoiakim, before he came himself, and besieged Jerusalem, and carried away part of the vessels of the house of the Lord, &c. For this

was the third year mentioned by Daniel, after he was restored to his kingdom, (Dan. i. 1, 2.) when he, Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah, were carried captive to Babylon, (ver. 6.)

According to the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servants the prophets.] By the prophet Isaiah, xx. 17, 18. of this book, and by Huldah, xxii. 16. and Jeremiah, in the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters.

Ver. 3. *Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did.*] By God's special order those people came up against Judah (therefore, in the verse before he is said to *send them*), because they were incurable. For Manasseh had so corrupted the whole body of the people, that Josiah's reformation could not recover them; but immediately upon his death, his son relapsed to the old idolatry.

Ver. 4. *And also for the innocent blood that he shed (for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood), which the Lord would not pardon.*] See xxi. 16. Upon the repentance of Manasseh, and the reformation made by Josiah, God deferred their punishment; but he resolved not to grant them an absolute pardon of their iniquity; which provoked him to decree their extirpation.

Ver. 5. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 6. *So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers.*] It appears by this, that to sleep with one's fathers, signifies no more than to die, as they did. For Jehoiakim was not buried with them, nor died in his bed; but being taken by the Chaldeans, he died as they led him out of Jerusalem, and, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, (xxii. 18, 19.) they cast him out of the gates, and he had the burial of an ass; that is, lay upon the ground unburied. Abarbinel thinks he died in the way to Babylon; and his body was left in the highway, without any care taken to inter it; but it lay exposed to the sun by day, and to the frost by night. (Jer. xxxvi. 30.)

And Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.] Who is called also Jechoniah, 1 Chron. iii. 16. and more briefly Choniah (by way of contempt, as some think), Jer. xxii. 24.

Ver. 7. *And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken, from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the king of Egypt.*] After the fight at Carchemish, (which I mentioned ver. 1.) Nebuchadnezzar conquered all the places that the king of Egypt held, between that and the river of Egypt; concerning which, see my notes on Gen. xv. 18. So that he durst not stir out of the limits of his own country, which was bounded by that river, till the reign of Zedekiah, when the king of Egypt adventured to come up to help him, but in vain; for he was forced to return to his own land, (Jer. xxxvii. 7, 8.)

Ver. 8. *Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign.*] That is, when he began to reign alone after his father's death: but his father when he was but eight years old made him his associate in the kingdom, (2 Chron. xxxvi. 9.) that he might continue the kingdom in his family, and there might be no contention among his sons about it. Thus this account and that in the Chronicles are easily reconciled. When his father had reigned one year, he took him to reign with him; and so he came to reign ten years with his father, and three months alone. Now here Ezra mentions only the time he reigned alone, but there he speaks of all the years he reigned with his father and alone. Abarbinel gives another account of this difficulty, with which I shall not trouble the reader; it seeming to me a little more forced than this solution of it. And the plainest way is to acknowledge an error in the transcriber of the book of Chronicles.

And he reigned in Jerusalem three months, &c.] *And ten days,* as it is explained 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9. but such small numbers are wont to be omitted in greater sums. (See 1 Kings xvi. 18.)

Ver. 9. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done.*] A wonderful thing, that he should not be moved to do better, by the sad example of his father, and his predecessor.

Ver. 10. *At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged.*] It is likely that Nebuchadnezzar heard he was entered into a confederacy with the king of Egypt, as his successor did; and therefore sent an army against him in the very beginning of his reign, to lay siege to Jerusalem, against which he intended to come himself. Some of the Jews say, that the counsellors of Nebuchadnezzar represented to him how unadvisedly he had acted in making him king, whose father had been in rebellion against him; using this proverb, "From an ill dog never comes a good whelp." Whereupon he resolved to depose him, and make Zedekiah king.

Ver. 11. *And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it.*] He first sent an army under his great commanders, and then came in person, and found they had obeyed his orders, and invested the city.

Ver. 12. *And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers.*] He made a surrender of the city into the hands of the king of Babylon; by the counsel of Jeremiah, perhaps, who advised the same to his successor more than once. (Jer. xxi. 9. xxvii. 17. xxxviii. 2.) And happy was it for him that he obeyed, and gave up himself to the king of Babylon; for God declared by the figure of good and bad figs, that he had sent them into the land of the Chaldeans for their good; whereas they that remained in the land should be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, for their hurt. (See Jer. xxiv. 5—8, &c.)

And the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign.] That is, in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign; for he began to reign in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, who reigned seven more after that, which was the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 13. *And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and all the treasures of the king's house.*] There being no mention of the carrying away of the ark, either here, or in the book of the Chronicles, or in Jeremiah, among the holy things of the temple, it is probable that it was burnt, together with the temple, in the next reign, when the remaining holy things were carried away, but nothing said of this. For what the Jews say of its being hidden by the prophet Jeremiah in a certain cave

in Mount Nebo is a mere fable; there being no ark in the second temple, as they confess; which there might have been, if it had been only hidden till the temple was restored.

And cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon the king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord.] That is, all in a manner, but not absolutely all; for some were remaining, or else renewed again (which is not likely), xxvi. 14, 15. And by *cutting in pieces* must be meant no more than their being cut off from the temple; which was deprived of a principal part of its treasure; for these vessels were preserved entire, and not cut in pieces, as appears from Dan. v. 2.

As the Lord had said.] By the prophet Isaiah unto Hezekiah, (xx. 17.) As for the pillars, and the sea, and the bases, and the residue of the vessels that were not now taken away, they were only reserved till the next reign; when Jeremiah prophesied they should be carried away also, (Jer. xxvii. 19—22.)

Ver. 14. *And he carried away all Jerusalem.*] He explains what he means by the following words; which restrain it to the principal persons.

And all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives.] Among whom was Ezekiel; who began his prophecy from this captivity, (Ezek. i. 2, 3.) and calls it *our captivity*, (xl. 1.) Mordecai, of the tribe of Benjamin, was carried away at this time, (Esther ii. 5—7.) if we believe the Jews.

And all the craftsmen and smiths.] By craftsmen, some understand carpenters; who were artificers, as the smiths were.

None remained, save the poorest people of the land.] Who were so numerous, that Zedekiah was tempted to rebel, and that against his oath of fidelity to the king of Babylon.

Ver. 15. *And he carried Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and the officers, and the mighty men of the land; those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon.*] All that belonged to the court, or that were of any quality in the country. (See Jer. xxiv. 1. xxix. 1, 2. Ezek. xvii. 12, 13.)

Ver. 16. *And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand; all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.*] This, and the foregoing verses, Abarbinel explains in this manner:—By the ten thousand mentioned ver. 14. are meant in general the whole number of Judah and Benjamin, that were now carried captive. Then here he comes to shew how this number was made up; (ver. 15, 16.) Jehoiachin, and all his court and great men, were seven thousand, the craftsmen and smiths a thousand. The rest were not mighty men, nor such tradesmen, but ministers and servants of the court, and other considerable men in the country, who made up two thousand more, and completed the ten thousand. Jeremiah computes them to have been but a little above three thousand that were now carried away to Babylon: but he reckons only those that were carried from Jerusalem; whereas here is an account of those that were carried from other cities, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, which were seven thousand. There was another captivity before this, in the last year of king Nebupolazzar, (Dan. i. 1—3.) but then only a few select persons were carried away to wait upon the king of Babylon; and therefore are not mentioned, either by Jeremiah, or by this Divine writer. But a very learned friend of mine, (in his late Chronology of the Old Testament, p. 49.) thinks that the first captivity was the greatest of all; those words, (xxiv. 3.) *This came upon Judah to remove them out of God's sight*, implying (in his opinion) that not only some of the seed-royal, with some others, but the body of the people were led into captivity. And therefore he dates the seventy years' captivity from that time; *viz.* the fourth year of Jehoiakim, in the beginning of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. (See Jer. xxv. 1. 11, 12.)

Ver. 17. *And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.*] Which signifies *the justice of God:* and seems to have been given him, to put him in mind of the just judgment of God, which would fall upon him, if he broke the oath of fidelity which he took to the king of Babylon, (2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. Ezek. xvii. 13, 14. 18.)

Ver. 18. *And Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem,* &c.] In the end of which he was carried captive, (Jer. i. 3.)

Ver. 19. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.*] Not regarding what Jeremiah said unto him, but shut him up in prison, &c. (Jer. xxxiii. 1, 2. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12.) And his servants, and the people of the land, were as bad as himself, (Jer. xxxvii. 1, 2.)

Ver. 20. *For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Judah and Jerusalem, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.*] God was so highly displeased with this wicked people, that he permitted Zedekiah to break his faith with Nebuchadnezzar, and to rebel against him, forgetting for what cause he changed his name. Unto his revolt, it is probable, he was persuaded by the ambassadors which the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Zidon, sent unto him, to solicit him to throw off the yoke of the king of Babylon, (Jer. xxvii. 2—4, &c.). Which was the greater crime, because he had *made him swear by God* he would be true to him, (Chron. xxxvi. 13.) The king of Egypt also, it is likely, promised him help, as I noted before, (ver. 7. and see Ezek. xvii. 15.) And Hananiah a false prophet assured him God would in two years' time break the yoke of the king of Babylon, and bring back all the vessels of the house of God, with Jehoiachin and all the captives. (See Jer. xxviii. 1—4, &c.) Jeremiah, indeed, proved that he had made them trust in a lie, by predicting his death that very year, which accordingly fell out, (ver. 15—17.) But they still persisted in their vain hopes, there being other deceivers, that *prophesied falsely in God's name,* (Jer. xxix. 8, 9.) And they most of all deceived themselves with proud conceits that they were the true seed of Abraham, who had a right to that land, (Ezek. xxxiii. 24.)

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem.*] See Jer. xxxix. 1. lii. 4.

And pitched against it.] Encamped themselves before it.

And they built forts against it round about.] On which to place their batteries, and keep any relief from coming to them.

Ver. 2. *And the city was besieged to the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.*] There was another siege began before this; *viz.* in the third year of Zedekiah; but during this second siege, the king of Egypt came to help Zedekiah: which made the Chaldeans raise the siege for a time, (Jerem. xxxvii. 12.) And then Jeremiah endeavoured to get out of the city, but was hindered; and bade them not flatter themselves, for the Chaldeans should return and burn the city with fire; as he had told Zedekiah before, (xxxiv. 1, 2, &c.)

Ver. 3. *And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land.*] Who had fled thither out of the country to secure themselves and their families. This famine is described as very terrible, in the book of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, iv. 10.

Ver. 4. *And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate, between two walls, which is by the king's garden (now the Chaldeans were against the city round about); and the king went the way towards the plain.*] It is a hard matter to understand how they made their escape, since the Chaldeans had begirt the city round about; unless we suppose they kept strong guards only at the gates of the city; but the Chaldeans having made a breach in the wall, they got away privately between the wall and the outworks, in a passage which the Chaldeans did not suspect: and the king ran into the champaigne country, with some of his forces attending him. The Jews think there were subterranean conduits from the royal garden into the plain, through which Zedekiah went out: but this is without any ground.

Ver. 5. *And the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army was scattered from him.*] Every man shifting away, and endeavouring to save himself in such places as he could flee unto.

Ver. 6. *So they took the king, and brought him to the king of Babylon to Riblah.*] Where he lay to attend the success of the siege, and to send them supplies, and intercept any relief that might come to them.

And they gave judgment upon him.] A great council, I suppose, was called; who passed a solemn sentence upon him, in condemning him as a rebellious subject. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah, that he should see the king of Babylon, and speak with him, (Jer. xxxii. 4. xxxiv. 3.)

Ver. 7. *And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes.*] See Jer. lii. 11.

And put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.] Thus two famous prophecies were fulfilled, which seemed to contradict one the other (whereby Zedekiah, perhaps, was tempted not to believe them): one of Jeremiah, that he should be carried to Babylon; (xxxii. 5. xxxiv. 3.) and the other of Ezekiel, that he should not see Babylon, (xii. 13.) The event made good both; for he was carried thither blind.

Ver. 8. *And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month (which is the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), came Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem.*] It is said in Jer. lii. 12. that he came on the tenth day of this month; that is, he came from Riblah upon the seventh, and arrived at Jerusalem on the tenth. Or, if he came to Jerusalem on the seventh, he did not burn the temple till the tenth; but spent the eighth and ninth days, as the Jews say, in eating, drinking, and making merry. Nebuchadnezzar did not come himself to Jerusalem, but he sent this great man to execute his commands; who, the Jews say, became a proselyte.

Ver. 9. *And he burnt the house of the Lord.*] After it had stood four hundred years, as Sir John Marsham computes it. But primate Usher makes account it was burnt four hundred twenty-four years, three months, and eight days, after it began first to be built by Solomon. But neither of these accounts are true, if we believe all the learned Jews, (Kimchi, Ralbag, Abarbinel, &c.) who agree that it stood four hundred and thirty years. Josephus stands amazed at this, that the second temple was burnt by the Romans, in this very month, and the same day of the month, (lib. vi. de Bello Judaico, cap. 27.) And so we read in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 30. that the Levites were in their desks singing the very same song in both destructions, which was this: *He shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness: yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off,* (Psal. xciv. 23.)

And the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire.] By *col beth gadol,* which signify *every great house,* the Talmudists understand all the synagogues. But Kimchi, Ralbag, and Abarbinel, interpret the words as we do. And so the Targum; yea, Jarchi himself, who is the most tenacious of the Talmudical interpreters, after he had said, *The houses of the synagogues, where the law and prayers were read,* adds these words, *and the palaces of the princes;* not daring (as Vitringa observes) to vouch the former for a literal interpretation, (lib. de Synag. par. ii. cap. 11.)

Ver. 10. *And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.*] That they who were left there might not be able to make any resistance hereafter; and that it might no longer be looked upon as a city, but as an open village.

Ver. 11. *Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude.*] That is, all that escaped the sword and the famine; and all that fled to the king of Babylon, and put themselves under his protection.

Did Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, carry away.] Who were in all eight hundred thirty and two persons; as we read in Jer. lii. 29. where he saith, in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (that is, in the end of it, and the beginning of his nineteenth year), he carried away this number.

Ver. 12. *But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vine-dressers and husbandmen.*] What should move the Talmudists by the Hebrew word *ceremim* to understand *gatherers of balsam;* and by *jogebim, fishers for purple,* is hard to understand (though Bochartus hath attempted some account of it); when Jeremiah tells us ex-

pressly that he gave these poor people vineyards and fields; which shews what they were, (Jer. xxxix. 10.)

Ver. 13. *And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord, and the bases, and the brazen sea that was in the house of the Lord, did the Chaldeans break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon.*] They were too cumbersome to be carried away whole, therefore he brake them in pieces, and so transported the brass of which they were made.

Ver. 14. *And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass, wherewith they ministered, took they away.*

Ver. 15. *And the fire-pans, and the bowls, and such things as were of gold, in gold, and of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away.*] He did not alter these, but carried them away as he found them; that he might give a punctual account of them to his master. And the singular providence of God herein appeared, that these vessels were not embezzled, nor employed to any common use, but put into the house of the king of Babylon's god, *viz.* Belus, where they were preserved to be restored, in God's appointed time, by Cyrus. So we read they were, Ezra i. 7, 8, &c.

Ver. 16. *And the two pillars, one sea, and the bases which Solomon had made for the house of the Lord: the brass of all these vessels was without weight.*] So we read they were, when they were first made, (1 Kings vii. 47.)

Ver. 17. *And the height of one pillar was eighteen cubits, and the chapiter upon it was brass; and the height of the chapiter three cubits; and the wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen work.*] These two pillars are more fully described in 1 Kings vii. 15, &c. and in Jer. lii. 21, &c.

Ver. 18. *And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest.*] Whom the Jews call the sagan; who was the deputy of the high-priest, in case of sickness, or any incapacity to officiate.

And the three keepers of the door.] Of the vessels of the temple, saith Kimchi; or of the treasury.

Ver. 19. *And out of the city he took an officer that was set over the men of war, and five men of them that were in the king's presence.*] Who constantly attended the king's person wheresoever he was.

Which were in the city.] Where at first they found but five of them: but afterward seven, (Jer. lii. 26.)

And the principal scribe of the host, which mustered the people of the land.] The muster-master-general, as we speak, or some such great officer.

And threescore people of the land that were found in the city.] These were some eminent persons who had concealed themselves in some private place; but, before Nebuzar-adan left Jerusalem, were discovered. And the Jews will have it that they were the men of the great Sanhedrin; whose whole number of seventy-one persons they make a shift to find here; *viz.* the three keepers of the door, and the seven near attendants upon the king, and the scribe; which with these threescore, make seventy-one. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 16. p. 671.)

Ver. 20. *And Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.*] That he might dispose of them as he thought fit; they being not vulgar persons, like those whom he had ordered to be carried captive, or left in the land.

Ver. 21. *And the king of Babylon smote them, and slew them at Riblah, in the land of Hamath.*] Passed the sentence of death upon them; which was forthwith executed: because he looked upon them, it is likely, as the king's principal counsellors, who advised him to rebel against him. And the judgment of God, Strigelius here observes, was remarkable upon impious priests, whom he suffered not to live, because they had been great instruments in promoting idolatry.

So Judah was carried away out of their land.] Four hundred sixty and eight years after the beginning of the reign of David; three hundred eighty and eight years since the division of the ten tribes from Judah and Benjamin; and a hundred thirty-four years since the destruction of the ten tribes; as our primate of Ireland makes account.

Ver. 22. *And for the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left.*] Ver. 12.

Even over them he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ruler.] His father Ahikam was a great friend of Jeremiah's, (Jer. xxvi. 14.) and therefore Gedaliah may be presumed to have been so likewise; and by his advice, it is likely, was one of those that went out to the king of Babylon, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 23. *And when the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor.*] That is, such as fled away with Zedekiah, (ver. 5.) and those that fled perhaps before the siege to the Moabites, and Ammonites, and Edomites, and other neighbouring countries. (See Jer. xl. 7. 11, 12.)

There came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Careah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men.] He reckons up the principal persons that came in to him, with those under their command. Jeremiah also himself put himself under his protection, (Jer. xl. 5, 6.)

Ver. 24. *And Gedaliah sware unto them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.*] He was so well assured of the king of Babylon's favour to him, that he secured them by an oath, they should be safe under his government; provided they would serve the king of Babylon, which it was their interest to do.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass in the seventh month.*] After he had been governor about two months.

That Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed-royal.] His pride (being of the seed-royal) tempted him to conspire against Gedaliah; though he had no power to maintain any authority in the country; but was forced presently to flee away. Nor was the king of Moab, who instigated him to this villany, (Jer. xl. 14.) able to support him.

Came, and ten men with him.] These ten men were commanders, no doubt, of some forces under them; for so few were not sufficient to make a slaughter of Gedaliah, and all the Jews and Chaldeans that were with him. (See Jer. xli. 1—3.)

And he smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and

the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah.] This story is told more largely in the fortieth and forty-first of Jeremiah; where we read that Gedaliah was admonished of this intended conspiracy against him; but, like other good men, who are commonly void of suspicion, because they have no design to hurt others, he did not believe what was told him.

Ver. 26. *And all the people, small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and came to Egypt; for they were afraid of the Chaldees.*] Contrary to the persuasion of Jeremiah (by whom they pretended they would be advised), who assured them that they should be safe if they would stay in the land of Judah, but should perish if they went into Egypt. (See Jer. xlii. 9, 10, &c.) Thus this populous and fertile country was laid waste and desolate; part of the people being carried captive to Babylon, part of those that were left in the land being slain with Gedaliah, the remainder flying into Egypt. So that it was left to be overrun with briers and thorns, and to be inhabited by wild beasts. Only some of the neighbouring nations seem to have settled themselves in some parts of it. (See Jer. xii. 14. Ezek. xxxvi. 4, 5.)

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass, in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven-and-twentieth day of the month.*] It was resolved on the twenty-fifth day of the month, and executed two days after. So this place is easily reconciled with Jer. lii. 35.

In the year he began to reign, did Evil-Merodach lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison.] Raised him from his dejected condition; for in affliction men hang down their heads. By this it appears that Nebuchadnezzar reigned five-and-forty years; for Jechoniah was carried captive in the eighth year of his reign, (xxiv. 12.) and now had been prisoner thirty-seven years, when Nebuchadnezzar was newly dead. Which two sums put together make forty-five. This is the account of the Jews; but, according to the canon of Ptolemy, he reigned but three-and-forty years: and therefore primate Usher makes him to have reigned two years with his father.

Ver. 28. *And he spake kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon.*] He had the kings of several countries with him in Babylon, whom his father had taken captive, and made prisoners: unto whom he not only left the name and titles of kings, but now gave them some liberty, and bestowed a royal seat upon them. But he preferred Jehoiachin above them all; either because of the great fame of his royal ancestors David and Solomon, from whom he was descended; or, as the Jews say, because he had made a friendship in prison with Evil-Merodach, who was thrown into it by his father Nebuchadnezzar for his maleadministration of the government, during the seven years that he was moped.

Ver. 29. *And changed his prison-garments.*] Bestowed on him royal apparel; that he might be fit to keep him company.

And he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life.] Was frequently invited to his own table, as Crœsus was to that of Cyrus. Victorinus Strigelius thinks it not unlikely that he had learned the doctrine of the true God from the prophet Daniel, as Nebuchadnezzar his father had done; who in a public edict professed as much: and upon this account he shewed such great kindness to Jechoniah. For which cause he got the name of Evil-Merodach among impious princes; that is, *Foolish Merodach.*

Ver. 30. *And his allowance was a constant allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.*] The meaning may be, that when he did not eat with the king, he lived upon a pension, that was duly paid him every day for meat, drink, clothing, lodging, and other expenses. Or if the word *continually* (in the foregoing verse) be understood literally, that he always ate with the king: then this allowance was made for his family and attendants; as in the case of Mephibosheth, (2 Sam. ix. 10.) Jeremiah, in the conclusion of his book, gives the same account of the king's extraordinary kindness to him; which continued, he saith, to the day of his death.

THE

FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES.

IT is the common opinion of the Jews that these books were written by Ezra: which is the more probable, because the book of Ezra begins with the same words (without the least variation) wherewith these books end: which argues one and the same person to have written both; who, to connect his history together, makes use of his own words, as Grotius observes other ancient authors have done. Howsoever, it appears from hence, that these books were written after the captivity, since they mention their restoration by Cyrus: and it is also evident from 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. that they were written after the time of the prophet Jeremiah.

Huetius, in his learned work, Demonstratio Evangelica, thus far agrees with this opinion of the Jews, that he thinks Ezra digested these books; and added to them the first six chapters of the book which bears his name, which afterward he continued: but Nehemiah, he thinks, had some hand in this work: which was gathered not only out of the public journals, but of the writings of the prophets, Shimeah, Iddo, Jehu, Nathan, Abijah, Isaiah, and others; and, it is likely, out of some genealogies (R. Solomon saith, upon the seventh chapter, that after their return he found three), and out of the other books of Holy Scripture before published, as Kimchi adds: and thus Procopius Gazæus,

"Hæc ex multis prophetarum scriptis collegit;" *he gathered these out of many writings of the prophets.*

That which confirms this opinion, is what we read in the second book, chap. v. 9. where it is said of the ark and its staves, which Solomon brought into his temple, *there they are to this day.* Which words are so far (as Huetius observes) from proving that these books were written before the captivity (after which the ark was no more heard of), that Ezra took this passage, and that in 1 Kings viii. 8. where are almost the same words, out of some other ancient book, and set them down word for word as he found them there. For having wrote the books of the Kings in the time of the captivity, he found at their return more ancient registers, containing larger accounts of several transactions; which he thought good to add to what he had before written, to make the history more complete: which Dr. Alix (in his Reflections upon the Books of the Old Testament, vol. ii. chap. 1.) thinks was done about six-and-twenty years after the writing of the books of the Kings, in the eighteenth year after the captivity was ended.

This seems to be implied in the Hebrew title of these books, which is *Dibre hajamim,* signifying they contain such things as were contained in the *diaries* or *day-books,* wherein the passages of those times were recorded, if any thing memorable happened every day. The word *Jamim* also signifying *years,* these books may be called *Annals:* which the Greeks call Παραλειπόμενα: as much as to say, those things are here supplied which were omitted in other books of Holy Scripture, especially in the books of the Kings, as other things are here amplified and enlarged: others explained and made more clear. For instance, in the conclusion of this first book, he gives an account of the things which David did in his old age: in ordering the courses of the priests, and of the Levites, the singers, and musicians; and in making vast preparations for the building of the temple by his son; none of which had been mentioned in the foregoing books. Thus Xenophon (Strigelius observes) wrote *Paralipomena* of the Peloponnesian war, which had been written before by Thucydides.

He begins these books with a genealogy from the beginning of the world to his own time, which had not been done in any book of Scripture before: but was necessary to be done now, that a distinction between their tribes and families being preserved (which was in danger to be lost by their dispersion in the captivity), it might clearly appear, the Messiah sprung out of that tribe and family, from which he was to descend, according to the ancient prophecies. For, as Procopius Gazæus observes, from these books it is that we learn, among other things, that Nathan, from whom St. Luke derives the genealogy of our Saviour, was the brother of Solomon by David and Bath-sheba.

To conclude this preface, it may be noted, that no book in the world shews the original propagation of mankind, but only the Holy Scriptures. They who were ignorant of them having nothing of true antiquity, devised senseless fables of their descent, they knew not how, nor from whom. The Arcadians fancied that they were before the moon: the people of Thessaly, that they sprung from stones. The Athenians took themselves to be αὐτόχθονες, who sprung up out of the ground; and affirmed, they were more ancient than Japetus; who, in truth, was the father of the Greeks; Javan, from whom came the Iones, being the son of Japheth, as these holy books shew. See upon 2 Chron. xxix. 21. a little additional proof that these books were written by Ezra.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *ADAM, Sheth, Enosh.*] He mentions only their names briefly: but the meaning is, that Adam begat Sheth, and Sheth begat Enosh: and so the rest are to be understood. Adam, indeed, had two sons before he begat Sheth: but one of them was murdered without issue, and the other was accursed; so that all who descended from him perished in the flood: therefore these only that came from Sheth are remembered.

This may seem to be sufficiently recorded, as much of that which follows is, in the book of Genesis: so that there was no need, some may imagine, to repeat it here: but there being a genealogy to be drawn of the several families of the Jews, it was fit to begin it with an account of the honour they had to be the select people of God, whose original and descent was manifest and plain from the very first man, who was the son of God. This was the peculiar glory of the Jewish nation, that they alone were able to derive their pedigree from the first man that God created; of which no other nation could boast, or make a shadow of pretence. Besides, by the recital of this, the Divine writer of this book designed to keep up the belief that the world was not eternal, but had a beginning, as is recorded in the book of Genesis.

Ver. 2. *Kenan.*] We translate it Cainan, Gen. v. 9.

Mahalaleel, Jered.] See Gen. v. 12. 15.

Ver. 3. *Henoch, Methuselah, Lamech.*] See concerning these, Gen. v. 18. 21. 25.

Ver. 4. *Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*] These were the three sons of Noah: among whom Japheth was the eldest, (Gen. x. 21.) and therefore his genealogy is first mentioned. But Shem being the person in whose posterity true religion was preserved, and from whom the promised seed was to come, is first named both here and in Gen. v. 31. x. 1.

Ver. 5. *The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.*] Thus they were reckoned up in the same order, Gen. x. 2. where see concerning them.

Ver. 6. *The sons of Gomer; Ashchenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.*] The same account we have in Gen. x. 3.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.*] The same we read, Gen. x. 4. And neither there nor here is any mention of the rest of Japheth's posterity, but only of Gomer and Javan. (See Gen. x. 5. in the latter end of my annotations on that verse.)

Ver. 8. *The sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.*] In this place, and in this order, they are mentioned in Gen. x. 6. And the reason, I suppose, why his genealogy is mentioned before Shem's, is, because from Shem the genealogy of Abraham and the Jewish nation was to be derived: which it was thought fit to set down without any interruption.

Ver. 9. *And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabtecha. And the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.*] See Gen. x. 7. where an account is given of the sons of Cush, and of his two grandsons by one of them.

Ver. 10. *And Cush begat Nimrod.*] He mentions him alone by himself, because he was the most eminent among all his sons. (See upon Gen. x. 8. where I have given an account of the next words.)

He began to be mighty upon the earth.] That is, was the first that raised a great kingdom.

Ver. 11. *And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim.*] The very same account we have in Gen. x. 13. where I have shewn in what parts of the world their posterity settled.

Ver. 12. *And Pathrusim, and Casluhim.*] See Gen. x. 14.

(Of whom came the Philistines).] Who were a colony from the Casluhim.

And Caphthorim.] See Gen. x. 14.

Ver. 13. *And Canaan begat Zidon his first-born, and Heth.*] See Gen. x. 15.

Ver. 14. *The Jebusite also, and the Amorite, and the Girgashite,*

Ver. 15. *The Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,*

Ver. 16. *And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.*] In this very order they are set down by Moses, in Gen. x. 16—18. (See what I have noted there.)

Ver. 17. *The sons of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram.*] Thus they are set down in Gen. x. 22. and Arphaxad is mentioned after Elam and Asshur, just as Aaron is after Moses in Exod. vi. 27. though he was the elder brother. For, as the Jews often note, the Scripture doth not strictly observe the order of time.

And Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Meshech.] These were not the sons of Shem, but his grandsons by Aram his youngest son: as appears from Gen. x. 22. But nothing is more usual in Scripture, than to call grandsons by the name of sons. As Laban is called the son of Nahor, Gen. xxix. 5. being his grandchild by Beth-el. And Mephibosheth is called the son of Saul, 2 Sam. xix. 24. because he was descended from him by his son Jonathan. Meshech had two names; for he is called Mash, Gen. x. 23. and possessed the mountain of Masins in Mesopotamia; as Bochart thinks in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 11. Though Mash may very well be thought not to be another name, but only the contraction of Meshech: who some think was the father of the Cappadocians.

Ver. 18. *And Arphaxad begat Shelah, and Shelah begat Eber.*] He follows Moses exactly; who gives no account of the posterity of the two sons of Shem first mentioned, but only of the third, Arphaxad: that he might the sooner come to him from whom the Israelites descended. Here the LXX. interpose Cainan between Arphaxad and Shelah: but it is not in the Greek Muscovite translation; as is observed by primate Usher, in his Letters, ccxcvi. (And see Bochart, in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 13.)

Ver. 19. *And unto Eber were born two sons.*] Gen. x. 25.

The name of one was Peleg (because in his days the earth was divided).] That is, the inhabitants of the earth were divided, and dispersed; according to the division of their languages. (See my annotations there.)

And his brother's name was Joktan.] Who had a more numerous issue than any hitherto mentioned.

Ver. 20. *And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah.*] See concerning these, Gen. x. 26.

Ver. 21. *Hadoram also, and Uzal, and Diklah.*] See Gen. x. 27.

Ver. 22. *And Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba.*] See Gen. x. 28. where the first of these is called Obal: from whence some have argued, that the name in this place is corrupted. As if, in process of time, there might not be a variation in the vowel: Moses pronouncing the name as they spake it in his time, and this author as they spake in his.

Ver. 23. *And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan.*] Who were thirteen in all: and all but one settled their habitation in Arabia. (See Gen. x. 29.)

Ver. 24. *Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah.*] These are repeated from ver. 17, 18. to shew how Abraham was descended from Shem: who was the most eminent of all Noah's sons; whom he solemnly blessed: the Messiah being to spring from him, (Gen. ix. 36.) For from Adam the promise of the Messiah was translated to Seth; and from Seth to Shem; from Shem to Eber; from whom the Hebrew nation, some think, derived their name; and had this precious promise committed to their trust, above all other nations in the world.

Ver. 25. *Eber, Peleg, Reu,*

Ver. 26. *Serug, Nahor, and Terah.*] This genealogy from Eber, is recorded by Moses in Gen. xi. 16—18, &c.

Ver. 27. *Abram, the same is Abraham.*] God changed his name from Abram to Abraham, when he established his covenant with him, (Gen. xvii. 5, &c.) and made him the father of many nations.

Ver. 28. *The sons of Abraham; Isaac, and Ishmael.*] Isaac is first mentioned, being the son of a free-woman, and the heir of the promise: though Ishmael was elder than he, but born of a bond-woman.

Ver. 29. *These are their generations: The first-born of Ishmael, Nebaioth.*] To shew how God made Abraham the father of many nations, he reckons up twelve great persons descended from his son Ishmael; the first of which was Nebaioth: concerning whom, and the rest that follow, see Gen. xxv. 13, 14, &c.

Then Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam.] I shall only observe here, that as from Nebaioth came the people called Nabatæi; so from Kedar came the Cedreni, whom geographers call Cedrei, and Cedranitæ, as Bochart observes.

Ver. 30. *Mishma, and Duma, Massa, Hadad, and Tema,*

Ver. 31. *Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael.*] In what country they dwelt, see Gen. xxv. 18.

Ver. 32. *Now the sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine.*] After the death of Sarah, Abraham married Keturah: and having many children by her, this holy writer names them, to shew how faithfully God made good the name he gave him, by making Abraham the father of many more nations.

She bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.] See Gen. xxv. 2.

The sons of Jokshan; Sheba, and Dedan.] There were four Shebas, as I there observed; and one more of the name of Dedan: and this man's sons are there mentioned, though here omitted.

Ver. 33. *And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Henoch, and Abida, and Eldaah.*] See Gen. xxv. 4. The first of these, as Bochart thinks, was the same with the Greek Hippos, a mountain and a village of which name Ptolemy describes on the same shore, a little below Madian, which he calls Modiana, in his Hieroz. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 3.

All these are the sons of Keturah.] Her sons or grandsons.

Ver. 34. *And Abraham begat Isaac. The sons of Isaac; Esau, and Israel.*

Ver. 35. *The sons of Esau; Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.*] These were by several wives, as we read Gen. xxxvi. 10. 14.

Ver. 36. *The sons of Eliphaz; Teman, and Omar, Zephi, and Gatam, Kenaz, and Timnah, and Amalek.*] It is plain from Gen. xxxvi. 12. that Timnah was not one of his sons, but his concubine; by whom he begat Amalek. This therefore is a short form of speech, as much as if he had said, *Of Timnah Amalek.* Who was not equal to the rest of his sons, and therefore he mentions his mother's name. Kimchi hath expressed this so well, that it may be for the reader's use to transcribe some of his words: which may serve for a rule in such-like cases. "In my judgment (saith he) the Scripture uses here a concise and compendious way of speaking: for there was no need that Ezra should recount all these things exactly and accurately, which had been done before in the law (he means in the book of Genesis), therefore he describes these genealogies briefly." Thus he doth in the seventeenth verse of this chapter, mentioning Uz and Hul after Aram: who were not his sons but his grandsons. R. Solomon hath the same observation. (See Buxtorf's Anticritica, par. ii. cap. 2.)

Ver. 37. *The sons of Reuel; Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.*] Who are called *dukes,* as the sons of Eliphaz also are; (see Gen. xxxvi. 15. 17.) that is, rulers, or governors of the country, but not with kingly authority.

Ver. 38. *And the sons of Seir; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, and Dishon, and Ezar, and Dishan.*] This Seir was not Esau, nor of his posterity, but the ancient lord of this country, from whom it had its name, (see Gen. xxxvi. 20.) whose genealogy is here set down, that it may be understood from whom Timnah and Amalek sprung.

Ver. 39. *And the sons of Lotan; Hori, and Homam: and Timnah was Lotan's sister.*] This woman was Eliphaz's concubine, and bare him Amalek, (ver. 36.) who, by his mother's side, was Seir's grandson.

Ver. 40. *And of the sons of Shobal; Alian* (or *Abian*), *and Manahath, and Ebal, Shephi, and Onam.*] See Gen. xxxvi. 23.

And the sons of Zibeon; Aiah, and Anah.] The latter of which was a person of great note. (See Gen. xxxvi. 24.)

Ver. 41. *The sons of Anah; Dishon. And the sons of Dishon; Amram, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.*] The first-born of these was otherwise called Hemdan, Gen. xxxvi. 26. which was the name, it is possible, whereby he was known among Esau's posterity: though anciently his name was Amram.

Ver. 42. *The sons of Ezer; Bilhan, and Zavan, and Jakan. The sons of Dishan; Uz, and Aran.*] Among all these persons descended from Seir, seven of them were dukes: who reigned perhaps at the same time in several parts of the country, (Gen. xxxvi. 29, 30.) By which it appears, that this was the ancient form of government before Esau conquered this country: which his posterity at the first followed, but afterward was changed into kingly, as it here follows.

Ver. 43. *Now these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel.*] See this explained in Gen. xxxvi. 31.

Bela the son of Beor.] This Beor was not Balaam's father, for he was a Mesopotamian, not an Edomite; but one of the same name, as Aben Ezra well observes.

And the name of his city was Dinhabah.] Of which he was governor, perhaps, before he was made king: and therefore therein he reigned, and made it the seat of his kingdom.

Ver. 44. *And when Bela was dead, Jobab, the son of Zerah of Bozrah, reigned in his stead.*] See concerning this succession, Gen. xxxvi. 33. Bozrah was a city in Edom, as three prophets plainly describe it, (Isa. xxxiv. 6. Jer. xlix. 13. Amos i. 12.) And one of these represents it also as a city of Moab: because, as some think, it was in the confines of both countries: or rather, in the opinion of Bochartus, there were two Bozrahs; the one in Idumea, the other in Moab.

Ver. 45. *And when Jobab was dead, Husham, of the land of the Temanites, reigned in his stead.*] We know nothing of Husham; but he seems not to have been the son of Jobab, but one of another family, in another part of the country. Some take this Jobab to have been Job: which opinion is exploded by Aben Ezra.

Ver. 46. *And when Husham was dead, Hadad the son of Bedad (which smote Midian in the field of Moab) reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith.*] See Gen. xxxvi. 35. where R. Solomon saith, the Midianites making war against the Moabites, this king of Edom came to help the Moabites.

Ver. 47. *And when Hadad was dead, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 48. *And when Samlah was dead, Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead.*] See Gen. xxxvi. 37.

Ver. 49. *And when Shaul was dead, Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 50. *And when Baal-hanan was dead, Hadad* (or *Hadar*) *reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pai* (or *Pau*); *and his wife's name Mehetabel.*] See Gen. xxxvi. 39.

The daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.] Some of the Jews fancy this Mezahab to have been a very ingenious woman, being the first that found out the art of drawing gold out into wires or threads: for *zahab* signifies *gold* in Hebrew. But the LXX. take this for the name of a man, and translate it υἱοῦ Μαιζοώβ.

Ver. 51. *Hadad died also. And the dukes of Edom were; duke Timnah, duke Aliah, duke Jetheth.*

Ver. 52. *Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon.*

Ver. 53. *Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar.*

Ver. 54. *Duke Magdiel, duke Iram. These are the dukes of Edom.*] After the death of Hadad, the form of government was altered again: for there were no more kings for a long time; but they returned to the first constitution, which they found, when they conquered the country; which was governed by dukes. (See Gen. xxxvi. 40.) And thus it was in Israel, after they came into the land of Canaan. They were first governed by judges, who had not kingly power. After which, from the time of Saul, they were governed by kings till their captivity. At their return, they had no more kings, but only such governors as Zerubbabel was. Some have imagined that Esau was the first king of this country: but in all likelihood, if he was, he would have left his son Eliphaz in the same authority; who was but a duke, (Gen. xxxvi. 15, 16.) Therefore Esau contented

himself with that form of government which he found among the Horites: which continued till Bela made himself king, (ver. 43.) The difference between their kings and dukes was (as Esthius observes), that the former ruled absolutely, according to their pleasure: the power of the other was limited and bounded by certain prescribed laws.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *THESE are the sons of Israel; Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun,*

Ver. 2. *Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.*] He reckons up his first four sons in the order wherein they were born, (Gen. xxix. 32, &c.) and next to them their two brethren by the same mother, Leah, (Gen. xxx. 18. 20.) Afterward, I can give no reason why Dan and Naphtali (the two sons of Bilhah) are not mentioned together, and Joseph and Benjamin, the two sons of Rachel, and Gad and Asher, the two sons of Zelpah.

Ver. 3. *The sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah.*] There is a plain reason why the genealogy of Judah is set down in the first place; because this tribe had obtained a superiority and pre-eminence among the rest, before the time of David; ever since the prophecy of Jacob, in the blessing he pronounced upon him, (Gen. xlix. 10.) For Judah, when they came into the wilderness, was ordered to march first; (Numb. ii. 3.) and accordingly we find they did, when they removed from Mount Sinai, (Numb. x. 14.) And when the princes of the tribes offered at the dedication of the altar, the prince of the tribe of Judah offered on the first day, (Numb. vii. 12.) When they came into Canaan, they obtained of Joshua a portion for Caleb without casting of any lot, as there was in the dividing of the land, (Josh. xiv. 6.) And when Joshua was dead, they were appointed by God to go up first against the Canaanites, to take from them what remained unconquered, (Judg. i. 2.) From David's time, every one knows, till the captivity of Babylon, a kingly power continued in this tribe: and Zerubbabel was of the same, who was their leader when they returned to their own land.

Which were born unto him of the daughter of Shua the Canaanitess.] See an account of this in Gen. xxxviii. 2.

And Er, the first-born of Judah, was evil in the sight of the Lord, and he slew him.] See ver. 7. of the same chapter. His second son also, though he be not represented under so bad a character, yet displeased God so much, that he slew him also, (ver. 9, 10.)

Ver. 4. *And Tamar his daughter-in-law bare him Pharez and Zerah. All the sons of Judah were five.*] See there, ver. 29. 50.

Ver. 5. *And the sons of Pharez; Hezron, and Hamul.*] Who were born unto him before they went into Egypt, (Gen. xlvi. 12.)

Ver. 6. *And the sons of Zerah; Zimri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara: five of them in all.*] These were born after they came into Egypt; for there is no mention of them in the book of Genesis. And the Jews in Seder Olam Rabba, and in Jalkut, say, these men prophesied when they were in Egypt: for they suppose them to be the same with those mentioned 1 Kings iv. 31. If they were, then Zerah had two names, and was also called Mahol: but there is great reason to think they were not the same, as I have shewn in my annotations there.

Ver. 7. *The sons of Carmi.*] This man was the son of Zimri: who, in Josh. vii. 18. is called Zabdi; for by length of time his name might easily be thus altered. And, indeed, in copying proper names, one might easily mistake.

Achar, the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the thing accursed.] He who is there called Achan, is here elegantly called *Achar;* which signifies *troubler:* because he had brought Israel into great danger, by the sin he committed in the accursed thing. The remembrance of this some thought fit he should carry in his name: which in process of time was changed, by common use and custom, from Achan into Achar. Which is more likely, than that there should be an error here in the transcriber. (See Bochart, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 31.)

Ver. 8. *And the sons of Ethan; Azariah.*] Here is but one son mentioned: but it is usual in Scripture to speak of a singular person in the plural number, (Gen. xlvi. 23.) to include all his descendants.

Ver. 9. *The sons of Hezron, that were born unto him; Jerahmeel, and Ram, and Chelubai.*] This Ram is mentioned in the genealogy of our Saviour, (Matt. i. 3, 4.) and called Aram.

Ver. 10. *And Ram begat Amminadab, and Amminadab begat Nahshon, the prince of the children of Judah.*] When they came out of Egypt, and pitched under their several standards, (Numb. ii. 3.)

Ver. 11. *And Nahshon begat Salma, and Salma begat Boaz,*

Ver. 12. *And Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse.*] These three are the principal persons in all this genealogy, as Pellicanus observes; being put into the genealogy of our Saviour, who was descended from David by these three great ancestors.

Ver. 13. *And Jesse begat his first-born Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and Shimma the third,*

Ver. 14. *Nethaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth,*

Ver. 15. *Ozem the sixth, David the seventh.*] It is manifest from 1 Sam. xvi. 10, 11. that Jesse had eight sons: but some think one of them was only an adopted son, and therefore not here mentioned: and they gather from 2 Sam. xxi. 2. that his name was Jonathan, by a mistake; for that Jonathan was David's nephew by his brother Shamma. The truest account therefore is, that one of Jesse's sons was dead, before David came to the kingdom. So Rasi.

Ver. 16. *Whose sisters were Zeruiah, and Abigail.*] Who were the sisters of David last mentioned.

And the sons of Zeruiah; Abishai, and Joab, and Asahel, three.] Who were all eminent commanders under David.

Ver. 17. *And Abigail bare Amasa.*] Another valiant man, who was murdered by Joab.

And the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmeelite.] He was an Ishmeelite by birth, but by religion an Israelite: or, as others will have it, he was born an Israelite, but bred so long among the Ishmeelites, that many called him by that name. (See 2 Sam. xvii. 25.) The father of Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, is no where mentioned; being not eminent, it seems, as this Jether was; but their glory was by their mother's side.

Ver. 18. *And Caleb the son of Hezron begat children.*] It

is plain this is not Caleb, whom Moses sent to search out the land of Canaan; for he was the son of Jephunneh, of whom he gives an account below, (iv. 15.) This man is called Chelubai, ver. 9. of this chapter.

Of Azubah his wife.] It is an ungrounded fancy of the Talmudists, in Sota, who say she was called Azubah (which signifies *forsaken*) because Caleb married her for the love of God, when nobody would have her.

And of Jerioth.] This is understood by Conradus Pellicanus, as if he had said, that *of his wife Azubah he begat Jerioth:* for there is nothing in the Hebrew that answers to the word *children.*

Her sons are these; Jesher, and Shobab, and Ardon.] That is, these were the sons of Jerioth.

Ver. 19. *And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him Ephrath, which bare him Hur.*] This was a very continent man, who had but one wife at a time; and loved Azubah so well, that he married no other while she lived. His second wife also was of such note, that gave name to a place in the country of Judah,(ver. 24.)

Ver. 20. *And Hur begat Uri, und Uri begat Bezaleel.*

Ver. 21. *And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir.*] After the death of Ephrath, I suppose, he married another woman of an eminent family.

The father of Gilead.] The prince of the country of Gilead; as the word *father* often signifies.

Whom he married when he was sixty years old, and she bare him Segub.

Ver. 22. *And Segub begat Jair.*] Who is called the son of Manasseh in Numb. xxxii. 41. because his grandmother was of that tribe, the daughter of Machir, the son of Manasseh, (Numb. xx. 29.)

Who had three-and-twenty cities in the land of Gilead.] In the right of his wife, as the common opinion of the Jewish doctors is: who observe in Scripture two instances of husbands that inherited the estate of their wives, though in another tribe. The first is in Josh. xxiv. 33. and the other in this place; where Kimchi notes, that this Jair, "the son of Segub, took a wife in the land of Gilead, unto whom he succeeded as her heir in her possessions, when she was dead: these twenty-three cities being her inheritance." (See Selden, de Successionibus ad Leges Hebr. cap. 18.)

Ver. 23. *And he took Geshur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from them.*] They were afterward called by his name, who conquered them, and took them from the neighbouring Geshurites and Syrians.

With Kenath and the towns thereof, even threescore cities.] The metropolis of which was Kenath: in the taking of which he employed a great commander, called Nobah, Numb. xxxii. 42. who, I suppose, was of the same tribe and family.

All these belonged to the sons of Machir, the father of Gilead.] His posterity possessed these towns.

Ver. 24. *And after that Hezron was dead in Caleb-Ephratah.*] This city was called after the name of both husband and wife, (ver. 19.) they being both famous persons. And it was also called Beth-lehem, from the fruitfulness of the place.

Then Abiah, Hezron's wife, bare him Ashur.] He married her when he was very old, (for he was threescore when he took his former wife, ver. 21.) and died before the child was born, whom he begat of her. The Jews look upon his marrying when he was so old, as proceeding from a great desire of posterity in the family of Pharez, from whom the Messiah was to descend. The same we see in Boaz, who married Ruth when he was old.

The father of Tekoa.] Who gave name to a famous town in this country, (2 Sam. xiv. 2. Jer. iii. 6.)

Ver. 25. *And the sons of Jerahmeel, the first-born of Hezron, were Ram the first-born, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, and Ahijah.*

Ver. 26. *Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name was Atarah: she was the mother of Onam.*] There being (according to our translation of the foregoing verse) mention of his former wife, it seems not to be unreasonable to take Ahijah to have been the mother of Ram, and the rest, which he had by Ahijah. So the words may be understood, supposing the particle *mem* to be wanting before Ahijah.

Ver. 27. *And the sons of Ram, the first-born of Jerahmeel, were Maaz, and Jamin, and Eker.*

Ver. 28. *And the sons of Onam were Shammai, and Jada. And the sons of Shammai, Nadab, and Abishur.*] He sets not down the names of the children of Jerahmeel's eldest son, by his first wife; but of both those he had by his second. The rest, perhaps, had no children, as is noted afterward of one of his grandsons, ver. 30.

Ver. 29. *And the name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail, and she bare him Ahban, and Molid.*] This, though the second son, it seems married first; and therefore his children are mentioned before the other.

Ver. 30. *And the sons of Nadab; Seled, and Appaim; but Seled died without children.*

Ver. 31. *And the sons of Appaim; Ishi.*] The plural number is often used when one son or daughter only is spoken of, (as I observed ver. 8.) for in that one all the posterity are comprehended. The next words are another example of this.

And the sons of Ishi; Sheshan. And the children of Sheshan; Ahlai.] It is plain from ver. 34, 35. that this Ahlai was not a son, but a daughter.

Ver. 32. *And the sons of Jada, the brother of Shammai.*] Mentioned in ver. 28.

Jether, and Jonathan: and Jether died without children.] He had neither son nor daughter.

Ver. 33. *And the sons of Jonathan; Peleth, and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.*] Whose male line he carries no farther; because, perhaps, it failed in these last named.

Ver. 34. *Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters.*] We read of no more than one daughter that he had; but he speaks in the plural number, as before, ver. 31.

And Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name was Jarha.] Who being a proselyte, it is probable, to the Jewish religion, and a faithful servant to his master, he gave him his freedom, and married his daughter to him.

Ver. 35. *And Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant to wife, and she bare him Attai.*] This servant was very dear to him, and perhaps ruler of his house, as Eliezer of Damascus was to Abraham; who, if he had not had a son, he looked upon as his heir to all his estate, (Gen. xv. 23.)

Ver. 36. *And Attai begat Nathan, and Nathan begat Zabad.*

Ver. 37. *And Zabad begat Ephlal, and Ephlal begat Obed.*

Ver. 38. *And Obed begat Jehu, and Jehu begat Azariah.*

Ver. 39. *And Azariah begat Helez, and Helez begat Eleasah.*

Ver. 40. *And Eleasah begat Sisamai, and Sisamai begat Shallum.*

Ver 41. *And Shallum begat Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begat Elishama.*] We cannot now understand why so long a genealogy should be inserted here of the descendants of Sheshan's daughter by an Egyptian. The Jews imagine it is the genealogy of Ishmael (who slew Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon left the governor of the land after he had taken Jerusalem), who they fancy was *the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama,* last mentioned, (as Jeremiah describes him, chap. xli. 1.) which we might have believed, if this genealogy had so concluded: in which, as there is no mention of Nethaniah, as the son of Elishama (but the genealogy ends with Elishama, and goes no further), so it is not probable, that the descent of so infamous a person, though of the seed-royal, should be deduced thus largely.

Ver. 42. *Now the sons of Caleb.*] Called Chelubai, ver. 9.

The brother of Jerahmeel.] This is added to shew he speaks of the same Caleb there mentioned, and ver. 18.

Were Mesha his first-born.] By a third wife; for his children by Azubah and Ephrath are named before.

The father of Ziph.] The prince of Ziph, as some understand it. There were two places of this name, in the tribe of Judah. (See Josh. xv. 24, 25.)

And the sons of Mareshah, the father of Hebron.] Hebron here is the name of a man, not of a place: for his posterity is immediately mentioned: but Kimchi makes this to be the sense of these and the foregoing words: *The sons of Ziph were Mareshah, the father of Hebron.* Which is very natural.

Ver. 43. *The sons of Hebron; Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema.*

Ver. 44. *And Shema begat Raham, the father of Jorkoam; and Rekem begat Shammai.*

Ver. 45. *And the son of Shammai was Maon: and Maon was the father of Beth-zur.*] Who gave name to a place in the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 58.) Which Josephus saith was in the mountainous part of it, as the word imports. Maon also is a well-known name to a wilderness in this tribe.

Ver. 46. *And Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bare Haran, and Moza, and Gazez.*] Besides his forenamed wives, he married a concubine: which was an inferior sort of wife, as I have shewn upon Gen. xxv. 6.

And Haran begat Gazez.] This is another Gazez; to whom Haran gave the name of his younger brother.

Ver. 47. *And the sons of Jahdai; Regem, and Jotham, and Geshan, and Pelet, and Ephah, and Shaaph.*] We read nothing of Jahdai in the foregoing genealogy: but the Jews take him for one of the sons of Ephah beforenamed; and most probably Moza, next brother to Haran: whose posterity is here set down, as Haran's was before. Moza therefore had two names; which was not unusual among the Jews.

Ver. 48. *And Maachah, Caleb's concubine, bare Sheber, and Tirhanah.*] This Caleb was a great man, and could maintain many wives; which he took, and had a numerous issue by them.

Ver. 49. *She bare also Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbenah, and the father of Gibea.*] By the word *father* in this verse, in all likelihood, is meant the prince or ruler of these places. For Gibea was a city in the tribe of Judah; and so was Madmannah, (Josh. xv. 31. 57.)

And the daughter of Caleb was Achsa.] Who is mentioned in the books of Joshua and Judges: but it is not said by what wife he had her. She was married to a great man, Othniel, (Josh. xv. 17. Judg. i. 12.)

Ver. 50. *These were the sons of Caleb the son of Hur, the first-born of Ephratah.*] This was another Caleb, descended from the foregoing, by Hur his son by Ephrath, (ver. 19.) who had this son, whom he called Caleb, after the name of his grandfather.

Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim.] The Targum translates it *the prince of Kirjath-jearim:* which is a place, as Beth-lehem, and Beth-gader were, of which two other persons are presently after said to be the father. But Kimchi takes the word *father* in the proper sense, and thinks Shobal's posterity possessed the city of Kirjath-jearim.

Ver. 51. *Salma the father of Beth-lehem, and Hareph the father of Beth-gader.*] It is not material which way we understand this; either as the Targum or as Kimchi expounds the word *father* in the foregoing verse.

Ver. 52. *Shobal, the father of Kirjath-jearim, had sons; Haroeh, and half of the Manahethites.*] The Hebrew words being *Haroeh, Hatzi, Hammenioth,* the LXX. expound them, as if Shobal had three sons, Araa, and Aisi, and Ammanith. But Kimchi takes the last word for the name of a place; which is evident from ver. 54. where the other half of it is mentioned: and of one half he thinks Haroeh was the lord and governor. But Jacchiades follows the LXX. and leaves Kimchi's explication.

Ver. 53. *And the families of Kirjath-jearim; the Ithrites, and the Puhites, and the Shumathites, and the Mishraites.*] The inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim were divided into several families (as Kimchi interprets it), and these here mentioned were the heads of families, denominated from Ithra or Jether, and Puhah, &c. as from Jimna came the family of the Jimnites, and from Beriah the family of the Berites, in Numb. xxvi. 44.

Of them came the Zareathites, and the Eshtaulites.] The same Kimchi observes, that Zarah and Eshtaol were two cities in the tribe of Judah; which were built by two of Kirjath-jearim of this name. Who inhabited these places, and left two great families, who were from them called Zareathites, and Eshtaulites.

Ver. 54. *And the sons of Salma; Beth-lehem, and the Netophathites, Ataroth, the house of Joab, and half of the Manahethites, and the Zorites.*] This Salma, the son of Caleb the younger, (ver. 51.) had a numerous posterity. For from him descended the inhabitants of Beth-lehem (so we are to understand this word, for Beth-lehem was the name of a place, not of a man), the Netophathites, and those of Ataroth, and Beth-Joab (so these words we translate *the house of Joab* should be rendered; for he is not speaking of Joab's family, but of Caleb's), and half of the Manahethites, and the Zorites, who were a people possessed of a town called Zorah: where the other half dwelt.

Ver. 55. *And the families of the scribes which dwelt at Jabez.*] This place, Kimchi thinks, might possibly be built by Jabez, (an honourable person, mentioned chap. iv. 9.) in

which some doctors of the law dwelt, who were of the family of Salma; for of these he is still speaking.

The Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and Suchathites. These are the Kenites that came of Hemath, the father of the house of Rechab.] These Kenites, as R. Solomon thinks, were the inhabitants of a place called Cani, in the tribe of Judah: (Josh. xv. 57.) though it must be acknowledged also, some of the Kenites, the posterity of Jethro, did settle in the same tribe, (Judg. i. 16.) of whom, some think, Ezra here speaks. And then Hemath descended from Jethro, who was the father, that is, the prince, of Beth-Rechab; so the last words may be understood. There were other Kenites, descended from Heber, who dwelt in the tribe of Naphtali, or Manasseh, (Judg. iv. 11.)

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *NOW these were the sons of David.*] Having given a large account of the posterity of Hezron, he returns to David beforementioned, chap. ii. 15.

Which were born unto him in Hebron.] Before he was king of all Israel.

The first-born Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; the second, Daniel, of Abigail the Carmelitess.] This second son is called Chileab in 2 Sam. iii. 3. where I have given an account of it. And here it may be noted, once for all, that it was a frequent thing among the Jews for men to have two names; especially when they lived sometimes in one country and sometimes in another. This appears from a famous case mentioned in the Gemara of Codex Gittin, where it is resolved, that if a man have two wives, one in Judea, and another in Galilee, and he gave a bill of divorce to her in Judea, subscribing to it his name whereby he is known in Galilee, the bill is void. And in like manner, if he write his name whereby he goes in Judea, unto a bill of divorce to his wife in Galilee, it is of no effect.

Ver. 2. *The third, Absalom, the son of Maachah, the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; the fourth, Adonijah, the son of Haggith.*

Ver. 3. *The fifth, Shephatiah of Abital; the sixth, Ithream, of Eglah his wife.*] This Eglah is generally thought by the Jews to be Michal daughter of Saul, (see my notes upon 2 Sam. iii. 5.) who, some think, is peculiarly called *his wife*, because she was his only legal wife, according to the Divine institution: all the rest he took by custom then reigning.

Ver. 4. *These six were born to him in Hebron; and there he reigned seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years.*] This hath been explained in 2 Sam. v.

Ver. 5. *And these were born to him in Jerusalem; Shimea, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon, four, of Bath-shua daughter of Ammiel.*] In 2 Sam. xi. 3. she is called *Bath-sheba* (as she is through the whole Scripture), and her father Eliam. But I observed just now, it was usual among the Jews to have two names: though there is no great difference in this first of these, no more than there is between Shammah and Shimea; the vowels being only changed, not the consonants, of which the names consist. Solomon was the eldest of these four sons; but he is mentioned last, because the discourse was to return to his genealogy, (ver. 10.)

Ver. 6. *Ibhar also, and Elishama, and Eliphelet.*] There is a small difference in the name of the second of these, as he is mentioned 2 Sam. v. 15. where he is called Elishua.

Ver. 7. *And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia.*

Ver. 8. *And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphelet.*] Two of these names are mentioned before; who, it is supposed, died in their infancy: and therefore he preserved their memory, by giving their names unto two others, who were born afterward, and lived longer. So Kimchi.

Nine.] Besides the four born of Bath-sheba; (ver. 5.) but there are only *seven* mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 16. those two who died early being there omitted. (See my notes on that place.)

Ver. 9. *These were all the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines.*] Who are not mentioned, either here or in Samuel.

And Tamar their sister.] See 2 Sam. xiii. 1.

Ver. 10. *And Solomon's son was Rehoboam, Abia his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son.*

Ver. 11. *Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son.*

Ver. 12. *Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son.*

Ver. 13. *Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son.*

Ver. 14. *Amon his son, Josiah his son.*

Ver. 15. *And the sons of Josiah were, the first-born Johanan.*] There is nothing needs explaining in the foregoing genealogy down from Solomon to this time: but here is some difficulty: for this Johanan is thought by many to be the same with Jehoahaz, who succeeded Josiah in the throne. But he was not his first-born; being but twenty-three years old when the people made him king, and after three months' time, his brother, being put in his place, is said to be twenty-five years old, (2 Kings xxiii. 31. 36.) Petavius hath said a great deal about this in his annotations upon Epiphanius ad Hæres. Epicur. p. 18. But, after all, I take the truth to be, that Johanan was his eldest son, but died before his father: and therefore is not mentioned in the book of the Kings: as Jehoahaz is not mentioned here, being made king by the people of the land, and presently dethroned.

The second Jehoiakim.] Who was next to him, to whom by right of succession the kingdom belonged: he being the eldest now Johanan was dead. He was called by his father Eliakim: but had this other name imposed on him by the king of Egypt, (2 Kings xxiii. 34.)

The third Zedekiah.] Who was the youngest of all Josiah's sons, as appears by his age, when he was made king after Jehoiakim was carried captive. The same Petavius thinks there were two Zedekiahs: one the son of Josiah, who was their last king; the other the son of Jeconiah (mentioned in the next verse), who never came to be king.

The fourth Shallum.] This was the next son to Jehoiakim, and the same with Jehoahaz, as is plain from Jer. xxii. 11. (See my notes upon 2 Kings xxiii. 30, 31.) He is put last, because he was not at all considerable; being made king by a popular faction; and in three months' time thrust out of his throne by the king of Egypt, who carried him thither, and there he died.

Ver. 16. *And the sons of Jehoiakim; Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son.*] The posterity of Jeconiah is set down in the next verse; and therefore here by the word *son* we must understand his successor in the kingdom. Thus Se-

neca makes Atreus and Tantalus to be descendants of Inachus; because they succeeded him in the kingdom of Argos. And in like manner Jacobus Capellus here observes, (in his Histor. Sacra et Exotica, ad A. M. 3424.) that "Multi filii dicuntur, qui legaliter tantum erant filii, id est, hæredes;" *many are called sons, who were only sons legally, that is, heirs.* Of which he makes Zedekiah an example, who is here called the son of Jeconiah (who was his uncle, 2 Kings xxiv. 17.) because he succeeded him.

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Jeconiah, Assir; Salathiel his son.*] Some think Assir is not the name of his son, but signifies *captive;* to denote that his son Salathiel was born when he was a captive in Babylon, as St. Matthew notes, (chap. i. 12.) which doth not contradict the prophecy of Jeremiah, who said he should die childless; (Jer. xxii. 30.) for his meaning is no more, but that he should have no child sitting on the throne after him. But Jacobus Capellus, in the place forenamed, makes Salathiel another instance of an heir being called a *son.* For he thinks he succeeded Jeconiah in the dignity to which he was restored by Evil-Merodach; but was the son of Neri, who sprung from Nathan.

Ver. 18. *Malchiram also, and Pedaiah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.*] These were not all the immediate sons of Jeconiah, but the sons of Salathiel; as may be gathered from hence: that in the next verse Zerubbabel is said to be the son of Pedaiah, and in St. Matthew (chap. i. 12.) to be the son of Salathiel; that is, his grandson. So there is something to be supplied, to make out the sense of this verse, *viz. The sons also of Salathiel were Malchiram, and Pedaiah,* &c. But Grotius (on Matt. i. 23.) thinks, that Zerubbabel here mentioned is not he, who was the leader of God's people when they returned from their captivity in Babylon; with whom Huetius also agrees. But others think, this may better be solved by supposing, that Salathiel dying without children, Pedaiah raised up seed to his brother, as the Scripture speaks, and begat Zerubbabel of Salathiel's wife. Who therefore was the son of Pedaiah, because begotten by him; and yet the son of Salathiel, because begotten of his wife; who had no son by Salathiel, but by Pedaiah; who begat him not to be his heir, but the heir of his brother who was dead.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of Pedaiah were Zerubbabel, and Shimei: and the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister.*] That is, sister to the two sons beforenamed; she having the same father and mother that they had: which the other five mentioned in the next verse, it is supposed, had not; but were by another mother, though they had the same father.

Ver. 20. *And Hashubah, and Ohel, and Berechiah, and Hasadiah, Jushab-hesed, five.*] Upon this they ground their opinion, who think the Zerubbabel here mentioned is not he that was the governor of the people after the captivity; for his son's name was Rhesa, (Luke iii. 27.) who is not found among the eight children that are here reckoned up.

Ver. 21. *And the sons of Hananiah; Pelatiah, and Jesaiah.*] These are the sons of the second son of Zerubbabel, (ver. 19.)

The sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shecaniah.] These four (and their sons) seem to have been likewise the children of Hananiah.

Ver. 22. *And the sons of Shecaniah; Shemaiah: and the sons of Shemaiah; Hattush, and Igeal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat, six.*] Here are but five sons of Shemaiah; and therefore the Hebrew word *Shishah* (which we translate *six*) is rather the name of his last son; who might possibly be so called, because he was his sixth son.

Ver. 23. *And the sons of Neariah; Elioenai, and Hezekiah, and Azrikam, three.*] The rest of Shemaiah's sons had no issue.

Ver. 24. *And the sons of Elioenai were Hodaiah, and Eliashib, and Pelaiah, and Akkub, and Johanan, and Dalaiah, and Anani, seven.*] The Targum here hath a very strange observation: for after the word Anani, he saith, "He is the king Messiah, who is to be revealed." The reason of which is given in the famous book Tanchuma (as Beckius here notes), because it is said in Dan. vii. 13. He saw in a vision, and, behold, one like the Son of Man, *im anani (in the clouds);* which certainly was a vision of the Messiah, as Saadis Gaon acknowledges. And this use is to be made of this passage, that their minds were always full of the thoughts of the Messiah, and that they expected he should be revealed (as they speak) so many generations after Zerubbabel: which is an argument he came long ago. St. Matthew, indeed, counts more generations from Zerubbabel to our Saviour's birth than are here mentioned, and hath quite different names in this succession: which is another argument that this Zerubbabel in the Chronicles is not the same with him in St. Matthew. And, indeed, though some persons in Scripture have two names, yet it is not likely that so many persons as are reckoned in this succession, should all have quite different names. Therefore St. Matthew's genealogy is not here recorded: but he had it out of the public tables, which were kept by the priests of all the great families of Judah: particularly that of David's, out of whose family they expected the Messiah should come, would not fail to keep a punctual account of his successors in every generation.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *THE sons of Judah; Pharez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal.*] By the sons of Judah are meant his posterity: for here is only one of his sons mentioned in this place; *viz.* Pharez: whose son Hezron begat Carmi, (the same with Chelubai and Caleb, chap. ii. 9. 18.) whose sons were Hur and Shobab: who is the same, I suppose, with Shobal; of whose posterity he intends here to give an account.

Ver. 2. *And Reaiah the son of Shobal begat Jahath, and Jahath begat Ahumai, and Lahad. These are the families of the Zorathites.*] Zora is not the name of a man, but of a place in the tribe of Judah: where several families of that tribe settled themselves, who were descended from Jahath, Shumai, and Lahad, the sons and grandsons of Shobal, by whom this city was built and inhabited. Thus Kimchi explains this place.

Ver. 3. *And these were of the father of Etam.*] Descended from the lord of a place called Etam: which was in this tribe, (ver. 32.)

Jezreel, and Ishma, and Idbash.] These were the sons of the lord of Etam: whose name is not here recorded.

And the name of their sister was Hazelelponi.] Who, it is

likely, was a very eminent woman: and therefore her name is remembered; though now we are ignorant of the particular reason there was then for it.

Ver. 4. *And Penuel the father of Gedor.*] In the eighteenth verse of this chapter, Jered is said to be the father, that is, the lord, of Gedor. But there might be then two lords of the same city; as there are now among us several lordships in the same town.

And Ezer the father of Hushah. These are the sons of Hur.] By some other wife than her, by whom he had the children mentioned chap. ii. ver. 20.

The first-born of Ephratah.] See there, ver. 19.

The father of Beth-lehem.] In the second chapter, ver. 52. Salma is said to be the father of Beth-lehem; but that doth not contradict this: for they might both be lords of the same place, especially one being the grandfather, the other the son.

Ver. 5. *And Ashur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah.*] See chap. ii. ver. 24.

Ver. 6. *And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hepher, and Temeni, and Haahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah.*] His first wife being barren for some time, it moved him to take another; who bare him these sons.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Helah were Zereth, and Jezoar, and Ethnan.*] Afterward his first wife grew fruitful, and bare him as many sons as the other. For it is probable that Coz (mentioned in the next words) was her son.

Ver. 8. *And Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum.*] I suppose several families sprung from Aharhel, who was the son of Coz by his wife Harum.

Ver. 9. *And Jabez.*] It is very uncertain who Jabez was: perhaps the founder of one of the families of Aharhel. But the Targum both here and upon chap. ii. 55. saith, he was the same with Othniel. But this is a Jewish fancy, confuted by ver. 13.

Was more honourable than his brethren.] Wiser in the law, as the Targum expounds it: who had respect, it is likely, to his piety and devotion, expressed in the next verse. Others think he was a person of greater courage and valour, for which Othniel was famous.

And his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow.] She had a very hard labour, when she was in travail with him.

Ver. 10. *And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast.*] He prayed for the help of God, to drive out the Canaanites, and make room for his family; that they might dwell more commodiously.

And that thy hand might be with me.] As it was with Othniel, to enable him to take Kirjath-sepher, as we read in the first chapter of Judges.

And that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me!] Preserve him in health, and prosper him, when he had enlarged his border: that he might not live in such misery, as that wherewith his mother brought him forth. For in the word *grieve*, most think he alludes to the pains of his mother in her travail.

And God granted him that which he requested.] And the rather, because he had hereby greater leisure for the study of the law, and instructing others in piety, as many understand it. For the Jews think this Jabez was an eminent doctor of the law, and left behind him a great many disciples, who are mentioned, they suppose, in the last verse of the second chapter of this book; where we read of *the family of the scribes that dwelt at Jabez.*

Ver. 11. *And Chelub, the brother of Shuah, begat Mehir, which was the father of Eshton.*

Ver. 12. *And Eshton begat Beth-rapha, and Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Ir-nahash. These are the men of Rechah.*] The persons whose posterity possessed the city of Rechah: of which we have no mention elsewhere.

Ver. 13. *The sons of Kenaz.*] It is not said whose son he was: it is likely of Chelub, mentioned ver. 11.

Othniel, and Seraiah: and the sons of Othniel; Hathath.] And likewise Meonothai, mentioned in the next verse: for after his sons follow the sons of Othniel's younger brother.

Ver. 14. *And Meonothai begat Ophrah: and Seraiah begat Joab, the father of the valley of Charashim.*] Or, of those that dwelt in Gecharashim: which was a city in the tribe of Benjamin, mentioned in Nehem. xi. 35.

For they were craftsmen.] The smiths that dwelt and wrought there gave it the name of Charashim: by which word some understand *carpenters*. For in this catalogue several such-like sort of persons are mentioned: such as potters, and weavers, and gardeners, (ver. 21. 23.) For societies cannot consist only of one sort of persons; but must be composed of men of different and various employments. As Strigelius observes out of Aristotle, "A city is not composed of physicians and physicians; but of physicians and ploughmen." So the son of Sirach discourses, that though such kind of men are not fit to be admitted to counsel, "yet they maintain the state of the world," (Ecclus. xxxviii. 34.) When Solomon, indeed, began to reign, there were not many craftsmen in Israel, but afterward they increased: and such honour was paid unto arts, that they took care to preserve the memory of such persons and families as applied themselves that way; as appears by this very verse, and ver. 21. 23. of this chapter. Whence the prophet Isaiah foretells this as a judgment God would send upon them, that he would take away their *artificers*, (chap. iii. 5.) And when Jerusalem was taken by the Babylonians, it is said, they carried away all the *craftsmen*, (2 Kings xxiv. 14.)

Ver. 15. *And the sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh; Iru, Elah, and Naam.*] Some take this Jephunneh to be the same with Hezron, whose son Caleb was: and had this son by a different wife from her mentioned chap. ii. 18.

And the sons of Elah, even Kenaz.] Or rather Uknaz was the son of Elah: as some of the Jews understand it.

Ver. 16. *And the sons of Jehaleleel.*] Who was the son of Uknaz last mentioned.

Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Asareel.

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Ezra.*] Who was the son of Asareel last named.

Were Jether, and Mered, and Epher, and Jalon: and she bare.] That is, Bithiah the wife of Mered (mentioned in the next verse) bare the sons following.

Miriam, and Shammai.] Miriam was the name of a man, as well as of a woman: and there are several such instances in Scripture, as Kimchi observes on this place.

And Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa.] It is uncertain whether Eshtemoa be the name of a person, or of a place whereof he was lord.

Ver. 18. *And his wife Jehudijah bare Jered.*] Mered had this son by another wife called Jehudijah.

The father of Gedor, and Heber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah.] The Targum, and Jarchi, with others, by *father*, in all these three instances, understand the lord or ruler of those cities, which were in the tribe of Judah. (See Josh. xv. 34, 35.)

And these are the sons of Bithiah.] Mentioned in the foregoing verse.

The daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took.] That is, married. But it is not likely he married the daughter of the king of Egypt, unless some natural daughter: but rather of some other person, called by the name of Pharaoh; who might be an Israelite as well as an Egyptian: names being, upon several occasions, given from other countries.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of his wife Hodiah.*] This was his third wife.

The sister of Naham.] It seems to me more reasonable to translate it Achotnaam: who was his son by Hodiah.

The father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maachathite.] These were his grandsons, who are frequently in Scripture called sons.

Ver. 20. *And the sons of Shimon.*] Who is supposed to be another son of Mered by his last wife.

Were Amnon, and Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon.

And the sons of Ishi.] Who is thought to be the son of Tilon last mentioned.

Were Zoheth, and Ben-zoheth.

Ver. 21. *The sons of Shelah the son of Judah were Er.*] Having given an account of those descended from Pharez the eldest son of Judah, and Zerah, whom Judah had by Tamar, (chap. ii. 4, 5.) he now relates the posterity of Shelah, whom he had by his wife Shuah, (Gen. xxxviii. 5.)

The father of Lecah.] This was a city in the tribe of Judah, of which Er was the lord.

And Laadah, the father of Mareshah.] Another city in the same tribe.

And the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen.] From him came all those families that were famous for this sort of workmanship in fine linen: wherewith their kings and priests were clothed, as the Targum notes.

Of the house of Ashbea.] The principal of which, I suppose, were those of this man's posterity.

Ver. 22. *And Jokim.*] This was either a person or a family descended from Shelah.

And the men of Chozeba.] They were another family sprung from the same root: who settled in this place.

And Joash, and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab.] Conquered several places there, in the time of David: or had the government of them given by him. The Targum takes the Hebrew word *Baalu*, as if it signified that they married wives in the country of Moab.

And Jashubi-lehem.] Or rather, *the inhabitants of Lehem:* a place where some of Shelah's posterity settled.

And these are ancient things.] That is, these things which have been related concerning Joash and Saraph (as Kimchi interprets it), who had dominion in Moab, shew that they were long ago: but now, as it follows, their condition was altered.

Ver. 23. *These were the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges.*] Or rather, *these now are potters,* &c. being fallen from the glory and splendour wherein they formerly lived, to common and mean employments.

There they dwelt with the king for his work.] This is commonly understood, as if they stayed in Babylon (for there was no king now in Judea) to be vine-dressers, gardeners, and husbandmen, under that monarch: whose service they liked so well, that they chose to continue in it, rather than return to Jerusalem.

Ver. 24. *The sons of Simeon were Nemuel, and Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, and Shaul.*] This tribe is mentioned next to Judah, because they were neighbours to them: part of their possessions being taken out of the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xix. 1, &c.) But the names of some of Simeon's sons were much altered, by length of time, from what they were when they went down into Egypt, (Gen. xlvi. 10.) And Ohad, there mentioned, is not here remembered: because, it is likely, he had no issue.

Ver. 25. *Shallum his son.*] That is, he was the son of Shaul, last mentioned.

Mibsam his son, Mishma his son.

Ver. 26. *And the sons of Mishma; Hamuel his son, Zacchur his son, Shimei his son.*] It seems Mibsam had no son.

Ver. 27. *And Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters.*] The posterity of his eldest sons are not taken notice of: but only, as it follows, that they had not many.

But his brethren had not many children, neither did all their family multiply like to the children of Judah.] Which evidently appears by the number that was taken of them at their first muster, Numb. i. 23. where we find that they were but fifty-nine thousand and three hundred: when the children of Judah were threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred, (ver. 26.) And at the next muster there was a far greater inequality, (Numb. xxvi. 14. 22.)

Ver. 28. *And they dwelt at Beer-sheba, and Moladah, and Hazar-Shual.*] These places are mentioned in Josh. xix. 2, 3.

Ver. 29. *And at Bilhah.*] Called Balah, in the place abovenamed.

And at Ezem, and at Tolad.] These are called Azem, and Eltolad, the former part of names being often cut off; as Hermon for Baal-Hermon, (Judg. iii. 3.) Shittim, (Numb. xxv. 1.) for Abel-Shittim, (Numb. xxxiii. 49, &c.)

Ver. 30. *And at Bethuel, and at Hormah, and at Ziklag.*] See Josh. xix. 4, 5.

Ver. 31. *And at Beth-marcaboth, and at Hazar-susim.*] Called there, Josh. xix. 5. Hazar-susah.

And at Beth-birei, and at Shaaraim.] The names are different in Josh. xix. 6.

These were their cities unto the reign of David.] Who, the Jews fancy, took these cities from them, and gave them again to Judah. Which is not likely, nor doth the word *unto* denote that they held them no longer, than till the reign of David: but that when he came to the crown their families dwelt here; though Ziklag had been in the possession of the Philistines, who gave it to David, as his own town.

Ver. 32. *And their villages were Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Ashan.*] Here is one place mentioned, more than is in Josh. xix. 7. which they had some way acquired since his days.

Ver. 33. *And all their villages that were round about the same cities, unto Baal.*] Called Baalath-beer, Josh. xix. 8.

These were their habitations, and their genealogy.] Or, as it is in the margin, *they divided themselves by nations among them; i. e.* among these places.

Ver. 34. *And Meshobab, and Jamlech, and Joshah, the son of Amaziah.*] These, and the rest that follow, seem to have been very eminent persons in this tribe: by whose valour these great things were performed, which are mentioned ver. 38, 39, &c. There is so great a resemblance in the name, that some fancy the name Ἰάμβλιχος among the Greeks came from this name Jamlech.

Ver. 35. *And Joel, and Jehu the son of Josibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel.*

Ver. 36. *And Elioenai, and Jaakobah, and Jeshohaiah, and Asaiah, and Adiel, and Jesimiel, and Benaiah.*

Ver. 37. *And Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah.*

Ver. 38. *These mentioned by their names.*] Whose names are mentioned in the four foregoing verses.

Were princes in their families.] Great persons of chief authority in their several families.

And the house of their fathers increased exceedingly.] By their valour they enlarged their habitations, which were too strait for them.

Ver. 39. *And they went to the entrance of Gedor.*] There was a place of this name belonging unto Judah, (Josh. xv. 58.) and another called Gederah, appertaining to the same tribe, (ver. 36.) out of which perhaps Judah had not driven the old inhabitants: and therefore the Simeonites wanting room, went thither, and by dispossessing them enlarged their border. But see the next verse, which places Gedor elsewhere.

Even unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.] For their sheep and their goats: which are properly meant by *flocks.*

Ver. 40. *And they found fat pasture and good, and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable.*] So that they might feed their flocks securely.

For they of Ham had dwelt there of old.] This had inclined Bochart to think, that Gedor was some place in Arabia, where some of the posterity of Ham settled, as he hath demonstrated. And the Arabians being wholly addicted to pasturage, sought out the best ground they could find for the feeding their flocks. Whose country the Simeonites made no scruple to invade; the posterity of Ham being accursed by Noah. (See his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 1.)

Ver. 41. *And these written by name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah.*] Their names are set down before, ver. 34—37. now the time is recorded wherein they performed such memorable exploits, which was in the reign of Hezekiah king of Judah. That is, as some take it, a little before the ten tribes were carried captive: or rather, some time after it, when these Simeonites, who were mixed with Judah, finding themselves very much straitened, made this expedition.

And smote their tents, and the habitations that were found there.] If they smote their tents, then it was sufficiently evident they smote their habitations; for they dwelt in tents. Therefore the word *Meunim*, I have shewn upon Judg. x. 12. (see my notes there), doth not signify *habitations*, but a people in Arabia, who dwelt in tents: which the Simeonites smote, as it here follows, and settled themselves in their place.

And destroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms.] There were none remained to attempt the recovery of their country any more: but the Simeonites possessed it when this book was written, after the captivity of Babylon.

Because there was pasture there for their flocks.] Which made them seek for no other settlement.

Ver. 42. *And some of them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to Mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi.*] Another body of them under these four great commanders, who were brethren, settled themselves in some part of the country of the Edomites: being forced to seek for subsistence abroad; either when the Assyrians invaded their country, or afterward, when it was destroyed, and there was not room enough for them among the Jews; whither many of them fled.

Ver. 43. *And they smote the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped.*] Who escaped the hands of Saul, and of David.

And dwelt there unto this day.] The king of Babylon did not disturb them in these new possessions: which were small, and not worth his regard.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *NOW the sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel (for he was the first-born; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto Joseph the son of Israel.*] The double portion, which was the right of the first-born, (Deut. xxi. 16, 17.) was given to Joseph: whose two sons had each of them a lot in the land of Canaan; as if they had been the sons of Israel. The Jewish doctors say there were two other prerogatives belonging to the first-born; *viz.* the *principality*, and the *priesthood:* the former of which was given to Judah, the latter to Levi. But I see no ground to think the priesthood was annexed to it: and as for the other, it is taken notice of in the following verse.

And the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.] This is the reason why neither Reuben's nor Joseph's genealogy is first set down: for though the double portion belonged to the first-born, yet he had not therefore the pre-eminence in other things, as it here follows.

Ver. 2. *For Judah prevailed above his brethren.*] That is, the tribe of Judah (not his person), which was the most powerful, and in all things, as I before shewed, preferred to the rest.

And of him came the chief ruler.] This is the principal reason why he prevailed, because the great prince of the people was to arise out of this tribe: first David, and at last the Messiah.

But the birthright was Joseph's).] Or, *though* the birthright was Joseph's; yet, for the reason beforementioned, Judah's genealogy is first set down.

Ver. 3. *The sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel, were Hanoch, and Pallu, and Hezron, and Carmi.*] See Gen. xlvi. 19.

Ver. 4. *The sons of Joel.*] Who, it is likely, was the son of Hanoch the eldest son of Reuben: because it appears from ver. 6. that he here gives an account of the chief per-

sons of this tribe; and consequently those who were descended from the first-born.

Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son.

Ver. 5. *Micah his son, Reaia his son, Baal his son.*

Ver. 6. *Beerah his son.*] Whom the Targum takes for a prophet, the father of Hosea, who is called Beeri, Hos. i. 1. But that is a mere fancy; for that prophet was of the tribe of Issachar, but this Beerah of the tribe of Reuben.

Whom Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria carried away captive out of their own land.] He is called Tiglath-pileser, 2 Kings xv. 29.

He was prince of the Reubenites.] When the two tribes and half were carried away captive out of their own country beyond Jordan, by the king of Assyria; *viz.* Tiglath beforementioned. The rest were carried away by Shalmaneser.

Ver. 7. *And his brethren by their families (when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned) were the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah.*] The genealogies of those descended from the rest of Reuben's sons were preserved: but he thought fit to mention only the chief of them, who were these two and those that follow.

Ver. 8. *And Bela the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son of Joel.*] This was another Joel, different from him mentioned ver. 4.

Who dwelt in Aroer, even unto Nebo, and Baal-meon.] All these were seated on the other side of Jordan. See Numb. xxxii. 37. Josh. xiii. 15, 16, &c. where we read of this city Baal-meon.

Ver. 9. *And eastward he inhabited.*] That is, the posterity of Reuben.

Unto the entering in of the wilderness.] This is the wilderness of Kedemoth, mentioned Deut. ii. 28. upon which the country of Sihon (which Reuben possessed) bordered.

From the river Euphrates.] Their territory did not reach so far as Euphrates: but only to the entrance of that wilderness, which extended itself to that river.

Because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead.] When their stock very much increased, so that they had not pasturage enough for them, they enlarged their border, as far as they were able, eastward towards the river Euphrates.

Ver. 10. *And in the days of Saul they made war.*] With the assistance of other tribes that dwelt on that side Jordan, (ver. 18, 19.)

With the Hagarites.] That is, the Ishmaelites descended from Hagar; who were settled in Arabia Deserta. (See Bochartus, in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 11.)

Who fell by their hands.] Were conquered by them in that war: so that, as it here follows, they possessed their country.

And they dwelt in their tents.] This shews they were Arabians; or near neighbours to them.

Throughout all the east land of Gilead.] They possessed all that country which lay east of Gilead: which chiefly belonged to the Gadites and Manassites, though the Reubenites had some of it, (Deut. iii. 12, 13.) A very learned man of our own is of opinion, that those Hagarites inhabited the country called Petra-Nabatæa. See Dr. Fuller's Miscellanea Sacra, lib. ii. cap. 13. where he observes, that all the rest, who were called Ishmaelites, or Kedar, were afterward comprehended under the name of Saracens.

Ver. 11. *And the children of Gad dwelt over against them, in the land of Bashan, unto Salcah.*] See Josh. xiii. 24, 25, &c. He next mentions the Gadites, because they were neighbours to the Reubenites.

Ver. 12. *Joel the chief, and Shapham the next, and Jaanai, and Shaphat in Bashan.*] He doth not give us the genealogy of this whole tribe, but only the names of the principal persons; among whom these were the most eminent, when their genealogy was examined: which seems to have been in the reign of Josham, (ver. 17.) All these dwelt, I suppose, in the metropolis of the country called Bashan: where the chief city was called by the same name; and afterward called Batanæa.

Ver. 13. *And their brethren, of the house of their fathers, were Michael, and Meshullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan, and Zia, and Heber, seven.*] These seven were eminent persons descended from other great men, of the same family with those beforenamed: and therefore are called their *brethren*.

Ver. 14. *These are the children of Abihail the son of Huri.*] That is, the seven beforementioned came from Abihail; whose pedigree here follows.

The son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz.

Ver. 15. *Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, chief of the house of their fathers.*] Besides the foregoing, there was another great person who was of chief authority in the family of Abdiel and Guni, and their fathers.

Ver. 16. *And they dwelt in Gilead in Bashan.*] In a part of it, the rest being given to the Reubenites and the half tribe of Manasseh. See Josh. xiii. 25. xvii. 1. Deut. iii. 13. where it is said Moses gave all Bashan to the Manassites: but the meaning is, all that was not given to the other two tribes, who had a share therein. (See what I have noted upon Deut. iii. 13.)

And in her towns.] That is, such towns as belonged to that portion of the country which they possessed.

And in all the suburbs of Sharan.] A country where there was excellent pasturage, and which produced the most generous wine. There were two Sharans; one in the east inhabited by the Gadites, (Deut. iii. 12, 13.) another in the west, (Josh. xii. 18.) not far from the famous port called Joppa, (Acts ix. 35.)

Upon their borders.] Unto the utmost bounds (as the Hebrew words signify) of that country.

Ver. 17. *All these were reckoned by genealogies in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel.*] This doth not imply that Jotham and Jeroboam reigned in the same time: but that in their several reigns this account was taken. Kimchi thinks that *all these* (*i. e.* the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half tribe of Manasseh) *were reckoned*, that were listed to undertake the war afterward mentioned with the Hagarites: so that it may not concern the genealogy.

Ver. 18. *The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, were four-and-forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war.*] These three tribes, or at least so many of them as made a great army, joined their forces together, consisting of their best soldiers, to invade the country of the Hagarites. This seems to be a distinct war from that in the days of Saul, ver. 10. (See 1 Sam. xiv. 47.)

Ver. 19. *And they made war with the Hagarites, with*

Jetur, and Nephish, and Nodab.] There was mention of the Hagarites before, but now he shews how they were utterly expelled their country, though their neighbours came to their assistance; *viz.* those of Jetur, Nephish, and Nodab: who were all Ishmaelites; the two first being expressly mentioned as the sons of Ishmael, (Gen. xxv. 15.) from whom these people took their name. But, as Dr. Jackson observes, there are no people mentioned in Scripture, who took their name from Nebaioth his eldest son. Which makes it probable, that they who in heathen writers are called Nabathæi, were in Scripture called Ishmaelites, as sole heirs to their first progenitor's name. Their seat was in the best part of Arabia Petræa, near to the Midianites. See book i. on the Creed, chap. 25. sect. 3. where he notes, that the Greek writers call the Hagarites Ἀγραῖοι; which is more consonant to the Hebrew name than the Latin, Hagareni. Their chief city was called Atra, and the inhabitants Atræni, unless they mistook their name, which perhaps was Agreni.

Ver. 20. *And they were helped against them.*] It is likely the Hagarites fought stoutly, but God assisted the Israelites; enduing them with extraordinary courage, and daunted their enemies. For it is not likely any other *help* is here meant but that from God.

And the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them.] That is, those allies beforementioned, who came to their aid.

For they cried unto God in the battle, and he was entreated of them; because they put their trust in him.] I suppose their enemies were too hard for them in the first onset, which made them pray to God most earnestly in the midst of the fight: representing to him the pious confidence they placed in him and his almighty power, and not in their arms and warlike skill: which moved him to give them the success they desired. Here the Targum, instead of these words, They put their trust *in him*, hath these, They put their trust *be Memra, in his Word.*

Ver. 21. *And they took away their cattle.*] In the Hebrew, *led captive;* that is, drove as many of their cattle as they pleased into their own country. This place is, among others, alleged by Grotius, as a proof of the lawfulness of taking the spoil in a just war against an enemy: as God allowed the Israelites to do, when a city fell into their hands, which had refused their offers of peace, (Deut. xx. 14.) But this instance is the more to be minded, because the war here spoken of was not by Divine precept as that against the seven nations of Canaan: but from common right, which men had to defend themselves against injurious persons, or to invade those who had invaded them, and would make them no satisfaction. Such war was approved by God, it appears by this, that he aided them, when they called upon him for help, as we read in the foregoing verse. (See lib. iii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 6. sect. 1.)

Of their camels fifty thousand.] It is no wonder there were so many, for the Arabians abounded in camels, as Diodorus Siculus relates, lib. iii. cap. 12. which they used in war, as well as to carry burdens in the time of peace. (See Pliny, lib. viii. cap. 18. and Vegetius, lib. iii.) For they being creatures very patient of thirst, were the fitter for any service in that hot and dry country. (See Bochartus, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 2.)

And of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand.] The prodigious number of sheep that those countries produced, is at large shewed by the same author, lib. ii. cap. 46. and their breed of asses in the same book, cap. 13.

And of men.] In the Hebrew, *souls of men; i. e.* of men, women, and children.

A hundred thousand.] Whom they did not kill (it appears by this relation), but carried them out of their own country, and sold them for slaves (as the manner was in those days), or employed them as such in their own business.

Ver. 22. *For there fell down many slain.*] Besides these taken captive, a great number were slain in the fight, which could not be avoided.

Because the war was of God.] Perhaps they consulted him before they went upon this expedition; and he encouraged them to undertake it, as he powerfully assisted them in it. Here again the Targum saith, The war was *from the Word of Jehovah.*

And they dwelt in their steads.] Possibly all those valiant men who were engaged in this war, settled themselves in the country which they had conquered.

Until the captivity.] In the days of Pekah, 2 Kings xv. 29. when they were rooted out, as the rest of the ten tribes were in the days of Hoshea.

Ver. 23. *And the children of the half tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land.*] In the same country, on the other side of Jordan, with the Reubenites and Gadites: of whom he having spoken, gives a short account of the Manassites.

They increased from Bashan unto Baal-Hermon and Senir, and unto Hermon.] They were first possessed of the kingdom of Og and Bashan; (Josh. xiii. 30.) from whence they extended their territories, when they were increased, unto the northern parts of the country beyond Jordan.

Ver. 24. *And these were the heads of the house of their fathers, even Epher, and Ishi, and Eliel, and Azriel, and Jeremiah, and Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty men of valour, famous men, and heads of the house of their fathers.*] He reckons only the most remarkable men of this tribe: who were not only of chief authority in their several families, but by their valiant exploits had gotten great renown.

Ver. 25. *And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them.*] All Israel transgressed as well as they: but it seems they were the greatest transgressors, who began, perhaps, the apostacy from God, and were ring-leaders to idolatry. And, therefore, as it here follows, they were the first that were carried away captive.

Ver. 26. *And the God of Israel.*] The Targum saith, The *Memra*, or *Word, of the God of Israel.* From whence it appears they thought the Divine ΛΟΓΟΣ to be the God of Israel: for they are words of the same import.

Stirred up the spirit of Pul the king of Assyria.] When, perhaps, he intended to bend his forces another way, God inclined him to go against Israel: whom he distressed so much, that they were forced to make him a great present: whereby they moved him not to stay there, but return to his own country, (2 Kings xv. 19, 20.) We do not read that he carried any of the people captive, though perhaps he might, after some spoil in the skirts of the country, as he went home.

And the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria.] Who came in the next king's reign but one, and carried those tribes away captive, as we read in 2 Kings xv. 29.

And he carried them away (even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh).] He carried these away entirely, together with some of the people of Galilee, particularly all Naphtali, as the forenamed place tells us. And the Jews say, they carried away the golden calf which was in Dan, as they gather from 2 Chron. xxviii. 21.

And brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara.] These are the very places unto which Shalmaneser afterward carried the remainder of the ten tribes, 2 Kings xvii. 6. xviii. 11. where there is only this difference, that there it is said *into the cities of the Medes,* but here *unto Hara,* which is all one; for Media is the very same with Hara, and is by St. Jerome (without an aspiration) called Ara. And the Greeks commonly call it Aria, and the people of it Arii, as we read in Herodotus, Pausanias, and others. And Bochartus thinks, not without reason, that the mountainous part of the country of Media towards the north was properly called by this name of Hara, from the word *har,* which signifies a *mountain.* Here Strabo saith many foreigners inhabited: for it is likely this hilly country was most empty of people.

And to the river Gozan.] That is, to the banks of the river on both sides: for it is as much as *τὴν περιχώραν, to the region about this river,* as our very learned Mr. Nic. Fuller observes, in his Miscellanea, lib. ii. cap. 5. where he takes Gozan to be the ancient name for that river, which the Persians afterward called Cyrus: near to which stood the city Gauzania in Ptolemy, which retained that name from the river Gozan.

Unto this day.] Here they settled, as the same learned man observes; and did not range as far as Tartary, as some have thought. For how should they, being miserable captives, who had no power to go back, or to go forward? especially through strange countries, without any arms, or other accommodations.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *THE sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.*] The first of these is called Gershom, ver. 16. (See Gen. xlvi. 11. Exod. vi. 16.)

Ver. 2. *And the sons of Kohath.*] He begins with the genealogy of the second son, because from him sprung the family of the priests.

Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.] The second of these sons is called Amminadab, ver. 22.

Ver. 3. *And the children of Amram; Aaron, Moses, and Miriam.*] See Exod. vi. 20.

The sons also of Aaron; Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.] The two first perished for their sin, in offering with strange fire, (Lev. x. 1.)

Ver. 4. *Eleazar begat Phinehas, and Phinehas begat Abishua.*

Ver. 5. *And Abishua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat Uzzi.*] According to the manner of the Greeks and Latins, who are wont to deprave oriental names, Josephus calls these three Abiezer, Boceias, and Ozi: (lib. v. Archæol. cap. 41.) and the Chronicon Alexandrinum, as Mr. Selden observes, assigns the very time when they exercised the high-priesthood; Abishua (whom he calls Abiud) in the time of Ehud; Bukki in the time of Shamgar; and Uzzi in the time of Tola. In whose days, the Jews think, the priesthood was translated from the family of Eleazar to that of Ithamar: for some great sin which they had committed; as afterward for the sins of Eli's sons, it was translated back again to Eleazar's posterity. So they say in Juchasin, "In the days of Samson died Uzzi of the family of Eleazar, and the high-priesthood was translated to the family of Ithamar; the first of which was Eli." But, as the Alexandrian Chronicle is of no great authority, so there is no mention, as Mr. Selden observes, of the names of these three persons, as succeeding Phinehas, either in the Scripture, or the Hebrew Chronicles, or in Eusebius. But the only high-priest between Eleazar and Eli is Phinehas: who the Jews think was alive in the war with the Benjamites, Judg. xxi. 28. (See lib. i. de Success. ad Pontif. cap. 2.) But this cannot be justified.

Ver. 6. *And Uzzi begat Zerahiah, and Zerahiah begat Meraioth.*

Ver. 7. *Meraioth begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub.*] See Ezra vii. 3. where in this genealogy six generations are omitted by him, *from Meraioth to Azariah the son of Johanan,* which are here mentioned. This Kimchi thinks was done for brevity's sake.

Ver. 8. *And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Ahimaaz.*] See 2 Sam. viii. 17. xv. 27.

Ver. 9. *And Ahimaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Johanan.*

Ver. 10. *And Johanan begat Azariah (he it is that executed the priest's office in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem).*] The Divine writer sets a mark of honour upon Azariah (which he doth not on any of the foregoing) for maintaining his office so resolutely, with the danger of his life, against the usurpation of one of Solomon's successors, who would have offered incense in that very temple which Solomon had built: of which see 2 Chron. xxvi. 17, 18, &c. The mention of Solomon's temple in this place, plainly denotes, that this was written after the second temple was built, or while it was building.

But Ludovicus Capellus is of opinion, that Azariah here spoken of is not he that resisted Uzziah. For such a noble fact as that was, he thinks, would not have been touched in such general words: but he takes him to have been the high-priest in the days of Solomon; and was the first that ministered only in his temple. For Zadok his grandfather, and Ahimaaz his father, ministered first in the tabernacle. Therefore to make this agree with that Azariah, he thinks, we ought to acknowledge a double metathesis in these verses, 9—12. which ought to be read thus: *Ahimaaz begat Azariah (he is the first that executed the priest's office in the house which Solomon built in Jerusalem), Azariah begat Amariah, Amariah begat Johanan, Johanan begat Azariah, Azariah begat Ahitub, Ahitub begat Zadok.* If this be admitted, all the difficulties that arise out of this genealogy are quite removed. (See his Chronologia Sacra Notæ in Tab. xiv. p. 286.)

Ver. 11. *Azariah begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub.*

Ver. 12. *And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Shallum.*] Who is called Meshullam in chap. ix. 11. These three are mentioned no where else, but in Nehem. xi. 11.

though they discharged the high-priest's office in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh, as Ludovicus Capellus makes account in his Chronol. Sacra, p. 287.

Ver. 13. *And Shallum begat Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begat Azariah.*

Ver. 14. *And Azariah begat Seraiah, and Seraiah begat Jehozadak.*] When Jerusalem was taken by the king of Babylon's army, Seraiah was carried by the captain of the guard to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah: where he commanded him to be put to death. So that in him ended the succession of high-priests under the first temple: which from Zadok unto him were twelve. The Jews, in Seder Olam Zula, make them to be eighteen; but they are not to be believed against the Scripture: there being also the very same succession mentioned Ezra vii. 1, 2, &c. which beginning from Aaron, the first four of these here mentioned, together with Ahitub the father of Zadok, are omitted for brevity's sake, as Kimchi thinks. (See Selden, de Success. ad Pontif. lib. i. cap. 5.) But some think it sufficient to say, that it was not the intention of the writer of this book to mention all the high-priests that were from Zadok to Seraiah: because Jehoiada, who was the high-priest in the time of Athaliah, is not here named. He is called indeed every where *Jehoiada the priest:* yet he took upon him such authority, as may well make us suppose him to have been high-priest. It is observed by Kimchi, that the line of the high-priests is drawn from Aaron down to the captivity, through the family of Eleazar his eldest son; none of Ithamar's being mentioned: because the perpetual priesthood was promised only to Phinehas the son of Eleazar, (Numb. xxv.)

Ver. 15. *And Jehozadak went into captivity, when the Lord carried away Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.*] In the captivity he begat Jeshua, who came back in the time of Cyrus, (Ezra iii. 2.)

Ver. 16. *The sons of Levi; Gershom, Kohath, and Merari.*] He hath not yet done with the account he intends to give of Levi's posterity: and therefore repeats the names of his sons, from whom these Levites sprung, who were not priests.

Ver. 17. *And these be the names of the sons of Gershom; Libni, and Shimei.*] Who were not mentioned before.

Ver. 18. *And the sons of Kohath were Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.*] See ver. 2.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi.*] See Exod. vi. 19.

And these are the families of the Levites, according to their fathers.] That is, these were the heads of the families that sprung from them: as it is probable, they that follow in the next catalogue were the chief of their families which continued unto the days of David; who regulated their attendance in their several courses.

Ver. 20. *Of Gershom: Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son.*] This last was his grandson by his son Shimei, as appears from ver. 42. But such are frequently called *sons.*

Ver. 21. *Joah his son, Iddo his son, Zerah his son, Jeaterai his son.*

Ver. 22. *The sons of Kohath; Amminadab.*] Called Izhar, ver. 2.

Korah his son, Assir his son.

Ver. 23. *Elkanah his son, and Ebiasaph his son, and Assir his son.*

Ver. 24. *Tahath his son, Uriel his son.*] Called also Zephaniah, ver. 36.

Uzziah his son.] Who went also by the name of Azariah, as that verse tells us.

And Shaul his son.

Ver. 25. *And the sons of Elkanah.*] He was the son of Korah, mentioned ver. 23. as appears from Exod. vi. 24.

Amasai, and Ahimoth.

Ver. 26. *As for Elkanah: the sons of Elkanah; Zophai his son.*] Or Zuph, as he is called ver. 35. This is another Elkanah; son it is likely of him last mentioned.

And Nahath his son.

Ver. 27. *Eliab his son.*] Who is called Eliel, ver. 34.

Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son.

Ver. 28. *The sons of Samuel.*] Who was the son of Elkanah, as we read 1 Sam. i. 1. which being a thing well known, this writer (giving only a breviate of these histories) omits the mention of it. But it appears by this account, that Samuel was only a Levite, not of the race of the priests (for he did not descend from Aaron, but from Izhar the uncle of Aaron), much less the high-priest, as some great men have fancied. (See Selden, de Success. ad Pontif. lib. i. cap. 14.)

The first-born Vashni, and Abiah.] The first of these is called Joel, 1 Sam. viii. 2. and here below, ver. 33.

Ver. 29. *The sons of Merari: Mahli; Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzza his son.*

Ver. 30. *Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son.*

Ver. 31. *And these are they.*] Having thus far deduced the genealogy of the Levites, he proceeds now to give an account how David ordered their attendance upon the service of God at the tabernacle: and sets down the names of the chief of them, which here follow.

Whom David set over the service of the song.] Appointed to minister unto God by singing of songs in his house.

After that the ark had rest.] After David had brought it from the house of Obed-Edom, and settled it at Jerusalem, (2 Sam. viii. 17.)

Ver. 32. *And they ministered before the dwelling-place of the tabernacle of glory.*] Which David had prepared for the ark, when it came to Jerusalem, (2 Sam. viii. 17.)

With singing.] The Psalms which David and other prophets composed.

Until Solomon had built the house of the Lord in Jerusalem.] Before the temple was built by Solomon they performed this service: which did not cease after it was built, but continued in great order, as it here follows.

And then they waited in their office according to their order.] Which David himself had constituted a little before his death: as we read in the latter end of this book.

Ver. 33. *And these are they that waited with their children: of the sons of the Kohathites; Heman a singer, the son of Joel, the son of Shemuel.*] That is, of Samuel the great prophet: whose name, it appears by this, was differently pronounced in different times and places. This place also still shews more clearly, that Samuel was only a Levite of the family of the Kohathites, not a priest of the family of Aaron, which is suggested by the Psalmist, (Psal. xcix.) "Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name." Therefore, as Estius observes, when Samuel is said to have offered sacrifice (as he did often in Gilgal and other places), it must be un-

derstood that he did it by the ministry of the priests, not by himself. And thus David and Solomon sacrificed, but not by their own hands, but by those to whose office it properly belonged.

This Heman was so eminent for his skill in singing, that he is thought to have been a composer of hymns: which I have considered in my notes upon 1 Kings iv.

Ver. 34. *The son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Eliel, the son of Toah.*] Called Nahath, ver. 26.

Ver. 35. *The son of Zuph.*] Called Zophai, ver. 26.

The son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai.

Ver. 36. *The son of Elkanah, the son of Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah.*

Ver. 37. *The son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah.*

Ver. 38. *The son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel.*] Thus, in honour of Samuel, the pedigree of Heman, who was his grandson, is derived from Israel the father of them all.

Ver. 39. *And his brother Asaph (who stood on his right hand), even Asaph the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea.*] This depends upon ver. 33. where it is said, *these are they that waited with their children*, &c. *viz.* Heman and Asaph: who is called Heman's brother, according to the Hebrew phrase; in which all near kindred are called brothers. And these two were of the same tribe and family; and also of the same employment, upon which account, if there were no other, he might be called the brother of Heman.

Ver. 40. *The son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Melchiah.*

Ver. 41. *The son of Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of Adaiah.*

Ver. 42. *The son of Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei.*

Ver. 43. *The son of Jahath, the son of Gershom, the son of Levi.*] There was no need to add *the son of Israel:* for it is apparent they sprung from the same stock, by two brethren the sons of Levi.

Ver. 44. *Their brethren, the sons of Merari, stood on the left hand.*] In like manner the children of the next son of Levi are here mentioned; who had the lowest place assigned, because they were of the youngest family. So there were three principal singers, who were masters and governors of the whole choir; Heman, descended from Kohath, was the prime, who, together with his sons, stood in the middle: and then Asaph, descended from Gershom, with his sons, stood on his right hand: and Ethan from Merari on the left. Of these three families there were three principal persons, who bare rule over the rest of the singers here mentioned, and kept good order among them. And indeed there was an admirable order observed, in the whole ministry at the tabernacle: three great men, and their sons, were singers and musicians; the rest of the Levites prepared and made ready the sacrifices; the priests offered them; and the high-priest officiated in the most holy place, as it here follows.

Ethan the son of Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch.] He who is here called Ethan, is called Jeduthun, chap. ix. 16. and in many other places.

Ver. 45. *The son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah.*

Ver. 46. *The son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer.*

Ver. 47. *The son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of Merari, the son of Levi.*] It is observable, that, in all the genealogies of the Levites, there is not a word said of the sons of Moses and their posterity: he having no ambition to prefer them unto any office, either in church or state.

Ver. 48. *Their brethren also the Levites.*] The rest of that tribe, who were not fit to be singers.

Were appointed unto all manner of service of the tabernacle of the house of God.] They performed all the laborious work that was to be done in the tabernacle; being porters, keepers of the vessels of the sanctuary, as well as taking care to prepare the sacrifices, and such-like things. Of which an account is given below in chap. xxiii. and these following.

Ver. 49. *But Aaron and his sons offered upon the altar of the burnt-offering, and on the altar of incense, and were appointed for all the work of the place most holy, and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses, the servant of God, had commanded.*] The noblest part of the ministry was reserved for Aaron and his posterity: which is mentioned at large in the book of Leviticus. Which shews that Aaron alone, and his successors in the high-priesthood, ministered in *the place most holy*, and made the *atonement:* but his sons, the priests, offered on the altars *of burnt-offering and of incense.*

Ver. 50. *And these are the sons of Aaron; Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son.*

Ver. 51. *Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son.*

Ver. 52. *Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son.*

Ver. 53. *Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.*] Having mentioned the high-priest's office, he sets down the succession of it from Aaron to the time of David: which he had done before more largely to the time of the captivity, (ver. 3, 4, &c.) There was no age like to this of David's, as Victorinus Strigelius observes; which produced so many great men, that he calls it the prophetical age. Wherein God raised up Samuel, Nathan, Gad, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan: who made the word of God dwell plentifully in the church of Israel in all wisdom.

Ver. 54. *Now these are their dwelling-places throughout their castles, in the coasts of the sons of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites.*] Now follows an account of the places where they inhabited: and first of the habitation of the sons of Aaron, who were the noblest of the Kohathites.

For theirs was the lot.] That is, the first lot fell to them. (See Josh. xxi. 4.)

Ver. 55. *And they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, and the suburbs thereof round about it.*] See Josh. xxi. 10, 11.

Ver. 56. *But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh.*] See Josh. xxi. 12.

Ver. 57. *And to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, namely, Hebron, the city of refuge, and Libnah with her suburbs, and Jattir and Eshtemoa with their suburbs.*] Besides the forenamed city of Hebron (which is mentioned again, because the most eminent) they gave them these following, which were in the same tribe of Judah.

Ver. 58. *And Hilen with her suburbs.*] Called Holon in the book of Joshua, (chap. xxi. 15.)

And Debir with her suburbs.] Mentioned in the same place.

Ver. 59. *And Ashan with her suburbs.*] Called Ain, Josh. xxi. 16.

And Beth-shemesh with her suburbs.] Mentioned in the same place.

Ver. 60. *And out of the tribe of Benjamin; Geba with her suburbs, and Alemeth with her suburbs.*] Called Almon, Josh. xxi. 18.

And Anothoth with her suburbs. All their cities, throughout their families, were thirteen cities.] Whereof there are only eleven here mentioned: but there are two more added in the book of Joshua, *viz.* Juttah and Gibeon, which make thirteen, chap. xxi. 16, 17. Perhaps they were not yet rebuilt when this book was written.

Ver. 61. *And unto the sons of Kohath, which were left of the family of that tribe.*] Who were not of the sons of Aaron, but descended from Kohath.

Were cities given out of the half tribe, namely, out of the half tribe of Manasseh, by lot, ten cities.] Some of these cities were taken out of the tribe of Manasseh, and some out of others; as appears from Josh. xxi. But in all they made ten, (ver. 26.)

Ver. 62. *And to the sons of Gershom, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the tribe of Manasseh, in Bashan, thirteen cities.*] Their cities were assigned them in these several tribes, because they were too many to be contained in one.

Ver. 63. *Unto the sons of Merari were given by lot, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.*

Ver. 64. *And the children of Israel gave to the Levites these cities with their suburbs.*] To the tribe of Levi, consisting of priests and simple Levites, these cities were given, which are here mentioned in this chapter.

Ver. 65. *And they gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin.*] These three tribes were very near one to another; and in several places Simeon mixed together with the other two.

These cities which are called by their names.] Which are recited in the foregoing verses, (ver. 57, &c.) and given to the sons of Aaron.

Ver. 66. *And the residue of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their coasts out of the tribe of Ephraim.*] By *coasts* here is meant portions: which were assigned them, though they were not priests, for their support in a lower ministry. These things seem to be mentioned so often, and with such exactness, that it might appear what care was taken by God for the maintenance of his ministers of all sorts; and for the instruction of his people, among whom he dispersed the Levites, who were peculiarly devoted to his service.

Ver. 67. *And they gave unto them, of the cities of refuge, Shechem in Mount Ephraim with her suburbs; they gave also Gezer with her suburbs.*] These were places of great eminence, unto which there was great resort: which gave them the greater opportunity of doing good. They are both expressly mentioned Josh. xxi. 21.

Ver. 68. *And Jokmeam with her suburbs, and Beth-horon with her suburbs.*

Ver. 69. *And Aijalon with her suburbs, and Gath-rimmon with her suburbs.*

Ver. 70. *And out of the half tribe of Manasseh; Aner with her suburbs, and Bileam with her suburbs, for the family of the remnant of the sons of Kohath.*] The city here called *Bileam* is called *Ibleam* in the book of Joshua; length of time making greater alterations in the names both of persons and places than this is, as appears by several other places here mentioned. For, as Kimchi here well notes (which frivolous cavillers should observe), the Divine writers did not affect accuracy in such matters as these; but took names as they found them.

Ver. 71. *Unto the sons of Gershom were given, out of the family of the half tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, and Ashtaroth with her suburbs.*] From Golan came the Gaulonites.

Ver. 72. *And out of the tribe of Issachar; Kedesh with her suburbs, Daberath with her suburbs.*

Ver. 73. *And Ramoth with her suburbs, and Anem with her suburbs.*

Ver. 74. *And out of the tribe of Asher; Mashal with her suburbs, and Abdon with her suburbs.*

Ver. 75. *And Hukok with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs.*

Ver. 76. *And out of the tribe of Naphtali; Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, and Hammon with her suburbs, and Kirjathaim with her suburbs.*] That place which here is called *Hammon*, is in Josh. xxi. 32. called *Hammoth:* from whence some argue, that one of these places is corrupted; and they fancy this, because the LXX. here hath Χαμώθ. As though the name of some place and person (as I said before) may not be differently pronounced in different times and countries. As Achan and Achar, mentioned above.

Ver. 77. *Unto the rest of the children of Merari were given, out of the tribe of Zebulun, Rimmon with her suburbs, Tabor with her suburbs.*

Ver. 78. *And on the other side Jordan by Jericho, on the east side of Jordan, were given them, out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer in the wilderness with her suburbs, and Jahzah with her suburbs.*

Ver. 79. *Kedemoth also with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs.*

Ver. 80. *And out of the tribe of Gad; Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs, and Mahanaim with her suburbs.*

Ver. 81. *And Heshbon with her suburbs, and Jazer with her suburbs.*] The first of these, Heshbon, was reckoned to be in the tribe of Reuben as well as in Gad. Of which see Josh. xiii. 17.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *NOW the sons of Issachar were Tola, and Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, four.*] There is some little difference in the names of two of these, as they are mentioned Gen. xlvi. And Jashub seems to have been called Job, for brevity's sake: just as Aram is called Ram, and among us Alexander is called Saunder. See Buxtorf's Anticritica, par. ii. cap. 8. where Rasi gives another account of it, but not so likely.

Ver. 2. *And the sons of Tola; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Jibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their*

father's house, to wit, of Tola: they were valiant men of might in their generations; whose number was, in the days of David, two-and-twenty thousand and six hundred.] When David numbered the people, (2 Sam. xxiv.) there were found thus many descended from the first-born of Issachar; which was a very great increase.

Ver. 3. *And the sons of Uzzi; Izrahiah.*] He names but one son: therefore, all his posterity is comprehended in the name of *sons*.

And the sons of Izrahiah; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Ishiah, five: all of them chief men.] Reckoning their father for one, they were five in all: and persons of great authority.

Ver. 4. *And with them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers, were bands of soldiers for war, six-and-thirty thousand men.*] As they were numerous, so they were of a warlike spirit; which made them very considerable.

For they had many wives and sons.] They were very fruitful, and propagated the more, because they had many wives, who bare them many sons: and those sons, it is likely, took many wives also, for the greater increase of their family. For this was the cause of polygamy among them, the desire of a numerous offspring (whereby God's promise to Abraham, of making them as the stars of heaven for multitude, might be fulfilled), and of a holy race of people to propagate piety, when the nations of the world were generally corrupted. (See chap. viii. 40.)

Ver. 5. *And their brethren.*] That is, their kindred.

Among all the families of Issachar, were valiant men of might, reckoned in all, by their genealogies, fourscore and seven thousand.] There was no such great increase of the rest of the families of Issachar, since in all they amounted but to this number: and from two of his sons sprung above fifty-eight thousand.

Ver. 6. *The sons of Benjamin; Bela, and Becher, and Jediael, three.*] He mentions no more in this place; but in the next chapter (ver. 1, 2.) he mentions five: they were ten in all, as we read in Gen. xlvi. 21. But either half of them died without issue, or their families were extinct, or their genealogies lost.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Bela; Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri, five; heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour; and were reckoned by their genealogies twenty and two thousand and thirty and four.*] There are others mentioned as his sons, chap. viii. 8. therefore it is likely these were his grandsons: who, being more eminent than their fathers, were mentioned as the chief of their several families, from whence they sprung.

Ver. 8. *And the sons of Becher; Zemira, and Joash, and Eliezer, and Elioenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and Alameth. All these are the sons of Becher.*

Ver. 9. *And the number of them, after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour, was twenty thousand and two hundred.*] They were not so many as those descended from the eldest son; and the youngest son had still fewer.

Ver. 10. *The sons also of Jediael; Bilhan.*] He mentions but one; who includes all descended from him, as it here follows.

And the sons of Bilhan; Jeush, and Benjamin, and Ehud, and Chenaanah, and Zethan, and Tharshish, and Ahishahar.

Ver. 11. *All these the sons of Jediael, by the heads of their fathers, mighty men of valour, were seventeen thousand and two hundred soldiers, fit to go out for war and battle.*

Ver. 12. *Shuppim also, and Huppim, the children of Ir.*] Or of Iri, as he is called, ver. 7. the youngest son of Bela; whose sons are called Huppim and Muppim, Gen. xlvi. 21. In which book there are other proper names of men, in the plural number, (Gen. x. 13, 14. xxv. 3.)

And Hushim, the sons of Aher.] If he still speak of the sons of Benjamin, this person was called Ahiram, Numb. xxvi. 39. But there being no mention of the tribe of Dan in this genealogy, unless it be here, many take Aher not to be a proper name, but a common word, signifying *other*; and so translate the words thus, *another son*: that is, the son of another tribe or family, *viz.* of Dan. For Hushim was his only son, Gen. xlvi. 23. where the word *sons*, though he speak of one man only, is used as it is in this place.

Ver. 13. *The sons of Naphtali; Jahziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shallum, the sons of Bilhah.*] The sons of Bilhah were Naphtali and Dan. Therefore these were her grandsons by the first of them.

Ver. 14. *The sons of Manasseh; Ashriel.*] His great-grandson; for both he and Zelophehad were the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh. (See Numb. xxvi. 29. &c. xxvii. 1.)

Whom she bare.] That is, whom his wife bare; for his concubine is here opposed to her, in the next words.

(But his concubine the Aramitess bare Machir the father of Gilead.] He took a Syrian woman to wife, from whom his chief posterity descended.

Ver. 15. *And Machir took to wife the sister of Huppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name was Maachah).*] He married into the tribe of Benjamin, whose sons these were.

And the name of the second son was Zelophehad.] This relates to the beginning of ver. 14. where his first son Ashriel is mentioned.

And Zelophehad had daughters.] No sons, but only daughters; as we read in the book of Numbers, chap. xxvii.

Ver. 16. *And Maachah, the wife of Machir, bare a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother was Sheresh; and his sons were Ulam and Rakem.*

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Ulam; Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.*

Ver. 18. *And his sister Hammoleketh bare Ishod, and Abiezer, and Mahalah.*] That is, the sister of Gilead, as Kimchi understands it (though some take her to have been the sister of Bedan), who was an illustrious woman, and therefore here mentioned, and, as the Targum imagines, was a queen; that is, governess of a certain tract of land in the country of Gilead. For he takes Hammoleketh not for a proper name, but for an appellative: of which there is no mention neither in the law, nor in the prophets, as Kimchi confesses; but they have this by tradition. Which, though it be very groundless, the Vulgar Latin follows it, and translates this word *regina*. Which Estius ingenuously acknowledges to be a mistake.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of Shemida were Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam.*] There is no mention of Shemida before. But he is supposed to be another son of Gilead's sister beforenamed.

Ver. 20. *And the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son.*] Some will have all these to be the sons of Ephraim: but the most natural sense seems to be, that Bered was the son of Shuthelah, and Tahath the son of Bered, &c. and so on to the following descendants of Ephraim, whose genealogy is now related.

Ver. 21. *And Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath that were born in that land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle.*] This piece of history is no where else recorded: which in all likelihood fell out before the children of Israel came out of the land of Egypt. For Ephraim, it appears by the next verse, was alive when these children of his were slain. Who, as the Targum thinks, mistook in their computation of the end of the years, wherein they were to be slaves in Egypt, and imagining them to be expired, made an inroad into the land of Canaan to take possession of it, before the time they were to enjoy it. But others think it proceeded from their desire of prey and spoil, which they thought they might lawfully get from those whose country they were to possess: and they presumed the more to make this attempt, because they were valiant men, and proud, perhaps, of the great power and authority which their uncle Joseph had in Egypt. Though others think it more probable, that the Philistines having infested them in the land of Goshen, these sons of Zabad broke into their country to make reprisals upon their cattle. Dr. Lightfoot (in his conclusion of his Annotations on Genesis), quite contrary, thinks that the men of Gath went to plunder in Egypt, and there slew these Ephraimites, who only stood up in defence of their cattle. And those words, *that were born in the land*, he thinks, signify these men of Gath were born in Egypt, though they now dwelt in Gath. So the men of Gath were the plunderers, and not the Ephraimites. But they who take the Ephraimites to have been the invaders, think those words are added, to shew that the Philistines were the more incensed against them; because they seemed to come to dispossess them of their land.

Ver. 22. *And Ephraim their father.*] They were his grandchildren.

Mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.] That is, his kindred (as the word *brethren* often signifies), they that were of his family came to condole with him. This shews Ephraim lived to be a very old man, if this happened near to the time of their going out of Egypt.

Ver. 23. *And when he went in to his wife, she conceived and bare a son, and he called his name Beriah, because it went evil with his house.*] For so the word *Beriah* imports: his family was *in an ill condition.*

Ver. 24. *(And his daughter was Sherah, who built Beth-horon the nether, and the upper, and Uzzan-Sherah).*] She was, it seems, a very great woman: who restored both these cities of Beth-horon, which were destroyed by the Israelites, when they conquered the land of Canaan, and rebuilt them in the same place, adding another city, which carried her own name in it.

Ver. 25. *And Rephah was his son.*] *i. e.* The son of Beriah.

Also Resheph, and Telah his son, and Tahan his son.] Beriah also had another son, whose name was Resheph, whose son was Telah, &c.

Ver. 26. *Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son.*] Who was the chief commander in the tribe of Ephraim when they were in the wilderness, (Numb. i. 10.)

Ver. 27. *Non his son, Jehoshua his son.*] For whose sake his pedigree seems to be thus largely deduced.

Ver. 28. *And their possessions and habitations were Beth-el and the towns thereof.*] See Josh. xvi. 1, &c.

And eastward Naaran, and westward Gezer with the towns thereof; Shechem also and the towns thereof, unto Gaza and the towns thereof.] Or rather Ad-azea, a place so called: for their border did not extend so far as Gaza in the land of the Philistines.

Ver. 29. *And by the borders of the children of Manasseh, Beth-shean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. In these dwelt the children of Joseph, the son of Israel.*] That is, the children of Manasseh. (See Josh. xvi. 11.)

Ver. 30. *The sons of Asher; Imnah, and Isuah, and Ishuai, and Beriah, and Serah their sister.*] See the same account of them in Gen. xlvi. 17.

Ver. 31. *And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel, who is the father of Birzavith.*] The two first of these were born before they went into Egypt, as appears from Gen. xlvi. 18.

Ver. 32. *And Heber begat Japhlet, and Shomer, and Hotham, and Shuah their sister.*

Ver. 33. *And the sons of Japhlet; Pasach, and Bimhal, and Ashvath: these are the children of Japhlet.*

Ver. 34. *And the sons of Shamer; Ahi, and Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram.*] The father of these was the second brother of Japhlet, called Shomer, ver. 32.

Ver. 35. *And the sons of his brother.*] That is, of Hotham, who was next brother to Shamer.

Helem; Zophah, and Imna, and Shelesh, and Amal.

Ver. 36. *The sons of Zophah; Suah, and Harnepher, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah.*

Ver. 37. *Bezer, and Hod, and Shamma, and Shilshah, and Ithran, and Beera.*

Ver. 38. *And the sons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara.*] This Jether is the same that is called in the verse foregoing Ithran; the youngest son but one of Zophah: the rest had no sons, or their genealogy was lost.

Ver. 39. *And the sons of Ulla; Arah, and Hanniel, and Rezia.*] We do not read whose son Ulla was; but it is probable of Jether; whereof there are many examples in the foregoing chapters.

Ver. 40. *All these were the children of Asher, heads of their father's house, choice and mighty men of valour, chief of the princes.*] Of these only he gives an account, and takes no notice of inferior families: though they are included, I suppose, in the following number.

And the number throughout the genealogy of them that were apt to the war and to battle was twenty and six thousand men.] Though they lived in a rich and delicious country, abounding with wine and oil, and other good things, in the best part of Galilee; yet they did not give themselves up to sloth and laziness, but were a warlike and valiant people.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW Benjamin begat Bela his first-born.*] He goes over the genealogy of this tribe again, (which he had

begun before in the foregoing chapter, ver. 6.) and gives a larger account of it, because it was entirely joined to the tribe of Judah; and likewise, that he might make way for the following history, and touch upon the generations of Saul; and shew how this tribe was increased again, after that great calamity which befel them in the time of the judges.

Ashbel the second son, and Aharah the third.] His first-born, Bela, is expressly so called by Moses, Gen. xlvi. 21. but all the rest are called by very different names. Therefore, either these were his grand-children (who are frequently called *sons*), or they had two names, which I shewed before was not unusual. (See chap. iii. 1.)

Ver. 2. *Noah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth.*

Ver. 3. *And the sons of Bela were Addar, and Gera, and Abihud.*

Ver. 4. *And Abishua, and Naaman, and Ahoah.*

Ver. 5. *And Gera.*] It is likely this was the son of the forenamed, and so grandson to Bela.

And Shephuphan, and Huram.

Ver. 6. *And these are the sons of Ehud.*] Who is not named before; unless he be the third son of Bela, called Abihud, ver. 3. And some think the three persons last named to have been his sons.

These are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba.] Where their first settlement was.

And they removed them to Manahath.] That is, Gera removed them, as it follows, ver. 7. to a place mentioned before in the second chapter of this book, ver. 52. 54. Geba being too narrow for them, when they were multiplied: or, this other place being a more commodious habitation.

Ver. 7. *And Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera, he removed them, and begat Uzza and Ahihud.*] After his removal.

Ver. 8. *And Shaharaim begat children in the country of Moab, after he had sent them away; Hushim and Baara were his wives.*] After the removal beforementioned, this person took two wives of the country of Moab: whose names are here set down. To shew (say some of the Jews) that though a Moabite was excluded from the congregation of the Lord, yet a Moabitess was not; as appears by the example of Ruth.

Ver. 9. *And he begat of Hodesh his wife.*] The Jews think she is the same with Baara: who was called Hodesh, that is *new*, because he renewed the example of marrying a Moabitish woman: which was first practised in Ruth. But this is an odd fancy of theirs, who misplace the time of Ruth.

Jobab, and Zibia, and Mesha, and Malcham.

Ver. 10. *And Jeuz, and Shachia, and Mirma. These were his sons, heads of the fathers.*] Chief men in their families.

Ver. 11. *And of Hushim he begat Ahitub and Elpaal.*] On this verse the Jews ground what they say of Hodesh, that she was the same with Baara, mentioned ver. 8. with Hushim as his other wife.

Ver. 12. *The sons of Elpaal; Eber, and Misham, and Shamed, who built Ono and Lod, with the towns thereof.*] These two, Ono and Lod, are joined together in other places, being neighbouring cities. (See Ezra ii. 33. Nehem. vi. 37. xi. 33.) They were but three miles distant one from the other, as Dr. Lightfoot computes in his Chorographical Decats before St. Mark, chap. 9. sect. *ult.* where he shews the Talmudists say, that Ono was a walled city from the days of Joshua; but in the war against Gibeah it was burnt with fire, as other cities were; and rebuilt by this Elpaal: who also re-edified Lod, which is the same with Lydda in the New Testament, as the same Dr. Lightfoot observes in his Chorographical Century before St. Matthew. Where he observes, the author of the maps of the land of Canaan hath placed Lydda not far from Jordan, and Lod near the Mediterranean: whereas they are one and the same place, as he shews at large. And in the other place mentioned before, he shews it was also called Laodicea: for sometimes they speak of the *martyrs in Lod*, and in other places call them the *martyrs in Laodicea*.

Ver. 13. *Beriah also, and Shema, who were heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Aijalon.*] That is, of the fields that lay about Aijalon: for the town itself belonged to the tribe of Dan, (Josh. xix. 42.)

Who drove away the inhabitants of Gath.] In revenge (as Pellicanus thinks) of the slaughter they made long ago of their brethren the Ephraimites: (chap. vii. 21.) or, finding the men of Gath had possessed themselves of this place, they drove them out after their return from the captivity of Babylon. But we read of no war after their return till the time of the Maccabees: and, therefore, this belongs (as a most judicious friend of mine, Dr. Alix, observes) to what was done in ancienter times, *viz.* after the division of the country by Joshua.

Ver. 14. *And Ahio, Shashak, and Jeremoth.*

Ver. 15. *And Zebadiah, and Arad, and Ader.*

Ver. 16. *And Michael, and Ispah, and Joha, the sons of Beriah.*] Mentioned before, ver. 13.

Ver. 17. *And Zebadiah, and Meshullam, and Hezeki, and Heber.*

Ver. 18. *Ishmerai also, and Jezliah, and Jobab, the sons of Elpaal.*] Of whom we had an account before, (ver. 11, 12.)

Ver. 19. *And Jakim, and Zichri, and Zabdi.*

Ver. 20. *And Elienai, and Zilthai, and Eliel.*

Ver. 21. *And Adaiah, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the sons of Shimhi.*] It is likely that this Shimhi is the same with him who is called Shema, ver. 13.

Ver. 22. *And Ishpan, and Heber, and Eliel.*

Ver. 23. *And Abdon, and Zichri, and Hanan,*

Ver. 24. *And Hananiah, and Elam, and Antothijah.*

Ver. 25. *And Iphedeiah, and Penuel, the sons of Shashak.*] This Shashak was an eminent person, mentioned ver. 14.

Ver. 26. *And Shamsherai, and Shehariah, and Athaliah.*] Here is another instance of the same name, being common to men and women.

Ver. 27. *And Jaresiah, and Eliah, and Zichri, the sons of Jeroham.*] He is the same with Jeremoth, mentioned ver. 14. next to Shashak.

Ver. 28. *These were heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief men. These dwelt in Jerusalem.*] It is probable that all these mentioned from ver. 14. dwelt at Jerusalem (one part of which belonged to the tribe of Benjamin), as they that are forenamed did at Aijalon.

Ver. 29. *And at Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon, whose wife's name was Maachah.*] Perhaps Gibeon built this city, and gave his name to it, as Kimchi conjectures. But his proper name was Jehiel (as we read chap. ix. 35. where this genealogy is repeated); and he is called *the father of Gibeon*, because he was the chief ruler or governor of the Benjamites, who inhabited that place.

Ver. 30. *And his first-born son Abdon, and Zur, and*

Kish, and Baal, and Nadab.] Between Baal and Nadab, there is mention of another son called Ner, chap. ix. 36.

Ver. 31. *And Gedor, and Ahio, and Zacher.*] Who is called Zechariah in chap. ix. 37. where another son is added, called Mikloth, whose posterity here follows.

Ver. 32. *And Mikloth begat Shimeah.*] Who is called Shimeam, chap. ix. 38.

And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over against them.] These families likewise were settled at Jerusalem, as well as the forenamed: and dwelt in a part of the city directly over against the other.

Ver. 33. *And Ner begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul.*] I observed before, ver. 30. that Ner was one of the sons of Gibeon (or Jehiel), who did not beget (in the common signification of the word) Kish; but educated him, and bred him up. For Kish was the son of Abiel: but different from him mentioned 1 Sam. xiv. 51. who was his brother. The Targum here saith, that Ner and Abiel were the same men, who had two names: Abiel was his proper name, but he was called Ner (which signifies a *light*), because he was illustrious upon some accounts which the Jews mention. See upon 1 Sam. ix. 1. where there is a large account of the ancestors of Abiel, none of which are here mentioned. Upon which Conradus Pellicanus makes this reflection: "That hence we may learn, it is an unnecessary labour scrupulously to inquire after these things, from which we can reap no fruit, and of which we may be ignorant without danger. Especially in the matter of these genealogies; the reason of which is long ago expired, together with the tribes to which they belong. As for the certainty of our belief, which depends upon the authority of the Holy Scriptures, that stands firm and constant, though some things by the length of time be so obscure, that they are not now exactly understood, especially in the difference we find in the proper names of persons and places, which without any prejudice to the faith may be neglected." Thus he.

And Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and Abinadab, and Esh-baal.] Who is called also Ish-bosheth. (See 2 Sam. ii. 8.

Ver. 34. *And the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begat Micah.*] This son of Jonathan is called commonly Mephibosheth. (See in the forenamed place.)

Ver. 35. *And the sons of Micah were Pithon, and Melech, and Tarea, and Ahaz.*] The third of these is called Tahrea, chap. ix. 41.

Ver. 36. *And Ahaz begat Jehoadah; and Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza.*

Ver. 37. *And Moza begat Binea: Rapha was his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son.*

Ver. 38. *And Azel had six sons, whose names are these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Shearíah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. All these were the sons of Azel.*

Ver. 39. *And the sons of Eshek his brother were Ulam his first-born, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third.*] We read nothing of Eshek before, unless he be the same with Eleasah, ver. 37.

Thus the family of Saul, though he was rejected by God from being king of Israel, was blessed with a numerous progeny, which sprung from his great-grandchild Micah, whose posterity is here largely recorded in honour of Jonathan.

Ver. 40. *And the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, archers.*] In the Hebrew the word for *archers* is, those that *tread the bow*, because their steel bows (which were much in use among them) were so strong, that they could not bend them with their arms; but sat down, and pressing them with their feet, pulled the arrow with both hands, that it might fly with greater force.

And had many sons and sons' sons a hundred and fifty. All these are of the sons of Benjamin.] Who, it appears by Judg. xx. were a very valiant tribe: and this family, in particular, were noted to be very great, both in number and valour.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies.*] As much as to say, Thus I have summarily reckoned up the genealogies of all the tribes; as I found them in the public registers.

And, behold, they were written in the book of the Kings of Israel and of Judah.] For, let it be noted, they were so careful to preserve their genealogies, that they were kept in the public records, not only of the Jews, but of the Israelites: whose kings were not negligent in this matter.

Who were carried away to Babylon for their transgression.] These last mentioned, of the tribe of Judah, were carried thither; as the Israelites had been before into remote countries, upon the same account of their idolatry. In which captivity there was, no doubt, a great confusion made in their families: but Ezra, by the help of the prophets Haggai and Malachi (as the Jews think), undertook to set them right, by giving an account of what he found remaining in his time. Though there is a great difference of names in Nehem. xi. from those who are here mentioned: Malachi, also, and Ezra did not live in the same time.

Ver. 2. *Now the first inhabitants, that dwelt in their possessions in their cities, were.*] He speaks of those that came back to their own country with Zerubbabel.

The Israelites, the priests, Levites, and the Nethinims.] The first inhabitants that came and settled in their country, out of which they had been carried captive, he comprehends under four sorts of persons, Israelites, priests, Levites, and Nethinims. The first of these seems to comprehend not only all those of the ten tribes, who were carried captive with Judah and Benjamin, but those also who were carried into Assyria and Media by Tiglath-pileser and Shalmanaser. For the edict of Cyrus extended to them, as well as to Judah and Benjamin; and, as the prophets had foretold, (see Jer. v. 3, 4. 10. and xxi.) some of them did return, though too many (as the Jews also did) continued where they were settled in their captivity. But that the word Israelites is here a distinct name from the Jews, is apparent from what follows, ver. 3. The last of these, *viz.* the Nethinims, are generally thought by the Jewish interpreters to be the same with the Gibeonites, who performed the lower offices in the temple, being hewers of wood and drawers of water. (See Josh. ix. 27.) But Ezra hath given us a better account of them, chap. viii. 20. where he informs us they were *given* by David to minister to the Levites (which is the original of their name), as the Levites were given by God to help the priests. And therefore in all places they are mentioned with holy persons.

Ver. 3. *And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh.*] This shews that some of the ten tribes returned with those of Judah and Benjamin. For the proclamation of Cyrus excepted none, but gave all the people of that nation liberty to return to their own country. And Josephus says expressly, that the edict of Cyrus was sent by Zerubbabel to those of Assyria and Media. Many, indeed, neglected that favour (as I said before), and continued where they were settled; but those that did return were united to the Jews without distinction. Insomuch, that at Jerusalem, which belonged to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, some of Ephraim and Manasseh were permitted to make their abode. For several of those tribes, being left in the land of Samaria, when the ten tribes were carried away, joined with Judah, (2 Chron. xxxi. 1. xxxii. 1. xxxiv. 9, &c.) and were carried with them to Babylon, and returned with them.

Ver. 4. *Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, of the children of Pharez the son of Judah.*] Now he sets down their names; and first those of the tribe of Judah, in this and the two following verses. But their names are so different from those in Nehem. xi. that it is an argument they speak of quite different persons, who lived in different times.

Ver. 5. *And of the Shilonites.*] Who are called Shelanites in Numb. xxvi. 20.

Asaiah the first-born, and his sons.] The eldest of that family, and those descended from him.

Ver. 6. *And of the sons of Zerah; Jeuel and his brethren.*] By *brethren* are meant near relations, as ver. 9. 13. 21.

Six hundred and ninety.] This was the whole number of the children of Judah, who dwelt in Jerusalem, after they came out of their captivity.

Ver. 7. *And of the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah.*] This Meshullam is said to be descended from quite different ancestors, than are mentioned Nehem. xi. 7. And therefore this is a quite different person from the other, though of the same name. Though some think that one of these authors gives an account of his remote ancestors, and the other of his more immediate: which is not probable.

Ver. 8. *And Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah.*

Ver. 9. *And their brethren, according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty and six.*] By *brethren*, as I said before, are meant their near kindred.

All these men.] That is, the seven mentioned above, (ver. 4. 8.)

Were chief of the fathers in the house of their fathers.] They are called *chief fathers*, because they were principal governors in their families. Nehemiah mentions no more than nine hundred twenty and eight, who came with these; therefore gives an account of different persons; or some before his time were dead, or removed to some other place. The first is most likely.

Ver. 10. *And of the priests; Jedaiah, and Jehoiarib, and Jachin.*] These are the second sort of inhabitants that first settled in their possessions after the captivity, mentioned ver. 2.

Ver. 11. *And Azariah the son of Hilkiah.*] Not he in the days of Josiah, (2 Kings xxii. 8.) but another of the same name; whose son Seraiah lived in the time of Nehemiah, xi. 11.

The son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the ruler of the house of God.] This last person is thought by Pellicanus to have been the high-priest: but both Ezra and Haggai tell us, Jeshua (or Joshua) was high-priest, (Ezra iii. 2. Haggai i. 1.) This therefore was not *the ruler*, but *a ruler* in God's house (as the words should be translated); not the principal ruler, but one in great authority under him: perhaps he that was called the sagan (who was vicar to the high-priest; and performed his office when he was sick, or otherwise hindered), or he was the head of one of the courses of the priests, that attended in their turns, at the house of God. Here it is to be noted, that by *the house of God* in this place, we are taught by ver. 23. to understand *the house of the tabernacle.* For as, before the first temple was built, there was a tabernacle for Divine service; so, after the second was founded, they erected a tabernacle, till this temple could be finished: without which they could not have performed the several parts of the worship of God, which were annexed to the several parts of the holy places, according to the law.

Ver. 12. *And Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah, and Maasiai the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer.*] There were three between that Jeroham and Pashur mentioned in Nehemiah: and therefore he was either his great-grandson, or they were different persons, though of the same name.

Ver. 13. *And their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.*] In the Hebrew they are called *mighty men of valour.* For the service of the house of God required not only great strength of body, but great courage and resolution of mind; especially at that time when they were newly come out of captivity. There was a famous instance of this courage before the captivity, in Azariah: who resisted the king himself, when he would have profaned the holy place, (2 Chron. xxvi. 17, 18, &c.)

Ver. 14. *And of the Levites; Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari.*] These are the third sort of persons, mentioned ver. 2.

Ver. 15. *And Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Zichri, the son of Asaph.*] This last was descended, it is likely, from that Asaph who lived in David's time, (2 Chron. xx. 14.)

Ver. 16. *And Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the Netophathites.*] He speaks of Elkanah, not of Berechiah: for he dwelt at Jerusalem. But there was not room for them all there; therefore Elkanah, and those that belonged to him, dwelt in these villages, till their own cities were rebuilt. They were in the tribe of Judah, (chap. ii. 54.) and waited at Jerusalem in their courses, though they did not dwell there.

Ver. 17. *And the porters.*] Or rather the *guards*, as the Hebrew word signifies, and not *porters.*

Were Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman,

and their brethren: Shallum was the chief.] The next verse tells us, at what places these guards exercised their office.

Ver. 18. *(Who hitherto waited in the king's gate eastward).*] That is, where the king's gate formerly was; which shews that the tabernacle they had erected was not on Mount Moriah, but in Zion, since their return from captivity.

They were porters.] That is, the four persons abovementioned.

In the companies of the children of Levi.] That were at the four sides of the tabernacle, Jerusalem being without walls.

Ver. 19. *And Shallum.*] Mentioned ver. 17.

The son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren (of the house of his father).] That is, the rest of that family.

The Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle.] Their service was to be keepers of the porches of the tabernacle: From which it appears again, that the Jews (as I said before) did pitch a tabernacle upon Mount Zion, till they had rebuilt the temple on Mount Moriah.

And their fathers, being over the host of the Lord.] Here the principal person among them attended, taking care of the tabernacle and all its appurtenances, which some think is meant by the *host of the Lord.*

Were keepers of the entry.] More especially they took care of the court, that none should enter into it but such as the law allowed.

Ver. 20. *And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past.*] So we rightly translate the last word, *lepanim;* which, as R. David Gauz observes in his Tzemoth David, (ad A. M. 2892.) doth not signify that Phinehas was now living, but he was ruler of them *in time past* when he was living. And thus that Hebrew word is rendered, Ruth iv. 7. Psal. cii. 26. But that he should be ruler over this sort of officers seems unlikely, being the son of the high-priest, and after Eleazar high-priest himself: which raised him far above such a low employment. Besides, it is evident he is here speaking of the Levites, not of the priests, and therefore it is probable this Phinehas was only a Levite, called, as his father was, by the ancient name of a high-priest. (See Selden, de Success. in Pontificatum, lib. i. cap. 2. fol. 117. 119.)

And the Lord was with him.] In the Targum, *the Word of the Lord was his helper.* From which Beckius frames this argument against the present Jews, That if he who was with Phinehas was Jehovah the true God, and this Word was with Phinehas, then the Word, in the opinion of this paraphrast, was Jehovah the true God.

Ver. 21. *And Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*] Here again the *tabernacle* is mentioned, which, as I said, the first inhabitants of the country, after their return from captivity, erected, till the temple could be built. For they would not be without the public worship of God, and a place was necessary for it. By the *door of the tabernacle,* I suppose, is meant the door which let into the court of the priests; for the Levites might not go into that court; and therefore this is not meant of the door of the sanctuary, as some have thought.

Ver. 22. *All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve.*] Who came in their turns to discharge this office.

These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages.] See ver. 16.

Whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain.] All things (that is, after their return from captivity), were put into that order at the house of God, which Samuel projected, and David, when he was settled in peace, put in execution. (See chap. xxiii. 5.) For there had been very great confusion, no doubt, in the service of God, in the days of the judges, as there had been in all other things. But when Samuel came to govern, he designed to put things in good order: and especially to make the attendance of God's ministers at his house more regular than it had been. For which end he contrived, in all likelihood, that method of the priests and Levites waiting in their courses; which (Saul being rejected by God) he imparted unto David, whom he anointed by God's appointment to be king over Israel. Who accordingly, in the latter end of his reign, disposed their services at the tabernacle.

In their set office.] Or rather (as it is in the margin) *in their trust;* for the Hebrew word signifies *fidelity:* importing, that their attendance at the house of God was no longer confused and disorderly (as it had been formerly, when there were sometimes too many, and sometimes too few waiting there; or, they had no certain work assigned them, or were negligent for want of overseers), but they every one in their course obediently went about their proper work, and faithfully discharged it.

Ver. 23. *So they and their children had the oversight of the gates of the house of the Lord, namely, the house of the tabernacle.*] This verse plainly instructs us that they built a tabernacle for the worship of God, (as I noted ver. 10.) after their return from Babylon, till the temple was finished: and here the priests and Levites attended; as *in the house of the Lord.*

By wards.] According to the courses that David appointed; as it is explained, ver. 25.

Ver. 24. *In four quarters were the porters, towards the east, west, north, and south.*] On the four sides of the tabernacle, as I observed on ver. 18. After the temple was built, these guards were kept, as Dr. Lightfoot notes, on the four quarters of the outward wall. For the wall that encompassed the courts had no gate on the west. (See Prospect of the Temple, chap. 4. sect. 3.)

Ver. 25. *And their brethren, which were in the villages, were to come after seven days.*] Every week a new course came to attend the service of the house of God, and to relieve their brethren.

From time to time with them.] They came to wait their week under the government of the chief porters: who seem to have constantly dwelt at Jerusalem, to see the courses disposed according as David had ordained. So it here follows.

Ver. 26. *For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in their set office.*] The principal porters were four, one at each gate, (ver. 24.) to whom was committed the care of the rest of their brethren to see that they did their duty.

And were over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God.] This I shall explain upon chap. xxvi. 20. where it is more distinctly mentioned.

Ver. 27. *And they lodged round about the house of God, because the charge was upon them, and the opening thereof every morning pertained to them.*] Round about the out-

ward wall, beforementioned, ver. 24. For, as the same learned man observes, neither priests nor Levites had any lodgings in the gates of the courts: nor did the Levites open those doors, but the priests.

Ver. 28. *And certain of them had the charge of ministering vessels, that they should bring them in and out by tale.*] For the use of the priests when they ministered: who returned, when they had done their work, the same number to the Levites, which they had received from them. This was another duty of the Levites.

Ver. 29. *Some of them also were appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices.*] See upon chap. xxvi. 20.

Ver. 30. *And some of the sons of the priests made the ointment of the spices.*] Or rather, *but some of the sons of the priests*, &c. For though the Levites had the custody of the spices of which the ointment was made, yet none but the *priests* could compound them and make the ointment.

Ver. 31. *And Mattithiah, one of the Levites (who was the first-born of Shallum the Korahite), had the set office* (or trust) *over the things that were made in the pans.*] To prepare fine flour and oil for the *mincha*, or meat-offering that was offered every morning and evening, as we read Lev. ii. 5, 6. The LXX. (who herein follow the Talmudists) will have this peculiarly refer to the *mincha* offered by the high-priest for himself and his family: which was the tenth part of an *ephah;* half in the morning, and half in the evening, (Lev. vi. 20, &c.)

Ver. 32. *And other of their brethren, of the sons of the Kohathites, were over the shew-bread, to prepare it every sabbath.*] When it was set new upon the table in the holy place, and the old taken away. (See upon Exod. xxv. 30.)

Ver. 33. *And these are the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, who remaining in the chambers were free.*] Others of the Levites, and principal persons among them, were appointed to be singers, and attended nothing else: but dwelt in some chambers about the temple, free from all other employment. And the reason why they dwelt there was, that they might not be defiled, and so made unfit at any time for that ministry: and that they might be ready at hand to attend upon it.

For they were employed in that work day and night.] In learning and teaching to sing, and to play upon instruments both wind and stringed: as appears from chap. xxvi. This was wholly a new thing, Moses having ordained nothing concerning singing and music in the house of God, and seems (as it is objected in the book of Cosri) to be contrary to what he commanded, Deut. xii. 32. *Thou shalt not add unto it* (that is, to the law), *nor take from it:* but they answer very well, that this command concerned the people only, who were forbidden out of their own heads, as we speak, to innovate any thing, and frame laws to themselves out of their own reasonings. But it did not oblige prophets and Divine men, such as Moses was: and therefore David had authority from God (who had not bound up himself to add nothing) to do what he did; as Solomon afterward had to set up another altar in the midst of the court, upon a special occasion, (2 Chron. vii. 7—9.) and Nehemiah to require but a third part of a shekel of the people, chap. x. 32. (Thus Sepher Cosri, par. iii. sect. 11, 12.)

Ver. 34. *These chief fathers of the Levites were chief throughout their generations.*] These were principal persons, among whose families had always been eminent men, who were chosen for this service.

These dwelt at Jerusalem.] They were settled there, for the greater convenience of attending the morning and evening service at the temple, without much trouble. But these words seem to comprehend a great deal more; *viz.* that not only these chief of the Levites, but all those whom he hath mentioned from ver. 3. unto this verse, lived at Jerusalem, and came back with Zerubbabel.

Ver. 35. *And in Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon, Jehiel, whose wife's name was Maachah.*] From hence to the end of the chapter the same genealogy is set down again, which we had in the foregoing chapter, (ver. 29, 30, &c.) and in the same words: and therefore I shall not here transcribe them. Of this I can give no account, but that this narrative of the descent and family of Saul is repeated, the better to join the following history to it, concerning the death of that king. But if we could give no account of it, Conradus Pellicanus thinks it is not irreligious to acknowledge that in these Jewish genealogies, which are very long and useless to us, some errors may have crept in by the negligence of transcribers. Who, in copying of them might not attend sometimes, but be drowsy, as we are apt to be, when we are about any tedious work and not very profitable, in which, if there be any error, the church suffers no damage by it. But there is no need of this.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *NOW the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa.*] This verse, and those that follow to ver. 13. have been explained upon 1 Sam. xxxi. where the same history is related; in the same words, and with very little difference. And it is repeated here, to make way for the history of David (which is mainly intended in the rest of this book), who, by Saul's death, was advanced to the crown.

Ver. 2. *And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul.*

Ver. 3. *And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded of the archers.*

Ver. 4. *Then said Saul to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not, for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.*

Ver. 5. *And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword, and died.*

Ver. 6. *So Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house died together.*] That is, all that were present with him in the battle: and his family had such a blow by their fall, that it never recovered itself. For though Ish-bosheth reigned over a part of the country, yet it was not in any splendour: such a deadly wound being given to the house of Saul, that it did not long survive him in the kingly authority.

Ver. 7. *And when all the men of Israel that were in the valley saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their cities, and fled: and the Phi-*

listines came and dwelt in them.] By *the valley* is meant the towns in the open country, which were not fortified. (See 1 Sam. xxxi. 7.)

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in Mount Gilboa.*

Ver. 9. *And when they had stripped him, they took his head.*] Which they cut off from his body, as we read 1 Sam. xxxi. 9.

And his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people.] That public thanksgiving might be given by them to their gods for this victory.

Ver. 10. *And they put his armour in the house of their gods.*] In the temple of Ashtaroth, as the same book tells us, (1 Sam. xxxi. 10.)

And fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.] These two, Dagon and Ashtaroth, were the principal gods of the country of the Philistines; unto whom they sent these trophies of their victory. And the place forenamed informs us where they fastened his body, after they had separated his head from it, and stripped off the skin and the hair; for the Hebrew word signifies a *skull.*

Ver. 11. *And when all Jabesh-Gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul.*] By Jabesh-Gilead, is meant the people of the city, and of the territory round about it.

Ver. 12. *They arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.*] This was a noble instance of their courage, and of their love and gratitude to their prince: who had some excellent qualities in him, and had highly obliged this city in the beginning of his reign: as I have observed on the book of Samuel. If we may believe Josephus, there was a law among the Jews, that they who killed themselves should be denied burial: for this was all the punishment that could be inflicted on them after they were dead, for so great a sin. Yet David highly approved this fact of the men of Jabesh-Gilead, who buried Saul: and therefore the Jews make this exception to the rule, That if they killed themselves merely to avoid that reproach which might be cast upon them if they lived, they might be buried: and they instance in Samson and Saul. Who they fancy repented of his many sins, after Samuel had appeared to him, and told him of his sad fate. But the two following verses seem to contradict this. (See Grotius, in his book de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. ii. cap. 19. sect. 5.)

Ver. 13. *So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it.*] His two great transgressions (one against the express order and command of God by Samuel, and the other against a known law of Moses) were his sparing the Amalekites, and his consulting the witch of Endor: which were plain proofs that he did not mind God, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 14. *And inquired not of the Lord.*] He did not regard him as he ought to have done: for otherwise he did inquire of him, (1 Sam. xxviii. 6.) but not with a religious mind.

Therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.] Kingdoms are never translated from one family to another, but injustice and impiety go before, as Grotius here notes. Which the son of Sirach expresses admirably, Ecclus. x. 8. "Because of unrighteous dealings, injuries, and riches got by deceit, the kingdom is translated from one people to another."

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *THEN.*] That is, after the death of Ish-bosheth: for many things passed after the death of Saul which are here omitted. As, the coming of the Amalekite to David with the news of it; his lamentation over Saul and Jonathan; his anointing at Hebron over the tribe of Judah; the death of Abner, and then of Ish-bosheth. After which this author relates the promotion of David to be king of all the tribes of Israel, by the full consent of all the people.

All Israel gathered themselves together to David unto Hebron, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh.] By *all Israel* is meant the elders of all their tribes, 2 Sam. v. 1. where this verse is explained.

Ver. 2. *And moreover, in time past, when Saul was king, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel; and the Lord thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel.*] See 2 Sam. v. 2. where there are the very same words.

Ver. 3. *Therefore came all the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron; and David made a covenant with them in Hebron, before the Lord; and they anointed David king over Israel.*] See there, 2 Sam. v. 3.

According to the word of the Lord by Samuel.] These words are added unto those in the book of Samuel, to shew how the people came to know that God told David (as they say in the foregoing verse) he should govern Israel. Samuel declared it to him, and published it, no doubt, among the people.

Ver. 4. *And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus.*] See concerning this place, Judg. xix. 10.

Where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land.] See 2 Sam. v. 6.

Ver. 5. *And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, Thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless David took the castle of Zion, which is the city of David.*] The insolent language of the Jebusites is recorded more largely in 2 Sam. v. 6. where see what I have noted.

Ver. 6. *And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, and was chief.*] It is evident Joab was before this in a great station, commanding all the forces of Judah; as may be gathered from 2 Sam. ii. 13, 14. and iii. 22, 23. But now he was a commander-in-chief of all the forces both of Judah and Israel; which made him very powerful: or, perhaps, Abishai being his elder brother, was general of the forces before; and this place gives an account how Joab came to have the pre-eminence, by this great achievement.

Ver. 7. *And David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called it The city of David.*] Because here he chose to have his constant residence: in order to which he enlarged and adorned it with many buildings, as it here follows.

Ver. 8. *And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about.*] See 2 Sam. v. 9.

And Joab repaired the rest of the city.] He repaired, perhaps, the fortifications, which had been, in the time of the siege, much shattered. And, as Conradus Pellicanus thinks, built some houses, for the quartering of his soldiers.

Ver. 9. *So David waxed greater and greater: for the Lord of hosts was with him.*] The Word of the Lord was his help, as the Targum expresses it. (See 2 Sam. v. 10.)

Ver. 10. *These also are the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom.*] Having touched upon David's promotion to the throne, and his settlement in Zion, he next thought fit to relate who those valiant men were that assisted him in his advancement, and helped to establish him in his authority. They were such, in all likelihood, as had accompanied him during his persecution, when they gave David many proofs of their valour and affection, as they also did afterward.

And with all Israel, to make him king.] A great many of the Israelites, as is related in the next chapter, came to David before the death of Saul, believing he was designed by God to be their king.

According to the word of the Lord concerning Israel.] That David should be king over all Israel: which word was delivered by Samuel, and known to all the people, as well as to Saul and Jonathan.

Ver. 11. *And this is the number of the mighty men whom David had; Jashobeam, an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear against three hundred, slain by him at one time.*] I have explained this upon 2 Sam. xxiii. 8. where I observed, how Kimchi reconciles this place to that, which saith he slew eight hundred. But I now think it plainer to say, That he slew three hundred with his own hand, and thereby routed the enemy, and put them to flight, in which five hundred more were killed in the pursuit. All which might be said to be slain by him; because the slaughter he made was the cause the rest were slain. Or, as Mayerus (upon Seder Olam) interprets it; After he had slain three hundred, he was so little tired, that he slew as many more as made eight hundred.

Ver. 12. *And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite.*] The son of Ahothi, as Kimchi understands it; for this is not the name of a country, but of a family.

Who was one of the three mighties.] See 2 Sam. xxiii. 9.

Ver. 13. *He was with David at Pas-dammim.*] The same with Ephes-dammin, 1 Sam. xvii. 1.

And there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley; and the people fled from before the Philistines.

Ver. 14. *And they set themselves in the midst of that parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines; and the Lord saved them by a great deliverance.*] All this is related, and hath been explained in 2 Sam. xxiii. 9—12.

Ver. 15. *Now three of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim.*] See there, ver. 13.

Ver. 16. *And David was then in the hold, and the Philistines' garrison was then at Beth-lehem.*] See there, ver. 14.

Ver. 17. *And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, that is at the gate!*] See ver. 15. He did not desire any one should venture to fetch him some of this water, but in a very hot day, said, as we sometimes do, What would I not give for a draught of those cool and refreshing waters! which he remembered he had drunk of freely in his youth.

Ver. 18. *And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: but David would not drink of it, but poured it out to the Lord.*

Ver. 19. *And said, My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing. Shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it: therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighties.*] See all this explained in that place, ver. 16, 17.

Ver. 20. *And Abishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew them, and had a name among the three.*] See 2 Sam. xxiii. 18. There are but two here mentioned; the third, Abarbinel thinks, was Adina the son of Shiza, mentioned ver. 42. who is said to be a captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him.

Ver. 21. *Of the three he was more honourable than the two, for he was their captain.*] Perhaps he was the first, and led them on, in that bold exploit at Beth-lehem.

Howbeit he attained not unto the first three.] But came short of them in their great achievements.

Ver. 22. *Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabziel, who had done many acts; he slew two lion-like men of Moab: also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day.*] See 2 Sam. xxiii. 20.

Ver. 23. *And he slew an Egyptian, a man of great stature, five cubits high,* &c.] The country of Egypt was famous for men of vast bigness, as we learn from Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. 130. 143. 153. 175, 176. See Huetius, in his Quæstiones Alnetanæ, lib. ii. p. 180. where he observes, out of Pliny, that in Ethiopia there was a people that were eight cubits high, (lib. vi. cap. 30. lib. vii. cap. 2.)

Ver. 24. *These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among the three mighties.*] See all this explained in the forenamed book, 2 Sam. xxiii. 21, 22.

Ver. 25. *Behold, he was honourable among the thirty, but attained not to the first three.*] He sets a mark of honour upon him as a man of great reputation among the thirty, though he did not rise up to the pitch of the first three, nor of Abishai, though it is likely he excelled the third. (See there, ver. 23.)

And David set him over his guard.] The Cherethites and Pelethites. Or, as some take it, he made him president of his council, as the Hebrew word imports (so Kimchi), there being a rare conjunction in him of wisdom with valour.

Ver. 26. *Also the valiant men of the armies were Asahel the brother of Joab, Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem.*] See there, ver. 24. These were chief commanders in the army, either colonels, as we speak, or captains; and they were under the command of the three foregoing great men, who were over them, as they were over the soldiers. But these great men were below the first three: who are said, in the tenth verse of this chapter, to be *mighty men to David* (as the words are in the Hebrew), because they attended upon him continually, as the keepers of his body, and had no other command.

Ver. 27. *Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the Pelonite.*] See 2 Sam. xxiii. 25.

Ver. 28. *Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abi-ezer the Antothite.*] See there, ver. 26. All the rest that follow are mentioned in that chapter of the second book of Samuel, with some difference in their names, as I have there noted. Some others also are added, being men of great note, though not equal to the abovenamed. Particularly he relates who were the chief commanders, in the borders of the kingdom beyond Jordan, (ver. 42, &c.) This appears by the names of their country, which was beyond that river.

There is a little difficulty in the thirty-eighth verse, where Joel, who is called Igal in 2 Sam. xxiii. 36. (there being nothing more common than such alterations in names), is said to be the brother of Nathan: which seems not to consist with what is said in the other place, that he was the son of Nathan. But the account of this is easy, for he might be both, if he was his adopted son, for want of children: the word *son* often signifying no more than a nephew, as the word *brother* doth one near of kin. As for the rest of the variations, Conradus Pellicanus resolves, that we need not trouble ourselves about the errors of transcribers, which we may acknowledge, in such matters as these, without any prejudice to faith, truth, or good manners. So he concludes this chapter.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *NOW these are they that came to David to Ziklag, while he yet kept himself close because of Saul the son of Kish; and they were among the mighty men, helpers of the war.*] This author thought fit to do those the honour of being remembered (which is omitted in the book of Samuel), who came and joined themselves to David, when he was in exile: and were afterward very assistant to him in his wars. They are said to come to him, while he *kept himself close because of Saul:* because they pitying David's condition, who was forced to skulk in secret places to secure himself from Saul's fury, designed to help him, and it is likely left their habitations, and went to seek him: though they did not actually join him till he came to Ziklag.

Ver. 2. *They were armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left.*] Which gave them a great advantage in war: and made them more valuable soldiers. (See Judg. xx. 16.)

In hurling stones, and shooting arrows out of a bow.] They were excellent slingers as well as archers.

Even of Saul's brethren of Benjamin.] There was some extraordinary cause which moved some of Saul's kindred, as well as of his tribe, to desert him, and go over to David. Either the great virtue of David attracted them, or they abhorred to see an innocent person so violently persecuted; or, perhaps, they were pious persons, who had a great regard to the words of Samuel, concerning David's right to the kingdom.

Ver. 3. *The chief was Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite, and Jeziel and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth, and Berachah, and Jehu the Antothite.*] There is mention before of Azmaveth, (chap. viii. 36.) as descended from Micah the son of Mephibosheth, the grandson of Saul.

Ver. 4. *And Ismaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty.*] I suppose there were thirty Benjamites came over to David at one time, and this was their leader.

And Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Jozabad the Gederathite.

Ver. 5. *Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite.*

Ver. 6. *Elkanah, and Jesiah, and Azareel, and Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korhites.*

Ver. 7. *And Joelah, and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham of Gedor.*] These were the principal persons among the thirty, mentioned ver. 4. the rest, perhaps, were not of such note.

Ver. 8. *And of the Gadites there separated themselves.*] From their countrymen and families, which they left to follow David.

Unto David, into the hold of the wilderness.] There are several *holds,* or inaccessible places mentioned, where David secured himself from Saul's persecution. (See 1 Sam. xxii. 4. xxiii. 14. xxiv. 22.) But some think he still speaks of those that came to David at Ziklag: which may be called *a hold,* they think, as the *city of David* is, chap. xi. 7. because he fortified it.

Men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler.] Under these are comprehended all weapons of war, which they could manage skilfully; being bred to it, and wanting no courage to engage any enemy.

Whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains.] They had a fierceness in their countenances, which terrified their enemies; who durst not look them in their face, but ran away as soon as they saw them. But they could not save themselves by flight, being pursued so swiftly by these men, that they overtook them and slew them. Bochart observes out of Aristotle, that lions have faces more like men than any other creatures, but very stern and terrible.

Ver. 9. *Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third.*] They are reckoned up thus distinctly, according to the dignity and precedence which they had in their own country; or according to the order wherein they came to David.

Ver. 10. *Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth.*

Ver. 11. *Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh.*

Ver. 12. *Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth.*

Ver. 13. *Jeremiah the tenth, Machbanai the eleventh.*

Ver. 14. *These were of the sons of Gad, captains of the host: one of the least was over a hundred, and the greatest over a thousand.*] They did not bring a host of men with them, but they had been commanders of the army in their own country. Or, when David came to the crown, he thought them worthy to be preferred, and the lowest of them was made a centurion.

Ver. 15. *These are they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflown all his banks.*] This is an instance of their fearless valour, that they ventured over Jordan in the most dangerous season: and perhaps swam over, when the stream was most rapid and violent, to help their brethren. (See Josh. iii. 15.)

And they put to flight all them of the valleys, both towards the east and towards the west.] When Saul was engaged to attend the motions of the Philistines, it is likely some people both of the eastern and western countries,

which bordered upon Jordan, laid hold of this opportunity to invade and spoil the land thereabout; which moved these men to go to their relief, and God gave them a great victory over them. Where these valleys lay, and what enemies these men encountered, is no where recorded.

Ver. 16. *And there came of the children of Benjamin and Judah to the hold unto David.*] Besides those of Saul's kindred beforementioned, there were others of that tribe, together with some of Judah, who came to him when he was in the hold, mentioned ver. 8. which I conjectured might be Ziklag; but I rather think it was some of the holds he was in, when he lay in the wilderness.

Ver. 17. *And David went out to meet them.*] They were so considerable, either for their number, or quality, that David went out (attended, no doubt, with some of his men) to meet them, before they came to the hold.

And answered and said unto them.] After the first salutation which they made him, he replied in the following words.

If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, my heart shall be knit unto you.] As much as to say, If you be really friends, you are welcome, and I will make a league with you.

But if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing there is no wrong in my hands, the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it.] He knew himself to be so innocent, both with respect to Saul and all other men, whom he had no way injured, that he doubted not God would protect him, and do him right against these men, if they came with bad intentions to him. What should make him suspect there might possibly be some treachery designed, is not now to be known. Perhaps some had before this come with pretences of great kindness to him, whom he had found to be false: which made him now more cautious whom he entertained.

Ver. 18. *Then the spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains.*] The spirit of power, saith the Targum: that is, God powerfully moved him with an heroical boldness, and resolution, in the name of them all, to profess their fidelity to David, in such pathetical words, as convinced him they were friends. Rasi compares with this those words in Judg. vi. 34. But none hath discoursed so well upon these words as Maimonides, who observes, that by *the spirit* in such places as this, is not to be understood a power to speak or declare any thing; but only to excite those who felt it, to do some excellent thing either for particular persons, or the whole church. With this power Moses was endued, when he came to man's estate, and was moved to smite the Egyptian, who injured one of his brethren. Which power did not leave him, but remained still with him when he fled into Midian. (See Exod. ii. 17.) This power exerted itself in David after he was anointed, 1 Sam. xv. 13. xvii. 34. (See More Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 45.)

And he said, Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse.] He seems to have broken out into this speech with a sudden violence, being unable to hear with patience their fidelity questioned. For the words *and he said*, are not in the Hebrew text; nor those *are we:* but only, *thine David*, &c. Which is a broken speech, expressing great passion.

Peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers.] He most affectionately wishes all happiness to him, and to all that came to his assistance: which implies a desire they might not prosper, if they did not now sincerely come to his help.

For thy God helpeth thee.] God they saw was on his side, who, by his marvellous deliverances of him, had shewn he had a special affection to him, and care of him: and therefore they believed would bless those that came to his help.

Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.] He preferred them to considerable commands in his army, when he came to be king: for it is not likely he would set them above those, who had served him all the time of his exile; they being but new comers.

Ver. 19. *And there fell some of Manasseh to David, when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle; but they helped them not.*] It seems they offered their service to David, when he was going with the Philistines to help them against Saul, in the last battle which he fought. This shews a strange zeal for David, and abhorrence of Saul's enmity to him, that they should then join their forces with him, when he took part with the Philistines. But neither they, nor the rest of David's men were admitted to fight in that battle.

For the lords of the Philistines, upon advertisement, sent him away, saying, He will fall to his master Saul to the jeopardy of our heads.] First kill them, and then flee to Saul and make his peace with him, at the cost of their heads. (See 1 Sam. xxix. 3, &c.)

Ver. 20. *As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jediael, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zilthai, captains of the thousands that were of Manasseh.*] These came to him, in that nick of time, when he went from the Philistines, in his return to Ziklag. Which fell out very opportunely, for they being valiant men, assisted him against that band of robbers, the Amalekites, who had burnt Ziklag, and carried captive their wives and children. He had indeed only six hundred men with him in that expedition, but these were of the number, who, as it follows, did him great service in recovery of his losses.

Ver. 21. *And they helped David against the band of the rovers; for they were all mighty men of valour.*] They were not at all disheartened, when they found David in such exceeding great distress; but being most valiant captains, offered their service to him in the pursuit of his enemies.

And were captains in the host.] In their own country they had been commanders of a company of men; many of which, it is likely, they brought over to David with them: or, they followed after them, as is intimated in the following words.

Ver. 22. *For at that time, day by day, there came to David to help him.*] After the battle wherein Saul was slain, so many resorted to him every day, that his forces grew very considerable.

Until it was a great host, like the host of God.] A very formidable host. Which he compares to the host of heaven (the stars or the angels), because they were numerous, and many of them illustrious persons.

Ver. 23. *And these are the numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron.*] The great resort to him at Ziklag, mentioned in the fore-

going verse, made greater numbers flock to him, when by God's direction he went to Hebron: and they brought their arms with them, that they might be ready to fight for him.

To turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the Lord.] They remembered what Samuel had said, and resolved to anoint him king, (2 Sam. ii. 4.)

Ver. 24. *The children of Judah, that bare shield and spear, were six thousand and eight hundred ready armed to the war.*] In the place beforenamed we read, *the men of Judah came* and anointed him king: which signifies the whole tribe consented to it. Therefore these six thousand and eight hundred men were only the first that came, and perhaps appeared in the name of the rest.

Ver. 25. *Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, seven thousand and one hundred.*] Though David was anointed king only over the tribe of Judah (one of Saul's posterity reigning over Israel), yet some of other tribes came and owned David for their king; particularly a great number of the tribe of Simeon, who were near neighbours to Judah.

Ver. 26. *Of the children of Levi, four thousand and six hundred.*] Those came out of several tribes, into which they were dispersed; yet all agreed to shew their affection to David.

Ver. 27. *And Jehoiada was the leader of the Aaronites.*] He was not the high-priest, for Abiathar held that place: but he was chief, as Jarchi thinks, of one of the courses of the priests; and now the chief commander of those of the family of Aaron, who came to invite David to take the government upon him. He was a man of war also, and brought these priests armed with him: for it is said, of all that came to David to Hebron, (ver. 23.) that they were ready armed for the war, in case any should oppose their design. (See Selden, de Succession. ad Pontificatum, lib. i. cap. 3.)

And with him were three thousand and seven hundred.] Besides those of the Levites beforenamed.

Ver. 28. *And Zadok, a young man mighty of valour, and of his father's house twenty-and-two captains.*] It is likely, he is the same person who was made high-priest in Solomon's time, who was now very young, but had a great deal of courage; whom two-and-twenty of his family followed, who were commanders of so many companies.

Ver. 29. *And of the children of Benjamin, the kindred of Saul, three thousand.*] We read of several of this tribe, and of Saul's kindred, that came to David before this, (ver. 1, 2. 16.) but now a greater number came over to him; which shews his interest to be considerably grown among them.

For hitherto the greatest part of them had kept the ward of the house of Saul.] But still a multitude of them (as it is in the Hebrew) adhered to the house of Saul, and endeavoured to keep the crown in that family. And, as Solomon Jarchi, and D. Kimchi, and others, understand it, the *three thousand* beforementioned, being of Saul's kindred, were of that mind, looking upon his grandson as the lawful heir of the kingdom, who ought to succeed in it. But now they altered their opinion, and came to David.

Ver. 30. *And of the children of Ephraim twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty men of valour, famous throughout the house of their fathers.*] This was so great a number, that by their defection from the house of Saul, it must needs be extremely weakened; especially since they were men of such great account in that tribe.

Ver. 31. *And of the half tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand.*] He speaks of those on this side Jordan, for of those beyond it on the other side he speaks afterward, (ver. 37.)

Which were expressed by name, to come and make David king.] These were appointed to go in the name of the rest of their brethren, and assure David of their affection to him; being picked (as we speak) out of the whole tribe, for this purpose. And some think the names of these men were set down in the public register of the kings of Judah: from which this author transcribed it.

Ver. 32. *And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times.*] The Targum, and many of the Jews (particularly Maimonides in Rosch Hashanah), take this to signify their skill, in computing the beginning of their years, and months, and intercalations, that it might be certainly known when their feasts were to be celebrated. Others think they were great astronomers; whence the Hebrew doctors say, that the name of this tribe was engraven in the sapphire in the high-priest's breastplate, and that their banner was of a sky colour, having the figures of the sun, moon, and stars, wrought in it, because of their skill in the motions of the heavenly bodies. Others take it to signify their skill in the weather, whereby they knew the proper season for sowing, planting, reaping, and navigation. Many such-like fancies there are, which seem impertinent to the present business, which required men of great abilities in political affairs, who could discern what was fit to be done in the various cases of human life, and particularly what was good for the commonwealth in all turns of affairs. Thus Solomon Jarchi himself: "They knew how to advise and give counsel, according to the nature and circumstances of all cases: which sort of men David stood in great need of at this time, to consult the best means to confirm him in his kingdom."

To know what Israel ought to do.] These words shew they were men skilful in secular affairs: and now, I suppose, told the Israelites it was the proper time to think of David, and make him their king; after the Philistines had gained so great a victory over Saul, and destroyed his family. For none was so likely to quell the Philistines as he, who had so often beaten them.

The heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment.] These two hundred were eminent persons among them; and were of such known wisdom and judgment, that they had all the rest of their tribe at their beck.

Ver. 33. *Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand.*] This is the greatest number of any tribe that went over to David; that is, gave him assurance of their readiness to assist him to make him king of Israel. For it is not likely, that so many as are here mentioned went to Hebron, as soon as David came thither.

Which could keep rank.] Men well disciplined; or, as some understand it, men that would stand their ground, and not flinch when they were assaulted by their enemies.

They were not of double heart.] But all sincerely affected to David, though there were so many of them. Thus some

understand it; but others think, it rather relates to the foregoing words, that they had not a counterfeit courage, but would stand to it (as we speak) with a firm resolution, to die rather than stagger in their undertaking. For this is affirmed of them all, that they *came with a perfect heart unto David,* (ver. 38.) and therefore needs not to be said of these in particular, there being no reason to suspect their loyalty.

Ver. 34. *And of Naphtali a thousand captains, and with them, with shield and spear, thirty and seven thousand.*

Ver. 35. *And of the Danites, expert in war, twenty and eight thousand and six hundred.*

Ver. 36. *And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, forty thousand.*

Ver. 37. *And on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and of the Gadites, and of the half tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, a hundred and twenty thousand.*] Here were so many thousands of valiant men, expert in war, reckoned up in the several tribes of Israel; that Saul could not well have been overthrown in battle by the Philistines, if God had not forsaken him, and the hearts of his people had not been alienated from him.

Ver. 38. *All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest of Israel were of one heart to make David king.*] After the death of Ish-hosheth (see 2 Sam. v.) all Israel, " communi consilio," *with one consent,* (as Maimonides explains this phrase, *with one heart,* More Nevochim, par. i. cap. 39.) came and joined with their brethren, who were gone over to him. And they were such a number, men of such undaunted spirits and expert in war, who crowded in to him, that the like is not to be found in any history. For, as Herodotus saith, in his Polyhymnia, in the army of Xerxes there were πολλοὶ μὲν ἄνθρωποι, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἄνδρες, *a world of people, but few men;* that is, men of courage and conduct; with which David's army so abounded, that every one of this vast number seems to have been fit to command in an army.

Ver. 39. *And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking.*] The famous historian Dion (as Victorinus Strigelius here observes) saith, he never saw a more splendid and pompous show than that was, when the emperor Severus entered Rome. But here was a far more noble feast, which lasted three days, for three hundred forty-eight thousand and eight hundred brave men.

For their brethren had prepared for them.] They who were before actually gone over to David, and others about Hebron, hearing of such a great concourse of people, had made a preparation for their entertainment.

Ver. 40. *Moreover, they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar, and Zebulun, and Naphtali.*] All the neighbouring countries brought in provisions for those who dwelt more remote: their common concernments begetting great love and kindness (as there ought always to be, especially on such occasions) for all their brethren, though never so distant from them.

Brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen.] Whom they employed, in that country, in carrying burdens; for horses were very scarce among them. So Bochart observes, that they did not only ride upon mules, but some of them were ἀχθοφόροι, *employed in carrying burdens,* as these were. Others were ζευγῖται, *yoked to draw chariots,* (lib. ii. Hieroz. par. i. cap. 19.) The same he observes of oxen, that though they seem made rather for the plough, yet they made them serve for the other purpose also, of bearing burdens.

And meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly.] All sort of provisions for a great feast.

For there was joy in Israel.] Their hearts were enlarged with joy to see an end of their division, by their union under such a king; as they might reasonably hope would procure great happiness to them.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *AND David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader.*] With all the principal persons in authority, who had any command over others. For it is a dangerous thing for a prince, especially in the beginning of his reign, to rely wholly upon himself alone, and not advise with others.

Ver. 2. *And David said unto all the congregation of Israel.*] Who were represented by those great men, whom he had called together for their advice.

If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the Lord our God.] Whom, I suppose, he intended to consult, as well as them.

Let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in the land of Israel.] Who were not there present.

And with them also the priests and Levites which are in the cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us.] Whose assistance was very necessary, in the sacred work which he intended.

Ver. 3. *And let us bring again the ark of our God to us.*] In the book of Samuel this is said to have been done after that which here follows, in the next chapter, concerning Hiram and David's wars with the Philistines; and so it was. Only David (as became a good king, whose first care is about religion) took advice with the elders of the people, as soon as he came to the crown, concerning the bringing up the ark of God. Which was put in execution afterward, when they had gone to their several countries, and spoken with the people about it; and a time was appointed for their meeting to do it. In the mean time Hiram sent his ambassadors to him, and the Philistines came twice to disturb him, and were beaten by him; and then all the people met in a vast number (it is probable at some solemn festival) to bring the ark to its place.

For we inquired not at it in the days of Saul.] They were not solicitous in his days to find a fit place for the residence of the ark of God, where they might conveniently attend upon his worship and service. For they were hindered by perpetual wars, and contented themselves with going to Gibeon, where the tabernacle was; though without the presence of God in it. But it is probable, that Saul, after David fled from him, and he was haunted by that evil spirit, that oft came upon him, grew so profane that he was not concerned about religion. So the words are in the Hebrew, *We inquired not of it,* or *about it.*

Ver. 4. *And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.*]

They were convinced of their negligence, and piously disposed to comply with the king's desire.

Ver. 5. *So David gathered all Israel together.*] Some chosen persons out of all the tribes, with their attendants (who represented all the rest): which were thirty thousand, (2 Sam. vi. 1.)

From Shihor of Egypt even to the entering of Hemath.] The former of these, Shihor, was the southern bounds, as Hemath was the northern of the land of Canaan. And by Sihor (called in other places the river of Egypt) the Targum, and most of the Jews, even Abarbinel himself, understand the river Nile. But there is great reason to take it for a little branch of that river, as I have shewn upon Gen. xv. 18. and see upon Numb. xxxiv. 5. Josh. xiii. 3.

To bring the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim.] Where it had been a long time, ever since it returned out of the land of the Philistines. (See 1 Sam. vi. *ult.* vii. 1.)

Ver. 6. *And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjath-jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of the Lord, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it.*] See 2 Sam. vi. 1.

Ver. 7. *And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.*] They had so long been without it, that they had forgot how it ought to be carried. (See 2 Sam. vi. 3.)

Ver. 8. *And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.*] See there, ver. 5.

Ver. 9. *And when they came to the threshing-floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.*

Ver. 10. *And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put forth his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.*

Ver. 11. *And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perez-uzza to this day.*] All this hath been explained in the forenamed place, ver. 6—8.

Ver. 12. *And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?*] See there, ver. 9. It is an old observation, that "pœna ad unum, metus ad plures pervenit;" *punishment falls upon one, the fear of it falls upon all:* which justifies the severity of God, as not contrary to his mercy, in such cases.

Ver. 13. *So David brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite.*] See there also, ver. 10.

Ver. 14. *And the ark of God remained with the family of Obed-Edom in his house three months. And the Lord blessed the house of Obed-Edom, and all that he had.*] See there, ver. 11. The Targum here pretends to give us an account how God blessed this family, by increasing it prodigiously with a numerous issue; of which the Jews were so desirous, that they could think of no greater blessing. For his wife and eight daughters (says that paraphrast), the wives of his sons, brought each of them at one birth eight sons: so that fathers and sons made up fourscore and one. But though history acquaints us with wondrous births of many children at a time, yet there is no ground to believe this of so many in one family.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *NOW Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of cedars, with masons and carpenters, to build him a house.*

Ver. 2. *And David perceived that the Lord had confirmed him king over Israel; for his kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his people Israel.*] See both these verses explained in 2 Sam. v. 11, 12. where the same thing is related, almost in the same words.

Ver. 3. *And David took more wives at Jerusalem; and David begat more sons and daughters.*] After he came from Hebron, and had possessed himself of Jerusalem, he took more wives and concubines also, as we read 2 Sam. v. 13. But they are all here called *wives*, for so they were: though not principal wives (as Pellicanus notes); that is, not such as governed the family, for that the concubines did not.

Ver. 4. *Now these are the names of his children which he had in Jerusalem: Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon.*

Ver. 5. *And Ibhar, and Elishua, and Elpalet.*

Ver. 6. *And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia.*

Ver. 7. *And Elishama, and Beeliada, and Eliphalet.*] In 2 Sam. v. 14—16. there are but eleven mentioned, whereas here are thirteen; of which I gave some account in that place. To which I shall here add, that some of them died in their childhood, which are reckoned here, but not in the other place. For here are two Eliphalets, the first of which dying young, the last was so called to preserve his memory. So Kimchi writes very judiciously; perhaps neither the first Eliphalet, nor Nogah, are mentioned in the book of Samuel, because they were not then living, but they are recorded here: because the author of this book proposed to himself to give an account of all David's sons born at Jerusalem, as he saith ver. 4. As for the difference between Elpalet ver. 5. and Eliphalet in this verse, Simeon de Muis hath well observed, it ought not to make any one think there is an error either here or in any other place: for that king of France who is commonly called Clodovæus, is called, by Cassiodore Luduinus, Ludovicus, and, in Hincmar, Hludovicus: such differences there are in the pronunciation of the same name, the examples of which are infinite, as he speaks in his Varia Sacra.

Ver. 8. *And when the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David: and David heard of it, and went out against them.*] See 2 Sam. v. 17.

Ver. 9. *And the Philistines came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.*] This phrase *spread themselves*, seems to import that they were very numerous, and assured themselves of victory. (See there, ver. 18.)

Ver. 10. *And David inquired of God, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the Lord said unto him, Go up; for I will deliver them into thine hand.*

Ver. 11. *So they came up to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there. Then said David, God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand, like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place Baal-perazim.*] See these verses explained in 2 Sam. v. 19, 20.

Ver. 12. *And when they had left their gods there, David*

gave a commandment, and they were burnt with fire.] No wonder they could not preserve such gods as could not preserve them. Which David would not honour, as they had done the ark when they took it, but burnt them. (See there, ver. 21.)

Ver. 13. *And the Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.*

Ver. 14. *Therefore David inquired again of God; and God said unto him, Go not up after them; turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry-trees.*

Ver. 15. *And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.*

Ver. 16. *David therefore did as the Lord commanded him: and they smote the host of the Philistines from Gibeon even to Gazer.*] See there, 2 Sam. v. 22—25.

Ver. 17. *And the fame of David went out into all lands; and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations.*] Upon all those upon whom the fame of him came: that is, all the neighbouring countries.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND David made him houses in the city of David.*] He had need of many houses, because he had many wives and children, as we read before: who could not all well live in one house, unless we suppose it to be very large, and to contain many apartments, which may be called houses.

And prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.] As we read in 2 Sam. vi. 17. For he did not think fit to bring the tabernacle from Gibeon, because he intended shortly to build a house for the ark. Or, as Conradus Pellicanus thinks, the tabernacle of Moses, having been long neglected, was grown ruinous: and he thought it better to prepare a new tabernacle than repair the old.

Ver. 2. *Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.*] The former miscarriage, when they brought up the ark from Kirjath-jearim, had taught him to use it with greater reverence, according to the prescription of the law; which ordered the Levites to carry it upon their shoulders. (See Numb. vi. 15. vii. 9.)

Ver. 3. *And David gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the Lord unto his place which he had prepared for it.*] See 2 Sam. vi. 15.

Ver. 4. *And David assembled the children of Aaron, and the Levites.*] Whom he ordered should be sent for before, when he first attempted to bring up the ark, but we do not read that they came, (chap. xiii. 2. 5.) therefore now he actually got them together.

Ver. 5. *Of the sons of Kohath; Uriel the chief, and his brethren a hundred and twenty.*] The sons of Kohath are mentioned in Exod. vi. 17, 18. and Uriel is none of them: therefore he was his grandson, who proved so famous, that his descendants are reckoned in the first place.

Ver. 6. *Of the sons of Merari; Asaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred and twenty.*

Ver. 7. *Of the sons of Gershom; Joel the chief, and his brethren a hundred and thirty.*

Ver. 8. *Of the sons of Elizaphan; Shemaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred.*] He was the son of Uzziel, the youngest son of Kohath. (See Exod. vi. 18. 23. Numb. iv. 3.)

Ver. 9. *Of the sons of Hebron; Eliel the chief, and his brethren fourscore.*

Ver. 10. *Of the sons of Uzziel; Amminadab the chief, and his brethren a hundred and twelve.*] These two last named were the sons of Kohath.

Ver. 11. *And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests.*] I have observed here before, that Zadok was in the greatest favour with David: and therefore is mentioned first, though Abiathar was the high-priest, and Zadok only the second priest. (See upon 2 Sam. xv. 27. 29.)

And for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab.] The six persons mentioned in the foregoing verses.

Ver. 12. *And said unto them, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it.*] This sanctification was by washing their bodies and garments, abstaining from their wives, and other purifications. (See Exod. xix. 10. 15.)

Ver. 13. *For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us.*] It seems the priests and Levites were not well acquainted with the law; or, the ark having been very long in one place, they had forgot how it ought to be removed: and did not sanctify themselves, and seriously consider their duty. At least, they that were then present (for the chief were not then assembled, as I said ver. 4.) were ignorant, or careless.

For that we sought him not after the due order.] This good king doth not wholly excuse himself, and lay all the blame on them: but puts himself into the number of those who were negligent in this matter. For it was his duty as well as theirs to look into the law, and pray to God for his direction. There were four faults committed: First, in putting the ark into the cart, which should have been carried by the Levites on their shoulders. Secondly, the Levites were not permitted to touch the ark, as Uzza did. Thirdly, he was no Levite, and therefore more grievously offended. (Numb. xvi. 28.) Lastly, he wanted faith, that God would take care of the ark. This last David could not help: but the three first he might have prevented.

Ver. 14. *So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel.*] From this place, and some others, (as Josh. iii. 3.) Buxtorf truly infers, I think, that all the tribe of Levi had a right to carry the ark, the priests as well as the others. But while they were in the wilderness, they that were bare Levites commonly did it, because the priests were few, and had other employment. But the priests, being Levites, might do it when they pleased, or were appointed to it. (See Histor. Arcæ, cap. 8. sect. 2.)

Ver. 15. *And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders, with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded, according to the word of the Lord.*] The children of Kohath had this peculiar privilege: who are the Levites here mentioned, (Numb. iv. 4.)

Ver. 16. *And David spake to the chief of the Levites.*] To those six persons beforementioned, ver. 5, 6, &c.

To appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments

of music, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals.] They that were chief among them knew who could sing well, and play upon such instruments as are here mentioned: the best of which were to be ordered to perform this service.

Sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy.] Singing so loud that all might hear, and have their hearts lifted up with joy in God. (See 2 Chron. xx. 19.) Here it may be observed, that though David did not build the temple, yet he ordered how the service of God should be performed there, in a more solemn manner than it had been hitherto, with singing and musical instruments. Which began now when the ark was brought to the place prepared for it; and was ordered afterward to be constantly performed every day, (chap. xvi. 4. 42.) And indeed there was scarce any solemn service performed to their gods, either by Greeks or barbarians, without both vocal and instrumental music, as the illustrious Ezekiel Spanhemius hath observed out of Strabo, lib. x. p. 467. See him upon Callimachus's hymn to Diana, ver. 245. where he notes out of Plutarch, that their musical instruments were three (as they were here); and that music was thought to be a thing so heavenly, that their gods were accounted the inventors of the principal instruments of it. (See upon ver. 295.) Certain it is that the Greeks were not the inventors of them, but they had them out of the east, as he shews upon ver. 249. Which appears by the names of some of them, which are plainly extant in the Bible, as Bochartus hath observed.

Ver. 17. *So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari their brethren, Ethan the son of Kushaiah.*] These three were the principal, who were appointed to govern the rest.

Ver. 18. *And with them their brethren of the second degree, Zechariah, Ben, and Jaaziel.*] The LXX. take *Ben* for an appellative, and join it with the next, as if he had said, *Zechariah the son of Jaaziel.* But the Jews take it for a proper name of one of the singers (as we do), and David Kimchi thinks this is the person to whom David directed the ninth psalm, to be sung by him, upon the occasion of the death of Saul; for it is said to be *Laben*, which he understands to be *to Ben* the singer.

And Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Uni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-Edom, and Jeiel, the porters.] This was the office of these of the second degree; who were also, when their attendance was over, instructed in music, and assisted in it when they were not in the other employment.

Ver. 19. *So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were appointed to sound with cymbals of brass.*

Ver. 20. *And Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah.*] Here is no mention made of Ben; which some imagine is, because, before they came to execute their office, he fell sick, or died: and Azaziah, who was not mentioned before, came in his room: but was not so eminent as he, and therefore put in the last place.

With psalteries on Alamoth.] Or, *with Alamoth.* Which being joined with psalteries, is thought by some to be a musical instrument. But Strigelius, from the derivation of the word, thinks that Alamoth signifies that these men sung the *bass*, as those in the next verse did the *treble.*

Ver. 21. *And Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-Edom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with harps on the Sheminith.*] Some take *Sheminith* to signify a harp with eight strings.

To excel.] The Hebrew word *lenatzeach*, coming from *natzach, to overcome*, is thought by Strigelius to signify a voice higher than all the rest.

Ver. 22. *And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites.*] A principal person among them, but not before mentioned: so that it doth not appear of what family he was.

Was for song.] Or, as it is translated in the margin, *was for carriage;* that is, for managing of the voice. He taught them how to sing, as the following words tell us, *he instructed about the song, because he was skilful.* Being a great artist in singing, he was the precentor: for, ver. 27. he is called *master of the song.* Which Lud. Capellus thinks signifies as much, as that he guided them to keep time, by the elevation of his hand, or of a wand. So the LXX. ἄρχων τῶν ᾠδῶν, who is properly called *the precentor* among us: who among the ancient Salii was called *vates:* he being the prime singer while they were dancing; as Gutberletius observes in his book De Saliis, cap. 11.

Ver. 23. *And Berechiah and Elkanah were door-keepers for the ark.*] Their office at present was to guard the ark as it passed along, that none might touch it.

Ver. 24. *And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God.*] For this was the office of the priests, as we read in Numb. x. the beginning.

And Obed-Edom and Jehiah were door-keepers for the ark.] When it was settled at Jerusalem, they kept the door of the tent prepared for it; that none might approach it but the high-priest at proper seasons.

Ver. 25. *So David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the house of Obed-Edom with joy.*] With music and dancing. (See 2 Sam. vi. 5. 12. 15.)

Ver. 26. *And it came to pass, when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams.*] Some understand this of the strength that God gave them to carry the ark without fainting, though they went up a steep hill, to settle it in the place where it was to rest. But it is not likely God imposed such great burdens on them in his service, that it was hard to bear them, without an extraordinary assistance. I think the meaning rather is, that he preserved them from committing any error, so that they carried it without offence. Or, as Junius takes it, God gave them ease, and others were ordered to take their place, when they had gone some part of the way. For, though it was not a heavy burden, yet they could not but proceed with fear and trembling, lest they should incur God's displeasure, as Uzzah did. Then *they*, that is, the Levites, offered upon their own account the sacrifices here mentioned; besides those which the king offered, as we read 2 Sam. vi. 13. And seven bullocks, and as many rams, being offered, some think, that every time the ark rested, for the Levites to rest themselves, a bullock was offered with a ram: which was

seven times between the house of Obed-Edom and the city of David.

Ver. 27. *And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen.*] Pure white garments were proper (as Grotius here notes) in Divine ministrations. And Kimchi thinks, that the Levites, who bare the ark, and the singers, being thus clothed upon this solemn occasion, David being musical, and bearing his part among them, chose to appear in the very same habit. Just, saith he, as, among Christians, their kings and princes, when they go in procession with the clergy, are clothed like them. And by this, perhaps, may be understood what Michal meant when she found fault with David for *uncovering himself:* which does not signify that he appeared naked, but put off his royal robes, and put on those that did not belong to him. But it must be confessed, that fine linen was the apparel of kings and great men.

And all the Levites that bare the ark, and Chenaniah the master of the song, with the singers.] These were all clothed in fine linen.

David also had upon him an ephod of linen.] Which was an honorary vestment allowed to those who were not Levites, as I have shewn upon 1 Sam. ii. 18. (See my notes there, and upon 2 Sam. vi. 14.)

Ver. 28. *Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.*] See upon 2 Sam. vi. 15.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass, as the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David, that Michal, the daughter of Saul, looking out at a window, saw king David dancing and playing; and she despised him in her heart.*] And expressed as much, when he came to his house, in words of great contempt. (See 2 Sam. vi. 16. 20.) She was a proud woman, and it is likely had no great sense of religion, which in the reign of Saul (as we read before, xiii. 3.) was much neglected.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt-sacrifices and peace-offerings before God.*

Ver. 2. *And when David had made an end of offering the burnt-offerings and the peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord.*] The Targum translates it, *in the name of the Word of the Lord.* Which shews that interpreter took the Word to be Jehovah.

Ver. 3. *And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.*] These three verses have been explained upon 2 Sam. vi. 17—19. (See there.)

Ver. 4. *And he appointed certain of the Levites.*] In their courses.

To minister before the ark of the Lord, and to record, and to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel.] To declare unto the people the wonderful works God had done for Israel (for that is to record), and to give him thanks, and to extol his almighty goodness, and all his glorious perfections. As none could sacrifice but the priests of the seed of Aaron; so none could minister in the temple but the Levites: which was unalterably established by the law of God. But it was in the power of their king to assign the priests or Levites several functions in the service of God, as Grotius observes from this place. They were appointed to be singers, with instruments of music, by the prophets, as we are told in 2 Chron. xxix. 25. and David, as a prophet, not as a king, appointed this Divine service, xxiii. 2. But the application of persons to their several places is every where ascribed to king David, and afterward to Solomon; and Jehoshaphat, who was no prophet, ordered the priests and Levites to go and teach the people. So David here appointed who should sing, who should be porters, and discharge other duties. (See De Imper. Sum. Potest. circa Sacra, cap. 10. p. 270. edit. Paris.)]

Ver. 5. *Asaph the chief.*] Some of whose Divine composures we have in the book of Psalms.

And next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-Edom: and Jeiel with psalteries and with harps: but Asaph made a sound with cymbals.] By whom all the rest were directed to take their several parts in this service.

Ver. 6. *Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.*] At the morning and evening service these priests attended with trumpets, as the Levites did with other musical instruments.

Ver. 7. *Then on that day David delivered first this psalm.*] Or, as it may be plainly translated out of the Hebrew, *This David appointed (or ordained) in the first place at that time; viz.* that God should be praised by Asaph and his colleagues in the manner following. Which solemn service began on the day when he brought up the ark, and ever after was continued.

To thank the Lord, into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.] To give him thanks (as Conradus Pellicanus well glosses) for all his benefits he had bestowed on his people Israel, and which he intended to bestow upon all the people of this world by his son Christ.

Ver. 8. *Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.*] Out of Psal. xcvi. and cv. which, I suppose, David had made before this time, he now composed one hymn to be daily used in the Divine service: wherein the Divine perfections are admirably set forth, that the people might be excited to his fear, love, and obedience. I have sufficiently explained the sense of every verse in my paraphrase upon the Psalms: but shall here touch upon them again, out of that good and truly great man now mentioned, who thus glosses upon this verse: O ye ministers and worshippers of the Most High, celebrate with heart and voice all the benefits you have received from him the fountain of all good; and if you suffer any evil, or want any thing, pray to him for relief; and being taught by happy experience how good he is, proclaim it to all the world, and teach them, that all things depend upon his pleasure and order.

Ver. 9. *Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk you of all his wondrous works.*] Praise him with heart and voice: declare his wonderful works, wherein he hath testified his omnipotence, and his wisdom to be faithful.

Ver. 10. *Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.*] Look upon this as your highest happiness, and make your boast of it, that he is your God:

and let their heart rejoice who seek his favour as their chiefest good.

Ver. 11. *Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually.*] Being sensible of your own weakness, depend upon his power for help: and seek his clemency and mercy with humble prayer on all occasions. The ark is called *God's strength* in other places, 2 Chron. vi. 41. Psal. lxxviii. 61. and therefore here they are exhorted to fall down before it and implore his mercy.

Ver. 12. *Remember his marvellous works that he hath done.*] For the preservation of his people, and the punishment of their enemies.

His wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.] He would have them reflect upon the plagues of Egypt, which came upon them in a wonderful manner, at the command of Moses. Or, perhaps, he means by *judgments* the laws he gave them at Mount Sinai, (Exod. xxi. 1.)

Ver. 13. *O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen ones.*] This is your duty, as you are the offspring of a most faithful servant of his: O ye posterity of Jacob, whom God hath chosen for his people; not for your merits, but out of his free love to one that loved him.

Ver. 14. *He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth.*] The great Lord of all things, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is our God: who rules the whole world by his providence.

Ver. 15. *Be ye mindful always of his covenant, the word that he commanded to a thousand generations.*] Never forget his most gracious covenant, wherein he promises to be ever propitious to you, if you keep his law.

Ver. 16. *Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac.*] This covenant he made with your fathers, and confirmed it with an oath, that it should never fail.

Ver. 17. *And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant.*] And what he first promised to Abraham, and confirmed to Isaac by a solemn oath, he established to Jacob by an inviolable law, to endure for ever. (See Gen. xvii. 1, 2. xxii. 16, &c. xxvi. 3. xxviii. 13.)

Ver. 18. *Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.*] He gave him an undoubted title to that good land; and afterward put his posterity into actual possession of it.

Ver. 19. *When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it.*] Remember your former condition, when you were the smallest of all nations, poor and little esteemed; were strangers in the land, which now you enjoy.

Ver. 20. *And when they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people.*] When you wandered up and down, from one country to another: having no settled dwelling-place.

Ver. 21. *He suffered no man to do them wrong.*] Though they were in danger to be oppressed by those who had not the fear of God before their eyes, yet they were safe every where under the Divine protection.

Yea, he reproved kings for their sakes.] When great princes did but attempt to offer any violence to them, he presently made them feel his hand against them.

In Seder Olam Rabba they say, that thus far they sung in the morning.

Ver. 22. *Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*] So that they durst not so much as touch them, but used them as if they had been kings and lords of the land. "So precious were you in his eyes, as if to do them the least harm had been the crime of treason against the Divine Majesty."

Grotius thinks they are called God's *anointed*, because they had in their family *jus regium*; and therefore Nicolaus Damascenus and Justin call them kings. Kimchi more plainly translates the word *anointed, my great men*, or *princes:* for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were honoured by kings, Abimelech and Pharaoh, as if they had been anointed kings. Whence the children of Heth say to Abraham, Thou art *a prince of God*, that is, a great prince, *in the midst of us*, (Gen. xxiii. 6.) St. Jerome thinks, that all the Israelites when they came out of Egypt were called *God's anointed*, because they were under his special protection, by the cloud that covered them; as Cyrus was called his *anointed*, because he was chosen by him to a special office, to be the deliverer of his people, and restore them to their own land.

Ver. 23. *Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; shew forth from day to day his salvation.*] Let not only the Israelites praise him, but all the people of the earth acknowledge their great Creator; proclaim his promised salvation by Christ, without intermission.

Here began the song between the two evenings (if we may believe the Jews in Seder Olam Rabba) unto those words, (ver. 36.) *Let all the people say, Amen.*

Ver. 24. *Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.*] Let them spread his fame among all nations, and celebrate every where his astonishing works.

Ver. 25. *For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised: he also is to be feared above all gods.*] He is the great Creator of all things, and the Donor of all good, who therefore cannot be sufficiently magnified and praised: and none ought to share with him in his worship and service.

Ver. 26. *For all the gods of the people are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.*] For all the gods which the heathen worship are empty names, who can do nothing: it is the Lord God of Israel who made the sun, moon, and stars (which the gentiles worship), and therefore only is to be adored.

Ver. 27. *Glory and honour are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place.*] To him only we ought to ascribe glory, honour, and power: in him alone we ought to confide, to him we ought to cleave, and in his clemency and favour perpetually rejoice.

Ver. 28. *Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.*] Let not his worship be confined to the people of Israel, but let all sorts of people, from one end of the world to the other, acknowledge him to be the great God, who governs the whole world.

Ver. 29. *Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.*] Acknowledge all his glorious attributes, wherein he excels all beings: offer unto him the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; prostrate yourselves before him in the humblest manner, and adore his most holy and gracious majesty.

Ver. 30. *Fear before him, all the earth.*] Let all the in-

habitants of the earth tremble before him, and humble themselves unto him.

The world also shall be stable, that it be not moved.] For if they humbly submit themselves to his gospel, and implore his grace, he will amend the world, and confirm them in all that is good; and not suffer so many nations to wander in such labyrinths of error.

Ver. 31. *Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth.*] Let all the inhabitants in heaven and earth be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will not only be known in Judea, but most gloriously reign in all nations.

Ver. 32. *Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.*] By *the fulness* of it, is meant its swelling to the very top of the banks, as Bochartus observes.

Let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.

Ver. 33. *Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the Lord, because he cometh to judge the earth.*] These two verses he thus paraphrases, "Let the vast sea, and all that live in the waters triumph; let the dry land, and all the living creatures therein exult for joy: let the trees, and all the fruit that grows on them, sing to the Lord for his benefits." For the Creator of all comes to restore mankind, and resume them into his favour; for whom all these things acknowledge they were created.

Ver. 34. *O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Whatsoever we are or can do, we owe it to his Divine bounty: unto whom we ought to give perpetual thanks, and hope in his mercy for ever.

Ver. 35. *And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.*] Let all, both Jews and gentiles, say, Save us, O Lord our God, most just, merciful, and powerful: and gather those who now are distant from, and opposite to one another, by variance and hatred, into the unity of faith and charity: that all nations may unanimously give thanks unto thee, and glory in this, that they are always praising thee.

Some have imagined that Ezra added these words after they came out of captivity: but David rather uttered them by the spirit of prophecy, concerning the happy union of Jews and gentiles.

Ver. 36. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel for ever and ever.*] Unto the great Creator and Sovereign of the world, God most blessed for ever, let all men every where never cease to give blessing and praise.

And all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord.] At the end of this hymn (the two last verses of which are the conclusion of Psal. cvi. 47, 48.) all the people expressed their desire that God might be for ever praised in this manner, by saying, *Amen*. From whence Vitringa observes the great antiquity of this sacred rite of saying *Amen* at the conclusion of all our prayers and benedictions: which was continued after the captivity, as we find Nehem. viii. 6. And he notes there rules which the Jewish doctors give concerning the pronunciation of this word by the people; first, that it be not pronounced too hastily and swiftly, but with a grave and distinct voice: and then, not louder than the tone of him that blessed: and lastly, it was to be expressed *in faith;* with a certain persuasion, that God would bless them and hear their prayers. (De Synag. Veteri, lib. iii. par. ii. cap. 18.)

Ver. 37. *So he left there, before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required.*] To sing hymns proper to the season.

Ver. 38. *And Obed-Edom with their brethren, threescore and eight.*] He was one of the principal singers under Asaph, (ver. 5.)

Obed-Edom also the son of Jeduthun, and Hosah, to be porters.] This is another Obed-Edom: who is joined with Jehiah as door-keeper for the ark, xv. 24. But Jehiah, I suppose, was also called Hosah.

Ver. 39. *And Zadok the priest.*] He was the second priest, as I have often noted, deputy to the high-priest.

And his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the Lord, in the high place that was in Gibeon.] As Asaph and his brethren ministered at Jerusalem; so others were appointed to minister at Gibeon: where the tabernacle of Moses was, and the altar of burnt-offering, ever since the slaughter of the priests by Saul. (See 2 Chron. i. 3.) Here the ordinary worship of God was performed, and therefore the priests attended at this place to offer sacrifice, which the Levites could not do, (ver. 40.) But the extraordinary worship was where the ark was placed, at Jerusalem; where Abiathar the high-priest attended upon David: that if he had any occasion to consult the Divine Majesty (which could be done only before the ark), he might be ready to do it for him. But Zadok, the chief of the secondary priests, always attended at Gibeon.

Ver. 40. *To offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the law of the Lord, which he commanded Israel.*] For this part of the Divine service could be performed no where but there where the altar was, nor by any body but by the priests: and therefore David took care it should be constantly performed here, though he was not present every day at those sacrifices, which were offered for all the people of Israel, wheresoever they were. The priests also took care to trim the lamps, and set the shew-bread on the table, and to do all other things which the law required.

Ver. 41. *And with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest that were chosen, who were expressed by name, to give thanks to the Lord, because his mercy endureth for ever.*] As Asaph and his brethren took care of the music at Jerusalem, where no sacrifices were offered, but only hymns sung and prayers made; so did Heman and Jeduthun (who were with Zadok) at Gibeon, where they sung and played on instruments when the morning and evening sacrifices were offered.

Ver. 42. *And with them Heman and Jeduthun, with trumpets and cymbals.*] It should be translated, *with them* (Heman and Jeduthun) *there were trumpets and cymbals.*

For those that should make a sound, and with musical instruments of God.] All the utensils of the tabernacle and temple were sacred and set apart for that use: not only those of the altar, but even these instruments of music, which David ordained to praise the Lord withal. They were not common, but consecrated to God to be used in his service alone: and therefore called *musical instruments of God,* both here and in 2 Chron. vii. 6. that is, sacred ones: whence those that sung the song of victory over the beast, Rev. xv. 2. are said to have in their hands *the harps*

of God: that is, not profane or common, but sacred harps, the harps of the temple, for there they sung their anthem, as Mr. Mede observes, book i. discourse 2.

And the sons of Jeduthun were porters.] To the tabernacle, as others of them were to the ark, (ver. 38.)

Ver. 43. *And all the people departed, every man to his house; and David returned to bless his house.*] See 2 Sam. vi. 19, 20.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass, as David sat in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell in a house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord remaineth under curtains.*

Ver. 2. *Then Nathan said unto David, Do all that is in thine heart; for God is with thee.*

Ver. 3. *And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying,*

Ver. 4. *Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me a house to dwell in.*] These four verses have been explained before, 2 Sam. vii. in the five first verses.

Ver. 5. *For I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but I have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.*] This verse is the very same with the sixth verse of that chapter in Samuel: only there it is said, *I have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle;* and here, *I have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.* Both which signify, that he had no settled place wherein to dwell, but walked or went, where the tent, or tabernacle, was pitched for him. For the words may be translated, *I went out of the tent into the tent:* that is, when they marched in the wilderness, the ark was taken out of the tent, and when they rested it was put into the tent again: and not into a house built of cedar. Or, this may refer to the translation of the ark from the tabernacle made by Moses, unto the tent made for it by David.

Ver. 6. *Wheresoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel (whom I commanded to feed my people), saying, Why have ye not built me a house of cedars?*] See 2 Sam. vii. 7.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheep-cote, even from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be ruler over my people Israel.*

Ver. 8. *And I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that are in the earth.*

Ver. 9. *Also I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more, as at the beginning.*] He speaks here, as if now, and not before, they were possessed of the land of Canaan: for under David's government they were settled and flourished; whereas under the judges they had no rest.

Ver. 10. *And since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel: moreover, I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell thee, that the Lord will build thee a house.*

Ver. 11. *And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired, that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom.*

Ver. 12. *He shall build me a house, and I will establish his throne for ever.*

Ver. 13. *I will be his father, and he shall be my son; and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee.*] All these verses, which are set down almost in the same words in 2 Sam. vii. from ver. 7. to ver. 16. are there explained.

Ver. 14. *But I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for evermore.*] That is, *in my church,* which is the house of God, wherein he dwelt; and which he governed, ruled, and protected as his peculiar people. It is very observable, that in 2 Sam. vii. 16. speaking to David, he calls them, *thine house,* and *thy kingdom:* but here, *mine house,* and *my kingdom.* Which confirms, what I noted upon the former place, that this principally belongs to the Messiah, of whom David was but a figure.

Ver. 15. *According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.*] See there, 2 Sam. vii. 17.

Ver. 16. *And David the king came and sat before the Lord, and said, Who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?*] He came and took his place before the ark, and then stood up, and made the following prayer to God, as I have explained it 2 Sam. vii. 18.

Ver. 17. *And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God.*] This is likewise explained there, ver. 19. but the latter part of that verse is expressed in different words, for there he saith, *Is this the manner of men, O Lord;* but here, *thou hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God.* This was not after the manner of men, to treat a poor shepherd, as if he were a great prince: but so he had dealt with David. But Victorinus Strigelius thinks, the Hebrew words will bear this translation, which in his opinion is better than our own, *Thou hast looked upon me in the form of a man, who art in the highest the Lord God.* Which he looks upon as a prophecy of the Messiah, who was really the Lord God, but appeared in the form of a man. The LXX. come near this sense in the former part of the words, ἐπεῖδές με ὡς ὄρασις ἀνθρώπου, *Thou hast looked upon me as the aspect of a man.* So Christophorus Helvicus interprets it in his Elenchus Judæorum.

Ver. 18. *What can David speak more to thee for the honour of thy servant? for thou knowest thy servant.*] He could desire no more for the increase of his honour: which is an explication of what is said 2 Sam. vii. 20. (See there.)

Ver. 19. *O Lord, for thy servant's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness, in making known all these great things.*] In 2 Sam. vii. 21. it is said *for thy word's sake,* that is, for the sake of thy promise to thy servant, as this place explains it. He had passed his word to David by his prophets, out of his own mere goodness, without any other motive. (See there.) It may be also thought to signify, *for the sake of the Messiah,* who is

the Word of God: and by way of eminence is called *his servant,* Isa. xlii. 1. xlix. 5.

Ver. 20. *O Lord, there is noue like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.*] This is more fully expressed in 2 Sam. vii. 22.

Ver. 21. *And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt?*] See 2 Sam. vii. 23. As in the former verse he acknowledges his happiness, in being beloved of God; so in this, the great honour God had done him, in making him king of such a people.

Ver. 22. *For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, Lord, becamest their God.*] See there, ver. 24.

Ver. 23. *Therefore now, Lord, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast said.*] See ver. 25.

Ver. 24. *Let it even be established, that thy name may be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel; and let the house of David thy servant be established before thee.*] See ver. 20. where the same thing is said, only the title of God is a little here enlarged. For there it is only said, *The Lord of hosts is the God of Israel;* but here, *The Lord of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel.* Or, as it may be translated, *The Lord of hosts the God of Israel, is a God to Israel;* that is, most gracious and merciful, as appeared in many things, particularly in bestowing such a king upon them.

Ver. 25. *For thou, O my God, hast told thy servant, that thou wilt build him a house: therefore thy servant hath found in his heart to pray before thee.*] See there, ver. 27.

Ver. 26. *And now, Lord, thou art God, and hast promised this goodness unto thy servant.*] See ver. 28.

Ver. 27. *Now therefore let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou blessest, O Lord, and it shall be blessed for ever.*] This is delivered a little more largely in 2 Sam. vii. 29. (See there.)

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines.*] This chapter hath been fully explained in 2 Sam. viii. What differences there are in any expression is there noted, and an account given of them, to which I refer the reader. Only it may be observed upon this verse, that in the book of Samuel it is said, he took Metheg-ammah out of their hand; but here *Gath and her towns:* which are all one in Abarbinel's account, who takes Metheg-ammah for a region or province, which comprehended Gath and her towns. We may observe also in ver. 11. the great piety of David, who had in his heart to build a splendid house for God's habitation: and when he was prohibited by God to do it (because he had been engaged in so many wars, and shed a great deal of blood), he could not satisfy himself without doing something towards it: by preparing materials for it, and consecrating a great deal of treasure to be employed in the building, and to no other use. For that is the meaning of what is here said, That he dedicated unto the Lord the gold and silver which he brought from several nations: that is, he consecrated, or solemnly deputed them to this holy use, that it might not be lawful hereafter to employ them to any other.

Ver. 16. It is observed by Drusius, that there were two Ahimelechs; one the grandson of Ahitub, the other the son of Abiathar: who, by the change of a letter, is here called Abimelech. (Miscel. Cent. i. cap. 46.)

CHAP. XIX.

THIS chapter also hath been so fully explained in 2 Sam. x. that there is no need of adding any thing. Unless I observe, that the country which there is called simply Maacah, is here called, ver. 6. Aram-Maachah. Which is the foundation of their opinion who think this was in Syria, as I there observed: but it is plain the Scripture makes Maachah a city of Canaan, (see Deut. iii. 14. Josh. xii. 4, 5. and other places.) But it lying beyond Jordan on the borders of Syria, it had the name of Aram added to it: because the people were in their manners more Syrians than Canaanites, as Bochartus conjectures. In like manner, Aram-Bethrehob he thinks belonged to Canaan, in the north part of it, not far from Emath, that is, Epiphania. (See Numb. xiii. 41.) And Maachah was in the tribe of Manasseh, as Rehob in the tribe of Asher, (Josh. xiii. 11. xix. 28.) As for what is said here, that *they hired thirty-two thousand chariots,* the meaning must be, so many men, who fought in chariots, when they saw cause. For in the book of Samuel, it is said expressly that they hired twenty thousand footmen from Zoba, and twelve thousand men of Ish-tob: which make up the thirty-two thousand here mentioned. Which if it should be understood of such a number of chariots, there would have been no footmen in their whole army, which is incredible: as it is that they should have so many chariots. (See 1 Sam. xiii. 5.)

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to battle, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah (but David tarried at Jerusalem); and Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it.*] See 2 Sam. xi. 1. where the history of David's adultery with Bath-sheba, and the murder of Uriah follows: which is here omitted, it being there so largely related, that nothing could be added to it.

Ver. 2. *And David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and there were precious stones in it; and it was set upon David's head: and he brought also exceeding much spoil out of the city.*

Ver. 3. *And he brought out the people that were in it, and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes: even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.*] See 2 Sam. xii. 30, 31. where these two verses are explained.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass after this, that there arose*

war at Gezer with the Philistines; at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Sippai, that was of the children of the giant; and they were subdued.] An account is given of this in 2 Sam. xxi. 18. where this giant is called Saph; who was, as I observed there, of the race of the Anakims. (See Deut. ix. 2.)

Ver. 5. *And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi, the brother of Goliah the Gittite, whose spear's staff was like a weaver's beam.*] See there, 2 Sam. xxi. 19.

Ver. 6. *And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man of great stature, whose fingers and toes were four-and-twenty, six on each hand, and six on each foot; and he also was the son of the giant.*

Ver. 7. *But when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David's brother, slew him.*

Ver. 8. *These were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.*] These three verses are explained in the forenamed place, 2 Sam. xxi. 20—22. After which follows the hymn which David composed in commemoration of his many deliverances from these and other enemies, especially from Saul: which is here omitted, because not only there largely recorded, but also in the book of Psalms.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *AND Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.*] It is said in 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. that God, being angry with Israel, moved David: that is, suffered Satan to move him. This is sufficiently explained there: only here the phrase *stood up* is to be observed. Which was the posture of those who charged and accused any person of a crime in a court of justice. (See 1 Kings xxii. 21.) Thus Satan is represented as the accuser of the brethren, in the book of the Revelation: and here to lay some sin to the charge of the Israelites, which he represented to God as a reason to punish them: for it is the way of the Holy Scripture thus to bring down these things, and accommodate them to the lowest capacities.

Ver. 2. *And David said to Joab, and to the rulers of the people.*] Who, it is plain by 2 Sam. xxiv. 4. were with Joab when the king gave this command.

Go, number Israel, from Beer-sheba even unto Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it.

Ver. 3. *And Joab answered, The Lord make his people a hundred times so many as they be: but, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?*] See what I have noted upon 2 Sam. xxiv. 3. It is something strange that Joab should see the danger of this, and David not think of it; no, not when it was so plainly represented to him. But the best men are sometimes very drowsy, and apprehend not those things which plainly appear to those who are not so good.

Ver. 4. *Nevertheless, the king's word prevailed against Joab: wherefore Joab departed, and went through all Israel, and came to Jerusalem.*] Unto which they came at the end of nine months and twenty days, as is more largely related in 2 Sam. xxiv. from ver. 4. to 9.

Ver. 5. *And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of Israel were a thousand thousand and a hundred thousand men that drew sword; and Judah were four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword.*] This account of their number differs much from that given in 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. concerning which see what I have there noted.

Ver. 6. *But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them.*] Some think he took no account of Levi because they were not warriors, and such only as were fit for war, David desired to be satisfied how many they were. And Benjamin they think was so diminished in the time of the judges, that they were to be spared. But these, it were easy to shew, are not good reasons; and no other reason is to be sought for, than that given here in the very next words.

For the king's word was abominable to Joab.] He did all this against his will, and at last the work was so odious to him, that he was quite tired with it: and therefore broke off before he took the number of these two tribes.

Ver. 7. *And God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel.*] He resolved to punish them, because it was for their sins that God permitted David to indulge himself in this vanity.

Ver. 8. *And David said unto God, I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.*] See 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. where I have explained this, and given the best account I could of the nature of this sin.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord spake unto Gad, David's seer, saying.*] This is expressed a little more largely in 2 Sam. xxiv. 11. (See there.)

Ver. 10. *Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three things, choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.*] He speaks to him so solemnly in the name of the Lord, that he might attend the more seriously to what he said, and look upon it as peremptorily resolved.

Ver. 11. *So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Choose thee.*

Ver. 12. *Either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes (while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee); or else three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.*] In the book of Samuel it is said, the prophet propounded seven years of famine, and here but three. Of which difference I have given an account in 2 Sam. xxiv. 13.

Ver. 13. *And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the Lord (for very great are his mercies); but let me not fall into the hand of man.*] See there, upon ver. 14. I only add here, that the pestilence is more properly called *the hand of the Lord*, than other common calamities: for they have visible causes, but none know whence this sudden destruction comes, but immediately from the hand of God; when there is no alteration that we can see in the air, or other elements (as we call them). And therefore the angel of the Lord is said to have smote the army of Sennacherib with such a pestilence, as Josephus reasonably conjectures.

Ver. 14. *So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men.*] This is more largely expressed in 2 Sam. xxiv. 15. (See my annotations there.)

Ver. 15. *And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it; and, as he was destroying, the Lord beheld.*] This seems to import that there were more angels than one employed to destroy in several places of the country: and that the angel sent to Jerusalem had begun to slay some of the inhabitants: but God took pity of them; beholding, perhaps, their serious repentance.

And he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the Lord stood by the thrashing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.] See there upon ver. 16.

Ver. 16. *And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand.*] Whence the pestilence is called, (ver. 12.) *the sword of the Lord.*

Stretched out over Jerusalem.] As ready to do execution upon the people there.

Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces.] It appears by their habit, that they (and the people of Jerusalem with them, ver. 15.) were humbling themselves before God for their sins, and deprecating his displeasure: for mourners were wont to clothe themselves in sackcloth.

Ver. 17. *And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned, and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.*] See 2 Sam. xxiv. 17.

Ver. 18. *Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David.*] This seems to signify that Gad was sent upon his former message (ver. 9.) by an angel, who came with that command from God.

That David should go, and set up an altar unto the Lord in the thrashing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.] See there, ver. 18.

Ver. 19. *And David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the Lord.*] See there, ver. 19.

Ver. 20. *And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves.*] Or, when he saw the angel, he turned his face from him (as did his four sons, who likewise saw him); being afraid at so glorious an appearance.

This book, as I observed in the beginning, supplies some things omitted in the book of Samuel, among which this is one. For nothing is said there of Araunah's seeing the angel, but only of David's seeing him.

Now Ornan was thrashing wheat.] For the greatest persons did not, in those days, disdain such employments.

Ver. 21. *And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked, and saw David, and went out of the thrashing-floor, and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground.*] See 2 Sam. xxiv. 20.

Ver. 22. *Then David said to Ornan, Grant me the place of this thrashing-floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the Lord.*] This he said, after Ornan had first desired, to know the cause of his coming to him.

Thou shalt grant it me for the full price, that the plague may be stayed from the people.] By offering a sacrifice to appease the Divine anger. (See ver. 21.)

Ver. 23. *And Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee, and let my lord the king do that which is good in his eyes: lo, I give thee the oxen also for burnt-offerings, and the thrashing-instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering; I give it all.*] He offered the ground to the king, as a free gift; with every thing that was necessary for sacrifice. (See 2 Sam. xxiv. 22, 23.)

Ver. 24. *And king David said to Ornan, Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the Lord, nor offer burnt-offerings without cost.*

Ver. 25. *So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight.*] This confutes their opinion, who think there were no shekels but of silver. See 2 Sam. xxiv. 24. where I have shewn that this account of the sum of money which he paid, doth not disagree with that which is given there in that place.

Ver. 26. *And David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings.*] See there, ver. 25.

And called upon the Lord.] By thanksgivings for his mercy, beseeching the continuance of it.

And he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering.] This was the highest token of God's gracious acceptance of any sacrifice. (See Lev. ix. 24.) The Jews say thus God consumed the sacrifices of Abel, and of Noah, and of Abraham, when they first dedicated altars to him. It is certain from the Holy Scriptures, thus God testified his acceptance of the sacrifices of Gideon and Elijah in ancient times: which Julian himself had not the hardiness to deny. (See St. Cyril, contra Julianum, lib. x.) And indeed this was known by the heathens: for Servius upon Virg. Æneid. xii. ver. 200. saith, that in the old temples sacrifices were no other ways consumed, "quam igne divino precibus impetrato," *than by Divine fire obtained by prayers.* (See other testimonies out of heathen antiquity, in Huetius's Quæst. Alnetanæ, p. 216, &c.)

Ver. 27. *And the Lord commanded the angel, and he put up his sword into the sheath thereof.*] Which, it seems, was brandished over Jerusalem, till this sacrifice was offered.

Ver. 28. *At that time, when David saw that the Lord had answered him in the thrashing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.*] That is, he continued to offer his sacrifices in that place, where there was such a manifest appearance of God, and a testimony of his acceptance of his sacrifices. So that from this time he did not go to Gibeon, where sacrifices were wont to be offered upon the brazen altar: which, as it follows, was then there, together with the table, the candlestick, and the fire that came down from heaven in the days of Moses: (as Seder Olam Rabba saith, cap. 14.) and here Zadok and his brethren ministered, while the ark was in Zion, and with them Heman and others, (xvi. 39—41.)

Ver. 29. *For the tabernacle of the Lord, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt-offering, were at that time in the high place at Gibeon.*] The Targum calls this high place *the sanctuary in Gibeon:* for this word comprehended the whole sacred house, as in 1 Sam. ix. 13.

Ver. 30. *But David could not go before it to inquire of God.*] He thought it not fit to go thither at this time, though that was the place to which they always resorted to beg mercy of God by sacrifice.

For he was afraid, because of the sword of the angel of the Lord.] As he thought God had consecrated this place for his service, and that he ought immediately to sacrifice

here, and not stay till he could go to Gibeon; so perhaps he thought there might still be danger, that the angel might smite Jerusalem, if he did not continue to worship God here: where he knew, by some means or other, God intended his temple should be built for his perpetual honour in this place. The altar also now erected here was set up by the command of God, as well as that of Moses: so that he thought he might most acceptably serve God here.

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *THEN David said, This is the house of the Lord God.*] He seems to have been inspired by God with this thought, that here he would have his temple to be built. At least, he concluded this, because the angel bade him build an altar here, which was for sacrifice: and here God testified his presence, as he did at the erection of the first altar, Lev. ix. 24. He seems to have respect to the words of Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 16, 17.

And this is the altar of burnt-offering for Israel.] That is, here all their sacrifices shall be offered, when the temple is built. From which words Maimonides concludes, it was utterly unlawful to build God a house any where else, or to offer sacrifice in any other place but this.

Ver. 2. *And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel.*] That is, those they called *proselytes*, who perhaps were better skilled in such works, as here follow, than the children of Israel. Or, as R. Solomon Jarchi thinks, these being servile works, he would not employ the free people of Israel therein: which example Solomon afterward followed, (1 Kings v. 15. ix. 22. 2 Chron. ii. 1. viii. 7.) But we must not from hence infer, as some have done, that proselytes were not as free as other subjects: for they did not settle among the Jews upon any condition of being under any kind of servitude.

And he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God.] Though God had forbidden him to build him a house, yet he thought he might prepare materials for the building: which God so much approved, that he was pleased to shew him a model of such a house as he would have, as we read chap. xxviii. 19.

Ver. 3. *And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance without weight.*] The word which we translate *joinings*, the Targum translates *hinges*.

Ver. 4. *Also cedar-trees in abundance: for the Zidonians, and they of Tyre, brought much cedar-wood to David.*] There being great friendship between them and David.

Ver. 5. *And David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death.*] He considered with himself these two things, the youth of Solomon, (of which see 1 Kings iii. 7.) and then the magnificence of the structure that was to be built; both which he thought required his care, to make what preparation he could for such an undertaking. For young men are wont to be careless, and are rarely capable of great designs. Learned men have observed, that this temple was so stately and rich, that it exceeded all others in the world: the famous temple of Diana at Ephesus, being not to be compared with it. (See Dr. Spencer, lib. iii. de Leg. Hebr. cap. 2. dissert. 6.)

Ver. 6. *Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build an altar for the Lord God of Israel.*] By this it was apparent, and, I suppose, well known, that he intended him for his successor: which made the crime of Adonijah the greater, who endeavoured to put him by.

Ver. 7. *And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build a house unto the name of the Lord my God.*] See in 2 Sam. vii. 1, 2.

Ver. 8. *But the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.*] This reason is not mentioned in the book of Samuel, but here is recorded to shew, that though David's wars were warranted, and succeeded by God in an extraordinary manner, yet it did not suit so well with the Divine Majesty, to have a house built him by one who had shed so much blood, as by one that reigned in peace and quietness: that he might be an emblem of the King of peace, the Lord of the church, who was prefigured in all such great transactions. There may be respect also here to the blood of Uriah, and those worthy men slain together with him, by the contrivance of David: which made him unworthy to be honoured with such an undertaking as this. David himself takes notice of this blood-guiltiness, as a thing which was always in God's eye, Psal. li. 4. where he saith, *I have done this evil in thy sight:* as God here saith, *Thou hast shed blood in my sight.* (See more below, chap. xxviii. 3.)

Ver. 9. *Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.*] Here are two reasons, why his son should have this honour: because God would give him rest from all his enemies, and Israel should live in peace and quietness in his days. Which made his reign a proper season for this great work.

Ver. 10. *He shall build a house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.*] This can belong to none, in the proper and full sense of the word, but Christ alone. For Solomon reigned but forty years, and after that his kingdom was torn in pieces: therefore to Christ the author to the Hebrews applies them, (Heb. i. 5.)

Ver. 11. *Now, my son, the Lord be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the Lord thy God, as he hath said of thee.*] He would not have him doubt, but be as confident as he was, that God would prosper him in this work; because he ordered him to undertake it.

Ver. 12. *Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the Lord thy God.*] When he committed Israel to his care.

Ver. 13. *Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.*] Nothing gives a man such an undaunted courage as a conscience of well-doing; in exact obedience to God's commands.

Ver. 14. *Now, behold, in my trouble.*] In a tumultuous reign, full of various troubles.

I have prepared for the house of the Lord a hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight (for it is in abundance); timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.] His heart was so bent to shew his gratitude to God, that he would have done a great deal more for him, if he had been able. Though this was such a vast treasure which he amassed (not out of covetousness, but purely for the honour and service of God), that it hath seemed to some incredible. For if we take this to be meant of the greater talent, it makes such an immense sum, that it exceeds the riches of any of the Roman emperors, or other former monarchs. For in the time of Trajan, when that empire was largest, the money that was in his treasury did not exceed seventy-three thousand talents, as Bodinus observes in his book de Republ. lib. vi. cap. 2. But a better man than he, our Brerewood, hath computed these talents to make so many millions, that he thinks the word *kikkar* should not be translated *talent* in this place; but only a *mass*, or *cake* of gold and silver. And so Guil. Budæus observes in his book De Asse, that there was in Homer's time a talent of lesser value: for he speaks of two talents, which were given, with other things, as a reward of a victory obtained in some exercises. Such talents, he thinks, we are to understand in this place: for David reigned about the time of the kingdom of the Assyrians, which was near the time of Homer. (See Beckius upon the Targum in this place.) Of the same opinion is Jacobus Capellus, and Junius, and Tremellius, as appears by the sum to which they make these talents to amount, *viz.* five hundred thousand dollars of gold, and as much of silver. And more lately Hermannus Witsius hath computed, that half so many talents of the sanctuary (as some call them) amounts to twenty thousand five hundred eighty-five tons of gold: which he shews David had opportunity to heap together, in his Miscell. Sacra, tom. ii. exerc. x. sect. 17, 18.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, there are workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.*] Who were all to be paid, as well as the labourers, and carriers of burdens, out of this money; which required a very great sum.

Ver. 16. *Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, there is no number.*] The meaning is, the quantity of brass and iron was not numbered, as that of the gold and silver was.

Arise therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.] He would not have him now go about the work, but begin it when he was settled on his throne: nothing doubting the Lord would prosper it.

Ver. 17. *David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, saying.*] By advising him, and encouraging the people in their labours.

Ver. 18. *Is not the Lord your God with you? and hath he not given you rest on every side?*] What God had already done for them, was a ground of hope he would further them in this work; which was for his service.

For he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued before the Lord, and before his people.] For God was the author of all those wars, and gave them all their victories.

Ver. 19. *Now, set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God: arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the Lord your God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the Lord.*] He beseeches them not to neglect this opportunity, which he spake of in the foregoing verse; *viz.* the time of peace which God had given them, which was fit for such a work. Strigelius compares these words with those of Christ, "While ye have the light, walk in the light." And, indeed, the ark and the tabernacle had been too long separated, and therefore such preparation being made for it, it was time to bring the ark, with all the holy vessels, in the tabernacle, together into a settled place, by building the sanctuary for them.

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *So when David was old and full of days, he made Solomon his son king over Israel.*] Declared him his successor, but did not resign his throne to him, nor make him his coadjutor.

Ver. 2. *And he gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites.*] It is likely he took this opportunity to declare before them all, that Solomon should be king after his decease. But the principal end of this assembly was, that he might acquaint them with a new regulation of the priests and Levites in their ministration: which he intended to establish by a Divine direction, as we read xxviii. 12, 13. This was a work becoming his elder years, after he had long observed and weighed the inconveniences of their present method, and the necessity of putting things into a better order. For nothing is more useful or more beautiful than good order, as Strigelius observes out of Xenophon in his Œconomics. And therefore the church of God was highly obliged to David, for distinguishing the degrees and offices of the Levites: appointing some to take care of the Divine rites and ceremonies (as his words are); others to govern the public judgments; others to watch and guard the temple; others to celebrate the praises of God with singing and instruments of music.

Ver. 3. *Now the Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years and upward.*] So Moses appointed, Numb. iv. 3. for then they were come to their full strength, and fit for service: which lasted till they were fifty years old, and no longer. For then they generally began to decay, and grew less able to bear burdens: which was their work then, to carry the tabernacle when it was to be removed, and all the utensils belonging to it. Which work being now at an end, they seem to have continued till their death to discharge their business at the temple; which was more easy, after that was built, and required less labour.

And their number by their polls, man by man, was thirty and eight thousand:] The priests are not included in this number: which is so great, that it may very well incline us to think, that many of them served rather for state and ornament, than for necessity. Abarbinel here cries out, "See whether in all the countries there were so many singers and musicians, and other officers employed in their temples, as there were in the house of the sanctuary. Who ever saw the like? Who ever beheld such sanctity, such ornaments, and such praising of God?"

Ver. 4. *Of which twenty and four thousand were to set forward the work of the house of the Lord.*] These were employed about the sacrifices and offerings, which they killed, and flayed, and washed: and served the priests in all other parts of their ministry about them. Which being very numerous, there were the greater number of Levites to attend this work; *viz.* a thousand every week: for they took their courses, which being twenty and four, in so many weeks they came about again. (See their business, ver. 28, 29.)

And six thousand were officers and judges.] God appointed judges and officers to be settled in all their gates; (Deut. xvi. 18.) but many think, there had been a long neglect in this matter: and that David himself could not restore their judicatures to their ancient order and dignity, till the latter end of his reign. For being hindered by perpetual wars, he was forced to be content with such judicatures as had been wont to be executed (which in many things was very defective), only reserving appeals to himself, in causes of great moment, (2 Sam. xv. 2.) But now he takes care of this so necessary a part of government, and having numbered the Levites, appointed them their certain business, which had been before unsettled and undetermined: employing them both in ecclesiastical and civil affairs, as Bertram discourses in his book de Republ. Jud. p. 124. But a late writer makes a doubt, whether the Israelites observed that command of Moses at all, when they came into the land of Canaan; the heads of their tribes taking upon them, for a long time, to determine all controverted matters. But now the Levites were constituted, in the cities where they dwelt, to be both officers and judges. All agree, that *shoterim* commonly signify such officers as execute the sentence of the judges. (See my notes upon Deut. xvi. 18. and other places.) But here, being placed before judges, we are not to take them for such inferior persons, but for men of greater authority; whom the Targum calls governors, such as our justices of the peace are, who saw good order kept according to the law: as the judges were such as decided causes in their several courts. (See Campegius Vitringa, in his book de Synag. Veteri, lib. i. par. ii. cap. 8.)

Ver. 5. *Moreover, four thousand were porters.*] Who were to take care that no unclean person entered into the temple; or any thing brought into it which ought not to be there; or any thing carried out of it which belonged only to that place: and that nothing was done about the door of the court which might disturb the people at their prayers.

And four thousand praised the Lord with the instruments which I made (said David) to praise therewith.] Thus he hath given an account how the whole thirty-eight thousand (mentioned ver. 3.) were disposed of to their offices. And this last four thousand had some among them that were more eminent than the rest; being their instructors, both in singing and playing upon instruments: and perhaps some of them, being very skilful in music, contrived instruments, and commanded them to be made.

Ver. 6. *And David divided them into courses among the sons of Levi, namely, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.*] They took their turns of waiting, some going off, and others coming on, to perform all the forementioned duties, which David, the man of God, ordered, (as he speaks, 2 Chron. viii. 14.) by the direction of Gad and of Nathan the prophets, who had a command for it from God, as we read in this book, xxix. 25.

Ver. 7. *Of the Gershonites were Laadan and Shimei.*] Who were their immediate ancestors is not said, nor is it material to be known.

Ver. 8. *The sons of Laadan; the chief was Jehiel, and Zetham, and Joel, three.*] It is likely they were not his sons, but some of his posterity: for so the word *sons* signifies in the verses following.

Ver. 9. *The sons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Haziel, and Haran, three. These were the chief of the fathers of Laadan.*] This Shimei was descended from one of the three sons of Laadan.

Ver. 10. *And the sons of Shimei were Jahath, Zina, and Jeush, and Beriah. These four were the sons of Shimei.*] That is, the sons of that Shimei, brother of Laadan, mentioned ver. 7.

Ver. 11. *And Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the second.*] He is called Zina in the foregoing verse.

But Jeush and Beriah had not many sons.] As their two elder brothers had.

Therefore they were in one reckoning, according to their father's house.] They were accounted but as one family, and not called by the name of their fathers, Jeush and Beriah, but by the name of Shimei their grandfather.

Ver. 12. *The sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four.*] See Exod. vi. 18.

Ver. 13. *The sons of Amram; Aaron and Moses.*] See Exod. vi. 18.

And Aaron was separated, that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons for ever, to burn incense before the Lord, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name for ever.] The business of Aaron and his sons was very different from the rest of the Levites: for they were set apart for the special services of the priesthood; to *sanctify*, that is, to minister in a holy manner the most holy things. His sons burnt incense every day; and the high-priest went into the most holy place on the great day of expiation, with the blood of expiation: and when he came out, blessed the people, as the priest who offered incense did every day, at the conclusion of the sacrifice.

Ver. 14. *Now, concerning Moses, the man of God, his sons were named of the tribe of Levi.*] Though Moses was so great a man, the supreme governor of the people while he lived, and had such familiarity with the Divine Majesty, yet his sons were not advanced to any dignity, but he left them simple Levites, not so much as priests. Such was the wonderful humility and modesty of this holy man, that he did not aim at great things for his posterity. Which perhaps is here noted, that none might presume, because of their noble descent, to meddle with the priesthood, which was settled in the family of Aaron; as the civil government of the people was left to Joshua, a man of another tribe, and Moses's servant.

Ver. 15. *The sons of Moses were Gershom and Eliezer.*] See Exod. xviii. 3, 4.

Ver. 16. *Of the sons of Gershom, Shebuel was the chief.*] Who is called Shohael, xxiv. 20.

Ver. 17. *The sons of Eliezer were Rehabiah the chief. And Eliezer had none other sons.*] The word for *chief* in the Hebrew is, the *first:* that is, the first-born, after whom

he had no other son; but a great many grandsons, who are frequently called *sons*.

But the sons of Rehabiah were very many.] Which in the Hebrew is thus expressed, *were highly multiplied*. From whence the Targum took a conceit (as several Jewish doctors have done) that they were multiplied to above six hundred thousand: merely, because the same phrase is used of the children of Israel in Exod. i. 7. that they *multiplied exceedingly* in Egypt; that is, to this number, Exod. xii. 17. Whereby they imagine God fulfilled his intentions to Moses, if he would not intercede for the Israelites, that he would make him a great nation. But these are idle speculations; wherein they abound, since they were abandoned by God.

Ver. 18. *Of the sons of Izhar; Shelomith the chief.*] Who is called Shelomoth, xxiv. 22.

Ver. 19. *Of the sons of Hebron; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jehaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.*

Ver. 20. *Of the sons of Uzziel; Micah the first, and Jesiah the second.*

Ver. 21. *The sons of Merari; Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli; Eleazar and Kish.*

Ver. 22. *And Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters; and their brethren the sons of Kish took them.*] Their cousins married them, as the Targum expounds it.

Ver. 23. *The sons of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth, three.*

Ver. 24. *These are the sons of Levi, after the house of their fathers; even the chief of the fathers, as they were counted by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the service of the house of the Lord, from the age of twenty years and upwards.*] They were numbered twice, as they were in the time of Moses: the first time all from thirty, the second time from twenty. And these here mentioned were of the last sort; who were fit to minister in some things belonging to the service of the Levites, at twenty years old: though they were not employed in the rest till thirty. See upon Numb. viii. 24. where they are ordered to begin at five-and-twenty; though they did not completely minister till thirty.

Ver. 25. *For David said, The Lord God of Israel hath given rest unto his people, that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever.*] That is, constantly attend upon the service of God there settled. Which was the reason for this new order, that the Levites should begin their ministry at twenty years of age: because Israel having rest was very much multiplied, and there being greater resort to Jerusalem, the Levites had more work to do at the temple. But it must here be noted, that those words, *for ever*, suppose their obedience to God, (as in chap. xxviii. 4.) in which if they failed, they were not to continue in Jerusalem, but be expelled out of it.

Ver. 26. *And also unto the Levites; they shall no more carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof.*] It should rather be translated, *As concerning the Levites:* they were no longer to have that burdensome work of carrying the tabernacle and its vessels when they were removed: but had a much easier service; which they might begin sooner than formerly: it requiring not so much strength of body, as readiness of mind.

Ver. 27. *For, by the last words of David, the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above.*] This was his last will about this matter; after he had well considered what they had to do, and what number was necessary to perform every part of this duty. For some of which they were able enough at twenty years of age: when they might be called *probationers* till they were thirty. And there would not have been a sufficient number for all the work, unless they had come to it at the age of twenty.

Ver. 28. *Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron.*] Which the Levites were able to do at the age of twenty years. To attend, for instance, at the tabernacle; but not to carry the ark or the tabernacle.

For the service of the house of the Lord.] This is a general expression of what they were to do; the particulars of which follow: to assist in the *courts*, and in the *chambers*, in making clean the holy vessels, and cleansing the courts, and taking care nothing was wanting for the service of the sanctuary.

Ver. 29. *Both for the shew-bread, and for the fine flour, for the meat-offering, and the unleavened cakes, and for that which is baked in the pan, and for that which is fried.*] They were to prepare the shew-bread, to be set on the table every week by the priests; and to see that there was a just quantity of fine flour for the meat-offering morning and evening; and that the unleavened cakes were rightly made: with every thing that was to be baked or fried. Of which in the second chapter of Leviticus.

And for all manner of measure and size.] They were to see also that the just measure for things liquid, and the just size for things dry, were exactly kept, and not altered. For all measures and weights (by which all that were used in the country were to be made) were kept in the sanctuary, in the custody of the Levites. Hence it is, that we read often of the *shekel of the sanctuary:* not that there were two sorts of *shekels*, one sacred, and another civil; but because weights and measures were reckoned *inter sacra, among holy things:* the examples, as I said, of them all being kept in the sanctuary. And so they were in the temples of the pagans, and afterward in Christian churches: as appears by Justinian's Novels, cxxviii. cap. 15. So Villalpandus and our bishop Walton have observed. Unto which may be added, that Constantine the Great had gone before him in this: for he commanded the cubit whereby the Egyptians measured the increase of Nilus, and was kept in the temple of Serapis, to be translated into one of the Christian churches, that there it might be preserved the safer by true religion; as both Socrates and Sozomen testify in their Ecclesiastical History, lib. i. cap. 18. lib. v. cap. 3. Julian, indeed, caused it to be restored to Serapis: but that temple being burnt, Ruffinus tells us the church had it again in its possession. All which shews, that this ancient piece of religion, to preserve weights and measures as sacred things, continued after the time of David; and perhaps was before it.

Ver. 30. *And to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even.*] At the time when the priests offered the morning and even sacrifice.

Ver. 31. *And to offer all burnt-sacrifices unto the Lord in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number.*] It was no part of their business to offer burnt-sacrifices, which belonged to the priests alone. Therefore the meaning is, to praise and give thanks to God at the offering of sacrifices at those solemnities, as well as every morning

and even; and to see there were a just number of sacrifices then offered as the law prescribed.

According to the order commanded unto them, continually before the Lord.] That is, in their courses, wherein they were commanded to wait continually when their turn came.

Ver. 32. *And that they should keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy place, and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the Lord.*] These words belong to those that went just before; signifying, that in their order, when their course came to attend, they served either about the tabernacle, or preparing the shew-bread in the holy place, or in any other things, wherein the priests had occasion to employ them: and the rest of their time they spent at home, in their several cities; where they studied, and taught the law.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *NOW these are the divisions of the sons of Aaron. The sons of Aaron; Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.*] To avoid all confusion, now that they were much increased, David distributed the priests, as he had done the Levites, into several courses: which, no doubt, was by a Divine direction, as well as the other; or rather, there was greater reason he should have God's order for it: they being higher ministers of his than the Levites were.

Ver. 2. *But Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no children; therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the priest's office.*] From these two all the families of the priests descended, who were now to be disposed into a regular performance of their duty.

Ver. 3. *And David distributed them both, Zadok, of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech, of the sons of Ithamar.*] These two (Zadok and Ahimelech) were the chief persons, in David's days, of the posterity of those sons of Aaron, Eleazar and Ithamar.

According to their offices in their service.] He determined, when they and those priests who depended on them should perform their office in the temple-service.

Ver. 4. *And there were more chief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar; and thus were they divided.*] Accordingly David divided them into certain classes and courses, as the Targum expounds it.

Among the sons of Eleazar there were sixteen chief men of the house of their fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar, according to the house of their fathers.] He appointed therefore sixteen courses of the sons of Eleazar, under as many heads of their families: and half as many of the posterity of Ithamar. Which Kimchi, and other Hebrew doctors, explain in this manner: In the days of Moses there were but eight courses in the whole: four of Eleazar's family, and four of Ithamar's. But in Samuel's days they were grown to sixteen: eight of the one, and as many of the other. But in the end of David's reign they were enlarged to twenty-four courses; two-thirds of which were assigned to the sons of Eleazar, because they were more numerous than the other: and the sons of Ithamar continued as they were before; having eight courses. But the Holy Scriptures never mention any settled courses till this time, (as Dr. Lightfoot observes in his Temple Service, chap. 6.) though their doctors assert it to explain that precept, Deut. xxviii. 6.

Ver. 5. *Thus were they divided by lot.*] That there might be no occasion for complaint: when all was ordered by a Divine disposition, according to very ancient custom. For the choice of persons by lot, into sacred offices, was used from the beginning of the world, as Grotius observes, in his book De Imper. Sum. Potest. circa Sacra, cap. 10. sect. 5.

One sort with another.] Both the sons of Eleazar and of Ithamar were thus chosen, who should wait together.

For the governors of the sanctuary.] The words in the Hebrew are, *share kodesh*: which signify the principal ministers about holy things.

And governors of the house of God.] There is no word for *house* in the Hebrew; where we only read *share Elohim*: which seem to signify the *chief judges*.

Were of the sons of Eleazar, and of the sons of Ithamar.] These two families had obtained the chief functions both in the temple, and in the civil government: wherein they could not be distributed so well any way as by lot; without danger of envy among themselves.

Ver. 6. *And Shemaiah the son of Nethaneel the scribe, one of the Levites, wrote them before the king, and the princes, and Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and before the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites.*] In perpetual memory of the thing (as Conradus Pellicanus thinks), this Divine writer sets down the name of the public notary, by whom their names were written, and put into the urn, out of which the lots were to be drawn. Which, that there might be no suspicion of fraud, were drawn before the king, the princes, both the chief priests (the high-priest and the sagan), and before the chief persons of the several families of priests and Levites. Whence it is reasonable to conclude, that David did not make this regulation by his mere royal power, but by a Divine direction. Which he had in this, as in the order he gave about the temple; (chap. xxviii.) and he seems here not to have acted by an absolute authority, but to have advised with the high-priest, and other persons of great note, how to proceed.

One principal household being taken for Eleazar, and one taken for Ithamar.] These words are something obscure: but the meaning is, that one of the principal families of Eleazar was first taken, and then one of Ithamar's; and after that, one of Eleazar's again, and so by turns till all was done: that is, till there were eight of each. After which, those of Eleazar alone were distributed under their several heads.

Ver. 7. *Now the first lot came forth to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah.*] The first lot that was drawn out of the urn had the name of Jehoiarib upon it: so that his family had the precedence, and waited in the first place. This was esteemed a great honour; for Josephus reckons himself noble, not only because he was descended ἐξ ἱερέων, *from the priests*, but ἐκ τῆς πρώτης ἐφημερίδος τῶν εἰκοσιτεσσάρων, *from the first course of the four-and-twenty*. For this made a great difference: Mattathias also, the father of the Maccabees, descended from Jehoiarib, as we read 1 Mac. ii. 54.

Ver. 8. *The third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim.*] I have nothing to observe concerning these, and the rest that follow to ver. 19. but only that Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist, was of the eighth course of these priests; *viz.* that of Abijah, mentioned ver. 10. as we read in the first of St.

Luke. For, as Josephus testifies, this order of the courses continued till his time; that is, till the destruction of the second temple.

Ver. 19. *These were the orderings of them in their service, to come into the house of the Lord, according to their manner, under Aaron their father.*] Under the inspection of the high-priest, who, being the successor of Aaron, is called by his name. He took care that this order should be observed in such manner, as is here prescribed: none of them anticipating their course, nor thrusting in themselves to attend before their time, but waiting till their time came. And then every course served a week, coming in on the sabbath; and going out the next before the burning of the incense at the morning sacrifice, when the shew-bread was set on the table, as Scaliger observes out of the Jewish writers, in his notes upon the Fragments at the end of his book De Emend. Temporum, p. 54. Upon the three great festivals, indeed, when all priests, as well as others, were bound to appear before God, they came out of their course, and, that they might not be idle, officiated in such things as properly belonged to those solemnities. But the ordinary business, for the daily burnt-sacrifice, and the free-will-offerings, was managed by those only whose course it was to wait. And thus the Jews understand those words, Deut. xviii. 6, 7. *The Levite (i. e.* the priests who were of that tribe) *that shall come to the place which the Lord his God shall choose* (that is, at the three solemn feasts), *then he shall minister in the house of the Lord his God, as all his brethren the Levites do* (which is meant of the priests, for they only ministered before God, not the Levites); *they shall have like portions to eat;* that is, of the sacrifices which were then offered at those solemn times they were to have their share, with the rest of the priests then in attendance, but the Levites did not eat of them: *beside that which cometh by the sale of his patrimony;* or, as it is in the Hebrew, by *the sale of his fathers.* That is, say they, except the portion of the daily sacrifices, and free-will-offerings, which by the ordinance of their fathers, Moses and Aaron, belonged only to those priests, who were in their ordinary attendance in their week.

As the Lord God of Israel had commanded him.] By his servant David.

Ver. 20. *And the rest of the sons of Levi were these: Of the sons of Amram; Shubael: of the sons of Shubael; Jehdeiah.*] Now he speaks of the rest of the Levites, who were not priests, who are mentioned in the foregoing chap. xxiii. 16, 17, &c. and here named again to distinguish them from the priests, and to shew that they also had their places assigned them by lot, ver. 31. I have nothing to note concerning those that follow between this verse and that, but only this: that several are mentioned as descended from Merari, who are not mentioned in the foregoing chapters, nor any where else. For which, no question, the author of this book had good authority, though we cannot, without the help of such records as he perused, give an account of it. (See Buxtorf's Anticritica, p. 1014.)

Ver. 31. *These likewise cast lots over against their brethren the sons of Aaron, in the presence of David the king, and Zadok and Ahimelech, and the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites.*] There was the like solemnity used in their distribution, as there was in that of the priests, by casting lots: whereby they knew what Levites should wait, in every course with the sons of Aaron.

Even the principal fathers over against their younger brethren.] This is expressed very obscurely; but the meaning is, that the elder and younger had their places by lots, not by seniority of houses. They that were of greater dignity drew lots against those that were of less: and they were to take their courses, as they fell; either to the elder or the younger family.

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *MOREOVER David, and the captains of the host.*] It is absurd to think, that the commanders in war meddled with ordering the tribe of Levi, and the service of the temple. Therefore by *the host* we are to understand (as our Mr. Thorndike well observes) the companies of priests, that waited upon the service of God at the temple: the captains of whom (*i. e.* the chief leaders), together with David, divided the singers, as they had done the priests, (chap. xxiv. 3. 6, 7.) Though elsewhere, (chap. xxiii. 6.) David alone is mentioned to have done it. (Rites of the Church, p. 230.)

Separated to the service.] Of God in the temple.

Of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun.] These were the chief persons among the Levites, whose families were separated to the following service.

Who should prophesy.] Sing psalms, which David and other prophets composed. For these young men were not prophets, as their fathers were; but are said *to prophesy,* because they sung in the service of God those Divine prophetical hymns, which were composed by their fathers, who were men divinely inspired. Thus the Talmudists say, in Bava-Bathra, cap. 1. that all the hymns we find in the Bible were made by Adam, Melchisedec, Abraham, Moses, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and David: who collected them into one volume. But this is a foolish tradition, and very new.

With harps, and psalteries, and with cymbals.] There were also pipes, or hautboys, used upon several occasions, together with the trumpets. The difference between these three here mentioned is better described by Dr. Lightfoot out of Josephus, than by any I have met withal; who observes, that the other Israelites, if allied to the priests by marriage, might, if they had skill, join in this instrumental music; but none besides the Levites in the vocal. See his Temple Service, chap. 7. sect. 2. where he likewise notes what psalms were to be sung every day of the week.

And this was the first office of the Levites; the two other are explained in the two following chapters.

And the number of the workmen, according to the service, was.] It had better be translated, *the number of the men of the ministry* (*i. e.* of those who ministered in singing and playing on instruments), *according to their service, was,* as follows.

Ver. 2. *Of the sons of Asaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and Asarelah, the sons of Asaph, under the hands of Asaph.*] Under his government, as their precentor: or, who taught and instructed them in singing and music.

Which prophesied according to the order of the king.] The Targum understand this, as if Asaph prophesied by the Holy Ghost, and was constituted the head of these by

the king. But the word *prophecy* is of very large extent; signifying sometimes, as I said before, nothing more, but singing divinely-inspired hymns. Thus Miriam is called a prophetess, (Exod. xv. 20.) because she led up the women to praise God, with timbrels and dances. And, indeed, music and singing were in ancient times had in such esteem and veneration, that they who excelled in this faculty were looked upon as persons divinely moved. So Quintilian observes, as a known truth, lib. i. Instit. cap. 10. "Quis ignorat, musicen tantum jam illis antiquis temporibus non studii modo, verum etiam venerationis habuisse, ut iidem musici, et vates judicarentur." *Who is so ignorant as not to know that music, in those ancient times, was not only so much studied, but had in such veneration, that the same men, who were musicians, were accounted prophets and wise men?*

Ver. 3. *Of Jeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun, Gedaliah, and Zeri, and Jeshaiah, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun.*] Here are but five named: but it appears afterward (ver. 17. when the lots were cast) there was another, whose name was Shimei: who being now very young, and not yet able either to sing or to play, is not named in this verse. But, that he might be instructed and learn both, he is chosen to be the head of a course, when he should be fit for it. Thus D. Kimchi explains this matter.

Who prophesied with a harp, to give thanks and to praise the Lord.] The harp was a most noble instrument, in which Jeduthun seems to be peculiarly skilled, and therewith praised God; which is called *prophesying.*

Ver. 4. *Of Heman: the sons of Heman; Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth.*] He had the most numerous issue of these three; and they all had families who were employed in this service.

Ver. 5. *All these were the sons of Heman the king's seer.*] He was a prophet, in whose company the king delighted: and with whom he advised in difficult affairs.

In the words of God.] Especially in Divine matters.

To lift up the horn.] In the temple they used also wind music: which many think to have been trumpets made of horn: but the priests only blew with trumpets in the temple, while the Levites sung to those other instruments. Therefore others understand this, of the hymns they sung to magnify the power, greatness, and exaltation of David's kingdom: or rather, of the kingdom of the Messiah, whom Zachary in his song (Luke i. 69.) calls the *horn of salvation.* For the power of any thing in Scripture is expressed by *a horn;* in which lies the strength of some creatures. And from these words Victorinus Strigelius gathers, that Heman was David's seer in politic affairs, which belonged to the confirmation and settlement of his kingdom: "Cornu enim significat regimen et regnum;" *for a horn signifies government and kingdom.* But the first sense seems to me to be most natural, that at stated times they blew aloud with trumpets made of horns: for such, I suppose, they might use, though the priests only could blow with the silver trumpets. And thus the famous Bochartus interprets these words, *at set times to blow aloud with trumpets made of horns;* in his preface to his Hierozoicon.

And God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.] Some have fancied there are fifteen mentioned in the foregoing verse: but the Jews look upon Romamti-ezer as one name; and so we take it: which is justified by ver. 31.

Ver. 6. *All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God.*] The whole number of these was four-and-twenty, who, under their several fathers, Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman, regulated the choir in their singing and music: being the instructors and governors of those who were under them. It is likely they set the psalms to music which David composed: or, if he himself modulated them, they sung them in the tunes he directed, with the musical instruments here mentioned.

According to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman.] These were prophets, who composed many of the songs, which their sons sung by their direction: as appears from 2 Chron. xxix. 10. where it is said they sung praises, "in the words of David and Asaph the seer."

Ver. 7. *So the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in the songs of the Lord, even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight.*] This was the whole number of those who were skilful in singing, who, under the persons beforementioned, were distributed (as it here follows) into several courses, after the same manner that the priests had been: with whom they were to attend in their order. For twelve of these singers, with their governor, came and waited every week; at the end of which they were succeeded by other twelve, till the course was finished: and then it began again, where it did at first. Now twelve times twenty-four amount to two hundred fourscore and eight.

It is no wonder that there were so many of them found very skilful in singing and music: for David himself was a great musician and poet, and every one knows how much the inclination of the supreme governor serves to the promoting of arts among the people.

Ver. 8. *And they cast lots, ward against ward.*] Being thus distributed into twenty-four courses, they cast lots, one course against another, which should wait first, and in order succeed one another.

As well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar.] So that they did not begin and succeed one another, according to the order of age, or of learning, but as God disposed them by their lot. The last words [*the teacher as the scholar*] the LXX. translate τελείων καὶ μανθανόντων, *those that were perfect, and those that were learners.* They were called perfect who were masters of their art, able to instruct others, who learnt of them.

Ver. 9. *Now, the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph.*] Who was not his eldest son; (see ver. 2.) After the word Joseph, we are to supply the words that follow in the rest of these classes, *who, with his brethren and sons, were twelve:* otherwise the number of two hundred fourscore and eight (ver. 7.) will not be complete.

The second to Gedaliah.] Who was the eldest son to Jeduthun, (ver. 3.)

Who, with his brethren and sons, were twelve.] These words, as Rasi observes, are to be referred to Joseph as well as Gedaliah: for he mentions them both, in one and the same verse; and therefore he only saith once with respect to both, *he and his sons and brethren:* where by *brethren* is meant their kindred.

Ver. 10. *The third to Zaccur, he, his sons and his brethren, were twelve.*] He was the eldest son of Asaph, (ver. 2.)

Ver. 11. *The fourth to Izri,* &c.] Called Zeri, ver. 3. who was the second son of Jeduthun.

Ver. 12. *The fifth to Nethaniah,* &c.] This lot fell upon the third son of Asaph, (ver. 2.)

Ver. 13. *The sixth to Bukkiah,* &c.] Who was the eldest son of Heman, (ver. 4.)

Ver. 14. *The seventh to Jesharelah,* &c.] Called Asarelah, ver. 2. the youngest son of Asaph.

Ver. 15. *The eighth to Jeshaiah,* &c.] Who was the third son of Jeduthun, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 16. *The ninth to Mattaniah,* &c.] Who was the second son of Heman, (ver. 4.)

Ver. 17. *The tenth to Shimei,* &c.] The youngest son of Jeduthun, as I have noted upon ver. 3.

Ver. 18. *The eleventh to Azareel,* &c.] The third son of Heman, who is called Uzziel in the same verse.

Ver. 19. *The twelfth to Hashabiah,* &c.] The fourth son of Jeduthun, (ver. 4.)

Ver. 20. *The thirteenth to Shubael,* &c.] The fourth son of Heman, called Shebuel, ver. 4.

Ver. 21. *The fourteenth to Mattithiah,* &c.] Who was the fifth son of Jeduthun, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 22. *The fifteenth to Jeremoth,* &c.] The fifth son of Heman, (ver. 4.)

Ver. 23. *The sixteenth to Hananiah,* &c.] The next son of Heman.

Ver. 24. *The seventeenth is Joshbekashah,* &c.] Who was the eleventh son of Heman.

Ver. 25. *The eighteenth to Hanani.*] Who was the seventh son of Heman.

Ver. 26. *The nineteenth to Mallothi,* &c.] Who was the twelfth son of Heman.

Ver. 27. *The twentieth to Eliathah,* &c.] Who was the eighth son of Heman.

Ver. 28. *The one-and-twentieth to Hothir,* &c.] Who was the thirteenth son of Heman.

Ver. 29. *The two-and-twentieth to Giddalti,* &c.] Who was the ninth son of Heman.

Ver. 30. *The three-and-twentieth to Mahazioth,* &c.] Who was the youngest son of Heman.

Ver. 31. *The four-and-twentieth to Romamti-ezer,* &c.] The tenth son of Heman.

Thus all things were disposed, for the preserving order, and avoiding all disputes about precedence: there being no respect had in this Divine distribution to their birth, but the younger in course preceded the elder.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. *CONCERNING the divisions of the porters.*] As some of the Levites were chosen to be singers (of which an account is given in the foregoing chapter), so others were appointed to be porters. Which were fixed offices (as Dr. Lightfoot observes) which they might not change: none of them being permitted to intrude into the office of the other; and neither of them into the priesthood. It was an office of great dignity, and men of the best quality were put into it: they having the charge of the holy things, (ver. 20. 22. 24. 26.)

Of the Korhites was Meshelemiah.] Called Shelemiah, ver. 14.

The son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph.] Not of Asaph the musician, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, for he was of the family of Gershon, (ver. 41.) but of another Asaph, called Eliasaph, and sometimes Jasaph, of the line of Kohath, (chap. vi. 23. ix. 19.)

Ver. 2. *And the sons of Meshelemiah were Zechariah the first-born, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth.*

Ver. 3. *Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Elioenai the seventh.*

Ver. 4. *Moreover, the sons of Obed-Edom were Shemaiah the first-born, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth.*

Ver. 5. *Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth; for God blessed him.*] With a numerous offspring, as the Targum glosses upon the last words: because he entertained the ark in his house with great reverence. Upon which account God did him the honour to let him see of his sons and grandsons fourscore and two: who were chief men among the Levites. This the Targum had said before, one only being wanting of this number. (See upon chap. xiii. 14.) But what the Scripture saith is sufficient to shew how God blessed him with a numerous posterity, without the help of such monstrous stories as some of the Jews relate.

Ver. 6. *Also unto Shemaiah his son were sons born, that ruled throughout the house of their father.*] Being men of great authority in that family.

For they were mighty men of valour.] Which was requisite in men who had this office: for they were to watch and guard the house of God, night and day. And not only to open and shut the doors of the mountain of the house, and of the court of the women (for the priests opened and shut the gates of the other courts), but to attend there to prevent any thing that might be done to the prejudice of the peace, safety, and purity of the place. And likewise, as appears by what follows, they had the guard of some treasures, which required men of courage to defend them.

Ver. 7. *The sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad (whose brethren were strong men), Elihu, and Semachiah.*] Their names are recorded, with two of their brethren, or cousins: who are likewise noted to be *strong men.* That is, not only men of great bodily strength, but of great courage and resolution. So it is translated in the margin, out of the Hebrew, *sons of valour.* But strength of body was a principal requisite in this service; for the doors of the temple were so massy and weighty, that the hands of many men (as Josephus saith) were needful to open and shut them.

Ver. 8. *All these of the sons of Obed-Edom; they, and their sons, and their brethren, able men for strength for the service, were threescore and two of Obed-Edom.*] This was a great number, which he lived to see descended from him, and from his sons.

Ver. 9. *And Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, eighteen.*] Still their strength is mentioned, as a qualification for this service.

Ver. 10. *Also Hosah, of the sons of Merari, had sons; Simri the chief (for though he was not the first-born, yet his father made him the chief).*] Because his elder brother was

feeble, or some other way unfit for the service. For, as Jacob gave the kingdom to Judah, and the priesthood to Levi, and put Reuben his first-born from his right, because of his crime; so there was some weighty cause, no doubt, why this man had the right of primogeniture given him, which was not to be altered upon the account of affection, (Deut. xxi. 16, 17.)

Ver. 11. *Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brethren of Hosah were thirteen.*] Who are not all named, but these who are the principal.

Ver. 12. *Among these were the divisions of the porters, even among the chief men.*] They were distributed into courses, as the priests and Levites were: and these were principal commanders over them: being the most illustrious among their brethren, and therefore particularly named.

Having wards one against another.] Having charges or custodies answerable to their brethren: that is, to the Levites, who attended as these did.

To minister in the house of the Lord.] This was not a vile ministry (as the word *porter* sounds among us), but they were like the standing guard of a king in his palace: and so the word, I observed before, had better be rendered. (See ix. 17.) Who kept the treasures of the temple, as it follows, (ver. 20. 26.) and officers and judges also were chosen out of them, (ver. 29, 30. 32.) which shews they were eminent persons: some of them being very learned and wise; (ver. 14.) though, I suppose, they were not judges of the law, but of other matters.

Ver. 13. *And they cast lots, as well the small as the great.*] Without respect to their age or dignity.

According to the house of their fathers.] Every family having a distinct lot drawn for it.

For every gate.] That it might be determined at what gate of the temple they were to wait.

Ver. 14. *And the lot eastward fell to Shelemiah.*] Who is called Meshelemiah, ver. 1.

Then for Zechariah his son (a wise counsellor) they cast lots, and his lot came out northward.] He was as much reputed for prudence, as others were for strength or valour: and it was as necessary in the management of many of their affairs.

Ver. 15. *To Obed-Edom southward; and to his sons the house of Asuppim.*] Many learned men take *Asuppim* to signify the treasury of the temple, or the place where things dedicated were laid up. This they ground, first, upon the import of the word, which betokens collections, or *gatherings*, as we translate it in the margin: and, secondly, because *Obed-Edom* (whose sons are here said to be placed at Asuppim) is said in 2 Chron. xxv. 24. to have the custody of the treasures. But, though this be granted, it still remains a very difficult matter to find where Asuppim was. After a long discussion of it, Dr. Lightfoot concludes, that Asuppim were two gates in the western wall, which stood most south, or nearest to Jerusalem; and that *the house of Asuppim* was a large building which run between them, and was a treasury of divers rooms for laying up things that served the use of the temple. (See Temple Service, chap. 5. sect. 3.)

Ver. 16. *To Shuppim and Hosah the lot came forth westward, with the gate Shallecheth, by the causey of the going up.*] This gate which in Solomon's time was called Shallecheth, in the time of Herod's temple was called the gate of Coponius. Which is said here to be *by the causey of the going up:* because it was by that ascent which Solomon made for his own passage up from his own house to the temple, (1 Kings x. 5. 2 Chron. ix. 4.) Which Josephus thus expresses (as Dr. Lightfoot observes), *A gate led to the king's house from the temple, the valley between them being filled up for the passage.* From whence the gate was called by the name of Shallecheth, which signifies *casting up;* because of the causey that was cast up to lead to it from the king's palace: this being the ordinary way to the house of God.

Ward against ward.] I suppose the meaning is, that they guarded each of these gates of Asuppim: or, as others take it, they guarded by turns; when one went off, another coming on. But the most learned Dr. Alix (whom I consulted about it) thinks these words signify, that their stations were at the four points of heaven, opposite one to the other.

Ver. 17. *Eastward were six Levites, northward four a day, southward four a day, and towards Asuppim two and two.*] That is, two at each gate of Asuppim beforementioned. The distribution of the porters into four-and-twenty courses, is not so plainly and distinctly set down in Scripture, as is the distribution of the priests and singers. Yet (as Dr. Lightfoot observes) it may be fairly concluded from two places: whereof this is one, in these two verses, 16, 17. where the fathers of the porters are summed up to the very same number that the first fathers of the other courses were, *viz.* to four-and-twenty. *Among all the porters* (saith Kimchi on this place) *there were four-and-twenty, according to the rest of the courses; six on the east side, four on the north, four on the south, at Asuppim two and two (four in all), four on the west, and two at Parbar: behold, four-and-twenty.* The other place is 2 Chron. viii. 14. where the porters go in the very same equipage (as he speaks), as to the matter of division into courses, with the priests and the singers. (See Temple Service, chap. 7.)

Ver. 18. *At Parbar westward, four at the causey, and two at Parbar.*] This gate, it appears from this place, was in the west quarter, and the west gate to the causey, or Shallecheth. It signifies, some think, the same with Parvar, which betokens suburbs: for it led to the suburbs, that is, that part of the city which was called Millo. Which was the valley at the west end of Mount Moriah, in which Jerusalem and Zion met; replenished with buildings in David's and Solomon's time, 2 Sam. v. 9. 1 Kings xi. 27. (See Dr. Lightfoot, in his Survey of the Temple, chap. 5. sect. 2.)

Ver. 19. *These are the divisions of the porters among the sons of Kore, and among the sons of Merari.*] These courses were made up of the Levites of these two great families.

Ver. 20. *And of the Levites, Ahijah was over the treasures of the house of God, and over the treasures of the dedicated things.*] By the *treasures of the house of God*, are meant such things as were of ordinary use and employment in the temple; such as the vessels, vestments, tithes, wine, oil, and other things that were commonly used; together with such as were offered to the treasury, either as a due (as was the half shekel), or voluntarily, as money or vessels, for the repair of the house of God, and advancement of the service there. By *the treasures of the dedicated*

things, are meant whatsoever their kings or great commanders had consecrated and dedicated for Divine uses; which lay as a stock for the temple, and monuments of their devotion.

Ver. 21. *As concerning the sons of Laadan; the son of the Gershonite Laadan, chief fathers, even of Laadan the Gershonite, were Jehieli.*] This was an eminent man of that family. (See xxiii. 7.)

Ver. 22. *The son of Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his brother.*] See xxiii. 8. where he is called Jehiel.

Which were over the treasures of the house of the Lord.] From hence Dr. Lightfoot gathers, that as some of the *treasures of the house of God* were under the care and charge of the porters, (see ix. 26.) so the rest, and the treasures of *dedicated things,* were committed to the care and charge of other Levites, who were neither porters nor singers.

Ver. 23. *Of the Amramites, and the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites.*] Several persons of these families were employed as they that are mentioned in the foregoing verse.

Ver. 24. *And Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, was ruler of the treasures.*] This is the sole honour, that we read of hitherto, conferred upon any of the posterity of Moses; one of which was advanced to a great authority, being the overseer of all the treasures, and their officers. By *treasures,* I suppose, is here meant those of the house of the Lord; for another was over the dedicated things, (ver. 26.)

Ver. 25. *And his brethren by Eliezer; Rehabiah his son, and Jeshaiah his son, and Joram his son, and Zichri his son, and Shelomith his son.*] These, I suppose, were under Shebuel, as their chief ruler.

Ver. 26. *Which Shelomith and his brethren were over all the treasures of the dedicated things.*] Here is another of Moses's posterity (by his younger son) preferred to a great office: to have the charge of those things which were dedicated for the service of God, in which his brethren were to assist him.

Which David the king.] Out of his great piety, had dedicated in abundance, to the building of the temple, (xxii. 14.)

And the chief fathers, the captains over thousands and hundreds.] Such as by the counsel of Jethro (Exod. xviii.) were constituted to assist in the government of the people.

And the captains of the host, had dedicated.] The great military men imitated the rulers in the civil government in this piety: or such as are called *captains of the host,* xxv. 1.

Ver. 27. *Out of the spoils won in battles did they dedicate to maintain the house of the Lord.*] As David gave a vast treasure to the building of the house, so these men dedicated a part of their spoil to the support and repair of it, as there should be occasion, after it was built.

Ver. 28. *And all that Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish, and Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruiah, had dedicated.*] He mentions particularly some great benefactors, to honour their memory, and to be examples to posterity. And Samuel seems to have begun, and led the way to the rest that followed. For he, I suppose, by the spirit of prophecy, foresaw the nation would be so well settled in the land, that a house would be built for the service of God: and therefore he dedicated part of the spoils, which he got in the battles he fought, while he was judge of the people of Israel. Which example Saul, Abner, and Joab, imitated. And they all took it from the ancient piety of the great patriarch Abraham, who gave the tenth of the spoils which he won to Melchisedec, God's high-priest. The like did the princes of the people of Israel, after their victory over the Midianites; as we read Numb. xxxi.

And whosoever had dedicated any thing.] There were many, no doubt, who were disposed to the same piety besides these named.

It was under the hand of Shelomith, and of his brethren.] He was a man of eminent probity and prudence; otherwise so great a trust would not have been reposed in him.

Ver. 29. *Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons were for the outward business.*] That is, the business without the city of Jerusalem; which neither belonged to the singers, nor the porters, whose business was within the city: but what this *outward business* was, is not easily resolved. Kimchi and other Hebrew doctors think, it was to cut down trees in the woods, and to hew stones, and to see the fields ploughed, and the vineyards and gardens planted and dressed, which by devout persons had been dedicated to the service of God: but there doth not seem to be any thing belonging to such matters in these words. For though *shoterim,* or officers, might possibly have something to do in such matters, yet, what business there was in these things for the judges (on whom these officers attended) none can imagine. And this *outward business* being *over Israel,* as it here follows, it does not denote their care of the fruits consecrated by the Israelites, nor the government of those who gathered those fruits; but some authority over the Israelites themselves; such as is described in the following verse. See Bertram, de Repub. Jud. p. 126. whose opinion is approved by Conringius; which is, that they were assessors with the ordinary judges.

Over Israel.] Not over all the people of Israel, but over a part of them: for those about Jordan were under another jurisdiction, as appears by the next verse.

For officers and judges.] For such employments as are mentioned in the following verse.

Ver. 30. *And of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred, were officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward.*] This was a vast number: therefore their officers were of several sorts (as it follows), not only in Divine, but in civil affairs.

In all business of the Lord, and in the service of the king.] The work or *business of the Lord,* was to take care of all things belonging to religion: among which Divine employments, no doubt, this was the chief, to judge the people according to the law of God; and to see their sentence put in execution. For their judges *judged for the Lord,* as Jehoshaphat tells them, 2 Chron. xix. 6. and they had officers, called *shoterim,* to see their judgment take effect. But the word *shoterim* doth not signify merely the ministers of the judges: but also such persons who had some ministry committed to them; to correct offenders, and to punish them; or to bring them before the judges to be punished by them. For they are not only joined with judges (as I have often before observed), but frequently put before them in this book: and, therefore, it is hard to find one word to comprehend the whole work of these officers; who were

employed both in peace and in war, as our learned Nic. Fuller observes, in his Miscellanies, lib. ii. cap. 20.

As for *the business of the king,* some think, it was the gathering his tribute, or perhaps publishing his orders and commands, and the like. (See Grotius, de Jure Sum. Pot. circa Sacra, p. 390.)

Ver. 31. *Among the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief, even among the Hebronites, according to the generations of their fathers.*] He was the principal person among the sons of Hebron, as we find before, xxiii. 19.

In the fortieth year of the reign of king David, they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour at Jazer of Gilead.] In the last year of king David's reign, not only these things mentioned in this chapter were established, but all the other ordinances which we read of in the foregoing, as the Hebrew commentators observe. And his care extended itself to the utmost parts of his dominion, where he sought for men fit to be put into these offices, on the other side of Jordan: and found many persons of great courage at Jazer in Gilead, and the territory belonging to it; among whom Jerijah was the chief: Jazer was a city given to the children of Merari, (Josh. xxi. 39.)

Ver. 32. *And his brethren, men of valour, were two thousand seven hundred chief fathers, whom David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.*] This was a great number to be employed in so small a country; when on the other side of Jordan (besides those under Chenaniah) there were but one thousand and seven hundred. But the reason was, that they lived a great way from Jerusalem, and therefore needed more to inspect, and admonish them of their duty, lest they should forget their relation to the temple, or grow sluggish in the worship of God, or embrace the religion of their neighbours, as Pellicanus observes.

For every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king.] It was the more necessary, there should be such a number of officers among them, to keep them in their obedience to the king, as well as in their duty to God. For there was danger of their desertion from their sovereign, who lived at a great distance, and was separated from them by the river Jordan. And nothing could be more pernicious, as he likewise observes, than the rending of the kingdom, and neglect of the Divine service.

From these words it appears very plainly, as Johannes Vorstius notes, (in his dissertation de Synedriis Hebræorum, sect. 36.) that the same persons took care of the things or causes pertaining to God, and those concerning the king. For nothing hindered that one and the same college of judges might judge both kind of things, whether spiritual, as we distinguish, or civil. And he thinks, no interpretation of the *things of God,* and the *things of the king,* is so probable, as that which I have given before: that by the *things of God,* are meant such things as might be judged by the Divine law; and the *things of the king,* such as could not be determined by the law, but were left to the judgment of the king. Who could not abrogate the ancient laws, being bound to study the book of the law all the days of his life, (Deut. xvii.) and judge according to it. But all things being not there defined, or not so clearly and plainly that they could be determined by those laws, the king, or those whom he entrusted in his stead, gave sentence in such matters, and could make new laws, provided they did not contradict the old.

CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *NOW the children of Israel after their number, to wit, the chief fathers and captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers, that served the king in any matter of the courses, which came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year, of every course were twenty and four thousand.*] After the settlement of ecclesiastical affairs, here is an account given how the militia, as we may call it, of the kingdom was settled in such order, that it might be serviceable. They were distributed into twelve legions, consisting each of twenty-four thousand men; who were commanded by one of the *chief of the fathers:* under whom there were *captains of thousands,* such as we now call *colonels,* which were twenty-four in every legion, commanding a thousand men. And then *centurions* under them, or *captains of hundreds;* and under them inferior officers. Each of these generals attended, with the legions, one month, for the security of the king and kingdom: at the end of which they marched off, and another legion, with their general, succeeded. So that their course came but once in a year, for one month, which made it no considerable burden to them: there being so many valiant men then in the nation, that without much damage such a number might be in arms, for so short a season. Pellicanus thinks, this order was instituted in the beginning of David's reign, but was interrupted by many wars he had abroad; and not renewed till his last years, when he established it again, and left his kingdom to Solomon thus governed. See Bertram, de Repub. Jud. p. 133. who observes, that after this we never read of the Cherethites and Pelethites; these troops being settled in their room.

Ver. 2. *Over the first course, for the first month, was Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.*] Now he sets down the names of the chief commander of every legion: and Jashobeam seems to have been the first of his mighty men, mentioned xi. 11. 2 Sam. xxiii. 8.

Ver. 3. *Of the children of Perez was the chief of all the captains of the host for the first month.*] The forenamed Jashobeam was of the children of Pharez, the son of Judah: which tribe had the honour to have the first chief commander chosen out of it.

Ver. 4. *And over the course of the second month was Dodai an Ahohite, and of his course was Mikloth also the ruler: in his course likewise were twenty and four thousand.*] This Dodo (as he is called in 2 Sam. xxiii. 9.) was another of David's mighty men: who had for his lieutenant (when he was absent) Mikloth; who, we may suppose, is therefore here mentioned, because he was a person of great eminence, and had some considerable command in this course.

Ver. 5. *The third captain of the host, for the third month, was Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest.*] Or rather, *a chief prince,* as the Hebrew word *cohen* often signifies: (See upon 2 Sam. viii. 18. xx. 26.) for it is certain, neither Benaiah nor his father was high-priest, or second priest; but Abiathar and Zadok were in those offices.

And in his course were twenty and four thousand.

Ver. 6. *This is that Benaiah, who was mighty among the thirty, and above the thirty.*] He was one of David's worthies, who had done such mighty acts, that this Divine writer did not think fit here to mention him, without a mark of honour set upon him. (See 2 Sam. xxiii. 20. 23.)

And in his course was Ammizabad his son.] He was his deputy, when his father could not attend this duty himself; having another office of great dignity, wherein he served as captain of the Cherethites and Pelethites, (2 Sam. viii. 18.) Of whom, I observed before, we never read after the time of David: but it is likely were kept up while they lived, though there was no need of them, after these courses were settled.

Ver. 7. *The fourth captain, for the fourth month, was Asahel the brother of Joab.*] This confirms Pellicanus's opinion, that David instituted these courses in the beginning of his reign: for Asahel was killed while David reigned in Hebron, before he was king over all Israel, and settled at Jerusalem. He also was one of David's worthies, (2 Sam. xxiii. 24.)

And Zebadiah his son after him.] He had the honour to succeed his father in this great command, when he was slain.

Ver. 8. *The fifth captain, for the fifth month, was Shamhuth the Izrahite,* &c.] It is very probable, that this was that valiant man called Shammah, 2 Sam. xxiii. 11. and Shammath in this book, xi. 27.

Ver. 9. *The sixth captain, for the sixth month, was Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite,* &c.] He is mentioned among the thirty mighty men in 2 Sam. xxiii. 26. and in this book, xi. 28.

Ver. 10. *The seventh captain, for the seventh month, was Helez the Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim,* &c.] He is called the Paltite in 2 Sam. xxiii. 26. and, for the honour of that tribe, he is said here to be of the *children of Ephraim.*

Ver. 11. *The eighth captain, for the eighth month, was Sibbecai the Hushathite of the Zarhites,* &c.] One of that family that was eminent in the tribe of Judah descended from Caleb, (ii. 53.) He slew one of the sons of the giant, in a battle with the Philistines, (2 Sam. xxi. 18.)

Ver. 12. *The ninth captain, for the ninth month, was Abiezer the Anetothite, of the Benjamites.*] He also is mentioned among the thirty mighty men in 2 Sam. xxiii. 27.

Ver. 13. *The tenth captain, for the tenth month, was Maharai the Netophathite, of the Zarhites,* &c.] One of the same mighty men, (2 Sam. xxiii. 28.)

Ver. 14. *The eleventh captain, for the eleventh month, was Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim.*] Who is also there mentioned, ver. 30. but here it is added of what tribe he was.

Ver. 15. *The twelfth captain, for the twelfth month, was Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel,* &c.] He is called Heled in this book, chap. xi. 30. and Heleb in 2 Sam. xxiii. 29.

Ver. 16. *Furthermore, over the tribes of Israel.*] Besides the twelve great captains beforementioned, who commanded, each of them, twenty and four thousand men; every tribe had a ruler, (who are called *the princes of the tribes of Israel,* ver. 22.) who had the chief authority among them, under the king.

The ruler of the Reubenites was Eliezer the son of Zichri: of the Simeonites; Shephatiah the son of Maachah.] He reckons up the tribes in order according to their birthright, by Leah.

Ver. 17. *Of the Levites; Hashabiah the son of Kemuel.*] He is mentioned before, (xxvi. 30.)

Of the Aaronites; Zadok.] They were not a distinct tribe, but of a distinct order, from the rest of the Levites: and therefore had a peculiar chief to preside over them, *viz.* Zadok. Who (as Bertram thinks) had the chief authority at the tabernacle in Gibeon, as Abiathar had at Jerusalem, where the ark was.

Ver. 18. *Of Judah; Elihu, one of the brethren of David.*] Called Eliab in 1 Sam. xvi. 6.

Of Issachar; Omri the son of Michael.] He was the fifth son of Leah, and therefore is reckoned next to Judah, who was the fourth, (Gen. xxx. 17, 18.)

Ver. 19. *Of Zebulun; Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah.*] He was the next son of Leah, (Gen xxx. 20.)

Of Naphtali; Jerimoth the son of Azriel.] Though Dan was the first-born of Bilhah, (Gen. xxx. 6.) yet that tribe is put last, and Naphtali, who was the next son, put before him. For what reason we cannot tell.

Ver. 20. *Of the children of Ephraim; Hoshea the son of Azaziah: of the half tribe of Manasseh; Joel the son of Pedaiah.*] This is meant of that half tribe, which had its portion on this side Jordan, near to Ephraim.

Ver. 21. *Of the half tribe of Manasseh in Gilead.*] On the other side Jordan, where the Reubenites and Gadites were.

Iddo the son of Zechariah.] It doth not appear of what family he was, but it is likely one of that tribe.

Of Benjamin; Jaasiel the son of Abner.] It seems the family of Abner, who was the greatest man in the kingdom of Israel, continued in high authority after his death.

Ver. 22. *Of Dan; Azareel the son of Jeroham. These were the princes of the tribes of Israel.*] That is, of those tribes beforementioned. But Gad and Asher are omitted, of which we can give no certain account: perhaps they were under the government of the ruler of some neighbouring tribe. For Asher, dwelling in very narrow bounds between Naphtali and Zebulun, might be under the command of him that governed either of them: and Gad, some think, was comprehended under the Reubenites.

Ver. 23. *But David took not the number of them.*] That is, of Israel, whom he had spoken of before.

From twenty years old and under.] But only of those who were above the age of twenty years.

Because the Lord had said he would increase Israel like to the stars of the heavens.] This was the reason, Pellicanus thinks, that God was so angry with David for numbering the people: which he had promised should be so many, that they should not be numbered. Which promise God would have to be believed, without attempting to prove the truth of it. But these words seem to me to confute that opinion: for they rather signify, that David forbore to number all the people, because he would not question that promise, and contented himself with an account of those that were fit to go to war, xxi. 4. (See my notes upon 2 Sam. xxiv. 10.)

Ver. 24. *Joab the son of Zeruiah began to number, but he finished not.*] For he did not number those of Levi and Benjamin; as we read before in this book, chap. xxi. 6.

Because there fell wrath for it against Israel.] This seems to import, that before Joab had finished his account the plague began; which put a stop to his proceedings.

Neither was the number put in the account of the Chronicles of king David.] An account of the number as far as he went, was given by Joab to the king: but the king being sensible of his error, would not have it recorded in the public registers of the kingdom, as other things of daily occurrence were. Yet the memory of it is preserved in these holy books, to teach all posterity not to put their trust in the arm of flesh.

Ver. 25. *And over the king's treasures was Azmaveth the son of Adiel: and over the storehouses in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the castles, was Jehonathan the son of Uzziah.*] The former of these was the principal officer in the exchequer, as we now speak, who received the king's money from the under-officers, and was accountable for it; and lived at Jerusalem, where he issued it out, according to the king's orders. But there was another in the country out of Jerusalem, who received the tribute of all kinds, which the people were to pay him: which he laid up in storehouses, that were built in several places for that purpose.

Ver. 26. *And over them that did the work of the field, for tillage of the ground, was Ezri the son of Chelub.*] Besides the tribute paid by the people of corn, wine, oil, &c. the king had land of his own; where he kept servants to till the ground. And this person was set over them, to see they were not idle, and that they were honest in gathering the fruits of the earth, and sending them to the storehouses.

Ver. 27. *And over the vineyards was Shimei the Ramathite.*] He looked after the vine-dressers.

Over the increase of the vineyards for the wine-cellars was Zabdi the Shiphmite.] His office was to see the wine pressed out of the grapes, and carried into the cellars; where it was laid up.

Ver. 28. *And over the olive-trees, and the sycamore-trees that were in the low plains, was Baal-hanan the Gederite.*] This shews that David was a great husband, as we speak, and had ground proper for all sort of fruits; which was managed by his own servants. For, as I have often observed, the greatest men in those times studied the improvement of their ground, of what sort soever it was.

And over the cellars of oil was Joash.] It appears, from many places, that a great part of their revenue lay in oil: which required great care, as wine did, in the looking after it.

Ver. 29. *And over the herds that fed in Sharon was Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds that were in the valleys was Shaphat the son of Adlai.*] He had great store of cattle also in his pastures, particularly in Sharon, which was a place noted for its fruitfulness, as we read in the prophet Isaiah, chap. xxxiii. 9. xxxv. 2. And so St. Jerome testifies, "Omnis regio Saron," &c. *all the region of Saron,* about Lydda, Joppa, and Jamnia, was apt for feeding of flocks. (See Isa. lxv. 10.) There was another Sharon besides this near the Mediterranean, which was in the east beyond Jordan (as I observed upon chap. v. 16. of this book), where the Gadites inhabited, who abounded in cattle: and therefore were planted by Moses in this region, and in Bashan, which was another rich country for pasture. (See L'Empereur, upon Bava-kama.) And therefore here David, it is likely, bred a great many cattle, both in the mountains and in the valleys; and had particular officers to look after them, they being very many. For here, as he observes out of Maimonides, there were great numbers of calves bred, which women had the care of, and were brought from hence to other places to be sold.

Ver. 30. *Over the camels also was Obil the Ishmaelite.*] An Ishmaelite was the fittest person to look after the breed of camels, because that country abounded with them, and they best understood their nature. And this person seems to have had his name from his office. For as *ibil,* in Arabic, signifies a *camel,* so *abal,* and *abil,* a *keeper of camels:* as Bochart notes in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 2.

And over the asses was Jehdeiah the Meronothite.] This was a great part of men's riches in old times; for we find Ana feeding his father's asses in Gen. xxxvi. 24. In which book we find them reckoned among the wealth of the ancient patriarchs: and the Israelites took no less than threescore and one thousand of them from the Midianites, Numb. xxxi. 34. And in this book we read of two thousand taken from the Hagarites, (chap. v. 21.) And when the Jews returned out of the captivity of Babylon, they were become so rich, that they brought away with them six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses; as Nehemiah relates, chap. vii. 69.

Ver. 31. *And over the flocks was Jaziz the Hagarite. All these were the rulers of the substance which was king David's.*] The *flocks* of sheep, no doubt, were very numerous; but among all the flocks and herds there is no mention made of swine, as Bochartus observes. Nor had the patriarchs any that we read of, when mention is made of their possessions. Nor had Job any in Arabia, though he had a vast number of other cattle. Nor did the Israelites ever take any of these as spoil from their enemies. And therefore Gadara, where swine were kept in Judea (as we read in the gospel), was a Greek city, not a Jewish, as Josephus tells us. (See Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. i. cap. 51.)

Ver. 32. *Also Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counsellor, a wise man, and a scribe.*] He was one of the privy-council; being a man of great wisdom, and also skilful in the law: for so the word *sopher* (which we render *scribe*) signifies. A very learned author thinks it signifies a *secretary of state,* or rather a *chancellor.*

And Jehiel the son of Hachmoni was with the king's sons.] He also, no doubt, was a man of great understanding, being a tutor, as we speak, or governor to the king's sons.

Ver. 33. *And Ahithophel was the king's counsellor: and Hushai the Archite was the king's companion.*] Ahithophel seems to have been president of the council: but Hushai was his favourite (being called David's friend), in whose company he most delighted, and whom he trusted with his greatest secrets.

Ver. 34. *And after Ahithophel was Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar.*] After Ahithophel had made away himself, these two were the principal counsellors; as Kimchi and other Jewish doctors understand these words. But others think the meaning is, that next to him these two were accounted the ablest men that David advised withal: but *after him,* for he was esteemed the man of greatest prudence.

And the general of the king's army was Joab.] The Targum hath a strange exposition of this verse, which is this: When there was war to be made, they consulted Ahitho-

phel, and after that they asked counsel of *urim* and *thummim* by Jehoiada, the head of the Sanhedrin; and by Abiathar the high-priest: and so the Cherethites and Pelethites, by the authority of *urim* and *thummim*, went to fight under the command of Joab, the general of the army. In the exposition of which there are a great many foolish descants, which I shall not mention.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes.*] These seem to be the same, one being the explication of the other: and they are those persons mentioned ver. 16, 17, &c. of the foregoing chapter.

And the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course.] That is, those great commanders, over four-and-twenty thousand apiece, mentioned in the beginning of the foregoing chapter.

And the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds.] The commanders of every one of those thousands, with the centurions who commanded the several companies, consisting of a hundred.

And the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons.] Who are mentioned also in ver. 25, 26, &c. of the foregoing chapter: and appear by this to have been considerable persons.

With the officers.] Who were about his person.

And with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men.] Those who were eminent for their services in war, of whom he had spoken in chap. xi. xii.

Unto Jerusalem.] All these he called to attend him in the chief city of the kingdom, that he might commend Solomon to them as his successor, and this government which he had settled. (See Bertram, de Repub. Jud. p. 150.) This seems to have been a distinct assembly from that mentioned chap. xxiii. 2. being more general, and consisting of many persons, who were not then in such offices as are here named.

Ver. 2. *Then David the king stood upon his feet, and said.*] He was sitting in his throne, I suppose, when they came in, but then stood up in respect to so great an assembly, and that he might be the better heard. When he first declared Solomon to be his successor, and caused him to be anointed, he lay upon his bed, being very palsic and decrepit, as we read 1 Kings i. But intending now to have him anointed again, in the midst of his princes and great commanders, (chap. xxix. 22.) whom he could not assemble, when on a sudden he commanded him to be anointed before; he roused up himself, and rose from his couch, and came out of his chamber, and made orations, and gave advice for things to come, as Dr. Lightfoot observes.

Hear me, my brethren, and my people.] He calls the great men his brethren, both because they had a share in the government with him, and to express his affection to them. It is likely they were attended by some other persons, whom he calls *my people*.

I had in mine heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord.] A fixed place, where the ark might be settled, and not carried about, as it had been hitherto, (2 Sam. vii. 1.)

And for the footstool of our God.] Here the conjunction *and*, as our Mr. Mede observes, is exegetical, and the same with *that is:* according to which expression, the prophet Jeremiah saith, (Lam. ii. 1.) that the Lord had cast *down the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool* (that is, the ark of the covenant, which was their glory), *in the day of his anger*, book i. p. 500. For the Divine Glory sitting upon the wings of the cherubims, over the mercy-seat, (Psal. lxxx. 2.) his feet, as we speak after the manner of men, rested upon the ark: and therefore the Targum thus paraphrases it, *The footstool of the throne of glory.* And thence it is sometimes called, *The ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts, who sitteth upon the cherubims*, (1 Sam. iv. 4.)

And had made ready for the building.] Laid up great treasures, which he designed to defray the charges of the building. (See chap. xxii.)

Ver. 3. *But God said unto me.*] In the Targum, The *Memra, Word of the Lord.*

Thou shalt not build a house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood.] See my notes upon chap. xxii. 8. To which I shall here add, that bloodshed was accounted a thing so heinous, that though one had killed another only accidentally, yet he was bound to flee for it to a city of refuge, or else he might have been killed himself. And among the ancient Greeks, (as Petitus shews, in his book of the Attic Laws, lib. vii. p. 512.) he that killed another involuntarily, was banished from his country for a year. But David is here forbidden to build God a temple, merely because he had been engaged in war and bloodshed, though it was on a pious account. And thus also among the ancient Greeks (as Grotius observes), they stood in need of an expiation, who, without any blame, had defiled their hands in blood. And, accordingly, among the Greek Christians there was a canon, long observed in that church, which kept men from the holy communion for a time, who had killed an enemy in any war. (See lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 25. sect. 9.) But Osiander, considering this passage in Grotius, thinks, that in these words, David's warring and bloodshed are not alleged, "ratione alicujus vitii," &c. *upon the account of any blemish*, which hindered him from building a house for God, but merely upon the account of the vast business wherein he was engaged: for, being employed continually in warlike actions, he was not at leisure for such a building; which was to be the work of peace and quietness. David also is expressly said to have managed the wars of the Lord, being but his instrument to punish the enemies of his people Israel: and therefore could not be blemished by being thus employed to God, nor made incapable thereby to build his temple. For he gloried and triumphed in these wars, and in the victories he got: for which he sung praise to God, Psal. lx. Add to all this, that the account which Solomon gives to Hiram, why his father did not build God a house, was, that he was otherwise employed, (1 Kings v. 3.) But I leave this to better judgments.

Ver. 4. *Howbeit the Lord God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever.*] See 1 Sam. xvi. 13. Psal. lxxviii. 68.

For he hath chosen Judah to be the ruler.] See Gen. xlix. 10.

And of the house of Judah the house of my father; and

among the sons of my father he liked me, to make me king over all Israel.] For till his days it was not known out of what family of Judah a king should be chosen, from whom the Messiah should come.

Ver. 5. *And of all my sons (for the Lord hath given me many sons) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.*] For he was beloved of God from his birth, (2 Sam. xii. 25.) and plainly designed by God to be his successor, (2 Sam. vii. 13. and here in this book, chap. xxii. 9.) So that David sware he should reign after him, and accordingly performed it, (1 Kings i. 17. 35.) This he declares now to them all, when he was going out of the world: that they might reverence Solomon as a person placed upon the throne by Divine appointment; and not out of any partial and fond affection of his to him, preferred before his elder brethren.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father.*] See 2 Sam. vii. 13. and this book, chap. xxii. 9.

Ver. 7. *Moreover, I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do my commandments, and my judgments, as at this day.*] The last words import, that hitherto Solomon was very towardly (as we speak), and gave great hopes he would continue steadfast in his obedience to God, as his father David had done.

Ver. 8. *Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the Lord.*] Who were here present by their representatives: to whom he now addresses his speech, that they might give the same exhortation to their neighbours.

And in the audience of our God.] Who was present in all their public assemblies, as I have noted upon Judg. xx. 1. (See there.)

Keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God.] It is not enough to know the will of God, if we do not *keep* it; that is, observe his commands, and live in the practice of our duty. But that we may know it, it is necessary to *seek* it; that is, to inquire after it, and study the laws of God. For no man (as Grotius here observes) shall be excused by a supine ignorance.

That ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever.] It was in vain to expect the continuance of God's favour to them, who had brought them into this good land, unless they continued steadfast in his obedience. This was the only way to settlement in their possessions.

Ver. 9. *And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father.*] To *know* God is, in Scripture language, to acknowledge and love him. As God is said *to know the way* of the righteous; that is, to approve and love it, (Psal. i. *ult.*) Solomon had the greater reason to do this, because God had been so very gracious to his father David, and chosen him, before all his brethren, to be his successor.

And serve him with a perfect heart, and a willing mind.] His love was to be expressed by obedience to God, and that entirely and cheerfully: out of choice, not by constraint; not to gain the good opinion of men, but the favour of God. For hearty piety, and not merely the outward appearance of it, is the surest support of a prince's power and authority: and will dispose his subjects to love and reverence him as sincerely as he doth God.

For the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.] He presses him with two arguments unto sincerity in his obedience. The first is in these words; because God cannot be deceived with external services; for he looks into the hearts, and discerns the most secret motions there: which cannot be hid from him, but he is privy to every thought, and to the very beginning of them.

If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.] This is the other argument; God is not tied to any man, but upon condition of his hearty obedience. As he behaves himself towards God, so God will deal with him.

Ver. 10. *Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build a house for the sanctuary.*] That is, for the ark to dwell in, for that was the principal furniture of the sanctuary. The Targum thus expresses it, *The Memra, Word of the Lord, hath chosen thee,* &c.

Be strong and do it.] Being a young man, he might be discouraged from undertaking so great work: but he bids him go about it strenuously, because God had chosen him to do it.

Ver. 11. *Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof.*] Abarbinel is very confident that the word *ulam,* which we translate *porch,* is a general word used in this place for the whole house. The description of which David gave Solomon, with all the apartments belonging to it: especially of the *houses thereof,* which were two: the outward, called *the holy place,* and the inward, called *the holy of holies,* which were distinct houses, being separated by a partition: and accordingly the former is called *the greater house,* (2 Chron. iii. 5.) being much larger in its dimensions than the other. At the entrance of which there was a porch, the model of which David gave him, as well as of the houses.

And of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof.] There were several rooms against the walls of the house round about, as we read 1 Kings vi. 5. which are here called by several names, according to the use wherein they were employed. And the forenamed Abarbinel here observes, out of Middoth, and Tamid, and other books, that the temple was built like a high tower, reaching up to heaven, there being three upper stories one above another, and the first story three times higher than that of Moses, *viz.* thirty cubits.

And of the place of the mercy-seat.] Where that should be placed, in the *holy of holies.*

Ver. 12. *And the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit.*] In the Hebrew, *of all that he had in the Spirit with him;* that is, *inspired into him.* It being a house for God to dwell in, it was fit that it should not be of a mere human, but of a Divine contrivance, as the tabernacle built by Moses was. Therefore God suggested to David by his Spirit, how he would have it made in all the parts beforementioned, and in those that follow: for those words refer to both. (See ver. 19.)

Of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about.] How large the courts should be, and how many, and what rooms adjoining to them, was all ordered by a special direction from God.

Of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things.] From the last words most.

are of opinion, it may be concluded, that in these places all the utensils belonging to the tabernacle which Moses made, and the tabernacle itself (which was no longer used after Solomon's temple was built), were laid up and preserved. By which, perhaps, was signified, as Constantine L'Empereur conjectures, (upon Middoth, p. 87.) that all the ceremonies of Moses should one day be decently laid aside, and something better come in their room.

Ver. 13. *Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the Lord.*] He disposed of the courses of the priests and Levites (beforementioned) by the same Spirit, and how they should be employed, and what vessels they should use in God's service.

Ver. 14. *He gave of gold by weight for things of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service; silver also for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service.*] He gave materials also, in a just proportion to the instruments that were to be made, either of gold or silver.

Ver. 15. *Even the weight for the candlesticks of gold, and for the lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof; and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, both for the candlestick, and also for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick.*] By this we learn that there were candlesticks of silver, as well as of gold. The former of which were lesser, to be carried in their hands from place to place, as there was occasion. But the latter were fixed in the sanctuary, and in Solomon's house were ten in number, (1 Kings vi. 49.)

Ver. 16. *And by weight he gave gold for the tables of shew-bread, for every table; and likewise silver for the tables of silver.*] There was but one table for the shew-bread: but there were several others attending upon it, whereon were set such vessels as belonged to it. For, as he made more candlesticks than were in the tabernacle; so, it appears by this, he also augmented the tables, which were no less than ten, (2 Chron. iv. 8.)

Ver. 17. *Also pure gold for the flesh-hooks, and the bowls, and the cups: and for the golden basons he gave gold by weight for every bason; and likewise silver by weight for every bason of silver.*] Assigning such a portion of gold or silver to every bason, as would make it as large as he proposed. Many of the Jews, by the Hebrew word *kepuri* (which we translate *basons*), understand *spoons*, which had the figure of oxen and lions on the head of them; which they imagine was the beginning of Solomon's offence. But the word rather imports some vessel, wherein they received the blood of the sacrifice *of expiation*.

Ver. 18. *And for the altar of incense refined gold by weight.*] It was covered with gold, as the cherubims were, 1 Kings vii. 49.

And gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubims, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the Lord.] It seems David contrived these two cherubims, besides those which Moses had made. Of which see what I have noted upon 1 Kings vi. 23. 28. They are called the *chariot*, because God is said not only *to sit*, but *to ride upon the cherubims*, (Psal. xviii. 10.) as the Lord of hosts: and therefore they are described in Ezekiel, as having wheels on which they ran. The other made by Moses were most properly his seat, but these represented him as filling the whole house.

Ver. 19. *All this, said David, the Lord made me to understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.*] God made him understand all this so plainly and distinctly, as if it had been written on his mind as the ten commandments were upon the tables of stone in the mount. But some of the Jews think the meaning is, that God revealed these things first to some of the prophets, Samuel, (iv. 22.) or Nathan, or Gad, who delivered all to David in writing, as the mind of God. However it was, God was pleased thus himself to give instructions about the structure of the temple, and all belonging to it; that it might breed in the people's mind a greater reverence, when they came to worship him there: and, as Joseph de Voysin observes, the Jews in Beracoth say, that their minds might be lifted up when they came to the temple, from earthly things, to things spiritual and celestial.

Ver. 20. *And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong, and of good courage, and do it.*] He repeats what he had said before, (ver. 10.) the more to excite and encourage him to this work, which was to do the work of God.

Fear not, neither be dismayed; for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord.] He thought that he might possibly fear disturbance from enemies abroad, of which David had a great many: but he bids him be confident, he should not be disquieted in his work; which should go on prosperously, by the blessing of God, till it was finished. Of which he might be the more assured, if he reflected how God had blessed David himself all his life long.

Ver. 21. *And, behold, the courses of the priests and the Levites, even they shall be with thee for all the service of the house of God: and there shall be with thee, for all manner of workmanship, every willing skilful man for any manner of service; also the princes and all the people will be wholly at thy commandment.*] It is a probable conjecture of Conradus Pellicanus, that he now presented Solomon with a list of all the courses of God's ministers, as God had directed him to establish them; assuring him, that God would dispose them to be serviceable unto him in all that he had to do for the carrying on of the work. Which should have the help and assistance of all other skilful persons, whom he would make willing to further it: and that he would make all the princes and the people obedient to him in all things. This was one reason, no doubt, of calling this assembly together, that they might be engaged to be aiding to Solomon in promoting so pious a work.

CHAP. XXIX.

Ver. 1. *FURTHERMORE, David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great: for the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God.*] He stirs them up to the assistance of his son, by these considerations, that he was a person chosen by God, not by him, for this work: and yet he needed their help, because he was but a youth, (see 1 Kings iii. 7.) and the work itself was to be very magnificent, suitable to the majesty that was to dwell

therein, *viz.* the Lord himself; who dwells not (as the apostle speaks) *in temples made with hands:* but was present there by a glorious light, which represented his majesty.

Ver. 2. *Now, I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God, the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood; onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistering stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance.*] We read of his great preparation for this building before, (chap. xxii. 14, &c.) only nothing is said there concerning *precious stones;* the use of which, in the ornament of any part of the temple, is not known. Ludolphus, speaking of the word *phuc,* which we translate *glistering,* saith, that as David provided all things for the fabric of the temple, so he provided for the clothing of the priests with rich garments, and also with such things as were good for bodily health, as this was, which was not only κοσμητικὸν, *for ornament,* but θεραπευτικὸν, *for medicine and preservation of health.* But perhaps *phuc* being famous among those things which women used for setting off their beauty, it may possibly here be a metaphorical word, for all such stones as may set off the building. (See his Commentary upon the Ethiopic History, lib. i. cap. 7. n. 51.)

Ver. 3. *Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house.*] Besides what he had devoted and dedicated to this use, he gave, out of what remained for his own occasions, a further sum for the building of the house, which is mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 4. *Even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir.*] The gold of Ophir, here mentioned, was that which came out of Arabia, where, Bochartus hath proved, there was a country of that name abounding with gold. For in David's time the Ophir of India was not known, Solomon being the first that attempted a long voyage thither. So are we to understand the word Ophir in the book of Job, (xxii. 24. xxviii. 16.) For in his time they had not learned to traffic into those far-distant countries, where the other Ophir in India was. (See my notes on 1 Kings ix. 18.) This gold here mentioned, was of a purer sort than that in chap. xxii. 11. which was coarser than the gold of Ophir.

And seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses withal.] There are two things, which Dr. Lightfoot hath remarked in these two verses. One is, that it is said, this preparation was above what he had prepared for the holy house, and yet he saith he had prepared it for the house of God. The other is, that mention is made here of silver to overlay the house withal; whereas it is evident, that within the house itself all the overlaying was of gold. Therefore it is thus to be understood, that besides the store of gold that David had provided for the gilding of the house, both in the holy and most holy place; he had also laid by a stock, both of gold and silver, to gild the chambers over the porch (for there were divers upper-chambers, the height of it being a hundred and twenty cubits), and to beautify the side-chambers, and the other rooms that were about the courts. All this gold and silver amounted to such a vast sum of our money, that it is not easy to give an account of it. (See Calvisius, ad Annum Mundi 2933.)

Ver. 5. *The gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers.*] That there might be enough to pay all sort of workmen their wages, as well as to provide them materials to work withal.

And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?] The Hebrew phrase *to fill his hand* (as it is in the margin) signifies to make an offering; unto which he excites them by his example, as a thing which would be very grateful unto God.

Ver. 6. *Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers over the king's work, offered willingly.*] All those great men, mentioned chap. xxvii. made their cheerful contributions.

Ver. 7. *And gave, for the service of the house of God, of gold, five thousand talents and ten thousand drams; and of silver, ten thousand talents; and of brass, eighteen thousand talents; and one hundred thousand talents of iron.*] What every particular person gave is not here recorded; but the whole amounted to these sums, which was very great.

Ver. 8. *And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the Lord, by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite.*] For he and his sons were keepers of the treasure of God's house, (chap. xxvi. 21, 22.) and were appointed to receive such offerings.

Ver. 9. *Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly.*] They that made the offering rejoiced; for they did it with a good will, and not by constraint.

Because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord.] This is the virtue which St. Paul calls ἁπλότης, *singleness of heart:* which hath respect purely to the service of God, the honour of religion, and the good of his church, (2 Cor. viii. 2. ix. 11, 13.)

And David the king also rejoiced with great joy.] It was a singular comfort to him in his old age, to see the people so well disposed, and his exhortation so effectual upon their hearts; which gave him a good hope this work would not fail to be speedily accomplished.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.*] All this he ascribed to the grace of God, whom he therefore blessed and praised, for giving them such a heart.

Ver. 11. *Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.*] This is a most noble declaration of the sense he had of the Divine excellences and perfections, with a thankful acknowledgment of his immensity, power, goodness, eternity, and majesty, which are the properties or attributes of God. The Targum, and the Talmudists, apply these to the wonderful works of God, in this manner:—*Thine, O Lord, is the greatness,* for thou createdst the world; *and the power,* for thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, and carriedst them through the Red Sea; and revealedst thyself in glory upon Mount Sinai, to give the law to thy people; and obtainedst victory over Amalek, Sihon, Og,

and the Canaanites; and madest the sun and the moon stand still, *by the spirit of thy glory*, till thy people were vindicated of their enemies. For all things, both in heaven and in earth, are the work of thy hands; thou supportest and rulest all things; and thou art exalted above all the angels in heaven, as well as all the kings upon earth.

Ver. 12. *Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all: and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.*] The Targum thus paraphrases it: The riches of the wealthy, and the glory of kings and dominions, are given them by thee; thou rulest over all, and they are in thy power: who art able to multiply, and strengthen all things; that is, to increase those to great numbers who are diminished, and to strengthen those who are feeble and weak.

Ver. 13. *Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.*

Ver. 14. *But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?*] In the Targum it is thus paraphrased: *Who hast given such plenty, that we are able to offer these gifts.* He should have added, and also given us a heart to part with them for thy service.

For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.] We only return to thee what thine own hand hath blessed us withal, as the Targum expresses it. And so the ancient Christians were wont to say at their offertory, τὰ σὰ ἀπὸ τῶν σῶν, *thine from thine:* that is, thy own goods, from thy own people. In like manner we ought to acknowledge God in all spiritual things; referring every good thought, good purpose, good work, to his Divine grace, from whom we receive it; beseeching him, as David doth here in this prayer, (ver. 18.) to preserve it in us.

Ver. 15. *For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.*] He acknowledges that they were not proprietors of that good land wherein they dwelt, but only his tenants; who held all they had of him; and that but a very short term; after which they must leave all, as their fathers had done. The words may be thus paraphrased, in short: *We have but the use of these things for a little while, and so have parted with no great matter unto thee.* Those words, *as a shadow*, the Targum thus paraphrases: *As the shadow of a bird which flieth through the air, so are our days upon the earth:* that is, soon gone, as the Psalmist speaks.

Ver. 16. *O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared, to build thee a house for thine holy name, cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own.*] He could not often enough repeat his sense of this, that they had given him nothing but what was his own; which he had most bountifully bestowed on them.

Ver. 17. *I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things.*] But the highest satisfaction was, that God had bestowed upon him a heart, to do what he had done willingly, with a sincere respect to the service of God, and not out of vainglory. For the truth of which he appeals to God himself, who could not be deceived with false shows and pretences.

And now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee.] It was a great additional comfort to him, that God had given such a heart unto his people.

Ver. 18. *O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee.*] He could not desire a greater blessing for them, than that he who had given them such a pious heart, would preserve them in the same good disposition: and confirm and establish them therein. So the last words are better translated in the margin, *establish their heart unto thee.* Which the Targum paraphrases, *dispose their heart to fear thee.*

Ver. 19. *And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all these things, and to build the palace, for the which I have made provision.*] To have a due respect to all God's precepts (in the observation of every one of which, *perfectness of heart* consists) he knew would be the best security for the performing what David designed. For then he would not be disobedient to his father's dying words.

Ver. 20. *And David said to all the congregation, Now bless the Lord your God. And all the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord and the king.*] They worshipped both with the same gesture, but with a different mind; God with religious worship, the king with civil: giving God thanks for all his benefits, and thanking the king for all the care he had taken, during his reign, for their prosperity. But some think, this worship was not paid to David, but to Solomon; it being the manner thus to acknowledge the king, when he was enthroned. So they bowed their knees to our Saviour, in mockery of him, as a pretended king.

Ver. 21. *And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings unto the Lord, on the morrow after that day.*] For the ark was now at Jerusalem, where this great congregation was assembled, (chap. xxviii. 1.) and therefore they offered peace-offerings and burnt-offerings to God in that place, on the morrow after their meeting: for there was not time to do it on that day, when the foregoing things were done.

Even a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their drink-offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel.] That is, together with the numerous burnt-offerings, a great many peace-offerings (which are here meant by *sacrifices*), sufficient for the entertainment of all the Israelites, who were there present, to feast upon; as the manner was, and as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 22. *And did eat and drink before the Lord on that day with great gladness.*] For the greatest part of peace-offerings was given to the persons that offered them, to entertain their friends withal, as hath been often observed. And they are said to eat and drink *before the Lord*, because it was a sacred feast, kept before the ark at Jerusalem, the place which God had chosen, according to the law, Deut. xii. 11, &c.

And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time.] This is supposed to have been done after David's death, when Solomon was anointed for himself, as reigning *pleno jure, in subjection to none:* as he was anointed the first time by David's command. But there are great men of another opinion; that he was twice anointed while David lived: first, in the presence of a few of David's ser-

vants, as we read 1 Kings i. and now, in the presence of all the great men of Israel, the princes of the tribes, captains of thousands and hundreds. (See Bertram, de Repub. Jud. p. 130, 131.) And, indeed, we are led to this by the connexion with the foregoing words: for the persons who now made him king the second time, were those beforementioned, who sacrificed and feasted thereupon with great joy: after David's long speech to them. Dr. Lightfoot, indeed, observes, that there is mention three times of Solomon's being made king: twice in this book, chap. xxiii. 1. and here in this place; and in 1 Kings i. So that there may be a question made, whether he was made king three times, or only twice. But this place seems to settle the doubt; for when, upon the aspiring of Adonijah, he was anointed, it was the first time that David shewed who should succeed him: see 1 Kings i. 21. 27. and that must be concurrent, or the same, with that making him king mentioned in this book, chap. xxiii. 1. and this anointing in the midst of the princes and great commanders, was the second time. Abarbinel is of the same opinion, that he was anointed at first before a few; and now more publicly before the whole nation.

And anointed him unto the Lord to be the chief governor.] After the death of David, who, perhaps, now resigned the government of the kingdom to him, finding he had not long to live.

And Zadok to be priest.] This hath inclined many to think the anointing forementioned was after the death of David: because Abiathar was not put out of his office till the beginning of Solomon's reign. But I see no reason why we may not think he was anointed to be priest, as Solomon was to be king, in David's lifetime: though he was not actually put into the office till after he was dead, when Abiathar was thrust out. It was necessary he should be anointed, because the succession to the high-priesthood, in the line of Eleazar, had been long interrupted; and Abiathar, of the line of Ithamar, was still alive. This reason the Jews give why he was anointed; which was not necessary, they say, but in this case: it being sufficient otherwise, only to clothe him with the priestly vestments. But see Selden, de Success. in Pontif. lib. ii. cap. 9. who will incline one to be of another opinion.

Ver. 23. *Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord.*] So the throne of this kingdom is called, because this was God's land, and Israel his people, over whom he still remained their king: and Solomon reigned over them, not by inheritance, but by his special appointment. The Targum thus expresses it, *He sat upon the royal throne, according to the word of the Memra, Word of the Lord.*

As king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him.] From the beginning of his reign, his people were all obedient to him: whereas, it was a long time before Saul could be settled on his throne; and it was longer before all Israel submitted to David.

Ver. 24. *And all the princes, and the mighty men.*] All the soldiery, as well as the heads of the tribes, and the great commanders.

And all the sons likewise of king David.] Who were then alive.

Submitted themselves unto Solomon the king.] Sware allegiance to him. For so the Hebrew phrase signifies, *they gave the hand under Solomon.* For putting the hand under the knee or the thigh of a person, was a token of subjection to him: and was anciently used, when they solemnly promised any thing to a superior, by an oath; (Gen. xxiv. 2. xlvii. 29.) which custom, if it did not continue in use in Solomon's days, yet that which was signified by it, was expressed in the ancient phrase.

Ver. 25. *And the Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.*] Which appears from the foregoing books, which shew, that neither David, nor Saul, nor any of the judges (who governed before them), lived in such splendour, as was in the court of Solomon.

Ver. 26. *Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel.*] That is, this is a brief account of what David did, during his reign, especially in the latter end of it.

Ver. 27. *And the time that he reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.*] See 2 Sam. v. 5.

Ver. 28. *And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour.*] Abundantly satisfied, that he had lived long enough, in as great plenty and glory as he could desire.

And Solomon his son reigned in his stead.] Having this particular satisfaction, to see his son sit on his throne, likely to reign in greater glory than he had done. This was the Lord's doing, who disposed the hearts of all the great men, and his elder brethren, and the whole kingdom, to submit to him, who was but a young man.

Ver. 29. *Now the acts of David the king, first and last.*] A larger account of all that he did, from the beginning to the end of his reign.

Behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.] Here are three distinct titles given to those three persons: Samuel being called *roeh*, and Nathan is called *nabi*, and Gad is called *choseh*. But whether they have distinct significations, denoting several ways of receiving Divine inspirations, or several degrees of it, I am not able to determine. But this we may certainly affirm, with Theodoret (in his preface to the book of the Kings), that the prophets, besides the edition of their prophecies, published also very frequently the history of their own times. And Samuel began to write the life of David, which Nathan and Gad finished: out of which these things here recorded were extracted.

Ver. 30. *With all his reign and his might.*] That is, how he governed his people, and how he warred with their enemies; and got glorious victories over them: with all the rest that he did, both as a prophet and as a king.

And the times that went over him, and over Israel.] All the troubles which he endured, and which befel the people of Israel; (which are called *times* in Psal. xxx. 16.) or, more simply, the meaning may be, all the revolutions that were in public affairs, in his days.

And over all the kingdoms of the countries.] That is, the neighbouring countries, such as the Philistines, Moab, Amalek, Syria, Damascus, the Ammonites, &c. The loss of which history is very much bewailed; but God knows better than we, what was fit to be preserved for the use and benefit of his church.

THE

SECOND BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES.

As there are some things here omitted, which are recorded in the first book of the Kings; so there are several things contained in this book, of which no mention is made there; particularly in the history of Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah. And many other things there mentioned, are here more fully and clearly explained; as will be observed in the acts of Abijah, Asa, Joash, and other kings of Judah: upon which account St. Jerome saith of this book, It is such, and of so great use, that he who, without it, will pretend to the understanding of the prophets, will expose himself to scorn.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *AND Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom.*] After the death of Adonijah and Joab, he was confirmed in his authority and government.

And the Lord his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly.] In the Targum it is paraphrased, *The Word of the Lord was his helper, and raised him to a great height of glory.*

Ver. 2. *Then Solomon spake unto all Israel, to the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every governor in all Israel, the chief of the fathers.*] Before that great assembly, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, in the midst of which he was anointed, went home, Solomon discoursed with them about his intentions of going to Gibeon to worship God, by offering a great sacrifice, and desired them to accompany him.

Ver. 3. *So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon.*] This verse shews, that this was the thing about which he spake unto them. (See 1 Kings iii. 4.)

For there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses, the servant of the Lord, had made in the wilderness.] But it was there without the ark, which was in the city of David, while the tabernacle was in Gibeon. How these came to be separated, so that the ark was without the tabernacle and its vessels; and the vessels, and the altar with the tabernacle, without the seat of the glory of God, is not easy to be resolved. Conradus Pellicanus supposes, that even then, in those days, God would have them to know, he did not regard the ceremonious worship, when the people were under the government and instruction of such men as Samuel and David: and they were free from idolatry. Then the Lord did not exact so strictly the legal services, as he did in times of peace and tranquillity, when they were most necessary for the people; lest, after their custom, when they lived in ease and prosperity, they should fall into superstition, and admire the rites of the gentiles. And with such questions as these he thinks the Jews may be very strongly urged: How came it to pass that, in the days of Samuel and David, the legal worship was not observed more precisely? How came the ark to be separated from the altars, which were made for the ark, and not the contrary? Who dispensed with David to build another tabernacle for the ark, and neglect that built by Moses? And how came Solomon to sacrifice in another place, than that which the Lord had chosen?

Ver. 4. *But the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjath-jearim to the place which David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem.*] See 2 Sam. vi. 2. 17.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, the brazen altar that Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, he put before the tabernacle of the Lord.*] One would think that this altar did not stand in its right place, till Solomon set it where it used to stand: but the words may be translated as in the margin, *was there* before the tabernacle.

And Solomon and the congregation sought unto it.] I think this is better translated by Victorinus Strigelius, *Solomon and the congregation were wont to frequent it;* with sacrifices by which they sought the favour of God.

Ver. 6. *And Solomon went up thither to the brazen altar before the Lord, which was at the tabernacle of the congregation.*] This is said to be *before the Lord,* though the ark was not there, because God was pleased graciously to accept the sacrifices offered before the place, where he was wont to dwell, though wanting the token of his glorious presence.

And offered a thousand burnt-offerings upon it.] He offered them by the ministry of the priests. And *burnt-offerings* here signify (as Pellicanus with great reason thinks) the sacrifice of peace-offerings, the general name being put for the special. For it is not reasonable to think, a thousand offerings were wholly burnt upon the altar: but, in all probability, he made a feast for all that were there present, as had been done when this great assembly offered so freely at his inaugnration, (1 Chron. xxix. 22.)

Ver. 7. *In that night did God appear to Solomon.*] Immediately after the offering of these sacrifices.

And said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee.] See 1 Kings iii. 5. This was a declaration that he accepted his prayers which accompanied those sacrifices, and would grant whatsoever he desired.

Ver. 8. *And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast shewed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead.*] An admirable example unto those who make petitions unto God, that they should in the first place thank him for the great benefits they have received, (1 Kings iii. 6.)

Ver. 9. *Now, O Lord God, let thy promise unto David my father be established, viz.*] That God would be a father to him, and make him his son, (2 Sam. vii. 14.)

For thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude.] See 1 Kings iii. 8.

Ver. 10. *Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people.*] This is a proverbial speech, for governing the people, both at home and abroad, in peace and in war. (See Numb. xxvii. 17. Deut. xxxi. 2.)

For who can judge this thy people, that is so great?] Among such a numerous people, he knew there would be so many, and so various, and many times difficult causes brought before him, that it would be impossible to hear them and judge aright, without a Divine spirit. (See upon 1 Kings iii. 9.)

Ver. 11. *And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king;*

Ver. 12. *Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.*] These two verses have been sufficiently explained in the same chapter; (1 Kings iii. 11—13.) only it may be observed, he doth not say he would give him *the life of his enemies*, because he was to be a peaceable king.

Ver. 13. *Then Solomon came from his journey to the high place that was at Gibeon to Jerusalem, from before the tabernacle of the congregation, and reigned over Israel.*] We put in these words, *from his journey*, which was not needful, for the words may be translated exactly, *Solomon came from the high place*, &c. and so it follows, *from before the tabernacle.* For the particle *lamed* signifies not only *to* but *from*. So R. Jonas, whom Kimchi calls a famous grammarian, saith that it is here put for *mem*, i. e. *from*. But Kimchi himself is author of our translation, who is followed by Junius, and Tremellius, and others, but comes to the same purpose.

Ver. 14. *And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.*] See upon 1 Kings x. 26.

Which he placed in the chariot-cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.] The *chariot-cities* were such wherein there was good pasturage for the horses.

Ver. 15. *And the king made silver and gold at Jerusalem as plenteous as stones; and cedar-trees made he as the sycamore-trees that are in the vale for abundance.*] See there, ver. 27.

Ver. 16. *And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen-yarn: the king's merchants received the linen-yarn at a price.*

Ver. 17. *And they fetched up, and brought forth out of Egypt, a chariot for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty: and so brought they out horses for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, by their means.*] These two verses are there also explained. (See 1 Kings x. 28, 29.) From this place the famous Bochartus gathers, that the chariots of Egypt in Solomon's time were drawn by four horses: for the tribute which was exacted for a chariot, was four times as much as was paid for a single horse. (See his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 9.)

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND Solomon determined to build a house for the name of the Lord.*] Wherein the Lord should be worshipped: as his father David had designed and directed.

And a house for his kingdom.] A royal palace for himself, and those who should succeed him. But he finished God's house before he began his own.

Ver. 2. *And Solomon told out threescore and ten thousand men to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand to hew in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred to oversee them.*] Here are three hundred more than are mentioned in the book of the Kings: concerning which difference, see what I have noted there, (v. 16.) and need not be repeated here.

Ver. 3. *And Solomon sent to Huram the king of Tyre, saying, As thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build him a house to dwell therein, even so deal with me.*] Hiram (as he is called in the book of the Kings) first sent to him, to congratulate his succession to the throne, and then Solomon sent to him: as I have noted there. (See 1 Kings v. 1.)

Ver. 4. *Behold, I build a house to the name of the Lord my God.*] That is, he purposed to build, as it is expressed 1 Kings v. 5. and he had also disposed things so, that he was ready to go about it.

To dedicate it to him.] For his worship and service.

And to burn before him sweet incense, and for the continual shew-bread.] So this bread is called in Numb. iv. 7. because it stood before the Lord continually, being renewed every week, as we read Exod. xxv. 30. and other places.

And for the burnt-offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts of the Lord our God.] He reckons up several parts of the Divine service, which was there to be performed: Hiram, as I have elsewhere observed, being no stranger to the God of Israel.

This is an ordinance for ever to Israel.] Which God himself had appointed.

Ver. 5. *And the house which I build is great: for great is our God above all gods.*] It was no large structure which he built, but very magnificent, suitable to the glorious majesty of him that dwelt therein.

Ver. 6. *But who is able to build him a house, seeing the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain him?*] He would not have Hiram imagine that he had such low notions of God, as to think he could be confined and comprehended in any house, though ever so large, being immense beyond all conception.

Who am I then that I should build him a house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?] It would have been a high presumption then for him, or any man else, to build him a house, for any other end, but only for his worshippers to assemble there; he being pleased in a special manner to be present in that place. The Targum thus paraphrases this, "The heavens are the throne of his glory, the earth is his footstool, the abyss, and all people are supported by the Spirit of his Word." Which carries in it a notion which the author had of the ever-blessed Trinity.

Ver. 7. *Send me now therefore a man cunning to work*

in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill to grave with the cunning men that are with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, whom David my father did provide.] There were admirable artists in all these works at Tyre: whom he desired to be sent to him; that they might assist those whom David had provided, but were not so skilful as those of Tyre.

Ver. 8. *Send me also cedar-trees, fir-trees, and algum-trees, out of Lebanon.*] Or *almug-trees;* concerning which, see what I have noted upon 1 Kings x. 11. To which may be added, that Beckius hath lately conjectured, This was a tree brought originally out of Arabia, as the prefix *al* notes. And then it was brought out of that Ophir which was in Arabia, and planted in Lebanon. For there, this place tells us, these trees grew; as well as cedars and firs.

(For I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon); and, behold, my servants shall be with thy servants.] The Tyrians were more expert in cutting down and hewing timber (they dealing much in it), and therefore he desires to entertain them as his principal workmen, with whom he should join.

Ver. 9. *Even to prepare me timber in abundance: for the house which I am about to build shall be wonderful great.*] In the Hebrew, *great and wonderful.* This relates not so much to the bigness of it (though, taking in all the courts belonging to it, it was of large extent), but to the admirable contrivance and riches of it.

Ver. 10. *And, behold, I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat.*] That is, of wheat ground, or fine flour, as R. Jonas, a famous grammarian, expounds it; whom many Christians follow.

And twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil.] All this was provision for the workmen; for whose subsistence Solomon took care, during their labour: besides what he gave to Hiram every year for his household. (See upon 1 Kings v. 11.) What this measure, called *corus,* was, is uncertain: but many learned men think it the same with an omer, which was the most ancient word. For we never find the other used in the books of Moses, nor in the prophets; but only in Ezekiel, (xlv. 14.) and in the books of the Kings, Chronicles, and Ezra. But Josephus and the LXX. often have the word *corus* instead of omer, which was the largest measure of dry things, containing, as Epiphanius saith, thirty bushels.

Ver. 11. *Then Huram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon, Because the Lord hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them.*

Ver. 12. *Huram said moreover, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, endued with prudence and understanding, that he might build a house for the Lord, and a house for his kingdom.*] From these two verses, Victorinus Strigelius thought it certain, that Huram was a proselyte to the true religion: because he first of all owns the God of Israel to be Jehovah, the maker of heaven and earth; for none but the Israelites called God by that name, and when they would distinguish him from idols and all creatures, they confess him to be the Creator of the world, as Huram here doth. And, secondly, he congratulates the Israelites the happiness they enjoyed under such a king, which was the effect of his love to God and his church. And, lastly, he declared his love to the church, not only in embassies and letters, but in real acts of kindness, sending to Solomon materials to build the house of God, and artificers the best in the world. But the first of these reasons is not good; for, as my most learned friend, Dr. Alix, hath observed to me, the name of Jehovah was known to the Tyrians from the time of Gideon, as we learn from the words of Sanchoniathon.

Ver. 13. *And now I have sent a cunning man (endued with understanding) of Huram my father's.*] A man of great skill and long experience, being the principal workman employed by his father. So the Targum seems to understand the word *Abi* to signify a *master* or *chief workman.* But Beckius upon this place thinks it most probable that Abi was his surname, as we call it: and translates this verse, *He sent him a man of great skill;* viz. *Huram Abi.* For it was very common among the eastern people, to call men by the name of Ab, and Abi, or Aba, and Abu, as he observes. And thus Luther translates these words, *Huram Abi;* to whom may be added Emanuel Sa, a person very skilful in this language.

Ver. 14. *The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre.*] The Targum saith she was *a woman of the tribe of Naphtali;* because it is said so in 1 Kings vii. 14. and therefore he reconciles these two places; by *a daughter of Dan,* he means of a man called Dan, who was of the tribe of Naphtali: which being near to Tyre, she married one of that nation. Or, as Jarchi and Kimchi will have it, he was a Jew, but dwelt to Tyre: as Obed-Edom was called the Gittite, because he dwelt in Gath, but was a Levite. (See my notes upon 1 Kings vii. 14.)

Skilful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him.] These last words argue this man to have been a great artist, who could contrive any thing that was propounded to him, though never wrought before.

With thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father.] This seems another argument, that Huram was of the true religion, because he honoured David with the name of his lord; as he doth Solomon in the next verse. Or, as others think, he was become tributary to them; his country very much depending upon them for corn.

Ver. 15. *Now therefore the wheat, and the barley, and the oil, and the wine, which my lord hath spoken of, let him send unto his servants.*] For their support in their labour.

Ver. 16. *And we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need; and we will bring it to thee in floats by sea to Joppa, and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem.*] The Hebrew word *rapsodoth* (which we translate *floats*) is of the same signification with *daberoth,* (1 Kings v. 9.) as a learned Jew notes. By which is meant, timber bound together, which was drawn through the sea, and through rivers. Such floats were used, especially in the river Tigris (as Beckius here notes out of a Hebrew author), which was so swift, that vessels were wont to be overturned by the stream: and therefore they employed these floats alone, made of reeds tied close together; upon which both men

and burdens went down the river. (See my notes upon 1 Kings v. 9.)

Ver. 17. *And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel, after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found a hundred and fifty thousand, and three thousand and six hundred.*] These were the relics (as Kimchi thinks) of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, mentioned afterward, chap. viii. 7. But they were not idolaters; for then David would not have suffered them to dwell in the land: but they worshipped God alone, though they did not embrace the Jewish religion wholly, by being circumcised. Those David had numbered, that he might know their strength and their condition. Which did not proceed from such vanity, as moved him to number his own people, but out of a prudent care, that they might be distinguished from Jews, and be employed in such work as he did not think fit to put upon the Israelites. (See 1 Chron. xxii. 2.)

Ver. 18. *And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people a-work.*] This he had said before, ver. 2. but now relates of what condition they were, who were put to these servile employments. They that were the overseers (whom the LXX. call ἐργοδιώκται) were, I suppose, of the children of Israel.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *THEN Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah.*] See what I have noted concerning Moriah upon Gen. xxii. 2. To which may be here added, that part of this mountain was in the tribe of Judah, and part of it in the tribe of Benjamin: so that the temple is ascribed to them both. To Judah, in Psal. lxxviii. 68, 69. to Benjamin, Deut. xxxiii. 12. For the greatest part of the courts was in the tribe of Judah: but the altar, the porch, the most holy part of the temple, where the ark and the cherubims were, in the tribe of Benjamin.

Where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the thrashing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.] The Targum here derives the sanctity of this place from many noble things that were done there in ancient times. For in this place, saith he, Abraham worshipped the name of the Lord, and here he offered up his son Isaac, but he was delivered by the *Memra*, the *Word* of the Lord, and a ram substituted in his place. Here Jacob prayed when he fled from his brother Esau; and here the angel appeared to David, and ordered him to offer sacrifice in the thrashing-floor of Ornan. By which appearance and sacrifice this mountain was consecrated to be a place where the temple should be built. (See 1 Chron. xxi. 26.) But Maimonides (in his treatise of the building of the temple) carries this a great deal higher. For here, saith he, Noah built an altar when he came out of the ark (as Abraham did when he offered his son); yea, here Cain and Abel offered their sacrifices, as Adam the first man had done before them. And more than that, he will have it, that he was created in this place; whence the saying of their wise men, *Man was made in the very place of his expiation.* But this is unworthy of Maimonides, who is not wont to follow such conceits as this, which is borrowed from a foolish book called Pirke Eliezer.

Ver. 2. *And he began to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign.*] See 1 Kings vi. 1. In the preceding winter it was not fit to build, and in the first month the *paschal feast* hindered, as Jarchi here observes: and Dr. Alix takes to have been a sabbatic year, in which the people were free from the tillage of their ground.

Ver. 3. *Now these are the things wherein Solomon was instructed for the building of the house of God.*] He had been instructed by David his father, who gave him a model, according to which he built it. (See 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, &c.) The Targum translates these words very clearly, which in the Hebrew are a little obscure, *These are the dimensions of the foundation of the temple, which Solomon began to build.* So in our margin we translate the word, not *instructed*, but *founded.* And thus, Beckius thinks, it is most properly to be understood; because Solomon did not receive from his father a delineation of the whole fabric of the temple, but only of the porch, and of the courts, and some other things: as the forenamed place tells us.

The length by cubits after the first measure was threescore cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits.] He projected the sanctuary and the oracle both together; and in their first description they were to be in length sixty cubits: that is, forty for the sanctuary, and twenty for the most holy place. Or, as some think, by the *first measure*, is here meant that measure which Moses followed in building of the tabernacle: for, in process of time, the cubits altered, and were larger. (See 1 Kings vi. 2.) But this is doubtful.

Ver. 4. *And the porch that was in the front of the house, the length of it was according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits.*] So we read expressly, 1 Kings vi. 2. that *the breadth was twenty cubits.*

And the height was a hundred and twenty.] This is a very different account from that in the book of the Kings, where it is said to be thirty cubits. But Abendana hath briefly summed up what their authors say to reconcile these two places. Some think it probable, that the porch was but thirty cubits high, but the whole temple higher. Thus Kimchi. Others, that the porch and all were of the same height: but from the foundation to the roof was but thirty cubits: though above the roof there were ὑπερῶα, *upper-rooms*, which were ninety cubits high. (See upon 1 Kings vi. 3.) And, indeed, it is not likely, that this house was lower than the second temple, which, by the command of Cyrus, was to be threescore cubits. (Ezra vi. 3. and see Josephus, lib. vii. cap. 8.)

And he overlaid it within with pure gold.] As he did the rest of the house.

Ver. 5. *And the greater house he ceiled with fir-tree, which he overlaid with fine gold, and set thereon palm-trees and chains.*] By the *greater house* he means the sanctuary, or holy place: which was larger than the most holy, as was before noted.

Ver. 6. *And he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty.*] This shews the use to which the precious stones, that were dedicated by David, and by his princes, were employed; (1 Chron. xxix. 2. 8.) which served not merely for the garments of the high-priest, but for the house itself, which was garnished with them. Though I do not

know, but the observation of Bochartus may be true, that these stones are called *precious stones*, though they were common, because they excelled the rest in greatness, fineness, and in their polishing. (Hieroz. par. ii. lib. v. cap. 7.)

And the gold was gold of Parvaim.] It is a great mistake of Abraham Mylius, and others, who take this place to have been Peru: which the great man now mentioned hath proved to be Taprobana, (see upon 1 Kings ix. 28.) which was called Parvaim, and, with a small change, Parvam, and Provan: from whence he conjectures came the name of Taprobana; which is compounded of *Taph* (which in Arabic signifies a *shore* or *coast*) and *Parvan*, (lib. ii. Phaleg. cap. 28.) The Jews, after their manner, say the gold was called the gold of Parvaim, because it was of a deep red colour, like the blood of *parim*, that is, *bullocks*, and signifies the most excellent gold; as L'Empereur notes upon Middoth: though others of them say it was a place.

Ver. 7. *He overlaid also the house, the beams, the posts, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold; and graved cherubims on the walls.*] See 1 Kings vi. 21, 22. 29.

Ver. 8. *And he made the most holy house, the length whereof was according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits: and he overlaid it with fine gold, amounting to six hundred talents.*] The very same is said 1 Kings vi. 20. only here is added the quantity of gold, which he expended upon this place, which was very great.

Ver. 9. *And the weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold.*] Each nail, I suppose, whereby the plates of gold were fastened to the boards, cost fifty shekels.

And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold.] These seem to be the chambers mentioned 1 Chron. xxviii. 11. of which David gave him a model. But Dr. Lightfoot thinks, that over the holy place there were no chambers at all in the temple of Solomon, but it was all open to the roof. Over the most holy place, indeed, there was an upper room of ten cubits high; but why that should be called *chambers*, in the plural number, and why it should be overlaid with gold, since there was none came into it, nor any way to come there, is not easy to apprehend. And as for the side chambers that were on the outside of the house, there was no reason they should be overlaid with gold, since they were places wherein their corn, and wine, and tithes, and first-fruits, and such-like things, were laid up. Therefore, by the Hebrew word *eljoth*, we are not to understand *upper chambers*, but *the upper floor*, or *the roof*, of the holy and most holy places; which were overlaid with gold every where; both the floor on which they trod, and the walls round about, and the roof over-head. (See his Temple Service, chap. 15. sect. 3.)

Ver. 10. *And in the most holy house he made two cherubims of image-work.*] I do not know why we thus translate the last words, for the Hebrew, which we translate *image*, hath nothing of that signification in it: unless we take the word *zaazum* to be the same with *zeeazim*, which some of the Jews say, signifies their faces were like to boys'. And accordingly many understand these words, They had the figure of youths, or boys. But Beckius, upon the Targum, in this place, seems to me to have given a more rational account of the word, which he derives from the root *zaa*, and translates it the *work of motions*, or moveable work, for they stood upon their feet, (ver. 13.) as ready to move. In which he follows Forsterus and Buxtorfius.

And overlaid them with gold.] For they were made of olive-wood, and were not like those of Moses, of beaten gold. (See upon 1 Kings vi. 23. 28.)

Ver. 11. *And the wings of the cherubims were twenty cubits long; one wing of the one cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing was likewise five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub.*

Ver. 12. *And one wing of the other cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing was five cubits also, joining to the wing of the other cherub.*

Ver. 13. *And the wings of these cherubims spread forth themselves twenty cubits.*] See these three verses explained, 1 Kings vi. 24—26. where the height of these cherubims is also set down.

And they stood on their feet.] See 1 Kings vi. 26.

And their faces were inward.] In the Hebrew, *towards the house*: that is, towards the inner house, or holy place, as Jarchi expounds it: whose words are, Their heads were not erect, that they should look outwards; but they bended down, that they might look one upon another.

Ver. 14. *And he made a veil of blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and wrought cherubims thereon.*] That is, the veil before the most holy place; which is the partition mentioned in 1 Kings vii. 21.

Ver. 15. *Also he made before the house.*] Before the entrance into the sanctuary.

Two pillars of thirty and five cubits high.] They were not each of them thus high, but both of them together, as it is explained 1 Kings vii. 15.

And the chapiter that was on the top of each of them was five cubits.] In the form of a crown, as the Targum expresses it. (See 1 Kings vii. 16.)

Ver. 16. *And he made chains, as in the oracle.*] See 1 Kings vi. 21.

And put them on the heads of the pillars; and made a hundred pomegranates, and put them on the chains.] There were a hundred in two rows, two hundred in all. (See 1 Kings vii. 20.)

Ver. 17. *And he reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz.*] See 1 Kings vii. 21. The Targum on these words makes this commentary; He called the one Jachin, because Nachon, the kingdom of the house of David, was *established*; and the other Boaz, from the name of the patriarch of that royal house of Judah, from whom all their kings were derived.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *MOREOVER, he made an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof.*] The making this altar so many cubits high, may seem to contradict God's command, Exod. xx. 26. But see what I have noted there, to shew how the ascent might be so contrived, that the priest's nakedness should not be discovered. The making it of brass also was, no doubt, by the direction of God, who told David how such things should be made, (1 Chron. xxviii.) as L'Empereur very well observes.

Ver. 2. *Also he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round in compass, and five cubits the height thereof; and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about.*] This and the following verses are explained 1 Kings vii. 23.

Ver. 3. *And under it was the similitude of oxen, which did compass it round about; ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about.*] These oxen are called knops in 1 Kings vii. 24. which were little protuberances, or bunches, round about the lips of the laver, in the figure of oxen. There were ten of them in every cubit, and the circumference being thirty cubits, there were three hundred of them in one row; and they being cast in two rows, one under another, were six hundred in all.

Two rows of oxen were cast, when it was cast.] They were not fastened on afterward, but cast together with the vessel itself. So Kimchi and Jarchi; the latter of which thus explains it: They were not joined to it by nails or solder, but all cast together with the sea.

Ver. 4. *It stood upon twelve oxen, three looking towards the north, and three looking towards the west, and three looking towards the south, and three looking towards the east: and the sea was set above upon them, and all their hinder parts were inward.*] See upon 1 Kings vii. 25.

Ver. 5. *And the thickness of it was a hand-breadth, and the brim of it like the work of the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies; and it received and held three thousand baths.*] See this account reconciled with that in 1 Kings vii. 26. The Targum here thus paraphrases: *Three thousand baths of things dry, and two thousand of things liquid.* But others better explain it, that the quantity of water which was commonly in it was two thousand baths; but if it were filled up to the top it would hold three thousand.

Ver. 6. *He made also ten lavers, and put five on the right hand, and five on the left, to wash in them: such things as they offered for the burnt-offering they washed in them; but the sea was for the priests to wash in.*] See there, 1 Kings vii. 38, 39.

Ver. 7. *And he made ten candlesticks of gold.*] See upon 1 Kings vii. 49.

According to their form, and set them in the temple, five on the right hand, and five on the left.] Those words, *according to their form,* are thus translated by the Targum, *as was convenient or agreeable to them.* Or the meaning may be, *according to the pattern which David gave him.*

Ver. 8. *He made also ten tables, and placed them in the temple, five on the right side, and five on the left; and he made a hundred basons of gold.*] See upon 1 Kings vii. 48. Some have observed, that there was the very same furniture made by Solomon for the most holy place that was made by Moses; but in the holy place there was an augmentation made of ten candlesticks and ten tables. But they should have remembered, that Solomon also added two cherubims, and of a larger size, to the most holy place, which were not there before.

Ver. 9. *Furthermore, he made the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with brass.*] See 1 Kings vi. 36. where the court of the priests is called *the inner court,* it being next the sanctuary: and by the *great court* here is meant the court of the people, to which he made doors.

Ver. 10. *And he set the sea on the right side of the east end, over against the south.*] See my notes upon 1 Kings vii. 39.

Ver. 11. *And Huram made the pots, and the shovels, and the basons. And Huram finished the work that he was to make for king Solomon for the house of God.*] See there, 1 Kings vii. 40. He did not stir from the work, but finished it all before he left Solomon's service.

Ver. 12. *To wit, the two pillars, and the pommels.*] Or, *the globes,* as we now speak, and as the Targum translates it.

And the chapiters which were on the top of the two pillars; and the two wreaths to cover the two pommels of the chapiters which were on the top of the pillars.] This is there explained, 1 Kings vii. 41.

Ver. 13. *And four hundred pomegranates on the two wreaths,* &c.] See ver. 42.

Ver. 14. *And he made bases,* &c.] See ver. 43.

Ver. 15. *One sea, and twelve oxen under it.*] See ver. 44.

Ver. 16. *The pots also, and the shovels, and the flesh-hooks, and all their instruments, did Huram his father make to king Solomon, for the house of the Lord, of bright brass.*] In 1 Kings vii. 45. it is said, *which Hiram made:* and that is the meaning here; for the words are best translated *Hiram Abi,* or Abif, *did make.* See upon chap. ii. 13. which seems more easy than other expositions which may be given of the words. For some think Solomon calls him *his father,* out of great respect to him; or, because he was the inventor of all this excellent work, (as in Gen. iv. 20, 21.) or it is a short speech, for *Hiram and his father.*

Ver. 17. *In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay-ground between Succoth and Zeredathah.*] See 1 Kings vii. 46.

Ver. 18. *Thus Solomon made all these vessels in great abundance.*] More for ornament and grandeur, than for necessary use.

For the weight of the brass could not be found out.] See 1 Kings vii. 47.

Ver. 19. *And Solomon made all the vessels that were for the house of God.*] That is, for the sanctuary.

The golden altar also, and the tables whereon the shew-bread was set.] One table only was made by Moses, but Solomon made ten, (ver. 8.) for the greater convenience of the priests in their ministration: that they might have a table at hand, whereon to set the bread which they took off, when they set on new upon the table of shew-bread. But it is not improbable, that *tables* in the plural are put for *table* in the singular, and that he speaks of that on which the bread stood before the Lord. Which, I suppose, was of gold, as the other were of silver.

Ver. 20. *Moreover, the candlesticks with their lamps, that they should burn after the manner.*] Which God had appointed in the law of Moses.

Before the oracle, of pure gold.] Here the Targum calls the oracle, *the house of expiations:* because into this most holy place the high-priest went with the blood, to make atonement on the great day of expiation.

Ver. 21. *And the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, made he of gold, and that perfect gold.*] The Hebrew word *miklot,* which signifies *perfection,* denotes gold most purified, as Kimchi saith their doctors expound it. But he thinks it signifies simply, all these vessels were of gold.

Ver. 22. *And the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and the censers, of pure gold.*] See upon 1 Kings vii. 50.

And the entry of the house, the inner doors thereof for the most holy place, and the doors of the house of the temple, were of gold.] They were not entirely of massy gold, but of wood, (as we read 1 Kings vi. 31, &c.) covered with plates of gold, (ver. 35. and see 1 Kings xviii. 16.)

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *THUS all the work that Solomon made for the house of the Lord was finished: and Solomon brought in all the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.*] See 1 Kings vii. 51. David, we read 1 Chron. xxii. 14. made such vast preparations for building of this house, that there was more than could be spent in the work. What remained, therefore, Solomon would not employ to his own use, but laid it up in the treasures of God's house.

Ver. 2. *Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is in Zion.*] See 1 Kings viii. 1.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto the king.*] That is, all the persons forementioned.

In the feast which was in the seventh month.] See 1 Kings viii. 2. The feast of tabernacles, which they kept seven days; and the feast of dedication, which lasted as many, (chap. vii. 9.)

Ver. 4. *And all the elders of Israel came; and the Levites took up the ark.*] That is, they whose office it was to carry it.

Ver. 5. *And they brought up the ark, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle; these did the priests and the Levites bring up.*] See 1 Kings viii. 3.

Ver. 6. *Also king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude.*] See 1 Kings viii. 5. The observation of Victorinus Strigelius upon this history is very pious: That nothing is more lovely in human things, than such concord as here appeared among all orders of men; both of teachers and learners, magistrates, soldiers, and people, who were all combined to promote the service and honour of God. Such unity ought to be studied by Christian people, that we may be all one, as our Saviour prayed.

Ver. 7. *And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, to the oracle of the house, in the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims.*] The very same words are in 1 Kings viii. 6. (See there.)

Ver. 8. *For the cherubims spread forth their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.*] And this verse also is the same with 1 Kings viii. 7.

Ver. 9. *And they drew out the staves of the ark, that the ends of the staves were seen from the ark before the oracle, but they were not seen without. And there it is unto this day.*] Or, *they are there*, as the margin hath it, out of 1 Kings viii. 8. where there are the same words. And when that book was written, they were exactly true; but when this author transcribed them into this book, after the captivity, there were then neither staves nor ark remaining: therefore he only relates how Solomon settled things. (See my notes there.)

Ver. 10. *There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.*] These words also are there explained. (See 1 Kings viii. 10.)

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place.*] Whither they carried the ark, and set it in its place.

For all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course.] As David had appointed in the ordinary service at the temple. But upon this extraordinary occasion they all attended (though it was not their course), at least as many as could, and were sanctified to do all the duties of this great day. For, as Kimchi observes, there were such a multitude of sacrifices offered, that the service of them all was necessary.

Ver. 12. *Also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals, and psalteries, and harps.*] According to their several families, as the Targum well explains it; *viz.* those of the family of Asaph, &c.

Stood at the east end of the altar.] Where the Talmudists say there were two desks for them to stand in and sing. One of which had fifteen steps, on which they sung those songs called the Songs of Degrees, or Steps. For there is no better account, L'Empereur thinks, can be given of that name.

And with them a hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets.] Who joined with the Levites, it appears by the next verse, in praising God.

Ver. 13. *It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord.*] When they were all ready, as one man, to make with one voice a loud sound.

And when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets, and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying.] As soon as they began to sound, and play on the instruments, and sing the following words.

For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.] Many think they sung the whole psalm, which thus begins, *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good*, &c. And so the LXX. in this place, ἐξομολογεῖσθε τῷ Κυρίῳ, &c. and the Vulgar in like manner.

That then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord.] In the Hebrew there is nothing answering to the word *even:* but the whole may be thus plainly rendered, *The house was filled with the cloud of the house of the Lord.* That is, with the cloud that was wont to be in the most holy place, and was the token of the gracious presence and favour of the Divine Majesty among them.

Ver. 14. *So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.*] See 1 Kings viii. 19. It is a pious reflection which Victorinus Strigelius makes upon this place: Which admonisheth us, saith he, first, of the presence of God in

his church; and, secondly, of the abrogation of the Levitical worship. It is a most sweet promise of our Saviour, *Where two or three are gathered in my name, I will be there present in the midst of them.* Thus when the Levites here sung his praises, the house of God was filled with a cloud, which was the token of his presence: and when the auditors of the apostles prayed, (Acts iv. 31.) the whole house where they were assembled was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost: but the Levitical priests being unable to discharge their office, after the majesty of the Lord filled the house; it was a plain signification that their ministry and way of worship should cease, when the Messiah came, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *THEN said Solomon, The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.*] When Solomon saw that token of the Divine presence, he made this speech to the priests. See 1 Kings viii. 12. and the following verses; for there is little in this chapter but what is there explained: the sense, and commonly the very words, being the same. The paraphrase of the Targum upon these words is very remarkable, which is this: "The Lord would have his Schechinah, or glorious presence, to reside in his city Jerusalem, in his sanctuary, which I have built to the name of his Word; and, behold, a thick cloud covereth it." This notion of God's dwelling in darkness was among the heathen (who hence learned it), for Justin Martyr observes, that Orpheus, and another ancient writer, call God Πάγκρυφον, *altogether hidden.* And the Lacedemonians, who pretend to be of kin to the Jews, had a temple dedicated to Ζεὺς Σκοτεινὸς, *Jupiter the dark,* as Strabo relates out of Pausanias. (See Meurs. Miscell. Lacon. lib. i. cap. 1.)

Ver. 2. *But I have built a house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever.*] See there, 1 Kings viii. 13.

Ver. 3. *And the king turned his face, and blessed the whole congregation of Israel (and all the congregation of Israel stood).*] Who were in the great court before the house. (See there, ver. 14.)

Ver. 4. *And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath with his hands fulfilled that which he spake with his mouth to my father David, saying.*] The same with what is there said, ver. 15.

Ver. 5. *Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt, I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build a house in, that my name might be there; neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel.*] The last words of this verse are very different from those 1 Kings viii. 16. where it is said, *but I chose David to be over my people Israel.* Till whose time there was no settled succession of a ruler, that he and his posterity should reign over them; but God raised up judges out of what tribe and family he pleased: and when he made Saul king, did not continue that dignity in his family, as he did to David.

Ver. 6. *But I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel.*] But now he declared both the city wherein he would dwell, and also the person and family whom he would have to govern Israel.

Ver. 7. *Now, it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of the Lord God of Israel.*

Ver. 8. *But the Lord said to David my father, Forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build a house for my name, thou didst well in that it was in thine heart.*

Ver. 9. *Notwithstanding thou shalt not build the house; but thy son, which shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name.*

Ver. 10. *The Lord therefore hath performed his word that he hath spoken; for I am risen up in the room of David my father, and am set on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised, and have built the house for the name of the Lord God of Israel.*] All these four verses are in the same words, 1 Kings viii. 17—20. (See there.) I shall only therefore observe here, how the Targum translates the last words of this verse; *built a house to the name of the Word of the Lord God of Israel.* In which he makes the Word a distinct person from the Lord God of Israel, but Lord God also; else he would not have built a house for his name, that he might be there worshipped and served.

Ver. 11. *And in it have I put the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, that he made with the children of Israel.*] There is no difference between these words and those 1 Kings viii. 21. but that there he saith, *I have set there the place of the ark;* which is the same in effect with these words, which signify he had put the ark in the most holy place.

Ver. 12. *And he stood before the altar of the Lord, in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands.*] See upon 1 Kings viii. 22.

Ver. 13. *For Solomon had made a brazen scaffold of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands towards heaven.*] This verse is added to what we read in the book of the Kings: and, as Solomon Jarchi observes, hath relation to what goes before, *in the presence of all Israel.* For he was advanced higher than they, that he might be seen and heard of all.

Ver. 14. *And said, O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; which keepest covenant, and shewest mercy unto thy servants that walk before thee with all their hearts.*] See 1 Kings viii. 23. where there are the same words.

Ver. 15. *Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day.*

Ver. 16. *Now therefore, O Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way to walk in my law, as thou hast walked before me.*] These two verses, with very little difference, are in 1 Kings viii. 24, 25.

Ver. 17. *Now then, O Lord God of Israel, let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant David.*

Ver. 18. *(But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!)*] See there, ver. 26, 27. I shall only add the gloss of Kim-

chi upon the last words, "Thou art rather the place of this world, and comprehendest all things, than the world the place of thee, which cannot comprehend thee. Wherefore then have I built this temple? it was only that thy gracious presence might dwell there, hearing the prayers which shall be made in this place." So the next words import.

Ver. 19. *Have respect therefore to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee.*] See there, ver. 28.

Ver. 20. *That thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said that thou wouldest put thy name there; to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth towards this place.*] Those words, *that thine eyes may be open*, the Targum expounds, By his Divine providence and protection, in this place of the residence of his gracious presence, as the words there are.

Ver. 21. *Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall make towards this place: hear thou from thy dwelling-place even from heaven; and when thou hearest, forgive.*] See 1 Kings viii. 30.

Ver. 22. *If a man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to make him swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house.*] See there, ver. 31. Whereby it appears, that a man who was to purge himself of any trespass, whereof he was accused against his neighbour, by an oath, was to do it at the temple, before the altar of God, from whom he expected remission of sin.

Ver. 23. *Then hear thou from heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, by requiting the wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own head; and by justifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteousness.*] See there, 1 Kings viii. 32.

Ver. 24. *And if thy people Israel be put to the worse before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall return and confess thy name, and pray and make supplication before thee in this house:*

Ver. 25. *Then hear thou from the heavens, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest to them, and to their fathers.*] These two verses are, in a manner, the very same with those 1 Kings viii. 33, 34.

Ver. 26. *When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray towards this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them.*] This and all the rest to ver. 32. are the same, in a manner, with 1 Kings viii. 35, 36, &c. And therefore see the explication of them there: and in ver. 29. he desires, that all prayers, whether for private or public concerns that were made here, might be heard.

Ver. 27. *Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, when thou hast taught them the good way wherein they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.*

Ver. 28. *If there be dearth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting, or mildew, locusts, or caterpillars; if their enemies besiege them in the cities of their land; whatsoever sore, or whatsoever sickness there be:*

Ver. 29. *Then what prayer, or what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall know his own sore, and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands in this house:*

Ver. 30. *Then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart thou knowest (for thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men);*

Ver. 31. *That they may fear thee, to walk in thy ways so long as they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.*

Ver. 32. *Moreover, concerning the stranger, which is not of thy people Israel, but is come from a far country for thy great name's sake, and thy mighty hand, and thy stretched-out arm; if they come and pray in this house:*

Ver. 33. *Then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all people of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as doth thy people Israel, and may know that this house, which I have built, is called by thy name.*] These two verses are there also explained, in ver. 41—43. Unto which I shall here add this pious reflection which Dr. Jackson makes upon them: "Solomon knew the goodness of God to be so great, that it could not be a whit lessened towards Israel, how far soever it was extended towards other people. Happy had it been for that nation, if their charity had been like this of their heavenly Father. But it was their seeking to engross God's promised blessings to mankind, which brought that grievous curse upon them, under which they groan at this day."

Ver. 34. *If thy people go out to war against their enemies by the way that thou shalt send them, and they pray unto thee towards this city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:*

Ver. 35. *Then hear thou from the heavens their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.*

Ver. 36. *If they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not), and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near;*

Ver. 37. *Yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captives, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly;*

Ver. 38. *If they return to thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray towards their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, and towards the city which thou hast chosen, and towards the house which I have built for thy name:*

Ver. 39. *Then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling-place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.*] All these verses are, with some small variation in a few words, and a large addition to the last verses, in 1 Kings viii. 44—50.

Ver. 40. *Now, my God, let (I beseech thee) thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.*] He sums up all these words, beseeching him, that the prayer which was presented to him here, for any blessing, of what sort soever it was, might be graciously accepted by him.

Ver. 41. *Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy rest-*

ing-place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness.] These words are part of Psal. cxxxii. 8, 9. with a little alteration. Wherein he beseeches God to take up his habitation here, together with his ark (whereby such wonders and miracles had been wrought), and stir from hence no more. And, then, that he would defend his priests, who ministered to him here; that they might obtain his blessings for others: so that all the people might rejoice in his great bounty to them. The Targum here translates the first words after a remarkable manner: *Now therefore, before the Lord God, rest in thy glory, thou, and the ark of thy strength.* Upon which words an unanswerable question is made by Beckius to the Jews; Who is this *thou*, who, according to their paraphrase, rests before Jehovah? Their mouths are stopped, unless they acknowledge another Jehovah, that is, the Word of God (as he is commonly called in the Targum), the second person in the ever-blessed Trinity.

Ver. 42. *O Lord God, turn not away the face of thine anointed.*] Since he had appointed Solomon to be king of his people, he hoped God would have a regard to his humble petition. For as to *look upon* one, or *lift up the countenance* upon him, is to have a kind respect to him; so to *turn away the face*, is to reject and refuse him.

Remember the mercies of David thy servant.] This is another argument for hope, that his prayer would be granted: because God had such a great kindness for David, that he had made very large and most gracious promises unto him, and his seed after him.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *NOW, when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house.*] See 1 Kings viii. 11. This is added to what is recorded in that book, to shew God's gracious acceptance of Solomon's prayer and sacrifices; to give him assurance he would be present in this place, and grant all their petitions. Of which he gave two demonstrations: one by fire sent down from heaven to consume the sacrifices; the other by the glorious cloud filling the whole house. By the former of these, the first sacrifice that we read of in Scripture (that of Abel), it is generally thought was declared to be acceptable unto God, (Gen. iv. 4.) And when the tabernacle was erected, and Aaron consecrated, there was the same testimony given of God's presence there, as here at the consecration of the temple, Lev. ix. 24. (See what I have there noted, and in other places.) I shall only farther add, that the like miraculous token of God's acceptance was shewn, when Elijah contested with the priests of Baal, (1 Kings xviii.) and when David offered sacrifice in the thrashing-floor of Araunah, (1 Chron. xxi. 26.) which had relation to what was now done: for David sacrificed in the very place where the temple was built; and therefore by both these miracles God declared he would be worshipped in this place. They differ only in this, that by the first God admonished David where the temple should be built: and by this he approved and consecrated it when it was built. Dr. Jackson most judiciously adds, that thus was the consecration of the Son of God to his eternal priesthood confirmed by the apparition of the Holy Ghost in a flame of fire; which was the accomplishment of the appearance of Aaron's consecration, and of this at the consecration of the temple.

Ver. 2. *And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house.*] See Exod. xl. 35. 1 Kings viii. 11. But another great man (Dr. Alix) thinks it pertinent here to observe, that there was no such thing in the second temple: though the Lord Christ was to appear in it, and make the glory of the last house greater than the first. For the appearance of the flames of fire on the day of Pentecost was not in the temple, but in Jerusalem: when the Messiah was exalted to his heavenly sanctuary, and the temple devoted to destruction by the Romans.

Ver. 3. *And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house.*] Here was a great assurance that God would be present in this place, in that the glory of the Lord not only *filled the house*, but appeared *upon the house:* so that all the people might see it, and not only have the word of the priests for it. By this they were satisfied that it was God's house, where he would accept their sacrifices, hear their prayers, and bestow his blessing upon them. There is no mention here made of the cloud, as in the book of the Kings; but that is comprehended, as Abarbinel observes, in the *glory* and the *fire*, which were in the cloud. It came down at the first like a cloud, and then broke out in such a light and splendour, as they were not able to behold: and a flame came out upon the altar, and consumed the sacrifices that lay upon it.

They bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped.] They bowed down to the middle of their body, and fell prostrate upon the floor, which was the most profound adoration. These were two distinct acts of worship (bowing and falling flat on the face), but here are joined together upon this great occasion. As Dr. Hyde observes in his Relig. Vet. Persarum, cap. 1. where he notes out of Maimonides, that the pavement was kept very clean: it being unlawful for any one to come into the court with their shoes on their feet, or so much as to spit there.

And praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.] They praised and gave thanks to God (as they had great reason to do, the fire from heaven and the cloud of glory being manifest tokens of God's presence among them) in the same words which the priests had used, who sung the eighty-sixth psalm. (See ver. 13.)

Ver. 4. *Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the Lord.*] They had offered sacrifices before; but now they renew them, and offer more in acknowledgment of this new assurance of God's love unto them.

Ver. 5. *And king Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep.*] See 1 Kings viii. 63. where it is said, he offered only twenty thousand oxen; which was a vast number, but not incredible: nor are these two places inconsistent, as I have there shewn.

So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.] Thus the dedication of the temple ended.

Ver. 6. *And the priests waited on their offices; the Levites*

also with instruments of music of the Lord.] They are called musical instruments of the Lord, because David had made them, as it here follows, *to praise the Lord withal, because his mercy endureth for ever.* (See 1 Chron. xv. 16.)

When David praised by their ministry.] For they sung the psalm of praise which he composed 1 Chron. xvi. 7, &c. In the Hebrew the words are *behallil Dabid bejatham,* with the *hallel* (that is, the hymn of praise) which David had put into their hands for that purpose.

And the priests sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood.] For that was the common posture of worship, whether in prayer or praises.

Ver. 7. *Moreover Solomon hallowed the middle of the court that was before the house of the Lord: for there he offered burnt-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings, because the brazen altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt-offerings, and the meat-offerings, and the fat.*

Ver. 8. *Also at the same time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt.*

Ver. 9. *And in the eighth day they made a solemn assembly; for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days.*] These verses, and the next, are explained in 1 Kings viii. 64—66.

Ver. 10. *And on the three-and-twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the Lord had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people.*] The Targum thus glosses upon the last words of this verse, which express the joy of the people: For the goodness of the Lord, shewn *unto David* in the opening of the doors of the sanctuary; and *unto Solomon,* whose prayer God had accepted, and vouchsafed his glorious presence, in the house he had built; and *unto his people Israel,* in his gracious acceptance of their sacrifices, and sending down fire from heaven to consume them.

Ver. 11. *Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord, and the king's house: and all that came into Solomon's heart to make in the house of the Lord, and in his own house, he prosperously effected.*] See 1 Kings ix. 1.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night.*] See 1 Kings ix. 2.

And said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice.] As appeared by the fire which came down from heaven, and consumed the sacrifice at the consecration of this house.

Ver. 13. *If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people.*] Famine and pestilence were two sore punishments, wherewith God afflicted them for their sins: and the former of them was caused sometimes by want of rain, and sometimes by locusts, who ate up what the earth produced for their sustenance.

Ver. 14. *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*] He had petitioned for the Divine favour and clemency upon no other condition.

Ver. 15. *Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.*] Some take these phrases to signify, that he will always discern, whether they were such as they ought to be; but they rather have the same sense with the next verse, that he would have a gracious respect to them, and testify it by hearing their prayers, as he desired, chap. vi. 40.

Ver. 16. *For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.*] See this explained 1 Kings ix. 3.

Ver. 17. *And as for thee, if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt observe my statutes and my judgments.*] See there, ver. 4.

Ver. 18. *Then will I stablish the throne of thy kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel.*

Ver. 19. *But if ye turn away, and forsake my statutes and commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them;*

Ver. 20. *Then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and will make it to be a proverb and a by-word among all nations.*

Ver. 21. *And this house, which is high, shall be an astonishment to every one that passeth by it; so that he shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and unto this house?*

Ver. 22. *And it shall be answered, Because they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them.*] This and the foregoing verses are the same with those 1 Kings ix. 6—9. and there have been explained.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass (at the end of twenty years, wherein Solomon had built the house of the Lord, and his own house).*] See 1 Kings ix. 10.

Ver. 2. *That the cities which Huram had restored to Solomon, Solomon built them, and caused the children of Israel to dwell there.*] This is a short relation of what is more largely told in the book of the Kings, chap. ix. 12, 13. only here we are further informed, that these cities being restored to Solomon, who had given them to Huram (who disliked them), Solomon built them so, that his own subjects became the inhabiters of them.

Ver. 3. *And Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it.*] This country lay between Euphrates, which was the eastern bounds of it; and Damascus, which was the western, as Bochartus hath demonstrated in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 7.

Ver. 4. *And he built Tadmor in the wilderness.*] See an account of this in 1 Kings ix. 18.

And all the store-cities which he built in Hamath.] All the cities wherein he laid up provision for war, were in this country of Hamath-zobah, as well as Tadmor.

Ver. 5. *Also he built Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether, fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars.*]

Only one of these cities is mentioned in the book of the Kings, *viz.* the nether. But both of them were built before, and he now only repaired, enlarged, beautified, and made them strong places. (See 1 Kings ix. 17.)

Ver. 6. *And Baalath, and all the store-cities that Solomon had.*] That is, elsewhere as well as in the land of Hamath.

And all the chariot-cities, and the cities of the horsemen, and all that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and throughout all the land of his dominion.] See 1 Kings ix. 19.

Ver. 7. *As for all the people that were left of the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which were not of Israel,*

Ver. 8. *But of their children, who were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel consumed not, them did Solomon make to pay tribute until this day.*

Ver. 9. *But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no servants for his work; but they were men of war, and chief of his captains, and captains of his chariots and horsemen.*] These three verses are the same with 1 Kings ix. 20—22.

Ver. 10. *And these were the chief of king Solomon's officers, even two hundred and fifty, that bare rule over the people.*] How this agrees with the book of the Kings, where it is said they were five hundred and fifty, see upon 1 Kings ix. 23.

Ver. 11. *And Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David.*] Where she first dwelt, (1 Kings iii. 1.)

Unto the house that he had built for her.] See 1 Kings vii. 8.

For he said, My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places are holy, whereunto the ark of the Lord hath come.] All houses into which the ark had come, were not thereby made holy, for then the house of Obed-Edom would have been so. But where it had been settled so long, as it had been in David's house, and had a tabernacle made for it, there was a special regard to the place, where it had made its abode: and Solomon would not suffer a stranger (for so his wife was, though proselyted) to keep her court there. For it is not likely, she, and all her servants, had embraced the law of Moses, though they had renounced idolatry; and so might many ways defile a place, which had been made sacred by a Divine presence in it: many other reasons are given by interpreters, to which I refer the reader: and only add, that Abarbinel thought it sufficient to say, that it would have sounded very ill, to hear the people say, that Pharaoh's daughter dwelt where the ark of God had inhabited. And he looks upon this as an argument, that the heart of Solomon continued hitherto right with God, and had no intentions to commit those sins he afterward did: and therefore God at this time vouchsafed him the gift of prophecy.

Ver. 12. *Then Solomon offered burnt-offerings unto the Lord on the altar of the Lord, which he had built before the porch.*] That is, he settled the daily sacrifice at the temple.

Ver. 13. *Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year; even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.*] He took care the law of Moses should be strictly observed, which prescribed what offerings should be offered every day, (Exod. xxix. 38, 39.) and at several other solemn times, here mentioned, (Exod. xxiii. 14. and other places.)

Ver. 14. *And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, the courses of the priests to their service, and the Levites to their charges, to praise and minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required.*] Next of all he took care to confirm and establish the orders which David had made, for the regular attendance of the priests and Levites upon the service of God. Who were but few in the days of Moses, in comparison of what they were now; and therefore David disposed them so, that all confusion might be avoided: and also assigned them new employments, in singing the hymns which he composed, and playing upon musical instruments, whereby he made the service of God more beautiful and cheerful. (See 1 Chron. xxiv. xxv.)

The porters also by their courses at every gate.] These words shew that the porters were distributed into twenty-four courses, as well as the priests and Levites: though this order of David's be not there expressly mentioned. (See what I have noted upon 1 Chron. xxvi. 27, 28.)

For so David the man of God commanded.] He is called by the name of the *man of God*, as Moses was; because after Moses there was none like him, so divinely inspired, to raise the public worship of God to a higher pitch, by his heavenly hymns; and to direct the manner of its performance in such order, that God was served (if I may use here those words of his) *in the beauty of holiness.* For though Solomon, as Strigelius observes, was a very wise man in natural knowledge, and in political affairs, and in moral and Divine things; yet he was much inferior to David in piety, and in the gift of prophecy; as the book of Psalms alone is sufficient to testify: in which there are so many glorious predictions of the Messiah.

Ver. 15. *And they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests and Levites, concerning any matter, or concerning the treasures.*] Whatsoever had been ordered by David in all other matters, Solomon settled them, and the priests and Levites obeyed him.

Ver. 16. *Now, all the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the Lord, and until it was finished: so the house of the Lord was perfected.*] Care was taken, that there should be no stop to the building of God's house: because all materials were prepared before he began it; and every thing projected how it should be done, in every part of it.

Ver. 17. *Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber, and to Eloth, at the sea-side in the land of Edom.*] After he had finished all those great works of the house of the Lord, and his own house, and built many cities, as before recited; he designed to improve navigation, which the Jews did not much understand. And for that end he went to these places, on the Red Sea. (See 1 Kings ix. 26.) Eloth (as is observed by the learned Nic. Fuller in his Miscellanies, lib. iv. cap. 20.) lay nearest to him, which appears from Deut. ii. 8. where we read that the Israelites passing by the country of Edom, came first to Eloth and then to Ezion. But Solomon went first to Ezion, though further off, because there was Ναυπήγιον, the place where ships were built and fitted

up: which Solomon made haste, with the greatest diligence and speed, to inspect, and see in what forwardness they were.

Ver. 18. *And Huram sent him, by the hands of his servants, ships, and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought them to king Solomon.*] Besides those ships which Solomon had built, Huram sent more, who brought able seamen with them to manage the whole fleet. See there, ver. 27, 28. where only four hundred and twenty talents are said to be brought: of which I have there given an account, and shewn it doth not disagree with this place.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.*

Ver. 2. *And Solomon told her all her questions: and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not.*] There is little in this chapter, but what is related in 1 Kings x. where see concerning these two verses, ver. 1—3. I shall only add, that the hard questions she came to ask, were not the curious inquiries into the secrets of natural things, or new political matters, but about things pertaining to piety, and the service of God. For our Saviour saith, she came to hear the *wisdom of Solomon*, and should therefore rise up in judgment against that generation, who would not learn of him: and in 1 Kings x. 1. it is said, the fame she heard of Solomon was *concerning the name of the Lord:* which moved her to this journey.

Ver. 3. *And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built,*

Ver. 4. *And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his cup-bearers also, and their apparel; and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her.*

Ver. 5. *And she said to the king, It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom.*

Ver. 6. *Howbeit, I believed not their words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and, behold, the one-half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: for thou exceedest the fame that I heard.*

Ver. 7. *Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.*] All that is contained in the foregoing verses, is related in the same words (with very little difference) in 1 Kings x. 4—8. where see what I have noted.

Ver. 8. *Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on his throne, to be king for the Lord thy God.*] In these words she says a great deal more than is there related ver. 9. for she here calls the throne of Israel the *throne of the Lord:* and acknowledges Solomon to be made *king for the Lord his God;* that is, not only to rule by his authority, and as his viceroy, but for his glory, and to promote his religion.

Because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.] See upon 1 Kings x. 9.

Ver. 9. *And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices great abundance, and precious stones: neither was there any such spice as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon.*

Ver. 10. *And the servants also of Huram, and the servants of Solomon, which brought gold from Ophir, brought algum-trees and precious stones.*

Ver. 11. *And the king made of the algum-trees terraces to the house of the Lord, and to the king's palace, and harps and psalteries for singers: and there were none such seen before in the land of Judah.*] This and the two foregoing verses are explained in 1 Kings x. 10—12.

Ver. 12. *And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides that which she had brought unto the king. So she turned, and went away to her own land, she and her servants.*] The last clause, concerning his presents (*viz. besides that which she had brought unto the king*), is expressed much otherwise in 1 Kings x. 13. where the words are, *besides that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty.* What is here explained to have been done, to requite her for the great presents she had made the king.

Ver. 13. *Now, the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and threescore and six talents of gold.*] See there, ver. 14.

Ver. 14. *Besides that which chapmen and merchants brought: and all the kings of Arabia, and governors of the country, brought gold and silver unto Solomon.*] See there, ver. 15.

Ver. 15. *And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred shekels of beaten gold went to one target.*

Ver. 16. *And three hundred shields made he of beaten gold; three hundred shekels of beaten gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.*] See both this and the foregoing verse there explained, ver. 16, 17.

Ver. 17. *Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.*

Ver. 18. *And there were six steps to the throne, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne, and stays on each side of the sitting-place, and two lions standing by the stays.*] These and the following verses are explained in 1 Kings x. 18—21. where there are the same words; only here is mention made *of a footstool of gold,* which is not taken notice of there.

Ver. 19. *And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom.*

Ver. 20. *And all the drinking-vessels of king Solomon were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver: it was not any thing accounted of in the days of Solomon.*

Ver. 21. *For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Huram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.*] See 1 Kings x. 22.

Ver. 22. *And king Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.*

Ver. 23. *And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart.*

Ver. 24. *And they brought every man his present; vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, harness, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.*] See of these verses 1 Kings x. 23—25.

Ver. 25. *And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots.*] See 1 Kings x. 26. and what I have noted there to make this place and that agree together.

And twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed in the chariot-cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.] See there. It is evident that in David's time they had no horses: for Absalom, when he had lost the battle wherein he perished, rode upon a mule to make his escape; and David ordered his own mule to carry Solomon to be anointed. And indeed the country did not produce them: but Solomon being able to make great expenses, had them brought out of Egypt, and maintained this number of chariots; which resembled those of the Grecians; that is, they were small, with two wheels a-piece, carrying a man or two, standing or leaning forward. The following kings could not be at this charge; but upon occasion sent for succour from Egypt, and then mention is always made of their horses.

Ver. 26. *And he reigned over all the kings, from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.*] That is, they were tributaries to him. (See 1 Kings iv. 26.)

Ver. 27. *And the king made silver in Jerusalem as stones.*] This is an hyperbolical expression, signifying such abundance of it, as exceeded all belief.

And cedar-trees made he as the sycamore-trees that are in the low plains in abundance.] This is a wild fig-tree, with which those countries abound; bearing fruit not unlike to figs, but much sweeter, and have no little seeds in them. And being not so good as others are little esteemed, but commonly sold only to the poorer sort of people, as Leon Rawholf informs us in his Travels, par. i. chap. 4.

Ver. 28. *And they brought unto Solomon horses out of Egypt, and out of all lands.*] Such as Cappadocia, which was famous for a noble breed of horses. (See 1 Kings x. 28.) But Egypt is here especially mentioned, because it was nearer, and no place afforded more. From whence, even till the captivity, they sought for supplies, as appears by Zedekiah's sending ambassadors to Egypt, requesting horses from thence, (Ezek. xvii. 15.)

Ver. 29. *Now, the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer, against Jeroboam the son of Nebat?*] In the first book of the Kings it is only said, that his acts were written in the book of the Acts of Solomon. (See chap. xi. 41.) But here we are told the particular books wherein they were recorded. And the last of these authors (*viz.* Iddo) wrote also the acts of Rehoboam, chap. xii. 15. of this book: and some suppose he lived till the time of Asa, chap. xv. 1. where he is called Obed. Howsoever that be, it appears by this, that the prophets, as I noted before, were also historians, who gave an account of what passed in their times: out of whose work this short history was extracted. And Abarbinel is of opinion, that there were two books or catalogues written of the acts of Solomon; one, De Rebus Prioribus, of what passed in the beginning of his reign, giving an account of his great buildings, and of the splendour wherein he lived, and the prosperity he enjoyed; and these were written by Nathan: the other, De Rebus Posterioribus, giving an account of what passed in the latter end of his life; how he doated upon women, and fell into idolatry, and was threatened with terrible punishments, and had several adversaries raised against him, &c. which were all written by Ahijah the Shilonite. And some of these things were also recorded by another author, Iddo; who wrote concerning the acts of Jeroboam, which could not be related without touching upon some part of Solomon's reign. These three did not join to make one book, but severally and distinctly gave an account of such things as occurred to their knowledge; out of which, it is probable, Ezra took many things, which he hath supplied in this book.

Ver. 30. *And Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.*

Ver. 31. *And Solomon slept with his fathers; and he was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.*] These two verses are the last words of 1 Kings xi. 42, 43.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND Rehoboam went to Shechem: for to Shechem were all Israel come to make him king.*

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat (who was in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of Solomon the king) heard it, that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt.*] See 1 Kings xii. where this chapter is so fully explained, that little is to be added here.

Ver. 3. *And they sent and called him.*] The Targum well translates it, *for they sent*, giving a reason why he returned from Egypt.

So Jeroboam and all Israel came, and spake to Rehoboam, saying,

Ver. 4. *Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee.*] This verse is the same in sense with 1 Kings xii. 4. and so are those that follow, with those that follow there; where see them explained. I shall only add, that if this complaint of Solomon's hard usage of them was true, it is probable that when he was corrupted by the love of money and strange women, and fell into idolatry, he also oppressed his subjects; being unable to maintain such great expenses, as so many wives and concubines, and building them places for religious worship (besides other things beforementioned) put him unto, without greater treasures than he had heaped up to support them. At least they began to be exhausted, which tempted him to these ill courses to keep them full.

Ver. 5. *And he said unto them, Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed.*] The rest of this chapter is so much the very same, not only in sense, but also in words, with what we had before in the book of the Kings, that I shall not transcribe it.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he gathered of the house of Judah and Benjamin a hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam.*

Ver. 2. *But the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,*

Ver. 3. *Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying,*

Ver. 4. *Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren: return every man to his house; for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the Lord, and returned from going against Jeroboam.*] These four verses I have explained in my notes upon 1 Kings xii. 21—24.

Ver. 5. *And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and built cities for defence in Judah.*] That is, he strengthened his frontiers against the ten tribes that were revolted from him.

Ver. 6. *He built even Beth-lehem, and Etam, and Tekoa.*

Ver. 7. *And Beth-zur, and Shoco, and Adullam.*] We are told in 1 Chron. iv. 32. that Etam was a town in the tribe of Simeon: therefore this shews that some portion of that tribe adhered to the house of David, after Jeroboam made this rent in the kingdom.

Ver. 8. *And Gath, and Mareshah, and Ziph.*

Ver. 9. *And Adoraim, and Lachish, and Azekah.*

Ver. 10. *And Zorah, and Aijalon, and Hebron, which are in Judah and in Benjamin fenced cities.*] It is apparent from hence, that by *building cities of defence,* (ver. 5.) is meant only repairing and fortifying them: for they were built before, but perhaps he now enlarged some of them, and made them more capacious.

Ver. 11. *And he fortified the strong holds, and put captains in them, and store of victual, and of oil and wine.*] These strong holds, I suppose, were in the heart of his country: which he furnished with good garrisons and provisions; that they might be able to maintain a siege, in case their enemies should make an irruption into his country.

Ver. 12. *And in every several city he put shields and spears, and made them exceeding strong, having Judah and Benjamin on his side.*] Who were two warlike and valiant tribes, by whose assistance he made every one of these cities a magazine; out of which, upon occasion, soldiers might be furnished with arms. Which was a necessary precaution in doubtful times, for the preservation of his kingdom.

Ver. 13. *And the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to him out of all their coasts.*] So the tribe of Levi was added to the tribe of Judah; though not all the cities wherein they dwelt: which they were forced to leave, when they would not conform to the idolatrous worship which Jeroboam had set up. The tribe of Simeon likewise was so intermixed with Judah, that, in all probability, more cities of it besides that beforementioned, if not all, became one body with it; which made Judah a very powerful kingdom.

Ver. 14. *For the Levites left their suburbs, and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem; for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the Lord.*] After the right manner, according to the law of Moses. For they refused to offer sacrifices before his calves in Dan and Beth-el: and he would not let them go to do their duty at Jerusalem, the place which the Lord had chosen; and therefore they left their dwellings and possessions, and went to live there. He mentions Jeroboam's sons as well as himself; because they were his principal counsellors, and assistants in the change he made in religion.

Ver. 15. *And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made.*] See 1 Kings xii. 28, 29, &c. A new religion being set up by Jeroboam, devised out of his own head, wherein he ordained a solemnity in the eighth month, which was not of God's institution, all that he did was profane. The priests profane, the feasts profane: and so were the sacrifices and the whole worship. And therefore he calls (as Bochartus well observes) the objects of their worship *devils* and not *gods:* and the ministers of this religion he calls not *cohen, priests,* but *chemarim:* (Hos. x. 5.) and their solemnities, instead of the *feast of God,* he calls the *day of their king* (Hos. vii. 5. because instituted by their king, and not by God); and the place of worship, instead of Beth-el, he calls Beth-aven, (Hos. x. 5. 8.) that is, not the *house of God,* but the *house of wickedness,* or of *idolatry.* For the ointment (as he speaks) being turned into deadly poison, the inscription ought not to remain upon the pot or box, wherein it was contained. (See his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 34. p. 357.) There is a late writer, indeed (Antonius van Dale), who labours to persuade us, that the word *seirim* (which we translate *devils*) signifies no more than *goats;* which were worshipped in Egypt: from whence Jeroboam lately coming brought this worship along with him. But who can think the Israelites would have been drawn to adore so filthy a creature? which was worshipped by the Egyptians, as several other hairy creatures were, and the image of them held in great veneration (Pan being represented below in that form), as Bochartus hath observed: yet signified also *demons,* which appeared in that shape. Thus the ancient interpreters, the Chaldee, the Syriac, the Arabic, and all the Jews, understand it, as the same learned man hath largely shewn, in the same book, lib. ii. cap. 53. p. 643.

Ver. 16. *And after them, out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers.*] The good example of the priests and Levites moved many pious people to quit their habitations and estates, rather than forsake, or not have the exercise of their religion.

Ver. 17. *So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, three years: for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon.*] Though the number of people that came to him out of all the tribes, added great strength to Rehoboam's kingdom; yet his power was chiefly owing unto God: who protected and assisted them, as long as he and his people continued in the way of his predecessors, David and Solomon. From which last words some conclude Solomon was a penitent, because he is mentioned here as an example of true piety, as well as David. But it cannot be certainly inferred hence, because this may relate only to the greatest part of his reign, before he lapsed in his old age, and forsook the law of Moses. The book of Ecclesiastes is a better proof of it,

which the Jews generally think was written when he was old: wherein he sensibly expresses the vanity of all earthly things; and particularly speaks with great detestation of bad women, by whom he had been seduced, (Eccles. vii. 26.) Here it is to be observed, that the corruption of Judah and Israel began in the fourth year of Rehoboam; (see xii. 1.) and from thence begin the three hundred and ninety years of their iniquity, mentioned by Ezekiel, iv. 5. which lasted to the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 18. *And Rehoboam took him Mahalath, the daughter of Jeremoth the son of David, to wife.*] We never read of Jeremoth among the sons of David, but only here. Some think he was by a concubine, who is not named.

And Abihail, the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse.] His grand-daughter; for he was David's eldest brother.

Ver. 19. *Which bare him children; Jeush, and Shamariah, and Zaham.*] He speaks, I suppose, of the latter of these wives, who bare him these children.

Ver. 20. *And after her he took Maachah, the daughter of Absalom, which bare him Abijah, and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith.*] This wife was his first cousin (as we call such persons), being the daughter of his uncle: if this be meant of Absalom the son of David. But it is evident this was another person of the same name of Gibeah, which was in the tribe of Benjamin, (xiii. 2.) whereas Absalom the son of David was of Judah.

Ver. 21. *And Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives and his concubines (for he took eighteen wives, and threescore concubines; and begat twenty and eight sons, and threescore daughters).*] So great was their desire of having abundance of children in those days, that they entrenched upon the law of God, who commanded their kings should not multiply wives. But David indulged himself in it, and Solomon a great deal more: and so did Rehoboam and Abijah, who had both of them a numerous issue. For virginity in those days was not accounted a virtue: and the greatest unhappiness in a married estate was barrenness.

Ver. 22. *And Rehoboam made Abijah the son of Maachah the chief, to be ruler among his brethren.*] He was his eldest son by his beloved wife, whom he put in authority over all the rest, which he had by her, and by his former wives.

For he thought to make him king.] Such power, I have observed before, they then challenged: and in order to it, he seems to have committed unto Abijah the management of all affairs under himself.

Ver. 23. *And he dealt wisely, and dispersed all his children throughout all the countries of Judah and Benjamin.*] Upon which words Kimchi glosses very well: He thought seriously of this thing, and, fearing a rebellion, broke all his sons (that is, did not suffer them to live together), and dispersed them into all parts of the country under his government, that he might confirm the kingdom in the hand of his son Abijah. Thus Abraham anciently sent his sons which he had by Keturah into other countries, that they might not be troublesome to Isaac, who he intended should be his heir: and thus Jehoshaphat did in following times after this, (xxi. 3.)

Unto every fenced city.] Of which, I suppose, he made them governors-in-chief, and committed a great care to them: these cities being frontier places, as I observed ver. 5. where, it is probable, he had trusted persons to watch and observe them, that they entered not into any combinations to defeat his design.

And he gave them victual in abundance.] He provided for them amply, that they might not be discontented, but live at their ease.

And he desired many wives.] This might possibly be for his children, that they might in their several governments live very pleasantly. But, considering his temper, most interpreters think it was for himself: being not satisfied with those wives he had already, but still desiring more.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself.*] When he thought himself safe, and out of all danger.

He forsook the law of the Lord.] His evil inclinations began to appear; which he derived, it is likely, from his mother, who was an Ammonitess. (See 1 Kings xiv. 21.)

And all Israel with him.] See 1 Kings xiv. 22—24.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass, that, in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem (because they had transgressed against the Lord).*] See 1 Kings xiv. 25. Their apostacy was in the fourth year of his reign; (after they had been three years obedient, xi. 17.) therefore God speedily corrected them, that he might reduce them to his service, before they were settled in their impiety.

Ver. 3. *With twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people were without number.*] That is, the footmen in his army.

That came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians.] There is no doubt the Lubims were the people of Lybia, a famous country in Africa, adjoining to Egypt. And the Sukkiims are the people called Troglodytes, who lived near the Red Sea: and had that name Troglodytes, because they dwelt ἐν τρώγλαις, *in caves and dens of the earth:* which is the very signification of the Hebrew word *Succha;* which in that language imports not only *tabernacles,* but also *caves* or *dens,* as in Psal. x. 9. Job xxxviii. 40. From this people there was a town, upon the coast of the Red Sea, called *Succhæ:* and at this day, with a little alteration, *Suachen,* as Bochartus observes in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 29. As for the people called *Cush* (which we translate *Ethiopians*), they were either those to the south of Egypt, or the Scenitæ in Arabia: for I have observed elsewhere it was a name common to both. (See the same most learned author in the same book, cap. 33.)

Ver. 4. *And he took the fenced cities which pertained to Judah.*] Where the sons of Rehoboam were governors: who, perhaps, there perished.

And came to Jerusalem.] The frontier towns being taken, nothing hindered his coming hither. For, trusting to his fenced cities, he had raised no army to oppose Shishak: or, if he had, they durst not oppose his progress.

Ver. 5. *Then came Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and to the princes of Judah that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak.*] As to a place of more safety than the country; or, perhaps, to consult what to do, in a time of so great danger.

And said unto them, Thus saith the Lord, Ye have forsaken

me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak.] The Chaldee translates this, *Ye have forsaken my fear;* that is, his worship, and turned to idols: therefore God gave them up into the power of an idolater.

Ver. 6. *Whereupon the princes of Israel.*] They are called *the princes of Israel,* because there were many Israelites among them; and they had all lately been comprehended under this name.

And the king humbled themselves; and they said, The Lord is righteous.] Sorrowfully confessed that the Lord had most justly punished them for their sins.

Ver. 7. *And when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves, therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak.*] Their humiliation prevailed with God so far, that he moderated his anger, and respited the destruction which was coming upon them: promising he would not suffer Shishak to do so much mischief as he designed. Yet he seems to intimate, that if they went on to provoke him, he would use some other hand to ruin them.

Ver. 8. *Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.*] He resolved to let them feel the difference between him and all other lords and masters: and how much more happy they were while they continued to worship and serve him, than when they fell under a foreign yoke.

Ver. 9. *So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.*] Which was basely yielded up to him, ἀμαχητὶ, *without striking a stroke,* as Dionysius Halicarnassus speaks. Who is thought by learned men to have respect to this place, when he saith, that Sesostris made an expedition into Palestine, Λαβὼν ἀμαχητὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐν αὐτῷ, *taking all the men there without fighting.* And it was to be ascribed only to the great goodness of God, that he did not possess himself absolutely of the whole country, and make it a province subject and tributary to the king of Egypt. For unless God had diverted him, he might have done what he pleased: it being in his power to extirpate the Jewish nation.

And took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all; he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

Ver. 10. *Instead of which king Rehoboam made shields of brass, and committed them to the hands of the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house.*

Ver. 11. *And when the king entered into the house of the Lord, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard-chamber.*] These three verses have been explained in 1 Kings xiv. 25—28. Only from hence may be gathered, that the golden shields were made for state, to be used by his guard when they attended him to the house of the Lord: this being the use of the brazen shields which were made in their stead.

Ver. 12. *And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the Lord turned from him, that he would not destroy him altogether.*] When he saw his danger he humbled himself, before Shishak came to Jerusalem: and after he had taken and ransacked it, he humbled himself still more. And thereby diverted that utter destruction, which such an army might have brought upon him, and which their sins deserved. For it appears, by the language of the prophet, God was most highly provoked by the defection of Judah so suddenly from him, *to pour out his wrath* upon them.

And also in Judah things went well.] They began again to prosper. But the words in the Hebrew being, there were *good things in Judah,* they may be understood of the reformation made in the whole kingdom; many good things being found among them, in the midst of their corruption. For the priests, I suppose, kept up the worship of God in its purity, and many good people joined in it; especially such as had fled from the idolatry of Jeroboam.

Ver. 13. *So king Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and reigned.*] He repaired the fenced cities which Shishak had taken; and recovered so much strength, that he reigned with some authority.

For Rehoboam was one-and-forty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there: and his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess.] See 1 Kings xiv. 21.

Ver. 14. *And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord.*] This seems to signify, that after his humiliation for his sins, he relapsed again into them (though it may relate to his first provocation); and the reason is here given, because his heart was not intent (as the Targum expounds it) to seek instruction from the Lord.

Ver. 15. *Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet?*] Which was extant when Ezra made this short abstract out of it. For prophets, as I observed before, wrote the history of their own times; as Jarchi says, they did their own prophecies.

And of Iddo the seer, concerning genealogies.] The Targum hath it, *Genealogies of the house of David:* which he set down in the history he wrote of things done in his time.

And there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.] See 1 Kings xiv. 30.

Ver. 16. *And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David: and Abijah his son reigned in his stead.*] As he had designed in his lifetime. (See chap. xi. 22, 23.)

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW, in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah.*] See 1 Kings xv. 1.

Ver. 2. *And he reigned three years in Jerusalem (his mother's name also was Michaiah, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah).*] He gives a different account above, xi. 20, 21. for there his mother is called Maachah, and her father's name is said to be Absalom: and so we read 1 Kings xv. 2. The Targum, therefore, to reconcile these two places, adds a long gloss, in these words, Because she was his legal wife, her name was changed from Maachah to Michajaha, which was a more honourable name: and the name of her father changed into Uriel, that no mention might be made of the name of Absalom. But this reason is frivolous, for she is said to be the daughter of Absalom in the place abovenamed. Therefore a better account of this is given by Jarchi and by Kimchi, who say, that her entire name was Michaiah Maachah; and her father's entire,

name was Uriel Absalom. (See what I have noted upon 1 Kings xv. 2.)

And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.] See 1 Kings xv. 7.

Ver. 3. *And Abijah set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, even four hundred thousand chosen men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, being mighty men of valour.*] Here was such a vast army brought into the field, that the whole strength of both sides was engaged in the controversy, about the restoring the kingdom of Israel to the house of David, who had but half the number of men that was on Jeroboam's side; but thought they had the better cause, and seemed by Abijah's speech to have put such trust in God for succour, that they doubted not of success.

Ver. 4. *And Abijah stood upon Mount Zemaraim, which is in Mount Ephraim.*] It seems Abijah had entered into the country of the Israelites, and there drew up his army, on the hill afterward called Samaria.

And said, Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel.] A great many might hear his voice from so advantageous a place; but all the eight hundred thousand could not. But he desired what he said might be reported to them; and it is very likely he desired a parley before they fought, to see if they could accommodate matters without shedding blood.

Ver. 5. *Ought you not to know.*] They did know, but he means they ought to consider and acknowledge.

That the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and his sons by a covenant of salt?] See concerning this expression, *covenant of salt*, Numb. xviii. 19. The Targum here expounds it, *as the waters of the sea*, which never alter their saltness. But it rather signifies a solemn covenant made by sacrifice, which was always salted, (Lev. ii. 13.)

Ver. 6. *Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up, and has rebelled against his lord.*] Though he had the warrant of a prophet to take the kingdom, yet his own ambition first led him to it; as we may gather from 1 Kings xi. 27.

Ver. 7. *And there are gathered unto him vain men, the children of Belial.*] Such, one would think, his principal partakers were, who so easily changed their religion, that it shewed they regarded neither God nor man, as the word Belial signifies. (See my notes upon 1 Kings xii. 24.) And here it may be further noted, that the high offenders of all sorts are called by the name of *children of Belial*. As those ungodly men, who, like a torrent, came upon David with all manner of violence, are called the *floods of Belial*, (2 Sam. xxii. 5.) and the sacrilegious sons of Eli, (1 Sam. ii. 12.) and the filthy beasts of Gibeah, (Judg. xix. 22.) and blood-thirsty men, (2 Sam. xvi. 7.) and perjured persons, (1 Kings xx. 10.) and pernicious counsellors, (Nahum i. 11.)

And have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young.] He was one-and-forty years old when he came to his kingdom, but not bred up to military affairs; in which he was raw and inexperienced, in a time of long peace.

And tender-hearted.] This doth not so much aggravate their crime, as reflect upon his father; who wanted courage, as this phrase signifies. But if we take it in this sense, Abijah overshot himself: for Rehoboam gathered a great army, and would have fought, if God, by his prophet, had not forbidden him. And if that was his meaning, that he had a tender regard to God's commands, and yielded immediately to them, he spake the truth: for he was fearful then to offend God, and so could not withstand them, as it here follows.

Ver. 8. *And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David.*] But he would not have them think that God would always be of that mind, and let them quietly enjoy what they had usurped. For the kingdom which he governed was not set up by such vain persons as advanced Jeroboam; but the Lord himself: whom they should not be able to withstand.

And ye be a great multitude.] Or, *though* you be far more in number than we; being two to one, (ver. 3.)

And there are with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods.] It may be better translated, *but there are with you*, &c. *i. e.* you have forsaken the Lord, and worshipped other gods (for so the golden calves were esteemed by God), and therefore your vast forces will do you no service.

Ver. 9. *Have you not cast out the priests of the Lord, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites.*] This they could not deny, whatsoever they might pretend against the charge of *forsaking the Lord*.

And have made you priests after the manner of the nations of other lands?] Without any regard to the family they were of, and out of any part of the country. (See 1 Kings xii. 31.)

So that whosoever cometh to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams.] Any one that could make this expense might consecrate himself to be a priest.

The same might be a priest of them that are no gods.] The Targum expresses it thus, *is the priest of him that is not the Word of the Lord.* By which it appears (as from innumerable other places) the Divine Word was the God of Israel, worshipped in the most holy place.

Ver. 10. *But as for us, the Lord is our God.*] So it follows in the Targum, *Unto us the Word of the Lord is our helper, he is our God.*

And we have not forsaken him.] Not quite departed from him: though in some part Abijah (who spake these words) had done evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father had done; and his heart was not perfect with God. (1 Kings xv. 3.)

And the priests, which minister unto the Lord, are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business.] The service of God was orderly performed in his house, by such only as were appointed to it by himself.

Ver. 11. *And they burn unto the Lord, every morning and every evening, burnt-sacrifices and sweet incense: the shew-bread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold, with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening.*] There was nothing omitted, either day or night, which the law required: and he mentions these things thus particularly, that he might put the Israelites in mind how the worship of God was with great solemnity kept up in Judah, which in some years the Israelites had not seen, and perhaps had forgot. But he mentions here only one candlestick, and its lamps, because, as some think, Shishak had carried away the rest.

Or rather, because Solomon had made the other ten candlesticks for ornament, so that they had not lamps in them every night, which burnt only in the great candlestick made by Moses, from evening until morning. (Lev. xxiv. 2, 3.)

For we keep the charge of the Lord our God; but ye have forsaken him.] The Targum here again thus expresses it, *We keep the charge of the Word of the Lord our God.* This gives us reason to think, that Abijah kept up the public worship of God very regularly: though he did evil in the sight of the Lord privately.

Ver. 12. *And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you.*] Upon the sounding of which Moses promised they should "be remembered before the Lord, and saved from their enemies," (Numb. x. 9.) This seems to be added as an amplification of their strict observance of the law of God in all things, in war as well as in peace, which gave them a good hope that he would be with them. And here it may be noted, that it doth not appear, that the priests were forbidden any functions in a civil life: for they went to war, and performed the office of trumpeters in the army, as well as in the temple.

O children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers; for you shall not prosper.] So he concludes his speech, that, if they fought, it was not so much against him, as against the Lord whom their fathers worshipped and they had forsaken, and therefore should not succeed. None of the great captains and commanders, whose speeches are recorded in heathen authors, ever spoke more movingly than this king of Judah did.

Ver. 13. *But Jeroboam caused an ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambushment was behind them.*] We read of no answer to this speech, but Jeroboam seems to have been so much touched with it, that he would not trust to his numbers, but used policy: and, like a great captain, laid an ambush behind the army of Judah, while he faced them with his main body, drawn up in battle-array. For he had such a prodigious multitude with him, that he had men enough to spare upon any design, and more than enough to fight also.

Ver. 14. *And when Judah looked back.*] Hearing a great noise, it is like, behind them.

Behold, the battle was before and behind.] Which put them into sore distress.

And they cried unto the Lord, and the priests sounded with the trumpets.] They were not dismayed, but implored help from God; which the priests gave them hopes to obtain. For *the sounding with the trumpets,* was an imploring of the Divine aid, which God had promised (as I before noted) when they sounded.

Ver. 15. *Then the men of Judah gave a shout.*] To terrify their enemies, by this token of their confidence, that they should have the victory.

And as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.] This is thus expressed by the Targum: When the alarm sounded, the Word of the Lord caused Jeroboam and all Israel to fall, and to be slain by Abijah. For to *smite,* commonly signifies in Scripture language to *kill.*

Ver. 16. *And the children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their hands.*] They seem not to have struck a stroke, but to have been so dismayed, that they run away; and in the chase were slain in vast numbers.

Ver. 17. *And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men.*] This is the greatest slaughter that we ever read of in any story, as Bochartus observes: but it is not incredible, when we consider that God fought for them, and chastised the idolatry of the Israelites to such a degree, that the Jews killed a hundred thousand of them, more than they had in their own army. So Josephus also long ago observes, that there never was such a slaughter heard of, either among the Greeks or barbarians.

Ver. 18. *Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time.*] Very much humbled, but not made subject to the house of David.

And the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers.] It was not by their own valour that they obtained this great victory; but by their leaning (or relying) *upon the Word of the Lord God of their fathers,* as the Targum expresses it.

Ver. 19. *And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him.*] He followed his blow (as we speak), and did not content himself with beating them in the field, but pursued the Israelites into their country, and possessed himself of some of their cities.

Beth-el with the towns thereof.] From whence, it is likely, Jeroboam removed the golden calf, unto some place of greater safety: or else the destruction of it would have been mentioned.

And Jeshanah with the towns thereof, and Ephraim with the towns thereof.] There was a city, as well as a tribe called Ephraim, John xi. 54. which some think was the same with Ophrah.

Ver. 20. *Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and the Lord struck him, and he died.*] Some have made it a doubt, who it is of whom it is said that God *struck him.* And in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 21, the Jews say it was Abijah: for Jeroboam lived a long time, but Abijah reigned only three years: God not granting him a longer life, because of his ingratitude for so great a victory; or, as others will have it, because, when he took Beth-el, he did not destroy nor carry away the golden calf, but let it remain, although he had reproached the Israelites with it, (ver. 8.) But it is uncertain, as I said, whether it was there when the city was taken: and the next verse plainly shews, that Abijah while he lived was mighty: and therefore it was Jeroboam who was struck, and died a year or two after this blow. And as long as he lived, after this defeat, some think he was full of anguish, and such pain in his bowels, as Jehoram had, (chap. xxi. 19.) Thus Abarbinel, and many others.

Ver. 21. *But Abijah waxed mighty, and married fourteen wives, and begat twenty and two sons, and sixteen daughters.*] Not after this victory, but before he was king, in the time of his father; for he lived not long after this success.

Ver. 22. *And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, are written in the story of the prophet Iddo.*] In the Targum it is, *they are written in the Midrasch of the prophet Iddo:* that is, in his *Commentary,* as we translate the Hebrew word here, in the margin of our Bible. (See chap. xii. 15.) This king was a very wise man (as appears by the excellent oration abovementioned); and in

familiar conversation dropped many remarkable *sayings*, like the proverbs of Solomon: which Iddo thought worthy to be recorded and transmitted to posterity.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David; and Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years.*] There was no war declared, but only some private bickerings between his subjects and Baasha's. (See 1 Kings xv. 16.)

Ver. 2. *And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God.*] See concerning this verse and the next, in 1 Kings xv. 11, 12.

Ver. 3. *For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves.*] By this it appears, that though Abijah maintained the public worship of God, (as I observed, chap. xiii. 11.) yet there were also strange gods worshipped in some places.

Ver. 4. *And commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment.*] I suppose he set forth royal edicts, requiring the people to worship the Lord alone, and to observe all the laws of Moses.

Ver. 5. *Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places.*] There were high places in the open fields, (mentioned before, ver. 3.) and also in the cities, which were all taken away by him.

And the images.] In the Hebrew the *sun images*, as we translate it in the margin. Certain it is, that the word *hammanim* imports something belonging to the sun, which Buxtorf renders *Solares statuæ, sun-statues;* because, saith Jarchi, they were set on the tops of houses, and so exposed to the sun. Whence Junius and Tremellius called them *subdiales statuæ*. But Abarbinel thinks they were in the form of the sun, made after the similitude of that globe, and worshipped by those who took the sun for their god. Others think they were temples built for the worship of the sun: which the Vulgar Latin follows.

And the kingdom was quiet before him.] Nobody made opposition to him.

Ver. 6. *And he built fenced cities in Judah.*] On the frontiers of his kingdom.

For the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the Lord had given him rest.] The Targum thus explains it, *Because the land of Israel rested, neither did they more war against him in those years.* That is, the Israelites and their king made no attempt upon him, nor endeavoured to vindicate the late great loss they had received, by the singular providence of God over him. But the meaning may rather be, that *the land of Judah* (which he is speaking of), which had hitherto endeavoured to reduce the ten tribes to the obedience of the house of David, now attempted nothing, nor was assaulted by them or others.

Because the Lord had given him rest.] Of which he made this good use, in providing for war in the time of peace.

Ver. 7. *Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls and towers, gates and bars.*] But he shewed his wisdom in this also, that he did not go about this work without the advice of his council, and the elders of Judah.

While the land is yet before us.] Which the Targum thus expounds, *While the inhabitants of the land are subdued to us:* or, as Jarchi, *While the kingdom is established before us.* That is, while it is in our power, as this phrase signifies.

Because we have sought the Lord our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side: so they have built and prospered.] None gave him the least disturbance till he had finished his works.

Ver. 8. *And Asa had an army of men that bare targets and spears, out of Judah three hundred thousand, and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these were mighty men of valour.*] He was provided also of a great army, if there were any occasion to use it, as well as of places of defence. Some think he raised these men after he heard Zerah intended an invasion upon him: but it rather signifies his great care to have an army in readiness, when he saw no danger of any enemy.

Ver. 9. *And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian.*] King of the Arabians, as Cush here signifies: and must necessarily be so understood in chap. xxi. 16. and 2 Kings xix. 9. See what I have there noted; and Bochartus, in his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 2. where he shews they were a very powerful nation.

With a host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots, and came to Mareshah.] A city upon the borders of Judah, (Josh. xv. 44.)

Ver. 10. *Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.*] He did not stay till he entered his country, but went to fight him upon the frontiers of it.

Ver. 11. *And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said.*] Before he began to fight, he implored the help of Heaven; which he did, I suppose, in the face of all his army, that they might look up to God as their strength and salvation.

Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power.] Or, as the Targum renders it, *There is none besides thee, who helpest both the strong and the weak.*

Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude.] In the Targum it is, *We rely upon thy Word, in the name of thy Word we go forth.* That is, by his authority, in confidence of his power, and in the defence of his kingdom and religion.

O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.] Nothing could more inspire them with courage, than to believe he looked upon their cause as his own, while they owned him for their God.

Ver. 12. *So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah: and the Ethiopians fled.*] As the Israelites had done not long before, (chap. xiii. 15.)

Ver. 13. *And Asa, and the people that were with him, pursued them unto Gerar.*] This was a city of the Philistines, who, it is likely, were their allies and confederates in this war.

And the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves; for they were destroyed before the Lord, and before his host.] The victory was so entire, that they could not rally their forces to renew the fight. It is not said what number were slain, but the word *destroy* signifies that very many perished; for they fought against the Lord and his host, who made a great destruction among them.

And they carried away very much spoil.] From the men that were slain in the field of battle, and those that run away and left their baggage behind them: for he speaks in the next verses of the spoil of their cities, and of the fields about them.

Ver. 14. *And they smote all the cities round about Gerar.*] Into which, it is likely, the Ethiopians fled.

For the fear of the Lord came upon them.] Seeing so vast a host defeated, they had no courage to defend themselves.

And they spoiled all the cities; for there was exceeding much spoil in them.] Partly by their own riches, and partly by the booty which the Ethiopians afforded them.

Ver. 15. *They smote also the tents of cattle, and carried away sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.*] The abundance of camels which they had shew they were Arabians. And the Scenitæ and Nomades (as Bochartus observes) did not live all the year in the open air, but had tents both for themselves and their cattle in winter time. And they that dwelt in tents are opposed to those who lived in the open field, who are said ἀγραυλεῖν. Thus Esau and Jacob are distinguished; the former of which is said to be *a man of the field*, and the other to *dwell in tents*, (Gen. xxv. 27.)

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded.*] Some think he was also called Obed, (ver. 8.) but had the name of Azariah given him, to distinguish him from his father.

Ver. 2. *And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The Lord is with you.*] As appeared by the late glorious victory they had obtained by his help, (chap. xiv. 13.)

While ye be with him.] While you continue to worship him alone.

And if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.] He would not have them presume of his continued favour, if they forsook his worship and service: and therefore admonishes them to stick close to him, otherwise he would forsake them. The Targum thus expresses it, *The Word of the Lord is your helper, while you walk in his ways*, &c.

Ver. 3. *Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God.*] The Targum explains it very clearly: *There have been many days since the house of Israel departed from the house of David, because of Jeroboam: in which they have not worshipped the true God, but the golden calves.*

And without a teaching priest, and without law.] For all the priests were gone into the land of Judah: and the Israelites neglected the study of the law, as the Targum explains the last words. But there are a great number of learned men who will have these words, and those that follow, relate to the times of the judges; when they were more manifestly in such a condition as is here described. And truly Campegius Vitringa hath learnedly asserted this opinion, in his book de Synagoga Veteri, par. ii. lib. i. cap. 6.

Ver. 4. *But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.*] If we follow the common interpretation, which respects the present and future state of Israel, these words should thus be translated; *If in their trouble they had turned*, &c. *they should have found him.*

Ver. 5. *And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in; but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries.*] We do not read of such troubles hitherto in the kingdom of Israel; therefore the words must be translated, *In those times* (if they continue to displease God) *there shall be no peace*, &c. No quiet, no safety; but they shall be infested both by external wars and intestine discords. Which was fulfilled, as we find in their history, 1 Kings xv. xvi. &c.

Ver. 6. *And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city.*] These words also must be translated in the future tense, *Nation shall be destroyed of nation*, &c. Where by *nation* is meant tribe: one of which fought against another, in those times, when there was no certain settled succession in the kingdom; but whosoever killed their king, hoped to make a party to help him to get into the throne.

For God did vex them with all adversity.] For God shall set them one against another, with mutual slaughters, and all those evils that accompany civil wars. The Targum here again translates it, *The Word of the Lord*, &c.

Ver. 7. *Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak.*] To root out idolatry; which had brought such calamities upon the Israelites, and would still bring more.

For your work shall be rewarded.] As they might learn from their late great victory over idolaters.

Ver. 8. *And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet.*] A short expression, being as much as *the son of Obed the prophet*. Though some think the father prophesied as well as the son, and foretold the same calamities: the more to awaken them, and confirm them in the belief of what Azariah said.

He took courage.] This explains the foregoing words, *be strong therefore*, to be meant of an undaunted resolution to abolish idolatry: which required great courage, when so many were addicted to it, and had practised it both in the days of Rehoboam and Abijah.

And put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from Mount Ephraim.] Or, which had been taken, *viz.* by Abijah.

And renewed the altar of the Lord that was before the porch of the Lord.] At the entry of the court of the priests.

Ver. 9. *And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: (for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance.*] Though the Simeonites had their portion out of the tribe of Judah, when the land was divided by Joshua, yet it appears from hence, as well as from other places, that they joined themselves to the rest of the Israelites, when the kingdom was rent by Jeroboam. But now great numbers of them came over to Asa: which they might easily do, for one side of their tribe adjoined to Judah, as the other to Dan.

When they saw that the Lord his God was with him).] The Targum here again renders it, *When he saw the Word of the Lord was his helper.*

Ver. 10. *So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem, in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.*] This seems to have been a voluntary assembly by common agreement, rather than by the king's commandment or invitation. Unless we suppose it to have been at one of the

great festivals, when they were bound by God to go up to Jerusalem.

Ver. 11. *And they offered unto the Lord the same time.*] In the Hebrew, in that *day*. Which the Targum takes to have been in the *feast of weeks;* which in the New Testament is called Pentecost; which was kept in the third month, called Sivan.

Of the spoil which they had brought.] From Zerah, and from the cities they took about Gerar.

Seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep.] Which they offered besides the appointed offerings at the feast. And they seem to have been partly burnt-offerings, in acknowledgment of God's goodness for their great victory: and partly peace-offerings, in eating of which they made the following covenant.

Ver. 12. *And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul.*] Engaged themselves, by a solemn oath, to worship the Lord alone, and professed to do it sincerely, and with entire affection to him. But this doth not signify that Asa had no fault: for it appears, by the next chapter, that he had a great many.

Ver. 13. *That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death.*] If any body did, either publicly or privately, worship any other god, they agreed the sentence of the law should be executed upon him, which was death, (Deut. xvii. 2.)

Whether small or great, whether man or woman.] That is, without any respect to persons; no consideration being had of any one's dignity, nor the weakness of their sex moving pity and compassion.

Ver. 14. *And they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets.*] These were expressions of the joy mentioned in the next verse, wherewith they took this oath. The difference between trumpets and cornets it is not worth inquiring after: the former seem to have been made of metals, the other of horns or wood.

Ver. 15. *And all Judah rejoiced at the oath.*] The main body of the people: and though there might be some idolaters secretly lurking among them, yet they all gave those outward tokens of their joy to see the worship of God thus established.

For they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire.] That is, they professed to do this most sincerely and heartily; and many of them, no doubt, did, at that time, resolve to worship God alone, though afterward they apostatized from him.

And he was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about.] They reaped the happy fruit of this reformation, in the great peace which they enjoyed, without disturbance from any of their neighbours.

Ver. 16. *And also concerning Maachah, the mother of Asa the king.*] His grandmother, as the Targum observes: it being usual in Scripture to call such their parents, (Exod. ii. 18.)

He removed her from being queen.] This was a great testimony of the uprightness of this king, that he would not suffer such a near relation to retain her idols, or any authority: his love to God overcoming his affection to his parents. (See 1 Kings xv. 13.) Jacobus Capellus thinks this stirred up Baasha to make war upon him: for having lived peaceably with him a long time, upon this he broke out into hostility. (Histor. Sacra et Exot. ad Annum Mundi 3053.)

Because she had made an idol in a grove.] Or rather, an *Asherah*, or *Astarte*, for so *Laasherah* is translated by the LXX. And, in all probability, Astarte, the famous goddess of Syria, was the deity which was worshipped by Maachah, as Mr. Selden observes in his de Diis Syris, Syntagm. ii. cap. 2. And thus Abarbinel upon Jer. xliv. makes Asherah to be the same with the *queen of heaven* there mentioned, *viz.* the moon.

And Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron.] He destroyed it with the utmost contempt, (1 Kings xv. 13.)

Ver. 17. *But the high places were not taken away out of Israel.*] It is said twice in the foregoing chapter, that he did take away the high places, (ver. 3. 5.) But that was of Judah: whereas out of the territories he had conquered in the land of Israel, we are here informed, he was not able to remove them. Or else the meaning is, that he gave orders for the taking them away every where; but they were not obeyed. Or, as others think, he took away those high places that were for the service of other gods; but let those alone where the true God alone was worshipped.

Nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.] He heartily hated all idolatrous worship as long as he lived.

Ver. 18. *And he brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels.*] See upon 1 Kings xv. 15.

Ver. 19. *And there was no more war unto the five-and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.*] That is, as some interpret it, there was no war with the Ethiopians, or such-like people; though with Baasha he had perpetual war, (1 Kings xv. 16.) But Jacobus Capellus in the place abovenamed would have the words thus translated, *There was no war in the kingdom of Asa, till the thirty-fifth year, viz.* of the kingdom of Israel, not of Judah, or Asa: for this was the thirty-fifth year after Jeroboam rent the kingdom from the house of David. In which he follows Torniellus, as he doth Beroaldus and Junius, though he would not vouchsafe to name them. But more of this in the beginning of the next chapter.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *IN the six-and-thirtieth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah.*] The war was begun in the conclusion of the five-and-thirtieth year: and in the beginning of the six-and-thirtieth he made this invasion. But this disagrees so much with what is said in 1 Kings xv. 33. that interpreters labour hard to reconcile them. For by that place it appears, that Baasha began his reign in the third year of Asa, and reigned no more than four-and-twenty years. From whence it follows, that he was dead nine or ten years before the thirty-sixth year of Asa. It is a short way of solving this which Josephus seems to take, (lib. viii. Ant. cap. 6.) by supposing a mistake in the transcriber from the original copy, in which it was not the *six-and-thirtieth* of Asa's reign, but the *six-and-twentieth*, which was the last year of the reign of Baasha. Who died, he thinks, immediately after Ben-hadad had defeated his intentions of building Ramah. But most think

this too bold a supposal: and therefore I gave in few words another account of this difficulty in my notes upon 1 Kings xvi. 8. *viz.* that this was the six-and-thirtieth year since the division of the kingdom, after the death of Solomon, when Israel was rent from Judah. For so many years were now past since that time; *viz.* twenty years in the reign of Rehoboam and Abijah, and fifteen of Asa's reign, when many of the Israelites came to him, (xv. 10.) Thus Seder Olam Rabba, Ralbag, Abarbinel also, with a great number of eminent modern writers, both protestants and papists: such as Junius, Piscator, Cocceius, Jacobus Capellus, Lightfoot, Mariana, Torniellus, Sanctius, Salianus, and Petavius himself, with many others. It is not said, indeed, that Baasha came up in the thirty-sixth year of the *kingdom of Judah*, but in that year of the reign of king Asa: but they make account, that the kingdom of Judah and of Asa were all one: and so they might easily be put one for the other. And whereas it is objected, that the Scripture is not wont to reckon the years of any king from any other term but the time wherein he began to reign: they produce an example to the contrary from 2 Sam. xv. 7. where Absalom is said to have gone to Hebron in the end of forty years, and there conspired against his father; which years Seder Olam reckons from the beginning of the kingdom, or the inauguration of Saul. And our Dr. Lightfoot alleges another instance in the thirty-sixth chapter of this book, ver. 9. where Jehoiachin is said to be eight years old when he began to reign: that is, said he, in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar: for he was eighteen years old, as appears from 2 Kings xxiv. 8. But this difference, I think, may be better reconciled another way, as I shall observe on that place. I shall here only add, that as this is the most ancient way of solving this difficulty, so they that go another are forced to suppose, that these words do not relate to the beginning of the reign of Asa, but to something else; for instance, to the beginning of his *wars with Israel.* Which Kimchi endeavours to make out; but I shall not trouble the reader with it: for many good men think Josephus in the right.

And built Ramah.] That is, made a wall about it, and fortified it.

To the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.] The late defection of so many of his subjects, as fell from him to the house of David, (xv. 9.) was the occasion of setting a strong guard in this place, which was the passage between the dominions of Israel and Judah, (1 Kings xv. 17.)

Ver. 2. *Then Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the Lord, and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-hadad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying.*] This is a little more largely related in 1 Kings xv. 18. (See my notes there.)

Ver. 3. *There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.*

Ver. 4. *And Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the store-cities of Naphtali.*

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, when Baasha heard it, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his work cease.*

Ver. 6. *Then Asa the king took all Judah; and they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was a building; and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah.*] These four verses are the very same (with small variation) with those in 1 Kings xv. 19—21. 29. (See my notes there.)

Ver. 7. *And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him.*] Here follows a remarkable history added to what we read in the book of the Kings: which relates the great weakness of Asa in his declining years, and God's displeasure at it.

Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God.] Who had promised great victories to him, by the prophet Azariah, if he did well, (xv. 7.)

Therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.] Whom God would have overthrown, as he did the Ethiopians, if they had continued their league with Baasha, and come to his assistance against Asa. But now the Syrians were reserved to be a scourge to his family.

Ver. 8. *Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen?*] See xiv. 9. By the Lubims are meant the people of Lybia, or the Africans beyond Egypt: who are sometimes in Scripture called Phut, and sometimes Lubim, from the Arabic word *Lub*, which signifies dry or thirsty, as Bochartus observes: for such was the country which this people inhabited, *terra sitiens* (as Lucian calls it), *a thirsty land.* They are noted by authors to have had abundance of horsemen and chariots, in which they fought, as Xenophon tells us. And Herodotus saith, the Greeks learnt from them τέσσαρας ἵππους ζευγνύναι, *to yoke four horses together to draw a chariot.*

Yet, because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thine hand.] See xiv. 11. The words of Conradus Pellicanus upon this verse are so pious, that I think fit to transcribe them: "Asa committed a triple offence; in distrusting the goodness of God for help, and calling to his aid an infidel and impious king; when he had lately had such an experiment of God's clemency in his triumph over the king of Ethiopia. Nothing offends God so much as distrust in his goodness towards the faithful: as an entire faith and confidence in his mercy pleases him above all things. Upon which account David was so highly in his favour, though otherwise guilty of sundry crimes."

Ver. 9. *For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him.*] He exercises a most watchful providence over those throughout the whole world, who sincerely commit themselves unto him, and depend upon him in well-doing, and will not fail to protect them. For these words, as Mr. Mede observes, are of the same import with those in the prophecy of Zechariah, iv. 11. where *the seven eyes of the Lord* are said to *run to and fro through the earth.* Which took such care of that one stone which Zerubbabel had laid for the foundation of the temple, that the work could not be disappointed, but should certainly at length be finished, (par. i. discourse 10.)

Herein thou hast done foolishly; therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.] The heart of Asa is said to have been *perfect all his days*, in the foregoing chapter, ver. 17. And so it was in the matter of the outward worship of God at the temple, of which he was there speaking. But in the

latter end of his life he was defective in his inward trust and confidence in God: which is called *foolishness;* both because it was a sinful thing, and very pernicious. For God exposed him to his enemies, as a punishment for relying on man more than his friendship.

Ver. 10. *Then Asa was wroth with the seer.*] This was still a greater sin, to be so angry with his reprover (though he had his commission from God) as to put him in prison. But anger is no good adviser; and when men forget God, they are not themselves.

And put him in a prison-house.] In the stocks which were in the prison, as Tremellius translates it, *in domum cippi.*

For he was in a rage with him because of this thing.] For which he ought to have thanked and rewarded him.

And Asa oppressed some of the people at the same time.] He enslaved them, as the Targum translates it. That is, in the latter part of his reign he grew something tyrannical. And no wonder, when he relied not upon God, but upon human power, and was full of pride and passion.

Ver. 11. *And, behold, the acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they are written in the books of the kings of Judah and Israel.*] Not in those books of the Kings which we have in the Bible; but in those written by the prophets, mentioned xii. 15.

Ver. 12. *And Asa, in the thirty and ninth year of his reign, was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great.*] He had the gout; which increased to such a height, that he died of it, as Pellicanus thinks. Which was a just punishment upon him, for putting the prophet's feet in the stocks: "Ut per id quod peccaverat, per id puniretur;" *that his offence might be seen in his punishment.*

Yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians.] It was not a fault that he desired the help of physicians; but that he trusted to their skill, more than to the goodness and power of God: which he did not implore, but continued in his former fault, of putting confidence in man. And so Grotius thinks, he did not sin in seeking help from the Syrians, but in trusting to them more than God, and hiring them with things consecrated to God, (lib. ii. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 15. sect. 9.) An excellent person whom I have often mentioned (Dr. Alix) is of opinion, that these physicians were heathens; for we never read of any before in the sacred story, but among the Egyptians: and the heathen physicians in those days were a sort of charmers.

Ver. 13. *And Asa slept with his fathers, and died in the one-and-fortieth year of his reign.*

Ver. 14. *And they buried him in his own sepulchres, which he had made for himself in the city of David.*] In the Hebrew the words are, they buried him *in his sepulchres;* the plural number being used, as many think, for the singular, which is frequent in the Scripture. But the words rather respect the form of their monuments in that nation, which contained many sepulchres; that is, several cells wherein dead bodies were laid. And it is likely he made one for himself, which he added to the rest of the sepulchres in that vault, or monument.

And laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours, and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art.] To all his other offences he added this vanity (as Conradus Pellicanus thinks), that he ordered his body to be buried after the manner of the gentiles, rather than like the people of God. Though it must be confessed, it was an ancient custom to embalm bodies, which was used in the burial of Jacob. But what is here related doth not seem to be meant of any thing done to the body, but to the bed on which it lay; which, among the Romans, was very stately for great persons. (See Suetonius, in the life of Julius Cæsar, cap. 84.) For the heathens were wont to burn their goods with them, to serve them in the other world.

And they made a very great burning for him.] The Greeks and Romans burnt dead bodies, throwing frankincense, myrrh, cassia, and other fragrant things, into the fire. And these in such vast quantity, that Pliny represents it as a piece of profaneness to bestow such heaps of frankincense upon a dead body, when they offered it to their gods by crumbs, (lib. xii. Nat. Hist. cap. 18.) But the Israelites had no such custom; but from the ancient Egyptians perhaps learnt the custom, not of burning bodies, but of burning many spices at their funerals; as we find not only here, but at the funeral of Jehoram, (chap. xxi. 9.) and of Zedekiah, (Jer. xxxiv. 5.) Kimchi here says, that they burnt the bed on which they lay, and other household-stuff, that none might have the honour to use them when they were gone.

If we may believe what the Jews say in Juchasin, when Gamaleel the son of Simeon, the grandchild of Hillel (at whose feet St. Paul sat), was buried, Onkelos burnt seventy pounds of frankincense upon his sepulchre. But this is a fable invented to raise the credit of the Targum of Onkelos, which was not known till many ages after. But the best of the Jews believe this burning of sweet spices and woods was first intended, merely to prevent the offence which the smell of dead bodies might possibly sometimes give. But the vanity of some men made them exceed beyond necessity.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *AND Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Israel.*] The first thing he did after he came to the crown, was to put his kingdom in a good posture of defence against the king and people of Israel; who had given disturbance to his father, (xvi. 1, &c.)

Ver. 2. *And he placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken.*] He fortified his frontier cities, and increased the garrisons in the rest of the country, and in those cities which his father took from Israel. We do not read, indeed, of any cities that Asa took, but Abijah possessed himself of several, which Asa kept and took for his own, (xiii. 19.) and Jehoshaphat put such forces in them as might secure them to himself.

Ver. 3. *And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat.*] The Targum, according to the usual language of that paraphrast, saith, *The Word of the Lord was his helper.*

Because he walked in the first ways of his father David.] Before he committed those foul sins, in the matter of Uriah. But some read it, *of his father, and of David.* For Asa in the beginning of his reign was very pious, as David was. And thus it is some reflection upon Asa, for his offences in the latter end of his life: his son being noted

to have followed him as he was in his *first* days, not in his old age.

And sought not unto Baalim.] Which were the gods worshipped in all the eastern countries round about them.

Ver. 4. *But sought the Lord God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel.*] As he worshipped not the gods of other countries; so he did not join with the Israelites in worshipping God by the calves.

Ver. 5. *Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought up Jehoshaphat presents.*] As they used to do in those countries, in the beginning of their king's reign. (See 1 Sam. x. 27, 28. 1 Kings x. 25.)

And he had riches and honour in abundance.] Riches procure men honour; when they make such a good use of them as he did.

Ver. 6. *And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord.*] He had very generous resolutions, as Strigelius renders it, to promote the true worship of God, and all goodness: his mind being raised above all fear and discouragement.

Moreover, he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.] The meaning is plain, that those high places wherein they sacrificed to idols he destroyed, as Asa had done in the beginning of his reign: but, in the latter end, some had restored them again. There is no need, therefore, of their amendment, who fancy that, anciently, instead of *veoth, moreover,* there was *velo, he did not;* that so it may agree with 1 Kings xxii. 43. and with the twentieth chapter of this book, ver. 33. As if the meaning was, that though he was courageous above all that had been before him; yet the people were so accustomed to sacrifices in high places, that he durst not take them away. This is true, that where they offered to the true God he did not take them away: but those wherein idols were worshipped were abolished.

Ver. 7. *Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, even to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah.*] He sent some that were of his council, to see the people taught; by removing all impediments, and making the people come to hear the priests and the Levites. For it had been to little purpose to take away their idols, if they had not been withal better instructed: and the priests and the Levites would not have had much authority among the people, if they had not been backed by such great persons as are here mentioned. Grotius, indeed, will have it, that these great men did themselves instruct the people: for, as the Jews observe, it was not proper to the priests and Levites, but all learned men might teach the people: and these who were of the king's council were certainly learned in the law. But the two next verses tell us, that priests and Levites were sent along with them, *who taught in Judah.* And therefore I take the meaning to be, that Jehoshaphat, being very desirous to have the people understand their duty, took this singular and extraordinary course to send some princes, together with the priests and Levites, upon this weighty business. The latter, that they might teach the people, the former to see them do it carefully, and require the people to come and receive instruction, and to be obedient to what they heard. Thus Jarchi and other interpreters explain it: "It belonged to the priests and Levites to inform the people of their duty, as it is written, Deut. xxiv. 8. and these political persons went along with them, to quicken the people to hear them, and compel them to obey them, and do according to their commands." (See Nehem. viii. 9.) Campegius Vitringa hath a large discourse to this purpose in his Synag. Vet. par. ii. lib. i. cap. 9. where he takes this to be an indication that the people in those times had little solemn public instruction; and thinks it a good proof that there were no synagogues in the country in those days, as there were in aftertimes, wherein the people were constantly instructed in the sense of the Divine law. Mr. Thorndike, indeed, rightly observes, that the words of Moses, Deut. xxiv. 8. are not rightly alleged by Jarchi to this purpose. But there is another place, Deut. xvi. 18. from whence he also concludes, (Religious Assemblies, p. 23.) that this teaching consisted in declaring the obligation of the law by the judges of it, the priests and Levites; and the princes were officers with power to enforce the execution of it. (See Malachi ii. 7.)

Ver. 8. *And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-Adonijah, Levites.*] These, no doubt, were eminent men among the Levites, as the two priests, Elishama and Jehoram, were, who were joined with them.

Ver. 9. *And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them.*] That they might teach with the greater authority, by reciting the very words of that sacred book. But from hence Vitringa argues, that the books of Moses were scarce among the people in those days; for if there had been then public synagogues, wherein the law had been read (as it was afterward, every sabbath-day), there had been no need of carrying a copy of the law with them; which they might have had in every synagogue.

And went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.] Which is too plain an argument, that there were not settled teachers in every city, who on all occasions instructed the people; nor doth it appear by this history, that these great men who were sent to see the people instructed, settled such constant teachers in every city, to instruct them when they were gone. The priests and Levites, no doubt, were ready to teach the people in their cities where they dwelt; and there is good reason to think, that most part of the prophets, who were the great instructors of the people, were priests and Levites. But it is as certain, that the charge of teaching the people belonged to those prophets who were not priests and Levites, as much as to those that were, as Mr. Thorndike observes in the same place.

Ver. 10. *And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.*] God took care to prevent any disturbance, while they were about this pious work, by striking a terror into all their neighbours; who, it is likely, were sensible that it was in vain to assault them, while they continued firm in their religion. For they could not but observe how much their prosperity depended on that; and that they never fell into their enemies' hands, but when they fell off from God.

Ver. 11. *Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute-silver.*] They were so far from giving him any disturbance, that some of his neighbours compli-

mented him by presents, and voluntarily paid their tribute. Which it is likely they had neglected in the time of some of his predecessors, though imposed on them by David, who had conquered the Philistines.

And the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he-goats.] The riches of the Arabians consisted in cattle, as Fuller observes out of Strabo and Pliny, in his Miscellanies, lib. iii. cap. 16. And the Scripture informs us, how they abounded in both the sorts of flocks here mentioned, (Isa. lx. 7. Ezek. xxvii. 21.) And these, perhaps, were their tribute, they having been brought under the Jews; or rather their present, by which they sought Jehoshaphat's friendship, and put themselves under his protection.

Ver. 12. *And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly: and he built in Judah castles, and cities of store.*] He built very strong towers (as Jarchi understands it), and cities wherein he laid up provisions of wine and corn.

Ver. 13. *And he had much business in the cities of Judah.*] To settle religion, and purge out idolatry; as well as to provide for their safety, by fortifications, and whatsoever was necessary for the preservation of public tranquillity.

And the men of war, mighty men of valour, were in Jerusalem.] He kept the principal officers in his army near to himself; that he might advise with them upon any emergency.

Ver. 14. *And these are the numbers of them, according to the house of their fathers: Of Judah, the captains of thousands; Adnah the chief, and with him mighty men of valour, three hundred thousand.*] He mentions only the commanders-in-chief: under whom were a great number of captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, who are not named.

Ver. 15. *And next to him was Jehohanan the captain, and with him two hundred and fourscore thousand.*] In the Hebrew (as it is noted in the margin) the first words are, *at his hand* was, &c. Which may seem to import, that he was lieutenant-general (as we speak) to the former great man: who assisted him in the management of that army. But the following words plainly signify, that he was another commander-in-chief, having under him a great body of men, though not equal to the former. And, as the Targum translates the first words (whom Jarchi follows), he encamped near to the former.

Ver. 16. *And next to him was Amaziah the son of Zichri, who willingly offered himself unto the Lord; and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of valour.*] Some think, he served as a volunteer, without any stipend; or that he vowed himself to the service. Kimchi thinks that he offered gold and silver to the treasury, for the service of the Lord.

Ver. 17. *And of Benjamin; Eliada, a mighty man of valour, and with him armed men, with bow and shield, two hundred thousand.*] All the former were of Judah; now he mentions those of Benjamin, and the eminent persons who commanded them.

Ver. 18. *And next him was Jehozabad, and with him a hundred and fourscore thousand ready prepared for the war.*] See ver. 16. If we put all these numbers of valiant men together, they make a great demonstration of the wonderful blessings of God upon Jehoshaphat: who, though he had little more than the third part of the kingdom which David had, yet went much beyond him, in proportion, in the number of able men that were subject to him. For David, when he numbered the people, found but thirteen hundred thousand; and Jehoshaphat had several bodies of good troops, which altogether amounted to eleven hundred and sixty thousand: not reckoning the garrisons, which were in the strong holds. Nor is there any thing incredible in this, for we read the like in profane histories. The great Thebes, for instance, (as Tacitus relates in his Annales, lib. ii.) furnished seven hundred thousand soldiers, of its own inhabitants alone. But it is farther observable, how God blessed the reign of these two last kings, Asa and Jehoshaphat: in that when Abijah, the father of Asa, could scarce bring into the field four hundred thousand men, (xiii. 3.) his grandson was able to muster almost three times that number.

Ver. 19. *These waited on the king.*] That is, these great men, who had such numerous forces at their command, attended the king's person always, wheresoever he went.

Besides those whom the king put in the fenced cities throughout all Judah.] He made governors of all strong places, who constantly attended their duty there: and were under the direction of the great men beforementioned. Who did not only wait upon the king, but, as Pellicanus conjectures, presided over the whole kingdom: and were ready upon any occasion to send abroad the king's orders, and take care of the public concerns.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance.*] So he had before this time, (xvii. 5.) but now they were more increased.

And joined affinity with Ahab.] For his son married Athaliah the daughter of Ahab, (2 Kings viii. 18. and chap. xxi. ver. 6. of this book.) His great prosperity tempted him to this affinity with an abominable idolater: having some conceit, perhaps, that he might again unite, by this marriage, the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

Ver. 2. *And after certain years.*] After there had been peace three years between Israel and Syria, as it is explained 1 Kings xxii. 1.

He went down to Ahab to Samaria.] The affinity between them was the occasion, I suppose, of this visit.

And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that were with him.] He entertained both Jehoshaphat and all his attendants with great splendour: which is not mentioned in the book of the Kings, though the substance of this chapter is the same with that abovementioned; and is there explained.

And persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-Gilead.] He caressed him so at this feast, and used such arguments, as prevailed with him to undertake this expedition.

Ver. 3. *And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go up with me to Ramoth-Gilead?*] What he had consented unto in the midst of their merriment, he seems now to resolve more deliberately. (See 1 Kings xxii. 4.)

And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and will be with thee in the war.] The prophet

Hanani had given his father a caution against this, (xvi. 7.) and Jehoshaphat is reproved for it afterward, (xix. 2. xx. 37.) The Targum expounds the last words thus, *that which happens to thee, shall happen to me, in this war.*

Ver. 4. *And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to-day.*

Ver. 5. *Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for God will deliver it into the king's hand.*

Ver. 6. *But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of him?*] These three verses are the same in sense, and almost in words, with those which I have explained in 1 Kings xxii. 5—7.

Ver. 7. *And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he never prophesieth good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.*] See there, ver. 8.

Ver. 8. *And the king of Israel called for one of his officers, and said, Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imla.*] He seems to have thought, that Micaiah would be backward to come, because he knew the king's hatred to him; and therefore he bids the officer (who was a person of quality) quicken him.

Ver. 9. *And the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat king of Judah, sat either of them on his throne, clothed in their robes, and they sat in a void place at the entering in of the gate of Samaria.*] The very same we read there, ver. 10. And the Targum explains it thus; *they sat in a semicircle,* as the court of judgment used to do, that they might see one another, and all the people stood before them.

And all the prophets prophesied before them.] All the *false prophets,* as the Targum understands it, who pretended to the gift of prophecy, which the following words shew to be the meaning.

Ver. 10. *And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made him horns of iron, and said, Thus saith the Lord, With these thou shalt push Syria until they be consumed.*

Ver. 11. *And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-Gilead, and prosper; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.*

Ver. 12. *And the messenger that went to call Micaiah, spake to him, saying, Behold, the words of the prophets declare good to the king with one assent: let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and speak thou good.*

Ver. 13. *And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak.*] There is no difference between these verses and those in 1 Kings xxii. 11—14.

Ver. 14. *And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go up to Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? and he said, Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand.*

Ver. 15. *And the king said to him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me, in the name of the Lord?*

Ver. 16. *Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace.*

Ver. 17. *And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil?*

Ver. 18. *Again he said, Therefore hear the word of the Lord.*] Some think he spake these words to the bystanders: but this is confuted by 1 Kings xxii. 19. where the words are, *Hear thou therefore,* speaking again to the king.

In all that follows, to the end of the chapter, there is scarce any difference between it, and what is recorded in the book of the Kings; where I have explained it: and will not here transcribe what the reader may find there.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND Jehoshaphat king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.*] I suppose, as soon as the battle was over, he immediately went to Jerusalem; to return thanks to God for his wonderful preservation.

Ver. 2. *And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer.*] See 1 Kings xvi. 1.

Went out to meet him.] Before he came into the city: that, being admonished by him, he might be the more affected with the mercy of God towards him in his deliverance.

And said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?] As much as to say, This is contrary to common reason, which taught the gentiles to make no friendship with such as were God's enemies. So Callimachus in his hymn to Ceres, ver. 117, 118.

Δάμητερ, μὴ τῆνος ἐμὶν φίλος, ὅς τοι ἀπεχθὴς,
Ἔσται, μηδ' ὁμόστοιχος· ἐμοὶ κακογείτονες ἐχθροί.

O Ceres, he shall be none of my friend who is hated by thee; nor shall he live under my roof: such neighbours are odious unto me. Where the illustrious Spanhemius hath observed many the like sayings among the heathens; and shews how the ancient Greeks abhorred to lodge in the same house with a murderer, or other grievous criminals; with whom they would not eat, much less be with them in their sacred assemblies; looking upon them as impure creatures.

Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord.] Upon which account God threatens to punish him: which some think he did by raising such numerous enemies to invade him, as we read of in the next chapter. But most of all, by suffering all his sons to be murdered by their elder brother, (chap. xxi. 4.) and his grandchildren by Jehu, (2 Kings ix. 27. x. 13, 14.)

Ver. 3. *Nevertheless there are good things found in thee.*] For the sake of which he so far pardoned his error as not to punish him in his own person, but in his posterity.

In that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God.] The chief thing wherein he pleased God was by abolishing idolatrous worship: which he had done rigorously, and served God with a sincere heart.

Ver. 4. *And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem.*] Being settled at Jerusalem after his visit to Ahab, and the war with Syria, he had time to reflect upon his escape out of the late battle, and the reproof of the prophet: at which

he was so far from being angry (as his father Asa had been, xvi. 7.) that he laid it to heart, and seriously resolved upon a farther reformation, in other matters, as well as religion.

And he went out again through the people.] He had sent out his officers before, (chap. xvii. 7.) who went out by his authority, and acted in his name, about this very business; but now he went in person, as then by his orders.

From Beer-sheba to Mount Ephraim.] The former of these had always been the utmost bound southward of the tribe of Judah: and the latter, since the division of the kingdom, had been the northern bound, as before the division was Dan.

And brought them back unto the Lord God of their fathers.] Since the last reformation, it seems, some had revolted to their former idolatry, whom he now reduced; especially those cities which his father had taken in Mount Ephraim, (chap. xv. 8.) who, being Israelites, might have been drawn in again to worship the calves.

Ver. 5. *And he set judges in the land, throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city.*] That is, in every one of these cities: or, as Bertram thinks it should be translated, *for city, and city.* That is, he placed judges in the principal cities, unto which all causes were brought from the lesser cities and villages. This was a means both to have justice done between man and man, and also to preserve them in the worship of God, when judges were ready at hand, to call those to an account who went after other gods.

Ver. 6. *And said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment.*] He gave them this very solemn admonition when he settled them in their places: which the Targum thus translates, *Ye do not judge before the sons of men, but before the Word of the Lord; and his glorious presence resides among you in the act of judgment.* Which is a most illustrious testimony that the ancient Jews believed more persons than one in the Deity.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore now, let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it.*] That is, Do as I command you, judge according to the law: for such as God is, such you ought to be, since you are in his place.

For there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.] He bids them remember that as the nature of God is perfectly just, so he cannot be moved to do iniquity by respect to the greatest, or pity to the meanest, or by any gift be bribed to do unjustly. Whom they ought to imitate, being entrusted by him with his authority.

Ver. 8. *Moreover, in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and of the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel.*] Many were of opinion, that as before he speaks of the courts consisting of twenty-three judges, which were settled in every considerable city of the kingdom; so here he speaks of the high court of all, consisting of seventy, called by the Jews the great Sanhedrin, sitting at Jerusalem: whither appeals were made in all causes, that could not be determined below. But if this be true, Jehoshaphat was the first that we can find who settled this excellent constitution: of which we can find no footsteps in the books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, or in the foregoing kings, as I have discoursed at large upon Deut. xvi. 18. xvii. 9. (See my notes there.) And there is little in the succeeding times to persuade us of it; for Ezra and Nehemiah set up no such judicature as that the Jews call Sanhedrin. Which seems to have been wisely constituted, when they fell under the government of the Macedonian princes, from whose language they borrowed the name. Though Jehoshaphat therefore settled judges in Jerusalem, yet the number of them is not certain.

For the judgment of the Lord, and for controversies.] These words are variously expounded: some understanding by the *judgment of the Lord,* causes about sacred matters, others pecuniary matters: and by *controversies,* some understanding civil causes, others criminal and capital. It is sufficient, I think, to say, they tried all sorts of causes.

When they returned to Jerusalem.] That is, when Jehoshaphat, and those that attended him, returned from the other cities, where they had appointed judges, (ver. 5.) he constituted this supreme court in the chief city of his kingdom. I say supreme court, for there were not two of them; one for ecclesiastical, the other for civil causes, as some have imagined: but one court judged both, as Grotius hath very well proved, from the very account here given of this matter. For Jehoshaphat bids these judges try what cause soever should come to them, (ver. 10.) and adds, *between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and judgments.* Which shews there was no kind of business in controversy, which did not come before this one court. Nor do those words ver. 11. prove the contrary, as he shews in his book, de Imperio Sum. Potest. circa Sacra, cap. 11. sect. 15.

Ver. 9. *And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.*] He gives them the same solemn charge, which he had given the other judges; (ver. 7.) that having the fear of God before their eyes, they should do righteous judgment, and not suffer themselves to be any way corrupted, for God would judge all over again.

It is a most memorable saying of Cicero, that judges, being sworn to do justice, should remember, when they come to pass sentence, "Deum se habere testem; id est, ut ego arbitror, mentem suam, qua nihil homini dedit ipse Deus divinius;" *that he hath God a witness of what he doth, even his own conscience, than which God himself hath given unto man nothing more Divine:* lib. iii. de Officiis, cap. 10. where he hath left this excellent instruction also, that a man must lay aside the person of a friend, when he puts on the person of a judge.

Ver. 10. *And what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities.*] By way of appeal from the other cities: where the judges were wont to refer matters of great difficulty to this supreme court at Jerusalem, where the judges were most learned.

Between blood and blood.] When the question was, who was next of kin to an estate, and should succeed him that was deceased. So some understand the word *blood* to signify *kindred.* But Jarchi understands it of a question, whether a murder was voluntary, or a man was killed by chance.

Between law and commandment, statutes and judgments.] Some take the word *law* to be a general word, the species of which follow. So that it is as much as to say, Ye shall judge concerning all manner of laws: first, of *command-*

ments, such as have a natural equity in them; then *statutes,* or positive laws belonging to rites and ceremonies; and *judgments,* concerning those precepts, which direct the manner of proceeding in judgment.

Ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the Lord, and so wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren.] This seems to be a command, that they should not only pronounce a righteous sentence in every cause that came before them, but that they should admonish him, who was in the wrong (and all other persons in the like case), to beware of injuring their neighbours for the time to come.

This do, and ye shall not trespass.] But worthily discharge their office.

Ver. 11. *And, behold, Amariah the chief priest.*] See concerning him, what I have noted upon 1 Chron. vi. 9, 10, &c.

Is over you in all matters of the Lord; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters.] Many understand by *the matters of the Lord,* all things sacred; and by *the king's matters,* all civil and political causes. But Grotius hath judiciously observed, (in his book de Imperio Sum. Potest. circa Sacra, cap. 11. sect. 15.) that it is most agreeable to the Scripture to understand by *the things of God,* those which were defined by the law of God, and were to be judged by that law: and by *the king's matters,* such as, not being defined by the Divine law, were left to the judgment of the king. Of which kind were all deliberations about what was expedient or not expedient. And thus he observes, the most learned of the Jewish interpreters explain these words in his book, de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. i. cap. 3. sect. 20. But which way soever we distinguish the *things of God* and the *king's things,* yet one and the same court took cognizance of them both: only with this difference, that the court had different presidents according to the nature of the causes. In things pertaining to God, Amarias the high-priest sat as the first judge; in things pertaining to the king, Zebadiah, a principal person about the king, had the chair, and was the moderator. For, as the high-priest was most conversant in the law of God, and therefore fittest to direct in such matters; so the chief ruler about the king was most exercised in matters left undetermined by the law, and so fittest to preside in such consultations.

There are, indeed, very learned men who think these words plainly prove two different courts: in one of which ecclesiastical matters were determined, in the other civil; in the former of which Amarias presided; in the latter, Zebadiah. Thus Corn. Bertram, in his book De Republ. Judaica, p. 137. 139. whom Const. L'Empereur defends in his annotations on that place: and endeavours to prove out of Deuteronomy, that God himself instituted an ecclesiastical senate, distinct from the civil, p. 389. But this is not a fit place to meddle further with that controversy: I shall only say, that I think Grotius hath sufficiently confuted this opinion in the book and chapter beforementioned, de Imperio, &c. And in his annotations also upon St. Matt. v. 22. (on those words ἔνοχος ἔσται τῷ συνεδρίῳ) where he makes this paraphrase upon this speech of Jehoshaphat: "Do not despond, as not able to discharge so weighty an office, for want of such learning and knowledge as are necessary for such a work: you have excellent men to guide you with their counsel. Such is the prince of the senate Amarias the priest, a man skilled in judgment; and if any thing fall out belonging rather to civil prudence than to the knowledge of the law, Sabadias the Ishmaelite is ready at hand, who is a principal person in such kind of deliberations. And besides (as it here follows) you have the Levites their assessors, who are very well skilled in many arts."

Also the Levites shall be officers before you.] Some of the Levites were members of this great court, who sat in judgment: (ver. 8.) the rest, who were not judges, were ministers under them to see their sentence executed. But it appears by this place, that the word *shoterim* doth not here signify, as in others, mere apparators who summoned men to the court, or such officers as executed the sentence of the court; but persons of some authority, who had power to make offenders sensible of the justice of the sentence, and convince them of their error: which was a great encouragement to the judges to undertake this office, and to judge uprightly.

Deal courageously, and the Lord shall be with the good.] He bids them not be afraid of any man: for God, who employed them, would stand by them and defend them, if they were good and upright judges. The Targum hath it, *The Word of the Lord will help you, who is good.*

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *IT came to pass after this also, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon.*] These seem to have been the principal in this invasion: the other here mentioned (in the next verse and in ver. 22.) to have been auxiliaries. For such was the ancient way of making war, and still is to this day, to call in the assistance of their neighbours. As appears by the Romans more especially, whose armies consisted of their own legions, on whom they chiefly relied, and their auxiliaries: who agreed neither in their discipline, nor in their language, nor in their affection, as Vegetius observes in his book de Re Militari, lib. ii. cap. 2. and therefore could not do such service. For which cause (as he observes in the beginning of his third book) they took care their *Socii Militares* should never exceed the number of their own soldiers, which is a rule laid down by Livy and Tacitus.

And with them other besides the Ammonites.] It ought to be translated, *and with them the Meunims:* who were a people in Arabia, near the Moabites and Ammonites. (See my annotations upon Judges x. 12. and in this book, chap. xxvi. 6, 7. and Bochartus, in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 22.)

Came against Jehoshaphat to battle.] Made an invasion upon his country.

Ver. 2. *Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea.*] That is the *Dead Sea,* as it is called in Scripture.

On this side Syria.] The Targum translates it, *from the western part of Syria:* for the Dead Sea was the western bounds of that country; and it is likely the Syrians joined against him, to revenge the assistance he gave to Ahab.

And, behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is En-gedi.] A place where there was a great forest of palm-trees. It seems he had but slender intelligence, for he heard not of their motion till they were upon the borders of his country.

Ver. 3. *And Jehoshaphat feared.*] Having been lately told by the prophet (chap. xix. 2.) that God was very angry with him.

And set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.] Fasting was generally joined with prayer in times of distress: unto which he publicly called the whole nation, that they might obtain help from God.

Ver. 4. *And Judah gathered themselves together to ask help of the Lord: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord.*] The Targum translates it, *to ask mercy of him, and to beg his direction, and to hear his holy word.* For some part of the law was read upon those solemn days. Vitringa takes this to be an argument, that there were no synagogues in every city in those days. For there would have been no need they should *come out of their cities,* and all resort to Jerusalem, to fast and pray, and hear the law there; which might have been done at home in their synagogues, as well as in the temple. Though not, indeed, in such a solemn manner, as it was performed by such a vast conflux of people, in one place, to make their supplications to God, (de Vet. Synag. par. ii. lib. i. cap. 9.)

Ver. 5. *And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord.*] For there was a throne, the Hebrew doctors tell us, in the court of the Israelites, where their kings prayed to God, or spake to the people, as there was occasion. So Jehoshaphat did, and, in following times, Hezekiah and Josiah: after the example of Solomon, who began this custom, (chap. vi. 13.)

Before the new court.] The most learned in these matters confess they do not know what is meant by the *new court.* Some think it probable, that it was only some enlargement that Jehoshaphat had made of the court of the people, to render it more capacious: but others are of opinion, that it signifies the *court of the women,* which was now made distinct from the *court of the men.* (See 1 Chron. xv. 3.) Thus Constantine L'Empereur thinks that the court of the women was not built by Solomon, but added in aftertimes, Annot. in Cod. Middoth, cap. 2. sect. 5. where he disputes, that, according to the Mischna, this court when it was made did not surround the court of Israel: but the breadth of them was equal, according to the delineation there.

Ver. 6. *And said, O Lord God of our fathers, art thou not God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?*] This is the most admirable prayer that we read any of their kings made: expressing the greatest confidence in God, and representing to him the justice of their cause. He begins with an acknowledgment of God's supreme and irresistible power; which extends itself every where over all creatures in heaven and earth, who are every one of them subject to his authority.

Ver. 7. *Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?*] Then he remembers the peculiar relation the people of Israel had to him, and the promise to Abraham, and the deed of gift which he made of this country to him, and to his posterity for ever, as a reward of his fidelity to him.

Ver. 8. *And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying.*] Next to that he remembers, that they had been long possessed of this country, wherein a house had been built for his worship by Solomon: to whom God promised at the consecration of it, that he would have regard to the prayers made in that place; (see the sixth chapter of this book, and 1 Kings viii.) The Targum here again saith this sanctuary was *built to the name of thy Word;* as in the foregoing verse God is said to have driven out the inhabitants of this land *by his Word.*

Ver. 9. *If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment.*] Some translate it, *the sword of judgment,* that is, the punishing sword. But if *judgment* signify any particular punishment, distinct from the *sword,* it must be wild beasts, or captivity: for *pestilence* and *famine* are particularly mentioned in the following words. The Targum translates it, *slaughter of the sword,* which was a sore judgment.

We stand before this house, and in thy presence (for thy name is in this house), and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.] See 1 Kings viii. 38, 39.

Ver. 10. *And now, behold, the children of Ammon, and Moab, and Mount Seir.*] Some think this explains what is meant by *other besides the Ammonites,* (as we translate ver. 1.) *viz.* Edomites. So the Targum in that place, *With these the Edomites, who joined with the Ammonites.* But see there.

Whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not.] He represents, in the next place, the foul ingratitude of their enemies (added to their injustice) in invading their country, unto which they had an undoubted title: when the Israelites did not do them the least harm, as they went to take possession of it, but took the pains to march a long way about to come at it, rather than give them any disturbance in their country.

Ver. 11. *Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.*] It is a most odious thing not to make grateful returns of benefits received; but to return evil for good is the highest wickedness. Which in this case was aggravated by this, that they made an attempt not only upon the rights of the Israelites, but of God himself; whose land this was, which they held of him as their Lord.

Ver. 12. *O our God, wilt thou not judge them?*] He appeals to the justice of God, the righteous Judge, who rights those that suffer wrong, especially when they have no helper. To *judge* in this place signifies to punish, as in Exod. vi. 6. Psal. ix. 16. where these words, *the Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth,* are thus interpreted by Drusius, The Lord is known *by the just punishment which he inflicts:* in his Miscellanies, cent. i. cap. 18.

For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.] This is the last argument he uses to obtain help from God: the weak condition wherein he and his people were, which made them the objects of the Divine pity; especially since they placed all their confidence and hope in him alone. But it may seem strange that he should say they had *no might* against this multitude, when he had so many hundred thousand men at command, as are mentioned chap. xvii. 14—16, &c. To which it may be replied, that perhaps this was such a sudden invasion, that he had not time to gather a considerable body to oppose

them: or rather he distrusted the greatest army, and acknowledged them to be of no force if God was not with them: on whom he entirely relied, and not on the number and valour of his soldiers, though both were very great.

Victorinus Strigelius hath such a devout reflection upon this prayer of Jehoshaphat, that it will not be unacceptable, I persuade myself, to the pious reader, if I here transcribe it: "In this weak and declining condition wherein the church now is, when the devil is very outrageous, because he knows his time to be short, &c. let us say daily with Jehoshaphat, We know not what to do; but our eyes are upon thee. Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory. Thou art our king and our shepherd; we are thy people, and the sheep of thy pasture. Thou only art powerful, we are infirm: but thy power will be perfected in our weakness. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give the glory; for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake. Do not remember our iniquities, but save us for thy mercy's sake; for we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: deliver us, and be merciful to our sins, for thy name's sake. Save us, O Lord our God, that we may give thanks unto thy holy name, and triumph in thy praise." Such addresses to God (so he concludes) will illustrate this prayer of Jehoshaphat better than the largest commentaries.

Ver. 13. *And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.*] The more to move the Divine compassion towards them.

Ver. 14. *Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation.*] He seems not to have been a prophet before this time: when a sudden inspiration came upon him from God, to comfort this great assembly with assured hope of deliverance, before they stirred from the place where they had prayed.

Ver. 15. *And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat; Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.*] As it was God's cause which they now asserted, so they might be assured he would maintain it, by overthrowing their enemies.

Ver. 16. *To-morrow go ye down against them.*] Jerusalem, where they now were, was situated on a high hill, and therefore he saith they should *go down* against these enemies: who are said in the next words to *come up*.

Behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook (or valley), before the wilderness of Jeruel.] God was so very gracious to them, as, by this prophet, not only to assure them of victory, but to inform them of the very time, and place, and manner of it. The time was the very next morning: the place is mentioned in the latter end of this verse, as the time is in the beginning: and the manner, in the conclusion of the foregoing verse, that it should be by the hand of God, and not by their own: who should be only spectators of the victory which God himself would give them: so it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 17. *Ye shall not need to fight in this battle; set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to-morrow go out against them.*] He repeats what he had said before (which he knew would be the greatest comfort to them), that they should have no conflict with their enemies; but only stand still in their place, and see the hand of God overthrowing them all. In which there was a notable accomplishment of Solomon's prayer, which Jehoshaphat recited.

For the Lord will be with you.] *The Word of the Lord will be your helper*, as the Targum expounds it.

Ver. 18. *And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground; and all Judah and Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord.*] The king gave most humble thanks to God, as did all the people with him, after his example.

Ver. 19. *And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites.*] Who were then waiting, in their course, at the temple.

Stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high.] They sung praise to God before the army went out, as if the victory had been already obtained. And they raised their voice as high as they could, to express their full assurance of success. This, I suppose, they did by the order of Jehoshaphat.

Ver. 20. *And they rose up early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa.*] That is, the army who were to stand, and face the enemy, went forth from Jerusalem.

And, as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem.] It is likely he stood in the gate of the city, through which they marched out, and spake these words to the several companies as they passed by him.

Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.] The Targum translates it, *Believe in the Word of the Lord your God, believe his law, and his prophets*, &c. God having made them a gracious promise, expected their belief of it, and dependance on it: otherwise they had no reason to hope for victory.

Ver. 21. *And when he had consulted with the people.*] That is, with the elders and heads of their tribes, who represented the rest: without whose consent he was loath to do any thing, in a time of common danger.

He appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness.] It may be translated, *should praise his most sacred Majesty*. Though it is commonly thought he ordered them to praise the Lord with the same state, pomp, and ornament, that they worshipped in the temple: in the same habit, in that order and magnificence, wherein they appeared in the holy place.

As they went out before the army.] This was an argument of great courage and assurance, that they led on the army: declaring to their enemies, that God (whose ministers they were) was coming against them.

And to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever.] This was the usual song, which they sung at the temple, (ver. 13.)

Ver. 22. *And when they began to sing and to praise.*] Before they had marched many steps.

The Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.] Or *smote one another*, as it is

in the margin. The Targum translates it, *The Word of the Lord set ambushments*, &c. By which that paraphrast understands his angelical ministers which attended him; who smote some of them secretly, and the rest thinking it was done by their neighbours, fell upon them as their enemies. But the meaning seems rather to be, that the ambushments which they had laid against Judah, by a confusion among themselves, made by a Divine hand, fell upon a part of their own army, mistaking them for their enemies.

Ver. 23. *For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.*] They of Mount Seir were ordered to fall upon Judah, out of an ambushment; but by some mistake they fell upon the Ammonites, their own confederates: and they and the Moabites fell upon them, till they had entirely destroyed those of Seir. And when that was done, they continued in such confusion, that they fell one upon another, still imagining they were destroying the Jews: who came upon them very early in the morning, as the prophet had directed.

Ver. 24. *And when Judah came towards the watch-tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped.*] Instead of meeting with any enemy to oppose them, they saw them all lie dead upon the ground. For this *tower*, it is probable, stood upon the cliff of Ziz, (mentioned ver. 16.) from whence they could behold how their army lay.

Ver. 25. *And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels (which they stripped off for themselves).*] As they found rich garments upon their bodies, so they found great treasure among their baggage (as we call it), and many precious jewels; which they brought along with them, I suppose, that they might appear the more glorious, in the triumph which they promised themselves over the Jews.

More than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering the spoil, it was so much.] They could not carry all the spoil at once, but spent three days in collecting it, and disposing of it. For there was vast provision, no doubt, which they had made for the subsistence of such a multitude; and a great many beasts for the carriages that brought it to them.

Ver. 26. *And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah; for there they blessed the Lord: and therefore the name of the same place was called The valley of Berachah unto this day.*] One cannot think, that they deferred to give God thanks for so signal a victory, till four days after it; but then they did it in a more solemn manner than they could at first: the whole body of the people assembling together, to acknowledge God's goodness to them. Which they did in such a remarkable manner, that it gave to the place ever after the name of the *Valley of Blessing*.

Ver. 27. *Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the fore-front of them, to go to Jerusalem with joy.*] This is a further instance of their thankfulness to God for their victory; that they did not return every man to his own home, after this overthrow: but first went back to Jerusalem, to bless him again for hearing their prayers, and making good his promises.

For the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies.] This they did with great joy, wherewith God had filled their hearts, by making them triumph over such powerful enemies.

Ver. 28. *And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries, and harps, and trumpets, unto the house of the Lord.*] To express by these the greatness of their joy, and proclaim their thankfulness to God.

Ver. 29. *And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries.*] On all the neighbouring nations, who heard of this glorious victory without fighting.

When they had heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel.] Here the Targum hath it, *When they heard that the Word of the Lord fought*, &c.

Ver. 30. *So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet; for his God gave him rest round about.*] Here again the Targum saith, *The Word of his God gave him rest.*

Ver. 31. *And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi.*] See 1 Kings xxii. 42. It is likely, his mother was a very religious woman, who had taken care to bring up Jehoshaphat in the fear of the Lord: and happy had it been for him and his family, if he had taken care to marry his son to such another woman.

Ver. 32. *And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the Lord.*] Whatsoever other faults he had, he kept close to the worship of God alone: and did many other good things as the law of Moses directed.

Ver. 33. *Howbeit the high places were not taken away.*] This shews, that the meaning of those words, xvii. 6. is, that the high places wherein God was worshipped were not taken away: though those wherein idols were served were destroyed.

For as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.] The reason of it is here given, the people could not bear it: for their hearts were not disposed to serve God exactly according to the law of Moses. But though they renounced idolatry, and worshipped none but the Lord, yet they would not have his worship, by sacrifices, restrained to one place alone, but have the liberty to sacrifice elsewhere.

Ver. 34. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Jehu the son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the Kings of Israel.*] He was an eminent prophet in the time of Baasha king of Israel, and lived to the end of Jehoshaphat's reign. (See 1 Kings xvi. 1. 7.) He, as several other prophets, wrote the history of his own time: out of which monuments these books were collected. And his work was so highly esteemed that it was registered in the book of the Kings of Israel: which were commentaries, as Huetius thinks, of what daily passed, (Demonstr. Evang. p. 202.)

Ver. 35. *And after this.*] That is, after the Lord had given him such a glorious victory, and struck terror into all his enemies, and given him rest and quiet round about.

Did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who did very wickedly.] This was a great

weakness, to make friendship with the son, when he had been so sharply reproved for joining with his father Ahab, (xix. 2.) especially since he was no better, but a very wicked idolater. And though he did not join with him in making war, but only in trade: yet God took it ill of him, and threatened to punish him for it, (ver. 37.) Into this he was betrayed by the affinity which was between them, which shews how dangerous it is to marry with idolaters.

Ver. 36. *And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Ezion-gaber.*] They were ships of Tarshish made to go to Ophir, as we learn from 1 Kings xxii. 48, 49. where I have shewn how this place and that agree. Bochart thinks there was a place called Tarshish in the Indian Ocean near to Ophir (that is, Taprobana), which the Phœnicians called by the same name with the other Tarshish, because the same commodities came from both. (See his Phaleg. lib. iii. cap. 7.)

Ver. 37. *Then Eliezer, the son of Dodavah of Mareshah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works.*] In the Targum it is again, *The Word of the Lord hath destroyed thy works.* Which he laid to heart so much, that when Ahaziah afterward desired to join in some voyage with him, he would not consent: as we read in 1 Kings xxii. 49.

And the ships were broken that they were not able to go to Tarshish.] They were shattered in the very place where they were built, in Ezion-gaber. (See 1 Kings xxii. 48.)

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *NOW Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.*] By his own appointment, as appears from ver. 3. He was designed king in the seventeenth year of the reign of Jehoshaphat; and crowned in the twenty-third year, and afterward reigned eight years; three with his father, and five alone. (See ver. 5.)

Ver. 2. *And he had brethren, the sons of Jehoshaphat.*] They had the same father, if not the same mother: which made his wickedness in killing them the more unnatural.

Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah.] The fourth son is distinguished in the Hebrew from the first, by the addition of *hu;* the first being called Azariah, this Azariahu.

All these were the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel.] He was king of Israel in a large sense, many of Israel being subject to him. So Ahaz is also called, xxviii. 19. where I shall give some further account of it.

Ver. 3. *And their father gave them great gifts of silver, and gold.*] After the manner of the ancient patriarchs. (See Gen. xxv. 6.)

And of precious things.] The Hebrew word signifies any thing that is excellent in its kind; whether jewels, or garments, or fruits of the earth, as Beckius observes out of Solomon Abu Melech.

With fenced cities in Judah.] Over which he made them governors. This he did very prudently, for providing so well for them, that they might not be tempted to envy the kingdom to their brother; nor quarrel among themselves. But, as Strigelius observes out of Cicero, "Sæpe optime cogitata pessime cadunt;" *things excellently designed have often very ill event.* For these riches of theirs made their brother first fear them; and then, being wickedly covetous, he was tempted to make them away, that he might get what they had into his possession.

But the kingdom gave he to Jehoram, because he was the first-born.] He could not but know his wicked disposition, by his inclination to idolatry: but was swayed purely by his being the first-born, to settle the kingdom upon him, though not so deserving as his brethren. For such was the power of the kings of Judah (as Conringius observes), that they took upon them to dispose of the kingdom, as if it had been their patrimony. Some think he superstitiously observed that law, Deut. xxi. 13. for sometime the younger sons were preferred to the elder, as we find in the sons of Josiah, 2 Kings xxiii. 30. But (as Mr. Selden shews) common usage was otherwise, lib. ii. de Successione ad Pontif. cap. 1. p. 202. where he translates these words, "Regnum autem transmisit," &c. not he *gave*, but he *transmitted the kingdom to Jehoram.*

Ver. 4. *Now, when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and slew all his brethren with the sword.*] Being advanced to the throne, his first business was to make himself so strong, that he might be able without danger to murder all his brethren. Which he did; that neither they nor their posterity might ever pretend to the crown. Perhaps they were inclined to the true religion, and therefore he made them away; lest they should oppose him, when he went about to alter it, and bring in the old idolatry.

And divers also of the princes of Israel.] Several of the most eminent persons in the country: such as the judges, established by Jehoshaphat in Jerusalem, and in the country; lest they should revenge the death of his brethren. (See Grotius.)

Ver. 5. *Jehoram was thirty and two years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.*

Ver. 6. *And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab; for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord.*] These two verses are the very same with 2 Kings viii. 17, 18. where see what I have noted.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit the Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a light to him and to his sons for ever.*

Ver. 8. *In his days the Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah, and made themselves a king.*

Ver. 9. *Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots.*

Ver. 10. *So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. The same time also did Libnah revolt from under his hand; because he had forsaken the Lord God of his fathers.*] There is little difference between these four verses, and what we read in 2 Kings viii. 19—22. I shall only note here, that this was the first punishment God inflicted on him for his sin, in not following his good father, but turning unto idols.

Ver. 11. *Moreover, he made high places in the mountains of Judah.*] For the worship of strange gods.

And caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication, and compelled Judah thereto.] He not only gave them a bad example, and enticed them to idolatry; but by threatenings and compulsions he endeavoured to constrain them to conform to his example.

Ver. 12. *And there came a writing from Elijah the prophet.*] It is certain Elijah was taken up into heaven in the time of Jehoshaphat: therefore Josephus and the LXX. imagine (as Grotius observes), that from thence he sent a letter. Which is no more wonderful, than that Judas Maccabæus should see in a Divine dream Onias and Jeremiah praying for the people; (2 Maccab. xv.) so that the meaning may be, that Elisha saw Elijah appear to him, and bid him write these words and send them to Jehoram. But our Dr. Lightfoot is of opinion, that it is not meant of that Elijah, who was carried up to heaven, but of another of his name, who sent this letter. His reason is, because he is always called Elijah the Tishbite, and never Elijah the prophet. (See him upon Luke i. 17.) But in this, I think, he is singular; and it is not true, that he is always called the Tishbite: but sometimes simply Elijah; and in 1 Kings xix. 16. God calls him *prophet*. Therefore Kimchi seems to me to have given the most natural and plainest sense of these words, in his commentary on this place: That Elijah foreseeing, by the spirit of prophecy, before he went to heaven, the wickedness of Jehoram, spake these words to one of the prophets, and charged him to put them down in writing, and send them in a letter to Jehoram, when he grew so impious as is here related; and let him know, that Elijah commanded this writing to be delivered to him: that so Jehoram being affected with it, as if it had been sent from heaven, might be moved to repent of the evil he had done. And indeed this passage will bear this sense, if we take the words *from Elijah* not to relate to the first words *there came*, but to the immediately precedent, *a writing*. He did not send a writing, but it was sent as his writing. For there is nothing in the words to intimate that this was written after his death, but delivered after his death: so that it might have been written (for any thing that appears to the contrary) by Elijah himself, before he was taken up into heaven.

Saying, Thus saith the Lord God of thy father David.] He seems to upbraid him with his degeneracy from so pious an ancestor as David was, from whom he descended.

Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah.] His sin was the greater, because both his father and his grandfather had left him an excellent example.

Ver. 13. *But hast walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab.*] He was not only an idolater himself, not only by his example corrupted others, but used his authority to draw, or rather to force them into idolatrous worship, and that of the very worst sort.

And also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself.] This seems to signify that they were pious persons, who abhorred idolatry: and therefore his sin was the more heinous in cutting them off, proceeding from enmity to God as well as to them.

Ver. 14. *Behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods.*] There was no calamity that could be thought of (as Vict. Strigelius observes) which did not befall this wicked prince: whose kingdom was destroyed and depopulated by the fiercest nations; his treasures ransacked; his wives carried into captivity; his children slain; and he himself laboured under a sore disease for two years; and when he was dead had not the honour of royal sepulture, such as his ancestors had. All which calamities were threatened in the writing sent him in the name of Elijah, that he might not think they came by chance, but by the special direction of Almighty God, as a punishment for his wickedness. But why should his people suffer, who are threatened in the first place to be plagued? the reason was, because their base fear made them comply with him in his idolatry; and besides, he was punished by the loss of them.

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels.*] A dysentery miserably tormented him.

Till thy bowels fall out.] For what should he do with bowels, who had no pity and compassion on his own brethren?

By reason of the sickness day by day.] For two years, as it is interpreted ver. 19. For *days* sometimes signifies a year: and in the Hebrew the words are *days upon days*, that is, one year after another.

Ver. 16. *Moreover, the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines.*] Who invaded him on the west side of his kingdom, as the Arabians did on the east side: who stood in such awe of his father, that they brought him presents, (chap. xvii. 11.)

And of the Arabians, that were near to the Ethiopians.] It should be translated, *that were near to the Cushites.* A people inhabiting the inmost part of Arabia, not far from Nabathea and Negid, which was then called Cush, in the confines of the territories of Babylon, which was the ancient Cush: by which name Arabia, or some part of it, is to be understood in many places. (See xiv. 9. 2 Kings xix. 9.) Whence the *topaz of Cush* must be understood of the topaz of Arabia, not of Ethiopia. In which country there are no precious stones, as Ludolphus was assured by a priest of Ethiopia, and is confirmed by our merchants. (See Dr. Hyde, in his late book de Relig. Veterum Persarum, cap. 1. p. 37. and my annotations on the place abovementioned.)

The Hebrew phrase *aljad (at hand)* is well translated *near* by us, for so it signifies plainly in other places. And Forsterus, perhaps, hath rightly observed, that the bounds and limits of countries were called *jad* (i. e. *a hand*), because a hand was there placed, to denote that there was the end of the territory, which reached no farther.

Ver. 17. *And they came up into Judah, and brake into it.*] For his soldiers were not able to defend it from this irruption on both sides.

And carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and his sons also.] Whom they slew, chap. xxii. 1.

And his wives.] All except Athaliah: who hid herself, it is likely, in some secret place, with her youngest son.

So that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.] Who is also called Ahaziah, chap. xxii. 1. and by the interposition of one letter Azariah, ver. 6.

Ver. 18. *And after all this the Lord smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease.*] He lived to see all those

calamities, which the prophet threatened, come upon him: and then the Word of the Lord, saith the Targum, smote him with a disease, for which there was no remedy.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, in process of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness: so he died of sore diseases.*] The last words seem to import, that there was a complication of other diseases, together with his dysentery: all which were very grievous, and a suitable punishment to his horrid wickedness.

And his people made no burning for him like the burning of his fathers.] See upon chap. xvi. 14.

Ver. 20. *Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and departed without being desired.*] Some think the meaning is, he was weary of his life, being so full of pain, as to desire to die, rather than live in such misery. But the most natural sense is, that his people did not wish he should live any longer, but were glad his reign was so short: as appeared by their contempt of him, in making no burning for him, nor burying him in the sepulchre of the kings, as it here follows.

Howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.] They shewed some respect to him, but not such as expressed any esteem for him.

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *AND the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead.*] They declared him king, and set him on his father's throne: but the kingdom was his of right, without the suffrage of the people.

For the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp.] Mentioned in the foregoing chapter, ver. 16.

Had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned.] This band of men came up with the Arabians, but, it seems, acted by themselves; and killed those in cold blood, whom the Arabians had carried captive, (chap. xxi. 17.)

Ver. 2. *Forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem.*] Many ways there are to reconcile this with 2 Kings viii. 26. where it is said he was two-and-twenty years old when he began to reign. (See my annotations on that place.) The shortest and plainest way is to acknowledge an error in the copyist or transcriber: for some Greek copies have here twenty-two years old; and so it is in the Syriac and Arabic translations: and our great primate Usher found it so, in a copy which he procured, at great charge, from that of the patriarch of Antioch. Piscator also acknowledges, there is no other way, that he knew, to solve this doubt.

His mother's name also was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri.] His grand-daughter, for she was Ahab's daughter, (chap. xxi. 6. and see 2 Kings viii. 26.)

Ver. 3. *He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly.*] She had the greater power of him, because she had saved him, together with herself, when the other wives and children of Jehoram were carried away captive. And she is said to have advised him *to do wickedly*, because she led him into a worse idolatry than that of Jeroboam's. Which is called *the way of the house of Ahab;* not because they were the first inventors of it, but the chief establishers of it in these parts. It did not consist merely in the worship of God by an image, which was the way of Jeroboam, but in the worship of other gods beside the God of Israel: *viz.* Baal-gods, or Baalim. Supposing, either by these to have easier access to the sovereign God the Lord of hosts; or that these they might resort unto at all times, and for all matters, as being nearer at hand, and not of so high a dignity. Whereas Jehovah, the God of Israel, Most High, either managed not smaller matters, or might not be troubled with them. For such was the conceit of the heathen, that the souls of great men after death had the honour to be agents between the supreme God and men, as being of a middle nature between them; which the Greeks called demons, and the Scriptures call Baalim. (See Mr. Mede, book i. discourse xliii. 243.)

Ver. 4. *Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab; for they were his counsellors, after the death of his father, to his destruction.*] His father was so bad, that there was no need any other should endeavour to seduce him, while he lived: but when he was dead, his mother's kindred thought it necessary to confirm him in his idolatry.

Ver. 5. *He walked also after their counsel.*] In other matters as well as in religion.

And went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel, to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth-Gilead: and the Syrians smote Joram.] Though he would not imitate his grandfather in that which was good in him, yet he followed his bad example; in joining with Ahab's son, as Jehoshaphat had with Ahab, in the like war.

Ver. 6. *And he returned to be healed in Jezreel, because of the wounds which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria. And Azariah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick.*] These two verses have been explained in 2 Kings viii. 28, 29.

Ver. 7. *And the destruction of Ahaziah was of God, by coming to Joram: for, when he was come, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the Lord had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.*] See how this was done in 2 Kings ix. 21. 27. and what I have noted there.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass, that when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, he slew them.*] As they were going to Samaria. (See 2 Kings x. 13, 14.)

Ver. 9. *And he sought Ahaziah: and they caught him (for he was hid in Samaria), and brought him to Jehu; and when they had slain him, they buried him: because (said they) he is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the Lord with all his heart. So the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom.*] The story of his death is related here a little more particularly than in the book of the Kings. (See what I have noted there concerning the whole, 2 Kings ix. 27, 28.)

Ver. 10. *But when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed-royal of the house of Judah.*] See 2 Kings xi. 1.

Ver. 11. *But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king.*] *i.e.* Of the former king, Jehoram,

Took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedchamber.] See concerning this my annotations upon 2 Kings xi. 2.

So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah), hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not.] She was the sister of Ahaziah by the father's side, though not by the mother's: for Jehoram had many wives, as we read in the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 12. *And he was with them hid in the house of God six years: and Athaliah reigned over the land.*] See in the place abovenamed what I have noted about the place wherein he was hid in the house of God: which the Targum here fancies was in the very holy of holies; into which none but the high-priest might enter, and that but once a year. But if this should pass for truth, we must not understand it of the most holy place itself, but of some chamber over it, as Beckius there observes, which will not justify this exposition; for, as I have observed before, there was no entrance into the room over it; nor is there any ground to think there was any building over it.

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took the captains of hundreds, Azariah the son of Jeroham, and Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, and Azariah the son of Obed, and Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, into covenant with him.*] It is not to be supposed that he took all the captains of hundreds that were in the nation into confederacy with him: but such whom he could depend upon, whose names are here mentioned.

Ver. 2. *And they went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah.*] These captains went about, and communicated the design to the Levites, as men that might be trusted with it.

And the chief of the fathers of Israel.] Some of which were under the government of the king of Judah; and others, perhaps, were known to be well affected to religion, and so were invited to give their assistance. But it is most likely that Judah is here called Israel (as in several other places), the principal men of authority of which were acquainted with Jehoiada's intentions.

And they came to Jerusalem.] To settle their resolution with Jehoiada.

Ver. 3. *And all the congregation made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And he said unto them, Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the Lord hath said of the sons of David.*] When all the forenamed persons were assembled at the temple, the young king was produced, and they all swore to be faithful to him. See 2 Kings xi. 4. where, in the following verses, most of this chapter hath been explained already.

Ver. 4. *This is the thing that ye shall do; A third part of you entering on the sabbath, of the priests and of the Levites, shall be porters of the doors.*

Ver. 5. *And a third part shall be at the king's house; and a third part at the gate of the foundation: and all the people shall be in the courts of the house of the Lord.*] See 2 Kings xi. 5—7. where this is delivered a little more largely.

Ver. 6. *But let none come into the house of the Lord, save the priests, and they that minister of the Levites.*] Who were then in waiting in their course.

They shall go in, for they are holy.] They were consecrated to the service of God, and were bound to attend there.

But all the people shall keep the watch of the Lord.] That is, of the *house of the Lord*, as was said before, ver. 5.

Ver. 7. *And the Levites shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whosoever else cometh into the house, he shall be put to death: but be you with the king when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.*] It appears by 2 Kings xi. 8. that part of the Levites were assigned to be the king's guard, which did not belong to their office (which was to guard the temple, and minister there); but upon this extraordinary occasion they were thus employed, as men upon whose fidelity Jehoiada might rely.

Ver. 8. *So the Levites, and all Judah, did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest had commanded, and took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that were to go out on the sabbath: for Jehoiada the priest dismissed not the courses.*] This is more distinctly set down in 2 Kings xi. 7. to which I refer the reader.

Ver. 9. *Moreover, Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds spears, and bucklers, and shields, that had been king David's, which were in the house of God.*] These seem to have been hung up as trophies in the house of God, after David's victories. (See there, ver. 10.)

Ver. 10. *And he set all the people (every man having his weapon in his hand) from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, along by the altar and the temple, by the king round about.*] See there, ver. 11.

Ver. 11. *Then they brought out the king's son, and put upon him the crown, and gave him the testimony, and made him king: and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him.*] The same is said in 2 Kings xi. 12. only one thing is here added, that he was anointed by *Jehoiada and his sons.* Among whom Zacharias was one, whom the king most basely requited. The Targum here hath a long fable, that this was the crown taken from the head of the king of Ammon, wherein was a magnet, &c.

And said, God save the king.] They said this, with clapping their hands, as we read in the book of the Kings.

Ver. 12. *Now, when Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came to the people into the house of the Lord.*] They ran from place to place proclaiming the king, and praising God, for setting him upon the throne. This is more briefly related in 2 Kings xi. 13.

Ver. 13. *And she looked, and, behold, the king stood at his pillar, at the entering in, and the princes and the trumpets by the king: and all the people of the land rejoiced, and sounded with trumpets; also the singers with instruments of music, and such as taught to sing praise. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and said, Treason, treason!*] In this verse something is added concerning their expressions of joy, with instruments of music, &c. otherwise it is the same with 2 Kings xi. 14.

Ver. 14. *Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, Have her forth of the ranges; and whoso followeth her, let him be slain with the sword. For the priest said, Slay her not in the house of the Lord.*] See 2 Kings xi. 15. where this is expressed more plainly.

Ver. 15. *So they laid hands on her: and when she was come to the entering of the horse-gate, by the king's house, they slew her there.*] See 2 Kings xi. 16. For no doubt an usurper may be slain, by those who have the supreme power and authority: whether it be in the king, or the senate, or the people, as Grotius speaks. To which he adds, the tutors of young kings who are their pupils, such as Jehoiada, lib. i. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 4. sect. 8. where he very wisely subjoins, that he cannot allow any private man to have a right to kill an usurper, sect. 19. Such a one Athaliah was, for she had no right to reign, but invaded the throne, by a tyrannical force, as Schickard calls it, (cap. 1. Theor. 3. de Jure Regio.)

Ver. 16. *And Jehoiada made a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, that they should be the Lord's people.*] I have explained this in 2 Kings xi. 17. where it is expressly said this covenant was made between the Lord, and the people, and the king. (See there.) Unto which I may here add, that there is no such difference between these two verses as may be imagined. For Jehoiada the priest sustaining the person of God, the covenant was made with God, not with Jehoiada, who only represented God, to whom they promised obedience.

Ver. 17. *Then all the people went to the house of Baal, and brake it down, and brake his altars and his images in pieces, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.*] See 2 Kings xi. 18.

Ver. 18. *Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the Lord by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord, to offer the burnt-offerings of the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David.*] What is set down briefly, at the end of that eighteenth verse, that the *priest appointed officers over the house of the Lord,* is here set down more largely in this verse, and in the next. The first words of which sound thus in the Hebrew, *he put the offices, the offices of the house of the Lord, in the hand of the priests and Levites.* Who, perhaps, had been put out of their offices by the former wicked kings, or by Athaliah, and now were restored by Jehoiada, according to the regulation made by David.

Ver. 19. *And he set the porters at the gates of the house of the Lord, that none which was unclean in any thing should enter therein.*] These also had been constituted by David. (See 1 Chron. xxvi. 1, &c.) For there is no earthly king, as Maimonides observes, whose palace is not encompassed with strong guards: and therefore much more fit was it that the dwelling-place of God, the King of kings, should be surrounded by his ministers, priests, and Levites, who should carefully watch that nothing did pollute it.

Ver. 20. *And he took the captains of hundreds, and the nobles, and the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought down the king from the house of the Lord: and they came through the high gate into the king's house, and set the king upon the throne of the kingdom.*] He would have those who had begun this work see it accomplished: and therefore they all accompanied the king from the temple to his palace, and saw him set on the throne of his father, (see 2 Kings xi. 19.) whereby he took possession of the kingdom, to which he had been anointed in the temple.

Ver. 21. *And all the people of the land rejoiced: and the city was quiet, after that they had slain Athaliah with the sword.*] See this explained in 2 Kings xi. 20.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *JOASH was seven years old when he began to reign; and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem: his mother's name also was Zibiah of Beer-sheba.*

Ver. 2. *And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada the priest.*] These two verses are the same with those 2 Kings xii. 1, 2.

Ver. 3. *And Jehoiada took for him two wives; and he begat sons and daughters.*] He did not take these two wives for the king, but for himself: which was contrary to the constant tradition of the Jews, that the high-priest was to be so pure as to have but one wife at a time: which they endeavour to prove by Scripture, from Lev. xxi. 13, 14. The Gemara Babylonica reports this, and Maimonides asserts it, (see Braunius in his Selecta Sacra, lib. iii. cap. 2.) Therefore Jehoiada is supposed to have had two wives before he was high-priest; or rather, one being dead, he took another. Or, as the Talmudists will have it, after he had divorced one he married another, as Mr. Selden observes, lib. iii. Uxor. Hebr. cap. 19. But, after all, it is not certain that Jehoiada was high-priest, for he is every where called *Jehoiada the priest;* and but once only (ver. 6.) *the chief:* which doth not necessarily imply that he was the high-priest, but only a great man, because of his relation to the royal family; or because he was the chief head of one of the twenty-four families of the priests. But he seems to be distinguished from the high-priest in 2 Kings xii. 9, 10. and is not mentioned either in Ezra vii. or 1 Chron. vi.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to repair the house of the Lord.*] As is related something more particularly in 2 Kings xii. 4, &c.

Ver. 5. *And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said unto them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year.*] That something might be done every year, till the temple was put into good repair. What money this was that they were to collect, we are informed 2 Kings xii. 4.

And see that ye hasten the matter: howbeit the Levites hastened it not.] Things were in so bad a condition, that it required the work should be begun with speed: yet such was the negligence of the Levites, and the backwardness, perhaps, of the people to part with their money, that in the twenty-third of this king's reign nothing was done, as we are informed in 2 Kings xii. 6.

Ver. 6. *And the king called for Jehoiada the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah, and out of Jerusalem, the collection, according to the commandment of Moses, the servant of the Lord, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle*

of witness?] Such oblations as were freely made in Moses's time for the building of the tabernacle. (See Exod. xxxv. 5.) There was also, beside this voluntary oblation, a tax set upon them. (See Exod. xxx. 12, 13.) It is called the *tabernacle of witness*, because here were kept the *two tables* in the ark, which witnessed the covenant between God and them. (See upon Exod. xxv. 16.)

Ver. 7. *For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God.*] That is, Ahaziah, and the sons of his brethren, mentioned chap. xxii. 8. For his brethren themselves were carried captive before their father died: (chap. xxi. 17.) or, as Abarbinel expounds it, she being a *wicked woman*, played the whore with another man, by whom she had several bastards, who committed this impiety: therefore they are called the *sons of Athaliah*, their father being unknown.

And also all the dedicated things of the house of the Lord.] Which should have been employed in the reparation of it.

Did they bestow upon Baalim.] Gave them either to adorn the temples of those false gods, or to promote their worship.

Ver. 8. *And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the Lord.*] This is more largely related in 2 Kings xii. 9. (See there.)

Ver. 9. *And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the Lord the collection that Moses, the servant of God, laid upon Israel in the wilderness.*] One like to that, according as every man should freely offer.

Ver. 10. *And all the princes, and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest.*] The great men set so good an example to the people, that they cheerfully joined with them in this good work.

Until they had made an end.] Till every body had given something, or all that had a mind had offered, and they saw no more would be given: or, till the temple was repaired, and the work finished.

Ver. 11. *Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Levites.*] Who brought it from the gate of the house of the Lord, (ver. 8.) that the king's officers might examine what the contribution amounted unto.

And when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe and the high-priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again.] By the hands of the Levites, who brought it thither.

Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.] This is related a little more largely than in 2 Kings xii. 10. (See what I have noted there.)

Ver. 12. *And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the Lord, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the Lord.*] See 2 Kings xii. 11—13, &c. where this is more distinctly related. Only here we are told who put the money into the hands of those that were to oversee the work, *viz.* the king and Jehoiada, which is not there mentioned.

Ver. 13. *So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it.*] For the men were so honest, that there was no time spent in calling them to an account, how they laid out the money: which they did very faithfully, (2 Kings xii. 15.)

Ver. 14. *And when they had finished it, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made vessels for the house of the Lord, even vessels to minister, and to offer withal, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver: and they offered burnt-offerings in the house of the Lord continually all the days of Jehoiada.*] It is likely Athaliah and her wicked sons had embezzled the holy vessels, and employed them to the service of Baalim. But till the temple was completely repaired, none of the money was converted to this other pious use, of purchasing vessels for the sanctuary, as we are distinctly told in 2 Kings xii. 13.

Ver. 15. *But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died; a hundred and thirty years old was he when he died.*] He seems to have lived long after this work was finished, being well stricken in years when he undertook it. Many such examples of long-lived men are collected by primate Usher, in his Chronologia Sacra, par. i. cap. 12. p. 70.

Ver. 16. *And they buried him in the city of David among the kings.*] This shews a good disposition in the king and the people at this time, though they soon changed after he was dead and buried.

Because he had done good in Israel.] The good he had done was in Judah, which is often in this history called Israel: because they were the principal tribe among the Israelites, and were, indeed, the true Israel of God, while they continued to worship him sincerely.

Both towards God, and towards his house.] He had been an instrument in restoring the Divine worship, which now they were sensible was a great blessing: and in repairing the decays which were in the temple, and furnishing it with vessels for the Divine service.

Ver. 17. *Now after the death of Jehoiada.*] In his lifetime they durst not attempt this, for though he was old and feeble he retained great authority.

Came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king.] Some of the great men, who in their hearts continued Baalites, desired to be admitted into the king's presence, and made their addresses with great reverence, pretending the greatest devotion to his service. And so falling into discourse with him concerning the state of religion, and other affairs, desired, at last, they might have leave to worship Baal, which Jehoiada had destroyed.

Then the king hearkened unto them.] To this dangerous discourse he listened and consented to them: for fair words and flatteries easily deceive princes, as Grotius here observes: and they wanted not specious reasons to persuade the king not to be so strict, as to permit no god to be worshipped but only one. Some of the Jews fancy, that they flattered him with a conceit, that he himself was worthy of Divine honour, being wonderfully preserved six years in the house of God; as the people flattered Herod after his oration, saying, *It is the voice of a god, not of a man.*

Ver. 18. *And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols.*] Though at the first, it is likely, these great men only worshipped Baal themselves: yet they had their emissaries who persuaded the people to join with them. So that the house of God was deserted, and they worshipped idols in the groves.

And wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their

trespass.] Which God punished by the hand of Hazael king of Syria. (See 2 Kings xii. 17, 18.)

Ver. 19. *Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them back again unto the Lord; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear.*] God's goodness was wonderful in sending his messengers to reduce such a base people: whose wickedness was no less wonderful, in that they hearkened to the great men among them rather than to the prophets of Almighty God.

Ver. 20. *And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them.*] He had a Divine motion to speak publicly to the people and reprove them: which that he might do and be heard of all, he got up into a high place where they might all both see and hear him. L'Empereur, in his Annotations upon Codex Middoth, p. 80. thinks, he got up into some desk or pulpit in the court of the priests.

Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you.] This he spake with great vehemence, and, it is likely, enlarged upon this subject so long, that it raised their indignation. It is very remarkable, that though he spake by the spirit of prophecy, yet he only applied the general prediction of Moses, Deut. xxxi. 16. unto the present time: that they might all learn to have a greater regard to Moses, and continually meditate in his law; unto which if they had attended, they would have easily discerned who were true prophets and who were false.

Ver. 21. *And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king.*] Who, it is likely, was present when he reproved them; or, being told what he said, sent an order to kill him. Which shews their error, who think Joash was not an idolater himself, but only connived at the great men's idolatry, and gave them liberty to exercise it. Josephus rightly accuses him of this sin, of which if he had not been guilty, he would not sure have slain the Lord's prophet who reproved it.

In the court of the house of the Lord.] This shews that they were there assembled; of which he took the advantage to put them in mind of their duty: and, if we believe the Jews, it was upon the great day of expiation. For, as Bochartus observes, (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 1.) "Plebeius furor nullos habet limites, maxime cum religionis velum illi obtenditur;" *popular fury hath no bounds, especially when the veil of religion is thrown over it.*

Ver. 22. *Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son.*] This sin, besides the contempt of God's prophet, and of the place where he was murdered, had a horrid ingratitude in it: he being the son of him to whom the king owed his life and his kingdom. Who assisted his father at his unction, as some think, because it is said, chap. xxiii. 11. "Jehoiada and his sons anointed him." But if Jehoiada was high-priest, this son is not reckoned among the successors of Aaron in 1 Chron. vi. And therefore it is likely he was a younger son of Jehoiada: for if he had been his eldest, he would have had sufficient authority, without the spirit of prophecy, to reprove Joash for his idolatry: as Azariah resisted Uzziah when he would have usurped his office. Ludovicus Capellus therefore thinks it probable, that his brother the high-priest conniving at Joash's apostacy, this younger brother was inspired by God to reprove it. Which boldness Joash and his courtiers thought they might punish with some colour, by alleging, that he was not moved by God to it, but by his juvenile heat and rashness, which they stirred up the people to chastise. (See Chronol. Sacra, p. 285.)

And when he died, he said, The Lord look upon it, and require it.] And so he did, both by external wars (ver. 23.) and by a conspiracy against him, (ver. 25.) It is not to be thought, that he died with a spirit of revenge; but by the spirit of prophecy foretold God would punish them for their hard usage of him. Thus the apostle, 1 Tim. iv. 14. speaks of Alexander the coppersmith, who had greatly opposed him, "The Lord reward him according to his work:" which may be understood as a sentence pronounced against him.

The Jews tell a strange story in the Gemara Sanhedrin, cap. 11. how Nebuzar-adan, when he burnt the temple, saw blood bubbling up in a certain place; and inquiring into the matter, he understood, that a priest and prophet of the Lord had been slain there, because he foretold their destruction. Whereupon he killed all the doctors of the law, but still the blood was not at rest: then all the scholars in their schools, but still it was not quiet: then all the priests, and at last many thousands of the people, but still it continued to bubble. So that he said, Zechariah, Zechariah, wouldest thou have me to destroy all the nation? and then it rested, (sect. 24.) In other books they say, there were seven transgressions upon this day, in which they killed a priest, a prophet, a judge, shed innocent blood, polluted the court of the Lord's house, and the sabbath, and the day of expiation.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass, at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him.*] God was very speedy in punishing this, and the rest of the wickedness they had committed.

And they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people.] Who had advised king Joash to restore the worship of Baal. This was a distinct war from that mentioned 2 Kings xii. 17, 18. Here Hazael is not said to have come up, but only his army, and that a small party. There it is not said, he took Jerusalem; but here he destroyed all the princes. There it is said, Joash diverted Hazael from him by presents; here, that they spoiled the city, and sent the prey to Syria. We are therefore thus to understand the whole: that when they did evil in the sight of the Lord, he sent Hazael to afflict them, who, we read in the book of Kings, took Gath, and set his face, as if he meant to set upon Jerusalem: whereupon Joash took the hallowed things, and thereby procured his departure from them. But in the end of the year Zechariah being murdered, this other war begun, which is here related in this book.

And sent all the spoil of them unto the king at Damascus.] Who was not here at this invasion, but contented himself to send a few forces against Judah, as the next words tell us.

Ver. 24. *For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the Lord delivered a very great host into their hand.*] This declared the punishment the more remarkably to proceed from the hand of God, who took away their courage, so that with a great host they could not resist a handful of their enemies.

Because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers.] According to the prophecy of Zechariah, ver. 20.

So they executed judgment against Joash.] They left him in a miserable condition; for all punishments are called *judgments* among the Hebrews.

Ver. 25. *And when they were departed from him (for they left him in great diseases).*] Many think he was sorely wounded in the battle; which brought him into great diseases. And they increased, it is likely, by the grief and anguish of his mind, to see his country ruined: and by the hatred and contempt into which he was fallen, which encouraged his own servants (as it follows) to conspire against him.

His own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest.] This doth not denote he killed more of his sons than one; but, according to the frequent use of this language, the plural number is put for the singular.

And slew him on his bed, and he died.] Perhaps they were of his bedchamber, and so could more easily compass their design. Howsoever, he was so weak and feeble that he could make no resistance, and was so little esteemed, that his guard minded not what became of him. This bed was in his house of Millo, as we read 2 Kings xii. 21. which is said to be in the way to Silla: because there was another house of Millo, from which this is thus distinguished.

And they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchres of the kings.] The same is said of Ahaz, xxviii. 27. Though the people could not punish wicked kings for their impieties while they lived; yet they set blots upon their memory when they were dead, as Grotius observes, lib. i. de Jure Belli et Pacis, cap. 3. sect. 16. *Egregio temperamento*, as he speaks, *by a most admirable temperament:* wherewith the sacredness of the supreme power was preserved, and yet kings out of fear of future judgment were kept from altering religion. But it may be doubted whether this was done perpetually: for we find bad kings builded themselves sepulchres, (2 Kings xxi. 18. 26.)

Ver. 26. *And these are they that conspired against him; Zabad the son of Shimeath an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith a Moabitess.*] They were mongrel fellows, whose fathers were Jews, but their mothers aliens. For so the manner of this impious people was, to make marriages contrary to the law.

Ver. 27. *Now concerning his sons, and the greatness of the burdens laid upon him, and the repairing of the house of God, behold, they are written in the story of the book of the Kings.*] Some by *burdens* understand the sore punishments God inflicted on him, called in Scripture *the burden of the Lord:* others, the great tribute laid upon him by the Syrians, which was a heavy burden, and a sore punishment.

And Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.] Though the father was not beloved, it did not hinder the succession of his son.

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *AMAZIAH was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.*] See 2 Kings xiv. 1.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart.*] He followed the right religion, and worshipped God aright, but not with such sincerity as David his father did, (2 Kings xiv. 3.) See Grotius upon xxvi. 4. where he observes, his son did in fact what the law required; but not with a solid piety.

Ver. 3. *And it came to pass, when the kingdom was established to him, that he slew his servants that had killed the king his father.*] They seem to have been men of some power and interest in the court, whom he durst not meddle withal till he was well settled in his authority. (See 2 Kings xiv. 5.)

Ver. 4. *But he slew not their children: but did as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, where the Lord commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.*] The very same is observed there, 2 Kings xiv. 6.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of their fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin.*] All that belonged to one family, he put under the command of one leader, whereby they became the more unanimous.

And he numbered them from twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand choice men, able to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield.] Behold here, how their iniquities had diminished their numbers, since the days of Jehoshaphat (*i. e.* in the space of eighty-two years); for this king could bring but three hundred thousand fighting men into the field, and Jehoshaphat brought near four times as many. (See upon chap. xvii. *ult.*)

Ver. 6. *He hired also a hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel for a hundred talents of silver.*] In two things he shewed his heart was not perfect with God: (as it is noted ver. 2.) for, first, he sinned in making a league with the ten tribes, contrary to what the prophet Azariah had declared, chap. xix.: and, secondly, he invited them to battle without any provocation; whereas he should have done as the Lord commanded, 1 Kings xii. 24. and left them to end their quarrels among themselves; only repelling them if they had invaded him, but no more.

Ver. 7. *But there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee.*] This was the prophet Amos, father of the prophet Isaiah, if we will believe the Jews, particularly Kimchi upon this place: but this is a foolish tradition, built on a mistake that Amos the prophet was Isaiah's father.

For the Lord is not with Israel, to wit, with all the children of Ephraim.] In the Targum it is, *The Word of the Lord will not help Israel:* who had highly offended him by the idolatry which Jeroboam of the tribe of Ephraim introduced.

Ver. 8. *But if thou wilt go, do it, be strong for the battle; God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help, and to cast down.*] If he had a settled resolution not to desist, the prophet bade him go and try, whether with the greatest power he could muster up he should be able to prevail against the Lord, who could either help a few, or destroy a great many.

Ver. 9. *And Amaziah said unto the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel?*] That which stuck with him was, the money he was likely to lose; for they would not return that, if he dismissed them from his army.

And the man of God answered, The Lord is able to give thee much more than this.] This objection was presently answered, if he would but obey God, and trust in his goodness, who was able to give his faithful servants more than that came to: and, as Grotius notes, he is rich enough who is impoverished for God's sake.

Ver. 10. *Then Amaziah separated them, to wit, the army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go home again.*] This argued some goodness in him, though his heart was not perfect with God.

Wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in great anger.] Because they looked upon them as enemies of God, and durst not employ them. St. Jerome thinks they carried idols along with them.

Ver. 11. *And Amaziah strengthened himself.*] With his own men only.

And led forth his people, and went to the valley of Salt, and smote of the children of Seir.] Who dwelt in Mount Seir.

Ten thousand.] See 2 Kings xiv. 7. where this story is told more briefly: for what follows in the next verse is there omitted.

Ver. 12. *And other ten thousand left alive did the children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the top of the rock, and cast them down from the top of the rock, that they were broken all in pieces.*] This was a very ancient punishment among the Romans, as we learn from Livy, Plutarch, Dionysius Halicarnasseus, and others; and was used among other nations, as Mr. Selden shews, lib. i. de Synedriis, cap. 17. where he observes an illustrious example of this among the Israelites; who threw Jezebel down upon the stones out of the windows, by the command of Jehu.

Ver. 13. *But the soldiers of the army, which Amaziah sent back, that they should not go with him to battle.*] The men of Ephraim, whom the prophet forbade him to join withal; and were therefore sent home.

Fell upon the cities of Judah, from Samaria even unto Beth-horon.] They went away from Amaziah in a great rage, (ver. 10.) which instigated them to revenge the affront put upon them in this manner: taking hold of the fair opportunity which presented itself, by his war with Edom; which had drained his country of all the forces that should have opposed them.

And smote three thousand of them, and took much spoil.] Thus Amaziah was punished for having entered into a society with idolaters, though at the prophet's reproof he broke it off: and God, it is not unlikely, also suffered this calamity to fall upon him, because he used his victory over the Edomites with too much cruelty.

Ver. 14. *Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir.*] Which he should have burnt with fire.

And set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them.] A most prodigious sottishness, as the prophet shews him in the next verse. Ahaz was wiser (though very wicked), who sacrificed to the gods of those people who had overcome him: hoping they might be persuaded to help him also, (xxviii. 23.) Or, perhaps, Amaziah worshipped them for fear they should owe him a spite, and contrive some mischief against him, in revenge of what he had done against the Edomites. (See Dr. Jackson, in his book of the Original of Belief, chap. 17. parag. 5. 10.)

Ver. 15. *Wherefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a prophet, which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?*] Nothing need be said more to convince him of his monstrous stupidity, of which no account could be given. Unless we suppose them to have been such beautiful images, that he looked upon them till he fell in love with them, and doated upon them, so that he was bewitched into a senseless idolatry. Fabius Maximus (as Strigelius here notes) was much wiser; who, having conquered Tarentum, and being asked what should be done with their gods, "Deos iratos Tarentinis relinqui jussit," *bade them leave their gods that were angry with the Tarentines.* For what vanity is it (as he adds) to hope for any safety from those that cannot preserve themselves? but such is the madness of idolaters, that it is reproved by sober heathens.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that the king said unto him, Art thou made of the king's counsel?*] Yes, undoubtedly, for he was made so by God; and did nothing but what belonged to his office, (Jer. i. 10.) But Amaziah thought not of this; but scornfully asked him, who made him a counsellor of state?

Forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten?] He bids him meddle no more in this matter, lest he should be provoked to deal with him as they did with Zechariah, (xxiv. 21.)

Then the prophet forbare, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.] He forbare to advise or reprove him any further, but only denounced the sentence God had passed upon him for this contempt of him, and his other sins: which came to pass, ver. 20. 27.

Ver. 17. *Then Amaziah king of Judah took advice.*] He would not be advised by the prophet, but consulted those that led him to his destruction.

And sent to Joash the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu king of Israel, saying, Come, let us see one another in the face.] He was advised, it seems, without first desiring satisfaction for the damage done him, (ver. 12.) in which perhaps Joash had no hand, to make war upon him, and provoke him to battle. (See 2 Kings xiv. 8, &c. where this and the following verses are explained.)

Ver. 18. *And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.*

Ver. 19. *Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites, and thine heart lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at home; why shouldest thou meddle to thine hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou and Judah with thee?*] See this explained there, 2 Kings xiv. 9, 10.

Ver. 20. *But Amaziah would not hear; for it came of God, that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemies, because they sought after the gods of Edom.*] God blinds the minds of those whom he intends to destroy for their sins.

Ver. 21. *So Joash the king of Israel went up; and they saw one another in the face, both he and Amaziah king of Judah, at Beth-shemesh, which belonged to Judah.*] For there was another Beth-shemesh in the tribe of Naphtali, (Josh. xix. 38. Judg. i. 33.)

Ver. 22. *And Judah was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every man to his tent.*] These two verses are in the same words, 2 Kings xiv. 11, 12.

Ver. 23. *And Joash the king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, from the gate of Ephraim to the corner-gate, four hundred cubits.*] See there, ver. 13.

Ver. 24. *And he took all the gold and the silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of God with Obed-Edom.*] The Targum here explains it, that Obed-Edom consecrated these vessels to God's service, when David brought the ark to his house; and God blessed him for his care in looking after it. But Kimchi judges better, who takes Obed-Edom to have been set over these treasures, in the custody of which his son succeeded him.

And the treasures of the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.] These hostages the Targum takes for the sons of the principal men of the city, with whom the generality of the Hebrew interpreters agree. So Jarchi; the children of Israel did not restore to Amaziah the kingdom of Judah, but upon condition, that he should give him the children of great men for a security of his fidelity, and that he should not rebel against him hereafter.

Ver. 25. *And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Joash, son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, fifteen years.*] See upon 2 Kings xiv. 17.

Ver. 26. *Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, first and last, behold, are they not written in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel?*] See there, ver. 18.

Ver. 27. *Now after the time that Amaziah did turn away from following the Lord, they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish: but they sent to Lachish after him, and slew him there.*] He turned from God before the death of Joash; therefore this conspiracy was laid a great while before it was discovered; and then he fled to Lachish, where it took effect. Or, as Jacobus Capellus conjectures (in his Hist. Sacra et Exotica), the wars abroad put a stop to this sedition at home; but when they were over, and he returned home, and had a son, then the conspiracy was renewed again, under the specious name of being guardians to the young prince, and taking better care of him than his father was likely to do.

Ver. 28. *And they brought him upon horses, and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah.*] That is, in the city of David, as it is explained 1 Kings xiv. 20.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. *THEN all the people of Judah took Uzziah.*] Who was called also Azariah, 2 Kings xiv. 21. xv. 1.

Who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah.] They made him king when he was sixteen years old; for his father left him an infant of four years old: so that there was an interregnum of twelve years; the kingdom being administered by a viceroy, or by the high-priest and the elders. (See Ludovicus Capellus, in his Chronologia Sacra, p. 182.)

Ver. 2. *He built Eloth, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.*] He repaired it, after he had retaken it from the Israelites: this being, I suppose, one of the cities, that the soldiers, whom his father Amaziah dismissed, had taken, (2 Kings xiv. 22.) and which, while he lived, he could not recover.

Ver. 3. *Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign; and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem: his mother's name also was Jecoliah of Jerusalem.*

Ver. 4. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah did.*] These two verses are the very same with those 2 Kings xv. 2, 3. (See there.)

Ver. 5. *And he sought God in the days of Zechariah.*] He persisted in the true religion, as long as Zechariah lived. By whom is not meant him whose book of prophecies is extant in the Bible, for he lived three hundred years after; nor the son of Jehoiada, who was slain some years ago: but, it is probable, the son of that Zechariah, who was called after his father's name, and was eminent for his Divine wisdom.

Who had understanding in the visions of God.] It is not said he was a prophet, but that he was a man very skilful in expounding the ancient prophecies, and giving instruction out of them, as Grotius understands it.

And as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper.] Of which he gives instances in the following verses.

Ver. 6. *And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines.*] From this verse unto the fifteenth, this Divine writer shews how excellent a prince this was, and how God prospered him, while he continued truly religious. For he was skilled in husbandry as well as in warlike affairs: and was very solicitous for the good of his people. The former of these is mentioned ver. 10. and the other in the rest of the verses: which tell us, how prudently he demolished all the fortifications of his enemies on the frontiers; and provided his own frontiers with works, garrisons, arms, and engines of war.

Ver. 7. *And God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-baal, and the Mehunims.*] I have noted often before, that these Mehunims were a people in Arabia Deserta. See 1 Chron. iv. 41. 2 Chron. xx. 1. Judg. x. 11, 12. of which this place gives a clear proof.

Ver. 8. *And the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah.*] Made him presents, that they might preserve his friendship.

And his name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened himself exceedingly.] His power grew so very great, that he was formidable, not only to the Philistines in the west, and to the Arabians and others in the east, but to the borders of Egypt in the south.

Ver. 9. *Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem, at*

the corner-gate, and at the valley-gate, and at the turning of the wall, and fortified them.] In his father's time the wall of Jerusalem was broken down four hundred cubits, as we read in the foregoing chapter, ver. 23. which, it is likely, was built again before this time. But Uzziah made it stronger by towers, which he built for its defence. One of which was at that very gate where the breach ended, *viz.* the corner-gate.

Ver. 10. *Also he built towers in the desert.*] To defend the shepherds from the sudden incursions of their enemies: particularly the Arabs, who had formerly broken in upon them, (xxi. 16.)

And digged many wells: for he had much cattle, both in the low country, and in the plains; husbandmen also, and vine-dressers in the mountains.] Some therefore take the towers forementioned to have been country-houses, where husbandmen dwelt; and where their cattle in hard weather were sheltered; and the fruits of the earth were laid up.

And in Carmel.] By this is not meant the famous mount of that name (for that was not in the tribe of Judah), but a very fertile country, as the word *Carmel* signifies in several places, (Isa. xvi. 10. Jer. ii. 7. xlviii. 33.)

For he loved husbandry.] As the greatest men (I have often observed) did in ancient times, and followed the plough, and fed cattle themselves. (See 1 Kings xix. 19.)

Ver. 11. *Moreover, Uzziah had a host of fighting men that went out to war by bands.*] They were sent out by parties, several ways, for it appears by what follows they were very numerous.

According to the number of their account by the hand of Jeiel the scribe.] He was the secretary of war (as we now speak), who took an account of the several bands of men that went out, and of the number whereof they consisted.

And Maaseiah the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, one of the king's captains.] These two, I suppose, were great officers, who were to oversee Jeiel; that there was no fraud in his account.

Ver. 12. *The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour were two thousand and six hundred.*] This is sufficient to shew he had a very great army (there being so many principal persons employed to command them); but a particular account is given of them in the next verse.

Ver. 13. *And under their hand was an army, three hundred thousand, and seven thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy.*] Perhaps these were a standing force, ready to repel their enemies if they invaded them; besides that host, which went forth by bands, to annoy their enemies on all sides: (ver. 11.) and then he was grown much more powerful than his father. (See xxv. 5.)

Ver. 14. *And Uzziah prepared for them, throughout all the host, shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and slings to cast stones.*] All sorts of arms; both defensive and offensive: but here is no mention of swords; with which, I suppose, all the people were always provided.

Ver. 15. *And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers, and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal.*] The Targum by these engines understands towers perforated: whereas the text plainly tells us they were engines, out of which they shot arrows and threw stones, from the towers and from the walls. Bochartus thinks the word properly imports, they were contrived for the projection of stones, (lib. iii. of his Phaleg. cap. 7. and in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 35.)

And his name spread far abroad.] Beyond the entering in of Egypt, (ver. 8.) unto distant countries.

For he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.] God aided him so wonderfully in all his undertakings, that he feared no enemy, (ver. 7.)

Ver. 16. *But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction.*] To the loss of all his authority. How hard is it to bear great prosperity with moderation and humble thankfulness!

For he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense.] What should tempt him to this folly, it is hard to give an account. Perhaps he had a vain ambition to imitate heathen princes; who in many places executed the priesthood also. And Jacobus Capellus thinks, that which puffed him up with pride was, that he had not only a son, *viz.* Jotham, but a grandson, Ahaz: (ad A.M. 3231.)

Ver. 17. *And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord, that were valiant men.*] See my annotations on 1 Chron. vi. 10.

Ver. 18. *And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him.*] It is plain by this, that they did not withstand his attempt by force of arms: but by reasons, persuasions, and exhortations. And, perhaps, they surrounded the altar, so that he could not, without offering violence to them, approach it.

It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense.] They represented to him, that he invaded the office of the priests, who were consecrated to this service: which he was not, and therefore ought not to meddle with it.

Go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed.] He had gone too far already, in going into the holy place; whereby he had offended the Divine Majesty: but they beseech him to proceed no further.

Neither shall it be for thine honour from the Lord God.] They represent to him, that he could get no honour, but lose very much by aspiring to this dignity of the priesthood, which the Lord had placed in other hands.

Ver. 19. *Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense.*] Which he would not lay aside upon their admonition: but fell into a great passion, because he was hindered in that which he designed.

And while he was wroth with the priests.] And, perhaps, threatening that he would have his will.

The leprosy even rose up in his forehead.] Where it could not be concealed, but was apparent to all that were present.

Before the priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense-altar.] Where they stood to keep him from it.

Ver. 20. *And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence.*] There was no need to use force to thrust him out, for he hasted himself, as it follows, to be gone: therefore they only admonished him most earnestly to depart, because the law permitted not a

leper to remain in a city, much less to come into the house of God.

Yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the Lord had smitten him.] And he was afraid of a sorer punishment, if he stayed there. (See Grotius, de Imperio S. P. circa Sacra, p. 251.)

Ver. 21. *And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death.*] The punishment was capital for meddling rashly with Divine ministrations, as we see from the beginning, in the case of Nadab and Abihu, (Lev. x. 1, 2. and see Numb. iii. 10. xviii. 7.) Now the leprosy was a kind of death, because it separated those who were smitten with it from the society of men, as if they were dead, and no part of this world.

And dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the Lord.] In the Hebrew the words are, *he dwelt in a house of freedom;* so such places were called, because such as were there were exempt from the common affairs, and shut up from the conversation of men: whence such as are laid in their grave, are said to be *free among the dead,* (Psal. lxxxviii. 5.) because removed from all the affairs and conversation of the world. (See Dr. Hammond upon that place, annot. c.)

And Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land.] See 2 Kings xv. 5.

Ver. 22. *Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.*] This shews, the prophets were wont (as I have before observed) to write the history of their own times. For Isaiah prophesied in the beginning of Uzziah's reign, and, as Abarbinel thinks, before Hosea, who lived in the same period of time; and prophesied before Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Ver. 23. *So Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings.*] This was in the city of David, as we read in 2 Kings xv. 7.

For they said, He is a leper.] Therefore he was not buried in the sepulchre of the kings his predecessors; but had a *several* burial-place when he was dead, as he had a several house while he lived.

And Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *JOTHAM was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: his mother's name also was Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok.*

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Uzziah did.*] The very same is said in 2 Kings xv. 33, 34.

Howbeit he entered not into the temple of the Lord.] Some imagine, he was so frighted at what befel his father, that he did not so much as go into the court of the temple, or that he did not offer sacrifices in the temple, but in high places. But this doth not well agree with the words foregoing: therefore the meaning rather is, that he imitated his father in all that was good in him; but did not profanely enter into the temple to offer incense, as he did.

And the people did yet corruptly.] For they offered incense in high places, 2 Kings xv. 35. and, as some think, committed idolatry.

Ver. 3. *He built the high gate of the house of the Lord.*] It was built before by Solomon, but he repaired it, (2 Kings xv. 35.) and, as some think, added a very glorious structure to it.

And on the wall of Ophel he built much.] The Targum translates it, *a palace:* but others understand by *Ophel* a high place, or cliff, where there was a tower. Pellicanus thinks, the meaning is, that he much beautified, as well as repaired, the porch of the Lord's house, which was a hundred and twenty cubits high.

Ver. 4. *Moreover, he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built castles and towers.*] That is, he took care to fortify his kingdom strongly on all sides against his enemies.

Ver. 5. *He fought also with the king of the Ammonites, and prevailed against them.*] This people had been entirely subdued by David, as we read 2 Sam. x. xii. 31. but now it seems they had recovered so much strength, that they invaded the country of Judah; but were overthrown by Jotham.

And the children of Ammon gave him the same year a hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand of barley.] He made them tributaries to him; and they began the very same year to pay the tribute.

So much did the children of Ammon pay unto him, both the second year and the third.] Either this was the agreement, that for three years they should make this acknowledgment; or, at the three years' end they grew so strong again, that they refused to continue it longer.

Ver. 6. *So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God.*] Directed his counsels and actions aright, according to the rule of God's word. Solomon Jarchi here observes, that all the kings of Judah had some ill thing laid to their charge, but only Jotham: for David himself sinned grievously in the matter of Uriah: Solomon was drawn away by his wives to countenance idolatry: Rehoboam forsook the law of God; and Abijah walked in his steps: Asa took the treasures of God's house, and sent them to the king of Syria; and likewise put the prophet in the stocks: Jehoshaphat entered into society with the wicked; and so he goes on with the rest. But in Jotham (saith he) there is no fault found; which is a wonder, when there were so few good people among them: for his integrity was not so great, as the corruption of his people; who immediately after his death joined with Ahaz in his abominable idolatries.

Ver. 7. *Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars, and his ways.*] He had wars not only with the Ammonites, but with the Syrians, and with the ten tribes, as may be gathered from 2 Kings xv. 37.

Lo, they are written in the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.] The affairs of the kings of Judah are commonly said to be recorded in the Chronicles of the kings of Judah: but this king's actions, it seems, were so eminent, that the Israelites also recorded some of them in their books.

Ver. 8. *He was five-and-twenty years old when he began to reign; and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem.*] This was said before, ver. 1. and it is not easy to give an account why it is here repeated. Unless it be true, which Kimchi saith, that Jotham was born the same year that his father was struck with a leprosy; but was not king till he grew up, and was instructed in the government; which was

managed during his minority by the princes of the people. But Jacobus Capellus rather thinks he reigned sixteen years by himself alone; and then took his son into society with him, in the government of the kingdom.

Ver. 9. *And Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.*] See 2 Kings xv. 38.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AHAZ was twenty years old when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord, like David his father.*] See 2 Kings xvi. 2. where there are the very same words.

Ver. 2. *For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim.*] He not only worshipped the golden calves (which was the way of the kings of Israel), but many other gods of the nations round about: which are all comprehended under the name of Baalim. (See what I have noted upon Judg. ii. 11.)

Ver. 3. *Moreover, he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom.*] Where Moloch was worshipped.

And burnt his children in the fire.] Or, made them to pass through the fire; for the words are ambiguous. The Targum here saith, The Word of the Lord snatched Hezekiah out of the fire; because he foresaw three saints would spring from him: and here he tells a long tale of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, who were thrown into the fiery furnace.

After the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel.] This was the most detestable idolatry that was practised among the ancient inhabitants of Canaan, as appears from Lev. xviii. 21. xx. 2—4, &c.

Ver. 4. *He sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places.*] Not unto God, but unto his idols, whom he worshipped also *on the hills, and under every green tree,* as it here follows.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore the Lord his God.*] The Lord is called *his God,* because he was so by the right of his dominion over him, and his kindness to him for his father's sake.

Delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria.] That by this punishment he might return from his evil ways. These two kings, Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah king of Israel, seem to have come upon him together, whereby he was put to some distress.

And they smote him.] That is, the Syrians slew many of his people.

And carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus.] This was after that invasion mentioned 2 Kings xvi. 5.

And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.] As is related in the next verse.

Ver. 6. *For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men; because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers.*] Who therefore forsook them, and took away their courage, that they could make no resistance; for otherwise, it had not been possible to make so great a slaughter in one day.

Ver. 7. *And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son, and Azrikam the governor of the house, and Elkanah that was next to the king.*] They seem to have taken Jerusalem (though they did not keep it), and to have slain these great persons. The Targum translates the last words, *the arkapta of the king:* that is, as some interpret it, the captain of his host. But our translation comes nearest to the Hebrew, *second to the king.* Who was inferior to the king alone; insomuch that the LXX. translate it Διάδοχον, he that immediately followed the king, and succeeded him. His *viceroy,* as some interpret it.

Ver. 8. *And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them.*] This is an argument that they were quite dispirited, and had no heart to defend themselves, being not only slaughtered like sheep, but carried captive by droves.

And brought the spoil to Samaria.] Into their own country, towards Samaria: but they had not yet brought it into the city of Samaria, (ver. 13.)

Ver. 9. *But a prophet of the Lord was there, whose name was Oded.*] By this it appears that God continued his prophets among the Israelites, to bring them to repentance, if they would have hearkened to their admonitions.

And he went out before the host that came to Samaria.] Bringing their captives and spoil in great triumph thither.

And said unto them, Behold, because the Lord God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand.] He would not have them lifted up with their victory; which was not to be ascribed so much to their valour, as to the anger of God against Judah, who abandoned them to their fury.

And ye have slain them in a rage that reached up unto heaven.] That had no measure, and cried to heaven for vengeance upon the Israelites.

Ver. 10. *And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem.*] This seems to denote that they had sacked Jerusalem.

For bond-men and bond-women unto you.] To use them as slaves of another nation, of whom they might make money, by selling them to their neighbour, or make them drudges to serve them for nought.

But are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God?] He bids them consider, that they who thought themselves God's favourites because he had made them so victorious, had sins enough to answer for: for which if he punished them as they deserved, they might be reduced to the same condition with the brethren of Judah.

Ver. 11. *Now hear me therefore, and deliver the captives again, which ye have taken captive of your brethren; for the fierce wrath of the Lord is upon you.*] If they did not set them at liberty, he threatens sudden destruction, which was ready to break forth upon them for their cruelty.

Ver. 12. *Then certain of the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, stood up against them that came from the war.*] These persons had some goodness in them, as well as courage, and great authority with the people and soldiers.

Ver. 13. *And said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the captives hither.*] That is, into the city of Samaria.

For whereas we have offended against the Lord already.] By making such an unmerciful slaughter of their brethren.

Ye intend to add more to our sins and to our trespass; for our trespass is great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel.] Or, *though our trespass is great,* and deserves to be punished with a fierce wrath, as we have exercised against Judah.

Ver. 14. *So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation.*] To dispose of them as they pleased. A wonderful instance of obedience; in restoring not only the captives which were very valuable, but all the spoil also, which, no doubt, was considerable. What might not these great men have done, to bring them to repent of their idolatry, if they had been truly religious, and exerted their authority?

Ver. 15. *And the men which were expressed by name.*] There were some nominated and appointed, I suppose, by the heads of the people, to take care of the captives, and see them well treated.

Rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them.] They not only gave them necessary sustenance, but refreshed their weariness, like the good Samaritan in the parable, who poured oil and wine into the wounds of a poor traveller. This was an extraordinary goodness, not only to release poor captives without doing them hurt, or making any gain of them, but to dismiss them with a *viaticum* (as Strigelius speaks), giving them all things necessary for their return home. And it was still a greater kindness to provide *vehicles* (as it here follows) for the infirm multitude, and bring them to their own country without hard travel.

And carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm-trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria.] So great was the power of the prophet at this time, that he turned their barbarous cruelty into the tenderest humanity. But, as I said, they were not so easily converted from idolatry: unto which they had so strong an inclination, that nothing could persuade them to forsake it.

Ver. 16. *At that time did king Ahaz send unto the king of Assyria to help him.*] When Rezin king of Syria invaded him, 2 Kings xvi. 6, 7. This is the first time that we read of the king of Assyria, except in 2 Kings xv. 19. where Pul, king of Assyria, is mentioned as a powerful prince, who invaded the Israelites. Before his time we read nothing of that monarchy, which grew by degrees to its greatness from small beginnings. For in David's time, or whensoever Psalm lxxxiii. was written, the king of Assyria was but a petty prince, like those of Moab and Ammon, and the like, with whom he joined, (ver. 8.) to enslave the Israelites: but now had swallowed up all those little princes, and grown to such a height that none could stand before them. But if their large empire had been of long standing, we should in all probability have heard of them before this time, as we do often afterward.

Ver. 17. *For again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives.*] When Rezin fell upon them, the Edomites took that advantage, and made great ravage in the land of Judah.

Ver. 18. *The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country.*] Which lay next to them.

And of the south of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shocho with the villages thereof, and Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there.] They prevailed so far as to make an inroad further into the country of Judah; and not only possessed themselves of the cities here mentioned, but settled in them. For in this weak condition into which Ahaz was fallen, they took their revenge for the mischief which Uzziah had done them, who subdued them as far as Gath, (chap. xxvi. 6.)

Ver. 19. *For the Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz.*] It was purely upon his account that God gave them up into the hand of the Philistines; for that very year in which Ahaz died, the prophet Isaiah foretold his son should afflict them, (Isa. xiv. 27—29.) and accordingly Hezekiah smote them as far as Gaza, (2 Kings xviii. 8.)

King of Israel.] We cannot gather from hence that he is called *king of Israel,* because he walked in their ways, for a good king is so called, xx. 2. And the Masorites observe, that six times we read the king of Israel instead of king of Judah, because they all descended from Israel. So Beckius here expounds it, in a large sense, he was king of Israel: for Israel is not here opposed to Judah, but comprehends it. Therefore the Targum hath the *king of Judah:* and so the LXX. and the Vulgar Latin. For Israel was once the name of the whole people, and after the division of the kingdom, the two tribes were still a part of Israel, in the ancient state of the world. See Buxtorf; who observes, out of the Hebrew grammarians, that the manner of the Scripture is to put the genus sometimes for the species, and the species for the genus, (Vindiciæ Hebr. Veritatis, cap. 7. par. ii.)

For he made Judah naked.] Deprived them of the Divine protection by his foul transgressions.

And transgressed sore against the Lord.] The Targum renders it, *The house of Judah ceased from the worship of God.* Which Ahaz in a manner wholly abolished, and thereby transgressed more grievously than all his predecessors.

Ver. 20. *And Tiglath-pilneser king of Assyria came unto him.*] As he desired by the messengers he sent to him, (ver. 10.)

And distressed him, but strengthened him not.] In 2 Kings xvi. 9. it is said, that he did *help him;* how therefore did he *distress him?* Both these are true, for as he did come to his assistance against the king of Syria, so he took Damascus, carried the people captive, and delivered Ahaz from the power of the Syrians, (2 Kings xvi. 7—9.) But this did Ahaz little good, for he helped him not to recover the cities the Philistines had taken from him, nor did he lend him any forces, nor enable him to recruit his own; but rather weakened him by exhausting his treasures, and by destroying Samaria, whereby the way was opened to invade his country the more easily in the next reign. Thus many countries in latter ages, by calling in the assistance of some foreign prince against their enemies, have been overrun, and conquered by those who came to their help.

Ver. 21. *For Ahaz took away a portion out of the house*

of the Lord, and out of the house of the king, and of the princes, and gave it unto the king of Assyria: but he helped him not.] Did not make his condition better, but so much the worse. (See 2 Kings xvi. 8.)

Ver. 22. *And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord.*] He was not at all amended by the sore calamities which fell on him, but introduced more idolatry than had been practised before.

This is that king Ahaz.] The word *hu* is sometimes a word of contempt, as Kimchi observes, (Gen. xxxvi. *ult.* Numb. xxvi. 9.) And Ahaz deserved to be branded, as the most notorious offender that had ever been among the kings of Judah: and was remarkable for this also, that he never prospered in any thing he undertook.

Ver. 23. *For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him.*] A most monstrous stupidity, to imagine they had any power over him, who could not defend themselves from Tiglath-pilneser: but being of opinion that they were gods, he sacrificed to them to appease them, that they might do him no further hurt; doing as the ancient Romans, who wooed by larger sacrifices the gods of their enemies to come over to their side, and be their friends, as Dr. Jackson discourses, in his Original of Unbelief, chap. 17. parag. 5.

And he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me.] Not against the Syrians, but he foolishly imagined they might help him against the Edomites, Philistines, and other enemies.

But they were the ruin of him and of all Israel.] They were so far from being his friends, that they proved the destruction of him, and of his whole country: for though it was not in their power to do him either harm or good, yet his worshipping of them undid him and all his people.

Ver. 24. *And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God.*] That the priests might not be able to minister before God for want of them, (xxix. 19.) and that he might employ the money he made of them (for what he cut in pieces, I suppose, he sold) in building altars (as it follows) in every corner of Jerusalem.

And shut up the doors of the house of the Lord.] That no man might come to worship God there, but sacrifice every where, but only where they should; and this continued till the beginning of his son's reign, (xxix. 3.)

Ver. 25. *And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods.*] He took care the people should not think of going up to Jerusalem; by erecting, at his own charge, high places in every city, wherein to perform Divine service to what God they pleased.

And provoked to anger the Lord God of his fathers.] With whom he did not join other gods, but worshipped him not at all.

Ver. 26. *Now the rest of his acts, and of all his ways, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.*] In 2 Kings xvi. 19. it is only said, they were written in the book of the kings of Judah: but Ezra, it seems, found that the book of the kings of Israel contained some memorable passages of his reign; there being, as is here recorded, great wars between them and Judah.

Ver. 27. *And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem; but they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel.*] They are called the kings of Israel, because they had an ancient right to govern the whole twelve tribes.

And Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAP. XXIX.

Ver. 1. *HEZEKIAH began to reign when he was five-and-twenty years old; and he reigned nine-and-twenty years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Abijah the daughter of Zechariah.*] See upon 2 Kings xviii. 1, 2. where I have noted, that Ahaz therefore was very young when he begat Hezekiah. And we may grant, as Jacobus Capellus thinks, that he was but ten years old (though, as I have there shewn, Bochartus thinks he was more); for though this was wonderful, yet not incredible, as his words are. For he refers us to Scaliger in his first oration against Paræus, where he mentions a city, in which a boy not twelve years old begat a child of a girl, a cousin of his, not ten years old: and adds, "Rem notam narro," &c. *I tell a known story*, whose memory is still fresh in Aquitain. (See his Histor. Sacra et Exotica, ad Annum Mundi, 2292.)

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done.*] The same is recorded in 2 Kings xviii. 2.

Ver. 3. *He, in the first year of his reign, in the first month.*] This demonstrates his great piety and zeal for God, that he began so soon to reform religion, and did not stay till he was established in his throne. For the surest way to establish himself, he thought, was to establish true religion; though he run a great hazard in attempting the abolishing idolatry, which had been confirmed by some years' prescription.

Opened the doors of the house of the Lord.] Which his father had shut up, (chap. xxviii. 24.)

And repaired them.] For by long neglect they were gone to decay.

Ver. 4. *And he brought in the priests and the Levites.*] Whose business it was to take care of religion, and look after things sacred, and admonish kings of their duty. But Hezekiah was beforehand with them, and prevented their endeavours; not only exciting them to reform what was amiss, but using the most proper arguments to press them to it.

And gathered them together into the east street.] Which was before the east gate of the temple, where the entrance into it was.

Ver. 5. *And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites; Sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place.*] The *abomination*, as the Jews translate it; that is, the altar of Damascus, and all the idols that were upon it. (See 2 Kings xvi. 10, &c.) These were brought by Ahaz into the temple; that is, into the court of the priests, which is called the *holy place*, in Lev. vi. 16, &c.

Ver. 6. *For our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord our God, and have forsaken him.*] He urges them to this pious work, from the consideration of the great sin of their forefathers, and their

horrible contempt of the service of God, as it follows in the next words.

And have turned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord, and turned their backs.] This seems to signify that Ahaz brought in a way of worship directly contrary to the law of God; which commanded them to worship towards the ark, which was placed in the west. But he ordered they should turn their backs upon that (which was a disrespect and contumely to the Divine Majesty), and worship towards the east, where he had set his altar. And at last he shut up the doors of the temple, that they should not worship there at all, as it is again observed in the next verse.

Ver. 7. *Also they have shut up the doors of the porch.*] That none might enter into the temple, but it might be left a desolate place.

And put out the lamps.] The priests having nothing to do there.

And have not burnt incense, nor offered burnt-offerings in the holy place, unto the God of Israel.] But made high places in every city, to burn incense unto other gods, as it is ver. 25. of the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 8. *Wherefore the wrath of the Lord was upon Judah and Jerusalem.*] After the confession of their sins, he represents to them the calamities wherewith God had punished them.

And he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, as you see with your eyes.] Sent such a panic fear and terror into them (such as is mentioned chap. xx. 22.) that they could not stand before their enemies, but became a scorn to them. For it had not been possible that they should slay such a vast number of them in one day (as we read chap. xxviii. 6.) if they had not been perfectly astonished, and bereaved of their senses.

Ver. 9. *For, lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword; and our sons, and our daughters, and our wives, are in captivity for this.*] Or rather, *were* in captivity, till the tender mercy of God released them. And it is likely some were still in captivity to other nations, though the Israelites had dismissed their captives: for they were distressed in Ahaz's time by the Edomites, and the Philistines; the former of which carried away captives, as we read xxviii. 17, 18.

Ver. 10. *Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us.*] He resolved therefore to renew the covenant between God and the people, because he foresaw there was immediate destruction impending upon the whole nation for their iniquities, unless they did heartily and speedily repent of them; for they were grown to the greatest height of impiety, his father having by degrees proceeded to the utmost pitch of idolatry: which, though God had many ways punished very severely, yet he persisted in his wickedness; and to the very end of his life amended nothing, but grew worse and worse: therefore this good king thought it absolutely necessary forthwith to make a thorough reformation, and engage the whole nation in a solemn covenant to worship God purely. Thus Conradus Pellicanus.

Ver. 11. *My sons, be not now negligent.*] He beseeches the Levites, in the most tender language, no longer to go along with the people in their error, but to bestir themselves to make them better.

For the Lord hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that you should minister unto him, and burn incense.] This was the work of the priests, unto whom he speaks as well as to the Levites, remembering them what their office was to which they were peculiarly chosen, *viz.* to take care to see his laws observed, and to minister to him, according to his directions; and therefore not to omit the performance of their duty in the house of God, now that it was open to them.

Ver. 12. *Then the Levites arose, Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son of Azariah, of the sons of the Kohathites: and of the sons of Merari; Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehalelel: and of the Gershonites; Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son of Joah:*

Ver. 13. *And of the sons of Elizaphan; Shimri and Jeiel: and of the sons of Asaph; Zechariah and Mattaniah:*

Ver. 14. *And of the sons of Heman; Jehiel and Shimei: and of the sons of Jeduthun; Shemaiah and Uzziel.*] These were the principal persons among the Levites, who readily complied with the king's exhortation, and engaged their brethren also (as it here follows) in the same work, which they undertook, of cleansing the house of the Lord.

Ver. 15. *And they gathered their brethren, and sanctified themselves.*] By washing their bodies, I suppose, and other rites prescribed by the law.

And came, according to the commandment of the king, by the words of the Lord, to cleanse the house of the Lord.] The king had a great power in things commanded by God: the exercise of which power is here very properly called *the commandment of the king, by the words of the Lord:* or, as in the margin, *in the business of the Lord.* The like we read chap. xxx. 12. (See Grotius, in his book de Imperio Summarum Potestatum circa Sacra, p. 59.)

Ver. 16. *And the priests went into the inner part of the house of the Lord, to cleanse it.*] That is, into the sanctuary (for into the most holy none might go but the high-priest), whither the Levites might not come.

And brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the Lord into the court of the house of the Lord.] That is, the court of the priests, where the Levites attended upon them, and ministered unto them.

And the Levites took it, to carry it out abroad into the brook Kidron.] They cast the filth into the valley of the son of Hinnom, or Tophet, through which Kidron ran, (2 Kings xxiii. 10. 12.)

Ver. 17. *Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify.*] This was the month Abib, as our great primate Usher observes, but not on the day he was made king, but nine months after his father's death. (See his Chronol. Sacra, p. 82.)

And on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the Lord.] Which they cleansed together with the outward courts, and the chambers of the temple, in which they spent eight days more, as the next words signify. The house having been long shut up, and nobody coming into it, must needs be full of dust, and the vessels become rusty: in the scouring of which, and restoring them to their splendour, and wiping the walls of the house, they must necessarily spend a great deal of time, for the neglect had been great, and their diligence extraordinary: it being probable, that this sanctification was by washing both the walls of the house, and the floor, and every thing else.

So they sanctified the house of the Lord in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end.]

The pollution was so universal, and their exactness so great in restoring all things to their purity, that they could not finish their work in less time. Some think they spent eight days in cleansing all the places from filth; and other eight days in sanctifying the temple, and all belonging to it: though how this sanctification was performed we are not told.

Ver. 18. *Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, We have cleansed all the house of the Lord, and the altar of burnt-offering, with all the vessels thereof, and the shew-bread table, with all the vessels thereof.*] All which they set in their right places, after they had removed all defilements from them.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression.*] The Targum explains it very significantly, *Which he profaned, and rendered abominable by idols of other countries, particularly from Damascus.* And so Kimchi, *Which he translated to idolatrous uses.*

Have we prepared and sanctified.] The Targum gives a quite contrary sense of the words, *We have set them apart and hidden them, and prepared others in their place.* And, indeed, the Talmudists (as Beckius here observes upon the Targum) are of opinion, that all the vessels which Ahaz profaned in his reign were set aside, and others consecrated in their stead: for they thought them not any longer fit to be employed in the Divine service. But Kimchi understands these words as we do, that they purged and purified the vessels which he had profaned.

And, behold, they are before the altar of the Lord.] Before the altar of burnt-offering (I suppose), unto which they went the next morning, and offered sacrifices; with the blood of which, perhaps, they were further purified.

Ver. 20. *Then Hezekiah the king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the Lord.*] Now he engaged the principal persons in the city to join with him in his reformation of religion, when all things were ready for the performance of the duties thereof.

Ver. 21. *And they brought seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he-goats, for a sin-offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah.*] It is very observable that the word *tsaphir*, which here signifies the *he-goat*, was never used by the Hebrews till after the captivity of Babylon, when we find it in Daniel who lived in the captivity, (chap. viii. 21.) And here being used, and in no other place beside, it is some argument that Ezra was the author of this book, which he wrote after their return from that captivity, in which he had learned the Chaldee language, and thence mixed some Chaldee words with the Hebrew, whereof this is one. And therefore Daniel, to explain it, adds the Hebrew word *seir* to it, just as in the New Testament the word ὁ πατὴρ is added to *abba*.

And he commanded the priests, the sons of Aaron, to offer them on the altar of the Lord.] There are two laws in the books of Moses, requiring a sacrifice to be offered for the sin of the whole congregation, when they were in an error. The first is in Lev. iv. 13, 14. where a bullock is required to be offered, when they were ignorantly seduced to do something forbidden by the law, though they did not forsake their religion. The other is in Numb. xv. 22—24. where a goat is commanded to be offered together with a bullock, when they acted contrary to their religion, and were fallen by error into the practice of external rites. And the bullock was offered for a burnt-offering in token that they owned no other God but the Lord, nor any other religion but that prescribed by Moses; and the goat for a sin-offering, that they might expiate the guilt they had contracted, by doing contrary to their religion. Now this good king Hezekiah being sensible, that they had not only acted contrary to their religion, but in effect abolished it, by shutting up the doors of the temple, and omitting the daily sacrifice, and every where exercising strange worship, appointed seven bullocks for a burnt-offering, and as many goats for a sin-offering (though the law never required more than one goat), thinking these numerous sacrifices (together with rams and lambs) were, if not necessary, yet very fit, because of the great and long neglect of his Divine service, and because of the multitude and long continuance of their other sins against the Lord, for which they now begged forgiveness. Thus after the captivity they offered twelve bullocks for burnt-offerings, and twelve goats for sin-offerings, (Ezra viii. 35.) according to the number of the children of Israel: for, as they knew one goat was necessary, so they thought a great number would be becoming in such cases.

Ver. 22. *So they killed the bullocks, and the priests received the blood, and sprinkled it on the altar: likewise, when they had killed the rams, they sprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed also the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood upon the altar.*] According to the direction of the law, Lev. viii. 15.

Ver. 23. *And they brought forth the he-goats for the sin-offering before the king and the congregation; and they laid their hands upon them.*] As the law also directed, Lev. iv. 14, 15. viii. 22.

Ver. 24. *And the priests killed them, and they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel; for the king commanded that the burnt-offering and the sin-offering should be made for all Israel.*] The burnt-offering, to acknowledge the Lord to be the only God: and the sin-offering, to make expiation for all their offences against his supreme authority. And they were made not only for Judah but for all Israel: a great many of the ten tribes being now joined to them.

Ver. 25. *And he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.*] What king David had ordained was approved by the prophets: who liked the design, and, by authority from God, settled this course of Divine service, (1 Chron. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1. 2 Chron. viii. 14. xxiii. 18.) The Targum here translates the last words, *For by the Word of the Lord this ordinance was made by the prophets.*

Ver. 26. *And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets.*] Which were ordained by Moses, Numb. x. 10.

Ver. 27. *And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt-offering upon the altar: and when the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began also.*] When the drink-offering was poured out, then began the song: as the practice is described in aftertimes, by the son of Sirach, Ecclus. i. 25, 26, &c. (See Dr. Lightfoot in his Temple Service.) What the song of the Lord was, we are told ver. 30.

With the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel.] See 1 Chron. xxv. 1. 6. These hymns and doxologies were in the nature of prayers to God, as Mr. Mede observes, book ii. chap. 6. p. 365.

Ver. 28. *And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt-offering was finished.*] They all adored, as soon as the sacrifice and the praises of God began: and continued praising God till all was done.

Ver. 29. *And when they had made an end of offering, the king, and all that were present with him, bowed themselves, and worshipped.*] As they began so they concluded the service, with adoration of the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 30. *Moreover, Hezekiah the king and the princes.*] Who now joined with him in furthering the reformation.

Commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer.] These were the prophets who composed the songs that the Levites sung, as I observed upon 1 Chron. xxv. 6. But the author of the psalms ascribed to Asaph (in the book of Psalms), seems to be one that lived in aftertimes: perhaps of the same family with this famous Asaph, who lived in David's days, and so called by his name.

And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.] Not only upon this day, but continually, as David had appointed; and Jehoshaphat in his reign restored, (xx. 19, 20.) But this order had been interrupted in the time of succeeding idolatrous princes, especially in the time of Ahaz; but now revived by this good king Hezekiah.

Ver. 31. *Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the Lord.*] By offering sacrifices of reconciliation with him, whom they had acknowledged to be their Lord; and were anew entered into their office.

Come near, and bring sacrifices and thank-offerings into the house of the Lord. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank-offerings.] These were peace-offerings, whereby they acknowledged God's great goodness to them: and gave him thanks for this happy change of religion.

And as many as were of a free heart, burnt-offerings.] These were not like the sacrifices of thanksgiving, as Kimchi observes, which were in great part eaten by the offerers: for burnt-offerings were entirely consumed upon the altar, in honour of God: and therefore it argued greater piety and largeness of heart to offer them.

Ver. 32. *And the number of the burnt-offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten bullocks, a hundred rams, and two hundred lambs: all these were for a burnt-offering to the Lord.*] These were not so many in number as had been offered in former times; for the nation was now grown poorer, in comparison to what it was heretofore.

Ver. 33. *And the consecrated things were six hundred oxen, and three thousand sheep.*] All these were devoted to the service of God, besides the burnt-offerings beforementioned.

Ver. 34. *But the priests were too few.*] For they who had sacrificed to idols were excluded from their ministry: and they who had not, were not all prepared and sanctified to do their duty. For it appears by what follows, they were backward unto this work to which Hezekiah called them; and therefore could not prepare all the burnt-offerings, (which was their proper work, Lev. i. 5.) much less all the other sacrifices, which were numerous.

So that they could not flay all the burnt-offerings.] This was the work of the priests, (Lev. i. 6.) and could not be done but by those who were skilful in the business. So Bochartus observes out of the heathen poet, that it was practised with great art and industry (Μιστύλλουτ' ἐπισταμένως) by those who had knowledge and skill to do it dexterously, (Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 33. p. 324.)

Wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them till the work was ended.] In cases of great necessity, they did not stand nicely upon the observation of the ceremonial law. For both now, and in the days of Josiah, (xxxiv. 11.) some things were admitted, which that law did not allow. For, as now the Levites flayed the sacrifices, (which was the work of priests alone, Lev. i. 6.) so all the people were allowed to keep the Passover in the second month; and the Levites offered the paschal lambs, which were brought by those that were unclean, and the unclean ate them.

And until the other priests had sanctified themselves.] Then the Levites might no longer continue to do their proper work.

For the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.] In the foregoing reign, as Jarchi thinks, such as feared God (that is, would not worship idols) were forced to conceal themselves, and lie hid: so that when Hezekiah came to the crown, they did not presently appear, nor were they forward to be cleansed and sanctified. But the Levites were men of greater integrity than the priests: at least there were more men of zeal found among them, that readily offered themselves to the service of God. (See xxx. 17.)

Ver. 35. *And also the burnt-offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace-offerings, and the drink-offerings for every burnt-offering.*] This is another reason why the number of the priests was not sufficient to discharge the work of this day: because there were not only abundance of burnt-offerings to be flayed, but the fat of peace-offerings to be burnt, and a drink-offering to attend every burnt-offering, which must necessarily employ many hands.

Ver. 36. *And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people.*] Had given this good mind to them, to join so forwardly in this reformation.

For the thing was done suddenly.] Which argued a Divine motion; whereby they were excited without long persuasions.

CHAP. XXX.

Ver. 1. *AND Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh.*] I look upon the last words as signifying, that more particularly he wrote letters to these two tribes, as he sent messengers to the rest: for they were the tribes nearest to him. Whom he could not command, but only invite and admonish them of their duty. For they were bound by the law, as well as the people of Judah, (see ver. 5.) and great numbers of them had settled themselves in the land of Judah, in the reign of Asa, (xv. 9.)

That they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover unto the Lord God of Israel.]

This was a festival that used to be celebrated in this very month wherein he began his reformation: which he resolved therefore to keep with great solemnity; and it could be kept no where but at Jerusalem; whither he invited the Israelites to come: and it seems, Hoshea king of Israel, at this time, did not forbid the messengers of Hezekiah to come and invite them, nor his people to go; as Jacobus Capellus observes: which I cannot but look upon as a remarkable instance of God's goodness towards this sinful people in the kingdom of the ten tribes, that he raised up, at the very last when they were ripe for destruction, such a king to reign over them, as had so much goodness in him, that he did not hinder any of his subjects who would go and worship at Jerusalem. Nor did he prohibit those from coming into his country, who were sent to invite them to it: so that the Israelites could not pretend they were compelled to be idolaters, for fear of the king's displeasure.

Ver. 2. *For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the Passover in the second month.*] The time being elapsed (by such means as here follow) for its observation in the first month (which was the proper season), he took advice with those who were his proper council in such matters, to keep it in the next. For by the *princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem,* are meant the great synagogue, consisting of the senate of that city, and the other senators called from other places. So Grotius understands it upon St. Matt. x. 17. And thus our Mr. Thorndike also, in fewer words; He means the consistory, called *the princes,* as they are called in the prophet Jeremiah, xxvi. 10, 11. (See Rites of the Church, p. 231.) For Jehoshaphat having settled judges in every city, it is likely they remained in some authority till this time.

Ver. 3. *For they could not keep it at that time.*] At the time appointed by the law, on the fourteenth day of the first month: for the reason here following.

Because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together at Jerusalem.] Ahaz had made such confusion in the worship of God, by shutting up the doors of the temple (that no Divine service might be there performed), and by erecting idols every where, and many other ways; that as the priests, by long disuse, could not be sanctified so soon as was necessary, nor the people have time to assemble: so the temple itself could not be purged till the sixteenth day of the first month, (xxix. 17.) and consequently the time was passed for keeping the Passover, which was to have been on the fourteenth: they thought it best therefore to adjourn it to the next month, rather than stay till the next year; especially since God himself allowed, in some cases, those that could not keep it in the first month to keep it in the second, (Numb. ix.) And what was allowed to particular persons, they thought might be allowed to the whole congregation of Israel.

Ver. 4. *And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation.*] The advice of the great council was approved by the king, and by every one else.

Ver. 5. *So they established a decree.*] This was the work of a court, or great council.

To make proclamation throughout all Israel.] By the king's authority.

From Beer-sheba even to Dan.] From one end of the country to the other.

That they should come to keep the Passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem; for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written.] The ten tribes had never kept it, since the division of the kingdom by Jeroboam (at least not in such manner as the law prescribed), being hindered by his threatening interdicts from going to Jerusalem; as their forefathers were by their long tedious travels in the wilderness, (Josh. v.) And as for Judah, it appears from ver. 26. they had never kept it with such solemnity, since the time of Solomon.

Ver. 6. *So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah.*] They sent posts, that timely notice might be given to every one, to prepare themselves for this service.

And according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria.] That is, Pul and Tiglath-pileser, who had carried a great many of them captive, (2 Kings xv. 29. 1 Chron. v. 26.)

Ver. 7. *And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the Lord God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as you see.*] And would certainly give them up also, if they continued to provoke him, as they did.

Ver. 8. *Now, be ye not stiff-necked, as your fathers were.*] It is a metaphor (as I have observed elsewhere) from refractory oxen, which will not go forward; but withdraw their necks and their shoulders from the yoke, and go backward.

But yield yourselves unto the Lord.] In the Hebrew, *give your hand;* concerning which phrase, see 1 Chron. xxix. 24.

And enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever.] Come to worship at Jerusalem: which was the only place appointed by God for his service, as long as that law lasted.

And serve the Lord your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.] Which otherwise was ready to make an utter end of them, as it had done of their brethren.

Ver. 9. *For if ye turn again unto the Lord, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.*] These were the contents of the letter, which Hezekiah sent throughout all Israel: concluding with a most exuberant grace (as Strigelius justly calls it), which not only promised to them that they should continue in their land; but they also, who were carried captive, should be restored to them. This, no doubt, Hezekiah had authority from God to declare to them, that he might move them to repentance. For Moses had declared this, which Hezekiah applies to them in their circumstances.

Ver. 10. *So the posts passed from city to city, through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.*] Being long accustomed to serve other gods, their hearts were so hardened, that the generality of the ten tribes scoffed at this

most gracious invitation to repentance. For which they paid very dearly shortly after: Shalmaneser coming six years after this, and taking Samaria, and carrying the whole nation captive, (2 Kings xvii. 6. xviii. 10.)

Ver. 11. *Nevertheless divers of Asher, and Manasseh, and of Zebulun, humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem.*] Here is not so much as one of Ephraim mentioned: but in some other tribes there were those found who laid to heart their apostacy, and came to Jerusalem, humbly begging pardon. Yet Ephraim is mentioned afterward as partaking of the passover; (ver. 18.) some of them, it is likely, upon consideration following the example of their brethren, though at first they mocked at the message.

Ver. 12. *Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes.*] There was a marvellous unanimity in Judah, who were so obedient to the motions of the Divine grace (without which so great a change could not have been made), as generally to comply with the king's proclamation, made with the consent of the princes.

By the word of the Lord.] They looked upon it as a Divine command, which was brought to them by that authority. And it appeared so to be, by the mighty power of God, which wrought their hearts to a cheerful obedience.

Ver. 13. *And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation.*] This confutes the fancy of the Talmudists, who say, Hezekiah added a month to this year by intercalation; that is, made another month, Adar, which was the last month of the year; and so kept this Passover in the first month of the next year. But this is directly contrary to the express words of this verse, which says, they kept it in the second month. Nor is the opinion of the Karaites truer, who fancy, that though they kept the Passover in the second month, yet they did not keep all the parts of it, but only offered the sacrifice of the paschal lamb; the feast of unleavened bread being performed in the first month. But this doth not agree with ver. 21. which saith expressly, "they kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days."

Ver. 14. *And they arose, and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away.*] They began as soon as they came to Jerusalem, to shew their zeal against idolatry, by throwing down the altars that Ahaz had erected in high places, either for sacrifice, or burning incense, which were very many. (See xxviii. 24.)

And cast them into the brook Kidron.] They stamped them to powder, I suppose, and then cast it into this brook.

Ver. 15. *Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month: and the priests and Levites were ashamed.*] They blushed to see the people so forward, and themselves so negligent.

And sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt-offerings into the house of the Lord.] They that had not done it already (xxix. 34. and ver. 3. of this chapter) now sanctified themselves, that they might perform their office; there being many sacrifices to be offered upon this day. (See upon Deut. xvi. 2.)

Ver. 16. *And they stood in their places, after their manner, according to the law of Moses, the man of God.*] That they might dispatch their business the more readily.

The priests sprinkled the blood, which they received of the hand of the Levites.] Private persons, as well as the Levites, might receive the blood from the beast, but the priests alone could sprinkle it.

Ver. 17. *For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified; therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passover.*] The passover doth not only signify the paschal lamb, but all the sacrifices that accompanied it, as I have shewn in the forenamed place, (Deut. xvi. 2.)

For every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the Lord.] Abundance of the people that came to keep this Passover were not clean; and therefore there needed the more sacrifices to be offered for their cleansing, which was one reason why the Levites were employed in it, otherwise there had not been a sufficient number to perform this duty.

Ver. 18. *For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves.*] And therefore ought not, according to the law, to have come to the sanctuary, much less eaten the passover.

Yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written.] They did not understand, after such a long night of ignorance and superstition, what ceremonies were required for their cleansing; or rather, they had not time to use them. Yet, having an eager and pious desire to commemorate their wonderful deliverance out of the Egyptian bondage, they were permitted in their uncleanness to eat the passover, lest they should be discouraged, if they were denied it, in their return to the true religion.

But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good Lord pardon every one.] He had a confidence that God was so gracious, that he would not stand strictly upon the observation of external rites, when he saw men's hearts honest and upright.

Ver. 19. *That prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers.*] Who with pure and holy intentions came disposed to worship God, and acknowledge him to be the Lord.

Though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.] But wanted such ritual purifications as were required of those that were admitted to worship God at the sanctuary.

Ver. 20. *And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.*] Some imagine that God smote them with some disease, because of their impurity, which upon his prayer was cured. But the Scripture uses this phrase, for granting pardon, and freeing men from the guilt of sin, as is apparent from Isa. vi. 10. "Lest they should be converted, and be healed;" *i. e.* pardoned.

Ver. 21. *And the children of Israel, that were present at Jerusalem, kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness.*] Which was appointed to be observed after the killing of the passover. (See Exod. xii. 15, 16, &c.)

And the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the Lord.] All the seven days they sang praises to God with music, when the sacrifices were offered.

Ver. 22. *And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord.*] He

encouraged them to continue to instruct the people more fully in their duty, by commending them for their care and diligence; and promising, it is likely, to reward them, for what they had done in propagating the true knowledge of God.

And they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace-offerings, and making confession to the Lord God of their fathers.] Acknowledging his great goodness unto them, which is called confessing, in the holy language, (1 Chron. xvi. 23, 24.)

Ver. 23. *And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days.*] They advised, it is likely, with those mentioned ver. 2.

And they kept other seven days with gladness.] They did not observe other seven days of unleavened bread, but offered sacrifices, with praises and thanksgivings, and feasting seven days.

Ver. 24. *For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks, and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks, and ten thousand sheep.*] Part of these sacrifices was offered unto God, and the priests had another part, and the rest was distributed to the multitude, that they might feast and be merry all the seven days, which was an extraordinary solemnity; but by this means not only all the Israelites were provided for who kept this great feast, but all the strangers also that came with them to Jerusalem.

And a great number of the priests sanctified themselves.] So that there was a sufficient number to offer the sacrifices, and to sprinkle the blood, though not to flay them all.

Ver. 25. *And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced.*] From hence we may conclude, that many strangers that were in the kingdom of Israel became proselytes, at this time, to the true religion revived in Judah.

Ver. 26. *So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon, the son of David king of Israel, there was not the like in Jerusalem.*] He held a wonderful great feast for a vast number of people fourteen days, as we read 1 Kings viii. 65.

Ver. 27. *Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people.*] That is, such of the Levites as were priests stood up and dismissed the congregation with a blessing: for it was their office alone to bless, (1 Chron. xxiii. 13.) and this blessing is ordained in the law of Moses, by a Divine commandment, (Numb. vi. 22, 23.) and was continued by them as long as the sanctuary stood. Yea, it was used, if we may believe the Jews, not only in the temple, but in the synagogues; not only in the land of Canaan, but in all countries where they met to worship God, and they think themselves bound to it by the Divine law. (See Campegius Vitringa, in his book de Synagoga Veteri, par. ii. lib. iii. cap. 20.)

And their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling-place, even unto heaven.] This shews that their blessing was a prayer to God to bless them, of which the blessing ordained by Moses is a proof. And, perhaps, God at this time, by some visible token, testified his acceptance of them: but it is not likely the Divine writer would have concealed such a miracle.

CHAP. XXXI.

Ver. 1. *NOW, when all this was finished.*] In the latter end of the second month, after the Passover and the following festivals were over, and they had received good instructions from the pious Levites, (xxx. 22.) they now produced the fruit of all this, by destroying the monuments of idolatry.

All Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars.] Which Ahaz had made in all the fenced cities of Judah, (xxviii. 25.)

Out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all.] They had no authority in the kingdom of Israel, to which Ephraim and Manasseh belonged: but some think, that as Hezekiah sent letters to all Israel to come and keep the Passover, so he went by a Divine motion to those tribes which were nearest to him, and, without the consent of Hoshea king of Israel, destroyed their images, and other idolatrous monuments. But these words may signify no more than that he did this in all parts of Ephraim and Manasseh, who were fallen off to Judah, and come under his government, (chap. xv. 9.)

Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities.] This argues great zeal, that they would not return home till they had done all they could to establish and promote true religion. Of so great import it is (as Pellicanus here observes) to have a good king, and a well-instructed people.

Ver. 2. *And Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests, and the Levites after their courses, every man according to his service.*] He restored the order which David had instituted; which had been interrupted since the days of Jehoshaphat, who walked in the ways of David, (chap. xvii. 3.)

The priests and the Levites for burnt-offerings, and for peace-offerings, to minister, and to give thanks, and to praise.] Not only upon such solemn feasts as the Passover (which they had lately kept), but every day they sung praise to God, when the sacrifices were offered.

In the gates of the tents of the Lord.] That is, in the Lord's house; which anciently was a tent, as he represents to David, 2 Sam. vii. 6. And all houses were called by that name, Psal. lxix. 25.

Ver. 3. *He appointed also the king's portion of his substance for the burnt-offerings, to wit, for the morning and evening burnt-offerings, and the burnt-offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as it is written in the law of the Lord.*] There was a particular sacrifice, I suppose, offered for the king every day, at his own cost and charge. Besides which, Hezekiah likewise maintained the morning and evening sacrifices every day, and especially on the sabbaths, and new moons, and solemn feasts: because the condition of the people was so low, that they could not every one pay the tax that was laid on them on purpose for the maintenance of these sacrifices. Yet the first-fruits and the tenths he ordered to be carefully paid, as it here follows. And these words it is possible may mean no more, but that he made an allowance out of his own estate, for the support of all the expenses, ordinary and extraordinary, at the altar.

Ver. 4. *Moreover, he commanded the people that dwelt*

in Jerusalem.] That by their good example others might be stirred up to their duty.

To give the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord.] For the service of God could not be maintained, unless there was a due provision made for the maintenance of his ministers, who were always supported out of the public stock. For they who minister to the community, ought by the law of nature (as Estius well observes) to be maintained by it. For their ministry is not appointed for themselves, but for the salvation of all the people.

Ver. 5. *And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey.*] The Targum translates the word *honey of dates,* as the Jews commonly understand it, and so expound Deut. viii. 8. where seven sorts of things are mentioned, of which they brought the first-fruits. But though honey was not offered in sacrifice to God (which is their reason why they will not here understand *honey,* properly so called), yet I see no reason why they might not bring the first-fruits of it, and give it to the priests for their own use.

And of all the increase of the field.] Which Kimchi expounds of the fruits of the rest of the trees; *viz.* fig-trees and pomegranates.

And all the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly.] They paid tithe, saith he, not only of the corn, but of the fruit-trees, and of the herbs, which were not due by the law: such herbs as those mentioned by our Saviour, mint, anise, and cummin; (Matt. xxiii. 23.) though these seem to have been of a later date, invented by the Pharisees.

Ver. 6. *And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the city of Judah.*] As many of the Israelites as were under the power and dominion of Judah, did the same that they did.

They also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep.] As the inhabitants of Jerusalem had brought in the tithe of such things as are forementioned, which they had in their storehouses; so they in the country brought in also the tithe of oxen and sheep, which were not kept in the cities.

And the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the Lord their God.] That is, saith Jarchi, the tithe which the Levites paid to the priests. But Kimchi takes it for things consecrated, which they had dedicated to God's service; of which they also gave tithe, though they were exempted from the law of the tithing.

And laid them by heaps.] In a great abundance, as is beforesaid.

Ver. 7. *In the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finished them in the seventh month.*] They began to offer first-fruits in the third month, when their harvest began; and finished the tithing in the seventh month, when their harvest was ended, (Exod. xxiii. 16.)

Ver. 8. *And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed the Lord and his people Israel.*] They gave thanks to God, who had given them such plenty of good things, and likewise given them a heart to offer so plentifully: and they commended the people, and prayed God to increase their store. For that is the meaning of blessing the people, praising their liberality, and praying God to reward it.

Ver. 9. *Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps.*] Asking them, as some understand it, what they meant to let them lie so carelessly, as if they were neglected, and did not lay them up in some safe place. But others think he means, how it came to pass, that there were still such great heaps left, and no more spent. Which the following answer seems to favour, though the next words incline to the former.

Ver. 10. *And Azariah the chief priest, of the house of Zadok.*] The head of the family of the priests, of the line of Zadok.

Answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord.] Which was from the very beginning of harvest.

We have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the Lord hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store.] His meaning seems to be, that they had not spared to make use of the plentiful provision which was brought to them; and had also laid up as much as they had room to receive, and all these heaps were still left.

Ver. 11. *Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare chambers in the house of the Lord; and they prepared them.*] To build new storehouses, besides those which Solomon had made; because there was not room enough wherein to lay all the offerings, and tithes, and other dedicated things.

Ver. 12. *And brought in the offerings, and the tithes, and the dedicated things, faithfully: over which Cononiah the Levite was ruler, and Shimei his brother was the next.*] As he took care they should all be faithfully laid up, so he set trusty persons to see that they were no less faithfully preserved, for their proper uses. Of which these two brethren were the chief.

Ver. 13. *And Jehiel, and Azaziah, and Nahath, and Asahel, and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Ismachiah, and Mahath, and Benaiah, were overseers, under the hand of Cononiah and Shimei his brother.*] These were inferior officers, under the command of the two forenamed brethren, who had the principal oversight, and these were assistant to them.

At the commandment of Hezekiah the king, and Azariah the ruler of the house of God.] For so it was ordered by the king, with the advice of Azariah, who was before mentioned (ver. 10.) as a chief person among the priests.

Ver. 14. *And Kore, the son of Imnah the Levite, the porter towards the east.*] At the entrance of the house of God.

Was over the free-will-offerings of God, to distribute the oblations of the Lord.] Unto the priests and Levites, to whose uses they were appropriated by God: or, as some think, to give out so much flour, oil, wine, frankincense, &c. as was necessary for the sacrifices.

And the most holy things.] So they called the burnt-offerings, and the offerings for sin, and the trespass-offerings, and the two lambs for peace-offerings, on the last day of the feast of tabernacles, as Beckius observes out of Maimonides.

Ver. 15. *And next him were Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shechaniah, in the cities of the priests, in their set office, to give to their brethren by courses, as well to the great as to the small.*] These were to take care of those who stayed in their cities, while others came in their courses to wait at Jerusalem. None of which wanted the portion allotted to them, both for themselves and for their little children.

Ver. 16. *Besides their genealogy of males, from three years old and upward, even unto every one that entereth into the house of the Lord, his daily portion for their service in their charges, according to their courses.*] Though none of the Levites were permitted to come into the house of the Lord, to do service, till they were twenty years old; yet their males (as Mr. Selden observes from this place), who were three years old or more, were allowed to come into the temple with their parents; and in the distribution, the other infants being pretermitted, these were provided for. Kimchi here observes, that males under three years old were not capable of entering into the house of the Lord: but females, neither then, nor after they were older, were capable of this privilege.

Ver. 17. *Both to the genealogy of the priests by the house of their fathers, and the Levites from twenty years old and upward, in their charges, by their courses.*] These words *twenty years old* (as the same great person observes) relate not to the priests, but to the Levites: who, according to the law of Moses, were not obliged to their function, till they were thirty years old, Numb. iv. 3. But David, in the latter end of his reign, a little before the building of the temple, admitted them to officiate at the age of twenty years, 1 Chron. xxiii. 26, 27. (See Selden, de Succession. ad Pontif. lib. ii. cap. 4.)

Ver. 18. *And to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation.*] The forenamed officers gave to every family their portion; not only to the priests, but to their wives and children: of which (it appears by these verses) an exact register was kept, according to which they made their distribution.

For in their set office they sanctified themselves in holiness.] Or rather, according to the Hebrew, For *in faith*, or *with fidelity* (some translate it in the margin *in trust*), *they sanctified themselves in holiness;* that is, attended upon their ministry at the house of God, nothing doubting they should be provided of all things necessary. For this seems to be a reason, why such care was taken of their wives and children, because their husbands were wholly given up to the service of God, and could not follow any other employment whereby to provide for the maintenance of their families.

Ver. 19. *Also of the sons of Aaron the priests, which were in the fields of the suburbs of their cities, in every several city.*] Care was taken of those that lived in the country, though at the greatest distance, as well as of those that lived in or near Jerusalem, or waited in their courses there. They that were not in waiting, but at home with their families, had provision made for them, as if they had been at the house of God.

The men that were expressed by name, to give portions to all the males among the priests, and to all that were reckoned by genealogies among the Levites.] The forenamed persons were entrusted with this business, to see that none wanted a maintenance.

Ver. 20. *And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good, and right, and truth, before the Lord his God.*] Whatsoever he thought was pleasing to God, conformable to the law, and profitable for his people, he performed with integrity of heart.

Ver. 21. *And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.*] Whatsoever he went about, either for the advancement of religion, or the good government of his people, he did it sincerely, and with great zeal; so that God prospered him both in peace and in war.

CHAP. XXXII.

Ver. 1. *AFTER these things, and the establishment thereof.*] After the reformation of religion, and the establishment of it, by settling the maintenance of the priests and Levites (whom he appointed, according to the ordinance of David, to attend in their courses), he prospered so, that he resolved to be subject no longer to the king of Assyria: who thereupon came and invaded his country, (2 Kings xviii. 7.)

Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah.] This was in the fourteenth year of the reign of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii. 13.

And encamped against the fenced cities.] Many of which he took: God thinking fit to try the faith of Hezekiah, and, by disappointing Sennacherib, to get himself the greater glory.

And thought to win them for himself.] To conquer the whole country, even Jerusalem itself.

Ver. 2. *And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem.*] His success puffed him up, so that he designed, as plainly appeared, to besiege the capital city of the kingdom.

Ver. 3. *He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men.*] Though the prophet Isaiah had assured him of God's protection, he did not neglect to consult the best means of his preservation.

To stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city.] To fill them up with earth, that it might not be known there was any water there; which they turned another way, and by pipes and channels under ground brought it to Jerusalem.

And they did help him.] Assisted him in this work.

Ver. 4. *So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land.*] That is Gihon, as Kimchi understands it; which some take to be Kidron. It was no easy thing to dry up this brook: but it is supposed the head of it was not far from the city, which being stopped up they diverted the current, and, by conveyance under ground, brought it into great pits within the city; which received the water for the use of the people.

For we read afterward (ver. 30.) of his stopping up a course of water, which was above; and bringing it down to this west side of the city.

Saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?] Water was scarce in this country; therefore they thought it prudent to distress their enemies by the want of it. He speaks of *kings*, in the plural number either because there were many kings that served under the king of Assyria, or because he was the *great king*, as he styled himself.

Ver. 5. *Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken.*] There was a great breach made in it by Joash king of Israel in the days of Amaziah: (chap. xxv.

23.) which, I suppose, was repaired in his son's days, who was a very powerful prince, (chap. xxvi. 9.) and therefore he speaks here of some other breach, which had been made since that time; and perhaps in the same place, where through neglect the wall might possibly be fallen down.

And raised it up to the towers.] It was broken down from the gate of Ephraim to the corner-gate (as we read in the forenamed places), where there were towers, for the defence of the gates, unto which he carried the wall: so that it was entirely raised up again.

And another wall without.] He compassed the city with another wall without the old one; for its stronger defence.

And repaired Millo in the city of David.] Some understand by *Millo* the wall that was about Zion, on the north part of the city: or the street within the city from the palace to the temple. Which he repaired, that is, fortified and made strong with a wall, to defend the entrance of it.

And made darts and shields in abundance.] Both offensive and defensive weapons; of which he took care there should be no want.

Ver. 6. *And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city.*] In the street of the principal gate, which was very large.

And spake comfortably to them, saying.] Encouraged them to stand by him, in defence of their city, religion, and liberties: which he assured them God would protect, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 7. *Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him.*] It is the part of a good commander to shew himself undaunted before his soldiers; but especially to persuade them, that, having a good cause, God is on their side: which the Targum in the next verse explains thus, *The Word of the Lord our God is our helper.* Which signifies, as Beckius there thinks, more persons than one in the holy Trinity.

Ver. 8. *With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God, to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.*] Relied on what he said, as if it had been spoken to them by God himself.

Ver. 9. *After this did Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem (but he himself laid siege against Lachish, and all his power with him), unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah, that were at Jerusalem, saying.*] See 2 Kings xviii. 17, &c. in which place, and in chap. xix. 10, &c. the following speech is set down more largely; which here is abridged.

Ver. 10. *Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the siege of Jerusalem?*] See 2 Kings xviii. 19. The last words seem to signify, that for fear of the king of Assyria, they durst not stir out of the gates of Jerusalem: for so we translate the last words in the margin, *the strong hold of Jerusalem.*

Ver. 11. *Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, The Lord our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria?*] See 2 Kings xviii. 22. He did not intend, it appears by this, to storm the city, but to keep them pent up till they were starved.

Ver. 12. *Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it?*] It is evident from hence, that the worship of one God alone was known to be the religion of the Jews. But Sennacherib would have had them believe, Hezekiah had dishonoured him by confining his worship and service to one narrow corner: which was before diffused and spread all over the city and country; and therefore would not help them. (See there, 2 Kings xviii. 22.)

Ver. 13. *Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of other lands? were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand?*] If the Lord had a mind to help them, he would have them believe that he was not able: because no gods had been able to deliver those that worshipped them from his power.

Ver. 14. *Who was there among all the gods of those nations, that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand?*] Upon this argument he enlarges himself very much in 2 Kings xviii. 32—35.

Ver. 15. *Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you in this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers; how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand?*] See 2 Kings xviii. 29, 30.

Ver. 16. *And his servants spake yet more against the Lord God, and against his servant Hezekiah.*] The Targum translates it, *They spake perversely against the Word of the Lord God,* &c. Which plainly declares, that paraphrast took the *Word of God* to be a Divine person, whose servant Hezekiah was.

Ver. 17. *He wrote also letters to rail on the Lord God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying.*] One of these letters is set down at large in 2 Kings xix. 9—14.

As the gods of the nations of other lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand.] He insists upon this so often and so long, it being the most popular argument he could use.

Ver. 18. *Then they cried with a loud voice, in the Jews' speech, unto the people of Jerusalem that were on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them, that they might take the city.*] By a surrender of it into their hand. (See 2 Kings xviii. 26, 27, &c.)

Ver. 19. *And they spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, which were the work of the hands of man.*] They ignorantly fancied, there was no difference between the God of the universe, whom the Jews worshipped, and the gods of particular countries, who pretended to no power but only there: though in truth they had no power at all, being made by those that worshipped them.

Ver. 20. *And for this cause Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven.*] See 2 Kings xix. 1, 2, &c. 25, 26, &c.

Ver. 21. *And the Lord sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains, in the camp of the king of Assyria.*] With a vast number of common soldiers, as we read 2 Kings xix. 35. The Hebrew text no where mentions the name of angel, nor of the time

of the year when this stroke was given, nor the kind of plague whereby they were destroyed: but the Targum saith, The Word of the Lord sent Gabriel to do this execution, who in the Passover night smote them with lightning. Which is related in the Babylonian Talmud, after the same manner, as Beckius observes upon the Targum.

One would think, that Artabanus had read or heard something of this sudden and dreadful overthrow, when he dissuaded Xerxes from invading Greece, being swoln with confidence that nothing could withstand him. "Dost thou not observe (saith he) how the highest and magnificent buildings are wont to be struck with thunder, when the lower escape? Φιλέει γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς τὰ ὑπερέχοντα πάντα κολούειν, *for God loves to depress all things that are lifted up.*" And a little after, in the same speech, he admonishes him, Οὐ γὰρ ἐᾷ φρονέειν ἄλλον μέγα ὁ Θεὸς ἢ ἑαυτόν· *for God doth not allow any other to think highly of themselves, but only himself.* (Herodotus, lib. vii. cap. 10.)

So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword.] See 2 Kings xix. 37. And with him the Assyrian empire began to fall, and never recovered its former strength, though it still continued in great power. For the next year after Sennacherib's death the Medes revolted, being encouraged to it, no doubt, by this great defeat at Jerusalem: and by their example several other nations fell off from the Assyrians and asserted their liberty, as Hermannus Conringius hath observed out of Herodotus, in his Adversaria Chronologica, cap. 4. But still their monarchy continued, as appears by what follows in the next chapter of this book.

Ver. 22. *Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side.*] That is, defended them from all their enemies; just as a shepherd doth his sheep, whom he leads into places of safety.

Ver. 23. *And many brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah.*] His neighbours were so far from molesting him, that many came to worship God, and to do honour to Hezekiah, who was so highly in God's favour.

So that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.] That is, all the neighbouring countries, who heard of these things, had him in great esteem.

Ver. 24. *In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the Lord: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign.*] Or, as it is in the margin, *wrought a miracle for him.* See a large account of this in the twentieth chapter of the second book of the Kings, and my annotations there. Unto which this may be added, that Pliny saith, *The application of a very fat fig to a hard swelling is a present remedy;* "Carbunculi, si sine ulcere est, quam pinguissimum ficum imponi, pene singulare remedium est," (lib. xxiii. Nat. Histor. cap. 7.) But the *schechin* wherewith Hezekiah laboured (which we translate *bile*) was not of this sort: for the word signifies the worst kind of ulcers: and therefore there was nothing in this application of a lump of figs to lessen the wonder.

Ver. 25. *But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him.*] In his deliverance from so powerful an enemy as he could not resist: and from such a dangerous disease, as was incurable, without the special hand of God.

For his heart was lifted up.] By the embassy sent to him from the king of Babylon, who came to inquire of the wonder done in the land. Which, together with the slaughter of Sennacherib's army, his shameful retreat, the presents which had been sent him from other countries, and the fame which he had got, made him have too high an opinion; though not of his power, which was very small; yet of his piety, which was very great. But instead of making him thankful, he grew so presumptuous of God's favour as to be forgetful of his benefits.

Therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.] Who, it seems, were as insensible as himself of the mercies they had received: contenting themselves, that they were not idolaters, though they were not truly pious, and mindful of God's benefits.

Ver. 26. *Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart.*] Upon the admonition which the prophet Isaiah gave him; and the severe sentence he pronounced against him, and his family.

(Both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem).] Who were awakened by the same threatening.

So that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.] But peace and truth were in his days, as he speaks, 2 Kings xx. 19.

Ver. 27. *And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels.*] All which he shewed to the king of Babylon's ambassadors, (2 Kings xx. 13.)

Ver. 28. *Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *for beast and beast;* that is, *every beast:* as in Esther ix. 21. *Year and year;* that is, *every year:* and ver. 28. *Generation and generation;* i. e. *every generation.*

Ver. 29. *Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance; for God had given him substance very much.*] The great riches of these countries consisted in abundance of cattle, of all sorts, as I have often observed.

Ver. 30. *This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper water-course of Gihon.*] He seems to speak of the same thing which is mentioned before, ver. 4. being a work of such great labour and art, that Ezra thought fit to make it memorable, by taking a more particular notice of it, among his great works. From the mention of the *upper watercourse,* Kimchi gathers, there were several streams of this torrent.

And brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David.] The rivulet, I suppose, had many windings before, and did not come straight down to the city, as now it was made to do.

And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.] It is likely, he contrived many other things for the benefit of the city of Jerusalem; none of which miscarried.

Ver. 31. *Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land.*] Which is mentioned at large, 2 Kings xx. 10, 11. Isa. xxxviii. 7, 8. In the former of which places I have endeavoured to give an account of

it. But Bochartus, I find, strongly opposes the opinion of the body of the sun's going back: in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 14. p. 4. where he observes, that the Scripture in both places speaks of the shadow's going back ten degrees; and then it is said, the *sun went back*, that is, the shadow of the sun, or the light of the sun, which succeeded to the going back of the shadow. And it must be confessed, that if the sun had gone back, it would not have been a miracle in Judea alone, but all the world over: and the king of Babylon needed not have sent to inquire about the wonder in that land, because it would have been a wonder in his land, and in all lands, as well as in Judea. And so it was, for I have observed there out of Herodotus, that in Egypt they knew something of the unusual motion of the sun: and, perhaps, they now observed it in Babylon, and only sent to inquire whether Isaiah foretold it, which was a great wonder. I have met also with one, who thinks, that the Babylonians being worshippers of the sun, it was part of Hezekiah's sin, that he did not take this occasion to persuade the ambassadors to worship God, who made and commanded the sun; and could stop the course of it when he pleased.

God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.] God suffered him to behave himself according to his own inclinations, without any special motion from him; that Hezekiah might know he was not so strong as he imagined, if he were left to himself without God. But it is generally thought, the last words relate rather to God: who made proof of him, as he had done of many other good men, whether he would entirely obey him, or not. He tries none in that sense of which St. James speaks; *viz.* for an ill intent, or to lead men to destruction; but for a good end, to improve them, and bring them to salvation. Thus he tempted Abraham, Gen. xxii. 1. and the children of Israel, Exod. xv. 25. xvi. 5. and Ezekiel, and many others, that it might appear how they stood affected to him: which God, no doubt, knew, and now saw the pride and vanity that lurked in Hezekiah's heart: which was hid from every one but God himself, who now suffered him to discover it for his humiliation. For it was a greater crime to be again puffed up, as he had been before his dangerous sickness.

Ver. 32. *Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz.*] Who hath recorded his prayer, which he made to God in his sickness.

And in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.] See xxvii. 7.

Ver. 33. *And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David.*] Which was a part of that honour which they did him, mentioned in the next words; for he deserved it above all the kings which they had since the time of David.

And all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death.] Buried him, perhaps, with such solemnity and expenses as were made at the funeral of king Asa, chap. xvi. 14. Maimonides saith, they appointed a company of students in the law to sit at his sepulchre, and to mourn seven days together. (See Schickard, in his Jus Regium, p. 173.) But this I look upon as merely rabbinical.

And Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Ver. 1. *MANASSEH was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem.*] See 2 Kings, chap. xxi. 1. where his mother's name is set down, which is here omitted.

Ver. 2. *But did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel.*] The very same words are in the forenamed place, ver. 2. And here it follows, ver. 9. that he did worse than those abominable heathens; not only committing all the sins of his forefathers, but endeavouring to exceed them, and leave nothing undone wholly to subvert the worship of God.

Ver. 3. *For he built again the high places, which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim.*] Imitated Ahab king of Israel, as it is explained there, 2 Kings xxi. 3.

And made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.] These groves, I suppose, were made about the temple, which was utterly forbidden, (Deut. xvi. 21.) being a heathenish rite, (Judg. vi. 25.) and mentioned by Isaiah (lxvi. 17.) among the abominable idolatries which they practised secretly in their gardens. Yet the Jews in aftertimes did plant trees about their *proseuchæ*, their oratories, or places of prayer, as Scaliger observes in his Fragmenta, at the end of his book de Emend. Temporum, p. 25. But they were not in the law touching the temple.

Ver. 4. *Also he built altars in the house of the Lord.*] In the court of the priests. (See 2 Kings xxi. 4.)

Whereof the Lord had said, In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever.] This was the greater profanation, because God had chosen this place to settle his presence in it.

Ver. 5. *And he built altars for all the host of heaven, in the two courts of the house of the Lord.*] In the court of the people of Israel, and in the court of the gentiles. (See there, ver. 5.)

Ver. 6. *And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom.*] There is mention made only of his son in the book of the Kings, but here of *his children*, whom he consecrated to Moloch.

Also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.] He seems to have studied to find out what God had forbidden in his law, that he might practise it. (See there, 2 Kings xxi. 6.)

Ver. 7. *And he set a carved image (the idol which he had made) in the house of God, of which God had said to David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever.*] This verse and the next are the same with 2 Kings xxi. 7, 8. where see my annotations. I shall only add here, that this seems to have been an image of more than ordinary note, which he *set up* with a great deal of ceremony. For among the heathens, whom he imitated, *images* did not become gods, that is, were not made objects of worship, till being placed in the most holy part of their temples, there they were consecrated by being anointed and crowned by sacrifices, prayers, and adorations; and then setting up candles burning before them: all which

was concluded with a festival, which sometimes was made anniversary. Many plain instances there are of this, particularly in Minutius Felix, who mentions the unction, coronation, adoration, and prayers, whereby they were consecrated.

Ver. 8. *Neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law, and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses.*

Ver. 9. *So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel.*] A most prodigious change, from the height of piety in his father's time into the sink of impiety in this: which strange vicissitude of things should admonish us not to be secure, as Victorinus Strigelius notes. Who being professor of theology at Heidelburg, left this remark in his lectures on this place near a hundred and forty years ago: "Now we have the word of God abundantly, in all wisdom; and pious princes patronise both those that preach, and those that learn the gospel. But this plenty of the word we now enjoy (I tremble to speak it, but I must speak it, because it will come to pass) shall be taken away: and that sad mournful time will come, when the public assemblies of the church shall be scattered, and a few pious souls shall meet with fear in a corner, to communicate among themselves the fragments of the heavenly doctrine, and give God thanks for those remainders;" which we have seen fulfilled in that country, and in France, and other places.

Ver. 10. *And the Lord spake to Manasseh, and to his people.*] By his servants the prophets. (See ver. 18.) The Jews say in Seder Olam Rabba, (cap. 20.) that Joel, Nahum, and Habakkuk, prophesied in his time; but he was so wicked, that they would not so much as mention his name in the beginning of their prophecies, which is not a good reason.

But they would not hearken.] Neither he nor his people regarded what they said.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria.*] The royal family failing in Babylon, the king of Assyria (Esar-haddon) brought that kingdom under his yoke again, and held it thirteen years, as primate Usher observes in his Annals. And he hearing, from the ambassadors of Merodach-Baladan, what great treasures were in Jerusalem, and that Hezekiah was dead, and Manasseh had forsaken that God who did such great things for his father, sent an army against him which he could not withstand.

Which took Manasseh among the thorns.] In a thicket where he had hid himself, but was discovered.

And bound him with fetters.] With iron chains fastened to his wrists, or to his legs, as we understand it.

And carried him to Babylon.] Which the king of Assyria, it is likely, had made his seat, to secure his late conquests. This was in the twenty-second year of his reign, as the Jews compute in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 24. when they carried away with him the idol in Dan, according to Judg. xviii. 30. But however that be, it is very evident the Assyrian monarchy was not fallen by the defection of the Medes and other nations, which I before mentioned, but still continued in great power; Babylon itself, which rebelled at the same time with the Medes, being again subdued to its obedience, as appears by their sending Manasseh bound hither. So that they had not only Cœlo-Syria and Phœnicia, but Mesopotamia and Chaldea under their dominion, as Conringius observes, in the book beforenamed, upon the foregoing chapter, ver. 21. How long their power continued the Scripture doth not tell us; but Manasseh, after his return from his captivity, seems to have been a free prince, subject unto none, maintaining forces in all his fenced cities, (ver. 14. of this chapter.)

Ver. 12. *And when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers.*] This was three-and-thirty years before his death, as the Jews make account, in the book beforementioned. But both Kimchi and Abarbinel confess that this relies upon a weak foundation, as doth the other thing, that he was carried away in the twenty-second year of his reign.

Ver. 13. *And prayed unto him: and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God.*] So true it is that "vexatio dat intellectum," *trouble and vexation give understanding,* and make men know God and themselves. Which is not universally true; for some are far from being brought to a right sense by their miseries: as Ahaz, this king's grandfather, was never without some sore affliction or other, and yet never relented. But though R. Johadan was so charitable as to think that Manasseh had his part in the other world, yet the doctors in the title Sanhedrin (cap. 11. sect. 1.) exclude him from any portion in it, and say he was only restored to his kingdom, but not to life eternal. For this is the doctrine they there lay down, There were three kings, and four private men, who have no portion in eternal life: the three kings are Jeroboam, Ahab, and Manasseh; the four private men, Balaam, Doeg, Ahithophel, and Gehazi. But they have no ground for this sentence pronounced upon Manasseh, but the wickedness of his successor; from whence they argue the father's repentance was not sincere. The folly of which sufficiently appears from this history of him and his father Hezekiah.

Ver. 14. *Now after this he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish-gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah.*] He provided for the safety of his kingdom, and in the first place built a wall for the defence of Jerusalem; which some think was that which his father made, (chap. xxxii. 5.) which he repaired and strengthened, after it had been thrown down, perhaps by the king of Assyria's forces, when they carried him captive. The *fish-gate* was the gate where they sold fish (as the Targum expounds it), which was brought from Joppa. Concerning Ophel, see xxvii. 3.

Ver. 15. *And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the Lord, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the Lord, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city.*] He had profaned the house of the Lord, but had not shut up the doors as Ahaz did; and therefore he is said only to have purged it from idols, but not to have opened it, as Jacobus Capellus observes.

Here particular notice is taken of the idol mentioned ver. 7. which confirms what I have noted there.

Ver. 16. *And he repaired the altar of the Lord, and sacrificed thereon peace-offerings and thank-offerings.*] For now he was sensible there was no other God but the Lord, who had wonderfully delivered him out of captivity, and restored him to his kingdom, when he implored his mercy.

And commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel.] This was a proof of his true repentance, that he endeavoured to bring his people back to the service of God, whom he had misled (ver. 9.) to the worship of idols. But, as Kimchi notes, he was not able to do so much good as he had done mischief, for the people continued their inclination to idolatry, and neglected the study of the law of God. For in Josiah's reign (which presently followed) it was matter of great surprise that they found the book of the law, when they were repairing the temple: the copies of it, as the Jews think, having been destroyed in the time of Manasseh and Amon. But it is not credible, which were preserved in the hands of the ten tribes, and without which the church could not have been reformed.

Ver. 17. *Nevertheless the people did sacrifice still in the high places, yet unto the Lord their God only.*] This was an error so rooted, that very good kings could not correct it, such as Asa and Jehoshaphat, in whose days the people worshipped the true God but in an unlawful place, as they now did.

Ver. 18. *Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer unto his God, and the words of the seers that spake to him in the name of the Lord God of Israel, behold, they are written in the book of the Kings of Israel.*] So Judah is now called, who with Benjamin were all that were left of the children of Jacob, who was named Israel. But these books here mentioned are not those which we now have, but others that were lost in the captivity.

Ver. 19. *His prayer also, and how God was entreated of him.*] He mentions his prayer again; because, I suppose, he made more than one. As if he had said, *how he continued to pray till God was entreated of him.*

And all his sins, and his trespass, and the places wherein he built high places, and set up groves and graven images, before he was humbled.] This is one of the places which plainly prove (as I have often noted) that *ascherim* (which we translate *groves*) signifies not the groves themselves, but the images or statues which were set up in them. For groves are *planted,* not *set up* or erected, as it is here said of Manasseh, that *he set up groves:* that is, dedicated and consecrated, as that word signifies among Greek and Roman writers. (See xxxiv. 1. 2 Kings xiv. 23. Jer. xvii. 2.)

Behold, they are written among the sayings of the seers.] Or *of Hosai* (as we translate it in the margin), who was a prophet, it is likely, in those times, by whom many memorable things in this reign were recorded: particularly *his prayer,* which he recorded, as Isaiah did the prayer of Hezekiah his father.

Ver. 20. *So Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.*] See 2 Kings xxi. 18. It is likely he left it in his last will, that he would be buried privately, as not worthy to lie by his ancestors.

Ver. 21. *Amon was two-and-twenty years old when he began to reign; and reigned two years in Jerusalem.*] As the sons of Jeroboam, and of Baasha, and of Ahab, reigned two years and no longer.

Ver. 22. *But he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed to all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and served them.*] See 2 Kings xxi. 20, 21.

Ver. 23. *And humbled not himself before the Lord, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself.*] He followed him in his sin, but not in his repentance.

But Amon trespassed more and more.] Some of the Jews say, that he burnt the book of the law: others, that he lay with his own mother. But the great sin which the Holy Scriptures charge him with, is his idolatry, which he more and more introduced, and never repented of it.

Ver. 24. *And his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.*

Ver. 25. *But the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon: and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.*] These two verses are the very same with those 2 Kings xxi. 23, 24. (See there.)

CHAP. XXXIV.

Ver. 1. *JOSIAH was eight years old when he began to reign; and he reigned in Jerusalem one-and-thirty years.*

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand nor to the left.*] These two verses are the same with 2 Kings xxii. 1, 2. only there the name of his mother is set down, which here is omitted.

Ver. 3. *For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father.*] He gave very early proofs of his pious inclinations; for when he was but sixteen years old, and had newly taken on him the administration of affairs, he began to worship God publicly, and propounded David to himself for his pattern.

And in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images.] When he was twenty years old, he began to bring others to the true religion, by reforming abuses in the worship of God. For now he had got more authority, and therefore destroyed idolatrous worship, which he was inclined to do before, and had it in his mind when he was a mere youth. This is not so distinctly noted in the book of the Kings, where nothing is recorded of him till what he did in the eighteenth year of his reign. And this is the more remarkable, because he began the reformation here spoken of before Jeremiah began to prophesy, which was not till the next year, in the thirteenth of king Josiah. (See Jer. i. 2.)

Ver. 4. *And they brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence.*] I have elsewhere observed that Baalim were *demi-gods,* as Mr. Mede truly calls them.

And the images that were on high above them he cut down.] The Hebrew word *chamamim,* which we translate *images,* as most think, hath some relation to the sun; because it comes from a word that signifies heat. And Aben Ezra translates it *houses made for the worship of the sun.* The LXX. sometimes translate it εἴδωλα, sometimes βδελύγματα, but do not tell us what *idols* and *abominations* these were.

Jo. Geusius thinks it was the idol called Thammuz, by which name Osiris, Jupiter Ammon, or the sun, was understood. And, indeed, the worship of all the host of heaven is mentioned together with the worship of Baalim, in the idolatry which Manasseh committed, chap. xxxiii. 3.

And the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces.] Here again *ascherim* signifies the *idols in the groves;* for the groves themselves were not *broken in pieces,* but cut down.

And made dust of them, and strowed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them.] To declare his detestation of the smallest remainders of them.

Ver. 5. *And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.*] Whereby he polluted these altars, and made them abominable, and purged the nation from their idolatry, which was very great. For it is likely these were not Levitical priests, but priests made by their idolatrous kings, either of other nations, or such as they could draw in of their own nation (after the manner of Jeroboam), to officiate to their strange gods.

Ver. 6. *And so did he in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali.*] Though Shalmaneser had carried away the main body of the ten tribes from their own land, yet there remained a great many of the poor people behind, as appears from this place, and from ver. 9. 33.

With their mattocks round about.] Some translate it *mauls,* others *forks,* or such-like instruments.

Ver. 7. *And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.*] For it appears by the book of the Kings more fully, that he went himself in person through the whole country to see this work done, which otherwise might have been performed negligently.

Ver. 8. *Now, in the eighteenth year of his reign.*] When he was twenty-six years old he proceeded further, having disposed the people to offer freely towards the reparation of the house of God, as it here follows.

When he had purged the land, and the house.] That is, the house of God.

He sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the Lord his God.] Here is a more perfect narrative of the reparation of the temple than was given in the book of the Kings, where only Shaphan is mentioned as sent to Hilkiah; but here two other men of great authority are joined with him, and ordered to see the work set forward.

Ver. 9. *And when they came to Hilkiah the high-priest, they delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin; and they returned to Jerusalem.*] These last words import, that these Levites (having received what was given at the door of the tabernacle which they kept) travelled all the country over, to collect what money they could gather from well-disposed people, who contributed to this work. Which money the three forenamed persons received from them when they returned to Jerusalem: and, besides this, Shaphan alone seems to have been sent to Hilkiah, to sum up the money that had been offered at the temple for this use, (2 Kings xxii. 4.)

Ver. 10. *And they put it in the hand of the workmen that had the oversight of the house of the Lord.*] Who were appointed to take care of the work, and to see it done.

And they gave it to the workmen that wrought in the house of the Lord, to repair and mend the house.] The overseers gave it to the artificers mentioned in the next verse, who were to buy materials, and employ them in the reparation.

Ver. 11. *Even to the artificers and builders gave they it, to buy hewn stone, and timber for couplings, and to floor the houses which the kings of Judah had destroyed.*] It seems both the outside and inside, the floor and the roof, were run to ruin by long neglect, since the days of Joash, when the temple was last repaired: which the Jews (in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 24.) make account was two hundred and eighteen years.

Ver. 12. *And the men did the work faithfully.*] So that no account was taken of them.

And the overseers of them were Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites, of the sons of Merari; and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to set it forward; and other of the Levites, all that could skill of instruments of music.] That is, all those who were well skilled in music, and performed their part in the service of the temple: which is here mentioned to signify that the principal Levites were set over this work to see it well done.

Ver. 13. *Also they were over the bearers of burdens, and were overseers of all that wrought the work in any manner of service.*] There being great numbers of them, they might well inspect every person that was employed in this work.

And of the Levites there were scribes, and officers, and porters.] These overseers were deputed to several employments; for which none so fit as the Levites, who understood all manner of things belonging to the house of God: being to do constant service there.

Ver. 14. *And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the Lord.*] And thereupon had begun the reparation of the house.

Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses.] The word *given* is not in the Hebrew: which must be applied not to the *book,* but to the *law of the Lord* given by Moses. For we cannot certainly from hence conclude, that this was the very authentic book which Moses laid up by the ark; (see 2 Kings xxii. 8.) because in the Hebrew it is said the book of the law of the Lord *by the hand of Moses.* Which doth not signify the book was written by his own hand, but that the law therein contained was delivered to the people *by the ministry of Moses.* So the phrase, *by the hand,* is used in very many places, Exod. xxxv. 29. Lev. x. 11. xxvi. 45. Numb. iv. 37. 45, &c. (See 2 Kings xviii. 8. and in this book, xxxv. 6.)

Ver. 15. *And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan.*] Who read it, 2 Kings xxii. 9.

Ver. 16. *And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they do it.*] When he came to give an account to the king, how he had executed his command, (ver. 8, 9, &c.) he delivered the book to him.

Ver. 17. *And they have gathered together the money that*

was found in the house of the Lord, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen.] See 2 Kings xxii. 9.

Ver. 18. *Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.*

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.*] These two verses are word for word in 2 Kings xxii. 10, 11. where I have explained them. I shall only here add, that Jacobus Capellus thinks, the reading of the law, on every sabbath and festival (which was divided for that purpose into several sections), was as old as the time of Joshua; but was neglected in the reign of wicked kings, particularly in that of Ahaz. If it were again restored by Hezekiah (which is uncertain), it was again abolished by Manasseh; and perhaps not renewed when he repented: howsoever, discontinued again by Amon. So that both priests and people, omitting the reading of the law, both publicly and privately (for the public omission caused a private neglect), no wonder, that upon finding the book of the law, and hearing it read, they were startled at it; as if one were risen from the dead, (Histor. Sacra et Exotica, ad A. Mundi 3372.)

Ver. 20. *And the king commanded Hilkiah, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying.*] He that is called here Abdon, is in 2 Kings xxii. 12. called Achbor: otherwise there is no difference between this verse and that.

Ver. 21. *Go, inquire of the Lord for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to do after all that is written in this book.*

Ver. 22. *And Hilkiah, and they that the king had appointed, went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum, the son of Tikvath, the son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college); and they spake to her to that effect.*

Ver. 23. *And she answered them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Tell ye the man that sent you to me,*

Ver. 24. *Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah:*

Ver. 25. *Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched.*

Ver. 26. *And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, concerning the words which thou hast heard,*

Ver. 27. *Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord.*

Ver. 28. *Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again.*

There is little difference in the words between these verses and 2 Kings xxii. 14, 15, &c. and none in the sense. He that is called there Harhas, is here called Hasrah (some pronouncing his name one way, and some another). And the Targum translates those words, (ver. 27.) *Thou didst humble thyself before God*, &c. in this manner: *Thou didst humble thyself before the Word of the Lord, when thou didst hear his words against this place.* Which plainly suppose the Word to be a Divine Person, who spake to Moses, and gave him the law.

Ver. 29. *Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.*] See 2 Kings xxiii. 1.

Ver. 30. *And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites.*] In 2 Kings xxiii. 2. it is said, the *priests and the prophets* went up. The Levites are omitted there, as the prophets are omitted here: but both make up a complete narrative of the persons that went up to the house of the Lord: For among the priests and Levites there were some prophets, such as Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and others.

And all the people, great and small; and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the Lord.] One cannot think that Josiah and all the nation were wholly strangers to the words contained in this book (though perhaps they seldom had read it), who considers that Jeremiah and other prophets were now living, who were very conversant in this book, and instructed the people out of it. But they did not sufficiently attend to the words of it; and therefore Josiah gathered a solemn assembly on purpose, that they might hear it read, and be moved to observe that which most affected them. But it is not to be supposed that the whole book was all read at one time, but by parcels at several times, that they might consider and weigh it. Especially that passage in Deut. xxviii. 38. where Moses foretold the captivity of Samaria, and afterward of Judah and their king: which, Kimchi thinks, Hilkiah might bid Shaphan take special notice of, and read it to the king, which (if it be true) no doubt, he remarked to the people, that, if it were possible, they might be brought to repentance, and prevent the great calamities which were threatened to them.

Ver. 31. *And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.*] See 2 Kings xxiii. 3.

Ver. 32. *And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.*] He did not compel them, but they offered themselves freely, upon his persuasion, to renew their covenant with God, and promised to be firm to it: which, perhaps, at that time they really resolved; though they soon revolted.

Ver. 33. *And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel.*

This is more largely related in 2 Kings xxiii. 4—6. and the following verses.

And made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the Lord their God.] He persuaded them to perform all acts of religious worship unto God, and unto none else.

And all his days they departed not from following the Lord, the God of their fathers.] But though he suppressed all external idolatry, yet in their hearts they strongly inclined to it, and often practised it, as appears from Jer. iii. 10. xxv. 3, 4, &c.

CHAP. XXXV.

Ver. 1. *MOREOVER, Josiah kept a Passover unto the Lord in Jerusalem.*] This was in the eighteenth year of his reign, immediately after he had made a glorious reformation, by abolishing all idolatry. And accordingly it is related next to that in 2 Kings xxiii. 21—23. but very briefly, as the other is very largely.

And they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month.] At the time prescribed by the law, Exod. xii. 6. For there was no need, it seems, to adjourn it till the second, as they did in the days of Hezekiah.

Ver. 2. *And he set the priests in their charges, and encouraged them to the service of the house of the Lord.*] To do their duty in their several places, so that nothing might be omitted, which was required to be done at this great festival.

Ver. 3. *And said unto the Levites that taught all Israel, which were holy unto the Lord.*] That is, the Levites were holy unto the Lord. And therefore may be rendered, *and were holy*, &c. *i. e.* peculiarly dedicated to this service of ministering to the priests, and instructing the people.

Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon, the son of David king of Israel, did build.] Jarchi thinks that Manasseh, or his son Amon, had removed the ark from its place, as other enormous things had been done by such wicked kings (2 Kings xvi. 14. xxviii. 24. of this book), which may give a more probable sense of those words, xxxiii. 23. that *Amon trespassed more and more*, than that which some of the Jews mention: for it was a great addition to his sin, if he displaced the ark. Other Jews, indeed, interpret it after another manner, and make a fable out of these words, as Const. L'Empereur observes upon Codex Middoth, p. 97. and Dr. Lightfoot of the Temple, p. 91. But nothing is more natural than to think that Hilkiah himself had removed the ark while the temple was repairing, there being defects in the most holy place as well as other parts of it: and it was not fit to let the ark be exposed to the workmen. Yet Jacobus Capellus thinks it better to say, the word *tenu* ought not to be translated *put*, but *keep*, or *look after*, the ark in the house which Solomon built. For now, that they were eased of carrying it on their shoulders, they ought to employ themselves more carefully in all other offices about it; ad A. Mundi 3374.

It shall not be a burden upon your shoulders.] That is, hereafter: for they were to carry it to a settled place, there to remain; and then they would be obliged no further to bear it on their shoulders, as they had done before it was fixed in the temple.

Serve now the Lord your God, and his people Israel.] Serve God in singing, and playing upon instruments, when the sacrifices of God's people are offered, and you shall be excused from your former burdens.

Ver. 4. *And prepare yourselves by the houses of your fathers, after your courses, according to the writing of David king of Israel.*] See 1 Chron. xxiii. xxiv. and the following chapters.

And according to the writing of Solomon his son.] See 2 Chron. viii. 14.

Ver. 5. *And stand in the holy place.*] In the court of the priests, where they were wont to stand when they ministered unto God.

According to the divisions of the families of the fathers of your brethren the people.] Who were to bring for every family a lamb, as Moses commanded, Exod. xii. 3.

And after the division of the families of the Levites.] Who were appointed to kill the lamb for them.

Ver. 6. *So kill the passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren.*] That they might be capable to eat of it.

That they may do according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses.] Who commanded it to be eaten in one house, Exod. xii. 46. He seems to require, that as the rest of the tribes came according to their families, into which they were divided; so the Levites would give them a good example, and come according to their families.

Ver. 7. *And Josiah gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids.*] For the lamb might be taken either from the sheep or from the goats, (Exod. xii. 5.)

All for the Passover-offerings, for all that were present, to the number of thirty thousand.] That the people might be at no charge: at least thirty thousand families were provided for, at the king's charge.

And three thousand bullocks: these were of the king's substance.] These bullocks were for offerings upon the seven days of unleavened bread which followed the Passover.

Ver. 8. *And his princes gave willingly unto the people, to the priests, and to the Levites.*] As Josiah provided paschal lambs for the people, so some great men provided not only for them, but for the priests and the Levites, that they also might offer without charge.

Hilkiah, and Zechariah, and Jehiel.] It appears by these words, that the princes here mentioned were not rulers of the people, but the chief of the priests. For Hilkiah was the high-priest; and the other two were the heads of the two great families of the priests, Eleazar and Ithamar: who are called the *captains of the host*, as I observed upon 1 Chron. xxv. 1. (See my annotations there.) This is a little more largely and distinctly expressed by Bertram, in his Republica Judaica, cap. 15. where he saith, Zechariah was the chief among the second priests of the race of Eleazar, who was properly called *Nagid*, the captain of the temple: as Jehiel was the most illustrious person among the second priests, who were the progeny of Ithamar, and was properly called *Pakid;* and was set over the Gershonites and Merarites, as Zechariah was over the Kohathites.

Rulers of the house of God.] Who were the same with those who in the New Testament are called the στρατηγοὶ of the temple, who governed the rest of the priests. (So Bertram, de Republica Judaica, p. 296. 300.)

Gave unto the priests for the Passover-offerings two thousand and six hundred small cattle.] That is, lambs and kids.

And three hundred oxen.] That through the whole festival they might be able to rejoice with their brethren.

Ver. 9. *Conaniah also, and Shemaiah, and Nathaneel, his brethren, and Hashabiah, and Jeiel, and Jozabad, chief of the Levites.*] Who were men of estates, as well as in great offices among their brethren.

Gave unto the Levites for Passover-offerings five thousand small cattle, and five hundred oxen.] That they might be provided for as well as the priests, to make it a time of universal joy.

Ver. 10. *So the service was prepared, and the priests stood in their place, and the Levites in their courses, according to the king's commandment.*] All things were disposed for the offering the paschal sacrifice; the priests standing in their place, and the Levites attending them.

Ver. 11. *And they killed the passover.*] That is, the Levites killed the lamb, and gave the blood to the priests.

And the priests sprinkled the blood from their hands.] For they alone could perform this part of the service.

And the Levites flayed them.] That the priests might have nothing to do, but to sprinkle the blood of every one of them: which took up a great deal of time. (See xxix. 34.)

Ver. 12. *And they removed the burnt-offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto the Lord, as it is written in the book of Moses.*] It seems, some of the lambs were given by Josiah for burnt-offerings: and these they dispatched as fast as they could, that they might give the paschal lamb to every family according to their divisions, after it had been offered to the Lord. For this was the principal offering upon this day.

And so they did with the oxen.] All of which were not given for peace-offerings, but some for burnt-offerings: which they also offered as fast as they could, that they might not hinder the paschal lamb from being offered.

Ver. 13. *And they roasted the passover with fire, according to the ordinance.*] See Exod. xii. 8, 9.

But the other holy offerings sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans.] Though the paschal lamb was to be roasted; yet the other eucharistical sacrifices which attended it (as the Targum expounds it) might be boiled in water.

And divided them speedily among all the people.] Gave every one of the people a portion of the oxen that were offered for peace-offerings: and did it so speedily, that they had time to take care of themselves, as it here follows.

Ver. 14. *And afterward they made ready for themselves, and for the priests: because the priests the sons of Aaron were busied in offering burnt-offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the priests the sons of Aaron.*] This is a great instance of the zeal and diligence of the priests, for whom the principal persons among them had made a large provision; but they did not eat of the paschal lamb nor of the peace-offerings till night, being employed in offering burnt-sacrifices, and burning the fat till that time: against which the Levites prepared for them and for themselves.

Ver. 15. *And the singers, the sons of Asaph, were in their place, according to the commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer; and the porters waited at every gate: they might not depart from their service; for their brethren the Levites prepared for them.*] This seems to import, that the singing and music continued till all the sacrifices were offered, that is, till night; and none were suffered to depart from the service, the porters standing at every gate to hinder them, if they attempted it. And their brethren, who were not singers, took care to provide for them their portion, when they had done.

Ver. 16. *So all the service of the Lord was prepared the same day to keep the Passover, and to offer burnt-offerings upon the altar of the Lord, according to the commandment of king Josiah.*

Ver. 17. *And the children of Israel that were present kept the Passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days.*] These two verses are a summary account of what went before, that the whole solemnity was performed in every part of it, according to the king's direction.

Ver. 18. *And there was no Passover like to that kept in Israel, from the days of Samuel the prophet.*] We do not read in the book of Samuel of any Passover kept in his days; therefore the book wherein this was recorded is lost, as many other books of the prophets are.

Neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a Passover as Josiah kept, and the priests and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.] The last clause shews wherein his Passover went beyond all other. David and Solomon were greater kings than he, and in several respects kept greater festivals; the number of people, while the ten tribes were united to the other two, being greater, and the multitude of sacrifices also greater: but in this Josiah excelled them all, that being nothing so rich, he was notwithstanding so liberal, as to provide all the sacrifices for the priests, the Levites, and the people, at this feast.

Ver. 19. *In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this Passover kept.*] In the same year wherein he repaired the house of God, and the book of the law was found and brought to him; which, it is likely, put him in mind of this duty; chap. xxxiv. 8.

Ver. 20. *After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple.*] Some time after the temple was repaired, and made fit for the service of God, and they expected great happiness to ensue such pious works, there was an unexpected change: which is here noted, to teach us not to be confident, nor rashly enterprise any thing, remembering the vicissitude of all earthly things.

Necho king of Egypt.] Whom the Targum calls *Pharaoh the Lame*, and so Kimchi, who saith he was lame in his feet, and thence called by the name of Claudus, as the Romans would have expressed it: who, from the like disposition of their bodies, gave names to their emperors; such as Crassus, Barbarosa, and others, as Beckius observes. This lameness proceeded from some wound he had received, for *Necho* signifies *wounded*.

Came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates.] The city Carcusium stood upon that river, and belonged to the Assyrians, with whose king Necho came to fight, (2 Kings xxiii. 29.)

And Josiah went out against him.] See what I have noted there; unto which I shall here add, that by this it seems probable Josiah was in friendship with the king of Assyria, to whose assistance he seems to have voluntarily gone with his forces, by giving a diversion to the Egyp-

tians. Certain it is, the Assyrian empire was not yet fallen; for in Josiah's days the prophet Zephaniah foretells the destruction of Nineveh, (chap. ii. 13, &c.) Now Josiah reigned in the time of Cyaxarus king of the Medes, by whom Nineveh was destroyed, as Herodotus tells us. But it was then in a flourishing condition, for Phraortis, the predecessor of Cyaxarus, not contented with the kingdom of the Medes, but invading the Assyrians, after he had subdued the Persians, was defeated, and lost a vast army before Nineveh: which Hermannus Conringius thinks might possibly move Josiah to court the king of Assyria's favour, by opposing himself to the king of Egypt when he came to invade him. But a most judicious person in this kind of learning (whom I have often consulted) thinks this all wrong; and that though Nineveh was not yet destroyed, yet the empire was, in the eighteenth year of Josiah; from which some governor got some little part, and kept Nineveh till it was destroyed by Nabopolassar, in the first year of his reign. Therefore I should have said Josiah was a friend of the king of Babylon, rather than of the king of Assyria. But I must leave those that are better skilled than I am in these matters to judge of them.

Ver. 21. *But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war.*] He had no controversy with him, and therefore prays him not to meddle in this war.

For God commanded me to make haste.] And therefore desires him not to give him any stop in his expedition. Some think he only pretended this, because he knew Josiah had a great reverence to God, and in obedience to him might desist from his purpose: and the Targum, with some of the Jews, thinks he calls his own idol by the name of God; though Kimchi thinks he speaks of the true God; who perhaps admonished him in a dream, as he did Abimelech, or sent him such a message by the prophet Jeremiah (as Grotius supposes), many of whose prophecies are directed to foreign nations: or, perhaps, he meant, that he felt a strong impulse unto this undertaking, which he took to be from God.

Forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not.] Of which there was great danger, if he opposed the Divine command.

Ver. 22. *Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself that he might fight with him.*] And not be known to be the king of Judah.

And hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God.] The Targum thinks that Josiah regarded not what Necho said, because he thought he spake only from his idol, for he could not imagine that the God of Israel had spoken to him. But these words import the contrary, and therefore Josiah should at least have inquired of God, whether it was his mind that he should not oppose Necho.

And came to fight in the valley of Megiddo.] A place in the tribe of Manasseh, (Josh. xvii. 11.) So that Josiah may seem to have come against him, because he passed through his country without his leave: but I rather think, as I said before, he was in the interests of the king of Assyria. I observed upon 2 Kings xxiii. 29. that Herodotus tells the same story, but mistakes the name of Megiddo, and calls it Magdolim; which was a great city in Egypt, better known to him than the cities in Syria or Phœnicia. He also adds, that after this battle the king of Egypt took the great city in Syria called Cadytus: which Herm. Conringius thinks was the name of Jerusalem among the old Egyptians: (Adversaria Chronolog. cap. 15.) I think Jacobus Capellus hath well observed (in his Hist. Sacra et Exotica), that the Egyptians, being a vain people, concealed from Herodotus, when he came to consult the affairs of their country, many things that were true, and imposed upon his belief many things that were false. For example, they did not tell him a word of the victory which Nebuchadnezzar got over Pharaoh-Nechoh at Euphrates; but gloried in this victory over the Syrians: ad A. Mundi 3425.

Ver. 23. *And the archers shot at king Josiah: and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded.*] His disguise did not secure him; for still he appeared, I suppose, as a great commander, at whom the enemy would sooner aim than at common men.

Ver. 24. *His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had.*] As all great captains have led horses, that if one fail they may mount another: (which was the custom in wars in ancient time, as Bochart shews in his Hieroz. par. i. cap. 2. 9.) so when they fought in chariots they had an empty one following them, into which they might go if the other proved unserviceable or inconvenient.

And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers: and all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.] After the example of the prophet Jeremiah. For as bad as they shewed themselves afterward to be, they had some sense of the great worth of this prince.

Ver. 25. *And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah; and all the singing-men and singing-women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day.*] Whensoever they bewailed any calamity, they mentioned that as the greatest that had befallen them.

And made them an ordinance in Israel.] That they should never forget this fatal stroke, after which they never saw good days. This statute was made by the supreme authority, and was approved by the prophet Jeremiah, who joined in this lamentation; which warrants Christian kings and princes to appoint days for the yearly commemoration of great calamities, or great deliverances.

And, behold, they are written in the Lamentations.] Josephus in his tenth book of the Antiquities of the Jews, chap. 6. imagines the book of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, which now remains in the Bible, contains the mournful ditties sung at Josiah's funeral, and in aftertimes; which opinion St. Jerome follows; at least in those words Lament. iv. 20. R. Solomon thinks Josiah was bewailed: but it is manifest all this is a mistake; for that book was written after the destruction of Jerusalem, which is lamented in it, and the words now mentioned plainly relate to Zedekiah, not to Josiah; who was not *taken* but killed. Therefore the Lamentations here mentioned are lost, which were written immediately after Josiah was slain.

Ver. 26. *Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his goodness,* &c.] That is, his piety, or (as we translate it in the margin) his *kindnesses*, that is, his great love to his people, of which there are great instances in the foregoing part of this history.

According to that which was written in the law of the Lord.] Which he made his rule in all that he did.

Ver. 27. *And his deeds, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.*] It seems the Israelites, who were left in the land of Samaria, continued to keep records of what was done in the land of Judah itself.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Ver. 1. *THEN the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem.*] Not by right of succession, but by a faction of the people.

Ver. 2. *Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.*] See 2 Kings xxiii. 30, 31.

Ver. 3. *And the king of Egypt put him down at Jerusalem, and condemned the land in a hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.*] He heard, it is possible, that he meditated revenge for the death of his father, and therefore deposed him; and also set a great fine upon the people who joined with him. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 33.)

Ver. 4. *And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim.*] As a mark he was made king by him, and owed his dignity to his favour. So Pharaoh changed the name of Joseph; and Nebuchadnezzar, the names of Daniel and his three companions.

And Necho took Jehoahaz his brother, and carried him to Egypt.] See 2 Kings xxiii. 34.

Ver. 5. *Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God.*] See 2 Kings xxiii. 36, 37.

Ver. 6. *Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.*] The first words *against him* are emphatical; for when he came up before, he did not come up properly against Jerusalem, but against Pharaoh-Nechoh. And therefore it is said, not that he came up against that city, but merely that he "came up into the land," (Jer. xxxv. 11.) when he made Jehoiakim his servant three years. So that his coming up had no other effect but to make him tributary to Nebuchadnezzar.

And bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon.] See 2 Kings xxiv. 1, &c. The Targum expounds it, He put brazen chains upon his hands and fetters upon his legs. But he did not carry him to Babylon, for Nebuchadnezzar altered his mind, and permitted him to reign at Jerusalem as his tributary; though he carried away, as it follows, some of the vessels of the temple, and also certain choice persons, as we read in the first of Daniel.

Ver. 7. *Nebuchadnezzar also carried of the vessels of the house of the Lord to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon.*] He carried away a great many in the next king's reign, (2 Kings xxiv. 13, 14.) but it seems he began to do it in this. And they were so hardened, as to believe those false prophets, who assured them these vessels should shortly be brought again from Babylon, and give no credit to Jeremiah, who told them they prophesied a lie; for these vessels should be so far from being brought from Babylon, that all the remaining vessels should be carried after them, and there be till the day when God visited them. (See Jer. xxvii. 16, 17. 21, 22.)

Ver. 8. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, they are written in the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.*] There was a book, it is likely, that had this title; but what was said there to be *found of him*, is not here mentioned. The Targum saith, *the iniquity that was found in him.* But what was that iniquity? To this they answer in the Talmud, that he had the name of an idol in his forehead; or, as others say, there were found in his body certain marks and impressions in honour of idols. So St. Jerome, He had made those marks in his body, which God had forbidden in Lev. xix. 28. (See our learned Dr. Spencer, lib. ii. de Leg. et Rit. Hebr. cap. 14. sect. 2.) But there are those that think it is meant of the innocent blood that he shed, (2 Kings xxiv. 4.) But that was the sin of Manasseh; therefore the plainest meaning is, that he was found guilty of disloyal intentions against the king of Babylon, which he concealed a great while, but at last they were discovered, (2 Kings xxiv. 1.)

And Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

Ver. 9. *Jehoiachin was eight years old when he began to reign.*] In 2 Kings xxiv. 8. it is said, that he was *eighteen years old* when he began to reign. See my annotations on that place: unto which may be added, that Abarbinel thinks there is no difference between these two places; but that the word for *eight* is governed by another that is wanting, signifying *ten.* But the common solution is, that when his father had reigned one year, he made his son joint sovereign with him, that the people might be settled in their affection to him before he left the throne, which was ten years after. So long he reigned with his father, and eight years alone, which made eighteen years in all. (See Buxtorf, in his Vindiciæ Hebr. Veritatis, par. ii. cap. 2. p. 408.) But there are those who take the meaning to be, that he was eight years old, when *he* (that is, his father) began to reign: or, as our primate Usher thinks, it was the eighth year, not of his age, but of the captivity of Babylon, to which some principal persons were obnoxious, (Chronologia Sacra, pag. *ult.*) But some great men think here is an error of the copyist, for he was *eighteen* years old.

And he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.] It seems Nebuchadnezzar repented of his making him king; being afraid, as Kimchi thinks, that by the evil counsel of his courtiers, he would be persuaded to rebel, after the example of Jehoiakim. Jacobus Capellus thinks the people set him up to be their king; and therefore he resolved to dethrone him, sending his servants against him, and then coming himself and taking Jerusalem. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 10, 11.)

Ver. 10. *And when the year was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of the Lord, and made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem.*] See 2 Kings xxiv. 11, 12. For God had threatened none of Jehoiakim's seed should sit upon the throne of David. They might be set upon his throne, as the same Capellus observes, but not remain or continue possessed of it. "Sedere enim dicuntur, non transitoria, sed quæ aliquamdiu pedem figunt," ad

Ver. 11. *Zedekiah was one-and-twenty years old when he began to reign; and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.*] See 2 Kings xxiv. 18.

Ver. 12. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet, speaking from the mouth of the Lord.*] *From the mouth of the Word of the Lord,* saith the Targum: which shews, that by the *Word* here he meant a Divine person. It is a wonderful thing, that having seen so many of the people carried away captive, together with their king Jehoiakim, they should not at all relent, but go on in those ways which had led others to destruction. But so incorrigible were this people, that Ezekiel tells us, they who were carried away captive (among whom he was one) persisted in their rebellion, and were not at all amended. His whole book is full of complaints of their impenitence. And in the thirteenth chapter he tells us, they still entertained false prophets (unto whom they hearkened rather than to Ezekiel), who saw visions of peace for Jerusalem, when there was no peace; as he there speaks, ver. 16. that is, made the people believe Jerusalem should not be taken; and so hardened their hearts in their obstinate wickedness.

Ver. 13. *And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who made him swear by God.*] That he would be true and faithful to him.

But he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of Israel.] His wickedness was so great, that God gave him up to commit this further crime of perjury, to his utter ruin, (2 Kings xxiv. 20.)

Ver. 14. *Moreover, all the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much, after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.*] There was such an universal corruption, and that to such an abominable height, that there was no hope of their growing better, they being perfectly ripe for utter destruction.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending.*] To *rise betimes* signifies in Scripture to do a thing with care, diligence, and affection: for good husbands, especially fathers of families (from whom this expression is borrowed), were wont to get up early to look after their business, and to quicken and encourage their servants to their duty. Such was the compassion and care of God for his people, that he gave them seasonable, timely, and early admonitions to their duty, and notice of their danger, before it was too late.

Because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place.] To this compassion they owed a succession of prophets in every king's reign, as I have before noted, who most earnestly called upon them to reform. Yet, if they did in a good king's reign grow something better, they immediately revolted as soon as he was dead, and a bad one came in his place. Such a strange propension they had to idolatry: which is the more wonderful, when we consider, that this nation, which was so prone to idolatry, when they had so many prophets among them to admonish them against it, were not at all inclined to it, when they had no more any prophets to instruct them, nor any miracles wrought among them; that is, after their return from the captivity of Babylon, when prophecy in a little time ceased; and yet they were steadfast in the service of God, according to the law of Moses. The best account that I am able to give of this is, that before the captivity sufficient care was not taken for the building of synagogues for the teaching of the law, if there were any at all; for we find no mention of them in these books: whereas they abounded in every place after the captivity; insomuch, that the Jews say, there were several hundreds in Jerusalem alone, wherein the law was read and taught, which was a most powerful means to keep them constant to the religion they professed: for, as Josephus reports, by this means the people came to be so acquainted with their laws, that if any person asked any of them concerning them, *ῥᾷον ἂν εἴποι πάντα, ἢ τούνομα τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ, he would more readily tell every thing, than his own name.*

Ver. 16. *But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets.*] As the corruption was universal, so they were incorrigible; not only rejecting, but despising, and setting at nought, the means of their cure.

Until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.] Till the implacable wrath of God came upon them; there being no hope they would repent, and be healed, but they must die and perish.

Ver. 17. *Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary.*] Unto which, it is likely, they fled for safety, after the manner of all nations, who took their holy places to be inviolable: but they found no protection there; the Chaldees being a rough nation, and having no regard to them.

And had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age; he gave them all into his hand.] To kill them, or sell them for slaves; as he thought good.

Ver. 18. *And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small.*] Which are numbered in the next book, Ezra i. 9—11.

And the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon.] The former treasures, by a special providence of God, were preserved, and restored in the reign of Cyrus to the house of the Lord: but the other, it is likely, were looked upon as spoil, and spent by the king and his great men.

Ver. 19. *And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.*] See 2 Kings xxv. 9, 10. But it is a very absurd supposition of some, who think that all the sacred books were now also burnt, and restored again by Ezra after the captivity out of his memory. For who can believe, that among all the priests, and prophets too, that were carried captive, none of them should take care to carry a Bible with them? Jeremiah also remaining in the land, we may be confident was not without it. It is plain also, that Daniel had his prophecy, and the books of Moses, in Babylon, (Dan. ix. 2, 3.) And Josephus says that Cyrus was shewn the prophecy of Isaiah, wherein his name was expressly mentioned: which shews, they had copies of these books in their captivity. But this extravagant fable was brought upon the stage by the apocryphal Esdras, (chap. xiv.) and

was not known till the beginning of the third century, when that author, half Jew and half Christian, lived.

Ver. 20. *And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia.*] Which gave them liberty to return to their country. Such was the law of war in ancient times; all the people of a city or country that were conquered became slaves to the conqueror; and appertained to the public or private persons who had taken them, according to the laws settled in every nation for the dividend of the booty. Thus we find at the sacking of Troy, all that remained alive were made slaves, even queen Hecuba, and her daughters. The Greek and Roman histories are full of such examples.

Ver. 21. *To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath.*] Because the Jews, among other precepts, had violated that of letting their land rest from ploughing and sowing every seventh year, God gave their land a long sabbath, or rest, for no less than ten times seven years; which Jeremiah threatened, chap. xxv. 9. 12. xxix. 10. If it be true, that they had neglected this law for the space of four hundred and thirty years; but had ploughed their ground, &c. in the seventh, as well as in all other years; then the judgment of God upon them was very remarkable, in making their ground rest, and be free from tillage, just as long as it should have been if they had observed his law: for in the space of four hundred and thirty years, there ought to have been sixty and five years of rest and intermission. (See Gulielmus Vorstius, upon David Ganz's Tzemuch David, p. 212.)

To fulfil threescore and ten years.] These years ended in the first or second year of Cyrus; but when they began is variously disputed. Hermannus Witsius hath lately argued strongly, that it was in the fourth year of Jehoiakim: for then Jeremiah said, *The whole land shall be a desolation, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years*, chap. xxv. 11. which is further explained, ver. 17, 18. Which is the opinion also of Hermannus Conringius, in his Adversaria Chronologica, cap. 14. and of Johannes Vorstius, in his Exercitatio Secunda de Captivitate Babylonica; and thus our Usher, ad A. Mundi 3394. Though other great men date these seventy years from the captivity of Zedekiah. (See Scaliger, de Emend. Temporum, lib. vi. p. 575.)

Ver. 22. *Now, in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia (that the word of the Lord, spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah, might be accomplished), the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made the proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,*

Ver. 23. *Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah: who is there among you of all his people? the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.*] These two verses, which conclude this book, begin the next, where I will explain them; and only take notice here, that thus the Targum translates this proclamation: "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of this earth hath the Word of the Lord God of heaven delivered unto me; and he commanded me to build him a sanctuary in Jerusalem," &c. Which evidently shews, this paraphrast believed the Word dwelt in the sanctuary.

THE

BOOK OF EZRA.

IT is generally thought by all sorts of writers, that Ezra himself wrote this book which bears his name. And there is the less doubt of it, if he wrote the foregoing book: for he begins this book as that ended; which is an argument they had the same author: it being an ancient way of writing, as Grotius observes out of Polybius, who concludes one book, and begins the next with the same words. But the learned Huetius is of opinion, that Ezra did not write the first six chapters of this book, but some other person: for it is evident they were written in the time of Darius, when the author speaks of himself as then at Jerusalem, (chap. v. 3, 4. 9.) Whereas Ezra went up from Babylon in the reign of Artaxerxes, (chap. vii. 1.) and then it is manifest wrote the four remaining chapters, as appears from chap. vii. 27, 28. ix. 5. x. 1. Therefore, when the Talmudists and other Hebrew doctors say Ezra wrote this book, they are to be understood (he thinks) to speak of the latter part of it.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW, in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia.*] This is that famous Cyrus, who, a hundred and forty years before the temple was destroyed, and two hundred years before he was born, was mentioned by name in the prophecy of Isaiah, as designed by God for the restoring his people, (Isa. xliv. *ult.* xlv. 1. 4.) Which prophecy, it is probable, Daniel shewed to Cyrus, which made him set forth the following edict: which was not put forth in the first year of his empire, for then the Jews were not his subjects, but the first year after his conquest of Babylon, where the Jews then lived in captivity. (See Scaliger, in his Isagoge, lib. iii. p. 260. and De Emend. Temporum, lib. vi. p. 576.)

(That the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah the prophet might be fulfilled).] Who foretold, that, after seventy years were accomplished, the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans should be destroyed, and the people of

Judah restored to their own land, (see chap. xxv. 12. xxix. 10.)

The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying.] God, who had so long ago designed him for this work, suggested these thoughts to him, and excited him to prosecute them; which he did, not only by causing his will and pleasure to be proclaimed, but to be put in writing, that none might mistake his meaning.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven.*] It is an observation of Mr. Mede, that as, before the captivity, when they spake of God they called him *the Lord of hosts;* so the constant style of the holy books after the captivity, is the *God of heaven.* As here, and chap. vi. 10. vii. 21. But it is a question, whether Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, penned these writings themselves, wherein they proclaimed the God of the Jews to be *the Lord God of heaven:* or, whether they were drawn up by some of the Jews that attended upon them. It seems likely to me, that God, who raised up the spirit of Cyrus to be a peculiar instrument of the freeing his people from slavery, did enlighten his mind to understand that there was but one only God whom the Jews worshipped, and who spake in those holy books which were shewn him. And Artaxerxes might call the law of Moses the *law of the God of heaven,* knowing the Jews worshipped no other God, whose law this was.

Hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth.] That is, all those large dominions which the Assyrians and Babylonians had enjoyed.

And he hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.] So he understood from Isa. xlv. 13. where God saith of Cyrus, *he shall build my city,* of which the temple was the principal part: and more plainly, chap. xliv. 28. *he shall say to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.* Josephus hath thus paraphrased upon these words, Ἐπεί με ὁ Θεὸς τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀπέδειξε Βασιλέα, &c. *Because the greatest God hath constituted me the king of the world, I believe him to be he whom the people of Israel adore. For he foretold me king by his prophets, and that I should build his temple at Jerusalem, in the land of Judea.*

Ver. 3. *Who is there among you of all his people?* &c.] Not of the Jews only, but of Israel also, who were under his government, the Assyrians and Medes being his subjects. And so Josephus (as I observed before) says, that Zerubbabel sent the edict of Cyrus into Media, to the rest of the ten tribes: to whom he not only makes a promulgation of liberty to go to their own country, but desires them to go, and prays God to be with them and prosper them in building God's house, whom he acknowledges to be the true and only God. This was a marvellous encouragement to them.

Ver. 4. *And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth.*] This seems to relate to such as were desirous to go up with their brethren, but were forced to stay behind for want of necessaries to support them in so long a journey.

Let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts.] He therefore requires his officers to furnish them with such things as they needed.

Besides the free-will-offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.] Which he supposed the richer sort of Jews would readily make to assist their poor brethren; though they themselves being well settled in Babylon, did not think fit to stir till they saw how these would succeed.

Ver. 5. *Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all those whose spirits God had raised up.*] There were some of other tribes besides Judah and Benjamin that went up, (1 Chron. ix. 3.) though these were the principal, who all needed a special motion from God to quicken and encourage them to this enterprise; the difficulties being so great which they were to encounter in a long journey, and their country lying waste when they came thither; this made those who had got possessions in Babylon to choose to stay there.

To build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.] This was the design, which people of great piety cheerfully undertook, that the public worship of the true God might be restored, whom they now worshipped only in private.

Ver. 6. *And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things.*] Such was the authority of the king, and such was the influence of God upon their hearts, that all their neighbours encouraged them to this work, and enabled them to undertake this journey to Jerusalem.

Besides all that was willingly offered.] Their brethren freely offered them their assistance, though they did not think fit to go along with them.

Ver. 7. *Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods.*] Where by a singular providence they had been preserved till this time, being looked upon as sacred things, which Nebuchadnezzar would not turn to his own private use, but dedicated to his gods. Some think the ark was among the sacred things which Cyrus caused to be restored; but it should first be proved that it was carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon, which now here appears to be true. The argument they bring for it is, that in the second temple sacrifices were offered as in the first, and all solemn days observed, especially the great day of expiation, when the law ordained the blood should be sprinkled before the mercy-seat, which could not be done when there was none; and there was none, if there was no ark. But, as the Jews universally acknowledge, this was one of the five things wanting in the second temple; so, unless the Divine Glory had been there also, the ark would have signified little. Therefore it is more likely, that by the absence of these, God would signify, he was withdrawing his presence from that house of stone, to dwell in the temple of Christ's body: who offered himself to God, and thereby put an end to those figurative sacrifices.

Ver. 8. *Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer.*] This was a name frequent among the Persians, derived from their god Mithra: as Cyrus himself had his name (Hesychius saith) from the sun, which in their language was called Κῦρος.

And numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah.] Which was another name for Zerubbabel, mentioned chap. iii. 2. 8. v. 14. 16. For it was common in the time of the captivity for the great men of Judah to have two

names: one of their own country, which was domestic; another of the Chaldeans, which was used at court. (Dan. i. 7.) Nehemiah had two names: and this of Sheshbazzar seems to have been a good omen of their flourishing condition; being compounded of two words, signifying *fine linen* and *gold*. On the contrary, Zerubbabel was a name importing the misery of the people of Israel at that time; for it is as much as an *exile*, or *stranger*, in Babylon, where he was born. Thus pious men, even in the midst of the honours they had at court (for, Josephus saith, Zerubbabel was one of the guard of the king's body), were admonished not to forget their brethren, but sympathize with them in their miseries.

Ver. 9. *And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine-and-twenty knives.*] See Dr. Lightfoot, of the Temple, p. 233, 234.

Ver. 10. *Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand.*

Ver. 11. *All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred.*] Here seems to be some difficulty: for all the vessels that are specially named, make no more in number than two thousand four hundred and ninety-nine. To which many think this a sufficient answer, that it is said in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18. Nebuchadnezzar carried away all the vessels, both great and small. Now, in the account that is here given, the larger vessels only, which were of greater bigness and price, are mentioned: but the gross sum comprehends all, both great and small, and amounts to the number of five thousand and four hundred. But Tremellius solves this, by translating the last words of the former verse otherwise than we do; not *of other vessels a thousand*, but *other vessels by thousands, viz.* almost three thousand, wanting one hundred: which our Mr. Mede judges a true translation, in his Daniel's Weeks, book iii. p. 700.

All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.] Which restoration of the Jews to their own land seems to be a greater miracle than the first conquest of it: for Joshua did that by force of arms; but these exiles recovered their country without any force at all; and were settled in it, notwithstanding many great impediments to hinder it.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *NOW these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity.*] Some by the *province* understand *Babylon;* in which these people were most of them born, and had all lived a long time. But I think it more likely to be meant of Judea, which was made a province when it was conquered, and Gedaliah constituted the governor of it; and in this book is called the *province of Judea*, chap. v. 8.

Of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon.] Their parents and ancestors had been carried away by him, and they in them.

And came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city.] See Jer. xxxii. 15. Nehem. xi. 3. Their land and their cities had been laid so desolate, and had been so long neglected, and were infested also by such bad neighbours, that it was a great piece of generosity in these men to return thither: and their names are recorded to the eternal honour of them, and of their posterity; they being the first planters of this country, after it had been laid waste.

Ver. 2. *Which came with Zerubbabel: Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah.*] These were their heads, who undertook to conduct them: among whom Zerubbabel was the prince, or leader in chief; as Jeshua was high-priest, who is mentioned next to him. Nehemiah, who follows after him, is not the same, whose book comes after this: for he did not go now, but afterward; or, if he did, he returned to Babylon again. (See our famous Reynolds, in his Censure of the Apocryphal Books, prælect. cxi..cxviii.) Nor is it likely, that this Mordecai was the same with him that was Esther's cousin, but some other person; there being another of that name mentioned in the book of the Chronicles. (See the same Reynolds, prælect. cxlvii.)

The number of the men of the people of Israel.] They who were called the *children of the province* before, are now called the *people of Israel:* for from him they were derived, though most of them were of the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 3. *The children of Parosh, two thousand a hundred seventy and two.*] He begins first to reckon up the families that went up; of which this was one of the largest, descended from Parosh, who was their ancestor.

Ver. 4. *The children of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.*] This was another family, descended from this man. The same is to be said of the rest.

Ver. 5. *The children of Arah, seven hundred seventy and five.*] So many gave in their names in Babylon, that they intended to return into Judea: but it appears by Nehem. vii. 10. that there came no more thither than six hundred fifty and two: therefore it is supposed, that the rest altered their minds, or died by the way. The same must be said of several other differences between this account and that in Nehemiah.

Ver. 6. *The children of Pahath-Moab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve.*] Here seems to be two families joined together, one from Pahath-Moab, the other from Jeshua-Joab (as the other may be translated), which both together make the greatest body of those that went up: and six more added themselves; for in Nehem. vii. 11. they are said to have been two thousand eight hundred and eighteen.

Ver. 7. *The children of Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.*

Ver. 8. *The children of Zattu, nine hundred forty and five.*

Ver. 9. *The children of Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore.*

Ver. 10. *The children of Bani, six hundred forty and two.*

Ver. 11. *The children of Bebai, six hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 12. *The children of Azgad, a thousand two hundred twenty and two.*

Ver. 13. *The children of Adonikam, six hundred sixty and six.*

Ver. 14. *The children of Bigvai, two thousand fifty and six.*

Ver. 15. *The children of Adin, four hundred fifty and four.*

Ver. 16. *The children of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.*

Ver. 17. *The children of Bezai, three hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 18. *The children of Jorah, a hundred and twelve.*

Ver. 19. *The children of Hashum, two hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 20. *The children of Gibbar ninety and five.*] Or, as it is in Nehem. vii. 25. the children of Gibeon; these being the citizens of that city. For this is not the name of a man, but of a place; and so are several that follow: which hath made some think, that the foregoing are not the names of men, but of cities, or countries, the people of which are called *the children* of such places; which is frequent in the Scripture language, where we read of the children of Zion, the children of Egypt, the children of the East, &c.

Ver. 21. *The children of Beth-lehem, a hundred twenty and three.*] These were such as belonged to that city; unto which they went up, (ver. 1.)

Ver. 22. *The children of Netophah, fifty and six.*] This was a town near to Beth-lehem.

Ver. 23. *The men of Anathoth, a hundred twenty and eight.*] A famous place in the tribe of Benjamin, where the prophet Jeremiah was born. But there are those who think it not improbable, that these were cities in the country of Babylon; which the Jews had built, and called by the names of those cities in their own country, from whence they were banished; of which they were desirous to preserve a remembrance. Thus the Spaniards at this day have cities in America, called Corduba, Granada, Carthagena, &c. that they may not suffer the memory of their ancient country to perish, when they were removed to a far distant land. But I see no ground for this.

Ver. 24. *The children of Azmaveth, forty and two.*] Or, of Beth-Azmaveth, as it is called Nehem. vii. 28.

Ver. 25. *The children of Kirjath-arim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty and three.*

Ver. 26. *The children of Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.*] These seem to have been cities in the tribe of Benjamin: and so, it is likely, were the foregoing, and some of those that follow.

Ver. 27. *The men of Michmas, a hundred twenty and two.*

Ver. 28. *The men of Beth-el and Ai, two hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 29. *The children of Nebo, fifty and two.*

Ver. 30. *The children of Magbish, a hundred fifty and six.*

Ver. 31. *The children of the other Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.*] There is another Elam mentioned ver. 7. which argues the former to be the name of a town; from which the very same number of persons went up that there did from this.

Ver. 32. *The children of Harim, three hundred and twenty.*

Ver. 33. *The children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and five.*] These were three towns in the tribe of Benjamin, which make it probable Harim was so likewise.

Ver. 34. *The children of Jericho, three hundred forty and five.*

Ver. 35. *The children of Senaah, three thousand and six hundred and thirty.*] It is uncertain whether this be the name of a person, or of a place; but the greatest number of persons went from hence that did from any of the forementioned.

Ver. 36. *The priests.*] Having numbered the people that went from Judah and Benjamin, he proceeds now to the tribe of Levi; and first mentions the priests.

The children of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.] He is mentioned in 1 Chron. xxiv. 7. as a principal person among the priests. (See Dr. Lightfoot, p. 916.)

Ver. 37. *The children of Immer, a thousand fifty and two.*] He is mentioned also in 1 Chron. xxiv. 14. as head of one of the twenty-four courses of priests.

Ver. 38. *The children of Pashur, a thousand two hundred forty and seven.*] He is mentioned also 1 Chron. ix. 12.

Ver. 39. *The children of Harim, a thousand and seventeen.*] See 1 Chron. xxiv. 8. where he is mentioned as head of another course of the priests.

Ver. 40. *The Levites: the children of Jeshua, and Kadmiel, of the children of Hodaviah, seventy and four.*] See Nehem. vii. 43.

Ver. 41. *The singers: the children of Asaph, a hundred twenty and eight.*

Ver. 42. *The children of the porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, in all a hundred thirty and nine.*

Ver. 43. *The Nethinims.*] These are generally taken to be of the race of the Gibeonites; who being given to the service of the temple were called Nethinims, which imports as much as *given.* But this is a mistake, the Nethinims being those whom David gave to help the Levites, as I have observed before.

The children of Ziha, the children of Hasupha, the children of Tabbaoth.] It is not said how many came from each family: but it appears there were several families of them, and their whole number is mentioned in ver. 58.

Ver. 44. *The children of Keros, the children of Siaha, the children of Padon.*

Ver. 45. *The children of Lebanah, the children of Hagabah, the children of Akkub.*] The number of these families, and those that follow, is not set down particularly; but they are all comprehended in that sum mentioned ver. 58.

Ver. 46. *The children of Hagab, the children of Shalmai, the children of Hanan.*

Ver. 47. *The children of Giddel, the children of Gahar, the children of Reaiah.*

Ver. 48. *The children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda, the children of Gazzam.*

Ver. 49. *The children of Uzza, the children of Paseah, the children of Besai.*

Ver. 50. *The children of Asnah, the children of Mehunim, the children of Nephusim.*

Ver. 51. *The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur.*

Ver. 52. *The children of Bazluth, the children of Mehida, the children of Harsha.*

Ver. 53. *The children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of Thamah.*

Ver. 54. *The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha.*

Ver. 55. *The children of Solomon's servants.*] These were a distinct people among the Jews; but it is uncertain who they were. Some take them to have been originally de-

scended from slaves, whom Solomon took in war, and who afterward became proselytes. But there was no war in his days; therefore others think they were such of other nations as came to serve Solomon in servile work during the building of the temple; who being proselyted, he deputed them to the perpetual conservation and reparation of it; as Joshua had done the Gibeonites, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water there. Or, they were some of the relics of the Canaanites, who delivered up themselves to Solomon, 1 Kings ix. 20, 21. Whosoever they were, it appears from ver. 55. of this chapter, that they had the same employment with the Nethinims about the temple, or something like it; for they are numbered together with them.

The children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of Peruda.] These, and they that follow in the two next verses, are the families of the forenamed persons.

Ver. 56. *The children of Jaalah, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel.*

Ver. 57. *The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the children of Ami.*

Ver. 58. *All the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants, were three hundred ninety and two.*] This makes it probable, that the Nethinims and the children of Solomon's servants (as I said before), were employed in the same or the like employment; being both mentioned together: to whose honour it must be observed, that, though they were not of the children of Israel, and were despised by them (there being decrees made by the Sanhedrin, as the Jews tell us, that they should not marry with the Gibeonites, who they fancy are here meant), yet they were more forward to return to Jerusalem, and build the house of the Lord (where they were to serve in lower ministries), than the Levites themselves. For there were greater numbers of them returned than of the Levites and singers, as appears by comparing this verse with ver. 40, 41.

Ver. 59. *And these were they which went up from Telmelah, Tel-harsa, Cherub, Addan, and Immer; but they could not shew their father's house, and their seed, whether they were of Israel.*] These are names of some cities in Chaldea, or Mesopotamia, from whence many went along with them to Judea: and, as some think, they were Jews or proselytes who were carried captive by Shalmaneser into Assyria. Now these could not shew the families from whence they were derived, and so could not obtain any certain possession in Judea; as the rest did, who knew to what family and city they belonged.

Ver. 60. *The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred fifty and two.*] These were persons who could not make out their pedigree; and yet were desirous to live among the people of God, and see his worship restored.

Ver. 61. *And of the children of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai (which took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name).*] This person, whosoever he was, thought it so great an honour to be descended from such a noble family as that of Barzillai, that he chose to be called by that name, which he preferred before his own in the family of the priests: by which vain ambition he lost his title to the priesthood, because he could not make out his pedigree from the priests, but from Barzillai.

Ver. 62. *These sought their register among those who were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found.*] The words may be more plainly translated out of the Hebrew, in this manner, *These being numbered among the priests* (or, reckoned in the priestly genealogy) *sought the register, the record of it in writing, but could not find it.* The Jews were so careful to keep the priesthood pure, that they preserved an exact account of the parents, the kindred, and the quality of every priest; because there were some women the priests might not marry, whose children were accounted impure; as Mr. Selden hath shewn at large, lib. ii. de Success. ad Pontific. cap. 2. p. 213. and cap. 3. p. 215. But when the city and temple were burnt, and the people carried away in a tumultuous, confused manner into Babylon, many tables of genealogy perished, and could not be recovered.

Therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.] Not permitted to perform the office of priests; because it did not appear that they were legally descended from priests.

Ver. 63. *And the Tirshatha.*] Some think (particularly Jacobus Capellus), that by the *Tirshatha* is here meant *Zerubbabel:* it being a general name, they suppose, for all chief governors. So Nehemiah is called, chap. viii. 9. x. 1. whom others therefore will have to be here meant; who was a kind of judge (as the Persian word signifies), and gave the sentence which here follows, when he came to Judea: which was a good while after this first company arrived there. Others interpret it, the *king's commissioner;* for Zerubbabel was no more. (See J. Reynolds, in his Censure of the Apocryphal Books, prælect. cxviii.)

Said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things.] That is, they should not partake of the sacrifices offered for sin, nor of the right shoulder of peace-offerings, nor of the shew-bread; which were all most holy, and the portion of the priests alone. This shews that Tirshatha, whosoever he was, had great power and authority; who could lay such a restraint upon those that had been held for priests.

Till there stood up a priest with urim and with thummim.] Till the Lord himself should shew (when he vouchsafed such a high-priest as was in the first temple), whether they were of the line of Aaron or not. He doth not quite reject and exclude them, but left them their claim; yet would not admit them to enjoy that which was the sole right of the priests: which he could not determine whether it belonged to them; but the oracle being ceased, waited till God, who knew all things, should declare it. Thus careful they were to distinguish families, that strangers might not come to inherit among God's people; and especially that the priesthood might not be invaded by any who were unqualified for it. (See Buxtorf, in his Historia Urim et Thummim, p. 323. 327.)

It is evident from this place, that the *urim* and *thummim* were either lost or burnt with the temple; and whether they were after this restored, that is, whether any priest with this authority was raised up after the captivity was ended, we are no where informed. If there was, it was only (as Dr. Jackson well speaks, book i. on the Creed, chap. 11.) to give this people a farewell of God's extraordinary speaking to them, either by priests or by prophets, till Christ came. Josephus confesses, that revelation by *urim* and *thummim* did cease two hundred years before his time: but more probably this, as other kinds of prophecy, and many extraordinary tokens of God's power and presence

(sometimes most frequent in this nation), did cease with that generation which returned from captivity, or immediately after the finishing the second temple: as if, during all that time (to use the words of that great man beforementioned), God had appointed a *fast*, or *vigil*, as an introduction to the fulness of time; wherein (as Joel prophesied, ver. 28.) God would *pour out his Spirit upon all flesh;* upon the gentile, as well as the Jew, (Mal. i. 11.) For this cause God imposed this long fast upon the Jews, that he might humble them, and teach them, that he was not their God alone, but of the gentiles also. The Jews generally acknowledge there was no *urim* and *thummim* under the second temple: and even they that say there was (because it was necessary the high-priest should have his garments complete), yet say, there was no answer from God given by it; which is as much as to say, there was none at all. (See Buxtorf, Hist. Urim et Thummim, cap. 5.)

Ver. 64. *The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore.*] This was but a small number in comparison with that vast multitude which came out of Egypt, yet more than double to that number which was carried away captive by Nebuchadnezzar. But here occurs a small difficulty (like that in the end of the foregoing chapter); for if we put together the several sums beforementioned, they amount to no more than twenty-nine thousand eight hundred and eighteen; so there wants above twelve thousand to make up this number of forty thousand three hundred and threescore. But where shall we find them? say the Jews, in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 29. To which they there answer, that they were of the rest of the tribes of Israel, who came up with those of Judah and Benjamin: or they might be Levites, or other Israelites, who could not make out their descent. Which is a very solid answer, for there is no doubt but many of their brethren of the ten tribes incorporated themselves with the two tribes in captivity, and took the advantage of returning with them: which may be the meaning of those words in the first chapter, ver. 5. "Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, with all them whose spirit God had raised to go up:" that is, saith Diodate, all those of other tribes, according to 1 Chron. ix. 3.

Ver. 65. *Besides their servants and their maids, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven.*] Though all that returned were not Jews, but some of the ten tribes joined with them; yet they did not amount, slaves and all, to fifty thousand. Now what is this number to what they were in Jehoshaphat's time, when Judah had in it two hundred thousand fighting men?

And there were among them two hundred singing-men and singing-women.] Whether these were now become servants is not certain; but it seems to be manifest from 1 Chron. xxv. 5, 6. that women, as well as men, sung in the house of the Lord.

Ver. 66. *Their horses were seven hundred thirty and six; their mules, two hundred forty and five.*] Their poverty appears, as by the small number of servants that attended them, so by the little parcel of cattle which they had to carry them.

Ver. 67. *Their camels, four hundred thirty and five; their asses, six thousand seven hundred and twenty.*] Most of the people therefore travelled on foot, for these would but suffice to carry their baggage (as we speak), or little more.

Ver. 68. *And some of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the Lord which is at Jerusalem.*] That is, to the place in which the temple stood, unto which it seems their pious affections carried them, as soon as they came to Jerusalem.

Offered freely for the house of God, to set it up in his place.] Made a new offering besides that which they brought out of Babylon from their brethren there, mentioned chap. i. 4. 6. By this it appears, that the Jews were not made such poor slaves in Babylon as wrought for their lords and masters, but had liberty to trade and get riches for themselves; some of them being advanced to considerable offices in the king's court: otherwise they could not have been able to offer such sums as are mentioned in the next verse. And the like contribution, though not so large, was made for the support of the second company that went up from Babylon, as Josephus tells us, lib. xi. cap. 4. where he saith, the Jews in Babylon gave their brethren who were going to their own country, a hundred pound of gold, and five thousand of silver. But most of these rich men continued still in Babylon, being well settled there, and in a thriving condition: insomuch that R. Eliezer was wont to say (as he is quoted by a converted Jew), "The bran only returned to Judea, the fine flour still remained in Babylon." (See Jer. xxix. 4, 5. 28.) But this is a conceit advanced to elude the prophecies which belong to their return from Babylon, and apply them to their present captivity from the Romans.

Ver. 69. *They gave after their ability, unto the treasure of the work.*] Which was presently erected, according to the ancient pattern in David's time, (1 Chron. xxvi. 20.)

Threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pounds of silver, and one hundred priests' garments.] Garments, as well as gold and silver, were wont to be laid up in treasures, as appears by our Saviour's words, "Lay up for yourselves treasures, where neither moth nor rust do corrupt," Matt. vi. 20. Moths do not corrupt silver and gold, but only garments. (See Job xxvii. 16.)

Ver. 70. *So the priests, and the Levites, and some of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities.*] They are here set down in that order wherein they are reckoned from ver. 36. and the good order is observed that was among them, every one going to the city where his ancestors dwelt; and so did all Israel, as well as Judah and Benjamin, (chap. vi. 16, 17.) Thus the foundation of this poor commonwealth was laid in a marvellous concord, there being no strife nor contention among them that came up, though of different orders and qualities; but they had one heart and soul, like the first Christians, without which unity no people can be preserved. And that it may be cherished, they must avoid those things that destroy it, which are (as Joh. Wolfius here observes) principally φιλαυτία and πολυπραγμοσύνη, *self-love*, and *meddling in other men's matters.*

And all Israel in their cities.] When the ten tribes were carried captives by Shalmaneser into Assyria, they were not carried away entirely, but some of every tribe left, who, with Judah and Benjamin, were afterward carried to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, and now restored by Cyrus. By this our primate Usher explains what we read afterward, (chap. vi. 17, 18.) that they offered twelve he-goats, according to the number of the children of Israel; (ad A. Mundi

3468.) and, indeed, there were some relics of the ten tribes till their last destruction, (Acts xxvi. 7.)

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AND when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem.*] We are no where told in what month they began their journey from Babylon. But from chap. vii. 9. we understand it was a journey of four months from thence to Jerusalem; so that we may safely conclude they came out in the spring-time in the first or second month, and having spent a short time in settling themselves in their several cities, the seventh *approached*, or *drew nigh* (so it must be understood, and should be rendered), in which was the first feast that fell out after they came into Judea; which they assembled themselves unanimously to celebrate at Jerusalem.

Ver. 2. *Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests.*] He was the high-priest, called Joshua in Haggai i. 1.

And Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren.] He is called there the governor of Judah, being appointed by the king of Persia to that office. And he is there put before Joshua, as here he is put after: the viceroy and the high-priest being "Pares dignitate aut suppares," as Bochartus speaks. (See below, ver. 8. chap. iv. 3. v. 2.)

And builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt-offerings thereon.] Which were the most ancient offerings of all others.

As it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God.] Where, in the very beginning of the book of Leviticus, there is an order for the burnt-sacrifices before any other.

Ver. 3. *And they set the altar.*] Before they began to lay the foundation of the temple; for they would not have sacrifices wanting while it was building.

Upon his bases.] That is, in the place, some think, where it anciently stood. Which was done, Maimonides saith, by the authority of the prophets, who were then among them. Here the reader must remember what I have observed upon 1 Chron. ix. 11. 21. 23. that till the temple could be built, they erected a tabernacle wherein the service of God was performed, as it was before Solomon's temple was built. But I noted there, ver. 18. that it did not stand on Mount Moriah, but on Mount Zion; and therefore the altar was also there, and not in the place where it anciently stood, till the temple was finished.

(For fear was upon them, because of the people of those countries).] The particle *ki*, which we translate *for*, signifies *although:* and so it had been better rendered here, Although they were in great fear of their evil neighbours, yet notwithstanding they would not desist from restoring the worship of God. But if we take it as we translate it, the meaning is plain that they were the more zealous to restore the worship of God, that they might upon all occasions flee to him for succour against their enemies, of whom they were in dread.

And they offered burnt-offerings thereon unto the Lord, even burnt-offerings morning and evening.] Which is called in the law of Moses the *continual burnt-offering*, Exod. xxix. 38—42. Numb. xxviii. 3. 6.

Ver. 4. *They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written.*] See Exod. xxiii. 16. The seventh month was so remarkable for many solemnities appointed to be held in it, that I cannot think they kept only the feast of tabernacles. For on the very first day of the month there was to be a holy convocation, (Numb. xxix. 1, &c.) on which they began to offer sacrifice, as it is said here, ver. 6.: and on the tenth day was another holy convocation, which was the most solemn in all the year, being the great day of atonement, (Numb. xxix. 7.) With these, I suppose, they began; and especially on the tenth day begged pardon of God for their sins, which had cast them out of their land; and then proceeded on the fifteenth day to thank God for their restoration, by keeping the feast of tabernacles.

And offered the daily burnt-offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required.] On every day of the feast, which lasted seven days, there were special sacrifices appointed by the law, and in great numbers; as may be seen Numb. xxix. 13. 17, &c. which put this poor people to great expenses; but their piety now was such, that they valued nothing so much as the service of God.

Ver. 5. *And afterward offered the continual burnt-offerings, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a free-will-offering unto the Lord.*

Ver. 6. *From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord: but the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid.*] The meaning of these two verses is, that holy rites of sacrificing were restored, and so were kept and continued ever after in their several seasons, on the new moons, and other festival solemnities. And they began with the morning and evening burnt-offering, which was never to be omitted, but in every solemnity was to have the precedence, and be offered in the first place. (See Numb. xxviii. 3, 4, &c.)

Ver. 7. *They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters.*] To prepare materials for the building.

And meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre.] Who wanted these things more than money, as appears by the history of Solomon's building, (1 Kings v. 10.)

To bring cedar-trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa.] As they had done in the days of Solomon, (1 Kings v. 9.)

According to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.] Who commanded, I suppose, those of Tyre and Zidon to assist them.

Ver. 8. *Now, in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem.*] That is, to the place where the house of God formerly stood.

In the second month.] All the time before this, in the latter end of the last year, was spent, it is probable, in removing the rubbish, and preparing the ground for laying the foundation, as much as the winter would permit: which was not a season to begin the work, but after the Passover, I presume, they entered upon it.

Began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the remnant of their brethren, the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem.] Here Zerubbabel is put before Jeshua, as ver. 2. Jeshua was put before him: whereby we learn they were of equal dignity, in the account of the

Jews. For Zerubbabel was not a king, but a governor of the province of Judea, under the king of Persia, as Nehemiah was; (chap. v. 14, 15.) under whom there were princes and rulers, that is, the heads of families; (chap. ix. 2.) and below them there were *captains of thousands*, &c. and other subaltern *officers;* (chap. x. 8. 14.) and after all, in the fourth place, the *great congregation:* which Bertram makes account was the government of the Jews, after their return from the captivity. (See him, de Repub. Jud. cap. 13. where he undertakes to make out the four orders from Nehem. v. 7, &c.)

And appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the Lord.] For since the time of David, they were thought fit at twenty years of age to attend the service of God in his house.

Ver. 9. *Then stood Jeshua with his sons and his brethren.*] Not Jeshua the high-priest beforementioned, but another Jeshua, who was a Levite, mentioned chap. ii. 40.

Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah, together.] Who is called there Hodaviah.

To set forward the workmen in the house of God.] They being made overseers of the work.

The sons of Henadad, with their sons, and their brethren the Levites.] These were afterward added to the forenamed, as their assistants.

Ver. 10. *And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord.*] While the sacrifices, I suppose, at the same time were offered, they sung praise to God with such instruments as they had; which were only cymbals, for it is like they had not yet got *harps* and *lutes*. The apocryphal Esdras saith, they laid the foundation in the new moon; but Calvisius thinks it more probable to have been laid the day after, the new moon being a festival.

After the ordinance of David king of Israel.] See 1 Chron. xvi. 7. xxv. 1.

Ver. 11. *And they sang together by course.*] That is, answered one to another; for from hence was derived the manner of praying and praising God in the Christian service alternatively, as Mr. Mede observes, book i. discourse xvi. where he notes how the seraphims cried one to another, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts," &c. Isa. vi. 3.

In praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever towards Israel.] Thus many of the Psalms of David begin, cvii. cxxviii. and cxxxvi. which last psalm, it is probable, was now sung entirely, in every verse of which these words are repeated, *his mercy endureth for ever.*

And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.] That is, every one expressed their thankfulness and joy, in such manner as they were able; the priests and Levites with singing and music, and the people with shouting, which is a natural expression of joy, and as acceptable as the most artificial composures.

Ver. 12. *But many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house.*] As many of them might have done, it not being above threescore (or, as some compute, sixty-one) years since it was burnt. And some of them lived long after this, which was the first year of Cyrus: for some prolonged their days (as Huetius observes) till the second year of Darius Hystaspes, which was eighteen years after the first of Cyrus.

When the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy.] The younger sort shouted, but many of the ancient people disturbed their acclamations with howlings. For though the temple was intended to be built as large as the former, upon the same foundation; yet there were not such goodly stones to lay for the foundation, as there were for Solomon's, (1 Kings vii. 9, 10.) nor could they hope to build it so magnificently as he had done, nor was there any appearance of the Divine glory, or of a priest with *urim* and *thummim*, and such-like things: which indeed were sad, but ought not to have made them weep so loud, and interrupt the public joy. Thankfulness for small beginnings would better have become them, than complaints that their condition was no better.

Ver. 13. *So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people.*] There was a great confusion among them by these contrary passions, which was very lamentable when God had been so very good to them all.

For the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.] Notwithstanding which, the young people continued to shout as loud as they could, and made the noise of their joy be heard farther off than the others' weeping was.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *NOW, when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin.*] These were the Samaritans, who were grieved at their return, (ver. 10.)

Heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel.] They being neighbours were soon informed, not only of their return from captivity, but of their building the temple.

Ver. 2. *Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you.*] This people, no doubt, were desirous to partake of the privileges which were granted to the Jews by the king of Persia: and so not only offered their assistance towards the building of the temple, but would have been one people with them. So the following words import.

For we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him.] They pretend to be of the same religion with them, which is the greatest bond of union: but in truth they were not; for though they worshipped God, yet they joined other feigned gods with him, and therefore could not be admitted into communion with them at the temple.

Since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither.] The same with him mentioned 2 Kings xix. 39. who brought a second colony, after that brought by Shalmaneser when he first conquered them, to people the country better; and sent a priest also to instruct them, from whom they pretended to have received God's true religion.

Ver. 3. *But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers, said unto them, You have nothing to do with us to build a house unto our God.*] They knew them very well what they were; *viz.* a mixed people, not purely of the seed of Israel, and of a medley religion, not wor-

shipping God purely; and therefore they would have nothing to do with them. And, indeed, they soon discovered their hypocrisy by writing against the work, which they would have hindered by making divisions if they had been among them.

But we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.] They resolve to admit no other people to join with them, but to pursue the grant which king Cyrus had made to them alone, and to none other. These were the two reasons why they rejected them, because they were not of the same people, and the king of Persia had granted this licence to build the temple only to the Jews.

Ver. 4. *Then the people of the land.*] That is, the forenamed Samaritans.

Weakened the hands of the people of Judah.] Discouraged them in their undertakings by false reports and slanders, and, perhaps, by threatenings.

And troubled them in building.] Laid all the impediments they could in their way, by hindering materials or provisions from coming to them, or by enticing away their workmen, or such-like means.

Ver. 5. *And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose.*] They bribed some of the council of the king of Persia to obstruct the work; a frequent mischief in courts, as Grotius notes: or, perhaps, there were some of the officers of the king of Persia in Samaria, Syria, and Judea, whom they corrupted to cross this design.

All the days of Cyrus king of Persia.] Who being engaged in war with the Lydians and Scythians, could not attend such affairs as this; but it went on slowly: which his son Cambyses regarded not at all, being no friend of the Jews, nor of religion.

Even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.] Till Darius the son of Hystaspes, who, killing the magi (who after Cambyses had possessed themselves of the kingdom), was made king; and marrying Artossa the daughter of Cyrus, and loving her very much, confirmed the decree of Cyrus, and followed his steps that he might stand the safer himself. It is a great controversy indeed between learned men, whether this Darius, or Darius Nothus, be here meant: and there are strong arguments on both sides, which it is an immense labour to examine, with the objections against them. It hath been lately done in brief by a judicious writer, who after all is constrained to conclude with a *non liquet*. But yet he thinks the most weighty reasons incline to Darius Hystaspes. (See Hermannus Witsius, Miscellanea Sacra, lib. i. cap. 20.)

Ver. 6. *And in the reign of Ahasuerus.*] Who this was is very uncertain; there being many who think, that after Cyrus this was *nomen gentilitium* (as they call it), the name of all their kings (as Pharaoh was of all the kings of Egypt), who were called Xerxes, or Artaxerxes (from Ahasuerus, as Grotius thinks), besides the name they had before they came to the crown. Some therefore say this was Cambyses, (so primate Usher, ad A. M. 3476.) others Darius Hystaspes, others Artaxerxes Mnemon, or Longimanus; whose disputes are very long about this matter, but leave one no more satisfied than before he began to read them.

In the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.] Importing that they intended to set up for themselves, and not to depend upon the king of Persia.

Ver. 7. *And in the days of Artaxerxes.*] Who is before called Ahasuerus; which is supposed to be his Chaldee name, as Artaxerxes was his Persian. But Dr. Alix, who had examined these things, looks upon it as absurd to suppose Ahasuerus to have been the name of all the Persian kings, and takes this Artaxerxes to have been the son of Xerxes, *viz.* Artaxerxes Longimanus.

Wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia.] These men first drew up the letter, which they intended to send to the king, being governors, I suppose, under him, on this side of Euphrates; such as the Greeks call tetrarchs.

And the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue.] The meaning may be, that they sent a brief address to the king in the Syrian tongue, and expounded their business more largely to some of his counsellors in the same tongue. Or, by the first we may understand the letter or characters, and by the other the words: so that the meaning is, it was wrote both in Syrian characters, and in Syrian words. For sometimes a letter or other writing is sent in the character of one language, and in words of another; as Chaldee and Syrian words are wrote in the Hebrew characters, and we ofttimes write Hebrew words in the English characters. But this letter was wrote, and was to be read in the same language.

Ver. 8. *Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king.*] These two were principal persons in these countries; who either joined with the other three beforementioned in the same letter, or wrote another letter of the same import.

In this sort.] Containing the same complaint against the Jews.

Ver. 9. *Then wrote Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions; the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites.*] These nine nations came out of Assyria, Persia, Media, Susiana, and other provinces of that vast empire; who with one consent joined in this letter or petition. For, perhaps, the king being loath to do any thing hastily upon the motion of that letter mentioned ver. 8. sent to have the opinion of all these nations, or the principal persons among them; and of all other on this side the river Euphrates, as it here follows.

Ver. 10. *And the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest that are on this side the river.*] Some take Asnapper to be another name for Shalmaneser, or for Esar-haddon, who sent these colonies hither. But it is more reasonable to think he was some great commander, who was entrusted by one or both of those kings to conduct them, and *bring them over* (the river Euphrates), and see them settled in these countries.

And at such a time.] Which was expressed, no doubt, in the letter; but here it is only noted in general, that the year and the day were mentioned, when it was subscribed.

Ver. 11. *This is the copy of the letter that they sent unto*

him, even unto Artaxerxes the king: Thy servants, the men on this side the river, and at such a time.] This was the title of their letter: the letter itself followeth.

Ver. 12. *Be it known unto the king, that the Jews, which came up from thee to us, are come unto Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations.*] This was a mere calumny; for they attempted no such thing as to build the walls of Jerusalem. But they speak in ambiguous words (as Huetius observes) concerning the building of this city; which in one sense was true. For they built houses, without which it could not be inhabited; but they did not go about to encompass it with walls, to defend the city against the incursions of their enemies; which was not begun till a great while after. They are fallacious words therefore, whereby they imposed upon the king's belief, when they say, *they set up the walls thereof:* for they only set up the walls of their houses, not of their city. And there is a demonstration they did no more; for when it is said there was an order from the king, that this city should not be built, and accordingly the work was stopped, it is thus expressed, (ver. 24.) *then ceased the work of the house of God, which is at Jerusalem.* It is not said, The work of building the walls of the city ceased (for they were about no such thing), but *the work of the house of God,* which was all they did. Thus wicked men compass their ends by lies and fallacies; with which they prepossess men's minds against the truth. As for their calling it a *rebellious and bad city,* there was some colour for it; their latter kings having rebelled against the king of Babylon. And besides, the laws and customs of the Jews were such, as would not permit them to conform to the manner of other nations; which made their neighbours have an ill opinion of them, as an unsociable people.

Ver. 13. *Be it known now unto the king, that if this city be builded, and the walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom.*] They pretend the Jews would be no longer in subjection, if their city was built; but set up for themselves, as a free people. By the first of these words Grotius understands that which every head paid to the king, which we call poll-money; by the second, the excise (as we now speak) that was upon commodities and merchandise; and by the last, the rent which their land paid. But a late learned man thinks, the first word rather signifies that part which every man paid out of his estate, according as it was valued; the second, that which was paid for every head; and the third, that which was paid upon the highways, by every traveller who brought in wares, or carried them out. (Herman. Witsius, in his Miscell. par. ii. Exerc. xi. n. 20.)

And so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings.] They pretend to study nothing but the profit of the king; and that neither he nor his successors might lose any of the duties owing to the crown.

Ver. 14. *Now, because we have maintenance from the king's palace.*] In the Hebrew it is, *we are salted with the salt of the palace;* i. e. *received their salary* from the king, as Junius translates it. For it seems, they received their stipend in *salt* (from whence it was called a *salary*), which the son of Sirach mentions among the things necessary to human life, (Eccles. xxxix. 31.) And Homer calls it *a Divine thing,* because, as Plutarch expounds him, it seasons all food, and gives a relish to it. (See Dr. Cudworth, of the Lord's Supper, p. 68.)

And it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour.] It did not become them who received maintenance from the king to see him wronged any way.

Therefore have we sent and certified the king.] Which they would have him think was the sole cause of their writing, to inform him in the truth.

Ver. 15. *That search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers.*] In the chronicles of the kings that had reigned before him; whom they call his *fathers,* because they were his predecessors in that kingdom, wherein he now reigned. This search shews, this letter was written a long time after the edict of Cyrus.

So shalt thou find in the book of the records, and know, that this city is a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have moved sedition within the same of old time; for which cause was this city destroyed.] They mix some truth with abundance of falsehood: for this city could not be rebellious in old time, being subject to none; till, in latter times, it was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, against whom they rebelled.

Ver. 16. *We certify the king, that if this city be builded again, and the walls thereof set up, by this means thou shalt have no portion on this side the river.*] This was a most groundless suggestion, that they should either be able to conquer all the neighbouring countries, as far as Euphrates, or draw them all into a rebellion with them against the king.

Ver. 17. *Then sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their companions that dwell in Samaria, and unto the rest beyond the river, Peace, and at such a time.*] This was a matter of such concern, that the king dispatched a speedy answer to be communicated to all the people, mentioned ver. 9, 10.

Ver. 18. *The letter which ye sent unto us hath been plainly read before me.*] It was read, in all likelihood, before the king in council.

Ver. 19. *And I commanded, and search hath been made.*] In the public records. (See chap. v. 17. vi. 1, 2. Esther ii. 23. vi. 1.)

And it is found, that this city of old time hath made insurrection against kings, and that rebellion and sedition have been made therein.] One instance or two of it, in latter times, served to fasten this odious character upon them; as if they had been always guilty of these crimes.

Ver. 20. *There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river.*] Such, indeed, were David and Solomon; who, as their records shewed, ruled over all countries on this side Euphrates.

And toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them.] As now they were to the king of Persia: which seemed to justify what this people suggested in their letter, ver. 16. only they wanted such mighty kings as they then had, and were never likely to have such again.

Ver. 21. *Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded.*] He gave no order about the temple, but only about the city; which he was made to believe they were fortifying.

Until another commandment shall be given from me.] He kept his ears open, like a good king, to further information; which if he should have different from theirs, he

might give other orders. For this was not a law of the Medes and Persians that could not be revoked; but only an edict, depending wholly upon the will and pleasure of the king, which he might have reason to alter hereafter.

Ver. 22. *Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?*] By their negligence, if they permitted them to proceed to fortify Jerusalem. It is very observable, that in neither of their letters, nor in the king's answer, there is not one word of the command which Cyrus gave; nor any thing said of the building of the temple: which was the great thing in which they were employed; and the building of which could be no damage to the king. But though we do not know by what trick the decree of Cyrus was now smothered, yet their silence about it proves (as the forenamed Dr. Alix suggests to me) that this complaint was moved neither in the time of Darius the First, who lived in the court of Cyrus, and married his daughter, nor of Xerxes his son, as Josephus thinks (taking Xerxes for Artaxerxes), but in the beginning of Artaxerxes Longimanus; who began to reign seventy-one years after the first of Cyrus, in which the edict was published.

Ver. 23. *Now, when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews.*] So they of the captivity are now called, though there were many Israelites among them; because they chiefly consisted of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. But it must be noted, that all Israel (as this author speaks, chap. ii. *ult.*) are included under the name of Jews. For liberty was granted to them all by the edict of Cyrus (which cannot be noted too often), in virtue of which they might return when they pleased. But the holy writers mention only those who returned in a body: after which the prophets admonish those who remained in captivity to return to their own land; as we see in the book of Zechariah.

And made them to cease by force and power.] They threatened, I suppose, to force them to desist, if they did not presently obey the king's order; which was only that the city should not be built: but the temple being a part of it, they would have it understood that it was comprehended in this order.

Ver. 24. *Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem.*] It did not quite cease; for when the Jews understood that this edict did not prohibit the building of the temple, but only of the city, they went on with their work again without asking any leave; since they knew Artaxerxes did not forbid it. But it went on so slowly, that in a manner it ceased, till the beginning of the reign of Darius, as it here follows.

So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.] They that take Darius Nothus to be here meant, are pressed with very great difficulties. For, from the first year of Cyrus, who gave order for the building of the temple, till the sixth year of Darius Nothus, in which they suppose it was finished, there were at least a hundred and thirteen years, as Scaliger and Calvisius make account: but as others think, a hundred and seventeen; and, according to Cocceius, a hundred forty and two. Now all this time Zerubbabel was in the government of Judea, and Jeshua in the high-priesthood: but so long an authority in church or state was never heard of in any age; and they must have lived some time before and after, and consequently they must be of a vast age: and therefore so long a space was not between the beginning and the conclusion of this work. Besides, Haggai supposes (chap. ii. 4.) that some remembered the glory of the first house, and compared it with the glory of the second: which, if this was in the sixth year of Darius Nothus, they must be at least a hundred and fourscore years old; which is not likely. Several solutions are given to this, which do not satisfy those who believe Darius Hystaspes is here meant: whose second year was the eighteenth after the first of Cyrus, as Huetius reckons: and this is the most ancient opinion. But it is built only upon the authority of Josephus, who was followed by many after the second century: but before, they took this Darius to be Darius Ochus, as Dr. Alix assures me, who thinks the long life of Zerubbabel and Jeshua is no objection against it; but is to be looked upon as an extraordinary effect of the Divine goodness, for the re-establishment of the commonwealth, and of the worship of God: as the life of Jehoiada was prolonged for the same reason, (2 Chron. xxiv. 15.)

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *THEN the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo.*] The grandchild of Iddo; for his father's name was Berachiah.

Prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them.] Or rather *against them*, as the Hebrew words may be interpreted: for they reproved them because they did not build the temple. They both prophesied in the second year of Darius, as appears by the beginning of their prophecies: one in the sixth month, the other in the eighth. This second year of Darius, as Dr. Alix observes to me, was a sabbatic year, from which there were seven weeks, or forty-nine days, as well for the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, which was in the twentieth of Artaxerxes, as for settling a right policy in church and state, which was finished by Nehemiah, the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, which was also a sabbatic year. And from this second of Darius, whom God gave order by these precepts to set upon this work, he thinks, is the true beginning of the sixty-two weeks, (spoken of, Dan. ix.) till the appearing of the Messiah.

Ver. 2. *Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem.*] It had been begun a good while ago, but went on very slowly, till these great men, excited by the prophets, set the work forward.

And with them were the prophets of God helping them.] Calling upon them to labour strenuously in the work: for God was with them, to protect, defend, and prosper them, (Haggai i. 13, 14. ii. 4.)

Ver. 3. *At the same time came to them Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and their companions.*] These were men in authority under the king of Persia, who managed the public affairs in these countries; but seem to have been of a better spirit than Rehum, and the rest mentioned in the foregoing chapter; who, it is likely, were either dead, or put out of their places by this new king.

And said thus unto them, Who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall?] They fairly question them by what authority they built the temple, and the wall about it: for they do not mean the wall of the city, which was not building.

Ver. 4. *Then said we unto them after this manner, What are the names of the men that make this building?*] Many take these to be still the words of Tatnai, and his companions. But it is more natural to take them for the answer of the Jews: who not only told them by what authority they built the temple, but also gave them the names of those who were the great undertakers of the work; after which, it is likely, they inquired, ver. 10. But then the word *What*, is not the note of an interrogation, but is to be translated, *We said unto them after this manner, What were the names*, &c. From which place Huetius argues, that he who wrote this chapter was now present when this question was asked, and answer made to it; and therefore Ezra was not the writer: for this was in the second year of Darius, and he did not come to Jerusalem till the seventh year of Artaxerxes, called Longimanus, (chap. vii. 1. 8.)

Ver. 5. *But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius.*] By the favour and good providence of God, the king's ministers in those parts became their friends, so far, as not to prohibit them to go on with their work; but referred the matter to the consideration of Darius himself; to whom they make a very fair and honest report of the case.

And then they returned answer by letter concerning this matter.] The matter being laid before Darius, they received answer from him by letter what should be done in it.

Ver. 6. *The copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shetkar-boznai, and his companions the Apharsachites, which were on this side the river, sent unto Darius the king.*] The Apharsachites were one of the nations mentioned before in the former letter to Artaxerxes, (chap. iv. 9.) of which, perhaps, these two great men were.

Ver. 7. *They sent a letter unto him, wherein was written thus: Unto Darius the king, all peace.*] They seem to write with greater affection than the former did, wishing the king all prosperity and happiness, which the other did not, but only called themselves his servants, (chap. iv. 11.)

Ver. 8. *Be it known unto the king, that we went into the province of Judea, to the house of the great God.*] So the Jews spake, to distinguish their God from all others, who were the gods only of small countries, every one of which had their particular gods.

Which is builded with great stones.] The Talmudists, Jarchi, and Kimchi, and others, translate it *marble stones*, and the LXX. *choice stones*.

And timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands.] It was advanced so far, and such diligence was used, that if a stop were not put to it, it would be speedily finished.

Ver. 9. *Then asked we those elders, and said unto them, Who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls?*

Ver. 10. *And we asked their names also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that were the chief of them.*] They made a very diligent inquiry, that they might give the king a perfect account of the matter, and he might the better judge of it.

Ver. 11. *And thus they returned us answer, saying, We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded and set up.*] They own their religion which was of very ancient standing; their God having been worshipped many ages ago in this house which was built by Solomon.

Ver. 12. *But after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon.*] They give them a short account how it came to be destroyed for their sins, and how they were punished on that account.

Ver. 13. *But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon, the same king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God.*

Ver. 14. *And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor.*

Ver. 15. *And said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place.*

Ver. 16. *Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished.*] These last words shew it had gone on very slowly and negligently ever since the first of Cyrus, they being in a poor condition, and hindered in the work by the Samaritans; after which the people grew sluggish, being set upon building their own houses, which they carried on with greater earnestness, than the house of God, as Haggai reproves them. However, in these last verses, the Jews gave Tatnai a faithful account of the whole matter; and he very worthily represented it to the king, as they informed him, without any addition or diminution of his own. For he did not accuse them of building the walls of Jerusalem; which shews, he and his companions were not their enemies; but impartially wrote what they affirmed to be true.

Ver. 17. *Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure-house, which is there at Babylon.*] Where the records of the kingdom were kept very carefully, as treasures use to be.

Whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.] It is likely the elders desired the records might be searched and examined, whether they said true or not; and accordingly, the governors reported their desires to the king, as a speedy way to be satisfied about this matter. For these do not seem to be like the Samaritans in the foregoing chapter, who endeavoured to obstruct the work, but were only desirous to be informed of the truth of what the Jews pretended, that so the building of the temple might either be permitted or prohibited, according as the king found the grant of Cyrus to be.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *THEN Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon.*] In the house where the records of the kingdom were kept; but by what follows, it appears that in Babylon they found nothing.

Ver. 2. *And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written.*] They searched therefore at Achmetha, which was afterward called Ecbatana, where the kings of Persia sometimes kept their courts: and there was found a volume concerning the affairs of Judea, wherein was the following record. This argued a great goodness in Darius, that he did not presently decree against them, because nothing that they alleged was found in Babylon; but caused a search to be made in another place, where he knew records were preserved.

Ver. 3. *In the first year of Cyrus the king.*] This, perhaps, was the inscription of the following memorial.

The same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits.] Or rather, *the length thereof,* as these last words may be translated. They had liberty to make it of these dimensions if they pleased, but no bigger: and these exceeded the proportions of Solomon's temple, if we suppose it to have been thirty cubits in height, except the porch, which was a hundred and twenty. But I have shewn elsewhere, that it is probable all the temple of Solomon was in length a hundred and twenty cubits, and this house was but half so high. This Josephus saith, who saw this second temple, (lib. xv. Archæolog. cap. 14.) Ἐνδεῖ δ' αὐτῷ πρὸς τὸ μέγεθος εἰς ὕψος ἑξήκοντα πήχεις, &c. *It wanted* (speaking of this temple) *to make it great, sixty cubits in height; for so much higher was the first temple which Solomon built.*

Ver. 4. *With three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber; and let the expenses be given out of the king's house.*] He ordered it to be built at his own charge, for so he saith God commanded him, (chap. i. 2.) "God hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem." Yet we do not find that the Jews made use of his bounty, as Pellicanus observes, because they would not provoke too much the envy of the Samaritans, who were angry at his kindness to them. And therefore they carried on the work at their own cost, till Darius now commanded they should have what they desired out of his revenue, to finish what they had begun.

Ver. 5. *And also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again to the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God.*] Thus far the decree of Cyrus is recited, which justified the truth of all the allegations of the Jews in the foregoing chapter. Now follows the decree of Darius thereupon.

Ver. 6. *Now therefore, Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, which are beyond the river.*] It is most likely that he set down in his letter to these men the forementioned decree of Cyrus, as it was found in the records, and then gave the following command.

Be ye far from thence.] Come not near Jerusalem to give them any hinderance or disturbance.

Ver. 7. *Let the work of this house of God alone.*] Obstruct not the work, but rather further it.

Let the governor of the Jews, and the elders of the Jews, build this house of God in his place.] In the place where it stood before. Zerubbabel is constantly called the governor of the Jews, never their king, (Hag. i. 1. 14. ii. 2. 21.) and so some of his successors, (Mal. i. 9.) For in Babylon, as Josephus relates, he was σωματοφύλαξ, *a keeper of the king's body,* and τῶν αἰχμαλώτων Ἰουδαίων ἡγεμών, *the captain of the captive Jews;* who in one word was called Αἰχμαλωτάρχα. Therefore he was appointed by Cyrus, and afterward by Darius, to govern the province of Judea in the king's name, and at his charge to see the temple built at Jerusalem. But learned men give no credit to what Josephus says of his great office in Babylon.

Ver. 8. *Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews.*] Whose names they had given in to him, (chap. v. 10.)

For the building of this house of God.] As he had ordered they should not be hindered, so he made a further order that they should give them assistance in what they were about.

That of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered.] That the work might not stop for want of money to go forward, which he ordered to be paid them without delay.

Ver. 9. *And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt-offerings of the God of heaven.*] So he had learned to call the God of Israel, after the example of Cyrus, who acknowledges God had made him so great, as he had Darius.

Wheat, salt, wine, and oil.] For meat-offerings to attend upon the burnt-offerings.

According to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem.] This was a great honour done to God's ministers, who might have whatsoever they desired for his service.

Let it be given them day by day without fail.] That the morning and evening burnt-sacrifices might never fail to be offered every day.

Ver. 10. *That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.*] From this place principally Mr. Mede proves at large, that sacrifices were a rite of supplication unto God; such ones, namely, whereby the supplicant came not with a naked petition, but presented something unto his God, whereby to find favour in his sight, and obtain his petition: whence we find Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, where they pitched their tents, to have built an altar also (which was a place for sacrifice), and there *called upon the name of the Lord.* And by this place it appears, that the sacrifices and oblations presented by gentiles were not refused by the Jews, when they desired their prayers to God for them. The Hebrew doctors indeed say, that all such sacrifices were eucharistical, not hilastical, that is, sacrifices of thanksgiving or acknowledgment to God (being burnt-offerings), not sacrifices of expiation, or sin-offerings.

So Maimonides, in his treatise of sacrifices, "All the eucharistical sacrifices of the gentiles were burnt-offerings." There is a memorable passage in Josephus (lib. ii. de Bello Judaico, cap. 31.) concerning Eleazar the priest, who, being admonished to admit the sacrifices and oblations of the gentiles, acknowledged that their ancestors adorned the temple with gifts offered by the gentiles, always accepting τῶν ἔξωθεν ἐθνῶν δωρεὰς καὶ θυσίας, *the gifts and sacrifices of external nations.*

The king and his sons.] Here it must be noted, that Darius the First had no sons, but Darius the Second had, *viz.* Artaxerxes Mnemon, and Cyrus the younger, who were great men, and reigned in some manner with him. Artaxerxes Mnemon (as Dr. Alix makes account) was thirty-five years old in the second year of Darius; and Cyrus (who was slain in a battle against his brother) was a little younger.

Ver. 11. *Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and, being set up, let him be hanged thereon.*] To make the decree more valid and better observed, he added this penalty; that if any acted contrary to it, a beam should be taken out of his own house, and, being set up, he should be hanged thereon. But Lud. de Dieu observes, that there is no construction in these words, which we render, *being set up;* therefore he would have them translated after the LXX. *and standing, let him be beat upon it;* whipped, as we say, at a post, as the manner was among the Persians and other nations. Only among the Jews they that were beaten did not stand, but lay down, (Deut. xxv. 2.) But if a greater punishment be here meant, then he makes the first words refer to the wood, and the latter to the man, in this manner, *and from above let it fall upon him.* That is, the stake, being lifted up, shall be struck into his body, and come out at his fundament; which was a cruel punishment among the eastern people, and still continued there.

And let his house be made a dunghill for this.] The pulling down of a beam from his house, supposes the pulling down of the house, which he orders should not be built again, but the place where it stood be made a dunghill. Thus the Romans pulled down the houses of very wicked men for their greater disgrace; of Sp. Cassius, for instance, and of Ovidius Pollio.

Ver. 12. *And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there, destroy all kings and people that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem.*] He was touched with such a sense of the greatness of the God of the Jews, that he prays, He who had all power in heaven and earth, would not only punish all those kings over whom he had no power (not being his subjects), who went about to obstruct this work, but destroy both them and their people.

I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed.] He concludes as he began, that forthwith this decree should be executed, (ver. 8.)

Ver. 13. *Then Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, according to that which Darius the king had sent, so they did speedily.*] They were as punctual in executing his decrees as he desired, and that without any delay.

Ver. 14. *And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo.*] Who directed and encouraged them in their work; representing to them, it is likely, the wonderful goodness of God, who had inclined the heart of the king of Persia to be so highly favourable to them.

And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.] If this Darius was he called Hystaspes, then it was Artaxerxes Longimanus his successor that is here meant; who, though he found the temple built, yet sent Ezra to beautify it, and to see things done there according to their law, (chap. vii. 12. 21. 27.) But some think him to be Artaxerxes Mnemon, who reigned with his father many years, and lived till he was ninety-four years old. (Plut.)

Ver. 15. *And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.*] Now they did in four years more than they had done in many years before. For, partly by their own poverty, and partly by the corruption of the courtiers of Persia, who hindered the necessary supplies; and partly by the envy of the Samaritans, who retarded them by their false accusations, and by their interest in the governors of Syria; and partly by the sluggishness of the Jews, and their inclination to mind their own private interest more than the public good, the work went on so slowly, that not only the prophets reprehended them for it, but God punished them severely by scarcity of provision, as we read in the prophet Haggai: but now, by the favour of this king, and by the zeal of God's prophets, it went on apace, and was speedily finished.

Ver. 16. *And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy.*] By the *children of Israel* are to be understood not only the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin (who were the chief), but all those of other tribes, many of which, from the time of Cyrus to the second of Darius, were come to their own country, though we have not a particular account of their names. This appears from the next verse. All these, together with the priests and Levites, agreed to dedicate this house with festival joy. Thus the temple at first was dedicated, (1 Kings viii. 2. 2 Chron. vii. 4, &c.) That is, after it was built, being designed only for sacred uses, now they shewed, by an example, how it should be used, which is the proper and simple sense of the word *dedicate,* as Selden explains it, (lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 13. sect. 5.) But the Hebrew doctors observe, that by these sacrifices now offered, there was no new sanctity given to the place, but the old only restored.

Ver. 17. *And offered at the dedication of this house of God a hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs.*] A hecatomb was the noblest sacrifice among the heathen, of which we find often mention in their books; and with that the Jews began the dedication of the temple: to which they made many additional offerings, some of which were peace-offerings, on which they feasted, as the hundred bullocks, I suppose, were whole burnt-offerings.

And for a sin-offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.] For it appears by many places before recited, that though the ten tribes

were carried captive by Shalmaneser, yet many of them remained in their country, and were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar, together with Judah and Benjamin, with whom they returned out of Babylon, as many others of the ten tribes did, who were carried away at the taking of Samaria. (See chap. ii. of this book, ver. 70. 2 Chron. xxxi. 5. 10, 11. xxxiv. 7. 9. xxxv. 3. 17. Ezra viii. 35. Acts xxvi. 7.)

Ver. 18. *And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God which is at Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses.*] Where directions are given for their service, Numb. iii. 6. viii. 9, 10.

Ver. 19. *And the children of the captivity kept the Passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month.*] As was enjoined Exod. xii. 6. The Jews had the free exercise of their religion in Babylon (as I shall observe more largely afterward), where they circumcised their children, and also made proselytes; but the *children of the captivity* signified those who were come back from it, and ate the passover, which they could not have done if they had not been circumcised.

Ver. 20. *For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves.*] They had time to purify themselves between the day wherein the temple was perfected, and the day wherein this feast was to be kept, there being above a month between.

Ver. 21. *And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the Lord God of Israel, did eat.*] That is, all proselytes, who had entirely made themselves subject to the law of Moses; for others might not eat of it, but they might, (Exod. xii. 48, 49.) Now, as Pellicanus observes, there were many proselytes who quite forsook their heathenish religion, and were brought to the knowledge and worship of the true God, by the favour of Cyrus and Darius, kings of Persia. They had kept the Passover before this, being in the place which God chose, and having an altar where they might sacrifice; but it was not a quiet and settled time, and they had much occasion to be among the heathen; and so, it is likely, could not easily purify themselves to eat of it, as they did now.

Ver. 22. *And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.*] God filled their hearts with joy, by turning the heart of the king, who now reigned over all the kingdoms which were formerly under the power of the Assyrians, who had grievously oppressed them, as the Persians who came in their stead now highly favoured them; who having conquered Babylon, were called the kings of Assyria. For we find in these books, the king of Persia, after that conquest, is called by the name of the king of Babylon, (see Nehem. xiii. 6.) as the same king of Persia is here called the king of Assyria: for the kings formerly called by these names were possessed of vast dominions over many large provinces; which the Persian kings enjoying, they retained the ancient names of the former kings. For, as Joh. Vorstius observes, in his Dissert. de Quatuor Monarchiis, sect. 9. the kingdom of Babylon was not extinguished by little and little, but all at once: Cyrus possessed himself of it entirely, *simul et semel;* and, adding a vast dominion to the small one he had before, was called the king of those dominions which he conquered.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *NOW after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia.*] The same Artaxerxes, I suppose, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, ver. 14. But R. Solomon and Aben Ezra fancy he was Darius beforenamed.

Ezra the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah.] He was descended from Seraiah, but not immediately begotten by him; for Seraiah perished when Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans: (2 Kings xxv. 18. 21.) at which time Ezra, it is likely, was not in being; but he was his grandson, or great-grandson, and his descent is mentioned from him, because he was an eminent person, who flourished before the destruction of the temple, whereas his father or grandfather lived obscurely in their captivity. (See 1 Chron. vi. 15.)

Ver. 2. *The son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub.*

Ver. 3. *The son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth.*] In this genealogy there are six generations omitted, between Azariah and Meraioth (as before there were some between Seraiah and Ezra), which are to be supplied out of 1 Chron. vi. 7, &c. which Kimchi, as I there observed, thinks was done for brevity's sake. For Ezra being author of that book, which was written first, and then of this, might think it needless to repeat all that he had there said at large.

Ver. 4. *The son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki.*

Ver. 5. *The son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest.*] See 1 Chron. vi. 4, 5.

Ver. 6. *This Ezra went up from Babylon.*] Not only by the king's leave and his commission, but with great authority, as appears from the end of this verse, and from ver. 25.

And he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given.] He calls himself a scribe (as Buxtorf notes in his Tiberias), not from writing and describing, but from declaring and explicating, those things that are contained in the Scripture. For as *sepher* signifies a *book*, so *sopher* signifies one skilful and learned in that book, an interpreter and teacher out of it. And there being no book comparable to the book of the law, therefore *sopher* became a name of great dignity, and signified one that taught God's law, and expounded it to his people. Thus, in the New Testament, Γραμματεῖς, *the scribes*, were those that instructed the people. For when our Saviour is said to have taught them as one having authority, and *not as the scribes*, it plainly shews that they were teachers, though not with such authority. See Jer. viii. 8. where the word *scribe* is thus used.

And he calls himself a *ready scribe*, because he was expert in the law, and understood it thoroughly, both in all things belonging to the priesthood, and to the civil power;

in which he was so well versed, that he could give a ready account of any part of it. And it is thought by some, he gathered together the most perfect copies of the law, and put out an accurate edition of it, with all the prophetical books, and such poems as had any sacred authority among them, adding the history of following times. But Josephus saith nothing of it, and therefore it is looked upon by others as a Jewish chimera, who attribute many other things to him without ground.

And the king granted him all his request.] Some think to rebuild Jerusalem, of which there is no mention any where: therefore he only granted him power, as he desired, to do such things as are mentioned below, (ver. 14, 15, &c.)

According to the hand of the Lord his God upon him.] For God was so favourable to him, as to incline the king to give a gracious answer to his petition. And, indeed, these kings of Persia were so exceeding kind to the Jews, that, in a grateful remembrance of the favour they shewed them, in permitting them to build the temple again, and assisting them in it, they caused a figure of the city and palace of Shushan (where the kings of Persia resided) to be made in brass, in the east gate of the temple, which looked towards Persia; as we read in the Talmud, in the treatise called Middoth.

Ver. 7. *And there went up some of the children of Israel.*] Of the ten tribes, or such Jews as remained still in Babylon, after leave given them by Cyrus to return into their own country.

And of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king.] This was the second company that went up to Jerusalem, consisting of such-like persons as went up first with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and others, (chap. ii. 2. 70.) For hearing the temple was rebuilt, and the worship of God restored, we may very well think many went along with Ezra, who had not such a strong motive to go in the first of Cyrus.

Ver. 8. *And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king.*

Ver. 9. *For upon the first day of the first month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem.*] On the first day of the first month they went from Babylon to the river Ahava, where they spent three days in taking a view of the people that accompanied him, (chap. viii. 15.) After eight days more, part of which they had spent in fasting and prayer, they went forward, (chap. viii. 21, 22. 31.)

According to the good hand of his God upon him.] He had great reason to acknowledge the favour of God to them in conducting them safe to Jerusalem; for it was a long way thither, and a difficult journey, and they had many impediments (going with wives and children, flocks and herds), and were not without enemies to waylay them, whom he boasted he did not fear, but relied on the Divine protection, as he told the king, chap. viii. 22.

Ver. 10. *For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.*] He was intent upon this business, on which he had set his heart, as we speak, bending his thoughts and studies this way. For so the Hebrew word *cun* (which we translate *prepare*) signifies, to establish, confirm, and make things fixed and immoveable. And first, he set himself to *seek the law of the Lord*, that is, to inquire into it, and search after the will of God therein contained, that he might understand it himself: and then, like a good man, he set his heart *to do* what God commanded, and put in practice what he knew to be his duty, whereby he was the better qualified *to teach* others what he knew and did himself, which was the next thing which he diligently attended. This was the right method of doing good, in which Nehemiah tells us he proceeded, (chap. viii. beginning.) Some think statutes and judgments are the same thing, comprehending all the precepts of Moses; but others take them to have a distinct meaning: the first signifying the ceremonial law about the Divine worship; and the second, the moral precepts concerning common honesty and civil life.

Ver. 11. *Now, this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord, and of his statutes to Israel.*] Here Ezra declares that he was no ordinary doctor of the law, but of eminent rank among them, who had studied the law thoroughly, and was able in every case to determine what was to be done: or (as some understand the latter part of this verse), he was perfectly skilled in the words or language wherein the law was written (which in the captivity many perhaps had forgotten), and in the sense of every law. But this, I think, is not to be supposed, that they had forgotten their own language.

Ver. 12. *Artaxerxes, king of kings.*] For he had several kings who were subject to him.

Unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven.] So Ezra, I suppose, was wont to be styled by the Jews, who never spake of him, but as a man of greater dignity and honour than others.

Perfect peace, and at such a time.] On such a year and day, as was mentioned in the date of the letter.

Ver. 13. *I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own free-will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.*] None might leave his country without the king's permission, which he here gives to all the Jewish nation who were so disposed.

Ver. 14. *Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors.*] By whose advice this decree being made, it gave it the greater authority; for these were the principal men of the kingdom, as appears from the first of Esther, ver. 14.

To inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God.] By this composition he gave him authority to make inquisition in Judea, whether every thing there was done conformably to the law of Moses: that is, he granted to the Jewish nation an *αὐτονομία, a liberty to live by their own laws*, and to judge all causes according to them; and, in the conclusion, granted them also an *αὐτοδικία, a power to sentence men according to their own law*, (ver. 25, 26.)

Which is in thine hand.] He entrusted Ezra with this great power of being supreme inquisitor and judge, because he was so very well skilled in the law (which is meant by having it *in his hand*), which he had in such readiness, and was so very conversant in it, that he was able presently to determine and judge whether it were observed.

Ver. 15. *And to carry the silver and the gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem.*] This is an argument that they had a high opinion of the God of Israel, and desired his favour, though they did not worship him alone, but imagined other gods had some power, though not so great as he.

Ver. 16. *And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in the province of Babylon, with the free-will-offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem.*] He gave them leave to carry away all the money they could procure (so the word we translate *find* is used in other places) in his own country of Babylon, as well as what the Jews, who had a mind to stay still there, should offer for the service of the temple at Jerusalem.

Ver. 17. *That thou mayest buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat-offerings, and their drink-offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem.*] That they might pray for the prosperity of the king and of his sons, as Darius ordered, chap. vi. 9, 10.

Ver. 18. *And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and gold, that do after the will of your God.*] He authorizes Ezra to take other priests to his assistance, in disposing of the money that was not laid out in sacrifices; only he would have it employed to some sacred use.

Ver. 19. *The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem.*] He speaks of him as if he thought him a particular God, but afterward speaks of him as the *God of heaven*, as he had done before, ver. 12. which is a sign he took him to be the most high God, who had a special affection for Jerusalem, because he was there worshipped.

Ver. 20. *And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow.*] Either for the reparation (if any was wanting), or for the adorning of the house. (See ver. 27.)

Bestow it out of the king's treasure-house.] Out of his exchequer, as we now speak.

Ver. 21. *And I, even I, Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river.*] All the receivers, and other officers employed about the king's revenue.

That whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily.] This was a wonderful large concession, that he should have whatsoever he desired; and that they should not make him attend upon them, and wait long for it, but furnish him immediately.

Ver. 22. *Unto a hundred talents of silver, and to a hundred measures of wheat, and to a hundred baths of wine, and to a hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much.*] He limits all the other expenses, except *salt;* without which no sacrifice could be offered: and therefore, since he would not have any sacrifice hindered, he did not prescribe any measure of that; but left them to take as much as they found necessary.

Ver. 23. *Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven.*] Here Jacobus Capellus cries out in a kind of rapture, "O verba literis aureis regum palatus inscribenda, atque adeo stylo adamantino fidelium omnium animis insculpenda!" *O words to be written upon the palaces of kings in golden letters, and engraven on the minds of all the faithful with a style of adamant!* For they express an exceeding great sense of God, and of his supreme authority; and the regard that is due from the greatest kings and potentates to his most sacred commands, (Historia Sacra et Exotica, ad A. M. 3543.) The like is not easy to be found any where.

For why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?] As he was afraid there would be, if the worship and service of God was here neglected through his default. An argument he was possessed with a greater dread of God's just displeasure, than the kings of Judah themselves were generally before the captivity. The mention of the king and *of his sons,* shews, that this agrees to Artaxerxes Mnemon exactly; but not to Xerxes (who was in Greece in the seventh year of his reign), nor to Longimanus: but Artaxerxes Mnemon had then Ochus the husband of Esther, who was a great man, and some more. This remark I owe to the most learned Dr. Alix.

Ver. 24. *Also we certify you, that, touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them.*] The king's revenue arose out of these three imposts, as appears by chap. iv. 13. from all which burdens, which were very great, the king freed every one of God's ministers, that they might the more cheerfully attend his service. And this was confirmed by some succeeding princes, as Bertram observes, (de Republica Jud. p. 171.) which the first Christian kings piously imitated, as J. Wolfius notes, "that they who watched and prayed for the public good, might be free from all other cares."

Ver. 25. *And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God that is in thine hand.*] According as the law of God directed, in which he was very expert, (ver. 14.)

Set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river.] Such as Moses ordered, Deut. xvi. 18. Here seems to be the original of the Sanhedrin, which continued but weakly till the time of the Maccabees.

All such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not.] Men well acquainted with the laws of God, who were able to instruct others that were ignorant. No Jewish king could have given more pious instructions. And the same Jacobus Capellus in the place abovenamed thinks, that in this large power granted to Ezra, there was comprehended sufficient authority to build the walls of Jerusalem. But as the king did not expressly mention it, so the malignity of the Jews' enemies hindered it; and Ezra being now grown old, was unable to cope with them. But this is not a good reason, for he lived thirteen years after this, able to stand and read the law from six to twelve of the clock.

Ver. 26. *And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king.*] By the *law of the king* is meant this decree, which was now made in favour of the Jews; giving them authority to execute their own laws again. As for the imperial laws Ezra had nothing to do with them, nor were the Jews to be governed by them, but by their own laws; unless any matters could not be determined by

the Divine laws: in that case they were to be judged by the king's law. So Joh. Vorstius understands these words disjunctively, (in his Dissert. de Synedriis Hebr. sect. 36.) that they should act according to the direction of the Divine law; or, if any thing fell out that could not be defined by that, then according to the prescription of the laws of the king.

Let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death.] The Romans never allowed the Jews the power of life and death, which the Persians did. So it is commonly thought; but the contrary is plain from the Acts of the Apostles, which shew they enjoyed that power, by their stoning St. Stephen.

Or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.] That word which we translate *banishment*, signifies in the Chaldee (as we note in the margin of our Bibles) *rooting out;* and therefore is by some interpreted disinheriting, or excommunicating from their society; so that he should be an *outlaw*, as we speak, the highest degree of which was called *shammathah*. And thus our Mr. Thorndike observes, that this *rooting out* is the same with that which in chap. x. 8. is called being *divided* or *separated* from the congregation of the captivity; being, indeed, a kind of temporal outlawry, unto which is joined confiscation of goods. And thus the greater excommunication among Christians is every where a temporal punishment; *viz.* in respect of some temporal punishment attending it in Christian states: which in Christianity is accidental, by an act of those states; but in Judaism was essential, so long as those temporal advantages, which were essential conditions of the law, were not forfeited. And this without doubt is the same punishment that is called *putting out of the synagogue.* (See Rites of the Church in a Christian State, p. 28. and Review, p. 58. with Grotius, de Imper. Sum. Potest. cap. 9.) I only add, that from such sentence it was in vain for them to appeal to any of the king's courts: for by this decree all matters were to be tried and finally judged by their own law.

Ver. 27. *Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.*] To be so liberal in his gifts and privileges, as is before expressed, (ver. 15, 16, &c.)

Ver. 28. *And hath extended mercy unto me.*] These words plainly shew Ezra wrote this part of this book, if not the whole.

Before the king and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes.] By whose advice and consent the large immunities beforementioned were granted to the Jewish nation.

And I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me; and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me.] Whose names follow in the next chapter. The marvellous kindness of the king in this grant to Ezra gave a great authority to him; and moved several of the greatest persons among the Jews still in Babylon, to resolve to accompany him to Jerusalem.

These two last verses are evidently the words of Ezra, acknowledging the Divine goodness to him, in giving him such favour with the king; whose words before are in the Syriac or Chaldee language; but these are in the Hebrew.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *THESE are now the chief of their fathers, and this is the genealogy of them that went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king.*] Whose names he sets down to preserve their memory to future generations.

Ver. 2. *Of the sons of Phinehas; Gershom: of the sons of Ithamar; Daniel.*] By the sons, he means the families of these two persons; two of which he particularly names, Gershom and Daniel: not Daniel the prophet, but some eminent person of Ithamar's family.

Of the sons of David; Hattush.] His family was so noble, because Christ was to spring from thence, that special notice was taken of it.

Ver. 3. *Of the sons of Shechaniah, of the sons of Pharosh; Zechariah.*] This Shechaniah is said to be the son of Pharosh, to distinguish him from another Shechaniah mentioned ver. 5.

And with him.] That is, with Zechariah.

Were reckoned, by genealogy of the males, a hundred and fifty.] It is not said how many there were of the other families: and we are not to think that none but males went up out of this family, and the rest that follow; for mention is made of their little ones, ver. 21. who had women, no doubt, to look after them.

Ver. 4. *Of the sons of Pahath-Moab; Elihoenai the son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males.*

Ver. 5. *Of the sons of Shechaniah; the son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males.*] This was a person of great note, of whose family there went up almost twice as many as did of any other family.

Ver. 6. *Of the sons also of Adin; Ebed the son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males.*

Ver. 7. *And of the sons of Elam; Jeshaiah the son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males.*] Concerning these, and the families that follow to ver. 15. there is little to be noted; but that out of them many went up with Zerubbabel in the reign of Cyrus (which appears by the account given in the second chapter), as now more went up with Ezra out of the very same families.

Ver. 8. *And of the sons of Shephatiah; Zebadiah the son of Michael, and with him fourscore males.*

Ver. 9. *Of the sons of Joab; Obadiah the son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males.*

Ver. 10. *And of the sons of Shelomith; the son of Josiphiah, and with him a hundred and threescore males.*

Ver. 11. *And of the sons of Bebai; Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty and eight males.*

Ver. 12. *And of the sons of Azgad; Johanan the son of Hakkatan, and with him a hundred and ten males.*

Ver. 13. *And of the last sons of Adonikam, whose names are these, Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah, and with them threescore males.*] They are called *the last sons*, with respect to the first of them that went up with Zerubbabel. Or, these were the last that followed Ezra: which some look upon as a blot on Adonikam, that his family was the last that accompanied Ezra.

Ver. 14. *Of the sons also of Bigvai; Uthai, and Zabbud, and with them seventy males.*

Ver. 15. *And I gathered them together to the river that runneth to Ahava.*] This seems to be the name of a river,

as well as of a town, which stood on the bank of Euphrates, there where this stream emptied itself into it. Some take it for Adiabene, a city so called from Adiava, ver. 31.

And there abode we in tents three days.] It is likely, that in the whole journey they lodged, not in cities and towns, but in tents, which they carried along with them; and could pitch where and when it was most commodious for them.

And I viewed the people.] Took an account of their number, and of what tribe they were.

And the priests, and found there were none of the sons of Levi.] That is, none who were not priests: of whom there were some, (ver. 2.)

Ver. 16. *Then sent I for Eliezer, for Ariel, for Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for Elnathan, and for Nathan, and for Zechariah, and for Meshullam, chief men.*] Men of authority among the company, and the heads perhaps of several families.

Also for Joiarib, and for Elnathan, men of understanding.] These eleven persons he sent for to come to him, that he might employ them in a message to a place, where he knew there were a great many Levites; as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 17. *And I sent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief.*] Among the Levites, who dwelt at the place next mentioned, and there had the free exercise of their religion, as this and many other passages in this book plainly enough prove. And it is very probable, they had their synagogues (as they had afterward in their dispersion), or other places, where they met for religious worship. For we find the people resorting to Ezekiel in their captivity, and him preaching to them the word of God, in many places of his book, particularly chap. xxxiii. 30, 31, &c. And Ezra, in all likelihood, was an instructor among them, as Joiarib and Elnathan also were, and Iddo, to whom these were sent. By which means many proselytes were made, who left their own country, and came with them to Jerusalem, when they returned, (chap. vi. 21.)

At the place Casiphia.] Several are of opinion, and particularly Stephanus Morinus lately, that this place was in the country of the Caspii, a people who gave denomination to the Caspian Sea: where some of the Israelites were planted, who were carried captive by Shalmaneser, and still preserved their language and religion. But I look upon this as unlikely; the Caspian Sea and the country about it being too far off for Ezra to send thither these messengers: who rather went to a place in the province of Babylon, to which they went, and did a great deal of business, and returned in the space of twelve days. The truth is (as Dr. Alix observes) the Levites were not among the ten tribes, but in Chaldea: and, perhaps, some of them were transported into Parthia, where there was a city called Caspi, known to the old geographers.

And I told them what they should say unto Iddo, and to his brethren the Nethinims, at the place Casiphia.] Who, it seems, were better disposed than many of the Levites, to whom they ministered. But R. Solomon and others translate the words quite otherwise; *He told them what they should say to Iddo and his brethren* (or, to Achio), *who were constituted in the place Casiphia.* For it is plain they were not Nethinims, Iddo being called *Harosh*, a prince, or chief, that is, among the Levites: by whose authority Ezra expected some Levites, whom he wanted to accompany him to Jerusalem, should be sent to him, as they were. Now this cannot be said of the Nethinims; for none of them were chiefs, or presidents of the Levites, but their ministers or servants, as appears from ver. 20. and other places. Therefore the word *Nethinim* must here signify men *appointed* to live among the Jews of that place; or, who had their residence there.

That they should bring unto us ministers for the house of our God.] That is, Levites to attend upon the priests, as the Nethinims did upon the Levites.

Ver. 18. *And, by the good hand of our God upon us.*] God inclined their hearts to comply with his desire.

They brought us a man of understanding, of the sons of Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel; and Sherebiah, with his sons and his brethren, eighteen.] They brought a man of understanding, *viz.* Sherebiah (so the words, I think, should be translated), with his sons and brethren, eighteen in number.

Ver. 19. *And Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiah of the sons of Merari, his brethren, and their sons, twenty.*] These were eminent persons also, though not equal to Sherebiah, who is noted as a man of great knowledge.

Ver. 20. *Also of the Nethinims, whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinims.*] Every one knows, that the Gibeonites were addicted by Joshua to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, for the service of God's house; but a great many of them being destroyed by Saul, there were not enough remaining to serve in those ministries. And therefore David (as Bertram thinks, in his book de Repub. Jud. p. 277.) appointed some other persons to the same employment; and afterward Solomon appointed more; who are called therefore Solomon's servants: all which, both Gibeonites and those who were added to them by David and Solomon, were known by the name of Nethinims, as much as to say, *dedititii*, or *ascriptitii*, men *given*, as the Hebrew word denotes: for, as the Levites were given to the priests, (Numb. viii. 16. 19.) so were these given to the Levites. And this is said to have been done by *David and the princes*, because David advised with the consistory about it, who are called *the princes*, 2 Chron. xxx. 2. xxxi. 8. (See Mr. Thorndike, Rites of the Church, p. 231.) But I have observed elsewhere, that these Nethinims were distinct from the Gibeonites, and of a higher rank in the service of God. (See 1 Chron. ix. 2.)

All of them were expressed by name.] I suppose Iddo sent the names of every one of them, though they are not all here mentioned.

Ver. 21. *Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.*] He being the leader of this colony, had authority from the king to command whatsoever he pleased for the good of it. And nothing was more necessary, than humbly and sorrowfully to acknowledge their offences against God, and beg his gracious pardon; and that he would prosper them in their journey, and direct them in the best way to bring themselves and all they had safe to Jerusalem: which was the end of this fast.

Ver. 22. *For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the*

way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.] He might have obtained from the king any thing that he desired; but he had so openly declared, that he depended solely upon God for safe conduct, that he was ashamed to ask a guard of the king to secure them in their passage, from those enemies that he knew would waylay them; (ver. 31.) for the king not being much instructed in Divine matters, might imagine, that all were vain boasts which the Jews had made of the favour of God to them, and of the prophecies concerning their restoration: which made Ezra and others so confident, as only to desire leave to return to their own country; and as for a safe passage, they took no care, but to commit themselves to God, who would defend his own people that trusted in him. To ask therefore protection and defence from the king, would look as if they distrusted the power and favour of their God, concerning whom they had spoken so magnificently. But it was highly necessary they should beseech that of God, which they would not ask of the king; which they did by fasting and prayer.

Ver. 23. *So we fasted, and besought our God for this; and he was entreated of us.*] Gave them some assurance that their petitions should be granted. Some think, this fast lasted eight days, beginning after the three days mentioned above, ver. 15. For they began to go out of Babylon on the first day of the month, (chap. vii. 9.) and they stayed at Ahava three days to take a view of their company; and went from thence on the twelfth, (ver. 31.) And therefore they must either keep this fast eight days, or else they were seven days in coming from Babylon, and other places, to Ahava; where a general rendezvous, as we speak, was appointed. And this I take to be most probable, that they came out of Babylon on the first day, and expected at Ahava till all their company was got together, which was about the seventh day; and they all rested three days to make a complete muster of the whole number, and fasted one day; and so began to take their journey from Ahava on the twelfth.

Ver. 24. *Then I separated twelve of the chief of the priests, Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brethren with them.*] With whom he might entrust the gifts that had been offered for the temple. These ten men, perhaps, were principal Levites, who were added to the two priests to take this charge upon them. (See ver. 29.)

Ver. 25. *And weighed unto them the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, even the offering of the house of our God, which the king, and his counsellors, and his lords, and all Israel there present, had offered.*] That they might have no excuse if they were any way embezzled.

Ver. 26. *I even weighed unto their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver vessels a hundred talents, and of gold a hundred talents.*] Or, *a hundred silver vessels, according to their talents;* that is, every one a talent.

Ver. 27. *Also twenty basons of gold of a thousand drachms, and two vessels of fine copper, precious as gold.*] They were not worth their weight in gold; but they were of great value, being scarce and rare: as that metal called aurichalcum was; which might be the reason why there was no more than two of them.

Ver. 28. *And I said unto them, Ye are holy unto the Lord; the vessels are holy also.*] They being men consecrated to God's service, were bound above all others to be faithful in the discharge of their duty, especially being entrusted with holy things; which were therefore to be carefully delivered at Jerusalem, just as they were committed to their trust.

And the silver and the gold are a free-will-offering unto the Lord God of your fathers.] Which made them still more sacred.

Ver. 29. *Watch ye, and keep them, until ye weigh them before the chief of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Israel, at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the Lord.*] Where they were deposited, after they had given an account of them there, to the persons here mentioned; who received them by the same weight, that they were delivered unto those that brought them.

Ver. 30. *So took the priests and the Levites the weight of the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, to bring them to Jerusalem, unto the house of our God.*] This shews, that some of these twelve men (mentioned ver. 26.) if not ten of them were Levites, and not all priests.

Ver. 31. *Then we departed from the river of Ahava.*] Which run by that city into Euphrates.

On the twelfth day of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem.] To pursue their intended journey,

And the hand of our God was upon us.] To protect and strengthen them in so dangerous and long a journey.

And he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way.] There were not only many enemies who hated them, and were desirous to cut them off, but many robbers who watched for a booty, whom God either diverted some other way, or disheartened from attempting any thing against them; or, perhaps, directed them (as they prayed, ver. 21.) into some uncommon ways, in which people were not wont to travel, whereby they escaped their enemies.

Ver. 32. *And we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three days.*] Before they did any thing. For it was necessary to rest and refresh themselves awhile, after so tedious a journey, in which they spent above a quarter of a year. (See chap. vii. 9.) Their friends also, it is likely, came to visit them in these three days' time, and welcome them to Jerusalem.

Ver. 33. *Now, on the fourth day was the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, weighed in the house of our God by the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest; and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinehas; and with them was Jozabad the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the son of Binnui, Levites.*] The names of Eleazar and Phinehas continued through many generations among the priests, because they were two very eminent persons in Aaron's family. And, as there were some Levites charged with this treasure to bring it to Jerusalem, so there were some of them who saw them discharge themselves of their trust.

Ver. 34. *By number and by weight of every one: and all the weight was written at that time.*] There was a public record made of it; and the persons forementioned, who brought the money and the vessels, were discharged by a public instrument, signed by them that received it. Or, perhaps, the meaning may be, that there was an inventory taken of the goods belonging to the temple, which the priests were charged withal, as the stewards of a family are wont to be with the goods belonging to it.

Ver. 35. *Also the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity.*] That is, this company who came up from Babylon with Ezra.

Offered burnt-offerings unto the God of Israel.] To express their gratitude to God for their restoration.

Twelve bullocks for all Israel.] One for every tribe.

Ninety and six rams, seventy and seven lambs, twelve he-goats, for a sin-offering.] For all Israel, whether still remaining in Babylon, or returned to Jerusalem.

All this was a burnt-offering unto the Lord.] All the rest (except the he-goats) were a burnt-offering; whereby they acknowledged the Lord for their God.

Ver. 36. *And they delivered the king's commissions unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors on this side the river.*] That they might know the king's pleasure, and what privileges he had granted them, which are recited in the foregoing chapter.

And they furthered the people, and the house of God.] Yielded obedience to the king's orders.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *NOW, when these things were done.*] When he had shewn his commission, and it appeared that he had power to reform all abuses, and see the laws of Moses observed by all the Jews, (chap. vii. 14.)

The princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands.] Some of the great men came to him with a grievous complaint, that unlawful marriages were practised among them with those wicked nations whom God had forbidden them to mingle withal: which was the more to be lamented, because not only the people, but the priests themselves and the Levites, were guilty of this sin.

Doing according to their abominations.] This is commonly an expression, signifying worshipping of idols, which are called *abominations* in Scripture; but here signifies only imitation of the heathen in promiscuous marriages with any nation whatsoever, which would soon lead them to commit idolatry. For these words in the Hebrew run thus, Have *not separated themselves from the people of the land, according to their abominations* (the word *doing* is not there); which Mr. Mede rightly interprets, *according to the several kinds of idolaters in the land round about them.*

Even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.] By this it appears, that, as marriages with the seven nations of Canaan were expressly forbidden, (Deut. vii. 2, 3.) so Ezra thought that law extended to all other nations, who were not proselyted to the Jews' religion. And this is the common opinion of the Hebrew doctors, as Mr. Selden shews, lib. v. de Jure Nat. et Gent. cap. 12. For even before the law of Moses, it seems to be thought unlawful, after they had received the covenant of circumcision, for the seed of Abraham to marry with other nations that were uncircumcised, (Gen. xxxiv. 14.)

Ver. 2. *For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons; so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands.*] They are called a *holy seed*, because of the covenant of God with them, which made them a peculiar people, separated from all other nations.

Yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass.] The case was the more dangerous, because the great men of the nation were the principal offenders, (chap. x. 18. 23.) whose example the people followed without fear of punishment. It is likely, those princes who informed Ezra of this enormous practice had endeavoured to reform them, but could not, because they were opposed by as great men as themselves. But we must not cast away all hope, though we cannot presently reform men's lives; the time may come when it may be done.

Ver. 3. *And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle.*] Both his inner and upper garment; which was a token not only of very great grief and sorrow, but expressed his sense of the Divine displeasure. For the Jews rent their clothes when they apprehended God to be highly offended. (See Grotius upon Matt. xxvi. 65.) The Talmudists say, the high-priest rent his garments otherwise than other men, not above from the shoulders to the bottom, but below at his feet, and the skirts of his garments, upward.

And plucked off the hair of my head, and of my beard.] This was still a higher sign of exceeding great grief; for in ordinary sorrow they only neglected their hair, and let it hang down scattered in a careless manner; but this was used in bitter lamentations, even among the heathens. So Bochart observes out of many authors, particularly Homer, in several places. For example, speaking of Ulysses and his companions bewailing the death of Elpenor, he saith, Odyss. x.

Ἑζόμενοι δ' ἐνταῦθα γόων, τίλλοντο τε χαίτας.

They sitting down there howled and plucked off their hairs. (See Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. 35.) To shave the head or the beard was another thing; which the law forbade the Jews in their mourning for the dead, because it was a custom of their idolatrous neighbours, whose manners he would not have them imitate.

And sat down astonied.] With amazement that they should be so ungrateful to God, who had delivered them from captivity, and with an apprehension of their danger, there being so open a breach of the Divine law, which had formerly proved their ruin.

Ver. 4. *Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel.*] Which it is likely he read to them, and told them the importance of them.

Because of the transgression of those that had been carried away.] Into Babylon, but now were returned to their own land, little or nothing amended, either by their banishment or their restoration. He speaks not of those who were lately come back with him, but of those who came back with Zerubbabel, and of their children.

And I sat astonied until the evening sacrifice.] When the people used to meet together to worship God.

Ver. 5. *And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness.*] Wherein he had sat ever since he heard of their foul transgression.

And, having rent my garment and my mantle.] He mentions that again, because he still continued and appeared in a mournful condition.

I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God.] But put himself now into the posture of an humble supplicant to the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 6. *And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.*] The sum of his confession and deprecation is this, which it may be useful to represent at once: That he was confounded when he thought of the greatness of their sins, which were ready to overwhelm them, and of the boldness and insolence of them beyond all measure; and that, though they had seen the Divine vengeance upon their forefathers (from whom they derived this impious disposition) in so terrible a manner, that they had not yet worn off the marks of his displeasure, (ver. 6, 7.) He had begun indeed to shew favour unto them; (ver. 8.) but this so much the more aggravated their wickedness, in that not very many years after he had been so gracious as to deliver a small handful of them, and given them a footing again in their own land, and in the holy place, and thereby had made them joyful, and given them life, as it were, from the dead, by restoring them to their liberty, they returned to their old provocations, and forgot both that they had been bondmen, and that God had been so kind to them in that bondage, as to make those whom they served to pity them, and give them leave to go to their own land, and build the house of their God, (ver. 8, 9.) What shall any one say for such a wretched people as this, (ver. 10.) who had no regard to their prophets, nor to Moses himself, who had charged them to have nothing to do with the people of Canaan, whom he intended to destroy, because they had defiled that land, but to separate themselves from them, and seek to root them out, which was the way to plant themselves firmly there for ever, (ver. 11, 12.) Can we expect less than utter destruction of this small remnant, when, after all the punishments he hath inflicted upon us for our sins, and his ceasing to punish us, and rescuing us in this manner from our captivity, we return to those sins which are so odious to him, because so expressly against his commandments? (ver. 13, 14.) if he deal so with us, we must acknowledge the justice of his proceedings. For when we remain a monument of his mercy, who are rescued (as is apparent) from our bondage, we are notwithstanding here before him in our offences so guilty, that we have nothing to plead for ourselves; we are not able to say one word to excuse our detestable ingratitude.

There cannot be a more pathetical supplication than this, taken altogether; several phrases of which it may be fit to explain.

For our iniquities are increased over our head.] A metaphor taken from deep waters, wherein men are drowned and ready to perish.

And our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.] This signifies, as I have expressed it in my paraphrase, the high presumption and insolence of their wickedness.

Ver. 7. *Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day,* &c.] And therefore were punished unto this day, as the verse concludes. For many of their brethren were still in Babylon, or other countries, and they who returned were in danger to be undone for their continued sins.

Ver. 8. *And to give us a nail in his holy place.*] By *nails* or *pins* tents were fastened to the ground; therefore this signifies (as it is explained in the margin) *a settled abode,* after long banishment.

Ver. 9. *To give us a reviving.*] For Ezekiel compares them, when they were in Babylon, to the dry bones of dead men lying in their graves, (chap. xxxvii. 1, &c.)

And to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem.] From hence some infer, that the wall of Jerusalem, before Nehemiah came, was built as well as the temple. But the Hebrew word *gedar* should be otherwise translated; for it doth not properly signify a *wall,* but a *hedge* or *fence,* such as were made for the folds of sheep. Whereby Ezra expresses (as Huetius well notes) the singular care of God of them; who, being the *Shepherd of Israel,* had gathered together his scattered sheep, and brought them back into their ancient folds; wherein he preserved them safe, even when they had no wall to defend them, under the powerful protection of the king of Persia.

Ver. 10, 11, 12. These verses need no explication more than I have given in the paraphrase upon them.

Ver. 13. *Our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *hast withheld beneath our iniquities:* that is, forborne to punish. For as, when God will no longer forbear, he is said *to arise,* and take vengeance: so here (as Lud. de Dieu observes), on the contrary, he is said to *withhold himself below;* that is, not to arise, but to wait patiently for their amendment.

Ver. 14. *So that there should be no remnant nor escaping.*] Not one of such a wicked nation left remaining, but all utterly extirpated.

Ver. 15. *O Lord God of Israel, thou art righteous,* &c.] Either the word *righteous* here signifies *very merciful,* which was the reason they were not destroyed as they deserved; or the next words must be translated, not *for we remain,* but *though we remain escaped:* that is, God's justice will not let us escape, though, for the present, he forbear to punish us.

Behold, we are before thee in our trespasses; for we cannot stand before thee because of this.] As this cannot be denied, so it cannot be defended or excused: but we must yield up ourselves to bear the punishment unto which thou wilt condemn us.

Thus he concludes this admirable representation of their condition; which is as much as if he had said, Unless we reform, I know not how to beg for mercy, but we must be undone, and that most justly. For he gives them no hope, intending to put them into a great terror and affrightment, and see how that would work upon their hearts. And we find in the next chapter (ver. 2.) it had this effect; that one stood up and spake in the name of all the rest, that they would renew their covenant with God, and put away these abominations (which was effectual repentance), and then they hope God would be merciful unto them.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *NOW, when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men, and women, and children: for the people wept very sore.*] This prayer being made at the time of

the evening sacrifice, (as we read before, chap. ix. 5.) when many assembled to worship God; and being uttered with great passion, and the highest expressions of grief and sorrow, it moved those very much who were present; especially to see such a person as Ezra, a priest of God, and a great ruler under the king of Persia, so dejected, full of fear, confusion, and astonishment: the report of which was presently carried through all Jerusalem, and, perhaps, to neighbouring places: which brought together a great number of people of all sorts, men, women, and children; who all made great lamentation, looking upon themselves as under the high displeasure of the Almighty.

Ver. 2. *And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra.*] He seems to have been a good man, not being numbered among those that had trespassed; though several of his family were: even his own father, Jehiel, and several of his uncles, the sons of his grandfather Elam, (chap. v. 26.)

We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land; yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.] Ezra seemed to have given up all for gone, the more to awaken and affright them out of their sins; and therefore this person stands up to keep them from despair, and to propound a remedy, which he hoped would prove effectual. This he spake in the name of the rest; with the principal of which, perhaps, he had consulted.

Ver. 3. *Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law.*] That which was done contrary to the law of God was looked upon as null, and therefore these were accounted no marriages, and their children were no better than those we call bastards, and were not to be a part of the family, but to be put away with their mothers. St. Paul, indeed, allows the Corinthians to keep their pagan wives or husbands, because they had them before they were Christians; and there was no law of God or man against their marriages, as there was here a very strict law of God forbidding them. It may seem hard, indeed, that the children should be put away as well as their mothers; but they were unlawfully born, and must follow the condition of their mothers, and being educated in superstition, might corrupt other children: and therefore it was unlawful hereafter to marry with the children of these women, for they were reputed unclean, though their fathers were Israelites. Thus Maimonides reports the sense of the law to be, "A son begot of a gentile by an Israelite, is not to be accounted a son." If a son, indeed, were begot by a gentile of an Israelitish woman, the child was accounted an Israelite, for *partus sequitur ventrem.* But a child was of the same condition with his mother, and no regard was had to the father at all: so that if a child was begot by an Israelite, of a woman that was a slave, the child was a slave; but if, on the contrary, a woman of Israel had a child by one that was a slave, the child was as free as any other Israelite. (See Selden, in the place abovementioned, p. 616.)

But it is likely, when they put away these wives and children, they made some provision for them; for all was to be done according to the counsel of Ezra, and other good men, who feared God, and trembled to think his commandment was broke, and therefore judged they should be put away: but they prescribed the manner of it, how it should be done; which, it is probable, was not without some consideration of them.

Ver. 4. *Arise.*] For he lay prostrate upon the ground, (ver. 1.)

For this matter belongeth unto thee.] Who had the greatest skill in the law, and a full power from the king of Persia to see every thing done according unto it, (chap. vii. 14.) Now the renewing of the covenant for the observation of the law was to be done by the authority of the sovereign, as we see by the examples of Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah: and therefore it is a great mistake (as Mr. Thorndike observes) to imagine the people could renew it, or any part of it, without the consent of the sovereign. From whence we may conclude, that Ezra having such a commission as is mentioned chap. vii. was established by the sovereign power, with an authority to execute the law against all transgressors.

We also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it.] He promises his assistance, and the assistance of the principal persons: which might give him confidence of success.

Ver. 5. *Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel.*] All that were then present.

To swear, that they should do according to this word: and they sware.] He admonished them of their duty in the name of God, and then persuaded them to take a solemn oath (as they did) to put away their strange wives and children. For the commission given to Ezra supposing a full leave to the people to live according to the law, enabled him to govern them by it, yea, to swear them to observe it; for he might do whatsoever he found necessary to keep them in obedience.

Ver. 6. *Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God.*] This seems to signify, that he made them swear before he would rise up; that they, seeing his great humiliation before God, in the most doleful condition, might be moved to a more forward compliance.

And went into the chamber of Johanan the son of Eliashib.] That he might there consult with the princes and elders (ver. 8.) how to put this counsel in execution. This Eliashib was the high-priest who succeeded Joiakim, who succeeded Jeshua; who living a long time, his son Joiakim enjoyed the priesthood but a few years: and Eliashib lasted not long, but seems to have been dead (as Dr. Alix thinks) a little after the twentieth year of Artaxerxes Mnemon. (See Nehem. xii. 10.)

And when he came thither, he did eat no bread, nor drink water.] The word *when* is not in the Hebrew; therefore it had better be translated, *till* he came thither he had eaten nothing.

For he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away.] And in time of mourning and sorrow they were wont to fast.

Ver. 7. *And they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem.*] This proclamation was issued forth by the counsel of the princes and elders mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 8. *And that whosoever would not come within three days.*] This was a short time; but they were resolved to be

speedy in the business, lest they that propounded it should cool, or any thing occur to hinder it.

According to the counsel of the princes and the elders.] It was a great power which the king of Persia entrusted Ezra withal; which he managed very discreetly: for he would not make the following decree by his own sole authority, without the advice of the Sanhedrin; which is generally thought to be meant by the *princes and elders, viz.* the high court of Jerusalem; for they that are here called *princes,* are ver. 14. called *judges.*

All his substance should be forfeited.] In the Hebrew, *devoted.* Which signifies, that his goods were to be so forfeited, as to become sacred to God; and so incapable to be restored to the former owner, being put into the treasury of God's house.

And himself separated from the congregation of those that had been carried away.] Excluded from their society, and all the benefits of their religion. (See chap. vii. 26.) This was a punishment inflicted by all nations on those who would not conform themselves to the laws; as Grotius observes, de Imperio Sum. Potest. circa Sacra, cap. 9. p. 242. edit. Hagæ, and Selden, de Synedr. lib. i. cap. 7. p. 146, 147. 150.

Ver. 9. *Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days.*] And all they of other tribes complied also with this proclamation, as appears from ver. 25. but these are alone mentioned, because they were the chief, and the others were mixed with them.

It was the ninth month, and the twentieth day of the month.] About a quarter of a year after Ezra and his company came to Jerusalem.

And all the people sat in the street of the house of God.] Some take this to be the street which led to the temple; but it was rather the court of the people where they worshipped; which lying open, and not being yet girt about with a wall, (as we may guess from Nehem. ii. 8.) is called a *street.*

Trembling because of this matter.] The offence they had committed against God, and the consequence thereof.

And for the great rain.] Which they took as a token of God's anger against them, because of their sin.

Ver. 10. *And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel.*] When they should have been bewailing their former sins, which cast them out of their land, they added new transgressions when they were restored to it.

Ver. 11. *Now therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure.*] Confession of sin alone, without obedience to God's will and entire submission to him, is insufficient to reconciliation with him.

And separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.] There being no mention here made of their children, but only of their wives, it hath made some think that they kept their children, and by circumcision dedicated them to God, teaching them to renounce the infidelity of their mothers. For though Shechaniah propounded the putting away the children also, (ver. 3.) yet it may be thought that Ezra, to whom the matter was referred, mitigated the severity of it; because we do not read any thing of them, but only of the wives, when he came to order what should be done.

Ver. 12. *Then all the congregation answered, and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do.*] They saw no other remedy, and therefore submitted to what he required, as the pleasure of God.

Ver. 13. *But the people are many, and it is a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without, neither is this a work of one day or two: for we have many that have transgressed in this thing.*] They give very good reasons why for the present they should be dismissed, and more time taken to make inquisition after all the offenders, and examine them: and to shew they really desired the thing should be done, they propound a method, in the next verse, for the management of it.

Ver. 14. *Let now our rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us.*] They would have the great council at Jerusalem settled (for that is meant by *let the rulers of all the congregation stand),* and be ready to take cognizance of this matter; set days being appointed for the offenders in every city to be brought before them, by the elders and judges of those cities (that is, some delegates from the senate of that place), who should testify that they had seen the divorces made from their strange wives; for they were best able to know the circumstances of every person, and all his actions. And this they would have to continue, as long as there remained any thing to be done in this business; that the anger of God might be turned away from them. So De Dieu truly renders, I think, the last words of this verse:

How *elders* and *judges* differ, is a dispute among learned men. Sometimes they signify the same; but when they are mentioned together, it is reasonable to think their powers were distinct. And Campegius Vitringa seems to me to have given a good account of them; that by *elders* are meant the supreme senate in every city, who judged in all civil causes; and by *judges* (as distinct from the other) are meant judges of an inferior bench, by whom all money matters were tried. For though the senate might judge in all causes, yet it is reasonable to think they referred small matters to a lower court. This he gathers out of the Scriptures, and shews it is conformable to the traditions of the Talmudists. (De Synagoga Veter. lib. ii. cap. 9. p. 58. and see L'Empereur upon Bertram, de Repub. Jud. p. 395.)

Ver. 15. *Only Jonathan the son of Asahel, and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah, were employed about this matter.*] These were two priests, who were chosen to see all things done according to the foregoing resolution: that is, to appoint the time when the men of each city should come to bring in their names, and to acquaint the great council that these were elders and judges of the cities, who had seen their orders executed.

And Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite helped them.] They were both of them Levites, as I take it, who were to assist the forenamed priests in so great a work.

Ver. 16. *And the children of the captivity did so.*] They who came up out of Babylon to their own country are constantly called *the children of the captivity;* to put them in mind of their servitude, and of their freedom from it.

And Ezra the priest, with certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by their names, were separated.] Sequestered themselves from all other business, to attend wholly to the issue of this.

And sat down on the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter.] I cannot imagine what it was that they were set apart to examine, unless it was whether the persons beforenamed did their duty: for it is likely they brought the names of those who were found guilty (which here follow) unto Ezra and these assessors; who examined whether they found more than these, and of what quality and condition they were.

Ver. 17. *And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives by the first day of the first month.*] Three months therefore were spent in this disquisition, which shews it was very exact.

Ver. 18. *And among the sons of the priests there were found that had taken strange wives; namely, of the sons of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and his brethren; Maaseiah, and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Gedaliah.*] No wonder the people broke the law, when so many of those who were supposed to understand it best (*viz.* the priests) gave them such a foul example of lust and levity (as Pellicanus speaks), yea, some of the sons of the high-priest; which made the example more pernicious. Which may be the reason, as he conjectures, why Jeshua, the high-priest, was represented in a vision to Zechariah the prophet in *filthy garments;* because his family (sons and brethren) were defiled with this impurity. For, as Cicero saith, out of Plato, in a letter to Lentulus, "Tales plerumque cives reliqui esse solent, quales principes in civitate fuerint viri;" *such the rest of the citizens are wont to be, as the great men in the city are.*

Ver. 19. *And they gave their hands that they would put away their wives.*] Solemnly engaged, by making a covenant, or by an oath, that they would do what was enjoined. (See Ezek. xvii. 18.) But it may be expounded simply, *they put their hand to the business;* that is, did it effectually, and actually put away their strange wives.

And, being guilty, they offered a ram of the flock for their trespass.] More than that, they openly confessed their guilt, and made an offering for their offence; and hereby, perhaps, endeavoured to make some amends for their sin, by being the first that condemned themselves and reformed, and offered a trespass-offering: which, some think, all the rest made, after their example.

Ver. 20. *And of the sons of Immer; Hanani and Zebadiah.*

Ver. 21. *And of the sons of Harim; Maaseiah, and Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and Uzziah.*

Ver. 22. *And of the sons of Pashur; Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethaneel, Jozabad, and Elasah.*] All these were priests, who were very deep in this guilt, and being public persons, led others fearlessly into it.

Ver. 23. *Also of the Levites; Jozabad, and Shimei, and Kelaiah (the same is Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.*] There were not so many Levites, as there were priests, in the transgression.

Ver. 24. *Of the singers also; Eliashib: and of the porters; Shallum, and Talem, and Uri.*] These seem to have been more modest; there being but one offender found among the singers, and but three among the porters.

Ver. 25. *Moreover, of Israel: of the sons of Parosh; Ramiah, and Jeziah, and Malchiah, and Miamin, and Eleazar, and Malchijah, and Benaiah.*] The Hebrews call all those Israel, who were not Levites, or dedicated to the service of the temple. Whence the court of Israel was that place wherein the men of Israel worshipped, as they were distinguished from the priests and Levites.

Ver. 26. *And of the sons of Elam; Mattaniah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jeremoth, and Eliah.*] This Jehiel was Shechaniah's father, ver. 2. And yet, notwithstanding, though his father and kindred were guilty of this crime, which Ezra bewailed, he did not stick to speak his mind, how it should be punished. An admirable example of zealous integrity!

Ver. 27. *And of the sons of Zattu; Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabad, and Aziza.*] The two former, Parosh and Elam, with this Zattu, and all that follow to ver. 32. were of the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 28. *Of the sons also of Bebai; Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.*

Ver. 29. *And of the sons of Bani; Meshullam, Malluch, and Adaiah, Jashub, and Sheal, and Ramoth.*

Ver. 30. *And of the sons of Pahath-Moab; Adna, and Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezaleel, and Binnui, and Manasseh.*

Ver. 31. *And of the sons of Harim; Eliezer, Ishijah, Malchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon.*

Ver. 32. *Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.*] Now follows an account of those of the other tribe.

Ver. 33. *Of the sons of Hashum; Mattenai, Mattathah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.*

Ver. 34. *Of the sons of Bani; Maadi, Amram, and Uel.*

Ver. 35. *Benaiah, Bedeiah, Chelluh.*

Ver. 36. *Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib.*

Ver. 37. *Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasau.*

Ver. 38. *And Bani, and Binnui, Shimei.*

Ver. 39. *And Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah.*

Ver. 40. *Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai.*

Ver. 41. *Azareel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah.*

Ver. 42. *Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph.*

Ver. 43. *Of the sons of Nebo; Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jadau, and Joel, Benaiah.*] Some take Nebo for a place, of which the following families were citizens. But nothing of this is worth inquiring into.

Ver. 44. *All these had taken strange wives.*] There is no great number of them, in comparison with all that returned from captivity: but they seem to have been eminent persons, who would have spread the contagion, if a stop had not been put to it.

And some of them had wives by whom they had children.] There were some of them women that had brought them children, as the Vulgar translates it: which De Dieu shews is the plainest translation of these words. Here was a fair occasion to have spoken of the putting away their children as well as their wives, if that motion had been prosecuted: but nothing being here said of it, it makes me think, the observation is true which I made ver. 11. (See there.)

THE

BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.

THAT Nehemiah himself was the author of this book there can be no reasonable doubt; for he saith as much in the beginning of it, and all along relates what he did in his own person, for the rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem, and other things. He lived in the reign of Artaxerxes Mnemon, and came into Judea thirteen years after Ezra; unto whom the king of Persia gave great authority, as he had done to Ezra; God disposing his heart to have some Jews still about him in his court, for whom he had a kindness. After him, we do not find that the kings of Persia made any governor, but left things, it is probable, to the management of Jadua the high-priest, as Corn. Bertram thinks. (See de Republ. Judaica, p. 168. 173. 175.)

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *THE words of Nehemiah.*] Or, as Pellicanus translates it, *gesta* (for so the Hebrew word often signifies), the things which Nehemiah did.

The son of Hachaliah.] We are no where told who this was, nor of what tribe: Eusebius and others say of the tribe of Judah.

And it came to pass in the month Chisleu.] Which answers to our November, and part of December.

In the twentieth year.] Not of Artaxerxes, but of Nehemiah's life. (See chap. ii. 1.)

As I was in Shushan the palace.] In the region of Elymais, where the Persian kings kept their court in winter, and, from its pleasant and beautiful situation, was called by heathen writers *Susa*, which signifies a *lily;* or (as Athenæus saith, lib. xii.) *a rose.* Stephanus Byzantinus gives this account of it: It was called Σοῦσα, *ἀπὸ τῶν κρίνων ἃ πολλὰ ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ πεφύκει ἐκείνῃ, from the lilies that grew in abundance in that country.* Our Dr. Hyde hath a peculiar fancy, that the Persians called it *Sus*, which signifies *licorice;* but the Jews, to compliment Ahasuerus, called it in these books by this name, of a better sound, which signifies a lily, (Hist. Relig. Vet. Pers. cap. 35. p. 414.)

Ver. 2. *That Hanani, one of my brethren.*] And, I suppose, one of his family.

Came, he and certain men of Judah.] Came from Jerusalem to Shushan, either about business, or finding things very hard with them in Judea.

And I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.] He inquired of the condition wherein they were who returned out of Babylon into Judea, and whether Jerusalem were again become a flourishing city; as it was natural for him to do, especially being a man that loved his nation exceedingly.

Ver. 3. *And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province.*] So Judea is called, Ezra v. 8. (See there.)

Are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire.] They answer to both parts of this inquiry, that the people were in great distress and contempt by their insolent neighbours, wherewith they were surrounded, and Jerusalem lay without any walls or gates to defend it from their injuries. He knew very well that it was burnt by Nebuchadnezzar, and the walls beaten down; therefore their meaning is, that the walls and gates lay as the Chaldeans left them after that devastation, and were not repaired, though the temple was built again.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down.*] Upon the ground, as the manner was, in great sorrow, and, perhaps, in ashes.

And wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven.] With his face towards Jerusalem.

Ver. 5. *And said, I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven.*] In this style they all spake of God (as I observed, Ezra i.) after the captivity: signifying, as Conrad. Pellicanus observes, his sovereign dominion over all things that are contained within the compass of the heavens; the sun, moon, and stars, angels, and men, and all creatures.

The great and terrible God.] He is called *great*, not with respect to those petty gods that the heathen worshipped, who had no power at all, but with respect to all potentates either in heaven or in earth; and he is called *terrible*, because he is most humbly to be worshipped and reverenced by them all.

That keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him, and observe his commandments.] Next, he celebrates his faithfulness and truth in performing his promises to those that plainly declare they sincerely love him, by keeping his commandments. These he never fails to bless, because they are faithful to him.

Ver. 6. *Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.*] A deep sense of our own unworthiness, is a good qualification for the mercy we beg of God. This Nehemiah expresses very sensibly, both here and in the next verse.

Ver. 7. *We have dealt very corruptly against thee.*] Some of the Jews expound it, *We have despised and contemned thee.*

And have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.] But violated every one of them, to the high offence both of God and man.

Ver. 8. *Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations.*] Which they had seen fulfilled by the Assyrians and Chaldeans.

Ver. 9. *But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them.*] As he hoped some of them now did.

Though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.] This promise made by Moses he hoped God would fulfil, as he had done the threatening. It is a very pious observation of Dr. Jackson, (book iii. chap. 17.) that Nehemiah framed this prayer to God, and directed his enterprise for the restoration of Jerusalem, by the rule of Moses, mentioned in Deut. xxx. 1—4. and he plainly found the truth of that prediction in the readiness of the king of Persia to grant his petition: which confirmed his belief of what Moses there saith, although a prophet by profession dissuaded his enterprise, as likely to prove dangerous to his person, (chap. vi. 10, 11.)

Ver. 10. *Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.*] For nothing but the overruling power of God could have moved Cyrus to dismiss this whole nation out of captivity, and let them return to their own land. Or, as some think, he beseeches his compassion to them, because they were his peculiar people, redeemed out of the Egyptian bondage by many miracles.

Ver. 11. *O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name.*] He was not alone in this petition for mercy, but there were many others, who would worship him sincerely. So the words are in the Hebrew, *who will fear*, or *delight to fear, thy name.*

And prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day.] He prayed night and day, as he saith, ver. 6. But this was the prayer he made on that day when he went to wait upon the king.

And grant him mercy in the sight of this man.] He means the king, unto whom he pointed as it were with his finger, when he was going to attend upon him.

For I was the king's cup-bearer.] And perhaps, as he came into his presence, he secretly made this prayer to God in his own breast. Many of the Jews, by the singular favour of God, obtained considerable dignities in their captivity, as Daniel and his companions, Zerubbabel, and others: among whom was this good man, who was advanced to this place of *cup-bearer*, when he was but a youth, as our Rainoldus hath shewn, in his Censura, Lib. Apocryph. p. 1496.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king.*] Which was almost four months after he heard of the desolate condition wherein Jerusalem lay; in all which time, I suppose, his turn of waiting did not come: so that he wanted opportunity to speak unto the king. Or, as others will have it, he and his friends retired all this time, and spent it in fasting and prayers

That wine was before him.] He was at dinner or supper, and he called for wine; which was ready for him.

And I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king.] After the manner that the cup-bearer was wont to do.

Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence.] But always appeared cheerful and well-pleased, as young men so advanced use to be; and perhaps entertained the king at table with pleasant discourse.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick?*] There did not appear in his countenance any sign of indisposition of body.

This is nothing else but sorrow of heart.] Some inward trouble which grieved his spirit.

Then I was very sore afraid.] Lest the king should have a suspicion that he had any treasonable design in his thoughts, and intended to poison him, as it was easy for the cup-bearer to do: or rather, he was afraid he should not prevail in his suit; the court, it is likely, being full of such as would oppose it.

Ver. 3. *And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever.*] They that think he was afraid the king should be jealous of him, take the meaning to be, Let not the king fear I mean him any harm, but pray for his long life. But this was a common form of wishing the king long happiness, as appears from several places in Daniel, and hath no respect to that now mentioned.

Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?] Men naturally have a great love to the monuments of their ancestors, and are troubled to see the place where they are laid desolate. He did not speak a word of religion, or the Divine worship (as Grotius observes), for though Artaxerxes had a great affection for the Jews, and had their God in veneration (as appears by the edict he sent to Ezra thirteen years before), yet the company about him might not be so well disposed; but had the same affection and concern for their country and relations that he had, though they did not worship the same God.

Ver. 4. *Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request?*] This argues the king had a great kindness for him, that he so readily asked what he would have him do for him, to ease him of his trouble.

So I prayed to the God of heaven.] In his mind he silently beseeched God to guide his tongue, and to bow the king's heart to grant his request.

Ver. 5. *And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight.*] It was a bold request he was going to make, and therefore, before he mentions it, he submits it to the king's will and pleasure; and acknowledges he had no merit, but depended wholly upon the king's kindness; unto whom, perhaps, he might have performed some acceptable service.

That thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my father's sepulchres.] This might lead Eusebius and others to think Nehemiah was of the tribe of Judah, because his ancestors dwelt in Jerusalem, and were there buried.

That I may build it.] Build the walls of it, and make it a city again; whereas now it was but an open town.

Ver. 6. *And the king said unto me (the queen also sitting by him).*] Which was not usual, as historians say, but is

noted here as a thing extraordinary; because it is likely she favoured him, and promoted the grant of his request.

For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return?] This is another argument of the kindness he had for him; that he would not lose his service, nor be long without it.

So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.] He having told the king how long he desired to be absent from his duty, the king permitted him to go. How long that was, is not certain. But it is not likely it was for twelve years; (mentioned chap. v. 14. xiii. 6.) but rather he asked leave for a year, or perhaps for half so much: which made him so quick in dispatching the building of the wall, which he finished in two-and-fifty days, (chap. vi. 15.) After which, it is likely, he returned to Shushan, according to his appointment: and the king sent him back as his governor for twelve years; his presence being very serviceable, or perhaps necessary there, for the better ordering of that province, to the king's content.

Ver. 7. *Moreover, I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over, till I come into Judah.*] Give him a safe conduct, and furnish him with necessaries in his journey through their several provinces, where they had authority.

Ver. 8. *And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest.*] I suppose he means the forest of Lebanon; from whence he might be furnished with materials for his building. Here the word *pardes* signifies differently from what it doth in other places where it is used; which are but two besides this, Eccles. ii. 5. Cant. iv. 13. where it signifies a most pleasant garden, planted with all sorts of trees. And this forest, it seems, was so sweet and pleasant a place, that it deserved to be called by the same name.

That he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house.] The Vulgar Latin, by *the palace*, understands the *tower of the house;* and so Pellicanus, *portas templi, the gates of the temple.* For though the temple itself was built, yet the several courts seem not to have been walled about, nor the gates to the temple made. For, that it should be meant of the gates of the king's palace, which was near the temple, is altogether unlikely; there being no occasion to build a palace for the king of Persia; and no other king could be intended.

And for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into.] He desired leave to build a convenient house for himself, and for those that should be future governors.

And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.] The *hand* is sometimes taken (as Drusius observes) in an ill sense, for inflicting punishments, (Ruth i. 13. Jer. xv. 17.) for we strike others with the hand: and sometimes in a good sense, for helping and assisting others; for we extend favours to men with our hand. Thus he explains Psal. lxxxviii. 6. *cut off from thy hand;* that is, fallen from thy grace and favour. Pindar, he observes, thus uses the *hand of God* for his help and aid, Olymp. x. Θεοῦ σὺν παλάμᾳ, *by the hand of God;* which the scholiast interprets, Τῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ δυνάμει καὶ βοηθείᾳ, *by the power and help of God,* (Miscellanea, cent. i. cap. 85.) Thus Nehemiah is to be here understood; by the Divine favour, which inclined the king to do what he desired; which he calls God's *good hand.*

Ver. 9. *Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. (Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me).*] This the king did over and above what he desired; which procured him the greater respect from the governors, when they saw the care the king took for the safety of his person.

Ver. 10. *When Sanballat the Horonite.*] He seems to have been a petty prince of Moab; or some great man of that country. For Horonaim was an eminent city there, (Isa. xv. 5. xlviii. 3. 5. 34.)

And Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite.] He had been a slave of that country; but now advanced to some authority (perhaps to be a governor of a province) in these parts. The mention of these two great men shews, that the nations of Moab and Ammon were restored as well as the Jews, according to the Divine oracles; and were well known, that their destruction by the people of God might be the more observable; which was in the time of the Maccabees, who subdued those nations, according to the predictions of several prophets.

Heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.] With such authority from the king, and in such favour with him; as appeared by the letters he brought with him, and the guard that attended him, and the diligence of the several governors, through whose provinces he passed, to serve him.

Ver. 11. *So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.*] In which he rested himself, and received the visits of his friends, as Ezra had done, chap. viii. 32.

Ver. 12. *And I arose in the night.*] At the end of those days, it is likely, for he was resolved to make no delay.

I and some few men with me.] In whom he most confided.

Neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem.] He, being a courtier, had learned to hold his peace, and observe when it was a fit time to speak, and to whom. For he would not trust to every body, knowing there was much falseness in men's hearts; and secrecy was necessary to keep his designs from being betrayed.

Neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.] They all went on foot besides himself, that there might be the less noise, and no notice taken of what he did. What beast it was on which he rode, whether horse or mule, is not worth the inquiry: it is likely a mule, on which great men were wont to ride in those countries.

Ver. 13. *And I went out by night, by the gate of the valley.*] This valley is mentioned again, chap. iii. 13. but whereabout it was, is not remembered, but only that it lay before the well called the Dragon-well.

Even before the Dragon-well.] So called, either from the silent sliding of the water (as a serpent creeps) from the fountain Siloam; or, from a dragon (as Bochartus thinks) which haunted this place since the city lay desolate; for serpents delight in such places, especially near fountains of water.

And to the dung-port.] Out of which dung was wont to be carried out of Jerusalem, when it was before inhabited.

And viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire.] Try-

ing (as Conradus Pellicanus reasonably conjectures) whether the foundation was still sound, and would support a new wall laid upon it; or whether it was rotten, and must be laid again.

Ver. 14. *Then I went on to the gate of the fountain.*] Either of Siloe, or of Gihon. The wall was not so broken down, but some part of it still remained, and the place where the gates were was known. (See chap. iv. 6, 7. vi. 1.)

And to the king's pool.] Which is generally supposed to be that which Hezekiah made, (2 Chron. xxxii. 3. 30.)

But there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass.] Being full of rubbish, or of water.

Ver. 15. *Then went I up in the night by the brook.*] The same night he went by the brook Kidron.

And viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned.] He seems not to have gone round about the whole city; for there were several other gates which are not here mentioned: but having seen in what condition so many parts of the wall were, by which he judged of the rest, he turned back into the city, and entered at the same gate from whence he went out, (ver. 13.)

Ver. 16. *And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did.*] These rulers (Conradus Pellicanus thinks) were gentiles, for they are distinguished from the Jews in the following words, and from other rulers among them; and therefore were the officers of the kings of Persia, who had hitherto obstructed the work.

Neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers.] To any of the people of the Jews, for he had not so much as acquainted the priests, nor the nobles, nor any that had authority among them, with his intentions.

Nor to the rest that did the work.] Whom he intended hereafter to employ in the work: or, he told none of those that went with him to view the ruins what his design was.

Ver. 17. *Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire.*] Not long after he took a fit opportunity to represent to them their low condition; and to let them understand what he intended, and had power to undertake.

Come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach.] Exposed to the scorn and insults of the people round about them.

Ver. 18. *Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me.*] He acquainted them how favourable God had made the king to him, and all the discourse he had with him, and the commission which he had received from him.

And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.] When they heard of the favour of God, and of the king.

Ver. 19. *But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it.*] It is probable, Geshem was the king's deputy in Arabia, as the two former were in Moab and Ammon. But others take them rather to have been all three great men among the Samaritans.

They laughed us to scorn, and despised us.] As men that made a vain attempt, which they would never be able to accomplish.

And said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?] This was the most odious calumny they could invent, that they intended to set up for themselves, and be no longer the king's subjects.

Ver. 20. *Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us.*] We have authority for what we do from a higher power than yours.

Therefore we his servants will arise and build: but you have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.] Do not you trouble yourselves about this matter; who have no part, either in the labour, or the merit, or the fame of it: for you are not of our religion; and therefore may mind your own business, and not meddle with ours.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *THEN Eliashib the high-priest rose up, with his brethren the priests.*] Now he shews by whom, and in what order, the wall was built: which was begun by Eliashib, the grandchild of Jeshua the high-priest; (as we read chap. xii. 10.) who with his brethren gave a noble example, in being the first that went about the work, and built the gate here mentioned.

And they built the sheep-gate.] Which was at the south side of the city, in that part of the valley which looked towards the city of David and the temple. The sheep used to enter in here which were to be sacrificed; and therefore, I suppose, the priests undertook this part of the work as most proper for them. Dr. Lightfoot hath taken a great deal of pains to find in what quarter these gates were; to whom I refer the reader in his Chorog. Century of the Land of Israel, chap. 26.

They sanctified it, and set up the doors of it.] When they had completed it, they blessed it by solemn prayers, and perhaps by sacrifices; as the first-fruits of this pious work: for we do not read that any other part, but this which they built, was sanctified. Some think this was done because of the relation that this gate had to sacred uses; but it was rather such a ceremony as was imitated by other nations, when they begun their walls; which they commended to the protection of their gods. Some translate it, *they made it an excellent structure:* others, *they cleansed* it from the rubbish, and the profanation which the Babylonians had brought upon it; restoring it to its ancient splendour. But our translation, I think, is best; for it being the priest's work, it became them to bless and sanctify it.

Even unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel.] They sanctified the rest of the wall, which they built as far as the tower of Meah on one side, and the tower of Hananeel on the other. But Pellicanus thinks, that Meah is not the name of a tower, but signifies a hundred; and makes the sense to be, They not only built the sheep-gate, but a hundred cubits of the wall to a tower so far off from the gate, and also to the tower of Hananeel. This *sheep-gate* some think is the same with the Προβατικὴ, mentioned John v. 2. which being the first that was built by the priests of God, and particularly commended to his blessing, had that singular gift bestowed upon the neighbouring pool, that it should miraculously heal those that

first entered into it every day; and that from this time it had this virtue. Afterward they dedicated the whole wall, as we read chap. xii. 27.

Ver. 2. *And next unto him builded the men of Jericho. And next to them builded Zaccur the son of Imri.*] Whom some take for a principal person in Jericho.

Ver. 3. *But the fish-gate did the sons of Hassenaah build.*] This was a gate which looked towards the sea; from whence fish was wont to be brought, and sold here.

Who also laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.] They made a complete piece of work of this gate; to which they gave the last finishing; which was not done universally till after some time. (See chap. vi. 1. vii. 1.)

Ver. 4. *And next unto them repaired Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz. And next unto them repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabeel. And next unto them repaired Zadok the son of Baana.*] These repaired the wall till they came to the old gate; for there was no other gate till they came there.

Ver. 5. *And next unto them the Tekoites repaired.*] The people of the city of Tekoa carried on the wall with those three beforenamed.

But their nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord.] They were either proud, and would not stoop to this work; or they were negligent, and cared not whether it were done or not. By *their Lord* some understand the leader and head of the whole family, who was active in it; others Nehemiah; and some God himself, whose work this was; unto which, therefore, well-disposed persons, though ever so great, *put their necks;* that is, laboured hard, not refusing to carry burdens, &c.

Ver. 6. *Moreover the old gate repaired Jehoiada the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah.*] Some think it was called *the old gate,* because there were some remains of it from the times of the Jebusites, yea, of Melchisedec, by whom it was at first built.

They laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, and the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.] They imitated those mentioned ver. 3. as several others did, (ver. 13—15.)

Ver. 7. *And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, unto the throne of the governor on this side the river.*] These, and they that follow in the next verse, repaired as far as to the wall of the broad street. And among these was a great man, whose name was *Chisse* (so Pellicanus translates the word we render *the throne),* a petty prince in Syria, under the king of Persia; who, being proselyted, joined in this work.

Ver. 8. *Next unto him repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, of the goldsmiths. Next unto him also repaired Hananiah the son of one of the apothecaries; and they fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall.*] These were two eminent persons; one among the goldsmiths, the other among the perfumers; who did not build the wall, because it was very good in this place; but only fortified it, and made it strong. Near to this was the broad street of the city, where there was a market-place for the selling of commodities.

Ver. 9. *And next unto them repaired Rephaiah the son of Hur, the ruler of the half-part of Jerusalem.*] There were two principal overseers of the work, on the two sides of the city: this, as some think, in that part which was in the tribe of Judah; and the other, (ver. 12.) in that which was in the tribe of Benjamin. (See chap. iv. 19.)

Ver. 10. *And next unto them repaired Jedaiah the son of Harumaph, even over against his house. And next unto him repaired Hattush the son of Hashabniah.*] The first of these repaired *against his house;* because that lay most convenient for him to bestow his cost upon it; and thereby he consulted his own safety, together with the public good.

Ver. 11. *Malchijah the son of Harim, and Hashub the son of Pahath-Moab, repaired the other piece, and the tower of the furnaces.*] The words we translate *the other piece,* are the *second measure.* But what the *first* was we cannot tell, and therefore are ignorant of the *second:* perhaps, half as much as the former had repaired. *The tower of the furnaces* is mentioned again, chap. xii. 38. as near to this place. (See there.)

Ver. 12. *And next unto him repaired Shallum the son of Halohesh, the ruler of the half-part of Jerusalem.*] There was another part mentioned before, ver. 9.

He and his daughters.] Who are generally thought either to be heiresses, or rich widows; who piously contributed to this work.

Ver. 13. *The valley-gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants of Zanoah; they built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thousand cubits on the wall unto the dung-gate.*] This was called the valley of Jehoshaphat, which lay between the city and the Mount of Olives; through which the brook Kidron ran, from the north to the south. The gate which led to this was the east gate; which was repaired, together with more of the wall than any others repaired, by these persons here mentioned.

Ver. 14. *But the dung-gate repaired Malchiah the son of Rechab, the ruler of part of Beth-haccerem: he built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.*] He was a great man, who commanded part of a city, which had its name from the vineyards that were there, as Pellicanus probably conjectures.

Ver. 15. *But the gate of the fountain repaired Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, the ruler of part of Mizpah; he built it, and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and the wall of the pool of Siloah by the king's garden.*] This man also was a great benefactor, being a considerable person, as the former was.

And unto the stairs that go down from the city of David.] Which stood upon the high hill of Zion; from whence they descended by steps to Jerusalem.

Ver. 16. *After him repaired Nehemiah the son of Azbuk.*] Of the same name, but not of the same family with the writer of this book.

The ruler of the half-part of Beth-zur, unto the place over against the sepulchres of David.] Where David had a sepulchre for himself, and for his successors in the kingdom.

And to the pool that was made.] This is supposed to be the place mentioned 2 Kings xx. 20.

And unto the house of the mighty.] There the king's guard were lodged, who were all mighty men of valour. But we can only guess at the sense of these words.

Ver. 17. *And after him repaired the Levites, Rehum the son of Bani. Next unto him repaired Hashabiah, the ruler of the*

half-part of Keilah, in his part.] In his street (as Pellicanus renders it), or with the men of his part or country where he was ruler.

Ver. 18. *After him repaired their brethren.*] Other Levites.

Bavai the son of Henadad, the ruler of the half-part of Keilah.] Of the other half of the city.

Ver. 19. *And next to him repaired Ezer the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah, another piece.*] Or rather, *one piece;* because *another* is mentioned in the next verse.

Over against the going up to the armoury.] There is such a place mentioned in the forest, (Isa. xxii. 8.) which Solomon it is likely made; but this was in Jerusalem, then well known, and one of the most noted places in the city, because here all warlike provision was laid up.

At the turning of the wall.] At some corner, where the wall turned another way.

Ver. 20. *After him Baruch the son of Zabbai earnestly repaired the other piece.*] With great zeal, as if he was ashamed the work went on so slowly; or that they should repair only one piece, and leave the other undone.

From the turning of the wall.] From the place beforementioned.

Unto the door of the house of Eliashib the high-priest.] Who had the honour to begin this good work, (ver. 1.)

Ver. 21. *After him repaired Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz, another piece, from the door of the house of Eliashib, even to the end of the house of Eliashib.*] He carried on the work from the place where the other left off, from the entrance of the house to the end of it; which being the house of a great man, we may suppose very large.

Ver. 22. *And after him repaired the priests, the men of the plain.*] Near to Jerusalem, chap. xii. 28.

Ver. 23. *After him.*] There was some eminent priest who engaged others with him, as Eliashib had done his brethren, (ver. 1.)

Repaired Benjamin and Hashub over against their house. After him repaired Azariah the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, by his house.] These were some of the tribe of Benjamin, settled in Jerusalem, who repaired over against their own doors, as far as their houses extended.

Ver. 24. *After him repaired Binnui the son of Henadad, another piece, from the house of Azariah unto the turning of the wall, even unto the corner.*] This, in all likelihood, was another of the tribe of Benjamin, who carried on the wall from the place where Azariah ended.

Ver. 25. *Palal the son of Uzai, over against the turning of the wall, and the tower which lieth out from the king's high house, that was by the court of the prison. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh.*] There are so many *turnings of the wall* mentioned, that none can now give an account of them, nor of the *king's high house* (which some take to have been a house built for that prospect). The *court of the prison* is often mentioned in the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

Ver. 26. *Moreover, the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel, unto the place over against the water-gate towards the east, and the tower that lieth out.*] Not only the priests and Levites, but the meanest persons that belonged to the house of God, inferior officers, contributed to this work. And the *water-gate,* it is likely, was that at which these lower ministers brought in water for the use of the temple: near to which Ophel was, which seems to have been a great tower, (2 Chron. xxvii. 3.) *The tower which lay out* I can give no account of; but the next verse tells us where it was.

Ver. 27. *After them the Tekoites repaired another piece, over against the great tower that lieth out, even unto the wall of Ophel.*] The people of this place are mentioned before, ver. 5. whose nobles, perhaps, who at the first withdrew themselves from this work, lent their help, now that they saw every body engaged in it.

Ver. 28. *From above the horse-gate repaired the priests, every one over against his house.*] It was called the *horse-gate,* as some think, because they went through it to water their horses at the brook Kidron: or, there was a place for the standing of horses.

Ver. 29. *After them repaired Zadok the son of Immer over against his house. After him repaired also Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the east gate.*] It is uncertain whether he speaks of the east gate of the city, or of the temple: but whichsoever it was, it seems to have been a principal gate, and therefore committed to the custody of an eminent person.

Ver. 30. *After him repaired Hananiah the son of Shelemiah.*] Some copies read *after me;* as if Nehemiah in modesty concealed his own work, and only intimated that he did something himself: but ours is the right reading.

And Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, another piece.] He had more zeal, it is likely, than his elder brethren, and therefore is here particularly noted as a worthy man, of less estate, but of more virtue than the rest of his family.

After him repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah over against his chamber.] Which he had, I suppose, in the temple.

Ver. 31. *After him repaired Malchiah the goldsmith's son, unto the place of the Nethinims, and of the merchants, over against the gate Miphkad, and to the going up of the corner.*] It seems the Nethinims had a part of the city assigned them for their habitation, which was among the merchants: near to whom there was a house of correction (as some think the word *Miphkad* imports), where they visited (as the Hebrews speak), that is, punished, men for their faults.

Ver. 32. *And between the going up of the corner unto the sheep-gate.*] There they began, (ver. 1.) and there they ended: which shews that they left not off till they had compassed the whole city with a wall, and that it was but one (as Pellicanus observes), not two or three, which was sufficient to preserve them from the incursions of their enemies.

Repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants.] Some will have these to have been their names, taken at first from their professions.

No man can think (as the same Pellicanus notes) that the names of them that repaired the walls of Jerusalem were set down so diligently, as here they are, without some rational cause for it. And the reason was, because it was a work of great virtue to love and to do honour to their country; a work of piety to restore the holy city; a religious thing to defend the true worshippers of God, that they might serve him in quietness and safety; and a courageous thing, in the midst of so many enemies, to go on with this work in a pious confidence of the power of God to support them. The names, therefore, of such persons deserved to be preserved and transmitted to future generations, as a most noble example to them.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *BUT it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews.*] Though he boiled inwardly with anger, yet he seemed to contemn that which he feared, and scoffed at the Jews.

Ver. 2. *And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria.*] By *his brethren* are meant the commanders-in-chief in those parts; who mustered, I suppose, all their forces in Samaria, as if they intended to invade the Jews, and hinder the work they were about.

And said, What do these feeble Jews?] But first he exposes them to scorn, as a people that had no power.

Will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day?] He heard there were so many hands at work, as if they meant to build the wall, and keep a feast, and dedicate it by sacrifice, all in one day; and so takes an occasion to laugh at their foolish diligence, and the haste they made, as if they could begin and end at once.

Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burnt?] He represents it as impossible they should repair the wall, unless they could make the broken pieces, which were also mouldered, to become whole stones again.

Ver. 3. *Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him.*] One of *his brethren*, mentioned in the verse beforegoing.

And he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.] Foxes abounded in that country, especially about Jerusalem, since its devastation, (Lament. v. 18.) At the wall of which Tobiah jeered, saying, It was so low that those creatures might leap over it; and so weak, that they might throw it down, or break through it. This opinion, it is likely, made them neglect to interrupt them in their building till it was too late.

Ver. 4. *Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn their reproach upon their own head.*] He beseeches God to take such notice of their scoffs, that, as they now despised his people, so they themselves might be laughed to scorn, and had in derision.

And give them for a prey in the land of captivity.] And carry them far away from the captives into some other land.

Ver. 5. *And cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee.*] This seems something harsh, that he should pray they might never be forgiven; but he spake by the spirit of prophecy, as David did in Psal. cix. they being of such a malicious and implacable spirit against God and his people, that he foresaw they would never be capable of his mercy, but be utterly destroyed by him. And, indeed, there were several oracles upon which this prayer was grounded, and it was confirmed by the destruction of these nations by the Maccabees and their successors.

For they have provoked thee to anger before the builders.] By scoffing at them, and discouraging them in the work, which was for God's honour, and for the safety of his people. And therefore it highly provoked him that these men should set themselves with such spite against it.

Ver. 6. *So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof.*] Till it was raised to the half of its height.

For the people had a mind to work.] Were very much set upon it, and went about it cheerfully, notwithstanding their jeers and contempt.

Ver. 7. *But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites.*] Some of these people were never mentioned before; and therefore this shews, that Sanballat endeavoured to draw all the neighbouring nations into a confederacy against the Jews.

Heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped.] It seems the Chaldeans had not entirely thrown down the walls, but contented themselves to make wide breaches and gaps in them.

Then they were very wroth.] So incensed, that it moved them to take the following resolution.

Ver. 8. *And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it.*] The last words in the Hebrew are, *to make an error in it;* that is, to put them by the work, or to make them not know which way to turn themselves.

Ver. 9. *Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.*] They committed themselves to the protection of the Almighty, whose servants they were, keeping a constant watch, that they might not be surprised, for they knew them to be very vigilant to do mischief.

Ver. 10. *And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed.*] They had wrought so long and so hard, that some of the Jews told him the labourers were quite spent.

And there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.] There was still a great deal of rubbish remaining, more than they were able to remove; and therefore they must desist, at least for the present, from building the wall.

Ver. 11. *And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.*] They pretended also to have intelligence, that the forenamed enemies did not intend to appear with an army before Jerusalem, but to march so secretly, that they should have no notice of their approach till they saw them in the city, and put them to the sword.

Ver. 12. *And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times.*] But there were some Jews who were neighbours to that people that found out their designs, and came to inform them of it a great many times: for *ten times* signify a great many in Scripture. (See Gen. xxi. 7.)

From all places whence ye shall return unto us they will be upon you.] The words in the Hebrew are no more than these, *from all places whence they return unto us* (there being no words answering to those, *they will be upon you*); if any words be added, they should be *they informed us of our danger.*

Ver. 13. *Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall.*] Where the wall was not yet raised to its just height, (ver. 6.)

And on the higher places.] Where it was completely finished.

I even set the people after their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows.] With such weapons as they were furnished withal.

Ver. 14. *And I looked, and rose up.*] When he saw how they were disposed, he rose up and made this speech to them.

And said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses.] All was at stake, therefore he exhorts them to be valiant, trusting in God, who was stronger than all their enemies.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.*] When they heard their plot was discovered, and they had no hope to surprise us, but we were ready to receive them, they laid aside their designs, and we went on with ours.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons.*] But, lest their enemies should imagine they were secure, and had quite laid aside their arms, and so might resume their enterprise, he ordered, that while half of his own servants wrought upon the walls, another half should stand by with weapons ready to put into their hands, if there were occasion.

And the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.] The rest, I suppose, followed this example; and the rulers stood at their backs to encourage them, and put them forward in their work.

Ver. 17. *They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.*] That is, they were well appointed for both, to build and to fight. For it is a figurative speech; it not being possible for them to work if both hands had not been at liberty. And the next verse saith, their swords were by their sides.

Ver. 18. *For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded.*] This expounds the foregoing words.

And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.] To give the alarm, if need should be, and so call them unto him for orders. It appears by this, that he was continually with them while they wrought.

Ver. 19. *And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another.*] In several quarters of it, some of which were at a good distance from others.

Ver. 20. *In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us.*] For while they lay scattered, they could not oppose their enemies successfully; but being united with him, and under his direction and conduct, he bids them not doubt of God's protection.

Ver. 21. *So we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears.*] For the use of every man, if there should be occasion.

From the rising of the morning till the stars appeared.] All the day long, from break of day till it was quite night.

Ver. 22. *Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour in the day.*] It is likely, that many of them at night went into the suburbs, or neighbouring villages, and lodged there; but he would have them all lodge in Jerusalem, for the greater security of the city in the night, and that they might be more ready to work in the morning.

Ver. 23. *So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes.*] He, and his kindred, and family, and guard, gave them a noble example; for none of them put off their clothes when they went to bed, but lay in them, that they might be more ready to fight if any assault was made on the city.

Saving that every one put them off for washing.] These last words are variously expounded by interpreters, and the fewest approve of our translation. Rabbi Solomon repeats the word *not; They put not off their clothes, no, not for washing.* The Hebrew word is *water,* which some here take for *the water of the feet,* as the Hebrews speak, and make the sense to be, *no, not when they made water.* De Dieu, quite contrary, *except only to make water.* But it is a more simple sense, *Every man had his sword ready when he made water.* So the word *schicho* may be rendered, as we translate it in the margin, *every man went with his weapon for water.* But Grotius follows our translation, and takes these words for an exception to what went before: and the plain meaning is, they put off their garments only for those ablutions, which the law required, or custom had introduced.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AND there was a great cry of the people, and of their wives, against their brethren the Jews.*] At this time there was a grievous complaint of the poor against their rich brethren: for though they were cured of their idolatry by their captivity, yet they were not cured of their other sins, but loved strange women, as we read before in the book of Ezra; and were so covetous, that they oppressed the poor and needy; and this at a time when their enemies threatened the destruction of them all. But this was the more heinous crime, because the twentieth of Artaxerxes, wherein this was done, began about the end of a sabbatic year (as Dr. Alix observes), which raised the cry of the poor to a greater height against their creditors, who exacted their debts of them contrary to the law, (Deut. xv. 3.) which was read to them publicly in such a year, (Deut. xxxi. 12.) For it was of such moment, that it moved Nehemiah to make the Jews take a solemn oath that they would observe this law, and release all the debts that were owing to them in this year, (chap. x. of this book, ver. 31.)

Ver. 2. *For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, are many.*] They had numerous families.

Therefore we take up corn for them, that we may eat, and live.] They had no way to keep them from starving, but by buying corn for them at unreasonable rates; which the

rich demanded when they saw them in such necessity, that they must pay what they asked or die.

Ver. 3. *Some also there were that said, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, because of the dearth.*] There had been a great scarcity for want of rain; which God denied, because they minded building their own houses more than his, as we read Haggai i. 9—11. Now the effects of such droughts caused among the people great scarcity of provisions, in which the rich had no compassion on their poor brethren, but forced them to sell all they had for bread.

Ver. 4. *There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards.*] They do not complain that they were constrained to borrow money, but that they could not have it without taking it up on usury, as it appears from ver. 7. which was contrary to the law of God; (Exod. xxii. 25, &c.) otherwise they could not have paid their tribute to the king of Persia, who laid it upon all his subjects every where, (Ezra iv. 13. vii. 24.)

Ver. 5. *Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children.*] They represent very pathetically that there was no difference between them and their brethren, but that they were poor, and the other rich; for they were all Jews of the same stock, from the same original, all alike circumcised; so that by nature, and by the favour of God, they were every way the same, and therefore ought to enjoy the same freedom that they and their children did.

And, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants.] In case of great necessity this was lawful, Exod. xxi. 7. But they were very void of compassion, who forced their brethren to do a thing so much against nature.

And some of our daughters are brought unto bondage already.] Some of the tender sex, who were least able to endure hardship, they had been already forced to part withal.

Neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards.] Their condition was very lamentable, for none would lend them money freely; and to pay their usury, they were forced to sell their children, whom they had not power to redeem, because their lands were mortgaged to those oppressors: so that they were in a worse condition than when they were in Babylon, being not in so much danger to be devoured by their cruel neighbours (who sought their destruction), as by their barbarous friends and neighbours.

Ver. 6. *And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words.*] It could not but move his indignation, to hear them complain one of another; but much more when he heard the reason.

Ver. 7. *Then I consulted with myself.*] It is not safe to do any thing in a fit of anger; but coolly to consider and deliberate what is fit to be done.

And I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers.] Whom he did not fear to reprove severely, when he found them in fault.

And said unto them, You exact usury every one of his brother.] And that a very heavy one; such as was used among the heathen, called *centesima*, the *hundredth part*, (ver. 11.) which was twelve per cent.

And I set a great assembly against them.] That he might put them to the greater shame. For this *great assembly* I take to be the whole body of the people, with their judges, as Bertram observes, de Repub. Jud. p. 171. (See Ezra x. 8. 14.)

Ver. 8. *And I said unto them, We, after our ability.*] Either he speaks of himself in the plural number, as great men are wont to do; or he means, he, with Ezra, and such-like lovers of their country, had done what follows.

Have redeemed our brethren the Jews, who were sold unto the heathen.] Had done their utmost to deliver the Jews out of the captivity of Babylon; whereby they were restored both to their own country, and to their liberty. And perhaps they had with their own money procured the freedom of such as were slaves to some of the Babylonians; who would not part with them, when they desired to go to Jerusalem, unless they were paid the price of them, being their own proper goods.

And will you even sell your brethren?] For that they might expect, since their parents could not redeem them.

Or shall they be sold unto us?] Must I redeem them out of your hands, as I have helped to redeem some out of Babylon?

Then they held their peace, and found nothing to answer.] There was such an express law of God against them, (Deut. xxiii. 19.) that they had nothing to reply; and therefore were silent, because they could neither deny the fact, nor were able to justify it.

Ver. 9. *And I said, It is not good that ye do.*] This encouraged him to proceed in his reprehension; and to tell them that they had committed a great sin. For that is the meaning of *it is not good:* a soft form of speech, used when they mean it is very bad; Prov. xvi. 29. and many other places.

Ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God.] Being so lately delivered by him from oppression, and having so many enemies about them, to observe what they did.

Because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?] Who might justly upbraid them with inhumanity; and thereupon reproach their religion.

Ver. 10. *I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn.*] As a reward of their care and diligence in the public service.

I pray you, let us leave off this usury.] But what then would become of the poor people, who were too much oppressed already? And therefore he beseeches them to leave off this usury; seeing he and his rather waved their own right, than demanded any thing for their labour and toil in the discharge of their offices.

Ver. 11. *Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive-yards, and their houses.*] Though they had lent money upon the security of those lands, &c. yet, since they were the possessions of the poor, who were reduced to great straits, and could not pay them, he beseeches them to restore them, and that without delay.

Also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them.] The hundredth part was an usury then practised in those countries, as afterward among the Romans; which was the hundredth part of what was lent every month; so that every year they paid the eighth part of the principal: thus it is commonly said. But Salmasius hath observed, that in the eastern

countries there were never any laws to determine what interest should be taken for money lent for a day, or a week, or a month, or a year (for there were all these sorts of usury), but every one was left to demand what he pleased; and according to what was agreed they paid for what was borrowed: therefore we cannot certainly tell whether this was heavy or light usury. But among the Greeks and Romans there was a measure set (as he notes in his book de Fœnore Trapezitico), and Ἑκατοστή, the hundredth part, was among the Greeks the lowest usury; though it was more or less in several ages, as he there shews, and in his book de Modis Usurarum; where he notes the difference between the Greeks and Romans in this matter, cap. 6. p. 230, &c.

Ver. 12. *Then said they, We will restore them.*] They readily consented to restore their lands, vineyards, and houses.

And will require nothing of them.] Demand no interest for the money.

So will we do as thou sayest.] They so entirely agreed to what he desired, that it made a kind of jubilee among the people: for, no doubt, there was great joy when this was done.

Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise.] While they were in this good mind he called the priests, and made them swear in their presence, who were witness to it, that they would keep their word.

Ver. 13. *Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied.*] He prayed God that they might lose all they had, who did not make good their promise; and predicted their poverty by an external sign, as the manner of the prophets was to do. For, folding up the skirts of his garment, and then scattering them abroad, he represented how God would cast them out of their possessions, and the fruit of their labours, who did not observe this oath.

And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the Lord.] God so wrought upon the people's hearts, that even they who had been guilty of taking usury, consented to this imprecation, and wished the same mischief to themselves, if they did not do as he required. And, which was more, they praised God, who had given them such a governor, and put into them this good mind, to submit unto him.

And the people did according to this promise.] Made an immediate restitution of what had been mortgaged to them, and released them of their obligation for money.

Ver. 14. *Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even unto the two-and-thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that is, twelve years.*] All which time he was not in Judea; but he ordered him, who was his deputy, in his absence, to do as he did.

I and my brethren.] He and his domestics; or those who, as I said, he deputed in his room.

Have not eaten the bread of the governor.] Taken the allowances which were made to the governors, appointed by the kings of Persia, to provide them a table. Which it was but reasonable they should have; that they who did the public business should be maintained at the public charge. But he would not do that which was lawful, when he saw it would be burdensome to his countrymen, and therefore lived upon his own estate which he had in Judea, and upon the salary which he had as cup-bearer to the king of Persia; in whose service, it is likely, he had enriched himself before he came to Jerusalem.

Ver. 15. *But the former governors, that had been before me, were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver.*] Who these were he doth not say, but spares their names, it being sufficient to declare he did not imitate them, whosoever they were. Nor doth he relate how much bread and wine they exacted, but only that they had besides forty shekels of silver every day, I suppose, to make provision of other things for their table. But from these words Scaliger concludes, that before Nehemiah and Ezra there had been other governors placed over them by the kings of Persia. And if we may believe the Jewish Annals, compiled by the author of Seder Olam Zuta, the first governor, Zerubbabel, returning from Jerusalem to Babylon, died there; and was succeeded in his government of Judea by his son Meshullam, and after him by his grandson Chananiah.

Yea, even their servants bare rule over the people.] They connived at the exactions of their servants, who demanded what they pleased.

But so did not I, because of the fear of God.] It was not vain-glory that made him thus generous, but his love to God, and to his country: for he loved religion better than riches; and took not his own due, that the people might serve God more cheerfully.

Ver. 16. *Yea, also I continued in the work of this wall.*] And all this while he took as much pains as any of them, in building the wall of Jerusalem.

Neither bought we any land.] Which they might have done of the poor at an easy price, if they had desired wealth; but they would not make any advantage to themselves of other men's necessities.

And all my servants were gathered thither unto the work.] They were constantly employed also in the same work, and received no pay for their labour, though it could not be done without neglect of his private business.

Ver. 17. *Moreover, there were at my table a hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, besides those that came unto us from among the heathen that are about us.*] This was the greater expense, because they were not inferior people that were entertained at his table, but persons of quality among the Jews and strangers who came about business, and, perhaps, brought him intelligence concerning the state of the neighbouring heathen, and of their designs.

Ver. 18. *Now, that which was prepared for me daily was one ox, and six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine.*] This shews that he kept a noble house, as we speak; and, indeed, it was very becoming a great man to entertain great persons, both of his own country and strangers, with magnificence.

Yet for all this required I not the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people.] They could not without great hardship maintain themselves.

Ver. 19. *Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.*] He expected his reward only from God, who he hoped would shew him the same kindness that he had done for his people. There is

no reason to think he speaks too much of himself, and his own worthy acts; for it was no more than was necessary in such a state of things, that posterity might be furnished with an excellent example of extraordinary virtue; and no more than St. Paul was constrained to speak of himself in his Epistle to the Corinthians; of whom he would take nothing, that he might stop the mouths of false apostles, and covetous people. (See chap. xiii. 22.)

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies.*] Mentioned chap. iv. 7.

Heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates).] Not upon all of them, though some had been set up at the charge of particular persons, (chap. iii. 3. 6. 13, &c.)

Ver. 2. *That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together.*] Either to consult about the common good of their several provinces wherein they governed (of which perhaps they pretended they were to give an account to their master), or to establish a friendship and good correspondence one with another, or some such purpose.

In some one of the villages in the plain of Ono.] A place in the tribe of Benjamin, chap. xi. 35. 2 Chron. viii. 12. (See there.)

But they thought to do me mischief.] He would not trust them, suspecting they intended to kill him; of which, perhaps, he had received some private intelligence.

Ver. 3. *And I sent messengers unto them, saying.*] He shewed so much respect to them, as not to return an answer by those whom they sent to him, but dispatched a messenger of his own to them.

I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?] He did not know any business they could have with him of such great concernment, as that which he had in hand; and therefore he would not put a stop to it to confer with them. This was one reason, but not the only one for his refusal.

Ver. 4. *Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort.*] They were restlessly bent upon his destruction, and therefore importuned him often to give them a meeting. For they thought, I suppose, if they did not take this opportunity to overthrow what he had done, before he set up the doors upon the gates, they should never be able to enter the city afterward.

And I answered them after the same manner.] He still persisted constantly to give no other answer; whereby they might understand he was resolved to finish the work.

Ver. 5. *Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me, in like manner, the fifth time.*] There is no mention of Tobiah in all the foregoing negotiation, and now Geshem is left out; and Sanballat alone sent him a message, pretending, it is likely, special respect and kindness unto him, in informing him what was laid to his charge. Certain it is, he was the great contriver and manager of all the mischief intended against him.

With an open letter in his hand.] Before the message was delivered by word of mouth, but now by letter; yet open, that every one might see of what he was accused.

Ver. 6. *Wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen.*] The report was spread among the nations thereabout.

And Gashmu.] The same, I suppose, with Geshem, mentioned ver. 1.

Saith it.] Undertakes to prove it.

That thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words.] That he might establish his authority, and reign over them, according to the common report.

Ver. 7. *And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah.*] This was cunningly suggested, that he might not think there was any prophet on his side: as indeed there was, for he had corrupted Shemaiah, as it presently follows.

And now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together.] How they should wipe off this suspicion, if it should be put into the king's mind, as he told him it certainly would.

Ver. 8. *Then I sent unto him, saying.*] In an open letter, I suppose, that every body might see it.

There are no such things done as thou sayest.] Nothing done to give a jealousy of a rebellion; nor any prophet that encouraged it.

But thou feignest them out of thine own heart.] He had invented this report to defame Nehemiah, without any ground for it.

Ver. 9. *For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.*] Their business was to contrive false stories, to put the Jews in fear; being confident they would be discouraged by such reports, as some were. Therefore he beseeches God to strengthen him that he might support others.

Ver. 10. *Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabeel.*] Who was a prophet, (it appears from ver. 12.) whom, it is likely, Nehemiah took to be his friend, and therefore went to consult and advise with him at his house.

Who was shut up.] Out of fear he pretended; and by this action would have had Nehemiah to understand what he himself should do for his own security: for it was the manner of the prophets to instruct the people by actions and signs, as well as by words. But others think he *shut himself up*, that is, retired, as a holy man, from the affairs of the world, to spend his time in meditation and prayer in some of the chambers of the temple; whither he advised Nehemiah to retire, and to take sanctuary there from the great dangers to which he was exposed.

And he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee.] By *the temple* he means the outward court of it, where he had a chamber; whither, as a friend in whom Nehemiah confided, he prayed him *to come*, that they might meet and consult together how to preserve Jerusalem, and where he might be safe himself from his enemies; who could not easily enter in there, it being a strong place, and besides privileged by its holi-

ness, unto which even heathens, perhaps, might have such regard as not to violate it; whereas the gates of Jerusalem were not yet in such a condition as to keep them out. By this means he hoped Nehemiah would become contemptible, when the people saw his cowardice; and the Jews would be disheartened, as much as their enemies took courage. And, perhaps, he intended, with some priests, his confederates, to seize on him, and deliver him into the hands of Sanballat: at least, it would give some countenance to the calumny he had raised, of his affecting to be king; because he fled from his work, and durst not stand upon his integrity. Shemaiah also might think hereby to draw him in to offend God, by coming into that court where the priests only might come, and where it is supposed this prophet now was.

Yea, in the night will they come to slay thee.] I take the meaning to be, Even this very night will they fall upon thee; therefore consult thy safety, by fleeing hither.

Ver. 11. *And I said, Should such a man as I flee?*] Who am a governor, and ought to give a good example of undaunted courage; and have professed to put great confidence in God; and hitherto been marvellously preserved by him, and assisted in his undertaking.

And who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.] There might have been colour for this advice, if Jerusalem had been an open place, without any walls, without armed men in it, or that had no courage to defend it: but they had appeared on the walls to defend it, (chap. iv. 13.) and being so well appointed, he was resolved still to rely on God, and on their fidelity and valour; and not be so base as to desert them, till they deserted him; which they might well do, if they saw him flee from them for fear.

Ver. 12. *And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me.*] Not to secure him, but to betray him; as he plainly discovered in a little time: which shewed, there was no such danger, as this false prophet pretended.

For Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.] Tobiah was not idle all this time, but it is likely invented this plot, to bribe this man to be a false prophet: which, perhaps, was discovered to Nehemiah by some undoubted prophets of God, who were on their side.

Ver. 13. *Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin.*] That they might draw him in to offend God, by distrusting his care of him; and dishonour himself by base cowardice.

And that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.] As a man guilty of what they accused him.

Ver. 14. *My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their works.*] Their calumnies, and malicious contrivances, and foul practices, which he hoped God would take a time to punish.

And on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.] The wicked temper of this people is very wonderful, who had already got false prophets among them, both men and women, whom Nehemiah did not think fit as a judge to punish, but left them to the judgment of God. Nor do we read that he informed the king of Persia of the foul dealings of these men (which certainly he would have punished), but prayed God to reward them after their deeds: for he would have all know that he depended wholly upon the power of God to enable him to perfect this work, and not upon the help of human force.

Ver. 15. *So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days.*] Which may seem incredible to those who do not reflect what a great number of people (who were not hired, but voluntarily) engaged in this work, and how full they were of zeal, and that the foundation of the wall was not razed by the Chaldeans; nay, there were some pieces of it standing, only great gaps being made in it. And other histories acquaint us with the like diligence; particularly Arrianus and Curtius relate, that Alexander the Great built the walls of Alexandria (which was seven miles in compass) in the space of twenty days.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things.*] When they heard how all the designs of their enemies were disappointed, and saw Jerusalem was built, and flourished.

They were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.] Being finished in so short a time, beyond all expectation, and in the midst of great fears and sad apprehensions.

Ver. 17. *Moreover, in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters unto Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came unto them.*] To add to all the other wickedness of this nation, there were false brethren among their great men, who held a correspondence with their most pestilent enemies against Nehemiah.

Ver. 18. *For there were many in Judah sworn unto him.*] Against the interest of their country, and of their religion; to such a height of impiety were many arrived.

Because he was the son-in-law of Shechaniah the son of Arah; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah.] So dangerous were marriages with foreigners, which Ezra therefore had great reason to make void; for by these alliances they were engaged in wicked designs against their country.

Ver. 19. *Also they reported his good deeds before me.*] To such an impudence were they arrived, that they highly commended him as a very worthy man in the presence of Nehemiah, who knew so much of his wickedness.

And uttered my words to him.] Or informed him of all that Nehemiah did. For so we translate in the margin, *matters*, not *words*.

And Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear.] Still continued such practices as are mentioned ver. 6. that, if it were possible, they might put him into such fear, as would move him to do something to disgrace himself.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass, when the wall was built, and I had set up the doors, and the porters, and the singers, and the Levites, were appointed.*] The porters were to attend the gates; but what the Levites and the singers had to do there is not easily resolved: perhaps they were to be ready against the time that the wall should be dedicated, which is mentioned chap. xii.

Ver. 2. *That I gave my brother Hanani.*] Who was the

man that came from Jerusalem to Shushan, to acquaint him with the deplorable condition of the city, and implore his help, (chap. i. 2.)

And Hananiah the ruler of the palace.] So the house where Nehemiah dwelt is called, because he was governor for the king, and a kind of viceroy, who did all the king's business, and here gave audience to all people, as the king was wont to do in his palace.

Charge over Jerusalem.] He made Hanani, I suppose, principal governor over Jerusalem, and Hananiah was his assistant and deputy.

(For he was a faithful man, and feared God above many).] He saith nothing of Hanani, who was well known to be zealous for God and for his country, by the journey he took to Shushan (which I before mentioned); but he gives the reason why he joined Hananiah with him, because he knew he might be trusted, being a man of conscience, who acted out of religious principles, which a great many in those days did not. The reason why he took this care for the city, it is likely, was, because he himself was returning to Shushan, to give the king an account of the state of affairs in Judea; and therefore placed such men in Jerusalem as he knew would faithfully secure it in his absence.

Ver. 3. *And I said unto them, Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot.*] Till it had been risen a good while, that they might see clearly round about them, and that all the people might be ready in case of any danger.

And while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar them.] And at night he charges them to stand by and see the gates shut and barred in their presence. Or, as some expound it, they should not suffer any man to stir till they shut the gates, lest through carelessness they should chance to be left open. So De Dieu renders the words, *While the standers-by shut the gates, hold them fast;* that is, he gave them power to keep all there present, and not let them go away till this was done.

And appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over against his house.] The gates being shut, he charges them to set the watch in proper places; every one keeping watch in that part which was next to his own house.

Ver. 4. *Now the city was large and great.*] And therefore required many watches.

But the people were few therein.] In comparison with the bigness of the city.

And the houses were not builded.] That is, not all that had been in former times, but a great deal of ground still lay waste.

Ver. 5. *And my God put into mine heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people.*] Whatsoever good motion came into his mind he ascribed it to God, and not to his own prudent consideration, though that was employed in this business. For without God we can do nothing, who ought therefore to be in all our thoughts.

That they might be reckoned by genealogy.] That, by knowing of what family they were, and where they formerly dwelt, he might recall those of them whose habitations had heretofore been in Jerusalem, to come and settle there again, now that the wall was built, and they might dwell there in safety.

And I found a register of the genealogy of them which came up at the first, and found written therein.] The words following:

Ver. 6. *These are the children of the province, that went up out of the captivity, of those that had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and came again to Jerusalem and to Judah, every one unto his city.*] These are the very words which we read in the second chapter of Ezra, ver. 1, &c. from whence he seems to have transcribed them, and added something to them.

Ver. 7. *Who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah: the number, I say, of the men of the people of Israel was this.*] He that is here called Azariah, is called there Saraiah; and there are some other small differences in the names, but all the same, only here Nahamani is added.

Ver. 8. *The children of Parosh, two thousand a hundred seventy and two.*] I shall not transcribe all this genealogy, concerning which I have nothing to observe, but that in some few things it differs from that in Ezra. (See my annotations on Ezra ii. 5.) There are also some families named here which are not in Ezra, as in ver. 22. 48—52. which are all omitted in Ezra. For it must be considered, that one of these accounts was taken by Ezra in Babylon, the other by Nehemiah in Judea: and therefore it is no wonder that a greater number are sometimes mentioned in Nehemiah than in Ezra; for in the first account that was taken of them, many were ignorant of their genealogy; but before the last, the book of their genealogy was found: and yet in the whole number the two accounts agree, though in the particular sums they vary. Compare ver. 66. of this chapter with the second of Ezra, ver. 64. of which Dr. Lightfoot gives this account in his Chronicle of the Times of the Old Testament, p. 146. "The matter is to be conceived and apprehended thus: That Nehemiah found that list and catalogue of those that came up in the first of Cyrus, as it was taken then; and that he called over the names of the families as they lay in order there: he observed the order of that list in calling and listing them; but he took the number of them, as they were now when he numbered them. And some families were now more in number than they were when that first was made, and some were less; and some that were in that list were not to be found now: for some had more of the same stock come out of Babel since the first numbering; and some that had come up at first, and were then numbered, were now gone back." And so he observed, by comparing that list and the present number, how the plantation in Judea had gone forward or backward, increased or decayed, since the first return.

Ver. 65. *And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things till there stood up a priest with urim and thummim.*] It is the opinion of Jacobus Capellus, that Zerubbabel is here meant by the *Tirshatha*, (Ezra ii. 63.) Whosoever he was, he expresses his hope that God might in time restore the *urim* and *thummim* (as he had done the nation), and so give answer about obscure and difficult matters, as he had done in former ages. But till then these priests were not admitted to partake of the most holy things, because it did not appear by good proof

that they were of the family of the priests, and *not to appear, and not to be, are the same thing* in law. But the Talmudists, as the same person observes, interpret these words as if it had been said, *Till the dead rise, or till the Messiah come.* For after the first temple was destroyed, "the cities of the Levites, with their suburbs, were wanting, and so were *urim* and *thummim*, and the kings of the house of Judah." (See his Historia Exot. et Sacra, ad A.M. 3557.)

Ver. 70. *And some of the chief of the fathers gave unto the work: the Tirshatha gave to the treasure a thousand drachms of gold, fifty basons, five hundred and thirty priests' garments.*

Ver. 71. *And some of the chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work twenty thousand drachms of gold, and two thousand and two hundred pounds of silver.*

Ver. 72. *And that which the rest of the people gave was twenty thousand drachms of gold, and two thousand pounds of silver, and threescore and seven priests' garments*] The offering mentioned in these three verses was made by different persons from those who are said to have offered in Ezra ii. 68, 69. and therefore no wonder the gold and silver, and other things offered, were different.

Ver. 73. *So the priests, and the Levites, and the porters, and the singers, and some of the people, and the Nethinims, and all Israel, dwelt in their cities.*] These are the very same words with those in the second chapter of Ezra, and the last verse; and in both places it is said *all Israel* dwelt in their cities. Which, though it be chiefly to be understood of Judah and Benjamin, yet it is evident some of the ten tribes did return with them, according to those prophecies, Jer. l. 4. Zech. viii. 13. And, indeed, there were many of the Israelites that did live in the tribe of Judah before the captivity, (2 Chron. x. 17. xi. 16.)

And when the seventh month came, the children of Israel were in their cities.] When all the business beforenamed was over, the people were sent back, by Nehemiah's direction, to their several cities unto which they belonged: where they remained till the seventh month came; which was five days after the wall was finished, on the twenty-fifth day of the sixth month, (chap. vi. 15.)

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND all the people gathered themselves together as one man.*] In this month was the first great feast that fell out after the building of the wall; as it was just after their first company returned to Jerusalem from Babylon, (Ezra iii. 1.)

Into the street that was before the water-gate.] Which gate is mentioned before, chap. iii. 26. the street before which being very capacious, they all might meet there; for the court of the temple was not large enough to contain such a multitude.

And they spake unto Ezra the scribe.] This, no doubt, is the same person mentioned in the foregoing book; who had been at Babylon, it is thought, since his first coming into Judea, and was now returned; beholding with great joy the wall of Jerusalem built, as before he had seen the temple.

To bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel.] They called to mind that place in Deuteronomy, chap. xxxi. 10, 11, &c. where God requires the law to be read publicly every seventh year in the feast of tabernacles, which was appointed to be kept in this month. This, no doubt, Ezra was ready to perform; but such was the forward zeal of the people at this time, that they prevented him by their pious entreaties, that he would observe that law.

Ver. 2. *And Ezra the priest.*] So he is called, as before the *scribe;* both of these titles being put together in the foregoing book.

Brought the law before the congregation, both of men and women.] For the city being restored and reinhabited, the next thing that was proper to be done was to instruct them in those laws whereby they were to live.

And all that could hear with understanding.] That were not mere children.

Upon the first day of the seventh month.] Which was not the feast wherein the law was to be read; but, as Pellicanus well observes, all this month was in a manner holy, so that they continued employed in these holy exercises till the end of the two-and-twentieth day, which was the conclusion of the feast of tabernacles.

Ver. 3. *And he read therein before the street that was before the water-gate, from the morning until mid-day.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *from the light;* that is, from the break of day (as we speak), or the sunrising, until noon. Then, I suppose, they went to take some repast, it being a festival, and a day of great rejoicing, "a memorial of blowing with trumpets," Lev. xxiii. 24. on which he thought good to begin the reading of the law, that he might do more than they desired, if they spake to him of reading it on the feast of tabernacles.

Before the men and the women, and those that could understand: and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.] This is a general account of what he did: the particulars follow.

Ver. 4. *And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose.*] To raise him higher than the people; that he might be the better seen and heard by them all; whence, in the Hebrew, it is called *a tower of wood:* but was not like our *pulpits,* which contain no more than one person; but large and long, that many persons might stand in it, as appears by what follows. Vitringa hath lately described it largely in his book de Synagoga Veteri, p. 184, &c.

And beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam.] It is evident by these words, that six persons stood on his right hand, and seven on his left, in the same pulpit, being in all fourteen.

Ver. 5. *And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people).*] He being in the very middle of the pulpit, and the forenamed persons on each side of him.

And, when he opened it, all the people stood up.] Out of reverence to the holy word of God. (See Judg. iii. 20.)

Ver. 6. *And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God: and all the people answered, Amen, amen.*] He seems to have used the words, wherein David ordered them to bless, 1 Chron. xvi. 36. where all the people answered, *Amen;* as they do here with great affection. But the Jewish doc-

tors pretend, that in the temple the people never answered *Amen*, but said, *Blessed be the name of his glorious kingdom, for ever and ever.* So Vitringa notes in his book de Synagoga Veteri, p. 1096. and our Mr. Thorndike observed the same long before, in his Religious Assemblies, p. 230.

With lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.] Which were all postures in prayer, and in thankful acknowledgments to God.

Ver. 7. *Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law.*] It is thought by some, that these persons expounded to the people what had been read to them; for the same persons did not read, they imagine, and make them understand what was read. But Stephanus Morinus hath observed very well, that it is not likely that Ezra was a mere reader, and Levites the doctors and expositors of the law before Ezra and Nehemiah. It is far more likely that Ezra began to read; and that when he was weary, some of those who stood by him on each side went on where he left off; for it was too much for one man to read from morning to mid-day. And he also instructed these Levites, if there was any difficulty, to make the people understand what was read.

And the people stood in their place.] Listening both to what was read, and what was delivered as the explication of it.

Ver. 8. *So they read in the book.*] That is, Ezra and his assistants read not all the book of the law, but only Deuteronomy, as they do at this day.

In the law of God distinctly.] With a clear voice and distinct pronunciation.

And gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.] Ezra, and the other persons directed by him, gave the sense, and made them understand what was read. So the last words are commonly expounded. But Isaac Casaubon, in an epistle of his to Suffridus Calignon, (Epist. dcx.) disputes at large, that all the Jews take the meaning to be, that the people in their captivity having disused the Hebrew tongue, and been accustomed to the Chaldee, Ezra and his companions rendered the Hebrew words exactly into the Chaldee language. And to put all out of doubt, that this is their sense, he observes, that the Jews at this day retain this custom (which they received from Ezra) in their synagogues, to read the same portion of Scripture, first in Hebrew, and then in Chaldee; as he himself was witness at Frankfort. And he justifies those who take these words, *caused them to understand the reading*, to signify, *expounded the Scripture.* Though the word *micra* be no where so used in the Bible, to signify *the Scripture*, neither doth it signify *reading.* And another learned man thinks the Hebrew words may be most exactly translated, "Dabant intelligentiam per ipsam Scripturam;" *they gave the sense by the Scripture itself.* But there is not good warrant to assert this. And the discourse of Casaubon is grounded on a tradition of the Jews, which hath no better foundation than this; that they had forgot their language in Chaldea, and therefore they read the law in that tongue, which they understood better than their own. But if this were true, why did the prophets write in Hebrew after their return from captivity? And this very book shews the contrary, chap. xiii. 23, 24. where the Jews' language appears to have been spoken by the people. Nor is the custom of reading the Targum after the law very ancient, nor generally used in their synagogues.

Ver. 9. *And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites, that taught the people.*] Who had instructed them in their duty out of the law that had been read to them.

Said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.] They bewailed the ignorance wherein they lived; and the many violations of the law, whereof they had been guilty. Just as Josiah did when he heard the words of the law read out of a book found unexpectedly, (2 Chron. xxii.)

Ver. 10. *Then he said.*] That is, the Tirshatha gave this command, who was the principal person among those forenamed, having the same authority that Zerubbabel had. (See chap. vii. 65.)

Go your way.] Now that it was noon, it was time for them to refresh themselves.

Eat the fat, and drink the sweet.] Make a feast, and provide as good cheer as you are able, according to the manner on their festival days.

And send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared.] It did not become religious people only to make much of themselves; but he would have them out of their fulness to feast their poor brethren, that they might rejoice with them.

For this day is holy unto our Lord.] Being the first new moon in the year, and the feast of blowing with trumpets, (Lev. xxiii. 24.) And nothing was more unsuitable to such festivals than mourning and lamentation; for they were appointed to be solemnities for mirth and gladness; and are therefore called *the days of your gladness*, in Numb. x. 10. And in Psal. xcii. 4. for the sabbath, the Psalmist saith, "Thou Lord hast made me glad through thy works; I will triumph in the works of thy hands:" expressing the subject of his gladness, the remembrance of the creation of the world, upon that day celebrated.

Neither be you sorry.] Inwardly grieved.

For the joy of the Lord is your strength.] Joy in the Lord for the great things he had done for them in restoring them to their own land, building the temple, and the walls of Jerusalem, was never more becoming than upon a festival day, which afforded other matter of joy. And beside, it would make them cheerfully perform the rest of their duty, and fortify them against troubles and adversities; nay, it was the way to remove them, or to keep them off: for when the service of God was their delight, he promised to keep off those plagues which were threatened in the law against transgressors, and to give them all the blessings they could desire.

Ver. 11. *So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved.*] What Nehemiah had said to as many as could hear him, the Levites said to the rest of the people: going about, and persuading them to lay aside their heaviness, and make it a good day.

Ver. 12. *And all the people went their way to eat, and to*

drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth.] As all nations were wont to do upon their festival days. There being very few among the Greeks, wherein they made lamentations; but they rather exceeded all bounds of decency in their jollity upon sacred solemnities, being wont, besides music and dancing (which were very proper), to entertain one another with jests and scoffs, and unbecoming laughter; as the illustrious Spanhemius shews, in his observations upon Callimachus's hymn, in Lavacrum Palladis, ad Versum 324.

Because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.] This was an extraordinary reason for their mirth, that they were illuminated in Divine knowledge, and understood the will of God better than they did before.

Ver. 13. *And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law.*] This was no festival day, but so desirous were they to be acquainted with the law (of the knowledge of which he had given them a taste), that they came again this day to beg further instruction. Which, it is evident from hence, Ezra gave them, not the priests and the Levites, who came to be instructed by him as well as the people.

Ver. 14. *And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month.*] It is probable that he read to them particularly the duties belonging to this month, wherein they were assembled, in which they found the feast of tabernacles was to be observed; and therefore they came to him for direction how it was to be kept, that they might obey the precept. And first he informed them that they must *dwell in booths:* which Maimonides shews how it is to be understood in his Seder Zeraim, where he explains the tradition of the ancients, who believed, that when God gave a precept he also gave the exposition of it, which he pretends was preserved by their wise men; which is a vain fancy of the Jews, to support the credit of their traditions. But the book Cosri thinks these words [*they found it written*] are to be understood of the common people; for the better sort understood well enough that such festivals were to be observed, and had not forgotten any of the precepts, (par. iii. sect. 63.)

Ver. 15. *And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying.*] Then he tells them that proclamation should be made in all their cities, beginning in Jerusalem, that this feast ought to be observed on such a day, (Lev. xxiii. 4. 34.)

Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written.] The nearest mount to Jerusalem was the Mount of Olives, where it is likely all these trees grew. But the word *shaman*, which we translate *olive-branches*, our famous Dr. Castell thinks signifies *citrons*, which is not material, they being such branches as the mount afforded.

Ver. 16. *So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house.*] Which by the law was to be built flat, (Deut. xxii. 8.)

And in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water-gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim.] They durst not make them without the walls of the city, for fear of their enemies.

Ver. 17. *And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths.*] They not only made them, but left their houses, and dwelt in them all the days of the feast.

For since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so: and there was very great gladness.] This is scarce credible, as Mr. Medo speaks, that for a thousand years none of the good kings in Israel should observe this festival, at least in this main circumstance *of dwelling in booths.* But so he thinks it was, and that this horrible omission of this feast alone foresignified the Jews would not acknowledge Christ, whom this signified to be Emanuel, God dwelling in our flesh. (See book i. discourse xlv. p. 354.) But I think this is not the meaning, that this festival had never been observed since Joshua's time; for we read in the foregoing book, that it was kept at their return from Babylon. But the meaning is, that the joy had never been so great as it was now since that time: for which there was a special reason, as the Jews observe in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 30. for they rejoiced in the days of Joshua, that they had got possession of the land of Canaan; and now they rejoiced that they were restored to it, and quietly settled in it, after they had been cast out of it.

Ver. 18. *Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God: and they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.*] There was a command that the law should be read on this feast, as I observed above, (Deut. xxxi. 10—12.) but not that it should be read every day. This was the effect of their great zeal to be instructed in the law of God, which made them desire to hear it on the second day of this month, which was a festival: (ver. 13.) and perhaps the eighth day, on which a solemn assembly was appointed, (Lev. xxiii. 26.) they continued the same holy exercise. But that seems contrary to this verse, which speaks only of *seven days.*

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *NOW, in the twenty and fourth day of this month, the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them.*] The feast being over, which ended upon the twenty-second day (all which time mourning was forbidden, as contrary to the nature of the feast, which was to be kept with joy), they now return to that which they were about before, (chap. viii. 9. 12.) and spent this whole day in humbling themselves before God for their sins. The reason why they did not immediately after the feast of tabernacles keep this fast, was (as Josephus Scaliger conjectures), because the twenty-third day was another festival, made by the constitution of the elders, by the same authority wherewith afterward they appointed the feast of Purim, mentioned in the book of Esther. It was called *the festival of the law,* still observed by the Jews on the twenty-third day of this month, because then they make an end of reading the law, which they begin again every year the next sabbath after. Now this being a day of joy, as other festivals were, on which they were forbidden to mourn, they deferred their mourning till this solemnity also was past, and then they fell to weeping again, as they did when they first heard the law read.

Ver. 2. *And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.*] Who had been guilty of taking strange women to be their wives; for which Ezra had severely censured them, and constrained them to put them away. But so depraved were some among them, that it seems they transgressed again in this matter, as they did in other things, who confessed their own guilt, and the guilt of those that were before them, and, as a token of their true repentance, *separated* themselves from these strangers. Which they did in such a manner, that they *stood* at a distance from them, to shew that they renounced them. For so the word *stood* is to be taken in this place, not for a posture of prayer, wherein they confessed their sins; for, appearing in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads, it is more likely they lay down and bewailed themselves, as the manner was in such cases. And accordingly the Levites called upon them (ver. 5.) to *stand up;* which supposes that they lay on the ground, or fell on their knees, and were not standing when they spake unto them.

Ver. 3. *And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God.*] That is, the Levites stood up in a place built for them, like that whereon Ezra stood: (chap. viii. 4.) for otherwise they could not have been heard when they read.

One fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the Lord their God.] They read the law and confessed (that is, praised God, ver. 5.) interchangeably. For in one fourth part of the day, that is, from the first hour to the third, they did the one, and from thence to the sixth hour (that is, till twelve o'clock) they did the other. Then they began the former again till the ninth hour, and from thence till the evening they spent their time in the other.

Ver. 4. *Then stood up upon the stairs, of the Levites.*] Or, upon the *scaffold* (as the margin translates it), which raised them above the people, that they might all see and hear.

Jeshua, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani, and cried with a loud voice unto the Lord their God.] They most earnestly beseeched him to be merciful to them.

Ver. 5. *Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah said, Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever.*] After the Levites beforenamed had cried to God for mercy (the people, I suppose, begging it on their knees), another company of Levites bade the people stand up, and praise the Lord, and give him thanks as long as they had any being.

And blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.] The Levites, it is likely, praised him in these words, acknowledging that the noblest creatures could not reach his superexcellent perfections, and all the people repeated the same words after them.

Ver. 6. *Thou, even thou, art Lord alone: thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all.*] As they confess the Lord to be the only God, so they attribute two things to him; that he is the Creator and the Conservator of the universe; for having made it, no doubt he takes care of every part thereof.

And the host of heaven worshippeth thee.] Sometimes the stars, and sometimes the angels, are called *the host of heaven.* The latter seems to be here meant; for the other are mentioned before, when he saith, *the heavens with all their host.* Concerning *the heaven of heavens,* see in Solomon's prayer, 1 Kings viii. 27.

Ver. 7. *Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham.*] Here follows a compendious history of the affairs of the Hebrew nation, in this confession of God's benefits, and their ingratitude. Which Nehemiah and Ezra, it is likely, composed in the form of a prayer, and delivered it to the Levites, whom they ordered to speak it distinctly before the whole congregation from their several scaffolds, which were conveniently placed in several parts of the assembly, that they might be heard.

Ver. 8. *And foundest his heart faithful before thee.*] In many instances, especially in that great trial of his faith and obedience, when he required him to offer up his only son to him, (Gen. xxii. and see also Gen. xv. 6. xvii. 5, &c.)

And madest a covenant with him, to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou art righteous.] True to his word in faithfully fulfilling his promises. (See Gen. xv. 7. 18. xvii. 2. 4. 7, &c.)

Ver. 9. *And didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heardest their cry by the Red Sea.*] They pass by all God's providences over Isaac and Jacob, to come to that which God had done for them since they were a nation; that is, since he had made good his covenant with Abraham, to multiply his seed as the stars of heaven; at which time he foretold him of the grievous affliction of his seed in Egypt, (Gen. xv. 5. 13.) from which he graciously delivered them, they here acknowledge, and completed their deliverance at the Red Sea.

Ver. 10. *And shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land.*] Which are recorded in the book of Exodus, chap. vii. viii. &c.

For thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them.] Intending to make them their slaves for ever, as, for the present, they treated them with the utmost contempt and cruelty, (Exod. v. 17, 18.)

So didst thou get thee a name, as it is this day.] See Exod. ix. 16.

Ver. 11. *And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land.*] See Exod. xiv. 21, 22.

And their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters.] So that they sunk down, and rose up no more to persecute them. The Hebrew word signifies the *strong* or *rough* waters. And so Bochartus observes out of many Greek authors, that that sea is called, and said, in short, to be κατὰ πάντα φοβερὸν, *in all regards formidable or terrible.* In his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 13.

Ver. 12. *Moreover, thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar, and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go.*] Concerning which, see Exod. xiii. 21.

Ver. 13. *Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judg-*

ments and true laws, good statutes and commandments.] This seems to relate, in the beginning of the verse, to the ten commandments, spoken by the mouth of God himself; but the latter part comprehends all the law delivered by him to Moses in the mount, (chap. xxi.—xxiii.)

Ver. 14. *And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath.*] The Scripture mentions the sabbath as a singular gift bestowed upon the Jewish nation, (Exod. xvi. 29.) It being a sign between him and them, that he was their God, who sanctified, that is, separated them out of all other people to be his peculiar people; that is, the worshippers of the Creator of the world, whom they acknowledged to be the Lord their God, while the heathen worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, and other creatures, as their gods, Exod. xxxi. 13. and Ezekiel xx. 12. 20. in which the prophet tells us, that God intended, by this, to shew that he had chosen Israel, as I said, to be his peculiar people above all other nations, and that they had no other God.

And commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant.] Which are those beforementioned, which were not spoken by God himself, but delivered by him to Moses in the mount, who was his faithful servant, and delivered nothing but what he received from God's own mouth. The observation of which is often pressed upon them as an acknowledgment of him to be their Creator, who brought them out of the land of Egypt.

Ver. 15. *And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst.*] See Exod. xvi. 14, 15. xvii. 6.

And promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them.] Which he set before them, and bade them go and possess it, as Moses tells them, Deut. i. 8.

Ver. 16. *But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments.*] A famous instance of this there was, when they refused to go up and possess the land, to the borders of which he had brought them: (Numb. xiv. 1, 2, &c.) and afterward more insolently rebelled against Moses and Aaron, who had been their conductors through the wilderness, (Numb. xvi. 3.)

Ver. 17. *And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks.*] Their ingratitude was the greater, because these wonders were not done among other nations, but were peculiar to them; which our Saviour makes a very high aggravation of the sins of their posterity, (Matt. xi. 21.)

And in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage.] See Numb. xiv. 4. where they consulted about it, and it seems came to this resolution, that they agreed upon a captain to lead them back to Egypt: or their resolving to do it was the same with the actual appointment of a captain, as it was in the case of Abraham's offering his son.

But thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.] This was the character God gave of himself to Moses, (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7,) which he made good to all generations. (See Psal. cxlv. 8.)

Ver. 18. *Yea, when they had made them a molten calf, and said, This is thy god that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations.*] This was the highest provocation, considering how lately he had spoken to them from heaven not to make a graven image, and how many cautions he had afterward given them against it.

Ver. 19. *Yet thou, in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness.*] But gave them an early instance of his clemency.

The pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go.] Which testified that, notwithstanding their provocation, God was still among them, and continued his gracious presence with them, of which this was a glorious token, as Moses told them, Numb. xiv. 14.

Ver. 20. *Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them.*] The spirit of prophecy, which was upon Moses, God imparted to seventy other persons, that the people might be better governed, (Numb. xi. 16, 17.)

And withheldest not thy manna from their mouth.] But continued it till they came to Canaan; or else they might have been starved. (See Josh. v. 12.)

And gavest them water for their thirst.] When the whole congregation deserved to perish, according to their own wish, that they had died when their brethren died before the Lord, (Numb. xx. 3.)

Ver. 21. *Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing: their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.*] See Deut. viii. 4.

Ver. 22. *Moreover, thou gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst divide them into corners.*] Some translate the last words, *Thou didst divide them by angles;* that is, he parted those kingdoms among them as by a line. But others understand it of the people dispossessed by the Jews, whom he drove into corners.

So they possessed the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan.] Most of the inhabitants of which he destroyed, and the rest fled and hid themselves in corners. But it must be observed, that Heshbon being the city of Sihon, (Numb. xxi. 26.) the first words should be rendered, *the land of Sihon, even the land of the king of Heshbon.*

Ver. 23. *Their children also multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven, and broughtest them into the land concerning which thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess it.*] See Gen. xv. 5.

Ver. 24. *So the children went in and possessed the land; and thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would.*] These words express the easy conquest they made of the whole country.

Ver. 25. *And they took strong cities.*] The walls of Jericho falling down flat before them.

And a fat land.] A fruitful country flowing with milk and honey.

And possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards, and olive-yards, and fruit-trees in abundance.] They were enriched with the estates of the people whom they destroyed, having houses ready built, and well furnished, together with all sort of trees planted to their hands.

So they did eat, and were filled, and became fat.] They wanted nothing, but rather had superfluity of all worldly blessings.

And delighted themselves in thy great goodness.] Their highest pleasure indeed ought to have been in their thoughts how good God was unto them; but the meaning of these words is no more than this, That God had bestowed so many blessings upon them, that they took great pleasure in the enjoyment of them.

Ver. 26. *Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs.*] The pleasant life they led in the good land God gave them made them wanton, and forgetful of God and of his laws, which they regarded not at all.

And slew thy prophets, which testified against them to turn them to thee.] We read of many prophets slain by Jezebel, 1 Kings xviii. 4. xix. 10.

And they wrought great provocations.] By abominable idolatries.

Ver. 27. *Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and, according to thy manifold mercies, thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.*] The whole book of Judges verifies this, that God delivered them for their sins unto the Moabites, the Canaanites, and divers other enemies, who grievously domineered over them; but when they cried to God for help, he was so gracious as to send such great men as Barak, Gideon, and others, to be their *saviours*, that is, deliverers from their tyranny.

Ver. 28. *But after they had rest, they did evil again before thee.*] No sooner did they begin to prosper, and the judge that saved them was dead, but they revolted from God, who had been so good to them.

Therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them.] God so abandoned them, that he let the Philistines rule over them forty years, (Judg. xiii. 1.) unto which, perhaps, this passage relates.

Yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and many times didst thou deliver them, according to thy mercies.] For nothing else could move him to it; they being through all generations unconstant and unsteadfast in their obedience.

Ver. 29. *And testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law.*] By many remarkable punishments he testified how highly he was displeased with them, that he might reform them.

Yet they dealt proudly.] Which one would have expected should have humbled them; but they grew more bold and obstinate in their sins.

And hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments (which if a man do, he shall live in them).] That is, be a happy man.

And withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear.] Withdrawing the shoulder is a metaphor (I have observed before) taken from refractory oxen, that draw back, and will not submit to the yoke.

Ver. 30. *Yet many years didst thou forbear them.*] Before he suffered them to be carried captive out of their own land.

And testifiedst against them by thy Spirit in thy prophets.] Whom he raised up (I have observed elsewhere) in every age, in every king's reign, to tell them their duty, and reprove them for their sins.

Yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands.] At last he delivered them into the hands of the Chaldeans, as we read 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16. who are called the *people of the lands*, because they had got possession of all the countries thereabout, which God put under their power, as he had done other countries beyond Euphrates.

Ver. 31. *Nevertheless, for thy great mercies' sake, thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them.*] But left them a remnant of the poorer sort in the land, and shewed favour to the captives in the land of Babylon.

For thou art a gracious and merciful God.] To which alone they owed their preservation from utter destruction.

Ver. 32. *Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy.*] Thus he began his address to God before he came from Shushan. (See chap. i. 5.)

Let not all the trouble seem little before thee that hath come upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the time of the kings of Assyria unto this day.] For those kings first began to invade their country, and carried away the ten tribes, (2 Kings xv. 19. xvii. 3. 5, &c.) After which, calamities came upon Judah, their good king Josiah being slain, Manasseh carried to Babylon before the great captivity.

Ver. 33. *Howbeit thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly.*

Ver. 34. *Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments, and the testimonies wherewith thou didst testify against them.*

Ver. 35. *For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works.*] In these three verses they acknowledge the justice of God, in all the punishments he had inflicted on them, though heavy, and of long continuance. For from the highest to the lowest they had done all wickedly, and would not be reclaimed.

Ver. 36. *Behold, we are servants this day; and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers, to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it.*] God had, indeed, marvellously restored them to their own country; yet the marks of his displeasure for their sins still remained very visible: for they were but servants unto others, not owners and proprietors of the lands which God had given to their fathers. Out of which they had been cast for their wickedness, and had not yet perfectly recovered it, but laboured for their lords and masters.

Ver. 37. *And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins.*] For their land paid a great tribute to the kings of Persia, out of the profit of it, (Ezra vi. 8. vii. 24. and in this book, chap. v. 4.)

Also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure.] For their bodies were liable to be pressed to serve in the king's wars, or in his works; and their cattle subject to them, when they had occasion to send post about the king's business.

And we are in great distress.] Though they were permitted to live by their own laws (as we read in the book of

Ezra), which was a great privilege, yet they lay under those public burdens, and were compelled to bear them. By which we may learn how vain their proud boasts were in John viii. 33. that they *were never in bondage to any man;* when they had long been slaves in Egypt, and lately in Babylon, and after they came from thence, as they here complain; and even they paid tribute to the Romans when they made those brags to our Saviour.

Ver. 38. *And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it.*] In consideration of which, they resolved to renew their covenant with God of better obedience; which they promised under their hands and seals, as the only remedy to procure perfect deliverance. And, to make it more effectual, they seem to declare this in the presence of God, at the conclusion of the foregoing confession and prayer.

It signified little, indeed, as Pellicanus observes, what such an untoward people promised; for what regard would they have to their own hand-writing, who regarded not the ten commandments, written on tables of stone by the finger of God? But it was very useful, that there should be a public instrument to convince them of their impiety, and that they might be publicly confounded when they proved perfidious deserters, by shewing them their engagements, under their own hands, to future fidelity.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *NOW those that sealed were Nehemiah the Tirshatha, the son of Hachaliah, and Zidkijah.*] Nehemiah was the governor of the country under the king of Persia, and therefore the principal prince among them, who led the way to the rest; who are not mentioned, unless we suppose Zidkijah to have been a prince; for they that followed were priests.

Ver. 2. *Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah.*] I need not transcribe the rest of the names to the eighth verse, at the end of which it is said *these were the priests,* that is, the chief of them, for there are but twenty and one of them in all; and there is no mention of Ezra the priest among them; of which it is hard to give an account, unless we suppose him to be now gone to Babylon: which must be very lately; for he was at Jerusalem in the beginning of the seventh month; (chap. viii. 2.) though on the twenty-fourth day of it, when they fasted and prayed, we do not find him named throughout the whole ninth chapter; yet at the feast of the dedication he was come to Jerusalem again, (chap. xii. 36.) Some therefore think he was now hindered by sickness from being present at this sealing.

Ver. 9. *And the Levites: both Jeshua the son of Azaniah; Binnui of the sons of Henadad; Kadmiel.*

Ver. 10. *And their brethren,* &c.] There are fourteen Levites mentioned in these and the following verses, to ver. 14. which, perhaps, were all the Levites that were then present; or rather were the principal Levites, who were not priests: for some of these are mentioned before, as chosen to expound the law to the people, and to make public prayers to God, (chap. viii. 7. ix. 4, 5.)

Ver. 14. *The chief of the people; Parosh,* &c.] It had been tedious to make all the people subscribe and seal the writing; therefore the principal persons did it in the name of the rest, whose names, in number forty and three, are here recorded till ver. 28.

Ver. 28. *And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having understanding.*] All that did not subscribe and seal, because they were too many, yet gave their consent to what the forenamed persons did. And not only the men, but their wives, and their children who were arrived at years of discretion, engaged themselves, as follows in the next verse.

Ver. 29. *They clave to their brethren, their nobles.*] They declared they were of the same mind with those that had sealed, and owned by word of mouth what they had set their hands unto; and said, it was their act, as much as their nobles' and brethren's, from whom they would not depart.

And entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our God, and his judgments and his statutes.] And more than that, they added an oath, whereby they obliged themselves to observe the law; and an imprecation upon themselves, wishing all the curses written in the law might fall upon them, if they did not do as the law required in all things.

Ver. 30. *And that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons.*] Besides their general promise, they specify those things that were most difficult; as, not marrying with strangers, observing the sabbath, bringing oblations for the use of the temple, &c. The first thing here specified was of great importance; and they solemnly engaged to perform it: for though both Ezra and Nehemiah had found them guilty of breaking this law, yet they were so prone to offend in this thing, that it seems, notwithstanding all they could do, some continued to violate it.

Ver. 31. *And if the people of the land.*] That is, their heathen neighbours.

Bring ware, or any victuals, on the sabbath-day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the sabbath.] We do not find any express law forbidding them to buy what was offered to be sold on the sabbath-day; but they obliged themselves not to do it, that the rest might be better observed. For none would come to sell, when there were no chapmen for their commodities.

Or on the holy-day.] That is, on all days of rest from their labours, such as the Passover, the feast of tabernacles, and others.

And that we would leave the seventh year.] That is, let their land rest every seventh year, and leave the fruit of it, which grew up of itself, for the poor, as the law required, (Lev. xxv. 4, &c.)

And the exaction of every debt.] That is, remit in that year the debts which the poor owed them, (Deut. xv. 2, &c.)

Ver. 32. *Also we made ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God.*] We do not find this enjoined any where by an express law; but reason required it at this time; and therefore they obliged themselves to it by an ordinance of the elders, that the service of God at the temple might be maintained by this small duty, which was laid upon every one.

Ver. 33. *For the shew-bread, and for the continual meat-offering, and for the continual burnt-offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin-offerings, to make an atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God.*] There was a treasury formerly in the house of God, out of which all these things were supplied: and when it was exhausted by the many great sums which were sent out of it to foreign princes in the days of Hezekiah, that prince maintained the burnt-offerings at his own charge, (2 Chron. xxxi. 3.) But both these failing for the present, there was this oblation made to furnish all the things here mentioned, and every thing else that was necessary for the service of God. And, no doubt, many good people dedicated things to the same use; whereby the expenses were well maintained.

Ver. 34. *And we cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the wood-offering, to bring it into the house of our God, after the houses of our fathers, at times appointed, year by year, to burn upon the altar of the Lord our God, as it is written in the law.*] They determined, by casting of lots, how much wood every one should bring in for his share, to maintain their fire continually upon the altar to burn the sacrifices; and in what order it should be brought (what family, that is, should begin first, and what should follow next), and at what times of the year. For there was another solemn feast (beside those I mentioned before), called *the feast of the wood-offering*, which took its original from hence; and, as Scaliger observes, was kept on the twenty-second day of the month Ab. But Mr. Thorndike observes, out of the Mischna, (in his Religious Assemblies, p. 269.) that it was held nine days in several months, whereof a great part fell in that month; and is meant by these words, *at times appointed, year by year.* The Talmudists also say, that every family, on the day when they brought in the wood, sacrificed a voluntary burnt-offering, called the *korban of wood*, as Petrus Cunæus observes, in his book de Republica Hebræorum, lib. ii. cap. 13. where he notes also, that herein Josephus differs from the Talmudists; that he mentions but one day of the feasts, which he calls ξυλοφορία: which was such a solemn festival, (as Maimonides saith, in his Furniture of the Temple, chap. 6.) that none might mourn on this day, nor fast, nor do any work.

Ver. 35. *And to bring the first-fruits of our ground, and the first-fruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the Lord.*] According to the command, Exod. xxiii. 19. Lev. xix. 23. (See below, ver. 39.)

Ver. 36. *Also the first-born of our sons, and of our cattle (as it is written in the law), and the firstlings of our herds, and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God.*] The law which gave all the firstlings to God is in Exod. xiii. the beginning, and ver. 11, 12. and God gave them all to Aaron the priest, in Numb. xviii. 15, 16.

Ver. 37. *And that we should bring the first-fruits of our dough, and our offerings.*] See Lev. xxiii. 17. Numb. xv. 19, 20. It was to be so large, that it is called *a gift* in Deut. xviii. 4.

And the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine, and of oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God.] See Numb. xviii. 12, &c.

And the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage.] See Lev. xxvii. 30. Numb. xviii. 21.

Ver. 38. *And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure-house.*] As the people gave the tithes of their land to the Levites, so the Levites gave a tithe to the priests. And when the people brought them to the Levites, one of the priests was appointed to be present to inspect them, and to see that, without fraud, they tithed the tithes; that is, set out the tenth part of the tithes they had received for the priests, which was brought to the chambers, wherein it was deposited for the priests in God's house.

Ver. 39. *For the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil.*] See Deut. xii. 6. 11.

Unto the chambers, where are the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers.] Where other holy things were kept, and where God's ministers attended, for whose use they were designed, and were to be brought thither at their own charge. These chambers were in the court of the priests: but L'Empereur thinks the court of the people likewise might have such places in it, wherein these things were bestowed, being more than the other could contain. For (as the Jews observe) though the priests had a court proper to themselves, into which none might come but they alone, yet they were not excluded from the court of Israel; and if there was not room enough to receive all the things forementioned, there were receptacles under ground, besides the upper room mentioned Jer. xxxv. 4.

And we will not forsake the house of our God.] They promise, according to their covenant and oath, to be no more so negligent in these matters as they had been; and accordingly they did fulfil this promise, as we read chap. xii. 44, 45. unto the end.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem.*] Their neighbours were so enraged to see the walls at Jerusalem built again, and were so restless in their designs to keep this city from rising to its former splendour, that it terrified many of the Jews from coming to dwell there, thinking themselves more safe in the country, where their enemies had no pretence to disturb them. The rulers, therefore, of the people came and settled themselves at Jerusalem, that they might invite and encourage others to come and inhabit it; and several persons, as the next verse intimates, did come and offer themselves freely to dwell with them there.

The rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts to dwell in other cities.] But though the rulers were settled here, and some followed their example, and all that formerly belonged to Jerusalem were ordered to return, (chap. vii. 4, 5.) yet still there was room for more citizens; and the city, considering how large it was, being very empty, they consulted to make it populous, by compelling every tenth man in Judah and Benjamin to quit his present habitation in the

country, and come and dwell there; leaving the rest to dwell where they pleased. For which end they cast lots, that among ten men it might be known whom God chose to come thither; and the lot falling by a Divine appointment upon such a person, rather than another, no doubt, he removed the more contentedly to this city.

Ver. 2. *And the people blessed all the men that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.*] Beside those who were chosen by lot, it seems there were some that voluntarily chose to go and live there; whom the people highly commended and praised, beseeching God to bless and prosper them: for indeed they were worthy to be honoured as men that sought the welfare of their country, the glory of God, the restoring of their nation, the defence of their city, and had a zeal for the Divine service performed there.

Ver. 3. *Now these are the chief of the province.*] Of those Jews that came from Babylon into the province of Judea.

That dwelt in Jerusalem.] Whose names are mentioned ver. 4, &c.

But in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities, to wit, Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants.] But those that dwelt in the other cities of Judah, he would not reckon in this catalogue; whom he comprehends under the name of *Israel*, the *priests*, the *Levites*, the *Nethinims*, and *Solomon's servants*. By *Israel* he means all the people of the ten tribes, as well as Judah and Benjamin, who were the chief; but he calls them *Israel*, because those of Judah and Benjamin dwelt at Jerusalem, the rest of Israel were in the other cities of Judah.

Ver. 4. *And at Jerusalem dwelt certain of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin.*] For these were the tribes that anciently possessed Jerusalem; which stood partly in the one, partly in the other tribe. Therefore, in some places of Scripture, Jerusalem is reckoned as belonging to the children of Judah, (see Josh. xv. 63. Judg. i. 8.) and sometimes in the same words to the children of Benjamin, (Judg. xviii. 20. xxi. 28.) and here to both. But what part of the city belonged to the one, and what to the other, is not agreed among learned men. Pineda hath represented the several opinions about it at large, in his book de Rebus Solomonis, lib. v. cap. 5.

Of the children of Judah; Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalaleel, of the children of Perez.] These were all of that family of Pharez, the son of Judah. If the names of these persons mentioned in this chapter be compared with the names of those who came back with Zerubbabel, it will appear, that they were the fourth, fifth, and sixth generation from Zerubbabel; which is a demonstration, that Nehemiah did not come to Jerusalem in the time of Artaxerxes Longimanus, but of Artaxerxes Mnemon. For this observation I am beholden to my worthy friend Dr. Alix.

Ver. 5. *And Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Colhozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of Shiloni.*] These were all of the same family, as the next verse informs us.

Ver. 6. *All the sons of Perez that dwelt at Jerusalem, were four hundred threescore and eight valiant men.*] Who seem to me to have offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem, and help to defend it by their valour, whose chiefs were Athaiah and Maaseiah.

Ver. 7. *And these are the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jesaiah.*

Ver. 8. *And after him Gabbai, Sallai.*] These two and Sallu (beforenamed) were the chief men among them.

Nine hundred twenty and eight.] There were almost as many more of Benjamin as of Judah (who were but four hundred sixty and eight); for though Mount Zion was in the tribe of Judah, yet the city of Jerusalem was in the tribe of Benjamin; which made them have a great desire to see it inhabited, and inflamed the minds of the most valiant, who were best able to defend it, to come and live there.

Ver. 9. *And Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer; and Judah the son of Senuah was second over the city.*] The former of these was the governor of the city; and the other was his deputy; who is called *secondary*, because he was next to him in the discharge of that office. Who is he, as Bertram thinks, that is called in the second book of Maccabees, chap. iii. 4. προστάτης τοῦ ἱεροῦ, *the prefect of the temple;* and by Josephus, Antiq. xiv. 11. ὑποστρατηγὸς ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις, *the under governor in Jerusalem.* (See his Repub. Jud. p. 163.)

Ver. 10. *Of the priests; Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin.*] Now he comes to speak of the tribe of Levi; many of which it was necessary should dwell there, to attend the house of God. And first he begins with the priests, who were his chief ministers.

Ver. 11. *Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, was the ruler of the house of God.*] This Seraiah was such a chief man among the priests, as he that is mentioned in 2 Chron. xix. 11. (See there.) Some take him to be the same with him that is called in the New Testament στρατηγὸς τοῦ ἱεροῦ, which we translate *the captain of the temple.*

Ver. 12. *And their brethren that did the work of the house were eight hundred twenty and two.*] Who discharged all the offices of the priests in the temple.

And Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchiah.

Ver. 13. *And his brethren, chief of the fathers, two hundred forty and two; and Amashai, the son of Azareel, the son of Ahasai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer.*

Ver. 14. *And their brethren, mighty men of valour, a hundred twenty and eight.*] Some of the priests were noted to be men of great courage, who, when there was occasion, fought for their country, especially to defend the house of God.

And their overseer was Zabdiel, the son of one of the great men.] Or, as the margin, *the son of Haggedolim*, was set over these valiant men; being descended (it is supposed by some) from some of the *great men* among the priests; as the word *Haggedolim* imports.

Ver. 15. *Also of the Levites; Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni.*] After the priests he gives an account of the Levites; among whom this person, and the two other mentioned in the next verses, were the chief.

Ver. 16. *And Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the chief of the Levites, had the oversight of the outward business of the house of God.*] There were a great many things to be done without the temple, as well as within, to prepare for the service of it; particularly, to gather the third part of a shekel, which every one was to give to make provision for it, (chap. x. 32.) which work was committed to these men. Though Bertram (de Republica Judaica, p. 160. 363.) thinks this may be the meaning, That they were judges and officers in the country, where their presence was necessary, when there were but few to discharge *such outward business in Israel*, as it is called in 1 Chron. xxvi. 29.

Ver. 17. *And Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, was the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer.*] He was the precentor (as we call him in our choirs) who began to sing the hymn at morning and evening sacrifice; which seems to be that in 1 Chron. xvi. 7, 8, &c. in the latter part of which they pray to God, as in the former they give thanks.

And Bakbukiah the second among his brethren, and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.] The first of these seems to have supplied the place of Mattaniah when he was absent.

Ver. 18. *All the Levites in the holy city were two hundred fourscore and four.*] Who certainly attended there; unless we suppose, with Bertram, that they went forth some time about some *outward business*, which they were required to dispatch.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, the porters: Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren that kept the gates, were a hundred seventy and two.*] Who had the custody of the gates of the temple.

Ver. 20. *And the residue of Israel, of the priests and the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance.*] He had said before that the rest of Israel dwelt in their own cities, (ver. 3.) and now he saith, that so did the rest of the priests and the Levites dwell in the cities anciently appointed for them.

Ver. 21. *But the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel.*] Which was a place upon the wall of Jerusalem, or a tower near it. (See chap. iii. 26. 2 Chron. xxvii. 3.)

And Ziha and Gipsa were over the Nethinims.] Two persons of their own body, I suppose, who were appointed to see them do their duty.

Ver. 22. *The overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micha.*] He was set over the Levites, to govern them, and see them discharge their offices in an orderly manner. The LXX. translate it Ἐπίσκοπος, and so doth the Vulgar; for he was supervisor of those below him.

Of the sons of Asaph, the singers were over the business of the house of God.] They were ordered to look after the reparation of the temple; for which they had the more leisure, both because they did not come in their courses to Jerusalem, as others did, but were settled there; and were to attend at the temple only at certain hours, after which they might look after other business.

Ver. 23. *For it was the king's commandment concerning them, that a certain portion should be for the singers' due for every day.*] Beside the forenamed reasons, they had great encouragement from the king, who ordered them a certain portion for their maintenance every day. Some are of opinion, that this was king David, who first appointed them to attend in a settled course; but it is more likely it was the king of Persia, who out of his munificence made them a daily allowance for their better support; they that sang hymns to their gods being persons much valued in all countries: and if David made any provision for them, it being lost, most likely was not yet restored.

Ver. 24. *And Pethahiah the son of Meshezabeel, of the children of Zerah the son of Judah.*] We had the children of Pharez named before, who settled at Jerusalem, (ver. 6.) and now it appears that some of the posterity of his brother did the same; for here is one man mentioned who was of great authority under the king of Persia, as it here follows.

Was at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people.] The king appointed him to receive all petitions from the people, and by him returned them answers. This seems the plain sense, according to our translation. But some translate it, not *at the king's hand*, but *on the king's part*, that is, he heard all causes in civil matters between the king and the people; as, about his tribute, or any grievance of which they complained. And Bertram thinks it appears by the very context, that he was appointed by the king (so *at his hand*, or *by his hand*, may be understood) to see all things supplied which the people were bound to furnish for the temple: or rather, as Pellicanus thinks, to see that what the king allowed for public sacrifices to be made for him, and for his family, (Ezra vi. 10.) was duly paid out of the treasury of the province.

Ver. 25. *And for the villages, with their fields, some of the children of Judah dwelt at Kirjath-arba, and in the villages thereof, and at Dibon, and in the villages thereof, and at Jekabzeel, and in the villages thereof.*] He gives no account of the families that dwelt in the country, as he doth of those that settled in Jerusalem, but only mentions the towns wherein they dwelt, which formerly had been walled cities, but now open villages, wherein houses were built, but not their walls.

Ver. 26. *And at Jeshua, and at Moladah, and at Beth-phelet.*] In this and in the following verses unto ver. 31. he mentions the other towns wherein the children of Judah dwelt, who did not come to inhabit at Jerusalem.

Ver. 27. *And at Hazar-shual, and at Beer-sheba, and in the villages thereof.*

Ver. 28. *And at Ziklag, and at Mekona, and in the villages thereof.*

Ver. 29. *And at En-rimmon, and at Zareah, and at Jarmuth.*

Ver. 30. *Zanoah, Adullam, and in their villages, at Lachish, and the fields thereof, at Azekah, and in the villages thereof. And they dwelt from Beer-sheba unto the valley of Hinnom.*] It appears by this account that some of these great towns or cities without walls had little villages about them, but others had only fields and no villages in them, the country being as yet but thinly peopled.

Ver. 31. *The children also of Benjamin from Geba dwelt at Michmash, and Aija, and Beth-el, and in their villages.*] Geba had formerly been an eminent place in this tribe, and so was Beth-el.

Ver. 32. *And at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah.*

Ver. 33. *Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim.*

Ver. 34. *Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat.*

Ver. 35. *Lod, and Ono, the valley of craftsmen.*] We read

of Lod and Ono before in the first book of Chronicles. (See chap. viii. 12.)

Ver. 36. *And of the Levites were divisions in Judah, and in Benjamin.*] The rest of the Levites who were not settled at Jerusalem were distributed among the people of Judah and Benjamin, who dwelt in the forenamed towns, whom they taught and instructed in religion and good manners.

We read also 1 Chron. ix. 3. that some of the children of Ephraim and Manasseh dwelt at Jerusalem; but, I suppose, they were so few, that they are not here remembered; or, perhaps, they removed to some other place when Jerusalem continued without walls.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *NOW these are the priests and the Levites that went up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua.*] The chief of the priests, as they are called ver. 7. whom he thought fit to mention here, because he intended to describe the dedication and consecration of the city, where the ministry of the priests and Levites was to be employed.

Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra.] If this was the same Ezra that wrote the foregoing book, or part of it, then he went back to Babylon after his coming up to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel, and came again instructed with a large power in the seventh year of Artaxerxes: but there are many reasons to prove he was not the same.

Ver. 2. *Amariah, Malluch, Hattash.*] He that is here called Malluch is called Melicu, ver. 14. and such differences are in some of the following names, which are repeated ver. 15, 16, &c. It being common among the Jews (as I have noted upon the book of Chronicles) to vary in the pronunciation of names, and sometimes to give two names.

Ver. 3. *Shechaniah, Rehum, Meremoth.*] The first of these is called Shebaniah, ver. 14. and the other two, in ver. 15. are called Harim and Meraioth.

Ver. 4. *Iddo, Ginnetho, Abijah.*] The second of these is called Ginnethon, ver. 16. which is a small difference. And Abijah was the head of the course of priests from whom Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, sprung, as Bertram thinks, de Rep. Jud. cap. 18. p. 311.

Ver. 5. *Miamin, Maadiah, Bilgah.*] The first of these is called Miniamin, and the next Moadiah, ver. 17. which are likewise very small variations.

Ver. 6. *Shemaiah, and Joiarib, Jedaiah.*

Ver. 7. *Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah.*] The first of these is called Sallai, ver. 20.

These were the chief of the priests.] Heads of the courses of the priests which David instituted, and were restored after their return from captivity, though as yet not so many as they had been before. (See Ezra vi. 18.)

And of their brethren, in the days of Jeshua.] Who was the high-priest at the return from captivity. The meaning seems to be, that they were not only heads of all those who were under them, but the chief of the heads, who were properly their brethren.

Ver. 8. *Moreover the Levites: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, which was over the thanksgiving, he and his brethren.*] They were appointed to see the psalm of thanksgiving sang every morning and evening at the burnt-sacrifice.

Ver. 9. *Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brethren, were over against them in the watches.*] That is, these ministered in their courses as the others did, and kept their stations over against them in their turns of attendance, which are called *their watches*, or wards. (See ver. 24.)

Ver. 10. *And Jeshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat Eliashib, and Eliashib begat Joiada.*

Ver. 11. *And Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua.*] In these two verses is an account of the succession of the high-priests, from the return of the captivity till the time that they began to bear the greatest sway in the Jewish nation. For this Jaddua is commonly thought to be that Jaddus the high-priest who went to meet Alexander the Great, in his pontifical habit, as he came from the conquest of Tyre and Gaza, and procured great privileges for the Jewish nation. Now this being granted, the Scripture history ends, as Grotius observes, where the very light of times (as he speaks), that is, the affairs of Alexander, begins: from which time all things in history are clear, the affairs of the Jews being recorded by many Greek writers (several of whom are now perished), as appears by St. Jerome upon Daniel.

Ver. 12. *And in the days of Joiakim were priests, the chief of the fathers: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah.*

Ver. 13. *Of Ezra, Meshullam,* &c.] As he had mentioned those who were chief of the priests in the days of Jeshua, so now he thinks fit to mention the sons of every one of them who officiated in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, either as assistants to their fathers, or succeeding them when they were dead. He begins with those three named ver. 1. and so proceeds in order to give an account of the rest, which reaches to ver. 22. and need not be transcribed.

Ver. 22. *The Levites, in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan,* (called Jonathan, ver. 11.) *and Jaddua, were recorded chief of the fathers; also the priests, to the reign of Darius the Persian.*] This is thought by many to be that Darius whom Alexander conquered, till whose time there were records kept of the principal families of the Levites, in the days of those four high-priests, as well as of the priests already mentioned.

Ver. 23. *The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, were written in the book of the Chronicles, even until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib.*] As there had been a register of them in the public records before that time from Jeshua to Johanan. Some think this refers to 1 Chron. ix. 14, &c.

Ver. 24. *And the chief of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brethren over against them, to praise and to give thanks, according to the commandment of David the man of God.*] These were particularly appointed for this office, which was of great importance.

Ward over against ward.] In their turns, one coming on when another went out, to attend in their courses, which are called *wards*.

Ver. 25. *Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, were porters, keeping the ward at the thresholds of the gates.*] Of the house of God, where they attended and performed their office; or, as some will have it, at the *treasuries*, as in the margin of our Bibles.

Ver. 26. *These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.*] It is impossible to give a certain account why these are so particularly registered in this book; but we may be sure there was some great reason for it in those days: perhaps, that it might demonstrate their care to employ the best men in all offices for which they were fit; and that they took special care to preserve a faithful record of those who were to serve God as his ministers, as long as they were a nation; which they have not a long time been, and so all distinctions among them are confounded.

Ver. 27. *And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps.*] As Solomon and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the Lord when it was built, (of which see 1 Kings viii. 2 Chron. vii.) so now Nehemiah, having set things in good order, thought it meet to dedicate the city, whose wall was built, and gates set up, (ver. 30.) as a place in which God had chosen to dwell, by settling his house here. And therefore they assembled to beseech his blessing and protection upon this city; which being made strong, and well defended, they hoped to serve God in his house there with greater quietness and security.

The Jewish doctors are of opinion, that the oracle being wanting in the temple, this dedication gave no new sanctity, but only restored it to the old; for it was still *the holy city*, as it is called twice in the foregoing chapter of this book, chap. xi. 1. 18. See Selden, lib. iii. de Synedriis, cap. 13. sect. 6. where he observes, that it being said here it was dedicated *with a song* (for so it is in the Hebrew), there was some particular song of dedication, which had been formerly used, which was now sung upon this occasion. And some think, that ever after this time they made a yearly commemoration of this dedication, as they conceive there was of Solomon's dedication of the temple. For the heathen, who imitated the Jews (whose temple Solomon built two hundred and sixty-three years before Rome was built), were wont so to do. But Selden thinks Hospinianus rightly judges, that the Maccabees kept the first anniversary dedication, chap. 14. sect. 7. and upon another account.

Ver. 28. *And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of Netophathi.*

Ver. 29. *Also from the house of Gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba and Azmaveth.*] These were the places where they had settled their habitations; from whence, upon Nehemiah's summons, they came to be present and assist at this solemnity.

For the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem.] That they might be the more ready to attend the service of God, when there should be occasion.

Ver. 30. *And the priests and the Levites purified themselves.*] With certain ablutions and expiations, that especially which is mentioned in Numb. xix. where a *water of separation* is prescribed to purify all uncleanness, ver. 9, &c. which is called *the water of purifying*, Numb. viii. 7.

And purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.] By sprinkling, I suppose, the same water upon them, and by prayers, and sacrifices.

Ver. 31. *Then I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great companies of them that gave thanks.*] So the LXX. translate the Hebrew words *shethe tothoth gedoloth*, δύο περὶ αἰνέσεως μεγάλους, *two great for praise*; that is, *two great choirs*, as the Vulgar translates it, which most versions follow. But our great Selden thinks the words should be translated, *two eucharistical sacrifices*, prepared for the altars, which were proper to the present business. The Spanish Jews translate the words, *two grand processions*, (lib. iii. de Syned. cap. 13. sect. 6. p. 210. and see Dr. Hammond upon Psal. xxiv. annot. p. 139.)

Whereof one went on the right hand upon the wall towards the dung-gate.] We add those words, *whereof one*, because of the other mentioned ver. 38. but in the Hebrew the words are, *going on the right*, &c.

Ver. 32. *And after them went Hoshaiah, and half of the princes of Judah.*

Ver. 33. *And Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam.*] Not Ezra the scribe, who was in a more honourable place, (ver. 36.)

Ver. 34. *Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah.*

Ver. 35. *And certain of the priests' sons with trumpets; namely, Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph.*

Ver. 36. *And his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God, and Ezra the scribe before them.*] They, in this verse and the former, were priests; and therefore Ezra, who was an eminent priest, led them up at the head of them.

Ver. 37. *And at the fountain-gate, which was over against them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David.*] See chap. iii. 15.

At the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the water-gate eastward.

Ver. 38. *And the other company of them that gave thanks went over against them, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond the tower of the furnaces, even unto the broad wall;*

Ver. 39. *And from above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate, and above the fish-gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep-gate: and they stood still in the prison-gate.*

Ver. 40. *So stood the two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me.*] The great man beforementioned translates the first words, *So stood the two eucharistical sacrifices in the house of God.*

The order wherein they thus marched, in a pompous manner, round about the city, now seems a little obscure: but the sense of the whole description is this; That they being met together in the same place, half of the rulers went upon the wall on the right hand, accompanied with several priests and Levites, and Ezra the scribe at the head of them, (ver. 36.) and the other half took the left hand, and walked upon the wall in the same order, accompanied with Nehemiah, who brought up the rear of them, (ver. 38.) and at length both parts of this *chorus* met in the temple; and there they stood still, and completed their praises and thanksgivings,

and offered sacrifices, as it here follows. Where all the people walked it is not certain, but only that half of them went with Nehemiah upon the wall; the rest, it is likely, walking below, because the wall could not contain them.

Ver. 41. *And the priests; Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets.*

Ver. 42. *And Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer: and the singers sang loud, with Jezrahiah their overseer.*] It doth not appear that they sounded the trumpets or sang while they were in the procession, but the song and the music began when they came to the house of God.

Ver. 43. *Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced.*] Feasting, I suppose, upon the eucharistical sacrifices which were then offered.

For God had made them rejoice with great joy.] By restoring the holy city to such a secure condition, that they praised the Lord there without fear of disturbance.

The wives also and the children rejoiced.] It was an universal joy.

So that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.] The singers sang with such loud voices, and had so many loud instruments, the women and children also shouting, that they might be heard at a great distance: or, the meaning may be, that the report of it was spread into far-distant countries.

Ver. 44. *And at that time were some appointed over the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the first-fruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them, out of the fields of the cities, the portions of the law for the priests and Levites.*] By *the treasures*, he means those places where the oblations, first-fruits, tithes, (which they had promised to pay duly, chap. x. 31, &c.) were laid up, and preserved for the use of the priests and Levites. Of which, that they might not be defrauded, a certain officer was at this time appointed, to see they were brought in according to the law, and to take care that every one had his portion.

For Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited.] They were so glad to see such a great concourse of them, (ver. 27, &c.) and that they performed their duty upon this occasion to the general satisfaction of all that were present, that their hearts were enlarged in love to them, which moved them to take care they should never want the provision appointed by God for them.

Ver. 45. *And both the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and the ward of the purification.*] These and other ministers (who also were Levites) did their duty so carefully, that they were much in the people's favour. For the singers *kept the ward of their God*, that is, sang orderly in their courses, and praised God; and the porters *kept the ward of purification*, that is, duly observed the orders about *purification*, in not suffering any unclean person or unclean thing to come into the house of God.

According to the commandment of David, and of Solomon his son.] Who had regulated all things belonging to the duty of these persons. (See 1 Chron. xxv. xxvi.)

Ver. 46. *For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God.*] There were other famous men joined with Asaph, *viz.* Heman and Jeduthun; but he was the principal person whom David employed in this regulation. And this verse gives the reason why the Levites and the singers performed their duty so accurately; because, from the time of David, who constituted their orders and offices, there were some great men who presided over them, and were careful both to instruct them in their duty, and keep them to it.

Ver. 47. *And all Israel, in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, gave the portions of the singers and the porters every day his portion.*] Those men that were appointed to look after the treasures, mentioned ver. 44. did their duty so well, that these inferior officers, much less the rest of the Levites and priests, never wanted what was due unto them, but had it every day while Zerubbabel and Nehemiah governed.

And they sanctified holy things unto the Levites, and the Levites sanctified them unto the children of Aaron.] The people separated and set apart the tenth part of their crop for the use of the Levites; and the Levites separated from their tithes the tenth part of them for their priests. For the people had no right to the tenth part, but it was holy, that is, to be separated from the rest for God's ministers, the Levites; and the Levites had no right to the tenth part of their tithes which they had received from the people, but it was to be set apart (which is called *sanctified*) for the children of Aaron, that is, the priests.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *ON that day they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; and therein was found written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever.*] This was not done upon the day of the dedication of the wall of the city, but upon some day after Nehemiah was returned to Jerusalem from Persia, whither he went to wait upon the king, (ver. 6.) For it is not likely that the people, who were so well affected to the ministers of God, as we read in the foregoing chapter, should so soon forget and neglect them; or that those who were appointed to look after their concerns, (chap. xii. 44.) should be turned out of their office immediately, or lay aside all care of them: for it is apparent, from ver. 10. of this chapter, their dues were not paid them when Nehemiah was not there to look after them. But when he was returned, all this was amended, and other abuses corrected: he continuing the public reading of the law, at stated times, probably on the great festivals, when all the people met together, (such as those mentioned chap. viii.) upon some day of which that portion of Scripture was read, in Deut. xxiii. 3. which forbids the admission of the Ammonites and Moabites into the congregation of the Lord; the meaning whereof see in my annotations there. I will only add here, that they who by *the congregation of God*, in this place, understand the public assemblies for Divine worship, are very much mistaken: for no man, of any nation, was forbidden to come and pray to God at the temple, but men of every nation, who would become proselytes, were admitted into their communion; and if they would be circumcised, had like privileges with all other Israelites, even to eat the passover, (Exod. xii. 48, 49.) They therefore, that think the meaning is, they should be excluded from all public offices, interpret it better: but that is not the truth neither;

for it is to be understood of marrying with them, as I have shewn in the explication of that law.

Ver. 2. *Because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing.*] See upon Deut. xxiii. 4, 5.

Ver. 3. *Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude.*] Who were born of strangers, whom the law would not allow to partake of the rites of marriage with Israelites.

Ver. 4. *And before this.*] That is, before this separation was made.

Eliashib the priest.] There were several of this name in those times, and some of them priests, (Ezra x. 6. 24. 26. 37.) But this seems to have been the high-priest, mentioned chap. iii. 1. for his family was much corrupted, as appears from ver. 28. of this chapter.

Having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God.] Here the singular number is used for the plural; for he had not the oversight of one chamber only, but of all the chambers, as the following verses, 5. 9. shew. But this may seem to indicate, that Eliashib was not high-priest, it being below him to be *set over the chamber* (as the phrase is in the Hebrew), though the high-priest, no doubt, had an inspection over them all.

Was allied unto Tobiah.] An Ammonite, as he is often called in this book; with whom he ought to have contracted no affinity, by suffering his grandson to marry with Sanballat's daughter; who was the fast friend of Tobiah, and the great enemy of the Jews. We read also in Ezra that several of the priests had married strange wives; and among the rest, some of the sons of the high-priest are there mentioned.

Ver. 5. *And he had prepared for him a great chamber.*] By breaking down the partitions, it is likely, between several little chambers, where holy things were laid, he prepared one great room for his reception.

Where aforetime they laid the meat-offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil (which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters), and the offerings of the priests.] All the offerings that belonged to the ministers of God (and the vessels wherewith they ministered), which there had been great care taken should be brought into these chambers, (the latter end of chap. x.) were now all profanely thrown out to make room for this man.

Ver. 6. *But in all this time was not I at Jerusalem.*] They took this boldness in Nehemiah's absence; and were the more audacious, because many of the nobles of Judah (it is likely) favoured this Tobiah, and were his friends, as they had been heretofore, (chap. vi. 17, 18.)

For in the two-and-thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon came I unto the king.] He was governor twelve years in this province; but did not continue all that time in Judea: for he sometimes stepped to Babylon, to give an account of his management to the king, who, it is likely (as I before observed), would not dispense with so long an absence from his attendance to his office at court. (See upon chap. ii. 6. v. 41.)

And after certain days.] In the Hebrew the words are *at the end of days*, that is, at the end of the year. For so the word *jamim* [*days*] often signifies in Scripture, Exod. xiii. 10. Lev. xxv. 29. (See below, ver. 15.)

Obtained I leave of the king.] To return to Jerusalem: from whence, it is probable, he heard of the forenamed disorders, and therefore once more begged leave to go thither, that he might redress them.

Ver. 7. *And I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah.*] He was fully informed what evil had been committed, before he went about to reform it.

In preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God.] In the court of the Israelites, which was a sacred place, into which no stranger might enter.

Ver. 8. *And it grieved me sore; therefore I cast forth all the household-stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber.*] His indignation was raised, as well as his sorrow, to see such a profanation: first, in bringing a stranger into the place where only Israelites were to come; and he an Ammonite, one of the worst of the strange nations, and a greater enemy of the Jews than many of the Ammonites; for whose sake he had removed the holy things, and put Tobiah in their place, who brought his household-stuff along with him; and all this done by the high-priest, who ought to have opposed such an attempt, and, indeed, was the only man that could have hindered it, till Nehemiah came, whose authority, as governor under the king of Persia, was superior to his; by which he threw all his goods out of the chamber, and forced him also to depart. Here is no mention of his reprehending Eliashib, which is an argument, that he died after Nehemiah went from Jerusalem.

Ver. 9. *Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers; and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat-offering and the frankincense.*] He gave order, that the chambers, which had been thus profaned, should be restored to their former sanctity by the water of purification, mentioned in the nineteenth of Numbers; whereby things, as well as persons, were cleansed from their impurities. And when the chambers were thus prepared, he brought in again all the vessels, and other things, (mentioned ver. 5.) which had been thrown out to make room for Tobiah.

Ver. 10. *And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them.*] For either the people did not pay them well, when they saw they were not laid up for their proper use in the place appointed, or Eliashib employed them for the entertainment of Tobiah; which he might as well do, as bring him into the sacred place: into which when they were not brought, the people, not knowing what became of them, might keep them to themselves. (See Bishop Montague, of Tithes, p. 347.)

For the Levites and the singers that did the work were fled every one to his field.] This made those that attended the service at Jerusalem forsake the city, and betake themselves to their country concerns, where they might make provision for the sustenance of their families. And, indeed, it is a great artifice of the devil, as Wolfius here observes, by his instruments to defraud the ministers of religion of their necessary maintenance, that he may thereby abolish religion itself.

Ver. 11. *Then contended I with the rulers, and said.*] He earnestly expostulated with them, and reproved them.

Why is the house of God forsaken?] There was no account to be given of it, but the negligence of the magistrates; whom he awakens to their duty, by representing to

them that God himself was highly affronted, by having none of his servants to attend him at his house.

And I gathered them together.] He recalled the Levites to Jerusalem out of the country; whither they were fled to look after their own estates.

And set them in their place.] Every one to his proper work and business.

Ver. 12. *Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn, and the new wine, and the oil, unto the treasuries.*] When they saw these things were likely to go the right way, and be employed to their proper uses, they brought them to their proper place. For the people (as Conradus Pellicanus here notes) readily obey, if the magistrates and the priests be not remiss in their duty.

Ver. 13. *And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe; and of the Levites, Pedaiah; and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah: for they were counted faithful; and their office was to distribute unto their brethren.*] There had been some appointed heretofore unto this office, (chap. x. 44, &c.) but they not performing their trust, Nehemiah sought out some persons, here mentioned, who had the general reputation of being men of integrity; whose business it was to give every one of their brethren his portion.

Ver. 14. *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof.*] It is very natural here to observe, that to make provision for the maintenance of God's ministers, and of his worship and service, is a work of high esteem with God. For these are the *good deeds* (as appears by the foregoing verses) for which Nehemiah recommends himself to the Divine favour and remembrance. And therefore, what shall we think of the times wherein we live; when men account them the most religious to God-ward, who would unfurnish the house of God most, and who most rob his priests? This is the reflection which Mr. Mede made upon these words of Nehemiah, book i. discourse xxxiv.

Ver. 15. *In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine-presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses: as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath-day.*] The treading wine-presses, shews that he came back in the latter end of the year, (as I have explained *in the end of days*, ver. 6.) when he found them carrying in sheaves and wine, and all manner of burdens (that is, doing all manner of work), on the sabbath, as if it had been a common day.

And I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals.] Or, as Pellicanus translates it, *I contested with them, that they should sell provisions on such days as they might be sold, and not on the sabbath.*

Ver. 16. *There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware.*] The city of Tyre was a place of great trade, and, lying on the sea, abounded with fish, which they brought from thence to Joppa, and so to Jerusalem. Tyre was nigh to Sidon, which had its name (as Justin saith, lib. xviii.) "ab ubertate piscium," *from plenty of fish.*

And sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.] Not only in the country, but in the holy city, as Jerusalem was called, where holy assemblies were to be held, and God worshipped solemnly, on the sabbath.

Ver. 17. *Then I contended with the nobles of Judah.*] As I had done before, ver. 11. for they who did not correct abuses when it was in their power, were more in fault than they that committed them.

And said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath-day?] For if they had exercised their authority, the people durst not have done as they did.

Ver. 18. *Did not your fathers thus? and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city?*] He bids them reflect and consider, that this was one of the crimes of which their fathers were guilty; for which God suffered them to be carried captive out of their land, and their city to be destroyed. (See Jer. xvii. 19—21, &c.)

Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel, by profaning the sabbath.] This aggravated their guilt, that they would not beware of those sins which had been their ruin; and would bring greater judgments upon them, because they were not amended by what they had suffered.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark.*] That is, when they who sat there could not see to do any thing, which was about sunsetting, the mountains about Jerusalem intercepting the light there sooner than in other places.

Before the sabbath.] In the evening of that day.

I commanded, that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath; and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath-day.] It seems, he could not trust to the common porters of the gates; and therefore appointed some of his own family, who he knew would neither be careless nor corrupted, to see the gates were kept shut, and all traffic hindered.

Ver. 20. *So the merchants, and sellers of all kind of ware.*] Who came from Tyre and other places, (ver. 16.)

Lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.] In the open fields (as appears by the next verse), where, perhaps, they pitched their tents, and opened their packs, hoping to sell their wares on the sabbath to the country people, though they could not get admittance into Jerusalem.

Ver. 21. *Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall?*] He solemnly declared to them, and called God to witness, that he would not suffer them to lodge there any more.

If ye do so again, I will lay hands on you.] Seize their persons and their goods, and punish them as offenders.

From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath.] Such power have good magistrates; especially, when they are resolute. And it is very observable, that these being men of other nations, were not bound by the law of the sabbath, and did not transgress in breaking it; yet he would not permit them to make the Jews, who were under the obligation of the law, to break it; and thereby trouble the commonwealth of Israel, by drawing the people into sin. It is also observable, that though buying and selling was not a servile work, yet he thought this comprehended in those words, "Thou shalt do no manner of work."

Ver. 22. *And I commanded the Levites, that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath-day.*] He thought the Levites would be more reverenced than his servants; and therefore

appointed them to this office of keeping the gates on the sabbath-day, that it might not fail to be sanctified as it ought to be. And they being also on that day to attend upon other offices which were holy, he commanded them also to cleanse themselves by some known purification, which might procure them the greater reverence. There was another reason why he joined the Levites with his servants to look after the gates on the sabbath-day; because he would have this watch continued, when he and his servants were gone from Jerusalem, till this evil custom was quite broken.

Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.] He had beseeched God to remember his good deeds; (ver. 14.) but, to shew that he did not think there was any proper merit or worthiness in them, which required a reward as a debt in justice due unto them, he here explains himself, and desires to be rewarded, or rather pardoned, out of God's free goodness, according to *the greatness* or *the multitude* of his mercies.

Ver. 23. *In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab.*] They had at this very time married strangers, as Pellicanus thinks; and by what Nehemiah did for their correction, one would think some were again revolted into that sin, which they had most solemnly renounced both before him and before Ezra, (chap. x. 30. Ezra x.) So hard is it to root out tares, which will be continually sprouting up again.

Ver. 24. *And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people.*] Whom they had married. For their mothers, with whom they were bred, spake to them in the language of their own country, and not in the language of the Jews; which it seems by this was very different from that of Ashdod, though they were neighbours to the Philistines. And so was the language of the Egyptians, and other countries thereabout, very different, as Bochartus observes in his Canaan, lib. ii. cap. 1. (See Scaliger, de Emend. Temp. lib. vi. p. 580.) But there doth not seem to have been such difference between the language of the Canaanites and the Hebrews in the time of Abraham; for he made use of no interpreters, that we read of, in his conversation with them. Yet it is probable, that by length of time these people had altered their language very much, which was preserved pure among the Jews.

Ver. 25. *And I contended with them, and cursed them.*] He expostulated with them, and denounced God's judgment against them; or, as Aben Ezra thinks, he excommunicated them, and cast them out of the society of God's people. But that was in use only when they could not punish offenders according to their law, which now they had power to do; and accordingly it follows, that he did inflict punishments upon them.

And smote certain of them.] Ordered the officers to beat some of the most notorious offenders, either with rods, or with scourges, according to Deut. xxv. 2.

And plucked off their hair.] Which was a great disgrace in those eastern countries; (see Isa. i. 6. Jer. xlviii. 37.) the hair being esteemed a great ornament, and a token one was a free-man. Therefore *plucking off the hair* was a putting them to shame, and making them look like vile slaves.

And made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.] He also took an oath of them that they would reform. But this he had done before; (chap. x. 29, 30.) and therefore, since the most sacred promises of amendment did not keep them fast to God, he also severely chastised them in the manner before related, that nothing might be wanting to make them better.

Ver. 26. *Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things?*] He argued also with them, and persuaded them to amend, from the example of the greatest men, who had been undone by such marriages, particularly king Solomon.

Yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless, even him did outlandish women cause to sin.] As much as to say, If such a man as he, who excelled all men in wisdom, and was so highly in God's favour, that he preferred him before all his brethren to be king over all Israel, was not safe from seducement by strange women, how shall ye be able to preserve yourselves from their enticements?

Ver. 27. *Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God, in marrying strange wives?*] That is, Would you have me connive at this wickedness, and so bring guilt upon myself, and ruin upon you?

Ver. 28. *And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high-priest.*] It is supposed that Eliashib died before Nehemiah returned from Persia, and Joiada his son succeeded him, one of whose sons had offended in this matter. He was his grandson.

Was the son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite.] He is said by Josephus to be that Manasseh, who, by Sanballat's interest, procured leave to build a temple in Mount Gerizim, to which all the Jews that had married strange wives resorted, (lib. xi. cap. 8.) and, as Solomon Virga saith, in Schebet Judah, he made proclamation in all the countries round about, that whosoever would come to his temple, they should pay neither first-fruits nor tithes, but only make voluntary offerings; by which he gained many of the poor sort to him. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 15. p. 623.)

Therefore I chased him from me.] That he should not serve at the altar; which Josephus will have to be decreed by the great Sanhedrin, who, if he would have before them renounced that unlawful wife, and put her away, offered to continue him in the exercise of his priesthood. See Selden, de Succession. in Pontif. lib. ii. cap. 6. and lib. ii. de Synedr. cap. 15. p. 649. where he observes, that Solomon Virga saith, he was put out of his ministry at the temple by an assembly of all the priests, who met together and expelled him. But there was no need of their authority, for Nehemiah himself *chased him from him*, that is, banished him from Judea, as Bertram expounds this phrase, in his de Repub. Jud. cap. 13. p. 165, &c.

Ver. 29. *Remember them, O my God.*] To punish them (that is, according to their deserts), as he desired God to remember him by rewarding him for the good he had done. But Rasi takes it for a prayer to God, to reform them and render them good for evil.

Because they have defiled the priesthood.] God required greater purity in the priests than in other Israelites, and in the high-priests especially, who might marry none but a

virgin of his own people. (See Lev. xxi. 6, 7. unto ver. 16.)

And the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.] There was a covenant made with Phinehas (Numb. xxv.) of an everlasting priesthood, which they had violated, because the covenant was mutual, binding them to observe the laws of the priesthood, as God engaged himself to preserve them in their office. What covenant was made with the Levites, I do not find; but I suppose the meaning is, they dishonoured the whole tribe of Levi, who were set apart for Divine ministries. For it is likely some of the Levites had transgressed in this matter, by the bad example of the priests. This great corruption of the priests seems to have been the occasion of God's sending Malachi, the last of the prophets, to correct it, after Ezra and Nehemiah had not been able to root out this corruption. And the covenant here mentioned, was that made in the twentieth of Artaxerxes, wherein they engaged to put away their strange wives. Thus Dr. Alix, whose judgment I prefer to my own, in this point.

Ver. 30. *Thus cleansed I them from all strangers.*] That is, both priests and Levites were separated from their strange wives.

And appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business.] To observe their courses of attendance at the house of God, and every one to perform there that business which was proper to him.

Ver. 31. *And for the wood-offering, at times appointed, and for the first-fruits.*] He commanded them to observe the decrees which had been passed some time ago, (chap. x. 34, 35.) Maimonides, in his treatise of the Manner of offering Sacrifices, chap. 14. gathers from these words, that it was lawful for any man, freely to vow either wine, or frankincense, or oil, or wood, to burn on the altar: for this, saith he, was a kind of sacrifice or offering, as Nehemiah here informs us.

Remember me, O my God, for good.] He concludes his book with a short prayer to God, wherein he commends himself, and all he had done, unto God's gracious acceptance. As it becomes all men, especially those who are employed in Divine things, if they have done any thing that is good, to remember it was by God's help and assistance, not by their own power; beseeching the Father of mercies, by his only-begotten Son, to make it serviceable to his church, and his own good. Thus Joh. Wolfius concludes his commentary upon this book.

THE

BOOK OF ESTHER.

THERE is a great variety of opinions concerning the author of this book. Whom a great number of late interpreters, and some of the Hebrew doctors, take to have been Mordecai; which is the common opinion of the Latins, and of Clemens Alexandrinus among the Greeks; which, they think, is sufficiently warranted by those words in the ninth chapter, ver. 20, &c. where it is said, *Mordecai wrote all these things, and sent letters unto the Jews,* &c. This, they think, relates to this whole history, which he wrote as it is recorded in this book: but those words plainly relate only to the decree of observing the feast of Purim perpetually; which supposes they had been acquainted with the occasion and ground of it, before those letters came, as Huetius observes; who therefore is of the same opinion with the Talmudists in Baba Bathra, that this book was written by the men of the great synagogue. Which opinion he the rather embraces (though I see no ground at all for it), because it comprehends theirs who think Mordecai was the author, and theirs who ascribe it to Ezra, and theirs who think it was Joiakim the son of Jeshua the high-priest; for all these might well have been in that synagogue. Whoever was the author, Maimonides saith (in his More Nevochim, par. ii. cap. 45.) their wise men openly declare, the book of Esther was dictated by the Holy Ghost; that is, as he explains it, by a motion or impulse (as he calls it) from the Spirit of God, who excited him to write this history, as by the same motion others indited psalms, and gave wholesome precepts, to regulate the lives of men. (See chap. x. 3.)

And that this history fell out after the captivity of Babylon was ended, and after the time of Darius the Mede, is very evident: for Shushan was not the royal city of the Medes, but of the Persians. Nor had the Medes so large a dominion, as from India to Ethiopia. But in what reign of the Persian kings these things fell out, is hard to determine. (See the last verse of this book.)

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass, in the days of Ahasuerus.*] This was a Persian, but which of them is a great doubt; for learned men think several of them had this name. There are, I think, eight several opinions about him here mentioned. Our great primate Usher takes him to have been Darius Hystaspes; but he married the daughter of the great Cyrus, to confirm himself in his kingdom, and would not have so easily parted with her as Ahasuerus did with Vashti. The great Scaliger therefore thinks him to have been his successor Xerxes; whose wife's name being Amystris, he takes her for Esther, this name being in the Persian language Ham-Esther. But this hath been con-

futed by many learned men, particularly by Jacobus Capellus; who observes, that this Amystris was the daughter of a powerful man among the Persians, whom Herodotus calls Otanes. Several other reasons he gives against this in his Historia Sacra et Exotica, ad A. M. 3640. 3650. where by good arguments he proves it was not Artaxerxes Longimanus, nor Darius Nothus, nor Artaxerxes Mnemon, but concludes, that it was the next king, Ochus, which agrees well with his Persian name, which was Achasch, to which Verosch being added as his surname, he was called by the Persians Achasch-Verosch, which the Greeks translated Ahasuerus.

(This is Ahasuerus which reigned from India even unto Ethiopia, over a hundred and seven-and-twenty provinces).] We are told by Herodotus, that Darius conquered India, (lib. iv. cap. 44.) And there might well be so many provinces between that and Ethiopia, whether we understand thereby the country beyond Egypt, or that near Arabia. Herodotus seems to direct us to the former, when he saith, That Darius found by his conquests, that Asia, in that eastern part of the world, was like to Lybia.

Ver. 2. *That in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom.*] Enjoying peace and quietness throughout his large dominions. Some think, this phrase, *when he sat on the throne of his kingdom*, signifies when he began to reign. But this is confuted by ver. 3. which saith, *in the third year of his reign* he did what follows.

Which was in Shushan the palace.] This was a noble city, which Strabo calls Πόλιν ἀξιολογοτάτην, *a most famous and highly-to-be-praised city*; where Cyrus and the Persian kings, after the conquest of the Medes (whose country was remote), settled their royal seat, that they might not be far from Babylon. The country about it also was wonderfully fruitful, producing a hundred, and sometimes two hundred fold, as he writes, lib. xv. p. 727. 731. It was built, as Pliny saith, by Darius: (lib. vi. cap. 27.) or rather enlarged, by building there a most magnificent palace, as Ælian explains it; (lib. xiii. de Animal. cap. 59.) which Aristotle, in his book de Mundo, calls Θαυμαστὸν βασίλειον οἶκον, *a wonderful royal palace*, shining with gold, and amber, and ivory.

Ver. 3. *In the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants.*] By his *servants* are meant his subjects; who were called servants in the eastern countries. And it was the manner of the Roman emperors sometimes to feast all the people of Rome, as well as the senate.

The power of Persia and Media.] And first he speaks of the feast made for the great men, whom he calls the *power of Media and Persia;* men in power, as we now speak.

The nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him.] He explains who they were; the governors of provinces, and other noble persons, who were all then at his court. The word *parthemim,* which we translate *nobles,* some would have to be the corruption of the Greek word παράτιμος, *honourable persons;* and Junius, with others, deduce it from the Greek word πρῶτος. But the Greeks were not yet got among them; and therefore it is a Persian word, signifying governors, as R. Solomon expounds it: and Joseph Kimchi thinks they were such great men as governed that tract of land that lay upon the river Phrath, that is, Euphrates. But Hottinger will have it to be a compound word from *par,* which signifies *high,* and *ram,* which signifies *spirit;* as much as to say, high-spirited or heroic persons: which seems to me to be but an ingenious conceit.

What the occasion of this feast was, is variously conjectured. Some think, it was begun on his birth-day. The Targum saith, a great rebellion had been lately suppressed, which filled him with joy. But the next words seem to inform us, that it was to shew his magnificent greatness to all his subjects. For in those countries they delighted much in making great feasts; as we read afterward, that Alexander (when he was there) entertained τετρακοσίους ἡγεμόνας, *four hundred captains,* or great commanders, who all sat in silver chairs, &c. as Duris tells us in Athenæus, lib. i. Deipnosoph. cap. 14.

Ver. 4. *When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majesty, many days, even a hundred and fourscore days.*] Which was for the space of six months; from the vernal to the autumnal equinox; which is a hundred fourscore and seven days. For Vashti kept a feast of seven days, at the end of his feast for the women of Susa, as Ochus did for the men, (ver. 7. 10.) Thus Jacobus Capellus. Some indeed will have it, that he was thus long in making preparation for this splendid entertainment, which did not last many days. But this custom is continued still to this day, of keeping an annual festival a hundred and eighty days, if we may give credit to Dr. Fryar, who lived lately in this country, and gives us an account of it in his Travels, (letter v. cap. 12. p. 348.)

Ver. 5. *And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days.*] Not only to the inhabitants of Shushan, but to all that were present in the city, out of all parts of his dominions, the Israelites not excepted, as the Targum saith.

In the court of the garden of the king's palace.] In the entrance of the royal palace; which was very spacious, and planted with all sorts of fruit-trees, and aromatics, as the Targum explains it.

Ver. 6. *Where were white, green, and blue hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble.*] How the Targum came to fancy that these hangings, being spread from one tree to another, were tied to them with silken purple strings, I know not; for the text saith expressly, they were hanged on pillars of marble, set up, no doubt, for that purpose.

The beds were of gold and silver.] On which they sat, or rather lay, at their meat. The *beds* themselves were of *melitim* (as Jonathan expresses it), of the softest wool; that is, the Milesian, which is the best in the world, as Bochartus hath observed out of many authors, in his Phaleg. lib. i. cap. 8. But the *bedsteads* were of *gold and silver;* that is, studded with gold and silver, or overlaid with plates of them, as the manner was; as Dietericus shews in his Antiq. Biblicæ, p. 388.

Upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black marble.] In the Hebrew, Upon a pavement *of bahat, and ses, and dar, and sochereth,* which signify several sorts of stones, as Bochartus hath proved beyond contradiction: but what stones are here meant is not easy to resolve, nor is it of much moment to know. He hath spent a large

chapter to prove that *dar* signifies a *pearl;* which, though very precious, it is not incredible was used in this Persian luxury, among other stones, to adorn this pavement. Which he justifies by many good arguments; and shews there are examples of such profuseness in other histories, (Hierozoicon, par. ii. lib. v. cap. 8.) Drusius also hath said a great deal about *sochereth,* to which I refer the learned reader, Miscellanea, cent. i. cap. 74.

Ver. 7. *And they gave them drink in vessels of gold (the vessels being diverse one from another), and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king.*] There was a great variety of wines, it is likely, as well as great plenty; and great variety of vessels to drink in, different from all that they had seen. So Drusius translates those words in the parentheses, *variantia diversa vasa,* as the Jews are said, chap. iii. 8. to have laws different from all other people, where there is the same word. (Miscellanea, cent. i. cap. 16.) Strabo saith, these princes were so luxurious, that they had their wine from Syria, called *chalybonium;* and the water they drank with it, from Eulæus, it being πάντων ἐλαφρότατον, *the lightest of all other waters.*

Ver. 8. *And the drinking was according to the law; none did compel.*] The plainest translation seems to be, *the drinking according to custom, none did compel.* It was customary to compel men to drink more than they had a mind to do; but this prince left every man to his liberty, that no man should incur any displeasure if he did not drink what others would impose upon him. But Drusius thinks the word *dath* never signifies a custom.

For so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure.] Which made the feast most acceptable, when every one drank for his own pleasure, and not for other men's. And such had been the custom of the ancient Persians, who (as Xenophon tells us) were very sparing in eating and drinking, though in his time they were grown extremely riotous. But nothing was more barbarous than their pressing men to drink beyond their inclinations; which the son of Sirach expresses by the word βλίβειν, (Ecclus. xxxi. 37.) it being no less inhuman to force a man to drink when he is not thirsty, than to deny him drink when he is ready to perish with thirst. According to an ancient saying of Sophocles in Athenæus, lib. x. Τὸ πρὸς βίαν πίνειν, ἴσον κακὸν τῷ δίψᾷν βίᾳ. *To compel a man to drink by force, is as bad as to compel him to endure thirst for want of drink.*

Ver. 9. *Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women.*] I have before said, it is not likely (as primate Usher thinks) that this was Atossa the daughter of Cyrus, whom Darius Hystaspes married: for the reason of that match being to strengthen himself in the kingdom, he would not have so lightly parted with her. Jacobus Capellus thinks, by the addition of the word *Par* to her name, she was called by the Persians *Par-Vashti,* which by the Greeks is pronounced *Parysatis,* the mother of Artaxerxes Mnemon. But she could not be the wife of Ochus, who was his son.

In the royal house which belonged to king Ahasuerus.] Where she entertained the wives of the princes, and other women; not in the open air, as the men were, but more privately, as was fit for women, who were not wont to eat together with men.

Ver. 10. *On the seventh day.*] Which was in the conclusion of this feast.

When the heart of the king was merry with wine.] Which made him a little forget himself, and not consider what became both his own state and that of the queen.

He commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king.] These eunuchs (as the word is translated in the margin) were men of principal authority in the court; where they had great offices about the king. And therefore he did her honour enough, in sending so many of them to wait upon her, and let her know his pleasure.

Ver. 11. *To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown-royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty; for she was fair to look on.*] It is a very absurd conceit of the former Targum, who saith, he commanded her to be brought quite naked, that her comely proportions might be seen, as well as her face. And yet in Pirke Eliezer they are so bold as to say, it was the custom of the Persian kings to have their wives publicly dance before them naked. It was too much, she thought, that he should expose her countenance to be beheld, especially by all the people: which was contrary to the custom of that country; where they kept their wives very close from the sight of all men but themselves.

Ver. 12. *But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains.*] Which she might do out of modesty, not pride: because, as I said, it was contrary to the custom; and the great men, inflamed with wine, might be provoked by her beauty (as Jacobus Capellus speaks) to lust after her.

Therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.] It was the more immoderate, because his blood was heated with wine; which made his passion too strong for his reason. Otherwise he would not have thought it decent for the queen, nor safe for himself, to have her beauty (which was very great) exposed in this unusual manner. Josephus saith, he was the more enraged, because he sent more than once to her, but still she refused to come. Which is not probable; for though it would have become him to send again to know her reason for refusing, yet he persisting in his command, one would think she would have yielded obedience.

Ver. 13. *Then the king said to the wise men, which knew the times.*] What had been done in former days; or, what was fit to be done on all occasions: men well versed in ancient histories (as Vitringa explains it), and in the laws and customs of their country; who were able to give counsel in all dubious and perplexed cases, such as this was, which rarely happened. (De Synag. Veteri, par. ii. lib. i. cap. 8.)

(For so was the king's manner towards all that knew law and judgment.] It was his constant practice; and he did not forget this laudable custom even in his drink, to consult with his counsellors before he resolved any thing; who were skilled in the laws of their country, and could judge what advice was to be given in all cases.

Ver. 14. *And the next unto him was Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media.*] These are called the king's seven counsellors in Ezra vii. 14. who took their

original from Daniel, who, being in great power under Darius the Mede, and having a great hand in framing the government of that state, caused the Persian court (as Mr. Mede conjectures) to resemble that of heaven, ordaining seven chief princes to stand before the king, as seven great angels are said in Scripture to stand before the throne of God. (See book i. discourse x.)

Which saw the king's face.] Who were his principal ministers, and admitted into his presence; which was not allowed to every one, but only to the great men of the kingdom. (See Grotius upon Matt. xviii. 10.)

And which sat the first in the kingdom).] Next to the king; being his royal judges, who determined what was right among the Persians, and were the interpreters of the laws of the country. Of whom Herodotus makes mention, lib. iii. cap. 14. 31. and Plutarch, in Artaxerxes, as primate Usher observes.

Ver. 15. *What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?*] These words make it plain, that the forenamed great persons were the supreme judges what was law; and that the king did not govern arbitrarily, by his own will and pleasure, but by the laws of the kingdom.

Ver. 16. *And Memucan answered before the king and the princes.*] He is the last of the seven princes, mentioned ver. 14. which inclines me to think, that the puny judge, as we now speak, delivered his opinion first (as they do here), and so they spake in order till they came to the first. And thus I find the latter Targum takes it, *He was the least of them, and therefore gave his opinion first.* But others take it quite contrary, that Memucan was the president of the council, or the king asked him first what he thought of the matter.

Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that are in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus.] He declared it to be a crime of such a dangerous nature, that it would have a mischievous influence upon the whole kingdom, if it were not severely punished.

Ver. 17. *For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women.*] This transgression of the king's commandment (as Maimonides explains it, in More Nevoch. par. i. cap. 23.) will be known every where; for it could not be concealed, being a public affront to his majesty.

So that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.] His opinion was, that then they would take upon them to disobey their husbands, and slight their commands, when they heard what Vashti had done, and was not punished for it.

Ver. 18. *Likewise shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen.*] He repeats it again, that it would have this effect immediately, especially on the great women, who, from this time forward, would take example by the queen, and say to their lords, Are you more honourable than Ahasuerus the king, whose wife would not come when she was sent for? So the latter Targum.

Thus shall there arise too much contempt and wrath.] Contempt in the wives, and wrath in their husbands, which would make great brawlings and contentions in all families.

Ver. 19. *If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes.*] He would not have a mere order given, but a law made, which, as it follows, should stand inviolable. The same Targum saith, that Memucan had married a wife, who, being richer than himself, was very proud, and would not speak to him but in her own language; and now he took this opportunity to be revenged of her, and make her do whatever he pleased.

That it be not altered.] This was cunningly done, saith the same Targum; for if she had recovered the king's favour, when his anger was over, this counsel might have cost him his head. But what made laws unalterable among them is uncertain. The Targum saith, because the king confirmed it by an oath, and then it became immutable: or, it was sealed, not only by the king, but by all the princes, as one would guess from Dan. vi. 8. 12. 15.

That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she.] This was a very rigorous decree. But Drusius observes, that the Persians were inclined to be severe to their wives.

Ver. 20. *And when the king's decree, which he shall make, shall be published throughout all his empire (for it is great), all the wives shall give to their husbands honour, both to great and small.*] For none would dare to disobey, when they heard that the greatness of the queen could not preserve her from such a heavy punishment.

Ver. 21. *And the saying pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan.*] With whom all the other six judges concurred in their opinion.

Ver. 22. *For he sent letters into all the king's provinces; into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language.*] The meaning seems to be, that this decree was published in every province, after the manner that such things used to be proclaimed, and in their own tongue, that every one, women as well as men, might understand it.

That every man should bear rule in his own house; and that it should be published according to the language of every people.] The decree runs thus in the Hebrew, *That every man should bear rule in his own house, and speak in the language of his people.* It seems the Persians had yielded so much to their wives, that when they had married a stranger, they suffered her to bring her own language into the family. But this decree altered that custom, and allowed no other language to be spoken in the family but that of the man, and of the people among whom he lived. (See De Dieu.) And thus the former Targum, *Every man shall rule in his own house, and compel his wife to speak in the language of her husband, and in the language of his people.* Which, indeed, was a token of dominion; all conquerors endeavouring to bring in their own language into the country which they have conquered. The latter Targum hath only these words, that *every man shall be honoured in his own house, and speak according to the language of his people;* that is, give his commands in his own language, which every one was bound to learn.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AFTER these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.*] When his anger was abated, and the wine gone out of his head, his ancient love began to revive to Vashti, whose beauty was exceeding charming; but then he remembered withal her undutiful behaviour, and the decree he had passed against her, which was irrevocable, so that he was in a great strait. Yet the latter Targum saith he called for the seven princes, who had given him the forenamed counsel, and said unto them, I am no longer angry at Vashti, but at you, who, from what I said in my drink, took occasion to destroy her; and thereupon commanded them all to be slain. For which there is no ground; but by what follows it appears to be a fable.

Ver. 2. *Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king.*] The same servants, in all likelihood, mentioned ver. 14. of the foregoing chapter, who continually attended him. And when they saw him afflicted, contrived by a new love to blot out the remembrance of the old.

Ver. 3. *And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace.*] The better to divert him, they propound that a great number of the most beautiful virgins that could be found should be brought from all parts to Shushan, that out of them he might take his choice which of them he would make his queen.

To the house of the women.] Or rather *of the virgins;* for the house of those who were women or wives was different from this, and under another governor, (ver. 14.)

Unto the custody of Hegai the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women.] Of the virgins, as Shaashgaz was of the women or concubines, (ver. 14.)

And let their things for purification be given them.] In this house, saith the former Targum, there was a place for bathing, and they were furnished with ointments and perfumes, and all other things necessary either for ornament or cleanliness; for the Hebrew word signifies both.

Ver. 4. *And let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen in the stead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.*] He approved of the advice, and gave order about it.

Ver. 5. *Now, in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai.*] Who is thought by some to have come to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel (because one of that name is mentioned in his company), but returned back again to Babylon, being one of the king's servants; for he was one of his guard, or keeper of the door; or, as we translate it, he *sat in the king's gate,* (ver. 19. 21.) But this was another Mordecai, as appears from the time wherein he lived, in the latter end of the Persian empire.

The son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite.] The latter Targum here gives his pedigree down from Benjamin, the son of Jacob, but mixed with such fables that no credit can be given to it.

Ver. 6. *Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.*] Mordecai was not then carried away, but Kish, who is mentioned just before, from whom Mordecai was descended. (See our Rainoldus, Cens. lib. Apocryph. prælect. cxlvi.) And Bonfrerius also hath well observed, (in his appendix to his Præloquium to his Commentaries on the Scripture, chap. 7.) if he himself was then brought from Jerusalem, he must be at least a hundred and ten years old (supposing this history to have fallen out in the time of Darius Hystaspes) when he came into the place of Haman; for, from the captivity of Jeconiah, till their deliverance from captivity, was eighty-one years; and from thence to the reign of Darius Hystaspes was almost twenty years, as Eusebius saith; and Haman was hanged in the twelfth year of this king; so here are a hundred and ten years. But it is not credible that a man of such a great age should be advanced to such authority as he had; and more incredible that Esther, who was his cousin-german, should be beloved of Ahasuerus when she was an old maid, as she must have been, if Mordecai was of these years.

Ver. 7. *And he brought up Hadassah (that is, Esther), his uncle's daughter.*] Her Jewish name was *Hadassah,* signifying in Chaldee a *myrtle,* as the former Targum saith; but her Persian name was *Esther,* which he fancies was from the Greek word Ἀστὴρ, a *star.* But the other Targum derives it from *satar,* which signifies *hidden,* because she was hidden in Mordecai's house a long time, and no man saw her but he; or rather, because her nation was concealed, and not known. Primate Usher thinks, that as Vashti was Atossa, so Esther was she whom the heathens called Artystona; who, as Herodotus saith, was the wife Darius loved above all other, and had her statue made of pure gold, (lib. iii. cap. 88. and lib. vii. cap. 69.) He saith, indeed, that she also was another daughter of Cyrus, and sister to Atossa; but he was either ignorant (as that great man thinks) of the Persian genealogies; or out of envy concealed their original. It is more likely he gives a true account of her descent, as he doth of other things, and she was not Esther.

For she had neither father nor mother.] Her father died, saith the former Targum, when her mother was big with child of her, and her mother died as soon as she was brought to bed.

And the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai (when her father and mother were dead) took for his own daughter.] The Vulgar translates it, *adopted her* for his daughter. Which doth not signify such an adoption as among the Romans (as Mr. Selden observes), but only paternal love and care to bring up a child who had lost her parents. For the Hebrew doctors are so far from acknowledging any *adoption,* that they say he took her to make her his wife. So Jarchi by *bat* [*daughter*] understands *beth,* a *house;* which the LXX. follow, he educated her εἰς γυναῖκα, *to be his wife,* (lib. de Succession. cap. 4. p. 18.)

Ver. 8. *So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women.*] The words which we translate *was brought,* may be translated *was taken;* and that by force, as the word sometimes signifies, and as the former Targum here explains it, *she was brought by violence.* The latter Targum tells the manner of it at large, That Mordecai, hearing of this order, hid his cousin

in a private place where the officers could not find her. But when the virgins were gathered together, and Esther was missing, whom all the neighbours knew to be a very great beauty, they procured an order from the king to Mordecai, that upon pain of death he should produce her; which he did. But perhaps I take too much notice of these Jewish fables.

Ver. 9. *And the maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him.*] That is, Hegai, who was much taken with her countenance, and her mien, and her sweet disposition (it is likely), and all other things, which he thought would make her acceptable to the king.

And he speedily gave her her things for purification.] That she might be fit before the usual time to go in unto the king, that is, in a year's time, as some understand it, (ver. 12. 16.)

With such things as belonged to her.] For her clothes and diet, which the former Targum makes to be very sumptuous.

And seven maidens.] One for every day of the week, saith the same Targum, whose names he gives us, and the days of the week on which they waited.

Which were meet to be given her, out of the king's house.] Persons of quality, fit to attend her.

And he preferred her and her maids unto the best place of the house of the women.] And did her so much honour, that he assigned her and her maids the best apartment in the house of the virgins.

Ver. 10. *Esther had not shewed her people nor her kindred; for Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew it.*] Lest she should be contemned, and looked upon as no better than a slave.

Ver. 11. *And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what should become of her.*] He might walk there without being suspected, because he belonged to the court, and was a man of condition; for those that were carried away in Jeconiah's captivity (as his ancestors were) were of the better sort, (2 Kings xxiv. 14, &c. Dan. i. 4.) And Esther might find means, by some of those that attended her, to let him know the state of her health, and of her affairs.

Ver. 12. *Now, when every maid's turn was come to go in to king Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months.*] They were kept close so long, that the king might be sure he should not be imposed upon by a child begotten by another man. And besides, it was suitable to the state of the king to have them wait a great while, before they were brought into his company: and another reason here follows. Herodotus explains the first words, lib. iii. cap. 69. where he saith, the Persian women go in to their husbands, ἐν περιτροπῇ, *in a circle*, by turns.

(For so were the days of their purifications accomplished, to wit, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours.] It is observed by Pliny, lib. xiii. cap. 1. that ointments were first invented by the Persians; which were very necessary in so hot a country, where men and women are apt to sweat much, and so smell rankly, without great care to keep themselves clean and sweet. For which purpose the oil of myrrh was much used, being very fragrant, and apt also to make the skin soft and smooth, and to cleanse it from scurf. The sweet odour served to the same use, to take away all ill scents, and, as some think, to make the body more vigorous.

There are many authors (as Fortunatus Scacchus observes) who take the word *mor* to signify not *myrrh*, but that fragrant herb which we call *marum*, or, as some think, *marjoram*, from which excellent oils were drawn: (lib. i. Myrothecium, cap. 50.) but he takes it, as we do, for *myrrh;* from whence not only a noble oil was drawn, but being beat to a powder, such a fumigation was made with it, as was offered unto their gods. Whence Athenæus blames Alexander's arrogance, for suffering Σμύρνα, καὶ τὰ ἄλλα θυμιάματα, *myrrh and other sweet odours to be offered to him*, (lib. xii. cap. 8.)

Six months.] This was a long time, which was set (first with that oil, and as many more with sweet odours) for their purification: or rather for their abstersion or cleansing, as the same Scacchus observes: for there were no such purifications here used, as were among the Jews; but it is a known thing, that, as women in all countries were wont to spend a great deal of time in their dressing, and trimming up of themselves, that they might appear well abroad; so much more in this country, and when they were to go to the bed of a great king. A year, indeed, was a long time; but Athenæus saith, that among the Sybarites (who were a delicate, luxurious people) there was a sanction that the women, when they were called to the public sacrifices at great festivals, πρὸ ἐνιαυτὸν τὴν παρασκευὴν ποιεῖσθαι, *were to make preparation for it a year before.*

And with other things for the purifying of the women).] Whatsoever was proper for this purpose, was used in their preparations for the king's bed.

Ver. 13. *Then thus came every maiden unto the king; whatsoever she desired was given her to go with her out of the house of the women unto the king's house.*] Whatsoever ornaments or attendants she desired.

Ver. 14. *In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines.*] She returned no more into the former house, having lost her virginity: but was treated in another house, as one of the king's wives: for so concubines were, of a secondary sort, as I have often noted:

She came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name.] For every one's name was registered, as the Targum saith, and the night, I suppose, when she went in unto the king.

Ver. 15. *Now, when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai (who had taken her for his daughter), was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing.*] But was contented with her own natural beauty, and desired nothing of art to recommend her.

But what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed.] Yet she did not refuse what he, who had been so kind to her, ordered for her.

And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her.] All that beheld her, as she passed from the house of the women to the king's house, admired her beauty: which needed no ornament, for the greatest ornaments of virgins are modesty (as Pellicanus speaks), silence, well-disciplined eyes, a serene countenance without levity, a horror of all wantonness; which meeting all in her, made her acceptable to every one that saw her.

Ver. 16. *So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into his house-royal.*] She was not sent back in the morning

unto the second house of the women, as the rest were, but the king kept her in his own house, intending to make her more than a concubine.

In the tenth month (which is the month Tebeth), in the seventh year of his reign.] He made the great feast we read of in the foregoing chapter in the third year of his reign, in the end of which Vashti was sent away. How it came to pass that it was so long before Esther was advanced to succeed her, seems difficult to resolve: but we are to consider, that a great deal of time was spent in gathering the virgins together, and that she was a year in preparing herself for admission to the king; and several, it is likely, went in before her, who had also their time for preparation; and took some time, it is likely, to try how he liked her wit, humour, and conversation.

Ver. 17. *And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen in the stead of Vashti.*] She being at this time, as Jacobus Capellus computes, twenty years old, ad A. M. 3645. But some make a question whether she did not commit a great sin to come at this dignity, not considering the custom of those times and countries. For those persons whom the king took into his bed after the manner beforementioned, were not harlots, but became his wives of a lower sort; for whom he provided ever after, and they were no longer chargeable to their parents or friends; nor might any other man marry them. Such a one Esther would have been, if he had not liked her so well as to do more for her. Which, no doubt, was ordered by a special providence of God, who thus rewarded her virtue, and also preserved the whole nation of the Jews from perishing.

Ver. 18. *Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast.*] So it was called, because it was made in honour of her, and, if we may believe Josephus, lasted a whole month.

And he made a release to the provinces.] At this feast he gave the people some ease in their imposts, and forgave them some of the duties they were bound to pay him. Some have affirmed, that this is reported by Herodotus to have been the custom of the Persian kings at their marriages. But I can find no more than this in him, that ὁ καθιστάμενος Βασιλεὺς, &c. *when he was made king, he remitted the tribute that was due to him from all the cities,* (lib. vi. cap. 59.)

And gave gifts, according to the state of the king.] He made great presents to the queen, as the manner of the Persian kings was; who gave to their queen at their marriage such a city to buy them clothes, such a one for their hair, another for their necklaces and other ornaments, and so for the rest of their expenses. Here the latter Targum tells an idle tale, how the king desired Esther to tell him what country she was of, and who were her ancestors from whom she descended. To which she answered, that her parents dying when she was an infant, she did not know who were her forefathers: which the king hearing, he released all men of their taxes, and gave them gifts, saying, I will be kind to all people of all nations, because I will be sure to be kind to the people of Esther, who are among some of them.

Ver. 19. *And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate.*] This doth not signify that there was another inquisition for virgins after Esther was married; but, to join this history with what follows, he repeats what was said before, ver. 2. that at the time when this second collection of virgins was made for the choice of a new wife, as there had been one before when Vashti was married, then Mordecai was in attendance at the gate of the palace; and so proceeds to shew how he discovered a plot against the life of the king.

Ver. 20. *Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people, as Mordecai had charged her.*] Which he would not have her to discover, lest she should be hated for her nation's sake, or her nation be envied for her good fortune.

For Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.] A rare example of virtue, that she should be so observant of him when she was a queen; for most forget what they were, when they are unexpectedly grown very great.

Ver. 21. *In those days (while Mordecai sat in the king's gate), two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.*] These were two great men, who, perhaps, kept the door of the king's bedchamber, and were incensed at the divorce of Vashti (whose creatures they were), or at the advancement of Esther, knowing her to be related to Mordecai, who they were afraid would be raised to greater power than themselves. Thus the former Targum writes, "Doth not the queen by her power with the king intend to turn us out of our places, and put in Mordecai?" therefore they resolved to poison him, as both that and the latter Targum understand it.

Ver. 22. *And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name.*] One of their servants, whose name (as Josephus saith) was Barnabazus, discovered the conspiracy to Mordecai, who found means to inform Esther of it, and she acquainted the king with it from Mordecai.

Ver. 23. *And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out.*] His information which he gave to the king appeared to be true, upon a due inquiry into the matter.

Therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the Chronicles before the king.] In the day-book, wherein all memorable things were recorded, to be read (as the Targum observes) before the king, when he required. Here we may see the infelicity and the danger of the most potent persons: the life of a great king depending upon the fidelity of one single person, whose service was neglected by the court, though a memorial was made of it. Thus all masters of families are obnoxious to the perfidiousness of their servants that wait upon them. They are the words of Conradus Pellicanus.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AFTER these things.*] About five years after, as appears from ver. 7.

Did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite.] He was descended from the royal race of the Amalekite kings, and grown into great favour in this court, as Daniel and his companions, who were of noble blood also, (Dan. i. 3.) The latter Targum hath given us the pedigree of Haman, up to Eliphaz, the eldest son of Esau.

And advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.] Either of his own or other nations. For it is likely the Persian kings, as the Chaldee before them, had many kings and princes, whom they had conquered, with them, who had the honour sometimes to sit on royal seats before them, (2 Kings xxv. 28.)

Ver. 2. *And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed and reverenced Haman; for the king had so commanded concerning him.*] To bow the knee or the body to all great persons was a common respect; for which there needed not a particular command to require this of every body with respect to Haman, since no doubt they did it to all princes, and would much more do it to him, who took place of them all, and was the prince's favourite. There was therefore some kind of Divine honour intended in this; such as was paid to the Persian kings themselves, to whom the Greeks would not pay this sort of respect, because it was accounted Divine. And the word *reverence* imports something beyond *bowing*, which was falling flat upon their faces to the ground. Such prostrations the kings of Persia expected: and Ahasuerus, to express his great affection to Haman, would have it paid to him. The former Targum I believe thought of this, when he saith, *They in the king's gate bowed down to his image which he had set up, and worshipped Haman.*

But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.] Because he was of a nation devoted by God to destruction, with whom therefore the Jews would have no friendship, nor shew them any kindness, but remember the injuries they had done them, (Deut. xxv. 18, 19.) But this doth not seem a reason weighty enough, why he should not pay him civil respect, which was given to all men in great place, especially since by denying it he might expose his whole nation to danger. This is an argument that there was something more intended: and accordingly the author of the apocryphal additions to this book understood it, who represents Mordecai praying after this manner: "Thou knowest, O Lord, that it is not contumacy, nor pride, nor desire of vain-glory, that makes me not worship Haman; for I would willingly kiss his feet, for the safety of Israel: but I do it, that I may not prefer the glory of a man to the glory of God; nor adore any one but thee my Lord alone."

Ver. 3. *Then the king's servants, which were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandments?*] I suppose it seemed strange to them, that one single person should refuse to do what every body did, especially since thereby he disobeyed the king: therefore they expostulated with him, to make him sensible of his duty and his danger.

Ver. 4. *Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them.*] Seemed not to regard what they said, and perhaps gave them no answer.

That they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand.] Whether he would persist in his stiffness, and what would be the issue of it.

For he had told them that he was a Jew.] Being much pressed by them, he confesses the reason why he could not do as they did. For, that they might not think it was pride or sullenness that made him not comply with the king's order, he acquaints them plainly of what religion and what nation he was; who might not shew any respect to an Amalekite (as some take it), or worship any but God alone, as I take the meaning to be. And thus the latter Targum here explains it: when they asked him why he did not obey the king, he answered, "What is the son of man that he should exalt himself? what is he that is born of a woman, who comes lamenting into the world, and is of few days, and then returns to his earth, that I should worship him? No, I worship God, the living God, who endures for ever," &c. And so he goes on, describing very well the glorious majesty of God, the Lord of heaven and earth, and thus concludes, "He is to be praised by us, and before him we ought to bow down ourselves."

Ver. 5. *And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.*] It is likely he did not mind what every one did that was in the king's gate (where there was a great crowd), till he was told of Mordecai's neglect; and then he marked him when he next passed by, and was highly enraged at him.

Ver. 6. *And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of king Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.*] He disdained to take so poor a revenge as to rid himself of one man alone, but resolved to make the whole nation suffer, who he knew were enemies to that nation from whence he sprung.

Ver. 7. *In the first month (that is the month Nisan), in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that is the lot, before Haman, from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is the month Adar.*] It was the manner of the eastern country, by casting lots into an urn, to inquire what days would be fortunate, and what not, to undertake any business in: according to which superstition Haman endeavoured to find what time of the year was most favourable to the Jews, and what most unlucky. And first he inquired what month was most unfortunate, and found the month Adar, which was the last month in the year, answerable to our February. For, as Guil. Schickard observes, there was no festival solemnity in this month, nor was it sanctified by any peculiar rites. And then he inquired the day, and found the thirteenth day was not auspicious to them, (ver. 13.) Some think there were as many lots as there were days in the year, and for every day he drew a lot; but found none to his mind, till he came to the last month of all, and to the middle of it. (See Hottinger's Smegma Orientale, p. 75.) Now this whole business was governed by a wonderful providence of God; by whom these lots were directed, and not by the Persian gods, to fall in the last month of the year; whereby almost a whole year intervened between the design and its execution, and gave time for Mordecai to acquaint Esther with it, and for her to intercede with the king, for the revoking or suspending his decree, and disappointing the conspiracy.

Ver. 8. *And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus.*] Or rather *had said:* for it is not likely he would cast his lots till he knew his mind, for fear he should lose his labour.

There is a certain people scattered abroad, and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom.] For a great number of them, being well settled in the land of their captivity, would not return to Judea when Cyrus gave them leave; whom Haman represents as a despicable people, or vagrants and stragglers (as the latter Targum un-

derstands it), dispersed here and there up and down in his dominions.

And their laws are diverse from all people, neither keep they the king's laws.] A proud, high-spirited people (as the same Targum represents the sense), who live by laws of their own, and will observe none of the king's; for they will neither eat of our meat, nor drink of our wine, nor keep our festivals; but have several of their own, on which they will not work, nor do the king's business. All which he sets forth at large in that paraphrase.

Therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.] The former Targum thus glosses upon these words, "The king gets nothing by them, while they live in this kingdom; but what will he not get if he destroys them all?" The other Targum makes him represent them as griping usurers, which was to the damage of the king's people.

Ver. 9. *If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed.*] He desires, not only a verbal command, but an order in writing, for their utter extirpation as a pestilent people.

And I will pay ten thousand talents of silver.] He promises to compensate the loss of the tribute which they paid yearly by a vast sum of money, which he would pay immediately. But he intended not to pay one farthing of it himself, it being easy to raise it out of the spoil of the Jews' goods, (ver. 13.)

To the hands of those that have the charge of the business.] Not of those who had the charge to kill them, but of those that received the king's money; as appears by the next words, *to bring it into the king's treasuries.* And so the same Targum, "I will pay it into the hands of those who coin the king's money;" that is, into the mint, as we now speak.

Ver. 10. *And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.*] Without any examination into the condition of the people, he consented to their destruction. So loath are men that love their pleasure to take any pains to distinguish between truth and falsehood.

Ver. 11. *And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given unto thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.*] He gave him power to draw up what decree he pleased, and seal it with his own ring; but as for the money, he loved him so much, he would have none of it.

Ver. 12. *Then were the king's scribes called.*] As there were sacred scribes among the Jews, who were men learned in the law, so there were political both among them and other nations, as L'Empereur observes upon Bertram, de Repub. Jud. p. 381. And there were two sorts of them; one of which was employed in writing public letters or contracts, and other acts that were to be signed by authority, the more honourable and highest of which were such as are called here the *king's scribes*, whom the Chaldee calls the *king's notaries*, and we now call *secretaries of state.*

On the thirteenth day of the first month.] This was not wisely projected, to let his design be known so long before it was to take effect; for the king's mind might alter, or the Jews might find some way to deliver themselves, or might steal out of the kingdom.

And there was written (according to all that Haman had commanded) unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province, according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.] He himself indited the decree by the royal authority, and made it, no doubt, as strict as it was possible; and perhaps commanded it to be executed under great penalties, by all manner of officers, who were required to take care to see it done. And that none might be ignorant, it was written in the language of every people, and in the character they could read.

Ver. 13. *And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces.*] Concerning these posts which were in use among the Persians, see Herodotus, lib. viii. cap. 98. where, describing the dispatches which were sent into Persia to carry the news of Xerxes's overthrow, he saith, Τουτέων δὲ τῶν Ἀγγέλων οὐδέν ἐστι θᾶσσον, ὅτι παραγίνεται δυπτὸν ἐον, &c. *There is nothing upon earth swifter than these messengers, whom neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor night, can hinder from finishing their course speedily.* The manner of which he there sets down, which the Persians, he saith, call Ἀγγαρήιον.

To destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.] This was a strong motive to such a bloody execution, that they who killed them should enrich themselves by their spoil.

Ver. 14. *The copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province, was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day.*] Copies of this original decree of the king were sent into every province, and there ordered to be published, requiring them to be ready against that day.

Ver. 15. *The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment; and the decree was given in Shushan the palace.*] He procured a new commandment from the king, requiring their speedy delivery of this decree, that the people might not want time to prepare for its execution; and he also got it signed by the king's council; for that seems to be meant by its being *given in Shushan.*

And the king and Haman sat down to drink.] It is likely Haman made an entertainment for the king, to thank him for his great kindness to him in this grant.

But the city Shushan was perplexed.] The Jews that lived there, who were very numerous, knew not what to do: and it is probable other people in the city were very fearful what would become of them; not knowing but that they might also suffer in such a massacre: and perhaps some of them were related to the Jews, or had made friendship with them, and therefore were much concerned at this horrid decree.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *WHEN Mordecai perceived all that was done.*] Which it is likely he heard by some friend before it was publicly known, but did not express his grief till the edict was hung up.

Mordecai rent his clothes.] Both before and behind, saith the latter Targum.

And put on sackcloth with ashes.] As the manner was, in great sorrow.

And went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry.] Saying, as the same Targum expresses it, What a heavy decree is this which the king and Haman have passed upon us? Not against a part of us, but upon us all, to root us out of the earth: whereupon all the Jews flocked about him; and he caused the book of the law to be brought to the gate of Shushan, covered with sackcloth; and therein he read those words of Moses in Deut. iv. 30, 31. "When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shall be obedient to his voice (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God), he will not forsake thee, nor destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he sware unto them." After which he exhorted them to fasting, humiliation, and repentance, according to the example of the Ninevites.

Ver. 2. *And came even before the king's gate.*] That his cry might come to the ears of Esther.

For none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.] But he durst not take his place in the gate, because none that were in mourning might come there: so careful they were, not in the least to disturb the king in his pleasures. By this it appears, as from many other places, that in the gate they made their court, as we speak, and dispatched all public affairs (as I have noted often before), which was here practised more than in other places, because the Persian monarchs lived more retired than other princes, few but those who attended them being admitted into their palace.

Ver. 3. *And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.*] All day long they fasted, and wept, and lamented themselves; and in the night many lay, not in their beds, but on the ground in sackcloth and ashes.

Ver. 4. *So Esther's maids and her chamberlains came and told it her.*] As a piece of news, or perhaps they understood there was some relation between them.

Then was the queen exceedingly grieved.] Imagining some mischief had befallen him, and not knowing what it was.

And she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him.] That he might come to court, and take his place in the gate.

But he received it not.] This, no doubt, very much increased her grief.

Ver. 5. *Then called Esther for Hatach, one of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her.*] In whom the king had a great confidence, and whom she could entrust with such a message.

And gave him a commandment to Mordecai, to know what it was, and why it was.] What was the cause of his weeping and wailing, and why he would not accept of the garments which she sent him; as the latter Targum very well explains it.

Ver. 6. *So Hatach went forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city, which was before the king's gate.*] Where, it is like, he still continued lamenting their miserable condition.

Ver. 7. *And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him.*] How he had refused to worship Haman (as the former Targum explains it), and how this had incensed him against the whole nation.

And of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them.] The ten thousand talents he had offered, to procure the king's consent to their destruction.

Some of the Jews here add another marvellous thing which *had happened* to Mordecai the very night before Hatach came to him, which he desired Esther might be acquainted withal: whether it be true or false, I think fit here to remember it (it seeming to be so piously designed), as I had it, near threescore years ago, from a great man in the Jewish learning, who quotes for it R. Moses Almosnino, in a book called Jede Moseh (the hands of Moses), where he says, That Mordecai going home in great heaviness, reflecting on the danger his whole nation was in, met three boys coming from school, whom he examined what they had learned that day; one of them told him his lesson had been in Prov. iii. 25, 26. "Be not afraid of sudden fear, nor of the desolation of the wicked when it cometh: for the Lord shall be thy confidence," &c. Then Mordecai cried out, I am confident this desolation shall not be so speedy. Then the second child told him he had learned that day, Isa. viii. 10. "Take counsel together, it shall come to nought; speak the word (or pronounce the decree), it shall not stand; for God is with us." O the wonderful goodness of God, said Mordecai, that thus out of the mouth of babes and sucklings ordaineth strength. And what have you learned? said he, to the third child; who answered, Isa. xlvi. 4. "Even to your old age I am he (that is, the God); unto hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear: even I will carry, and will deliver you." Now, blessed be God, cried Mordecai, that hath not left us comfortless; his hand shall be with us, as in former ages, &c. But another great man, in this learning, hath lately admonished me that this rabbin is but of yesterday, and designed to elude the prophecy of Psalm viii. quoted in the gospel, and therefore unworthy to be mentioned in this place.

Ver. 8. *Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew it unto Esther.*] That she might be fully satisfied what was intended.

And to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.] He charged her, I suppose, in the name of God, or, as she loved her nation, to go and earnestly to beseech the king to be merciful to the Jews, as the Targum expounds it.

Ver. 9. *And Hatach came, and told Esther the words of Mordecai.*

Ver. 10. *Again, Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai.*

Ver. 11. *All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know.*] That is, nobody, either in the court or in the whole kingdom, was ignorant.

That whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called.] Here the king kept retired from all company, but such as he called for, or was pleased to admit.

There is one law of his to put him to death.] Let him be of ever such quality there was no exception; but one law reached all that were so presumptuous. This seems to have

been an ancient law in that country, mentioned by Herodotus, lib. i. and Athenæus, lib. xii. But the former Targum will have it, that it was procured by Haman, that none might come into the king's presence unless he introduced them.

Except such to whom the king shall hold out his golden sceptre, that he may live.] Which, I suppose, was so seldom done, that few would venture to stand in need of a pardon. A sceptre was the ensign of the highest and most absolute authority: so that, as Wagenseil observes, when Mordecai was advanced to the greatest dignity next to the king, having royal apparel, and a great crown on his head, (viii. 15.) yet he had no sceptre; for that was proper and peculiar to the king.

But I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.] Which might justly make her fear his love was cooled to her, and then her person and petition might not be acceptable to him.

Ver. 12. *And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.*] There seems to have been more than one person that went with this message, to confirm the truth of what she said.

Ver. 13. *Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house more than all the Jews.*] He would not have her flatter herself with a vain imagination, that because she was queen she should be spared; for she would find no more privilege in the king's house than the rest of the Jews did abroad.

Ver. 14. *For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place.*] He did not know whence, but he confided in God, that by some means or other he would preserve them from utter destruction.

But thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed.] He would have her believe that God would cut off her and her family for self-love, and want of zeal to preserve her nation.

And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?] Rather than refuse to intercede for her people, he would have her think (though there was danger in it) that God had raised her up to the dignity in which she was, on purpose that she might be the deliverer of her people, and therefore go courageously about it.

Ver. 15. *Then Esther bade them to return Mordecai this answer:*

Ver. 16. *Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan.*] Not all into one public congregation, for that might have given suspicion of an intended insurrection, but in several private assemblies.

And fast ye for me, neither eat or drink three days, night or day.] None, or very few, could keep a fast for three days and nights, without tasting any meat or drink: the meaning therefore is, that they should make no set meal in their families, neither dinner nor supper, but only eat and drink so much at night as would support them in prayer to God for a blessing upon her undertaking; or, as Josephus understands it, they should abstain from all delicacies, and be content with hard and coarse fare. But Drusius thinks this fast was only one whole day and two nights, according as it is said of our Saviour, that he lay three days and three nights in the grave; and then they might fast so long without taking any refreshment: and in those hot countries we read of monks that fasted four or five days.

I also and my maidens will fast likewise.] It is not likely her maidens were Jews; yet notwithstanding they might be disposed to fast with her; which was not unusual with the gentiles in time of great distress, as appears by the story of the Ninevites, whose fast the Targum thinks Mordecai imitated, making the cattle, oxen, and sheep to abstain, as well as men and women.

And so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law.] Being thus recommended to God, she resolved not so much to regard the law, as the preservation of her people; for there are in some cases such violent circumstances, that to observe the law, as Grotius notes, would be to offend the chiefest law. Whither Puffendorf refers what we read in Valerius Maximus, lib. iii. cap. 7. n. 1. cap. 8. n. 6.

And if I perish, I perish.] This is not a speech of despondence, but of courage and resolution; being as much as to say, I am content to perish in so good a cause; and if I perish for it in this world (as the Targum glosses), I shall have my portion in the world to come.

Ver. 17. *So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.*] Betook himself to fasting and prayer (unto which he called all the Jews) as long as Esther required, omitting the joys of the paschal feast, and turning it into a fast, if we may believe the former Targum: for that paraphrast thinks, that Haman laying his plot in the month of Nisan, (ii. 7.) and Mordecai presently applying himself to defeat it, these things must fall out about the Passover, which was in this month. But in memory of this the Jews keep a fast on the thirteenth of Adar, which they call *Esther's fast.*

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass, on the third day.*] In the conclusion of the fast, or, as the former Targum, on the third day of the Passover.

That Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house.] But first, saith the latter Targum, she made a solemn prayer to God, with many tears, as soon as she was dressed, saying, "Thou art the great God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of my father Benjamin: as thou didst deliver Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, out of the fiery furnace, and Daniel from the lion's den, so deliver me now out of the hand of the king, and give me grace and favour in his eyes," &c. And so he goes on in a very long prayer.

And the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.] So that he could see every one that came into the court.

Ver. 2. *And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight.*] He was much moved, saith the former Targum, to see trouble in her countenance, and her eyes full of tears; and so immediately comforted her in the manner following.

And the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand.] In token of his favour, and inviting her approach. But the other Targum says, that the officers about him, as soon as she entered, ran to apprehend her, that she might be put to death: but the king stopped them, by his shewing she was acceptable to him. So true is that

of Solomon, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will," (Prov. xxi. 1.)

So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.] Kissed it, saith the Vulgar, or put her hand under it, saith Grotius, in token of her subjection and thankfulness for his favour.

Ver. 3. *Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom.*] This is an usual form of speech among kings, when their hearts are enlarged, and they overflow with affection to others, or when they give them the freest liberty to demand what they please, as Grotius explains it upon Matt. xiv. 7. It is a foolish addition, which the latter Targum here makes, that he excepted one thing, which was the building the house of the sanctuary at Jerusalem, which he would not grant, because he promised Geshem, Sanballat, and Tobiah, it should not be built, lest the Jews should rebel.

Ver. 4. *And Esther answered, If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.*] It was very prudent not to open her mind presently, but first to endear his affection by feasting, music, dancing, and whatsoever might please him: and it was no small pleasure, it is likely, that she invited his favourite to come to her entertainment together with him. There was also a singular providence of God in this matter, which so disposed her mind, that the high honour the king bestowed on Mordecai the next day might fall out between this and that, and make way for her petition.

Ver. 5. *And the king said, Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said.*] Get himself ready with all speed.

So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

Ver. 6. *And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine.*] At the conclusion of the entertainment: for they did not drink wine, but water, at the beginning of their feasts.

What is thy petition? and it shall be granted unto thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.] This shews it was not a sudden passion of love that made him speak so kindly to her before, but he had a settled affection for her, which disposed him to be very bountiful, and shewed he was much pleased with her entertainment.

Ver. 7. *Then answered Esther, and said, My petition and my request is,*

Ver. 8. *If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do to-morrow as the king hath said.*] That is, make her request to him: which she thought would be more seasonable, when she had won his heart by fresh expressions of her desire to please him, and obtained also a new promise from him, that he would deny her nothing: for there was need of a great preparation, to dispose him to do so great a thing for her, as to revoke or suspend his own decree. The latter Targum, after his fashion, gives several frivolous reasons why she invited Haman to the banquet twice; but the last of them is tolerable. The Israelites were in great expectation of the issue of this feasting, and hoped to see Haman presently cut off; but she was resolved to turn their thoughts the right way, that is, from her unto God, looking for mercy from their heavenly Father.

Ver. 9. *Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart.*] To think he was in such favour with the queen, as well as with the king.

But when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.] The Targum still repeats it, that he saw Mordecai would not rise up before his image.

Ver. 10. *Nevertheless Haman refrained himself.*] From taking any sudden revenge.

And when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh his wife.] The daughter of Totni (saith the latter Targum), one of the king of Persia's governors beyond the river.

Ver. 11. *And Haman told them of the glory of his riches.*] How splendidly he lived.

And the multitude of his children.] It was a glory in this country, as Drusius observes, to have abundance of children; but the Targum had no shame, when he affirms he had two hundred and fourscore, besides those ten that were princes in the provinces, and besides Shimstæus the king's secretary.

And all the things wherein the king had promoted him.] What offices and dignities he had conferred upon him.

And how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.] So that he took place of the greatest princes who were natives of the country, and of all the officers in the court.

Ver. 12. *Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to-morrow am I invited unto her also with the king.*] He did not fail to relate the peculiar honour the queen had done him, which he could not but look upon as a token that he was established in the favour of the court.

Ver. 13. *Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.*] How small a matter will spoil all the satisfaction of those who are arrived at the top of human felicity! immense riches, glory, and honour, gave not Haman so much pleasure, as he felt pain from one man's disrespect unto him: and yet he might have given himself ease before this, by speaking one word to the king to displace Mordecai, or put him to death, if his pride and passion would have let him be contented, without the destruction of a whole nation.

Ver. 14. *Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high.*] That men might see him that was hanged on it afar off, and be struck with the greater terror, by that spectacle, of giving any disgust to Haman.

And to-morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon.] They advised him not to wait till the general slaughter of all the Jews, but to rid him presently of Mordecai; for which he had now a fair opportunity, being to attend on the king to-morrow unto the banquet.

Then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet.] When his heart was eased of this trouble, the dispatch

of his enemy, and the banquet, giving him a double pleasure.

And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.] And set up before the door of Mordecai's house, saith the former Targum, against the plain words of this history, vii. 9. where it is said, they stood in Haman's house; from whence, it is possible, he intended to remove them to the door of Mordecai: that Targum hath a great deal of frivolous stuff about this consultation which Haman's friends had how to destroy Mordecai; some advising one way, and some another, but none approved of till this was propounded. The reason given for it is foolish; but at last he concludes piously, that the Jews were extremely troubled at the sight of the gallows, and all cried to God in the words of the Psalmist, (cxxiii. 2.) "Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us."

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *ON that night could not the king sleep.*] Now follows a wonderful turn of affairs: God so disposing it, that the king could take no rest in the night; and instead of music and singing, and diverting himself with his wives and concubines, he called for the records of the kingdom to be read to him.

And he commanded to bring the book of records of the Chronicles; and they were read before the king.] These were *diaries*, wherein was set down what passed every day, which we now call *journals*, (as I observed, ii. 13.) And in them it was the manner of the Persians to set down the names of those who had done the king any eminent service; as Grotius notes out of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Procopius.

Ver. 2. *And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.*] It was a singular providence of God, that they should read in that very part of the book wherein the service of Mordecai was recorded. And the latter Targum, to increase the wonder, saith, that Shimstæus, who brought the book, and opened it at this place, seeing this which was written of Mordecai, turned over the leaves, and would have read in another part of the book; but the leaves flew back again to the same place where he opened it, and he was forced to read that story to the king.

Ver. 3. *And the king said, What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him.*] Great men sometimes are unmindful of the highest services that are done them, and take no care to reward them. Though some think the king ordered him a reward, of which, by the artifice of those in the court, who hated the Jews, he was deprived. But there was a special providence in it, that he went without a reward then, which procured it for him most opportunely at this time. It is not improbable, that, as Josephus saith, the history of some of his ancestors was read before they came to his reign; wherein was set down what services men had done, and what preferment or gifts had been bestowed upon them; which moved the king to ask, when they came to this story of Mordecai, what had been done for him?

Ver. 4. *And the king said, Who is in the court?*] For he was resolved immediately to shew how sensible he was of his service.

(Now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him).] He was come very early to court, that he might gratify his revenge, and go with more pleasure to the banquet. This was another part of God's providence, to bring him so soon to court when the king was thus disposed.

Ver. 5. *And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.*] Which he durst not do, as great as he was, without leave.

Ver. 6. *So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour?*] The king, in all probability, would not have asked this question, but ordered himself what he thought fit, if God had not intended that Mordecai should have the greatest honour done him, and that by the judgment of his greatest enemy.

(Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?)] He had reason to think so, because he had already heaped so many favours upon him, and was now invited by the queen to keep him company at her banquet.

Ver. 7. *And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honour,*

Ver. 8. *Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear.*] When he went abroad, and appeared publicly among his people; which should rather be translated, *the royal robe*, an external garment, or stole, coming down to his feet, which none wore but himself.

And the horse that the king rideth upon.] I suppose it was a horse which none might ride upon but himself; like the mule among the kings of Israel, which was peculiarly appointed to their own use, as I have noted on 1 Kings i. 33. Herodotus (lib. i.) mentions such a generous and most noble horse belonging to the king of Persia.

And the crown-royal which is set upon his head.] That is, upon the horse's head, upon which there was a royal ornament; as there is now at Rome, called a *fiocco*. For *keter* is a large word, signifying any ornament about the head or the neck. And that this refers to the horse, not to the king, is plain in the Hebrew, and from the next verse, and ver. 10, 11. where there is no more mention of this *keter;* but only of the robe, and of the horse to which this royal ornament upon his head belonged. (See Ludovicus de Dieu.)

Ver. 9. *And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.*] This proclamation, in all likelihood, was made by some public officer.

Ver. 10. *Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate.*] It is very likely these words astonished Haman, and made

as great commotions in him, as the Targum here describes: but he durst not dispute the king's command, nor ask him what Mordecai he meant (there being many of that name), when the king had plainly told him on whom it was he intended to bestow this honour. But if he made any difficulty to obey this command, or desired to be excused, the king bade him say no more, but go (as the verse concludes), and *let nothing fail of all that he had spoken.*

Ver. 11. *Then took Haman the apparel, and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour.*] At which sight (saith the latter Targum) Esther praised God in the words of the Psalmist, cxiii. 7, 8. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill: that he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people." And Mordecai said those words, Psal. xxx. 11, 12. "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; I will praise thee, O Lord God my redeemer, that thou hast not let mine enemy triumph over me."

Ver. 12. *And Mordecai came again to the king's gate.*] Returned to his duty, clothed not in sackcloth, as the Targum represents him (for then he might not have come there), but in his own raiment. Shewing he was not puffed up with the honour that had been done him; but foreseeing, no doubt, the happy event which followed.

But Haman hasted to his house mourning, and having his head covered.] Which was a token of sadness and dejection.

Ver. 13. *And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends.*] Who were waiting to hear what was become of Mordecai, whom they advised to get hanged on the gallows.

Every thing that had befallen him.] How cross every thing had fallen out to him that morning.

Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife.] They whose counsel he had used in his divination by lots, now changed their mind; and his wife concurred in opinion with them, that these were bad omens.

If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.] They had observed, it is likely, how the Jews had been wonderfully raised from under great oppressions, since the time of Cyrus; and thence conclude there was a particular providence that took care of them. And it is possible they had heard something of the oracle against the Amalekites, that they should perish by the hands of the Jews. And, as Dr. Jackson excellently notes, (book i. on the Creed, chap. 21.) Those plots which would have crushed other nations, did often turn to their advancement, and the fall of their enemies. Whence both their rising and falling, and consequently the success of such as opposed them, was in the apprehension of wise men of other nations merely fatal; altogether incorrigible by worldly policy. Whence these wise men of Chaldea (as he calls them), upon the first notice of the wind's turning for them, read Haman's destiny. And accordingly Achior's speech to Holofernes, Judith v. 17, &c. (whether truly uttered, or feigned by the penman of the history), was framed according to the known experience of those times, and contained such advices as a faithful counsellor, well acquainted with the estate of the Jews, should have given to his lord, who did not so well understand it.

Ver. 14. *And while they were yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.*] He hearing their opinion, that these things boded some evil to him, was very slow, we may well suppose, in his motion; and could have been content, perhaps, not to have gone to the banquet: or he was musing what to do for his preservation, which made him stay longer than he should have done, before he waited on the king to it.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.*

Ver. 2. *And the king said again to Esther on the second day, at the banquet of wine.*] When his heart was merry, and highly delighted with his entertainment.

What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom.] This promise, renewed the third time, gave her courage to present her suit to him.

Ver. 3. *Then Esther the queen.*] Lifting up her eyes to heaven, as the Targum enlarges it.

Answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king.] Thus she prefaced to her request, when she only beseeched him to accept of a banquet from her.

Let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request.] That is, the life of her people.

Ver. 4. *For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish.*] For Haman had offered a great sum of money to purchase their destruction. She uses so many words, that she might express the outrageous mischief intended against them, which was no less than their extermination.

But if we had been sold for bond-men and bond-women I had held my tongue.] For that might have turned to the king's profit, and they might, at one time or other, have recovered their liberty.

Although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.] The king would not have gained so much as he would have lost by it. But there is another interpretation which Aben Ezra mentions, who takes the Hebrew word *hatzar* not to signify an *enemy*, but *distress, misery*, and *trouble.* Which makes this sense, *If they had sold us for slaves, I had not troubled the king with my petition, because that misery of ours would not have been so much to the king's damage.* (See De Dieu.)

Ver. 5. *Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?*] It seemed incredible that any man should entertain such a thought (for the king, I suppose, had forgot the decree Haman had obtained from him), to cut off a whole nation. In the Hebrew the words are, *Who is he whose heart hath filled him to do so?* A speech like that in the New Testament, Acts v. 3. "Why hath

Satan filled thine heart?" Made thee so daring and presumptuous. The like, Eccles. viii. 11.

Ver. 6. *And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman.*] She found now that she need not fear to speak plainly.

Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.] For he could not but see the danger he was in to lose his greatness and his life. And his fear was the greater, now he knew the queen was one of that nation whom he had conspired to destroy.

Ver. 7. *And the king, arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath, went into the palace-garden.*] To take breath, and cool himself; being in a great commotion, by variety of passions boiling and struggling in him. For as he loved the queen, so he loved Haman; and yet was full of indignation that he should engage him in such an odious design.

And Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen.] Who he thought might have so much tenderness, as to take compassion upon him and forgive him.

For he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.] Which he discerned by the king's countenance, and by his going out of the room in a great fume and violent passion; which, it is likely, broke out into threatening words.

Ver. 8. *Then the king returned out of the palace-garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was.*] They sat, or rather lay upon beds, as they ate and drank: and Haman fell down as a supplicant at the feet of Esther, laying his hand upon her knees, and beseeching her to take pity upon him. I have not read any where that this was the manner among the Persians; but it was among the Greeks and Romans, to embrace the knees of those whom they petitioned to be favourable to them. Insomuch, that it was a rite in their religious worship to touch the knees of their gods. (See Pliny, lib. xi. cap. 45.) And thus Sulpitius Severus takes it to have been done here, "Deinde regressus rex, vidit Aman reginæ genua amplexum."

Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me in the house?] The king finding him in this posture, interpreted it, as if he were so impudent as, before the king's face, and in his own palace, to offer violence to the queen's chastity. Not that he believed this was his intention; but in his furious passion he turned every thing to the worst sense, and made use of it to aggravate his crime.

As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.] That he might not see the face of the king any more; or rather, as a man condemned, this told him his doom: for it is likely the king, when he saw him in that posture, made a sign what they should do with him, which immediately was performed. Though Aben Ezra saith, this was always done to those with whom the king was angry, though they were not put to death; to shew them what they deserved, never to see the king more.

Ver. 9. *And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king.*] The latter Targum saith, that this Harbonah was one of Haman's counsel, who advised him to set up the gallows to hang Mordecai; but, seeing this strange turn of affairs, incensed the king, by telling him what Haman designed against him who had saved the king's life.

Behold also the gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman.] Upon which he intended to make Mordecai an example to all those that should presume to offend him.

Then the king said, Hang him thereon.] But whether dead or alive is not said, as Salmasius observes; who shews, by many instances, (in his book De Cruce, p. 494.) that it was the manner of the Persians, first to cut off the heads of malefactors, and then to hang them on a gibbet. Josephus, indeed, saith, that he commanded Haman, ἐκ σταυροῦ κρεμασθέντα ἀποθανεῖν, *to be put to death hanging on a cross:* but crucifying was not a Persian punishment; nor did the Romans let the bodies of malefactors die on the cross themselves; but they extinguished them some other way.

Ver. 10. *So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.*] The latter Targum here adds a great deal of frivolous stuff, how the king sent for Mordecai, and charged him to see the execution done upon Haman; and how he begged of Mordecai to spare his life, at least not to hang him, who had been so great, like a varlet, &c. but he concludes very well, that now was verified the observation of Solomon, (Prov. xi. 8.) "The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead."

I cannot think fit to end this chapter without taking notice of a reflection which a great man of our own church made long ago upon it: that, in this wonderful deliverance of the Jewish nation, there was no extraordinary manifestation of God's power, no particular cause or agent, that was in its working advanced above the ordinary pitch of nature; and yet the contrivance, or suiting of those ordinary agents appointed by God, is more admirable than if the same end had been effected by means truly miraculous. That a king should not sleep is not unusual, nor that he should solace his waking thoughts by hearing the annals of his own kingdom, or the journals of his own reign, read to him, &c. But that he should lie awake at that time especially, when Haman was watching to destroy the Jews, and that, in the chronicles of the kingdom, they should light on that place where Mordecai's unrewarded services were recorded; and that he should resolve forthwith to do him honour; and Haman come in at that very nick of time when the king was so disposed; and should ignorantly determine what honour should be done him, and be made the instrument of it: this was from the keeper of Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, and was truly marvellous in his people's sight, as Dr. Jackson speaks in his second sermon upon 2 Chron. vi. 39, 40. where he observes, that miracles are in their nature more apt to affect the sense; but such secret contrivances of God's wisdom and providence do more affect the understanding: the one works astonishment, the other admiration. For which reason, miracles were more frequent in the infancy of our religion, to enforce unbelievers to give ear to the words of life, and to take God's promises (which otherwise they might have slighted) into serious consideration: but now the ways of God's wisdom, or secret dispositions of his providence, are more apt to cherish the seed of life sown in the hearts of believers. Miracles by continual frequency would cease to be miracles, and not be wondered at; whereas the unsearchable ways of God's wisdom in contriving extraordinary successes, by means ordinarily, will incessantly breed in us matter of admiration: and his wise contrivances are still,

in one kind or other, most visible, but we want eyes or hearts to observe or contemplate them.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *ON that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman, the Jews' enemy, unto Esther the queen.*] That is, he bestowed on her the whole estate belonging to his family (for that is meant by *his house*); his lands, his goods, his servants, his cattle, all the money he had treasured up. For by his crime all was forfeited to the king; who could not more fitly dispose of it, than to her who would have been the greatest sufferer by him.

And Mordecai came before the king.] By Esther's intercession.

For Esther had told what he was unto her.] Which was not known at court till now; though two eunuchs, who were her confidants, knew something of it, (ii. 21.) and he, perhaps, who carried messages between them, (iv. 5. 13.)

Ver. 2. *And the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman.*] Which he had formerly given him, (iii. 10.) but now had resumed.

And gave it unto Mordecai.] In token that he put the same confidence in him, to be the keeper of his signet.

And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.] Not over his family, for that was destroyed; but over his lands and goods, which the king had given to Esther. Of which she made Mordecai her steward, that he might manage that vast estate, which Haman, no doubt, had heaped up, for her advantage.

Ver. 3. *And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears.*] The danger was not yet over, and therefore she renews her petition in the most humble and most moving manner; for tears flowing from so great a person have a great power to move compassion. But she had not yet delivered her petition, these words only expressing what she intended and was prepared to do.

To put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews.] By repealing that bloody decree which he had obtained from the king, (iii. 13.)

Ver. 4. *Then the king held out the golden sceptre towards Esther.*] Who, it seems, had adventured to press into the king's presence once more, without being called. Which he did not take ill, but graciously invited her to come to him by this token.

So Esther arose, and stood before the king.] She rose from her knees, and stood before him to make her request.

Ver. 5. *And said, If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes.*] She uses such variety of expressions for the same thing, to insinuate herself into the king's favour, by an entire submission to his pleasure. For she knew what an unusual thing it was that she was about to desire.

Let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces.] This edict which Haman procured, some think, was not made in such a manner as to become immutable, like that, i. 19. but might be revoked by another edict more peremptory. But this, I think, is a mistake; for it was sealed with the king's ring, which he himself saith, ver. 8. *no man may reverse.*

Ver. 6. *For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?*] If she herself should be spared, she represents to him that it would break her heart to see all her kindred, nay, her whole nation, destroyed.

Ver. 7. *Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen, and to Mordecai the Jew.*] Who, I suppose, was sent for to hear the king's answer to her petition.

Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews.] That is, intended to destroy them all. By what the king had done to shew his resentment against Haman, they might easily believe he would deny them nothing that was necessary for their preservation.

Ver. 8. *Write ye also for the Jews.*] As Haman had done against them.

As it liketh you.] In as full words as you can desire for your safety.

In the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring.] To give it the same authority which the former writing had.

For the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.] This seems to me to signify, that the king could not do what Esther desired; (ver. 5.) for it was contrary to the law of the Medes and Persians to reverse any decree. But he promises to do what he was able to make that decree ineffectual, by giving them power to defend themselves against all that should assault them. And for that end he bade them draw up a letter, in words as strong as they could devise, which would hinder the former decree from being executed, though he could not annul it. And accordingly we find, by what follows, that there is not a word said of revoking Haman's decree; but only that they should stand for their lives, and destroy all, little and great, that should attempt to execute the decree sent by Haman. Thus he chose to fill his realm with blood, rather than revoke a rash decree; which was agreeable enough to the temper of Ochus, who is represented by Valerius Maximus as very cruel. So Jacobus Capellus observes, ad A. M. 3650. where he saith he doth not remember any heathen writer who mentions such an absurd law as this of the Medes and Persians; though Ælian mentions one not much less unreasonable.

Ver. 9. *Then were the king's scribes called at that time.*] As they had been before by Haman to write his decree, (iii. 12.) The author of the apocryphal additions to this book hath forged a copy of this letter; wherein the king tells his subjects, that it was not levity which made him change his mind, and contradict the former decree; but he found he had been deceived by the false suggestions of those whom he highly honoured; as many other great kings had been before him. Which letter discovers the ignorance of him that wrote it, in that he calls Haman a Macedonian, who intended to dethrone him, and take away his life.

In the third month (that is the month Sivan), on the three-and-twentieth day thereof.] A little more than two months after the former decree.

And it was written (according to all that Mordecai com-

manded) unto the Jews.] That they might prepare themselves for their defence the best they could; and let all men know what power the king had given them.

And to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces.] Who were commanded (as they were in Haman's decree, iii. 12.) to be assistant to them, and furnish them with means to defend themselves.

Which are from India unto Ethiopia, a hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.] This doth not prove that there were so many distinct languages spoken in his dominions, and many different ways of writing; but, as Bochartus observes, whatsoever any people spake, or what character soever they used (which might be the very same in some provinces), there were letters wrote to them in that language and in that character, (lib. i. Phaleg. cap. 16.)

Ver. 10. *And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus's name, and sealed it with the king's ring; and sent letters by posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries.*] It is very difficult to render this verse word by word, though the sense be very plain. For the first words, *bejad haratzim,* seem to me to signify *by the hand of couriers,* as we now speak; for *ratzim* signifies *runners* or *racers.* And the next, *basusim,* undoubtedly signifies on *horses:* the former Targum saith, of horses whose spleens were cut out, and their hoofs pared; which Bochartus shews was sometimes practised, in his Hierozoicon, par. i. lib. ii. cap. 11. Then here follows *rocheve harechesh,* riders on a swift beast called *reches.* But what animal that was is very uncertain. Many say a dromedary; with which Drusius is unsatisfied, but leaves it in doubt, (Miscellan. cent. ii. cap. 73.) Bochartus thinks it is a word added to explain what went before, signifying that he sent the posts upon the swiftest horses; for *reches* was a kind of horse. (See 1 Kings iv. 28.) Our translation takes it for *mules,* which Ælian saith, were ἄγαν δρομαίους, *exceeding swift runners,* and therefore used in the Olympic races, as Bochartus observes, Hieroz. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 21. Then the next word, *ahashteranim* (which we translate *camels*), he takes to be a Persian word; for there is a word at this day in that language of the same sound and signification, *viz. asthera:* (see his Phaleg. lib. i. cap. 15.) Then follows *bene haramachim,* which we translate *young dromedaries;* and the latter Targum, the *foals of mares.* And so Bochartus shews that *ramec* doth signify a *mare;* from whence he thinks the word *marc* among the ancient Gauls was derived, which Pausanias tells us signified *a horse:* for there was such a transposition of letters as is in the word *forma,* which comes from μορφή. In his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 42. there is extant a work of a very learned young man of our own (now with God), who, after that he had observed that neither the latter nor the ancient Jews, nor the Gemarists themselves, knew what to make of this word, hath made a long discourse about it. (See Guil. Guisius, in his Annotations upon that title in the Mischna, called Kelaim.)

The sense of the whole is, that he sent men on horseback (naked, as the first Targum will have it, that they might be lighter), and upon other creatures as swift as horses, and upon mules both old and young, according as the places were nearer or farther off. So he ordered the letters to be sent with great speed by the post, which carried them from stage to stage, till they came to the place whither they were directed.

Ver. 11. *Wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together.*] Notwithstanding that former decree sent by Haman.

And to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.] It must be presumed that some would obey the former order, out of their hatred to the Jews; therefore this gives them authority, if any attempt was made upon them, either in great bodies or small parties, not only to defend themselves and repel them, but to make as great a slaughter of them as they were able (for he uses many words to express the liberty he gave them to destroy their enemies), not sparing children and women; and to possess themselves of their goods, as men used to do in war, and as Haman had procured them licence to take the goods of the Jews, (iii. 13.)

Ver. 12. *Upon one day, in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar.*] Which day was chosen and appointed by Haman for their destruction.

Ver. 13. *The copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province.*] To warrant them to do what was therein commanded.

Was published unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to revenge themselves on their enemies.] Furnish themselves with arms, and all things necessary for their defence, and to annoy their enemies on that day. The latter Targum makes bold to insert a copy of this letter, which imports, that the king was deceived by Haman, who persuaded him to write the former letter; but now he had hanged him, because he found the Jews to be an innocent people, worthy of his protection: and especially commended Esther and Mordecai, whom he had taken into his favour: and therefore sent this new signification of his will and pleasure to them in the behalf of the Jews. There are many expressions in it, which, no doubt, he never used; but the sense of it is good.

Ver. 14. *So the posts which rode upon mules and camels went out.*] Here are two of the same words used again, *reches* and *ahashteranim;* the latter of which is translated *camels,* as it was before; which, though they be not swift creatures, yet are very fit to travel through dry countries better than horses, being very patient of thirst and labour.

Being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment.] Who gave them a strict charge to make all the speed possible to disperse this new order.

And the decree was given at Shushan the palace.] As that sent by Haman was; (iii. 15.) and, as I there observed, signed, it is probable, by the king's counsellors.

Ver. 15. *And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white.*] In such robes as the princes of Persia were wont to wear.

And with a great crown of gold.] Not like that of the king's; but such a coronet as was used by the greatest peers of the realm.

And with a garment of fine linen and purple.] This was his inner garment, as the former was the outward. The former Targum hath made an extravagant description of

the riches of the habit, wherein Mordecai appeared; his tunic costing four hundred and twenty talents of gold; and many such things which he saith about his sword, and the chain of gold about his neck, which it would be a vanity to mention. But one thing he saith, which is pious, if it were truly related; that Esther looking out of her window, saw him walk in this state: and he spying her, said those words of the Psalmist, (cxxiv. 6.) "Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given me a prey unto their teeth." To which she replied in the words of Psal. cxxii. 7. "Our help standeth in the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth."

And the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.] At his advancement, and at the fall of Haman, who designed the ruin of such an excellent person.

Ver. 16. *The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy.*] All these words signify the same thing, expressing the highest joy and satisfaction.

And honour.] They were much respected by the people.

Ver. 17. *And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came.*] His commandment was, that the decree should be published with all speed; and both of them were known together: what decree the king had made, and how he pressed the delivery of it, (ver. 14.)

The Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day.] Not only in Shushan, but every where else, they entertained one another, and their neighbours, with good cheer, being full of joy at this unexpected alteration of their affairs. For they doubted not this new decree of the king's would be observed by his people; and they were resolved to defend themselves against those that did not observe it, and destroy them.

And many of the people of the land became Jews.] Many of the Persians became proselytes to the Jewish religion, as both the Targums explain it; but that they were circumcised is not probable. Such persons there were in all times, especially in the days of David and Solomon, when the affairs of the Jews were very prosperous. But the Jews say they did not admit them presently, until the court of judgment approved them as sincere converts. See Selden, de Jure Nat. et Gent. lib. ii. cap. 2. 4. where he observes, that such persons ever after went by the name of Jews (as Dio himself takes notice), and were not reckoned gentiles if they fell to idolatry, but called apostates. (See p. 149, &c. 160.)

For the fear of the Jews fell upon them.] The liberty granted them by the king's edict, and the power of the queen and Mordecai, made the Persians stand in awe of them and of their God, who had so marvellously disposed things in their favour. (See the next chapter, ver. 2, 3.)

But this hath made some admire that such a marvellous and memorable thing should not be related, nor so much as touched, by any exotic writer whatsoever. Of which Jacobus Capellus hath given a plain reason, that the history of Ochus is described by no writer, but only Diodorus Siculus: and he meddles with the affairs of Persia no farther than as they cohere with the affairs of Greece.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *NOW, in the twelfth month (that is the month Adar), on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them.*] As they often boasted (it is likely) and threatened, since the decree, which Haman sent, came to them, for they had gotten start of the other, and put the Jews into great terror and confusion, and their enemies into high expectation of their ruin.

(Though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them).] As it appeared presently when the time was come for the executing both the decrees.

Ver. 2. *The Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt.*] As some did, being possessed with hatred to them, and being combined, it is likely, upon the receipt of Haman's decree, to endeavour to destroy them. It cannot be imagined, that when Haman perished, all his friends and potentates perished with him; but he had a great party every where, some of which were so furiously enraged at his fall, that they could not contain themselves from shewing their indignation at those who were the occasion of it.

And no man could withstand them.] But they fled before them.

For the fear of them fell upon all people.] When they heard that Haman had lost all his authority and his life, and that his family was destroyed, and how Mordecai was in great power (as it here follows), and the queen herself was a Jew, no doubt it daunted all those who were disposed to execute the first decree. And though some were so desperately envenomed against the Jews, that they did rise up to assault them, yet they had not such courage as the Jews had to oppose them.

Ver. 3. *And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and officers of the king, helped the Jews.*] Which was a great advantage to them, and disheartened their enemies, who hoped for their assistance.

Because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them.] They were men of the times (as we speak), and would have been as ready to execute Haman's decree, if he had continued in power, as to aid the Jews in this: which it was their interest to do, being afraid to be turned out of their places by Mordecai, who was the chief minister, if they did otherwise.

Ver. 4. *For Mordecai was great in the king's house.*] Having the management of all the queen's affairs in the court, where she was beloved of the king; who also (it appears by the foregoing chapter, ver. 15.) gave him the highest authority in the kingdom.

And his fame went out throughout all the provinces.] It is soon known every where who is the favourite at court, which makes all addresses to be paid to him.

For this man Mordecai waxed greater and greater.] In the esteem of the people, who not only stood in awe of his power, but highly applauded his wisdom and justice in the management of all affairs: for one cannot but think he was very eminent in those noble qualities.

Ver. 5. *Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction.*] That is, they that had no swords slew them with clubs and staves, and such-like weapons as they could procure; as the former Targum understands it.

And did what they would unto those that hated them.] Had them perfectly at their mercy.

Ver. 6. *And in Shushan the palace.*] That is, in the city where the king's palace was.

The Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men.] It is commonly thought that these and the rest mentioned ver. 15, 16. were such as they knew were confederate with Haman, and perhaps Amalekites (as the latter Targum saith); for Mordecai, they think it is likely, required them to kill none but those who declared themselves forward to execute Haman's decree. But I see no ground for this: if men were quiet, and did not rise up against them, they had no authority to hurt them, much less to kill them. Therefore these five hundred, and the rest killed in other places, were men who could not conceal their wicked inclinations, but openly assaulted them; and such Ahasuerus gave them power to destroy, (viii. 11.) And Dr. Alix thinks the conjecture of the Targum is right; that these five hundred men were Amalekites, who followed the fortune of Haman: and by their slaughter were accomplished the prophecies against Amalek. Some others, it is likely, joined with them; but they were the most enraged against the Jews, and the readiest to attempt their destruction.

Ver. 7. *And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha,*

Ver. 8. *And Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha,*

Ver. 9. *And Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha.*] It is too curious an observation of some of the Jews, that the letter *vau* before the last of these names is larger than ordinary, to shew, that though this was the youngest son of Haman, yet he was the most violent against the Jews of all the rest. Or, as others will have it (for such conceits are endless), this being the numeral letter for the number six, it signifies this was the sixth son of Haman, but placed last, out of contempt, as the vilest of them all.

Ver. 10. *The ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, slew they.*] It is likely they were in the head of the rest, who were so bold as to attempt the destruction of the Jews in this city; being mad with rage, and resolved to revenge their father's death; and rather perish than not execute his design as far as they were able.

But on the spoil laid they not their hand.] The king had granted them leave to take it, (viii. 11.) but they would not meddle with it, that they might not seem to desire any thing but their own safety, and that the king might have the greater kindness for them, into whose exchequer these goods were to come, if he pleased.

Ver. 11. *On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace, was brought before the king.*] Who required an account, that he might know how people stood affected towards the Jews.

Ver. 12. *And the king said unto Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces?*] That was not yet known, but he thought in all likelihood they must have killed a great many more.

Now, what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee; or what is thy request farther? and it shall be done.] If this did not satisfy her, he asks her what she had to desire farther, and he would not deny her.

Ver. 13. *Then said Esther, If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan to do to-morrow also according unto this day's decree.*] That is, kill as many of their enemies as they could find; for some that appeared against them, perhaps, escaped their hands, whom they might meet withal the next day.

And let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows.] By their father, I suppose.

Ver. 14. *And the king commanded it so to be done: and the decree was given at Shushan.*] That both her petition and request should be granted. This was a new decree, authorizing them to do on the fourteenth day as they had on the thirteenth.

And they hanged Haman's ten sons.] For their great infamy, that they might be exposed to public reproach, and their bodies remain unburied, being left to rot upon the gallows, or to be devoured by crows and vultures, and such-like ravenous creatures. For, though the Jews suffered none to hang on a tree (so they called a gallows) longer than till the evening of the day, whereon they were hanged, yet other nations let them hang till they were there consumed; as appears from the story of the Gibeonites, (2 Sam. xxi. 9, 10.) and from the vulgar saying among the Romans, "pascere in cruce corvos," *to feed ravens on a gibbet.*

Ver. 15. *For the Jews that were in Shushan gathered themselves together on the fourteenth day also of the month Adar, and slew three hundred men at Shushan: but on the prey they laid not their hand.*] The former Targum saith still, these three hundred men were of the family of Amalek. But whosoever they were, I take them to have been such as the day before rose up against them, but in the conflict escaped by flight, and now were found out and killed.

Ver. 16. *But the other Jews that were in the king's provinces gathered themselves together, and stood for their lives.*] This they did upon the thirteenth day, when they defended themselves from those that rose up against them to destroy them.

And had rest from their enemies.] Who could not stand before them; but ceased to molest them.

And slew of their foes seventy and five thousand.] There is some reason to think these were Amalekites, as the former Targum saith: for, it is likely, many of that nation might be dispersed throughout the king's provinces as well as the Jews; and being the old enemies of the Jews, might be very forward to help to destroy them. But whosoever they were, the Jews prevailed against them, and slew so many thousands, that thereby we may judge what a great number of Jews still remained in other countries, and did not return to their own.

But they laid not their hands on the prey.] It is likely Mordecai, in his letters, had charged them not to make use of the liberty the king had given them to take the spoil, (viii. 11.) because they universally avoided it.

Ver. 17. *On the thirteenth day of the month Adar.*] This is to be referred to the foregoing words; the slaughter was made in the provinces on the thirteenth day of this month, when they should have been destroyed themselves.

And on the fourteenth day of the same, rested they, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.] And so the Jews in the provinces made the next day a festival of rejoicing for their great deliverance. For there never was any day

of joy and gladness for any blessing, without feasting and liberal entertainment of each other, and of the poor.

Ver. 18. *But the Jews that were at Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth day thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof; and on the fifteenth day of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.*] The Jews, indeed, in the city of Shushan, made the fifteenth day a festival, because they had liberty to avenge themselves of their enemies, not only on the thirteenth, but on the fourteenth, which were both days of slaughter; and therefore they rested not till the fifteenth day.

Ver. 19. *Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwalled towns, made the fourteenth day of the month Adar a day of gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another.*] This verse gives an account of the reason of the different observation of the festival in Shushan, and in the country towns throughout the king's provinces. There they had leave only on one day to slay their enemies, which was the thirteenth of Adar; therefore the fourteenth was a day of gladness to them: whereas in Shushan the fifteenth was the day of gladness, the fourteenth being, by the king's leave, made like the thirteenth, another day of slaughter. But this was at the first done thus, only of their own free accord; afterward the law established it otherwise.

A day of gladness and feasting, and a good day.] A day of thanksgiving and praise to God, as well as of feasting one with another, and of sending portions to their neighbours out of their good cheer, that the meaner sort might feast and rejoice also. And as, to add to their joy, they sent them meat from their tables; so the Jews have made a constitution, that they should make a collection of money to send to the poor at this time of the year, that they may provide themselves things necessary to make a feast. Which money it is unlawful (as Guilielmus Schickardus observes) to apply to any other use, but only the making themselves merry at this time. (See Nehem. viii. 10.)

Ver. 20. *And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both nigh and far.*] That which they had done at the first voluntarily, he thought good to turn into a law, and sent it into the whole realm.

Ver. 21. *To stablish this among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly.*] But, to make these more solemn times, they now keep a fast before the feast (after the example of Esther) on the thirteenth day of the month Adar.

Ver. 22. *As the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day; that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.*] For in the provinces they had done their work before the fourteenth day, and then rested and rejoiced: but in Shushan not before the fifteenth; and then they rejoiced there.

Ver. 23. *And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them.*] That is, to keep these days as festivals every where throughout all generations.

Ver. 24. *Because Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur (that is the lot) to consume them, and to destroy them:*

Ver. 25. *But when Esther came before the king, he commanded, by letters, that his wicked device, which he devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.*] These two verses give an account why this festival was ordained, which they took care should be understood by all posterity: who observe it at this day; and tell us it consists in these three things: in *reading*, in *rest* from labour, and in *feasting*. The reading begins in the evening, as soon as the stars appear; when the history of Haman is read from the beginning to the end, out of a Hebrew manuscript written on parchment: for it is not lawful to read it out of a printed Bible, no more than they do the law itself, as Schickard observes out of their writers, who say, three prayers go before this reading. In the first of which they praise God for counting them worthy to attend this Divine service: in the second, they thank him for the miraculous preservation of their ancestors: and in the third, that they have lived to observe another festival in memory of it. After this they go to supper upon spoon-meats; and next morning to the synagogue, where the history is read over again with the same ceremonies. After which they have done with religion and piety, and spend the two days in idleness, and eating, and drinking. Surenhuysius hath given a full account of this reading, and the benedictions, in his notes upon the Megillah, p. 387. And for their rest and feasting, they say in their books, that the first is kept so sacredly, that they will not so much as set or sow any thing in their garden on these days; but play at chess, and such-like games, or spend the time in music and dancing, till it be time to feast. And then they indulge themselves so far, that they think it not unlawful to drink so much, as not to be able to distinguish between the blessing of Mordecai and the curse of Haman, as they themselves speak. Insomuch, that our learned primate Usher calls this feast, *The Bacchanals of the Jews.*

Ver. 26. *Wherefore they called these days Purim, after the name of Pur.*] A Persian word, signifying a *lot*.

Therefore, for all the words of this letter, and of that which they had seen concerning this matter, and which had come unto them.] This seems to refer to the foregoing words; *wherefore they called these days Purim*, because of what was contained in the letters of Mordecai, and because of what they had seen when these things fell out, and what they heard reported of them in the places where they could not see them. But we take them to be the reason of what follows; *viz.* of the keeping these days.

Ver. 27. *The Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them.*] All that should become proselytes to their religion.

So as it should not fail, that they would keep these two days according to their writing, and according to their appointed time, every year.] According as Mordecai had written, so they engaged without fail to keep these two days in the time appointed; *viz.* on the fourteenth day they kept the festival in the country all over the king's dominions, and on the fifteenth they kept it in Shushan. The former of these the Jews now call in their calendar *the lesser feast of Purim*, and the latter *the greater feast*.

Ver. 28. *And that these days should be remembered, and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city.*] Accordingly at this day they kept this festival, as they did in more ancient times: for in the second book of Maccabees, xv. 37. we find, that Judas having obtained a great victory over Nicanor, they ordained it should be commemorated upon the thirteenth of Adar, *the day before the feast of Mordecai*, which was this of Purim. This shews, that in those days they kept this deliverance in memory by celebrating this feast, and that the thirteenth of Adar was not then a fast.

And that these days of Purim should not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them perish from their seed.] This is but a repetition of what was said before, to make them more seriously attend to their obligation; which was laid upon them all throughout all generations. Accordingly now, as they tell us in their books, the little children, the women, they that are base born, and servants, &c. are bound to keep this feast.

Ver. 29. *Then Esther the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all authority, to confirm this second letter of Purim.*] These days were first recommended to their observation by the authority of Mordecai, ver. 20. But either they were neglected, or sometime intermitted, or were thought not to be sufficiently established; therefore the first order was confirmed and ratified by a second, which was backed by the authority of the queen. And the opinion of Maimonides is not improbable, that this was also an ordinance of the prophets; *viz.* Haggai, Zechariah, and others, that lived in the days of Esther. But this cannot be true; for they were dead long before this time.

Ver. 30. *And he sent the letters unto all the Jews, to the hundred twenty and seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus.*] And consequently as far as Jerusalem; for Syria and Judea were among his provinces, and the Jews should have been killed there, as well as in the rest of his dominions: and were bound to thank God for their preservation throughout all ages; for otherwise they had not been any longer a people.

With words of peace and truth.] Full of sincere love and affectionate desires of their happiness. "Verbis amicis et sinceris." Or, as others will have it, wishing their prosperity, and exhorting them to live in love and peace, and to be faithful in their religion; and particularly in keeping their promise of observing these days. But after all, Conradus Pellicanus seems to me to have guessed the best at the meaning of these words *peace* and *truth;* which he thinks were the salutation at the top of the letter.

Ver. 31. *To confirm these days of Purim in their times appointed, according as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had enjoined them, and as they had decreed for themselves, and for their seed, the matters of the fastings and their cry.*] Some learned men understand these words, as if they meant, that these days of Purim were therefore appointed, that they might be a memorial of that deliverance, which was obtained of God by fastings and prayers unto him; which, if it be admitted, gives no ground to conclude from thence, that they observed a fast upon this occasion, as well as a feast. The Jews, indeed, think quite otherwise; and, if we may believe their calendar, have ever since kept a fast on the thirteenth of Adar, which was the day appointed for their extirpation. Upon the hearing of which decree, all places were filled with doleful lamentations, there being no help for them if God did not deliver them; unto whom therefore they cried with fasting and prayer. In memory of which, they undertook to keep a yearly fast, as well as days of feasting and gladness, which immediately ensued. But their calendar is a new piece, and of no credit at all; nor do we find the least indication that Esther or Mordecai enjoined any thing but a feast, no mention being made of a fast in their decree: and therefore it was voluntarily undertaken by the Jews themselves in after-ages, as this verse seems to import. Which the former Targum thus paraphrases (and the latter to the same purpose): "To confirm these days of Purim, as Mordecai the Jew, and Esther the queen, appointed concerning them; and as the Jews ordained for themselves, and for their posterity, to keep in memory the matter of their fastings and their prayers."

Ver. 32. *And the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the book.*] Either she made a new decree by her sole authority to enforce the former; or the meaning is, that she commanded the forementioned decree, which confirmed the days of Purim, to be recorded and made a public act, in a book where, perhaps, this whole history was contained. Which record testified in time to come what passed in her days; *viz.* their danger, and their wonderful deliverance, and the decree of Esther concerning the observation of these days.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND the king Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land, and upon the isles of the sea.*] Having great occasion for money, he laid a new tax upon all his provinces, both in the continent (as we speak) and in the isles of the sea, belonging to his dominions. Some think, that the imposts which he released to his people at the marriage of Esther, (ii. 18.) which continued for some years, were now revived; and that this is all which is meant by these words. But this doth not well agree with this phrase, of *laying a tribute* on them. Our primate Usher understands by the *isles* here mentioned, those in the Ægean Sea, which were conquered by Darius Hystaspes, who was the first that laid a tribute on his subjects; for Cyrus, and Cambyses before him, laid none; but, being begun, they continued it to the reign of this king, *ad Annum Per. Julian.* 4219. Strabo saith, (lib. xv. p. 735.) that the tribute exacted on the sea-coast was paid in silver; but that from the land, in such commodities as every country afforded, in wool, drugs, cattle, &c.

Ver. 2. *And all the acts of his power, and of his might.*] Which was so great, that the Egyptians in their hieroglyphics represented Ochus by a sword. And Plutarch (as Jacobus Capellus observes) calls him the most terrible of all the Persian kings.

And the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king advanced him, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?] These words signify, that as this king did great things, so they were to be ascribed very much to the management of Mordecai, after he was advanced to the highest authority in the kingdom. But it was not the design of the author of this history

to relate such things; for which he refers to the public records of the kingdom, which were kept in some part of the king's house, (it appears from vi. 1.) and were extant in those days when this book was written.

Ver. 3. *For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus.*] I cannot but observe here, in the conclusion of this book, that Mordecai is so often called *the Jew* by this author, (see ix. 29. 31.) that it hath inclined me to think it was not written by one of that nation, but by some proselyte of Persia who was converted, as many were at this time, (viii. 17.) to the Jewish religion. Some of which might be in these times divinely inspired, as Nicholas, a proselyte of Antioch, was in the apostles' days, (Acts vi. 5.) But I have no authority for this, which I mention as a mere conjecture.

And great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren.] His greatness did not make him forget his brethren; by whom he was highly esteemed, and much honoured by every one of them.

Seeking the wealth of his people.] And no wonder he was so acceptable, for his study was how to do them good.

And speaking peace to all his seed.] Advising and promoting whatsoever was for their advantage; and speaking still to the king for that which might tend to the happiness and prosperity of his nation, which he advanced to the utmost of his power. Unto which a most earnest desire of the coming of the Messiah contributed exceedingly; and the serious study of the law, which he recommended to them, as the only means of living happily. Thus Conradus Pellicanus concludes his commentary on this book; but where he found this I cannot tell. It is only highly probable, that so good a man as Mordecai was very solicitous they should be obedient to the law of Moses (as Malachi was), and live in expectation of the Messiah, concerning whom Moses prophesied. For, as Epiphanius, and Seder Olam, and others, observe, this book of Esther is the last canonical book of the Old Testament; and the nearer they approached to the coming of Christ, the more desirous holy men were to see him. Others, indeed, think Malachi is the last Divine writer; but, on the other side, it seems probable, that he, having taken no notice of the deliverance under Esther, prophesied some time before it.

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CRITICAL

COMMENTARY AND PARAPHRASE

ON THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

AND THE

APOCRYPHA.

BY

PATRICK, LOWTH, ARNALD, WHITBY, AND LOWMAN.

A NEW EDITION:

CORRECTED BY THE

REV. J. R. PITMAN, M. A.

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CONTENTS:

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THE

BOOKS

OF

JOB, PSALMS, PROVERBS, ECCLESIASTES,

AND THE

SONG OF SOLOMON,

Paraphrased:

WITH

ARGUMENTS TO EACH CHAPTER, AND ANNOTATIONS THEREUPON.

BY THE

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

DR. SYMON PATRICK,

LORD BISHOP OF ELY.

A

PARAPHRASE

ON

THE BOOK OF JOB.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM, EARL OF BEDFORD,

Knight of the most noble Order of the Garter, &c.

MY VERY GOOD LORD AND PATRON.

My Lord,

THOUGH I have not pursued the design, which I have long had in my thoughts, of making some public acknowledgment of my obligations to your Lordship, for placing me, when I thought not of it, in this station which I hold in Covent-Garden; yet I have only deferred it, till the most proper opportunity, as it seems to me, for this small expression of my gratitude. For I could not have prefixed your Lordship's name to any work of mine, which I believe would have been so acceptable, as this wherewith I now present you; desiring it may remain as a lasting testimony of the sense I have of the favours I have received from your Lordship. In whom, as I have always observed a particular veneration and affection for the Holy Scriptures; so I know to be a constant reader of them: and therefore humbly offer this assistance to your Lordship, for the understanding of the oldest book (as I have shewn) of that sacred volume, which, I am confident, you esteem above all earthly treasures.

There have been many large volumes written for its explication: which will cost abundance of time and pains to peruse; and after all, the design and scope of the whole may not be understood, while the reader's mind stays so long in the several parts. I have therefore taken quite another course, and only given the sense of it in a compendious, but perspicuous Paraphrase (or Metaphrase rather, as the ancients would have called it), which is not much longer than the text, put into other words. It would have been more easy to have enlarged it, than it was to make it thus short; which I the rather chose to do, not merely because it will be more useful for those who have little leisure, or less money, but because thereby I have preserved, I persuade myself, the majesty of the book; and made it still look, not like the word of a man, but, as it is indeed, the word of God.

Which I could never have presented to your Lordship and the world more seasonably than now; when the state of our affairs is so dangerously perplexed, that we cannot stand upright, nor preserve our souls from sinking into the saddest fears or discontents, or some such troublesome passion, without a strong confidence in the most wise, just, and merciful providence of the Almighty; which orders things, in unsearchable ways, to the good of those that steadfastly adhere unto him in faithful obedience. Which is so admirably represented in this holy book, that one cannot read it seriously, and not be moved to resign the conduct of ourselves, and all that concerns us, unto God's most blessed will and pleasure; to wait patiently for him, as the Psalmist speaks, and keep his way; not to be disheartened by any trouble that befals us, much less forsake our integrity; but still expect "the end of the Lord," as St. James speaks, *i. e.* the issue to which he will bring our troubles; persuading ourselves that he is very pitiful, and of tender mercy; and therefore, as he doth not love to grieve us by laying afflictions on us, so is wont many times to bring the greatest good out of the greatest evil; and to produce it by such unexpected means, as shall surprise us with the greater admiration of his wisdom and goodness.

For a great reader of ancient writers tells us, "He hath observed, in the histories of all ages, that the great events which determine the fate of great affairs do happen less frequently according to design, than by accident and occasion. Our enterprises here below are derived from above; and we but engines and actors of pieces that are composed in heaven. 'Homo histrio, Deus vero poeta est:' *God is the sovereign poet;* and we cannot refuse the part which he appoints us to bear in the scene. All our business is to act it well; cheerfully complying with his orders concerning us, and submitting ourselves to the direction of his providence."

To which, and all other religious courses, did we more heartily apply ourselves, there is no doubt but that in this book we might read God's gracious intentions towards this

church and kingdom. Which his most merciful providence would bring, as he did his servant Job, through all these clouds which now encompass us, into a splendour incomparably beyond all that wherein hitherto we have appeared. Why should we despair of it, when he shews, by the unexpected discovery which he hath made of the designs of our enemies against us, that he hath no mind to cast us off, if we will not carelessly cast away ourselves, by the continual neglect of our duty to him?

God of his infinite goodness awaken all our hearts, to make such a good use both of that deliverance, and of our present distress (which is so great that we see no way out of it, but by his power alone to whom Job owed his resurrection), that we may, in the issue, be the more happy, and the better established, for having been so miserably unsettled. In which prayer, I am sure your Lordship will cordially join with,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble

and affectionate servant,

SY. PATRICK.

April 19, 1679.

PREFACE.

THE study of the Holy Scriptures is so much recommended to us by the Scriptures themselves, and hath been judged so necessary by the holy doctors of the church, that St. Chrysostom (who was wont to press this duty with great earnestness, not only in his sermons, but in his private discourses with his people) adventures to say, (Hom. 3. in Lazar. tom. v. 243.) that "a man cannot, he cannot be saved, unless he be conversant in this spiritual reading." But, as the neglect of them is very dangerous when men are able to read them; so the reading them without understanding must needs be unprofitable. Though a Christian (as the forenamed great person speaks) can no more be without the Scriptures, than an artificer without his tools; yet we must acknowledge, that he will make but ill work with them in many places, unless he be instructed how to use and apply them to the purpose for which they were designed. Whosoever, therefore, shall assist the minds of Christians, by giving a clear meaning of them (in which that holy father employed much of his time), it is certain, doth great service to God, and to their souls. For this contributes much to the honour of the Holy Scriptures (which want nothing to make them reverenced by considering men, but to be understood), and it invites men to the reading them, and it conveys the heavenly truth easily and delightfully into their minds.

Which hath moved me to attempt the explaining of the most ancient book in the whole Bible, by way of a short paraphrase. In which, if I have not always tied myself to our English translation (which ever gives an excellent sense of the original words), it was because I thought another meaning sometimes more agreeable to the whole discourse; which I have endeavoured to carry on coherently, from first to last. But if the matter would bear it, I have, when I met with a word of two senses, expressed them both. And where I found any difficulty, I consulted with such interpreters as are of best note in the church; being unwilling to do any thing without the warrant of some or other of them. I was forced, indeed, here and there to follow only my own judgment; but not without the appearance of very urgent reasons; of which, if I should give an account, by adding notes to those places, it would make this, which I intend for common use, swell into too big a volume. I have only, therefore (in the argument prefixed to each chapter), pointed to such histories in the Bible as may help to illustrate some passages; and shewn how the dispute is managed, till God himself determine it.

But there are two things of which I think myself bound to give a larger account, to avoid the imputation of such novelty as may be justly censured. The one is, that I have interpreted those three known verses in the nineteenth chapter, 25—27. not of Job's resurrection from the dead at the last day, but of his restoration to a happy estate in this world; after he had been so sorely afflicted. There are many, of no mean esteem (Mr. Calvin amongst the rest), who have done so before me; in following whom, I do not forsake the sense of the ancient doctors. For though I take that to be the literal sense of the words, yet I doubt not there is another more secret and hidden, which lies covered under them; and that we ought to look upon Job's restoration (and so I have always explained it) as a notable type of the future resurrection of our bodies out of the grave. And accordingly our church hath very fitly applied the words (as many of the fathers do) to this purpose, in the office for the burial of the dead.

St. Jerome (or the author of the Commentaries upon Job under his name) is my guide in this business; who saith no more than this, that Job, in these words, "resurrectionem futuram prophetat in Spiritu," *prophesieth in the Spirit the future resurrection*. Now the words of the prophets had commonly an immediate respect to something which was then doing, or shortly to be done, besides that sense which the Holy Ghost directed them to signify in the latter days. And so had these words of Job, of which that father, indeed, gives us only the mystical sense; but he doth so in many other places of that book, where it is certain and acknowledged the holy man had another meaning, in which he was more nearly concerned. I shall refer the reader only to one place in the first chapter; where he saith, that Job did "ferre typum Christi;" (and so he saith in his preface, "Figuram Christi portavit;" and in his conclusion, xlii. 14. "Figuram manifeste habuit salvatoris:") and therefore expounds those words, ver. 20, 21. in this manner: "He fell on the ground when he emptied himself of the form of God, to take on him the form of a servant; and came naked out of his mother's womb, being not aspersed with the least spot of original sin." He that will may read what follows, and see how he only sets down a mystical sense, when it is certain another (upon which that is built) is first intended. And so we are to take his exposition upon these words, which "secundum mysticos intellectus," (as he speaks, xxxviii. 16.) *according to the hidden inter-*

pretations, are to be understood of the resurrection of the dead at the second coming of Christ; but relate, in the first place, to Job's resurrection out of that miserable condition wherein he lay, which was a figure of the other. "They, therefore, who interpret these words otherways, (to speak with that father in his commentaries upon Ezekiel, xxxvii. 1, &c.) ought not to make me ill thought of, as if, by expounding them in the literal sense only, I took away a proof of the resurrection from the dead. For I know there are far stronger testimonies (of which there can be no doubt nor dispute) to be found for the confirmation of that truth. On those let us rely, on the plain words of Him who is the truth (and of whom Job was but a figure), which are abundantly sufficient to support our faith; and let none imagine that we *give occasion to heretics* (as he speaks presently after) *if we deny these words to be meant of the general resurrection.*"

The second thing of which I am to give an account is, that I have not expounded *behemoth* to signify the *elephant,* nor *leviathan* to signify the *whale;* because many of their characters do not agree to them; but every one of them to the description which the writers of natural history have given of two other creatures. And therefore I have herein followed the guidance of that excellent critic Bochartus, who takes the former for the *river-horse,* and the latter for the *crocodile;* as I have expressed it in the margin, but put neither of them in the text: for I leave every one, as our translators have done, to apply the words to any other creatures, if they can find any besides those now mentioned, which have all the qualities that are here ascribed to them.

I have adventured also in the beginning to add a few words, as the manner of paraphrasts is, to give an account of the time when Job lived, which seems to have been before the children of Israel came out of Egypt. For though there be plain mention of the drowning of the old world, and the burning of Sodom, in this book, yet there is no allusion to the drowning of Pharaoh, and other miraculous works which attended their deliverance. Nor is there any notice taken of that revelation of God's will to Moses, when Elihu reckons up those ways whereby God was wont to discover himself to men. Such-like reasons moved Origen to say, (lib. i. contra Celsum, p. 305.) that Job was ἀρχαιότερος καὶ Μωυσέως αὐτοῦ, *more ancient than even Moses himself;* and Eusebius (lib. i. Demonstr. Evangel. cap. 6.) to pronounce that he was before Moses two whole ages. Which is conformable to the opinion of many of the Hebrew writers, who, as Mr. Selden observes, (lib. vii. de Jure Nat. &c. cap. 11.) think Job lived in the days of Isaac and Jacob. The judgment of other eastern people is not much different from this, as may be seen in Hottinger's Smegma Orientale, (p. 381. 452, 453.)

And therefore one use we may make of this book is, to inform ourselves what are the true natural dictates of human reason, which teaches greater chastity than many Christians are now willing to observe; strict justice, both private and public; compassionate charity to those who are in need; together with a pious care to please God, and to worship and confide in him alone; as we may learn here better than from any other book in the world. For in the twenty-first chapter, Job gives such a character of his life, with respect to all these, as declares both that there is a law written in our hearts, and what instructions it gives us, if we will attend to it. There is not the least syllable that we read concerning his being circumcised, or observing the sabbath, or such-like parts of the Mosaical discipline, which assures us he was neither a natural Israelite, nor a proselyte, as St. Austin speaks; (lib. xviii. cap. 47. de Civit. Dei.) and yet he found such a rule of life in himself, that, by the assistance of the Divine grace, he ordered, not only his outward actions, but the inward motions of his mind, after such a manner, as is "not unsuitable to the evangelical doctrine of our Saviour." They are the words of Eusebius in the place forenamed; where he doth not fear to add, that the "word of Christ hath published to all nations that most ancient manner of godliness which was among the first fathers; so that the new covenant is no other than that old godly polity which was before the times of Moses:" I may add, before the time that Abraham was circumcised; when, as St. Chrysostom speaks very significantly, (upon Rom. ii. 14.) ἀρκεῖ ἀντὶ τοῦ νόμου τὸ συνειδὸς καὶ λογισμὸς, *their conscience and the use of reason sufficed instead of the law.*

The Hebrew books, indeed, are full of discourses concerning certain precepts, which all mankind after the flood observed, but cannot all of them be deduced from the principles of reason. They call them the seven precepts of the sons of Noah; who delivered them, they say, to all his children, by whom the world was peopled; and therefore the Israelites ever exacted the observance of them from all those gentiles whom they admitted as proselytes at large to their religion. Two of these precepts concerned their duty towards the blessed Creator; the next four respected their duty towards their neighbours; the last forbade cruelty towards other creatures. They are reckoned up commonly in this order: 1. Concerning strange worship, or idolatry. 2. About blaspheming the name of God. 3. About murder. 4. About the uncovering of nakedness, or all filthy mixtures. 5. About theft and rapine. 6. About judicatures and civil government; to make the other precepts more carefully observed. 7. About not eating of any flesh which is cut off from any animal alive. The authors that treat of these are innumerable: among whom I shall only mention Maimonides, who thus delivers his opinion of them in his treatise of Kings, chap. ix.—

"Adam, the first man, received commands about six things (which are those first abovementioned); from whence it is, that the mind of man inclines more pronely to them, than to the rest of the commands which we have received from our master Moses. Besides these, it is manifest, Noah received another, according to what we read Gen. ix. 4. 'Flesh with the life thereof you shall not eat.' And thus things stood throughout the whole world until the days of Abraham; to whom there was superadded the precept of circumcision."

But, as there is not the least sign that circumcision was part of Job's religion, so there is no footstep at all remaining of his observance of the last of those seven precepts, which they say all the sons of Noah, who were pious, carefully obeyed. A great man of our own nation (Mr. Selden, lib. *ult.* de Jure Naturali, &c. cap. 2.) hath sifted this business with as much diligence as is possible; but after all his search, he is fain to stop at those first six precepts delivered to Adam. For though this general character be

given of Job in the beginning of the book, that he was a perfect, or simple and upright, man, fearing God, and eschewing evil; and in the thirty-first chapter, and other places, there are particular instances given of his abhorring strange worship, (ver. 26.) blasphemy, (i. 5.) murder, (xxxi. 29. 31.) adultery, and other filthiness, (ver. 1. 9.) theft, rapine, and deceit; (ver. 5—7.) for the punishment of which he mentions judges in his days, (ver. 11. 28.) and was himself one of the chief: (xxix. 11.) yet here is not so much as one word to be found, that I can discern, concerning the seventh precept; whether we understand thereby eating flesh with the blood in it; or, which is more likely, (because other nations, that were not Jews, might lawfully eat that which died of itself, Deut. xiv. 21.) eating that which was cut alive from any living creature.

Which makes me think that it was not so generally known as the Jews now pretend; till the memory of it was revived by Moses, among whose ancestors the tradition was more carefully preserved than in other nations. For Job and such-like pious persons, seem to have been governed by those precepts only which the first man received; that is, the dictates of natural reason. According to those words of Tertullian, in his book against the Jews: where he contends, (chap. 2.) that "before the law of Moses, written in tables of stone, there was a law not written, which was naturally understood, and observed by the fathers:" which he elsewhere calls the "common law, which we meet withal *in publico mundi, in the streets and highways of the world,* in the natural tables;" which mankind having broken, our Saviour came to repair and renew; abrogating the law of Moses, in which the Jews had placed too much confidence, while they neglected these natural precepts. Or rather, he hath not only engaged us by his holy sacraments to observe those more strictly, but raised them also to a greater height of purity; according to that of St. Chrysostom in his book of virginity: "We are to shew greater virtue, because now there is an abundant grace poured out; and great is the gift of the coming of Christ."

But the principal benefit (to omit the naming of many other whereby I might recommend this work) which I hope pious souls, especially the afflicted, will reap by this book, is, to be persuaded thereby, that all things are ordered and disposed by almighty God; without whose command or permission, neither good angels, nor the devil, nor men, nor any other creature, can do any thing. And that, as his power is infinite, so is his wisdom and goodness; which is able to bring good out of evil. And therefore we ought not to complain of him in any condition, as if he neglected us, or dealt hardly with us; but rather cheerfully submit ourselves to his blessed will; which never doth any thing without reason, though we cannot always comprehend it. To that issue God himself at last brings all the dispute between Job and his friends; representing his works throughout the world to be so wonderful and unaccountable, that it is fit for us to acknowledge our ignorance, but never accuse his providence: if we cannot see the cause why he sends any affliction, or continues it long upon us; instead of murmuring and complaining, in such a case, this book effectually teaches us to resign ourselves absolutely to him; silently to adore and reverence the unsearchable depth of his wise counsels; contentedly to bear what he inflicts upon us; still to assert his righteousness, in the midst of the calamities which befal the good, and in the most prosperous successes of the wicked; and steadfastly to believe that all at last shall turn to our advantage, if, like his servant Job, we persevere in faith, and hope, and patience.

To which this book gives so high an encouragement, and contains such powerful comforts for the afflicted; that the old tradition is, Moses could not find any thing like it for the support and satisfaction of the Israelites in their Egyptian bondage; and therefore took the pains to translate it into their language, out of the Syriac, wherein it was first written. Thus he who writes the commentaries upon this book under the name of Origen, tells us, "That he found 'in antiquorum dictis,' *in the sayings of the ancients,* that when the great Moses was sent by God into Egypt, and beheld the affliction of the children of Israel to be so grievous, that nothing he could say was able to comfort them in that lamentable condition; he declared to them the terrible sufferings of Job, with his happy deliverance; and setting them down in writing also, gave this book to that distressed people. That reading these things in their several tribes and families, and hearing how sorely this blessed man suffered, they might comfort and exhort one another, to endure with patience and thanksgiving the evils which encompassed them; and hearing withal how bountifully God rewarded Job for his patience, they might hope for deliverance, and expect the benefit of a blessed reward of their labours.

"Be ye constant, O children of Israel (said Moses, with a pleasing countenance, when he delivered this book into their hands), do not faint in your minds, O ye posterity of Abraham; but suffer grief, and bear these evils patiently, as that man in the land of Uz did, whose name was Job: who, though he was a righteous and faithful person, in whom was no fault, yet suffered the sorest torments by the malice of the devil; as you do now most unjustly from Pharaoh and the Egyptians. They treat you indeed very basely, and have enslaved you, without any fault of yours, &c. But do not despair of a better condition; you shall be delivered, as Job was, and have a reward of your tribulations, like that which God gave to him."

There follows a great deal more to the same purpose in that writer, which I shall not transcribe. But only add, that the church of Christ, as he observes, was wont, after this example, to read this passion of Job publicly in all their assemblies; upon holy-days (when they commemorated the martyrs), and upon fasting days, and days of abstinence; and upon the days of our Saviour's passion: of which they thought they saw a figure in the sufferings of Job; as of our Saviour's resurrection and exaltation, in Job's wonderful recovery and advancement to a greater height of prosperity. And, as they read this history in the church publicly; so, when they went to visit any one privately that was in grief, mourning, or sorrow, they read a lesson of the patience of Job for their comfort or support under their troubles; and to take away the distress and anguish of their heart.

I pray God it may have that effect upon all afflicted persons, who shall read it; and that others also, considering the instability of all worldly things (which is here also livelily represented), may use their prosperity with such

moderation, that they may bear a change of their condition, if it come, with an equal mind. I am sure there is no man, of whatsoever rank, or in whatsoever condition he be, but may learn very much, if he please, from this admirable pattern. Which is the very first that is left us upon record, of a virtuous life, both in prosperity and in adversity, and that not only as a private man, but as a prince: "In whom it is the greater commendation to obey the will of God; because he hath more means and temptations to fulfil his own."

That therefore shall conclude the character of Job; who, when he had no superior to control him, (as you may read chap. xxix. xxxi.) gave such an example of piety and devotion, humility and moderation, chastity and purity, justice and equity, charity and compassion, as few have done in a private condition. This is as admirable, and will be praised as much to all generations, as his generous patience. Which was so much famed in ancient times, that (from a passage, which some editions of the LXX. have added to the conclusion of this book) it went as a common tradition οὐδὲν ἄπιστον ἔχων (as Theophanes speaks), *having nothing incredible in it,* that Job was one of those, who had the honour to rise out of his grave at our Saviour's resurrection; when, as St. Matthew assures us, xxvii. 51. "Many bodies of saints which slept arose, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." (James v. 7. 11.)

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter is a plain narration of the flourishing condition wherein Job lived, before the envy and malice of the devil brought upon him the sorest calamities; which are particularly described, with the occasion of them, and his admirable constancy under them; whereby he became as eminent an example of patience in adversity, as he had been of piety and all manner of virtue in his prosperity.

Ver. 1. *THERE was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.*] In the time of the ancient patriarchs, before the giving of the law of Moses, there lived in Arabia a person of great eminence, whose name was Job: a man not more illustrious for his birth or place, than for the height of his virtue, which appeared in a most unblamable life, void of all hypocrisy, both in his piety towards God, and in his dealings with men, and all other ways.

Ver. 2. *And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.*] Whom God therefore had so wonderfully blessed, that his outward prosperity was equal to the perfections of his mind. For, first, he had given him the sweet fruits of marriage, in a numerous issue of seven sons and three daughters:

Ver. 3. *His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.*] And then enriched him abundantly with the wealth of that country; which consisted in seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, as many she-asses; with such a very great tillage, and so many servants, that in those eastern parts he had neither superior nor equal.

Ver. 4. *And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters, to eat and to drink with them.*] And together with all this happiness, he had the pleasure to see his children live in love and unity. For it was the custom of his sons to meet at each other's houses, and to make a feast every one upon his birth-day: (iii. 1.) and he whose turn it was to treat the rest, always invited their three sisters to come and be merry with them.

Ver. 5. *And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.*] This feast was wont to last seven days; at the end of which their good father never failed to send a messenger to them, to call upon them to prepare themselves, by fasting and prayer, for the sacrifice he meant to offer for them: and when they were assembled, he rose up early in the morning (the fittest time for devotion), and prayed to God, by offering burnt-offerings for every one of them, because he was afraid they might have done or spoken something that was profane, and misbecoming their religion, when their minds, loosened by mirth, were less upon their guard. And thus he did constantly after every feast.

Ver. 6. *Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.*] But this great piety was not sufficient to preserve him from false accusations. For as Job set a time for his children to examine themselves, so there are certain seasons when the angels come and stand in the Divine presence, to give an account of their ministry, and to receive commands from God, the Judge and Governor of the world: and Satan, that subtle adversary of mankind, came one day, and thrust in himself among them.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.*] And the Lord (to make him sensible he was not an absolute prince, but his subject) called to him, and demanded an account of him, where he had been, and from whence he came? To which he gave an answer, which expressed, as the great restlessness of his mind, and his unwearied diligence, so the limitation of his power, which extends only to this lower world; for he told him, he came from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*] Then the Lord said to him again; After all thy inquisitiveness and busy search, thou hast nothing to object against the integrity of my servant Job; a man that excels in piety and justice, and all other virtues, which he practises exactly and sincerely.

Ver. 9. *Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?*] Yes, said Satan; he serves himself rather than thee: it is not thy pleasure which he regards, but his own profit.

Ver. 10. *Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.*] Hast thou not paid him well for his pains? and so environed him and his family, and all belonging to him in every place, that no harm can come to them? Whereby all his business prospers, and his flocks and his herds are so increased, that the country can scarce hold them.

Ver. 11. *But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.*] But I am confident, if thou wilt but employ that power to plague him, which hath so long preserved him, he will not only in his heart, but openly, deny thy providence.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.*] Then the Lord (who was willing to prove the virtue of his servant in an afflicted estate, as he had done in a prosperous) withdrew the protection he had given him, and granted Satan a commission to dispose of all belonging to Job according as he pleased; excepting only his person, which he commanded him not to touch. This was joyful news to that malicious Spirit, who went immediately to do what he had long desired.

Ver. 13. *And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house.*] And within a short time found an opportunity to try the constancy of Job, by doing him all the mischief possible, in one and the same day: which was the birth-day of his eldest son, when all his children (far from fearing any evil) were met, according to their custom, at his house, to feast and rejoice together.

Ver. 14. *And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them.*] Then it was that Satan put in execution what he had designed; and first of all stirred up a thievish sort of people in Arabia, to fall upon that part of his land which was next to them. Of which tidings were presently brought to Job by a messenger, saying,

Ver. 15. *And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*] As the oxen were at plough, and the asses in a pasture hard by them, the Sabeans made an inroad into thy country, and carried them all away; having slain, by an unexpected assault, all those who should have preserved them, except myself alone, who made an escape to acquaint thee with it.

Ver. 16. *While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burnt up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*] He had not quite delivered his message before another of his servants arrived (as evils seldom come single), to tell him that there had been a very great lightning in those parts, where his sheep were feeding, which had consumed both them and the shepherds, and left none surviving, but himself alone, to give him notice of this disaster.

Ver. 17. *While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*] He had not finished his narration before another messenger was at the door, saying, Our neighbours the Chaldeans, seeking for booty, divided themselves into three parties, who set upon us all at once; and they have carried away the camels, and killed all the servants that looked after them, except myself, who made a shift to save myself by flight to bring the news of this invasion.

Ver. 18. *While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house.*] Before he had concluded, came in another, the most doleful messenger of all, saying, Thy children, as thou knowest, were feasting with their elder brother:

Ver. 19. *And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*] And, behold, on a sudden there arose a violent wind, which coming from the desert, and whirling about the house, took away the four corners of it, and buried them all in its ruins; and there is not one of the guests escaped, that I know of, but only myself, to be the messenger of this great calamity.

Ver. 20. *Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground and worshipped.*] Then Job (who had heard all the rest without disturbance) was overcome with grief at this last word, and laying aside all other thoughts, gave up himself to the most lamentable sorrow: for he rent his upper garment, cut off the hair of his head, and threw himself upon the ground. Where he deceived the devil's expectation; for he most reverently adored, as became his piety, the Divine Majesty, and submitted himself to his will, saying,

Ver. 21. *And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.*] I am but what I was at first, and what I must have been again at last; and he that hath stripped me of all before I die, hath taken away nothing but what he gave. Let him therefore be praised, who is the Donor of all good things, and the Disposer of all events.

Ver. 22. *In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.*] This was the worst word that he spake, when all these evils came upon him so unexpectedly, and so thick together: all the rest was like this; and nothing dropped from his mouth which in the least accused or questioned the providence of God.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The first part of this chapter is a continuation of the narration, which was begun in the foregoing, of the calamities which befel this good man; whom God suffered the devil to afflict in his body, as he had already done in his goods and children. And then follows a farther testimony of his constancy, notwithstanding his wife's angry and pro-

fane accusation of the Divine Providence: though, it is true, he was so much dejected to see himself reduced to this extremity of misery, that neither he, nor his friends that came to visit him, were able for several days to speak a word.

Ver. 1. *AGAIN there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord.*] After these things the angels going again to attend the pleasure of the Divine Majesty, and to give an account of their several charges, Satan also openly appeared among them, and presented himself as ready and desirous to be examined about his management.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.*] But not daring to speak before he was called, he waited till the Divine Majesty asked where he had been, and what he had done. To which he answered, as he had done before, that he had not lost his time, but had fetched a circuit round about the earth, to find opportunity for the exercise of his power.

Ver. 3. *And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.*] Well then, said the Lord, art not thou convinced how true a character I gave of my servant Job, and how much thou hast calumniated him? for he still resolutely continues as perfectly virtuous as he was in his prosperity, though I have consented to these miserable calamities which he suffers undeservedly.

Ver. 4. *And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin; and all that a man hath will he give for his life.*] To which Satan answered again and said, that his constancy was not so wonderful, since a man hath reason to think himself rich who is in health. Who is there that will not give another's skin to save his own; nay, part with his children, as well as his goods, to save his life?

Ver. 5. *But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.*] But enlarge now my commission a little farther, and let me afflict his body, so that it touch him to the very quick, and he will openly renounce thee, and deny thy providence.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.*] To which the Divine Majesty (knowing the fidelity of Job, which hereby would become more illustrious) was pleased to yield; and said, Behold, I give thee the same power over his person which thou hadst over his family and goods: inflict what diseases thou wilt upon him, so they do not kill him.

Ver. 7. *So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore biles, from the sole of his foot unto his crown.*] No sooner had Satan obtained this new grant, but, withdrawing himself from the presence of the Divine Majesty, he went to pursue his mischievous desires; and smote Job from top to toe with a fiery ulcer, whose sharp humour was extreme grievous and painful, and pricked him (according to his wish) to the very bone.

Ver. 8. *And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.*] The filthiness of the disease also increased that sorrow and heaviness which before had seized on him, and made him sit down in the ashes; where he laid hold on what came next to hand, a piece of a broken pot, to wipe away the foul matter which issued out of his biles.

Ver. 9. *Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.*] And it was a farther addition to his grief, to hear his dear consort (whom the Divine Goodness he thought had still left to help him to bear his affliction) utter this profane speech, What a folly is it still to persist in the service of God, when all thou gettest by it is to give him thanks and perish.

Ver. 10. *But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.*] These words struck him to the very heart: but instead of being angry with God, he only severely reproved her, telling her that she talked like one of the wicked women; and then piously represented to her, that we ought to take nothing ill which comes from the hand of God (as all evil things do as well as good), and the more good we have received from him, the less reason we have to complain when we suffer any evil. No discourse but such as this was heard to come from his mouth.

Ver. 11. *Now, when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every man from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him, and to comfort him.*] Now there dwelt in the neighbouring provinces three great men, with whom Job had long maintained a particular friendship, who, hearing the sad tidings of his sufferings, came every one from his country to visit him. Their names were Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite; who all three met at his house on the same day, according to an appointment they had made, to come and condole with him, and comfort him.

Ver. 12. *And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads towards heaven.*] But as soon as ever they entered into the place where he lay, they were surprised with so miserable a spectacle of deformity, that they shrieked aloud, as men affrighted, and burst out into tears, and rent their garments, and threw dust into the air, which, falling on their heads, expressed the confusion they were in, to find him so covered over with ulcers that they could not know him.

Ver. 13. *So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights; and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.*] And when they approached nearer him, they only sat down upon the earth, in the same mournful posture wherein they found him, but were not able (so much were they astonished) for seven days and nights to say one word of the business about which they were come to him. And indeed his grief was so exceedingly great, that they did not well know what to say, till time, which alters all things, had assuaged a little both his grief and theirs.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Here begin the discourses which Job and his friends had about his affliction; which are all represented, by the author of this book, poetically; not as hitherto, in a plain simple narration, but in most elegant verse. And being overcharged with grief (without the least word of comfort from his friends), he that had for some time borne the weight of his afflictions with an admirable constancy, could not contain himself any longer, but bursts out (to such a degree was the anguish of his spirit increased) into the most passionate complaints of the miseries of human life. The consideration of which made him prefer death much before it, and wish that either he had never come into the world, or gone presently out of it again, or at least might now forthwith be dismissed.

Ver. 1. *AFTER this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day.*] And at the end of seven days Job himself began by complaints to give some vent to his grief, which had stupified him thus long: but he burst out into such bitter lamentations, that he wished a thousand times he had never been born.

Ver. 2. *And Job spake, and said.*] That which he said was to this effect:

Ver. 3. *Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man-child conceived.*] Let the day and the night of my birth be never more mentioned, but be quite forgotten, as if it had never been.

Ver. 4. *Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.*] Let that day be turned into night, and not be counted among the days: let the sun then withdraw its light, and never shine upon it.

Ver. 5. *Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it.*] Let the most dismal darkness and the thickest clouds wholly possess it, and render it terrible to men.

Ver. 6. *As for that night, let darkness seize upon it; let it not be joined unto the days of the year; let it not come into the number of the months.*] And let the night be of the same sort, and both of them quite blotted out of the calendar.

Ver. 7. *Lo, let that night be solitary; let no joyful voice come therein.*] Let nobody meet together on that night, to feast or make merry.

Ver. 8. *Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning.*] Let it be as the day wherein men bewail the greatest misfortune, or the time wherein they see the most dreadful apparition.

Ver. 9. *Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it look for light, but have none; neither let it see the dawning of the day.*] Let there not so much as a star appear in that night, nor so much light as we see at peep of day.

Ver. 10. *Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's womb, nor hid sorrow from mine eyes.*] Because it did not bury me in my mother's womb, and thereby secure me from all these miseries.

Ver. 11. *Why died I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?*] What a misfortune was it, that I did not die before I was born, or at least as soon as I came into the world.

Ver. 12. *Why did the knees prevent me? or why the breasts that I should suck?*] That they who received me from the womb did not let me fall on the ground, or my nurse refuse to give me suck.

Ver. 13. *For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest.*] Then should I have felt none of these miseries which I now endure, but lain quiet and undisturbed.

Ver. 14. *With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves.*] Equal to kings and the greatest persons, who lie alone in the tombs which they built themselves.

Ver. 15. *Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver.*] Having gold and silver in abundance, whereof now they are bereaved.

Ver. 16. *Or as a hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light.*] Or like an abortive, which was never numbered among men.

Ver. 17. *There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.*] There are none can hurt us in the grave, though they be never so malicious, nor shall we toil any more when we come thither.

Ver. 18. *There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.*] The captives, and they who are condemned to hard servitude, take no pains there, and do not dread the voice of the exactor of their labours.

Ver. 19. *The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master.*] There none are greater than other; but the servant in that place is as free as his master.

Ver. 20. *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul.*] Is it not strange, that a man should be forced to live when he hath no mind to it?

Ver. 21. *Which long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures.*] But wishes for death though in vain, and seeks it more eagerly than the greatest riches?

Ver. 22. *Which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave?*] Leaping for joy when he can meet with his grave, as far more welcome to him than a mine of silver?

Ver. 23. *Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?*] Not knowing which way to turn himself, but only thither?

Ver. 24. *For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters.*] This is my condition, whose meat merely sustains a miserable life, which is all sighs and sobs, as loud as the roarings of the lion.

Ver. 25. *For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.*] For the very thing which I dreaded is fallen upon me, notwithstanding all my care to prevent it.

Ver. 26. *I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.*] I did not confide in my riches, nor in the least lull myself in security, (chap. i. 5.) and yet that did not preserve me from being miserable.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

Eliphaz, incensed at this complaint of Job, instead of condoling with him, and pitying the miseries which had put

him into this agony, and applying fitting lenitives to his anguish, bluntly rebukes him for not following the good advice that he used to give to others in their adversity; and tells him he had reason to suspect his piety, because the innocent were not wont to suffer such things, but only wicked oppressors, whom, though never so mighty, God had always humbled. Witness the Horims, who dwelt in Seir, (Deut. ii. 12.) whom the ancestors of Eliphaz (Gen. xxxvi. 11.) had overcome, though they were as fierce as lions. To those beasts of prey, of all sorts, he compares the tyrants whom he speaks of in this chapter, ver. 10, 11. intending, it is likely, to remember him also of the destruction of the Emims by the children of Moab, (Deut. ii. 10, 11.) and of the Zamzummims, (ver. 20, 21.) who were rooted out by the children of Ammon, as the Horims by the children of Esau: from whose grandchild Eliphaz seems to have been descended, and called by the name of the eldest son of Esau. He tells Job also of a vision he had to confirm the same truth, that man's wickedness is the cause of his destruction.

Ver. 1. *THEN Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said.*] Then Eliphaz (one of his most ancient friends, descended from Teman) replied to him and said;

Ver. 2. *If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but who can withhold himself from speaking?*] We must either still keep silence, or speak what will not please thee. But truth sure is more to be regarded than friendship; and therefore I must remember thee.

Ver. 3. *Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands.*] That thou, it is well known, hast given good counsel unto others (and perhaps reproved their impatience); thou hast encouraged those who were dispirited.

Ver. 4. *Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees.*] And by thy discourse hast supported those whose hearts were ready to sink, and settled those who trembled under their burden.

Ver. 5. *But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.*] And now that thou art fallen into the same condition, thou canst not practise thy own lessons; but faintest, and art struck with consternation.

Ver. 6. *Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?*] Is not this the time to exercise thy piety (so much famed), thy confidence in God, thy hope, thine integrity?

Ver. 7. *Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?*] Consult thine own observation, and tell me when thou ever sawest a righteous man forsaken by God.

Ver. 8. *Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.*] Quite contrary, I have seen the wicked reaping the fruit of their doings.

Ver. 9. *By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.*] God blasts and consumes them, as the nipping wind, or the fire, doth the corn in the field.

Ver. 10. *The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the teeth of the young lions, are broken.*] Though they be as fierce as the lions and as strong, their power is broken.

Ver. 11. *The old lion perisheth for lack of prey, and the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.*] The greatest tyrants and their posterity, after they have long enjoyed their power, are deprived of all their riches gotten by oppression, and come to nothing.

Ver. 12. *Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.*] If these observations be not sufficient to convince thee, hear what God himself secretly whispered to me.

Ver. 13. *In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men.*] As I was ruminating one night, when all were asleep, of some visions which I had had,

Ver. 14. *Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake.*] I was on a sudden seized with such a fear, that it made every joint of my body tremble.

Ver. 15. *Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up.*] Whereupon I saw a spirit pass by me, which made mine hair stand on end.

Ver. 16. *It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes; there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying.*] I am not able to describe what it was like; for though it stood still, and I saw an image of something, yet I can only tell what I heard in a still voice, saying,

Ver. 17. *Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his Maker?*] Can any one think that a miserable man is more righteous than God his judge? or that it is possible for any body to be more unreprovable than he that made him?

Ver. 18. *Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly.*] The heavenly ministers themselves may fail; for they are not perfectly wise, though they have no flesh and blood as we have.

Ver. 19. *How much less on them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?*] How can we then pretend to perfection, who dwell in bodies of dirt; which stand upon no firm foundation, but are as subject to be destroyed as a garment to be fretted with moths?

Ver. 20. *They are destroyed from morning to evening: they perish for ever, without any regarding it.*] We see continual examples of those that are cut off: they are quite taken away when nobody thinks of it.

Ver. 21. *Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? they die, even without wisdom.*] Though their dignities be never so great, and their posterity never so numerous, all go away with them, and they die like so many beasts, who have no understanding of their latter end.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

Eliphaz still prosecutes the very same argument; endeavouring to confirm it from the opinion and observation of other men, as well as from his own. And thereupon exhorts him to repentance, as the surest way to find mercy with God; and to be not only restored to his former prosperity, but to be preserved hereafter from the incursions of savage people, or of wild beasts, and

from all the rest of the disasters which had befallen him. Of this he bids him, in the conclusion, be assured; for it was a point he had studied.

Ver. 1. *CALL now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?*] If thou dost not believe me, thou mayest inquire of others. There is no good man but is of this opinion: and if an angel should appear to thee (as there did to me), thou wouldest have no other information but this:

Ver. 2. *For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy stayeth the silly one.*] That God in his anger and indignation destroys the wicked, and him that errs from his precepts.

Ver. 3. *I have seen the foolish taking root: but suddenly I cursed his habitation.*] This is so certain, that I have predicted his downfall, when he seemed most firmly settled in his prosperity.

Ver. 4. *His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them.*] His children also fell with him; justice took hold of them, and would not let them escape.

Ver. 5. *Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns, and the robber swalloweth up their substance.*] The hungry soldier devoured their harvest, there was no fence could secure it; but the rest of their riches became a prey to the robber.

Ver. 6. *Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.*] For we are not to ascribe the trouble and misery of mankind merely to earthly causes, which are but the instruments of God's justice.

Ver. 7. *Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.*] Who hath made it as natural to man to suffer (having offended him), as it is for the sparks to fly upward.

Ver. 8. *I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause.*] Wherefore, if I were in thy case, I would humbly address myself to God, and desire him to order all things as he pleases.

Ver. 9. *Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number.*] For he is the author of all those wonderful things, whose causes we can no more find out than we can count their number.

Ver. 10. *Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields.*] Of the rain, for instance, in its season; and of the springs which run in the fields:

Ver. 11. *To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.*] Whereby men of low condition are enriched and grow great; as the plants and corn shoot out of the earth, after they are moistened with showers.

Ver. 12. *He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise.*] And, on the contrary, he defeats the craftiest designs of subtle men to raise themselves; and it is not in their power to effect that which they have most wisely contrived.

Ver. 13. *He taketh the wise in their own craftiness; and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.*] Nay, they produce that which they studied to avoid; and when they think themselves sure, make too much haste to their ruin.

Ver. 14. *They meet with darkness in the day-time, and grope in the noon day as in the night.*] They trip in the plainest way, and see not their danger, when it is visible to every body but themselves.

Ver. 15. *But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.*] Whereby many a helpless man is delivered, both from the open force, and from the treacherous flatteries or calumnies of those that are too strong for them.

Ver. 16. *So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.*] And therefore he that is oppressed should not despair, nor should the oppressors boast themselves; for there is hope that God will save the one to the utter destruction of the other.

Ver. 17. *Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.*] Behold then, how little reason there is to complain of God's chastisements, which if thou dost not refuse he is able to turn to thy good.

Ver. 18. *For he maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.*] For he doth not merely wound, but, like a wise chirurgeon, by that very means he cures and heals.

Ver. 19. *He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.*] Thy troubles cannot be so many, but, if thou submissively accept them, he will free thee from them.

Ver. 20. *In famine he shall redeem thee from death; and in war from the power of the sword.*] He will feed thee in the best barren years, and defend thee in the day of battle.

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue; neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.*] False accusers shall not be able to hurt thee; and when whole countries are depopulated, thou shalt be secure.

Ver. 22. *At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh; neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.*] When nothing is to be seen but wild beasts, whom famine forces from their dens, thou shalt be cheerful and undaunted.

Ver. 23. *For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.*] For the stony parts of the country shall not fail to bring forth its fruits plentifully; and the beasts of the field shall not devour them.

Ver. 24. *And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin.*] Wheresoever thou pitchest thy tent, thou shalt find it in safety: and when thou takest an account of thine estate, all things shall answer thine expectation.

Ver. 25. *Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth.*] Thou shalt find thy posterity also very great and numerous, like the grass; though now thou art as bare as the earth in winter.

Ver. 26. *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season.*] Thou shalt not die a violent and untimely death; but be carried to thy grave as corn is to the barn when it is full ripe and fit to be gathered.

Ver. 27. *Lo this, we have searched it, so it is; hear it, and know thou it for thy good.*] Doubt not of this, for we have thoroughly considered it, and find it so: receive it therefore, and keep it in memory.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

Job, not at all convinced by these discourses, justifies the complaint he had made, (chap. iii.) which Eliphaz had now accused; maintaining that his grief was not equal to the cause of it. And therefore he renews his wishes of death: at which, though they might wonder who felt nothing to make them weary of life, yet he had reason, he shews, for what he did; and one more than before, which was their unkindness: who pretended to be friends; but, by this rude reproof of him at the very first, without so much as one compassionate word, or the least syllable of consolation, shewed how little sympathy they had with him in his sufferings. These things he desires them to consider, and weigh the cause of his complaint a little better, before they passed any farther judgment on it.

Ver. 1. *BUT Job answered and said.*] Here Job replied to Eliphaz, and spake in these terms to him,

Ver. 2. *Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together!*] Would to God some more equal person than you would lay my complaint and my sufferings one against the other, and judge sincerely which is the heaviest!

Ver. 3. *For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea: therefore my words are swallowed up.*] He would soon find, that the sand of the sea is not so heavy as my misery; and that I am not able to complain enough.

Ver. 4. *For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.*] The Almighty himself hath given me such a wound, that I am dispirited: for nothing but dreadful spectacles present themselves ready armed against me.

Ver. 5. *Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder?*] It is easy for you who feel no pain nor want to forbear complaints; which is no more than the very ass and other brute creatures do.

Ver. 6. *Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?*] But may not he who eats insipid things call for a little salt to make them go down better? (How much more then may we call for something to qualify that which is bitter?)

Ver. 7. *The things which my soul refused to touch are as my sorrowful meat.*] As I do now, who have nothing afforded me for my support, but such discourses as yours, which my very soul loathes.

Ver. 8. *Oh that I might have my request! and that God would grant me the thing that I long for.*] I cannot but cry unto God, and beseech him to grant me my heart's desire.

Ver. 9. *Even that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!*] Which is, that he would be pleased not to let me languish in this miserable condition, but with one stroke more quite cut me off.

Ver. 10. *Then should I yet have comfort; yea, I would harden myself in sorrow: let him not spare; for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.*] It would be a great comfort to me to hope for this, and would strengthen me to endure the severest pains: for I would receive the sentence of death with acclamations of praise, if God would pronounce it against me.

Ver. 11. *What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?*] For I have not strength enough to endure any longer, nor any hope of better days in the conclusion, which should make me willing to have my life prolonged.

Ver. 12. *Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh of brass?*] God hath not made me insensible, and therefore do not wonder that I desire to be released from the sharpest pains.

Ver. 13. *Is not my help in me? and is wisdom driven quite from me?*] Do not think my reason hath forsaken me, and that I do not understand myself.

Ver. 14. *To him that is afflicted pity should be shewed from his friend; but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.*] Were it so, a friend should shew me the more pity; as you would do, but that you fear not God, nor remember that he can afflict you as he doth me.

Ver. 15. *My brethren have dwelt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away.*] My dearest friends prove as deceitful as the torrents, which make a great noise, and run with a violent stream.

Ver. 16. *Which are blackish by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid.*] When the melted ice and snow fall thick into them.

Ver. 17. *What time they wax warm, they vanish: when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place.*] They promise water, but in the summer-time are dried up.

Ver. 18. *The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.*] So that you can scarce find any mark of the course wherein they ran, they are so perfectly vanished.

Ver. 19. *The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them.*] They that travel into our neighbouring countries expected to quench thirst there, where they had sometime seen so much water.

Ver. 20. *They were confounded because they had hoped; they came thither, and were ashamed.*] But were shamefully disappointed, and blushed to think they should seek relief from such uncertain streams.

Ver. 21. *For now ye are nothing; ye see my casting down, and are afraid.*] Just such are you, good for nothing; who, seeing my calamity, shrink from me.

Ver. 22. *Did I say, Bring unto me? or, Give a reward for me of your substance?*] And yet I never sent for you, nor do I ask, now you are come, any relief from you.

Ver. 23. *Or, Deliver me from the enemy's hand? or, Redeem me from the hand of the mighty?*] I do not expect you should deliver me from these calamities, which, as so many mighty enemies, oppress me.

Ver. 24. *Teach me, and I will hold my tongue; and cause me to understand wherein I have erred.*] Do not mistake me, nor think that I despise the assistance of your counsel and advice: no, I am ready to receive your reproofs, and humbly to submit to them, if you can better inform me.

Ver. 25. *How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?*] Oh what power is there in truth! but your reprehensions are ineffectual.

Ver. 26. *Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?*] You only study to shew your eloquence, and in vain use words to drive me to desperation.

Ver. 27. *Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless, and you dig a pit for your friend.*] You fall upon him who is already depressed, and without defence, and in a barbarous manner devise counsel against your friend.

Ver. 28. *Now therefore be content; look upon me: for it is evident unto you if I lie.*] But let it please you to consider my case a little better, and then judge if I be in the wrong.

Ver. 29. *Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteousness is in it.*] Discuss things over again, I beseech you, and do it fairly. I say, let me have a second hearing, it will but the more shew my innocence.

Ver. 30. *Is there iniquity in my tongue? cannot my taste discern perverse things?*] Have I said any thing hitherto that is faulty? I do not think my judgment is so corrupted, but that I can discern what is bad, though spoken by myself.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Job proceeds still in the defence of his complaint, and of his wishes to see an end of so miserable a life; which at the best is full of toil and trouble. And, since his friends had so little consideration of him, he addresses himself to God, and hopes he will not be angry, if he ease his grief by representing to him the dolefulness of his condition, and expostulating a little with him about the continuance of it, and his release from it.

Ver. 1. *IS there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of a hireling?*] Is not the whole life of miserable man a perpetual conflict with various troubles? And must he not at best undergo much toil, labour, and weariness?

Ver. 2. *As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as a hireling looketh for the reward of his work.*] Why may I not then as passionately wish to see an end of it, as the slave in a hot day gasps for the refreshment of the shade? or the labourer longs for the evening, when he may rest, and be paid for his pains?

Ver. 3. *So I am made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.*] I am sure my days are no less void of contentment than theirs; and in the night, when men are wont to forget their sorrows, I can do nothing but restlessly increase them.

Ver. 4. *When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.*] I no sooner am laid down but I wish to be up again; and the night seems very tedious while I toss up and down, in unquiet and tormenting thoughts, calling for the morning.

Ver. 5. *My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome.*] How can I do otherways, when my body is nothing but ulcers, full of worms, and crusted over with scabs; which have made such clefts in my skin, that I am loathsome to myself?

Ver. 6. *My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.*] All my happy days are run away in a moment, and there is no hope I should recover them.

Ver. 7. *O remember that my life is wind; mine eye shall no more see good.*] O my God, remember how short the most pleasant life is, which when it is gone I cannot live over again.

Ver. 8. *The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.*] I can never return to my friends after I have left them: thou dost but frown upon me, and I vanish quite out of the world.

Ver. 9. *As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.*] Just as a cloud dissolves on a sudden before the sun, so doth man sink down into his grave, and appear no more.

Ver. 10. *He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.*] He shall make his habitation there, for hither he cannot return; but others shall take his place, which will no longer acknowledge him the owner of it.

Ver. 11. *Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.*] Suffer me then to speak freely, and to give vent to my grief, by complaining a little of the inexpressible miseries which oppress me.

Ver. 12. *Am I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?*] Am I like a sea, or a whale (or wild beast), that must be shut up and confined under these insupportable sufferings, and by no means break through them?

Ver. 13. *When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint.*] If death may not come and put an end to them, one would have hoped at least to have found some intermission of them by sleep.

Ver. 14. *Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions.*] But then I am haunted with such frightful dreams, and such horrid apparitions.

Ver. 15. *So that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life.*] That I had much rather die the most violent death, than carry this carcass any longer about with me.

Ver. 16. *I loathe it; I would not live alway: let me alone; for my days are vanity.*] It is loathsome to me: I would not, if I might, live always in it. Dismiss me, therefore, since I have no pleasure in life, which of itself will end shortly.

Ver. 17. *What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?*] Is mortal man so considerable, that thou shouldest honour him so much as to contend with him, and set thyself against him?

Ver. 18. *And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?*] That thou shouldest send new afflictions on him every morning; nay, try his strength and courage every moment?

Ver. 19. *How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?*] It is time to turn away thy displeasure from me; at least for so short a space, as to give me leave to breathe.

Ver. 20. *I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou Preserver of men? why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?*] I am not able to

give thee satisfaction for my offences against thee, O thou Observer of men. But why dost thou not remove me quite out of thy sight, if I be a burden to thee?

Ver. 21. *And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be.*] Or else forgive my sin, and so far release me from its punishment, as to let me die; which I shall do presently, and not be found to-morrow to endure these afflictions, if thou dost not still hold me under them.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The foregoing apologies of Job, it seems, made little impression on his friends: for he had no sooner done, but another of them, called Bildad, continued the dispute, with as little intermission as there was between the messengers that brought him (chap. i.) the sad tidings of his calamities. And it doth not appear by his discourse, that he differed at all in his principles from Eliphaz. For, though he give him very good counsel, yet he still presses this as the sense of all antiquity, (ver. 8.) that God ever prospers the just, and roots out the wicked, be they never so flourishing for a season. And he being descended from Shuah, one of Abraham's sons by Keturah, (Gen. xxv. 2.) seems to me to have a particular respect, in this appeal to history, unto the records which then remained of God's blessing upon that faithful man's posterity, who hitherto, and long after, continued in his religion; and of the extirpation of those eastern people (neighbours to Job), in whose country they were settled, because of their wickedness.

Ver. 1. *THEN answered Bildad the Shukite, and said.*] When Job had made an end of this discourse, Bildad (another great friend of his, descended from Shuah, one of Abraham's sons by Keturah), reprehended him in the same manner as Eliphaz had done, saying;

Ver. 2. *How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?*] Why dost thou persist to talk on this fashion, and with such vehemence expostulate with God?

Ver. 3. *Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?*] Dost thou imagine the supreme Judge will not do thee right? or that he who needs nothing will swerve from the rules of equity?

Ver. 4. *If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression.*] Is it not now reasonable to think that thy children had highly offended him; for which cause he took a sudden and hasty vengeance on them?

Ver. 5. *If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty.*] And that if thou didst now (instead of complaining) implore his grace and favour with humble supplication;

Ver. 6. *If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.*] And wert thyself sincere in heart and upright in thine actions, he would certainly have a regard to thee, and restore thy family to its former splendour.

Ver. 7. *Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.*] I am confident, thou art not now so low, but in time he would make thee as high, nay, far more eminent, than thou wast before.

Ver. 8. *For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers.*] I do not desire thee to take my word for it; but let those who are gone before us instruct thee, and search diligently into the histories of the most ancient times.

Ver. 9. *(For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow).*] (For, alas! we are not old enough to understand much: being able to make but few observations, by reason of the exceeding shortness of our lives.)

Ver. 10. *Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?*] They will not fail to inform thee aright; and out of their long experience, and the prudent observations of many ages, justify the truth of my words.

Ver. 11. *Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?*] The rushes and flags we see can shoot up no higher, when they want their mud and moisture.

Ver. 12. *While it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.*] There is no need to stop their growth by cutting them down; for they will wither of themselves, even when they are fresh and green: while smaller herbs, which want not water, continue their beauty.

Ver. 13. *So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrite's hope shall perish.*] Just such is the condition of all those who neglect God (without whose blessing none can flourish): who knows him also that counterfeits piety, and will defeat him of the happiness he expects.

Ver. 14. *Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web.*] He may flatter himself with vain hopes, and be so much the more miserable; for the things wherein he trusts are as weak as a spider's web.

Ver. 15. *He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand; he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.*] He may fancy his family to be so great and potent that it will support him; but it shall fall as well as himself: he may endeavour to keep it up by strong alliances, but to no purpose.

Ver. 16. *He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.*] Nay, he may seem to all the world, as well as to himself, to be like a flourishing tree, which spreads its branches in a fair garden.

Ver. 17. *His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.*] Whose roots have wreathed themselves thick about the earth, and whose head lifts up itself above the highest edifices.

Ver. 18. *If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.*] But when God blasts him, and plucks him up by the roots, there shall remain no remembrance that such a man ever lived in that place.

Ver. 19. *Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.*] Believe it, the pleasure such men take in their prosperous estate is no better than this; and out of the dust shall others spring up, and flourish in their stead.

Ver. 20. *Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil-doers.*] It is a certain truth, that

God will not desert the upright, nor will he uphold the wicked.

Ver. 21. *Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.*] Thou thyself (if thou art upright) shalt still be so blessed by him, that thou shalt not be able to contain thy joy within thy heart; but it shall appear in thy countenance, and burst out into joyful songs.

Ver. 22. *They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame; and the dwelling-place of the wicked shall come to nought.*] They that rejoiced at thy fall shall be perfectly confounded at thy happy restoration, and never recover themselves, but utterly perish.

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

Job allows what Bildad had well spoken in the beginning of his speech: and very religiously adores the justice, wisdom, and sovereignty of the Almighty, with whom he protests he had no intention to quarrel or dispute, but only to assert the contrary maxim to that which they maintained, that piety will not secure us from all calamities, which do not ever fall upon those that deserve them. Witness, on one hand, the prosperous estate of wicked princes, ver. 24. (particularly of one great prince, who then somewhere reigned in their neighbouring countries); and, on the other hand, his own infelicity, notwithstanding his known integrity, ver. 25. About this he confesses he was very much unsatisfied; though he knew it was in vain to argue with God about it, nor would his affliction suffer him to do it.

Ver. 1. *THEN Job answered and said.*] When he had done, Job began again, and replied in this manner:

Ver. 2. *I know it is so of a truth; but how should man be just with God?*] There need not so many words to prove what thou saidst in the entrance of thy speech; for I know very well that God never perverts judgment, and that frail man cannot justify himself before him.

Ver. 3. *If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.*] If he should go about to answer to a thousand things which may be objected to him, he would hardly clear himself in one.

Ver. 4. *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?*] I adore also his wisdom and power as well as his justice; and am sensible that no men can be safe who obstinately oppose him.

Ver. 5. *Which removeth the mountains, and they know not; which overturneth them in his anger.*] Though they were as big and as strong as the mountains, he can hastily overturn them in a moment before they think of it.

Ver. 6. *Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.*] For he is able to remove the whole earth out of its place, and shatter the very foundations of it.

Ver. 7. *Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars.*] Nor are the heavens less subject to his power: for neither sun nor stars can shine if he forbid them.

Ver. 8. *Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea.*] He alone commands the clouds to cover them, and makes the sea swell and lift up its waves.

Ver. 9. *Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south.*] All the constellations of heaven obey him in their several seasons: both those which we see, and those in the other hemisphere.

Ver. 10. *Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.*] In short, I agree with Eliphaz, (v. 9.) that the wonders he doeth are innumerable, and past my comprehension.

Ver. 11. *Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not.*] He sets them before my eyes continually, and yet I am not able to understand them.

Ver. 12. *Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?*] If he snatch away any thing suddenly, who can make him restore it, or cause him to give an account why he did it?

Ver. 13. *If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him.*] If he will continue his displeasure, there is no remedy; but the proudest undertakers must confess their inability to relieve us.

Ver. 14. *How much less shall I answer him, and choose out my words to reason with him?*] What am I then, poor wretch, that I should contend with his anger? or where shall I find out words choice enough to plead with him?

Ver. 15. *Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer, but I would make supplication to my judge.*] It is not fit for me to open my mouth before him in the justest cause, unless it be to supplicate his favour when he judges me.

Ver. 16. *If I had called, and he had answered me; yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice.*] And if I had made supplication, and he had granted my desire, I would not think my prayer had done the business (or believe myself to be out of all danger).

Ver. 17. *For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause.*] For I am not conscious of any guilt; and yet you see with what violent blasts he hath shattered me and my family in pieces, and given me one wound after another.

Ver. 18. *He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.*] No sooner was one past, but another immediately followed; which have left me not the least pleasure in life.

Ver. 19. *If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong: and if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead?*] If I stand upon my might, alas! it is not to be named with his; if upon my right; what judge is there above him to appoint us a day of hearing?

Ver. 20. *If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.*] If I should justify myself, there would be something in my very plea to condemn me: it will render my cause worse to pretend I am innocent.

Ver. 21. *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul; I would despise my life.*] Though I were so, yet I would not be mine own judge in the case: I do not value my life so much as to contend about it.

Ver. 22. *This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.*] All that I affirm is this, and I persist in that opinion, that he lets the innocent suffer sad things as well as the guilty.

Ver. 23. *If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.*] When a plague comes which kills in a moment, he regards not though it fall on the innocent.

Ver. 24. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the judges thereof; if not, where, and who is he?*] And, on the other side (so false is your discourse), we see the government of the earth given into the hands of a wicked prince, who blinds the eyes of his judges. If you deny this, tell me, where is the man, and what is his name, who administers things uprightly?

Ver. 25. *Now my days are swifter than a post; they flee away, they see no good.*] I myself was in prosperity, but it is fled away swifter than a post; and there is not the least footstep of it remaining.

Ver. 26. *They are passed away as the swift ships; as the eagle that hasteth to the prey.*] The ships that are carried with the most rapid stream, or the hungry eagle in chase of her prey, do not make more haste away.

Ver. 27. *If I say, I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort myself.*] I think sometime with myself, that I will forget the miseries of which I complain, and be more cheerful and courageous:

Ver. 28. *I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.*] But then my grief frights away that resolution; knowing thou wilt not release me, but make me still groan under them.

Ver. 29. *If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?*] I am wicked in thine account, and therefore it is to no purpose to vindicate mine innocence.

Ver. 30. *If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean.*] Were I never so pure and clean from all filthiness in heart and life;

Ver. 31. *Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.*] Thou wouldest notwithstanding cover me with filthy ulcers, and make my nearest relations abhor to approach me.

Ver. 32. *For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.*] For God is not like me, that we should dispute upon even terms.

Ver. 33. *Neither is there any day's-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.*] Nor is there any body above us both to compose our differences and command silence, when either of us exceeds our bounds.

Ver. 34. *Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me.*] As for myself, his rod, which is upon me, keeps me in such awe, that I cannot speak freely.

Ver. 35. *Then would I speak, and not fear him: but it is not so with me.*] Let him remove that, and then I shall utter my mind with less dread: for I am not so bad as you imagine.

CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT.

In this chapter the passionate complaints and expostulations with God, from which Job tells us (in the foregoing chapter) he intended hereafter to refrain, break out afresh; and he earnestly desires to know what his guilt is: which God who made him, he was sure, could not but perfectly understand, if there was any, and needed not, for the discovery of it, to expose him to these severe torments. Which, he still is of the opinion, may justify his wishes of never being born, or of dying presently after. Though, those wishes being vain, he acknowledges it is more rational to desire, that God would be pleased to intermit his pain awhile, if he did not think fit quite to remove it.

Ver. 1. *MY soul is weary of my life: I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.*] And since life is a burden to me, which can find no ease but only in complaining, I will take that liberty, (for it is in vain to contend against it, ix. 27.) though no words can express my anguish and misery.

Ver. 2. *I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*] O thou supreme Judge of all, do not pronounce thy final sentence against me, till thou hast first shewn me what the crimes are for which I suffer.

Ver. 3. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?*] What benefit wilt thou receive by my spoils? or is it agreeable to thee to slight thine own workmanship, and to countenance the reasonings and designs of evil men?

Ver. 4. *Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?*] Dost thou judge of things as men do, who can see no farther than the outside, or are led by their affections?

Ver. 5. *Are thy days as the days of man? are thy years as man's days?*] Must thou take time as we do to find out the truth, and understand the bottom of a business?

Ver. 6. *That thou inquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?*] Is that the reason thou usest me thus severely, and hast laid me upon a rack, and as it were examinest what I have done amiss?

Ver. 7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver me out of thine hand.*] Surely thou (whose vengeance none can escape) knowest, without the help of such torments, that I am not guilty.

Ver. 8. *Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about; yet thou dost destroy me.*] There is no part of me but was most elaborately made and fashioned by thee (and therefore thou canst not be ignorant of me); though now thou art about to ruin me.

Ver. 9. *Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?*] Need I put thee in mind that I was formed by thee, as the potter works the clay into what shape he pleases, and now thou art crumbling me into pieces again?

Ver. 10. *Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?*] Didst not thou gather all the scattered parts together, and compact them in my mother's womb?

Ver. 11. *Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews.*] And first cover them with skin, and then with flesh, and at last strengthen them with bones and sinews;

Ver. 12. *Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.*] And in due time bring me into the world, and give me all the comforts of life, and by thy constant care preserve both it and them?

Ver. 13. *And these things hast thou hid in thy heart: I know that this is with thee.*] Thou canst not have forgotten these things; and I am sure that this misery I now endure is not without thy order.

Ver. 14. *If I sin, then thou markest me; and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.*] I cannot offend thee in the least, but thou (by whom I was thus formed) must needs know and observe it, and I cannot avoid thy punishment for it.

Ver. 15. *If I be wicked, woe unto me; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head: I am full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction.*] If I be wicked, I am undone; and if I be righteous, I am so oppressed that I cannot look upon what a lamentable confusion I am in, beholding nothing but misery which way soever I cast mine eyes.

Ver. 16. *For it increaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce lion; and again thou shewest thyself marvellous upon me.*] For it grows greater and greater, while thou pursuest me as a lion doth his prey; and when I hope there is an end of my troubles, sendest more to fill me with new astonishment and horror.

Ver. 17. *Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, and increasest thine indignation upon me; changes and war are against me.*] Fresh witnesses of thine anger rise up against me: thou multipliest thy plagues upon me so that there is no end, but only a change of my conflicts.

Ver. 18. *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!*] And therefore I cannot but wish, as I did at the first, that my mother's womb had been my grave: happy had it been for me if I had died there, and never come into this miserable world:

Ver. 19. *I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.*] Or that I had died as soon as I was born, and been carried from the womb to the grave;

Ver. 20. *Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.*] To which I am now very near. May I beg therefore but this one favour, that since thou wilt not quite remove thy hand, thou wilt forbear awhile to strike, and let me breathe and refresh myself a little;

Ver. 21. *Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death.*] Before I depart thither from whence I shall not return (to ask any more favours); be laid, I mean, in my grave, the place of dismal darkness:

Ver. 22. *A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.*] Where it is as dark as dark can be; and there is no succession of day and night, as we have here, but one perpetual night.

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter gives an account of the sense of Zophar about the business in dispute. It is uncertain whence he was descended; but probably he dwelt upon the borders of Idumea, for there we find an ancient city called Naamah, (Josh. xv. 41.) and from thence came to visit Job in his affliction. But instead of joining with him in his prayer for a little respite from his pain (with which Job hadconcluded his discourse), he calls him an idle talker, and accuses him of irreverence towards God. Concerning whose incomprehensible counsels, and irresistible power, &c. he discourses with great sense, and gives Job exceeding good advice; but still follows the opinion of the other two friends, that he would not have been so miserable if he had not been wicked.

Ver. 1. *THEN answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said.*] Here a third friend of Job's (Zophar of Naamah) began to speak, with no small passion;

Ver. 2. *Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified?*] Dost thou think to stop our mouths with abundance of words; and by thy talkativeness to persuade us thou art innocent?

Ver. 3. *Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?*] Must we not confute thy false allegations, but suffer thee to be insolent, because thou art miserable?

Ver. 4. *For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.*] For thou pretendest not to have offended either in word or deed, and that God himself can find no reason to condemn thee.

Ver. 5. *But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee.*] Oh that he would vouchsafe to shew thee thine error, and with his own mouth confute thee!

Ver. 6. *And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth.*] That he would shew thee the secret reasons of his wise counsels (which far surpass thine) in this affliction; and make thee know that he would be just, if he should punish thy sin more severely.

Ver. 7. *Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?*] Art thou able, after all thy busy inquiries, to give an account of God's judgments, and perfectly comprehend the reasons of his providence?

Ver. 8. *It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?*] Thou mayest as well take a measure of the height of heaven, or of the depth of hell.

Ver. 9. *The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.*] The earth and the sea, as long and as broad as they are, have their bounds; but that hath none.

Ver. 10. *If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?*] If he seize upon any thing, and shut it up (as a hunter doth his prey in a net), he will gather it, and who shall force him to restore it?

Ver. 11. *For he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider it?*] For he knows vain men (who mind not what they say or do), he sees their most hidden wickedness, and will not he punish it?

Ver. 12. *For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt.*] Shall man, void of understanding, take the confidence to dispute with God? man, who is naturally as rude and blockish as a wild ass's colt?

Ver. 13. *If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him.*] If thou art truly wise, cease disputing, and fall to prayer.

Ver. 14. *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.*] If thou art guilty of any sin, banish it quite away, and reform thyself and thy family.

Ver. 15. *For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear.*] For then shalt thou look cheerfully again, and be perfectly freed from this loathsome condition; yea, thou shalt be settled without any fear of losing thy happiness.

Ver. 16. *Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away.*] Which shall be so great, that it shall blot out the remembrance of thy past miseries; or thou shalt think of them as of waters that are run away, and will return no more.

Ver. 17. *And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.*] The rest of thy life shall be more glorious than the sun at noon: even thy darkness shall be like the morning-light.

Ver. 18. *And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope: yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety.*] Thou shalt be confident, though any evil threaten thee, because there is hope God will deliver thee: thou shalt dig wells of water, and none shall disturb thy tents or thy flocks.

Ver. 19. *Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee.*] Thou shalt be in perfect peace, and none shall disquiet thee: yea, the multitude shall sue to thee for thy favour, and the greatest persons shall desire thy friendship.

Ver. 20. *But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.*] But the wicked shall in vain look for happiness: they shall not escape their deserved punishment, but their hope of deliverance shall faint away.

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

In this chapter Job taxes all his three friends with too great a conceit of their own wisdom, which had not, as yet, taught them common humanity to the miserable. And lets them understand, that he needs not come to them to learn, but might rather teach them the falseness of that proposition, wherewith Zophar had concluded his speech, concerning the infelicity of the wicked. For the contrary, he tells them, was obvious to sense, ver. 7, 8, &c. And as for what Zophar had discoursed of the wisdom and power of God, he would have them know, that he was as well skilled in those points as the best of them, and understood as much of the history of ancient times; particularly of the vain attempt at the tower of Babel, unto which it is probable he hath respect in the fourteenth verse; as, in all the following, he seems to have to what you read in Gen. xiv. 5—8. of the rooting out of those fierce giants the Rephaim, and other such-like barbarous and rapacious people; of the particulars of which we have now no records remaining.

Ver. 1. *AND Job answered and said.*] To this Job replied in such words as these:

Ver. 2. *No doubt but you are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.*] You believe then there are no men of sense in the world besides yourselves: so that if you were dead, there would be no wisdom left among us.

Ver. 3. *But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?*] Let not your vanity abuse you; I have understanding as well and as much as you; and so hath every body else: for I see nothing singular in all you have said.

Ver. 4. *I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: the just upright man is laughed to scorn.*] I am not so simple but I see how you deride your friend, when you bid him call upon God that he may answer him. But this is no new thing, the best of men have been mocked at on this fashion.

Ver. 5. *He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.*] Though he be as a lamp, yet they who are dazzled with the splendour of worldly prosperity despise him: the upright is never acceptable to him who is not steadfast in his goings.

Ver. 6. *The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.*] For they thrive and flourish, though they rob the just; and even such men live without disturbance, as provoke God with those very things which he bestows upon them with his own hand.

Ver. 7. *But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee.*] Thou needest not go any farther than to the beasts or birds, to learn how well the wicked fare.

Ver. 8. *Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.*] The earth brings forth her fruit to them abundantly; and the fishes of the sea deny them not their service.

Ver. 9. *Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?*] Who is so stupid as not to understand by all these that God hath ordered it should be thus?

Ver. 10. *In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.*] Whose right it is to dispose of all creatures, as well as of mankind.

Ver. 11. *Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste meat?*] Cannot the mind distinguish truth from falsehood, as exactly as the palate sweet from bitter?

Ver. 12. *With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding.*] And the older we grow, the wiser one would think we should be.

Ver. 13. *With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.*] But what is all our wisdom to God's? who (as he knows, so) can do all things; and he never errs in his understanding, or miscarries in his designs.

Ver. 14. *Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.*] It is not in the power of any creature to repair that which he throws down; nor to extricate that man whom he casts into difficulties and straits.

Ver. 15. *Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up; also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.*] If he deny us rain, the waters themselves dry up: and he sends such floods as break the strongest banks.

Ver. 16. *With him is strength and wisdom; the deceived and the deceiver are his.*] Nor is his wisdom, as I said, inferior to his power: but the subtlety of those who deceive is as well known to him as the silliness of those who are deceived.

Ver. 17. *He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh*

the judges fools.] He defeats the wisest statesmen, and infatuates the ablest senators.

Ver. 18. *He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.*] So that they are not able to keep the crown on the head of their kings; but they are stripped of their royal ornaments, and bound in chains.

Ver. 19. *He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.*] Their great ministers are carried captives with them; nor are the most powerful forces they can raise able to defend them.

Ver. 20. *He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.*] Eloquence, fidelity, and the prudence which hath been gained by long experience, signify as little for their preservation.

Ver. 21. *He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty.*] The nobleness of their birth or their munificence is not at all regarded: and he dissolves the strongest confederacies, into which their friends enter for their support.

Ver. 22. *He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.*] No plot can be so secretly carried but he discovers it; and brings to light that which hath been contrived in the greatest obscurity.

Ver. 23. *He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again.*] Whole nations (as well as their princes) are perfectly under his power; whom he sometimes multiplies, and again diminishes by war, famine, or pestilence. He enlarges their bounds, and, when he pleases, reduces them into narrower limits.

Ver. 24. *He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way.*] He deprives their leaders both of courage and judgment; and brings them into such confusion, that they know not which way to turn themselves.

Ver. 25. *They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.*] Blind men see as much as they; and their counsels and motions are as uncertain as those of a man in drink.

CHAP. XIII.

ARGUMENT.

From the foregoing observations, Job still continues to assert, first, his own understanding to be equal, or rather superior, to theirs; who had better therefore learn of him, and know that God was not pleased to have his providence defended by untruths; nor to see men partial, though it was in his behalf; and, secondly, his own integrity to be such, that he would ever defend it against all accusers, even before God himself: whom he desires to take cognizance of the cause, and to let him understand what the crimes were for which he was thus severely handled. For he protests that he was ignorant of them; though the punishments he had endured were more than sufficient to awaken the sense of his guilt, he being almost consumed by them.

Ver. 1. *LO, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it.*] I have said nothing, I would have you know, but what I myself have observed; or received from credible reports, which I have found to be certainly true.

Ver. 2. *What ye know, the same do I know also: I am not inferior unto you.*] Whereby you may see I had reason to say, that I know as much as you, and am not to learn of you.

Ver. 3. *Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.*] Would to God I might speak with him, and lay my reasons open before him; and be troubled with your discourses no longer.

Ver. 4. *But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value.*] For your conclusions are false; and, like unskilful physicians, you exasperate the diseases which you cannot cure.

Ver. 5. *Oh that you would altogether hold your peace; and it should be your wisdom.*] The best proof of your wisdom would be to say never a word more of these matters.

Ver. 6. *Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.*] But listen a little to me, I beseech you, and hear by what reasons I will defend myself.

Ver. 7. *Will you speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?*] Doth God stand in need of untruths to justify his proceedings? cannot he be righteous unless I be wicked?

Ver. 8. *Will you accept his person? will ye contend for God?*] Hath he so little right on his side, that you must shew him favour? or do you think to oblige his majesty by doing me wrong.

Ver. 9. *Is it good that he should search you out? or, as one man mocketh another, do you so mock him?*] Will it be to your advantage, think you, that God should strictly examine all you have said? or can he be deceived with your flatteries, as frail men may be?

Ver. 10. *He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.*] No; he will severely chastise you, for designing to gratify him by condemning me.

Ver. 11. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you?*] The incomparable excellence of God, one would think, should have frighted away such a thought; and his dreadful majesty made you not presume to imagine he wanted your patronage.

Ver. 12. *Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay.*] Whose remonstrances, on his behalf, are no better than dust; and the arguments you accumulate but like so many heaps of dirt.

Ver. 13. *Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what will.*] Keep silence, therefore, and do not disturb me in my speech; for I will omit nothing.

Ver. 14. *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?*] And I am so conscious to myself of my innocence, that I must still wonder why I suffer such enraging miseries, and am exposed to so many dangers.

Ver. 15. *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.*] Assure yourselves I will never forego this plea; but still maintain mine innocence, though I were at the last gasp, and had no hope of life.

Ver. 16. *He also shall be my salvation: for a hypocrite shall not come before him.*] And I am confident God him-

self would vindicate it; for I am no hypocrite, nor shall false accusations be admitted at his tribunal.

Ver. 17. *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.*] Do not interrupt me, but give due attention to what I am about to say.

Ver. 18. *Behold now, I have ordered my cause; I know that I shall be justified.*] See, I beseech you, I refuse not to be tried, but have framed a process against myself; and am so sure of the goodness of my cause, that I know I shall be acquitted.

Ver. 19. *Who is he that will plead with me? for now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.*] Let who will come and accuse me, I am ready to answer: for to hold my peace, on so just an occasion, is death to me.

Ver. 20. *Only do not two things unto me; then will I not hide myself from thee.*] Let me only beg, O great Judge of all, that thou wilt forbear to make use of two things against me; and then I will appear confidently, to plead my cause before thee.

Ver. 21. *Withdraw thine hand far from me; and let not thy dread make me afraid.*] Do not continue my pain: and let not the sight of thy majesty put me in disorder.

Ver. 22. *Then call thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer thou me.*] Then summon me to thy bar, and charge me, and I will defend myself; or let me question thee, and do thou clear thy proceedings against me.

Ver. 23. *How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.*] Tell me what, and how many, are mine iniquities and sins, for I am ignorant of them: I desire to know them all, great and small, against thee, or against my neighbour.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?*] For what cause am I thus afflicted, and used as if I was thine enemy?

Ver. 25. *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?*] What honour wilt thou get by employing thy power against one, who is no more able to stand before thee, than the leaf to resist the wind which sports with it, or the dry stubble the fire which instantly consumes it?

Ver. 26. *For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.*] For thou hast passed severe decrees against me, and punisheth me for the crimes which were committed before I well knew what I did.

Ver. 27. *Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet.*] And thou dost execute them as severely; for I can no more escape than a malefactor whose feet are in the stocks, who is encompassed with a vigilant guard, and cannot stir a foot from the place where he is.

Ver. 28. *And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.*] But there he rots and wastes away, as I do, like a garment that is eaten by the moths.

CHAP. XIV.

ARGUMENT.

The good man proceeds to plead with God for some mitigation of his miseries, from the consideration of the shortness of life, and the trouble that naturally belongs to it; which he thought might move him not to add any greater burden of suffering; especially considering, that when he is dead he cannot come into the world again (as the plants do) to receive the marks of his favour. Which he hopes therefore he will bestow upon him here, notwithstanding the depth of his misery; (which tempted him to the borders of impatience, ver. 13.) it being very easy for him to remove his affliction, though never so heavy, whose power is so great, that he removed mountains out of their place, and brought a deluge, as we may say, of sand (as they saw sometimes in their neighbouring countries) to overflow the most fruitful regions.

Ver. 1. *MAN that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.*] Man is born to die; and, as he cannot live long, so his short life is subject to many cares.

Ver. 2. *He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.*] He may be compared to a flower, which is beautiful indeed, but suddenly cropped; or to the shadow on a dial, which never stands still, but is hasting away apace.

Ver. 3. *And dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?*] And dost thou concern thyself so far about such a wretch, as to summon him before thy tribunal, and there pass dreadful sentences against him, as thou dost against me?

Ver. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.*] The common frailty of humanity might make thee overlook him; for nothing, thou knowest, can be better than the original from whence it comes.

Ver. 5. *Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.*] Or if he were more considerable than he is, yet, since he can live but to such a time as thou hast prefixed, beyond which he cannot prolong his days one moment:

Ver. 6. *Turn from him that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as a hireling, his day.*] That I should think might move thee not to torment him in this manner; but to let him alone till that appointed time come, which will be as welcome to him as the end of his labour is to the hireling.

Ver. 7. *For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.*] And after that, there is more hope of a tree than of him; for if it be cut down to the very ground, the body of it will grow again, and thrust out new branches:

Ver. 8. *Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground.*] Nay, though it hath been so long cut down that the roots of it are grown old, and the trunk seems quite dead;

Ver. 9. *Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.*] Yet when it is well moistened it will shoot up again, and bring forth boughs, as if it were but newly planted.

Ver. 10. *But man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?*] But when man dies, he crumbles into dust; and none can set it together to make him live again.

Ver. 11. *As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up.*] As lakes and great rivers are dried up, when their waters find a new channel:

Ver. 12. *So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens*

be no more they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.] So man laid down in his grave shall come no more hither; but in that bed of dust shall sleep perpetually.

Ver. 13. *Oh that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!*] I wish I were buried alive, rather than suffer such things; or that I could take sanctuary somewhere till this storm be over; or at least thou wouldest set me a certain time when thou wilt deliver me.

Ver. 14. *If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*] Then (though there be no hope of living here again after I am dead) thou shalt see I will patiently wait all the days of that appointed time, till that happy change come.

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.*] Do thou speak the word, and it shall be done; shew thou hast some love to thy own workmanship.

Ver. 16. *For now thou numberest my steps; dost thou not watch over my sin?*] Though now thou seemest to number every step I have trod in all my life, and dost not spare to punish every fault;

Ver. 17. *My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sowest up mine iniquity.*] Having taken as great care the memory of them should not be lost, as if they had been sealed up in a bag, and added one punishment to another:

Ver. 18. *And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.*] Yet notwithstanding the highest mountains may fall like a leaf, and the rock be removed from his place.

Ver. 19. *The waters wear the stones: thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man.*] The waters, though soft, wear away the hard stones, and the very dust or sand sometimes overflows the fruitful fields: why, therefore (since such strange and unexpected things come to pass), may there not be some hope for miserable man?

Ver. 20. *Thou prevailest for ever against him; and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.*] Who is not able to stand before thee; but must yield and be gone for ever when thou requirest: thou spoilest his beauty, and sendest him away into another world.

Ver. 21. *His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.*] And then, whether his children, whom he leaves behind, be rich, or whether they be poor, it is indifferent to him; for he knows not what passes here.

Ver. 22. *But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.*] But while he is in flesh he cannot but be in pain for them, and his soul is inwardly grieved to see their misery.

CHAP. XV.

ARGUMENT.

In this chapter Eliphaz renews the dispute with more eagerness and fierceness than before; being very angry that Job slighted them so much, and thought himself so wise (as he interpreted it), that he disdained their exhortations, and would not follow the counsel they had given him, of confessing his sins, and praying to God for forgiveness; (v. 8. viii. 4—6.) but except this one argument (that he need not be ashamed to confess his guilt, when he considered how prone all men are to sin), there is nothing new in his discourse; but he merely urges what he had asserted at first, from his own and the wisest men's observations, that they are not the good, but the wicked, whom God punishes with such calamities as now were fallen upon Job. And with great ornaments of speech, he most admirably describes the vengeance which God is wont to take upon impious tyrants; having his eye, I suppose, upon Nimrod, or some such mighty oppressor.

Ver. 1. *THEN answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said.*] Then Eliphaz, incensed with these reproaches, rose up again, and said;

Ver. 2. *Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?*] Dost thou pretend to be wise, who answerest us with such empty discourses; and whose heart is swollen with such pernicious opinions, and vents them with so much vehemence?

Ver. 3. *Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?*] Is this thy wisdom, which teaches thee to wrangle to no purpose, and to pour out words for which one is never the better?

Ver. 4. *Yea, thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God.*] The better did I say? They destroy all religion, and discourage men from pouring out their complaint in prayer to God.

Ver. 5. *For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty.*] Thou rather teachest them to dispute with him; whereby thou hast proclaimed thine iniquity, while with fallacious words thou seekest to dissemble it.

Ver. 6. *Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I; yea, thine own lips testify against thee.*] I need produce no farther testimony against thee; for thy own mouth hath done the business, and condemned thee of impiety.

Ver. 7. *Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before the hills?*] Thou art but a man, why dost thou talk as if thou wert God, or at least wert made before the world?

Ver. 8. *Hast thou heard the secret of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?*] Wast thou admitted into God's secret counsels, and thereby engrossedst all wisdom to thyself?

Ver. 9. *What knowest thou, that we know not? what understandest thou, which is not in us?*] Wherein (to retort thy own words upon thee) doth thy knowledge exceed ours? Let us hear what secret thou hast learnt, which we do not understand.

Ver. 10. *With us are both the gray-headed and very aged men, much elder than thy father.*] If by age and long experience men acquire wisdom, there are some of us who are much elder than thy father.

Ver. 11. *Are the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee?*] Why dost thou slight then those Divine consolations which we have given thee? Hast thou some secret ones which nobody else knows of?

Ver. 12. *Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what doth thine eyes wink at.*] What makes thee have such a high opinion of thyself, and in this manner contemn us?

Ver. 13. *That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?*] Nay, oppose thyself to God, and take the boldness to argue with him?

Ver. 14. *What is man, that he should be clean? he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?*] Thou wilt maintain thy innocence, thou sayest; but thou forgettest sure what thou art and whence thou comest; else thou wouldest not stand upon thy justification, nor complain that thou art wronged.

Ver. 15. *Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.*] Remember what I told thee before, (iv. 18.) that the angels are not immutably good; the heavenly inhabitants, I say, are not without their spots.

Ver. 16. *How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?*] What a loathsome and filthy creature then is man, who is as prone to sin, as he is to drink when he is dry.

Ver. 17. *I will shew thee, hear me; and that which I have seen I will declare.*] Do not stop thine ears whilst I shew thee thine error, and I will say nothing but what mine own eyes have seen,

Ver. 18. *Which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid it.*] And which wise men have observed, and their fathers before them, who have reported it to their children:

Ver. 19. *Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them.*] And they no mean persons neither, but such as were alone thought worthy to be entrusted with the government of whole countries, which no foreign power could enter (as they have done thine) while they ruled.

Ver. 20. *The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.*] The wicked tyrant (this is their and my observation) is never free from inward torment; all his life long he is in dread of some greater oppressor than himself.

Ver. 21. *A dreadful sound is in his ears: in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him.*] His guilt so pursues him, that it makes him fear some mischief or other is still falling on him; and in the most peaceable time he doth not think himself in safety.

Ver. 22. *He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, and he is waited for of the sword.*] When he lies down he is afraid he shall be killed before the morning; and he fancies nothing but naked swords round about him.

Ver. 23. *He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it? he knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand.*] He shall wander to get a morsel of bread where he can find it; and when he hath it, he shall imagine it will prove his poison.

Ver. 24. *Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle.*] The distress and anguish wherein he sees himself shall affright him; they shall press upon him and overcome him, as a king doth his enemies whom he hath surrounded with his forces.

Ver. 25. *For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.*] Which will be a just punishment of his audacious impiety; because he defied God, and resolutely set himself in opposition to the Almighty:

Ver. 26. *He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers.*] Who will suddenly lay fast hold on him and kill him, though he be never so well armed:

Ver. 27. *Because he covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on his flanks.*] Because he minds nothing but his belly; and, casting away all fear of God, nourishes up himself in luxury, pride, and haughtiness.

Ver. 28. *And he dwelleth in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.*] Possessing cities which he hath laid desolate; and houses out of which he hath driven the owners, and which are running to ruin.

Ver. 29. *He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.*] But the riches he hath gotten by such violence and oppression shall come to nothing: he may design great things, but shall leave them imperfect.

Ver. 30. *He shall depart out of darkness: the flame shall dry up his branches; and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.*] When his troubles begin, they shall not end till they have destroyed both him and his children: one word of God's mouth (so mad a thing it is to set himself against Heaven) will utterly consume him.

Ver. 31. *Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity; for vanity shall be his recompence.*] Let such examples teach him that is seduced into evil ways, not to trust to such uncertain greatness; for vexatious disappointments shall be all that he will get by it.

Ver. 32. *It shall be accomplished before his time, and his branch shall not be green.*] He shall meet with them when he little thinks of it; and see his children wither away as well as himself.

Ver. 33. *He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive.*] They shall die before their time, as the unripe grape, or the blossom of the vine or olive, are struck with hail, or bitten off by the frost.

Ver. 34. *For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.*] The most numerous families of such ungodly men shall have none in them left: the Divine vengeance shall destroy the house which was built with ill-gotten goods.

Ver. 35. *They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepared deceit.*] And they justly deserve to be thus punished, because all they design and do is nothing but the oppression and ruin of their subjects: against whom when one design miscarries, they conceive new arts to undo them.

CHAP. XVI.

ARGUMENT.

Job reproves the vanity and obstinacy of Eliphaz, in repeating the same things over again, and still persisting in his inhumanity, though he saw his case so pitiable: which he again describes, to make him sensible how unworthily he was treated by him and the rest of his friends; who, in effect, joined with his enemies, who took this opportunity to rail at him. Whereas there was no crime of his appeared to justify their accusations, and to make good Eliphaz's argument: which signified nothing, unless he meant to say, that Job was like that wicked tyrant of whom he had discoursed. Which was so far from any

show of truth, that he protests he never hurt any body, and was always a sincere lover of God, &c. (ver. 17, 18.) The truth of which God knew, to whose bar he appeals from their unjust sentence.

Ver. 1. *THEN Job answered and said.*] Here Job interrupted him, and said,

Ver. 2. *I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all.*] Thou dost but repeat what hath been often said already: such comforters as you are as troublesome as my sufferings.

Ver. 3. *Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?*] May not one endlessly pour out such empty discourses? (as I may with more reason call thine than thou didst mine, xv. 3.) I wonder at thy confidence, that, having so little to say, thou shouldest take upon thee to answer.

Ver. 4. *I also could speak as ye do: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you.*] I could insult as well as you; and, if we could change conditions, let you see how easy it would be to oppress you with such words as these, in a grave fashion to mock at your calamities.

Ver. 5. *But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief.*] But I abhor the thought of such a guilt: I would not fail to fortify you, in that case, with the best arguments I could invent; and carefully abstain from the least word that should augment your grief.

Ver. 6. *Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged: and though I forbear, what am I eased?*] Though as for myself, I find my misery admits of no consolation: for whether I defend my innocence, or silently suffer you to condemn me, it makes no difference.

Ver. 7. *But now he hath made me weary: thou hast made desolate all my company.*] God hath long since quite tired me with one trouble upon another. Thou hast not ceased, O God, till thou hast left me neither goods, nor children, no, nor a friend to comfort me.

Ver. 8. *And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me: and my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face.*] The furrows in my face (which is not old) shew the greatness of my affliction: which is extremely augmented by him, who rises up with false accusations to take away mine honour, as this consumption will do my life.

Ver. 9. *He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnashes upon me with his teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.*] He rends my good name in pieces with a passion equal to his hatred: my enemy is enraged against me, and cruelly sets himself to spy out the least occasion to calumniate me.

Ver. 10. *They have gaped upon me with their mouths; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have gathered themselves together against me.*] There is no small number of such as these, who look like so many wild beasts coming to devour me; having already most shamefully abused me, and joined themselves together to give full satisfaction to their wrath, wherewith they are filled against me.

Ver. 11. *God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked.*] So God will have it; who hath abandoned the protection of me, and delivered me bound into the hands of the ungodly, to use me at their pleasure.

Ver. 12. *I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark.*] How happy was I heretofore! and now I am crushed in pieces: from an eminent condition he hath thrown me down into the most despicable; and there I am exposed (as a butt to the arrow) to all manner of indignities and miseries.

Ver. 13. *His archers compass me round about; he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground.*] He is not content to take away all my goods, and destroy my family, but, to the reproach of friends (which strike like so many darts to my very heart), he hath added ulcers in every part of my body, with inward pains, which rack me without intermission; and, in one word, hath so mortally wounded me, as if my bowels were already shed upon the ground.

Ver. 14. *He breaketh me with breach upon breach; he runneth upon me like a giant.*] Before one wound be closed he makes another, and in such violent a manner, that I can make no more resistance than a dwarf can do against a giant.

Ver. 15. *I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the dust.*] The sackcloth which I put on at the first now cleaves so fast to me, as if I had sewed it to my skin; and all my authority and honour is changed into contempt.

Ver. 16. *My face is foul with weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death.*] My face is dirty, and mine eyes in a manner quite put out by the very tears which have fallen from thence.

Ver. 17. *Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure.*] And yet I must still say, I never offered such a violence as this to any man, and was always (so false is Eliphaz's accusation, xv. 4.) a sincere worshipper of God.

Ver. 18. *O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.*] If this be not true, let my blood be left to the dogs to lick, when I am dead, and let neither God nor man regard my complaint while I am alive.

Ver. 19. *Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.*] But what need these imprecations? The great God who rules over all is my witness, and can testify how just I have been towards my neighbours, and how pious towards himself.

Ver. 20. *My friends scorn me; but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.*] From your judgment therefore (who, instead of comforting my innocence, scornfully set yourselves to defame me) I appeal to his; and beseech him with perpetual tears to vindicate me.

Ver. 21. *Oh that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour!*] I am so assured of the goodness of my cause (as well as of his justice), that I wish for nothing more than to have it speedily heard and tried by him, in the same manner that pleas are held before earthly judges.

Ver. 22. *When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.*] For my life cannot last long; and I know that when I am gone I cannot return hither again, for him to do me justice.

CHAP. XVII.

ARGUMENT.

Here Job desires he may be tried presently before God's tribunal, his life being just upon the point to expire, as he had said in the end of the former chapter; and continues to urge again in this, because his friends were very unfit judges in this case, and had passed such a sentence upon him as upright men would never approve of. Whereby they had given him a new vexation, to hear them talk so idly, and put him in hope of recovering his happiness, if he would follow their admonitions, when they saw him just dropping into the grave, which was the only thing, he saith, that he could hope for.

Ver. 1. *MY breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me.*] My vital spirits are spent, they give but a glimmering and dying light; whereby I can see nothing but graves on every side prepared for me.

Ver. 2. *Are there not mockers with me? and doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?*] How can I support my spirits, when my friends, who should comfort me, mock at all I say for myself? This so bitterly exasperates me, that I cannot take a wink of sleep, nor think of any thing else.

Ver. 3. *Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee; who is he that will strike hands with me?*] Once more therefore I beseech thee, O God, to assure me that thou wilt judge my cause thyself: let somebody undertake for thee: who is it that on thy behalf will engage to do me right?

Ver. 4. *For thou hast hid their heart from understanding: therefore shalt thou not exalt them.*] Not these friends of mine; for they comprehend nothing of the way of thy judgments: therefore, thou shalt not confer this honour on them who talk so absurdly.

Ver. 5. *He that speaketh flattery to his friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail.*] I must speak the truth of them (though it displease them), and not soothe them up in their errors: for he that flatters his friends, when he should reprove them, may look long enough before either he or his children find one that will deal sincerely with them.

Ver. 6. *He hath made me also a by-word of the people; and aforetime I was as a tabret.*] This very person who spake last hath made me a proverb in every body's mouth: and it is the vulgar pastime to talk of my calamities.

Ver. 7. *Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my members are as a shadow.*] No wonder then that excessive sorrow hath darkened mine eyes; and that all the flesh of my body is so consumed, that I am but the shadow of a man.

Ver. 8. *Upright men shall be astonished at this, and the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite.*] Upright men hereafter will be astonished at the cruel sentence which my friends pass upon me; and the innocent will resolutely oppose the wicked, when he judges the worse of piety, because of my afflictions.

Ver. 9. *The righteous also shall hold on his way; and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.*] The righteous will not be moved by such arguments to change his purpose of well-doing; much less will he do any evil action, but grow rather the better by adversity, and add perseverance to his piety.

Ver. 10. *But as for you all, do you return, and come now: for I cannot find one wise man among you.*] And truly I wish that all you, who have charged me so heavily, would consider things better, and hearken to what I have said: for I must tell you again, there is not a man of you that judges truly of my case.

Ver. 11. *My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.*] Repent of your harsh censures before I die, as I must speedily, my joys being quite gone, and all the hopeful designs, which had possessed my heart, being utterly subverted.

Ver. 12. *They change the night into day: the light is short because of darkness.*] Instead whereof other thoughts are come to torment me; which will not let me sleep in the night, nor enjoy any pleasure in the day.

Ver. 13. *If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness.*] If I hope for any thing now (as you would have me), it is for a grave: that is the only house I can promise myself; there I am going to rest in a bed where I shall not be disturbed.

Ver. 14. *I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister.*] I have already made so near an alliance with death, that my father and mother and nearest kindred are nothing so near me as worms and rottenness.

Ver. 15. *And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it?*] How vain then are all the hopes you would have me feed myself withal? (xi. 15, 16, &c.) Who shall see, when I am sure I shall not, the happiness you would have me look for here?

Ver. 16. *They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.*] All these hopes you speak of shall sink down into the bottom of the grave; when you, my friends, as well as I, shall take up your lodging in the dust.

CHAP. XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

In this chapter Bildad again takes up the dispute, and pretends to reply to what Job had said. But I do not see any thing new, saving the description he makes (as Eliphaz had done before him) of the ruin which shall inevitably fall, according to the fixed rules of Providence (so he fancied), upon the wicked and his family; notwithstanding all the assistance that his friends and allies can lend him for his preservation. And this he seems to imply was the fate of Job; whom he doth not so much as exhort to repentance, (as he had done in his former discourse, chap. viii.) being very angry with him, that he had no higher esteem of their wisdom.

Ver. 1. *THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said.*] Then Bildad the Shuhite, seeing Job continue in his first opinion, rose up, and said,

Ver. 2. *How long will it be ere you make an end of words? mark, and afterward we will speak.*] How long shall we continue this dispute? Let us make an end of it, unless he will attend better to our reasons; then we will go on to argue with him.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore are we counted as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight?*] To what purpose is it to talk with one who tells us we understand nothing, (xvii. 4. 10.) but looks upon us as a company of dull beasts, into whom nothing of wisdom will enter?

Ver. 4. *He teareth himself in his anger: shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the rock be removed out of his place?*] Such is his passion, which will not let him see how he himself, like a wild beast, tears his own soul in pieces with impatient anger. What art thou, that God for thy sake should cease to govern the world by his known laws, which are fixed and immutable?

Ver. 5. *Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine.*] Say what thou wilt, it is an everlasting truth, that the wicked shall not continue in the splendour wherein we sometime see him: but though he seem to sit as by a great fire (warm in his wealth, and honour, and power), there shall not remain so much as a spark to comfort him.

Ver. 6. *The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.*] The glory of his family shall be turned into contempt, and all their joy shall end in sorrow.

Ver. 7. *The steps of his strength shall be straitened, and his own counsel shall cast him down.*] The attempts which his power makes to preserve his greatness shall but more perplex him: and his own devices shall prove his overthrow.

Ver. 8. *For he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare.*] He shall entangle himself by his own wiles; and having contrived himself into danger, every step he takes in pursuance of his designs shall farther ensnare him.

Ver. 9. *The gin shall take him by the heel, and the robber shall prevail against him.*] Before he is aware he shall find it so impossible to disengage himself; that they who thirst after his blood, or wealth, or place, shall easily lay hold on him.

Ver. 10. *The snare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.*] He shall not foresee his danger; but be caught as a bird or a beast in a snare or a trap, when he thinks himself secure in his proceedings.

Ver. 11. *Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet.*] Then he shall be surrounded with a thousand terrors; and which way soever he runs to save himself, he shall meet with them.

Ver. 12. *His strength shall be hunger-bitten, and destruction shall be ready at his side.*] He shall pine away till he hath no strength remaining: for nothing but mischief shall attend and accompany him in every place.

Ver. 13. *It shall devour the strength of his skin: even the first-born of death shall devour his strength.*] Rottenness shall eat up his bones; I say, his very bones shall rot and be consumed.

Ver. 14. *His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors.*] Whatsoever he relies upon for the support of himself and family, it shall utterly fail him, nay, help to hasten his death, the most dreadful of all his enemies.

Ver. 15. *It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because it is none of his: brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.*] That man had best take heed, who shall have a mind to dwell in his house when he hath left it; for thunder and lightning shall destroy it.

Ver. 16. *His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off.*] And it shall never be built up again, nor shall his family be restored; but be like a tree, whose roots are so dried up in the earth that it shall never shoot forth any more branches.

Ver. 17. *His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street.*] His very memory shall perish, as well as himself; and his name never be mentioned among men unless it be to make him infamous.

Ver. 18. *He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world.*] He shall be cast out of his splendid greatness into some obscure grave; and removed out of the world as some unclean thing.

Ver. 19. *He shall neither have son nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.*] None of his descendants shall survive him; nor any of his kindred remain to keep up his name.

Ver. 20. *They that come after him shall be astonied at his day, as they that went before were affrighted.*] Future times shall read of this severe vengeance of God upon him with astonishment, as they who see it shall be seized with horror.

Ver. 21. *Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.*] Certain it is, that this is a just description of the miserable condition of the wicked: they that do not honour God shall thus be abased.

CHAP. XIX.

ARGUMENT.

The purpose of this chapter (in which Job replies to Bildad) is to shew, that it would be sufficient for him also merely to repeat the same things, as they had done in ten discourses: but the more to aggravate their want of compassion, or rather cruelty, towards him, he represents several new things, which made his condition more deplorable than he had hitherto said. One of which was, that he could not tell the reason why God dealt thus with him; who notwithstanding was so gracious, that, in the depth of this misery and anguish, he affords him a glimmering of a comfortable hope (which began now to appear in his soul, and which he had hitherto wanted), that God would at last take pity upon him, and shew his friends their error, by restoring him to his former health and splendour. That seems to be the literal meaning of the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth verses, and of the two next that follow: where, among other things, he says, he doubted not but his Redeemer should stand at last upon the earth (so it is in the Hebrew, the word *day* not being there), that is, quite overcome the devil, and deliver him from these distresses; like a mighty conqueror, who keeps the field, when all his opposers are routed and fled away. But in this he was, as St. Austin calls him, "eximius prophetarum," and prophesied of the resurrection of the body at the last day.

Ver. 1. *THEN Job answered and said.*] Then Job, hearing him also repeat his former discourse, (chap. viii.)

wherein he reflected on him as a wicked man, burst out again into these words:

Ver. 2. *How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?*] Will you never cease to torment me, and to break my very heart with your words, which grate upon me as sorely as all the miseries I endure?

Ver. 3. *These ten times have ye reproached me: you are not ashamed that you make yourselves strange to me.*] You have reproached me often enough, one would think, and yet you are not ashamed to continue your hard-hearted censures, as if I were a perfect stranger, and my manner of life utterly unknown to you.

Ver. 4. *And be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself.*] Suppose that I have done amiss (which is more than you know), I suffer sufficiently for it; and it doth not become you to increase my sufferings by your reproaches.

Ver. 5. *If indeed you will magnify yourselves against me, and plead against me my reproach.*] But if you will still proceed to lift up your voice to declaim against me, and allege my calamities, which have made me contemptible, as an argument to condemn me;

Ver. 6. *Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net.*] Let this answer suffice you, that I am sensible it is God's doing; who, having laid me thus low, and environed me with unavoidable miseries, calls upon you to compassionate, rather than reproach me.

Ver. 7. *Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard; I cry aloud, but there is no judgment.*] And my case is the more pitiable, because I know not the cause of all this; nor can have any audience or redress, though I appeal to God with the loudest cries, and protest to him that I am innocent.

Ver. 8. *He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths.*] There is no way open for my escape; but his plagues surround me so on every side, that I am at my wit's end, and know not which way to turn myself.

Ver. 9. *He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head.*] He hath not merely stripped me of my ornaments, and taken that dignity and authority from me wherewith I was invested;

Ver. 10. *He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone; and mine hope hath he removed like a tree.*] But brought me to such utter ruin, that, like a tree plucked up by the very roots, I have not so much as hope remaining, which is the only comfort of the miserable.

Ver. 11. *He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.*] For he hath done all this with such violence, as if he were extremely incensed against me, and looked upon me as his enemy.

Ver. 12. *His troops come together, and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle.*] Whole armies of evils, by his order, have at the same time invaded me, and laid such a strait siege to me, that not the smallest comfort I had could escape their fury.

Ver. 13. *He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me.*] I looked for some relief from my brethren, but they were so astonished at the number and dreadfulness of my calamities, that they durst not approach me; and as for my neighbours, who formerly so much courted my acquaintance, they truly keep aloof off, as if they had never known me.

Ver. 14. *My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.*] They whom nature inclined to it have failed to perform the duties of humanity towards me; and they to whom I was tied by a stronger bond than nature, have forgotten the friendship there was between us.

Ver. 15. *They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight.*] They that have been kindly entertained at my house, nay, the people of my family, have forgot the respect they were wont to give me, and look upon me as if they had no relation to me.

Ver. 16. *I called my servant, and he gave me no answer; I entreated him with my mouth.*] I called to my slave, and he regarded not what I said: no, not when I beseeched him, as if he had been my master.

Ver. 17. *My breath is strange to my wife, though I entreated for the children's sake of mine own body.*] Which is the less wonder, since I am become so loathsome, that my wife will not come near me, though I have conjured her to do it by the dear memory of our children, those common pledges of our mutual love.

Ver. 18. *Yea, young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me.*] After these examples young children and fools despise me: and when I rise up to invite them to me, abusive language is all the return they make to my courtesy.

Ver. 19. *All my inward friends abhorred me; and they whom I loved are turned against me.*] And, which is worst of all, the men whom I entrusted with my greatest secrets, cannot endure me; and they who have received so many tokens of my love are become mine enemies.

Ver. 20. *My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.*] All these afflictions have so wasted me, that I am little more than skin and bone: a mouth to complain withal is all the flesh that is left me.

Ver. 21. *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.*] O ye my friends (if you still deserve that name), who are the only persons that undertake to comfort me, have pity, have pity, I beseech you, upon a miserable wretch, and consider what wounds the hand of God hath given me.

Ver. 22. *Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?*] Will you assume the same prerogative, and think you have the same right to afflict me? and doth it not suffice you to see my body all consumed, but you will vex my very soul also with your perverse reasonings?

Ver. 23. *Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!*] Oh that the protestations and appeals I have so often made might remain upon record, and be registered in the public acts and monuments!

Ver. 24. *That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!*] May they be graven upon a plate of lead with an iron pen; nay, cut into a rock or marble pillar, to continue to all posterity!

Ver. 25. *For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.*] For my hope, which was as dead as myself, (xvii. 13. 15. xix. 10.) begins to revive; because, though I seem for the present

to be forsaken of God, yet I know that he can hereafter deliver me out of this miserable condition, since he lives for ever; and will, I doubt not, at last appear victorious over all the enemies which now oppress me.

Ver. 26. *And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.*] And though the worms which have eaten my skin should proceed to consume the rest of this wretched body, yet I feel my soul inspired with a comfortable belief, that before I die I shall see myself restored, by the mercy of God, to a happy estate.

Ver. 27. *Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.*] He will not let me always lie under these reproaches; but I begin to assure myself, that with these very eyes I shall see him vindicate my innocence; not only others, but I myself shall live to see it: and I even faint away with vehement desire to behold that happy day.

Ver. 28. *But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?*] Which will make you repent that you have thus persecuted me, who have not without ground thus long disputed this matter with you, but am sure the right lies on my side, and not on yours.

Ver. 29. *Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment.*] Take my advice therefore in good time, and dread the just displeasure of God against you for your perverse reasonings (for his wrath punishes men's iniquities with the sword, or some such sore vengeance), whereby you will know to your cost, that there is a more righteous judgment than yours.

CHAP. XX.

ARGUMENT.

The abrupt beginning of this speech of Zophar shews that he was in a passion; which, though he pretends to bridle it, would not let him calmly consider the protestation which Job had made of his innocence. But he goes on in the old common place of the certain downfal of the wicked, be he never so powerful and well supported. Which he illustrates, indeed, after an excellent fashion, with great variety of figures and remarks upon histories as old as the world. In some of which he had observed, that the wicked after their fall had made notable attempts to get up again; but by the hand of God were so crushed, that they could never rise more. All the flaw in his discourse is this (which was common to him with the rest), that he imagined God never varied from this method; and therefore Job, without doubt, was a very bad man, though it did not appear he was so any other way, but by his infelicity.

Ver. 1. *THEN answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said.*] Here Zophar, though he had no new thing to produce, hastily interrupted Job, and said,

Ver. 2. *Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this I make haste.*] These words of thine make my former thoughts return again; and do so provoke me, that I am not able to forbear speaking any longer.

Ver. 3. *I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.*] While thou pretendest to correct my errors, I have heard myself rather shamefully reproached; yet I will not suffer my passion to reply, but the clear light of my understanding shall answer for me.

Ver. 4. *Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth.*] It seems thou dost not yet understand, though it be a truth as old as the world,

Ver. 5. *That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?*] That the happiness which the wicked, and he that counterfeits piety, so much boast of, is of no long standing, and will continue but for a few moments.

Ver. 6. *Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds.*] Though he should be advanced to the highest pitch of human greatness, and overtop all mankind as much as the highest trees do the lowest shrubs:

Ver. 7. *Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung: they which have seen him shall say, Where is he?*] Yet he shall fall as low as his dunghil; and, like it, be cast out for ever with contempt: they who saw him so flourishing shall be astonished at his ruin, and ask, with amazement, what is become of him?

Ver. 8. *He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found; yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.*] For his happiness hath no firmer foundation than a dream, of which we have no remembrance in the morning: or if we have, all the rich furniture and feasts which appear to us in our sleep vanish in an instant as soon as we awake.

Ver. 9. *The eye also which saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him.*] Just so shall he pass away, and all his glory with him: those eyes that were wont to gaze upon it with envy shall lose the sight of it, and never behold it more.

Ver. 10. *His children shall seek to please the poor, and his hands shall restore their goods.*] His children shall have enough to do to pacify the rage of the poor, whom he hath oppressed; and he shall be forced with shame to restore with his own hands the goods he hath extorted from them.

Ver. 11. *His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust.*] His very bones are full of pain and anguish. All which punishments of his secret sins shall stick to him till they bring him to his grave.

Ver. 12. *Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue.*] Though wickedness, like some dangerous meats, be pleasant in the acting, as they are in the chewing; so that a man is as desirous to continue it, as a glutton is to keep a long relish of those sweet morsels upon his palate:

Ver. 13. *Though he spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth.*] Though he will by no means part with it, when he is told the danger; but still retains it, as the other doth that meat in his mouth, which he is told is no better than poison:

Ver. 14. *Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him.*] Yet, after it is committed, it wrings and gripes the conscience, as those dainty bits, when they are swallowed, do the bowels: the pleasure is turned into pain, the sweetness into such bitterness as brings the most sudden destruction.

Ver. 15. *He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.*]

His ill-gotten goods, for instance, which he devoured with so much greediness and insatiable desire, shall never thrive with him; but he shall be forced to refund them with a torment far exceeding the pleasure wherewith he got them: God himself shall violently force them from him, and all his other riches together with them.

Ver. 16. *He shall suck the poison of asps; the viper's tongue shall slay him.*] Which shall prove as great and as deadly a torture to him, as if, when he squeezed the poor, he had sucked the poison of asps, or been bitten with a viper.

Ver. 17. *He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.*] This shall be his portion, instead of the pleasures of nature and art; which he flattered himself would flow in several streams to him perpetually.

Ver. 18. *That which he laboured for shall he restore, and shall not swallow it down: according to his substance shall the restitution be, and he shall not rejoice therein.*] He may endeavour again with new labour to repair his broken fortune; but it shall be in vain: though he should get as much riches as he had before his change, he shall have no joy in them.

Ver. 19. *Because he hath oppressed, and hath forsaken the poor; because he hath violently taken away a house which he builded not.*] When he hath with new oppressions grinded the poor, and left them destitute, when he hath violently seized on a house, he shall not be able to build it.

Ver. 20. *Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired.*] When he hath turned, as we say, every stone, and been as restless as a woman in travail; all his pains shall bring forth nothing of that which he desired.

Ver. 21. *There shall none of his meat be left; therefore shall no man look for his goods.*] He shall have no more left him to eat, than he was wont to leave for others, which shall put him out of all hope of mending his condition.

Ver. 22. *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: every hand of the wicked shall come upon him.*] The greater fulness you can suppose him to regain of worldly goods, the more he shall be distressed; for the hand of every man whom he hath afflicted shall lay hold on him to demand satisfaction.

Ver. 23. *When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating.*] God himself also shall disturb him in his enjoyments, with the sorest effects of his Divine vengeance, which shall come pouring down from heaven, when he thinks himself most secure.

Ver. 24. *He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through.*] He shall run from a lesser danger to fall into a greater; as if one, avoiding the weapon in a man's hand, should be shot through with a bow of steel.

Ver. 25. *It is drawn, and cometh out of the body; yea, the glistering sword cometh out of his gall: terrors are upon him.*] And though he should draw the shaft out of his body, and the wound in his bowels should be healed, he shall not escape so, for terrors shall perpetually accompany him.

Ver. 26. *All darkness shall be hid in his secret places: a fire not blown shall consume him; it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle.*] Nothing but dreadful dangers shall wait for him in those places where he hoped for safety: a fire not kindled by man shall devour him, and the same pestilence or burning fever shall take hold of the rest of his family.

Ver. 27. *The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him.*] The heaven by thunder, lightning, or tempests, shall declare itself his enemy; and the earth, by wild beasts or serpents, or some other way, shall make war against him.

Ver. 28. *The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath.*] His whole revenue shall melt away as waters poured out, in the day when God intends to punish him.

Ver. 29. *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God.*] This is the portion which God the righteous judge will allot to the wicked: thus will the Almighty reward his blasphemies, or his other proud and insolent words.

CHAP. XXI.

ARGUMENT.

To bring the dispute to a speedier issue, Job (after a short preface, reproving their incivility) comes close to the business: and doth not content himself merely with denying what they had said, but shews them where the fallacy in their discourse lay: *viz.* in concluding an universal from some particulars. For he maintains from as good history and observations as they could produce, that though God do make some wicked men such examples of his vengeance, as they had said, yet he lets others, and they of the vilest sort, atheists and deriders of Divine providence, live prosperously, and die peaceably, and have stately monuments built to perpetuate their memory. In brief, he shews there is great variety in God's proceedings about the punishment of the wicked; which makes them so bold as they are in their impiety. And seems to have respect to the history of Ishmael, who was a wild or barbarous man, grasping at all he could lay his hands on, and persecuting Isaac; and yet had twelve princes descended from him, settled in their several fortresses, as we read Gen. xvi. 12. xvii. 20. xxv. 16. And it is possible, to the history of Eliphaz's own country: Esau's ancestor being very rich, (Gen. xxxvi. 6, 7.) and having many dukes, whose posterity afterward advanced themselves to the title of kings, that sprang from him, before there was any king over the children of Israel, (Gen. xxxvi. 15. 31.)

Ver. 1. *BUT Job answered and said.*] But Job, who knew the falseness of this assertion (in which Zophar secretly struck at him), that God always punishes sinners in this manner, would not let it pass without answer, and therefore said again unto them;

Ver. 2. *Hear diligently my speech; and let this be your consolations.*] Let me prevail with you to attend better than you have done hitherto to my discourse: do me this kindness, and it shall serve instead of all the consolations I promised myself from you.

Ver. 3. *Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on.*] Hear me patiently, and do not so hastily interrupt me as Zophar just now did; (xx. 2.) who,

after I have done, may begin, if he please, to deride me again.

Ver. 4. *As for me, is my complaint to man? and if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?*] Have I not all this while made my appeal to God? why then do you interrupt me, and take upon you to pronounce that sentence which I expect from him alone? but if my complaint had been to you, yet, seeing there is a just cause for it, can I choose but be vexed to see you will not hear me patiently?

Ver. 5. *Mark me, and be astonished, and lay your hand upon your mouth.*] Consider well my misery, and being astonished at the greatness of it, and of your rudeness, be so civil now as to impose silence on yourselves, while I am speaking to you.

Ver. 6. *Even when I remember I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.*] I am sure I myself am astonished at the very remembrance of it: were I free from it, yet the thought of what is past makes every joint of my body tremble.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?*] Let me therefore again desire you to answer me this question more leisurely; if what you have said be true, how come we to see so many wicked men, not only enjoy all the good things of this life, but grow old in their enjoyment, and want no honour or power to which riches can advance them?

Ver. 8. *Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.*] Nay, live to see their children settled in the world; yea, their children's children grow up like young plants before their eyes.

Ver. 9. *Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.*] There is nobody disturbs their tranquillity in any of their habitations; nor doth God inflict any punishment on them for their sins.

Ver. 10. *Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.*] But extends his care even to the herds of cattle; where the kine never fail to conceive, and in due time bring forth their calves, and do not miscarry.

Ver. 11. *They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.*] And so do their flocks of sheep, with whom their wives may be compared; who bring forth their little ones as easily and as numerously: and their children dance about their houses, like the little lambs which skip about their fields.

Ver. 12. *They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.*] They lift up their voice, and sing to the timbrel and harp: they dance for joy at the sound of the pipe.

Ver. 13. *They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.*] In a word, they prolong their days to a great old age, in all manner of pleasure; and then do not lie long languishing on a bed of sickness or pain, but go easily and suddenly to their grave.

Ver. 14. *Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*] And yet these are the men that never think of God; or, if they do, presently bid those thoughts be gone; for they desire to have nothing to do with him or with his laws.

Ver. 15. *What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?*] They know no such being, they say, as the Almighty; nor do they owe him any service: and if they should worship and serve him, they do not believe they shall be a whit the better for it.

Ver. 16. *Lo, their good is not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked is far from me.*] Do not imagine that I am of their opinion; I know very well that they cannot make themselves rich and prosperous without God; and therefore, far be it from me to join with them in their impiety.

Ver. 17. *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out? and how oft cometh their destruction upon them? God distributeth sorrows in his anger.*] But yet, I say, how oft is it that we see the joy of these wicked men extinguished? Sometimes, indeed, God takes a speedy vengeance on them; but it is not his usual course to destroy them, and to give them such plagues and torments (as you speak of) for their portion.

Ver. 18. *They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away.*] We do not see them so frequently as you say, driven away like stubble before the wind, and all their estates scattered like the chaff which is blown away with a storm.

Ver. 19. *God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know it.*] And when doth God punish the iniquity of the wicked in his children, (as you pretend he always doth, xx. 10.) and that while he lives, and beholds it himself?

Ver. 20. *His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.*] It is not such a common thing as you make it, for him to see his own ruin, and to feel the effects of the dreadful wrath of the Almighty.

Ver. 21. *For what pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?*] As for what befals his children when he is dead, he concerns not himself; it is nothing to him though they be cut off in their most flourishing estate.

Ver. 22. *Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.*] Shall we be so bold as to instruct God how to govern the world? and tell him he is not just, unless he punish the wicked when we expect it? He judges the highest beings, and therefore knows sure how to govern us.

Ver. 23. *One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.*] Who must not think to tie him to our rules. For one man dies in the highest and firmest worldly prosperity, meeting with nothing all his days to disturb his quiet and tranquillity.

Ver. 24. *His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow.*] Health as well as riches accompany him to his grave; his ribs are fat, and his bones full of marrow, even in his old age.

Ver. 25. *And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.*] When another man (who perhaps is better than he) dies in great pain and anguish; after a miserable life, in which he never enjoyed any pleasure.

Ver. 26. *They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.*] They shall both alike have the dust for their bed, and worms for their covering; and no distinction, that we can see, be made between them.

Ver. 27. *Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me.*] I am sensible

that in all this I very much contradict your thoughts; which are as well known to me as to yourselves: I see by what arguments you are studying to oppress me.

Ver. 28. *For ye say, Where is the house of the prince? and where are the dwelling-places of the wicked?*] I hear you say within yourselves, What is become of the house of Job, who lived like a prince? what difference is there between him and those wicked men, whose dwelling-places are destroyed?

Ver. 29. *Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens.*] But let me answer you; or rather go and ask the first passengers you meet with (for it is a thing vulgarly known), and they are not interested in our disputes, let them tell you their observations about God's providence:

Ver. 30. *That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.*] Which all agree in this, that the wicked is spared very often in a common calamity; though it be very general as well as terrible, yet many of them escape it.

Ver. 31. *Who shall declare his way to his face? and who shall repay him what he hath done?*] Which makes the wicked so bold, that none dare reprove him: much less is he in danger of being punished for his offences, since God spares him, and man dreads him.

Ver. 32. *Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb.*] The pomp of his funeral is answerable to the splendour wherein he lived; and a stately monument is raised to preserve his memory, and represent him as if he were still living.

Ver. 33. *The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him, and every man shall draw after him, as there are innumerable before him.*] There he lies quietly in the earth, and none disturbs his ashes: he suffers nothing but what all men shall do after him, as innumerable have done before him.

Ver. 34. *How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?*] See then how ill you discharge the office of comforters, whose answers have so little truth in them. For you maintain that prosperity is the inseparable companion of piety; when every body can tell you, that none flourish more than the wicked, and that calamities are common to all mankind.

CHAP. XXII.

ARGUMENT.

Though Job had clearly stated the controversy in the foregoing chapter, yet Eliphaz would not yield; but begins the combat a third time, without any ground at all, but a pure mistake, as I have expressed it in the first verse. And to avoid the reproof which had been given him, of repeating merely the same things; he now brings in a catalogue, though without any proof (so much was his anger and bitterness increased), of the particular sins, both against God and against his neighbour, of which he supposes Job to have been guilty. Else, he still boldly concludes, God would not have punished him with such severity; that there was not a greater instance of his indignation to be found any where; unless it was in the old world, and in Sodom. Yet he hath so much moderation, that he invites him at last to repentance, and promises him the happy fruit of it; as he had done in his first speech, but not in his second. Nay, he tells him, in conclusion, for his encouragement, that he should be able to do as much for a nation, as ten righteous men, could they have been found there, might have done for Sodom.

Ver. 1. *THEN Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said.*] Then Eliphaz, not being able to deny all this, and yet not minding the scope of it (but imagining Job had accused the Divine Providence of injustice, in suffering the wicked to prosper and the righteous to be afflicted), grew very angry, and said,

Ver. 2. *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?*] Is God ever the better for any thing that we do? because a wise man receives great benefit by his virtue, shall we think that God is a gainer by it too, and that he is bound to reward it?

Ver. 3. *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?*] Doth he, who needs nothing (being possessor of all things), desire thou shouldest be righteous for his own advantage? or will it turn to his profit, if thou livest never so unblamably?

Ver. 4. *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? will he enter with thee into judgment?*] Or, on the contrary, is he afraid thou shouldest hurt him by thy sins, and will therefore punish them? Is this the reason that he now afflicts thee, to prevent the damage they might do him?

Ver. 5. *Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite?*] Are not rather thy sins against God and against men so great and so numberless, that no other cause is to be sought of thy sore and multiplied punishments?

Ver. 6. *For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing.*] For (to begin with those against man) thou hast been a tyrant, and exacted pawns of thine own kindred for little or nothing: and hath stripped even those of their garments, who had no more but just to cover their nakedness.

Ver. 7. *Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.*] Thou hast been hard-hearted to the weary traveller, when thou sawest him ready to die with thirst or with hunger.

Ver. 8. *But as for the mighty man, he had the earth; and the honourable man dwelt in it.*] But as for the great and the powerful, all thy estate was at his service; if he brought the title to any land in question, he was sure to carry the cause by thy favour to him.

Ver. 9. *Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken.*] When, at the same time, the poor widow and orphans (whose protection God hath in a special manner commended to us) could not obtain the favour of having justice done them; but were crushed and broken by thee, and had all the means of defending themselves taken from them.

Ver. 10. *Therefore snares are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee.*] Thou art guilty, sure enough, of some such sins as these, which are the cause that now thou art beset with these calamities, and most dreadful plagues have on a sudden confounded thee.

Ver. 11. *Or darkness, that thou canst not see; and abundance of waters cover thee.*] Oh! thy blindness: dost thou

not yet see how God hath proportioned thy punishment to his crimes? hath the depth of the afflictions wherein thou art plunged quite taken away all sense from thee?

Ver. 12. *Is not God in the height of heaven? and, behold, the height of the stars, how high they are!*] Is not God above the heavens? behold, he is the head and governor of the stars, although they be so high; and therefore, how shouldest thou think to escape his justice?

Ver. 13. *And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?*] But, perhaps, thou fanciest (such is thy impiety against him, as well as cruelty to thy neighbour) that, because he is so high, he minds not what is done here below: or that he cannot discern the difference of things so very remote through such a mist as is between us.

Ver. 14. *Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.*] He is wrapped, thou imaginest, in such thick clouds, that they obscure us from his sight: or he is confined to the heavens, and so busied in their affairs, that he hath no leisure to attend to ours.

Ver. 15. *Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?*] But didst thou never observe, or hast thou forgotten, the course of the old atheistical world, who ran licentiously into all manner of wickedness?

Ver. 16. *Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood.*] To whom God therefore put a stop, by destroying them before their time, and carrying them quite away with the flood, when they thought themselves firmly settled in the earth;

Ver. 17. *Which said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?*] And were saying, (as thou wouldest have us believe the wicked now do, and yet prosper, xxi. 14.) We have nothing to do with God, nor he with us. Dost thou remember what God then did to them for their horrid ingratitude to him?

Ver. 18. *Yet he filled their houses with good things: but the counsel of the wicked is far from me.*] Who had filled their houses with all manner of good things: O, vile wretches! whose wicked thoughts I abhor as much as thou thyself, (xxi. 16.)

Ver. 19. *The righteous see it, and are glad; and the innocent laugh them to scorn.*] Whose overthrow Noah and his family beholding, rejoiced in God's righteous judgment: that innocent men derided their incredulity.

Ver. 20. *Whereas our substance is not cut down; but the remnant of them the fire consumeth.*] Whereas we, who believe God's care and providence, are untouched in our estates; when the relics of those impious men are devoured by fire from heaven.

Ver. 21. *Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.*] Let me advise thee therefore (whom God hath not yet quite consumed) to join thyself to the society of the righteous, and to become like Noah: then be secure, and doubt not but by that means all happiness shall return to thee.

Ver. 22. *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.*] Do not refuse the instruction which such men give thee from God, but heartily embrace it, and faithfully preserve it to be the rule of thy life.

Ver. 23. *If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.*] Thou shalt soon feel the comfortable fruits of it; for if thou return to the Almighty, who hath laid thee thus low, he will return to thee, and raise thee up as high as ever: he will pardon thine iniquity, and remove the punishment of it far from thee and thine.

Ver. 24. *Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.*] Thou shalt recover all thy losses with usury; and no more value gold than the dirt on which it shall lie, nor the purest gold more than the pebbles in the brook.

Ver. 25. *Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.*] Thou shalt be at no pains to secure thy vast heaps of gold and silver; because thy Almighty Restorer, who gave them to thee, will defend them better than the strongest fortress, and be himself thy treasure.

Ver. 26. *For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God.*] For then thou shalt be so far from doubting of his care over thee, that thou shalt delight to think how he loves thee: thou shalt not be dejected any more, but confidently and cheerfully expect his blessing on thee.

Ver. 27. *Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.*] Thou shalt ask nothing of him but thou shalt obtain it; and have abundant cause to be continually giving thanks to him for his bounteous goodness in fulfilling thy desires.

Ver. 28. *Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee; and the light shall shine upon thy ways.*] Thou shalt accomplish whatsoever thou designest, and all thy undertakings shall be prosperous.

Ver. 29. *When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person.*] Thou shalt pray to God also to lift up others who are in a low condition; and he shall grant thy petitions, by delivering him that is depressed.

Ver. 30. *He shall deliver the island of the innocent; and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.*] Yea, a whole country shall owe its safety to thy innocence: it shall be delivered by thy pious prayers and blameless actions.

CHAP. XXIII.

ARGUMENT.

To the foregoing discourse of Eliphaz, Job thought at first to make no answer, but only by complaints of their injustice, and fresh appeals to God: by whom he desires, more earnestly than ever, to be tried, being assured that he would acquit him. And though for the present God was not pleased to give him audience (of which he complains with too much passion), yet he maintains that hope, which began to appear in his soul, (in his last discourse with Bildad, chap. xix.) that God would at last clear him from all the aspersions which were cast upon him.

Ver. 1. *THEN Job answered and said.*] Then Job, hearing his person thus defamed, and his discourse perverted, renewed his complaints, and said,

Ver. 2. *Even to-day is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning.*] Still my just defence of myself

is judged to be rebellion against God: which renders my sufferings heavier than all my sighs and groans can express:

Ver. 3. *Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!*] And makes me once more appeal to God, and wish I could be admitted into his presence (so free from the conscience of any guilt), and approach even to his judgment-seat.

Ver. 4. *I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.*] I would set before him the justice of my cause, and fill my mouth with confutations of your false accusations.

Ver. 5. *I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.*] I would press to know his judgment of me, and diligently attend to the sentence which he would pass upon me.

Ver. 6. *Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me.*] Do you think he would make no other use of his absolute power than to oppress me? I cannot believe it; he would rather employ it to support me;

Ver. 7. *There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge.*] Till at his bar I had proved myself a righteous person, and been perfectly acquitted by him my righteous judge.

Ver. 8. *Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him.*] But all these, alas! are vain wishes; but which way soever I turn myself, whether to the east or to the west, I cannot see him appear to do me right.

Ver. 9. *On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him.*] He works and moves invisibly in all other quarters of the world; but I can discover nothing he does to clear my innocence.

Ver. 10. *But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.*] My only comfort is, that though I cannot know all his ways, yet he, being every where, knows the whole course of my life: and when he hath proved me by these afflictions, as gold is by the fire, I doubt not, I shall be cleared from these imputations which you lay upon me.

Ver. 11. *My foot hath held his steps; his way have I kept, and not declined.*] I am sure I have ever followed his guidance, and so steadfastly observed his commandments, that no temptation hath made me swerve from them.

Ver. 12. *Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.*] I have prevented the advice you give me, (xxii. 22.) having never done otherwise than he bade me, and laid up his words more carefully than my necessary provision for this life.

Ver. 13. *But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.*] But for the present this doth not at all move him to relieve me: he continues his purpose (whatever it be), and none can alter it, no more than they can hinder the fulfilling of it.

Ver. 14. *For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him.*] For what he hath resolved to inflict upon me, that I find he will accomplish: and many such things as these he doth, of which he will not give us the reason.

Ver. 15. *Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.*] This terrifies me when I reflect upon it, notwithstanding my innocence. I tremble at the thoughts of his absolute power and unsearchable wisdom, which may think fit still to continue these afflictions:

Ver. 16. *For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me.*] Which by the weight of them have broken my spirit, and made me so timorous, that I cannot but dread the danger I am in of suffering more from his almighty hand.

Ver. 17. *Because I was not cut off before the darkness, neither hath he covered the darkness from my face.*] For still he keeps me alive under all these evils which I endure, and will not let me have the favour to die by that hand which strikes me so severely.

CHAP. XXIV.

ARGUMENT.

Upon farther consideration, Job thought good again to confute their rash assertion, about the plagues which always befal the wicked, by an induction of particulars that prove the contrary. Among which the wild Arabs, he tells them, are a notorious instance; whose profession is rapine, and yet they thrive and prosper in it, (ver. 5, &c.) And so do the more civilized oppressors, of whom he says something before, and again ver. 11, 12. where he seems to reflect upon hard landlords, and griping merchants and traffickers in cities; to whom he adds murderers, adulterers, pirates, with several other wicked villains (in the conclusion of the chapter), who notwithstanding die like other men, and are not called to an account for their enormous crimes in this present world.

Ver. 1. *WHY, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days?*] But to answer a little what you have so often asserted: if punishments from the Almighty be so apparent and visible upon the wicked, why do not they who are truly pious see the public and open judgments?

Ver. 2. *Some remove the land-marks; they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof.*] Especially when the wickedness of some of them is so notorious, that they violate all known rights; seizing on the lands of their neighbours, taking away their cattle, and (not content with that) owning it when they have done, by putting them openly into their pastures?

Ver. 3. *They drive away the ass of the fatherless; they take the widow's ox for a pledge.*] If a poor fatherless child have an ass left him to carry his burdens, they drive it away on some pretence or other; and have no more mercy than to take of the widow, for the security of her debt, the only ox she hath wherewith to plough her ground.

Ver. 4. *They turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth hide themselves together.*] They offer abuses to helpless people upon the highway, so that the meaner sort dare not appear for fear of their insolence or their violence.

Ver. 5. *Behold, as wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work, rising betimes for a prey: the wilderness yieldeth food for them and for their children.*] And you shall see others of them, who (making pillage their trade) leave the cities and towns, and go to skulk in forests and desert

places; where, becoming wild and savage, they live on rapine and spoil; in which they are so diligent, that those wildernesses (where they neither plough nor sow) maintain their families.

Ver. 6. *They reap every one his corn in the field; and they gather the vintage of the wicked.*] For they make inroads out of those woods into the neighbouring fields and vineyards, and thence wickedly carry away the corn and the grapes, never regarding who is the owner of them.

Ver. 7. *They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that they have no covering in the cold.*] They spare not the poor reapers and vintagers; but, stripping them to their very skin, leave them never a rag to defend them from the cold, when they go to rest after their wearisome labours.

Ver. 8. *They are wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of a shelter.*] They are exposed (poor wretches!) to the injury of the weather, as they lie asleep at the foot of mountains: they have no whither to run, but into caves and holes of rocks; where they endeavour to shroud themselves, when they see a tempest coming.

Ver. 9. *They pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor.*] Nay, the persons of men are not safe from the violence of these outlaws; but they snatch away young children from their mothers' breasts, and carry away the poor (pretending they owe them something) to make them their slaves.

Ver. 10. *They cause them to go naked without clothing, and they take away the sheaf from the hungry.*] Whom when they have stolen, they will not allow so much as clothes to cover their nakedness, nor let him that is ready to starve eat of the sheaf which he hath gleaned.

Ver. 11. *Which make oil within their walls, and tread their wine-presses, and suffer thirst.*] They cause these miserable creatures to press out their oil and their wine in their cellars; but let them not taste a drop, though they be ready to die with thirst.

Ver. 12. *Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out; yet, God layeth not folly to them.*] Whole cities groan under the oppression of some or other of these wicked men, and cry out like those that are dying of their wounds: and yet God, who knows all this, doth not make them examples of his displeasure, nor can we tell when he will punish them for their injustice and cruelty.

Ver. 13. *They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.*] The world would be very empty, if he should destroy all such persons; for besides these open there are more secret sinners, who look upon the light as their enemy: they dare not be seen in the day-time; or if they be espied, they presently seek to hide themselves, that they may not be discovered.

Ver. 14. *The murderer, rising with the light, killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a thief.*] The murderer, for instance, rises before the sun, to kill those whose poverty calls them up to early labour; and then, lurking all day in the close thickets and woods, he turns robber, and rifles rich men's houses in the night.

Ver. 15. *The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me; and disguiseth his face.*] The adulterer also, whose eye hath let an unlawful love into his heart, waits for the dusk of the evening to favour his lewd desire: then he hopes nobody he meets withal will know him; but lest they should, he wraps his face in his cloak to prevent discovery.

Ver. 16. *In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the day-time: they know not the light.*] And when all are at rest, he will dig through the walls of houses, if there be no other way to come at the adulteress: the assignment was made between them in the day-time, and the place then marked out, at which he may most easily enter; but it is the night which brings them together to act the works of darkness.

Ver. 17. *For the morning is to them even as the shadow of death: if one knew them, they are in the terrors of th shadow of death.*] These are their delight, and if they chance to sleep too long together, and the morning surprise them, they are ready to die with fear; if any one know them, they are in the very agonies of death.

Ver. 18. *He is swift as the waters; their portion is cursed in the earth: he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.*] To this wicked crew you may add the pirate, who robs upon the sea, and runs from one little creek to another in swift ships: which bring him in so much riches, that he despises the employment of those who till the earth and plant vineyards, as poor and unprofitable.

Ver. 19. *Drought and heat consume the snow-waters; so doth the grave those which have sinned.*] And yet all these, after they have spent their life in such horrid villanies, do not die of lingering and tormenting diseases; but go down to the grave as easily as snow-water sinks into the dry ground when it is melted by the sun.

Ver. 20. *The womb shall forget him; the worm shall feed sweetly on him: he shall be no more remembered; and wickedness shall be broken as a tree.*] God sets no such mark of his displeasure upon him, but that his mother may soon forget him: the hand of justice doth not hang him on a gibbet for the birds to feed on; but he is carried to his grave like other men, to be the sweet food of worms. There he lies quietly, and neither he nor his wickedness are any more remembered than a tree which is broken all to shivers.

Ver. 21. *He evil-entreateth the barren that beareth not, and doeth not good to the widow.*] This is true even of him who, to hide his villany, kills the child in the womb of her whom he hath deflowered; and when he hath abused a poor widow, makes her no satisfaction.

Ver. 22. *He draweth also the mighty with his power; he riseth up, and no man is sure of life.*] The greatest persons are not able to stand before him: when he rises up to assassinate, there is no man, be he never so strong, is sure of his life.

Ver. 23. *Though it be given him to be in safety wherein he resteth, yet his eyes are upon their ways.*] Though he give you his hand, and promise you security so solemnly, that you think you may rely upon him, yet he watches all occasions, and lies in wait secretly to do you mischief.

Ver. 24. *They are exalted for a little while, but are gone and brought low; they are taken out of the way as all other, and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.*] Thus these impious men flourish, and are lifted up above all other; and then they depart the world without any punishment: they are laid down and shut up in their graves like all other men; nay, they die as easily (without those tedious pains

which some endure) as the top of an ear of corn is cropped with your hand.

Ver. 25. *And if it be not so now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?*] All this I know to be so true, that I challenge all the world to disprove me: I am sure it is not in any man's power to shew that my discourse is frivolous.

CHAP. XXV.

ARGUMENT.

The foregoing discourse of Job, in the twenty-fourth chapter, was so undeniable, that Bildad begins to break off the dispute. For he says not a word to it, but only advises him to speak more reverently of the majesty of God, than he imagined he had done in his appeal to him, (chap. xxiii.)

Ver. 1. *THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said.*] Then Bildad (whose turn it was to speak), being unable to refute what Job had said, only desired him, in a few words, to beware how he reflected upon the justice of God, or imagined himself to be just if he examined him. The words were these:

Ver. 2. *Dominion and fear are with him; he maketh peace in his high places.*] Take heed what thou sayest of God, the Sovereign of the world, who ought to be worshipped by thee with the most awful reverence; as he is in the heavenly places, where they never rebel against his orders.

Ver. 3. *Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise?*] Hath he not innumerable troops of angels, and other creatures, all ready to execute his pleasure? And where is the man that is out of the verge of his all-overspreading providence?

Ver. 4. *How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?*] Why then doth such a pitiful wretch as he talk of his righteousness before this glorious Majesty? He forgets sure the condition of his birth, who pretends to purity in his sight.

Ver. 5. *Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.*] Let a man lift up his eyes as high as the moon; nay, look as far as the sun, and the stars of heaven, he shall find that they have their spots; nay, in his presence, have no lustre at all.

Ver. 6. *How much less man, that is a worm; and the son of man, which is a worm?*] What can be expected then from miserable man or his posterity; who, being full of corruption whilst they live, can be nothing but rottenness when they are dead?

CHAP. XXVI.

ARGUMENT.

Job, hearing Bildad wander so far from the business, derides his grave affectation of wisdom; and tells him, that though he talked as if he thought himself fit to be a coadjutor to God Almighty, yet, as his discourse was impertinent, so it was but mean and flat, in comparison with what he was able to speak himself, concerning the omnipotent wisdom of God: which he sets forth in a far more lively manner.

Ver. 1. *BUT Job answered and said.*] To this Job replied almost as briefly; saying,

Ver. 2. *How hast thou helped him that is without power? how savest thou the arm that hath no strength?*] O wonderful advocate! how excellently hast thou defended him who hath no need of thy help! dost thou think to do the Almighty any service by such discourses?

Ver. 3. *How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom? and how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?*] What admirable advice wouldest thou give him in his government of the world, if he would admit thee to be his counsellor, who imaginest, no doubt, thou aboundest with wisdom, and hast hit the very mark!

Ver. 4. *To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?*] Dost thou think me ignorant of such things as these? or canst thou pretend to any extraordinary inspiration concerning them?

Ver. 5. *Dead things are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof.*] I know as well as thou canst inform me the power of God; which appears, not only in the heavens (to which thou biddest me look), but even in the lowest parts of the earth: where vast giant-like creatures are formed under the water, whose inhabitants are innumerable.

Ver. 6. *Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.*] Nor is his knowledge, I am sensible, less than his power; but penetrates into the greatest depths: the very dead, who are quite removed out of our sight, being perfectly visible unto him.

Ver. 7. *He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.*] Who by his wonderful power and wisdom stretches out the whole world from the one pole to the other, which he alone sustains; as he doth this globe of earth hanging in the air, without any thing to support it.

Ver. 8. *He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them.*] It is he who binds up the fluid waters, as it were in bags, and keeps them a long time hanging in the clouds: through which they do not burst all at once, but distil by drops to moisten the earth in due season.

Ver. 9. *He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it.*] These clouds he spreads before the glorious face of heaven, to restrain the beams of the sun from scorching the earth.

Ver. 10. *He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end.*] He hath enclosed the waters of the sea in shores; and so exactly compassed them about, that as long as the world lasts they shall not be able (be they never so furious) to exceed those bounds, but shall break all their rage against them into froth.

Ver. 11. *The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof.*] And yet the highest mountains, which look as if they were the pillars and supporters of the heavens, quake and tremble, when he thunders and lightens upon them.

Ver. 12. *He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud.*] By his power he raises a tempest, which makes great furrows in the sea, and divideth, as it were, one part of it from another: and (such is his wisdom) he knows how to appease it again, and depress its proud waves into the deadest calm.

Ver. 13. *By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.*] Finally, by his wise contrivance the heavens were adorned, and made thus beautiful, as we behold them: his power made the milky way (and other celestial signs), whose windings are so admirable.

Ver. 14. *Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?*] And yet these are but very small parcels of his works: for, alas! it is very little that such as we can comprehend of him; but the utmost force of his power is past all understanding.

CHAP. XXVII.

ARGUMENT.

As Bildad began to decline the dispute, so Zophar quite gives it over: either looking upon Job as incurably obstinate, or (as we might more charitably conceive, were it not for what we read xxxii. 1.) being convinced he had more reason on his side. Whose silence so raised the spirit of Job, that he now triumphs over his opponents: as the word *mashal*, which we render *parable*, may denote. For it signifies among the Hebrews an elegant ingenious kind of speech; excelling, and, as it were, domineering over all other, in its pithiness, or neatness, or some other rare quality. Such is the following discourse of Job, which begins (in this chapter) with a vehement protestation that he would never desert his plea; nor yield to their doctrine, that a remarkable vengeance always attends upon wickedness in this world: though he grants, and largely here asserts, that sometimes there doth.

Ver. 1. *MOREOVER, Job continued his parable, and said.*] After Job had made some pause, and Zophar (whose turn it was now to speak) had nothing at all to reply, he proceeded with greater eloquence than ever to assert his innocence; saying,

Ver. 2. *As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul.*] I protest by the eternal God, who, for the present, will not judge my cause; by the omnipotent Lord of the world, who hath loaded me with so many afflictions, that they have taken away all the pleasure of life from me:

Ver. 3. *All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils.*] I protest, I say, that as long as I have breath in my body, and he shall enable me to speak a word,

Ver. 4. *My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.*] My tongue shall be the faithful interpreter of mine heart, and I will never speak otherways than I think.

Ver. 5. *God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove my integrity from me.*] Therefore never hope I will yield to your opinion, which I know to be false: no, I abhor the thought of it, and will sooner die than confess the guilt you charge me withal.

Ver. 6. *My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.*] You shall never extort that from me, but I will resolutely maintain my righteousness, and not be persuaded by any reasons to desert its defence: my conscience doth not hitherto accuse me, and it shall never upbraid me hereafter, for betraying mine innocence.

Ver. 7. *Let mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.*] And let me tell you, he that sets himself against me, and would have me thought wicked, shall be found so himself in the end: I say again, he shall prove himself unrighteous sooner than me;

Ver. 8. *For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?*] Who knows very well it is madness for a man to counterfeit piety when he hath none: for though he may get riches by that pretence while he lives, yet what hope hath he when he dies?

Ver. 9. *Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?*] Nay, before that, when any calamity comes upon him, will God give any regard to the cries of one who regarded him so little?

Ver. 10. *Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?*] Or will he himself have the confidence to go to God, and expect any comfort from him? will he not rather despond in such a case, and cease to call upon him?

Ver. 11. *I will teach you by the hand of God; that which is with the Almighty will I not conceal.*] Do not disdain to learn of me, and I will make you understand what God doth with the wicked; and discover to you some of the secrets of his Almighty providence.

Ver. 12. *Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it; why then are ye thus altogether vain?*] Behold, there is not one of you but hath by his own experience found what I am about to say to be certainly true; and yet, such is your vanity, you will defend an ungrounded opinion.

Ver. 13. *This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors, which they shall receive of the Almighty.*] I grant that a wicked man (but not all wicked men, as you maintain) doth sometimes receive such punishment from God as he deserves: which might make other tyrannical oppressors fear to meet with the same vengeance.

Ver. 14. *If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword; and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.*] We have seen, for instance, his numerous posterity fall by the sword of justice or war, or by the fury of a popular tumult: and they who escaped, were reserved to perish with cruel hunger;

Ver. 15. *Those that remain of him shall be buried in death; and his widows shall not weep.*] Or else with such pestilential diseases, that none would adventure to bury them, nor did their widows survive to lament them.

Ver. 16. *Though he heapeth up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay.*] So that if he have treasured up such heaps of riches, that he values silver no more than dust, nor costly apparel and furniture than the mire of the street;

Ver. 17. *He may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.*] He shall have only the trouble of gathering them together, but none of his shall enjoy them: God shall translate all these treasures to another family, who shall do more good with them.

Ver. 18. *He buildeth his house as a moth, and as a booth that the keeper maketh.*] He builds a goodly fabric, out of which he is as easily shaken as a moth out of a garment: and it shall not be more durable than the booth, which is made for him that keeps the fruits of a garden.

Ver. 19. *The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered: he openeth his eyes, and he is not.*] And when he dieth, he shall have no monument made for him: nay, while he lives it so falls out, that he looks about him, and sees that every body hath deserted him.

Ver. 20. *Terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night.*] Innumerable terrors then break in upon him, and surprise him like an inundation of waters; the Divine vengeance, like a violent tempest, unexpectedly hurries him away.

Ver. 21. *The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth; and, as a storm, hurleth him out of his place.*] Some pestilent vapour blasts him irrecoverably; and as certainly kills him, as a whirlwind hurls things out of their place.

Ver. 22. *For God shall cast upon him, and not spare; he would fain flee out of his hand.*] Or God shall send some other mischiefs so fast upon him (without any pity to him, who had none for others), that all the attempts shall be in vain which he makes to escape the vengeance.

Ver. 23. *Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place.*] At which the beholders shall rejoice, and applaud God's righteous judgment (which I confess he sometimes executes): they shall hiss at his name when he is dead, in that very place where he hath been so much magnified.

CHAP. XXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

The connexion of this chapter with the foregoing, I hope I have truly expressed in the first verse. And that being found, it is not difficult to see at what it drives; *viz.* to stop the busy inquiry of mankind, who are very wise, he shews, in other things, but have not wit enough to comprehend the reasons why God doth not inflict those punishments upon all wicked men which fall upon some. It is not needful to set down here how this argument is managed (with such admirable elegance of words, and such weightiness of matter, as make it deserve the name of *mashal, parable,* or *proverb),* because it will sufficiently appear in the paraphrase.

Ver. 1. *SURELY there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold where they fine it.*] You would have me give a reason, perhaps, why God punishes some wicked men and not all: but the wit and industry of mankind, which have discovered mines of silver and gold, must not think to find out this secret, which God hath reserved to himself.

Ver. 2. *Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone.*] They invent means to extract iron and brass out of the earth and out of stone.

Ver. 3. *He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection; the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.*] There is no mine so dismally dark, but there some man or other sets things in order for his work; he searches to the very bottom of it, and finds out those stones which lie in the most abstruse and hidden parts of the earth.

Ver. 4. *The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; even the waters forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men.*] A flood breaks out from some neighbouring place, and disturbs the miners (for the waters seem as if they would stagnate there, and never stir a foot): but by the hard labour of man they are drained, and leave the place dry again.

Ver. 5. *As for the earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire.*] Out of the surface of the earth he gets herbs and corn for his food and sustenance, and underneath it he finds lime and brimstone, and such-like fiery stuff for other uses.

Ver. 6. *The stones of it are the place of sapphires; and it hath dust of gold.*] He goes into countries whose stones are the place where sapphires are lodged, and whose dust to him is as good as gold.

Ver. 7. *There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen.*] He treads in paths which no bird of prey knoweth, which the most quick-sighted among them hath never seen.

Ver. 8. *The lion's whelps have not trodden it; nor the fierce lion passed by it.*] Where the wildest beasts, who search for solitary places, never made their den, or so much as approached, no, not the ravenous lions, whose hunger leads them every where to seek satisfaction.

Ver. 9. *He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots.*] He digs through the hardest rocks by his obstinate labour, and undermines mountains, that he may find the treasure hid in their bowels.

Ver. 10. *He cutteth out rivers among the rocks, and his eye seeth every precious thing.*] And if he meet with waters which hinder his work, he cuts a channel through the rock to convey them away, and never rests till he hath discovered every thing that may requite his indefatigable pains.

Ver. 11. *He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.*] Nay, more than this, he stops the course of rivers, and leaves not a drop remaining, that he may bring to light all that is hidden in the bottom of them.

Ver. 12. *But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?*] But though he be so successful in these searches, he must not think to comprehend the reasons of wise Providence. He may study as long as he pleases, and weary himself with busy inquiries, but never be able with all his labour to dive into the bottom of this secret, why God doth not punish all the wicked who so insolently contemn him.

Ver. 13. *Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.*] Alas! this wisdom is not to be purchased with all that wretched man hath to give for it: it is not a thing that any part of this world affords.

Ver. 14. *The depth saith, It is not in me; and the sea saith, It is not with me.*] The miners, poor souls, dig they never so deep, are never like to come within the reach of it; nor is it to be fetched by the mariner from any of those countries to which he sails.

Ver. 15. *It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.*] All the gold and silver which men have heaped up by such long toil and labour, are too inconsiderable a price to be offered for it.

Ver. 16. *It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.*] Though it be the purest gold which comes from Ophir, together with all the precious stones wherewith that rich country abounds, they are of so little value,

Ver. 17. *The gold and the crystal cannot equal it; and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold.*] That if you should add the gold and the crystal which are brought from other places, with all the vessels made by the art of man of the most refined and massy gold, they could do nothing to obtain it.

Ver. 18. *No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies.*] The precious stones which are fetched out of the mountains of the east are not worthy to be named with it: men may dive into the sea, and fetch up pearls, but this wisdom lies a great deal deeper.

Ver. 19. *The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.*] The Arabian topaz, which is so much esteemed for its wonderful lustre, doth not come near it; nor are all the golden ornaments, which they wear in those parts, proportionable to it.

Ver. 20. *Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?*] By what means then shall we get this wisdom of which we are desirous? Who can shew us where it lies, that we may go and search for it?

Ver. 21. *Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air.*] We may ask this question as often as we please, but none can resolve us; for it is concealed from all men living; the most soaring wits were never able to disclose it.

Ver. 22. *Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.*] Death is the best informer, and the grave the only place where we may learn something of it. But this is all that they can tell us (which is as far short of a full account as a rumour is from a certain knowledge), that they will shortly make all men equal, and then it will be of no great moment, whether we have been happy or miserable.

Ver. 23. *God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.*] None but God understands the way and method of his own providence: he alone knows the place of that wisdom we inquire after, which is no where else but in his own mind.

Ver. 24. *For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven.*] For, who should govern the world but he, whose understanding is infinite, and sees the motions of all creatures, from one end of it to the other?

Ver. 25. *To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.*] Which he hath set in such exact order, and given to them such just measures, that the wind cannot blow, nor the water flow, but in those proportions which he hath prescribed.

Ver. 26. *When he had made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder.*] To the like laws he hath bound the rain, and appointed the course which the thundering cloud shall take.

Ver. 27. *Then did he see it, and declare; it he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.*] And when he ordered all these things, he was pleased in the wisdom which he saw in his works; he made it visible and apparent; he fixed it therefore, and made these laws perpetual; because, after all the search that could be made, he found no fault in it.

Ver. 28. *And unto man he said Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.*] And making man at the same time, he imprinted this sense upon his heart, that he ought to be an humble adorer, not a censurer, of his secret wisdom, whereby he governs the world. For the highest wisdom and skill that man can attain, is to be possessed with such a religious fear of the great Lord of all, as not to dare to do any thing which he knows will displease him.

CHAP. XXIX.

ARGUMENT.

To such discourses as these, Job presumes his friends would have given greater attention than it seems they did, had not the vileness of his present condition made his speeches also contemptible. And therefore he puts them in mind with what reverence all his orations were formerly received, by great and small; wishing God would restore to him those happy days: and inserting all along so remarkable instances of his integrity (especially as a judge), in the height of his princely prosperity, when he had an uncontrollable power to do as he pleased, and yet not abused it; but employed it constantly for the defence and comfort of the meanest people in his province.

Ver. 1. *MOREOVER, Job continued his parable, and said.*] Here Job made another pause, to see if his friends would return any answer: but they continuing silent, he proceeded in his eloquent vindication of himself, saying,

Ver. 2. *Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me.*] Oh that God would re-establish me in that happy condition, wherein, some time ago, I was a principal part of his care! you would then give a greater regard to my words than you do now in my misfortune:

Ver. 3. *When his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness.*] Which hath left me nothing but only wishes, that he would restore me those pleasant days when I saw nothing but continued tokens of his favour, by which I passed untouched through all the inconveniences and troubles of this life.

Ver. 4. *As I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle.*] Oh, the flourishing season of that prosperous estate! would it were possible to recal the felicity of those days, when the Divine Providence treated me so kindly, that all my answers were held for oracles:

Ver. 5. *When the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me.*] When the Almighty Goodness had not ceased to be gracious to me; but I saw myself surrounded with my children and servants, waiting to know my pleasure:

Ver. 6. *When I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil.*] When my lands were so fertile, and were blessed with such plenty, as if the rivers had flowed with butter and oil:

Ver. 7. *When I went out to the gate through the city; when I prepared my seat in the street!*] When I went in state to the court of judgment, and sat on the bench in the open

place, where the people are wont to have their causes heard:

Ver. 8. *The young men saw me, and hid themselves; and the aged arose, and stood up.*] And the youth, seeing me appear, were seized with such fear, that they durst not look me in the face; and the aged no sooner perceived me, but they rose up from their seats, and, in token of reverence, stood in my presence.

Ver. 9. *The princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth.*] Immediately ensued a general silence, the princes themselves breaking off their discourses, and not taking the liberty to speak a word.

Ver. 10. *The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.*] The nobles and great commanders could not have heard me with greater attention and stillness, if they had quite lost their voices, or their tongues had been tied to the roof of their mouths.

Ver. 11. *When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me.*] And (so far was I from being a tyrant, as you have accused me, xxii. 5, 6.) there was no ear heard the sentence I gave but prized my integrity; no eye saw me after I had spoken, but you might have beheld therein the respect and honour which they all bare me.

Ver. 12. *Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and such as had none to help him.*] Because I never failed to ease the poor when he complained of his oppressions; the fatherless, and such as had none to take their parts, ever found me their defender.

Ver. 13. *The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.*] I had his prayer for my prosperity, whose life and estate I preserved when he was in danger of utter undoing: and I made the sorrowful widow such a joyful woman, that she openly proclaimed my praise.

Ver. 14. *I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem.*] For in the morning I put on a resolution to do justly, together with my clothes, and I never swerved from it all the day after: but looked upon the righteous sentence which I pronounced as a greater ornament than the purple robe on my shoulder, and the diadem upon my head.

Ver. 15. *I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame.*] I instructed him who did not well understand his own business, and assisted him who wanted means to carry on his cause.

Ver. 16. *I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not I searched out.*] For the poor I had such a paternal affection, that it made me his advocate as well as his judge: and I never left studying his cause (when there was an obscurity in it) till I had cleared the business, and done him right.

Ver. 17. *And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth.*] By which means I disabled the unjust to oppress them, and forced them to restore that which they had violently extorted from them.

Ver. 18. *Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days as the sand.*] And having done so many virtuous actions, and being in such high authority, I was apt to promise myself, that, after an exceeding long and happy life, I should die quietly in mine own house among my children and friends.

Ver. 19. *My root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.*] For, being like a tree, whose root spreadeth out itself by the waters, and whose boughs are perpetually moistened by the sweet dew of heaven, I thought I should never wither.

Ver. 20. *My glory was fresh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand.*] My esteem and reputation increased every day, and grew greater; and so did my power, to defend the authority and dignity I had obtained.

Ver. 21. *Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel.*] Though there was no need I should so employ it; for when I spake all men gave me the greatest attention, and my words were a law to them.

Ver. 22. *After my words they spake not again; and my speech dropped upon them.*] Which, when I had uttered, no man contradicted, or so much as corrected, but it sweetly instilled itself, and sunk into their hearts.

Ver. 23. *And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouths wide as for the latter rain.*] For they expected my opinion with the same eager desire that the husbandman doth the showers, after he hath sown his seed; they gaped for it as the thirsty earth doth for the latter rain, to plump the corn.

Ver. 24. *If I laughed on them, they believed it not: and the light of my countenance they cast not down.*] The reverence they bare me was so great, that when I laid aside my gravity, and jested with them, they would not believe it, but still took all I said to be serious; and whatsoever pleasantness I used with them, it did not diminish my authority among them.

Ver. 25. *I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners.*] But if I went to visit them, they still preserved their respect to me, and gave me the pre-eminence. And, as my condescension to them did not make them less honour me, so their submission to me did not make me less familiar with them; for when I sat as a king, guarded with many troops of followers, I comforted the meanest, and would not suffer them to be dejected.

CHAP. XXX.

ARGUMENT.

From the foregoing account of his ancient splendour, he takes occasion to annex a no-less-elegant description of the vileness of his present condition. Hoping that the consideration of such a prodigious change (which he represents in several particulars, and not without some touches still upon his integrity), might at last move his hard-hearted friends to some compassion towards him; especially, when they saw how near he was to his grave, notwithstanding all his prayers to God for relief.

Ver. 1. *BUT now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.*] But now, alas! there is so sad an alteration, that the youths, who durst not look me in the face, have the confidence to mock and jeer me; even those youths, whose fathers were so mean, that I disdained to employ them in the vilest service.

Ver. 2. *Yea, whereto might the strength of their hands profit me, in whom old age was perished?*] Men whom, if I

had had a mind to employ, were fit for nothing; being so lazy, listless, and unable to do any business, that it was in vain to call them to it.

Ver. 3. *For want and famine they were solitary; fleeing into the wilderness in former time desolate and waste.*] Beggarly fellows, who, being ready to starve, were ashamed to be seen; and sneaked into desert places to hide their poverty: it is but yesterday that they were most wretchedly miserable;

Ver. 4. *Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper-roots for their meat.*] Satisfying their hunger with those unsavoury herbs, which they cut up in the salt marshes; and having no other bread but the roots of juniper-trees.

Ver. 5. *They were driven forth from among men (they cried after them as after a thief).*] They were driven from the society of men; and, if ever they appeared, an outcry was raised against them, as there is against a thief when he is discovered.

Ver. 6. *To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys, in caves of the earth, and in the rocks.*] They had no other habitation, but the clefts which the brooks sometimes make in the valleys; or the caves which they found in other parts of the earth, or in the rocks.

Ver. 7. *Among the bushes they brayed, under the nettles they were gathered together.*] Their sighs might be heard, like the braying of asses, among the thorn-bushes; they lurked together under nettles or thistles:

Ver. 8. *They were children of fools, yea, children of base men; they were viler than the earth.*] Being lewd villains, the children of obscure parents; viler than the earth upon which they trod.

Ver. 9. *And I now am their song; yea, I am their by-word.*] And I now am become their pastime: they have made songs of my calamity; and it is the common entertainment to discourse of my misery.

Ver. 10. *They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face.*] They express an abhorrence of me; and, as vile as they are, will not come near me; or if they do, it is only to shew their extreme contempt of me.

Ver. 11. *Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me, they have also let loose the bridle before me.*] God, they see, hath scattered all my estate, and, by sore afflictions, laid me very low; which hath made them forget all respect to me, and take an unrestrained licence in their insolent behaviour towards me.

Ver. 12. *Upon my right hand rise the youth; they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction.*] They set up the very boys to accuse me; they push me down, and then trample on me. I am become the beaten path, as I may call myself, of their pernicious reproaches.

Ver. 13. *They mar my path; they set forward my calamity; they have no helper.*] They so disturb my thoughts, that I know not what course to take in this miserable condition: which they heighten by their calumnies; and are so fruitful in them, that they need none to help to invent them.

Ver. 14. *They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters: in the desolation they rolled themselves upon me.*] They assault me with such a fury as soldiers do their enemies, when they have made a wide breach in the wall of a besieged city, and pour in all their forces to destroy them.

Ver. 15. *Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue my soul as the wind; and my welfare passeth away as a cloud.*] This dismal change hath fearfully astonished me; to see all my wishes and hopes dispersed like the wind, and all the happiness I possessed passed away as swiftly as a cloud.

Ver. 16. *And now my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction have taken hold upon me.*] I can do nothing now but melt into tears; my very soul is ready to faint away with grief, when I think how those joyful days are gone, and what distresses have seized on me, and come to take their place.

Ver. 17. *My bones are pierced in me in the night-season; and my sinews take no rest.*] In the night (when sleep is wont to bury our grief) I feel such sharp pains, as penetrate through my very bones; my blood boils so violently in my veins, that I can take no rest.

Ver. 18. *By the great force of my disease is my garment changed: it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.*] It requires a great deal of strength, when I would shift my clothes, to pull them off; my outward garment, by the filthy matter of my sores, being glued as fast to me, as the collar of my shirt.

Ver. 19. *He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes.*] I look as if I had been thrown into the dirt: there is little difference between me and dust and ashes.

Ver. 20. *I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me; I stand up, and thou regardest me not.*] And, which is saddest of all, I call upon thee, O God, but cannot prevail with thee to relieve me: I continue praying and waiting for thy help, and thou sufficiently understandest my miserable case.

Ver. 21. *Thou art become cruel to me; with thy strong hand thou opposest thyself against me.*] But thy former kindness to me is turned into such severity, that it looks like cruelty: thou hast given me such deadly blows, as if thou hatedst me.

Ver. 22. *Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ride upon it, and dissolvest my substance.*] Thou didst lift me up on high, and madest me, as it were, to ride upon the clouds: but hast thrown me down with so much the sorer fall, which hath broken me all in pieces.

Ver. 23. *For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living.*] So that I can think of nothing but dying, and going to my grave; the common sanctuary of all mankind.

Ver. 24. *Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the grave, though they cry in his destruction.*] Whither thy afflicting hand will not pursue me: for, though men cry when they are sent thither, yet when they are there, all their sufferings and complaints are ended.

Ver. 25. *Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? was not my soul grieved for the poor?*] Strange that I should be thus punished without any mercy! was I wont to be so unmerciful to others? No, I never looked upon men under any hardship without tears; and was so sensibly touched with the miseries of the poor, that I ever relieved them.

Ver. 26. *When I looked for good, then evil came unto me; and when I waited for light, there came darkness.*] Which gave me good hope that I should be very happy: but, instead thereof, the saddest afflictions and troubles are befallen me.

Ver. 27. *My bowels boiled, and rested not; the days of affliction prevented me.*] Which have so suddenly surprised

me, that they have put me into the greatest commotion and disorder: my bowels boil without the least intermission.

Ver. 28. *I went mourning without the sun; I stood up, and I cried in the congregation.*] My affliction is so constant, without any glimpse of joy, that I am a perpetual mourner; and am not able to lie still, nor to refrain from shrieks and cries in the greatest assemblies.

Ver. 29. *I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls.*] I can do nothing but lament myself, as if I were one of those mournful creatures which make such doleful noises in desert places.

Ver. 30. *My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burnt with heat.*] The boiling heat of my body hath so parched me, that my skin looks black; and the marrow in my bones, and all my vital moisture, is dried up.

Ver. 31. *My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.*] And, to say no more, all mirth is banished my house, the musical instruments are laid aside, and nothing but mourning and weeping come in their room.

CHAP. XXXI.

ARGUMENT.

It was possible his friends might make quite another use than Job intended of the relation he had made of his miserable condition, in the chapter foregoing: and therefore, lest it should harden them in their old error, and they should take what he had said to be an argument of his guilt, he gives in this chapter a large and particular account of his integrity, which in general he had so often asserted; laying his very soul, and the most secret inclinations of it open before them; together with the actions of his whole life, in his private capacity, (for of his public he had spoken before, chap. xxix.) both in respect of his neighbours, of all sorts, and in respect of God; to whom he again most solemnly appeals, in the conclusion of this discourse, that he did not boast of more virtues than he had; but would most gladly be tried before him, by some impartial judge. I need not here enumerate his virtues, because they are plainly and distinctly expressed in the paraphrase; and I do not pretend to give the entire contents, but the design only, of each chapter.

Ver. 1. *I MADE a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?*] But do not, I beseech you, any longer look upon these sufferings as an argument that I am not innocent; for I protest to you, I have been very resolute, and careful to avoid even the occasions of lasciviousness: and therefore how should I ever so much as deliberate to corrupt a virgin?

Ver. 2. *For what portion of God is there from above? and what inheritance of the Almighty from on high?*] For I know there is a God in heaven, an Almighty Being, who rules over all: and what could I expect from him, as the reward of such impurity?

Ver. 3. *Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?*] Doth it not lead to destruction? nay, do not strange and horrible punishments fall upon the workers of that iniquity?

Ver. 4. *Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?*] Is it possible to commit it so secretly that it shall not be known by him, who observes every motion, and tells every step I take?

Ver. 5. *If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit.*] If I have broke my promises, or have been forward to deceive and cheat my neighbour;

Ver. 6. *Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.*] I refuse not to be tried: but rather desire my actions may be scrupulously weighed and examined; for God, I am sure, will approve of my upright dealing.

Ver. 7. *If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to my hands.*] If I have turned aside from the rules of justice for fear or favour; if I have coveted the goods of other men, or my hands have taken any bribes:

Ver. 8. *Then let me sow, and let another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out.*] Let me be served in my kind, and let other men eat the corn which I have sowed, and pluck up the trees (roots and all) which I have planted.

Ver. 9. *If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door.*] If my heart hath been seduced to filthy desires after another man's wife; if I have watched for his absence, or some fair opportunity to enter into his house and defile his bed;

Ver. 10. *Then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her.*] Then let others take away my wife from me, and make her the vilest slave, whom they may use at their pleasure.

Ver. 11. *For this is a heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges.*] I ever thought this a crime of the highest nature, an iniquity to be corrected by the severity of the public justice.

Ver. 12. *For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction, and would root out all mine increase.*] For it is a fire, which, if it be not extinguished, consumes men and their estates; yea, destroys whole families and kingdoms; and so incenses the Divine displeasure, that, should it escape the magistrates' punishment, I could never hope that any thing of mine (were I guilty of it) should thrive, but all come to utter ruin.

Ver. 13. *If I did despise the cause of my man-servant, or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me.*] So far was I from doing such foul injuries to my neighbours, that I never extended my power to the oppression of my slaves: but was content to wave the privilege the law gave me, of using them as I pleased; and to allow them a fair hearing when they had any difference with me.

Ver. 14. *What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?*] For I thought with myself, that though men could not punish me for my rigour towards them, yet I should never be able to excuse it to God when he came to judge me; nor tell what to answer when he called me to an account for my ill usage of them.

Ver. 15. *Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?*] I often also called to mind that there was no such a difference in our estates as there was an equality in our births: and that we having one common Creator, my slave was as nearly related to God as myself.

Ver. 16. *If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail.*] Nor have the

poor any reason to complain of me: for if I ever denied to satisfy their desire, or let the widow in vain expect my relief;

Ver. 17. *Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof.*] Or have sitten down at my table alone, without the company of fatherless children:

Ver. 18. *(For from my youth he was brought up with me as with a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb).*] (For whom I have always had a natural compassion from my very youth; I brought it into the world with me, and it hath been my companion ever since:)

Ver. 19. *If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering.*] If I have suffered any to perish for want of clothing, or let the poor go naked without a covering;

Ver. 20. *If his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep.*] If his loins did not admonish him to bless me as oft as he girded on his garment, and he were not kept warm with the cloth made of my wool:

Ver. 21. *If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate.*] If I ever have beaten the fatherless, because I knew I should be too strong for him in the court, in case he complained there of the injustice;

Ver. 22. *Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.*] Then let that guilty arm fall off from my shoulder, or be broken in two in the midst.

Ver. 23. *For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.*] For I never thought I could escape the Divine vengeance; the dread of which affrighted me, when men could not, from all such insolence; for I knew I could not support myself against his majesty:

Ver. 24. *If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence.*] Whose favour I do not desire, if I have put my trust in riches, and thought myself safe and secure, because I was furnished with the noblest treasures:

Ver. 25. *If I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much.*] Or, if I was vainly elevated and puffed up with the large possessions left me by my ancestors, or with the great increase I had made to them by my own industry.

Ver. 26. *If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness.*] If when I beheld the sun arise, or the moon appear in her full lustre,

Ver. 27. *And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand.*] I ever entertained an opinion in my mind that they were gods, or kissed my hand in token of worship and reverence to them:

Ver. 28. *This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.*] This also were a fearful crime, which God's vicegerents should punish; because it were to put those stars in the place of him who is above all heavens.

Ver. 29. *If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him.*] Whom I do not wish to be my friend, if I ever was glad at the ruin of mine enemy, or insulted over him, when any mischief befel him:

Ver. 30. *(Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin, by wishing a curse to his soul).*] (No, I was not so much as guilty of making any imprecations against him, nor was provoked by his malice to wish him dead:)

Ver. 31. *If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied.*] Though the people of my family were so enraged at him, that, if I would have yielded to their passion, they were ready to eat him up with an insatiable anger:

Ver. 32. *(The stranger did not lodge in the street; but I opened my doors to the traveller).*] (Much less was I guilty of unkindness to strangers, whom I never suffered to lodge in the streets: for the door of my house stood open, that any traveller might turn in there if he pleased:)

Ver. 33. *If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom.*] If I have studied to seem better than I am, and have not now made a free confession; but, like our first parent, have concealed or excused my faults, and out of self-love have hidden mine iniquity:

Ver. 34. *(Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrify me, that I kept silence, and went not out of the door?*] (Because I dread what the people will say of me, or am terrified by the contempt into which the knowledge of my guilt may bring me with the neighbouring families: then I am content my mouth should be stopped, and that I never stir out of my door any more.

Ver. 35. *Oh that one would hear me! behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book.*] Oh that the truth of all this might be examined by some equal judge! Behold, I continue still to desire of God this favour; and let him that can accuse me, bring in his libel in writing against me.

Ver. 36. *Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me.*] Surely I would not endeavour to obscure it, but openly expose it to be read by all; nay, wear it as a singular ornament, which would turn to my honour, when the world saw it disproved.

Ver. 37. *I would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto him.)*] I myself would assist him to draw up his charge, by declaring to him freely every action of my life: I would approach him as undauntedly as a prince, who is assured of the goodness of his cause:)

Ver. 38. *If my land cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof complain.*] For if so much as a bit of my land was unjustly gotten, or I have defrauded those who ploughed it of their wages;

Ver. 39. *If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life.*] If I have taken the fruits of it from my tenants, and paid nothing for them; or let them such hard bargains, that it broke their heart:

Ver. 40. *Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley. The words of Job are ended.*] Then let corn never grow there any more; but let it be overrun with thistles and the most stinking weeds.

Here Job ended his defence.

CHAP. XXXII.

ARGUMENT.

It appears by the fifteenth verse of this chapter, that there were several other persons present besides those that

are named, when this dispute was held between Job and his three friends. Among whom there was a young man named Elihu; and who was either a Syrian (in which language this book was first written, and translated by Moses into Hebrew, says the author of the commentaries under Origen's name), descended from the second son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, Gen. xxii. 20. or an Idumean, of the same country with Eliphaz the Temanite, Jer. xxv. 23. I have made him a Syrian in my paraphrase, because he is said to be of the kindred of Ram; by whom we are to understand either Aram, or, as the Hebrews think, Abraham, by whom such wisdom and piety might be promoted in his brother's family, as is apparent in Elihu; who, though much inferior to the rest in years (for which reason he had held his peace thus long), yet was much superior to them in knowledge. Which he discovers in the judicious censures he here passes, not only upon the three friends, but upon Job himself: whom he hath nothing to charge withal, relating to any crime committed before this affliction befel him; but thinks he had not managed the dispute about it with so much calmness and submission to God, as became his piety. In this he differs from those that spake before him: for I do not find that he blames him for any miscarriages, but those only which he observed in the heat of his disputation; and he spends his time rather in justifying God, than in carping at Job, as the other had done.

Ver. 1. *So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.*] And his three friends also left off disputing with him, because they saw him immoveably fixed in the opinion of his innocence.

Ver. 2. *Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram; against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God.*] Which very much displeased a young man, who had stood by all this time, and heard what both sides said for themselves. His name was Elihu, descended from a brother of Abraham; who was exceeding angry with Job, because he spent more time in justifying himself than in justifying God;

Ver. 3. *Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.*] And with his three friends also, because they were not able to maintain their charge against Job, and yet had condemned him to be a wicked hypocrite.

Ver. 4. *Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he.*] Yet he moderated his passion so discreetly, that he said not a word, till he had waited, as well as Job, to see whether they would resume the debate: because it was not fit, he thought, for him to meddle, as long as his elders had any thing to say.

Ver. 5. *When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.*] But when he saw that none of the three offered to reply, but sat as men that knew not what to say, he was not able to hold his peace any longer:

Ver. 6. *And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion.*] But in this manner addressed himself unto them, saying, I have considered all this while mine own youth, and your aged experience; which have deterred me so much, that I have hitherto been afraid to interpose my opinion.

Ver. 7. *I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years shall teach wisdom.*] I thought with myself, that it was becoming one of my small standing to hear, rather than to speak; and to learn wisdom in such grave company as yours, rather than pretend to teach it.

Ver. 8. *But there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.*] But I see I was mistaken: man is a very wretched thing, though he live never so long, if God do not illuminate him. It is the Divine inspiration which gives understanding.

Ver. 9. *Great men are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgment.*] They are not always the wisest who are in authority, and the teachers of others: nor do old men always so well employ their years as to understand the difference of things.

Ver. 10. *Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will shew mine opinion.*] Therefore let me entreat you to lend your ears a little to me: I also will tell you what I think about this matter.

Ver. 11. *Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst you searched out what to say.*] Do not think me too forward; for I have with great patience heard all your discourses, and observed your arguments; and let you proceed till you have searched as far as you could into the business:

Ver. 12. *Yea, I attended unto you; and, behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words.*] And having duly considered and comprehended every word, I must needs pronounce, that there is none of you hath confuted Job, nor said any thing to the purpose in answer to his defence of himself.

Ver. 13. *Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man.*] For it is not sufficient for you to say he is obstinate, and therefore it is wisely done of us to leave him to God: he shall confound him, by continuing his affliction; not we by our arguments.

Ver. 14. *Now, he hath not directed his words against me; neither will I answer him with your speeches.*] Which truly are so weak, that I shall make no use of them; but, as Job hath directed none of his words against me, so I shall trouble him with none of your replies.

Ver. 15. *They were amazed; they answered no more; they left off speaking.*] See, I beseech you all, you that hear us, how these disputants are amazed; how silent they are, as if their speech had forsaken them.

Ver. 16. *When I had waited (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more).*] You are my witnesses, that I have waited for satisfaction: but after long expectation they bring forth nothing; they are at a stand, and furnished with no further answer.

Ver. 17. *I said, I will answer also my part; I also will shew mine opinion.*] Which made me resolve within myself, that I would have a share in this dispute; and shew, as I have often told you, what my opinion is concerning it.

Ver. 18. *For I am full of matter; the spirit within me constraineth me.*] And indeed it is high time; for I am so full, by long thinking of what I have to say, that I am in pain till I have uttered my mind.

Ver. 19. *Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles.*] My thoughts work within me, like new wine in a vessel: and we are both alike in danger to burst, unless there be a vent.

Ver. 20. *I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips, and answer.*] I must speak, therefore, if it be but to ease myself: I will open my lips, as they do such vessels, and make an answer, because I cannot with safety hold my peace any longer.

Ver. 21. *Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person; neither let me give flattering titles unto man.*] And, I beseech you, let me speak with all freedom; with regard only to the cause, and not to the person: and do not expect that I should compliment, and give to man any glorious titles.

Ver. 22. *For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away.*] For I do not understand that art of soothing men into a great opinion of themselves: or if I did, I should not venture to use it; lest he that made me should presently stop my mouth for not dealing plainly.

CHAP. XXXIII.

ARGUMENT.

Here Elihu addresses his speech to Job alone (for he rejected all that the three friends had said, as sufficiently confuted by Job in his dispute with them), and tells him, first, that he was the man who would now plead with him in God's behalf (as he had often desired), and that he was no equal match for him. And then begins to reprehend those passages which he thought were blamable in Job's speeches; particularly his insisting so much upon his integrity: which, though true, should not have been mentioned without due acknowledgment, that the Sovereign of the world had done him no wrong in thus afflicting him; and that it was not fit for him to question the wisdom and justice of God's providence, because he did not understand it. For the care of God over man, and his kindness to him, he shews, are so apparent, upon so many scores, that they ought not to be denied because of the unaccountable afflictions that may befal us; which we ought rather to think are one of the ways whereby he doth man good.

Ver. 1. *WHEREFORE, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words.*] And truly I think I need not use any farther preface, to persuade thee, O Job, to hear my discourse, and to give an attentive ear to all I have to say.

Ver. 2. *Behold, now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth.*] Behold, now I begin; the words are upon my tongue, if thou art ready to receive them.

Ver. 3. *My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart; and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.*] And I assure thee they shall be the unfeigned language of mine heart, which it shall not be hard for thee to understand: for the instructions they give thee shall be clearly and perspicuously delivered.

Ver. 4. *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*] And first of all consider, that I am no other creature than what thou art; a man whom the power of God hath formed, and then inspired with life.

Ver. 5. *If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.*] Thou needest not therefore decline the encounter; but if thou art able to answer, set thy forces in order against me, and stand up to oppose me.

Ver. 6. *Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay.*] Thou hast formerly desired (ix. 33. xiii. 3.) that somebody would appear in God's stead, to reason the case with thee: behold, thou hast thy wish; I am the man that appears for him, who am made of the same matter with thyself.

Ver. 7. *Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.*] Look upon me, the combat is not unequal; (as thou complainedst when thou lookedst upon God, ix. 34. xiii. 21.) thou seest no dreadful majesty in me to affright thee, nor any power to oppress thee.

Ver. 8. *Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying.*] I do not accuse thee neither, as thy three friends have done, of crimes uncertain or unknown, but of what I myself, with mine own ears, have heard thee utter.

Ver. 9. *I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me.*] For surely thou hast said more than once, (x. 7. xiii. 23. xvi. 17, &c. xxxi.) I am pure and without any fault, in my heart and in my actions, both towards God and towards man.

Ver. 10. *Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy.*] Behold, He who I thought would have vindicated my innocence, seeks for occasions to fall out with me, and for slight matters declares himself mine enemy.

Ver. 11. *He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.*] Whom he keeps so fast in prison, that I cannot stir, and watches so narrowly, that I can find no way to escape.

Ver. 12. *Behold, in this thou art not just; I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.*] This is thy complaining language, and mark what I say to thee: though I cannot accuse thee, as thy friends have done, of other sins, yet in this thou dost offend; and I must reprehend thee for it, by remembering thee, that there is no comparison between God and man.

Ver. 13. *Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters.*] And therefore, why dost thou presume to dispute with him, and call him to an account for his actions, who will not reveal to us all the secrets of his providence?

Ver. 14. *For God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not.*] Not that God envies knowledge to us, for he teaches man more ways than one, and a great deal more than he takes care to learn.

Ver. 15. *In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed.*] One way is by a dream (which you may call a night-vision), when men fall into a deep sleep, or lie on their beds between sleeping and waking.

Ver. 16. *Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.*] Then (when their minds are free from the business and cares of the day) he secretly whispers instruction in their ears, and imprints it upon their minds.

Ver. 17. *That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.*] Not to make them understand, indeed, all the secret reasons of his providence, but to turn man from his evil way, and to dispose him with all humility to submit himself to his heavenly instructor.

Ver. 18. *He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.*] Who by this means mercifully preserves him (if he obey his admonition) from running on to his own destruction, and rescues him from the violent death which the sword of justice, or of an enemy, would have inflicted on him.

Ver. 19. *He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain.*] Another way (and more common than this by dreams) is the painful diseases wherewith he chastises man, and lays him low on his bed, though his constitution of body be never so firm and strong.

Ver. 20. *So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.*] In which languishing case he loathes his food; yea, nauseates that very meat which formerly was his greatest delight.

Ver. 21. *His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out.*] Which makes so great a change in him, that his flesh, which formerly appeared plump and fair, cannot be seen; and his bones stick out, which formerly did not appear.

Ver. 22. *Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.*] There is but a step between him and his grave; the pangs of death being ready to seize on him.

Ver. 23. *If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness.*] If then (which is a third way whereby God teaches men) there come a Divine messenger unto him, a rare person that can expound the mind of God, and persuade the sick man to repent and amend his life;

Ver. 24. *Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom.*] He shall beseech God to be gracious to him, saying, Spare him, good Lord, and rescue him from going down to the grave; let it satisfy thee that thou hast corrected him, and that I have found him a penitent.

Ver. 25. *His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth.*] Presently the sick man shall begin to recover, and become a new man in his body as well as in his mind: his flesh shall look as fresh as when he was a child; and he shall be restored to the vigour and strength of his youthful age.

Ver. 26. *He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him; and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness.*] His prayer also shall be acceptable to God, and prevail for the blessings he asks: he shall go into the house of God, and with the most joyful voice give thanks unto him, and praise his goodness; who will then acquit him, and restore this poor man to his favour.

Ver. 27. *He looketh upon men; and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not.*] And he (as becomes a true penitent), casting his eyes upon his neighbours, shall openly confess and say, I have offended God, and he hath justly chastised me; I have done wickedly, and he hath punished me according to my desert:

Ver. 28. *He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.*] But hath redeemed me from that death into which I was going; and not only made me live, but given me hope that I shall enjoy prosperous days.

Ver. 29. *Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man.*] Behold, in all this, the wonderful goodness of God; who by so many means very often admonishes man:

Ver. 30. *To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.*] To reduce him from those evil courses which had just brought him to his grave, and to raise him up again to live in all true happiness and pleasure.

Ver. 31. *Mark well, O Job; hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak.*] Mark this well, O Job, for it may very much concern thee: consider what I have said; and if thou pleasest to hear me patiently, I will still instruct thee more fully.

Ver. 32. *If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak; for I desire to justify thee.*] Or if thou hast any thing to object to what I have said, I am willing to hear it: speak before I go any further; for I heartily desire thou mayest clear thyself, and appear a righteous person.

Ver. 33. *If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.*] If thou hast no exception against my discourse, then continue thy attentions, and silently listen to me, and I will teach thee more wisdom.

CHAP. XXXIV.

ARGUMENT.

Here Job shews himself a far more humble and teachable person than his three friends; for though Elihu had invited him to make what exceptions he pleased to his discourse in the former chapter, he would not open his mouth, because he plainly saw that Elihu had hit upon the thing wherein he was defective. And so this young man proceeds to carry the charge a little higher, and tells him, with more sharpness than before, that there were some words in his discourses which sounded in his ears as if he accused God's justice and goodness. For what else did he mean when he complained that God did not do him right, and that he destroyed alike both good and bad? which rash assertions he overthrows, from the consideration of the sovereign dominion, power, righteousness, and wisdom of God; and represents to him what behaviour and discourse would have better become him than that which he had used.

Ver. 1. *FURTHERMORE, Elihu answered and said.*] To this last motion Job consented; and replying never a word, Elihu proceeded in his discourse, and said,

Ver. 2. *Hear my words, O ye wise men; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.*] I do not desire to be judge alone in this cause, but I appeal to them that are wise; and beseech all those (among you that hear me) who are intelligent, to mark and consider what I now deliver.

Ver. 3. *For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.*] You can discern whether it be true or false; for the mind is as proper a judge of discourse, as the palate is of meat.

Ver. 4. *Let us choose to us judgment; let us know among*

ourselves what is good.] Let us agree to examine the business, that we may be able to pronounce a righteous judgment: let us debate among ourselves, and resolve, whether Job have a good cause or not.

Ver. 5. *For Job hath said, I am righteous; and God hath taken away my judgment.*] For he hath said, I am innocent; and God (who knows I do not deserve to suffer in this manner, xxvii. 2. 6.) will not do me right:

Ver. 6. *Should I lie against my right? my wound is incurable without transgression.*] I scorn to defend myself with lies; but I must still maintain, that this deadly wound is given me for no crime of mine.

Ver. 7. *What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?*] Did you ever know such a man as Job, who, instead of adoring the Almighty (as becomes his wisdom and piety), takes the liberty to pour out abundance of contemptuous language concerning his judgments?

Ver. 8. *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.*] He associates himself with evil-doers; and talks after the same rate that the wicked are wont to do.

Ver. 9. *For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he shall delight himself with God.*] For he seems to me to be of this opinion, that though a man study to please God, he shall get nothing by it, (ix. 22.)

Ver. 10. *Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding: Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness; and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.*] What think you of this, ye men of wisdom? Do you not abhor such a thought as much as I, that he who is almighty should wrong any man, and he who is all-sufficient should swerve from the rule of righteousness?

Ver. 11. *For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways.*] He will never be charged with such weakness, but always deals with men according as they deserve: for he that doth well never fails to find a reward; and he that doth ill meets with a just punishment.

Ver. 12. *Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.*] Surely I need not fear to affirm this with the greatest confidence, that the supreme Judge of the world will never condemn an innocent person; nor will he that possesses all things be corrupted to pronounce an unrighteous sentence.

Ver. 13. *Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world?*] For he did not receive the government of the world from any above himself; nor is there any higher being, whose authority he may be thought to dread, and for fear of whom he may be tempted to do unjustly.

Ver. 14. *If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath.*] No, he made and he sustains all creatures; so that if he should contain his goodness within himself, and recall that spirit and life which he hath infused into them;

Ver. 15. *All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again into dust.*] Nothing could subsist one moment: but all mankind would expire together, and return unto their dust.

Ver. 16. *If now thou hast understanding, hear this; hearken to the voice of my words.*] If thou art wise, mind what I say; and consider also what follows:

Ver. 17. *Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?*] Can he be an enemy to justice himself, who binds us so fast to the practice of it? and wilt thou condemn his actions, who is most powerful, as well as just; and therefore need not serve himself by any wrongful dealing?

Ver. 18. *Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked; and to princes, Ye are ungodly?*] There is no king on earth but looks upon it as a great and insufferable reproach to be called a tyrant: nor will inferior rulers endure you should say, that they have no regard to equity.

Ver. 19. *How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands.*] Shall we impute then any such thing to him, before whom a prince or a rich man is no more than the meanest and poorest persons? who shall have the same justice from him with the greatest, because they are all alike the work of his hands.

Ver. 20. *In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away; and the mighty shall be taken away without hand.*] How should he stand in awe of the power of kings, or be bribed with the gifts of the rich, who can strike them all dead in a moment? Whole nations tremble before him, and in their deepest security are destroyed. He needs not the help of any force on earth to put down a mighty tyrant; but invisible powers carry him away.

Ver. 21. *For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.*] For there is no one passage of man's life but he is acquainted with it: and therefore cannot be suspected, through ignorance of their actions (no more than through fear of their persons), to overlook their crimes, or to do them any injustice.

Ver. 22. *There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.*] They may seek to hide their wickedness, when they have committed it; and may make excuses and subtle pretences: but they cannot cast a mist before his eyes, who sees into the thickest darkness, and the deepest secrets.

Ver. 23. *For he will not lay upon man more than right, that he should enter into judgment with God.*] And therefore, as he will never charge man with that of which he is not guilty; so, when he calls him to an account, he will not delay, nor put off his judgment, to hear what man can say for himself.

Ver. 24. *He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.*] For he needs not be informed how matters stand; and therefore breaks in pieces mighty men, without inquiry or examination of witnesses against them, and confers their dignity upon others.

Ver. 25. *Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed.*] And by this means shews that he knows their works; when he so suddenly overturns them, that they are crushed in pieces.

Ver. 26. *He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others.*] He punishes them as men that in his eyes are apparently wicked; and therefore makes them public examples for the terror of their neighbours;

Ver. 27. *Because they turned back from him, and would*

not consider any of his ways.] Because they would not follow his counsels, nor regard any of his commands:

Ver. 28. *So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.*] But went on in their oppression of the poor, till they cried to heaven for vengeance upon them: and the cry of such afflicted people God never fails to answer.

Ver. 29. *When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only.*] And if he will grant such poor wretches rest and ease, who can disturb them? or if he be angry with their oppressor, who can shew him favour? (which is as true of whole nations, as one single person.)

Ver. 30. *That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared.*] He will not let the wicked tyrant reign always, though he pretend piety and the public good never so much, lest the people should be ensnared into sin by his example.

Ver. 31. *Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more.*] Wherefore it is best for an afflicted person not to complain, but to suspect himself (though he be never so good), and presently to say to God, I confess this suffering is just; I will not offend by pleading my innocence.

Ver. 32. *That which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*] If I have overlooked any thing that I should have observed, do thou shew it me: if I have committed any fault, I will take care to do so no more.

Ver. 33. *Should it be according to thy mind? he will recompense it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose; and not I: therefore speak what thou knowest.*] Hast thou addressed thyself to God in this manner? Answer that question; for God will recompense it, if thou dost despise such good counsel; which perhaps thou wilt choose to do, but so would not I. Speak therefore what thy opinion is.

Ver. 34. *Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.*] Or let any understanding persons tell us what is their opinion; for such, as I said before, would I have to judge between us.

Ver. 35. *Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom.*] Job seems to be very much mistaken; and his discourses to be inconsiderate and without reason.

Ver. 36. *My desire is, that Job may be tried unto the end, because of his answers for wicked men.*] And therefore I am so far from wishing he may be presently released from his afflictions, that I take it to be more desirable he should be still tried and proved by them, till he recant the answers in which he hath complained of Divine Providence, after the manner of wicked men.

Ver. 37. *For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his hands amongst us, and multiplieth his words against God.*] For otherwise he will add greater offences to those lesser he hath already committed: he will defend what he hath inconsiderately spoken; nay, triumph, as if he had got the better of us; and, instead of making the confession to which I have exhorted him, continue to multiply his complaints against God.

CHAP. XXXV.

ARGUMENT.

Job still keeps silence, notwithstanding that Elihu had made the harshest construction of his words; because he was sensible he meant him well, and had now, in the conclusion of his discourse, given him very wholesome counsel; and, allowing his integrity, had only charged him with some unhappy expressions, which had fallen from him when he was in great anguish of spirit. Which, I suppose, was the reason he doth not contradict him, though he continue here in this chapter to fasten the very same harsh sense upon his words, ver. 2, 3. which he refutes from the consideration of the infinite disproportion there is between man and God: who is never the worse, indeed, for any evil, nor at all the better for any good that we do; and yet hath such a love to mankind, that it is certain he would not have them miserable, but takes care for their relief when they are oppressed, if they address themselves, as they ought, to him.

Ver. 1. *ELIHU spake moreover, and said.*] To this Job making no answer, Elihu pressed him again, and said,

Ver. 2. *Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's?*] Let me appeal to thy own conscience: Dost thou think this to be right, that thou saidst God is not so righteous as I am?

Ver. 3. *For thou saidst, What advantage will it be unto thee? and, What profit shall I have if I be cleansed from my sin?*] What else could be thy meaning, when thou utteredst such words as these, What doth God care whether I be innocent or not? or what benefit shall I have by it if I be?

Ver. 4. *I will answer thee, and thy companions with thee.*] I will answer thee, and such as thou art, in a few words.

Ver. 5. *Look unto the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds, which are higher than thou.*] Cast up thine eyes to the heavens, look upon the clouds and the sky, and consider, that as high as they are, they are not so much above thee as God is above them.

Ver. 6. *If thou sinnest, What doest thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him?*] And therefore it is true, that he is never the worse for the sins which thou hast committed, nor will be the worse, though thou should proceed to commit more and greater:

Ver. 7. *If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?*] And that he is never the better for thy being righteous, which can confer nothing upon him which he hath not already, nor add any thing to his greatness.

Ver. 8. *Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the son of man.*] But thou shouldest not conclude from thence, that it is all one whether a man be good or bad: for thy wickedness will prove hurtful to thyself, and to the rest of mankind; and thy righteousness will do thee and them great service.

Ver. 9. *By reason of the multitude of oppressions they make the oppressed to cry; they cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty.*] The cries of the oppressed tell us what mischief injustice doth, and how miserable it makes them: the tyranny of the mighty forces them to cry aloud to God

for vengeance; who, though he be not hurt himself by it, is touched with a sense of their affliction.

Ver. 10. *But none saith, Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night.*] The greatest mischief is, that not one of these miserable wretches inquires seriously after God, who gave him his being; and is able therefore not only to relieve him, but to comfort, yea, to fill him with joy in the midst of the saddest affliction.

Ver. 11. *Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?*] Having endued us with reason and wisdom to consider, that he, who takes care of the beasts and the birds, will not neglect us, if we do not merely cry and groan under our oppressions (as those brute creatures do); but, with hearty repentance, and a thankful sense of his benefits, and humble confidence in his goodness, piously address ourselves unto him.

Ver. 12. *There they cry (but none giveth answer), because of the pride of evil men.*] This is the reason that God doth not deliver them; because they lie crying, indeed, under their affliction; but it is not a sense of him, but only the haughty violence of their oppressors, which extorts it from them.

Ver. 13. *Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.*] For we must not think that God (though he be inclined to relieve the afflicted) will give ear to men so void of piety: he will not regard those who have so little regard to him; even for this reason, because he stands in need of nobody.

Ver. 14. *Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, yet judgment is before him; therefore trust thou in him.*] Therefore, although thou complainest that thou dost not see him appear for thy deliverance, (xxiii. 8.) yet do not conclude from thence that he is unrighteous; but go and condemn thyself before him, and then patiently wait for his mercy.

Ver. 15. *But now, because it is not so, he hath visited in his anger; yet he knoweth it not in great extremity.*] But now, because there is nothing of this in thee, God hath thus severely afflicted thee; and not at all regarded the exceeding great prosperity wherein thou hast hitherto lived.

Ver. 16. *Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain; he multiplieth words without knowledge.*] And Job may spare his complaints hereafter, for they are to no purpose; he heapeth up words without reason.

CHAP. XXXVI.

ARGUMENT.

Having reprehended some of the unwarrantable expressions in Job's discourses (which he himself would not justify), Elihu comes closer to the business, and speaks to the very cause itself. Shewing, from the nature of God, and the methods of his providence, that if Job had, instead of disputing, submitted himself humbly to God's corrections, he would have delivered him (it being as easy for him to lift up as to cast down): and that his not discerning the reason of his corrections, (which Job had made a great cause of his grief, xix. 7.) ought not to have hindered his humble submission; because we are not able to comprehend any of the works of God, which we see every day, and acknowledge to be most excellently contrived.

Ver. 1. *ELIHU also proceeded, and said.*] Job still keeping silence, Elihu proceeded in his discourse, and said,

Ver. 2. *Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf.*] Be not weary, and I will open my mind more fully; for thou hast not yet heard all that God hath to say for himself by my mouth;

Ver. 3. *I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and I will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.*] Which shall now, from the most sublime contemplations, assert the righteousness of my Maker.

Ver. 4. *For truly my words shall not be false: he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.*] For assure thyself I will not seek to baffle thee with sophistical arguments: he that discourses with thee is none of those subtle disputers, but loves sincere and solid reason.

Ver. 5. *Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is mighty in strength and wisdom.*] Know then that God is most mighty, but despiseth not the meanest: the excellence of his power, and the greatness of his mind, will not suffer him to wrong any body.

Ver. 6. *He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the poor.*] When men are extremely wicked, and fit to be punished, he will let them live no longer; but the poor at last shall recover their right, and be delivered out of their affliction.

Ver. 7. *He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.*] For whatsoever affliction the righteous suffer, God never ceases to take a special care of them; and sometimes raises them to the highest offices that kings can confer upon them: in which they are settled as long as they live, and exalted above the power of their enemies that would pull them down.

Ver. 8. *And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction.*] Or if they should fall into any trouble, which lies as heavy on them, and holds them as fast, as if they were bound with chains and with cords;

Ver. 9. *Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded.*] It is only to make them reflect upon their lives, and to shew them their sins; because they grow strong, and begin to prevail over them.

Ver. 10. *He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.*] He disposeth them hereby to listen to instruction, and admonishes them to forsake their sins, and return to their duty.

Ver. 11. *If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.*] And if they profit so much by their affliction, as to obey his counsel, and devoutly serve him, they shall regain their former splendour; and pass the rest of their life in prosperity and pleasure.

Ver. 12. *But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge.*] But if they be disobedient, they shall be utterly cut off, and die in their folly.

Ver. 13. *But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath; they cry not when he bindeth them.*] And they that are false-hearted, do but heap up wrath to themselves by their counterfeit piety: which surprises them so suddenly, that it gives them no time so much as to cry to God, when his punishments seize on them.

Ver. 14. *They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean.*] They die before their time, in the flower of their age; and perish like the impure Sodomites, with a hasty and unexpected destruction.

Ver. 15. *He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression.*] Whereas he delivers the poor humble man in his affliction; and makes his oppression the means of giving him wholesome counsel:

Ver. 16. *Even so would he have removed thee out of the strait into a broad place, where there is no straitness; and that which should be set on thy table should be full of fatness.*] Even so would he have rescued thee (if thou hadst humbly submitted to his correction) out of these miserable straits to which thou art reduced: and not only enlarged thee, but set thee so far from all danger of falling again into them, that peace and plenty should have been thy portion.

Ver. 17. *But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and justice take hold on thee.*] But thou hast maintained the cause of the wicked: and such as a man's cause is, such will the judgment of God be upon him.

Ver. 18. *Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.*] And because God is angry with thee, take heed lest thou farther incense him to punish thee so heavily, that upon no terms he will deliver thee.

Ver. 19. *Will he esteem thy riches? no, not gold, nor all the forces of strength.*] Dost thou think he will have any regard to thy riches? no, not if thou hadst all the treasure and all the force which all the power on earth can muster up.

Ver. 20. *Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place.*] Do not dream that they can do thee any service; nor entertain thyself with vain hopes, as thou art musing on thy bed in the night; when God sometimes destroys whole nations on a sudden.

Ver. 21. *Take heed, regard not iniquity: for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.*] But let thy sufferings teach thee caution, and make thee afraid to go on to provoke offended justice: for thou hast done it too much already, in choosing rather to accuse Divine Providence, than to submit patiently to his chastisements.

Ver. 22. *Behold, God exalteth by his power: who teacheth like him?*] Consider the vast extent of God's power, which lifts men up as well as casts them down. What lord is there so absolute as he? or who shall teach him how to govern his dominions?

Ver. 23. *Who hath enjoined him his way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?*] What visitor is there over him, to examine and take an account of his actions? or who may presume to say, this or that is not well done?

Ver. 24. *Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold.*] See that thou leave off this carping at his providence, and remember to extol and magnify it, as well as the wonderful fabric of the world, which men behold with admiration and praise.

Ver. 25. *Every man may see it; man may behold it afar off.*] All mankind contemplate it with astonishment: there are none so dull, but in the farthest parts of the earth they behold, if they open their eyes, the majesty of God;

Ver. 26. *Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out.*] And must confess that he is great in wisdom and power, and cannot be comprehended by our shallow understandings; which are presently confounded, when they enter into the search of his eternal being.

Ver. 27. *For he maketh the small drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof.*] For it is he who dissolves the clouds into water, and doth not pour it down all at once; but by small drops sweetly restores to the earth the vapour which was exhaled from thence:

Ver. 28. *Which the clouds do drop and distil upon a man abundantly.*] For he hath made the clouds to be fluid bodies; which distil their showers in so many places, that there are multitudes of spectators and admirers of this wonderful contrivance.

Ver. 29. *Also can any understand the spreadings of the clouds, or the noise of his tabernacle?*] And can any one understand how he spreads those clouds, and makes them hang in the air, when they are full of water? or give an account of the dreadful sounds which are heard from thence, and which tell us that he dwells in those celestial places?

Ver. 30. *Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea.*] Observe also how he spreads the beams of the sun upon the sea, and covers it all over with light; which raises new vapours and clouds in the room of those which are exhausted.

Ver. 31. *For by them judgeth he the people; he giveth meat in abundance.*] Which he uses for quite contrary ends; both to punish mankind by storms, and tempests, and floods, and to make a plentiful provision for them by fruitful showers.

Ver. 32. *With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it not to shine, by the cloud that cometh betwixt.*] By those clouds also he sometimes quite hideth the sun from us, that it cannot ripen the fruits; and sometimes only intercepts its beams awhile, that it may not burn them up by immoderate heat.

Ver. 33. *The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour.*] The very cattle perceive the cloud as soon as it rises, and declare what God intends to do with it; whether to turn it into storms and tempests, or into fruitful rain and showers.

CHAP. XXXVII.

ARGUMENT.

Elihu continues his speech, which he had begun before, concerning the incomprehensible works of God: and limits himself chiefly, as he had in the foregoing chapter, to the wonders God doth in the clouds. To which, at last, he subjoins the amazing extent, brightness, and firmness of the sky; in which the sun shines with a lustre which we are not able to behold. And thence concludes, that the splendour of the Divine Majesty is infinitely more dazzling, and that we must not pretend to give an account of his counsels.

Ver. 1. *AT this also my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place.*] These are a few of the works of God; and though there be innumerable more, yet this one single effect of his power strikes terror into me, and makes my heart tremble, as if it would leap out of my body, and leave me dead.

Ver. 2. *Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound that goeth out of his mouth.*] Hearken I beseech you seriously to the horrible noise which comes out of some of those clouds, and it will astonish you also. The smallest murmurs are so dreadful, that it may be fitly styled the voice of God, calling men to stand in awe of him.

Ver. 3. *He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth.*] It is heard far and near, for he darts it through the whole region of the air; accompanied with his flashes of lightning, which shoot to the ends of the earth.

Ver. 4. *After it a voice roareth: he thundereth with the voice of his excellency; and he will not stay them when his voice is heard.*] After them follow the claps of thunder, more terrible than the roarings of a lion: which grow louder and louder till they conclude in a violent rain, or hail, or tempest.

Ver. 5. *God thundereth marvellously with his voice: great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.*] And he who thunders thus with his most wonderful voice, doth other great things which the wit of man cannot comprehend.

Ver. 6. *For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength.*] For in those clouds, which I have so often mentioned, he makes the snow, and commands it to cover the earth; and on a sudden they turn into rain, which sometimes falls in gentle showers, and sometimes in impetuous spouts of water:

Ver. 7. *He sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work.*] Which stop the labour of all those whose business is in the fields; and make the husbandmen know that he disposeth of them as he pleases.

Ver. 8. *Then the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places.*] The very beasts also are driven at that season into their lurking-places, and are forced to stay in their dens.

Ver. 9. *Out of the south cometh the whirlwind; and cold out of the north.*] From one quarter of the heavens blow turbulent winds; and from the opposite quarter those cold blasts which clear and purify the air again.

Ver. 10. *By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened.*] By the like sharp blasts God sends the frost; and binds up the waters so fast that they cannot flow.

Ver. 11. *Also by waterings he wearieth the thick cloud; he scattereth his bright cloud.*] In serene evenings also he presses the cloud into drops of dew upon the earth; or the dewy cloud receiving the sunbeams, by a dispersed and various light, makes the beautiful rainbow in the heavens.

Ver. 12. *And it is turned round about by his counsels; that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.*] For it is turned about and whirled several ways, according to the orders of his wise counsel; and so are all the rest that I have mentioned, which execute his commands upon the face of the whole earth.

Ver. 13. *He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy.*] Being sent either to bring a dearth, and to scourge our sins with plagues and pestilential diseases; or to produce the wonted crop of the earth for the necessary sustenance of man and beast; or to reward our obedience with extraordinary plenty, and very healthful seasons.

Ver. 14. *Hearken unto me, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.*] Listen diligently to these things, O Job; do not dispute any more with God, but silently consider these his wonderful works.

Ver. 15. *Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine?*] Canst thou tell beforehand what orders God will give about them? Art thou able to tell so much as when a rainbow will appear in the clouds?

Ver. 16. *Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?*] What canst thou tell us then of the hanging of the clouds in the air, as in an equal balance, and such-like stupendous works of his most absolute wisdom?

Ver. 17. *How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the south wind?*] Whence comes the violent heat which we sometimes feel? or how do calms come out of the same quarter from whence come whirlwinds? (ver. 9.)

Ver. 18. *Hast thou with him spread out the sky, which is strong, and as a molten looking-glass?*] Lift up thy thoughts still higher, and tell us, Didst thou join with him when he stretched out the sky, in which, as in a mirror, we behold the admirable power and wisdom of him, who, though it be so wide and vast, made it as firm as it is clear and bright?

Ver. 19. *Teach us what we shall say unto him; for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness.*] Teach us (if thou art so well skilled) what we shall say to him of his power and wisdom; for we must confess our ignorance is so great, that our thoughts are confounded when we attempt it.

Ver. 20. *Shall it be told him that I speak? If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.*] Is any thing that I have said of him worth his hearing? Whoever he be that goes about to describe him shall lose himself, and be dazzled with the brightness of his glory.

Ver. 21. *And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.*] For, alas! men are not able to look upon the brightness of the sun when it shines in the heavens, after a wind hath swept and cleansed them;

Ver. 22. *Fair weather cometh out of the north: with God is terrible majesty.*] And brought pure and serene weather out of the northern parts: how then shall they look upon God, whose majesty is most dreadful, and therefore not to be pried into with curiosity, but worshipped and praised with the humblest reverence?

Ver. 23. *Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.*] For when we have done all we can, we must acknowledge, that the Almighty cannot be comprehended by our understanding: his power is so excellent, his judgment so exact, his justice so abundant, that he ought not to be questioned by us for what he doth; but if he be, he will not give an account of his actions.

Ver. 24. *Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.*] Which should make all men stand in awe of him, and lowly adore, rather than boldly dispute with him: for he despiseth all those who are so wise in their own conceit.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

What Elihu had said concerning the Divine Majesty, in the twenty-second verse of the foregoing, God declares to be true, by a sensible demonstration, as I have expressed it in the first verse of this chapter. In which God himself appears as a judge (according to Job's repeated desires) to decide this great controversy. And taking up the argument begun by Elihu (who came nearest to the truth), and prosecuting it in inimitable words (excelling his and all other men's in the loftiness of the style, as much as thunder doth a whisper), he convinces Job of his ignorance and weakness, by shewing him how little he understood of the most obvious things in this world. Intending from thence, at last, to infer, that he who found himself puzzled, when he went about to give an account of the meanest of God's visible works, should not presume to penetrate into his secret counsels, nor question his goodness, no more than he could his wisdom and power, though he knew not why he was afflicted. One instance had been sufficient to bring Job to a nonplus; but he heaps up abundance, to humble him the more when he saw how much cause there was for it: whether he considered the earth, or the heavens, the sea, or the sun, things contained in the bosom of the sea, or in the bowels of the earth, especially all the meteors (as we call them) which are formed in the clouds, and the constellations in the higher regions; together with the beasts upon the earth, and the birds which fly in the air; one of each of which he mentions in the end of this chapter.

Ver. 1. *THEN the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said.*] No sooner had Elihu spoken these words, but there was a sensible token of the presence of that most dreadful majesty of God (xxxvii. 22.) among them. For there arose an unusual cloud (after the manner of God's appearing in those days), and a voice came out of it, as loud as a tempest, which called to Job, saying,

Ver. 2. *Who is this that darkneth counsel by words without knowledge?*] Who is this that disparages my counsels with his ignorant discourses about them?

Ver. 3. *Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.*] If thou hast the courage to argue the case with me (as thou hast often desired), make thyself ready for the debate, and answer me the questions I shall ask thee.

Ver. 4. *Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare if thou hast understanding.*] Where wast thou when I founded the earth? Speak, man, and relate how I went about that work, if thou art so skilful as thou pretendest.

Ver. 5. *Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?*] How came it to have these dimensions? (For thou, sure, who presumest to censure my providence, canst not be ignorant of such matters.) After what manner was the line and the rule applied, to give it these exact proportions?

Ver. 6. *Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof.*] Canst thou tell how it was fixed and settled upon its centre, or what it is that holds all the parts of it so firmly together?

Ver. 7. *When the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?*] Where wast thou when the bright stars first appeared to proclaim my praise with one consent; and all the angelical powers expressed their joy, but did not assist at the birth of the world?

Ver. 8. *Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?*] What midwife had the sea to bring it forth, when it burst out of the confused abyss, like an infant out of the womb?

Ver. 9. *When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it.*] And I covered it with clouds as with a garment, and wrapped its boisterous waves in a thick mist, with as much ease as a nurse swaddles a new-born child;

Ver. 10. *And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors.*] And laid it in that bed, which I had appointed to be broken up for it in the earth? Where, though it be tossed to and fro, as an infant in a cradle, yet it keeps within its shores, which cannot be overturned.

Ver. 11. *And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.*] For I have fixed its bounds, and resolved, Thus far shalt thou flow, but no farther: these sands and these cliffs shall stop thy swelling waves, be they lifted up never so tempestuously.

Ver. 12. *Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the day-spring to know his place.*] Raise up thy thoughts still higher, and tell me, dost thou remember since the morning-light was made? Or was it thou who ordered the sun, in what part of the heaven it should every day arise?

Ver. 13. *That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?*] And spread its beams to the ends of the earth; that the wicked, who delight in works of darkness, may be detected and dragged to their deserved punishment?

Ver. 14. *It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand as a garment.*] For they are daunted at its approach, and change colour as oft as the clay doth its form under different seals; they are no more consistent with themselves than a changeable garment:

Ver. 15. *And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken.*] And at last lose the use of that light, which innocent persons enjoy with so much pleasure; their insolent power, which in the night was so audacious, being broken in pieces in the morning.

Ver. 16. *Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?*] O thou who adventurest to enter into the abyss of my judgments, didst thou ever penetrate into the spring of the sea? or hast thou perfectly discovered all that lies at the bottom of that great deep?

Ver. 17. *Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?*] Hath the earth opened all her dark caverns to thee? or hast thou gone down to the very centre of it?

Ver. 18. *Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all.*] Nay, dost thou so much as understand all that grows upon the surface of the earth? shew thy skill, if it be so comprehensive.

Ver. 19. *Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as*

for darkness, where is the place thereof.] Tell me, which is the way that leads to the place where light takes up its dwelling when the sun goes down? Or what becomes of the darkness when the sun rises again?

Ver. 20. *That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?*] Art thou able to go and bring either of them hither? or to carry them back again away from hence, and prescribe them their limits at thy pleasure?

Ver. 21. *Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born? or because the number of thy days is great?*] Art thou acquainted with these things, because thou wast then born when I made them? How comest thou to discourse so confidently of my government of mankind, who canst neither tell that thou shouldest be born, nor art able now to say when thou shalt die?

Ver. 22. *Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasure of the hail.*] And when wast thou in the clouds, to see how the snow or the hail is made in such abundance;

Ver. 23. *Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?*] That I need no other weapon than those, if I please to use them, for the destruction of mine enemies?

Ver. 24. *By what way is the light parted, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?*] Art thou able to give an account how the light diffuses itself all over in an instant? or what makes the east wind blow so violently upon the earth?

Ver. 25. *Who hath divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters; or a way for the lightning of thunder.*] Didst thou make a channel in heaven for the conveyance of overflowing showers? or open the way for the breaking out of lightning and thunder?

Ver. 26. *To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man?*] Is it by thy direction that these showers go, and fall upon the desert places, where there are no inhabitants to employ their art to provide them with water?

Ver. 27. *To satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?*] And that they satisfy the dry and rotten parts of the earth, where all the labour of man is unprofitable, without such plentiful rains to make them fruitful?

Ver. 28. *Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of the dew?*] What is more common than the rain and the dew? but who is able to produce one drop of either?

Ver. 29. *Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?*] In whose womb was the ice formed? or who can make so small a thing as the hoary frost?

Ver. 30. *The waters are hid as with a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen.*] Whence comes the cold that turns the waters into stone, and fetters the raging waves of the sea?

Ver. 31. *Canst thou bind the sweet influence of Pleiades? or loose the bands of Orion?*] Canst thou forbid the sweet flowers to come forth when the seven stars arise in the spring? or open the earth for the husbandman's labour, when the winter season, at the rising of Orion, ties up their hands?

Ver. 32. *Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?*] Is it by thy power that the rest of the stars, great and small, appear in the southern and the northern signs, in their proper seasons?

Ver. 33. *Knowest thou the ordinance of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof on the earth?*] Dost thou understand the orders and the laws which I have established among the heavenly bodies? or couldest thou tell what to do, if it were referred to thee here on earth, to settle the government of them?

Ver. 34. *Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?*] Let me see an instance of thy power and skill; lift up thy voice to the clouds, and command them to pour out abundance of waters upon the place where thou now art.

Ver. 35. *Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?*] Or call to the lightnings, and bid them go whither thou hast a mind to send them? and let me hear them answer, Behold, we are ready to obey thee.

Ver. 36. *Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?*] Didst thou give thyself understanding? how comes it then to be so small, that thou canst not tell how a thought is made?

Ver. 37. *Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay the bottles of heaven.*] Nor, with all the wisdom thou hast, so much as count the number of the clouds, whose showers thou art as unable to stop, as to make them run:

Ver. 38. *When the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?*] Though they have fallen so long, that the earth is abundantly satisfied, and fit for the plough, or for the seed?

Ver. 39. *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion, or fill the appetite of the young lions.*] Or dost thou pretend to have great power upon earth, though none in heaven? wilt thou undertake then to provide food for a lion and all his whelps,

Ver. 40. *When they couch in their den, and abide in the covert to lie in wait?*] And that in a desert; where they lie lurking in their dens, and greedily watch for a prey in close and shady places?

Ver. 41. *Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.*] Or, which is less, wilt thou take upon thee to feed the young ravens? who, expelled by the old ones out of their nest, complain to me of their cruelty, but know not where to get a bit of meat.

CHAP. XXXIX.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter continues the discourse begun in the latter end of the foregoing, concerning God's providence about beasts and birds: and to the two beforementioned he adds seven more. First, the wild goat, or hind, whose hard labour among the rocks God is wont to help and promote (as the Psalmist observes, xxix. 9. and other authors agree) by a clap of thunder; the terror of which puts her into such an agony, that she presently excludes her young one, which sticks in the birth. Then he mentions the wild ass; and after that a tall creature in those countries called *reem*, which we render a *unicorn;* but Bo-

chartus hath proved to be a two-horned goat, in Arabia, of great strength, with an erected head and ears. Of the rest I need say nothing here, they are so well known.

Ver. 1. *KNOWEST thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?*] Vain man, who wouldest so fain pry into my secrets! didst thou ever climb the rocks to see the wild goats bring forth? or hast thou assisted at the hard labour of the hinds, and helped to ease them of their burden?

Ver. 2. *Canst thou number the months that they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?*] Dost thou know the moment of their conception? or keepest an account when they will be delivered?

Ver. 3. *They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows.*] Hast thou seen how they bow themselves; with what pain they bring forth, and with how much difficulty they are freed from their sorrow?

Ver. 4. *Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them.*] And yet their young ones are lusty and strong; they grow up in the open fields; they leave their mothers, and return to them no more.

Ver. 5. *Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?*] Was it thou that gave the wild ass his liberty, and made him so free from their servitude, in which you keep other creatures?

Ver. 6. *Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings.*] Who but I made that difference between him and them; and laying no burden on him, assigned him the wilderness and barren countries for his habitation?

Ver. 7. *He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.*] Where he laughs at those that live in the tumult and bustle of cities; and hears none of the cries of him that drives other asses to their labour.

Ver. 8. *The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.*] Nor is confined in small enclosures, but hath whole mountains to range in for his pasture; where he finds sufficient food to appease his hunger.

Ver. 9. *Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib?*] Go to the unicorn (thou who wouldest have all things conformable to thy will), and see if thou canst persuade him to serve thee: will he be content to be tied to thy crib all night?

Ver. 10. *Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?*] Or submit his proud neck to thy yoke all day? Canst thou make him go to plough? or will he draw the harrow over thy land?

Ver. 11. *Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?*] Wilt thou rely upon him (because his strength is great) to do all the rest of thy work in the field?

Ver. 12. *Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?*] Or leave thy harvest out of doors, till thou hast prevailed with him to bring it home, and lay it in thy barn?

Ver. 13. *Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?*] Have other birds any reason to complain that they are not so goodly as the ostrich? whose wing is triumphant, if it be compared with the wing and the feather of the stork;

Ver. 14. *Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust.*] But her inward qualities are not so beautiful as her plumes: for she doth not seek for solitary places wherein to lay her eggs; but drops them any where upon the ground, and negligently leaves them to be corrupted by the heat of the sand and of the sun.

Ver. 15. *And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.*] She doth not secure them from the foot of travellers, or of wild beasts; who frequently tread upon them and crush them in pieces:

Ver. 16. *She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers: her labour is in vain without fear.*] But is hardened against the fruit of her own womb, as if it were not hers; and so she loses all her labour, because she hath no fear it may be lost.

Ver. 17. *Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding.*] For God hath not given her that wisdom which he hath bestowed upon other creatures; but made her of a stupid and careless nature.

Ver. 18. *What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.*] Though he hath imparted so much as is necessary for her preservation: for when she raises herself, and lifts up her wings, she runs so fast, that she despises a man on horseback, who cannot overtake her.

Ver. 19. *Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?*] And now I speak of the horse, let me ask thee again, Who was it that made him so much superior to other creatures in strength and in courage? didst thou give him his valiant spirit, or clothe his neck with such a stately mane?

Ver. 20. *Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible.*] Or put that vigour and mettle into him, which make him leap and bound in the air like a grasshopper? there is a majesty in his looks; and when he snorts vehemently, it is terrible.

Ver. 21. *He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men.*] He stamps impatiently on the ground, and breaks it up with his feet: he glories in his strength, and goes out boldly to meet the arms that oppose him.

Ver. 22. *He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.*] He derides all the dreadful instruments of war, and cannot be dismayed by them: he runs upon naked swords;

Ver. 23. *The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.*] And is not daunted at the noise of arrows which come whizzing by his ears, nor at the sharp points of spears and lances which are thrust at his breast.

Ver. 24. *He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage; neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet.*] He makes the earth quake and tremble as he gallops over it, and rids abundance of ground in a moment: neither can he stand still, when he hears the sound of the trumpet:

Ver. 25. *He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.*] But the louder it is, the more he neighs and dances for joy. He perceiveth the battle before it begins,

by the thundering voice of the captains, and the shouting of the soldiers.

Ver. 26. *Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings towards the south?*] Behold, also, how the hawk mounts up aloft. Didst thou give her those swift wings; or teach her, when the winter comes, to fly into the southern parts, that she may still enjoy the warmth of the sun?

Ver. 27. *Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high?*] But what bird soars so high as the eagle? Is she beholden to thee for that strength which carries her into the clouds? or was it by thy direction that she builds her nest quite out of all men's reach?

Ver. 28. *She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.*] She dwells on the top of high rocks; in the steep and craggy rock, as in an inaccessible fortress, she settles her abode.

Ver. 29. *From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off.*] There she leaves her young ones safely, while she goes to provide them food; from thence (so sharp is her sight) she spies her prey a vast way off.

Ver. 30. *Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain are, there is she.*] Which when she hath seized and torn she brings to her nest, that they may suck its blood: she looks down to the very earth; and where the carcasses lie, there may she be found.

CHAP. XL.

ARGUMENT.

Job modestly declining to say one word in his own defence (though he was graciously invited by God to speak, if he had any plea remaining), is still more humbled by a plain declaration from the Divine Majesty, that Elihu had reason to reprove him for his immoderate complaints (which some might look upon as an accusation of God's providence), and for maintaining his own righteousness so much, and God's righteousness so little, in the dispute he had had with his friends. Shewing him withal, that he was not sensible enough of the infinite distance and inequality between him and God; when he desired so vehemently to argue his case with him, that he forgot to make those submissions to the Divine Majesty, which had better become him. This disproportion is most livelily represented and illustrated, by an admirable description of the strength of the *behemoth*, a word of Egyptian termination; signifying, not the elephant, (which seldom lies down, and never among reeds, as this doth, ver. 21.) but a creature in that country, called by the Greek writers *hippopotamus*, i. e. *river-horse*. For it appears by the second book of Esdras, chap. vi. 49. that the Hebrews reckon *behemoth*, not among the land creatures, but among those belonging to the water, which were created on the fifth day. And there is none, that we know, of that sort, to whom the characters here mentioned belong, but the creature now named.

Ver. 1. *MOREOVER, the Lord answered Job, and said.*] After a short silence, to see what Job would reply to this long discourse, the Lord proceeded, and said;

Ver. 2. *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.*] Why dost thou not speak? Hath not the Almighty brought arguments enough to convince thee? Let him that will argue with God about his providence, first make an answer to these questions.

Ver. 3. *Then Job answered the Lord, and said.*] Then Job, whose confusion had made him silent, answered with great humility and said;

Ver. 4. *Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.*] Behold, I am a wretched creature, and not worthy to speak unto thy Majesty: nor do I know what to answer; and therefore I will hold my peace.

Ver. 5. *Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no farther.*] I have said too much already, in speaking only these two words to thee: but I have done; I will add no more.

Ver. 6. *Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said.*] Then the Divine Majesty spake again, after the same manner as before, saying,

Ver. 7. *Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.*] What, hast thou (who desiredst so much to plead with me) lost thy courage? pluck up thy spirit, man, and prepare thyself (as I said at first) to answer the questions I shall farther ask thee.

Ver. 8. *Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me that thou mayest be righteous?*] Is there any reason to suspect my care of mankind, who have shewn it so much about other creatures? Canst thou not defend thyself, but thou must also complain of me? must I be condemned that thou mayest be justified?

Ver. 9. *Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?*] Who art thou, that talketh so much of thine own innocence, that thou forgetteth to maintain my righteousness? hast thou a power equal to mine; or canst thou speak with a voice like this; or imitate the thunder thou hearest in the clouds?

Ver. 10. *Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency, and array thyself with glory and beauty.*] Lift up thyself then; and let me see thee appear in the highest majesty: put on thy robes, and shew thyself in such royal state, that all may honour and reverence thy excellent greatness.

Ver. 11. *Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath; and behold every one that is proud, and abase him.*] Let all thine adversaries round about thee (as becomes a mighty prince) feel the fierceness of thy wrath; frown upon all the haughty, and make them hang down their heads.

Ver. 12. *Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.*] Look, I say, upon every proud oppressor, and make him cringe and throw himself at thy feet: tread down all the wicked, wheresoever thou shalt find them.

Ver. 13. *Hide them in the dust together, and bind their faces in secret.*] Cast them all into one grave, that the world may be no more troubled with them: cover those faces with perpetual shame and confusion, which now bear themselves so high, and overlook all others.

Ver. 14. *Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.*] When I see thee do such things as these, then will I myself also magnify thy power, and acknowledge that thou needest none of my help to deliver thee.

Ver. 15. *Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox.*] But consider awhile (if thou art

not yet humble enough) a creature* which I have made in a country not far from thee: he lives among the fishes in the great river of Egypt, but he feeds upon the earth, and eateth grass like an ox.

*Behemoth, i.e. river-horse.

Ver. 16. *Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly.*] Consider, I say, the greatness of his strength, and the firmness of his flesh, not only in his loins, but even in the navel of his belly, where other creatures are wont to be weak and tender.

Ver. 17. *He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together.*] He hath a tail as thick and as stiff as a cedar, but he bends and throws it back at his pleasure: the nerves of his thighs are so many, that they are intricate and perplexed one within another.

Ver. 18. *His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron.*] His bones (for so they are rather than gristles) are as strong as bars of brass, and as hard and firm as rods of iron.

Ver. 19. *He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him.*] He is one of the principal works of God, a very singular instance of his power: he that made him hath fastened such crooked teeth in his jaws, exceeding sharp, that therewith he mows the grass and the corn as with a scythe.

Ver. 20. *Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play.*] For he goes in the night to graze upon the hills, in the company of the rest of the beasts of the field; who sport themselves in those rich pastures:

Ver. 21. *He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reeds and fens.*] But (in the day) he lies down in shady and close places, under the covert of the reeds, and in the fenny mud.

Ver. 22. *The shady trees cover him with their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about.*] The bushy trees, which are there very numerous, afford him a shelter; he is encompassed with the willows and the osiers, which grow in abundance on the banks of Nile.

Ver. 23. *Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth.*] Nay, behold, he dives to the very bottom of the river, and there takes his repose without fear: he will be secure, though Jordan also should break out, and be poured upon his mouth.

Ver. 24. *He taketh it with his eyes; his nose pierceth through snares.*] Who dare come in his sight, or attempt to take him by open force? Where is he that will undertake to fasten hooks in his nose?

CHAP. XLI.

ARGUMENT.

In this chapter another creature of vast bigness and strength is described, called in the Arabian language *leviathan*. By which we are not, in this place, to understand the whale; because that fish is not armed with such scales as the leviathan is here said to have: (ver. 15.) nor is impenetrable, as every body knows; and, to say no more, never creeps upon the earth, which is part of the description of this leviathan, (ver. 3.) Whereby we are therefore to understand the *crocodile* (to whom every part of this description exactly belongs), a creature as big again as a man of the greatest stature, and in some places vastly greater: there having been crocodiles seen of twenty, nay forty feet long; and in some places of a hundred. To this fierce and untameable creature God sends Job, that he might learn more humility than to contend with his majesty, when he saw how unable he was to stand before one of his creatures. That use he himself teaches Job to make of this description, (ver. 10—12.)

Ver. 1. *CANST thou draw out leviathan with a hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?*] There is another creature also in the same river, which I would have thee consider; and behold therein the Divine power and human weakness. Canst thou catch the leviathan* as you do other fishes? Canst thou let down a line, and draw him out by the tongue with a hook?

*Crocodile.

Ver. 2. *Canst thou put a hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?*] When thou hast made a cord of the rushes of the river, canst thou put it about his nose; or strike an iron, as sharp as a thorn, into his jaw?

Ver. 3. *Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft words unto thee?*] Will he importune thy favour, and with many prayers beseech thee to spare him? will he sue for his liberty with submissive words, and speak thee fair to let him go?

Ver. 4. *Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?*] Will he enter into bonds, and make a solemn covenant with thee, never to do thee hurt, but be thy slave, and serve thee for ever?

Ver. 5. *Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?*] Wilt thou adventure to play with him, as with a sparrow? or tie him by the leg, for the sport and pastime of thy daughters?

Ver. 6. *Shall the companions make a banquet of him? shall they part him among the merchants?*] Shall the society of fishermen make a feast for joy they have taken him; and sell their share in him among the merchants?

Ver. 7. *Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish-spears?*] Where is the dart wherewith thou canst hope to penetrate his skin? or the fish-spear that is able to wound his head?

Ver. 8. *Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more.*] Go, and touch him if thou darest: the battle will be soon ended; for thou shalt not do it the second time.

Ver. 9. *Behold, the hope of him is in vain: shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?*] Mark what I say; he will be sorely disappointed that thinks to take him: for he will be ready to sink down with fear at the very sight of him.

Ver. 10. *None is so fierce that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me?*] Though he lie asleep on the shore, there is none so hardy as to dare to awake him. Who is he then that takes upon him to contend with me? If one of my creatures be so terrible, how dangerous is it to provoke my majesty?

Ver. 11. *Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him? whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.*] And where is the man to whom I am a debtor? How came I, that made the whole world, to be obliged to thee, or any

one else? Did you first begin to do me kindnesses, that I should owe you a requital?

Ver. 12. *I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.*] What insolence is this to dispute with me, when thou art not able to stand before this single work of my hands? None of those limbs or joints I will conceal, nor forbear to speak of his strength, and of the comely disposition of all his parts.

Ver. 13. *Who can discover the face of his garment? or who can come to him with his double bridle?*] And first take a view of his scaly skin, wherewith he is covered: who hath ever stripped him of that upper garment? or who dare come within his doubled snout?

Ver. 14. *Who can open the doors of his face? his teeth are terrible round about.*] Who will venture to open his wide jaws, and so much as look into his mouth, in which his long rows of teeth are very dreadful?

Ver. 15. *His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal.*] The scales of his back are like the plates of a shield, which I have provided for his defence: every one of them is closely compacted, and strictly sealed to the next.

Ver. 16. *One is so near to another, that no air can come between them.*] They are knit so close, that the air, which presses into all things else, cannot come between them.

Ver. 17. *They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered.*] They cleave one to another, they hold so fast together that no art or violence can make a separation.

Ver. 18. *By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.*] When he sneezeth, as he lies gaping in the sun, the spirits break forth with such a force that they seem to sparkle: and when he riseth up out of the river, his eyes appear before the rest of his body, as the morning light before the sun.

Ver. 19. *Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out.*] The steam also which then comes out of his mouth is as vehement as if it were full of burning torches; or there were a fire in him, that sends forth sparks.

Ver. 20. *Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething-pot or caldron.*] Out of his nostrils goes a smoke, like the reek of a seething-pot or a boiling caldron.

Ver. 21. *His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.*] His breath is so hot, though he come out of the water, that it is sufficient to kindle coals; and may be called a flame, which issues out of his mouth.

Ver. 22. *In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him.*] His neck is exceeding strong, as if it were the very seat of strength: sadness and terror march before him, and seize on all those that meet him.

Ver. 23. *The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.*] The muscles of his flesh are glued together; every one of them is compact and solid; they are not easily moved.

Ver. 24. *His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.*] He is as far from fear as he is from pity: for his heart is as firm as a stone; as hard as an anvil, or a piece of the nether millstone.

Ver. 25. *When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves.*] But the stoutest hearts tremble when he lifts himself up above the water: they are seized with such a fright, that they are at their wits' end, and know not which way to turn themselves.

Ver. 26. *The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold; the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon.*] Though they assault him with the sword, it will do them no service; for the hardness of his skin will break it in pieces: the spear, also the dart and the javelin, are altogether as feeble, and cannot enter into him.

Ver. 27. *He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood.*] All the other weapons of iron (which the wit of man can devise) he values no more than a straw; and those of brass no more than rotten wood.

Ver. 28. *The arrow cannot make him flee: sling-stones are turned with him into stubble.*] The arrow shot out of the strongest bow cannot make him flee: and those stones which are thrown out of a sling with so much force, move him no more than a little chaff.

Ver. 29. *Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.*] Lay at him with heavy clubs, and he regards them no more than if they were stubble: shake the lance at him, and he contemns its most violent thrusts.

Ver. 30. *Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire.*] For instead of him it meets only with the rough shells wherewith he is armed; which are so hard, that he beats back the sharpest weapon, and throws it into the mire.

Ver. 31. *He maketh the deep to boil like a pot; he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.*] When he tumbles about in the bottom of the river, he raises bubbles on the top; and the water of the lake is so troubled with the slimy mud which he stirreth up, that it looks like a pot of ointment.

Ver. 32. *He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary.*] When he swims, he makes furrows in the face of the deep; and leaves a path behind him so covered with a froth and foam, that it looks as if it were grown old, and were full of gray hairs.

Ver. 33. *Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear.*] His fellow is not to be found upon the earth; where he creeps indeed in the dust, but is so made that he cannot be trodden under foot and bruised.

Ver. 34. *He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride.*] No, though he lie so low, yet he despises the tallest beast; and reigns over the oxen and camels, and all those creatures whose long legs raise them to the loftiest height; whom he masters and rends in pieces at his pleasure.

CHAP. XLII.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter concludes the book, with an account how Job completed the submission which he had begun before to make to God: whose pardon he sorrowfully begs; confessing and repenting of his fault; resigning himself entirely to be instructed by him; but resolving never hereafter to complain, nor to move any questions about his providence. This repentance God accepts; and for his sake grants a pardon also to his friends, whom he condemns as more faulty than Job. Who after this receives extraordinary marks of God's favour; and hath such an ample recompence made him for his losses, as may encourage all posterity to persevere in well-doing and pa-

tient suffering; believing steadfastly that nothing can be done or permitted by God, without much reason (whose wisdom shines so gloriously in all his works), and humbly expecting a comfortable issue out of all our troubles.

Ver. 1. *THEN Job answered the Lord, and said.*] These words so livelily represented the power and wisdom of God in his works, that Job, seeing his error more clearly than ever, submitted himself unto the great Lord of all; and said,

Ver. 2. *I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.*] I am abundantly satisfied that thy power is as large as thy will; and that nothing can hinder thee from effecting every thing which thou designest: but, as thou hadst reason to cast me down, so thou canst restore me and lift me up again.

Ver. 3. *Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.*] I am sensible also of the justice of the reproof which thou hast given me, (xxxviii. 2.) and do confess I very much forgot myself, when I adventured to talk so ignorantly of thy wise administrations. It was that which made me so rash as to discourse of things far above my reach; wonderful things, which I ought humbly to admire, not arrogantly censure.

Ver. 4. *Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.*] Be not angry with me, I beseech thee, but graciously hear me speaking in thy own words. I do not pretend to give an account of thy wonderful works, and of thy providence; and therefore ask me no more questions, (xxxviii. 3.) but let me learn of thee, and do thou instruct my ignorance.

Ver. 5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee.*] Something I did know before of thy greatness, and mightiness, and wisdom; but nothing so clearly as I do now, by this revelation and visible appearance of thy dreadful majesty.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*] Which touches me with a sensible displeasure against myself for my indecent complaints, and vehement expostulations, and eager desires to die, or to be delivered: I condemn them all (together with whatsoever I have spoken too boldly about thy government), and in the most sorrowful manner repent, that I have justified myself so much, and thee so little.

Ver. 7. *And it was so, that, after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.*] Which ingenuous confession pleased the Lord so much, that he did not chide Job any farther: but turning his voice to Eliphaz (his principal accuser), he said, I am angry with thee and with thy two friends: for you have made a perverse construction of the afflictions I sent upon Job; whom, notwithstanding all his errors, I acknowledge to be my servant, and to have spoken better of me than you have done.

Ver. 8. *Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering, and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept; lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.*] And therefore take no less than seven bullocks, and as many rams, and carry them to my servant Job; whom I appoint to be your priest, to offer for you a burnt-offering, in token of my absolute dominion over all creatures. And that faithful servant of mine shall pray for you, and obtain your pardon: for I have a great love to him, and will be favourable to you for his sake. Do not fail to go about this, lest I inflict some grievous punishment upon you; because, as I said, you have made an ill representation of my providence, and repeated those things confidently which my servant Job shewed you to be false.

Ver. 9. *So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, went and did according as the Lord commanded them: the Lord also accepted Job.*] So Eliphaz and his two companions submitted themselves also unto God. and went, as he commanded them, and desired Job to intercede for them. And the Lord heard his prayer, and was reconciled to them.

Ver. 10. *And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends; also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.*] And at that very time when Job was performing this charitable office for his friends, the Lord was pleased to begin to restore to him all those things which had been taken away from him: and never ceased, till he had not only established him in his former splendour, but made him twice as rich as he was before.

Ver. 11. *Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house; and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold.*] All his kindred likewise, and his familiar acquaintance, (whom his unusual affliction had estranged from him, xix. 3.) when they heard of the wonders the Lord had done for him, came to visit him and feast with him: and after they had condoled his misery, and testified their sorrow for all that had befallen him, they congratulated his happy recovery; and, in token of their joy, every one of them presented him with a piece of money and a pendant of gold.

Ver. 12. *So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses.*] Thus the Lord impoverished this good man only to make him richer. For, instead of seven thousand sheep which he had before his troubles, he found he had fourteen thousand when they were ended; and for three thousand camels which were taken from him, the Lord gave him six thousand; and multiplied his yokes of oxen, which were but five hundred, into a thousand; and his she-asses in the same proportion.

Ver. 13. *He had also seven sons and three daughters.*] His wife also became very fruitful, and brought him as many children as he had lost; seven sons and three daughters.

Ver. 14. *And he called the name of the first Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Keren-happuch.*] And to preserve the memory of so marvellous a deliverance (of which they were so many living monuments), he called the name of the first Jemima, that is, the day; because of the felicity wherein he now shone, after a sad night of affliction, wherein he had lain; and the second

Kezia (a spice of an excellent smell), because God had healed his filthy stinking ulcers, which made even his wife refuse to come near him; (xix. 17.) and the last he called Keren-happuch, *i. e.* plenty restored, or a horn of varnish, because God had wiped away the tears which fouled his face, (as he complains, xvi. 16.)

Ver. 15. *And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.*] The beauty also of these women proved as bright as their names; for there were none so amiable in all that country: and their father did not (as the manner was) endow them with a small portion of his goods, but (having a large estate, and a great affection to them) he made them coheirs with their brethren, in the inheritance which he left them.

Ver. 16. *After this lived Job a hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.*] After which glorious restitution of him and his family, his years were multiplied as well as his estate: for the Lord added almost an age and a half (no less than a hundred and forty years) to those he had lived before; so that he had the pleasure to see his children's children to the fourth generation.

Ver. 17. *So Job died, being old, and full of days.*] And departed not out of the world till he was so fully satisfied, that he desired not to live any longer.

APPENDIX.

HERE ends the book of Job; whose short sufferings (for the space of twelve months, as the Hebrews reckon in Seder Olam) were recompensed with a very long life in great prosperity. If we could rely upon all their traditions, this might have been added to the paraphrase upon the last words, That the whole time of his life was two hundred and ten years. For in the Jerusalem Targum upon Exod. xii. 40. and in Bereschith Rabba upon Gen. xlii. 2. they make account that the Israelites stayed just so long in Egypt: and in the Chronicle forenamed, and in Bava Bathra, and other books, they tell us, that Job was born that very year when Jacob went with his family down thither to sojourn; and died that same year when they were delivered from thence by the hand of Moses. But this agrees neither with what other of their authors say, whom I mentioned in my preface; nor with the LXX. who, in the last verse but one of this book, insert this clause, "All the days of his life were two hundred and forty years."

This, indeed, might be easily reconciled with the account beforementioned, if we did but rectify their numbers in the beginning of that verse by the Hebrew truth, and cut off the thirty years which they have added to the true time that he lived after his recovery from his sickness; for then this passage also must be corrected, and instead of two hundred and forty we must set down two hundred and ten. Which we might also prove in this manner (out of Seder Olam, cap. 3.) to be the right account of his age; because it is said (ver. 10. of the last chapter) that *the Lord added to Job the double of what he had before;* and therefore, if a hundred and forty years were added, he had seventy before, which in all make two hundred and ten. But it is not worth our while to trouble ourselves with such uncertainties; much less is it safe to rely upon any thing which is supported by no stronger authority than the Hebrew tradition: the vanity of which appears most notoriously in this, that Manasseh ben Israel saith, (lib. i. de Resurrect. cap. *ult.*) it is evidently certain, by tradition, that the Mahometans at this day pay a great reverence to this holy man's sepulchre, and honour it at Constantinople with much religion and devotion; when all men that have any considerable acquaintance with other authors, besides those of their own nation (upon which the Hebrews dote), may easily know, that the Job whom the Turks honour was a captain of the Saracens, who was slain when they besieged that city, in the year of Christ 675.

It will be to better purpose if I take notice of an observation of theirs, which hath more certainty in it, because clearly founded upon the Holy Scriptures; which is, that Job was a prophet among the gentiles, and a prophet of very eminent quality and degree: who deserved to have been at least mentioned by Josephus in his book of Antiquities, where he hath not vouchsafed to name him; nay, to have been praised by the son of Sirach, in his catalogue of famous men, (Ecclus. xliv. &c.) who were honoured in their generations, and were the glory of their times. But, according to the humour of the Jews, he magnifies only those of their own country, or such from whom they were directly descended: not considering, how much it was for their honour, that, by the care of their noble ancestors, the history of Job, and his excellent virtues, had been preserved: which he ought not therefore to have omitted, but to have celebrated him among the chief of those worthy persons, "by whom God wrought great glory; such as did bear rule in their kingdoms, men renowned for their power, giving counsel by their understanding, and declaring prophecies," &c. (Ecclus. xliv. 2, 3.)

Nay, his friends deserved a short remembrance, who seem nothing inferior to the wise men among the Jews, (though they mistook in the application of many excellent truths), but are acknowledged by themselves to have been prophets among the gentiles. And not without reason; for Eliphaz, we read, (iv. 13, &c.) had night-visions, an apparition of an angel, and secret whispers, like the still small voice which Elijah heard, (1 Kings xix. 12.) which made R. Sol. Jarchi not fear to say, that the Schechinah was upon him. And Elihu, it is easy to discern, felt a Divine power working in him mightily, (xxxii. 8. 18, 19.) which was not altogether a stranger, he shews, (xxxiii. 15, 16.) to other men; whom God in those days instructed by dreams, amongst other ways that he had of communicating his mind to them. But there was none equal to that wherein he made himself known to Job, who in three things seems to have had the pre-eminence among all the gentile prophets. First, in that God was pleased to speak to him aloud by a voice from heaven, xxxviii. 1. (which the Jews call the *Bath Col)* and not merely in such silent whispers as he did to Eliphaz. Secondly, that this voice was attended with a notable token of a Divine presence, from whence it came; *viz.* a *whirlwind,* which I take to have been something like that *sound as of a rushing mighty wind,*

wherein the Holy Ghost came upon the day of Pentecost. And, lastly, he saw likewise, in all probability, the appearance of some visible majesty, (xlii. 5.) suppose in a glorious cloud, (as the LXX. seem to understand it, xxxviii. 1.) or something like that which Moses beheld in the bush, when God first called unto him out of the midst of it, (Exod. iii. 4.)

Which need not at all puzzle our belief; when we consider that the church in those days was catholic, and not as yet confined to any one family or nation. God was pleased, indeed, to shew an extraordinary grace to Abraham, in calling him out of his own country and father's house, where idolatry had taken a deep root, or had been long growing without any hope of amendment. For if we may give any credit to Kessæus, a Mahometan writer, or to Elmacinus, a Christian, they were infected with it in the days of Heber, who stoutly opposed it, but with so little effect, that though God sent a whirlwind, which threw down all their idols, and broke them in pieces, that false worship still prevailed. But this doth not warrant us to imagine that God utterly rejected and neglected all other people; to whom he revealed himself in a very familiar manner, and gave many demonstrations of his Divine presence among them, till they corrupted themselves by such abominable idolatries, that they became altogether unprofitable, and unfit for the society of that Holy Spirit which ofttimes moved them. Even among the Canaanites, into whose country God led Abraham, we find Melchisedec was then a priest of the most high God; a greater person than that prophet, and the minister of that oracle (some fancy) which Rebekah went to consult when she felt the twins struggling in her womb, Gen. xxv. 22. To whom I might add several others, if I had a mind to prolong this discourse.

And though the book beforementioned (Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 21.) is pleased to say, that the Holy Ghost ceased to inspire men of any other nation, after the giving of the law; yet it is easy to shew, that therein it contradicts even its own affirmation elsewhere, which is grounded on good reason, that Balaam was a prophet divinely moved among the Syrians in Mesopotamia. He was a man, indeed, of naughty affections, and inclined to superstition, but still had many illuminations and motions from the Most High; as appears, not only by his predictions, but by the express words of Moses, who says, "the Spirit of God came upon him," Numb. xxiv. 2. To which, if I should add his own testimony concerning himself, that he *heard the words of God*, and *saw the vision of the Almighty*, and that in an extraordinary manner, *having his eyes open* in his ecstasy, I see no reason why it should be rejected; especially since he declared at the first, when the princes of Midian importuned him to go with them, that he would be wholly guided by the Lord in the business; and when he was come to Balak, constantly went to meet the Lord, to ask him what he should say, and professed his care to speak what the Lord had put in his mouth, (xxii. 8. xxiii. 3. 12. 15, &c.) These considerations, to which many more might be added, are sufficient to shew, that there is little, if any, ground for the opinion of Theodoret; who resolves, (Quæst. 39. in Num.) that Balaam did not inquire of the true God, though the answer was given by him of whom he was ignorant, not by him whom he invoked: and that the conclusion of St. Basil, (Epist. 80. ad Eustath.) or Greg. Nyssen (Lib. de Trinitate; it is uncertain whose work it is wherein we find it), is more remote from truth, who determines, that when the Scripture saith he went to consult with God, we are thereby to understand the devil. For should we allow the word *Elohim*, or God, to be so equivocal, that it may be applied not only to other excellent beings besides the Divinity, but to the devil himself (which is the foundation there laid for that conclusion), yet the word *Jehovah* or *Lord* is never so used; and Balaam always says that he would go and meet with him. And accordingly, the Lord is said to put a word in his mouth, even then when just before we read that *God met him*, xxiii. 4, 5. Where it is most reasonable by *God* to understand the angel mentioned xxii. 35. whom the Lord employed to deliver his mind unto him.

All which I have said to shew, that God did not quite desert the gentile world, as long as there were any considerable relics of the ancient religion remaining among them; and they did not wholly divert to fables, and deliver up themselves to the guidance of evil spirits, against the apparent testimony of the Holy Spirit of God; who spake to them by such good men as Job, in whose days those sinners were not only reproved, but punished also by the judges, who worshipped the sun, moon, and stars; which seems to have been the oldest idolatry of all other, as not only Maimonides, but Diodorus Siculus observes. And if they had listened to such instructions, and not suffered themselves to be led merely by sense, to which those heavenly bodies appeared in such an amazing brightness that struck with admiration (as the last named author speaks, they fancied them to be Θεοὺς ἀϊδίους τε καὶ πρώτους, *both eternal and the first Gods)*; we cannot conceive that they would have sunk so low, as to fall into image-worship: which in Job's country doth not seem to have obtained in his days.

But the chiefest part of the wisdom of this prophet consisted in his piety; of which he proved a rare example, as I have said already; especially in adversity: wherein he behaved himself with such admirable virtue, that though the apostle to the Hebrews does not mention him among those who were famous for their *faith* (he not being of their race to whom the promises were made), yet St. James in the next epistle highly magnifies and applauds his *patience*. And not only propounds him, together with the prophets and holy men, "who had spoken to them in the name of the Lord," (ver. 10.) as a pattern of well-doing, and contented suffering, to the Christian Hebrews; but numbers him among those blessed souls, whose worthy deeds we praise, and whose happiness we admire: (ver. 11.) or rather he names him alone, as an example of a happy man; who endured more than we read of in ancient times, and in the end found the Lord so mercifully gracious and bountiful to him, that it may encourage all pious men to endure with such a wonderful submission as he did.

Who, when he lost his goods, his house, his children, his health, nay, was all over ulcerous, and in great pain; and, moreover, was solicited by his wife to speak irreverently, if not irreligiously, of God, and to deny his providence; and by his friends was upbraided as a hypocrite, nay, accused in their passion as a tyrannical oppressor; whereby they endeavoured to bereave him, as St. Ambrose observes, (lib. i. de Interpel. cap. 4.) of that great comfort

in afflictions, *culpa vacare, to be conscious of no enormous crime,* and to make him appear to himself as the author of his calamity; at which his inferiors mocked and scoffed, who had formerly had him in great veneration: nay, it exposed him to the scorn of those who were not worthy to be set with the dogs of his flock; so that he looked as if he had been deserted by God, and made an example of his heaviest displeasure: yet he bare all at the very first (when men are wont to be shaken, nay overthrown, by the sudden news of such dreadful disasters), not only with much resolution and resignation, but with hearty thanksgiving; and, through the whole course of his calamity, committed no error that I can discern, but what the indiscreet and uncharitable censures of his friends provoked him unto: which put him upon too frequent and long justifications of himself, and perplexed him extremely (which seems his greatest trouble), that he could not find out the reason why God afflicted him so severely.

But in the issue God revealed to him what it was fit for him to think in this matter also: and thereby hath given us such satisfaction in that great controversy, and difficult question about God's providence, as is no where to be met withal but in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Even prudent men, as St. Ambrose observes, (lib. ii. de Interpellatione, cap. 1.) in a book he hath written about Job, are apt to be extremely moved when they see the wicked abound with good things, and the just very much afflicted: and truly, says he, it is *lubricus locus, a slippery place,* in which the saints have scarce been able to tread in the path of a true opinion, as we see in David, and Job, who maintained a long conflict with his three ancient friends that came to comfort him upon this subject. And God himself brought the dispute at last to such a conclusion, as may fully settle the minds of all those who meet with this book, and preserve them from being scandalized, or in the least offended, on such occasions. The Mahometans themselves seem to be fully satisfied, as we read in the Lives of the Fathers, written in the Arabian language by Kessæus; who brings in the Most High, speaking to Job's friends after this manner, (Hotting. Hist. Orientalis, lib. i. cap. 3.) "'Do you not know that Job is a prophet of God, whom he hath chosen to his apostleship, and to whom he hath committed his inspiration? God would not have you think that he is angry with him; as you seem to gather from this afflicted state wherein he lies. For you know that God is wont to prove the prophets, the just, the martyrs, and other good men; wherein notwithstanding there is no indignation, or contempt of them, but honour rather with God most high."

Thus St. Chrysostom I find most elegantly represents him as a far more glorious spectacle when he sat on the dunghill, than the greatest prince, without his virtue, is when he sits upon a throne. "His ulcers (says he, Hom. v. ad Populum Antiochenum) were far more valuable in my account than all their precious stones. For what profit do we receive by them? What necessity, what want do they supply? But these ulcers of his are the comfort of all manner of heaviness that can seize upon us. You may know this to be true, if, when a man hath lost his genuine and only son, you shew him a thousand jewels and precious stones, which give no comfort at all to his grief, nor in the least assuage his trouble and pain. But in this case, if you remember him of the wounds of Job, he presently finds some ease; when you ask him, saying, Why dost thou weep and lament, O man, on this fashion? Thou hast lost one son, but that blessed man lost all the children he had: and, together with that blow, received a stroke in his flesh, and sat naked in the dung, besmeared all over with the filth that ran out of his wounds; in a deep consumption, which by little and little wasted that just, that true, that devout man, who abstained from all manner of evil, and had God himself for the witness of his virtue. If thou dost but speak these words, instantly thou extinguishest the heaviness of the mourner, and riddest him out of all his grief; and so the ulcers of that righteous man become more profitable to him than jewels.

"Do you therefore conceive now that you have that champion before your eyes; and that you see the dung and him sitting in it; a statue of gold, of diamonds, I am not able to say of what: for there is nothing so precious as to be worthy to be compared with that ulcerated body, whose sores shine more brightly than the beams of the sun; which enlighten only the eyes of the body, but these illuminate the eyes of the mind. They make us see, and they made the devil quite blind: for after he had given those wounds in his body, he fled and appeared no more. See here, beloved, how great the gain of affliction is! For when that righteous man was rich, and enjoyed his ease, the devil had something to say against him: though falsely indeed, yet this he had to say; 'Doth Job serve God for nought?' But after he had stripped him naked, and made him a beggar, he had not a word to say; he durst not so much as open his mouth against him. When he was rich, then he adventured to wrestle with him, and threatened to supplant him; but after he had made him poor, deprived him of all he had, and reduced him to the extremest grief and sorrow, he ran away, and durst not renew the assault. When his body was sound then he laid violent hands on him; but when he had filled it with wounds, he was routed and fled away vanquished. By this thou seest how much poverty may prove better than riches, weakness than health, temptation than ease and quiet, to those that are vigilant and watchful: who make a profit of all these; and by fighting grow more illustrious and courageous. Who ever saw, who ever heard, such noble combats?"

But there is none, that I have met withal, who represents him in such lively colours, as the great St. Basil; who, in a sermon of his (tom. i. Homil. xxiii. p. 565, &c. the latter part of which was occasioned by a lamentable fire, that happened near their church, and put it in danger), exhorts all the rich, who were untouched by the flames, to relieve their poor neighbours, whose goods were consumed in them; and then addressing himself to those, who had saved themselves, but nothing else, beseeches them, "Not to take their loss too heavily, nor to let their minds be disturbed; but to shake off the misty cloud of sorrow, and to strengthen their souls with such generous and manly thoughts, as might turn this accident into an occasion of crowns. For which end, he advises them to put themselves in mind of the constancy of Job; and to say to themselves, as he did, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it seemed good to the Lord, so it is come to pass.' And by no means (says he) let any of you be moved with what hath happened, either to say, or think, there is no Providence which rules our affairs; or presume

to accuse the dispensation and judgment of the Lord; but let him fix his eyes on that champion, and make him his counsellor, who will advise him to better thoughts.

"Let him recount in order all the agonies he endured, and then observe how bravely he came off; and how the devil threw all his darts at him in vain; not one of them giving him a deadly wound. First he set upon his goods, and endeavoured to overwhelm him with the doleful news of various calamities, which came tumbling, like the waves of the sea, one upon the neck of another; but all to no purpose, for the just man received them as a rock doth the fury of a tempest; turning the rage of the waves into froth, and standing itself immoveable. He said not a word, that we read of; he made no complaints of these disasters; or if he said any thing, we may well presume, it was those decent and becoming words which we read in the conclusion, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord, so is it come to pass.' But he did not think any of those calamities that befel him to be worth his lamenting with his tears.

"Well, but there comes one afterward that tells him a most dismal story, of the death of all his children by the fall of the house wherein they were making merry. At this, it is true, he rent his garments; and it is the first expression of his grief that we meet withal, in compliance with the passions of nature, and to declare himself a most tender father. But he set some bounds to his grief, and adorned what had happened with those pious words, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away,' &c. As if he should have said, I was called their father, as long as he that made me so pleased. But now he hath taken off this crown of children from my head, and it is not fit for me to contend and dispute with him about his own. Let that be which seemeth best to the Lord. He it was that formed them, I was but the instrument. Why should I, who am but a servant, foolishly complain of my master; and repine at that decree, which I cannot alter?

"With such words as these that righteous man wounded the devil; and, as one would say, shot a dart quite through his heart, which so enraged him, that, seeing him still a conqueror, he made an assault upon his body; which he turned into corruption, and made it become such a bag of worms, that from a throne it was cast upon a dunghill. And yet the good man remained immoveable: and when his body was torn, preserved still the hidden treasure of piety in his soul, of which the devil could not rob him. And therefore, not knowing what to do more, he betook himself to his old stratagem; and instigating his wife to entertain irreligious and blasphemous thoughts, attempted that way to overthrow this champion. For she, tired with the long continuance of his calamities, came to him, and clapping her hands at what she beheld, upbraided him with these lamentable fruits of his piety, and rehearsing his former prosperity, and then pointing at this present misery, asked him, if this was the reward which he received from the Lord for all his sacrifices? With abundance of such-like words, which were enough to disturb the most composed, and subvert the most steady and resolved mind. I am a vagabond, said she, and am forced to crouch to others like a slave; I, who was a queen, am constrained to depend upon my servants for relief; I, who maintained many liberally, am now nourished myself out of other folks' charity. Adding, that it would be far better for him, to provoke his angry Creator, by impious words, to cut him off, than by an unprofitable patience thus to prolong both his and her misery.

"But he, more offended with these words than any of his former sufferings, with eyes full of indignation, looked upon her as an enemy, and asked what ailed her to talk thus like one of the foolish women? Lay aside, said he, these thoughts, and let me hear no more of this advice, which makes me appear to myself as if one half of me were wicked and irreligious. 'What, shall we receive good at the hands of the Lord, and shall we not suffer evil?' Remember all the past happiness thou hast enjoyed, and oppose better unto worse. No man's life is entirely and thoroughly happy. Τὸ διὰ παντὸς εὖ πράττειν, μόνου Θεοῦ. *To be always as well as we can wish, belongs to God alone.* If thou art grieved at what is present, fetch thy comfort from what thou hast received before. Now thou weepest, but formerly thou didst laugh; now thou art poor, but there was a time when thou wantedst nothing. Then thou drankest of the pure fountain of life; be content, and drink now the more patiently of the troubled waters. Behold the rivers, their streams are not clear in all places; and our life thou knowest is like to one of them, which slides away continually, and is ofttimes full of waves, which come rolling one upon another: one part of this river is passed by, and another is running on its course. This part of it is gushing out from the fountain, and the next is ready to follow it as soon as it is gone. And thus we are all making great haste to the common sea; death, I mean, which swallows up all at last.

"If we receive good from the hands of the Lord, shall we not bear evil? Think of that again. Shall we go about to compel the Judge to afford us just the very same things for ever? Shall we presume to instruct our Lord and Master how he ought to conduct our life? He hath the power of his own decrees and orders as he pleases, so he appoints our portion for us. And we know that he is wise, and that he dispenses to his servants what is most profitable for them. Do not then curiously pry into the counsels and resolutions of thy Lord and Governor; only take in good part, and affectionately embrace, whatsoever is ordered by his wisdom. Love his administration; and whatsoever he is pleased to give, receive it with pleasure. Demonstrate now in a sorrowful condition, that thou wast worthy of all the joy which thou hadst formerly in a better.

"Thus Job discoursing, he baffled the devil once more; and gave him such a repulse, that he made him perfectly ashamed to see himself thus vanquished. And what ensued after this? why, when the devil was beaten, his disease fled away too, having assaulted him in vain, and got no ground of him. His flesh began to recover into a second youth; he flourished also in his estate, which was restored to him with increase. For riches flowed so plentifully into his house, that they were double to what he had before: first, that he might be no loser by his affliction; and, secondly, that he might have a merciful reward of his patience under it. Therefore it was that his horses, mules, and camels, and sheep, and all the rest of his revenue, were doubled, only his children were no more than equal to the number he had before, seven sons and three daughters. The reason was because his beasts, indeed, perished entirely; but

the better part of his children still survived, when they were taken from him. And therefore being again adorned with as many sons and daughters as formerly he enjoyed, he had a double portion of them also; those who are present with him here, and those who expected him in the other world. Behold then what good things this just man, Job, heaped up to himself, by his patient submission to God. And do thou, therefore, if thou hast suffered grievously in this fire, which the malice of the devil kindled, bear it constantly, and lenify the affliction with these better thoughts; according to that which is written, 'Cast all thy care upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee.'"

To this purpose that great person, St. Basil, discourses, when he represents how Job received the first assaults of his affliction, and how happily it ended. And there is great reason to think that he did not, in the progress of it, swerve from those good beginnings, which had so blessed a conclusion; but whatsoever expressions fell from him, when he was engaged in the heat of disputation, he still preserved such a religious temper of mind, as made him not cease to submit himself reverently to God's will, and to thank him for all the benefits he had formerly received from his bounty. Nor do I find any cause for the censures which Maimonides (More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 23. and out of him Manasseh ben Israel, lib. i. de Resurrectione, cap. 16.) hath passed upon the disputation between him and his four friends, about Divine Providence, which he hath thus stated:

"Job (saith he) maintains that mankind is so vile a sort of being, that God doth not regard the best of them any more than he doth the worst; but it is all one to him, when a calamity comes, whether it light upon the offenders, or upon the innocent. Nay, more than this, he affirms that there is no expectation after death, and consequently no hope remaining for him." Which are such blasphemies, that Maimonides is fain to seek excuses for him; and for that end, alleges a common saying among their wise men, that "A man is not apprehended, or seized on, because of his grief;" that is, what he says in extremity of pain is not imputed to him for sin. But there is no need of this apology; for the places he alleges do not prove him guilty of uttering such things, as (to speak in his words) are evil in the highest degree. Though Manasseh ben Israel is so presumptuous, as to charge him with such a profane denial of Divine Providence, at least here below the moon, that he makes him impute all his misery to the malignant aspect of the planets, under which he was conceived and born.

To which opinion of Job, say they, every one of his friends opposed a particular opinion of his own, differing each of them from the other. And, first, Eliphaz endeavours to establish this for a certain truth, "That as afflictions do not come by chance, but by the providence of God, so they are sent for the sins of men;" and therefore, without all doubt, Job was a great offender, which was the cause he was handled in this manner. "This opinion (says Maimonides) he held to the last; only was fain to add, in conclusion, that all the ways whereby we deserve punishment do not appear."

Then after him (when Job had argued against this) comes Bildad, who produces a new opinion, grounded upon the doctrine of permutation, or recompence, as they speak; that is, "He believed the evils which Job endured here, should, if he proved innocent, be changed into good things; and, in the issue, be highly serviceable to him in another world."

After whom succeeds Zophar, with a different resolution from all these; which was, "That God acts according to his own pleasure, and that we are not to search for any cause of his actions out of his own will; nor to say, why doth he this, and not that? In short, we are not to seek the way of equity, and the decree of wisdom in his doings; for it necessarily belongs to his essence that he do what he will; and our understanding is too shallow to comprehend the secrets of his wisdom, whose right and property it is that he may do according to his pleasure, and for no other cause."

And these four opinions about Providence, Maimonides undertakes to shew have had their several assertors since, who have propagated them among their scholars. Job's opinion, he saith, is the same with Aristotle's, who attributed all to accident. Bildad was followed by the sect of Mutazali (a kind of pharisees among the Ishmaelites), who ascribed all to wisdom. Zophar, by the sect of Assaria, who attributed all to will and pleasure. And Eliphaz, he fancies, held the opinion of the law; which is, that God deals with men according to their works.

But when that all these men had disputed, nothing moved Job, there stands up another, whose name was Elihu, "who first proves the providence of God from prophetical dreams, (xxxiii. 15.) and to those things which Eliphaz had said, adds, according to the imagination of Manasseh ben Israel, the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, (which he labours to find in ver. 14.) and thereby, in a wonderful way, says he, resolves all the doubt, by determining that Job, and other just men, may be punished for sins which they committed in a former body."

But as there is no footstep, that I can see, for this fond conceit, which he honours with the name of a mystery; so it is evident these men follow their own vain inventions in all this discourse, directly contrary to the book itself. For they make Job's opinion the very worst of all the rest; when the Lord himself tells Eliphaz, in the conclusion of the book, (xlii. 7.) that he was angry with him and his two other friends, because they had not spoken of him so rightly as Job had. And it doth not appear by their speeches, that they held several opinions about Providence, and took every one of them a different way (that is a mere rabbinical subtlety) to solve the doubt, wherein Job's unusual sufferings had perplexed them. But they seem to have harped all of them upon one and the same string, as I have represented in the arguments before each chapter.

From whence the conclusion of Maimonides will be very evident (which is the best thing he says), that "The scope of the book is, to establish the great article of providence; and thereby to preserve us from error, in thinking that God's knowledge is like our knowledge, or his intention, providence, and government, like our intention, providence, and government. Which foundation being laid, nothing will seem hard to a man whatsoever happens: nor will he fall into dubious thoughts concerning God, whether he knows what is befallen us or not, and whether he takes any care of us. But rather he will be inflamed the more vehemently in the love of God; as it is said in the end of this prophecy, 'Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.' So say our wise men, 'They that act out of love, will rejoice in chastisements.'"

THE

BOOK OF PSALMS.

TO ALL DEVOUT CHRISTIANS,

ESPECIALLY THOSE THAT FREQUENT THE

DAILY PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH,

THE AUTHOR DEDICATETH THIS

PARAPHRASE UPON THE BOOK OF PSALMS;

Wishing them increase of grace and comfort, by "singing praises unto God with understanding," (Ps. xlvii. 7.)

PREFACE.

THE work itself proves so long, that I must make the preface the shorter; which shall be confined to these two heads: First, A brief account of the Book of Psalms; Secondly, Of my paraphrase upon it.

I. For the first, The book is a most admirable piece of poetry, which moves more powerfully, and touches the mind more sensibly, than sentences in prose; especially when it is in such perfection, as we find it in these Divine inspirations. For, as Melancthon truly speaks, this is the most elegant work extant in the world; and hath performed that, I may add, which Plato himself wished for, but confessed was above the reach of mere men. There was no more efficacious way, that philosopher clearly saw, of instructing youth, than by odes and songs; about which he discourses at large, and gives a great many cautions in his second book of Laws; but, after all, concludes at last, (p. 657. edit. Serran.) τοῦτο δὲ Θεοῦ, ἢ θείου τινὸς, ἂν εἴη. *This must be the work of God, or of some Divine man:* wherein he plainly acknowledges the defect of their institution (though certain poems were pretended then to have been anciently made by their goddess Isis), and marvellously justifies the Hebrew discipline, who taught their children or scholars by hymns.

Which Moses, the man of God, began to compose, (Exod. xv. Deut. xxxii.) and other inspired persons afterward imitated, (Judg. v. 1 Sam. ii.) but was brought to perfection by David. Who, as he was an admirable artist in music, (1 Sam. xvi. 18.) and himself invented some musical instruments, as we learn from the prophet Amos, vi. 5. so was an incomparable poet, (2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2.) and took all occasions to exercise this faculty, not on such low subjects as those to which it is commonly debased, but in abundance of Divine meditations, which are gathered together in this book; wherein he calls upon them to listen unto him, saying, "Come, ye children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord," (Psal. xxxiv. 11.)

It is called, in their language, *Sepher Tehillem, the Book of Psalms, or Hymns; i. e.* Praises of the Lord: because, though there are many complaints, and imprecations, and prayers, in it, yet the greatest part are praises or thanksgivings unto God: and in those other, there are many mixtures of acknowledgments what God had formerly done for him, or of confidence what he would still do, or of resolutions how thankful he would be, when God granted him deliverance. Which gave them such a strange power "to cure heaviness, to extirpate grief, to wipe away sorrow, to lay asleep troublesome thoughts and passions, to ease us of our cares, to recreate those who are oppressed with any sort of pains, (they are the words of Proclus, archbishop of Constantinople, Serm. de Incarn. Dom.) as well as to move compunction for sin, and to stimulate unto piety;" that no book in the world is to be compared with it for these purposes.

And as it is called the Book of Psalms, or Praises, from the major part, so they are called David's Psalms, because he made the most of them; though it must be confessed, there were several other authors, by whom some of them were composed.

In the Hebrew they are divided, like Moses's law, into five books, as I shall shew in due place, and so may be called a second Pentateuch: which seem to have been collected by several persons (as will appear in the preface to each of them); for no other reason but that can be given, why all that belong to one subject were not put together; or, at least, all those composed by David placed by themselves, and not so mixed, as they are, with those made by other authors.

Some think they were gathered together by the friends of Hezekiah, before the captivity. But if they had been so, they would, in all probability, have been disposed in such order as they were penned; all the sacred books being preserved in the temple, as Josephus witnesses, (Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 1.) with great care; from whence they might have taken the copies of them, with the names of all their authors, which now, in many of them, are wanting. Which makes it more likely, that, after the temple and the sacred records were burnt by the king of Babylon's army, some pious persons collected as many as they could find, by inquiring among their friends, in those good men's hands who had transcribed them heretofore for their own private use, every one as he had most need. For the Songs of Zion the people were very well acquainted withal, though it lay desolate, as it appears by the hundred and thirty-seventh Psalm, where the Babylonians desire to hear one of them sung by the mournful captives. Who preserved them, no doubt, to their comfort in that sad condition, and added to

them such as were made by Divine men, during its continuance, and after their return from captivity.

When, as St. Athanasius (tom. ii. p. 86.) resolves in his Synopsis (following the Hebrew tradition), Ezra put them together in one volume, as we now have them, which is not affirmed without reason: for we find that the foundation of the second temple was no sooner laid, but Ezra (as the Hebrews call him) restored the ancient custom of psalmody, or singing psalms of praise, (Ezra iii. 10, 11.) which David had appointed to accompany the sacrifices as soon as the ark was settled, (1 Chron. vi. 31. xvi. 17. Ecclus. l. 15, 16, &c.) and which Solomon continued after he had built the temple, and brought the ark into it, (2 Chron. v. 12, 13.)

Now, when all those bloody sacrifices were abolished, by the offering which Christ made of himself, the sacrifice of praise alone remained, as the principal service of the Christian church: several persons being inspired, not only to pray divinely, but to prophesy also, or to sing psalms and hymns of praise; as we read in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, xi. 5. xiv. 15. 26. And in the book of the Revelations, we find the apostles and elders thus employed, Rev. iv. 9—11. in which the people bare a part; as we learn from the next chapter, v. 9. 13. xiv. 1—3. So that St. Austin might tell Januarius, (Epist. cxix. cap. 18.) that "concerning singing hymns and psalms, we have instructions, and examples, and precepts, both of our Lord himself, and of his apostles." According to which, the churches of Africa sang *Divina cantica prophetarum, the Divine songs of the prophets,* while the drunken Donatists sang the composures of human wit. Nor can I see, saith he, what Christians can do more profitably, and more holily than this, when they meet together, and are not reading, preaching, or praying.

Those *Divina cantica,* no doubt, were principally the Psalms of David, in singing of which Christian people delighted above all other exercises of devotion.

The manner of their singing, also, was like that in Ezra's time: (Ezra iii. 11.) one beginning the hymn, and the rest answering the τὰ ἀκροστίχια, *extremes, or last words of it,* as the author of the Apostolical Constitutions tells us, (lib. ii. cap. 57.) which Eusebius calls the Ἀκροτελευτία τῶν ὕμνων, *the last part of the hymns,* which he expressly says were sung by the whole company, who hearkened in silence to him that sang the rest, till he came to the close, which they all repeated together, (lib. ii. Eccles. Hist. cap. 17.) And when that manner of singing the Psalms, which we now use in our choirs, was brought in by Flavianus and Diodorus, who, at Antioch, divided the choir into two parts (singing the Psalms of David, ἐκ διαδοχῆς, *alternately,* one verse by this half of the choir, and the next by the other); it thence spread itself, as it were by a joint consent, all the world over. Thus Theodoret informs us in his Eccles. Hist. book ii. chap. 19.

By which means the people came to be so well acquainted with them, that (as the same Theodoret tells us in his preface to this Book of Psalms) both in city and country this was the employment of Christian people. They that minded no other book of the Scriptures, yet had this so by heart, that both in their houses, and in the streets, and in the highways, they were wont to recreate themselves with the singing of these holy songs.

But I must not enlarge any further on this subject, nor fill this preface with the high commendations which the ancients give both of psalmody and of this Book of Psalms; which St. Basil (who alone would furnish me with the sense of all the rest, if it were fit to transcribe his preface to it) calls the *common treasure of all good precepts* (containing the perfections of all the rest of the Scriptures), ἐκκλησίας φωνὴ, *the voice of the church,* in which may be found, θεολογία τέλεια, *a complete body of theology.*

Which will make this Paraphrase, I hope, the more acceptable; of which it is time now that I give an account.

II. There being two ways of paraphrasing, one which keeps to the metaphors, and pursues them in more words of the like kind; another which puts those borrowed forms of speech into proper and common expressions; I have chosen the latter, and endeavoured, by giving a clear interpretation, and expressing, as well as I could, the true force and just value of every phrase, to make the original words plain and easy in our language: as may be seen particularly, xviii. 2. xix. 8, 9. In which endeavour, it is likely, I may sometimes meet with the censures of those who do not consider the import of the Hebrew words; but not be thought much faulty, I hope, by such as can and will consult them; for they will find I have carefully weighed them, and taken some pains rightly to expound them; not largely, nor making discourses upon them, but in a few words representing the mind and spirit of the Psalmist in his own way, which is devotion. And where there are two senses of which a word is capable, they will find likewise that I have endeavoured to express them both, if the matter would bear it. As, for example (to name one place for all), in Psal. cxix. 126. where we read, "It is time for thee, O Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law:" I have expounded it thus; *It is time to work to the Lord,* or *for the Lord,* &c. because all the ancient interpreters, except one, have so understood it; yet I have not neglected the other sense, which we follow, but made them agree well together. I have preferred, indeed, the first interpretation, not only for the reason now named, but because the words run most currently so in the Hebrew: and the best of the Jews have expounded them in that manner. Maimonides, for instance, who says this was one argument that moved him to write his famous book, called More Nevochim: which some might account an audacious attempt, because never undertaken, he saith, (Præfat. pag. penult.) by any of their nation since this long captivity (as he calls it); but he supported himself with this principle—that it is said concerning such sort of matters, *It is time to do something for the Lord: they having made void thy law.* And, in like manner, David Ganz, in his Chronology, says, (ad Ann. 3978.) that R. Judah Hakodesh, observing their oral law, or traditional religion, in danger to be lost, set it down in writing, though there was a prohibition against it: for סמך על הבתוב the rabbi relied upon this Scripture (thinking it would bear him out), *It is time to work to the Lord,* &c. which he expounded to this sense; Now that the law by word of mouth is like to be forgotten, and utterly lost, there must be something extraordinary done to uphold it; and so he wrote the Mischna.

I have sometimes also followed Theodoret, in the explication of some phrases; which I think good to signify, that none may be too forward to censure that for which I have

a good authority, at least, if not a weighty reason. As, for example, Psal. lxxxix. ver. 13. I have grounded my paraphrase upon his notion, That as the *hand of God* denotes the Divine energy, so *his right hand* signifies his energy for good. And therefore, they then needing a double energy, the Psalmist remembers both his *hand* and his *right hand;* desiring to see their enemies destroyed and themselves delivered.

And if the readers will please to take the pains to compare the text with the references I have made (and enclosed) in the Paraphrase to other Scriptures, they will easily see (especially if they have any understanding in the original language) that I have not followed my own fancy in my interpretation, but had good reason for expounding the text as I have done in such places: and that this Paraphrase may serve, in many places, instead of a larger commentary upon the words. As, for example, Psal. cxlvii. 19. *his words,* I think, plainly relate to the *ten words* spoken on Mount Sinai; as I might have shewn, if I intended to write annotations.

Which if I had undertaken, it would not, perhaps, have been wholly a superfluous labour; but I might have produced something new, as I think I have done in this Paraphrase; else I should not have attempted it, especially after such an excellent person as Dr. Hammond. For therein I have interpreted some phrases otherwise than they have been understood: of which I think good here to give one example. The *son of man* and the *sons of men (ben Adam* and *bene isch)* are phrases which often occur; which I have good ground to think belong in the Scripture language to *princes;* and sometimes the *greatest of princes.* So I have expounded that known place, Psal. lxxx. 17. *The man of thy right hand, the son of man, whom thou madest strong for thyself;* and Psal. iv. 2. *O ye sons of men,* i. e. rulers of people; and viii. 3. *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man (i. e.* the greatest of men), *that thou visitest him?* cxlvi. 3. *Put not your confidence in princes, nor in the son of man* (how great a prince, that is, soever he may be, though of never such dignity and power), *in whom there is no help.*

And thus the counsellors of Saul are called *the sons of men,* lviii. 1. and so I understand those words in Isa. li. 12. "Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man (that is, a prince), who shall be as grass?" where, upon the words that go before, "I am he that comforteth you," Theodoret hath this note: "I am he that cast Pharaoh and his army into the sea; he who killed many thousands of the Assyrians by one angel." From which I conclude, that he understood the following words thus: Why dost thou then fear any man, though he be never so great a tyrant, and armed with never so much power? as the king of Babylon then was, whom he calls an *oppressor* presently after, who carried them captive from their own land.

Thus, in the title of the ninth Psalm, the Septuagint, for *labben* read τοῦ υἱοῦ; and so do Symmachus Aquila, and Theodotion, as Theodoret there observes: the former of which makes it a triumphal song for the death of *that son;* which most interpreters, as I have there observed, conclude to have been that great man Goliath. The original of which language, I conceive, is to be fetched from the common manner of speech among the Hebrews, who call the chief of any kind by the name of the whole kind. As they call man *creature,* Mark xvi. 15. because the prime creature here below: so a king, or eminent person, they call the *son of man,* because the prime among the sons of men. Thus St. Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 13. calls magistrates *human creatures;* where the Syriac translates *sons of men,* i. e. *great men,* or *governors.* And so *man* is used, Gen. ix. 6. for a man in authority. But all this is to be understood of that expression, *ben Adam:* as for *ben Enosh,* which we also render *son of man,* (Psal. cxliv. 3.) it hath another signification; importing the wretchedness of any man's condition. And if that had been the name whereby the angel salutes Ezekiel, it might have been to put him in mind of his mean condition, though conversing with heavenly ministers; but he constantly calling him *ben Adam,* I see no reason why we should not think it denotes him to be a *great man,* highly esteemed by God; and appointed by him to judge and pass sentence upon his people, (Ezek. xx. 4.) And, in like manner, Daniel is called *son of son,* Dan. viii. 17. who in the next chapters hath the title of a *man greatly beloved,* (ix. 23. x. 11.)

And, by the way, I may observe, that from hence we may learn what to understand by that title, which our blessed Saviour so often gives himself; of ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, *the Son of man,* or rather *that Son of man;* that is, the Messiah, the Lord's anointed, that great Prince God promised to bless them withal. It can have no other meaning in John v. 22. 27. (where he saith, God hath committed all judgment unto him, and given him authority to execute it, because he is the Son, or that Son, of man) than this; that he is that great person, whom God designed to be the Lord and Governor of all things. So he appeared to be, when he sent the Holy Ghost; which seems to be called *the coming of the Son of man,* Matt. x. 23. where he says, they "shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man come:" by the power, that is, of the Holy Ghost, to enable them, and give them authority, to go and preach him in all other countries, as well as there, to be the great Lord of all.

But instead of such annotations as these, which the world is already well furnished withal (particularly by the learned Dr. Hammond upon this book), I have only, in the argument to each Psalm, given a brief account, now and then, of some difficulties; and both there, and in the Paraphrase itself, pointed to such parts of the history of David, or others, as I thought the Psalms have a respect unto. Which I have followed so closely as to wave other expositions, when I thought I saw clear warrant to accommodate them to that. For, in my judgment, (to use the words of that good man Musculus, upon the hundred and thirty-second Psalm, ver. 9.) "It is the duty of every pious person, as much as he is able, to prefer that exposition, which is approved by most testimonies of the Holy Scriptures, before all others whatsoever, though in show and appearance never so plausible."

For this reason I have forborne a great many mystical and allegorical senses of the words, and rather adhered to the literal meaning, though accounted trivial and vulgar by many men; who had rather indulge to their own fancies, than be at the pains of making a diligent inquiry after the truth. For, whatsoever is pretended, it is not the easiness and meanness of the literal sense, which have made it be

despised, and been the cause of allegorizing the Scriptures; but the great difficulty and labour that are required to the finding of it out, in many places. St. Jerome and St. Austin confess as much; who spent their younger years in mystical interpretations, as more easy studies: but when they grew old, applied themselves to historical explanations. Which St. Jerome, in his preface to the prophet Obadiah, confesses he did not understand, when he wrote upon that book in his youth; and, in plain terms, ingenuously acknowledges those mystical expositions were the work, *puerilis ingenii, of his childish wit,* at which he blushed and hanged down his head, even when others cried them up to the skies; but the historical explications (which then he set out) the work, *maturæ senectutis, of his mature age;* when he had, at least, profited thus far, as to know, with Socrates, that he was ignorant. In short, he begins that preface with the words of the apostle, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things:" and hopes this would excuse him, for interpreting that prophet allegorically in the heat of his youth; whose history he did not know. St. Austin acknowledges as much, in his first volume of Retractations, chap. 18. which I will not transcribe, but only set down the words of Martin Bucer, one of the first reformers, upon the sixth of St. Matthew; where he says, that "it would be worth a great deal to the church, if, forsaking allegories and other frivolous devices, which are not only empty, but derogate very much from the majesty of the doctrine of Christ, we would all simply, and soberly, prosecute that which our Lord intends to say to us."

This hath been my rule, though I have not so followed (I must add) the strict literal sense, as to make a mere Judaical paraphrase (which Theodoret complains, in his preface to this book, was the fault of some that went before him), but have improved the words, in all places, to a sublimer sense, where I had any direction from our Saviour or his apostles, to apply them to the things belonging to Christ's kingdom. But where I wanted their guidance, I have not taken upon me to do it (unless it be very sparingly, where the church hath thought it probable there was something intended beyond the letter), because I did not know whether the Holy Ghost, which indited the words, had respect to these times; as well as to those histories, to which I thought I saw a clear warrant to apply them.

And where there is no title to the Psalm (which St. Jerome, or one under his name, calls the *key,* to let us into the sense of it), it is not easy to tell to what history it relates: but must be acknowledged to be ἔργον μέγιστον &c. (as Origen upon the first Psalm speaks, Philocalia, cap. 2. from some learned Hebrew), a work of very great labour, to find the keys which lie scattered up and down in several parts of the Scripture: and then to fit them to the places which they are to open. In this I have taken some pains, as may be seen in the arguments to the several Psalms; in some of which, if I differ from those that have gone before me, I hope none will be so perverse as to make it a fault: for (as the true St. Jerome speaks in his preface to the Psalms, according to the Hebrew verity), since they are still desiring new pleasures, and the neighbouring seas cannot satisfy men's gluttony, "cur in solo studio Scripturarum, veteri sapore contenti sunt?" *why in the study of the Scriptures alone can they relish nothing that is new, but content themselves merely with that which tastes of antiquity?* Which I do not speak, as he proceeds, to reflect upon my predecessors, or detract from their excellent labours (to which I thankfully acknowledge, I am exceedingly beholden), but only to give an account to the readers of what I have done; that they may not think I have only transcribed what I found before said in this argument, and brought no further light to it.

Why, may some be forward to say, do you pretend, after so many monuments of learning, both ancient and modern, to bring forth any thing which hath not been said before, and said better? I answer, as Musculus doth in the like case, (Præfat. ad Lectorem.) If the treasure of the Holy Scriptures be such, that it can be drawn so dry by the diligent searches of pious and learned men, as nothing shall remain to exercise the studies of those that succeed them; if there be at any time such an effusion of God's Holy Spirit, that after that time it is in vain to labour in finding out its mind in the Holy Scriptures; if there have been in the church, after the prophets, Christ, and his apostles, men of such perfect accomplishments, that to them was imparted such an universal fulness of Divine knowledge, as to make their writings absolutely complete, so that we need do nothing but night and day study them alone; then truly I refuse not the censure of folly, nay of madness, for attempting any thing new in the Holy Scriptures, after such absolute writers. But if that most rich fountain of the Divine oracles be altogether inexhaustible, and no age can be assigned, to which alone the grace of the Holy Spirit was confined; and there were never any doctors at any time in the church, after Christ, the apostles, and prophets, of such esteem, that nothing is wanting in their writings, nothing can be rightly added to them, nothing is in them, which may be justly taken away, or changed for the better; then I do not see why we may not profitably travel in the same way that others have done, with hopes of adding more light to that which they have left us.

It is better, indeed, if a man only consults his own worldly ease and tranquillity, not to trouble himself at all about such studies; but to get a reputation merely by censuring those that are thus employed. But if a man look upon himself as consecrated to the service of Christ, and seek not what he thinks will please himself, so much as what will please his master Christ, and from him alone expect his reward, he will not think fit to be discouraged in such endeavours, by the hatred or the unkind censures which they may procure him; no, nor by the sense neither of his own infirmities, and the lapses he may have in such writings: which all truly good men will pardon, when they see an honest diligence in us to do as well as we can; and when they remember that no one man can do all things, nor nothing so as to need no correction.

Submitting therefore this work, such as it is, to the correction and amendment of those that are better able, and shall hereafter labour in this argument, I commend it to the perusal of devout Christians; hoping that the light I have given to this admirable book is so clear, if not great, that they will, by God's blessing, receive no small benefit by it. For there is nothing which David, or any of the rest, say of themselves and their condition, but by an easy ac-

commodation may be made to serve every one of our occasions, when we are in any strait, public or private; or when we have received any remarkable deliverance. Athanasius hath said much on this subject, which I must not transcribe; nor shew how they are fitted (as Gregory Nyssen observes, lib. i. de Inscript. Psal. tom. i. p. 261.) to all persons and ages, to all conditions of life, and all manner of employments, to the state both of sickness and of health, when we are upon the land, or upon the water, so wonderful is their useful variety. But I shall conclude this preface, as Theodoret doth his commentaries upon this book:

"I beseech the readers, if I seem to have expounded it well and aptly, that they would reap the profit of it; and if I have not attained the secret mysteries of the Spirit, that they would not find fault too much; for what I could find I have freely propounded, and what I have learnt of those gone before, I endeavour to transmit to posterity; and I have taken the pains, of which others may receive the benefit without any labour. Whom I beseech and entreat to make some compensation for my pains, with their prayers; by the help of which, I may to words add deeds, and reap the blessedness which belongs to both. For he that doeth and teacheth, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven," (Matt. v. 19.)

"And let us praise the Lord (as St. Chrysostom also concludes) perpetually (as this book instructs us); let us never cease to give thanks in all things, both by our words and by our deeds. For this is our sacrifice, this is our oblation, this is the best liturgy, or Divine service, resembling the angelical manner of living. If we continue thus singing hymns unto him, we shall finish this life inoffensively, and enjoy those good things also which are to come. Of which, may we all be so happy as to be partakers, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ: to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be glory, dominion, and honour, now and for ever. *Amen.*"

PART I.

PSALM I.

ARGUMENT.

The collector of these five books of Psalms, or David himself (as Apollinarius and others think), prefaces to them by a short discourse about the last end of man; just as the philosophers were wont to do in their books of morality; and as Christ himself doth in the beginning of his sermon on the mount. The end of man is blessedness; and the way to it, observance of God's law; which he lays down here as the foundation (so St. Basil conceives it) of the whole ensuing work. So that we may bestow upon this Psalm the title of ΜΑΚΑΡΙΣΜΟΣ, i. e. *Blessedness*, out of Athanasius's epistle to Marcellinus, and Theodoret's preface to this Psalm.

Ver. 1. *BLESSED is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*] Great is the happiness of that man, unspeakably great, who hath not trod in the steps of the ungodly (who have no other rule of their actions but their own lusts and passions); or, if he hath at any time been seduced by them, timely retracted his folly, and did not persist, like those obdurate wretches, in evil courses; much less persevered so long, and proceeded so far in his impiety, as to resolve to be one of that pestilent company, who deride and scoff at all religion!

Ver. 2. *But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*] But his pleasure is to do the will of God, by following his counsels which he hath given in his holy laws; with which he advises and consults continually, and with unwearied study endeavours to be thoroughly acquainted with them.

Ver. 3. *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doth shall prosper.*] You may behold an emblem of this man's happiness, in those trees which are planted by such trenches as derive their water from a perpetual fountain. As they are green and flourishing all the year, and never fail to reward the gardener's pains at the time he expects to receive their fruit; so shall this pious man be ever prosperous, and in the issue reap a plentiful fruit of his labours; for there are none of his enterprises but shall succeed, according to his heart's desire.

Ver. 4. *The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.*] O, how miserably will those men be deceived, who hope to thrive as well, or better, by their impiety! it is too little to say, that they shall be like trees without any moisture; the light and useless chaff, which is blown away with the wind, is a fitter resemblance of them: for so shall all their counsels, designs, and endeavours, to root themselves in the earth, be scattered and come to nothing.

Ver. 5. *Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.*] Therefore let them not think to defend themselves when God comes to judge men according to their works: for whatsoever plea they make, or power they have, they shall certainly be overthrown. It is possible, for the present, they may seem to equal or overtop the prosperity of the righteous: but there will be a time when God will make a difference, and give the righteous a happiness wherein they shall have no share at all.

Ver. 6. *For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.*] For he approves and highly esteems the obedience of the righteous to his holy laws, and therefore will certainly reward it: but that lewd course of life which the wicked lead, he utterly hates, and they shall infallibly perish in it.

PSALM II.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, under the history of David, whom, from a low and afflicted condition, God raised to a throne, and, notwithstanding all the opposition made against it, first by Saul, and then by others, settled him in it, contains a most illustrious prophecy of the kingdom of Christ, whom God raised even from the dead, made the King of glory, and, notwithstanding all the scribes and pharisees, Herod

and other princes, could do to hinder it, enlarged his kingdom to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Ver. 1. *WHY do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?*] What frenzy is this, which makes the Philistines, and other neighbouring nations, (2 Sam. v. 17, &c. viii. 1, &c.) as I foresee the pharisees and their partakers will do hereafter, storm thus furiously, and bandy together with so much noise and tumult? why do they contrive to hinder that which the power of God will irresistibly bring to pass?

Ver. 2. *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed, saying.*] Their kings and governors are risen up, and lay their heads together, to oppose the design of God, who hath anointed me king over his people: just as Herod, and Pontius Pilate, and the rulers of Israel, (Acts iv. 27.) will conspire against Christ, and seek to dethrone him, when he is made, by God the Father, King of all the world.

Ver. 3. *Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.*] Let us not submit, say they, to this new king, who pretends to reign by Divine authority; but resolutely deny to be bound to his obedience, and throw off the yoke which he and his ministers would impose upon us.

Ver. 4. *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.*] As if they were stronger than he, whose throne is in heaven: who, as he contemns their vain attempts, so will expose them to the scorn and derision of all those who shall behold their folly.

Ver. 5. *Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.*] Even then, when they think they have done their business, they shall find the tokens of the Divine vengeance against them; and if they will not desist from their opposition to him, he will utterly confound them with a destruction so terrible and so remarkable, as if he had called to them from heaven, and said,

Ver. 6. *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.*] See how madly you set yourselves against my will; for in spite of all that you can do, I have anointed and set up David, who rules by my authority in the hill of Zion, where I have a peculiar residence: as in time to come (let all his enemies do what they can to hinder it) I will anoint one of his posterity to sit upon the throne of glory at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Ver. 7. *I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day I have begotten thee.*] Such I am sure is the decree of heaven, which I here promulgate to all the world: for, from a low and poor condition, the Lord hath raised me to the highest dignity. This very day, by his order, I begin to reign, and may call it the birth-day of my kingdom: which is but a slender type of a far more strange and greater exaltation of his son Christ, whom he hath determined to raise again to life after he is dead and buried, (Acts xiii. 33. Rom. i. 4.) and then to crown with glory and honour in the heavens.

Ver. 8. *Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*] If you will not believe this royal edict, you shall shortly see, not only this nation of the Jews, but the Philistines, the Edomites, Moabites, Syrians, and other remoter countries as far as Euphrates (whom God, according to his ancient grant, Exod. xxiii. 31. Ezra iv. 16. 20. hath at my request given unto me), subdued under my feet (Psal. lx. 6, &c. 2 Sam. viii.) as all the nations of the earth shall be under his son Christ.

Ver. 9. *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*] They shall never be able to stand before me (much less before him): for he hath given me a sceptre so powerful (and to him, one infinitely more irresistible), that they who will not bow unto it, and be ruled by it, shall be broken in pieces as easily and irreparably as an earthen pot is with a rod of iron.

Ver. 10. *Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth.*] And therefore let all kings and governors of the earth be advised by me; take heed what you do, and understand your own interest so well, as not to oppose the decree of Heaven; or if you have begun to set yourselves against the Lord's anointed, be not so vain as to continue in that folly, but repent, and correct your error.

Ver. 11. *Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.*] If you would be safe, surrender up yourselves to become his subjects, and be afraid to incur his displeasure by any disobedience. You ought indeed to rejoice, that you may be so happy as to be under the government of so great and so gracious a Prince; but that very thing should make you the more fearful to offend his majesty.

Ver. 12. *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*] To whom I counsel you to go and do your homage, and to pay him all the honour that is due to God's vicegerent; lest he grow angry at your obstinate refusal to submit unto him, and you perish in that rebellious course, when his wrath breaks out suddenly, like an unquenchable fire against you. Blessed are all they that follow this advice, and fly to him as their mighty protector and deliverer.

PSALM III.

A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his Son.

ARGUMENT.

Apollinarius calls this Ανγρὸν μέλος, *a mournful or lamentable song.* And so it is, if compared with the preceding; otherwise there are in it far greater expressions of faith and triumphant confidence in God, than there are of trouble and dejection of spirit, though David's condition when he wrote it was very sad and dangerous. For the title, which St. Jerome truly calls the *key of the Psalm* (whereby we are let into the sense), informs us, that it is a meditation composed in his flight from Jerusalem, when his son Absalom conspired against him, and most of the kingdom fell off from him, (2 Sam. xv. &c.) Which after his return thither he commanded to be sung in the tabernacle, in commemoration of that disconsolate condition.

And here I must note, once for all, that it cannot be certainly known what is meant by the word *Selah*, which we meet withal thrice in this short Psalm. The most probable opinion is, that it was a note in music. In which David (as Theodoret observes upon this word) be-

ing a very great master, he set some of his Psalms himself, to be sung to such instruments as he thought were most agreeable to the notes. But that music being now lost, some interpreters have wholly omitted this word *Selah*, as I shall also do.

Ver. 1. *LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.*] O Lord, who changest not, what an amazing change is this! I who in a Divine manner was set by thee upon thy throne, and lately triumphed over so many foreign countries, (Psal. ii. 6—8.) now see great armies of my own subjects raised against me; and conspiring with my son, not only to pull the crown from my head, but to take away my life.

Ver. 2. *Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.*] The general cry is, that I am lost, and that thou, who wast wont to be my helper, and in whom I always made my boast, hast quite forsaken me, as my people have done universally.

Ver. 3. *But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.*] But this (how sad soever it be) shall never shake my confidence in thee, O Lord, whom I still behold surrounding me with thy almighty protection: and therefore I will not cease to glory, and make my boast in thee; but hope (though now I am in a sorrowful condition) that thou wilt make me joyful again, and raise me out of this dejected estate to my former dignity.

Ver. 4. *I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.*] Why should I doubt of it? when I never yet cried unto the Lord, either in this or any former distress, but he sent me relief from that place, where he, having made his special residence, would have us thither direct our prayers.

Ver. 5. *I laid me down and slept; I awaked: for the Lord sustained me.*] He hath already so quieted and composed my mind, that in the midst of this dreadful danger I laid me down securely, and slept profoundly, and awaked, as I slept, without any fear, or any disturbance: for the Lord supported and upheld my spirit, in a firm confidence of his careful providence over me.

Ver. 6. *I will not be afraid of ten thousand of people that have set themselves against me round about.*] And therefore, were I beset with as many nations, as I see men now encamp themselves on all sides against me, I should not be at all daunted at it.

Ver. 7. *Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek-bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.*] But only address myself to thee, saying, Defer no longer, O Lord, but let them see thou hast not forsaken me. Deliver me, O my God, from these rebellious subjects, whom I beseech thee to discomfit and put to shame, as thou hast done many other powerful enemies, who most impiously have sought with eager desire to devour me.

Ver. 8. *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.*] Thou alone art the author of all happiness, and therefore unto thee I flee to save and preserve me from this conspiracy: not that I may live to be revenged, but to do good unto thy people, whose prosperity I wish and will seek, though never so ungrateful and undutiful to me their sovereign.

PSALM IV.

To the chief Musician upon Neginoth. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

We can learn no more from this title, but that David was the author of this Psalm; and that he delivered it to the master of music in the tabernacle, to be sung to the stringed instruments. But when or upon what occasion he penned it, is not certainly known, though the matter of it makes it probable, it was in the same (or the like) distress wherein he made the foregoing Psalm.

Ver. 1. *HEAR me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.*] O my God, the most righteous judge, who knowest the justice of my cause, and art the protector of oppressed innocence, vouchsafe to give me a gracious answer now that I cry unto thee for help against my enemies. Thou hast heretofore made an open way for my escape out of the sorest straits and greatest dangers; which makes me hope thou wilt still take pity upon me, and hear the humble petition which I put up unto thee.

Ver. 2. *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah.*] I am confident my desire is granted; and therefore do you hearken unto me, O ye rulers of the people, by whose authority such multitudes are drawn into this conspiracy: cease to defame my government, (2 Sam. xv. 3, &c.) and break off your vain endeavours to dethrone me. Why do you delight to weary yourselves in the pursuit of such fallacious counsels, and to employ so much industry in inventing calumnies, and spreading lies to draw the people from me?

Ver. 3. *But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him.*] Know that it is not in your power by all these arts to depose me; for I did not come to my kingdom by chance, nor by your choice, but by the special appointment of God; who, having so highly favoured me, that he hath selected me out of all other men, and in a wonderful manner advanced me to be his vicegerent; he will no doubt maintain me in my place, and graciously preserve me when I implore his help from all the enemies that can assault me.

Ver. 4. *Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.*] Dread his displeasure, I beseech you, though you fear not my power; and let not your anger at me make you any longer offend him, by persisting in this rebellion, into which you have run rashly: but if you will debate the matter calmly within yourselves, and, when all the bustle and tumult of the day are over, ask yourselves at night what ground there is for it; I doubt not you will find reason to lay down your arms and be quiet.

Ver. 5. *Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord.*] As for you, my friends, that adhere still to me, though you are driven with me from God's holy place, yet fear nothing; but only take care to observe strictly all the rules of righteousness, which are the most acceptable sacrifices you can offer to the Lord; and then

confide in him; and though your forces be few, doubt not of the victory.

Ver. 6. *There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.*] You are desirous, I know, to see peace and settlement restored; of which many are apt to despair, saying, Who shall make us so happy? But do thou, O Lord, look favourably upon us and bless us, and then I am surer of it, than if I saw the most powerful armies appear, with banners displayed, for my succour.

Ver. 7. *Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.*] The very thoughts of it, this small glimpse of thy love, hath already filled my heart with such joy, that it far exceeds all the pleasure my enemies can take in seeing their barns full of corn, and their presses overflow with wine.

Ver. 8. *I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.*] Nor can they take their rest more securely than I; for though encompassed with these dangers, I no sooner lay me down, but I fall asleep; because when I have no other guard about me, thou, Lord, alone art a sufficient defence unto me.

PSALM V.

To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David (but whether when he was persecuted by Saul or by Absalom, I cannot certainly determine), and delivered to the master of music in the tabernacle, after his troubles were over, to be sung in parts to the organ; in commemoration of that sad condition, and the devout confidence he placed in God of deliverance out of it.

Ver. 1. *GIVE ear to my words, O Lord; consider my meditation.*] Thou seest, O Lord, unto what grievous straits I am reduced: let them move thee to grant me my request, and to have regard to the silent groans and sighs, whereby I call upon thee for relief.

Ver. 2. *Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King and my God: for unto thee will I pray.*] To thee I appeal as my sovereign Lord and supreme Judge; from whose almighty power I earnestly beg protection, and from whose justice I humbly implore the vindication of my innocence.

Ver. 3. *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.*] And thou wilt be as speedy, I hope, in thy help and succour, as I am early in my prayer: for the first thing I do, is to address myself to thee. I no sooner awake, but I dispose myself to wait on thee (as an humble suitor at the gate of thy mercy), and expect what thou wilt be pleased to do for me.

Ver. 4. *For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall evil dwell with thee.*] Who wilt not fail, I am confident, to answer my expectations; for thou art a most righteous judge, who art so far from approving this unjust persecution of me (or rebellion against me), that thou abhorrest such wicked practices. They may prosper for a little time in these evil courses, but shall have no place in thy favour.

Ver. 5. *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.*] Thou wilt condemn them to suffer the punishment of their folly and madness; and banish those from thy presence, who in their blind rage have driven me from my habitation: for all such wicked doers are odious to thee.

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing; the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.*] Thou wilt utterly destroy those that abuse their tongues to tell lies, whereby they defame and calumniate my government: their bloody designs, which they seek to compass by fraud and treachery, make them abominable to the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 7. *But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy; and in thy fear will I worship towards thy holy temple.*] But I, whom they have driven not only from my own house, but (which is far worse) from thine, hope, by thine infinite goodness towards me, to be restored again to go into thy courts; and there, with the humblest reverence, to worship thee, towards the place where thou hast set the monument of thy presence with us.

Ver. 8. *Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.*] And in the mean time, thou wilt be my guide and conductor in the way of thy commandments, which are the rule of righteousness; that my enemies, who seek for something to colour their hatred to me, may have nothing to object against me. They would gladly see me trip, and they watch for my halting: and therefore do thou make thy way so plain before me, and order my goings so steadfastly, that I may never stumble, much less fall, and give them any advantage over me.

Ver. 9. *For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.*] For with what triumph would they blaze abroad my real faults, who now stick not to tell all manner of lies of me? their hearts are perpetually hatching the most malicious and mischievous stories, which they utter with open mouth, gaping for the destruction of the innocent: to whom, when they speak fair, and put on a guise of friendship, it is with an intent to devour them.

Ver. 10. *Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.*] O thou most righteous Judge, pronounce that sentence of condemnation against them which they deserve. Let their own devices, whereby they seek to ruin me, destroy themselves; and disperse them, because of their multiplied impieties. For it is thy cause more than mine that is now disputed, while they reject him whom thou hast appointed the king of thy people.

Ver. 11. *But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.*] This will excite all those who are faithful to thee, and confide in nothing but thy merciful protection, to rejoice and triumph perpetually in thy praise. They will be encouraged by thy wonderful goodness and power appearing in my deliverance, to hope thou wilt protect and succour them also; and never fail to fill the hearts of all those that truly love thee, with the highest joy in thee.

Ver. 12. *For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous: with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.*] For thou, Lord, who art faithful and true, hast engaged thyself, by thy gracious promise, to do good unto the righteous: whom thou lovest and delightest in; and therefore wilt crown with thy favour, and encircle him, as with an impenetrable shield, against all the darts of his enemies.

PSALM VI.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

When David laboured under some grievous disease, he made his complaints to God, and deprecated his displeasure, according to the sense of this Psalm. Which he composed, it is likely, after his recovery: and ordered the master of music in the tabernacle, to cause it to be sung to the harp of eight strings. That seems to be the best interpretation of *Sheminith*, which the Chaldee follows; and it may be justified from what we read 1 Chron. xv. 21. Of *Neginoth*, see Psalm iv. By way of accommodation, the words of this Psalm have been applied to the sickness of the mind; but, upon the former account also, it may be called one of the penitential Psalms.

Ver. 1. *O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.*] O Lord, who delightest in mercy, moderate, I beseech thee, thy sharp correction; and do not proceed to inflict upon me the severest marks of thy displeasure.

Ver. 2. *Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed.*] I am brought very low already, my strength faileth me, and every joint in my body trembles; and therefore now, O Lord, thy mercy will come very seasonably. Good Lord, from whom alone I expect a cure, let it be sufficient that I have suffered so much already, and vouchsafe to heal me.

Ver. 3. *My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long?*] For this sore affliction, and the dread of thy farther displeasure, have struck into my soul also an exceeding great consternation; and how long it will continue, thou, Lord, alone knowest.

Ver. 4. *Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: O save me for thy mercies' sake.*] My enemies think thou hast quite forsaken me: convince them of their error, O Lord, by being reconciled, and restoring to me the kindness thou wast wont to shew me. Deliver me from this anguish and fear, and (though not for my merits, yet) for thy mercy save me from going down into the grave.

Ver. 5. *For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?*] For there I can have no opportunity to do thee service; the dead being utterly unable to commemorate thy wonderful works, and propagate the memory of them to posterity. As long as I live I will shew forth thy praise; but who can celebrate thy name, and instruct thy people, in the grave?

Ver. 6. *I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim: I water my couch with my tears.*] To that silent place I shall soon descend, unless thou make haste to deliver me; for I am tired out with these pains under which I groan. The night, which is wont to quiet all men's grief, and lay their troubles asleep, is to me so restless and uneasy, that the incessant agonies I am in dissolve me into sweat; and I do nothing but pour out floods of tears.

Ver. 7. *Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.*] Which have made such furrows in my face, that my countenance hath lost all its beauty, and looks like that of a consumptive man, who is dropping into his grave. I am worn away with the mere grief and indignation of seeing all mine enemies insulting over me, and with joy waiting for my death.

Ver. 8. *Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.*] But why am I thus concerned at their behaviour; and torment myself, as if my life depended on their pleasure; which is in the hand of God alone; who pities my mournful condition, and will grant me that which I have sought with so many tears? And therefore go your way, ye evil-doers, and stay no longer here expecting my death. Desist from all your wicked contrivances against me, and be not so vain as to hope to triumph over me.

Ver. 9. *The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer.*] The Lord hath not rejected me, as you imagine; but is graciously pleased both with my deprecation of his displeasure, and with my petitions to him for his favour.

Ver. 10. *Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly.*] And therefore I tell my enemies once more, that they shall all be ashamed of their vain hopes to see me dead. I shall live to disappoint them, and make them terribly afraid: nay, they shall make a sudden retreat, and be confounded to see themselves so shamefully defeated.

PSALM VII.

Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the Words (or business) *of Cush the Benjamite.*

ARGUMENT.

An excellent Psalm, composed by David to commemorate the loving-kindness of the Lord upon occasion of some calumnies and false accusations; wherein Cush, one of the same tribe with Saul (and probably one of his courtiers or captains, if not one of his kinsmen), had charged David with some very great crime; of treason, it is likely, and conspiracy against Saul. Athanasius, indeed (as we find in some fragments of his upon the Psalms), thinks that David made this χαριστήριον ᾠδην, as he calls it, when Hushai (whom he takes for Cush) had defeated the good counsel of Ahithophel, by a discourse he made to shew it was not safe to set upon so warlike a prince as David, without a greater force than Absalom had at present; whereby he saved David from certain ruin. But I see nothing in the Psalm to give a colour to this conjecture; for the words therein mentioned were against David, not in his favour. The name of Hushai also is otherways written, and he is called an Archite, not a Benjamite; which St. Basil (whose opinion this was) endeavours to solve, by saying he was called Benjameni, because he

managed his matters so dexterously, in overthrowing the counsel of Ahithophel. But that is only a piece of wit; and the conjecture of Valentine Schindler seems to me more probable; that by Cush, he secretly notes (by a change of letters) Saul himself, the son of Kish; who could no more alter his mind, full of hatred to David, than a man of Cush, or an Ethiopian, could his skin or complexion.

Ver. 1. *O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me.*] O Lord, who hast hitherto been my most gracious God, and defended my innocence against those that have falsely accused me, I ought not to doubt of thy continued care and love towards me: and therefore fly unto thee, with an humble confidence in thy almighty goodness, that thou wilt preserve and deliver me from this new persecution which is raised against me.

Ver. 2. *Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.*] For if thou dost not protect me, I am no more able to stand before Saul than a lamb before a lion: so great is his power, and so implacable his rage, that if thou sufferest me to fall into his hands, there is no creature can rescue me, but he will infallibly destroy me.

Ver. 3. *O Lord, my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands.*] And let him destroy me, O Lord, if I be guilty of that whereof I am accused. Thou art the most righteous judge of all, and to thee I here again most solemnly appeal, as I have done before him, (1 Sam. xxiv. 12. 15.) desiring that thou wilt judge between us. If I have conspired against him, or had any design to do him hurt, (as he was made to believe, 1 Sam. xxiv. 9.) if any such thing hath so much as entered into my thoughts:

Ver. 4. *If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy).*] If I have either injured him when he was kind to me, or sought to be revenged of him since he has injured me: (no, I abhorred to take revenge, so far was I from seeking it, when he fell into my hand, and spared him twice when it was in my power to have killed him, who causelessly endeavoured to kill me, 1 Sam. xxiv. xxvi.)

Ver. 5. *Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah.*] Then I beg no mercy; let him go on to be my enemy; let him pursue me till he apprehend me, and execute his desire upon me. I refuse not to die; nay, to be trod under foot like dirt with the greatest contempt; and to be as much reproached when I am dead, as I have been honoured alive.

Ver. 6. *Arise, O Lord, in thine anger, lift up thyself, because of the rage of mine enemies; and awake for me to the judgment that thou hast commanded.*] But if I be innocent in this matter (as thou, Lord, knowest I am), then I beseech thee to shew thy displeasure at this unjust proceeding. Let my enemies know that thou art the sovereign Lord of all, by suppressing them now that they rage thus furiously. Thou hast appointed judges upon earth to distribute justice, and relieve the oppressed; but hast reserved the supreme judgment to thyself, even over them as well as others: and therefore I beseech thee to take cognizance of my cause, and issue out thy orders speedily for my deliverance from this persecution.

Ver. 7. *So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about; for their sakes therefore return thou on high.*] Which will draw all the people to make their resort to thee, and wait upon thee, till thou dost them justice. For that reason ascend thy judgment-seat again, and, as thou hast done formerly, vindicate me from these calumnies, and assert my innocence.

Ver. 8. *The Lord shall judge the people: judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.*] The Sovereign of the world will not fail to dispense equal justice unto all, according to their works. Of which I beseech thee, O Lord, to give an example in me, who desire no greater favour than to be disposed of according to my innocence in this matter. Thou hast designed indeed a kingdom for me: but let me lose it, if ever I entertain a disloyal thought against him who now enjoys it.

Ver. 9. *Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.*] I leave it to thee to perform thy own purposes; who hast long borne with the wicked in their unjust proceedings, but wilt at last put a stop to them, and settle the righteous, whom they injuriously persecute from place to place, in a peaceable possession of what thou hast promised. For thou, Lord, discernest the most secret thoughts and desires of them both; and as thou canst not be deceived with specious shows, so thou wilt not be corrupted, either by fear or favour, to pronounce an unrighteous sentence.

Ver. 10. *My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.*] That is my comfort, none but God, the Judge of all, can either absolve or condemn me; and he knows so well the sincerity of my heart, that I assure myself from him of protection and deliverance.

Ver. 11. *God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.*] For he is so just a judge, that he will defend the cause of the righteous, and never be persuaded to take part with the wicked; with whom he is highly displeased all the time that he forbears to strike him, and cut him off in his evil courses.

Ver. 12. *If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.*] And if he will not repent, as he is invited by that forbearance, he shall be punished at last with so much the greater severity; because he would take no warning, but went on confidently, notwithstanding the vengeance he was told was preparing for him.

Ver. 13. *He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.*] Vengeance, which will certainly come, though it stay long, and not fail to do execution: for it is decreed in heaven (if they do not repent), and will pierce through the very heart of Saul, and all the rest of my fierce and outrageous persecutors.

Ver. 14. *Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.*] See here the folly of this calumniator; who wickedly plots my ruin, and hath formed most mischievous designs against my life; which shall all miscarry, and deceive his expectation.

Ver. 15. *He made a pit, and digged it; and is fallen into the ditch which he made.*] And he shall not escape so nei-

ther; for beside the shame of not being able to compass his design, he shall suffer that himself which he laboured to do to me. Just as you see sometimes a man fall into the pit which was digged with his own hands; so shall he fall upon the sword which himself hath drawn, (1 Sam. xxxi. 4.)

Ver. 16. *His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.*] The mischief which with so much pains he contrived against me, shall be retorted upon that head which projected it: all his violence and cruel persecutions, wherewith he thought to oppress me, shall fall down (like a stone thrown into the air) upon himself, and crush him to pieces.

Ver. 17. *I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness; and will sing praise to the name of the Lord most high.*] Which shall afford matter of perpetual praise to me; who will most thankfully acknowledge not only the power, but the just judgment of God, and his faithfulness to his word. With the greatest delight and joy shall my songs celebrate the glorious majesty of the Lord, which far surmounts our highest thoughts and thanksgivings.

PSALM VIII.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

The Targum takes the word *Gittith* to denote that this Psalm was to be sung to a harp which David brought with him from Gath. Others think it to be only a note in music; or to have relation to the time of vintage. But Theodoret looking upon it (as indeed it seems to be), ψαλμὸς ἐπινίκιος, *a psalm of triumph to God*, the author of some great victory he had gotten, I take it to have been composed by David, and delivered to the master of the music in the tabernacle, after he had overthrown that haughty insolent giant, Goliath of Gath. Which is very agreeable to the matter of the Psalm, and a lively emblem of Christ's conquest over our great enemy the devil.

Ver. 1. *O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.*] O Lord, the Sovereign of the world, who art graciously pleased to own us in a peculiar manner to be thy subjects, who can behold the wonders of thy works, and the wisdom of thy providence, and not be astonished at the incomparable greatness and splendour of thy majesty? which all the earth proclaims with the highest praises; but cannot be contained within the spacious bounds of the heavens, whose glorious brightness it far surpasses.

Ver. 2. *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies; that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.*] What an amazing wonder is it, that thou shouldest enable the weakest of men to do the greatest and most praiseworthy things! and particularly hast now assisted me (who, in comparison of Goliath, am but an infant) with power and strength to subdue that mighty giant! It is enough to confound all the enemies, and to stop the mouths of the most pernicious opposers of thee and of thy people: as the far more to be celebrated works of the Messiah and his disciples, when they shall but speak the word, shall confound even the devil himself, that great enemy of thine, and tormentor of mankind.

Ver. 3. *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained.*] Who are extremely stupid if they do not most thankfully acknowledge thy singular love to them. For when I seriously look up to thy celestial habitation, and consider the vastness of that admirable structure, and behold also those lights which thou hast placed there in beautiful order,

Ver. 4. *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?*] I know not what to say, but am perfectly astonished to think that thou, whose greatness I see so visibly in the heavens, shouldest condescend so far as to shew such grace and favour as thou dost to this wretched creature man: particularly to me, who am the meanest of my brethren. Lord, what am I, that thou shouldest work such salvation by my hands? Nay, what is the greatest prince in the world, that thou shouldest thus honour him? But that thou shouldest advance our mortal nature so highly in *that* Son of man, the Lord Christ, whom the world will vilify and despise, exceeds all wonder, and ought to be the matter of our perpetual admiration.

Ver. 5. *For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.*] Thou hast raised man to such a dignity, and honoured him so highly, (particularly me, whom thou hast used as thy minister to punish that insulting giant, who defied thy armies, 1 Sam. xvii.) that he is not much inferior to the celestial hosts: as shall be more clearly seen in thy Son Christ, whom thou hast determined to advance far above the highest angels in heaven, after he hath for a short space been much beneath them, by submitting himself to a poor condition in our flesh, that he might lay down his life for man, (Heb. xi. 6, 7, &c.)

Ver. 6. *Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.*] Whose glory is great, even in the dominion thou hast given him over all thy creatures in this lower world: (though this be nothing comparable to the exaltation of the great Son of man, under whose feet thou hast put in subjection all creatures whatsoever, even those in the highest heavens.) There is nothing here but he hath a power over it, and finds means to make it subject to his pleasure.

Ver. 7. *All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field.*] Not only the beasts that are tame, such as sheep and oxen, but those that are wild, even tigers, bears, and lions.

Ver. 8. *The fowl of the air, and the fishes of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.*] Yea, and the fowls of the air cannot fly so high, but he hath ways to reach them; nor can the fishes in lakes, or rivers, or those in the deepest ocean, exempt themselves from his dominion.

Ver. 9. *O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!*] All which moves me again to cry out and conclude as I began, in the highest admiration of thy most powerful wisdom and goodness, saying, O mighty Lord, our most gracious Governor, who can comprehend the excellent greatness of thy majesty? O how transcendent is thy loving-kindness in all thou hast done, and wilt do for man! How loudly ought the whole world to sound forth thy praise!

PSALM IX.

To the chief Musician upon Muth-labben.
A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm which David composed and delivered to the master of music in the tabernacle, when he was in some great distress: (ver. 13.) wherein he commemorates God's former deliverance of him; both when he killed Goliath, and got frequent victories afterward over the Philistines, and other enemies of Israel, (ver. 11. 15.)

I mention Goliath, because, among the various opinions about *Muth-labben*, I find none so probable as theirs, who think it hath some relation to him: to whom there are three ways of applying those Hebrew words. All of them by *Almuth*, understand to be meant *upon the death:* and then *Labben*, some think, signifies *the son*, that is, a great man, as I have expounded in my preface to this work. Others render it *the white;* that is, an illustrious, noble person, or one famous in arms, as Goliath was. Others render it *intermediate;* which agrees also to that champion, who came out and stood *between* the two armies, and defied Israel, (1 Sam. xvii. 4, &c.) Thus the Chaldee paraphrase here interprets. But that this Psalm was not made just after David's victory over him, with respect merely to his death, is apparent from the mention of Zion, ver. 11. 14. which was not then in the hands of Israel. And therefore he only calls to mind (as I said in the beginning) this deliverance, upon some fresh occasion he had to implore the mighty assistance of the Divine Power, which then first began to appear to him.

Ver. 1. *I WILL praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.*] I will acknowledge, O Lord of heaven and earth, thy omnipotent goodness, with the heartiest devotion and entire affection to thee. Nor will I content myself to praise thee for this last victory alone, but on this occasion commemorate all the wonders thou hast formerly done for me.

Ver. 2. *I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou Most High.*] The thoughts of which are so pleasing and delightful to me, that I cannot but be exceeding glad and leap for joy, while I celebrate with my songs thy supreme majesty; whose power infinitely excels the united force of all creatures upon earth.

Ver. 3. *When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.*] It was thou who madest my enemies turn their backs, and seek for safety in flight: (1 Sam. xvii. 51.) and the dread of thee so pursued them, that they stumbled and fell down wounded, (ver. 52.) and were destroyed, because they saw thee appear against them.

Ver. 4. *For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou sattest in the throne judging right.*] For in that great controversy between us and the Philistines, (1 Sam. xvii. 9.) wherein I stood up against Goliath, thou didst take my part (as thou hast done since in many other battles), asserting the cause which I defended, and openly giving judgment on my side.

Ver. 5. *Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.*] Thou hast given a terrible rebuke to the audacious insolence of those nations; thou hast cut off their daring champion, who so impiously defied thy armies, and cursed me by his gods: thou hast put them to shame, and made their names infamous to all generations.

Ver. 6. *O thou enemy! destructions are come to a perpetual end; and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.*] O thou insulting enemy, who in thy own thoughts hadst completely devoured us, where are the utter desolations thou threatenedst to our country? and the cities which thou intendest to lay even with the ground? How vain were thy hopes of leaving no remembrance of them but in their ruins.

Ver. 7. *But the Lord shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.*] Such shall be the end of all the rest of my enemies, who can never prevail against the Lord. For, though earthly thrones may tumble down, he and his throne cannot possibly be disturbed, but remain fixed for ever; and his justice is as immutable, which he will equally dispense to all.

Ver. 8. *And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.*] For his jurisdiction is not limited, nor can his justice be corrupted: but the whole world is under his government, and no wicked man is so powerful, that he should be able to escape his vengeance, which shall pursue every one of them, and render to him exactly according as he deserves.

Ver. 9. *The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.*] And, as he will punish the wicked, be their authority never so great; so he will preserve the righteous, be they never so helpless. They may safely fly unto him for sanctuary against the unjust persecutions of their mighty oppressors, and he will give them seasonable relief in all their distresses.

Ver. 10. *And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.*] All they that are acquainted with thee, and with the merciful and just methods of thy providence, will consent to this; and, abhorring all undue ways of saving themselves in troublesome times, will heartily confide in thee: for it was never known, that thou, Lord, hast left any man destitute of thy help, who hath piously made his constant addresses to thee.

Ver. 11. *Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.*] Let them join, therefore, their songs with mine, and praise the Lord, who dwells among us by his special presence in the sanctuary. Let us make all the world know what wonderful things he hath done for us, that they may also learn to trust in him.

Ver. 12. *When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble.*] Who, though he may seem to wink for a time at the cruelty of violent men, yet will call them at last to a strict account for all the innocent blood they have shed, and for their unjust and unmerciful usage of meek and humble persons; whose cry he never forgets (though he doth not presently answer it), but takes a fit time to be avenged of their oppressors.

Ver. 13. *Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that*

liftest me up from the gates of death.] In confidence of this, I cry unto thee now, O Lord, for my seasonable relief, in this necessitous condition to which my enemies have reduced me. O merciful God, who hast delivered me from the greatest dangers, from the lion and the bear, from Goliath, who thought to give my flesh to the birds and the beasts, (1 Sam. xvii. 44.) from Saul, and all others who were ready to swallow me up; cast a gracious eye upon my present distress, and bring me out of it.

Ver. 14. *That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.*] That I may go into thy sanctuary (which now thou hast placed in Zion), and there, in the most frequent assemblies of thy people, add this to all the rest of thy praises, that thou hast heard my cry. O how joyful shall I be! how shall I triumph, when I magnify thy power in my deliverance!

Ver. 15. *The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.*] Which the experience I have had of thy goodness makes me comfortably expect: for I have often seen all the designs and contrivances of the Philistines and other nations against thy people, to conclude in nothing but their own utter ruin; their engines recoil upon themselves, as Goliath was slain by his own sword.

Ver. 16. *The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.*] This is a thing notorious to all, and for which thou art renowned. By this thou convincest the minds of those that deny thy providence. Nor is there any thing more admirable, and worthy of our meditation, than this thy righteous judgment upon the ungodly; when they are entangled in their own devices, and, contrary to all expectation, bring upon themselves that destruction which they had prepared for others.

Ver. 17. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.*] This makes me confident that I am not deceived, when I look to see these wicked men, who now seek my ruin, precipitate themselves into the pit of destruction. Nay, so shall all those people perish (though never so numerous), who, forgetting what God had done to others, proceed on in the same impious designs against the innocent.

Ver. 18. *For the needy shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.*] For the Lord, in due time, will shew that he doth not neglect them when they are poor and helpless, though for the present he defer to relieve them. Let them patiently wait upon him under their affliction, and he will not fail their expectation.

Ver. 19. *Arise, O Lord; let not man prevail; let the heathen be judged in thy sight.*] And may I desire thee, O Lord, to delay no longer? O suffer not weak and wretched man to domineer on this fashion, nay, boast of his victories; but call all those nations that oppose thee to an account, and condemn them to that punishment which they deserve.

Ver. 20. *Put them in fear, O Lord; that the nations may know themselves to be but men.*] Strike a terror into them, O Lord, by some sharp vengeance inflicted on them. Shake out of their mind the vain opinion they have of themselves and of their power; and make the nations sensible they are but frail and miserable men.

PSALM X.

ARGUMENT.

It is not known by whom, or on what occasion, this Psalm was composed: but it is a most lively description of the insolency of wicked atheistical men, when they have power, and are in authority; which they abuse to the oppression of the meaner or weaker sort, and make no conscience by what arts they bring their designs about. Against whom the Psalmist humbly beseeches the Divine vengeance, and rests confident they shall be suppressed.

Ver. 1. *WHY standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?*] It is strange, O Lord, to see thee, who hast done us the peculiar honour to say we have thee nigh unto us on all occasions, (Deut. iv. 7.) now withdraw thyself to such a distance from us, that there is no sign of thy coming to our relief. It perplexes our thoughts, and we cannot find the reason of it, that now, in these grievous straits, which seem to us the fittest opportunity, thou dost not appear for our deliverance.

Ver. 2. *The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.*] If our great affliction do not move thy pity towards us, yet the intolerable pride and insolent rage of the wicked, we are prone to expect, should meet with a rebuke from thy just indignation. Especially since he oppresses the poor, who have no friend but thee alone; whose glory also it is to humble arrogant men, by making those very devices cast them down, whereby they thought to ruin others, and exalt themselves. O that we might see them fall in this remarkable manner!

Ver. 3. *For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.*] For whilst the wicked prospers thus in all his designs, he is not only encouraged in those evil courses, but glories in them, and brags that he can do what he lists. Nay, it doth not suffice him to do evil himself, but he commends and praises the unjust extortions and rapines of other violent men; whom he accounts happy, though the Lord abhors them.

Ver. 4. *The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.*] But it is to no purpose to tell him how the Lord abhors them; for, scornfully rejecting all such good admonitions, he will not so much as inquire and consider whether there be a God or not: but rather boldly concludes there is no God, or, if there be, that he cares not what we do.

Ver. 5. *His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them.*] And therefore, though all his business be to molest and torment his neighbours, and he is always bringing forth some mischief or other, yet that thou wilt judge him for it is the farthest thing from his thoughts: and as for those men that are his adversaries, he contemns them all, and values them not a straw.

Ver. 6. *He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity.*] He confidently promises himself that none shall be able to disturb him; and rests secure he shall always be thus prosperous, which makes him resolve he will never alter his wicked course of life, let God or man do what they can against him.

Ver. 7. *His mouth is full of cursing, and deceit, and fraud; under his tongue is mischief and vanity.*] Nor sticks at any thing that may serve his ends: for he makes no conscience to call for one curse after another upon himself, to confirm those oaths or promises which he never intends to keep; but by this impious means to deceive and cheat those that rely upon his word. He speaks very fair; but it is only to hide the mischievous wickedness which lurks in his heart.

Ver. 8. *He sitteth in the lurking-places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor.*] And if he cannot this way compass all his designs, he makes no scruple to rob and kill upon the highway: near unto which he lurks, and in covert places, where nobody sees him, shoots at the innocent traveller; especially when he sees he is defenceless, and hath none to help him.

Ver. 9. *He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net.*] He lies as close as a lion in his den; and is as cruel when he hath caught his prey. A fowler is not more cunning to draw the birds to his net, than he to get poor helpless men into his power, that he may devour them.

Ver. 10. *He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones.*] For he can counterfeit himself (if occasion serve) to be a harmless traveller; and look so humbly and innocently, that the poor man, on whom he intends to seize, suspecting no danger, will lie the more open to his sudden and violent assault.

Ver. 11. *He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it.*] From which God himself, he thinks, will not protect him. They call him (saith he within his heart) the Omnipotent, and the poor commit themselves unto him: but what cares he for them? he regards them not, and will never call me to any account for what I have done against them.

Ver. 12. *Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble.*] Confute these blasphemies, O Lord; and delay no longer, O thou omnipotent Judge of the world, to appear in just displeasure against them. Stretch forth thy hand to confound these violent oppressors, and to relieve all thy afflicted servants.

Ver. 13. *Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it.*] What is it, but thy long-suffering, and bearing so much with them, that makes the wicked thus insolently despise thee? He concludes, thou wilt never punish him, because thou art so patient with him.

Ver. 14. *Thou hast seen it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.*] I doubt not, indeed, that thou takest notice of their villany, and that thou wilt requite them in their kind, for all the mischief and vexation of which they have been the authors. The poor have reason to commend their cause to thee; and to expect that thou wilt do them right, who art the protector of the weak and friendless, who have nothing to rely upon but thy goodness.

Ver. 15. *Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man: seek out his wickedness till thou find none.*] But the wicked will never believe this, as long as they are able to do mischief; and therefore I beseech thee to despoil them of all their power to hurt and oppress thy people. Be avenged on them for their wickedness, after which they fancy thou wilt not inquire, and let there be no footsteps of it remaining.

Ver. 16. *The Lord is King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land.*] Thou canst easily do it, being the same everlasting King, by whose authority and power the seven impious nations were expelled out of this land.

Ver. 17. *Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.*] And I believe thou wilt do it, O Lord, who hast so often since granted the desire of the afflicted. Thou wilt dispose their heart humbly to wait upon thee, and then vouchsafe them a favourable audience;

Ver. 18. *To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.*] When they pray thee to assert the right of the fatherless, and other poor helpless people, and to punish their insolent oppressors: that those tyrants, sprung out of the earth, and who deserve to be tumbled down thither again, may be no longer terrible to them.

PSALM XI.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, the title tells us, was composed by David: and very likely (as Theodoret and others conjecture) when Saul persecuted him, and some advised him to seek his safety in flight: or rather, when Saul began to have evil designs against him; and he was invited by some, who pretended friendship to him, to a place of safety in the mountainous country of Judea. When he came to the crown, he delivered it to the master of music in the tabernacle, to be sung there in remembrance of what then passed between his friends, him, and God Almighty, in whom he placed his hope.

Ver. 1. *IN the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?*] It is not in fortresses or friends that I place my confidence, and hope for safety, but only in the Lord, who hath anointed me his king. On him I rely; and therefore do not put me in fear, and bid me fly away thus speedily, like a timorous bird before the fowler, to your place of security.

Ver. 2. *For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.*] Behold, say you, the danger wherein thou art is no less imminent, than when a fowler hath bent his bow, and fitted his arrow upon the string, and, lying close, hath the bird in his eye, whom he means to shoot: for just so have Saul and his wicked counsellors laid their plot on a sudden to destroy thee.

Ver. 3. *If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?*] And if men have no regard to laws and public decrees, which are the foundation of human society, but will boldly violate all known and standing rules of justice and truth, what security can an honest man have? or what should he do, but make haste away from this court, where they act so arbitrarily, and are so perfidious?

Ver. 4. *The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of*

men.] My answer is, that the world is not governed by chance, nor can men carry things just as they please: but the Lord, into whose holy palace no unjust counsels can possibly enter, and whose throne is infinitely above that of the highest king on earth: he, I say, is the supreme and most righteous ruler of all affairs; and no mischief can be so secretly contrived, no wicked design so artificially dissembled, but it lies open before his eyes, and he sees through it: nor need he take any pains to discover it; for at the first glance, as we speak, he perfectly discerns how all men are inclined, and looks to the very bottom of their hearts.

Ver. 5. *The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth.*] And he may think fit to try the fidelity of him whom he knows to be upright, by many adversities; that he may afterward give him the more illustrious testimonies of his approbation and love. But whatsoever success the wicked, and he that delights in doing mischief, may have for the present, he is most hateful to God; and he will without fail severely punish him, for abusing his power to oppression and violent dealing.

Ver. 6. *Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.*] The wicked may think themselves very secure, because they are so cunning and so strong; but how can they defend themselves against the Lord, who hath innumerable ways to ensnare them when they least think of it; and can as unexpectedly overthrow all their forces, as, when the heavens are most serene, a sudden storm of thunder and lightning, and tempestuous blasts, arises, and tears up the trees by the roots? Thus the Sodomites, thus the Egyptians, perished; and such measure will the wise Dispenser of all punishments mete to these violent oppressors.

Ver. 7. *For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.*] For the Lord, who is just in his own nature, and in all his ways, loves none but those who are like himself: and therefore he will plague all injurious persons, but with special favour defend and reward all upright men, who steadfastly keep (notwithstanding all the injuries they receive) in the paths of righteousness.

PSALM XII.

To the chief Musician upon Sheminith. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed by David, and delivered to the master of music in the tabernacle, to be sung as the sixth Psalm, upon the harp with eight strings. The occasion of it is not expressed; but it is a sad complaint of the corrupt manners of that age, (especially of the court of Saul, ver. 3.) in which it was hard to find an honest, plain-dealing man, in whom one might confide. Some think it aims partly at Doeg, and such-like courtiers: partly at the Ziphites, and such perfidious people in the country, who, promising him their friendship (as Theodoret understands it), would have most basely betrayed him unto Saul, his declared enemy.

Ver. 1. *HELP, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.*] Lord, be thou my safeguard, for there is no such thing as kindness and friendship to be found among men: I dare trust myself with none of them; for there is not so much as any truth and honesty left in the world.

Ver. 2. *They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips, and with a double heart, do they speak.*] One neighbour cannot with safety believe another: they are all liars and dissemblers, pretending fair in words, but meaning quite otherways.

Ver. 3. *The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things.*] This vice hath spread itself so universally among us, that it cannot be rooted up, but only by the hand of Heaven: which will destroy these pestilent deceivers; who speak also big and blasphemous words, whereby they daunt those that are below them.

Ver. 4. *Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?*] We will have the better, say they, of all those that oppose us; and our tongues are the weapons whereby we will get the victory. They are our own; who shall hinder us from employing them to supplant whom we please? whether it be true or false which we say, what is that to any body; or who shall call us to an account for it?

Ver. 5. *For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.*] That will the Lord; whom the sighs, and tears, and miserable groans, of those poor wretches, who are oppressed by your calumnies, have moved to resolve to take a speedy vengeance on you. He hath absolutely determined to rescue and deliver them from your snares and fraudulent practices: you may puff and storm as much as you please, but shall not be able to hinder it.

Ver. 6. *The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.*] For the promises of God are not deceitful like yours; but sincere, and void of all guile: the purest silver, refined to the greatest perfection, is not more free from dross, than they are from all mixture of falsehood.

Ver. 7. *Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.*] I am confident, O Lord, thou wilt perform them, and not suffer thy words to fail. Thou wilt ever preserve him that confides in thee from this perverse generation, how oft soever they renew their attempts against him.

Ver. 8. *The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.*] Which will make the wicked not know which way to turn themselves; but be ready to burst with anger and vexation, when they see those poor men, whom they contemned and vilified, not only preserved, but exalted by thy favour to dignity and honour.

PSALM XIII.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed by David, and delivered to the master of music in the tabernacle. It is not known to what time it relates; but by the matter of it we understand he was in some great distress when he indited it, either by the persecution of Saul, or of Absalom. Theo-

doret thinks the latter, and gives this reason for it: that the trouble which Saul gave him was before his great sin, and so he was full of confidence; but that of Absalom was after it, which made him cry out in this doleful manner.

Ver. 1. *HOW long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?*] What a sad condition is this, O Lord, into which I am fallen, and in which thou seemest to neglect me? I have waited a long time for some glimpse of thy favour; but can see no sign of deliverance, nor tell how long thou intendest to delay it.

Ver. 2. *How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?*] O how afflictive is it, that there is no end of my anxious thoughts! but I am always casting in my mind, with a heavy heart, where I shall shift for my life, and can think myself in no place secure. The power of my enemy is very great, and threatens, like a tempest hanging over my head, every moment to fall upon me. O when shall I see it dispersed?

Ver. 3. *Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.*] Thus I sigh perpetually to thee, O Lord, the omnipotent Ruler and just Judge of the world; beseeching thee to commiserate my affliction, and, as thou hast done often, to answer my prayer. Thou seest with what dangers I am encompassed, and how forlorn and dismal my condition is: endue me with wisdom and circumspection, that I may escape these dangers; and revive and cheer me under these sad afflictions, lest my spirit sink within me, or the enemy destroy me.

Ver. 4. *Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.*] Let not him that persecutes me boast of his success, as he certainly will, unless thou affordest me thy conduct and comfort; which I humbly again implore, that they who join with him may not have the pleasure to see me fall, and insult over my misery.

Ver. 5. *But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.*] I am unworthy, indeed, of thy favour; but hope thou wilt magnify thine own mercy, in which I have placed such an entire confidence, that I persuade myself I shall have the joy to see thee deliver me out of all these distresses.

Ver. 6. *I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.*] Which shall be acknowledged with the most cheerful hymns of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, who hath dealt so well with me, as to render to me not according to my merits, but according to my hope and trust in his inconceivable mercy.

PSALM XIV.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm (which was composed, as the foregoing, by David, and delivered by him to the master of music in the tabernacle) may probably refer, though it be not in the title expressed, to the universal apostacy of the people, in the rebellion of Absalom, from the allegiance they owed to him, and from the duty they owed to God.

Ver. 1. *THE fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt; they have done abominable works; there is none that doeth good.*] Though the wicked are not yet so impudent, as openly to deny God with their mouths, yet such is their abominable filthiness, so shameless are they in their wickedness, so universally depraved, that their secret thoughts sure are, God takes no notice what they do, or that he will not judge them for it.

Ver. 2. *The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.*] But let them know that he exactly observes them; and that all the ways of the sons of men are naked and bare before his eyes: though, alas! there is nothing now to be seen but ignorance and contempt of his majesty.

Ver. 3. *They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*] The whole nation hath lost all sense of their duty; and, like a body without a spirit, is so rotten and putrefied, that it is hard to find so much as one that hath any sense of goodness in him.

Ver. 4. *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord.*] Strange! that they should all be thus senseless; as not only to injure and oppress my poor innocent people, but to be cruel and void of all pity towards them, and to throw off likewise all religion.

Ver. 5. *There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous.*] What a terror will it be to them to see the Divine vengeance seize on them, when they think themselves most secure? for he, who is the righteous judge, will not desert those who are faithful to him, but graciously deliver them.

Ver. 6. *You have shamed the counsel of the poor; because the Lord is his refuge.*] Your confusion, O ye atheistical fools, will be the greater; because you mocked and jeered at that poor despicable party of men, who resolved to adhere to piety and virtuous loyalty, and to wait patiently upon God, and trust in him alone for safety:

Ver. 7. *Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.*] Who is mighty to save, whatsoever you think, and resides by a special token of his presence in Mount Zion. Oh that it might please him to send us deliverance from thence, and to restore us again to the happy enjoyment of that place, from whence we are banished! it would turn our sad lamentations into the most cheerful thanksgivings; and fill not only Judah, but all the tribes of Israel, with joy and gladness. (2 Sam. xix. 9, &c.)

PSALM XV.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, in which he excites the people to the study of solid virtue, was composed by David, either when he brought the ark to Mount Zion, (2 Sam. vi.) or when he was restored thither again (as he desired in the conclusion of the foregoing Psalm), after the rebellion of Absalom, (2 Sam. xix.) Then it was very seasonable to ad-

monish them to live better, as became those who were under the government of God (as Theodoret excellently speaks), and had received such a great deliverance from him.

Ver. 1. *LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?*] Lord, what a happiness is it, that thou wilt be pleased to dwell among us in this mountain wherein thou hast pitched thy tabernacle! but who shall have the honour to be admitted into thy society, and enjoy all the privileges of a true worshipper of thee?

Ver. 2. *He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.*] I hear thee answer (methinks) as if a voice came from thy holy oracle, saying, Not all that are descended of Abraham, nor every one that offers me sacrifices, and observes my appointed rites; but he who completely endeavours to please me in all the parts of a holy life, exercising justice and mercy to his neighbour, as well as piety to me; and taking care he wrong not his neighbour in words no more than in deeds.

Ver. 3. *He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.*] He that doth not abuse his tongue to calumny and detraction, nor is any other way injurious to his neighbour; who neither reproaches his neighbour himself, nor lightly believes, increases, or spreads the reproaches which are begun by others.

Ver. 4. *In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord: he that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.*] Who never courts men for their riches and power, if their wickedness makes them despicable; but honours those who are truly pious, though never so poor: and who hath such a respect to religion, that whatsoever he promises by oath he will perform, though he loses never so much by keeping his faith.

Ver. 5. *He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.*] He who orders his private affairs so exactly, that he makes no gain of the money he lends to his poor brethren, (Exod. xxii. 25. Deut. xxiii. 19, 20.) and behaves himself so well, when he is in public office, that no gift can corrupt him to condemn the innocent, or absolve the guilty. He that lives after this manner, need never fear to fall from my favour.

PSALM XVI.

Michtam of David.

ARGUMENT.

A most excellent Psalm of David, more precious than any jewel, and worthy to be inscribed on a marble pillar, to endure to all posterity. For beside admirable expressions of his faith and confidence in God (though he was most violently persecuted by Saul, and forced to fly into foreign countries), it contains a prophecy of the resurrection of our Lord Christ from the dead.

Ver. 1. *PRESERVE me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.*] Thou seest, O most mighty God, with what dangers I am encompassed: defend and protect me, I beseech thee, for I depend upon thee alone for safety.

Ver. 2. *O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee.*] I ever did so, as my conscience testifies; and therefore I hope thou wilt still continue my gracious God. Not that I can merit any favour of thee, or, by any good that I can do, requite thy kindness to me:

Ver. 3. *But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.*] But if thou wilt be pleased to protect me, I will employ all my power (when I come to the throne) to protect the pious in the land: worthy men, who excel in virtue, shall be preferred and honoured; for they are the persons who are most dear to me, and in whose company alone I delight.

Ver. 4. *Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.*] They multiply idols, (here in this place, whither I am driven, 1 Sam. xxvi. 19.) and are zealous in the service of another god: but I will never forsake thee, by partaking with them in their abominable sacrifices, in which the blood of men is offered, nor by swearing by the name of any of their false gods.

Ver. 5. *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.*] The Lord of heaven and earth is the God whom I serve: he, who is the supreme dispenser of all things, hath given me a kingdom for my portion, where he himself is worshipped; and he will defend and maintain my title to it while I adhere to him:

Ver. 6. *The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.*] As I am resolved to do: for there is no place so pleasant as that where he is worshipped; no country comparable to that (for all manner of good things) which he hath settled upon me, though I am not yet possessed of it.

Ver. 7. *I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night-season.*] I will therefore praise the Lord, and acknowledge his love; who hath hitherto guided me to behave myself so prudently, that my enemies have not been able to surprise me. In the darkest night of affliction, when I could not see my way, he hath secretly inspired my mind with wise thoughts, and admonished me what course to take for my preservation.

Ver. 8. *I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.*] This hath ever been my practice, to conceive God always present to me: and since he is still nigh to support and defend me, the fiercest assaults of my enemies shall never be able to deject me from that dignity which he hath designed for me.

Ver. 9. *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope.*] In confidence of which I feel not only a perfect satisfaction, but joy and triumph of heart. My tongue cannot but boast of it; and, be my condition never so weak and low, I shall rest in hope to be raised up again.

Ver. 10. *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell: neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*] For thou wilt not suffer me to remain always in this forlorn condition, nor let him, whom thou hast anointed to be thy king, be destroyed by Saul: *much less let that great King perish (whom thou hast promised of my seed); but, though they kill him and lay him in his grave, thou wilt take him from thence, and raise him from the dead, before his body be in the least corrupted.*

Ver. 11. *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*] Thou wilt shew me the way to escape out of all these dangers *(and do much more for the Messiah, who, being raised from the dead, shall live eternally);* and not only preserve my life, but satiate me with joy, when thy favour hath settled me on the throne, by that almighty power which is able to dispense everlasting happiness; *and will certainly exalt the Messiah to reign at thy right hand in endless joy and pleasure, after all his grievous sufferings.*

PSALM XVII.

ARGUMENT.

A Prayer of David; wherein he humbly represents to God his innocence in those things whereof he was accused: (of affecting the kingdom, I suppose, and seeking the life of Saul, 1 Sam. xxiv. 9.) and therefore beseeches him to grant him deliverance from his persecutors and calumniators (Saul, it is most likely, and those that set him on). See Theodoret.

Ver. 1. *HEAR the right, O Lord, attend unto my cry; give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips.*] I am oppressed, O Lord, with such false accusations, that I have no way but to appeal to thee, who art the righteous judge of the world; beseeching thee to deal with me according to the justice of my cause. It is my most earnest request to thee; and I desire no favour of thee, if these lips have spoken any deceitful words against Saul, or do now dissemble with thy majesty.

Ver. 2. *Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.*] Who hast long suspended thy sentence, and let my enemies pursue me, as if I was guilty: but I humbly entreat thee at last openly to acquit me; and to shew that thou regardest the greatness of no man's person, but only his uprightness and integrity.

Ver. 3. *Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing: I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.*] Thou art privy to the inmost thoughts of my heart; in the greatest retirements thou seest what I design; and hast tried me also (as gold in the fire) by many afflictions, which thou didst never find to make me think of any unlawful courses for my preservation: but still I have been what I pretended, and my words and secret thoughts have always agreed together.

Ver. 4. *Concerning the works of men, by the word of my lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.*] I know what men are apt to do in such circumstances; but the respect I bear to thy commandments hath preserved me from those murderous practices, which the violent man would have boldly attempted. (1 Sam. xxvi. 8.)

Ver. 5. *Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.*] And I beseech thee still confirm me in this resolution; that no temptation may make me forsake that tract of virtue in which I have hitherto persisted;

Ver. 6. *I have called upon thee; for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech.*] And in which I doubt not to be safe: for I have never yet cried unto thee but thou hast granted my request, and wilt not now, I hope, refuse to condescend unto it; but admit of this appeal which I make to thee, and do me right.

Ver. 7. *Shew thy marvellous loving-kindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them.*] Thy mercy will appear most wonderful in my preservation from this imminent danger wherein I am. Magnify it, therefore, O thou whose property it is to interpose thy mighty power, for the deliverance of such as confide in nothing but thy omnipotent goodness, from those who rise up against them to destroy them.

Ver. 8. *Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings.*] I commend myself to thy watchful providence; beseeching thee to defend me with the same care that we do that tender part in the midst of our eye. As a hen covers her chickens under her wings, from the ravenous bird that hovers over them to devour them:

Ver. 9. *From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies who compass me about.*] So do thou, O Lord, protect me (who fly unto thee for safety) from the wicked that are about to seize on me and spoil me; from those deadly enemies which have beset me round with eager desires and hopes to destroy me.

Ver. 10. *They are enclosed in their own fat; with their mouth they speak proudly.*] Who are so stuffed with worldly goods, and have thriven so long in their ungodly courses, that they are grown extreme proud of their power: and not only haughtily threaten my destruction, but presumptuously brag as if they had already accomplished their desire.

Ver. 11. *They have now compassed us in our steps; they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth.*] And, indeed, they have now gotten me and my followers into a very great strait: (1 Sam. xxiii. 26.) and which way soever we turn ourselves, we are in danger to fall into the hands of those who have steadfastly resolved our utter ruin.

Ver. 12. *Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places.*] No lion can be more desirous to tear a lamb in pieces, than Saul is to make a prey of me. Like a young lion in his den, he watches when an opportunity will offer itself that he may fall upon me, (1 Sam. xxiii. 7, 8. xxiv. 2, &c.)

Ver. 13. *Arise, O Lord; disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword.*] Delay no longer, therefore, O Lord, but speedily appear to defeat him. Throw him down to the ground, when he thinks to fall upon me: and though thou hast suffered the wicked to wound me sorely, yet let him not kill me, who depended upon thy power, which is able to deliver me.

Ver. 14. *From men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.*] He hath many, I know, that join with him to destroy me; but they are only mortal men, O Lord, who can do nothing but what thou permittest them for my correction: worldly men, who look no farther than this present life; and desire no other satisfaction, but to be very rich, to have a numerous posterity, and to leave them great estates, when they can enjoy them no longer.

Ver. 15. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.*] Which prosperity I do in no wise envy them, but think

myself happy that I can approach into thy presence, and, with a good conscience, wait for thy favour; nothing doubting, but when thou shalt shew thyself in thy majesty and power, it will be abundantly to my satisfaction.

PSALM XVIII.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David, the Servant of the Lord, who spake unto the Lord the Words of this Song, in the Day that the Lord delivered him from the Hand of all his Enemies, and from the Hand of Saul: and he said,

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David (whom the Lord chose to serve him in governing the children of Israel), and delivered by him to the master of the music in the tabernacle, for a perpetual commemoration of God's gracious care over him, and preservation of him, through the whole course of the long persecution and opposition he met withal, before he could get the kingdom. For which singular providence, he still gave particular thanks to God after every deliverance or victory which he vouchsafed him: but, at last (so great was his piety), he made one general acknowledgment of God's goodness to him, when he was peaceably settled upon his throne, in delivering him from the Philistines, the Syrians, and other nations, who rose up against him (and that in a miraculous manner, as he describes it, ver. 13, 14, &c. where Theodoret observes, that, in his time, God scattered the enemies of Christians by the like dreadful tempests); but especially from Saul, who (as he was the first, so) was the most violent, implacable, and dangerous, of all his enemies.

The sense of the Psalm is this:

Ver. 1. *I WILL love thee, O Lord, my strength.*] I love thee, O Lord, to whom I owe my safety and preferment, with the most passionate and ardent affection: and I will never cease to love thee thus, as long as ever I live.

Ver. 2. *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.*] For it was not the caves and lurking-places, (1 Sam. xxii. 1. 5. xxiii. 23.) nor the fortresses and strong holds, (xxiii. 14. 19. 29.) the rocks and impregnable forts, (xxiv. 2.) the high mountains and steep hills, to which I fled, (xxvi. 1.) that preserved me from my enemies; but the Lord Almighty, whom I made my refuge, and whom I acknowledge for my deliverer: to his gracious providence, and powerful protection, I ascribe my safety, and will never confide in any other security; he defended me in the most dangerous assaults of my enemies; he repelled all their forces, and placed me out of the reach of their violence.

Ver. 3. *I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from my enemies.*] Praised therefore be the Lord, unto whom I humbly commended myself by prayer (as I mean to do always) in my distresses, and he delivered me from all my enemies.

Ver. 4. *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.*] When there appeared no way for my escape, but they thought that they had me as sure as a bird taken in a net; when whole troops of ungodly men came pouring in upon me as a torrent, that threatened to sweep me quite away;

Ver. 5. *The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me.*] When I had no more power to help myself than a dead man bound hand and foot in his grave; (so suddenly was I entangled in their deadly snares, 1 Sam. xxiii. 26.)

Ver. 6. *In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.*] This was my belief in such grievous straits: I made my usual addresses to the Lord, and with great earnestness supplicated my most merciful God, who had so often delivered me: and, though he be so infinitely above us in his heavenly palace, he did not despise my petition, but it was admitted into his presence, and found a gracious audience.

Ver. 7. *Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.*] For he instantly appeared in a sensible manner to confound my enemies; who saw his wrathful displeasure in the dreadful tempest which fell upon them, and made the very earth tremble under them.

Ver. 8. *There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.*] There was nothing to be seen but fuming smoke and devouring fire; which, at his command, shot out burning coals among them.

Ver. 9. *He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet.*] His glorious majesty also visibly shewed itself, bowing the heavens (the place of its residence), and coming down in a thick cloud, which was spread as a carpet under it.

Ver. 10. *And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.*] Some of the principal angels were its chariot, wherein it rode very swiftly; and a rapid wind was the token of their presence, (2 Sam. v. 24.)

Ver. 11. *He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.*] A great darkness obscured it; for round about it were the rest of the heavenly ministers disposed to attend upon it in watery vapours and thick clouds of the sky.

Ver. 12. *At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed; hail-stones and coals of fire.*] Who, going forth from his glorious presence, sent hail-stones and coals of fire (as in the days of Joshua, x. 11.) in the face of my enemies.

Ver. 13. *The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail-stones and coals of fire.*] Which were followed with such terrible thunder, (like that in the days of Samuel, 1 Sam. vii. 10.) mixed with more hail-stones and fiery exhalations, as declared the greatness of his majesty, and the mightiness of his power.

Ver. 14. *Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.*] These were the arrows wherewith he scattered them: there needed no other darts to discomfit them.

Ver. 15. *Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.*] For even the earth itself was rent and torn by them; they cleft it asunder, and penetrated so deep, that the secret abysses

of it were discovered through the breaches that were made; when thou, O Lord, in great indignation didst rebuke my enemies.

Ver. 16. *He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters.*] Nothing but such a power from above could have preserved me, which the Lord was pleased graciously to extend to me: he laid hold on me, and kept me from sinking; he snatched me out of many and great dangers, which, like a deluge, were ready to overwhelm me.

Ver. 17. *He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.*] He delivered me first from that mighty giant Goliath, and then from Saul, whose power I was not able to withstand; and afterward from the Philistines and Syrians, and many other nations, whose forces were far superior unto mine, and whose hatred instigated them to do all they could to destroy me.

Ver. 18. *They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the Lord was my stay.*] When I was weak and unable to resist, they suddenly invaded me; but the Lord would not suffer them to overthrow me: (1 Sam. xxiii. xxiv. &c.)

Ver. 19. *He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.*] But brought me out of those straits into a state of perfect liberty. He delivered me (when they thought they had pent me up so close that I could not escape them) because he had a kindness for me.

Ver. 20. *The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.*] He knew also that I was unjustly persecuted; and therefore rewarded me according to the integrity of my heart, and the purity of my actions; which were never guilty of that whereof they accused me.

Ver. 21. *For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God.*] For I never took any unlawful courses for my deliverance; but when Saul fell into my hands, I would not kill him, because he was the Lord's anointed, (1 Sam. xxiv. 10.)

Ver. 22. *For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.*] For I laid his precepts before me, as the rule of my actions; and did not bid them stand aside, when it seemed to be my interest not to observe them:

Ver. 23. *I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.*] But chose rather to suffer any thing than lose my integrity: and how unjustly soever my enemies dealt with me, I would not imitate them; but, though I could not hinder *theirs*, kept myself from *mine* iniquity.

Ver. 24. *Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eye-sight.*] And therefore hath the Lord, who administers all things with the exactest justice, and the greatest goodness, heard my prayer: (1 Sam. xxvi. 23.) and dealt with me according to my innocent intentions, which would not let me defile my hands with the blood of Saul, when it was in my power to be revenged of him.

Ver. 25. *With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright.*] Such is the gracious method of thy providence, O Lord, who wilt do good to those who do good to others, and do them justice also (against their oppressors and calumniators) who preserve their integrity.

Ver. 26. *With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.*] And keep thy promises faithfully with those whose piety is unfeigned, and who immoveably keep their fidelity to thee. But if any will take crooked ways to obtain their ends, thou wilt ensnare them in their own devices; and, by such means as they least think of, lead them to destruction.

Ver. 27. *For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks.*] For thou art wont to deliver those who are poor and miserable, when they humbly wait on thee; and to lay those low, who (proud of their power) insolently oppress them.

Ver. 28. *For thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.*] I myself am an instance of it, who owe all my prosperity and joy to thee; by whom (when my hopes were ready to expire, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1.) I was brought out of a calamitous estate into this splendour and royal greatness which now I enjoy.

Ver. 29. *For by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall.*] For the strongest and most numerous enemies were not able to stand before me: I easily scaled the highest walls, wherein they thought themselves most securely defended against me, (2 Sam. v. 7, &c.)

Ver. 30. *As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried; he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.*] God is not like to men, for he never deserts his servants (as men are wont to do those that depend upon them) in difficult and dangerous affairs: his promises are freer from deceit, than the most refined gold from dross; and none shall be able to hurt those that rely upon them.

Ver. 31. *For who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God?*] For who is there that can frustrate his intentions, or resist his will? What power is there above or equal to his whom we worship, that can injure those whom he will protect, or defend those whom he will destroy?

Ver. 32. *It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.*] It was this mighty Lord that inspired me with courage, and removed all obstacles out of my way, to the completing my conquests, (2 Sam. v. 10.)

Ver. 33. *He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places.*] If swiftness was necessary, he made me as nimble as a hind, to pursue mine enemies even into those places, which, for their height and cragginess, were thought inaccessible.

Ver. 34. *He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.*] If there was need of dexterity or strength, he bestowed it on me to such a degree, that I was able to wrest the strongest bow out of my enemy's hand, and break it in pieces.

Ver. 35. *Thou hast given me the shield of thy salvation; and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great.*] If at any time I fell into the thickest troops of them, I was safely protected by thee and delivered. Thy mighty power upheld me from being oppressed by their numbers; and by thy goodness, with a handful of men, I got great victories.

Ver. 36. *Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip.*] Thou didst open a wide passage to me in

my greatest straits, and in the most uneven and difficult ways I never stumbled:

Ver. 37. *I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed.*] But having routed my enemies, I pursued them so closely, that I overtook them in their flight, and did not return to my camp till I had destroyed them.

Ver. 38. *I have wounded them, that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.*] I gave them such a blow, that they were not able to renew the fight; but were so perfectly subdued, that they lay at my feet.

Ver. 39. *For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me.*] Which is all to be ascribed to thy mighty power, O God; who gavest me both the courage to fight, and success in the encounter, with such numerous enemies as hoped to destroy me.

Ver. 40. *Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me.*] To thy praise I again mention it (not to magnify my own prowess), that they who hated me submitted their very necks to me, that I might kill them, or impose what yoke I pleased on them.

Ver. 41. *They cried, but there was none to save them; even unto the Lord, but he answered them not.*] They sought for help of their allies and confederates; but it was beyond their power to deliver them: for they were deserted by the Lord, who regarded not their cries unto him;

Ver. 42. *Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind; I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.*] But left them to be beaten and dispersed by me, till they were as weak as the small dust, which is tossed up and down with every wind; and as contemptible as the dirt in the street, which every body tramples under foot.

Ver. 43. *Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; and thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people whom I have not known shall serve me.*] Thus hast thou continued thy kindness to me, till thou seatedst me on the throne, both of Israel and Judah; whose contentions are ceased, and both united in me. (2 Sam. v. 1.) And, since that time, thou hast not only delivered me from those dangerous rebellions, (2 Sam. xviii.) and seditious motions, (2 Sam. xx.) which have been raised among my own people to dethrone me; but made foreign nations subject to me, and people whom I had no knowledge of to become my tributaries.

Ver. 44. *As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: the strangers shall submit themselves unto me.*] The very report of me and of my victories made some of them heartily submit themselves to me; and others dissemble their hostility, and offer me their service.

Ver. 45. *The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places.*] They trembled and fell, like withered leaves, at the sound of my name; and, distrusting their strong holds, came creeping out with fear, to surrender them into my hands.

Ver. 46. *The Lord liveth; and blessed be my Rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.*] Blessed be the Lord (to whose eternal glory and honour I speak all this): let him be everlastingly praised, who hath preserved me in so many dangers: let him, who not only preserved but exalted me, be magnified and exalted with the highest praises.

Ver. 47. *It is God that avengeth me, and subdueth the people under me.*] For he is that mighty God (I can never say it often enough), who hath many and many a time executed vengeance for me on those who were injurious to me; and hath brought many nations under my empire.

Ver. 48. *He delivereth me from mine enemies; yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me; thou hast delivered me from the violent man.*] It is he to whom I owe my life (which my enemies, if he had not rescued me, would have taken from me): and, which is more, thou hast made me superior to them all, and set me on a throne, in spite of the fierce and violent persecution of Saul; from which thou didst mercifully deliver me.

Ver. 49. *Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.*] And therefore I will every where make my thankful acknowledgments unto thee, O Lord: those strange nations shall know that I ascribe my victories unto thee; in honour of whose great name I will sing this perpetual song.

Ver. 50. *Great deliverance giveth he to his king: and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.*] The Lord hath granted wonderful and manifold deliverances to me; who reign not by usurpation, but by his special appointment; and the same mercy, by which alone I was advanced to this dignity, shall be continued to me, and to my posterity, till the coming of that great King, whose kingdom shall have no end.

PSALM XIX.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David (and delivered by him to the master of the music in the tabernacle), declaring that no man could be ignorant of God who would consider his admirable works; much less could the Jews, whom he had instructed by his law; and therefore justly expected their greater care not wilfully to offend him.

Ver. 1. *THE heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.*] There is no part of this great fabric of the world which doth not direct us to a most mighty Being, by whom it was made: but above all the rest, the heavens, which are so vastly extended, and wherein we see so many glorious bodies, proclaim aloud to all mankind the immense greatness, and power, and wisdom, and goodness of God; which shine most brightly there.

Ver. 2. *Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.*] By their settled and orderly revolution the day and the night are made; from whose constant succession, and commodious variations, there issues forth (as water from a fountain) perpetual instruction, and matter of praise and thanks to his most wise goodness.

Ver. 3. *There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.*] They cannot speak, indeed, as we can do; nor do we hear any words they utter: and yet, without these, they are understood by all nations; even by the most barbarous, who understand not a word of any other language.

Ver. 4. *Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun.*] They all read here, as in a book, the wonderful art and skill of that almighty Being, who framed this regular structure; though they be never so re-

mote, they hear them preach (as the apostles hereafter shall preach more fully) how great and how good he is: especially if they hearken to that universal minister of his, the sun, which hath its habitation fixed for it here;

Ver. 5. *Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.*] And comes forth every morning decked with such a radiant light, that no bridegroom looks so cheerfully, or is so adorned, on his marriage-day. Its swiftness also is as admirable as its beauty, for the mightiest champion can but weakly imitate it, in the speediness, evenness, and unwearidness of its course.

Ver. 6. *His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.*] It runs from the east to the west every day; and, in its yearly revolution, visits the southern and northern parts: so that all the earth feels the benefit of its quickening heat.

Ver. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.*] Thus is God visible to all the world in the face of the heavens; but to us he is conspicuous in a more excellent manner, by the revelation he hath made of himself in the law of Moses: which is a more perfect light to guide us, than the sun itself; restoring and comforting the most drooping souls, more than the sun cheers our bodily spirits. For it is a sure testimony of God's will and of his love, and preserves ignorant souls from being seduced to worship the sun as a god: for it makes them, at the first word, so wise, as to understand that "the Lord created the heavens, as well as the earth."

Ver. 8. *The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.*] And from thence delivered to us a complete rule of life for all sorts of men among us: who see with great joy all officers and rulers, both sacred and civil, directed how to manage all for the public good; and every private man taught to keep himself pure from all manner of wickedness: it being as clear as the sun what he ought to do, and what to avoid.

Ver. 9. *The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.*] The true worship of God is here unalterably settled, (Deut. xii. 32.) free from all profane mixtures of superstition: and all our transactions with men are prescribed to be in perfect truth and righteousness.

Ver. 10. *More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb.*] We are happier in this than in all the gold and precious treasures which are brought from other countries; or in the most delicious pleasures which he hath provided for us in our own.

Ver. 11. *Moreover, by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.*] I say nothing but what I have tried: for, by following the admonitions of thy holy laws, both in my private and my public capacity, thy servant is become thus illustrious: and in their observance there is not only much satisfaction at present, but a far greater reward in the conclusion.

Ver. 12. *Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.*] All our unhappiness is, that we do not observe them so strictly as we ought. They are a perfect rule; but our obedience, alas! is so exceedingly imperfect, that we cannot so much as number our wanderings from it: many of which we never observed; and therefore are so far from meriting any reward for obedience, that I must humbly beg thy pardon for the demerits of my negligence:

Ver. 13. *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.*] And the assistance of thy grace likewise (without which I shall still farther swerve from thy law), to preserve me from all wilful sins against thee. I am devoted to thy service, O Lord; therefore I beseech thee so to strengthen my will to please thee, that no temptation may prevail with me to consent deliberately to offend thee. Then shall I (notwithstanding my infirmities and ignorances) be accounted upright before thee; and be free from a great deal of guilt, which otherways, by manifold transgressions, I shall draw upon me.

Ver. 14. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.*] And I shall have the confidence also then to address myself unto thee, both openly and in secret, with hopes that all my sacrifices (offered from a heart that sincerely studies to be obedient to thee) shall be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord; to whom I fly for safety and deliverance, in all the assaults which the enemies, either of my body or my soul, make upon me.

PSALM XX.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David (and by him delivered to the master of the music in the tabernacle), wherein the people are taught to pray for his good success in some great expedition: it is probable (from ver. 7.) against the Ammonites and Syrians, who came, with great numbers of horsemen and chariots, to fight with him, (2 Sam. x. 6. 8. 1 Chron. xix. 7.)

Ver. 1. *THE Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee.*] The Lord, who never fails those that seek him, hear thy prayer, when the enemy distresseth thee in the day of battle: (2 Sam. x. 9, &c.) the mighty God, who hath made a gracious covenant with Jacob and his posterity, protect thee, and make thee victorious.

Ver. 2. *Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion.*] O God, who hast pitched thy tabernacle among us, and dwellest in Mount Zion by a visible token of thy presence, succour our sovereign in the time of need, and support him in all assaults of such numerous enemies as are combined against him.

Ver. 3. *Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt-sacrifice. Selah.*] Shew, by some signal token from heaven, that thou art pleased with all his oblations and burnt-sacrifices, whereby he made his supplication to thee, for thy blessing on him in this undertaking.

Ver. 4. *Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.*] Make him as prosperous as he himself wishes; and enable him to accomplish whatsoever he designs.

Ver. 5. *We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the Lord fulfil all thy petitions.*] In confidence of thy help we will shout when we set upon our enemies; in thy power and might we will advance courageously against them: for the Lord will not fail to grant the petitions of our sovereign; whose cause is so just, and who hath been so insolently treated by them, (2 Sam. x. 3, 4.)

Ver. 6. *Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed: he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.*] This is the assured hope of every soul of us; we are as certain as if he had already obtained it, that the Lord will make him victorious: for he reigns by his special appointment: who, as he infinitely excels in strength, and commands all the hosts of heaven; so will declare the exceeding greatness of his power, in giving him an illustrious deliverance.

Ver. 7. *Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.*] We are not daunted at the vast numbers of our confederate enemies; some of which boast of their chariots, others of their horses: but to all these we oppose the mighty power of the Lord, who hath heretofore done such great things for us.

Ver. 8. *They are brought down and fallen; but we are risen, and stand upright.*] And we triumph beforehand, saying, they are thrown down from their chariots, and fallen from their horses, wherein they trusted: but we, whom they despised, are erect and stand unmoveable, merely by our confidence in the Lord.

Ver. 9. *Save, Lord: let the king hear us when we call.*] Let it be unto us, O Lord, according to our desires and our hopes: preserve our king; and, in the day when we cry unto thee for help, make our armies victorious.

PSALM XXI.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

Theodoret truly observes, that, in this Psalm as well as the former, David (who was the author of it, and delivered it to the master of the music in the tabernacle) speaks in the person of the people: whom he instructs how to give God thanks (not for Hezekiah's recovery from his great sickness, and the lengthening of his days, as Theodoret takes it, but) for granting him those victories which they prayed for in the Psalm foregoing. And it is generally looked upon as describing, under that figure, the exaltation, glory, and majesty of Christ, which he obtained by his bloody death and passion. Many of the Hebrews themselves apply it to the Messiah. So that it may be called a Psalm of triumph, after the victories which David got over his enemies; which were a type of Christ's victory over death, and of the triumph that ensued. And truly there are some things in it which are more literally fulfilled in Christ than in David, as ver. 4—6.

Ver. 1. *THE king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!*] Thou hast heard the prayers of thy people, O Lord, when they cried unto thee, saying, *Lord, save the king:* (xx. 9.) who will never cease, therefore, to thank thee, with the greatest joy and gladness, for that extraordinary strength and courage wherewith thou didst endue him. O how much beyond all expression are his joy and thankfulness for thy wonderful deliverance of him!

Ver. 2. *Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.*] Thou hast granted all that his heart desired, (xx. 4.) as well as that which he openly requested with his lips.

Ver. 3. *For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.*] Yea, more than his heart desired. For when he thought of no such thing, thou wast graciously pleased to anoint him to a kingdom: in which having settled him, thou hast added a new glory to him, and set an illustrious crown upon his head. (1 Chron. xx. 2.)

Ver. 4. *He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever.*] He desired only to escape with his life, when he was encompassed with inevitable dangers: and thou moreover didst promise to prolong his days; (2 Sam. vii. 12.) and to continue the crown to his posterity for many generations, (2 Sam. vii. 16. 19.) as thou wilt do to his son Christ for ever and ever.

Ver. 5. *His glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.*] Great is the fame, also, which he hath won by the many victories thou hast given him: (2 Sam. vii. 9.) all nations honour him (as they shall much more do the Messiah), and reverence that royal majesty to which thou hast exalted him. (1 Chron. xiv. 2. 17.)

Ver. 6. *For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.*] And, which is a far greater glory, thou hast not only bestowed extraordinary benefits upon himself; but made him a blessing to future generations, whom thou wilt bless for his sake. (1 Kings viii. 15. 20. 56.) By which special favour and token of thy love to him, thou hast raised him to the highest pitch of joy as well as of greatness.

Ver. 7. *For the king trusteth in the Lord; and through the mercy of the Most High, he shall not be moved.*] Which shall never cease to cheer and refresh his spirit, because he confides in him who never fails to perform his promises: through his kindness, who is superior to all, the throne of David shall stand fast, though all the power on earth shall combine to overturn it.

Ver. 8. *Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies; thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.*] They are thy enemies, O Most High, as well as his, who endeavour to disturb him; and they shall never escape thy vengeance: wheresoever they skulk or fly for safety, thy vengeance shall pursue them, and punish their spiteful opposition to thee.

Ver. 9. *Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.*] Woe be to them, when the time comes wherein thou wilt call them to an account for their hatred to thee. They shall as certainly perish, as if they were cast into a fiery oven: the Lord, who is justly incensed against them, shall utterly consume them with a sharp and unavoidable destruction.

Ver. 10. *Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.*] They shall be so far from finding any favour, that thou shalt quite ex-

tinguish their families, and wholly abolish such a wicked generation.

Ver. 11. *For they intended evil against thee; they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform.*] Who intended to destroy thy anointed, and root out thy religion. Their design was so mischievous, and therefore they deserve to be thus punished; though they were not able to effect it.

Ver. 12. *Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them.*] It may most justly provoke thee to set thyself against them: and, as their aim, and the bent of their heart, was to throw him down whom thou hast advanced; so to make them the mark of thy severest displeasure, till they fall down wounded and rise no more.

Ver. 13. *Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power.*] Whereby all good men shall be excited to extol thy power; and therefore shew the greatness of it, O Lord, and magnify thyself before their eyes: and then, whatsoever others do, we, who are delivered by thee, will set forth thy mightiness in our songs, and celebrate it with perpetual praises.

PSALM XXII.

To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar (Hind of the Morning). A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David (and directed to the master of music in the tabernacle), wherein, under his own person, (who was persecuted as a hind is by the hunters early in the morning, ver. 16.) he makes a large description of the sufferings of Christ; and, in conclusion, of his exaltation, and the propagation of his kingdom to the utmost ends of the earth. Some of which things are delivered in such expressions, that they are more literally fulfilled in our Saviour, than ever they were in David; to whom they belong, but in a metaphorical sense. I shall note the particulars in their proper places, underneath the paraphrase, which I would not too much enlarge, or interrupt, by inserting them here.

Ver. 1. *MY God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*] O my God, my most gracious God, whose power no creature can resist, how strange doth it seem, that I, who have been thy care so long, am now left without any visible means of escaping those that seek my life; and that the loudest cries which I pour out of a heart loaden with sorrow and grief, are far from prevailing for any relief, (Matt. xxvii. 46.)

Ver. 2. *O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not; and in the night-season, and am not silent.*] O my God (for so I will still call thee, even in the greatest distresses), there is no day, no night, passes, wherein I do not, with incessant cries, most importunately call upon thee; but can obtain no rest from my persecutions.

Ver. 3. *But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.*] Yet thou art he that hatest all those who unjustly persecute thy servant; and keepest thy word most faithfully with them that depend upon thee: as appears by the many deliverances thou hast sent them from thy holy place, where they celebrate thy name with their perpetual praises.

Ver. 4. *Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.*] They that are gone before us have left us many remembrances of thy mercy to those that piously relied on thee: in all their straits they applied themselves unto thee as their only deliverer; and by thy help they escaped the greatest dangers.

Ver. 5. *They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.*] Their fervent prayers prevailed with thee (though mine can now obtain no audience): they were confident thou wouldest preserve them in safety, and their hope did not make them ashamed.

Ver. 6. *But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.*] Whereas I, who have waited on thee also after their example, am so disappointed in my expectation, that my adversaries are ready to tread me under their feet: so weak I am, and thereby so contemptible, that not only the great men, but the baser sort and dregs of the people, publicly reproach and despise me.

Ver. 7. *And all they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying.*] All that see the straits to which I am reduced openly deride me: they make mouths at me, and, in a scornful manner, shake their heads, and jest upon me, saying,

[*This was most exactly and literally fulfilled in our Saviour Christ,* Matt. xxvii. 39. 43.]

Ver. 8. *He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.*] This is he that talked so much of the favour of God to him, and depended upon him that he would deliver him: let us see now what he will do for him: let him deliver him out of our hands, and shew thereby that he is so dear, as he pretends, unto him.

Ver. 9. *But thou art he that took me out of the womb; thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.*] This insolent language is very grievous to my soul, but it shall not cast me into utter despair of thy mercy: I will rather continue to wait upon thee, who, without my knowledge, and when I could not call upon thee, didst grant me a greater deliverance than this which I now ask of thee: for thou broughtest me out of my mother's womb, and then providedst nourishment for me; tookest a singular care of me while I hung upon her breasts.

Ver. 10. *I was cast upon thee from the womb; thou art my God from my mother's belly.*] In my infancy thou didst preserve me from all the mischiefs to which that weak estate is incident; and ever since hast been my most gracious protector: for, from my first coming into the world till this moment, I have had nothing to trust unto but only thy good providence; which all along declared (though I was the youngest of my brethren) what a large share I had in thy loving-kindness.

Ver. 11. *Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help.*] And shall I think thou wilt now forsake me, when I call upon thee, and acknowledge thy former care, and hope for thy future? Go on, O God, to conclude as thou hast begun, and continue to do me good. And now that there is an appearance of the sorest distress, and I am no more able to help myself than when I was an infant, and have less help and succour from others; be

thou pleased to exert thy power, as thou hast ever done, for my deliverance.

Ver. 12. *Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.*] It must be thy work alone; for my enemies are not only very numerous, but so mighty and formidable in their power, so insolent also and furious, and have enclosed and hemmed me in so strictly, that it is impossible without thy miraculous providence to escape them.

Ver. 13. *They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.*] A hungry lion is not more fierce nor more dreadful, when he is just ready to seize on his trembling prey, than these my persecutors; whom I hear roaring and thundering out their threats, and see coming with open mouth to fall upon me, greedily desiring and aiming to devour me:

Ver. 14. *I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.*] Which have struck me with such consternation, that I am as weak as water; my bones are so loosed, that they are not able to support my body; my heart fails me, and my spirit dissolves and faints away, as wax melts before the fire.

Ver. 15. *My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.*] Fear, sadness, and sorrow, have quite dried up my vital moisture: I have scarce strength enough left to complain: but am just upon the point to expire, and to be laid in my grave.

Ver. 16. *For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.*] For that malicious company which have combined together to persecute me, are as greedy and as cruel as the hungry dogs, who have hunted down a hind (see the title), and are all gathered about her to tear her in pieces: they use me most shamefully, as well as cruelly, and have bored through my hands and my feet.

[*There is nothing like this in the history of David; of whom it can be only spoken poetically by an hyperbole.*]

Ver. 17. *I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.*] Grief and sorrow have so consumed my flesh, that my bones stick out through my skin, and may be distinctly numbered: and they that behold my misery are so far from having compassion on me, that they feed their eyes, and are exceedingly satisfied with this lamentable sight.

Ver. 18. *They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*] They make themselves sure I shall never recover; no more than the poor hind, whose skin the hunters have divided, or cast lots to whose share it shall fall. For so have they parted my upper garments among them, and cast lots who shall have my inner.

[*This also was more literally fulfilled in Christ than in David; in whose story we find nothing like it: and therefore it can signify nothing more (if applied to him) than that they looked upon him as utterly undone; and rifled his house, and despoiled him of all when he fled from Saul,* 1 Sam. xix.]

Ver. 19. *But be not thou far from me, O Lord; O my strength, haste thee to help me.*] Once more, therefore, I humbly beseech thee, O Lord, to interpose, by thy power, in this grievous strait, for my deliverance: it is easy for thee to effect it, who art almighty, and I depend merely on thy aid; which I entreat thee to send speedily for my relief, or else it will come too late.

Ver. 20. *Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.*] Rescue my life from the sword, which the enemy hath drawn to despatch me: it is all I have left, and it is left without all defence but thine; who, I hope, wilt preserve it from the power of him, that, with the rage and fury of a dog, maliciously persecutes me.

Ver. 21. *Save me from the lion's mouth; for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.*] Thou hast done as great things heretofore, and sent me relief when the fiercest and strongest enemies were pushing at me, and insulting over me: which makes me presume of thy favour now in this sore exigence, when the most violent men are ready to fall upon me, and tear me in pieces, if thou dost not save me.

Ver. 22. *I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.*] Save me, O Lord, and it will redound to thy praise, and not merely to my own satisfaction: for I will tell all my brethren how good and gracious thou art; and publicly proclaim the greatness of thy power, and wisdom, and justice (as well as of thy love), in the midst of thy faithful people.

[*This David did in the eighteenth Psalm; and this our Saviour did by his apostles,* Heb. ii. 12. *who preached his resurrection,* &c. *every where, to the praise and glory of God's grace.* Ephes. i. 6.]

Ver. 23. *Ye that fear the Lord, praise him: all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.*] I will call upon all the devout worshippers of the Lord to join with me in praising and giving thanks unto him. (1 Chron. xvi.) Let the whole posterity of Jacob (and whosoever hath any thing of his spirit in him) set forth the glory of his most excellent perfections, which shine in his marvellous works: let them all, I say, whom he hath chosen to be his peculiar people, most humbly worship and adore his majesty, and learn to give him faithful obedience.

[*All that follows is as applicable to Christ as to David; and some passages more fulfilled in him.*]

Ver. 24. *For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.*] For that poor despicable person (whom men contemned and scorned, ver. 6, 7.) he hath not disdained to look graciously upon, in his lowest and vilest condition. But, though he seemed to neglect him for a time, hath seasonably appeared in his favour, and granted the earnest prayers which he put up unto him in his distress.

Ver. 25. *My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.*] Which shall be openly acknowledged, when I return to thy house with the heartiest praises to thee; from whom, I am sensible, I receive all the blessings I enjoy. And as I have been forward in my trouble to vow thee many sacrifices, if thou wouldest restore me; so I will certainly offer them in the presence of those that devoutly worship the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 26. *The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him; your heart shall live for ever.*] I will invite also those poor people, who were partakers with me in my sufferings, to come and feast with me on that plentiful provision I will make for them; and thereby encourage all those that seek the Lord sincerely, and depend upon

him, to hope that they shall also praise him. Let me assure all such faithful souls, your hearts shall be always full of comfort and joy, which nothing shall be able to take away from you.

Ver. 27. *All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.*] Nor shall the fame of thy wonderful works, O Lord, be confined within the narrow bounds of this one country; but spread itself to the farthermost parts of the earth; where they shall, with thankful commemorations of thy goodness, universally prostrate themselves before thee, and become thy subjects.

Ver. 28. *For the kingdom is the Lord's; and he is the governor among the nations.*] For the Lord is the sovereign of the whole world: and therefore, as all nations are under his dominion, so they shall all submit unto his government.

Ver. 29. *All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him; and none can keep alive his own soul.*] All they that are rich and powerful shall partake of his altar, and humbly worship him that bestows such benefits upon them:* and so shall all the poor and miserable also think themselves happy in his service. For he is the protector of them all; and the greatest, as well as the meanest, must acknowledge, that of him alone cometh their salvation.

[* *As they that ate of the sacrifices did,* 1 Cor. x. 18.]

Ver. 30. *A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.*] Their posterity likewise shall devote themselves unto him, and propagate his religion unto future generations; whom the Lord shall adopt into his family.

Ver. 31. *They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.*] They shall join themselves to the society of his people; and publish to those that shall succeed them the loving-kindness and the faithfulness of the Lord, in this wonderful deliverance, which he alone hath wrought for me.

PSALM XXIII.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed by David, after God had brought him out of that great distress, of which he complained in the foregoing, and settled him in a prosperous condition: wherein he was confident God would continue him.

Ver. 1. *THE Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.*] There is no shepherd exercises a more tender and constant care over his flock than the Lord doth over me: and therefore I am confident I shall not want any thing that is necessary, either for my sustenance or for my defence, against those who would bereave me of my happiness.

Ver. 2. *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*] For, as a good shepherd leads his sheep in the violent heat to shady places, where they may lie down and feed (not in parched, but) in fresh and green pastures; and in the evening leads them (not to muddy and troubled waters, but) to pure and quiet streams: so hath he already made a fair and plentiful provision for me; which I enjoy in peace without any disturbance.

Ver. 3. *He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*] And lest I should lose so great a happiness, his goodness is pleased (for to nothing else can I ascribe it) both to direct and guide me in the right course of pious living, and to reduce me when I go astray; just as a shepherd brings back his wandering sheep from those craggy, untrodden paths, wherein they would lose themselves; and leads them into plain and easy ways, wherein they find rest and safety.

Ver. 4. *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*] Which makes me resolve to take a good courage, though I should fall again into the most dismal dangers (as a poor sheep sometimes doth into a deep pit): it shall not terrify me, when I remember that thou art present with me, to protect and defend me: thy royal power and pastoral care shall be my support and comfort.

Ver. 5. *Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.*] But (such is thy extraordinary kindness to me) thou hast not merely provided food, but a feast for me; a most sumptuous feast, which, with great care and order, thou hast set before me, to the astonishment of my enemies: who with shame and grief behold me, whom they lately despised, rejoicing in thy royal bounty towards me, which entertains me even with superfluity of all good things.

Ver. 6. *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*] And therefore I am bold to hope, that the same bounteous goodness and tender mercy which hath without my desert done all this for me, and pursues me as zealously with its favour as my enemies do with their malice, will still most graciously attend me to the end of my days, and settle me in a quiet enjoyment of his house (as well as my own); where I will never cease to praise his wonderful love towards me, and to give him thanks for all the benefits he hath bestowed upon his unworthy servant.

PSALM XXIV.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

As the foregoing Psalm seems to have been made by David presently after his settlement in his kingdom, so this, it is most likely, was penned by him, when he brought the ark from the house of Obed-Edom, and settled it (after many flittings and removals) in Mount Zion. Which place, upon that account, he prefers before all the rest of the world; and excites the people, who attended the ark thither with extraordinary pomp and solemnity, not to content themselves merely with that sort of piety, but to add the practice of all moral virtue; that so they might enjoy the blessings which might be expected from the Divine presence with them, and comfortably wait for the coming of the Messiah. Whose ascension to heaven is represented by the carrying of the ark up into Mount Zion; which was a type of heaven, as the ark was of the Lord Christ.

The Hebrews (from whom some copies of the LXX. add in the title, τῆς μιᾶς τῶν σαββάτων) were wont to sing this

Psalm on the first day of the week; (see the Argument of Psalm xciii.) because, as some fancy, there is mention in the beginning of it of the creation of the earth; which Moses says was on that day: but rather, I should think, because therein their prophets and wise men saw a prophecy of Christ; whose first step to the throne of his glory was upon the first day of the week, when we constantly commemorate his resurrection. And there is so remarkable a difference between the eighth verse and the tenth, that we may justly think some new thing is intended in the ninth and tenth verses, which are a repetition of the seventh and eighth; *viz.* the ascension of our Lord Christ: for, in the beginning of the verse, the question is put with great emphasis, *Who is this King of glory?* and in the latter end, the words, *mighty in battle,* are omitted: because, in the days of Christ, as Aben Ezra himself gives the account, "Men are to turn their swords into plough-shares," &c.

Ver. 1. *THE earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.*] What a favour is this, that the Divine Majesty will vouchsafe to take up his special residence here among us! when the whole earth is his, and all the creatures wherewith it is filled, this great world, and all the people that inhabit it.

Ver. 2. *For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.*] For by his almighty power it was formed, and therefore he hath a just propriety in it. He hath settled it also so firmly, that, though the seas and the rivers beat against it, they cannot overwhelm it; but, together with it, make a convenient dwelling for those that live in every part of it.

Ver. 3. *Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in his holy place?*] And, blessed be God, we dwell in that part of the earth where he himself hath fixed his royal palace. (For this is the mountain that he hath chosen and separated from all other, to be the place of his special presence.) But who is worthy to appear before him? Who may hope to be admitted to a gracious audience with him?

Ver. 4. *He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.*] Not every one that lives in this happy country (though chosen to be his peculiar people), but he that carefully keeps his commands in thought, and deed, and word. He, I say, who not only preserves his hands pure from murder and theft, and such-like injurious actions, but his heart also from so much as designing them; who uses no lies, much less false oaths, to deceive his neighbour, and enrich himself; but religiously observes all his promises, especially those that are made in God's presence, though it be to his own detriment.

Ver. 5. *He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.*] This is the worshipper, and he alone, who shall receive a blessing, not only from the priest (when he comes out of the sanctuary), but from the Lord himself; who will faithfully keep his promises with them, and amply reward them, who are thus faithful to him.

Ver. 6. *This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.*] This is the genuine people of God, whose prayers are like to prevail with him. Such should all those proselytes be, who seek the favour of being received into your communion, O ye children of Jacob.

Ver. 7. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.*] And let all those who thus follow the Lord (not merely with their bodies, but with their hearts), in this solemn entrance he now makes into the holy place, join with me, and say, Be ye open, O ye gates of the sanctuary; stand wide open, ye durable doors; and the King of incomparable majesty will enter, and, by the special token of his presence, dwell among us.

Ver. 8. *Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.*] And if any ask, who this King is, whose majesty we proclaim to be so transcendent, let them know it is the Lord, who made and governs the world: that most mighty and invincible Lord, by whose presence with me I have been victorious in so many battles.

Ver. 9. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.*] Therefore make no delay, O ye gates of the [*heavenly*] sanctuary; be ye open, wide open, O ye doors, which never shall decay; and the King of incomparable majesty, as I said, shall enter, and fix his seat in this holy place.

Ver. 10. *Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.*] And if you ask again (as there is reason), with greater admiration, Who is this (see the Argument), the King of incomparable majesty? know that the Lord of the sun, moon, and stars, yea, of all the angelical powers; he is the King, whose transcendent majesty is come to make his residence here.

PSALM XXV.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been penned by David after the commission of some great sin, (ver. 11.) and in some great distress, whereinto he was fallen, (ver. 15, 16.) probably after the matter of Uriah, and when Absalom rebelled against him. Which brought to mind all the offences of his youth, (ver. 7.) and made him an earnest supplicant for the pardon of them, and for deliverance from his enemies. He began to make this petition with an extraordinary art; but the method is presently disturbed, by the ardency of his desires, and his passionate sorrow, which would not let him follow exactly the order of the letters of the alphabet, in the beginning of every verse, as he first designed.

Ver. 1. *UNTO thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.*] O Lord, my constant and only refuge in all my troubles, I look up unto thee in this distress; most humbly waiting on thee, and hoping in thee that thou wilt deliver me.

Ver. 2. *O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed; let not mine enemies triumph over me.*] Thou knowest, O my God, that I place no confidence in any thing but thine almighty goodness, upon which I profess entirely to depend: and therefore do not fail to relieve me, lest I hang down my head in confusion of face, and my enemies insult over me, when they see me disappointed of the help which I have so often declared I expect from thee.

Ver. 3. *Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.*] Yea, for their sakes, who, by my example, wait upon thee, do not deny me: let not those who take my part, and place the same confidence in thee that I do, be disappointed of their hopes; but let them be utterly defeated, who, against all law and all obligations, have broke their faith with me, and without any provocation vainly labour to destroy me.

Ver. 4. *Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths.*] It is hard to know what to do in these difficult times, especially in this great agitation of thoughts, wherein my troubled mind is tossed up and down: therefore do thou be pleased, O Lord, to shew me the course thou wouldest have me take; and govern my actions so, that they may be pleasing unto thee.

Ver. 5. *Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.*] I have as much need of thy guidance, as a little child hath of its parents'; and I cry as earnestly to thee, that thou wilt direct me in every step: and especially that thou wilt preserve me as faithful to thee, as I doubt not thou wilt be to me; for thou art the author of all the deliverances I have received, and on thee I have, with a constant and perseverant hope, depended in all my trials.

Ver. 6. *Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindnesses; for they have been ever of old.*] Who art so ready to help the miserable, when they humbly seek thee, that all ages have left us remembrances of thy most compassionate bounty towards them. And therefore I beseech thee to do to me as thou hast ever done: I beg no new thing of thee, but implore that clemency and mercy which thou never yet deniedst to any pious supplicant.

Ver. 7. *Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; according to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness' sake, O Lord.*] I am a sinner indeed, and began to be so very early; for in my youth I childishly and foolishly went astray from thee, and since that time have committed much more grievous offences. But thy goodness is so great, that thou art not wont to punish us according to our deserts, but to pardon us according to thy tender mercies; to which I now betake myself, beseeching thee not to consider the greatness of my sins, but only the largeness and freeness of thy mercy, which gives me hope thou wilt be graciously reconciled to me.

Ver. 8. *Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.*] For such is the loving-kindness of the Lord, such is his love to rectitude and holiness; that he will rather choose to reduce sinners, and instruct them in the way of virtue, than destroy them because they have wandered from it.

Ver. 9. *The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way.*] If they repent, that is, and, being troubled for what they have done amiss, meekly submit to his will and pleasure; he will sweetly direct them to discern what is acceptable to him. Such humble souls will be apt to learn, and therefore he will not fail to teach them the way to recover his favour.

Ver. 10. *All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.*] And when they carefully observe the covenant wherein they stand engaged to him (by obeying his laws, which testify what his will and pleasure are), he will order and dispose all things for their good, and faithfully perform the promises he hath made to such dutiful servants.

Ver. 11. *For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.*] I beseech thee therefore again, by this mercy and faithfulness of thine, which shall be always celebrated and praised by me, to grant me a gracious pardon; for which I am the more earnest, because my sin is so foul, so heinous, and such a multiplied wickedness, that I can have no rest till thou art reconciled to me.

Ver. 12. *What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.*] Which if thou wilt be, O how happy shall I think myself! For he that fears to offend thy majesty (as I in all reason ought hereafter to do, both because I on no other terms expect thy merciful pardon, and have felt also the sad burden of being a sinner), him will the Lord instruct, and lead into those ways which are conformable to his blessed will, and which will prove most grateful to him that walks in them.

Ver. 13. *His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.*] He shall be at ease within himself, or rather filled with joy, and all manner of satisfaction: none of the blessings of this life shall be wanting to him, and he shall leave them as an inheritance to his posterity after him.

Ver. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.*] Or if he fall into any straits and difficulties, the greatest comfort of all is, that the Lord is present to them that fear to do any thing displeasing to him (though it were to deliver themselves from danger), to counsel and secretly suggest good advice unto them; for he hath engaged himself to shew them what is best for their safety and preservation.

Ver. 15. *Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.*] In confidence of which my mind is fixed in a constant dependance upon the Lord: I expect no help from any one else, but on him will I patiently wait; for I believe he will wind me out of these perplexities, and deliver me from the snares which my enemies have laid for me.

Ver. 16. *Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted.*] Behold, O Lord, how entirely I trust in thee; have a respect to my faith, and hope, and patience, and take pity upon me, now that thou seest I am in a manner forsaken by all, and reduced from the estate of a king to the condition of a beggar.

Ver. 17. *The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.*] Great are the oppressions that lie upon my heart, and they are still growing into new cares, and fears, and vexatious thoughts: O deliver me out of such grievous straits, which press so sore upon me.

Ver. 18. *Look upon mine affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins.*] Have compassion upon the miserable and toilsome life which I lead, and remove all my sins out of thy sight, which I know are the cause of it.

Ver. 19. *Consider mine enemies, for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.*] Discountenance my enemies, who (as they are very numerous, so) bear an implacable hatred to me; which disposes them to do me all the mischief imaginable, though I have not been in the least injurious to them.

Ver. 20. *O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.*] O preserve me from

falling into their hands, for they seek my life, and rescue me from the danger I am now in of losing it: and let not (I again most humbly beseech thee) the trust and confidence which I repose in thee be turned into shame and confusion, as they will be if thou dost not deliver me.

Ver. 21. *Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.*] I have grievously offended thy majesty, it is true, and I have sorrowfully bewailed it; but as for them that rise up against me, they have so little reason to accuse me, that I desire thee to deal with me according to my uprightness and integrity, in all my administrations: let my innocency be my guard, and my honest dealing my protection; for I depend on nothing but thy favour in such courses.

Ver. 22. *Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.*] Nor do I plead my own private cause alone, but beseech thee to have mercy upon the whole nation, who are lamentably distracted by these divisions; and to restore them to peace and quietness, by delivering me from this rebellion that is raised against me.

PSALM XXVI.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

In this Psalm David asserts that uprightness and integrity, to which he pretended in the twenty-first verse of the foregoing Psalm: and appeals to God as the judge of his sincerity, who was privy to his most secret intentions. But it seems to relate to former times, when he was persecuted by Saul, and looked upon as a public enemy, (1 Sam. xxiv. 9.) Thus Theodoret understands it: and thinks he was now among the Philistines, or in some other strange country, into which he was some time forced by that persecution.

Ver. 1. *JUDGE me, O Lord; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the Lord; therefore I shall not slide.*] I am accused of grievous crimes by those that persecute me; but am not afraid to appeal to thee, O Lord, as the judge of that matter: nothing doubting but thou wilt acquit me, and punish my false accusers and persecutors. For, thou knowest, I kept a good conscience when I was at court; (1 Sam. xix. 4.) and since I have been banished thence, have taken no wicked course to deliver myself; (1 Sam. xxiv. 11, 12.) but entirely depended upon thee alone for safety: in which resolution nothing shall shake me.

Ver. 2. *Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.*] Thou seest into the secret thoughts of my mind, and inclinations of my will: if I have not sufficiently approved myself, to have not so much as designed any such evil as I am charged withal, go on, good Lord, to make a farther search; and if thou wilt still expose me to the fiery trial of sorer afflictions, I hope it will only still discover more of my integrity.

Ver. 3. *For thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes; and I have walked in thy truth.*] For I trust to nothing but thy loving-kindness, which is the pattern I have set before my eyes to imitate: I ever designed good, not hurt, to them; and have ever kept my faith, and punctually performed my promises to them; after the example of thy truth, by which I have squared all my actions.

Ver. 4. *I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.*] I never loved the company of false and treacherous persons; nor have had any thing to do with those, who, under specious shows, cover ungodly designs.

Ver. 5. *I have hated the congregation of evil-doers; and will not sit with the wicked.*] No, I perfectly hated their meetings, where they laid their heads together to contrive some evil thing or other: I never did, nor ever will, sit in consultation with those unquiet and turbulent spirits, who are restlessly hatching mischief.

Ver. 6. *I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O Lord.*] I never satisfied myself with the mere ceremony of washing my hands, before I went to offer thee any sacrifice: but sincerely endeavoured, O Lord, to keep myself free from all impurity (as by that token I testified), and so presented myself, with due reverence, at thy altar:

Ver. 7. *That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.*] Not merely to pray to thee, when I was in any distress; but to praise thee also, and to give thee thanks; proclaiming to all thy people those stupendous things which thy admirable goodness hath done for me.

Ver. 8. *Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.*] And thou knowest, O Lord, with what affection I attended upon this employment; and how glad I was to go into thy tabernacle (which thou hast been pleased to make the place where thy glory dwells among us), to offer those devout sacrifices unto thee.

Ver. 9. *Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men.*] And therefore, I hope, thou wilt not let me suffer with those, from whose society I have always separated myself; O let me not perish, as if I was a murderer;

Ver. 10. *In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes.*] Or a companion of those that live by rapine and spoil of others, (1 Sam. xxv. 15, 16.) or obtain their ends by bribery and corruption of justice.

Ver. 11. *But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.*] For I am none of that number; but have always preserved, and will still continue, an upright endeavour to keep myself pure in all things: therefore, I beseech thee to deliver me, now that they seek to destroy me as an evil-doer; and shew that thou judgest otherways of me.

Ver. 12. *My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregation will I bless the Lord.*] Why should I doubt of it, when, notwithstanding all the assaults of mine enemies, I stand firm and unshaken? Surely the time will come when I shall publicly praise the Lord, my protector and deliverer, in the assemblies of his people; from whence this unjust persecution hath driven me, (1 Sam. xxvi. 19.)

PSALM XXVII.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David, when he was, or had been lately, in some great distress. It is not easy to resolve,

whether it were when he was persecuted by Saul before he was crowned (as the LXX. now say, though Theodoret could find no such thing in the Hexaplus); or when he was forced to fly from Absalom; or, as some of the Jews think (which seems most probable, because it agrees very well with several passages in the Psalm), when, in fight with the Philistines, he had engaged himself so far among the enemies, that he was in danger of being killed by a giant, if Abishai had not seasonably stepped in and relieved him. This was in his declining years, when the same courage remained, but not the same strength, which he had in his youth. And therefore the people came and sware to him, saying, "Thou shalt go out no more with us to battle, that thou quench not the lamp of Israel," (2 Sam. xxi. 17.)

Ver. 1. *THE Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*] The Lord still bears a favour to me, and fills me with joy by his wonderful preservation of me. What enemy then is so terrible, that I should not dare to engage him? He defends my life in the most dangerous assaults; of whom then, though he be never so great a giant, should I stand in fear?

Ver. 2. *When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.*] When malicious men, full of hatred and rage, made their approaches so near me, that they hoped, like so many savage beasts, to tear me in pieces and devour me; they quite missed their aim, and fell down dead at my feet.

Ver. 3. *Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.*] And therefore, though I should see myself besieged with a great army of enemies, it shall not dismay me; though I were to fight a battle with the most numerous forces, I shall not, after such a demonstration of God's love and careful providence over me, despair of victory.

Ver. 4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.*] Not that I am greedy of glory and fame by such marvellous successes: no, I can stay at home, as my people desire me, (2 Sam. xxi. 17.) and give God thanks for what he hath done for me. Nothing in the world agrees so much with my desires: this is the only thing I have sought (even by my wars), and will still make the end of all my endeavours, that I may perpetually attend upon the service of God in the holy assemblies; and enjoy the sweet pleasure the Lord is pleased there to impart to his people, and receive directions from him when I wait upon him every morning in his tabernacle.

Ver. 5. *For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.*] For there I shall think myself as secure in troublesome times as if I was environed with the strongest bulwarks, or lay obscured in the most secret hiding-places: the most impregnable rock I should not take to be a place of greater safety.

Ver. 6. *And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.*] And now I have felt the happy fruit of my love towards it; for the Lord hath given me a glorious victory, and made me triumph over all my enemies on every side. For which cause I will go thither, and offer sacrifices of thanksgiving with the highest expressions of joy: I will compose songs of praise, and therein set forth the power and loving-kindness of the Lord.

Ver. 7. *Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.*] On whom I still depend for my future preservation; beseeching thee, O Lord, to give me a gracious audience: whensoever I address myself unto thee, shew then the kindness thou hast for me by granting my desire.

Ver. 8. *When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.*] Which I do not presume to offer to thee without thy invitation; but have still thy own words in my mind whereby thou exhortest us to come unto thee, saying, *Seek ye my face:* to which my heart answers, Behold, O Lord, in obedience to thy command, and by thy gracious motion, I will never cease to seek it.

Ver. 9. *Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation*] And thou, I hope, will look favourably upon me; and not withdraw thy presence from me, when I beg thy protection or assistance. Do not then in anger reject my suits, because I am a sinner; but accept them because I am thy servant: whom in former times thou hast so often relieved, that from thence also I am emboldened to beseech thee not to desert me, O Lord; but (as thou hast begun, so) continue to give me deliverance and safety.

Ver. 10. *When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.*] The indulgence of my parents is not to be compared with thy most tender affection; but though they, and all the friends I have, should abandon me, I would hope the Lord would take me into his care, and not suffer me to perish.

Ver. 11. *Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path; because of mine enemies.*] As I certainly shall, if thou leavest me to myself. For, alas! I know not what course it is best for me to take for my safety: and therefore beseech thee to vouchsafe me thy direction; and enable me to walk so circumspectly and evenly, that they who narrowly pry into all my actions, and watch for my halting, may have no advantage against me.

Ver. 12. *Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.*] Let not those have their will of me, who love to trouble me, and give me perpetual disturbance; as too many still do, notwithstanding all the wonderful things thou hast wrought for me. They cease not to calumniate and defame my government; and he that heads them, and sets them on, speaks of open force and violence, if he had opportunity.

Ver. 13. *I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.*] Good God! how had it been possible for me to support myself under so many troubles and fears, which follow one upon another; if I had not firmly trusted in thee, that, notwithstanding the restless malice of my enemies, I shall enjoy thee, in a prosperous and happy condition, even here in this present life?

Ver. 14. *Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.*] And let me admonish thee, whosoever thou art, that shalt hereafter fall into any such straits, to learn, by my example, not to be impatient, nor despond presently, much less despair of relief, if the Lord do not send it just when thou expectest it: but wait upon him still with a steadfast hope, and fortify thyself with a strong faith in him. Let not thy heart fail thee in the greatest danger; but, as I said, wait upon the Lord, and confidently expect that in his good time he will relieve thee.

PSALM XXVIII.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

Theodoret thinks this Psalm was composed by David during Saul's persecution, when he was betrayed by those whom he took for friends, or not for his enemies: such as Doeg, the Ziphites, and many others. But the matter of this Psalm inclines me to consider it as a meditation, on some such occasion as moved him to pen the foregoing. For he blesses God in the latter part of it (ver. 7, 8.) for the victories he had got over his enemies, and for the peace he enjoyed: and yet complains in the beginning of it, of some men who molested him, and sought an occasion to do him a mischief. See 2 Sam. xxi. 18—20. where we read of three battles between his forces and the Philistines, after that mentioned in the argument of Psalm xxvii. when, it is likely, some of his own subjects took an opportunity to give him some disturbance.

Ver. 1. *UNTO thee will I cry, O Lord, my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.*] O Lord, to whom alone I betake myself for safety, and under whose protection nothing can hurt me; I make my most earnest prayer unto thee, that thou wilt defend me. Do not deny me, I most humbly beseech thee; lest, while I am so importunate with thee, and confide so entirely in thee, and yet thou takest no notice of me, I look like one that is abandoned by thee to destruction.

Ver. 2. *Hear the voice of my supplications when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands towards thy holy oracle.*] Grant my desires, therefore, when with ardent affection I seek thy favour, and, renouncing all dependance on human succour, implore thy help; which thou art wont to send from thy holy place.

Ver. 3. *Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity; which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts.*] Let not that destruction seize on me, which is the portion of the wicked: nor suffer me to be involved in the same punishment with those pernicious wretches, who make no conscience what villanies they commit; and yet pretend the greatest friendship to their neighbours, when they design and are contriving their ruin.

Ver. 4. *Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.*] It is fit that they suffer as they have done, and reap the fruit of their manifold wickedness: dispense a reward to them according to their works; and deal with them (which is the measure whereby I desire thou wilt proceed with me) as they have dealt with others.

Ver. 5. *Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.*] I know thou wilt: because they regard not the wonderful things thou hast done for me, and by me; particularly that great work (which is to be ascribed to thy power alone) of making me their king; thou wilt utterly overturn them without any hope of their being raised up again.

Ver. 6. *Blessed be the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.*] And I ought never to forget (that which they neglect) the singular providence of the Lord over me; whom I therefore bless and praise, because he heard my prayer when I was in distress; and desire all ages may ever praise him.

Ver. 7. *The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.*] The Lord is to me instead of a fortress and shield, when my enemies assault me: I heartily confided in him, that he would defend me; and, behold, he sent seasonable succour to me, (2 Sam. xxi. 17.) which fills my heart with such exceeding joy, that (as I cannot express it, so) I am not able to contain myself; but I must compose a hymn in his praise, and say,

Ver. 8. *The Lord is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.*] It is the Lord that gives courage and strength to those that are on my side: he is the fortress that preserves in safety him whom he hath appointed to be the king of his people:

Ver. 9. *Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.*] Whose good and happiness I seek; beseeching thee, O Lord, to preserve thy people, and to pour down thy blessings upon those whom thou hast appropriated to thyself, out of all other nations: take care of them, as a shepherd doth of his flock; and make them victorious over all their enemies, both now and in all future generations.

PSALM XXIX.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed by David after some extraordinary great thunder, lightning, and rain; whereby (it is probable) God had so discomfited his enemies, and put their forces into such disorder, that he easily got the victory over them. Whereupon he exhorts them in this Psalm to submit to that glorious Majesty, from whom that thunder came: and who can so easily strike a sudden terror into the hearts of his stoutest and most resolved opposers. Theodoret applies it to the destruction of Sennacherib's army, in Hezekiah's time; for which I see no foundation: nor for the title which is now in the LXX. (but Theodoret could not find in the Hexaplus); which makes the occasion of it to be David's bringing the ark to the place he had prepared for it.

Ver. 1. *GIVE unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength.*] O ye princes and rulers of the world, who so readily receive the lowest prostrations from your subjects; give unto the Lord of all that honour which he justly expects from you: acknowledge his supreme power, which you have so lately felt; and submit to his authority.

Ver. 2. *Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.*] Do him honour suitable to the excellence of his majesty: and, as a sign you have him in great veneration, come and cast down yourselves before him in the sanctuary; where he hath fixed his glorious residence among us.

Ver. 3. *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth; the Lord is upon many waters.*] Whose voice was it but his, which you heard in the clouds? (whither the voice of no earthly monarch can reach.) From thence his glorious majesty thunders; and makes not only the earth, but the great ocean, tremble, at that token of his presence.

Ver. 4. *The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.*] You think there is great power in your words: but as they can be heard but a little way, so they are of little force, in comparison with this mighty voice; wherein the Lord expresses how potent he is; and strikes a dread and horror into all that hear it.

Ver. 5. *The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.*] It makes the strongest trees of the forest quake; nay, breaks them into shivers: the cedars, as hard and tall as they are; even the cedars of Libanus, which are framed for their durableness and goodly bulk, are thrown down and shattered by it.

Ver. 6. *He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.*] It lifts them up into the air when it hath torn them in pieces; and makes the mountains themselves leap like the young creatures which live upon them.

Ver. 7. *The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire.*] Flashes of fire break out together with it; and, cutting their way through the clouds, are scattered, with a wonderful swiftness, into all quarters.

Ver. 8. *The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness; the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.*] The force of it is felt in the most desert places, even in that vast and horrid wilderness of Kadesh; which, by overthrowing trees and rocks, it renders still more horrid.

Ver. 9. *The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory.*] It opens the wombs of hinds, which otherwise bring forth with the greatest difficulty: and it lays bare the covers of the wild beasts in the forest, whom it frightens into their dens, while his temple remains unshaken by these tempestuous blasts, and all his pious worshippers there securely sing the praises of his glorious majesty and power, saying,

Ver. 10. *The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.*] The Lord is the great King, who governs even the clouds, and orders the thunder-showers, to do what execution he pleases. When all other monarchs fail, the Lord still remains the same throughout all generations; and the thunder doth not more easily tear the trees and rocks, than he can break in pieces the proudest princes: who ought therefore to tremble before him, and to dread his judgments.

Ver. 11. *The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.*] But as for all those that are sincerely devoted to his service, though never so weak and feeble, the Lord will be their support: they may depend upon his power to defend them in the greatest dangers, and against the mightiest enemies: the Lord will not only preserve them from evil, but bless and prosper them with all manner of happiness.

PSALM XXX.

A Psalm and Song, at the Dedication of the House of David.

ARGUMENT.

The title of this Psalm differs from all the foregoing; it being the first that is called a *Psalm and Song*, or a *Psalm-Song*: as others, we shall see in due place, are called a *Song and Psalm*, or a *Song-Psalm*. The difference of which it is hard to find out. (See Argument of Psal. lxvii.) But here the words may be otherwise construed; for they run currently enough in the Hebrew; thus, *A Psalm, A Song of Dedication of the House made by David;* who would not eat in his house till he had first, in a solemn manner, addressed himself to God, at his entrance into it; either after it was newly built, (2 Sam. v. 11.) or (which agrees best with a great part of the Psalm) when he returned to it again, after he had been driven from it by the rebellion of Absalom, who defiled it. (2 Sam. xvi. 21.) Then he gave God thanks for his being restored to a peaceable possession of his palace; and made a feast for his friends (as the manner was, at their coming to dwell in a new-built house), with extraordinary piety and devotion, acknowledging God's goodness, who had graciously reinstated him in his throne. The Talmudists generally understand by *the house* here mentioned, the house of the sanctuary; (see Mr. Selden, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 13.) but I see no ground for it: for David did not build God a house, nor do the words of the Psalm (as Theodoret observes) agree to that matter.

Ver. 1. *I WILL extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.*] O Lord, to whose powerful providence I ascribe my late wonderful deliverance, I will give thee the highest praises, and never cease to magnify thy name; who hast drawn me up out of that depth of misery into which I was plunged, and filled me with that joy which my enemies hoped to have had in my destruction.

Ver. 2. *O Lord, my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.*] O Lord, my gracious God, I was in a most forlorn and languishing condition; like a sick man who cannot help himself: but I addressed myself in earnest prayer to thee; and thou hast restored me to my former estate again.

Ver. 3. *O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.*] Which mercy is the more to be admired, because there seemed to be no more hope of my restoration, than there is of the resurrection of a dead man out of his grave;

or, at best, of a sick man's recovery, that is just at the point of death.

Ver. 4. *Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.*] Join with me then, all ye that are sensible of the Divine benefits, in this duty of praise to him who hath called me from death unto life again: give thanks together with me (for my single praises and thanksgivings are not sufficient), and gratefully commemorate his power, and goodness, and wisdom, and truth, which he hath shewn in my restitution.

Ver. 5. *For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*] Wherein you may see his clemency towards his faithful servants: whom he may correct very sharply, for a little time; but is soon reconciled, and then extends his favour to them without any end: and sends them deliverance so unexpectedly and suddenly, as well as seasonably, that where nothing but lamentations were heard over night, there nothing but shouts of joy are heard in the morning.

Ver. 6. *And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.*] Yet that must not make them secure, nor confident in any thing but his goodness alone. For therein I was to blame, that when I was delivered from the persecution of Saul, and settled peaceably in my kingdom, I fancied vainly, that now I should never be any more disturbed.

Ver. 7. *Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.*] But I soon found that that was more than I could promise myself; and that it depended solely on thy favour, O Lord, by whom my throne was established in the strong fortress of Zion, (2 Sam. v. 7. 9.) For thou, being offended with me, didst withdraw thy gracious presence from me; and presently I was involved in new troubles and dangers.

Ver. 8. *I cried unto thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made supplication.*] And had no way to relieve myself, but by making my addresses to thee, O Lord; and earnestly beseeching thee to pardon me, and restore me to thy favour.

Ver. 9. *What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?*] For what service, said I, can I do thee when I am dead? shall my ashes be able so much as to praise thy goodness, or declare thy faithfulness to thy promises? Will they not rather seem to fail, and lose their credit, together with me? Spare me therefore, O Lord, and deliver me from those that seek my life: let me live, to tell how good and how true thou art.

Ver. 10. *Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord, be thou my helper.*] Do not deny me, O Lord, but take compassion upon my sad estate. Lord, be thou my helper; who art able to restore me to my former happiness, without any other assistance; as thou alone, I am sensible, not the strongest guards, canst preserve me in it.

Ver. 11. *Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.*] In this manner I humbly besought thy mercy, and obtained a gracious answer: for joy and gladness are returned again, after a short time of sadness and sorrow.

Ver. 12. *To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.*] Which engages me to do thee all the service I am able; and, in the most magnificent manner, to sing thy praises without ceasing. O Lord, my most gracious God, I will be as good as my resolution; and spend my whole life in giving thanks unto thee, for thy faithful mercy towards me.

PSALM XXXI.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David, and delivered to the master of music in the tabernacle: wherein he describes his confidence in God, notwithstanding a grievous strait wherein he was; when (as I understand it), after his escape from Keilah, Saul, with three battalions (as we now speak), pursued him so close in the wilderness of Maon, that without an extraordinary providence of God over him, he had certainly fallen into his hands. To that strange deliverance, and not that from Absalom (to which Theodoret refers it), it is the more probable he hath a respect in this Psalm (in the latter end of which it is thankfully commemorated), because the haste, which the Psalmist here saith (ver. 22.) he made in that sore distress, is expressed by the very same word (and used no where else in any other part of David's history), when the great fright he was in, and his sudden speedy flight from one place to another, is described, 1 Sam. xxiii. 26.

Ver. 1. *IN thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.*] Thou seest, O Lord, that in all these persecutions which I endure, I have no confidence in any thing, but only thy power and goodness; which if they should fail me, I should be lamentably ashamed; prevent that confusion, O Lord, and magnify thy own mercy and fidelity, by preserving me in, and delivering me out, of these dangers which now encompass me.

Ver. 2. *Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for a house of defence to save me.*] Graciously incline to favour my request, now that I am so sorely pressed by my enemies, that they are ready to seize on me; haste thy relief, for it is not this rock or strong hold wherein I am (1 Sam. xxiii. 25.) that can protect me, but only thou, O Lord; to whom I resort as a more sure defence, than the most impregnable fortress in the world:

Ver. 3. *For thou art my rock and my fortress: therefore, for thy name's sake, lead me and guide me.*] For so I have hitherto found thee, in all my distresses, and therefore I still flee to thee for safety; beseeching thee to glorify thyself (I have no other argument whereby to move thee) in leading me out of this strait, and guiding my steps so, that I may not fall into the hands of my enemies:

Ver. 4. *Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me; for thou art my strength.*] Who have now so circumvented me, and, by the secret treachery of the Ziphites, brought me into such perplexities, (1 Sam. xxiii. 19, 20, &c.) that I am undone, unless thou extricate me: as I hope thou wilt; for I profess again, that I depend on thee alone for help and deliverance.

Ver. 5. *Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.*] Unto thy care and custody I commit myself, and deposit my very life with

thee.* Who hast so often rescued me, when I was like to lose it; and wilt still, I doubt not, shew thyself my most gracious God, as well as powerful Lord; who never deceivest those that rely upon thy faithful word.

[* *Our Saviour used these words in a more proper and literal sense than they can be applied to David.*]

Ver. 6. *I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the Lord.*] There is nothing else that I rely upon, for I never inquired of diviners, wizards, soothsayers, or fortune-tellers; nor consulted the necromancers (or any other of those vanities wherewith the gentile world is cheated), which way I should flee, or how I should provide for my safety: no, I have hated all such practices, and those that observe them; confiding entirely in the Lord, and his directions.

Ver. 7. *I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities.*] In whose merciful providence over me I will be glad and rejoice, even when I am in straits: for it is most delightful to remember how thou hast taken care of me in my afflictions; and never neglected, but still owned me, and provided for my security, in the greatest distresses.

Ver. 8. *And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.*] And very lately didst not suffer me to be shut up in Keilah, (1 Sam. xxiii. 7.) whose inhabitants would have delivered me into the hand of Saul: but admonishedst me by thy oracles, at which only I inquired, (ver. 9, &c.) to depart from thence, where I was in danger to be enclosed; and gavest me a larger compass, to seek the means of my preservation.

Ver. 9. *Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble; mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly.*] Go on, good Lord, to perfect thy mercy to me; and now that I am fallen into a new difficulty, and closely begirt on every side by my enemy, take some pity upon me, and speedily deliver me: for the continual anguish and vexation which these returning dangers give me, together with the hunger and thirst which at present sorely pinch me, have in a manner quite dispirited me.

Ver. 10. *For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.*] I cannot subsist long, unless thou relievest me; for I am wasted away with sorrow and sighing; the punishments of my sins are so heavy, and I am so weak, that I cannot support myself under their burdens.

Ver. 11. *I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.*] My enemies also mock at my confidence in thee, now that they have thus distressed me; and my neighbours, who have been witnesses of my integrity in all my actions, are too prone to join with them in those reproaches; and, which is still sadder, my familiar friends are afraid to be seen in my company, or to send me the least relief: they dare not entertain me into their houses; for when they have met me in the highway, they fled, and would not come nigh me.

Ver. 12. *I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.*] They look upon me as a man utterly lost; and so never think of me no more than if I were in my grave: they despair of my restitution, and despise me as much as an earthen vessel when it is broken in pieces, which nobody minds, because it cannot be repaired.

Ver. 13. *For I have heard the slander of many; fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.*] The calumnies and slanders also whereby the greatest persons defame me are come to my ears. They say I am a seditious fellow; that the life of the king cannot be in safety till I be destroyed: and so they have held consultation together against me; wherein they have debated nothing else, but how to find a way to take away my life.

Ver. 14. *But I trusted in thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God.*] But how great soever their cunning and their power be, and how dejecting soever my fears, I do not quite despond: but still repose a sure confidence in thee, O Lord, saying, Thou art a judge of my innocence; thou art my defender and protector, who hath hitherto always done me right.

Ver. 15. *My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.*] It is not in their power to dispose of my life at their pleasure; no more than it is in mine to appoint the time of my deliverance, which I leave to thy wisdom, O Lord, to whom it belongs: only beseeching thee, at present, to rescue me from falling into the hands of my enemies; and at last, when thou judgest it most fit, to free me from their persecution.

Ver. 16. *Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake.*] Disperse these black clouds of affliction, which have so long kept me in such a mournful condition, that my enemies fancy thou hast abandoned me; and shew the favour thou bearest to me, who am faithfully devoted to thy service; and therefore, though I am unworthy of it, yet hope thou wilt magnify thy own mercy in delivering me from these dangers, and making me as happy as now I am miserable.

Ver. 17. *Let me not be ashamed, O Lord; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave.*] Let not thy humble supplicant, O Lord, who testifies by his daily prayers that he wholly depends upon thy favour, be shamefully disappointed in his expectation of relief from thee: but let the wicked be confounded, to see all their contrivances against me come to nothing; let them be laid in their graves, and give me no farther disturbance.

Ver. 18. *Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.*] Stop the mouths of those bold calumniators who insolently threaten utter ruin to the innocent: whom they charge with the most grievous crimes, and deride all that he can say or do in his own defence.

Ver. 19. *Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!*] Oh what a comfort is it, when they thus insult, to think of thy kind intentions towards those that fear to offend thee, though for the present they are most miserably abused! How great are the blessings thou hast treasured up in store (as shall in time appear openly before all the world), and prepared for those that religiously avoid all unjust ways of preserving themselves, and trust to thee alone!

Ver. 20. *Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.*] They are forced to hide themselves sometimes in caves and dens of the earth, (1 Sam. xxiii. 14. 19. 23. xxiv. 2. 3. 8.) but there thou art present with them; and it is thy gracious providence that preserves them from him that furiously persecutes them: thou dost keep them as safe as if they were in thy dwelling-place, from the mischiefs which contentious men, by their false accusations, seek to bring upon them.

Ver. 21. *Blessed be the Lord; for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a strong city.*] Of which I myself (for ever praised be the Lord) am a remarkable instance: for he hath magnified his mercy to me in assisting my escape, when I was shut up in a fortified city that had gates and bars, (1 Sam. xxiii. 7. 13.)

Ver. 22. *For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.*] And presently after that, when I fell into such a strait, that I had no hope of evading it, but (so vehement was my fear) said in my precipitous flight, (1 Sam. xxiii. 26.) I am lost; I shall never be able to save myself, though I make never so much haste: yet even then, upon my humble supplication to thee, thou didst instantly send a most seasonable and wonderful deliverance to me, (ver. 27.)

Ver. 23. *O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.*] What an encouragement is this to all truly pious souls! Let them love the Lord, and steadfastly cleave unto him: for the Lord taketh care of their safety, who continue faithful to him in all their troubles: and plagueth those who proudly insult over them, till he hath left none of their race remaining.

Ver. 24. *Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.*] Be not dejected, therefore, much less disheartened in the course of piety, all ye that place your hope and confidence in the Lord: but let that fill you with courage; and make you firmly resolved to adhere to him, and never to shrink from your duty under the sorest afflictions.

PSALM XXXII.

A Psalm of David. Maschil.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David, when the calamities into which he fell by his son's rebellion taught him how evil and bitter a thing it was to offend God; and how infinitely he was beholden to him, that he was so merciful as not to take such a vengeance on him as his sins deserved. There are those who think it was intended for public use, upon the great day of expiation, when the whole nation made a general confession of their sins: and called *Maschil*, either because it contains an excellent *instruction* (as that word signifies), concerning the means to obtain true blessedness; or because it was set to the tune of a song, in vulgar use in those days, which began with the word *Maschil*. This is the more probable of the two, because there are twelve Psalms besides this that have the same title, to all of which the former reason cannot be applied.

Ver. 1. *BLESSED is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.*] Happy is that man, thrice happy, to whom God will be pleased, out of his own free grace and mercy (for no man can merit such a favour by any services that he can do him), to remit not only his common errors and weaknesses, but also his grosser sins, whether committed against the Divine Majesty, or against his neighbour.

Ver. 2. *Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.*] It is impossible to express the happiness of that man, to whom the Lord will be so gracious, as not to exact the punishment due to his former offences, for which he is most heartily afflicted (for to none else this happiness belongs): and doth not only seem, by his sorrowful confessions, to hate and abhor them, but is unfeignedly resolved to forsake them.

Ver. 3. *When I kept silence my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long.*] He that hath felt the smart of them, as I have done, will be sensible what a pleasure it is to be eased of such a sting. For when I seriously reflected upon the grievous sin I had committed, but not bewailed it as I ought, it filled me with such anguish and horror, that I lost all appetite to my meat, and pined away till I was not able to go or stand; but lay roaring perpetually (like a lion that hath received a deadly wound), under the miserable torture of my mind.

Ver. 4. *For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.*] So heavy was the sense of thy displeasure, wherewith I was struck, that I could find no means to throw it off, either by business or diversions in the day: nor would it suffer me to take my rest in the night, but still pressed down my spirit, and scorched me so vehemently with its raging heat, that my body (which heretofore was fat and fresh) was consumed and parched like the grass of the earth in the midst of the driest summer.

Ver. 5. *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.*] But at last I bethought myself of that remedy which I had too long neglected; and humbled myself before thee in a sorrowful confession of all my sins, both great and small: I laid open all those wounds which were so full of anguish, and acknowledged I deserved to be still far more miserable: I resolved I would never hereafter palliate or excuse my sins; but ingenuously charge myself home with them, and condemn myself before thee for them. And straightway thou (who sawest the sincerity of my repentance) was pleased to grant me a gracious pardon, and to release me from all my pain: though my guilt, which was the cause of it, was exceeding great.

Ver. 6. *For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.*] Which should encourage every one that hath any sense of God, and of the blessedness of being in his favour, and the misery of lying under his displeasure, to apply himself speedily to him, by unfeigned repentance, as soon as ever he hath offended him: for that is the surest time of finding mercy with him; and the way of preventing those great calamities, which otherwise may overtake him, when the

Lord sends a deluge of miseries, as he did in the days of Noah, upon the world of the ungodly.

Ver. 7. *Thou art my hiding-place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble: thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.*] Then he may say, Thou, Lord, art my refuge, to whom I fly for safety; and I trust that thou wilt preserve me (though I have been a grievous sinner) from those distresses which surround me; and thereby give abundant cause to me, and all that are about me, to bless and praise thee for thy merciful deliverance of me.

Ver. 8. *I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.*] Hearken therefore unto me, whosoever thou art who hast any care of thy salvation; and I will bestow some good advice upon thee, and direct thee into the wisest and safest course of life: trust thyself with me to be thy guide, and I from my own experience will give thee faithful counsel, and take care thou do not go amiss.

Ver. 9. *Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.*] God hath endued you with reason, both to tell you what you ought to do, and to check you when you do not as you ought; and hath made you capable also of receiving good admonitions from others: do not therefore follow your own unbridled lusts and appetites, much less be refractory and untractable, when God would reduce you from the error of your ways; as if you were not men, but headstrong horses and mules, who can by no means be curbed, nor made to come near thee, that thou mayest manage them at thy pleasure.

Ver. 10. *Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.*] Let such ungovernable, obdurate sinners expect to be handled like those brutes, for they shall receive many and grievous strokes, which shall make their hearts to ache. But he that entirely commits himself to the Lord, to be ruled and disposed of according to his will, shall be not only secured by his good providence, but enriched with abundance of his blessings.

Ver. 11. *Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.*] And therefore whatsoever your present troubles may be, let your heart be glad, O ye that are obediently led and governed by him: rejoice in the confidence you ought to have of his favour towards you: triumph in his loving-kindness, all ye that sincerely study to do his will; and shout for joy, as if you were already victorious over all your enemies.

PSALM XXXIII.

ARGUMENT.

It is not recorded by whom this Psalm was composed, nor upon what occasion. But there is little question it was a pious meditation of David (of whose spirit it savours), and, as we may guess, upon occasion of some special benefit received from God (though not particularly mentioned); which makes him call it (ver. 3.) *a new song.* (Of which see more, Psal. cxlix.) Wherein he desires all the faithful to join with him in joyful praises of the Lord; considering his excellent nature, and his admirable works, both of creation and providence; especially over good men, who piously trust in him, and expect all good from him; and therefore ought to think themselves blessed that they have relation to him.

Ver. 1. *REJOICE in the Lord, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright.*] Bless the Lord with joyful hearts, triumph in his praise, all ye that are just and good: for nothing is more becoming them that sincerely do the will of God, than to praise him, from whom they have received, and hope, for so many benefits; and nothing is more desired than to have your hearts perpetually filled with delightful thoughts of him.

Ver. 2. *Praise the Lord with harp; sing unto him with the psaltery, and an instrument of ten strings.*] Extol therefore his glorious perfections in psalms and hymns, composed in praise of him: and let all the instruments of music accompany the voices, to express and excite your joy in him.

Ver. 3. *Sing unto him a new song, play skilfully with a loud noise.*] Let not the ancient songs of praise suffice you, but indite a new hymn, to testify your singular love and gratitude to him: employ your best skill to make the sweetest music; and sing as cheerfully as you are wont to do at your most solemn feasts.

Ver. 4. *For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth.*] For the Lord hath graciously revealed his will unto you, and shewn you the right way, in which, if you walk, you cannot miss of being happy: and whatever he doeth, hath the same scope with what he saith; for in all that befals you, he faithfully designs your good.

Ver. 5. *He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.*] Let this therefore be part of your song, The Lord governs the world with perfect justice and equity; these he loves, and in these he delights: his goodness and mercy also are so conspicuous, that we can look no where but we see innumerable proofs of his bounty towards us; which spreads itself over the face of the whole earth.

Ver. 6. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.*] And who can doubt of the greatness of his power, when he beholds the spacious heavens; with the sun, moon, and all the stars, which are placed there like an army in excellent order; and considers that all these he made with the same ease that we speak a word, only by commanding them to be?

Ver. 7. *He gathereth the waters of the sea together as a heap; he layeth up the depth in storehouses.*] Nay, the earth itself declares how mighty he is: for when it lay covered with the waters, being far heavier than they, he commanded it to appear, (Gen. i. 9, 10.) and, cutting a deep channel for them, he laid them up there as in cellars; where they swell and rise up in round heaps, higher than the shore, but cannot overflow the earth.

Ver. 8. *Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.*] Let all mankind, therefore, in whatsoever part of the world they dwell, dread this almighty Lord: let them not dare to disobey him, who thus tamed even the raging sea.

Ver. 9. *For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.*] For as then he did but signify his pleasure, and the thing was done, and remained fixed and firm according to his appointment: so, whatsoever he will have now to be done (whether for a blessing on those that sub-

mit to him, or a punishment of the disobedient), it shall certainly come to pass; and none can resist or alter his orders.

Ver. 10. *The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.*] Let men lay their designs never so deep, let whole nations combine together, and in their gravest assemblies consult how to compass their ends; the Lord (such is his wisdom, as well as his power) easily disappoints them all: and makes the most likely contrivances, which oppose his will, to be in vain and without success.

Ver. 11. *The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.*] Whereas that which he resolves none can defeat; but shall certainly obtain its effect. One generation passes away, and another comes in its stead; but his purposes are still immoveably the same, and can no more in future ages than now be overthrown.

Ver. 12. *Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.*] Most happy then is that nation which worships this Lord, the creator of heaven and earth: unspeakably happy are they who live under the care of so just, so good, so powerful, and wise a being, and are so highly in his favour, that he hath chosen them (though all mankind be his) to be a peculiar people to himself; among whom, in a special manner, he will reside, and hath engaged himself by a gracious covenant to do them good.

Ver. 13. *The Lord looketh from heaven: he beholdeth all the sons of men.*] How careful ought they to be to please him, and approve their very hearts unto him! for though he be in heaven, as the place of his most special and most glorious presence, yet there is not a man upon earth but he sees and observes him.

Ver. 14. *From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.*] They are all exposed to his view; and from thence he takes a strict and exact account, not only of all their open actions, but of their most secret designs and contrivances.

Ver. 15. *He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.*] For they are every one of them, without exception, his creatures: and as he is equally the former of them all, so he formed their souls as well as their bodies; and therefore must needs see into their very hearts, and be perfectly acquainted with every one of their thoughts.

Ver. 16. *There is no king saved by the multitude of a host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.*] And to him a king is no more than another man; but if he sees that he regards not his majesty, nor depends upon him, he will make him find, that it is not in the power of the greatest army he can raise to secure and defend him: nor shall the mightiest and most valiant man in that army be able to deliver so much as himself, though he hath a giant-like strength.

Ver. 17. *A horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.*] Though he should be mounted upon the stoutest horse (which is a most warlike creature), he will but deceive himself, if he rely either upon his courage, or his strength, or his agility, or his swiftness, for preservation.

Ver. 18. *Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy.*] It is the Lord only from whom comes salvation; and he hath regard to none but those that fear to offend his majesty, and, placing their confidence and hope in his love, more than all human force, look up to him for safety. Over such he will watch with a very careful providence.

Ver. 19. *To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.*] To rescue them when they are in danger by the sword or the plague; and to supply their necessities in time of scarcity and dearth.

Ver. 20. *Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield.*] What shall we do therefore in all straits, but desire him to take care of us? For this is our peculiar privilege, that we may confidently expect and wait for his seasonable relief, who is our only helper and defender.

Ver. 21. *For our heart shall rejoice in him; because we have trusted in his holy name.*] For we may be sure he will not fail our expectations, but at the last fill our hearts with joy, as a reward of the pious trust we have reposed in him; whose unspotted purity and faithfulness shall be ever famed.

Ver. 22. *Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.*] O Lord, thou seest we depend upon thee alone, and have placed all our hope, all our comfort and contentment, in thy care and good providence over us: let us prosper accordingly; deal with us according as we trust in thee, and not in any strength, wisdom, or contrivance, of our own.

PSALM XXXIV.

A Psalm of David, when he changed his Behaviour before Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed.

ARGUMENT.

The title tells us this Psalm was penned by David, after the escape he made from Achish, king of Gath (in which country all their kings were called by the common name of *Abimelech*, i. e. *My father the king;* as in Egypt, anciently, they were all called Pharaoh, and afterward Ptolemy), who he was afraid would seize on him, when he heard it commonly reported that he was the person that killed Goliath, and pretended to the sovereignty over all those countries: (1 Sam. xxi. 11.) and therefore he put on the behaviour of a man beside himself; hoping that when Achish saw this he would despise him: and looking upon him as a useless man, that could do neither good nor harm, think fit to thrust him out of his court, where he had been entertained, and send him packing from thence. And accordingly it succeeded. (1 Sam. xxi. 14, 15.) But though he was preserved by this artifice, the deliverance notwithstanding is piously ascribed unto God's great mercy, who prospered the device. To whom therefore he would have all pious men commit themselves, and depend upon his favour in well-doing: which he declares is the sure course to be happy. The Psalm is curiously composed, according to the number and order of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, in the beginning of every verse; which shews it was contrived, when he reflected upon his escape, in some place of safety.

Ver. 1. *I WILL bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.*] I will never forget how gracious the Lord hath been to me in this remarkable deliverance; but, whatsoever my condition be, will still have my mind and my mouth perpetually filled with his praise.

Ver. 2. *My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.*] This shall be my glory; in this I will think myself happy, that the Lord is with me, wheresoever I am, to guide and defend me: and I will let all those that humbly depend on him know what he hath done for me; that they may likewise joyfully hope for his mercy.

Ver. 3. *O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.*] Oh that they would all join with me in declaring the greatness of his goodness, in this miraculous providence over me! Let them with the same devout affection extol him in all his glorious attributes; who hath given *me* such a deliverance, and *them* such hope in the greatest danger.

Ver. 4. *I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.*] I was sore afraid (1 Sam. xxi. 12.) when I found they had discovered me in the court of Achish who I was; and many a sad thought and dreadful apprehension began then to trouble my mind: but committing myself to thee by hearty prayer, and desiring thee to be my guide and my protector; thou wast pleased presently to rid me of them, by inclining his heart to look upon me as I appeared, and to make no stricter inquiry after me.

Ver. 5. *They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.*] From which all pious men should take courage in all their straits, and when their hearts are ready to sink, look up unto God: who will revive and comfort them, and never suffer them to be ashamed of the hope they repose in him.

Ver. 6. *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.*] Let them fix their eyes on me, and excite one another to a cheerful dependance on him, saying, Behold that man: he was in a miserably poor condition, destitute of all human help; but commending himself to the Lord by earnest prayer, the Lord took care of him, and delivered him out of all his distresses.

Ver. 7. *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.*] Why should we then despair of his mercy, who sends an invisible host (as appeared to Elisha) to guard those who fear nothing so much as to offend his majesty; and to preserve them as securely as if they were surrounded with an invincible army from all the assaults of their enemies?

Ver. 8. *O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.*] Oh that men would not be so negligent, but seriously consider this, and make a trial, by steadfast fidelity to God in all their troubles, how gracious and kind he is! They shall soon find that there is no man so happy as he that piously confides in him.

Ver. 9. *O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.*] Continue therefore, O ye devout worshippers of the Lord (whatsoever other men do), to fear nothing, but lest you be false to him. Never betake yourselves to any sinful ways to provide for your safety, or to supply any of your necessities: but religiously observe his command; and you shall never be reduced to such straits, as to be utterly destitute of what is needful for your preservation.

Ver. 10. *The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.*] The young lions (an emblem of those that seek to enrich themselves by rapine, or by injurious practices), who are most ravenous in their appetites, as well as swift to pursue, and bold to seize, and strong to tear in pieces, their prey, are many times disappointed, and cannot meet with satisfaction to their hungry desires; but they that seek their food from the Lord in pious and honest ways, shall certainly be blessed with every thing that is good for them.

Ver. 11. *Come, ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.*] Come hither then, all ye that are disposed to learn, and hearken to the instruction which, out of a most tender affection to your welfare, I shall give you, concerning the fear of the Lord.

Ver. 12. *What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?*] Who is there among you that desires to live happily? that would fain prolong his life to a great number of years, and have them all prosperous and pleasant?

Ver. 13. *Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.*] Let him be very careful, in the first place, to bridle his tongue; and never employ it to speak evil of others, or to deceive them with fair words and false promises.

Ver. 14. *Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.*] Let him in all his actions also eschew what God hath prohibited, and do what he hath commanded: and, more particularly, avoiding all hatreds and enmities, strife and contention, study to maintain love and friendship with all his neighbours, and to make peace among them when they quarrel; and though they be averse to it, not to cease his importunities, till, if it be possible, he hath reconciled them.

Ver. 15. *The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.*] Such men will feel great contentment in their own hearts, and be exceedingly beloved by others: and (which is the greatest happiness of all) the Lord will have a special care of them; and, when they are in any distress, most readily hear their cry, and help them.

Ver. 16. *The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.*] But as for all those that take the contrary course (besides that they are ill at ease in themselves, and hated by their neighbours), the Lord is their enemy: and in his heavy displeasure will utterly destroy both them and theirs.

Ver. 17. *The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.*] Experience hath taught us this (and therefore let them not be disheartened if they fall into any trouble, but still expect good days), that the Lord graciously answers the prayers of those who adhere unto him in the ways of piety and peaceableness, and sends them seasonable relief and deliverance.

Ver. 18. *The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*] Though he may seem to absent himself, by suffering them to be sorely bruised and crushed under their burdens: yet he is really present to them to support and comfort their droop-

ing spirits; and at last to ease them of their burdens after they have humbly and patiently submitted to them.

Ver. 19. *Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.*] Many of these afflictions there may be (for such prosperity they must not promise themselves, as will exempt them from troubles, for a trial of their fidelity): but in this they ought to think themselves happy, that they know the Lord will put an end to them when he hath sufficiently proved them.

Ver. 20. *He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.*] And while they lie under them, he sustains, upholds, and defends them: so that they receive not the least hurt by any of those sufferings, which otherwise would crush them in pieces.

Ver. 21. *Evil shall slay the wicked; and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.*] Whereas the wicked, who for the present flourish, shall at last be seized by some calamity or other; which shall stick to them, till it hath destroyed them: they that spitefully persecute the righteous bring such a guilt upon themselves, that they shall not escape without their justly-deserved punishment.

Ver. 22. *The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.*] And by that very means the Lord ofttimes rescues his faithful servants from those mischiefs which their enemies intended to them; and, you may be sure, will not suffer any of them, since they rely entirely upon him, to perish, like those ungodly wretches.

PSALM XXXV.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, we are sufficiently informed by the matter of it, was penned by David, when he was fiercely persecuted by Saul. Whose forces, which were unjustly raised against him, he beseeches the Lord to dissipate; and especially to stop the mouth of his false accusers (such as Doeg and the Ziphites), of whom he most heavily complains, in the middle of the Psalm: vowing to God that he should be ever mindful of the benefit, and never cease to give him thanks and praise for his loving-kindness, if he would be pleased to confound them, and deliver him.

There may seem to be here, as in other Psalms, such horrid imprecations against his enemies, as do not become the mouth of a good man. But they must be considered as an appeal to God in a particular case; for justice against those whom no court on earth could or would punish: which made it fit, he thought, to desire the Divine Majesty to execute the judgment he had enacted in his law against obstinate and incurable offenders, who else would escape the hand of justice; whereby, also, others would be hardened in their wickedness.

Besides, the words may be interpreted, not as a prayer, but as a prediction; and rendered, not *let them be*, but *they shall be*, &c.

Ver. 1. *PLEAD my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.*] Take my part, O Lord, and maintain my cause against those that contend with me, and have raised a war against me: for I am not able to defend myself, and have none else to appear for me.

Ver. 2. *Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.*] Be thou my protector, and preserve me under the shield of thy almighty providence! oppose thyself unto them, and keep off all the assaults of my enemies.

Ver. 3. *Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.*] Strike through them, as well as defend me; let them run upon the spear and the sword, if they continue to pursue me: and confirm my soul in this belief, that thou wilt at last deliver me from this persecution.

Ver. 4. *Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.*] Disappoint them [*or*, they shall be disappointed] of their hope, which they have to destroy me; and make them blush to see all their warlike preparation against me come to nothing: let them all be put to flight, and make a confused retreat with shame and dishonour, who design my ruin.

Ver. 5. *Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the Lord chase them.*] Let them be dispersed [*or*, they shall be dispersed, *and so of the rest*] as the chaff, when it is blown about by a mighty wind: and let the invisible powers, which thou usest as ministers of thy displeasure (especially when thy ministers on earth do not their duty), drive them forward, and thrust them on in that disorder.

Ver. 6. *Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the Lord persecute them.*] Let them not know where they are in their flight; but wander, as men in the dark, up and down in slippery and dangerous ways: and there let the ministers of thy vengeance still pursue them, and press them on with restless fears, till they tumble headlong into destruction.

Ver. 7. *For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.*] For though I have done them no wrong, nor given them any provocation, they hunt and pursue me as if I were some wild beast; and by treachery, as well as open force, endeavour to take away my life.

Ver. 8. *Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.*] Let him, whose hatred hath armed so many against me, (and, when I suspected no danger, sought my ruin, 1 Sam. xviii. 10, 11. 21. xix. 10.) meet with unexpected destruction: let him be caught in his own wiles; and, according to the rules of thy righteous judgment, suffer that himself which he thought to do to me.

Ver. 9. *And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord: it shall rejoice in his salvation.*] Then shall my soul conceive the highest joy in the love the Lord bears to me, and in his care over me: to him will I give thanks as the author of my deliverance, and rejoice in what he hath done for me.

Ver. 10. *All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy, from him that spoileth him?*] The joy shall spread all over me, and from the inmost sense of my heart, with all the power and strength I have, both of body and soul, I will burst forth in thy praise, and say, Lord, who is comparable to thee in mercy,

and wisdom, and power? who rescuest the poor helpless man, in wonderful ways, from him whom he cannot resist; the man who is miserably in want, and hath none to relieve him, from him who by violence and oppression hath undone him.

Ver. 11. *False witnesses did rise up: they laid to my charge things that I knew not.*] For which they have no pretence at all, but what is founded on calumnies and lies, forged by men of no conscience, who have accused me of the highest crime, and laid to my charge such things as never entered into my mind, (1 Sam. xxiv. 9.)

Ver. 12. *They rewarded me evil for good, to the spoiling of my soul.*] And (which adds to the sharpness of my persecution) they are men whom I have obliged; who are so detestably ungrateful, as, for all the good I did them when I was in power, to make me no other requital, but to endeavour to deprive me of my life.

Ver. 13. *But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into my own bosom.*] O how unlike is this to the kindness that I shewed to them in their troubles! when they were sick, for instance, I sympathized most heartily with them; and testified my unfeigned grief and sorrow for them, by putting on sackcloth; in which I humbled myself before God, with prayer and fasting, for their recovery: which I often repeated; and in such an affectionate manner poured out my soul to God on their behalf, in my most secret retirements, that I wish myself no better than I desired God to do for them.

Ver. 14. *I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.*] I walked mournfully; and went to visit them with the same diligence as if I had been in danger to lose a friend or brother: I could not have looked more dejectedly if I had bewailed the death of the dearest mother.

Ver. 15. *But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together; yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceased not.*] But these very men (such was their inhumanity) could not dissemble the joy they conceived, when the news was brought of any evil that befel me; but ran to tell one another, and assembled themselves together, that they might publicly testify how glad they were to hear it. The very scum of the people, who were so vile, that I did not so much as know there were such men in the world, met together, by their example, to revile me; and there was no end of their reproaches.

Ver. 16. *With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.*] They joined themselves to the profane flatterers and trencher-buffoons; who maintaining themselves by saying any thing which they think will please their lords and masters, made me the subject of their abusive jests, ridiculous sayings, and scoffs, in their table-talk; which they accompanied with such rage, as if they could have eaten me up.

Ver. 17. *Lord, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul from their destruction, my darling from the lions.*] Lord! thou seest all this, I know very well; but how long wilt thou bear with it, and be a spectator only? be pleased at length to vindicate my innocence, and deliver me (who am desolate, and have none to relieve me, but thee alone) from those that have already despoiled me of my goods and good name; and now seek, like so many rapacious lions, to devour me, and take away my life.

Ver. 18. *I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people.*] I will ever preserve a grateful remembrance of it, if thou wilt vouchsafe this mercy to me; it shall be acknowledged with the most hearty thanks before all thy people, as soon as thou shalt restore me to thy tabernacle; in the most frequent assemblies, when the whole nation meet at their solemn feasts, I will celebrate thy power and goodness with my praises.

Ver. 19. *Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me; neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.*] Let not those, therefore, that unjustly persecute me, have the pleasure of getting any advantage of me: let them no longer make signs one to another with their eyes and their heads, as if they had done their business, and should satisfy their causeless hatred of me.

Ver. 20. *For they speak not peace; but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land.*] For they are men of a turbulent spirit, that give not their sovereign peaceable counsel, but devise false stories, to incense him against those that would gladly serve God quietly under his government, without doing the least harm to any body.

Ver. 21. *Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha! our eye hath seen it.*] Nor are they content to do this secretly; but now they bawl against me with open mouth, and boldly accuse me as a traitor, rejoicing at any colour they can meet withal for their calumnies; and saying, So, so, we have found him out; his treasonable practices are discovered; we ourselves are eye-witnesses of it.

Ver. 22. *This thou hast seen, O Lord: keep not silence: O Lord, be not far from me.*] But thou knowest me better than they, O Lord; to whom I appeal as a witness of the wrong they do me; beseeching thee to declare my innocence, by affording me thy help, and delivering me from their hands now that they hope to seize on me.

Ver. 23. *Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord.*] Thou hast seemed hitherto to neglect me, though I have so often made my appeal to thee; but I beseech thee at length, O my God and my Lord, who art the only judge that can give me relief, the only sovereign that can protect an injured subject, to take cognizance of my cause; and pass sentence on me according to my doings.

Ver. 24. *Judge me, O Lord my God, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.*] I desire only that thou wilt do me right; and not that thou shouldest, in favour of me, forbear to condemn and punish me, if I be guilty of what they accuse me. Deal with me according to thy unspotted justice, O Lord (whom the fear of none can overawe) my God, who art a judge whom none can corrupt; and then I know they shall never have the better of me.

Ver. 25. *Let them not say in their hearts, Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, We have swallowed him up.*] Prevent so great a mischief, O Lord, lest they should applaud themselves in their wickedness. Let them have no occasion to think within themselves they shall prevail; saying to their souls, So, now all goes well; cheer up, we shall have our desires: much less let them prevail so far,

that they should triumph in my ruin, and say, We have obtained our end, we have utterly destroyed him.

Ver. 26. *Let them be ashamed, and brought to confusion together, that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me.*] Let them all be shamefully disappointed; and, as they have combined together insolently to deride and mock me; so let them who rejoice at my present forlorn condition, look upon one another with amazement and confusion. Let them not only be put to the blush, but perfectly confounded, and never be able to lift up their heads again, who proudly traduce me, and seek to raise themselves upon my ruin.

Ver. 27. *Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause; yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.*] And thereby fill all their hearts with joy, and their mouths with the voice of triumph, who, believing my innocence, have wished well to me: and let them see me so victorious, that this may be their perpetual song; The Lord be extolled with the highest praises, who favoured his servant David so much, that he delivered him out of all his troubles, and settled him in peace and prosperity.

Ver. 28. *And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness, and of thy praise all the day long.*] As for my tongue, that sure shall never rest; but be declaring thy justice, and goodness, and fidelity to me: on which I shall ever think; and be giving thee the praise which is due unto them perpetually.

PSALM XXXVI.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David, the Servant of the Lord.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, composed by David, and delivered by him to the chief master of music in the tabernacle, seems to have been penned, as the former and many others were, during the persecution he suffered from Saul. It is hard to say, to what part of that time it peculiarly belongs. The most probable opinion is, that it hath respect to the beginning of it: when Saul had a jealousy of him, and a hatred to him; but hid it secretly in his heart, and counterfeited friendship to him, and desire of his alliance; (as you read 1 Sam. xviii.) and yet could not carry the matter so cunningly, and so wholly suppress and conceal his intentions to destroy him, but that they broke out in some fits; (as you find there, ver. 11. and in the next chapter, ver. 10.) and by the very preferment he gave him, made it plainly appear he designed his ruin. This treachery David here describes (without naming Saul, to whom he preserved a due reverence); and opposes thereunto the fidelity and goodness of God, who rules the whole world, and takes care of beasts as well as men; and therefore would not, he hoped, desert him, nor any else that depend on him, and are his faithful servants; as he, in a special manner, professed himself, and was obliged to be.

Ver. 1. *THE transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.*] The wicked may use many arts to disguise and cloak his evil intentions; but his actions, directly contrary to all the laws of humanity, as well as the law of God, discover what he is, and make me resolve not to trust him; because, without all doubt, he hath no regard to God, nor will be restrained by the fear of him from doing me still more mischief.

Ver. 2. *For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful.*] Though he flatter and soothe up himself in his own conceit, imagining he carries things so cunningly and smoothly, that none can accuse him; yet at length his iniquity shall be found out, and make him odious to all the world.

Ver. 3. *The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good.*] When he pretends great kindness to me, and professes I am dear to him, his meaning is to do me mischief, and to cheat and ensnare me into danger. He was once a better man, and better affected towards me; but now his passions have so blinded his judgment, and perverted his will, that he knows not what belongs to justice and equity, much less to goodness and charity.

Ver. 4. *He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil.*] For whatsoever he may say in public of his affection to me, when he is retired he is contriving how to ruin me. He muses of nothing else when he lies down to sleep, and when he awakes: and is not transported merely by a sudden fit of jealousy and anger against me; but hath set himself (with an obstinate resolution to persist in it) in a course so void of all piety, justice, or charity, that there is no wickedness, though never so abominable, at which he sticks, to compass his design to destroy me.

Ver. 5. *Thy mercy (O Lord) is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.*] My comfort is, that his hatred and falsehood cannot be so great, but thy goodness and loving-kindness, O Lord, and thy faithfulness to thy word, are infinitely greater: on these I rely, which I know will not deceive me; being no less conspicuous and constant (as well as unmeasurable) than the heavens.

Ver. 6. *Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast.*] Thy justice, also, in the administrations of all affairs, appears as visibly, and is as unmoveable, as the highest mountains; which the greatest power on earth cannot shake, nor make to bend to their inclinations. The deepest plots they can lay are shallow, and easily disappointed by thee; whose orders and decrees shall be executed and brought to pass, by ways and means that we cannot fathom: and therefore I will trust in thee, O Lord; whose careful providence extends not only to men, but to beasts also, which have no sense of thee.

Ver. 7. *How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.*] For if thou hast such care of their well-being, O God; thy loving-kindness, sure, and tender mercy, are incomparably greater to those that know thee, and depend upon thee. It is impossible to express the value of them; and to know how rich, how safe, and secure, they are, who, in all troubles and dangers, can confide in thee for thy powerful protection.

Ver. 8. *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness*

of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.] They shall not only be well contented in that condition wherein they are; but have abundant satisfaction in thy love to them; and, at length, bring thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, for thy merciful preservation of them, and feast with thee in thy house; where thou shalt pour into them the sweetest joys, and give them an earnest of the greatest plenty of all Divine blessings, that shall continually flow in upon them.

Ver. 9. *For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.*] For thou art the spring from whence all our happiness comes, which thou art able to communicate for ever: and if thou wilt be favourable to us, nothing shall hinder our joy; but we shall think ourselves happy in the most disconsolate condition.

Ver. 10. *O continue thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.*] Vouchsafe then, O most gracious God, to extend thy loving-kindness (which is so precious, that it excels all worldly things) not only unto me, but unto all that obediently acknowledge their dependance on thee: never withdraw thy favour from them, but perform thy promises to thy faithful servants, and defend them from all the mischievous devices of their enemies to destroy them.

Ver. 11. *Let not the foot of pride come against me; and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.*] Make me an example of it; and, whatsoever is secretly designed and plotted against me, let not my proud enemy prevail, and tread me under his feet; let not all the power of the wicked, that may join with him, be able to subvert me.

Ver. 12. *There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.*] In this attempt I am confident they shall fail; I plainly see them baffled in this wicked design. It is as certain, as if I already beheld it with mine eyes, that where they thought to overthrow me, they shall fall themselves: with so powerful a hand shall they be thrown down, that they shall never recover themselves, to renew their attempts against me any more.

PSALM XXXVII.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

In this Psalm (which is composed so artificially, that the order of the letters of the alphabet is observed, in the first letter of every other verse) David seems to intend to prevent the scandal which some might take when they saw the wicked in prosperity, and the godly under affliction (as they did sometimes); quite contrary to the law, which promised all good things to those that kept it, and threatened all evil to those that broke it. He bids them be patient, and stay awhile; and they should see both verified. For the prosperity of the wicked shall be short (as he over and over again bids them consider): and the just, if they would but wait awhile, should see themselves not only delivered out of trouble, but made very flourishing. And therefore he advises, in the first place, that no man by any means suffer himself to be tempted, by the splendid condition of the wicked, to imitate them in their ungodly courses; but to stick close to the principles of piety and virtue, trusting in God, and committing himself to him; who will give great satisfaction to such honest men, in what they have at present, though never so little; and, at last, put them in possession of all that their hearts can desire. And, to preserve themselves in this pious temper, he shews nothing could be more available than meekness and humility (which procure us, as Theodoret here notes, abundance of good things), and to reflect on the lamentable end of the proud and haughty, who take unjust courses (as was apparent in what befel Saul and Absalom, and such-like persons). Which sufficiently admonishes all men to bear their present troubles decently and well: and not to envy the prosperous successes of the wicked, nor to call them blessed: but rather account them unhappy and miserable.

The son of Sirach seems to have summed up this Psalm in those few words, (Ecclus. i. 23, &c.) "A patient man will bear for a time, and afterward joy shall spring up unto him. For the fear of the Lord is wisdom; and faith and meekness are his delight."

Ver. 1. *FRET not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.*] Let it not vex thee to see the evil-doers in great prosperity: nor be provoked thereby either to accuse God's providence, or to think the worse of virtue; or to imitate them in their wickedness; or to wish thyself to be what they are.

Ver. 2. *For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.*] For this prosperity, which thou art apt to look upon with admiration, envy, or anger, is so far from lasting always, that it is but of short continuance: they shall be cut down on a sudden, as the grass is by the hand of the mower, when it is most flourishing; or they shall fade away as the green herb doth, which in a little time withers, and of itself falls to decay.

Ver. 3. *Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.*] If you would have a firm and stable happiness, confide in God (and not in riches, shouldest thou have them in the greatest abundance), doing all the good thou art able in that condition wherein his providence hath placed thee: so shalt thou be settled in the good land God hath given us (when the wicked are cut off from it), and shalt enjoy securely all those blessings which he, according to his faithful promise, will provide for thee.

Ver. 4. *Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*] Be not discouraged, therefore, nor too much dejected, if thou art for the present afflicted; but rest contented with what thou hast: or rather solace thyself in the Lord, and take a greater delight in his promises, than the wicked can do in their present possessions; and, commending thyself unto him by constant prayer, be confident he will answer thee, according to thy heart's desire.

Ver. 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.*] When thou hast any difficult business in hand, and art doubtful of the success; or when thou knowest not what course to take, for the accomplishing of thy honest designs; leave all to the Lord, and trust to him in pious and upright courses, that he will direct and assist thee, and bring things to a good issue.

Ver. 6. *And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the*

light, and thy judgment as the noon-day.] And if thou shouldest be accused as a man of evil designs; let not that trouble thee neither: for though thy fame may be obscured for a time by calumnies and slanders, as the sun is by mists and clouds; yet, as that scatters them all at last, so shall thy integrity appear, and shine as bright as the sun at noon-day.

Ver. 7. *Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.*] And in the mean time rest satisfied in this, that the Lord knows thy innocency: and do not murmur and complain if he do not presently vindicate it: but think it becomes thee to wait upon him, with humble submission to his will, and to stay as long as he pleases. And be sure thou beest not so impatient, as to be irritated, by the thriving wickedness of the ungodly, and the strange success they have in their dishonest contrivances, to do as they do; and to follow them in their calumnies, fraud, injustice, and oppression, or any such-like courses, whereby they craftily compass all their designs.

Ver. 8. *Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in anywise to do evil.*] If thou perceive thy indignation begin to arise, to see such vile people so successful, suppress it presently; let it not vex and afflict thee, much less boil up to wrath and furious displeasure; or if on a sudden, thou art surprised with such a passion, take care, however, that it proceed no farther; and by no means be so incensed (I must repeat that caution, it is so weighty) as to follow their example in evil-doing.

Ver. 9. *For evil-doers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.*] For how prosperous soever it may prove in the beginning, the end, assure thyself, shall be lamentable. And let those evil-doers expect also to meet with an untimely end, and to be cut off by the hand of justice, in a remarkable manner, from the land of the living: when they that follow my advice, and wait patiently till the Lord will do them right, shall possess those good things that he hath promised, in this land which he hath given them for their inheritance.

Ver. 10. *For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.*] And do not think he stays too long before he doth it; but if that thought come into thy mind, resolve to expect yet awhile longer; and still believe that, after a very short time, the wicked, who seem to stand so fast, shall be utterly destroyed. When thou hast made a strict search after him, thou shalt find nothing of him remaining in the place where thou sawest him so flourishing.

Ver. 11. *But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*] Whereas they that meekly submit to their present afflictions, and patiently wait upon God till he be pleased to relieve them, shall be settled at last in their possessions; and lead a most pleasant life, in the greatest plenty of all manner of good things: in the enjoyment of which nothing shall disturb them.

Ver. 12. *The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.*] The wicked, indeed, hope to hinder this; being so furiously enraged at the just, that he is always contriving some mischief against him.

Ver. 13. *The Lord shall laugh at him; for he seeth that his day is coming.*] But all his plots and crafty devices are ridiculous in the eyes of the Lord, who sees the day of his ruin approaching: which will inevitably seize on him, before his designs can take effect.

Ver. 14. *The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation.*] He hath numerous partakers, indeed, who have added open force to their secret practices, and armed themselves in a warlike manner, for the just man's utter destruction; which they hope may be the more easily compassed, because he is destitute of human help, and will not take any crooked ways for his own preservation.

Ver. 15. *Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.*] But all these endeavours also shall prove in vain; and, which is more, they shall not only miss their aim, but their sword, as we say, shall cut their own throat; and the evil they intended against the just, shall fall upon themselves.

Ver. 16. *A little that the righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.*] And as there is more satisfaction in the little pittance a righteous man hath, than in all the abundance which the greatest potentates have gotten by extortion, oppression, and violence: so that small power he hath shall be of more force to protect and preserve him, than all the multitudes which attend upon those violent men to guard them.

Ver. 17. *For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the Lord upholdeth the righteous.*] For the Lord is against the wicked; and be their power never so great, which they have to oppress and destroy the righteous, he will break it in pieces; but good men will he support, be they never so weak; and both maintain them in what they enjoy, and increase their stock, notwithstanding all that their enemies can do against them.

Ver. 18. *The Lord knoweth the days of the upright; and their inheritance shall be for ever.*] He may seem to neglect them; but there is no day passes wherein he doth not take care of them, and exercise a most gracious providence over them; observing not only all their afflictions, but their patience under them, which shall be rewarded with the blessings he hath promised to them, and to their children after them.

Ver. 19. *They shall not be ashamed in the evil time; and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.*] In calamitous times, when God punishes the world by war or pestilence, they shall not be ashamed of the hope they have placed in God, that he will preserve them; when a famine comes and pinches others, they shall be sure to have enough.

Ver. 20. *But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.*] But the wicked shall perish in those evil days; for the Lord looks upon them as his enemies; who, when they grow rich and great, are but fatted up as beasts for the slaughter, and on a sudden melt away, as fast as the fat of lambs that is burnt upon the altar: just so shall the Divine vengeance seize on them, when they are in the fulness of their prosperity; and, like that fat, they shall vanish into smoke, and come to nothing.

Ver. 21. *The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.*] You see a man now, perhaps, grow rich by wicked arts; but he shall in

time be reduced to such straits as shall put him to double shame; first of borrowing, and then of not being able to pay at his day: when the righteous shall be so far from borrowing of any, that he shall be able to lend; nay, to exercise mercy, and give freely to him that needeth.

Ver. 22. *For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.*] For upon these God hath entailed a blessing by his gracious promises (which shall certainly be fulfilled), that they and theirs shall enjoy the good things of the land; and against the other he hath denounced a curse (which they shall no ways avoid), that they shall be rooted out.

Ver. 23. *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way.*] Let a man but take care that his ways be pleasing to the Lord, by doing what he approves; and he will prosper him in all his undertakings, and guide his counsels and actions so, that he shall meet with good success.

Ver. 24. *Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.*] Or if he fail sometime of his end, he shall not be undone: the Lord still supports him by his power, that he be not discouraged; and relieves him by his good providence, that he be not utterly ruined.

Ver. 25. *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*] I say nothing but what I can confirm by my own long observation: when I was young, I began to take notice of it; and I continued so to do, till now that I am grown old: and I cannot remember, that in all my life I ever saw a truly pious, just, and charitable man, left destitute of necessary things; or his children after him reduced to such poverty, that they were constrained to beg from door to door.

Ver. 26. *He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.*] No, he rather hath not only enough to supply his own wants, but to spare also for the relief of others; to whom he freely gives, or at least lends: and is so unwearied in these acts of charity, that God rewards it with blessings upon his posterity.

Ver. 27. *Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.*] Take my advice, therefore, if thou wouldest be happy: never do any evil, though it be to gain the greatest advantage this world can afford; but constantly employ thyself in good works, especially in acts of mercy: though thereby thou mayest seem to impoverish thyself for the present; be assured, this is the way to live a long and prosperous life in great tranquillity and peace.

Ver. 28. *For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.*] For the Lord loveth that which is just and right; and upon that account will not forsake those that are merciful, but be very merciful to them; and continue his mercy to their children after them, when the posterity of injurious and hard-hearted men shall be destroyed.

Ver. 29. *The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.*] Such wretches may flourish for a time: but they that shall be settled and fixed in the land of promise, and leave it as an inheritance to those that succeed them, are only (as I have often said) the godly, just, and merciful men.

Ver. 30. *The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.*] Who do good not only to men's bodies, but to their souls also; imparting to them (especially to their own children) such precepts of virtuous wisdom, as teach them how to behave themselves aright in every action of their life, and naturally tend to make them prosperous.

Ver. 31. *The law of his God is in his heart: none of his steps shall slide.*] As appears by this righteous man himself: who, making the law of God (which he hath continually before his eyes) the rule of his life, proceeds steadily to the obtaining of his end; and happily finishes his course, without falling into those mischiefs, into which wickedness leads those who have no regard unto that rule.

Ver. 32. *The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.*] His greatest danger is from such lawless men, who (as I have said before) watch for an opportunity, and leave no means unattempted (though it be by falseness and treachery), not only to give him trouble and disturbance, but to take away his life.

Ver. 33. *The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.*] But the Lord will not let them have power to do what they design. He will rescue him from their violence. Or, if they seek to undo him in a form of law, by false accusations before the public judges, he will find a means to clear his innocence, and reverse even the sentence they have pronounced against him.

Ver. 34. *Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.*] Therefore, if I should study never so long, I can give a good man no better advice than I did at first: hope in God (when any of these troubles happen) and patiently wait for his mercy, in a steadfast observance of all his commands. Be not moved by any mischiefs that men can threaten, to go out of that way into which thou art directed by God's law; but believe that he will at last, if thou perseverest in it, advance thee to the possession of all the blessings it promiseth; and thou shalt see those that thought to depress thee utterly destroyed.

Ver. 35. *I have seen the wicked in great power, and spread himself like a green bay-tree.*] There wants not public examples of this in our own days. For I myself have seen the wicked (such as Saul, Doeg, and Ahithophel) in such power, that he was in no fear that any body could hurt him; but quite contrary, struck terror into all: his offspring was numerous, his possessions large, his revenue exceeding great; being like a tree never yet transplanted, that hath taken root, and sucked abundance of the earth, and spreads juice out of its branches every way.

Ver. 36. *Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.*] And yet, as firm as he seemed to stand, he was gone on a sudden; he vanished (it is very wonderful) just as you see a cloud pass away and disappear. I looked about me to see what was become of him, and whether he might not be removed (as a tree sometimes is) to another place; but there was no such man, nor any remainder of him to be found.

Ver. 37. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.*] Do you mark then and make it your own observation, as I have made it mine, and you will find there is this great difference between him that makes the laws of God the rule of his life, and those that

transgress them; that though the former may meet with some troubles for a time, yet, if they do not make him forsake his integrity, nor in any thing swerve from his duty, he shall in the issue be very prosperous and happy.

Ver. 38. *But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off.*] But the other shall be utterly destroyed; none of them shall escape by any of their cunning tricks and devices, but shall all alike perish; though for the present they may thrive in their wickedness, yet in the conclusion they shall be cut off both root and branch.

Ver. 39. *But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; he is their strength in the time of trouble.*] For the Lord, whom none can resist, undertakes to be the defender, deliverer, and benefactor of just and good men: they may safely depend on him for power and strength to support and protect them, whensoever they fall into any distress,

Ver. 40. *And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.*] He will not fail to help them during their troubles, and at last to deliver them out of them: the wicked shall not be able to hinder it; but he will deliver them from all their secret plots, or open attempts to destroy them: he will therefore deliver them, because they entirely rely on him for safety, and will not take any other course but such as he allows, to save themselves from danger.

PSALM XXXVIII.

A Psalm of David, to bring to Remembrance.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed by David, either during his affliction, to desire God graciously to remember him (as the title of it is), and send him deliverance, or afterward, to put himself in remembrance of the moans he made when he was in that sad condition; and how earnest he then was with God, to pardon all the sins which had brought him into it, and to release him out of it; and what hope and confidence he then had in God, which might encourage him and all others to place the like humble trust in his goodness for the time to come.

What the affliction was, is not so certain as it may seem at first sight. It is generally thought he was sick, and that of some noisome, ulcerous disease; as, in the beginning of the Psalm, several expressions, if they be taken literally, plainly enough denote. But he presently falling into a doleful complaint of the malignity of his enemies, and the coldness of his friends' affection towards him; it is thought not improbable by others, that he describes the crazy condition he was in (under the persecution of Saul) by the languishment of a sick man under some dangerous disease. And thus Theodoret understands it: only he supposes that he reflects upon the disastrous things that befel him after he came to the crown; by the murder of his son Amnon, the rebellion of Absalom, the falseness of Ahithophel, the abusive reproaches of Shimei, and all the other afflictions, mentioned in his history, which were sent by God upon him for the cure of his sins. And this sense we must follow; or else say, he was at the very same time sick of a grievous disease, when he laboured under one of those persecutions. And since the Psalm will be of larger use, if we so interpret it, I shall follow that conjecture. So I call it, because we do not read of any sickness David had; nor are we certain what the particular sins were which he bewails in so sad a manner, that it hath made this be called one of the *penitential Psalms*, beginning just as the first of them doth, Psalm vi.

Ver. 1. *O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath; neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.*] O Lord, I am sorely afflicted; and it is but just I should be so. Yet let me prevail with thee for so much mercy, as not to proceed to any farther severity: or if thou dost, yet still to mitigate it with some favour, that I may not suffer in the utmost extremity.

Ver. 2. *For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.*] For (beside the trouble which my enemies give me without) the pains I already endure in my body are exceeding sharp, and touch me to the very quick: thou hast inflicted on me a heavy punishment, which presses me down to the ground.

Ver. 3. *There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin.*] There is no part of my body but feels the sad effects of thy displeasure, which my sins have so provoked, that I am in perpetual pain, without any intermission.

Ver. 4. *For mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.*] They have brought a great number of evils upon me, which like a deluge have overwhelmed me; and lie upon me as an intolerable burden, under which I am ready to sink, unless thou support me.

Ver. 5. *My wounds stink, and are corrupt, because of my foolishness.*] I am full of ulcers, and they are full of putrefied matter, which grows noisome and offensive to me; as a just reward of my folly, whereby, to satisfy my unreasonable desires, I have inconsiderately offended thee, (2 Sam. xi. 2—4.)

Ver. 6. *I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly: I go mourning all the day long.*] I am not able to go upright, being grown crooked beyond measure: the posture of a mourner, who goes, or rather creeps, softly, and bowed down, is mine continually.

Ver. 7. *For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease; and there is no soundness in my flesh.*] Fiery biles break out in the parts about my loins: and though there be so many of them, that one would think all the ill humours were run thither; yet, in the rest of my body, as I said before, there is no part but is out of order.

Ver. 8. *I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.*] I am exceedingly weak, and worn away with pain and grief; wherewith my heart is so perpetually tormented, that I roar, rather than sigh, and groan and cry under the apparent anguish of it.

Ver. 9. *Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee.*] But why do I complain in this manner, and make such a particular enumeration of my sufferings? thou, Lord, understandest what I want, and what I would have: though I should say never a word, all my miseries, and the sighs they have cost me, are not unknown to thee.

Ver. 10. *My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me.*] Thou seest

the great agitation of my mind, which wanders up and down in restless thought, but all to no purpose; for my strength hath forsaken me: the light of my eyes is so weak, that I can scarce make any use of them.

Ver. 11. *My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off.*] And if I could, I should see none of those whom one would expect, in such a condition, to come and comfort me, (2 Sam. xv. 31.) For I am deserted by those who professed great love to me: yea, they with whom I contracted a friendship and intimate familiarity neglect me; and such whom nature hath inclined to pity and relieve me keep at a distance, and give me no assistance in my affliction.

Ver. 12. *They also that seek after my life lay snares for me; and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long.*] Meanwhile my enemies are very busy, and employ all their subtilty to find a way how to make an end of this miserable life of mine: they discourse of nothing else but what mischief they may do me; and what they cannot do by force, they are continually contriving how to compass by fraud and deceit.

Ver. 13. *But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth.*] I wanted not information how they calumniated me; but was so oppressed with the weight of my other afflictions, and of those sins which have brought them upon me, that I took no notice of it: but lay as if I were deaf, and heard not what they said; or dumb, and could not make an answer.

Ver. 14. *Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.*] I was as silent, I say, as if I knew nothing of their false accusations; or as if I were not able to confute them.

Ver. 15. *For in thee, O Lord, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.*] For, notwithstanding all my sins, and thy sore displeasure which I feel against them, I have a good hope in thee, O Lord, that thou wilt plead my cause. I leave them therefore to thee, O Lord, who art the righteous judge; and as thou hast in justice afflicted me, so wilt thou, I doubt not, make them know that they have wrongfully charged me.

Ver. 16. *For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth, they magnify themselves against me.*] I still conclude with myself, that, as bad as I am, and as low as thou hast laid me, thou wilt not think fit to let them insult over me, and brag that they have got the better of me:

Ver. 17. *For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me.*] As they are in danger now to do; for I am so weak every way, that I am ready to fall, and have nothing but a sad prospect of ruin before mine eyes.

Ver. 18. *For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.*] I know, and do confess, that I have deserved it by my iniquity; which when I consider (and nothing else), I have reason to fear the worst that they can do unto me.

Ver. 19. *But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong; and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.*] And what cannot they do, who, while I lie in this weak and miserable condition, are flourishing and prosperous, strong and mighty? and, by false rumours, make me still more odious to the multitude, and increase their forces against me.

Ver. 20. *They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is.*] With which are joined even those whom I have highly obliged; who do not think it bad enough not to be my friends, but are become my adversaries: for no other reason, that I can find, but because I make a conscience of what I do, and faithfully study, and earnestly seek, the good of all this kingdom.

Ver. 21. *Forsake me not, O Lord: O my God, be not far from me.*] I humbly therefore betake myself to thee, O Lord, beseeching thee, that thou wilt not desert me as they have done. O my God, who hast been very gracious to me on suadry occasions, and seest that I still depend entirely upon thee, let not my sins make thee to abandon me.

Ver. 22. *Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.*] But rather let my misery, and the imminent danger I am in, move thee speedily to relieve me. Defer no longer, O Lord, whose property it is to deliver those who have none to help them, and trust in thee alone, as I now do, for safety and preservation.

PSALM XXXIX.

To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

It is thought by some, that this Psalm (which David delivered afterward to Jeduthun, an excellent musician, and governor of the music in the tabernacle, 1 Chron. xxv.) was made upon the same occasion with the foregoing. And so in part it was; for though there is little reason to think that he was still sick when he composed it (as they imagine); yet his enemies, it is manifest, pressed him sorely. And the consideration of the flourishing condition wherein they were, though very wicked (whilst he, a pious servant of God, was lamentably afflicted), put him into some commotion, notwithstanding his resolution to the contrary; till the thoughts of the shortness of man's life, and consequently of his sufferings, and how easy it was for God to cut off his enemies, composed his spirit again, and made him patient and contented with his present condition.

So that this Psalm seems to me to be rather of the same kind with the thirty-seventh than the thirty-eighth. Only there David gives counsel to others, after God had delivered him from many persecutions, to be patient by his example: but here he himself puts that counsel in practice (perhaps, when the rebellion of Absalom renewed his trouble, which is the opinion of Theodoret); though he shews it is very difficult, on some occasions, not to be very much disturbed at wicked men's prosperity, and good men's afflictions, especially when it comes to be a man's own case under some grievous calamity.

Ver. 1. *I SAID, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.*] It is a very great provocation to anger and discontent to see the wicked still continue prosperous, and to hear how they abuse and calumniate me. But I resolved with myself not to be vexed at it; but rather to take care, as I have exhorted others, (Psal. xxxvii.) to be more inoffensive in all my actions; and especially to watch over my tongue, and to lay the strictest restraint upon it, that no indecent complaint, no irreverent discourse about God's providence, no, nor any intemperate speeches

against my adversaries, should proceed out of my mouth, (2 Sam. xvi. 8. 13.)

Ver. 2. *I was dumb with silence: I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred.*] And this purpose I kept for some time so steadfastly, that I spake not a word, either good or bad, but remained, like a dumb man, in perfect silence; being so afraid of breaking out into impatient language against my unjust accusers, that I would not so much as vindicate myself, and clear my innocence. Though the truth is, while I thus denied all vent to my inward grief (which I could not quite suppress), it was the more increased.

Ver. 3. *My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue.*] For though I *said* nothing, yet I could not choose but have many sad *thoughts* of the injuries I suffered; and musing long upon them, and upon the impunity of those who committed them, my sorrow grew so great at last, that it could no longer be pent up; but, burning like a fire, with vehement heat in my breast, it broke forth into such expressions as these:

Ver. 4. *Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.*] Lord, I do not murmur nor repine at my sufferings; but that I may be able to bear them still patiently, make me sensible, I humbly beseech thee, how short this frail life is, and how soon it will have an end; that, duly considering this, I may be the less concerned about the miseries I endure, which will end together with it.

Ver. 5. *Behold, thou hast made my days as a handbreadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily, every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.*] And it is strange I should forget it, seeing it is so apparent thou hast circumscribed my days within a very narrow compass, and that, compared with thy eternal duration, they are just nothing. Besides, there is no man so strong, so firm, but he may die in an instant (as my enemies may do), in the height of his prosperity, and most flourishing condition: for be he never so settled as he thinks in his greatness, it is certain he is mere emptiness and vanity.

Ver. 6. *Surely every man walketh in a vain show; surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.*] What an imaginary thing then is the life of man! who promises himself mighty matters, but hath no more than the image and shadow of them in his brain; for on a sudden he himself vanishes, and is gone: yet for these he makes a lamentable bustle and stir, whereby, if he get any thing, alas! it is to very small purpose; for after all the pains he hath taken to heap up wealth, he hath no certainty whether he shall live to enjoy it; no, nor whether his son, or his kindred (for perhaps a stranger, nay, his enemy), shall possess it.

Ver. 7. *And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee.*] And therefore I am resolved, O Lord, with thy gracious assistance, not to trouble myself so much as I have done about these vain and uncertain things: for what is there even in a kingdom, that I should desire and expect it impatiently, which may so soon be lost again? I have done with all these empty hopes, and content myself with this alone; that thou wilt not forsake me, but be my gracious God, and choose what is best for me.

Ver. 8. *Deliver me from all my transgressions; make me not the reproach of the foolish.*] And, first, I hope thou wilt forgive me all those sins, which have justly deserved these heavy punishments; and then shew me so much favour, that wicked men, who are so foolish, that they understand not thy meaning in these afflictions which have befallen me, but imagine thou hast cast me off, may not make me their laughing-stock, nor mock at my reliance on thee, and patient submission to thee.

Ver. 9. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it.*] For I did not complain, but silently endure their insolent and scurrilous language, together with all my other sufferings; reverencing thy justice, by whom every thing is ordered: (2 Sam. xvi. 10.) and this they interpreted to be yielding the cause, and justifying their proceedings against me.

Ver. 10. *Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.*] May it please thee, therefore, who hath inflicted sore judgments on me, at length to remove them: put a speedy end to them (if thou intendest to confute their foolish reproaches); because I cannot long subsist under such a burden, as hath already taken away all my strength from me.

Ver. 11. *When thou with rebukes doth correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah.*] And, indeed, who is able to contend with thee, if thou wilt not graciously remit the punishment we deserve? For when thou chastisest man (in any of those ways whereby thou hast threatened to rebuke his extravagance), his wealth, his power, and whatsoever else he hath that is valuable, moulders away like a garment that is moth-eaten: and it is no wonder; for the greatest of men, as well as the meanest, are but mere vanity.

Ver. 12. *Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.*] But let even this move thee, O Lord, to grant my petition, which I make for pardon and release from this chastisement. Because I am so frail (as all my forefathers were), and our time here is so very short, that I am more like a stranger and sojourner in this country, than an inhabitant or lord of it (as I lately thought myself); therefore grant my earnest request: and when I say nothing, but silently submit to thy correction, let my tears speak for me, and prevail with thee for some mercy.

Ver. 13. *O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.*] Forbear me, I beseech thee, and do not proceed thus to afflict me: but repair the decays that are in my strength, and let the very few days I have to live be more peaceable; that, free from the disturbance my enemies give me, I may do thee some small service before I leave the world, and have nothing to do in it any more.

PSALM XL.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm of David, directed to the chief master of music, for the use of the tabernacle. Wherein he thankfully acknowledges God's goodness to him in delivering him from some great danger: (it is not certain what: but may be applied either to the distress he was reduced into by his enemies, as we read in the Psalm foregoing; or to

the sickness God had inflicted on him; or to both, mentioned Psal. xxxviii.) and then declares his resolution to serve God faithfully and cheerfully, in such words as may be better applied to Christ's readiness to do the will of God, though it were by dying for us.

But it seems this deliverance was not so complete, but that still he was infested with many enemies; and therefore, in the latter part of this Psalm, he commends himself still to God's merciful providence: beseeching him to finish what he had begun, by continuing to be his deliverer.

Ver. 1. *I WAITED patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.*] It is good, I see, to persevere in prayer, and with constancy and patience to wait upon the Lord; for though he hath made me expect very long, yet at last he hath been graciously pleased to condescend unto me, and to grant my desire.

Ver. 2. *He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay; and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.*] For when I was in the greatest distress, and no more able to help myself than a man who is fallen into a very deep pit, where he sticks fast also in the stiffest clay; he not only delivered me from that present danger, which was very dreadful; but brought me into a place of safety, and withal confirmed me in it, that I might not fall again into the like extremity:

Ver. 3. *And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.*] But have liberty in quiet and peace to meditate his praises, and to indite a new song in honour of our God; who hath, to all other benefits, added this late wonderful preservation: which shall excite many others, when they duly consider it, to join together with me in his worship and service; and patiently to depend upon him, and hope in his mercy, as I have done.

Ver. 4. *Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust; and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.*] And happy is that man, notwithstanding all the troubles he may endure, who reposes his confidence in the Lord alone: and neither envies the success of insolent and deceitful men; nor is tempted thereby to imitate them in their pride, and in their perfidiousness.

Ver. 5. *Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.*] Many are the benefits, O mighty Lord, and my most gracious God, which thou hast bestowed upon such faithful servants; for whom thou hast done wonders, and still designest great and many kindnesses, which cannot be comprehended, much less expressed, by our weakness. Whensoever I attempt to make thee some acknowledgment for such inestimable favours, I find it is beyond my power so much as to tell the number of them.

Ver. 6. *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required.*] There are no peace-offerings (whereby we are wont to testify our thankfulness for thy mercies), nor any oblations, which attend upon them that are worthy to be presented unto thee; or are a fit expression of our gratitude for so many, and so great, benefits as I have received from thee. A ready and constant obedience to thee, in thy faithful service, is far more acceptable; to which, as I am by nature tied, and thou hast by thy mercies strongly engaged me, so I do freely consent, and cheerfully devote myself (as the Lord Christ hereafter will do entirely): if I should add all other kinds of sacrifice, whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin, I see of how little value they are with thee.

Ver. 7. *Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me.*] And therefore, when I thought what thou mightest justly expect from me, after this great deliverance, immediately I said (as if I had heard thee calling upon me, to do thee some extraordinary service), Behold, I come to make an offering of myself unto thee (as the Lord Christ will do, even of his very blood). For so the book of the law requires (wherein this sacrifice of Christ is more plainly described):

Ver. 8. *I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.*] That I should do what is pleasing and acceptable to thee, O my God (as the Lord Christ will do more perfectly), though it be never so difficult and troublesome to me: and so I will most gladly, with all my soul: for there thy law is written, and not only in my book. (Deut. xvii. 18, 19.)

Ver. 9. *I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest.*] And as an earnest of it, I have already proclaimed to all thy people, in their full assemblies, what great obligations I have unto thee: behold, O Lord, I appeal to thee, who canst not be deceived how forward I have been to offer to thee, on all occasions, this public sacrifice of praise, for all thy benefits bestowed upon me.

Ver. 10. *I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.*] I have not thought it sufficient to meditate alone by myself upon thy loving-kindness, which hath mightily affected my heart; but I have made known to others how faithfully thou hast performed thy promises in the wonderful deliverance thou hast lately given me: this singular kindness and fidelity I have openly published to all thy people, in their most frequent assemblies, at the solemn festivals.

Ver. 11. *Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me.*] Be thou pleased, O mighty Lord, as readily, openly, and abundantly, to express thy tender mercy towards me: let that loving-kindness and faithfulness, which I have so much magnified, be ever seen in my continued preservation and deliverance from all future dangers.

Ver. 12. *For innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me.*] For I am not yet so completely happy, but that I see mine enemies are so busy in contriving more mischief against me, that dangers without number surround me. And indeed my sins are so many, that it is but just I should feel the fruit of them in multiplied punishments; which have suddenly seized on me, and grown to such a number, that, as I may sooner tell how many hairs I have on my head, than how many troubles I suffer, so I am ready to faint under the burden of them:

Ver. 13. *Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me: O Lord, make haste to help me.*] Till I think of thee, O Lord, who, I hope, wilt be still pleased to deliver me; yea, thou hast been so very good to me, that I take the humble boldness to beseech thee, O Lord, to deliver me speedily.

Ver. 14. *Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward, and put to shame, that wish me evil.*] Let them all be alike most shamefully disappointed, that restlessly endeavour to take away my life: defeat them, and put them to flight, with open disgrace, whoever they be that study to do me any mischief.

Ver. 15. *Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame, that say unto me, Aha, aha!*] Let utter desolation be the recompence of all their shameful deeds, whereby they thought to have exposed me to shame: when they insulted over me, and made a mock both of my affliction and of my trust in thee.

Ver. 16. *Let all those that seek after thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified.*] But let all those that depend on thee alone, and seek for safety by no other means but those which thou allowest, have perpetual cause to rejoice in thee exceedingly: let such as expect and delight to see thee appear for the deliverance of thy people, never cease to say, The Lord be praised: let the glory of his wonderful works be every where published and extolled.

Ver. 17. *But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.*] As for myself, this is my never-failing comfort, that though I am stripped of all, and quite destitute of human help, yet the Lord takes care of me, and consults my good: and it is sufficient, that thou Lord art my God, on whom I depend for relief and deliverance; O delay not to send it to me.

PSALM XLI.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

Though some will have this Psalm to have been composed by David, and delivered to the chief master of music, only upon occasion of that great strait, into which he was brought by the rebellion of his son Absalom; yet it is the more common opinion, and seems more probable, that he had been also lately very sick. And then finding, by sad experience, what an aggravation it was of his affliction, to see his enemies so barbarous as to rejoice at it, and wish his death; nay, his friends, especially some one particular friend (who was a type of the traitor Judas), not only to take no pity on him, but prove false and perfidious to him; he, in the first place, highly commends and blesses that temper of mind which inclines men to be pitiful and compassionate to those that are sick, and assures such persons that they shall feel the happy fruits of it; and then complains most heavily of their inhumanity, who insulted over him in his calamity, and with reproachful words and vile calumnies exasperated the grief of his mind. On which he hoped God, who loves merciful men, would take compassion, and put him into a condition to chastise their insolence.

Ver. 1. *BLESSED is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.*] Happy is that tender-hearted man, who, prudently considering it may be his own condition, doth not despise, but visit the sick, especially such as are poor, and takes care to comfort and relieve them. The Lord will requite his kindness, and send him the like succour and relief when he falls into any danger.

Ver. 2. *The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.*] In sickly times, or other public calamity, the Lord will preserve his life; and more than that, will make him live in prosperity upon the earth; which when the envy and hatred of his enemies endeavour to destroy, the Lord will disappoint them, and not suffer them to have their will on him.

Ver. 3. *The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.*] Or if any sickness (as no man can expect always to be in health) bring him into such a languishing condition, that he cannot help himself, the Lord will support him, and give him patience: then thou wilt remarkably requite his officious care about the sick (whose bed he was wont to turn and smooth for his softer repose), by giving him ease and refreshment during his weakness, till thou change it again into health and strength.

Ver. 4. *I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.*] In confidence of this, I myself, when I was sick, addressed my prayer unto the Lord, and implored his mercy, saying, Take pity upon me, (who have not been negligent in this duty, Psal. xxxv. 13, 14.) and do not deal in strict justice with me; but, though I have been a grievous offender, and so deserved a heavier stroke, graciously pardon all that I have done amiss, and restore me again to my former health.

Ver. 5. *Mine enemies speak evil of me; When shall he die, and his name perish?*] I am the fitter object of thy compassion, because my enemies have none at all; but, to the affliction which thou hast laid upon me, add their defamations, and imprecate more evils to befal me: for nothing will satisfy them but my death; which they impatiently long to see, and hope to bury my reputation together with me.

Ver. 6. *And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it.*] If any of them, indeed, come to see me, he seems to be sorry for me, and condoles with me; but there is nothing but fraud and deceit under these fair words, which he bestows upon me: for all the time that he either counsels or comforts me, or makes any promises of what he will do for me, he is hatching some mischief in his heart against me, from what he can gather out of my words, or actions, or disease; and as soon as he is out of my doors, he spreads it abroad among his companions, to increase their hatred, or their contempt of me:

Ver. 7. *All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt.*] Which discovers itself in their private assemblies, where they secretly confer together how to undo me: they have no other business there, but to contrive what use they shall make of his information for my ruin.

Ver. 8. *An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him:*

and now that he lieth, he shall rise up no more.] This is the time, say they: for now God hath met with him, and punished his heinous sins with a grievous disease; which sticks as fast to him as our reports (which the people believe, and he will never be able to confute), and hath laid him so low, that he cannot possibly recover.

Ver. 9. *Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.*] And, which is still more afflictive, the man with whom I never had any quarrel, but rather used as a friend; he in whom I reposed the greatest confidence, (2 Sam. xvi. 23.) who was one of my family, and was maintained by my service, hath, in a brutish manner, not only forsaken me, but (like a horse that kicks at him that feeds him) contemptuously lifted up himself against me.

Ver. 10. *But thou, O Lord, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.*] But all this doth not discourage me when I think of thy mercy, O Lord; which as I most humbly implore, so thou art wont to shew to those that are merciful. I am not so low, (ver. 8.) but, contrary to their expectation, thou art able to raise me up, and restore me to my throne, from whence they have driven me; and then I shall punish them, according as my office and their wickedness require.

Ver. 11. *By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.*] And truly I take this to be an argument of thy kind intentions towards me, that hitherto thou hast marvellously preserved me, both in this sickness and in all other dangers; so that my enemy hath missed the triumph he hoped for in my ruin.

Ver. 12. *And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and setteth me before thy face for ever.*] The triumph belongs to me, who thankfully acknowledge that thou hast supported me, and defended my innocence: thou hast taken such a special care of me, that I hope I shall serve thee all my days, without interruption, in that office thou hast committed to me.

Ver. 13. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and amen.*] For which and all other his benefits, let the great Lord of all the world, the God of Israel, whom he hath chosen for his own peculiar people, be most heartily blessed and praised; let him be blessed throughout all generations, as long as the world shall last, and unto all eternity: let him be blessed; let him be blessed (again and again I repeat it with most fervent affection); and let all his people concur with me in these desires, and with one consent accompany me with their joyful acclamations, saying, The Lord be praised, the Lord be praised.

PART II.

PSALM XLII.

To the chief Musician. Maschil. For the Sons of Korah.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins the second of the five books of Psalms, according to the Hebrew division. All those of the former book, except four, have the name of David prefixed to them, as the author of them; and so were put together, by him that collected them, into one volume. But in this second book, the first part of it consists of Psalms entitled *to the sons of Korah;* as several learned men understand the inscriptions; who imagine that some holy men among them composed these Psalms, in the time of the captivity. But I shall follow our English translation, and take this Psalm (as the LXX. and the Vulgar Latin do) to be directed to the sons of Korah, to be set or sung by them, under the chief master of music in the tabernacle. And then there is little question to be made, but David indited this, and some of the Psalms which have this title; as it is certain he did most, if not all, of those that are contained in the latter part of this second book, from Psalm the fiftieth to the end of the seventy-second. And this present Psalm, with that which follows, seems to have been penned, either when he was under the persecution of Saul, or (which is more probable) when he was driven again from the house of God by Absalom. Which sad condition he bewails; with a great mixture of grief for his banishment from those sweet enjoyments he had there, and of hope to be restored to them again.

This Psalm is the second of those thirteen which are called *Maschil;* (see Psal. xxxii.) by some here taken to be an epithet of the master of music, who taught or instructed the sons of Korah very skilfully.

Ver. 1. *AS the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.*] The hunted deer doth not long more earnestly, and cry more loudly, for the brooks of water to quench her thirst, than my soul doth for the happy enjoyment of thee, my God, in the public solemnities; from whence I am driven by those that seek my life.

Ver. 2. *My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?*] It is not my throne of which I am so desirous, as the place where thou my God dwellest; who art the eternal spring of life and comfort, which no other God can communicate. O how vehemently doth my soul long for thee; and how tedious doth the time of my banishment from thee seem! O when shall I see that happy day, wherein I shall be restored to the liberty again of presenting myself before thee in thy tabernacle?

Ver. 3. *My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?*] There I was wont with great delight to feast with thee; but now my appetite fails me to my daily food: instead of which, my only satisfaction is in tears; to which I have wholly abandoned myself. For what can be more grievous than to hear them say, I am abandoned by thee? (2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8.) and to be continually reproached and derided with this taunting question, What is become of thy God, of whose favour thou wast wont to boast?

Ver. 4. *When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy-day.*] O what a sad thought is it, to call to mind those pleasant days which are past and gone! particularly when I brought the ark to thy dwelling-place, with the joyful shout of all thy people; who in

a pompous manner accompanied me with their praises and thanksgivings at that festival solemnity. (1 Chron. xv. 25. 28.) It even breaks my heart with grief to remember this thing, and all the other sacred times, when before this banishment we met together at thy house, to worship and acknowledge thee for all thy benefits.

Ver. 5. *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.*] And why may I not expect the like again? It is true, my soul, these are very sad and melancholy reflections; but must I therefore be utterly dejected? Is there any cause that anxiety of mind should make thee so tumultuous, as if all hopes of this felicity were lost for ever? Trust in God, and patiently wait upon him; for the time will come when I shall go to his house, and praise him still for his favour towards me; in delivering me from this as well as all my former afflictions.

Ver. 6. *O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.*] O my most gracious God, thou seest how I chide myself for it; and yet I am overcome with grief, and should be quite oppressed, while I am forced to hide myself in this wilderness beyond Jordan, (2 Sam. xvii. 22. 29.) and wander up and down in these solitary mountains, far distant from thy tabernacle, did I not comfort myself with the thoughts of thy goodness and power; whom I have served there.

Ver. 7. *Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.*] I am fallen into a bottomless depth of miseries; which follow one upon another, as if the former invited the next to succeed it: they gush in upon me by thy appointment with such violence, as spouts of water do out of a cloud. I am tossed like one upon a tempestuous sea, where the waves rage and swell so high, that every billow threatens to overwhelm and bury me in the deep.

Ver. 8. *Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.*] Yet I do not distrust the loving-kindness of the Lord, by whose authority this tempest shall be appeased. He will in much mercy order and dispose things so, that night and day I shall have perpetual cause to sing his praise: and therefore I will commend myself to him continually, who is the author of my life, and beseech him to preserve it.

Ver. 9. *I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?*] I will take the boldness also to expostulate with him, saying, O God, I have always made thee my refuge; and thought myself safer under thy protection, than if I had been in the strongest fortress: why then dost thou delay thy help, as if thou tookest no farther care of me? why do I still continue in that mournful condition wherein I left Jerusalem, (2 Sam. xv. 30.) and have no relief from this grievous oppression of the enemy?

Ver. 10. *As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?*] O how cutting are their reproaches! how deeply do they wound my soul! It is like a stab to the very heart, to hear them say, in their daily jeers, What is become of thy God, in whom thou trustedst? why doth he make no more haste to send thee deliverance?

Ver. 11. *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.*] But it better becomes me to expostulate with myself, than with thy majesty. And therefore I ask myself again; O my soul, why art thou thus sadly afflicted? why do these things so miserably torment thee, and disturb thy quiet? since there is hope in God, that I am not utterly banished from his presence; but shall return to his house again to praise him: on whom I fix my eyes as my only saviour (for hitherto he hath been my most gracious God), who will pull off my mourning apparel; and make joy and gladness take place of sorrow and sadness in my countenance.

PSALM XLIII.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, in all probability, was composed by the same author with the former (and accordingly the LXX. expressly ascribe it to David); and upon the same occasion, when he was driven by Absalom (who drew the whole kingdom into his conspiracy, 2 Sam. xv. 10. 13, &c.) from the house of God, which he loved more than his own palace. Thither, therefore, he desires to be restored, and expresses his hope of it, in the very same words that he did in the Psalm foregoing.

Ver. 1. *JUDGE me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.*] O God, the supreme judge of the whole world, I appeal to thee, in this contest between me and a seditious people; who, void of piety and humanity, are risen up in rebellion against me: beseeching thee to vindicate my innocence, and defend me from their violence. O deliver me from that deceitful man, who pretended devotion, when he went to make an insurrection; (2 Sam. xv. 7. 10.) deliver me from the crafty counsel which Ahithophel gives him; and from the open force, whereby he seeks injuriously to take away my life, (2 Sam. xvii. 1, 2.)

Ver. 2. *For thou art the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?*] For I have none to flee unto for safety and protection, but thee alone; who hast ever hitherto been my mighty deliverer, and art now my only support: and therefore I hope thou wilt make haste to help me; because it puts me into the sorest agonies to see myself for the present so deserted by thee, that I can do nothing but bewail the forlorn condition and the miserable straits into which the enemy hath reduced me. (See Psal. xlii. 9.)

Ver. 3. *O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.*] I am beset with mighty armies, and have nothing to oppose to them but thy favour and thy faithfulness: O send forth the blessed effects of them, and, according to thy promises to those that depend on thee, let thy almighty power, in much mercy, lead and conduct me: let it go along with me, and give me the victory over them; and bring me back again unto thy holy mountain, where thou hast fixed thy dwelling-place.

Ver. 4. *Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God*

my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God, my God.] Then will I faithfully perform my promises unto thee; and the first thing I do, shall be to go to thy altar, with sacrifices of thanksgiving to thee, the author of my joy and triumph: which shall not cease with that public service; but when I am alone, entertaining myself with my harp, I will praise thy mercy, and faithfulness, and power, O God, my righteous judge; who graciously protectest the innocent, and defendest those that cannot right themselves.

Ver. 5. *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.*] I doubt not of it; and therefore be no longer dejected, O my soul: why shouldest thou give thyself any farther disquiet, and trouble thyself with tumultuous thoughts? Hope in God to see better days; and believe the enemy hath not so blocked up the way to his tabernacle, but God will open it again, and give me liberty to go and sing praises there unto him; from whom alone as I expect deliverance, so he (who hath always been my most gracious God) will turn my mourning into joy, and let my countenance be dejected no more.

PSALM XLIV.

To the chief Musician, for the Sons of Korah. Maschil.

ARGUMENT.

This is the third of those Psalms called *Maschil*, (see Psal. xxxii.) and the second of those directed to the sons of Korah, (see Psal. xlii.) but doth not seem to have been composed by David, as the two foregoing were: for in his days they were not oppressed by foreign enemies, as the Psalmist here complains, in the name of the whole church, they were to such a degree, that some of them were made slaves, others killed, and all of them became a reproach. Yet I do not think it was composed in the captivity of Babylon (much less in the persecution by Antiochus, as Theodoret thinks, when these inspirations were ceased), but before that time, though long after David's days, while their kingdom was as yet standing, and they had some forces remaining, though God did not bless them with success, (ver. 9.)

And if we will fix upon any particular time, and not content ourselves to know, in general, that it was penned when the whole nation was in great distress, I can find none so likely as the days of Hezekiah, who was a pious reformer of that church, and had restored the Divine service, according to the law of Moses, and the ordinances of David; (2 Chron. xxix. 3, 4. 12. 25.) and taken care the priests and Levites should not only do their duty, but have their tithes paid them punctually, &c. (2 Chron. xxx. xxxi.) and yet, notwithstanding, was invaded by the king of Assyria. Who did not merely make some inroads upon them, and carry away a great many people, (as had been done before his time, 2 Chron. xxix. 9.) but took all the fenced cities, and came before Jerusalem with a great army, (2 Kings xviii. 13. 17. Isa. xxxvi. 1.) In this strait, that good king (or some other Divine person, 2 Chron. xxix. 25.) indited this Psalm; wherein he remembers what God had done for their ancestors; and, considering he was still their king, thought they might have hoped for the like victories, of which they could not but still boast and glory. But alas! it fell out quite contrary; for when they expected his help, he delivered them up into their enemies' hands, and that when they were the true worshippers of him, and for his sake were slain all the day long. The consideration of which, he hoped, would move God at length to take compassion upon them, and arise for their deliverance.

This is the best account I can give of this Psalm, which I shall follow in my Paraphrase. And we need not scruple to think there were psalmodists in Hezekiah's days; for after that we find this gift remained with the prophets. For instance, it is visible in Habakkuk; who composed a prayer after the manner of David's Psalms, as we read in the last chapter of his prophecy: where there are several words, which are to be met withal no where but in the book of Psalms; such as *Sigionoth*, *Selah*, and *Niginoth*.

Ver. 1. *WE have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.*] We have been certainly informed, O Lord, by our fathers, and we believe what they have told us, not only concerning the wonderful works thou didst in their times, but in the ages long before them; as our ancestors that lived in those days have recorded.

Ver. 2. *How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.*] How thou didst by thy power expel the seven nations out of the land of Canaan, and settle in their stead thy people Israel, whom thou didst transplant thither from among the Egyptians; upon whom thou inflictedst the sorest plagues, till they were forced themselves to thrust them out, (Exod. vi. 1. xii. 33.)

Ver. 3. *For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.*] This is to be ascribed to thee alone, and not to their strength and valour: such a speedy conquest was not gained by the force of arms, but by thy mighty power and glorious presence; which thou wast pleased to afford them; not because they had obliged thee by their meritorious services (for they were a murmuring and refractory people), but merely out of thy love and good-will towards them.

Ver. 4. *Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.*] And thou, O God, who didst such astonishing things for them, art still the very same almighty being; whom I honour as my sovereign, my governor, and protector; and humbly beseech thee that thou wilt now in this sore distress vouchsafe to deliver (for, alas! it is not in my power, though thou canst as easily as speak a word deliver) the posterity of those, for whom thou hadst so great a favour.

Ver. 5. *Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.*] If thou wouldest but appear for us, the most powerful enemies should not be able to stand before us: but (as thy servant Moses foretold, Deut. xxxiii. 17. O fulfil that gracious promise!) we should overthrow and trample under foot all that oppose us.

Ver. 6. *For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.*] It is thou alone must do it, as thou didst for our forefathers, when thou broughtest them into Canaan: for I have not the least confidence (as they slander me, 2 Kings xviii. 20.) in my arms; no hope to be delivered from this dreadful invasion by any forces that I can raise:

Ver. 7. *But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.*] But by thee, O Lord, of whose goodness we ourselves, as well as those before us, have had experience; for thou hast often rescued us from our enemies, and shamefully disappointed those, whose hatred armed them against us.

Ver. 8. *In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever. Selah.*] In this we glory, and make our boast continually, that we have such a King, such a mighty Saviour and Deliverer, who hath wrought wonderful things for us, and for our forefathers: this is our only comfort and security, which gives us hope that we shall praise thee for relieving us in this distress, and that all posterity shall praise thy power and goodness.

Ver. 9. *But thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and goest not forth with our armies.*] But for the present thou art so far from being our defender, that thou hast exposed us to the will of our enemies: the shame which was wont to fall on them (ver. 7.) is now our portion; and thou hast withdrawn that gracious presence, (ver. 3.) wherewith thou wast wont to conduct and accompany our armies.

Ver. 10. *Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy; and they which hate us spoil for themselves.*] We have lost the courage wherewith thou didst formerly inspire us, and cannot defend our cities and fortresses: but, instead of pushing down our enemies, (ver. 5.) are forced to flee before them, and shamefully leave our camp to be a spoil to them that hate us.

Ver. 11. *Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat; and hast scattered us among the heathen.*] And some of us they kill in the pursuit without any mercy, like sheep appointed for the shambles: others they carry captive, and disperse them among strange people: (2 Chron. xxix. 9.)

Ver. 12. *Thou sellest thy people for nought, and dost not increase thy wealth by their price.*] Where being disowned by thee, they are become so contemptible, that they are sold as the vilest slaves, who are nothing worth: thou hast parted with them very easily, and their lords look upon them as unprofitable wretches; by whose sale they do not enrich themselves, but only seek to be rid of a useless burden.

Ver. 13. *Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us.*] This hath made us that remain to be so cheap in the eyes of all our neighbours, who do not only despise, but reproach and vilify us; for we are grown ridiculous to them that are round about us, and they make a scoff of us.

Ver. 14. *Thou makest us a by-word among the heathen, a shaking of the head among the people.*] Thou hast brought upon us the curse pronounced by thy servant Moses, (Deut. xxviii. 37.) for we are become a by-word among the heathen; who, when they would express the wretchedness of any person, say, he is viler or more miserable than a Jew; and when they say nothing they signify, by the scornful motion of their heads, their contempt and derision of us.

Ver. 15. *My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me.*] I cannot open my eyes but the tokens of our disgrace present themselves before me; which hath made me so ashamed, that, to hide it, I do not willingly shew my face.

Ver. 16. *For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; by reason of the enemy and avenger.*] For I can hear nothing neither but reproachful words against us, and blasphemous words against thee: (2 Kings xix. 3. 23.) from that insolent enemy, whose very countenance is full of disdain and scorn, and threatens farther mischief to us.

Ver. 17. *All this is come upon us: yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.*] This great heap of calamities is fallen upon us, and certainly we have deserved them all: though this comfort is still remaining, that we are not so wicked as to be moved by all this to desert thee, and violate that covenant whereby we are engaged to worship thee alone.

Ver. 18. *Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way.*] We adhere still to thy religion, though both it and we be thus vilified and persecuted: (2 Kings xviii. 22.) we have such a hearty affection to it, that we have not hitherto proved apostates from it:

Ver. 19. *Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.*] No, though thou hast so shattered and broken in pieces all our forces, that we are in the most dismal and forlorn condition; little short of utter destruction.

Ver. 20. *If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god.*] Thou knowest the truth of this: for if there have been so much as a design in our hearts to revolt from thee; or we have made prayers when we spread out our hands towards heaven unto any other god, whose worshippers we saw so prosperous;

Ver. 21. *Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.*] How is it possible for us to conceal it from thee? or how should we escape thy vengeance for it, who art privy to the most secret motions that are in our souls?

Ver. 22. *Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.*] And that which thou seest in secret, our sufferings testify openly to all others: for our constancy to thee exposes us to continual slaughters; we prefer a shameful death before prosperous impiety; and, rather than sacrifice to any other god, choose to fall ourselves a sacrifice to thee.

Ver. 23. *Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever.*] And therefore we hope at last thou wilt take notice of our fidelity; and no longer seem to neglect those that have not deserted thee. Give us leave, O God, to beg this of thee most earnestly, and to ask why thou dost not send relief to thy afflicted servants. Make no farther delay; but, though for our sins we have been exposed to the cruel contempt of our enemies, (ver. 9.) own us now at length for thy people: and shew that we are not such abjects as they account us.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression?*] It is very grievous to us to think that they look upon us as deserted by thee; which

provokes us to expostulate with thee, and to demand (in an humble manner) wherefore is it that thou givest us no countenance; nor expressest the least regard to our intolerable affliction, wherewith we are oppressed?

Ver. 25. *For our soul is bowed down to the dust; our belly cleaveth unto the earth.*] For the load of it is so great, that it hath sunk us into the most dejected condition: wherein we lie dismayed, as men without life and soul, having no strength at all to help ourselves.

Ver. 26. *Arise for our help, and redeem us, for thy mercies' sake.*] Therefore do thou appear for our deliverance, now that we can neither do any thing for ourselves, nor deserve any thing of thee: let not thy goodness, which hath been so famed, suffer together with us; but, for the sake of that, which we and our fathers have so often experimented, rescue us from our miseries.

PSALM XLV.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the Sons of Korah. Maschil. A Song of Loves.

ARGUMENT.

The foregoing Psalm is not more sad and mournful, than this (as Theodoret observes) is joyful and comfortable: promising the most glorious things to them. The author of it is not named: but it was delivered, as the former, to the master of music, for the use of God's service in the tabernacle; to be sung upon *Shoshannim* (by which we may understand all those instruments that had six strings) by the sons of Korah, to the known tune of *Maschil*, (see Psal. xxxii.) And being a *Song of Loves*, as the title tells us, (alluding plainly to the name of Jedidiah, given to Solomon by Nathan the prophet, 2 Sam. xii. 25.) most interpreters conclude it was composed upon the occasion, at least, of Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter: who, it is most probable, was a proselyte to the Jewish religion.

Some few, indeed, will not allow so much as this, that there is any respect to Solomon at all in this Psalm, but only to Christ. And the truth is, many of the expressions in it are so magnificent, that they can but in a very poor and low sense be applied to Solomon and his bride: and some of them scarce at all. Though, on the contrary side, other expressions seem so plainly to belong to him, that they can no other way, but by allegory, be applied to our Saviour. Therefore I believe that I ought not wholly to omit all respect to Solomon and his marriage in my Paraphrase; though principally I shall direct the Psalm to Christ. It being so apparent, that no Christian can deny it, that the mind of the prophet, while he was writing some part of this Psalm, was carried quite beyond king Solomon, to the great King, the Lord Christ. Or, at least, he was guided to use words so high, that they proved too big for Solomon: and we must say, as our Saviour doth in another case, *Behold, a greater than Solomon is here.* And so the best of the Jewish interpreters acknowledge.

Ver. 1. *MY heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.*] My heart is full of a festival song, which I have meditated, and am ready to utter in praise of king Solomon; who is but a shadow of that great King which we expect: in honour of whom chiefly I will recite what I have composed, with such fluency, as shall equal the style of the most skilful writer.

Ver. 2. *Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.*] Thou, O King, art lovely above all other persons, thy speech is most acceptable and persuasive; because the Lord loves thee, (2 Sam. xii. 24.) and hath therefore promised long blessings to thee; which yet do but faintly represent the truly eternal blessings, which he hath bestowed on that great King, who when he comes it shall be said that he is in favour with God as well as man; (Luke ii. *ult.*) and speaks as never man spake, (John vii. 46.) so that all wonder at the gracious words which proceed out of his mouth, (Luke iv. 22.)

Ver. 3. *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.*] Put on thy royal ornaments, and the ensigns of thy power, O most mighty prince; and appear like thyself in such splendour and majesty, as may serve for an emblem of that most illustrious power and sovereign authority, wherein the omnipotent Lord of all the world shall shew himself among men.

Ver. 4. *And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.*] And may thy kingdom so prosper every way, in the planting all virtue among thy subjects, and terrifying thy enemies; that it may prove a lively type of the happy government of the Lord Christ: whose kingdom shall prevail over all, when he goes forth like a great conqueror, (Rev. xix. 11.) not to enslave men's persons, or to spoil them of their goods, but to settle the true faith among them, to make them humble and meek, just and charitable: and for the furtherance of this glorious work, thy mighty power, O Lord, shall instruct thee to do miraculous and amazing things, (Luke iv. 36. v. 26.)

Ver. 5. *Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.*] Which shall make thy word pierce, like sharp arrows, into the hearts of all those that oppose thy royal authority; and make the nations of the earth (far more than shall obey king Solomon, though he should reign over many kingdoms, 1 Kings iv. 21.) humble themselves, and become subject to thee.

Ver. 6. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.*] O great Lord, the God of king Solomon, and of all those that are called gods in heaven or earth; the judge of the whole world: how weak and tottering are the thrones of all other princes in comparison with thine, which shall never be subverted? It is the glory of king Solomon, that God hath promised his kingdom shall continue many ages: (2 Sam. vii. 13.) but thou shalt reign for ever and ever; and of thy kingdom there shall be no end: (Luke i. 33.) thy laws are so just and so good, thy government so equal and fit, that they shall be subject to no alteration.

Ver. 7. *Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*] For thou thyself also immutably lovest all righteousness and goodness, (from which other princes may swerve, and so bring their kingdoms to ruin, 1 Kings ix. 4—6.) and perfectly hatest all impiety and wickedness: for which cause, God the Father hath

highly exalted thee, O God, above all others whom he calls his sons; and conferred on thee such supereminent gifts, as make a joy among thy subjects far exceeding that, by whose sound the very earth was rent, when Solomon was anointed king, and preferred above all his brethren, (1 Kings i. 39, 40.)

Ver. 8. *All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.*] That, indeed, was a joyful day; and so is this, wherein thou didst appear with great gladness in thy wedding garments, brought out of the stately wardrobes: the odour of which is so fragrant, as if they were made of the richest perfumes among us; and yet nothing so grateful as the knowledge of Christ, which shall be spread as a sweet odour in every place, when he goes to espouse a church unto himself, (2 Cor. ii. 14—16.)

Ver. 9. *Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.*] Thou wast most honourably attended by many princely virgins, the daughters of kings (though far inferior in their descent to the true disciples of Christ, who are all born of God), and next to thyself was placed the royal bride, in a vesture of the purest gold; as an image of the church of Christ, which shall sit with him in heavenly places, (Eph. ii. 6.) having the glory of God upon her, (Rev. xxi. 9. 11.)

Ver. 10. *Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house.*] O royal bride, understand and consider seriously the happiness to which thou art advanced, by being married to such a prince: and never think more of the religion of thy country in which thou wast born and bred; but become a true proselyte, and consent to the law of God: (as we ourselves and all the world must do to Christ, when he calls us to incline our ears to his heavenly doctrine; and not only renounce all our former rites, but father and mother, and all things else that are dearest to us, for his sake, Luke xix. 26. Eph. v. 31, 32.)

Ver. 11. *So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.*] So shalt thou be most beautiful and amiable in the eyes of the King thy husband, (as Christ by that means shall present to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, Eph. v. 27.) who is now become thy Lord: and therefore see thou beest subject unto him, (as the church must be to Christ; whom God will highly exalt, that at his name every knee shall be bound to bow, and every tongue confess that he is the Lord, Phil. ii. 9, 10.)

Ver. 12. *And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour.*] The people of Tyre, as rich and as proud as they are, shall come, with their neighbouring countries, and bring thee presents; the most powerful among them shall make suit unto thee for thy friendship, (as the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and their honour into the church, Rev. xxi. 24.)

Ver. 13. *The King's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold.*] For king Pharaoh's daughter, the wife of our prince, is no less adorned with all excellent qualities of mind, than her body is with rich attire; wherein she now appears in a splendid manner, (as the ornaments of those that are born of God in the Christian church, shall not be so much the outward adorning of wearing of gold, as the hidden man of the heart, which is in the sight of God of great price, 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.)

Ver. 14. *She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.*] She shall be brought home unto the king with magnificent pomp, in embroidered raiment; and the virgins, her maids of honour, that attend upon her, shall come along with her, (as the church being owned by Christ for his spouse in a solemn manner, and being pure and holy, Rev. xix. 7, 8. there shall be many chaste virgins among us, who shall make a part of it, and follow Christ whithersoever he goes, Rev. xiv. 1. 4.)

Ver. 15. *With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the King's palace.*] They shall express their inward gladness by all the outward tokens of joy, as they go along in that pomp; and so shall enter into the royal palace, (a figure of the church, into which men shall enter with far greater joy, and say, Hallelujah, let us rejoice and be glad, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, Rev. xix. 6, 7. Acts ii. 46.)

Ver. 16. *Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.*] And may this be the happy fruit of this marriage, that instead of thy royal ancestors in Egypt, whom thou hast forsaken, thou mayest be the mother of children, whom thou mayest make rulers in all the countries which are subject to king Solomon, (2 Kings iv. 21. 24.) As, instead of the patriarchs, of our descent from whom we are apt to boast, shall be the twelve apostles and their successors, sitting upon thrones, and judging the twelve tribes of Israel, (Matt. xix. 28.) by whose means the church shall bring forth children unto Christ, whom he shall make kings and priests unto God, and they shall reign upon the earth, (Rev. v. 10.)

Ver. 17. *I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.*] By this very song I will make thy name to be mentioned with honour throughout all ages, who shall learn from hence to give thee thy deserved praises as long as the world shall last; and, much more, to propagate the Christian name (prophesied of so long before) to the latest posterity, and celebrate their worth with perpetual praises, who forsook all to follow Christ, and rather chose to lose their life, than quit his service, (Jam. v. 11. Μακαρίσομεν, *We call them blessed*, &c.)

PSALM XLVI.

To the chief Musician, for the Sons of Korah. A Song upon Alamoth.

ARGUMENT.

It is not known to what time this Psalm belongs (about which there are several conjectures), nor who was the author of it. I shall suppose it to have been made by David, or some of the sons of Korah, after those great victories which he won over several nations, mentioned 2 Sam. viii. 10. For any one may see that it is a pious triumph in God, after some remarkable deliverance from very powerful enemies; and there are none we can find in the historical books to whom it can more probably relate, than to those there recorded. Of which great victories it was very fit there should be some thankful

monument left to posterity, whereby they might be encouraged to hope in God, and not suffer themselves to be dismayed at the sight of the most numerous armies that might be gathered against them, if they adhered faithfully to their duty. And therefore this Psalm was delivered to the master of music, to be sung in the tabernacle upon *Alamoth;* of which mention is made, 1 Chron. xv. 20. and is thought to be either some tune then in common use, or some kind of musical instrument unknown to us, in which young virgins, as some fancy, took a peculiar delight, and were wont to learn to play upon it; which they make the reason and original of its name.

Ver. 1. *GOD is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*] God is the most powerful protector, in whom we may safely confide: he inspires us with courage, and gives us strength to meet our enemies; we were in great danger, but found him exceeding ready to send us help, and give us a safe deliverance when we were sorely distressed.

Ver. 2. *Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.*] For which cause we will never hereafter be dismayed, but steadfastly hope in God in the midst of the greatest tumults and dangerous commotions: though we should see the most dreadful confusions (such as there are in an earthquake), and all things tumbled upside down, as if the earth and sea were blended together, we will still immoveably trust in him.

Ver. 3. *Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.*] Though the times should prove very tempestuous, and our enemies should storm like the troubled sea; though they should threaten utter destruction to us, and rush upon us with such a violence as its raging waves do (when it is swollen to the greatest height) against the shore; the mountainous cliffs shall sooner shake than we be disturbed.

Ver. 4. *There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.*] Our hearts shall be quiet and still; like the river that runs through our city, from whence the inhabitants draw, by trenches, delightful streams to water their gardens. The small forces that guard this place, which make no more noise than those waters, (Isa. viii. 6. 7.) shall, by the help of the most high God, who in a special manner dwelleth here, be too hard for the greatest armies, which, in their number and their boasts, imitate the waves of the roaring sea.

Ver. 5. *God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.*] Let them not think to prevail against him, who, by a singular token of his presence, is in the midst of this city: other mountains may be shaken, but Mount Zion is immoveable; because God, when there is any danger, will send us seasonable and speedy relief against those that invade us.

Ver. 6. *The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.*] So we have lately seen, that when many nations combined against us, (2 Sam. x. 6.) they only shewed their rage and fury, but could not hurt us; for they were remarkably overthrown by the power of God, who declared himself against them, and utterly discomfited them; as he did the Philistines, sometimes by thunder and lightning from heaven, 1 Sam. vii. 10. (See Psal. xviii. 13, 14.)

Ver. 7. *The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.*] Why then should we be afraid, since it is apparent the Lord, who commands all the armies of heaven as well as earth, is on our side? That God who preserved our forefather Jacob in all his distresses, and hath made a gracious covenant with his posterity, defends us as in an impregnable fortress, where we need never fear any danger.

Ver. 8. *Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.*] Draw near all ye that doubt of it, and consider seriously the wonderful victories, which it had been impossible for us to win without the help of God: mark, I beseech you, how many cities we have taken, and what desolations we have made by his assistance in the enemies' country, who thought to have laid us waste, (2 Sam. viii. 1, 2. 1 Chron. xviii. 1.)

Ver. 9. *He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder: he burneth the chariot in the fire.*] It is he that hath given us this peace, which we now enjoy, by disenabling all the people of Canaan, and the neighbouring nations, to make any wars upon us: he hath broken their bows, and cut their spears in pieces, and cast their chariots, wherein they trusted, into the fire, (2 Sam. vii. 4.)

Ver. 10. *Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.*] Shewing them as plainly by these glorious victories, how vain it is to oppose him, as if he had called unto them by a voice from heaven, saying; Lay down your arms, and no longer molest my people; know that I am the supreme governor of all the world, who have defeated all your designs, and destroyed your forces: and my power is not confined to one country, but shall be magnified every where as well as here, by confounding all those that will not desist from their hostile opposition to my will and pleasure.

Ver. 11. *The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.*] This is our comfort and support; in this we continue still to glory, and say as we did before, We will not fear the most potent enemies, since the Lord, who commands all the host of heaven and earth, is on our side: he preserved our forefather Jacob in all his distresses, and made a gracious covenant with him to be the God of his posterity; in him we are safe, as in an impregnable fortress, where no danger can approach us.

PSALM XLVII.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm for the Sons of Korah.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is thought by some to have been composed by David (though his name be not in the title), when he translated the ark (which was the token of the Divine presence with them) either from Kirjath-jearim, with the most solemn pomp and all sorts of music, (2 Sam. vi. 5.) or from the house of Obed-Edom unto Mount Zion, (ver. 14, 15.) Others think it was composed by some of the sons of Korah, when the ark was again translated by Solomon, with the like rejoicing, (2 Chron. v. 2. 12, 13.) from Mount Zion to the house which he had built for it

upon the neighbouring mountain. And there may be a third conjecture allowed, that it was made after some great victory which God had given them over their enemies; and sung as they followed the ark back to its dwelling-place, from whence it had been carried before them to the battle. There is no doubt but one or other of these triumphs gave occasion to it: and the ark being a figure of Christ, as that mountain was of the heavens, the translation or carrying back of the ark thither may be looked upon as a figure of Christ's ascension (after he had dwelt here awhile in a meaner place, and conquered death) unto the high and holy place, where he is now at God's right hand in the heavens. And with relation to this alone, the ancient fathers expound the Psalm; which may easily be applied, in the mystical sense, unto that business.

Ver. 1. *O CLAP your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.*] O be joyful all ye people, who are now assembled at this festival; let your hearts overflow with joy, and express how exceeding glad they are, by clapping your hands, and lifting up your voices, and shouting after a triumphant manner, in honour of the great God who dwells among us.

Ver. 2. *For the Lord most High is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.*] For his majesty is most sublime, his dominion absolute, his power dreadful; being the sovereign Lord of the whole world, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords:

Ver. 3. *He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.*] By whom the people of these countries, though warlike and strong, were anciently subdued; and other nations since have been made our subjects.

Ver. 4. *He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob, whom he loved. Selah.*] He, who is the supreme disposer of all things, hath of his mere good-will chosen this good land to be our inheritance, and therein chosen a place for his own dwelling; which is an honour wherein we excel all other people, and a most singular token of his love towards us.

Ver. 5. *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.*] God is gone up, by the special token of his presence, into that holy place, with shouts of joy and praise: the Lord is gone up in a triumphant pomp, with the sound of the trumpet, and all other instruments of music, (2 Sam. vi. 5. 15.)

Ver. 6. *Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.*] Let us never cease to sing his praises, who hath chosen us to be his people; let it be our constant employment to praise our King, who hath subdued the nations to us: O sing praises to him, sing praises to him; it cannot be too oft repeated, that he alone is to be praised.

Ver. 7. *For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.*] For our King is the sovereign of all the nations upon earth; sing ye praises therefore skilfully to his most excellent majesty: it is your wisdom to praise him in the best manner you are able, who alone is wise enough to govern all the world.

Ver. 8. *God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.*] He hath made those heathens who dwelt in Zion to feel his power, and submit themselves unto him, (2 Sam. v. 7.) And there he hath seated himself upon the ark of his presence as on his holy throne.

Ver. 9. *The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham; for the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted.*] Before which the heads of the tribes, with all the people that worship him, who promised to give this country unto Abraham, are assembled together at their solemn feasts; without any fear of invasion from their foreign neighbours: for God (when to attend his service they have left their own houses unguarded) hath undertaken their protection, (Exod. xxxiv. 23. 25.) and he is infinitely superior to all other gods, which pretend to be defenders of the earth.

PSALM XLVIII.

A Song and Psalm for the Sons of Korah.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed after the repulso of some army which invaded them, and intended to have destroyed Jerusalem. If all things else would agree, it might not unfitly be applied to the defeating of Sennacherib the king of Assyria's army, which actually begirt that city; but by a sudden pestilence, which in one night killed a vast number, was forced to quit the siege, and retreat with shame, (2 Kings xviii. 19.) But the fourth verse of this Psalm speaks of a combination of kings, who had joined their forces together upon this design: which makes it most applicable, in my judgment, to that history in 2 Chron. xx. where we read (ver. 1, 2. 10.) that Moab, and Ammon, and they of Mount Seir, came against Jehoshaphat, with an intention, I suppose, to fall upon Jerusalem. And though Jehoshaphat went out to oppose them, yet he acknowledges, (ver. 12.) their multitude was so great, that he had no power to resist them; but they might do what they pleased with him: for he knew not which way to turn himself, but only depended upon God: who in a marvellous manner dispersed them, as he told Jehoshaphat he would, without their striking one stroke against them. For which gracious message, sent him by a prophet, (ver. 14.) the Levites, and among others those descended from Korah, immediately praised the Lord beforehand, (ver. 19.) and after the victory gave solemn thanks, before they left the field, in the Valley of Blessing; (ver. 26.) and then returned to Jerusalem with psalters, and harps, and trumpets, unto the house of the Lord, (ver. 28.) At which time, it is probable, this Psalm was sung, and called, a *Song and Psalm;* that is, a psalm of triumph, or of great joy; composed, perhaps, by some of the sons of Korah. But of a *Song and Psalm,* see Psalm lxvii.

Ver. 1. *GREAT is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.*] Great is the majesty and the power of the Lord; who is therefore to be celebrated with the highest praises: and no where so much as in his own city, by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, in that mountain which he hath long ago set apart for the place of his worship, and hath now so marvellously defended.

Ver. 2. *Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion; on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.*] And a beautiful place it is which he hath chosen for

his habitation, the very situation of Mount Zion being most delightful, the pleasantest in all the country, for it lies on the north side of Jerusalem, the city of the great King, the Lord of heaven and earth:

Ver. 3. *God is known in her palaces for a refuge.*] Who is the principal glory of that place, as that is of the country: for Mount Zion is not so beautiful for its situation, as for his Divine presence in that magnificent palace, which is built for him there; and makes that city an impregnable fortress.

Ver. 4. *For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.*] For, behold, a fresh instance of it; the kings of several neighbouring countries entered into confederacy to cast us out of our possession; (2 Chron. xx. 11.) and made a great progress in their design; marching together from beyond the Dead Sea, (ver. 2.) till they came nigh to Jerusalem, (ver. 16. 20. 24.)

Ver. 5. *They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away.*] But then they only had a sight of it, and that was all: for a sudden amazement seized on them, and such a panic fear, that they fell into confusion; and, taking one another for enemies, were destroyed by the ambush which one nation laid for the other, (2 Chron. xx. 22.)

Ver. 6. *Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail.*] There was nothing but terror and trembling to be seen throughout all the host: which surprised them so suddenly, and cast them into so great anguish, that it may be compared to the hasty and violent pangs of a travailing woman:

Ver. 7. *Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.*] Or to the consternation and confusion which the mariners are in, when a fleet of ships richly laden from Tarshish is broken in pieces, by the furious blasts of the east wind, one against another.

[*As a fleet of Jehoshaphat's was shortly after,* 2 Chron. xx. 37.]

Ver. 8. *As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.*] We have heard of such things heretofore, which our fathers have reported to us; but now our eyes see the wonderful works of God, who told us by his prophet, that he would save us from this great army which invaded us, (2 Chron. xx. 14, 15, &c.) And we have seen his word verified in this city; from whence God, whose city it is, and who is the Lord of all the host of heaven and earth, sent invisible powers to terrify and disperse them; (ver. 22.) and will, we hope, defend and protect it from being subverted by the assaults of our enemies in future ages.

Ver. 9. *We have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.*] O God, we had no confidence in our fortifications, or in our army; but we assembled ourselves together in thy temple, to ask help of thee, (2 Chron. xx. 3—5.) and, meditating on thy wonted mercy to those that seek thee, we quietly expected what thy loving-kindness would do for us.

Ver. 10. *According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness.*] And as thou art called, O God, by the name of the Lord of hosts, so thou hast demonstrated thyself in the glorious victory thou hast given us, (2 Chron. xx. 15.) For which not we alone praise thee, but the most distant people, who hear the fame of it, shall acknowledge and magnify thy power, (ver. 29.) which thou hast abundantly declared in the just destruction of our enemies, and the gracious protection of us thy faithful servants.

Ver. 11. *Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.*] Let the inhabitants of Jerusalem then, which is the mother-city, give an example of joy and thankfulness to all the rest of the cities and towns of Judah: and let them unanimously join together with the greatest gladness, to express how sensible they are of thy power and goodness in this wonderful deliverance.

Ver. 12. *Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.*] Make a solemn procession, and go round about the city, blessing and praising God with thankful hearts; who hath preserved you from being begirt by the enemy: tell all the towers as you go along, and see if there be so much as one wanting, or the least hurt done to any of them.

Ver. 13. *Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.*] Observe the outworks, and attentively consider them; take a distinct survey of all the sumptuous buildings also; and mark how entire they are, and untouched by the enemies' batteries, that you may keep a record of it, and preserve the memory of so great a wonder for the benefit of succeeding generations.

Ver. 14. *For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.*] For this is the God who alone can protect us, and will be our defender, if we depend upon him, for ever and ever: he will not content himself with having preserved us once; but be our conductor, and exercise a most tender providence over us, as a shepherd doth over his sheep, all the days of our life.

PSALM XLIX.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm for the Sons of Korah.

ARGUMENT.

The author of this Psalm is not known; nor can we find whether there was any particular occasion of it. But whosoever composed it (whether some of the sons of Korah, or any other), it is likely that he had in his eye the unreasonable thirst of mankind after riches, and their insolence and haughtiness when they have acquired them; which, it is possible, was a great discouragement to some pious but poor people in those times; and, therefore, after the example of David, (Psal. xxxvii. xxxix.) he indited this Psalm to check that vanity, by setting death before their eyes. The serious meditation of which, he knew, would both pull down the plumes of the proud and scornful, and preserve those upon whom they trampled, from being dejected at their prosperous impiety.

Ver. 1. *HEAR this all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world.*] Listen to me all ye people, in what part of the world soever you dwell; for that which I am going to deliver is of such common concernment, that it belongs to all countries, as much as any one, upon the face of the earth.

Ver. 2. *Both low and high, rich and poor, together.*] Whether you be men of obscure birth, and meaner rank,

or persons nobly descended, and in great authority; whether you abound in wealth, or are of a poor estate, you are all alike concerned to attend to my instruction.

Ver. 3. *My mouth shall speak of wisdom: and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.*] Which is neither about trivial things, nor slightly considered, but about the most weighty matters, which my mind hath deeply pondered: I will enrich your souls with wisdom, which is better than all the worldly wealth you covet; and teach you how to direct all your actions aright unto that scope at which you aim of being happy.

Ver. 4. *I will incline mine ear to a parable; I will open my dark saying upon the harp.*] It is not vulgar instruction, but most excellent advice, which I have to give you; more to be desired than the skill of resolving the darkest riddles: to which I myself will diligently attend, while it is sung, as I play upon my harp.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?*] I intend not to neglect the counsel I give to others; and therefore shall ask myself the question I mean to answer: What cause is there that I should be troubled with fears, and cares, and anxiety of mind, in calamitous times, when the iniquity of those that endeavour to supplant me hath surrounded me on all sides, and left me no way to escape them?

Ver. 6. *They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches.*] They are confident their strength and power are such, that none can resist them; and the high conceit they have of their vast treasures makes them so proud, that they insult over others, and brag what they can do to ruin them.

Ver. 7. *None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.*] Alas! poor men, their weakness is apparent; there is not a man among them that, by all the power he hath, can find a means to save the dearest friend alive when God calls for him: he alone can dispose of men's lives; and the richest of them hath not wealth enough to purchase a reprieve, when he pronounces the sentence of death upon him.

Ver. 8. *(For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever).*] That is a business too difficult and costly for him, to redeem the life of a man; or to respite for a time his departure, whose soul is leaving his body: he must let that alone; for, as long as the world lasts, it will be a vain endeavour.

Ver. 9. *That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption.*] Let him attempt it, if he please, upon himself: can he prolong his own life, from time to time, so that it shall be perpetuated and never dissolved?

Ver. 10. *For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.*] No such matter; the wisdom I speak of (ver. 3.) promises no exemption to the best of men, but they must die as well as others: and therefore those wicked sots, whose life differs little from that of beasts, may justly expect not merely to die, but to be destroyed and cut off like the beasts that perish. And then what becomes of all their wealth, which they are forced to leave to others; perhaps to strangers?

Ver. 11. *Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations: they call their lands after their own names.*] They imagined, indeed, and secretly pleased themselves in this fancy, that when they could stay no longer in the world, their goodly houses, which they had built, should stand for ever, and the places of their abode continue in their family from age to age: though they could not be immortal themselves, yet they hoped their names, which they imposed upon their lands, should never die.

Ver. 12. *Nevertheless, man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.*] But, alas! the thoughts of man are vain: for whatsoever esteem or reputation one of these worldlings gets here, it lasts not at all, but dies together with him; he is in this also like to his fellow-beasts, whom, when they are dead, nobody remembers.

Ver. 13. *This their way is their folly; yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah.*] Thus their life concludes, as it was spent, in folly; (for they have no security that the names they impose on their lands shall last; or if they do, that men shall think of them; or if they should, what are they the better for it?) and yet, so close doth this folly stick to mankind, that they that succeed in their possessions make no benefit of this observation, but are as very fools as themselves, and tread in the steps of those that went before them.

Ver. 14. *Like sheep that are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.*] They go in droves to their graves, when death seizes on them; thither it drives them in the close of their days, just as the shepherd doth his sheep to the fold in the evening: and then the just, over whom they insulted, shall quickly trample upon, and triumph over them (as they shall do much more when they awake out of the dust at the resurrection); all their power and splendour wherein they formerly appeared, though they seem as firm as a rock, shall moulder away; for the grave is their utmost bound, beyond which they cannot go.

Ver. 15. *But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me. Selah.*] And doubtless God will rescue me from that imminent danger wherein I am (ver. 5.) of being destroyed, and not let me descend into the grave, but live to have dominion over them; for he hath graciously received me into his favour (so that if I die, I shall still have this comfort remaining, that he will one day raise me out of my grave again).

Ver. 16. *Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased.*] Be not thou then troubled, nor dismayed, (no more than I, ver. 5.) whosoever thou art that hearest or readest this, when thou seest a worldly man grow very rich, and great honours heaped on his family; which enable and embolden him, perhaps, to use the meaner sort contemptuously:

Ver. 17. *For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him.*] For he can by no means, as I told thee, purchase the privilege of living one moment longer than God pleases; and when he dies, he is no greater than other men: for he can carry none of his wealth along with him; nor shall he that was so terrible here be at all regarded in the other world.

Ver. 18. *Though while he lived he blessed his soul (and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself.)*] For all his happiness ends with this life, (why shouldest thou then be troubled at his prosperity?) which he spends in luxury

and riot, pride and vanity, applauding himself in his riches and in his pleasures, and having a company of flatterers about him; who will commend thee too, if thou wilt imitate him in indulging thine own appetite, and denying nothing to thyself and companions, but doing no good to any body else.

Ver. 19. *He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.*] And he arrives, perhaps, at the age of his forefathers, whose steps he follows; but after that shall all be alike miserable, and never more partake of the least joy or consolation.

Ver. 20. *Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.*] So true it is, which was said before (and so little cause there is to envy such men's greatness), that a man raised to great dignity in this world, and never considers how short his honour is, (ver. 15.) behaves himself like a brute while he lives; and, thinking of no such thing, is cut off like a brute, whom nobody regards when he is dead.

PSALM L.

A Psalm of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

The author of this Psalm, the title tells us (as we translate it), was Asaph, who composed several songs, as well as David, for the use of the tabernacle, as we read in 2 Chron. xxix. 30. But whether he was Asaph the Levite, who lived in the same age with David, or some other prophet in aftertimes, cannot be certainly resolved. It seems to me that it was not the former; because he is never, that I remember, called Asaph the seer, as the other is; whose psalms Hezekiah caused to be sung together with those of king David. And therefore I judge it most likely that he lived in aftertimes, in the reign of some pious prince, such as Jehoshaphat; or, which is most probable, in the days of Hezekiah himself; (see Psal. xliv.) who, though he had reformed the worship of God, yet could not amend men's minds; but there still remained, this prophet observed, abundance of hypocrisy among them: both among the people, who placed all religion in sacrifices, and other external rites and ceremonies; and among the doctors of the law and the judges, who taught the people their duty, but observed none of those precepts themselves which they expounded to others.

Both these this holy man awakens, by this Psalm, to a consideration of the danger they were in; representing God as the supreme judge of the world, coming in an amazing manner to call them all to a strict account, and to take a severe vengeance on them, unless they amended; which began to come upon them by Sennacherib: whom God threatened to send *against the hypocritical nation:* (Isa. x. 6.) and calls that time, *the day of his visitation,* (ver. 3.) when Sennacherib overran all the country, (as Isaiah prophesied, viii. 7, 8.) till he came to Jerusalem: upon which city Nebuchadnezzar completely executed the judgment here threatened, when he destroyed Jerusalem and the temple itself; unto which it was to no purpose to bring a multitude of sacrifices, while they continued the evil of their doings, (Isa. i. 13. 16.)

In both which days of visitation, first by the king of Assyria, and then by the king of Babylon, the Psalmist here represents the Divine Majesty, after the manner of men, like to a king coming out of his palace, attended by his ministers, with the ensigns of terror carried before him; and issuing out his orders to summon all his subjects to appear at his tribunal, and hear their accusation read, with the sentence he would pronounce upon them.

Ver. 1. *THE mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.*] The omnipotent Majesty, the supreme Judge of heaven and earth, to whom the greatest kings and potentates are but subjects; the eternal Lord, who changes not, hath given out his orders, that all the people of the land, from east to west, be summoned to appear before him.

Ver. 2. *Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.*] He will go forth in the greatest splendour out of his magnificent palace, where he dwells in Zion; and let you see how much his incomparable excellencies and perfections are to be reverenced.

Ver. 3. *Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.*] Our God will undoubtedly come and reckon with you, though now he seems to take no notice of your impiety: and he will not come like earthly princes, before whom there marches an armed multitude, but in a far more terrible and irresistible manner; which shall make you as sensible of his dreadful presence, as your ancestors were at Mount Sinai, when the devouring flames, and thunder, and lightning, which attended on him, made the very mountain quake and tremble. (Exod. xix. 16. 18. Isa. ix 18, 19.)

Ver. 4. *He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.*] He shall call heaven and earth to be witnesses of the equity of his proceedings; (Isa. i.2.) and you may as soon move them out of their place, as avoid appearing before his tribunal.

Ver. 5. *Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.*] He will send out his officers, with a peremptory charge, saying, Bring those men before me, whom I have obliged above all other people, and separated to myself to be a holy nation; (Deut. xiv. 2.) and who have engaged themselves to me in such a solemn covenant, confirmed by the blood of sacrifices, that they wish they might perish, in like manner, if they did not observe it, (Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19.)

Ver. 6. *And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.*] They shall have a fair trial, whether they have so done or not: for the justice of his judgment shall be as conspicuous as the heavens; because God himself, who cannot do unrighteously, will examine the cause, and pronounce the sentence.

Ver. 7. *Hear, O my people, and I will speak: O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God.*] Imagine then, that all things being thus prepared, you hear him calling to you, saying, Hearken, O my people, for I have something to say to thee. O Israel, my beloved people, hearken; for I must admonish and convince thee of the breach of those laws, which I, the supreme lawgiver, and thy most gracious God, have given to thee, (Exod. xx. 2.)

Ver. 8. *I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy*

burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me.] I do not mean those concerning sacrifices; I have no complaint to make about that matter: thy burnt-offerings, I acknowledge, never fail to be brought both morning and evening to my altar; and I see how busy thou art in that employment:

Ver. 9. *I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds.*] But is this all that I require of thee? do not mistake thyself, nor think that I will be content all the rest of my laws should be broken, if you do but multiply sacrifices, of which I have no need; or if I had, need not be beholden unto thee, for the very best of them.

Ver. 10. *For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.*] For I could be supplied out of my own folds and herds, which thou hast nothing to do withal; having all the beast of the forest at my command, with the cattle that graze on more hills than thou hast ever seen.

Ver. 11. *I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine.*] I know also where the fowls of the mountains build their nests, which thou canst not reach; and the wild beasts in the open fields, whom thou canst not enclose, are all ready at hand to do me service.

Ver. 12. *If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.*] If I were hungry, I would not come to acquaint thee with it, that thou mightest provide me food: why should I be beholden to thy poverty, when I am so rich? for the whole world is mine, and all that it contains.

Ver. 13. *Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?*] Canst thou be so absurd as to imagine that I need meat or drink? and for that reason call daily for the flesh of bulls, and the blood of goats, to satisfy my hunger, and to quench my thirst? or that my nature is such, that I can be pleased merely with the smoke of those upon my altar?

Ver. 14. *Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High.*] They have their use: but if thou wilt bring me acceptable sacrifices, know that I value, in the first place, a truly thankful heart, which gratefully acknowledges my benefits, above all the peace-offerings in the world; and next, that I expect thou shouldest faithfully perform all the vows and promises thou makest, when thou beggest any blessing of me; and not think to put me off (who am too great to be dallied withal) with sin-offerings for the breach of them.

Ver. 15. *And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*] And, thirdly, devoutly commend thyself unto me, when thou art in any trouble, by ardent prayer; piously confiding in me, and thou shalt find it more powerful than all burnt-offerings: for I will certainly deliver thee, that thou mayest honour me with thy praises, and proclaim my power and goodness, to invite others unto my service.

Ver. 16. *But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?*] Not that this is all that I require of thee; for if thou leadest a wicked life, and art injurious to thy neighbours, what care I for thy praises, or for thy zeal, to boot, in pressing my commands upon others, which thou dost not observe thyself? thou braggest thou art a doctor of the law, and thou declarest to the people my will and pleasure, and makest often mention of my covenant, whereby they stand bound to be obedient to me; but to what purpose is it? or with what face canst thou do it?

Ver. 17. *Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.*] Since, by thy example, thou teachest them to contemn all those instructions to which thou hatest to be bound thyself; and by thy actions declarest thou hast no regard at all to any thing, either that I have bidden thee do, or threatened I will do to those that violate my precepts.

Ver. 18. *When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers.*] When thou hast observed a man thrive by stealth and robbery, instead of having him punished, thou hast greedily accepted the proffer of being a sharer with him; and, which is worse, the adulterers find favour with thee, and thou art partaker with them in their filthiness.

Ver. 19. *Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.*] Thou lettest thy tongue loose to slanders; and backbitest those who are not present to answer for themselves; and dost not stick to contrive artificial lies and deceits, to cheat those that have any dealing with thee.

Ver. 20. *Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.*] Nay, when thou sittest in open court, solemnly to judge men according to the law, thou makest bold to speak falsely (for a reward); and that not against a stranger, but thy own brother: yea, thou wilt not spare him that lay in the same womb with thee; but load him with calumnies and reproaches.

Ver. 21. *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.*] All this wickedness thou hast committed, and I have forborne to punish thee: but instead of amending thy life, to which my patience should have invited thee, thou hast presumed so much upon my lenity, as to add another sin to all the rest; and imagined that I am ignorant of what is done in secret, or am altogether as well pleased with these things as thyself: and therefore now I have sharply rebuked thee for them (so hateful they are to me) and set them all in order (that thou mayest see nothing can escape my knowledge) distinctly before thy eyes.

Ver. 22. *Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.*] Let this be a warning to you, and to all those that abuse the patience and long-suffering of God; never thinking of his just severity against such wicked doers. Consider this seriously, and repent in time, lest my patience be turned into indignation and wrath; and I lay hold on you, and snatch you away, to suffer your deserved punishment: and none of your companions, whom you have served in their sins, shall be able to give you any relief; but all perish together with you.

Ver. 23. *Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.*] Remember I have told you what sacrifices I am well pleased with; not with those of beasts, but with the sacrifice of praise and hearty thanksgiving for all my benefits; which doth me more honour than all the lifeless sacrifices of bulls and goats: but he that thus devoutly worships me, must take care withal to dispose his

life into a conformity with all my precepts; for this is the man whom I will make partaker of the blessings which I have promised.

PSALM LI.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the Prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba.

ARGUMENT.

Here now begins a new collection of some Psalms, whereof David was the author: which, I suppose, were found after the first book was published, and this second begun; to the end of which from this place they continue: as we read expressly, Psal. lxxii. *ult.* For though the author of the two last before that be not mentioned in the title, yet the very matter of them, as well as the conclusion of the book, assure us they were composed by David; who, in this fifty-first Psalm (as the title tells us), most sadly bewails the sin which he had committed with Bath-sheba, and those that followed it. In which he had also continued for some time, till Nathan the prophet came with a message from God to reprove him, and to pronounce a very sore judgment against him and his family for his crimes.

After this Divine reprehension and threatening, he was very much humbled, and, to make himself as notorious an example of true repentance as he had been of foul wickedness, he composed this penitential hymn: and sent it to the master of the music in the tabernacle, to be used perpetually there; as a testimony of his unfeigned sorrow for what he had done, and of the miserable condition he thought himself in, without the infinite mercy of God to him. Which he begs with the greatest earnestness, together with the assistances of his grace; which he promises to employ for the reducing other sinners, beseeching him withal to be favourable to his people, especially to the city of Jerusalem; and not let them and that suffer for his offences.

Ver. 1. *HAVE mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.*] O God, the supreme judge of the world, whom I have most highly offended many ways, and therefore may most justly be condemned to suffer the effects of thy severest displeasure; I cast down myself before thee, and humbly supplicate for mercy: unto which I am encouraged by thy known clemency, and thy infinite compassions; which will move thee, I hope, to take pity upon a grievous sinner, and to pardon the adultery and bloodshed, accompanied with a number of foul circumstances, which I have committed.

Ver. 2. *Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.*] I have made myself indeed exceeding loathsome by my repeated wickedness, which, like a stain that hath long stuck to a garment, is not easily got out: but do not therefore, I beseech thee, abhor me, but rather magnify thy mercy in purifying me perfectly, and cleansing me so throughly, that there may be no spot remaining in me.

Ver. 3. *For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me.*] For how stupid soever I was, before thou sentest thy prophet to awaken me, I am now deeply touched with a sense of my horrid transgressions: which I both sorrowfully confess and bewail in thy presence, and in the face of the public congregation; and carry also a sad and amazing remembrance thereof continually before my eyes.

Ver. 4. *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.*] Not because I stand in fear of punishment from men, who have no power over me; but because I am so obnoxious to thee, whose judgments I ought to dread the more, the less I am liable to give an account of my actions unto others. O how it afflicts me, that I presumed, because I had none to control me here on earth, to offend thy majesty, thy all-seeing majesty; at whose tribunal the highest must be judged: and if thou shouldest pronounce the heaviest sentence upon me for my crimes, and execute it also with the greatest severity, I could not accuse thee of too much rigour; but must still justify thee in thy proceedings, and clear thee from all such unjust imputations!

Ver. 5. *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me.*] It is true, indeed, and thou, O Lord, knowest it better than I, that there is in me an innate proneness to evil; but I am so far from representing this as an excuse for what I have done, that I confess the consideration of it ought to have made me the more watchful and diligent to suppress those bad inclinations; which I knew to be so natural, that I brought them into the world with me.

Ver. 6. *Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden parts thou shalt make me to know wisdom.*] I am amazed at my folly, that I should be so careless; when I was not ignorant that thou requirest us not to entertain, with the least kindness, those first motions which we find in our thoughts and desires after any evil, but uprightly to oppose them; for which end thou hast put a principle of better motions into us, and endued me with wisdom, which secretly checks and corrects those brutish inclinations.

Ver. 7. *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*] I have nothing therefore to say in my own behalf, but wholly betake myself to thee for a gracious pardon of my sin, which every thing I can think of sadly aggravates. I am as impure as a leper, and deserve to be banished from thy presence, and shut out from among thy people; far more impure by touching Bath-sheba, than he is that toucheth a dead body; yet I am not so foul, but, if thou pleasest, thou canst purify me, and make me as clean and white as snow: vouchsafe me that grace, O Lord; expiate me, I beseech thee, (Lev. xiv. 6. Numb. xix. 17, 18.) and restore me perfectly unto thy favour, and the happy fruits of it, which I have justly forfeited and lost.

Ver. 8. *Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.*] Raise me out of this wofully dejected state wherein I lie; and as the terrible message I received by thy prophet, hath cast me into such insufferable anguish and pain, as if my bones were crushed in pieces by my fall: so send me the most comfortable news of my reconciliation with thee; to ease me of the torment I endure under the weight of my guilt, and the sense

of thy heavy displeasure; and to turn it into the height of joy and gladness.

Ver. 9. *Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.*] Remember not any longer how wicked I have been; nor lay any sin to my charge: but pass by all my transgressions, and acquit me from the punishment they deserve.

Ver. 10. *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*] And bestow upon me withal such purity of heart (which, alas! I have lost, and am not able to recover without thy grace), that I may utterly hereafter detest all such filthy motions: and, because we are apt to revolt from our good resolutions, do thou daily supply me with fresh strength from above, to confirm and settle them, that I may never return to folly.

Ver. 11. *Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.*] I deserve, I confess, to be rejected by thee, as my predecessor was, (1 Sam. xv. 25, 26.) and to be admitted no more into thy favour: but I humbly beseech thee, deal not so severely with me, nor deprive me (as thou didst him, compare 1 Sam. x. 6. with xvi. 14.) of the gift of thy Holy Spirit, wherewith thou hast anointed me, (ver. 13.)

Ver. 12. *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit.*] Let not that evil spirit which troubled him seize on me; but restore to me the joy which I was wont to have, when I saw myself so much in thy favour as to be delivered by thee out of the greatest danger: (Psal. xxi. 1.) support me and my authority, with such a cheerful, free, and generous spirit, as becomes him whom thou hast appointed to be the governor of thy people:

Ver. 13. *Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.*] That I may have the confidence to admonish those of their duty that transgress thy laws (as I will not fail to do), and they may not take the boldness to despise my instructions: but the very worst of them may, by my authority and my example, be reclaimed from their sinful lives, and become, like me, thy faithful servants.

Ver. 14. *Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.*] Though I have added the sin of murder to that of adultery, the murder of a trusty servant, of several of my servants, (2 Sam. xi. 17.) who by my order were exposed to that danger wherein they lost their lives; let it not hinder this grace which I beg of thee; but, O God, the God from whom I have received so many deliverances and blessings, vouchsafe this one favour more, to deliver me from the punishment due to this crying sin: and I will not spare to proclaim, as loud as ever I can, thy infinite goodness and clemency; together with thy truth and faithfulness in thy promises to returning sinners: it shall be my joy to speak of these, though therewithal I publish my own most horrid wickedness.

Ver. 15. *O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.*] Try me, O God, and let the sense of thy gracious pardon give me the boldness and liberty to open my lips (which shame, confusion, and fear, have closed and shut up), and my mouth shall every where declare thy mercy to thy perpetual praise and renown.

Ver. 16. *For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt-offering.*] This shall be the sacrifice I will offer to thee, as an acknowledgment of thy kindness; but that of beasts, I know, thou desirest not I should bring thee: the whole burnt-offerings being no pleasure at all to thee, but only as they are tokens of a grateful mind.

Ver. 17. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*] With which I will also join that Divine sacrifice of an humble, sorrowful, and penitent heart: for a soul that is truly contrite, and entirely submits its will to thine, is such an acceptable sacrifice, that thou canst not possibly reject it.

Ver. 18. *Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.*] And the same mercy I desire for myself, I beg also for all thy people. Spare them, good Lord, and let not my folly be the occasion of bringing upon them any calamity; or upon that city, which is called after my name, where I have set both thy throne and mine: (2 Sam. v. 7. 9. vi. 16.) but be favourable to that place, and do it good; let the walls of Jerusalem, which I have begun to build, (2 Sam. v. 9.) be perfectly finished, (1 Kings iii. 1. xi. 27.)

Ver. 19. *Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt-offering, and whole burnt-offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.*] Then shall the righteous be very thankful to thee; and express it by bringing peace-offerings in abundance, and all other sacrifices: they shall offer thee the choicest sacrifices upon thy altar, (1 Kings iii. 5. viii. 63, 64.) which from such pious persons shall be acceptable to thy majesty.

PSALM LII.

To the chief Musician. Maschil. A Psalm of David; when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the House of Ahimelech.

ARGUMENT.

The title sufficiently instructs every one about the author, and in the occasion of this Psalm, if they will but read the history to which it directs them in 1 Sam. xxii. where Doeg (one of the seed of Esau, or that had lived so long among them, that he had got the name, as well as the savage manners, of the Edomites), to ingratiate himself with Saul, pretended to discover those who were confederate with David, particularly Ahimelech; whom he undertook also to kill, together with all his family, when others refused that bloody charge which Saul would have imposed on them. And when he had done, it should seem he bragged of it, as if it had been some gallant action, or famous achievement; as is intimated, I take it, in the first verse of the Psalm. Which David penned when Abiathar (who was the only person that escaped in that slaughter, whereby they thought to terrify others from harbouring David, or shewing any kindness to him) came and brought him the sad tidings of what was befallen their city. And it was afterward delivered to the master of the music in the tabernacle, to be sung in perpetual memory of the thing, to the vulgar tune called *Maschil;* (see Psal. xxxii.) or, as Theodoret seems here to expound the word, to fortify those with patience and constancy who unjustly suffer, by instructing them in the justice of the Divine sentence in the issue.

Ver. 1. *WHY boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God endureth continually.*] A goodly feat, indeed, for a man to boast of! that he hath killed eighty-five innocent and unarmed priests, together with a company of women, children, and sucklings, (1 Sam. xxii. 19.) A mighty champion thou art, who vapourest, no doubt, that thou wilt do the like execution upon me: but know, vain man, that the goodness of God, whereby I have been hitherto preserved, (1 Sam. xxii. 1. 3. 5.) will still defend me; for it is not a thing of short continuance, like our prince's favour, but lasts for ever.

Ver. 2. *The tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.*] O thou contriver of false stories! who pretendest to be the only or most loyal person in the court of Saul, (1 Sam. xxii. 8, 9.) but art an egregious hypocrite; a mere designer of mischief to others, thereby to advance thyself: thy tongue was the first instrument in this butchery, being sharpened by thy malice on purpose like a razor newly set, to cut the throats of the guiltless, that thou mightest seem to be the most zealous of all others for the safety of the king's person and government.

Ver. 3. *Thou lovest evil more than good, and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah.*] To have told the plain truth would not have served thy ambition and thy malice, which make thee love to do mischief rather than good offices unto others, and to devise lies against Ahimelech, rather than to declare his innocence.

Ver. 4. *Thou lovest all-devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.*] Thou carest not whom thou destroyest, but can swallow up a whole city at a morsel: O thou false tongue, who, to curry favour with thy prince, devisest the most impudent lies against those that never offended him.

Ver. 5. *God shall likewise destroy thee for ever: he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling-place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.*] The great God, whose priests thou hast slain, shall avenge their cause, and pull thee from that greatness and honour, to which thou seekest, by this vile means, to raise thyself: and more than that, he will pay thee in the same coin thou hast dealt to them; for he will utterly destroy thee, and snatch thee away as hastily as thou didst those innocents; just so will he pluck thee from the tabernacle of God, (where thou wast wont to pretend devotion, 1 Sam. xxi. 7.) and root out, not only thee, but all thy family, from the face of the earth.

Ver. 6. *The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him.*] Which just judgment of God upon thee all good men shall mark, and be confirmed thereby in their pious fear of offending him; and, reflecting upon thy vain devices to greaten thyself and family, shall deride thy folly, saying as I do;

Ver. 7. *Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.*] Behold that mighty man, that principal favourite, who regarded not God, nor sought to support himself by his favour, but laid the foundation of his fortune (as we speak) merely in abundance of riches, and the favour of his prince; in which also he endeavoured to establish himself, not by honest means, but by the most perfidious arts, and cruel enterprises: what now is become of him? and where is his greatness? Lo, his ambitious hopes are all vanished and come to nothing.

Ver. 8. *But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.*] Whilst I, at whom he principally aimed in his murderous design, am still, blessed be God, in safety; nay, compared with that destruction which shall fall on him, in a flourishing condition: for he shall drop away like a withered leaf; but I grow and increase in strength, like a green olive-tree planted in the courts of God's house; whose mercy, I trust, will preserve me to my life's end from all the mischiefs they devise against me, and make me more and more flourishing, both in my person and in my posterity.

Ver. 9. *I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name; for it is good before thy saints.*] For which I will never cease to praise thee, because I owe it entirely to thee that I am not destroyed; and I will patiently expect the accomplishment of thy promises to me: for all thy pious servants have ever found this to be the best and wisest course, to depend upon thy omnipotent goodness and faithful promises, and not to imitate those wicked men, who study to advance or preserve themselves by flattery, or other viler practices.

PSALM LIII.

To the chief Musician upon Mahalath. Maschil. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm and the fourteenth differ so little, that it hath troubled interpreters to give a reason for the repetition of the same thing, almost in the same words. There is some variation, indeed, in every verse, but it is merely the change of one word for another of the same import: (as, for example, *God* for *Lord*, ver. 2. 4. 9.) except only verse the fifth, where there is a much greater alteration; and the sixth wholly omitted; which makes it probable there was some new occasion for the using this hymn again, though an occasion exceeding like the former. What it was writers do but guess; and if I take the liberty also to interpose my conjecture, it will be nothing so remote as all those that I have met withal seem to be.

If we suppose the defection of the people in the rebellion of Absalom, to have been the matter of his complaint in the fourteenth Psalm, then it looks like a probability, that the new revolt which the Israelites generally made, immediately after the other, before David had quite recovered Jerusalem, and his settlement there, was the occasion of this. For you read, that upon the quarrel which arose between the men of Judah and the men of Israel, about precedency in bringing back the king, Sheba blew the trumpet of rebellion afresh; and it is said, that every man of Israel left David, and followed after him, (2 Sam. xx. 2.) This is the revolt, I apprehend, here spoken of, ver. 3. where the Psalmist says, *Every one of them is gone back.* And a dangerous revolt it was, as David apprehended, more dangerous than the former, unless timely checked; (2 Sam. xx. 6.) which made him, before all his army could be assembled, (ver. 5.) send his guards to pursue him speedily: (ver. 7.) as they did through all the tribes of Israel, (ver. 14.) Who being afraid of the issue (ver. 5. of this Psalm), fell off from Sheba more and more, the farther he went, and left him at last to shift for himself, so that he was shut up in the city of Abel, there

taken, and beheaded, (ver. 22.) After which, his body, it is likely, was exposed to the fowls of the air, or the wild beasts; insomuch that his bones were, indeed, at last scattered, (as the Psalmist here speaks, ver. 5.) and all his adherents made contemptible.

This David desired should be commemorated together with his deliverance from Absalom's rebellion; and therefore, making a review of the fourteenth Psalm (wherein that distress is described), he delivered it again to the master of the music (as appeared after the first collection of the book of Psalms was finished), with some small alterations, relating to this new business; desiring God, for instance, to give them still some farther and new *salvation*, (ver. 6.) For the word here is in the plural number, but in the fourteenth Psalm in the singular; which hath made me render it here *complete salvation*, which he implores with the same earnestness he had done before, and orders also how the Psalm shall be sung upon *Mahalath*, or the hollow instrument (flute or pipe) to the tune of *Maschil*, (or as a caveat against rebellion, see Psal. xxxii.)

If any be not satisfied with this account of the Psalm, because of the word *captivity*, in the last verse, which they may think ought to be taken properly; then they may suppose this Psalm to have been reviewed by Asaph the seer, in the days of Hezekiah, when abundance of the people had been indeed carried captive, (Isa. v. 13.) But there is no need to have recourse to this: for the word *captivity* imports no more, in some places, but only *great desolation;* such as was made of Job's estate and family, (xlii. 10.) and by the Philistines, when Shiloh was destroyed, (Judg. xviii. 30, 31.)

Ver. 1. *THE fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good.*] Though the wicked are not yet so impudent as openly to deny God with their mouths; yet such is their abominable filthiness, so shameless are they in their wickedness, so universally depraved, that their secret thoughts sure are, God takes no notice of what they do, or that he will not judge them for it.

Ver. 2. *God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God.*] But let them know that he exactly observes them, and all the ways of the sons of men, which are naked and bare before his eyes; though, alas! there is nothing now to be seen but ignorance and contempt of his majesty.

Ver. 3. *Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*] The Israelites have made a new separation, and are entirely revolted; being like a body without spirit, so rotten and putrefied, that it is hard to find so much as one that hath any kind of goodness in him.

Ver. 4. *Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread: they have not called upon God.*] Strange, that they should still be thus senseless! and (after such a defeat as they have lately received) continue to work iniquity; nay, to be cruel and void of all pity and compassion to my poor people; the reason is, they have no religion.

Ver. 5. *There were they in great fear, where no fear was; for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee: thou hast put them to shame, because God hath despised them.*] And none more cowardly than such atheistical wretches; whose courage so soon failed them, that a panic fear seized them before my forces could approach them: for they ran away, and dispersed themselves, when I sent but a small party after them. God, O my soul, hath broken him in pieces, and his bones lie scattered on the ground, who thought to oppress thee: thou hast obtained this favour of him, to put them to shame; for he despised those who had so little regard to his majesty.

Ver. 6. *Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.*] And he is mighty to save (whatsoever such wicked people think), and resides, by a special token of his presence there, on Mount Zion: O that it might please him to complete our deliverance from thence; and restore us all again to the happy enjoyment of that place, from whence we have been banished! it would turn our sad lamentations into the most cheerful thanksgivings; and fill not only Judah, but all the tribes of Israel, with joy and gladness.

PSALM LIV.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth. Maschil. A Psalm of David, when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, the title tells us, was composed, when (not long after the butchery of Doeg) the Ziphites, a false people, void of humanity, and that sought nothing but how to raise themselves, though by another's ruin, endeavoured to ingratiate themselves with Saul, by discovering to him where David lurked in their neighbourhood: (1 Sam. xxiii. 14. 19.) and undertook to guide the king to the very place, and assist the forces he should send to take him, (ver. 20, &c.) By which means David was brought into such a great strait, (ver. 26.) that if Saul had not been diverted by a sudden invasion which the Philistines made, he could not have escaped him. In this distress he made his address to God by prayer, in the words of the three first verses of this Psalm. But on a sudden (hearing, I suppose, how Saul himself was alarmed with the news of an invasion) he breaks out (ver. 4, 5.) into admiration of God's goodness. And when the danger was quite over, added, I suppose, the two last verses; wherein he expresses with what joy he took a view, from the mountain where he lay hid, of Saul's forces as they retreated. Which was a thing so memorable, that, when he came to the kingdom, he delivered the whole to the master of music in the tabernacle, to be sung, as the fourth Psalm, to the tune of *Maschil.*

Ver. 1. *SAVE me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength.*] O God, whose name imports that thou art the supreme judge, and therefore the defender and protector of all injured and oppressed persons, I humbly implore thy aid in this great distress; beseeching thee, who can easily do it, to deliver me from my enemies, and, by thy almighty power, vindicate my innocence; and maintain my

righteous cause against those that are too strong for me, and wrongfully seek to destroy me.

Ver. 2. *Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.*] Deny me not this request, O God, I most earnestly entreat thee; but grant the petitions of thy poor servant, who hath nothing but his prayers to oppose to all those forces that surround him.

Ver. 3. *For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.*] And they are conducted by barbarous people, whom I have no way disobliged, for I never had any thing to do with them; and yet they have undertaken to deliver me into the hand of Saul, and those formidable enemies that are come to seek my life; (1 Sam. xxiii. 20.) having no regard to God at all; but only studying, right or wrong, to gain the favour of their prince.

Ver. 4. *Behold, God is mine helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul.*] O the wonderful goodness of God! who in this deplorable condition sends me, in a strange and unexpected manner, most seasonable relief! Behold, how he takes my part, the Lord preserves my life: for, alas! the small forces I have with me, are unable to secure it; and can by no means support me against those numerous enemies that thought to destroy me.

Ver. 5. *He shall reward evil unto my enemies: cut them off in thy truth.*] And as for those spies that undertook to find out all my hiding places, (1 Sam. xxiii. 22, 23.) he shall bring the mischief they intended to me upon themselves: take a just vengeance on them, and execute thy threatenings, O Lord, against such treacherous persons.

Ver. 6. *I will freely sacrifice unto thee; I will praise thy name, O Lord, for it is good.*] In the mean time I will not be sparing in expressing my thankfulness for what thou hast done already, but make thee my grateful acknowledgments both in word and deed. First, I will offer thee liberal sacrifices; and then I will accompany them with my praises of thy wisdom, power, and goodness, O Lord; which is the most pleasing sacrifice, I know, unto thee, and the most delightful employment.

Ver. 7. *For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.*] Who, by his special providence, am marvellously delivered out of that distress wherein I was, and all the dangers which it threatened: for my eyes now dare look upon those enemies in their retreat, from whom I lately fled for fear. (1 Sam. xxiii. 26—28.)

PSALM LV.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth. Maschil. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was sent to the master of the music, to be sung as the former: having an occasion something like it. For the complaint which he makes in the middle of the Psalm, that his greatest confidant proved treacherous to him, makes it probable that it was composed when Absalom's rebellion broke out, and he was forced to flee suddenly from Jerusalem: and, as he was going barefoot upon Mount Olivet (he and all his company weeping), to increase his sorrow, met the news that Ahithophel also was among the conspirators, 2 Sam. xv. 31. Upon which, we read there, he presently fell to his prayers; and as soon as he came to a place where he could rest, and retire himself, he represented, it is likely, the sadness of his condition more largely in this Psalm: beseeching God to disappoint the conspirators, (ver. 9.) First, because of the violence they had committed at Jerusalem: ver. 9—11. and, secondly, because of the vile treachery of Ahithophel, from the twelfth to the fifteenth, which seems to me ought to be connected with the beginning of the ninth verse; for he goes on, in the fifteenth, to beseech God to defeat them all, which he had begun in the ninth, but breaks off to insert his reasons why he was so earnest: and then, in the conclusion, he exhorts all those that adhered to him not to be discouraged, but to cast their care upon the Lord; who would reward their pious confidence in him, by protecting and delivering them, and destroying their and his enemies.

Ver. 1. *GIVE ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.*] O God, the supreme judge of all the world, I most humbly address myself to thee, who art inclined to relieve those that are oppressed: beseeching thee not to reject a poor supplicant, but graciously to receive his petition which he puts up unto thee.

Ver. 2. *Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise.*] Let the sadness of my condition move thee to consider and relieve me; which I am not able to represent in my prayer, without shrieks and lamentable cries: so great is the perturbation of my mind.

Ver. 3. *Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.*] Because my own son is become my enemy, and hath blown the trumpet of rebellion against me, (2 Sam. xv. 10.) and because of the sore straits to which he hath wickedly reduced me: for which, that there might be some colour, he and his associates load me with false accusations, and say I am unjust, and take no care of my people, (ver. 3, 4.) and therefore furiously set themselves against me to dethrone me.

Ver. 4. *My heart is sore pained within me; and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.*] This is a sore grief unto my heart, and puts me into the very agonies of death: which, without thy mercy, I must suddenly expect, (2 Sam. xvii. 2.)

Ver. 5. *Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.*] The suddenness and strength of this conspiracy have struck me into such a fear, as makes me tremble: I am involved in such difficulties, that, which way soever I look, horror and consternation seize upon me.

Ver. 6. *And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.*] In this confusion I rather wished than hoped to escape, (2 Sam. xv. 14.) saying, Who will lend me wings as swift as those of a dove, that I may flee away to some place of safety and repose?

Ver. 7. *Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.*] Lo, then would I go to some far-distant country, though I wandered I knew not whither; (2 Sam. xv. 20.) I would hide myself in some desert place, remote from all society.

Ver. 8. *I would hasten my escape from the windy storm*

and tempest.] And I would make all the haste imaginable to escape this fierce persecution, (2 Sam. xvii. 16. 21.) which is risen like a sudden storm of wind, or violent tempest, and threatens utterly to subvert me.

Ver. 9. *Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city.*] O Lord, let that speedy destruction swallow up them which they design against me, (2 Sam. xvii. 16.) divide their counsels, and raise dissensions among them: (2 Sam. xv. 34. xvii. 14, 15.) for I am certainly informed, that, by rapine and cruelty, brawling and contention, they have filled the whole city of Jerusalem with tumult and confusion.

Ver. 10. *Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it.*] There is nothing else to be seen, either by day or by night: for they that guard the gates, or go the rounds, make it their business to ravage and spoil, to pick quarrels, and fall out with every body they meet withal; and such as run to the main guards, in hope to meet with some relief, are miserably deceived: for there the same iniquity, oppression, and injurious dealing, keep their station.

Ver. 11. *Wickedness is in the midst thereof; deceit and guile depart not from her streets.*] There is no place free either from their open violence, or secret fraud and deceit; but they barbarously abuse, or cunningly circumvent, the inhabitants, both within doors and without.

Ver. 12. *For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him.*] And there is one most notorious traitor, whose ingratitude deserves to be severely punished; for he hath maliciously reproached and calumniated me and my government, when I thought of no such treachery: for we never had any quarrel (then his treason would not have been so strange, but far more tolerable), nor did he give any sign of hatred to me; for then I could have secured myself, by withdrawing from his familiarity.

Ver. 13. *But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.*] No; thou, O most perfidious of all mankind, who contrivest this mischief against me, wast the person whom I esteemed above all others; whom I loved as myself; whose counsel I ever followed; and to whom, as my friend, I unbosomed all my secrets.

Ver. 14. *We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.*] Whose conversation was most delightful to me, and to whom I thought I had been tied, not only by the bond of civil friendship, but (which is far stronger) of religion.

Ver. 15. *Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.*] Let death seize on them as unexpectedly as this treason broke out against me: let them sink on a sudden into the grave, when they think of nothing less; for wheresoever they go, all manner of mischief marches along with them.

Ver. 16. *As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me.*] As for me, I will injure nobody to preserve myself, but only commend myself and my cause to God, the righteous judge: and the almighty Lord, who changes not, will deliver me as he hath done formerly.

Ver. 17. *Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice.*] For this I will not cease to solicit him when I go to bed, and when I rise, and before I take my repast; both in my inward thoughts, and with my mouth, in silent desires and lamentable moans, I will never give over my importunity, till he graciously grant my petition, and send me relief.

Ver. 18. *He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me.*] He will rescue me from the hand of this rebellious army which comes against me, and restore me to my throne in peace: for be they never so numerous, there is a far greater power on my side, to defend me, and to fight for me.

Ver. 19. *God shall hear and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.*] God himself, who hath so long governed the world most justly, and never alters nor changes, will hear my prayer, and bring down their pride: for having prospered hitherto in their villany, there is not one of them that repents; but they all pertinaciously persist in their rebellion, without any fear of the Divine vengeance.

Ver. 20. *He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him; he hath broken his covenant.*] Especially that perfidious person, who hath not only violated all the laws of friendship, but profanely broken his promise and oath of fidelity, wherein he was engaged to me.

Ver. 21. *The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.*] Nothing can be falser than he; who entertained me with the fairest and smoothest language, when, at the same time, he was contriving this rebellion in his heart: all his soft words and tender professions of kindness to me, served only to hide his design of giving me a mortal wound.

Ver. 22. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*] But why do I trouble myself any farther with him? be not dejected, O my soul (and let me give this counsel to every one that adheres to me), but, reposing thy humble trust in God, cast all the burdens of thy cares upon him, who will certainly support thee under any troubles that he is pleased to impose upon thee. Preserve thy integrity; and, though thou mayest be shaken and disturbed for a time, he will not suffer thee to be moved out of thy place, but quietly settle thee there again.

Ver. 23. *But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.*] But as for those that have given me this disturbance, thou, O God, wilt bring them to an untimely end, and throw them headlong into the pit of destruction. They are men that thirst after blood, and by all manner of fraud and treachery endeavour to compass their ends: and such shall perish in the flower of their age, when I trust to spend my days in prosperity and peace.

PSALM LVI.

To the chief Musician, upon Jonath-elem-rechokim. Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by David, when, for fear of Saul, he fled like an innocent dove into remote countries. More

particularly when he was forced to take shelter among the Philistines in Gath, (1 Sam. xxi.) where the lords of the court brought him to king Achish, with such high commendations of his valour, as he thought might endanger his life. And therefore he put on the guise of a man beside himself; silently bewailing the sadness of his condition, which constrained him to make use of such artifices; and complaining to God of the cruelty of his enemies, who had driven him into this and many other straits: but making no remonstrances to Achish how he was used, nor begging his assistance against them. Not a word of this; which is the reason, possibly, why he compares himself here in the title to a *silent* or *dumb dove*, if interpreters rightly understand the words *Jonath-elem*, which they expound in that manner. And Kimchi thinks, he the rather compares himself to a *dove*, because that is accounted a *silly* creature; (Hos. vii. 11.) and David now seemed no better.

And this is the reason that this Psalm is also called *Michtam*, (see Psal. xvi.) because it is a commemoration of God's singular care over him, in many great dangers, especially at Gath; when he entirely depended upon his favour and love alone; supporting himself (and seeking no farther for help) by his gracious promise to him; which he thankfully acknowledges, especially in the conclusion of this Psalm.

Which was penned, it appears from ver. 8. after many *wanderings* of this good man; first, to Samuel in Naioth, (1 Sam. xix. 18.) then to Jonathan, (xx. 1.) then to Nob, (xxi. 1.) after that to Gath, (ver. 10.) from thence to Adullam, (xxii. 1.) and then, into the country of Moab: (ver. 3.) from whence he was admonished by the prophet Gad, to go to a place of greater security, (ver. 6.) which he found in the forest of Hareth; (1 Sam. xxii. 5.) where, I suppose, he might have a little repose and leisure, to reflect upon what was past, and to compose this Psalm: and from that forest, I fancy, he might call himself, (if we admit of Bochartus's change of one point, lib. i. de Animal. cap. 3. par. ii.) *Jonath-elim-rechokim, a dove in the remote woods.* Where he made this Psalm before the rest of his wanderings to other places, which afterward followed. And when he came to the kingdom, he delivered it to the chief master of music, to be sung after the tune of a song, which began with those words (as Aben Ezra takes it), *Jonath-elim-rechokim.*

Ver. 1. *BE merciful unto me, O God; for man would swallow me up: he fighting daily oppresseth me.*] O God, the supreme, and therefore impartial, judge of all the world, take pity upon me, I beseech thee, and rescue me from the violence of my enemies: for Saul, forgetting his own mortality, and how unseemly it is for frail man to continue his enmities for ever, most eagerly pursues me, with an unsatiable desire to take away my life: he never intermits his persecutions, but presses me so closely, that he gives me no time to breathe.

Ver. 2. *Mine enemies would daily swallow me up; for they be many that fight against me, O thou Most High.*] He sends abroad his spies, to watch all opportunities to ensnare me; for which they gape as greedily as ravenous beasts do for their prey: and great multitudes there are, O thou Most High (who alone canst disappoint them) that, proud of their numbers, and of their power, have insolently set themselves against me to destroy me.

Ver. 3. *What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*] As I have just reason to fear they will, unless I be defended by thee, with whom I have entrusted myself and all my concerns; which is the only thing whereby I overcome those fears when they seize upon me.

Ver. 4. *In God I will praise his word; in God I have put my trust: I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.*] By the help of God, I will be so far from being dismayed, that I will rejoice in the faithful promise he hath made to me by his prophet, (1 Sam. xvi. 13. 2 Sam. iii. 9. v. 2.) Though it be not fulfilled presently, yet by his assistance I will depend, as I have done hitherto, upon his fidelity for the performance of it, and never fear what frail man can do to hinder it.

Ver. 5. *Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts are against me for evil.*] I know what an ill construction my enemies would put upon these words, if they could hear what I say; for they do nothing but wrest the most innocent speeches; and because I profess to confide in God, pretend that I conspire against the king, (1 Sam. xxiv. 9.) their whole business being nothing else, but to contrive how to do me mischief.

Ver. 6. *They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.*] For this end they hold many consultations among themselves, and lay snares privily for me; curiously observing all my motions, and still expecting an opportunity to take away my life.

Ver. 7. *Shall they escape by iniquity? in thine anger cast down the people, O God.*] Shall this iniquity always go unpunished? Or by their subtilty and craft shall they, who thus unjustly persecute the innocent, escape thy vengeance? O God, the righteous judge, throw down those insolent people, who have so long provoked thy patience, and make them feel the effects of thy just displeasure.

Ver. 8. *Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?*] Thou art perfectly acquainted, I am sure, how often I have been forced to fly, like a vagabond, from place to place; which hath cost me many a tear: good Lord, preserve a kind remembrance of them; and let them not perish as things thou nothing regardest. But why am I so importunate for this, since I know thou art so far from despising my misery, that thou art as mindful of it, as if thou keptest a register of every tear, and all my troubles?

Ver. 9. *When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.*] My prayer therefore shall prevail when my enemies oppress me, and obtain a glorious victory over them; of this I am assured, because the mighty God, who rules all the world, is on my side.

Ver. 10. *In God will I praise his word; in the Lord will I praise his word.*] By his gracious assistance I will continue my resolution to rejoice in the faithful promise I beforementioned: he is the eternal Lord, who never alters nor changes, and I will be like him, immutably rejoicing in that faithful promise.

Ver. 11. *In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.*] Nothing shall shake the confidence I have reposed in him; nor will I fear what the greatest man can do, were he more powerful than he is,

to hinder the accomplishment of what the Lord designs for me.

Ver. 12. *Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.*] Nor will I ever be unmindful of the promises I have made to thee, O God; to whom, when I was in distress, I vowed the most grateful acknowledgments, if thou wouldest deliver me: though I am not able to requite thy kindness, yet I will not cease to magnify and extol it with my highest praises.

Ver. 13. *For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?*] For thou hast so remarkably rescued me from death (to thy goodness I ascribe it, not to my policy) when I was in the power of the Philistines, that I ought not to doubt of thy continued preservation of me, from the snares my enemies lay to entrap me, or from the open violence they use to overthrow me: thou wilt support me still to praise thee, and to perform further service to thee here in this world, as I intend to do most sincerely.

PSALM LVII.

To the chief Musician. Al-taschith. Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the Cave.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, the title informs us, was penned upon the like occasion with the former. For after several other wanderings, (besides those he speaks of in the foregoing Psalm, ver. 8.) or removes from place to place, mentioned 1 Sam. xxiii. you find David in the strong hold of En-gedi, (ver. 29.) where there was a cave among the rocks, (xxiv. 2, 3.) in which David and his men lurked and hid themselves for fear of Saul. Who, in his pursuit of them, came to ease himself in this very place where they skulked; and thereby presented David with as fair an opportunity, as could be desired, to kill him. Which he might have done without any noise, if his piety and religious resolution to do nothing that was sinful, no, not to gain a kingdom, but (trusting to the faithful promise he speaks of, Psal. lvi. 4. 10.) to wait wholly upon God, to prefer him when and as he pleased to the throne, had not hindered him. For some of his men, observing the advantage, would fain have despatched him, if David had not forbidden the person who was ready to strike the blow, saying, *Al-taschith, thou shalt not destroy him;* or, *destroy him not.* So some expound that word, which we find in the title of the Psalm; though others (observing the same word to be in the title of the two following Psalms, and of the seventy-fifth, which belongeth not to this matter) judge it more probable that *Al-taschith* was the beginning of some song, according to which this Psalm was to be sung. To which, notwithstanding, in my opinion, it may be replied, that those three Psalms which follow after this had that title prefixed, only to shew that they were to be sung like this.

In which David commemorates God's great mercy in mollifying the heart of Saul, at that time, by the kindness and piety which he expressed towards him: remembering, in the first place, what kind of thoughts he had when he was in the cave, and saw himself in manifest danger of being taken by Saul's forces: and then blessing God for the sudden change which was made in his condition, by Saul's falling into his hand, to do what he pleased with him, by the demonstration he gave him, that he had no traitorous thoughts in his heart; but bare still a due reverence to him, notwithstanding the ill usage he received from him.

It is called *Michtam*, for the same reason that the former was, because of the singular favour which God shewed him in this deliverance; more precious to him than any jewel, and that deserved an everlasting remembrance. (See Psal. xvi.)

Ver. 1. *BE merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me; for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.*] O God, the ruler and governor of all the world, I most earnestly beseech thee to be merciful and gracious to me; O take some pity upon me, who rely solely on thy mercy, having no confidence in these fortresses, or secret places, where I hide myself; but trusting merely to thy almighty protection, on which I will still depend, as I have done hitherto, for defence and preservation, till this danger be past, which is now impendent over me, and threatens to destroy me.

Ver. 2. *I will cry unto God most High; unto God that performeth all things for me.*] There is none superior, or equal, to him, unto whom I will continually commend myself; unto that mighty God, who will finish, I hope, what he hath begun to do for me.

Ver. 3. *He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.*] There are greater armies in heaven, than those that here surround me; which, rather than I shall perish, he will send for my deliverance; he will expose him to shame and reproach, that gapes like a ravenous beast to devour me: I doubt not of it; for, besides his infinite mercy, I have his promise for my security; in the performance of which, he will visibly declare his fidelity.

Ver. 4. *My soul is among lions; and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongues a sharp sword.*] And now there is a fit opportunity, when my life is in extreme danger; for here I lie close, and dare not stir, being encompassed with enemies picked out on purpose to destroy me, (1 Sam. xxiv. 2.) who are as fierce and cruel as lions, and enraged against me so furiously, that they are continually incensing Saul to pursue me; tearing my good name (as they hope to do me) in pieces, and giving the most deadly wound to my reputation, (1 Sam. xxiv. 9.)

Ver. 5. *Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.*] Confute them, O God, the most righteous judge of men's actions and intentions; and by delivering me from this imminent danger, raise to thyself the highest praises: and spread the fame of thy glorious power, goodness, wisdom, and truth, throughout all the earth.

Ver. 6. *They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah.*] And how ready art thou to hear the prayers of thy faithful servant! For, after all their projects and devices to entrap me, when

I was just falling into their hands, I am miraculously preserved; and they themselves precipitously run into that very danger, wherein they thought to have caught me, (1 Sam. xxiv. 3—5, &c.)

Ver. 7. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise.*] My heart also is ready, O God, my heart is prepared, and firmly resolved to pay thee the vows which I made in my distress; my song shall be of thee; and, with all the joy I can express, I will set forth thy praise.

Ver. 8. *Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.*] My tongue, wherewith I ought to glorify thee, shall be no longer silent, or merely full of complaints; nor shall any instrument of music be wanting to accompany my hymns: which I will sing unto thee so early, that I will prevent the rising sun.

Ver. 9. *I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people; I will sing unto thee among the nations.*] Nor will I content myself with my private acknowledgments of thy goodness; but I will publish thy praise in the greatest assemblies of thy people, among whom this song shall be sung; yea, other nations shall read therein, how thankful I am to thee for what thou hast done.

Ver. 10. *For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.*] For it is fit my thankfulness should be as boundless as thy mercy; which transcends all my expressions; and hath nothing equal to it, but thy faithfulness and truth.

Ver. 11. *Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.*] Be thou still exalted in these, O God, and raise to thyself thereby the highest praise: spread the fame of them every where, that thou mayest be glorified throughout all the world.

PSALM LVIII.

To the chief Musician. Al-taschith. Michtam of David.

ARGUMENT.

This and the next Psalm, in order of time, precede the foregoing. But it is an ordinary method among the Hebrews to go backward from the last to the first; as they seem to me to do very plainly in these three Psalms, which have the title of *Al-taschith*. For David's first escape, when Saul sent to kill him, was certainly the occasion of Psal. lix. And then Saul calling his privy-council together, who, without any more ado, pronounced him guilty of high-treason; it is the subject of this present Psalm. And after that Saul persecuted him with the greater colour and show of justice, accusing him of the worst of crimes; as he complains in many places, particularly in the Psalm foregoing: which being called *Al-taschith*, for a peculiar reason (see there), this, when it was delivered to the chief musician, was appointed to be sung after the same manner with that, and had the same name given it, with the title of *Michtam* also; because it contains a memorable reproof of those evil counsellors, who, against their conscience, had condemned David, merely to please the king, and give him a pretence to destroy him. And therefore he prophesies a signal vengeance should overtake them (which he would have every body observe); and that so suddenly and dreadfully, that he compares it to the mischief which a whirlwind doth, when it carries all before it in a moment: and particularly, he remembers the pots and caldrons over the fire, which should suffer by it; to intimate, I suppose, that these men were great oppressors, and devoured the people; as the prophets often complain, in that very language, particularly Micah, iii. 2, 3. where you read how the senators of Israel broke the very bones of the poor, and chopped them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron. Which place affords the best explication that I can find of the ninth verse of this Psalm. Where I take *hai* and *harou* to refer to thorns, and render the former *green*, or alive, the other *dry*, or scorched and burnt. But whatsoever these words signify, the repetition of *chemo* before each of them plainly denotes (to any one that understands the Hebrew language), that the things meant by those words should be served both alike.

Ver. 1. *Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?*] From whom may we expect justice, if not from the princes and rulers of the people met together in council? But let me ask that grave assembly, Do you verily think that you have pronounced a righteous sentence against me? Did you judge according to your consciences, uprightly and sincerely; and not suffer yourselves to be biassed by your affections?

Ver. 2. *Yea, in heart you work wickedness; you weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.*] You know the contrary to be true; and that you are not only disposed to do as the king would have you; but have hearts fraught with malice and wicked devices against me: you that ought to weigh things in an even balance, and judge a cause according to its merits, suffer yourselves to be inclined by base respects, to do an open violence to your country, and to oppress the innocent.

Ver. 3. *The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.*] But it is no wonder I am thus used by a wicked brood, who never had any sense of God and goodness; but were depraved from the very womb: going astray as soon as they could go; and telling lies as soon as they could speak.

Ver. 4. *Their poison is like the poison of a serpent; they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear.*] And such is the malignity of their venomous nature, they tell the most malicious and destructive lies of me; which strike at my life as plainly as if they were the poison of a serpent: whom they resemble in this also, that they will not be better instructed, nor, as becomes good judges, keep an ear open to farther information; but are as obstinate as the deaf adder (so much spoken of in our neighbouring countries), which can hear well enough, but stops both her ears.

Ver. 5. *Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.*] And will not listen to the magical song, wherewith their cunning men are wont to charm those serpents; and draw them together out of their holes.

Ver. 6. *Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth; break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord.*] I appeal, therefore, from them unto thee, O God, the most righteous judge; beseeching thee to disable those men's forces, whose wickedness is incorrigible: though they be as strong and terrible, as fierce and ravenous, as the young lions, thou,

O Lord, who art superior to all, canst easily disarm them, and leave them a desire, without any power, to do me mischief.

Ver. 7. *Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.*] Or if they have any strength remaining, let their courage fail them when they would attempt any thing against me; let them be dissipated like waters which slide away: when Saul bends his mind to do me any harm, let him miss his aim; like him that shoots a broken arrow out of his bow.

Ver. 8. *As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away; like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun.*] Or be like a snail, that appears with a threatening look when it puts forth its horns; but the farther it goes, the more it wastes and spends itself: whatsoever designs he and his followers may have to destroy me, let them all miscarry and prove like an abortive child, which dies in the womb, and never sees the light of this world.

Ver. 9. *Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath.*] O ye unrighteous judges; who, instead of preserving the people, devour and eat them up: God shall hurry you away suddenly, as in a furious tempest; which, before your flesh-pots can feel the thorns, carries them all away, both the green thorns and the dry.

Ver. 10. *The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance; he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.*] Which just judgment of God, when innocent people, whom you have oppressed, shall behold, it will fill them with joy; yea, they shall triumph over these wicked men, like a great conqueror; who, returning with an absolute and complete victory from the slaughter of his enemies, dips his feet in their blood, as he passes over their carcasses.

Ver. 11. *So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.*] And the most vulgar people, who observe little, seeing so remarkable a vengeance, shall confess and say, Surely it is best to be just and pious: surely there is a supreme Judge, whatsoever profane men imagine, who takes notice of all that is done upon earth, and punishes or rewards men according to their desires.

PSALM LIX.

To the chief Musician. Al-taschith. Michtam of David; when Saul sent, and they watched the House to kill him.

ARGUMENT.

The title sufficiently informs us of the occasion of this Psalm, wherein David expresses what his thoughts and affections were, when Saul sent officers to watch his house all night; and to slay him when he came out of his doors in the morning: as you may read 1 Sam. xix. 11—18. He represents his danger; beseeches God's protection; describes the wickedness of his enemies, and their diligence to destroy him; commends himself to God; expresses his confidence in him; and at last gratefully acknowledges God's goodness, who, by the kindness of his wife, preserved him from this danger. Which was so great, and the deliverance from it so remarkable, that he would have it commemorated in this Psalm: which is therefore called *Michtam;* (see Psal. xvi.) and was sent to the master of music in the tabernacle, to be sung as the two former, which have the name *Al-taschith.* (See Psal. lvii.)

Ver. 1. *DELIVER me from mine enemies, O my God; defend me from them that rise up against me.*] O God, who hast hitherto graciously preserved me, (see 1 Sam. xix. 10.) take me now into thy protection, and deliver me from this great danger: thou seest the number and the power of my enemies, who are risen up to destroy me; be thou my defence, I beseech thee; and bring me into some place of safety, where they may not be able to reach me.

Ver. 2. *Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.*] Rescue me from the malice of men, whose business and constant employment it is to do wickedly: save me from the cruelty of those, whom nothing but my blood will satisfy.

Ver. 3. *For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O Lord.*] For, lo, a strong guard hath beset my house, and lies in wait to apprehend me, and take away my life: though I have committed no offence against them, either great or less, as thou, O Lord, from whom nothing can be hid, very well knowest.

Ver. 4. *They run and prepare themselves without my fault: awake to help me, and behold.*] Unprovoked by me (I dare again repeat it, so great is my innocence) they very busily run to and fro, and with all diligence dispose their watch in every place to hinder my escape: O that thou wouldest therefore seasonably interpose for my succour, and consider the danger of my condition!

Ver. 5. *Thou therefore, O Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.*] What is all their power and force to thine? who art the sovereign Lord of the world, and commandest all the hosts in heaven and earth; and hast made also a gracious covenant with thy people, to protect and defend them: appear now for my relief, and punish all those wicked men who call themselves thy people, but are as barbarous and cruel, as false and perfidious, as the heathen: do not spare them, therefore, nor shew any favour to such as violate all the laws of justice and charity, and keep no faith with their neighbours.

Ver. 6. *They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.*] After I had escaped the fury of Saul in the day, he renews his attempts in the evening; and sends armed men to apprehend me: (1 Sam. xix. 10, 11.) some of which lie about my house, ready, like a growling dog, to seize upon me; and others (should they miss me there) go round about the city to waylay me in every corner.

Ver. 7. *Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords are in their lips; for who, say they, doth hear?*] Behold, how full their hearts are of malice! which bursts out at their mouth: they openly threaten to kill me: (1 Sam. xix. 15.) for who, say they, shall call them to any account for it, when they have despatched me?

Ver. 8. *But thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.*] Thou, O Lord, art not in their thoughts, who wilt so disappoint them in their designs, as to make them very ridiculous: thou wilt expose all these

paganish people to the scorn and derision of those who see how they are defeated, (1 Sam. xix. 15.)

Ver. 9. *Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defence.*] For what is the strength of Saul to thee? on whom I will wait with the same diligence, that they watch for me: knowing that I am safer under God's protection, than if my house were an impregnable tower.

Ver. 10. *The God of my mercy shall prevent me: God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies.*] He who hath given me so many demonstrations of his love, will not now desert me; but make way for my timely escape, notwithstanding all their diligence to apprehend me: let them observe me as closely as they can, God will let me behold their disappointment.

Ver. 11. *Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord our shield.*] Not that I desire they should all be slain at one stroke, which, though a terrible vengeance, might soon slip out of my countrymen's mind; whose profit I desire, more than my own private revenge: and therefore wish rather thou wouldest employ thy power, O Lord our protector, first to depose them from their honour and high place; and having laid them low, and made them contemptible, then to disperse them here and there, and make them wander up and down as vagabonds; that they may remain every where public spectacles of thy just displeasure.

Ver. 12. *For the sin of their mouth, and the words of their lips, let them even be taken in their pride; and for cursing and lying which they speak.*] The falsehoods and calumnies which their mouths continually utter deserve this vengeance; which shall certainly come upon them: for, though they may thrive by this means for the present, yet at last these very artifices shall prove their ruin: especially since they are so arrogant and audacious, as to dare to forswear themselves, and to confirm their forgeries with oaths and horrid execrations.

Ver. 13. *Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be; and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.*] Let such vile wretches as these, who incense thy just displeasure against them after this manner, be utterly consumed: let them waste away by degrees in their dispersions, till there be none of them found: that they may be convinced there is a supreme Being, and most righteous Judge, who governs all things, and controls even kings themselves, not only among us, but throughout the world.

Ver. 14. *And at evening let them return, and let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.*] Let them therefore watch me now, as narrowly as they please; (ver. 7.) lying near my house, like a dog, ready to seize upon me; or hunting about the city every where to apprehend me.

Ver. 15. *Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied.*] They shall be punished in their kind, and go up and down the city and country hereafter, upon another design: wandering, like a hungry dog, from door to door, to get something to eat; and forced to pass whole nights in complaints for want of satisfaction.

Ver. 16. *But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.*] Whilst I (whom they thought to have devoured) am praising thy power, as I intend to do continually; I will get up early, to give thee the highest praises for thy mercy (as I did that morning when I had escaped the hands of those that watched for me), because thou didst so mightily defend me, and take me into thy gracious protection; when I was in such a strait, that without thy miraculous mercy I must have perished.

Ver. 17. *Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.*] It is but just that I should praise thee (who didst inspire me with strength and courage) with the same diligence that I prayed to thee, against the power of Saul, (ver. 9.) For, whosoever was the instrument, it was God that brought me to a place of safety; that God, who hath been most merciful to me, and tied me unto him by innumerable benefits.

PSALM LX.

To the chief Musician upon Shushan-eduth, Michtam of David, to teach; when he strove with Aram-Naharaim, and with Aram-Zobah; when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the Valley of Salt twelve thousand.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, we learn by the title, was penned by David after Saul's persecution was ended by death; and David not only ruled over Judah, but Israel also. Till which time the Philistines and other nations afflicted the country very much, by reason of the divisions there were between the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah: as they had done also all the days of Saul, while he was busying himself in pursuing his hatred against David; and neglected his foreign enemies so much, that the Philistines were too hard for him, and at last overthrew him in that great battle wherein he and his sons were slain, (1 Sam. xxxi.) But when David was come to the crown, and both kingdoms also united in him, God himself seemed to lift up an ensign to them, (as he speaks here, ver. 4.) to call them to resort with one consent unto David, in assured hope of victory over their enemies. Accordingly he subdued the Philistines, as you read 2 Sam. viii. 1. (which chapter must be read for the understanding of this Psalm), and after that smote the Moabites, ver. 2. of that chapter; and then, in a memorable battle (particularly taken notice of in the title of this Psalm), overthrew the Syrians, called here and in other places Aram: both those that lived between the two rivers Tigris and Euphrates, called Naharaim; and those that adjoined to them, in that part of Syria, called Zobah, (ver. 3, &c.)

And returning from this victory, after his lieutenant-general Abishai had slain of the Edomites eighteen thousand, (2 Sam. viii. 13. 1 Chron. xviii. 12.) Joab, the general of all his forces, fell upon them again, and killed in the same place, the Valley of Salt, twelve thousand more (as the title of this Psalm informs us), and afterward destroyed them entirely, leaving never a male-child, that he could find, remaining, (1 Kings xi. 15, 16.)

For all which expeditions, when David was preparing himself, he composed this Psalm, and delivered it to the master of music in the tabernacle, to be sung upon an instrument of six strings, which was wont to be used in solemn thanksgivings (and therefore called *Shushan-eduth*). For he nothing doubted, but God would prosper his arms

better than he had done Saul's; and both give him the victory over their forces in the field, and bring him also into their fortified cities, (ver. 9.) as we read he did, 2 Sam. viii. 14. Which made this Psalm also be called *Michtam of David;* (see Psal. xvi.) being a most precious memorial, worthy to be ever preserved, of his faith in God, and of the admirable success of it, whereby posterity should learn to trust in him.

Ver. 1. *O GOD, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again.*] O God, the judge of all the world, who hast lately rejected us, and refused to go out with our armies; who hast broken and scattered our forces, (1 Sam. xxxi. 1. 7.) so highly had our sins provoked thy displeasure; I most humbly beseech thee to return to us with thy favour, and make us as prosperous as we have been unsuccessful.

Ver. 2. *Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.*] There have been dreadful commotions among ourselves, and miserable rents and divisions, (2 Sam. ii. 9, 10. 17. iii. 1.) the woful effects of which remain to this day, and call for thy help; who alone canst repair the breaches our folly hath made, and perfect the union which is begun.

Ver. 3. *Thou hast shewed thy people hard things; thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.*] Thou hast made us feel what it is to offend thee, by inflicting grievous punishments upon us, wherein thou hast fulfilled the words of thy servant Moses; (Deut. xxviii. 18. 34.) for we have been like to men bereft of the use of their reason by some intoxicating potion, and have madly destroyed one another.

Ver. 4. *Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.*] But now thou hast granted the desires of those that devoutly worship thee, and, according to thy faithful promise, (2 Sam. iii. 9. 18.) given me to them to be their king; to whom they should all repair, as soldiers do to their ensign when it is lifted up, and unanimously fight against their enemies under my conduct.

Ver. 5. *That thy beloved may be delivered, save with thy right hand, and hear me.*] Which I beseech thee to bless and prosper; that by the mighty power accompanying my arms, I may be an instrument of delivering thy beloved people from those that have oppressed them.

Ver. 6. *God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice: I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.*] Why should I doubt of it? And not rather rejoice in assured hope of victory; since God, who is most holy, and cannot lie, hath said, He will deliver them by my hand, (2 Sam. iii. 18.) and hath already put me in possession (as he also promised, ver. 2.) of all the country about Samaria, which I will distribute under such officers as I think fit to set over them.

Ver. 7. *Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver.*] Gilead also and Manasseh, who were lately under another king, (2 Sam. ii. 9.) have submitted themselves unto me; and so hath the tribe of Ephraim, which is a main support of my authority: these, and all the rest of the tribes of Israel, are now united to the royal tribe of Judah, which (according to the word of our forefather, Gen. xlix. 10.) supplies me with wise and able men to administer the laws, and order the affairs of my kingdom.

Ver. 8. *Moab is my wash-pot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me.*] Which shall now extend itself beyond the bounds of this country; for I will tread Moab under my feet, and reduce them to the vilest servitude; (2 Sam. viii. 2.) I will trample also upon the Edomites, and make them my slaves, (ver. 14.) The Philistines likewise, whom I have begun to smite, (2 Sam. v. 17, &c. 22, &c.) shall add to my triumphs, and be forced to meet me as their conquering lord, (2 Sam. viii. 1.)

Ver. 9. *Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?*] These are difficult things indeed; and I may well ask, when I consider how potent these nations are, By what power or force shall I enter that strongly-fenced city, in the frontiers of their country? who is it that will conduct me into Idumea, and make me master of it?

Ver. 10. *Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? and thou, O God, which didst not go out with our armies?*] But I can soon answer myself; for why should I despair of thy presence with us, O God of all power and might? who formerly indeed didst reject us, and forsake the conduct of our armies; but now, I hope, wilt graciously aid us, and make us victorious.

Ver. 11. *Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.*] Do not frustrate these hopes; but afford us thy help against the Syrians also, (2 Sam. viii. 5.) now that they distress us; for no human force is able to deliver us, nor have we any confidence in it, but in thee alone.

Ver. 12. *Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.*] By whose assistance we will behave ourselves courageously, and do valiant acts; for God will utterly rout our enemies, and tread them down like mire in the streets.

PSALM LXI.

To the chief Musician upon Neginah. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

All agree that, in the beginning of this Psalm, David relates what his thoughts were, when he fled either from Saul or from his son Absalom; who drove him over Jordan, as far as Mahanaim, the very extremity of Judea. Of this latter, it is most probable, he complains here; (ver. 2.) because afterward he calls himself king, (ver. 6.) which he would not have done during the life of Saul, though he was anointed, and designed by God to that high dignity; because nothing could have justified Saul's persecution of him so much as his taking upon him that title. It may be said, indeed, that he kept this Psalm private till he was possessed of the kingdom, and then delivered it to the chief musician, to be sung as Psalm iv. But that will not seem so likely, when we consider that his danger was over before he had finished this Psalm, and called himself a king, as appears from the latter part of it, beginning ver. 5.: where, after a pause, he begins to acknowledge how God had granted the desires he made when he was in distress; and thankfully commemorates his mercy in bringing him back again to his tabernacle: hoping he would prolong his life in the throne, (ver. 6.) to which he

was newly either advanced, or restored by God's goodness. I shall suppose the latter in my Paraphrase.

Ver. 1. *HEAR my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.*] O God, the supreme governor and judge of all the world, graciously vouchsafe to admit and answer the petitions of a poor supplicant, who, in a most lamentable condition, cries unto thee most earnestly for relief.

Ver. 2. *From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.*] Of which I will not despair, though I am upon the brink of being thrust out of my kingdom, (2 Sam. xvii. 22. 24.) and in such anxiety of mind, that I am even overwhelmed with fear, and grief, and care; still I cry unto thee, saying, Secure me, I beseech thee, and bring me into a place of safety; which as without thee I am not able to reach, so there my enemies may not be able to approach me.

Ver. 3. *For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.*] For in all my distresses hitherto, thou hast been pleased wonderfully to preserve me: I fled to thee, and was protected, as in an impregnable fortress, when Saul sought to destroy me.

Ver. 4. *I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever; I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.*] Which makes me hope thou wilt restore me again to the place where thou dwellest; and that I shall never be thus banished from it any more, but remain in safety under thy almighty protection, in which I will put my entire confidence.

Ver. 5. *For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.*] And since thou, O God, hast heard the prayers, which with these vows I made unto thee; and hast given me again the possession of that country, which is the inheritance of thy faithful people:

Ver. 6. *Thou wilt prolong the king's life; and his years as many generations.*] I doubt not but thou wilt grant their king a long and prosperous reign over them, and add so many years to those which his enemies would have cut off: as if thou hadst given him a new life, and added another age unto the former.

Ver. 7. *He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him.*] He shall sit upon his throne, and ever govern in the fear of God: O that thy goodness and faithfulness, which are a stronger guard than all his military forces, may be ever ready at hand to defend him!

Ver. 8. *So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.*] So will I perpetually sing psalms in praise of them; and learn thereby to be faithful to my promises: and day by day perform the vows which I made unto thee when I was in trouble.

PSALM LXII.

To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

There are no petitions at all in this Psalm, nor any thanksgivings, but only expressions of David's faith and confidence in God. Which (notwithstanding the straits he was in, as appears from ver. 3, 4.) grew greater and stronger, (compare ver. 2. with ver. 6.) and moved him to earnest exhortations of all other persons, never to trust in men; much less in those wicked arts of fraudulent dealing and robbery, whereby men are wont to advance themselves to great estates; hoping thereby to be so strong, that nobody dare meddle with them: but to place all their confidence in God alone, who can and will make those supports fail those that rely upon them, and bless the piety of such men as depend wholly upon him.

Which would make one think this Psalm was penned by him when he had overcome all the fears into which the rebellion of Absalom at first put him; but yet was not restored to his kingdom. Unto which when he returned, he committed this meditation to the master of the music, to be sung according to the tune to which Jeduthun, a famous artist, had set the thirty-ninth Psalm.

Ver. 1. *TRULY my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.*] Let the dangers be never so great which threaten my destruction, I am resolved quietly and patiently to submit myself to God; expecting what he will be pleased to do for me, who alone is able to deliver me.

Ver. 2. *He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.*] Be my enemies never so powerful, I doubt not by his providence to be safe; so secure, that though they give me some disturbance, they shall not be able to do it long, much less to throw me quite out of my throne.

Ver. 3. *How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence.*] I wonder at your obstinacy, who continue thus to contrive the ruin of a man, whom God hath so visibly declared that he favours: to what purpose are all your conspiracies, but only to bring sudden destruction upon yourselves? for you shall all perish in this enterprise, and fall to the ground, like a wall that is not evenly built; or like a partition made only of loose stones, that have no mortar to cement and hold them fast together.

Ver. 4. *They only consult to cast him down from his excellency; they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.*] It is plain what they design, and whither all their consultations tend; to dethrone him whom God hath been pleased to advance to the highest dignity: this they hope now to effect by lies and calumnies; in which they please themselves, as formerly they did in fawning and flattery: speaking fairly to me with their mouth, when in their heart they wished my utter ruin. (See Psal. lv. 21.)

Ver. 5. *My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.*] But let not this discourage thee, O my soul; resolve still to wait upon God with quietness and patience: for from him I expect my deliverance.

Ver. 6. *He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved.*] By his providence, as I said before, I doubt not I shall be so safe, so secure, that, do what they can, they shall not be able to take one step more to throw me out of my throne.

Ver. 7. *In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.*] Both my safety, and my honour, and dignity, depend upon God alone; and not upon their will and pleasure: and I trust not either in

fortresses or armies, but make him my confidence, on whom I rely for defence and protection against the strongest enemies.

Ver. 8. *Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.*] And so I would advise all my people to do continually, in whatsoever condition you be, repose a pious confidence in him: be not fearful, nor too solicitous; but commit yourselves to God by earnest prayer, and implore his help; for he will never fail us.

Ver. 9. *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.*] But do not place any confidence in man; for as the multitude are vain, giddy, and unconstant, so the greater sort are false, deceitful, and treacherous: take them altogether, they are no more to be depended on than the vainest thing in the world; which, thrown into the balance against them, will prove more solid and ponderous.

Ver. 10. *Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.*] And do not by any means, when all human helps may fail you, betake yourselves to frauds, cheating, and calumnies, for support; much less endeavour to enrich yourselves by rapine, spoil, and robbery. Be not so vain as to trust to ill-gotten goods; for if your riches increase by honest means, they are not things wherein to place either your confidence and hope, or your love and joy.

Ver. 11. *God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God.*] For God hath frequently declared, in the course of his providence, as well as in his word; I myself have been witness of it more than once; that by his power he disposes things quite otherways than men project; dashing all their worldly confidences in pieces, and especially defeating the hopes of those that think to prosper in evil courses.

Ver. 12. *Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.*] And that thou, O Lord, art also exceeding gracious to those that piously trust in thee; preserving and providing for them, when they are destitute of human succour: for thou art not an idle spectator of men's actions, nor acceptest any man's person; but an exact dispenser of rewards and punishments, to every man according to his work.

PSALM LXIII.

A Psalm of David, when he was in the Wilderness of Judah.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, the title informs us, represents the thoughts which David had when he was in the wilderness of Judah. But whether by that he meant the forest of Hareth, wherein, after other places, he secured himself when he fled from Saul; (1 Sam. xxii. 5.) or the wilderness he went through, when he fled from Absalom, (2 Sam. xvii. 29.) may be questioned. Theodoret takes it for the former; but I incline to the latter, for the same reason I gave before; because he calls himself a king, (ver. 11.) which he would not have done, as I said, (upon Psal. lxi.) during the reign of Saul; because it would have given him too just cause to persecute him; and made the people look upon him as a traitor. Unless we say that he did not publish this Psalm, but reserved it for his own private use, till he came to the kingdom. When he delivered it to the chief musician, for the service of the tabernacle: where he longed very much to be, when he was in his banishment. As appears by this Psalm; in which he expresses exceeding great love to God (as Theodoret notes), and predicts the destruction of his enemies.

Ver. 1. *O GOD, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.*] O God, the governor of the world, who hast ever been my gracious God, and art my only confidence; to thee I early direct my morning thoughts, most earnestly beseeching thee to take pity upon me, in this desolate condition: wherein I languish, and am ready to faint, as I travel through this dry and tiresome wilderness, (2 Sam. xvii. 29.) where there is no water to refresh me.

Ver. 2. *To see thy power, and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.*] It is not so much some satisfaction to my hunger and thirst that I desire, as to be restored again to worship thee before the ark of thy presence; (2 Sam. xv. 25.) which is the token of thy power and majesty residing among us: and there to enjoy thee, as I have done heretofore; when I had the liberty to go into thy sanctuary.

Ver. 3. *Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.*] My lips shall then praise thee with the same devotion that I now pray unto thee: for nothing is so dear unto me as thy favour and love; without which, life itself, and all the pleasures of my court, would be of little value.

Ver. 4. *Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.*] The greatest pleasure of my life shall be continually to bless thee for such a happy restoration; and with the most thankful acknowledgments for what thou hast done for me, to implore thy future kindness towards me.

Ver. 5. *My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips.*] My hungry appetite would not now receive greater satisfaction, if the best cheer in the world was presented to me; than my soul shall be filled withal in that sweet employment: when, with the highest expressions of joy, my mouth shall, with a loud voice, sing thy praises.

Ver. 6. *When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches.*] Meantime, I comfort myself with the hope of that happiness; calling to mind, as I lie upon my bed, and seriously considering, as oft as I awake, how gracious thou hast been unto me.

Ver. 7. *Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.*] From whence I conclude, that since thou hast relieved me in my greatest straits, I shall be safe under thy almighty protection; and at last triumph over all my enemies.

Ver. 8. *My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.*] Though thou seemest to cast me off, my soul notwithstanding cleaveth fast unto thee, and will not part with its hope in thee: and I feel the happy fruit of it; for by thy mighty aid I am supported and preserved from sinking under these sore calamities that have lain upon me.

Ver. 9. *But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.*] Which now shall fall upon those that endeavour to destroy me: who, seeking to take away my life, shall lose their own, (2 Sam. xviii. 7, 8, &c.)

Ver. 10. *They shall fall by the sword; they shall be a portion for foxes.*] They shall perish by the sword; and their carcasses have no other sepulchres but in the bowels of foxes, and other such-like ravenous creatures, who live as they do, by stealth and deceit.

Ver. 11. *But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.*] But I, their sovereign, shall be filled with joy; and so shall all pious men, who preserved their loyalty, and would by no means violate their oath, wherein they stood engaged to me: they shall triumph when my calumniators, (2 Sam. xv. 2, 3.) and all perfidious persons, shall be so silenced, that they shall not have a word to say for themselves.

PSALM LXIV.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

The enemy of whom David here complains, it is most probable, was Saul: whose hatred to him was very much heightened, and made more malignant, by the calumnies and false stories which were told of him by some ill men in his court: who were always plotting and contriving in their cabals (as we speak), how to compass his destruction (and found no means more effectual for that end than lies and calumnies); though, in truth, they were all that time (as he foretold) devising their own. In memory of which he delivered this Psalm, together with several other (which he made on the same subject), to the master of music, to be sung in the tabernacle.

Ver. 1. *HEAR my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.*] O God, the governor of all the world, who seest the danger I am in by a dreadful enemy; be thou my friend, I humbly beseech thee; and preserve the life of thy persecuted servant, who by earnest prayer commends himself unto thy custody.

Ver. 2. *Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity.*] Protect me from the secret plots, and the open violence of those wicked men who make a great stir against me, and unjustly seek my ruin.

Ver. 3. *Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words.*] Their tongue is their principal weapon; which they have in readiness (as soldiers have their swords) upon all occasions, to wound my reputation: calumnies and slanders, like so many poisoned arrows, are ever at their tongues' end:

Ver. 4. *That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.*] Which, when they are in private with Saul, they shoot at me; who never did him or them any wrong; but am perfectly guiltless of that which they charge me withal: yet I find these false accusations, which I never expected, spread abroad by those who have no fear of God to restrain them from doing mischief to their innocent neighbours.

Ver. 5. *They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?*] They use their utmost endeavours to make their calumnies be believed, and confirm one another in their resolved prosecution of their wicked design: which they consult how to effect, though it be by falsehood and treachery, or by wiles and crafty practices, so subtly contrived, that nobody, they hope, shall be able to discover them.

Ver. 6. *They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and their heart, is deep.*] They employ all their wit and diligence in these wicked devices; and leave nothing unattempted to produce the most exquisite and absolute piece of villany that can be invented by men of the deepest reach and policy.

Ver. 7. *But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.*] But all to no purpose; for, when they little think of it, they and all their projects shall perish, by a sudden stroke of the Divine vengeance.

Ver. 8. *So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.*] Their slanders shall reflect upon themselves; and their wicked counsels prove so pernicious to those that gave them, that they shall be forsaken even of their friends; and they that were wont to visit them, shall fly away from them.

Ver. 9. *And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God: for they shall wisely consider of his doing.*] And all other men shall be afraid to imitate them; not being able to deny the just vengeance of God, the judge of all, upon them: for they shall be convinced that it was not by chance, but by his counsel, that they were not only defeated, but ensnared in their own contrivances.

Ver. 10. *The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.*] Which shall both fill my heart, whom they unjustly maligned, with such joy in the Lord, as shall encourage me to commit myself unto him for ever in well-doing; and make all true lovers of piety triumph in the victory, which integrity and simplicity have gotten over falsehood and subtilty.

PSALM LXV.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm and Song of David.

ARGUMENT.

The latter part of this excellent Hymn of Praise (as the title calls it; see more, Psal. lxvii.) hath moved some judicious interpreters to think, that it was delivered by David to the master of music, after some great drought; which had brought, or threatened to bring, a dearth upon the land: and there are those who imagine it relates to the three years' famine after the rebellion of Absalom, (2 Sam. xxi.) which being removed by plentiful showers of rain, the Psalmist gives God public thanks in this Hymn for sending them seasonably to his people; whom he had formerly obliged by several other great benefits, as he doth all other nations; which David here first of all commemorates.

I can find nothing more probable than this. For as to the title which we find in the Vulgar Latin, out of some Greek copies, that it is *a Psalm sung by Jeremy and Ezekiel, with the people of the captivity, when they were about*

to go into, or come out of it (I know not well which they mean); there is no sense that I can see to be made of it. For Jeremiah was not carried captive, as Theodoret observes, but left at liberty to go whither he pleased; and Ezekiel was gone long before: nor are there any such words, as the same Theodoret notes, to be found either in the Hebrew, or in other interpreters; no, not in the LXX. which was in the Hexaplus. But somebody, who neither attended to the sense of the Psalm (as he passes his censure), nor understood the history, added this inscription. Yet he himself thinks it was spoken by them in captivity, when, far from their own land, they longed to sing God's praises; but could not do it publicly in Babylon; and therefore prayed God, in the words of this Hymn, to turn their captivity, and to bring them again to Zion; which I know not how to contradict: but seeing no proof of it, I shall not meddle with that sense in my Paraphrase.

Ver. 1. *PRAISE waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.*] It becomes us, O God, above all other people, to praise thee in thy sanctuary (though we cannot worthily express, but must rather silently adore, thy incomparable excellences), and to pay the vows which we made unto thee in the time of our distress.

Ver. 2. *O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.*] And more especially to magnify thy clemency in hearing my prayer, (2 Sam. xxi. 1.) which may invite all mankind, even those that are most miserable, to make their addresses unto thee.

Ver. 3. *Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.*] Nor need their sins discourage them; for thou hadst matter enough of that kind against me to have hindered the prevalency of my prayer, if thou hadst charged my iniquities upon me: but thou hast been graciously pleased to forgive not only me, but all thy people their transgressions, whereby they have provoked thee.

Ver. 4. *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.*] O how happy is the condition of a priest, or a Levite, whom thou hast chosen to minister before thee; and hath the privilege to be continually employed in thy service! Though we cannot all be so blessed, yet, such is thy goodness, we enjoy most sweet refreshments in thy house, when we offer our prayers and praises to thee; and taste of the sacrifices of thanksgiving, which we there present for the benefits we have received from thee.

Ver. 5. *By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea.*] Who hast done wonderful and astonishing things for us, out of thy mere mercy and bounty, when in our necessity we implored thy help, O God; who not only marvellously savest and deliverest us in this nation from destruction, but art the support and safeguard of all mankind in the remotest parts of the earth, or islands of the sea.

Ver. 6. *Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power.*] For God's power, which is ready at all times to execute his pleasure, is not inferior to his mercy; but hath settled the mountains in their places, and sustains their vast weight from sinking down into the earth.

Ver. 7. *Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.*] Against which, when the sea beats tempestuously, he composes and silences its swelling and roaring waves: as he doth, with the same ease, the rage and fury of the people, when, by the breath of unquiet, seditious spirits, they rise up tumultuously, and break out into rebellion.

Ver. 8. *They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.*] The most barbarous people, who live in the remotest corners of the earth, behold with wonder and amazement the heavenly bodies, which thou hast appointed for signs and tokens; (Gen. i. 14.) by the rising of the sun, the moon, and stars, in the morning and evening, thou fillest them with joy, as well as admiration.

Ver. 9. *Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.*] But we are more particularly bound unto thee; whose land, which was lately visited with drought, thou hast now refreshed and enriched with such liberal showers out of the clouds (which, like a vast river, are never exhausted), as have made it exceeding fruitful; for from thence thou hast ordained it should be constantly replenished.

Ver. 10. *Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; thou settlest the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft with showers; thou blessest the springing thereof.*] And, accordingly, when the ground is ploughed up, thou sendest abundance of rain upon its ridges, which settle the clods, and make them sink down upon the seed that is newly sown: and when the ground grows too hard, and hinders its sprouting forth, thou softenest and openest it with gentle showers, which bring up the blade; and that thy blessing makes to prosper and thrive, till it grow up into corn.

Ver. 11. *Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.*] Thus thy goodness hath made this a most plentiful year, and magnificently adorned it with variety of fruits: for thy clouds have wheeled about, and every where distilled a fattening juice into the earth.

Ver. 12. *They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness; and the little hills rejoice on every side.*] They have made green pastures even in desolate places; and the little hills, which before looked ruefully, appear now most beautiful; and have, as it were, put on the garments of joy and gladness.

Ver. 13. *The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.*] The pastures, which were bare before, are clothed now with flocks, as they are with grass; the fields also are so covered with corn, that the face of the earth cannot be seen: they keep a kind of festival, which hath filled us all with an universal mirth, and made us triumph in thy goodness.

PSALM LXVI.

To the chief Musician. A Song or Psalm.

ARGUMENT.

The Vulgar Latin here again (so little trust is to be given to it) hath an inscription, which, as Theodoret witnesses, is not to be found in other interpreters, no more than in the Hebrew; no, not in the Septuagint translation, which was in the famous Hexaplus. Nor can any good reason be given why they call it, *A Song-Psalm concerning the Resurrection;* unless thereby we understand the resurrection of the dry bones, of which Ezekiel prophesied, chap. xxxvii. which was the bringing the people in Babylon, where they seem to be buried, to their own land again, ver. 12. And so Theodoret himself takes it for a Psalm which David, by a prophetical spirit, composed for the people in captivity, not praying for their return (as he fancies they do in the Psalm foregoing), but upon their way home, and praising God for their liberty.

Certain it is this Psalm was made after a very remarkable deliverance from some sore calamity, under which the nation had groaned. And it not being said by whom it was penned, nor who the enemies were that oppressed them, it is generally thought not to be David's, whose name it doth not bear in the title, as the foregoing does; but to have been made by some holy man after, or in their return from, the forementioned captivity. But he that collected the Psalms contained in this second book, though he did not find David's name in the front of it; yet took him, I believe, to be the author both of this and of the next Psalm, as well as of the foregoing: otherwise he would not have placed them between those on both sides which certainly belong to him, when he intended, it appears by the conclusion of this book, (lxxii. 20.) to put together all the prayers that he had then met withal of David's. He that considers also that the seventy-first and seventy-second Psalms have not David's name in the title, and yet are generally thought to be of his composing, will not take the want of the usual inscription here to be a sufficient argument why we should seek for some other author of this Psalm.

Which was penned, I judge, after God had advanced David to the throne, and peaceably settled him in his kingdom. Till which time they had been in a very unsettled condition, not only during the rule of the judges (when, as he speaks here, ver. 12. many of their neighbours *rid over their heads*, or, as we now speak, domineered over them as they pleased), but also in the reign of Saul, when the Philistines were so powerful, that the Israelites durst not look them in the face, but hid themselves in caves, and thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits, (1 Sam. xiii. 6.) For they had disarmed them; so that when they came to fight, there was not a man had a sword or a spear but only Saul and Jonathan, (ver. 22.) And though they prevailed over the Philistines afterward in several battles, (chap. xiv. xvii.) yet they grew so strong again, that they penetrated into the country as far as Mount Gilboa, where Saul and his sons were slain; (chap. xxxi.) and the people thereupon were so dismayed, that they about Jordan forsook their cities, and the Philistines came and dwelt in them, (ver. 7.) To these things the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth verses of this Psalm may have respect. And then the freeing the country from that oppression, and forcing those insolent enemies to submit to David (ver. 3. where there is the same expression in substance with that which he uses, Psal. xviii. 45. after he had overcome all his enemies), may be the thing for which he here gives praise to God: exciting all the country to join with him in blessing his Divine Majesty; not only for this, but for former deliverances he had vouchsafed to that nation. Which he would have acknowledged with their most cheerful thanksgivings, (which may be the meaning of a *Song-Psalm*, see lxvii.) especially in the public service of God at the tabernacle. Into which he promises to go, ver. 13. 14. (a sign the Psalm was not made at their coming out of Babylon, when there was no house to go unto) and pay his vows, which he had made before these victories. But at their return from Babylon it is likely they might use this Psalm, and apply it to that purpose, going to the place where the house of God formerly stood.

Ver. 1. *MAKE a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands.*] Let all the people of this land shout aloud, and triumph in the liberty which God hath restored unto us.

Ver. 2. *Sing forth the honour of his name; make his praise glorious.*] Sing psalms in honour of his most glorious majesty; and do not merely praise him, but do it in the most splendid manner: and place your principal glory in this, that you have the honour to sing his praises.

Ver. 3. *Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.*] Saying, O God, thy stupendous works fill us with wonder and amazement; but we are not able to express the greatness of them: they strike terror into the hearts of thy enemies, who, feeling the dreadful effects of thy power, dare not oppose thee any longer, but, dissembling their hostility, shall come and offer thee their service, (2 Sam. viii. 1.)

Ver. 4. *All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah.*] For which be thou adored by all the inhabitants of this country: let them all sing joyful hymns unto thee; let them sing the praise of thy power, which hath thus daunted our enemies, and delivered us.

Ver. 5. *Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing towards the children of men.*] Approach, I beseech you, and attentively consider what our God hath done, and then I need not exhort you to praise his name: for the works and counsels of his providence over all mankind are very astonishing.

Ver. 6. *He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot; there did we rejoice in him.*] Especially over us, for whose fathers, to their unspeakable joy, (Exod. xv.) he opened a passage through the Red Sea, when they were so shut up between that before, and the army of Pharaoh behind, that there was no way left for their escape, (Exod. xiv. 16.) And also led them dryshod through the river Jordan, when it was so full of water, that it overflowed its banks, (Josh. iii. 15—17.) which created a new joy in the hearts of our nation.

Ver. 7. *He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold*

the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.] And it ought to continue still in succeeding ages, since the same Divine Power which did those wonders governs the world throughout all generations: he sees and observes the motions of all nations, who may learn, by the Egyptians and Canaanites, that they, who contemn his authority, in vain endeavour to exalt themselves to greater eminence; for they shall certainly be abased.

Ver. 8. *O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard.*] We have reason to say, that he is our God, and takes care of us, as well as of those before us; and therefore let all the tribes of Israel agree together to bless him, and proclaim his praises; that it may be for ever known how good he is, and how grateful they are.

Ver. 9. *Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.*] For he hath wonderfully preserved us from perishing in our affliction: and not suffered our enemies to pursue their advantages to our utter overthrow and ruin.

Ver. 10. *For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.*] Thou hast proved our constancy, indeed, O God, by most severe chastisements; and as a refiner tries his silver by throwing it into the fire, so thou hast dealt with us as well as with our forefathers; whose labours in the iron furnace of Egypt we have been forced to imitate under our oppressors.

Ver. 11. *Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidest affliction upon our loins.*] Our enemies have pursued us, and brought us (like to wild beasts taken by the hunter) into most grievous straits, (1 Sam. xiii. 6.) They have used us like beasts of burden, and laid sore loads upon us; which they have fast bound upon our backs, (ver. 19, 20.)

Ver. 12. *Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.*] Thou hast made us slaves to the vilest of men, who exercise the most insolent tyranny over us: we have endured variety of the sorest miseries; and yet, such is thy goodness, thou hast carried us through them all; and at last brought us into a state of perfect liberty, ease, and plenteous prosperity.

Ver. 13. *I will go into thy house with burnt-offerings; I will pay thee my vows.*] I will go therefore into thy house, and give a good example to all my people: for I will not present myself before thee with empty praises; but acknowledge thy benefits with burnt-offerings, and faithfully discharge the vows wherein I stand engaged.

Ver. 14. *Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.*] Which I was not more forward to make with open mouth when I was in distress, than I will be to perform with all solemnity now that thou hast graciously delivered me out of it.

Ver. 15. *I will offer unto thee burnt-sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams: I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.*] For as I will not come empty into thy house; so I will not bring thee a niggardly present: but offer sacrifices of all sorts; and the best and choicest in every kind.

Ver. 16. *Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.*] And together therewith I will make a thankful commemoration of his loving-kindness (which is the most acceptable sacrifice), and let all pious men know (O that they would come and hearken to me while I relate!) how good God hath been unto me.

Ver. 17. *I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.*] For the ardent prayers which I made unto him, in a very low condition, are now turned into the highest praises of his powerful goodness; whereby I am advanced unto a throne.

Ver. 18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.*] Which hath brought along with it a testimony of my sincerity; far more valuable than my kingdom: for if I had been guilty of any such crimes, or entertained so much as a thought of them, as my enemies charged me withal; the Lord, who hates iniquity, would have denied me my request.

Ver. 19. *But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.*] Which now sure you all see he hath graciously granted; and thereby cleared my innocence from all the aspersions that were cast upon me.

Ver. 20. *Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.*] To the praise of God's infinite goodness be it spoken (not of my own righteousness), who did not reject my prayer; but vouchsafed me the mercy which I desired.

PSALM LXVII.

To the chief Musician upon Neginoth. A Psalm or Song.

ARGUMENT.

This excellent Psalm, all agree, hath the same author with the former; which I have made it probable (see Psal. lxvi.) was composed by David; who, being settled in his throne after miserable confusions, and having brought the ark to Jerusalem, and offered burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, (as he promised in the Psalm foregoing, ver. 15.) blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts; (2 Sam. vi. 17, 18.) pronounced, that is, this Psalm (as I conjecture), wherein he manifestly imitates that form of blessing, which the priests were appointed to use on solemn occasions; (as you may read Numb. vi. 23—25.) beseeching God to continue his favour to them, and to make them such an example of his loving-kindness, that it might invite all nations, to whom the fame of it should come, to submit themselves unto his government.

It is no argument against this, to say, that he doth not bless them here in the name of the Lord; which is used in the blessing which Moses taught them. For it is certain he alludes, in the beginning of the next Psalm, to the form of prayer used at the setting forward of the ark, (Numb. x. 35.) and yet there also he uses the word *Elohim* instead of *Jehovah*, as he doth in this Psalm; which he delivered afterward to the master of music, to be sung as the fourth Psalm.

But what difference there is between a *Song-Psalm* and a *Psalm-Song* (in which the titles of the fifty-fifth and of this and the next differ from the foregoing, as the title of the thirtieth doth from the forty-eighth), I am not able certainly to resolve. For some think that a *Psalm-Song*, or *Psalm of a Song*, began with voices, the musical instruments following after; and a *Song-Psalm*, or *Song of a Psalm*, began with instruments, the voices following after: others give a quite contrary account; for, taking a *Psalm* to be properly the sound of instruments (whereof there were six or seven sorts), and a *Song* to be the voice of singers; they will have a *Psalm-Song* to be that where,

the sound of instruments preceding, the singing voices followed; and a *Song-Psalm* that where, the voices preceding, the instrumental music followed. But Kimchi ingenuously confesses, in his preface to the Book of Psalms, that their nation can give no account of such-like things, which we meet with in the title of the Psalms.

Ver. 1. *GOD be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us. Selah.*] Be gracious unto us, O God, and complete the happiness which thy almighty goodness hath begun to bestow upon us; let us not fall again into those dismal calamities, out of which thou hast delivered us; but declare thou lovest us, by continuing thy gracious presence with us.

Ver. 2. *That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.*] That the fame of thy wonderful providence over us, and of the deliverances thou workest for us, being spread not only here in this country, but throughout all other nations; they may be moved thereby to acknowledge and worship thee as the only God.

Ver. 3. *Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.*] O that we might see that happy day; O that the people would confess and praise thee, O God; that all the people every where, with one consent, would confess and praise thee.

Ver. 4. *O let the nations be glad, and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.*] O that the nations were so sensible what a happiness it is to be under thy care, that they might rejoice and shout for joy, to know that thou art the governor of the world! who by thy power oppressest none, but distributest equal justice unto all; and graciously providest for the welfare of those who become thy subjects, and commit themselves unto thy conduct.

Ver. 5. *Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.*] We cannot often enough wish to see them so happy; but must again and again repeat our desires, that the people would confess thee, O God, to be the Lord of all: that all the people every where would, with one consent, celebrate thee with their praises, and confess that thou alone canst make them happy.

Ver. 6. *Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.*] As thou dost us, whose land of late hath been so exceeding fruitful, (2 Sam. vi. 19.) that we may look upon it as an earnest of future blessings: which may it please our good God, whose people we are by peculiar covenant, to multiply upon us.

Ver. 7. *God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.*] With this prayer let us conclude as we began, that God would be pleased still to pour down his benefits upon us: that so the people, who live in the remotest parts of the earth, may all devoutly worship and serve him.

PSALM LXVIII.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm or Song of David.

ARGUMENT.

David having brought the ark to Jerusalem with a great deal of joy and triumph, (2 Sam. vi.) after it had been long neglected in the reign of Saul, (1 Chron. xiii. 3.) which was one cause, it is like, that he had no better success against his foreign enemies; hoped God would be more propitious to him, according to the prayer he had made in the foregoing Psalm. For now he had (to repair that negligence of Saul) not only brought the ark near to his own palace, in the chief city of the kingdom, but prepared a noble place for its reception, (2 Sam. vi. 16. 2 Chron. i. 4.) which it had been a long time without. For ever since its falling into the hands of the Philistines, (1 Sam. iv. 11.) it had been separated from the tabernacle of the congregation built for it by Moses, which was God's habitation or dwelling-place; and after the destruction of Shiloh was removed to Nob, (1 Sam. xxi. 1.) and from thence, after Doeg had slain the priests, to Gibeon, where it remained till the building of Solomon's temple. All which time, it is manifest, it had no ark of God's presence in it, for that was in Kirjath-jearim, (1 Sam. vii. 1.) from whence David fetched it (1 Chron. xiii. 5.) to Mount Zion; where he having made a tabernacle for its entertainment, the Lord God might be said (as we render it, ver. 18. of this Psalm) to *dwell among them*, with an intention not to remove from thence (as the ark had done before) to any other mountain, (ver. 16.) And, indeed, here he dwelt more magnificently than he had done before, and was more royally attended and solemnly served; David appointing, a little before he died, (as he had begun to do before, 1 Chron. xvi.) the priests and Levites, in their courses, constantly to wait upon him, with songs and instruments of music; and settling all other officers belonging to a house, and suitable to the greatness of the majesty that dwelt there, (1 Chron. xxiii.—xxvi.)

Which honour being done to God, he hoped, as I said, that God would favour him in his enterprises better than he had done Saul, who took care of no such matters. And being shortly to engage some potent enemies, (2 Sam. viii.) he earnestly begs the presence of God with him (of which the ark was a token) in this excellent Psalm. And he begs in that very form of words, (ver. 1.) which Moses had directed the priests to use every time that they took up the ark, to set forward in their march to the land of Canaan, (Numb. x. 35.) Upon which occasion he calls to mind what wonders God had done for them in leading them by the ark of his presence through the wilderness into their good land. Where he hoped he would establish and settle his people, now that he had, in so pompous and triumphant a manner, ascended into the high hill of Zion, (out of which David had expelled the Jebusites, 2 Sam. v. 6.) and, by his special direction and conduct, already given them such great victories over the Philistines, their mortal enemies, (2 Sam. v. 19. 23.) that it was an emblem of the far more glorious ascension of the Lord Christ, after he had overcome death itself, the last and greatest enemy of mankind, into the highest heavens. Of the title of the Psalm, see lxvii.

Ver. 1. *LET God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him.*] O that God, who by his powerful presence conducted his people, in spite of all opposers, into this land, (Numb. x. 35.) would now graciously appear to disperse and put to flight those numerous armies, which, out of mere hatred to him, come to dispossess us of it.

Ver. 2. *As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.*] They are no more able to stand before him, than the smoke (whatsoever show it makes) is to stand before the wind; or the wax (how firm soever it seem) before the fire; but shall be dispelled, and melt away, like those feeble things: just so shall those wicked people perish, if God will be pleased to manifest himself to be among us.

Ver. 3. *But let the righteous be glad: let them rejoice before God; yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.*] Which shall fill the hearts of all his faithful servants with joy and gladness: they shall leap for joy before him, (as I lately did when I brought up the ark unto Mount Zion, 2 Sam. vi. 14. 16.) and be so extraordinarily transported, that they shall not find words enough to express the joy they have in his gracious presence with them.

Ver. 4. *Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name Jah, and rejoice before him.*] O begin your cheerful hymns unto his majesty; sing the praise of his powerful goodness, and of all the rest of his glorious attributes, whereby he is known to you: magnify him, and prepare a triumphal pomp for him, who turns about even the highest heavens, and rules them at his pleasure: O rejoice exceedingly before him, who hath plainly shewn, by what he hath lately done, that he is the eternal, unchangeable God, who faithfully keeps his promises for ever.

Ver. 5. *A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.*] The poorest and meanest persons on earth need not doubt of his patronage; for though he be higher than the highest heavens, yet he hath taken up his dwelling among us; that the fatherless and widows, when they have no helper, may fly unto his fatherly care, and appeal to him as their righteous judge, to redress the wrongs that are done unto them.

Ver. 6. *God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains; but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.*] God provides for those who are utterly destitute, and settles them in comfortable habitations: he unties the chains of captives, and gives them a happy deliverance; but brings rebellious oppressors into that want and scarcity whereunto they have reduced others.

Ver. 7. *O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah.*] A famous instance of which we saw at our coming out of Egypt; when thou, O God, wentest before thy people, night and day, in a pillar of cloud and fire, (Exod. xiii. 21.) and conductedst them, as their captain, through a barren and dangerous wilderness.

Ver. 8. *The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.*] The earth trembled, yea, the heavens dissolved into thunder, lightning, and rain, (Exod. xix. 16.) when the Divine Majesty descended upon Mount Sinai; the mountain itself quaked (ver. 18.) before his glorious majesty, who is still present with his people Israel.

Ver. 9. *Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary.*] For whom, O God, thou didst miraculously provide, by sending them liberal showers in those dry and desert places; and, having chosen them for thy own peculiar people, didst rain down bread from heaven, (Exod. xvi. 4.) to refresh and strengthen them when they were faint and weary.

Ver. 10. *Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.*] A vast congregation of people, with their flocks and their herds, found a convenient habitation in that wilderness, by thy bounty, O God; who didst furnish those who were in danger to starve, with all things necessary for them.

Ver. 11. *The Lord gave the word; great was the company of those that published it.*] Yea, the Lord made them so victorious over all those who opposed them, that they still returned from the battle with songs of triumph in their mouths; and a great army of women met them, (according to the custom, Exod. xv. 23, &c.) to join with them in publishing his praises; saying,

Ver. 12. *Kings of armies did flee apace; and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.*] The kings and captains of those hosts who thought to have destroyed us were put to flight, (Exod. xvii. Numb. xxi. 2, 3, &c.) They fled away in haste, and left their spoil behind them, to be divided among us, that were too weak to go into the field, (Numb. xxxi. 8. 11. Judg. viii. 21. 26.)

Ver. 13. *Though ye have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.*] But we welcome home our victorious countrymen with this encouragement, that though you have endured great hardships in Egypt, where you looked not like valiant soldiers, but rather like vile scullions besmutted among kettles and pots, you shall hereafter appear most beautiful and splendid, and the wings of your armies shall shine like those of a dove, when they glisten as if they were covered with silver and gold.

Ver. 14. *When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon.*] And their word was fulfilled at our entrance into Canaan; when, by scattering all their kings, the Almighty appeared most illustrious as Salmon, and gave us possession of the country on this side Jordan.

Ver. 15. *The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan; a high hill, as the hill of Bashan.*] As, on the other side of it, he subdued the country of Og king of Bashan, (Numb. xxi. 33, &c.) which hill became the hill of God; the hill with so many fertile risings, the famous hill of Bashan, became part of his inheritance.

Ver. 16. *Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in, yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever.*] But do not grow proud of this, ye lofty mountains; for neither the height of Salmon, nor of Bashan, shall invite him there to make his habitation; Zion is the hill which he hath chosen to honour with that favour; yea, there the Lord hath resolved to fix his tabernacle, and never (till the Messiah come) to remove to any other.

Ver. 17. *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.*] Nor let the heathen brag of the multitude of their chariots, wherein consists their strength; for in Zion there are ten thousand times more innumerable hosts of angels attending upon the Divine Majesty; who is with them there, as he was upon Mount Sinai, which now is in the sanctuary.

Ver. 18. *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for*

the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.] Thou hast declared as much, O God: who art gone up thither, and hast highly exalted thyself by illustrious victories; which through their invisible ministry thou hast given us over our enemies (as the Messiah, who shall be thy sanctuary, will do far more magnificently, when, after the conquest of death, &c. he shall ascend in a bright chariot, Acts i. 9. attended with the heavenly hosts, into the highest heavens, to be exalted at thy right hand), whom by thy aid we have carried away captive, and their spoils together with them, to be distributed among thy people (an emblem of the rich gifts the Messiah shall bestow upon us, and distribute among us, after his ascension); yea, the rebellious opposers of thee in other nations shall become proselytes to dwell with thee, O Lord God, and worship at thy sanctuary (as the gentile world shall, by that effusion of Divine gifts, submit themselves to the Messiah, the Lord God of all the world).

Ver. 19. *Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah.*] Blessed be the Lord, who day by day exercises as tender and careful a providence over us, as a mother over her children: (Isa. xlvi. 3.) that mighty God be blessed, to whom we owe all our deliverances.

Ver. 20. *He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues of death.*] And they are very great and very many, which it is not in the power of any other god to bestow, but of him alone that dwells in Zion; who, as the author of all men's being, and their supreme Lord and governor, disposes of their lives, and assigns them what passages he pleases out of the world.

Ver. 21. *But God shall wound the head of his enemies; and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses.*] And certainly God, the righteous judge, will now break in pieces all those enemies that lift up their heads so high, in hope to destroy us: their fierce captain, (2 Sam. viii. 3.) whose shaggy hair makes him look very terribly, shall not escape, if he go on still presumptuously to offend thee.

Ver. 22. *The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan; I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea.*] Thus the Lord hath determined within himself, saying, I will renew the wonders I wrought in former times; and make my people as victorious over all these mighty armies, as they were over Og the king of Bashan, (Numb. xxi.) and over Pharaoh, when they marched through the Red Sea. (Exod. xv.)

Ver. 23. *That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same.*] The victory shall be so complete, and such a slaughter made, that thou mayest wade, and thy dogs put their tongues, in the blood that shall flow from those enemies, and from him that leads them.

Ver. 24. *They have seen thy goings, O God; even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.*] For thy people, O God, have seen to their joy, and thy enemies to their terror, what a solemn entrance thou madest (by the ark of thy presence), with what pomp thou, my mighty God, and my King, wast brought into the sanctuary, (2 Sam. vi. 13. 15, 16.)

Ver. 25. *The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; amongst them were the damsels playing with timbrels.*] Part of the Levites went singing before, and the rest with musical instruments followed after; (1 Chron. xv. 16. 28.) and, to complete the melody, the damsels playing with timbrels came between them both.

Ver. 26. *Bless ye God in the congregations, even the Lord, from the fountain of Israel.*] And as they went along, they sang this song; O bless your good God, in all your assemblies: bless the Lord, all ye that are the offspring of Israel.

Ver. 27. *There is little Benjamin with their ruler, the princes of Judah and their council, the princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali.*] Who were universally assembled to accompany that pomp; (1 Chron. xiii. 5. xv. 3.) for not only the nearest tribes were there, *viz.* Benjamin, little indeed in number, (Judg. xxi. 6.) but from whom the first king of Israel came; and the princes of the tribe of Judah, the great support and prop of the kingdom: but the princes also of those which were most remote, as Zebulun and Naphtali, came to attend at that solemnity.

Ver. 28. *Thy God hath commanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.*] This happy union, thy God, O Israel, hath brought about; and thereby made thee strong and formidable to thy enemies: and may it please thee, O God, to continue and confirm it; for as it is begun, so it must be perfected by thee alone.

Ver. 29. *Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee.*] Pour down thy blessings upon Jerusalem out of thy sanctuary, (1 Sam. i. 9. iii. 3.) which now thou hast settled there: and so shall heathen kings bring presents, (2 Sam. viii. 9—11.) in token of their subjection to thee.

Ver. 30. *Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, till every one submit himself with pieces of silver: scatter thou the people that delight in war.*] Destroy that fierce prince, (2 Sam. viii. 3.) who like a wild beast of the forest comes against us; with a great number of captains as furious as bulls; and of soldiers as insolent as young heifers: who prances in arms plated with silver, and, unprovoked by us, makes war upon us merely to satisfy his vain ambition, or desire of wealth; scatter, good Lord, all such people as have no better reason for the blood they delight to shed.

Ver. 31. *Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.*] Which shall invite even the Egyptians to send princely ambassadors to Jerusalem: and the neighbouring countries also (1 Kings iv. 21.) shall make haste to stretch out their hands unto the Divine Majesty, in oblations and prayers (which the most idolatrous nations in the world shall, in abundance, offer unto the Lord Christ, when he reigns).

Ver. 32. *Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord. Selah.*] Nothing shall conduce so much to their happiness: and therefore, O ye kingdoms of the earth, both far and near, sing joyful songs unto God; set forth the praises of the great Lord of all the world with hymns and psalms.

Ver. 33. *To him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens which were of old, lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice.*] Whose empire is the most ancient of all other, and extends beyond the highest heavens: hearken when it thunders, and consider how terrible his majesty is; for that is his voice, which makes the mightiest men on earth to tremble.

Ver. 34. *Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds.*] I would advise you all to acknowledge his Divine power, by hearty submission to him; whose care over Israel as plainly appears in many magnificent works, as thunder declares his strength in the clouds.

Ver. 35. *O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power to his people. Blessed be God.*] O God, thy dreadful majesty is to be most humbly adored, who striketh terror into thy enemies, both out of thy sanctuary here in Zion, and out of thy sanctuary in heaven: but art most gracious to thy people, whom, as thy peculiar portion, thou enduedst with mighty strength and invincible courage. Blessed be God for his goodness to us.

PSALM LXIX.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, the title assures us, was composed by David; and the matter of it sufficiently declares, that he was in extreme great danger when it was penned. I should suppose it might have been about that time, when he concluded, that he should one day perish by the hand of Saul, (1 Sam. xxvii. 1.) were it not for what we read here, ver. 35. of this Psalm, concerning God's love to Zion: which was not then in the possession of the Israelites. And therefore it must rather be indited when he was persecuted by his rebellious son Absalom: who pressed him so sorely, and reduced him to such lamentable straits, that, as he feared he should never be able to extricate himself; so he could find no words high enough to express the agonies into which they cast him. But this is not so considerable a difficulty, as to be sufficient to incline those who read the whole Psalm seriously, to conclude that it hath no reference to Saul's persecution: unto which some passages in it seem more plainly to belong than to the other. And therefore I suppose he only reviewed it, (see Psal. lxx.) and added the thirty-fifth verse, in the rebellion of Absalom: which was likewise so grievous and dangerous, that he could find no words fitter to represent his sad condition, than those he had formerly used in the like distress. And some of the expressions, it is manifest, are such as were not literally fulfilled in him, in either of those afflictions, but in our Saviour Christ: of whom David was a figure; both in his sufferings, and in his advancement after them to a kingdom. There is no mystery, I suppose, in the word *Shoshannim* (as some of the Jews fancy), but it only denotes that the master of the music was to take care this Psalm should be sung as the forty-fifth: to which I refer you for an account of this word.

Why Theodoret should think this Psalm was made without respect to David, for the Jews in the captivity of Babylon, praying for deliverance out of that servitude, I cannot imagine. But what he adds concerning our Saviour's sufferings, which are here foretold, together with the utter overthrow of the Jewish nation, who were the authors of them, is very considerable. For because, saith he, they were so audaciously wicked, as to do that to their benefactor and Saviour, which they had suffered from their spiteful enemies; God the righteous judge condemned them to suffer that themselves, which they prayed might fall on the heads of those enemies.

Ver. 1. *SAVE me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul.*] O most mighty God, in whom alone I hope for safety; deliver me, I beseech thee, out of this miserable condition; wherein I am overwhelmed with so many calamities, that my life is in extreme danger, unless thou mercifully preserve it.

Ver. 2. *I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.*] There is no hope otherways, that I should escape: for I am like a man that sinks deeper and deeper into the mud, and can find no bottom; or that is fallen into the very deepest place in a river; and carried away out of the reach of human help, by the violence of the stream.

Ver. 3. *I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.*] I have long also implored thy help, with most earnest prayers; even till I am tired with my crying: I can now scarce speak a word, nor lift up my eyes towards heaven, from whence, with great intention of mind, I have expected some relief; but cannot yet obtain it of my God, who hath been formerly most gracious to me.

Ver. 4. *They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty; then I restored that which I took not away.*] No, rather my enemies are grown more formidable, both for their number, which exceeds the hairs of my head, and for their power, which enables them to destroy me: to which they want no will, having conceived an implacable, but undeserved, hatred to me. Who have been so far from provoking their malice, that I am content, rather than quarrel with them, to part with my own right; and make them satisfaction for a wrong that I never did them.

Ver. 5. *O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee.*] O God, the righteous judge, I make my appeal to thee, who knowest the very worst of me: and protest, that whatsoever my mistakes or my wilful sins have been, which cannot escape thy sight, I never did them any injury, nor gave them cause to persecute me.

Ver. 6. *Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake; let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.*] Which will move thee, I hope, to take some compassion on me; for it will extremely dishearten all pious men, if thou sufferest innocence to be thus ruined: for their sakes, as well as for mine, be pleased to relieve me: O let not those that rely alone on thee, O Lord, the mighty God, who commandedst all the powers in heaven and earth, hang down their heads for shame, to see me deserted by thee: let not those, O God (who hast engaged thyself unto us by a gracious covenant), that commend themselves to thee in well-doing, be confounded; as they will, if they see me forsaken by thee.

Ver. 7. *Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.*] For it is upon thy account (merely because I adhere to thee, and will use no unlawful means to right myself, 1 Sam. xxiv. 10, &c.) that I have thus long suffered so many reproaches and abuses, as have made me extremely contemptible.

Ver. 8. *I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.*] Not only to those that do not know me, but to my cousins and familiars; nay, to those who lay in the same womb with me: who behave themselves towards me as if I were a perfect stranger; or a man of another country and religion.

Ver. 9. *For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.*] Whereas thou knowest, it was nothing but my ardent zeal for thy honour and service (not any childish ambition) which made me hazard my life for them; and was the first occasion of this hatred they bear me, (1 Sam. xviii. 6—8. as it will be of the death of the Messiah, John ii. 17.) I could not endure the blasphemies which I heard against thee, but they moved my indignation (as they will do his, Rom. xv. 3.) as much as if they had been against myself, (1 Sam. xvii. 10. 26. 45.)

Ver. 10. *When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.*] These things grieved me exceedingly; and it hath cost me many a tear, while I humbled my soul with fasting, to bewail their impiety, and the dishonour that was done thee: but they took occasion from thence only to despise me; and to load me with greater reproaches, either of weakness or of hypocrisy.

Ver. 11. *I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them.*] And still the more sorrowfully I debased myself, wearing sackcloth in token of my heaviness, the more I was scorned and derided; and it was the common saying (when they would express their utmost hatred or contempt of any man), I value him no more than I do David.

Ver. 12. *They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards.*] This is the language even of the grave senators, and judges of the land, who ought in reason rather to have vindicated my innocence, (Gen. xxiii. 10. 18. xxxiv. 20. Ruth iv. 1. Prov. xxii. 22.) as well as of the idle and dissolute companions, who, in their drunken meetings, make abusive songs and libels on me.

Ver. 13. *But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O Lord, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.*] While I in the mean time do nothing but only commend myself with the greater earnestness unto thee, O Lord; who, now that I am so despicable, wilt think it, I hope, the fittest time to be favourable to me: hear my prayer, O God, I beseech thee, and thereby magnify thy abundant mercy, and thy faithfulness, in such a seasonable deliverance of me.

Ver. 14. *Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.*] For I am in extreme great danger of perishing in this distress, unless thou interpose (as I most humbly again beseech thee that thou wilt, ver. 1, 2.) for my deliverance: O leave me not in this miserable condition into which I am plunged; but deliver me from my bitter enemies, and all the troubles and difficulties wherein they have involved me.

Ver. 15. *Let not the water-flood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.*] Which are great and many, and extremely dangerous; enough to make me despair of safety, did I not depend on thee; that thou wilt not suffer me to be carried away, overwhelmed, and buried in this heap of calamities which oppress me so sorely, that I am ready to sink under the weight of them.

Ver. 16. *Hear me, O Lord; for thy loving-kindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.*] Do not fail my expectation, O Lord, whose loving-kindness, as it is the only comfort I have, so it gives me abundant consolation: for it is prone to pity and relieve those that are distressed; and will incline thee, I hope, to look now favourably upon me, as thou hast done, many and many a time, with most compassionate mercy towards me.

Ver. 17. *And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily.*] Who, as despicable as I am, yet am thy servant; and upon that score claim the patronage of my most gracious Lord and Master: O disown me not, especially now that I am in such helpless straits; but rather make the greater haste to relieve me.

Ver. 18. *Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me, because of mine enemies.*] For nothing less than my life (which is in imminent danger) will satisfy the rage and hatred of my enemies: therefore interpose thy power for my rescue, and let not them have the pleasure (which will make them still more insolent) to see me ruined.

Ver. 19. *Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee.*] Thou art perfectly acquainted with the reproaches, the shameful and contumelious abuses of all sorts, which I have suffered; and must still (without thy seasonable deliverance) endure from my cruel enemies: none of whom, nor of their secret plots, and subtle lies, whereby they seek to defame and undo me, are hidden from thy all-seeing eyes.

Ver. 20. *Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.*] Which behold likewise, what an intolerable burden it is to me to be thus loaded with reproaches, and to have no means to clear myself from their false imputations: it even breaks my heart, and I am oppressed with heaviness, looking still for some help to arrive; but, alas! I cannot meet with so much as the comfort of any body to condole with me.

Ver. 21. *They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.*] Instead of that, they exasperated my grief; and because I was so miserable, reproached me the more bitterly: just as if, when a man is hungry, one should give him gall to eat; or when he is thirsty, they should give him (as they really will do to Christ, John xix.) vinegar to drink.

Ver. 22. *Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.*] Which barbarous usage shall meet with a suitable vengeance; for they shall have no friends neither: but they that eat of their meat shall betray them, and their prosperity shall prove their ruin. (This shall be the recompence of those that abuse the Messiah, as now they do me, Rom. xi. 9.)

Ver. 23. *Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.*] They shall be deprived of all judgment, and not be able to see the evils that are coming on them; or if they do, let them not be able, O Lord, to prevent them; but make their councils uncertain, and let them have no power to execute any good design for their preservation.

Ver. 24. *Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.*] Pour out on a sudden so many evils upon them, that they may not be able to escape; but feel they suffer the most dismal effects of thy severest and lasting displeasure against them.

Ver. 25. *Let their habitation be desolate, and let none dwell in their tents.*] Let their most magnificent structures be laid waste; and root them out so entirely, that there may not be a man left to dwell in their poorest cottages, (Matt. xxiii. 38. Acts i. 20.)

Ver. 26. *For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded.*] For they had no pity upon the miserable; but instead of comforting him, when they saw him afflicted by thee, they took that opportunity to insult over him, and oppress him: nay, made a pastime of his calamity; and added to all his other suffering, their scoffs and jeers, their lies and calumnies, or at least their uncharitable censures of him.

Ver. 27. *Add iniquity to their iniquity; and let them not come into thy righteousness.*] Let such obstinate offenders be quite deserted by thee; and by thy just judgment be suffered to go on to complete their iniquity, and never obtain any mercy from thee.

Ver. 28. *Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.*] Let them be cut off before their time, in the midst of their jollity; and let them enjoy none of the blessings which thou hast promised to the righteous.

Ver. 29. *But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.*] But let me, O God, who now am despised and dejected, be graciously delivered by thee, and raised above the contempt or power of such men to depress me.

Ver. 30. *I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.*] And I will not be unmindful of the benefit, but praise thy power and goodness in joyful hymns; and acknowledge how great they are, in thankful commemorations of them.

Ver. 31. *This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.*] Which will be, I know, more acceptable sacrifices to the Lord, than if I should bring him a whole ox, when he is young and in his prime, and offer him at his altar.

Ver. 32. *The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.*] For other pious men, reading in my songs the goodness of the Lord, will be filled with joyful hopes, when they fall into such-like troubles as I am in: they will think they hear me saying to them, Do not despond, but be of good comfort, whosoever you are that seek God, and faithfully depend upon him.

Ver. 33. *For the Lord heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.*] For the Lord, you see, doth not fail to relieve the afflicted and helpless men, when they cry unto him, and rely on him alone: but owns them for his servants, when they are no better than slaves; by delivering them from their hard and cruel bondage.

Ver. 34. *Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein.*] Let the whole world therefore join together, to celebrate him with their highest praises: for one tongue is not sufficient to proclaim his most excellent goodness, and to thank him for all his benefits.

Ver. 35. *For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah; that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.*] Which shall be continued towards Zion; for God will preserve it from being destroyed in these tumults: and will repair the ruins of the other cities of Judah; that his people may dwell quietly, and not be disturbed in their possessions.

Ver. 36. *The seed also of his servants shall inherit it; and they that love his name shall dwell therein.*] And their posterity also may hereafter inherit it; provided they faithfully serve him, and heartily love him and his religion: for then they shall dwell securely in Zion; and offer the continual sacrifice of praise unto him.

PSALM LXX.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David, to bring to Remembrance.

ARGUMENT.

It is not easy to determine, whether this Psalm was only separated from the fortieth (whereof, for the main, it is a part), that it might serve those who are in any distress, as a short form recommending themselves and their condition to God; or that David in some new danger (probably that into which he fell by Absalom's conspiracy, as Theodoret thinks) took a review of what he had there said, and, with some small alterations, composed this as a distinct prayer, to be used by him constantly, during the time of that sharp affliction. I incline to this latter, because there is some difference (though not very much, in the fourth verse) between every verse of this Psalm and those in the latter end of the fortieth, from which it is taken; just as there is between the fifty-third and the fourteenth. See what I have said there; and in the title of the thirty-eighth Psalm, you will find why this is called, *A Psalm to bring to Remembrance.*

Ver. 1. *MAKE haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O Lord.*] O God, the judge of the world, thou seest the danger I am in is so exceeding great, that I am undone without thy speedy relief: which I beseech thee therefore not to delay; but to make haste, O Lord, to declare thy power in sending me seasonable help for my rescue, now that I am ready to perish.

Ver. 2. *Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt.*] My enemies fancy that I cannot escape their hands: but do thou most shamefully disappoint all those that restlessly endeavour to take away my life: defeat them, and put them to flight with open disgrace, whosoever they be that study to do me any mischief.

Ver. 3. *Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, aha!*] Let a total rout of their forces be the recompence of their shameful deeds; whereby they thought to have exposed me to shame, when they insulted over my calamity, and made a mock both of it, and of my hope that thou wouldest deliver me.

Ver. 4. *Let all those that seek thee rejoice, and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.*] But let all those that depend on thee alone, and seek by no other means, but such as thou allow-

est, for safety, have perpetual cause to rejoice in thee exceedingly: let such as expect and delight to see thee appear for the deliverance of thy people never cease to say, Let the righteous Judge of the world be praised; let the glory of his wonderful works be every where published and extolled.

Ver. 5. *But I am poor and needy; make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help and my deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying.*] O God, I beseech thee again, delay not to speed the relief I expect from thee; that this may be my song also: for at present I am stripped of all, and utterly destitute of human help; nay, so forlorn, that I shall perish presently, unless thou prevent it, O Lord; on whom alone I rely for help and deliverance, which I once more beseech thee to send me speedily.

PSALM LXXI.

ARGUMENT.

Though this Psalm want an inscription, yet it is generally thought that David was the author of it: and if he was, there is no doubt he composed it upon the occasion of Absalom's unnatural rebellion. For the matter of the Psalm sufficiently informs us, that when he made it he was in extreme great danger of perishing; and this danger also happened in the time of his old age, (ver. 9.) when he was gray-headed, (ver. 18.) Now he was not so during the time of Saul's persecution, (2 Sam. v. 4.) but in that of Absalom's he was; which though it did not last so long as the other, yet in this regard was more grievous to him; that it fell out in his declining years, when men are more unapt for toil and labour, and naturally desirous of quiet and repose. And therefore he begins the Psalm almost in the same words as he doth one of those which he made when he was distressed by Saul, (Psal. xxxi.) in his younger years, when he was better able to bear it.

As for the title, which some of the Greek translators, and from them the Latin, have prefixed to this Psalm (which they will have to be a Psalm *of the sons of Jonadab and the first captives*), it is so far from the business, that it is hard to give any account of it. For Theodoret pertinently observes, that the sons of Jonadab were not among the first captives; and that he who made this inscription, confesses he did not find it in the Hebrew, but placed it there himself. Yet that learned father, I know not for what reason, takes this Psalm to have been composed by David, in the person of those who were captive in Babylon; wishing deliverance from that servitude, and desiring to be restored to their own land.

Ver. 1. *IN thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be put to confusion.*] Thou seest, O Lord, that in all these troubles which have befallen me, I have no confidence in any thing, but only thy powerful goodness; which I hope will not fail me now, no more than it hath ever done heretofore; for I shall be lamentably ashamed, if thou shouldest frustrate my expectation.

Ver. 2. *Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me.*] Magnify thy mercy and fidelity in delivering me, and finding a way for my escape from these dangers that surround me: let me obtain this extraordinary favour of thee, and preserve me from falling into the hands of those who have conspired to destroy me.

Ver. 3. *Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress.*] For I am forced to quit my habitation, and have no place of safety (so universal is the revolt) to retreat unto; but whensoever I fly to thy almighty protection, do thou always keep me as secure as if I reposed myself in an impregnable castle: it is thy purpose, I am confident, to preserve me; for I never trusted in any other strong hold or fortress, but thee alone.

Ver. 4. *Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked; out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.*] Deliver me, therefore, from falling into the power of that turbulent man, who hath no fear of thee before his eyes: from the power of him that cares not by what perfidious arts, or cruel violence, he brings his ends to pass.

Ver. 5. *For thou art my hope, O Lord God: thou art my trust from my youth.*] For in thee, O Lord, who hast a sovereign dominion, which alters not, have I placed all my hope; and from thee is my expectation: when I was but a youth, I confided in thee, (1 Sam. xvii. 33. 37.) and was marvellously preserved by thee.

Ver. 6. *By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise shall be continually of thee.*] Who didst take care of me, even before I could trust in thee; for I have been supported by thee, and preserved in innumerable dangers, ever since I came out of my mother's womb: where I had perished also, if thy power had not drawn me thence, and brought me into the world; to praise and bless thee, as I have ever done, and will never cease to do, to the end of my days.

Ver. 7. *I am as a wonder unto many: but thou art my strong refuge.*] There are many, indeed (especially the great ones), that stare upon me, as if I were a monster; marvelling as much at this confidence I place in thee, as they do at my sudden fall into this deplorable condition: but, for all their taunts, I do not look upon myself as abandoned by thee; but have a strong hope that thou wilt deliver me.

Ver. 8. *Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day.*] And that I shall still have abundant cause to praise without ceasing thy most magnificent goodness towards me.

Ver. 9. *Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.*] I have deserved, I know, very ill of thee; but let me prevail with thee, notwithstanding, for the continuance of thy favour towards me; and do not reject me now in my old age: O forsake me not, when I have most need of thy help, and am least able to do any thing for myself; but let that good providence, which watched over me in my youth, be still my security.

Ver. 10. *For mine enemies speak against me; and they that lay wait for my soul take counsel together.*] For my enemies are no less subtle, than they are cruel; having defamed me, and taken away my reputation: as they now seek for an opportunity, and for that end are combined in a strong conspiracy to take away my life, (2 Sam. xv. 3. 12.)

Ver. 11. *Saying, God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for there is none to deliver him.*] Encouraging one

another in their enterprise with such words as these; God it is manifest hath forsaken him, for the hearts of all Israel are turned from him, and his own heart faileth him; (2 Sam. xv. 13, 14.) pursue him closely now, and we shall certainly take him; for he hath not forces enough to withstand us, and to deliver him out of our hands, (2 Sam. xvii. 1, 2.)

Ver. 12. *O God, be not far from me: O my God, make haste for my help.*] But how false soever my subjects are, it daunts me not, if thou, O God, who judgest righteously, will not be estranged from me: O my God, who hast hitherto so wonderfully preserved me, let this their vain confidence, and insulting language, incline thee to make the greater speed to relieve me.

Ver. 13. *Let them be confounded and consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be covered with reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.*] Let those implacable enemies, that will not be satisfied but with my life, be most shamefully disappointed; and see all their forces wherein they trusted quite dissipated, and come to nothing: expose them that design my ruin to the open shame and contempt of all the world; when they find that they have only ridiculously contrived their own destruction.

Ver. 14. *But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.*] And I will learn thereby, both to hope in thee perpetually (as now I do) even in the greatest straits and difficulties; and to add new songs of praise, over and above all those which I have already composed, to magnify thee for the vast heap of benefits which thou hast conferred on me.

Ver. 15. *My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day long; for I know not the numbers thereof.*] That shall be the subject of my songs, to publish thy mercy and truth in judging righteously between me and my enemies: this shall be my continual employment; though I shall never be able to tell the least part of that mercy, which will appear in my deliverance from such formidable enemies.

Ver. 16. *I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.*] I will enter notwithstanding upon this work, of pondering in my mind, and publishing with my mouth, the mighty things which I expect, from the sole powers of the great Lord and Governor of all things: I will not ascribe them to my own deserts, or to the courage or fidelity of those few friends that still adhere to me; but to thy undeserved favour, and faithfulness to thy word; and to that alone will I give the praise.

Ver. 17. *O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.*] O good God, thou hast given me many instances of this kind power and faithfulness of thine ever since I was a youth: (ver. 5.) and from thence unto this present moment thou hast been doing wonderful things for my preservation and preferment; which I have not failed to proclaim and thankfully commemorate.

Ver. 18. *Now also, when I am old and gray-headed, O God, forsake me not, until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.*] And therefore do not now, O God, abandon the care of me, when I need it most: but continue the same kindness to me in my declining years, which I found when I was a youth: and let me survive these calamities, to proclaim thy power in fresh instances of it to this present generation; and let all posterity know how mighty it is, in making a few victorious over very great multitudes.

Ver. 19. *Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee?*] Which I do not despair to see, when I consider how infinitely thy mercy, O God, surpasses all our deserts, nay, expectations; and what stupendous things thou hast already done for me, such as have no example: for who is there, O God, that can be compared to thee, either in goodness to design well for us, or in power to do what thou thinkest good?

Ver. 20. *Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore trouble, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.*] I never was in such straits and distresses (and yet I have been in the greatest and sorest) but I found relief from thee: and therefore I doubt not thou wilt revive me, now that all men give me up for dead; and draw me out of this extreme danger into which I am plunged, and wherein I shall perish without thy help.

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.*] Nay, thou wilt not only restore me to my former greatness, but much augment the splendour of it: and though now I seem forsaken by thee, wilt return again, and so surround me with thy favour, that my future comforts shall far exceed my present troubles.

Ver. 22. *I will also praise thee with the psaltery, even thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel.*] And then sure I shall be no less forward to bless thee than thou art to bestow thy benefits on me: I will bless thee, O my God, in the most joyful manner, with the psaltery and harp, and the rest of my musical instruments; which shall play to the songs I will compose in praise of thy faithfulness and constancy to thy word; O thou, whose incomparable excellences are peculiarly known unto, and celebrated by, thy people Israel.

Ver. 23. *My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.*] It is not possible to express the joy wherewith not merely my lips, but my heart and soul, shall sing triumphant songs; for the miraculous deliverance which I expect from thee.

Ver. 24. *My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.*] Which shall not only be the subject of my solemn songs, but of my constant discourse; wherein I will perpetually magnify thy goodness and truth towards me, and thy just vengeance upon my enemies: whom I look upon already as utterly defeated; and hanging down their heads, to see that ruin fall upon themselves which they designed for me.

PSALM LXXII.

A Psalm for Solomon.

ARGUMENT.

That David was the author of this Psalm, we may be satisfied from the conclusion of it. From whence we may also gather, that it was made by him towards the conclusion of his life: when, by his command, Nathan the prophet, and Zadok the priest, took Solomon and set him upon his throne, (1 Kings i. 39, &c.) that David might have the satisfaction to see all the great men do homage to Solomon, and acknowledge him for their suc-

ceeding sovereign before he died: which you find they did, (see 1 Chron. xxix. 24.) And thereupon the spirit of the holy man being transported with an extraordinary joy, he indited this Hymn, and sent it to Solomon: wherein he first recommends him to the Divine benediction, and then instructs him how to make his people happy; by describing the qualities of a good king, and the prosperous state of the kingdom under his government. Which his eyes began to behold before he died, (1 Chron. xxix. 25.) and he hoped others should behold when he was gone: to the example and admiration of all following generations. For what we translate in the future time, as if it were a prophecy, may be construed to be only a prayer. Which he carries on in so high a strain, in some places, that the words had not a full accomplishment in Solomon, nor in any one else, till the appearing of that great King, Christ. Of the happiness of whose reign, and of the justice of whose government, together with the mightiness, and the largeness, and the eternal continuance of his kingdom, his father David here prophesies.

Of that there can be no reasonable doubt (for the Jews themselves acknowledge it, as appears by the Chaldee Paraphrase, Midrasch Tehillim, the book Siphre, and many others): but that in this Psalm he prophesies of nothing else, and hath no respect to Solomon, as Theodoret supposes in his interpretation, seems as far wide from the truth, as to say, that he looks no farther than Solomon. For the Psalm doth in part agree as aptly (if not more) to Solomon, as the name of Solomon doth to the Messiah, our Saviour Christ: who was indeed the Prince of Peace, and left his peace with his disciples when he left the world (as Theodoret notes), and made peace wheresoever his doctrine was entertained, and his government settled over men's hearts. Yet he is not the only person here spoken of; but, as St. Jerome hath excellently stated the matter, in Solomon himself there was the shadow and image of the truth, which was more perfectly fulfilled in our Lord and Saviour.

Ver. 1. *GIVE the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.*] O God, the supreme judge of the world, bestow I beseech thee upon Solomon, who is now anointed to sit on my throne, such a right judgment in all things, and such uprightness and integrity of heart, that he may govern thy people according to thy laws; and, tempering justice with mercy, may be a worthy successor to me, who have now resigned my charge unto him.

Ver. 2. *He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.*] The weight of which I know is so exceeding great, that he needs thy special guidance and assistance: by which he may be able to administer all affairs, with such impartial justice and clemency; that the poorest subjects he hath may be as dear unto him, as they are unto thee; and recover their rights, or be preserved in them, from the power of those who would oppress them.

Ver. 3. *The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.*] So shall all parts of the kingdom be most happy; living in peace, and enjoying the blessed fruits of it: while all the judges of the land, both great and small, make it their study to maintain them in their just rights and liberties.

Ver. 4. *He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.*] And his authority is not abused to the oppression of the poor; and the making those more miserable, who have nothing but beggary left them for their inheritance: but employed for their defence and preservation; and for the crushing of those, that, by fraud and force, are injurious to them.

Ver. 5. *They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.*] Which righteous administration shall redound to his everlasting honour, and win him such reverence and observance from his people, as shall make him a lively emblem of the great King, Christ: whose happy subjects shall never cease to worship and praise him day and night to the world's end.

Ver. 6. *He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth.*] For he shall not endeavour to be formidable to them like a tyrant, whose government imitates the thunder, storms, and tempests: but condescend most graciously to the meanest; and rule them in so soft and gentle a manner, as shall make his authority no less acceptable and beneficial, than the rain is to the after-grass, or dripping showers, which fall in the summer heat, to refresh the parched earth.

Ver. 7. *In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth.*] The wicked shall have no preferment in his days; but righteous and virtuous men shall grow to a great height, and flourish as the plants do after those cherishing showers: whereby such lasting peace and tranquillity shall be established, as nothing can exceed, but the blessed times of the Prince of Peace, whose kingdom shall have no end.

Ver. 8. *He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.*] Nor shall his empire be confined within the bounds of Judea; but, according to the promise made to our forefather Abraham, (Gen. xv. 18.) and renewed to his children, (Exod. xxiii. 31. Deut. i. 7. xi. 24. Josh. i. 3, 4.) he shall extend it from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the river Euphrates to the border of Egypt; (1 Kings iv. 21. 2 Chron. ix. 26. Ezra iv. 20.) and be the most illustrious type of that glorious kingdom of Christ, which shall spread itself throughout the world.

Ver. 9. *They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.*] The most barbarous nations shall come and do him homage; and they that refuse it shall be humbled, and forced at last to submit and prostrate themselves with the lowliest reverence at his feet.

Ver. 10. *The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.*] The kings of the most distant countries, they of Tarshish, (1 Kings x. 22.) as well as Cyprus and Crete, and the rest of the isles, shall honour him with their presents; and so shall they of Arabia, as far as the Persian Gulf, approach him with gifts.

Ver. 11. *Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him.*] Yea, so many kings and nations shall make their obeisance, and subject themselves unto him; that it shall foreshadow the large extent of the kingdom of Christ, who shall be universally acknowledged, worshipped, and obeyed, by all kings, and all nations of the earth.

Ver. 12. *For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.*] Nor shall they be induced to these submissions so much by the greatness of his power, the vastness of his riches, and the magnificence of his court, as by the fame of his justice, mercy, and compassion (wherein he shall resemble the Lord Christ). For no sooner shall any miserable wretch, who hath no friend in the world, implore his protection, but he shall instantly succour, defend, and relieve him.

Ver. 13. *He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.*] He shall take pity upon such helpless creatures, and add no heavier burden unto that of their lamentable poverty; nor shall he be prodigal of their lives, but as tenderly secure them as those of his greatest subjects.

Ver. 14. *He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.*] He shall preserve them from being ruined, either by the fraud or violence of those who are too subtle or too mighty for them; and love them so dearly, as never to satisfy his own ambition, covetousness, or revenge, with the expense of the precious treasure of their blood.

Ver. 15. *And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him; continually and daily shall he be praised.*] Whereby his reign shall be long and prosperous; and the longer he reigns, the richer presents shall be brought unto him (as there shall be to Christ from the eastern countries): together with their perpetual prayers for his continued prosperity; and the highest praises and commendations, which shall ever be in men's mouths, of his just and gracious government.

Ver. 16. *There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.*] Which God shall bless with such plenty, that a handful of corn sown in the earth, even upon the top of barren mountains, shall spring up so thick, with ears so plump and full, that when they are shaken with the wind they shall make a noise like the cedars of Lebanon; nor shall the city be less fruitful than the country, but become as populous and well stored with all good things as the earth is with grass, or flowers in the spring.

Ver. 17. *His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.*] His memory and fame shall never die, but be propagated from father to son, aslong as the sun shall shine; and when they would wish well to another, they shall say, *God make thee as happy as Solomon:* for all people that hear of him shall look on him as the most excellent prince that ever was, except the king Messiah, whom all nations shall magnify and extol, and above all things desire his blessing.

Ver. 18. *Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.*] For which good hopes, and for all other his benefits, I renew my thanks, (1 Chron. xxix. 10.) to the great Lord and Sovereign of all the world; who hath graciously chosen Israel for his peculiar people: let him be most heartily blessed and praised, whose bounty is stupendous, and incomparably beyond all that can be said or thought of it.

Ver. 19. *And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and amen.*] Let his supereminent perfections be for ever celebrated with our praises; and not with ours only, but let the whole world be possessed with a sense of the surpassing greatness of his wisdom, power, and love, and join together with us in his praises. Let it be so, let it be so; let us all consent to say again and again, The Lord be praised, the Lord be praised.

Ver. 20. *The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.*] This was the last Psalm which David the son of Jesse composed, not long before he died: (and was all of his that the collector of this book could find before he published it.)

PART III.

PSALM LXXIII.

A Psalm of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins a new collection of seventeen Psalms, most of them very disconsolate and full of sad complaints, which make up the third book of this volume, as the Hebrews divide it. They were most of them composed by Asaph (and but one of them by David), though who he was is not resolved by interpreters: who suspect, indeed, there might be another author of some of these Psalms; but have no other Asaph to name, but Asaph the singer, who was famous in the days of David. (1 Chron. vi. 39. xvi. 5. 2 Chron. v. 12.) And accordingly Apollinarius thus descants upon the title, "The Divine invention of David failing in the composing of songs, Asaph arose, and by the Divine Spirit resounded this hymn." But it seems to me that there is another person of this name mentioned in the holy books (who may be more probably entitled to this work), called *Asaph the seer*, (see Psal. l.) who lived in the days of Hezekiah, (2 Chron. xxix. 30.) and whose son, I suppose, was then recorder. (2 Kings xviii. 37. Isa. xxxvi. 3.) Some of them, indeed (as I shall take notice in due place), may be thought rather to belong to another Asaph in aftertimes: but for the present Psalm (and most of the rest) I can find no person so likely to whom it may be entitled, as him now named: who composed it, I conceive, either when he saw the miserable havoc which strangers made among them in the days of Ahaz, (2 Chron. xxviii. 17—19. xxix. 8, 9.) or when Sennacherib invaded them, notwithstanding the reformation which Hezekiah had made: or, which is most probable, upon the occasion that David wrote the thirty-seventh Psalm, to comfort himself and good men, when they saw the lewder sort among them thrive and prosper, and the pious sometimes sorely afflicted: quite contrary to the sanctions of their law, which promised all good things to those that observed it, and threatened the evil to those that broke it. This extremely afflicted his spirit, and staggered his faith, till he considered the matter more deeply; and then he broke out into this meditation, saying,

Ver. 1. *TRULY God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.*] I will never hereafter, whatsoever con-

fusions I behold, question the justice of God's providence; but constantly affirm that he is not merely just, but very good; yea, hath a most singular love to his faithful people; who, notwithstanding the evils they endure, will never consent to do any evil.

Ver. 2. *But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.*] Time was indeed, when I, even I, who have had such long experience of his care over me, began to doubt and stagger in my faith: nay, was in danger to tumble headlong into unbelief.

Ver. 3. *For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.*] The reason was, that having a just indignation against the folly, or rather madness, of wicked men, it first vexed me to see them, notwithstanding their ill deservings, in a very flourishing condition; and then tempted me to think it very hard, that sober men should not equal, if not exceed, them in such happiness: especially when I saw no likelihood that it would end, but that they continue in their prosperity.

Ver. 4. *For there are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm.*] For as they carry on all their designs smoothly, and meet with no rub in their way, nor are in any danger (so great is their power), to be bound over by human justice to answer for their crimes, how many soever they commit: so they are not afflicted with sore diseases by the hand of God, nor brought to their graves with pains and torment; but after a long life, in firm and vigorous health, depart easily out of the world.

Ver. 5. *They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.*] Their life is nothing so laborious and toilsome, as that of many honest, but poor and wretched men: and they escape untouched, or are little hurt by such calamities as are common to all mankind.

Ver. 6. *Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment.*] Which makes them so unsufferably proud, and vainly conceited of themselves, that they not only tyrannize over their neighbours, but openly boast of the power they have to do them mischief: and glory in all the violence and cruelty, whereby they maintain and increase their pompous greatness.

Ver. 7. *Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.*] In which they pamper themselves to such an excess, that in their very countenance they express the haughty swelling of their minds and hearts: which are strangely puffed up, by their being raised (not only beyond the expectation of all other men; but) far above all that they themselves at first imagined or could design.

Ver. 8. *They are corrupt; and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily.*] They mock at all those who scrupulously tie themselves to the rules of justice, or tell them of the danger they run by their violation: for they threaten to undo all those that oppose them; and publicly declare, in the height of their arrogance, that they will not be bound by any laws.

Ver. 9. *They set their mouth against the heavens; and their tongue walketh through the earth.*] No, not those of God himself, who (with all the invisible powers of which men talk), they say, is but a name; which they do not dread: and, therefore, no wonder if such blasphemers of his majesty spare neither high nor low, but let their tongues loose, to abuse and calumniate whomsoever they please upon earth.

Ver. 10. *Therefore his people return hither; and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them.*] And yet, as bad as they are, there is none of them but hath his followers and admirers; whom he first invites, and then retains, like beasts, by filling their bellies: which abundantly contents them, though others be squeezed and oppressed, to give them this poor satisfaction.

Ver. 11. *And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?*] Nay, they drink in their opinions, and join with them in their impiety, saying, How can God know what we do here? or if he do, why should we think that he, who is so high, troubles himself about our affairs?

Ver. 12. *Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.*] For, behold, there are none that contemn him more than these men; and yet he is so far from inflicting any punishment on them, that none enjoy such a continued course of prosperity as they, whose wealth and power increase every day.

Ver. 13. *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.*] And verily, if these men discourse aright, I have taken a great deal of pains to little purpose; while I have studiously endeavoured to keep my heart pure from so much as ill designs, as well as to refrain the doing of any evil actions, from the charge of which I can safely purge myself.

Ver. 14. *For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.*] And yet I am plagued perpetually by the restless malice of these wicked doers; which, as constantly as the sun rises, falls on me a deal sooner than on other men.

Ver. 15. *If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.*] But, whatever confused and foolish thoughts came on a sudden into my mind, I concluded, upon more mature deliberation, that if I said as these men do, I should basely betray the cause of all them who are truly dear unto thee.

Ver. 16. *When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me.*] And therefore resolved with myself, before I pronounced my sentence, to study this point more seriously; which at first sight appeared so hard, that it grievously perplexed me.

Ver. 17. *Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.*] And retiring myself into the holy places, to consult with thee, and with those to whom thou communicatest thy secrets, I was presently sensible how short their felicity is: unto which death having put an utter end, it is followed with a dismal after-reckoning in another world.

Ver. 18. *Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.*] And next I considered, that all of them do not stand so firm as they imagine, but merely flatter themselves with vain hopes of continuing in their station to the end of their days: for being raised to the highest preferments, they find them to be very slippery places; from whence, to the amazement of themselves, and of all spectators, they come tumbling down into a most horrible ruin.

Ver. 19. *How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.*] Oh what an astonishing change is this! which is the most frightful, when on a sudden the Divine vengeance seizes on them;

and, when they least expect it, an end is put to their greatness; nay, they are quite destroyed, in a most terrible manner, as if they had never been.

Ver. 20. *As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.*] So that it is but a dream of happiness wherein they live, and they pride themselves in a mere imaginary glory; which not only vanishes away, when thou, O Lord, dost arise to judge them, but becomes as contemptible, in that very city where they appeared in all their pomp and splendour, as the fine things which a man sees in his sleep are when he awaketh.

Ver. 21. *Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.*] And therefore, when my spirit boiled with vexation, and grew sour at the sight of their prosperity; (ver. 2, 3.) when I was so vehemently provoked to passionate complaints, feeling the sharpest touches of grief and anger;

Ver. 22. *So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee.*] I now ingenuously acknowledge, it was for want of such manly and religious thoughts as these, which should have been in my mind when I thought of thy administrations; if I had not been dull and stupid, as void of sense as the beasts, which look only at things before their eyes, and have no regard to what is to come, or is not seen.

Ver. 23. *Nevertheless I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand.*] For, if I had looked beyond my senses, I might have seen that I am under the care of thy good providence, and that thou hast been my guide and my supporter, even when I had these brutish thoughts, and didst not suffer these wicked men to destroy me.

Ver. 24. *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.*] And therefore I ought in all reason still to conclude, that thou wilt direct me to behave myself so wisely, that I shall never fall into their snares: but, after I have suffered awhile, be preferred to those dignities from whence they fall; and, which is more, be so graciously accepted by thee, as to continue in them unto immortal glory.

Ver. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.*] This I expect from thy almighty goodness, who art the sole object of my hope. For thou knowest there is none in heaven, whom I depend upon for help and protection, but thee alone; none upon earth, whose favour I seek, but only thine, which shall perfectly content me.

Ver. 26. *My flesh and my heart fail: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*] It is possible I may still be pressed with such sore afflictions, that not only my bodily strength, but also my courage, may begin again to fail me; but then I will recover myself, and fortify my soul by flying unto thee, O God, for safety: in whose love I will always think myself happy, and enjoy everlasting satisfaction.

Ver. 27. *For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.*] For there is nothing more certain or more remarkable than this; that they who, by forsaking thee, have put themselves far from under thy care, will never be able, by any other means, to save themselves from perishing: for thou hast already made such men a terrible example of thy displeasure; and utterly destroyed those, who, quitting thy service, have devoted themselves to the worship of other gods, (2 Chron. xxviii. 6. 18, 19. xxix. 7—9.)

Ver. 28. *But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works.*] And therefore I will learn, by their miscarriages, that it is the best and safest course for me to adhere to my good God, and to make my humble addresses to him alone. I have done so hitherto, and no danger shall tempt me hereafter to quit this hold, and to confide in any thing, but only in the Sovereign of the world, who never fails those that depend upon him; and will, I hope, be so gracious unto me, that I shall have abundant cause to publish and proclaim to all others the works of his providence; in preserving the good, and in throwing the wicked down, at last, to the ground.

PSALM LXXIV.

Maschil of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

The desolation of Jerusalem and of the temple, as well as the rest of the country, made by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, was the sad occasion of this Psalm. For it is altogether improbable, that it hath respect to the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, as some fancy; because, as Theodoret pertinently notes (to omit all other reasons), we read nothing in any history of his burning the temple, or so much as of his laying the city waste; which are both here most sorrowfully bewailed by Asaph. Who was not therefore that Asaph in David's time (unless we should grant him to have written by the spirit of prophecy, and predicted what should be in aftertimes, as a great many think), because there was no such temple in those days, nor had been, as is here described: nor was it Asaph the seer in Hezekiah's days (of whom see Argument of the foregoing Psalm), who saw no such desolation made by Sennacherib (for he did not take Jerusalem, nor shoot so much as an arrow into it), nor, in all likelihood, prophesied of the destruction here spoken of; because the description of it in this Psalm is so plain, that we may most reasonably think the author of it had it before his eyes, and did not merely see it by the spirit of prophecy; which is not wont to foretell things in so clear a manner, but more obscurely and darkly.

I conclude, therefore, it was some other Asaph who composed this Psalm, in the time of the captivity, and in the middle, or rather towards the conclusion of it; because he complains (ver. 9.) that they had no prophet (as there was in the beginning of the captivity, particularly Jeremiah) to tell them how long it should last. And, considering that in the second verse he speaks of himself as one that dwelt still in the land of Israel, pointing to Mount Zion as a place near to him, I take him to have been some pious man of the posterity of Asaph, who was suffered to remain there with the Chaldeans.

And if it were fit to suppose him to have written this Psalm very young, and to have lived to a great age, when I have no proof of either, I should guess him to be Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, in the days of Nehemiah; who desired Artaxerxes to write to him, to furnish him with timber out of Lebanon, for the rebuilding some of those places which the Psalmist here complains were de-

stroyed. Among which, the porch of the court of the sanctuary remained unbuilt even unto those times.

Howsoever, from the mention of Mount Zion in the second verse, it is manifest Grotius forgot himself, when, in his notes upon ver. 6. he applies this Psalm to the destruction of Shiloh, which he supposes Asaph to have here bewailed. For Mount Zion had then never been in their possession, as it was afterward, and had lain so long waste, (ver. 3.) when Asaph wrote this Psalm, that it looked like a perpetual desolation. Besides, the tabernacle was not burnt when Shiloh was destroyed, but remained, though without the ark, till the days of Solomon, 2 Chron. i. 3. (see Psal. lxviii.) And of the meaning of *Maschil*, see Psal. xxxii.

Ver. 1. *O GOD, why hast thou cast us off for ever? why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?*] O God, the sovereign judge of the world, who hast justly expelled us out of our land, and continued our banishment so long, that little hope appears of our being restored to it again; behold the anguish of our souls wherein we cry unto thee for mercy: for we are confounded to see thee so highly incensed against those, who were once under thy most indulgent care, as if thou wert resolved never to be reconciled to us any more.

Ver. 2. *Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed; this Mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.*] Thou hast not forgotten, we know, though it be very long ago, with the expense of how many miracles thou didst make our ancestors thy peculiar people: for which reason, though we be exceedingly undeserving, we beseech thee to let all the world see, thou wilt not utterly abandon the poor remainders of that nation, which thou didst acquire at so great a price; that kingdom, which thou didst rescue out of the most miserable slavery, to be thy own possession; and this Mount Zion, wherein (after thou hadst by many wonders brought us into Canaan, and rooted out the old inhabitants) thou wast pleased at last to settle thy abode among us.

Ver. 3. *Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations, even all that the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.*] Make haste, good Lord, to come and visit the ruins of our country and city, which have lasted exceeding long, and will never be repaired without thy powerful help: which we implore against the authors of them; who, to all the other mischiefs they have done, have, with a peculiar spite, not only defaced, but utterly destroyed, thy dwelling-place.

Ver. 4. *Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they set up their ensigns for signs.*] They are thy enemies therefore as well as ours, whose fury and rage so transport them, that they roar rather than shout; whilst they triumph in those places where thy people were wont to meet to praise thy name: there they have set up their banners in token of their victory, and brag as if their gods were superior unto thee.

Ver. 5. *A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.*] Every one of them laid about him, and bestirred himself with all his might, as if he hoped to get renown by the mischief he did: which was committed with no more remorse, than if they had been lopping off boughs in the thickets of a forest, where they may be spared.

Ver. 6. *But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers.*] Just so methinks I see (as if it were now a-doing) how they hacked and hewed with axes, and knocked down with hammers, the curious carved work of the temple: whose elegance would have moved any but barbarians to have preserved it, with as great a zeal as they employed to beat it in pieces.

Ver. 7. *They have cast fire into thy sanctuary; they have defiled by casting down the dwelling-place of thy name to the ground.*] But so mad was their rage, it was not satisfied with this, but set fire unto thy holy place: and what that did not consume, they pulled down; till they had utterly profaned the habitation consecrated to thy majesty, by laying it level with the ground.

Ver. 8. *They said in their hearts, Let us destroy them together: they have burnt up all the synagogues of God in the land.*] Nor did all this give a stop unto their fury; but they rather grew the more outrageous: for, designing quite to destroy our religion, both in this and in future generations, they left not so much as one place wherein we might meet to say our prayers, or hear the law, throughout the land.

Ver. 9. *We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet: neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.*] And, which is the saddest thing of all, thou seemest to have left us too; and we see no token of thy Divine presence with us: so far we are from beholding any miraculous works, as our fathers did, for our deliverance, that there is not so much as a prophet to be found, to give us any advice, or speak a word of comfort to us: not a man among us, that can tell when these calamities will have an end.

Ver. 10. *O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?*] What a reproach is this, O God? which hath quite tired our patience, and made us cry unto thee to make haste to avenge thyself of these insulting enemies: stop their blasphemous mouths, O God, and let them not say any more, as they have done too long, that thou art not able to deliver us.

Ver. 11. *Why withdrawest thou thy hand; even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy bosom.*] For we are confounded, and know not what to say, while thou thus withdrawest thy powerful presence from us; that mighty power which was wont to do such wonders for us: exert it again, we beseech thee, and stretch it out for the destruction of those who have spoken of it so contemptuously.

Ver. 12. *For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.*] Why should I despair of it? since the great God, whom they deride, hath many ages ago undertaken the government and protection of us: working for us such deliverances in this land, which now lies waste, as astonished all the world.

Ver. 13. *Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.*] Thou art that God, to whose power the raging sea is subject; which at thy command retired, and opened a way for us to pass through; but came back again with its wonted violence, and overwhelmed the Egyptians; who, like so many sea-monsters, thought to have devoured us.

Ver. 14. *Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wil-*

derness.] Pharaoh, that fierce tyrant, as terrible as the vastest whales, thou didst utterly destroy there; with all his stern captains and commanders: whom the sea spewed up, (Exod. xix. 30.) to find their tombs in the bellies of the wild beasts and birds, which people the neighbouring wilderness.

Ver. 15. *Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: thou driedst up mighty rivers.*] Where, when our fathers wanted drink, thou madest water to gush out of a rock; (Exod. xvii. 6. Numb. xx. 9.) which followed them in a full stream, till they came to the borders of Canaan: and then thou driedst up the waters of Jordan, at a time when they ran violently, and (as if many rivers had been joined in one) it overflowed all its banks, (Josh. iii. 15. 17.)

Ver. 16. *The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun.*] And still there are such instances of thy power, which the whole world, if they would but mind, have always before their eyes. For as thou didst sometimes change the dry land into a river, and a river into dry land; so thou dost continually change the day into night, and the night into day: having settled the moon to govern the one, and the sun to govern the other, in their turns.

Ver. 17. *Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.*] By thy almighty wisdom also it is, that the motion of the sun not only makes the days and nights, but the different climates of the earth, and the seasons of the year: which are sometimes hot, and sometimes cold; sometimes flourishing, as we see in the summer, with all manner of fruit; and sometimes stripped, as we see in the winter, of all its ornaments, that afterward it may be the more fruitful.

Ver. 18. *Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.*] And we sure have endured a very tedious winter; wherein all things have looked most ruefully. May it please thee now to return, like the sun, unto us, and let thy enemies know thou hast not forgotten how they have reproached thee, O Lord! (whom they ought to have honoured as the mighty Creator of all things) but wilt vindicate thy glory, by punishing these insolent people, who, foolishly puffed up with their victories, have despised and derided thy omnipotent majesty.

Ver. 19. *O deliver not the soul of thy turtle-dove unto the multitude of the wicked: forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever.*] Deliver, we beseech thee, thy church, which, like a turtle-dove, can do nothing but meekly mourn, and make her silent complaints unto thee, from those violent men, who, like birds of prey, seek utterly to destroy her: let them not take away its life and being; but, though we be at present deserted by thee, yet hear our cries, and at last relieve a poor helpless company, who flee unto thee, and depend upon thee alone for safety.

Ver. 20. *Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.*] Though we are unworthy to be regarded by thee, yet have regard unto thy own promises; wherein thou hast engaged thyself unto our fathers, to give to them and their posterity the land of Canaan: which is so far from being now inhabited by thy people, that every blind corner of it is a den of thieves and murderers; who have filled it with rapine and cruelty.

Ver. 21. *O let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name.*] O let not thy poor afflicted servant, who implores thy aid against these barbarous oppressors, be denied his suit; and go away ashamed, to see himself disappointed of his hope: but let him, and all the rest of thy miserable people, who were never in greater need of thy help, be restored to praise thy goodness in their ancient possessions; from whence they have been thus long banished.

Ver. 22. *Arise, O God, plead thine own cause: remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily.*] Appear, O God, in our behalf; and thereby vindicate thyself from reproach: let me again beseech thee, to shew that thou art not unmindful of all the scoffs, which prosperous fools belch out against thee every day.

Ver. 23. *Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against thee increaseth continually.*] It is time to punish all the insulting language of thy enemies: for the insolent brags and furious threats of those that oppose thee increase still more and more, and rise up to a greater height of audacious impiety.

PSALM LXXV.

To the chief Musician. Al-taschith. A Psalm or Song of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

I take this Psalm to have been made by Asaph *the seer*, mentioned 2 Chron. xxix. 30. (see Psal. lxxiii.) after the great deliverance, which, by the strange destruction of Sennacherib's army, God gave the good king Hezekiah. For whose use Asaph composed this Psalm, and delivered it to the chief master of music in the tabernacle; that he might therein make his public profession of his obligations to Almighty God, and his resolution to serve him, and to depend upon him: as he advises all men else to do, if they would not be undone; or if they hoped for any good, of which he is the sole and absolute dispenser.

If *Al-taschith* be more than a note, that this Psalm was to be sung like to the fifty-seventh, and those that follow; it may signify as much as, *thou shalt not*, or *wilt not, destroy:* and be applied either to Sennacherib, who, the prophet told them, should not accomplish his design of destroying them, as he had done other nations, (2 Kings xix. 17. 2 Chron. xxvii. 14.) or to God, who had not given him commission, as he pretended, to destroy Jerusalem, (2 Kings xviii. 25.) but would defend it, (2 Kings xix. 34.) and not suffer it to be laid desolate.

Symmachus gives a more spiritual sense of the word, and calls this a *triumphal Song concerning immortality;* because it contains, as Theodoret explains it, a prediction of the righteous judgment of God in the destruction of the wicked, and rewarding the lovers of virtue: which should admonish us not to suffer any godly thoughts we have in our mind to perish; but to preserve them whole and entire, that we may inherit immortality.

What is to be understood by a *Psalm-Song*, see in the Argument of Psalm lxvii.

Ver. 1. *UNTO thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous*

works declare.] Unto thee, O God, the righteous judge, who art the sole author of this great deliverance, do I and all my people give most solemn thanks: nor can we ever thank thee enough, but we must again and again renew our acknowledgments unto thee; whose almighty power is still ready at hand, we clearly see by the wonders thou hast done, to succour all those who gratefully commemorate thy benefits.

Ver. 2. *When I shall receive the congregation I will judge uprightly.*] And I will not content myself with these verbal praises alone; but as soon as I shall meet with a fit opportunity, and we can have our solemn assemblies again (which by this invasion have been interrupted, 2 Chron. xxxii. 1.) I will perfect the reformation which I have begun: and see that equal justice be done to all my people; as well as that they be preserved in thy true religion.

Ver. 3. *The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it. Selah.*] The whole country hath been in a miserable confusion; while their hearts melted with fear of an utter desolation: but as then I supported their spirits, and encouraged the great men and the officers to do their duty, (2 Chron. xxxii. 6—8.) so I will hereafter establish such magistrates and judges, as shall bring all into better order.

Ver. 4. *I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly; and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn.*] I have told them my mind already, and do still solemnly proclaim and declare, that I will proceed with the utmost severity against the contemners of thy laws; and therefore I advise them not to be so madly rude and insolent: for the proudest of them all shall know, that it is safest for them to be more modest, than to glory, as they do, in their impiety; or to boast of the power they have to be injurious to their neighbours.

Ver. 5. *Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck.*] Do not vaunt of this, I once more advise you, nor bear yourselves high, as if you would outbrave heaven itself: be not refractory and stubborn, nor arrogantly say, that you will have your way, and that none shall curb you.

Ver. 6. *For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.*] For which way soever you turn yourselves, whether to the east, or to the west, or to the mountainous deserts that lie on the north and south of us; in vain do ye think to escape the righteous judgment of God.

Ver. 7. *But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.*] Who, being the sovereign Lord and governor of the world, easily lays those low that proudly exalt themselves against his authority; and lifts up those that humbly submit themselves unto him.

Ver. 8. *For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.*] For he never wants power to inflict the most dreadful punishments; which (like an intoxicating wine, full of stupifying ingredients, that loosens the very joints, and takes away all a man's strength to resist) never fail to have their effect: and the godly may taste of them, nay suffer solely for a time; but the heaviest and most grievous punishments (like the dregs at the bottom of such wine) shall fall to the share of all the wicked of the land; who shall be forced to endure the utmost expressions of the Divine vengeance upon their sins.

Ver. 9. *But I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.*] And this I, who am his minister to execute his judgments, will not cease to declare, as long as I live, that none may pretend ignorance for their excuse: and I will sing praises unto God (who delivered Jacob from all evil), not only for his late miraculous preservation of us, by his vengeance on Sennacherib (whom he hath made an example of his wrath to all proud contemners of him), but for making me the instrument of so happy a reformation.

Ver. 10. *All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.*] For this is my resolution, not merely, as I said, to praise him, but to pull down the haughty spirit, and cut short all the power of the wicked, that they shall not be able to do such mischief as they desire: and to raise the righteous into such authority, that they shall not fear what their most insolent enemies can do unto them.

PSALM LXXVI.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth. A Psalm or Song of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

It is visible to every eye, that the Psalmist here commemorates some notable victory over very powerful enemies: whereby God delivered (when it was in great danger) the whole country, particularly Jerusalem: which is called here Salem, (ver. 2.) by an usual form of speech among the Hebrews, who are wont, in names of places, to cut off the former part; instead of Abel-Shittim, saying only Shittim; and Nimrim, for Beth-Nimrim; Lechi, for Ramath-Lechi; Sheba, for Beer-Sheba, and many such-like, as Bochartus hath shewn in the second book of his Phaleg. cap. 25. and in the first part of his work concerning the animals named in Scripture, book ii. chap. 25.

And there is as little reason to doubt that the particular deliverance here aimed at is that from Sennacherib's army, which Asaph the seer, mentioned 2 Chron. xxix. 30. (see Psal. lxxiii.) was not content to celebrate in the former Hymn, which he made for the use of the king; but added this also, for his own use, and all other pious persons: who he hoped would join in it, especially when it was sung in the temple, as he directed the master of the music, after the same manner as Psal. iv.

Some of the Greeks seem to have perceived something of this: for though there be no such title in the ancient Hexaplus of Origen, yet, in aftertimes, Theodoret tells us, he found in some copies this inscription, which still continues, *An Ode against the Assyrian:* which Apollinarius follows.

Of a *Psalm-Song,* see Psal. lxvii.

Ver. 1. *IN Judah is God known; his name is great in Israel.*] God hath so illustriously demonstrated himself among us (in this unexpected and terrible execution) to be the sovereign ruler and judge of the world, that he must shut his eyes that doth not see it: his power, and all his other glorious perfections, which are conspicuous every where, are in no country so magnified as they are in Israel.

Ver. 2. *In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion.*] Our enemies themselves, who reviled him, (2 Chron. xxxii. 17. 19.) and despised Jerusalem, (ver. 10.) are now sure convinced that there this mighty Lord maketh his abode: in the top of that mountain where he hath chosen to fix his dwelling-place.

Ver. 3. *There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah.*] Before the walls of which he hath slain, with an invisible dart, the fiery archers; (who have not shot so much as one arrow into it, 2 Kings xix. 32.) and made the shields, and swords, and the rest of their military preparations, altogether useless and unprofitable.

Ver. 4. *Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey.*] Whereby thou, O Zion, art become more glorious than all the mountains, where the fiercest beasts of prey, or the most desperate robbers, have their resort, who never made such slaughters.

Ver. 5. *The stout-hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands.*] For they, whose courage made them fear no danger, but confidently promised themselves the spoils of Jerusalem, are given unto us for a spoil: they lay down to sleep, but never awaked; (2 Kings xix. 35.) not a man among the most mighty of them was able to strike a stroke, or do any thing to defend himself against that hand which cut them off.

Ver. 6. *At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep.*] But the most experienced horseman, as well as they that rode in chariots, sunk down dead, at the sudden check, the severe rebuke, which they received from thee, O God of Jacob, whom they reproached, (2 Kings xix. 22, 23.)

Ver. 7. *Thou, even thou, art to be feared; and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?*] Thou, and none but thou, art to be dreaded: and what king is he, that is able, for so short a time as a moment, to resist thy power? which in an instant can destroy all those who incur thy heavy displeasure.

Ver. 8. *Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still.*] We have an example of it before our eyes; for when we made our solemn appeal to thee, (2 Kings xix. 3, 4. 15, 16.) thou wast pleased to pronounce a sentence of condemnation from heaven upon our enemies, which struck such terror into those that survived, that they who before were full of rage, and made a tumultuous noise, (ver. 27, 28.) were as still as lambs, and durst not stir a foot, but only to return from whence they came, (ver. 28. 36.)

Ver. 9. *When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Selah.*] They were afraid to continue their attempts against us, when God, who had long suffered their insolence, sent an angel to chastise it, and to do execution upon them; and thereby delivered the helpless people of this land, who had patiently borne their horrible oppression.

Ver. 10. *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.*] Which may well be a warning to all fell tyrants, not to be so fierce and outrageous; which will only present thee with a fairer opportunity to glorify thyself, and raise thy praise to a greater height; as thou hast now done, by suppressing the Assyrians' fury; who, if they have any relics of wrath, which may boil up again in their hearts, thou shalt chain it up, and not suffer it to break forth to our further disturbance.

Ver. 11. *Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God: let all that are round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.*] And let this excite you all, who are thus marvellously delivered, to make more liberal promises of grateful sacrifices; as well as to perform those which you have already vowed, to the great Lord, your most gracious God: who so far excels all others, that the nations round about us, who hear the fame of this, shall reproach you (if you be forgetful of his benefits) by the presents which they shall make to him, (2 Chron. xxxii. 23.) who ought to be feared by all his friends, and is most terrible to his enemies.

Ver. 12. *He shall cut off the spirit of princes: he is terrible to the kings of the earth.*] For he can easily, with a sudden stroke, not only take down the proud stomach, but take away the life of the fiercest captains and commanders; (2 Chron. xxxii. 21.) yea, make the greatest monarchs (who keep the world in awe) quake and tremble at his dreadful executions.

PSALM LXXVII.

To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

A Psalm composed by Asaph, and sent by him to that song-master, who was over the children of Jeduthun; in which I imagined, at first sight, that he represented the sad condition of Hezekiah, and the motions of his heart towards God in his sickness, (2 Chron. xxxii. 24. Isa. xxxviii. 1.) But, upon farther consideration, it appears, from the latter part of it, that he bewails the calamity of all the nation: either when Sennacherib overran the country, or else in the captivity of Babylon. If we refer it to the latter, then it was not Asaph the seer, whom I mentioned before, (Psal. lxxiii.) that made this Psalm; but some other in aftertimes, (see Psal. lxxiv.) who laments the long continuance of their captivity; which looked like an utter forsaking by God; but he comforts himself, at last, with the remembrance of what God had done formerly for them, when he delivered them out of the Egyptian bondage.

Ver. 1. *I CRIED unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.*] I have incessantly made my prayer to God, and I will still most earnestly entreat his favour: to him who hath justly afflicted us, and can alone relieve us, have I again and again renewed my importunate suit; which I hope will at last prevail with him for deliverance.

Ver. 2. *In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.*] I have not negligently discharged this duty, but as the distress is great wherein we are, so I have restlessly implored help from the Lord: in the night, when men are wont to bury their troubles in sleep, I have with unwearied diligence spread out my hands unto him (in token that all my dependance is upon his power alone), resolving to admit of no consolation, till I obtained a gracious answer from him.

Ver. 3. *I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.*] I remem-

bered, indeed, how kind God had been unto us in former times; but this only gave me the greater trouble, when I compared it with our present miseries; and the more I mused on it, the more my spirit was disturbed, and miserably afflicted.

Ver. 4. *Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.*] Insomuch that I could not close my eyes, to take a wink of sleep; nor open my mouth (such was my perturbation and astonishment) to express the heaviness of my grief.

Ver. 5. *I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.*] All that I could do, was to recount thy merciful providences over our forefathers in times past; and ponder seriously what wonders thou didst for them many ages agone.

Ver. 6. *I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart; and my spirit made diligent search.*] I called to mind all the songs I had indited, to celebrate the memory of those ancient benefits: and spent whole nights in silent meditations, and diligent inquiries, which I revolved to and fro in my mind; why he who had taken such care of our ancestors, had so long rejected us.

Ver. 7. *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?*] Will the Lord, thought I, abandon us for ever? Is he so incensed against us, that he will never be reconciled, nor intend to shew us any more favour?

Ver. 8. *Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore?*] Is his infinite mercy, which is the fountain of all his benefits, quite exhausted? and will he never hereafter speak a word of comfort to us?

Ver. 9. *Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.*] Hath God, whose property it is to shew mercy, quite laid aside all thoughts of exercising his clemency towards us? or have we so highly provoked him to anger, that he hath no regard at all unto our miseries?

Ver. 10. *And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.*] But having thus complained, and said within myself, This is the thing which sorely afflicts me, to see such alterations in the proceedings of the Most High, that the same hand which formerly protected us now severely scourges us;

Ver. 11. *I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old.*] I presently considered, that there might be a change again; and resolved to comfort myself with the remembrance of the former works of the Lord; and to go back as far as the miracle thou didst for us (in bringing us up out of the land of Egypt), when our deserts were as small as in these days.

Ver. 12. *I will meditate also of all thy works, and talk of thy doings.*] Of all the ensuing wonders I will think, rather than on our present miseries: I will not omit one of them; but, instead of these complaints, make them the constant subject of my discourse.

Ver. 13. *Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?*] From which I cannot but conclude, that the method of thy providence, O God, is not only perfectly holy and just, but quite out of our reach: nor is thy power inferior; but, as thou dost not proceed in the common way of our thoughts, so none can resist what thy incomparable majesty thinks fit to effect.

Ver. 14. *Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people.*] For thou art the mighty God, who canst do miracles as easily as the most ordinary works: and hast made all the world sensible, that thy power exceeds both the strength and the opinion of all creatures.

Ver. 15. *Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.*] Having delivered thy people, descended from Jacob, and miraculously preserved by Joseph, from the Egyptian bondage, by a long series of stupendous judgments upon Pharaoh and his servants, (Exod. vi. 6. Deut. vi. 21, 22. vii. 8.)

Ver. 16. *The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.*] Which were followed presently with a greater wonder, when the waters of the Red Sea felt thy power, O God: they felt thy power to the very bottom of them; which so disturbed them, that they retreated, as if they had been affrighted at thy presence, and left a plain way for thy people to march through upon dry ground:

Ver. 17. *The clouds poured out water; the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad.*] But returned again upon the Egyptians (who pursued after us), accompanied with a terrible storm of rain, and thunder, and hail-stones; which flew about their ears, and brake the very wheels of their chariots, (Exod. xiv. 24, 25.)

Ver. 18. *The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.*] The noise of this thunder filled all the air thereabout; and so did the lightning that flashed in their faces; which, together with a dreadful earthquake, made the very inhabitants of Canaan tremble, (Josh. ii. 10, 11.)

Ver. 19. *Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.*] We might well say then, that thy way is quite out of our reach; (ver. 13.) who madest a passage through the sea, a broad path through the boisterous waters: which, as none ever trod before or after, so they cannot trace the footsteps, which the waters have overflown and obliterated, (Exod. xiv. 26, 27.)

Ver. 20. *Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.*] Nor did thy care over thy people end there; but, by the ministry of thy servants, Moses and Aaron, thou didst conduct them with the same tenderness that a good shepherd doth his sheep, through a horrid wilderness, in which thou feddest them, till they came to Canaan. [And thither the same power can, and the same goodness will, I hope, restore us: though now we seem neglected by thee, as our fathers were, for a time, in the land of Egypt.]

PSALM LXXVIII.

Maschil of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

When God gave his law to the Israelites, he commanded them not only to be careful to study it themselves, but to inculcate it upon their children, (as the Psalmist here remembers, ver. 5.) that they might propagate the knowledge of it to all future generations: (Deut. iv. 9. vi. 7, 8, &c. xi. 18, 19, &c.) and particularly to instruct them in the reason of their feasts; which were appointed for the commemoration of several benefits, which he would

not have forgotten, (Exod. xiii. 8. 14.) In prosecution of which end, as Theodoret well observes, this Psalm was indited, by the prophetical grace (as his words are); that they and all their posterity might preserve in mind the wonderful works of God. An epitome of which (for the help of their memory) he here presents them withal; from the time of their coming out of Egypt, till David's promotion to the throne.

Where this narration concluding, it makes it probable this Psalm was composed by that Asaph, so often mentioned, as one of the principal singers in those days; who, setting before the people's eyes, as in a table, the benefits their fathers had received, with their shameful ingratitude, and the punishments inflicted upon them for it, teaches and instructs them who succeeded (for which reason some will have it called *Maschil*, see Psal. xxxii.) to learn greater gratitude and fidelity to their Benefactor; for fear they should incur his higher displeasure, if they did not beware by such sad examples.

Ver. 1. *GIVE ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.*] Attend reverently, O my countrymen, for whom I have a particular affection, unto the admonition which now I intend to give you: listen diligently, I beseech you, to the following instruction.

Ver. 2. *I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old.*] It is no vulgar lesson which I would have you learn; nor will I be sparing in my instruction: but I will abundantly inform you in the most remarkable passages of God's providence in former times; which are more worthy your knowledge, than the skill of resolving the darkest riddles.

Ver. 3. *Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.*] And I will not report uncertain or doubtful things to you; or things done in another nation: but such as are of unquestionable credit; which you have heard and known to be recorded in your holy books: and our forefathers, who were eye-witnesses of them, have faithfully registered and transmitted unto us.

Ver. 4. *We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.*] Who will not be so treacherous as to lose the memory of them in our days; but diligently propagate them to posterity: endeavouring that all future generations may understand, how much the Lord deserves to be praised, for the mighty and stupendous works which he hath done in former ages.

Ver. 5. *For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children.*] And, indeed, when God gave us the law, he strictly charged our forefathers, and made a particular injunction about it, which he frequently repeated (Deut. iv. vi. xi. see the Argument); that they should be careful to leave the knowledge of these things as a sacred legacy, or inheritance, unto their children.

Ver. 6. *That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children.*] In order to the conveying them, by their hands, to the next generation; who were then unborn: who should be taught also, when they were grown up, to deliver them with the same diligence to their descendants; and so preserve the memory of them to all succeeding generations.

Ver. 7. *That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God; but keep his commandments.*] To the end, that they might learn by such wonderful instances of his powerful goodness, to adhere unto him, and confide in him alone; and, by the constant commemoration of his benefits, be provoked religiously to observe his precepts.

Ver. 8. *And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright: and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.*] And take warning by the punishments inflicted on them, not to imitate the ingratitude of their forefathers, who were not only a refractory generation, but so fickle, that they fell off from God to the worship of idols, presently after they came out of Egypt: for they did not lay to heart what he had done for them, and so were never rightly disposed to his service; or if in a good fit they were inclined to it, they soon revolted from him.

Ver. 9. *The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.*] What could be more shameful, than their base refusal to go and engage the Canaanites, when they were so well appointed for the fight; and were commanded by God, in whose power they had no confidence, to go up and take possession of the land? (Deut. i. 26.) unless it were their foul cowardice when they did engage them against his command; (ver. 43, 44.) and the Ephraimites themselves, though a valiant tribe, and excellent archers, ran away, and were chased in a shameful manner by their enemies.

Ver. 10. *They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law.*] For they brake their word with God, (who therefore would not be with them, Numb. xiv. 43.) and would not be governed by *his* will, but by their own.

Ver. 11. *And forgat his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.*] Never thinking of the illustrious works which their eyes had seen; and so distrusting his power, notwithstanding all the miracles, whereby he had demonstrated the greatness of it to them.

Ver. 12. *Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.*] Nor were the next generation any better; though the memory was then fresh of that heap of wonders, which their fathers saw him do publicly: not in a corner, but in all the land of Egypt; yea, in and about the principal city of the kingdom.

Ver. 13. *He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as a heap.*] From whence when he had delivered them, and they were in great distress at the Red Sea, he made it give way to them, that they might walk through it on dry ground: the fluid water swelling into little hills, (Exod. xv. 8.) which stood like a solid wall on either hand, to secure them in that dangerous passage, (Exod. xiv. 22.)

Ver. 14. *In the day-time also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.*] Through which he conducted them, as he did at all other times, by a glorious cloud: whose dark side served also in the day-time, for a shadow from the scorching rays of the sun; and its bright side in the night, for a torch to guide them when they travelled; or if they rested, to light them in their tents.

Ver. 15. *He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave*

them drink as out of the great depths.] And when they wanted water in the wilderness, he brought it out of the rocks (which he commanded Moses to smite more than once); first at Rephidim, (Exod. xvii. 6.) and then in Kadesh, (Numb. xx. 8. 11.) and they had it in such plenty, both for themselves and their cattle, as if it had been a great pond or lake.

Ver. 16. *He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.*] And yet it was no standing, but a flowing water; which ran continually out of the dry rock as out of its fountain, in several streams; or rather, like unto rivers; which followed them in their travels.

Ver. 17. *And they sinned yet more against him, by provoking the Most High in the wilderness.*] But all these miraculous works did not alter their depraved nature, which broke out into new and greater provocations; in that very place, where, without the singular providence of their most high Benefactor, they had all been starved.

Ver. 18. *And they tempted God in their heart, by asking meat for their lust.*] For they were not content with the bountiful provision which he had made for them, (Exod. xvi.) but muttered within themselves against him: and wished, if he was so powerful and kind as was pretended, that he would give them a new proof of it; by sending them meat to satisfy their wanton appetite.

Ver. 19. *Yea, they spake against God: they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?*] And, at last, they openly declared that distrust of his power which was in their hearts; saying, Is God able to make us a feast here in this barren wilderness? (Numb. xi. 4, 5, &c.)

Ver. 20. *Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?*] It is true, he hath brought water out of a rock for us in great abundance (which perhaps was lodged there before in the caverns of it, and might have flowed out of itself); but can he give us more substantial bread, (not such light stuff as this manna is, which he also hath sent us, Numb. xi. 6.) here where no corn grows? and make an ample provision for all this multitude, of such flesh as this place doth not afford?

Ver. 21. *Therefore the Lord heard this, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel.*] Which rude and insolent language highly incensed the Divine displeasure: so that he sent lightning from heaven (Numb. xi. 1.) to consume those whom he had before cherished: and he resolved also to punish them more severely, before he had done with them, (ver. 33.)

Ver. 22. *Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation.*] Because they had so mean an opinion of him, that they durst not confide in him, and commend themselves to his good providence; to preserve and conduct them safe to Canaan.

Ver. 23. *Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven.*] No, not after such extraordinary benefits as they had received from him: for he had undertaken in a miraculous manner (as is fit to be more particularly remembered) to dispense food to them from above, and to make the clouds the granary, whose doors he opened to them.

Ver. 24. *And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.*] And, instead of rain (to make the earth with long labour become fruitful), to send showers of manna out of the air, (Exod. xvi. 4.) which was a kind of corn ready prepared for them, (Numb. xi. 8, 9.)

Ver. 25. *Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.*] There was not a man among that vast multitude, but was fed with that strong and hearty, or rather princely, food; brought to them from the habitation, and by the ministry, of angels. This was their daily entertainment, as long as their travels in the wilderness lasted; and they had it in such abundance, that none of them could pretend they were not sufficed, (Exod. xvi. 16, 17. 35.)

Ver. 26. *He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven; and by his power he brought in the south wind.*] And therefore it was not to satisfy their hunger, but to reprove their unbelief, that he was pleased to comply with their desires; and, when the wind blew violently out of the east, turned it by his power into the south:

Ver. 27. *He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea.*] Which brought a great cloud of quails (a delicious bird) from the coasts about the Red Sea: which (either tired with long flight, or beaten down with the wind) came pouring down like showers of rain; and lay on the ground, as thick as the dust or the sand on the sea-shore, from whence they came, (Numb. xi. 31.)

Ver. 28. *And he let it fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations.*] There was no need of labour, or of any art, to catch them; neither needed they go far to take them up: for they dropped down in the midst of their camp; and lay also many miles round it, in such heaps, that they, who would, might fetch enough to serve them for a whole month, (Numb. xi. 20. 31.)

Ver. 29. *So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire.*] So they had not only a taste of his liberality, but were glutted and crammed with them: for he satisfied their longings to the full.

Ver. 30. *They were not estranged from their lust: but while the meat was yet in their mouths.*] And they were not hindered from eating as much as they pleased; nor was this diet become at all nauseous to them; but they greedily feasted on these birds to the end of the month: and at that very time had these sweet morsels in their mouths, (Numb. xi. 33.)

Ver. 31. *The wrath of God came upon them, und slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel.*] When the Divine vengeance seized on them, by a very great pestilence, (Numb. xi. 33.) which swept away the strongest and goodliest persons that were in Israel.

Ver. 32. *For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works.*] But these punishments wrought no more change in their hearts than his benefits, for they added new sins to all the former; and were not moved by any of his wonderful works, to believe that he was able to bring them into the land of promise, (Numb. xiv. 2—4.)

Ver. 33. *Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble.*] For which cause he resolved they should never come thither, but be consumed in the wilderness: (Numb. xiv. 28. 33, &c.) where, though they travelled up and down very much and long, yet it was to no purpose; for they were never the nearer to their journey's end, nor were ever free from one plague or other, till they were utterly destroyed.

Ver. 34. *When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God.*] They re-

lented, indeed, sometimes, and when God cut off some of them, the rest began to deprecate his displeasure: (Numb. xiv. 39, 40.) and, by promising amendment, most earnestly sought to recover his favour.

Ver. 35. *And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer.*] And professed that they would trust in God hereafter for safety and deliverance: who they acknowledged was superior to all other gods, and had been their mighty redeemer.

Ver. 36. *Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.*] But all this was little more than speaking him fair, while they lay under his correcting hand: and they did not sincerely intend to do as they promised, when it was removed.

Ver. 37. *For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant.*] For their hearts were not rightly disposed, nor firmly resolved to adhere unto him; as appears by their frequent revolts from their engagements; which they never faithfully observed, but as constantly broke, as they renewed their covenant with him, (Numb. xvi. 3. xx. 3, 4. xxi. 5. 7. xxv. 1, 2, &c.)

Ver. 38. *But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not; yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.*] Yet he was so full of compassion, that after he had threatened utterly to destroy them, (Numb. xiv. 11, 12.) he remitted very much of the severity of the sentence; and did not cut them off at once, (ver. 15. 17, 18.) but very often spared them when they deserved to be punished; or when he punished them, did it less than their deserts.

Ver. 39. *For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.*] For he considered how frail they were, and that they could not continue long (though he did not snatch them away), but would moulder of themselves into dust; and vanish like a blast of wind, which makes a bustle and noise for a little time, and then is dispersed and heard of no more.

Ver. 40. *How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert?*] How many times, before this terrible threatening, did they provoke him to anger in the wilderness? (Numb. xiv. 22.) and afterward did things exceeding offensive to him, in other parts of the desert? (Numb. xvi. xx. xxi. xxv.)

Ver. 41. *Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.*] Being so vilely ungrateful, as to talk of returning into Egypt; (Numb. xiv. 4.) or requiring, upon every occasion, new proofs of his power: nay, questioning whether it could do all things, though he had wrought so many wonders; and appointing him, who had so often shewn himself to be incomparably greater than all other gods, what he should do, (as I said before, ver. 19, 20.) if he intended to have them believe on him.

Ver. 42. *They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.*] For they quite forgot (this was the reason of their naughtiness, ver. 11, 12, which is fit again to be repeated), or never laid to heart, the mighty things he had done for them: especially that memorable time, when he, by his power alone, delivered them from the tyranny of Pharaoh, who most miserably oppressed them.

Ver. 43. *How he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan.*] They did not seriously ponder the evident demonstration he gave of his uncontrollable power, in the miraculous judgments which he sent upon the Egyptians; even upon the court of Pharaoh, and the principal city of the kingdom.

Ver. 44. *And had turned their rivers into blood, and their floods, that they could not drink.*] When, for instance, he left them no water to quench their thirst; by turning the river Nile, (Exod. vii. 17. 19, 20.) with all the streams that were derived from it, and all their ponds and pools of water, into blood.

Ver. 45. *He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them.*] And sent an infinite swarm of the most pestilent, and to them the most odious sort of flies, (Exod. viii. 21, 22.) which bit the Egyptians, as they used to do their dogs: as not long before he had sent such an army of frogs to invade all places, (ver. 3. 8, 9, &c.) and so to spoil their meat and drink, and every thing else, that if this plague had lasted, they must have left their country, or not have lived.

Ver. 46. *He gave also their increase unto the caterpillar, and their labour unto the locust.*] After which he exposed the fruits of the earth, for which they had taken long pains, to be devoured by various kinds of locusts; with which the whole country was so overspread, that nothing else but they were to be seen upon the face of the earth. (Exod. x. 5.)

Ver. 47. *He destroyed the vines with hail, and their sycamore-trees with frost.*] Which had been miserably harassed before, by storms of hail, both small and great: whereby not only the grapes and such-like fruit were smitten down, but the trees themselves (for instance, the vines, and the wild fig-trees) quite killed, and corrupted at the very root, (Exod. ix. 18, 19. 25.)

Ver. 48. *He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunder-bolts.*] For there was a dreadful thunder, and lightning mixed together with it; which let no living creature escape, but destroyed even the cattle and the flocks, which were left abroad in the field, (Exod. ix. 22, 23, &c.)

Ver. 49. *He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them.*] Many other ways he plagued them, which were tokens of his severest displeasure; by a grievous murrain, by fiery boils, by a most dismal darkness, (Exod. ix. 10.) till at length he sent evil angels, (who had frighted them in that darkness, Wisd. xvii. 3.) as the ministers of his heavy wrath.

Ver. 50. *He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence.*] Which irresistibly and speedily seized on them, wheresoever he found them; and spared not their lives: but took away the first-born of all their cattle by a pestilential disease, (Exod. xii. 30.)

Ver. 51. *And smote all the first-born in Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham.*] As well as the first-born of all their children (the prop of their families, in whom the hope of future succession was principally laid), throughout the dwellings of the posterity of Cham, the father of the Egyptians, (Gen. x. 6. Exod. xii. 30.)

Ver. 52. *But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.*] And by that means brought forth his people from among them, (Exod. xii. 31.) as peaceably as a shepherd doth his sheep out of

their folds, (not so much as a dog moving his tongue against them, Exod. xi. 7.) and then directed them the way they should go in the wilderness, (Exod. xiii. 18. 21.) where he graciously provided for them.

Ver. 53. *And he led them on safely, so that they feared not; but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.*] He conducted them securely, even through the Red Sea, without any apprehension of danger, (Exod. xiv. 19. 22.) but overwhelmed Pharaoh and his followers, in that very path where *they* travelled in safety.

Ver. 54. *And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased.*] And never ceased his care over them (notwithstanding all their provocations), till he brought them into his holy land; and (in the issue) to this Mount Zion: which, not their prowess, but his mighty power, by the hand of David, won for them, (2 Sam. v. 6, &c.)

Ver. 55. *He cast out the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.*] And after he had expelled the old inhabitants, who were not able to stand before them, (Josh. xii.) he distributed, by lot, to every tribe their portion of land, which they should inherit, (Josh. xiv.) and settled them in a quiet possession of it, (Josh. xxi. 43, 44.)

Ver. 56. *Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies.*] Yet, after so many, and so great benefits, they behaved themselves no better, in that good land, than they had done in the wilderness: but as soon as Joshua and the elders were dead, (Judg. ii. 7. 10.) they disbelieved the threatenings of their law, and would make a trial whether they were true or not; provoking the great Lord of all the world, by slighting his commandments, which he had so strictly enjoined them to observe.

Ver. 57. *But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.*] They imitated their forefathers, both in their frequent apostacies from God, and in their falseness to their promises, when they pretended to repent of them; (Judg. ii. 13. 18, 19. iii. 7, &c.) having depraved minds and hearts, which (like an ill-made bow, that never sends the arrow to the mark) would turn aside into crooked ways, and not be directed according to the will of God.

Ver. 58. *For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.*] For they highly incensed him, by their altars and images, (Judg. vi. 25.) which they built after the manner of the heathen, (Numb. xxii. 41.) in the high places; where they worshipped a number of false gods, (Judg. x. 6.) to his great offence and dishonour.

Ver. 59. *When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel.*] Which was so notorious, that the Judge of the world could not but take notice of it, and severely punish it; by abandoning that people, for whom he had done such wonders, into the hands of the Syrians, the Moabites, the Midianites, Philistines, and the children of Ammon (see the book of Judges), who made them as contemptible unto others, as they were loathsome unto him.

Ver. 60. *So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men.*] Insomuch that, at last, he quite forsook the city of Shiloh, where, in his tabernacle, he had been graciously pleased to be present with them, (1 Sam. iv. 3, 4.) and would never return unto it any more, (Jer. vii. 12. and see Argument of Psal. lxviii.)

Ver. 61. *And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemies' hand.*] Nay, he let the ark of the covenant, the special token of his presence with them, from whence his power was wont to appear most gloriously for them, not only fall into their hands; but be carried away captive by the Philistines, (1 Sam. iv. 11. 22. v. 1.)

Ver. 62. *He gave his people over also to the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.*] Whose sword slew a great number of his people; (1 Sam. iv. 10.) so exceeding angry was he with those, whom he had formerly taken into his special care, above all other nations, (Deut. xxxii. 8, 9.)

Ver. 63. *The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given to marriage.*] For it was by his Divine vengeance, more than the Philistines' valour, that they lost abundance of brave young men; the very flower of their army: by which means many of their virgins were constrained to remain unmarried; and they that found husbands were fain to omit all tokens of joy, in a time of public sorrow.

Ver. 64. *Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation.*] For some of their priests, who were peculiarly consecrated to God's service, were slain in this battle, (1 Sam. iv. 11.) and their wives, oppressed with grief, did not long survive, to make any public funeral for them, (ver. 20.)

Ver. 65. *Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.*] The Lord himself also (who was wont to fight for us) seemed no more concerned in all these calamities, which befel both us and our religion, than a mighty commander is at that which is done to his army when he is asleep, or overcome with wine: till at last, like such a great warrior (who being awaked calls for his arms, and charges the enemy with greater fury), he vindicated his honour in a terrible manner, and made a very great destruction among them, (1 Sam. v. 9. 11.)

Ver. 66. *And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts; he put them to a perpetual reproach.*] For, besides the fall of Dagon before the ark, he smote several cities of the Philistines, with a grievous sort of hemorrhoids; whereof many died, and the rest languished under most miserable torments: (1 Sam. v. 6. 9. 12.) the monuments of which they themselves were forced to make, and send back with the ark; to his great glory, and their eternal reproach, (vi. 3, 4. 9.)

Ver. 67. *Moreover, he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim.*] Yet he would not return to Shiloh again (which was in the tribe of Ephraim, the son of Joseph), nor have the ark of his presence placed there any more.

Ver. 68. *But chose the tribe of Judah, the Mount Zion, which he loved.*] But first it was brought to Kirjathaim, (1 Sam. vi. 21.) a city of the tribe of Judah, (Josh. xv. 6.) where he resolved hereafter to have his special residence: and so from thence (after a short stay at the house of Obed-Edom) unto Mount Zion, (1 Chron. xiii. 6. xvi. 1. 3. 29.) which he preferred before the hill of Kirjathaim, (1 Sam. vii. 1.) or any other place in all the country.

Ver. 69. *And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which he hath established for ever.*] There Solomon

built him a stately temple, which, as it was a high and lofty fabric, so was not moveable like his former habitation; but remained perpetually fixed, like the earth on which it stood.

Ver. 70. *He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheep-folds.*] For as he had rejected Shiloh, and chosen Zion for the place of his dwelling; so he had likewise rejected Saul, and chosen David (the father of Solomon) to be the king of his people: a man, who served him as faithfully in that office, as he had done his father in keeping of his sheep.

Ver. 71. *From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.*] From that mean employment he took him, and raised him to the highest charge and dignity; that the care he had employed in looking after the ewes, and their lambs when they should fall, he might exercise in governing his people; and endeavouring that they, whom he had chosen for his own peculiar inheritance, did no way miscarry.

Ver. 72. *So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.*] And he did not deceive his expectation; but governed them with equal integrity and prudence: never designing any thing but their good; and dexterously accomplishing whatsoever he designed.

PSALM LXXIX.

A Psalm of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was penned, in all probability, upon the same occasion with the seventy-fourth; *viz.* the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar: see what I have said there, in the Argument of that Psalm; and it will appear altogether unlikely, that this should have respect to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes: as many imagine, and among the rest Theodoret: which is the more strange, because the same reason he gives there why the seventy-fourth Psalm doth not belong to those times, (which he repeats again upon Psal. lxxx. 17.) lies as strongly against the application of this Psalm to the fury and rage wherewith that prince fell upon the Jewish nation. Whose miserable calamity under Nebuchadnezzar we find bewailed by Jeremiah, who then lived, (Jer. x. 25.) in the very words of the sixth and seventh verses of this Psalm; which is some indication that they both belong to the same matter: but whether Jeremiah took them from Asaph, or Asaph from him, I cannot certainly determine. The latter is most likely; because this Psalm seems to have been written after that desolation had for some time continued.

We read, indeed, in the first book of Maccabees, (vii. 16, 17.) two other verses of this Psalm, (*viz.* 2, 3.) applied to the slaughter of threescore of the devouter sort of Jews, presently after Antiochus's death. But that author quotes them, it is plain, as words which had been written in former days; and by him only made use of to his purpose: which was to shew, that the same cruelties were in great part acted over again, which their fathers had seen at the destruction of Jerusalem.

Ver. 1. *O GOD, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.*] O God, the supreme judge of the world, thou art not ignorant, we know, of our calamity, for it comes by thy order; but give us leave to represent unto thy majesty, the sad condition of the people and place which were once very dear unto thee; for profane nations have not only invaded our (or rather thy) country, to which thou hast a peculiar title, but polluted thy own house, which was separated to thy service alone; and laid it, together with Jerusalem, in ruinous heaps.

Ver. 2. *The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.*] Under which thy servants the priests, and other holy men, whom they have slain, could not have the honour to be buried; nor obtain the common civility of a grave: but the dead bodies of those whom thou lovedst, they have barbarously exposed to be devoured by ravenous beasts and birds.

Ver. 3. *Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and there was none to bury them.*] For they valued the shedding of their blood no more than the pouring out of water: which flowed in such abundance about Jerusalem, that they left not men enough alive to take care of the interment of the dead.

Ver. 4. *We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.*] And we that remain lead a most despicable life, being not only scorned and abused, but openly derided, and made the sport of the Edomites and other nations, which formerly stood in awe of us.

Ver. 5. *How long, Lord, wilt thou be angry? for ever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire?*] And, which is saddest of all, we have long complained of this, and find no relief; but only in our most passionate cries to thee, O Lord: the effects of whose just anger and jealousy we groan under (because we have forsaken thee, and been unfaithful to our covenant with thee), but hope they will not always last; nor proceed to make an utter end of us.

Ver. 6. *Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name.*] Pour them out rather (in as full a measure, and with as little pity, as they did our blood, ver. 3.) upon the Babylonians: who, though they have conquered many kingdoms, do not acknowledge thee at all, nor ascribe their successes to thy power: but to their idols whom they serve, and honour with that worship which is due to thee alone.

Ver. 7. *For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling-place.*] They have been the instruments, indeed, of thy vengeance; but have executed it with such cruelty, that, not content with the conquest of us, they have sought our total extirpation: having depopulated our country, and made that pleasant land a wilderness; which thou gavest to Jacob and his seed for their habitation.

Ver. 8. *O remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us; for we are brought very low.*] O let not his virtue, and the covenant thou madest with him, be forgotten; when thou reckonest with us for the sins of our forefathers; the punishment of which we beseech thee that we may bear no longer: speed our deliverance, good Lord; and how unworthy soever we be,

let thy tender compassion prevail with thee, to save us from utter ruin, which is very near; so few, so broken and spent we are, unless seasonably prevented by thy mercy.

Ver. 9. *Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.*] Send us that seasonable help, O God, from whom alone we expect it, and have heretofore very often received it; for it will tend much to the honour of thy almighty goodness (which in former times was much celebrated, but of late hath been exceedingly disparaged) to save us now, when none is able to preserve us: upon that account be pleased to pass by our sins, and to interpose for our deliverance; lest thou suffer together with us.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God? let him be known among the heathen in our sight, by the revenging of the blood of thy servants which is shed.*] While the idolatrous nations utter this insolent language (which is exceeding grievous, nay, insupportable, to us), If their God be so great in himself, and so kind to them, as they pretend; why doth he not take their part, and appear for their deliverance? O that thou wouldest put them to silence, by taking such an open and remarkable vengeance on these blasphemous nations for the blood they have shed; that not only we, but all the world, may see, thou hast a care of us thy servants.

Ver. 11. *Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die.*] Let the sighs and groans of those who lie in prison be as prevalent with thee as these prayers: and magnify thy power by preserving the lives of those whom they have condemned to die.

Ver. 12. *And render unto our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord.*] And when thou hast done with the Babylonians, reckon with our neighbours also, who have insulted over us, and derided us, or rather have spoken so reproachfully of thee, O God, that they justly deserve, not only to be paid home in their kind, but to be made seven times more contemptible than we have been.

Ver. 13. *So we thy people, and sheep of thy pasture, will give thee thanks for ever; we will shew forth thy praise to all generations.*] So we thy people, being conducted again to our land, and happily restored to live under thy government there, will never cease to give thanks unto thee, for thy benefits bestowed upon us: and be careful to transmit the memory of them to those who shall come after us, that all future generations may perpetuate thy praises.

PSALM LXXX.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim-eduth. A Psalm of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is something of kin to the former; deprecating the displeasure of the Almighty in a time of great calamity. Which, as all that I have met withal think, was either in the captivity of Judah and Benjamin by Nebuchadnezzar; or of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser. But it seems to me rather to have been penned between these two, in the time of Hezekiah: who had wrote a letter you find (2 Chron. xxxi. 6.) to the remnant that were escaped out of the hand of the king of Assyria; especially to Ephraim and Manasseh, the tribes nearest to them, that they would come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, and keep the Passover with them: which summons several of them obeyed; (ver. 11. 18.) and kept the feast as long again as they were wont, (ver. 23.) And when this was finished, they all went through the country, and threw down all the high places and altars that they found: not only in Judah, but in Benjamin also, Ephraim, and Manasseh, (2 Chron. xxxi. 1.)

But after this happy settlement, you read there, (xxxii. 1.) that the land was invaded by Sennacherib, and sorely distressed; to the great discouragement, no doubt, of those who had joined in the reformation: which moved Asaph (mentioned 2 Chron. xxix. 30. see the Argument of Psal. lxxiii.) most earnestly to beseech God (ver. 2. of this Psalm), that he would be pleased to stir up himself before Ephraim and Manasseh, as well as Benjamin (who was so linked to Judah, that part of Jerusalem and of the temple stood in that tribe); and let them see, by a remarkable deliverance, that their zeal for the purity of their religion was acceptable to him.

Another reason, indeed, there may be given (which I have not omitted in my Paraphrase) why these three are joined together, rather than any other, because they were the tribes (as we read in the second of Numbers), who, when they were in the wilderness, always marched behind the tabernacle when it moved; and had that part where the propitiatory was, from whence God sent his oracles, and the tokens of his power, just before them. But then there is this to be added, to make it probable that this Psalm was not penned in the time of the captivity, because, as then there was no ark; nor did God *sit between the cherubims* (concerning which phrase the learned reader may see Lud. de Dieu upon 1 Sam. iv. 4.) as he is said here to do; nor were Ephraim and Manasseh then mixed with them, that we read of: so, first of all, it is too full of elegancies for that time of utter desolation; and, secondly, the Greek expressly calls it, *A Psalm concerning the Assyrian;* (who is the *wild boar*, I suppose, that broke into God's vineyard, mentioned ver. 13.) and lastly, Hezekiah, I observe, applies himself to God (in the time of that distress by the king of Assyria), in the very language of the Psalmist; and begins his prayer just as Asaph doth here, to him *that sits between the cherubims,* desiring him to incline his ear to his requests, (2 Kings xix. 15, 16. Isa. xxxvii. 16, 17.)

It was delivered to the chief master of music, to be sung as the sixtieth Psalm, upon the instruments of six strings: which were wont to be used in solemn thanksgivings (see the Argument of that Psalm); for he nothing doubted God would hear their prayers, and destroy Sennacherib: or, perhaps, it was ordered afterward to be sung in that manner.

Ver. 1. *GIVE ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.*] O thou, who art the ruler and protector of thy people Israel, who didst long ago give a famous instance of thy power, in preserving Joseph, when he fell, like an innocent lamb, among a company of wolves, (Gen. xxxvii. 18, &c.) and conducting him to the highest preferment; reject not our humble petitions, which we put up unto thee

in the like distress; but shew that thou favourest us, by some illustrious token of thy presence among us, in thy holy place, from whence thou canst send angels to defend and deliver us, (2 Kings xix. 35.)

Ver. 2. *Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up thy strength, and come and save us.*] Let the posterity of Joseph, who beheld heretofore so many enemies fall before thee, when they attended upon the ark of thy presence in the wilderness, (Numb. ii. 18. 20. 22.) and have lately been very zealous in thy service, (2 Chron. xxx. 1. xxxi. 1.) see thy power to be as great as ever (though for some time it hath not appeared at all for us): and that thou art as forward, in due time, to grant us a glorious deliverance.

Ver. 3. *Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.*] Restore us, O God, to our former happiness; and for that end restore us into thy favour: and then there will soon be an end of our calamities.

Ver. 4. *O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?*] For what can the greatest armies (2 Kings xviii. 17.) do against thee, who art the supreme Lord of all, the absolute commander of the hosts of heaven? whose help we have most importunately implored, and long waited for, as men impatient to see our enemies so prevalent; though hitherto thou hast been so exceeding angry with us, that thou hast not heard the prayers of thy people.

Ver. 5. *Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.*] But hast turned our joyful feasts unto fasting and weeping; and our plenty into scarcity of all things, but only of tears: which we pour out in large measure; when we think of the danger we are in, to perish by famine and by thirst, (2 Chron. xxxii. 21.)

Ver. 6. *Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours; and our enemies laugh among themselves.*] Our neighbours, the Edomites and others, either pick quarrels with us, or strive among themselves who shall make the greatest booty of us: while our enemies, that besiege us, mock at our inability to help ourselves; and at our confidence which we place in thee, (2 Kings xviii. 22, 23. 2 Chron. xxxii. 15.)

Ver. 7. *Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.*] Convince them, O Lord, that it is not vainly placed, by restoring us again to our former happiness: which it is easy for thee to do, who hast all the hosts of heaven at thy command; if thou wilt but be pleased to favour us (as we again beseech thee thou wilt), and then no harm shall befal us.

Ver. 8. *Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.*] We were once very dear unto thee, when thou didst transplant us, like a choice vine, out of Egypt into this country: from whence thou didst drive out the ancient inhabitants, that we might be settled in their place.

Ver. 9. *Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.*] Thou preparedst the way for us, making our terror fall upon them before we came, (Josh. ii. 9—11.) so that we easily expelled them; and being there firmly established, like a vine deeply rooted in a fruitful soil, we increased and multiplied, till we peopled all the land.

Ver. 10. *The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.*] And as a rich vine covers the hill, on the side of which it is planted, or overtops the lofty cedars, which support it: so we obscured the splendour of the greatest kingdoms, and made mighty kings become tributaries to us, (1 Kings iv. 24.)

Ver. 11. *She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.*] For our empire extended itself (just like such a luxuriant vine, which spreads its branches every way) from the Midland Sea to the river Euphrates, 1 Kings iv. 21. (See Psal. lxxii. 8.)

Ver. 12. *Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?*] But now, alas! thou hast withdrawn thy protection from us; and we are left like a vineyard without its hedges: all our strong holds and fenced cities are taken; (2 Kings xviii. 3.) so that we lie open to be made a prey to every one that hath a mind to spoil us.

Ver. 13. *The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.*] The Assyrian king, like a wild boar, that breaks into a vineyard, treads down all under his feet, and seeks to root us up: there is no savage beast can make greater havoc among the vines, than his barbarous soldiers have done throughout all the land; which they have eaten up, (2 Kings xix. 29.)

Ver. 14. *Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts; look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine.*] Our only hope is, that thou, the great Lord of hosts, on whom the event of wars, as of all things else, depends, wilt be reconciled unto us, and drive him out again; deny us not this request, we beseech thee; but, though we be destitute of all help on earth, yet send us some from heaven; and, though very unworthy, yet graciously take us into thy care, and repair the breaches which they have made.

Ver. 15. *And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself.*] Be favourable to the remnant of us, which, by thy powerful preservation, is still left; like the root or stock of a vine, which may sprout out again: (2 Kings xix. 30, 31.) and especially to our king, whom thou hast endued with zeal and courageous resolution for thy service (2 Chron. xxx. 32.) and for our defence (xxxii. 5—8.)

Ver. 16. *It is burnt with fire; it is cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.*] Great numbers of us are destroyed already, and may be compared to the numerous branches of that remaining stock, which, being cut off, are burnt with fire: and all the rest of us must perish, if thou wilt not be reconciled unto us, but still persevere in thy anger towards us.

Ver. 17. *Let thy hand be upon the Man of thy right hand, upon the Son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.*] Which we beseech thee turn away; and be the mighty helper of our sovereign, who is dearly beloved by thee; of that excellent prince, whom thou hast endued with zeal and courageous resolution, for thy service, and for our defence and preservation, (ver. 15.)

Ver. 18. *So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.*] Which shall be an everlasting obligation upon us, never to revolt from thee to our former idolatry: do but free us from these deadly enemies and we will worship thee alone; and never cease to praise thee, and acknowledge that we owe our very lives to thy almighty goodness.

Ver. 19. *Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause thy*

face to shine, and we shall be saved.] Hear us, O great Lord, who hast all the angels in heaven at thy command; hear us, we once more beseech thee, and restore us perfectly to our former happiness; and, in order to it, restore us to thy favour; and let there be a speedy end of all these calamities.

PSALM LXXXI.

To the chief Musician, upon Gittith. A Psalm of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

There was a special command of God, as the Psalmist here takes notice, (ver. 4.) for the making a joyful sound with trumpets, upon all the solemn days, especially their new-moons, (Numb. x. 10.) But more particularly upon the first day of the seventh month; which is called by this peculiar name, above all other days, *a day of blowing the trumpets*, i. e. from morning unto evening, (Numb. xxix. 1.) and *a memorial of blowing trumpets*, (Lev. xxiii. 24.) For this solemn day, I suppose, this Psalm was composed; and the reason is apparent why they were to blow with trumpets longer on this day than any other, because it was the first new-moon in the year (for, according to their old computation before they came out of Egypt, their year began on this day, as appears from Exod. xxiii. 16. xxxiv. 22. where the feast of in-gathering their fruits is said to be in the *revolution*, or *the end, of the year*); and God intended, it is possible, to awaken them (as Maimonides conjectures), to prepare themselves by strict inquiry into their lives, and by hearty repentance, for the great day of atonement, which was the tenth of this month.

But of what this blowing trumpets or cornets was a *memorial*, is not easy to resolve; the Hebrews themselves being at such a loss about it, that they are fain to go as far back as the deliverance of Isaac, and the offering a ram in his stead, for the reason of it. The clearest account of which, it seems to me, may be fetched from this Psalm; which plainly intimates, that the *blowing with trumpets* at that time, related to something which ensued upon their happy deliverance out of Egypt: which, though it began upon the first day of the first month, according to their new computation, (which took its original from that deliverance, in memory of which God ordained the feast of the Passover to begin on that day, Lev. xxiii. 6.) yet they had not a complete body of laws delivered to them by Moses, till the first day of the seventh month, which was the feast of blowing trumpets.

Moses received, indeed, several laws in the third month, (Exod. xix. 1. 3, &c.) on the third day whereof (ver. 11. 16. 19, 20.) God himself appeared on the top of Mount Sinai, with the sound of a trumpet exceeding loud and prolonged (to which I believe this feast hath respect), and spake the ten commandments; after which Moses delivered them a body of civil laws, (Exod. xxi.—xxiii.) But they did not know the manner of the Divine service, for which they came out of Egypt into the wilderness, till Moses had been twice forty days, one after the other, in the mount; and, likewise (as several of the Jews understand those passages in Deut. ix. relating to this matter), had forty days more bewailed their sin in making the golden calf. Which sixscore days, if we add to the time between their coming out of Egypt, and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, and to the six days which passed before Moses was called up into the cloud, it will fall out exactly to be the first day of the seventh month, when he began to give orders for the building of the tabernacle, and making all things belonging to God's house; according to the direction he had received in the mount. I am sure this was the precise time of their setting up the altar, and beginning to offer burnt-offerings, after their return from the captivity at Babylon, before the foundation of the temple was laid. For you read, Ezra iii. 1. 6. it was upon the first day of the seventh month; in the middle of which they also kept the feast of tabernacles, as Moses had appointed; in memory of their dwelling in booths in the wilderness, under the government of the Almighty, unto which the Psalmist here hath respect in the next words, which we translate *in the time appointed*, that is, at the *full moon* (as De Dieu hath demonstrated), on which the feast of tabernacles was kept in this seventh month: at which feast Solomon dedicated his temple, 1 Kings viii. 2. where it is called the *feast:* and may well be meant here in the last words of the third verse of this Psalm, our *solemn feast-day*. Unless we take both the *new moon feast*, and the *full moon* (*i. e.* feast of tabernacles), to be meant, and translate it *on the day of our feast*. The same first day also was kept holy by Nehemiah, with great solemnity, viii. 1. 8—10. where you find how the book of the law was distinctly read to the people on this day, and the sense of it explained: so that they came the next day again for further instruction, (ver. 13.)

Now that they might be more mindful of those Divine benefits which in this month they commemorated, more than in any other month in the year, Asaph (in the days of David, it is likely) composed this Psalm, and directed it to the master of music, to be sung (as the eighth Psalm upon *Gittith*) in the beginning of it, upon the feast of trumpets. And he introduces God himself (before whom they were summoned, as I said, by these trumpets to appear), instructing them in the end of this solemnity; and complaining of their forgetfulness of his benefits, in giving them so great a deliverance out of the Egyptian slavery; and of their hard-heartedness, in preferring their own inventions, and the miseries they brought thereby upon themselves, before his counsels, and the happiness he intended for them. Which happiness is expressed in the last verse, by *satisfying them with honey out of the rock:* concerning which the learned may consult Bochartus, de Sacris Animal. par. ii. lib. iv. cap. 12.

Ver. 1. *SING aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.*] Sing praises aloud unto God, to whose mighty power alone we owe the deliverance which we now commemorate: shout with the voice of triumph, in honour of him, who was so good unto your forefathers.

Ver. 2. *Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp, with the psaltery.*] Offer to him your cheerful hymns; and, to complete the melody, and express the greatness of your joy, let some with timbrels, others with the pleasant harp, and others with the psaltery, celebrate the memory of his mercies.

Ver. 3. *Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast-day.*] And let the priests especially (Numb. x. 8.) take care to blow with the trumpets at the sacred solemnity; on the first day of the seventh month, the principal new moon in the year (which is attended with another feast at the full moon of this month): that all the people may call to mind the trump of God, (Exod. xix. 16. 19.) which our fathers heard, at his dreadful appearance on Mount Sinai, to give his law unto them.

Ver. 4. *For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.*] For thus hath the Lord decreed in that law; where the God of our father Jacob requires this service of us, (Lev. xxiii. 24, &c.)

Ver. 5. *This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt; where I heard a language that I understood not.*] This he appointed unto the children of Joseph, as well as the rest of the tribes of Israel, for a perpetual memorial of his benefits: when he, going out over all the land of Egypt, (Exod. xi. 4. xii. 23. 29.) and destroying all the first-born, forced them to let us depart into the wilderness; where we heard, to our great astonishment (for we were never before acquainted with it), the voice of God.

Ver. 6. *I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots.*] Who, considering with himself what a title he had to our service (having taken off the heavy burdens which the Egyptians laid upon our backs, and rid our hands of those sordid and dirty employments, wherein they made us labour),

Ver. 7. *Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder; I proved thee at the waters of Meribah. Selah.*] Admonished us to this effect, saying; You cried to me by reason of your cruel servitude under Pharaoh's task-masters, (Exod. ii. 23.) and I delivered you out of it; (iii. 8.) and again answered your prayers, when you cried unto me in a new distress, at the Red Sea, (xiv. 10. 13.) but confounded the Egyptians, with thunder and lightning out of the cloudy pillar, (ver. 24, 25. Psal. lxxvii. 18.) After all which, I might well expect you should depend upon me: but presently found you full of distrust and infidelity at the waters of strife; (Exod. xvii. 7.) where I gave you a new proof of my power.

Ver. 8. *Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me.*] Of which, if you will still enjoy the benefit, then give ear, O my people, and I will solemnly declare my will; and give a severe charge unto you, O ye Israelites, if you resolve to be obedient to my admonitions.

Ver. 9. *There shall no strange god be in thee: neither shalt thou worship any strange god.*] Then this is the principal thing upon which all the rest depends; you shall not suffer any other gods to be acknowledged among you, but only me; (Exod. xx. 3. 23.) nor shall you worship the gods of other nations, (xxiii. 13. 24. 32.)

Ver. 10. *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.*] For I, and I alone, am the living Lord, the eternal God; who gave a being to all things; and who am your peculiar benefactor; having brought you out of the Egyptian bondage: (Exod. xix. 4. xx. 2.) and if you will be faithful and obedient to me, enlarge your desires as far as you please, and I will satisfy them; for all the world is mine, (xix. 5. xxiii. 25.)

Ver. 11. *But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.*] But, notwithstanding their seeming compliance with him, and the fair promises they made him, (Exod. xix. 8. xx. 19. xxiv. 3. 7.) he presently complained (xxxii. 7—9. as I hear him still do at this day), My people would not be obedient to me; and Israel would not rest contented with me alone:

Ver. 12. *So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust; and they walked in their own counsels.*] So, provoked by their long stubbornness, I took no farther care of them, but left them to do as they pleased; saying, Let them follow their own inventions.

Ver. 13. *O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!*] But it had been better for them to have adhered to me; who, out of my tender affection to their good, still wished, even when they were so refractory, that my people Israel had been so wise as to have followed my directions, and been led by my advice; and not their own foolish imaginations.

Ver. 14. *I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.*] Then I should in a short time have quelled all their enemies; and, by one victory after another, have quite destroyed those adversaries: which (since I brought them into Canaan) have often miserably afflicted and oppressed them, (Judg. ii. 2, 3. 14, 15. 19, 20. iii. 1, &c. iv. 2.)

Ver. 15. *The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.*] All that maligned their prosperity, and set themselves against the design of the Lord, to make them victorious over their enemies, should have been so daunted, that they should have dissembled their inward hatred, and been forced, at least, to a counterfeit submission: but his people should have seen blessed days, and enjoyed a substantial and durable happiness without any interruption.

Ver. 16. *He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.*] He should have made their country exceeding fruitful, and fed them with the richest wheat: and I myself, saith the Lord, would have blessed thee with such plenty, that in the deserts thou shouldest have found the sweetest refreshments; and, without any care of thine, the bees should have laboured honey for thee, in the rocks, and holes of trees, and such-like places, (Deut. xxxii. 13. Judg. xiv. 8. 1 Sam. xiv. 25, 26.)

PSALM LXXXII.

A Psalm of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

Though there had been a notable reformation made by Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xix. 5, 6, &c.) of those corruptions which had been growing in the supreme court of judicature at Jerusalem, as well as in the lesser in other cities, ever since the times of David and Solomon; (who took care to see justice done, 1 Chron. xviii. 14. 1 Kings iii. 9. 28.) yet it appears, by the frequent complaints of Isaiah, that when Hezekiah (in whose days that prophet lived) came to the crown, there was a general depravá-

tion again; and that, notwithstanding the amendment he had made in matters of the Divine worship, (2 Chron. xxx. xxxi.) and his resolutions and endeavours, no question to reform the abuses which were in their civil judicatures, (as I have expounded Psal. lxxv. 2, 3.) they continued still exceeding corrupt. Insomuch that Isaiah calls their judges, *rulers of Sodom*, (Isa. i. 10. when he finds no fault with their religious services, ver. 11, 12, &c.) and says, their princes were rebellious, companions of thieves, loving gifts, and following after rewards, (ver. 23.)

Where it is evident he describes the judges in the highest court of all; who are called by the name of *princes* in several places, particularly in Jeremiah: who being condemned by the priests, and prophets, and people, as a man worthy to die, (Jer. xxvi. 8, 9.) was brought before the princes, (ver. 10, 11.) at whose bar he cleared himself so well, that they acquitted him, (ver. 16.)

And as there they are called *princes*, with respect to their superiority over the people, so here in this Psalm they are called *Elohim, gods*, in respect to the fountain of their power, which was from the Most High; who honoured them with his own name; which is so frequent for those of the supreme court, that some, not unreasonably, understand those words, (Judg. ix. 13.) which we render, *Cheers the heart of God and man*, in this manner; Wine alike cheers both princes and people, judges and clients, the meaner persons (called in this Psalm *Adam, man*, ver. 6, 7.) as well as the greatest, who, in opposition to them, are called *gods*. Whom Asaph (who lived in the time of Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxix. 30. see Psal. lxxiii.) admonishes to be more careful in their duty; and to remember that God observed them, and would judge them.

Ver. 1. *GOD standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.*] Remember, O ye judges, whose ministers you are; (2 Chron. xix. 6.) and consider, that you are not so powerful, but God, who hath put you in his place, and honoured you with his name, (Exod. xxii. 28.) is far greater: and, as he is present in your court to observe what you do, so will call you to a strict account, and severely punish you, if you judge amiss.

Ver. 2. *How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.*] How dare you then pronounce an unrighteous sentence? Is it not time to leave off your partiality? and no longer to favour a bad cause, because the man is rich and great; and can either give you a large bribe, if you will judge it for him; or do you a mischief, if you give sentence against him?

Ver. 3. *Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.*] Your duty is, to do equal justice to all men that come before you; and to take a particular care, that the poor and the fatherless do not suffer because they have no money to give, nor any friend to solicit, for the defence of a righteous cause: and that the men of low condition, and such as are reduced to very great want, be not condemned, when they are injuriously prosecuted, by those who are above them.

Ver. 4. *Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.*] See that you protect and deliver him that is quite exhausted and miserably oppressed with poverty; let them not become a prey to violent men, who have no conscience; but put it out of their power to undo them.

Ver. 5. *They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.*] These are the constant admonitions which the men of God give the judges; but, alas! hitherto they have little prevailed. For they will not study the laws of God; or if they do, will not think it their interest to be governed by them: but are blinded by bribes, or by their corrupt affections, to do any thing that they would have them; insomuch that the foundations of the kingdom, which are justice and truth, are shaken; all things are in confusion, and in danger to come to utter ruin, (Isa. v. 23, 24, x. 1—3.)

Ver. 6. *I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High.*] Hear therefore the sentence of God upon you (whose words these are); I have put my majesty upon you; and, though you be no more than other men in yourselves, have by my constitution raised you to such a dignity on earth, as my celestial ministers have in heaven.

Ver. 7. *But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.*] Yet this shall not privilege you in your unjust proceedings; but since you have no regard to me, nor to your office, I will have as little regard to you: for you shall perish like one of the common men, without any respect to your honour; and be thrown down from your seats, like the tyrants and cruel oppressors that have been before you.

Ver. 8. *Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.*] Let us see this sentence fulfilled, O God, the righteous judge; and do not suffer the insolent iniquity of these men any longer: but redress all those evils wherewith such men have filled not only this nation, but all the world; which belongs to thee, and thou wilt one day sure vindicate mankind, as the just owner of them, from the tyranny of those impious governors; who now abuse them, as if they had an absolute dominion over them.

PSALM LXXXIII.

A Song or Psalm of Asaph.

ARGUMENT.

It is the common opinion, that the combination of powerful enemies, against which they here implore the Divine assistance, was that mentioned in 2 Chron. xx. in the days of Jehoshaphat. The reason is, because the children of Lot, (ver. 8.) *viz.* the Moabites and Ammonites, (the ground of whose quarrel with the Jews is set down in Judg. xi.) seem to have been the principal in this confederacy, and the other but assistants; as it is plain they were in that invasion, (2 Chron. xx. 1.) And then the author of this Psalm, must be either Jahaziel, one of Asaph's posterity (upon whom you read there, ver. 14. the Spirit of the Lord then came), or some other in those days, whose proper name this was. Which is much more probable than their conjecture, who think the author was Asaph, in the days of David; who subdued, indeed, the Moabites and Edomites, and other neighbouring nations: but we do not read of any confederacy they made against him; much less that they sent as far as

Assyria for help; or that they began the war, as the people here mentioned did.

The same may be said against the application of it to the conquests made in the days of Uzziah, over several people here mentioned, (2 Chron. xxvi. 6—8.) Or to the invasion made by Sennacherib king of Assyria: who did not join himself (as we read here, ver. 8.) with other nations; but by the forces of his own kingdom alone, as far as appears, came up against them.

There are those, indeed, that take in all the attempts made upon them, since that in Jehoshaphat's days, by several nations; the last of which was Assyria; whose king came to do that which the rest had not been able to effect: and then the author is easily found to be the same that I have named in the Argument of the foregoing, and many other Psalms. And which way soever we are pleased to determine the matter, it is plain, in general, that many nations, both near and remote, who had a hatred to the Jews, set themselves together, when this Psalm was penned, to destroy them: assaulting them not only severally, but conjunctly; entering into consultation also, and conspiring together how to effect it. Which hatred continuing after their return to their own land, from the captivity of Babylon, gave occasion to Theodoret to say (both in his preface to this Psalm, and upon the twelfth verse of it), that the Psalmist here complains of the opposition which several of their neighbours made to the rebuilding of the temple and of Jerusalem.

But this seems more improbable than all the rest; many of those countries, here named, being before that time destroyed: and the Assyrians themselves (as he himself observes upon ver. 8.) being not then extant. Though whensoever this confederacy happened, there was very great reason for that solicitous and vehement importunity wherewith this Psalm begins.

Why it was called a *Song-Psalm*, see Psalm lxvii.

Ver. 1. *KEEP not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.*] O God, the supreme judge of the world, whose power is so great, that the united forces of all men on earth, or angels in heaven, are not to be compared with it; (2 Chron. xx. 6. 12.) who with one word of thy mouth canst dissipate this great army; do not refuse now to answer our prayers in this sore distress: O do not shut thy merciful ears to our cries, nor quietly see us perish, most mighty God.

Ver. 2. *For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult; and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.*] For we are surprised with a sudden invasion of numerous enemies (haters of thee and thy worship, as much as of our nation), who make a dreadful noise, like the waves of the sea, (2 Chron. xx. 2.) and proudly promising themselves a victory, insult as if they had already won it.

Ver. 3. *They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.*] They have, with equal malice and subtilty, carried on a close design against thy people; and with great secrecy consulted how to destroy, not only us, whom thou hast hitherto wonderfully protected as thy jewels, but thy temple also; and the secret place wherein thou there dwellest.

Ver. 4. *They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.*] Come, say they one to another, let us agree and join all the power we have together; not merely to make a conquest of them, but for their utter extirpation, (2 Chron. xx. 11.) that there may be no mention hereafter in the world, of such a people as the commonwealth of Israel.

Ver. 5. *For they have consulted together with one consent; they are confederate against thee.*] And accordingly ten several nations are combined heartily in this design; and how different soever their inclinations are upon other accounts, they have all entered into a solemn league, and made a covenant of mutual help, and of employing their joint endeavours, totally to subvert that government and religion which thou hast established.

Ver. 6. *The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes.*] Those warlike nations, the Edomites and Ishmaelites, who dwell in tents, are engaged in this enterprise: and so are the Moabites, and others descended from Hagar, the mother of Ishmael.

Ver. 7. *Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines, with the inhabitants of Tyre.*] With whom are united our neighbours the Gebalites, (Josh. xiii. 5.) the Ammonites; our old enemies the Amalekites and Philistines; and they that dwell in and about the famous city of Tyre.

Ver. 8. *Assur also is joined with them; they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah.*] And, to add to their strength, they have called the powerful nation of the Assyrians into their association: on whose assistance the Moabites and Ammonites (the authors of this war) do principally rely.

Ver. 9. *Do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook of Kishon.*] The greater need we have of thy assistance, and with the greater earnestness we beseech thee to make them an example of human weakness: by defeating them, as thou didst that vast army of the Midianites and their confederates, (Judg. vi. 5. vii. 12.) whom Gideon overthrew with no greater power than three hundred men; (Judg. vii. 21, 22. compared with 2 Chron. xx. 23.) and as thou didst in former times to that famous captain Sisera, (who fell by the hand of a woman, Judg. iv. 21.) and to Jabin his king: who, together with his army, was swept away in the brook of Kishon, (Judg. iv. 21. 24. v. 21.)

Ver. 10. *Which perished at En-dor: they became as dung for the earth.*] A great slaughter there was of them near En-dor, (compare Judg. v. 19. with Josh. xvii. 11.) where their carcasses lay and rotted; and served instead of dung, to fatten and enrich the earth.

Ver. 11. *Make their nobles like Oreb and like Zeeb; yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna.*] Let their princes and commanders fall like Oreb and Zeeb: (Judg. vii. 25.) and their kings not be able to save themselves by flight; but be taken and slain, like Zebah and Zalmunna, (Judg. viii. 12. 21.)

Ver. 12. *Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.*] Who came with a design, (Judg. vi. 3—5.) as these nations do now, (2 Chron. xx. 10, 11.) to possess themselves of that pleasant land, wherein thou dwellest among us in thy holy habitation.

Ver. 13. *O my God, make them like a wheel: as the stubble before the wind.*] O my God, whose goodness hath never failed us in distress; let them not be able to stand their ground; but put them to flight, and make them run as

swiftly as a ball down a hill; disperse all their forces like the chaff, when it is blown about with a furious wind.

Ver. 14. *As the fire burneth the wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire.*] Blast and consume them utterly; as the lightning, or the scorching rays of the sun in a long drought do the leaves of the forest trees, or the grass upon the mountains, (Joel i. 19.)

Ver. 15. *So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.*] Raise a dreadful tempest to affright them; and pursue them so with thy vengeance, that they may be shattered and driven away instantly, as in a whirlwind: put them into such a panic fear that they may not know which way to turn, but clash against one another in a terrible confusion, (2 Chron. xx. 22, &c.)

Ver. 16. *Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O Lord.*] And make those that escape so ashamed at this disgraceful disappointment, that they may not be able to hold up their heads, nor deny thy power to be superior to theirs, but humbly seek thy favour.

Ver. 17. *Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish.*] This is the worst we wish them, notwithstanding their enmity to us; that they may be so astonished and confounded at their defeat, as never to recover any courage to assault us: nay, together with their credit and their courage, quite lose their power to give us any farther trouble.

Ver. 18. *That men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth.*] And thereby be convinced, which they would not believe before, that thou art what thou art called, the true and only God, who givest being to all things; and art the supreme governor, not only of us, but of all the nations upon earth.

PSALM LXXXIV.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith. A Psalm for the Sons of Korah.

ARGUMENT.

It is uncertain to what times this Psalm belongs: they seem to have most reason on their side, who think it was composed upon the same occasion with the forty-second and forty-third, when David, forced from Jerusalem by the rebellion of his son Absalom, most passionately longed to be restored to the place of God's worship. But it may as well, or better, in my judgment, be thought to have been composed by some pious Levite in the country, when Sennacherib's army had blocked up the way to Jerusalem, and hindered them from waiting upon the service of God at the temple: where he judged the lowest ministry, that of a porter (as we read ver. 10.) to be far more honourable than the highest preferment among pagan nations. And thus I shall take the liberty to expound it in my Paraphrase: pointing the reader to such places in the history of that sad time, as I think will explain some passages of this Psalm: which, after their freedom was restored, by the destruction of Sennacherib's army, the author of it delivered to the master of music in the temple, to be sung as the eighth Psalm. (See there.)

Ver. 1. *HOW amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!*] It is impossible to express the affection I have to thy dwelling-place, O Lord; who art attended there by the ministry of the heavenly host, (Isa. xxxvii. 16.) and needest none of our services.

Ver. 2. *My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.*] But we cannot live with any satisfaction, while we are absent from thee; for I am ready to faint away in ardent longings to tread again in the courts of the Lord's house: where my tongue and my hands, as well as my mind, would gladly be employed in the praises of our God; who in this excels all other, (2 Kings xix. 4. 16. 18.) that he lives for ever.

Ver. 3. *Yea, the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God.*] It grieves me, O mighty Lord of all the heavenly hosts, whose subject I am, and infinitely engaged to thee, to see the very birds, who know nothing of thee, enjoy that liberty which is denied me: who am here lamenting my distance from thee, when the sparrows and the ring-doves have their constant residence at thy house; and there live so undisturbed, that they build their nests, and bring forth their young, in the rafters of it.

Ver. 4. *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.*] O how happy are they who partake of such a privilege! who live so near thy house, and frequent it so much, as if it were their own! Their delightful employment is, with never-ceasing praises, to pay their thankful acknowledgments unto thee.

Ver. 5. *Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.*] And happy also is that man (how mean soever his outward condition be) who, relying upon thy Divine protection, (Exod. xxxiv. 24.) goes up three times a year to the solemn feast at Jerusalem: or when he is debarred that liberty, as I now am, is one of those devout persons, whose hearts are more in the highways that lead thither, than at their own home.

Ver. 6. *Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.*] Who travelling through the troublesome valley of Baca, where there is no water, pass it as cheerfully, as if it abounded with pleasant springs: and, depending on God, as the fountain of what they want, receive from him the blessing of plentiful and seasonable showers, to refresh them in their journey:

Ver. 7. *They go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.*] So that the whole company go from stage to stage, with an unwearied vigour; till they all present themselves before God, to receive his blessing in his temple, upon the hill of Zion.

Ver. 8. *O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.*] O mighty Lord, who commandest all the heavenly hosts, which attend in that holy place, (and are far more numerous than the armies that invade us, 2 Chron. xxxii. 7.) make me one of that happy number; and restore me, O God, who deliveredst Jacob out of all his troubles, to the liberty of waiting upon thee there.

Ver. 9. *Behold, O God our Shield, and look upon the face of thine Anointed.*] Look graciously upon me, O God, who hast hitherto been our protector against the most powerful enemies; and accept the prayer of our sovereign, who petitions thee still to be our defender, (2 Kings xix. 19.)

Ver. 10. *For a day in thy courts is better than a thou-*

sand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.] For one day spent in thy courts, is far more pleasant than a thousand in any other place; and I had rather lie at the gates of thy house, than live in the most splendid condition in idolatrous countries.

Ver. 11. *For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*] For though our happiness be sometimes clouded, yet the Lord, like the sun, will dispel the darkness of affliction; and, having brought us out of a disconsolate condition, defend and secure us in a better: (2 Kings xx. 6.) the Lord will give those favour with others, and advance them to great honour; (2 Chron. xxxii. 22, 23.) he will never be sparing of his blessings, but heap them abundantly on those who sincerely do his will in all things, (2 Kings xviii. 5, 6. xx. 3.)

Ver. 12. *O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.*] O most mighty Lord, who commandest all the host of heaven, happy is that man, who, by his integrity, preserves this hope and confidence in thee; though, for the present, he be restrained from the delightful enjoyment of thee in thy temple.

PSALM LXXXV.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm for the Sons of Korah.

ARGUMENT.

It is thought by many, that this Psalm was composed by some of the sons of Korah, after David's banishment from Jerusalem by his son Absalom, (called a captivity, as we read Psal. xiv. *ult.*) and his happy restoration to his kingdom; though not to such a settlement as they desired. But it may be as well, or better, applied to the miraculous providence which drove Sennacherib out of the land, (who had taken many captives, Isa. v. 13.) and restored them to the happy liberty, whose loss they bewailed in the Psalm foregoing.

Which way soever we understand it, the composure is such, that it might be much better used by them after their return from the captivity of Babylon, than at any other time: when they were infested with many enemies, who disturbed the peaceable enjoyment of their country and religion. And therefore it is possible it might be reviewed, if not made, in those days, and delivered to the chief master of music in the temple, to be sung presently after the foundation of it was laid, (Ezra iii. 10, 11, &c.) but the work hindered from proceeding by the opposition of their enemies. And so I shall interpret it.

Ver. 1. *LORD, thou hast been favourable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.*] Thou hast been exceeding kind unto us, O Lord; and we most thankfully acknowledge the favour thou hast done us: in delivering us, the posterity of Jacob, out of our sad captivity; and restoring us to the land in which thou thyself hast chosen to dwell, (Ezra i.)

Ver. 2. *Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people: thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.*] Our sins kept us from it, in banishment, a long time; but now thou hast graciously pardoned both our idolatry, and all the other crimes for which we justly suffered.

Ver. 3. *Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger.*] Thou hast put an end to the sore punishments which in thy heavy displeasure thou inflictedst on us: and turned thy severity, which, like fire, had almost consumed us, into great clemency and mercy towards us.

Ver. 4. *Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger towards us to cease.*] Complete, good Lord, our deliverance, which thou hast thus graciously begun: and let not our ingratitude provoke thee to continue this new vexation and trouble that is befallen us, (Ezra iv. 4, 5. 21. 23.)

Ver. 5. *Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?*] Which forced us to sigh, and say, in the anguish of our souls, Will there never be an end of our miseries? Is it not enough that the foregoing generation hath felt the sad effects of thine anger, but it must extend itself to us also, and our posterity?

Ver. 6. *Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?*] Will it not be more for thy honour, not only to preserve this feeble life which thou hast bestowed on us, but to give us a perfect recovery? that thy people may have nothing to damp their joy and entire satisfaction in thy goodness to them.

Ver. 7. *Shew us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation.*] Make us so happy, good Lord; and, though we deserve, indeed, to be more miserable than we are, yet let thy mercy prevail with thee to grant us a complete deliverance.

Ver. 8. *I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly.*] I will wait patiently upon the Lord, the judge of the world, for a gracious answer to these prayers; hoping that he will not condemn us to farther punishment; but settle his people, who devoutly worship him, in a prosperous tranquillity; provided they return not again to their old idolatry.

Ver. 9. *Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.*] He will be so far from deserting those who fear to offend him; that I am confident the time approaches, when he will finish what he hath begun to do for us, in rebuilding our temple, (Ezra v. 2. 8. vi. 7, 8, &c.) and restoring our country to its ancient dignity and splendour.

Ver. 10. *Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*] For, methinks, I see goodness and fidelity, justice and concord (which are the principal glory of a kingdom), meeting together, like ancient friends, which have been long absent, and embracing each other.

Ver. 11. *Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.*] And, as truth and honesty, with all other virtues, shall grow and flourish among us (like flowers and herbs in the spring, after a tedious winter), so God shall faithfully fulfil his promises to us, and exercise a most gracious providence over us.

Ver. 12. *Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase.*] Yea, the Lord will do us good beyond our expectation: and reward our fruitfulness in good works, with such a large and plentiful increase of the fruits of the earth, as shall demonstrate the bounty of heaven to us.

Ver. 13. *Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps.*] He will govern us with great justice and mercy; having his faithful promises always before his eyes: from that rule he will never swerve; but steadfastly proceed by it, as the constant method he will hold in his Divine administrations.

PSALM LXXXVI.

A Prayer of David.

ARGUMENT.

The title satisfies us that David was the author of this Psalm; which the collector of this third book found, I suppose, after the other two were made up and published, and so placed it here, among those which belong to the same subject. For though it was composed by David, when he was so persecuted, either by Saul or Absalom, that he was stripped of all he had, and left in a most forlorn condition, (ver. 1.) yet Theodoret thinks it was made with a prospect of the attempt which the Assyrians made upon Jerusalem, and the hope which Hezekiah then placed in God for deliverance. Which notion, it is likely, he had from the Jews; who say, that this prayer was made use of by Hezekiah in the time of that sore distress: for the first words of this Psalm are the same with his in 2 Kings xix. 16. and the eighth and ninth verses may very fitly be accommodated to that history (as I have there observed), but the rest a great deal better to David.

Ver. 1. *BOW down thine ear, O Lord, hear me: for I am poor and needy.*] There cannot be a fitter object of thy mercy, O Lord, than thy poor supplicant, who beseeches thee graciously to condescend to his request; for else he is utterly undone, being quite destitute of all human help.

Ver. 2. *Preserve my soul, for I am holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.*] And yet my life is in imminent danger, unless thou dost preserve it; as many reasons make me hope thou wilt: for, as thou the righteous judge hast been long my benefactor, and I am perfectly innocent of that my enemies charge me withal, so I myself have been a reliever of others in their need; and besides, am a faithful servant of thine, who depends entirely upon thee, and hath no confidence in any thing but only thy almighty goodness.

Ver. 3. *Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily.*] Whose merciful help I have also implored with most importunate and incessant prayers; which is another reason of my hope, that thou wilt take compassion upon me, O Lord.

Ver. 4. *Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.*] And turn the present sorrow of thy servant into joy and gladness: for I have placed my hope entirely in thee, O Lord; and expect nothing but from thee alone.

Ver. 5. *For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.*] Who art no less bountiful (which is another exceeding great encouragement to me) than I am indigent; ready also to pardon those that have offended thee: yea, to shew abundant kindness to every one of them, in his greatest distress; when, with unfeigned devotion, he calls upon thee.

Ver. 6. *Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.*] As I now do, O Lord, most humbly beseeching thee, with repeated entreaties, to give a favourable answer to these prayers and supplications; whereby I deprecate thy displeasure, and sue unto thee for favour.

Ver. 7. *In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.*] Which I beseech thee let me the rather obtain, because my distress is so great and so urgent, that thy power will now be the more magnified in delivering me: as heretofore thou hast been wont to do, upon such earnest petitions as these are unto thee.

Ver. 8. *Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works.*] For nothing is too hard for thee; nor art thou unwilling to do more kindnesses for us, because thou hast done so many already: but, as appears by thy unparalleled works, dost incomparably excel (whatsoever strangers think, 2 Kings xviii. 15.) all those that are worshipped in the world as gods; who are not able so much as to help and preserve themselves.

Ver. 9. *All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name.*] Which shall move all our neighbouring nations, (2 Chron. xxxii. 23.) as all the rest shall do in the days of that great King which we expect, (Rom. xv. 9.) to acknowledge thee, O Lord, to be their Creator; and with humble veneration to submit themselves unto thee, and to honour thee with their highest praises.

Ver. 10. *For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone.*] For they shall clearly see, by the magnificence of thy marvellous works, that thou art infinitely superior to all those powers whom they adore: and that, in truth, there is no God, but thou thyself alone.

Ver. 11. *Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.*] Which I so firmly believe, that I desire nothing more than to be perfectly instructed in all thy will; which I will sincerely observe: knit my heart, O Lord, in such pious affections to thee, that it may never in the least dissent from thee; nor be disturbed with any vain cares, but entirely bent to study this alone—what is pleasing unto thee.

Ver. 12. *I will praise thee, O Lord, my God, with all my heart; and I will glorify thy name for evermore.*] Whom I am bound to praise, both as the supreme Lord of all, and as my most bountiful benefactor, with all the powers of my soul: and, accordingly, I do now most thankfully acknowledge thee; and will never cease to honour thee, and to do thee service, as long as I have any being.

Ver. 13. *For great is thy mercy towards me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.*] For the benefits thou hast bestowed on me are as inestimable as they are innumerable: I owe my very life to thee, which hath been often snatched out of the extremest dangers; wherein I had inevitably perished, if thou hadst not mercifully delivered me, (1 Sam. xxiii. &c.)

Ver. 14. *O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul, and have not set thee before them.*] Behold, O God, a new opportunity to glorify that mercy; for proud and ambitious

men (2 Sam. xv. 1, 2, &c.) have made an insurrection against me, and raised a most formidable army, (ver. 12, 13.) to take away that life, which thou hast so miraculously preserved: having no regard to thy providence; nor refusing any means whereby they may satisfy their unjust desires.

Ver. 15. *But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious; long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.*] All our comfort is, that thou, not they, dost govern the world: who art no less compassionate, than thou art powerful; readily forgiving offences, of bearing long before thou punishest them; choosing rather to heap thy benefits upon us, and never failing to perform thy faithful promises.

Ver. 16. *O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.*] In confidence of which, I humbly beseech thy favour and gracious pardon, though I have highly offended thee: assist thy poor servant, by thy irresistible power, against those mighty forces, which are ready to assault me: O deliver me, who am here humbled in the lowest manner before thee; looking upon myself as more absolutely thine, than any slave that is born in our house can be ours.

Ver. 17. *Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed; because thou Lord hast holpen me, and comforted me.*] Vouchsafe me now in this great distress such manifest tokens of thy favour towards me, that I may not only be delivered, but all may take notice of it: and good men thereby be encouraged to hope in thee; but they that hate me be utterly confounded, to see him whom they intended to destroy, not only preserved, but blessed with comforts proportionable to the sorrow he hath endured.

PSALM LXXXVII.

A Psalm or Song for the Sons of Korah.

ARGUMENT.

It is as uncertain when this *Psalm-Song* (see lxvii.) was composed, as which of the sons of Korah was the author of it. But it is manifest enough, that it was written in commendation of Jerusalem, situate in the holy mountains of Zion (where David built his palace, and afterward settled the ark) and of Moriah, where Solomon built the temple. There are those that think it was composed upon the anniversary of the birth or coronation of some great prince, such as Hezekiah: in whose days this city was made more famous, by the glorious deliverance which God gave it, from the power of the king of Assyria's army. But this is a mere conjecture; and I shall follow the vulgar opinion: according to which, the beginning of this Psalm must be looked upon as very abrupt; but expresses the greater rapture of joyful admiration, wherein the Psalmist was.

Ver. 1. *HIS foundation is in the holy mountains.*] Great is the strength and beauty of this place, which is founded by God in the high mountains; which he hath peculiarly chosen for the seat of his kingdom, and of his priesthood.

Ver. 2. *The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.*] Though the Lord loves all the habitations of his people, yet none are so dear unto him as those within the gates of Jerusalem: a principal part of which is Zion.

Ver. 3. *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.*] There is no city in the world, of which such glorious things are foretold, or of which any thing can now be said, comparable to what we can truly boast of thee, that art the city which God himself hath separated for his own habitation.

Ver. 4. *I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there.*] I do not deny the due praises which belong to other places and countries; but rather am wont to make honourable mention among my acquaintance and familiars, of Egypt and Babylon; and of those who are nearer to us, the Philistines, Tyrians, and Arabians: bidding them observe, that such a notable person was born among them.

Ver. 5. *And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her.*] But what is this to Zion? of whom it shall be said in future times, that (not such a single person, but) this and that man; a great many worthies, and far more eminent, both in learning and in arms, but especially in piety, were born in her; for she hath no meaner instructor than the Most High; who shall settle her in a flourishing estate, by educating and forming her inhabitants to the most excellent qualities.

Ver. 6. *The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah.*] So that when he himself, whose eyes nothing can escape, shall look over the register of those nations, and count the famous men they have produced; he shall find only some one great man, and he comparatively of no great value, was born among them.

Ver. 7. *As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there: all my springs are in thee.*] But in thee, O city of God, he shall find multitudes of excellent persons, all eminent in their kind, even among those of lower rank, as well as in the higher. And there shall be a constant succession of such, as there is of water in the spring.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

A Song or Psalm for the Sons of Korah; to the chief Musician upon Mahalath Leannoth. Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite.

ARGUMENT.

Who this Heman was, is uncertain. Not he who was the famous singer in David's time; for he was of the tribe of Levi: (1 Chron. vi. 32. xv. 17.) whereas this was descended from Zerah, who was one of the sons of Judah, 1 Chron. ii. 6. where we find, indeed, not only Heman, but Ethan (to whom the next Psalm is ascribed), mentioned as two of Zerah's sons: but we cannot reasonably think that they were, in those early times, the authors of these two Psalms; because Ethan plainly makes mention of David, and the promise which God had passed to him of a perpetual kingdom.

It remains, therefore, that these two here mentioned were of the posterity of those sons of Zerah (and thence called Ezrahites), and had the names of their noble an-

cestors given them, to perpetuate the memory of those who were so famous for wisdom, (1 Kings iv. 31.)

But in what time they lived cannot be certainly determined. It is probable, when Jeconiah, otherwise called Jehoiachin (or after him Zedekiah) was taken, and carried captive to Babylon, together with abundance of the nobility, and the principal commanders and artisans, (2 Kings xxiv. 14—16.) In some of which ranks I suppose this Heman was; who being cast into a dark prison, (which hath made some fancy Jehoiachin himself to have made it, ver. 6. 8.) or otherwise as miserably treated as if he had been in a dungeon, bewails his private calamity: as Ethan in the next Psalm doth the public.

Why it is called a *Song-Psalm*, see upon the title of Psal. lxvii. It was to be sung by the sons of Korah interchangeably, which is the meaning of *Leannoth*, upon a flute, or pipe, (see Psal. liii.) to the known tune of *Maschil;* (see Psal. xxxii.) Some passages in it may be applied to our Saviour's death and burial in his grave, which the prophet Isaiah compares to a prison; and so is used by our church upon Good-Friday.

Ver. 1. *O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee.*] O mighty Lord, by whose gracious care and good providence I have been hitherto preserved, and on whom all my hopes of safety still depend; I have not failed in this sore affliction to implore thy mercy, with most earnest cries, without any intermission.

Ver. 2. *Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry.*] Let them at last prevail, I beseech thee; and do not reject my petition, accompanied with sad moans and doleful lamentations; but vouchsafe a favourable answer to it.

Ver. 3. *For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.*] For my soul is overcharged with great variety of long-continued evils; which have brought me so low, that there is but a step between me and the grave.

Ver. 4. *I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength.*] All that know my condition look upon me as utterly lost; and I have no reason to think otherwise, being quite spent, and having no power at all to help myself.

Ver. 5. *Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand.*] I am no longer one of this world, from whose society I am quite separated; there is little difference between me and those, who, being slain in a battle, and cast all together into one common grave, are no farther regarded; or those whose families are so wholly extirpated, that there are none left to preserve their memory.

Ver. 6. *Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.*] For thou hast thrust me down into a deep and dismal dungeon (which I can compare to nothing but a grave); wherein I lie neglected, and see no hope of being delivered.

Ver. 7. *Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Selah.*] My spirit is ready to sink under the weight of thy displeasure, while my calamities fall upon me so fast, and so heavily (like the mountainous waves of the sea), one after another, that it is impossible to express the soreness of my affliction.

Ver. 8. *Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; thou hast made me an abomination unto them: I am shut up, and I cannot come forth.*] I am not allowed to have any familiarity with my friends or acquaintance, no more than if I were in another world; and as for other men, they abominate to come into such a loathsome place; where I am kept so close, that I have no means of getting out.

Ver. 9. *Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: Lord, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out mine hands unto thee.*] Nor can I do any thing there but weep, till I am almost blind, by reason of the miseries I endure: only I cease not to look up unto thee, O Lord, continually, who art my only companion in this solitary and helpless condition; imploring thy aid with fervent prayers, and longing expectations; saying,

Ver. 10. *Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead rise and praise thee? Selah.*] Make haste, good Lord, to deliver me, if thou intendest any kindness to me; otherwise I shall presently perish; and then, without the greatest miracle, there is no help for me: for can I with any reason expect, that thou shouldest do wonders for me among the dead, when thou wouldest do nothing for me while I was alive? and raise me out of my grave, when thou wouldest not bring me out of prison.

Ver. 11. *Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction?*] Now is the time to declare the love thou bearest to me; and to perform the promise thou hast made to them that faithfully serve thee; for if thou dost defer thy relief, I die; and what can I hope for, when I am rotten in my grave?

Ver. 12. *Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?*] Shall thy power be apparent there where nothing is seen? and wilt thou convince men how good and how just thou art to thy servants, in the place where they are no more remembered?

Ver. 13. *But unto thee have I cried, O Lord, and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.*] Thus, O Lord, I cry unto thee in the anguish of my soul; which keeps me awake to present my prayers unto thee, before the morning light.

Ver. 14. *Lord, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?*] Though, alas! they have no effect; but I see myself deserted, notwithstanding all my prayers, in these miserable straits; wherein I lie sighing, to think what the reason should be that thou deniest me thy help, and takest no notice of me.

Ver. 15. *I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.*] Which is the more strange, because I faint away under my misery, which hath continued many years, and under the sad prospect I have before me of more dreadful calamities; which so astonish me, that I know not what to do with myself.

Ver. 16. *Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off.*] I only bemoan over again my forlorn estate, which grows still more deplorable; I suffer not merely the effects of thy anger, (ver. 7.) but of thy severest and most terrible displeasure; wherewith I am so overwhelmed and oppressed, that I am scarce able to fetch my breath.

Ver. 17. *They came round about me daily like water; they compassed me about together.*] Which way soever I turn myself, I find that I am environed with them; and

they increase continually, like floods of water coming from several places, and at last meeting all together, to enclose and swallow me up.

Ver. 18. *Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.*] And there is no friend, no neighbour, comes near me to give me the least consolation: but all they whose sweet society was wont to help to mitigate my sorrow, are either dead, or kept from my sight; or hide themselves for fear of being thrust down, together with me, into this doleful place.

PSALM LXXXIX.

Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite.

ARGUMENT.

The author of this Psalm was near of kin to him that made the former (see the Argument there); and they lived, I suppose, in the same time. Only Heman bewailed some private affliction, which was befallen himself; whereas Ethan (after a thankful acknowledgment of the benefits God had bestowed upon them, and especially of his promise made to David by Samuel and Nathan, of settling the kingdom upon him and his posterity for ever) laments most sadly the public calamity; by the subversion of the royal family and government, in the days of Jehoiakim, or of Zedekiah. Whose miserable fate seems, in the conclusion of this Psalm, to be bewailed with the greater passion, because it looked like a breach of God's promise to David; and gave the Babylonians, and other nations, who assisted in their destruction, occasion to say, that notwithstanding all the promises they boasted of, and the fidelity of their God in their performance, there was now a period put to David's family and kingdom.

That is the clearest account I can give of the meaning of the last clause of the last verse but one; where we read that they *reproached the footsteps of his Anointed.* The word we render *footsteps,* signifies properly the *heel of a man's foot:* and from thence is translated to signify the *end* of any thing, as in Psal. cxix. 33. Which notion of it, in my judgment, best suits with all that goes before in this Psalm; concerning the stability of David's kingdom: which their enemies now boasted (as we would express it in our present language), they saw upon its last legs. And the truth is, it was never restored to that family till Christ the son of David came; to whom some passages in this Psalm are applied by the Jews themselves, in both the Bereschiths, and in other books; to which Aben Ezra and R. Solomon consent.

Why this Psalm is called *Maschil,* see Psal. xxxii. But why any should fancy, as some have done, that it was made by Jehoiachin, after he came out of prison, (2 Kings xxv. 27, 28.) I cannot conceive; unless the first words moved them to think that he who, in the foregoing Psalm, speaks of himself as in a dungeon, gives God thanks here for his deliverance.

Ver. 1. *I WILL sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.*] The innumerable calamities that are befallen us, shall not blot out the memory of the innumerable benefits which the Lord hath formerly bestowed on us; but I will sing of them without ceasing; and endeavour to make all posterity believe, notwithstanding our present desolation, that thou art faithful and constant to thy word.

Ver. 2. *For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever; thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.*] For I am confident thy mercy, which is immoveable, and endures for ever, will raise us out of these ruins: thy promises being as firm and steadfast as the heavens; in which we see an image of the unchangeableness of thy nature and of thy will.

Ver. 3. *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant.*] Which thou didst declare by thy prophet, saying, (1 Sam. xvi. 13. 2 Sam. iii. 9, 10. v. 2. vii. 15, 16. 28.) I have chosen David my faithful servant to be the governor of my people; and have made a covenant with him, confirmed by an oath

Ver. 4. *Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.*] That not only he, but his children after him, shall be settled in the throne; which, though it totter sometime, or be thrown down, shall be raised again, and continued throughout all succeeding generations.

Ver. 5. *And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord; thy faithfulness also in the congregation of thy saints.*] For which stupendous kindness, if we should forget to praise thee, or in this our calamitous condition distrust thy power and fidelity to make it good, the heavenly inhabitants will not fail to do it: but, in their holy assemblies, confess them both with their solemn praises.

Ver. 6. *For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?*] For there are none of the powers of the air they know (much less any upon earth) that can resist the Lord, and hinder the fulfilling of his will: the mightiest among themselves, they are sensible, are not to be compared with his majesty, to whom they are but ministers.

Ver. 7. *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.*] And when they assemble, in the greatest numbers, and make the most glorious court, stand in great fear and dread of him: attending, with awful reverence, what commands he will be pleased to lay upon them.

Ver. 8. *O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?*] With whom I will join, O Lord, the commander of all these heavenly hosts, and celebrate thy name on earth, as they do in heaven, saying: Where is he among them all that can equal thee, O most powerful Lord; whose faithfulness is as ready to fulfil thy promises, as the angels are to execute thy commands?

Ver. 9. *Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.*] The sea itself, which submits to nobody else, is under thy government: who, when it is a calm, makest it swell, as if it would overflow the earth; and reducest it, when it is in its greatest rage, to a perfect stillness again.

Ver. 10. *Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain: thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.*] There the Egyptians, who had been wounded before with many other grievous plagues, were utterly overthrown: and with the like irresistible power the Canaanites were scattered, at the entrance of thy people into the promised land.

Ver. 11. *The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world, and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.*] For thou art the owner of all things both in heaven and earth, and hast the justest right to dispose of them to whom thou pleasest; because the world, and all the inhabitants of it, are thy creatures.

Ver. 12. *The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.*] Whether we cast our eyes to the southern or northern parts of the earth, to the west towards Tabor, or eastwards towards Hermon, they all acknowledge thee their Creator; and rejoice in thy bountiful providence, which enriches them with all things needful for them.

Ver. 13. *Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.*] And thy power, extending itself throughout the whole, always effects in every place whatsoever thou designest; and that with an irresistible force; whether it be to punish evil-doers, or to preserve and exalt them that do well.

Ver. 14. *Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.*] But none shall be able to say thou dost them any wrong: because thou dost not rule the world merely by thy absolute power; but hast placed thy principal glory in justice and equity, mercy and fidelity; from which thou never swervest.

Ver. 15. *Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.*] Happy then are the people who live under thy righteous and merciful government; and hear the trumpet sound, which signifies the royal presence of thy majesty among them, and calls them to attend upon thee: (Numb. x. 10.) they shall spend their days most cheerfully, O Lord; being secure of thy favour, which will let them want nothing that is good for them.

Ver. 16. *In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.*] They shall not barely rejoice, but triumph, and that continually, in thy love to them, and thy power to defend them; and, walking in thy holy laws, shall, by thy goodness, be highly exalted, and made superior to all their enemies.

Ver. 17. *For thou art the glory of their strength; and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.*] For they owe not their conquests to their own valour, or forces, though never so great; but it is thou who givest illustrious victories to the smallest armies: and therefore by thy favour we hope, that our empire, which is now broken, shall be raised again to its former splendour.

Ver. 18. *For the Lord is our defence: and the Holy One of Israel is our King.*] For the Lord is still our protector, though our prince be taken, and made unable to defend us: he whom Israel adores, and acknowledges infinitely to transcend all other beings, is our King and Governor.

Ver. 19. *Then thou spakest in vision to the Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.*] Who then didst reveal thy mind, in a vision, to the holy prophet Samuel, (1 Sam. xvi. 1.) when the Philistines defied Israel, and grew terrible to them, (xvii. 10, 11. 24.) saying; I have provided myself a valiant champion (1 Sam. xvi. 18.) to be your deliverer: (2 Sam. iii. 18.) I have designed a person of singular worth, from among the common people, (1 Sam. xvi. 11.) to be promoted to the kingdom.

Ver. 20. *I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him.*] I have observed David, (1 Sam. xvi. 1.) and find him a man that will faithfully serve me: go, and anoint him with the holy oil; for I intend him for the governor of my people.

Ver. 21. *With whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him.*] With whom I will always be powerfully present, for his assistance, (1 Sam. xvii. 45, &c.) and never desert him, as I did Saul: (xviii. 12. 24. 28.) but my mighty power shall extraordinarily strengthen him in all his enterprises, (1 Sam. xxx. 6. 2 Sam. viii. 6. 14.)

Ver. 22. *The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him.*] The subtlest of his enemies shall not be able to circumvent him; nor the most malicious, how powerful soever, oppress him.

Ver. 23. *And will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.*] But after all their vain attempts, I will not only protect him from their crafty violence, but subdue all his adversaries under him, and destroy those that hate him. (2 Sam. vii. 9.)

Ver. 24. *But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him; and in my name shall his horn be exalted.*] He shall ever find me, not only faithful in my promise to him, but kind above his expectation; and, by my powerful assistance, and his confidence in it, his authority shall be highly exalted. (1 Chron. xiv. 17. 2 Sam. vii. 9. viii. 13.)

Ver. 25. *I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.*] On one hand he shall conquer the Philistines, and those that live upon the coast of the sea; (2 Sam. viii. 1.) and on the other hand the Syrians, as far as Tigris and Euphrates. (2 Sam. viii. 9, &c. x. 16. 19.)

Ver. 26. *He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.*] For he shall entirely depend on me in all his distresses, and fly to me for succour, as a child to his parent; saying, with more than usual love and confidence, Thou art my Father, as well as my omnipotent God, from whom alone I expect protection and deliverance.

Ver. 27. *Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.*] Which I will never fail to afford him, till I raise him to the prime dignity, among all those whom I call my sons; and set him so high above all other kings in the world, that he shall be a most eminent type of my Son, Christ, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords.

Ver. 28. *My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.*] Nothing shall alter these kind intentions towards him; but I will always have a love for him, and faithfully perform my covenant with him.

Ver. 29. *His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.*] Which is, that his family shall never be extinct; but, notwithstanding the changes which all things are subject unto here below, have the royal power continued in it, as long as the heavens endure. (2 Sam. vii. 16. 28, 29. Luke i. 32, 33.)

Ver. 30. *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments.*] If his successors, indeed, shall depart from the law which I have given you by my servant Moses, and not judge my people righteously;

Ver. 31. *If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments.*] If they profanely neglect or corrupt my reli-

gion, and observe not the rest of the rules of life which I have enjoined them:

Ver. 32. *Then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes.*] Then will I execute the threatenings which are in my law (Lev. xxvi.) upon them; and punish their transgressions with sore diseases, and their idolatries with several plagues, (2 Sam. vii. 14.)

Ver. 33. *Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.*] But I will not so chastise them, as never more to do good to his family; (2 Sam. vii. 25.) but I will still have a kindness for it, and faithfully keep my promise with it, (1 Kings xi. 34—36. xv. 4. 2 Kings viii. 19, &c.)

Ver. 34. *My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.*] I will not violate the covenant I have made with David, (2 Chron. xxi. 7.) nor retract the promise which I have solemnly passed to his family.

Ver. 35. *Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David.*] For I have unalterably sworn by my own incommunicable excellences, that I will as soon cease to be what I am, as deceive him.

Ver. 36. *His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.*] His family (as I said ver. 29.) shall never be quite extinct; but always remain in my favour, and hold the royal dignity as long as the sun shineth.

Ver. 37. *It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.*] The moon may as well fall from her orb, as his authority fall to the ground, and rise no more: let that be a witness of my fidelity, when you look upon it; (Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21.) and conclude, that after all the changes and eclipses his kingdom may suffer, it shall stand as fast as that and all the rest of the heavenly bodies.

Ver. 38. *But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.*] But all these promises, alas! so sacredly confirmed and oft repeated, have not secured it from a dismal subversion: for thou hast rejected, with the greatest contempt and indignation, our sovereign; one of the posterity of David, and his lawful successor in the kingdom, (2 Kings xxiv. 20. xxv. 6, 7. Lam. iv. 20.)

Ver. 39. *Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant; thou hast profaned his crown, by casting it to the ground.*] Thou seemest not to regard the covenant made with that thy faithful servant, (which thou promisedst not to break, ver. 34.) and, instead of raising his family higher than all other kings, (ver. 27.) hath suffered it to lose all its authority; which, together with the royal diadem, is vilely trodden under foot.

Ver. 40. *Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin.*] Thou hast broken down all the walls of Jerusalem, (2 Kings xxv. 10.) and made all his fortified places a mere desolation.

Ver. 41. *All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours.*] So that he hath no defence against those who have a mind to make a prey of him, (2 Kings xxiv. 2.) and is now scorned and derided by those who formerly dreaded him.

Ver. 42. *Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.*] Thou hast made his adversaries (whom thou promisedst to depress, ver. 23.) far stronger than himself: they have executed all that they designed, and now triumph in his ruin.

Ver. 43. *Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle.*] His forces have done him no service; but being shamefully routed, durst never rally again, to make any opposition to their enemies.

Ver. 44. *Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground.*] Thou hast put out that splendour which we thought should have been perpetual; (ver. 37, 38.) and hast utterly overturned his kingdom.

Ver. 45. *The days of his youth are shortened: thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.*] Thou hast made a speedy end of the reign of Jehoiachin, who in his youth is made a slave: (2 Kings xxiv. 8, &c.) and suffered Zedekiah to be most disgracefully condemned as a rebel, to lose his eyes, and remain a prisoner all the days of his life, (2 Kings xxv. 6, 7.)

Ver. 46. *How long, Lord, wilt thou hide thyself? for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?*] O what a sad condition is this, in which thou seemest wholly to neglect us! but, O Lord, wilt thou never appear for us again, and put a period to our miseries? wilt thou let thy anger burn, till we be utterly consumed?

Ver. 47. *Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?*] Our natural weakness pleads for some mercy; and emboldens us to beseech thee, that, since we must not only die unavoidably, but a short time will bring us to our graves, thou wilt be pleased to let us spend that little time in more ease; and not live, as if we were made for nothing else, but only to be miserable and to die.

Ver. 48. *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.*] For where is the man whose constitution is so firm, that he shall not yield to death? For what ability have we, though our enemies should not thus destroy us, to defend ourselves from the power of the grave?

Ver. 49. *Lord, where are thy former loving-kindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth?*] Lord, what a difference is there between our times, and those when thou wast so exceeding good to David! and swarest, most faithfully, to continue to him for ever thy loving-kindness, which we beseech thee now restore unto us.

Ver. 50. *Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people.*] Shew, O Lord, that thou dost not forget the scoffs and jeers, whereby our enemies augment the sufferings of thy servants: there is nothing I lay to heart so much, as all the reproaches of many and mighty nations.

Ver. 51. *Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O Lord; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.*] Who are thy enemies as well as ours: and have blasphemed thee, O Lord, and mocked at thee; as if our slavery were the effect of thy inability to protect us; and as if there were an end of the family and kingdom of David, thine anointed, which thou saidst should last for ever.

Ver. 52. *Blessed be the Lord for evermore. Amen, and amen.*] But let them laugh on; neither their scoffs, nor our calamity, shall hinder us from praising the Lord, and speaking good of him continually, in assured hope that he will at last deliver us. Let it be so, we beseech thee; let it be so, as we desire and hope; that we may ever praise thee for our happy restoration.

PART IV.

PSALM XC.

A Prayer of Moses, the Man of God.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins the fourth book of Psalms; in this differing from the rest—that as those of the first book are most of them ascribed to David, and those of the second in great part to the sons of Korah, and those of the third to Asaph; so there are few of these whose author is certainly known: and therefore, I suppose, were all put together, in one and the same collection. The first of them, indeed, being made by Moses, the Hebrews have entertained a conceit (which St. Jerome and St. Hilary also follow), that he was the author also of the ten next immediately ensuing. But, as there is no reason for that (it will appear in due place), so I can see no cause why we should fancy David, or some of the children of Moses in his time, or a singer of that name (as Aben Ezra conjectures), to have composed this present Psalm; when not only the title expressly gives it to that Moses who was *the man of God,* (as their lawgiver is called, Deut. xxxiii. 1.) or that famous prophet by whom God spake to them; but the Chaldee Paraphrase and the very matter of this Psalm, sufficiently shew that it was a meditation of his, when the people offended so highly against God in the wilderness, (especially by murmuring at the relation the spies brought them of the good land, Numb. xiv.) that he shortened their lives to seventy or eighty years at the most, and suffered them not to arrive at the age of their ancestors, or of Moses, Caleb, and Joshua, whose lives he prolonged to a hundred and twenty years.

Which grievous punishment Moses prays God they may lay to heart seriously, and so recover his favour, (ver. 12, &c.) who is the eternal God, as he tells them (in the beginning of the Psalm), and had been, in a particular manner, kind to their progenitors in former generations.

This is the substance of the Psalm: which the collector of this book thought fit to place in the very beginning of it; because of the great antiquity of this Psalm, and the dignity of its author.

Ver. 1. *LORD, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.*] O Lord, who sustainest and governest the whole world, thou hast been the constant protector of our nation for many ages; having afforded all things necessary for the defence and security of our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, when they had no certain dwelling-place, but were strangers in the land whither we are going, and supported us in the land of Egypt; where, in a time of dearth, thou madest an ample provision for us; as thou hast also done hitherto in this barren desert.

Ver. 2. *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.*] Where, though we have no towns nor houses, we ought to think ourselves safe; and to trust in thee, who art the same mighty God. Thou ever wast (not only before we and our forefathers were made, but before the mountains arose out of the waters, and thou commandedst the rest of the earth, and this beautiful world, to appear), and ever wilt be, whatever changes there be here, without any alteration.

Ver. 3. *Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.*] We have highly offended thee, indeed, and so did our first parents; who became thereby most wretched and miserable creatures, and were doomed by thee to return to the dust, out of which they were formed; as all their posterity must do, whensoever thou summonest them to obey that sentence thou hast passed upon them.

Ver. 4. *For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.*] And should we have a reprieve for a longer time than our first father Adam, and some of his successors had, who lived near to a thousand years, we should be wretched still: especially when we compared ourselves with thee; in whose account the longest life is as inconsiderable as one day, and that when it is spent and gone; nay, as three or four hours, which pass away in sleep.

Ver. 5. *Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up.*] But, alas! in these ages thou carriest men away suddenly; as a violent torrent doth those things it meets withal in its passage: they vanish like a dream when we awake; and are as grass, which in the morning is grown higher and stronger than it was:

Ver. 6. *In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.*] But how flourishing and fresh soever it then appear, is cut down before night, and loses all its beauty: such is the frailty of man; who is now in vigorous health, and anon languishes, and falls to the earth.

Ver. 7. *For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.*] This, I am sure, is our condition; who have so provoked thee to anger by our sins, that we perish in an instant, (Numb. xvi. 35. 46.) and are perpetually disturbed with dreadful apprehensions of thy heaviest displeasure, (xvii. 12, 13.)

Ver. 8. *Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.*] After many threatenings, thou hast proceeded, as a righteous judge, to call us to a severe account for all our foul crimes, though never so secretly committed; and makest it appear, by our punishments, to all the world, (Numb. xiv. 20, &c.) that we are a perverse generation, though we pretend to thy service.

Ver. 9. *For all our days are passed away in thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told.*] For we constantly feel some effects or other of thine anger; whereby our lives decline exceeding fast, and many times before we can say what is this, are at an end.

Ver. 10. *The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.*] We fall short of the days of our forefathers; being now all doomed to perish in the wilderness, and not to exceed, commonly, the age of seventy, or (if men be of a vigorous constitution) at most of eighty years: the best part of which also is spent in toilsome travels, (Numb. xx. 14. xxi. 4. xxxi. 11. Deut. ii. 1. 3, &c.) and

much sorrow and vexation; to see the strongest among us cut down like grass in a moment, or at least making great haste unto their graves.

Ver. 11. *Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.*] And yet, alas! who is there that seriously considers, and lays to heart, the dreadful effects of thy displeasure, which irresistibly falls upon us? (Numb. xxv. 1—3, &c.) or, with such a pious fear as it ought to excite, takes any care to prevent more terrible punishments than those we have felt already?

Ver. 12. *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*] Lord, do thou touch us with a sense of thy judgments; that we may not presume thus foolishly to offend thee, as our fathers have done: but, making a just account of the shortness and uncertainty of our lives, may wisely apply ourselves to make the best use we can of them, in repenting of our sins.

Ver. 13. *Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.*] And then be pleased to turn thy severity into kindness towards us: let it suffice, good Lord, that we have endured so many and long punishments; and now at last revoke or mitigate the sentence thou hast passed upon us, who, though very disobedient, are thy servants.

Ver. 14. *O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.*] O let us see some appearance of thy love to us; which may satisfy and cheer our languishing souls, like the morning light after a tedious night: and, instead of sighs and groans, fill us with shouts of joy all the remainder of our days.

Ver. 15. *Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.*] Compensate our past troubles with future comforts; and make our happiness to equal, if not exceed, the misery we have suffered.

Ver. 16. *Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.*] Declare to all the world that thou hast not quite forsaken us thy servants: but wilt still work wonders for us, and do more glorious and magnificent things for our children, though we have sinned against thee, (Numb. xx. 17, 18, &c. xxxi. 2. Deut. ii. 25. iii. 24.)

Ver. 17. *And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.*] Let them inherit, by the special favour of the Lord our God, that lovely and pleasant land, (Gen. xlix. 15. Deut. viii. 7, 8, &c.) which he hath promised to give us: and, for that end, direct and prosper our arms; that what we shall attempt in vain, if we be left to ourselves, may successfully be achieved by thy assistance, (Deut. viii. 17, 18, &c. xxxi. 6—8.) O prosper thou our undertaking, and make our arms victorious.

PSALM XCI.

ARGUMENT.

The author of this Psalm is not known, but the occasion seems to have been some great pestilence; in which the Psalmist commends an humble confidence in God, and ardent love to him, as the best security both in that and in all other dangers. Maimonides thinks (as other of the rabbins also do) that the Psalmist hath a peculiar respect to the incursions of evil spirits, ver. 5, 6. as in the following verses, 7, 8. to those mischiefs which may come from the hand of evil men. And as far as those spirits had any hand in the pestilence here spoken of, his opinion is true; and his words in general are very significant, that the Psalmist here *treats elegantly of that great Providence which protects and keeps us from all evils, both universal and particular*, &c. Thus he discourses in his More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 51. where we have the reason of that name which is given to this Psalm by the Talmudists; who call it *A Song of evil Spirits.* (See Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. in the word שֵׁדִים.)

Now there is no pestilence so likely to have given occasion to this Psalm, as that in the latter end of David's reign; who, having numbered the people, and not made those acknowledgments to God which the law in that case prescribed, (Exod. xii.) had this sad choice given him by the prophet Gad—whether he would be punished for his negligence by famine, or by the sword of his enemies, or by pestilence. And submitting to the last (which God sent a destroying angel to inflict, 2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 16.) was taught, it is not unlikely, by that prophet, called David's *seer*, to recommend himself to the Divine protection, in the words of this Psalm. For that David himself was the author, as some conceive, is not so probable; because there is no such confession of his sin, and deprecation of the Divine displeasure, in this Psalm, as we read he made on this occasion, 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 Chron. xxi. unless we will imagine that he made this Psalm after that plague; to direct and excite all others to make God their refuge, as he had done in such-like calamities.

And this is far more probable, than that it should be made by Moses, as some of the Hebrews fancy; for none of the plagues in his time were so great as that in David's: and the most of them fell on those whom God had condemned to die in the wilderness (as he in the foregoing Psalm commemorates), and therefore he could not promise long life to them upon any terms; as the Psalmist here doth to the man that confides in God, (ver. 16.)

The ancient interpreters by *schacal* (which commonly signifies a lion) do so unanimously understand some kind of serpent, and not without reason (as Bochartus hath demonstrated), that I have followed them in my paraphrase of ver. 13. and made no mention of those beasts of prey, but only of venomous creatures.

Ver. 1. *HE that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*] It is an undoubted truth, that he who always makes the Divine Providence his sanctuary, and, commending himself to the protection of the Most High, rests in that, and troubles himself no farther, need not fear any danger whatsoever: but think himself safe and secure in his custody; who, as he is almighty, so will never fail those that piously confide in him.

Ver. 2. *I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.*] And therefore I will now encourage my soul to flee unto the Lord for shelter, saying, I have no confidence in any thing but him alone: he is a better defence than the most impregnable fortress; being the sovereign of the world, and so good to me, upon all occasions, that I will never distrust his kindness.

Ver. 3. *Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the*

fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.] I doubt not but he will deliver thee from all unseen dangers; particularly from this most destructive pestilence; whose venom catches men as insensibly and suddenly as the snare doth the bird, when it is laid by a cunning fowler.

Ver. 4. *He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.*] He will affectionately defend thee, as a hen doth her young ones under her wings: and therefore trust to his benign providence, and depend upon his faithful word; opposing that to all the dangers which threaten thee, as a soldier doth his shield and buckler to the darts and thrusts of his enemies.

Ver. 5. *Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day.*] Then thou needest not to be afraid, either of murderers and robbers; whose sudden attempts in the night make them more dreadful: nor of insurrections, and popular tumults, and the open assaults of any adversaries.

Ver. 6. *Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day.*] No, nor of those infectious diseases which arise from unknown causes: nor of those malignant fevers which rage in the hottest season of the year.

Ver. 7. *A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.*] Whereby, though whole towns and countries be depopulated, a thousand falling on the left hand, and ten thousand on the right hand, of thee, thou shalt remain untouched in that mortality:

Ver. 8. *Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.*] And only be a spectator of the Divine vengeance, in punishing wicked offenders so visibly, that thou canst not but observe his righteous judgments, (2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 16.)

Ver. 9. *Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation.*] Because I have placed my confidence and hope in thee, O Lord, who art a sanctuary to which no violence can approach.

Ver. 10. *There shall no evil befal thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.*] Therefore rest still assured, O my soul, that he will suffer no mischief to befal thee, nor let this plague seize upon thy family.

Ver. 11. *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.*] But give his angels, who are always ready to obey his commands, a strict charge to take care of thee, and to preserve thee whithersoever thou goest.

Ver. 12. *They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*] They shall as diligently attend thee, as a nurse doth her child: guiding, supporting, and defending thee, with such a solicitous affection, that the least harm shall not befal thee.

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.*] No, shouldest thou come among serpents, asps, and dragons, with all the rest of those venomous sorts of creatures, they shall not be able to do thee hurt; but thou shalt victoriously trample upon them and triumph over them, (Luke x. 19. Mark xvi. 18.)

Ver. 14. *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.*] For so hath the Lord declared his will and pleasure to be, when he gave commission to his angels concerning me, saying, Because he heartily loves me, and delights in me, therefore will I deliver him from all present danger, and raise him above the reach of all future: because he hath acknowledged me to be the only safe refuge, and relied on my power for his protection.

Ver. 15. *He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.*] I will grant him all his petitions; especially when he is in any distress, I will be present with him to afford him suitable comfort: and not only preserve him from perishing, but, after a happy deliverance, make him great and illustrious.

Ver. 16. *With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.*] And more than that, he shall have the satisfaction of enjoying his honour to a great old age: and when his strength fails him, I will not; but still give him evident proofs of my care of him, and kindness towards him.

PSALM XCII.

A Psalm or Song for the Sabbath-Day.

ARGUMENT.

If Adam had made this Psalm, presently after he was created, in the evening of the sabbath (which is a rabbinical fancy, mentioned in the Midrasch upon this place), sure it would have been set in this fourth book of Psalms before that of Moses: who may more probably be conceived to have composed it, to raise the hearts of the Israelites to the proper business of the sabbath-day: which was to praise God, when they meditated upon his wonderful works, not only of creation, but of providence in the government of the world. Several instances of which, in rewarding the good, and punishing the wicked, they themselves had seen since they came out of Egypt: and were to see more when they came into the land of Canaan; to keep their sabbath or rest there, after their long travels in the deserts: with respect to which, some think Moses might call this *A Psalm for the Sabbath-Day.*

But there is no certainty of these things; or rather it is certain, that neither of these conjectures is true. For as Adam in Paradise had no enemies to rise up against him, nor was troubled with any workers of iniquity, (such as we read of ver. 7. 11.) and there were no psalteries, harps, and instruments of music, then made, which Moses himself tells us were found out by Jubal; so those instruments were not employed in the service of God till the days of David: who may therefore more reasonably be thought to have made this Psalm for the sabbath, than either of the other; after God had given him such *rest round about from all his enemies,* 2 Sam. vii. 1. that he concluded he should be able to subdue those who should hereafter adventure to oppose him: such as those mentioned in the following chapter, viii. 10.

Ver. 1. *IT is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High.*] Now is the proper season to give thanks unto the Lord, for all the benefits we have received from him: and it is no less delightful, than it is profitable, to sing hymns, in the praise

of the Divine perfections; which infinitely transcend all that can be said, or thought of them.

Ver. 2. *To shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.*] This is the sweetest employment in the morning; and no entertainment equal to it at night: to commemorate and declare to all, how bountiful thou art; and how faithful in performing thy promises to those who depend on thy almighty goodness.

Ver. 3. *Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.*] Which ought to be celebrated with a full concert, not only of our cheerful voices, but of all the instruments of music.

Ver. 4. *For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.*] For all are too little, O Lord, to express the joy I have in the acts of thy providence; by whom, as the world was made, so it is still governed: it ravishes my spirit, and makes me shout for joy, to think how excellently thou orderest and disposest all things.

Ver. 5. *O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.*] Whose administration, though I cannot fully comprehend, yet I admire and applaud the astonishing greatness of thy works; and reverence the unsearchable depth of thy counsels and designs.

Ver. 6. *A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.*] Of which a stupid man, who looks not beyond his senses, is so wholly ignorant, that seeing himself, and other such-like fools, prosper and thrive, while better men are in trouble and affliction, he presently concludes, thou dost not meddle in our affairs; but leavest all to chance: for he doth not understand so much as this secret:

Ver. 7. *When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever.*] That when the lewdest men grow rich, high, and powerful; and their interest is such, that by their means all the workers of iniquity, and few other men, are promoted; the reason is, because nothing in this world is of any great value, nor of any long continuance; but, after they have flourished awhile in an empty glory, they shall be cut down like grass; and, which is more, never rise up again.

Ver. 8. *But thou, Lord, art most high for evermore.*] And that thou, who rulest all things, though far out of their sight, canst as well punish or reward men hereafter, as at present; being the eternal Lord.

Ver. 9. *For, lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.*] Who shewest thou dost not intend to let the wicked escape, though now they flourish; for thou hast begun already to give thy enemies, who have long prospered, a remarkable defeat: they have received such a notable blow, that I am confident they shall perish; and all their partakers, though never so numerous and strongly linked together, be dispersed and utterly destroyed.

Ver. 10. *But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.*] But my power and authority thou shalt raise to a formidable height: and crown that dignity with such undisturbed joy and pleasure, as shall prove the pious are not always miserable;

Ver. 11. *Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me.*] Nor the wicked always prosperous: for to all other pleasures this shall be added, that I shall see those deprived of all power who have long watched to do me mischief: or certainly hear of the ruin of those malicious men, who set themselves with all their might to destroy me.

Ver. 12. *The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.*] Which may be an encouragement to every good man to hope in God, and not question the justice of his providence, if at present he be afflicted: for as he shall overturn all his enemies at the last, so he will make the righteous flourish (not as the wicked do, like the grass, ver. 7. but) in a durable prosperity, like the fruitful palm and the stately cedar in Lebanon.

Ver. 13. *Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.*] For they are under the care of the Lord our God, whose house they frequent: and there partake of his Divine blessing, for the growth and increase of their happiness.

Ver. 14. *They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.*] Which shall not decay, as the strength and freshness of those trees will do with age; but the older they grow, the more happy fruits shall their piety produce: and they shall abound in wealth and honour as much as they do in that.

Ver. 15. *To shew that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.*] To demonstrate to all the world that the Lord is a most impartial governor, whom I have found my firm and unmoveable friend: and, assure yourselves, is so just and kind, that he will never let wickedness go unpunished, nor virtue be always unrewarded.

PSALM XCIII.

ARGUMENT.

There is no title in the Hebrew to tell us who was the author of this Psalm: nor was there any in Origen's Hexaplus, or in Eusebius, as Theodoret confesses: who found, in the Greek copy which he used, this Psalm called *An Ode of David, in Praise of God:* to which hath been since added, *in the day before the sabbath, when the earth began to be inhabited.* Which Musculus thinks was not rashly done by the Greeks: but suspects they were moved to it; because they knew, perhaps, that the Jews used this Psalm upon that day. As indeed they did: for the words of the Talmud, in the title Kedishim, confirm his suspicions; which are these (as I find them set down by De Dieu, upon the foregoing Psalm): "The Canticles which the Levites sung in the sanctuary were as follow: on the first day of the week the twenty-fourth, on the second the forty-eighth, on the third the eighty-second, on the fourth the ninety-fourth, on the fifth the eighty-first, on the sixth the ninety-third, and on the seventh the ninety-second.

Nor is the matter of this Psalm more distant from the foregoing, than the sixth day is from the seventh; for it seems to me to have been composed when some of those potent enemies began to take heart again, and threaten to disturb David's peace and tranquillity: which, in the foregoing Psalm, he had said he was confident they should never be able to overthrow. Though, in the more sub-

lime sense, it ought to be applied to the stability of Christ's kingdom: which several of the Jews acknowledge is prophesied of, in this, and in all the Psalms that follow unto the hundredth.

Ver. 1. *THE Lord reigneth; he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is established, that it cannot be moved.*] Let the nations boast of the power and splendour of their kings, and trust to their military preparations; this is our glory and our confidence, that the Lord reigneth over us: whose royal ornaments are not gold and precious stones, but majesty itself; and is not armed with sword and spear, but with almighty strength, which is ready to fight for us: who have this comfort also, that he who made the world will support that excellent order wherein we are settled; so that it shall not be in the power of man to disturb what he had established.

Ver. 2. *Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.*] This we know, because thy kingdom, O Lord, is fixed and immoveable: and did not begin now, when we were made thy peculiar people; but was, as thou art, from everlasting.

Ver. 3. *The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.*] We will not be afraid, therefore, though multitudes of combined enemies threaten to break in upon us like a flood: though they storm and rage, and insolently vaunt, as if they were sure to overwhelm us:

Ver. 4. *The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.*] Though they roar terribly, and be as numerous as the waters of the sea; swelling like its boisterous waves, in a furious tempest: the great Lord is above them all, and can instantly depress them as low as he pleases.

Ver. 5. *Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.*] And thy fidelity, in performing the promises wherein thou hast testified thy good will to us, is as unquestionable as thy power: no age shall find it fail: for it becomes not thee to start from thy word delivered to us by thy oracle; but it is thy glory to observe it sacredly for ever.

PSALM XCIV.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm also wants an inscription in the Hebrew, to tell us who was the author of it, but the later Greeks entitle David to it; and call it, *a Psalm of his for the fourth Day of the Week:* which they had (as I shewed in the Argument of the foregoing Psalm) from the Hebrew tradition in the Talmud: and he hath little acquaintance with the history of David, who doth not see that here is an exact description of the court of Saul, who abused their authority to all manner of oppression and violence (especially against David), without any fear of God, or thought that he would call them to any account for it; as he complains in several other Psalms; particularly lvii.—lix.

But it might as well be penned by any other holy man, who lived in times of general corruption; when (as Theodoret expresses it) their kings and their princes (*i. e.* judges) loved not to be tied to the law: but pronounced unjust sentences, and committed murders; selling the blood of innocents for bribes: of whom the prophet Isaiah sadly complains, ver. 21. of the first chapter; where, ver. 10. he calls them *rulers of Sodom*. Certain it is, the Psalmist, whosoever he was, desires he may see justice done upon such atheistical oppressors; and desires good men not to be discouraged under their tyranny: but patiently expect a happy issue of all the vexation which they gave them.

Ver. 1. *O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.*] O eternal Lord, the sovereign of the world, in whose power it is to punish the highest offenders; and to whom alone it belongs to take revenge on those who oppress thy people, when they should protect them: make thy justice conspicuous in a severe vengeance upon them.

Ver. 2. *Lift up thyself, thou Judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.*] Call them to an account, O thou righteous Judge of the whole earth: and, by making them suffer according to the wrong they have done, let those proud men, who have acted as if they thought none could control them, know they have a superior.

Ver. 3. *Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?*] We can scarce behold these wicked men without indignation; it tempts us to impatience, O Lord, to see how they prosper and triumph in their injurious proceedings:

Ver. 4. *How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?*] And to hear their insolent and provoking language; for they care not what they say; but as they intolerably abuse us, so they audaciously blaspheme thee: the whole company of them priding themselves in the mischief they do; and scornfully deriding those that tell thy judgments will overtake them.

Ver. 5. *They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage.*] They have crushed thy people so, that they dare scarce complain of their tyranny: which cruelly afflicts those who are dear unto thee, with all manner of rapines and extortions.

Ver. 6. *They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.*] They have no compassion upon the widow or the stranger; but rather spoil them; nay, condemn them to die upon false accusations (that they may possess themselves of their estates), because they have no patron to defend them: and in the same manner they murder, for it is no better, the poor fatherless children, whom they ought to protect from violence.

Ver. 7. *Yet they say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.*] And to harden themselves in their wickedness, they say; What do you tell us of the Lord? he knows not, or minds not, what we do here. Though there are such evident demonstrations of the Divine Providence over Jacob, and his posterity; yet, for all that, they fancy he doth not regard, nor will call them to any account for their doings.

Ver. 8. *Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?*] What stupid wretches are these! who think themselves the wisest, but are in truth the most brutish of all mankind: whom I would advise, if they have not perfectly lost their reason, to consider this

(and sure they are not such fools, but they may soon understand it):

Ver. 9. *He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?*] Shall not he hear your blasphemies, who gave you the faculty of hearing? and shall not he see all you do, who gave you the power of seeing? Is it possible he should give to others what he wants himself?

Ver. 10. *He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?*] He that taught all nations his will, shall not he correct them when they transgress it? to what purpose did he make man to know the difference between good and evil, but that he should observe it; and expect, if he did not, to suffer for it?

Ver. 11. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.*] Let them devise what ways they please, and flatter themselves with hopes to escape his vengeance: the Lord knows them all; and will make them see one day, that all such counsels and contrivances are but mere folly and vanity.

Ver. 12. *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law.*] And far better had it been for them to have been punished sooner: for not he that prospers in his wickedness is happy, but he whom thou chastenest, O Lord, when he doeth amiss; and thereby teachest to study and obey thy law with greater care and diligence.

Ver. 13. *That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.*] Which will quiet his mind under all his troubles, and at last procure the removal of them: when absolute destruction and ruin meantime are preparing for the ungodly.

Ver. 14. *For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.*] For the Lord will never abandon the care of his people; nor leave those whom he owns for his peculiar possession, to be utterly undone by the oppressions, which for a time they may endure.

Ver. 15. *But judgment shall return unto righteousness; and all the upright in heart shall follow it.*] But how much soever his judgments may seem to depart from the rules of righteousness, while the wicked flourish, and the godly are afflicted; they shall at last return to such a perfect conformity with them, that all honest-hearted men shall be encouraged thereby still to follow the Lord; and by no means to depart from their integrity, though all things look as if they were unequally carried.

Ver. 16. *Who will rise up for me against the evil-doers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?*] Let them learn by my example not to despond; for who is it but he alone, from whom I have expected, and still do expect, to receive protection and help against these malicious men? who make no conscience of what they do, and design my utter ruin.

Ver. 17. *Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.*] Whose power also is so great, that if the Lord had not seasonably interposed for my assistance and deliverance, I had not now been praying to him, but laid in a silent grave.

Ver. 18. *When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.*] This was my constant support, if at any time my heart even failed me, and I was ready to conclude, I cannot subsist any longer; then thy mercy, O Lord, sent me relief, and preserved me from the danger wherein I was afraid I should have unavoidably perished.

Ver. 19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.*] I have had innumerable perplexed thoughts, and anxious cares, which have extremely disquieted me: but as soon as ever I reflected on thy goodness, justice, and truth, they all vanished; and I felt such consolation from thence, as revived my dejected soul.

Ver. 20. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?*] And made me say, I will never imagine it possible, that thou shouldest favour the tyrannical proceedings of these unrighteous judges: who not only oppress thy people, but do it in a form of justice; and, under the colour and pretext of law, make them miserable.

Ver. 21. *They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.*] They assemble themselves together, and in full council combine to destroy the righteous: upon whom they pass a solemn sentence, though he be perfectly guiltless, to lose his life.

Ver. 22. *But the Lord is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge.*] But this doth not discourage me (whose case this is); let them decree what they please, and be too hard for all laws, the Lord, who hates unrighteousness, will be my defence; he, who hath been long very gracious to me, I am confident, will secure me from their violence:

Ver. 23. *And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off.*] And, more than that, retort it upon themselves; for the mischief they intended against me, shall fall upon their own head: he shall cut them off in their own wicked contrivances; though it be not in our power, yet the Lord our God, who hath undertaken the patronage of those that confide in him, shall cut them off.

PSALM XCV.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm likewise is without any title in the Hebrew; but the Greeks call it *A Psalm of David*, because the apostle to the Hebrews cites a passage out of it under his name, iv. 7. Though that, it must be confessed, is no concluding argument of its being composed by him; because it is usual to call the whole five books by the name of the Psalms of David; when it is certain he did not make them all, but only the greater part.

Whoever was the author, it looks as if it were intended to be a προσφώνησις, or solemn invitation of the people (when they were all assembled together on the sabbath, or some public occasion: Grotius, in Heb. iii. 7—13. thinks on the *feast of tabernacles*, for which this Psalm was composed) to praise the Lord their God, and hear instructions out of his law: and is justly employed still by the church, in the entrance of our morning service, for the very same purpose. For it plainly relates to the days of Christ, as the Jews confess, and the apostle proves, Heb. iii. iv. where he demonstrates to them of that nation, that the *rest* here spoken of could not be merely that in the land of Canaan, which their forefathers fell short of, by their disobedience to God in the wilder-

ness: but another, far better, into which they in *that day* were to be brought by the Messiah, a far greater captain of salvation than Joshua. And therefore it concerned them then, he shews, above all other times, to take care they did not harden their hearts against him, when he came to invite them to a participation of the greatest blessedness; but entertain his holy gospel with a cheerful and joyful obedience to it. Theodoret is of opinion, that it was particularly designed for the times of Josiah, when he made that notable reformation, (which we read of 2 Chron. xxxiv. xxxv.) and called them from the worship of idols to the service of the true God. But it could never be more properly used by that nation, than when the Lord Christ came to call them to repentance.

Ver. 1. *O COME, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation.*] O stir up yourselves, all ye that come hither to worship the Lord, and with united affections let us cheerfully sing his praises: let us lift up our voices, and triumphantly laud the Author of all the good we enjoy; and in whom we may safely confide for ever.

Ver. 2. *Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.*] Let us approach into his presence with thankful hearts, to acknowledge the benefits we have received from him: and devoutly proclaim, with triumphant hymns, what a joy it is to us that we may address ourselves unto him.

Ver. 3. *For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.*] For the Lord is infinitely powerful, and hath a sovereign authority; not only over all the princes on the earth, but all the angels and principalities in heaven.

Ver. 4. *In his hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is his also.*] All those treasures are in his possession, which lie in the deepest and most secret parts of the earth, whither none of our monarchs can extend their power: and the loftiest hills, which none but the clouds can touch, are part of his dominion.

Ver. 5. *The sea is his, and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land.*] The sea also obeys him alone; who hath an unquestionable title to it, and to all the rest of his wide empire: for he made both it and the dry land, with all the things contained therein.

Ver. 6. *O come, let us worship, and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.*] O be not backward then to comply with this renewed invitation; but let us all with the lowest protestations devoutly adore his majesty: let it not suffice us to do it once, but again let us, with humble reverence, bow both our bodies and souls, in token of our subjection to him: let us fall on our knees, and submissively acknowledge the duty we owe to the great Lord who gave us our being.

Ver. 7. *For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To-day, if ye will hear his voice.*] Which we, above all people, have reason to do, because he hath a peculiar relation to us, and kindness for us; providing for all our wants most liberally, and continually defending us from all dangers: O that you would therefore, without delay, listen to him, and be obedient to the voice of your Creator, Conservor, and Benefactor, who calls upon you most graciously, (by his own Son, Heb. iii. 6, 7. iv. 7.) saying;

Ver. 8. *Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness.*] Lay to heart what I have done for you, and be not so stupidly insensible as your fathers were; at that place whose name (Meribah and Massah) preserves the memory of their provoking strife with Moses, and temptation of God in the wilderness, (Exod. xvii. 2—7.)

Ver. 9. *When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.*] When they doubted of my power, and demanded new proofs of my presence among them, (Exod. xvii. 7.) though they had seen my wonderful works in their late deliverance at the Red Sea; and in making the bitter waters sweet; and in sending them bread from heaven, (Exod. xiv.—xvi.)

Ver. 10. *Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways.*] Nor did they then cease their discontented murmurings and distrust of me; but continued their stubborn infidelity, vexing, nay tiring, my patience for the space of forty years; long before the end of which I concluded that they were a people whose heart would never be steadfastly resolved to adhere unto me; for they did not mind what wonderful things I did for them, nor what I commanded them to do for me.

Ver. 11. *Unto whom I sware in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest.*] Which so highly displeased me, that I sware they should wander all their days, and die at last in the wilderness, (Numb. xiv. 28, &c.) and never enter into that good land, where I intended to give them rest after all their travels, (Deut. xii. 9.)

PSALM XCVI.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm also wants a title in the Hebrew: but the Greeks are justified in the former part of their inscription (which calls it *An Ode of David's*), by 1 Chron. xvi. where we find, that, at the bringing up the ark from the house of Obed-Edom, to the place he had prepared for it on Mount Zion, David delivered this Psalm (together with the hundred and fifth) into the hand of Asaph, to express the joy he had in God's special presence among them: which all their neighbours round about, he foretells, should be made sensible of, as well as themselves.

This Psalm, indeed, is not exactly the very same with that; but there is a difference in some expressions: *ex. gr.* it is called here *a new song*, but not there; which shews it was afterward altered by some Divine person, who accommodated it to other uses. And very probably by Ezra, when they came out of Babylon: which occasioned the Greeks to add, in the latter part of the inscription of this Psalm, these words: *when the house was built after the captivity.* Ezra, that is, made use of it to express their joy at the re-edification of the temple.

But it never had a complete fulfilling, answerable to the height of it, till the Messiah (who was indeed the temple of God) came to dwell among us, to give eternal salvation to us. Several of the Jewish writers acknowledge

that it belongs to his times: and accordingly we not only may, but ought to have him in our minds, when we say, *Sing unto the Lord a new song* (for his new grace, that is, in sending him to give salvation to all nations), and *the Lord reigneth,* (ver. 10.) and hath all things put under his feet. (See Euseb. in his Demonstrat. Evangelica, lib. i. cap. 4.)

Ver. 1. *O SING unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord all the earth.*] O sing praises unto the Lord, for his new and extraordinary benefits which he hath bestowed upon us: let all the earth join together with us to sing his praises.

Ver. 2. *Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.*] We can never praise him enough; and therefore cease not to bless his name, and to spread the fame of his almighty goodness towards us; but publish every day, with joyful hearts, the great deliverances he hath wrought for us.

Ver. 3. *Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.*] Tell the nations round about how he hath glorified himself: let none of them be ignorant of the wonderful things he hath done among us.

Ver. 4. *For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.*] For all our praises fall infinitely short of the greatness of the Lord; who is worthy of the highest praise of the whole world: and hath shewn both to us (1 Chron. xiii. 10—12. 1 Sam. vi. 29.) and to others (1 Sam. v. 3, 4, &c.) how dreadful he is above all that are called gods.

Ver. 5. *For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.*] For all the gods of the nations are nothing worth, being able to do neither good nor harm; but the Lord not only made the earth, but the heavens too; which abundantly declare the greatness and splendour of his majesty.

Ver. 6. *Honour and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.*] Whose heavenly court infinitely outshines all the state and pomp wherein the greatest earthly monarchs live, (Esther i. 4.) For all the words we have are not able to express the brightness and magnificence, the power and comely order, of so much as his ministers: an image of which we have in his holy place; wherein he manifests himself among us.

Ver. 7. *Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.*] Ascribe, therefore, unto the Lord, O ye people, from whatsoever family ye come; ascribe unto him that incomparable majesty, and supreme dominion and authority, which you give to imaginary gods.

Ver. 8. *Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.*] And renounce them all; and, acknowledging the Lord alone to be the omnipotent king of all the world, do him honour suitable to the excellency of his majesty; bring him an oblation in token of your subjection to him, and humbly worship him in his temple.

Ver. 9. *O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him all the earth.*] O come and cast down yourselves before the Lord in his sanctuary, where he hath fixed his glorious residence among us: adore his transcendent perfections; and let all the people approach into his presence with a pious trembling and dread to offend their Sovereign.

Ver. 10. *Say among the heathen, that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established, that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously.*] Go, ye that are already become proselytes unto him, and publish every where, in all countries, that the Lord [Christ] is the sovereign of the world, who alone can make it happy: for he shall settle those in peace that submit unto his government; and they shall not be so disturbed as they were wont, with wars and tumults: he shall administer equal justice unto all; and neither suffer the good to be unrewarded, nor the evil to escape unpunished.

Ver. 11. *Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.*] Let the whole universe therefore be filled with joy at this blessed news; which the angels themselves shall gladly receive: (Luke i. 30. 32.) much more ought all mankind, wheresoever they are dispersed, on the earth, or on the sea, and the islands thereof, exceedingly rejoice; and fill all places with the loud sound of their joyful praises.

Ver. 12. *Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice.*] Let the husbandmen, and the shepherds, and all that dwell in the fields, leap for joy: and the woodmen and foresters shout for joy, to see the happy day approaching; when all the idols that are worshipped there shall be thrown down together with their groves.

Ver. 13. *Before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.*] Let them welcome that day; and meet the Lord with forward affection, who is coming to them: for he comes to reform the earth, and will govern mankind by righteous and merciful laws; and faithfully keep his word with all those that truly observe them.

PSALM XCVII.

ARGUMENT.

Some of the Hebrews conceive (as I observed upon Psal. xc.) that Moses was the author of this, as well as the rest of these Psalms which want an inscription. And, indeed, he excelled in this faculty of composing hymns, as we learn from Exod. xv. and Deut. xxxii. and might upon some other occasion, as well as the overthrow of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, make a song of triumph, after some of those great victories which God gave them over their enemies. Which was a thing in use before his time, as it appears by the fragments of ancient songs recorded in his books: particularly that ἐπινίκιον made by some poet among the Amorites, after Sihon had taken Heshbon from the Moabites, to whom it formerly belonged; wherein they triumph over their god Chemosh, as unable to deliver his worshippers, (Numb. xxi. 27, &c.) And if we could be sure this Psalm was made by Moses, I should think it to have been composed after the Israelites had conquered Sihon and his land: over whom they triumphed, as he had done over the former possessors of that country. But the Psalm seems so plainly to have been composed in pursuance of what was said in the foregoing Psalm, that *the Lord reigneth,* and is king,

not only over Israel, but all the earth, that one cannot but think they had the same author: who shews the truth of that by the illustrious victories which God, as their king, had given them over all those that opposed them. For the eighth verse makes it manifest that this Psalm hath respect to some conquests they had lately made over the heathen: which, I suppose, were no other than those which David won over divers nations; not long after (1 Chron. xviii. 1.) he had brought the ark to Zion, and delivered the foregoing hymn to be sung, to put the Israelites in hope, and their enemies in fear, of the great things which should ensue, upon this special presence of God among them.

Which moved the Greeks to call this *A Psalm of David, after his Land was restored unto him:* that is, after he was made master of all those countries which God anciently designed to be the inheritance of Israel. For that it should relate to the restoring his kingdom to him after Absalom's rebellion, is not probable; because the mention of idolaters and of their gods, ver. 7. seems to determine it to other countries. In the subduing of which, God, it is likely, fought for them by some such tempest as we read of, 2 Sam. v. 20. 24. whereby their enemies' armies were shattered, and so terrified, that they not only fled, but left their images behind them (such was their haste), and gave the Israelites an easy victory over them.

But whatever was the carnal sense, it belongs, in the diviner meaning, to Christ's triumph over the grave, and all the powers of darkness, at his resurrection and ascension to his throne in heaven: as appears by those words which the apostle to the Hebrews alleges out of the seventh verse, and applies to Christ's royal power and authority over angels. Which the Hebrew doctors themselves, as Kimchi confesses, take to be there intended: and may be farther justified from that exposition which we meet withal in Midrasch Tenchuma, of the words of the prophet Isaiah, lii. 13. "Behold, my servant shall prosper: he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." This is the king Messiah, says that gloss, who shall be exalted above Abraham, and extolled above Moses, and *be very high* above the angels of the ministry.

Ver. 1. *THE Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof.*] The Lord, it is manifest, is the sovereign of the world: under whose happy government, not only we, and they who are already become subject to him in other places, ought to rejoice; but the most distant countries have the greatest reason to be glad thereof.

Ver. 2. *Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.*] His majesty is most dreadful; and hath appeared in great terror against those that oppose him: whom, as he will not wrong, so he will certainly punish; for he maintains his authority, and supports his government, by doing exact and equal justice.

Ver. 3. *A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.*] Let none therefore resist him, for flames of fire proceed from his presence; which make the battle too hot for his enemies: who can turn no way but they feel them flashing in their faces.

Ver. 4. *His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled.*] It was his thunder and lightning, the brightness of which the world lately saw; and were so amazed, that shivering pains took hold upon them, as upon a woman in her travail.

Ver. 5. *The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.*] The hearts of the stoutest kings and captains failed them; and melted like wax before the fire, at this terrible appearance of the Lord: at the appearance of him whose dominion extends over all the earth.

Ver. 6. *The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.*] For he is the Lord of the heavens: which have declared, by this dreadful tempest (excited by his angelical ministers), his severity against his enemies; and made all the people sensible of the incomparable splendour of his majesty.

Ver. 7. *Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.*] Which may well make them all ashamed (and they shall be confounded by him, if they will not renounce their errors) who worship graven images, (though of gold and silver, 2 Sam. v. 21.) and boast themselves in vain gods, who can do nothing for them: let all that are called gods, whether princes on earth, or angels in heaven, bow down to him, as the only Saviour, (Heb. i. 6.) and acknowledge his supreme authority over them all.

Ver. 8. *Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced, because of thy judgments, O Lord.*] Jerusalem, the mother-city, hath received the news of thy victories with a joyful heart: after whose example, all the other cities of Judah are exceeding glad, O Lord; because thou hast judged righteously, in destroying our idolatrous enemies, and defending thy faithful servants.

Ver. 9. *For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth; thou art exalted far above all gods.*] Whose hearts are filled with the greater joy, because thou, O Lord, hast manifested thyself hereby, to be the supreme and only potentate: who rulest over all the earth, and art infinitely superior to all that have the name of gods.

Ver. 10. *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.*] But do not content yourselves merely with this passion of joy: if you truly love the Lord, hate every thing which you know is displeasing to him: so shall you have the Lord of all things for your continual keeper; who preserves the lives of sincerely pious men, and watches over them with such a careful providence, that when they are in the power of the wicked, he will not suffer them to destroy them.

Ver. 11. *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.*] Be not discouraged, though the world should frown upon you; but rest assured, that God designs you, in due time, more cheerful and happy days: which, if you continue faithful, and serve him with upright hearts, shall as certainly come, as the corn at last springs up after it hath lain all winter in the ground.

Ver. 12. *Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.*] Let all truly good men rely on this, and rejoice in their worst estate; that they serve such a gracious Lord: let them give thanks unto him for his benefits, and gratefully commemorate how

kind and gracious he hath been unto them; that it may be kept in perpetual remembrance.

PSALM XCVIII.

A Psalm.

ARGUMENT.

There is no title here but only this, *A Psalm;* to which the Greeks add *of David:* who, it is very probable, was the author; or if he was not, it was made by some holy man, in imitation of what David saith in the ninety-sixth (of many of whose expressions this Psalm consists), upon occasion of some remarkable deliverance, which God had newly granted to Israel, as an earnest of future blessings; especially of the coming of that great blessing, the Lord Christ, to give complete salvation to his people.

Ver. 1. *O SING unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him victory.*] O let the new and extraordinary benefits which the Lord hath bestowed upon us, provoke you to sing praises unto him with fresh devotion: for he hath done stupendous things, and, by his almighty goodness alone, and incomparable strength, hath wrought salvation for those who were as unworthy to be helped by him, as they were unable to help themselves.

Ver. 2. *The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.*] The Lord hath declared, by the wonders he hath done, how mighty he is to save and deliver: he made the gentile world apparently see, that he is the just rewarder of all those who piously obey him; and will not let the wicked escape unpunished.

Ver. 3. *He hath remembered his mercy and his truth towards the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*] He hath not forgot his ancient covenant with our forefathers: but so faithfully performed what his mere mercy moved him to promise, (Luke i. 54, 55. 72.) that all mankind have seen what our gracious God hath done, and partake of his Divine benefits.

Ver. 4. *Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.*] Let them all therefore shout for joy; let them cry aloud, and with strong and cheerful voices sing hymns of thanks and praise unto the Lord.

Ver. 5. *Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.*] Let nothing be wanting to express your joyful sense of the goodness of the Lord; but let the harp accompany your songs: let the sweet sound of the harp, I say, and the sound of your voices, be mixed together with your psalms.

Ver. 6. *With trumpets, and sound of cornet, make a joyful noise before the Lord the King.*] And let the trumpet also and cornet proclaim with a louder sound, the exceeding greatness of your joy; while you shout with triumphant acclamations to him, and acknowledge the Lord to be your King.

Ver. 7. *Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.*] Let the noise of his praises be heard like thunder, throughout all the habitable world: both among those that live on the sea, and those that are upon the land.

Ver. 8. *Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together.*] Let high, as well as low, applaud their happiness, and join together with one consent, to express, by all the tokens of joy, the singular pleasure and satisfaction they feel in their hearts.

Ver. 9. *Before the Lord: for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.*] Let them meet the Lord with forward affections; who is coming to reform the earth: and will govern mankind by righteous and merciful laws; distributing to every man according to his work.

PSALM XCIX.

ARGUMENT.

The Greeks entitle David to this Psalm: which seems to have been made upon the same occasion, and to the same end, with the three foregoing: only with these two differences; first, that from the consideration of the royal power of the Lord (who had manifested himself by some notable conquests over his enemies, to be the only monarch; whose sovereignty extends over all the world), they should mix fear and trembling, together with that joy and exultation to which in the former Psalm he had excited them: and secondly, that he doth not so plainly, as in those Psalms, prophesy of the kingdom of the Lord Christ.

But there are many passages, as Theodoret observes, which may be applied to the appearing of our Saviour, and the infidelity of the Jews. St. Austin and St. Ambrose apply to him that passage, upon which the Roman church builds the lawfulness of worshipping images, (ver. 5.) where the Vulgar Latin reading *adorate Scabellum Pedum ejus, worship his footstool;* those two fathers think there is no way to reconcile this with that command, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,* but by expounding this of *the flesh* of Christ, which is the *footstool,* they say, which the Psalmist exhorts all men to worship (so far were those holy men from allowing adoration to any thing that is not God, or hath not a personal union with him). And, indeed, Christ was represented by the ark; which was the Divine footstool (here spoken of), but not to be adored, no more than the *hill* on which it stood: concerning which the Psalmist speaks, in the last verse, just as he doth of the ark in this; and therefore we ought to understand both passages alike (the particle in the Hebrew being the very same before *footstool* and before *hill),* and translate them thus, worship *at,* or *before,* or *towards,* his footstool and holy hill: as elsewhere he speaks of worshipping towards his temple, (cxxxviii. 2.) And so Menochius very honestly here expounds this passage in these words; *Worship in his temple, turning your faces towards the ark, on which is the propitiatory, which is his footstool; since he sits on the wings of the cherubims.*

Ver. 1. *THE Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved.*] Let the people fret and be tumultuous, if they please; it will do them no service: for the Lord is the supreme governor of

the world, whether they will or no; and they had better, with a pious fear, submit themselves unto him: though the whole earth should be in an uproar, we are safe and secure; for the Lord is attended with innumerable heavenly ministers, who are a guard to his faithful worshippers.

Ver. 2. *The Lord is great in Zion; and he is high above all people.*] The Lord, whose palace is in Zion, is transcendently great: there is no power on earth able to oppose him; who infinitely surpasses the united strength of all people.

Ver. 3. *Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy.*] Let them all therefore praise, and reverently acknowledge, thy mighty and dreadful majesty: for that alone is every way most excellent, and hath no equal; and therefore worthy of all veneration.

Ver. 4. *The king's strength also loveth judgment, thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.*] For, though none can resist him, yet he is not a king that uses his power to wrong or oppress his subjects; but to do them right, and give them relief, in which he delights: this is thy character, O Lord, who hast established most equal laws among us; and hitherto governed the seed of Jacob with exact justice and singular mercy.

Ver. 5. *Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool: for he is holy.*] Do you, therefore, above all other people, extol the Lord our God, both in your thoughts, affections, and words; and, turning your faces towards the ark of his presence, prostrate yourselves before his majesty, in token of your absolute subjection to him: for he is incomparably above all other beings, and the proper object of your adoration.

Ver. 6. *Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name: they called upon the Lord, and he answered them.*] Thus did Moses and Aaron, two of his principal and most famous ministers, (Exod. xxxii. 11. Numb. xvi. 45, 46.) and thus did Samuel, one of his greatest prophets, that were wont to intercede for you, (1 Sam. vii. 5. 9. vii. 5. xii. 19.) These holy men fell down before him, to make their humble supplications to him; and he gave them what they desired.

Ver. 7. *He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them.*] He spake to them in a familiar manner, telling them his mind out of a pillar of cloud, wherein he appeared to them; (Exod. xxxiii. 9, 10. Numb. xii. 5. xvi. 42. 1 Sam. iii. 10.) and they, like faithful servants of his, conformed themselves to his precepts, by which he testified his will to them; and worshipped him after that manner that he appointed them.

Ver. 8. *Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.*] Whereby they obtained great favour with thee, O Lord our God; for when they prayed to thee, thou fulfilledst their petitions: passing by, for their sakes, the sins of those who had highly offended thee; but taking a most severe vengeance on all those who contemned their authority, and were contriving how to depose them, (Numb. xii. 2. 10. xvi. 3. 35. 1 Sam. viii. 7—9, &c.)

Ver. 9. *Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill: for the Lord our God is holy.*] Imitate therefore the piety of those admirable men; and raise your thoughts, and affections, and voices, to extol and magnify the Lord our God, as much as you are able; for you can never do it enough: and in token of your absolute subjection to him, go and prostrate yourselves before him, at his house on the holy hill of Zion; for the Lord our God is incomparably above all other beings, and alone worthy of your adoration.

PSALM C.

A Psalm of Praise.

ARGUMENT.

There is no other Psalm hath the like title with this; which is called *A Psalm of Praise;* or rather of *Thanksgiving,* and acknowledgment for Divine blessings, as the word is translated below, (ver. 4.) and in most other places. For which reason, I suppose, it is, that the Hebrews imagine (as the Chaldee Paraphrase, as well as others of their authors, tells us) it was peculiarly appointed to be sung, when their sacrifices of thanksgiving were offered; mentioned Lev. vii. 12, 13. The companies also, or choirs of them, who gave thanks to God, are called by this name, Nehem. xii. 31—38. Which makes it probable, that the Levites sung this song upon that occasion: which the Greeks think was made by David; who invites all the world to join with the Israelites, in the service of Him, who was kind and gracious to them beyond expression. Accordingly we Christians now properly use it, in acknowledgment of God's wonderful love to us in Christ: by whom we offer up continually spiritual sacrifices; for redeeming us by the sacrifice he made of himself; for making the world anew, and creating us again unto good works; according to his faithful promises, which we may depend upon for ever.

I do not know but the word עשה *made* (ver. 3.) may be used here as it is 1 Sam. xii. 6. for *advancing, raising,* or *preferring them* (as he is there said to have done Moses and Aaron); *making* them to be what they then were, a famous people, in a good land: which seems to agree best with the following words, *and not we ourselves* (and therefore I have not omitted that sense). For to deny that we created ourselves, is altogether needless; but that it is not to be ascribed to our industry or wit, that we are raised to a happy condition, is a proper expression of humility.

Ver. 1. *MAKE a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.*] Let all the people of the earth lift up their voices, in triumphant songs, to the honour of the Lord; who deserves all our praises.

Ver. 2. *Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing.*] Make the service of the Lord your delight, nay, greatest pleasure; and when you approach into his tabernacle, shout for joy that you are admitted into his blessed presence, to praise him with your cheerful hymns.

Ver. 3. *Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves: we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.*] Consider that the Lord, whom you worship, is the creator and governor of the world; who gave us our being, and all the good things we enjoy: his we are, and by his power and goodness, not our own, we are become so great and mighty a nation; whom, out of his own mere good-will alone, he hath made his peculiar people, of whom he takes a tender care.

Ver. 4. *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.*] When you enter therefore into the gates of his sanctuary, present him not merely with the sacrifices of beasts, but with the most acceptable sacrifice of hearty thanksgiving; and as you stand in his courts, attending on him, cease not to sing his praises: thank him, I say, for all his benefits, and praise his incomparable perfections.

Ver. 5. *For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.*] For as his power is transcendent, so is his goodness; as appears by his never-failing bounty towards us, and his steadfast faithfulness to his word: for the mercy promised to our forefathers he hath exactly fulfilled in our days; and will continue to all succeeding generations.

PSALM CI.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

The title tells us who made this Psalm; and the matter of it is so plain, that any body may see it is a pious resolution of David to govern first himself, and then his court, and then his kingdom, with so much care, that the good might expect all favour from him, but no wicked man, of any sort, have the least countenance or encouragement.

The only difficulty is to know when he composed it; whether before or after he was settled in his kingdom. The first words of it seem to countenance those who think he was possessed of it; and newly entered upon the government; which he thankfully acknowledges. But the words that follow, (ver. 2.) *O when wilt thou come unto me,* seem to justify their opinion, who think he was now under Saul's persecution: yet, having confidence in God's promises (which he longed to see fulfilled), made this religious vow, of being a good king; and proposed to himself an excellent form and manner of life, when God should be pleased to perform them. To reconcile both these, there is a middle way lies open to every one's view that reads this history. For upon the death of Saul, he was immediately promoted to the kingdom; though not entirely: but resolved then with himself how well he would govern; when God should make him king over all Israel, as he had done over Judah. And so I shall order my Paraphrase, supposing him to reign now in Hebron, (2 Sam. ii. 1—4.) and expecting to reign in Jerusalem, (v. 3—5.) which I presume he here calls *the city of God,* ver. 8. because there he intended to settle the ark, as well as to fix his court; when he should be possessed of it.

That passage, indeed, hath induced some to think, that he composed this Psalm after he had made an attempt to bring the ark thither; but failing in it, (2 Sam. vi. 9, 10.) sighs here for its enjoyment. Which I shall not dispute, because I would not prolong this preface unnecessarily. It is sufficient in my judgment to say, that it doth not seem likely he would defer this resolution so long after he was installed in his kingdom. For it required time to prepare a place for the reception of the ark, suitable to the majesty it represented.

Ver. 1. *I WILL sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing.*] I will never forget, but celebrate with perpetual praises that mercy which hath raised me from a low condition unto the throne; and that just punishment which I see inflicted upon all my opposers: both which I ascribe, O Lord, to thee alone, and not to my virtue or valour; and therefore to thee will I sing my grateful hymns.

Ver. 2. *I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*] Nor will I satisfy myself merely with songs of praise; but study, with all diligence, integrity of life, and purity of manners: O when wilt thou perfect what thou hast begun for me, and settle me peaceably in my kingdom? Then I shall be able to live more regularly than now in this state of war and confusion, (2 Sam. iii. 1. 39.) and so I resolve to do; sincerely endeavouring to make myself an absolute pattern of piety and virtue to all my court.

Ver. 3. *I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.*] No pretended reasons of state and politic ends shall make me so much as project any thing against the law, to which I will ever tie myself: for I abhor the practices of those who decline that rule, to pursue their own private desires; no such corrupt principles shall be entertained in my mind.

Ver. 4. *A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person.*] I will turn him instantly out of my service, who shall dare to suggest to me any crooked counsels: I will have no familiarity with him, much less make him my favourite, who makes no conscience how he compasses his ends.

Ver. 5. *Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath a high look, and a proud heart, will not I suffer.*] I will be so far from listening to their private whispers, who, by secret calumnies and detractions, endeavour to supplant their fellow-servants, that I will severely punish and banish them my court: nor will I endure those whose pride makes them overlook all others, as if they were another sort of creatures; or whose unsatiable covetousness and ambition make them study their own advancement more than the public good.

Ver. 6. *Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.*] I will look out for trusty persons, men fearing God, and of clear integrity; and in what part of the country soever I find them, make them of my privy-council: and no man shall bear any other office in my court but he that lives unblamably.

Ver. 7. *He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.*] No subtle knave that is made up of shifts and tricks, or that devises cunning cheats to oppress my subjects, shall remain in my service: though he have craftily got into it under a guise of simplicity, yet no false informer, flatterer, or any other sort of liar, shall continue in my favour.

Ver. 8. *I will early destroy all the wicked of the land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord.*] As soon as ever I am settled in my throne, I will use my utmost diligence to reform the whole nation; especially the place of thy peculiar residence, which ought to be an example to the rest of the kingdom; taking care that all offenders be severely punished in the courts of justice: and, if there be no other remedy, cutting off those evil

members who have got an incurable habit of doing wickedly.

PSALM CII.

A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his Complaint before the Lord.

ARGUMENT.

A Prayer composed by some pious person, (towards the latter end of the captivity of Babylon, or rather presently after their return from thence to their own country, ver. 13, 14.) who was extremely afflicted, and even overwhelmed, with grief and trouble, to see the temple still lie in its rubbish, and the rebuilding of it hindered by many enemies. This was the cause of those sad complaints and lamentations, wherein he takes the liberty to represent their condition unto the Lord, and thereby give some ease to his oppressed spirit: which began to lift up itself in some comfortable hopes, when he considered both the faithfulness of God to his promises, and the honour it would be to him, when the nations round about should see their wonderful restoration happily completed, and thereby be invited to embrace their religion. Which proved a lively emblem of the coming of the gentiles into the church of Christ: the eternity of whose kingdom is here prophesied of, in the conclusion of the Psalm. Which, as Theodoret well expresses it, may serve for any man's use, who wrestles with any great calamity, and implores the Divine favour for his help and deliverance. It may be applied also to his sad condition, who groans under the burden of his sins, and cries for mercy: being the fifth among those seven which are called *penitential Psalms.*

Ver. 1. *HEAR my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee.*] Reject not my humble supplication, O Lord; but graciously admit the earnest request, which, with lamentable cries, I present unto thy majesty.

Ver. 2. *Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily.*] The distress wherein I am is exceeding great; which will move thee, I hope, to moderate thy anger, and not absolutely refuse my petition: but rather to grant me the more favourable audience, and to send me the speedier relief; when I implore it in the time of the sorest calamity.

Ver. 3. *For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burnt as a hearth.*] For my days are spent as dismally as if I lived and breathed in smoke; and the anguish I suffer is so sharp, that it penetrates to my very bones, and makes them as parched and dry as the fire doth the hearth.

Ver. 4. *My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.*] My vital spirits are exhausted; and flag like the grass when it is struck with a pestilential blast: for, together with my appetite, I have lost even the thoughts of my necessary food.

Ver. 5. *By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin.*] Sadness hath seized on me to such a degree, that I do nothing but groan and sigh: which hath wasted me away to skin and bone.

Ver. 6. *I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert.*] I take no delight in the company of my friends; but seek for lonesome places, like a pelican in the wilderness; where I may bemoan myself like the bittern in the desert.

Ver. 7. *I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top.*] Grief and sorrow banish sleep from mine eyes; and make me like those solitary birds, which spend the night on the tops of houses, in doleful shrieks and cries.

Ver. 8. *Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me.*] This hath exposed me to the scorn of my enemies, who do nothing but upbraid me with my misery: and, not content therewith, are so furiously bent upon my ruin, that they have entered into a combination, and sworn they will destroy me.

Ver. 9. *For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping.*] Which hath still more increased my affliction, and made me lie down in the ashes: where, while I mourn and weep, they mingle themselves with my bread, as tears do with my drink.

Ver. 10. *Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.*] Because thy anger still continues in great severity against us; for thou hadst lifted me up in glorious hopes, (Ezra i. 5. ii. 68. iii. 10.) thou hast dashed them all in pieces, (Ezra iv. 4. 24.) and thereby given me the sorer fall.

Ver. 11. *My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.*] And whilst I wait for better times, my life declines apace; like a shadow, which, being come near to its utmost length, is ready to vanish: for I have very little strength remaining; but droop and languish, like the dried grass; which is ripe for the mower's hand.

Ver. 12. *But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever, and thy remembrance unto all generations.*] All my comfort is, that, though I die, thou abidest to all eternity; and canst hereafter remedy all these evils, which thou dost not think fit to redress at present: and wilt, I am confident; for all generations have transmitted down unto us the memorial of thy faithfulness, and the glorious things thou hast done for thy people.

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.*] It will not be long before thou dost take pity upon the desolations of Zion, and raise her out of her ruins: for the time prefixed for her punishment being expired, (Jer. xxix. 10, 11.) it is the season now, the appointed season, for thy mercy in her restoration.

Ver. 14. *For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.*] For her scattered stones are far more dear to thy pious worshippers, than the goodliest palaces in Babylon: and therefore they cannot look upon her dust and rubbish, without the most sensible grief and commiseration.

Ver. 15. *So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.*] Especially when they consider how thy glory suffers thereby: whereas the nations who now contemn thee, will stand in awe of thee; O Lord, all their kings and princes will reverence thy glorious power, the fame of which now seems to lie buried in her ruins.

Ver. 16. *When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.*] When they shall see Zion rebuilt (which the Lord alone can bring about), and his glorious majesty there worshipped with the ancient solemnities:

Ver. 17. *He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.*] And the prayers of miserable captives, who were stripped of all, prevail with him, not only for their liberty, but for their entire restitution to their former splendour.

Ver. 18. *This shall be written for the generations to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord.*] This wonderful deliverance shall never be forgotten, but remain upon record to the following generation: who shall transmit the memory of it to their posterity, that they may also look upon themselves as a people created anew to praise the Lord.

Ver. 19. *For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth.*] Because, in much mercy, he hath been pleased to preserve a miserable nation from utter destruction: and though he be infinitely exalted above all our thoughts, yet the Lord hath graciously condescended to mind the afflicted condition of this distressed country:

Ver. 20. *To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death.*] And to be moved by our groans to deliver us out of a sad captivity: and to revive us when we had reason to look upon ourselves as dead and hopeless.

Ver. 21. *To declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem.*] That we might go and recount in his temple the famous things which he hath done; and make the holy city sound with the praises of his power, goodness, and truth; which he hath declared in our restoration.

Ver. 22. *When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord.*] When all the people shall be gathered together, there to worship the Divine Majesty; and other kingdoms join with us unanimously in his service.

Ver. 23. *He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.*] I had hopes to have lived to see this blessed time, and thought I had been in the way to it; (Ezra iii. 8, &c.) but he hath stopped our vigorous beginnings, (Ezra iv. 4.) and thereby so sorely afflicted me, that I feel I am like to fall short of my expectations.

Ver. 24. *I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations.*] Though I prayed most earnestly to him, and said, O my God, who hast so graciously begun our deliverance, take me not away before it be completely finished; but let me see thy promise fulfilled, which thou, who diest not (as we do), I am sure, wilt not fail to make good.

Ver. 25. *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands.*] For it cannot be too hard for thee to raise Zion out of her ruins; who hast, many ages ago, created this goodly fabric of heaven and earth by thy eternal word, (Heb. i. 10.)

Ver. 26. *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed.*] And thou dost neither decay nor alter, in process of time, as thy creatures do; some of which shall perish, but thou shalt eternally subsist; all of them shall grow old, like our garments, with long wearing: even the heavens themselves, which now enwrap the earth, as our clothes do our bodies, shall be folded up, (Heb. i. 12.) and laid aside like a tattered garment, when thou shalt command that alteration.

Ver. 27. *But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*] But thou (and thy word) art still the very same; and shalt always continue so, without any the least variation.

Ver. 28. *The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.*] Yet all that I conclude from hence is only this: that though I do not live to see our perfect restoration, yet, according to thy unalterable purpose, the temple and Jerusalem shall be rebuilt; and the children of thy servants, who now are in great distress, be peaceably settled there; yea, their posterity after them remain unmoveable in their favour, and enjoy the tokens of thy Divine presence among them.

PSALM CIII.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

The title tells us this Psalm is one of David's: and the third, fourth, and fifth verses may satisfy us that he composed it after his recovery from a dangerous sickness, to such a vigorous health, as the eagles have when they renew their plumes. To that he alludes ver. 5. as Euthymius and St. Jerome understand it. The latter of which says, upon Isa. xl. that he had often taught, the eagles do no other way return to youthfulness when they are old, but only *mutatione pennarum, by change of their feathers.* I have expressed this a little more largely than ordinary, in the Paraphrase (as I have done in the rest of the Psalm), to fit it the better to their use now that have escaped the like danger: who should take occasion, when they thank God for such a blessing, to imitate David; in making a thankful commemoration of the rest of his mercies, both to him and to others; both in the present and in past ages. And the more to excite devout souls to this, and that I might make their thankfulness the more affectionate (if they please to make use of this Hymn for that purpose), I have oft repeated the beginning of the Psalm, which I think refers to the whole: and likewise put it into a little different form (of a soul actually praising God), without the least alteration of the sense.

Ver. 1. *BLESS the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.*] Blessed, for ever blessed, be the Lord of life and health, and all other blessings; blessed be his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness: with my whole heart do I bless him; with my most ardent love, and the devoutest affections of my soul.

Ver. 2. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.*] Which shall be every day thus employed, and praise his name with continual pleasure: I will never forget (how shouldest thou prove so ungrateful, O my soul! as not) to acknowledge the inestimable benefits I have received from his bounty; which are more than thought can number.

Ver. 3. *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.*] More particularly, I render thee, O Lord, my most hearty thanks, for thy late mercies vouchsafed to me: blessed be thy merciful kindness, that, after a short correction for my faults, thou hast graciously pardoned

them; and healed all the sores and grievous wounds which they had made.

Ver. 4. *Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies.*] Blessed be God, who hath saved me from death; and not only spared my life, but surrounded it most graciously with I know not how many benefits; which make it exceeding delightful to me. [I owe my friends, lovers, and acquaintance, my careful attendants, my warm and quiet habitation, the plentiful estate thou hast given me, the liberal provision thou makest for me, with all the rest of thy mercies, to the bowels of thy tender compassions towards me.]

Ver. 5. *Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.*] Blessed be thy almighty goodness, that my mouth (which lately disgusted all things, or was restrained from what it desired, or was prescribed that which was disgustful to it) can now relish its food again; and is satisfied with many good things; I can never sufficiently bless thy goodness, who by this means dost restore my strength, and makest my youth and freshness return like the eagle's. [O that I may with fresh delight and joy be still praising thee! and be lifted up to heaven (as they are when they have renewed their plumes), in more vigorous love, and affectionate desires and endeavours; to employ all my renewed strength in thy faithful service.]

Ver. 6. *The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.*] Nor am I alone obliged to my gracious Lord for his singular favour to me: but, blessed be his name, he relieves all those who suffer wrong; and doth justice upon their oppressors, who are too mighty for them.

Ver. 7. *He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.*] Moses and the rest of our forefathers are witnesses of this: whom the Lord delivered, in a stupendous manner, out of the house of bondage.

Ver. 8. *The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.*] And by other methods of his providence towards them, and dealing with them, declared how bountiful his blessed nature is, and how ready to forgive: forbearing long when men deserve to be punished; and soon releasing them from their pain, when they heartily repent of their folly.

Ver. 9. *He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever.*] He doth not love, blessed be his name, to be always chastising us for our faults: and when he doth chastise us, he neither loves to prolong our miseries, nor to inflict them proportionable to our deserts.

Ver. 10. *He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.*] No, blessed be his holy name, there is mercy even in our punishments: our sufferings are never so great as our sins; but we might justly suffer a great deal more than we do for our faults.

Ver. 11. *For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him.*] And were we never so obedient, there is not a greater disproportion between the vast circumference of the heavens and this little spot of earth, than there is between his mercies towards us and our small services.

Ver. 12. *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*] To those mercies alone it is to be ascribed, that we are not bemoaning ourselves under innumerable miseries: but he hath quite taken away his wrath from us; and, adored be his goodness, perfectly remitted the punishment due to our manifold offences.

Ver. 13. *Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.*] O what bowels of mercy are these! no father can be more indulgent and tender-hearted to his returning children, than the Lord, blessed be his name, is to those who so reform by his chastisements, as to fear hereafter to offend him.

Ver. 14. *For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.*] He easily relents, and takes compassion on them: considering how frail he hath made them; and how soon of themselves they will moulder into the dust, out of which he took them.

Ver. 15. *As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.*] For what is man, that the Almighty should contend with him? He looks fresh and fair; but, alas! is as feeble as the grass, and as a flower in the field; whose beauty is far greater than its strength.

Ver. 16. *For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.*] Many accidents snatch him away, even in his prime: just as the biting wind, to which the field-flowers are exposed, blasts them on a sudden, and they spring up no more in the place that was adorned with them.

Ver. 17. *But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children.*] O how much doth this magnify the wonderful mercy of our God! who designs to be everlastingly kind (blessed be his goodness) to such short-lived creatures as we are: rewarding the faithful services of a few years with eternal life to ourselves; and with many blessings to our posterity in future generations.

Ver. 18. *To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.*] There is no doubt of this; which hath been verified in those who have sincerely kept their faith with him; and not only promised, but constantly performed, the obedience they owed him.

Ver. 19. *The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.*] For none can hinder thee, O most mighty Lord, from being as kind as thou pleasest: who art the universal Monarch; the blessed and only Potentate; to whom, not only the greatest men on earth, but the highest powers in heaven, are subject.

Ver. 20. *Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.*] Let the angels, therefore, who know his greatness, power, and gracious providence, better than I, bless his holy name: let those mighty ones, whose strength surpasses all the powers on earth, and yet never dispute his sacred commands, give praise unto him, with all their might; and with the same cheerfulness wherewith they obey his word.

Ver. 21. *Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.*] Let the whole company of heaven, all the several hosts of those glorious creatures, who have been employed by his Majesty so many ways for our good, and understand how much we are beholden to his love, speak good of his name, and bless his mercy, both to themselves and unto us.

Ver. 22. *Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his*

dominion: bless the Lord, O my soul.] Yea, let every creature, throughout the wide world, proclaim, as well as it is able, the loving-kindness of the Lord: let none of them be silent, but all with one consent bless his holy name: and thou, O my soul, be sure thou never forget to make one; O fail not to bear thy part in this joyful choir, that daily sing his praise.

PSALM CIV.

ARGUMENT.

The foregoing and the following Psalm being certainly composed by David, the Greeks, and from them several other ancient interpreters, have ascribed this also to the same author. For which they had this farther reason, that it begins (as Aben Ezra observes) just as the foregoing Psalm ends: and celebrates the mighty power and goodness of God in the fabric of the world; as the hundred and third doth his benefits to himself, and to the rest of the children of men.

As for the occasion of it, we may look upon it as a probable opinion, that when David thought of building a house for the Divine service, and God sent Nathan to forbid him, (2 Sam. vii. 5.) he fell not long after into the contemplation of the majesty of God; who, having built this great world as his temple, needed none of his erecting; though he would be pleased to accept one for the burning sacrifice before him, as Solomon afterward speaks, (2 Chron. ii. 6.) To strengthen this conjecture of mine, it may be observed, that he begins this Psalm with such an admiration of God's most excellent perfection, as we meet withal in David's prayer: immediately after God had certified him of his love towards him, though he would not let him build him a house: (2 Sam. vii. 22.) *Thou art great, O Lord, for there is none like unto thee.* In the same manner he saith here, *O Lord my God, thou art very great:* as he proceeds to demonstrate from his wonderful works. And first he begins with the heavens, the clouds, and the angels; and then comes down to the earth, the sea, the mountains, valleys, fountains, and other inferior things: which depend so much upon the sun, the moon, and heavenly bodies, that all of them together declare the most admirable wisdom of him by whom they were composed; and should excite all mankind to his perpetual praises. Which that we may do the more affectionately, when we use this Hymn, I have often repeated the beginning of it, as I did in the foregoing.

Ver. 1. *BLESS the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.*] Stir up thyself, O my soul, with all thy might, to meditate the praises of the Lord. For the highest of all our thoughts are infinitely below thy greatness, O Lord, my most gracious God: who hast shewn, in thy most admirable works, the surpassing excellence of thy majesty; which we can never worthily celebrate with all our praises.

Ver. 2. *Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment; who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.*] The light, which dazzles our eyes with its splendour, is the royal robe, wherein thy invisible and incomprehensible brightness appears unto us: and the spacious heavens are the royal pavilion, which thy sovereign power hath extended, like a canopy, for thy majesty, in this great palace of the world.

Ver. 3. *Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind.*] The floor of whose chambers, which the Lord hath laid in the upper region of the air; O how highly is it advanced above the top of the stateliest piles that are raised by earthly monarchs! whose pompous chariots (whereof they boast) fall infinitely short of those glorious clouds, wherein he makes himself present to us; as their swiftest horses are slow-paced, in comparison with the quick motion, more speedy than the wind, wherewith he visits every part of his dominion.

Ver. 4. *Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire.*] Into which he sends his angels (and what king is there that hath such noble ministers?) sometimes in vehement winds, and sometimes in lightning and thunder, whereby they execute his royal pleasure.

Ver. 5. *Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.*] Who hath settled the massy globe of the earth even in the liquid air, upon such firm foundations, that none of those storms and tempests, which beat upon it from without, nor any commotions from within, can ever stir it out of the place he hath fixed for it.

Ver. 6. *Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.*] It was all covered over at the first with waters, (Gen. i. 2.) which were so deep, that there was no appearance of the highest mountains.

Ver. 7. *At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.*] Till thy omnipotent word charged them to retire, (Gen. i. 9.) at which they started back, and suddenly shrunk away; as an affrighted slave doth, when he hears the thunder of his master's threatenings, if his commands be not obeyed.

Ver. 8. *They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.*] Immediately the dry land was seen; part of which (by thy wonderful contrivance, O Lord) rose up in lofty hills, and the rest sunk down in lowly valleys; where thou hast cut channels for the waters to run into the main ocean; the place thou hast appointed for them.

Ver. 9. *Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.*] And there, though they restlessly toss and swell, yet they cannot get over the shores, wherein thou hast enclosed them: nor shall they ever recover their former liberty, to overflow the earth again.

Ver. 10. *He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.*] But still, such is the admirable providence of the Lord, they climb, through the hollow places of the earth, up the steepest parts of it; and there break out in springs: which fall down into the valleys, to make brooks and rivers, that run between the hills; which, on either side, send into them fresh supplies to enlarge their streams.

Ver. 11. *They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.*] Which afford, not only to us, but to all the beasts of the earth, such abundant refreshment, when they are dry; that even the dull asses, who live in parched deserts, find them out to quench their thirst.

Ver. 12. *By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.*] The birds of the air also delight to resort thither; where, having wet their throats, they sit and chaunt the various notes among the thick boughs of the trees, which grow upon the banks.

Ver. 13. *He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.*] As for the hills, which constantly thus enrich the lower grounds, he waters them from the regions above: whence dews distil, and showers of rain come pouring down, by thy marvellous contrivance, O Lord, unto the satisfaction of them, and of all the rest of the earth.

Ver. 14. *He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth.*] O bless the Lord, my soul, who by this means provideth the beasts with grass and hay, and us with all variety of herbs, and roots, and fruit, and pulse, which he causes to sprout out of the earth, that we may never want what is necessary for our food, or for our physic.

Ver. 15. *And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.*] But rather take our pleasure and delight in the rich wines, which he produces to cheer the drooping spirits of miserable men: together with oil to anoint their heads; and bread to recruit their strength, when it is spent with toil and labour.

Ver. 16. *The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted.*] Blessed be the Lord, who by this means also supplies, with abundant nourishment, the largest trees, which are not planted by the art, nor watered by the care, of man, but by his almighty providence: who makes whole forests of them grow, as the cedars in Libanus do, even upon the most barren and stony mountains.

Ver. 17. *Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir-trees are her house.*] In these trees the birds, both small and great, build themselves convenient habitations: and some of them (as the stork, for instance, who seats her nest on the top of lofty pines and fir-trees) with admirable artifice.

Ver. 18. *The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats, and the rocks for the conies.*] And with no less safety the wild goats deposit their young, in the tops of those craggy mountains; whither they can climb as easily as the birds fly to the tops of trees: and other feeble creatures creep into the rocks, and there lie secure from the violence that stronger beasts would offer to them.

Ver. 19. *He appointeth the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down.*] By his most wise contrivance the moon hath her full and her wane; and the sun doth not always shine, but observes a constant time for its going down.

Ver. 20. *Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.*] And then darkness covering the face of the earth, and inviting us to rest, gives the wolves and other wild beasts of the forest (such is thy care, O Lord, of all creatures), who were afraid to venture abroad before, security and confidence, to come out of their lurking-places, and seek their food.

Ver. 21. *The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.*] Which the ravening young lions then meet withal; falling upon their prey with a horrible noise; whereby they express the eagerness of their hunger; which is not so sharp and devouring, but, by the Divine providence, it finds full satisfaction before the morning.

Ver. 22. *The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.*] When the sun again appearing, and rousing us out of our sleep, they all return with one consent, and lay themselves down in their several dens..

Ver. 23. *Man goeth forth to his work, and to his labour, until the evening.*] And so man, refreshed by the night's repose, goes forth, without any danger, about his business in the fields: and continues his labours till the night call him to rest again.

Ver. 24. *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.*] O eternal Lord! how many and how great are thy works! and with what admirable wisdom hast thou contrived them all! If we look no farther than this earth, what astonishing variety of good things do we behold, wherewith thy bounty hath enriched it!

Ver. 25. *So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.*] And this great and spacious sea also, which seems to embrace the earth in its arms, is no less full of thy wonderful works: for there swim fish without number; some of which astonish us as much with the art thou hast shewn in their small bodies, as others do with the prodigious greatness of their bulk.

Ver. 26. *There go the ships; there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.*] There the ships sail as swiftly as the fishes swim; fetching us the riches both of sea and land: and there that great leviathan (in forming whom thou hast shewn thy mighty power) finds room enough to tumble up and down, and sport himself in his absolute dominion over all that the sea contains.

Ver. 27. *These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.*] O how liberal is thy goodness, which provides convenient sustenance for such a vast world of creatures! Every one of which, though they know not their benefactor, are duly and seasonably supplied, with the food they seek, by the care thou takest of them.

Ver. 28. *That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.*] For they only gather what thou, without any care of theirs, dispensest to them: and thou art not sparing of thy blessings; but hast made a most plentiful provision, which thou scatterest every where for them.

Ver. 29. *Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.*] If it fail at any time, by the suspense of thy heavenly influences, all things look most ruefully: they grow weak, nay, die; and are dissolved into the elements out of which they were made.

Ver. 30. *Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.*] But then thou sendest forth again thy quickening power; whereby new ones are produced, in the room of those that are dead: just as the earth, after a sharp winter hath made it bare, looks fresh and green again at the return of the spring.

Ver. 31. *The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works.*] Thus the world is still as full as ever it was; and all future ages shall praise, as well

as we, the same power, and wisdom, and goodness, of the Lord: which appears so gloriously in all his works, that he himself is still pleased, and delighted in the continuance of them; as he was at first in their contrivance, (Gen. i. 31.)

Ver. 32. *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.*] Else they would all soon vanish, and come to nothing: for at his presence the very earth trembles; and the mountains, as our fathers saw at Mount Sinai, are full of fire and smoke.

Ver. 33. *I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise unto my God while I have my being.*] I will never cease therefore to sing the praises of the Lord; who, as he created, so supports and maintains the whole fabric of heaven and earth, and all the creatures contained in them: and I will never forget his particular kindness to me, among the rest; but acknowledge to my very last breath the innumerable benefits I have received from his bounty.

Ver. 34. *My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord.*] With such affection will I praise him, that all my thankful meditations and discourses shall be, I hope, no less pleasing to him, than they shall be to myself: who will take the highest satisfaction in thinking and speaking of the goodness of the Lord; from whom I shall still receive more abundant cause to rejoice in him.

Ver. 35. *Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Praise ye the Lord.*] But as for them, whose only pleasure it is to satisfy their brutish lusts, and abuse the many good things they enjoy (either denying, or never acknowledging, him who is the donor of them), they shall utterly perish, and be no longer the care of that Providence to which they are so ungrateful; O my soul, never imitate their impiety, or negligence; but be excited thereby to the greater diligence, in praising thy great Creator and Benefactor. And let all those who have any sense of him, stir up themselves, and join with me in his praises.

PSALM CV.

ARGUMENT.

Though this Psalm hath no title, yet we are assured by what we read in 1 Chron. xvi. 8, &c. that the first part of it, at least, (to the end of ver. 15.) was made by David; and delivered by him to Asaph and his brethren, for the constant service of God in the tabernacle: when, after several victories over the Philistines, (1 Chron. xiv.) he had settled the ark of God in Zion. And it is most probable that he afterward enlarged this Psalm, (for who else would adventure to do it?) that it might be a more complete commemoration of all the mercies of God, towards their nation, from the days of Abraham to their taking possession of the land of Canaan. Into which he shews their glorious Lord conducted them by so many miraculous providences, in several ages (according to his faithful promise made to Abraham, his faithful servant), that it deserved their most hearty acknowledgments: to which he excites them, by ten several expressions, in the five first verses of the Psalm.

To which the Greeks prefix a Hallelujah (for they take the last word of the foregoing Psalm, and set it on the head of this), as a note how much they were obliged to praise the Lord, according to that exhortation; when they remembered in this Psalm the benefits that he had bestowed upon their forefathers: which were sufficient to excite and whet their minds to the imitation of their virtue.

And it may serve to admonish the new people of God (as Theodoret speaks), that is, as Christians, how much we ought to rejoice in God's goodness to us; and how dangerous it is to be ungrateful to him: which provoked him to deprive the Jews of that fatherly care which he had taken of their ancestors.

Ver. 1. *O GIVE thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.*] Stir up yourselves, all ye that are here assembled, to make your most grateful acknowledgments unto the great Lord, who is pleased to come and dwell among you: never approach his presence to make your petitions to him, but join his praises together with them; and proclaim to all the people round about, what great things he hath done for you and for your forefathers.

Ver. 2. *Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.*] Sing his praise with a cheerful voice, and with all the instruments of music: and let the subject of your hymns, and of your ordinary discourse, be his many marvellous acts, of which let not one be forgotten.

Ver. 3. *Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.*] For nothing can be so great an honour to you, as that you are servants of such a mighty Lord; who infinitely transcends all other beings: triumph, therefore, and make your boast of this, as a greater happiness than all worldly goods; let it fill the hearts of all his faithful worshippers with the highest joy and gladness.

Ver. 4. *Seek the Lord, and his strength; seek his face evermore.*] Let it encourage them to address themselves unto him upon all occasions; and, prostrating themselves before the ark of his presence, (2 Chron. vi. 41.) commend themselves to his powerful protection: let them unweariedly seek his favour, and implore his gracious assistance.

Ver. 5. *Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.*] Which you may, with the greater confidence, expect, if you call to mind, and thankfully commemorate, the marvellous things he hath done for your deliverance; and his terrible executions, (Exod. iii. 20.) according to his just sentence passed (Exod. vii. 4.) upon your enemies.

Ver. 6. *O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen.*] The benefit of which you still enjoy, O ye who are the posterity of his servant Abraham (whose faith and obedience you ought to imitate); the children of Jacob, whom he chose (rejecting Esau) to inherit the promised blessing.

Ver. 7. *He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth.*] He is still the same mighty Lord, and our most gracious God; who continues to execute his judgments every where upon our enemies, (2 Sam. v. 7. 10. 17, &c.) and therefore let us never cease to praise him, and cheerfully serve him, and faithfully depend upon him.

Ver. 8. *He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.*] For he is never unmindful of his engagements to us; but punc-

tually performs, in all ages, what he hath promised in his covenant.

Ver. 9. *Which covenant he made with Abraham; and his oath unto Isaac.*] Which he first solemnly made, (Gen. xv. 17, 18.) and then sware (xxii. 16.) unto Abraham: and renewed with his son Isaac; to whom he promised to perform that oath, which he sware unto Abraham, Gen. xxvi. 3.

Ver. 10. *And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant.*] And again confirmed it to Jacob, both when he went to Haran, (Gen. xxviii. 13, &c.) and, at his return, when he changed his name into Israel; (xxxv. 10, &c.) and, at last, passed it into a law, in that covenant which he made with their posterity, (Exod. xxiii. 22, 23. 31, 32.) never to be altered, if they keep their covenant with him.

Ver. 11. *Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.*] The sum of which was this; I bestow upon thee, and will bring thee into that good land, the land of Canaan: which, according to this faithful covenant, you now possess; as by lot it was distributed to your several tribes, for their inheritance, (Josh. xiv. 1, 2.)

Ver. 12. *When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it.*] This covenant he began to make with your forefathers (and shewed his intention to perform it, by his singular care over them), when their family was very small, (Gen. xii. 1. 5.) and consequently so weak, that they might easily have been destroyed in the land where they were strangers, (xxiii. 4.) and had no friends nor allies to support them:

Ver. 13. *When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people.*] Nor any settled habitation; but were forced to wander to and fro, from one part of Canaan into another, (Gen. xii. 6. 8, 9.) and then to sojourn in other kingdoms; sometimes in Egypt, (ver. 10.) sometimes in Gerar, (xx. 1. xxvi. 1.) and sometimes in the eastern country from whence they came, (xxix. 1.)

Ver. 14. *He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproved kings for their sakes.*] And wheresoever they sojourned, he took them into his protection, and suffered no man to do them any injury, (Gen. xxxi. 24. 42.) but gave severe checks even to the king of Egypt, (xii. 16.) and the king of Gerar, (xx. 3, &c.) to prevent the mischief which they were designing to them.

Ver. 15. *Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*] For he told them, these were sacred persons, whom he designed to make greater men than themselves, and therefore charged them not to hurt them; but to honour them, not merely as princes, (Gen. xxiii. 6.) but as prophets, (xx. 7.) by whose prayers they should receive great blessings if they were kind to them.

Ver. 16. *Moreover, he called for a famine upon the land; he brake the whole staff of bread.*] And when, in the days of Jacob, he punished the land of Canaan, as well as other countries, with such a dearth, (Gen. xli. 54, &c.) that the earth brought forth no kind of grain for the support of human life:

Ver. 17. *He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant*] He took a special care, in a most wonderful way, to provide both for him and for his family; for Joseph (whom his brethren first conspired to destroy, but afterward were diverted from their purpose, and only sold for a slave) was brought into Egypt, by the secret counsel of God, (Gen. xlv. 5. 7, &c.) to be the instrument of their preservation.

Ver. 18. *Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron.*] He was oppressed, indeed, for a long time by a most grievous calumny: which was a sorer affliction to him, than the chains and fetters that were, at first, laid upon him in prison.

Ver. 19. *Until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him.*] Till mention at last was made of him to Pharaoh, by one of his officers: who related how exactly Joseph predicted what had befallen him and another of his fellow-servants; as if he were a man inspired, (Gen. xl. 21, 22. xli. 12, 13.)

Ver. 20. *The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free.*] Whereupon the king presently sent for him; (Gen. xli. 14.) that great prince, whose dominion extended over many provinces, and commanded him to be set at liberty.

Ver. 21. *He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance.*] And received such satisfaction from him about his dream, which none of his wise men could interpret, that he not only wholly discharged him from his imprisonment, but made him the chief officer in the court: and, under himself, the supreme governor of his whole kingdom, (Gen. xli. 40, 41.)

Ver. 22. *To bind his princes at his pleasure, and teach his senators wisdom.*] Yea, entrusted him with an absolute power, to command all the rulers of his several provinces, what he pleased; and to punish their disobedience according to his discretion: the most ancient and wisest counsellors in the realm were ordered to repair to him, and to do nothing without his instructions, (Gen. xli. 44.)

Ver. 23. *Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.*] By which great authority he procured not only the leave, but the invitation of Pharaoh (Gen. xlv. 16, 17, &c.) to his father, to come and bring all his family with him into Egypt; and accordingly he came and dwelt in the best part of all the country, (xlvi. 26, 27.)

Ver. 24. *And he increased his people greatly, and made them stronger than their enemies.*] Where, according to his promise, when he bade Jacob accept that invitation, (Gen. xlvi. 3, 4.) the Lord multiplied them exceedingly, (Exod. i. 7.) and made them mightier than the Egyptians, (ver. 9.) who, of friends, were now become their enemies.

Ver. 25. *He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtly with his servants.*] For the kinder God was to the Israelites, and the more he increased their numbers, the greater jealousy it begat in the heart of the Egyptians: which turned at last into an absolute hatred of them; and provoked their malice to invent the cruelest ways, first to diminish, (Exod. i. 10, 11, &c.) and then to destroy them, (ver. 15, 16.)

Ver. 26. *He sent Moses his servant, and Aaron whom he had chosen.*] This moved the Divine compassion, when he saw their oppression grew intolerable, to give commission to Moses, whom he had in an extraordinary manner preserved from perishing, (Exod. iii. 13.) and to Aaron, whom he chose to be his assistant, (iv. 15.) to go and demand their liberty of Pharaoh, (iv. 23. v. 1.)

Ver. 27. *They shewed his signs among them, and wonders*

in the land of Ham.] And he disputing their commission (and refusing to let Israel go), they proved it, and persuaded him to obey it, by many miraculous works: which God commanded them to do, as tokens that he had sent them.

Ver. 28. *He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word.*] Among which the pitchy darkness, which overspread the whole land three days (except only where the Israelites dwelt), was a very remarkable punishment of Pharaoh's blindness: who would not see the hand of God in all those other plagues, which Moses and Aaron, not fearing his displeasure, but pursuing their orders, had inflicted on him.

Ver. 29. *He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.*] As, first of all, the Lord commanded them to stretch their hand upon all the waters of Egypt; which he turned into blood: and made them so putrid, that the fish which was in the river died, (Exod. vii. 20, 21.)

Ver. 30. *Their land brought forth frogs in abundance in the chambers of their kings.*] And, at the next stroke, produced such a vast number of frogs out of the stinking waters and mud, that not only the whole earth was covered with them, but no house, no room in their houses, no, not the cabinets of their king and his princes, were free from their annoyance, (Exod. viii. 3—6.)

Ver. 31. *He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, and lice in all their coasts.*] And then followed an infinite swarm of the most pestilent sort of flies, (see Psal. lxxviii. 45.) after a troublesome and filthy plague of lice, which had infested all the country, (Exod. viii. 17. 24.)

Ver. 32. *He gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land.*] Which was succeeded (after a murrain upon their cattle, and a fiery ulcer on their own bodies) by a dreadful storm of hail (when fruitful showers of rain were most desirable), together with such lightning, as was never seen: for it ran upon the ground, and burnt up all that was not destroyed by the hail, (Exod. ix. 23, 24, &c.)

Ver. 33. *He smote their vines also and their fig-trees, and brake the trees of their coasts.*] Which not only struck down the grapes and the figs; but shattered the vines and fig-trees themselves; together with many other fruit-trees in the land.

Ver. 34. *He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number.*] And whatsoever escaped this tempestuous storm, (for some things were not then grown up, Exod. ix. 31.) was, not long after, devoured by an innumerable army of various sorts of locusts, (Exod. x. 4. 12, &c.)

Ver. 35. *And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.*] Which, by his command, came and covered the whole face of the country, eating up the very leaves of the trees, as well as all the grass and herbs upon the ground, (Exod. x. 15.)

Ver. 36. *He smote also all the first-born in their land, the chief of all their strength.*] And, at last, he finished these plagues in the slaughter of all their first-born, both of man and beast: the angel of the Lord killing, in one and the same night, (Exod. xii. 29.) the principal prop of every family: and the best of all their flocks and their herds.

Ver. 37. *He brought them forth also with silver and gold; and there was not one feeble person among their tribes.*] Which terrible destruction so affrighted them, that they not only let Israel go, but were forward to thrust them out of Egypt, and that loaded with silver and gold: (Exod. xii. 31—35.) and, which is very wonderful among so many thousand persons, (ver. 37.) there was not one, at that time, so feeble, as to be unable to travel.

Ver. 38. *Egypt was glad when they departed; for the fear of them fell upon them.*] And great was the joy at their departure; not only among the Israelites, but among the Egyptians: who thought themselves not safe till the Israelites had their liberty; but were in dread of another plague, which they thought might kill them, as the former had done their children, (Exod. xii. 33.)

Ver. 39. *He spread a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light in the night.*] Nor did the Divine Providence desert our fathers after it had brought them out of Egypt; but, lest they should suffer any prejudice by the exceeding great heats, or mistake their way in a desolate wilderness; he defended them in the day from the scorching rays of the sun by a cloud: which itself gave them light to comfort, and (if need were) to guide them in the night, (Exod. xiii. 21, 22.)

Ver. 40. *The people asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven.*] He provided also a delicate food for that vast multitude; even when they were so ungrateful as to murmur against him: (Exod. xvi. 12, &c.) sending them, in the evening, such flights of quails, and in the morning such showers of corn out of the clouds, as abundantly satisfied every one of them.

Ver. 41. *He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river.*] And when they murmured again for want of drink, (Exod. xvii. 2—6.) he was so kind as to stop their complaints, by making water to spring out of a rock: from whence it gushed so constantly, and in such abundance, that it made a stream; which followed them in all the parched grounds through which they marched.

Ver. 42. *For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant.*] For the Lord was resolved punctually to perform his promise, passed in former ages, (Gen. xv. 18. Exod. ii. 24.) which made him reward the fidelity of his servant Abraham; even upon his incredulous posterity; at that very time which he had prefixed for it, (Gen. xv. 13. Exod. xii. 41.)

Ver. 43. *And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness.*] When, with much mirth and joy, he brought his people out of the Egyptian bondage; and made them shout to see the difference he made between them and the Egyptians; who were drowned in the Red Sea; while they were conducted safe through it on dry land, (Exod. xv. 1. 13. 19.)

Ver. 44. *And gave them the lands of the heathen; and they inherited the labour of the people.*] And, in conclusion, he cast out seven nations, to make room for them in the land of Canaan: where their posterity took possession of cities and towns, fields and vineyards; which the labour of others had built and planted for them, (Deut. vi. 10, 11. Josh. xxiv. 13.)

Ver. 45. *That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the Lord.*] That they might have the more leisure to purge the country of all its ancient superstition and filthiness: and set themselves heartily to worship God, after that manner that he prescribed; in a strict

observance of all the rest of his holy laws.—For which, and all other his benefits, excite yourselves to praise the Lord.

PSALM CVI.

Hallelujah, i. e. *Praise the Lord.*

ARGUMENT.

There is little doubt to be made, but this is the title of the Psalm, as it is of many other, (cxi. &c.) whereby the author excites them to acknowledge God's bounty to their ungrateful forefathers. For as, in the foregoing Psalm (they are the words of Theodoret), the Divine benefits are commemorated; so in this the Psalmist both commemorates them, and also upbraids the ingratitude of those that received them. Which magnified the mercies of God the more; in being so very kind to those wicked people, that when he punished them, he did not utterly destroy them.

The opinion of that father is, that the Psalm was composed in the person of the more pious sort of people, who bewail the common calamities, and implore the Divine indulgence. And most interpreters that I have met withal, imagine it to have been made in the time of the captivity of Babylon: but the proof of it is very weak. For the last verse but one, upon which they ground that conjecture, may have another construction, and mean no more but this; that God would be pleased, when the nation, or any part of it, should be carried captive, to take pity upon them, and restore them again to their country. Or rather, in my opinion, it refers to those, who, in the days of Saul, or before, were taken prisoners by the Philistines, and other nations: whom David prays God to gather to their own land again, that they might worship him in that place, which he had prepared for the ark of his presence. For it seems plain enough that this was one of the Psalms which he delivered then to Asaph: the first verse and the two last being set down in 1 Chron. xvi. 36, 37. as the beginning and ending of another Psalm (which can be none but this), which he then gave in with the other two there mentioned, (xcvi. and cv.) to praise the Lord withal.

Ver. 1. *PRAISE ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] O make your thankful acknowledgments to the great Lord of all the world, who was exceeding gracious to your forefathers, and will continue his kindness, you may hope, unto all succeeding ages.

Ver. 2. *Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? who can shew forth all his praise?*] Praise him with all your might; for when you have done your best, you must acknowledge that it is impossible to express your obligations to his omnipotent goodness. For who is able to tell how miraculous that power was, which wrought such wonders for us in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and in the land of Canaan? where shall we find a man that can set forth, as they deserve, all the praiseworthy acts of the Lord?

Ver. 3. *Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.*] Which are so great and many, that they are most happy men, who, by faithful obedience to all his precepts (not only when they have newly received his benefits, but throughout the whole course of their lives), preserve themselves in the favour of so gracious a Lord and Master (which our forefathers foolishly lost, by revolting presently from their merciful Deliverer).

Ver. 4. *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation.*] Make me, good Lord, one of this happy number; and let me partake of the favour thou still designest for thy people; and find thee ready at hand, in all dangers, to preserve and deliver me, (1 Chron. xviii. 6. 13, 14.)

Ver. 5. *That I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.*] That I may live to see thy chosen people Israel settled in a peaceable enjoyment of all thy blessings, (1 Chron. xxii. 18.) and have my share in their joy and felicity, (xxix. 9.) nay, triumph together with them, in the highest praises of thy bounty towards thy own nation, and peculiar inheritance, (ver. 10, &c.)

Ver. 6. *We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.*] Our sins, indeed, may hinder these blessings from us; for we are no better than our forefathers, but have offended after their example, by which we ought to have been amended: we are guilty of many iniquities against one another, and much impiety against thee.

Ver. 7. *Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red Sea.*] We are the wicked offspring of those who were so stupid, as not to be affected with the prodigious works thou didst in Egypt; or presently to forget that long series of miraculous preservations and deliverances by which they were brought from thence: but in the very next strait into which they fell (at the borders of the sea, that remarkable place the Red Sea) distrusted his power, and wished he had left them in that cruel servitude, of which before they so heavily complained, (Exod. xiv.)

Ver. 8. *Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake; that he might make his mighty power to be known.*] And yet (such was his stupendous goodness) he would not let them perish in their ingratitude; but, to preserve the name he had gotten of their mighty Saviour, gave them a new deliverance: that the world might not imagine he wanted power to complete what he had begun to do for them.

Ver. 9. *He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.*] On this consideration, he checked the course of that sea by so strong a wind, that he made a path in the midst of it: and led them through those depths on as hard and dry ground as they trod upon in their march through the parched deserts, (Exod. xiv. 21, 22.)

Ver. 10. *And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.*] By which means he saved them from Pharaoh's army; which pressed hard upon their backs, as the sea was before their face. (Exod. xiv. 9, 10.) He rescued them from the power of those implacable enemies, whose hatred carried them to pursue them eagerly even into the sea, (ver. 23.)

Ver. 11. *And the waters covered their enemies; there was not one of them left.*] Where they were drowned every man of them; the sea, which had stood fixed as a wall to save

the Israelites, returning back with a mighty violence to overwhelm their adversaries.

Ver. 12. *Then believed they his words; they sang his praise.*] Which was so evident a token of his power and goodness, that they were persuaded by it, at that present, to believe God's promises, (Exod. xiv. 31.) and to sing a song of praise to him for this miraculous deliverance, (Exod. xv. 1, &c.)

Ver. 13. *They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel.*] But within three days they grew impatient again, (Exod. xv. 22. 24.) and, forgetting the great and many pledges they had received of his Divine power, quarrelled with his servants; and would not expect till he shewed what way he intended to relieve them.

Ver. 14. *But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.*] But not long after this murmured again; (Exod. xvi.) and though, instead of punishing them for it, he satisfied them with bread from heaven, and gave them several other demonstrations of his Divine presence among them in the wilderness: (Exod. xvi. xx. xxiv. &c.) yet, to please their wanton appetite, they mutinied another time, and cried out vehemently for flesh to eat, (Numb. xi. 4, 5, &c.) and desired new proofs of his power to supply them.

Ver. 15. *And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.*] Which he was pleased to grant in such abundance, that they surfeited of the quails which he sent them: and, instead of being nourished, fell into a grievous disease, whereby great numbers of them were wasted and consumed, (Numb. xi. 31, 32, &c.)

Ver. 16. *They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord.*] And they that escaped were not cured of their rebellious humour, but seditiously disputed the authority of Moses: and accused both him and Aaron, whom the Lord had consecrated for the service of his altar, as ambitious men that took too much upon them, (Numb. xvi. 3.)

Ver. 17. *The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.*] Which moved the Divine justice to punish their presumption with a most terrible vengeance: for the earth opened and buried alive both Dathan and Abiram, and the faction that adhered to them, (Numb. xvi. 32, 33.)

Ver. 18. *And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burnt up the wicked.*] And the other company raised by Korah were smitten with lightning from heaven; which burnt up those impious men, who were so bold as to invade the office of the priests of the Lord, (Numb. xvi. 35.)

Ver. 19. *They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.*] Whose anger they began very early to incense; for even at that very place where the Lord had newly appeared to them, in astonishing thunder, and lightning, and clouds, (Exod. xx. 18.) and had spoken to them with an audible voice, and at the second word he spake had charged them not to make any graven image, (Exod. xx. 4.) and had called Moses up into the mount to receive the rest of his laws (which he had begun in a most dreadful manner to deliver to them), they stupidly made a golden calf, and prostrated themselves before the work of their own hands.

Ver. 20. *Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.*] Slighting that glorious presence of the majesty of God, (Exod. xxiv. 16, 17.) which, appearing in the cloud, had done many wonders for them: and choosing rather to commend themselves to the protection of an image, in which they saw no glory; the image of a dull ox, a creature without reason, a servant of man, that is supported itself by so weak a thing as hay, (Exod. xxxii. 14.)

Ver. 21. *They forgat God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt.*] The root of which sottish apostacy was, that they did not keep in mind what deliverances God had granted them under the conduct of Moses; whom now they despised: (Exod. xxxii. 1.) but forgat his great works in the land of Egypt, where they never saw any similitude of him.

Ver. 22. *Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea.*] Miraculous works, which filled the whole country with wonder and astonishment; and concluded at last in the fearful overthrow of Pharaoh and all his host in the Red Sea, through which they passed safely.

Ver. 23. *Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.*] Which provoked the Divine displeasure so highly, that he resolved to destroy them; (Exod. xxxii. 9, 10.) and had done it, if Moses, for whom he had a great respect, had not, by his earnest intercession, made up this breach; and reconciled him so far to them, that he did not proceed then to take such vengeance on them, (ver. 11, 12. 14, 15.)

Ver. 24. *Yea, they despised the pleasant land; they believed not his word.*] But when after this they despised (Numb. xiii. 32.) that goodly country, to the borders of which he had brought them, (Deut. i. 19, 20.) which the spies themselves confessed was rich and desirable: (Numb. xiii. 27. xiv. 32.) and would not believe that God intended, or was able, to perform his promise to them: (Numb. xiii. 37.)

Ver. 25. *But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord.*] But murmured against Moses and Aaron in their tents, as if they had deluded them, (Numb. xiv. 1, 2, &c.) refusing to march, when the Lord commanded them to go up, and take possession of it: (Deut. i. 21. 26. 32.)

Ver. 26. *Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness.*] Then he solemnly sware, that not one of that wicked generation, who had so often rebelled against him, should ever come there, but all perish in the wilderness, (Numb. xiv. 21, 22. 35. Deut. i. 34.)

Ver. 27. *To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.*] And some of them be overthrown by the heathen, whom the Lord would have delivered up into their hand, (Numb. xiv. 45.) and others dispersed in several parts of that country which they despised, (xxi. 1.)

Ver. 28. *They joined themselves also unto Baal-Peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.*] Nor did they grow much better by these dreadful threatenings and executions; but not only most shamefully committed whoredom with the daughters of Moab, but embraced their religion: devoting themselves to the vile service of Baal, whose temple stood upon Mount Peor; and partaking with them in the sacrifices which they offered to dead men, (Numb. xxv. 1—3.)

Ver. 29. *Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions; and the plague brake in upon them.*] Which abominable wickedness incensed the Divine displeasure to such a degree, that he commanded the offenders to be killed and hanged up in the face of the sun: and also sent a grievous plague among the people, (Numb. xxv. 4, 5. 9.)

Ver. 30. *Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and so the plague was stayed.*] Which raged in the camp, till Phinehas, in a holy zeal, went as boldly to punish, as others did to commit their crimes: and thrust through the body one of the princes of the people, whom the judges feared to meddle withal; and then the plague ceased, (Numb. xxv. 5—8.)

Ver. 31. *And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.*] Which seasonable piece of justice the Lord not only approved as a praiseworthy act, but rewarded also with the promise of the priesthood: which he entailed upon his posterity, throughout all generations, (Numb. xxv. 12, 13.)

Ver. 32. *They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes.*] And, before this, they had been so unbelieving and rebellious, as, having had long experience of God's power and goodness in providing for them, to murmur for want of water; at that place, which took its name from their quarrel with Moses, (Numb. xx. 3. 13.) who sadly suffered upon their account, (Numb. xx. 12.)

Ver. 33. *Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.*] For, being exasperated by their frequent mutinies, he let fall some passionate words; which expressed such distrust and impatience, as did not become so great a minister of God, (Numb. xx. 12.) who thereupon resolved he should not have the honour to accomplish his promise, of bringing them to their rest, (Numb. xxvii. 24. Deut. i. 37.)

Ver. 34. *They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the Lord commanded them.*] In which, being settled, they did not destroy those seven nations, (Judg. i. 21. 27. 29, &c.) whose abominations were so foul, that the Lord gave them a strict charge not to suffer them to live there any longer, (Exod. xxiii. 30. 33. Deut. vii. 2.)

Ver. 35. *But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.*] But, quite contrary, they not only let them live, but, against God's express commandment, (Josh. xxiii. 7. 12.) entered into familiarity, and made a covenant and league with them, (Judg. ii. 1, 2.) and so at last learned to do as they did, and imitated their evil manners.

Ver. 36. *And they served their idols; which were a snare unto them.*] For they forsook the Lord, who had brought them thither, and worshipped the gods of those people whom they had conquered, (Judg. ii. 11, 12. iii. 5, 6.) which proved their utter ruin and destruction, (Deut. vii. 16. 26. Judg. ii. 3.)

Ver. 37. *Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils.*] For they were so besotted with their idolatry, as to imitate their most barbarous rites: sacrificing to infernal spirits, not only their beasts, but (as the custom of that country was, Deut. xii. 30, 31.) their sons and their daughters.

Ver. 38. *And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.*] Whom they did not merely consecrate to the service of devils; but offered their blood, the blood of innocent babes, even of their own sons and daughters (as I said), upon the altars of the idols of Canaan: profaning thereby the holy land with the most impious and unnatural murders.

Ver. 39. *Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.*] Besides other abominable works wherewith they defiled themselves; such as whoredom, and all manner of beastly lusts: which were the filthy vices of those nations whom God cast out before them, (Lev. xviii. 24, 25. 27, 28, &c.)

Ver. 40. *Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.*] And so contrary to nature, as well as his law, that the Lord was exceeding angry with them, (Judg. ii. 14. 20.) and the more, because he had made them his people: whom he now abominated as impure and unclean, though once they had been very dear unto him.

Ver. 41. *And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them.*] And thereupon delivered them up to the power of those impious nations, with whom they contracted friendship, when they should have destroyed them, (Judg. iii. 3. 5. iv. 2. xiii. 1.) who, retaining still their ancient hatred, exercised a rigorous tyranny over them, (iv. 3.)

Ver. 42. *Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.*] And so did many other of their neighbouring enemies, the Mesopotamians and Moabites, (Judg. iii. 8. 12.) the Midianites and Amalekites, (vi. 2, 3, &c.) and such-like, (x. 7, 8.) who not only grievously afflicted them, but deservedly made those their subjects, nay, slaves, who would not serve their gracious God.

Ver. 43. *Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity.*] Who still continued so kind to them, that upon the first sign of their repentance, he constantly raised up the spirit of some great man or other to rescue them from every one of these oppressors: though they as constantly provoked him again, by relapsing to their former idolatry, which in the issue brought them exceeding low, (Judg. x. 8, 9.)

Ver. 44. *Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry.*] And yet, such was his tender compassion towards them, he did not absolutely refuse to help even these base revolters, (Judg. x. 14—16.) when, in their distress, they made a lamentable moan, and promised amendment.

Ver. 45. *And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies.*] For he was not unmindful of the covenant he had made with their forefathers, (Lev. xxvi. 42. 44, 45. Deut. xxx. 1—3.) but let them reap the benefit of it, in ceasing to punish them; and, when they deserved to be utterly destroyed, bestowing many and exceeding great blessings on them.

Ver. 46. *He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.*] For he inclined the hearts, even of those who had subdued, and implacably hated them, unto some compassion towards them: so that they did not endeavour their total extirpation, (Judg. xiii. 1. xiv. 2. xv. 9, &c.)

Ver. 47. *Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and*

to triumph in thy praise.] And therefore we humbly hope still in the same great mercies; and beseech thee, O most mighty Lord, who hast been wont to do our nation good, to deliver us, how unworthy soever, from all our present enemies; and to restore such of us as are fallen into their hands unto their own country, that they may join with us in giving thanks to thy incomparable goodness, and setting forth thy praises with the greatest joy and triumph, saying,

Ver. 48. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the Lord.*] Let the great Lord of all the world, who hath been so gracious unto Israel, as to choose them for his own peculiar people, be most heartily blessed and praised: let all generations bless him, as long as the world shall last, and unto all eternity: and let all his people concur in these desires, and wish it may be so; let them all praise the Lord, and desire he may be ever praised.

PART V.

PSALM CVII.

ARGUMENT.

The fifth book of Psalms (which consists most of praises and thanksgivings) begins here; with an exhortation to those whom God (according to the prayer foregoing, cvi. 47.) had delivered from pagan servitude, to acknowledge that singular benefit with their hearty thanksgivings; and thence to take occasion to magnify his merciful providence over all other men, not only of that, but of all nations, where they addressed themselves unto him in their distresses. For instance, travellers in the desert, who have lost their way, prisoners, sick people, mariners, husbandmen, even whole countries, the Psalmist shews, are made strangely prosperous, if they have a regard to God; and, on the other side, fall into great misery, if they neglect him. It had been endless to enumerate all other cases; but by these any man may understand, if he please (as he observes in the conclusion), how good the Lord is, and ready to help those who fly unto him for succour, whatever their condition be.

The author of the Psalm is unknown; but if I have guessed aright, at the connexion of this with the foregoing Psalm, it is most probable it was composed by David: who having, in the hundred and fifth, put them in mind (as Theodoret observes) of the promises made to the patriarchs, and of the blessings bestowed on their posterity; and, in the hundred and sixth, of their horrid ingratitude for such benefits, and the punishments, for that cause, inflicted upon them: declares in this Psalm the inexplicable kindness of God, in their freedom from slavery; and in his careful providence, as I said, over all mankind: which might give them the greater encouragement to hope in him, if they served him faithfully, who had taken them for his peculiar people.

Ver. 1. O *GIVE thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.*] O make your grateful acknowledgments to the great Lord of the world; of whose goodness you and your forefathers have had such a long experience, that you may conclude his loving-kindness will extend itself to all succeeding ages.

Ver. 2. *Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.*] Let them especially call upon one another to give thanks unto his goodness, whom the Lord hath graciously redeemed from a sad captivity; into which they were reduced by their prevailing enemies:

Ver. 3. *And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.*] And hath brought them back to their own country again; from all the lands, on every side, into which they were dispersed.

Ver. 4. *They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.*] And they also, who, travelling through vast wildernesses and sandy deserts, lost their way, and could find no tract to lead them to a city inhabited:

Ver. 5. *Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.*] But, in this perplexity, wandered up and down so long, that all their provision spent, and they were ready to die with hunger and thirst:

Ver. 6. *Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.*] Yet then, recommending themselves to the Lord, and earnestly imploring his help in this miserable strait, he mercifully delivered them out of it, and freed them from all their anxieties:

Ver. 7. *And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.*] Directing them, when they were in a maze, into the right path again; which brought them to a place inhabited, where they found relief for their necessities.

Ver. 8. *Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!* Oh that such men would never forget to make their thankful acknowledgments to the Lord for this singular kindness; but every where proclaim his wonderful works!

Ver. 9. *For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.*] Who thus seasonably preserved them from starving, by providing, in this languishing condition, drink to quench their thirst, and plenty of good things to satisfy their hungry appetite.

Ver. 10. *Such as sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron.*] They also who have no other dwelling but a dark prison, nay, a horrible dungeon; where, to add to their affliction, they are loaded with iron manacles or fetters;

Ver. 11. *Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High.*] As a just punishment for the crimes they had rebelliously committed against the express commands of God, and the plain dictates and frequent checks of their own consciences; which were the voice of the Most High, giving them wholesome counsel, though they contemned and despised it:

Ver. 12. *Therefore he brought down their heart with labour: they fell down, and there was none to help.*] And thereby provoked him to throw them into that miserable condition, to humble their proud hearts by the hardship of a tedious and painful imprisonment; in which they lay so

dejected and helpless, that they saw no human means whereby they should be delivered.

Ver. 13. *Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.*] Yet, they then making their addresses to the Lord, and earnestly beseeching him to take pity upon their wretched estate, he was pleased mercifully to hear their prayers, and free them from those miserable straits:

Ver. 14. *He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.*] Bringing them out of their sad confinement in that dismal dungeon, and setting their hands and feet at liberty, from the chains wherewith they were bound.

Ver. 15. *Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*] Oh that such men would never forget to make their thankful acknowledgments to the Lord for his singular kindness; but every where proclaim his wonderful works!

Ver. 16. *For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.*] Who, when their case was desperate, removed the greatest obstacles; and made even brazen gates, and iron bars, give way to their escape.

Ver. 17. *Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.*] In like manner we see others, who, forgetting God, and sottishly giving themselves up to all kind of debauchery, in an irregular way of living, falling into grievous diseases:

Ver. 18. *Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.*] Which not only quite take away their appetite, but make them nauseate all manner of food, which they formerly abused; and thereby lay them so low, that they are at the very brink of the grave:

Ver. 19. *Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, he saveth them out of their distresses.*] Yet even these men, when they make their addresses unto the Lord, and, in the weak estate into which they have brought themselves, pray earnestly to him, are wont to find relief from him, when no medicines whatsoever will avail them.

Ver. 20. *He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction.*] He orders their recovery, when all the prescriptions of physicians prove ineffectual: nay, when they are left for dead, raises them up to life and health again.

Ver. 21. *Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*] Oh that these men would be so grateful to the Lord, as never to forget his singular kindness to them; but every where proclaim such wonderful works as these!

Ver. 22. *And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.*] And not content themselves with the sacrifice of beasts (which in their sickness they were apt to vow unto him), but offer those far more acceptable sacrifices of a grateful heart: acknowledging his goodness, and telling every body they meet withal, in such a manner as may express how much they are affected with it, what great things the Lord hath done for them.

Ver. 23. *They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters.*] Who shews no less kindness to those that have occasion to be much upon the sea; to fish, or to traffic upon the main ocean.

Ver. 24. *These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.*] Where they behold remarkable acts of Divine Providence, in the wonderful alterations which he makes in that vast collection of waters.

Ver. 25. *For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.*] For when they are smooth and still, a sudden tempest arises by his command: which puts them into such a rage, that they are turned into swelling waves and billows.

Ver. 26. *They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble.*] On which the ships are sometimes mounted up as high as if they would touch the clouds; and then sink down as low as if they would be buried in the bottom of the sea; to the great astonishment of the passengers, who are ready to die with fear.

Ver. 27. *They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end.*] For they are so tossed and whirled about, that, as they are not able to stand upon the decks, so the most skilful mariners do not know which way to steer, or what course to take, to save themselves from perishing.

Ver. 28. *Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.*] And yet, when, in the midst of this great strait, they make their addresses to the Lord, with earnest prayers for his protection, he is graciously pleased to hear their cry, and to free them from that anguish of mind which sorely oppresses them.

Ver. 29. *He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.*] For he silences the blustering wind, and makes so great a calm, that the swelling waves lie quiet and still.

Ver. 30. *Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.*] Which happy change turns their fear into joy; when they see not only the storm appeased, but gentle gales arising to carry them directly to the port for which they are bound.

Ver. 31. *Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*] Oh that they who are thus unexpectedly preserved, would never forget to make their thankful acknowledgments to the Lord for this singular kindness, but every where proclaim what wonders he hath done for them!

Ver. 32. *Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.*] Let them magnify his power and goodness in the greatest assemblies of the people, especially in his temple: let them praise him in the supreme court of the kingdom; that the judges and governors may be excited to make him their trust and confidence.

Ver. 33. *He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water-springs into dry ground.*] Who turns well-watered countries into a mere wilderness, and makes moist and fertile soils become dry and barren ground:

Ver. 34. *A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.*] Where none of those fruits will grow, which before it plentifully yielded; because of the ill disposition of the inhabitants, who produce nothing but all manner of vice and wickedness.

Ver. 35. *He turneth the wilderness into a standing-water, and dry ground into water-springs.*] And, on the other side, he turns a barren desert (for none of these things come by

chance) into rich and fruitful pastures: and sends such plenty of water into dry and sandy grounds,

Ver. 36. *And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation.*] That there they, who lived wretchedly before, find a comfortable habitation: and are invited to build towns and cities in those formerly desolate places.

Ver. 37. *And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.*] Where they sow all manner of grain, and plant vineyards; which recompense their pains with a plentiful harvest, and a joyful vintage.

Ver. 38. *He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly, and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.*] His blessing also makes the inhabitants fruitful, as well as their ground: they grow exceeding populous, together with their flocks and their herds, which by the increase of people are not diminished.

Ver. 39. *Again they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.*] But when they prove ungrateful to him, he quite alters the course of his providence; and on a sudden sends some grievous pestilence, which lessens their numbers; or lays them low by tyrannical oppressors (into whose hands he delivers them), by dearth, and other calamities, which make them pine away in grief and sorrow.

Ver. 40. *He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way.*] Their princes and the most eminent persons in their country are not able to preserve themselves from contempt and scorn; to which they are so openly exposed, that they who had troops of followers and attendants are utterly deserted, and forced to walk in solitary places to hide their shame, without any means that they can see to recover their thrones, out of which they are disgracefully thrown.

Ver. 41. *Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.*] Which he bestows upon some poor despicable person, whom, from a low condition, he raises to the highest dignity; and gives him a very numerous issue, to maintain and continue the honour he hath conferred on him.

Ver. 42. *The righteous shall see it, and rejoice; and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.*] Which is a great encouragement to the righteous; who herein behold with joy the wise and just providence of Almighty God: but gives the wicked (who under those bad princes were insolent, and full of proud boasts) such a rebuke, that they hang down their heads, and are confoundedly put to silence.

Ver. 43. *Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.*] And therefore whosoever will be truly wise, ought to mark and ponder such passages as these in the Divine government; that they may make others, who are less considerate, understand how very kind and gracious the Lord is, to those who study to please him, and to obtain his favour by dutiful obedience, and humble submission to him.

PSALM CVIII.

A Song or Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

The title tells us this *Song-Psalm* (see the reason of this name upon Psal. lxvii.) was made by David: and was placed here, as I conjecture, because now he was in a hopeful way to perfect some victories which he had begun to win; whereby some of those captives in strange lands (mentioned ver. 2, 3. of the foregoing Psalm) were rescued and set at liberty. What those nations were, over whom he was about to triumph, see in the title of Psalm lx. For the latter part of this Psalm, from ver. 6. to the end, is the very same (with some light variations) with the eight last verses of that; as the former part of it is very little different from the five last verses of Psalm lvii. Which the Psalmist, I suppose, here placed instead of those wherewith the sixtieth begins (though he retains all the latter end of it), because now, as I said, he had made some progress in those wars, which he was but entering upon when he made that sixtieth Psalm. And therefore here he begins with thanks to God for his mercy, as there he laments the ill condition wherein he found the affairs of the kingdom when he came to the crown.

Ver. 1. *O GOD, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.*] My heart is ready, O most gracious God, it is firmly resolved to give thee most solemn thanks: my tongue also, wherewith I ought to glorify thee, shall sing of thy goodness; and, with all the expressions of joy, set forth thy praise.

Ver. 2. *Awake, psaltery and harp; I myself will awake early.*] Nor shall any of the instruments of music be silent, but accompany my hymns: which I will sing unto thee so early, that I will prevent the rising of the sun.

Ver. 3. *I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.*] Nor will I merely make thee my private acknowledgments, but publish thy praise in the greatest assemblies of thy people, among whom this song shall be sung: yea, other nations shall read therein, how thankful I am for what thou hast begun to do for us.

Ver. 4. *For thy mercy is great above the heavens, and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.*] For it is fit my thankfulness should be as boundless as thy mercy: which infinitely transcends all my expressions; and hath nothing equal to it, but thy faithfulness and truth.

Ver. 5. *Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; and thy glory above all the earth.*] Be thou more and more exalted in these, O God; and raise to thyself thereby the highest praises: spread the fame of them every where, that thou mayest be glorified throughout the world.

Ver. 6. *That thy beloved may be delivered: save with thy right hand, and answer me.*] Especially now, I beseech thee to grant my humble petitions, that by thy mighty power, accompanying my arms, I may be an instrument of delivering thy beloved people from their oppressors.

Ver. 7. *God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.*] Why should I doubt of it, and not rather rejoice in assured hope of a perfect victory? since God, who is most holy, and cannot lie, hath said he will deliver them by my hand; (2 Sam. iii. 18.) and hath already put me in possession (as he also promised, ver. 2.) of all the country about Samaria; which I will distribute under such officers as I think fit to set over them.

Ver. 8. *Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver.*] Gilead,

also, and Manasseh, who were lately under another king, (2 Sam. ii. 9.) have submitted themselves to me; and so hath the tribe of Ephraim, which is a main support of my authority; these, and all the rest of the tribes of Israel, are united to the royal tribe of Judah; which (according to the prophecy of our forefather, Gen. xlix. 10.) supplies me with wise and able men to administer the laws, and order the affairs of my kingdom.

Ver. 9. *Moab is my wash-pot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.*] Which shall now extend itself beyond the bounds of this country; for I will tread the Moabites under my feet, and reduce them to the vilest servitude: (2 Sam. viii. 2.) I will trample also upon the Edomites, and make them my slaves: (ver. 14.) the Philistines also, whom I have begun to smite, (2 Sam. v. 17. 22, &c.) shall add to my triumphs, and be forced to submit unto me, as their conquering lord, (viii. 1.)

Ver. 10. *Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?*] These are difficult things indeed; and I may well ask, when I consider how potent these nations are, by what power or force I shall be able to enter that strongly-fenced city, in the frontiers of their country? who is it that will conduct me into Idumea, and make me a master of it?

Ver. 11. *Wilt not thou, O God, who hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts?*] But I can soon answer myself: for why should I despair of thy presence with us, O God of all power and might; who formerly indeed didst reject us, and forsake the conduct of our armies; (1 Sam. xxxi. 1. 7.) but now, I hope, wilt graciously aid us, and make us victorious.

Ver. 12. *Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.*] Do not frustrate these hopes; but afford us thy help against the Syrians also, (2 Sam. viii. 5.) now that they distress us: for no human force is able to deliver us, nor have we any confidence in it, but in thee alone.

Ver. 13. *Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.*] By whose assistance we will behave ourselves courageously, and do valiant acts: for God will utterly rout our enemies; and tread them down like the mire in the streets.

PSALM CIX.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

Most interpreters consent to the opinion of Aben Ezra and D. Kimchi, that David (to whom the title ascribes this Psalm) hath respect here, in the first place, to the grievous persecution which he suffered by Saul, and some of his court: who would let him enjoy no rest, but having driven him from his own house, pursued him so close, wheresoever he heard he was, that he could have no certain dwelling: but became like a locust, (as he speaks ver. 23.) which, having no nest, (as Bochartus observes, par. ii. lib. iv. de Animal. Sac. cap. 2.) leaps or flies from hedge to hedge; as he did from place to place. To provoke Saul to this rage against him, as they all loaded him with many calumnies, (which made David curse them to Saul's face, 1 Sam. xxvi. 19.) so one especially among the rest, who is generally thought to be Doeg the Edomite, was notoriously guilty of this wickedness: whom, by a prophetical spirit, he here most solemnly curses, in a direful manner; and pronounces the heaviest judgment upon him and his family: his inhuman villany being so great, that it made him an exact picture of the traitor Judas, to whom the apostle St. Peter, (Acts i. 20.) applies the eighth verse of this Psalm. The rest of which is spent in prayer to God, against such false accusers; and in vows of the praises he would give him, when he was delivered from the mischief which thereby they designed to him. Accordingly, when he was settled in his throne, he sent this Psalm, among others, unto the master of music in the tabernacle; to perpetuate the memory of God's mercy to him.

Concerning such imprecations as we here meet withal, see the Argument of Psal. xxxv. which is of the same nature with this.

Ver. 1. *HOLD not thy peace, O God of my praise.*] O God, the supreme judge of the world, who, as thou hast given me hitherto continual cause to praise thee, so I hope wilt still vindicate my honour; I appeal unto thy majesty: beseeching thee to declare thyself on my side; and make it appear that I am innocent.

Ver. 2. *For the mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitful, are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.*] For men of no conscience have taken the liberty to invent the most mischievous lies of me; whereby, though they always speak me fair to my face, they have wickedly traduced me to Saul behind my back:

Ver. 3. *They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.*] And spread those false reports so diligently, that I find they have made me odious every where: and thereupon, without any provocation from me, have levied war against me, to take away my life, (1 Sam. xxiii. 8. 25.)

Ver. 4. *For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.*] Who have been so far from doing them any harm, that I have deserved well of them: (1 Sam. xix. 4, 5.) and even now, when they requite my kindness with endeavours to destroy me, do nothing but recommend myself by prayer to thy protection; refusing to make use of the opportunity I had to revenge myself upon them, (1 Sam. xxiv. 9, 10, &c.)

Ver. 5. *And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.*] And yet this will not mollify them, but still they are so extremely ungrateful, as to repay my kindness with new attempts to do me mischief; (1 Sam. xxvi. 2.) and the more affection I express, with the greater hatred am I prosecuted.

Ver. 6. *Set thou a wicked man over him; and let Satan stand at his right hand.*] So implacable is his malice, who is the principal author of the calumnies wherewith I am loaded, (1 Sam. xxii. 9. 11.) against whom, therefore, I implore thy justice, O most righteous Judge of the world: let the worst man that can be found be appointed to hear his cause when he is accused, and his most malicious adversary plead against him.

Ver. 7. *When he shall be judged, let him be condemned; and let his prayer become sin.*] When sentence is given let him be condemned to be as guilty, as really he is; and if he petition for a pardon, let it not only be rejected, but prove an aggravation of his crimes.

Ver. 8. *Let his days be few; and let another take his office.*] Let him (and the false traitor, who in future times will use the Messiah as now they do me) be cut off before his time: and his office, (1 Sam. xxi. 7. xxii. 9.) wherein he behaves himself with such insufferable insolence and falsehood, be transferred to a better man.

Ver. 9. *Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.*] Let not his fatherless children succeed him in any thing that he hath; nor his widow have any thing left to maintain her.

Ver. 10. *Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.*] Let them not have so much as a house wherein to put their heads; but be perpetual vagabonds, supporting a miserable life by begging an alms; and seeking where to lodge, because their own dwellings are laid waste and desolate.

Ver. 11. *Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the stranger spoil his labour.*] Let his creditor (pretending a judgment) seize on all his estate; and a stranger, by that means, reap the fruit of all his care and labour.

Ver. 12. *Let there be none to extend mercy unto him; neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.*] Let no man shew the least kindness to his memory; or upon that account bestow an alms upon his fatherless children.

Ver. 13. *Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.*] Let them rather be odious for his sake, and the sooner destroyed: so that they be the last of the name; and, in the next generation, not one of that family be found.

Ver. 14. *Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the Lord; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.*] But, according to the just sentence of thy law, (Exod. xx. 5.) let the punishments (which were due long ago, but thy patience moved thee to forbear) fall all upon him; let him suffer for the sins of his progenitors on both sides; in whose wicked steps he would not cease to tread.

Ver. 15. *Let them be before the Lord continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.*] Let it be seen that their wickedness is not forgotten, though committed many years ago; but prosecute it with a continued vengeance, till nobody remember that there were such people in the world.

Ver. 16. *Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.*] This will be but a deserved recompence for all his cruelties: for as he let all benefits slip out of his mind, and was ungrateful to those who had obliged him, so he had no sense of that common compassion which is due to the calamitous; but when he saw me in a necessitous condition, destitute of friends, and dejected in spirit, made no other use of it but to persecute me to death.

Ver. 17. *As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him; as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.*] What can be more just, than that the mischief, in which he delighted, and both wished and designed to others, should fall upon himself? and that he should never meet with the blessing of those righteous courses which he always hated and avoided?

Ver. 18. *As he clothed himself with cursing, like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.*] His very business was to slander others, every where; taking a pride in the mischievous effects of his cursed lies: and therefore let him feel the miserable fruit of his wickedness, spreading itself, like the water he drinks, into every vein of him; and sticking as close to him as oil unto the bones.

Ver. 19. *Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.*] Let him be involved in perpetual misfortunes and miseries, and never be able to shake them off: let him be hampered with straits and difficulties, without any possibility of getting out.

Ver. 20. *Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the Lord, and of them that speak evil against my soul.*] This shall most certainly be the reward, which the righteous Lord will give to my malicious adversaries for all the pains they have taken, by slanderous reports and calumnies, to take away my life:

Ver. 21. *But do thou for me, O God the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.*] Which I commend to thy protection, O Lord, the governor of all things; beseeching thee to take my part, and appear for me; though not for my honour, yet for thy own; whose kindness is so exceeding bountiful unto all, that for that reason I am encouraged to hope thou wilt deliver me; to whom thou hast engaged thyself by many promises of mercy.

Ver. 22. *For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.*] Which I never needed more than now: for I am so poor, and forsaken of all my friends, (1 Sam. xxv. 8, &c.) that I am ready to faint away with grief and sorrow, like one that is wounded at the very heart.

Ver. 23. *I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.*] The evening shadow doth not vanish sooner than I, from the place of my present abode: (1 Sam. xxii. 1. 3. 5. xxiii. 13, 14.) which I am forced to quit on a sudden; and to wander like the locust, which flies, or is driven, with the wind, uncertainly from place to place.

Ver. 24. *My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.*] And for want of food in those desert places, I am sometimes scarce able to remove: for my body, which heretofore was plump and fat, (1 Sam. xvi. 12.) is now grown lank and thin, like one of those miserable lean creatures.

Ver. 25. *I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shaked their heads.*] Which, instead of moving their pity, hath exposed me to such contempt and scorn, that when I am seen by any of them, they deride and scoff at me as an undone wretch, that vainly hopes to escape their hands.

Ver. 26. *Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to thy mercy.*] But my hope is, that thou, O Lord, who hast hitherto been my most gracious God, wilt seasonably interpose for my relief: and deliver me, out of that tender mercy, which is wont to extend itself to those who have nothing else to depend upon.

Ver. 27. *That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou Lord hast done it.*] Whereby they themselves may be convinced, and forced to acknowledge, that, not by chance, no more than by my small forces, but by thy almighty power alone, and thy care of me, O Lord, I am delivered.

Ver. 28. *Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.*] Thy blessing and protection I implore; which if thou wilt vouchsafe me, let them go on to curse and slander me as long as they please; it shall not hurt me: nay, let them assault me with armed force, they shall only be confounded at their vain attempt; and give thy servant the greater cause to rejoice at their disappointment.

Ver. 29. *Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame; and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.*] Which shall so increase the confusion of my malicious adversaries, that they shall not be able to bear the disgrace: but wish they could hide themselves from the sight of their shame, which their own wickedness hath brought upon them.

Ver. 30. *I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.*] In hope of which defeat, I vow beforehand to the Lord the best expressions of my gratitude that I am able to make: not only in private, but in the greatest assemblies; where I will not cease to praise his almighty love.

Ver. 31. *For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul.*] And bid them trust in God, who hath pleaded my cause, and rescued me from death; and will ever be the advocate of him that hath no helper, but depends on his goodness, to deliver him from the hands of those judges, who prosecute the unjust sentence they have passed upon him to lose his life.

PSALM CX.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

There is the same reason to think this Psalm was composed by David (not by some other concerning David), that there is to conclude all the rest to be so, which have the same title. And then, as it is very plain he speaks of some person much greater than himself, whom he calls his Lord, so it can be no other but the Lord Christ, of whom he here prophesies. Not, as he is wont to do elsewhere, with respect to himself, in the first place, as his type and figure; but in plain words, which can belong to none but Christ alone: for no other king but he can be said in any sense to sit at God's right hand; nor was there any priest of the order of Melchisedec that could be a shadow of him.

David, indeed, seems once to have exercised the office of a priest, when he blessed the people, at the bringing of the ark to Zion, (2 Sam. vi. 18.) and so to have been then both king and priest in one person, as Melchisedec was; but not a priest for ever, on whom the office was perpetually established, and that by an oath; as it was on the priest here mentioned.

And therefore it is in vain to endeavour to accommodate any part of this Psalm to David; who conquered many of the neighbouring countries, smote their kings, made them bring him tributes, and at last smote the *head of the country of Rabbah* (as some render the last words of the sixth verse of this Psalm), that is, the king of the children of Ammon: but still we are to seek how the rest can be applied to him, who never had any pretence to such an authority as is here described, nor can in any sense call himself *my Lord;* but as our Lord Christ hath demonstrated, spake concerning him, (Matt. xxii. 43, &c.) and his exaltation, after his resurrection from the dead, (as St. Peter and St. Paul also shew, Acts ii. 34, 35. 1 Cor. xv. 25. Heb. iv. 1. 13. v. 6.) when he set up another priesthood, and abolished that of Moses; which change is here predicted.

And though the Jews have taken a great deal of pains to wrest this Psalm to another sense, yet they are so divided in their opinions about it (speaking inconsistent things, like drunken men, as St. Chrysostom's words are, or rather, says he, like men in the dark, running against one another), that from thence alone we may be satisfied they are in the wrong, and have their eyes blinded, else they would not have embraced such interpretations as those, which may be seen in them that have written upon this Psalm, which some of the Jews themselves (such as R. Moses Hadarsan, Saadias Gaon, and divers others whom I might mention) have been forced to acknowledge belongs to Christ; and is a very plain prediction of his Divinity, his royal dignity, his priesthood, and his victories and triumphs, which the Psalmist sets forth as follows.

Ver. 1. *THE Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*] This is the decree of the eternal Lord, that the great person whom we expect, and whom I honour as my Lord and Master, shall be advanced (after his sufferings) to the highest dignity (1 Kings ii. 19.) in the heavens; and reign with him as the King of all the world, till he hath perfectly subdued (Josh. x. 24.) the most powerful opposers of his kingdom; and overcome death itself, by whom all mankind are conquered, (1 Cor. xv. 25, 26.)

Ver. 2. *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.*] The eternal Lord, who hath thus decreed to honour thee, O most mighty Prince, will make Zion, first of all, to feel how powerful thy sceptre is, (Acts i. 8. ii. 34. 37.) and thence extend thy empire over all the earth; where I wish thou mayest, and foretell thou wilt, prevail over all infidelity, idolatry, superstition, and impiety; which will set themselves against thy authority.

Ver. 3. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.*] For in the day when thy forces, (2 Tim. ii. 3.) completely armed with a Divine power, (Acts iv. 33.) shall march forth to subdue the world unto thy obedience: they that are fit for thy kingdom (Luke ix. 62. Acts xiii. 48.) shall cheerfully submit themselves, and present thee with free-will-offerings, in token of their absolute subjection unto thee, (Acts ii. 45. iv. 34.) And great shall be the number of chosen men, (1 John ii. 13.) who, glad to see the night of ignorance gone, shall, at thy first appearance, by the celestial blessing, fall unto thee as thick as the morning dew.

Ver. 4. *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*] And happy are they who live under thy government; for the Lord hath unchangeably resolved that thou shalt be a priest as well as king; with full power to bless all thy subjects, not only in that, but in all future ages, even to all eternity:

for thou shalt not be a priest like those after Aaron's order, who die to make room for others; but, like that great king and priest Melchisedec, shalt neither have any predecessor nor successor in thine office, but continue a royal priest for evermore, (Heb. vii.)

Ver. 5. *The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.*] Who, as he will be most compassionate to all those that heartily acknowledge him for their Lord, and submit unto his government; so will break in pieces the greatest powers on earth that provoke his displeasure by obstinate opposal of his authority at thy right hand.

Ver. 6. *He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.*] From whence he shall demonstrate himself to all the heathen world, to be their Lawgiver and their Judge; taking a severe vengeance on those that persecute his subjects, and destroying, at last, even that mighty empire which shall then rule over many countries.

Ver. 7. *He shall drink of the brook in the way: and therefore shall he lift up the head.*] But before all this, he shall first humble himself to the meanest condition; not living in the state of a king here in this world, but of a wayfaring man, (Luke ix. 56.) who is content with such provision as he meets withal. For which cause, after the enduring many hardships, even death itself, he shall be highly exalted to his royal and priestly dignity in the heavens; from whence he shall never fall.

PSALM CXI.

Hallelujah, i. e. *Praise the Lord.*

ARGUMENT.

It is certain this is the title of the Psalm, which consists of as many short metres as there are letters in the Hebrew alphabet; and therefore cannot begin with *Hallelujah,* whose first letter is the *fifth,* not the first letter in that alphabet. In which order it proceeds for the better help of the memory: being composed thus artificially, that every one, as well as the singers (to whom the *Hallelujah,* perhaps, is particularly directed), might have in their minds a brief form of thanking God (especially upon festival days) for the wonderful things he had done for that nation.

It was a meditation which the author had in time of peace and quiet; for in distress, or immediately after a great deliverance, men's spirits are not at liberty to use such art and curiosity in their composures, as there is in this Psalm; being full at those seasons of such passions as make them neglect it, even when they are inclined to use it, (see Psalm xxv.) For which reason, I think, Theodoret's opinion hath no ground; that the Psalmist hath respect to the great victory obtained by Jehoshaphat over the Ammonites and other nations, who invaded his kingdom; for which they gave thanks to God presently after, (2 Chron. xx.) It is more likely that David, who composed those larger forms of commemoration, Psalm cv. and cvi. made this (as I said) for a compendious remembrance of what is there more largely delivered. And that he might not exceed the number of the ten commandments (as some give the reason of it) in the verses of this Psalm, the metres of the two last are so short, that they have each of them *three* letters of the alphabet in them, whereas all the former have but *two.*

Ver. 1. *PRAISE ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.*] I will make my thankful acknowledgments to the Lord, not only with my lips, or with some slight affections of my mind, but with all my heart and soul: and that not only in the private society of those good men whom I am more intimately acquainted withal, but in the public congregation of all his people.

Ver. 2. *The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.*] Who ought to join together to praise the Lord for his mighty and wonderful works, which it will not cost them much labour to understand; for they are easily found out by all those who take any pleasure in such inquiries.

Ver. 3. *His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.*] And there is not one of them but is full of majesty and splendour; and the fruit of his infinite bounty, and faithfulness to his promise, which he still expresses towards us, and will do so for ever.

Ver. 4. *He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the Lord is gracious, and full of compassion.*] And such is his goodness, lest we should forget his benefits, he hath instituted solemn times for the commemoration of the wonders he hath done for us, (Exod. xii. 14. xiii. 3. 9, &c.) which are everlasting testimonies, that we serve a most gracious and compassionate Lord.

Ver. 5. *He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.*] Who gave our forefathers (whom by his wonderful works he possessed with the fear of him, Exod. xiv. 31.) the spoil of the Egyptians, (Exod. xii. 35, 36.) and afterward fed them with manna in the wilderness, (Exod. xvi.) according to his covenant, which he had made long before, (Gen. xv. 14.) and will never forget in future ages.

Ver. 6. *He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.*] He hath evidently demonstrated to his people the greatness of his power in destroying Sihon the Amorite, (Deut. ii. 24, 25.) and Og the king of Bashan, (Deut. iii. 21. 24.) with the rest of the Amorites and other nations, in the land of Canaan: (Josh. x. 6. 11, 12, &c.) which he took from the ancient inhabitants, that he might give it us for our possession.

Ver. 7. *The works of his hands are verity and judgments: all his commandments are sure.*] In which he did them no wrong; but was exactly just in fulfilling his promise to us, and in executing his judgments upon those wicked wretches, (Deut. ix. 5. Gen. xv. 16.) For all his orders of either kind are in pursuance of most righteous decrees.

Ver. 8. *They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.*] Which he doth not alter and change at pleasure, but hath settled as eternal rules: because there is no partiality or inquiry in them; but they were enacted with a sincere respect to all men's good and happiness.

Ver. 9. *He sent redemption unto his people; he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.*] And it was in conformity to these that he at first sent Moses and Aaron to bring our fathers out of Egypt, (Exod. vi. 6.) and then exercised his supreme authority

over them, in giving them a law, which he tied them by a covenant perpetually to observe; (Exod. xix. 4, 5. xxiv. 8.) appearing in such majesty to them, (Exod. xx. 18. xxiv. 10, 11.) as might possess them with an awful regard to him; and make them for ever dread, by any profaneness, to offend him, who infinitely excels all other beings.

Ver. 10. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.*] And, indeed, it is the first and principal point of wisdom to fear the Lord, and carefully observe his commandments; the practice of which gives men a better understanding of what is good for them, than any politic maxims can infuse into them. Therefore let the Lord be for ever praised, who hath given us these good and wholesome laws: and thereby shewn us the way to eternal honour and praise.

PSALM CXII.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is composed after the very same manner with the former; and seems to be intended for a short commentary upon the last verse of it: shewing how well and wisely they consult their own good and happiness, who observe God's commandments; especially those about charity, or doing good to others. Of which that they might be always mindful, the Psalm is contrived, for the help of their memories, into as many short versicles as there are letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Hallelujah therefore is no part of them, but the title prefixed to the Psalm, (see Argument upon Psalm cxi.) to excite them to praise the Lord; who had made it their present interest to be religious.

Ver. 1. *PRAISE ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.*] Happy is that man whose chiefest care it is to please the Lord, by observing his commandments: which will yield, in the issue, the highest pleasure and satisfaction to himself.

Ver. 2. *His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.*] And procure a blessing also upon all belonging to him: first, upon his children, and those that shall descend from them in future times; who shall fare the better, and be more powerful and prosperous, for the sincere virtue of their pious forefathers:

Ver. 3. *Wealth and riches shall be in his house; and his righteousness endureth for ever.*] And next on his estate; which shall not only be rich and plentiful, but so firmly settled and entailed on his posterity, that they shall reap the perpetual fruit of his justice and charity.

Ver. 4. *Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.*] Or if any affliction come, it will be so far from making him unhappy, that, besides the Divine comforts imparted to him for his support, it will make the virtue of upright men the more illustrious: while one exercises meekness and sweetness to those that provoke him, another forgives offences, and pities the instruments of his trouble; and a third exercises the greater justice of mercy, and will not be tempted to do any dishonest or cruel thing for his own deliverance.

Ver. 5. *A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.*] But, above all other men, he leads the most comfortable life, who is so kind, that he supplies the needs of others; giving to one, and lending to another, as occasion serves: and yet ordering all his affairs so judiciously, that he doth not impair, but rather maintain, the good estate of his own family.

Ver. 6. *Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.*] Sure it will not be in the power of the most mighty and malicious enemies (though they may disturb him) quite to overthrow him: and when they are forgotten, or mentioned with contempt, the worthy actions of this sort of righteous men shall be celebrated with never-ceasing praises.

Ver. 7. *He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.*] He is not affrighted and discomposed at the false reports that are raised of him; nor at the rumour of dangers which threaten him: being prepared for such things as these, by a settled trust and hope in God; that he will take care of him, who hath been as kind as he could to others in their distresses.

Ver. 8. *His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.*] This confidence is the prop and support of his soul; which will not let him be dismayed: but makes him expect the time, when he shall be able securely to look upon all his enemies.

Ver. 9. *He hath dispersed; he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.*] He doth not merely heap up riches for himself; but dispenses them to others, especially to the poor and needy, with a liberal hand: nor is he weary of well-doing, but ever producing some new fruit of his charity, which shall gain him the greatest honour, and raise him to an illustrious degree of power and authority.

Ver. 10. *The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.*] At the sight of which the wicked (who shall not be able to obstruct it) shall be extremely vexed; or rather furiously enraged: he shall pine away with grief, envy, and impatience, to see himself and his companions disappointed in all that they wished; either of good to themselves, or evil to the righteous.

PSALM CXIII.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, with the five next which follow, the Hebrews call by the name of *Hallel*, or *Hymn:* which they recited at their table (as in the new moons and other feasts, so) in the paschal night, after they had eaten the lamb; concluding it with *Hallelujah:* which is the title of this Psalm (as of the two foregoing), to excite all God's people, especially those that constantly attended in the tabernacle, to the praises of God's good providence; which extends itself as far as this earth where we live: several instances of which the Psalmist here mentions.

Ver. 1. *PRAISE ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord.*] O ye ministers of the Lord, and whosoever you are that love his service, praise his eternal majesty: be not remiss in this heavenly

employment; but, with your best affections, praise the power, wisdom, and goodness, of his eternal providence.

Ver. 2. *Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and for evermore.*] Praise him now in this present age; and wish that those incomparable perfections of his may be celebrated with the praises of those that live in future times, as long as the world shall last.

Ver. 3. *From the rising of the sun, unto the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised.*] And not only here in this little spot of earth; but wheresoever the sun shines, and lets men see how splendid and glorious his majesty is.

Ver. 4. *The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens.*] For all the nations of the earth are his; and but a little parcel of his supreme dominion; which extends far beyond the sun, and moon, and stars; whose light is but a dim resemblance of the brightness of his glory.

Ver. 5. *Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high?*] Do not think that any of them (though worshipped by other nations as gods) is comparable to that great Lord, and our most gracious God, whom we adore: for the very place where his glorious majesty resides is far higher than they.

Ver. 6. *Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!*] And it is a great condescension in him, that he will have any respect to the most illustrious of those celestial bodies: though he be so gracious also as to extend his kind and careful providence, even to us who dwell upon this earth.

Ver. 7. *He raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill.*] Where, among other manifest tokens of his stupendous goodness, he is pleased to take special notice of those whom the world despises: and to raise them out of a mean, nay, sordid condition, to such a pitch of honour and dignity.

Ver. 8. *That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people.*] That at last they are advanced to sit upon a throne; and made the governors of his own people, (1 Sam. ii. 8. 2 Sam. vii. 8, 9. compared with 1 Sam. xxiv. 14.)

Ver. 9. *He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the Lord.*] And, which is still more strange, he opens the barren womb (which according to the course of nature would have brought forth nothing), and makes a numerous family spring from thence, to the great joy of her that bears them, (1 Sam. i. 20. ii. 21.) Praise the Lord in these, and such-like wonderful works of his.

PSALM CXIV.

ARGUMENT.

As the foregoing Psalm puts them in mind of several works of the Divine Providence, about particular persons: so this makes a brief narration of some miraculous work; wherein the Lord declared his power, when he brought the whole Jewish nation out of the Egyptian bondage.

Ver. 1. *WHEN Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language.*] When our forefathers, with their whole family, were brought out of Egypt; and not one of them left behind among that barbarous people who had long oppressed them;

Ver. 2. *Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.*] There was a most glorious appearance of God among them, by that bright cloud, the token of his presence: which then had no other peculiar place for its sanctuary; but stood over the whole camp of Israel, (Exod. xiii. 21. Numb. xiv. 14.) whom he then took for his peculiar kingdom, (Exod. xix. 6.)

Ver. 3. *The sea saw it, and fled; Jordan was driven back.*] At which appearance the Red Sea forsook its channel, and left a dry path for them to march through: (Exod. xiv. 21. 24.) and so did Jordan also afterward; to make way for their easy entrance into Canaan, (Josh. iii. 15, 16.)

Ver. 4. *The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs.*] All the mountains, great and small, which adjoined unto Sinai, trembled and leaped, like so many affrighted rams, or little lambs, before the same most dreadful majesty, (Exod. xix. 18.)

Ver. 5. *What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?*] To what else shall we ascribe that sudden ebb of the sea? and that, no less strange, retreat of Jordan, when it overflowed all its banks?

Ver. 6. *Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs?*] What made the mountains and hills leap up, like affrighted rams or lambs; as if they would run away from the place where they were so firmly fixed?

Ver. 7. *Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob.*] But only the glorious presence of the Divine Majesty, who was then bringing his people to the rest he had promised to give them. And let the whole earth be afraid and tremble before that great Lord who hath honoured us so far, as peculiarly to be our God:

Ver. 8. *Which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.*] And was so kind as to supply the necessities of our forefathers, even when they murmured against him, by a new miracle: bringing out of hard rocks, as hard as flint, such plenty of water, as if they had been dissolved into lakes or rivers, (Exod. xvii. 8. Numb. xx. 11.)

PSALM CXV.

ARGUMENT.

There is great reason to think, that this Psalm was made in some time of sore distress; when their pagan enemies began to boast and brag, as if their gods were too hard for the God of Israel. But by whom it was made, or on what particular occasion, there are so many conjectures, that it will be no presumption to interpose mine, which is this: that when Jehoshaphat saw that vast army (which we read of 2 Chron. xx. 2.) composed of several nations coming against him; and, after his prayer to God for deliverance, was encouraged by a prophet to hope for it; (ver. 14, 15.) and had by the Levites given him thanks for this hope; he, or that prophet, composed this Hymn to quicken and confirm their faith in God: unto which you read he exhorted them, (ver. 20.) And it is likely that this was the Hymn which, by common consent, the

singers were appointed to use, when they went out to encounter those enemies: saying not only those words, which we read there, (ver. 21.) "Praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever;" but these, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake," &c.

Ver. 1. *NOT unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.*] Prosper our arms, O Lord, and give us the victory over these enemies that invade us: not that we may grow more famous (no, we have no thoughts of the glory that will accrue to ourselves thereby); but that thy Divine Majesty may be honoured, and thy goodness and faithfulness to thy promises be made the more illustrious.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?*] What a sad thing will it be to hear the nations that surround us insult, not so much over us, as over thee; saying, What is become of their God in whom they trusted? if he be so powerful as they boast, why doth he not deliver them?

Ver. 3. *But our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased.*] Let them know that thou art infinitely superior to them and all their gods; being the possessor of the heavens, as well as the earth, (2 Chron. xx. 6.) whom no power of theirs can hurt, or so much as restrain; but art able to do whatsoever thou pleasest for their confusion, and for our deliverance.

Ver. 4. *Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.*] Their idols cannot hinder it in the least; who are of no more value than the silver and gold of which they are made; and are so far from being the makers of things, that they themselves are the work of those that adore them.

Ver. 5. *They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not.*] They are mere lifeless images; that have mouths, but cannot give a word of advice, or of encouragement and comfort, to their supplicants: and eyes also, but cannot see the devotion wherewith they look up unto them, or prostrate themselves before them.

Ver. 6. *They have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not.*] Let their worshippers cry to them never so loudly, they cannot hear a word: all the frankincense and sweet odours which they burn to them are merely lost; for they cannot smell them.

Ver. 7. *They have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat.*] Though they have thunderbolts in their hands they feel them not; nor are able to do either good or harm: they cannot stir a foot from the place where they stand, unless they be carried; nor make so much noise as a fly; being utterly void of breath, as well as of sense and reason.

Ver. 8. *They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.*] To what then, but to those idols, shall we compare the makers of them, and such as confide in them? who are mere images of men: having eyes, but do not see that the brutes are more excellent than such gods; and that the least help is not to be expected from them.

Ver. 9. *O Israel, trust thou in the Lord; he is their help and their shield.*] O ye Israelites, who by the Divine favour are better instructed, repose that confidence in the eternal Lord, which they do in those vanities: and he will not only protect and defend you against all the assaults of your enemies, but help you to overcome them, (2 Chron. xx. 9.)

Ver. 10. *O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord; he is their help and their shield.*] O ye priests and Levites, do you above all others rely upon that eternal Lord; whose praise you sing, and to whom you offer continual sacrifice: for he will never fail, not only to protect, but to assist, all such as piously confide in him.

Ver. 11. *Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; he is their help and their shield.*] And let all that fear the Lord, and devoutly worship him (of whatsoever nation they be), place the like confidence in his almighty goodness: for he will never forsake those that depend on him alone (though they be not of the seed of Abraham), but defend them also in all dangers, and aid them against all their enemies.

Ver. 12. *The Lord hath been mindful of us; he will bless us: he will bless the house of Israel, he will bless the house of Aaron.*] We have had abundant experience of his care over us in all ages; and therefore, though now for the present our enemies afflict us, yet let us believe that the Lord will do us good, and bless us with a glorious deliverance: all the house of Israel shall see how kind he is; especially they that minister unto him in his holy temple.

Ver. 13. *He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great.*] And he will not forget those pious proselytes that are come to worship him there, as the only God; but, without any respect of persons, give them his blessing also: which shall not be denied, either to old or young, to rich or poor.

Ver. 14. *The Lord shall increase you more and more, you and your children.*] Nor will he grant you only a single blessing, by sending a present deliverance: but heap his benefits, and multiply his mercies, upon you; and upon all those that shall succeed you.

Ver. 15. *You are blessed of the Lord, which made heaven and earth.*] Ye are a happy people, who live under the care, and love, and benediction, of that mighty Lord, whose power nothing can confine: for he is not made (like the gentile gods), but himself created both the heaven and the earth.

Ver. 16. *The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.*] In which he cannot be comprehended neither; for his empire extends farther than you can see; to the heavens, which are above these visible heavens: from whence his providence reaches down, even to us the children of men; whom he hath placed upon this earth, to admire and praise his infinite majesty.

Ver. 17. *The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.*] And therefore will not suffer us to be rooted out, as our enemies design; (2 Chron. xx. 11.) for then the earth would have none in it to sing his praises: which the dead, who dwell in the silent grave, cannot celebrate.

Ver. 18. *But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the Lord.*] But will continue us still alive, that we may praise the Lord, and speak good of his name, as we do at this time; (2 Chron. xx. 21, 22.) and leave those to succeed us, who shall continue his praises in all future generations to the world's end. Hallelujah, Praise the Lord.

PSALM CXVI.

ARGUMENT.

I do not understand the reason why Theodoret applies this Psalm to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, when it agrees so exactly to the condition of David in his flight from his son Absalom, (which seems to be mentioned ver. 11.) when Ahithophel and others proved very false to him; and he had little or nothing to depend upon, but only the goodness of the Almighty; who was pleased to plead his cause, and deliver him. For which he resolved to be very thankful, and to call all his friends to rejoice with him, as I have expressed it, ver. 13. where the first words sufficiently declare the sense; but I have added more to explain the phrase, which is borrowed from the custom of those days: about which the reader may consult Mr. Mede, p. 483. last edit. In this resolution he was so serious that he repeats it in the conclusion; and saith he will pay his vows in the midst of Jerusalem: from whence the history tells us he was forced to fly, in great haste, to save his life, (2 Sam. xv. 14.)

This seems to be the occasion of the Psalm, which may very well befit any other persons that receive any great deliverance from God; and accordingly I will order the Paraphrase, and fit it for the expressing of their devout affections.

Ver. 1. *I LOVE the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.*] O how I love the Lord! he knows that I love him exceedingly: and there is the greatest reason for it; because he hath so graciously heard my prayer, when in my distress I cried unto him.

Ver. 2. *Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.*] I cannot choose but mention again this love of his, in granting so readily my desires: which encourages, and engages me, on all such occasions, to address myself, with thankful acknowledgments, unto him; and to the last breath of my life, to expect deliverance from him.

Ver. 3. *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.*] Great was my misery; exceeding great: death itself and the grave were ready to seize on me; and I saw no way to escape: nay, I myself, in the anguish of my soul, inconsiderately cast myself into danger.

Ver. 4. *Then called I upon the name of the Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.*] Yet I did not despond in these straits; but made the mighty, wise, and good providence of God my refuge; to whom I cried, saying, O Lord, who wast before all things, and commandest them as thou pleasest; rescue me, I most humbly beseech thee, from those dangers which threaten my destruction.

Ver. 5. *Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.*] And it was not in vain that I cried unto him; for the Lord hath shewn me how ready he is to do good, and how faithful in his promises: and withal how gentle in his punishments, and inclinable to pardon our faults; which demonstrates that no people serve such a gracious master as our merciful God.

Ver. 6. *The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.*] I had perished, I am sure, if I had relied only on my own wisdom, or the skill and policy of others: but the Lord was my hope, who preserves the most simple and incautious souls, when they commit themselves to him, and wholly depend on his providence. I ought to say so; who was reduced to a most forlorn estate, and then, by his assistance, in a wonderful manner delivered.

Ver. 7. *Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*] What hast thou then to do, O my soul, who hast been so tempestuously tossed, but to settle thyself again in peace and tranquillity; loving and praising the Lord, who hath very many ways expressed his bounty most liberally to thee.

Ver. 8. *For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.*] For when the dangers of death surrounded me, thou, O my God, didst deliver me: whenever any sadness seized on me, thou hast been my comforter: and when I have been in danger of hurts, maims, or bruises (or of falling into the hands of my enemies), thou still hast been my protector.

Ver. 9. *I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*] I ought therefore, and I am resolved, to employ all that health and cheerfulness, that soundness of body and mind, that peace and safety, which thou hast thus graciously bestowed on me, in doing thee (to whom as my sovereign Lord I owe) all faithful service; as long as I stay in this world.

Ver. 10. *I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted.*] I had nothing, I will thankfully remember, to depend upon, but only thy kind providence: in this I placed my trust; in this I gloried to others, when I was in my greatest straits: for the truth is, I was extremely miserable.

Ver. 11. *I said in my haste, All men are liars.*] Pressed on all sides with dangers; from which, when I fled as fast as I was able, (2 Sam. xv. 14. xvii. 16. 22.) I concluded it was vain to rely on the friendship and help of men: for they in whom I trusted proved so false and treacherous, (xv. 31.) that I had reason to think the rest would deceive and fail my expectation, when I was in the greatest need of them.

Ver. 12. *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?*] O the greatness of thy love! who even then didst interpose and deliver me, by the assistance of some faithful friends, who still stuck to me! (2 Sam. xvii. 13, &c.) What shall I render unto the Lord, who heard my prayer? (xv. 31.) How shall I shew myself grateful to him for this, and for all other his benefits, which he hath heaped upon me.

Ver. 13. *I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.*] All that I can do cannot make him more happy: but, as my duty binds me, I will praise the Lord, and speak good of his name, and give him thanks, in the best and most solemn manner I am able: I will call all my friends together to rejoice with me, and taking the cup, which we call the *cup of deliverance* (because, when blessed and set apart, we are wont to commemorate the blessings we have received), I will magnify the power, goodness, and faithfulness of God my Saviour before all the company; and will drink myself, and then give it to them, that they may praise his name together with me.

Ver. 14. *I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.*] And whatsoever I have pro-

mised thee, O Lord, in the time of my distress, I will faithfully engage myself to perform before them all: they shall see I am not forgetful of thee, who wast so mindful of me in my trouble.

Ver. 15. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.*] As, indeed, thou art of all good men, whose lives thou preservest as a precious jewel: and wilt not give them up to the pleasure of their enemies; nor suffer them to be lost, but by thy special providence.

Ver. 16. *O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.*] Accept, good Lord, of these my resolutions; for I am sensible that I am thy servant; every way thy servant, and entirely obliged to be faithful to thee; both by my birth and by my education; and by this marvellous deliverance, whereby thou hast rescued me from the power of death, which had, in a manner, taken hold of me.

Ver. 17. *I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.*] I can never sure prove ungrateful to thee, unto whom I am tied by so many bonds; but will always be making thee my most thankful solemn acknowledgments for the benefits I have received: and together with those praises, and thanksgivings, wait upon thy goodness, for the like mercies in time to come.

Ver. 18. *I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.*] I resolve again, religiously to make good these, and all other my vows, wherein I stand engaged to the Lord: and that not only in private; but here at this solemnity, in the face of all his people:

Ver. 19. *In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord.*] When they are gathered together at his house, in the midst of the holy city of our God; where they meet to worship him, and to do him honour. There let them all join with me, to bless and praise the great Creator and Preserver of all things.

PSALM CXVII.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm (like the hundred and tenth) seems to be altogether prophetical, of the joy that all the world should conceive at the coming of the Messiah: to give salvation, first to the Jews, and then to all other nations; according to his faithful promise. St. Paul applies the first words of it to this business, (Rom. xv. 11.) and some of the Hebrews justify his application; confessing that this Psalm belongs to that matter. The brevity of it makes it the more remarkable; and easier to be remembered both by Jews and gentiles.

Ver. 1. O *PRAISE the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.*] Let not the praises, which are due to the great Lord of all, be confined to our nation; but let all people upon the face of the earth praise him: let all mankind sing thankful hymns unto him.

Ver. 2. *For his merciful kindness is great towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord.*] For they are all concerned in his transcendent kindness, which hath done mighty things for us; and the Lord, who changes not, will never fail to perform his faithful promises to the world's end. Therefore let us all join our praises to our common Benefactor.

PSALM CXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

There is nothing more probable than that David composed this Psalm, after God had settled him upon the throne of Israel as well as Judah; and also subdued the Philistines, (who hoped to have crushed him before he grew too powerful, 2 Sam. v. 17.) together with other enemies round about him, who, though they are not mentioned, yet, in all likelihood, joined with them, as we may gather from ver. 10, 11, of this Psalm, compared with 2 Sam. vii. 1. For that it was written after he had brought the ark to Jerusalem, (mentioned there, chap. vi.) and placed it in the house he had prepared for it, seems very plain from ver. 19. of this Psalm; where he begins to praise God in such words, as had not their complete fulfilling till the Lord's Christ (whom the Jews rejected, and said, He shall not reign over us) was made king of the world. For to him R. Solomon himself acknowledges those words, *The Stone which the builders refused*, &c. are to be applied.

And as the latter part of the Psalm is a prophecy of Christ, in David's type, so the former part may be accommodated to all Christians: who, being persecuted (as Theodoret speaks), and tormented, and disgracefully treated, by many princes and their people, by kings and governors, got a glorious victory over them all, after they had endured a thousand deaths.

It seems also to have been pronounced, at first, in some solemn assembly of all the people, met together to praise the Lord for his benefits. And it is the common opinion of most interpreters, that they all had a part in this Psalm. The greatest part of which was spoken by David; who begins with a declaration how much he was indebted to God, desiring all to assist him in his praises: and then coming in a solemn procession, I suppose to the gates of the tabernacle, calls upon the porters (ver. 19.) to open them to him, that he might praise God in his sanctuary, which he doth in the very entrance, (ver. 20.) and then in the courts of his house; (ver. 21.) after which all the people shout, and magnify the Divine goodness; in making him, who was banished from his country, their king: (ver. 22, &c.) and then the priests come forth, and bless both the king and people in the name of the Lord, (ver. 26.) and exhort them to be thankful: (ver. 27.) and then David seems to take the words out of their mouths, and to declare that he will never be unmindful of God's benefits; desiring all the people also to remember them, (ver. 28, 29.) According to which account of the Psalm I have ordered the Paraphrase.

Ver. 1. O *GIVE thanks to the Lord; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.*] O make your thankful acknowledgments to the great Lord of all the world: who, as he is the author of all good, and hath been exceeding bountiful unto us, so will continue his kindness to all succeeding generations.

Ver. 2. *Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.*] Let the children of Israel, who have had such long experience of his love, and now see his promises fulfilled;

let them confess, and thankfully acknowledge, that his kindness continues to all generations.

Ver. 3. *Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.*] Let the priests and the Levites, whose business it is to attend upon his service, confess now, and thankfully acknowledge, that his kindness extends unto all ages.

Ver. 4. *Let them now that fear the Lord say, that his mercy endureth for ever.*] And let all the devout worshippers of the Lord, of whatsoever nation they be, join together with us (for there is one Lord of all, who dispenses various benefits to every one of us), and confess now most thankfully, that there is no end of his kindness.

Ver. 5. *I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place.*] You may see an example of it in me, who was in grievous straits and dangers; (1 Sam. xxiii. 26. xxvii. 1.) but then imploring the Divine protection, the Lord not only delivered me, but placed me in a secure estate, free from all such molestation, (2 Sam. v. 3. vii. 1.)

Ver. 6. *The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?*] For the Lord, it is evident, takes my part; and therefore, though I have many enemies, I am not afraid of them: for, when he is for me, what disturbance can men, be they never so powerful, give me?

Ver. 7. *The Lord taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.*] It is sufficient that the Lord, who hath done great things for me by weak instruments, is still aiding me: therefore I dare look the most malicious enemies in the face, and doubt not to see them turn their backs upon me, (2 Sam. viii.)

Ver. 8. *It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.*] This is my hope; and long experience hath taught me, that it is much safer to rely upon him, than upon the most numerous armies:

Ver. 9. *It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.*] Far more safe to depend upon his help and protection (who, as he can do what he pleases, and is constant to his word, so never dies), than to confide in the aid of the greatest princes; whose mind may change, or their forces fail, or they themselves, on a sudden, leave the world.

Ver. 10. *All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them.*] All the neighbouring nations round about (1 Sam. v. 17, &c. vii. 1.) combined with the Philistines to environ me; but, by the almighty power of the Lord, I was confident that I should hew them in pieces.

Ver. 11. *They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.*] Again they made a new invasion, and beset me with stronger forces, (2 Sam. v. 22, &c.) but still, by the almighty power of the Lord, I doubted not that I should cut them off, and utterly defeat them.

Ver. 12. *They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.*] Though they were exceeding numerous, swarming about me like angry bees, and flaming with such rage and fury, as if they would presently consume me; yet it was but like the blaze of fire among thorns: for, by the almighty power of the Lord, I was confident I should destroy them.

Ver. 13. *Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall: but the Lord helped me.*] They pressed me exceeding hard, and, as one man, conspired with all their might to throw me down from the throne, to which I was advanced; but though they shaked it, and it was ready to fall, yet, by the help of the Lord, it was supported.

Ver. 14. *The Lord is my strength and my song, and is become my salvation.*] To him alone I ascribe my present happiness, saying, with our forefathers in their triumphant song, (Exod. xv. 2.) The Lord hath armed me with invincible strength; he, and he alone, is to be praised, who hath given me a most glorious deliverance.

Ver. 15. *The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacle of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.*] Which comforts the hearts of all righteous men; whose houses sound with such joyful shouts of praise for my deliverance as these: The mighty power of the Lord hath done most stupendous things.

Ver. 16. *The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.*] He hath made his mighty power to appear to be superior to all other; for not by man, but by that power we have again and again obtained illustrious victories over our enemies, (2 Sam. xix. 9.)

Ver. 17. *I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.*] From whence I conclude, that I shall not fall into the hands of those that would take away my life; but still prolong it to declare what wonderful works the Lord hath done for me.

Ver. 18. *The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.*] Who hath let my enemies have power to afflict me very sorely, but not to proceed so far as to destroy me.

Ver. 19. *Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go in to them, and I will praise the Lord.*] No, instead of that, he hath brought me to his own house again, from which I was banished, (1 Sam. xxvi. 19.) where I will return thanks unto him: and therefore, O ye that minister in the tabernacle, open the gates at which the righteous enter into the courts of the Lord, that I may go in and make him my acknowledgments, for bringing me from a most forlorn condition to a throne.

Ver. 20. *This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter.*] This is the gate (which I behold and approach with joy) that leads to the courts of the Lord, at which the righteous shall enter together with me, and hear me say;

Ver. 21. *I will praise thee; for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.*] I will never cease to praise and acknowledge thy goodness, O Lord, who hast graciously heard my prayer, when I implored thy help, and delivered me out of all my distresses.

Ver. 22. *The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.*] And let them bear a part with me in this my psalm of praise, saying; He whom the great men and rulers of the people rejected, (1 Sam. xxvi. 19.) as the builders of a house do a stone unfit to be employed in it, is now become our king; to whom we must all join ourselves, if we hope for safety: in whom we see a figure of that glorious King, who shall hereafter be in like manner refused, (Luke xix. 14. xx. 17.) and then by God exalted to be the Lord of all the world, and the foundation of all men's happiness, (Acts iv. 11, 12.)

Ver. 23. *This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our*

eyes.] This is the sole work of the Lord (not the effect of human counsels, who opposed and obstructed it), which surprises us with the greatest admiration, to see a despised person become on a sudden so renowned.

Ver. 24. *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.*] This is the happy day which the Lord himself hath made illustrious by his marvellous work; and which it becomes us to celebrate with joyful hearts, and with all outward expressions of gladness, for so great a benefit:

Ver. 25. *Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.*] Most humbly beseeching thee, O Lord, to preserve our king; and to advance and perpetuate his kingdom, (especially the kingdom of Christ, which shall be welcomed into the world with these words, Matt. xxi. 9, &c.) It begins most gloriously; be pleased now, O Lord, to give it answerable success and prosperity.

Ver. 26. *Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord: we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord.*] Which acclamations of the people, let the priests of the Lord meet with their approbation, saying: Blessed be the king which is set over us by the Divine appointment; and blessed be all the people who live under his happy government: we, whose office it is to minister to the Lord, give you his blessing from the holy place, into which you are come to worship him.

Ver. 27. *God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.*] Who is the omnipotent Lord, most faithful to his promise; who hath put an end to our troubles, and made peace among us: O be not ungrateful to him, but solemnize this day with festival joys; bind your sacrifices with cords, and bring them to the corners of the altar, to be offered as testimonies of your love and thankfulness unto him.

Ver. 28. *Thou art my God, and I will praise thee; thou art my God, I will exalt thee.*] And so for my part, I am resolved; who must own thee to be my most gracious God, and almighty Deliverer; to whom therefore I will make continually my most thankful acknowledgments: to thy almighty goodness alone I owe this greatness to which I am promoted, and therefore I will never cease to speak the highest things I am able in thy praise.

Ver. 29. *O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] And let all good men join together with me, and make their thankful acknowledgments to the great Lord of the world; who, as he is the author of all good, and hath been exceeding bountiful unto us; so will continue his kindness unto all succeeding generations.

PSALM CXIX.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is contrived so artificially, that one would think, at first sight, it was made after the foregoing; when God had subdued the rest of David's enemies, (2 Sam. viii. 10.) and given him leisure for such curious composures. For it is divided into as many parts as there are letters in the Hebrew alphabet, each part containing eight verses, and every one of those verses beginning with that letter wherewith that part begins. The verses, for instance, of the first part, all begin with *alpha*, or A; and all of the second with *beth*, or B, &c. And thence this Psalm is called in the Masora, *The great Alphabet;* which is an indication that David was now in a very sedate condition, under no extraordinary motions, when he penned this Psalm; but quietly considered things as they were represented to his remembrance.

But when we observe how frequently he mentions his affliction, as lying actually upon him, now when he wrote these meditations, it forces us to conclude that it was penned during Saul's persecution: in which there were, I suppose, some quiet intervals; (see ver. 54.) either between the time that Saul (having his life given him by David) resolved to persecute him no more, (1 Sam. xxiv.) and his renewed attempts to destroy him, upon the information the Ziphites again gave him: (1 Sam. xxvi.) or after David's fresh demonstration of his loyalty to him, before he went to Gath: or while he was in that city, where he had liberty to meditate on the excellence of God's laws, and the happiness of those that kept them, and the comfort they were to him in his affliction; which he found to be so sweet and so great, that he begs of God little else, but that he might be more and more in love with them; which were already so much his delight, that he mentions them under one name or other in every verse of this Psalm, none excepted but one, (ver. 122.) or two at the most; (ver. 90.) where he celebrating God's *faithfulness,* which relates to the steadfastness of his *promise* (called in this Psalm his *word*), it may well be thought to be no exception to that observation.

I shall not be so curious as to examine the nice difference which is made by some, between *laws, statutes, testimonies, judgments, precepts,* &c. because they seem here to be used promiscuously; or if there be any peculiar meaning in some verses, I shall endeavour to express it plainly in the Paraphrase.

Theodoret hath a conjecture concerning David's design in this Psalm, (both in his preface to it, and upon ver. 157.) which I shall mention, that the reader may take his choice. David, it is well known, had great varieties in his condition, for he both fled from enemies, and chased them; lived sometimes very melancholy, and again most pleasantly; ran into God's ways, and stumbled, and rose again to run that good course. Now all these things, saith he (and it is not improbable), David afterward collected into this one Psalm; "connecting all the prayers which he had made to God at several times, and on several occasions, and putting them together in this admirable meditation, divided into twenty-two parts, which propound one and the same most profitable lesson to all men; and teach them how it is possible to live virtuously in the worst condition. Nor doth he neglect dogmatical instruction (as he speaks); but adds it to the other: so that this Psalm is sufficient to perfect those that study exquisite virtue, and to stir up the diligence of those that are lazy; to comfort those that are sad; to correct the negligent; and, in one word, to afford all manner of medicines for the cure of the various diseases of mankind." And, if it would not have made this book too big, I should have taken the pains to shew the design of every part in an argument before it.

ALEPH. PART I.

Ver. 1. *BLESSED are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.*] Happy, more happy than can be expressed, are those men, who do not take the liberty to live as they list; but, making the law of the Lord their rule, order their life in an exact conformity therewith.

Ver. 2. *Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with their whole heart.*] The stricter they keep to that rule (wherein he hath testified his will unto us), most heartily studying to please him, entirely devoting themselves to seek his favour in this way alone, the happier still they are.

Ver. 3. *They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.*] Especially when they will not be tempted to do an evil action, though it were to gain the greatest good in this world; but constantly adhere to him in the way which he hath prescribed them.

Ver. 4. *Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently.*] We are infinitely beholden to thee, therefore, O Lord, that thou hast obliged us to be so happy, by requiring us to use our utmost diligence to observe thy precepts (which we ourselves know to be good for us) with all care and exactness.

Ver. 5. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.*] O that I may ever be one of those happy men! I have no greater wish than this; that all the actions of my life may be ordered and governed according to thy will.

Ver. 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.*] Then shall I never be disappointed of my hopes, nor blush at the crimes which are laid to my charge; when my own conscience tells me, that there is not one of thy commandments but is ever before my eyes, as the rule of my actions:

Ver. 7. *I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.*] And is so dear unto me, that nothing can give me such a joy as to have learnt effectually how just and how good they all are; for which I will most sincerely thank thee, as the greatest benefit.

Ver. 8. *I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.*] Deal with me according to the uprightness of my heart in this resolution; that I will observe even those statutes, for which I see no other reason but only thy will. O do not abandon me too far, (1 Sam. xxvii. 1.) but stick to me, as I purpose to do to thy statutes.

BETH. PART II.

Ver. 9. *Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.*] But how shall a young man, such as I am, (1 Sam. xxvii. 33. 2 Sam. v. 4.) in an age that is prone to evil, be able to do as he resolves? keeping himself so pure in all his ways, that they maintain an exact conformity unto thy word?

Ver. 10. *With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.*] First, I implore, with all my soul, thy gracious assistance; beseeching thee to afford me such a measure of it, that for want of those heavenly supplies I may not be drawn aside at any time from thy commandments.

Ver. 11. *Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.*] Next, I have laid up thy word in my heart, as the most precious treasure; hoping that will be a security to me, and preserve me from offending thee; whose promises are no less comfortable, than thy threatenings are dreadful.

Ver. 12. *Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statutes.*] And I know also, that thou, O Lord, art kind, and dost not envy thy favours to any of us, but wilt for ever be praised for thy bounty towards us; and therefore I expect that thou wilt hear my prayer, and enable me effectually to learn thy statutes.

Ver. 13. *With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.*] On which I have so much set my heart, that I have not spared to declare to others the great regard I have to every thing which thou hast pronounced just, or condemned as unrighteous.

Ver. 14. *I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.*] I can safely say, likewise, that I have taken more satisfaction, now that I am poor, in doing that which thou hast testified to be acceptable to thee, than I should in all the wealth of the world, were it heaped on me.

Ver. 15. *I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.*] I will ruminate also often on thy precepts (which will be another means, I trust, to preserve me undefiled): and never do any thing, but consider beforehand, how it agrees with the rules which thou hast prescribed me.

Ver. 16. *I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.*] The study of thy statutes (see ver. 8.) shall be my delight; and I will not let slip any word of thine, but preserve it in faithful remembrance.

GIMEL. PART III.

Ver. 17. *Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.*] Let these reasons move thee to deal graciously with me, who am devoted to thy service: render to me according to my integrity; and let not my enemies take away my life, which I intend to employ in doing whatsoever thou hast commanded.

Ver. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.*] For which end, I beseech thee to illuminate the eyes of my mind, that I may clearly discern the admirable wisdom which discovers itself in thy law.

Ver. 19. *I am a stranger in the earth; hide not thy commandments from me.*] I am no better than a stranger in the land, wandering from place to place, (1 Sam. xxiii. 13.) and having no possessions: but do not let me want the knowledge of thy will; and then I shall not think myself destitute of an inheritance.

Ver. 20. *My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times.*] For which my soul longs so vehemently, that I am not more broken with the hardships of my banishment, than with my continual labour and earnest application of my mind, to have a full understanding of thy judgments.

Ver. 21. *Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments.*] According to which, thou hast already given a severe rebuke to those haughty men, who, without any respect to right or wrong, persecute and abuse thy servant: (1 Sam. xxiv. 11, &c. xxv. 10. 37.) and the curse which thou hast pronounced (Deut. xxvii. 26.)

shall light on all such men as take the boldness to transgress those bounds which thou hast set them.

Ver. 22. *Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies.*] And thereby remove from me that disgrace and shame, unto which they expose me as a traitor to my king and country: for I am not guilty of any such wickedness; but carefully observe thy testimonies, ver. 14. (1 Chron. xii. 17.)

Ver. 23. *Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.*] Though the rulers and principal senators of the kingdom sat in consultation how to ruin me, declaring me guilty of the greatest crimes; the only care of thy servant hath been to study how to behave himself unblameably according to thy statutes.

Ver. 24. *Thy testimonies also are my delight, and my counsellors.*] Of which I have not been weary; but make the study of thy testimonies my recreation; and never took advice of any other counsellors.

DALETH. PART IV.

Ver. 25. *My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.*] Consider, therefore, the forlorn condition wherein I lie, struggling for life, and utterly unable to help myself; and be pleased to revive and raise me out of it, according to thy promise, (1 Sam. xvi. 12.)

Ver. 26. *I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: teach me thy statutes.*] Thou knowest both my manner of life, and all the dangers to which I am exposed; for I have ever laid them before thee, and found thee ready on all occasions to assist and relieve me: and therefore I hope thou wilt not now leave me; but more perfectly instruct me in my duty, as the surest way to safety.

Ver. 27. *Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.*] Give me such a right understanding, that I may ever be preserved in the way of thy precepts: then shall I escape the snares of my enemies; and my ordinary discourse shall be, what wonderful deliverances thou hast given me.

Ver. 28. *My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.*] Pity my sad condition; and now that my heart sinks under the weight of my affliction, support and strengthen me according to thy promise; that I may never take any undue course for ease and relief.

Ver. 29. *Remove from me the way of lying; and grant me thy law graciously.*] Far be all fraud and falsehood from me, whereby my enemies contrive to undo me: I desire not to learn any of their wicked arts; but only beseech thee to give me grace to observe thy laws constantly.

Ver. 30. *I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.*] That is the way I have resolved upon, to deal truly and sincerely; squaring all my actions according to thy judgments; which I have laid before me as the most equal rule of my life.

Ver. 31. *I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O Lord, put me not to shame.*] And hitherto I have kept my resolution, and never started from thy testimonies: preserve me, good Lord, that I may not hereafter disgrace myself, by doing any thing contrary to them; nor be disappointed of my hope, by falling into the hands of those that seek my ruin.

Ver. 32. *I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.*] And when thou shalt have filled my heart with joy, by freeing me from those grievous straits, I will do thee better service; and be more forward cheerfully to execute all thy commandments.

HE. PART V.

Ver. 33. *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end.*] Instruct me, therefore, good Lord, more and more in the right way of serving thee; and I will shew myself most thankful for it, by keeping exactly to it all the days of my life.

Ver. 34. *Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.*] Illuminate my mind to understand the excellence of thy law: and then I shall not only observe it, but set myself to do it with a watchful, impartial, and most affectionate, diligence.

Ver. 35. *Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.*] Be thou my leader and guide, that I may not stray from the path of thy commandments, wherein I find the greatest satisfaction.

Ver. 36. *Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.*] Incline my heart always to seek its contentment in thy testimonies: and suffer it not to be drawn away by the desire of worldly goods, which, having no measure, is never satisfied.

Ver. 37. *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.*] Help me to overlook those empty honours and fading beauties which we are apt to behold with too much admiration, and with lively affections and vigorous endeavours, to persist in the pursuit of thy favour, in the way thou hast set before me.

Ver. 38. *Establish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.*] And at last make good thy promise to thy servant, (2 Sam. v. 2.) who fears to do any thing to offend thee, though thereby he might win a crown.

Ver. 39. *Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.*] Turn from me that disgrace, of which I cannot but be sometime afraid, (1 Sam. xxvii. 1.) and must certainly suffer, if I fall into my enemies' hands; for thou wilt proceed, I know, according to thy own judgments; which are all equitable, merciful, and gracious.

Ver. 40. *Behold, I have longed after thy precepts; quicken me in thy righteousness.*] I appeal to thee, whether I have not a great zeal for thy precepts; unto which I desire above all things to be conformed: let me not perish therefore in these troubles; but in much mercy revive me, according to thy faithful promise.

VAU. PART VI.

Ver. 41. *Let thy mercies come also unto me, O Lord; even thy salvation, according to thy word.*] To those infinite mercies of thine, which moved thee to make me such gracious promises, I betake myself: and beseech thee to let me feel the happy effects of both in my deliverance.

Ver. 42. *So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.*] So shall I be able to put to silence those that reproach me for my confidence in thee: which they call a vain presumption; but is an humble reliance on thy own gracious promises to me.

Ver. 43. *And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.*] Which till

thou art pleased to fulfil, do not so far abandon me, as to let me be disheartened in asserting their truth and faithfulness (which I am wont to oppose to all the threats of my enemies): for my whole dependance is on this, that thou wilt not fail me; but pronounce a righteous sentence for me.

Ver. 44. *So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.*] And I for my part promise, when thou shalt be so gracious to me, not to suffer myself to grow more negligent in thy service: but to be more careful than ever in the observance of thy laws, to the very end of my days.

Ver. 45. *And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.*] For then I shall have no such encumbrances on me, as I now have in these straits and difficulties; from which when thou freest me, I will do my duty with the greater cheerfulness and joy: for it is not liberty, no, nor a kingdom, that I seek, so much as better advantages to fulfil thy precepts.

Ver. 46. *I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.*] Which I will not be ashamed to justify before the greatest persons in the world, to be the most excellent rule of life, and the best testimony of thy love to us: and will do it with such reasons, that they shall never be able to disprove me.

Ver. 47. *And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.*] Nor will I confute myself, by leading a voluptuous life; when I have liberty to do as I list: but as I have hitherto preferred thy commandments before all other things, so then will I take the highest pleasure in them:

Ver. 48. *My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.*] Not only in their study; but shew the truth of my love to them, by a diligent and zealous practice of them: which shall be the end of my meditation in them.

ZAIN. PART VII.

Ver. 49. *Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.*] Be pleased therefore, in due time, to perform the promise, which thou hast long ago made to thy servant, (2 Sam. v. 2.) and when I thought of no such thing, given me an assured hope of it, (1 Sam. xvi. 11—13.)

Ver. 50. *This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.*] Which as it hath been the occasion of many and great troubles to me, so hath comforted me under them all: and, even when I despaired of safety, revived my spirit, and restored my courage to life again.

Ver. 51. *The proud have had me greatly in derision; yet have I not declined from thy law.*] Though my insulting enemies mocked exceedingly at my hope, and, in the pride of their hearts, attempted by the most unjust means to destroy me; it never moved me to imitate them, by taking any unlawful method for my preservation.

Ver. 52. *I remembered thy judgments of old, O Lord; and have comforted myself.*] But I called to mind, O Lord, how, in all foregoing ages, thou hast suffered good men to fall into great calamities; thereby to render them, at last, the more illustrious: and with this consideration also I comforted myself.

Ver. 53. *Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law.*] I have been seized, indeed, sometime with a horrible fear, when I thought what sort of men were my persecutors: who stuck at nothing which would serve their ends; having no regard to right or wrong;

Ver. 54. *Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.*] Yet in all my wanderings up and down, (1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2. 5. xxiii. 13.) I never tarried long in any place, but I passed the time delightfully, in composing some such song as this in praise of thy statutes.

Ver. 55. *I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy law.*] When others were asleep, I was calling to mind how good, how powerful, and how faithful, thou art: and resolving with myself still to observe thy laws.

Ver. 56. *This I had, because I kept thy precepts.*] Which make those so happy that obey them, that I ascribe this sweet composure of mind, and cheerfulness of spirit, under all my grievous afflictions, to my strict observance of them.

CHETH. PART VIII.

Ver. 57. *Thou art my portion, O Lord: I have said that I would keep thy words.*] I have no possessions in this world, (1 Sam. xxvi. 19.) which I see others greedily sharing among them: but I do not think myself poor, as long as I have an interest in thy love, and in thy promises, O Lord; whose words I have resolved to keep as the greatest treasure.

Ver. 58. *I entreated thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.*] For there is nothing comparable to thy favour; which I have besought with the heartiest affection, and the most importunate prayers: and do again beseech thee to deal mercifully with me, according to thy repeated promises unto me.

Ver. 59. *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.*] For upon serious deliberation what course of life it was best to take, I rejected all other, which with specious shows of worldly advantages would have seduced me, and determined to be guided wholly by thy testimonies.

Ver. 60. *I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.*] And being thus resolved, I admitted no farther debate about it; but instantly, without any delay, set myself to the strict observance of thy commandments.

Ver. 61. *The bands of the wicked have robbed me: but I have not forgotten thy law.*] Nor hath any thing been able to remove me from this resolution; but though I have been beset with troops of wicked men, who stripped me of all I had, (1 Sam. xxiii. 26.) it did not make me forget my duty; nor put me upon any unlawful means of being revenged of them, (xxiv. 6, 7.)

Ver. 62. *At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous judgments.*] But have blessed thee both night and day, and arose at midnight to give thee thanks for those just and good laws, which thou hast taught me to observe.

Ver. 63. *I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.*] Associating myself willingly with none but such as fear to offend thee, and do religiously observe thy precepts: who are all truly dear unto me.

Ver. 64. *The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy: teach*

me thy statutes.] And no other thing do I desire of thee, O Lord, whose kindness is so great that it dispenses its blessing plentifully throughout all the earth, but that thou wilt instruct me still to serve thee as I ought.

TETH. PART IX.

Ver. 65. *Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according unto thy word.*] Many other benefits, I will thankfully acknowledge, O Lord, thou hast bestowed upon thy servant: with whom thou hast faithfully kept thy word.

Ver. 66. *Teach me good judgment and knowledge; for I have believed thy commandments.*] And I am not ignorant of thy commandments, which, by thy grace, I have believed to be the only way to happiness: but still I need thy farther assistance, to give me a delightful taste and thorough sense of what I know; which I beseech thee add to the rest of the benefits I have received from thee.

Ver. 67. *Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word.*] And if it be necessary for this end, to deprive me still of all other delights, I submit unto it: for I must confess I committed many errors before I was thus afflicted; which since I have corrected, and grown more strictly observant of thy word.

Ver. 68. *Thou art good, and doest good: teach me thy statutes.*] Thou art in thy own nature kind and good; and nothing else can proceed from thee, who designest our good even when thou afflictest us: take what methods thou pleasest with me; only teach me effectually to do as thou wouldest have me.

Ver. 69. *The proud have forged a lie against me: but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart.*] They that disdain to be tied to the common and plain rules of honesty, have taken a great deal of pains to invent a lie against me: (1 Sam. xxiv. 9.) but as I am hitherto conscious of no such guilt, so I will always confute them by an impartial and most hearty observance of thy precepts.

Ver. 70. *Their heart is as fat as grease: but I delight in thy law.*] Which gives me infinitely greater satisfaction in a poor starved condition, than all the dull delights of sense, which they enjoy, in the fullest plenty of worldly prosperity.

Ver. 71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*] This they stupidly imagine is the only happiness; but I can truly say, it was more happy for me that I was afflicted: for thereby I learnt to apply myself more seriously to thy statutes.

Ver. 72. *The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.*] Whereby thy will is declared unto us by a voice from heaven, (Exod. xx. 1.) which I prefer before all the gold and silver in the kingdom.

JOD. PART X.

Ver. 73. *Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.*] Desert me not then, who am thine own workmanship; that neither hath nor hopeth for any thing but from thy almighty power: and desires above all things to comprehend fully what thy will is, that he may obey it.

Ver. 74. *They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.*] It will be a very great comfort and encouragement to all good men, when they see me delivered out of all these troubles: for thereby they will be confirmed in their belief of thy faithfulness to thy promises; on which it will appear I have not vainly depended, though I stayed long for the performance.

Ver. 75. *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.*] And I am satisfied, O Lord, that while thou makest me wait for the performance, thou doest nothing contrary to thy justice, or to thy fidelity: but that all these cross dispensations of thy providence, in the heavy afflictions which have befallen me, are perfectly righteous: and will only make thy truth and faithfulness, at last, the more illustrious.

Ver. 76. *Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.*] O hasten that happy time; when I shall see thy loving-kindness turning this disconsolate into a more comfortable condition: according to the promises which thou hast made unto thy servant, (1 Sam. xvi. 12, 13.)

Ver. 77. *Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight.*] Let me feel the speedy effects of thy compassionate mercy; rescuing me from those that seek my life, and raising me out of this forlorn estate, (1 Sam. xxiv. 14.) For howsoever I am represented, my highest satisfaction is in obedience to thy law.

Ver. 78. *Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts.*] Confound all those proud contemners of it, who, making no conscience of what they say, have oppressed and overthrown me with lies and calumnies; as if I studied to disturb the kingdom, when my only study is to observe thy precepts.

Ver. 79. *Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.*] Let all pious men, who have a due regard to thy testimonies, be convinced of this; and be no longer abused by these slanders; but turn to my side, and become my friends.

Ver. 80. *Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.*] And in order to it preserve me so blameless before thee, in such integrity of heart as well as life, that I may not be ashamed of the hope I have, that thou and all good men will take my part.

CAPH. PART XI.

Ver. 81. *My soul fainteth for thy salvation; but I hope in thy word.*] For which blessing I have now attended so many years, that I am ready sometime to faint away with vehement desire to see thy long-expected promise fulfilled, of deliverance from all my enemies.

Ver. 82. *Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?*] That joyful sight I have looked for, till I am in danger to be weary with expectation; saying, When will the time come of my deliverance from this disconsolate condition?

Ver. 83. *For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet I do not forget thy statutes.*] I hope it will not be long delayed; for I am worn away, and my skin (like an empty leathern bag, that hath hung a great while in the smoke) is shrivelled up with toil and grief; and yet I have never taken any unlawful course to rid myself of all this misery.

Ver. 84. *How many are the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?*] I leave that to thee, O Lord; beseeching thee to consider how my days spend apace in trouble and sorrow: which force me to sigh and say, How long must thy poor servant still lie in this calamitous condition? O when wilt thou do me right against my persecutors?

Ver. 85. *The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law.*] Who proudly contrive by all manner of frauds and treachery to take away my life, directly contrary to thy law; to which they are as injurious as unto me.

Ver. 86. *All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.*] For all thy commandments teach us to be just and true; being as faithful, as those men are false and perfidious: therefore make good thy promises to me; and deliver me from those who persecute me with lies and forgeries.

Ver. 87. *They had almost consumed me upon earth: but I forsook not thy precepts.*] Which they have employed so successfully, that I escaped very hardly with my life, when I was in the land of Judah; (1 Sam. xxiii. 26.) and yet, for all this, I stuck to thy precepts; and would not take away the life of him that sought mine, when I could have easily done it, (xxiv. 6, 7.)

Ver. 88. *Quicken me after thy loving-kindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.*] Deal as kindly with me, O Lord; and not only spare my life, but raise me out of this forlorn estate, wherein I lie, like a man that is dead; (1 Sam. xxiv. 14.) and I will endeavour the more carefully to observe the testimonies which thou hast solemnly (ver. 72.) given us in charge.

LAMED. PART XII.

Ver. 89. *For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.*] Thou art eternal, O Lord, and changest not; and thy promises are like thyself, fixed and settled in the heavens; which are a lively emblem of their constancy, and unvariable truth.

Ver. 90. *Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.*] One generation goes, and another comes; but thy fidelity is still the same to all: and alters no more than the earth; which thou hast firmly and immoveably established, while all those creatures that live upon it pass away and perish.

Ver. 91. *They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants.*] All things remain to this day in the order at first appointed; and never vary from the laws which thou hast set them: for they are entirely subject to thy will and pleasure.

Ver. 92. *Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.*] Which was a most comfortable meditation in my afflicted condition: when my heart would have failed me, and I should have been undone; if thy laws (which stand as fast as heaven and earth) had not given me constant consolation.

Ver. 93. *I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.*] I will never, therefore, be guilty of neglecting thy precepts: which have revived me (by thy faithful promises thou hast annexed to the observance of them), when I looked upon myself as a dead man, that could not escape the hands of those that sought to destroy me.

Ver. 94. *I am thine, save me: for I have sought thy precepts.*] And be thou pleased still to deliver me from falling into their hands: for though they have driven me from thy inheritance, (1 Sam. xxvi. 19.) I still continue thine, and serve no other God; but have diligently inquired, in my greatest dangers, what would be most pleasing to thee, as most advantageous to myself.

Ver. 95. *The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: but I will consider thy testimonies.*] Those wicked men, who are combined to destroy me, have long watched for an opportunity which they confidently expect to meet withal: but it doth not discourage my study of thy testimonies, as the best defence against their bloody attempts.

Ver. 96. *I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad.*] For had I greater forces than my enemies, alas! I never yet saw any thing so complete, but, as it had its bounds and limits, so it is exceeding frail; and when it is arrived at perfection, comes to a speedy end; whereas the wisdom which thou hast revealed to us hath infinite satisfaction in it, durable and lasting satisfaction; which never fails those that depend upon it.

MEM. PART XIII.

Ver. 97. *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.*] It is impossible to express the love I have to thy law: which entertains my meditation, or enables me to entertain others, with admirable variety, whole days together.

Ver. 98. *Thou, through thy commandments, hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.*] Mine enemies are very crafty, and use many artifices to destroy me: but, by observing thy commandments, I have defeated all their subtle devices, and confounded them, even by refusing (because thy commandments, which are ever before my eyes, restrain me), to be avenged on them, (1 Sam. xxiv. 17, 18, &c. xxvi. 21.)

Ver. 99. *I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.*] I have outstripped all the doctors of the law, of whom I formerly learnt; and understand more perfectly than they, the best means of securing myself: because my mind is still employed in thy testimonies, as the rule of all my designs and undertakings.

Ver. 100. *I understand more than the ancients; because I keep thy precepts.*] Though I am but young, yet have I more understanding in things, than the judges and grave privy-councillors; because my maxim is, strictly to observe thy precepts.

Ver. 101. *I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.*] Whatsoever advantage it promised me, I have never proceeded in any evil course to obtain my end: but refused the seeming gain; that I might not offend against thy word.

Ver. 102. *I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.*] My respect to thee hath hindered me from doing any injury unto others: because I know thou art the author of those laws which forbid it; and in the observance of them, I have learnt, consists my happiness.

Ver. 103. *How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*] And a happiness it is, I feel already, incomparably above all other: the pleasure

I take in every word of thine, is inexpressibly far to be preferred before all the delights of sense, though never so sweet and luscious.

Ver. 104. *Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.*] And by thy precepts I am so fully instructed how to behave myself, that I need not to betake myself to any dishonest ways, which I utterly abhor.

NUN. PART XIV.

Ver. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*] Thy word is my only guide; whose directions I follow in all the dark and difficult passages of my life.

Ver. 106. *I have sworn, and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.*] I have solemnly resolved, and bound myself by the most sacred ties, which I will never break, but do now confirm, that I will carefully observe thy decrees, which I find to be both just and good.

Ver. 107. *I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy word.*] I have suffered very much upon that account, and am still sorely afflicted; but I comfort myself, O Lord, with thy promise, according to which I beseech thee to deliver me from those that seek to destroy me; and raise me out of this forlorn condition, wherein I can scarce be said to live.

Ver. 108. *Accept, I beseech thee, the free-will-offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me thy judgments.*] I have no other sacrifices that I am able in this exile to offer to thee, but these of prayer, and thankful acknowledgments, and vows of sincere and cheerful obedience; with which I do most freely and heartily present thee, O Lord: beseeching thee to teach me still more effectually thy judgments; that I may never fail to be conformed to thy will.

Ver. 109. *My soul is continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.*] To which I have hitherto so closely adhered, that though I go in continual danger of my life, (Judg. xii. 3.) it doth not move me in the least (whatsoever shifts I am forced to make) to save myself by forsaking thy law.

Ver. 110. *The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts.*] They that make no conscience of their actions, have contrived a subtle plot to ruin me; but I have never stepped out of the way of thy precepts, to avoid the snares they have laid for me.

Ver. 111. *Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.*] I had rather always continue as poor as I am, than do any thing against thy testimonies; which I hold to be my chiefest good and surest possession: out of which none can expel me; and which always yield me that inward satisfaction and joy which none can take from me.

Ver. 112. *I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end.*] This infinitely outweighs all other considerations; and hath inclined my heart to resolve to do always as thou biddest me (whatsoever I may lose by it), to the very end of my days.

SAMECH. PART XV.

Ver. 113. *I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love.*] I hate all double-dealing, and crafty devices, that are not warranted by thy law: to which I have resolved to stick with hearty affection.

Ver. 114. *Thou art my hiding-place and my shield: I hope in thy word.*] In that way I will trust to thee for safety and protection: having a firm hope that thou wilt be as good unto me as thy word.

Ver. 115. *Depart from me, ye evil-doers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.*] Do not persuade me any longer, O ye evil-doers, to join with you; but get you gone from me: for I will follow none of your counsels; but strictly observe the commandments of my God, who hath hitherto most graciously delivered me.

Ver. 116. *Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope.*] And on whom I still depend, that thou wilt support me, O Lord, according to thy promise, against all the assaults of my enemies that seek my life: and not let me be ashamed of the hope and expectation I have, that thou wilt defend and deliver me.

Ver. 117. *Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.*] Be thou my support in this weak condition, I humbly again beseech thee: and then they shall not be able to throw me down; but in safety and security I shall make thy statutes my perpetual study.

Ver. 118. *Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit is falsehood.*] They shall fall to the ground, and not I; for thou art wont, I observe, to abase and lay as low as the mire in the streets all those that presume to go out of the plain way of thy statutes; for all their crafty tricks and crooked arts, on which they rely, at last prove false unto them and deceive them.

Ver. 119. *Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross: therefore I love thy testimonies.*] Thou castest all such wicked men out of the land like dross, that is good for nothing, which makes me addict myself, with the greater love, unto thy testimonies.

Ver. 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.*] Trembling all over with fear lest I should by any disobedience to thee incur thy severe displeasure; and dreading above all things thy judgments: which are threatened in the law, and which I see executed upon the contemners of it.

AIN. PART XVI.

Ver. 121. *I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors.*] This pious fear laid such a restraint upon me, that I never did any wrong to them, nor so much as dealt hardly with them, that now injure me: therefore suffer me not to fall into the hands of those who oppress me with their calumnies.

Ver. 122. *Be surety to thy servant for good; let not the proud oppress me.*] Their pride is great, and, having power equal to their malice, they hope to prevail over me; but do thou graciously undertake my protection, and be my security against the mischief they design me; that instead of being my ruin, their calumnies may turn to my greater good and advantage.

Ver. 123. *Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.*] I believe they will; but I have

looked so long for that happy time, when thou wilt deliver me (and yet am still in apparent danger to fall into the hands of my enemies), that I am almost tired with expectance of thy promise; though I know it is faithful and true, and shall certainly be performed.

Ver. 124. *Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes.*] Pity my infirmity, and in much mercy send speedy relief unto thy servant; and in the mean time instruct me more perfectly in thy statutes; that I may make the better use of that deliverance.

Ver. 125. *I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.*] I am devoted to thy service, and designed by thee to a high employment: enlighten my understanding therefore, that I may fully know my duty.

Ver. 126. *It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law.*] For now is the time to do all I can for the Lord (who may be pleased then to take this opportunity to perform his promise), when wicked men not only transgress, but are so profane that they reject, and would wholly lay aside, thy law.

Ver. 127. *Therefore I love thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold.*] This inflames my zeal, and heightens my love to thy commandments, which I value far more than all the riches in the world; which shall not tempt me to violate one of them, or suffer them, if I can help it, to be contemned by others.

Ver. 128. *Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.*] For the more I consider them, the more I approve every one of them (as the exactest and best rule whereby I square all my actions), and abhor all those base and dishonest ways whereby others study to advance themselves to riches and honours.

PE. PART XVII.

Ver. 129. *Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.*] I cannot sufficiently admire and extol the excellent wisdom also of thy laws, whereby thou hast testified thy will unto us; which makes me the more careful faithfully to observe them.

Ver. 130. *The entrance of thy words giveth light: it giveth understanding unto the simple.*] When a man doth but begin to be acquainted with thy word, he finds his mind marvellously enlightened with such clear and useful knowledge, as directs the most simple people how to live happy.

Ver. 131. *I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.*] Which hath excited me to the most eager pursuit of this most excellent wisdom; for I longed to have a perfect understanding of thy commandments, which at first sight afford such abundant satisfaction.

Ver. 132. *Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou used to do unto those that love thy name.*] Favour my desires, I most humbly beseech thee; and vouchsafe me the same grace which thou art wont to bestow on those that sincerely love thee, and study, as I do, thy honour and glory.

Ver. 133. *Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.*] And first of all enable me to walk steadily, according to the rule of thy word, that I may not be a slave to any sin whatsoever.

Ver. 134. *Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.*] And then deliver me from the oppression of him (1 Sam. xxvi. 24.) who unjustly seeks to destroy me; that I may have the greater liberty to study and observe thy precepts.

Ver. 135. *Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.*] Put an end to the troubles of thy servant, who is devoted to thy obedience; and for this reason, above all others, desires to see better days, that he may have better opportunities to learn thy statutes.

Ver. 136. *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.*] Which it is a very great grief to me, to behold so universally neglected; and hath cost me many a tear, when I consider, not merely the persecution which I suffer, but how thereby my enemies violate thy law.

TZADDI. PART XVIII.

Ver. 137. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments.*] I leave it to thee, O Lord, to redress these evils; who art both just and good, and governest all things with an unerring equity.

Ver. 138. *Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful.*] For as all the laws thou hast given us are perfectly righteous; so thou dost exactly and most faithfully fulfil all the promises or threatenings which thou hast made to the observers, or against the breakers, of them.

Ver. 139. *My zeal hath consumed me; because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.*] The consideration of which moves my indignation to such a degree, that I am tormented to see my enemies so forgetful of their own interest, as not to regard thy words.

Ver. 140. *Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.*] Which I know to be infallibly true, and perfectly free from all falsehood and deceit: which is the reason of that ardent affection thy servant hath unto them.

Ver. 141. *I am small and despised; yet do not I forget thy precepts.*] Which will not suffer me, though I am mean and contemptible in the eyes of my enemies (who are honourable and mighty), to be guilty of neglecting any of thy precepts.

Ver. 142. *Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.*] For still I think with myself, that thy justice, goodness, and fidelity, are unchangeable; and whatsoever thou hast said in thy law is the very truth; upon which we may certainly depend, and never be deceived.

Ver. 143. *Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me; yet thy commandments are my delights.*] And therefore, though I am unexpectedly (1 Sam. xx. 3.) involved in very sore straits and difficulties, yet I do not forsake, but find great consolation in the study of thy commandments.

Ver. 144. *The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.*] Especially in this consideration, (which comes often into my mind, ver. 142.) that all the declarations thou hast made of thy will to us are so just and true, that they will never fail our expectation: O give me wisdom to order my life according to them! and then it shall not be in the power of my enemies to make me miserable.

KOPH. PART XIX.

Ver. 145. *I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord: I will keep thy statutes.*] I have besought thy favour in this sorrowful and distressed condition, with most vehement cries and hearty affection: be pleased to rescue me out of it, O Lord, and I promise with the greater care to observe thy statutes.

Ver. 146. *I cried unto thee; save me, and I shall keep thy testimonies.*] I have made it my constant business to cry unto thee for help; from whom alone I seek it: deliver me, I again beseech thee, and I will not fail to make good my promise of observing thy testimonies.

Ver. 147. *I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word.*] I have sent up early cries unto thee, before the morning-light appeared: constantly expecting the performance of thy promise to me.

Ver. 148. *Mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I might meditate in thy word.*] Nor have I been less forward in the study of my duty, than in the imploring of thy mercy; but have awaked before all the watches were set, to meditate in thy word.

Ver. 149. *Hear my voice, according unto thy loving-kindness: O Lord, quicken me according to thy judgment.*] Let my prayer prevail with thee, O Lord, for that favour and kindness which I have oft experienced; and preserve my life, as thou hast done hitherto, by such means as thou judgest best for me.

Ver. 150. *They draw nigh that follow after mischief: they are far from thy law.*] I am closely beset, thou seest, and in danger to be seized (1 Sam. xxiii. 26.) by those who, as they persecute me, and seek my ruin, so care not by what wicked arts they compass their design: for they have no regard at all to thy law.

Ver. 151. *Thou art near, O Lord: and all thy commandments are truth.*] My only comfort is, that they cannot approach so near to hurt me, as thou, O Lord, art to defend and preserve me: and that all thy promises annexed to thy commandments (still I think of that, ver. 142.) shall faithfully be fulfilled.

Ver. 152. *Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.*] This hath ever been my support, long before I fell into these troubles; that whatsoever thou hast testified to be thy will and pleasure, is firm and steadfast, and shall never fail those that depend upon it, (ver. 144.)

RESH. PART XX.

Ver. 153. *Consider mine affliction, and deliver me; for I do not forget thy law.*] Shew then that thou dost not neglect me; but art as mindful of me, as I am of thy law in this afflicted condition, out of which I beseech thee to deliver me; for none of the evils that have befallen me have made me forget my duty to thee.

Ver. 154. *Plead thou my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word.*] I appeal to thee, whether I have not a righteous cause; beseeching thee to do me justice upon mine enemies, (1 Sam. xxiv. 15.) and rescue me from their persecutions: for I am in great danger of perishing, but depend upon thy promise for my safety.

Ver. 155. *Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.*] Far be it from thee to afford any help to the wicked: for they have no regard to thy statutes; but seek only how they may satisfy their own lewd and cruel desires.

Ver. 156. *Great are thy tender mercies, O Lord: quicken me according to thy judgments.*] To which I oppose the bowels of thy compassion, O Lord, whose tender mercies are many and great: and will preserve my life, I hope, according to thy wonted care over me, and kindness to me, (ver. 149.)

Ver. 157. *Many are my persecutors, and mine enemies; yet do I not decline from thy testimonies.*] I am not discouraged, either by the number or the strength (which are both very great) of those that persecute me with a deadly enmity: which doth not move me in the least to depart from thy testimonies, (Lev. xix. 18.) by seeking their destruction as they do mine, (1 Sam. xxiv. xxvi.)

Ver. 158. *I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.*] It only provokes my sorrow, to see that there is no faith, nor truth, nor gratitude, in them, (1 Sam. xxiv. 17, &c. xxvi. 2.) and troubles me beyond measure, that they have no regard to what thou commandest or forbiddest.

Ver. 159. *Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O Lord, according to thy loving-kindness.*] Such is the love I have to thy precepts; which, I beseech thee, let the world see thou dost observe: and both preserve my life, O Lord, and, according to the exceeding greatness of thy goodness, deliver me out of this sad condition.

Ver. 160. *Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.*] As I doubt not thou wilt; for none of thy promises have ever failed: but the very first of them, which thou madest to our forefather Abraham, (Gen. xii. 2.) hath been faithfully fulfilled; and so shall every thing else, which thou hast resolved and declared to be thy will, be punctually performed to the end of the world.

SCHIN. PART XXI.

Ver. 161. *Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.*] The rulers and prime counsellors of the kingdom persecute me, for pretended crimes; of which as I am not guilty, so I do not fear so much what they can do against me, as lest I should do any thing in my own vindication against thy word, (1 Sam. xxiv. 6. xxvi. 9.)

Ver. 162. *I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.*] I would not purchase my liberty, my peace, or the honour they enjoy, by any unlawful actions: for I take far more delight in doing thy will, and in what thou hast promised to do for me, than in the completest victory over all my enemies.

Ver. 163. *I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love.*] I hate all fraud and deceit; even to the degree of abhorrence and abomination: but most heartily love these honest courses to which thy law directs me.

Ver. 164. *Seven times a day do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments.*] It is the subject of my perpetual thanks and praise, that I have the happiness to be acquainted with the justice and goodness of those laws, whereby thou governest us.

Ver. 165. *Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.*] The observance of which gives such inward satisfaction, and brings so many and great blessings to those who truly love them, that they take all things which befal them in good part; and nothing will tempt them to turn aside and leave those virtuous paths wherein they lead them.

Ver. 166. *Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.*] I have met with the most grievous discouragements: but, Lord, in the midst of the greatest straits I have expected deliverance only from thee; and never done any thing, for my preservation, contrary to thy commandments.

Ver. 167. *My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly.*] All my care hath been still most heartily to observe thy testimonies: which I prefer infinitely before all earthly enjoyments.

Ver. 168. *I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways are before thee.*] There is not one of thy laws, of any sort, but I have carefully observed; even then when I might have privily broken them, and been a gainer by it: (1 Sam. xxiv. 4, &c.) for I knew that nothing can be done so secretly but thou art perfectly acquainted with it.

TAU. PART XXII.

Ver. 169. *Let my cry come near before thee, O Lord: give me understanding according to thy word.*] As thou art also with my most earnest petitions; to which, I beseech thee, O Lord, vouchsafe a gracious answer: and in the first place teach me, according as thou hast promised, to walk, not only innocently, but prudently, in the midst of all the snares that are laid for me.

Ver. 170. *Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.*] Do not deny admittance to this humble suit; but in due time grant this farther request: that I may, according to the same promise, be perfectly delivered from this long persecution.

Ver. 171. *My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.*] Then will I praise thee without ceasing; first, for instructing me how to please thee in all things;

Ver. 172. *My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.*] And next, for fulfilling thy promise to me: which I will loudly proclaim with my thankful acknowledgments; that whatsoever thou hast said is truly and faithfully performed.

Ver. 173. *Let thine hand help me: for I have chosen thy precepts.*] Let thy Divine power therefore succour me in this weak and distressed condition wherein I am; for I rely on that alone; having resolved to be guided wholly by thy precepts.

Ver. 174. *I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord; and thy law is my delight.*] And I have long expected, with most ardent desires, thy help, O Lord, for my deliverance: delighting myself, in the mean time, in thy laws; while thou art pleased to delay it.

Ver. 175. *Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.*] O let me not perish in these straits wherein I am involved; but spare my life, according to thy wonted kindness, and I will spend it in thy praises: send me relief, by executing the judgments thou hast decreed against my enemies.

Ver. 176. *I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.*] Who have so chased me from place to place during this tedious banishment; that, like a wandering sheep, which hath lost its way, I know not whither to betake myself for safety: but be thou pleased, like a careful shepherd, to look after me, and to put thy servant into the right way of escaping all the dangers to which I am exposed, and of recovering my liberty, rest, and peace again: for, how hard soever my condition hath been (I can still seriously profess it), I have not been careless in the observance of thy commandments.

PSALM CXX.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

There can no certain account be given, why this and fourteen other Psalms, which follow, are called *Songs of Degrees*, or *Ascents*. Their conjecture seems to me most probable, who think the title denotes, either the *elevation* of the voice in the singing these songs, or the *excellence* of the composure, or of the music to which they were set, or the *high esteem* they had of them upon some account or other; particularly because they were so fit for their use (though most of them composed in former times), at and after their return from the captivity of Babylon. Then, some think, this title was given to them because they sung them as they *went up* to their own country again.

But this present Psalm seems to have been made by David, when the calumnies of Doeg, and others, forced him to flee his country, and to go as far as the Kedarens, or Arabians, (ver. 5.) whose company was very irksome to him. We do not read, indeed, in his history that he was there: but we may well think he sought for safety in more places than are particularly mentioned; and might as well be there, as among the Moabites, and in the wilderness of Paran, (1 Sam. xxv. 1.) which was not far from them. As for Mesech, I take that to signify not a place, but the length of time which he stayed there, before he durst stir from thence; or which he was forced to spend in exile: as all the ancient interpreters, except one, understand it. (See Bochart, in his Phaleg. lib. iii. cap. 12.)

Ver. 1. *IN my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me.*] I have had frequent experience of the goodness of the Lord; who, when I have earnestly implored his help in my straits and difficulties, hath constantly relieved me.

Ver. 2. *Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.*] May it please thee, O Lord, still to continue thy mercy towards me: and now that men strike at my life, by calumnies and cunningly-devised lies, (1 Sam. xxii. 9. xxiv. 9.) to preserve me from the danger into which they have thrown me.

Ver. 3. *What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?*] O thou false accuser! what dost thou hope to get by these specious tales which thou hast forged? What will they add to that heap of wealth which thou treasurest up? (Psal. lii. 7.)

Ver. 4. *Sharp arrows of the Almighty, with coals of*

juniper.] They shall be so far from turning to thy advantage, that they shall prove thy undoing: for the mighty Lord (whom none can resist) shall take a sharp and a swift vengeance on thee; which shall never cease, till it hath utterly consumed thee.

Ver. 5. *Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!*] For it is but fit thou shouldest smart for the mischief thou hast done, under which I groan most sadly; not only in a tedious banishment from my own country, but in that I am forced to seek for shelter among the barbarous Arabs.

Ver. 6. *My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.*] Where my mind cannot but perpetually reflect upon the implacable spirit of my enemies: whose bitter hatred will not suffer them to come to any terms of agreement.

Ver. 7. *I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.*] As I never gave them the least offence, so there is nothing that I more vehemently desire than peace and reconciliation; but when I make a motion of it, they are the more exasperated; and, as if I distrusted my cause, or craftily sought advantage by a treaty, betake themselves more fiercely and resolutely to their arms.

PSALM CXXI.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

If David was the author of this Psalm, (and to whom can we with so much likelihood ascribe it?) it is an expression of the high trust and confidence which he reposed in God, when he was in great straits, and saw no hope of human help: being either environed by Saul's forces, or pursued by his son Absalom. It is hard to say to which it belongs; but if by *hills* in the first verse we understand Zion and Moriah, where David's palace and the ark of God were placed; then it must be referred to the latter: for Zion was not theirs, during Saul's persecution.

There are those indeed, who, following Kimchi, take the first verse to be a military form of speech; and suppose David to have looked round about him, as a captain in danger doth, to see if he could spy any assistance coming to him down the neighbouring hills wherewith he was encompassed. But the other sense seems to me more simple; which therefore I have followed: though, if we should adhere to that conjecture, still it will best agree to the distress into which Absalom had reduced him. For then he might well look to see if any of his subjects, continuing their fidelity to him, would appear to defend him. Why called *a Song of Degrees*, see Psal. cxx.

Ver. 1. *I WILL lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help.*] Though I am driven not only from my own palace, but from God's dwelling-place, (2 Sam. xv. 14. 25.) yet my eyes shall be ever directed thitherward: from whence I expect a powerful aid against those numerous enemies that are combined to destroy me.

Ver. 2. *My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.*] I have no dependance on any other help, but wait for deliverance wholly from the presence of the Lord: to whom all creatures are subject, and who hath angels at his command, to send to the succour of his servants; for he made the heaven as well as the earth.

Ver. 3. *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.*] And methinks I hear his ministers calling to me out of his holy place, and saying, Fear not, since thou hast placed thy confidence in the Lord alone, he will not let thee be subverted: thou hast a stronger guard than the most valiant army would be to thee; for they may be tired and fall asleep, but he that hath thee in his custody will exercise a most unwearied care over thee.

Ver. 4. *Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.*] Be confident of it; he that is the protector of all good men, will never in the least neglect thee; much less abandon the care of thee: but, by a most watchful providence, keep thee in safety.

Ver. 5. *The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.*] The omnipotent Lord of the world is thy guardian: the very same Lord that covered your forefathers with a glorious cloud (Exod. xiii. 21.) is always present with thee, to defend and assist thee against all the enemies that assault thee.

Ver. 6. *The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.*] Be not troubled that thou art forced to take up thy quarters in the open field: for the sun shall do thee no hurt by its vehement heat in the day, nor the moon by its cold and moisture in the night, (2 Sam. xvii. 1. 6. 22.)

Ver. 7. *The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul.*] The Lord shall preserve thee from all manner of harm: he will preserve thy life, and not suffer thee to fall into the hands of those that contrive to take it away, (2 Sam. xvii. 1, 2. 14.)

Ver. 8. *The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore.*] The Lord shall secure thee whithersoever thou marchest; and prosper thee all along in thy undertakings, either abroad or within doors: not only now, but in all future times, to the end of thy days.

PSALM CXXII.

A Song of Degrees of David.

ARGUMENT.

The title satisfies us that David was the author of this Psalm: who, having settled the ark (which before had no certain place) at Jerusalem, and being at this time, upon some occasion, in the country, heard the good people there speak one to another, as some of them did to him, of going to worship God, at some of the three solemn feasts: which devotion of theirs, as it rejoiced his heart, so it moved him, I conjecture, to compose this Psalm for their use, at such times.

If the Talmudists may be believed, they were wont to sing the first verse of this Psalm as they went out of the country towards Jerusalem, carrying their first-fruits to the house of the Lord; as the law (Deut. xxvi. 2.) directed them: and when they entered within the gates of the city, they sang the second verse. There they were met by some of the citizens, who, if this be true, sang the rest of the Psalm, it is likely, together with them, as they went towards the temple. Of this custom Mr. Selden treats, lib. iii. de Synedr. cap. 13. Of *a Song of Degrees*, see Psal. cxx.

Ver. 1. *I WAS glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.*] I was exceedingly pleased with the cheerful devotion of those who came unto me, before the approaching feast, and said, Let us go and pay our thankful acknowledgments to the Lord in the place where he dwells, and makes himself present among us.

Ver. 2. *Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.*] Which motion ought to be the more readily embraced, because now he hath fixed his habitation: and we need not travel farther than Jerusalem, to inquire after the ark of his presence.

Ver. 3. *Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together.*] To Jerusalem, I say, that fair and beautiful city, whose buildings do not now lie scattered and divided: but are all compacted, and united together (as we ought to be) in a goodly order, (1 Sam. v. 9. 1 Chron. xi. 8.)

Ver. 4. *Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the estimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.*] Thither all the twelve tribes of Israel, who own the great Lord for their God, go up from all the parts of the country, by his special commandment, (Exod. xxiii. 17.) to acknowledge, before the ark of his testimony, (xxv. 21, 22.) all the benefits they have received from his almighty goodness; and this above the rest, that he thereby testifies his singular care and providence over them.

Ver. 5. *For there are set thrones of judgment: the thrones of the house of David.*] Thither also they repair for justice; for the supreme judicatory of the kingdom sits here, (2 Chron. xix. 8.) and there is the seat of the royal family, (where David and his sons have their residence, and govern the people, 2 Sam. viii. 15. 18.)

Ver. 6. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee.*] O let this be part of your devout prayers, when you come there; that God would preserve Jerusalem in peace: happy shall they be, who, out of love to the religion and justice which are administered in thee (O beloved city), contribute their endeavours, as well as their prayers, for thy safety and prosperity.

Ver. 7. *Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.*] Let no enemy (this shall be my constant prayer) approach so much as to thy outworks to disturb thee: and let plenty of all good things abound within thy palaces.

Ver. 8. *For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.*] The kindness I have for my kindred, and my neighbours and friends, whether in the city or the country, will not let me cease my earnest prayers to God, that he will confer his blessings on thee.

Ver. 9. *Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good.*] But above all, the love I have to the Lord our God, whose house is here (whither all his devout servants resort to worship him, and celebrate his name), shall excite not only my prayers, but my study, to promote thy welfare.

PSALM CXXIII.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, it is certain, was composed in a time of great distress; when they were extremely afflicted by some haughty and insolent enemies, (ver. 3, 4.) Who those enemies were there are several conjectures; and I will add mine: that this short form of prayer was made by some pious person, when the king of Assyria (whose pride the prophet Isaiah describes viii. 7. and many other places) sent Rab-shakeh, and other of his captains, to besiege Jerusalem: where they poured out most contemptuous, nay, blasphemous words, against God and his people, (2 Kings xviii. xix.) It is probable, if this conjecture be admitted, that it was made by Isaiah, whom Hezekiah desired to lift up his prayer for the remnant that was left, (2 Kings xix. 4. Isa. xxxvii. 4.) Accordingly we read, (2 Chron. xxxii. 20.) both he and Hezekiah cried unto the Lord: and, we may suppose, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said these words.

Ver. 1. *UNTO thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.*] Though all human help fail us in this sore distress; yet I do not despair of relief from thee, O Lord: whose majesty and power incomparably excel all earthly monarchs.

Ver. 2. *Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us.*] Behold, how, not only I, but the rest of thy faithful people, wait upon thee: submitting ourselves to this severe punishment, as poor slaves do to the stroke of their offended master or mistress; and resolving to bear it patiently, till thou our Lord, who dost inflict it, wilt be pleased to shew thyself our most gracious God; and in much pity towards us remove it.

Ver. 3. *Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.*] O be gracious unto us, good Lord, be gracious unto us; and in much mercy take away this heavy scourge from us: for we are become so beyond all measure contemptible, (2 Kings xviii. 23, 24. xix. 34.) that we can scarce any longer endure it.

Ver. 4. *Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.*] We have a long time groaned under the intolerable load of the derision and contempt of those whose constant prosperity puffs them up with pride: nay, makes them insolently oppress all those who are unable to resist them.

PSALM CXXIV.

A Song of Degrees of David.

ARGUMENT.

If the title had not told us that this is a Psalm of David's, I should have thought it had been composed by the author of the former; to acknowledge the wonderful power and goodness of God in delivering them from Sennacherib's army; which came in like a flood, (Isa. lix. 19.) and had overflown all the country as far as Jerusalem, (viii. 7, 8.) which might well make them be called *proud waters,* (as the Psalmist here speaks, ver. 5.) because they fancied nothing could stand before them. Such it seems were, either the Philistines, upon whom, when they spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim, the Lord broke forth *as a breach of waters,* (2 Sam. v. 19.)

or the Ammonites and their associates, (x. 6. 15, 16.) Of *a Song of Degrees*, see Psal. cxx.

Ver. 1. *IF it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say.*] If we had not had such a mighty helper as the Lord, who took our part, may Israel now most thankfully acknowledge;

Ver. 2. *If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us.*] If it had not been the Lord (whom none can resist) who took our part, when such numerous enemies united their forces, as one man, to make war upon us;

Ver. 3. *Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us.*] They would then have made but one morsel of our small army: and in the furious rage wherein they were, have immediately devoured us; as monstrous beasts do their prey, which they greedily swallow down alive.

Ver. 4. *Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul.*] Then they would have overrun all the country like a violent torrent: and we should have been buried in the flood.

Ver. 5. *Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.*] Having once made a wide breach, by the overthrow of our army, they would have poured in more numerous forces upon us: till, like an inundation of water, which swells more and more, they had wholly overwhelmed us.

Ver. 6. *Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.*] Thanks be to the Lord, to whose infinite mercies we ought to ascribe it; that he hath not permitted them to domineer over us, and execute their cruel intentions against us.

Ver. 7. *Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we are escaped.*] They thought they had laid their design so strongly, that we could not escape; no more than a little bird, which a fowler hath taken in his snare: but, blessed be the Lord, who hath assisted our weakness, their plot is defeated, they are broken in pieces; and we thereby most wonderfully delivered.

Ver. 8. *Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*] This was not a work of our wit, no more than of our power; nor were we beholden to the help of any of our neighbours; but we owe it wholly to his almighty goodness; who commands, because he made, all creatures: in whom we ought to place our confidence for ever.

PSALM CXXV.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

We may well look upon this Psalm as a pious exhortation to the people to trust in God; when Sennacherib's army threatened to destroy Jerusalem. And perhaps these were some of the comfortable words, which we read, 2 Chron. xxxii. 6—8. Hezekiah then spake to them; when God chastised them by that rod of his anger, (as he calls Sennacherib, Isa. x. 5.) which the Psalmist here foretold (ver. 3.) should not long afflict them. Of *a Song of Degrees*, see Psal. cxx.

Ver. 1. *THEY that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.*] There are none so safe as they that repose a pious confidence in the Lord: by which they shall both maintain themselves in a settled peace and tranquillity; and remain for ever, as unmoveable, conspicuous, and illustrious, as Mount Zion.

Ver. 2. *As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth, even for ever.*] For as Jerusalem is surrounded with high hills, which make it not easily accessible by any enemies, so the Divine providence encompasses his people who depend upon him, to guard and defend them from all dangers; not only now, but in all succeeding ages, to the end of the world.

Ver. 3. *For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.*] The power of wicked tyrants, indeed, may heavily afflict the righteous for a time: but they shall not always harass their country, nor continue their oppression so long, as quite to tire out the patience of the righteous, and tempt them to forsake their pious confidence in him, and lay hold on any means, though never so unjust, of obtaining deliverance.

Ver. 4. *Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts.*] To prevent so great an evil, be pleased now, good Lord, to deal well with those who are truly good, and reward their fidelity; who, notwithstanding all these calamities, sincerely persist in thy ways, and preserve their integrity.

Ver. 5. *As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: but peace shall be upon Israel.*] But as for those who, instead of growing better by these oppressions, decline more and more from the ways of piety, unto the most perverse and crooked courses: the Lord shall deliver them over to be punished with their oppressors; when Israel, after all these sore afflictions, shall be settled again in peace and happiness.

PSALM CXXVI.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is so universally thought to be a joyful song composed by Ezra, or some such good man, when they returned out of Babylon, that I shall seek for no other interpretation: but observe, with Theodoret, that when Cyrus gave them all leave to return to their own land, some were so ill-minded that they chose to continue where they were: but such as had any sense of the piety of their forefathers, and desired to see the worship of God, according to the law, restored, gladly embraced the opportunity of returning to their own country: where they thought themselves so happy in the liberty which they enjoyed, that they pray (ver. 4.) all the rest of the nation, who remained still behind, would come and partake of it.

This is the most received sense; else I should have thought the deliverance from Sennacherib might be here celebrated; who had carried many of them captive (Isa. v. 13. and other places), and when they were delivered from his oppression, they were, indeed, *like men that*

dreamed, as the Psalmist here speaks. For awaking in the morning, and seeing his vast army to be dead corpses, (2 Kings xix. 35.) they could scarce believe what they beheld with their eyes, it was so wonderful.

And, perhaps, it was first made then, and afterward applied, with some alteration, to their return from Babylon. (See Psal. cxxxiii.)

Ver. 1. *WHEN the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.*] To the Lord alone must we ascribe this wonderful change (which is like the sudden recovery of health, out of a tedious and desperate sickness); for when the proclamation unexpectedly came forth, to give us liberty to return to our own country, out of a long captivity, (Ezra i. 2, 3.) we could scarce believe it; but were apt to look upon ourselves, as only in a dream of so great a happiness.

Ver. 2. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.*] Which presently turned our heaviness into such a height of joy, that it filled all places with our mirth, especially with cheerful hymns; in which the heathen themselves accompanied us, saying, This truly is the Lord's work, who hath magnified his power in the strange deliverance of this nation.

Ver. 3. *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.*] And truly so he hath (we should be very ungrateful, if we should not thankfully acknowledge the singular benefits which strangers admire); the Lord hath not only restored our liberty, but declared the greatness of his power in this deliverance; which justly fills us with joy and triumph.

Ver. 4. *Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south.*] O that the Lord would be pleased to perfect what he hath begun! and bring back, in greater numbers, the rest of our brethren that still remain in Babylon: which would be as welcome to this desolate country, as streams of water to the dry and thirsty grounds.

Ver. 5. *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.*] Then this small handful of people, who are come to plant themselves here again, and have laid the foundation of the temple, with a great mixture of sadness and tears, (Ezra iii. 12.) shall shout for joy, to see so great an increase, and this pious work, by their help, brought unto perfection.

Ver. 6. *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*] Just as we behold the poor husbandman, going to and fro with a little seed, which in a scarce year he throws with a heavy heart into the ground, returning again and again from the field, with songs of joy in his mouth, when the harvest comes to reward his past labours with a plentiful crop of corn.

PSALM CXXVII.

A Song of Degrees for Solomon. (See cxx.)

ARGUMENT.

The Hebrew particle which here we translate *for,* is thought by our interpreters, in most other places, to signify *of:* and so they translate it a little before, in the title of Psal. cxxiv. and a little after, in that of the hundred and thirty-first. Therefore I shall look upon this Psalm as composed by Solomon; who, you read, 1 Kings iv. 32. made above three thousand songs: though none of them (except that large poem called the *Song of Songs,* and, as some think, Psal. cxxxii. and, as I suppose, the next to this) have been transmitted to posterity, but only this: which is a commentary upon a pious maxim of his, often repeated in the book of his Proverbs, that it is in vain to attempt any thing, if the Lord do not prosper it. Teaching us, therefore, in all our ways to acknowledge him, (Prov. iii. 6. xvi. 3.) and not to presume, that it is in our power *to direct our own way* (that is, our designs, enterprises, and actions) to what issue we please. For, *though a man's heart deviseth his way, yet it is the Lord that directeth his steps,* (Prov. xvi. 9. xx. 24. xxi. 30, 31.) A truth to be deeply pondered by all, especially by princes; in whose affairs, this overruling providence is most visible. Of *a Song of Degrees,* see Psal. cxx.

Ver. 1. *EXCEPT the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*] The success of all our undertakings depends so entirely upon the Lord's blessing, that it is in vain, by building houses and cities, to enter into societies, unless he prosper the design: and when they are framed, all the care of the soldier and the magistrate is to no purpose, unless his good providence be their guard.

Ver. 2. *It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.*] And as fruitless, unless he favour it, is the toil and solicitude of you the artificers and tradesmen in the city; who rise betime, and go to bed late, and fare hardly: when they whom he loves (because they own his providence, and depend upon his blessing, more than their own diligence) live securely, and want nothing that is fit for them; though they have no such strong guard of soldiers to defend them; nor break their sleep with labour and care, to supply their necessities.

Ver. 3. *Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*] Observe it also; it is not in the power of the strongest and most healthful persons (though nature designs, above all things, the propagation of mankind) to have children when they please, to inherit the riches they have got: but the Lord bestows them as freely as parents do their estates; and makes those women fruitful, whose pious reliance upon him he thinks good to reward.

Ver. 4. *As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.*] And yet there is nothing of which we are more desirous than a numerous issue; especially in the flower and vigour of our youth: for they will be no less defence to us in our age, than arrows or darts are in the hand of a valiant champion, to beat off his assailants.

Ver. 5. *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.*] Happy is that man who hath obtained so much favour of the Lord, as to have his house as full of them as the champion's quiver is of arrows; they will undauntedly appear for him, to answer any challenge sent him by his enemies (see Theodoret); or any accusation put in against him before the judges.

PSALM CXXVIII.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

It is not unlikely, that this Psalm was composed by the same author that made the former; to excite men to be truly religious, as the only way to obtain the blessings there mentioned of the Lord. Which, as he there shews we must have from his free gift, and not think to acquire merely by our own industry: so here he shews the Lord is wont to bestow on those who, fearing to offend him, sincerely keep his commandments.

Some think this was a form prescribed to be used at the blessing of their marriages; when they wished the new-married couple all manner of happiness; especially a long life in peaceable times, (ver. 5, 6.) Of *a Song of Degrees*, see Psal. cxx.

Ver. 1. *BLESSED is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.*] Whosoever thou art that desirest to be happy, be sure to add unto the devout worship of the Lord the practice of justice and charity, and all other virtues: and thou shalt never miss of it.

Ver. 2. *For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.*] For then he will prosper thy honest labours; and give thee a heart also to enjoy the fruit of them: yea, this will seem no small part of thy happiness, that thou art able to live of thyself, and not be beholden unto others.

Ver. 3. *Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive-plants round about thy table.*] He will bless thee also in thy wife; and make her as fruitful as the vine, which spreads itself, laden with full clusters, over all the sides of thy house: and in thy hopeful children too, who shall grow up and flourish like the young olive-plants, that are set in thy arbour, round about thy table.

Ver. 4. *Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed, that feareth the Lord.*] Observe it, that this shall be the comfortable portion of the man that religiously serveth the Lord; who alone can bless our labours, and continue the product of them in our families.

Ver. 5. *The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion; and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.*] Address thyself unto him in his holy place; and the Lord shall bestow on thee whatsoever blessings thou askest of him: yea, mayest thou be so happy as to see Jerusalem, the seat of justice and religion, in a flourishing condition all thy life long.

Ver. 6. *Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.*] And long mayest thou live, to such a good old age, as to see thy children's children; and the whole nation, all the time, in a prosperous tranquillity.

PSALM CXXIX.

A Song of Degrees. (See cxx.)

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was made when some new calamity threatened them, either by Sennacherib, or, as Theodoret thinks, by those nations which combined to destroy the Jews, as soon as they returned from the captivity of Babylon. When they were taught by Ezra, or some such holy man, to recount what God had done for them ever since they were a people; and to denounce the Divine vengeance against those that now sought their ruin. The former conjecture seems the truer; because as yet, he saith, (ver. 2.) their enemies had not prevailed against them; unless we expound that phrase, as I have done in the Paraphrase (according to the received interpretation of the Psalm), that they had not quite destroyed them, and made them cease to be a nation.

Ver. 1. *MANY a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say.*] Our adversaries, may Israel now upon this occasion say, have very often, and very sorely, distressed us; ever since we began to be a people.

Ver. 2. *Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; yet they have not prevailed against me.*] It is hard to number how oft, or to tell into how great straits, they have reduced us, ever since we began to be a nation: and yet, by the special favour of God, they have not been able to compass their desire of our utter extirpation.

Ver. 3. *The ploughers ploughed upon my back; they made long their furrows.*] They have laid us sometimes exceeding low; and not only scourged us so severely, that the marks of it might be seen as plain as the furrows are which the plough makes in the ground, but long continued also our vexation and torment.

Ver. 4. *The Lord is righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.*] But the Lord at last, in much mercy, hath made good his faithful promises, and broken in pieces the power of wicked oppressors; that they might not always hold us under their yoke, and thus miserably tyrannize over us.

Ver. 5. *Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.*] And may all those that still hate us and our religion, never have better success, but be shamefully defeated, and forced to desist in all their attempts upon us.

Ver. 6. *Let them be as the grass upon the house-tops, which withereth afore it groweth up.*] Let none of their designs ever come to maturity; but be blasted like the grass upon the house-top, which, having no root, withers of itself, and needs nobody's hand to pluck it up.

Ver. 7. *Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.*] And as it lies unregarded by those that reap, or that carry in the fruits of the earth; so let these men and all their enterprises become contemptible, and be looked upon as good for nothing.

Ver. 8. *Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the Lord be upon you: we bless you in the name of the Lord.*] Let all their hopes so speedily vanish, that there be none to favour them; nor so much as to wish prosperity to them: no more than there are gatherers of such withered grass appear, to whom the passengers (after the usual form, Ruth ii. 4.) should say, The Lord give you a good harvest: we pray God you may reap the fruits of your labours.

PSALM CXXX.

A Song of Degrees. (See cxx.)

ARGUMENT.

Some think David made this prayer, after he had plunged

himself into a very deep guilt, by his sin with Bath-sheba. I rather think, when he was persecuted by Saul, and reduced to so low a condition, that his heart began to sink within him. For *the floods of ungodly men* (as he speaks, Psal. xviii. 4.) *made him afraid*, that he should one day perish in them, (1 Sam. xxix. 1.) and he complains elsewhere, *that he sunk in the mire, where there was no standing*, &c. (Psal. lxix. 2. 14, 15.)

In this condition he implores the Divine mercy with great earnestness: and beseeches him to pardon his sins, and the sins of all the people; which made them deserve that ill government under Saul and his flatterers.

It is the last but one of the seven penitential Psalms.

Ver. 1. *OUT of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord.*] In the greatest straits, when I can see no bottom, no end of my troubles, but I still sink lower and lower into them; I never despair of thy mercy, O Lord; but cry unto thee most earnestly to deliver me.

Ver. 2. *Lord, hear my voice; let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.*] Vouchsafe, good Lord, the governor of all things, to grant my petition: do not reject it, I humbly beseech thee; but give me a favourable answer when I deprecate thy displeasure.

Ver. 3. *If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?*] I do not plead any merits of mine, but rather accuse myself before thee; knowing that if I were the most innocent person in the world, yet if thou, Lord, shouldest strictly examine my life, and proceed against me, according to my deserts, (Lord, what would become of me?) I should certainly be condemned.

Ver. 4. *But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.*] But thou most graciously invitest us unto thy service, by thy readiness to pardon all those that are truly penitent; without the hope of which, we could not so much as think of becoming religious.

Ver. 5. *I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.*] This encourages me to wait and expect when the Lord will deliver me; my soul is earnestly bent to expect this happy time, which I believe will come; because I have his promise for it, on which I depend.

Ver. 6. *My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning.*] I direct my thoughts to the Lord alone for safety and relief; which I implore incessantly with my early prayers: for they that watch in the temple for the break of day; I say, the priests that watch in the temple for the break of day, are not more forward than I to offer up their morning sacrifice to the Lord.

Ver. 7. *Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.*] In whom let all his people place their trust and confidence: for the Lord is very ready to do good; and hath more ways than we can imagine to rescue those that hope in him out of the sorest distresses.

Ver. 8. *And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.*] And he will at last free them from all those troubles; which he hath inflicted on them as a punishment for their iniquities.

PSALM CXXXI.

A Song of Degrees. (See cxx.)

ARGUMENT.

Though David could not purge himself from all manner of guilt, (as he confesses in the foregoing Psalm, ver. 3.) yet in that matter, which he was charged withal by his enemies (of affecting the kingdom), he could safely protest he was as innocent as a little child. Which he doth in this Psalm particularly; and in several parts of other Psalms.

Ver. 1. *LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.*] O Lord, I am accused of traitorous designs against my sovereign, and of aspiring to the throne wherein thou hast placed him: but thou, who searchest the hearts, knowest that I harbour no such ambitious thoughts; nor hath my behaviour betrayed any such intentions: for I never looked upon any man superciliously; nor meddled with affairs of state, or any thing else that is above my place and calling.

Ver. 2. *Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.*] But have levelled my mind (else let me perish) to an equality with my condition; and resolved to acquiesce in the present state of things, committing myself unto thy care, and depending on thy providence, as a child that is newly weaned doth upon its mother; just so do I silence my natural desires; and am content to be disposed of as thou pleasest.

Ver. 3. *Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.*] And let all good men, in like manner, modestly place their confidence and hope in the Lord as long as they live; and choose rather to be depressed, than by any undue means raise themselves to greatness and honour.

PSALM CXXXII.

A Song of Degrees. (See cxx.)

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed by some holy man; after God had given commandment to David, by Gad the *seer*, to build an altar in the thrashing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite (where the destroying angel stood); and the Lord had answered him by fire upon that altar, (1 Chron. xxi. 18. 26.) whereby David knew, what he had till now been ignorant of, that this was the place where God would be worshipped, and have his temple built, (xxii. 1.) Accordingly we read expressly, that Solomon therefore built the temple in this place; because God here appeared to David his father, and David designed and prepared this place for it: (2 Chron. iii. 1.) that there God's habitation might be fixed; and not removed from place to place, uncertainly, as it had been in former times. For the tabernacle, which the Hebrews call *Mischkan*, had been in an unsettled condition, except one period of time, ever since they came into the land of Canaan. It was first pitched in Gilgal, and stayed there twenty-four years. Then it was removed to Shiloh, where it remained to the death of Eli, three hundred and sixty-

nine years. After his death, Shiloh being laid waste, it was translated to Nob, where it remained, they say, thirteen years: (but was now no better than a cabinet without its jewel; the ark being in another place, and never restored to it after that desolation of Shiloh; see Psal. lxviii.) After the death of Samuel, they say, Nob was also destroyed: and then it was carried to Gibeon, where Solomon found it, and from thence fetched it, when he had finished the temple. Which the Hebrews therefore call *Beth-Olamim*, the *eternal house*; because it was fixed to a place, and out of it the ark never departed, as it had done out of the tabernacle: but there (as the Psalmist here speaks, ver. 14.) the Lord took up *his rest for ever*: never to depart, that is, to any other place, till the Messiah came; who was the temple of God, "in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily."

There are those that think Solomon penned this Psalm; because (in 2 Chron. vi. the two last verses) he concludes his prayer at the consecration of the temple with some part of it, *viz.* ver. 8—10. And truly, since he speaks as if the priests were just taking up the ark to carry it into this resting-place, and there begs that God would not, for David's sake, turn away the face of his anointed (*i. e.* refuse to hear his prayer), it is not an improbable conjecture; which I shal follow in my Paraphrase, and connect also this Psalm with the former; to which it seems to have respect: if we render the last word of the first verse, as the ancient interpreters do; not *affliction*, but *humility, meekness*, or *modesty*. Yet I have not forgot to take notice of the other signification: and, in like manner, have expounded that phrase, *the mighty God of Jacob*, two several ways, (ver. 2. 5.)

Ver. 1. *LORD, remember David, and all his afflictions.*] Let it appear, O Lord, that thou art not unmindful of the pious humility of my father David, (cxxxi. 1.) who chose to endure many afflictions, rather than by unlawful means to prefer himself to a kingdom.

Ver. 2. *How he sware unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob.*] Which when he enjoyed, his principal care was to provide a settled place for the worship of God: for he bound himself with a solemn oath unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty One, who had preserved him, as he did Jacob, in all his troubles:

Ver. 3. *Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed.*] Saying, I am resolved, as I hope to prosper, that I will not come into the new palace, which I have built for myself, (1 Chron. xiv. 1.) much less go to dwell and take up my lodging there;

Ver. 4. *I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids.*] Nay, I will not lay myself down to rest, nor take a wink of sleep;

Ver. 5. *Until I find out a place for the Lord, a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.*] Until I have found out a convenient place for the ark of the Lord, (1 Chron. xv. 1. xvi. 1. 43.) a habitation for that mighty One; who there makes himself present to his people, the posterity of Jacob.

Ver. 6. *Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah; we found it in the fields of the wood.*] And now, behold, the Lord himself, to our great joy, hath told us the very place where he will fix his habitation, (1 Chron. xxi. 18. 26.) in the territory of Beth-helem-Ephratah; (Gen. xxxv. 16. 19.) in the fields of that forest, where the angel stood, and directed David to build an altar unto the Lord, (1 Chron. xxi. 18. xxii. 1.)

Ver. 7. *We will go into his tabernacles; we will worship at his footstool.*] Let us go therefore into his tabernacles; and prostrating ourselves before his majesty, let us take up the ark on which his glory stands, (1 Chron. xxviii. 2.) with humble reverence, and bring it into the temple which is now built for it, (2 Chron. v. 2—4, &c.)

Ver. 8. *Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength.*] And be pleased, O Lord, together with the ark, the token of thy powerful presence among us, to translate thy Divine glory thither: (2 Chron. v. 13, 14. vii. 1—3.) there to settle itself, and stir from thence no more for ever.

Ver. 9. *Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.*] Guard also thy priests, who minister unto thee here, and encompass them with thy goodness: (2 Chron. vi. 41.) that they may procure thy blessings for others; and make all thy pious worshippers, who are dear unto thee, triumph in thy kindness to them.

Ver. 10. *For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.*] I beseech thee, have a respect to the sincere piety of my father David, and thy gracious promise to him; (1 Chron. xxii. 2. 10. 14. xxviii. 2. 6, &c.) and upon that account deny me not; but grant the petitions of thy servant, who, by thy special appointment, succeeds him in the government of thy people.

Ver. 11. *The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, he will not turn from it, Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.*] According to that oath, whereby the Lord secured the kingdom to his family; that faithful oath, which he will never break, saying; One of thy sons will I advance to sit upon thy throne, when thou shalt leave it, (1 Chron. xvii. 11. xxviii. 5. 2 Chron. vi. 10.)

Ver. 12. *If thy children will keep my covenant, and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children also shall sit upon thy throne for evermore.*] Yea, I will perpetuate this royal dignity to thy children in all succeeding generations, (and not take it from them, as I did from Saul, 2 Sam. vii. 15, 16.) if they prove faithful and constant in their religion; and observe all the commandments, whereby I will teach and instruct them how my pleasure is, that they should worship and serve me, (1 Kings ii. 4. ix. 4. 6.)

Ver. 13. *For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation.*] For the Lord hath such a love to Zion, the seat of the royal family, (2 Sam. v. 7. 9.) that he hath chosen to place his own dwelling very near unto it, (2 Chron. iii. 1. vii. 12.)

Ver. 14. *This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.*] Saying, This is the place where my glory shall fix itself for ever, (2 Chron. vii. 16.) I will remove no more; but here will I take up my abode: for I have pitched on this place, and declared that it is acceptable to me, above all other, (1 Chron. xxi. 26. xxii. 2.)

Ver. 15. *I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.*] From whence I will dispense my blessings so abundantly, that Zion (which is become the city of God as well as of David) shall never be in any want: but I will make such liberal provision for it by fruitful years, that the poorest person there shall be satisfied with food, (2 Chron. vii. 13, 14.)

Ver. 16. *I will also clothe her priests with salvation; and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.*] I will also defend her priests, and they shall be giving continual thanks and praise for the blessings they shall procure for my pious worshippers: who shall exceedingly triumph in my kindness towards them.

Ver. 17. *There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.*] There will I make the regal power and majesty of David to put forth itself afresh in his royal successors; no sooner shall one be extinguished but another shall shine, (1 Kings xi. 36. 2 Chron. xxi. 7.) in such splendour as shall give a lustre to the name of that anointed servant of mine; till the great prince, the Messiah, appear.

Ver. 18. *His enemies will I clothe with shame; but upon himself shall his crown flourish.*] And whosoever they be that go about to destroy this succession, they shall be so miserably defeated that they shall not be able to shew their faces; while, with shame and confusion, they behold the regal dignity in his family (notwithstanding all their attempts against it) in an unfading glory.

PSALM CXXXIII.

A Song of Degrees. (See cxx.)

ARGUMENT.

When there was no other strife among all the tribes of Israel, than who should be most forward in returning their allegiance; and the children of Judah also were inclined as one man to bring back David to his kingdom, from which his son Absalom had driven him, (2 Sam. xix. 9. 14.) he fell into a rapturous admiration of that happy unity and concord which made them meet together in one place to worship God (for so, I think, Zanchius rightly understands the last word of the first verse, which we translate *together in unity*, to relate to the public assemblies): which unity he commended to them afterward in this Psalm, as their best preservative and security in future ages. This seems to me more probable to be the occasion of it than the concurrence of all the tribes to make him king after Saul's death (which is the common account that is given of it), for then Zion was not in his possession: and it is not likely he would then have made such mention of it as he doth here, while it remained in the hands of the Jebusites. But whatsoever was the first occasion, it was aptly applied to their condition after the return of their captivity from Babylon; when, as Theodoret notes, the tribes which had been divided by the imprudence of Rehoboam, were then again united; living under one and the same government, and worshipping God in the same place and the same manner as the law prescribed.

It was as fitly used by the first Christians, to express their joy for the blessed union of Jews and gentiles; and may now serve the uses of all Christian societies, whose happiness lies in holy peace and concord.

Ver. 1. *BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*] O consider, how beneficial and delightful it is, beyond all expression, for those that come from the same stock, and are of the same religion, to have no differences one with another; but to live and worship God together, in such a friendly agreement, as if they had but one soul among them all.

Ver. 2. *It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garment.*] I cannot resemble it to any thing better than to that excellent ointment compounded of several spices, (Exod. xxx. 21, &c.) which consecrated the high-priest to the Divine service, (Lev. viii. 12.) and was poured in such plenty, that, running over all his face, even to the collar of his garment (where he did bear the names of all the tribes of Israel), it perfumed all the place with its fragrant odour: for just so doth this holy concord make you both dear to God, and procure you an excellent fame among men; who cannot but be pleased to see such variety of humours and inclinations all conspiring with one accord to promote the common good of the whole society.

Ver. 3. *As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.*] The dew of heaven is not more necessary for the parched mountains, which, though never so distant one from another (as far as from Hermon to Zion), are refreshed with it, than this is for men of all ranks and conditions, who every where perceive the comfortable fruits of it; for to this the Divine favour is immutably annexed, which will pour upon such societies innumerable blessings; giving them a happy and long life (an earnest of endless felicity), in a constant enjoyment of all manner of good things.

PSALM CXXXIV.

A Song of Degrees.

ARGUMENT.

It is uncertain by whom this Psalm was composed, but it seems to have been made to be sung by some one or more of the Levites, at the shutting up of the gates of the temple; to excite the rest, whose turn it was to watch that night, to be diligent in their office of singing Psalms, and making devout prayers for the people. It is the last of those that have the title of *a Song of Degrees;* concerning which, see Psal. cxx.

Ver. 1. *BEHOLD, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.*] Attend to your duty, O ye ministers of the Lord; who not only by day, but by night also, reverently wait upon him in his house: (1 Chron. ix. 33.) cease not to declare how great and how good the Lord is.

Ver. 2. *Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.*] Be fervent in your devotion; and, disclaiming all dependance on any thing else, praise the Lord in his sanctuary with pure hearts and clean hands; and give thanks for all his benefits.

Ver. 3. *The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.*] Pray also for his people Israel, and say; The great Lord, who, though he cannot be confined, being the creator of all things, yet hath his special residence in this place, dispense his blessings, both heavenly and earthly, from hence, unto every one of you.

PSALM CXXXV.

ARGUMENT.

This perhaps was the Morning Hymn, which the precentor (ver. 4, 5.) called upon the Levites to sing, at the opening of the gates of the temple: as the former was sung at the shutting up of the gates in the evening. It recounts several of the great works of the Lord; especially towards that nation: whom it excites to steadfastness in their religion; and to contempt of idols and idolaters. It both begins and concludes with an exhortation to give praise to God; and so was entitled, as several other Psalms are, (cvi. cxi. &c.) *Hallelujah*, or *Praise the Lord*: that is, by this Hymn set forth the most excellent perfections and works of the Lord.

There are those who conjecture, from what we read ver. 14. of this Psalm, that when it was composed they were (or rather had been lately) infested by some of their idolatrous neighbours. Whose gods the Psalmist derides in the very same manner as he doth Psal. cxv. For the four following verses of this Psalm, 15—18. differ very little from 4—6. 8. of that, which it is certain was composed in a time of great distress; as this was when it was over.

Ver. 1. *PRAISE ye the Lord. Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise him, O ye servants of the Lord.*] Let all here present praise the most wise omnipotent goodness of the Lord: let him especially be praised, by you, his priests, who minister unto his majesty.

Ver. 2. *Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.*] And by the Levites who attend upon him in his house; together with all the rest of his people, that frequent the courts of God's house, who is our constant and most liberal benefactor.

Ver. 3. *Praise ye the Lord; for the Lord is good: sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant.*] Let this excite you all to praise the Lord: for, as his nature is most excellent, so he is the fountain of all the good we enjoy: and no employment is so delightful as to acknowledge his perfections, and commemorate the benefits we have received from him, by singing psalms and hymns of praise and thanks unto him.

Ver. 4. *For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.*] I invite you above all other people to this heavenly duty: both because the Lord had a peculiar kindness for Jacob your forefather; and doth still exercise a special providence over you his children, as far more dear and precious to him, than the rest of mankind, who are under his care:

Ver. 5. *For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.*] And because I am sensible that the Lord, under whose government we are, is so great and powerful above all other beings, though called by the name of gods; that you can never praise his majesty enough.

Ver. 6. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.*] His own will alone gives bounds to his power: for, as none act without his leave, so none can hinder him from doing what pleases himself; in the heavens as well as in the earth, and the seas, and other deep waters.

Ver. 7. *He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.*] He raises vapours, for instance, from any quarter of the earth, and makes them go up into the air; where some of them break forth in flashes of lightning; and that (which is strange) is followed with great showers of rain: and, from unknown places and causes, strong and violent winds blow with such continuance, as if they came out of some treasury, where he had gathered, and long locked them up, till he had occasion to bring them forth.

Ver. 8. *Who smote the first-born of Egypt, both of man and beast.*] He made the Egyptians feel how much superior he was to all their gods; (Exod. xii. 12.) who could not defend them from his stroke: but he sent his angel, and, in one night slew all the first-born in the country, both of man and beast, (ver. 29.)

Ver. 9. *Who sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, unto Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.*] Before which terrible blow, he had given many other wonderful demonstrations of his power, in several miraculous plagues; which he openly inflicted on thee, O Egypt; not only on the meaner sort, but upon the king and all his court, (Exod. vii.—ix. &c.)

Ver. 10. *Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings.*] And after he had, by these means, brought you out of their bondage, he overthrew several great nations and slew potent kings: who, presuming of their strength, opposed the accomplishment of his promises to you.

Ver. 11. *Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan.*] First of all Sihon king of the Amorites, who were esteemed invincible, (Numb. xxi. 24. Amos ii. 9.) and then Og, that giantly king of Bashan, (Numb. xxi. 33. Deut. iii. 11.) and, at last, all the kingdoms and kings of the land of Canaan, (Josh. xii. 7. 24.)

Ver. 12. *And gave their land for a heritage, a heritage unto Israel his people.*] Which he graciously bestowed upon us, the children of Israel, as an inheritance we should hold of him, by a Divine right; of which none, while we continue his obedient people, shall be able to dispossess us.

Ver. 13. *Thy name, O Lord, endureth for ever; and thy memorial, O Lord, throughout all generations.*] O Lord, how astonishing is this thy omnipotent goodness! the fame of which shall never be forgotten: but an illustrious memory, O Lord, shall be continued of it, from generation to generation.

Ver. 14. *For the Lord will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants.*] For though our enemies may sometimes oppress us, when we offend him, yet the Lord, at last, will take the part of his people, and deliver them: and, being reconciled unto his servants, will turn his severity into kindness towards them.

Ver. 15. *The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.*] It is not in the power of the idols, which the heathen worship, to divert his kindness from us; for they are of no more value than the silver and the gold of which they are made: and are so far from being able to do any thing, that they themselves are made by those that adore them.

Ver. 16. *They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not.*] They are mere images of things,

without their life: having mouths, but cannot give a word of advice, or comfort, to their supplicants; and eyes also, but cannot see, much less prevent any danger that doth approach them.

Ver. 17. *They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.*] Ears they have; but cannot hear a word that is said to them: and noses also; but they do not so much as breathe, much less can they smell the odours that are offered them.

Ver. 18. *They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them.*] They that make them therefore, or put any confidence in them, are as senseless as themselves; having eyes, for instance, but do not see, that brutes are more excellent than such gods; and that no help is to be expected from them.

Ver. 19. *Bless the Lord, O house of Israel: bless the Lord, O house of Aaron.*] O how much then are we all bound to bless the Lord, the creator of all, who hath freed us from this stupid blindness. Let the whole nation of the children of Israel, especially the priests of the Lord, praise him and give thanks to him, who hath better instructed them.

Ver. 20. *Bless the Lord, O house of Levi: ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord.*] Let all the Levites declare how gracious he is: yea, let all his pious worshippers, of whatsoever nation they be, join in this heavenly employment, of speaking good of the Lord.

Ver. 21. *Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord.*] Let them all say, with one accord, The Lord be ever praised in this holy place; who, though he be the owner of all the world, yet makes his special residence at Jerusalem.

The honour the heathens give to their lifeless images ought to excite you all, with the greater devotion, to praise the Lord of the world.

PSALM CXXXVI.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, like the former, is a commemoration of the goodness of God, expressed in his wonderful works: particularly those he had done for that nation. And, it is likely, was composed to be sung upon the great festivals; as every day, I suppose, they sung the foregoing; which is of the same strain with this, and contains much of the same matter; only here, at every half verse, one half of the choir answers to the other in these words: *For his mercy endureth for ever.* A form of acknowledgment prescribed by David, to be used continually in the Divine service, (1 Chron. xvi. 41.) and accordingly followed by Solomon, (2 Chron. vii. 3. 6.) when he dedicated the temple; and by Jehoshaphat, when, by the encouragement of a prophet, he went out to encounter a vast army with small forces; (xx. 21.) and here is repeated six-and-twenty times, to make them the more sensible that they owed all they had to the mere bounty of God, and to excite them to depend entirely upon it, and rest assured it would never fail them if they did piously and most heartily acknowledge it. Such repetitions we use now in our earnest prayers, when we say, *Lord, have mercy upon us*, &c. which are no more vain than these. I have variously expressed the sense of this repeated acknowledgment, according as the other part of the several verses seemed to direct me.

Ver. 1. *O GIVE thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Offer your thankful hymns unto the Lord of all; who is as good as he is great, and will continue his kindness (which hath been exceeding abundant towards us) unto all succeeding generations.

Ver. 2. *O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] He is the Sovereign of all the heavenly hosts; and therefore praise him, and give thanks unto him: for he can employ them all for your help and protection (as he hath in former times), and you need not doubt of his kindness, which continues unto all ages.

Ver. 3. *O give thanks unto the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] All the kings and princes of the earth are his subjects; upon which account also, give him praise and thanks: for his kindness endures throughout all ages, to defend you, as he hath done hitherto, from their tyrannical violence.

Ver. 4. *To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] He it is, and he alone, whose works are so great, that they surprise all those who seriously consider them with wonder and astonishment; and therefore give him praise and thanks: for his kindness will never fail, still to employ his infinite power for the good of those who are truly grateful to him.

Ver. 5. *To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Look upon the heavens, and behold, with admiration and praise, the splendour and the order wherein his wisdom hath contrived and settled them: for his kindness is as large, and as firm, and durable as they.

Ver. 6. *To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] And then look down to the earth; thankfully praise him who brought it out of the waters, and preserves it in its just extent from being again overflowed by them; for his kindness is no less immoveable, and by length of time can never be impaired.

Ver. 7. *To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Witness those great lights which never go out, but always call upon us to praise and give thanks to him; who made them to illuminate the world, and to be the emblems of his kindness; which sends its benign influences continually upon us unto all generations.

Ver. 8. *The sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] By day the sun exerts his power to quicken all inferior beings; and excites us to praise him, and be thankful to him; whose kindness thereby perpetually administers to us all necessary things, and will do so to the end of the world.

Ver. 9. *The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] And by night the moon or the stars supply its place: and let us see how much we are bound to praise and thank him, whose kindness is so constant, that, in the worst condition, it will never quite forsake us.

Ver. 10. *To him that smote Egypt in their first-born: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] We must needs say so, and think ourselves engaged above all others to give him thanks, if we call to mind that memorable night (Exod. xii. 29.) when he punished the Egyptians with the loss of all their first-born: for his kindness still continues for ever to relieve

those that are injured, and to punish their insolent oppressors.

Ver. 11. *And brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Let us not forget how after that stroke he brought our forefathers out of the cruel bondage, wherein they had long held them, (Exod. xii. 41, 42.) but thankfully acknowledge that wonderful deliverance: for it is an argument why we should never distrust his kindness, in the sorest straits that can befal us.

Ver. 12. *With a strong hand, and with a stretched-out arm: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] His power, let us remember, is irresistible; which first by lesser, then by greater signs and wonders, delivered us out of their hands, (Exod. vi. 5, 6. vii. viii. &c.) to praise and magnify him, whose kindness is stupendously great, and will never cease to succour those who depend upon him.

Ver. 13. *To him which divided the Red Sea into parts: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Let us therefore give thanks to him; who, when our forefathers utterly despaired of safety, (Exod. xiv. 10, 11.) commanded the Red Sea to retire, and leave a broad way for them to pass, (ver. 21.) which plainly proves that his kindness is inexhaustible, and always ready to help us in the most dreadful dangers.

Ver. 14. *And make Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] For he led them safely through the very midst of the sea, (which rose up like a wall on either hand of them, Exod. xiv. 22.) and will by his kindness eternally secure all those that piously confide in him:

Ver. 15. *But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] But threw those that oppose him headlong into destruction, as he did Pharaoh and his host, in the very same place where Israel was preserved: (Exod. xiv. 27, &c.) for his kindness loves to complete his favours, and perfect what he hath begun for his people.

Ver. 16. *To him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] And accordingly, when he had thus delivered them, he led his people by the direction of a glorious cloud, through an untrodden desert; and there (with our thankful praises let it be remembered) made a miraculous provision for them, (Exod. xvi.) For his endless kindness, wheresoever they went, still with new benefits pursued them.

Ver. 17. *To him which smote great kings: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] When potent kings opposed their passage to the promised land, he utterly discomfited them (to his praise be it thankfully acknowledged): for his kindness was not stopped by difficulties, but ever overcame them.

Ver. 18. *And slew famous kings: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Though they were kings famous for their prowess; yet, such was his for-ever-to-be-praised kindness towards us; he gave us as easy and as absolute a victory over them, as he had done before over Pharaoh and his host.

Ver. 19. *Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Over Sihon, king of that fierce nation of the Amorites, who were thought invincible: (Amos ii. 9.) for his kindness was mightier than they, and gave us this as an earnest of future conquests over our enemies.

Ver. 20. *And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Over that huge tyrant Og the king of Bashan: (Deut. iii. 11.) for his kindness added that, as a new pledge of what he intended to do for us, when we came into Canaan.

Ver. 21. *And gave their land for a heritage: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] And gave both their countries to be held of him, as a perpetual inheritance: for his kindness doth not decay (nor loves to revoke his favours), but continues to the latest posterity.

Ver. 22. *Even a heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] An inheritance they were, which he settled upon us, the children of Israel, as long as we continue his faithful servants: for his kindness hath no end; but delights to perpetuate his mercies to those who are worthy of them.

Ver. 23. *Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Nay, when for our sins we were severely afflicted, and in danger to be thrown out of this good land into which at last he brought us; (Judg. ii. iii. iv. &c.) he was pleased graciously to relieve us: for his kindness pardoned our ingratitude, and was as forward as ever to bestow fresh benefits upon us.

Ver. 24. *And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] And rescued us many a time, when we cried unto him, from the power of those that tyrannized over us: for his kindness was not spent by the frequent deliverances it had given us; but still granted new matter for our thanksgivings to him.

Ver. 25. *Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Whose bounty is not confined to us alone, but supplies the wants of all mankind, yea, of all living creatures: for his kindness hath no bounds; nor will ever cease to make a plentiful provision for them.

Ver. 26. *O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] O raise your hearts to give him thanks with the highest praises; whose power extends itself beyond this earth, even unto the highest heavens: for his kindness is so unwearied, that we may hope from thence to be ever receiving more and more his blessings.

PSALM CXXXVII.

ARGUMENT.

This is a mournful Song, composed by some of the captive Levites in Babylon; when he reflected upon their sad parting with their dear country, and the scorn wherewith their insulting enemies treated them in that strange land. Which he foresaw God would severely punish, by the hand of some other cruel people; who should shew them as little mercy as they had shewed the Israelites.

The Vulgar Latin ascribes this Psalm to Jeremiah: upon which inscription, Theodoret (who found it also in some Greek copies in his time) passes this censure; That the bold author of it wanted wit, as the inscription itself openly proclaims: for Jeremiah was not carried captive into Babylon; but, when he had stayed some time in Judea, was compelled by the disobedient Jews to go down with them into Egypt. Yet there are those who, to excuse this, would have us think that Jeremiah sent this Psalm to the captives in Babylon: and that it is called *A Psalm of David* (for so it is in the Vulgar Latin also), because made after the example of his Psalms: as Vir-

gil said he sung *Ascræum carmen* among the Romans; when he made his Georgics in imitation of Hesiod.

In the Paraphrase of the first verse I have followed a conjecture of St. Chrysostom's, that the captives were not suffered (at their first coming thither) to dwell within any of their towns or cities; but were dispersed all along several rivers of the country; where they built tabernacles, or cottages, for themselves: and, perhaps, were forced to drain those moist places to make them wholesome.

Ver. 1. *BY the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.*] When we were transported from our own country into the land of Babylon, and had the sides of Euphrates, and several of its rivers, (Ezek. i. 1. Baruch. i. 4.) assigned for our habitation, there we sat down in a sorrowful posture; and could not refrain from tears, when we called to mind the happy days which we enjoyed in the holy hill of Zion.

Ver. 2. *We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.*] We brought our harps along with us, wherewith we were wont to praise the Lord: (1 Chron. xv. 16.) but as our fruitful vines and fig-trees, under which we formerly sat, were turned into barren willows and osiers; so all our mirth and joy were turned into such heaviness and sorrow of heart, that we let all our instruments of music hang neglected upon the boughs of those doleful trees.

Ver. 3. *For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us, required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.*] For when our new masters, who had carried us away captive, they that had laid Jerusalem on heaps, and had power to do what they pleased with us, required us (between jest and earnest) to entertain them with our music; and to let them hear one of those songs, which were wont to be sung in the temple:

Ver. 4. *How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?*] Neither fear nor favour could extort this service from our Levites, but they resolutely answered; As those songs were not made for pastime and sport, but in honour of the great Lord of the world; so, how can you imagine that miserable slaves are disposed to sing? and to sing those songs, in the land where we are exiles, which recount the mercies of God unto us, in our once most flourishing country?

Ver. 5. *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.*] No (said I then within myself), if I forget thy desolations, O Jerusalem (though never so far removed from thee), so as to gratify their desires, by profaning thy music and thy songs; then let my right hand be benumbed, or quite lose its skill of touching the harp any more.

Ver. 6. *If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.*] Let me be struck dumb, and never be able to move my tongue; if I be not so mindful of thee, as never to sing again; till I see Jerusalem, and her holy solemnities restored.

Ver. 7. *Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.*] Which joyful day I hope will come; when thou, O Lord, wilt call our enemies to an account: and first of all, reckon with the Edomites, (Jer. xlix. 10. Ezek. xxv. 12.) who, instead of pitying Jerusalem, as became kind neighbours and relations, were glad to see the day of its desolations; and encouraged our destroyers with their acclamations, saying, Lay it flat, lay it even with the ground upon which it stands.

Ver. 8. *O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.*] And then shall your turns come, O ye Babylonians; who have laid waste so many nations, but shall one day be made desolate yourselves: (Isa. xiii. 19, &c.) and may that prince and people prosper and be happy, (Jer. l. 9. 41.) who shall pay you in your kind; and use you as barbarously as you used us, (li. 24. 35. 49.)

Ver. 9. *Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.*] He shall be praised and thought to have done a worthy work, who shall snatch your sucking children from their mothers' breasts; and have no more mercy on them, than upon the whelps of wolves, or such-like creatures; but shall dash out their brains against the walls of your houses, or stones in the street, (Isa. xiii. 16.) that there may be no remains of such a cruel generation, (Jer. li. 62.)

PSALM CXXXVIII.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

This is one of David's Psalms (as the title assures us), wherein he thankfully acknowledges God's goodness to him, in advancing him from a low and afflicted condition to the royal dignity; which remarkable change would invite, he thought, other kings and princes to have a very great regard to his Divine Majesty: who, he hoped therefore, would support and defend him in his new-gotten kingdom, by the same almighty power which raised him unto it.

Ver. 1. *I WILL praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.*] I will make thee my thankful acknowledgments, O Lord, with the devoutest affections of my heart: thy holy angels shall be witnesses of my gratitude, which I will express in psalms and hymns, in the presence of the great assembly of the judges, (Exod. xxii. 9. Psal. lxxxii. 1. 6.) that they may remember to whom they owe their power and authority.

Ver. 2. *I will worship towards thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving-kindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*] I will prostrate myself in the humblest adorations of thee, towards the place where the monument of thy Divine presence is; and acknowledge how much I am indebted to thy almighty goodness: first, for promising me, out of thy mere grace and favour, the royal dignity; and then for performing thy promise most faithfully: for thou hast manifested thy most excellent power and goodness to me, in nothing so much, as in punctually fulfilling thy promise, (1 Sam. xvi. 13.) notwithstanding all the opposition which was made to it; nay, in raising me higher than I expected.

Ver. 3. *In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.*] I had long ago fallen short of this honour to which I am advanced, hadst not thou, during all the time of Saul's persecution, as rea-

dily relieved me, as I cried to thee: and mightily supported my spirit, by a courageous faith and hope in thee.

Ver. 4. *All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth.*] Which will move, sure, all our neighbouring kings, who have any knowledge of my affairs (2 Sam. v. 11, 12. viii. 10.) to join with me, in praising thee, O Lord: when they shall hear, by how many strange providences thou hast brought to pass, that which thou promisedst to me by thy prophet.

Ver. 5. *Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord.*] The wonderful ways whereby the Lord brings things about, shall be the subject of their songs; and they shall think it their greatest happiness to be guided and governed by him: for they shall confess, that none can do such glorious things as the Lord hath wrought.

Ver. 6. *Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.*] Whose sublime greatness doth not make him neglect (as they see in me) the meanest persons; especially when their minds are as humble as their conditions: but will not let him stoop to the loftiest princes (as they may see in Saul), whom he despises, when they are forgetful of him, and ungrateful to him for his benefits.

Ver. 7. *Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.*] Which have been so great to me, that, should I fall again into the same straits wherein I was before, and be encompassed with them, I should hope that thou wouldest preserve me, and bring me safe out of them all. Thy power, I am confident, will repress the violent assaults of my enemies; and by thy almighty goodness I shall be delivered from their wrath and fury, (2 Sam. v. 17, &c. viii. 1, &c.)

Ver. 8. *The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.*] The Lord, who hath begun, will go on to finish his gracious intentions towards me; not for my merits (I know they are none at all), but for thy own mercy's sake, O Lord; which, as it was the sole motive to what thou hast done for me, so will I hope (for it is still the same, and ever will be) incline thee to preserve and settle me in that dignity, to which not my ambition, but thy own goodwill and pleasure, hath promoted me.

PSALM CXXXIX.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

The two last verses of this Psalm seem to me a sufficient indication that David (to whom the title ascribes it) composed it, when he lay under the imputation of having evil designs upon Saul; (1 Sam. xxiv. 9.) which, as he protests against, in several parts of other Psalms, and calls God often to witness his integrity; so here he appeals unto him in a set and solemn meditation, composed on purpose to represent before him the clearness of his intentions: which never suffered such designs to enter into his thoughts. And who could believe that a man, who seriously acknowledged it was impossible to conceal any thing from God's all-seeing eye, who forms us in the womb, should be so impudent as to make this appeal unto him, if he were conscious to himself of any such guilt? And, which is more, how could he be confident (as he declares he was, ver. 19.) that God would make his innocence evidently appear, by destroying his opposers, if he did not know they were calumniators? whose vile aspersions when God had effectually confuted, he delivered this Psalm to the master of the music, as a lasting testimony of his sincerity all along, before he came to the kingdom; and a constant admonishment to himself and others, never to promote any designs for the future by sinister arts, though managed so secretly that they lay hid from the eyes of all the world: since God cannot but be privy to them; who loves righteousness, and hates all iniquity.

Ver. 1. *O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me.*] I am accused, O Lord, of grievous crimes; but my comfort is, thou seest I am not guilty of them: for the exactest survey cannot make any thing so well known to us, as I am to thee; who art thoroughly acquainted with me.

Ver. 2. *Thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine up-rising; thou understandest my thought afar off.*] Thou knowest what designs I have, when I sit musing at home; and what I go about when I stir abroad: nay, my inclinations are so perfectly understood by thee, that before I have conceived any design it is visible unto thee.

Ver. 3. *Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.*] Nothing can be so narrowly sifted, as all the motions of my body and mind, both by day and by night, are scanned by thy all-penetrating eye: which comprehends and is intimately privy to all the ends which I pursue.

Ver. 4. *For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.*] When I am about to speak, thou, O Lord (such is thy most admirable wisdom), needest not to be informed what it is: but knowest before I open my mouth every thing I intend to utter.

Ver. 5. *Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.*] Whatsoever I have done long ago, is as well known to thee, as that which is lately passed, or which I am about to do: for I am so environed by thee, and so absolutely in thy power, that I cannot possibly escape thy notice, nor so much as stir without thy leave.

Ver. 6. *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.*] O amazing height of understanding! It is in vain to think I can hide any thing from it; which so far surpasses all I can say or conceive, that it excels even my admiration.

Ver. 7. *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*] Into what world shall I go, where thou art not as present as thou art in this? It is impossible for me, should I make never so much haste, to get out of thy sight.

Ver. 8. *If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.*] If I could get up into the highest part of heaven, I should not be out of thy reach; or go down and lie in the lowest depth of the earth, I should find thee still as near unto me.

Ver. 9. *If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea.*] If I could move as swiftly as the light of the rising sun, and in an instant fly from

hence, and take up my dwelling in the remotest parts of the world:

Ver. 10. *Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*] I should not be a jot the farther from thee; without whom, as I could not get thither, so I should be still subject to thy government, and as much under the care and protection of thy almighty providence there, as any where else.

Ver. 11. *If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.*] If I should have such a thought as this in my mind, that, though thou art present every where, yet, in the dark, I may lie undiscovered by thee; it would be very foolish: for when the sun is gone down, all that is in me is as apparent unto thee, as if it were noon-day.

Ver. 12. *Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.*] The darkness cannot conceal any thing from thee; who, being the Fountain of light, seest as well in the blackest night as in the brightest day: the night and the day, the most open and the most covert practices, are equally clear unto thy view.

Ver. 13. *For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.*] For my very thoughts, (and what is there more abstruse than they?) my most retired thoughts and contrivances, and my most secret desires, are apparent to thee: whose I am, and by whom I was wrapped up in those skins, which enclosed me in my mother's womb; than which there is nothing more hidden and dark.

Ver. 14. *I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.*] Yet there (such is thy stupendous wisdom, which I will never cease to praise and thankfully acknowledge) I was, I know not how, in such a wonderful manner formed, that the thoughts of it strike me with astonishment: thy operations in that work are most admirable: and of that I am exceeding sensible; but I can say no more, for they are incomprehensible.

Ver. 15. *My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.*] Though I was made in so secret a place, yet not the least joint in my body was concealed from thy eyes; but I received from thee there (where no more light can come, than there doth in the lowest depths of the earth) such a comely distinction of parts, and variety of powers, that no embroidery can be so curiously wrought.

Ver. 16. *Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.*] For when the matter out of which I was made was without any form, it was visible to thee how every muscle, vein, and artery, with all the rest of my body, should be wrought, out of the pattern of them which was in thy mind; and accordingly, in time, when there was not so much as one of them, they were all fashioned for the several uses to which they are designed; and not the smallest of them omitted, or left imperfect.

Ver. 17. *How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!*] How invaluable, also, and incomprehensible (O God, I am not able to express the high and grateful sense I have of it), is thy tender care and providence which thou hast exercised over me ever since I was born! All the secret passages of it amount to such a sum, that I am not able to give an account of them.

Ver. 18. *If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.*] When I attempt to reckon how many they are, I find that I may as well undertake to number the sand; for, though I continue the whole day in this employment, and, after a night's rest, begin again in the next morning to think how numerous thy mercies are; I am still as far as ever from seeing any end of them.

Ver. 19. *Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.*] Which makes me confident, O God, thou wilt not now desert me; but rather destroy that wicked man, (Psal. cxl. 1.) who, forgetting thy all-seeing eye, regards not by what means he plots my ruin: and therefore it will be best for you all, O ye men of blood, who have slain the priests of the Lord, (1 Sam. xxii. 18.) and now thirst after my life, to make your retreat, and desist from persecuting me any farther.

Ver. 20. *For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain.*] For it is not so much me that they persecute, as virtue and piety; to which, though they are not open, yet they are the most dangerous enemies, because they make it serve their wicked ends: having godly pretences for their doing mischief; and not sticking (so little belief have they of thy omniscience) to call thee to witness the truth of their lies and calumnies.

Ver. 21. *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?*] And have I not reason then, O Lord, to hate those who have such an inveterate hatred unto thee? and to take the greatest distaste to them that oppose themselves so industriously to thy holy laws?

Ver. 22. *I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies.*] I detest them with all my heart; and, as their impiety is the only cause of it, so I cannot loathe them more than I do; but declare myself upon that account to be their utter enemy.

Ver. 23. *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts.*] If I have any other ground of my enmity, or am guilty of so much as designing any evil to them, merely because they have done so much evil to me, I desire to find it out, and submit myself to the severest trials, which may discover to me any such thought that lurketh in my heart.

Ver. 24. *And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*] For I would not continue in such a pernicious course: but if in any thing I do, I intend them any hurt, or so much as to be grievous to them, my humble request is, either that I may not live, or live more exactly by the unchangeable rules of righteousness, sincerity, and truth.

PSALM CXL.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

There is no doubt (for the title ascribes it to him) but this Psalm was made by David. And it is little less undoubted that he composed it (as Theodoret well judges) when he was persecuted by Saul; who was instigated

thereunto by the calumnies of Doeg, and the information of the Ziphites: whose falseness and pestilent malice he here describes; beseeching God to preserve him from the mischief they intended him, and to turn it upon themselves: as he rests assured he would. When he came to his kingdom, and had settled the service of God in that manner, which we read 1 Chron. xvi. xxiii. &c. he delivered it to the master of the music; to be sung at certain times in the tabernacle. But it was not found, I suppose (no more than the two foregoing, and the four following), till some time after the other books of Psalms were published; and so were placed here all together by him that collected this book.

Ver. 1. *DELIVER me, O Lord, from the evil man: preserve me from the violent man.*] Defeat, O Lord, the wicked designs of that naughty man, (1 Sam. xxii. 9, &c.) who makes no conscience of what he saith or doeth to compass his ends: and let me not fall into the hands of that injurious prince, (xxiii. 7.) whom I have never wronged, but done him faithful service.

Ver. 2. *Which imagine mischiefs in their heart: continually are they gathered together for war.*] They are zealously bent to do me all the mischief they are able: which they studiously plot, and do nothing all the day but contrive how to oppress me with armed force; which in several places they have laid to intercept me.

Ver. 3. *They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent: adders' poison is under their lips. Selah.*] And they have so tradaced me by their calumnies and false accusations, that they have already given my reputation a deadly wound: for the tongue of the serpent, or the teeth of the adder or viper, do not more effectually convey their poison into men's bodies, than they have infused these venomous slanders into the people's minds.

Ver. 4. *Keep me, O Lord, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from the violent man, who have purposed to overthrow my goings.*] And therefore I most humbly again beseech thee, O Lord, to keep me from falling into the power of that naughty man, (ver. 1.) who instigates his prince to the most injurious proceedings against me: be thou my preserver, O Lord; for otherwise I shall never escape the trains they have devised and laid, to supplant and utterly undo me.

Ver. 5. *The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords: they have spread a net by the way-side: they have set gins for me. Selah.*] There is no hunter or fowler more industrious and cunning in laying snares and toils, in spreading nets, or setting gins and traps, for the beasts or the birds in the places which they are wont to frequent; than they are to trace me in all my motions, (1 Sam. xxii. 23.) and to invent all manner of wiles and subtle arts to surprise me: which they proudly presume will have their desired success.

Ver. 6. *I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God: hear the voice of my supplications, O Lord.*] To which I have neither cunning nor power of my own to oppose, no friend whose aid I can implore; but only commend myself unto the Lord, saying, I have always owned thee for my protector, and thou hast hitherto owned me, and been my merciful deliverer: do not now, O Lord of all power and might, deny my earnest request; who depend on thee alone for succour.

Ver. 7. *O God the Lord, the strength of my salvation; thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.*] O most mighty Lord, whom no creature whatsoever can withstand; O thou who disposest of all events; I again profess, that I look for safety from thy almighty power alone: by which I was protected (having no other helmet or armour, but only that, 1 Sam. xvii. 39, 40. 50.) in the day when I fought with Goliath.

Ver. 8. *Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the wicked; further not his wicked device, lest they exalt themselves. Selah.*] Suffer not him, O most mighty Lord, who now seeks my destruction, to effect his desire; let him not succeed in any of his mischievous designs and projects against me: lest he and his partakers grow so insolent, as to dare to attempt all manner of violence against other innocents.

Ver. 9. *As for the head of those that compass me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them.*] Let the poisonous and pernicious calumnies of those that now beset me round retort upon themselves; and let them be overwhelmed by those very devices, which with laborious lies they have contrived for my ruin.

Ver. 10. *Let burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not up again.*] Let their slanders (which I can compare to nothing better than burning coals, that are not easily quenched) be the instruments of their own destruction: let them perish in the flames which they themselves have kindled; and be irrecoverably thrown headlong into those dangers and mischiefs which, like dreadful deep pits, they prepared for my destruction.

Ver. 11. *Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth: evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him.*] This I am confident shall be their portion; for though a false informer may for a time be believed, and thrive by his lies and slanders, yet truth will at last prevail; and not suffer him to establish his greatness by such base and wicked practices: and as little shall violence and injustice avail him that relies upon them; but bring upon him one evil after another, which shall pursue him to his ruin; as the hounds do the wild beast, which, after all its windings and turnings, becomes a prey unto them.

Ver. 12. *I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor.*] For I am sure the Lord, who is stronger than all, will assert the cause of the oppressed: and do right to those who are destitute of human help, by punishing all that are injurious to them.

Ver. 13. *Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name; the upright shall dwell in thy presence.*] Let the righteous rely on this as an undoubted truth, that they shall give thanks to thy almighty goodness, for appearing in their vindication; and, when these false and violent men shall be extinct, they that are sincerely honest shall remain in thy favour; and receive the marks of it in thy constant care and providence over them.

PSALM CXLI.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

If the title had not told us that David was the author of this Psalm, the matter of it would have led our minds to think of him, and his many sufferings, during the per-

secution of Saul. Which he prays to God (as Theodoret observes upon the third and fourth verses) he may be able to bear so patiently, that it may not exasperate his spirit to speak irreverently of Saul; much less to do him any mischief: but leave it unto God, to take his enemies in the snare they had laid for him.

Nobody need wonder, that there are so many prayers found upon the same subject; for that persecution endured long, and they were made upon different occasions, or to different purposes: and if they had been all to the same purpose, it would not have been strange to him that considers the pious disposition of David; who loved to spend his time in such devout meditations. And this seems to have been composed about the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, (ver. 2.) when his afflictions also pressed him sorely, that they tempted him to speak something which was, οὐκ εὐπρεπὲς (as Theodoret's phrase is), unbecoming God's anointed (Saul), and the profession he made of duty to him.

Ver. 1. *LORD, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.*] The danger wherein I am, O Lord, is exceeding great, (1 Sam. xxiii. 25. xxiv. 1, 2.) which makes me double my cries, and beseech thee the more importunately, speedily to succour me (when my distresses call for it) with seasonable relief.

Ver. 2. *Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.*] Though I am now in a wilderness, and thereby disabled from offering thee any other sacrifice but my prayers; yet they shall be as acceptable to thee, as if they were accompanied with the sweetest odours: and my fervent devotion in them, with entire dependance on thee alone for help, be as prevalent, as if I could now present thee, at the tabernacle, with an evening oblation.

Ver. 3. *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.*] And in the first place, I humbly desire thee, O Lord, to lay such restraints upon my tongue, and to enable me so vigilantly to observe all the motions of it; that none of the troubles I endure, though never so grievous, may make me burst out into any intemperate speeches; which may give a just offence to them that persecute me.

Ver. 4. *Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity; and let me not eat of their dainties.*] Yea, govern all the motions of my will so steadily, that I may not listen to evil counsels, (1 Sam. xxiv. 4. 6, 7.) much less engage with men, who have no regard to right and justice, in any evil practices; but always refuse to partake in their designs; though invited with the specious promises of the greatest felicity.

Ver. 5. *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.*] I had rather much that a righteous man should give me a severe rebuke, than be enticed by evil-doers to accompany them in their sins: for it will do me a real kindness, and be so far from giving me any vexation, that it will be as acceptable to me as the most excellent ointments are unto the head; and only make me continue my prayers with the greater earnestness, that I may not run into those mischievous courses, from which I am deterred by their pious reproofs and admonitions.

Ver. 6. *When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words: for they are sweet.*] The effect of which their greatest rulers have seen, when, being left by their master on the sides of the rock, (1 Sam. xxiv. 2, 3.) while he went into a hole of it to uncover his feet, they heard that I spake not a reviling word (much less did I stretch out my hand against him), but in the mildest and most dutiful language addressed myself unto him, (1 Sam. xxiv. 8, 9, &c.)

Ver. 7. *Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth.*] And yet this gentleness hath been so far from mollifying their hearts, that they still persecute me, and the small body of men that follow me: (1 Sam. xxvi. 2. xxvii. 1.) whom they have reduced to such extremities, that, like the earth when it is ploughed up, we break in pieces; and are ready to disperse and flee for our lives, with little hope of safety.

Ver. 8. *But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord: in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute.*] But in this sore distress I fix my thoughts on thee, O mighty Lord, the governor of all things; in whom I repose an assured confidence, that thou wilt not abandon me to the malice of those that seek to take away my life from me.

Ver. 9. *Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.*] Preserve me, I beseech thee, from all the subtle plots which they have laid to destroy me: and though they stick at nothing (though never so unjust), and have various arts to blind the world and hide their perfidious designs; suffer me not to be ensnared by them.

Ver. 10. *Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal escape.*] But let all the contrivances of such wicked men prove pernicious to themselves; and bring upon them the evils which they intended me: whilst I, and they that are with me, by thy care of us, escape untouched by any of them.

PSALM CXLII.

Maschil of David. A Prayer when he was in the Cave.

ARGUMENT.

When David hid himself for fear of Saul, in the cave of Adullam, (1 Sam. xxii. 1.) or, as others think, more probable in the cave of En-gedi, (1 Sam. xxiv. 1—3.) this was the meditation he had in that disconsolate place, before Saul came thither to uncover his feet in it. Which was set afterward to the tune of *Maschil;* (see Psal. xxxii.) or called by that name, because it admirably instructs posterity in the most forlorn, nay desperate, condition, to recommend themselves to God, and to depend on him with a resolved faith. Who, by an unexpected means, granted the desire of David, which he makes in the conclusion of this Psalm, (ver. 7.) and brought him out of those straits wherein he was imprisoned. I say *resolved faith,* because in the Hebrew the words of the first and second verses run thus; *I will cry unto the Lord; I will make my supplication; I will pour out my complaint before him,* &c.

Ver. 1. *I CRIED unto the Lord with my voice: with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication.*] Though

I am destitute of human help, I will not despair of safety; but with the more fervent cries implore the Divine succour: and with vehement sighs and groans deprecate the Lord's displeasure.

Ver. 2. *I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.*] I will lay before him at large all the sad thoughts which perplex my heart: and, representing the inextricable straits and difficulties wherein I am, expose myself unto him; as an object of his pity.

Ver. 3. *When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path: in the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.*] Now that I am utterly at a loss, and ready to faint away in a confusion of thoughts, thou knowest very well a way for my escape: though, by the intelligence they hold with mine enemies, (1 Sam. xxiv. 1.) they have blocked up all the passages which I am acquainted withal; and laid ambushes for me in every road.

Ver. 4. *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.*] Look about thee, O my soul, and see if thou canst spy any hope of relief from thy best and most powerful friends: there are none of them that dare own thee; nor do I know whither to fly for safety, if any of them would be so kind as to invent a means, and open a way, for my deliverance from the present danger.

Ver. 5. *I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living.*] All that I can do, is to recommend myself to thee, O Lord, by fervent prayers, saying, I trust myself with thy almighty goodness, as in a sure sanctuary: I have nothing else in the world to depend upon, but thee alone; by whom I will hope to be protected and provided for as long as I live.

Ver. 6. *Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.*] O let my importunate cry prevail for some relief, which will come most seasonably in this exceeding great necessity: rescue me now, that I may not fall into the hands of my persecutors; who are every way (except in these cries unto, and confidence, in thee) much too strong for me.

Ver. 7. *Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.*] Bring me, with life and liberty, out of this dismal cave, wherein I am pent up; that I may make my thankful acknowledgments to thy almighty goodness: which shall attract the admiration of all good men, and provoke them unanimously to join together with me in praising thee; when they see that thou art the most righteous judge, and bountiful benefactor, of those that commit themselves unto thee.

PSALM CXLIII.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

To the title of *A Psalm of David,* Theodoret says he found, in some Greek copies, these words added (to explain the time of its composition), *when Absalom's son persecuted him.* Which he confesses was not then in the Hebrew (no more than it is now), nor in other interpreters of the Psalms; but agrees well enough, he thinks, with the truth of the story. So he that was the author of the Vulgar Latin thought also: though there are some passages in the Psalm, which sound as if it had been made during the persecution of Saul; at some time, when he was in the like distress with that described in the foregoing. For ver. 3, 4. he uses some of the same expressions which we find there; and represents himself as in danger to be buried in some such cave as that mentioned in the last verse of Psal. cxlii. where he begs, as he doth here, for a speedy deliverance. Yet, for all this, there are other passages which will incline us to adhere to the forenamed addition, and apply the Psalm to his flight from Absalom. For then it was he had most reason to fear, lest God should deal with him according to his sins: which he deprecates (ver. 2.) with such a deep sense of his unworthiness, that it hath made this to be numbered among the penitential Psalms, and is the last of them. The memory also of God's former deliverances of him, a great while before, (ver. 5.) may well refer to what he had done for him, not only against Saul, but before he knew him; which, as he doth not forget, so he hoped the Lord would now remember, and grant him the like again, when he was in the like distresses.

Ver. 1. *HEAR my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.*] I renew my requests and my earnest supplications unto thee, O Lord, for some relief, in these new straits and difficulties into which I am fallen: hoping, though I am very unworthy, yet, in thy abundant mercy, thou wilt faithfully fulfil the promises thou hast made to me.

Ver. 2. *And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.*] My sins, indeed, (2 Sam. xii. 9—11.) have justly brought these troubles upon me; but I humbly beseech thee to own me still for thy servant, and not to call me unto a severe account for what I have done amiss; but to deal favourably with me: for if thou shouldest proceed according to the rigour of the law, the best man living (much less so great a sinner as I) will not be acquitted at thy tribunal.

Ver. 3. *For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground: he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.*] And I am not so bad, but my enemy that persecutes me is far worse: who without any provocation seeks my life, and hath already utterly despoiled me of all the comforts of it, (2 Sam. xv. 13.) and forced me to seek my safety in holes and obscure places, in the wilderness, (xvii. 16.) where I seem to be buried alive, without any hope of a resurrection.

Ver. 4. *Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.*] Which, as it calls to mind the distress wherein I was, when, in my flight from Saul, I hid myself in caves, (see cxlii. 3.) so it hath the same effect upon me; for I am ready to swoon away in this great perplexity; which hath struck me with such astonishment, that I have no strength remaining in me.

Ver. 5. *I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.*] Till I call to mind, withal, not only what thou didst for me in that former persecution, but long before, in my younger days, when I was delivered by thee from the greatest dangers: (1 Sam. xvii. 34, &c.) on these wonderful works I meditate; and consider with myself, that not by my own strength, but by thy stupendous power, I was then preserved.

Ver. 6. *I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.*] And then I feel my fainting spirits return again; and though I despair of human help, I make my prayer unto thee, with a cheerful confidence for thy relief; which I long for, and expect with as eager desire as the parched ground gasps for a refreshing shower.

Ver. 7. *Hear me speedily, O Lord; my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.*] Do not delay it, O Lord, I most earnestly beseech thee; for I am not able to hold out much longer in this great extremity: deny not my humble request, lest I be utterly lost (as I am in danger), without all hope of recovery, (2 Sam. xvii. 16.)

Ver. 8. *Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.*] Though this night be very sad, yet let me hear (according to the confidence I repose in thy mercy) better news, and see my affairs in a more comfortable posture, in the morning, (2 Sam. xvii. 22, 23.) Shew me which way I shall direct my course, and provide for my safety, (ver. 24. 27.) for I depend entirely upon thee.

Ver. 9. *Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.*] Let me not fall into the hand of my enemies, from whom I am now flying; but know not whither to go, but only to thee, for shelter and protection.

Ver. 10. *Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.*] Whose guidance I beseech, as well as defence, that I may do nothing (no, not for my preservation) but what is perfectly agreeable to thy laws; for thy favour is my security, which I know is not otherways to be obtained: and therefore I desire the conduct of thy good Spirit (which is ready to assist those that seek it), as well to lead me in the plain path of justice and piety, as to suggest to me the ways and means of escaping the snares of my enemies; and of coming into an honest country, where I may be free from the fear of being betrayed to them.

Ver. 11. *Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.*] I have nothing to move thee to it, but only the honour it will be unto thy majesty; in respect to which I hope, O Lord, thou wilt preserve me from perishing, and restore me again to thy kingdom: for though my straits are so great that my life is in extreme danger, yet nothing can hinder the performance of thy just and faithful promise to me.

Ver. 12. *And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I am thy servant.*] Thy mercy also surpasses all the malice of my enemies; whom I trust thou wilt cut off and destroy, rather than let me continue in these hazards: for I am thy minister, and, though never so unworthy, am appointed by thee to govern thy people; in which office I will do thee all faithful service.

PSALM CXLIV.

A Psalm of David.

ARGUMENT.

The inscription will not let us doubt that David was the author of this Psalm; but that it was a triumph after his victory over Goliath (as the Vulgar Latin hath it), is asserted without ground. For though some Greek copies have such an addition to the inscription; yet Theodoret says, that as he could not find it in the Hebrew, so it was not to be met withal in any other interpreters, no, not in the LXX. in the Hexaplus. And it plainly appears by the second verse, that it was composed after he came to the kingdom; and not then, till he had got some victories over those that opposed him. Nay, there are so many expressions here like to those we meet withal in Psalm xviii. that it hath inclined some to think it was made at the same time, and for the same purpose, with that; of which it looks like a compendium, and might be intended for a short form of thanksgiving for his deliverance from all his enemies. But if the expressions be carefully examined, their opinion will appear to be truer, who think it was composed, not after God had given him rest from all his enemies, but after those two victories over the Philistines, mentioned 2 Sam. v. if not before them: for as he still mentions more opposers who were unsubdued, (ver. 7. 11.) so he doth not say, as in Psalm xviii. that God had cast forth lightnings, and shot his arrows against them, &c. but desires him here (ver. 5, 6.) that he would appear in that manner for him: acknowledging, that not only his kingdom, but his courage, his victories, and successes, were all to be ascribed unto God.

Ver. 1. *BLESSED be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight.*] Praised be the Lord, by me, and by all men else; by whom I have been kept in safety, as in an impregnable fortress: and who hath given me both strength and skill to handle my arms, whensoever I engaged, either in a single combat or in battles.

Ver. 2. *My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me.*] I ever found him very merciful unto me, when I was in any danger; for he still preserved me as in a strong hold; nay, set me out of the reach of the most potent enemies; either making a way for my escape when they surrounded me, or protecting me in their most furious assaults upon me: and, as I reposed a constant trust in him, so he hath never failed my expectation; but, after long contests, made all Israel submit themselves unto my empire, (2 Sam. v. 1, &c.)

Ver. 3. *Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!*] I am astonished, O Lord, at this thy wonderful goodness; and know not what to say, but only admire that thou shouldest take such care of so poor a thing as man is, at the best: especially of me, a miserable wretch; whom thou hast honoured with most glorious successes.

Ver. 4. *Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away.*] Man, alas! is but a breath which presently vanishes: what a marvel is it then, that I should have strength to achieve such things! His life is exceeding short and uncertain; and yet, such is thy stupendous goodness, I am not only alive, notwithstanding all the hazards through which I have run; but, in a little time, have performed such memorable acts, that the fame of them will last for ever.

Ver. 5. *Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down: touch*

the mountains, and they shall smoke.] Proceed, O Lord, to perfect my conquest; and now that my enemies are combined against me, (2 Sam. viii.) let thy majesty appear, as it hath done formerly, (see Psal. xviii. 9.) for my assistance and defence: and as soon as the proudest opposers feel that thou art present, they will vanish away like smoke.

Ver. 6. *Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.*] Let them be dispersed by flashes of lightning in their faces: and so terrified with thunder and hail, that they may not be able to recollect their forces.

Ver. 7. *Send thine hand from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children.*] Send powerful aid unto me from heaven, (Psal. xviii. 16.) for I rely upon nothing on earth: relieve me in all my straits; and deliver me out of these great and manifold dangers, wherewith I am threatened by a foreign power of idolatrous people, which now invade me:

Ver. 8. *Whose mouth speaketh vanity; and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.*] Who, as they have been wont to brag of more than they do, so promise more than they will ever perform: for whatsoever treaties of peace and leagues of friendship I make with them, they break them all; and falsify so shamefully both their words and their oaths, that there is no trust to be given to them, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 9. *I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery, and an instrument of ten strings, will I sing praises unto thee.*] I will never prove ungrateful to thee for so great a benefit: but here solemnly vow to compose, with my best skill, new hymns of thanks unto thee, O God; and with the usual instruments of music sing thy praises, saying,

Ver. 10. *It is he that giveth salvation to kings; who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.*] It is not merely by the conduct and valour of our captains and soldiers that we have overcome; but the most powerful kings owe their safety, and their victories, unto the Lord: to whom I am more particularly bound; first, for the high honour he hath done for me, in making me his minister; and now, for this deliverance from these mighty armies, which threaten my destruction, (2 Sam. viii.)

Ver. 11. *Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.*] Grant my renewed requests, therefore, I beseech thee, (ver. 7, 8.) and send me seasonable relief and deliverance from this foreign invasion of an idolatrous people: who have no faith nor honesty, but shamefully falsify both their words and their oaths; and when they shake hands with others, as if they were their friends, intend thereby to deceive them.

Ver. 12. *That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.*] Let not our country be overrun by such barbarians; but be so preserved by thee in peace and tranquillity, that our hopeful sons may grow up like young flourishing trees, till they attain their full strength and stature, and our daughters be tall and beautiful, like those polished pillars, which are the ornaments of a royal palace.

Ver. 13. *That our garners may be full, affording all manner of store; that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets.*] Our granaries also and storehouses, being as full as they can hold, may afford us all sorts of provision from year to year: and our flocks of sheep bring forth thousands; which may multiply into ten thousands, in their walks.

Ver. 14. *That our oxen may be strong to labour; that there be no breaking in, nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets.*] Our cows also, being great with young, may neither be driven away by the irruption of our enemies, nor cast their calves at home: but we may be free from this and all other causes of crying, or complaining, in our streets.

Ver. 15. *Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.*] Happy is that nation, which is settled in such a prosperous condition! That is, happy is that nation, which truly worships the great Lord of the world; who hath promised (Deut. xxviii.) to bless his faithful servants with these and all other fruits of his love.

PSALM CXLV.

David's Psalm of Praise.

ARGUMENT.

After David had obtained those favours of God for himself and for the nation, which he begs in the foregoing Psalm, he composed (according to his promise there, ver. 9.) this admirable Hymn: which is contrived with such art, that it is manifest from thence, he made it when he was much at leisure; and God had given him rest from all his enemies: (2 Sam. vii. 1.) for every verse begins with a new letter of the alphabet in order: which are all here, except the letter *nun*, which is wanting: (ver. 13.) I suppose it was lost when this Psalm came to the hands of the collector of this book; and he would not adventure to supply it with one of his own inventing. The Greek, indeed (that is, the present Greek copies; for Theodotion, and Aquila, and the ancient LXX. had it not), and Latin, and Arabic (which in effect are but one and the same), have another verse, which we may well think, if it ever were in the Hebrew, began with that letter *nun*: but it differs so little from the seventeenth verse (when there is no repetition in any other part of the Psalm), that it doth not, in my opinion, look like the true original verse. And it may be doubted, whether there ever was any such verse in that place (where we suppose one wanting), for the Psalmist might be carried (see Psal. xxv.) by the strength of the inspiration, which was upon him, out of the method he had at first proposed to himself.

Certain it is, this Psalm was always esteemed so excellent, that the title of the whole book of Psalms is taken from this; which is wholly spent in praising God with such admirable devotion, that the ancient Hebrews were wont to say (as Valentine Schindler hath long ago observed), *He could not fail to be a child of the world to come, who would say this Psalm three times every day.* And for that reason, perhaps, it was composed alphabetically; that so useful a Psalm might be the more easily learnt, and remembered by every body.

Ver. 1. *I WILL extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.*] I will proclaim to all the world, O my God, the supreme governor of heaven and

earth, how excellent thy majesty is; infinitely surpassing the highest of our thoughts: and will never cease to express the delightful sense I have of all thy glorious attributes; whereby thou art made known unto us.

Ver. 2. *Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.*] This shall be my daily employment; and I will sing joyful hymns in praise of thy glorious perfections, without any end.

Ver. 3. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.*] For the Lord is immensely great, in power and dominion, and all other ways, and therefore to be honoured with our highest, and with our endless praises: but when we have said all we can, our best praise of him will be, to confess that his transcendent excellences cannot be comprehended.

Ver. 4. *One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.*] For there are none of thy works, which we see, that we are able to understand; but, though this age transmit its observations to the next, and that recommend the study of them to posterity, yet still we are ignorant, and cannot praise them enough; no, nor sufficiently declare the prodigious acts of thy miraculous providence, for the preservation of thy people, which shall be perpetually commemorated.

Ver. 5. *I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.*] It shall be my business, in this present age, to speak of the dazzling splendour and beauty of thy majesty; which I want words to express, but appears in thy stupendous works.

Ver. 6. *And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts; and I will declare thy greatness.*] Which they that come after shall rehearse; and from the narratives that I shall make of thy magnificent greatness, declare to their posterity, what dreadful things were done, by thy irresistible power, for the subversion of our enemies.

Ver. 7. *They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.*] And with the same diligence shall they continue the constant memory of thy numerous benefits to us: which they shall no more cease to celebrate with their praises, than a spring doth to pour out water; but publish, in their perpetual hymns, how just and faithful thou art to thy word.

Ver. 8. *The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.*] For the Lord (this shall be the subject of their and of my song) is exceeding propense to do us good; and very indulgent when we do amiss: which makes him that he doth not presently punish, but rather chooses to bestow new and greater benefits upon us, if we repent of our faults.

Ver. 9. *The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works.*] Nor is his goodness confined unto us; but extends itself in various acts of bounty to all mankind: who need not doubt of his kindness, when they see he takes so tender a care of all his creatures.

Ver. 10. *All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee.*] Who all in their several kinds declare, O Lord, throughout all generations, how great, how wise, how powerful, and provident, thou art; which such as we, who are particularly bound unto thee for special favours bestowed upon us, ought most sensibly to acknowledge with thankful praises.

Ver. 11. *They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power.*] It is their duty to discourse of the incomparable wisdom, and goodness, and care, which thou exercisest in the government of the whole world; especially of us: and to recount the memorable acts of thy invincible power among us.

Ver. 12. *To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.*] That all mankind, who regard not such things so much as they ought, may be made sensible how mighty the Lord is: and adore the amazing splendour of his illustrious works; and the admirable order he observes in his government of all things.

Ver. 13. *Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.*] Which as they are all entirely subject to him, so his empire over them is immoveable; and neither ends nor decays: but when earthly kingdoms fail, and are transferred from one to another, his dominion is still the same throughout all successions.

Ver. 14. *The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.*] In which he doth not neglect any of his subjects that depend upon him (as mortal princes too frequently do), but supports and comforts the meanest of them that are oppressed with grievous afflictions; and gives them a seasonable deliverance, when they are in danger to sink and perish under the heavy weight of their burdens.

Ver. 15. *The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.*] He makes a constant provision also for them; which every creature, when their necessities call for supply, daily receive from thee, O Lord, in the proper season for it.

Ver. 16. *Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.*] And thou art not sparing of thy blessings; but dispensest them with such a bountiful hand, that there are none of them live without satisfactions, but have all their appetites filled, by thy liberality to the smallest of them.

Ver. 17. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.*] And therefore let us not doubt, but thankfully acknowledge, that the Lord is not only just in all the dispensations of his providence to us (though perhaps we do not apprehend it), but exceeding merciful and kind in every thing that befals us.

Ver. 18. *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.*] We need do no more but piously commend ourselves to him, and he will take care of us: for he is ready, on all occasions, to relieve every one that addresses himself unto him, with a sincere heart, truly disposed to be faithful to him.

Ver. 19. *He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry, and will save them.*] He that satisfies the appetite of all creatures, (ver. 16.) will not fail, we may be confident, to gratify in their desires, such religious persons as fear to offend him: but though he let them fall into troubles and straits, in due time will be moved, by their importunate prayers, to send them a seasonable deliverance.

Ver. 20. *The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.*] For since they love him so well, that they had rather suffer any thing than disobey him; the Lord undoubtedly will preserve them: and de-

stroy all those impious men, who have no regard to his laws; nor make any scruple to abuse and oppress such virtuous persons.

Ver. 21. *My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.*] For which, and all the rest of his benefits, I will never cease to sing hymns of praise unto the Lord: and let all mankind (remembering how weak and frail they are) join together with me in this employment (as the greatest support, and comfort, and security, they have), to bless his incomparable goodness, and power, and careful providence, for ever and ever.

PSALM CXLVI.

Hallelujah.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, and the other four which follow, both begin and conclude with the word *Hallelujah*, i. e. Praise ye the Lord. And therefore might, if the Jews had pleased, have been called *The great Hallelujah;* being all of them exhortations and incitements to the people; to stir up themselves to that heavenly employment: which this Psalm recommends to them, from the consideration of several of the Divine excellences: which make him the proper object of our confidence in all conditions. The Vulgar Latin, and the present Greek, entitle it to Haggai and Zechariah: but there is no such thing in the Hebrew, nor in other ancient interpreters, nor in the LXX. in the Hexaplus, as Theodoret tells us. And we might rather think it not unlikely to have been composed by David; when Saul, who at first had a great kindness for him, afterward turned his most bitter enemy: were it not for one word, *viz.* the mention of Zion; which was not then in David's possession. This, it is possible, inclined those that made the foregoing title to think it was not composed till aftertimes: and they could find none so likely, as that after the captivity: when they soon found it was in vain to rely upon the favour of princes; some of which hindered the building of the temple, as much as Cyrus, at the first, had furthered it. I shall not trouble the reader with any other conjectures: but only note, that the eighth verse was most exactly and literally fulfilled in our Lord Christ; when he came to give salvation to us.

Ver. 1. *PRAISE ye the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul.*] Stir up thyself, O my soul, to give the Lord, who gave being to all things, those affectionate praises which are due unto him.

Ver. 2. *While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God, while I have any being.*] The best resolution thou canst make is this; I will praise the Lord all my life long; and never cease to give thanks unto my God, who never ceases to bestow his benefits on me.

Ver. 3. *Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.*] And let all mankind, if they would be happy, preserve his favour, by being grateful to him; and not (with the neglect of his service) court the favour of princes, and settle upon them their dependance: for the greatest king on earth, though never so just, never so bountiful, as well as rich and powerful, is still but a man; who cannot be present every where when we are in danger, nor be able always to help us in our greatest needs.

Ver. 4. *His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.*] For there is a time when he cannot help himself, nor, by the whole power of his empire, keep his soul from leaving his body: nay, a small accident may carry him away suddenly; and then a clod of earth can do as much as he, and whatsoever designs and projects he had laid (for any man's preferment, suppose), they all die together with him.

Ver. 5. *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.*] He, and he alone, is the truly happy man, who expects help from the mighty God, by whom Jacob was fed all his life long, (Gen. xlviii. 15.) who trusts to him that is Lord of the world; and hath made him his friend so much, that he can call him his God.

Ver. 6. *Which made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that therein is; which keepeth truth for ever.*] For, as he never dies, so there can be no defect in his power, nor want of his presence in every place; the heavens, the earth, and the sea, and all that is in them, being his own works: and, as nothing can hinder him from doing what he pleases, so, he will never alter his mind, nor go back with his word; but faithfully keep his promises for ever, with those that rely upon them.

Ver. 7. *Which executeth judgment for the oppressed; which giveth food to the hungry. The Lord looseth the prisoners.*] There are innumerable instances of the careful providence of this great King; who doth not slight or forget the cries of his grieved subjects, but in due time asserts the right of those who are oppressed, and can find no relief in other courts of judgment: he supplies also the needs of poor hungry wretches, who are ready to famish: and is so gracious a Lord, that he sets them at liberty, who, by unjust or pitiless men, have been held in miserable captivity.

Ver. 8. *The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down: the Lord loveth the righteous.*] The Lord sends help, when there are no hopes of human cure; for he restores sight to the blind (as we shall see most remarkably when the Lord Christ appears), and lifts up those who are bowed together, by tedious weaknesses, (Luke xiii. 11.) or crushed under other insupportable burdens: and, above all, the Lord delights to do good to them who have done good to others.

Ver. 9. *The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.*] The friendless strangers are preserved by the Lord from those injuries which men are apt to do them, when they commit themselves to his protection: and so do the disconsolate widows and fatherless children find support and relief from him, against the injustice and violence of their wicked oppressors, whose designs and practices he utterly confoundeth.

Ver. 10. *The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord.*] Be of good comfort then, O ye inhabitants of Zion, who sincerely worship this great Lord, that doth all these wondrous things: for his power and authority never fail, but from age to age will ever succour those pious souls who are destitute of human help; therefore praise perpetually this everlasting King.

PSALM CXLVII.

Hallelujah. (See cxlvi.)

ARGUMENT.

St. Chrysostom and Theodoret think this Psalm hath respect to the return of the Jewish nation from the captivity of Babylon, and the instauration of Jerusalem, which followed upon it. And the second and thirteenth verses may well incline us to be of the opinion, that it was made by some holy man at that time (Haggai or Zechariah some ancient interpreters imagine; or rather Nehemiah, who built the walls and set up the gates); especially if we observe, that there are some phrases in it which savour of the Chaldean language. And though this can be no more than a conjecture, yet it is very certain and evident, that, in that deliverance, God gave such illustrious proofs of his power, wisdom, mercy, and justice, as the Psalmist here exhorts the people to celebrate with their thankful praises. I shall follow it therefore in my Paraphrase; it being reasonable to suppose that devout persons would be as forward to acknowledge the wonderful providence of God in their restoration, as they were to bewail (which they do, Psal. cxxxvii.) the ruin of their country; and that posterity would be no less careful to preserve what was composed in memory of the one, than they had been to continue the memory of the other: and there is no Hymn we can find so suitable to that occasion as this.

Ver. 1. *PRAISE ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.*] Let all the nations praise the Lord; who will send us new benefits when we are truly thankful to him, our great benefactor, for the old: for it is a thing highly acceptable to him, as well as delightful to those who are employed therein, and best becomes us of all other things; there being nothing so decent as to see men grateful to him that hath obliged them.

Ver. 2. *The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.*] To which we stand bound above all other men: for the Lord hath not only delivered us out of a sad captivity; but, in spite of all the opposition our enemies have made to it, (Ezra iv. 12.) hath raised Jerusalem out of its ruins; whereby he invites the rest of our brethren, who remained behind, to return to their own country, from whence they are expelled.

Ver. 3. *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.*] He comforts us after our long sorrows, which had, in a manner, broken our heart with grief and sadness; and hath, in some measure, repaired our breaches, which, like a festering wound, endangered the life of our nation.

Ver. 4. *He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.*] Whom he knows how to gather, out of all their dispersions, and to find every one of them wheresoever they are, though as numerous as the stars of heaven: (Gen. xv. 5.) which he as directly and exactly understands (how confusedly soever they seem to us to be scattered in the sky), as we do those things which we call by their proper names.

Ver. 5. *Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.*] Let us not despair of it, for nothing is impossible with our Lord and governor: who is not like earthly kings, that rule over a few petty provinces, but the great Sovereign of the whole world; whose power and wisdom are so unlimited, that he is able to do whatever he pleases, and knows how to compass whatever he designs.

Ver. 6. *The Lord lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.*] And doth not, because he is so great, despise the afflicted; but, if they meekly commit themselves to his care, will raise them up to a better condition; and throw down the mightiest princes that proudly oppress them as low as the very ground.

Ver. 7. *Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God.*] Celebrate therefore with your thankful songs (you cannot make a less return unto him) this infinite power, and wisdom, and goodness: begin now, with the usual instruments of music, to sing hymns of praise unto our God, for all his benefits.

Ver. 8. *Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.*] Particularly for the great plenty he hath given us by his almighty goodness: (Haggai ii. 1.) which shews itself, first in raising vapours from the earth; and then turning them into clouds, wherewith he covers the face of heaven; and then bringing forth rain out of those clouds: which he sends back to the earth again; and makes not only the green pastures but the parched mountains and desert places become fruitful.

Ver. 9. *He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.*] By which wonderful providence he provides food even for the wild goats, and such-like beasts, that live upon the top of craggy rocks: for he neglects not the vilest creatures, but satisfies the hunger of the young ravens; though it be so ravenous, that they are continually crying for new supplies.

Ver. 10. *He delighteth not in the strength of the horse; he taketh not pleasure in the legs of man.*] Let us not doubt, then, but he that takes care of crows, will much more take care of us; and not be afraid, though we are of little force, (Neh. iv. 3, 4. vii. 4.) and have no armies of horse and foot to defend us: for the Lord (who fights for us, Nehem. iv. 20.) hath no need of these; and will not take part with our enemies, because they are superior to us in the strength of their horses, and the nimbleness of their soldiers.

Ver. 11. *The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.*] But delights to give those his assistance and protection, who, worshipping him devoutly, fear to offend him; and having no help in themselves, nor any earthly refuge to fly unto, depend notwithstanding with a steadfast faith on his infinite mercy.

Ver. 12. *Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.*] Praise the Lord, O ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; sing joyful hymns unto your God, O ye people of Zion, (Nehem. xii. 27. 31. 40. 43.) who have seen this truth abundantly demonstrated in your days.

Ver. 13. *For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.*] For he hath made this city, which was lately without walls and gates, so strong a place, that no enemy dare assault it, (Nehem. vi. 14—16.) and hath increased the number of thy citizens, which were but few, (vii. 4. xi. 1, 2.) by the manifold blessings he hath poured on them.

Ver. 14. *He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.*] Which are not confined within

the walls of that city; but he hath settled all the country in peace: no enemy appearing to infest thy borders, and to disturb the husbandmen in their labours; which have produced so rich a crop, that plentiful provision is made for all our satisfaction.

Ver. 15. *He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly.*] This we ought to ascribe to his merciful providence, who shews by the fruitful seasons he sends, after all things seem to be killed by a hard winter, that he doth not intend by our affliction to destroy us; and that he can easily bring all our brethren hither who remain still in captivity: for when he would have any alteration made in the earth, it is done as speedily as we can speak.

Ver. 16. *He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes.*] He sends, for instance, a sudden cold; which sometimes turns the moist vapours, in the air, into flakes of snow, to cover the earth as with a fleece of wool, and defend the corn from the biting winds; and sometimes into hoary frost, which he gently scatters and strews, like ashes, upon the earth.

Ver. 17. *He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?*] And sometimes congeals them into ice; which he breaks into bits, and throws down in violent hail; accompanied with such extremity of cold, that neither man nor beast, nor the fishes in the ponds and rivers, are able long to endure it.

Ver. 18. *He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.*] But then, to prevent the hurt that might ensue by its continuance, he issues forth another command, which as suddenly (ver. 15.) makes a thaw; and, by the warm breath of softer winds, loosens the waters which were bound up, and causes them to flow again.

Ver. 19. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.*] In such things as these the whole world see how powerful and how good he is: but we have more peculiar reasons to depend upon him, for a happy return of our nation; whom he doth not teach merely by the snow, the hoar-frost, and the ice; but by another sort of word than that which sends them upon the earth: (ver. 15.) even by his ten commandments delivered from heaven, (Exod. xx. 1.) in a most glorious and astonishing manner, (ver. 18.) and by laws of all sorts, which he hath given us for the government of our life.

Ver. 20. *He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.*] This is a privilege which no other nation in the world enjoys, (Deut. iv. 32, 33.) For though they all receive the showers and snow out of the clouds, yet laws from thence they have no acquaintance withal. Therefore let not us dishonour him so much as to distrust his providence; but continually praise the Lord, and acknowledge his bounty to us.

PSALM CXLVIII.

Hallelujah. (See cxlvi.)

ARGUMENT.

It doth not appear who was the author of this Hymn, nor upon what occasion it was composed. But the last verse sufficiently shews the nation was then in a very flourishing condition; and therefore probably it was made by David, when God had given him rest from all his enemies: which filled his heart with such love to God, that it transported him into this rapture. Wherein, finding how short his own praises were, he wishes all creatures in heaven and earth would conspire in a sweet symphony, as Theodoret speaks, of singing hymns unto him. And first he calls upon the world above, and all that is therein, from the first verse to the seventh: where he descends to the world here below; and calls upon all things on the earth to praise the Lord; concluding (ver. 13.) that as there is one maker of both, so all that they can say of him, when they have joined all their powers together in one choir, falls infinitely short of his most excellent majesty: who hath set forth his most transcendent wisdom, power, and munificence, in such variety of stupendous work, that there is not the smallest of them, but ministers such matter of praise, nay admiration, to those that attentively consider them; that they cannot but wish with the Psalmist here, that every one of them were able to tell us how much skill and kindness he hath shewn in their contrivance; or that we were able to find it out, and comprehend it. Thus he is to be understood when he calls upon all creatures to praise the Lord; or it is as if he had said, *the Lord is to be praised by*, or *in*, all these things, as long as the world lasts.

This I take to be the true account of this Psalm, which I refer to the times of David, because the two following seem to have been then made; and there is no other we can so well fix upon; unless we will conceive that it was a meditation, when they were perfectly settled in a peaceable enjoyment of their religion, after the captivity; of which there is not the least intimation of this Psalm.

Ver. 1. *PRAISE ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights.*] Let all creatures praise the Lord. First let the celestial choir begin, and sing their thankful hymns to him, who hath raised them so high above us in power and might, as well as in dignity and place.

Ver. 2. *Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.*] Praise him all ye angels, who have the honour to be the prime ministers of his excellent majesty: O let their several hosts and companies, in whatsoever rank or order they stand, praise him whose sovereign authority commands them all.

Ver. 3. *Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.*] Praise him ye sun and moon, who are his greatest visible ministers, and unwearied in his service: praise him all the rest of the shining stars; and declare to all future generations, as ye have done for so many ages past, how glorious he is.

Ver. 4. *Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.*] Let all the heavenly regions praise him: particularly the clouds, which hang in the air, and distil in fruitful showers to enrich the earth.

Ver. 5. *Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created.*] Let all these set forth the adorable wisdom, and power, and goodness, of the Lord: for by his omnipotent word, these, whom the mistaken world calls gods, were created; not to be worshipped, but perpetually to proclaim his praise.

Ver. 6. *He hath also established them for ever and ever:*

he hath made a decree which shall not pass.] Who hath made them not only illustrious, but everlasting monuments of his splendour and glory: having fixed and settled them in an admirable order, which they constantly observe; and prescribed them laws which they never transgress.

Ver. 7. *Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps.*] O let all creatures here below accompany those celestial hosts, in their praises of the Lord: whose power the vast whales in their several kinds, and all that move in the profound depth of the sea, abundantly declare.

Ver. 8. *Fire and hail; snow and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word.*] Let the lightnings, thunder, and hail; the snow, hoary frost, and ice; the winds, storms, and tempests; all make a part of this song: for they constantly execute his sovereign will, and serve his wise designs.

Ver. 9. *Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars.*] The lofty mountains also and the lesser hills; the fruit-bearing trees, with the stately cedars; the pines, the firs, and all the rest (which he hath created for several ends and uses), let them all be called upon to tell how great and how bountiful he is.

Ver. 10. *Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl.*] The wild beasts also of the forest, and all the cattle that feed in the fields; whatsoever creeps upon the earth, or swims in the sea, or flies in the air; let it join in this hymn of praise to him: who hath shewn his manifold wisdom and diffusive goodness in them all.

Ver. 11. *Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth.*] But especially let mankind praise him; who (after he had made these things) brought them into the world, last of all, to contemplate his wonderful works: and first let kings (who here on earth resemble the angels or the sun in heaven), and then let their ministers of state, and lieutenants in their several provinces; and next, all the judges of the earth (who are like the moon and the stars) give a good example unto all the subjects; and stir them up, to meditate his praise.

Ver. 12. *Both young men and maidens; old men and children.*] Let no sex, no age, think themselves exempted from this heavenly employment; but let the young men praise him for their strength, and the virgins for their beauty; they that are going out of the world, for all that they have seen and heard of him: and they that are newly come into it, for all the goodly spectacles that are before them.

Ver. 13. *Let them praise the name of the Lord: for his name alone is excellent; and his glory is above the earth and heaven.*] Let them praise the incomparable wisdom, goodness, and power of the Lord: for how great soever any other beings are, there is no other god but he; whose most excellent majesty infinitely surpasses all that the earth or the heavens can tell us of him.

Ver. 14. *He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the Lord.*] And yet so great is his condescension unto us (who are bound therefore more particularly to praise him), he takes a peculiar care of us; and hath set over us a powerful prince for the defence and safety of his people, (Psal. lxxxix. 19.) Whose fame he hath thereby raised to the highest pitch of honour; having obliged the children of Israel by many peculiar benefits, especially this; that they are a people more nearly related to him, than any other whatsoever: for he dwells among them in his holy place, where they approach to him. O praise him there for this singular favour.

PSALM CXLIX.

Hallelujah. (See cxlvi.)

ARGUMENT.

Theodoret thinks this Psalm was made for them that, after their return from captivity, had many opposers; but, by the Divine assistance, overcame them: and that it is a prediction of those great things which were done by the Maccabees. Certain it is, that some signal victory was the occasion of it; and thence St. Chrysostom hath here given us a full account, I think, of the meaning of *a new song:* which, according to the use of the word *new* in other places, (when they would express a thing very wonderful, such as hath not been seen nor heard of before, Numb. xvi. 30. Jer. xxxxi. 22.) he takes to denote *an illustrious and famous hymn, made for victories, for great achievements and trophies.* Which were never more remarkable in this nation than in the days of David; and therefore this Psalm may very well relate to his reign; who subdued several kingdoms, which had stood out, and would not submit to Israel till his time, though God had promised to give their countries to them, (Gen. xv. 18. Exod. xxiii. 31. 2 Sam. viii. 1, 2, &c. x. 19.) The interpretation which I have given of the sixth verse, need not seem strange to any one; who considers that it hath been and is the custom of all nations, to stir up themselves to fight by the sound of some musical instrument or other. "The ancient inhabitants of Etruria (saith Clemens Alexandrinus, in the second book of his Pædagogus, cap. 4.) used the trumpet for this purpose; the Arcadians the whistle; the Sicilians an instrument called *pectids;* the Cretans the harp; the Lacedemonians the pipe; the Thracians the cornet; the Egyptians the drum; the Arabians the cymbal:" but it was proper to the Israelites to go forth against their enemies, singing psalms of praise to God, (as we read, 2 Chron. xx. 21, 22.) who had given great victories to their ancestors, and had promised never to forsake their posterity; while they served him only, and piously confided in him.

Ver. 1. *PRAISE ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.*] Sing a new hymn unto the Lord, for the fresh and singular benefits he hath bestowed upon us: let him be praised not only in private, but in the public assemblies of those who have received special marks of his favour to them.

Ver. 2. *Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.*] Let all the Israelites rejoice in him that made them his peculiar people; and hath now raised them to great splendour among the nations of the world: let the inhabitants of Zion, more particularly, be exceeding glad, that the Lord, who is our king, hath there settled his royal throne, (2 Sam. v. 9. vi. 12.)

Ver. 3. *Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.*] Let them leap for joy, and unanimously praise his most excellent majesty, in their dances to the flute: (2 Sam. vi. 16.) let them testify their gratitude to him, by singing psalms, with the timbrel and the harp.

Ver. 4. *For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.*] For the Lord taketh pleasure in doing good unto his people: and will not only deliver them after they have been oppressed many years; but, if they meekly depend upon him, make them as great and illustrious, as they have been contemptible and mean, (1 Chron. xiv. 2.)

Ver. 5. *Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.*] Which shall fill the hearts of good men (who are dear to him) with the highest triumph, in the honour that he hath done them: and make them shout for joy in the security and peace he shall bestow upon them.

Ver. 6. *Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand.*] Which they shall not doubt to maintain against all opposers; for in assured hope of victory they shall go to war, with psalms and hymns in their mouths, concerning the great acts of the Lord: which they shall courageously sing with a loud voice, when they shall fall upon their enemies; and prefer to the two-edged sword which they carry in their hand.

Ver. 7. *To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people.*] Wherewith they shall take a just revenge upon the heathen, for all the injuries they have done us: and so chastise the insolence of the people, that they shall fear again to molest us, (1 Chron. xiv. 17.)

Ver. 8. *To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron.*] For their victories shall be so complete, that they shall not only rout their enemies and put them to flight, but lead away their kings captive in chains; and take their great captains and commanders prisoners, and keep them fast in fetters of iron.

Ver. 9. *To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the Lord.*] In order to the executing upon them the judgment which God hath long ago decreed, and is recorded in his law, (Deut. vii. 24. xxxii. 41—43.) This is the honour which all Israel shall have, when they are in favour with God; and such shall be their glorious victories, and such hymns and melodious songs shall they sing, saying; Hallelujah, praise the Lord, by whose power and might we have done all this.

PSALM CL.

Hallelujah. (See cxlvi.)

ARGUMENT.

Theodoret takes this also to be Ὕμνος Ἐπινίκιος, *a Song of Triumph after some victory:* and the mention of the *mighty acts of the Lord,* ver. 2. seems to countenance this conjecture: which consists well enough with what others conceive; that it was at first particularly directed to the Levites (by David I suppose), whose office it was to praise the Lord with musical instruments; (1 Chron. xvi. 4, 5.) and excite others to his praises, not only for victory, but for all other his benefits. For if the tradition of the Jews be true, which we read at large in Maimonides (in a treatise on that subject), when the people of any place brought up their first-fruits to present them to the Lord at Jerusalem, (according to the law, Deut. xxvi.) with a pipe going before them; as soon as they came to the mountain of the temple, every one took his basket into his hand, and sung this whole Psalm: till they came to the courts of the Lord's house, where the Levites met them singing the thirtieth Psalm.

And, indeed, it might well be used upon occasion of any exceeding great joy; for it seems to be intended (by the repetition of these words, *praise the Lord,* or *praise him,* thirteen times; and by the calling for no less than ten instruments of music) to express the height and fulness of their joy, and thankfulness to God for his benefits: nor can music be so well employed to any other use, as this Divine and heavenly exercise of praising God, by hymns, and psalms, and spiritual songs: to which the Psalmist seems to me to excite all creatures, in heaven and in earth; from the highest to the lowest. And with this the collector of these five books of Psalms thought good to conclude the whole; and not unfitly: for in whatsoever condition we be (as there are Psalms adapted to several purposes), we should never forget to praise the Lord; but after we have prayed, or complained, &c. still end with thankful acknowledgments to God for his goodness to us.

Here are several sorts of musical instruments mentioned; which I have not adventured to explain, because the Hebrews themselves acknowledge they do not understand them. We have no way (saith Aben Ezra upon those words, ver. 5. which we translate *loud cymbals)* to know what these musical instruments were: there being many found in the country of the Ishmaelites (*i. e.* Mahometans) which are not among the men of Edom (*i. e.* Christians), and others among them, which the wise men of Ishmael never heard of.

Ver. 1. *PRAISE ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.*] Praise the mighty God, ye angelical ministers that attend upon him in his celestial sanctuary; praise him all ye inhabitants of heaven, where you see the brightest demonstrations (and most lasting monuments) of his power.

Ver. 2. *Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.*] Praise him all ye ministers of his upon earth, for the miraculous things which he hath done for our deliverance and exaltation; let your praises bear some proportion to the excellence of his majesty, and the multitude of those great and magnificent acts of mercy towards us.

Ver. 3. *Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.*] Let the priests of the Lord (Numb. x. 8.) praise him with the sound of the trumpet; and let the Levites (1 Chron. xxv. 6.) praise him with psalteries and harps.

Ver. 4. *Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.*] Let some praise him with the timbrel and the flute; and others praise him with the stringed instruments and organs.

Ver. 5. *Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals.*] Let all sorts of cymbals accompany their psalms and hymns in his praise: both those of daily use, and those that are wont to be employed in times of the highest joy and triumph.

Ver. 6. *Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.*] Finally, let every man living join himself to this sacred choir; and at every breath praise the Lord, the giver of life and of all good things. To him let all the world, with one consent, give perpetual praise.

THE

PROVERBS.

TO HER GRACE

THE DUTCHESS OF MONMOUTH.

MADAM,

THERE were anciently so many noble women, as well as men, who even then made the study of the Scripture their delight, when Christian piety began to decay, that a great part of St. Jerome's pains was bestowed in opening the meaning of them to Blesilla, Marcella, Melania, Paula, and her daughter Eustochium, with several other eminent Roman ladies: whose songs (as he writes to Asella) were nothing but psalms; whose discourse was the gospel; whose pleasure was continence; and whose life was fasting and abstinence.

More particularly he addressed his services of this kind to the last of those ladies, Eustochium; to whom he gives an epithet, importing her prodigious industry, with the most fervent desire, in the study of heavenly knowledge; and therefore inscribed to her the most elaborate of all his commentaries, upon the prophet Isaiah (as he did afterward those upon Ezekiel), which were sent her by parts, in eighteen books; before every one of which there is a solemn preface to her.

By whose example, and to heighten that esteem and love of Divine wisdom, wherewith, in an age of folly and vanity, God hath already inspired your excellent mind, I have presumed to dedicate to your Grace this small work of mine; wherein, with no small labour, I have expounded the most useful book of the PROVERBS.

Which commends itself to your Grace's acceptance, both by the excellence of the matter; containing (as the words are, viii. 6. xxii. 20.) most noble and princely things; choice maxims, built upon the oldest observations, and that will stand firm, and be found true, as long as the world endures; and from the dignity and splendour of the author; whose illustrious name and pedigree are set down on purpose (as St. Basil thinks) in the entrance of the book, to give the greater authority to his words.

It is Solomon, to whom the Lord himself said, (1 Kings iii. 12.) "Behold, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." And again, it is recorded of him there, (iv. 29.) that "God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore." For as the sand of the sea encompasses all the coasts of this world where we inhabit; so did his mind comprehend all things, as well human as Divine.

This is that admirable person, to the study of whose rare wisdom I invite your Grace: which, that it may be had in greater veneration, the name also of his mighty ancestor (saith the same St. Basil) is added in the title unto his own: to put us in mind, that he was the wise son of a wise father and prophet, who from his infancy had instructed him in the holy writings, and made him fit to succeed him in his throne.

That likewise contributes not a little to the weight of these instructions, that the author of them was a king; and a king in the holy city of God, whose authority he had; which being a name of regular and legal power (as the same father still observes), it is manifest, that the precepts delivered by such a person, and one who was truly worthy of that high title of a king, are of the greatest worth and moment: because they have respect to nothing but merely the common benefit and public good; and cannot be suspected to have been framed and composed with any aim at private interest. For that is the difference (saith he) between a tyrant and a king: that the former hath regard only to himself in all that he doth and designs; but the other consults the profit and welfare of those whom he governs.

So that, in short, this is the work of him, who was truly invested with that threefold glory, which the ancients ascribe to Trismegistus; *the power of a king, the illumination of a priest, and the learning of a philosopher.*

But the excellence of this book will be best understood by the serious perusal of it; which will discover it to be a magazine of all sorts of wisdom: "So full of golden sentences (as king James gives its character in his instructions to his son) and moral precepts, in all things that concern our conversation in this world, as, among all the profane philosophers and poets, there is not to be found so rich a storehouse of natural wisdom, agreeing with the will and Divine wisdom of God."

And therefore it is most worthy the constant study of all persons, who would accomplish themselves with the most useful knowledge: but of none more than of those that are great, whom Solomon instructs how to be greater, and to make their greatness also lasting and durable: and especially of such whose understandings are great and capacious, able to penetrate into the depths even of the civil precepts and advertisements contained in this book; "spring-

ing (as our great advancer of learning speaks) out of the most profound secrets of wisdom, and flowing over into a large field of variety."

In which, I am confident, your Grace will delight to walk: whose exquisite judgment cannot but find the highest entertainment, in weighing the wisdom, as well as the truth and usefulness, of these parables: and whose virtue and prudence dispose the hours of your life with such order, as not to let you want time, both to ponder them yourself, and to instil them also into the minds of your children.

Whose future happiness depends upon their being early seasoned with such principles as these: which will be the most effectual preservatives against the infectious air wherein we breathe; and a treasure of such inestimable price, as will keep their minds from being corrupted, by all the briberies of fortune (as we call it), or from being dejected at any cross turn of it; which, in this world, must be sometimes expected.

For such is the inconstancy of all human things; such is the frailty even of our own bodies, as your Grace hath been lately taught by a tedious sickness (from which I most heartily congratulate your Grace's happy recovery), that we love not ourselves, if we seek not after a better good, which is firm and permanent: a good that can withstand corruption, and defend itself against the force of time, and all the accidents of this world.

In the prosecution of which supreme good I commend your Grace to the blessing of the Almighty; who always favours the least desires of being good, and therefore will never desert your sincere endeavours of it: which are not unknown to him, while you prefer the closet to the theatre, and look more to the inside of virtue than to its outward appearances.

But I forget myself; and stand in need of a pardon for this long address: which I shall the more easily obtain, if your Grace please to believe nothing emboldened me to it, but the opinion I have that your goodness is as unlimited as my desires to approve myself, what I stand bound by many obligations to be,

May it please your Grace,

Your Grace's most humble, and obedient servant,

S. PATRICK.

PREFACE.

I. NEXT to the Psalms of David, which are an admirable collection of devotion, follow the PROVERBS OF SOLOMON, which contain most excellent rules of life. They are commonly called his Ethics; correcting men's errors, and teaching them how to conduct themselves in all relations: but may as well be called his Politics also, comprehending under that word rules for the government of families, cities, and kingdoms, as well as of particular persons. For, as St. Basil speaks, this book is ὅλως διδασκαλία βίου, an universal instruction and direction for all men, and for the whole life: containing frequent documents of what is to be done on all occasions.

II. And there being two ways of teaching; one by brief sentences and aphorisms, which are delivered also promiscuously, without any great care about the order of them; the other by methodical discourse, according to the rules of logic, proceeding orderly from one thing to another, till all that belongs to the matter in hand be reduced to one body, and make as it were an entire building: Solomon hath chosen the first way, which was the most ancient; as it would be very easy to shew, were there any necessity of it; and were not the great antiquity of this sententious way of speaking apparent enough from that passage of David's, (1 Sam. xxiv. 13.) "As saith the proverb of the ancients, 'Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked:" which is much like that Greek adage, κακοῦ κόρακος κακὸν ὠόν. For it was very usual with wise men of old (as the Lord Bacon observes, in his eighth book of the Advancement of Learning), when their observation light upon any thing that might prove beneficial unto common life, to reduce it immediately, and contract it either into some *short sentence* or *parable*, or else into a *fable*. As for fables, they were only the substitutes and supplements of examples; to serve instead of them, while they were wanting, and no longer: when the world abounded in histories, they became unnecessary, because the shadows of things are useful only where the substance cannot be had; and because the aim is more exact, and more pleasant, when the mark is alive. Then those fables were to give place to the sententious way of instruction, comprising wise observations in a few words; which could be illustrated and enforced by a multitude of examples.

III. And therefore, in the fabulous times, we find those even among the poets who forsook fables, and betook themselves to this more profitable way of instruction: particularly Phocylides and Theognis, whom Julian the apostate is bold not only to compare with Solomon, but to prefer before him. To whom St. Cyril of Alexandria very judiciously answers, (lib. vii. adv. Jul.) that as Solomon's work is of far greater antiquity, he being contemporary with Homer himself, and they living a long time after with Solon and Thales, in the reign of Crœsus: so it is infinitely more weighty than theirs; who said, indeed, some pretty spruce things, but so weak and shallow, in comparison with the manly and deep sense of Solomon's Proverbs, that they were fit only for the use of nurses to prattle to their babes; or at the most for pedagogues to teach little boys. There is not, for instance, such a wise instruction to be found in all their books, as the very first of all in Solomon's, which he lays as the ground of all wisdom (but they, alas! did not think of), that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." This, as St. Basil observes, is that Καθάρσιον ψυχῆς (which their philosophers so much talked of, but did not understand), the only thing that can purge the soul, and prepare it to be capable of instruction: which it is as improper (says he) to give to a man of impure affections, as it is to pour a precious ointment into a sordid filthy vessel.

The like I might say of another most admirable precept in his book, to dispose the soul for wisdom, *viz.* "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding." There is no such word in all their writings; nor in Isocrates neither (whom that apostate prince vainly magnified likewise above Solomon), who may be praised for some profitable lessons he gave to youth, but must stoop, as St. Cyril speaks, to this great person; who, as he wrote long before him, so far outwent him in all sort of wisdom, for the instruction both of young and old. Nor doth he only give precepts of manners, but many excellent admonitions about rewards and punishments: together with lively descriptions of the events of human actions, which serve much for our information. Many things also he discovers of men's most secret affections; of the causes and grounds of the greatest changes in human affairs; of the principal things that are of greatest moment in government; of the way to avoid all manner of dangers, and to preserve ourselves, our fame, our estates: with so many other things of like nature, that the son of Sirach justly said of him, Eccles. xlvii. 14, 15. "He was as a flood filled with understanding. His soul covered the whole earth, and he filled it with dark parables."

IV. By that name some call these *short sentences,* which we call *Proverbs:* though the word *parable* properly signifies only a comparison or similitude. The original of which name is this (as Grotius hath observed in his Prolegomena to Stobæus), that the most ancient authors delivered their precepts about manners, or about government, by comparisons: either full and at length (which the rhetoricians properly call παραβολὴ, *parable),* or curtailed, as we speak, and shortened. And these taken either from things plainly fabulous (as that of the fruit-trees and the bramble, in Judg. ix. and that of the thistle and the cedar, 2 Chron. xxv. 18. of the hawk and nightingale in Hesiod; the wolves, dogs, and sheep, in Demosthenes; and the famous parable of Menenius about the members of our body), or else from things likely and probable, as that of Nathan to David, and most of our blessed Saviour's.

V. But Solomon's sentences in this book are not of this nature; and therefore the LXX. use another word, signifying a saying as trite and common as the highway; worn, as we say, threadbare (to use St. Basil's phrase), by every body's constant use. And so doth the Latin and our English word *proverb,* denote some ancient common saying, which every body hath in his mouth. But the word in the Hebrew, denotes only *any acute and excellent saying; which is as worthy to be known by all, and to be in every one's mouth, as common proverbs are.* And thus it is used in the most ancient book of Holy Scripture for an eloquent speech, much exceeding those that had been made before, in the beginning of the twenty-seventh and twenty-ninth chapters of Job. And so the doctors of the church explain it: "A proverb (saith St. Basil) is a profitable saying, delivered with a moderate concealment of the sense," &c. or a pithy sentence in a few words, expressing much sense.

This is the first signification of the word: though in after-times, every saying that was never so little out of the way of vulgar speech, began by the Hebrews to be called *Mashal,* as may be seen in Ezek. xx. 49. And whether it was figurative, or simple and plain, if it did contain any profitable instruction, it was called by the same name; as we learn from the sentences in this book.

VI. Which consists of a preface, and of the book itself. The preface is in the nine first chapters; seven of which seem to be an admonition what is to be done, and what to be avoided, to make a man capable of wisdom: which in the eighth and ninth chapters sets forth her own praises.

Then begins, as you find in the front of the tenth chapter, the Proverbs of Solomon: which consist of three parts, or books. The first part, from the beginning of the tenth chapter, to the seventeenth verse of the twenty-second, where a new form of speech, any body may discern, begins (as I have there noted), and continues to the twenty-fifth chapter: which may be called the second part. And then, from the twenty-fifth to the thirtieth (which is the last part), follow such sentences as were collected afterward out of his writings, or the writings of those who had recorded them; by some persons whom Hezekiah employed to search the ancient records. For we are told in 1 Kings iv. that he spake in all *three thousand proverbs:* which Josephus seems to think were so many books that perished in the captivity; but St. Jerome takes for so many sentences contained in this book; that is, some of them, for there are in all but eight hundred verses. And some of them are not Solomon's; for in the end of the book are added certain sayings of Agur to his scholars, and the instructions of a pious mother to her son Lemuel: of all which I have given an account in their proper places.

VII. And therefore must entreat all those that would profit by this book, to read the *Argument* of each chapter, before they proceed to the Paraphrase: or at least to consult the *references* which I have made to such passages in it as will help to make the sense clearer, or to explain difficult places; which sometimes are capable of more senses than one: and therefore, if I have not represented them all in the Paraphrase, I do it in the Argument: designing all along this alone, to give the fullest and properest explication of every phrase; upon which, as I have not dilated, so I have expressed the meaning in the plainest words I could find. For, as St. Jerome speaks concerning his own commentaries upon Ezekiel (in the preface to the fifth book), "My business was not to study the art of rhetoric, nor of exact composition and graceful language; but to use a careful diligence to hit the sense: resting content with this praise alone, if the wise man's words be understood by my means." And indeed it ought to be the design of every good man, in such works as these, that the holy books (as he speaks in another place) "may be made more intelligible by his endeavours; and not that his own writings may be commended, by occasion of those books."

VIII. And in his time nothing was commended, he saith, but only that which men fancied to be eloquent. In this the Latins were then altogether delighted; but nauseated the understanding of the Holy Scriptures. Which provoked God, in his just judgments, to deliver them into the hands of those rough nations, who, in his days, broke in like a flood upon them; and turned their vain affectation of neatness and elegance of speech into rudeness and barbarism; which ought to be a caution unto us, not to give up ourselves to the admiration only of the language and of the wit of the stage; lest our minds thereby be so depraved, that we have no relish of the most serious, no, not of the

sacred writings, but reject them as insipid things: with which disease if any be infected, they might, by God's grace, be cured; if they would be pleased to apply their mind with due attention to the study of this one holy book, which wants nothing to entertain the minds of all men, though of the widest capacity, with the greatest variety of pleasure; if they have not perfectly lost their taste of that which will do them good, and make them truly happy.

IX. It is recorded by Suetonius of Cæsar Augustus, that in his reading all sort of Greek, as well as Latin authors, he chiefly observed and transcribed such wholesome precepts or examples, as might serve him either for public or private use: which upon occasion he produced, for the instruction of his own domestics, or of the commanders of his armies, or the governors of provinces, or the magistrates in his several cities; according as he thought every one had need of admonition: whom, if any man have the heart to imitate, Solomon hath saved him the labour, which that great person underwent. He need not turn over many volumes, to search for all manner of wise instructions; but be furnished here (and at an easy rate) out of the vast treasure of learning he hath left us in this small book, with the best advices that can be given, either to princes, counsellors, judges, and other public ministers; or to all sorts of subjects in their several relations, and in every condition; to make them both pious and politic: to direct them in the choice of their consorts, in the education of their children; in the management of domestic affairs, and in their transactions with other men; in contracting or conducting their friendships; in giving or taking good counsel and reproof; in making or preserving peace; in judging of men, and of the event of their designs; and, in short (for it would be a new book to mention every thing particularly), to instruct every one in all sorts of virtue; especially in the government of the tongue; wherein men offend, and whereby they suffer so much, that there is no part of prudence more necessary than that, and therefore none more insisted on in this book.

X. Which contains the wisdom of that excellent prince, who could readily resolve all questions and doubts; penetrate into the nature of all things; and had his own family and kingdom in such admirable order, that it astonished her who came from the ends of the earth to discourse with him. And it was composed, if we may rely upon the judgment of the Jewish writers, in his best and most judicious years: when his kingdom also was in perfect peace, and there was no disturbance in his affairs.

For the book of Canticles, say they, was wrote in his youth; the Proverbs, when he was of riper years; the Ecclesiastes, when he was old, and repented of the sins he had been drawn into by the snares of women: who had made this admirable person as great an example of folly as he had been before of wisdom. Whence that common saying of theirs; "Men compose songs, when they are young; parables, when they are grown to be perfect men; and discourses of the vanity of things, when they are old."

XI. But the time of his writing these books is not so material as the design; which is excellently expressed by St. Basil, in a discourse of his upon the beginning of this book: (tom. i. hom. xii.) "The book of Proverbs (saith he) is an instruction of manners, and a correction of the passions; and an entire direction of the whole life, containing abundance of precepts about well-doing. The Ecclesiastes touches upon the nature of things; and evidently shews the vanity of every thing in this world: that so we may not think it worth our pains to be so solicitous as we are about things that swiftly pass away from us; nor waste the thought and cares of our mind about empty and vanishing enjoyments. The Song of Songs shews the manner of perfecting souls. For it contains the happy concord of the bridegroom and the spouse: that is, the familiarity of the soul with God the Word."

XII. I conclude this Preface, as that great man doth that discourse. "He is wise, not only who hath arrived at a complete habit of wisdom, but who hath made some progress towards it; nay, who doth as yet but love it, or desire it, and listen to it. Such as these, by the reading of this book, shall be made wiser; for they shall be instructed in much Divine, and in no less human, learning: it expelling vice divers ways; and, with as great variety, introducing all manner of virtues. It bridles the injurious tongue; corrects the wanton eye; and ties the unjust hands in chains. It persecutes sloth; chastises all absurd desires; teaches prudence; raises men's courage; and represents temperance and chastity after such a fashion, that one cannot but have them in veneration."

Let a man but consent to one thing, which this book desires, to make these precepts familiar to his mind, "saying unto wisdom, (as you find the words, vii. 4.) Thou art my sister, and calling understanding his kinswoman:" and he will not fail to be happy. For this is the sum of all, in a few words; "Love her, and she shall preserve thee."

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

The title of this book is joined to it, as a part of the work, and contained in the six first verses. Where the author uses several words to express the matter he intends to treat of; *viz. wisdom, instruction, understanding, knowledge,* &c. the difference of which I have expressed as well as I could in the Paraphrase, and shall not here criticise upon them: but observe rather that the learning they teach is the most necessary of all other; and therefore so contrived, as he tells us, that the most ignorant as well as the most wise may receive great benefit by it.

In order to which, the first principle of it must be carefully observed; which is this: [*a*] that *a due sense of God is a most necessary qualification to profit by these instructions:* which will signify nothing to epicures, and such-like profane persons. This is the very first word of the book, ver. 7. teaching us, that our first care must be to possess our minds with a lively sense, that there is a God; and that the highest wisdom in the world is to study to please him; and to be fearful to offend him, by any neglect of him, or by doing any thing contrary to his will. Which *fear of offending God* is commonly founded in a dread of his punishments; which perhaps gives the first rise to this fear: however, Nazianzen well observes, (Orat. xxxix. p. 628.) that we "must not (if we would be wise) first begin in contemplation, and so end in fear (for an unbridled contemplation is very dangerous); but being

thoroughly seasoned and purged, and as one may say attenuated, and humbled by fear, so to be carried aloft in contemplation."

This is the first step to wisdom, and the second is, [*b*] *next to God, to bear a reverence to parents,* both natural and spiritual: to God's ministers, that is, and to all teachers and instructors; to whom, if children be not bred to give a great regard, they seldom prove virtuous, (ver. 8.) Where it is very observable how much human laws differ from Divine: the former generally only providing that due regard be given by children to their *fathers,* but taking no notice of *mothers;* as may be seen in the Persian laws mentioned by Aristotle, the Roman described in the Digests and Constitutions, and several passages of the Greek philosophers, which we find in Epictetus and Simplicius, who (as Grotius notes upon the fifth commandment) consult only the honour of the *father:* but God in his law takes care to preserve a just reverence both to *father* and *mother* equally; as the persons whose ministry he uses to bring us into the world. And accordingly not only Solomon in this place and many other, but the son of Sirach also (who was bred under that Divine institution), presses the duty owing to both very largely, in the first sixteen verses of the third chapter of Ecclesiasticus.

Now one of the first things *parents* should take care of, is to teach their children [*c*] *to avoid evil company* (as it follows here, ver. 10.) and then to represent vice in its true colours, as Solomon here doth one sort of wickedness, (ver. 11, 12, &c.) the root of which he shews is *love of money:* which therefore should be looked upon as most odious; and, indeed, the root of all evil, (ver. 18, 19.)

Their stupid blindness also is to be represented, who will take no warning: but though destruction be plainly before their eyes in the way wherein they are; yet will go on to complete their ruin, (ver. 17.)

And they are to be admonished also to hearken to the voice of wisdom presently, wheresoever they meet with it: which is every where, (ver. 20, &c.) Which is pressed here, (ver. 24, &c.) from this consideration, that there will be a time when they shall stand in need of God's help; but not find it, if they have slighted his importunities to obedience. For he is not only good, but just also: and not so easy, as to be moved merely by prayers and entreaties (and that when we are in distress), which have more of self-love in them, than love to him. Whose wise providence requites men in their kind; and destroys them by that which they most desire.

"In short, in this chapter he introduces Wisdom speaking to his son, or to her children in general; inviting them to love her, and by no means to tread in the way of sinners: but to keep close to her directions; threatening destruction to those who contemned this counsel."

There seem to be three proverbial sayings in it. One, ver. 17. which may be four or five ways interpreted: two of which I have comprised in the Paraphrase, being the most common and natural. Another, ver. 31. like to that in Terence, "Tute hoc intrivisti, omne hoc vorandum est tibi." And the other in the next, (ver. 32.) where those words, *the prosperity of fools shall destroy them,* teach us that it is a great part of wisdom, to be able to bear a great fortune, as we call it. Of which, among the Jews, Jason was an example in aftertimes, who was undone by his successes, (2 Maccab. v. 6, 7, &c.)

Ver. 1. *THE Proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel.*] This book contains some notable and very useful sayings of that wise prince, king Solomon, the son of that devout prince, king David; by whose special appointment he succeeded him in the government of God's peculiar people Israel, for which (according to David's prayer Psal. lxxii. and his own, 1 Kings iii. 9.) God endued him with an extraordinary degree of understanding.

Ver. 2. *To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding.*] The scope of them, is to make a man *know* what it is to be truly wise; and *instruct* him how to avoid those errors which men are apt to fall into, or to correct them if he hath been misled and run into them; and to make him *understand* when good advice is given him; nay, to be able to give it unto others.

Ver. 3. *To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity.*] For they will furnish him with the most excellent notions, and make him capable to understand things of highest concernment; both how to be just and good in all *private transactions;* and *in public trusts and offices* to judge and act according to right and equity; and every other way, to *be upright and exactly virtuous.*

Ver. 4. *To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.*] The most unskilful and incautious persons may here learn to be *circumspect and wary;* and they who are childish and inconsiderate, get so much knowledge, as to behave themselves with *prudence and discretion.*

Ver. 5. *A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.*] As for him that is wise already, he will not lose his labour in reading this book; which will make him still wiser. And, indeed, it is principally designed for the improvement of him that is so wise, as *to be willing to learn more:* who shall both gain a *clearer knowledge* of what he understands, and also make such additions, that he shall be fit to be a *counsellor to kings, and govern the affairs of state* in the greatest kingdoms.

Ver. 6. *To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.*] He shall comprehend the most *useful maxims;* and be able to express them also with the *greatest elegance:* the *weightiest sayings* of wise men shall be easy to him; and their *abstrusest notions* shall not be hidden from him.

Ver. 7. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*] In the first place, then, let all, both simple and wise, look upon an awful sense of God, a devout affection to him, and fear to offend him, as the chiefest point, and the very foundation of all wisdom: without which men are but fools; and, having no regard to their Creator, will despise the wisest instructions that I can give them. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 8. *My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother.*] And next to God let me advise thee, my son (or whoever thou art that comest to learn of me in this book), to reverence thy parents. And not only to hearken unto thy *father,* when he teaches thee to fear God, or tells thee that thou doest amiss; but to let thy *mother's* commands be a law to thee; especially when

she bids thee observe the directions of thy tutors and public instructors, unto whom she commits thee: from which be sure never to depart. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 9. *For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.*] But value their counsels more than the fairest ornaments thy parents can put upon thy head; or the most precious chains wherewith they can adorn thy neck: for they shall add a far greater grace unto thee; and make thee more acceptable both with God, and with all worthy men.

Ver. 10. *My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.*] There will be those who will make it their business to seduce thee from their obedience; but remember, my son, that none can love thee so well as they: and, therefore, if lewd persons (who have no respect to God, or to their pious parents and instructors) persuade thee to bear them company, by no means yield to their greatest importunities; but flee their society. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 11. *If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause.*] They may represent, perhaps, what advantage it will be to thee, to join with them in the breach of the very next commandment to that, of *honouring thy father and thy mother:* saying, Come along with us to our lurking-places, where nobody can see us; and from thence set upon a wealthy traveller, who is to go that way, and take away his life: what though he be innocent, we shall the more easily dispatch him, when he suspects no danger, and hath given us no provocation.

Ver. 12. *Let us swallow them up alive, as the grave, and whole, as those who go down into the pit.*] And though he should have many servants or companions with him to defend him, let not that affright thee; for we are enough of us to kill them all with ease in a moment, or to strangle them, and bury them alive: so that none shall escape to tell any tales; nor shall they make any noise; nay, it shall not be known what is become of them.

Ver. 13. *We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil.*] The booty shall be great; for we are sure to find vast treasures, and all manner of precious things: enough to enrich us all, and furnish our houses bravely, that we may live splendidly all our days.

Ver. 14. *Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse.*] Come in for a share of it; and thou shalt have as much of it as we, who have been longer at the trade: for we live like friends, among whom all things are common; there is but one purse among us all, in which every one hath an equal interest.

Ver. 15. *My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path.*] But, my son (or whoever thou art that wilt learn of me), let them not prevail with thee to go along with them, or to betake thyself to such a course of life: but if thou findest an inclination to it, stop it presently, and stir not one step in their company, or after their example.

Ver. 16. *For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.*] For it is not one single murder (or robbery) in which they will engage thee (though the guilt of that is too horrid to venture upon), but they will be always hurrying thee to some new mischief or other; and as soon as one mischief is over, they will be ready for, and make haste to commit, another.

Ver. 17. *Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.*] Flee from their society, therefore, now that I have given thee this warning: and be not so foolish and incautious as the silly birds, who use to run into the snare, or the net, which they see the fowler lay before their eyes, (vii. 23.)

Ver. 18. *And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives.*] For as he doth not lay his net in vain, but they are caught therein; so assure thyself these men are setting a trap for themselves, when they lie in wait to take away the lives of others: for they shall not always escape the hand of justice; but at last be taken and suffer, either by a special vengeance of God, or by his ministers, what they have deserved.

Ver. 19. *So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.*] Such is the fate of him that greedily endeavours to enrich himself by such wicked means. As the bird, enticed by a little chaff, falls into a snare, which it doth not perceive, so he on a sudden loses his life, to satisfy a vain desire of worldly pelf, which then he cannot enjoy.

Ver. 20. *Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets.*] Let me advise you, therefore, rather to hearken to the manifold instructions of wisdom; whose most excellent counsels you cannot but be as well acquainted withal, as you are with that which is proclaimed in the open streets: for you hear them in the plain dictates of your own consciences, in the laws of God, in the mouth of his prophets and ministers, in the admonitions and examples of good men, and in the course of his providence and wise government; which call upon you more earnestly and loudly than these lewd seducers, to follow and obey them.

Ver. 21. *She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the opening of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying.*] There is no place, where this cry of virtue and piety is not heard; which is not ashamed of itself, nor lurks in darkness, like those impious seducers, but appears openly in the midst of the greatest crowds; where no noise can drown its voice, no business, either public or private, can thrust by its reproof; but still it interposes itself, and every body, even those wicked men that flee from it, hear it calling to them;

Ver. 22. *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?*] And representing their unaccountable folly and stupidity, in such unanswerable questions as these: Is it not apparent, by many examples, that such men as you are deceived and abused with vain hopes? why then do you continue the cheat? have you not played the fool long enough, but you will still act against your reason, and against your interest? where lies the pleasure of scoffing at religion and virtue, that you will never give it over? is any man so wise, that he needs no monitor? or is ignorance so laudable, that a man should hate those who would inform him?

Ver. 23. *Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*] Do not turn away from such checks as these; but repent in time, and resolve to learn your duty. It is not too late; for if you will listen to the secret rebukes of your own consciences, and to the open reproofs of my prophets, and fol-

low their directions, I will plentifully communicate my mind, and infuse the very sense of it into you: it is not hard to find, nor will I conceal any thing of it, but plainly shew you all that I require of you.

Ver. 24. *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded.*] Which offer if you refuse, nay, go on obstinately to despise instruction, then hear the doom which God, whose voice wisdom is, passes upon you: Because I have pressed you often to amend, and ye would not yield to me; nay, I have been very urgent and earnest with you (offering you my assistance, heaping upon you many benefits, and when they would do no good, laying on corrections, as well as shewing you the way to happiness), and none of you would so much as attend unto me:

Ver. 25. *But ye have set at nought all my counsels, and would none of my reproof.*] But, quite contrary, set at nought all the good advice I gave you, as if they had been but vain and idle words; and slighted all my reproofs and threatenings, as if they had been ridiculous, or of no moment:

Ver. 26. *I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh.*] Therefore I will repay you in your kind; and as little regard what becomes of you, in the day of your calamity (which like a dismal cloud I will bring upon you unavoidably); I will be utterly unconcerned, when you know not which way to turn yourselves; but are become the scorn of those who shall see you quake and tremble at that which before you would not fear at all.

Ver. 27. *When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.*] Though it prove such a dreadful calamity, as will lay all waste, it shall not move me to relieve you; but I will let it sweep you, and all you have, away, like a whirlwind: and when you fall into the most pinching outward distresses, and into the sorest anguish of mind, you shall evidently see, it was my pleasure to reduce you to those inextricable straits and pressures.

Ver. 28. *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.*] For then (hearken all you that have not yet sinned to this degree of obstinacy) it will be very hard for these men not to think of me, whom before they would not regard: nay, they shall cry to me for help, but I will send them none; they shall seek my favour importunately, but without the least success.

Ver. 29. *For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord.*] Because, when time was, they hated that knowledge, of which now they are forced to be desirous: and when they were earnestly solicited to have some regard to God and to religion, they would not consent unto it.

Ver. 30. *They would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof.*] But (as was said before) rejected my good advice with such disdain, as if it had been a grievance to them; and slighted, nay, contemned, all those reproofs, whereby I would have reclaimed them from their impiety.

Ver. 31. *Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.*] Therefore, as it is just that men should reap what they sow, and eat such fruit as they plant, so these men shall suffer the punishments which their wicked doings naturally produce: nay, be glutted and surfeited with the miserable effects of their own counsels and contrivances.

Ver. 32. *For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.*] For let them alone, and they need nobody but themselves to destroy them: their escaping dangers, only making them more audacious to run into them; and their receiving daily additions of riches and honours, supplying their folly with means to hasten their undoing.

Ver. 33. *But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.*] Such a vast difference there is between wicked and virtuous men. For whoso follows my counsels, and takes the courses to which I direct him, shall even then be safe, and possess what he hath in peace, when he sees these fools come to ruin; nay, he shall not be so much as disturbed with the fear of any mischief; but rest secure of a watchful providence over him.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The attention of those that read this book being bespoke in the foregoing chapter, he persuades them not only to read, but to receive and obey these good counsels; by representing the benefits of being wise, that is, good and virtuous; and the mischiefs a man shall thereby avoid. The chief is, that he is sure to be under the guidance and blessing of God, who will impart more and more of himself to those that study wisdom; which is the scope of the former part of this chapter: and as, on the contrary, if he do not order his ways by the rules of wisdom, he is sure to wander most dangerously; so, if he keep close to them, they will preserve him from utter ruin; which is the design of the latter part of it. Where, under the figure of an adulterous woman, (ver. 16.) some think he persuades us to shun all those [*a*] doctrines which draw away the mind from God; such as those of the Epicureans and idolaters. But I take this to be intimated before, (ver. 12.) and therefore understand him literally: and then he seems to give a caution against the breach of the next commandment to that mentioned in the first chapter, (ver. 10, 11.) where he charges his son by no means to consent to join with murderers; and here to shun fornication and adultery, which alienate the mind quite from wisdom, (ver. 16, 17, &c.)

This therefore is one of the first things wisdom directs us unto, and a principal benefit we receive by it; *to preserve our understandings from being corrupted by keeping our bodies pure and undefiled.* For too many, giving up themselves to fleshly lusts, are thereby wholly perverted, and never recover themselves, but live and die like fools.

And one of the next points of wisdom is, [*b*] to be taught by the dear-bought experience of others; who have been ruined, body and soul, by those lewd courses to which we are enticed. And here the wise man leads us back as far as the old world; which was wholly destroyed by such villanies as men's brutish lusts and passions carry them to commit. This seems to be implied in the word *Rephaim*, ver. 18. (concerning which, see Mr. Mede, p. 42.) who, being abominably debauched themselves, had corrupted the rest of the world: so that there was

no way left to purge it, but by extirpating the whole race of mankind, except the family of Noah.

In short, here are both promises and threatenings to excite us to the study of wisdom; together with good directions to make our proceedings successful; which are principally these. First, our own *diligence;* secondly, *dependance upon God for help and assistance;* thirdly, *a due value of that which we seek;* fourthly, *avoiding such things as will plainly seduce us;* and, lastly, *putting in practice what we know,* that we may know more: for want of which many learned men have proved worse than the most ignorant. Most of these are the sense of the beginning of the chapter; and the last of them is the sense of ver. 10, 11.

[c] There are those who look upon ver. 4. as a *proverbial saying,* borrowed from those that dig in mines: the former part of it expressing eager desire and great diligence; and the latter, invincible resolution and constant perseverance, notwithstanding those difficulties that occur to discourage our labour. Both which I have taken notice of in the Paraphrase; though I see nothing *proverbial* in it, more than in many other similitudes.

[d] I do not know whether I need observe (it is so easy) that the phrase we meet withal ver. 19. *go unto her,* is a modest expression; used frequently in the holy books: as may be seen very often in one chapter, Gen. xxxviii. 2. 8, 9. 16. 18.

Ver. 1. *MY son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee.*] And now, my son, whose happiness I most heartily desire, let me tell thee for thy farther encouragement; that if thou dost entertain these exhortations which I have now given thee, and keep these precepts in remembrance, for the same end that corn is sown and covered in the ground:

Ver. 2. *So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thy heart to understanding.*] Listening with diligent attention, not to the enticements of such evil men as I have described, but to the counsels and instructions of wisdom, with sincere affection, applying thy mind to understand thy duty:

Ver. 3. *Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding.*] And moreover, if thou expressest such a desire of it, as men do of that which they most need; and without which they are in danger to perish; praying those that are able to inform thee; and beseeching God likewise with ardent devotion, that he would bring thee acquainted with it:

Ver. 4. *If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures.*] If thou dost value this wisdom above the greatest treasures, and shew thy esteem of it by studious seeking for it, as covetous men do for money; laying hold upon all occasions of profiting in knowledge, and pursuing thy advantages (as they do) when thou meetest with them; not giving over thy labour presently; if thou findest not what thou desirest; but inquiring still, and sparing no pains to know what the will of the Lord is: See Arg. [c]

Ver. 5. *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.*] Then thou shalt not fail to understand what it is to be truly religious; and that there is no wisdom comparable to it: and shalt find also what reason there is to reverence, worship, and solicitously obey him, who is the almighty Creator, Governor, and Judge of all the world.

Ver. 6. *For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*] For as wisdom, no less than all other good things, is the gift of the Lord (without whom all our pains and study about it will be ineffectual), so there is no doubt he will bestow it on those who esteem it above all worldly goods; especially this most necessary part of it: which he hath already imparted to us by his prophets and men inspired; who have given us a true knowledge and understanding of him.

Ver. 7. *He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.*] And have assured us, that he hath solid and durable blessings (transcending all the transitory things of this life) reserved in store for upright men: and will protect all those, by his almighty providence, whose care it is to perform and complete obedience to him in all things.

Ver. 8. *He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.*] That so he may preserve them in their integrity; and encourage them neither to swerve from the rules of justice, nor to cease to exercise mercy and kindness: for he hath a great favour to such pious persons; and will be their keeper and defender in such proceedings.

Ver. 9. *Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.*] By which thou shalt understand that justice and mercy in thy private dealings, and faithful discharge of thy trust in all public offices, and uprightness in every other virtue, are all of them the best, the most plain, easy, and natural way a man can take to be happy.

Ver. 10. *When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul.*] And when wisdom hath thus taken possession of thy very heart and affections; and thou findest an inward pleasure and satisfaction by observing the rules of piety and all manner of virtue:

Ver. 11. *Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee.*] This alone will be a sufficient security to thee, and make thee unwilling to depart from them. For thy own experience will teach thee, that it is the greatest cunning to go in those plain and open ways, and that no men understand their own interest so well, as they cannot be persuaded by any means to forsake them.

Ver. 12. *To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things.*] Though otherwise thou mightest be seduced into a wrong course, yet this will deliver thee from that danger; and not suffer thee to be perverted by the mouth of him that would subtly insinuate his lewd principles into thee.

Ver. 13. *Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness.*] Though thou shouldest be assaulted by many of them, thou shalt easily discover their folly, in leaving the straight, plain, and even paths of virtue, to walk blindly they know not whither, in the perplexed ways of vice and wickedness.

Ver. 14. *Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked.*] Being so mad as to rejoice when they have done any mischief; and having no higher pleasure than to pervert others, and make them as bad as themselves.

Ver. 15. *Whose ways are crooked, and they forward in their paths.*] That is, to draw them aside, and entangle

them in intricate ways, directly cross to their own interest, safety, and pleasure; for the whole course of their life is nothing else but a shameful contradiction to their soberest reason and best understanding.

Ver. 16. *To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words.*] But such is that sweet satisfaction which (as I said, ver. 10, 11.) thou wilt find in the affectionate love of true wisdom, that it will deliver thee, not only from the snares of wicked men, but, which is more dangerous, of a naughty woman: whose company (though so pernicious that God would have thee perfectly estranged from her, if she were not of the commonwealth of Israel, yet) hath powerful charms in it, to flatter thee into her embraces. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 17. *Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.*] Above all other, from that filthy adulteress, who is so lewd as to leave her husband (though a worthy and perhaps noble person), to whom she was joined in her youth, when love is in its greatest warmth, and took him for her guide and governor; but hath wickedly broken the laws of God, and violated the solemn vow of fidelity to him, which she made when they were married.

Ver. 18. *For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.*] The least degree of that discretion which wisdom infuses, will teach thee to avoid her society, who loves nobody, now that she hath forsaken him that had her first affection; but seeks the ruin of all that go to her house: where, by one means or other, they are in danger to meet with their grave, and be sent to keep company with those old giants, who corrupted mankind with such filthiness and violence, that they brought a deluge upon the earth, (Gen. vi. 4, 5. 11.) See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 19. *None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.*] And this is very remarkable, that it is rarely seen that any body who is drawn into her impure embraces ever gets out again: but she holds them all so fast by her enchantments, and they are so blinded and bewildered by her arts, that, like men who have quite lost their way in a strange country, they seldom or never can hit into it, and recover themselves to a virtuous way of living. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 20. *That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous.*] In which the sincere love of wisdom (ver. 11, 12, &c.) will so secure thee; that escaping her snares, as well as those of wicked men, thou mayest imitate those excellent persons the patriarchs and prophets; and be preserved in the paths of those righteous men who have followed after them.

Ver. 21. *For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.*] Which is as much as to say, that thou mayest be perfectly happy: for men of integrity (according to God's promise, Deut. xi. 8, 9. 21.) shall peaceably enjoy this good land which God hath given us; and they that study sincerely to please him in all things, shall leave it in possession to their posterity after them.

Ver. 22. *But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.*] But such impious men as I spoke of (according to what God himself hath also denounced, Deut. xi. 17. and other places) shall be cut down from the earth; where they may flourish, like a tree, for a time: nay, they that give themselves up to do wickedly, and keep no faith with God nor man, shall be plucked up, like a tree, by the very roots, and leave none to preserve their memory behind them.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

In this chapter he continues to press obedience to the precepts of wisdom; from the consideration of the benefits that are to be reaped thereby. Which he began to speak of in the foregoing chapter (touching also there, upon the mischiefs on the contrary side), but here handles more largely; and explains it not only in general, but in several particular precepts: for instance, *liberality to God's ministers,* ver. 9, 10. *patience in adversity,* ver. 11, 12. the foundation of which is *an entire trust in God, and his fidelity,* who will honour those that honour him, in his ministers; and never desert those in their trouble who do good when they are in their prosperity, ver. 5, 6.

After these things he returns to the general exhortation, ver. 13, &c. advising every one to learn the doctrine delivered by God, and to be obedient; and not to be so foolish as to prefer his own wisdom or craft before it. To which he adds promises and comminations, together with several advices; which I need not note particularly, because they lie plainly before their eyes who will read the chapter.

I shall only observe that he represents wisdom, [*a*] (ver. 16, 17, &c.) that is, religion and virtue, as other authors have done (particularly Cebes in his Tables), in the shape of a beautiful woman, or rather queen; with her arms extended, in the posture not only of directing, but also of rewarding her lovers and followers. For she holds forth in her *right hand* the great blessings of health and length of days, unto all those that will walk in the way to which she points. And it was but just to place this in her *right hand,* that is, to give it the precedence; because it was the chief promise of the law: and indeed the most desirable of all earthly blessings, without which nothing can be enjoyed; no, not ourselves.

And then, after this, follow wealth and reputation; things that mankind mightily covet: which he places in her *left hand;* as inferior blessings, but that come also from her gift.

And as for cheerfulness in all conditions, there are no pleasures, he affirms, like those which wait upon her, and attend her motions. Safe and secure pleasures; which do not merely gratify us for the present, and then expose us to danger, and leave us sad afterward; but give us a peaceable possession of perpetual joy, which never dies nor decays; but, like the *tree of life,* remains fresh for ever. This he proves, ver. 19, 20. and amplifies in the rest of the chapter.

[*b*] In which some observe three proverbial sayings: one ver. 8. which seems to be but a metaphorical representation of that firmness, that vigorous health, and cheerfulness of mind, which virtue imparts: the other in ver. 12. [*c*] *whom the Lord loveth he correcteth;* which Theodoret, upon Heb. xii. 6. calls indeed παροιμιακὴ παραίνεσις, a *proverbial admonition,* belonging to such parents, guardians, and masters, as are careful of those committed to their charge; but he names it so, I suppose, only because he found it in the book of the Proverbs. The last

in ver. 18. [*d*] *tree of life:* which seems to be a proverbial speech (used afterward more than once in this book) for that which prolongs life; and makes it very delightful and pleasant, as well as firm and durable, if we understand it of Christ, the wisdom of God (as Origen, St. Ambrose, St. Austin, and others do), or of his doctrine, which is the same: it is literally true that he gives immortality, as the tree of life in Paradise would have done.

Ver. 1. *My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments.*] Let me then again entreat thee, whoever thou art that comest to learn of me (who loveth thee with a fatherly affection), not to be careless and negligent in the observance of these instructions; but remember them, and love them, and set thyself heartily to do whatsoever I command thee.

Ver. 2. *For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.*] For this is the surest way to that which all men naturally desire, and seek to attain: a long life, in firm health, vigour, and strength; with all manner of happiness and prosperity, (Deut. xxx. 18. 20.)

Ver. 3. *Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart.*] Of this thou canst not miss, if thou wilt be steadfastly good and just; for the infinite bounty of God, and his faithfulness to his promises, will secure these blessings to thee; therefore let my commandments be ever before thine eyes; fix them in thy memory and in thy affections, as if they were engraven upon thy heart; and look upon it as the greatest ornament to be obedient to them.

Ver. 4. *So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.*] Which is as much, as if I had bidden thee acquire favour with God; and understand, on all occasions, what is good for thyself, ordering all thy affairs with such judgment and prudence, as to be in high esteem with him and with men.

Ver. 5. *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thy own understanding.*] And assure thyself there is no rule of prudence like to this, to confide in God entirely; and to depend wholly on his providence for good success in well-doing: not imagining that, by thy own wit and policy, thou canst contrive such events as thou desirest, and bring about what thou designest.

Ver. 6. *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*] No; in all thy undertakings, both private and public, be sensible of his overruling power; observe his laws; and implore his favour and blessing: and he shall guide thee in thy proceedings; and bring them to a happy issue, as he in his wisdom sees best for thee.

Ver. 7. *Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil.*] Never be guilty of such folly as to conceit thine own wit to be so great, that thou canst manage things thereby in thine own way (neglecting the rules that he hath prescribed thee) to thy satisfaction: but have a religious regard to him, who can either disappoint or prosper thee as he pleases; and, fearing to offend his majesty, avoid most cautiously those practices that he hath forbidden thee.

Ver. 8. *It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.*] This is the way to preserve a good habit both of soul and body: and in all conditions to remain undejected; nay, cheerful and fully satisfied, whatsoever happens. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 9. *Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase.*] As, for example, there are those who think it prudence to save all they can; though it be by robbing God himself: but, if thou wilt be truly wise and happy, honour him in his ministers, by paying them their *tithes* duly; and bringing *oblations* to his house at the three solemn feasts; (Exod. xxiii. 14, 15.) together with the *first-fruits* of all that thy estate produces, (xxii. 29, 30.) in token of thy gratitude to him, and that all thou hast is his, and cannot thrive without his blessing.

Ver. 10. *So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.*] Which he will pour upon thee abundantly; and convince thee, by lading the earth with fruit, and sending a seasonable as well as plentiful harvest and vintage, that this is the way, not to diminish, but to increase the estate which God hath given thee. (Deut. xxviii. 4, 5. 2 Chron. xxxi. 10.)

Ver. 11. *My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord: neither be weary of his correction.*] And suppose it be his pleasure that any affliction should befal thee; my son, (ver. 1.) let not that dissatisfy thee; nor make thee either doubt of his gracious providence over thee, or out of impatience take any unlawful course to remove it from thee.

Ver. 12. *For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.*] But rather submit unto it, as a part of his fatherly discipline, which cannot hurt thee; but only correct something that is amiss in thee: for we are sure he loves those that keep his commandments; and therefore nothing that proceeds from his love ought to be despised, or received with an abject mind; but duly esteemed by them, and raise their expectation of some good from the affliction; which should no more make him suspected of any unkindness, than a tender parent is, when he whips the child in whom he delights; and to whom he wishes so well, that he will not let him be unchastised. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 13. *Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.*] Happy, more happy than can be expressed, is that man who attains to this degree of wisdom; and acquires (though it cost him the greatest pains and labour) such an understanding of God, and belief of his providence, as, notwithstanding any troubles that befal him, still to adhere unto him in faithful obedience, (ver. 7.)

Ver. 14. *For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver; and the gain thereof than fine gold.*] If it were to be bought for money, one would purchase it at any rate; for the profit of it is infinitely to be preferred before all the advantages that can be made by silver and gold.

Ver. 15. *She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.*] The most precious pearls are not so valuable; nor can our boundless fancy present any thing to our wishes that is worthy to come in competition with it.

Ver. 16. *Length of days is in her right hand: and in her left hand riches and honour.*] For true wisdom presents us, as we say, with both hands: teaching us, in the first place, such prudence and moderation, as by the Divine blessing prolong our days (which none of those things can do for us); and, in the next place, adds both riches and honour;

which men foolishly and vainly seek to get, and to keep, by other means. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 17. *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.*] And, besides all this, there is a singular pleasure, nay, the highest delight, in all the acts of virtue to which wisdom directs her followers: who are always either in perfect safety by well-doing, or, if any trouble come upon them, have that inward tranquillity and satisfaction, which nothing else could give them.

Ver. 18. *She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is every one that retaineth her.*] In short, wisdom leads into a paradise; and supplies the place of that tree of life, from whence our first parents were banished; that is, gives not only a present, but an immortal satisfaction, to all those that strongly apprehend and retain her precepts; and therefore I again pronounce him happy (ver. 13.) above all other men, and above all expression, who constantly and firmly adheres unto them. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 19. *The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.*] For they are a participation of that wonderful wisdom and understanding, whereby the Lord settled the earth in that place where it remains fixed; and disposed the heavenly bodies in that admirable and unchangeable order, which he would have us imitate.

Ver. 20. *By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.*] In works of mercy and goodness especially, whereby we plainly communicate with him in that knowledge, by which the Lord made fountains of water gush out of the earth for the use of all living creatures; and the clouds drop down plentifully their refreshing dews, for the cherishing of plants and grass, which in hot countries many times have no other moisture.

Ver. 21. *My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion.*] My son, (to whom my affection is so great, that I cannot but again repeat it, ver. 1. 11.) let me prevail with thee to fix these good instructions in thy mind: look upon them as the most solid wisdom, and the greatest cunning and policy; and accordingly observe them.

Ver. 22. *So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck.*] For they will revive and cheer thee, when other things fail thee: and enable thee also with acceptable words to comfort those, whom the fame of thy wisdom shall invite to learn of thee.

Ver. 23. *Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.*] When thou goest abroad about thy business, thou shalt dispatch it the more cheerfully, because thou art sure of God's providence over thee: and wisdom will direct thee to avoid those stumbling-blocks, by which others fall into sin and danger.

Ver. 24. *When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.*] And when thou comest home to rest from thy labours, thou shalt not be troubled with fear of what may happen whilst thou art asleep; but (having nothing to discompose thee) shalt lie down securely, and, by a sound and sweet repose, be refreshed to return to thy employments.

Ver. 25. *Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.*] In which, if thou shouldest be interrupted by any rumours and reports of unexpected and approaching danger, let not that disturb thee: no, though thou shouldest see the wicked ready to lay all waste, or the Divine vengeance bringing utter desolation upon them for their wickedness.

Ver. 26. *For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.*] For a firm hope in the Lord shall be thy support, even when thou art in a tottering condition; nay, when thy skill quite fails thee, and thou knowest not what to do for thy safety; he shall so direct and guide thee, that thou shalt be preserved from falling into the hands of those that lie in wait to destroy thee.

Ver. 27. *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.*] And, as it will give thee great security of mind and confidence in God at such a time, not to be conscious to thyself of any wrong done to thy neighbour, by denying to pay thy just debts when thou art able; so the remembrance of having done good to others will be a far greater: and therefore let me advise thee to take a special care not to withhold relief from those whose needs entitle them unto it: when thou canst not pretend disability, but hast wherewithal to do it.

Ver. 28. *Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.*] And, as thou wouldest not have God to defer his help in such distresses as I spake of, (ver. 25, 26.) so do not thou put off thy neighbour, when he begs a kindness of thee, saying, I cannot now; come another time; to-morrow thou shalt see what I will do for thee: when, if thou hadst a heart to it, thou couldest supply him now, as well as then; and who can tell what shall be to-morrow?

Ver. 29. *Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.*] And let not the quietness of any man's temper, much less the confidence he hath of thy honesty and goodness, tempt thee to contrive any mischief to him: for the more securely he relies on thy virtue, and the less mistrust he hath of any harm from thee, the greater wickedness it will be, so much as to have it in thy thoughts to do him any injury.

Ver. 30. *Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.*] For instance, do not bring false actions against any neighbour, nor vex him with causeless or unnecessary suits at law: no, nor so much as pretend a cause for quarrelling and falling out with him, when he hath done nothing to deserve it of thee.

Ver. 31. *Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.*] And what though thou shouldest see men thrive by oppression and violence, let not that provoke thee to emulate them; that is, to wish thyself in their condition, by imitating them in any of their injurious proceedings.

Ver. 32. *For the froward is abomination to the Lord: but his secret is with the righteous.*] For he that perversely departs from all the rules of truth and justice, is above all expression abominable to the Lord; even in his highest prosperity: but the Lord is a friend to men of sincere integrity; who know the secret of his providence in raising those wicked oppressors so high, that they may have the more dreadful fall.

Ver. 33. *The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just.*] The evildoer is under the curse of the Lord, though he live in the

most stately palace: but just and good men ought to look upon themselves as under his care and blessing; and therefore very happy in the meanest cottage.

Ver. 34. *Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace to the lowly.*] Those proud oppressors and scoffers at good men, he will undoubtedly, not only confound, but expose to scorn, and make them ridiculous in the eyes of the world; but cause the humble, modest, and meek (who bear even their insolent scoffs patiently), to be had in honour and highly esteemed.

Ver. 35. *The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.*] They may be despised and debased for a time, but in the issue they shall be accounted the only wise men; and leave an excellent never-dying fame behind them; when those impious men shall be famous for nothing, but the shame and disgrace that shall fall upon them.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The dulness, sluggishness, and forgetfulness of mankind in their principal concernments are so notorious, that we need not wonder the wise man repeats the very same things, and quickens our attention to them, in the beginning of this chapter. Which he thought necessary to excite again (ver. 10.) and again, (ver. 20.) because all his pains he knew would be lost without serious consideration of what he said: and *the very first step to wisdom, is to have a mind to be wise.*

And to make his exhortations the more acceptable, he acquaints the reader with the lessons which his own father and mother were wont to teach him, (ver. 3, 4, &c.) and the great benefit he had received by them. Which gave him the greater confidence to press every one to follow his example of obsequiousness to good counsels, as the surest way to be happy: and by no means to imitate the examples of the wicked, from which he dissuades by many arguments, (ver. 14, 15, &c.) and beseeches they may be so duly pondered, (ver. 20, 21, &c.) that they produce in every one a watchfulness over his own heart, his mouth, his eyes, his feet: as may be seen in the conclusion of the chapter.

The whole chapter from ver. 4. may be conceived to be the words of David as well as Solomon's. But I have extended David's advice no farther than unto ver. 10. and there make Solomon to resume his exhortation; and urge upon his son what his father had taught him.

There is one proverbial speech in ver. 27. which needs no explication. Some would have another, ver. 16. but I can see no reason for it.

The principal instructions in this chapter are these: *the care that parents ought to take to instruct their children diligently;* and the greater they are (suppose princes) the more accurate ought their education to be, as Solomon's was: (ver. 3, 4, &c.) and above all things *the excellence of wisdom and virtue is to be inculcated:* for this excites a desire of it; and that is the very beginning of it, as some expound those words, ver. 7. In which sense they are admirably explained in the book of Wisdom, (vi. 12—14. 17.) Next to this they are to be *cautioned against evil company, as the bane of youth:* and the *wretchedness of their life that live wickedly* is to be represented; and *the happiness, comfort, and satisfaction, of theirs that live virtuously,* which increase as their days and their virtues do, (ver. 18.) Next they are to be taught how necessary it is to be *constant in reading pious books, especially the Holy Scriptures:* (ver. 21.) and *to have an upright heart,* sincerely disposed to follow such directions; upon which all depends, both their well or ill-doing, and their well or ill-being. *Watchfulness also over the senses* is commended, as of great use to preserve the affections from being corrupted.

Ver. 1. *HEAR, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.*] Listen then all ye that are desirous to learn, unto the instructions which, out of a paternal affection, I bring from God unto you: hearken to them, though they correct your present manners; and let your mind be so attentive, that you may know what it is to have a right understanding in all things.

Ver. 2. *For I give you good doctrine, forsake you not my law.*] They are no frivolous or indifferent matters which I teach you; but the most excellent things, and absolutely necessary to your happiness: therefore do not merely attend to them, but strictly observe my precepts, as the law and rule of your life.

Ver. 3. *For I was my father's son, and tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.*] Do as I myself did, who remember, that when I was a child, the son of a most wise and pious father, and under the careful eye of an affectionate mother; who loved me most dearly above all her children, and while I was soft and flexible, and apt to receive good impressions, looked to my education with great circumspection;

Ver. 4. *He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.*] My father was wont to tutor and instruct me, (1 Chron. xxviii. 8. xxix. 2.) saying, Mind my words, and faithfully retain them, not only in thy memory, but in thy affections; observe my commandments, and thou shalt enjoy long happiness.

Ver. 5. *Get wisdom, get understanding; forget it not: neither decline from the words of my mouth.*] And this is the thing I require of thee, not so much to seek after riches, as to treasure up wisdom; and endeavour to understand how to behave thyself upon all occasions; and when thou art well-informed in thy duty, do not forget it, nor turn aside from the way, into which I will direct thee.

Ver. 6. *Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.*] Quit all things in this world rather than forsake the precepts of wisdom; stick to them, and they will preserve thee from innumerable mischiefs: love them sincerely, and they will be stronger guard than money can procure thee.

Ver. 7. *Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.*] And as there is nothing comparable to wisdom, so the first step to it is to know as much, and to prize it accordingly. Begin therefore to be wise, by looking upon the fear of God as above all earthly possessions, and by being willing, if it were needful, to give all thou art worth to know what is pleasing to him.

Ver. 8. *Exalt her, and she shall promote thee; she shall*

bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.] Thou canst not speak nor think too highly of this wisdom, as thou shalt find by happy experience. For if thou magnify it above all things, it will raise thy esteem, and make thee great in the world; yea, when thou entertainest it with ardent love, thou shalt become most illustrious in the sight of God and men.

Ver. 9. *She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.*] Whatsoever else thou hast to commend thee and gain thee honour, this shall add unto it, and make it far more amiable; the fairest ornaments, or the most beautiful crown that can be set upon thy head, shall receive lustre from hence; and be settled there the most securely.

Ver. 10. *Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings: and the years of thy life shall be many.*] Thus my father was wont to discourse to me, as I do to thee, my son; whom I earnestly again entreat (ver. 1.) to consider what I say, and to believe it; and then I promise thee, what he did me, (ver. 4.) that thou shalt lead a long and happy life.

Ver. 11. *I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.*] I have already taught thee, and will still inform thee in the wisest course unto it; not in those crooked ways of fraud and falseness, &c. which many take; but in the direct paths of integrity and truth, in which I intend, as I have done hitherto, to lead thee.

Ver. 12. *When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.*] And if thy actions and designs have no other rule, thou shalt be at ease, and free from those straits and difficulties which others meet withal; and in case thy business shall require haste, this will be the safest, as well as the most inoffensive (if not the shortest), way to accomplish thy ends.

Ver. 13. *Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.*] Resolve to try it, and, though it should be contrary to thy present sense, yet do not refuse this instruction which I give thee; but take such fast hold of it, as never, for want of care and pains, to let it slip out of thy mind; keep it as a most precious treasure, for all thy happiness depends upon it.

Ver. 14. *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.*] And if thou really intendest to be guided by me, remember the advice I gave thee in the beginning, (chap. i. 10.) not so much as to enter upon their wicked course of life, or to keep them company, who regard not God, and are injurious to men: or, if thou hast been seduced into it, be not persuaded by their seeming prosperity, and thriving condition, to continue in it.

Ver. 15. *Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.*] Avoid it therefore with a just abhorrence; come not near it, but get as far as thou canst from their society: and decline all occasions that might invite thee into it, as dangerous temptations.

Ver. 16. *For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.*] For as mischief is their business, so they pursue it with a restless diligence: there being those among them, for instance, that cannot be quiet, nor have any satisfaction, till they have executed their villanous intentions; but perpetually disturb themselves, that they may ruin others.

Ver. 17. *For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.*] For they live by robbery and spoil; having no other meat and drink, but what is the fruit of their rapine and violence, and not of their honest labours.

Ver. 18. *But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*] Which makes a wide difference between them and righteous men; whose pure and innocent life is full of honour as well as joy; which increases continually together with their virtue; proceeding (like the splendour of the sun, which nothing can extinguish, nor hinder in its course) till come to the highest pitch of joy and glory.

Ver. 19. *The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble.*] Whereas, those wicked people live most uncomfortably, as well as basely and vilely; going on blindly to their own destruction (of which they are in constant danger, and grows more and more upon them), and yet they know not (no more than men in thick darkness) what mischief it is that suddenly may befal them.

Ver. 20. *My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.*] Therefore I do, not without reason, once more repeat my request unto thee, (ver. 1. 10.) that thou wilt give diligent heed to my advice; and seriously consider those exhortations, which proceed from a sincere affection to thy welfare.

Ver. 21. *Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.*] Read them over and over again, and keep them perpetually in mind; or rather preserve them studiously, and lay them up, as a most precious treasure, in the closest affections of thy heart.

Ver. 22. *For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.*] For they will make all those exceeding happy, both in body and soul, that come thoroughly acquainted with them: and, how various soever their temper and condition be, will prove an universal remedy for all their griefs and troubles.

Ver. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*] And charge thyself with this, above all other cares, to set such a strict guard upon the inward thoughts, motions, and affections of thy soul (which are besieged with many enemies), that thy consent be never obtained to any thing which thou oughtest to refuse: for thy living well or ill depends on this; and such as thy caution and watchfulness are in this, such will the actions of thy life be, which flow from thence.

Ver. 24. *Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.*] And as they that defend a city against an enemy set a strong guard at the gates and posterns, so do thou upon thy ears and upon thy mouth, never speaking things contrary to truth, honesty, and religion, thyself; nor listening unto those that do, but banishing both as far as is possible, from thy familiarity.

Ver. 25. *Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.*] The eyes also are dangerous inlets into the heart; and therefore watch them well that they do not gaze about, and fasten on every object that invites them: but be fixed upon one scope, as thy thoughts ought to be, from which let nothing divert them.

Ver. 26. *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.*] And before thou fixest and resolvest upon any action, examine and weigh it thoroughly, whether it be agreeable to the rule of life, and the end thou aimest at:

and so thou shalt be constant to thyself, and confirmed in a steadfast course of well-doing.

Ver. 27. *Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.*] From which do not suffer thyself to be drawn aside, either to superstition on the one hand, or to contempt or neglect of religion on the other: let neither love of friends, nor hatred of enemies, neither hope of pleasure and gain, nor fear of pain and damage, neither prosperous nor cross events, ever move thee to turn into either extreme from the rule of virtue: but, whatsoever inclination thou findest that way, do not proceed to commit the least sin against God, or against thy neighbour.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

There being nothing to which youth is so prone, as to give up themselves to satisfy their fleshly desires, and nothing proving so pernicious to them, if they do it with harlots; the wise man gives a new caution against those impure lusts, which he had taken notice of before, (chap. ii. 16, 17, &c.) as great obstructions to wisdom: and with repeated entreaties begs attention to so weighty an argument, which here he prosecutes more largely, and presses, not only with singular elegance, but with powerful reasons. Which, in the heat of youth, men are not forward to consider; but if they would be so sober, Solomon hath said enough to deter them from whoredom.

Whose miserable effects he describes by several apt resemblances, (ver. 4, 5.) which shew how, by this vice, men lose their honour, their time, their health, and estates; and at last (as he shews afterward) lie down in sorrow, and end their days in an unprofitable repentance. And therefore, for the prevention of this, he commends the use of marriage, and a passionate love for a man's own wife; which he describes allegorically: first [*a*], under the comparison of a *domestic fountain;* where a man may quench his natural thirst, and from whence *streams* (*i. e.* children) may be derived abroad to serve the public good, &c. and, secondly, under the comparison of a *young hind* and *a young wild goat:* which are taken notice of by authors that write of animals (particularly Oppianus) to be loving creatures; and which in ancient times were playfellows (as one may call them) for the greatest persons, who kept them in their palaces, and diverted themselves with them, as a lovely sort of creature, whom they delighted to adorn with chains, and garlands, and such-like things. About which Bochartus among others may be consulted: who hath demonstrated that the *jaalah* (which we translate a *roe*) is a creature that lived in mountainous places, and could climb up the steepest rocks. Unto which, as well as to a *young hind*, Solomon compares a good wife, because of the simplicity, softness, and good-nature of this kind of creature; and other qualities mentioned by ancient authors: who abundantly satisfy us, what reason the wise man had to make choice of these comparisons, to represent the pleasure of ardent love between man and wife, when it is natural without constraint; sincere, simple, gentle, without moroseness, suspicions, or pride: which good qualities are not to be found in harlots, but may be met withal in a wife. From whence he shews the unreasonableness, nay, unaccountable folly, of preferring fornication and vagrant lusts, before the innocent joys of a married life, (ver. 20.) to which a man, who considers his own good, would choose to be tied, that he may avoid the inconveniences, or rather miseries, to which the lusts of uncleanness reduce him: but especially the heavy judgment of God; who, having ordained marriage for the comfort of mankind, and the preserving society, (ver. 21, &c.) will not therefore let the contempt of it go unpunished.

The principal things to be learnt in this chapter are, not to believe every thing to be good for us that pleases the flesh for the present, (ver. 3, &c.) but in the beginning of any pleasure, to look to the end of it; to avoid the company of harlots; to use due care in the choice of a wife; to love her too much, rather than too little; to restrain ourselves from inordinate affection, by the consideration of God's omnipresence, &c.

The proverbial sayings are obvious enough in ver. 3, 4. 15. I shall only give an account of my translating עדה ver. 14. [*b*] the *assembly of judges:* for in many other places, besides those quoted there in the Paraphrase, it signifies the *seventy elders* or *senators* who judged the people: as in Josh. xx. 6. and Numb. xxvii. 21. where R. Solomon thus expounds בל העדה *all the congregation.* And so truly it seems plainly to be used Numb. xv. 24, &c. where the sacrifice is different from that prescribed in Lev. iv. 13, &c. and therefore the sin was different, and the *congregation* for whom this was offered, were *the representatives of the whole congregation;* or, as they now speak, the great Sanhedrin.

Ver. 1. *My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding.*] I cannot too often awaken thine attention, (whoever thou art that puttest thyself under my instruction; see chap. ii. 1. iii. 1. 21, &c.) especially in things of such moment as I am going to treat of: and therefore again I beseech thee, both to mind diligently, and to consider what I take to be true wisdom, and more than ordinary prudence.

Ver. 2. *That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge.*] Which, if thou observest, it will make thee so skilful and discreetly cautious, that thou shalt not only be able to preserve thyself from the most subtle and dangerous deceits; but, upon occasion, to advise others, and keep them from being cheated.

Ver. 3. *For the lips of a strange woman drop as a honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil.*] As too many are by the arts of a harlot, from whom thou oughtest to estrange thyself as much as if she were not of the commonwealth of Israel; for she pretending the greatest love, allures inexperienced youth by her flattering speeches, and sweet voice, perhaps, and songs, wherewith she enchants them; and making them believe they shall taste nothing but the most delicious pleasures, her soft and smooth enticements slip down glibly into their unwary hearts, which are taken with her.

Ver. 4. *But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.*] But the beginning of this love is not so sweet, as the conclusion is bitter; and therefore think of both together, and believe what I now tell thee, without making a trial; that after a short pleasure follows long

pain, by impairing men's health, strength, estates, and credit; which they cannot reflect upon without trouble and vexation, and (if she do not quite destroy their reason) be filled with remorse of conscience, and anguish of spirit: for, like a sword that cuts on both sides, she wounds both soul and body.

Ver. 5. *Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.*] In short, leads those that follow her to an untimely, shameful, and miserable end: to have never so little to do with her, is to approach to certain and inevitable destruction; not only here, but in another world.

Ver. 6. *Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them.*] For though thou mayest think to make a retreat in time, thou wilt be deceived: she having more ways than thou canst ever know (winding and turning herself into a thousand shapes), to keep thee from so much as deliberating about thy return to a virtuous course of life.

Ver. 7. *Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.*] All which considered, should incline those that read these things to be obedient to me: who do not desire to restrain them from any thing that will make them happy; but in tender affection advise them, not to be enticed by her flatteries to depart from those fatherly counsels, which, out of mere kindness, I give unto them.

Ver. 8. *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house.*] If all will not be governed by them, yet do thou, whose mind is awakened to attend unto me, wholly shun all familiarity with her; nay, so much as the least aspect towards her: avoid her as thou wouldest the plague; and be so far from going into her chamber, as not to come near the door of her house.

Ver. 9. *Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel.*] Lest thou forfeit all the reputation, which perhaps thou hast got by worthy actions, and grow contemptible among thy friends and acquaintance; who see thee prefer the company of harlots, and their base attendants, before that of the most virtuous persons: and thereby thou lose, not only thy fame, but sacrifice the flower of thine age, and thy precious time, to one that doth not love thee a jot; but could see thee perish without any pity.

Ver. 10. *Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labours be in the house of a stranger.*] And that will be the issue of thy impurity; which wastes first the strength and vigour of thy body, and then thy money and estate, upon a strange family, perhaps of another country: whose filthy lusts are satiated at the expense of thy spirits; and whose house and table are furnished with the fruit of thy care and labours.

Ver. 11. *And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed.*] And when things are come to this pass, that thy credit, thy friends, thy precious time, thy health, thy estate, and thy pleasure too are all gone, and nothing left but a heavy heart, and skin and bone; then thou begin unprofitably to groan and lament; nay, perhaps to roar out thy grief in a most deplorable manner.

Ver. 12. *And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof.*] Saying, How stupidly foolish have I been, in not considering all this sooner; how senselessly bent upon my own ruin. I am amazed to think how I hated the cautions that were given me to avoid her company; and inwardly despised (how civilly however in outward show I received them) the just reproofs I had afterward for going to her.

Ver. 13. *And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!*] I wanted no good instructions of my parents, tutors, friends, and God's ministers; who informed me of the danger, and taught me how to escape it: but, alas! I was so sottish as not to obey them; so contumacious, that I did not so much as consider what they said unto me.

Ver. 14. *I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.*] But gave up myself to follow my lusts, which in a short time engaged me in almost all kind of wickedness; from which the reverence of no persons could restrain me: but openly, in the face of the most public and solemn assemblies of God's people, even before the magistrates and judges, (Numb. xxv. 7. xxxv. 12.) I boldly committed them. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 15. *Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.*] Such are the fruitless moans of a man that hath quite exhausted himself in those lewd courses; which shew how much better it is to follow the advice which I now give thee: marry, and in a wife of thine own enjoy the pleasures thou desirest, and be content with them alone; innocent, chaste, and pure pleasures; as much different from the other as the clear waters of a wholesome fountain are from those of a dirty lake or puddle.

Ver. 16. *Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets.*] Of whom thou mayest have a lawful issue, which thou needest not be ashamed to own; but openly produce and send them abroad, like streams from a spring, to serve the public good; nay, a numerous progeny may be derived from your happy society, and match into divers other honest families.

Ver. 17. *Let them be only thine own, and not strangers with thee.*] Children that acknowledge no other father, because they spring from one whom thou enjoyest (like a fountain in thy own ground) to thyself alone: being taught by thy confining thyself to her, never to admit any stranger to thy bed, but to keep it solely unto thee.

Ver. 18. *Let thy fountain be blessed; and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.*] Happy shalt thou every way be with such a wife; whom I advise thee to take in thy youth, and, avoiding those filthy cruel harlots, (ver. 9.) to solace thyself in her innocent and delightful company: whereby thou wilt long preserve thy youth, which they speedily deflower, (ver. 10.)

Ver. 19. *Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.*] Love her and cherish her, with a most tender affection; and let her always seem amiable in thy eyes: if thou wouldest recreate and disport thyself (as some are wont to do with young fawns, and other beautiful creatures of like kind), let it be with her, as the sweetest companion; in whose embraces take such satisfaction, as to forget all other, and to be excessively transported with her as long as you live. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 20. *And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?*] Consider, my son, (ver. 1.) what I say, and deny if thou canst, that it is an unaccountable folly to seek that in a

vile harlot (to whom thou oughtest to be as great a stranger, as to her religion), which thou mayest more fully, more pleasantly, securely, and constantly, as well as more innocently, enjoy in a pious wife of thine own nation:

Ver. 21. *For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.*] And, which is most considerable, enjoy with the approbation and favour of the Lord: from whom no man can hide his private actions, but he plainly sees and weighs all he doth, wheresoever he be; and will exactly proportion rewards and punishments, according as he behaves himself.

Ver. 22. *His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.*] If he be a wicked fornicator or adulterer, for instance, let him not think to escape, because he is so cunning that nobody observes him, or so powerful that none can call him to account: for his own manifold iniquities shall arrest and apprehend him; and he shall need no other chains to bind and hold him fast, to answer for them to God.

Ver. 23. *He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.*] Whose sentence upon such a person is this, that he shall inevitably perish, (ver. 5.) because he refused to follow these instructions; and not only miss of his aim of being happy, but, like men that wander from the right way, precipitate himself into unexpected ruin, (ver. 9—11.) because he was such an egregious fool, as to take no warning by all that could be said to him; but still to commit innumerable sins, (ver. 13, 14.) though he was told the many inconveniences, nay mischiefs, they would bring upon him.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

For the securing of the peace and happiness of a married life (which the wise man had commended in the foregoing chapter), he here adds two cautions; one against *suretyship*, the other against *sloth:* which make great discontents in a family, by bringing it to poverty. He illustrates both by elegant similitudes; especially the latter, by the example of the ant: who borrows of none, and yet is not in danger to starve; laying up in store, by a notable industry, sufficient provision in due season against a time of need. Which the great Lord Bacon [*a*] ingeniously applies (in the beginning of his sixth book of the Advancement of Learning) to the improvement of arts and sciences, *by every one's bringing his grain.* And in this business he defines the slothful to be; *whose only care it is to live upon the main stock; but not to improve it by sowing the ground of sciences over again, and reaping a new harvest.* This is the sum of the eleven first verses.

And upon this occasion he annexes the description of a deceitful knave, (ver. 12, &c.) who cares not by what wicked arts he lives, when he is reduced to poverty: whose character he gives from his mouth, his eyes, feet, fingers, heart, and tongue. And after a septenary of vices, (ver. 16, &c.) which he represents as most odious to God, he returns to his former argument, to give cautions against uncleanness, especially adultery, (ver. 20. 24, &c.) which, as it is many times the effect of idleness, so he shews is the way to bring one to poverty; nay, to endanger one's life, or to bring inevitably upon him some other mischief; not only infamy, but the hatred and revenge of that person who is wronged by the adulterer; who hereby puts himself into a worse condition than that of a thief. [*b*] They that would see the terrible effects of this jealousy fully and livelily described, let them read St. Chrysostom, περὶ Παρθενίας, chap. lii. where he observes, among other things, that οὐ τὴν ἀθυμίαν μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ θυμὸν, &c. *this disease is wont to breed and bring forth, not only an intolerable heaviness of mind, but an insupportable rage;* and that such is the madness of this distemper, that it is not cured, no, not by the revenge it takes upon him that is the cause of it.

The principal points of wisdom to be learnt in this chapter are these; care of our family; caution in engaging for others; diligence in some honest employment; hatred of idleness, as contrary to nature; not to contemn the meanest instructor, but to learn something even of the smallest creature; and to improve the present time; to dread the mischievous effects of poverty, especially that which comes by idleness; (the effect of which is too oft the loss of all conscience; ver. 12, 13, &c.) to give good heed to the admonitions of our parents and instructors, when they teach the will of God: and above all things, to fortify ourselves against the sins of uncleanness. About which the wise man gives the more frequent cautions, because youth is not more prone to them, than they are pernicious to youth: who ought therefore not only to weigh diligently the miserable consequences of them, especially of adultery (which he represents in the conclusion of the chapter), but carefully to avoid the occasions of such sins; and faithfully to suppress the first motions towards them, ver. 25, &c. [*c*] where he gives a particular charge to watch over our eyes (which are the inlets to love), and uses a remarkable phrase to express the danger of gazing upon an evil woman; lest he be *taken* or *caught* with her eyelids: which he seems to compare to *nets*, as other authors do: particularly Philostratus in his Epistles; where he often speaks of the τὰ τῶν ὀμμάτων δίκτυα, *nets of the eyes;* and hath in these elegant words expressed the power of love which resides in the *eyelids*, here mentioned: ὁ Ἔρως τὴν τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀκρόπολιν, οὐ ξύλοις οὐδὲ πλίνθοις, ἀλλὰ μόνοις βλεφάροις τειχίσας, ἡσυχῇ κατὰ μικρὸν εἰσδύεται, &c. Epist. Γυναικί.

It would be too long to note the *proverbial* speeches in this chapter. I shall only give a brief account of them, and of one phrase in this chapter that needs a little explication.

[*d*] As for the proverbial speech, it is ver. 11. upon which the Lord Bacon hath made a very ingenious observation; distinguishing in this manner, between the poverty that comes as a traveller, and the want that comes as an armed man: that the "shipwreck of fortune falls upon prodigals, or such as are careless of their estates, by insensible degrees of the first: with soft silent paces, like a traveller, and is hardly perceived: but soon after necessity invades him, like an armed man; that is, presses upon him so hard, that he feels it plainly, and perceives there is no resistance to be made." And thereupon he gives this prudent advice, to "prevent the traveller, and to be well provided against the armed man." But it is sufficient to have noted this here, (out of his eighth book

of the Advancement of Learning, chap. 2. parab. 5.) which they that please may make use of upon occasion. In my Paraphrase I have waived this exact curiosity; because I observe the wise man generally repeats the same thing, in other words, without any such distinction.

[*e*] As for the phrase I spoke of, it is ver. 31. where it is said a thief shall *restore sevenfold* (as we translate the word), when the law of Moses enjoins no such restitution, but much less, (Exod. xxii. 1. 4.) and there is no reason to think the law was altered in aftertimes. Therefore I have followed another use of the word *schivatajim*, which signifies not any determinate number, but only such as is perfect and complete in its kind; as may be seen Gen. iv. 15. 24. Psal. xii. 7. Isa. xxx. 26.

Ver. 1. *My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger.*] And now, my son, (see chap. ii. 1. iii. 1. 17.) that no difference may arise between thy wife and thee; be advised by me not to pass thy word rashly for the money which thy neighbour or friend borroweth of another; much less stand bound for a stranger, whose honesty or ability is unknown to thee.

Ver. 2. *Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.*] Young men, indeed, think this no great matter; but if thou hast been so incautious as to be drawn into such engagements, look upon thyself as no longer a free man, but hampered and enslaved in dangerous obligations.

Ver. 3. *Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend.*] And therefore, in that case, immediately follow the counsel which I now give thee, my son: do thy utmost endeavour to be discharged, by pressing thy friend forthwith to satisfy the debt, or to give thee security against the creditor: make no delay, and stick not, if need be, to cast down thyself before him on the ground, and beseech him as readily to grant thy request, as thou wast forward to comply with his: be not modest at all; nor cease to urge and importune him, by thyself and by thy friends, till thou hast prevailed with him.

Ver. 4. *Give not sleep to thy eyes, nor slumber to thy eyelids.*] Be not quiet till this be accomplished; nor take so much as a wink of sleep till thou art eased of this care: which, if thou understandest thyself, may well disturb thy rest.

Ver. 5. *Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.*] For thou art in the same condition with a young roe, or silly bird, that is taken in the toil of the hunter, or the snare of the fowler; and therefore struggle, like them, with all thy might, to get loose (if it be possible), and to be released from the bond wherein thou art entangled.

Ver. 6. *Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.*] Nor are industry and diligence requisite in this alone, but in all thy affairs; to which, therefore, if thou art slothful, I must excite thee by the example of the ants, whose orderly and unanimous diligence, in collecting and preserving food for themselves, if thou wilt mark and observe, thou mayest be ashamed to be an idle spectator of their labours; and learn hereafter to imitate their provident care. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 7. *Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler.*] Which is the more remarkable, because they have none to lead and direct them (as mankind have), no overseer to exact their labours; no supreme governor to call them to an account for any negligence.

Ver. 8. *Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.*] And yet they never omit the opportunity they have in harvest, to make provision against the winter; but toil perpetually in gathering, and carrying food into the cells they have digged for it in the earth; where they lay it up and secure it with admirable art; that it may neither be injured by the weather, nor stolen from them by other creatures.

Ver. 9. *How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?*] O the strange idleness of mankind! who have many monitors and governors, that call upon them again and again, and stir them up in vain to labour. What wretchlessness is this, which makes thee, O sluggard, indulge thyself in laziness and sloth? as if thou wert made for nothing else but to sleep and take thine ease!

Ver. 10. *Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.*] Rolling thyself in thy bed, and ridiculously desiring thy pains may be spared, and thou mayest be suffered still, without any disturbance, to enjoy a little more sleep; when thou hast loitered too long, and put off the care of thy affairs from time to time, till thou hast none left to do it in.

Ver. 11. *So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.*] But poverty comes apace upon thee, and before thou art aware leaves thee as naked as if thou wert stripped by a highwayman: nay, extreme want seizes on thee unavoidably, like an armed man, which thou canst find no means to resist. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 12. *A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth.*] By which means thou mayest be tempted to become the worst of men, a perfect shark, void of all faith and honesty; whose mouth never speaks a word of truth; but makes it his business, by lies, or flatteries, or slanders, or perjuries, to maintain himself in his idle courses.

Ver. 13. *He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers.*] His very eyes are instruments of deceit or mischief; for he makes signs with them to his companions, when they are to play their pranks: or if that be too broad, he secretly treads upon their toes, or signifies his mind by the motion of his fingers; for every part of him is employed to make his wicked meaning understood.

Ver. 14. *Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord.*] How should it be otherwise, when his heart is a shop, furnished with nothing but all manner of perverse inclinations? which are perpetually at work to contrive some mischief or other: and (if they can do nothing else) by casting suspicions into men's minds one of another, to stir up hatred, dissension, strife, brawlings, law-suits, and all manner of discord; which is the destruction of families and kingdoms.

Ver. 15. *Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.*] And shall prove his own utter ruin: which, for this very cause, shall, sooner than he thinks of, in a terrible manner, come upon him; when he fancies he hath carried his matters so cun-

ningly, that nobody discerns his villany, he shall on a sudden be looked upon as the worst of mankind, and, like a vessel broken into little bits, be incurably undone.

Ver. 16. *These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him.*] For, among offences of this kind, nothing is more odious to the Lord (who is the dispenser of rewards and punishments), nothing more opposite to the Divine nature, and which he more severely punishes, than these six or seven things; which are commonly found in loose companions, such as I have now described:

Ver. 17. *A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood.*] First, pride and haughtiness of spirit; which swelling a man with a vain opinion of himself, makes him contemn all others, and overlook them as below his notice. Secondly, falsehood or treachery; which stick not at any lies, or flatteries, or calumnies. And, thirdly, a violent, cruel disposition; which makes a man rather imbrue his hands in the blood even of an innocent person, than not have him removed, who stands in the way of his designs.

Ver. 18. *A heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief.*] To which add the fountain of all these, and of those that follow; a mind that studies nothing but how, by fraud or force (though never so injurious to others), to satisfy some desire of pleasure, covetousness, or revenge: which produces three other abominable vices. First, forwardness to execute such mischievous intentions and desires cheerfully, without any check or delay:

Ver. 19. *A false witness that speaketh lies, and him that soweth discord among brethren.*] Secondly, an atheistical impudence, which makes a man in open court (when he is upon his oath) testify any falsehood against his neighbour; and lastly, such malicious envy, as loves to make the dearest friends fall out; and takes pleasure to see those at variance, who ought to be most closely united in brotherly affection.

Ver. 20. *My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother.*] And here, my son, I must remember thee of what I said in the beginning, (chap. i. 8.) about a reverend regard unto thy parents; especially when they warn thee against such wickednesses as these: do not make light of their admonitions; but observe the precepts of thy father, and let thy mother's commands be a law to thee. (See chap. i. 8.)

Ver. 21. *Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.*] Fix them in thy mind, and link thy affections so fast to them, that they may not only be continually before thine eyes; but seem the greatest ornament to all thy words and actions, when they are ordered by their directions.

Ver. 22. *When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.*] Thou wilt find the benefit of giving early entertainment to such good counsel from thy parents, in every passage of thy whole life: for when thou goest about any business, it will guide thee to do it honestly and successfully; when thou liest down to sleep, it will make thee rest secure of the guardianship of the Divine Providence over thee; and when thou awakest in the morning, suggest to thy thoughts how thou oughtest to behave thyself at home and abroad.

Ver. 23. *For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the ways of life.*] In the darkest times, and the most dubious cases, it will both direct and comfort thee; for every particular commandment of God (which they teach thee) is like a candle; and the whole law is like the light of the sun; to shew thee thy way, and to exhilarate thy spirits, while thou walkest in it: nay, the severest reproofs, which correct thy errors, and reduce thee to obedience, are the way to the greatest happiness.

Ver. 24. *To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman.*] As those instructions and reproofs, for instance, out to be accounted, which preserve thee from being deluded by the flattering speeches and enticements of a lewd woman; from whom thou oughtest perfectly to estrange thyself, as from a sink of all wickedness.

Ver. 25. *Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids.*] Let me advise thee again (though I have done it oft, ii. 16. v. 3, 4, &c.) not to gaze upon her beauty, or upon her fine attire; but suppress the very first desire, which a glance of her may have kindled in thy heart: do not consent to pursue it in the least; much less suffer thyself to be caught in the nets of her wanton eyes, and thereby drawn into her dangerous embraces. See Arg. [c]

Ver. 26. *For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread; and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.*] For such is the cunning of a harlot, that having got a silly youth into her toils, she will hardly let him go, till she have reduced him to the extremest beggary; and if she be another man's wife, a train is laid for that which is more precious by far than all the treasures he hath spent, *viz.* his dearest life; which he foolishly loses for the short pleasure of a sinful lust.

Ver. 27. *Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burnt?*] He may think, perhaps, to enjoy his pleasure so privately, that none shall know it; but that is as unlikely, as that a man should take fire secretly into his bosom, and so conceal it that it shall not break out and burn his clothes.

Ver. 28. *Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt?*] Who ever heard that fire will do no hurt, because it is closely lodged? or that any body ever walked barefoot upon red-hot coals, and his feet escaped from being burnt?

Ver. 29. *So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent.*] Even so it is sottish folly to imagine that a man shall suffer nothing, who lies with his neighbour's wife: let him be who he will that commits that crime, he shall not escape unpunished.

Ver. 30. *Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry.*] For he is not a common thief, who only steals a man's goods, and that perhaps out of extreme necessity, merely to satisfy his hungry appetite, which he knows not otherways how to fill: such a one we are apt to pity, and do not expose him to shame, by whipping him, and laying stripes upon his back;

Ver. 31. *But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.*] But when he is found out, he shall only make as complete a restitution (Psal. lxxix. 12.) as the law requires, (Exod. xxii. 1, &c.) though that perhaps may be no less than all that he is worth. See Arg. [e]

Ver. 32. *But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.*] But the adulterer robs a man of his wife, without any such necessity, there being other and honest ways to satisfy his desires; and therefore, hath no excuse, but must be looked upon as a stupid fool, void of common understanding; and when he is found out, be punished, not merely in his estate, but with the loss of his life, (Lev. xx. 10.)

Ver. 33. *A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.*] And besides the quarrels and other troubles wherein this sin may engage him, his reputation shall receive a deadly wound; and it will make him infamous as long as he lives, and when he is dead; for while his name lasts, it shall not be mentioned without reproach; but have a brand of disgrace set upon it, which shall never be blotted out.

Ver. 34. *For jealousy is the rage of a man; therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.*] For no restitution can be made, nor satisfaction given, in this case, as there may be in the other; no prayers neither, nor submissions, shall prevail with the injured husband; whose justly-provoked indignation rises up to a furious rage; which will not pity or spare the adulterer (though the public justice should be asleep), when he finds an opportunity to be revenged. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 35. *He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.*] Though he may be willing to expiate his crime, and redeem his life at any rate, it will not be accepted; the largest gifts will be refused; and though greater and greater be still offered, they will not appease his wrath: which pursues the adulterer implacably, and never rests contented but in his utter ruin.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Chastity is a virtue of that consequence, and impurity such a pernicious bane of youth, that the wise man thought he could not too often make mention of the danger of the one, to move men carefully to preserve the other. And therefore is not contented with what he had already said about this matter, in the latter end of the second chapter, and in the whole fifth chapter, and now in the latter part of the sixth; but again repeats it with renewed importunities; desiring to be heard attentively, especially in the cautions he gives against *adultery;* the avoiding of which he represents as a high point of wisdom, (ver. 1—4.)

And the better to secure those that desire to be happy from this snare, he represents, together with the silliness of young men, the cunning and crafty devices of an impudent adulteress. Which is admirably set forth from ver. 6. to ver. 21. where he begins to shew the effects of her courtship, and its lamentable conclusion. And thereupon (ver. 24.) renews his entreaties to beware of such women; who have undone many and great persons; and to stop at the very first motion or inclination towards her.

The sum of all is, that it is a *singular benefit* a man hath by true wisdom, to be preserved from such sins and such miseries: and therefore we should *study wisdom;* which alone can secure us from being deceived by such flatteries, as bewitch silly and incautious souls to their ruin. And herein the *vigilance of magistrates* is required to watch and observe (as Solomon did, ver. 6, 7.) the manner of their subjects; that may the better obviate and correct their vices: but especially *every man's diligent consideration* is necessary, of such things as Solomon here sets before him, to divert him from such wicked courses. Particularly the *character of these lewd women is to be studied;* who are then most abominable, when they put on the mask of piety and devotion. As this strumpet doth (ver. 14.) in her speech which she makes to the young man; where there are two things in my Paraphrase, of which I owe some account to the reader.

[*a*] The one is in the beginning of it, (ver. 14.) Where I have taken *schelamin*, peace-offerings, of which there were three sorts, (Lev. vii. 11, 12. 16.) for the last of them, offerings of *thanksgiving* for blessings already obtained; not of *prayer* for the impetration of blessings from God (as Grotius and others understand the word) not yet received: my reason is, because she was so solicitous to have company at her feast upon this sacrifice that very day. Every body knows that such sacrifices were to be of the best, either of *bullocks*, or *sheep*, or *goats*, (Lev. iii. 1. 6. 12.) and that the greatest part of them fell to the share of the person who offered them, that he might feast with God: that is, all except the fat upon the kidneys, and rump of the sheep, and the breast and right shoulder; which was sufficient to make a liberal entertainment for his friends. But this is not so commonly observed, that though they might keep this flesh two days, before it was all spent, because there was such plenty of it, yet that is to be understood only of the two first sorts of peace-offerings, for obtaining blessings; not of the *eucharistical*, or thank-offerings: which, as Philo observes, were to be eaten the very same day they were offered: "that they who had readily received favours from God, might as readily, and without delay, communicate to others." Which is the account Abarbinel also gives of this matter: and it is observable, that all sorts of bread were to be joined with this sacrifice, that every thing might be ready for the feast.

[*b*] The other thing is at the latter end of her speech, (ver. 20.) where by the word *haccese* I understand the *full moon*, as the Vulgar Latin doth. With which translation interpreters find fault, because it looks like a contradiction, they say, to call that day by a name, which signifies the moon *to be covered:* and therefore they translate it rather the *new moon*, as we do in the margin of our Bibles. But they that can consult Lud. de Dieu upon Psal. lxxxi. 3. will find good reason to take it quite otherwise; for the *full moon*, which giving light then all the night, made it a fit time for a journey, either in winter (as by the darkness of the night, ver. 9. I suppose it might now be) when the days are short: or in summer when the heat made them unfit for travel.

The proverbial sayings in this chapter, some make three, others four; all contained in two verses, 22, 23. With which I shall not trouble the reader; because I have made them plain enough in the Paraphrase; and

intend not to fill this book with like sayings out of other authors.

[c] I should only add, that *rabbim* in the last verse but one, signifying *great* men as well as *many*, I have expressed both: and Solomon himself, as well as Samson, became an example of the *mighty men* there mentioned, who were undone by lewd women.

Ver. 1. *MY son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.*] There is great reason then, my son, (Prov. ii. 1.) to repeat the caution I have often given thee, against this and other vices: and to beseech thee to observe my instructions, and to lay up my commandments in such faithful remembrance, that they may not fail to produce the fruit of obedience.

Ver. 2. *Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.*] For if thou wilt be ruled by them, assure thyself (as I have said before, iv. 4.) thou shalt enjoy long happiness: therefore observe them carefully with a tender affection to them; and, looking upon them as thy safest guide and director, consent as soon to wound the apple of thine eye, as in the least to violate any of my laws.

Ver. 3. *Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.*] Do not merely read what I write, imagining thou canst have continual recourse to them here in this book; but be so well acquainted with them, as to have them (as we speak) at thy fingers' ends: or rather, let them be transcribed from hence into thy very heart.

Ver. 4. *Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman.*] There embrace them with ardent love; and set such a high esteem on wisdom, that thou mayest invite it more and more unto thee; till it be as familiar with thee as an only sister, born at the same time with thee; and thou understand and delight in all her precepts, as so near akin to thee, that thou find them to be the very reason and sense of thy own mind.

Ver. 5. *That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.*] Which will be a powerful preservative to thee from the snares of the naughty woman: who, though her company be so pernicious, that God would have thee perfectly estranged from her, as if she were not of the commonwealth of Israel, yet hath powerful charms about her, to flatter those into her embraces, who are not heartily in love with wisdom.

Ver. 6. *For at the window of my house I looked through my casement.*] Of which a memorable instance comes now into my mind; for looking one day from my chamber, through the lattices of the window of my palace;

Ver. 7. *And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding.*] I observed, among the undisciplined and unexperienced striplings of the city, one that was as childish and void of consideration, as he was youthful and eager in his desires:

Ver. 8. *Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house.*] Who, as if he had a mind to be undone, passed idly through the street, till he came to a corner, where naughty women use to haunt: walking in as stately a manner as he could devise, directly towards one of their houses.

Ver. 9. *In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night.*] It was in the twilight, while he might see his way, and yet hope to be concealed: in the close of the day; which was followed by a night as dark as pitch, and fit for such works of darkness.

Ver. 10. *And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of a harlot, and subtle of heart.*] There, on a sudden, I was surprised with the sight of a woman starting forth; who did not stay till he came up to her, but went to meet him in a gaudy lascivious dress, apt to allure a weak young man: who thought presently she was in love with him; when her heart, as full of subtilty as his was of folly, is reserved only to herself.

Ver. 11. *(She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house.*] This is her character: she is full of talk, and of bold unseemly courtship; unruly, and not to be controlled or broke of her will; idle also, and always gadding abroad, as if she had no business (but with her foolish lovers) at home.

Ver. 12. *Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)*] Sometimes she stands before her door; and, if that will not do, she goes farther into the streets and places of greatest concourse: and, more especially, waits at every corner (where she may look into two streets at once) to ensnare such as are apt, like silly birds, to be taken by her.

Ver. 13. *So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him.*] At one of those corners (as I said) she met this young fool; and, contrary to all the rules of modesty, caught him hard about the neck and kissed him: and after these amorous caresses put on still a bolder face, and, without any blushing, made this following speech to him:

Ver. 14. *I have peace-offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows.*] I am a happy woman, in many blessings that God hath bestowed upon me, for which I have given him solemn thanks this very day: and, as religion and custom bid me, I have provided as good a feast as those sacrifices would afford, which I formerly vowed, and now have paid; having no want of any thing, but of some good company at home to rejoice with me. See Arg. [a]

Ver. 15. *Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face; and I have found thee.*] Which made me go abroad to try if I could meet with thee (who art the very person whom I came to seek), that I might invite and earnestly beseech thee to be so kind as to bear me company: and, to my great joy, this is added to all my other happiness, that I have found thee speedily and most opportunely.

Ver. 16. *I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt.*] There shall no other pleasures be wanting when our feast is done; but from the table we will remove to my bed; which I have richly adorned with every thing that may please the eye; and made it as soft also as heart can wish.

Ver. 17. *I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.*] Where thou shalt be entertained likewise with the sweetest perfumes, that ours or the neighbouring countries could furnish me withal; such as myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon; wherewith I have sprinkled my bed, to render it more grateful to all thy senses.

Ver. 18. *Come let us take our fill of love until the morning; let us solace ourselves with loves.*] Why do we waste

our time then here in the street? come along with me, and let us go thither; and there satisfy our desires to the full with love: we will solace ourselves with the sweetest pleasures; which shall not end till the morning-light.

Ver. 19. *For the good man is not at home, he is gone a long journey.*] For there is no fear we shall be interrupted or disturbed; the man (whom they call my husband) being from home, and not likely to return in haste: for he is gone to a place a great way off.

Ver. 20. *He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed.*] Where he hath much business to dispatch; which will detain him so long, that I am sure it will be full moon (and now the new doth scarce yet appear, ver. 9.) before he can be at home again. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 21. *With much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.*] In the representing of these, and many other like specious pretences (of great affection to him, of all sorts of pleasure, of secrecy, and safety in their enjoyments), she shewed herself such a mistress of her art, that she bowed the heart of the young man to become her disciple: and, having wrought upon his inclinations, she pursued her advantage with so much cunning, that she rather compelled than attracted him, by her charming voice, and her soft alluring language.

Ver. 22. *He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks.*] For he made not the least objection, but away he went immediately, and followed her like a great calf (as we speak in our language), or a stupid ox; that fancies he is led to the pasture, when he is going to be killed; or like a fool, who takes it for an ornament, when the stocks are brought for his correction, to be clapped upon his legs.

Ver. 23. *Till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.*] Just so he hastily threw himself into her embraces, and dreamt of nothing but pleasure; till, like a rash soldier that falls unexpectedly into an ambush, he received a mortal wound by that which he fancied would be his highest satisfaction; or like a silly bird, that, greedy of the food which is laid to entice it, never minds the snare that is laid together with it: so he, eagerly longing to taste of her feast and the following delights, had not so much as a thought that this was a design upon his life; and would not end, but in miseries infinitely greater than all his joys.

Ver. 24. *Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth.*] This is a true representation, my dear children (whom I love unfeignedly, not deceitfully, like those harlots), of the folly and danger of these lewd courses, in which youth is prone to be engaged: and therefore do not look upon it as an idle speculation; but give diligent heed unto it, and be ruled by my advice.

Ver. 25. *Let thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths.*] Let not one of you so much as entertain a thought of going to such a woman, much less of consenting to her enticements: or, if any of you have been so unhappy as to be engaged in her company, let him think it is too much that he hath adventured to turn aside out of the right way, and not wander till he hath utterly lost himself in those strange paths, and cannot find his way back again.

Ver. 26. *For she hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her.*] Do not presume of being safe in such courses, and of making a good retreat at last: for many have been the examples, of no mean persons, who have fallen in their reputation, their estates, their healths, their comforts of life, and in truth have utterly perished by her: innumerable are the mighty men, both for valour and for wisdom, whom she hath brought to ruin. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 27. *Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.*] In short, to follow her unto her house, as this young man did, is the direct way to hell: every step that is taken to her bed (unto which she invited him to ascend), is, in truth, a going down to the dismal chambers of death, and to the most horrid miseries.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The folly and danger of yielding to those brutish lusts and affections, whereby so many are misled, having been plainly discovered and livelily described in the foregoing chapter; the wise man proceeds in his design, by appealing to all that read these things, whether they be not sufficiently cautioned against those courses which ruin them; and abundant care be not taken to make them really wise and happy. For he knew none could answer those questions negatively which he asks in the beginning of the chapter, (ver. 1, 2, &c.) but all must confess they have been informed in the doctrine of wisdom. Whom he represents as present every where, and commending itself to all sorts of persons with a sincere affection, (ver. 6, &c.) as infinitely better than all the treasures which they greedily seek, (ver. 10.) and to be desired and valued upon so many accounts, that it is not easy to number them. Particularly for that prudence and that authority, which it gives to those who are endued with it, (ver. 12. 14, 15, &c.) and more than this, because it makes them approach near unto God, the fountain of wisdom and goodness, and the original pattern of them, (ver. 21, 22, &c.)

This is expressed in such magnificent language, that, though Solomon, I suppose, thought of nothing but the wise directions God had given them in his word, revealed to them by his servant Moses and the prophets; yet the ancient Christians thought his words might better be applied to the wisdom revealed unto us in the gospel by the Son of God; nay, to the Son of God himself, the eternal Word, and wisdom of the Father.

[*a*] Whom the Arians, by a false interpretation of a passage in this chapter, (ver. 22.) endeavour to prove a creature: but, according to the Hebrew verity, if this text belong to that matter, appears to have been, as St. John speaks, *with the Father in the beginning*, being his only begotten before all worlds. And so the word קָנָה which we translate *possess*, sometimes signifies in Scripture; and, as it is thus rendered by the LXX. in Zech. xiii. 5. so ought it to be translated in Gen. iv. 1. (not *I have gotten*, or *possessed*, but) *I have brought forth* a man from the Lord: as Bochartus discourses in his Phaleg. p. 784.

But I said, *if it belong to that matter*, because the fathers themselves are not resolved, whether these words (ver. 22.) may not rather be applied to our blessed Saviour,

according to his human nature. For so the great Athanasius himself sometimes expounds them (though at other times he goes the other way), allowing the Arian sense of ἔκτισε, *he created me;* this is not to be understood (saith he, in his Expositio Fidei, tom. i. p. 242.) of the Divinity of Christ; "but σωματικῶς εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν γέγραπται, *is written of Jesus bodily,* as he was born of the Virgin Mary. For of this Κυριακὸς ἄνθρωπος (as he speaks), whom he sent for our salvation, it may be said truly, that he was *the beginning of God's ways:* we have access by him to God the Father, as he himself saith, *I am the way,* which leads to the Father." And afterward, in his epistle about the decrees of the Nicene council, (p. 262.) he glosses upon these words in this manner; "The person who here speaks is, indeed, our Saviour, who is to be conceived to say this when he took a body, *the Lord created me in the beginning of his ways.* For as, with respect to his being the Son of God, it is most agreeable to say, *he was always, and in the bosom of the Father:* so, being made a man, this saying was very becoming, *the Lord created me.*" And, to name no more places, he interprets it thus several times, in his third oration against the Arians, (p. 415. 417, &c.) where he hath these words: "It is as if he had said, My Father made me a body, and created me to be among men for their salvation."

But this not being the sense of the words which Solomon first intended, I shall not build my Paraphrase upon it; but take *wisdom* here, as it signifies in other places of this book, and hath been hitherto described. Whom Solomon now celebrates for her most venerable antiquity, (as Aristobulus observes to Ptolemy, in Eusebius's Præpar. Evang. lib. xiii. p. 667.) and introduces, like a most beautiful person, no less than a queen; or rather some Divine being (infinitely to be preferred before that base strumpet spoken of in the foregoing chapter). Who having finished her own praises, which, the truth is, better agree to that heavenly doctrine afterward delivered by our Lord Jesus Christ (who was the wisdom of the Father, both as the eternal ΛΟΓΟΣ subsisting with him before all worlds; and as he was anointed by the Holy Ghost to declare to us all the counsel of God), concludes with an earnest invitation unto all to become acquainted with her instructions, if they meant to be happy, and would avoid the greatest miseries, (ver. 32, 33, &c.)

There are so many notable lessons to be learnt out of this chapter, that it would make this preface too long, if I should mention them all. I shall therefore name only *one doctrinal point;* that if this chapter be at all to be understood of the Divinity of the Son of God (which the Arians believed), then both his *eternity* is most plainly here asserted, and also his distinct *subsistence* and personality, as we speak, (ver. 22. 30.) And these *two practical:* first, that it *is a vain pretence we make to wisdom, if the fear of God and true virtue be wanting;* (ver. 13. 20.) and, secondly, the whole chapter supposes what the last verse more particularly expresses, that *every man's death and destruction are from himself;* who wrongs his own soul; and that against the desire and earnest frequent importunities of the wisdom of God: unto which he will not hearken; but perversely rejects the seasonable reproofs and the wholesome advices, which, on many occasions, he meets withal, to prevent his ruin.

They that follow the Vulgar Latin fancy they find a proverbial saying, ver. 13. where that which we translate a *froward mouth,* they translate a *mouth with two tongues:* but I have followed the Hebrew, which speaks of a worse sort of perverse language than that phrase alone signifies.

Ver. 1. *DOTH not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?*] Can you then hereafter pretend ignorance, and say you never had any caution given you against these snares? Or rather, have I not the greatest reason to chide you for your stupidity in hearkening unto those secret allurements to the deeds of darkness, when their shamefulness is so apparent? and you have had so many open and loud admonitions given you to be wiser; and such serious and earnest endeavours have been used, by repeated instructions and reproofs, to reclaim you from your folly?

Ver. 2. *She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.*] There is no public crier better heard and understood by all, when from a high place he makes proclamation to the people, than the rules of wisdom and virtue are: which do not lie concealed, nor can be altered at our pleasure; but present themselves continually to men's thoughts wheresoever they go, being as plain as the highway, and remaining unmoveable and fixed notwithstanding all the attempts that have been made to subvert them.

Ver. 3. *She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.*] Let their business be what it will, whether in the courts of judgment, or among those that traffic in the city, or in their own private habitation, still they know what their duty is: which their own conscience, as well as God's ministers, rings so continually in their ears, that they cannot avoid such informations.

Ver. 4. *Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men.*] Which they hear as plainly and distinctly, as if wisdom itself should call to them from above, saying, Hearken, O men, of whatsoever rank and condition you be; whether high or low, rich or poor; for my instructions are common to you all.

Ver. 5. *O ye simple ones, understand wisdom; and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.*] Your fault is, that you are inconsiderate, and easily cheated, (vii. 21, 22.) or, which is worse, stupidly bent to follow your sensual appetite; as if you had no better inclinations: but if you will attend, I will make you more circumspect and wary; and dispose you to be led by prudent counsels.

Ver. 6. *Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things.*] Do not turn away your ears, but listen to my words; for I will teach you things most worthy of your notice and choice; which will conduct you safely in all the passages of your life; and lay before you such a plain, direct, and easy path, that if you walk in it you shall not miss of being happy.

Ver. 7. *For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips.*] For I will utter nothing rashly, or contrary to the truth; all falsehood, deceit, and whatsoever may do hurt, being so detestable to me, and so far from my thoughts, that the correction of such wickedness is the aim of my discourse.

Ver. 8. *All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them.*] Every word

of which is exactly conformable to the rule of righteousness; there is nothing I enjoin or forbid merely to hamper and perplex you, or to abridge you of your just liberty, much less to misguide and pervert you in the pursuit of what is good for you.

Ver. 9. *They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.*] But, whatsoever they may seem to inconsiderate and prejudiced minds, they will all manifestly appear equal and just unto him that uses his reason; and approve themselves, as I said, exactly conformable to the strictest rules of righteousness, unto well-disposed minds, who will be at the pains to know the difference between right and wrong, or between that which is good and that which is evil for them.

Ver. 10. *Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.*] They will not think me unreasonable, when I commend the very rebukes which I give them, (though administered by some sharp affliction, iii. 14.) and set such a high price upon them, as to advise every one to accept them rather than silver; and to value the knowledge of God, and of themselves, and of all things else (which these corrections teach them), above the choicest gold.

Ver. 11. *For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.*] For true wisdom is such an inestimable jewel, that the most precious pearls are trash to it; nor can our boundless fancies present any thing to our wishes, that is worthy to come in competition with it.

Ver. 12. *I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.*] For what is there comparable to a prudent mind, which is not crafty to deceive, but so cautious as not to be deceived? And this I may boast is solely in my power to endow men withal; who ever give the safest, nay, infallible advice, and direct men to discreeter resolutions in the most difficult cases, than the subtlest head in the world, that consults not with me, can invent for his clients.

Ver. 13. *The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.*] And my rules are as short as they are sure: for I teach men, in the first place, religiously to worship and stand in awe of the Divine Majesty; which is but a vain pretence; I farther instruct them, if it do not make them abominate all manner of evil, though but in design; more particularly, I hate that vain opinion men have of their own abilities to compass their designs, which makes them forget God, and despise the wholesome advice of honest men; as I likewise do the use of all unlawful means, though the end be good; especially lying, calumny, detraction, breach of faith, which every one must renounce who will have my friendship.

Ver. 14. *Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength.*] Who am the ablest counsellor in all deliberations; and give men the most certain, solid, and never-failing advice, for the effecting their desires, or being contented with disappointments: for I comprehend whatsoever is fit to be done or omitted in all undertakings; and inspire men also with courage to persist in good resolutions, which are neither rashly taken, nor wrongfully pursued.

Ver. 15. *By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.*] Kings themselves sit not fast on their thrones, though placed there by God himself, unless they be ruled by me: the wisest senators cannot support themselves and them, but by persuading them to enact and execute just and merciful laws for the government of their people.

Ver. 16. *By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.*] In vain do their great captains, or other ministers, endeavour to defend them, but under the conduct and protection of my virtuous discipline: nobles and all the judges of the land lose their authority, if they do not faithfully observe the rules that I prescribe them.

Ver. 17. *I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.*] Which are no less amiable than they are easily known: there needing no more to come acquainted with me, but only to love me: for they that love me are beloved of me; and as they will not fail to seek what they love, so they shall certainly find what they studiously seek.

Ver. 18. *Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness.*] And together with me, they shall find such riches and honour, as shall add to the greatness, and splendour, and stability, of their kingdoms and dignities: for not merely riches and honour are in my donation, but durable possessions; which will last the longer, because they are not gotten either by oppression, or by niggardice; for I teach men both to do justly and to love mercy also. (Dan. iv. 24.)

Ver. 19. *My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.*] Whereby I bring them in greater treasures than gold, though never so massy, never so refined; a revenue of higher value than the purest and choicest silver in the world.

Ver. 20. *I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment.*] For I set their minds and hearts aright, and enrich them with excellent thoughts; which teach them how to use those earthly goods, and govern themselves with such exactness in all their private transactions or public administrations, as never to swerve from the steady rules of justice and equity.

Ver. 21. *That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.*] In order to their happy settlement in a state of eternal peace and substantial satisfaction, which I confer on all those that sincerely love and adhere unto me; whose souls I will fill as full with abundance of inestimable riches, as their treasuries are with silver and gold, and all other stores.

Ver. 22. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.*] For the Lord himself hath no greater riches than me, who lead men to a participation of him, and communion with him, (iii. 19, 20.) with whom I was ever present (as well as always most dear unto him), not only when he began to create this world, but before he made any of his works; when, as yet, there was nothing but himself.

Ver. 23. *I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.*] My sovereignty and dominion is from everlasting; and hath no superior to it: all antiquity comes infinitely short of mine; who was before the earth itself, the common mother of all mankind. (Gen. i. 1.)

Ver. 24. *When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.*] When, as yet, there were no depths, (Gen. i. 2.) I was conceived

in the mind of God long before the sources and springs: whose excellent waters, which are of greater value than any other, owe their rise unto me, the inexhausted fountain of all things.

Ver. 25. *Before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth.*] Who had a being before the mountains, from whence those waters run, were settled; or there was so much as a hillock to be seen in the earth.

Ver. 26. *While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.*] For as yet the Lord had not made the earth itself, (as I said before, ver. 23.) much less adorned it, and put it into this form of lofty mountains and spacious plains: no, there was not so much as the first atom of this globe wherein you tread.

Ver. 27. *When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth.*] But why do I speak of the earth alone? I was present when he disposed the heavens into this wonderful order, wherein we behold them, as well as when he moved upon that confused abyss which they enclosed, and fashioned the earth into a regular shape.

Ver. 28. *When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep.*] When he made the watery clouds also, with admirable wisdom, so firm in the air, that they shall not fall down altogether, but by drops upon the earth: and provided strong cisterns for the waters pent up there; from whence they gush out forcibly, and yet wear not away the passages he hath opened for them.

Ver. 29. *When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth.*] When he prescribed also to the sea its limits, that the waters thereof (though they swell and toss up and down) shall not pass over the shores wherein he hath confined them: and when he settled the earth so steadfastly, like a building upon sure foundations, that it remains unmoveable in the place he appointed for it:

Ver. 30. *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.*] Then was I with him, nay, very near unto him; contriving all these things: nor had he any higher pleasure than me, who, day by day, during the creation of the world, produced some lovely work or other; in which he rejoiced, to see how good and agreeable they were, (Gen. i. 4. 10. 12. 18. 21. 25. 31.)

Ver. 31. *Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.*] More particularly, I displayed my skill in the vast variety of creatures, wherewith I have beautified this earth wherein you dwell; which afford a most delightful spectacle unto me, and unto all wise observers: who may see, that, above all the rest, my principal thoughts were fixed upon the children of men, (Gen. i. 26.) in whom I delighted exceedingly; (as the Lord doth in me, ver. 30.) beholding them made in the image of God, and, after his likeness, capable to converse with me.

Ver. 32. *Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.*] Who may therefore justly expect (all these things considered) that you should cheerfully embrace my repeated counsels; and, as dutiful children, take the greatest pleasure in being obedient to them: for blessed, you cannot but see, blessed, beyond all expression, are they who observe (as all other creatures do) the laws that I have prescribed them.

Ver. 33. *Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.*] Hearken, I beseech you, and yield to the voice of your own reason, and of God's holy word and spirit; which checks the irregular motions which you find at any time in you; and be so wise and considerate as not to slight and reject it.

Ver. 34. *Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.*] But rather invite such instructions, by giving them thankful entertainment, and going thither where you may meet with them: for happy, more happy than can be expressed, is that man, who not only hearkens obediently when he is told his duty, but makes it his business to be rightly informed; neglecting no opportunity, but constantly and diligently attending there, where he may be taught how he ought to live; most earnestly desiring to become my disciple, and to be governed by me.

Ver. 35. *For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.*] In which, whatsoever pains he bestows, he shall not lose his labour: for as he shall not fail to find what he seeks, so he shall find withal, that I will make his life a perpetual pleasure to him; for I have demonstrated that he must needs be beloved of the Lord, to whom I am most nearly allied, and from him he shall obtain his heart's desire.

Ver. 36. *But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul; all they that hate me, love death.*] From whence it is manifest, that he who violates my laws, doth the greatest injury unto his own soul: and whosoever they be that hate to be reproved for it, and can neither endure to be told of their faults, nor receive any good advice, they love to be miserable, and wilfully bring upon themselves utter destruction.

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

In this chapter the wise man seems to me to illustrate more fully what he had delivered in the conclusion of the foregoing, (ver. 32. 34, 35.) concerning the satisfaction and happiness they might expect to find, who would attend at the gates, and submit themselves to the government, of that heavenly wisdom; which he had described to be acquainted with all the secrets of the Almighty. And which he here again represents as a glorious queen, the daughter of heaven, adorned with all perfections (and [*a*] therefore uses a word of the plural number, ver. 1. whereby to express her excellences), living in a stately palace; unto which she invites all misguided souls, and promises them, if they will forsake their follies, the most delicious entertainment.

[*b*] Which is set forth under the notion of a feast, whereby the holy writers are wont to express (as the aptest resemblance of it that can be found) the high satisfaction, joy, and pleasure, which the principles of wisdom and virtue fill our hearts withal; when we have a true relish of them, that we embrace them and digest them, and are enlivened by them to a pious life.

This is the substance of the parable; every part of which is not to be minutely scanned; nor shall I go about to

say what is particularly meant [c] by the *seven pillars* of wisdom's house (though, taking her house for the world, the *seven pillars* may well be thought the *seven planets*), what by her *meat*, what by her *drink*, &c. but look upon them only as a description of the ability of wisdom to impart complete satisfaction unto those that entertain her precepts. Which were principally taught in the schools of the prophets; whose business it was to instruct the people (as the scribes did afterward) in the law of God; and being dispersed in several places of the country, I have conjectured their schools might be the house here spoken of, where wisdom had her habitation. I cannot say certainly how many of them there were, much less that there were just seven principal schools, which might be looked upon as the main supporters of religion and virtue: but there were more than one it is evident from the sacred history; where, in one city, (1 Sam. ix. 13, 14.) we find Samuel seated (in whose times these schools began to flourish); who, no doubt, had there a college of prophets with him, as he had afterward, we find, at Ramah: (xix. 20.) and in another place called the *hill of God*, where the Philistines had a garrison, we meet with another company of prophets, (1 Sam. x. 5. 10.) And in aftertimes there were sons of the prophets both at Beth-el, (where they seem to have been more anciently, ver. 3.) and at Jericho, (2 Kings ii. 3. 5.) and at Gilgal, (iv. 38.)

These schools also were seated in *high places*, it appears from 1 Sam. ix. 2. x. 5. 10. [d] 2 Kings i. 9. (and might be one reason of their sacrificing in such places) which agrees exactly with what is said here of wisdom's crying upon the *highest places of the city*, (ver. 3.) to call all those who had an appetite to come and partake of her instructions. Which there was some hope all those might do, who were merely inconsiderate and deluded, (ver. 4.) though *scorners* (as he observes, ver. 7, 8. who perhaps called the prophets mad men) are so incapable of correction, that nothing will move them to become better; and therefore she passes them by, and leaves them to their beastly folly; which inclines them rather to listen to the enticements of such filthy strumpets as he had described, chap. vii.

Against whom there cannot be too much caution, the strumpet's house being, as St. Chrysostom (Hom. ii. upon St. Matt.) calls it, *the very shop of the devil:* and therefore the wise man again gives her character in this chapter, (ver. 13, 14, &c.) and represents the danger of being drawn in by her; that, if it was possible, he might make men sensible, there is nothing more inconsistent with wisdom, than to give up themselves to those impure lusts, which have been the ruin of all those that have been led by them.

That is one of the profitable lessons to be learnt from this chapter, in which the wise man concludes his preface to the book of Proverbs. And therefore again repeats once more, (ver. 10.) that *first principle* upon which all religion is built, wherewith he began this preface: (i. 7.) "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Which they that want will be apt to make a laughter of all good instructions; and it is well if they be not angry at those who are so kind as to reprove them. If they be, it is best to let them alone, and not cast pearls before swine; as our Saviour teaches, [e] agreeable to the doctrine of the wise man, ver. 7—9. of this chapter.

Where the Lord Bacon (lib. viii. Advanc. of Learning, cap. 2. parab. 9.) is very curious, and distinguishes between a *scorner* and a *wicked man*, (mentioned ver. 7.) and between *shame* or reproach, and a *blot;* and, consequently, between *reproof* given to the one and *rebuke* to the other. "For a *scorner* (saith he) only makes us lose our labour; but the other repays us with a stain and dishonour. When a man instructs a *scorner*, his time indeed which he thus employs is thrown away, and others deride his pains, as a labour ill-placed; and the *scorner* himself also despiseth the knowledge which he is taught. *Thus a man is put to shame.* But the matter is transacted with greater danger in the reprehension of the other, because a *wicked nature* not only gives no ear to advice, but turns head against his *reprehender*, now made odious to him; whom he either wounds presently with contumelies before his face, or traduces afterward to others behind his back."

But I have not been thus nice in my Paraphrase, because it is the manner, I observe, of the wise man to repeat the same thing in the same verse, in other words, throughout all this book; and a *scorner* signifies the worst of men.

[f] In the ninth verse also the same great person, following the Vulgar, and reading the words thus, *give occasion to a wise man, and his wisdom will be increased*, makes this witty observation, (in the same chap. parab. 32.) that "occasion, when it is offered, shews the difference between wisdom that is ripened into habit, and that which swims only in the brain and conceit, or is boasted in speech, but hath not taken deep root. For the former upon occasion presented, whereby it may be exercised, is instantly quickened, addresses itself to the business, and is so enlarged and dilated, that it seems greater than itself: but the other, which, before occasion, was brisk and busy, now occasion is given, becomes amazed and confused: so that even he who presumed himself possessed of it, begins to be in doubt whether his pre-conceptions of such wisdom were not mere dreams and empty speculations."

But there being no such word as *occasion* in the original, and the word *give* seeming to me rather to refer to what the wise man is speaking of, *viz. reproof* or *instruction*, I have waived this observation; which will do well alone, but not be connected with the discourse, which is my design to represent. And here note this as a mark of a hopeful person, that is likely to become wise, if he be not galled with reproof, at which fools are wont to kick. This is a truth to be considered most seriously, by which every man may take a measure of himself, whether he be likely to come to good or not: if he cannot endure to be told of his faults, it is a shrewd sign he is in the way to be undone; and hath not as yet so much as approached to the gates of wisdom.

Which admonishes us here of another great fault of mankind, [g] who are most eager after that which is prohibited to them. An observation which is as true of their fondness and readiness to embrace heretical doctrines, (to which the fathers apply ver. 17.) if they be preached in a corner, and made a great secret; as of their appe-

tite after those pleasures, from which they are restrained, and cannot have with public approbation.

Ver. 1. *WISDOM hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.*] Do not imagine that I commend unto you some meaner piece of knowledge or skill, but the most absolute and accomplished wisdom; whose worth and dignity are inexpressible: for, as this great world I told you (viii. 26, 27, &c.) was built by wisdom in most excellent order and perfect beauty, so from every part of it we may learn what regard we ought to have to her holy precepts; which are taught every where, but especially in the schools of the prophets. See Arg. [*a*] [*b*] [*c*]

Ver. 2. *She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine: she hath also furnished her table.*] There, above all other places, a most plentiful provision is made for all hungry and thirsty souls (that are desirous to know what is good for themselves), who shall find no less life, and vigour, and strength, and joy, communicated to them from her sacred instructions, than the body doth when it partakes of a liberal and most delicious feast.

Ver. 3. *She hath sent forth her maidens, she crieth upon the highest places of the city.*] For nothing is wanting there, but only guests to accept of her entertainment; unto which her attendants and ministers (persons of uncorrupted purity and sincerity) are sent to invite you, with a loud voice and earnest entreaties, which cannot but be heard by whole cities and countries, unto whom the dwelling-places of wisdom and the food of souls lie openly exposed. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 4. *Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him.*] There is no man so silly but he may be welcome to it; or rather all such persons are desired to bethink themselves, how inconsiderately they have been seduced, and to forbear the prosecution of their foolish desires so long, as to take advice of her. Let a man be never so much besotted with vice and wickedness, she doth not reject him, nor despair of him; if he will but hearken, when she makes this gracious motion to the whole knot of them;

Ver. 5. *Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.*] Draw near, consider, and lay to heart, the wholesome instructions which I propound to you; credit me so far as to rely upon the promise which I make you of the highest comfort, pleasure, and satisfaction, in embracing and obeying my precepts.

Ver. 6. *Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.*] Do but make a trial, by forsaking all ill company, and those childish desires and senseless courses of which you can give no account to yourselves; and immediately you shall have a taste of happiness, which will invite you to perfect it, by following hereafter the deliberate dictates of sober reason, and the grave counsels of prudent persons, who have discerning minds, and practise themselves what they commend to others.

Ver. 7. *He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame; and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot.*] As for those that deride religion, and scoff at all good admonitions, it is in vain to meddle with them; for reproofs are fittest for such persons; and he who performs that charitable office, not only loses his labour, but is like to be requited with reproaches; whosoever he be that rebukes one of those impious wretches, hath commonly all the dirt thrown upon him that his malice can rake together. See Arg. [*d*] [*e*]

Ver. 8. *Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.*] Therefore men of that wicked temper wisdom doth not invite to her instructions, nor require her ministers to call upon them; but rather to pass them by, when they find by experience that they can do no good to such persons, but only draw their hatred upon themselves: from such it is wisdom to turn away, and bestow reproofs upon those who have so much understanding, as to see God's ministers intend their good, and accordingly thank them for it, and give them opportunity to do them farther service.

Ver. 9. *Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser; teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.*] For this is an undoubted maxim, that a man disposed to learn will grow wiser even by reprehension; and the instructions given to a man inclined to goodness, will make him better, and much improve him: not only in knowledge, but in the practice of virtue (whereas a scorner grows worse by endeavours to reform him, and is only made more incapable of good advice, by being exasperated and enraged at it). See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 10. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding.*] And the very first, and indeed the principal thing that is to be instilled into all men's minds, without which they will learn nothing else, is a religious sense of the Divine Majesty, and an awful regard towards him (as I have observed already more than once, i. 7. ii. 5. viii. 13. but it cannot be too oft repeated). And next to this, that no knowledge deserves the name of understanding, but that which is delivered by the holy men of God, and disposes us to devote ourselves unto him in holy obedience.

Ver. 11. *For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.*] Other knowledge may make thee subtle and cunning in thy worldly affairs, but this alone can make thee happy: and will certainly both prolong thy life, (as I have frequently said, iii. 2. 16. iv. 10. 13, &c.) and lengthen it in health, peace, prosperity, and pleasure.

Ver. 12. *If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.*] This is the true reason I invite thee so earnestly to imbibe my doctrine, (ver. 5.) not for my own sake, but for thine; who alone wilt either reap the profit of being truly virtuous, or suffer all the harm and mischief (which will not in the least redound to me) of thy profane scoffs and jeers at religion and goodness.

Ver. 13. *A foolish woman is clamorous; she is simple, and knoweth nothing.*] Unto which profaneness as there want not temptations, so there is none more dangerous, I think, which makes me mention it so often, (ii. 16. v. 3. vi. 24. vii. 10, 11, &c.) than the lewd and impious adulteress; who is no less bold and importunate, than she is bewitching and powerful, to besot the minds of her stupid lovers; but perfectly ignorant of God and religion, and a stranger to all the principles of virtue.

Ver. 14. *For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city.*] Which she openly opposes, for (as if she would put a manifest affront upon them) in

that very place where the ministers of wisdom call men to learn the fear of the Lord (ver. 3. 10.) she sits in state at the door of her house, to divert their minds from all such thoughts, and drown them in sensual pleasures.

Ver. 15. *To call passengers who go right on their ways.*] That is the very business of her life, to defeat all good designs; by drawing even those aside into her chambers of impurity, who were going straight forward to the schools of wisdom and goodness.

Ver. 16. *Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him.*] Whose words (ver. 4.) she no less impudently than profanely returns, and tells them, It is not she, but wisdom and virtue that make men fools; by confining their desires, and denying them the liberties which she invites them to come and enjoy in her embraces; where their dulness shall learn this unknown secrets.

Ver. 17. *Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.*] That there are no pleasures comparable to those which a man gets by stealth from them to whom they properly belong; no morsel so sweet, as that which is forbidden; but, having been long desired, he finds at last a private opportunity to taste of without danger. See Arg.[*g*]

Ver. 18. *But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.*] But the poor deluded wretch considers not all this while (which I have often already represented, ii. 18. v. 5. vii. 27. and is all that I shall oppose to those sinful enticements) that she invites him to utter ruin both of soul and body; (See ii. 18.) and sinks all those down who accept of her invitation to the very bottom of that pit where the old giants are, who corrupted mankind with such filthiness and violence, that they brought a deluge upon the earth, (Gen. vi. 4, 5. 11.)

PART I.

CHAP. X.

The Proverbs of Solomon.

ARGUMENT.

Here now properly begins the book of the Proverbs (as the title of this chapter tells us), what hath been delivered hitherto being rather a preface, to awaken attention, and from sundry arguments to commend the wise instructions, which now follow, to every one's practice; and to caution those who would receive benefit by these instructions, from such things as may hinder their edification in the school of wisdom.

Whose lessons, in this first part of the book, (which reaches to the 17th verse of chap. xxii.) are delivered in short sentences; every verse being a lesson by itself; which commonly hath no connexion with that which goes before and follows after: or if there be any, it is not so clear as to be easily made out. And these lessons are for the most part delivered, either by way of antithesis, *i. e.* comparing opposites one with another; the wise, for instance, and the foolish, the diligent and the sluggish, the rich and the poor; and, in general, virtue and vice, assigning to each their proper rewards and punishments; or they are mere parables, that is, similitudes; in which one thing is compared to another that resembles it.

And he intending to instruct all sorts of men in their several kinds of life, these lessons are very various; and do not merely inform them about their *manners*, but about the *events* also, which are wont (either frequently or sometimes) to accompany or follow such and such estates, offices, and actions of human life. And some are directions for single persons; others for the ordering of household affairs; and others for the government of kingdoms. In short, some are Divine precepts; others, civil advertisements for the management of ourselves in several passages of human life: to the observance of which he excites the reader sometimes by promises, sometimes by threatenings.

It is not to be expected that in a Paraphrase I should preserve the smartness that is in many of these sentences: and it will be hard to abridge, as I have done hitherto, the contents of each chapter. Yet, I shall attempt something in it: and though I cannot say there is an order observed in them all (they being only a collection of wise observations and aphorisms, in which method is wont to be neglected by other authors), yet the first sentence of this chapter seems not to have been casually, [*a*] but designedly set in the front of the rest. Because nothing contributes so much every way to the happiness of mankind, as a religious care about the education of children. Which parents are here admonished to attend, if they desire their children should not prove a grief and shame to them; and children are put in mind of the obedience they owe to their instructions, that they may be a joy to their parents.

The Lord Bacon, in his Advancement of Learning, (lib. viii. cap. 2. parab. 7.) thinks that the *gladness* and heaviness which are in *fathers* and *mothers*, according as their children prove good or bad, are here so accurately distinguished by Solomon; "that he would represent a wise and well-governed son to be chiefly a *comfort to the father*, who knows the value of wisdom and virtue better than the *mother* (which account the Hebrews also give of this matter), and therefore rejoices more at the towardliness of his son; which he not only better understands, but hath taken perhaps so much more care about his education, that the good fruits of it give *him* a greater joy than they can do to the *mother*. Who, on the other side, is *more grieved and discomfited* at the calamity of a son; both because the affection of a mother is more soft and tender, and perchance is conscious to herself, that by too much indulgence she hath tainted and corrupted his tender years." She is more at home also (it may be added), and therefore having her son's folly more in her eye, hath a greater share in the grief that it causes.

But this is not to be too much pressed, I think, for both of them have such a share either in the *joy* or in the *sorrow*, that it is as hard to distinguish between them constantly, as it is to make a difference between the joy and grief for the well or ill doing of a *son*, and the well or ill doing of a *daughter:* which may be, and ofttimes are, equal. And therefore I have but just touched upon this in my paraphrase of the first verse. Concerning which I shall note this farther, that whether these instructions were written with a peculiar respect to the education of

Solomon's own son, or indifferently for all, it was most judiciously done to begin with such as this first part chiefly consists of; there being so great a necessity (as the forenamed writer observes in his seventh book, chap. 3.) "that men drink deeply all pious and moral knowledge before they taste of politic, that they who are bred up in the courts of princes, and in affairs of state, from tender years, rarely attain to inward and sincere probity of manners. For not being seasoned with religion and the doctrine of manners, and offices of life, their judgments are corrupted and made to think, that there are no true and solid moral differences of things, but all things are to be measured by utility and success." And in this false opinion they are the more immoveably settled, if to ill education there be added the fuel of bad books: which all those will reject with disdain, who shall be so happy as to make this book their early study.

In which there follow here immediately (and very properly) some instructions about getting riches, and about the keeping and using them aright, (ver. 2, 3, &c.) that a curse may not be entailed upon them, and descend with them unto our children. And then (ver. 7.) a memorable observation is annexed [*b*] (which Plato, as Eusebius observes, translated into his seventh book of Laws), concerning the fame of good and bad men after they are dead. About which the same great man beforenamed (the Lord Bacon) hath this note in the same eighth book, parab. 8. that "the name of good men, after envy is extinguished (which cropped the blossom of their fame, while they were alive), presently shoots up and flourisheth; and their praises daily increase in strength and vigour:" but for wicked men, "though their fame through the partial favour of friends, and of men of their own faction, may last for a little time, a detestation of their name springs up not long after; and at last those vanishing praises end in infamy, and, like bodies that putrefy, expire in a filthy and noisome odour:" and thus the LXX. in this place, instead of *memory of the just is blessed*, or *is with blessing* or *benediction*, have these words, *the memory of the just is with enconiums*, or *praises:* which is the true explication of the phrase. And, accordingly, the church commemorates the saints of God, recounting their worthy deeds, and praising him for them. Of which, see Mr. Mede, Disc. xxii.

The rest of the chapter consists of mixed observations, concerning the difference between *wise* men and *fools*, *idle persons* and *diligent*, *ill-natured* people and those who are *candid and kind*, (ver. 12.) and especially between the vices and virtues of the tongue, and their rewards and punishments, (ver. 13, 14, &c.) And one remarkable observation is inserted, (ver. 22.) which belongs to [*c*] that head of diligence and laboriousness: upon which, he remembers us, no man is so to depend, as to imagine to obtain what he would have by that alone; but to look up to God as the donor of all good things, and giving success to our industry. Which was a thing little thought of by heathens, who were too prone to imagine all things requisite unto happiness to be placed in themselves. But the Scriptures every where inculcate this, that it is God who gives wisdom to the wise, and victory to the valiant, and riches to the diligent, and good success to the prudent and potent, &c.

[*d*] Unto which add that observation also, (ver. 24.) which may be farther improved than is expressed in the Paraphrase, to this sense: That wicked men many times draw upon themselves that which they feared, by those very means whereby they study to avoid them. An example of which (as Bochartus observes in his Phaleg. lib. i. cap. 16. par. i.) we have in those that built the tower of Babel: who, for fear of dispersion, designed to build a city and a tower, saying, "Go to, let us build, &c. lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth," (Gen. xi. 4.) But God so ordered it, that this very attempt was the occasion of their dispersion, and brought what they feared sooner upon them, "atque ipsum mali remedium illis cessit in periculum:" *the very remedy of the evil they would have avoided, leading them directly into it.*

R. Levi hath an observation, that the precepts of wisdom, from the beginning of this chapter to the tenth verse of the eighteenth, are in a manner all concerning the danger of several sorts of vice and wickedness; and afterward they are all concerning other subjects: which, how true it is, I shall there consider.

Ver. 1. *THE Proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.*] Let the father's care in educating his children (especially his son, the heir of his family) be equal to the joy he will have in their well-doing: and let the mother beware that her indulgence do not spoil them; for she will have the greatest share in the heaviness which their untowardness will give them. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death.*] This is more necessary than the care of heaping up riches for them (which many times tempt men to fraud and oppression); for, though great treasures be gotten by such means, they will be so far from availing the owners in time of distress, that they will rather expose them to be a prey; when justice and mercy, with a little wealth, will procure safety and deliverance from the greatest dangers.

Ver. 3. *The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away the substance of the wicked.*] The reason is, the Lord hath treasures in store for the just, especially for the merciful man; and will send him such supplies in his straits, that he shall not starve, but rather have enough: but he will drive the wicked out of their ill-gotten possessions, whereby they think to secure themselves from want.

Ver. 4. *He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*] And next unto virtue let children be bred up to industry; without which, indeed, they cannot be virtuous; for both poverty and fraud are commonly the fruit of negligence and sloth; when an active diligence is wont to enrich men, without the help of deceit.

Ver. 5. *He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.*] Especially if prudence be added to diligence, and opportunity be not neglected: for as he that makes hay (as we speak) while the sun shines, is commended for his provident care, so he that, by taking his ease when he should gather the fruits of the earth, loses all the benefit of his former labours, is a shame to himself, and unto those that bred him.

Ver. 6. *Blessings are upon the head of the just: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.*] The blessings of Heaven shall visibly descend in great plenty upon the just and merciful man; but their own iniquity shall violently overwhelm those, to their utter confusion, who wickedly defraud and oppress their neighbour.

Ver. 7. *The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.*] And though envy may sometimes cloud a good man for the present, yet after death an honourable mention shall be made of him; and he shall be commemorated with praises: when the memory of the wicked, who now perhaps are extolled, shall either perish or stink, and be abominated. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 8. *The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall.*] He that is truly wise will thankfully receive such good advices as these, and avoid the dangers of which he is admonished: but he whose wisdom lies only in his tongue (which moves upon all occasions, and will not let him learn of others), ruins himself, even by his own imprudent prating.

Ver. 9. *He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.*] He that deals sincerely in all his actions is both safe and sure; but he that relies upon fraud and tricks of deceiving, shall find his cunning fail him at the last; and, besides, can never be secure that he shall not be detected and made a public reproach.

Ver. 10. *He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow: but a prating fool shall fall.*] But he especially, that under pretence of kindness betrays his neighbour, and gives the sign to others, when he would have them circumvent him, is a common grievance; and shall himself, in the end, feel the miserable effects of his falseness: for he is worse than a man who, openly professing his malice, rails perpetually, and thereby sooner hurts himself than others.

Ver. 11. *The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.*] The discourse of a good man (like a perpetual spring of wholesome water) always tends to the profit, comfort, and refreshment of those that receive it: but a wicked man, how fair soever his language be, doth but conceal the mischief which (like pestilent waters out of a deep pit) he designs to produce when opportunity serves.

Ver. 12. *Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.*] Such is the difference between hatred and love, that where all things are in quiet, *hatred* raises up disturbance, and makes men quarrel about trifles; when *love* pacifies the minds of those that it finds provoked by real offences, and composes all those contentions, for which there was too much occasion.

Ver. 13. *In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding.*] He that would be wise must seek the acquaintance of some intelligent person: but the most knowing person in the world cannot make him wise that is void of consideration; who will never learn, unless, perhaps, by some great affliction.

Ver. 14. *Wise men lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.*] Wise men treasure up knowledge, and reserve it till a fitting opportunity to make use of it: but a fool is always talking, and seldom opens his mouth but it proves a present mischief to himself or others.

Ver. 15. *The rich man's wealth is his strong city: the destruction of the poor is their poverty.*] Riches are a powerful defence to their owners against a great many evils, to which we are subject in this life; and naturally raise men's minds, and make them confident: whereas poverty exposes men to injuries and abuses; and is apt to depress and deject their spirits.

Ver. 16. *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin.*] Which is a great motive to an honest diligence; but then remember this, that the end of a virtuous man's labours after riches is only that he may provide himself the necessaries of life, and that he may do good with them; but the great revenues, which, perhaps, are left to a wicked man by his ancestors, without any pains of his own, are employed to satisfy his sinful lusts and passions.

Ver. 17. *He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof erreth.*] He that carefully observes, and puts men in mind of these wholesome admonitions, which may teach them to correct and amend their lives, is in the way to make himself and others happy: but he that leaves off to give reproof, encourages men in their errors; from which he, who shuns those who are wont to reprehend him, is never like to be reclaimed.

Ver. 18. *He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth slander, is a fool.*] He that dissembleth his hatred, by great professions of friendship before one's face, and then goes and vents it in slanders behind his back, may seem a cunning man; but is really an impious fool.

Ver. 19. *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: for he that refraineth his lips is wise.*] Nor are calumny and flattery the only vices of the tongue; but much speaking is rarely innocent: therefore he that is sparing of his words, and considers well both when, and where, and what, he speaks, is a truly prudent person.

Ver. 20. *The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.*] The words of such a man are exceeding valuable; because they are both solid and sincere; but let wicked men devise and study what they please, it will be good for little, or rather very mischievous.

Ver. 21. *The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.*] Many are preserved from perishing by the discourses of a good man: but a fool, for want of consideration, receives no benefit by them, and doth not so much as take care to save himself.

Ver. 22. *The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich; and he addeth no sorrow with it.*] It is not merely men's industry and provident care to which they owe their riches, but the blessing of God prospering their endeavours; which, when he favours, wealth flows in apace upon them; and is enjoyed also without anxious thoughts and labours. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 23. *It is as a sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.*] A senseless sinner makes a jest of the most horrid impieties that can be committed by himself or others: but a man that weighs things wisely, considers that this is no laughing matter; and takes that pleasure in doing well which fools take in mischievous wickedness.

Ver. 24. *The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted.*] Yet there is none so wicked but he is sometimes afraid; and since this will not amend him, he shall feel what he fears: but

this is the comfort of righteous men, who have reason to hope, that they shall at length obtain their desires. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 25. *As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.*] Though the wicked, like a whirlwind, may bluster terribly, and overthrow all that stands in his way, yet he quickly vanishes, and destroys himself by his own violence: but the righteous, as he is fixed and settled in his virtue, which is peaceable and quiet, and makes no disturbance; so he enjoys the solid fruits of it, in a durable and immoveable felicity.

Ver. 26. *As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him.*] Vinegar is not more offensive to the teeth, nor smoke more vexatious to the eyes, than a remiss and negligent minister is to him that employs him, and relies upon him in a weighty business.

Ver. 27. *The fear of the Lord prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.*] The best way to prolong life, is religiously to observe the laws of God: but wickedness generally (both by its own nature and by God's righteous judgment) brings men to an untimely end.

Ver. 28. *The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.*] And what a lamentable case is a wicked man in, when he finds himself unexpectedly undone? for this is another difference between a good man and a bad; that the hope of the former concludes in a joyful possession of what he waits for; but the other, failing of his expectation, ends his days in sadness and sorrow.

Ver. 29. *The way of the Lord is strength to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.*] Whence it follows, also, that a faithful observance of the rules of virtue, which the Lord hath prescribed us, inspires the upright man with great courage, and undaunted resolution, when any evil threatens him: but the workers of iniquity, being weak and feeble-spirited, are terribly shaken, nay, broken, with the fear of that destruction which is coming on them.

Ver. 30. *The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.*] There is no way like piety, justice, and mercy, to establish a family in perpetual prosperity; but the wicked (how successful soever they may be for a time) shall not be able to settle themselves and their posterity in the good land, which God hath given us.

Ver. 31. *The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out.*] The very discourse of a righteous man is so profitable to instruct others in wisdom and goodness, that it shall be a means to perpetuate him, like a fruitful tree in a flourishing condition: but he that uses his tongue perversely, to abuse, cozen, or raise dissensions among his neighbours, shall be cut down, like a tree that cumbers the ground.

Ver. 32. *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked speaketh frowardness.*] The righteous knows very well how to speak those things (and accustoms his mouth unto them) which are grateful to men, and yet not displeasing to Almighty God; but the wicked are odious to both, because they are skilled altogether in lying and flattery, fraud and calumny, and such-like subtle, but detestable, arts of doing mischief.

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter consists of many promiscuous observations, concerning such things as will make men happy or miserable. It begins with an admonition concerning *justice* in our dealings one with another; without which society (which God designs, and takes a special care to uphold) cannot be preserved. And mankind being very apt to be regardless what they do towards God, or towards man, when they grow rich and great, he next gives a caution against *pride* and *insolence*, as a certain forerunner of ruin. For it consisting in forgetfulness of God, confidence in men's selves, despising others, slighting good counsels, and attempting things out of the bounds of men's place and calling (all which proceed from stupid folly), naturally leads men headlong into destruction. Then he commends *sincerity* and *charity*, (ver. 3, 4.) and represents the vast difference between virtue and wickedness, in order to men's private safety, (ver. 5, 6, &c.) and to the public security, (ver. 10, 11.) After which follow a great many prudent observations and advices for men's private, and for the common good; with such remarks upon sundry virtues and vices, as are sufficient to invite to the one, and deter from the other.

[*a*] Among the rest there is one, ver. 21. (translated thus by us, *though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished*) upon which there are as many glosses almost as there are interpreters. But I have only put together those two senses of the former part of the verse, which are most agreeable to the latter; and do not think fit to trouble the reader with the other, any farther than merely to inform him of this one thing: That most interpreters by *hand in hand* understand the hands of divers persons; but some few take it for the hands of one and the same person, who puts one hand into the other. And these last named make the sense one of these two ways: either that though a sinner endeavour to hide his sin (as a man doth a thing which he holds in one hand and covers with the other), he shall notwithstanding be found out and suffer for it; or that, though wicked men do nothing, but like an idle person have their hands folded one in the other, yet they are not free from sin, which they are devising in their mind, and will draw a just vengeance upon them.

[*b*] In the next verse I have followed Bochartus, de Animal. Sac. par. i. lib. ii. cap. 57. in his translation of those two words, מרח מצם which he renders, *her mind departed, viz.* from the love of her husband: but I have not neglected the other sense, of which I think those words are capable.

[*c*] In the twenty-ninth verse I have adhered to the opinion of the Lord Bacon, (book viii. of the Advanc. of Learning, chap. ii. parab. 9.) who takes it for "a profitable admonition, touching discords in families and domestic breaches (but may as well be applied to whole kingdoms, which are larger families), which whosoever cherishes among his children, or servants (or people), as a means to have his affairs better administered when they have an evil eye upon and hate one another, commonly finds his hopes turn into wind. For those alterations and

changes, for the most part, succeed ill: and those disturbers of their own families oftentimes meet with vexations and ingratitudes from those very persons whom (passing by others) they adopt as the objects of their special favour: nay, by this means they draw upon themselves ill reports and doubtful rumours; for it is not ill observed by Cicero, *that all reports, both good and bad fame, come from domestics.* Which two evils (he thinks) Solomon expresses by *inheriting the wind:* for the *frustrating of expectations* and *raising of rumours* are rightly compared unto *winds.*" I have added in the Paraphrase two other things belonging to wind; which *makes a great noise,* and *leaves nothing behind it:* for all make it an emblem of *emptiness.*

[*d*] The last verse is a wise consideration suggested to good men, when they are under the oppressions of the wicked: that if the just be afflicted (as Melancthon glosses), who seriously endeavour amendment of life, God will take a time to reckon with those lewd men, who contumaciously and furiously persist in their wickedness. So the wise man (says he) admonishes us of two things. First, that the church is subject to the cross, which the cruelty of tyrants may lay upon it: but, secondly, those tyrants must one day answer for their cruelty by sharp punishments upon themselves: nay, though they flourish for some time, at last (says he) they are shaken out of their empires. Hither he applies those known words of the poet, *Ad generum Cereris sine cæde,* &c.

Ver. 1. *A FALSE balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight.*] It is not so small a sin as men imagine, to cheat their neighbour (though it be only in a little matter), but extremely hateful and detestable to the great Lord and Governor of the world: as, on the other side, exactly just and equal dealing in all our commerce one with another, is highly pleasing to him.

Ver. 2. *When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.*] Do not entertain a haughty conceit of thyself, nor insult over others; for the folly of this appears, in drawing along with it that contempt and disgrace, which above all things such men would avoid: therefore be humble and modest; the wisdom of which is manifest, from the universal respect which it gains every where.

Ver. 3. *The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.*] The integrity of those that uprightly observe the rules of virtue, is their highest prudence, and safest guide, through all manner of difficulties and dangers: but the crafty wiliness of perfidious men, who will be tied unto no laws, is mere folly; and shall be so far from preserving them, that it shall prove their certain destruction.

Ver. 4. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.*] Heaps of wealth, amassed by extortion or covetousness, shall as little avail as subtilty and cunning, when God, in his righteous displeasure, shall punish the world by a common calamity: but justice, accompanied with mercy, (as hath been observed already, x. 2.) will befriend him that hath constantly practised them, and rescue him, even when there is no hope of safety. (See Eccles. xxix. 11—13. xl. 24.)

Ver. 5. *The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.*] Remember this (and be not nauseated at the repetition of it, for it is a weighty truth), that there is no surer guide to direct men in the plain way to safety, or any other good, than a sincere and impartial observance of all God's laws: but that the wicked shall perish by those very impious courses (of lies, suppose, breach of promises, perjuries, and oppression), whereby they think to greaten or to secure themselves.

Ver. 6. *The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.*] Remember it, I say (for it cannot be too often inculcated), that the virtue of unfeignedly and entirely upright men, shall be their preservative when they are in danger: but they that are governed wholly by their own depraved desires and interests, shall be entangled, and inevitably perish in their own naughty contrivances.

Ver. 7. *When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth.*] Do not imagine, therefore, that they have the advantage of others, who are loose from all laws. They may seem so to have for the present: but, beside what I have now said, it must be considered that death (and how suddenly doth that sometimes overtake them) utterly destroys all their projects and hopes: whatsoever they expected to accomplish by their riches, or their power, or their friends, it perisheth together with them.

Ver. 8. *The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.*] Nay, before that, it is frequently seen, that a just man is unexpectedly drawn out of those straits and difficulties wherein he was perplexed, and the wicked (who, perhaps, brought him into them) takes the place which he hath left; falling into those very distresses from which the just is happily freed.

Ver. 9. *A hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.*] And, more than this, a good man hath this advantage by his wisdom, that it sometimes instructs many how to evade those snares, which the profane hypocrite, with counterfeit professions of friendship, lays to destroy his neighbours.

Ver. 10. *When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth; and when the wicked perish, there is shouting.*] We see also in this, how amiable virtue, and how hateful vice is, that the inhabitants of a city generally leap for joy when good men prosper, and are advanced unto power: but are so far from pitying the downfall of the wicked, that they shout when they behold them tumbling from the high places to which they were raised.

Ver. 11. *By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.*] Men of unbiassed virtue make a city flourish by the blessings they procure for it from heaven, by their prayers, by their prudent advice, their pious admonitions, and their constant study of the public good; but the wicked, by their blasphemies, their evil counsels, their pestilent maxims, their impious doctrines, whereby they corrupt men's manners, utterly subvert the good estate thereof.

Ver. 12. *He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.*] It is a great weakness to speak contemptuously of any man, or to render him ridiculous (for no man is so mean but he is sensible of despisal, and may find ways to shew his re-

sentment), therefore a thoroughly prudent person, whatsoever he thinks of others, saith nothing to their reproach.

Ver. 13. *A tale-bearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.*] A man whose trade it is to ingratiate himself by defaming others, will not stick most treacherously to discover the secrets wherewith they have entrusted him; but a man whose mind is steadfastly fixed to be true and faithful to his neighbours, will study (though they have not desired him) to hide those things, which, being known, may prove injurious to them.

Ver. 14. *Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.*] Where prudent counsellors are wanting, a nation goes to wreck, as certainly as a ship doth without a pilot: nor is one sufficient; but then a country is safe, when there are many wise men to govern affairs: that if one fail, there may enough still remain; or what one or two sees not, others may be able to discern.

Ver. 15. *He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it; and he that hateth suretyship is sure.*] He is in great danger to be undone, who stands bound to pay the debts of another man, especially of a stranger, (vi. 1.) whose ability and honesty are unknown to him; and the way to be secure from that fear is, not only to avoid such engagements one's self, but to abhor to see other men enter into them.

Ver. 16. *A gracious woman retaineth honour; and strong men retain riches.*] Beauty and virtue in a woman advance her to honour; as formidable strength and power in men advance them to riches: and as their principal care is to keep their treasures, so hers should be to preserve her reputation.

Ver. 17. *The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh.*] He that hath a heart to be kind and bountiful unto his neighbours, will have this advantage by it, among many others, that he will not deny what is fit and convenient to himself; whereas the covetous and hardhearted, as he hath no regard to his nearest relations, so he pinches his own flesh by his sordid way of living.

Ver. 18. *The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward.*] He thinks perhaps hereby to raise himself, or his posterity, to greatness, but, like all other wicked men, will be deceived in his expectation; for the event of his actions never answers the design; but virtuous men shall infallibly reap the fruit of their pious, just, and charitable labours.

Ver. 19. *As righteousness tendeth to life; so he that pursueth evil, pursueth it to his own death.*] Thus God orders it in his providence, and thus it is in the nature of things, that virtue tends to make men happy: but the more eagerly any man pursues an evil thing, the more he is bent upon his own destruction.

Ver. 20. *They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the Lord: but such as are upright in their way are his delight.*] Of all other men they are most odious to the Lord, who pretend to justice, kindness, and truth, but study and advise how to compass their ends, though it be by the wickedest means: as, on the contrary, they whose exact observance of the rules of righteousness in the whole course of their lives testify the integrity of their hearts, are highly in his favour and love.

Ver. 21. *Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.*] Though the wicked endeavour to strengthen himself and his family by powerful leagues and confederacies, and his successors also have mighty associates to maintain his acquisitions, they shall not be able to defend themselves from the punishment their iniquity deserves: but the posterity of the righteous need not be at such pains; but, though deserted by men, escape the danger into which the others fall, by the help of God alone. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 22. *As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.*] As a golden ring is ill placed in the snout of a swine, which is always routing in the mire; so is beauty ill bestowed on the body of a woman whose mind, having lost all savour and relish of virtue, carries her from her husband, to wallow in filthy lust, and adulterous pleasures. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 23. *The desire of the righteous is only good: but the expectation of the wicked is wrath.*] The righteous desire nothing but that it may be well with all men; but the wicked wish for trouble and disturbance, especially that they may execute their malice and wrath upon those whom they hate: and accordingly God will deal with them; good things shall be the portion of the righteous, but his just indignation shall frustrate the expectation of the wicked.

Ver. 24. *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.*] You may see by this how miserably they are mistaken, who imagine none so wise as the penurious; that you shall find here and there a man who communicates readily and liberally to the necessities of others, and yet his estate is so far from being impaired thereby, that it increases: when others, who are so saving that they will part with nothing, no, not upon the most just occasions, do not thrive at all, but by one means or other become beggars.

Ver. 25. *The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.*] Let not him therefore that bestows benefits, imagine thereby he shall be impoverished, for it is the certain way to enrich himself: and the larger his charity is, and the more diffused for the refreshment of others, the greater abundance shall be poured on him, and the abler still shall he grow to do more good.

Ver. 26. *He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.*] He that hoardeth up corn in a time of scarcity, on purpose to raise the price, shall fall into the popular hatred, and be loaded with many a curse: but he who then opens his granaries and sells at a moderate rate, shall not only have the people's good word, but the blessing of God.

Ver. 27. *He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour: but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.*] He that from the time he rises, studies nothing but how to do good to others, shall obtain favour both with God and man; but he whose business it is to do mischief, shall draw upon himself the evil he designs against others.

Ver. 28. *He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.*] He whose confidence in riches, as the surest support and defence, makes him covetous, unjust, and unmerciful, shall fall to decay like a withered leaf: but they whose pious dependance upon

God makes them just and charitable, like a flourishing tree, shall thrive and prosper.

Ver. 29. *He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind; and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.*] He that makes or cherishes dissensions and factions in his own family (or kingdom) may, by making a great bustle and stir, seem to be a notable man; but will not only be deceived in his expectations, but defame his government, and bring his estate to nothing: nay, it is oftentimes seen that he who is thus foolish loses all his authority, and becomes a servant to him who administers his affairs with a more prudent care. See Arg. [c]

Ver. 30. *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.*] The benefit the world receives from a just and charitable man is so great, that it may be compared to the fruit of the tree of life; which keeps mankind from being miserable: but he is the greatest benefactor of all, who communicates wisdom so charitably and seasonably, that he draws souls to the love of virtue.

Ver. 31. *Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner.*] But who is there so good as to do, or to suffer, no evil? And if God do not let the just and charitable man (mark what I say), they who are so useful and beneficial to the world, go without correction; who can think that the wicked, who is good for nothing, but obstinately contemns and breaks all the laws of God and man, shall escape the just punishment of his many crimes? See 1 Pet. iv. 18. and Arg. [d]

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter begins with an admonition, often inculcated in this book, concerning the affection wherewith a man, that would be wise and good, ought to receive charitable reproofs. And there are several things also repeated, concerning the providence of almighty God; in punishing men according to their wickedness, and delivering good men from those who seek their destruction: which is notably expressed in three verses, one after another, (ver. 5—7.) where he observes how the wicked, labouring to compass their ends, by cozenage, or by violence, even by blood (especially if they can privately make a man away), not only miscarry in their designs, but are unexpectedly overturned and subverted out of their places, wherein they behave themselves with such injustice and cruelty.

There are divers instructions, also, here repeated about several virtues and vices; especially those of the tongue. Among which Melancthon commends this to the remembrance of the reader, ver. 22. [a] *lying lips are an abomination to the Lord;* who recommends to us (says he) the *love and care of truth;* both in doctrines concerning himself, and in arts, and in all honest covenants and contracts. For truth being among the chiefest and most conspicuous virtues, therefore the contrary vice is condemned, by a terrible word, and called *abomination, i.e.* such an evil as God detests with a singular indignation (for idols are called βδελύγματα, *abominations,* or *abominable things*), which is principally true of such lies, as are on purpose invented to destroy men's fame; and much more of such as are devised for the taking away their lives, and the ruin of their families: such as those which David often complains were contrived against him.

The Lord Bacon hath made notable remarks also upon another passage in this chapter, (ver. 10.) where he observes concerning the former [b] part of the verse, that "there is implanted in man's nature a noble and excellent affection of pity and compassion, called here *mercy:* which extends itself even unto brute creatures, that are by Divine ordination subject to his command. And therefore this compassion hath some analogy with that of a prince towards his subjects: nay, farther, it is most certain, that the worthier any soul is, the larger is its compassion. For contracted and degenerate minds imagine these things appertain not to them: but the mind that looks upon itself as a nobler portion of the universe, is kindly affected towards inferior creatures, out of the communion there is between them: wherefore we see that there were under the old law many precepts concerning this, which were not so much merely *ceremonial,* as *institutions of mercy.* As that of not eating flesh with the blood in it, and such-like." I suppose he means those mentioned Exod. xxiii. 5. 19. Deut. v. 4. xxii. 6, 7. xxv. 4. For, as Grotius hath excellently observed, it is very laudable to exercise kindness towards brute creatures, that we may keep ourselves the more remote from all manner of cruelty towards men. Which the angel, the Jews think, reproved in Balaam when he chid him for striking his ass three times. For thus they bring in the angel speaking to him, in the great commentary upon Numbers: If I am required to demand satisfaction for the injury done thy ass, concerning whom there is no law of justice, nor covenant of our fathers, how much more for this, that thou goest about utterly to root out a whole nation?

I omit what the same Lord Bacon there says (book viii. of the Adv. of Learning, chap. 2. parab. 14.) concerning the ancient Essenes and Pythagoreans, and concerning some people now in the Mogul's country, and the present Turks, who are full of affection to brute creatures; and only observe that he looks upon the latter part of the same verse, as a kind of caution added by the wise man; lest we should think he patronizes all sort of mercy and compassion. "No, the mercy which spares wicked persons from being cut off by the hand of justice, is not mercy, but more cruel than cruelty itself. For cruelty is exercised upon single persons only: but this kind of mercy, by the grant of impunity, arms the whole band of impious men against the innocent." So, by the *mercies of the wicked,* he understands *mercy shewn to the wicked:* which is an unusual form of speech, and disagreeing to the opposition which the wise man, in this proverbial saying, makes between the righteous and the wicked. And therefore, it is not to be embraced, nor to be looked upon as a true exposition: in which, though I believe he followed Drusius, yet he hath very little company besides. And the sense rather lies as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase: in which, if I have added more than interpreters do, I am confident it will appear to him that considers not to be without reason. For these words, *the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel,*

seem to me to have the same sense with that proverbial speech among the Greeks, Ἐχθρῶν δῶρα ἄδωρα.

In the twelfth verse I have expressed both senses of which the word *mezod* is capable: which signifies both a *net* and a *fortress*. And so I have done in the next, (ver. 13.) which may be rendered two ways. Either, that by *prevaricating with his lips, a wicked man lays snares,* or [c] that *he is himself ensnared by his prevarications.* In the same manner I have comprehended more senses than one, in several other verses; which, if I should particularly mention, it would enlarge this preface beyond its just length. Else I should have made some remarks upon ver. 15. where the danger of self-love and self-conceit is represented: which hath ever this effect, that it makes men slight, if not reject, good counsel; out of a vain opinion, that none can advise them better than themselves: which is to follow the direction of a fool. For it is as certain a note of folly to rely wholly upon a man's own judgment, as it is of prudence to hearken to the advice of others.

Ver. 1. *WHOSO loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish.*] It is an excellent sign that a man will be wise and good, who not only patiently bears with those that tell him of his faults, but loves and is thankful for reproof: which he, who not only declines, but hates, and is thereby enraged, gives way to such brutish passions and desires, that there is little hope he should ever be a man.

Ver. 2. *A good man obtaineth favour of the Lord: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.*] He that studies how to do good to others, attracts the good-will and blessing of the Lord upon himself: but he who contrives mischievous designs, under a specious show of religion and the public good, shall be judged by him who knows the heart, to suffer what he deserves.

Ver. 3. *A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved.*] For no man, though never so subtle or powerful, shall be able to establish himself and his family, who lays the foundation of his greatness in wickedness: but the righteous, like a tree that hath taken a deep root in the earth, though shaken with storms and tempests, shall remain unmoveable in a flourishing estate.

Ver. 4. *A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.*] A wife that strenuously employs herself in her domestic affairs, and can prudently command her own passions and desires, is a singular ornament and honour to her husband; who may well glory in his happiness: but she whose laziness, or lasciviousness, or other infamous quality, makes him hang down his head for shame, is an incurable grief and vexation, consuming him and all that he hath.

Ver. 5. *The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit.*] The designs of good men are managed with exact justice and truth: but the contrivances of the wicked are carried on with fraud, dissimulation, and all manner of deceit.

Ver. 6. *The words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood: but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.*] Nay (such is the height of their wickedness), they consult one with another, and lay plots to take away secretly the life of those who stand in the way of their designs: but men sincerely good give the best advice they can to deliver such innocent persons from their bloody snares.

Ver. 7. *The wicked are overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.*] And God befriends them also; who not only defeats those wicked projectors in their designs, but so totally overthrows them and their families, that no footstep of them remains: whereas, he not only continues, but settles, the just man's family in a durable succession, (as I have often said, ver. 3. x. 25. 30. xi. 35.) when they that assaulted them are quite extinct.

Ver. 8. *A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised.*] True prudence directing a man to effect his ends by fair and honest means, will procure him the greatest esteem, and the most lasting praise: but he who contrives by fraud, and such-like crooked ways, to attain his aim, shall fall into utter contempt, and be scorned by all as a foolish knave.

Ver. 9. *He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.*] He is far happier who makes no show in the world, but hath a competent estate, than he who appears in great splendour and pomp abroad, but wants bread to eat when he is at home.

Ver. 10. *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.*] A good man takes care that his beast be well used, and have food and rest convenient for it; which is more than men bent upon wickedness will do for their neighbours: for their very kindnesses, being treacherous, are a cruel cheat; nay, the highest expressions which they make of tenderness and compassion (whereby they induce others to repose a trust in them) are intended merely as a cover for the mischief they mean more securely to do them. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 11. *He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain persons is void of understanding.*] He that takes pains in an honest employment, suppose in tilling his land, shall find it requite him with sufficient, if not plentiful provision for himself and his family: but he that is idle, falling into the company of loose and wicked persons, will find at last (by the desperate courses into which they will lead him) that he wants not only bread, but understanding.

Ver. 12. *The wicked desireth the net of evil men: but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.*] The wicked desires two things; first, to do as much mischief as he can by his wiles and arts of deceiving; and then to be secure in his wickedness: but the righteous make every body the better for them; and thereby enjoy that safety, which the other have only in their wishes and desires.

Ver. 13. *The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips: but the just shall come out of trouble.*] The wicked ensnares himself by that deceitful talk wherewith he designed to have ensnared others: but the righteous escapes the danger; nay, by his prudent discourse, avoids very great difficulties wherein otherways he might have been entangled. See Arg. [c]

Ver. 14. *A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth; and the recompence of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.*] There is no man gives good counsel and advice (especially in public affairs) but he shall reap

the fruit of it abundantly himself: and there is no good work he doth for the benefit of others, but God will requite it, and make it turn to his own good account.

Ver. 15. *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.*] A fool is so conceited that he consults nobody but himself; for whatsoever he doth, in his own opinion he is always in the right: but a wise man will not rely upon his own judgment alone; but, suspecting himself, makes use of the sound advice of other men.

Ver. 16. *A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.*] A fool (like a beast) is no sooner provoked but he grows angry; and, which is worse, it appears immediately in his countenance, words, and actions: whereas a prudent man is not unseemly transported by his passion; but stifles his resentments, even of the most reproachful injuries that are done him.

Ver. 17. *He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.*] He that freely and boldly speaks the truth, and all the truth, and nothing but the truth, demonstrates himself an honest man, and doth justice unto others: but he that conceals the truth or forges falsehoods, and testifies unto lies, declares himself both a deceitful and mischievous person.

Ver. 18. *There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.*] A cut-throat is not more pernicious than he; and they are not much better, whose business it is, by secret calumnies, to wound the reputation of their neighbours, or to make discords and divisions among them: which a good man uses all his skill to cure; persuading them to love, unity, and peace.

Ver. 19. *The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment.*] He that speaks the truth (being always conformable to himself) hath this advantage, that he can never be disproved, nor consequently discredited: but a liar, though he may at present be believed, is soon confuted; for he is apt to contradict himself, and blast his own reputation for ever.

Ver. 20. *Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy.*] They do but deceive themselves, who look for any satisfaction from dissensions and disturbances; which they cannot contrive without much fear and anxiety of mind: but, as they are always cheerful who consult nothing but peace, concord, and happy settlement, so they will have great joy, whatsoever the issue be, of such good designs.

Ver. 21. *There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.*] For the Divine providence takes a peculiar care of good men, to avert the harm that the iniquity of the wicked intends them: which shall fall upon themselves in such abundance, as to overwhelm them.

Ver. 22. *Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight.*] It is thought no great matter if a man break his word, or any way deceive his neighbour; but know, that this is a thing exceeding hateful to the Divine Majesty: and, on the contrary, they that faithfully perform their promises, and in all things deal truly with their neighbours, are no less acceptable to him. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.*] A prudent man conceals his knowledge, and will not make a show of being so wise as really he is: but a fool publishes his ignorance, as if he was ambitious that every one should know he is a fool.

Ver. 24. *The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.*] He that taketh pains in an honest employment, shall take his ease at last; nay, raise himself to dominion and power; but he whose sloth makes him live by sharking and deceit, shall bring that toil upon himself which he would avoid, when his poverty and villany have reduced him to be a slave.

Ver. 25. *Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good work maketh it glad.*] Anxious cares and solicitude how to live depress the spirit of a man, otherwise magnanimous: but the kind and encouraging discourses of a friend (much more the gracious promises of God) erect it, nay, make it glad.

Ver. 26. *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.*] As in other things, so in this, a righteous man is more excellent than his neighbour, that he doth not delude himself with vain hopes; nor miss his end, as the wicked doth in all his designs.

Ver. 27. *The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious.*] There is nothing more vile than a lazy fellow that lives by cheating; who, if he catch, shall not be able to keep his prey: but he is a valuable man, who by honest diligence getteth wealth, which shall durably remain with him.

Ver. 28. *In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death.*] True goodness leads unto endless prosperity and happiness: nor is there any one action of virtue that tends to make a man miserable; as all manner of wickedness doth.

CHAP. XIII.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter begins as the foregoing did, with an admonition about receiving instruction and reproof with due regard to them; especially from parents, who cannot be thought to intend any thing but the good of their children.

And as he did there, so here again the wise man gives fresh advice about the *government of the tongue*, about *diligence* and *industry:* and hath several observations, not much different from what he made before, of the advantage which the righteous have of the wicked in a great many instances, which are easy to observe in the Paraphrase.

And in the eighth verse he seems to me to teach [*a*] *contentedness of mind;* by shewing that the poor have a great advantage of the rich in an evil time. Some, indeed, take the sentence quite otherways, as if the wise man intended to represent the great advantage rich men have of the poor, in this sense: A rich man, when he fears any evil from his enemies, can divert it by a sum of money: but a poor man, when he is threatened, dare not stay, but runs away: and others there are who go a middle way, and think he intends to shew, that each of them has his advantages of several kinds. But considering the opposition that is usual in this book, between one

part of the verse and the other, this seems not to be the meaning: yet I have mentioned it, that they who do not take the opposition to lie as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase, may have their choice, and follow which sense they like best. As for that of Clemens Alexandrinus, lib. iii. Pædagog. cap. 7. who thus glosses upon the former part of the verse, ἐὰν πλουτῇ, μεταδόσει σωθήσεται, *if a man be rich, he shall be saved by giving away to those in want;* it doth not answer to the opposite part of the verse, unless we should interpret it thus: As for the poor, they shall have no rebuke for not giving, because they have nothing to give. But I look upon this as not genuine; though his admonition upon this occasion be excellent, which is this: He that earnestly presses to go up to heaven must καλὴν βακτηρίαν τὴν εὐεργεσίαν περιφέρειν, *carry about with him that good staff of beneficence;* and by relieving those that are afflicted, partake himself of true rest and refreshment.

Which it is impossible to find any way but in [*b*] virtuous courses, as the fifteenth verse suggests to us; the sense of which, according to the plain import of the Hebrew words, I have expressed in the Paraphrase. But as the last part of it sounds in our language, it will not be incongruous to take the meaning of the whole thus:—If a man have understanding enough to be thoroughly good, he will find things favourable to his honest desires; but they that take evil courses meet with great difficulties, and are forced to go backward and forward, and wind and turn every way, to bring about their ends, or save themselves, perhaps, from ruin.

[c] There are several other notable sentences in this chapter, upon which, if I should enlarge, it would be to write a book. The only two which Melancthon singled out for the observation of his scholars, are, the one of them in ver. 10. concerning *pride*. Upon which he remembers them of the Greek proverb, Ὄρος ὄρει οὐ μίγνυται, *a mountain cannot mix with a mountain; i. e.* two high men will never agree together: and of another excellent saying among the Latins, "Crede mihi, sapere, est non multum sapere;" *believe me, to be wise, is not to be over-wise.* For they whose minds are infected with a vain opinion of themselves, either cannot see the truth, if it be against their thoughts, or, if they do, they will not acknowledge it, for fear they should yield, and confess themselves overcome.

[*d*] The other is ver. 23. the latter part of which he renders differently from all that I have read. *There is much food in the furrows of the poor; et alii sine modo cumulant,* and *others heap up without any measure;* that is, to no purpose, when a little will suffice. Which is a wise saying, but not agreeable to the Hebrew text.

I shall only add, that as the chapter begins with an admonition to hearken to reproof (especially from parents), which is repeated again in the middle, ver. 13. 18. so it concludes, [*e*] in the last verse but one, with an advice to parents not to spare the rod, if reproof will not do: which is but necessary in very young children; because there is no other means, perhaps, to make them understand the difference between good and evil, decent and unseemly; but only to make them smart for the one, and to give them some sensible pleasure for the other. Some children there are, are so disposed, that they must be thus treated: and it seems a wonderful piece of wisdom in the old Lacedemonians (as Plutarch relates in his Laconical Institutes), that, out of an universal love and care for each other's good, made it lawful for any man to correct the child of another person, if he saw him do amiss. And if the child complained of it to his father, it was looked upon as a fault in the father if he did not correct him again for making that complaint. Such was their confidence in each other, that every man being as much concerned for another man's children as for his own, would never do them any injury, nor unreasonably check them without cause. For this is the character Plutarch gives of them; that they did not, as in other cities, "look every man only after his own children, servants, and cattle; but every man looked upon what was his neighbour's as his own, ὅπως ὅτι μάλιστα κοινωνῶσι καὶ φροντίζωσιν ὡς ἰδίων, that there might be, as much as was possible, a communion among them, and they might take care of what belonged to others, as if they were their own proper goods."

Ver. 1. *A WISE son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke.*] A good child will reverently receive and obey both the instruction and reprehension of his father: but there is no hope of him that laughs and scoffs when he is admonished or chidden for his faults.

Ver. 2. *A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth: but the soul of the transgressors shall eat violence.*] He that speaks well of others, or gives them faithful counsel, shall reap the benefit thereof himself: and so shall they that perfidiously calumniate or deceive them, suffer themselves that injury which they desired to do their neighbours.

Ver. 3. *He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.*] It is worth a man's pains to watch over his tongue; for he that carefully observes every word he speaks, preserves himself from much trouble and danger: but he that blunts out every thing that comes into his head, not minding what he saith, is in the ready way to ruin.

Ver. 4. *The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.*] There is nothing gotten by sloth, neither riches nor learning; which he in vain desires that will not labour for them: but the diligent and industrious shall never want satisfaction, but enjoy, perhaps, a great deal more than he desired.

Ver. 5. *A righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.*] A good man not only avoids, but hates, all manner of falsehood, both in word and deed: but the wicked delights to abuse others with such abominable lies and frauds, as make him no less loathsome than a stinking carcass; and so contemptible, that he dare not shew his face for shame.

Ver. 6. *Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth the sinner.*] The justice of all honest and upright designs will be a sufficient security to them: but all wicked contrivances are overthrown by their own iniquity.

Ver. 7. *There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.*] You will be deceived, if you judge of men by the outward appearance; for there are those who have the vanity to make a great show in the world, when they are not

worth a farthing: and others, who are so cunning as to dissemble their vast estates under the garb of poverty.

Ver. 8. *The ransom of a man's life are his riches: but the poor heareth not rebuke.*] Rich men are not always so happy as they are imagined; for their wealth sometimes only serves to make them accused of high crimes, and then to bring them off with a huge sum of money, which they pay to save their lives: but nobody is apt to find fault with the poor, or to bring any charge against them. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 9. *The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.*] The happiness of the just is great and illustrious, like the light of the sun, and increases still to their endless joy: but the happiness of the wicked is weak and dim, like the light of a candle, and will at last be utterly extinguished.

Ver. 10. *Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well-advised is wisdom.*] They that have a high conceit of themselves, and will yield to none, declare their folly, in that they can do nothing without strife and contention: but they that are so humble as to be advised by others, do all things prudently, in quietness and peace. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 11. *Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.*] Wealth ill-gotten (by lying, gaming, cheating, &c.) soon wastes away: but what is gotten by honest labour, swells to a greater heap, which moulders not, but still increases.

Ver. 12. *Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.*] The delay of that which a man eagerly expects is such an affliction, that it differs little from a lingering disease: but when he enjoys what he hath long looked for, it restores him presently to his former vigour and liveliness.

Ver. 13. *Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.*] He that despises the good admonitions or counsels that are given him, is his own enemy, and destroys himself: but he that reverently submits to the Divine commandments, makes God his friend, who will reward him for it.

Ver. 14. *The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.*] The instructions of a good man ought to be as a law to him that receives them; for, like the water of a perpetual spring, they are most beneficial; especially to preserve him from those pernicious and destructive principles whereby too many are ensnared.

Ver. 15. *Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard.*] A prudent, pious, and regular behaviour, is most amiable and acceptable to all men: but the conversation of such as live by no law but their own lusts, like rough way, is grievously uneasy. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 16. *Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly.*] All prudent persons are so cautious not to discredit themselves, that they undertake nothing but with due deliberation, and what they understand: but a fool discovers his weakness to be greater than was thought, by rash meddling with matters out of his reach.

Ver. 17. *A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health.*] A messenger, or a minister, that wickedly betrays his trust, is so injurious to his prince, or him that employs him, that he shall not escape a just punishment: but he that faithfully discharges this office (healing suppose, or preventing, differences and breaches) procures safety to himself, as well as to the person that used his service.

Ver. 18. *Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.*] He that proudly rejects instruction, and disdains to be checked in his lewd courses, is likely to be a beggar, and exposed to the public scorn: but he that is so humble as to give a due regard to reproof, and to correct his errors, not only gains a just esteem, but is likely to rise unto dignity and honour.

Ver. 19. *The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: but it is abomination to fools to depart from evil.*] It is a high satisfaction to enjoy what we earnestly desire: but fools herein defeat themselves; being so wedded to their wickedness, that they will not quit it, if that must be the condition of their being so happy.

Ver. 20. *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.*] He that keeps company with wise and good men is likely to be so himself; that is, to be happy: but he who associates himself with the wicked shall be as certainly ruined as he will be unavoidably infected with their wickedness.

Ver. 21. *Evil pursueth sinners: but to the righteous good shall be repaid.*] The wickedness of sinners pursues them to their unavoidable destruction: and the good which righteous men do, will infallibly return into their own bosom, and reward them with many blessings.

Ver. 22. *A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children; and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.*] A man that doeth good with his estate takes the surest course to settle it upon his posterity for many generations: but the wealth of him who regards nothing but his own sinful lusts and pleasures, shall be transferred from his family unto one that is truly virtuous.

Ver. 23. *Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment.*] A poor man many times makes a plentiful provision for himself and his family, out of a few acres of land; which he manages judiciously and honestly: but there is a sort of men whose larger estates are wasted; either for want of skill to improve their ground, or because they do not pay the hireling his wages. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 24. *He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.*] Fond affection, which maketh a parent forbear to chastise his child for the faults that cannot otherwise be amended, is no better than hatred; for it helps to undo him: therefore he that truly loves his child must not be so indulgent; but as soon as ill inclinations begin to appear, while he is tender and flexible, give him early correction as well as admonition, before he has accustomed himself to the doing evil. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 25. *The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want.*] A righteous man never wants satisfaction, because his desires are moderate, and he lives in a temperate use of God's blessings: but wicked men, some of them, bring themselves to extreme poverty by their luxury and riot; and others of them are indigent even in the midst of the greatest abundance; because their desires are insatiable, and they never think they have enough.

CHAP XIV.

ARGUMENT.

[a] As the foregoing chapter began with a description of a towardly child, so this with the character of a good mother of a family: who by her prudent care makes it flourish; when a lewd woman throws the house (as we say) out of the windows: for so the wise man observes: *She pulls down the house with her own hands;* that is, ruins the family without any other help. *There needs no more than a bad wife to undo a family.*

[b] A little after this (ver. 4.) there follows an admonition for the man without doors, as here for the woman within; that he do not neglect his husbandry. Of which *oxen*, every one knows, were the principal instruments: being not only employed in that country (as they are here) in ploughing the ground, and carrying home the crop, but also in treading out the corn. The strength also of the ox (which is here mentioned) is celebrated in all authors: and thence *bulls* are called *abbarim*, i. e. *robust*, among the Hebrews, who were very careful about the breeding of these most profitable creatures. It is not my business to inquire after the difference between *alaphim* and *sor* (which we render here, in this verse, by the same English word), but certain it is, they are used promiscuously for either sex; and the latter without any respect to age: though most commonly it signifies one grown to maturity, which we call an *ox*.

[c] Upon the next verse but one, (ver. 6.) the Lord Bacon (in his seventh book of the Adv. of Learning, chap. 2.) hath made this useful gloss: "He that comes to seek after knowledge, with a mind to scorn and censure, shall be sure to find matter enough for his humour, but none for his instruction." One reason of which is, that this humour of deriding all things, springs from a great pride and conceit of their own wit, which disposes them to seek for wisdom, not from others, but wholly from themselves: and so (as the wise man observes) they are not likely to find it where it is not to be had. When he that attributes less to himself, and hath the humility to listen to instruction, in a short time attains great wisdom. I cannot wholly omit the opinion of Jansenius; who thinks the wise man means, that he who hath accustomed himself to laugh at all wholesome counsel, and in some strait or other begins to think what is best to do, commonly finds himself at such a loss, that he cannot see his way out of it. And it may be applied to those also, who having mocked at religion all their days, at last desire to understand it; but cannot, through their own inveterate indisposition to it.

[d] In the next verse I have joined these two senses together, which it may have according to the different acceptation of the word *minneged*, signifying either *before*, or *from before*.

[e] The next, (ver. 8.) I take to be that, which the Lord Bacon, minding the sense rather than the words, thus translates, (Advancement of Learning, book viii. chap. 2. parab. 30.) "Prudens advertit ad gressus suos, stultus divertit ad dolos." Which his English translator (who refers this to Prov. xxvii. 12. which is quite to another purpose) reads thus, *A wise man is weary of his way, a cunning fool seeks evasions.* Upon which that lord thus descants: "There be two sorts of wisdom; the one *true* and *sound*, the other *counterfeit* and *false:* which last Solomon doubts not to call folly. He that applies himself to the former, takes heed to his own ways and footings, foreseeing dangers, studying remedies, using the assistance of good men, and fortifying himself against the wicked: wary how he enters upon a business; and not unprepared for a retreat, and how he may come off handsomely; attend upon advantages, courageous against impediments, with innumerable other things that relate to the government of his own ways and actions. But that other kind of wisdom is made up altogether of fallacies and cunning devices; and relies wholly upon the hopes of circumventing others, and framing them as he list himself. This wisdom the parable rejects not only as wicked, but as foolish. For, first, it is not in the number of things which are in our own power, nor is it directed by any constant rule; but new stratagems must be every day devised, the old failing and growing useless. And, secondly, as soon as ever a man hath got the name, and the opinion of a cunning, crafty companion, he hath deprived himself utterly of the principal instrument for the management of his affairs, which is *trust:* and so he will find by experience all things to go cross to his desires. For, lastly, these arts and shifts, however they promise fair, and much please such as practise them, yet they are commonly frustrated, and, which is worse, end sadly." Which Tacitus hath well observed in these remarkable words: "Consilia callida et audacia, expectatione læta, tractatu dura, eventu tristia:" *Crafty and audacious counsels are joyful in the expectation, difficult in the management, and sad in the event.*

[f] There is the same difficulty in the ninth verse that was in the seventh: for the word *jaliz* is translated by some *mock*, by others *excuse:* and so (besides what I have comprehended in my Paraphrase) there may be this sense of the words: Fools endeavour to make handsome apologies for their fault, and to find out colourable excuses; but upright men freely confess them, and easily grant a pardon for them, and make up the difference which they raise in a friendly manner. Or if we retain the acception of *mocking*, this may be the sense of the verse: Fools laugh and jeer at those who have committed a sin; but good men pity them, and by kind reproofs seek their amendment. I know not how otherwise to make out the opposition, which is usual between one part of the verse and the other, unless we choose to take it thus: That when fools offend God in the highest manner, they make nothing of it; but if good men in the least offend, they presently beg his pardon, and seek his grace and favour. The former part of the sentence also may be inverted, and make this plain obvious sense; which is as natural as any: Sin will expose those to scorn, who are so foolish as to commit it: and then the latter part is as plain: But the upright will have favour both with God and man. A good admonition to them that make a mock of sin; which will in time make a mock of them, and expose them as ridiculous fools.

[g] Some take the next (ver. 10.) to be an admonition to a prudent man, that he should conceal both his grief and his joy; and keep them to himself. But it is rather an

advice to every one, not to censure too heavily the passions of grief or of joy in others, because the causes of them may be unknown to us. Or we may look upon the former part of the verse, as an admonition to those that are at ease, not to censure too severely the complaints of those that are in pain or trouble; and the latter part as an admonition to such as are delivered from trouble, to be more thankful than any one can exhort them to be, because they best know what reason they have for it.

[*h*] The next verse but one (ver. 12.) is the only sentence which Melancthon points out to his scholars, as most remarkable in this chapter. Which he takes to be an admonition of the weakness of men's judgment, and all human counsels: which mistake lamentably, and lead men frequently into ruin. According to that saying of Simonides, τὸ δοκεῖν βιάζεται τὴν ἀλήθειαν, *Shows and seeming appearances do violence to truth,* or *Truth is forced to give way to the mere show of it:* and that other, πολλάκι τὴν μόρφην ἐξαπατῶσ' ἰδέαι, *Shadows too oft cheat us of the reality.* Against which there is no remedy but the word of God, and invoking his direction: according to such sayings as these, *Thy word is a light to my feet,* &c. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, and trust in him, and he will bring it to pass. This shall be your wisdom, to walk in my precepts,* (Deut. iv.)

[*i*] And as some are deceived by their own counsels, so others by the counsel of flatterers; if they be so simple as to believe every one that pretends to kindness, (ver. 15.) Where Bochartus notes very appositely, that "as prudence without simplicity degenerates into craft; so simplicity without prudence is no better than mere fatuity."

[*k*] In like manner the wise man observes, (ver. 23.) that talking without doing is vain, and to no purpose; but only to be a cover perhaps for idleness. As the Lord Bacon (Advanc. of Learning, book viii. chap. 11. parab. 28.) glosses upon that verse in these words: "Solomon here separates the fruit of the labour of the tongue and of the labour of the hands, as if want was the revenue of the one, and wealth the revenue of the other. For it commonly comes to pass, that they who talk liberally, boast much, and promise mighty matters, are beggars; and receive no benefit by their bags, or by any thing they discourse of. Nay, rather for the most part such men are not industrious and diligent in their employment; but only feed and fill themselves with words, as with wind. Certainly, as the poet says, *Qui silet, est firmus.* He that is conscious to himself of proficiency in his endeavours, contents himself with inward applause in his own breast and holds his peace: but he who knows within himself that he only hunts after vain-glory, and hath nothing else to live upon, talks abundantly, and reports wonders unto others."

There are several other remarkable things in the rest of the chapter; but this preface is already so long, that I shall only touch upon one, (ver. 34.)

[*l*] Where they seem to me to have translated the Hebrew most exactly, who take the word *chesed,* in the ordinary sense of it, for *mercy* or *clemency;* not for *reproach,* which it never signifies, unless, perhaps, once, (Lev. xx. 17.) of which there may be a just doubt made. As for the *chattaah,* nobody doubts but it signifies a *sin-offering,* as well as *sin;* yet with respect to our translation, I have endeavoured to express both senses of those two words in my Paraphrase.

Ver. 1. *EVERY wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.*] He hath a great treasure, whosoever he be, that hath a wise and virtuous wife; for she alone, by her diligence and prudent administration, is able to raise her family, and increase its riches and reputation: but she that is foolish, and void of goodness, by her negligence, ill management, and luxury, without any other assistance, will lay it low, and waste all that hath been gotten by her predecessors' care. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the Lord: but he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him.*] He that sincerely discharges his duty in all the actions of his life, hath a due regard and reverence to the Lord; from which all virtue flows: but he that cares not what he doth, so he doth but satisfy his own lusts and passions, lives in a profane contempt of his majesty; which is the very fountain of all wickedness.

Ver. 3. *In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.*] A fool is so insolent that he boldly calumniates and wounds the reputation of others, though it comes home at last, with a terrible backblow, upon himself; but wise men are careful of their words, not to offend, much less abuse, the meanest person; and thereby they remain in safety.

Ver. 4. *Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox.*] If the fields lie fallow and be neglected, a famine must needs follow: but good husbandry bestowed upon them makes great plenty. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 5. *A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.*] A person of integrity will not be prevailed withal, either for fear or favour, to justify the least untruth: but a man of no conscience, who hath accustomed himself to lying, cares not how many falsehoods he testifies; which he utters without any difficulty.

Ver. 6. *A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth.*] He that scoffs and jeers at every thing he reads or hears, would be thought wise; but loses all his pains, which perhaps he takes to be so: when a serious person, who doth not think himself too wise to learn, easily and quickly attains the knowledge of things necessary and useful for him. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 7. *Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.*] Observe a fool (and a wicked man is no better) as diligently as thou pleasest, and thou shalt never learn any good from him; and therefore it is best to flee the company of such persons, whose discourse thou perceivest tends to nothing but vice and mischief. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 8. *The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit.*] The greatest cunning and subtilty that a truly wise and good man studies, is to understand what he ought to do, and what to avoid, upon all occasions: but all the skill of wicked men, such is their folly, lies in cheating tricks, and in devising arts of circumvention and deceit. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 9. *Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour.*] Lewd men, as if it were but a sport,

care not what injury they do their neighbours, and when they have done, laugh at those that talk to them of making satisfaction: but among men exactly virtuous, there is nothing but good-will, which makes them live without offence, or presently reconcile themselves to those they have offended. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 10. *The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.*] Nobody can know what another suffers, so well as he himself: and he alone is privy to the greatness of that joy which springs from the happy conclusion of his sufferings. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 11. *The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.*] Men of sincere integrity are happier in a mean cottage, than the wicked are in their palaces: for, when the great and potent families of those wicked men are overturned, the despicable family of the sincerely pious shall flourish and grow illustrious.

Ver. 12. *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death.*] Examine every thing strictly and impartially, and be not led merely by thy appetite; for that makes many actions seem innocent, which, in the issue, prove deadly destructive. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 13. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.*] Do not think that every one that laughs is merry, or that profuse and immoderate joy is true pleasure; for it leaves the heart more heavy and sad afterward, especially when the mind reflects upon it: nay, such is the vanity of this present life, there is no joy without a mixture of sorrow; which ofttimes treads so close upon its heels, that it immediately follows.

Ver. 14. *The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways; and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.*] He that, to avoid a danger, revolts from those virtuous courses, unto which he knows he ought to have adhered, shall bring upon himself misery enough, by his own devices: but a truly good man is, even in this, far superior to him, that though he should suffer, his own integrity, and the clearness and quietness of his conscience, give him abundant satisfaction.

Ver. 15. *The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.*] It is a mark of great silliness to be credulous; that is, to take all those for friends who make profession of it, and easily to follow every one's advice: for a prudent man is suspicious, and proceeds cautiously; examining before he trusts, and considering well, before he does as he is advised. See Arg. [*i*]

Ver. 16. *A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.*] A wise man being admonished of his error, and of his danger, is afraid of incurring the Divine displeasure; and instantly starts back from that evil way, into which he was entering, or wherein he was engaged: but a fool storms at those that would stop him in his course, and proceeds boldly and securely to his own ruin.

Ver. 17. *He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly; and a man of wicked devices is hated.*] He whose anger is presently kindled, and breaks out when he is offended, may do such things, when the fit is upon him, as none but a fool would be guilty of; but he is nothing so bad as him, who, suppressing his wrath, lets it boil in his breast, and deliberately contrives how to take a cruel revenge: for most men are inclined to pity the weakness of him that is hasty, but this man's wickedness is odious and execrable unto all.

Ver. 18. *The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.*] Inconsiderate men will never leave their folly, till they feel the woful effects of it: but they who are cautious, and advised, will heartily embrace all the means of instruction, and endeavour to arrive at the perfection of knowledge; which will prove a singular ornament and glory to them.

Ver. 19. *The evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.*] Evil-doers had best not be insolent in their prosperity; for they may not only be brought low, but have been seen to humble themselves before the face of those good men, whom they had oppressed; the most impious of them, that stuck at nothing which would support them in their wickedness, have been forced to wait as humble supplicants at the gate of that just man (whom they despised and abused), and implore his favour and relief.

Ver. 20. *The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends.*] There is little sincere kindness left in the world; for if a man fall into poverty, his near neighbour, nay, even he that professed friendship to him before, not only forsakes him, but hates his company; but if a man grow very rich (let it be by what means it will) there are many that before took no notice of him, who will pretend to love him; nay, the greatest persons offer him their favour.

Ver. 21. *He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.*] But let such men know that it is a greater sin than they imagine, and shall be severely punished, to overlook their poor neighbour, and deny him their charitable relief: which whosoever compassionately affords him, not only doth a good deed, but shall be amply rewarded for it.

Ver. 22. *Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.*] Need I tell you (when it is so known a truth) that they miss their end, and do but contrive their own ruin, who carry on mischievous designs against the innocent: but they that take the same pains to study how to do men good, shall never fail of that bountiful reward, which is secured to them by the faithful promise of God.

Ver. 23. *In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.*] If a man take pains in any honest employment, though never so mean, it will bring him in some profit: but to spend one's time in talking only, and perhaps boasting what he can do, tends to nothing but to make a man a beggar. See Arg. [*k*]

Ver. 24. *The crown of the wise is their riches: but the foolishness of fools is folly.*] Riches are a singular advantage and ornament to a wise and virtuous man, who knows how to use them: but such is the folly of wicked men, that their wealth makes them the more vile, and only gives them the greater means to shew what senseless fools they are.

Ver. 25. *A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful witness speaketh lies.*] An upright man will not fear to endanger himself in justifying the truth, to save the lives of those that are falsely accused: but false and deceitful men boldly pour out lies and calumnies, though thereby they destroy the innocent.

Ver. 26. *In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence; and his children shall have a place of refuge.*] A religious care to please the Lord in all things, gives a man the firmest resolution, and the strongest confidence of security and protection in all dangers: and his children after him may flee to God for safety, and hope to fare the better for their pious father's sake.

Ver. 27. *The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.*] There is nothing makes a man live so comfortably and happily, as this religious care to avoid every thing offensive to his majesty; which, like a perpetual spring, gives endless satisfaction; and diverts a man from those dangerous ways, wherein others are entangled to their utter destruction.

Ver. 28. *In the multitude of people is the king's honour: but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince.*] The honour and splendour of a king, depend upon the multitude, wealth, and strength, of his subjects; whom, therefore, he ought to cherish: for if they be wasted by unnecessary wars, or forced into other countries by oppression and unjust exactions, it proves the ruin of his kingdom.

Ver. 29. *He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.*] He declares himself to be a great man, and to abound with prudence, who is not soon provoked to anger by reproaches or ill usage: by which, if a man be hastily inflamed, he exposes his folly, and makes it apparent to every body.

Ver. 30. *A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.*] There is nothing conduces more to health and happiness, than a quiet, gentle, and contented mind; but envy, and such-like fretful passions, is as miserable a torment and consuming disease as rottenness in the bones.

Ver. 31. *He that oppresseth the poor, reproacheth his Maker: he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.*] He that defrauds or oppresses the poor, forgets God, who can reduce him to the same condition; nay, affronts his majesty, who hath promised to be the defender of such helpless people: therefore whosoever hath any respect to God, will be so far from injuring, that he will shew mercy, and do good to him that is needy.

Ver. 32. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.*] When a wicked man falls into calamity, his heart fails him, and he is driven away from all his confidants, like the chaff before the wind, by the consciousness of his own wickedness; but a righteous man is not dismayed in the greatest dangers; but remains steady and confident, even in death itself.

Ver. 33. *Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but that which is in the midst of fools is made known.*] A prudent person makes no unseasonable demonstration of his wisdom; but lets it lie quiet in his own mind, till there be a fitting opportunity to do good with it; whereas fools cannot contain themselves, but presently vent whatsoever they know, though never so small, in every company whereinto they come.

Ver. 34. *Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.*] Justice and piety raise a nation to the highest degree of prosperity and glory, especially when mercy, humanity, and kindness, even unto strangers and enemies, are joined with them: which pacifies the Divine anger, and turns away many calamities; which the contrary sins bring down upon a people, till they make them vile and miserable. See Arg. [*l*]

Ver. 35. *The king's favour is towards a wise servant: but his wrath is against him that causeth shame.*] A prudent and dexterous minister of state, who understands his business, and is faithful in it, must needs be very acceptable to his prince: whose anger nothing more provokes, than one who regards not his master's honour, but, by his ill management, disgraces his government, and brings all things into confusion.

CHAP. XV.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter begins with that aphorism, which [*a*] the Lord Bacon (Advancement of Learning, book viii. chap. 2.) hath set in the front of all those which he hath culled out of this book; for an example of that sort of wisdom which is to be exercised in business, upon various occasions. And he applies it particularly to a man's behaviour towards a prince, or other great person, when he is angry with him. "Two things (saith he) Solomon advises in this case: the one is, that *an answer be made;* the other, that *it be soft.* The first of which contains three precepts. First, that you *beware of a sad and sullen silence;* which either charges the fault wholly upon yourselves, or impeaches your master of injustice, as if his ears were not open to a just defence. Secondly, that you *beware of delaying the answer,* and of craving longer time for your defence; because that plainly betrays you are devising some cunning and counterfeit apology, having no present answer. Thirdly, that by all means *an answer be made:* an *answer,* I say, not a mere *confession* or *submission;* but with some sprinklings of an excuse let fall here and there. For it is not safe to bear yourself otherways, unless you have to deal with very generous and noble dispositions, which are rare. But then, this answer (which is the second and principal thing here advised) must be very soft and temperate, not harsh and peremptory: for that will make the business worse than if it had never been meddled with at all; and increase that wrath which you should study to appease."

Melancthon also, I find, in his short lectures upon this book, commends this lesson very much to his scholars: but looks upon it as a general precept for the preservation of peace, and avoiding unnecessary contentions; which arise out of pride, ambition, morosity of nature, emulation, wrath, superstition; which move men either to give ill words, or to return worse to those that are given them; endeavouring to overcome by sharpness and bitterness, not by lenity and moderation. And the truth is, the Hebrew word we translate *answer,* signifies as well what is first said, as the reply to it. So that Solomon here gives this caution, that we should not think it enough, not to begin strife and contention; but if others begin it, we should not continue it by rough answers, but endeavour to make an end presently, by mollifying the matter, and yield much for the common tranquillity's sake. And he thinks it is a precept of the same nature with that of Pythagoras, *Stir not up fire with a*

sword: and commends those excellent verses of Euripides:

Δυοῖν λεγόντων, θατέρου θυμουμένου,
Ὁ μὴ ἀντιτείνων τοῖς λόγοις σοφώτερος.

And next to this precept he commends to his scholars [*b*] that in ver. 8. which is all that he glosses upon in this chapter: and thinks it is *a caution against resting in ceremonious worship, without moral virtue.* Concerning which he says so many things, useful for these present times, that I cannot but here give the sum of them.

There are three sorts of works, saith he, mentioned by the prophets, concerning *ceremonies,* and concerning *moral virtue,* and concerning *faith.* For the first of these, *ceremonies,* or external signs, God instituted some for two causes: first, that they should be signs of the promises; secondly, that they should be the nerves of the public congregation: because God would not have his church be hid in obscurity, but be conspicuous and discerned from other nations, *voce et ceremoniis.* But here we must prudently consider how ceremonies are to be used; because men are prone to false worship, and especially to the abuse of ceremonies: which they take for righteousness, and think thereby to merit remission of sin: which persuasion spread itself largely among mankind, in the heathen world, among the pharisaical Jews, and in the Roman church. Yet the wiser heathen themselves corrected this error, of trusting to ceremonies without moral good works. Plato, for instance, saith, that *God loves worshippers,* οὐ σχήμασι τεχνάζοντας, ἀλλ' ἀληθείᾳ τιμῶντας ἀρετὴν, *not that can artificially compliment him with gestures and outward shows; but that in truth, honour, and virtue.* But the Scripture goes a great deal farther; and teaches us also to add *faith in God, and in our Lord Jesus Christ. Moral good works* will please God, when done for this end; not that we may merit thereby remission of sin, but that we may be obedient to God, and teach others to know him, and to celebrate him. And then also *ceremonies,* instituted by God, are pleasing to him, when they are done for this end, not to merit remission: but, because they are signs admonishing us of the promises, to stir up our faith; and likewise because they are *signa confessionis, signs of what religion we profess;* and, lastly, *quia sunt nervi congregationis,* because *they are the nerves whereby the congregation* of Christian people are joined together, and preserved in unity. These true ends, saith he, ought to be understood by the church, and impious opinions to be removed. And for such good ends, one would think none should question, much less quarrel with those few ceremonies, which our church hath appointed in God's service.

That this was his opinion also, appears in his commentaries upon the fiftieth Psalm: where he saith, that *even human ceremonies are, in some sort, the nerves of discipline;* and condemns only those that make them effectual for the remission of sin. But his mind is delivered most fully, in a discourse which I find in the second volume of his works, concerning the method of preaching: where he directs preachers to tell the people in general, that *all ceremonies are not to be abolished;* as appears by this, that then we must take away *baptism* and the *eucharist.* And if any one ask, what must be done with ceremonies instituted by man, he answers, *Some of them are necessary,* and therefore must be retained; as certain days, in which the word of God is taught; and certain rites in the church, such as that of singing psalms, and certain forms of communicating, &c.

But there are others not so necessary; what must be done with them? Must they be tolerated? He answers, Yes; if they be not impious, and if they be useful; either because they commend religion to the vulgar, or they are instructive to children, for whose sake they were chiefly instituted. N. B. For we see in some churches, where there are no ceremonies left but only the sacraments, that religion was never so contemptible as it is now. For there is need of external show, which may commend religion to the vulgar, and make it appear more venerable; because they cannot of themselves see its magnitude and dignity.

It is impious also, he resolves, to think that all ceremonies were instituted by wicked popes. No, there were some prudent and holy men, who perceived how supine and dull the minds of the vulgar were; that they would never be sensible of the dignity and amplitude of religion, unless their minds were both awakened and detained by some reverend solemn ceremonies; which might help to lift them up, and teach them to admire it.

These are his reasons why all ceremonies ought not to be abolished—because some are commanded; others necessary; and others, that are not, have no impiety in them, and are very profitable for weaker minds. Which I thought good here to insert; because the opinion of so great and wise a reformer, may weigh much with some persons who have little regard to us.

I have been so long in this, that I must but briefly mention two verses more: upon which the beforenamed Lord Bacon hath given some touches.

[*c*] The first is ver. 15. where by a *merry heart* he understands a good conscience, (Adv. of Learning, book vii. chap. 1.) and thus glosses: "A mind conscious of good intentions, though success be wanting, affords truer and purer joy, and to nature more agreeable, than all that this world can furnish a man withal, either for the enjoyment of his desires, or the repose of his mind." The words, indeed, of Solomon seem to be larger, and to extend unto all that are void of care, anxiety, and sorrow; but this is a pious sense, and may well be comprehended in them.

[*d*] The other place is ver. 9. the beginning of it; where he hath enlarged the sense farther than I have done in my Paraphrase (and the words will bear it) to this purpose, that *sloth in the conclusion proves laborious.* "For diligence and sedulous preparation level the way we are to go in any business, and remove impediments in our passage. But he that is slothful, and puts off all to the last point of execution, must needs perpetually, at every step, pass, as it were, through briars and thorns; which ever and anon entangle, detain, and hinder him in his proceedings. The same observation may be made concerning the government of a family, wherein if there be due care and providence used, all goes on cheerfully, and, as it were, of its own accord, without noise or tumult; but if those be wanting, when some greater occasion falls out, all matters throng in to

be dispatched at once; the servants are in an uproar, the whole house rings, and there is nothing well done in that confusion.

[*e*] The two verses before this some have connected; but there is no necessity of it; though it be a great truth, that passionate men are apt to make disturbance even at feasts; which men of temperate spirits endeavour to appease, though affronts be offered them. According to that excellent advice of Seneca, *let dissension begin from others, but reconciliation from thee.* It is there observed by Bochartus, (lib. ii. de Animalibus Sacris. cap. 32. par. i.) that *herbs*, or, as some translate it, *green pottage*, was the poorest; and an ox put up into a stall, and there fatted (or, as the Talmudists understand the phrase, a *crammed ox*), the noblest entertainment in those countries. For it is reckoned among the provision made for the tables of Solomon and Nehemiah; and in the New Testament, the marriage provision which the king made at his son's wedding were *oxen and fatlings;* (Matt. xxi. 4.) and the *fatted calf* was brought forth to entertain the returning prodigal. And thus it was in other countries, as he observes out of Dioscorides; who notes, that Homer never sets any other cheer before his heroes but this; no, not at marriages or any other meeting: though he introduces Agamemnon often treating the princes of Greece.

Ver. 1. *A SOFT answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.*] A mild, submissive, and yielding answer, to him who severely chides, pacifies wrath; and prevents the farther progress of it: but sharp, contemptuous, and saucy language, incenses it more, or raises a passion, where there was none before. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.*] A wise man gives profitable instructions; and understands also how to speak so seasonably and prudently, that it shall make the knowledge he imparts both acceptable and useful: whereas fools have nothing but silly stuff to utter; or pour out their thoughts so indiscreetly and confusedly, that they only serve abundantly to declare their folly.

Ver. 3. *The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*] There is nothing either in heaven or earth that can escape the knowledge of God: who is every where; and observes the most secret motions and actions of men, both good and bad.

Ver. 4. *A wholesome tongue is a tree of life; but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.*] He that skilfully employs his tongue to give wholesome instructions, especially to heal differences and make peace, is an incomparable blessing to the place where he lives, and makes it a paradise: but he that abuses his tongue, to poison men with ill principles, to lie, to calumniate, to make bates, doth most miserably disturb mankind, and (like a blighting wind) blasts all the comforts of their life.

Ver. 5. *A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.*] He that regards not, or rejects, the instruction of his father, or tutor, or superior, whose love is equal to his authority, will always be a fool: but he that is willing to receive even rebukes, from whomsoever they come, and carefully observe them, hath already attained a great degree of wisdom; and prudently consults his own welfare and happiness.

Ver. 6. *In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.*] A truly just and merciful man is very rich, whether he hath little or much; because he is well contented, and what he hath is likely to continue in his family: but there is much disquiet and trouble in the greatest revenues of the wicked; which can neither stay long with him, nor give him satisfaction while he enjoys them.

Ver. 7. *The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doth not so.*] Wise and good men are neither envious nor sparing of their pains to disperse their knowledge; which they freely communicate, and diligently propagate unto others; but evil men are such fools, that either they have nothing to impart, or no heart to do any good with what they have.

Ver. 8. *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.*] It is impious to think to please God with mere gifts and sacrifices; which when they are presented from wicked men, who have no thought of amending their lives, are abominable to the Divine Majesty; but the very prayers of upright men, though they are not able to bring him any costly offerings, are exceeding acceptable, and prevail for great blessings from him. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 9. *The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.*] For the whole way of a wicked man, his designs, contrivances, and course of life, are all odious and abominable to the Lord; which make even his sacrifices no better: but he loves him, whose thoughts, affections, and endeavours, are earnestly bent to an unwearied pursuit of piety and virtue.

Ver. 10. *Correction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way; and he that hateth reproof shall die.*] Sharp and grievous punishments shall be inflicted on him that forsakes the virtuous path in which he began to tread: for he is not easily reclaimed; because it is unpleasing to him to hear of his faults; and in time he hates reproof, and then must certainly perish.

Ver. 11. *Hell and destruction are before the Lord; how much more then the hearts of the children of men?*] The Lord is perfectly acquainted with things most hidden and secret to us; with the grave, the infernal places, and things perished and quite consumed: how much more therefore with the souls of all men living upon earth, if they have but so much as an intention or inclination to depart from him?

Ver. 12. *A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise.*] A profane man, who makes a mock of God and of religion, loves not to argue with himself about such matters, and hates those that reprove him: which makes him avoid the acquaintance and society of wise and virtuous men, for fear he should meet with their reprehension.

Ver. 13. *A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.*] When the mind of a man is inwardly satisfied and full of joy, it doth good to his body too; as appears in his cheerful countenance: but when grief and sorrow seize on the heart, they deject, enfeeble, and break the most courageous spirit.

Ver. 14. *The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.*] An intelligent man, who is heartily in love with wisdom,

greedily seeks for solid knowledge: but men void of understanding gape after, and relish nothing but frivolous, vain, and unprofitable things; which are like meat and drink unto them.

Ver. 15. *All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.*] All the days of a poor man are full of anxiety and trouble; especially if, when any affliction befals him, he be discontented with his condition, and cannot bear with disappointments; but a good heart and cheerful spirit are a cure for this; especially, a mind conscious to itself of designing well, whatsoever the success prove, is a perpetual comfort, and a higher satisfaction than the most delicious banquet of the rich and prosperous. See Arg. [c]

Ver. 16. *Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure, and trouble therewith.*] A small estate with the fear of offending the Divine Majesty by discontent, or any other sin, is much better than vast treasures with disquiet and confusion of thoughts; which (without a religious sense of God) are wont to attend upon abundance of wealth.

Ver. 17. *Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.*] The meanest fare, with the love of him that invites, and with agreement among the guests, is much better than the most sumptuous entertainment of him that hates us; or among those that quarrel and contend, even then when all differences should be forgotten. See Arg. [e]

Ver. 18. *A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.*] A man prone to wrath will easily disturb the most peaceable company, being apt to quarrel for very trifles: but a meek and patient person is so far from raising strife, that he will endeavour to compose it, when he finds it is begun by others.

Ver. 19. *The way of the slothful man is as a hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.*] A slothful man, when he hath any thing to do, feigns to himself most grievous difficulties, which he fancies, or pretends, are impossible to be overcome: but those very things seem easy to the industry of honest-hearted men; who go on smoothly in their business, and conquer all impediments. See Arg. [d]

Ver. 20. *A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.*] A pious son (as hath been said before, x. 1. and cannot be repeated too often) is a great joy to his parents; especially to his father, who hopes he will support his name and family: but a wicked man is as great a grief unto them; especially to his mother (whose indulgence, perhaps, makes him more irreverent towards her), when he bears no regard to her; nay, despises her commands and admonitions, and makes her contemptible unto others.

Ver. 21. *Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly.*] It is a pleasure (as was also said before, x. 23.) to a man void of consideration, to do the most absurd and wicked things: but he that understands himself, not only directs his thoughts, and takes the greatest care to live orderly and regularly; but feels it to be his highest satisfaction.

Ver. 22. *Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.*] The necessity likewise of prudent counsellors is fit again to be repeated, (xi. 14.) for, if they be wanting, the best designs are likely to miscarry: but where there are a multitude of wise and virtuous men consulting for the public good, they will easily compass any thing; by foreseeing all difficulties, and providing against them.

Ver. 23. *A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth; and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!*] And it is a great pleasure to a man to give wholesome counsel; and a greater to see the good success of it: but the greatest of all (an inexpressible pleasure, both to himself and others), to have given it so seasonably, that a business was easily effected by it, which had not been done without it.

Ver. 24. *The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.*] The way to be perfectly happy, a truly wise man sees, is to raise his thoughts, desires, and hopes above this earth, and to have respect to God in all his actions: which will make him truly noble and great; and preserve him both from all mean and base practices, and from the most horrid dangers here, and utter destruction hereafter.

Ver. 25. *The Lord will destroy the house of the proud; but he will establish the border of the widow.*] Trust not in riches and power, but in the great Lord of the world, who possesses and disposes all things; for he will overturn the family of haughty men (who, forgetting him, trample upon their inferiors), though never so strongly supported: but will preserve the poor widow, who hath no helper, in her right, when such insolent persons invade it.

Ver. 26. *The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord: but the words of the pure are pleasant words.*] For the Lord abhors all wicked designs, and mischievous contrivances: but the kind consultations and discourses of such as seek the welfare and comfort of others, are no less pleasing to him than they are pure.

Ver. 27. *He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house: but he that hateth gifts shall live.*] He that is so greedy of money, that he cares not how he gets it, instead of raising his family, confounds it: but he that hateth bribes, and all unlawful ways of gain, shall prosper, and continue it.

Ver. 28. *The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.*] A good man thinks it is soon enough to speak, when he is asked about a business, and deliberates within himself to speak nothing that is not to the purpose: but bad men are rash, and forward to utter their mind; and generally do more hurt than good.

Ver. 29. *The Lord is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.*] The Lord is far from giving any regard to the wicked, whose business it is to do evil, though they implore his favour: but sends good men help, when they pray unto him, as readily as they were wont to send relief to others.

Ver. 30. *The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart; and a good report maketh the bones fat.*] It is a wonderful pleasure to behold all the beautiful works of God, which present themselves to our eyes: but nothing gives such intimate satisfaction, and makes a man so cheerful in well-doing, as to hear a fair report of his own honest actions; or to receive the good news of the well-doing of other virtuous men.

Ver. 31. *The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth*

among the wise.] He that lends an attentive ear to wholesome reproof, and is obedient to it, is to be numbered among the wise, and shall at last be able to give good instructions unto others.

Ver. 32. *He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.*] And whosoever he be that refuseth, much more that contemneth, such instructions and reproofs, he sets his own soul at nought, and despiseth the means of safety: but he that diligently hearkens to it, knows what is good for himself; and keeps his soul from being lost for want of understanding.

Ver. 33. *The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.*] A brief institution of wisdom and virtue is this, to have an awful sense of God; with a devout affection to him, and fear to offend him: and as this is the best disposition for wisdom; so humility, and patient submission, in a low condition, is the best preparation for honour and preferment.

CHAP XVI.

ARGUMENT.

[*a*] This chapter begins with a most necessary observation, which a good man ought always to have in his mind, (for which cause it is repeated, with little difference, twice more in this chapter, ver. 9. 33. and again chap. xix. 21.) the sense of which our translation seems to have missed. For it ascribes both the *preparation of the heart*, and *the answer of the tongue unto the Lord* (which is true in this regard, that without him we can do nothing); whereas the Hebrew words run plainly thus, *man hath the disposing of the heart;* he may, with God's leave and common assistance, intend, propound, resolve within himself, what he will say and do; but that he shall be able to utter things in that order he hath premeditated; or, if he be able, shall attain the end of his deliberation, and eloquent speech, is more than he can undertake; for *that is as the Lord pleaseth.* This seems to me to be better opened by Melancthon than any one I have read. Who truly observes, that such sayings as these do not take away the liberty of man's will or choice; but only shew, that even the best men sometimes err in their choice; and that the success doth not always answer. For we must diligently distinguish, saith he, between our election and the success: and remember, that we need a double help of God, for the making a happy choice: one of *judging right*, and the other afterward of *governing events.* For unless our judgment be ruled right, many errors happen; as we see in Josiah, Zedekiah, Demosthenes, Pompey, Cicero; who all erred "in eligendo bello," *in their resolves about war;* and direful events followed. And sometimes also when the mind doth not err in its judgment; yet God is not pleased to assist the action, for other causes. As in the war against the Benjamites, which miscarried a great while, because the Israelites trusted in their own strength. We must always therefore be sensible, that happy events do not depend merely on human forecast, diligence, and power, as Jeremiah speaks, "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself;" *i. e.* he cannot have what success he will, but must be beholden to God for his happiness. This our weakness God would have us to acknowledge, and to fear and depend on him, as it follows here, ver. 3. "Commit thy work unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." To this use we ought to accommodate such sayings as these, not to a stoical opinion of necessity. Thus he.

[*b*] And he no less worthily glosses upon the common interpretation of ver. 4. the latter part of which hath exercised many pens to little purpose: when the sense is clear, though no expositor, that I have seen, hath hit upon it, *viz.* that *God makes some use of wicked men, as well as of all things else;* which they shall serve whether they will or not. For he *disposes* (so the word we translate *hath made* is to be understood; not of his *creating* things) all things correspondent to his own will and pleasure, which they all obey. So *lammaanthu* seems to be best translated, not *for himself*, but *according to his will.* However, I have included the other interpretation also in my Paraphrase; but applied *the day of evil* not to the punishment which he inflicts upon the wicked for their sins; but which he orders them to inflict upon others, when their iniquities are ripe for his vengeance. For it is the method of his providence to direct the ambition, wrath, hatred, revenge, &c. which he sees in some wicked men's hearts, to vent themselves there, where it will do service to him. Who wisely and justly makes some wicked men do execution upon others like themselves. This seems to me the most easy and natural sense of the words; which were remarkably fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman soldiers, whom our Saviour used to punish his crucifiers. Not that they undertook that war out of any design or desire to do our blessed Saviour right; but out of an ambition to enslave the world: ἐχρῆτο δὲ αὐτοῖς ὁμῶς ὁ Θεὸς ὡς δημίοις, δι αὐτῶν τοὺς ἠσεβηκότας κολάζων, *yet God made use of them for another design, as public executioners, by whom he punished the ungodly,* as Theodoret speaks upon Psal. lxxiv. 3.

[*c*] I must omit Melancthon's glosses upon this verse and the two next; that I may have room for his pertinent observation upon ver. 10. *A Divine sentence is in the lips of the king,* &c. "These words (says he) affirm the whole political order, *magistrates, laws, distinction of dominions, contracts, judgments, punishments,* to be things ordained by the wisdom of God among men. And since we know political order to be the work of God, we ought to love it, and study to defend it; and modestly for God's sake obey it; and give thanks to God who preserves it; and look upon those horrible furies of the devil and men, who disturb this order, to be displeasing to God: as this whole doctrine is explained, Rom. xiii. But *what is this Divine sentence* which is in the king's lips? It is *the laws* (says he); and *judgments according to the laws:* and besides, God hath armed kings with a power *to make laws of their own,* not repugnant to his laws; but built upon them, either by demonstrations, or probable reasons. God sometimes moves the mind of kings also, and gives them *singular motions* (as other excellent artificers have), because he will by that means save mankind, &c. Thus it was a singular motion in Solomon's reasoning about the mother of the child. And in the judgment of Gonzaga, in the last age,

upon the Spanish governor of Milan under him: who having held a noble person captive a long time, would not deliver him to his wife (when she petitioned and offered a large sum of money for his redemption), unless he might lie with her; and after he had obtained his desire, then caused her husband to be killed, and delivered him dead to her. Which when Gonzaga heard, and had examined, he compelled him to marry this woman; and as soon as he had done that, he condemned him to be immediately beheaded, and gave her all his estate."

But we are not from such places as this to infer, that kings cannot give a wrong judgment: though this be as good a conclusion as from those words, *the priest's lips shall preserve knowledge*, to conclude the pope cannot err. Kings from this place of Solomon may as well pretend to infallibility, as priests from that place of Malachi. Nay, if we respect either the form of this precept, or the plenitude of God's promise for ability to perform it, we must confess, this place is more plain and peremptory for kings, than any can be brought for the high-priest's infallibility, in giving definitive sentence. And yet all the places (as a famous divine of our own speaks, Dr. Jackson, book iii. upon the Creed, chap. 12.) that can be brought either for the king's or priest's authority, rather shew what manner of men they should be, both in life and judgment, than assure them of any infallibility of judgment, if they be dissolute in life, and regard not the laws of God. This was a thing never dreamt of by any, till the notoriously infamous lives of popes discredited the titles of sanctity and infallibility (which, from the conceit of their predecessors' integrity, they had usurped), and enforced their flatterers to frame a distinction of sanctity in doctrine, separated from sanctity of life.

I thought it not amiss to say thus much upon this subject, because I find even Maldonate himself, in his notes upon this place, hath the confidence to conclude the pope must needs have this privilege, which is promised to kings; when it is apparent kings are not infallible; and consequently, by his own reasoning, popes cannot be so.

There are other notable sentences which would deserve a larger gloss than I have given in this Paraphrase; which I must pass by; because this preface is already prolonged to a great length.

[*d*] I shall only therefore mention two. One, ver. 21. where *wisdom* and *eloquence* are compared together. The former of which, no doubt, is of greatest value, as we see in those words of God to Moses, when he disabled himself for the service imposed upon him, for want of the other faculty: "There is Aaron (saith the text), he shall be thy speaker, and thou shalt be to him as God." Yet, in profit and popular esteem, wisdom gives place to eloquence; according to the Vulgar translation of this verse, *Sapiens corde appellatur prudens, sed dulcis eloquia majora reperiet;* signifying, says the Lord Bacon, (Adv. of Learning, book vi. chap. 3.) not obscurely, that "profoundness of wisdom may help men to fame and admiration: but it is eloquence which prevails in business and active life."

[*e*] The other is ver. 26. where I have put two senses together, according to the different acceptions of the Hebrew word *amal*, which signifies either to take pains one's self, or to molest others. But I can see no reason why Maldonate should favour the LXX. translation; who, against the stream of all other interpreters, apply these words to an ungodly man's *digging up evil* to himself, as if the meaning were, *he digs a pit for himself, and the words he speaks are the cause of his punishment, as if he were burnt:* unless it proceeded from his fondness for the Spanish inquisition, which he was desirous to introduce every where. The very best of them, it appears by him (who was one of the most learned and judicious interpreters in the Romish church), are most devoutly bent to our destruction: for he cannot forbear here to allege that inquisition as a proof of Solomon's words, "Id exemplo inquisitionis Hispanicæ perspicuum est," &c. *This is apparent by the example of the Spanish inquisition;* whereby he that speaks any thing rashly against the faith, is deservedly delivered to the fire; which *I wish were done every where.*—Thus, in the most literal sense, this Jesuit's lips are as a burning fire; in which he would have us not only singed, but devoured: in pursuance of this maxim of Solomon. Which others honestly interpret of those calumnies, discords, seditions, which evil men raise by their tongues, to the destruction of their neighbours. For so it follows, (ver. 28.) "A froward man soweth strife," &c.

Ver. 1. *THE preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.*] Men may deliberate, and contrive, and order, in their mind, what, and in what manner and method, they will speak: but whether they shall persuade and prevail or not for such an answer as they expect, nay, be able to deliver themselves with such elocution as they imagine, cannot be resolved by them, but depends upon the pleasure of the Lord. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes: but the Lord weigheth the spirits.*] Such is the blindness of self-love, that men can find no fault in themselves; but imagine all that they contrive and do, to be free from blame; which, when the Lord examines, who searches into the very intentions of men's hearts, is found to be very defective, if not vicious.

Ver. 3. *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.*] When thou undertakest any thing, implore the Divine blessing; and committing the success of it to God's providence, leave it to him to give what issue to it he pleases: which is the surest way to have thy honest designs accomplished.

Ver. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.*] The Lord disposeth all things throughout the world, to serve such ends, as he thinks fit to design; which they cannot refuse to comply withal: for if any men be so wicked as to oppose his will, he will not lose their service; but, when he brings a public calamity upon a country, employ them to be the executioners of his wrath. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 5. *Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.*] There is no man so great, but if his mind grow lofty and arrogant, forgetting God, and insolently oppressing his neighbour, he is hateful beyond all expression unto the Lord; who will take vengeance on him, and pull him down, though he make never so strong confederacies to support himself; for if he avoid one punishment, another

shall overtake him; nay, his wickedness shall pursue him from generation to generation, (xi. 21.)

Ver. 6. *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged; and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.*] The most effectual means to appease men's anger for private offences, or to divert the anger of God in public calamities, is to exercise mercy and loving-kindness, with justice and faithful performance of promises: especially when they proceed from an awful regard to God, and religious dread of his displeasure; which will make a man careful to decline every thing that is evil, and thereby escape the punishment that attends upon it.

Ver. 7. *When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*] The best way to have our enemies reconciled unto us, is for us first to be reconciled unto God: for such is the reverence men bear to virtue, and such is the love which the Lord hath to virtuous persons, that when all their designs and actions are such as he approves, he inclines even those that were their foes to become their friends.

Ver. 8. *Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right.*] A small estate honestly gotten, and charitably enjoyed, is much to be preferred before vast incomes heaped up by oppression, and kept without hospitality.

Ver. 9. *A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps.*] The mind of man designs an end, and contrives what means to use, and reckons perhaps what success they will have: but the Lord determines what the event shall be, and orders his motions perhaps to such an issue, as never came into his thoughts.

Ver. 10. *A divine sentence is in the lips of the king; his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.*] God is present in a singular manner unto a pious king, inspiring his mind to divine sagaciously in dubious and obscure things; that his resolutions and decrees may be received like oracles; and all causes be decided by him so justly and exactly, that no man be wronged in the judgment which he passes. See Arg. [c]

Ver. 11. *A just weight and balance are the Lord's; all the weights of the bag are his work.*] And it is worthy of his care, that there be no corruption in private, no more than in public justice; for it also is of Divine institution: the great Lord of all requiring just and equal dealings in all our commerce one with another; which he hath ordained should be managed with scrupulous integrity, in the smallest, as well as in the greatest matters.

Ver. 12. *It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness; for the throne is established by righteousness.*] It is not enough to good kings that they do no injury; but they abominate, with the highest detestation, all oppression, cruelty, extortion, &c. not only in themselves, but in others; for they know that justice, mercy, and true religion, support their authority, and make their kingdoms durable.

Ver. 13. *Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.*] And calumniators, or flatterers, find no acceptance with such princes; but they delight in those that will not deceive them by false, unjust, and malicious informations; and make him their favourite, who deals sincerely, and tells them the truth, though it may seem ungrateful to them.

Ver. 14. *The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it.*] The wrath of a king strikes such terror into him, with whom he is offended, as if the sentence of death were pronounced against him: but, as ill men and fools exasperate it more, so a virtuous and prudent courtier appeases his anger, and makes a reconciliation.

Ver. 15. *In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.*] And when a king will be pleased to look graciously upon a man, especially after he hath been incensed against him, it not only revives, but gives him the greatest joy; for from his favour he promises himself all manner of happiness; as a plentiful harvest follows the showers of rain, which, in the spring, refresh the corn.

Ver. 16. *How much better is it to get wisdom than gold? and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver?*] But, after all is done, to get so much wisdom as to know the difference between good and evil, and to understand how to behave a man's self upon all occasions is, beyond all expression, better, and more to be chosen, than the greatest treasures of gold and silver, which either the favour of princes can give, or his own industry acquire.

Ver. 17. *The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.*] This is the constant aim and endeavour of upright men, the beaten path, as we may call it, in which they travel, to decline every thing that is evil: and he who makes this his care, looking well to all his actions, that he do nothing amiss, looks well to himself, and preserves his soul and body from destruction.

Ver. 18. *Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*] Insolent behaviour is the forerunner of utter destruction: and when men lift up themselves in their own thoughts, and overlook all others with contempt, they are in the greatest danger to stumble; and not to see that, which will give them such a grievous downfall, as will break them all to shivers.

Ver. 19. *Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.*] Therefore it is much better to submit to the meanest condition, nay, patiently to bear injuries, with afflicted, but meek and lowly persons, than to lift one's self to the prejudice of others, and by trampling upon them to partake with the proud in their rapine and spoil.

Ver. 20. *He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he.*] He that understands his business thoroughly, and manages it prudently and discreetly, is likely to have good success; but none so happy, none so sure of prospering in his design, as he that confides more in the Lord, than in his own skill and industry.

Ver. 21. *The wise in heart shall be called prudent; and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.*] He whose mind is well furnished with wisdom, cannot but win a great reputation, and be highly esteemed for his prudent counsels and resolutions: but if he have the powerful charms of eloquence also, to convey his mind delightfully unto others, it will add a greater value to his wisdom, and make it more diffusive and instructive unto the world. See Arg. [d]

Ver. 22. *Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.*] A clear understanding, and right judgment of things, like an inex-

haustible spring, gives perpetual comfort and satisfaction to him in whom it is; and makes him very useful unto others: but the learning of fools is frivolous and vain; and therefore, if they undertake to instruct others, they only make them like themselves.

Ver. 23. *The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.*] The mind of a wise man instructs him to speak judiciously and pertinently: and makes him not only communicate his thoughts to others, but with such weight of reason as increases their learning.

Ver. 24. *Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.*] Especially when he can deliver his mind in pleasing and delightful words, flowing from him with a natural eloquence, as honey drops from the comb: which ravish the affections, and touch a man's heart to the very quick; when he needs either comfort or cure for any inward disease wherewith he labours.

Ver. 25. *There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the ends thereof are the ways of death.*] But there is never more need of caution, than when we hear a moving orator; therefore this instruction may be here necessary to be repeated, (xiv. 12.) examine every thing strictly and impartially; and be not led away merely by thy fancy and thy appetite: for they make many things seem innocent, which, in themselves, and in the issue, are deadly and destructive.

Ver. 26. *He that laboureth, laboureth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him.*] It is a powerful motive to a man to take pains in an honest employment, that all his labour is for his own preservation; his mouth begging this favour of him, that he may not starve: and, on the contrary, he that spends his time in giving trouble and vexation unto others, will find it fall upon himself; for he cannot speak so much as an evil word, but it will return upon him, and fly back in his own face. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 27. *An ungodly man diggeth up evil; and in his lips there is as a burning fire.*] And it is not a little pains that an ungodly lawless man takes, to plot and devise mischief; wherein he labours, as if he was digging for a treasure; and one way is, to brand his neighbour with false reports and slanders, and thereby utterly destroy his reputation.

Ver. 28. *A froward man soweth strife; and a whisperer separateth chief friends.*] Others of them have such a perverseness in their spirit, that it is their business to disturb the world, and raise dissensions among those that would live in peace; by backbiting, detracting, and whispering false stories: making a breach even between princes and people, husband and wife, nay, the dearest friends and familiars, if they hearken to their tales.

Ver. 29. *A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good.*] Another sort live by rapine and open violence; who are not content to do wrong themselves, but persuade others to enter into their society; and then lead them into the most pernicious courses.

Ver. 30. *He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things; moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.*] Which they do not fall into by chance; but with profound study contrive the ruin of others; and the sign being given, they furiously execute the mischief they have designed.

Ver. 31. *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.*] Old age is very venerable, when a man's past life hath been truly virtuous and useful: which is the best way also to prolong one's days; and bring one to that great honour which is due to those who have long done much good to mankind.

Ver. 32. *He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.*] He that can suppress the vehement motions of anger, deserves more praise than those mighty men who quell the enemies that oppose them: and he that hath power to govern all his own inclinations, affections, and passions, by reason, hath a nobler empire than he that subdues cities and countries by force of arms.

Ver. 33. *The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.*] Acknowledge the Divine providence in all things, even in those which seem most casual: for though men cast the lots into the lap of a garment, or into a hollow vessel, and thence draw them out again; yet it is the Lord who directs entirely in what order they shall come forth, and so determines the matter in doubt according to his pleasure.

CHAP. XVII.

ARGUMENT.

In the first verse of this chapter, the wise man observes how happy that family is which lives in peace and perfect agreement one with another; though they have but a mean estate. And next to this how happy a thing it is if there be but one wise and virtuous man in a family (suppose he be but a servant) when any dissensions and differences arise in it. For so the Lord Bacon (Advanc. of Learning, book viii. chap. 2. parab. 2.) expounds the [*a*] second verse; whose words I will set down, because, if they hit not the sense completely, yet they very pithily express a part of it, and carry in them a very important truth. "In all troubled and disagreeing families (saith he) there is commonly some servant or gentle friend, who, being powerful with both sides, may moderate and compose the differences that are among them. To whom, in that respect, the whole house, and the master himself, are much engaged and beholden. This servant, if he aim only at his own ends, cherishes and aggravates the divisions of the family: but if he be sincerely faithful and upright, certainly he deserveth much; so as to be reckoned as one of the brethren; or at least to receive a fiduciary administration of the inheritance."

[*b*] And after some other documents, there follows a notable *rule for the making peace*, and ending all differences; whether between particular persons in families, or between kingdoms: (ver. 9.) upon which the same great person thus glosses, (ib. parab. 27.) "There are two ways of proceeding to arbitrate differences and reconcile affections. The one begins with an act of oblivion of what is past; the other begins with a repetition of wrongs, subjoining apologies and excuses. Now some think this last to be the only way; insomuch, that I have heard a prudent person and great statesman lay down this maxim: He that treats of peace, without a recapitulation of the terms of difference, rather deceives men's minds with the sweet name of agreement, than composes them by equity and moderation of right. But Solomon, a wiser man than he, is of a contrary opinion; approving an act of oblivion, and forbidding repetition.

For in repetition, or renewing the memory of the causes of difference, there are these inconveniences: not only that it is, as we say, *unguis in ulcere, raking in the ulcer*, which very much exasperates, but also endangers the breeding of new quarrels while they are debating the old (for the parties at difference will never accord about the terms of their falling out); and lastly, in the issue it brings the matter to apologies: whereas both the one and the other party would seem rather to have remitted the offence, than to have admitted excuses for it."

Melancthon thinks this and the three next verses, 10—12. to be sentences near of kin; all belonging to the right method in judging, which is comprehended in that saying of Christ's, *If thy brother sin against thee, tell him of it between thyself and him:* and interprets this ninth verse thus (taking *Aluph* for a prince, which we translate *chief friends):* He that orderly admonishes him that erreth, cures him, and makes no public disturbance; saves the man, and preserves public concord: but this order being neglected, thence arises out of brawlings, discords of princes, wars, and devastations.

[*c*] Now an evil man only seeks scoldings or contentions; (as it follows, ver. 11.) *i. e.* saith he, he doth not seek truth nor the good of the church, but troubles without end. Thus Cleon and Alcibiades in the state, scattered seeds of war at Athens: the cynics and academics contradicted every body among the philosophers: and lately, Valla, Cornelius Agrippa, Carolostadius, &c. had the like scolding natures. They seek not truth; but contradict things rightly spoken, or wantonly move unnecessary disputes, and will not yield when they are admonished, but with greater rage defend their errors. Of such Solomon here saith in the next verse, *it is better to meet a bear robbed of her whelps, than a fool in his folly.* An example of which we meet withal, when we meet with a bewitched papist, who defends the most manifest errors. Thus he.

But that which the Vulgar translates *semper jurgia quærit malus*, and we translate, *an evil man seeks only rebellion*, the most and the best interpreters take the other way; as the words lie more naturally in the Hebrew, *a man very rebellious seeks nothing but mischief:* which sense I have expressed in the Paraphrase, together with the other.

[*d*] The truth of the next verse (ver. 12.) is admirably opened by Bochartus, (lib. iii. de Animal. Sacris, cap. 9. par. i.) who observes four things concerning the *bear*, out of good authors. The first every one knows, that a *bear* is an exceeding fierce creature: the second is, that the *female* is more fierce than the *male:* the third, that she is more fierce than ordinary, when she hath whelps: and lastly, that when she is robbed of them she is fiercest of all, *immanem in modum, even unto rage and madness.* Which the Scripture takes notice of in two other places besides this, 2 Sam. xvii. 8. Hosea xii. 8. where St. Jerome observes that the writers of natural history say, among all wild beasts, none more fierce and cruel than the *bear*, in two cases especially, when she wants food, and when she is robbed of her whelps. The reason of this last is there given by Kimchi; which well enough agrees with the comparison which the wise man here makes: *for a bear cannot be more in love with her whelps, than a fool is with his absurd opinions and resolutions:* and as a *bear* falls upon the next person she meets withal, taking him for the robber; so doth a fool upon every one that stands in his way, though he be never so much obliged to him. He spares none in the heat of his passions, but furiously abuseth them, &c.

[*e*] Unto what is expressed in the Paraphrase upon ver. 17. concerning *a brother being born for adversity* (which I have referred, as the best interpreters do, unto a *friend),* this may be added, as the plainest translation of the Hebrew words: *A true friend* (spoken of before) *is born* (that is, *becomes) a brother in adversity.* He was a friend before; this makes him a brother; and so he is to be esteemed.

[*f*] There is a phrase in the nineteenth verse, *exalteth his gate,* which is variously taken by interpreters. I have expounded it literally; not for the *mouth,* but for the *gate of a house* or other place; and have put two senses together.

[*g*] Various glosses also have been made upon the beginning of ver. 22. *a merry heart doth good like a medicine:* where, because the particle *like* is wanting in the Hebrew, other constructions have been made of the words; some, for instance, having taken them thus; *a merry heart makes a medicine work better, or do more good.* But he that can consult Bochartus (in his second book of Sacred Animals, chap. 16. par. ii.) may find so many examples of the effect of that which they call כף רמיון *caph similitudinis;* that he will not think it unreasonable to supply it (as our translators have done) in this place of the Proverbs.

In the twenty-fourth verse I have put two senses, in which the words may be taken, into one. And that none may wonder at the repetition of the [*h*] same thing in the twenty-fifth verse, which was said just before in the twenty-first, I shall here observe, that there is no doubt but Solomon, having frequent occasions to speak of the same matter, varied the words sometimes, but not the sense; and so the collectors of his sayings put down both. And he might speak the oftener of this matter, having an example before his eyes of the great weakness of his own son: who, it is not unlikely, was a perpetual grief to him. There is also something observable in this verse, which was not in the other; *viz.* that the untowardness of children have many times different effects upon the parents: provoking the fathers to anger and exasperation; and the mothers to grief and sorrow, to which their tenderness more inclines them than to the other passion.

There are several ways also of expounding the latter end of the next verse, (ver. 26.) I have expressed the sense of our translation; and had respect, in the next verse to that, (ver. 27.) to both readings of the word which we render *excellent.*

Ver. 1. *BETTER is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife.*] There is more satisfaction in a bit of dry bread (without butter or oil, &c.) in the open field, and love and concord therewith; than in a house full of the best cheer in the world, attended with brawling, contention, and strife.

Ver. 2. *A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance*

among the brethren.] Probity and prudence are so much better than mere riches and noble birth, that a wise and faithful servant sometimes arrives at the honour of being appointed the governor of a son, whose folly and wickedness make him a discredit to his family: nay, he is left not only executor of the father's will, or trustee for the children; but his merits, perhaps, are rewarded with a portion of the estate, which is to be distributed among them. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 3. *The fining-pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth the hearts.*] The art of man hath found out means to prove whether gold and silver be pure or not; but none can search into the secret thoughts, designs, and inclinations of men's souls, but the Lord: who (as those metals are tried by fire) many times proves and discovers what they are by sharp afflictions and troubles.

Ver. 4. *A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.*] A man that designs evil unto others, hearkens greedily to him that will tell false and mischievous stories; and there never wants such a man, of the very same mind with himself; for he who gives his mind to lying and falsehood, listens to him that speaks the most pestilent things.

Ver. 5. *Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker; and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished.*] He that derides a man because he is poor, forgets God, who can bring him down to as low a condition: nay, affronts his majesty, who hath promised to take a peculiar care of such friendless persons: nor is he much better, who rejoiceth at the calamity of others, which will bring unavoidable punishments upon himself.

Ver. 6. *Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.*] The honour and comfort of parents lie in a numerous progeny, which doth not degenerate from their ancestors' virtue: and that which makes children illustrious, is their being descended from worthy parents; whose wisdom and virtue reflect an honour upon their posterity.

Ver. 7. *Excellent speech becometh not a fool; much less do lying lips a prince.*] It doth not become a fool to discourse of grave and weighty matters; which as they are above him, so are not regarded out of his mouth, though he should speak excellent things; but it is much less seemly for a prince to lie and deceive; which as it is below him who represents the God of truth, so it makes him despicable, and destroys his authority, when his subjects cannot rely upon his word.

Ver. 8. *A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it; whithersoever it turneth it prospereth.*] A gift is so tempting, that it can no more be refused, than a lovely jewel by him to whom it is presented; and such is its power, it commonly prevails over all men, dispatches all business, carries all causes; and, in a word, effects whatsoever a man desires.

Ver. 9. *He that covereth a transgression seeketh love: but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.*] He that passes by and buries in oblivion a transgression that hath been committed against him, takes the best course to preserve friendship, and to make himself universally beloved; but he who rakes up that fault again, and objects it afresh when it was forgotten, breaks the strictest bands of amity, and makes an irreconcilable separation. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 10. *A reproof entereth more into a wise man than a hundred stripes into a fool.*] One reproof penetrates deeper into the mind of an ingenuous man, and works a greater alteration there, than a hundred stripes will do for the amendment of an obstinate fool.

Ver. 11. *An evil man seeketh only rebellion; therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.*] Who seeking nothing but to have his own will, and being so refractory, that he hath shaken off all reverence to God, or to his governors, is wholly bent upon mischief, and cannot be reclaimed; it remains therefore only, that a severe execution be done upon him, to cut him off in his folly, without mercy. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 12. *Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.*] There is less danger in meeting a bear in the height of her rage, than a furious fool in the pursuit of his unruly passions and desires: for it is possible to defend a man's self against the one; but there is no way to hinder the brutish motions of the other. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 13. *Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.*] It is so unnatural for a man to return evil to him from whom he hath received nothing but good, that the punishment of his ingratitude shall not rest in his own person, but descend upon his posterity to all generations.

Ver. 14. *The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water; therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.*] When men begin a quarrel or a difference, they know not where it will end: for the very first breach is like cutting the banks of a river, which presently overflows the neighbouring grounds, but cannot easily be reduced into its bounds again. It is best therefore to make peace immediately, before both parties be involved in such troubles, as, like a deluge of water, lay all desolate.

Ver. 15. *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord.*] It is hard to say, which is most detestable to the Lord, he that pleads for a wicked man, and, more than that, acquits him; or he that pleads against the righteous, nay, plainly condemns him. Certain it is, they are both most highly obnoxious to his displeasure, who is the fountain of justice; and as he would have it exactly administered, so he hates those who endeavour to confound the nature of good and evil among men.

Ver. 16. *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?*] What good doth a great estate in the possession of a fool? Can he therewith purchase wisdom how to use it? alas! he wants understanding to desire it, and to procure good instructors, in which his riches (if his mind were good) might be serviceable to him.

Ver. 17. *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.*] Time makes proof of a friend; who, if he be sincere, loves not merely for a fit, nor alters with the change of one's condition; but continues steadfast in adversity, as well as in prosperity: nay, in straits and distresses, shews himself more like a brother than a friend. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 18. *A man void of understanding striketh hands,*

and becometh surety in the presence of his friend.] He is very inconsiderate, whose kindness makes him forward to pass his word for the payment of another man's debts, (vi. 1. xi. 15.) and especially to enter into bonds in the presence of his neighbour for whom he engages: which may make him more careless about the payment than he would have been, if unknown to him he had been security for him.

Ver. 19. *He loveth transgression that loveth strife; and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction.*] He vainly pretends to the love of piety, who accustoms himself to brawling and contention: which as necessarily draw along with them abundance of sins, as lifting up a man's self above his estate, in raising sumptuous buildings, brings him to ruin: or as breach of the public peace opens wide the flood-gates to all iniquity. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 20. *He that hath a froward heart findeth no good; and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.*] A man of wicked designs, which he resolves to accomplish by any sort of means, shall find himself deceived in his expectation: and he who employs his tongue to deceit and fraud, pretending fair to men before their face, but slandering them behind their back, shall, by that very means, bring mischief upon himself.

Ver. 21. *He that begetteth a fool doeth it to his sorrow; and the father of a fool hath no joy.*] Great is the care which ought to be taken in the contract of marriage, and in the education of children: for if a son prove vicious and lewd, it will be such an inexpressible grief to his father, that he will take no comfort at all in any things he enjoys, (ver. 25.)

Ver. 22. *A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.*] And consequently it will shorten his days: for as nothing conduces more to health than a cheerful spirit, which serves instead of physic; so nothing destroys it more than sadness and grief, which consume the vital juices, and dry up the body to skin and bone. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 23. *A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.*] No man would willingly be known to be so wicked as to be bribed to do injustice: but there are too many that will suffer themselves to be secretly corrupted by presents, to give counsel or judgment contrary to the course of law and equity.

Ver. 24. *Wisdom is before him that hath understanding: but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth.*] As a wise man's understanding appears in his very countenance; and a fool is known by his garish and wondering eyes: so the one hath his wisdom always present and ready at hand to guide and govern him; when the other knows not what to follow, but his thoughts are roving up and down to no purpose, though he ramble to the very ends of the earth.

Ver. 25. *A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.*] A foolish dissolute son, who regards not the counsel of his parents, wasting their estate, and disgracing their family, is such a vexation to his father, that he provokes his indignation; and such a grief to his mother, that it makes her life bitter and irksome to her. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 26. *Also to punish the just is not good, nor to strike princes for equity.*] There may be specious pretences for it; but it is against all honesty and piety to punish innocent persons together with delinquents: especially to scourge judges and governors, for doing equal justice upon all offenders.

Ver. 27. *He that hath knowledge spareth his words; and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.*] The more any man knows, the less he is apt to talk: for his wisdom gives him such an excellent composure of spirit, that it represses his heat, his forwardness, and haste; and makes him coolly deliberate what, and when, it is fit to speak.

Ver. 28. *Even a fool when he holdeth his peace is counted wise; and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.*] Such a virtue it is to be silent, that he who understands nothing is deemed wise, as long as he holds his peace; and he whose mind hath such power over his mouth as to keep it shut, that nothing may suddenly and impetuously go out, is wise indeed.

CHAP. XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

[*a*] There is so much difficulty in the two first verses, which hath produced so many various interpretations, that I scarce know which to follow. Some take that word which we translate *separateth himself,* in a good sense; others in a bad: I have chosen the latter, because it seems most agreeable to the rest of the words. But the Chaldee interpreter gives a quite different sense, both of that word, and of some other in these verses: and De Dieu hath shewn there is such reason for it, that I think I am obliged here to take notice of it, and to paraphrase upon it.

By *niphrad,* which we render *separateth himself,* he understands *a man divided,* uncertain in his own mind, who can stick to nothing; but wanders about in his own thoughts. And the last word in the first verse, *jithgalla,* which we translate *intermeddleth,* he translates *is left desolate.* And in the next verse, taking *behith galloth* for *wandering up and down,* not for *discovering,* or *revealing,* as we do, the paraphrase will run thus:—

Ver. 1. An inconstant man desires many things, and seeks satisfaction: but whatsoever he seeks, he never meets with it, but is defeated and disappointed in all his designs.

Ver. 2. And this is a certain character of a fool, that he never fixes in any thing; but chooses rather to gad up and down, and rove from one inquiry to another, than give his mind to true wisdom and prudence, in which he hath no pleasure.

The Lord Bacon aims at this, I suppose, when he briefly expresses the sense of Solomon thus; "Pro desiderio quærit cerebrosus, omnibus immiscet se;" *A hare-brained man seeks to satisfy his fancy, and intermixeth himself with all things.* According to that of Seneca, "Vita sine proposito, languida est et vaga;" *A life that proposeth no end to pursue, is faint, sickly, and vagrant.*

If we take the word *niphrad* in a good sense, then the paraphrase must run thus:—

Ver. 1. He that lives retired, and sequesters himself from all company and business, out of a true affection to wis-

dom, endeavours to have a sound knowledge and understanding of things.

Ver. 2. But a vain man addicts himself to his studies, for no other end, but only to vapour with a show of wisdom, which he doth not love.

[*b*] As for the Vulgar translation, it is so remote from the Hebrew, that I shall only observe a handsome application which the Lord Bacon hath made of the second verse, to a quite different purpose from all interpreters that I am acquainted with. The words there run thus: "Non recipit stultus verba prudentum, nisi ea dixeris quæ versantur in corde ejus." Which is commonly understood of *accommodating one's self to the humour of a fool*, who otherwise will not regard what is said to him: but that great man applies *to the way of dealing with men of corrupt minds and depraved judgments.* "Who presuppose that honesty grows out of weakness of wit, and want of experience; or only out of a silly belief given to preachers and schoolmasters, to books and popular opinions. And, therefore, unless you can make them plainly perceive that you know what is in their very heart, when you exhort and admonish them; and are as well acquainted with their depraved principles and crooked rules, and have as fully discovered and deeply sounded them as themselves, they will despise all manner of virtue and the most excellent counsels; according to that admirable oracle of Solomon, *A fool will not receive the words of the wise, unless thou speakest the very things that are in his heart;* i. e. an honest man can do no good upon the wicked, unless he know all the coverts and depths of wickedness. In which Machiavel himself hath done some service; by discovering plainly *what men used to do*, not *what they ought to do.*" (Advanc. of Learning, book vii. chap. 2.)

[*c*] The next verse may have a connexion with these two, and intend to describe the worst of wicked men, who seek for glory by being so bold as to scorn religion, and all the teachers of it. Such men are the greatest of Solomon's fools: by whom an excellent person (whom the Hebrews call *isch*, in opposition to *Adam*) should not be discouraged from pouring out good instructions, as he shews in the following words, (ver. 4.)

[*d*] Then, after a caution to judges (ver. 5.) to search into the merits of a cause, and not merely to look to the quality of the person that appears before them; he observes in several verses the mischief done by the tongue, ver. 6—8. In the last of which the word *mithlahamim*, being of uncertain signification (because it is but once more used, and in this book, to the same purpose), I have taken in two or three of the senses of which it is capable: as he that pleases to examine will be satisfied.

[*e*] Rabbi Levi observes, that in the tenth verse there begins another sort of precepts of a different kind from those that have been hitherto delivered from the beginning of the tenth chapter to this place. All which have been in a manner concerning the danger of such vices, as *sloth, hatred, anger, deceit, brawling, strife, impiety*, and other parts of that folly, against which he hath given many general cautions. But now he proceeds, as that Jewish doctor thinks, to an argument of another nature, directing men in the management of affairs of state, or in domestic business, &c. Which is true in part, but not an exact observation: for there are precepts of the former kind interspersed in the following chapters, as any one may see that will read them: and so there are several political maxims, and others belonging to different matters, in the chapters foregoing. Even that observation which here immediately follows, (ver. 11.) concerning a rich man's confidence in his wealth, rather than in the Divine providence and protection, was delivered in part before, (x. 13.) And the very next concerning pride and humility (ver. 12.) in xv. 33. xvi. 18. And that also (ver. 16.) about gifts was touched in xvii. 8.

[*f*] The thirteenth verse is referred by some to judges, who were anciently called *cognitores*. And in good authors *cognoscere* is as much as to do the office of a judge; who ought to take the greatest care to know the truth, before he gives a sentence. For if it be a shame to a private person, in ordinary discourse, to answer a matter before he heareth it, much more will it be to a magistrate, if, in matters of justice and judgment, he come to a resolution, before he hath taken full cognizance of them.

[*g*] Some would connect the seventeenth verse with the foregoing, but I have taken it separately. And there being several ways of interpreting it, either *politically*, with relation to causes brought before a judge; or *spiritually*, with relation to what is transacted in a man's own soul; I have followed our translation, which seems to me nearest to the Hebrew. In which a *just man* is not the person of whom Solomon speaks; but the mark of the nominative case (as grammarians call it) is set before the word *first*. So that it hath the same meaning with our vulgar saying; *One tale is good, till another be told:* though I think there is more in it; and the Lord Bacon hath made this excellent discourse upon it; which I have not neglected in my Paraphrase:

"The first information, (says he, Adv. of Learning, book viii. chap. 2. parab. 17.) in any cause, if it a little fix itself in the mind of the judge, takes deep root, and wholly seasons and prepossesses it; so as it can hardly be taken out, unless some manifest falsehood be found in the matter of the information; or some cunning dealing, in exhibiting, and laying open the same. For a bare and simple defence, though it be just and more weighty, can hardly compensate the prejudice of the first information, nor is of force in itself to reduce the scales of justice, once swayed down, to an equal balance. Wherefore it is the safest course for a judge, that nothing touching the proofs and merit of the cause be intimated beforehand, until both parties be heard together: and it is best for the defendant, if he perceive the judge to be pre-occupated, to labour principally in this (so far as the quality of the cause will admit) to discover some cunning shifts, and fraudulent dealing, practised by the adverse party, to the abuse of the judge."

They that expound this verse (as the ancients generally do) concerning private judgment, within a man's own soul, follow the LXX. and the Vulgar Latin: and commonly make this the meaning:—A good man, before he minds another man's faults, will first narrowly look to his own; and call himself to an account, before he inquire after the miscarriages. This is an excellent sense (if the words would bear it), which some of the Lutherans fol-

low; even Melancthon himself, who thus translates it, "Justus initio est accusator sui, postea inquirit in alium:" and runs into a long discourse concerning self-love, and men's blindness to their own faults, and quick-sightedness in spying other men's; citing the known sayings of Catullus, Horace, and Persius, to this purpose. But though he takes the *just man* here to be opposed to the *hypocrite* our Saviour speaks of, who minds the mote in his brother's eye, and neglects the beam in his own, yet he acknowledges that the Greek word in the LXX. belongs to the law, and the civil courts, *viz.* πρωτολογία, which is the allegations of the accuser, before the other party is heard: and hath this remark out of Demosthenes: "It is hard to pull out of men's minds the opinion they have first conceived."

Which Verres, among the Romans, understood so well, that it was his common trick *to accuse those whom he had injured:* for men are apt to favour the plaintiff, supposing he cannot have the impudence to complain without a cause.

Nay, there are those in the Roman church that apply the Vulgar translation this way; to this sense:—"A just man is so prudent (as well as honest) as to relate all that concerns his cause sincerely, without concealing any thing; even accusing himself if he be guilty: whereby he procures greater favour, and prevents what his adversary would have said; who, be sure, would have laid it open to his disgrace, if he had craftily omitted any thing," &c.

But I will not trouble the reader with any other of their interpretations; which are devised merely to make good that translation. The truth of ours may be farther justified from the next, (ver. 18.) which belongs to the matter of civil controversies: which, if the judges could not determine, were referred to God's decision by lots.

[*h*] But I have said enough, if not too much, of this: and therefore shall only observe a few reflections which Melancthon makes upon the twenty-second verse. "Where he notes first, how acceptable the *state of marriage* is to almighty God, as well as unto us. And next, what care he takes of pious persons in that state; for so he understands those words, as they run in the Vulg. Lat. *Hauriet voluptatem a Deo.* As if he should say, *There are great dangers in human life, and many common miseries; but God will be the keeper of such married persons, as, in happy concord and agreement, invoke his protection.* Such were Zachary and Elizabeth, and other pious persons; whom God wonderfully preserved, when the armies of wicked men ravaged all Judea. When Lamyrus slew thirty-thousand Jews, and caused the captives to eat the carcasses of their brethren; then he protected Zachary and Elizabeth, and the blessed Virgin and her parents; as he saved the three children in the fiery furnace. By which examples we may conceive, what it is to *draw pleasure from the Lord.*

"Those words also shew, what comfort and delight there are in an agreeable marriage; and therefore we ought to flee fornication, and keep in mind those severe threatenings, *whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*, &c. and the punishment God inflicted upon the inhabitants of Canaan for their confused lusts. "Nec est dubium, magnam partem calamitatum," &c. *Nor is there any doubt that a great part of the calamities among all mankind are the punishments of filthy lusts.* Let us therefore be more ardent in begging chastity of God; for the more he is displeased with impurity, the more carefully we ought to preserve chastity: and let us observe that rule, *To shun sins, is to shun the occasions of sins.*"

Ver. 1. *THROUGH desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom.*] He that affects singularity inquires into all manner of things, according as his vain-glorious humour leads him: which makes him also bend himself, with all the wit he hath, to overthrow the solid reasons of wiser men. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.*] For a fool will never take any pleasure in true understanding; but all the design of his studies is, to make a vain ostentation of wisdom unto others: this is his chiefest pleasure, to hear himself discourse; that is, discover the folly that is in his heart. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *When the wicked cometh, then cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.*] Into whatsoever company or society (suppose into the schools of wisdom) a profane person comes, he brings along with him contempt of God, and religion, and good men: and (as one wickedness grows out of another) that contempt improves into affronts, and reproachful language of them. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, and the well-spring of wisdom as a flowing brook.*] A man of great understanding is never exhausted, nor wants matter of useful instruction: his mind being like a fountain, out of which wise thoughts spring perpetually; and flow in abundance, with a torrent of eloquence, for the common good and benefit.

Ver. 5. *It is not good to accept the person of the wicked to overthrow the righteous in judgment.*] Apologies may be made for it, but it can never be made consistent with honesty and goodness, to have respect to the person, not to the cause, which is brought before one in judgment: for by that means the wicked is favoured, because he is rich, or because he is a friend, &c. and the just man loses his right and is oppressed, because he is poor, or none of the judge's acquaintance.

Ver. 6. *A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.*] If a fool find others scolding or contending, he will thrust himself into the quarrel; but is so unskilful, that instead of making them friends, he increases the difference, till from words they come to blows; in which he escapes not without some share of them to himself.

Ver. 7. *A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.*] For, in all other cases, a fool uses his tongue so imprudently, that he ruins himself by his own discourse: and if he go about to defend what he saith, he is but the more entangled, to the certain hazard of his life.

Ver. 8. *The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.*] A whisperer of false stories makes a great show of harmlessness, if not of love and kindness, when he backbites others; nay, seems perhaps to do it very unwillingly, with great grief of heart, and not without excuses for the persons from whom he detracts: but his words give them the most deadly

wound; and sink deep into the mind of those that hear them. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 9. *He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.*] There is so little difference between a slothful man and a prodigal, that they may be called brethren: for he that looks not after his business, must needs come to poverty, as well as he that is a spendthrift.

Ver. 10. *The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.*] The almighty power and goodness of the great Lord of the world, are the securest defence in all manner of dangers: unto which a virtuous man may have the confidence cheerfully to resort, and hope to find protection; nay, to be there as safe as if he was in an impregnable fortress. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 11. *The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as a high wall in his own conceit.*] The worldly-minded man indeed thinks otherwise, and places his security in heaps of wealth, which he fancies hath a power to do any thing, and is able to defend him (like a high bulwark, which none can scale) from all assaults: but, alas! this is only his own vain opinion; he is safe merely in imagination.

Ver. 12. *Before destruction the heart of man is haughty; and before honour is humility.*] When a man's spirit grows lofty by prosperity, forgetting God, and despising his brethren, it is a certain forerunner of his utter destruction: as, on the other side, humility, meekness, and patience, in a low condition, are the best preparation for honour and preferment.

Ver. 13. *He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.*] He that is so forward as to answer to a business before he hath heard the state of it (that is, before he understands it), thinks, perhaps, to shew the quickness of his apprehension: but, by his impertinent discourse, declares his egregious folly, and makes himself ridiculous. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 14. *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity: but a wounded spirit who can bear?*] There is a vast difference between outward and inward evils; for a manly spirit will support us under bodily sicknesses and outward afflictions: but if the mind itself have lost its courage, and become abject, cast down and oppressed with grief and sadness; it is not in the power of man to raise and lift it up.

Ver. 15. *The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.*] He (therefore) that hath so much understanding, as to consider what is good for himself, will take the greatest care to possess his mind with the true knowledge of God, and of his duty to him; and be so wise as to listen to those that can give him right information; for it is this alone that can preserve the mind from being dejected and broken.

Ver. 16. *A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.*] There is no man so mean but he may make his way, whithersoever he desires, by gifts and presents: which will produce his enlargement, if he be in prison; and, more than that, bring him into favour with great men; nay, purchase him the honour to wait upon princes.

Ver. 17. *He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.*] A man may seem to have a good cause, who hath got the start of his neighbour, till he come also to examine his information, and open the whole matter before the judge: nay, more than this, he hath a great advantage who first possesses the judge's mind with the justice of his cause; for it will not be easy for his adversary to find out his tricks and to confute him, without a diligent search and curious inquiry into what he hath alleged. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 18. *The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty.*] But in some cases it is very hard to make an end of suits, where the reasons are strong on both sides, or the parties contending both very powerful to maintain their pretensions: and then the casting of lots is an equal way to determine the controversy, and put each of them in quiet possession of that which falls to his share.

Ver. 19. *A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.*] But there are no contentions so sharp and obstinate as those among brethren: who grow so refractory when they have transgressed against each other, that it is easier to take a strong city, or to break the bars of a castle, than it is to compose their differences, and remove all the obstructions that lie in the way to their hearty reconciliation.

Ver. 20. *A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.*] The tongue is so hard to govern, and so much depends upon it, that (it cannot be too oft repeated, xii. 2. 14.) we ought to take as great care about the words we speak, as we do about the fruit of our trees, or the increase of the earth, which we are to eat; for, according as they are wholesome and good, or unsavoury and bad, so will the pleasure or the pain be, wherewith we shall be filled.

Ver. 21. *Death and life are in the power of the tongue; and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.*] The good or the harm that the tongue can do, both to a man's self and unto others, is more than can be expressed; for many have cut their own throats by incautious words, or brought themselves off from danger by prudent answers: in like manner, by false accusations, it destroys other men, or saves them by testifying the truth; and this may be laid down for a general rule, that they who love to talk much shall suffer by it.

Ver. 22. *Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.*] He who hath married a wife that is truly a helpmeet for him, hath met with a most excellent blessing; and ought thankfully to acknowledge the singular favour of God, in guiding his mind to make so happy a choice. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 23. *The poor useth entreaties: but the rich answereth roughly.*] Boldness doth not become a beggar, but modest entreaties and doleful supplications, which is the proper language of the poor and miserable: and if they meet with a stern or harsh answer from the rich, it is no wonder; and they must still humbly deprecate their displeasure.

Ver. 24. *A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly; and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*] A friendly person is prone to do all neighbourly offices, which is the very end of friendship, and the way to preserve it: and such a friend is sometimes found, who loves so heartily, that he sticks closer to his friend in any strait, and assists him more faithfully, than a brother.

CHAP. XIX.

ARGUMENT.

[a] This chapter begins with a comparison between the rich and the poor; whom, in another regard, he had compared together in the last verse but one of the foregoing chapter. The sense is plain enough; and it is, μία τῶν παροιμιῶν σοφῶς ἔχουσα, *one of those proverbs which contains much wisdom in it,* as Greg. Nazianzen speaks, (Orat. xxvi. p. 458, 459.) who applies it unto Christians of mean understanding, and simple speech; that understand not λόγων στροφὰς; neither the instances of Pyrrho, nor the syllogisms of Chrysippus; nor the depraved cunning of Aristotle's arts, nor the witchery of Plato's eloquence; which, like the Egyptian plagues, had infested the church. There is no need (says he) of any of these: but a poor man that *walks in his simplicity,* ὁ πένης ἐν λόγῳ καὶ γνώσει, as he paraphraseth it *(poor in discourse, and reasoning, and knowledge),* and relies upon plain simple words, is much better (and will in this way be saved, as in a small cogboat) than a fool (for he is no better) that knows how to wind and turn every way in his discourse; and most unlearnedly trusts to his demonstrations, &c. But this must be acknowledged not to be the literal sense of the words, but only an accommodation of them to his purpose; which was to represent how commendable simplicity is in religion and inquiries of faith, as well as in all things else. Not that a man should content himself to be ignorant, but only that he should not be too curious and subtle in his disquisitions.

[b] For Solomon, in the next verse, observes two great springs of all our miscarriages; want of understanding, and want of deliberation. To make too much haste in a business is the way not to speed (according to the known proverb); and to run blindly upon any thing is no less prejudicial to us in our undertakings. That is the meaning of the first word, which we translate *also:* both he that affects things without knowledge, and he that pursues what he understands without deliberation, run into many mistakes, and commit many sins. So some render the word *nephes (soul), the desire of the soul,* the appetite, which must be always governed by prudence; or else it will run a man upon rocks, and precipitate him into ruin. For which miscarriage, he shews in the next verse, (ver. 3.) he must blame none but himself, and never in the least reflect upon God, as if he were negligent of us, or hard to us: which men are prone to think when they have foolishly undone themselves.

[c] Then follows an observation which he had made before, (xiv. 20.) but here repeats, in different words, over and over again, (ver. 4. 6, 7.) For it is a lamentable thing to see how little true friendship there is in the world; most men altering and changing together with the fortune (as we call it) of those whom they pretend to love. If they be rich, they are courted by every body; but poverty shews how insincerely. The books of all ancient authors are full of such sentences; which I shall not so much as mention. [d] But note that in the midst of these, he inserts (ver. 5.) an observation (which he had formerly made) of a greater wickedness in human nature; which moves them either publicly to accuse others falsely, or secretly to backbite them; neither of which shall escape unpunished. For "there is no word so secret that shall go for nought, and the mouth that belieth slayeth the soul;" as the Wisdom of Solomon excellently speaks, (i. 11.) This is repeated also again in this very chapter, (ver. 9.) with the alteration only of one word. The reason of which is, that Solomon (as I have noted before), using often the same axioms, sometimes varied the phrase, though not the sense: and the collectors of his sayings thought good to set down his different forms of speech, for the same thing. In both verses the LXX. plainly understand him to speak of such lies as are pernicious and hurtful to others: and in the latter of them, they take the destruction which the wise man threatens unto such liars, to arise from their own wicked words. And so I have expressed it in my Paraphrase. There are those who think that this sentence is repeated in the ninth verse, as an admonition to the rich men spoken of in the verses foregoing: who break their promises with those that depend upon them; and give good words when there is no need of them: but will do no good when men call for their assistance. These shall suffer for their falseness. But this seems to be strained, and not agreeable to the meaning of the Hebrew text.

[e] That which follows (ver. 10.) is a notable admonition of the confused and disordered state of things here in this present world; wherein we too often see men, void of wit or goodness, wallowing in pleasure; that is, abounding in all things that can gratify their senses, which they please most absurdly: and mean men getting into power, and lording it over their betters, &c. These things are very unseemly, saith Solomon; and the latter of these more unseemly than the former: but so it will be unless men become wise and good; for most are made worse by prosperity, which they know not how to use. Therefore it is a true rule of the son of Sirach, (Ecclus. xxxiii. 24.) "Fodder, a wand, and burdens for an ass: and bread, correction, and work for a slave." Every one is best in the condition that is proper for him; and therefore a slave should be kept under, and a brutish sot be restrained from taking all his pleasure. For no man is fit to govern another that cannot govern himself, as the next verse intimates: and the more power any man hath, the harder it is for him to command his passions: which may be suggested in the twelfth [f] verse; for the *young lion,* to whom a king is compared, as he is the strongest, so is the fiercest of all other.

From hence the wise man passes to some domestic observations (ver. 13—15. 18, 19.) Upon which if I should make any remarks, it would extend this preface beyond its just bounds. The skilful reader will see where I have put two senses together: which I could not do in the twenty-third verse; and therefore shall here give a short account of it.

[g] All interpreters, except one, understand it as our translation hath rendered it; by supplying a word before *abideth satisfied.* Only Lud. de Dieu thinks the parts of this verse are opposite; as the rest used to be: and by that word which we translate *satisfied* (which signifies *full* in the Hebrew language), understands proud and haughty people (as they who are rich are too prone

to be), who are here opposed to him that fears God; as they are in Luke i. 50, 51. 53. And the paraphrase will run thus: He that is possessed with such a religious sense of God, that he fears to offend him, is a most happy man: but he that is swollen with pride and forgets God, when worldly goods flow in upon him, shall lie down at last in sorrow, and never want something or other to afflict him. And something of this sense the LXX. seem to have had in their mind; who make the members of this verse opposite, as he doth; understanding by שבע *full*, he that hath no fear of God. For so their translation runs; *The fear of the Lord is to a man's life,* ὁ δὲ ἄφοβος, &c. *but he that is without fear* (*viz.* of God) *shall abide in places where there is no knowledge to govern him; i. e.* run blindly into all manner of mischief.

[*h*] The next verse is a most elegant, but hyperbolical, description of a man that hath given up himself to sloth: who refuses to do things as *easy* as to pull his hand out of his bosom; and as *necessary* as to eat and drink. This being the plain sense, I have not varied from the common translation of the word *zallachath;* which every where signifies a *pot,* or *dish,* or something like it; and can only by a metaphor be applied to the bosom, or arm-holes. But we must either so understand it, or else take the first word, *taman, hide,* in a very improper sense: for there can be no cause for hiding the hand in a pot. Therefore we must either translate it as we do, or else understand by *hide,* putting or thrusting the hand into the pot or dish; and thus translate the whole verse: *A sluggard puts his hand into the dish; but will not so much as move it from thence unto his mouth.*

[*i*] The next verse, as Melancthon well notes, is an observation concerning the way of amending the world. Some are so bad, they must be handled with great sharpness: especially such profane men, as with an epicurean contempt deride admonitions, and grow thereby more furious. But there are those who grow better, even by the example of severity against notorious offenders: as the Gibeonites came and sought peace, when they saw their neighbours destroyed; and the punishment of Sisamnes made Otanes more cautious, when he was placed in the seat covered with his predecessor's skin; as Herodotus relates in his Terpsichore. But then there are a third sort, who need not so much; but, being admonished, are obedient to those that tell them of their faults. To such a reproof, at the most, is sufficient.

[*k*] In the two next verses I have had respect to both constructions, of which they are capable. But, in ver. 28. I have omitted the sense which some great Hebricians give of the words; as if an *ungodly witness* sought only by false colours to deceive the judge, and thereby pervert judgment. For a witness of Belial seems to me rather to signify such an impudent varlet as sticks not boldly to testify to the grossest lies.

Ver. 1. *BETTER is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.*] A poor man who acts sincerely, and hath no guile in his mouth, is far happier, and more to be commended, than he that gathers great riches by fraud and circumvention: which he takes to be cunning, but will prove folly in the end. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good; and he that hasteth with his feet, sinneth.*] Ignorance and inconsideration are equally mischievous; for a mind that knows not what it ought to choose, and what to avoid, can never do well: and if a man hastily and unadvisedly pursue an end (which he reasonably propounds to himself), and will not take time to deliberate, he must needs commit many errors. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *The foolishness of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the Lord.*] Yet he is unwilling to take the blame upon himself, but commits this grand error after all the rest; that when his own folly, and perhaps wickedness, hath led him to many misfortunes, he imagines God is unkind to him: and is vexed, not at himself, but at the Divine providence; against which he perpetually murmurs.

Ver. 4. *Wealth makes many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour.*] Together with riches, a man gets many (and perhaps great and powerful) friends, though he had none before: but he that hath most need of them, is so far from getting any, that, if he had one, he loses even him, when he grows poor. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 5. *A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.*] A false witness, who fears not in open court to accuse the innocent, shall meet at last with a just punishment: nor shall he escape, who privately calumniates and vents his malice in lies to the prejudice of his neighbour. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 6. *Many will entreat the favour of the prince; and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.*] A prince never wants suitors for his favour, which the greatest persons seek with the humblest submissions: and every one loves, or pretends to love him; whose liberality is so well known every where, that it hath procured him the name of a bountiful giver.

Ver. 7. *All the brethren of the poor do hate him; how much more do his friends go far from him? he pursueth them with words, yet they are wanting to him.*] All the kindred of a poor man not only forsake him (as was observed before, ver. 4. xiv. 20.) but hate his company, as a disgrace or a trouble to them; and therefore no wonder if his companions and familiars grow strange to him: he urges them with their former protestations or promises of kindness, but finds they signified nothing; and if he earnestly implore their pity, it is to no purpose.

Ver. 8. *He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul; he that keepeth understanding shall find good.*] He that is so considerate, as to value wisdom above riches, and, accordingly, to store his mind with virtuous principles, is the truest lover of himself: and if he strictly observe them, and conduct his life by those rules, he shall find the profit of it.

Ver. 9. *A false witness shall not be unpunished; and he that speaketh lies shall perish.*] He that testifies to a lie, to the perverting of justice, if the judge do not find him out, shall be punished by God: and he who privately whispers slanders against his neighbours, and kindles strife and contention among them, shall perish by those wicked practices.

Ver. 10. *Delight is not seemly for a fool; much less for a servant to have rule over princes.*] Pleasure doth not become a man void of understanding; who is never more ridiculous than when he can do what he lists: and yet empire less becomes a vile slave; who is most intolerably

insolent, when he can wantonly domineer over the greatest persons. See Arg. [e]

Ver. 11. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.*] The world thinks him stupid, who is patient; and without sense of honour, who passes by injuries: but the more understanding any man hath, the slower he is to anger; and the greater his spirit is, the greater his glory and praise, not to revenge a wrong when he hath opportunity.

Ver. 12. *The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion: but his favour is as dew upon the grass.*] But none find it more difficult than a king, especially in the heat of his youth, to bridle his wrath; the signification of which is as dreadful to his subjects, as the roaring of the young lion to the rest of the beasts: and, on the other side, any token of his favour and kindness is so comfortable, that, as the dew restores those herbs, which were parched by the hot beams of the sun; so it revives those who were almost struck dead with the terror of his rage. See Arg. [f]

Ver. 13. *A foolish son is the calamity of his father; and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.*] Two things make a man exceeding unhappy; a dissolute son and a scolding wife: for the former breaks the heart of his father, to see him like to prove the utter destruction of his family: and the other drives a man to undo his family himself, when he is no more able to live at home with her, than to dwell in a rotten and ruinous house, through the roof of which the rain drops perpetually.

Ver. 14. *House and riches are the inheritance of fathers; and a prudent wife is from the Lord.*] The singular providence of God, therefore, is to be acknowledged in a virtuous wife; which is not so easy to get as an estate. For a house, with all its furniture, and land belonging to it, may descend upon us, without our thought, from our progenitors: but great care and prudence are required in the choice of a wife, that knows how to manage a family aright; who is not found neither, without the peculiar direction and blessing of the Lord.

Ver. 15. *Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.*] As labour makes men vigorous and rich, so sloth and idleness hath these two miserable effects: that it insensibly sinks the mind into a dull stupidity and unconcernedness about the most necessary things; and thereby reduces them unto extreme beggary and want: to which may be added a third; that it tempts them to shirk, and use dishonest arts for a livelihood.

Ver. 16. *He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul: but he that despiseth ways shall die.*] He that carefully observes the commandments of God, as the rule of his life, hath a due care of himself, and consults his soul's safety: but he that minds not what he doth, despising all order and rules of life, is regardless of his own good, and will be very miserable.

Ver. 17. *He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.*] He that takes compassion on the poor and relieves his necessities, doth not impoverish, but enrich himself. For the Lord looks upon what is given to the poor as lent unto him: and he will not fail to make him a full compensation; or rather return the benefit he hath done to others, with large interest and increase of blessings, upon him and his posterity.

Ver. 18. *Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.*] Give due and timely correction to thy son for his faults, before he hath gotten a habit of them, and there be little hope of his amendment: but neither proceed to such cruel usage of him, as to make him weary of life, and not to care what becomes of him; nor yet be moved merely by his roaring to abate of thy necessary severity towards him.

Ver. 19. *A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment; for if thou deliver him, yet thou must do it again.*] For he whose wrath exceeds all bounds, and makes him severe beyond measure, undoes his child, and consequently himself (nay, all men that are immoderately angry bring great mischiefs upon themselves; and if you help them out of one danger, it doth not make them cautious, but they run into a new trouble); and yet, if he do not punish him at all, he tempts him to go on in his sin; and the same case, whether he shall punish him or not, will return again.

Ver. 20. *Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.*] Listen unto good advice, and be not impatient of reproof; no, nor of correction for thy faults: but receive all thankfully; and learn thereby that wisdom which will do thee service, when all things else will fail thee.

Ver. 21. *There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.*] There are many designs and contrivances in the minds of men, which they think are so well laid that they cannot miscarry: but are all defeated by the overruling counsel of the Lord; which alone can inevitably bring to pass whatsoever it pleases.

Ver. 22. *The desire of a man is his kindness; and a poor man is better than a liar.*] There is nothing more desirable to a man, than to have wherewithal to be kind to others, and oblige his friends and neighbours; for nothing makes him more beloved: but it is better to want this power than to have it, and have no will to do good; no, not to those to whom we have made great professions and promises of love and kindness.

Ver. 23. *The fear of the Lord tendeth to life; and he that hath it shall abide satisfied: he shall not be visited with evil.*] Nothing makes a man lead so happy a life as a religious care to please the Lord in all things; which is attended with abundance of blessings, but especially with inward satisfaction of mind: which makes a man sleep quietly and securely, without fear of any evil that can invade him. See Arg. [g]

Ver. 24. *A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.*] All things seem so difficult to a lazy wretch, who indulges himself in sloth, and loves his ease; that he would not willingly pull his hands from under his arms; no, not to put his meat into his mouth. See Arg. [h]

Ver. 25. *Smite a scorner, and the simple will beware; and reprove one that hath understanding, and he will understand knowledge.*] Punish a derider of religion severely; and though it do him no good, yet those incautious persons whom he hath deluded, will be awakened by it to greater circumspection: but it is sufficient only to chide a well-disposed person for his faults; of which he himself will receive the benefit, and learn to amend them. See Arg. [i]

Ver. 26. *He that wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.*] A son that leads a debauched life, too often wastes all his father's estate; and either turns his mother out of doors, or makes her weary of the house: which is so disgraceful, that it makes them ashamed to shew their heads; and will bring him to greater confusion at the last.

Ver. 27. *Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.*] My son, beware of their discourse, who, under the show of greater learning, seduce thee from the plain paths of virtue; or if thou hast been unhappily engaged in such company, quit it presently, and stick to those that honestly instruct thee: for remember this; to leave off hearing the instruction of good men, is the first step towards a departure from all religion.

Ver. 28. *An ungodly witness scorneth judgment; and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.*] A wicked witness, who hath perfectly discharged all sense of good and evil, mocks if you tell him of law and justice, or of the judgment of God upon perjured persons: for there is no iniquity so great, but there are men as lewdly impious; who do not so much as boggle at it, but will swallow it down as glibly as drunkards do their liquor. See Arg. [*k*]

Ver. 29. *Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools.*] But they shall not mock always; for terrible punishments shall certainly be inflicted upon those that scoff at conscience and religion: nor shall other wicked men escape, who are such fools as to slight these good instructions; but feel at last, to their smart, the doleful effects of their sin, in indelible marks of the Divine displeasure.

CHAP. XX.

ARGUMENT.

[*a*] The first precept in this chapter is against *drunkenness*, as an enemy to wisdom, even in common things; much more in those of everlasting consequence: for that it commonly expels out of men's minds all reverence both to God and to others: inclining them to take the licence to say or do any thing without restraint or discretion; and what unruly passions it excites when the brain is disturbed with it, is known to all, and need not be here recited. The word *homeh*, which Solomon here uses, and which we render *raging* or outrageous, includes them all: signifying that discomposed, unquiet, and restless state of mind, which expresses itself in some wild motion or other, according as men are naturally inclined. But nothing worse can be said of it than this, that it makes men either stupid sots, or profane scoffers at religion and all sobriety.

[*b*] Next to this he advises every man to take heed how he suffers himself to be drunk with anger: for nothing else but an intoxication therewith, can make a man so distracted as to fly in the face of majesty. For so that word *hithabber* properly signifies, not to *provoke* the king (though most interpreters, even Bochartus himself, so render it), but to be *angry* at him; which is a kind of madness: for thereby he is provoked to such fury, as is in young lions, who are the fiercest of all others. I have therefore expressed both senses of the word.

[*c*] In the next verse I take *isch* to signify a more than ordinary man; one of the highest rank; and that in wisdom: for it is opposed to a fool; and therefore so I have expounded it.

[*d*] As I have also understood it in ver. 5.; where Solomon observes that there are no men so cunning, but there are others as subtle to find them out. Concerning which art of finding out men, the great Lord Bacon hath given many notable rules (in his second chapter of book viii. of the Advancement of Learning): for though the knowledge itself falls not under precepts, because it is of individuals; yet instructions for the deducing of it may be given. And he observes six ways whereby the knowledge of men may be drawn out and disclosed. By their faces and countenances; by words; by deeds; by their nature; by their ends; and by the relations of others. What he says upon these heads, the reader may there find. I shall only mention this single observation of his; that "the weakest and simplest sort of men are best interpreted by their natures (according to which they commonly act), but the wisest and most reserved, are best expounded by their ends and aims."

[*e*] The next verse is very variously expounded; but our translation seems to come nearest to the sense of the Hebrew words: which may admit also of this construction; which approaches nearer than any other, besides that which we follow:—It is the common inclination of mankind, when they are in need or danger, to call for relief or help from him whom they have obliged: but there are very few, that in such a condition will approve themselves to be faithful friends.

[*f*] The eleventh verse also may be expounded quite contrary ways. Because the word *ithnakker* signifies both to *make one's self known*, and to *make one's self a stranger* unto others. All the ancient interpreters follow, as ours doth, the first sense; which seems most genuine; for nature commonly betrays its inclinations in children so plainly, and they are so strong and violent, that they cannot dissemble them. Yet that (which is the other) is no absurd sense, which some give of these words, *Even children are so cunning as to hide their inclinations: and therefore it is not easy to guess in their childhood, what they will prove when they come to man's estate.* But this is not so common as the other.

[*g*] The next verse some good interpreters expound wholly concerning the happiness a people is in, when the subjects are so humble, that they are inclined meekly to obey their superiors; and their superiors so wise, that they solicitously provide for their safety and good government. Thus Melancthon observes, that in government these two things must concur; good counsel in the governors, and obedience in the people: both of which Solomon acknowledges to be the gift of God. Nay, both these, saith he, must concur in a king; who must not only have good counsellors, but be inclined also to hearken to them, or else he will not be happy. Jeremiah was an excellent monitor, but Zedekiah would not be ruled by him; and so Jerusalem was destroyed: as, on the other side, Hezekiah in former times hearkened to Isaiah, and then it was preserved. *Hæc est principalis sententia hujus dulcissimi dicti.* But I rather look upon this to be that which they call a tropical sense, not the

literal; and therefore I only note it here, together with this wholesome admonition of that author which follows: "That kingdoms cannot be well governed only by human wisdom; but the assistance of God must be implored both in giving of counsel, and in bowing the will of men to obedience, and in governing events."

[*h*] The fourteenth verse is alleged by the Lord Bacon, as an instance of one of the mere colours of good and evil: teaching us that all is not good which men praise, nor all bad which they discommend. For as *fraud*, the wise man here observes, makes them dispraise that to which they have a mind; so in other cases, out of *ignorance*, or out of *partiality*, or *faction*, nay, sometimes from *natural disposition*, men both disparage that which is praiseworthy, and commend that which is good for little.

But there are other authors, who give a quite different sense of these words; particularly Luther and Melancthon: who by *koneh* do not understand a *buyer*, but an *owner* or *possessor*: and imagine the meaning of this proverb to be, that *men are not wont to like that which they enjoy; but after God hath taken it away from them, then they commend the happiness they have lost.* The last-named writer heaps up abundance of excellent sentences out of the ancients, like this of Thucydides, ἀεὶ τὸ παρὸν βαρύ, *the present is always grievous.* Which arises out of fickleness and inconstancy; or because they are cloyed with what they have long enjoyed; or are impatient of some inconveniences in their present state; but chiefly out of inconsideration, that all conditions will have something troublesome in them; and out of great unthankfulness to God, and insensibleness of his providence, which disposes things better than we can do ourselves. But the word *jithallel*, which we translate *boast*, scarce admits of this sense; and therefore I have not taken notice of it in the Paraphrase.

[*i*] Whether *peninim*, in the next verse, signifies rubies or pearls, or any other sort of precious stone, or none in particular, is not very material: but Bochart, I think, hath demonstrated that it signifies pearls: (par. ii. lib. v. cap. 6. de Sacr. An.) and therefore I have so translated it. And it is not an impertinent argument, which he alleges for this, (cap. 8.) that wisdom in the Scripture is frequently compared to pearls, or preferred before them; as it is here in this place.

[*k*] In the seventeenth verse, under the name of *bread of deceit*, may be comprehended all things got wrongfully: which though they may please a man in the beginning, will bring sorrow and pain in the conclusion: and therefore so I have expressed it in the Paraphrase.

[*l*] There is little difficulty in the verses that follow till we come to the twenty-fifth verse. Where the Vulgar Latin hath been so extremely corrupted, that various interpretations have thence arisen of a very plain sentence, as the words run in the Hebrew. Which are directed against *sacrilege*, as protestant writers universally acknowledge. "A corruption (saith Mr. Cartwright himself) which never more infested the world than in this age: in which most men not only give nothing, but do all they can to take away from that which their ancestors have given, to the service of God, and the support of his ministers, of schools, or of the poor. By which they are guilty not only of their own destruction, but of the loss of the souls of others." The only difference between them herein is, that some take the words to be a censure of the *hypocritical wickedness* of such as, after they have committed sacrilege, and such-like sins, think to make God amends by vows, and sacrifices, and prayers. Thus Luther and Melancthon, and among the reformed (as they are called) De Dieu, who adds this new conjecture, that the first word *mokesch* may be interpreted *by a snare, i. e.* fraudulently and craftily; and then the sense is this: A sacrilegious man finds devices to rob God of things that are consecrated to him; and then makes vows, in hopes by them to expiate his sacrilege.—The whole sentence he also observes may be otherways disposed: but it seems to be so forced and unusual, that I shall not mention it.

[*m*] The like variety of interpretations, the mistake of the Vulgar Latin hath produced in the next verse. Which seems to intend no more than this; That a good king separates the bad from the good by a due execution of his laws; which is like the winnowing of the corn, after the chaff is separated from it, by drawing the wheel over it. For as the flail is the instrument among us of beating the corn out of the husk, so in those hot countries, they made this separation by a wheel drawn by oxen over it: which both pressed out the corn, and brake the straw; as may be seen in Isa. xxviii. 27, 28. and many other places, which our learned countryman, N. Fuller, hath explained in his Miscellanies, (lib. vi. chap. 12.) and Dr. Hammond hath applied to that place of the Psalmist, Psal. lxxviii. 13. though it seemed to me there to have another meaning.

Others by the *wheel* understand here such a sore punishment as that mentioned 2 Sam. viii. 2. xii. 31. and then the meaning is, He will use the utmost rigour to extirpate the wicked, and fright men from their wickedness.

[*n*] The plainest sense also of ver. 27. seems to be that in our translation: the latter part of which the Lord Bacon (with some others) refers to the inquisitive search of man's mind into all manner of things. "For though the wise man says (in Eccles. iii.) that it is impossible for man to find out all the works of God; yet this doth not derogate from the capacity of a man's mind, but may be referred to the impediments of knowledge (such as the shortness of life, janglings among learned men, and refusing to join their studies and labours, unfaithful and depraved tradition of sciences, with many other inconveniences, wherein this present state is entangled); for that no parcel of the world is denied to man's inquiry or invention, he declares in another place; where he saith, The spirit of man is as the lamp of God; wherewith he searcheth into the inwards of all secrets." Thus he in the beginning of his Advancement of Learning. Which, if it be not the full import of the words, is nearer than that sense which others give of them; who by the *candle of the Lord*, understand either the knowledge of God himself, which penetrates into the secrets of all men's thoughts; or else his Divine favour and love; the sense of which marvellously recreates and refreshes the soul; and is as it were the life of man, penetrating through his whole body.

[*o*] Upon the next verse Kab-venaki hath this note; That by *chesed*, the *mercy*, which Solomon here commends

unto a king, we are to understand, an exceeding great excess of goodness and kindness; even towards those who are not worthy of it: and by *emeth, truth,* his keeping his word exactly, and loving and sincerely practising this virtue. Which two will keep him from all harm; but it is that excessive degree of goodness alone, which establishes and settles him in the throne of his kingdom. A proverb directly contrary to the wicked *maxims* of Machiavel, as Schickard observes in his Mischpat Hammelech, cap. 4.

[*p*] The last verse some take to be a description of the depraved condition of human nature; which makes men as loath to be cured of their sins by sharp and severe rebukes, &c. as to be beaten till lumps be raised in the flesh, &c. So they make *tamrickbere,* the *cleansing* or scouring *of an evil man,* to be the subject of which he speaks. And then the paraphrase should run thus; To rub up a wicked man, and chide him soundly for his sins, is as grievous to him as to beat him till he be bruised, and so sore, that he complains his very bowels are hurt and in anguish by it. This I have not wholly neglected; but yet followed the common exposition: which is, That the severest corporal punishments are necessary for the cure of some offenders.

Ver. 1. *WINE is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.*] Let him whose design it is to be wise and good, take heed of accustoming himself to excess of wine, and such-like liquors; which is inconsistent with it: for drunkenness not only disposes a man to be abusive and scurrilous, in deriding even things most serious and sacred; but to be so furious, tumultuous, and quarrelsome, as declares him both to be a fool, and incapable of being otherwise. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion; whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul.*] The displeasure of a king strikes terror into men, and makes them tremble, as they are wont to do at the roaring of a young lion, which comes with open jaws to devour them: it is best therefore to submit to him; for whosoever provokes him, especially by angry and exasperating language, brings his own life (as well as his soul) into very great danger. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling.*] It is below a wise man, or one that is truly great, to scold and brawl; or if a quarrel be begun, it is no disparagement to him (but the noblest thing he can do) to withdraw himself from it, and let it rest: but all fools and lewd persons love to thrust themselves into contention; and fancy, when they are engaged in strife, they are bound in honour to maintain it. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *The sluggard will not plough by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.*] The smallest difficulty frights a lazy person from the most necessary undertaking: for instance, he will not rise to plough his ground in autumn, when the morning air grows sharp, for fear of catching cold: by which means he exposes himself to far greater hardships; for in the harvest-time, when plenty crowns the labours of other men, he turns beggar, and nobody pities him, or will relieve him.

Ver. 5. *Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water: but a man of understanding will draw it out.*] There is nothing but may be compassed by wisdom. For though the designs and intentions of another man, especially that hath a deep wit, are as hard to be sounded as waters that lie in the secret caverns of the earth; yet there are persons of such penetrating understandings, and of so great a reach, that they will find means to discover them and draw them out. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 6. *Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?*] It is such an honour to be kind and to do good to others, that a great part of mankind value themselves very much upon the mere pretence of it; every one of them boasting what he hath done, or will do upon occasion: though, alas! in a time of trial, it is very hard to find so much as one of them that will be as good as his word. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 7. *The just man walketh in his integrity; his children are blessed after him.*] But whosoever he be, that is endued with this rare virtue of being just to his word; and so sincerely charitable, that he persevereth in his virtue to the end of his days; he shall not only fare the better for it, and enjoy great satisfaction in himself, while he lives; but his children after him shall reap the happy fruits of his unfeigned love to God and man.

Ver. 8. *A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.*] A prince attentive to his people's good, who doth not give up himself to pleasure, nor abandon all his care of his affairs to his ministers, but sits constantly himself to do justice to his people; prevents a world of mischief by his very presence in the courts of judgments: and by his strict observance how things are carried, and careful search into men's causes, keeps both judges and pleaders, and all men else, within the bounds of their duty; and applies fitting and seasonable remedies to all the public grievances.

Ver. 9. *Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?*] There is no man so perfect, that he hath nothing left to do; for who can say, and say truly, that he hath not the least evil affection remaining in him, no unruly passion stirring in his soul? or that he is so free from every sin, that he needs no further purifying?

Ver. 10. *Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord.*] It is not so small a sin as men imagine, to cheat and cozen their neighbours; for instance, to buy by a weight or a measure too heavy and big, and to sell by those that are too light and scanty: for these are alike displeasing to the Lord; nay, such injustice is detestable to him beyond expression.

Ver. 11. *Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.*] It is not hard to give a shrewd conjecture, what a child is like to prove when he is a man: for not only youths, but little children, make early discoveries by their behaviour, by their contrivances, by their dealings one with another; nay, by their very sports and pastimes, and such things wherein they delight, whether their future life will probably be modest and honest; free, that is, from lasciviousness, impurity, and such-like vices; and void also of fraud, and guile, and malignity of spirit. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 12. *The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.*] As the Lord is to be acknowledged the fountain of all good; particularly of those excellent and useful senses whereby the knowledge of all

things is conveyed to us: so the towardly disposition which we observe to be in any child, to listen to instruction, and a clear understanding to discern, with a sound judgment to resolve aright, are likewise, above all things, to be peculiarly ascribed to the Divine grace. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 13. *Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty: open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.*] But our industry must be joined with God's blessing, in the faithful improvement of those faculties, or good inclinations he hath given us. And therefore let not idleness make thee indulge thyself in too much sleep; which is the way to beggary: but get up betime, and apply thyself, with attentive care, to some honest labour; and then thy desire of all things necessary shall not want satisfaction.

Ver. 14. *It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.*] The buyer sometimes is as unjust and deceitful as the seller; (ver. 10.) for when he cheapens a commodity, he disparages it to such a degree, as if he thought it nothing worth: but having purchased it, upon his own terms, he goes away and brags how subtle he was, and laughs at the simplicity of him that sold it at so vile a rate. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 15. *There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.*] Some think themselves rich, and powerful, and happy, because they have treasures of gold, or perhaps heaps of pearls, or other precious stones: but among all the jewels, or ornaments, or furniture, that are most esteemed, there is none comparable unto true wisdom; especially joined with eloquence; which can do more than them all. See Arg. [*i*]

Ver. 16. *Take his garment that is surety for a stranger; and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.*] It is rank folly to trust to him, who is so rash as to be bound for one, whose ability and fidelity are utterly unknown to him; especially for a woman whose loose way of life makes her credit justly suspected: therefore have nothing to do with such an inconsiderate person, without the utmost security that he can give thee, for the payment of what he owes thee.

Ver. 17. *Bread of deceit is sweet to a man: but afterward his mouth shall be filled with gravel.*] Do not satisfy thy appetite of wealth by fraud, lying, or bribery; nor thy desires of pleasure by adultery or fornication: for though this may be sweet for the present, it is but like the pleasure of gritty bread, which may relish well to a hungry man, when it is first tasted; but being chewed, hurts the palate, cuts the gums, or breaks the teeth, with the sharp and rough gravel that is in it. See Arg. [*k*]

Ver. 18. *Every purpose is established by counsel; and with good advice make war.*] Rashness spoils the best designs; which must be carried on prudently, and with good advice, if we would have them prove successful: and above all other, warlike expeditions are not to be undertaken without great deliberation; nor can be well managed without exact conduct, and subtle contrivance: unto which the victory is commonly more to be ascribed, than unto force.

Ver. 19. *He that goeth about as a tale-bearer revealeth secrets; therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.*] He whose trade it is to ingratiate himself by defaming others, will not stick most treacherously to discover the secrets wherewith they have entrusted him: (xi. 13.) therefore suspect a fawning fellow, and have no familiarity with him; for his drift is, to entice thee to talk what he intends to carry about to others.

Ver. 20. *Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.*] He that not only slights and despises, but reproaches, and wishes mischief to his father or mother, shall bring the heaviest punishments on himself, and on his posterity: who, the happier they were before, shall be the more miserable, by falling from a flourishing, into the most dismal condition.

Ver. 21. *An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.*] Make not too much haste to be rich; for though, with a great deal of bustle and stir, an estate may in a short time be heaped up, yet the foundation of it being laid in rapine, extortion, or fraud, it moulders away many times as suddenly as it was gotten; and it is certain will not prosper unto many generations.

Ver. 22. *Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.*] Be patient, and do not so much as resolve to take revenge for any injury thou hast received (of which thou art not the proper judge, nor like to do exact justice in it), but leave thy cause to the Lord, and expect his righteous sentence; believing steadfastly he will not only do thee right, but defend thee from farther injuries; which thou fanciest, perhaps, thou shalt invite by thy forgiving those that are past.

Ver. 23. *Divers weights are an abomination unto the Lord; and a false balance is not good.*] To buy by one weight, and to sell by another, is extremely odious, not only to all honest men, but much more to the Lord; which was said before: (ver. 10.) but is a sin so heinous, and yet so commonly practised, that this is fit to be repeated again; that it is a most wicked thing to cheat another, though it be but in a little matter, (ver. 11.)

Ver. 24. *Men's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?*] There is no man, great or small, that can take one step towards any thing he designs, without the permission and direction also of the Lord; who overrules their motions unto ends so far distant from men's thoughts, that it is impossible for them to know what the event shall be, of any thing they undertake.

Ver. 25. *It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make inquiry.*] There are two pieces of profaneness, which entangle him that is guilty of them, in great troubles; nay, bring ruin upon him. First, when he makes no distinction between things holy and common; but converts that which was consecrated to God (the first-fruits, suppose, or such-like sacred things) to his own proper use: and secondly, when he vows in his distress to give something unto God; but having obtained his desires, studies how he may be loosed from his obligations. See Arg. [*l*]

Ver. 26. *A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.*] Such impious persons can no more stand before a religious prince, than the chaff before the wind: but he disperses them all, and thrashes them (as we speak) so severely, that the country is clean purged, and freed from such wicked wretches. See Arg. [*m*]

Ver. 27. *The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.*] That active spirit, which the Lord hath breathed into man, is like a torch lighted at the Divine understanding, to guide and di-

rect him in all his motions; and to make reflections upon them afterward: nay, to penetrate also into the most secret designs of other men, that he may not be deceived by them. See Arg. [n]

Ver. 28. *Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.*] The best and strongest guards for the preservation of a prince's person, and for the security of his government, are bounty and clemency, joined with justice and faithfulness to his word: and if either of the two be of greater force than the other, for their support and maintenance, it is a high degree of bounty and benignity; which settles him fast in all men's affections, and entails the kingdom upon his posterity. See Arg. [o]

Ver. 29. *The glory of young men is their strength; and the beauty of old men is the gray head.*] That which makes young men honoured is their strength, and vigour, and courage; whereby they are capable to serve for the defence of their country: but that which makes old men venerable, is their aged gravity and experience, which qualify them to advise and consult for its safety.

Ver. 30. *The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil; so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.*] It is impossible to mend some persons without blows; and those not gentle neither, but severe: and therefore, though it be a very sharp and grievous remedy, which they by all means avoid, it must not be forborne; but they are rather to be beaten black and blue, and scourged till their very hearts ache, than not be cleansed from their impurity. See Arg. [p]

CHAP. XXI.

ARGUMENT.

[a] This chapter begins with a sentence, which Themistius, a pagan philosopher and orator, seems to have notice of, and mentions as very memorable in the Assyrian (as he is supposed to call the Hebrew) writings: and commends to the thoughts of the Emperor Valens, in a speech he made to him, Orat. ix. But if he had respect to this proverb of Solomon's, he will not fully comprehend the sense of it; for he takes notice only of a prince's mind being in the custody and under the guard of God. For thus he translates it, ὁ νοῦς τοῦ Βασιλέως ἐν τῇ Θεοῦ παλάμῃ δορυφορεῖται, *the mind of the king is kept in safe custody in the hand of God.* From whence he draws this inference, that a king ought to be very sensible what danger he is in, if he go about any thing contrary to the mind of God; because he then is in peril to fall out of the hand which preserves and keeps him. Nay, thou oughtest, O king (saith he), not only to design nothing thyself but what is holy; but they that are about thee ought to speak to thee nothing that is not so: for every word that comes to thy ears is written in his uncorrupted hand. But though this be a most excellent admonition, worthy to be written in the hearts of all princes, That it is very unbecoming to have any evil thing, any thing impure, or in the least blemished with cruelty or inhumanity, in that heart, which those most holy and most gracious and benign hands of God carry in their keeping; yet there is a great deal more than these Assyrian letters or pictures, which he speaks of, express. For Solomon would have them, and us, sensible that they cannot manage things by their power, as they think good; but depend upon a higher Cause, who orders all their motions, good and bad, to such ends as he proposes to himself, quite contrary to their intentions and inclinations. Which is an instruction sufficient to correct the pride of the most absolute monarch, and the impatience of the most oppressed subject.

[b] Next to which follows (ver. 2.) a caution against thinking too well of ourselves: which had been delivered before; (xvi. 2.) but for the weightiness, I suppose, of the matter, and the proneness of men to flatter themselves, and not to judge sincerely of their own actions, is here again repeated.

And then there is a caution added (ver. 3.) against hypocrisy; which thinks to please God with ceremonies, without moral honesty.

[c] In the fourth verse the meaning is something uncertain, from the different acceptations of the word *ner* or *nir*: which the Greek, the Latin, and other interpreters, translate, not *ploughing*, or *ploughed fields*; but the *light*, the *splendour*, of the wicked. I have had respect to both senses; understanding by *ploughing*, the study, contrivance, and business, of wicked men. And the sentence may be inverted in this manner: *Sin is the pride, the ambition, the glory, and joy* (or the business), *of wicked men.* That, upon which they value themselves, and for which they think themselves brave fellows, &c. is, that they dare do wickedly: or we may make two sentences of this verse, to this purpose:—Men that have proud and lofty thoughts have very ambitious desires, and an insatiable appetite; which put them upon much wickedness: nay, the very business and employment of all wicked men (as well as their pleasure) are nothing but sin. And this word *ner* signifying a *yoke*, among the Chaldeans, Syrians, and Arabians, Lud. de Dieu thinks this no improper sense: *Superciliousness and swelling of the heart* (or mind) *are a yoke intolerable, and proper to the wicked.* Castalio alone understands by *sin*, the effects of sin, to this sense: *Pride and haughtiness of mind are deadly enemies to that happiness and pleasure which the wicked pursue:* for instead of making them greater, as they fancy, they lay them low in all men's opinions, and expose them to their hatred, &c. I omit other interpretations.

[d] In the seventh verse there are different opinions about the force of the word *jegorem:* most of which I have endeavoured to express in the Paraphrase. And there is no little obscurity in the next verse: but besides that sense which I have represented, the words are capable of another, which is as plain; *viz.* As the man is, so are his works; a man of tricks will act strangely (quite different from all the rules whereby we ought to govern ourselves), but an honest man you may know where to have; for he acts conformable to the laws of righteousness.

[e] In the eleventh verse, De Dieu thinks both parts of it ought to be referred to one and the same subject; *viz. peti*, the *simple:* who, saith Solomon (according to this construction of the words), may be instructed two ways. One is, by the punishments which are inflicted upon a scorner; which works upon his fear: the other is, when he attends to the wise, and observes God's great goodness to him; which works upon his love. Wherein he seems to have respect also to another signification of the word *bemaschil*, besides that of attending to information,

and instruction: for it sometimes imports that happiness and prosperity wherewith God blesses the wise and prudent. But that sense which I have followed in the Paraphrase, seems nearest to the Hebrew: and agrees best with what was said before, (xix. 25.) And it being usual, in this book, to repeat the same sentence in divers places, in different words, I have therefore kept to that sense. But if any like the other (which the Vulgar Latin also follows, making both parts of the sentence to respect *the simple*), the plainest interpretation of the latter part of it seems to me to be this:—When instruction is given to the wise, the simple also learn something; by observing how diligently even the wise hearken to it. And in this sense the word *Maschil*, with *lamed* after it, is used in the next verse; *the just considers the house of the wicked.*

[*f*] Which, though it seems very plain, yet there are great varieties in the interpretation of it; because of the following part of the verse. In which many put in the word *Jehovah*, or *God*, to supply the sense (as we do), but without any necessity; there being a clear and obvious sense (which I have expressed in the Paraphrase), without any such supplement; if we do but take the *just man* for a just magistrate, and not for a private person.

[*g*] There is little difficulty after this, till we come to the twenty-fourth verse; where he either gives this character of a scorner, that he is proud and arrogant, and does all things in the *wrath of his pride* (as the words are in the Hebrew), or describes the proud and arrogant man to be a scorner also, and full of haughty wrath. It is not of much concern which way we take it; for the sense will, in a manner, be the same. I have expressed the Hebrew, as near as I could, in my Paraphrase, taking the construction thus:—A proud and haughty person, who may well be called a scorner, proceeds furiously and insufferably in all that he doth.

[*h*] In the last verse Solomon mentions the *horse* instead of all warlike preparations: because it was the chief; and all nations placed much of their confidence in the number and strength of their horses. But that the Israelites might not do so too, there was a special provision made in their law against it, (Deut. xvii. 16.) Notwithstanding which, they were so prone to this vain confidence, that Joshua, in his wars against the Canaanites, houghed all the horses he took after a great victory: that is, cut their ham-strings, and thereby made them unserviceable: which he did by an express command from God, (Josh. xi. 6. 9.) and the reason of it was (as Kimchi well observes) to prevent a false conceit which might have arisen in the people's mind; that they owed their good success to them, had they made use of those horses in future battles. Which Solomon also here endeavours to prevent: for, though he had a great number of horses to increase that splendour which was peculiar to him above all kings, yet he would have them know he did not trust in them; nor would have the people imagine they were a whit the more secure, because they were so well appointed for war, if they did not carefully obey the laws of God; and from him look for deliverance.

Ver. 1. *THE king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will.*] It is not in the power of kings (much less of other men) either to do, or to design, what they please; but their very wills are subject to the great Lord of all; who diverts them as easily from what they intend, or inclines them to that which they resolve against, as the gardener draws the streams of water through the trenches he cuts, unto what part of the ground he thinks good. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *Every way of a man is right in his own eyes; but the Lord pondereth the hearts.*] There is nothing that a man doth or designs (especially if he be great and potent), but, such is the fond affection he hath for himself, he fancies to be exactly good: when in the account of the Lord, who searches into the secrets of men's souls, and knows the just value of every thing, they are very defective, if not grossly wicked. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.*] Men imagine, for example, that their devotion towards God will satisfy for their breach of faith, their uncharitableness and injurious actions, towards men: when he prefers the practice of truth, of mercy, and justice, before the richest sacrifices that can be offered to him.

Ver. 4. *A high look, and a proud heart, and the ploughing of the wicked, is sin.*] The pride, the insolence, the ambition, and vast desires; nay, all the designs and contrivances of wicked men, with all the prosperous successes they have in them, lead them into abundance of sins; and in the issue into no less miseries. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 5. *The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness; but of every one that is hasty, only to want.*] He that to prudent counsels and contrivances adds an honest diligence, is likely to grow rich: but he that acts inconsiderately in his business, or greedily catches at every advantage, whether by right or wrong: or undertakes more than he can manage, out of an eager desire to grow rich presently, is most like to be a beggar.

Ver. 6. *The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.*] There are men that make it their business, with much labour, to heap up wealth, though it be by lying, or flattery, or calumny, or perjury: but as such treasures are no more durable than heaps of chaff, or clouds of smoke, which are soon dissipated by the wind; so they expose the owners of them to many dangers, and at last bring them, by their own diligence, to a woful end.

Ver. 7. *The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; because they refuse to do judgment.*] For the rapine of such wicked men, whereby they have destroyed other families, and made them desolate, shall fall in most grievous and dreadful punishments upon themselves; which they shall not be able to shake off, till they be utterly destroyed; because they knowingly injured their neighbours, and obstinately denied to make them satisfaction.

Ver. 8. *The way of man is froward and strange: but as for the pure, his work is right.*] For a man whose life is nothing but wiliness and craft, imposture and deceit, is so alienated from God, that he is very odious to him, and to all good men: but he that is sincere and free from all fraud and guile approves himself in all his actions, and is most acceptable and dear to both. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 9. *It is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.*] It is much

more desirable to live poorly and solitarily in the open air, exposed to all the injuries of the weather; nay, to be thrust into a little corner on the top of the house; than to have a spacious habitation and numerous family, governed by a contentious wife: whose perpetual scolding and brawling within doors, upon the least occasion, is more intolerable than the thunder, and the lightning, and the blustering winds, which may molest him without.

Ver. 10. *The soul of the wicked desireth evil; his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes.*] An impious man is so set upon mischief, that he is not satisfied till he hath effected his desire: nor will he spare either friend or foe, to serve his ambition, his covetousness, or whatsoever evil affection it is that reigns in him.

Ver. 11. *When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise; and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.*] Lay a heavy fine or other punishment upon a derider of religion; and though it do him no good, yet such simple persons as were only incautiously deluded by him, will make some wise reflections on it, and be the better for it: as for him that is wise already, it is sufficient only to give him good admonitions; of which he himself will receive the profit, and amend what is amiss in him. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 12. *The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked: but God overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness.*] A just judge makes a prudent, but strict, scrutiny into all the actions of a wicked man's family; that he may so punish them for their rapine, violence, and extortion, as to deprive them of all power to do any farther mischief. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 13. *Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.*] He who is so far from relieving the poor, though they lie under most grievous calamities, that he plainly declares their petitions are very troublesome to him; shall fall into the like straits and pressures himself: and, which is worse, be denied when they force him to cry for help.

Ver. 14. *A gift in secret pacifieth anger, and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.*] Men do not love to be thought so weak as to do any thing for money; but such is its power, if it be secretly conveyed, that they will resign their strongest resentments to it: their anger, for instance, will yield to a gift; nay, a rich present, prudently placed, will extinguish that wrath which was thought implacable.

Ver. 15. *It is joy to the just to do judgment: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.*] The execution of justice is a joy to him that hath observed the laws; but a terror to those that have violated them by their wicked deeds: who look upon themselves as in danger to be undone thereby.

Ver. 16. *The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.*] He that will not live by those wise laws which God hath prescribed him, but follows the conduct of his own foolish lusts and passions, shall after all his extravagances be sent down to hell; and there confined to the company of the old giants, who, giving themselves over to debauched courses, were swept away with a deluge. (See ii. 18. ix. 18.)

Ver. 17. *He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man; he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.*] Nay, before he goes thither he may suffer very much; for it is too frequently seen that voluptuous men destroy their own pleasures, by wasting their estates, and bringing themselves to extreme beggary: at the best, he can never thrive, who loves to feast and to live delicately.

Ver. 18. *The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.*] Nay, such is the distinction which Divine Providence makes between the good and bad, that righteous men are not only strangely delivered from those dangers which others fall into; but preserved from mischief, by its seizing on the wicked: and men sincerely virtuous, escape in a common calamity; when they that prevaricate with God and with religion, by that very means (which they thought was best for their safety) are overwhelmed in it.

Ver. 19. *It is better to dwell in the wilderness than with a contentious and angry woman.*] It is more eligible (as was said before, ver. 9.) to dwell quietly, in the most rueful place upon earth, than to live in a palace with a contentious wife: whom nothing can please; but is uneasy and angry at every thing, and always gives provoking language.

Ver. 20. *There is a treasure to be desired, and oil in the dwelling of the wise: but a foolish man spendeth it up.*] Wisdom furnishes a man not only with the necessaries, but with all the conveniences and pleasures of life, that he can reasonably desire; which it teaches him also to enjoy with great satisfaction, though but in a small habitation: but such is the folly of a wicked man, that he lavishly spends all those treasures, which he knows not how to get, nor how to live without.

Ver. 21. *He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.*] He that makes it his business to be good; not contenting himself merely with doing no harm, but greedily laying hold on all occasions to exercise justice and mercy, shall lead a most happy life; for, besides the satisfaction and pleasure he hath in doing good, he shall preserve himself from being injured, and oblige all to be kind to him, and be highly esteemed, honoured, and praised every where.

Ver. 22. *A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.*] The virtue of the mind is of greater force, and more prevalent, than strength of body: for a whole city of mighty men are not able to resist a wise and pious commander that besieges them; but they are either taken by his cunning stratagems, or they yield themselves to his eminent goodness; unto which they trust more than to their fortifications.

Ver. 23. *Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles.*] He that is wary and cautious in his talk, thinking seriously before he opens his mouth, and taking care to offend neither God nor man by what he speaks, preserves his mind from a great deal of trouble, and himself from dangerous distresses.

Ver. 24. *Proud and haughty scorner is his name who dealeth in proud wrath.*] He that is puffed up with a great conceit of himself, whose ambition makes him insatiable in his desires, as he regards neither God nor man, so he cannot endure the least opposition, nor do any thing with moderation; but, being easily enraged with insolent fierceness and cruelty, proceeds against those that cross his designs. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 25. *The desire of the slothful killeth him: for his hands refuse to labour.*] A sluggard hath desires as well as other men: which must needs be a perpetual torment to

him, because he will not be at the pains to give them satisfaction: nay, they bring him sometimes to a miserable end; because his sloth moves him to make provision for them by robbery, or other unlawful ways, rather than by following some honest but laborious calling.

Ver. 26. *He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth, and spareth not.*] Nor is there any measure in his desires; but, as they are endless, so they are exceeding eager and restless, to his own and others' great disturbance; but he that is diligent and honest is so far from desiring, much less stealing, his neighbour's goods, that he freely gives away his own, and hath not the less thereby, but still enough to spare.

Ver. 27. *The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination; how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?*] God is so far from being pleased merely with sacrifices, (xv. 8.) that when they are offered by impious men, who never think of amending their lives, he detests them; though presented with never so specious a show of piety: especially when, at that very time, they have some wicked design in their heads, which they think to sanctify by their sacrifices.

Ver. 28. *A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly.*] He that for money, or love, or hatred, shall testify any thing of which he hath no knowledge, shall soon lose his credit, and at last come to a miserable end: (xix. 9.) but he that, in obedience to God, testifies nothing but what he hath attentively heard or seen; as he never varies from what he deposes, so he shall always be believed, and continue in good esteem, as long as he lives.

Ver. 29. *A wicked man hardeneth his face; but as for the upright, he directeth his way.*] All the endeavours of a man resolvedly wicked, are to grow so impudent, that he may not blush at what he doth; nor be moved, in the least, by any man's admonitions or reproofs: but a man sincerely virtuous is so different from him, that he himself examines and censures his own actions if they be amiss; and makes it all his care so to live, that he may not be ashamed of what he doth.

Ver. 30. *There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel, against the Lord.*] It is folly to design any thing which is not approved by the Lord: for let it be managed with all the skill that natural sagacity, long study and experience can furnish men withal; with the most prudent foresight also of all contingencies; and with mature and deliberate advice about the most effectual means, and with due application of them to the end; they all signify nothing when they oppose the counsels and decrees of Heaven.

Ver. 31. *The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the Lord.*] Nor is power and force, though never so great, more significant than counsel and advice: for after an army of horses, and chariots, and valiant soldiers, are set in battle array, they can give no security of victory, without the Divine favour and help; from whom alone therefore both safety and prosperous success are to be expected. See Arg. [*h*]

CHAP. XXII.

ARGUMENT.

[*a*] After an admonition not to set too great a price upon riches, (ver. 1.) there follows another (ver. 2.) unto rich men; not to set too great a value upon themselves; but with an instruction also to the poor, not to be discontented with their condition; the rich having as much need of them as they have of the rich: Greg. Nazianzen, indeed, (Orat. xvi. p. 263.) is of opinion that Solomon doth not say, that God hath made one man poor and another rich, οὐ γὰρ δῆλον εἰ θεόθεν ἡ τοιαύτη διαίρεσις, *for it is not apparent that such a distinction is from God:* but his meaning is only this, that πλάσμα Θεοῦ ὁμοίως ἀμφότεροι, καὶ εἶτα ἔξωθεν ἄνισοι, *they are both alike the workmanship of God, though in external regards they be unequal.* Which ought to shame rich men into sympathy and brotherly-kindness towards them: that when they are apt to be lifted up because of those things wherein they are unequal, they may be taken down again and become more moderate, when they consider how in the greatest things they are both alike.

But I have had a respect to the other thing also in my Paraphrase: because, if God did not intend in the beginning so great a disparity as we now see (which this is not a place to dispute), yet some disparity it may be easily proved he did design; the mean condition, that is (though not beggary), of some, in comparison with others. Which serves many wise ends of his providence: nay, beggary may be very useful, to give the greater occasion of liberality on the one hand, and of patience, humility, and honest diligence, on the other. And to be commended for these virtues is much better than to be rich, as he observes in the first verse. Where Melancthon hath a large discourse to shew that it is lawful, nay necessary, to endeavour after a good fame: according to that saying, *I have need of a good conscience with respect to God, and of a good name for the sake of my neighbours.* And he alleges some ancient sentences to the same purpose with this of Solomon; as that of Publius, *Honestus rumor alterum patrimonium est:* and that of Plautus, *Honestam famam si servasso, sat ero dives.*

[*b*] There are more observations about riches, in ver. 7—9. which seem to me to have a dependance one upon the other; and so I have considered them in the Paraphrase. And in the next verse but one, (ver. 11.) I have followed the judgment of Lud. de Dieu, who thinks Solomon observes two fruits of pureness of heart; one, that the word of such a man may be relied on; and the other, that the king (who loves not to be deceived) will be his friend upon that account. This seems nearest to the Hebrew; unless we will take it thus: Two things recommend a man to the affection of a prince, his *integrity* and his *eloquence:* which make him very capable to do his prince service. And then the paraphrase must run thus:—He that loves sincerity above all things, and is able to deliver his mind in acceptable language, is fit to be privy-counsellor to a king.

[*c*] And to this, I conceive, he hath some respect in the next verse; where by *daath, knowledge,* in the first part of it, we are to understand (the other part of the verse shews), Men truly knowing, and who speak according to their knowledge.

[*d*] In the thirteenth verse, there is an admirable description of the disposition of slothful persons, who raise difficulties in their own fancies, where there are none; or,

pretending them greater than they are, will not so much as attempt any thing, because it is possible they may meet with insuperable hinderances. Which some have, not unfitly, applied to cowardly magistrates, who dare not punish great and powerful offenders; but excuse themselves, saying, He is a mighty man, there is no dealing with him, &c. Whereas a worthy magistrate (as an excellent prelate of our own, Bishop Sanderson, speaks) would choose to meet with such a *lion;* that he might make God's *ordinance* to be reverenced, and clear the way for others, by tearing *such a beast* in pieces; "and would no more fear to make a worshipful thief, or a right worshipful murderer (if such a one should come in his circuit), an example of justice; than to twitch up a poor sheep-stealer."

But the Lord Bacon applies it, no less wittily, to the laziness of mankind, in the Advancement of Learning, (lib. i. chap. *ult.*) the knowledge of some things being so abstruse, that it is impossible to be compassed by human industry. Whereas "all those things are to be held possible and performable, which may be accomplished by some persons, though not by every one; and which may be done by the united labours of many, though not by any one part; and which may be effected in a succession of ages, though not in the same age; and, in brief, which may be finished by the public care and charge, though not by the abilities and industry of particular persons." But there is no excuse for those who will not set themselves to any inquiries, because some things cannot be known. Which is perfectly the temper of the sluggard Solomon here mentions; who, because a *lion* sometimes comes into the street, would not stir out of his doors. It was not ordinary, you must know, for *lions* to come into towns; no, nor to rove in the day-time: (the night being their season, Psal. civ. 20.) but sometimes by the Divine vengeance they were stirred up to leave the deserts, and go to inhabited places; (Jer. v. 6. 2 Kings xvii. 25, 26.) and likewise, if we may believe the great philosopher (in his History of Animals), when they grow old, *πρὸς τὰς πόλεις ἔρχονται μάλιστα*, &c. they haunt cities more than other places; because then they are not so able to prey upon beasts, and therefore lie in wait for men. The same is affirmed by Pliny, as Bochartus observes, lib. iii. cap. 2. par. i.

[*e*] In the sixteenth verse I have followed our translation, and expressed the sense to as much advantage as I could. But I think the Vulgar Latin, which Luther and some others follow, comes nearer to the Hebrew, which runs thus: *He that squeezes the poor to increase his own estate, gives to the rich* (not to secure what he hath gotten, but) *only to impoverish it:* that is, He shall be squeezed by some mightier person than himself: and so the paraphrase, in more words, should be this:—

Such is the just providence of almighty God, that he who, to enlarge his own estate or power, oppresseth the poor by violence or deceit, shall meet with the like extortion from others more powerful than himself; and thereby be reduced to as poor a condition as those whom he oppressed.

Ver. 1. *A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.*] Riches are not so great a good as men imagine; for a wise man will prefer the fame of using them well (or any other virtue) much before them: and choose much rather to be esteemed and beloved of good men, than to be possessed of abundance of silver and gold. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all.*] The world doth not consist all of rich, nor all of poor; but they are mixed together, and have need of one another: and will agree well enough, and not clash one against another, if they both consider, that there is one Lord, who is the creator of both; and hath, by his providence, ordered this inequality for their mutual good. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 3. *A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.*] He whose long experience and observation of things hath made him cautious and circumspect, foresees a calamity before it comes; and withdraws himself from the danger, into a place of safety: but an incautious and credulous person is easily abused by crafty men, to overlook the mischief, which even they intend against him; and so he goes on securely in his accustomed track, till it overtakes him.

Ver. 4. *By humility, and the fear of the Lord, are riches, and honour, and life.*] A modest sense of a man's self, and humble submission to the meanest condition, arising from a religious regard to the Divine Majesty, is the way to be promoted, both to wealth and to honour; and to enjoy them both also a long time in joy and pleasure.

Ver. 5. *Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward; he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.*] The life of a man that winds and turns any way, to bring about his ends, is very scandalous to others; and will entangle him at last in most grievous troubles: he, therefore, that hath a care of his soul, will have no society with such persons; and thereby avoid the danger of being undone by them.

Ver. 6. *Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.*] Instruct a child as soon as ever he is capable, and season his mind with the principles of virtue, before he receives other impressions: and it is most likely they will grow up with him; so that when he is older he will not forsake them, but retain them as long as he lives.

Ver. 7. *The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.*] Riches draw dominion along with them over the meaner sort; nay, though a man be not absolutely poor, yet, if he be forced to borrow, he loses his liberty, and depends upon the will and pleasure of the lender.

Ver. 8. *He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity; and the rod of his anger shall fail.*] But let not such abuse their power, for no man can reap better than he sows; but if he do injury to others, it shall produce his own trouble: and the authority which he employs vexatiously and spitefully shall fail him, and not be able to bear him out in his inhumanity.

Ver. 9. *He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.*] On the other side, he that, beholding the miserable condition of others, takes compassion upon them, and friendly relieves them, shall be blessed by God, and commended by men: because he doth not put them off to be supplied by others, but imparts of his own goods to him that cannot requite him again.

Ver. 10. *Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out;*

yea, strife and reproach shall cease.] Throw the scoffer, who derides all things, out of a society, and contention, which he is wont to raise, will go out together with him: there will be no quarrels, no suits, no reproachful words, wherewith contending persons are apt to bespatter one another, when such insolent and turbulent men are excluded.

Ver. 11. *He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend.*] He whose heart is so free from guile, that he places his pleasure in the integrity of his conscience, will never gloss, nor flatter, nor study to put false colours upon things, but speak ingenuously, according to the sincere sense of his soul; upon both which accounts a wise prince will value him, and advise with him as a friend. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 12. *The eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge; and he overthroweth the words of the transgressor.*] There is a special providence of God which watches over honest men (who speak as they think), and which prospers the advice they give, and the affairs they manage: but he subverts such as are treacherous and perfidious; and blasts all their counsels and designs. See Arg. [c]

Ver. 13. *The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.*] A slothful man never wants pretences to excuse himself from labours; for he can feign to himself imaginary difficulties, and make a dreadful representation of them: affrighting himself with dangers where there are none; or which happen very rarely. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 14. *The mouth of a strange woman is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein.*] When thou art enticed by the beauty and blandishments of those lewd women, from whom thou oughtest to estrange thyself as far as they are estranged from God, (see ii. 16.) remember that they allure thee into such a gulf of utter destruction, that to fall into their familiarity, is a mark of the highest displeasure of almighty God against thee, for some other crimes.

Ver. 15. *Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.*] False opinions and bad inclinations stick so close sometimes to the mind and will of a child, and are so twisted with them, that no admonitions, no reproofs, nor the wisest discourses, but only prudent and seasonable chastisement, and that not without some severity, will remove such obstinate folly.

Ver. 16. *He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.*] There are some men have such a mixture of ill qualities, that at the same time they will take from the poor to enrich themselves, though it be by violence or fraud; and give to the rich and powerful to wink at their oppressions: but all in vain; for such practices shall surely bring them to beggary. See Arg. [*e*]

PART II.

CHAP. XXII. (CONTINUED.)

ARGUMENT.

Now from this verse, there is scarce any interpreter but hath observed another form of speech, much different from the former, begins, and continues unto the twenty-fifth chapter: and therefore it may not unfitly be called, *the second part of the book of Proverbs.*

From the beginning of the tenth chapter to this place, the instructions of wisdom are delivered in short sentences, and *Proverbs,* properly so called; which have seldom any connexion one with another, or not easily discerned; shewing what is good or bad, true or false, &c. But now follow exhortations and precepts, in the *imperative mood* of speech, and those comprehended in two or three or more verses, before he finishes what he intends. In which alteration, some think the weakness of the reader is consulted: who being weary of the sententious way of instruction, may be refreshed and awakened unto new attention, by varying the form of writing. And thus the son of Sirach, after his *gnomæ,* or sentences, adds an earnest exhortation to the study of wisdom and virtue, like this of Solomon, in the following *section,* which I call his *second part.* Which may have respect both to that which follows: as if he had said, Let not all that hath been said be lost, or superficially regarded; but take a serious review of the foregoing counsels: and give ear also to what I have farther to deliver, &c.

[*f*] And to move the greater attention, he commends them (ver. 20.) under the name of *schalischim, words fit for a prince to speak, and the best men in the world to hear:* which we truly, therefore, render *excellent things.* There is another notion of the word, I know, which I have not altogether neglected; but it always signifying in the Bible, either *great captains,* and *commanders,* and *nobles,* or the *best sort of musical instruments* (as it doth in one place), I look upon this as the most proper interpretation of it.

[*g*] And among those *principal rules* of life he first commends this, (ver. 22.) not to be injurious to poor people: especially by oppressing them in a form of justice. Which all know was administered by the elders *in the gate* of their city; as may be seen in many more places, besides that which I have noted in the Paraphrase, (Deut. xxi. 19. xxii. 9. xxv. 7. Ruth iv. 1, 2, &c.) Which being so common a notion, it is strange that the Greek interpreters should here understand this verse of *poor people begging at their doors:* whom the wise man admonishes them not to abuse. This seems to be their sense: but the word *tedakke* signifies more than ἀτιμάσῃς, *dishonour,* or *abuse* (which is the word whereby the LXX. express it); for it denotes as much as to *crush,* and that *into bits, i. e.* to undo people utterly; which nobody is inclined to do, unto poor wretches begging at their doors, who are undone already.

[*h*] Then follows a most necessary advice about the choice of a friend, (ver. 24, 25.) upon which the Lord Bacon hath passed this judicious remark: (Advanc. of Learning, book viii. chap. 2. parab. 26.) " By how much the more devoutly the laws of friendship among good men are to be observed; by so much the more it stands upon us to use the caution, even at the very first, in the prudent election of friends. And let the disposition and humours of our friends be what they will, so far as concerns ourselves only, they are by all means to be borne withal: but when they impose a necessity upon us, to behave ourselves just as they would have us towards

other men, it is a very hard and unreasonable condition of friendship. Wherefore it highly concerns us, as Solomon here admonishes for the preserving of the peace and safety of our life, that we intermingle not our matters with men of a choleric nature; and such as easily provoke or undertake quarrels and debates. For such kind of friends will perpetually engage us in contentions and factions: so that we shall be constrained either to break off friendship, or to be wanting to our own personal safety."

[*i*] In the two next verses (ver. 26, 27.) he seems to warn men against such friendships, as will engage them to be bound for the debts of others. There are several admonitions before against being surety for a *stranger*, (vi. 1. xi. 15.) and in one place (xvii. 18.) he seems to caution against rash engagements, though for a *neighbour* or friend: but especially, he here adds, when a man is conscious to himself that he hath no estate, and doth but deceive him to whom he stands bound for another man's debt: and so, by pretending to be more able than he is, deprives himself of the benefit of that law mentioned Exod. xxii. 26, 27. and repeated Deut. xxiv. 6.

[*k*] What is said in the twenty-eighth verse against the removing of the *boundaries* whereby one man's possessions are distinguished from another's, and that by ancient consent, is applied, by all sorts of writers, as a caution against innovations. And it is a great mistake to imagine, that only popish authors make that use of it: for the best of the protestants have thought fit to accommodate it to the same purpose. And among the rest Melancthon hath very judiciously explained it in this manner: "This precept is not obscure if it be cited allegorically for *not changing the laws, which antiquity by grave authority hath delivered; unless there be an evident necessity*. For this is often repeated among the precepts of political life, not *rashly to change the ancient laws*. And he here quotes a long passage out of Demosthenes against Timocrates, concerning the people of Locri; who ordained that *he who proposed a new law to them, should do it with a halter about his neck*, &c. And if there were such severity now, saith Melancthon, we should not have so many new dogmatists and Lycurguses about wax-candles, and bells, and such-like things; of whose change, as there is no necessity at all, so it would bring no utility. And wise men require us *to pardon and indulge some small inconveniences to custom*; lest by motion, as it is in sick bodies, the commonwealth should suffer a greater evil. It is necessary, indeed, here to add this caution when any doctrine is impious, and the law establishes impious opinions and idols, *then we ought to prefer rules before them, and to obey God rather than man*. But when such amendment is necessary, the boundaries and limits of our fathers are *not taken away, but restored:* because we only return to the doctrine delivered by God to our first father, according to that of Tertullian, *Primum quodque verissimum est. All our care, therefore, herein is to inquire diligently, what is the true antiquity:* for that is a great confirmation of our faith, when we understand the true state of the church in all ages, to follow the testimony of those who retain the foundation."

[*l*] In the last verse Solomon doth not merely commend industry and diligence, as some understand it (taking this to be the same with the Greek proverb, Τύχη ἐν τῷ πόνῳ), but something more, which the Hebrew word *mahir* plainly imports, *viz. speed, swiftness, readiness,* and *cheerfulness*, in the dispatch of business. To which is required a quickness of apprehension in discharging the fittest means, and a dexterity in the application of them: so that the business is not only done, but done speedily, and without much noise and bustle. On such a person, if he can be found, Solomon here makes this remark, that he is likely to come to great preferment. "For there are no qualities (as is observed by the Lord Bacon, book viii. chap. 6. parab. 19.) which princes more respect and require in the choice of a minister, or servant, than celerity and alacrity in the dispatch of business; which are above all the rest, as he shews by this induction. Men of *profound wisdom* are many times suspected by kings as too prying; and able by the strength of their wit as with an engine to turn and wind about their masters, insensibly, whether they will or not. Then *popular persons* are hated, as those that stand in the light of kings, and draw the eyes of the people too much unto themselves. *Men of courage* are commonly taken for turbulent spirits, and more daring than is meet. *Honest men,* who are valuable for their integrity, are thought too stiff; not so pliable as their masters desire to their will and pleasure in every thing. To conclude (saith he) there is not any other good quality, which presents not some shadow, wherewith the mind of kings may be offended: *only quickness of dispatch, in the execution of commands, hath nothing in it that doth not please.* The motions also of the minds of kings are swift, and not very patient of delays. *For they imagine they can do any thing; this only being wanting, that it be done out of hand:* Upon which account, above all other qualities, *celerity* is to them most acceptable."

Ver. 17. *BOW down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.*] And now let me exhort thee again, (iv. 20. v. 1.) whosoever thou art that readest these things, to attend diligently; and consider seriously all the counsels and precepts which wise and good men have delivered: and in particular, let me prevail for an affectionate application of thy mind, to the knowledge which I impart unto thee.

Ver. 18. *For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.*] For it will give thee most high satisfaction if thou dost so heartily entertain them, and thoroughly digest them, and faithfully preserve them in mind; that thou art able withal to produce any of them, as there is occasion, and aptly communicate them for other men's instruction.

Ver. 19. *That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee.*] For what greater satisfaction can there be, than to have a good hope in God, and to be well assured of his gracious providence over thee? which is the very end, for which I now declare these things to thee: that if thou hast been negligent before, yet now at length, thou, even thou, mayest know the way to happiness, and shew it unto others.

Ver. 20. *Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge.*] Think of it seriously, and deny, if

thou canst, that I have taken more ways than one for thy information, and have set down most excellent rules, and those well considered with great exactness and care, for thy conduct both in public and in a private state of life. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 21. *That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?*] That thou mightest not only have a certain, firm, and solid knowledge, of all those truths that are necessary for thee, but be able also to give sound advice to those that send to consult thee: and be fit to manage the most difficult affairs, to the satisfaction of them that employ thee in an embassy.

Ver. 22. *Rob not the poor, because he is poor; neither oppress the afflicted in the gate.*] And besides those instructions already given, remember these that follow. Never abuse thy power to the spoiling of him, that is in a mean condition, because he is unable to resist thee: but especially do not undo him there, where he hopes for relief, by denying him justice, much less by false accusations, when he comes into the public courts of judgment, (2 Sam. xv. 2.) See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 23. *For the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.*] For all causes shall be heard over again, by a higher judge; even the Lord himself, who will do them right: and force their spoilers to pay dearly for the wrong they have done them; for which nothing less than their life shall make satisfaction.

Ver. 24. *Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go.*] And as there is nothing more necessary than a friend, so a principal point of wisdom consists in the choice of him; concerning which, observe this rule among others: not to enter into any familiarity with a man prone to anger; and the more furious he is, be so much the more cautious of being drawn along with him, into any company. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 25. *Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.*] For it will be a very hard matter to preserve thyself in good temper, when he is out of humour; but thy very kindness to him will make thee feel the same commotion: nay, bring thy very life into great danger, by being engaged in all his quarrels.

Ver. 26. *Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts.*] And do not keep company with those who are forward to pass their word, and give security, for the payment of other men's debts; lest they draw thee into such dangerous engagements, (vi. 1. xi. 15.) especially when thou hast no estate to answer the debt for which thou art bound. See Arg. [*i*]

Ver. 27. *If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?*] For it will highly incense the creditor when he falls upon thee, to find thou art not so able a man as thou madest a show of to him, and so provoke him to pull away the very bed from under thee, when thou art in it; and leave thee shamefully and wretchedly on the ground: for why should any man have so little care of his own good, as thus to expose himself to such miserable straits for the sake of another?

Ver. 28. *Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.*] Be content with thy own estate, and do not seek to enlarge it by invading other men's possessions: especially those to which they have an unquestionable right, having enjoyed them by long prescription, and by the consent of thy forefathers, whose constitutions ought to be had in great veneration. See Arg. [*k*]

Ver. 29. *Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.*] Mark a man that is not rash, but yet quick and dexterous in the dispatch of any business he is charged withal: and thou mayest foretell that he shall not long continue obscure, in some private and mean family; but be taken notice of, and preferred to the service of his prince, in some public ministry.

CHAP. XXIII.

ARGUMENT.

[*a*] As the foregoing chapter concludes with an observation concerning the quality of a person who is most likely to come to preferment, so this begins with a caution to him, when he is promoted to it. For the first verse is (as Melancthon calls it) *Aulica admonitio*, an admonition to a courtier; remembering him, that there is danger, even in the favour, especially in the familiarity, of princes and great men. Whose kindness must be used with so much modesty and circumspection: especially if they be so extraordinarily kind, as to admit an inferior to eat with them: when, if a man use not great moderation, he loses the guard he ought to have upon himself. For his head growing hot, his tongue may run (as we say) before his wit; his behaviour may be indecent, or too negligent, &c. and therefore Solomon advises such a person to be very considerate at that time, above all others; and with earnest attention to mind both *who* and *what* is before him (for the Hebrew words may refer to both, as I have explained in the Paraphrase): there being great danger of his ruin, if he give any offence at such a time; when the passions of the prince or ruler are apt to be as disordered as his own: and therefore had need be watched, that he may know how to appease them presently; and so govern himself as to receive no prejudice thereby.

[*b*] But especially he must be sure to have a command over his tongue, (which Melancthon takes to be the meaning of *putting a knife to his throat*, ver. 2.) that it take not too much liberty, and that he speak nothing rashly; which may undo him, as it did Clytus; whom Alexander slew at a feast, for contradicting him too freely. He cites many admonitions out of the poets concerning this danger; concluding with that counsel which Æsop gave Solon, when he was going to Crœsus; Speak to a king, ἢ ὡς ἥκιστα, ἢ ὡς ἥδιστα, *either as little, or as sweet, as is possible.*

But this is too narrow a sense of that phrase, *put a knife to thy throat;* though it be a part of it. For it expresses the exceeding great caution a man should use at a feast, lest he exceed his bounds in eating and drinking: wherein he should be as careful as he is of cutting his throat; which many have in effect done by intemperance; whereby some have utterly destroyed their healths at last; and others fallen into such a liberty of speech, as hath on a sudden cost them their lives. Be as afraid, therefore, saith the wise man, of running into excess (of which thou art in great danger at a great table, if thou hast a great stomach), as if thy knife, wherewith thou cuttest thy meat,

would certainly cut thy throat, if thou eatest too much. In short, he advises a man to affright himself from intemperance, where is a great temptation to it.

There are those, indeed, that take the first particle *ve*, in the beginning of the verse, to signify as much as *otherwise;* and the meaning to be, If thou dost not curb thy appetite, but let loose its reins to eat and drink as much as it desireth, it will expose thee to as certain danger, as if a knife were at thy throat: which, though it be not so easy a construction, I have not altogether neglected.

[c] After this follows an admonition against *covetousness,* ver. 4. where he neither forbids all labour, nor a provident care (which in other places he commends), but only represents how vain it is to be over solicitous; and to leave no thoughts nor strength for any thing else: for so the first word is, do not *weary thyself* to be rich. And in the next part of the sentence, he only bids us *desist from* our own understanding; meaning thereby, either we should not wholly trust to that, though in the use of honest means; or that we should not follow our own inventions, contrary to the Divine direction. Some would have the meaning of the whole to be this; Do not prefer the getting of riches before the getting of wisdom: taking the verse as if it ran thus; *labour not for riches so as to cease from the prosecution of wisdom;* let not thy worldly cares hinder better things, and then there is no danger: which is an excellent sense, if the words would bear it.

[d] The reason which Solomon adds, (ver. 5.) hath little or no difficulty in it; which is from the uncertainty, either of getting or of keeping riches. Whose inconstancy he sets forth by the flight of an *eagle:* which of all other birds is observed to fly swiftest, and highest into heaven (as Solomon here speaks), or into the clouds (as other authors); that is, quite out of sight. Whence it is that God saying, he carried the Israelites out of Egypt *upon eagles' wings,* Exod. xix. 4. R. Solomon (upon Exod. xii. 37.) took a conceit that they went a hundred and twenty miles in one hour; for so far it was from Rameses to Succoth. Which though it be but an idle fancy, yet there was this foundation for it; that the Scripture expresses the swiftest motion by that of the *eagles.* So Saul and Jonathan, who were strong and excellent racers, pursuing the enemies with great speed, are said to have been *swifter than eagles,* (2 Sam. i. 23.) And such were they who pursued Zedekiah and the people of Judah, when they fled out of Jerusalem in hope to make an escape, (Lam. iv. 19. Hab. i. 8. compared with 2 Kings xxv. 4, 5.) And thus other nations represent it, as Bochartus observes out of Cicero, who tells us out of Chrysippus, that when a racer dreamed he was turned into an *eagle,* an interpreter told him, "Vicisti, istâ enim ave volat nulla velocius."

[e] Next to covetousness he condemns envy, as Melancthon and others understand ver. 6, &c. or rather such covetousness, as makes men sordid: whence arises, indeed, that part of *envy,* which disposes a man to grudge every thing to his neighbour, though he would be thought liberal: which I pass by only with this note, of that good man; That a singular diligence ought to be used, in observing and finding out the dispositions and inclinations of others; that we may know whom to avoid, and whom to consort withal. And (according as he understands the beginning of the next verse, ver. 7.) there is none worse than the man now mentioned, who hath a *spectre* or *satyr* in his soul; so he renders it, mistaking *schaar* for *saar:* which are widely different. And this word *schaar* being used only here in this place, hath raised a great deal of difficulty, whence to derive it: which I shall not trouble the reader withal; the sense being well enough expressed in our translation, and in short is this, *he is not what he seems:* his thoughts differ much from his words; and therefore do not believe what he saith, but mark the discovery he makes of his inward thoughts, which are so sordid that he is *detestable,* as some render the phrase, or *stinkingly base.*

[f] Of *envy* at the prosperous estate of wicked men, which makes others wish themselves in their condition, though it be by imitating their wickedness, he speaks afterward, ver. 17. From whence, to the twenty-fifth chapter, most of the precepts are admonitions proper for parents to give their children; that they may know what to eschew: particularly *drunkenness* and *whoredom* (of which he speaks in this chapter), and such *company* as may entice them to be so lewdly wicked. And, in order hereunto, to implant in their minds a *due esteem of wisdom,* as infinitely to be preferred before all earthly treasures. This he inserts in the middle, between the cautions against *drunkenness* and *whoredom,* [g] ver. 23. upon which the Lord Bacon hath passed this remark, that the wise man judged it reasonable, that "riches should be employed to get learning, and not learning be applied to gather up riches."

[h] St. Chrysostom's observation concerning a harlot (Hom. xiv. ad pop. Antioch.) most excellently explains ver. 27, 28. that "πορνὴ φιλεῖν οὐκ ἐπίσταται, ἀλλὰ ἐπιβουλεύει μόνον, *a whore understands nothing of love or friendship, but only of the art of inveigling.* Her heart is never sensible of true affection; but is made up of wiles to deceive and entrap men unto their undoing. And if the danger do not appear, she is the more to be avoided, ὅτι περιέσταλε τὸν ὄλεθρον, &c. *because she covers the destruction,* and hides the death; and takes care it shall not presently come into the sight of him, whom she ensnares into it."

[i] In the conclusion of the chapter he resumes his discourse about *drunkenness;* and represents at large the dismal effects of it, in so lively a manner, as may well deter any man that reads it seriously from being too busy with wine: which he saith, in conclusion, *bites like a serpent, and stings like a basilisk* (so Bochartus hath proved we ought to translate the word *tziphoni,* which we render *adder):* whence it was, that Tatianus, the Encratites, and Manichees, called wine *the gall of the dragon, and the venom of the old serpent:* and would not taste a drop of it, no, not in the holy communion. Not considering, what lies open and obvious to every body's eyes, that there is no hurt in the thing itself (which is a singular Divine benefit), but in our excess. Whereby innumerable diseases are bred in the body, the reason for the present suffocated, and the most absurd affections stirred up: which change men for the time into beasts: Some into *lions,* as Bochartus glosses: (lib. iii. cap. 10. par. ii.) witness Alexander, who killed his dearest friend in his cups; and Herod, who, after a feast, condemned the great servant of God, John Baptist (whom he himself

highly reverenced), to be beheaded: others into *dogs;* as Nabal, who most rudely and churlishly barked at David, to whom he had great obligations, when he was in drink: others into *hogs,* wallowing in filthy pleasures; as Lot, who defiled himself with incest, when he was not himself: nay, it throws men down below the beasts, who drink no more than needs, and never excite their thirst by art, but only follow the directions of nature. All which, if any man consider, he will easily allow of what Solomon says, that it *bites like a serpent,* &c. that is, doth more mischief than can be repaired. For the wound which the basilisk gives is said, by Avicenna, to be incurable; and the writers of his nation say, it doth hurt even by its *looks* and *hissing,* as that author beforenamed relates, cap. 9. And so Solomon immediately represents the effects of drunkenness to be such, that they make a man senseless, and perfectly stupid; and consequently incorrigible, though he suffer never so sadly by it, (ver. 34, 35.) As if this poison made a mortification in the whole man; for which there is no remedy.

Ver. 1. *WHEN thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee.*] When a prince, or a very great person, doth thee the honour to admit thee to his table, be not transported with such vain joy, as to remit the seriousness of thy mind: but remember thou art in danger, if thou hast not thy wits about thee to direct thy behaviour; lest thou touch any thing, which, perhaps, was reserved only for the prince's own eating, or demean thyself indecently towards him or towards any of the guests or waiters at the table. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite.*] Especially lest thou speak too freely, which may hazard thy undoing; for the prevention of which keep thy mind as sharp as thine appetite; and affright thyself from intemperance in language, as well as in eating: of which there is the greater danger, if thou hast a greedy desire of meat and drink. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *Be not desirous of his dainties; for they are deceitful meat.*] Most especially when exquisite delicacies are set before thee; which are so tempting, that it is a piece of wisdom not to be too forward to accept of such invitations; or being there to content thyself with the plainest dish: for it was not kindness, but design, perhaps, which called thee thither; or thou mayest be easily enticed by such dainties to overeat thyself.

Ver. 4. *Labour not to be rich; cease from thine own wisdom.*] Do not trouble thyself with restless and tiresome labours to get a great estate; be not too thoughtful, nor let thy cares be endless about such matters; much less use any ill contrivances which they may suggest to thee; no, nor depend so much upon thy own prudent management for the success of thy honest undertakings, as upon God's blessings. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 5. *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they flee like an eagle towards heaven.*] Consider, for the cure of this, how ridiculous it is, that thou shouldest let thy mind be so intent upon riches, and pursue them with such haste and earnestness which, perhaps, thou canst never catch; or, if thou dost, may be gone as fast as they came; and by all thy care and pains never be recovered. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 6. *Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats.*] Receive no obligations from a sordid man: but though he invite thee to a feast (which he may perhaps make sometimes for ostentation's sake), let not the good cheer tempt thee to accept his invitation. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 7. *For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.*] For, even then, when he would be thought most free and generous, he is not able to dissemble the baseness of his mind; which expresses itself in his very looks; whereby he shews that when he prays thee to feed heartily, he had rather thou wouldest let it alone, and thinks thou eatest and drinkest a great deal too much.

Ver. 8. *The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.*] Which will make thee so nauseate, as to be ready to bring up again every bit thou hast eaten: and to repent of the commendations thou hast bestowed on his entertainment; or the thanks thou hast returned to him for it; or the wholesome discourse thou hast interspersed at the table; for it is all perfectly lost upon him.

Ver. 9. *Speak not in the ears of a fool; for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.*] And, indeed, it is good advice, not to speak of any serious thing to such stupid fools; for be thy discourse never so ingenious, prudent, or instructive, they will not only reap no profit by it, but despise, and, perhaps, laugh at it.

Ver. 10. *Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless.*] What was said before (xxii. 28.) of not removing the ancient boundaries, understand with a peculiar respect to fatherless children: whose possessions be not tempted to invade, because they are in their infancy, and do not understand the wrong that is done them: or are utterly unable to defend or to right themselves.

Ver. 11. *For their Redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.*] For, if their guardians and friends be careless of their concerns, or afraid to oppose thy proceedings, they have a Protector, who neither wants power nor courage to recover their right: and will undoubtedly assert it, and condemn thee to make them ample satisfaction, (xxii. 23.)

Ver. 12. *Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.*] And do not think these to be slight admonitions, which need not much to be regarded, but apply thy mind with sincere affection to such instructions, and listen diligently to those persons whose discourses tend to make thee understand thy duty.

Ver. 13. *Withhold not correction from thy child; for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.*] Unto which children sometimes will not attend, and therefore remember what hath been often said, (xiii. 24. xix. 18. xxii. 15.) and do not forbear to give correction to a child that is so ill-disposed: let not foolish pity make thee spare him; for it will do him no hurt if he be soundly beaten; but rather be a means to save him from sorer punishment, even from death itself.

Ver. 14. *Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.*] Do not turn over this business to another, but do it thyself; which may save the public officers the labour: nay, by making his body smart for his

faults, both body and soul may be delivered from utter destruction.

Ver. 15. *My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.*] But mix the kindest exhortations and entreaties with this discipline, saying: My dear child, if thou hast any love for me, who was the instrument of bringing thee into the world, be serious, and heartily in love with wisdom and goodness, which will give me, me, I say (not to mention now thy own happiness), a joy incomparably greater than all other.

Ver. 16. *Yea, my reins shall rejoice when thy lips speak right things.*] A joy that may be better felt than expressed; diffusing itself all over me; and making my mind triumph, when I hear no ill words come out of thy mouth; but only discourses of the right way to be happy.

Ver. 17. *Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.*] In which, that thou mayest always tread, be not offended at the prosperity of the wicked; much less vex and fret thyself into an imitation of them; but maintain perpetually an awful sense of God in thy mind; which is the best preservative against envy, and all other sins, if thou perseverest constantly in it. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 18. *For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.*] Which there is great reason thou shouldest; for be assured, though thou art afflicted for the present, the time will come when thou shalt not only be delivered, but rewarded for thy patience: expect it confidently, if the fear of the Lord make thee persist in faithful obedience to him: for it shall not be in the power of man to disappoint thee of thy hope; but thou shalt certainly flourish, when those wicked men shall hang down their heads and perish.

Ver. 19. *Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way.*] And more particularly, my dear child, be advised by me to study this piece of wisdom; and to follow closely and heartily this direction which I commend to thee.

Ver. 20. *Be not amongst wine-bibbers; amongst riotous eaters of flesh.*] I know how greedy youth is of pleasure; and in what danger to be corrupted by it: therefore avoid the society of drunkards and gluttons; and take heed of all excess in eating and drinking.

Ver. 21. *For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.*] For besides that it is an enemy to wisdom, it brings men to poverty; which is the common effect of revelling, feasting, and riotous living: for that is wont to be attended also with laziness, carelessness, and neglect of all business; which necessarily reduces men to extreme beggary.

Ver. 22. *Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.*] Be obedient to this counsel, which is given thee by thy father, who loves thee, and hath had longer experience of the world than thou, and by bringing thee into it hath power to command thee: and do not slight (as the manner is) what thy mother saith, because she is a woman, much less because she is grown old; which ought to make her advice the more regarded by thee.

Ver. 23. *Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.*] Spare no cost nor pains to acquire the knowledge of what is true and false, good and bad; and do not think there is any thing of equal price unto it: and therefore neglect not the study of it, though it were to get never so much money, or the highest honours; but prefer wisdom and virtue, and the means that instruct thee how to attain them, and to make thee able to do good to others, infinitely before them all. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 24. *The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice; and he that begetteth a wise child, shall have joy of him.*] For there is no greater joy a parent can have, than to see his son take virtuous courses: which as it is the only wisdom, so gives both parents and children the highest pleasure and satisfaction.

Ver. 25. *Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.*] Let not thy father and mother, then, want this singular pleasure; but by thy well-doing fill the heart of her that bare thee with joy and triumph: who, for all the pains and care she hath had in thy birth and about thy education, desires no other requital but only this.

Ver. 26. *My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.*] And more especially, my dear child, let me prevail with thee also to apply thy mind affectionately to this following instruction: and let thy thoughts be very intent and fixed upon it; that thou mayest preserve thyself in the practice of those virtues to which I have directed thee.

Ver. 27. *For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit.*] Estrange thyself from harlots, as much as they are estranged from God; for (as I have told thee before, xxii. 14.) thou art utterly undone, if thou fallest in league with a whore; who will never be satisfied with all the money thou canst give her: and yet, such are her arts, notwithstanding all the straits and hardships thou shalt suffer by her, it will be a hard matter, when thou art once engaged, to get quit of her.

Ver. 28. *She also lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men.*] She is not what she appears; but, whatsoever love she may pretend to thee, is no better than a highway-robber; who will watch all opportunities to make a prey of thee: and is of no other use in the world, which already is too bad, but to make it worse, by increasing the number of lewd, disloyal, and faithless men. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 29. *Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?*] And if thou intendest to avoid such women, then (as I said before, ver. 20.) avoid intemperance; the lamentable effects of which are so many, that it is a hard matter to enumerate them: for if thou considerest who they are that run themselves into all manner of mischiefs, that are never out of danger, but are engaged, for instance, in quarrels, disturbing the neighbourhood by their noise and tumult, and fighting; and are wounded, not for the safety of their country, but for frivolous causes; look deformedly, and spoil their very countenances:

Ver. 30. *They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to seek mixed wine.*] Thou wilt find they are such as are so in love with wine, that they neither willingly stir from it, nor content themselves with the ordinary sort; but make a diligent search for the richest and most generous liquors.

Ver. 31. *Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself*

aright.] Therefore do not believe thy senses merely, but consider the power and effects of wine: and when thou seest how bright it looks, and how it sparkles in the glass; when it tastes most gratefully, and goes down smoothly: let it not entice thee to excess.

Ver. 32. *At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.*] But remember, that the pleasure will be attended at last with intolerable pains; when it works like so much poison in the veins; and casts thee into diseases as hard to cure, as the biting of a serpent or the stinging of a basilisk. See Arg. [*i*]

Ver. 33. *Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.*] Thy thoughts will not only grow confused, and all things appear to thee otherways than they are; but lustful, nay, adulterous desires will be stirred up, which thou canst not rule; and thy mouth, being without a bridle, will break forth into unseemly, nay filthy, scurrilous, or, perhaps, blasphemous language; without respect to God or man.

Ver. 34. *Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.*] And, which is worst of all, thou wilt grow so perfectly senseless, that thy most important business will not only lie neglected; but thou wilt sottishly run thyself into the extremest hazards, without any apprehension of danger: being no more able to direct thy course, than a pilot who snorts when a ship is tossed in the midst of the sea; or to take notice of the peril thou art in, than he that falls asleep on the top of the mast, where he was set to keep the watch.

Ver. 35. *They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.*] And to complete thy misery, shouldest thou be not only mocked and abused, but beaten also, thou thyself wilt confess, afterward, that it made no impression on thee: nay, shouldest thou be most lamentably battered and bruised, thou wilt neither know who did it, nor at all regard it; but, as if no harm had befallen thee, no sooner open thy eyes, but stupidly seek an occasion to be drunk, and beaten again.

CHAP. XXIV.

ARGUMENT.

[*a*] The proneness of good men, especially while they are weak, and only in the beginnings of goodness, to be dejected at the prosperity of the ungodly, and so to be tempted to imitate them, is the reason, that the admonition we meet withal in the first verse is so often repeated. Which we find before, (iii. 31. xxiii. 17.) and comes again ver. 18. of this chapter.

[*b*] And, in like manner, for the encouragement of well-disposed persons, to depend on God's blessing, in the exercise of a virtuous prudence; for the getting, increasing, and preserving an estate, (ver. 3—5.) he repeats another observation (ver. 6, 7.) of the advantage which wisdom hath over mere strength: which we had several times before, (xi. 14. xv. 22. xx. 18.)

[*c*] And then having shewn that it is not wisdom to invent new ways of doing hurt, (ver. 8, 9.) he advises to diligence in the acquiring of true wisdom, while we are in a good condition: for else we shall not be able to support ourselves when adversity comes. So some understand ver. 10. which we translate otherways, and so do most interpreters: and therefore I have expressed the sense of our translation first; and only annexed the other to it. There is a third, which I have taken no notice of in my Paraphrase, because it doth not seem to me to be genuine; which is this, *If adversity deject thee, and break thy spirit; thou wilt be so much the more unable to get out of it.* But it is an excellent observation, and therefore I thought good here to mention it: though the simplest sense seems to be that which we follow, and in brief is this: *Thou art not a man of courage, if thou canst not bear adversity with an equal mind.*

[*d*] And there is a courage to be exercised in our charitable succouring of others, as well as in our own distresses; which he commends in the following words, ver. 11, 12. where he presses, with a great deal of warmth (as will appear to those that understand the Hebrew language, and read the last words with an interrogation), the necessity of giving our assistance for the rescuing of innocent persons (when their lives are in danger), either by counselling them, or petitioning others in their behalf, or purchasing their release with money, or using our authority, or power (if we have any and can do it lawfully), for their deliverance. For this chiefly belongs to magistrates, and those that are in public offices; who ought not to be overawed by great men, from undertaking the protection and relief of those who are unjustly oppressed. This, I think, Melancthon has expressed, as well or better than any I have met withal, in this manner: "God commands both the magistrates and private men not to murder the innocent, and likewise not to assist unjust cruelty. But quite contrary, the magistrate ought to be the guardian of innocent men's lives; and private persons in their places ought to oppose, without sedition, unjust severity, as much as they are able. There are many examples of this in the Scripture. Jonathan opposed his father and helped to preserve David; not only by the good testimony he gave of him, but by other good offices. Obadiah fed the prophets whom Jezebel designed to have killed. The eunuch pulled up Jeremiah out of the dungeon; and the Egyptian midwives saved the Israelites' children, as Rahab afterward did the spies. In the time of Dioclesian, a noble person in the city of Nicomedia in Bithynia, publicly tore down the edict of the emperor for putting Christians to death, that he might shew he detested that unjust cruelty. Examples to the contrary, are such as that of Doeg, who, in compliance with Saul's fury, slew the innocent priests: and many now either openly or by their silence confirm the unjust severity, which is exercised against our churches. Let such think of these words of Solomon, *If thou forbear to deliver them,*" &c.

[*e*] Who shews with what pleasure such instructions should be received, and how profitable, nay, necessary, they are, by the example of *honey,* (ver. 13, 14.) which was not only reckoned the sweetest thing in those countries (as appears by many places of Scripture), but one of those which was most necessary for human life; as appears by the words of the son of Sirach, (xxxix. 41.) For it was useful for food, for drink, for medicine, for preserving of dead bodies; and was so natural to them,

that it seems to have been the food of infants, (Isa. vii. 15.) Whence the ancient Christians were wont to give a little *milk* and *honey* to those who were baptized; as persons newly regenerate and born again: because *honey*, as well as *milk*, was the nutriment of little children in those days and countries. How refreshing it was, appears by the story of Jonathan; (1 Sam. xiv. 17.) and in what common use, by the example of our Saviour after his resurrection, (Luke xxiv. 41, 42.) Which may all be applied to wisdom; from whence the mind derives the greatest satisfaction: and therefore ought to be, as it were, our daily diet (without which we cannot subsist), from the beginning of our days unto the end of them.

[*f*] For many gracious promises are made to it which must not be so understood, he shews, as if no evil thing should befal good men: but as wisdom teaches them to be content with a little, (which seems to be denoted by the word we translate *habitation*, ver. 15.) so, when they meet with any affliction, it instructs them not to despair of better days. So those words are to be understood, ver. 16. which are commonly not only in *sermons*, but in *books* also, applied to falling into sin: and that men may the more securely indulge themselves in their sins, and yet think themselves good men, they have very cunningly added something to them. For they are commonly cited thus, *A just man falleth seven times a day*, which last words [*a day*, or *in a day*] are not in any translation of the Bible (much less in the original), but only in some corrupt editions of the Vulgar Latin: which, against the plain scope of the context, and meaning of the words, seems to understand this place of falling into sin. When the word *fall* never signifies so; but always *trouble* and calamity: as abundance of learned men have long ago observed; particularly Tarnovius, and, since him, Amama and Grotius. Nor needs there any other proof of it, than those places (which are many) wherein *falling* and *rising again* being opposed, both of them have respect to *calamities:* and the former signifies, *being plunged into them*, and the other *getting out of them*. And so, in the Latin tongue, adversities are called *casus*, *falls*, as every body knows.

And therefore we must make use of other places, for the confuting the fancy of perfection in this life; and for the comfort of those who are cast down by their lapses into sin: and take heed of reading the Holy Scriptures so carelessly, as to turn our medicine into poison: which is the fault of those who, from such mistakes, give way to their evil affections, and let them carry them into sin.

[*g*] Against this there follows a severe caution, in the wise man, who would not have us so much as indulge ourselves in that pleasure we are apt to take, in seeing our enemies fall into such troubles as they have given us, (ver. 17.) And to this he annexes another, which cannot be too often repeated, (ver. 19.) against fretting at the prosperity of those who do ill: which he often prohibits; but doth it now in the words of his father David, (Psal. xxxvii. 1.) whose authority was justly held very great in that church: and who had made many observations, from his own experience, of the shortness of their felicity, and the sudden changes with which they were often surprised and astonished.

[*h*] An instance he gives of this in the next precept, (ver. 21, 22.) which, saith Melancthon (so careful were the reformers to prevent all *sedition* and *rebellion*), is to be reckoned among the principal sentences that are to be observed in this book; commanding obedience, and directing the order of it. "For, first, he commands us to obey God, and then the king: whose office it is to see the laws of God observed by his subjects; and to make such laws as are not repugnant to God's laws; and to punish the contumacious; and to pronounce all sentences according to the laws, &c. And *in dubious cases their decrees ought to prevail;* not only because there is a probable reason on their side, but because of the authority given from above unto magistrates: whom God would have us in civil affairs, though dubious before, to obey. And because God gives us sometimes more mild and gentle, sometimes less kind, he would have us also to bear *onera duriora*, if they be tolerable, and obedience be not a sin. For he threatens here a severe vengeance to those that are *seditious:* so he translates the word *schonim;* which the Chaldee translates *fools (changelings* in our language): for they are no better who invert and *change* this order (as some understand the word), either by advancing the will of the prince above all law, without any regard to what God himself hath enacted; or by pretending religion and the fear of the Lord for rebellion against the king, who ordains nothing against God's law."

[*i*] But there is no necessity of glossing upon that word (which we render *given to change*), for though it be diversely translated, the sense is still the same. And some of the varieties that are of opinions, about the sense of the latter part of the twenty-second verse, I have expressed in the Paraphrase, and made them agree well enough. Lud. de Dieu is alone by himself (as far as I can find), who would have that word we render *both of them* to signify *their years:* and the meaning to be, *who knows how soon their life may be at a miserable end?*

Among the following sentences, which are rules also of wisdom, there is no difficulty; but a little in ver. 26. 28. where I have endeavoured to comprehend several expositions, and connect them together in my Paraphrase: but think not fit to enlarge this preface any farther, by giving a particular account of them.

Ver. 1. *BE thou not envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.*] Let it not vex thee into impatience and indignation to see men thrive, who are bent upon nothing but wickedness; much less move thee to think them happy, and to wish thyself among them: but avoid their company, and much more their course of life. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.*] For who would grow rich and great by the misery of others? and such men's thoughts are always contriving how to ruin those who stand in the way of their wicked designs; and their tongues are employed in lies, calumnies, false accusations, and all manner of forgeries; not only to give trouble and vexation unto their neighbours, but to undo them.

Ver. 3. *Through wisdom is a house builded, and by understanding it is established.*] An estate may be gotten, and a family raised, by such wise and pious means as are recom-

mended in this book; and there need no other arts but virtue and prudent management to settle and continue it.

Ver. 4. *And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.*] For as true learning and knowledge is the best furniture of the mind; so it is the best able to furnish every room in the house; not only with all things necessary, but with what may serve for ornament and for the pleasure of life.

Ver. 5. *A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength.*] Wisdom also is able to supply the defect of bodily strength, for a man's defence against unjust invaders of his possessions: or if he have outward strength and power, his skill and dexterity will add such force unto it, as will make it more effectual.

Ver. 6. *For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war; and in multitude of counsellors there is safety.*] For experience tells us, that victory doth not depend so much upon mighty armies, as upon exact conduct, good discipline, subtle contrivance: and the safety of a nation doth not lie merely in the multitude of the people; but in the number of wise men, to direct and govern all affairs, (xi. 14.) See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 7. *Wisdom is too high for a fool; he openeth not his mouth in the gate.*] Who are the more valuable, because it is no easy thing to be an accomplished person in all the parts of wisdom; which are above the reach of vain, rash, and heady men, who are not admitted either to judge, or to advise in the common council of the city, where wise men are not afraid nor ashamed to speak, and that with great authority.

Ver. 8. *He that deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person.*] He that deviseth new ways and arts of cheating, or doing mischief unto others, is one of the worst of men; and shall be branded with the odious name of *an inventor of evil things*, (Rom. i. 30.)

Ver. 9. *The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men.*] To contrive any thing that is hurtful unto others, though out of rashness and folly, is a sin: but he that makes a jest of it when it is done, and laughs at those who tell him it is a sin, is such a pestilent wretch, that he is, or ought to be, extremely abhorred of all mankind.

Ver. 10. *If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.*] To despond and desist from any good design, much more to despair of deliverance, when thou fallest into any distress, is an argument of great weakness and feebleness of mind: and yet, if thou art remiss in the study of wisdom in a prosperous condition, thy spirit will be apt to sink, and be dejected, in a worse. See Arg. [c]

Ver. 11. *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain.*] Use thy best endeavours to deliver innocent persons, who, by false accusations, or other ways, are dragged to execution; or are in present danger of losing their life: and do not think thou canst with a safe conscience withdraw thyself from succouring them in that distress.

Ver. 12. *If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?*] I know the common excuse which men are apt to make in this case; protesting that they did not understand their innocence, or how to save them: but dost thou think such things will pass with God, though they do with men? Canst thou deceive him with false pretences? Him, that searcheth into the secrets of all men's hearts? Him, that observeth every, the very least, motion of thy soul? by whose wise providence, which serves all men in their kind, thou thyself shalt be deserted, as thou hast deserted others. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 13. *My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honey-comb, which is sweet to thy taste.*] Do not slight, much less nauseate, such precepts as these, my dear child: but, as honey is most acceptable to thy palate, both for its wholesomeness and for its pleasure; especially that pure part of it, which drops of itself immediately from the honey-comb: See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 14. *So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.*] So let that knowledge be to thy mind, which tends to make thee wise and virtuous: for as nothing is more necessary for thee, nothing more delightful; so, if it be seriously studied and thoroughly digested, it will abundantly reward thy pains, with prosperous success in all thy undertakings; and never put thee in hope of any thing, which shall not answer thy expectation.

Ver. 15. *Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting-place.*] It is possible, indeed, that a good man's condition may be very mean, nay, afflicted sometime in this world: but let not that tempt the wicked subtly to contrive to ruin, much less by open violence to disturb his innocent repose; nay, cast him out of his small habitation, with which he is contented:

Ver. 16. *For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.*] For though a good man should meet with so many troubles, that thou imaginest he cannot fail to perish in them; he shall overcome them all, and flourish again: when the wicked shall sink under the calamity that befals them, and never be able to recover out of it. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 17. *Rejoice not when thy enemy falleth; and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth.*] It is a great piece of wisdom and virtue also, to pity others in their trouble, and not to shew any sign of joy and mirth, when thou seest any man, though he be thy enemy, in a calamitous condition: no, not so much as (upon thy own account) to take any inward pleasure in his downfall.

Ver. 18. *Lest the Lord see it, and it displease him, and turn away his wrath from him.*] For though nobody sees it, God doth; and such inhuman affections are so displeasing to him, that they may provoke him to translate the calamity from thy enemy unto thee: and thereby damp thy sinful joy with a double sorrow; first to see him delivered from his trouble, and then to find thyself involved in it.

Ver. 19. *Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked.*] Let not thy anger kindle (or if it do, quench it presently, that it may not tempt thee to impatience) when thou seest men thrive and prosper: and do not imagine them to be happy men, and thereby be provoked to follow them in their impious courses. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 20. *For there shall be no reward to the evil man; the candle of the wicked shall be put out.*] For though a wicked man may live bravely for a time, yet it shall end

quite otherwise than he expected: and his splendour (such as it is), if not in his own days, yet in his posterity, be utterly extinguished.

Ver. 21. *My son, fear thou the Lord and the king; and meddle not with them that are given to change.*] Take care therefore, my dear child, that thy religion (which teaches thee in the first place to worship, reverence, and obey the great Lord and Governor of all the world) make thee humbly obedient to the king, as God's vicegerent here on earth: and have nothing to do with those, whose discontent with the present state of things, or their love of novelty, makes them effect a change of government; and depart from their duty both to God and man. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 22. *For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?*] For an unexpected and dreadful calamity shall unavoidably and violently seize on them: but when and how either God or the king will punish them, none can tell; or what terrible vengeance they will take, both upon those that move rebellion, and those that associate with them. See Arg. [*i*]

Ver. 23. *These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect to persons in judgment.*] These things also that follow, belong to the wise and virtuous conduct of thy life. It is a very evil thing, if thou art a judge to consider the quality of the person, (either his greatness, or his relation, or the friendship thou hast with him, &c.) and not the merits of the cause, that is brought before thee.

Ver. 24. *He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him.*] And whoever he be, that contrary to the plain evidence which is given in against the wicked shall pronounce him innocent, and make a bad cause to be good, the whole country shall curse him, and wish the Divine vengeance shall overtake him: nay, other nations, who hear of his unjust proceedings, shall have him in great detestation.

Ver. 25. *But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.*] But they that give a check to vice and wickedness, by punishing evildoers according to their deserts, shall not only have inward satisfaction in their own mind; but increase of joy, by hearing others speak well of them: nay, God himself, the fountain of all good, shall plentifully bestow his blessings upon them.

Ver. 26. *Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer.*] It is not only justice but kindness, to pass a righteous sentence, without fear or favour; and upon all occasions to speak appositely and consonant to truth: and as such persons give others a singular pleasure, so they shall be beloved most dearly, and honoured by all.

Ver. 27. *Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterward build thine house.*] Do every thing in order: and first mind those things which are most necessary; contenting thyself with a little hut in the field till thou hast gotten an estate, by a careful improvement of thy pasturage and of thy tillage: and then it will be timely enough to build thee a house, and to bring a wife into it.

Ver. 28. *Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause; and deceive not with thy lips.*] Do not testify any thing against thy neighbour rashly, much less when thou hast no ground at all for the accusation; nor seduce any body into a false opinion of him, by crafty insinuation; much less suborn them secretly by promises of rewards, to say that which is not true of him; when outwardly thou carriest thyself to him, and pretendest to be his friend.

Ver. 29. *Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.*] Suppose he hath been injurious in that kind to thee heretofore, and thou hast now an opportunity to be revenged; let not that tempt thee to resolve with thyself to do to him as he hath done to thee: taking upon thee that, which God hath declared belongs to himself alone, (Deut. xxxii. 35.) to recompense upon him according to his deservings.

Ver. 30. *I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding.*] And, to that which I have just now said (ver. 27.) concerning diligence, I will add this observation; which I myself made, as I took a view of the state of my subjects, among whom I found one so lazy and void of consideration; that, though he had good land in the field, and a fruitful vineyard,

Ver. 31. *And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone-wall thereof was broken down.*] Yet, such was his wretched sloth, instead of corn I was surprised with the sight of thorns and thistles, which had overrun his whole field; nor was there any thing but nettles to be seen in his vineyard: or if there had been any fruit in either, it would have been lost for want of a fence; which was fallen down, and laid all open to the beasts of prey.

Ver. 32. *Then I saw, and considered it well; I looked upon it, and received instruction.*] Which rueful spectacle so deeply affected my heart, and brought so many thoughts into my mind, that I learnt, by beholding those miserable effects of idleness, to cure that vice in myself, and to correct it in others.

Ver. 33. *Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.*] And I cannot do it better, than in those words before used, (vi. 10, 11.) If thou wilt not rouse up thyself, O sluggard, but, rolling thyself on thy bed, ridiculously desire thy pains may be spared, and that thou mayest still be suffered without any disturbance to enjoy a little more sleep, and to lay aside all care of thy business, when thou hast loitered too long already:

Ver. 34. *So shall thy poverty come, as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.*] Then poverty shall come swiftly (though in silent and unobserved paces) upon thee; and, before thou art aware, leave thee as naked, as if thou wert stripped by a highwayman: nay, the most extreme want and beggary shall unavoidably seize on thee, like an armed man, against whom thou canst make no resistance.

PART III.

CHAP. XXV.

ARGUMENT.

[*a*] Here begins the third part of the book of Proverbs; which is a collection made by some belonging to Hezekiah: and acknowledged here (in the entrance of the book), as well as the former, to be Solomon's. Who

spake a great many proverbs; (we read 1 Kings iv. 32.) which, no doubt, were preserved by his successors in a book, if he did not set them down there himself. Out of which volume, some good men had selected such as they thought most useful for the people: and besides those in the foregoing chapters, which had been compiled, either in his own days, or soon after; these also which follow were thought good to be added in the days of Hezekiah: who, restoring the service of God in the temple to its purity and splendour, (2 Chron. xxix. 3, &c. xxxi. 2, 3, &c.) took care in all likelihood, for the better instruction of the people in piety, to revive the *schools of the prophets* also: and to press them (as he had done the priests) to do their duty faithfully; in teaching the laws of God, and informing the people in all things that might be profitable for them.

Out of which schools some were chosen, it is probable, to attend the king himself; who are called his *men* or *servants:* who, out of their great zeal to promote useful learning, culled out more proverbs from among that great heap of three thousand (which would have been too great a bulk to have been all published, and, perhaps, all of them not concerning manners or good government), and such especially as they saw would do good to the prince as well as to the people; of which nature are those that are put into this collection; many of which belong to the right administration of the public affairs. I am not able to produce express authority for all this; but I think it may be fairly conjectured from those words, 2 Chron. xxxi. *ult.* where we read of the pains Hezekiah took about the law, and about the commandments, as well as about the service of the house of God.

But who the persons were that he employed in transcribing these proverbs out of the ancient records, is more obscure. Some of the Hebrews say, Shebna the scribe, and his officers or clerks that were under the principal secretary: others add Eliakim and Joah: (who are joined together in 2 Kings xviii. 26. 37.) others fancy them to have been Esaiah (a person of great quality, near of kin to the king, and very familiar with him), together with Hosea and Micah; who all lived in the days of Hezekiah, and might possibly undertake this excellent work. In which they assert some things, which are to be found in the foregoing parts of this book, in words but little different, as, ver. 24. of this chapter, and chap. xxvi. 13. 15. 22. and other places, of which I cannot stay here to give an account.

[*b*] They begin the book with a sentence, which the Lord Bacon applies to all the learning and wisdom of Solomon. "In which (saith he) Solomon challenges nothing to himself, but only the honour of the inquisition and invention of truth: *which it is the glory of God to conceal, and the glory of a king to find out.* As if the Divine Majesty took delight to hide his works, to the end to have them found out; and as if kings could not attain greater honour (or pleasure or recreation either) than to employ themselves in that business: considering the great command they have of wits, and means, whereby the vestigation of all things may be effected." Thus he, lib. vi. of the Advanc. of Learning, chap. 6.

Which is a very ingenious gloss, if we refer both parts of the sentence to one and the same matter: tacitly admonishing Hezekiah, and in him all succeeding kings, not to spend their time in any thing so much, as in searching after truth; and endeavouring to understand not only the secrets of government, but of the laws of God, and of all his works: that they may not be imposed upon by false colours and deceitful glosses; which cunning wits are apt to put upon causes that are brought before them; nay, upon the book of God itself.

But if the words be well examined, they will be found to speak rather of different matters; which God conceals, and into which kings penetrate. By which some understand one thing, and some another: but taking the word *elohim* to relate to God's government of the world; that which I have said in the Paraphrase seems to me the nearest to the business. And Jansenius's exposition is not forced, who discourses to this purpose: It is part of God's glory that he need search into nothing; besides, he perfectly knows all things: and yet need not declare that he takes notice of every thing (because he can do it when he pleases), but rather seem to dissemble his knowledge; in which he wonderfully declares his patience and long-suffering towards us. But kings on earth must not herein imitate him; for it is their honour to search diligently and inquire into the state of their kingdom, and to correct presently what they find amiss, lest it be out of their power, when it is strengthened by long custom and numerous offenders. But especially in difficult and intricate business, covered with darkness and obscurity, perplexed with many windings and turnings, and with crafty and subtle conveyances; there to spy light, and by wisdom and diligence to rip up a foul matter, and, searching the cause to the bottom, to make a discovery of all, is a thing most worthy of a king, and tends highly to his honour. In short, as it makes for the glory of God, that he need not inquire into any thing, but, when he knows all things, yet conceals that knowledge: so, on the contrary side, it makes for the glory of kings, that, when they are forced to confess, that they are ignorant, as well as other men, of many things; they make such diligent inquiry, that they discover and detect those things which others have entangled, and would have buried in darkness.

To some such purpose all interpreters expound these words, save one: who refers both parts of the sentence to kings (understanding by *elohim, gods,* judges and princes) in this sense; "Wise kings preserve the reverence which is due to their persons and place, by concealing carefully their own intentions and counsels; and by finding out the designs of other men." Thus Maldonate; which I mention, because it is a great truth, though not the sense of the words, but rather the meaning of the following verse, (ver. 2.)

[*c*] Which concerns kings also, as some of those that come after likewise do (which would incline one to think this part of the book of Proverbs was particularly collected for the use of Hezekiah), and hath received this gloss from the same great man I named before, the Lord Bacon: who gives this as one of the chief reasons why the hearts of kings are inscrutable, because "they being at the very top of human desires, have not, for the most part, any particular ends proposed to themselves (none at least to which they vehemently and constantly aspire),

by the site and distance of which ends we may be directed to take the measure and scale of the rest of their actions: whereas there is no private person, who is not altogether like a traveller, that goes intently aiming at some certain terms of his journey, where he may stay and rest: from whence one may probably conjecture, what he will do, or not do. For if any thing conduce to the end at which he aims, it is likely he will do it; but if it cross his design, he will not." Therefore he passes this judicious observation upon the whole: that "princes are best interpreted by their natures, and private persons by their ends." (Adv. of Learn. book viii. chap. 2.)

But from hence also he observes (in his first book), that it is best not to be too inquisitive to penetrate into the hearts of kings: since we are so ignorant of the things we see with our eyes every day; which the custom of the Levant aims at, that makes it a heinous offence to gaze and fix their eyes upon princes: *which is barbarous in the outward ceremony, but good in the moral:* for it becomes not subjects to pry too far into their princes' counsels. But it may as well check the ambition as the curiosity of private persons; because they can hardly be sure of that favour which they may imagine their prince hath for them: there being such depths in their inclinations and affections as they cannot sound.

But in the next verses princes are admonished that there is no policy like true virtue to support their thrones: and that in order to it they should not keep so much as one ill man about them; who ofttimes corrupts the whole court, and disturbs the whole kingdom.

[*d*] And in the next verse he admonishes subjects not to be vainly ambitious; nor bold and forward to thrust themselves into offices, or into a rank that doth not belong to them: but to be modest, especially in the prince's presence; and (according to our Saviour's rule) to be invited to honour, rather than greedily seek it. And withal he secretly commends to kings the care of keeping up their state and dignity: not suffering every body to intrude into their presence, but giving a check to proud, bold, and saucy persons.

Then follow private instructions, not to be too forward to go to law; and when we do, to manage suits fairly, without aspersing those with whom we contend, and without breaking the laws of friendship: which require us, not to discover the secrets wherewith another hath entrusted us, (ver. 9, 10.)

[*e*] In the eleventh verse I have followed Maimonides's interpretation of the word *maskijoth;* in his preface to his More Nevochim. And it being doubtful, whether by *apples of gold,* he mean apples that look like gold, or apples made of gold; I have expressed both.

[*f*] But I must not give a particular account of every verse; and therefore I shall only add, that I have taken the meaning of the sixteenth and seventeenth verses to be, that *moderation is good in all things, especially in those that please us:* as *honey* doth; which was so plentiful in those countries (as it is in many other), that it was ordinarily found in the *woods,* and *holes of rocks,* &c. as may be seen in Bochart, (lib. iv. cap. 12. par. xi. de Sac. Animal.)

[*g*] In the twentieth verse I have followed Melancthon in what he observes out of Pliny concerning *nitre* (whose nature is not now well known), that it is exasperated by *vinegar* or *lime.* But, in the latter end of the verse, I have kept to our translation, which, by *lebra,* understands a heart ill affected by grief or sorrow: which he takes literally for an evil or wicked heart. And makes this the meaning (which some others have followed), that *pertinacious sinners are made more furious by admonitions.*

In all ancient translations there follows, after this verse, this sentence: *As a moth in a garment, or a worm in wood; so is heaviness in the heart of man.* But St. Jerome, in the latter end of his commentaries upon Isaiah, tells us, that it was *sub obelo* in Origen's works: where he noted all superfluous additions with that mark.

[*h*] I must not omit neither, that the twenty-third verse will admit of a quite contrary sense to that in our translation; and is by some rendered thus: *As the north wind begetteth rain* (for so it doth in some climates), *so a backbiting tongue raiseth up anger and indignation* (which appear in the countenance both of him that believes the calumny, and of him that is calumniated; when he knows how he is abused).

[*i*] There is no great difficulty in verse twenty-six. But interpreters are divided about this; whether he spake of a just man's falling into *sin,* or into some *calamity.* Melancthon understands the latter, and makes this the sense; that *even wise men's minds are extremely troubled, when they see the wicked prevail against the virtuous:* of which he gives a great many examples. But I have taken in both; and have referred it also to all manner of sufferings, and not restrained it to public injustice, as the Lord Bacon doth; who hath this excellent observation upon the place: (book viii. chap. 2. parab. 25.) "This parable teaches us, that states and republics must, above all things, beware of an unjust and infamous sentence, in any cause of great importance; especially where the innocent is not absolved, but he that is not guilty condemned. For injuries ravaging among private persons do, indeed, trouble and pollute the streams of justice, yet only as in the smaller rivulets: but such unjust judgments, as I mentioned, from which examples are derived, infect and distain the very fountain of justice. For when the courts of justice side with injustice, the state of things is turned, as into a public robbery; "et homo homini fit lupus," *and one man preys upon another.*

[*k*] With this verse, De Dieu connects the next, (ver. 27.) and gives the easiest account that I find any where of the Hebrew text: only translating that particle *but,* which we translate *so;* as it is often taken in the Scripture. And his sense is this: "Though the just may be trampled under foot for awhile by the wicked, yet their glory shall not perish: but remain so fresh and sweet, that it shall be a glorious thing to inquire into their glorious actions." So he would have the verse translated thus: *To eat much honey, indeed, is not good; but to search out their glory (viz.* of just men) *is glory.* And if we take the verse by itself, then the sense may be this, as the Belgic interpreters translate it (of whom he, if I mistake not, was one): *To eat much honey is not good: but to search into excellent things is a great commendation; and we cannot therein easily offend by excess:* which is quite contrary to the Vulgar Latin, whose sense and meaning (though not the words) may be defended,

even without repeating the word *not*, as we do in our translation; in this manner: *As honey, though pleasant to the taste, oppresses the stomach, if it be immoderately used: so, upon a curious search into things sublime and glorious (though they be most sweet and desirable to our understanding), we shall find ourselves overwhelmed with a greater glory than we can bear.* And so the latter part of the verse should, word for word, be thus translated: *The search of their glory (viz.* of things as sweet as honey, but transcending our knowledge) *is glory: viz.* too bright for our weak minds.

[*l*] The last verse, which in the Hebrew belongs to all men, whose passions are unruly, is by the Vulgar restrained to him that cannot command his tongue: which is part of the sense. For as men may go out of a city without walls when they will; so every thing is blurted out by him, even the greatest secrets; and by too much liberty he disobliges others and undoes himself.

Ver. 1. *THESE are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.*] Besides the foregoing lessons sententiously delivered by Solomon, these also were collected out of his works, by some of the servants of that good king Hezekiah: who, setting himself with all his heart to reform the people of Judah, among other things wherein God blessed his endeavours, (2 Chron. xxxi. 21.) caused these proverbs to be transcribed out of the ancient records, for their fuller instruction. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.*] The almighty Creator and Sovereign of the world declares his supereminent majesty, authority, and wisdom (which cannot be ignorant of any thing), and procures to himself the greatest veneration, by concealing the reasons of his decrees, and of his judgments: but earthly princes, whose knowledge is very imperfect, do themselves the greatest honour, when they decree and judge nothing but after the strictest search and examination, and give the clearest reason for their proceedings. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.*] It is as impossible for vulgar minds to penetrate into the secrets of state, and understand the counsels and designs of wise princes (and the various ways and means whereby they project to effect their ends), as it is to know how far it is from hence to the highest heavens; or how far to the centre of the earth, upon which we tread. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.*] As when the finer hath separated the dross from the silver, it will become so pliable, that he may cast or work it into what form he pleaseth:

Ver. 5. *Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.*] So let the king not only remove the wicked (who are the scum of the nation) from his counsels and company, but punish them severely; and his people will be easily moulded to righteousness, piety, and all manner of virtue: which will settle his kingdom in peace, and make his government durable.

Ver. 6. *Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men.*] And among other virtues, learn humility and modesty, if thou art a subject; though never so rich: and do not make thyself taken notice of by too splendid an appearance at court: much less by intruding thyself into the place, where none but the great officers or nobles ought to come. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 7. *For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither, than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.*] For it will be much more for thine honour, and thy satisfaction too, if, standing at a distance, thou art invited to come up higher (whither of thyself thou durst not presume to go), than to have a check given thee for thy forwardness, and to be disgracefully thrust out of the presence of the prince; unto whom thou hast adventured to approach too near.

Ver. 8. *Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.*] Take some time to consider well, both the goodness of thy cause, and its weightiness, and how to manage it, before thou bring an action at law against thy neighbour; lest, in conclusion, thou wish it had not been begun; when he puts thee to open shame, by shewing thou hast impleaded him wrongfully, or for a trifle.

Ver. 9. *Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself, and discover not a secret to another.*] Nay, let me advise thee, though thy cause be just and good (yet the event being doubtful), to debate things privately, and, if it be possible, to make up the difference between yourselves; especially if it be about a secret business, which ought not easily to be divulged: or, if it cannot be composed, yet let not hatred or anger provoke thee to discover other secrets, merely to disgrace thy adversary, when they appertain not to the cause.

Ver. 10. *Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.*] Lest not only every one that heareth reproach thee for thy perfidiousness; but if he be enraged to retort such infamous things upon thee, as shall stick so close, that thou shalt never be able to wipe off the dirt, nor recover thy credit, as long as thou livest.

Ver. 11. *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.*] A word of counsel, reproof, or comfort, handsomely delivered, in due time and place, &c. is no less grateful and valuable, than golden balls, or beautiful apples, presented in a silver net-work basket. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 12. *As an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.*] A good man will not think himself reproached, but rather obliged, by a prudent reproof: which, meeting with an attentive, considering, and patient mind, makes a man receive it so kindly; that he esteems him who bestows it, as much as if he had hung a jewel of gold in his ear, or put the richest ornament about his neck.

Ver. 13. *As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him; for he refresheth the soul of his masters.*] A trusty messenger (or ambassador), that faithfully and dexterously executes his commission, to the satisfaction of the persons that sent him, is as welcome, when he returns, as the coldest drink or air is to the reapers in the time of harvest: for he revives the spirits of his masters, who were ready to faint, with fear of ill success in their business.

Ver. 14. *Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like*

clouds and wind without rain.] He that raiseth high expectations, by promising much, and then deceives them by performing little or nothing; leaves him that depended on these promises, as sad as the country people are, after the clouds have made a great show, and the wind a great sound, but are followed by no showers of rain.

Ver. 15. *By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.*] It is not prudent violently to oppose a prince in his resolutions; who will more easily yield to reason, if one give way to his heat, and patiently expect the fittest time to represent things to him: but this must be done also with soft and tender language; which is apt to bow the stiffest minds, and work upon the hardest hearts.

Ver. 16. *Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.*] All pleasures should be used like honey; which when it offers itself, eat as much as suffices thee for thy refreshment, not as much as thou desirest: for as moderately taken it strengthens the body, and prolongs life; so too much of it disturbs the stomach and turns the pleasure into pain and torment. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 17. *Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee.*] Which is wholesome advice, even in the enjoyment of a good neighbour, or friend (the sweetest thing in the world); do not upon every light occasion interrupt his weightier affairs: lest having too much of thy company, it grow not only troublesome but loathsome to him; and his love turn into hatred of thee.

Ver. 18. *A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.*] There is nothing more pernicious than him that makes no conscience of bearing false witness against his neighbour; his tongue alone serves him instead of a maul to beat down a man's fame, or break in pieces his estate; nay, instead of a sword to take away his life, and of a sharp arrow to destroy him, not only when he is near, but much more when he is afar off, not able to answer for himself.

Ver. 19. *Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.*] As a broken tooth or leg out of joint, not only fails a man when he comes to use it, but likewise puts him into pain; so doth a faithless person serve them that depend upon him, when they have the greatest need of his help: and such also is the confidence that a faithless person himself places in riches, or craft, or great friends, &c. which some time or other will disappoint him to his great grief, when he expects the most from them.

Ver. 20. *As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre; so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart.*] It is as improper to sing pleasant songs to a man full of grief as to take away his garment from him in sharp weather, or to pour vinegar upon nitre: for as the one increaseth his sense of cold, and the other irritates the nitre; so such unseasonable mirth makes a sad man's heart far more heavy and sorrowful than it was before. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 21. *If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink.*] If he that hates thee be hungry or thirsty, or wants any other necessaries, take the opportunity to express thy kindness to him; by succouring him in his need, and thereby preserving him from perishing.

Ver. 22. *For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee.*] For if he have the least spark of goodness in him, it will work a change in his mind; and make him throw off all his enmities: or, if it have the contrary effect, he shall have so much the sorer punishment; and thou shalt not lose thy reward, which the Lord himself will give thee.

Ver. 23. *The north wind driveth away rain; so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.*] As the sharpness of the north wind scatters clouds, and drives away rain; so a severe countenance, full of indignation against him that traduces his neighbour secretly, not only gives a check, but puts a stop, to his slanderous tongue; which would not tell such lies if they were not greedily received. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 24. *It is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman, and in a wide house.*] It is more desirable (as was said before, xxi. 9.) to dwell poorly, inconveniently, and alone in the open air, exposed to all the injuries of the weather; nay, to be cooped up in a little corner on the house-top; than to have a spacious habitation and numerous family, governed by a contentious, brawling wife; whose perpetual scoldings within doors, upon all occasions, are far worse than the thunder, lightning, and blustering winds, which may molest him without.

Ver. 25. *As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.*] Good and certain news, especially from a far country (from whence it is hard to have any true intelligence), is as grateful to him that longed to hear of his friends there, as cool water is to a thirsty traveller; especially when he meets with it in remote and uninhabited places, where he did not expect it.

Ver. 26. *A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.*] A truly religious, just, and charitable man, is such a blessing unto all about him, that they suffer no less when he is oppressed (and thrown out of authority) by the violence and craft of wicked men, or when he disgraces himself by any foul sin, or loses his courage, and dare not oppose impiety; than they do when dirt and filth are cast into a public fountain; or a spring is stopped up, or corrupted and made useless. See Arg. [*i*]

Ver. 27. *It is not good to eat much honey; so for men to search their own glory is not glory.*] Honey is very pleasant to the taste; but to eat much of it (as we said before, ver. 16.) is so far from being wholesome, that it is hurtful: and in like manner to hunt greedily after honour and glory, of which men are very desirous, proves at last not honourable, but reproachful to them. See Arg. [*k*]

Ver. 28. *He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.*] He that cannot govern his passions, especially his anger, but suffers them to break out upon all occasions, lies open to innumerable mischiefs; like a city unwalled, or whose fortifications are decayed; which is exposed to the rapine of every enemy. See Arg. [*l*]

CHAP. XXVI.

ARGUMENT.

[*a*] This chapter begins with a tacit admonition to kings (for whose use principally this *last part* of the book of

Proverbs was collected, as I noted in the beginning of the foregoing chapter), to be very careful in disposing preferments only to worthy persons. For bad men are made worse by them; and they do as much hurt to others, by the abuse of their power to the discouraging of virtue, and promoting vice, as snow or hail doth to the fruits of the earth, when they are ripe and ready to be gathered. So that we may make this aphorism out of Solomon's words—that the blending of summer and winter would not cause a greater disorder in the natural world, than the disposal of honour to bad men (and consequently throwing contempt upon the good) doth in the world moral: where wicked men, when they are in power, if they can do no more, will at least pronounce anathemas against those that do not deserve it.

[*b*] So the Hebrews understand the next verse; which I have extended farther, and translated also those two words *zippor* and *deror* a *sparrow* and a *wild pigeon*, (see Psal. lxxxiv. 3.) For *deror* signifying here a particular bird, in all likelihood *zippor* doth so too: and then all agree it signifies a *sparrow*, as the other (Bochart hath proved) doth (not a *swallow*, but) a *ring-dove*, or *turtle*, or some of that kind; which are famous for swiftness and strength of flight. And the meaning of this verse is, That curses which fly out of men's mouths causelessly, shall no more alight where they would have them, than a sparrow which wanders uncertainly, or a dove that flies away swiftly, will settle according to their direction: or thus, Such curses fly as swiftly as those birds (whose propriety it is to wander and fly up and down) over the head of him against whom they are directed, and never touch him.

Melancthon by *curses* in this place understands *calumnies;* of which the world is too full: which shall not rest upon a good man long before they be confuted. But he himself is forced to confess that sometimes they do great mischief first: and instances in Joseph, Palamedes, Aristides, Theamenes, and Socrates, who lost his life by this means. After which, he observes, the tragedy of Palamedes being acted (in which the poet bewailed the death of the best of the Greeks, who sung like a sweet nightingale, but hurt no man), the citizens expelled the accusers of Socrates out of Athens. But this doth not so well agree with the Hebrew word, which signifies such evil speaking as amounts to a *curse:* which the wise man saith shall not rest upon a man when it is causeless, but fly away like a bird that settles no where till it comes to its proper place: *As the curse returns many times, and settles upon him that made it, when it lights not on him that was cursed:* which sense, one reading of the Hebrew expresses plainly enough; and therefore I have not omitted it.

[*c*] After which observations, there follows another to shew that a lewd fool should rather be sent to a house of correction than have any preferment, (ver. 3.) Nothing less will cure him, as it follows, ver. 4, 5. where he admonishes us, how vain it is to hold any discourse with him, any farther than merely to shew that he is a fool; and, if it be possible, to confute (not what he says, but) the vain opinion he hath conceived of himself. St. Cyprian hath given a good account of these two verses in the beginning of his letter to Demetrian: who having babbled a long time against Christianity, like a mad man, with loud clamours only and no sense, the good father thought fit to answer him with neglect, and overcome rage with patience; thinking it to no more purpose to go about to repress an irreligious man with religion, or restrain a mad man with meekness, than to offer light to the blind, or speak to the deaf, or reason with a brute. But when Demetrian at last offered something that looked like an argument, St. Cyprian could not any longer keep silence; lest his modesty should be thought disturbful of his cause; and whilst he disdained to refute false criminations he should seem to acknowledge the crime.

Melancthon wholly refers both verses to reproaches and calumnies: which he shews it is fit, either utterly to neglect, or to confute in a few words.

[*d*] Then the wise man proceeds to shew, that such a fool is very unfit to be so much as sent on a message; which he will neither deliver right, nor return a good answer. The first seems to be expressed by *cutting off the legs;* as much as to say, a business committed to such a person will no more proceed, than a man can go without legs: the latter, by *drinking an injury;* as much as to say, instead of satisfaction in what he desires, he must be content to swallow abundance of affronts and ill-dealing.

[*e*] After this follow several other observations about fools: in some of which there are words of no small difficulty; which I cannot here particularly explain, as some may desire, because it would take up too much room. But I have expressed the sense of them as well as I could in the Paraphrase. As, for example, the word *dalju* (ver. 7.) signifying something of *elevation* or lifting-up, I have explained *dancing;* than which nothing is more unsuitable to a lame man: as speeches full of reason in themselves, are most absurd when witlessly applied by a fool.

[*f*] And the word *margema,* in the eighth verse, which is variously translated by interpreters, I have expressed in two senses of it: but look upon it as superfluous to trouble the reader with what learned men (such as Scaliger and Selden, &c.) have written concerning the heaps of stones in the highway, into which superstitious people were wont to cast one as they passed by, in honour to Mercury, &c. for I do not think this custom was as old as Solomon's time. Nor is it necessary to understand such a heap of stones as covered the dead bodies of those who were stoned to death: but, in general, any heap of pebbles; or else a *sling,* as the Chaldee and the LXX. whom we follow, expound it.

[*g*] And, ver. 10. the first word, *rab, great,* may be applied either to God, or to a prince: and that either good or bad. All which I have taken notice of; and expressed the different senses wherein the word *cholalti* is used. But there is one signification more of the word *rab,* which the Lutherans generally follow (which I think fit to mention here, because I have not touched on it in the Paraphrase, and it makes no improper sense of the place), who take it for a *master* in any sort of art or learning; and expound it thus: *A master in his art forms all things excellently well: but he that hires a fool* (or a *bungler,* as we speak), *gives his money to have his work spoiled.* Thus Melancthon; who takes it to be an admonition belonging to prudence in the choice of fit persons for every business; not be-

lieving those that crack and brag what they are able to do, &c. *ex. gr.* " plurimi sunt impostores, qui volunt videri medici: plurimi indocti concionatores, qui adulantur vulgo aut potentioribus." And he heaps up many excellent sayings to this purpose, that men *should meddle only with that which they understand:* concluding with this admonition to the people, which they should always remember—*ignorance makes men impudent.* And thus Castalio took the word *rab;* but to this sense: *A wise man does his business himself; and not by fools, who mar it all.*

[*h*] Among other examples of the wise man's observations, (ver. 11.) Melancthon mentions this; which is not commonly noted: The Sodomites, being divinely delivered by the help of Abraham, who overthrew the army that had spoiled them, and recovered the spoil; forgetting their former punishment and marvellous deliverance, ran furiously into more foul sins, wherein they utterly perished by a most terrible vengeance.

[*i*] Then follow, after one observation concerning a conceited fellow, several observations about *sloth;* some of which have been noted before in the foregoing parts of this book, but are here put together by the *men* of Hezekiah in some order, and with some additions. For here seems to be three degrees of sloth represented. The first, when a man is loath to stir out of doors about his business in the field; (ver. 13.) the second, when he is loath so much as to leave his bed; (ver. 14.) and the third and highest, when he will scarce put his hand to his mouth, (ver. 15.) by which hyperbolical expression he most admirably sets forth the incredible laziness of some men, which increases upon them continually, if they will not shake it off. And yet so presumptuous (he observes, ver. 16.) they are withal, that they laugh at those who take a great deal of pains to be wise; and fancy themselves much wiser, because, without any pains, they can find fault sometime in other men's works. Nay, this very thing, perhaps, they think a piece of folly, to study hard, imagining it to be the greatest wisdom to enjoy their ease, and reap the benefit of other men's labours. After which follows an admonition against rash intermeddling in other men's affairs; against backbiters and dissemblers; especially such as are malicious, and cover the malignity of their minds under fair shows of love, or perhaps of friendship. In several of which verses the words are capable of more senses than one; which I have endeavoured to knit together in the Paraphrase. An example of which I might give particularly, in ver. 24. where the word *jinnaker* may be rendered either *he pretends to be what he is not,* or *he is known to be what he is.*

[*k*] And what Solomon says in the next verse concerning him that *flattereth* another, some extend to all wicked men, none of which are to be trusted: but as one of our own writers advises, Though a wicked man hath done thee seven courtesies, and promises fair for the eighth, yet do not trust him; for there are seven abominations in his heart. And though thou mayest think thou hast some hank upon him, do not depend upon it; for he can unfetter himself from them all, as Samson from the green withes and cords wherewith the Philistines bound him, unless God mightily restrain him.

[*l*] But I only observe one thing more; that the last verse is capable of this sense, which I have in part touched:—A liar is not capable to be a friend; for if he be reprehended, truth makes him hate the person that detects his falsehood; if he be not reprehended, his fulsome flatteries will alienate from him the mind of his friend.

Ver. 1. *AS snow in summer, and as rain in harvest; so honour is not seemly for a fool.*] As snow or rain is so unseasonable, that it does a great deal of hurt in summertime, when the fruits of the earth are ready to be gathered: so is dignity and authority very ill placed in the hands of a fool or wicked man, who knows not how to use it, but will do mischief both to himself and others with it. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying; so the curse causeless shall not come.*] Though men are too prone in their passion to wish evil to others, or by mistake to pronounce solemn curses against them; yet there is no reason to fear such rash imprecations, or unjust censures: for they shall do no harm (unless it be to him that makes them), but pass by the innocent like a sparrow, that wanders nobody knows whither; or a wild dove, than which few birds fly away more swiftly. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.*] A horse that will not stir without a whip, and an ass that will not go without a goad, or will go only his own way, without a bridle to turn about his stiff neck, are fit emblems of a senseless sot: who must be treated like a beast, and by smart punishments be excited unto his duty, to which he hath no list; and checked from running into that evil to which he is inclined.

Ver. 4. *Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.*] For words will not reclaim a wicked fool; with whom, if thou hast occasion to contend, observe these two rules: Answer him not at all, because it is to no purpose; at least, not in his own way, with bawling, railing, and reproaches, which is to be as very a fool as himself. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 5. *Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be also wise in his own conceit.*] But if he grow insolent by thy silence, fancying that he is unanswerable; then say so much only as may serve to take down his presumption, and make it appear that he is a fool: for nothing is more dangerous, than to let him go away with a high opinion of his own abilities.

Ver. 6. *He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet and drinketh damage.*] He that sends a witless man, or one that minds nothing but his pleasure, to treat about his business; shall be sure not only to miscarry in it, but to suffer exceeding great damage by his ill management. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 7. *The legs of the lame are not equal; so is a parable in the mouth of fools.*] A wise saying as ill becomes a fool, as dancing doth a cripple: for as his lameness never so much appears, as when he would seem nimble; so the other's folly is never so ridiculous, as when he would seem wise. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 8. *As he that bindeth a stone in a sling; so is he that giveth honour to a fool.*] As a stone put into a sling stays not long there, so is that honour thrown away which is bestowed upon a fool: who not knowing how to use his au-

thority (unless it be to do mischief, even to him that conferred it on him), it is as ill placed in his hands, as a diamond when it is cast into a heap of common stones. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 9. *As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard; so is a parable in the mouth of fools.*] It is as dangerous for a fool to meddle with a proverb, as for a drunkard to handle a thorn; wherewith he hurts himself: but the sharpest saying no more touches a fool with any compunction, though spoken by his own mouth; than the drunkard feels the thorn, when it runs into his hand, and gives a grievous wound.

Ver. 10. *The great God, that formed all things, both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth the transgressors.*] The great God, who made all things, governs them also most wisely and equally; dispensing, for instance, his punishments suitable to men's sins, whether out of ignorance, or of wilful wickedness: whom a good prince imitates; but a bad proves an universal grievance, by employing either fools or profane persons in his service; who vex the rest of his subjects. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 11. *As a dog returneth to his vomit; so a fool returneth to his folly.*] As a dog, when he hath vomited up the meat which made him sick, is no sooner well but he returns to it and eats it up again; forgetting how ill it agreed with him; so an imprudent person commits the same error over again for which he formerly smarted; and a lewd sinner shamelessly and greedily repeats the crimes of which he hath repented as grievous and hurtful to him. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 12. *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.*] Such a sottish person is hardly curable: and yet, if he be not altogether insensible of his folly, nor refuse admonition, there is more hope of his amendment, than of his who takes himself to be so wise and virtuous that he despises his betters, and thinks he is above instruction.

Ver. 13. *The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way, a lion is in the streets.*] He that hath no mind to labour never wants pretences for his idleness: for his fancy represents such terrible and insuperable difficulties to him, as seldom happen; and frights him with a vain conceit of them, when he might soon satisfy himself there are none at all. See Arg. [*i*] (See xxii. 13.)

Ver. 14. *As the door turneth upon its hinges; so doth the slothful upon his bed.*] As a door turns to and fro upon its hinges, but never stirs from thence; so is a sluggard fixed to his bed: where he turns from one side to the other (and is uneasy even in his sloth), but still remains in his idle posture.

Ver. 15. *The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.*] All things seem so hard to such a lazy wretch, that it is not easy to persuade him to pull his hand from under his arm: but even this appears like a tiresome business, though it be only to put his meat into his mouth. (See xix. 24.)

Ver. 16. *The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.*] Yet one of these idle companions, whose wit serves him only to prate, and carp at men's honest labours, takes himself to be much wiser than a great many able persons who can give a satisfactory account of any thing that is proposed to them.

Ver. 17. *He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.*] As he that takes an angry dog by the ears is in danger to be bitten; whether he hold him, or let him go: so he that furiously engages in other men's quarrels, whom he lights upon by chance, and in which he is not concerned, shall hardly escape the displeasure of one or both of them, whichsoever part he takes, or if he take neither.

Ver. 18. *As a mad man, who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death.*] As he that throws flames, darts, or other deadly or destructive things, and hides his malice by feigning himself mad, is far more dangerous than he that is mad indeed:

Ver. 19. *So is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?*] So he is worse than an open enemy, who cunningly abuses his neighbour, and under a fair show puts foul cheats upon him; and then asks him, Why he resents it so heinously? for he was only in jest; and intended merely to try how he would take it.

Ver. 20. *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out; so where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth.*] Look upon him as an incendiary, that carries tales and whispers false stories; and expel him from the family which he hath disturbed by backbiting; for as the fire will go out, if you take away the wood that feeds it; so will quarrels and contentions cease, when he is thrust out of doors that blows up the flame.

Ver. 21. *As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.*] Avoid also an angry man, who is hard to please, and apt to find fault with every thing; for provoking language as quickly passes into quarrels, as dead coals do into burning, or wood into fire, when they are laid upon them.

Ver. 22. *The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.*] But there is never need of greater caution, than when a whisperer makes a show of harmless intentions, and of love and kindness, when he traduces others; nay, seems perhaps to do it very unwillingly, and with great grief of heart; and not without excuses also, for the persons whom he backbites: for his words are stabs, which give them the most deadly wounds; and sink deep into the minds of those that hear them. (See xviii. 8.)

Ver. 23. *Burning lips, and a wicked heart, are like a potsherd covered with silver dross.*] Ill and angry language suits as well with ill-will, as silver dross with a piece of a broken pot: and he that studies to hide his hatred under most affectionate words will as certainly be detected and vilified, as a potsherd that makes a fair show at a distance when it is covered merely with the scum of silver.

Ver. 24. *He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him.*] And yet there is nothing more usual, than for him that hates thee to counterfeit the greatest kindness to thee; when he means thereby only the more easily and securely to deceive and undo thee: though let him study never so much to disguise his inward rancour, he commonly lets fall some word or other, whereby it may be discovered; nay, it may be known sometimes by his extraordinary expressions of friendship, beyond all reason and measure.

Ver. 25. *When he speaketh fair, believe him not; for there are seven abominations in his heart.*] And thou wilt the more certainly discover it, if thou observest this rule,

not to be too credulous; no, not when he gives thee the kindest words, and beseeches thee to believe him: but to remember, that if hatred still remain in his heart, it will suggest to him the most detestable designs against thee, and that without number See Arg. [k]

Ver. 26. *Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the whole congregation.*] And it were well, if such a man would think, that it is hard for him to carry on his malicious designs so craftily, but, though a private person may not be able to find out his wickedness, yet, when he comes to be examined by the public council, some or other will discover it: and then that dissembled hatred, which he thought to have hid in secrecy, will be openly exposed to the view of all the world.

Ver. 27. *Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein; and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.*] For by the righteous judgment of God (as hath been anciently observed, Psal. vii. 15. ix. 15.) the wicked are not only disappointed in their designs, but involve themselves in that mischief, which they intended to do to others: just like a man that falls into a pit, digged with his own hands; or that is crushed in pieces by a stone, which returns upon him, as he rolls it up a steep place for the oppression of another.

Ver. 28. *A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.*] A forger of falsehood is not content to undo others by his calumnies, but his guilt makes him hate those men above all others; unless it be him that confutes his falsehood and proves him a liar: whom he cannot endure, because he disables him from doing any farther mischief unto others; which is the design of all his glossing and flattering words, which prove at last the ruin of himself. See Arg. [l]

CHAP. XXVII.

ARGUMENT.

[a] This chapter begins with a most useful admonition of the inconstancy and uncertainty of all things here below; like to which there are a great many in other authors, which several writers have collected (but I shall not trouble the reader withal), particularly Melancthon: who observes, that the wise man here teaches us *modesty;* and prohibits these two great vices—confidence in ourselves, or any thing we have; and rash undertaking necessary things, out of a foolish hope they will succeed according to our desires. Wise and good men should only meddle within the bounds of their calling; and depend also on God for his blessing: but not attempt things without just cause, presuming they can carry them as they please. Thus Pericles (says he) made an unnecessary war for a slight reason; which many then judged to have been neglected: and Alcibiades in like manner passed over into Sicily: and Hannibal made war upon the Romans: and Pompey would needs try his fortune (as they called it) in war, when he might have kept peace upon honest conditions. All these were destructive to their countries, and the proverb was verified in them, Μάταιοι μάταια λογίζονται δι' ἐπιθυμίας, *Vain men devise vain things, according as their desires lead them.*

[b] And there is nothing more foolish than the vanity of praising themselves; which follows in the next verse, (ver. 2.) and is noted by all authors; who have many sharp sayings about it, which I also pass over. But shall take notice (because it is still more useful) what the same good man Melancthon observes upon the third verse, that "fools and unskilful people are more apt to be angry than others:" because they consider not the infirmity of mankind, and that there are many errors of others which ought to be borne withal, and cured after a gentle manner: whence that true saying, *Imperito nunquam quicquam injustius est.* But as goodness is most eminent in God; who himself bears with many evils in us, and commands us to *forgive and it shall be forgiven us:* so wise men bend their minds to goodness and lenity; remembering the common infirmities of all men, their own as well as others'. Nor can there be a more lively picture of the implacable spirit of a fool, than that which our Saviour himself hath drawn in the gospel; of a cruel servant, who, when he had been forgiven sixty ton of gold by his master, would not forgive his fellow-servant a hundred pence, (Matt. xviii.) This sentence of Solomon therefore, saith he, admonishes us to avoid the company of fools, *qui neque cognoscere neque ignoscere norunt;* as well as to be so wise ourselves as to moderate our passions and to be mindful of human weakness. For *nihil magnum quod non est placidum,* as Seneca speaks, like unto which he adds other sayings out of Homer and Pliny.

[c] In the next verse but one some think the wise man speaks of such friends as are too tender and delicate; and for fear of offending others, have not the courage to tell them of their errors: whom the great Lord Bacon follows; and thinks Solomon prefers an open enemy before such a friend: which I do not take to be the meaning; but shall here set down his excellent observation upon these words: (Adv. of Learn. book viii. chap. 2. parab. 29.) "The parable (saith he) reprehends the soft nature of such friends as will not use the privilege which friendship gives them, in admonishing their friends with freedom and confidence, as well of their errors as of their dangers. For what shall I do? (says such a tender-hearted friend) or which way shall I turn myself? I love him as dearly as any man can do another: and if any misfortune should befal him, I could willingly pawn my own person for his redemption. But I know his disposition; if I deal freely with him, I shall offend him; at least make him sad: and yet do him no good. And I shall sooner estrange him from my friendship, than reclaim him from those courses, upon which his mind is resolved: such a friend as this, Solomon here represents as weak and worthless, and says, that a man may reap more profit from a manifest enemy than from such an effeminate friend. For he may, perhaps, hear that by way of reproach from an enemy, which, through too much indulgence, was faintly whispered by a friend."

[d] And one great reason why men are loath to tell others of their faults, is, because they are wont to take it heinously. If men were more willing to receive reproof, others would more faithfully give it: of which the wise man therefore admonishes us, ver. 6. where the word *naṭaroth* is so difficult that it admits various interpretations:

some of which I have expressed in the Paraphrase. And made ver. 7. a caution against the immoderate enjoyment of pleasures: which commend themselves to us by their rarer use. As the next, (ver. 8.) is a caution against unsettledness of mind, and discontent with our present condition; which not only spoils all our pleasures, but often carries men restlessly to their ruin: where Melancthon suggests this useful meditation, that there is no condition of life, no function, without its cares, troubles, and dangers; which make men soon weary of it: according to the ancient saying, "Optat ephippia bos piger, optat arare caballus." But the wise man would have us understand, that nothing is more dangerous than this; and therefore to take care, lest, tired and broken with disgusts, we lightly desert that kind of life to which we are rightly called. All the ancient wisdom hath observed, that such desultory humours never thrive: about which they have many proverbs, with which I shall not fill these papers.

[e] After this follow some advices about friendship, and other things; which have been noted before, in the foregoing parts of this book. And then he seems, (ver. 14.) to lay open the guise of flatterers, who hope to cully favour with their benefactors, by extolling their bounty with extravagant praises. So I have expounded that verse, not merely of those that praise others, but praise them for their kindness to themselves: as the word *barak* properly imports. The intention of which is only to get still more from them: which is commonly the end of all those that praise others immoderately, for their rare qualities and perfections; hoping thereby to make them extraordinary kind to them, above all other men. Thus the Lord Bacon hath observed about this matter: whose gloss upon these words is this, (in the forenamed place, parab. 33.) "Moderate and seasonable praises, uttered upon occasion, conduce both to men's fame and fortune; but immoderate, streporous, and unseasonably poured out, profit nothing: nay, rather, according to the sense of this parable, they do much prejudice. For, first, they manifestly betray themselves, either to proceed *from too much affection*, or from *studious affectation*; whereby they may rather ingratiate themselves with him whom they praise by false commendations, than adorn his person by just and deserved attributes: secondly, sparing and modest praises commonly invite such as are present *to something of their own to the commendation:* contrariwise, profuse and immodest praises invite the hearts to *detract and take away something that belongs to them:* thirdly (which is the principal point), *too much magnifying a man stirs up envy towards him: seeing all immoderate praises look like a reproach to others, who merit no less.*"

But beside this, I cannot quite pass by the gloss which some have made upon these words: who by *jaschkem babboker* (which I have applied only to their too much assiduity in praising others, as if one should say, *from morning to night*) understand making too much haste to praise men; when it is, as we speak, but *early days with them:* and they have made no progress in those virtues for which they are commended. And then the sense is, There is nothing more dangerous than to cry up men too soon for their parts or for their virtues, before they be sufficiently tried, and have made a due improvement: for this, instead of doing them service, proves many times their ruin: making them, that is, entertain a vain opinion of their own worth, and grow idle, or negligent, &c. and so dwindle away to nothing.

[f] What he saith afterward of *a railing wife*, (ver. 16.) may be thus expressed in short: There are three things that cannot be concealed, because they betray themselves: the wind, a strong perfume, and a scolding wife: with which some join the next verse, (ver. 17.) as a remedy for the mischief of a brawling wife; and thus render it: *As iron is easily joined with iron, so is a man with his equal.* And therefore the best way for a man to avoid the trouble of a bad wife is, not to choose one for his consort because she is rich, or because she is beautiful only; but because she is like him in humour, and inclination, and condition, &c. Thus the Tigurine version: and De Dieu to the same purpose; who makes this proverb no more than that of *like to like;* which best agree together. But this is too narrow; and therefore I have followed our, and indeed all the ancient translations: who take this to be of the same signification with another old saying, *One man is nobody;* and therefore God hath formed us to have a communion with each other: the necessity of which is expressed in abundance of ancient aphorisms; which admonish us to confer with others, and to hearken to the counsel and judgment of the wise. And daily experience shews us how dangerous it is, ἰδιοβουλεύειν, *to be a man's own counsellor*, and what is said of artificers may be applied unto all; *Every man is his own worst master.* To which purpose Melancthon alleges that of Euripides, ὁμιλία ἔτεκε τέχνας, *conversation brought forth arts:* when men, that is, not only observed one another's works, but conferred their thoughts together, and assisted one another's inventions. And he pertinently observes, that "the Christian doctrine, in the beginning of the Reformation, was opposed by those who would not hear others, but skulked like bats that fly the light, and devised new opinions out of their own heads, abhorrent from the approved form of doctrine. *Tales multi nunc sunt*, &c. There are many such now-a-days, who glory that they are αὐτοδίδακτοι, and admire their own dreams; refusing to hearken to the sound judgment of other men. But let us (saith he) be obedient to such precepts as this: which includes in it, first, *modesty*, in consideration of our own frailty; and then *prudence*, in advising with those who may teach us that of which we are ignorant." Thus he observes out of Synesius, that Apelles was wont to make Lysippus, the statuary, judge of all his pictures: and Lysippus, on the other side, made Apelles judge of all his statues, before they would expose them to be seen by others.

[g] The next verse but one, (ver. 19.) is understood so variously by interpreters, that it is a labour to number their expositions: some of which are directly contrary to the other. For, according as they take the *face* to be represented in *water;* either *perfectly*, or so *lubricously* and *moveably*, that it is hard to discern what sort of face it is: so they make it either *easy*, or *impossible*, to understand the hearts of other men. Melancthon took it in the latter sense; inculcating the old wholesome lessons, Μέμνησο ἀπιστεῖν, and "Quos credis fidos, effuge, tutus eris," &c. But now it is generally expounded the

other way: and some expound it of men's own hearts, and some of the hearts of other men. I have in the Paraphrase expressed two of those interpretations, which I looked upon as most simple. And think fit here to mention that of Castalio, who applies it to a man's self in this manner: "As a man may know what kind of face he hath, if he will look into the water; so he may know what kind of man he is, if he will examine his conscience." And this of Maldonate, who is alone (as far as I can find) in his exposition, which is this: "As a man's face may be seen in the water; so his heart, or his inward affections, may be seen in his countenance:" taking *man*, in the conclusion of the sentence, for the outward man, *i. e.* his countenance: and making the Hebrew run thus: "As a man's face is answerable to that face which appears in the water: so his heart is answerable to his countenance." The Lord Bacon, as I have expressed it in the beginning of my Paraphrase on this verse, takes the end of this parable to be, "to distinguish between the mind of wise men and of those that are not wise: comparing the former to *waters*, or *glasses* which receive and represent the forms and images of things; whereas the other are like to *earth*, or *rude* and *unpolished stone*, wherein nothing is reflected. And the mind of a wise man (which is so capable that it observes and comprehends an infinite diversity of natures and customs) is the more aptly compared to a *glass* or mirror; because in a glass he can see his own image, together with images of other men: which his eyes cannot do alone without the help of a glass."

And so this parable, it seems to me, may not unfitly be expounded after this manner:—A man may see himself while he looks upon other men; as well as know other men by considering his own inclinations.

[*h*] This preface is already so long, that I must not mention the various interpretations of the twenty-first verse. I have expressed that which is nearest to our translation; and seems to be the truest touchstone of this sort, whereby to try the goodness or badness of men's minds. Some of which are so incorrigible, he shews in the next verse, that the sorest afflictions will not amend them.

[*i*] And then, in conclusion, he presses every one to diligence about his own business: and especially commends the pastoral care, which men should have about their flocks and their herds: which are the best sort of possessions, he shews, in several regards. First, because most durable, for they are always increasing of themselves; (ver. 24.) secondly, because easily preserved without much labour, or fraudulent arts; God himself providing liberally for them; (ver. 25.) thirdly, because most profitable; yielding all things necessary for food and raiment, (ver. 26, 27.)

[*k*] Where he mentions, particularly in the last verse, *the milk of the goats*, and of no other creature: because they had abundance of them, and their milk was in daily use, both for meat and for medicine. And for medicine the ancients preferred it before all other, as most moderate and temperate. So Galen and Paulus Ægineta; the last of which writes thus: "Woman's milk is the most temperate of all other; next to that goats; and next to that ass's; then sheep; and lastly, cow's milk." From whence it was (Bochartus conjectures, who hath heaped up a great deal on this subject, lib. ii. de Sac. Animal. cap. *ult.* par. i.) Jupiter, a king in Crete about Abraham's time (and looked upon afterward as the greatest god), is said to have been nourished by a goat: that is, by the best of nourishments.

Ver. 1. *BOAST not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*] Be not so confident of thy present power, riches, or any thing else, as to grow presumptuous, and brag what thou wilt do or enjoy hereafter: for thou canst not be secure of this very day (wherein thou makest such large promises to thyself of the future), which may produce something, for any thing thou knowest, that shall spoil all thy designs, and frustrate all thy expectations, which thou hast for to-morrow. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.*] Be not so blinded with self-love, as to praise thyself; which is both indecent and imprudent, for others will only the more undervalue thee: but take care to do praiseworthy things, which will force commendations even from strangers and foreigners, who cannot be thought too partial to thee; for this will make thee truly honourable.

Ver. 3. *A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.*] We feel there is heaviness in a stone, and that a bag of sand is a weighty load; but neither of them is so intolerable as the effects of a fool's wrath, which cannot be shaken off so soon as they may be: for he cannot easily be appeased by us, nor can he moderate himself; till his anger hath carried him to the most barbarous cruelty. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 4. *Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?*] And yet envy is still worse than this; for though in a fury a man hath no pity, but is transported by his violent passion beyond all bounds (like an inundation of waters), yet his wrath appearing openly, it may be avoided, and in time it is composed and allayed; nay, perhaps he repents of it: but *envy* (or a *desire of revenge*) is a lurking evil, which increases daily without remorse; and is more exasperated by time, till it finds some means or other to do the mischief it desires.

Ver. 5. *Open rebuke is better than secret love.*] He that takes an ingenuous liberty to tell others plainly of their faults, and rebuke them freely, when need requires, to their face, is a better friend, and more valuable (though perhaps he pleases them less), than he that hath more of the passion of love in his heart, but makes it not known by such good effects. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 6. *Faithful are the wounds of a friend: but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.*] Just reproofs, though never so smart and severe from one that loves us, ought to be thankfully accepted, because they proceed from his care of us, and fidelity to us; but the most tender expressions of kindness from an enemy ought to be suspected to be false and treacherous; especially when he heaps them upon us in great abundance, and with such earnestness and seeming passion, that we had need to pray him to forbear, and pray God to preserve us from being too credulous. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 7. *The full soul loatheth a honey-comb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.*] As hunger makes men relish the most distasteful food, when full stomachs

loath the most delightful: so poverty hath this advantage of plenty, that it disposes men to be thankful for the smallest blessings, though mixed with care and trouble; when the richer sort, if they be not very careful, are apt to be unsatisfied with, nay, to nauseate, their most delicious enjoyments, upon which they have a long time surfeited.

Ver. 8. *As a bird that wandereth from her nest; so is a man that wandereth from his place.*] Men seldom change for the better; but as a bird that forsakes its nest exposes itself to danger, and cannot easily settle again: so he whose levity, or discontent, makes him rashly leave his country, or trade, or office, wherein he was well placed, too often undoes himself, but rarely mends his condition. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 9. *Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart; so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.*] As balsam and fragrant perfumes marvellously refresh and comfort the natural spirits when they droop and are tired: so doth the very presence of a true-hearted friend, and much more his faithful counsel, rejoice a man's soul; especially when he is at such a loss, that he knows not how to advise himself.

Ver. 10. *Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near, than a brother afar off.*] Forsake not therefore a friend, whom thou, or thy father before thee, hath tried and found sincere; but betake thyself to him when thou art in distress, rather than to thy natural brother or kinsman, if he be not also thy friend: and above all other, choose a friend near thee, if it be possible; for as a man that is closely joined unto us in near affection, is better than one of our nearest kindred, whose heart is not knit to us; so a good neighbour near at hand, is better than eithe friend or brother who is so far off that we may perish before he comes to our assistance.

Ver. 11. *My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me.*] My dear child, if thou hast any love for him, that was the instrument of giving thee a being, let such precepts as these make thee wise and good: which will both give me the highest joy, and furnish me with an answer unto such, as are apt to object tho child's miscarriages to want of care in his parents.

Ver. 12. *A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.*] He whose long experience and observation of things have made him cautious and circumspect, foreseeing a calamity before it comes, withdraws himself in good time from the danger, into a place of safety; but inconsiderate and credulous persons are so easily abused by crafty men, that they not only quite overlook the mischief which even they intend against them, and go on securely in their accustomed track till it overtakes them; but make haste to fall into it, notwithstanding any caution that is given them.

Ver. 13. *Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.*] It is a great weakness to trust him who is so rash, as to be bound for one whose ability and honesty are utterly unknown to him; especially for a woman whose way of life makes her credit justly suspected: therefore have nothing to do with such an inconsiderate person; without the utmost security that he can give thee for the payment of what he owes thee.

Ver. 14. *He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.*] He that spends all his time in nothing else but proclaiming his praises extravagantly, who hath bestowed great benefits upon him, disparages rather than commends his benefactor; in doing so much for a base flatterer: who magnifying rather his own deserts than the other's bounty, incurs hereafter his just displeasure. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 15. *A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.*] He is in an ill case, the roof of whose house is so ruinous, that in a very rainy day, when he shall be wet if he go abroad, cannot be dry at home: and he is no better that hath a scolding wife, who torments him herself if he stay at home; and makes him tormented with the jeers of others if he go abroad.

Ver. 16. *Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, which bewrayeth itself.*] For it is altogether as impossible for him to keep the wind from blowing, and from being heard when it blows; or to enclose a fragrant perfume in his hand, so that it shall not be smelt; as to make her hold her tongue, or to conceal her bawling humour, which she herself proclaims. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 17. *Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.*] As nothing is more natural, so nothing is more powerful, than society: for as iron is sharpened and brightened by iron, so one wit whets another, one friend encourages and cheers another; nay, all sorts of passions are stirred up, and men are made either good or bad by mutual conversation. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 18. *Whoso keepeth the fig-tree shall eat the fruit thereof; so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.*] As he that diligently looks after the fig-tree (especially whilst it is young and tender), and preserves it from suffering by drought, by vermin, or by wild beasts, &c. shall at last eat of its pleasant fruit; so he that faithfully defends his master's person or reputation, and takes care his estate be not wasted, shall, in due time, be largely rewarded by him for his integrity.

Ver. 19. *As in water face answereth to face; so the heart of man to man.*] The inclinations and designs of other men appear as plainly to the mind of those that are wise, as their faces appear to themselves in the water: where, as every man will find such a countenance represented to him (whether sour or smiling) as he brings when he looks into it; so he ought to expect no other affections from others, but such as he expresseth towards them. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 20. *Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.*] The appetite of man is as insatiable as his eyes, which still desire some new sight: and are as far from being filled with all that they have seen, as the infernal places with all the souls they have received; or the grave with all the bodies it hath devoured.

Ver. 21. *As the fining-pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so is a man to his praise.*] As gold and silver are tried by putting them into the fire; which discovers whether they be pure or adulterate: so a man is discovered what he is, by trying how he can bear praises, commendations, and great applauses; which will presently shew either the virtue or the vanity of his mind. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 22. *Though thou should bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.*] The folly and wickedness of some men are so

incurable, that though, unto reproofs, and chidings, and threatenings, you should add stripes and blows; nay, beat and knock them, like wheat in a mortar; bruising their bodies (as we speak) till they are black and blue, they would not grow a whit the wiser or the better for it.

Ver. 23. *Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.*] Whether thou be a private person or a prince, let me advise thee to look after thy business thyself; and not to trust merely to thy servants and ministers: but go sometimes and take an exact survey of the state of thy affairs; and more particularly make it part of thy care to visit thy flocks and thy herds, and know in what case they are. See Arg. [*i*]

Ver. 24. *For riches are not for ever; and doth the crown endure to every generation?*] For as no riches are so durable as these, which increase and multiply continually, so the greatest estate, even in these, unless it be well managed, will in time be brought to nothing: nay, the crown itself will not continue to many generations, without due care to preserve its revenue; of which these ought to be thought the best and most lasting portion.

Ver. 25. *The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.*] For the maintenance of which the earth brings forth plentifully, without any more pains of thine, than only in the spring-time to drive the flocks and herds into pastures; and to look after them, when the earth brings forth grass and young herbs for their food; and to gather hay in due season, which even the mountains afford, for their fodder and winter provision.

Ver. 26. *The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of thy field.*] And if thou takest care to preserve them, they will preserve thee: for the sheep and the lambs will afford thee wool to make thee clothes; and with the price of thy goats thou mayest purchase a field for the sowing of corn to make thee bread.

Ver. 27. *And thou shalt have goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and for the maintenance of thy maidens.*] And both of them, especially the goats, will yield thee milk enough for thy own food, and for the sustenance of all thy family, both men-servants and maidens; who may hence be provided with all things necessary for their livelihood. See Arg. [*k*]

CHAP. XXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter consists, as the foregoing did, of several mixed observations: some belonging to the concerns of private persons, others to the public.

[*a*] It begins with the difference between a good and a bad conscience, which discovers itself, when there is any danger, of which men are apprehensive. And in the next verse, he observes the difference between a nation when it is bad and when it is good; when its manners are depraved, they fall into confusion; and when they grow better (for most interpreters take the word *Adam* in the latter part of the verse *collectively*, for the body of the people), then they keep their government, and live happily. Especially when they have a wise and prudent prince; who is here also to be understood in opposition to *many princes*, either together or successively; by whom a nation is miserably harassed, when its wickedness brings upon it such a punishment. So Melancthon understands, ver. 2. "The complaints (saith he) are very usual concerning the negligence of princes, their exactions, oppressions, want of care to administer justice, &c. and the people still accuse them and their court: but God accuses both princes and people; and for the sins of the people, he gives them ill governors; as Solomon here teaches, that for the transgression of a country, *i. e.* both of prince and people, *many are the princes thereof:* that is, *none reign long;* or *many reign together,* opposing and thrusting out one another. Now for the cure of this he gives a singular admonition, necessary both for prince and people, which is this: that *a prudent and wise man makes empire durable.* That is, a wise prince will sometime depart from his own right to quiet things, and suffer some inconveniences to prevent greater: as Fabius and Cicero did. And on the other side, people are to be advised, lest they draw greater mischiefs upon themselves by seditious counsels than those which they study to remedy."

[*b*] And there is none greater he seems to tell us in the next verse, (ver. 3.) than when power comes into the hands of a beggarly fellow; who is void of all humanity, and forgets even what he himself was, and all the miseries of poverty, which he perpetuates upon them who are poor already. So Maldonate (and he alone, I think) expounds that phrase *veen lechem, and there is no food,* to signify, *before the corn be grown out of the earth:* and by the *sweeping rain,* understands not such rain as beats out the corn when it is in the ear, but which washes away the seed before it springs up. Even so he that spoils the poor, takes away from them, after a manner, what they have not; and extirpates the very seeds of future riches, which he deprives them of all means of gathering. Upon which subject the Lord Bacon hath discoursed very ingeniously in his eighth book of the Advancement of Learning, chap. 2. parab. 24. "This parable (saith he) was by the ancients expressed and shadowed forth under the fable of *two horse-leeches;* one full and the other hungry. For oppression, coming from the poor and necessitous person, is far more grievous than that of the rich and the full; because it seeks out all tricks for exactions, and leaves no corner unsearched where money may be found. This kind of oppression was wont also to be resembled to *sponges,* which being dry suck in strongly, but not so being moist. And the parable comprehends in it a profitable instruction, both to princes and to people. To princes, *that they commit not the government of provinces or offices of charge to indigent and indebted persons:* and to the people, *that they suffer not their kings to struggle with too much want.*"

But none have glossed better upon this place, than an excellent prelate of ours, Bishop Sanderson, in his sermon upon Prov. xxiv. 10, 11. where he discourses to this effect: "That it is in matter of *power,* as it is in matter of *learning.* They that have but a smattering of scholarship, it is observed, are the forwardest to make ostentation of the few scraps they have, for fear there should be no notice taken of their learning, if they should not shew it when they can; and yet then they do it so untowardly, that when they think most of all to shew their scholar-

ship, they most of all, by some gross mistake or other, betray ignorance. Even just so it is in the case of power, when men of base spirits and condition have gotten a little of it into their hands; who conceive their neighbours will not be sensible what goodly men they are, if they do not, by some act or other, shew forth their power to the world: but having minds too narrow to comprehend any brave and generous way to do it; they cannot frame to do it by any other means, than by trampling upon those that are below them; which they do beyond all reason and without any mercy."

Which he illustrates very handsomely upon 1 Sam. xii. 3. "If a mean man (says he) in any of our towns or hamlets, be a little gotten up to overtop most of his neighbours in wealth; or to be put into some small authority, to deal under some great man for the disposing his farms or grounds; or have something to sell to his necessitous neighbour, who must buy upon that day; or have a little money lying by him to furnish another; who, to supply his present needs, must sell off somewhat of that little he hath, though at an under rate; or the like: it is scarce credible (did not every day's experience make proof of it) how such a man will screw up the poor wretch that falls into his hand, &c. *conclude hence, all ye that are of generous births and spirits, how unworthy that practice would be in you;* wherein men of the lowest minds and conditions can, in their proportion, not only equal, but even exceed you: *which should make you not only to hate oppression, because it is wicked; but even to scorn it, because it is base.*"

[*c*] After this follow several bad characters of other men: and among the rest of him that oppresses his brother by *usury* and *increase*, ver. 8. where these two words, *neschech* and *tarbith*, do not seem to signify greater extortion, and more moderate gain. For all usury is *neschech*, as it respects the debtor of whom it is taken; and *tarbith*, in respect of the creditor who is the gainer by it; whether it be great or less, that the one gives and the other receives. If there be any other difference between these two, it either lies in this, that there were several sorts of usury whereby men increased their estates; or the one signifies the advantage men made of their money, and the other the advantage they made of their goods. About which I do not think fit to trouble the reader any farther: nor to examine whether their opinion be true, who say, *the king was to take away their unjust gain, and give it to better men.* I have left that undetermined, whether God or man should punish the usurer, but have expressed all that the law forbids in this case, which was to take interest (as we speak) of their *brethren*, especially of their *poor* brethren, which some think are only meant; but I have contented myself to say, are *principally* meant.

[*d*] And in the next verse but two, (ver. 11.) he observes that such men as grow rich, though it be by fraud and oppression, are apt to have a mighty conceit of their own wisdom: which understanding men, though never so poor, see through, and discern to be, at best, but craft: and many times to be no more than that, which we call purse-pride, when they have no more wit but just to save and hoard up money. Upon which place some observe that Solomon secretly intimates riches to be an impediment to wisdom; and poverty a great advantage: because the one is apt to blow men up into a vain opinion of themselves; and the other to make them humble and modest: the former of which is the greatest enemy, and the latter the best friend, to wisdom. Certain it is, that money having so large a command, as to be able to purchase not only dignity, but great veneration, from the multitude; they that have it are apt to look no farther neither for wisdom nor virtue: which made a confidant to Cæsar (as the Lord Bacon observes) give him this counsel, that if he would restore the decayed state of the Roman commonwealth, he must by all means take away the estimation of wealth: "for these (saith he) and all other evils, together with the reputation of money, shall cease; if neither public offices, nor any other dignities, which commonly are coveted, be exposed to sale." And the truth is, saith that Lord, (Advanc. of Learn. book i.) as it was rightly said, that *blushing is the colour of virtue*, though sometime it come from vice; so we may truly affirm that *poverty is the fortune of virtue*, though sometime it may proceed from misgovernment and improvidence. And he adds farther, that "the magnificence of princes and great men had long since turned into barbarism and rudeness, if the poverty of learning had not kept up civility and decency of life."

[*e*] For bad princes, Solomon shews, ver. 12. bring great contempt and misery upon a nation, as bad men (ver. 13. 14.) bring mischief upon themselves. But no princes are more grievous to their subjects, than such as are needy, and yet have no goodness. So I understand, with the LXX. ver. 15. where that word we render *raging* is well translated by the Vulgar a *hungry bear*, as Bochartus hath shewn.

[*f*] Who also seems to me to have expressed the sense of the next verse most fully; when he observes, that, according to the manner of the Hebrew language, there is something wanting in one part of the verse, which is to be supplied out of the other. As when the Psalmist saith in Psal. lxxxiv. 11. "One day in thy courts, is better than a thousand;" he means *elsewhere, out of his courts.* And Psal. xci. 7. "A thousand shall fall on thy side (viz. *the left hand*), and ten thousand on thy right hand." In like manner we are to understand this verse, as if he had said: A prince that wants understanding, and is a great oppressor, shall shorten his days: but he that hates covetousness shall prolong them. (See parab. 1. de Animal. Sac. lib. iii. cap. 25.)

[*g*] In the two next verses I have endeavoured to connect several senses together; as he that examines them will perceive. And in ver. 21. have taken some notice of the Lord Bacon's observation; that men may be bribed by something else besides money, to pervert justice: and more commonly by other respects than by that. His words are these: (book viii. Advanc. of Learn. chap. 2. parab. 23.) "Easiness of humour in a judge, is more pernicious than the corruption of bribes. For all persons do not give bribes; but there is hardly any cause, wherein somewhat may not be found, that may incline the mind of the judge, if respect of persons lead him. For one man shall be respected as his countryman, another as an ill-tongued man, another as a rich man, another as a favourite, another as commended by a friend;

to conclude, all is full of iniquity where respect of persons bears sway: and for a very slight matter, as it were for a bit of bread, judgment is perverted.

[*h*] The rest of the chapter contains plain observations, concerning several sorts of good and bad men: and concludes with the repetition of a remark he had made before, (ver. 12.) about the state of public affairs; which are then in an ill condition, when bad men get into authority. For virtuous men begin then to be so ill treated, that they fly or hide themselves; to avoid the abuses which they see will be put upon them. This the LXX. suggest, when they translate the first clause of the verse thus; *In places where the impious bear sway, the righteous sigh and groan; i. e.* some are imprisoned, and sent into obscurity, by the unjust prosecution of the wicked; and others obscure themselves, and groan in secret under those oppressions, till there be a turn of affairs (which Solomon here intimates they may expect in due time) by the fall of those wicked persons, and the preferment of better: which invites virtuous men to appear again; and by the countenance they then receive, to propagate piety among the people: who are so ready to conform themselves to the example of their governors, that there is no blessing we should pray for so earnestly as this; especially when the days are evil. Then that saying of the son of Sirach should be perpetually in every good man's mind, to support and comfort him; when he is constrained, perhaps, to lie hid and conceal himself to avoid trouble and danger, "The power of the earth is in the hand of the Lord, and in due time he will set over it one that is profitable," Ecclus. x. 4. read the foregoing verses.

Ver. 1. *THE wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.*] An evil conscience makes men timorous and cowardly, like a faint-hearted soldier who runs away at the appearance of an enemy, and never so much as looks back to see whether he pursue him: but men of integrity are not easily affrighted; but proceed like a young lion, with an undaunted resolution, even in hazardous undertakings.

Ver. 2. *For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof: but by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged.*] There are many mischiefs that people draw upon themselves by their wickedness, and this especially—that falling into factions, every one thinks himself fit to govern; and throwing down one ruler after another, they can come to no settlement, till they grow better and more considerate: and then, some truly prudent and pious person arises, who takes the right course to heal these breaches, and prolong the government in peace and tranquillity. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 3. *A poor man that oppresseth the poor is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food.*] But there is none more wicked and intolerable than a needy fellow that is got into power; but hath lost all sense of the miseries of the poor, whom he squeezes and spoils, like a violent rain, which, instead of refreshing the corn, as gentle showers do, beats it down and lays it so flat, that it can never recover; but a famine comes upon the land. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 4. *They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them.*] From such a man there is none so wicked but he shall receive encouragement; for they that make not the law of God their rule, but their own lusts, will employ and promote the vilest person, and find something or other to commend him for: but they that resolutely observe God's law, are so far from approving such a wicked wretch, that they oppose him; and declare, as we say, open war against him.

Ver. 5. *Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the Lord understand all things.*] For the minds of men that give up themselves to wickedness are so depraved, that sometime they do not so much as understand, and at no time regard, the difference between right and wrong; much less the difference that God doth and will make between them: but men piously affected understand and consider all things of this nature so exactly, that they are careful not to offend in the least against their neighbour.

Ver. 6. *Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.*] An honest, upright man, that acts sincerely in all that he doth, though he be never so poor, is far happier, and more useful and commendable, than a crafty person, that knows how to wind and turn himself every way; though by his fraud and tricks he grow never so rich and great. (See xix. 1.)

Ver. 7. *Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father.*] He that studies the law of God, and observes the rules of sobriety and temperance, and other virtues, which it prescribes, is likely to prove a wise son, in whom his parents may find comfort: but he that had rather go into merry company, than into the school of the wise, and there spend his time and his money in sensual pleasures, is a shame, as well as a vexation to them.

Ver. 8. *He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.*] He that increases his estate by usury, for the money or goods which he lends to his poor brother, (contrary to the laws provided in that case, Exod. xxii. 24. Deut. xxiii. 19, 20.) shall not be able to make his family so great as he intended; but those riches shall be translated into some other hands, which will exercise that charity which he neglected. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 9. *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.*] He that refuses to hearken unto God and to obey his laws, deceives himself, if he think by his prayers to please him, and make an amends for his crimes; for God will be so far from hearkening unto him, that he will abominate such prayers as tend to nothing but to make God a partner with him in his sins.

Ver. 10. *Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good things in possession.*] He that studies by false suggestions, and deceitful representations, to seduce upright men into dangerous practices, shall fall himself irrecoverably into that very mischief which he designed for them: while they, preserving their integrity, shall remain not only safe, but in a flourishing condition.

Ver. 11. *The rich man is wise in his own conceit; but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.*] A man whose labours and cares have such success that he grows very rich, and is courted and complimented by every body, is apt to fancy himself much wiser than other men: but when a man of mean condition, who applies himself more

to understand the value of things than to get riches, comes to discourse with him; he easily discovers, and makes it appear, that he is but a fool. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 12. *When righteous men do rejoice, there is great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is hidden.*] When the righteous are advanced to places of trust and authority, there is excessive joy among all virtuous men; and the whole kingdom feels the happy effects of it, in beautiful order, peace, security, and plenty, at home; and in the honour and reputation it hath abroad: but when the wicked get up into power, it makes a rueful change, being wholly employed in finding reasons to ruin others: whose safety then lies in concealing themselves in their estate. (See ver. 28.)

Ver. 13. *He that covereth his sins, shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*] He that studies to hide and extenuate rather than to leave his sins, shall be so far from escaping by his impudent denial, that he shall make himself obnoxious to severer punishments: but he that ingenuously acknowledges he hath done amiss, and not only promises to do so no more, but gives some proof of his amendment, shall obtain pardon both from God and man.

Ver. 14. *Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.*] From which happiness if he would not relapse, let him constantly preserve a pious fear and dread of God and of his displeasure in his mind, and be cautious and circumspect in all his actions: for if he be presumptuously confident and careless, and, because God is so gracious, regard neither his commands nor his threatenings; he will fall back into deeper guilt and misery.

Ver. 15. *As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the people.*] A lion and a bear are not more dreadful to the weaker beasts, especially when hunger presses them to seek a prey, than a needy prince, who fears not God and loves not man, is to the poorer sort: who have not wherewithal to fill his insatiable desires; and yet are the surest to be invaded, because the least able to resist his power. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 16. *The prince that wanteth understanding, is also a great oppressor, but he that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days.*] But it is very great ignorance not only of religion, but of all things else, that makes a prince grievously oppress and pillage his people; which makes his reign short, as well as unhappy: when he that, hating such exactions, is kind to his subjects, prolongs his days in much tranquillity. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 17. *A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.*] He that murders a man, and, pressed with the weight of his guilt, or pursued by the avenger of blood, flies to save himself, shall never think himself safe; but lead a restless life to his very grave: for all men looking upon him as a common enemy, shall refuse to succour him: no, though they see him falling headlong into a pit which he is not aware of, they shall not stop him, but let him perish.

Ver. 18. *Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.*] There is no such way to be safe, as to be honest and sincere in all a man's words and actions; for he that endeavours to preserve himself by fraud and deceit, though he can wind, and turn, and hath several shifts he thinks to save himself by, yet in one or other of them he shall perish: for the time will come, when he will blindly choose the wrong course; and commonly when he begins to fall, he sinks utterly, and cannot possibly recover himself.

Ver. 19. *He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain persons shall have poverty enough.*] He that is a good husband in the management of his estate, shall have the satisfaction of Providence sufficiently, if not plentifully, for himself and his family: but he that is careless, and follows the courses of loose and wicked companions, can reap no other fruit of his negligence, but the most miserable want and beggary.

Ver. 20. *A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.*] He that is true to his word, and just in all his dealings, shall have abundance of blessings from God, and be well spoken of by men: but he whose eager desires make him heap up wealth, by right or by wrong, brings such guilt upon himself, as makes him execrable unto both.

Ver. 21. *To have respect of persons is not good; for, for a piece of bread that man will transgress.*] It is a wicked thing in a judge to incline to consider the quality of the person, and not the merits of the cause that is brought before him: for though, perhaps, at the first he could not be corrupted under a great sum of money, yet, having accustomed himself to it, he will at last sell his sentence at the lowest rates; nay, be moved by the smallest considerations to forsake the rules which ought to guide him. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 22. *He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.*] An envious, covetous wretch, that cannot look upon what another hath without grudging, is pushed on, by his impatient desires, to get riches, without making any distinction between good and evil: never considering, in that disturbance of mind wherein he lives, that all may be gone in a moment; and he then stand in need of the mercy of those whom he would not pity.

Ver. 23. *He that rebuketh a man, afterward shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.*] He that rebukes a man for his evil courses may displease him, nay, anger him at the first: but when he considers that he could have no other end in it but his good, he will have a greater kindness for such a man, than for one that humours him in every thing; and with flattering words soothes him up in those faults, which he ought to take the freedom to reprehend.

Ver. 24. *Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer.*] He that lays hands upon all that he can rap and rend from his father or mother, and thinks it no sin, or no great one, (pretending they keep him too short, and have no need of it themselves, or do not use it, &c.) not only keeps the company of spendthrifts; but is wicked enough to be a highwayman, and murder others to feed his own luxury.

Ver. 25. *He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be made fat.*] A man of a proud and insolent spirit, of ambitious and vast desires, is never quiet; but as he lives in perpetual quarrels, so hath no satisfaction in what he enjoys; nay,

many times wastes it all in suits and contentions: but he who, confiding in the good providence of the Almighty, hath a humble and contented mind, lives peaceably with others, and comfortably within himself; nay, thrives many times and abounds with plenty of all good things.

Ver. 26. *He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.*] He that relies wholly upon his own judgment is like to miscarry; because he follows the conduct of a fool: but he that, distrusting himself, takes good advice and follows it, escapes many mischiefs, into which the other rashly runs; and is delivered out of many dangers, in which the other perishes.

Ver. 27. *He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.*] He that relieves those that are in want, shall be so far from wanting himself, that he shall thereby procure God's blessing to increase his estate: but he that regards not the miseries of others, nor is willing so much as to know them, for fear of having his compassion moved towards them, shall draw upon himself the curse of God as well as men; and fall into many and grievous misfortunes.

Ver. 28. *When the wicked rise, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase.*] When wicked men are advanced unto power and authority, they favouring such only as are like to themselves, it makes good men scarce; who are forced to withdraw, and hide themselves from their tyranny; but when they perish (as they shall at last), and good men come in their place, then the righteous openly shew themselves; and the number of them increase by their example, and by the encouragement they enjoy under righteous governors. See Arg. [*h*]

CHAP. XXIX.

ARGUMENT.

[*a*] This chapter concludes the collection of Proverbs, made by the *men of Hezekiah;* and contains more advices proper to a prince (as he was) than any of the rest: but ushers them in with a general admonition, how dangerous it is not to profit by reproofs or corrections (such as he and his people had by the hand of Sennacherib), which when they work upon men's spirits there is some hope of them: but when they become refractory, inflexible, and obstinately reject them, they are near to a final destruction. This wicked temper of mind he expresses by hardening the *neck;* which is a metaphor, as Bochartus truly observes, (lib. iii. de Sacris Animal. cap. 41. par. ii.) taken from *oxen*, who being put forward draw back and withdraw their necks and shoulders from the yoke: and sometimes are so headstrong and stiff-necked, that they cannot be brought to submit to it: unto which the Scriptures often allude, both in the Old Testament and the New: for instance, Exod. xxxii. 9. Acts vii. 51. And hither belong those expressions, Isa. xlviii. 4. where he saith his people had an *iron sinew*, &c. and that in Jer. v. 5. where he saith they *had broken the yoke and burst the bands.*

[*b*] Then follows a tacit admonition unto princes, to be good, by describing the happiness which a nation then enjoys: which they had noted twice before in the foregoing chapter, (ver. 12. 28.) but thought it so considerable and so needful, that they insert it here again; and the latter part of it once more, (ver. 16.) being a famous observation of his father David, Psal. xii. 9. where he takes notice how the wicked flourish, and go about confidently into every place, nay, take the liberty to do as they list, when men of no account are exalted to power: who take no care to oppose growing wickedness, and to keep every man within the bounds of his duty.

[*c*] And after an admonition (ver. 3.) that the study of wisdom is the only preservative against the lusts of uncleanness; which, in the preface to this book as it is observed, destroy abundance of young men, and their estates also (for lust is very blind and very prodigal); the next observation (ver. 4.) is concerning kings again: where *isch terumoth*, which we translate *a man that receiveth gifts*, is in the Hebrew phrase *a man of oblations.* For so the word *terumoth* always signifies, throughout the whole Bible, *the heave-offerings* which were offered to God: which would make one think that *isch terumoth (a man of heave-offerings)* signifies here *a prince that is sacrilegious*, and robs the church of its proper goods: or, if we will not take it in that strict sense, it denotes one that will suffer himself to be pacified by gifts, and bribed to wink at the most enormous crimes, which he ought to have severely punished: or, that is so unjust as to find fault, perhaps, with the most innocent persons, on purpose that they may appease him, offering him a part of their estate to save all the rest: one or other of these is the most literal exposition of the words. But I have contented myself with the LXX. (who render it παράνομος) to use only general expressions in the Paraphrase which include all these, and whatsoever else that is contrary to the duty of his office. Rabbi Solomon doth not differ much from the sense of the LXX. when he translates it *a proud man*, who heaves and lifts up himself in his own thoughts, imagining he is above all laws, and not bound to observe them.

[*d*] In the next verse (ver. 5.) I have not wholly neglected the sense of the LXX. who refer the last clause to the flatterer himself: who cannot escape the hatred of those whom he hath ruined by his pernicious praises, or base compliances, with all their humours, &c. which is more fully expressed in the following sentence, (ver. 6.) where I have interpreted one part of the verse by the other.

[*e*] And then seems to follow again a double admonition to princes, or those that govern under them. First, not through laziness, or contempt to refuse to examine a poor man's complaint, and do him right, (ver. 7.) Secondly, not through profaneness, pride, or carelessness, to scorn admonition; especially any warning that is given of danger, &c. (ver. 8.) For when he says "the righteous considers the cause of the poor," he seems to mean a *righteous prince*, or *judge* (and so I have explained it in the Paraphrase): for who else is to consider of the *din* (as it is in the Hebrew), the cause of the poor which is to be judged? None but they, and the advocates who are to plead it: all which persons are obliged, in conscience, to search into the truth of things; not to be sparing of their pains (though matters be intricate, though the labour be like to be long, though they shall get nothing by it) to find out the bottom of a business: which he that refuses to do, nay, perhaps rejects the complaint of the poor, or beats them off with big words; or, out of the hardness of

his heart, or the love of ease, or fear of great men, or any other respect, will not give them audience, or not consider and redress their grievance; Solomon pronounces him a *wicked*, an *impious* person; and accordingly God will proceed against him.

[*f*] Such men, indeed, may scorn these threatenings, nay, laugh at them: but thereby they will endanger the bringing all things into confusion; as Solomon observes in the succeeding words, (ver. 8.) where *men of scorn* (as it is in the Hebrew) signify such as mock at religion, and at all things that are serious: whom the LXX. call ἄνομοι, *lawless, pestilent* men; that regard neither God nor man, but only their own wicked humour: which brings the kingdom or place where they live into the greatest danger. Which we express by the word *ensnare*, and other translations by words of the import: which I have expressed in the Paraphrase, but shall not mention here, because I would leave room to insert the most admirable discourse of the Lord Bacon upon this verse. "It may seem strange," saith he, (book viii. Advanc. of Learn. chap. 2. parab. 12.) "that in the description of men, made and framed, as it were, by nature to the ruin and destruction of a state, Solomon hath chosen the character, not of a *proud* and *insolent* man, not of a *tyrannical* and *cruel*, not of a *rash* and *violent*, not of an *impious* and *lewd*, not of an *unjust* and *oppressive*, not of a *seditious* and *turbulent*, not of an *incontinent* and *voluptuous*, no, nor of a *foolish* and *unable* person; but of a *scorner*. But this is a judgment most worthy the wisdom of that great king, who best knew the causes of the preservation or subversion of a state. For there is not commonly the like plague unto kingdoms and commonwealths, as when counsellors, or senators, and such as sit at the helm of government, are by nature *scorners*. For, first, such persons, that they may win the reputation of undaunted statesmen, do ever extenuate the greatness of dangers; and insult over those who give them their just weight, as timorous and faint-hearted people. Secondly, they scoff at all mature delays, and meditated debatings of matters by consultations and deliberation, as a thing too much tasting of an oratory vein, and full of tediousness; but nothing conducing to the sum and issue of business. Thirdly, as for fame, at which a prince's counsels should especially level, they contemn it as the *spittle of the vulgar*, and a thing that will quickly be blown over. Fourthly, the power and authority of laws they regard not at all, but look upon them as cobwebs, that ought not to stop matters of consequence. Fifthly, counsels and precautions, foreseeing of events afar off, they reject as mere dreams and melancholy apprehensions. Sixthly, men truly prudent, and well seen in affairs, of great resolution and counsel, they defame with gibes and jests. In a word, they do at once overturn all the foundations of civil government: which is the more to be attended, because they secretly undermine it, and do not assault it by open force. And it is a practice which is not yet so suspected among men as it deserves."

[*g*] The latter end of the next verse, (ver. 9.) some refer to the *fool*, others to the *wise man*. They that refer to the fool understood it two ways, much to the same purpose. Some thus, The fool will always be angry or deride, so that the wise man cannot put in a word: others thus, The wise man shall be either irritated, or derided by the fool perpetually. As much as to say, He shall get nothing, if he contend with a fool, but either to be derided or provoked to anger by him. This I have taken some notice of in my Paraphrase: but the other being the most common opinion, that he speaks of the way of a wise man's dealing with a fool, I have principally regarded. And the Lord Bacon hath made this pertinent reflection upon it, (in the forenamed book and place, parab. 3.) which it will be profitable to set down here. "It is accounted a wise rule, *not to contend with our betters:* but it is a no less useful admonition, which Solomon here gives us, *not to contend with a worthless person;* whom we cannot meddle withal, but upon disadvantageous terms. *For to overcome, is no victory; but to be conquered, a foul disgrace.* And it is all one, in the management of his contention, whether we deal sometime *in a jesting* way with him, and sometime in a way of *disdain and scorn*. For which way soever we turn, we shall come off with the loss of our credit, and not be able handsomely to disengage ourselves. But the worst of all is, when the person with whom we contend hath *something of the fool* in him (as Solomon speaks): that is, if he be both *witless* and *wilful:* have some *heart* but no *brain*."

[*h*] The tenth verse I have expounded of a *magistrate*, that hath the courage to make inquisition after and prosecute notorious offenders: and, in the latter part of it, have put two senses together. As I have done also in the next, (ver. 11.) where the word *ruach, spirit*, being differently interpreted, hath produced several expositions. For some take it to signify *anger;* others to signify *words*, or the *sense of the mind*. They that take it for *anger*, expound it thus: *A fool shews all his anger immediately, but a wise man keeps it in, till he hath a fitting opportunity to express it most to purpose.* If we understand it of *words*, the sense is; *A fool blurts out every thing that comes in his head, but a wise man speaks only as much as is necessary.* If it signify the *sense of the mind*, then this is the meaning, *A fool utters all that he knows; but a wise man conceals many things.* But the great person beforenamed, (in the same chapter, parab. 15.) thinks none of these hit the mark. "For this parable (saith he) corrects principally, not the *futility of vain men*, who utter easily as well what ought to be kept secret, as what may be spoken; nor *the bold liberty* of such as, without discretion and judgment, fly upon all men and upon all matters; nor *talkativeness*, which troubles others even to a surfeit; but another vice more close and retired, *viz.* that ill government of discourse which of all other is not prudent and politic. And that is, when a man so orders his discourse, in private conferences, as whatsoever is in his mind which he conceives any way pertinent to his purpose, out it comes at once, and as it were in one birth, and in a continued speech. This is that which doth much prejudice business. For, first, a speech broken off by interlocutions, and instilled by parts, penetrates deeper than that which is continued: because that in a continued discourse the weight of things is not precisely and distinctly taken; nor by some convenient pauses suffered to fix: but one reason drives out another, before it be thoroughly settled

in the mind of the hearer. Secondly, there is no man master of such powerful and happy eloquence, as to be able, at the very first dash, as we speak, to strike him *dumb and altogether speechless*, with whom he discourses: but he will have something to answer, and perhaps to object, on the other side. And then it falls out that those things, which should have been reserved for replication and refutation, being disclosed already and tasted beforehand by this unadvised anticipation, quite lose their strength and their grace. Thirdly, if a man do not pour out all he hath to say at once, but deliver himself by parcels; now one thing, and anon casting in another: he shall perceive by the looks and the answer of him, with whom he discourses, how every particular passage affects him, and what acceptance it finds with him: so as what is yet remaining to be spoken, he may with the greater caution, either suppress, or select what is to his purpose." Thus that great person: who herein hath followed the LXX. who express the sense, rather than translate the words, in this manner; *A man void of understanding brings out his whole mind, but a wise man dispenses it part by part.*

[*i*] The like observation he makes upon the next verse, (ver. 12.) where by *lies* or *words of falsehood* (as the Hebrew hath it), the LXX. truly understand λόγον ἄδικον, *an unjust report*, that hurts our neighbour by calumnies, or false accusations; (as the word commonly signifies in Scripture, particularly Psal. lii.) unto which, if a ruler lend his ear, he will never want lewd informers, or rather slanderers, in his court to work upon that inclination. Melancthon hath observed upon this verse, that the *love of lies* (as he translates it) comprehends a great many vices; according as there are divers sorts of lies: which are all repugnant to that eminent virtue of *truth*, in which a prince ought to excel, viz. *vanity* or *perfidiousness, breach of promises, calumnies, suspicions, sophistry;* which defends bad causes by colourable pretences to please great men; and persuades the prince, by plausible arguments, that he is tied to no rules: unto any of which, if a prince be inclined, his ministers will not fail to make him break his word perpetually, to abuse him with false stories, to infuse into his mind unjust suspicions; and to find colour for any thing, though never so wicked: of all which he gives examples.

But none hath opened this parable comparably to the Lord Bacon, in the place beforementioned, (parab. 13.) "Where he takes it for an easy credulous temper in a prince, to believe detractors and sycophants without examination. From whence proceeds such a pestilential breath, as infects and corrupts all his servants. For some of them feel out the *fears* and *jealousies* of the prince, and increase them by fictitious tales; others awake and stir up the furies of *envy;* especially against all those that are best deserving in the state: others seek to wash away their own guilt, and the stain of a foul conscience, by defaming better men: others promote the suits of their friends, and their preferments, by traducing and debasing the merit of their competitors: others compass fabulous representations of their enemies, as if they were upon a stage; and innumerable such-like. And these are the arts of such of the prince's servants, as are of a more wicked disposition. As for those, who are by nature better inclined, and by education more civilized, when they perceive their innocence to be no safe sanctuary (their prince not knowing how to distinguish between truth and falsehood), they put off the probity of their manners, and accommodate themselves also to the air of the court, and are carried about therewith in a servile manner. 'For (as Tacitus saith of Claudius) there is no safety with that prince, into whose mind all things are conveyed, as it were by infusion and direction from others.' And Comines saith very well, 'It is better to be servant to a prince whose suspicions have no end, than to one whose credulity hath no measure.'"

After this there follows, in the next verse but one, another admonition to princes: (ver. 14.) and then a double admonition to private parents, to take care of the good education of their children; as the best way to make a kingdom happy, and to prevent the increase of wickedness. About which he interposes an observation between these two: in the explanation of all which verses, I have had some respect to the LXX. without any injury to our translation.

[*k*] And so I have done in the next, (ver. 18.) where by *vision*, or rather *prophecy*, they understood ἐξηγητὴς, an expounder of the laws of God to the people; which was the office of the prophets: who had a great stroke also in the government (as Melancthon observes), and by their counsels, when they were followed, made the kingdom flourishing. As Elisha for about seventy years governed the counsels of their kings in the greatest calamities; particularly in the siege of Samaria: after whose death the kingdom endured not much above a hundred years, agitated by perpetual seditions. Thus Esaiah, by his counsels to Hezekiah a good part of the people were saved. From such examples, saith he, we may gather that when *prophecy* ceased, the people were scattered (so he translates the word *para*); because for want of wholesome counsellors there follow, in empires, strifes of ambition, and seditions, which all tend to utter ruin: yet the second part of this sentence, saith he, admonishes us, that a remnant should be safe in their dispersions; *viz.* such as kept the Divine doctrine. For want of which God takes away men's instructors, when they are not obedient to wholesome precepts. So the LXX. translate this verse (minding the sense rather than the words), *there is no expounder of the law to a wicked lawless nation*, &c. God *strips* them even of their teachers; as some translate the word *para, perish:* which hath various significations, most of which I have expressed in the Paraphrase; because they all agree well enough to this place.

[*l*] There is an exposition of the next words, (ver. 19.) which would be very natural, if the wise man spake only of the commands of ministers to their servants; which they pretend sometime not to hear, that they may not do as they are bidden. But he speaks of their not amending the faults, of which they have been already told: which is not the quality of all *servants;* and therefore I have said a *slave*. Or else we must interpret it, as the LXX. do of οἰκέτης σκληρός, *a stubborn, obstinate servant;* whose heart is hardened against all words that can be spoken to him, good or bad.

[*m*] But I must make no more glosses, for fear of prolong-

ing this preface too much beyond its just bounds. And therefore I shall conclude it with the Lord Bacon's observation upon ver. 21. (where the LXX. have expressed but a little part of the sense) "that both *princes* and private *masters* should keep a *mean* in the dispensation of their grace and favour towards *servants:* which *mean* is threefold. First, that servants *be promoted by steps* (or degrees), *not by leaps.* Secondly, that *they be now and then accustomed to repulses.* Thirdly (which Machiavel well advises), that they *have ever in their sight before them something whereunto they may farther aspire.* For unless these courses be taken, in raising of servants, princes shall, instead of thankful acknowledgments and dutiful observance, be repaid with nothing but disdain and contumacy. For from sudden promotion arises *insolence;* from constant attainment of their desire proceeds *impatience of being denied;* and there being nothing remaining that they can farther wish, *alacrity* and *industry* will cease."

Ver. 1. *He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*] He that having received frequent reproofs from good men, and perhaps corrections from God, will not yield in the least, but absolutely refuse to be guided by them, and submit unto them, is in danger to fall, and that on a sudden, into utter and irreparable ruin. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.*] When just and merciful governors make virtuous men grow numerous, (xxviii. 28.) a kingdom is happy: but when an unjust man rules, the wicked get into places of trust; and make the people miserably groan under their oppressions. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth his substance.*] A young man whose love of wisdom and virtue preserves his body as pure as his mind, and his estate as entire as both, gives the greatest joy to his father: as, on the contrary, nothing can be a greater grief to him, than to see his son so sottish, as to maintain a company of harlots; whose covetousness being as insatiable as their lust, devoureth all that he hath. See Arg. [c]

Ver. 4. *The king by judgment establisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.*] A king that administers justice exactly to all his subjects, restores his kingdom to a good estate, though it had been before in great disorder: but he who, having no respect to equity and right, takes the most illegal courses to enrich himself, subverts it utterly; though it be never so well settled. See Arg. [c]

Ver. 5. *A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.*] He that soothes up his neighbour, by commending all that he doth, though never so directly against his interest, is so far from being his friend, as he imagines, that he is a traitor to him; and leads him, unawares, into such dangers, that when he finds himself perplexed in them, he will treat that flatterer as his greatest enemy. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 6. *In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.*] A naughty man hath a heavy heart at last, when he finds himself undone by those very arts, whereby he thought to have ruined others: but pious men are always cheerful, nay, full of joy; both to think that they are in safe and secure ways, and to see the evil-doer caught in his own wickedness.

Ver. 7. *The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.*] A righteous man, when he is in authority, not only readily receives, and patiently weighs, the complaints of the poorest person; but is at the pains to study his cause, that he may fully understand it, and do him right, though he thereby incur hatred to himself from the adverse party: but a wicked man will not attend unto it, or not use due care to be well instructed in it. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 8. *Scornful men bring a city into a snare: but wise men turn away wrath.*] There are no greater fools than scorners, who, by laughing at all things serious, whether sacred or civil, put a kingdom into a combustion, when it is disposed to be quiet; nay, turn things topsy-turvy, and endanger its utter ruin, unless good and cautious men prevent it; who, by their piety, turn away the Divine vengeance; and by their prudence, and other virtues, divert the fury of men, which these scorners have raised. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 9. *If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest.*] Let a man be never so wise, it is to no purpose for him to dispute or to enter into any contest with an obstinate fool: for which way soever he deal with him, whether angrily or pleasantly, there will be no end of the controversy; but the fool will still have the last word; nay, it is well if he do not either restlessly rage, or laugh one to scorn. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 10. *The blood-thirsty hate the upright: but the just seek his soul.*] Men enormously wicked, who stick not to kill those that oppose their desires, above all others hate and would destroy an upright magistrate; whose integrity makes him courageously endeavour to bring them to condign punishment; but such a person all virtuous men love the more heartily, and labour to defend and preserve from their violence; or to revenge his death, if he should perish by them. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 11. *A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterward.*] A fool is so inconsiderately transported by his passion, or conceit of himself, that when he comes to treat of any business, he can put no stop to his discourse, but runs on till he hath poured out all that he thinks upon that subject; but a wise man represses the heat and forwardness of his spirit, that he may pause and take time to declare his mind, not altogether, but by parcels. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 12. *If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked.*] A prince who hearkens to the false suggestions of those that tell him he may do what he pleases; or who easily believes, without any examination, all the stories and accusations that are brought him against others, fills his whole court with so many wicked men, that it is hard to find an honest minister or officer among them. See Arg. [*i*]

Ver. 13. *The poor and the deceitful man meet together; the Lord lighteneth both their eyes.*] The world is made up of several sorts of men: of poor, for instance, who are fain to borrow, and of rich, who lend them money, and perhaps oppress them: but these would all agree well enough, when they meet together, if they would but con-

sider, that there is one Lord who makes the sun to shine equally on all; and who intends all should live happily, though in an unequal condition. (See xxii. 2.)

Ver. 14. *The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.*] A king that administers justice equally to all his subjects, and cannot be moved by the power or interest of the greatest persons to deny it to the meanest; but faithfully and sincerely sets himself to help the poor to their right, or to defend them from violence and wrong; takes the surest course to settle himself in the affections of his people, and continue his kingdom for many generations.

Ver. 15. *The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.*] The way to make a child wise and virtuous, is not only to instruct him in his duty, but to check him when he is in fault; and that not merely by reproof, but by the sharp discipline of the rod, when the other will do no good; for if he be left to his own will, or rather to wander after his own inclinations without such restraints, he will prove, in all likelihood, a disgrace to his mother, by whose indulgence he was spoiled; nay, fly, perhaps, in her face, and openly reproach her, (x. 1.)

Ver. 16. *When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: but the righteous shall see their fall.*] When the wicked grow numerous, by growing great, (ver. 2.) men take the greater licence to transgress; and wickedness increases by having authority on its side: but let not the righteous hereby be discouraged; for the wickeder men are, the shorter is their reign: and they that preserve their virtue shall have the pleasure to behold their downfall.

Ver. 17. *Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.*] It may seem most for thy ease to let thy child alone, without giving him correction or reproof; but let me advise thee to put thyself to this trouble, to save thyself a greater (*viz.* many anxious and restless thoughts, which his ill doing will raise in thee), or rather to give thyself the highest delight, when, by thy care of his education, he proves a great ornament unto thee.

Ver. 18. *Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.*] Where there are none to instruct the people, and expound the will of God unto them, they first grow idle and careless, and run into all licentiousness; till, growing refractory and ungovernable, they be abandoned by God to destruction; but when they are not only well taught, but also strictly observe the laws of God, they remain in a prosperous, happy condition. See Arg. [*k*]

Ver. 19. *A servant will not be corrected by words; for though he understand he will not answer.*] A slave, and he that is of a servile nature, is not to be amended by reason and persuasions; no, nor by reproofs, or threats: for, though he hears, and understands too, what you say, yet he will not obey, till he be forced unto it by blows. See Arg. [*l*]

Ver. 20. *Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.*] Observe it when you will, you shall commonly find that he who is forward to speak to a business, before his betters, or before he understands it, or hath considered it, is so conceited of himself, that a man wholly ignorant may sooner be rightly informed, than he who is so well persuaded of his own sufficiency.

Ver. 21. *He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become his son at the length.*] It is so hard for a man of base condition to bear a sudden preferment handsomely, that it is dangerous to express too much kindness to a servant at the very first; by feeding him delicately, clothing him finely, or indulging him too much ease, liberty, and familiarity: for this is the way to make him saucy, if not contumacious; nay, to domineer and take upon him, as if he were a son, and, perhaps, endeavour to disinherit the heir of the family. See Arg. [*m*]

Ver. 22. *An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.*] A man prone to anger is very troublesome and unpeaceable, being apt to quarrel about trifles: and, as he offends very often, so, if he let it proceed to rage and fury, he falls into abundance of sins; both in word and deed, against God, and against his neighbour.

Ver. 23. *A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.*] Proud and contumelious behaviour, instead of procuring men respect, throws them into the contempt and hatred of all; and, at last, into destruction; but he whose meek and lowly mind makes him kind and obliging, shall be highly esteemed; and the esteem he hath shall be his support, when others fall to ruin.

Ver. 24. *Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not.*] He that partakes with a thief, by harbouring him, when he is pursued, or by receiving stolen goods, &c. hath the same guilt upon him with the thief himself; and, as he hath put his own life in danger to save the thief's, so this will engage him to run his soul into greater danger, to save his life: for being adjured to discover what he knows, he will go near to forswear himself, for fear of being hanged.

Ver. 25. *The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.*] As all inordinate fear bereaves a man of counsel and power to help himself; so he that stands in too great fear of what men can do unto him, will be ensnared in many sins, and perils also, to avoid their displeasure: but he that confides in the Lord hath his wits always about him, and, being raised above such low considerations, preserves his integrity; and that, by God's good providence over him, will preserve him in safety.

Ver. 26. *Many seek the ruler's favour: but every man's judgment cometh from the Lord.*] There are multitudes of men who are ambitious to be known to their prince, and obtain his favour for honour and preferment; but few remember that there is a greater Lord than he, the sovereign of all the world, whose grace and favour should be principally sought: for he determines and orders what every man's portion shall be; and will both judge of men's deserts better than any earthly king can do, and deal with them according as they behave themselves, in that condition wherein they are.

Ver. 27. *An unjust man is an abomination to the just; and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked.*] There is such a perfect antipathy between virtue and vice, that all truly good men extremely abominate him that doth mischief in the world, though he be never so great and powerful: as, on the contrary, the evil-doer hath every man that behaves himself uprightly, though never so useful, in utter abhorrence and detestation.

PART IV.

CHAP. XXX.

ARGUMENT.

[a] This chapter contains a new collection of pithy sayings, which some fancy to be Solomon's; and therefore translate the two first words thus: *the words of the collector,* or *gatherer.* But why Solomon should call himself by this name, and also, instead of the son of David, style himself the *son of Jakeh,* seems to me unaccountable. And therefore it is most reasonable to follow our translation (unto which the wisest of those that adhere to the Vulgar are forced to consent, as most literal), and to look upon this chapter as a fragment of some wise sentences, delivered by one whose name was Agur, and his father's name Jakeh: unless we will conceive that this son of Jakeh (whosoever he was) had gotten the name of *collector,* because, though he was a very wise man, yet he composed nothing himself; but only *gathered* out of other wise men's works such instructions as he thought most profitable, and comprised, in a few words, a great deal of sense.

[b] Which conjecture, if it be admitted, nothing can better explain his disclaiming the title of a *wise man,* (ver. 2.) which he would not assume to himself, because he was only a *collector* from other authors, and did not pretend to have discovered or invented any thing himself.

But take it how we will, some of his observations are here annexed to the Proverbs of Solomon, after the manner of other writings of this nature. In which (as Melancthon notes) the greater part of a book belonging to one author, some notable speeches of others have been inserted: as some of the Sibylline verses, they say, were into the poem of Phocilides.

[c] And these words of Agur are called *massa,* which we translate *prophecy,* either to denote the weightiness of the sentences, or that they were culled and selected out of some work of his, then remaining in their records, as fit (in the judgment of the *men of Hezekiah,* who perhaps extracted them) to accompany the Proverbs of Solomon. And they seem to me to be answers to several questions propounded to him by his scholars, Ithiel (who was the principal) and Ucal: who came to him, as if he had been an oracle, to be resolved in some hard doubts; asking him in the first place, just as they did Apollo of old (as Aben Ezra conjectures), *Who was the wisest man?* To which he replies, (ver. 2.) *He that is sensible of his own ignorance.* Much like the saying of Socrates, *This only I know, that I know nothing:* and of Pythagoras, who also refused the name of *wise;* which made much for the reputation of his wisdom.

[d] Upon this subject Agur enlarges, ver. 3, 4. wishing his scholars, especially Ithiel (who, I suppose, asked the question in the name of the rest), to be sensible how imperfect all human knowledge is; by considering how little or nothing we know of the works of God, which none can understand (though they be perpetually before our eyes) but he alone that made them. And therefore advises him to make it his principal study to understand what belonged to his own duty (which is the best part of knowledge), ver. 5. and herein also to be content with what God hath revealed, and not pretend to be wiser than he hath made us, (ver. 6.)

[e] After which, he gives answers, as I take it, unto other questions, which Ithiel propounded to him. And, first, about *prayer.* For Agur, having repressed their busy humour of inquiry into all manner of things, had raised, we may suppose, some devotion in his scholars' hearts, which made them desire to be directed in it. And he gives them most wise advice, ver. 7, 8. to be very cautious what they prayed for; just as in Plato (Alcibiad. 2.) we find Socrates giving Alcibiades instructions about this, as a principal part of virtue; in the practice of which, he tells him, there had need to be the greatest care, lest we imprudently ask those things that are not good for us. But he could not give Alcibiades such directions about this matter, as Agur here gives Ithiel and the rest of his scholars, whom he informs, that the true knowledge of God is the chiefest good, and therefore to be desired in the first place, above all other goods: and then (according to our Saviour's rule, in aftertimes), having first sought the things that belong to religion, he directs them to beg of God moderate desires of all earthly things; believing that we are safer in a mediocrity, or middle estate, than either in fulness or in want. To which purpose Melancthon and others have gathered together many sayings out of other writers. But none have given such reasons for this choice of a middle state as this wise man, (ver. 9.)

[f] After which, he seems to answer a question, which Ithiel propounded, about *moral virtue:* which having been largely treated of by Solomon, he only gives him one caution against hard-heartedness to slaves and servants, (ver. 10.) of which the Hebrew nation were generally very guilty, and thereby unmeet for that favour which they begged of God in their prayers, which ought to have disposed them to be favourable unto others.

[g] And then he gives the character of four sorts of men who are execrable unto God, and therefore ought to be avoided by all those that would be good, (ver. 11—14.) which I must pass by without any farther account of them but what I have given in the Paraphrase: because the fifteenth verse hath much difficulty in it, and therefore requires some time to be spent in opening it. Bochartus thinks to solve some of the difficulty by giving a new signification of the word *aluka.* But all interpreters, in a manner, taking it for that thick worm in waterish places, which we call a *horse-leech,* I do not think fit to forsake our translation: nor to refer the beginning of the verse to that immediately foregoing, (as some do in this manner: *Detractors can no more leave off evil-speaking, than the horse-leech leave off sucking,* &c.) but rather to those words immediately following in this same verse, which, notwithstanding, I take to have some connexion with all the four foregoing, as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase. For it seems to me to be an answer to some such question as this which the disciples had propounded to their master Agur, (after the manner of enigmatical discourses or riddles), *What is most insatiable?* which he chooses to give an account of in this place, the better to represent the nature of those wicked men he had spoken

of before: especially of the two last; the *proud*, and the *tyrannical* or *extortioner*, whose desires are a gulf that can never be filled.

And at the first he seems to have thought but of two things, *viz.* the *grave* and the *barren womb*; which might be called the *daughters of the horse-leech*, because they are so perfectly of the like nature, in regard of their insatiableness. But he presently adds another; nay, a fourth came into his mind as no less greedy: *viz.* the *thirsty earth* (which in those hot countries sucks up all the rain as fast as it falls, though never so much), and the *fire*, which devours all the fuel that is laid upon it. And this he expresses after the manner of the Hebrews; who, intending to mention four things or more, separate them at first, and begin with a lesser number, and proceed then to all that they designed. There are many examples of it in Amos i. 3. 5. 9, &c. and here in this book of Proverbs, vi. 16. and below in this chapter, ver. 18. 21, &c. Indeed there is no example like this, where the sentence begins with two, and then says three, and then four: but that might be usual, of which we have no exact example; and therefore I do not look upon this as a sufficient objection against this way of explaining this verse. Which the LXX. have taken in the Roman edition, which runs thus: *The horse-leech hath three beloved daughters, and these three are never satisfied: and there is a fourth that saith not, It sufficeth.*

There are those who compare certain vices with these four insatiable things, and not inaptly: *the desire of revenge*, to the grave; *libidinous desires*, to the barren womb; *covetousness* (or rather *drunkenness*), to the thirsty earth; and *ambition*, to the devouring fire. And it is easy to shew, how fitly all these are resembled to the *horse-leech:* it being the vulgar saying, That *harlots* (for instance) *are the horse-leeches of young men*, sucking all their money from them, and exhausting their bodies too. And the servant in Plautus, when he was about to rob the chests of the two old men, says, "Jam ego me vertam in hirudinem," &c. *now I will turn myself into a horse-leech, and suck out their very blood.*

But I forbear such things, because there are others more necessary to be added for the understanding the rest of the chapter.

[*h*] And that which next follows, ver. 17. is a reflection upon the first generation of wicked men, (mentioned ver. 11.) who sinned against the first commandment of the second table (as we speak), and for their rebellion against their parents were adjudged to death by the law of Moses, (Exod. xxi. 15. 17. Lev. xx. 9. Deut. xxi. 18.) And to make them more detestable, their carcasses, perhaps, were thrown into some loathsome place, called *the valley of carcasses*, or *dead bodies*, (Jer. xxxi. 40.) and *the valley of crows* (as Bochartus conjectures), or *ravens:* whom the wise man here speaks of. And besides this, they who abuse their parents, being of a villanous nature, were likely to turn rogues, and to commit robberies, murders, treasons, or such-like horrid crimes: which would bring them to the gallows (as we speak), or some such infamous death. The Jews, indeed, might not suffer the body of one that was hanged, after he had been put to death, to remain upon the gibbet, beyond the evening of that day wherein he was executed. But they were not forbidden to let him lie unburied, in some polluted place, when he was taken down: and in some cases, we find, they did let dead bodies hang a long time, as we read 2 Sam. xxi. And therefore Paulus Fagius (upon Exod. xx. 12.) expounds these words of Agur after this manner: "Disobedient children shall come to an ignominious death, and end their days by a halter, or other punishment; and so become crows' meat." But there is no necessity of this explication. For we may conceive such a wicked person to be *drowned* by the just judgment of God upon him; and his body to lie floating on the water; or to be cast on shore, where the *ravens* (who frequent the waters) come and pick out his eyes, at which they are observed to fly, sooner than any other part. He might *perish also in other countries*, where the infamous punishment of the gibbet was in use; or be *slain in battle;* and left there to be a prey to beasts and birds. Among which the *raven* is the rather mentioned, some think, because the young ones are so impious (as Vossius speaks, lib. iii. de Idol. cap. 85.) as to fall upon the old ones and kill them, when they are hungry (which is affirmed by Ælian and others), and therefore more fitly employed to pick out the eyes of undutiful children. But I look upon this as having more of fancy than solidity in it: for others, for the quite contrary reason, make the *eagles* here named, because they are a bird full of piety; as hath been observed out of Aben Ezra, by our learned Dr. Castell, whose discourse in his speech (in Schol. Theol. p. 31.) I shall here set down for the explication of one word in this verse; wherein he differs from all others: which is יקהת. This word the Hebrews interpret *doctrina*, and understand the verse thus: *The eye that despiseth the doctrine or the lesson of his mother*, &c. But there is no known root in their language from whence to derive this signification of it: and therefore that doctor, out of the neighbouring languages, translates it rather *senium, old age:* which is most agreeable to the sense of the place. For that which is despised by the *eye* is some corporal defect (as *crookedness, wrinkles, shaking of the head*, &c. and such-like things which attend old age), not any thing belonging to the mind. And besides (saith he) it better agrees with what follows of the *eagle's young ones* picking out such an eye: for they are observed to bear a regard to their ancients, and to have a kind of piety in them.

[*i*] In the next words, (ver. 18—20.) he resolves another riddle they put to him, which was this: *What things are most obscure and unaccountable, though ordinary and common?* of which I have given the best explication I could in the Paraphrase; but cannot farther explain here, without making this preface (which must necessarily be longer than ordinary, unless I should give no account of several things in the following verses which require explication) a great deal too much exceed the proportion which belongs to it.

[*k*] Next to these four *inscrutable* things, he subjoins four more, which are *very grievous*, or rather *intolerable*, because of their great indignity: (ver. 21—23.) the two first belong to men, and the disturbance of the commonwealth; the two last to women, and the disturbance of private families. And there are reasons peculiar to each: *ex. gr.* a slave is intolerable when he gets the

sceptre into his hand (as they have done sometimes), partly because such persons, being ill-bred, generally have base principles, and are accustomed to vile things; and grow insolent by their good fortune: partly because they are full of fears and suspicions, especially that they are despised and contemned; and, therefore, believing they are not loved, they will be feared, and care not what cruelties they exercise to keep men under. Part of which the Jews object to themselves in Schebet Judah; where they bring in a philosopher laying this to their charge, That they affecting dominion in the city of Toledo, proceeded to such boldness and sauciness, that they would openly strike Christians: which fulfilled, saith he, that of Solomon, xxx. 22.

[*l*] The like might be said of the other three; but I shall only observe concerning the last, that there being another way of explaining it, besides that which is most obvious, I have not omitted it: because the LXX. go that way, who thus render it, *When a servant-maid casts her mistress out of doors.* And there is a third way, which I have not mentioned, because it is not so agreeable to the words; when the mistress is not expelled, but the *maid also is taken to wife and preferred in the husband's love:* as N. de Lyra takes it: examples of which we have in history, that have proved very fatal to families. But this preface, as I said, would be too long if I should name them; therefore I pass to the next.

[*m*] Which seems to be an answer to this question, "Quid est magnum in minimo?" *What is great in little?* or rather in *the least?* ver. 24, &c. where he teaches us several things: first, not to admire merely bodily bulk, strength, or beauty; but rather wisdom, diligence, and sagacity, to understand and pursue our own interest: secondly, to admire the wisdom and power of God in the smallest things: and, thirdly (as Melancthon adds), to reflect upon our own degenerate state, who neglect our own greatest good; nay, mind not self-preservation, but rather destroy ourselves by vice and wickedness: and, lastly, not to refuse admonition from the brutes. Among which, saith he, the *ants* teach us industry and forecast; the *rabbits* not to attempt any thing above our strength; the *locusts*, to preserve society by industry, and not to break it by sedition and disturbance of the public order; and the *spider*, to endeavour to excel in some art or other. All of them teach us not to rely merely on strength, but to use counsel and prudence.

The first and second of which reflections I find in St. Chrysostom, who discourses admirably (Hom. xii. ad pop. Antioch. p. 139.) of the wonderfulness of the Divine artifice, which in so small a body as that of the *ant* hath contrived such a perpetual desire of labour. To which, if we attend, we cannot but receive this instruction, *μὴ καταμαλακίζεσθαι, μηδὲ φεύγειν ἱδρῶτα καὶ πόνους· not to affect softness and delicacy, nor fly from sweat and labours.* And when the wise man sends us, saith he, to learn of these little creatures, he does just as we are wont to do in families; when the greater and the better sort have offended in any thing, we endeavour to shame them, by pointing to the little children, saying, Βλέπε τὸν μικρότερον σου, πῶς ἐστι σπουδαῖος καὶ διεγηγερμένος. *Behold, one that is a great deal less than thou, how towardly, how attentive and ready he is to do as he is bidden.*

[*n*] But that word which we translate *conies*, ver. 26. (which are not so small a creature as Solomon here speaks of, nor make their holes in rocks) Bochartus hath evidently proved signifies a *mouse* in those countries (whose hinder legs are longer than their fore legs), called by the Arabians in their language *aljarbuo;* whose craft I have briefly expressed in the Paraphrase.

[*o*] In what is said of the *locusts* also, ver. 27. I have followed him: who observes, that to *go forth*, is a Scripture phrase for *making war*. In which the general was wont to divide the prey among the soldiers, after a victory: but the *locusts*, having no settled constant commander, divide among themselves. Yet I have not neglected our translation.

[*p*] Which in the twenty-eighth verse hath forsaken the ancient interpreters, who take *semamith* not for a *spider*, but for a small sort of *lizard;* from its spots called *stellio;* which is accounted by all authors a very crafty creature: and to which the characters here given by Solomon do most properly belong. As the same Bochartus hath shewn at large, lib. iv. cap. 7. de Sacr. Animal. par. i. But if any have a list to understand hereby some sort of *spider*, they may read Cœlius Secundus's little book called Araneus: in which he represents the wonderful wisdom of God, in the structure of this small creature: together with its admirable agility, and cunning; both in *weaving* its *webs* and *nets;* and in *hunting* for its prey (particularly for young *lizards*), and in *preserving* itself; and its foresense of dangers, and of opportunities to catch its prey: for instance, against rainy weather; when other little creatures grow dull in their motion and in their sight. In short, he observes, that as there is nothing in appearance so mean, so abject, so small, in which the Creator of all is not to be adored, and whose usefulness is not very great; so there are five things which are admirable in that sort of *spider*, which he describes: the exhausted matter which it spins out of so small a body; the wisdom of its contrivances; strength in fighting; knowledge of the future; and usefulness for medicine.

[*pp*] And from all these four, some have noted, that an abridgment may be made of all that is necessary for the conversation of a kingdom in good estate: where, first, care must be taken for provision of food, which we learn from the *pismire;* then for secure and commodious dwelling, which we learn from the second sort of creature; and then that there be concord and agreement among domestics and citizens, which we learn from the third; and lastly, that labour, industry, and ingenious arts be encouraged and advanced, which we learn from the fourth.

[*q*] After the consideration of these four little creatures, of small strength and contemptible aspect, he places four other which are great, stately, and undaunted, (ver. 29, &c.) In which there are two considerable difficulties; one about that word in ver. 31. which we translate a *greyhound* (the Vulgar a *cock;* though Maldonate ingeniously conjectures the true reading in St. Jerome was *gallicus canis*, which afterward came to be corrupted into *gallus*), but I take rather for a *horse* (as our margin hath it), being a far braver and more stately creature than either of those; especially when he prances, and is managed by a rider.

The other is about the last words of the same verse: which are the character he gives of *a king*, (who perhaps is immediately placed after the *he-goat*, because that creature in Scripture is an emblem of majesty, Dan. viii. 5. 21. Isa. xiv. 9. Jer. l. 8, &c.) *alkûm immò*, which Bochartus translates, *against whom none of his subjects ought to rise.* For though many do, yet it is so contrary to their duty, and so dangerous, that he therefore calls him *Alkum, against whom none arises.* So Pallas was called by the Phœnicians, *Ela Alkuma*, the goddess against whom none made *insurrection.* And the city in Bœotia that was sacred to her (she being reputed to be born there) was called Alalcomenas: for though it was small and built in a plain, yet it always remained untouched and inviolated, because, out of reverence to the goddess, πάντες ἀπείχοντο πάσης βίας (as Strabo speaks), *all men abstained from all force and violence to it.* Thus he discourses in his Epist. quæ Resp. ad tres Quest. p. 43. And I find he had said it before in his Phaleg. second part, lib. i. cap. 16. where he translates *melec Alcum, rex invictus, an invincible king.*

But there is another conjecture of a very learned man of our own, Mr. Pocock, (Not. ad Greg. Abulfarai. p. 203.) which is so pat, that I could not omit it in my Paraphrase. For, according to the Arabic use of the word *alkum* (out of which language both rabbins and Christians take the liberty to expound the Hebrew words of the Bible, when they are singular), the sense is still more pregnant, and sounds thus: *A king with whom his people is*, or *whom his people follow.* For as, when there is such a happy agreement between king and people, there is nothing more comely; so then he appears with the greatest and most awful majesty, and strikes terror into all his enemies.

[*r*] The two last verses, if we take them severed from the foregoing, are an advice how to be happy: which the whole chapter shews in effect is, to endeavour to be innocent. But because no man can be so wise as never to do a foolish thing; he seems, in conclusion, to tell what is next to that, *viz.* when we have miscarried any way, not to justify it; but to appease those whom we have offended, by silence: taking shame to ourselves, and not defending what we have done amiss, much less making complaints of others, &c. For (as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase, ver. last) by insisting upon our innocence, or charging others, or exaggerating faults, very great mischiefs may ensue.

But these two verses may be connected with that which precedes (though I have not been bold to do it, because interpreters go the other way); and ver. 32. may be an advice to *subjects* if they have offended their prince any way, and been so foolish as to oppose him, not to persist in their error; much less to defend it, and clamour upon the government, &c. but sit down in silence, bewailing the guilt, and imploring a pardon. And then ver. 33. may be looked upon as advice to *princes*, not to oppress their subjects; and thereby provoke them to rebel against them.

The Vulgar Latin seems to refer both to *princes:* for thus runs the sense of ver. 32. according to that translation (which I cannot indeed reconcile well with the Hebrew), *It sometimes happens, that he who is advanced on high* (to a throne suppose) *appears to be a fool: who if he had understood* (*viz.* his danger, or his folly, or what had been best for him) *would have put his hand upon his mouth:* that is, never have desired that dignity which, perhaps, he earnestly sought. And, though I know not how to justify this translation, it agrees well with what follows, which may well be applied unto *princes*, that *it is great folly to strain things too far.* Either the *laws*, which if extended to the utmost rigour will, by such hard construction, become the bane of human society; or their *taxes* and exactions beyond what the people can bear. For by squeezing them too much, most dangerous seditions and rebellions have happened under excellent princes.

And thus Melancthon understands the beginning of this verse, (ver. 33.) that empires and governments ought to be moderate; according to two excellent sayings of Plato and Solon; which he alleges: and then concludes that *anger* also ought to be repressed (according to the admonition in the last words), lest public discords arise which draw after them vast ruins: and ofttimes arise from light causes; which ought to have been mollified and cured by some moderation, and not exasperated into a flame.

Ver. 1. *THE words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal.*] Here now follow some memorable sayings of Agur, who was the son of Jakeh; out of whose works these weighty sentences were collected, which he uttered like a prophetical teacher to Ithiel, one of his most eminent scholars, and to Ucal, another of them, but especially to the former. See Arg. [*a*] [*c*]

Ver. 2. *Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.*] Who admiring his wisdom, and desiring to be resolved in many difficulties, Agur modestly and humbly said, Do not call me wise: for I am so far from that acuteness which is natural to him who excels in wisdom, that I am stupid, in comparison with such a person; nay, I cannot arrogate to myself the understanding of a common man. See Arg. [*b*] [*c*]

Ver. 3. *I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.*] And as for improvements, which are made by the help of knowing persons, I have not had the advantages of many other men: for I was never brought up in the schools of the prophets, where I might have learned some wisdom, much less have I received the knowledge of such sacred mysteries as thou inquirest after; the most I can pretend unto is, only to know what belongs to a pious life. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 4. *Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?*] But had I a greater reach, or been better bred, it would have been impossible for me to give an account of the works of God; much less of God himself. For where is he among all the wise men that ever went up into heaven, and came down again to tell us the order and motion of the stars; and all the rest that is done there? Nay, who is it, that can so much as give us the least account of the wind, but God alone? who hath it perfectly in his

power to make it cease and blow again as he pleaseth. And to come lower yet, who but he hath tied up the waves of the sea, that they should not exceed their bounds? Or, who hath fixed the earth (on which thou dwellest, and therefore art better acquainted withal) within such limits, as it never breaks? By what name is he called that can explain these things? or, if thou knowest, tell me the name of his son, or of his family; that, if he be dead, we may inquire of them.

Ver. 5. *Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.*] The most that any man can do for thy satisfaction, is this; to send thee to the book of God, and bid thee be content with what he hath there revealed of himself, and of his will; which in every part of it is so sincere, and free from all mixture of deceit, that thou mayest safely rely upon it; and take his word, that he will protect and defend all those who, in obedience to his commands, trust him for what he hath promised.

Ver. 6. *Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.*] Let this suffice thee; and do not pretend to greater acquaintance with his will, than really thou hast; by adding any thing of thy own to God's word, and vouching it for his; which may bring thee into great danger of the severest punishments from him; for being guilty of the worst of forgeries, in counterfeiting Divine inspiration.

Ver. 7. *Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die.*] And in answer to the question about prayer, *(what things thou shouldest ask of God?)* I have not much to say neither; for I would not have thee multiply words, but say, as I am wont to do: I humbly beg only two things of thee, O God; which I most earnestly beseech thee, I may not want, as long as I stay in this world.

Ver. 8. *Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me.*] The first is for my mind; that I may be perfectly secured from being deceived myself by false opinions, especially concerning thee and religion; and from being any ways guilty of deceiving other men: and then, for the supply of my bodily necessities, I desire thou wouldest neither give me scarcity nor superfluity; but, if I may choose, a middle between both: making me such a competent allowance as may be sufficient to maintain me decently, in that state and condition of life wherein thou hast placed me. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 9. *Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.*] For I am sensible how great danger there is, either in having abundance of wealth, which may tempt me to be so profane and irreligious, as not only to forget the Donor of all good things, but atheistically to contemn thy worship and service; nay, insolently to profess, that I know no such thing as the Lord, nor have any thing to do with him: or in a beggarly condition, which may press me, first to be injurious unto others for my own relief; and then to run into the fearful crime of perjury, to purge myself from the charge of theft, (Exod. xxii. 8. 11.)

Ver. 10. *Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.*] As for rules of behaviour towards others, they are generally well known; and therefore I only admonish thee to avoid one thing (to which our nation is too prone); that is, not to abuse any poor slave, whose condition is wretched enough; and therefore, for instance, rather excuse than aggravate his fault to his master, who perhaps is too rigorous: and be sure never to load him with unjust accusations, lest, being wronged by thee, and not knowing how to right himself, he appeal to the Lord, and pray him to punish thee; and thou, being found guilty, feel the heavy effects of his vengeance. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 11. *There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.*] And now, to answer your inquiry, *What company you should keep?* there are four sorts of men, I would have you set a mark upon, and cautiously shun. First, they that are foully ungrateful to them from whom they have received many benefits: for such a sort of men there is, who have no sense of obligations, no, not to their parents, to whom they have the greatest; but rail upon their father, nay, wish him dead; and cannot speak a good word of their mother.

Ver. 12. *There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.*] Next to these are a sort of hypocrites; who have a great opinion of their own purity, and would be thought by others very virtuous: but hide the greatest filthiness, both in their minds and lives (which either they do not see, or will not take care to purge away), under this outward garb of holiness.

Ver. 13. *There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.*] There is a third sort, whose pride and arrogance is so lofty, that it appears in their very countenance; and makes them superciliously overlook all other men, as if they were not worthy of the least respect from them.

Ver. 14. *There is a generation whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw-teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.*] But the fourth and last sort is most mischievous, whose ravenous cruelty hath no example; unless you conceive a lion or wolf, that hath teeth, both small and great, as sharp as swords or knives, coming with open mouth to devour every creature that is weaker than themselves: such is the savage oppression of tyrants, extortioners, calumniators, &c. who have no mercy upon the poor and needy; but make their condition (which moves compassion in other men) so insufferable, that they are weary of living any longer in the world.

Ver. 15. *The horse-leech hath two daughters, crying, Give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, It is enough.*] And here I will satisfy one of your other questions, *What creature is most insatiable?* I answer, the *horse-leech;* which sucks the blood of other creatures till it bursts: as those wicked men do the livelihood of the poor, till they ruin themselves. And in this perpetual craving more and more, without any end, there are two things so like the horse-leech, that they may be called her daughters: nay, there are three that are never satisfied; or rather four, whose desires cannot be filled. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 16. *The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough.*] They are these: *death,* or the *grave;* which having consumed so many past generations, will as greedily swallow up and consume all that are yet to come: the *barren womb;* which is wont to be desirous of children beyond measure: the *earth,* which drinks up all the rain

that falls upon it, and still thirsts for more: and the *fire*, which devours all the fuel that is thrown into it, and never ceases to burn, as long as there is any thing to feed it.

Ver. 17. *The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.*] I will not end this, till I have pronounced the doom of the first sort of wicked men, now mentioned, (ver. 11.) who are so ungrateful to their parents, as not only to disobey their commands, but to scorn, nay, and deride their persons; and mock at the infirmities of their old age: whose villanies shall bring them to an infamous end, and expose their dead bodies for a prey to the ravens (which frequent the brooks that run in the valleys) and to the young eagles; who shall pick out those eyes, in which their scorn and derision of their parents were wont to appear. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 18. *There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four, which I know not.*] To your next question, my answer is, that there are three things, whose motions are beyond my reach: nay a fourth, which is the most unaccountable of all the rest. See Arg. [*i*]

Ver. 19. *The way of an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent upon a rock, the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man with a maid.*] First, the wonderful swiftness of an eagle's flight into the air, quite out of our sight: (xxiii. 5.) secondly, the manner of a serpent's speedy creeping, without any feet, to the top of a slippery rock: thirdly, the way that a ship makes in the sea, though it seems sometime to sink to the bottom of the water, and to mount up into the air: but above all, the slipperiness of youth, (which is more inconstant than the air, &c.) and especially the impatience and restless tossing of a young man's mind, his cunning and sleights when he goes a wooing; and the wonderful arts he hath to slide into the heart of a maid, and win her love.

Ver. 20. *Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.*] And yet the subtilty of an adulterous woman is equal to this; both in crafty contrivances of secret ways to enjoy her filthy pleasures, and in casting a mist before her husband's eyes to conceal them, when she is in danger to be discovered. For having defiled his bed, she not only looks modestly and demurely, but professes the greatest innocency; and behaves herself as if she were the honestest woman, and the kindest wife too, in the world; like one that having eaten some forbidden meat, wipes her mouth, and says, she has not so much as tasted it; but abhors to let it come within her lips.

Ver. 21. *For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear.*] And to satisfy your other question, *What things are most intolerable?* my answer is, that three things make such a disturbance, that men groan under the load of them: nay, there are four, which are an insupportable grievance unto those that are oppressed by them. See Arg. [*k*]

Ver. 22. *For a servant when he reigneth, and a fool when he is filled with meat.*] First, the insolent cruelty of a vile slave, when he is advanced to a throne: secondly, the petulant rudeness of a fortunate fool; especially when he grows debauched, and is in one of his drunken fits:

Ver. 23. *For an odious woman when she is married, and a handmaid that is heir to her mistress.*] And, thirdly, a woman, whose moroseness, pride, and passion, and such-like ill qualities, make her hated by every body, when she gets a husband: and, lastly, a poor maid-servant, when she is puffed up by an estate, left her by her mistress; or, which is worse, that having supplanted her mistress, and thrust her, first out of her husband's affections, and then out of doors, succeeds in her place, and becomes his wife. See Arg. [*l*]

Ver. 24. *There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise.*] To these four *intolerable* things, of which all complain, I will add four more, that are very *contemptible*, but much admired: for though they have no bodily bulk, their wisdom is exceeding great, and very elaborate. See Arg. [*m*] [*pp*]

Ver. 25. *The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer.*] First, the ants: who are a creature so infirm, that one crush of our foot kills multitudes of them, and yet so provident, as well as industrious, that they prepare granaries under ground, with wonderful art, to receive their food: which they gather and lay up in harvest-time; and secure it too, that it may serve for all the year. (See vi. 8.)

Ver. 26. *The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks.*] Secondly, the mountain mice are a feeble sort of creatures also; but they have a leader to give them notice of any danger; and are so cunning, that they provide for their safety in high rocks: into which they have several entrances and outlets; that if they be assaulted in one port, they may escape at another. See Arg. [*n*]

Ver. 27. *The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands.*] Next, the locusts, which herein indeed differ from the former, that they have no king to govern them: yet go forth like soldiers to battle, in good order; and when they fall upon the spoil, divide it among themselves without any quarrel or contention. See Arg. [*o*]

Ver. 28. *The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.*] Lastly (the spider, which weaves a curious web, or rather) the little spotted lizard, which takes fast hold even on the flat cieling of houses; and there goes (with its body hanging down into the air) in pursuit of its prey: which as it nimbly catches, so it intrudes itself to hunt for it even in kings' palaces. See Arg. [*p*]

Ver. 29. *There be three things which go well, yea, four are comely in going.*] And here, after the consideration of these four contemptible things, it will be fit to answer your last question, *What things are most stately?* and there are three, or rather four things, whose motion is majestic, and go after a goodly manner.

Ver. 30. *A lion, which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any.*] First the lion, when he is come to his full growth; who is the most heroical and undaunted of all creatures; never turning his back for fear of the greatest multitude of hunters, or dogs, that set upon him.

Ver. 31. *A greyhound; a he-goat also; and a king, against whom there is no rising up.*] Next to him a strong and generous *horse;* especially when he is girt and equipped (as we speak) for the battle: and then the *he-goat*, with his long beard; when he walks in pompous state before the flock: and, lastly, a prosperous *king*, of invincible courage; especially when he reigns in the hearts of his people, and marches at the head of an unanimous, victorious army, whom none dare rise up to oppose. See Arg. [*q*]

Ver. 32. *If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth.*] If thy pride, or thy passion, hath engaged thee in some foolish action, whereby thou hast disgraced thyself; or made thee contrive and endeavour any thing that is unwarrantable; do not add one fault to another, by excusing it, or blaming any body but thyself for it; much less by quarrelling at those that admonish thee of it, and reprehend thee for it: but stop at the first motion to this, and silently acknowledge thy error. See Arg. [r]

Ver. 33. *Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood; so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.*] For from little things there is an easy progress unto greater. And just as you see milk is first pressed out of the cow's udder, and then being shaken in the churn is forced into butter; and as the nose being wrung, though at first it only purge itself, yet if it be harder pressed, there comes out blood: even so words, passing to and fro, raise a heat, and that, if continued, stirs up anger; and that, making men vehemently insist upon their opinion, or their desire, turns into scolding; and that, in the issue, grows up to quarrels, and irreconcilable enmities.

CHAP. XXXI.

ARGUMENT.

[a] It is generally taken for granted, both by Hebrew and Christian writers, that king Lemuel, whose mother gave him the precepts contained in this chapter, was Solomon; whom Bath-sheba took early care to instruct in his duty, being, as some of no small name fancy, divinely inspired with the gift of prophecy. But, as all this depends merely upon conjecture, and that without the least ground, so there is no good reason assigned why Solomon should here be called Lemuel; and not by the name he hath both in the beginning of the preface to this book, (Prov. i. 1.) and in the entrance of the first part, (x. 1.) and of the last collection also, (xxv. 1.) made by the men of Hezekiah: whom Grotius fancies to be the king here mentioned, under the name of Lemuel; only for this reason, that this chapter follows the collection of proverbs made by his servants: which hath no force at all in it; for the words of Agur follow more immediately; which he cannot ascribe to Hezekiah.

And therefore it is more reasonable to conceive this Lemuel to have been a prince in some other country; who had gathered some weighty sentences taught him by his mother (whose name is unknown), which it was thought fit to adjoin to the foregoing: because they are very wise, and of great moment; as if they proceeded from a prophetical spirit. And it is only the vanity of the Jewish nation, who would enclose all wisdom within the bounds of their own country, which hath made them ascribe that which follows in this chapter to Solomon and Bath-sheba. For which, as I said, there is no colour; but it appears by the history of the queen of Sheba, and the embassies which came from the kings thereabout, who sent to hear the wisdom of Solomon, (1 Kings iv. *ult.*) that there were even in those times great persons very inquisitive after knowledge, as there had been, in the times foregoing, in those eastern countries, and in Egypt; which was famous for wise men, 1 Kings iv. 30. where we read of the *wisdom of the children of the east* (*i. e.* Arabia, where Job, a considerable prince, and the rest of his friends, lived in former ages), and the wisdom of Egypt. Of which country some have thought those famous men to have been, who are mentioned in the next words, (ver. 31.) where this demonstration is given that Solomon's wisdom excelled all the wisdom of those countries; *For he was wiser than Ethan, the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda,* &c. upon which words Gasper Sanchez notes, That the Seder Olam says, *These were Egyptian wise men.* But it is not good to take things upon trust; for I find upon examination of the place (which is chap. 20. of the greater book of that name) that it saith no such thing, but only this, that *the sons of Zara, Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Chalcol, and Darda,* (mentioned 1 Chron. ii. 6.) *were prophets, who prophesied in Egypt.* But however this be, that very book acknowledges in the next chapter, that *there were prophets in other countries before the law of Moses was given: though after the delivery of it, the Holy Spirit,* they fancy, *forsook all the world but them; immediately upon the speaking of those words,* Exod. xxxiii. 16. xxxiv. 6. For which assertion, as there is not the least shadow of reason, so, supposing it were true, it must notwithstanding be confessed that there remained still among other nations many excellent and wise persons both men and women: who had such communication also with the Jews, that many of them were proselyted to their religion: which might have countenanced their authors if they had said (and it seems to me a better fancy than any they have) that Lemuel's mother was a Jewish lady, married to some prince of another country, by whom she had this son; and took care of his institution in the wisdom of her people.

And by the use of the word *bar* three times for a son, in the beginning of this instruction, (which is no where used in this book before, nor in the whole Bible more than once, Psal. ii. 12.) one would guess this Lemuel to have been some great person in Chaldea. For in the next verse also (ver. 4.) we meet with the word *melachin (kings),* according to the termination in the language of that country.

[b] But this is all uncertain, and therefore I proceed no farther in it: but only note, that whosoever was the mother of Lemuel, she was mightily solicitous to have him do well: as appears by ver. 2. Which some think to be a passionate expression, when she saw him begin to incline to evil courses; as if she had said, *What dost thou mean, my son,* &c. But it is more likely that it proceeded from a tender concern for his well-doing, as soon as ever he grew up; whilst he was yet innocent and untainted. And that he might so continue, she gives him three, or rather four, of the most proper advices that could be thought of for a prince.

[c] First, to subdue that lust which she knew to be very violent in youth; especially in young kings; who have more provocations, and are apt to take more licence, than other men: but bring thereby such mischiefs upon themselves and their kingdoms, as are not to be repaired; but often end in their destruction, (ver. 3.)

[d] In order to this, she admonishes him, in the second place, to avoid drunkenness; and to preserve himself

perfectly sober; whereby he would be fit also for counsel; and be able likewise to give a right judgment when causes are brought before him; (ver. 4.) which some extend so far, as to think she would not have him drink any wine at all, or other strong liquors (of which there were several made of honey, or dates, and divers other things; which go under the name of *schechar*). But it is more reasonable to look upon it, to caution against excess: which is dangerous in all men, but especially in those that are to govern others as well as themselves. For then they blurt out the greatest secrets, as the Vulgar translates the latter part of the verse; or grow furious and outrageous, as the LXX. translate the same passage: but both of them without any ground that I can see in the Hebrew text.

[*e*] In which follows (ver. 5.) the true reason of this prohibition; and then an account (ver. 6.) of their condition, to whom a larger quantity than ordinary, of wine or strong drink, is fit to be allowed. Not to *kings*, who have innumerable ways to relieve their cares, and to divert themselves, when any thing troubles them: but to poor miserable people, that are ready to faint under their heavy burdens and oppressions. For whom this is a present relief; and the only one sometimes they are capable of; when they are in a very melancholy condition. And they that are of such a temper, or are otherways made exceeding sad, can better bear a great deal of wine, without any disorder, than the sanguine, and they that are gay and merry. There are those that, by *men ready to perish*, have understood such as were *condemned to die*, and *going to execution*. Unto whom it was the custom to give a draught of wine, to support their spirits; and in the degenerate ages of the Jewish commonwealth, they put something into it to intoxicate the poor wretches, so that they might be insensible of pain. And some imagine this custom took its original from this place in the Proverbs; though it be not the true sense of the words. For the latter part of this verse, and that which follows, (ver. 7.) give the best explication of the first: and they shew she speaks of those that were *miserably poor*. And so the best Hebrew expositors interpret those words, Deut. xxvi. 5. My father was a Syrian, *ready to perish:* that is, extreme poor; and in want of all things.

[*f*] And thus having enlarged this second advice a little, she passes to the third: which is, (ver. 8.) to take such care that justice be exactly administered (without which no kingdom can subsist), as himself to undertake the defence of those, who were in danger to lose a good cause; for want of an advocate to plead it for them, or to open the true state of it, &c. Especially, she commends to him the patronage of *strangers, orphans*, and *poor indigent people*. The first of which, in the Hebrew, are called *children of change;* or *that are passed by:* that is, persons who *have changed their country;* or, that are in danger to *suffer grievous alterations* in their condition, if right be not done them; or, *who are deserted by all*, and have none to stand by them. Several other ways there are to explain the phrase; but to the same purpose.

[*g*] But the great care of parents being to see their son well married, she concludes with the description of such a wife, as she would have him seek: which takes up the rest of the chapter, from ver. 10. to the end. And it is in the form of a *poem* (as St. Jerome takes it), consisting of a sort of iambic verses: each of which begins with a new letter of the alphabet in order; the tenth with *aleph*, the eleventh with *beth*, and so to the bottom. Which was an elegant sort of composure among the ancients, and a help to memory also; as we see in several Psalms, and other parts of Scripture.

Now whether she composed these verses herself, or got her sense expressed by some eminent poet, cannot be known; nor is it material. But I do not think fit to follow the conjecture of Huetius, (in his late Demonst. Evang.) who imagines the words of Lemuel's mother to end with the ninth verse: and here to begin a distinct composition of some other person: suppose Solomon. For though this following poem be disjoined from the foregoing words in the LXX. and differs herein from the rest, that in the beginning of every verse the order of the Hebrew alphabet is observed: yet there being no words in the head of it as there are in chap. xxx. and the beginning of this chapter, to denote it to belong to another author, I take it to be of the same piece with the first nine verses. That is, to be a copy of verses, delivered to Lemuel by his mother, in commendation of an excellent woman: which, perhaps, she did not make herself (though there be no proof of that, and both Deborah and Hannah we find were poets), but, notwithstanding, being recommended to him by her, would, she thought, have the same authority with him, as if she had been the author. And it is very observable, that the general character of such a woman as she would have him marry, is *escheth chajil*, a *virtuous woman*, we translate it. Which word *chajil*, signifies both *strength* (or rather *valour* and *courage*) and *riches* and *virtue*. And, in the description of fitting persons for the magistracy, Jethro, in general, saith, they should be *anschee chajil*, (Exod. xviii. 21.) which we translate *able men:* and then follows more particularly wherein their *ability* should consist, *such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness*. I take, therefore, *escheth chajil* to include in it a great *fear of God*, (mentioned afterward, ver. 30.) which is so powerful, as to endue one with courage to do well, when piety is contemned; nay, laughed at and abused: I have not therefore omitted this among other words, to express the force of this phrase.

[*h*] And then follow, after this, abundance of other good qualities, which are included in this: such as chastity; and such a care of her husband's estate, that he might have a perfect confidence in her management; love to him without moroseness; diligence in all household affairs; frugality; gentleness in the government of her family; a prudent care in the education of her children; and in setting all the family to some employment or other; and increasing also her husband's estate, and yet giving liberally to the poor; affability and courtesy to all, &c. Which excellent endowments if her son found in a wife, she knew it would be a certain means to preserve him from following other women, (ver. 3.) when he took perfect delight in her company: and from *drunkenness* also, (ver. 4.) which few fall into who entirely love their wives, and study to please them in all things: for they generally abhor this loathsome vice. In order to this, she would have him marry such a one, as he could per-

fectly confide in; and never in the least suspect of any levity, or unfaithfulness, or carelessness, when he was abroad; (ver. 11.) and would never be cross to him; but always loving, and kind, and pleasing, when he was at home, (ver. 12.)

[*i*] An excellent housewife also; prone to take any pains herself, that she might give a good example to others: particularly in the linen and woollen manufacture; in which the greatest women, it appears by ancient authors, constantly employed themselves heretofore, with such diligence, as is highly praised in their books, ver. 13. where, to express her propension to this work, he ascribes a *willingness* and *forwardness* to her hands; just as, Prov. xxi. 25. he makes the hands of the sluggard to be averse to labour.

[*k*] Which turns to a great account, she shews, both in foreign commodities, (ver. 14.) and in the purchase of land, (ver. 16.) which the good housewife herself views, and walks about with great expedition, (ver. 17.) tucking up her garments (as we speak) that she may be fit for motion every where: and not minding fine clothes more than her business, nor, for fear of spoiling them, neglecting that; but preferring strength in her arms acquired by labour, before the ornaments wherewith they are wont to be adorned.

[*l*] The profit of which she finds is so great, that it makes her love labour better than sleep; and when there is haste of work, to continue it all night: so ver. 18. may be expounded.

After which follows (ver. 19.) another instance of humble greatness. Then her charity to the poor, (ver. 20.) her care of her own family, (ver. 21.) where the last word having different senses, I have expressed them all in the Paraphrase.

[*m*] And then is wisely mentioned (ver. 22.) her magnificence in the hanging of her house, and of her bed, and in her own apparel: which was the more allowable when the poor were not neglected; and the decking herself and house, did not make her forget their necessities. The particular words there, I have not room to explain. Nor those which follow, ver. 23. (after she had mentioned the honour her husband would get by such a wife, ver. 24.) for I think it is needful to give a brief account of ver. 25.

[*n*] Which seems not unfitly translated by Castalio to this sense: *that she being thus amply provided, and fortified, as it were, against all accidents; need not fear any want in future times.* But considering what follows, (ver. 26, 27.) I have chosen only to touch on that sense; and to take the *strength and honour* for the excellent qualities belonging to her: which I have called her *principal ornaments;* because the Hebrews are wont to express that which adorns any person, and is most proper to them, by the name of *clothing:* as Psal. cxxxii. 9. "Thy priests shall be clothed with righteousness."

[*o*] The rest I must wholly omit, and only observe, that *the fear of the Lord* in the conclusion, (ver. 30.) is the foundation of all these virtues (which will either not be found, where there is no devout sense of God; or not be constant and equal, but vary as several passions govern and rule their spirits), especially when it is in such a high degree, that a woman values herself for *fear of the Lord,* more than any thing else. So the LXX. translate it; *A prudent woman is commended; but she praises the fear of the Lord:* which may have this sense also, that *her virtues commend religion unto others. Religion itself is honoured by her excellent virtues:* which are so exemplary, that they make others in love with them, as well as with her.

I conclude all with the observation of Melancthon, that this description, which he calls "Speculum honestæ matronæ," is altogether simple and plain, without any such allegories as Simonides used, who said, "he was happy that married a wife like a bee:" and that all this, in a manner, is comprehended by the apostle in those words, 1 Tim. ii. *ult.* She shall be saved in child-bearing, if they continue *in faith,* and *charity,* and *holiness, with sobriety. Faith,* saith he, is the acknowledgment of the true God, and confidence in his Son Jesus Christ (that is, belief of the whole gospel), out of which springs the *love of God,* and from thence the love of her husband and children: and then *holiness* or *sanctification,* which is that virtue we call *chastity;* and, lastly, *temperance,* as he translates it, moderation in meat and drink; or rather, all manner of *sober behaviour,* and *prudence,* in the government of the family, and in the moderation of all sorts of expenses, &c. Which things the apostle particularly mentions; because, in the enumeration of virtues, it is the manner of the holy writers to name those only, which are most proper and suitable to every one's state and vocation.

Ver. 1. *THE words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.*] Unto those sayings of Agur, let these of king Lemuel be added and considered: which are weighty sentences also, (xxx. 1.) which his mother taught him with such authority, as if she had been a prophetess. See Arg. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?*] And with no less tenderness and affection also, saying, Hearken, my dear son, for whose well-doing, O how much am I concerned! I want words to express the care I have about it: I am at a loss how to instruct thee according to my wishes: what shall I desire thee to do for my sake, who endured so much for thee; when I carried thee in my womb, and brought thee forth from thence? what shall I pray thee to do? for whom I have made so many prayers to God; and vows too, if I might but see thee come safe into the world, and grow to be a man, and sit upon a throne. See Arg. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.*] In the first place, let me prevail with thee, as thou lovest me, and as thou lovest thyself, to be chaste in thy desires of bodily pleasures, and not to give up thyself to follow thy lust after women; which will destroy the strength of thy body, weaken thy mind, and exhaust thy treasures: that is, engage thee in such courses as are the bane of kings; and, by making them neglect their government, have brought many of them and their kingdoms to utter ruin. See Arg. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes strong drink.*] And next to this, O Lemuel, kings of all other men, kings, I say, should be sparing, very sparing, in the use of wine, and of all

other intoxicating drink: and so should their counsellors, and commanders of armies, and judges, and all other ministers and officers. See Arg. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.*] For they may injure more than themselves, when they are in drink. If a cause, for instance, be brought before a prince or a judge, and his thoughts are confused by the fumes of wine, he may quite forget the standing rules whereby he ought to determine it: and things appearing to him quite otherwise than they are, he may not only judge amiss, but unjustly condemn those that ought to have been acquitted; and undo poor and afflicted people, by giving away their right, when the comfort of their whole life depends upon his justice.

Ver. 6. *Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts.*] If the liberal use of wine and strong drink is to be indulged to any body, it is to those miserable wretches, and the meaner sort of persons: whom it may be charity to comfort therewith when they are in danger to perish, for want of the necessary supports of life; or are oppressed with grief and sorrow in any other deplorable condition. See Arg. [*e*]

Ver. 7. *Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.*] Then bring forth plenty of wine, and set it before such a disconsolate person: let him drink freely till he hath cheered his heart, and raised his drooping spirits, and be able to think of something else, beside his poverty and misery; nay, till he be so merry, as quite to forget the cares and wearisome labours that they bring upon him.

Ver. 8. *Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.*] And this is the third thing I beg of thee, to administer justice exactly to all thy subjects, and not merely commit the care of it unto others: but sit thyself upon the bench; and if thou seest a man in danger to lose his right, because he is not able to make it out, and, through fear, or ignorance, or want of elocution, cannot speak for himself, keep not silence, but undertake his defence; especially if it be the cause of strangers, who understand not the laws, and perhaps are in danger to suffer some great damage, in their bodies, credits, or estates. See Arg. [*f*]

Ver. 9. *Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.*] And when thou hast cleared the righteousness of their cause, fear not to pronounce the sentence boldly, according as the laws require: let no man persuade thee to admit delays; but bring the business to a speedy issue; that he who is poor, nay, a mere beggar, may neither be oppressed by doing him injustice, or by deferring to do him right.

Ver. 10. *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.*] And now, next to this, I shall commend a good wife unto thee: in the choice of whom, a singular care ought to be employed. But, alas! such a woman as I would have is scarce, and hard to be found. One that is not only industrious, but pious, and can command herself as well as govern her family: being enriched with all those virtuous qualities, which make her far more valuable than all the pearls of precious stones, that women love to be adorned withal. See Arg. [*g*]

Ver. 11. *The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.*] I can only give the character of her (which may serve to direct others, as well as thee, in their search after such a person), in whose chastity, as well as prudence, frugality, and fidelity, in ordering affairs at home, her husband hath such a confidence, that he may go abroad, and attend the public affairs; without the least care or solicitude what will become of his domestic concerns; and not be tempted to enrich himself, or supply his own necessities, with the spoil of other men. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 12. *She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life.*] She will not only endeavour to answer his love with an equal affection, but to provoke and excite it, by pleasing him in every thing; and avoiding whatsoever is ungrateful to him: nay, by deserving well of him, and studying to promote the interest of him and his family, and to maintain his honour and reputation; and that not only by fits, and in a good humour, but all the days of her life; even after he is dead, if she survive him. See Arg. [*h*]

Ver. 13. *She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.*] Idleness is so hateful to her, that she need not be desired to employ herself in some piece of good housewifery: but of her own accord sets up a linen and woollen manufacture: to which she applies her own hands so willingly, as well as dexterously, that it appears she delights in the work. See Arg. [*i*]

Ver. 14. *She is like the merchant's ships, she bringeth her food from afar.*] And therewith she maintains her family without expense, by carrying on a gainful traffic for foreign commodities (which she gets in exchange for these), as if her husband set out a fleet of merchant ships; to fetch them from far-distant countries.

Ver. 15. *She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.*] Nor doth she indulge herself in over-much sleep, but is an early riser, before the break of day; to make provision for those that are to go abroad to work in the fields; and to set her maidens their several tasks at home.

Ver. 16. *She considereth a field, and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hand she planteth a vineyard.*] So far she is from wasting her husband's estate, that by her prudent management she continually increases it: first purchasing a field for corn, when she meets with one that she judges worth her money; and then, out of the mere product of her own labours, adding a vineyard to it, which she causes to be well planted.

Ver. 17. *She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.*] And as her diligence is unwearied, so she is neither slow in her dispatches, nor refuses any pains; but nimbly bestirs herself, and goes roundly (as we say) about her business: nay, exercises her arms to the strongest labours, both within doors and without. See Arg. [*k*]

Ver. 18. *She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.*] For finding, by sweet experience, not only how wholesome labour is, but what profit her traffic yields, she doth not conclude her work with the day; but continues it as much in the night as can be spared from necessary sleep. See Arg. [*l*]

Ver. 19. *She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.*] And she doth not think it beneath her quality to put her hands to the spindle: but twists the thread or the yarn with her own fingers; and winds them with her own hands.

Ver. 20. *She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.*] Which she stretches forth with no less forwardness to relieve the poor: being not only for getting all she can, but for giving liberally, out of her gains, to needy people; whom she supplies cheerfully, as well as bountifully; and extends her charity not only to those who are near, but to those who are remoter from her.

Ver. 21. *She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.*] Yet such is her prudence withal, that her own family and domestic servants are in no danger to suffer hereby, in the hardest winter: for she provides them with change of raiment, for the several seasons, and with double garments when the weather is cold; nay, not only clothes them, but adorns them so, that they may appear in a splendid manner, when they are to wait upon her. See Arg. [*l*]

Ver. 22. *She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.*] The furniture of her house also is very noble, and her own apparel suitable to it: in which her greatness is not the less, but the more conspicuous; because they are of her own making. See Arg. [*m*]

Ver. 23. *Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.*] And so are her husband's robes; which make him noted, when he comes into the courts of judicature, and sits among the senators of the country: who call him a happy man in such a wife, as doth him honour, and eases him of all his cares, but only those of the public business: which her wisdom, diligence, and prudent management, give him leisure wholly to attend.

Ver. 24. *She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.*] For such is her industry, that she exercises more arts than one or two, to enrich her family; making, for instance, very fine linen, with embroidered belts, and girdles curiously wrought; which she sells to the Phœnician merchant.

Ver. 25. *Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.*] But her principal ornaments are, the firmness, constancy, and vigour of her mind; her modest, comely, and decent behaviour; her generous and honourable way of dealing with every one: which (accompanied with the forenamed diligence, &c.) make her so happy, that they free her from all fear of what may be hereafter; and prepare her to meet old age, and death itself, with joyful satisfaction. See Arg. [*m*]

Ver. 26. *She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.*] Unto which add this singular grace; that as she is neither silent nor talkative, so she loves not to talk of frivolous, but of serious things; of which, when occasion serves, she discourses pertinently and judiciously, not expressing her passion, but her wisdom: which shews itself not only in the constant softness and sweetness of her unprovoking language; but in the instructions and exhortations she gives unto doing good, exercising mercy, living peaceably and lovingly together; which is the lesson she inculcates every where.

Ver. 27. *She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.*] But especially in her own family, where she narrowly observes the motions and manners of every one; whom she neither suffers to gad abroad at their pleasure, nor to labour at home without good instructions; but teaches them how to live as they ought; and by this, if she did nothing else, deserves the bread she eats.

Ver. 28. *Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.*] Happy are the sons of such a mother, whose care both of their good education and to make provision for them, excites them, when they are grown up, to extol her virtues: happy is the husband of such a wife, whom he can never sufficiently commend; but having recited all her praises, saith,

Ver. 29. *Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.*] Daughters may do much by their housewifery, but nothing like to the care of a virtuous wife; and of all the wives that have done worthily, and mightily advanced the state of their family, there were never any comparable unto thee; whose merits far transcend them all.

Ver. 30. *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.*] A handsome shape and graceful behaviour are very taking; and so are a good complexion and lovely features: but, alas! as the greatest beauty soon fades and vanishes, so many ill qualities may lie concealed under goodly looks (which will utterly spoil all the happiness that a man promised himself in such a choice); and therefore a truly religious woman, who dares not any way offend the Lord, is that amiable person, and she alone, who will please a man always, and deserve perpetual praises.

Ver. 31. *Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.*] Let every one extol her virtue, for I cannot do it enough; let her not want the just commendations of her pious labours; but, while some are magnified for the nobleness of the stock from whence they spring, others for their fortune, others for their beauty, others for other things; let the good deeds which she herself hath done be publicly praised in the greatest assemblies; where, if all men should be silent, her own works will declare her excellent worth.

ECCLESIASTES;

OR, THE PREACHER.

WITH ANNOTATIONS ON EACH CHAPTER.

PREFACE.

I. THIS book, not carrying in the front of it the express name of Solomon, it hath emboldened some to take the liberty of entitling other authors to it. Hezekiah, for instance, whom the Talmudists make to speak those words in the entrance of it, *The words of the Preacher*, &c. or Isaiah, as R. Moses Kimchi, with some other Jews, fancy: or, to name no more, Zerubbabel, whom Grotius (in his notes upon chap. xii. 11.) conjectures to have appointed certain men to make this *collection*. For so he would have the word *Coheleth* translated a *collector*, or heaper up of opinions, rather than a *preacher*.

II. But there are so many passages in the book which agree to none but Solomon, that it is a wonder so great a man as Grotius should be led away from the common opinion, by such slight reasons as I shall presently mention. For instance, there never was any body that could truly speak those words which we read ver. 16. of the first chapter, but only Solomon: for neither Hezekiah, nor Isaiah, nor Zerubbabel, kept such great state as he did, much less excelled him in wisdom: and who but he could boast of such things as are mentioned chap. ii. 4—9. to represent the splendour wherein he lived, above all that had been before him in Jerusalem? Or, on the contrary, who had such reason as he to make that sad complaint (chap. vii. 26, &c.) of the mischief he had received by women? And, to omit the rest, those words in the last chapter (ver. 9, 10.) can belong to none but him, who *set in order many proverbs*, as appears in the foregoing book.

III. Which things are so convincing, that Grotius is forced to acknowledge that Zerubbabel caused this book to be composed in the name of king Solomon (for he was no king himself, but a governor under the king of Persia), repenting of his former vain and sinful life. Which very acknowledgment carries in it a plain solution of the principal argument, whereby he was led to this odd opinion: which is, that he finds some words in this book that are no where to be met withal, but in Daniel and Ezra, and the Chaldee interpreters. Which makes it probable, he thinks, that it was written after their captivity in Babylon. But supposing Solomon to write here as a penitent, after he had frequented the company of many outlandish women, (of whom we read 1 Kings xi. 1, 2.) it need not seem strange to us that he had learned the use of many of their words. And so, notwithstanding this objection, he may still be thought to have been the author of this book himself: which the Hebrews generally conceive to have been written by him, towards the end of his reign, after he had tried all manner of pleasures, even to an excess. Besides, in other books of Scripture there are words, for the signification of which we are fain to have resort unto other languages; and particularly the Arabic, because they are not to be found elsewhere in the Scripture; and yet, for all that, might be pure Hebrew, according to the language which was then spoken, when such books were written.

IV. But it is not fit to stay any longer in the confutation of such a weak reason as this; which hath no force in it (though it be the best he hath), to make us think of any other author of this book than Solomon. Who, if he did not write it himself, it is certain spake the things contained in it: and calls himself the *Preacher*, because of the great gravity and dignity of the subject whereof he treats; of which he was wont to speak frequently, (chap. xii. 9.) desiring it might be understood and laid to heart by the *whole congregation* of Israel, as the word *Coheleth* seems to import; which, in the Ethiopic language, signifies a *circle*, or a company of men gathered together in the form of a *circle*, as Ludolphus hath lately observed. For the scope of this discourse is concerning the *chief good* or happiness of man: the *great end* he should propose to himself all his life long. Which is not that he shews which men generally follow; but that which is generally neglected. For most men mind nothing but just what is before them; which they will find at last, as he had done by sad experience, to be mere vanity; utterly unable to quiet their minds. Which must therefore seek for satisfaction in something else; and, after all their busy thoughts, designs, and labours, come to this conclusion: that to *fear God and keep his commandments* is the happiness of man; who ought, therefore, to use all the pleasures of this world (which is the only good it can afford us), with a constant respect to the future account we must all make to God.

V. This, it appears, by the beginning and the end of this book, is the scope of it. Unto which they that will not attend, are wont to pick out here and there a loose sentence, which agrees with their desires; and then please themselves with a fancy, that they have got Solomon on their side, to help to maintain their infidelity: not considering what he asserts directly contrary, in other places, where he presses the greatest and most serious reverence to almighty God, (iv. 17. v. 1, &c. viii. 12, 13. xii. 13.) together with a remembrance of the future judgment; (iii. 17.

xi. 9. xii. 14.) works of mercy and charity also, whereby we may do good to others; (xi. 1, &c.) and the contempt of those frivolous pleasures, which draw our hearts from God and from good works, (ii. 2. vii. 2, &c.) All which plainly shew, that those words which seem to countenance men in the neglect of religion, and open a gap to licentiousness, are only opinions which he intends to confute, according to the method he had propounded to himself in this book. Wherein he first represents the various ends men drive at; which in the very entrance of it (that men might not mistake his meaning) he pronounces to be so vain, that he had no words significant enough to express their vanity; and then, their different opinions about God, and his providence, and their own souls: and what thoughts he himself had tossed up and down in his mind; which at last came to that resolution I mentioned before, wherewith he ends his book. In the close of which, to give the greater weight unto what he had said, he adds this: that these were not only the result of his own thoughts, but the judgment of other wise men, with whom he had consulted.

Let no man therefore deceive himself (to use the grave words of Castalio), as some, I wish I could say a few, have done: who not minding the end and drift of this book, but having met with some one place in it that seems to favour their beloved lusts, lay hold on that scrap alone; and with that, endeavour to defend their licentious course of life. As if they expected, they should find God just such a judge hereafter, as they are of themselves at present.

VI. To comprise all in a few words. The sense of the whole sermon, as we may call it, seems to be comprehended in this syllogism:—

Whatsoever is vain and perishing cannot make men happy;

But all men's designs here in this world are vain and perishing:

Therefore, they cannot by prosecuting such designs make themselves happy.

The proposition is evident in itself, and needs no proof. The assumption therefore he demonstrates in the six first chapters, by an enumeration of particulars; as I shall shew in the Argument before, or Annotations upon, each chapter: and then proceeds, in the rest of the book, to advise men unto the best course to make themselves happy; evidently proving all along, from this inconstancy and vanity of all things here, that he who wishes well to himself, ought to raise his mind above them to the Creator of the world: and expecting to give an account to him, so to demean himself in the use of all earthly enjoyments, that he devoutly acknowledge his Divine Majesty, fearing and worshipping him and doing his will.

Such, indeed, is the dulness of mankind, that, hearing all was but vanity, they might condemn every thing as evil and hurtful; and declaim too bitterly against this world. Which was so far from Solomon's intention, that having explained the vanity of all our enjoyments here, and the vanity of human cares, solicitous desires, and endeavours, he persuades all men to be content with things present, to give God thanks for them, to use them freely with quiet minds: living as pleasantly, and taking as much liberty, as the remembrance of a future account will allow; void of anxious and troublesome thoughts, what will become of them hereafter in this life.

VII. But it may not be amiss, perhaps, to give a larger account of this sermon; and let the reader see in what method it proceeds. For many men imagine it to be a confused discourse, which doth not hang together: and therefore have explained this book, only by giving an account of the meaning of each verse, as if it were a distinct sentence, independent of the rest; like those in his Proverbs. But Antonius Corranus, a most excellent person, in a small discourse of his upon this book, written above a hundred years ago, hath drawn such a scheme of it, as I believe will satisfy those who consider it, that Solomon proceeds after an exact order, to deduce what he intended: and therefore I will translate the sense of what he saith into English; which is to this purpose.

VIII. The design of the author is to find out and to shew, what it is in which the chief good and complete felicity of man doth consist. As appears by this, that reflecting upon various things in which men place their happiness; at the end of this discourse upon every one of them, he rejects them as utterly insufficient for that purpose, but continues his search so far till at last he finds it; and declares in the concluding epiphonema, that he had been seeking it through the whole discourse, saying, The sum of the matter is this, *Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole of man.*

Now there are two principal parts of the whole sermon. The first of which contains a recital and confutation of men's false opinions about their chiefest good: the other teaches, in what our genuine, true, and solid felicity lies; both in this life and in the next. In both he shews very diligently what is the end to which a man should direct all his counsels, studies, and endeavours; what he ought to follow as most desirable above all things; and what to avoid as the extremest of evils.

Of the first of these he treats in his six first chapters; of the other in as many more that follow: which is both a perspicuous and exact method. For being to treat of felicity, it was but fitting he should divide it into false and true; and then define aright what that true felicity is. For we must first shun that which is evil, and then pursue that which is good: according to the frequent admonitions we meet withal in the holy prophets.

The first Part.

IX. Now the first part of his sermon relies upon a proposition which nobody denies; *viz.* that vain, frail, and troublesome things cannot make any man happy: and such, saith he, in the very first words of the book, are all things here, *vanity of vanities*, i. e. extremely vain.

Which assumption it may seem hard to prove, if we consider what account blind mortals make of their own inventions, counsels, studies, and labours, by which they think to attain felicity. But to Solomon nothing was more easy; who having made a full and long experiment of all enjoyments here, most evidently demonstrates this by an enumeration of parts, and that in an apt, perspicuous, and compendious order. For he neither confounds the parts, too curiously pursues them, nor mentions all the false opinions of men about the chiefest good (which would have been too tedious, if, like Varro, he had told us of two hundred and eighty-five, and yet that he could not reckon all); but, reducing the most probable opinions unto four principal

heads, he confutes them by various arguments; drawn chiefly from adjuncts and effects.

The first is of those who place blessedness in the knowledge of natural things, and in human wisdom, which begins at the twelfth verse of the first chapter, and reaches to the beginning of the second. For in the precedent verses, he only lays a foundation for his discourse, and plans his way to the proof of what he intended.

The second is of those who place it in pleasure; which he dispatches, as unworthy of a long confutation, in the three first verses of the second chapter. But there being those of this sect who, joining these two together, *pleasure* and *knowledge*, imagine they will make up a complete happiness, he spends more time in shewing their vanity; from the fourth verse of the second chapter to the sixteenth verse of the third: interposing only a parenthesis, wherein he compares *wisdom* with *folly*, and the effects of both shew how much the former is to be preferred before the latter.

The third touches those who think honours, magistracies, and power in the commonwealth, to be the highest of all goods. In which number are they who seek to extend their empire, though it be by a vast effusion of their own blood, by which means also they establish their tyranny, when they have acquired it. Which disputation reaches from the sixteenth verse of the third chapter to the ninth verse of the fifth. Yet so, that from the beginning of the fourth chapter to the thirteenth verse of the same, he inserts the miseries that grow from such tyrannical administration; and the vices which break in upon the impunity of evil-doers, and neglect of the laws. Particularly, he gives us a lively description of *emulation* and *covetousness;* two of the foulest and most cruel pests of the commonwealth. In the fifth chapter also he inserts a discourse of that superstitious and vain worship of God; in which some, despising all other things, place their satisfaction: and most lamentably applaud themselves in it. Which disputation contains in it some excellent precepts of true religion and piety; which the reader may find in the first eight verses of the fifth chapter.

After which follows the fourth opinion, of those who propound to themselves riches and wealth as their last end: which if they can attain, they doubt not they shall live very happily. Which extends itself from thence to the eleventh verse of the sixth chapter; where you have the general epilogue of the first part, concerning false felicity.

The other Part.

X. Then follows the second, and most elegant as well as useful part of the sermon. In which he teaches, that the felicity, for which men take so much pains (every one going his own way to it), is not to be found any where but in a religious and serious fear of God: according to that of the Psalmist, "Blessed are all they that fear the Lord; that walk in his ways;" and again, "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; that delighteth greatly in his commandments." For other things, though they promise felicity, yet they cannot perform it; because they have such a mixture of vanity, trouble, and grief with them, as will not suffer them to be absolutely good; and because, if they were sincere, yet they being so uncertain, that they may be lost before we die, and at the best are terminated within the narrow bounds of this short life; they cannot give that satisfaction and quiet of mind which we desire. But the fear of God is such a good, that it both gives true content, satisfaction, and tranquillity of mind, as long as we live; and when we die, fills us with a sure hope of a better life; in which true and genuine felicity is accomplished.

For the sum of what can be said in this matter may be reduced to this argumentation:—

That which can make a man's mind quiet, still, and calm, both in life and death, that alone can make him happy:

Now this the fear of the Lord can do for him, and this alone; therefore this, and nothing else, will make him a happy man.

The proposition needs no proof: for then we feel ourselves happy, when our minds are so quiet and well pleased; that they neither grieve, nor fear, nor solicitously desire, nor vainly hope for uncertain things; but rest satisfied in that excellent and most certain joy and hope, which arise out of a pure conscience.

The assumption is proved from two effects of the fear of God, *viz. wisdom* and *justice*. The first of which teaches us what to follow, and what to fly; and furnishes us with such caution, that we be not imposed on, in the choice of that which seems to be good for us. The other instructs us to do our whole duty towards God, towards our neighbour, and towards ourselves. In which two all religion and piety, together with satisfaction, tranquillity, and felicity, are contained.

And because effects are more known than their causes, and it would be uncertain what he meant by the fear of God, unless he explained it by those things wherein it consists; he begins his disputation on this subject with those effects; and employs himself wholly in shewing what are the offices of *wisdom* and *justice;* that he might inform us not only what is the chief good to which we ought to aspire, but by what ways and means we may come to it.

XI. Of *wisdom* and *prudence*, therefore, which are conversant in the choice of things, he treats in the first place, chapter the seventh; because no man can act either righteously, or valiantly, or temperately, unless, by the benefit of prudence, he be before instructed what force they are unto our happiness. He explains, therefore, its various offices in such documents as these: that a good fame is to be desired above all things; that death ought to be the subject of our frequent meditations; that those things are to be avoided which incite to pleasure, and the contrary to be followed, which admonish us to be modest and sober; that severity and gravity are to be preferred before mirth; chastisements and corrections to be willingly admitted; flattery and soothing people to be cashiered; not to be too much disturbed at calumnies and reproaches; to take no bribes; to expect the issue and conclusion of things; to bridle anger, as an enemy to reason; to love the use of money, not money itself; and such-like: unto which, last of all, he adjoins a brief commendation of wisdom; rejecting both the larger explication of its effects, and its praises, to the end of the ninth chapter and beginning of the tenth.

Now this first part concerning *wisdom*, is handled in the twelve first verses of the seventh chapter.

XII. Then he enters upon the other, concerning *justice;* which he divides into that which respects God, and that which respects men. The former of which (comprehended

under the names of *religion*, *piety*, and *godliness*) consists in this: That, in the first place, we conceive aright and judge well of God, and of his providence in the administration of human affairs; and then that we pay him that honour, worship, and service, which are due unto his Divine Majesty.

This discourse, which he touches upon from the thirteenth to the sixteenth verse of the seventh chapter, he resumes again in the eighth chapter, and pursues it from the ninth verse of it, to the thirteenth verse of the ninth chapter.

As for that justice which respects others it is manifold. For it is either towards men, or towards women: which consists, in a manner, altogether in shunning both the extremes of it, and observing an ἐπιείκεια, *moderation* or *equity:* and hath respect to their offences, either against ourselves or others: which we are partly to correct and partly to bear withal. Which is the sum of his discourse, from the sixteenth verse to the beginning of the eighth chapter.

Where interspersing a few things, after his manner, in the praise of wisdom, he begins another division of justice: concerning the duty of subjects to their princes, from the second verse to the eighth; and on the other side, the duty of princes towards their subjects: of both which it may be fit to give a larger account. For this *tractate* is truly royal, and worthy to be read perpetually, in this most turbulent age, both by high and low: that from hence subjects may learn to perform obedience, and the greatest observance both in word and deed towards their princes; choosing rather to bear and suffer any thing, than to attempt rebellion against them; and kings may also remember, that they ought to govern their kingdoms, according to the rules of law and equity, and not according to their own will and pleasure; God having committed unto them the sceptre of justice, clemency, and welfare of their subjects; not the sceptre of cruelty, tyranny, and destruction.

In which this wise king observing both princes and people to be too negligent, and that thence ariseth a very great licence in sinning, lest well-affected minds should be offended at this horrible corruption of manners; he digresseth into a long, but very profitable and necessary, disputation of God's providence, and the economy of justice. Which though the wicked deny and deride, because they see not such manifest difference, as one would expect, made between the good and the bad, in the events that befal them both; yet he advises all that fear the Divine Majesty not to be dejected and disheartened at this; nor to search with too much curiosity into God's secrets; but steadfastly resolving, that it shall not be well with the wicked, though all things flow at present according to their hearts' desire, and that whatsoever the godly may suffer now, they shall find at last that God is their friend; to look upon themselves therefore as happy men, both in the peace of their conscience in this world, and in a sure and certain hope of a better condition in the other. Upon which account he frequently inculcates this counsel, that they who are studious to fear God, and do well, being secure of God's administration, and of the event of things, should enjoy the present good things, which his Divine bounty bestows upon them; with cheerful minds, and with thanksgiving to him. This discourse (which it must be confessed is not altogether so methodical as some other) extends from the ninth verse of the eighth chapter to the thirteenth verse of the ninth.

And because he had shewn, that the event of things is not in our own counsel and in human wisdom, but in the hand of God, lest any body should be so weak or perverse, as thence to conclude, that it is the same thing, whether we act wisely or foolishly; he again makes a digression into the praises of wisdom; shewing how much it excels folly, from the effects of both. It begins at the seventeenth verse, and reaches to the fourth of the tenth chapter. Where he returns to his discourses, about the mutual offices of justice between one another, both of princes and subjects.

And then in the six first verses of the eleventh chapter, he exhorts most earnestly to liberality and almsgiving; which is no small part of righteousness. And with that he concludes the two effects of the fear of God, wisdom and justice.

XIII. The rest of the work is his peroration: in which he fully opens his opinion concerning the chief good; which he confirms to lie wholly in a truly religious fear of God. Which therefore he seriously exhorts every one to make his study as earnestly as is possible: before dull and inactive old age, and death itself (both which he elegantly describes), come upon us, and, before we think of it, oppress us.

This is the method of this most excellent sermon: which I cannot but exhort all men to study diligently, and with great intention of mind; both for the author's sake, and for the matter of it. Which he handles in such a manner, as, first, to draw us from the desire and love of earthly things, and from the perverse use of them: and then to lead us unto the true and lawful use of them, without any offence to God, as well as without hurt to ourselves. And he teaches us how we may, without a preposterous solicitude and anxiety about events, enjoy all things in the fear of God, with tranquillity and satisfaction of mind at present; and, at last, by the same fear of God and observance of his commandments, arrive at a never-dying felicity.

To conclude, he intersperses through the whole discourse abundance of common places, both philosophical and theological; which are so fitted to make us every way more learned, more prudent, and more pious, that we shall find great use of them in all the passages of our lives.

XIV. Thus that learned Spaniard concludes his preface; which I have contracted, that I might set before the reader's eyes, in one short view, both the design and the procedure of the discourse. Of the former (the design) there is no doubt: and the latter is very regular, as it will farther appear, in the explication I shall give of it. Wherein I have not followed this author throughout, in every part of this division of the book; because, though for the most part I take it to be accurate enough; yet, I think, in several places I had reason to differ from him; and take another way to make the connexion more easy and natural, and the sense thereby more clear and evident.

I beseech God, that the pains I have taken herein may not be in vain; but prove an effectual means both to make the mind of Solomon in this book better understood; and to turn all our minds from these frivolous things, about which now they are too much employed, unto the solid

and full good which here he recommends to us. Who may be the better trusted in what he saith; because he had tried what satisfaction could be found in all manner of enjoyments here: and it could not be objected to him that he disparaged the world, merely because he could not get any share in it, or had not the liberty which was necessary to enjoy it. For no man ever had greater plenty, or gave a greater loose to his desires; but, after all the experiments he could make, came to this resolution, which he had better have taken at first; that religion and virtue are the only things that can make a man happy.

And, perhaps, as God suffered St. Thomas to doubt of our Saviour's resurrection, for the greater confirmation of our faith, by the satisfaction he at last received; so he let this great man go astray, that by his dear-bought experience he might teach us this wisdom, to keep the closer to God in faithful obedience.

Which it will be a very great shame, if we do not learn, who live under the instruction of a greater master than Solomon, the Son of God himself. By whom we are taught these things in a more effectual manner; not only by his doctrine, but by his whole life and by his death: in which he declared the greatest neglect and contempt of this world; and that his mind was wholly set upon the other.

And what a blessed sort of resurrection would it be, if (as Erasmus somewhere admirably speaks) we would all lay aside our dissensions, strifes, and quarrels, and study the lessons our Lord hath taught us. Whose business it was in this world, to form unto himself "a people that should wholly depend on heaven, and, placing no confidence in any earthly support or comfort, should be after another manner rich, after another manner wise, after another manner noble, after another manner potent, in one word, after another manner happy: designing to attain felicity by the contempt of those things which are vulgarly admired. A people that should be strangers to filthy lusts, by studying in this flesh the life of angels; that should have no need of divorce, by being able to mend or to bear all manner of evils; that should be wholly ignorant of oaths, as those who neither distrust, nor will deceive any body; that make not the getting of money their business, having laid up their treasures in heaven; that should not be tickled with vain glory, because they refer all to the glory of Christ alone; be void of ambition, as disposed, the greater they are, to submit themselves, so much the more unto all men, for Christ's sake; that should be unacquainted with wrath, much more with revenge, as studying to deserve well of those who deserve ill of them; that should be so innocent in their behaviour, as to force commendations even from heathens; that should be born again to the purity and simplicity of infants; that should live like the birds of the air, without care and solicitude; among whom there should be the greatest concord, nothing different from that which is between the members of the same body; in which mutual charity should make all things common; that whether there were any good thing it should help to supply him that wanted, or any evil thing, it should either be removed or mitigated by the good offices of others; who should be so wise by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, to live according to the example of Christ, as to be *the salt of the earth, the light of the world, like a city on a hill*, conspicuous to all the country round about; whose abilities, whatsoever they are, should make them forward to help others; to whom this life should seem vile, death desirable, out of a longing for immortality; who should neither fear tyranny, nor death, nor the devil himself, relying upon the invincible power of Christ alone, who should act in all things so, as to be ever prepared and ready for that last, and most-to-be-wished-for, day, when they shall take possession of true and of eternal felicity."

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

In the eleven first verses he lays the foundation of his following discourses, and makes his way to the proof of what he intends (*viz.* that nothing here can make us solidly happy), by shewing how empty all things are, and how short a time a man hath to possess them; and that while it lasts he can only enjoy the same empty things over and over again, till he be cloyed with them. And then (ver. 12.) he enters into a *particular* consideration of the insufficiency of *human wisdom* and knowledge alone, to give us full satisfaction: though this be one of the very best things wherein men place their felicity. Which discourse continues to the end of the chapter.

Ver. 1. *THE words of the Preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem.*] These are the words of him, who thought the name of a Preacher, or public instructor of God's people (to whom he calls aloud in this book, to mind what he saith concerning the supreme good of man), no less honourable, than that of the son of king David: whom he succeeded in his throne; and reigned after him in the holy city Jerusalem. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity, all is vanity.*] That good of which you are all desirous, is not there to be found where you seek it; for all things here below are so frail, so subject to change, and to vanish, that I have not words to express how vain they are. This is the thing which the Preacher first undertakes to prove, that they are mere emptiness, more vain than vanity itself; so full of trouble and care, as well as extremely unstable, that to no purpose are all men's endeavours, who seek for satisfaction from them; especially if they place their highest good in them. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *What profit hath a man of all his labour which he takes under the sun?*] For proof of this, let every man survey himself; who consists of body and of mind. And let him ask his *mind*, what great matter there remains, after all its cares for the things of this life? what contentment he or any man else in all this world hath reaped by his toilsome labours, and anxious thoughts, wherewith he hath racked himself both day and night? which have often ended in disappointment; and when he hath enjoyed his desires, this very thing hath spoiled his pleasures, that he could not long enjoy them. See Annot. [c]

Ver. 4. *One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.*] For if they do not presently leave him, he in a short time must leave them: his *body* (the other part of him) being made out of

the earth; and therefore, how firm and solid soever it now seems, must be crumbled into earth again. Which continues for ever, to receive back those bodies which come out of it: for no generation can abide as the earth doth; but follows the foregoing, as the next that comes after shall follow it, unto the grave. See Annot. [c]

Ver. 5. *The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose.*] Out of which they cannot return and stand up in their former places, as the sun, that quickens all things, doth: which in a constant and regular course ariseth, and makes no more speed to go down, than it doth to appear the next morning, in the same glory again. No; man dies, and appears here no more: though if he should, it would be to die again. See Annot. [d]

Ver. 6. *The wind goeth towards the south, and turneth about unto the north: it whirleth about continually; and the wind returneth again according to its circuits.*] Nor is the annual course of the sun less certain than its diurnal; but it comes back the next year at a fixed time, to the very same point from whence it moved this. Nay, the winds, as fickle and inconstant as they are, whirling with a marvellous swiftness round the earth, return at last to the same quarter from whence they shifted (and some of them the very same months of the year), to fetch the same compass, and run the same round they did before.

Ver. 7. *All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.*] The like circle there is in watery bodies; for the torrents and brooks, that the rain makes, run into the rivers, and so into the sea, which nevertheless doth not swell beyond its bounds, because it restores all back again to their former places, by the vapours which the sun exhales, or by the secret passages through the earth: whilst poor man alone (who is compounded of all these, of the earth, the air, the water, and such heat as the sun administers) passeth away and cometh to his place no more; but must be content to imitate these things, only in their restless agitations.

Ver. 8. *All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.*] Which is another thing that increaseth his trouble; that in this short life, which he cannot live over again when it is done, he can neither be quiet, nor move with ease (as the things forenamed do), nor yet acquire satisfaction with his perpetual motion; but tries himself even in his pleasures; and finds all sort of business so laborious, that he himself is not able to tell how tedious it is; and after all is done, he is no better pleased than when he first began. For the eye (for instance) and the ear, which are the noblest and most capacious senses, having seen and heard all manner of things, are as desirous of some new entertainment, as if they had enjoyed none at all. See Annot. [e]

Ver. 9. *The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.*] But, alas! the very same things (like the sun, the wind, and the rivers) come about again; and we are cloyed with seeing and hearing what hath often presented itself unto us already, or, at least, hath been in times before us, and will be again in those that succeed us. There is nothing done now, but (the persons being changed) will be acted over again in future ages; to whom the sun can shew nothing but what we have seen in these days, and others have seen in the foregoing. And therefore it is vain for any man to expect that satisfaction now or in future times, which none have found since the world began: men will always loath things present, as they have ever done; and long for those which are coming, which will ever give them the same satiety. See Annot. [f]

Ver. 10. *Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.*] Is any man able to contradict this and point us to the thing which is altogether new, and hath never been seen or heard of before? It may appear, perhaps, so to him; but that is to be imputed merely to the shortness of human life: which makes us ignorant of what hath passed in former ages (save only in a few things transmitted down to us by observing men). For had we continued many generations, that which now seems new and unusual to us, would have appeared familiar, and of great antiquity, as really it is.

Ver. 11. *There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.*] They that went before us, indeed, might have registered such things; but as they observed little, so they have left the memory of less: nor will this age, or those that follow, be more careful; or if they should, posterity will be as negligent as former ages have been, in preserving those records: for we differ nothing from our forefathers, nor will the ages to come excel this in which we live; but still the vanity of man, and of all his projects and contrivances, will continue to the world's end.

Ver. 12. *I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.*] And let none imagine that I speak this only as a *preacher*, in a zealous passion, much less in a melancholy mood; but remember that I have long sat upon a throne, ruling over God's own peculiar people, in that city which is the very school of wisdom; where I wanted nothing either for the body or the mind; and had both opportunity and ability to make trial of all things wherein men place their happiness, and therefore may be believed, when I declare nothing but from my own experience. See Annot. [g]

Ver. 13. *And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of men, to be exercised therewith.*] And being thus instructed with all the helps and assistances that the power of such a king could afford, I applied my mind, in the first place, and set my wits to work with all imaginable care and diligence, to search into the nature of all creatures here below; thinking I should be happy if I could but find out the causes, beginnings, and progress of things; especially the counsels, contrivances, and endeavours of mankind, with the event of all their actions. But, alas! I soon found that this was a tedious business, in which, when I had travelled a great way, I met with small satisfaction; nay, found it to be the torture of the mind, unto which God hath condemned mankind, as a punishment for their vain curiosity, and gross negligence of heavenly wisdom. See Annot. [h]

Ver. 14. *I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.*] And having now finished these studies, and taken a serious view

of all that falls within the compass of human knowledge, I cannot say that they have given me any solid contentment: for we can know but little, and what we do know of natural things doth us small service: it puffs us up, indeed, like wind, but gives no nourishment; it fills us with notions, but of little or no use; and therefore vexes us at last, and breaks our heart to consider that we have spent so much time, and so many thoughts, which have even eaten up our spirits, to so little purpose. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 15. *That which is crooked cannot be made straight; and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.*] For as there are inextricable difficulties in all sorts of knowledge, of which no man can give an account; so, with all our study, we cannot have skill enough either to prevent misfortunes, or to remove out of the way that which crosseth our designs, much less to alter the nature of things (no, not so much as in our own constitutions), nor to redress the disorders in government: the defects in which, and in all other things and conditions, we are so far from being able to supply, that we cannot number them; and yet the folly of mankind represents every thing to their desires, as if it were completely good, and wanted nothing to make one happy. See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 16. *I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem; yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.*] I myself still persisted in my reach after knowledge, though I found it so painful, and so unsatisfactory: thinking within myself, that there was this good at least in it, that it had gotten me a very great name, and raised me so high in all men's opinion, that I was noted for the wisest person that had ever been in these parts of the world, there being no sort of knowledge wherewith my mind was not stored in abundance. See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 17. *And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.*] And, as the nature of all knowledge is to excite a thirst after more, this made me apply my mind more earnestly to comprehend, not only the greatest, but the meanest matter; to mark, for instance, the actions and occupations of madmen and fools, as well as the motions of wiser persons: but I perceived, that to be pleased merely with fame, was to live upon air; and it was an afflictive thought to observe, how little the most of the world (though they thought themselves very wise) differed from lunatics and distracted folk. See Arg. [*m*]

Ver. 18. *For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.*] So that though knowledge be the most excellent of all other earthly goods, being the ornament of the mind, which is the best part of us, yet this also is insufficient for our happiness: because, after it hath cost a man infinite pains (and sometimes exhausted his spirits, and made him melancholy and morose, nay, thrown him into many diseases) to acquire that little wisdom he can attain; which raises also more doubts than it can resolve, and meets with troublesome opposition from various opinions that clash against it; it cannot but fill him with indignation to find folly generally applauded more than his wisdom, and grieve his very soul to see that it is dangerous for a man to know more than his neighbours; and that he is so far from being able to remedy what is amiss, that he is hated if he endeavour it; and rewarded with reproaches for his care of the public good. See Annot. [*n*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. The wisdom, virtue, and dignity of an author making his work more valuable and regarded; Solomon (or he who composed this book from what he heard him deliver, or found in his writings) begins with his quality; not merely as a king, and as the son of a great king, and of a great people, in a famous city; but, which was most considerable, as a public instructor, having ability and authority to inform all men where they should find that happiness, which they ignorantly sought, but could not meet withal. This he proclaims with a loud voice; desiring serious attention to such a weighty discourse, and that they would often recollect, as he had done, (all which may be the import of the word *Coheleth;* see Preface, Numb. IV.) how frivolous and trivial all those things are which most men pursue with the greatest earnestness.

[*b*] Ver. 2. This is the subject of this book, to shew how senseless it is to place our happiness in these frail and inconstant things, that we enjoy upon this earth: which he not only pronounces, but proves to be mere emptiness. So *vanity* signifies; and what is consequent upon that, dissatisfaction, trouble, and affliction. (See Psal. lxxviii. 33.) And this, beyond what can be expressed; for our translators take it to be a word of the same import with *tohu;* which is used in the Hebrew language, when they would signify that of which they speak to be so trivial, that it is below less than nothing, (Isa. xl. 17.) And yet Solomon is not content with this single word, but doubles it, to denote the extreme dissatisfaction he found in all things, which made a show of affording him contentment; but performed nothing of that which they seemed to promise. So the word *vanity* is also used for that which is also false, lying, and deceitful, Psal. lxxii. 9. and other places, where *idols* are called *vanities.*

[*c*] Ver. 3. Here begins the proof of his assertion; by considering first the mind of man: which runs from one thing to another without any end; but finds no satisfaction remaining from all its restless thoughts. And then the body of man, (ver. 4.) which, as proud and lofty as it now looks, must moulder into dust; and the poorest person, perhaps, shall tread upon its grave. For it cannot last like the earth from whence it comes; which stands for ever, as a public theatre, whereon men enter and act their part, and then go off, and never appear again: and when they go (as some prettily, rather than solidly, gloss upon the words, *the earth abideth for ever*) they can carry none of it along with them, but leave it all behind them, unto those that come after; who pass away also, leaving the earth where they found it.

[*d*] Ver. 5. The sun also, in a settled course, observes its times of rising and setting: whereas man, when he goes down to the earth, cannot, like the sun, come up again. So the fifth verse seems to be most naturally connected with the foregoing; and, in like manner, the sixth and seventh verses are to be expounded. There are many interpreters, indeed, who look upon the things mentioned in these three verses only as emblems of the instability of all human affairs, and of the constant revolutions of the same miseries: which cannot be hindered by any human counsels, but will

return after all the changes, whereby we think to mend ourselves. Upon which sense I have just touched in my Paraphrase, but not followed it; because it doth not seem to me to be the scope of these verses. In which man is represented by four comparisons, with the *earth*, the *sun*, the *wind*, and the *sea*, to be more subject to vanity than other things.

[*e*] Ver. 8. Which having thus illustrated, he proceeds here more particularly to consider what he has said in general words, (ver. 3.) of man's vain endeavour to satisfy himself in worldly designs and contrivances; in which he is tired, but comes to no end of his desires. How should he? when his whole business here is only to enjoy the very same things over and over again: as all men have done before us, and shall do after us, (ver. 9—11.)

[*f*] Ver. 9. We may fancy, indeed, that we have found some new thing; but this conceit proceeds merely from our ignorance; as the Lord Bacon excellently discourses in his first book of the Advancement of Learning, chap. 8.

"Learning and knowledge (saith he) take away vain and excessive admiration; which is the very root of all weak counsels. For we admire things, either because they are *new*, or because they are *great*. As for *novelty*, there is no man that considers things thoroughly, but hath this printed in his heart, *There is nothing new under the sun*. Nor can any man much admire a puppet-play who doth but thrust his head behind the curtain, and seeth the instruments and wires whereby they are moved. As for *greatness*, we may say as Alexander, who, after his great conquest in Asia, receiving letters of some small fights or skirmishes in Greece, at the taking some bridge or fort, was wont to tell his friends, that *it seemed to him, that they had sent him news of the battles of Homer's frogs and mice:* so, certainly, if a man consider the universe and the fabric of it, to him this globe of earth, with the men upon it, and their busy motions (excepting always the divineness of souls), will not seem much more considerable than a *hillock of ants, whereon some creep up and down with their corn, others with their eggs, others empty; all about a very little heap of dust.*" And, as Melancthon well observes, the same desires, the same counsels, the same ends, the same causes, of war, and calamitous events, return again: according to Thucydides, *While human nature continues what it is, the like mischiefs will happen; sometimes less, sometimes more direfully.*

[*g*] Ver. 12. Thus having confirmed his main propositions, by such general arguments as reach to all things in this world; he proceeds here to a more particular proof of it, from his own proper experience. And designing (before he declared his own opinion of the chief good, and by what means it may be attained) to confute the vain fancies of men about it; he reduces them, as I have shewn in the Preface, to four heads. And observing that some place it in *knowledge*, and curious inquiries into all manner of things; others in *pleasure*, or in both these together; others in *honour* and *power*; others in *riches* and heaps of wealth; he begins with that which is the most plausible. And demonstrates, from the thirteenth verse to the end of this chapter, how little satisfaction is to be found in the mere speculation of things, though a man arrive at the highest degree of human knowledge.

[*h*] Ver. 13, 14. Melancthon restrains these two verses to political wisdom, in the government of kingdoms, which gives men a double affliction: first, in that the wisest men often err in their counsels; and, secondly, that events sometimes do not answer to the best counsels that men can follow. Examples of the first are innumerable: sometimes they err through ambition, as Perdiccas, after Alexander; sometimes through a false opinion of right, as Brutus; sometimes through over-doing, busy-headedness, and inquietude of mind, as Pericles; sometimes through anger, as Marius. And how many ways good counsels have miscarried, it is too long here to remember; because it is here farther observable, that sometimes mere doubtfulness and uncertainty of mind what course to take, is as great a torment to the mind as any other. Thus Pompey was first perplexed in his counsels, before he saw the disastrous event of his error. To conclude this; all government is full of cares, perplexities, and impediments, that it made Demosthenes say, If he were to begin the world again, he would rather die than be promoted to it. And Æschines, That he was as glad when he was rid of his office, as he would have been to be delivered from a mad dog.

But this I take to be too strait a sense; though it be agreeable enough to what he saith, ver. 12. of his kingly office; and therefore I have enlarged it farther in my Paraphrase; though Gregory Nazianzen also seems to have a respect to it, when he thus interprets this place, (Orat. lib. iii. p. 750.) *That all things here below are possessed with an uncouth and execrable spirit* (ἀλλοκότου καὶ μυσαροῦ πνεύματος), *so that a man cannot comprehend how absurdly all human affairs are managed.*

[*i*] Ver. 14. The word we translate *vexation* is found only in this book, and is capable of many senses, all pertinent to the scope of this place. For, according to the several fountains from whence it may be derived, this phrase may be interpreted, either *anguish* of spirit, or *breaking* of spirit, or *preying* upon the spirits, or (in another sense of the word *spirit*) *feeding on the wind or air:* none of which I have neglected in the Paraphrase.

[*k*] Ver. 15. The shortness of human wit, though never so much improved, is here represented by two things: first, that it cannot remove what is inconvenient: secondly, that it cannot supply what is deficient in any condition of life. Or, as others will have it, the first part of the verse refers to the inability of man to rectify that *perverseness* (as the Hebrew word we translate *crooked* signifies) which he finds in himself or others; and the latter part, to the small reach of human understanding, which can attain but a very imperfect knowledge, either of *words, things, times, persons*, or *actions;* as some branch out the innumerable particulars of which we must be content to be ignorant.

[*l*] Ver. 16. I have not curiously distinguished between *wisdom* and *knowledge*, either in this verse, or in the eighteenth. But there may be this difference pertinently made, that *wisdom* directs a man, in the practical affairs of life, unto that which is most fit for his purpose, according to the various circumstances wherein he may be. It consists chiefly in a clear judgment to discern our true interest, and the proper means to compass it; together with a presentness of mind, to obviate sudden accidents. And then *knowledge* relates to the speculation of natural things, in their causes and effects, their properties and differences, and such-like things.

[*m*] Ver. 17. *Madness* and *folly* may refer also to all the

idle speculations, wherein men of parts and wit sometimes not only *employ*, but *applaud* themselves, as the first of those words seems to import in the Hebrew. This trifling sort of *knowledge* is notably described by Erasmus, in his Praise of Folly.

[*n*] Ver. 18. If there be any difference to be made between *wisdom* and *knowledge*, I have noted it above upon ver. 16. As for *grief* and *sorrow*, they may be thus distinguished, that the former, in the original word, includes in it *indignation*, which is a sharp *anger* mingled with scorn; to find either our persons and counsels contemned, or our projects and well-laid designs defeated. Such as was in Ahithophel; whose penetrating wit made his rage the greater, to see his judicious advice rejected, and the whole conspiracy utterly disappointed. The other word *(sorrow)* properly denotes an extreme great trouble and sickness of mind; and is sometimes applied to pains in the body; which is the effect too frequently of over-hard study. Melancthon understands the whole verse (as he did ver. 13, 14.) of the trouble that wise men have when they are entrusted with government, to see the confusions, errors, vices, and calamities of mankind. And their afflictions are the greater, because they are not only more sensible than other men of present evils, but foresee by the present those that are future; and therefore are tormented with a sore pain and grief, both for what they feel and for what they fear. For they know, that from the first disorders there commonly follow greater confusions: as when Pericles had once stirred up a war, there followed the destruction of almost all the great cities of Greece. And it is too truly said by Pindar, that *it is easy for any body to disturb a city; but God alone can restore peace unto it.*

This I take to be too limited a sense; but it is no small trouble to a wise and prudent person, as Corranus excellently expresses it, to behold the miserable disorders and confusion of human affairs. For how is it possible to avoid it, nay, how can a man choose but be filled with indignation to see justice, equity, probity, fidelity, integrity, and constancy, and all other such-like virtues, slighted and disregarded by mankind; and, on the contrary, injustice, baseness, perfidiousness, flattery, and such-like vices, possess the world, and carry all before them? Or what man can, without vexation, observe the preposterous judgment of mankind, which magnifies those things that are not only vain but hurtful and pernicious; and not only contemn, but hate, those things which are truly good for them; nay, alone desirable? no man can either be wise alone to himself, in such a multitude of fools and madmen, without the greatest grief and indignation: nor can he accommodate himself, with an equal mind, to the dotages of the common people, when he sees that which is better.

I shall conclude this chapter with the Lord Bacon's observation, concerning this anxiety of spirit which arises out of knowledge, in the beginning of his book of the Advancement of Learning:—

"Solomon (saith he) doth not pass this censure absolutely upon wisdom and knowledge, but only sets forth the true bounds, wherein human knowledge is to be circumscribed: which if we do not observe, it will prove very troublesome to us and others. And those limitations are three. First, that we do not so place our felicity in knowledge, as to forget our mortality. Secondly, that we use not our knowledge to beget anxiety, but repose and contentment of mind. And, thirdly, that we do not presume by the contemplation of nature, to think ourselves able to comprehend the mysteries of God." The first and the last of these are plain enough; and therefore I shall only note what he saith of the second: that "it is certain, no anxiety or perturbation of mind ariseth from knowledge, but by mere accident. For all knowledge and admiration (which is the seed of knowledge) is pleasant in itself; but when we fall to frame conclusions from thence, which, obliquely applied to our own affairs, beget either weak fears or immoderate desires, then ariseth that torment and trouble of mind, whereof Solomon here speaketh. For then knowledge is no longer *dry light* (which Heraclitus was wont to say was the best), but *moist light*, steeped and infused in the humours of the affections."

As for that exposition which some have given of those words, that *he increaseth the number of his stripes (or wounds) who increaseth knowledge;* and maketh no use of it, nor takes care that his obedience rises in some good proportion with it; it is not the proper sense of the place, but rather an accommodation of the words to another profitable purpose.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

Having passed his censure upon the first way men take to find satisfaction (mentioned in the notes upon ver. 12. of the first chapter), which without all contradiction is the chief, and the best of the four; he proceeds here to consider the second, which is the more common: most men immersing themselves in pleasure, as their highest good. Of which he was more capable to judge than any other man; because he denied himself no delights that he desired, and yet did not plunge himself wholly into them, but with a mixture of wisdom, as he tells us, ver. 3. Whereby he soon perceived, that they who leave the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of bodily pleasure change for the worse: for, after he had tried all sorts of things that could give him any pleasure, he went back to *wisdom* and *knowledge*, as the better of the two, (ver. 12.) And yet, after he had considered that again the second time, he could not but confess, that there were such great imperfections in it; that it could not make a man happy, as he discourses in the following verses. Of which I shall give a more particular account in the Annotations.

Ver. 1. *I SAID in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity.*] Being thus disappointed, therefore, in the expectations I had of happiness from much wisdom and knowledge, and beholding many men look jollily who had none at all, I resolved to leave off those troublesome cares and labours, and to follow my pleasures: saying to myself, Why dost thou vex and torment thy mind to no purpose? let alone these crabbed studies which hasten old age, and indulge thyself in all those sweet delights which youth desires: try what satisfaction mirth and joy can give thee; and for that end take no thought for the future, but enjoy to the height the present goods of this life: which accord-

ingly I did; but believe me, though this promised much at first, it performed little, but left me more void of contentment than it found me. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it?*] For the noise, the tumult, the indecent motions, and scurrilous jestings, of men that let themselves loose to excessive laughter, and extravagant merriment, appeared to me like distraction of mind; and considering how unprofitable it is, I could not but with a passionate disdain put it from me; saying of it, and of mirth and dancing, and all the frolicness of mankind, What is there in it that thus bewitcheth them? where lies the pleasure that thus enchants them, and puts them so beside themselves; that they think neither of God, nor of any thing else that is worthy of them, but of this alone? See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine (yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom), and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.*] I deliberated, therefore, with myself about a middle course of life; which should neither be altogether studious, nor altogether voluptuous, but a mixture of both; and in pursuance of this counsel entertained myself freely, with all the delights of feasting and banqueting; yet so, as not to lose my acquaintance with wisdom, but to keep my mind so intent upon it, that folly might not have its full swing; but find a check upon it, till I might make a sufficient trial, whether herein lay that so-much-desired good which men should propose to themselves, and prosecute all the time of their stay in this world. See Annot. [c]

Ver. 4. *I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards.*] For which end I raised, with exquisite art, the most stately and magnificent works that could be contrived, for the pleasure of all the senses; as, first of all, I built myself a most magnificent palace, and other goodly houses; which when I had elegantly adorned and sumptuously furnished, I proceeded to plant about them, in a beautiful order, the choicest vines; (Cant. viii. 11.) which, besides the fragrant smell (ii. 13.) and the lovely sight, wherewith they entertained me abroad, afforded the most generous wines for my table at home. See Annot. [*d*].

Ver. 5. *I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits.*] To which I added delicious gardens, full of various flowers, herbs, and plants, for all the seasons of the year; and then spacious forests and parks, or rather paradises of pleasure, wherein, besides other delights, were lovely shades and coverts for all sorts of beasts: nor were orchards wanting, stored with all kinds of fruit-trees, which either this or other countries could afford. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees.*] And that nothing might be wanting to the perfection or preservation of these places, I made with great charge, and no less art, either fountains, or cisterns, or pools of water; not only for delight and for fish, but to serve instead of rain, to water the flowers and herbs, especially the young nurseries of trees, that they might not die with drought. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 7. *I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me.*] All which requiring the care of a great many persons, I purchased servants, both men and women, in great abundance; of whom I had a multitude of children born in my house, whom I employed in looking after my other possessions, which I had in herds and flocks of greater and lesser cattle; which were so numerous, that I killed every day for my family ten oxen crammed in the stalls, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, with a hundred sheep; (besides harts, and roebucks, and fallow-deer, and fatted fowl, to say nothing of other provision, 1 Kings iv. 22, 23.) and yet such was the plenty, my stock did not decrease, because a new brood grew up continually in such abundance as the like had never been seen in our country before my days. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 8. *I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I got me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts.*] By which, and divers other means, (1 Kings iv. 21. x. 21—23, &c. 2 Chron. ix. 24.) I laid up vast treasures of silver, and gold, and jewels, and all that was choice and precious in other kingdoms; especially in those provinces which were subject unto me, which were great and many; (1 Kings iv. 24.) out of whom I picked out also the sweetest voices that could be found, both of men and women; together with the rarest songs and hymns, composed by the best masters in the world; and all sorts of instruments of music; than which nothing is more charming among the children of men, either to lay them asleep when they would go to rest, or to recreate their spirits when they are tired with business; to banish melancholy when they are oppressed with sorrow, and to augment their pleasure when they would be merry: being no less fit to wait upon feasts, than they that attend at the table. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.*] Thus I was not only great in place, and power, and riches, but, by such means as these, added splendour also to my greatness, and made it more conspicuous and illustrious: and (which is still more glorious) I was not greater in any thing than in wisdom; which was not undermined by all these pleasures; but, when they were in danger to dethrone my reason, this settled it again in its former state and authority. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 10. *And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them; I withheld not my heart from any joy: for my heart rejoiced in all my labour; and this was my portion of all my labour.*] And, on the other side, my wisdom did not lay such restraints upon me, but that I took the liberty to please my eyes, and all my senses, with every thing that fell within the wide compass of their desires: it did not deny me any joy to which I had a mind; but taught me rather to reap this as the sweet fruit of all my labours: there being nothing (it sheweth me) that came to my share of all that I had gotten with so much care and diligence, but only the free enjoyment of it; without which I had as good have been without it. See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 11. *Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do; and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.*] But then, after I had consi-

dered seriously how small a thing this pleasure was, how short, and how often interrupted, and laid in the balance against it all the time I had spent, and the pains I had taken, in contriving these magnificent buildings, gardens, paradises, and all the rest, it seemed to me as nothing; and I cannot but leave this observation behind me, that all this is empty and unsatisfying to the spirit of man; and there is also much vexation and torment in it, to see how cross things go many times to our desires, how negligent they are who should look after such great works as mine were; but especially in this, that a man can reap so little benefit and so transient, from such vast and long labours, (i. 3. 14.) See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 12. *And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what can the man do that cometh after the king? even that which has been already done.*] Wherefore I began to reflect upon my former thoughts, and to turn them back again towards wisdom, as the only good of man, (i. 13. 17.) and especially that wisdom which moderates our pleasures, and keeps them from running into madness and folly (and who is there that can give a better account of this than I? who have had such advantages above any private man to know the history of former times, as well as of my own, that I am confident they who come after can pass no other judgment upon things than I do now).

Ver. 13. *Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.*] For I clearly discerned, that there is as wide a difference between wisdom and folly, as there is between the light of the sun, which beautifies the whole world, and shews all things distinctly to us, and the darkness of the night, which wraps up all in dismal confusion, and hides even our dangers from us.

Ver. 14. *The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.*] Whence it is, that a wise man, having this light in his mind, looks before him, and round about him; which makes him cautious and well aware of dangers, into which a blundering fool, whose mind is blinded with the sottish love of pleasure, falls rashly and inconsiderately: and yet with all his circumspection (so imperfect are all things here, in which we place our happiness), the wisest man is not able to avoid a great many calamities, which are common to the whole race of mankind.

Ver. 15. *Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.*] Which reflection made me sigh, and think with myself; If notwithstanding this excellence of wisdom above folly, the very same diseases, loss of children and friends, and innumerable casualties, happen unto me, even unto me who know so much, that there do unto a fool; to what purpose have I taken all this pains, and studied so hard to be wiser than he? and upon this review of all that wisdom can and cannot do for us, I concluded again the second time, that there is a vanity also in this; which makes it incapable of giving us full satisfaction. See Annot. [*m*]

Ver. 16. *For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is, in the days to come shall be forgotten: and how dieth the wise man? as the fool.*] For as both wise and foolish are alike subject unto death, so, when they are dead, their names live not long after them, but they and all their famous achievements are forgotten; there being few of those things which are now done, that will be so much as thought of in the next generation; much less in future ages, when the memory of them will be utterly lost, and cannot be recovered: and is not this a lamentable case, that a wise man hath no more privilege than a fool, either from death, or from its inseparable companion, oblivion? See Annot. [*n*]

Ver. 17. *Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.*] This put me quite out of love with life, because the toil and labour of it are so great and grievous; and the pleasure it yields either interrupted and spoiled by many unforeseen accidents, or quite taken away by death, which leaves no footsteps of us behind us: for nothing is constant or of long continuance, nothing solid, nothing satisfactory here, but all our enjoyments leave us as empty, as he that feeds only upon the wind; nay, it torments us to see that we must take great pains too, for such weak and fading things, (i. 14.)

Ver. 18. *Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun; because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.*] And besides all this, there are other reasons which made me despise all those goodly structures which I had erected, and those beautiful works which I had contrived; (ver. 4—6, &c.) because, as I cannot keep them long myself, so I must leave them to I know not whom, to a stranger, perhaps, who without any pains of his enjoys the fruit of all my labour.

Ver. 19. *And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.*] Or, if my son succeed me in the possession of them, there is no man can assure me, whether he will wisely preserve and improve what I have gotten, or foolishly squander all away; in short, whether he will prove a worthy or an unworthy inheritor of my labours: and yet, such as he is, he must have an absolute power over all that I leave, to dispose of it as he pleaseth; and sottishly, perhaps, to waste in a little time, what I, with prudent care and diligence, have been heaping up all my life long. This is a great addition to human misery; and renders even the study of wisdom very vain, which cannot find a remedy for these evils.

Ver. 20. *Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.*] Which are so great, that, instead of pursuing my designs for this world, I turned my thoughts the quite contrary way; and like one perfectly tired, I concluded it best to leave off all farther cares about any thing here; despairing to reap any satisfaction from all my labours; particularly, to attain any certainty what kind of man he will be who shall inherit them.

Ver. 21. *For there is a man whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein, shall he leave it for his portion. This also is vanity, and a great evil.*] For what hath happened to others may to me; who have observed a man no way defective, either in wise contrivance, or prudent management, or upright dealing, but as eminent for honesty, as he was for diligence; whose estate fell to the share of an idle person, nay, of an ignorant, silly, unjust, and ungrateful wretch;

who prodigally consumed upon his lusts that which cost him no pains, not so much as a thought to acquire. This likewise, it cannot be denied, is not only a dissatisfaction, but a torment, nay, a great torment, to the mind of man.

Ver. 22. *For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?*] Who may well say, To what purpose is all this toil of my body, and these solicitous thoughts and anguish of my mind? For all that a man can enjoy himself of the anxious labours wherein he spends his days, amounts to little or nothing; and what comfort hath he in thinking who shall enjoy the fruit of them hereafter?

Ver. 23. *For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.*] And yet, such is our folly, there is no end of our cares; for we see many a man whose life is nothing but a mere drudgery; who never is at leisure to enjoy any thing that he hath, but still engaged in one troublesome employment or other to get more; which he follows so eagerly, as if it were his business to disquiet and vex himself, and make his life uneasy to him; being not content with his daily toils, unless he rack his mind also with cares in the night, which invites him to take some rest. This is so void of all reason, that nothing can be imagined more vain and foolish.

Ver. 24. *There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.*] Nor can any man reap the benefit of his labours, but by studying first to free his mind from over much care and anxious thoughts: and then (instead of heaping up perpetually for his heirs) by allowing himself a moderate and decent use of all that he hath gotten by his honest labours; cheerfully communicating them with his friends and neighbours; and, lastly (in order to these), by being truly and devoutly religious, acknowledging God to be the donor of all good things; from whose bountiful hand proceeds even this power, both to enjoy all a man hath with a quiet, peaceable, and well-pleased mind, in the midst of all troubles of this life; and, in conclusion, to leave all with the like mind unto those that shall come after him.

Ver. 25. *For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto, more than I?*] For the truth of which, you may rely upon my experience; who, when I could have hoarded up as much as any other man, chose rather freely to enjoy the fruit of my labours; and was as forward to spend, as ever I was to get: but must acknowledge this to be the singular grace of God to me, who preserved me from that great folly of neglecting myself, for the sake of I know not whom.

Ver. 26. *For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather, and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.*] For this is a blessing which God reserves for him whom he loves; whose sincere piety he rewards with wisdom to judge when, and with knowledge to understand how, he should enjoy, and take the comfort of, all that he hath; especially with inward joy, satisfaction of heart, and tranquillity of mind, in this favour of God to him; whereby the troublesome affairs of this life are tempered and seasoned: but he delivers up him that regards not God, to the most cruel tormentor, which are his insatiable desires, and anxious cares, with busy labours and incessant pains, to increase his estate without end, and to heap up vast treasures, which God disposes afterward to those who approve themselves to him, in a pious, just, and charitable life, with contented minds.

Now what a vanity and vexation is this also to a sinner, to get riches for those to whom he never designed them? Nay, it is a sad thought to a good man, that if his son be not virtuous, the estate he leaves is not likely to prosper with him. See Annot. [o]

ANNOTATIONS.

[a] Ver. 1. Thus Themistocles, Lucullus, and others (as Melancthon observes), being wearied in their attendance upon public affairs, by many unprofitable contentions, nay, by the ingratitude of the people, delivered up themselves unto pleasures, as better than ill-bestowed pains.

[b] Ver. 2. *Laughter.*] The censure he passes upon this makes it necessary to expound it of such dissolute and frantic mirth, as I have mentioned in the Paraphrase.

[c] Ver. 3. *Gave myself.*] The word in the Hebrew (as the margin of our translation informs the reader) imports something of *extension;* as in other places of Scripture: (Psal. xxvi. 10.) because, when men indulge themselves very liberally in eating and drinking, the blood boils and rises, the veins swell, and the skin of the whole body is distended.

Lay hold on.] The word signifies not simply to apprehend, but to keep under restraint what we have seized. As the Philistines are said to have *taken* David (had him in their power) in Gath; in the title of Psal. lvi. Thus I have expounded it here, as most agreeable to the sense of the place.

[d] Ver. 4. *Great works*] Include all that follow, to the end of ver. 8. consisting either in buildings, or in plantations, and water-works belonging to them; or in his household; or his stock upon his land; or his exchequer, and magazines; or in things that were for mere state and magnificence, *viz.* royal furniture; or in great variety of vocal and instrumental *music;* to which some add a kind of *seraglio* of the most beautiful women that could be found: though for this last there is no ground to think it here mentioned; but what lies in two hard words, of which I shall give an account presently.

[e] Ver. 5. *Gardens.*] The Hebrew word *gennoth* some will have it to be proper places for *flowers, herbs, sallads,* and all manner of *fruit-trees;* and *pardesin,* which we translate *orchards,* to be only *woods, forests,* or *parks.* Of which there is no certainty: for this last word *pardesin* is used but twice more in the Holy Scripture; and in the first of those places we translate it *forests,* (Nehem. ii. 8.) and in the other, (Cant. iv. 13.) it signifies a place where *pomegranates* grew. And therefore it indifferently signifying either of these, I have expressed both in the Paraphrase. And, if we judge of such places by what the Greeks (from this word) call a *paradise,* they were so large as to comprehend not only all sorts of trees, both fruit-trees and others (such as *cedars, cypresses,* &c.) but *fountains,* and *fish-ponds,* and *aviaries,* and *walks,* for all kinds of beasts, wild and tame: in short, whatsoever could make a place pleasant, either by nature or art.

[*f*] Ver. 6. *Pools.*] The word *berecoth* carrying in it the notion of *blessing*, some interpreters will have it to signify places filled and supplied by the great *blessing* of rain. But there is no reason for this limitation, it being as capable to signify any lake, or large hollowness in the ground, or upon it, for the reception of water, either from the clouds, or from springs, or from rivers; which are beneficial for sundry uses, as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase.

[*g*] Ver. 7. Though the word *baker* properly belongs to *oxen* and *cows;* yet we well translate it, the *greater sort of cattle*, comprehending *camels, asses*, &c. In like manner, *tzon* is commonly used for *sheep*, but comprehends *goats* also; and therefore is well translated by us, the *lesser sort of cattle*. All which, both great and small, are comprehended under the general word *mikneh*, which we translate *possession*.

[*h*] Ver. 8. *Peculiar treasure.*] The word *segullah* signifies either the *things* themselves that are rare and precious; or the *place* where such things are reposited and kept, *viz.* a *treasury*.

But the greatest difficulty in this verse, and indeed in this chapter, is, to tell what is meant by *siddah* and *siddoth;* which he calls, in the conclusion of this description of his magnificence, *the delights*, or delicious pleasures, *of the sons of men*. These Bochartus hath probably conjectured to be most excellent compositions in *music*, or most excellent verses, set by a rare artist among the Phœnicians, called Sido, to the most ravishing and melting notes. And therefore I have not so much as taken notice of their interpretation, who, deriving these words from an original signifying spoil and devastation, understand hereby *beautiful women*, taken captive in the wars; of which the king had the first choice, as he had of the rest of spoil. For there were no wars in his time, till the latter end of his reign; and then he was rather worsted than victorious. Some, indeed, to keep this sense, derive it from *saddaim*, the breasts, or paps; because no small part of women's beauty (which they would have to be the *delights* here spoken of) consists in the fine shape and decent position of this part of their body. But this seems to be far fetched; and therefore I have let it, and divers other interpretations, alone; and only expressed the sense of our own translation, which takes these for *musical instruments;* and those of such extraordinary sweetness, that they left no part of a man's soul untouched, nor room for any other pleasure (so some derive it, from a word signifying *abundance*); and had some regard to the LXX. who understand it of such as waited upon him at the table (*cup-bearers*, and such-like officers), where *music* also was seldom wanting, but made a part of the entertainment of great persons; as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase.

[*i*] Ver. 9. *My wisdom remained.*] For it was not the manner of great men, in ancient time, to pass their feasts only in eating and drinking, and, after the sottish custom now, to send the cups going round, when all was taken away; but to spend the time in pleasant, but learned, discourses, or in telling stories, or propounding and resolving questions; which might whet the wit, and form men's manners, or open the secrets of nature; and at the same time both refresh and instruct the mind. As we see at Samson's marriage-feast he propounded a riddle to be unfolded, concerning the generation of bees, out of the carcass of a lion. In Plutarch's Symposiacs, there are abundance of such merry and learned questions resolved. And Athenæus, in his Deipnosophists, hath excerpt the flower of all arts, and authors, poets, philosophers, and historians. In Virgil also at the end of his first book of Æneids, Jopas is introduced singing a philosophical song (at the feast which Dido made), concerning the motions of the moon and the sun, and in short of all that Atlas, that most famous astronomer, had taught. And in another place, Æneas himself relates the destruction of Troy.

[*k*] Ver. 10. *My portion.*] Though wisdom thus bridled his pleasures, yet it did not restrain him from such a free and plentiful enjoyment of them, that there was no sort which he did not taste as highly of as was possible, without making himself a mere fool. This he calls *his portion*, by a metaphor taken from inheritance; which being divided into parts, every one of the children had his part given him; or from *lots*, which as they were used among merchants, so sometimes in the dividing of inheritances; when the heirs could not agree among themselves about the equality of the *portions* which were set out for them.

[*l*] Ver. 11. *I looked.*] Having considered the value of this *portion*, he could not say it was much worth; but rather that there was very little in it: and therefore he prefers wisdom much before all this pleasure; and still far more before sottish and mad pleasure, (ver. 12.)

And yet, for all that, after he had taken the benefits of wisdom into a second consideration, (ver. 13, 14.) he could not but conclude again, that there is a *vanity* in that also. Which is threefold; as there are three ends for which men study wisdom. First, that they may provide for their safety and security: secondly, that they may commend their names to posterity: or, thirdly, that they may leave to their children what their singular prudence and great diligence have gathered together. But all these he shews are vain designs.

[*m*] Ver. 15. *Happened.*] For instance, he represents here how all mankind, wise and fools, are alike liable to the same casualties, and many inconveniences, which are common to every one of us in this life. Which the Lord Bacon (in book iv. of the Advancement of Learning, chap. 2.) extends to such considerations as this: that, "in all times, witches, and old women, and impostors, have been rivals and competitors, in the reputation and opinion of the multitude, with the ablest physicians; and contended with them for the same cures: nay, the impostor bears away the prize, and virtue lies under the censure; such is the weakness and credulity of men, they prefer a mountebank, or a witch, before a learned physician: which the poets observed when they made Æsculapius and Circe, brother and sister, both children of the sun. And what follows from hence, but that the physicians say to themselves, as Solomon in another case, *It befals to me, as it doth to the fool; why should I labour to be more wise?* It discourages them, that is, in their profession."

[*n*] Ver. 16. *No remembrance.*] And then for the other two (mentioned above, *k*) he observes how short-lived our memorial is, as well as ourselves, (ver. 16, 17.) and that no man can be sure, who shall inherit his labours, or what kind of person he shall be; wise or sottish, good or bad, (ver. 18, 19.) Which he reflects upon again in the following verses with a very heavy heart, that made him weary of life, (ver. 20, 21.) And then concludes the chapter, with

a brief account of the true way to enjoy all the happiness that this world can afford: of which we are utterly incapable, unless we have a sense of God, and be devoutly affected towards him as the author and donor of all good things. Which I have expressed so fully in the Paraphrase of ver. 24, &c. that I may be censured for making it too long; and therefore shall not commit another error, in enlarging it farther here.

[o] Ver. 26. But only observe, that *wisdom* and *knowledge* in this verse do not differ, as they may be thought to do, i. 26. but relate both of them to the same thing; only with such a distinction, as I have mentioned in the Paraphrase; or, as others will have it, *wisdom* relates to the acquisition of the good things of this world, *knowledge* to the use; from which prudent fruition flows the *joy* he mentions together with them. Thus Corranus.

The last words of the chapter are referred by all expositors, in a manner, only to the condition of the *sinner*, which immediately precedes: but since they have a true sense with respect to all men whatsoever, good and bad, I thought it best so to expound them; with regard to the whole foregoing verse.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Upon the mention of God's overruling providence, in the latter end of the foregoing chapter, Solomon proceeds from thence to illustrate (in the first part of this chapter) both those things, of which he had discoursed before; *viz.* first, the *imperfection* of human wisdom; which is confined to a certain time or season, for all things that it would effect: which if we neglect, or let slip, all our contrivance signifies nothing. And, secondly, that the utmost *perfection* at which our wisdom can arrive in this world, consists in these things: first, in being contented in this order wherein God hath placed all things, and not disquieting ourselves about that which it is not in our power to remedy, or alter; or, at least, not for the present: secondly, in observing and taking the fittest opportunity of doing every thing, as the most certain means to tranquillity: there being nothing that makes our mind more unquiet than striving against the stream (as we speak), and, when the wind is against us, labouring to bring about our ends, and to obtain our desires: and, thirdly, in taking the comfort of what we have at present; and making a seasonable and legitimate use of it: and, lastly, in bearing the vicissitudes that we find in all human things with an equal mind; because they are necessary and unalterable.

These were the things he had suggested in the conclusion of the former chapter; and the beginning of this may have relation to every one of them. And since he had spoken before also (ver. 9, 10, of the second chapter) concerning the moderating of pleasures by wisdom, and of the study of wisdom by seasonable pleasures, I do not know but he may have respect unto that also; and therefore I have begun with it in the Paraphrase.

Castalio goes still farther, and thinks the meaning of the first part of this chapter may be, that it is in vain to expect our happiness in this world; for this is no more the time and the place for it, than seed-time is the harvest. But we must stay till the next life for it; which is the proper time for complete happiness: here we must be content with a great many tears. Which is a pious meditation, but seems not to be the scope of Solomon; and therefore I have not touched upon it.

In short, he still continues to enlarge himself upon the two first things, wherein men place their happiness; *wisdom* and *pleasure:* and comes not to the third till the middle of this chapter, where I shall observe it.

Ver. 1. *To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.*] How vain an attempt it is to obtain the forenamed tranquillity by fixing our mind upon any one thing in this world; and how necessary it is to let the study of wisdom, for instance, and the enjoyment of pleasure, labour, and rest, take their turns, God himself hath shewn us, by tying us to this order in the course of things: which, whether they be natural or depend upon our will, will have their certain appointed seasons and occasions; upon which all our designs, counsels, and endeavours have such a dependance, that if we will not observe them, we shall not only lose our labour, but miserably vex and torment ourselves to no purpose. See Annot. [a]

Ver. 2. *A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted.*] As for natural things, we see in ourselves that there is a stated time for an infant's lying in the womb before it can be born; and the time afterward for its growth, and stay in the world; beyond which a man cannot go, but drops into his grave: and so it is not only with other living creatures as well as man, but with herbs, and roots, and plants, which we cannot set and sow at all times; but must take the proper season both for that, and for gathering the crop when it is come to maturity, or else our pains are ill bestowed, and we find to our sorrow that we have laboured in vain.

Ver. 3. *A time to kill, and a time to heal: a time to break down, and a time to build up.*] And thus it is in the diseases of our body; there is a time when they are so infectious that they are incurable, or when it is so improper to administer physic that it doth no good, but certainly kills; whereas, at another time, those very remedies prove effectual means to restore our health unto us: and so it is in other structures as well as our own bodies; there is a time when it is more proper to break down a building than it is to raise it; and when houses are built, there are seasons for repairs, and sometimes for pulling them down and erecting them anew, or else they will not stand. See Annot. [b]

Ver. 4. *A time to weep, and a time to laugh: a time to mourn, and a time to dance.*] Other alterations also there are in human life, which sometimes naturally move our tears; and at another time our laughter: nay, there are times not only for tears, but for the bitterest lamentations, which the funerals of our dearest relations, or the public calamities, require; and again, there is a time (at a wedding suppose) which provokes us so naturally, not only to be merry, but to leap and dance for joy; that it would be as absurd then to bewail ourselves, as it is to dance about the dead bodies of our friends.

Ver. 5. *A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together: a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.*] And in the plantations which we make,

there is a time when it is fit to pick up stones, and throw them out of our vineyards or fields of corn; and there is another time, when it will be as necessary to gather up the same stones again, to make a fence about those vineyards or fields, or to repair the highways; and as it is in these natural things, so it is in those that depend upon our own disposal: there are seasons proper for husband and wife to enjoy the ends of marriage; but there are other times when they ought to refrain, and deny themselves even these otherways innocent pleasures.

Ver. 6. *A time to get, and a time to lose: a time to keep, and a time to cast away.*] In like manner, in our traffic and commerce one with another, there is a time of gaining much; but there are other times, when a man must be content to lose by his commodities: sometimes also it is fit for him to lay up, and keep what he hath gotten; but at another time it will be as fit for him to spend or to give away to those that need it.

Ver. 7. *A time to rend, and a time to sew: a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.*] In direful disasters, also, as when God is blasphemed, it becomes us to rend our garments; but after a certain time, it will be as becoming to sew up the rent again; and as, on other occasions, the proper times for holding one's peace, or for speaking, are to be observed; so in great grief, it is to no purpose to administer comfort, till the passion be a little over; and then discourse will be as seasonable as silence was before, (Job ii. 13. iv. 1, 2.)

Ver. 8. *A time to love, and a time to hate: a time of war, and a time of peace.*] To conclude, love itself may turn into hatred; so that they who are now well-affected towards us, may prove our enemies; or those in whose company we now delight, there may be reason hereafter to avoid: and the like turns there are in public, as well as in private affairs; there being just causes sometimes for making war; and then, such a change in the state of things, that it is greater wisdom to conclude a peace.

Ver. 9. *What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?*] And therefore, why do we fancy any thing to be settled, fixed, and constant, here in this world; unless it be these opposite changes? Or, to what purpose is all our labour and travail for any thing, out of the season proper for it? And what great matter is it that we then get; since we must expect another season to part with it? See Annot. [c]

Ver. 10. *I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.*] For that which I have observed from all this is, that God hath made it our business to mark the times and seasons that are fit for the doing of all things, which hath great trouble and anxiety in it: and there is a farther trouble, that after we have done what we desired, we must submit to that time and season, which will undo all again.

Ver. 11. *He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart; so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.*] And though we are not wont to be satisfied with this vicissitude of things, yet God, no doubt, hath disposed them thus most wisely; and there is such a beautiful order appears in several contrarieties (as, for example, of heat and cold, of day and night), that we may well conclude there is so in all manner of events, though never so opposite; which God also hath given us wisdom to discern, in part; having endued man with the understanding of the present state of things, in the age wherein he lives: yet as that is imperfect (it being beyond our skill to know when our industry will succeed, and when a change will come), so he is not able to find out what respect the present changes have to the times that are gone before, and to those that are yet to come hereafter; and so cannot give an exact account of the government of God, because he sees not the beginning, and the progress, and the conclusion of every thing that comes to pass. See Annot. [d]

Ver. 12. *I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.*] Wherefore long consideration and experience assure me, that, leaving these fruitless inquiries and vexatious cares about the future, the only happiness that is in our power, is to make the best we can of our present condition: rejoicing that things are so well with us, and being solicitous for nothing in this world but to obtain a good hope in God, by living piously and virtuously, and doing good to others with what we have; and this not remissly and by fits, but seriously and constantly, as long as we live. See Annot. [e]

Ver. 13. *And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.*] And if a man have arrived at so much happiness, as not to deny himself the use of what he hath at present, out of a vain fear of wanting in time to come, but can so freely and cheerfully enjoy the fruit of his honest labours, as to be well satisfied in the midst of all the inconveniences of this life, let him not ascribe it unto his own wisdom, but thankfully acknowledge the great goodness of God herein: for it is a singular gift of his, to be able, with a quiet and contented mind, to take the comfort of those blessings which God's bounty has bestowed on us, (ii. 24.)

Ver. 14. *I know that whatsoever God doeth it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it; and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.*] And, on the other side, it is not only very foolish and vain, but a great plague, to be discontented that things go otherwise than we desire; for certain it is, God hath settled them by such an eternal and immutable law, in that course and order before described (ver. 1, &c. in which nothing is superfluous, nothing wanting), that it is not in the power of man to make the least alteration one way or other: therefore we must alter ourselves, and not murmur that we cannot change the course of things; which God hath thus immoveably fixed, not to make us miserable, by fretting at it, but happy, by reverent submission to the Divine government, and humble patience under those troubles which we cannot honestly avoid; and a due care not to offend the Divine Majesty, whose will shall be done one way or other, if not by us, yet upon us. See Annot. [f]

Ver. 15. *That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been: and God requireth that which is past.*] This alone is sufficient to silence all our unprofitable, as well as undutiful complaints, about that which hath always been, and ever will be. For we, in this present age, are subject to no other laws than those by which God hath governed the world from the beginning; nor will the next produce any other method than that wherein he hath already proceeded: but, though that which succeeds thrusts out what went before, it brings the very same things about

again, as constantly as spring and fall, summer and winter, return in their seasons.

Ver. 16. *And, moreover, I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.*] But, beyond all this, it is lamentable to consider how that which God hath provided as a remedy for a great many evils which we bring one upon another in this world, is quite perverted, and turned to be itself the greatest evil of all other. The power and authority, I mean, which are committed unto men of great place, wisdom, and dignity: who lean so much to their own affections, that I myself have observed nothing but corruption in the highest, as well as the lowest, courts of judicature: for, whether men's lives or their estates were concerned, such unjust sentences were pronounced, (to the condemning the innocent, and acquitting the guilty, &c.) that I could not but conclude there is nothing more dangerous than for a man who hath not that fear of God before his eyes, (which I now mentioned, ver. 14.) to be advanced unto honour and entrusted with power. So vain are they that place their felicity in these. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 17. *I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose, and for every work.*] For, so rooted is this impiety in the hearts of men, and such arts there are to defeat the best endeavours to redress it, I could bring my thoughts about this matter to no other issue but this (in which we must all be satisfied), that there is a supreme Judge of all, who will in due time make that difference between men and things, which we cannot do now; absolving and rewarding the righteous, and condemning and punishing the wicked: for as there is a time, I observed before, for all other things, so there is for this; they that govern the world have their time now, for contriving and acting what mischief they please; but he will take a time hereafter of calling them to an account for the injustice they designed, as well as did, in the courts of judgment. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 18. *I said in my heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.*] But in the mean time I could not but think the condition of mankind, especially of the poorer sort of them, to be very deplorable; which made me fetch a deep sigh, and wish to God that he would be pleased to lay these great men open and manifest to themselves, and make them sensible, that they have no reason to look down with so much contempt upon others; much less treat them like beasts destined to the slaughter: for, were they stripped of their external pomp and power, they are so far from excelling other men, that in many regards they do not excel the very beasts. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 19. *For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath: so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity.*] For as the beasts are subject to many accidents which they think not of, so are all mankind, who can no more foresee several things that happen to them than the beasts themselves; or, if they herein differ from them, that they can better defend themselves from some things that befal them; yet there is one thing which makes them all equal, and that is death: for both men and beasts not only grow old, but die alike; and while they live, one sucks in no other air than the other doth; which, when they can no longer breathe, a man remains as much an unprofitable lump and putrid carcass as a beast: and, therefore, herein can pretend to no pre-eminence above other inferior creatures; but they are both equally vain and perishing.

Ver. 20. *All go unto one place: all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.*] And being dead, their bodies are dissolved into the same principles, out of which they sprang; so that herein they are both alike again: for man, as proud as he is, derives his body from no higher original than the dust; the very same dust of which the beasts are made; into which they both, men and beasts, must return again at the last.

Ver. 21. *Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?*] As for the spirit, which makes all the difference between the beasts and us, that is invisible; and where shall we find a man, especially among those great persons (spoken of before), who seriously considers it? and believes that the souls of all mankind go to God that gave them, (xii. 7.) to be judged by him (ver. 17. of this chapter); whereas the souls of beasts perish with them? No; herein they differ not at all from beasts, that having buried their minds in brutish pleasures, they have no more sense of a future life than they; but imagine that their souls die together with their bodies. So senselessly stupid are they that trample upon the rest of mankind, and yet have such ignoble thoughts of themselves, that they imagine their very souls are no longer lived than a beast. See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 22. *Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?*] And therefore, considering that our bodies have no privilege above the beasts, and that mankind are so liable to be abused by those who should protect them, (ver. 16. 19, 20.) I was confirmed in my former opinion, (ii. 24.) that it is best for a man herein also to imitate the beasts, by enjoying freely the good things God hath blessed him withal, and taking all the comfort he can find in them at present, without solicitous care about the future: for this is all he can be sure of; it being in no man's power to secure him, he shall enjoy that hereafter, which he makes no use of now; much less when he is dead, can he be brought back again to take any pleasure in the fruit of all his labours, or see what becomes of them.

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. *Season.*] The Hebrew words *zeman* and *gneth* signify either that point of *time* when things, being ripe, come forth of themselves, by the constitution of their several beings, as all *natural* things do: or that occasion which serves our *voluntary* actions, and is fit for effecting what we design. The Hebrews observe, that Solomon here reckons seven opposite seasons, of each sort, as a complete demonstration, by induction, of the truth of this general proposition in the first verse: which holds good even in virtue itself: which is not proper, but in its place. For fortitude hath not always been successful (as the Lord Herbert observes), nor temperance safe, nor justice opportune: the fury and insolence of the outrageous people having, in some insurrections, grown to that excess, that it has been

greater wisdom to pass by awhile than to punish them. And it is very apparent also in our councils, when they are conducted merely by human wisdom; which is not able, without a Divine direction, to choose the most fortunate (as we call them) and happy seasons for undertakings. Brutus, Cicero, Hirtius Pansa, all thought to restore the ancient estate of the Roman commonwealth (as Melancthon notes), but were deceived; and after the same manner many are still, still and will be deceived. Then businesses proceed, when we obey his Divine directions, and he assists: and yet then sometimes more, and sometimes less difficulty.

[*b*] Ver. 3. *Kill.*] In the third verse I have taken the liberty of following my own judgment in expounding the first part of it: which I have not referred to punishing and sparing offenders, as interpreters do; but to the condition of diseases that are in our bodies. For though the other be an excellent sense, yet this seems to be more agreeable to the wise man's meaning: because he is hitherto speaking of things natural; and the word *heal* also directs rather to that sense, which I have given of *killing*, than the common one. The same may be said of the next part of the verse; there being a craziness in buildings, as well as in the body of man: and some weather so improper to raise a fabric, that the parts will not hang together; but that which cements them moulders so fast away, that that time were better spent in pulling down a house, than in building it up.

As for the rest of the calendar or *ephemeris* (as the Lord Bacon calls it), which the wise man hath made of the diversities of times and occasions for all actions, I need give no farther account of it here, than I have done in the Paraphrase.

[*c*] Ver. 9. *What profit.*] Nor is it hard to expound the inference he makes in this verse, from the foregoing induction: which I have expressed as fully as I could in the Paraphrase; and more largely in the Argument of this chapter. Gregory Nazianzen thinks, he only intends to reflect upon the great inconstancy, as of all earthly things, so of human actions, (sometimes, for instance, men are madly in love with a woman, and in time they as much hate her; now they are eager to get, and at another time they profusely spend; sometimes they kill, and sometimes they are killed; sometimes do nothing but talk, and at another time have not a word to say, &c.) and therefore all his labours are vain. But I have extended it farther, with a respect to other things, which the forenamed induction suggests to us.

[*d*] Ver. 11. *World in their heart.*] There is greater difficulty in this verse, if we connect it with the rest of the discourse; as we ought to do. Which I have endeavoured to explain by taking the word *haolam, the world*, for the present state of things, in this age wherein we live (which is a genuine sense of it), whereof God hath given us some understanding; but not so perfect as to be able to give an account of the reason and scope of every thing that we see happen in this world, because we are ignorant of what went before, and of what will follow after, when we had or shall have no being here.

It is commonly understood of the works of nature. And in this sense the Lord Bacon (in the beginning of his book of the Advancement of Learning) hath admirably expounded it, in this manner: "In these words, *he hath placed the world in man's heart*, &c. Solomon declares not obscurely, that God hath framed the mind of man as a mirror, or looking-glass, capable of the image of the whole world; and as desirous to receive it, as the eye is to entertain the light: and not only delighted in beholding the variety of things, and the vicissitude of times; but ambitious to find out and discover the immoveable and settled laws and decrees of nature. And though he intimates, that this whole economy of nature (which he calls *the work that God hath wrought, from the beginning to the end*) cannot be found out by man; it doth not derogate from the capacity of his mind, but is to be imputed to the impediments of learning," &c.

There is one interpreter (Corranus) who by *olam, world*, understands the circular motion of things for the service of man. But I can find no such use of the word any where, else the sense would be elegant enough, which arises from thence; *viz.* that this *revolution* being remote from our knowledge, and a secret to us; who cannot tell what day or hour it will be; we ought not to trouble ourselves about this, but make use of the present, and refer the rest to God.

Melancthon also hath an unusual interpretation; which is, that God made things so, that we should sweetly enjoy them (that he understands by *placing the world in man's heart*), but men make the use of them unpleasant, by their wandering desires, by their vain solicitude, by their diffidence; which make them long after new things, and meddle with that which is unnecessary. Like M. Antony, who, when he had gotten the most flourishing part of the empire, could not be content; but, out of an unquiet nature, desired the whole, and so lost all. This he makes the sense of the latter end of the verse; which he thus translates: *man cannot find out the work of God, neither the beginning nor the end of it.* Therefore, as I said just now, it is wisdom to satisfy ourselves with what we have; for the present only is that which is in our own power.

[*e*] Ver. 12, 13. And so it follows in these two verses: the sense of which Gregory Nazianzen (Orat. liii.) hath thus briefly expressed, *the greatest good of man I persuade myself to be* ἐκθυμίαν, καὶ εὐποΐαν, *cheerfulness of mind, and beneficence, or doing good to others;* and this short pleasure alone the Divine indulgence bestows upon us, if righteousness conduct all our affairs.

[*f*] Ver. 14, 15. And with this we must rest contented, for with all our toilsome thoughts, we cannot alter the course of things: which God, he here shews, hath immutably settled; on purpose that we should be sensible of a power above ourselves. Which it is our wisdom to stand in such awe of, as not to contend with it, but submit unto it: that so we may obtain all the favour from him, which in such a state of things, as his wisdom hath appointed, can be indulged to us. And here, I think, Melancthon hath very pertinently observed, that Solomon doth not merely recite the vain complaints and endeavours of mankind, after the manner of philosophers and poets; but lays down a rule of life, as the best remedy that can be found for our disease. Which is, *not to trust to ourselves, nor to indulge our own curiosity and appetites; but to be sensible of our own infirmities, to fear God, to obey his commands, to keep within the bounds of our vocations, and to beg and expect the help of God, and to acquiesce in his holy will and pleasure.*

[*g*] Ver. 16. Unto these things it is better for us to apply ourselves, than it is to endeavour to be great and mighty; which is another vain desire of man, fancying he can thereby keep off many evils; for few can be at the top of all; and so there must be still greater than we, by whom we may be oppressed: and our vexation will be so much the greater, when with all our power we cannot hinder it. As for those that are in the very highest places, (if they have not that fear of God, before spoken of, ver. 14.) their power doth but betray them, to do the more mischief unto themselves and others; and thereby increase the misery of mankind. This seems to be the dependance between the foregoing verses and this. Wherein the wise man passes to the consideration of the third thing (mentioned upon chap. i. 12.) unto which some aspire, as the highest happiness; *viz. greatness, power,* and *honour.* Which if a man be bad, make him so much the worse himself, and the world by his means: and if he be good, will trouble him very much, to find there are many abuses, which by all his power he cannot remedy. For Solomon himself saw several gross impieties committed (as he tells us in this verse), even by them who were appointed to be the guardians of men's lives, liberties, and enjoyments; which he, as great a king as he was, wanted ability wholly to redress: but still they went on so confidently in their wicked course of perverting judgment, that he was fain to leave them to be judged by the supreme judge of all, God Almighty. And if it were so in the reign of a good and wise king, what could be hoped for in the reign of those who were impious and injudicious, as most of the kings of Israel and Judah were? for such pervert all things by their covetousness, ambition, or folly; so that their subjects can have no justice, nor enjoy any tranquillity. And besides, they permit (as he shews afterward, chap. v.) many corruptions to creep in the Divine worship; and ridiculous rather than religious ceremonies to be introduced, &c. whereupon follows a great decay of all moral virtue.

In short, this is a great part of the vanity and misery to which we are here subject; that, as Melancthon well notes, there are many things done unjustly, even under just governors; because they are not able to look unto all things themselves, but must manage them by other men: many of which are negligent, others wicked and swayed by depraved affections; and yet crafty enough to cover their own guilt. Here is the only comfort, that *God notwithstanding preserves government, and political order;* and in his time will judge even kings and judges of the earth.

[*h*] Ver. 17. The last words of this verse may, in my judgment, be thus most literally translated out of the Hebrew: *There is a time for* (judging) *every purpose, and every work there; viz.* in those corrupt courts of judgment: every thing that hath been transacted in the judicatures he had been speaking of.

[*i*] Ver. 18. These words, which follow the former, are variously interpreted; but they have a perspicuous sense, if they be taken in the coherence with the foregoing (as in reason they ought to be), without fancying, as some have done, that they are spoken in the person of an *epicure.* And so I have considered them; as intended to take down the vain opinion those great men have of themselves (which makes them tyrannize over their inferiors), by representing to them (or rather desiring God would effectually represent to their minds) how little they differ from beasts; save only in that which they do not at all value, or regard, *viz.* their immortal spirits.

The word *lebaram,* to *manifest them,* is commonly expounded of God's manifesting them unto others; but I have taken it for his shewing them to themselves; agreeable to the word that follows, *lireoth, that they might see,* &c. The whole may be thus translated: *That God would clear their minds, that they may see,* &c. For it comes from a root which signifies such an accurate separation of one thing from another, that the difference may be perspicuously discerned.

[*k*] Ver. 21. And thus it seems also most reasonable to expound this last verse, in connexion with all the rest; and to understand the first word of it, *who;* concerning those persons mentioned in the beginning of this discourse: *Who among those unrighteous judges,* &c.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

Having considered the power which many times falls into the hands of unjust and cruel men, he now represents the miserable estate of those that are subject to them: as a farther argument of the vanity and vexation unto which mankind are liable in this troublesome world. And having noted some of the principal mischiefs of this sort (of which I shall give a distinct account in the Paraphrase and Annotations upon it), he concludes the chapter with some animadversions upon the condition of the greatest, nay, and the best, of princes: who are not so happy as the world is apt to think them.

Ver. 1. *So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of the oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.*] But I have not yet done with the consideration of the miseries which mankind suffer by the abuse of that power which is necessarily placed in the hands of some persons for the good of others, (iii. 16.) For, reflecting again upon it, I observed the innumerable ways that were practised in this world for the undoing of others; both by violence and exactions, and by fraud and calumnies (as well as by unjust decrees), whereby so many were crushed, that nothing was to be seen or heard but the tears and cries, the sighs and groans, of such as lay in a desolate condition, and could find no relief; no, not so much as one to comfort them: for such was the greatness of their oppressors, who had gotten all power into their hands; that as they could not defend themselves against them, so nobody else durst express their compassion towards them, much less plead for them; for fear of being served in the same kind themselves. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive.*] Which made me think it was better to be among the dead, who have made a happy escape from all these calamities, than to remain still alive; either to suffer under this tyranny, or to live in perpetual fear of it; or to behold such great grief of heart (but without power to help them) which many miserable wretches endure.

Ver. 3. *Yea, better is he than both they who hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.*] Or rather (for why should I compare the living with those, who, though they now lie at rest in their graves, have been heretofore very sorely afflicted?) much more desirable than either of these, is it not to have come into the world at all: and so to have had no sense of the miseries which the dead have formerly felt, and the living now undergo.

Ver. 4. *Again, I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.*] For besides what they suffer from mighty oppressors, they give one another a great deal of trouble; pride, ambition, emulation, envy, and hatred, reigning so uncontrollably every where among all orders and ranks, all trades and professions, that when a man hath taken a great deal of honest pains, in some useful work, and brought it to perfection; instead of gaining credit by it, and being honoured for it, his neighbours look awry upon him: nay, he is maligned, disparaged, and traduced, by those, who either cannot, or will not, imitate (but only carp at) his ingenious labours. So vain it is to endeavour to excel others in art or industry; which procure a man ill will, when he looks for thanks and commendations: and such an affliction it is to a man's spirit, to labour hard for an ungrateful world; who are tormented by that which should please them; and cannot see any worth in another, but they are vexed within themselves. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 5. *The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.*] But see now (as a farther instance of the vanity of mankind) what use some make of this; who are so absurdly foolish, as to be utterly discouraged, and to sit down in perfect idleness; because there are such oppressions, on one hand, from those above them, (ver. 1.) and such emulations, on the other hand, from those that are equal with them, and under them, (ver. 4.) A wise resolution this! to do nothing, because others do ill; not to satisfy one's self, because others will be displeased; not to satisfy, did I say? nay, he is hunger-bitten, and eaten up with cares how to live; he hath not a rag to his back to cover his nakedness; having reduced himself and family, by his laziness, to extreme penury. See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 6. *Better is a handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit.*] And though he want not excuses for his folly, yet they are as idle as his sloth: for he senselessly applies that common saying to his purpose, *One handful with ease is better than two without it:* Which is very true, if rightly understood; and may serve to reprove both him, and those from whom he learns this folly: for as idleness and emptiness always go together (and therefore he in vain expects to have so much as *one handful* without labour), so is a moderate estate gotten honestly, with moderate diligence, and enjoyed handsomely, with perfect contentment, better than the greatest treasures gotten by oppression, or with infinite toil, and enjoyed with anxious thoughts and fretting cares, and exposing a man either to the hatred or the envy of others. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 7. *Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun.*] Nor is this all the folly into which men fall by the forenamed tyranny and oppression; (ver. 1.) but reflecting again upon this subject, I observed another extreme into which they run; no less void of reason and of satisfaction than the former.

Ver. 8. *There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travail.*] For, as some grow idle, so others grow too scraping and penurious; it being no rare thing to find a man that lives single and alone, without so much as a companion, and hath neither child, nor brother, nor kinsman, to make his heir; and yet he sets no measures, either to his labours, or to his desires, but toils and craves without end: and, which is still worse, as he can scarce find in his heart to allow himself the necessaries, much less the pleasures, of this life, so it never comes into his mind to think who shall be the better for all this when he dies; and what a madness it is, both to rack his mind with cares, and to pinch his belly, and deny himself the comfort of what he hath, for the sake of he knows not whom.

This also, certainly, is not only a senseless and unprofitable folly, but one of the greatest plagues and torments of human life. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 9. *Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.*] How much wiser is he, who not only enjoys what he hath himself, but takes others into the society, to partake of the good things that God hath given him? for nothing is more comfortable than good company; as nothing is more dull and melancholy, than a solitary life: and besides, when two or more are adjoined together in common counsel, and mutual help and assistance, they will not only act more cheerfully, but more easily effect their design, and take the greater pleasure in the fruits of their labour. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 10. *For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.*] Or if they have any ill success, or fall into danger, it will not only make the singular benefit of fellowship the more plainly appear; because they will relieve and rescue one the other; but lamentable is his condition, who hath no friend, no companion, to reach out his charitable hand to him, when he falls (suppose into a pit); none to comfort him when he is sick; none to testify his innocence when he is defamed; or, which is worse, to restore him when, by his own imprudence or negligence, he falls into a sin.

Ver. 11. *Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?*] And therefore, in the very beginning of the world, God did not think fit to let man be alone, but gave him a helpmeet for him: and as two that lie together in the same bed cherish one another by their mutual heat; but it is hard to be warm alone; so do they that are strong, undaunted, vigorous, and cheerful, infuse that courage and comfort, which silver and gold cannot give, into those that are of a weak, timorous, dejected, or melancholy spirit.

Ver. 12. *And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*] To conclude, we are never more sensible of the benefit of society, than when we are assaulted by a powerful enemy; whom we cannot resist alone, but by the help of a friend

may be able to overcome: for as a great many threads twisted together are not quickly broken, though a single one be soon snapped asunder; so he that is surrounded by his children, friends, and neighbours, will make a better defence, and hold out longer against those that invade his right, than that wretched man can do, (ver. 8.) who, by loving money alone, hath deprived himself of all such succours.

Ver. 13. *Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.*] But it is not society alone will make a man happy, without wisdom and virtue. For who are better attended and guarded than kings? and yet the poorest man that is, if he be wise and good, is far happier than the wealthiest prince on earth, who foolishly abuseth his power: nay, the towardly child of a poor man is much better than such a king, though his greatness be made more venerable by his gray hairs: for, besides that wisdom makes the poor youth contented with his condition, though never so mean (a blessing at which princes hardly arrive), it renders wholesome admonition also acceptable to him, when, by his inexperience, he falls into an error; but folly makes the other impatient of all advice and counsel, and the older he is, the more obstinate; because, as his kingly dignity, he fancies, authorizes him to do what he lists, so his age gives him a privilege of knowing, better than any body can tell him, what to do. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 14. *For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor.*] By which means it comes to pass, that he who was born a mere beggar, nay, was as poor and abject as the vilest slave, rises, by his singular prudence, counsel, and conduct, unto a throne: when he whose ancestors were kings, and possessed his dominions by an hereditary right, is deserted by his subjects, and, through his folly and wickedness, falls into such contempt, that he not only loses his crown, but is reduced to the greatest poverty, in which he spends a miserable life.

Ver. 15. *I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.*] Or, if this happen not, yet (such is the infelicity of good princes) I have seen a great king left with nothing but the bare title, and the outward state of royalty; the hearts and affections of all nobles, gentry, and common people, from one end of the kingdom to the other, inclining to his son (or to the next heir) that is to succeed him; unto whom they do obeisance, as if he were already upon the throne, but neglect his old father; who sees himself robbed of those honours in which he placed his happiness; and that by his own son, who would have been more dutiful, perhaps, if he had been a private man. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 16. *There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.*] Nor is this a thing that will have an end, but a humour so rooted in all mankind; that as, in all preceding time (before this king and son were born), they have been weary of that which they have long enjoyed; so this young prince, who is now followed with such applause, must not think that it will last always: but they that come after will take as little delight in him, as the present generation doth in his father; and, when he grows old, court his son, after the same fashion, as they now do him, being young.

From all which it appears, that happiness is not to be found in honour and dignity; no, not in the very highest pitch of it, which is the kingly power: for there also is not only dissatisfaction, but many dangers, troubles, and vexatious cares, which very much disturb and perplex their spirits. See Annot. [*i*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. *Oppressions.*] There are more evils than one that arise from the ill administration of public affairs. For they are either *external* or *internal*. And the *external* are two; either from *superiors*, or from *equals* and *inferiors*. Those from *superiors* he speaks of in this verse, and calls by the general name of *oppressions*, which comes from a root in the Hebrew, that signifies indifferently to oppress (or rather to *squeeze* others, and utterly *crush* them), whether it be by forcible violence, or by extortion in the traffic, or by fraud, circumvention, and false accusation. If it refer to any one of these more than to another, it is to the last. And therefore the LXX. though they translate it by several words, importing bearing down others by main strength, yet by none so frequent as by συκοφαντεῖν, to undo others by *calumny*.

[*b*] Ver. 4. *Envied.*] Those evils which come from *equals* or *inferiors*, he speaks of in this verse, and calls by the general name of *envy;* which is a word in the Hebrew that signifies, when it is taken in an ill sense, all those vicious affections, which are the causes, or the effects, of envious emulation, at the good qualities or prosperity of another person. Which St. James calls πικρὸς ζῆλος, *bitter zeal or envying*, (iii. 14.) and St. Paul is wont to express by two words, ἔρις and ζῆλος, strife (or making hate) and envying; Rom. xiii. 13. *strife and envying, i. e.* contentious or factious emulation; Philip. i. 15. *envy* and *strife, i. e.* invidious contention.

[*c*] Ver. 5. *Foldeth his hands.*] Here he passes to those evils which I called *internal;* which come not from others, but from ourselves. For some (seeing the forenamed *oppressions*, or the *envy* that attends upon men's industry and good successes) grow idle and leave off all business, (expressed here by *folding the hands*, see Prov. vi. 10.) because it is to no purpose to get what another may presently take away; or if he keep, it raises him other enemies, who grudge to see him so happy.

By this means such a man brings himself to extreme poverty: so that phrase, *eateth his own flesh*, signifies, one that is ready to die with hunger; and whose wife and children (called in Scripture a man's *flesh*) are in danger to starve with him. There are other explications of this phrase, upon which I have touched in the Paraphrase, which admirably express the folly of him that undoes himself, to avoid being undone by others.

[*d*] Ver. 6. *Better is a handful.*] Which, though it be a very absurd resolution, yet he wants not apologies for it. Nay, as if he were the only wise man (*sapientum octavus*, wiser than seven men that can render a reason, as Bishop Sanderson speaks), he utters sentences (but it is *like a parable in the mouth of a fool*, a speech full of reason in itself, but witlessly applied), and says, that *better is a handful*

with quietness, &c. Wherein he makes a show of being the most contented soul that lives: but is far from it; desiring and coveting as much as the most toiling and moiling wretch in the world, if he might but have it, and never sweat for it.

Thus some understand this sixth verse: which others take to be Solomon's advice to the envious spoken of before, or to the covetous spoken of afterward, that they would be contented with their condition: moderate riches having fewer cares, which a great estate brings along with it in abundance. Unto all which I have had respect in the Paraphrase upon this verse.

[*e*] Ver. 8. *One alone.*] And as this is the fault on one side, so, on the other, there are those who turn their thoughts altogether to save what they can; pinching themselves by a penurious way of living, that they may seem poor and not worth the squeezing; and likewise have a secret reserve of unknown treasures in case they be oppressed. This he describes here, by the example of a man, who hath neither wife, nor child, nor friend, nor companion, but lives solitary in a house by himself, where he spends little, and yet thinks of nothing but getting riches; which he enjoys not at all, only looks upon them, and wishes still to see more.

One, not a second] Is properly a man without an heir, or a successor; as ver. 15.

[*f*] Ver. 9, &c. Upon the occasion of the foregoing observation, ver. 8. (the better to represent the folly of that sottish humour he there describes), he sets forth the benefit of society, which Greg. Thaumaturgus here calls Κοινωνίαν Βίου, *living in fellowship and communion together.* This he shews is profitable; first, to procure us greater happiness, which is the subject of this ninth verse; secondly, to preserve us in the enjoyment of that happiness when we have attained it: as he shews by three instances. First, to deliver us out of dangers; (ver. 10.) secondly, to fortify us against them; (ver. 11.) thirdly, to repel them when they actually assault us, (ver. 12.) Where is a proverbial saying of a *triple cord*, or *thread;* like to which there are many in other authors; but I forbear to fill this paper with them, and leave those also who have a mind to allegorical applications of these three things, to seek for them in other books. For my business is only to give a brief account of the literal sense, which is this in short: that a companion will afford us his help and assistance many ways; and, if there were no other benefit to be reaped from him, this would be an exceeding great comfort; to have one in our adversity, into whose bosom we may exonerate our sorrows, which will be the lighter, if we see there is any body that sympathizes with us in our calamities.

[*g*] Ver. 13, 14. And thus having represented the miserable effects of power abused to oppression: which bereaves men of the sweetest consorts of life; making them avoid society: he returns to consider the wretched estate of such oppressors, though never so mighty. Both from their own folly, ver. 13, 14. (where that expression is very remarkable, he *is made* or *becomes* poor in his kingdom, as Dr. Hammond well expounds it upon Matt. i. not. *a*) and from the fickleness and inconstancy of the people's affections; which create a great many troubles even to good governors, (ver. 15, 16.) Where there are many difficulties in the Hebrew texts; but not such as make the sense obscure: and an account is given of them by many authors; and therefore I shall only note what the Lord Bacon hath observed, for the illustration of the fifteenth verse, and what De Dieu hath noted upon the sixteenth.

[*h*] Ver. 15. This verse sets out the vanity of the people; who are wont to press and flock about the designed successors of princes. "The root of which vanity (saith the Lord Bacon, Advanc. of Learn. lib. vii. chap. 2. parab. 20.) is that frenzy in the minds of men, which inclines them, with too extreme an affection, unto their own projected hopes. *For the man is rarely found, that is not more delighted with the contemplation of his future hopes, than with the fruition of what he possesseth.* Another thing is, that *novelty which is pleasing to man's nature, and earnestly coveted:* now in the successor to a prince (called here his *second*), he that is next to him, these two concur; *hope* and *novelty.* Which make *more men* (as Pompey said to Scylla, and Tiberius afterward touching Macro) *adore the rising, than the setting sun.* And though princes, perhaps, who are in present possession, be not much moved with this fond humour, nor make any great matter of it (as neither Scylla nor Tiberius did), nay, they smile, it is possible, at the levity of men; and do not stand to fight with dreams (for hope is but the dream of a man awake), yet it cannot but inwardly vex them, to see themselves slighted, even by those on whom they have bestowed many benefits, merely in hope of receiving more from their next supposed successor. For they cannot reasonably expect more, perhaps, from him that now reigns; and therefore they make timely applications to the next heir. He hath done enough for them; and therefore they betake themselves to him who hath yet done nothing. And besides, old men grow tenacious, morose, and sour; whereas youth is commonly liberal, jocund, without care, and ambitious to do great things; especially at his entrance upon the kingdom." This, saith another learned writer, makes the long life of princes, and their power, troublesome and grievous, both to courtiers and people: of which they that live at Rome do not want ocular demonstration.

There is nothing more needful for the explication of this verse, but only to observe, that the *child*, or *youth*, who is here called *the second*, doth not suppose another child, or youth, that is *first:* but only signify, that this youth is *second in the kingdom.* Not second in respect to another son, but second in respect to his father, who reigns before him; and when he dies the son succeeds him.

[*i*] Ver. 16. The first words of this last verse, L. de Dieu seems to me to have expressed better than any other interpreter: they running thus word for word in the Hebrew: *There is no end to any people.* That is, no end to their fickleness, no bounds to their inconstancy; but one nation is as subject to it as another. And as this age follows the former, so the next will follow this, in its levity and mutability. And therefore those young princes, who are transported with the acclamations of the people, do but feed upon wind (as some, I observed upon the first chapter, translate those words, which we render *vexation of spirit*): for their applauses are like to their affections, as changeable as the wind; which will turn another way, to some other person, when this present prince grows old, or he rules ill, or the people's fancy and humour alter. And then it will be, indeed, a sore affliction to him, to see him-

self despised, by those who formerly cried him up as if he had been their darling.

It may be referred also to the very government itself, with which the Israelites were not pleased. For when they were under judges they desired a king: and then they were not pleased with the *monarchy*, but wished for the old *aristocracy* again: though that in truth was the most excellent *monarchy*, which they would not understand, under the immediate government of God himself.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

Under an ill government in the state, religion itself is commonly corrupted in the church. And therefore, having set forth the miseries people endure under the oppressions of an abused power, and the extremes of folly into which it drives them; he begins this chapter with a correction of those errors that are in religion. Which is the only remedy, indeed, the only comfort we have against all the troubles to which we are subject in this world: but such is the vanity of mankind, they spoil their very remedy, and take away all the virtue of that which should be their support; turning it into mere ceremony, whilst their minds remain impure, and without any true sense of God. For they do not consider that he, who is a pure mind himself, must be better pleased with pure thoughts and affections, composed to the observance of his will, and acquiescence in his pleasure; than with all the sacrifices and offerings in the world, which the wicked may bring him as well as the good.

To prevent therefore this new folly into which men are apt to run, when they intend to cure all the rest, Solomon shews all those who would attain true tranquillity of mind, what they must do, and what they must avoid, in the worship of God. And about the middle of the chapter, as I shall observe in the Annotations, proceeds to consider the last of those four things wherein men place their happiness.

Ver. 1. *KEEP thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.*] And now, lest any man add to the affliction and torment of his spirit, even by that which is the only cure for it, let every one, who would be a true worshipper of God, in whom alone lies the happiness we seek, take care to avoid that negligence which is observable in many people; and to approach with all reverence, both of body and soul, into his blessed presence; but do not think to please him with mere postures of devotion; no, nor with sacrifice and incense, without the oblation of an obedient heart, disposed to do what he would have thee: for the worst men in the world may be able to offer him the richest sacrifices, but are very impious, as well as foolish, if they think he delights in the fat and the blood of beasts (save only as testimonies of love to him, and acts of obedience unto his will); for in that very thought they offend him, and make no conscience of what evil they do, while they believe their sacrifices atone for all. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.*] And next to this, when thou makest thy prayers to God, or givest him thanks for his benefits, deliberate with thyself beforehand what it is fit for thee to ask of him, or to vow unto him: and let not any sudden passion make thee inconsiderately, either with thy mouth or in thy mind, desire what is not fit for thee to have; or promise what is not fit for him to receive, or thou art not able or willing to give. But remember, first, how infinitely great the Lord and Governor of the world is, who comprehends all things; and then, how little and vile thou art, who prostratest thyself before him: and therefore do not dare to speak to him as an equal, whatsoever comes into thy mind, much less to make him large promises which thou canst not perform; but let a sense of his majesty, and of thy meanness, overcome thee into a profound reverence of him; expressing itself rather in ardent sighs and groans than in abundance of words; which signify nothing but want of a serious apprehension of him. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words.*] It is so difficult, at the same time, to speak much and wisely unto God, that a man, whose thoughts have been distracted with a great deal of troublesome business in the day, is not more likely to be disturbed with confused dreams in the night, than he who pours out abundance of words in his prayers, is in danger to vent a great many vain, unseemly, absurd (if not impious) things, which are utterly unworthy of the Divine Majesty. See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.*] Yet this is not his greatest danger; for such men having in a fit of zeal bound themselves to God in magnificent promises, are very loath to perform them when they are cool again. And therefore let me farther advise thee, when, in great straits and difficulties, or after great blessings received from him, thou art apt, out of abundance of devout affection, to vow what thou wilt do for him; to deliberate and consider, as I said, in the first place, what thou art truly willing and able to give him; and then, having once vowed it to him, be no less forward to perform than thou wast to promise: for he is highly offended with those that childishly trifle with him, or impiously mock him with delusive promises, and do not keep their word with him: and therefore let me again advise thee to be very faithful and cheerful too in discharging such obligations speedily. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.*] For though the innumerable benefits he bestows on thee may require some such grateful return from thee, yet it is a less fault not to vow at all, than, having vowed, not to perform: the one being but a neglect, the other an affront, nay, a contempt, of his majesty; who needs nothing, indeed, that thou canst give him, but will not suffer a scorn to be put upon him. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 6. *Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?*] Therefore do not hastily engage thyself in such vows as the weakness of human nature, and thy fleshly reluctances, will not suffer thee to perform;

much less think of being absolved from the obligations thou layest on thyself, in the presence of God, and of his holy angels, by such foolish excuses as these; It was a mistake; I did not mind what I said; or, that was not my meaning: for this will but more increase thy guilt: and why shouldest thou farther incense the anger of the Almighty (who is too much provoked already, by thy breach of faith with him), not only to defeat those designs, for the success of which, perhaps, it was that thou madest thy vows; but blast all thy undertakings, and bring thy whole estate to ruin? See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 7. *For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God.*] For all this folly, inconstancy, and falsehood of mankind, proceeds from the want of a serious awful sense of God, in whose worship and service they therefore devise, after the manner of men in dreams, a multitude of senseless things; hampering themselves, for instance, in many vows, from which they seek afterward in vain to extricate themselves, and therefore plainly violate and break: the cure of which lies in a holy fear of offending God; with which possess thy soul, especially when thou comest into his house, that it may preserve thee from speaking much unto him, and from vowing any thing, which is either unworthy of him, or so inconvenient to thyself, that afterward thou shalt not find in thine heart to make it good. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 8. *If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they.*] And this also will preserve thee (if thou always preservest it in mind) from being too much troubled at that abuse of power, which began this discourse, (iii. 16.) when thou seest, for instance, those who should vindicate and protect the poor become the instruments of their oppression; so that even in the courts of justice, to which they fly for relief, their rights and their lives, perhaps, are violently wrested from them: be not dejected at this bold licence which they take; but remember that these great men have one higher than themselves, *viz.* the king; whom God hath set over them, as well as over others, to inspect their doings and to judge them; and if he neglect his duty too, there are higher than them all; *viz.* God, and his holy angels; whom he will employ to punish both them and him. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 9. *Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all: the king himself is served by the field.*] And now let us consider, how senseless the love of money is, which is the cause of all this rapine and violent dealing. And this appears from the fruitfulness of the earth; which brings forth more than enough for all men's necessities, if husbandry be not neglected: an employment no less noble than innocent; for kings themselves, in former times, have not disdained to give their mind unto it; nor is there any prince now, who is not so much indebted to it, that it ought to be one of his principal cares, to encourage, secure, and protect it.

And yet, such is the vanity of mankind, that, disregarding these riches, which lie not very deep in the earth, all their business is, with incessant pains and danger, to dig into its bowels for gold and silver; which tempt them also to oppress and squeeze the poor, to pervert judgment, and do all manner of evil, to extort their money from them. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 10. *He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase. This is also vanity.*] And what can it do for him that sets his heart upon it, but only to increase his desires, that they can never be satisfied? For though necessary things have certain bounds set them by nature, beyond which we do not desire them; yet money, and riches, and all unnecessary things, are unlimited; and, therefore, excite an endless appetite after them; which very appetite also deprives him, who indulges it, of the fruit of all his abundance; for imagining he parts with so much of his happiness, as he doth of his money, he hath not the heart to make use of it for his pleasure; nor scarce for his necessity. This is another strange folly, or rather madness, which infests mankind; and miserably torments them. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 11. *When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding them with their eyes?*] But let us suppose that he useth his riches; yet it is but a small portion of them that he can enjoy; and as his estate increases, the greater family and retinue (if he will live like himself) he must maintain; who have a larger share than himself in the daily provision that is made by his expenses. And as for the rest, that is not expended (which he calls peculiarly *his*), he hath no other benefit from it, but only that it feeds and entertains his eyes: from which he derives all the true pleasure he hath above them, if he keep a good house willingly, that he sees many continually supported by his hospitality; but this very thing, if he be covetous, is his torment, that he beholds so many mouths, which eat at his cost and charges. See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 12. *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.*] And as he that tills his ground, or serves him in any other labour, hath commonly a better appetite, and stronger digestion, and therefore more health, than himself; so he sleeps soundly, and is recruited with new vigour against the morning, whether his supper be small or large: when his rich master, if he eat sparingly, hath his head so full of cares and fears, or if he cram himself, hath it so filled with unquiet vapours, that he cannot sleep a wink; or tosses up and down so restlessly, that he is not at all refreshed by it, but, by his crudities, prepares matter for many diseases. See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 13. *There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.*] And, besides all this, there is another thing which is very calamitous, and may rather be called a grievous plague than a mere affliction; that these very treasures which men have heaped up, and preserved with a great deal of care, from thence expecting their felicity, prove, in the issue, their utter undoing: for I myself have seen some of these miserable men murdered by their servants, or by thieves, nay, by their own children, that they might be masters of these riches; which bring them also, perhaps, at the last, into the same or the like destruction. See Annot. [*m*]

Ver. 14. *But those riches perish by evil travail; and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.*] Or, if this happen not, these riches perish (to their no small grief and trouble) by fire; or shipwreck; or bad bargains; or ill debtors; or those very crafty practices whereby he seeks to increase his estate; or by some other misfortune or mis-

adventure; so that the son, whom he thought to have left possessed of abundance of wealth, hath nothing at all to support a wretched life. See Annot. [*n*]

Ver. 15. *As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.*] These things, indeed, do not always happen, but this which follows doth: that, though he die possessed of all that he hath gotten, yet he cannot carry one farthing away with him: but in this, he and the poorest wretch are both alike, that, as he came naked into this world, so he must be stripped again when he goes out of it; and, though his labour hath been great, and his estate no less; yet it is not in his power to take along with him so much as a winding-sheet; but what others please to bestow upon him.

Ver. 16. *And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?*] This is another grievous affliction, and sore torment, to mankind, especially to the wealthy, that the things, on which they have set their hearts, cannot accompany them into the other world; for as the richest man that ever was brought nothing hither, so he can carry nothing thither; but must leave all that he hath behind him: and then what advantage hath he? what pleasure? wherein doth he differ from a mere beggar? But in this only, that he hath taken a world of pains to no purpose; for that which gives no satisfaction, and which he can hold no more than he can the wind.

Ver. 17. *All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.*] And as at death he can find no comfort in all his wealth, so he took as little, perhaps, in his life; but dwelt obscurely, and, denying himself even what he had, led such a sad, melancholy, and sordid life, that his meat, and his drink, and the very light itself, gave him no pleasure: for such a man never thinks himself happy, but when some hope of gain shines upon him; and therefore, at other times, he pines, and grieves, and frets, and vexes himself, at every thing that makes an expense, or crosses his covetous desires and designs; insomuch that the sickness of the soul appears in his pale and careful looks, and in his lean and meagre body; which consumes and wastes, even by the sorrow and sadness, the vexation and displeasure, of his mind. See Annot. [*o*]

Ver. 18. *Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the fruit of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him; for it is his portion.*] Behold, therefore, the truth of that observation, which I have made more than once, (ii. 24. iii. 12, 13. 22.) and now repeat again; that it is best for a man, and most becoming, freely to use and enjoy the riches he hath gotten by his honest labours; both for the constant supply of all the necessities of nature, and for moderate delight and pleasure, for the entertainment of his friends, and the relief of his poor neighbours; and this not for a fit, but all the time that God is pleased to continue him in this world: for this is all that falls to his share; or that can truly be called his part, in the good things of this life; and the only way to prolong his days, and enlarge his portion in them. See Annot. [*p*]

Ver. 19. *Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.*] And whosoever he be, whom God hath blessed, not only with plenty and abundance of worldly goods, but also with such a noble and generous mind, that he is not their slave, but truly master of them; being able to enjoy them innocently, and to take his full share in them, and that with cheerfulness, and delight in doing good to others: let him be very thankful to almighty God for so great a happiness; and acknowledge it to be a singular gift of his bounty, wherewith he rewards his honest labours.

Ver. 20. *For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.*] For he that is thus highly favoured of God, will not think life tedious or irksome; but (forgetting all his past toils, and taking no care for the future) spend his time most pleasantly: because God hath given him his very heart's desire, and he hath attained the scope of all his labours; in that inward tranquillity of mind, or rather joy and gladness of heart, wherewith God hath compensated all his pains, and testified his extraordinary kindness to him.

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. To prevent or cure that folly mentioned in the Argument of the chapter, he advises three things about the worship of God. The first of them is in this verse; to look to the disposition of their mind, when they go to God's house. And this pious disposition of mind consists also in three things: first, in frequenting the house of God, the place where he is worshipped: secondly, in a reverent behaviour there; suitable to the great thoughts we have of God, and to the humble sense we have of our own meanness: expressed by *keeping or observing the feet; i. e.* taking care to put off their shoes, or sandals, as the manner was in those countries; and to go barefoot into the holy places; answerable to which now is *uncovering the head* in our churches, &c. as Mr. Mede well discourses in more places than one: (book ii. p. 441. 546.) and then, lastly, in readiness of the will to obey all the Divine precepts as the best of sacrifices. For this is the sacrifice of wise and good men; and all other sacrifices without this are but the sacrifices of fools and wicked people: who are able, many times, to furnish the altar with more burnt-offerings than the best of men. But they are such fools as not to consider, that this very thing increases their guilt; that they imagine God will be pleased with the sacrifice of beasts, without the sacrifice of themselves; in entire obedience to his will. So our translation seems to understand the last clause of this verse: which may be thus also translated, *For they make no conscience to do evil.* It is no part of their religion to abstain from wickedness: but fancying by their sacrifices they shall atone for that, they do not fear to commit it. To this purpose Maldonate expounds it more plainly than any that I have read.

[*b*] Ver. 2. Here he gives the second advice; which is about prayer, and about vows to God, or (as St. Jerome seems to take it, and to which Melancthon wholly confines it) about the doctrines we deliver concerning God: which should be very well considered, before we affirm any thing of him. The two first are most proper to the place, especially the latter of them: both which I have comprehended in the Paraphrase of this verse.

[*c*] Ver. 3. The reason for the foregoing precept (*of*

not using many words), taken from the consideration of God's greatness and our meanness, (ver. 2.) together with the enforcement of it in this verse, is thus explained by St. Jerome: He requires us, that, whether we speak or think of God, we should not venture beyond our ability; but remember our imbecility; and that, as far as the heaven is distant from the earth, so much do our thoughts fall short of the excellence of his nature. And therefore our words ought to be very moderate: for as a man that is full of thoughts commonly dreams of those things whereof his head is full, so he that attempts to discourse much of the Divinity falls into folly. Or rather thus: Our words ought therefore to be few, because even those things which we think we know, we see through a glass, and *in ænigmate;* and we do but dream of that, which we fancy we comprehend. So that when we have said a great deal (and to the purpose, as it seems to us), the conclusion of our disputation is folly.

And so much, we may be certain, he suggests unto us, that in a multitude of words spoken unto God (as I rather understand it), there must needs be many of them as idle as men's thoughts are in a dream. For the third verse sounds thus in the Hebrew: *For a dream proceeds from (*or *by) a multitude of toilsome business; and the voice of a fool from (*or *by) the multitude of words.* That is, if a man have a multitude of cares in his mind all the day, they will produce strange, extravagant, or distracted dreams in the night: and, in like manner, if a man utter abundance of words, without consideration and due weighing what he saith to God, many of them must needs be foolish; whether they be vows, or whether they be prayers unto him (or whether they be discourses concerning him; for we may refer it, if we please, to all). And the sense will not much differ, if that preposition which we translate *from,* be translated *with;* in this manner: *As dreams come with a multitude of business* (*i. e.* bring before the mind, in a confused manner, what we have been doing or thinking of all day), *so a fool's voice comes with a multitude of words; i. e.* he utters a great deal of incoherent, confused stuff, &c. Or thus, The voice of a fool comes *in* a multitude of words. And then the sense will run thus: As a multitude of business tires a man, and makes him but dream at last about it (and therefore he had better leave off, before he be unfit to attend it), so when a man enlarges himself too far in his prayers or discourses of God, he doth but babble in the conclusion, and therefore had better be shorter.

[*d*] Ver. 4. And now follows the third advice, about the *performing* of vows that have been *made.* Which is double; first, not to delay the performance, nor put it off from time to time (which is the subject of this verse), lest we be tempted, at last, not to perform our vows at all; which is the second thing: of which he speaks in the next words, ver. 5. 6. where he cautions against excuses which men are apt to make for not being as good as their intentions. Greg. Thaumaturgus hath expressed both excellently in a few words (alluding to the Hebrew word שלם which signifies to *complete*), Ἐπαγγελία δὶ εὐχῆς γινομένη τέλος λαμβανέτω δ' ἔργου. *A promise being made by a vow, let it receive its perfection (*or *completion) by performance:* and that with all speed, as soon as it is due. For a vow is an imperfect sort of a thing till it be made good: it hath only the beginning of a good thing, and wants its finishing; which, if it have not, it becomes ugly and odious. For God loves not (that is, hates) to be so dealt withal, as if he did either not understand, or not mind, what we say to him; or would put up that affront which the poorest man cannot but resent. Who looks upon himself as not only abused, but despised, when men give him fair words, which either have no meaning, or deceive him when he depends upon them. This Solomon represents in the fifth verse as far worse than promising nothing at all; in which men may be unkind, but in this they are unjust.

[*e*] Ver. 6. And he presseth it farther in this verse, where by *malach, angel,* there are those that understand that particular angel, which is supposed by some (but cannot be certainly proved) to attend upon every particular person; others understand the *priest,* who is God's *minister:* but I have followed Mr. Mede, (book ii. p. 438.) who takes *angel* here *collectively,* for more than one, as *tree* is put for *trees, leaf* for *leaves,* Gen. iii. 2. 7. which attended upon the Divine Majesty in his house, where the vow he is here speaking of was made, (ver. 1.) Which angelical ministry in God's house was represented to the Jews, by filling all the curtains of the tabernacle with the pictures of cherubims, (Exod. xxvi. 36, 37.) and by carving the inside of the walls of Solomon's temple with the same, (1 Kings vi.) and by the ark of the testimony being overspread with two mighty cherubims (having their wings lifted up, and their faces looking down towards it, and towards the mercy-seat), called the *cherubims of glory, i. e.* of the Divine presence, (Heb. ix. 5.) And all to signify, that where God's sacred memorial is, there the blessed angels, out of duty, give their attendance; and therefore the LXX. I observe, in this place, instead of *before the angel,* have πρὸ προσώπου τοῦ Θεοῦ, *before the face or presence of God:* whose ministers the angels were, and before whom the vows men engaged themselves in being made; they were witnesses also, and avengers of their excuses, or of their delays, to make them good.

As for the Vulgar translation of those words [*it is an error*], which is this, *there is no providence;* I have taken no notice of it, because it doth not seem to be the genuine meaning: for why should a man make any vows, who believes no providence over him? Unless we will say, that he might alter his opinion afterward; and so we may put both senses together thus: *I was in an error: there was no providence; and therefore I need not trouble myself about my vows.*

[*f*] Ver. 7. In these words he concludes his discourse about religion, with a repetition (as some take it) of the third verse, a little varied and enlarged. Which may be thus paraphrased, according to our translation: *To sum up all that concerns this matter; since in a multitude of words, as dreams, there must needs be much vanity; therefore have a greater reverence of God than to speak any thing rashly, or to make larger promises to him, than thou art truly willing to make good.*

In the Hebrew the words run thus: *But from a multitude of dreams (*or *when dreams are multiplied) both vanity and words are multiplied; therefore fear thou God.* Which may have this meaning: They do but merely dream of God, and are not awakened to a lively sense of him, who make either those vain excuses, or those idle promises: of which that thou mayest not be guilty, possess thy soul with an

awful dread of his majesty. This is exactly agreeable to the Hebrew, if we take *vanities* to relate unto the excuses of ignorance or error beforementioned, and *words* and *promises:* and by *multitude of dreams,* understand a great many conceptions concerning God; more like dreams, than waking thoughts of him.

Interpreters explain the words many other ways, whom the learned reader may consult: I have followed my own conjectures; and shall also propound another translation of the words, which seems to me very natural and easy; which is this: *When, in abundance, dreams, and vanities, and words, are multiplied, then fear thou God.* That is, have a great care of thyself, and let the dread of God overawe thee, lest thou offend, when thy head is hot and full of dreams and vain imaginations, which dispose thee to speak abundantly.

[*g*] Ver. 8. As the foregoing verse concluded his discourse about religion, so this concludes the third *general* head, whereby he demonstrates the vanity of all things, begun iii. 16. Which he here admonishes us, should not too much disturb, much less quite astonish us: because God will set all right in his due time. So he began it, iii. 17. and so he here ends it in this verse. Which hath some difficulty in the last part of it; which we translate, *He that is higher than the highest,* &c. Word for word, *High above the high observeth.* But מעל in Hebrew never signifies simply *above,* but always *from above,* or *from on high;* and therefore so should be translated here, *He that is high from on high observeth.* And then the only question is, who is meant by the *high;* whether God or his vicegerent, the king here on earth. I have expounded it of the latter; because otherways the same thing must be said over again immediately, which is not unusual, indeed, in Scripture; but where there is no necessity of it, and where the words will better bear another sense, they are not to be so construed. And the last word of the verse will no way be so plain, as by referring it both to the high person mentioned before, and to all his inferior potentates and judges, whom he observes from on high; that is, from his throne, or from his seat of judgment. Where he ought to call them to an account, and examine any complaints that are made against them; or if he do not, both he and they are observed by the supreme Judge of all, and shall be accountable to him, whether they will or not.

[*h*] Ver. 9. And now he seems in this next verse to make a transition to the fourth *general* head (mentioned in the beginning), concerning the vanity of those, who place their happiness in getting and heaping up a great deal of money.

It is an obscure verse, both in its connexion and in some of its phrases; and therefore is diversely expounded by interpreters. To help out the connexion, I have made bold to preface a little, and also to add such a conclusion, in my Paraphrase upon it, as I took to be most agreeable to what follows, and to what went before. I have expressed also both senses of the last clause, which we render, *the king is served by the field;* but may more literally be translated, *the king is a servant* (or is *addicted*) *to the field.* For anciently the greatest persons did not think it below them to follow husbandry (whose just praises Cicero hath given in his Offices, but especially in his book de Senectute), as we are taught by the examples of Hiero, Philometor, Attalus, Archelaus, Cyrus the younger, in profane story; and by the example of king Uzziah in Scripture, (2 Chron. xxii. 10.) Which did not at all abate their courage, or dull their wit; but only made the one more patient of toil and labour, and the other more solid and more serious. Whence it is that we find the greatest captains among the Romans, such as Camillus, Regulus, Fabius, Cato, Cincinnatus, were fetched from the plough: as Gideon among the Israelites was from the thrashing-floor; and Elisha called to the high office of a prophet, as he was driving one of the twelve ploughs his father had going in the field.

And therefore Maldonate's translation of these words is not to be despised; who (and he alone, as I can find) thinks they are capable of being rendered thus: *By following husbandry diligently, a man may grow so rich as to become a king.* Melancthon alone translates the whole verse thus: *The king in the earth is above all for the tillage of the field.* Where Solomon, saith he, distinguisheth a *king* from a *tyrant.* A tyrant depopulates his country, and lays all waste; a good king cherishes his people, especially honest husbandmen and farmers: and loves to see them thrive, together with all good arts. The Vulgar Latin, I suppose, aimed at something of this, though it be taken otherwise by those that follow it. Agreeable to which is this memorable passage in a Persian writer, quoted by Mr. Pocock, (in his notes upon Abulfarajii, p. 202, 203.) "That in that country they kept a solemn feast every year; wherein the king descended from his throne, laid aside his royal apparel, threw away the veil from his face, and conversed with most ordinary people, even with the country swains and husbandmen, with whom he ate, saying, *I am one of you; nor can the world subsist without tillage, which is performed by your pains;* and that tillage subsists, it *is owing to the king: so that neither of us being able to subsist without the other, we are, as it were, individual brethren.*"

There are those that comprehend pasturage, as well as tillage, under these words; because the ancient patriarchs were shepherds. But there is no need of this; and husbandry or gardening was far more ancient: even as old as Adam; and after the flood we find Noah thus employed; as Isaac also was in succeeding times.

[*i*] Ver. 10. The latter end of this verse runs thus in the Hebrew text: *Whoso loveth (viz.* silver) *reaps no fruit of his abundance; i. e.* doth not enjoy it, as St. Jerome expounds it; which is very often the miserable condition of worldly-minded men.

[*k*] Ver. 11. The latter end of this verse, also, is capable of contrary senses; which I have expressed in the Paraphrase, but shall not give an account of it here, because I see these Annotations already grow too large. For which cause I will not note particularly every thing that is observable in the following verses; but only touch upon some of them, under this observation, that he seems to demonstrate the vanity of that sort of happiness which men place in riches, from ten considerations. The two first are contained in the tenth verse, that the desires of such men are insatiable; and the more insatiable they are the less they enjoy of what they have.

The third and fourth in the eleventh verse; that if they will enjoy it, the more they have, the more others must also have of it; and the pleasure of this is very small; being

no more than to behold a great many people eat and drink at their cost.

[*l*] The fifth, ver. 12. that their servants commonly sleep more sweetly than they. For so *haofed* (which we translate *labouring man*) signifies, *one that serves;* that undertakes work for another; or any way *ministers* unto him.

[*m*] The sixth, that their riches expose them to the danger even of their life; by poison, or by open violence, ver. 13. Where the first words *rai chole, sore evil,* import such an evil *as makes one sick,* when he thinks of it, especially when he fears it. For the Hebrew word *chalah* always carries in it the notion of *sickness* and *weakness;* and that sometimes accompanied with *pain* and *torment,* (as in the case of Hezekiah, Isa. xxxviii. 1.) and proceeding from a deadly wound; as in the case of Ahab, (1 Kings xxii. 34.) It may therefore be translated here a *tormenting* or a *deadly* evil, or an evil that *disables* a man, and makes him so feeble and languishing, that he is unfit for any thing. For the LXX. frequently render the noun that comes from hence ἀῤῥωστία: see ver. 17. of this chapter.

[*n*] And, seventhly, though they escape these dangers, there are many other ways whereby their riches may be lost; which seem to be included in that phrase, (ver. 14.) *injan na, an evil business, or matter,* which may signify, as well the way of their perishing, as that they perish with the great *grief* and affliction of him that loseth them. Whether that *way* be by their very merchandise in the way of their trade; or by their own frauds and subtilties in traffic, whereby they overreach themselves; or, lastly, by other accidents, as we call them, such as fire, storms, &c.

And then follows the eighth, that he leaves his son a beggar; which is no small trouble to them both, he having bred his son in expectation of an estate, which never comes to him; or if it do, neither father nor son can enjoy it longer than their lives, (ver. 14, 15.) Which is the ninth thing: if their riches do not leave them, they must leave their riches, (ver. 16.)

[*o*] And whilst they live (which is the last, ver. 17.) they spend their time, perhaps, either in filthy lusts (as Gregory Thaumaturgus understands those words, *eateth in darkness*) with vile harlots; or in wretched niggardice, and such sordid penuriousness, that the *miser* even eats up himself; taking no joy, no comfort, in any thing that he possesseth. So *darkness* signifies, being opposed to *light* in Scripture, which denotes joy and gladness: and thus the LXX. here explain it by adding a word, *in darkness and in mourning.* It may refer also to his dismal habitation (to which I have had respect in the Paraphrase) in some by-place, where he hopes nobody can find him; or in a room, whose windows are shut up and barred for fear of thieves.

The last clause of this verse runs thus, word for word, in the Hebrew; *Sorrow is multiplied* (or *there is much sorrow*), *and sickness, and wrath:* the force of which I hope I have expressed in the Paraphrase: and shall only note, that the first word *sorrow* (as was observed chap. i.) includes in it *indignation,* together with heaviness; and the next word *sickness,* includes in it *pain* and *anguish,* as was observed before: and the last word *(ketzeph) wrath,* denotes the highest commotion of that sort. For being applied to the sea, it signifies such a boiling rage as makes it foam. There is another word, indeed, which we render *hot displeasure:* but this is joined with it (Psal. xxxvii. 1.) as equivalent to it, or the effect of it.

[*p*] From all which he concludes this chapter, as he had done his discourse upon the foregoing subjects, with this meditation (which some call *sententia intercalaris*), that the greatest blessing a man can enjoy in this life, is to have a heart to use what God hath given him, for his own honest pleasure; with due acknowledgments to God, and charity to others, ver. 18—20. where (ver. 19.) there are two words to express *abundance of worldly good,* as I have paraphrased them. The last of them, *nekasim,* is larger than the former, comprehending all manner of goods (cattle and all) which a man gathers together. For it seems, by a transposition of letters, to be derived from *kanas,* to *collect,* or *gather;* (ii. 8.) from which comes the Latin word *census;* the *revenues* which a man is esteemed to have, and accordingly is rated and pays subsidies.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

The first ten verses, at least, of this chapter, are a continuation of the same argument he handled in the latter part of the foregoing: and therefore ought to be connected with it. For they set forth the vanity of riches in the possession of a covetous wretch: who only increases the number of unhappy men in this world; being never the better for any thing he enjoys, as he shews in the conclusion of the chapter.

Ver. 1. *THERE is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men.*] But, alas! this Divine benefit, though above all others, is coveted by very few: for I have observed this most wretched, miserable humour reigning among mankind; which, though it be the greatest mischief, is grown so common, that it hath overspread the face of the whole earth. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease.*] When a man is blessed by God, with such abundance of money, and goods, and height of honour, that he need not, unless he will, want any thing which his largest desires can wish should administer to his pleasure; yet so great is his ingratitude to God, and his uncharitableness to men, that for these and other sins, God denies him the power to enjoy these gifts of his bounty, to which he is a slave, rather than their master: for he possesses them, as if they were not his own, but kept by him for somebody else; and those not his children, nor his kindred, but a mere stranger, perhaps; who (either in his lifetime, or after he is dead) devours all that he hath saved. What can be more senseless than this? nay, what sorer plague can infest mankind? See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *If a man beget a hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he.*] Unless it be this, that one of this sort of men, being blessed also with abundance of children, and with an exceeding long life; yet thereby is made only so much the more, and so much

the longer, miserable: being so solicitous for posterity, that he hath no heart to take the comfort of any thing he possesses at present; no, nor so much as to take order for his decent funeral when he is dead; but he goes out of the world without any notice that he hath lived in it. Of such a one I pronounce, that an abortive, which came into the world before its time, is not so despicable as he. See Annot. [c]

Ver. 4. *For he cometh in with vanity, and parteth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.*] For though in this they are both alike, that they come into the world to no purpose; and go out of it so obscurely, that nobody minds their departure; and leave no memory behind them that they have been in it: See Annot. [*d*.]

Ver. 5. *Moreover, he hath not seen the sun, nor known any thing: this hath more rest than the other.*] Yet in this they differ, that an abortive, having never seen the light of the sun, much less been acquainted with any thing in this world, had no desire to enjoy that of which it was perfectly ignorant, and was as utterly insensible of grief and pain, as it was of joy and pleasure: whereas this man's insatiable desires, carrying him after every thing he sees, torment his soul with anxious thoughts, care, and labour; which not only make him pine away with grief for what he cannot get, but deprive him of the comfort of what he hath. And how much better is it never to live at all, than to live only to disquiet a man's self with restless solicitude of mind, and toilsome pains of body, for that which he can neither keep, nor part withal, with any contentment?

Ver. 6. *Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?*] Men are so fond of life, indeed, that because the one lives long, and the other not at all, they imagine the former to be incomparably more happy: but let us suppose this covetous wretch to live more than as long again as the oldest man that ever was, what is he the better for it, when his greedy desires, not suffering him to enjoy his goods, multiply his miseries equally to his years? Which will expire also at last, and then, what are his riches able to do for him? can they privilege him from going down into the grave, and rotting there like the abortive? See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 7. *All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.*] And while he lives, to what purpose is his restless labour? Seeing if he desire only what is necessary, it is easily provided; and, having food and raiment, a man may be contented: and if he extend his desires farther, they are infinite; and therefore can never meet with any satisfaction.

Ver. 8. *For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?*] For let a man be otherways never so wise as well as rich, yet if he bridle not his desires, he is little better than a fool: and he that is poor, but hath so much understanding as to know how to behave himself among men suitably to his condition, and to be contented therewith, is incomparably the wiser and the happier man. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 9. *Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire: this is also vanity and vexation of spirit.*] It being much better to enjoy what a man hath at present, than to live upon the hopes of that which his ravenous desires continually pursue: which sure is a very foolish thing, and another great part of the miseries of human life: that men are still craving more, when they know not how to use what they have already; and, neglecting what they possess, wish for that which, perhaps, they cannot get; or, if they do, can give them no more satisfaction than what they possess. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 10. *That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is man: neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.*] And what if a man have already arrived at great renown (as well as riches), still it is notorious that he is but a man, made out of the dust: and therefore weak, and frail, and subject to many disastrous events: which it is not possible for him, by his most anxious cares, to prevent, or, by his power and wealth, to throw off when he pleases. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 11. *Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better?*] And since there are so many things, and of great consideration, that add to the natural uncertainty which attends all worldly enjoyments, what can a man promise himself from all his cares? and how frivolous are his hopes? and how senseless are they, when they will not suffer him to enjoy any thing, for fear of diminishing that heap, which they would fain increase? See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 12. *For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?*] For (beside all that hath been said) there is this great mischief will still remain; that if he should attain his hopes, he cannot tell whether it would not have been better for him to have been disappointed: for, alas! what man is there that hath skill enough to know, whether that eminent station (for instance) to which he aspires will prove so good for him as the private condition wherein he is? And the same doubt may be made of all other things which he desires in this short life: which passes away insensibly, but very swiftly, and ends in the like uncertainty, what shall become of a man's family and possessions, which he leaves behind him when he departs out of this world? See Annot. [*i*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. *Common.*] Covetous wretches, it seems, were no rare creatures in those days, but the nation of the Jews abounded with them; being of the same humour they are now, scraping up riches by right or wrong, which they scarce ever enjoy. But I have expressed also the other sense of the word *rabba*, which signifies *great*, (Gen. vi. 5.) as well as *many* or *frequent*.

[*b*] Ver. 2. *Riches*, &c.] He describes in this verse the ridiculousness, as well as the misery, of this penurious humour; by the example of a man who wants nothing, and yet wants all that he hath; being like one that stands up to the chin in water, but fears to take a sip to quench his thirst. For to those two words, *riches* and *wealth* (mentioned in the nineteenth verse of the foregoing chapter), he here adds a third, to express the greatest plenty, *viz. glory:* which is more comprehensive than the other; including in it all those goodly things which may do a man credit, and raise him to a splendid condition in this world. For so Laban's sons call the ample possessions which Jacob had got in their father's service, *all this glory*, (Gen. xxxi. 1.) or *substance*, as some render it: which made him (as we

now speak) a *substantial man;* for it denotes any thing that hath *weight* in it, and makes a man to be *valued.*

Evil disease.] That which was called *raa choleh,* a *sore evil,* (v. 13. 16.) is here called *choli ra,* an *evil disease, sad sickness,* or *grievous torment.* Which is only an inversion of the words, the same sense being still preserved.

[*e*] Ver. 3. *Days of his years,* &c.] He seems to represent in this verse a higher degree of that *evil disease,* by the example of one who hath not only great store of money, and lands, and honour, but also abundance of children; and such firm health, that he lives to a great age. Which is expressed by two phrases, which we translate thus, *lived many years, so that the days of his years be many:* but to avoid tautology, the latter clause should be thus translated, *and the days of his years be abundantly sufficient:* so many, that he cannot reasonably expect or desire more. For thus *rab* signifies in many places, where we translate it *enough;* Gen. xxiv. 25. *straw and provender enough:* Gen. xxxiii. 11. *I have enough, my brother.* And yet this man, thus abundantly provided for a long happiness, doth no good, either to others or to himself, with what he possesses: but grudges even the expenses of a funeral, after he can hold his riches no longer. So I understand those words, *he have no burial.* Which are generally understood, I confess, of lying neglected, without any interment: which the Hebrews (every one knows) look upon as a great judgment: (see Jer. xxii. 19.) and so Anton. Corranus glosses upon these words: "By the just judgment of God, such wretches, who would not feed the poor while they lived, become the food of dogs, or crows, when they are dead."

[*d*] Ver. 4. *He cometh in.*] Is born.

With vanity.] Or *in vain, to no purpose.* Which some refer to the *covetous* wretch, others to the *abortive,* beforenamed: but I have referred to both. For this makes the clearest sense; if in the next verse (ver. 5.) we suppose that he compares these two together, and prefers the latter before the former; as he plainly doth in the conclusion of it.

[*e*] Ver. 6. *Sees no good.*] To *see,* is to enjoy, as the phrase is used in many places: particularly Lev. xx. 17. John xvii. 24. And the sense of this verse is, That the *life* of a covetous man is so far from making him happier, than he who never lives at all; that if he should live as long again as Methuselah, he would only be so much the more wretchedly miserable. For when he hath tired himself with labour, he hath not taken one step towards satisfaction: which he might have had with less pains, if he had taken the right course to it, (ver. 7.)

[*f*] Ver. 8. *What hath.*] There is so great a difficulty in this verse, that I did not know how to connect it with the foregoing, but by taking the latter part of the sentence as if Solomon had said, *What comparison is there between him (viz.* the man beforenamed) *and the poor that knows how to walk before the living? i. e.* the poor man, who hath so much skill as to know how to live well, is infinitely to be preferred before him, whose wisdom still leaves him such a fool, that it doth not restrain his superfluous appetites. And this suits well with the next words, (ver. 9.) where the *sight of the eyes,* being opposed to the *wandering of the desire;* it is reasonable to take it for the fixedness of a man's mind, to rest satisfied in what is before him: that is, in things present.

Or the words may admit of this construction (which is come into my mind since I wrote the Paraphrase), *What excellence is there in the wise man* (that is, in the opinion of the wretch beforementioned there is none) *more than in a fool, especially if he be poor,* &c. That is, to all other miseries of the rich churls, that is commonly added, that they are very ignorant of what is most truly valuable: having no esteem of the wisest man in the world, no more than of a fool. Nay, they prefer a rich fool before a poor wise man; who knows how to carry himself so decently, that he is not afraid to appear before any man living. This is a great sottishness, (ver. 9.) and breeds no less sorrow; to be led by blind appetites, and not by reason and judgment. For so the words of the ninth verse may be interpreted: *Better it is to understand aright, than to follow after one's desires.*

[*g*] Ver. 10. *That which hath been.*] The sense that I have given of the beginning of this verse (taking the first word for an interrogation, and *name* for renown, as is common in Scripture) seems to me to be the most simple, and most agreeable to the whole discourse. And it is that which Melancthon hath expressed in these words, "Although a man grow famous, yet it is known that he is but a man; and he cannot contend with that which is stronger than himself." That is, he cannot govern events. But I shall mention two other interpretations, which some give of it. One is this, *As he was made at first, so his name was given him; i. e.* the name of Adam, signifying that he was taken out of the earth, and therefore mortal. The other is this; *He that hath been, his name is called already;* that is, his memory is abolished together with himself. This is Maldonate's sense; but is not agreeable to the Hebrew phrase, *his name is called;* for that in the Scripture signifies rather the contrary, *viz. fame,* and honourable mention, as I have expressed it word for word out of the Hebrew, in the Paraphrase. The common interpretation may be found in all commentators, which is this; that *God hath appointed what every man shall be; whether rich or poor,* &c. *and therefore it is in vain for them to contrive as they do, to be other than what they are.* For it is to endeavour to alter that which is immutably settled by the Almighty.

[*h*] Ver. 11. *Seeing there be.*] This verse sums up all this matter about riches; or, as others will have it, the whole foregoing discourse, concerning all those four things, wherein men place their happiness: whether *wisdom, pleasure, honour,* or *wealth.* Which draw so *many* and so *great* (for the Hebrew word includes both) inconveniences along with them; as sufficiently demonstrate a man is still to seek for the satisfaction of his desires, if he look no farther.

And so they would have the last verse to be an introduction to the following discourse in the next chapter: where he shews, wherein that true and solid happiness lies, which mankind vainly pursue in the forenamed enjoyments. But I have connected it with what goes before in this chapter: as the particle *(for)* in the beginning of it shews it ought to be.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Having discoursed, in the foregoing part of the book, of the courses men take to make themselves happy; he now seems to proceed to prescribe the best remedies that can

be found against that vanity to which we are subject: by setting down many wise precepts for our direction and conduct, support and comfort, in a troublesome world. Where, it is confessed, that our happiness can be but imperfect; yet so much we may attain as to be well satisfied, and not vex ourselves that we cannot make things more certain and constant; nor dispose men to be more just and equal to us than they are.

And if we examine the following *particulars*, we shall find they are comprehended in this *general* direction; *the change of our mind, thoughts, and opinions:* which must be quite altered; for that things which now look like *paradoxes*, must be judged the greatest wisdom. Such are all the doctrines that begin this chapter (quite opposite to the common opinions of the world), That a good name is to be preferred before precious ointment, and the day of one's death before one's birth-day; mourning before feasting; sadness before laughter; rebukes before commendations; the end of a thing before the beginning of it; a patient, suffering spirit before a stout, haughty mind; wisdom before riches, &c. These and such-like are the maxims of true wisdom and piety, which must be learnt; in order to the settlement of our minds in peace and tranquillity: notwithstanding the vanity that is in all things.

Ver. 1. *A GOOD name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.*] But though there be such uncertainty in all other things, yet a good name, which a man gets by a virtuous life, is lasting and durable: and as the conscience of well-doing gives a greater pleasure to the mind for the present, than the most fragrant ointment can do to the senses of voluptuous men, so the fame of it will remain after he is dead; and he will still live in a good report, when all those sensual joys expire, like the vapour of the ointment, which is soon dispersed and lost after it is poured out: and therefore, if we would be happy, we ought to order our life in such a manner, that death, which fools and wicked men fear, may be welcome to us; and only let us out of the troubles into which we are brought at our birth. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.*] And, that it may befriend us, it is our wisdom to think often of it; and consequently, choose rather to converse with things that will make us serious, than with those which will make us merry: to go, for instance, into the company of those who are mourning for the dead, rather than of those who are feasting for joy that a child is born into the world: for in the midst of those pleasures we are apt to be dissolute and to forget ourselves: but that sad spectacle inclines us naturally to be considerate, and disposes our mind to humility, modesty, gentleness, sobriety, and charity: when, in one we see the fate of all; and we follow him to his grave, who a little while agone, perhaps, was as vigorous and strong as ourselves. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.*] Sadness, therefore, and sorrow, are much more profitable for us than mirth and jollity (as we see in those severe and stern rebukes, which make men sorrowful for their faults), because that grief which makes a man look sadly, whether it be for his own sins, or other men's calamities, is apt to do his soul good; by giving him a right understanding of God, and of himself, and of all things else. See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning: but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.*] Whence it is, that wise men affect to think of such things, when they do not see them, as shew them how vain all our enjoyments are: but fools seek all occasions to put by such thoughts, and to divert themselves with merriment and pleasure. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than for a man to hear the song of fools.*] And he that would be in the number of these wise men, must look upon this as one of the first steps towards it, to lend an obedient ear unto the reproofs of him who is truly wise and virtuous: which, though never so sharp and rough, are to be infinitely preferred before the smooth praises and commendations of a great many fools. Nay, ought to sound more gratefully in our ears, than the most delicious music, songs, and jests, of all the merry companions in the world. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity.*] These jolly fellows, indeed, make a great noise and show; as if they were the only men that enjoy this world: but, alas! their mirth and joy are but for a spurt, and then end in heaviness: like the crackling of thorns, which sometimes blaze under a pot, as if they gave a mighty heat; but leave the water in it as cold as they found it.

All their jollity, therefore, is vanity. See Annot. [*f*].

Ver. 7. *Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.*] And there is the greater need to be well instructed, and therefore to hearken to the wise, (ver. 5.) because there are other things, besides vain pleasures and flatteries, to disturb and unsettle our minds, if we be not well fortified against them. For the better any man is, the more he is in danger to suffer from slanderers, revilers, and all sorts of injurious persons: whose violence sometimes is so great, that unless a man be provided with more than human wisdom (and it be deeply rooted in his heart), it will not only miserably disquiet, but even distract him. Nor is this his only danger; but that power and authority which raise him above the former, may expose him to another; unless he be armed with great integrity: for his mind may be corrupted by gifts and presents to do injustice unto others, which he hates should be done to himself. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 8. *Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof; and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.*] And he will be the better able to resist them both, who is so wise as to look, not merely to the beginning of them, but attend to their conclusion: for that which seems grievous at the first appearance, in the issue proves very advantageous; and, on the contrary, that which promises fair at first hath a deadly farewell with it; and therefore it is much better to endure patiently, and humbly wait to see the issue, than to be provoked by pride and disdain hastily to precipitate events; for he that scorns to wait and attend upon the leisure progression of things, commonly undoes himself and his affairs, by his fierce and violent attempts, presently to compass his desires. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.*] It is another point therefore of that wisdom, which must make us happy, to repress the motions of anger that we feel in ourselves, and not suffer them, without great deliberation, to have any effect: for anger is an enemy to counsel and advice, and is, indeed, the property of fools; who, out of weakness of mind, and shortness of thoughts, are familiarly transported with it, upon the slightest causes; and not easily appeased again, as wise men are when they chance to be incensed.

Ver. 10. *Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.*] It is wisdom also to correct in ourselves that complaining humour which is apt to be ever finding fault with the present times, and commending the foregoing ages as far better and happier than the present. For perhaps it is not true; and thus much is certain, that he is foolishly inconsiderate, who imagines, that *then* there was no evil, and that *now* there is no good: or if it be true, that there was more good in those times, let us not murmur and repine, asking why we are cast into a troublesome age, full of oppression, suppose, and violence, and wrong, (ver. 7.) but rather submit to the providence of God; considering, that there is no age so bad as to hinder us (which is the principal point of wisdom) from being good: and therefore let us do our duty; believing God hath such reason for suffering the times to be as they are, that we have no reason to quarrel at them; or to call in question his wisdom, goodness, or justice. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 11. *Wisdom is good with an inheritance; and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.*] Yet do not think that wisdom or virtue consists in despising riches; but only in using them well when we have them, and in being contented without them; for as we cannot be happy by riches alone, without wisdom, so we cannot be completely happy with wisdom alone, without riches: for he hath a vast advantage to do good every way who is rich as well as wise; it giving him an authority even to speak more freely than other men; and making what he speaks to be more regarded: but of the two, wisdom and virtue must always be preferred; which can do greater things, and bestow nobler benefits upon mankind, than treasures alone can do. See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 12. *For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.*] For as wisdom, for instance, contrives many ways whereby a man may innocently defend himself from danger; so can money ofttimes purchase his protection and safety: but herein is the pre-eminence of wisdom, that when neither of them can shelter a man, nor stave off the calamity that invades him, it marvellously supports, revives, and comforts the souls of those who are owners of it, under all the evils which it could not help them by honest means to avoid. See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 13. *Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?*] And in order to it, the highest piece of wisdom is, to live in a serious sense of the sovereign power of God; and to consider, that as he hath settled all things in heaven and earth, in an unchangeable course, so nothing comes to pass without his providence: with which it is in vain to struggle, when he is pleased either to cross us in any of our private designs; or to send any public calamity, which, by our art and power, we can neither avoid nor remedy. See Annot. [*m*]

Ver. 14. *In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.*] No, we ought rather to accommodate ourselves to the present state of things; and when we are in prosperity, to enjoy God's blessings cheerfully, with thankful and charitable hearts; but so soberly also, as not forgetting that affliction may come: and when it doth, let us take it patiently, considering, among other things, that there may be a change to a better condition again: for as both the one and the other come from God, so he hath ordered they should have their turns in such due season, and balanced one with the other with such exactness, that the meanest man hath no reason to complain of him; nor the greatest to fancy himself more than a man; who cannot invent any means to dispose things otherwise, much less better, than God hath done. See Annot. [*m*]

Ver. 15. *All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.*] I know what may be objected to this, having, all my life long, made observations upon all manner of things, in this troublesome world, and it seems very hard that a just man's integrity should not be able to preserve him; but he is therefore, perhaps, destroyed, because he is better than others; when a wicked man escapes, nay, is countenanced and encouraged, or suffered to prolong his days in (and perhaps by) his wickedness. See Annot. [*n*]

Ver 16. *Be not righteous over-much; neither make thyself otherwise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?*] But besides other things which may be replied to this (as that good men are sometimes removed from, and wicked reserved unto, future evils), it must be noted also, that some pious men are more strict and rigid than they need, and not so prudent as they ought to be; but unnecessarily expose themselves to danger. And therefore, it is good advice, in order to a safe and quiet passage through this life, to be temperate in thy zeal, and not to overdo; either by extending thy own duty beyond the Divine commandment, or by correcting the inveterate vices of others, and opposing the vulgar opinions too severely or unseasonably; whereby they are only exasperated and enraged, but not at all amended: for why should a man bring a mischief upon himself, without any benefit unto others? See Annot. [*n*]

Ver. 17. *Be not over-much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?*] And, on the other side, let not impunity tempt any man to presume to grow enormously wicked, and foolish, as to embrace and follow the lewdest opinions: for this may awaken the public justice against him, even for the common safety; or the Divine vengeance, nay, his own excessive wickedness, may cut him off, before he come to the natural term of his life. See Annot. [*o*]

Ver. 18. *It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.*] The advice is so profitable, that he who loves himself will not only apprehend it, but take fast hold of it, and diligently observe it; never departing from either part of it; but, while he wisely manages himself to decline dangers, honestly and faithfully

performs his duty: for nothing can do a man so much service in this, as a true fear of offending the Divine Majesty; which will preserve him both from rash and heady forwardness, and from consulting merely his own private safety and interest. See Annot. [p]

Ver. 19. *Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city.*] And this pious prudence, which proceeds from the fear of God, will be a stronger guard and security to him who is endued with it, both against all inward fears and all outward dangers, than a multitude of valiant commanders, and all their troops are, to defend a city, when it is besieged by its enemies. See Annot. [p]

Ver. 20. *For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.*] Though this must always be understood, when we thus discourse, that no man is either so perfectly wise, or completely virtuous, as never to mistake and commit a fault; but sometimes the best of us may slip into a sin, notwithstanding all our caution and care; and thereby fall into danger. See Annot. [q]

Ver. 21. *Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee.*] The consideration of which frailty of mankind is useful many ways; not only to abate our severity in censuring or chastising public offenders, but to teach us gentleness towards those who do us private injuries: and therefore not to regard (for instance) every word that is spoken against us, but rather to dissemble our knowledge of it; first, because otherwise we shall have no quiet; for, perhaps, we may chance to overhear our own domestics speaking slightly of us; which we may easily pass by and overlook, but cannot take notice of without great disturbance. See Annot. [r]

Ver. 22. *For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.*] And secondly, because, if thou examinest thy own life, thou wilt find this fault is so incident to human nature, that thou thyself perhaps hast been guilty of it many a time; and done as much by others that are thy betters as thy servant doth by thee.

Ver. 23. *All this have I proved by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me.*] For my part, I cannot exempt myself from the guilt of great errors: for though I have not only studied to be wise and virtuous, but made a trial of the excellence of all these rules which I have now delivered; and resolved also that I would strictly observe them, and never, in the least, swerve from them; yet, alas! I fell far short of these holy purposes. See Annot. [s]

Ver. 24. *That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?*] That which I have done already, in time past, is far from the wisdom whereby I intended to have acted; and who can tell, when he once sinks below himself, how much deeper and deeper he shall be plunged in sin, till he cannot find his way out again?

Ver. 25. *I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness.*] Notwithstanding which I did not cease my endeavours, but diligently looked every where, and viewed every corner, even of my heart; making the most exquisite search after the surest means to attain that wisdom and virtue which I desired and laboured for above all things; and to be settled, upon firm grounds, in my holy resolutions: for which end, I likewise endeavoured to understand what is the very height of folly and wickedness; even that wickedness which besots a man's mind, nay, turns his brain; and not only infatuates him, but makes him act as if he were distracted.

Ver. 26. *And I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God, shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.*] And I found, at last, that nothing so destroys a man's understanding, nothing leads him into so many dangerous errors, and makes him quite forget himself, as that filthy lust which carries him to a harlot; who brings him into so many grievous mischiefs, that he had better die than be acquainted with her: for she is made up of wicked arts and wily devices, and doth nothing but contrive how to ensnare and entangle him that approaches her; whom she holds so fast by her charms that he remains her prisoner for ever, without a wonderful grace to deliver him: which he hath little reason to expect, when he considers, that it is commonly some other great offences against God that betray him into these snares; from which he, who approves himself sincerely unto God, finds so much favour with him, as to be preserved. See Annot. [t]

Ver. 27. *Behold, this I have found (saith the Preacher), counting one by one, to find out the account.*] Behold then the result of my most serious thoughts, which I publicly proclaim to all, and would have it diligently observed; that having distinctly considered all things, one by one, I find nothing so dangerous, and therefore nothing so much to be avoided by him, that would be steadfastly wise and good, (ver. 23.) as the conversation of women; especially those that are of a lewd inclination.

Ver. 28. *Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found.*] And where to meet with any of them, with whom it is safe to have society, I am still to seek, though very desirous to find: for, though here and there I have found a truly honest man, among those multitudes that attend upon me in my court, yet I cannot say that among all my acquaintance of the other sex (and I have a great many, 1 Kings xi. 1.) I have met with so much as one, that is what a woman should be; modest, plain-hearted, humble, sincerely virtuous, without guile, hypocrisy, and dissimulation. See Annot. [u]

Ver. 29. *Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.*] Only observe this, that I do not herein accuse (far be it from me) the Creator of the world; for I am assured of nothing more than this, that as God made all other things very good in their several kinds, so he made both men and women in perfect integrity: with a clear understanding to judge aright, and with an honest will, inclined to do accordingly; prescribing them also no other rule of life, but such as was just and good: but they, affecting to be greater than God intended, and to have more liberty than he allowed, raised scruples and doubts, questions and disputes, about their duty; inventing many ways to shift it off; and so depraved themselves, by following their own vain fancies, and false reasonings, rather than his blessed will. See Annot. [x]

ANNOTATIONS.

[a] Among all the maxims of true wisdom and piety, which are to be learnt for the settlement of our mind in

peace and tranquillity, notwithstanding the *vanity* that is in all things, Solomon recommends to us, in the first place, the care of that which men foolishly lose; by minding nothing but heaping up wealth, or pleasing themselves in a voluptuous life, &c. *viz. to acquire a good name.* Which nothing but a virtuous use of all things can bestow upon us; and when we have it will give us a singular delight at present, and embalm our memory when we are laid in our graves.

Which good name (as Melancthon observes) consists in two things: in the approbation of our own consciences judging aright, and in the approbation of other men, who also rightly judge. Both which are required by God; that we should do right things, and that others should approve of what is rightly done. Unto which they are bound, for two reasons; that the difference of virtue and vice may be the more conspicuous; and that others may be taught by examples. He requires, therefore, that infamous persons be cast out of society, and that they be honoured, whose manners are without infamy. Now, since such an approbation is a Divine ordinance, it is manifest we may desire this glory; and, by the same reason, that we must avoid all scandal, and take care that we may be commended.

Which Solomon here compares to a precious ointment, because nothing was more grateful and refreshing in those eastern countries: and therefore used not only in feasts, but at other times, when they were weary or languishing; for comforting the brain, recreating the spirits, cheering the countenance, suppling the joints; and for other services tending to health, as well as pleasure. Which made ointments to be held in the greatest price and estimation, and to be mentioned among the treasures of kings, (2 Kings xx. 13. Isa. xxxix. 2.) Suitable to this is that of Pindar, *a bath of warm water doth not so refresh the tired bones as glory.* And this of Thucydides, that *honour is the nourishment and food of an old man;* who lives upon the reputation he hath gotten by worthy deeds, which will make death not unwelcome to him. So the latter part of this verse must be understood, with reference to a well-spent life; for otherways it would be only a discontented saying, like that of the heathen, *the best thing is not to be born, the next best to die presently.* Unto which doctrine (as Melancthon well speaks) the church is a stranger.

I cannot well pass over this verse without observing what all interpreters note; an elegant *paranomasia* (as they call it), that is, a near affinity, both in the letters and in the sound, of these two Hebrew words, *schem,* name, and *schemen,* oil or ointment; as there is afterward (ver. 5, 6.) between three other words, *shir,* a song, *sirim,* thorns, and *sir,* a pot. Which being found also in several other parts of the Bible, it shews that such allusions are not unseemly, nor ought to be censured as affectations; if they be sparingly used, and wisely, gravely, and decently scattered in a discourse; not fulsomely, upon every occasion, obtruded.

[*b*] Ver. 2. Now the wise man knowing that nothing stirs us up more powerfully to a religious life, than the frequent remembrance of our mortality (which, alas! we are not willing to think of), he next advises him that would be happy, to embrace all occasions that may put him in mind of it. *The meditation of death* being, as was anciently said, *the very abridgment of all philosophy.* All the precepts of wisdom they thought were comprised in this; and therefore no wonder Solomon not only begins with it, but presses it so largely as he doth in the following verses: to the end, that we may make our life not only a *meditation,* but an *exercise,* of death; which in the Christian language is called *mortification.* In short, the thoughts of death will, without any other teacher (if we keep it always in mind), instruct us in all those virtues, which will procure us a good name; some of which I have touched in the Paraphrase. And the more healthful we are, the more we had need to charge ourselves with the thoughts of it, because that is apt to make us forget it. So I have taken *chai,* not merely for *living;* but *lively,* vigorous, lusty, and flourishing, as we translate it truly, Psal. xxxviii. 19.

[*c*] Ver. 3. In the explication of this verse, I have touched upon another sense of the first word of it: which signifies not only *sorrow,* but anger or indignation also; by which some expound this verse. And understand thereby, either the anger of God afflicting men for sin, or the angry reproofs that are given sinners: which are better for them than prosperity, or to applaud and humour them in their folly. But this is mentioned ver. 5. and therefore I take it not to be intended here.

The truth of the latter part of this verse is admirably explained by St. Paul in 2 Cor. vii. 11. As for the phrase, I shall only note, that *an ill look* is an exact translation into our language of the Hebrew phrase, which is here translated *sadness of the countenance.* Now a man may *look ill* not only by sickness, but by reason of any other thing that afflicts him, (as we find in the case of Nehemiah, ii. 2.) some of which I have expressed in the Paraphrase.

[*d*] Ver. 4. *Heart.*] The thoughts, affections, and delight.

[*e*] Ver. 5. *Rebuke.*] The word includes *roughness* and severity in it; and is opposed to the smooth flatteries of those that seduce to sin. So I have understood *song* (not excluding the common sense of the word, which I have also expressed): for as the first part of wisdom is for a man to be able to give good advice to himself and others; and the next part of it, to take such advice when it is given: so it belongs to the first part, to see a man's own faults, and reprove himself for them; and to the second, to receive such reproof willingly from others, and to abhor to be flattered and soothed, as if he had no faults at all.

[*f*] Ver. 6. This comparison between rebuke and flattery, Corranus thinks is continued also in this verse; upon which he paraphrases in this manner: "As thorns put under a pot, and kindled, make such a crackling, as if they would set the whole house on fire, and by their noise raise an expectation of the greatest flame; but presently end in smoke and vapours: so senseless flatterers make a great buzzing in men's ears, and blow up their minds, extolling them to heaven with their praises; but in truth make them not one whit the better," &c. But I do not see how the word *laughter* can be well applied to this; and therefore I have omitted it, and only thought fit here to mention it.

[*g*] Ver. 7. The connexion of this verse with the preceding is a little obscure; unless we translate it, as Maldonate doth (following Munster), *A wise man despiseth calumny, and a mind that can be corrupted with gifts:* which is an excellent admonition, and well suited to Solomon's purpose. But no interpreters besides them take the word *jeholel* in the signification of *despising* (except Forsterus,

who takes it for making one despised, translating it thus, *calumny makes even a wise man inglorious),* but rather in the sense of *giving disturbance,* or *making mad,* as we translate it. Though a great many by *oschek* (which raiseth the disturbance in a wise man) understand that sort of oppression which comes from calumny. Particularly Melancthon herein follows the Vulgar; shewing what a most pestilent mischief this is, in all governments: whereby such excellently deserving persons as Palamedes, Aristides, Cymon, and Themistocles, were oppressed. The fountain of which vice is pride, envying the glory of others; and, that they may lessen it, misrepresenting their counsels and actions: which sophistical depravation of other men's words and deeds is called *calumny.*

But I have not confined the sense to this; the Hebrew word *oschek* signifying all sorts of oppressions, as I have noted before, either by fraud or by force. And the easiest sense of the verse seems to me that which I have expressed in the Paraphrase; by connecting it with ver. 5. as a reason why we ought to hearken even to the rebukes of the wise; that we may acquire a good habit of mind, able to hold out against oppression on the one hand, and bribery on the other: which none can do, who is not very virtuous.

And in this exposition I have taken *wise* as St. Jerome doth; not for one that is *perfect,* but for a *proficient:* who hath not yet settled wise principles in his mind.

It is possible, also, that Solomon may have respect to the oppressions which men generally endure in a state ill governed: which raises a just indignation, and holy warmth of zeal, in the best of men; but if care be not taken to repress the violence of that perturbation which this is apt to give us, it may turn into fury, and make us behave ourselves towards our superiors as men out of their wits.

[*h*] Ver. 8. I have connected this verse with the foregoing; though it may be taken alone by itself. And the word *debar,* signifying either *speech* or *thing,* some (following the Vulgar) interpret this of the care that ought to be taken in the epilogue, or close of an oration (as St. Jerome speaks), rather than in the beginning or preface to it; that, as we are wont to say, we may come off well, and leave a sting in the minds of those that hear it. But this is so wide from the wise man's purpose, that I do not think fit to set down an excellent discourse of the Lord Bacon's upon this sense of the words, (lib. viii. de Augm. Scient. parab. 10.)

And if we expound it of *things,* it is but a dilute sense to say, that *a thing perfected is better than a thing begun.* Others, therefore, take it to be the same with that, *Finis coronat opus:* which is true, but doth not complete the sense; unless we understand it in this manner; that the *conclusion of all things is to be expected, before we judge of them.* For whilst they are growing and coming on, they appear with a quite different face, from what they have when they are gone and shall be no more.

In the latter part of the verse, *patient in spirit* is properly one that is long before he grows angry, or falls into any passion; who is opposed to *proud in spirit,* because it is *high-mindedness* (as the word signifies) which makes men's passion rise and swell hastily. It may have relation to the former part, and be expounded in this manner: *A patient man, and slow to anger, dispatches business better than a proud, huffing, and blustering spirit: whose passion so disorders his mind, and indisposes it for the management of affairs, that he seldom brings them to a good issue.*

Or thus: *A proud man is a boutefeu, who begins the fray: but the patient in spirit is the man that must end it (if ever it be well ended), and that is much the better work, and the greater honour to him who is employed in it and effects it.*

Or, which is still clearer, we ought to attend to the end of a thing with patience: because it cannot be known what it will prove, nor whither it tends, in the beginning; and we should be the more prone to be patient in spirit, if we would expect the issue of every thing. Thus Corranus paraphrases upon the words most excellently, but a little too long:—"It is no small part of wisdom, to judge of things, and of business proposed to us, slowly and maturely, &c. for we see frequently that inconsiderate men, finding a thing very hard and difficult in the beginning, and never thinking how profitable and pleasant the issue may prove, immediately despond; and, out of an impatience, shall I say, or rashness of mind, desist from the most excellent enterprises; and many times betake themselves to worse. From which rashness and inconstancy he will be very far removed, who, endued with Divine wisdom, waits for the desired and happy conclusion of his affairs. And unto this nothing contributes more, than a slow, constant, and patient mind, that can endure labour and pains: which steadfastly and quietly considering how fruitful the end may be which he affects, will not suffer himself by any difficulty, trouble, or weariness, which he meets withal in the beginning, to be drawn from his purpose. Far different from those who, out of a proud, arrogant humour, think it is baseness, and unbecoming a gallant man, to attend upon the slow and leisure progresses of things, and to expect their events."

Thus he: which sense I have not neglected in my Paraphrase; but comprised it among the rest: and it is thus, in part, expressed more briefly by a wise and good man in that age; when he told his friend (who was undone because he would not mind it), that "he was like an unskilful player at tennis, ever running after the ball; whereas an expert player will stand still to observe and discern where the ball will alight, or where it will rebound; and there with small travel will let it fall on his racket, or on his hand."

[*i*] Ver. 9, 10. These two verses depend on the foregoing, shewing that *anger* is inconsistent with wisdom; and so are murmuring and repining at the hardship we meet withal in evil times. And therefore, as the same Corranus well glosses, *let us not throw the causes of our anger upon the times;* but blame ourselves, who, at all times, if we want *meekness of wisdom,* shall grow angry upon the most frivolous occasions; and not only let loose the reins of our anger, but of all other vices.

But I think this advice (ver. 10.) is not merely to be restrained to this, but extended unto all sorts of discontent, which are apt to make us complain of our present condition; and so to admire what is past, as not to mind what is present: as if they had nothing but what was good who lived before us; and we nothing but what was naught in these days. Whereas they complained just as we do now; and that of Thucydides was true then, as it ever will

he, ἀεὶ τὸ παρὸν βαρύ, *the present is always burdensome.* Because, as Melancthon observes, we have a feeling sense of present incommodities; but know what was heretofore only by report: and so we praise those ancient times, but do not like our own, which may be as good. This we are sure of, that *all times have their troubles:* and it is the part of a wise and good man to bear them, and not to increase them by a foolish cure. According to that saying, μὴ τὸ κακὸν ἰῶ κακῷ: *let not one evil be remedied by another.* And that of Pythagoras, ὧν ἂν μοίραν ἔχῃς φέρε μηδ' ἀγανάκτει: *what portion of things falls to thy share take it; and do not grumble nor be vexed at it.* And remember, as Corranus glosses again, that "a truly wise man is never so transported with admiration of ancient times, as to despise the present; crying out, Those were the golden, these the iron ages; nor will he solicitously inquire into the causes of what was then, and what is now; when this is certain, that virtue is the only cause of happiness, and vice of infelicity; which, in what time soever we fall, always produce the same effect." And to imagine that the ancient times had no evil in them, and ours no good, is the conceit of a man that judges inconsiderately. For our eyes ought not to be so fixed upon the present calamities of our days, as blindly to overlook all the good; nor is the ancient felicity to be so admired, as not to remember, that they also conflicted with many tempests, and perhaps greater than we, as their frequent complaints of their times do abundantly testify. He therefore that is wise and fears God, will make account (as the truth is) that it is in our own choice, by his grace, whether the times shall be good or bad; for if he live well, they cannot be bad to him; as, on the contrary, they cannot be good, if he live wickedly.

I am the longer in these observations, because they are things of mighty moment: but most of the rest I shall contract as much as is possible.

[*k*] Ver. 11. Most take this verse as denoting their happiness, who have riches as well as *wisdom;* which commonly is despised without *wealth.* But the words may bear another construction (which I have not neglected, because it agrees well with what follows), that *wisdom is equal to an inheritance; nay, much to be preferred before it.* For they may be thus translated, *Both wisdom and an inheritance are profitable for men in this world; but especially wisdom.* Or, as Maldonate renders the last clause, "et residuum est videntibus solem," *and there is a remainder to those that see the sun.* That is, when all things in this world fail us, the fruits of wisdom only remains with us.

[*l*] Ver. 12. This is farther explained in this verse: where it will be needless to do more than barely observe, that the word we render *defence* is *shadow* in the Hebrew; which in their language signifies protection and comfort; Gen. xix. 8. *For this cause they came under the shadow of my roof: i. e.* that they might be secure from violence. Numb. xiv. 9. *Their shadow* (*i. e.* protection) *is departed from them.*

[*m*] Ver. 13, 14. Here follows an admirable advice, to comply with our present condition, and suit our mind unto it: because we cannot bring things to the bent of our own mind, and therefore had better study to conform our mind to our condition, whatsoever it be; whether prosperity or adversity. Into which the Divine wisdom hath divided our life, and so proportioned them one to the other, that none can justly find fault with his Divine disposal; nor, all things considered, tell how to mend them, or order them better.

So I have understood the last clause of ver. 14. in which is the only difficulty: *find nothing after him.* Which words *(after him)* some refer unto God, and make the sense to be, that *after him* (or beside him) *a man shall find nothing certain:* and therefore it is best to depend upon him alone. Which I have not taken notice of in the Paraphrase, and therefore mention here. Others refer *after him,* unto man; and that two ways (which it may be fit just to set down). Some translate it thus: *For this end, that man may find out none of those things which shall befal him hereafter:* and so, being perfectly ignorant of what is to come, neither presume in prosperity, nor despair in adversity. Others thus (which is Maldonate's gloss): *That a man losing in time of adversity what he had gotten in prosperity, might not adhere too much to the things of this world.* Melancthon alone interprets *find nothing,* in this sense, *that he might not betake himself unto unallowed courses:* but in prosperity keep himself within the bounds of his vocation, and not be carried beyond it by vain curiosity; and in adversity expect the help of God, in the use of such remedies as he hath ordained.

[*n*] Ver. 15. This verse may either be joined with the precedent, or with the following: I have connected it with both, in my Paraphrase upon it, and ver. 16. where I have attended to the scope of the wise man in this chapter; and accordingly interpreted that and the seventeenth verse; which will admit of several other expositions.

They are commonly expounded of public justice; which ought to be neither too rigid, nor too remiss and negligent. Insomuch that Melancthon's words are, *non dubium est;* there is no doubt he speaks of political justice, which governs the things of this life: and consists in a mean, between cruelty and negligence. Too much severity becomes cruelty; as it was in Aurelian: and too much indulgence confirms men in wickedness; as it was in the days of Arcadius. A good governor, like Augustus, takes a middle course; and doth not seek that middle with too much subtilty: but rather, as in God, lets mercy prevail over judgment. The like admonition, saith he, is subjoined about wisdom: for, as too much severity becomes cruelty, so too much wisdom, that is, subtilty, becomes cavilling sophistry and cheating. And thus he interprets ver. 17. that a magistrate should not tolerate enormous vices.

Dr. Hammond alone, as far as I have read, makes the sixteenth verse, *Be not righteous over-much,* &c. to be the objection of a worldling; who takes that for an excess of duty, which brings any damage or worldly destruction upon him. Which is answered, saith he, in ver. 17. *Be not wicked over-much,* &c. that is, the fears, and from thence the prudential (but oftentimes very impious) practices of the worldling, are the more probable path, to the most hasty ruins. (Vide Answ. to Cawdry, chap. 2. sect. 2.)

But this is not coherent, in my opinion, with the rest of the chapter; and therefore I have followed rather the opinion of Gregory Nazianzen; who interprets it of heat and zeal, more than needs, without reason and discretion: which, as it makes all the schisms in the world, so produces a great many other evils. And the same passion, saith he, is both about righteousness and about wisdom:

Θερμότης πρὶ πράξιν καὶ λόγον, ἔξω τοῦ καλλοῦ, &c. (Vide Orat. xxvi. p. 446.)

I shall omit other interpretations, (which are collected by Del Rio, and more copiously by Hackspan, lib. ii. Miscellan. cap. 1.) and mention only that of Grotius: who expounds it of a vain affectation of justice and wisdom. Which interpretation is in part followed by the Lord Bacon, (lib. viii. de Augment. Scient. cap. 2. parab. 31.) whose discourse upon the words I shall not send the reader to seek, but set it down entirely; because it is very useful: "There are times (saith Tacitus), wherein great virtues are exposed to certain ruin. And this fate befals men eminent for courage or justice; sometimes suddenly, sometimes foreseen afar off. But if *prudence* be also added to their other accomplishments; that is, if they be wary and watchful over their own safety; then they gain thus much, that their sudden destruction proceeds from counsels altogether hidden and obscure; by which both envy may be avoided, and their ruin fall upon them unprovided. As for that *nimium (over-much)* which is set down in the parable (since they are not the words of some Periander, but of Solomon, who now and then notes the evils in men's lives, but never commends them), it is to be understood, not of virtue itself (in which there is no *nimium*), but of a vain and invidious affectation and ostentation thereof.

"A point, something resembling this, the same Tacitus intimates in a passage touching Lepidus; setting it down as a miracle, that he had never been the author of any servile sentence, and yet remained safe in such cruel times. 'This thought (saith he) often comes into my mind, whether these things be governed by fate, or whether it lies also in our power to steer an even course, free both from danger and from indignity, between deformed flattery and abrupt and sullen contumacy.'"

[o] Ver. 17. There are those who, by *al tirsha*, understand not, *be not too wicked;* but, *be not too busy;* make not too great a stir and bustle about the things of this world (especially in dangerous times); do not destroy thyself by too much toil and labour; or by too much stirring, when it is better to be quiet and sit still. Of which I have taken no notice in the Paraphrase, and therefore mention it here. For though the word be not used commonly in this sense, yet it is its original signification. And the advice of the son of Sirach is something to this purpose, Ecclus. vii. 6, 7.

[p] The foregoing advice he looks upon as so useful, that he presses it farther here, (ver. 18.) and promises more security from such a religious prudence, as teaches us moderation, and yet keeps us strict to our duty, than from the greatest armies that men can raise for their defence, (ver. 19.)

For (as Melancthon observes) Alex. Pheræus was slain by his wife and his brethren; though he lay in a high tower, well garrisoned, to which none could ascend but by ladders. And the father of Alexander was slain in the midst of a public pomp, his princes and his guards looking on; as Julius Cæsar also was in the senate.

Ten mighty men] Every one knows, is, in Scripture-phrase, as much as *many* mighty men. And so Bochartus interprets that difficult place, Numb. xi. 31. where speaking of the vast quantity of quails that came into the camp, Moses saith, he that gathered least gathered *ten* omers; that is, saith the forenamed writer, *many* heaps: for so he thinks *omer* should be there translated, as it is in some other places, (lib. i. de Sacris Animal. cap. 15. p. 106. par. ii.)

[q] Ver. 20. Here he seems to limit what he had said before, with this exception; that *no man can be always so wise and cautious, as never to offend.* Which Melancthon truly calls *politica sententia:* and refers to lapses in government, like that of Josiah, who was a very good prince, but perished by engaging rashly in an unnecessary war. And therefore the character of a governor, as well as of a man, must be fetched from the constant strain and bent of his actions, and not from particular facts. For he is a good governor that always intends to do right, though he sometimes miscarry (as David and the forenamed Josiah), and he is an ill governor, who hath no such design, but quite contrary; though sometimes he do well, as Cambyses. The difference therefore must be taken from their perpetual will and inclination.

There are those who connect this verse with the next, rather than the foregoing: but I have referred it to both, and not unfitly, I think; as may be seen in the Paraphrase upon ver. 21.

[r] Ver. 21. Which the Lord Bacon (lib. viii. cap. 2. parab. 4.) refers principally to vain curiosity; and thus discourses upon it: "It is a matter almost beyond belief, what disturbance is created by unprofitable curiosity, about those things that concern our principal interest: that is, when we make a too scrupulous inquiry after such secrets, which, once disclosed and found out, do but cause disquiet of mind; and nothing conduce to the advancing of our designs. For, first, there follows *vexation and disquiet of mind:* human affairs being so full of treachery and ingratitude, that if there could be procured a magical glass, in which we might behold the hatreds, and whatsoever malicious contrivances are any where raised up against us, it would be better for us if such a glass were forthwith thrown away and broken in pieces. For things of this nature are like the murmurs of the leaves of trees, which in a short time vanish. Secondly, *this curiosity loads the mind too much with suspicions,* and ungrounded jealousies: which is the most capital enemy to counsels, and renders them inconstant and involved. Thirdly, the same curiosity doth sometimes *fix those evils which otherways of themselves would pass by us and fly away.* For it is a dangerous thing to irritate the consciences of men; who, if they think themselves to lie undiscovered, are easily changed for the better; but, if they perceive themselves to be detected, drive out one mischief by another. And therefore it was deservedly esteemed the highest wisdom in Pompey the Great, that he instantly burnt all Sertorius's papers, unperused by himself, or suffered to be seen by others."

Some take this verse to speak of those, who willingly lend their ears to informers and detractors; who will bring them what is said abroad, whether true or false. And therefore, saith Solomon, since there is no man but who offends sometimes, not thou thyself excepted, do not hearken unto those who reckon up other men's faults; lest thou hear thy own, from those that are of thy family. Thus Maldonate.

[s] Ver. 23. Here he seems to resume his discourse, in the beginning of the book, concerning the shortness of hu-

man understanding; and the difficulty of finding the truth and the reason of things. But no account can be given, why he thus starts from his subject, on a sudden, without any coherence. And therefore I have endeavoured to give another account of this and the following verse: which I have so interpreted, that they may be knit to the foregoing. I cannot say that herein I have followed any guide but my own judgment: which led me to think this to be a continued discourse. But they that dislike my connexion, must rest satisfied (as far as I can see) with that of Corranus (which hath more colour for it than any other), who takes this verse to be a preface to what the wise man had to add concerning the subtle arts of women to draw men in, if they be not exceeding cautious. Their wits being so versatile, their cunning so sly, and their allurements so many, that he professes he found them inexplicable; though he had spared no pains to penetrate into them. This he makes the sense of ver. 23—25.

[*t*] Ver. 26. And then, in this verse, Solomon gives an account of the danger they are in who suffer themselves to be ensnared by the arts of naughty women (who are so numerous, that he advises him, who would be good, to be very cautious how he enters into familiarity with that sex), who have brought sore calamities upon the greatest men; such as Samson, David, and Paris, and many other besides Solomon himself. The next verse I have made to relate to that.

The two words we translate *snares* and *nets* (to which he compares her *heart, i. e.* her invention, devices, &c.) both signify *nets*. Only the former signifies the nets of *hunters;* the latter, the nets, or *drags* rather, of *fishermen*, (Ezek. xxvi. 5.) as the LXX. distinguish them. The former, indeed, is applied also to *fishes*, in this book, (ix. 11.) and therefore the truer difference perhaps is, that the former signifies *finer*, the latter *coarser*, but stronger *nets:* such as cannot be broken, but will certainly destroy; as the root from whence *cherem* comes denotes. Both these words are in the plural number, to denote the vast multitudes that they catch, and the innumerable ways they have to entangle them, and hold them fast.

[*u*] Ver. 28. Gregory Thaumaturgus interprets this verse altogether of their chastity, after this manner: *I have found a chaste man, but never a chaste woman:* and, indeed, of that he is speaking, which makes this sense not unreasonable: though I have not so restrained it, nor do I think this is to be looked upon as the true character of women in general, in all ages and countries, but of such only as Solomon was acquainted withal; and of those in that and the neighbouring nations; especially of women there excelling in beauty, which commonly betrayed them to their ruin, and to the ruin of others; without an extraordinary grace to preserve them.

[*x*] Ver. 29. In the beginning of this verse (Melancthon thinks) Solomon speaks not of the first creation of man, but of the rule of men's actions; which God proposed to them: the sense being, as if he had said, *God instituted a good order how men should behave themselves in all things; but they contrive how to go beyond their bounds.* As David, for instance, had many wives of great beauty; but he would not be content without another man's. Antony had a great power, but he would be a monarch: which is the fault of many other great men.

This I have not altogether neglected; and also taken notice of De Dieu's interpretation of the last words of the verse, *Men sought out the thoughts of the great or mighty:* taking *rabbim* for *magnates;* that is, not contented with his own condition, *he affected to be like the angels, nay, like God.*

Maimonides refers it to the evils and miseries man draws upon himself here in this world; understanding by *chesch-bonoth (inventions)* man's foolish reasonings, whereby he precipitates himself into all the evils he endures. "For he thinks he wants this and that, when he doth not: and he thinks this and the other thing make him miserable which have no hand in it. But we may say, as Malachi doth, (i. 9.) *This hath been by means of your ownselves;* and as the wise man elsewhere, (Prov. xix. 3.) *The foolishness of man perverteth his way; and his heart fretteth against the Lord.*" (More Nevochim, par. iii. cap. 12.)

The common editions of the LXX. may be corrected out of Epiphanius, Hæres. xlix. who quotes this verse thus—Θεὸς συνετὸν ἄνθρωπον (in the common editions, even in the Polyglott Bible, it is σὺν τὸν ἄνθρωπον, most absurdly) ἐποίησε εὐθῆ· αὐτοί δε ἐζήτησαν πολλὰς ἑαυτοῖς ὁδούς. According to which I have, partly, framed my Paraphrase, taking συνετὸν to refer to the understanding, and εὐθῆ to the will: but I have attended also to the common reading in the latter end of the verse, which is not ὁδούς, but λογισμούς.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

In this chapter the wise man pursues the design of the former. Wherein he having given several advices, as a proper remedy for the vanity and trouble we find in all things (the principal of which are *seriousness, mindfulness of our mortality, integrity, meekness, patience, prudence),* in not exasperating men when we can avoid it *(caution in conversation with women),* he now adds several other of no less moment; which have respect not only to private, but also to public persons. And they amount to this (that I may give as short a summary as I can of the chapter), to shew how happy we all should be, if both subjects and princes also would be advised and considerate. But if they be not, good men should make themselves less miserable, by not being either too much disturbed at it, or giving any public disturbance; much less by disbelieving Providence, though they do not see the world governed as they would have it, to the encouragement of the good, and the punishment of the bad: but to enjoy what they can honestly, in the present condition wherein they are: and be contented and submit to the Divine government (though we do not understand it) when any alteration comes; and not add this affliction unto all the rest, anxiously to inquire into those things of which we are not able to give an account.

Ver. 1. *WHO is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed.*] There is no man so happy, as he that is wise enough to understand, and to live by these rules: but let that man remember also, that as true wisdom gives the greatest comfort, confidence, and courage, to himself, so it is apt to

make him kind and gentle unto others; and therefore let no man pretend unto it, unless it dispose him unto such virtues: for the deeper insight he hath into men, and business, and things, and the better able he is to solve all doubts and difficult cases, and thereby satisfy both himself and other men; the more friendly, courteous, and affable should he be to all; and the more humble, meek, and gentle also: which is far more majestical, and will gain him greater reverence, than austerity, surliness, and pride. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *I counsel thee to take the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.*] And let no man think I have respect merely to myself in what follows, because I am a king; but look upon this as a principal point of wisdom, both for his own and the public safety; to live in dutiful obedience to the king's edicts and commands, which do not thwart the laws of God: and that not merely for fear of his displeasure, and the penalty of the law, if it be broken or neglected, but out of respect to God, whose minister he is, and whom his subjects called to witness unto the sincerity of their hearts, when they swore true faith and allegiance to him. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.*] Let not thy passion transport thee to shew the least disrespect to him, much less to refuse his commands unmannerly, or to do any thing that may throw thee out of his favour; but if thou hast offended him, let thy next care be not to persist obstinately in the error, but to humble thyself and beg his pardon: not imagining thou canst flee so fast from his anger that it shall not reach thee; for his power is so large, that it will, one time or other, lay hold on thee and punish thee. See Annot. [c]

Ver. 4. *Where the word of a king is, there is power; and who may say unto him, What doest thou?*] For the king's commands are backed with power; so that if he give sentence against thee, his officers are ready to do execution immediately; never examining whether it be right or wrong, but holding themselves obliged to do as he bids them. And, indeed, who may question him, or call him to an account, that hath no superior? Or who can control him that hath the power of the kingdom in his hands? See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *Whoso keepeth the commandments shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.*] Therefore, not only for conscience' sake, but for thy own safety and security, yield obedience to the king's commandment; for so thou shalt avoid the trouble both of thy mind and of thy body: and if thou pretendest to wisdom, shew it, not in opposing him and contending with him, but in a prudent declining what thou canst not honestly do; and in observing and taking the fittest season, and in the most inoffensive and winning manner, to insinuate good advice, when the king commits an error. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *Because to every purpose there is time and judgment; therefore the misery of man is great upon him.*] For want of which sort of prudence men suffer very much: because there is a certain season for, and a certain manner of, doing every thing; which if it be not understood (and it requires no small pains to be able to discern it), or not embraced, it is not only impossible to be done, but many and great inconveniences ensue upon that oversight, or neglect. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 7. *For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?*] For no man can be sure that the like opportunity will return again: future things being so much in the dark, that neither he nor any one else can inform him what shall be hereafter; or when that will come, which in the course of things may probably be expected. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 8. *There is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.*] But let no prince, though never so great, presume hereupon to abuse his power to tyranny, because he hath no superior to control him: but remember these things following. First, that though he command over men's bodies, yet he hath no dominion over their minds and spirits; nor can he hinder them from thinking what they please, no more than he can the wind from blowing where it listeth: and next, that he cannot command them long; for death will come, and irresistibly seize on him, as well as on the meanest man: nay, he cannot rule the chances of war, nor promise himself certain victory in the day of battle: or, if he have had a great while good success, yet neither his policy, nor his power, shall be able always to defend him from the vengeance that will be taken, of the injustice, cruelty, and impiety, which he exercises in his government. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.*] There is no reason, therefore, to be so much as ambitious of great power; for in the view I have taken of all manner of things in this world, which I have weighed also, and considered daily, I have observed that sometimes unlimited power breaks itself in pieces, and the dominion to which a man is promoted ends in his own ruin, as well as theirs whom he pillages and tyrannically governs. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 10. *And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done. This is also vanity.*] And, among other things, I also observed such wicked men carried to their graves, who had been honoured as gods while they lived, because they were God's ministers, and sat in the judgment-seat, in that very place where he himself is present; but were no sooner gone, but they were forgotten, in that very city where they had enjoyed such high authority: so vain is the pomp wherein great men live, and wherein they are buried; which vanishes together with them, and, if they were not good in their place, is no more remembered. See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 11. *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.*] But these observations move not vain men, who look no farther than their present prosperity. For though God hath pronounced a dreadful doom against all wicked men, and especially those that abuse their power unto tyranny over others; yet, because execution is not presently done upon them, but they live in all earthly splendour, both they and others also, by their example, grow more audaciously presumptuous in their wickedness; and think of nothing but doing mischief, by rapine, and all manner of iniquity in the world. See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 12. *Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and*

his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him.] Not considering or believing this, which I am assured, as an undoubted truth, that though such a powerful sinner commit innumerable spoils upon his poor subjects, and no harm befal him a long time, yet, as God will make those good men an amends, whose reverence to his majesty makes them choose rather to suffer than to sin; and, notwithstanding all their oppressions, maintain their integrity, and continue in awful obedience unto him, and unto their governor: See Annot. [*m*]

Ver. 13. *But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.*] So he will take a time to punish that impious tyrant, because he despises God and his providence, and fears not this Divine vengeance: nor are we without examples of such men, who have hastened their own ruin; and, by their violence, shortened their reign; and vanished away suddenly, like a shadow.

Ver. 14. *There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked: again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous. I said, that this also is vanity.*] Such examples, indeed, do not deter them from wickedness, because they see instances on the other side (which is an afflicting consideration), that virtuous men sometimes fall into such miseries, as the wicked rather deserve to suffer; and, on the contrary, those impious men enjoy all the prosperity which, one would think, belongs only to the righteous: this, I have acknowledged already, is the lamentable condition of things, and a great part of the trouble of this world; to which I have given the best satisfaction I could, iii. 17. v. 8. See Annot. [*n*]

Ver. 15. *Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry; for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God hath given him under the sun.*] And must again commend that advice wherewith I concluded one of these discourses, (iii. 22.) that this ought neither to discourage a man in virtuous proceedings, nor make him careful and solicitous about events; but only move him, in the fear of God, (of which I just now spake, ver. 11.) to be merry whilst he may: for there is nothing better, than soberly and freely to enjoy the present good things, which the bounty of God bestows upon us; with thankfulness to him, and charity to others: for when a man, by his pains and labour, hath gotten a great estate, this is all that he can call his; God having only sent him what he hath for his present use, while he tarries here in this life; and then he must resign it unto others, and give an account how he hath used it unto him. See Annot. [*o*]

Ver. 16. *When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth: (for also there is that neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes.)*] In this therefore rest satisfied, and do not trouble thyself with curious inquiries, why things are administered with such inequality, as is beforementioned: for I have travelled, as much as any body, in that disquisition, and, with great application of mind, have made a most diligent search into the causes and reasons of the whole management of affairs here in this world (my mind being one of those, that are as eager and greedy of knowledge, as others are of riches; for which they toil all day, and take little rest in the night): See Annot. [*o*]

Ver. 17. *Then I beheld all the works of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun; because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea farther, though a wise man think to know it, yet he shall not be able to find it.*] But this was all the satisfaction at which I could arrive, That the providence of God, without all doubt, governs every thing in this world; but why he suffers the wicked to prosper, and the virtuous to be oppressed by them; why he doth sometime speedily cut off a wicked tyrant, and sometime defer the execution so long, that he lives to do a world of mischief, and yet goes, perhaps, to his grave in peace; (ver. 10.) it is impossible to give a full account: for there is little or nothing that any man can know of the secrets of his counsels, or indeed of any other of his works; which are inscrutable by us, though a man take never so much pains to find them out; nay, though the wisest man in the world make it his constant business, he will be still forced to confess his ignorance; and the height of his knowledge will be to know, that God's ways are past finding out.

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. To the advices he had given in the foregoing chapter, he now adds some new ones: the first of which is this; that *the wisdom which will make us happy in this world must not make us morose and supercilious, severe and rigorous; but kind and benign, gentle and easy.* And the more we know, the more humble we ought to be: and by the very cheerfulness and pleasantness of our countenance invite others to us; and not by our frowning forbid them, or make them afraid, to approach us.

This I take to be the meaning of the first verse; in my Paraphrase upon which I have had respect to several acceptations of the several words, which it will be too long here to give an account of. They that will consult interpreters will find how they vary; and therefore I shall only mention the exposition of Melancthon upon the latter part of the verse (which is not commonly known), which, following the LXX. he thus translates: *Wisdom is the light of a man's countenance; but a pertinacious* (or impudent, obstinate) *person is worthy of hatred.* Which he explains in this manner, That wisdom, which can judge aright, when severity is profitable, or when lenity will do best; when it is fit to make war, when to be quiet; brings a man great gladness; but a pertinacious person, who is stiff and obstinate in his opinion, and will not hearken to those that give him good counsel, but follows the motions of his own anger, and obeys his passions, destroys himself and others. As the pertinacious humour, for instance, of Pericles and Demosthenes was most pernicious unto all Greece.

[*b*] Ver. 2. This pertinacious humour shews itself oftimes in opposing the sovereign authority: whereby men create to themselves and others great trouble in this world. And therefore Solomon advises men, in the next place (desiring them not to dislike the counsel, because the king gives it), to live in dutiful subjection to their prince; as a singular means of leading a happy life. For it is hard to say, whether the prudence and justice of a sovereign, in

ruling well, or the humble and peaceable spirit of the people in complying with the established orders, contribute most to the public welfare. Certain it is, that it is much safer and easier (as well as more honest) to submit and be quiet, than to contend and unsettle the peace of kingdoms; though princes do not govern as they ought.

Melancthon makes this verse to contain two precepts (as the LXX. also seem to do), in this manner: *Observe the commandment of the king; and the word of the oath of God.* A sentence, saith he, exceeding worthy of consideration and remembrance: in which he commands us to observe the command of the king; but with this restriction, that we observe the law of God, and do nothing contrary unto that. For he calls the law the *oath of God;* because God made the sanction of it, in promises and threatenings with an oath. But this interpretation wholly neglects one word in the Hebrew, viz. *al:* and it draws both *dibrath* and *shebuath elohim,* from their ordinary and usual sense, to a meaning that is forced and strained. For which reason another exposition is not natural; which makes this indeed one precept, but instead of taking the latter part of it for an *obligation* to observe it, turns it into a *restriction* of it; in this manner: *Keep the king's commandment, but according to the oath of God;* that is, as far as religion and the faith we owe to the great Lord of all will suffer.

This is true, but not the true sense of the Hebrew word for *oath;* which some would have relate to the covenant made with God in circumcision; which is still farther off from the business than the notion which Melancthon had of it. Our translation is the plainest and most literal; Be obedient to the king, *and that in regard* (or because of the matter) *of the oath,* to which God is a witness, and a severe revenger of the breach of it. From which a moderate interpreter doth not much vary: whose words it will not be unprofitable to set down in this place, which run thus in English: "*Regard the king's mouth,* i. e. do whatsoever comes out of his mouth; whatsoever he commandeth and appointeth, out of that authority which he hath by Divine ordinance: *and chiefly the intention of the oath of God* (so he translates the latter part of the verse), that is, the oath whereby every one citeth God as his witness and judge, that with a good conscience he will obey the king; because God hath so commanded." Thus Joh. Coch. Which *oath* is either *tacit,* the very being in the condition of a subject carrying with it (as the late primate of Armagh speaks), by implication, a *silent* oath of fidelity and due obedience; or *express,* in the direct form of an oath, which princes have, for their better security, been wont to exact of their subjects. This is an ancient form, still remaining in Vegetius, of the oath wherein the soldiery bound themselves to the Christian emperors: *By God, and by Christ, and by the Holy Ghost, and by the majesty of the emperor, which, next after God, was to be loved and honoured,* lib. ii. cap. 5. where he adds this remarkable reason for it; because to him, when he hath received the name of Augustus, faithful devotion is to be performed, and all vigilant service paid, *as unto a present and corporeal God.* The violation of which oath, though made to a heathen prince, how heinously God takes, even as a despising of an oath made to himself, and a breach of his own covenant, those terrible threats do sufficiently demonstrate (Ezek. xvii. 12—14, &c.) which are denounced against Zedekiah, who rebelled against the king of Babylon, *who had made him swear by God,* (2 Chron. xxxvi. 13.)

Some of the pharisees were the first that we read of who would not take this oath of allegiance: but, (as Josephus tells us, lib. xvii. Antiq. cap. 3.) boasting themselves to be the most exact observers of the law of God, and therefore the most in his favour (while they were full of inward pride, arrogance, and fraud), dared openly to oppose kings, and presumed by their motions to raise war against them, and annoy them: refusing, saith he, to take the oath, when all the Jews had sworn to be faithful to Cæsar. Of this sect, he adds, there were above six thousand: who were so far from lessening their crime by this refusal, and making what they did against his authority to be no rebellion; that it heightened it very much, and was in itself a piece of rebellion: they having a natural allegiance unto him, by being born his subjects.

There are some who, from the beginning of this verse, argue this book not to be Solomon's: because he saith of himself, *I observe the mouth* (*i. e.* commandment) *of the king.* So they translate the first words: which the LXX. translate as we do; and so do the Chaldee, the Syriac, and Arabic interpreters. For though the Hebrew word be אֲנִי *ego, I;* it signifies nothing to this purpose; because he doth not say, *I observe,* but simply *I; do thou* observe. There being a distinct note אֲנִי *I,* and what follows: shewing that it is a short form of speech, to be supplied by some such word as this, *I say,* or *I command,* or *counsel;* or rather *charge* thee. And the reason, perhaps, why the principal verb was omitted, might be (as the learned primate of Ireland, Usher, conjectures) because no word could be found significative enough to express the deepness of the charge.

Some may think that I have dilated too much upon this verse: but they may be pleased to consider how useful, if not necessary, it is at this time, when men begin again to plead the lawfulness of resistance. Which is so plainly condemned in this place, that the most learned assertors of the *old cause* were extremely puzzled to make it agree with their principles in the late times of rebellion. There is one who (in his book called Nature's Dowry, chap. 21.) calls in the assistance of a great many Hebrew doctors to help him to another translation of the words; and yet, after all, is forced to acknowledge that our English is right enough: and is content to admit it, with this proviso, that *the king manage well the affairs of the commonwealth.* As much as to say, do what they would have him.

[c] Ver. 3. The first word in this verse is capable of several senses, which I have endeavoured to express in the Paraphrase. For it originally signifies such a passion and perturbation (particularly that of *anger* and *terror*), as makes a man *precipitant* in his motions: being transported sometimes by σπεύδω, and sometimes by ταράττω, in the LXX. and the meaning of the wise man is, that, in pursuance of the foregoing counsel, (ver. 2.) we must take care, if we desire to live happily, to suppress our passions, and not to shew the least discontent with the government: especially, not hastily and rashly to fling ourselves (as we speak), in a fume, out of the king's presence, on any occasion: much less receive his commands with impatience; or, which is worst of all, incur his just displeasure by sullen disobedience. For though we may think to escape the effects of it, we shall find ourselves deceived: princes

having long arms (as the phrase is) to reach those that offend them; though they flee never so far from them. This is the sense of ver. 3.

[*d*] Ver. 4. And it is farther enlarged in this verse: where Symmachus translates the first words thus: διὰ τὸν λόγον βασιλέως ἐξουσιαστικὸν εἶναι, *for the command of the king is authoritative;* carries such authority with it, that it will be executed. For the word *shillon* (from whence learned men have not unfitly derived the titles of *sultan* and *soldan*) denotes such a *power* as overpowers, and cannot be resisted: like that of death, (ver. 8.) to which all must submit.

And so it follows, in the end of this verse, *Who may say unto him, What doest thou?* i. e. first, Who hath any authority to call him to an account? as much as to say, None hath, but God alone. According to that of an eminent rabbi (quoted by the forenamed primate in the entrance of his book about Obedience), *No creature may judge the king, but the holy and blessed God alone.* To allow the people (either collective or representative) to have power to do it, is to make them *accusers, judges,* and *executioners,* also, in their own cause; and that against their sovereign. Nor, secondly, can any man safely attempt it; but he shall meet with punishment either here or hereafter. Which is no new doctrine, but the same with that of St. Paul (as Luther here honestly notes), *they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation:* which none shall be able to avoid. *Therefore it is safe simply to obey magistrates.* Which he repeats again upon ver. 7. *A man cannot do better than simply to obey.* So preachers, saith he, should exhort the tumultuous and seditious. *For judgment, vengeance, or punishment, is ordained and decreed by God, to all the disobedient, which none shall escape.* And thus much the author of Nature's Dowry is forced to acknowledge from the evident light he saw in this place; *that the scope of the words is, that, as we tender our own safety, we ought not to withstand the magistrate in his edicts, which are consonant to the word of God.* And it is *wisdom,* saith he (out of Elisha Gallico, a Hebrew interpreter), *in a private man, when the magistrate enjoins what is repugnant to God's will, to remove out of his dominions, rather than contest with him.* Which some conceive to be imported by the word *telec (go out,* or *go away),* in the foregoing verse.

[*e*] Ver. 5. From whence he again concludes it is the most prudent course, as well as most honest, to comply with those that have authority over us, in a dutiful obedience, or humble submission. So I have expounded the word *commandment,* for the commandment of the king beforementioned. Which, if we do not oppose, it is the way to preserve us from *knowing sorrow;* as we speak, very agreeably to the Hebrew phrase in this place; if by *evil thing* we understand the evil of punishment, rather than of sin. Many, indeed, by *commandment,* understand the precepts of God; which if we keep, we shall not fall into any evil practices; particularly, not into rebellion. Which is a good sense, and the reader may follow which he pleases; for the latter part of the verse will agree with either. Wherein he suggests that the wisest thing we can do, when princes require any thing grievous unto us, is, not to rebel, but to watch the fittest opportunities to petition for redress; and that after such a manner as may not give offence: so I have expounded *time* and *judgment,* in this and in the next verse.

[*f*] Ver. 6. For the truth is, a great part of the happiness of our life depends upon our discretion in observing and choosing the fittest opportunity for every thing, and the right manner of doing it. Especially when we have to do with kings, and great persons: concerning whom the wise man may still be thought to speak; both in this and the following verse.

[*g*] Ver. 7. If the Hebrew reading would bear it, the Vulgar translation (which the Syriac follows) of this verse, hath given an excellent reason, why a man is at such a loss to discern what is fit for him to do upon all occasions (especially how to direct his behaviour towards kings), *Because he knows little of what is past; and less, or rather nothing, of what is future.* For prudence consists in the remembrance of things *past,* consideration of things *present,* and foresight of things likely to *come hereafter.*

Luther refers it wholly to the miserable condition of a rebel, in this manner: "He desires various things, and hopes for mighty matters by his disobedience, but is lamentably deceived. For of the very impunity which he promised himself, he cannot be secure; but in an hour when he thinks not of it, judgment overtakes him, and he perishes in his disobedience. In short, the wicked contemns present obedience, and minds not future punishment. The wise man acts quite otherways; and remembering what mischiefs attend upon the rebellious, is studious therefore to be obedient."

[*h*] Ver. 8. Hence he takes occasion to give some good advice to princes themselves (which seems to me the plainest sense of this verse), not to abuse their power, because none can withstand them, or so much as question them: but to remember how weak they are upon many accounts; and therefore ought to be moderate in their government, if they intend to live happy. For otherwise they must expect their people's hatred; which they cannot hinder, no more than they can death, which is not in their power to resist. And if they be engaged in war, they will find their subjects assist them so coldly, that it may endanger the loss of their crown. So that clause may be understood, which we translate, *there is no discharge in war* (the word *that* being not in the original); that is, it will be too late then to discharge their subjects from the heavy burdens whereby they have oppressed them, when they have need of their service against an enemy. Or, as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase, they cannot command what success they please in war; but the event will be dubious: taking the word *mislachat* for a *dart,* a *javelin,* or such-like *weapon;* which we cannot direct and guide in that confusion, so as certainly to hit the mark at which it is thrown. So the Targum translates it, *Nor do the instruments of arms profit.* Or we may take it for a *commission* to raise forces (it being but once more used in the Bible, Psal. lxxviii. 49. and there the *mislachat* of evil angels, seems to be a company of angels, sent with a commission to do the execution there mentioned), which is too late to issue in the day of battle, if he be beaten: or, if he be not, yet let him not flatter himself (which is the true sense of the last clause of the verse), as if he should always escape; for the Divine justice will one day lay hold on him and punish him.

Thus, with reference to princes, the LXX. seem to understand this verse: who having said, ver. 4. βασιλεὺς

ἐξουσιάζων, *the king commands with authority,* thus translate the first words of this, οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος ἐξουσιάζων ἐν πνεύματι, but *no man* (no, not the king himself) *hath authority in all things; for example, not over the spirit of man.* But this verse also may be expounded (as some interpreters understand it) to be a continuance of the foregoing discourse, in this manner; That no man can bridle the wrath of the prince (by *spirit* understanding *anger*), or hinder the eruption of it. And it is in vain also for men to seek to save themselves from the sentence of death which he hath pronounced against them: for if they should wage war with him, it is not likely they would overcome or escape in the day of battle: or, if they did, they would meet sometime or other with a just punishment for their rebellion. Which is the meaning of the last clause (if the words be thus taken); *wickedness* (that is, *rebellion*) *shall not deliver those that are the authors of it.*

[*i*] Ver. 9. This and the following verse agree very well with that exposition which refers (ver. 8.) to princes: who sometimes are advanced to rule over others, to their *own hurt.* So we translate the last words of this verse; which Luther (who is not alone in that opinion) will have still to belong to *subjects,* over whom a prince is sometimes placed to be a scourge unto them. Notwithstanding which, saith he, the king's commandment is to be observed, and sedition not to be moved. Which he repeats again (so full he was of this doctrine): The wise man here grants, that there may be evil governors to punish their subjects; and yet these also are to be tolerated.

[*k*] Ver. 10. This verse I have taken wholly to belong to *wicked rulers;* because all the ancient translations do so, as well as our English. Though most of the modern interpreters will have the first part of the verse to refer unto wicked governors, and the latter part unto good; whose memory is abolished, when the other (so bad is mankind) are extolled and honoured: for which I see no reason, but look upon it as contrary to the design of the wise man, in this place, and therefore I have rejected it.

The place of the holy] May be expounded divers ways; but it seems to me most natural to take it for a *periphrase* of the place of judgment, (mentioned iii. 16.) in which the judges sustained the person of God, who was in their assembly, and judged in the midst of them. (Psal. lxxxi. 1.) Whence the judgment-seat was called the *place of the Holy, i.e.* of God, the *Holy One of Israel:* whom the Jews now constantly call by the name of *the Holy, that most Blessed One.* St. Jerome understands it of the *temple* (but then it must be translated, not the *place of the holy,* but the *holy place;* which is not agreeable to the Hebrew), and expounds the words thus, *The wicked buried, who were esteemed saints in the earth; and while they were thought worthy princes in the church, and in the temple of God.* I have sometimes thought that the words might, according to this sense of the *holy place,* be thus word for word rendered out of the Hebrew (if the grammarians will permit *holy* here not to be a substantive), *I saw the wicked buried, and they* (that is, such as attend their funeral) *came, and even out of the holy place followed;* that is, the very priests waited on the hearse to do them the greater honour. Or thus, *The funeral pomp reached from the very temple to the place of burial.*

[*l*] Ver. 11. From hence he takes occasion to shew what is the very root of men's malicious and incurable wickedness. And the first thing to which he ascribes it is, their thriving a long time in evil courses, which makes them hope this prosperity will continue to the end of their days. And if they can but live splendidly, they care not what becomes of them when they die. Now though there be a *pithgam,* a *decree,* a *definitive sentence* (as the word signifies), passed against them; yet nothing being done upon it, so soon as we expect, it both hardens the heart of those sinners, and mightily discourages better men; who hereupon grow angry, or flag in their duty: to both which Luther would have what follows referred.

But it properly belongs to the evil-doers, who, upon the suspense of the judgment passed upon them, sin on with great confidence; and have nothing else in their thoughts but malicious contrivances. Both which may be denoted by this phrase, *Their heart is filled in them* to do evil.

[*m*] Ver. 12, 13. Yet this is not to be understood, he here shews, without exception; but sometimes the Divine justice proceeds to quick execution. Which is a thing noted by the heathens themselves, that God cuts tyrants short; and suffers them not to ravage so long, as they hope to do. And thence they exhort them to moderation; according to that of Stesichorus, quoted by Aristotle in his Rhetorics (as Melancthon here observes), "Do not injure any man, for the very grasshoppers will chirp it in the fields." That is, the poor, who are oppressed, send out their complaints, and move God to punish such tyrants.

[*n*] Ver. 14. Here he discovers the other root of men's incurable wickedness; *viz.* the examples they see of those who live virtuously, and yet live miserably. Which proves a great scandal to those who admire worldly things too much: and makes them angry, at least to behold how all was given heretofore, for instance, to wicked priests, and now godly ones have scarce bread to put into their mouths. They are the words of Luther, who observes, that soldiers have better pay than many of Christ's ministers; who are to lead his people, and conduct them unto heaven.

[*o*] Ver. 15. Notwithstanding which, the wise man advises him that would live as happily as the state of things here will permit, not to grow sullen at this, (ver. 15.) much less to doubt of God's good providence; nor to be disturbed, though we are not able to give a reason, why virtuous men suffer very much, when the wicked at the same time escape. Which I take to be the meaning of the two last verses; which I have referred to our ignorance of this particular matter; as St. Jerome also doth, whose words are these: "He that seeks the causes and reasons of things, why this or that is done, and why the world is governed by various events; why one man is blind and lame, and another is born with eyes and sound; one is poor, and another is rich; this man is noble, that inglorious: he gets nothing by his inquiry, but only this; to be tormented in his own questions, and to have his disputations instead of a rack, and yet not find what he sought."

That word in the Hebrew which we translate *because though,* is found only in this place; but from Josh. i. 7. (where it is found in composition) the doctors conclude it signifies, *for that,* or *because of;* and so the meaning here is, that a man shall not be able by all the labour and pains he can take, not though he be a wise man that is thus laborious, to discover the reasons of things, and give an ac-

count of the difference which he observes in the Divine dispensations.

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter begins where the foregoing ends; the wise man proceeding still to justify what he had observed, about the most puzzling question in the world: *Why the good and bad fare all alike, without any constant visible distinction?* His resolution, cautions, remedies, about this matter, appear so plainly in the Paraphrase and Annotations which I shall annex to it, that I will give no large account here of this chapter; but only note, that the sum of it is this: that the confusion of things here below should not move us to discontent, much less incline us to irreligion; but rather dispose us, with thankfulness and sobriety, to enjoy freely that portion of good things, while we have them, which God hath given us. Neither slacking our diligence, nor trusting to it alone; but depending on God's wise providence, which, notwithstanding that seeming confusion, governs all events: disappointing many times the most likely and applauded means; and again, succeeding the most unlikely and contemptible. Which should move us to commend ourselves and concerns unto God; and then, above all things, to value and study true wisdom and prudence in the management of all affairs; as far excelling mere power, of which we are foolishly ambitious.

Ver. 1. *FOR all this I considered in my heart, even to declare all this, that the righteous and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.*] This is no rash assertion, for I, Solomon, affirm again, (viii. 16.) I have deeply considered all that belongs to this matter with earnest desire and endeavour to give a clearer account, and fuller resolution of it, than this, which is all I can say: that though good men and prudent are under the care of God (which must satisfy them in all events), by whose special providence, both they and their undertakings and affairs are approved, directed, governed, and defended; yet (such a secret there is in it) they prove sometimes so unsuccessful, that no man can know by any thing that befals him, or others, how God stands affected towards them; but will conclude very falsely, if he judge that God loves him who hath all that his heart desires; or that he hates him, who is sorely afflicted. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good, and to the clean; and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.*] For there is no certain and constant distinction made between one man and another, in the distribution of things in this world; but they all fare alike, especially in public calamities: a righteous man, for instance, perishes in a battle as well as the wicked; he that keeps himself pure and undefiled dies in a pestilence, as well as the filthy and unclean; he that worshippeth God in sincerity and truth suffers by storms, shipwrecks, and inundations, &c. as well as a profane person or a hypocrite; and, on the contrary, a blasphemer of God, nay, a perjured wretch, prospers and thrives, as much as he that dreads the holy name of God, and dares not rashly, much less falsely, take it into his mouth. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *There is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea also, the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.*] This (it must be acknowledged) is one of the most grievous things in this lower world, that all things being thus blended together without any distinction, some draw from thence this lewd and wild conclusion, that there is no difference between virtue and wickedness: and therefore take the greatest licence to do evil confidently and boldly all their life long: pursuing their own lusts and passions so furiously, that they hasten their end; and death, which spares nobody (but is the most common of all other things), seizes on them before they think of it. See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.*] But who would choose to be a companion of these mad men, who run themselves so fast out of all hope? which still remains (in the midst of all our changes here) as long as a man remains in the number of the living; but is lost when he is dead: in which respect the meanest and most contemptible person here in this world, hath the advantage of the greatest king, when he is gone out of it. See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 5. *For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.*] For while men live and are well, they have sense and relish of such things as they possess; and, knowing they must die, are taught thereby to use them with a sober freedom: because when they are gone from hence they become perfect strangers to all things here, and can no longer enjoy any benefit of their labours; (iv. 9.) the fruit of which falls into the hands of other men, who never so much as think what is become of them.

Ver. 6. *Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.*] Nor doth it then signify any thing, whether a man was loved, or hated, or envied by them; but all these passions are so extinguished with them, that nobody courts their favour, nor fears their ill-will or displeasure: for, though they have been never so powerful, they have nothing more to do with us here in this world; nor can we, if we would, transmit any of our enjoyments to them, in the place where they are.

Ver. 7. *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.*] And, therefore, shaking off both all anxious cares, and also all perplexing thoughts about God's providence, (ver. 1.) excite thyself, by the remembrance of death, to a cheerful enjoyment of those good things present which thou justly possessest: use them while thou hast them, with a well-pleased, contented, nay, joyful mind; believing, if thou hast approved thyself to God in the rest of thy works, it is very acceptable to him, that thou shouldest thus rejoice in his love; who hath made all things here for the service of man, and blessed thee with a comfortable portion of them. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 8. *Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.*] For which reason, do not live either sordidly or sadly; but, at all seasonable times, entertain thyself and thy friends liberally, with such pleasures as may recreate and refresh thy spirits, after thy honest labours: for innocent mirth, suitable to thy condition, is as becoming those that are good, as the filthy delights of men lewdly voluptuous are abominable. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 9. *Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.*] Flee therefore adultery and fornication, but solace thyself exceedingly with thy own wife; and, loving her with the most tender and constant affection, take all the comfort her society can afford: for it is the greatest God hath provided for mankind in this troublesome life; and therefore both seek for such a one as thou canst love; and, when thou hast her, delight thyself in her company, with such unalterable kindness, as may help to sweeten the afflictions to which we are subject in this world: for thou canst reap no other fruit of all thy toil in this life, but to take an innocent pleasure, with tranquillity of mind, in such good things as those, which the providence of God bestows upon thee. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.*] In which, that thou mayest take the sincerest pleasure, let it not make thee slothful, much less dissolute; but dispose thee rather to be vigorously industrious, in doing all the good that is in thy power: for which end, lay hold on every occasion that presents itself, and improve it with the utmost diligence; because now is the time of action, both in the employments of the body and of the mind; now is the season of studying either arts or sciences, or wisdom and virtue; for which thou wilt have no opportunities in the place whither thou art going in the other world: which is designed for rest from our present labours, and for the reward of them. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 11. *I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.*] But do not presume merely on thy own industry, though never so great, for good success in thy undertakings, nor fancy that nothing shall interrupt thy pleasures, but look up unto God, and leave all to his providence: for (to return to what I said about events, ver. 1.) I have observed that they do not depend upon our will and pleasure, but upon his: we being apt to think, that he who, for instance, can run swiftest, will certainly carry away the prize; and that he who hath the greatest forces will win the victory in a battle; when it falls out quite otherwise, that both of them lose the day: and more than that, the wise and the learned in their profession cannot sometimes get their bread, but men of greatest reach are poor, and ingenious artists not at all regarded, or encouraged, according to their deserts; for there are certain seasons wherein, by various accidents which unexpectedly start up, all men's nimbleness, strength, valour, wit, cunning, and dexterity, prove ineffectual. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 12. *For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.*] For no man can foresee many evils that befal him, no, not the time of his death, which surprises him unawares, when he thinks no more of it, than the silly fish or birds do of the net or the snare, wherein they are caught to their destruction: nay, as they are entangled, when they swim or fly securely, in hope to catch their prey; so do men perish by those counsels and actions, from whence they expected the greatest advantages; and are undone by some sudden and unavoidable mischief that seizes them, when they thought themselves at the top of their hopes. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 13. *This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me.*] But though events be not in our power, being overruled by a higher Providence, we ought not therefore to imagine there is no use of prudent counsel and forecast: for that sort of wisdom, which we call political, how mean soever it may seem in some men's eyes, is with me of greater price than wealth and riches. And this single observation shews that I have reason for it: See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 14. *There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it.*] There was a city of small circuit, ill fortified, and manned by a very small garrison; against which a mighty king, with numerous forces, made his approaches: and, having intrenched his army, and drawn a strong line about it, and raised his batteries, doubted not to take it speedily, or to have it surrendered into his hands:

Ver. 15. *Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.*] When, by a strange providence of God, there unexpectedly appeared a wise man, but he so poor that nobody minded him, who saved the city from this imminent danger; and that not by money, for he had none; nor by arms, for the besiegers were far superior in strength; but merely by his wise counsels, contrivances, stratagems, and conduct, wherein he excelled the greatest warriors. And yet, O foul ingratitude! his citizens, who ought to have recorded his fame, and preserved it to all posterity, soon forgot their deliverer; and, because he was poor, regarded him after this memorable service he had done them, no more than they had done before. See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 16. *Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.*] Which notwithstanding ought not to discourage worthy men from serving their country; for wisdom and counsel, from such examples as this, will be preferred by all judicious and virtuous persons, as well as by me, before mere power and strength: because ungoverned forces destroy themselves, when a little force, under skilful conduct, achieveth the greatest things: and therefore it ought to be highly valued in the most obscure person, though the senseless multitude (as if wisdom borrowed all its credit from him that possesseth it) despise the counsel of a poor man; and ofttimes suffer this punishment of their folly and ingratitude, that, shutting their

ears to his wholesome advice, they fall into many and great calamities. See Annot. [*m*]

Ver. 17. *The words of wise men are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.*] An intolerable fault this is. For the modest speeches of the meanest wise man delivered gently, and without noise, are far more worthy to be heard; and, if they meet with a patient ear, and a serene mind, free from the tumult of pride and passion, will be more regarded, and prove more efficacious, than the most clamorous and imperious language of a powerful fool: as appears by what the poor man propounded for the saving of the city, which prevailed more in their distress, than the furious outcries of the greatest commander, swaggering among his troops of ignorant soldiers. See Annot. [*n*]

Ver. 18. *Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.*] I cannot therefore but again commend counsel and wise conduct, and prefer it before the greatest forces, and all manner of warlike preparation; for it sometimes saves whole armies, nay countries, from destruction, which have been utterly ruined by the rash boldness and forwardness, or other error, of some mighty man; who hath overthrown well-settled kingdoms and states, and brought them into many miseries: for it is a known thing, that many have been undone by the fault of one; as by one man's prudence many have been delivered. See Annot. [*o*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. Though Solomon had often, and thoroughly, considered that question, mentioned in the Argument of this chapter, yet he could come to no resolution about it but this, that it ought not to shake our belief of God's love to virtuous men (which is expressed in that phrase, *in the hand of God;* wherein are included all the effects of his kindness and care), and that we must not judge men to be good or bad, by what befals them in their outward estates. So those words are most naturally interpreted, *A man knoweth not love or hatred,* &c. which some, indeed, refer unto men, not unto God, in this sense: *No man knows certainly what is best for him in this world;* and consequently cannot tell what he should desire, and what deprecate, of all the things that are before him. For those things which he hates and is averse unto, may be as good for him as those which he loves, and wishes to enjoy. To this purpose Maldonate. Or thus, No man knows whether that which he loves, or that which he hates, shall befal him; but *all things are before them;* that is, are appointed how they shall be, antecedent to the will of men. Thus Aben Ezra. And there are those who interpret that phrase, *before them,* in this manner: *They see the good and evil which befals them, but cannot foresee it till it come upon them.* And some join both together thus, *Neither the favour nor disfavour of men, neither their approving or opposing what we do, is any certain mark that we are good or bad.*

But I have followed that sense which seemed to me most simple and most coherent with the rest of the words. As for that doctrine, which many great writers in the Roman church have built upon this text, that *no man can be certain whether he be in the favour of God or not, while he is in this life,* Melancthon truly calls it *interpretatio monachorum; the interpretation of the monks;* who distorted the words of Solomon, and writhed them to their own dotages. For it is madness, saith he in another place (in his treatise of good works), to say, that we know not whether murderers and adulterers are worthy of God's hatred.

[*b*] Ver. 2. For this next verse plainly shews, that he speaks of such notes of God's favour or hatred, as men are very desirous he would make; by putting a difference between good and bad men, in external things. Which he is not pleased to do: but they are sick, or lose their goods, their children, or friends, all alike. Which is more particularly true in public calamities, as St. Cyprian excellently discourses, both in his book to Demetrian, and in his book de Mortalitate. In the former of which he acknowledges, that good and bad men being in this world, as in one and the same house, whatsoever befals the house, must necessarily befal the inhabitants; who cannot be well, when the common air wherein they all breathe is infected; nor have a good crop, when there wants rain to make the earth fruitful. "Only herein (saith he to the pagans) we are not *compares et æquales vobis, alike and undistinguished from you:* that we do not grieve as you do, in these common calamities; we are not so impatient; nor make such outcries and complaints: but a courageous and religious patience quiets our mind, and makes us thankful to God. *Viget apud nos spei robur,* &c. *the strength of faith is vigorous among us; and the firmness of hope;* and a mind erect in the midst of the ruins of a decaying world; together with an immoveable virtue; a constantly joyful patience; and a soul always secure of her God. So that she may say with the prophet, (Habak. iii. 17, 18.) *Although the fig-tree should not blossom, neither should fruit be in the vine,* &c. *yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*" The difference of the several expressions used here in this verse, for good men and bad, I have explained, as well as I could, in the Paraphrase. And they that would see examples of the same event to every one of the opposite persons, may look into the Hebrew commentators, or into Mercer, and there find them.

[c] Ver. 3. In this and the following verses, he shews the ill use men make of the foregoing observation; and their folly therein. For, imagining God loves all men alike, because they find the same things happen to them all, they run into such an excess of wickedness with such a frantic liberty, as brings them speedily to their graves: whereby they lose what they would have kept, and what they desired and hoped still to get. Thus I have interpreted ver. 4. in which there is exceeding great difficulty; both because of the various reading of one word, which we translate *joined to;* and the uncertainty whether Solomon here delivers his own opinion, or the opinion of the epicures; whom some think he here introduces, and making a speech which reaches to ver. 11. which is the sense of Greg. Thaumaturgus among the Greeks; and of several Latin writers, who herein follow some of the Hebrews: whose wise men say, (as we read in Maimonides's More Nevochim, par. ii. cap. 28.) *that some sought to smother the book of Ecclesiastes, because its words savour of heresy.* From which imputation that they might free it, they took such words as they thought looked that way, to be the sayings of carnal men. But there is no need to have recourse to this way of exposition (as St. Jerome acknowledges), which I have not followed, be-

cause there seems to me to be an easy and plain sense of the words, in coherence with the foregoing. And in expressing of that sense, I have neglected neither the *writing*, nor the *reading*, as the Hebrews speak: but taken notice of the sense of the word we translate *joined to*, as it is in the text, and as it is in the margin of the Hebrew Bibles. There are many other ways of explaining it, and the whole verse; but I shall not trouble the reader with any of them, save only with Melancthon's (which I do not find taken notice of by any of the later interpreters), who translates the words thus: *What therefore is to be chosen? In one that is alive there is hope; and a living dog*, &c. In answer, saith he, to those who, being disturbed at the confusion of things, asked, *Must we then choose to labour, when we meet with no rewards?* Solomon replies, *By all means follow your calling, and commend events to God.* "There is hope while a man lives, that he may come to something; and, although thou canst not be a lion, yet be content to be a meaner creature, though it be but a little dog. Thou art not able to be such a captain as Scipio; yet thou mayest be like to Fabius. Why do we seek for *lions*, such heroical captains and governors as Gideon, Samson, and David? Let us use such as we have, who, though they be not like those lions, yet may be like small dogs. And let them do something in their places; and pray to God they may be vessels of mercy. In which consideration (saith he) Solomon stays long; saying, in the following verses, that the dead are gone from the government of this world; and therefore we must use those that are present, follow our calling, rest in God by faith and a good conscience, whatsoever the events be." As for those that fancy the wise man would here contradict himself in what he said, iv. 2, 3. unless we take these words for the opinion of other men, they may be easily answered; that both are true in different respects. There he speaks with respect to the *troubles* of life; and here with respect to the *advantages* of it: the chief of which is, hope of bettering our condition, when it is never so miserable. Which may be extended to the minds, as well as our outward concerns: there is hope men may live to see their follies, correct their mistakes, amend their lives, and recover the favour of God: which is irrecoverably lost when they are gone from hence. In short, he seems to say the same that the heathen meant in the fable of Pandora's box: in which *hope* alone remained, after every thing else that was good was flown away. And there are the like sayings in Theocritus and Euripides: which may be found in Erasmus's Adages, chil. ii. cent. iv. adag. 12.

[*d*] There is little difficulty in the following verses; where there are several passages which shew, that Solomon is not representing the sense of those who believe nothing after this life: but hath respect only to the state of men here in this world, as he saith expressly in the conclusion of ver. 6. And in the seventh verse plainly supposes the man to whom he directs his discourse to be religiously affected, and to govern himself in his pleasures with a regard to God, and the censure that he will pass upon his actions in another place: and thereupon advises him to a cheerful use of all manner of good things in this life.

[*e*] For I take *white garments* not to denote a magnificent and splendid way of living; but only a neat, clean, and pleasant (both *white garments* and *anointing the head* being opposite to the habits of mourners, which were sad and sordid), in which there can be no danger, if it do not hinder serious business; but rather be a refreshment after it, and a preparation to renew it, as it follows, ver. 10. The Essenes, as Josephus tells, (lib. ii. cap. 7. ἁλως.) went in white, though they would not use any ointments, which seemed to him too voluptuous. The pleasure, indeed, of them was great, (as I shall shew upon Cant. i. 2.) and was by many abused, and made too expensive and costly: but not therefore to be refrained altogether by sober people; who forbare them in times of *mourning* (2 Sam. xiv. 2.) and *fasting*, (Matt. vi. 17.) but used them in feasts and in times of joy, (Psal. xlv. 7. xcii. 10. Luke vii. 37, &c.)

[*f*] Ver. 9. Here is a new proof, that this is not the speech of voluptuaries; for they love not to be confined to a wife; as Solomon here advises this happy man to be: making her his partner in all the joys and comforts he hath; as she will be in his grief and sorrows. The Hebrew phrase *see life*, or *lives*, in the plural number, is well translated by us *live joyfully* (or *very joyfully*), for *chajim* includes in it all the conveniences and pleasures of life, (Psal. xxxiv. 13.) and to *see* is to *enjoy*, as was noted before.

[*g*] Ver. 10. Here Gregory Thaumaturgus imagines the speech of the profane, atheistical crew concludes; and glosses in this manner upon it: Ταῦτα μὲν οἱ μάταιοι, ἐγὼ δὲ, &c. *Thus vain men talk, but I say unto you*, &c. (as it follows in the rest of the chapter.) Which is not at all agreeable, in my opinion, to the words of this verse; wherein there is a very serious advice to be diligent in all that we have to do in this world: which is not the way of sensual men, who love not to think of *work*, *contrivance* (or *thought*), *knowledge*, and *wisdom*. The difference between which words, I have expressed in the Paraphrase; and shall only add, that they seem to comprehend our whole business here in this world. For action is employed in some *work* or other; to which we must bend our *thought*, and devise how to do it; and for that end learn *sciences*, but especially study *wisdom* (unto which *sciences* are an entrance), that we may both accomplish what we design, and know how to use the fruit of our labour.

[*h*] Ver. 11. But after all that we can do, he advises to a faithful dependance upon God and his good providence: and not upon our own strength or wisdom. By which advice he reproves that old saying, "Faber quisque fortunæ suæ;" *Every man makes his own fortune:* "Which (as the Lord Bacon speaks, in a discourse touching helps to the intellectual powers) we ought to look upon as an insolent and unlucky saying: except it be uttered as a hortative or spur to correct sloth;" and (I may add) to excite us to watchfulness, in laying hold of all opportunities, and neglecting no occasions, of doing ourselves good. "For otherwise, if it be believed as it sounds, and a man enters into a high imagination that he can compass and fathom all accidents, and ascribes all successes to his own drift and reaches, and the contrary to his errors and sleepings, it is a profane speech; and it is commonly seen that the evening fortune of that man is not so prosperous, as of him that, without slacking his industry, attributeth much to felicity and providence above him."

Yet this is not the same doctrine with that neither which saith, "Vitam fortuna regit, non sapientia;" *Fortune, not wisdom, governs the life of man.* For, as Melancthon observes upon the conclusion of this book, there is much dif-

ference between *philosophical* and *ecclesiastical* sayings. The *church*, in such sayings as this, confirms providence, and admonishes us to have God in our thoughts; whether events be answerable to our desires or not. But profane writers, in such sayings as that now mentioned, leave out Divine providence, and take no notice of it; but only of a blind power, which troubles all things that are wisely designed.

It is no impertinent inference which Corranus makes from these words, that all the things which the *swift*, the *valiant*, and the rest of the persons here mentioned seek, being their end, of which they frequently miss; it is an argument that the happiness of man consists not either in *fame*, or *victory*, or *eating* and *drinking*, or *riches*, or the *favour* of others; but in contentment with such things as we have, and God shall think good for us, in his wise providence.

[*i*] Ver. 12. Which hath given us many examples of men, who, incited by false persuasions and foolish hopes, dreamt of good events; when, in the midst of their course, they were oppressed with great calamities. Thus Melancthon glosses upon these words in ver. 12. and instances in Marius, Pompeius, and Julius Cæsar. Which he explains more largely in his Review of the first chapter of this book, a little before he died. "Where he observes how Cato and Marcellus were disappointed when they hoped for victory in a good cause: and Brutus and Cassius, when they hoped by the treacherous slaughter of Cæsar, to have restored the form of the old republic: and Antony, when he thought by oppressing Augustus to make himself monarch of the world. All which verifies the old saying (which he remembers in his notes upon the Proverbs), Μάταιοι μάταια λογίζονται, δι' ἐπιθυμίας. *Vain men are abused by their own desires, which lead them to make false accounts, and fill them with vain expectations.* And it teaches us the truth of those Divine sayings, *The way of man is not in himself. Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it*, &c. Examples of which we have in Saul, who hoped to have left the kingdom to his posterity: and in David himself, who thought once of having Absalom for his successor. But Solomon here teaches us to consider how infinitely the wise providence of God excels our greatest wit and cunning, and can more easily overreach all our counsels, and overturn all our well-laid designs, than we can outwit the silly birds and fishes."

[*k*] Ver. 13, 14. Which should not discourage wise and regular proceedings; but only make us refer ourselves unto God: who, as he thus disappoints the most probable hopes, so, at other times, makes men successful, when they have no hope at all. As Solomon here shews in the following observation, (ver. 13, 14.) Upon which St. Jerome glosses in this manner: "It hath been often seen, that a small city and few inhabitants, being beset by an army of innumerable enemies, and besieged so straitly, that they were in danger, if not otherways, to perish by famine; were on a sudden, contrary to all men's expectations, delivered by a mean person, who, having more wisdom than all the wealthy, great, powerful, and proud citizens, thought of a way to save them, when they gave themselves for lost; and effected that also of which they utterly despaired. And yet, O that ungrateful forgetfulness of mankind! after the siege was raised, after the liberty of their country was restored, there was nobody thought of this poor man, nobody gave him thanks for their safety: but all honoured the rich, who, in their danger, could do them no service."

[*l*] Ver. 15. Which sets forth, as the Lord Bacon observes on this verse, (lib. viii. de Augm. Scient. cap. 2. parab. 21.) "the depraved and malignant nature of mankind: who, in extremities and straits, commonly flee to men of wisdom and courage, whom before they despised: but so soon as the storm is over, they become unthankful wretches to their preservers. Machiavel, not without reason, propounds the question, Whether should be most grateful to well-deserving persons, the prince or the people? but in the mean time he taxed them both of ingratitude. Though this doth not arise merely from the ingratitude of the prince or the people alone; but there is added too oft to this the envy of the nobility: who in secret repine at the event, though happy and prosperous, because it proceeded not from themselves. For which cause they extenuate the merit of the act, and depress the author."

Thus Themistocles was served (as Luther here observes), who, having performed great things for his citizens, was basely requited by them. Nay, David himself was soon forgotten, who had been the greatest benefactor to Israel: ten of whose tribes soon renounced all dependance on his house, and fell off quite from their subjection to it. So that to do good to the world, saith he, is to throw away the benefits we bestow; or to cast gold into dung, and pearls before swine. And therefore it is best to enjoy what we have, and to mind our present business, casting away care for the future. For, as Phædria saith in Terence, "It is better my benefits should be lost, than I should be lost together with them." And not to be moved from our duty by the world's ingratitude, is an advice he often repeats, very profitable in this chapter: that we may be like our heavenly Father, who *doth good to the evil and to the unthankful.*

[*m*] Ver. 16. The beginning of this verse may be illustrated out of Dion Prusæus (Orat. ii. de Regno), who observes, that Agamemnon wished rather for ten such grave counsellors as Nestor, than so many valiant youths as Ajax and Achilles, ὡς ᾧττον ἂν ἁλούσης τῆς Τροίας. Where he shews also how great the power of oratory is to subdue men's minds.

[*n*] Ver. 17. Yet it must be added, that the best and safest counsels cannot be so much as heard or regarded, though never so wise, till people's straits have made them humble, sad, and serious; as Aben Ezra expounds this seventeenth verse: *The words of the wise are despised by the people, when they are in prosperity; but when they are in distress* (almost famished by such a siege as is beforementioned), *and silenced by fear and grief, then they listen greedily and diligently.* Which Melancthon expresses better; *The words of the wise are heard by the silent: i. e.* by such as do not rage with any desire; but seek the truth, and what is wholesome for them. This, and another obvious sense of the words, I have expressed in the Paraphrase; but have taken little notice of this, which seems not so near the meaning: that *it is better to hearken to wise men, who persuade to peace, than to tumultuous spirits, who incite silly people unto war. He that rules among fools*, is a Hebraism for a great fool: or we may understand it of

one whose authority sways much among fools, or of a *foolish commander*. And St. Jerome expounds it of a *bawling orator*, or *preacher*. "Whatsoever declaimer (saith he) thou seest in the church, by the incitement and elegance of words exciting applauses, moving laughter, or stirring up the people to affections of joy: know that it is a sign of folly both in him that speaks, and in them that hear him: for the words of the wise are heard in quiet and moderate silence," &c.

[*o*] Ver. 18. All authors furnish us with abundance of examples of the truth of the last clause of the last verse: but I shall only briefly mention a little of Melancthon's gloss upon the place. There are vessels of wrath, and vessels of mercy: the *vessels of wrath* are unhappy men, who bring destruction upon themselves and others, though sometimes they be great and wise persons: according to that of Solon, *Commonwealths are overturned by great and excellent wits*. Such were Ahaz, Zedekiah, Catiline, Antony, and others. And in the church, Samosatenus, Arius, Manichæus, and many other pernicious doctors. Of all which Solomon says, *One sinner destroys much good*, Πολλακὶ καὶ συμπᾶσα πόλις κακοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐπαυρεῖ. The *vessels of mercy* are such men, whose course is salutary to themselves and others: such a poor man in the city was Jeremiah; by whose counsels, if they had been followed, Jerusalem might have been saved from destruction. Let us therefore pray to God, with continual groans, that we may be vessels of mercy; and that he would preserve us from being the pests and furies (ἀλάστορες) of mankind: driving a violent course to our own and others' ruin.

CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT.

The sum of this chapter is, that as true wisdom and virtue is the only thing that can give us tranquillity: so that part of it which teaches us to govern our tongue, and to behave ourselves dutifully towards our governors (though they do not manage things to our content, nor to the general good), conduces more unto it, than men are willing to believe. For this is, in a manner, the scope of the whole chapter, to make every one sensible of the great blessing of government; especially of good government: and that therefore they ought to bear with all manner of grievance; as a less mischief than the want of government, by rebellion against it. Which begins in undutiful discourse: the folly and danger of which he admirably represents; with many other things tending to our present peace and settlement.

Ver. 1. *DEAD flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.*] And the wiser or better any man is, so much the more cautious ought he to be, in all his words and actions; if he mean to preserve that credit, esteem, and authority in the world, which give him great advantages of doing good. For as dead flies, though very small creatures, falling into a pot of ointment, and bursting there, corrupt that precious composition, which the apothecary hath made with excellent art; so that it turns the perfume into a stink: in like manner doth a small error, or miscarriage, blemish him, who was highly valued for his discretion and virtue; and the least sordid action destroys his reputation, who was honoured for his noble way of living. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a fool's heart is at his left.*] It is hard indeed to be thus circumspect; but herein a truly wise man's worth is discovered, that his judgment never fails him in the greatest difficulties: wherein he not only resolves aright, and takes things by the right handle, but is ready also in the execution of what he designs, and manages his affairs with ease, and with dexterity; whereas a fool both mistakes in his aim, and fumbles also in the easiest business, which he handles so awkwardly and untowardly, that it commonly miscarries. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *Yea also when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool.*] And though he would dissemble his folly, and endeavour to seem wise, he is so far from his aim, that in every thing he doth, whether great or small, he openly betrays his want of judgment: nay, by his very gait and behaviour, as well as by his words and actions, he tells every body (as plainly as if he said it in so many words) that he is a fool: which appears in nothing more than in his holding all for fools in comparison with himself. See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences.*] But a man's wisdom hath seldom a greater trial than when his prince is angry with him, and perhaps treats him hardly; which incenses a fool, and makes him leave the court, if not grow factious and rebellious: but it is better and safer advice to keep in the station wherein thou art, and to do thy duty faithfully, with a patient, but yet pensive spirit: for nothing so appeases a prince's offended mind, as to give way to his fury by mild and gentle words, and by modest, humble, and submissive behaviour; whereby a man also prevents a world of sins, into which he throws himself, if he yield unto disloyal thoughts. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler.*] And there are worse evils than this, that a wise and good man must patiently bear withal; particularly that great error which princes, it must be acknowledged, either through ignorance, imprudence, surprise, easiness, and being imposed upon by other men's false representations, subtilties, or ill affections, are too frequently guilty of: whereby they derive many mischiefs upon all their people; for which they must answer, as if they were committed by themselves. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place.*] In advancing, I mean (which I have too often observed), the most witless, careless men, and of base condition; or suffering such who are noted for nothing but their folly, and their vices, to creep up to the most eminent dignities and offices; and in the mean time depressing noble persons, or making no account of them, though endowed no less with all excellent qualities, than with riches and honour. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 7. *I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.*] By the like senseless folly, I have observed mere slaves, that deserved not the meanest office in a private family (being fitter to be kept under by every body, than to be entrusted with the smallest power), appear in the greatest state, by reason of their

high preferment; and men of great families, or of singular worth and merit, altogether slighted; nay, forced to wait upon them, as if they had been their lackeys. See Annot. [g]

Ver. 8. *He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him.*] Which foul indignities, notwithstanding, a wise and virtuous person should choose rather to wink at, and patiently endure, than think of moving any public disturbance; for such counsels are extremely hazardous, and commonly end in the ruin of those that give them: according to that known proverb among us, which admonishes us how dangerous it is to pursue our own desires and passions violently (especially against kings and princes), whereby men in heat, forgetting their own contrivances, have run themselves into that very ruin, as hunters do into the pit, which they prepared for others: and that other common saying, which warns us not to overthrow the well-settled laws and customs of church or state; for that is like the breaking down a hedge: wherein as a serpent many time lurks, which gives him that attempts it a deadly bite; so they frequently draw upon themselves their own destruction, who pull down the ancient government. See Annot. [h]

Ver. 9. *Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.*] We abound with proverbs to this purpose; which teach us that the giving public disturbance, by invading the rights of others (especially of kings) and endeavouring to change the form of government, is like removing the boundaries of lands, which raises great troubles; or like the taking much pains to pull down a building without judgment, some of the stones of which fall upon him that meddles with it, and crush him in pieces. Such is his folly, also, that fancies he can mend every thing that is amiss, and form and square the people exactly according to his rule: which proves just like an unskilful workman's cutting a knotty piece of wood; who only makes clefts and chips (as the other doth factions and rents), and, in the issue, gives a grievous gash to himself. See Annot. [i]

Ver. 10. *If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.*] This is sufficient to shew, how unprofitable all our endeavours are without true judgment. For as a rusty tool, though managed by the strongest man, is so far from effecting his desires, that it only tires his arm, unless he file and whet it, to recover its edge: so all the power in the world rather hurts than advantages him that hath it, unless it be guided and directed by wisdom and prudence; which can do far more, than violence and force, to correct the errors of kings, and mend the faults of their government. See Annot. [k]

Ver. 11. *Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbler is no better.*] But of all other men he is the most dangerous, who spits his venom secretly against his governors; slandering and traducing all their actions in his private discourses, and thereby enraging people's minds against them; and giving them a more grievous wound than if they were stabbed with a weapon: for that may be prevented, or healed afterward; but this, like the biting of the most deadly serpent, which stopping its ear to all enchantments, poisons both inevitably and incurably. See Annot. [l]

Ver. 12. *The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious: but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.*] See here again the wide difference between a wise man and a fool. The former of which, by his virtuous discourse, wins every one's (especially his prince's) favour; and doth good to those with whom he converses; but the other, by his ill tongue, not only hurts his neighbour, but plunges himself into endless troubles; out of which he cannot deliver himself, nor can any body him. See Annot. [m]

Ver. 13. *The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness; and the end of his talk is mischievous madness.*] And the more he talks, in the greater danger he is: for, though he begins only with senseless and impertinent stuff, he heats himself before he hath done into a rage; and then minds not either how injurious his discourse is unto others, or how mischievous unto himself.

Ver. 14. *A fool is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?*] No, though he be admonished of it he cannot desist. For he abounds with words, and while he thinks to mend the matter, he makes it worse; adventuring to talk not only of things civil, but of things sacred; and not only of things present, but of things past also, nay, of things to come: in which wiser men than he hath little or no skill; and yet the less he knows, the more confident and bold he is; when he doth not so much as foresee the evil he is bringing upon himself, by his foolish prating. See Annot. [n]

Ver. 15. *The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.*] Which is the more intolerable, because he torments himself and others with fruitless pains about the abstrusest matter; when he knows not the most trivial, that is as plain as the highway: for if he be engaged in any common business, he only tires himself with toil and labour, but is never the nearer: like a silly traveller, who, being ignorant of the road, goes about, if not through dangerous, yet through troublesome paths, and the farther he goes, perhaps, is the farther off from the place he intends. See Annot. [o]

Ver. 16. *Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!*] What a miserable condition then is that poor country in which abounds (as most places do) with a great many of these fools! And, besides, hath the unhappiness to fall under the government of a child: whose tutors, counsellors, guardians, and protectors, who have the management of all affairs in his minority, are so given to their pleasure, that they can find no time to mind seriously the public business; nor take any care to infuse principles of wisdom and goodness into their young prince's mind, but let him remain a child as long as he lives. See Annot. [p]

Ver. 17. *Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!*] And, on the contrary, the happiness of that nation is inexpressible, whose king is not only of an illustrious family, descended from the most ancient nobility, but, having had ingenious and liberal education, doth not degenerate from their heroical virtue: which teaches him to place such officers under him, in their several stations, as make pleasure wait upon business; which they first dispatch, and then refresh themselves, not to excess, but to fit themselves to return to their business again. See Annot. [q]

Ver. 18. *By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.*] Being sensible, that as, through the negligence and gross carelessness of the master of a family, the house falls to decay; and, for want of timely reparation, the rain gets in and rots the roof, and then the supporters, and at last the very foundation of it: so, by that laziness and sloth, which is the effect of luxury and riot, kingdoms themselves go to wreck; and seasonable remedies not being applied to public disorders, the whole government by degrees grows out of frame, and is in the end dissolved. See Annot. [*r*]

Ver. 19. *A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things.*] For these idle and dissolute persons, among other mischiefs, consume the public treasure, by their vast expenses in feasts, and all manner of merriment; which serve indeed for their present pleasure, but waste that which should make it lasting, and is of most universal use to support the prince's crown and dignity: and therefore, when the exchequer is exhausted, these men are tempted to fill it by the most grievous oppressions; nay, law and justice, and every thing else, are sold; virtue itself is of no price, but money alone is valued, and bears all the sway: which is another way of bringing all to utter ruin. See Annot. [*s*]

Ver. 20. *Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.*] But notwithstanding all this, as I advised thee before, not to rise up in rebellion against thy sovereign, (ver. 8, &c.) so now let me add, that it is very foolish, as well as wicked, to be provoked by this ill management, so much as to speak an opprobrious word of him, or of his government, or ministers; nay, entertain not so much as a thought of it, though it may be done never so secretly, where none but thy wife, or most intimate friend, is admitted: for it is not safe to trust any body with so dangerous a secret, which it is most likely will not always be concealed; but, as it is certainly known to God, so will be carried, by some undiscerned means or other, with such swiftness to the prince's ears, as if the bird that sat in the window, or passed by when the words were spoken, had flown away immediately with the report of them. See Annot. [*t*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. He seems, in the first words of this chapter, to prosecute what he had said in the last clause of the foregoing; shewing how much good one fool may spoil, by the great mischiefs that ensue one foolish action: whereby a man, otherwise famed for wisdom, utterly loses his reputation. So most interpreters understand the latter part of the verse; which Melancthon, following the Vulgar, interprets quite contrary; that *a little folly*, or rather *folly for a little while, is better than wisdom and glory:* that is, seeming folly, like that of Fabius, who was condemned for his slow proceedings, and thought a cowardly fool, is better than wisdom which makes a glorious show, but doth not conduct things so safely as that captain did.

But this exposition agrees not at all with the similitude whereby Solomon illustrates what he here saith concerning folly, which is that of *dead*, or rather *venomous flies* (for the Hebrew phrase, *flies of death*, may better be translated *deadly*, than *dead* flies); which, though very little animals, yet falling into a pot of precious ointment, spoil it all when they putrefy: and not only take away the delicate scent, but turn it into a filthy noisome stink. For a fly is observed to be both *fœdum* and *fœtidum animalculum;* especially some sort of them, which seem here to be particularly denoted by the word *xebube:* being not merely bred out of filth, and delighting to live in it, but leaving behind them such a humour as is very offensive to the smell, and kills those creatures into whom they thrust their snouts. From whence the god of the Ekronites had his name of Baalzebub; (2 Kings i. 2.) which, if it were given him by his worshippers, signified his power to destroy those venomous flies which infested the inhabitants of that country: if by the Israelites, expressed their contempt of him, as a mean, and a filthy, sordid idol. For, therefore, St. Jerome thinks the prophet Isaiah compares the Egyptians to a *fly*, (vii. 18.) not only because they were a weak people, but *propter sordes idololatriæ, by reason of the sordid filthiness of their idolatry:* which was a great reproach to their famed wisdom; and made them vile, even in the opinion of pagan people.

I cannot here omit the reflection which the Lord Bacon hath made upon these words, (lib. viii. de Augm. Scient. cap. 2. parab. 11.) "That the case of men eminent for virtue, is very hard and miserable; because their errors, though never so small, are by no means pardoned. But as in a pure diamond, of great lustre, the very least speck or smallest cloud strikes the eye, and affects it with a kind of trouble; which in a grosser stone would scarce be observed: so in men of singular abilities, the least infirmities are presently espied, and become the matter of men's discourse, and are perstringed with a heavier censure; which in men of meaner parts or rank would either pass without notice, or easily procure pardon. *Therefore a little folly in a very wise man, a small sin in a very honest man, and a slight indecency of manners in a man of courtly and elegant behaviour, much derogates from their fame and reputation.* So that it would not be the worst course for excellent persons, *if they would mingle some absurdities* (so it may be done without guilt) *with these actions:* that they may maintain a kind of liberty to themselves, and confound the notes and characters of smaller defects."

[*b*] Ver. 2. From hence Solomon takes occasion to represent more largely, how much men suffer by their folly, and what advantages wisdom gives them: and treats of both with respect, not only to men's private, but to the public good. And, first, he shews what a difference there is between a wise man and a fool, in the management of any business. So I have interpreted this verse, which may be also thus paraphrased, *A wise man always takes honest courses; but a fool turns into by-ways.* Thus Greg. Thaumaturgus glosses; *A wise man is his own leader and conducter to the best things; but a fool inclines to the wrong side, nor will his folly ever lead him to any thing that is excellent.* Which St. Jerome expresses in this manner; *A wise man always thinks of the world to come, which leads to the right hand; but he that is a fool only of the present world, which lies on the left.* And quotes a famous passage of Lactantius (which I find in his Institutions, lib. vi. cap. 2.) concerning the letter Y, unto which the Pythago-

reans resembled the course of human life. In which there is a time, when a youth finds his way cleft, as that letter is, into two parts or ways; and he stands doubting unto which he should incline. If he be so wise as to take the right-hand way, he is happy; if the other, he is miserable. Which sense Grotius follows: *The right hand is the way of virtue; the left, the way of vice.* Unto which we may reduce that of the Chaldee paraphrast, *The heart of the wise inclines to the law of God, which was given from God's right hand; the fool to silver and gold, which are the gifts of the left.*

But if this had been the sense, it would have been more proper to have said, the wise man's heart is on *the right hand;* not on *his* right hand: which is much different; and therefore I have omitted this in the Paraphrase (though I thought good to mention it here), and taken no notice of many other glosses; particularly that of Melancthon's, which seems something nearer to the sense: *The wise man hath power over his affections* (the right hand being the strongest, and the instrument of action in most men), *and can moderate them, as occasion requires: but a fool is under the government of his passions; and is hurried that way, which his anger, ambition, grief, and other blind affections, drive him.*

I will add this, that the meaning may be, *A wise man hath his wisdom always at hand,* to direct him what to do in public or in private business; whether he have to do with friends or enemies; in adversity, as well as in a prosperous estate (his mind being just like the right hand, which we use readily, upon all occasions, for all manner of actions): *but a fool is to seek;* and knows not which way to turn himself, &c. Which is much to the same purpose with what I have said in the Paraphrase.

[c] Ver. 3. And agrees with what follows in this verse; the first words of which signify as much as, *Moreover,* a fool is so silly that he cannot hide it. For though the rest of the diseases of the mind may be covered by artificial discourse, as the blemishes of our bodies are with our garments; only folly cannot be dissembled, but will appear to all, in every motion of him whose weakness it is.

There is another sense of the last words of the verse, besides that in our translation; which I have not neglected: because the words will bear the sense of the Vulgar; *viz. He saith every body is a fool.* Which St. Jerome interprets thus, *He judges all men by himself.* Symmachus thus, *He fancies himself the only wise man.* The LXX. (as St. Jerome observes) seem wide from the sense, who translate it thus: *All that he thinks is very vain.* Maldonate understands it differently from them all, in this manner: *In that wherein he himself offends, he reprehends others.*

[d] Ver. 4. And then Solomon proceeds to give a particular instance of this folly and wisdom; especially in the public state and government. Where it is great folly for a governor to carry himself haughtily and furiously; but if he do, it is no less folly in his people to oppose him with the like passions; and not rather to be patient and peaceable: which is the sense of ver. 4. Which some take for a counsel to governors; others to the subject. They that understand it as counsel to governors, translate it some of these ways; *If the spirit of a governor come upon thee,* that is, if thou art fitted for government, and advanced unto dignity, behave thyself humbly; and administer all things with great lenity: for that is the best way to heal public distempers. Or thus, *If thou art made a prince, discharge this office diligently,* and with vigilance: for if thou art remiss and careless, it will make thee fall into great errors. Or, as some will have it, in this manner, *Thou hast a desire to be in authority, suppress it;* or if it be offered thee, accept not of it: a private life is better; and less subject to the occasions of sin and danger. And some translate it thus, *If thou art in singular favour with the governor, keep thy station notwithstanding; and be not ambitious of preferment,* &c. Which is counsel unto subjects; and by *ruach (spirit)* of the ruler, most do not understand his *favour,* but his *anger:* and then also it may be taken in a different sense from that in our translation (making it still an advice to him that is in authority), that if anger come upon him he should reflect, and consider the station wherein he is; lest this passion make him act indecently, and transport him into great sins.

But the greatest part of interpreters taking the verse to be counsel to a subject, in case he incur the displeasure of his prince, I have followed that sense; which is almost agreeable to the coherence. And I have interpreted that advice, *not to leave his place,* as most do, for not quitting the duty of a subject: but have taken in also the most ingenious interpretation of the Lord Bacon. Who makes this a political advice to courtiers; not to relinquish their place and office, nor to retire from the execution of their charge, as many do when they see their prince angry with them. "Which arises partly out of an *impatience of disgrace;* partly lest they should *make the wound bleed afresh,* by coming into the presence; partly that their prince may see *how sorrowful and humble* they are: which makes them think fit to withdraw themselves from their employments; nay, to resign, perhaps, the offices and dignities themselves into the prince's hands.

"But Solomon disallows this way of cure, as hurtful and prejudicial; and that upon very good grounds. For, first, this course doth *too much publish the disgrace itself:* from whence both enemies and enviers grow more bold to hurt; and friends more timorous to help. Secondly, by this means it comes to pass, that *the wrath of the prince,* which, if it had not been made public, would have died perhaps of itself, *becomes now more fixed:* and having begun to overthrow the man, is carried on to his utter ruin. And lastly, this retiring *savours something of a malignant humour;* that is, fallen out with the times: which heaps the mischief of indignation upon the mischief of suspicion.

"The proper precepts, therefore, for a cure are these: which he thinks are contained in the last words, *Pliant demeanour pacifies great offences.* First, above all things *not to seem insensible, or not so affected as in duty he ought to be; the prince's displeasure;* either through *stupidity,* or a *stubbornness,* and pride of spirit. That is, let his countenance be composed, not to a sullen and contumacious, but to a grave and modest pensiveness; and in all manner of employments let him shew himself less pleasant and cheerful than he was wont to be: which it may be expedient, also, that some friend or other should represent to the prince; and insinuate seasonably, with what sensible grief he is inwardly afflicted. Secondly, *let him carefully avoid all, even the least occasion,* whereby either the thing itself, which was the first cause of the indignation, may be re-

vived: or the prince apprehend a new occasion to be displeased with him again, or, upon any account whatsoever, to chide him before others. Thirdly, let him with all diligence seek, on the other side, all manner of occasions, wherein *his service may be acceptable to his prince;* that both he may shew a prompt and forward affection to redeem his forepast offence; and his prince may understand what a good servant he is likely to lose, if he thus cast him off. Fourthly, let him sagaciously either *lay the fault upon others;* or insinuate, that *it was committed with no ill intention,* in himself; or remonstrate *their malice* who accused him to the king, or aggravated his fault, more than it deserved. To conclude, *let him be diligent and watchful in all things, and intent upon the cure.*"

There is another great man of our own, who seems to take this for an admonition not to be false-hearted, by flinching from our station, when mighty men frown upon us. *In an upright course* (saith Bishop Sanderson, in his sermon upon 1 Cor. vii. 24. sect. 46.) *fear not the face of man, neither leave thy place, though the spirit of a ruler rise up against thee: patience will conjure down again that spirit in time, only if thou keep thyself within thy circle.* But I look upon this, which agrees not with the latter part of this verse, as an accommodation only of these words to his present purpose; and not as intended for the proper sense of them.

[*e*] But of all other follies this is the most mischievous, of which princes themselves are sometimes guilty: in preferring (as it follows, ver. 6, 7.) unworthy men (who are so unfit to govern others, that they cannot govern themselves) to the highest dignities, and perhaps trusts: and at the same time neglecting, if not depressing, men of worth and honour, of noble families, and sometimes of heroical virtue. Which is more provoking, because more pernicious, than the personal displeasure (beforementioned, ver. 4.) which they express towards any private man. For it is an universal grievance, and as if the ruler himself should give order for all the mischief which they do (as some expound that phrase *as an error),* and yet, notwithstanding, it is the wisest course not to be exasperated by it, to make any tumults and seditions; but to be patient and quiet, (ver. 8, 9.) So I have expounded these verses, in connexion one with another: for though there are those who by *ruler* here understand the devil; who thrusts the worst men into the best places (as may be seen in St. Jerome's commentaries); and others understand God, who permits this; yet the whole discourse is still to the same purpose: that senseless persons get into power; being more acceptable many times at court (as Melancthon glosses) than the wise and good. According to the ancient verses,

Ὁ βίος μάλιστα τοῖς πονηροῖς ἥδεται·
Πράττει δ' ἄριστα κόλαξ, ὁ συκοφάντης δεύτερος.

The world takes the greatest pleasure in bad men: the flatterer fares best in the first place; and next him the sycophant and false accuser. In the Roman story there are many instances of men preferred merely for their vices, of others only for money: some of which are collected by Joannes Filesacus, lib. viii. Selectorum, cap. 15.

[*f*] Ver. 6. I mentioned *vices* in the foregoing annotation [*e*] because *folly,* in the holy language, comprehends that, as well as silliness, or incapacity to manage affairs, and mindlessness, negligence, and sloth: which are both denoted in the Hebrew word סכל in this place: where the abstract (as they speak) being put for the concrete, we are to understand idle, ignorant, and senseless men; and that in the highest degree; and, being opposed to the *rich,* they are also supposed to be men of mean extraction, or condition. For which reason the rich also are to be understood, not simply men of estates, or great birth, but of excellent education, noble endowments of mind, and attentive unto business, &c.

[*g*] Ver. 7. The sense of this verse is not different from that of the former; but the same thing is set forth in both, by two illustrations: one taken from their place and dignity; the other from their equipage (as we now speak), wherein they appear upon their advancement. For to *ride* belonged unto great persons; as to go on foot, unto inferiors. And to ride on *horses,* in Solomon's time, was much more stately than to ride on *mules,* which were used by great men in David's time; (2 Sam. xiii. 29. 1 Kings i. 33.) or on *asses,* in former ages, (Judg. x. 4.)

[*h*] Ver. 8. Yet it is senseless to be enraged, by this preferment of senseless and unworthy men, into rebellion, as the wise man here shews by several proverbial sayings. In the application of which to this purpose, I have the approbation of Melancthon; who expounds the last words of ver. 8. and the last of ver. 9. concerning the punishment of those who go about to change the ancient laws, and the form of government. And it is more agreeable to the phrases of *breaking hedges,* and *removing landmarks,* or such-like things, than to apply it unto the mischiefs that princes bring upon themselves and their countries, by such imprudent promotions as are beforementioned: though that be true also, that such disorders give great disgust, and are the occasion of dangerous commotions.

Which commonly are most fatal, notwithstanding, to those that are so foolish as to advise, contrive, and excite them. Who bring that mischief on themselves which they intended should wholly have fallen upon others; as Solomon here shews by two similitudes: one taken from the pits digged for the entrapping *foxes, wolves,* and such-like creatures; or, as others will have it, from those that undermine the walls of towns, and often perish in the mines wherein they themselves have long wrought. Agreeable to that old saying which Aristotle mentions (in his third book of Rhetorics, cap. 9.) out of Democritus Chius, οἴτ' αὐτῷ κακὰ τεύχει ἀνὴρ, ἄλλῳ κακὰ τεύχων. The other, from a breaker of a *hedge,* or *fence,* or *wall,* (for so we translate this word, Numb. xxii. 24.) or any *partition* (so the LXX. there translate it by the word φραγμὸς), whereby men's grounds were separated, and kept in several: in which enterprise he meets with his death's wound from a serpent. Which were wont to *lurk* in rocks (Prov. xxx. 19.) and in holes of the earth, (Isa. xi. 8.) as well as in the bottom of *hedges,* or old *walls* (as the wise man here intimates), and in other dry places where there was no water. (Deut. viii. 15.) There were water-serpents also, (Amos ix. 3.) of which men were in less danger.

[*i*] Ver. 9. There is great variety of judgments concerning the sense of this verse: but that which I have given I am sure is not improper; which, in short, is this: that they who, out of love with novelty, will not let things alone in their place, but be altering and changing, though thereby

they make great rents and distractions; do not only give themselves a great deal of trouble, and disturb the quiet of their own mind, but run the hazard of ruining themselves, together with whole kingdoms and churches. Therefore that saying of Pindar, quoted by Melancthon, should always be in people's minds: "It is easy to disturb a government, but God alone can settle it again."

The phrases are sufficiently explained in the Paraphrase: only I think fit to note, that the word which (following the LXX.) we translate *endangered*, is by Forsterus translated *aspergetur*, that is, hurt by the *shivers* of it.

[*k*] Ver. 10. There is no less variety, but rather greater, in the interpretation of this verse: wherein he seems to return to the commendation of wisdom. And it may still refer to what went immediately before; as I have applied it, in the latter end of my Paraphrase. In which I have not varied from our translation, if, after those words *put to more strength*, these be understood, *but all in vain:* and so the words may be translated out of the Hebrew, *If the iron be blunt, and he* (that cutteth with it) *do not whet the edge, it will overcome all the force he uses:* that is, will not cut as he would have it. And so the meaning of the verse is excellently expressed by the Lord Bacon in his preface to the second book of the Advancement of Learning. "These words (saith he) insinuate, that a wise election of the means doth more efficaciously conduce unto the accomplishment of any enterprise, than any enforcement or accumulation of endeavours." For, as the saying is, "Claudus in via antevertit cursorem extra viam;" *A lame man in the way will outrun a post out of the way.*

But though I take this to be the true sense, yet I shall here mention some others, that the reader may choose which he thinks most congruous. Some take that word *chajalim*, which we translate *strength*, for *forces* or *armies;* and make the sense this: *Where an army is governed by wisdom it prevails, though it be defective in weapons: for wisdom doth more to set things right (i. e.* doth more to make up the want of arms), *than arms can do to get the victory alone.* Others, who translate the former part of the verse to the same sense that I have done, translate the last part thus; *the excellence of industry is wisdom:* that is, wisdom in this excels all other tools; they are blunted by use, but it is sharpened thereby. And therefore they, the more they are used, give them that employ the greater labour; but this, the more it is exercised, gives us the less. Thus Maldonate. Some in this manner, If iron be blunt, it must be sharpened; and so must the sword of justice (when by the negligence of officers it hath lost its edge, and the earth is filled with violence, with thefts, and adulteries, &c.) be resumed and whetted by the magistrate, to the severe punishment of such wickedness.

Melancthon seems to express the sense of the Vulgar: As iron, being blunted, is not sharpened without great labour: so the companion of great diligence is wisdom: or wisdom cannot be attained without great industry. Which others, that follow that translation, express thus more largely: As a knife, or such-like instrument, having lain long rusty, cannot, without much whetting, be sharpened again: so the mind that is grown dull by long sloth and negligence, requires great labour, study, and exercise, to restore it to its former vigour. Which may be applied to government that is decayed, and cannot, without a wonderful diligence and prudence in those that have the management of things, be recovered.

There are those who look upon it only as an admonition what may be done by mere industry and pains-taking, though a man have not much wit, nor be much befriended by others, and yet gets up wonderfully in the world.

[*l*] Ver. 11. In the exposition of this also there is much variety; according to the Hebrew phrase, *master of the tongue* is expounded either of a *mere babbler*, and loose talker; or of a *backbiter* and slanderer. I have taken it in the latter sense; as St. Jerome, in the Vulgar edition, doth. And the former part of the verse may either signify a serpent that is not enchanted, or that cannot be enchanted by any means. For some such sort of serpents there were, as Bochartus observes, (lib. iii. de Sacr. Animal. cap. 6. par. ii.) and as appears out of Jer. viii. 17. and other places of Holy Scripture. Unto which, I think, the backbiter and detractor may be best compared: for nothing will restrain his virulent humour, nor defend one from the mischief which he doth in secret. I have connected this verse also with the precedent matter; as it may be, though we should take the words in the common sense; which is this: That as a serpent will bite if he be not charmed; so will he do mischief that talks much, if he govern not his tongue with great wisdom. Or, as others interpret the latter part of the verse, a man's words, though never so eloquent, (for so the word *lachasch* is used, Isa. iii. 3.) will do no good, to pacify a prince's mind, if he be not charmed at the very first, before he has fixed his anger.

Others take this verse separate from the rest, and understand no more by it than this; that a calumniator is like a serpent, that bites secretly; without so much as giving warning by its hissing. So Melancthon: who truly observes, that calumny is a most grievous pestilence; which rages and destroys whole countries. For it first kindles dissensions; and thence arise confusion of religion, wars, and desolations. Or, according to our translation, *A babbler can no more refrain from blurting out his own or others' secrets, than a serpent, if he be not charmed, can do from biting.* Which may be referred also to the matter foregoing, in this manner: He that gives himself a liberty of talking of every thing, blurts out even the secrets and the vices of princes; whereby he not only makes himself odious, but procures his own destruction.

[*m*] Ver. 12, 13. The three following verses may be also referred to the same matter; and the latter part of this is capable of another sense, than that in our translation; which is this: that *a fool's lips subvert all that a wiser man hath said.* So St. Jerome expounds it. There would be less harm in folly, saith he, if it would be content with its own rustic ignorance: but it affects to contradict the dictates of wisdom, and to affront prudent persons; nay, to supplant and overthrow them; whereby it becomes exceeding wicked.

[*n*] Ver. 14. And it is in vain to hope to amend this; because, as Solomon here observes, a fool thinks himself in this very thing to be wise and learned; that he is able to multiply words, though they be never so confused, without head or foot (as we speak), and he say the same thing over and over again, in a round; as the LXX. seem to

understand the word *holleloth*, madness (in the foregoing verse), which they translate περιφερείαν, as if it were from the Hebrew word, which signifies a *dance*. Melancthon understands these three verses, as if they expressed the difference between wise counsellors or teachers, and such as are foolish, but fancy themselves very wise: though they direct their counsels and instructions merely by their own or others' blind affections. So Mardonius persuaded Xerxes unto his unhappy war; and Pompey had such-like instigators: but they were ignorant men, or considered not *what had been before*. So he expounds this fourteenth verse: *They who by foolish counsel, or pernicious doctrine, undo themselves and others, regard not former examples; nor have any prospect of future judgment.*

[*o*] Ver. 15. He refers all to this verse (where I have put two senses together) unto the same thing. These perverse wise men, saith he, make a great bustle to no purpose; and, endeavouring to reform many things, bring lamentable events upon themselves and others: because they are ignorant of the sense of mankind; and consider not the weight of business; nor discern what is fit to be done. Which is comprehended in these words, *They know not the way to the city, or to the court:* but are like the shepherd, saith he, who, coming to the court, had a looking-glass bestowed on him; in which contemplating himself, he fell into admiration of his own beauty: and thereby grew so insolent, that he was not only thrown out with disgrace, but broke his neck.

[*p*] Ver. 16. From hence Solomon takes occasion to admonish us, that the misery or welfare of a people depends very much upon the king that governs them. Who, if he be a child, must be governed by others; and if they prove bad, as commonly they are, all things go to wreck. This seems to be the sense of this verse; where by a *child* I understand a prince to whom the sceptre falls in his minority: though it may be taken (as Jo. Forsterus expounds) for one that is *rerum imperitus, unskilful in business;* (as in Jer. i. 6, 7. Isa. iii. 4.) and I have not omitted the common interpretation, which understands it of such a weak *prince*, as is wholly governed by his passions, and lets the worst of men govern him. Who, like children, think all is well, if they may but play, and follow their pleasure. Which they take so greedily, that they are drinking when they should be at council; dancing when they should be judging causes. So Jo. Drusius, I remember, expounds *eating in the morning*, in his annotations on Numb. xvi. 5. where he applies that place of Jeremiah, xxi. 12. to illustrate this; and observes, that the *morning* is the time of judgment and counsel; as the *evening* is for mirth or compotations. According to that of Socrates, *In the morning counsel, in the evening conversation.* And that of the Hebrews, "Non judicant in hora ebrietatis;" *They do not sit to judge in the hour of drinking; i. e.* in the evening. Which is so prejudicial to government, that there was a law among the Carthaginians, that no magistrate whatsoever should drink any wine at all, τοῦτον τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν οἷ ἂν ἄρχουσι, *that year in which they bear any office,* &c. as we read in Plato, lib. ii. de Legibus, p. 674. edit. Serrani. And he admirably represents what the mischief of it is, when a mere youth governs, who is not able to undergo so weighty a charge, in the next book, p. 691.

[*q*] Ver. 17. And, on the other side, the felicity of a nation is unspeakable, when it is under the care of a gallant prince; whom he calls *ben chorim*. Which may either signify his descent, or the excellent qualities of his own person: or rather both, one who inherits the virtue of his ancestors. Who, though they should chance to leave him but a *child*, yet entrust him with such wise and faithful persons, that they infuse into him the spirit of his heroical predecessors: which makes the people willingly submit unto him. For, as Plato observes, that parents every where have the power of governing their children: so next to this it is consonant, γενναίους ἀγενῶν ἄρχειν, *that generous persons* (who do not degenerate from the virtues of their noble ancestors) *should govern those that are mean and base,* (lib. iii. de Legibus, p. 690.) Whence the Babylonian princes are called by this name, Isa. xxxvi. 12. where the Chaldee hath *bene herin*, the sons of ingenious and free men; or the sons of heroical persons. For hence comes the name of *Heros:* and thence Bacchus is called by the name of *Liber, i. e.* a prince or nobleman, as Bochartus rightly observes in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 18. And so the LXX. translate *ben chorim* in this place, υἱὸς ἐλευθέρων: which word they elsewhere translate ἔντιμοι, *nobles,* (Nehem. v. 7. vi. 17.) and ἄρχοντες, (Isa. xxxiv. 12.) It is vulgarly derived from the *white garments,* or *robes of fine linen,* wherein such great persons appeared: but it is more likely to be of some foreign original; and may be best translated *illustrious* persons.

[*r*] Ver. 18. I have referred this and the next verse unto the same matter. And this represents, how necessary it is to be very diligent and careful to make up the smallest breaches, and correct the beginning of disorders; by shewing what ruin attends upon supine sloth, remissness, and negligence. Which is expressed in two most significant words; the first *(slothfulness)* implying such a sluggish temper, that a man will move neither hand to any work; the other *(idleness)* such a remissness and listlessness, as there is in a man that is asleep: when his *hands hang down,* (as the phrase is, Heb. xii. 12.) which seems to be the import of *shiphluth* in this place; coming from a word that signifies humble and dejected.

[*s*] Ver. 19. The next verse represents the vast power of money: which therefore a prince should be sure to have at command; because it commands all other things. As he finds, when he is in want of it; and is thereby tempted to squeeze his people unjustly; or to set all things to sale: which is another way of expounding that phrase, *money answers all things.* I cannot omit here to note, that it would not be absurd, if this verse should be connected with ver. 17. to signify the happiness of a nation, whose prince takes care that his people want not provision (*bread* and *wine* in the language of the Hebrews signifying all that is necessary for human life); but especially that the money of the nation, whereby all things are purchased, be not exported.

[*t*] Ver. 20. But whatsoever negligence, or profuseness and waste there be, it should not provoke any wise and good man to speak contemptuously of his sovereign, or of his ministers: if he consider merely how unsafe it is to make such reflections on him. For there are no ears so faithful, no place so secret, as that they may be trusted with such words: *the ears of kings,* according to the old saying, *being as long as their arms.* That is, they can as

easily discover crimes, as punish them: they have spies on purpose every where; or men to ingratiate themselves will turn accusers; or loyal persons may, some way or other, come by the knowledge of it, and think themselves bound to let their sovereign know who are his enemies.

Thus most interpreters and the most learned understand this verse: and therefore I have followed no other interpretation in my Paraphrase. For thus that admirable person, S. Bochartus, glosses upon these words: (Epist. qua respond. ad. iii. quest. p. 37.) The true mind of Solomon is, that kings do not want their προσαγωγέας καὶ κηρυκείους, *emissaries and curious observers;* by whom they learn what is most secret. Which was the reason that Midas was represented by the poets with asses' ears; because he had those that listened and hearkened in all parts of his kingdom: and brought him news of every thing, that was but whispered by his subjects.

And thus St. Jerome: The simple sense is, that we take care we be not overcome by anger and fury, to speak evil of our prince, or detract from him: for he may, some way or other, hear it, contrary to our expectation, and make us suffer for our ungoverned tongue. That is the meaning, saith he, of the last part of the verse; which is an hyperbolical expression, like that in common speech when we say, *The walls that are conscious to what you speak will discover it.* Nay, this very proverbial hyperbole is used in good authors, for a thing very secret, *Unless some bird saw it.* So Aristophanes, in his comedy which hath its name from birds:

Οὐδεὶς εἶδεν τὸν θησαυρὸν τὸν ἐμὸν, πλὴν εἴτις ἂν ὄρνις.

None ever set eye upon my treasure, unless perhaps some bird.

And Suidas cites this verse out of the same poet (which more illustrates the sense I have given of this phrase in the Paraphrase):

Οὐδείς με θεωρεῖ πλὴν ὁ περιπτάμενος ὄρνις.

None sees me, unless the bird that passeth by.

But I am not satisfied whether Solomon had not respect to something else; and intimated that some prophet might make the discovery: as Elisha did of many things spoken in the king's own bedchamber, (2 Kings vi. 9.) The Chaldee paraphrase, by *that which hath wings*, understands the heavenly ministers; and so many of the Hebrews: about which, though they talk many fabulous things, yet the meaning may be, the angels shall, one way or other, bring it to light, and give occasion to the discovery. For, as a great man of our own observes, (Bp. Taylor, lib. iii. Duct. Dub. chap. iii. rule 3. n. 3.) *the government of the other world reaches strangely even unto us;* "and we speak not a word in vain, but, by the Divine providence, it is disposed to purposes that we understand not. And therefore it is not safe to speak evil of *magistrates* in our private houses; lest the angel that attends us order it so, that it pass into publication. But as for the *king* (who is above the *rich* or mighty), *call him not accursed in thy heart:* which being a thing that can only be perceived by God, who is the searcher of the heart; it shews that, as angels take care of the rich, the wise, the mighty, and noble; so kings are the peculiar care of God," &c.

And, indeed, as the same Bochartus adds, it appears from hence, that Solomon doth not deter us from this sin by the mere fear of dangers; for he lays a restraint not only on our words, but on our thoughts: which are known only unto God. And if we may not in thought detract from him, how much less speak a reproachful word of him; or move rebellion against him.

I shall only add two things more, and conclude this chapter with a notable discourse of Martin Luther: first, that some of the Hebrews who take the angels to be here meant, thereby understand the devil: as our Saviour, by the *fowls of the heaven*, understands ὁ πονηρὸς, *the evil one;* (Matt. xiii. 4.) but especially *night-birds*, they say (who may seem here to be meant, where he speaks of the *bed-chamber*), denote the devil and his angels. Whence that proverb among the Arabians, *Speak where there is no night-bird;* that is, where no creature hears.

Secondly, the last words of the verse are capable of this sense (if we distinguish between *bird of the air*, and *that which hath wings:* taking the one for *angels*, and the other for *men;* who minister to kings as angels do to God), that the angels will report our blasphemy in heaven; and some or other will be found to reveal it, and carry the news of it to the king upon the earth. Gregory Neocæsariensis suggests the former part of this: who thus expounds the words, *Swift and winged messengers carry all to the only rich and great King, discharging both a spiritual and rational ministry.*

It will not be unuseful, much less unseasonable, in such an unruly age as this, to let the reader understand how deeply the first reformers of religion laid this precept to heart; by transcribing some of Luther's admonitions, in his annotations on this verse.

"The worse and the more malignant (saith he) the world is, the more studious and laborious Solomon teaches us to be, in the doing our duty. Particularly, in *honouring magistracy;* because it is a Divine ordinance, and the better part of the world: by which God manages all things under the sun. But the ungodly begin their wickedness chiefly in the contempt of magistrates; when they hear how God blames and reproves them in the Holy Scriptures. But it belongs to the Divine office to find fault with magistrates, and to rebuke them. And therefore, though thou hearest it, yet do not imitate it. For thou art not God; nor the ordainer, no, nor the reformer and restorer of the Divine ordinance. But as God reproves them, so thee also, in the Holy Scriptures; that thou mayest do thy duty, and not meddle with what belongs to them. Whereas thou forgetting the beam in thy own eye, beginnest to spy the mote in another man's: correcting thy superiors, by whom thou rather art to be corrected. And if thou shouldest sustain their office, wouldest offend more than they do, and not do so much good as is performed by them. The meaning therefore of Solomon is this: I have spoken much of princes, how they undo the world: but do thou reverence them, notwithstanding that; for they are not a human ordinance, but a Divine. St. Peter, indeed, calls the king a *human creature;* because he is assumed from among men, but his authority is Divine: and though princes be bad, they are to be honoured because of this ordinance of God. Why then wilt thou speak evil of those who are vexed with so many and such great cares and labours for thy peace: if they be good? And if they be bad and foolish, their own impiety is mischief enough to

them, and brings them into sufficient danger. Bear with them then, and compassionate them; rather than rail upon them, and revile them," &c.

Yes, will some answer; but we may say what we please of their ministers. Not so, saith the wise man in this place, *Curse not the rich; i. e.* men in great authority under the king. For (as the same Luther discourses upon the first verse of this chapter), "just as we see flies fall into a pot of excellent ointment, and there dying and corrupting, spoil it all: so when excellent counsel is given in the kingdom, in the senate, in war; behold there comes some mischievous knave or other, and utterly dashes it: so that it hath no effect. But as we are compelled to endure those poisonous flies; so we must be content to suffer these pestilent counsellors."

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

As obedience to governors, and patience under ill government, are the means (he shews in the foregoing chapters) to preserve peace and quietness; which are the great blessings of human life: so in peaceable, quiet, and easy times nothing contributes more to our happy living, than the constant exercise of charity, in works of mercy; which make us beloved of God and man. Upon which, therefore, the wise man here insists largely; in the six first verses of this chapter: and then presses men to it by the consideration, that there is no pleasure like this, while they live; and that as they cannot keep what they have long, but death will rob them of all: so they must give an account of what they have enjoyed; and therefore had best make such an use of it, as will stand them in stead at that time. This I take to be the sum of this chapter.

Ver. 1. *CAST thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.*] Now, having shewn how thou oughtest to behave thyself towards those above thee, look down a little upon those below thee; and believe that nothing is more profitable (though the world think otherwise), as well as obliging, than to be kind and charitable unto all men; but especially to the poor, miserable people, though they be not so good, perhaps, as they ought to be; but will ungratefully forget all thy benefits, and never think of them more; or, at least, are never likely to make thee any return, no more than if thou didst sow thy seed on the sand or in the sea: let not that discourage thee; for when thou thinkest not of it, God will requite thee, either in this world or in the next; nay, there may come a time, when some of those who have been relieved by thee, may do thee service. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.*] Give therefore unto others some part of the good things, which God hath given thee; and give very liberally, and be not weary neither of well-doing; but though there be a great many suitors that solicit thy charity, extend thy bounty to them, rather above than beneath thy ability: for thou knowest not how calamitous the times may shortly be, and then the good thou hast done, will stand thee in greater stead than all the goods thou enjoyest: which perhaps may be taken from thee, and leave thee nothing to do good withal; but make thee an object of other men's charity; which no person hath greater reason to expect, than he who, when he had wherewithal, hath been kind to others in that condition. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall towards the south, or towards the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.*] Look up to the heavens, and imitate the clouds; which are not filled with moisture for themselves; but pour it down freely and plentifully upon the thirsty earth; even upon the barren as well as upon the fertile soil, without any difference: and look upon the earth, and learn from the trees to be fruitful in good works, while thou art alive, for when thou art dead, none can raise thee up again to exercise that charity which now thou neglectest; no more than a tree can be made to bear when it is cut down, but which way soever it falls, whether to a cold or a warmer quarter, there it remains for ever, without so much as leaves. See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.*] And do not put off thy charity until another time; under a pretence that now the times are hard, or thou shalt be better able hereafter, or mayest find fitter objects for it, and do more good with it: for as he that will not sow, till the wind blow from a favourable quarter, may let the seed-time pass over; and he that will not reap, because he is afraid of every cloud that threatens rain, may lose his harvest; so they that will do no good, till the times be just as they would have them, or till they find objects against whom there lies no exception, will never want reasons to excuse their duty, and defer it till they have no opportunity for it. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.*] Trust God for all such things as those, and do not rely upon thy own understanding, which comprehends very little of what is before thee; for instance, whence the wind comes; what makes it blow and cease; how the soul comes into the body and departs out of it; how the body itself is formed in the womb; by what power, and how it goes to work, hardening some part of the matter into bones, and softening others into flesh, &c. And therefore much less art thou able to comprehend the providence of God, who disposeth all things; and know, for instance, whether it will be a dear year or a cheap, whether thou and thy heirs shall live or die; lose or keep an estate; particularly, what strange ways God hath to blast or to bless thy designs; making thy estate dwindle by saving, and grow wonderfully by giving away bountifully: which seems to diminish; but, by means as secret as the growth of a child in the womb, increase and enlarge it. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.*] Let nothing therefore discourage thee from taking all opportunities to give thy alms incessantly; early and late; when thou art young, and when thou art old; when things smile upon thee, and thou art in a declining condition; for thou knowest not, which will hit to do the most

good unto others, and to bring the greatest blessing back upon thyself: or whether all may prove alike beneficial unto both. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 7. *Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.*] Let not love of thy own pleasure make thee regardless what becomes of other men: for though it is true, life is full of delight when we are in a prosperous estate, and we are entertained with great variety of pleasure when we look about us and behold all the good things, the sun shews the bounty of heaven hath provided for us; yet, believe it, there is no satisfaction comparable to that of having done abundance of good with that which he bestows upon us. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 8. *But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity.*] If God therefore should bless a man with a healthful body and a very long life, I do not forbid him to take the comfort of it; but advise him rather (as I have often done), with a mind free from solicitude and carefulness, to enjoy all the innocent pleasures it can afford him: only let them be tempered with these two reflections: first, that as the fairest sun that ever shone, will set, and the night follow it; so the most merry life will have an end, and then we must lie down in our graves longer than we have lived, without the least glimpse of these joys. Secondly, that while we live, nothing which we expect hereafter, can give us more contentment than what we enjoy at present; and will slide away also as fast, and leave us altogether unsatisfied, unless we have done some good with it. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.*] And there is one thing, above all other, which if the most childish youth would consider, and always carry in mind, I might give him full liberty to be as jocund and merry as his frolic age inclines him; to banish melancholy thoughts; and, while he hath the briskest taste of them, to invent all manner of pleasures for his entertainment; denying himself nothing that he desires, and gratifying all his senses: it is this, that he must give a strict account of all his actions unto God; who will deal well with him, if he have kept himself within his bounds, and enjoyed only lawful pleasures, with thankful acknowledgments unto him; but will punish him for all his extravagances and forgetfulness of him, with torments infinitely greater than all his sinful delights. And this, be it known to thee, whosoever thou art that readest this, is a certain truth. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 10. *Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity.*] And therefore, by the thoughts of this, I advise thee, also, to suppress and banish that fierceness, rage, sadness, fretting, and vexation, with all such-like perturbations of mind, unto which, in the heat of thy blood, thou art subject, when any thing crosses thee (suppose when thou art only reproved for thy faults); and let no filthy desires, which then are strong, and would plunge thee in all wickedness, stay with thee: for, if such care as this be not taken to lay restraints upon him, there is nothing more senselessly foolish, rash, inconstant, and froward to ruin itself, than man in his childish youth: when he is in the dawning, as we call it, of his days, and comes first acquainted with the pleasures of this world. See Annot. [*k*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. Charity being the subject of his discourse in the first six verses of this chapter (as was observed in the Argument), he begins with the proper object of it: those who, as our Saviour speaks, Luke xiv. 14. are not likely to recompense us again. Thus this first verse (about which there are various conceits), I think, may be most naturally expounded. And it is a very ancient exposition, as appears by the words of Gregory Thaumaturgus; which are these in English: *It is just to communicate unto others, &c. for, though for the present it may seem to be lost (and thrown away, as we speak), like the bread that is cast upon the water; yet, in process of time, thy love to mankind will appear not to be unprofitable and without fruit.* And, after the same manner, Greg. Nazianzen in aftertimes, (Orat. xix. p. 298.) speaking of the liberality of his father to the poor, saith, he proceeded upon this maxim: that it is much better, for the sake of those who may be worthy, to give to those who are unworthy, than for fear of bestowing our charity upon the unworthy, let worthy people want it. To which that seems, saith he, to belong, which we read in Solomon [*Cast thy bread upon the water*], *Which is not thrown away and quite lost, in the account of him that justly estimates things; but is sent thither where all that we do is laid up; and shall in due season meet us again, though we think not of it.*

And, to strengthen this, it is observed by some, that *waters* in Scripture signify great affliction and misery, (Psal. xviii. 17. lxvi. 12.) And therefore the sense of the proverb is, not of sowing in a fertile ground, by the rivers; or in a soil well watered, from whence men naturally expect a fruitful crop (as some expound it); but of sowing (*i. e.* giving alms) there, from whence we expect no fruit; no more than if we threw the seed in a rapid river; in which it is carried away, nobody knows whither, and seems utterly lost.

And so it may be applied also to ungrateful people; as I have touched in the Paraphrase: and I shall not trouble the reader with other expositions, which may be found in most commentators; only naming this of Maldonate (which agrees well enough with that which I have followed), *Give to the poor, whose miseries are so great that their faces are all wet and besmeared with tears.* And though there be many of them, be not sparing, if thou art able to receive them; for *waters* signify sometime a multitude of people in the Scripture language. But that is the sense of the next verse; and therefore, upon the *face of the waters*, is as much as upon those, *who will be gone presently*, like the waters of a river; and never bring any thing back to us to reward us: if they do, is more than could be expected.

As for the word *bread*, it signifies any benefit whereby the poor may be supported: especially all sorts of food (1 Sam. xiv. 24. where it comprehends *honey*, and every thing that was edible), more particularly that food which is made of corn; (Gen. iii. 19.) and from thence signifies *corn* itself, of which bread is made, (Isa. xxviii. 28.) And so St. Jerome here expounds it, agreeable to what I said above, of sowing seed in the water.

[b] Ver. 2. And as in the first verse he has respect to the *quality* of the persons, unto whom we are to give; so here to the *number* of them, and the quantity of our alms; which is expected, perhaps, by a great multitude. Yet let not that damp it, saith he, out of a fancy that it will undo us, to relieve them all: but, if we be able, let us help them; and though more still come when we have extended our charity according to our utmost ability, let us rather go beyond it (as the apostle saith the Macedonian Christians did, 2 Cor. viii. 3.) than let miserable creatures perish. Thus Greg. Nazianzen seems to understand these words, *seven, yea eight*. Seven is a complete number; eight added to it denotes something above that which we account perfection. His words are these, that *his father gave not only, τοῖς περιττοῖς, out of his superfluity; but τοῖς ἀναγκαίοις, out of his necessaries; according to the prescription of Solomon, Give a portion not only to seven: but if an eighth came, he was not here sparing; but much more ready to give than others are to get*. In short, he means, give *most liberally, ἀφειδῶς*, as Greg. Thaumaturgus here expresses it, *not sparingly*, but *profusely*. I omit other glosses upon the verse, and the criticism which some make upon the word *portion*: which they think, alludes to what was sent from feasts unto the poor, or those that were absent: of which there is no certainty. I will only note, that here again Solomon contradicts the vulgar principle, upon which covetous wretches move; and directs the quite contrary. They think all is lost that is given away in charity: no such matter, saith the Preacher; (ver. 1.) the fruit of it will be found hereafter, beyond what can be imagined. O, saith the covetous man again, I know not what will be hereafter: now I have enough, but in the latter end of my life I may want; and therefore it is best to save whilst I may. No, saith the Preacher; for that very reason, give; because thou knowest not what may be hereafter; when that may be taken away from thee, which now thou wilt not bestow upon needy people, &c.

[c] Ver. 3. In this verse he illustrates both the *duty* and the *reason* of it. The former by the *clouds*, which are a fit emblem of charity: the second, by the *trees*, which can bring forth fruit no longer than they continue joined to their root; from which being separated, they bear no more, nor can be fixed to their root, as the clouds may be filled with water again. So I have interpreted the latter part of this verse: which Grotius understands as if it meant no more than the foregoing: *Do good to men without distinction; like him who, when he cuts down a tree, regards not which way it falls*. I omit other interpretations, and shall only mention Maldonate's gloss upon this verse, which is ingenious enough. He urges us, saith he, to do good while we live, by two reasons: first, from the *profit of it*, because we shall receive more than we give; like the clouds, which receive from the earth but a thin vapour; which they return to it in the most copious showers. The second, from the *impossibility* of being in a capacity to do good when we are dead: for then, like a tree, we must continue as we are, when death seizes us; and never be restored to our former condition again. Corranus alone (as far as I can find) expounds the latter part thus, in his Annotations: *A tree, in what place soever it is planted, there abides, and brings forth fruit: and so ought we to help others by all manner of means; in whatsoever place or time we live*. And he takes *north* and *south*, for all parts of the world. If any think fit to apply this, unto the unalterable condition wherein we must remain in the other world (like a tree cut down, which, if it fall towards the north, cannot change its posture, and turn to the south), they cannot follow a fitter gloss upon the words than this of Luther's: *If the Lord find thee in the south; that is, fruitful and rich in good works, it will be well: but if in the north; that is, barren of good works, it will be ill with thee. Howsoever thou art found, so shalt thou be judged; and so thou shalt likewise receive*.

[d] Ver. 4. And then follows here an admonition to take the first opportunity of doing good; and not to defer it, because now it may seem unseasonable, and we fancy it may do better another time. Which the Lord Bacon extends unto all other things, as well as alms. "There is no greater, or more frequent impediment of action (saith he, in the conclusion of the first chapter of the eighth book of Advancement of Learning), than an over-curious observation of decency; and of that other ceremony attending on it, which is too-scrupulous election of time and opportunity. For Solomon saith excellently, *He that observeth the wind*, &c. We must make opportunity oftener than we find it."

And thus that great prince Xerxes (otherwise not very prudent) speaks very discreetly in Herodotus, lib. vii. *Be not fearful of all things; nor consider every thing minutely: for if in the consideration of business thou wilt weigh every thing alike, thou shalt never be able to do any thing*. And thus Melancthon understands this place, *As events are not in our power*, (which he takes to be the meaning of ver. 3.) *so he that will have certain and circumscribed events* (that is, such and such things come to pass) *before he act, will never attempt any thing*.

And so a great divine of our own expounds it: "If we will suspend our resolution till we can bethink ourselves of something free from all inconveniences; in most of our deliberations we shall never resolve upon any thing at all: God having so tempered things, that every commodity hath its incommodiousness, every conveniency some inconvience attending it; which, many times, all the wit and industry of man are not able to serve." (Bishop Sanderson's Sermon upon 1 Cor. x. 24. p. 245.)

St. Jerome also elegantly accommodates these words to negligent pastors; who will not preach, but when the people are very desirous to hear; and there is a fair gale breathing to favour their design. And gives this advice to us: Do not say, *This is a fit time, that is unprofitable: for we are ignorant what is the way, and what is the will of the Spirit, which dispenseth all things*.

[e] Ver. 5. In this verse he seems to pursue the same metaphor of the wind, which blows uncertainly; and nobody knows whence, nor from what causes. And therefore from our ignorance of that, and indeed of all other things, which we are here conversant withal; of our own soul, for instance (which our translators understand by the word *ruach, spirit*), and of our body, or of that *vis formatrix*, how it goes about its work, to make this body of ours in the womb, which may possibly be meant by *spirit*, (Job xxiii. 4. Psal. civ. 30.) Solomon persuades us not to presume to know, how God intends to order the course of this world, in his overruling providence; and therefore to do our duty, and leave events to him.

[*f*] Ver. 6. Imitating the husbandman (with which metaphor he began this discourse, and now concludes it), who, not knowing which will prosper, sows both early corn and late. So Symmachus understands this verse to be an allusion to those that sow some very forward seed; which perhaps may hit, when that which is sown at the ordinary time doth not: or, perhaps, both may succeed and bring forth fruit, to their great enriching. Others take *morning and evening*, only to signify all times.

[*g*] Ver. 7. I have continued this verse with the foregoing, and supposed (what all interpreters do in the third and fourth verses) that the comparison is imperfect: there being only the πρότασις (as Hermogenes speaks), the proposition of the sentence, and the ἀπόδοσις (that which answers unto it) left to be made by the reader: which I have supplied from the sense of the whole foregoing discourse in this chapter.

Others think a new discourse here begins for the conclusion of the whole book; and that after all he had said of happiness, he advises every one to think of another life, and not expect to find it in this.

Or, as some understand him, his meaning is, *Now you have seen wherein happiness doth not, and wherein it doth consist; therefore do not either imagine there is none at all here in this world, or that it is greater than really it is: but take a middle course, which I have shewn you, and look upon this life as having pleasure in it, but not absolutely perfect; yet such as our condition will permit: begun here, and to be completed in another world.*

[*h*] Ver. 8. The beginning of this verse I have expounded according to the Hebrew, where the words run thus, as St. Jerome himself translates them: *If a man live many years, let him rejoice in all these things*, &c. And the latter part of the verse, I have supposed, contains two motives to moderation in our present enjoyments, and to make us think of doing some good with them, as the highest pleasure of all. Because they will have an end, when we can no longer enjoy them; and because, while we have them, they run away apace, as all that follows will do, and leave us empty and dissatisfied, unless we have made a good use of them: upon which we may reflect, when they are gone, with some pleasure.

[*i*] Ver. 9. To those motives, he here adds the most considerable thing of all: which is expounded two ways by interpreters. Some taking these words as a *permission*, under such restraints as he mentions in the end of the verse; others, as *ironically* and *sarcastically* (as the Greek phrase is) spoken, by way of mockage and bitter scoff. The two first phrases (*rejoice*, and *let thy heart cheer thee*) incline to the former way, being commonly used in a good sense: the two last (*walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thy eyes*) unto the other way, being commonly used in a bad. Therefore the scope of the place, and the coherence, must determine it. And as the LXX. and St. Jerome go the first way, so it agrees best, in my opinion, with what went before; and therefore so I have paraphrased it. And considering that they are two different words in the beginning of the verse, which we translate as if they were the same (*viz. young man* and *youth*), I have not done amiss, I think, but expressed them more significantly by these words, *childish youth*. And so they are distinguished in the last verse; where that word which here we translate *youth*, we more truly translate *childhood*: which yet goes before youth.

[*k*] Ver. 10. Here I have followed the judgment of St. Jerome; who, under *anger* (or *grief*) comprehends all the perturbations of the mind: and under *evil of the flesh*, all the hurtful pleasures of the body. And accordingly I have expounded the whole verse, with respect to the danger youth is in, by the fiery motions of both sorts: the former of which incline men to imitate the wild beasts; the other sink them into the condition of the dullest brutes.

The word we here translate *youth* signifies the *peep of day*; in our language, the *appearing of the morning*: and therefore is to be understood of our entrance upon the most pleasant time of our life. Which, as well as *childhood*, is but *vanity*; that is, presently vanishes (as some will have it), and will be soon gone: or rather, childhood and youth, signifying all that is done in that age of our life: the meaning is, it is an age of great levity, folly, and indiscretion, &c.

And, therefore, as Luther observes, the great care of mankind should be to season *youth* with right opinions and a good sense of things; and then it is not to be denied all pleasures, of which it is very desirous; much less shut up from the very sight of them, for it abhors solitude. And this is to begin at the wrong end of education; which must be applied first to the mind, not to the body: and when the mind is well tinctured, the body will be easily governed. That is, neither follow filthy pleasures, nor be carried away with furious passions, &c. the benefit of which will be unspeakable: for they that live pleasantly and quietly in youth, are likely to arrive at and enjoy a comfortable old age.

Some begin the twelfth chapter at this verse, and others begin it with the foregoing: but I have followed our translation, and the most interpreters.

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

He continues his advice to young men (begun in the two last verses of the foregoing chapter), wishing them to season their minds with such an early sense of God, and of their obligations to him, that it might govern them in all their ways; and be a comfort to them in old age, which (by a long description of it) he shews will be a melancholy time at best. After which discourse, he concludes the book, with a brief sum of the scope and design of it; inserting something concerning the author, which might dispose the reader to attend the more heedfully, unto the conclusion of the whole matter.

Ver. 1. *REMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.*] The best counsel, therefore, that I can give every man is this, That he would awaken, and preserve in mind perpetually, an awful sense of God; unto whom he is so deeply indebted, that he received his very being from him; and, therefore, let him apply himself faithfully and affectionately to his service, in his most vigorous age, as soon as ever he can consider that he is not his own, but God's, who formed him in his mother's womb, took him thence, and brought

him up to be a man: do not defer this weighty business, till thou art sick, or all thy faculties so broken by the infirmities of old age, that though it last several years, yet they shall prove flat and dull, irksome and tedious, to thee: and no pleasure at all left in them, but only the remembrance of a well-spent life; without which, instead of thanking God, thou wilt be apt to do nothing but complain, or groan, under the weight of one evil or other that falls upon thee. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain.*] For what joy can a man have, or what misery can he be without (and therefore what folly is it not to think of God before that time), when the natural heat and vigour are quite spent, and all the powers and faculties of soul and body in such a languishing condition, that he is altogether unfit for the offices of piety; particularly for the acknowledgment of God's benefits, the very remembrance of which is slipped out of his mind, or he hath but a dull perception of them; being no more sensible of the benefit of the sun itself, when it gives the brightest light, than he is of the moon or stars; but the day is as sad, and as full of pains and heaviness to him as the night; and there is no end of them, no intermission: but they succeed one another, as the clouds do in a rainy season, when one is no sooner emptied, but another is gathered, and ready to discharge itself in showers. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened.*] Is this a proper time to be allotted to the service of God, when a man cannot serve himself? his hands being struck with a palsy, and made unable either to feed or defend his body; his feet bending under the weight of it, having lost their power to support him; his teeth likewise so rotten, or worn away, or fallen out, that they cannot chew his meat; and the sight of his eyes, which were wont to shew him things at a great distance, now so failing him, that he cannot know one man from another, though they stand hard by him: See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low; and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird; and all the daughters of music shall be brought low.*] Is this the time to gain acceptance with God, when he is despised by men; and excluded the public assemblies, because his voice is so low, that nobody can hear him? Nay, his lips look as if they were closed, and fall so inward, that he can but mumble; by reason of the loss of his teeth, the weakness of his lungs, and the defect of other instruments of speech: nor can he recruit himself as he was wont by rest; for sound sleep departs from his eyes, and he awakes early as the birds, but is not pleased at all with their songs: his hearing being so dull and flat, that he is not moved by the best music in the world; though he listen and incline his ears unto it with never so much diligence. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond-tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail; because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.*] For joy and all such pleasant passions being fled away, melancholy fear alone remains; which makes him scarce dare to tread in the highway, much less (his head is so giddy) to go up a pair of stairs; nay, he thinks himself unsafe in the strongest fortress: such is the feebleness of old age, which looks venerably by its gray hairs, but they are an early sign of approaching death, and are made contemptible by his crumpled shoulders, hips, and back: which, as they are of themselves a sufficient load, so are relieved and supported by no bodily pleasures, the very desires of which now fail him: for there is but a very short step between him and his grave; unto which if he be carried with the usual solemnities, it is all his friends can do for him. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.*] Remember therefore thy Creator, while the noble faculties of sense and motion remain entire, and strong and lively; for the time will come (and that will be very unfit for this, or indeed any other business) when they will be totally disabled: the nerves, for instance, will shrink up and be dispirited; the brain itself, and all those precious vessels wherein it is contained, be of no use at all unto thee: for the very fountain of life, the heart, will fail, and the veins and arteries no longer carry the blood round the body; but the motion will cease, by the decay of that power, which now thrusts it forward in a continual circulation. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 7. *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*] And then what remains, but that the soul and body being parted, they go to their several original? The body, though now so fair a fabric, to the earth out of which it was taken (according to that ancient doom passed upon it, *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return*); but the soul unto God, to be judged by him, according to what it hath done in the body since he sent it thither. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 8. *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is vanity.*] And if this be the conclusion of all our labours, I have reason to conclude this book as I began it; and listen, I beseech you again, to him who proclaims nothing to you but what he hath proved in this discourse; that there is no solid satisfaction to be found in any thing here below, where all things are both full of care and trouble, as well as uncertain and perishing: and therefore it is the height of folly to take great thought for this present life, and to lay up nothing for the life to come. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.*] Perhaps you may still think otherwise; and therefore, I have this now to add (and so shall sum up all I have said), that I am as likely to judge aright as another man; being endued with wisdom from above, by an extraordinary gift of God, (1 Kings iii. 12. iv. 30, &c.) whose goodness also I have imitated, in communicating my knowledge freely unto others: nay (knowing that by sloth or envy the greatest wisdom may be lost), the more I understood, the more diligent I was in informing others; nor did Divine illuminations make me either neglect my own studies, or other men's inventions, but I listened unto all from whom I might hope to learn any thing; and both weighed what they said, and also made an exact search into things myself: of

which, that not only the present age, but posterity also, might reap the benefit, I have gathered together, and aptly disposed and fitted to all capacities, abundance of excellent pithy sentences for instruction in wisdom and virtue, (1 Kings iv. 32.) See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 10. *The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.*] Thus I, that preach these things, have employed my pains, in seeking (with no less diligence than covetous men do for money) both the most pleasant, and the most useful, and most certain knowledge: and having found what I sought, I may safely affirm, that nothing is said by me but what ought to be most acceptable, being apt to give the greatest contentment and delight: nothing written by me, but what I found in the Divine writings, or is so exactly agreeable thereunto, that it is a straight and faithful rule of life: there is nothing frivolous or doubtful in them; but they contain the most solid wisdom, as sure and true as truth itself. See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 11. *The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.*] And there is the same power in them (as there is wont to be in all the acute sayings of those that are wise and good) to excite and stir up the minds of slothful men to the practice of virtue; that there is in a goad to prick the dull ox forward, to draw the plough: nor do they only sting and move the mind for the present; but are apt to stick as fast in the memory, as nails do when they are driven into a board: and to collect also the thoughts, affections, and resolutions unto one certain end; especially when they are fastened by the skilful hand of those who rule the assemblies of God's people; and are ruled themselves by one and the same supreme Governor, whose Holy Spirit directs them all. See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 12. *And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.*] Therefore, my son (or whosoever thou art that shall read these things, whose happiness I wish as my own), be advised by me, and not only believe these things, but rest contented with such useful knowledge; and do not trouble thyself, either in composing or reading many books: for all that is needful to instruct men how to be happy, may be comprised in a few wise precepts; and if thou extendest thy desires beyond this, thou mayest turn over infinite volumes, which are increasing continually, and serve only to distract thy mind, and tire thy spirits, and impair thy health; but yield little profit, after the expense of a great deal of pains and time. See Annot. [*m*]

Ver. 13. *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter, Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*] Let us draw up all, then, that can be said in this matter, into as small a compass as is possible; if thou wouldest be happy, preserve in thy mind such an awful sense of God, as to have a greater regard to him, both as thy creator and governor, and as thy judge, than to any thing in this world; and dreading his displeasure, not only worship him religiously, but observe all his commandments: for, as unto this all men are bound, so in this consists all their duty, and their whole happiness; and therefore they ought to make this their main business, and employ their best endeavours in it. See Annot. [*n*]

Ver. 14. *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*] As they would with all seriousness, did they but believe and remember what is most certainly true, that, though now the wicked and the good sometimes fare alike, yet there will be a notorious distinction one day made between them; when God (whose knowledge nothing can escape, and out of whose memory nothing can slip) will pass an exact sentence upon every thing we do here in this world, though never so secret and known to none but himself: and then no evil thing, though only designed, and never actually committed, shall go unpunished; and no good thing, though only heartily intended for want of power to accomplish it, shall be unrewarded. See Annot. [*o*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. From the consideration of what he had said in the conclusion of the foregoing chapter, *that youth is attended with folly, and folly attended with destruction* (as Greg. Thaumaturgus excellently explains those words), he begins this with the most weighty lesson: which ought to be perpetually inculcated, and beaten into the mind and memory of young men; *viz.* that they would reflect so far as to consider who gave them their being; and what, upon that account, they owe unto him: who, as he is the sole author of all things that give us any delight; so he is of all the abilities and faculties which make us capable to take pleasure in them: and the sole disposer, likewise, of all opportunities that bring us and those delights together.

All this may well be comprehended in the word *Creator;* (if this place be compared with Isa. xl. 28. xlv. 7. 18. lxv. 17, 18.) which being in the Hebrew a word of the plural number, some from thence draw the mystery of the Holy Trinity, which I cannot certainly say is here intended, because it is very ordinary in the Scripture to put the plural for the singular; especially when God is spoken of. Thus when the Israelites had made the golden calf, they say, *These are thy gods, O Israel,* &c. (so we translate it, Exod. xxxii. 4.) as if there had been more gods than one in that calf. But it should be translated, *This is thy god, O Israel;* as appears by what follows, *which brought thee out of the land of Egypt:* signifying they worshipped in this image him, who had wrought that great deliverance for them. And thus Jonathan there understands it; and Theodoret upon the first book of Kings, quest. 10.

More places, like to this, are observed by Bochartus, (lib. ii. de Animal. Sacr. cap. 34. par. i.) in whom the learned reader may find many such Latin words, that are only of the plural, not singular number. And I will only mention one remarkable, (which he might have added, 1 Sam. xxviii. 9.) where the woman says, she saw gods ascending out of the earth: and Saul thereupon asks her, *What form is he of?* understanding she saw a single person.

But whatever becomes of this, we Christians (to whom this mystery is now plainly revealed) ought, when we read such places as these, to think of the obligations we have unto God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, into whose name we are baptized. And not only to *consider* such things as are abovementioned; but to be *moved* and *affected* with them (for that is here included in

the word *remember*), according unto their weight and importance.

And to do this betime, the first thing we do; because *the days of our youth* are our best and choicest days (as the word in the Hebrew signifies; whence in 2 Sam. vi. 8. where David is said to gather all the *chosen men*, the LXX. hath νεανίαν, the *young men* in Israel), in which we are apt to take the greatest delight in ourselves, or in any thing truly delightful: our spirits being then most fresh, lively, and vigorous. So that the measure of our delight, whether in ourselves or in any thing without us, being then truly taken, it would constrain us unto an equal delight in him, who is the author of both, and unto a correspondent gratulation for them. Whereas, if we defer this *remembrance* till old age come upon us, when life grows a burden, and the wonted delights of it are either irksome or insipid (unpleasant, or without all taste or relish), our thankfulness for them will be but faint; our gratulation worthless; our devotion cold and lumpish: as Dr. Jackson excellently glosses upon these words, (book xi. upon the Creed, chap. 33.) Which he had expressed long before, more briefly, in his treatise of Faith, chap. 8. p. 125. thus: "The inventory of what we have received from God in our creation, should be taken in those days wherein we most delight; because then the characters of his blessings bestowed upon us, and their true worth, are most fresh and sensible in all our faculties: well knowing, that if we defer this survey till old age, in which life itself becomes a burden, our return of thanks for fruition of it, and the unpleasant appurtenances, will be but wearyish." And plainer still in his second book upon God's Attributes, chap. 11. p. 95. "Then the prints of God's creative power are most fresh in our nature; and might transmit a fairer copy, and truer estimate of the Creator's goodness unto old age, than old age can take any," &c. Which I have repeated the oftener, in several forms of speech, in hope that one or other of them may touch the heart of young men, and excite them by frequent reflection upon the present comforts of health and strength, upon the activity of their body, the quickness of their sense and spirit, to engross them deeply in their memory; *before the evil days come.*

So Solomon calls our decrepit old age: both because they are void of all pleasure, as he saith in the following words; and because they are attended likewise with so many inconveniences and miseries, that it is hard to number them. But he gives us some account of them, in his admirable description of decrepit age, (ver. 2—6.) which abundantly confirms that speech of Cicero in his book de Senectute, that old age proves so odious unto most men, "ut onus se Ætna gravius dicant sustinere," *that they complain of a load that lies heavier than Mount Ætna upon them.*

[*b*] Ver. 2. These infirmities he demonstrates to be very great, because decrepit age consists in the universal decay of the whole frame of nature: which I take to be the meaning of the *sun, the light, the moon, and stars*, being darkened. For as, in a body-politic, the extinction or falling down of these signifies, in the prophetical language, the subversion of that frame of government; (as, to omit abundance of other places, may be seen in what Isaiah saith concerning Babylon, xiii. 10. and Ezekiel concerning Egypt, xxxii. 7, 8.) so the darkening of these in the natural body of man, signifies, in my judgment, its total decay and nearness to a dissolution: the tumbling (as we speak) of an old man into his grave; like a ruinous old house which can stand no longer: for so the metaphor is carried on, (ver. 3.)

And then the *return of clouds after the rain*, refers to the dismal condition a man is in at that time: when one trouble treads upon the heels of another; which is no sooner gone, but the like, or a new one, comes in its room. And so the words may be translated, *The clouds return, and after that the rain:* that is, there is a succession of misery, of grief, pain, or weakness, drawing on one another.

There are some who apply the darkening of *sun, moon, and stars*, to the mind of man (as one would think, indeed, he should say something of that; and all the following description belonging wholly to the body, we must find it here or not at all); but still I conceive that he intends only, in general, to signify the failing of the mind in all its faculties and powers; without a respect to some particular distinct faculty in each of these words. But they who think the inward powers are here intended, are not content to rest in such a general meaning; but will have something in particular signified, by every one of them. And then they do but guess, which gives me the liberty to interpose my conjectures also: that by the *sun* may be meant the soul itself; by the *light*, its understanding; by the *moon*, the will; by the *stars*, all the notions in the mind and memory, with all the affections and passions in the will; just as *sun, moon*, and *stars*, in Joseph's dream, signified his *father*, and *mother*, and *brethren*. And so the sense of this verse is, the mind of man grows feeble in all its powers; the understanding dim-sighted; the memory forgetful; the reason weak and childish (giving such a feeble light, that it can neither direct ourselves nor others); the will listless in all its desires, dull about our greatest concerns, wavering and inconstant in all its resolutions, &c.

But I judge it more reasonable, as I said, to rest in the interpretation first mentioned (which I am sure is agreeable to the holy language in other places); that hereby is only represented, in general, the universal decay of the faculties of the upper part of man, his soul. Which sense I have comprehended together with the other in my Paraphrase: and not neglected this, in which others acquiesce, that these words signify *the miseries an old man feels, both night and day.* As for those who hereby understand the dimness of the eyes, it being expressed afterward, (ver. 3.) I have taken notice of their sense: but another there is, which is worth mentioning. For the meaning may be, *there is nothing but darkness, i. e.* a most uncomfortable condition; like that, when the heavens are clouded day and night, (as they were in St. Paul's voyage, Acts xxvii. 20.) and when one cloud hath spent itself in the tempest, another immediately succeeds it.

[*c*] Ver. 3. As in the foregoing verse he gave a general description of the decay of the whole body (and of the internal faculties of the mind together therewith), so here he enters into the particulars. And conceiving the body to be like a house or tabernacle (unto which it is frequently compared, not only in the Scripture, but all other authors), he resembles the shoulders, arms, and hands, to the *keepers of the house:* because by them we defend ourselves from dangers; administer both food and physic; exercise all manner of arts and manufactures (as we call them), as long

as they have any strength remaining in them. Which old age takes away, the nerves, tendons, and ligaments so flagging, that these *keepers* quiver and shake (*tremble* we render it), and grow so useless, that we can no way help ourselves or others with them.

And then he compares the thighs, legs, and feet, to *strong men:* they being the supporters and pillars, as it were, of the whole fabric, which hold it up; till old age quite disables them for this office, and makes the knees *bend* under the burden of the body alone.

The reason of which follows; in that the *grinders fail,* &c. in which metaphor he compares the *teeth* in the jaws, above and below, to the upper and nether millstone. For they, by cutting, breaking, and chewing of the meat, prepare it to be dissolved in the stomach, and turned into nourishment (as the corn is ground between those stones into meal, and so prepared for making bread, and other such-like uses); but in time drop out of their sockets, or are broken, so that they can grind no longer.

And the like decay we find in the sight of the eyes; which he means by *those that look out of the windows.* All those *coats, humours, and nerves,* that make up the eyes: which are set in two *holes* (as the word is), or *hollow places* in the forehead (like the windows in the house), and have a round hole also in the midst of them, called the *pupil* of the eye (like a casement), through which all things are transmitted to the inward sense of seeing. Until the *skins,* and the *humours* also, grow too thick; and the very figure of the eye, as some have observed, be changed, by the dryness of the crystalline humour: and then the house is *darkened.* Aristotle, in his Problems, (sect. 31. quæst. 14.) expresses it thus, in short, οἱ πρεσβύται οὐκ ὀξὺ ὁρῶσι, καὶ γὰρ τῶν γερόντων σκληρύδερμα, &c. *when men grow into years, their sight grows dull; because, in the eyes of old men, the skin is both hard and also rugged, so that their sight is obscured.*

[*d*] Ver. 4. This verse hath a greater difficulty in it, especially in the beginning; *And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low.* But the LXX. suggest an unexceptionable sense of this passage, in my opinion, which is, that *they are shut out of all public meetings, because of the lowness of their voice, which formerly was as loud as a mill.* And there is little reason to doubt, but by *doors* are meant the lips (it being a frequent expression in Scripture), and by the *lowness of the sound of grinding,* the lowness of the voice, from the loss of teeth, or the weakness of respiration; in short, from the defect there is in the organs of speech.

Nor do I see why Maldonate's translation may not be allowed, which is still more simple (and therefore I have taken notice of it in my Paraphrase); *The lips are shut without* (so כשוק may be translated *foris, extrinsecus),* that is, they sink and are compressed; *when the voice grows weak and tremulous, because of those that grind;* that is, by the falling of the teeth. Thus he. But it may more exactly be translated thus, *by the falling low of the voice, of which the teeth are principal instruments.* And the whole, I have sometimes thought, may not incongruously be translated in this manner: *His lips are shut in his mouth* (for the mouth is the *street* or highway into this house of which Solomon is speaking) *by the falling down of the voice of grinding;* i. e. the voice that is made by grinding the air, as it were, between the teeth and the roof of the mouth, &c.

It might be referred *to the eating meat, seldom, because of his bad digestion* (the meat being ground in the stomach as in a mill), if the word *voice* or *sound* would agree to this. Which renders Dr. Smith's interpretation very difficult, in my judgment: who by *doors* understands all the *inlets* and *outlets* of the body; and by *streets,* the open ways and passages in the body; in which the matter of nourishment is conveyed, and passeth, without let or molestation: and by *shutting* these doors, the ceasing from their use: and by *grinding,* the digestions and concoctions in the stomach, bowels, mesentery, glandules, &c. (all which is well enough, though, perhaps, too philosophical): and by the *voice* of these concoctions, the natural symptoms, significative of digestions; all those indications which demonstrate the work of nature is to proceed aright. Which seems to me very far fetched, and too great a straining of the word *voice* or *sound:* however, I have here mentioned it, that they who are pleased with it may follow that interpretation, which is very ingenious.

The next passage in this verse is easier; though it is uncertain whether he mean that the *chirping of the least bird* wakes him; or that he wakes early, when the birds do. For *tzippor* signifies all kind of birds, great and small; and may be interpreted of the *cock,* as well as any other: and the meaning be, *he gets up at the cock-crowing.* This last seems most probable, because, being thick of hearing (as the next passage signifies), it cannot be supposed that the least noise disturbs him. Though I confess the meaning may be, that a *small noise wakes him sooner, than thunder would have done in his young days.*

The daughters of music, if it refer to the parts of the body, I take not to be those organs of it which made music; but which receive it, being made. For the Hebrews call that the *son* of a thing, which is fitted or designed for that of which it is said to be the son. Thus an *arrow* is called *the son of the bow,* or quiver, (Isa. xli. 19. Lam. iii. 13.) and *wheat* called the *son of the thrashing-floor;* (Isa. xxi. 18.) and so the *daughters of music* may be those parts where music is entertained. Yet there is one objection against this, which lies in the word *all:* which cannot properly be applied to the ears; because there are but two of them: and we never say *all the ears,* but *both the ears.* Which makes some think, that hereby we are rather to understand all sorts of music, which are made either by instruments or voice. But to these it may be answered, that the word *all* refers to the several parts of the ear, in which the sound is formed: both the winding channels in the outward part, and the tympanum, and the three cavities, and as many little bones in the inward part, together with the auditory nerve itself. All which are manifestly contrived on purpose to receive sounds: which are born here, and so may be called their *daughters:* which in youth are brisk and sprightly; but are humbled (as the LXX. translate it) and flat in old age.

There is no necessity, I acknowledge, of interpreting this passage thus (though it seem most agreeable to the rest of the description), because it may be translated, *the daughters of a song:* that is, singing-women *are not valued at all* by old men: they account them nothing worth; and would not give, as we say, a farthing for them. Old Barzillai confesses this imperfection, 2 Sam. xix. 35. which place, St. Jerome thinks, may very well explain this.

[e] Ver. 5. And it is attended with a greater, which is the passion of *fear:* unto which old age is very subject, from defect of spirits, weakness of imagination, as well as of bodily organs; which are unable to resist any dangers; which old men also are apt to apprehend greater than they really are. For as their heads turn giddy, if they ascend to any high place, so they tremble, in the plain way; for fear of a stone, a clod, a hole, any unevenness, by the rising or depression of the earth (for so Grotius thinks the words may be expounded, though the ancient interpreters do not favour it, *He is afraid to stumble at the rising or falling of the earth);* or he fears he may be pushed down by others, if he do not fall of himself; in a word, he knows not what he may meet withal, and therefore fears.

Or it may be expounded, as Maldonate takes it, *He never thinks himself safe, though he be in a high fortress.* Or, dreads a high wall, though never so firm, lest it should fall upon him. There are some that expound the first words of this verse thus, *He is afraid of spirits,* and separate souls: of those excellent beings which dwell in the regions above. That is, *he is superstitious;* which I look upon as forced.

The next part of this description, which we translate *almond-tree flourish,* most interpreters take for his *head growing hoary,* or *white,* like the blossoms of the almond-tree. Which though it make an old man look venerable, yet brings the tidings of approaching death: and is as certain an indication of it, as the almond-tree's blossoming is of the spring; or (as others will have it) of its speedy production of fruit: for it flowered, they say, in February, and showed its fruit in March; and thence had the name of *shached* in Hebrew; from its forward blooming, and hasty ripening into fruit. And, to strengthen this interpretation, some have observed that an *almond* was anciently called by the Greeks κάρηνον, that is, *the head:* from some resemblance which that fruit had to it. What that resemblance should be, I do not understand; unless it be in the figure of the brain: which, the skull being removed, appears like the shell of the almond, when the husk, wherein it is enclosed, is peeled away. From thence Herodianus of Alexandria (as I find in Athenæus, lib. ii. cap. 12.) derives the common Greek word Ἀμυγδάλη for an almond; because next to the green rind, ὡσπερεὶ ἀμυχὰς ἔχει πολλὰς, *it hath, as it were, a great many clefts,* and looks as if it were scarified.

I see no apter interpretation than this, unless it be that which I shall mention below (when I have explained the rest of this verse), or we understand it, as St. Jerome saith some did, of the *huckle-bone;* which, by the wasting away of the flesh of the buttocks, appears, nay thrusts out itself; and makes their very sitting or lying down uneasy to them. And I find an Arabic word of this sound, which signifies a kind of boat; and may possibly be the original of the Latin word *scapha.*

And this would agree well with the next words, *the grasshopper shall be a burden;* which seem to be a description of his stooping under the burden of old age; his shoulders, hips, and back, all bunching out; which is a load great enough for him, without any other. In short, *he can scarce bear himself,* as Melancthon expounds it: which Avenarius thinks is a literal translation of the words, the *grasshopper* (or *locust*) *shall burden itself;* that is, saith he, his *gibbous back.* Which is better than their gloss, who made it to signify, he can scarce bear the weight of a grasshopper or locust. The LXX. translate it, *the locust shall be made fat; i. e.* swell, bunch out, or be burdensome: which aptly denotes the *knotting of the joints* (like those of the locust), and the rising up of the vertebræ (or any such thing in the body of man), which make his back resemble that of a locust. And so Jo. Forsterus excellently translates it, "Ut in curvo incedat dorso, sicut cicada;" *that he goes crooked in the back, like a grasshopper.* Luther, also, had this in his mind (though he did not fully explain it) when he thus glossed upon these words: *Such an old man is like a locust: for his bones stick out, and his body is shrunk up; so that he is a mere image of death.*

And then the next signifies no more than this, That the greatest bodily pleasures fail; and the member that serves those pleasures is relaxed and flags. For the word *haavijonah* (which we translate *desire*) signifies either the *fruit* of a shrub, which the LXX. take to be *capers* (though *avjonath* signifies the berries of laurels, myrtles, and, indeed, of all the lesser sort of trees), or that *desire* which it is supposed (according to Avicenna) to excite; or that *knob* in us, which something resembles that fruit.

There is one interpretation of these three last clauses which seems to me not at all constrained, but apt enough (only it doth not make all relate to the parts of the body, as the rest do), which is that of De Dieu; from whom Junius before him did not much differ. It is this, *Though the almond-tree flourish, and the locust be ladened with fat (i. e.* though the pleasures of the spring appear and come on apace, making all things else to swell with joy), *it doth not invigorate his blood, nor make it rise, to stir up his desire,* &c.

The reason is, he is just upon the point of leaving all things here, and going to his *long home.* Which signifies either the place to which all men go (*domum seculi, the house of the whole world,* whither all mankind have ever gone, and must go), or the place from whence he came; as Forsterus expounds *domum seculi sui, his old house,* out of which he first came forth; (thus we translate the word *olam,* Jer. vi. 16.) or that where they must long abide, even till the resurrection of the dead.

For their friends there leave them; and can do nothing more but mourn for them: as it follows here, *the mourners go about the streets.* That is, are preparing for the funeral, ready to accompany the hearse: or, they already bewail him as a dead corpse, rather than a living man: or, when he is dead, can only give him a solemn funeral, and openly bewail him; not only at home, but in the streets. For which purpose they sometimes hired mourning-men and women; who are the *minstrels* we read of, Matt. ix. 23. For Josephus saith (lib. iii. cap. 15. of the Wars of the Jews), that when Joppa was taken, and he reported to be slain, πλειστοὺς μισθοῦσθαι αὐλητὰς, &c. *there were many minstrels hired at Jerusalem,* who began to make lamentations in a doleful tone. But Gierus, in his treatise of the Mourning of the Hebrews, (p. 320.) thinks Solomon doth not here mean the mourning of those that accompanied the corpse to the grave, nor their walking about in mourning apparel; but the sad lamentations which their grief sometimes moved them to make in the very streets: when they were weary with mourning at home, or put thereby into an extravagant passion; like that which the Jews supposed Mary the sister

of Lazarus to fall into, when she rose up hastily and went out of the house, (John xi. 31.)

[*f*] Ver. 6. Now we are come to the most difficult verse of all; in which the wise man describes this house as falling down: that is, enumerates the evils which immediately forego death; of which he would have us think frequently, while the house is in good condition: for those words, *Remember thy Creator*, St. Jerome thinks, are here again to be repeated; *or ever*, that is, before death seize on thee, and pull down this earthly tabernacle, and lay it in the dust.

First, *by loosening the silver cord.* Which some fancy signifies all the *humours of the body;* which are, as it were, *the thread of life;* which the destinies were said to spin out, for a certain time, and then cut off: others understand by it, *the string of the tongue:* and Gasper Sanctius, (upon Cant. vii. 5.) the *urine;* whose stream, he fancies, resembles a silver thread, which is then broken, when it distils by drops, as it frequently doth in old men. But the best of the Hebrew writers by this cord understand the *spinal marrow* (that is, the pith of the backbone); others, the *nerves;* others, the outward *coats* of the nerves, &c. And there is little reason to doubt but the marrow down the back continued from the brain, as it were, in a string or cord, unto the very bottom of it; together with the nerves arising from it; and the filaments, fibres, and tendons, that proceed from them, are the thing here intended. Which Melancthon saw long ago: *the nerves* (saith he) *and ligaments are here meant;* which have literally the power of *cords*, both to unite and tie together, and also draw. But nobody, that I know of, hath explained this so well as our Dr. Smith (in his Γηροκομία Βασιλική), who hath also solved that doubt, why they are expressed in the singular number; because, though there be many of them, yet they are the continuation of one and the same thing (the *fibres* being nothing else but the nerves divided and dispersed; and the *nerves* nothing else but the marrow in like manner separated, as so many arms and branches of the same tree); they are all one in their *original*, the brain; they are all one in their *continuation*, for a long space in the spine; all one in their use, to convey the animal spirits, and to be the instruments of motion.

This cord is called *silver*, because of its colour; being not only white, but also shining bright and resplendent; and that when it is taken out of the body, after death. I omit other reasons.

It is *loosened* (shrunk up, or contracted, or removed, as others translate it) when it is no longer full of spirits: and so the body becomes void of sense and motion, either in part or in whole.

The second step to a dissolution is by breaking *the golden bowl:* and as the former related to the rivulets, as one may say, of sense and motion, so this to the fountain, *viz.* the head, and all contained in it: the membranes, for instance, especially that which the ancients, from the great esteem and reverence they had for it, called *Pia mater.* Which is that part which, deeply insinuating itself into all the anfractuous passages of the brain (as Dr. Smith speaks), and being firmly annexed thereunto, keeps every part thereof in its proper place, and due texture: so that whatsoever is performed within the whole compass of the brain (whether the making animal spirits, their exercise therein, or their distribution therefrom), is principally done by the help of this membrane. Which therefore may be called *gullath;* that part of the head which is the *spring* of all the motion that comes from thence. And so we translate the plural of this word, Josh. xv. 19. and both Forsterus and Avenarius understand the singular here.

And it is called *golden* bowl (like that, Zech. iv. 2, 3. from whence the oil was conveyed by pipes unto the lamps), for such reasons as gave the other the name of *silver* cord. For instance, in respect of the colour, not only because that most precious and deep-coloured liquor of life is abundantly contained in the vessels of this membrane, but chiefly because the membrane itself is somewhat of a yellowish colour, and tends more towards that of gold than any other part whatsoever doth. But especially in respect of its excellency and universal use: for it being the instrument that doth depurate the best of blood, clarifies and exalts the vital spirits, and so prepares them for animality (as they speak), to what should it be likened, but to that most perfect, best concocted, and most exalted mineral of gold?

Now the *breaking* of this bowl is its losing its use; not being able to retain its liquors (as a bowl is useless when it is broken); or, as Dr. Smith explains it, in the extremity of extreme old age, it can no longer continue its continuity; but by reason either of its natural dryness, shrivelling into itself, or of preternatural moisture, imbibing excrementitious humours, till it be overfull; it ofttimes snaps asunder, and so recurs (*i. e.* runs back, as the Hebrew word signifies) into itself; from whence the brain must necessarily subside, and all the part serving unto animal motion be suddenly and irrecoverably dashed in pieces. So Avenarius judiciously translates this passage, *That yellow membrane which contains the brain be trodden down.*

The third step is, the *breaking of the pitcher at the fountain.* Which is variously interpreted; some understanding hereby, the inability of the bladder to retain the urine; others by *fountain* understand the *liver;* and by the *pitcher*, the *bladder of gall;* or the *veins;* which is the most common opinion. But Dr. Smith rather takes it for the *heart:* which is indeed the *fountain of life;* and hath two distinct cavities, the *right* and the *left:* out of which proceed those *veins* and those *arteries* which carry the blood through the whole body, and bring it back again to the heart, in a perpetual circulation.

And if by *pitcher* we understand the veins, which are the *receptacle* of the blood, (and the Hebrew word signifies any *containing vessel*, particularly the widow's *barrel* in which was her meal, 1 Kings xvii. 14. 16. as well as a *barrel of water* in the next chapter, xviii. 33.) then by the *fountain* must be peculiarly understood the *right ventricle* of the heart, which is the original from whence the veins have their rise. For so the Hebrew word signifies, not only a *fountain*, but a *spring;* from which waters bubble up and burst forth (as we translate it, Isa. xxx. 7. xlix. 10.) in a running stream: and therefore is so to be translated here, the *spring* or *original, viz.* of the veins which proceed from thence. Which induced commentators to take the *fountain* here for the liver; which they would not have done, had they understood, as we do now, that the veins do not arise from thence as their first original; but from the right ventricle of the heart. And they are spoken of in the singular

number (as the nerves were before), because they are all of one and the same nature, original, and use.

Now the *breaking* of this pitcher into shivers (as the Hebrew word signifies) is the utter failing of the veins; their ceasing quite from their natural action and use. When they can no longer carry back, nor conveniently convey unto the heart that liquor which they properly contain: but the little blood which remains in the cold body of man near his end is congealed, and stagnates in his veins.

And so I proceed to the last thing, *the wheel broken at the cistern.* Where by the *wheel* some understand the *lungs;* which, by their continual motion, do thrust out the breath from them, and draw it in again to them: resembling the *wheel of a well,* now drawing up the bucket to itself, anon letting it down again into the well. Melancthon, by *cistern* understanding the *stomach* (the word signifying, saith he, a profound cavity), takes the *wheel* for the *guts* adjoining thereunto, which are wrapped about one another in a kind of circular form; and make the *mesentery* look like a wheel. Which Grotius seems also to have had in his mind. But, taking it for granted, that a *wheel,* being an instrument of circulation, is the hieroglyphic of something that goes, and makes a round in us, I think Dr. Smith's conjecture is most probable; that hereby is meant the great artery with all its branches: which is the great instrument of rotation or circulation in the body of man; and so evidently thrusts the blood forward, that we perceive its pulses forcing the blood along its cavity, in the wrists, the temples, and other parts of the body. Without which instrument to compel it, the blood that naturally tends home to the heart would go no farther.

And then the *cistern* from whence this wheel forces the liquor, and conveys it through all the parts, is the *left ventricle of the heart:* to which this great artery is annexed, and from whence it ariseth. For a *cistern* is a vessel made on purpose to receive a due proportion of water, and to keep it till the time of use, and then conveniently to pass it into vessels that are prepared to receive it from thence. And such is the left ventricle of the heart; which in its *diastole,* as they call it, receives the blood that is brought into it from the lungs; and then, keeping it there a little, doth in its *systole* pass due proportions thereof into the great artery, to be dispensed as was said before. And, for this end, there are little valves, or falling doors, placed at the entrance and at the going out of this cistern, which are like cocks, to let in and to let out; and, by their opening or shutting, give convenient passage or stoppage to the liquor, which continually runs that way.

And so the *breaking* or *shaking in pieces* (as Forsterus translates the word) of this wheel, is the ceasing of the pulse; so he in another place translates it, *trodden down,* i. e. *suppressed* by the decay of the instruments of pulsation, which can no longer perform that work. Which being absolutely necessary for the preservation of life, the ceasing of it is death.

[*g*] Ver. 7. And so the *body,* made of a mouldering substance, being no longer a fit habitation for the spirit (and therefore deserted by it), which held the parts of it together, shall crumble again into the earth, out of which it originally came, according to that sentence passed upon Adam in the beginning: *Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,* (Gen. iii. 19.) This body was no better in its first principles: and though now we are very fond of it, as if it were some goodly thing, yet, when the spirit leaves it, it will appear to be indeed but *dust.*

But the *spirit,* the nobler part of man, being of a higher original, shall return to God, who sent it into the body, to be disposed of by him, according to the sentence that he should pass upon it. For the Chaldee paraphrase's explication of the latter part of this verse is very apposite: *It shall return, that it may stand in judgment before God.* For *Elohim* (the word here for *God*), in the Hebrew language, signifies a *judge.* As in the place abovementioned, 1 Sam. xxviii. 9. There is a sentence not much unlike to this, I have observed in Plutarch's Consolatory Discourse to Apollonius upon the death of his son: where he alleges, amongst a great many others, this saying of Epicharmus, Συνεκρίθη καὶ διεκρίθη, καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ὅθεν ἦλθε πάλιν, γᾶ μὲν εἰς γὰν, πνεῦμα δ' ἄνω.

[*h*] Ver. 8. And now having thus demonstrated his first proposition, he elegantly repeats the *exordium,* or entrance of his book, as is here observed by St. Jerome, whose words are so significant, that I cannot but translate them; as an excellent gloss upon this verse: *For, since all the labour of mortal man (of which Solomon hath disputed in this whole book) amounts to this, That the dust returns to its earth, and the soul returns thither from whence it was taken: it is an excess of vanity to labour for this world; and to gather nothing for the future:* where he is to live for ever, and to be judged according to his behaviour here.

This only may be added, that here he enters upon the conclusion of his discourse; and divides it into two parts, as he had done the foregoing book. First, he sums up what he had said in the six first chapters, concerning the *false ways* men take to happiness, in this verse: which he backs by several serious considerations, in those that follow, unto ver. 13. Where, secondly, he sums up what he had said from chap. vii. to this place, concerning the *true way* to happiness; which lies only in a due regard to God and his commandments.

[*i*] Ver. 9. The first word of this verse is variously translated: and the whole verse applied by interpreters, either to confirm what was said before concerning the false methods men take to happiness (as if he had said,—I have done when I have told you, that you may believe me; who am sufficiently able to inform you, and not think to meet with better information, from other men's writings, or from your own experience), or as an introduction to what he intends to say, (ver. 13, 14.) concerning the right method to be happy. Which he prepares the reader to attend unto, and receive into his mind: first, by asserting his own great authority in this verse (who the wiser he was, the more desirous he was both to teach and to learn). And then, the weighty doctrine which he taught, (ver. 10.) and the great usefulness of it; (ver. 11.) the like to which they would find no where else, (ver. 12.) It is not very material which of these ways we take; but I have had respect to both, in my Paraphrase: where I have expressed the sense so fully, that I cannot think fit to enlarge any farther upon this verse. But only note, that Luther, and he alone, I think, expounds the first words thus (not absurdly, nor disagreeing with the Hebrew text): *There remained nothing to the Preacher, but that he was wise,* &c. He understood and taught aright, and took a great deal of pains; which was

a great satisfaction to himself, but he saw little or no success of it in others, who would not be governed by his advice, &c.

[*k*] Ver. 10. This verse runs thus, word for word, in the Hebrew, *The Preacher carefully sought to meet with desirable words; and the writing of uprightness; and the words of truth.* Where *writing* may refer both to what he read in others, whether Divine or human authors; and to what he wrote himself (and so I have expounded it in the Paraphrase), which he commends from three heads, *pleasure*, or delight, *usefulness*, and *certainty*.

Some fancy that Solomon wrote a book called *Catub Jascher (the writing of uprightness)*, or *Jascher dibre emeth (the upright words of truth)*: of which, as there is no certainty, so I see no probable grounds to assert it. Only we know he wrote a great many more books than we have, (1 Kings iv. 32, 33. 2 Chron. xxxv. 4. and see Josephus, lib. viii. Antiq. cap. 2.)

[*l*] Ver. 11. Some connect this with the foregoing verse in this manner, *The Preacher sought to find out the words of the wise*, &c. And so the words run exactly in the Hebrew. But we may take this verse by itself, supplying the word *are*, as we do in our translation; and look upon it as a commendation of these wise words: which doth not in the least alter the sense. I have had respect to both; and comprehended also, in my Paraphrase, two of the interpretations which one difficult phrase is capable of; *viz. masters of the assemblies.*

Which may be translated divers ways, more literally out of the Hebrew than we do; who add the word *by* before them, which is not in the original. For the last words, which we translate *masters of assemblies;* may be attributed to *nails*, in this manner: *As nails fastened, whereby things are joined together (nails* being the instruments of gathering or bringing those things together, which were separate); or thus, retaining the words of our translation, *the masters of assemblies are as fixed nails:* or the *masters of collections*, such judicious authors as make excellent collections of apophthegms and smart sayings, *stick in the mind as nails do in planks.* Or the *principal*, the choice *collections, viz.* of wise men (mentioned in the beginning of the verse), *are as*, &c. or it may, in the same sense, be connected (not with nails, but) with the words following; the *masters*, or *authors, that collect wise and pithy sayings, have their gifts from one and the same shepherd.*

So ungrounded is the fancy of Grotius; who from hence conjectures, that there were several persons appointed by Zerubbabel (whom he takes for this *one pastor)* to collect the sentences of this book, and put them out under the name of Solomon. Who, himself, may rather be thought to be this *one pastor*, or *king:* who employed (if we interpret the words this way) many persons to make collections: of which he afterward made use as he saw cause.

This seems to be certain, that he here gives the reason of this concise and sententious way of writing: because such acute sayings, not only stir up and quicken slothful minds for the present (as a goad stimulates the dull ox to labour), but penetrate deep, and stick fast in the memory; collecting also the thoughts, affections, and resolution, to one certain point or scope, and gathering together a great deal of sense into a few words. As those words, *baale a syppoth, masters of assemblies*, or *authors of collections*, may, I have sometimes thought, be understood. Such a collector was that great man Julius Cæsar, who gathered a book of apophthegms; and shewed by that, he thought it more honourable unto him, if he changed himself, as it were, into *tables* and *codicils*, in which the prudent and grave sayings of others were registered, than to have his own words hallowed like oracles, as some vain princes, corrupted by flattery, have affected. Though divers of his own speeches, as the Lord Bacon observes, (lib. i. de Augm. Scient. cap. 7.) are truly, such as those which Solomon here describes, full of vigour and efficacy; insomuch, that by one word alone he appeased a mutiny in his army.

But, after all that may be said on this subject, since I find not only the Vulgar, but the LXX. making out the sense by adding the word *per* and παρὰ (as we do the word *by* in our translation), before *masters of assemblies;* I have in the Paraphrase followed that interpretation also.

[*m*] Ver. 12. And in this verse have adhered to the same translation, which understands the first words, as if he had said, Beyond these things do not trouble thyself. For so they may be translated exactly, *And what is above, or more than them* (that is, *the words of the wise*, beforementioned), *my son, be warned, or be enlightened:* observe these well, and trouble thyself no farther. Be content with a few good precepts of the wise, and do not involve thyself in many books. For what is necessary may be learnt, without much labour, out of a short book: if men will be wiser than they need, they will but trouble themselves to no purpose. There being no certainty of most things; no satisfaction when we go beyond the known or acknowledged principle and precepts of virtue: but what one man asserts, another confutes; and when we think we have written excellently, another writer starts up and discovers abundance of errors: and so volumes are multiplied without end; and we are led into long disquisitions, without any satisfaction to the mind, but with much weariness to the body, and great loss of precious time; which had better be spent in digesting and practising such short, useful, and necessary instructions as these.

He doth not absolutely condemn many books, for there are not a few of the Divine writings, and about the same thing: but books about needless things, and that dilate too much upon things necessary; rather tiring, than instructing. And he condemns the levity of those that are always reading, but never meditating: running over such a book as this presently, and then going to another not so profitable, and never returning to this again.

So I take it in short, *Content thyself with this book, and such-like; and do not turn over many authors, to learn how to be happy.* For goodness and truth are included in certain bounds; but wickedness and lies, *sine fine sunt, are without end*, as St. Jerome here notes. Who observes also, that, perhaps, he adviseth us to study brevity; and to mind the sense more than the words: directly contrary to the philosophers and doctors of the world, who, to assert their false opinions, used abundance and great variety of words; but the Divine Scripture, *brevi circulo coarctata est, is confined to a small circle;* and as much contracted in words, as it is dilated in sense.

The Hebrew word *bahag*, which we translate *study*, Aben Ezra says, in the neighbouring languages, signifies *reading;* and so we translate it in the margin.

[*n*] Ver. 13. To teach us to contract our labours into as small a compass as we can, he sums up, in a few words, the sense of his whole discourse in this book; which he calls *the conclusion or end of the matter;* of all that can be said on this subject: the whole sense of the sermon succinctly delivered; unto which, therefore, every one should confine his endeavours. It is this,—to work his soul unto such a due regard of the Divine Majesty (standing in awe of him as his Lord, overseer, and judge), that he take care to observe all his commandments: without which all religion is vain and fruitless.

And these two things (the *fear of God,* or devotion and *obedience)* he commends from two arguments: the first of which is in this verse; that they are things which concern all mankind, one as well as another; of which if they be careful, they have done enough to make themselves immortally happy.

For those words, *this is the whole,* or *the all of man,* may be expounded four several ways: either, this is *all the duty of man,* or the *duty of all men;* or the *whole happiness of all men;* or *their whole business;* unto which therefore they should devote their *whole selves;* that is, all their strength. For, according as St. Jerome understands it, *to this man was born: That he understanding God is his Creator should worship him with fear and honour, and observance of his commands.*

And the *fear of God* being implanted in our minds, we shall not fail to worship him, and call upon him, and expect all good things from him, and give him thanks for them: and, as the best expression of our thankfulness, *keep his commandments,* and be obedient to all his precepts: both in subduing our sinful appetites and passions, and in exercising charity towards our neighbours. Which will make us true in word and deed; faithful in all our contracts; liberal to the poor; observant of our governors; in short, make us observe all the directions of this book, in order to our happiness.

[*o*] Ver. 14. Here is the second argument, why we should seriously intend these things; because the Lord and Judge of the world will one day call us to an account for what we do here; and pass an impartial sentence upon every action of our life, even *against every secret* (as some expound these words, *al col alam),* or upon all secret as well as open actions. Which are all known to him, though now he seem to take no notice of them; and shall then not only be brought to light, but with an apparent distinction between good and evil: the difference of which shall be certainly and notoriously manifested; by the severe punishment of the one, and the bountiful remuneration of the other.

I will imitate therefore (saith Melancthon) the example of Solomon; and, in the conclusion, recite the sum of this book. "He intended to assert Divine providence, and to refute the objections against it: which are these; There are great confusions in human life; a vast multitude of ungodly men, and but few that acknowledge and fear God: and, which is worse, the wicked flourish in honour and riches; but the pious are afflicted, and ofttimes killed by the worst of men, &c. therefore all things seem to be carried by chance. Unto which Solomon answers; Though, for the most part, such be the confusion of things, yet be thou ruled by God's word, and hold the opinion of his providence with a firm faith. Do not fall from God, because of these scandals; nor cast away his fear, or thy confidence in him, nor desert thy vocation: but oppose these two things to these confusions; There will come a judgment, when God will take away these confusions and make an exact distinction: for the wicked shall be thrown into everlasting punishment; but it shall be well for ever with the righteous. And in this life, also, God moderates these confusions: for he punishes heinous wickedness, supports government, preserves governors, and order, and polities in the world. Nay, this is a testimony of God's presence, that when the infirmity of human nature is so great, and so many are no better than mad and furious, yet God preserves his church." And, I may add, we have such good books as these for our direction into truth, and encouragement in piety.

THE

SONG OF SOLOMON.

WITH ANNOTATIONS.

PREFACE.

I. THAT this book was composed by Solomon is no more doubted, than that he was the author of the two foregoing.

And that it was always looked upon as a holy book, treating of some spiritual and Divine matter, appears from its being placed among the rest of that kind. Nor hath it been doubted of by any considerable number of men, either among Jews or Christians, but only by a few singular persons; who ought (as Theodoret speaks in his preface to this book) to have looked upon those blessed fathers, who, placing this Song among the Divine writings, took it to be fit for the uses of the church, as men of greater judgment, and more spiritual than themselves. And they ought likewise to have considered (as he adds) that we have, in effect, the testimony of the Holy Ghost itself, for its Divine authority: Ezra, a man excelling in virtue and full of the Holy Spirit, having thought this worthy of a room among those sacred volumes, which he gathered together after their return from the captivity of Babylon.

And, accordingly, a great many holy men have illustrated it (as he farther notes) with their commentaries and interpretations, or have adorned their writings with its sentences: such as Eusebius, Origen, Cyprian, (who wore the crown of martyrdom), καὶ οἱ τούτων παλαιότεροι καὶ τοῦ Ἀποστόλων πλησιέστεροι, *and others that were more ancient than these, and nearer to the times of the apostles.*

It is unnecessary to mention those that followed after in future times, who all took this for a spiritual book: let us only consider, whether, if these things being so, it be reasonable for us to despise so many and such great persons, nay, the Holy Spirit itself, and to follow our own private opinions; nor hearkening to him that said, "The thoughts of mortal man are vain, and our devices are but uncertain:" (Wisd. ix. 14.) or rather of St. Paul, (Rom. i. 21.) "They became vain in their imagination, and their foolish heart was darkened."

II. Nor doth it seem hard, either to find out what that spiritual matter is, of which the wise man here treats (especially, since all Christian writers have from the beginning applied this Song to Christ and the church), or to give an account of the rise and original of such sublime contemplations, which I take to be this.

The great prophet David having plainly foretold that a far more glorious King than his son Solomon should one day arise, (as we read in the song he made at his marriage, Psal. xlv.) and likewise more expressly prophesied of his Divinity, royal majesty, priesthood, &c. (Psal. cx.) and again resumed this argument, just before his death, when he caused his son Solomon to be crowned and to sit upon his throne, (Psal. lxxii.) it stirred up the longing desires of Solomon after the coming of this most illustrious Prince; and made him study to have, at least, as clear a sight of him, as was possible to be attained afar off. And that he might stir up the same desire in the whole nation, after his appearing, he cast his meditations on this subject into a Song, in the form of a pastoral eclogue: in which several persons being introduced, who speak their parts, it may be called a *dramatic poem.* And so it is styled by St. Greg. Nazianzen, in his thirty-first oration; where he quotes a passage, ἐκ τοῦ νυμφικοῦ δράματός τε καὶ ἄσματος, (as his words are, p. 503. edit. Paris.) *out of this bridal interlude and song.* For a *drama,* as the Greeks teach us, consists in the change of persons, some of which enter; others come to them; others withdraw; till the whole work be completed, by this shifting and alteration of the persons.

Now the persons which compose this Song, are the *bridegroom,* the *bride,* the *virgins* attending on her, and the *youths* attending on him; to whom some add the *sister* of the spouse mentioned chap. viii.; and the *watchmen* and *daughters* of Jerusalem, who are introduced in their turns. For example, first, the bride (and her companions) comes in and saith, *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth,* &c. Then the bridegroom appears, and saith, (ver. 8.) *If thou knowest not, O thou fairest,* &c. After which he seems to withdraw himself, leaving the bride and her companions alone upon the stage, (while he sits at his repast, ver. 12.) who thus speak to her, *We will make thee borders of gold,* &c. And then she speaks again, ver. 13. and he returns and speaks, ver. 15.

How many parts there are in this *drama* is not agreed. Some make ten; others make but seven *colloquies,* or interlocutory passages, in this sacred *dialogue,* as they call it. About which I do not think fit to dispute; but shall take notice of as many as I can observe, in the Argument or Annotations upon each chapter.

As for the phrase, it is wholly allegorical, in expressions borrowed chiefly from the fields, and woods, and gardens: as I shall shew in their proper places, when we meet with them. And such were the fittest that could be found, supposing he would use poetical words, to set forth the ardent desire he had, and would excite in others (as I said before)

to have a sight of that great *Shepherd* of the sheep, who would make all the world happy.

III. And none need wonder that he speaks *wholly* of this glorious King: for so doth his father David in the hundred and fifth Psalm, which can be applied to no other person whatsoever; and so doth the prophet Isaiah in aftertimes, in his fifty-third chapter. Which, though some have endeavoured to accommodate first to another person, yet they have failed in their attempt; and never could find any in whom it was so literally fulfilled as in our blessed Saviour. Who alone was there intended; as he seems to me to be here also in this present Song of Solomon's.

Where it need not seem strange neither to any one, that he is compared to a *bridegroom*, and the church to a *bride*, who doth but reflect upon the forty-fifth Psalm; and observe how Solomon doth only follow the metaphor, wherein his father David had represented this mystery: and observe withal, that it is the common language of the prophets, who compare Jerusalem and Zion (under which name is comprehended the whole church of the Jews) to a virgin, called frequently *the virgin-daughter of Zion*, &c. whom God had espoused unto himself.

IV. But, for the fuller explication of this, it may be fit to note, that the profoundest of the Hebrew divines, whom they now call *cabalists*, having such a notion as this among them, that *sensible things are but an imitation of things above*, conceived from thence, that there was (for instance) an original pattern of that love and union, which is between a man and his wife here in this world. This they expressed by the kindness of *Tipheret* to *Malcuth:* which are the names they give unto the invisible bridegroom and bride in the upper world. And this *Tipheret (i. e. beauty* or *ornament)* they call also by the name of the *Adam on high*, and the *Great Adam*, in opposition to the *terrestrial* or *little Adam* here below. As *Malcuth (i. e. kingdom)* they call also by the name of *Cheneseth Israel* (i. e. *congregation of Israel);* who is united, they say, to that *celestial* Adam as Eve was to the *terrestrial*. Which heavenly Adam or *Tipheret* they call likewise the *Sun*, and *Malcuth*, the *Moon:* and make the former an active principle, the latter a passive; or, as their phrase is, *Tipheret* is but the masculine power which influences *Malcuth;* who is but the recipient of those influences. So that, in sum, they seem to say the same that the apostle St. Paul doth, when he tells us, that *marriage is a great mystery; but he speaks concerning Christ and his church*, (Ephes. v. 32.) For the marriage of *Tipheret* and *Malcuth* (or *Cheneseth Israel)* is the marriage of Christ, the Lord from heaven, with his spouse the church, which is the whole congregation of Christian people. Which was represented in the conjunction of Adam and Eve, and of all other men and women descended from them, when they are joined together in holy matrimony; insomuch, that those divines, called *cabalists*, have formed this maxim about this matter; that *wheresoever in the Holy Scripture we read the love of man and wife, there is mystically designed the conjunction of* Tipheret *and* Cheneseth Israel.

Now this notion (of which the learned Dr. Cudworth hath long ago wrote a peculiar discourse) was so ancient among those doctors, that they had it before the times of Christ; it gives the plainest account, why John the Baptist uses the word *Christ* and *bridegroom*, as if they were in a manner synonymous, and of the same import; (John iii. 28, 29.) and why Christ himself compares the whole business of his heavenly kingdom (called by the people in St. Mark xi. 10. *the kingdom of our father David)* to a *marriage*, or *marriage-feast*, which a king made for his son, (Matt. xxii. 2, &c.)

V. And this is one argument of its being a very ancient notion among them, that idolatry and false worship in the church is constantly expressed in the Scriptures under the name of spiritual *fornication*, and *going a whoring* from God: whom therefore the church was to look upon as her husband. And so he taught the children of Israel to do, by using this form of speech throughout the whole prophetical writings, (Isa. liv. 5. lxii. 4, 5. Jer. iii. 4. 20. xxxi. 32. Hos. ii. 2. 7. and many other places.) Nay, the very words of the apostle to the Ephesians, seem to suppose some such mystical sense, which was current in that nation, of those words of Adam the first man, (Gen. ii. 23, 24.) "This now is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, &c. therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." Which the apostle takes, as if they had been spoken of Christ, and his love to his church, as any one may see that will read Eph. v. 29—32. For these are not, in the account of the cabalists, two distinct senses: but one and the same sense, different only as the matter and the form of the same thing: which form, say they, lies latent under the matter, whereby we are led unto it, as the main thing comprehended in it.

Thus Archangelus Burgonovensis speaks, in his preface to the explication of some select aphorisms of those divines, *gathered by Mirandula*, who observes also (p. 91. of his book), that as immediately after the fabric of the world was reared, matrimony followed, as the emblem of God's great love to those that should believe on him; so this world shall end in the sacrament of marriage: St. John shutting up all the mysteries of the Holy Scripture in the Revelation, with these words, "Let us be glad and rejoice: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready," (Rev. xix. 7.) Which if it be the voice of the heavenly host, agrees with what the Hebrew doctors say, (in Pirke Eliezer, cap. 12.) of the marriage of Adam and Eve: that the *angels rejoiced at it, and with music and dancing attended upon the wedding.*

VI. All which things put together shew how naturally the thoughts of David were led, at Solomon's marriage, to sing concerning Christ and his church: and the thoughts of Solomon afterward to sing more largely of the wonderful love of the same heavenly bridegroom, in this *Song of songs*; that is, most excellent song. For so it may be truly called, both in regard of its subject-matter, and in regard of the manner of its composure: this parabolical way of writing, by figures and similitudes, being in many regards (as the forenamed cabalistical doctors discourse) the best of all others. First, because it is taken from things sensible, by which both learned men and ignorant can be instructed. Secondly, because such narrations very easily imprint themselves on the mind: A parable (say they) being instead of an artificial memory. And, thirdly, because all our knowledge hath its rise from sense, and therefore symbolizes much with sensible parables. And, fourthly, it is very delightful to contemplate how the parable agrees with the spiritual things, which are thereby figured. Unto

which (saith that Archangelus beforementioned) the doctrine of St. Paul is conformable, when he saith, *the invisible things of God from the creation of the world, are seen by those that are made.* And, lastly, what is there more evident, than that all visible things declare God to be love? whose praise Solomon celebrates in this Song. For by love (as the same author discourses of Boetius and others) the heavens are joined together, and the elements agree in composition, animals cohabit, cities are preserved, and all kingdoms supported and replenished. Which made Pherecydes Syrus say, that God was transformed into love, before he made the world. And because God created all things in love, he also embraces all things with the same love; and would have us to love; which is the sum of all that he exacts of us: that, being knit together by mutual love, we may in conclusion be united with him in love; that so all things may be one, as they were in the beginning.

Of this love, Solomon, say they, treats throughout this whole Song; nay, it is the subject of all the book of God. According to that of David, (Psal. lxii. 11, 12.) *God hath spoken once, viz.* to the whole people of Israel, when he gave the law at Mount Sinai; yea, *twice have I heard this,* from the prophets, that is, who say the same with the law, *that power belongeth to God, also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.* Which they expound in this manner, Thou canst send good or evil influences upon us; by the union of *Tipheret* and *Malcuth,* a good influence; by their separation, a bad. For when Israel doth well, then it receives good influences from above; that is, from *Tipheret:* for *such is the order* (says one of their aphorisms) *which is constituted in the archetypal world, that all good influences proceed from Tipheret.* And then these two principles are animated, when we observe God's precepts; but when we transgress the law, the one is separated from the other; that is, *Tipheret* doth not send influences upon *Malcuth* for our good; but another principle interposes, and sends anxiety and trouble. Now love is the union of these two principles: the love of man and wife signifying in Scripture the union of Israel and *Tipheret:* which union Hosea speaks of, when he saith, (ii. 19, 20.) "I will betroth me unto thee for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord."

Thus that sort of divines discourse; very agreeable to the sense of this book. Which represents the heavenly bridegroom, appearing in the greatest beauty; and sometimes in most familiar communication with his spouse, the church; but at other times withdrawing his glorious presence, and absenting himself from her. Who is represented, therefore, after the same manner, like to the moon (unto which they compare *Malcuth);* sometimes full of his heavenly light, sometimes illuminated only in part, and sometimes obscure and dark. Which will appear more at large, in the explication of the several parts of this book.

VII. The time of whose writing cannot be certainly known; but it is very probable, that it was not long after Solomon was seated on his throne: and had both the prophecy of his father David fresh in his mind; and was also strongly affected with the wonderful love of God to himself. He being filled then, likewise, with incomparable wisdom from above: such wisdom, that it brought the queen of Sheba to discourse with him, having "heard the fame of Solomon, because of the name of the Lord;" (1 Kings x. 1.) that is, as some of the Hebrews expound it, because she understood that the wisdom which was in him, was not merely natural, like that of the philosophers and eastern sages, but Divine and heavenly, by a special inspiration from above; whereby he was enabled to answer the hardest questions.

At that time, when these celestial gifts were newly poured into him (which the cabalists call the *unction of the Holy Ghost;* or the *sacred name,* of which Solomon speaks, say they, when he says, in the beginning of this Song, *Thy name is as an ointment poured out),* we may well conceive his mind shined in its greatest purity and clearness: and enjoying the sweetest and most perfect peace and tranquillity, was the fitter for such Divine meditations as these, which are the subject of this holy book. The sense of which seems to be expressed in 2 Cor. xi. 2. Where St. Paul (who was not *rude in knowledge,* ver. 6. but mightily versed, as that word *knowledge* signifies, in the mysteries of the Old Testament) puts the church of Corinth in mind of his solicitous concern for them in these words, *I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin unto Christ.* For of that *one husband* alone, and of that *pure virgin,* and no other: and of their *espousals, love,* and *union,* is this incomparable Song of Solomon's to be understood and expounded.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

There are four principal parts of this chapter: first, the bride comes in expressing the desire of Israel, nay of all nations, to see the Messiah. Who, next of all, is brought in (ver. 8.) testifying his love to all those that seek after him. And then (all her attendants having, with one voice, made a noble resolution, not to be unworthy of such love, ver. 11.) she speaks again, and declares her marvellous satisfaction in the knowledge and love of him, (ver. 12.) Which is the third part. And, lastly, they both conclude with mutual gratulations and praises; (ver. 15, 16.) and, accompanied with the symphony of all their attendants, (ver. 17.) commend the excellency of their habitation.

Ver. 1. *THE Song of songs, which is Solomon's.*] The most excellent of all the songs that Solomon (or any other person) ever composed: representing the ardent desire which was in him, and which he endeavoured to excite in all the people, to enjoy that great blessing of the Messiah. See Annot. [*a*]

Spouse.

Ver. 2. *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.*] With the thoughts of whom his mind being wholly possessed, he burst forth into this most passionate strain of affection to him, saying, in the name of them all, O that he would come and speak to us by himself, and not merely by his pro-

phets; who have told us so much of him, that I cannot but wish to converse familiarly with him, and receive the words of his own mouth (those words of grace, Psal. xlv. 2. which will ravish all men's hearts), and all other expressions of his incomparable love: which is to be preferred infinitely before the most delicious pleasures, that this good land wherein we live affords: yea, before the very sacrifices, and the wine that is poured out upon the altar unto God. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.*] By whom thou art so highly exalted, far above all other kings and prophets; and the fame which is already spread of thee, (Psal. xlv. 8, 9.) and of the knowledge which thou shalt impart into the world, is so sweet, so grateful and delicious, that for this cause all truly pious and holy souls (Psal. xlv. 14.) are in love with thee, and long to see thee. See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee. The King hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee; we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.*] Appear then in thy power, majesty, and glory, and by thy mighty grace and love attract me and all my people to thee: which will make the whole world most readily and cheerfully devote themselves unto thy service. And, methinks, I behold this king in his royal splendour, as if he were already come; nay, he hath made me understand the secret mysteries of his kingdom; which give me a taste of that great joy, wherewith we have been told (Psal. xlv. 15.) all mankind shall enter into thy society: and it is but reason that we should all resolve with the highest satisfaction of mind, to rejoice and triumph in thee, and never to think of thy love, and the blessings we expect from thence, but with a pleasure beyond all other: and the better judgment any men have, and the more upright-hearted they are, the more perfectly will they love thee and thy unspotted righteousness. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.*] And do not take offence, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, at his kind reception of all nations into his kingdom; but hear this answer to you, when you upbraid them with idolatry, and all manner of impurity: which is the same with that of a lovely shepherdess, when tanned by lying much abroad in the fields. My complexion, indeed, is dark and swarthy; but my features and proportions are comely and beautiful: though I seem as rustic as the skins of the tents, wherein the wild Arabs dwell; yet I am as amiable as the fine linen, which makes the curtains of the apartment of king Solomon. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.*] Do not despise me, therefore, by considering only my outward hue, though it be exceeding black; since it is not naturally so, but contracted by being exposed to the sun: for my brethren and sisters, who should have been more kind, did me the greatest injury, and made me a slave to the meanest employments, in which I could not preserve my beauty; because I was like one that being set to keep other men's vineyards, could not look after his own.

Which is a lively emblem of the gentiles, who are descended from the same parents with yourselves, and though by worshipping the sun, and by other idolatries, they are become odiously polluted; yet, shall be cleansed by becoming the subjects of Christ, who will pity them, as seduced by false teachers, and neglected by you; which made them embrace any religion rather than the true. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 7. *Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?*] But let us all join together, professing our most hearty affection to him, and beseech him with one voice, saying, O thou whom I love above all things, instruct me in thy heavenly doctrine, and make me to understand, not only where we may learn thy will, but also enjoy thy true religion in quiet peace: for we are weary of wandering uncertainly after those who pretend to thy Spirit, but mislead such as are guided by them. See Annot. [*g*]

Bridegroom.

Ver. 8. *If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed the kids beside the shepherds' tents.*] Unto which his answer is, Thy desire of true knowledge hath already made thee most amiable in my eyes (Psal. xlv. 11.) and therefore what thou understandest not, I will teach thee. Forsake those vain religions, (ver. 10.) by which thou hast been deluded, and enter into the holy assemblies of those pious souls that worship me: and bring thy young converts, to be instructed by those pastors, whom I will authorize in my church. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.*] Where they shall grow in strength, and increase in number; and under the conduct of those great men, who shall guide and lead them, speedily subdue all mankind unto my obedience: (Psal. xlv. 4.) for I have likened thee, whom I love, to those victorious armies of a mighty king, which trample all opposition triumphantly under their feet. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 10. *Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.*] And then will the very outward face of the church look most beautiful, by those various orders of spiritual gifts, wherewith I will enrich her: which shall make her appear like a lovely bride, when she is decked with all her jewels and ornaments, that add lustre to her beauty. See Annot. [*k*]

Chorus of Virgins.

Ver. 11. *We will make thee borders of gold, with studs of silver.*] Unto which all her members shall contribute, by their unanimous resolution, to lead such a life as may adorn their religion; and make the church shine in such splendour and glory, that she shall not come short of royal majesty, (Psal. xlv. 13.) See Annot. [*l*]

Spouse.

Ver. 12. *While the King sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.*] Whereby she shall become fit for the affections of her great Lord, when he sits upon the throne of his glory; acknowledging his bounty in all the benefits and ornaments he hath bestowed upon her, (Philip. iv. 18.) and making manifest the sweet and fragrant odour of his knowledge in every place: (2 Cor. ii. 14. compared with Psal. xlv. 8.) See Annot. [*m*]

Ver. 13. *A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.*] From which knowledge every pious soul shall derive the greatest refreshment, comfort, and strength: and therefore love him above all things, and resolve never to let him slip outof their minds: but to preserve the remembrance of him most carefully, night and day, in their very hearts; as the most precious cordial, in all conditions, unto their spirits. See Annot. [*n*]

Ver. 14. *My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi.*] And, indeed, there is nothing of such price, nothing so delicious among us for our bodily pleasure, but ought to put us in mind how much more inestimable that knowledge is, which thou, O Lord, who deservest all our love, vouchsafest for the comfort and satisfaction of our souls. See Annot. [*o*]

Bridegroom.

Ver. 15. *Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes.*] Such shall be the language of those who are acquainted with his worth, which shall increase their mutual affection unto each other; and move him to give his church more sensible testimonies of his love, and repeated assurances how amiable her purity and modesty, her innocence and simplicity, as well as her decent order and comely government, are in his sight. See Annot. [*p*]

Spouse.

Ver. 16. *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green.*] And what can this love of his produce, but new admiration in her, of him and of his love, bursting forth into such expressions as these; Yea, rather, thou art most amiable and lovely, (Psal. xlv. 2.) not I; whose beauty and goodness are but a weak reflection of thy incomparable perfections, which move thee to communicate thyself in the most delectable graces unto all those that love thee: who, making one body with thee, may say, We feast together most sumptuously, and are entertained every day with those delights, which grow there only, where thou vouchsafest thy gracious presence. See Annot. [*q*]

Ver. 17. *The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.*] Who hast promised to dwell with us, in the several churches of thy saints; which are so many living temples dedicated to thy service: and, being protected and defended by thee, shall remain so stable and firm, that they shall last for ever. See Annot. [*r*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. *Song of songs*] Every one knows is an Hebraism for the most *excellent song;* as *Holy of holies* is the *Most Holy;* and *King of kings* the *greatest King*. And though the most natural meaning seems to be, that this is the most excellent of all the songs that Solomon made, (which were very many, 1 Kings iv. 32.) both in its structure and composure, and in regard of the subject whereof it treats: yet, since the Chaldee paraphrase, and abundance of Christian writers, think it called the most excellent song, with respect likewise to all the songs that had been formerly made by any prophetical person, as those, Exod. xv. Judg. v. 1 Sam. ii. &c. (because *they* celebrated only some particular benefits, *this* the immense love of God, not only towards that nation, but towards all mankind), I have not neglected that in my Paraphrase.

Which is Solomon's.] The Hebrew words are so contrived, that they may either signify *concerning Solomon (i. e.* Christ), or of which *Solomon was the author*. Which, I doubt not, is the first and literal meaning; because so the LXX. expound it; and so the same phrase is understood by all, in the titles of those Psalms, which are called *Psalms of David*. But it may be observed farther, that here are none of his usual titles added, as there are in the Proverbs and Ecclesiastes; where he is called *son of David, king of Israel,* and *king in Jerusalem*. Of which, if any reason is to be assigned, this seems the most probable, that those titles, which have respect only to his temporal estate, greatness, and dignity, he wholly forgot, when he was wrapped in contemplation of that celestial Prince, the Prince of Peace; in comparison with whom all others are not worth the naming; and whose character was best expressed by the name of Solomon alone: he being the great *Peace-maker* and reconciler of God and man.

[*b*] Ver. 2. *Let him kiss me.*] Solomon speaks this in the person of the *virgin daughter of Zion;* that is, the church. Whom he here introduces in the most passionate strain, wishing for some token of love, which is expressed under the metaphor of a *kiss*. But there is no mention at all made of the name, condition, or beauty of the person whose love is desired; nor any account given of the beginning or progress of this desire: but he makes her burst out on a sudden, and abruptly into these words, *Let him kiss me,* &c. that he might the more artificially describe the nature and force of Divine love: which, when it possesses the mind, snatches it so from itself, that it is wholly in him that it loves. It thinks of nothing else, seeks nothing, wishes nothing, speaks of nothing, but this alone: and imagines that every body else thinks of the same, and knows of whom it speaks.

It is just such a beginning as that of the eighty-seventh Psalm: where the Psalmist enters upon the description of the loveliness of Mount Zion and Mount Moriah, in this manner, *His foundation is in the holy mountains.*

Kisses of his mouth.] As a kiss given to another, was a token of love and kindness, friendship and familiarity, in those countries, (it being their manner to salute their guests whom they invited to their house, Luke vii. 45.) so many *kisses* were a token of abundant love, and excessive affection; as appears from what is there said by our Saviour of the woman, who had *not ceased to kiss his very feet*. And therefore, the beginning of this verse may be thus paraphrased, *Let him declare his love unto me, in the most familiar and most ample manner.*

Of which matter I have noted something elsewhere (Mensa Mystica); and therefore shall only add here, that, in the mystical divinity of the cabalists, these are the words of Malcuth the spouse, speaking to her Tipheret, the bridegroom: beseeching him to influence her with the gift of the Holy Ghost, or with *binah,* as they speak; that is, *understanding,* and *intelligence,* which is called by them the *mouth* of the *sephirot,* or emanations of light.

Better than wine.] *Wine* was the highest entertainment for those guests beforementioned; and therefore used by the Hebrews to express the greatest pleasure. There was a portion of it also to be poured out on the altar, in their offerings to God: and so may comprehend their sacrifices, which were the principal part of their religion. Unto both which I have had respect in the Paraphrase.

[c] Ver. 3. *Savour of thy good ointments.*] *Ointments* also were not wanting at all their entertainments: with which some were wont to anoint their whole heads; or at least their nostrils: which they looked upon as conducing much to health, as well as pleasure. According to those famous words of Alexis the poet, in Athenæus's Deipnosophists, (lib. ii. cap. 7.)

Ἐναλείφεται τὰς ῥῖνας, ὑγιείας μέρος
Μέγιστον ὀσμὰς ἐγκεφάλῳ χρηστὰς ποιῶν.

Of which ointments there were exceeding great variety: four he mentions in that place, which were in common use; but a vast number more in his fifteenth book, chap. 11. out of Apollonius Hierophilus. Who shews, in a book on purpose about it, that several countries afforded unguents, that were most excellent in their kind. As the best of *roses* were made at Phaselis, and some other places; the best of *crocus* came from Soli, in Cilicia; that of *spikenard* from Tarsus, &c. ἡ δὲ Συρία τὸ παλλαιὸν χρηστὰ πάντα παρείχετο, &c. *Syria anciently* (though not in his time) *afforded excellent of all sorts, especially of one,* which he there names.

Now to this use of ointments some think Solomon here alludes; but I rather think he hath respect to his father's words, (Psal. xlv. 8.) and intended hereby to signify the glorious offices of the Messiah, whose very name (signifying *anointed*) carried in it all that could be desired: he being anointed by God to be the great deliverer and Saviour of his people. And these first words of the verse, the LXX. seem to me to have most rightly understood (whom I have therefore followed), who translate them thus; *The smell of thy ointments is above all spices:* taking *tovim,* which we translate *good,* for the *best* of ointments.

Therefore do the virgins love thee.] The attractive power of sweet ointments (to which Solomon here alludes) is notably declared in that which Basil (Epist. ad Julittam) relates of the manner of catching doves. Which was by breeding up one tame, and then, μύρῳ τὰς πτέρυγας αὐτῆς χρίσαντες, *anointing her wings with ointment,* they let her fly away, καὶ ἡ τοῦ μύρου εὐωδία, &c. *and the sweet odour of the ointment drew abundance of pigeons after her;* which she brought to the cot of her owner. See this farther explained in the next note. [d]

[d] Ver. 4. *Draw me.*] In the beginning of this verse I suppose he comprehends all the nation of the Jews, as persons conjunct with him, in these words, *draw me.* And then speaks in the name of all other people, *we will run after thee.* For so the Hebrew writers themselves by *virgins* (in the foregoing verse) understand those, who, out of paganism, came into the church, and embraced the true religion: such as Jethro and Rahab; who, having heard of the miracles in Egypt and in the wilderness, joined themselves to the people of God. And, indeed, wonderful ardent was the love of those, who came from gentilism unto Christ: such as the woman of Samaria; (John iv.) the centurion; (Matt. viii.) the Canaanitish woman, (Matt. xv.) who had such faith as was not found in Israel.

The king hath brought me, &c.] Here now he seems on a sudden to have had a glance of the Messiah, the great king of Israel: and in the spirit of prophecy to have beheld a glimpse of those things, *which eye had not seen, nor ear heard, neither did they enter into the heart of man.* Which I understand here by the word *chadarau,* which we translate *chambers:* wherein he alludes to the chambers of the temple, (1 Chron. xxviii. 11.) but especially to the most secret place of it; into which no man might enter, but the high-priest alone: till Christ came and made way for us into the holiest of all, which was typified by it.

The upright love thee.] The two last words of this verse being capable of various translations, I have expressed the sense so largely as to comprehend them all in my Paraphrase. And shall only add, that the whole verse may be understood after this manner, that the first words, *draw me,* are the voice of the spouse; the next, *we will run after thee,* the words of the chorus of virgins. And then she speaks again, *the King hath brought me into his chambers;* and then they again express their joy at it in the following words, *we will be glad and rejoice,* &c. This came into my mind since I wrote the Paraphrase, and seems to be the plainest account of this verse.

[e] Ver. 5. *I am black,* &c.] The principal mystery of the kingdom of Christ, being the calling of the gentiles into fellowship with him (which is oftener called a *mystery* in the New Testament than any one thing whatsoever), Solomon seems to speak of that in this verse: having beheld, in the rapture wherein he was, the gentiles flocking to him, not without the great displeasure of the Jews, who contemned, and would have excluded them, as people incapable of his love: unto which the gentiles are here introduced, making their answer to the exceptions of the Jews, in these words: *I am black, but comely,* &c. The literal sense of which, and of the next verse, I have expressed so fully in the Paraphrase, annexing the spiritual sense at the end, that I do not think fit to enlarge upon it here. But desire the reader to take notice that the word *sechora,* which we translate *black,* denotes such a duskishness as is in the *morning* (called *sechar* in the Hebrew), when some little light begins to appear, and the darkness to fly away. Which aptly represents the condition of the gentile world, when they were upon the point of receiving the knowledge of Christ. Which this wise king Solomon might well foresee would be imparted to them; by observing a type of it in his own marriage, as well as in the marriages of other great men in former times. Which plainly shewed the Jews, if they would have learnt it, that there was no reason they should except against the conjunction of the gentiles with themselves; in the spiritual marriage of both, in one body, unto Christ. For Isaac married Rebecca, a gentile, and the daughter of an idolater, as appears from her brother Laban, who was no better, (Gen. xxxi. 19. 30. &c.) And this man's daughters Jacob married: whose son Judah, the prince of their tribes, took to wife a Canaanite, (Gen. xxxviii. 2.) as Joseph did an Egyptian; (Gen. xli. 45.) nay, Moses himself, that great deliverer and lawgiver, married an Ethiopian (or Arabian) woman; (Numb. xii. 1.) and, notwithstanding the anger of his brother and sister at this marriage, would not be divorced from her. Nahshon, also, a great man of the house of Judah, married Rahab of Jericho, and had by her Boaz, who took Ruth the Moabitess to wife, by whom he had Obed the grandfather of David. And, indeed, the very first institution of marriage having (as I have proved in the Preface) a mystical intention in it, which St. Paul unfolds in Ephes. v. these marriages may well be looked upon as emblems of the uniting all sorts of people with Christ, in one body of the church.

[*f*] Ver. 6. Here they seem to give an account how they came to degenerate, and lose their original beauty; by false prophets and prophetesses, in the gentile world, who led them to idolatry: particularly to the worship of the sun, which was the most ancient of all other, (Deut. vi. 19. Job xxxi. 26.) and spread itself as far as the sun shineth. For it was the sun whom one country worshipped under the name of Baal; another under the name of Moloch; another of Chemosh; and others of Mithras and Osiris. Which last was the name given to it by the Egyptians; among whom the sun was worshipped in the famous city of Heliopolis (which took its name from thence), not far from the land of Rameses; where the children of Israel dwelt while they lived there, (Gen. xlvii. 11.) and so were more easily infected with that idolatry.

[*g*] Ver. 7. This verse I take to be the voice of the whole church, longing to be acquainted with his doctrine; which is compared to *food*, as his disciples are to *sheep:* whom shepherds were wont in those countries to lead into cool shades at noon, that they might not suffer by the heat. Unto which Solomon here alludes; representing all pious souls as afraid also of wandering from the true Shepherd, and falling like sheep that go astray, into the hands of strangers. All which metaphors are largely pursued by our blessed Saviour, in one of his parables, (John x.) as comparisons familiarly known to his disciples, who found them here first used in this holy book.

[*h*] Ver. 8. To the foregoing petition, he here returns this answer. Which needs no other explication than what I have given of it in the Paraphrase: unless we observe a difference between *flocks* and *kids*. The latter of which signifies the *goat's young ones;* and so may represent the new converts of the gentiles who formerly lay under an ill character, and did *male olere*, as they speak, smell rank of many foul superstitions. But I am not willing to meddle with such niceties.

[*i*] Ver. 9. *Company of horses*, &c.] This comparison may convince us, that Solomon doth not aim at any single person in this Song (either Pharaoh's daughter, or a beautiful Shunamite, or any other woman or virgin, who would very absurdly be compared to a *troop of horses*), but as a great many united in a body: *i. e.* the whole company of believers in the Messiah; who may very fitly be resembled to the *horses in the chariots of Pharaoh;* whose kingdom, in those days, abounded with the most excellent horses; which were famous for their strength, and fitness for service: as may be seen by the provision of them Solomon made for himself from thence, 1 Kings x. 28, 29.) and the great number which came from thence against Jerusalem, in his son's days, (2 Chron. xii. 3.) Long after which we read of their great force; (Isa. xxxi. 1. Jer. xlvi. 4. 9.) and consequently, the body of Christian people, that is, the church, being compared to a company of them, is set forth thereby as very powerful, and prevailing over all opposers.

[*k*] Ver. 10. The means of which is here represented to be by the power of the Spirit; wherewith Christ had endued his church. For the manner of bridegrooms being to present their future bride with jewels, or some other rich gifts (suitable to their quality and ability), Solomon alludes to them, as I take it, in this verse; and points at the gifts which his father foretold (Psal. lxviii. 18.) Christ would dispense, when he ascended up on high to his throne of glory: whereby several orders of admirable men were constituted in the church, (1 Cor. xii. 28, &c.)

[*l*] Ver. 11. And the design of all those gifts was to make men truly virtuous, which seems to be intended in this verse; (for love and good works are compared to *gold*, in the language of Christ himself, Rev. iii. 18.) which is the voice of all those that attended upon the bride.

[*m*] Ver. 12. That which makes the greatest difficulty in this book, is the frequent change of the persons that speak: and it is doubted here, whose language this is. I take it to be the bride herself, that here again gratefully acknowledges his benefits, and endeavours to make all the world sensible of them.

Sitteth at his table.] The King sitting at his table, signifying his rest and joy after all his labours; I have therefore expounded it of the throne of his glory; unto which our blessed Saviour being advanced, he received power to prefer others; whose honour and dignity are expressed by these two things, *eating at his table*, and *sitting by him upon thrones;* which were the same thing in our Saviour's own language, (Matt. xix. 28. compared with Luke xxii. 29, 30.)

Spikenard.] It is observed by Pliny that the most fragrant *nard* comes from the *spikes* of a very small contemptible shrub: which may well be looked upon as an emblem of the sweet odour of the gospel; wherewith such mean and despicable persons, as the apostles were of themselves, filled all the world by their preaching: together with the extraordinary holiness of their lives, which recommended their preaching very much to all observing men. So the cabalists expound this fragrancy, in the ancient book Zohar: where R. Judah saith, When good works are multiplied in the world, then the *cheneseth Israel* (i. e. the *congregation of Israel*, the same with *Malcuth*, in their language) exhales *rich in tovin, good odours*, i. e. most sweet and fragrant odours, being blessed by the holy King, &c. Which words the scholiast expounds thus, *she exhales sweet odours to her husband Tipheret*, and is most acceptable to him: the lower world (as his words are) being by this means married to the higher.

[*n*] Ver. 13. *A bundle of myrrh*, &c.] The church, deriving the greatest comfort and satisfaction, from his sitting on the throne of his glory, resolves here to keep him perpetually in mind, and in her most hearty affections: which is expressed by *myrrh* tied up in a little bag, and put into the bosom, as the manner was in those countries, to corroborate the heart, and exhilarate the spirits.

The bosom of all chaste women is inaccessible to any hand but that of their husband: and therefore here signifies the careful preservation of his memory, and of the doctrine he hath deposited in his church.

[*o*] Ver. 14. *Cluster of camphire.*] Nothing more puzzles interpreters than these words, which we translate *cluster of camphire*. For our *camphire* was unknown to the ancients, and doth not grow in clusters, but is the resinous substance of a tree in Borneo, and in China: and therefore is far better translated in the margin of our Bibles, *cypress*. But by *cypress* is not to be understood the tree which bears that name among us; but a far more aromatic plant in the east, which was a kind of *ligustrum* or *alcharma*, called by Pliny *cyperus*, and sometimes *cyprus:* which produced a most sweet bush of *flowers*, and also *berries*, not much different from the fragrancy of spikenard. Whence it is likely the

famous island Cyprus took its name; because here (as at Ascalon in Judea, and on the banks of the Nile) the best, that is, the most odoriferous *cyprus* grows. Thus both Stephanus and Eustathius; The island Cyprus hath its name, ἀπὸ ἐκεῖ φυομένου ἄνθους Κύπρου, *from the flower of cyprus growing there:* as Bochart shews in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 3. Of which flowers, or of the seed, was made that ointment which Pliny calls the *unguent royal.*

But there is one that thinks these words may be translated, *precious cluster,* or *cluster of great value;* to be bought at any rate: because *copher* denotes the price of any thing that is purchased or redeemed. Such was the balsam that came from these shrubs; which grew at En-gedi (in the plains of Jericho), after the manner of vines; and therefore called, as Bochartus hath shewn, the *vineyards of En-gedi.* And thus the ancient Hebrew doctors, by dividing the first word אשכל have found out the mystery of the Messiah in these words. Which they understand, as if he had said, *My beloved is unto me* איש כל כופך *the man that propitiates all things.*

[*p*] Ver. 15. *Behold.*] This and the following verse, contain the mutual expressions of their love. First, of Christ to his church, in this verse: and that not only in regard of her inward purity, but of her external order; both which were remarkable: and therefore the word *behold* is repeated.

Doves' eyes.] The *eyes* shew more than any part else, the inward affections of the mind: and *doves' eyes* are the emblems of simplicity, candour, sincerity, and purity.

[*q*] Ver. 16. Here follows the expression of the church's love to Christ: whom she acknowledgeth to be the fountain of all that is in her.

Our bed is green.] By *bed* I understand their *table;* about which they sat on beds strewed with flowers, or such fragrant greens as were in season.

[*r*] Ver. 17. *Our house,* &c.] This last verse I take for a description of particular churches: by the *roof* or *covering* of which I understand their protection. And it being made of *cedar* and *fir,* there seems to be an allusion to the temple; in the fabric of which these were employed, as most durable and incorruptible. Others take that word we translate *fir* to signify *cypress:* which is still nearer to the sense I have given of this verse. Which sense will not seem at all forced unto those who consider, that not only the whole body of the faithful, which is the church universal, but the parts of it, or single churches, such as that at Ephesus, are represented by the apostle, as *a holy temple,* a *habitation,* or *dwelling-place of God:* which is built upon Christ, and with him makes up one house of God, (Ephes. ii. 20—22.) Nay, every particular faithful person is not only a *living stone,* as St. Peter speaks, in that building, but is called also a *temple* of God; who dwells in holy minds by his Spirit, (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. vi. 19.) So that the *bride* and the *chorus of virgins,* might well, both with respect to Christ and to one another, use the style of *our house,* in this description of his dwelling-place.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins a new colloquy, which hath two principal parts.

In the first of which the *bridegroom* owns the praises to belong unto him, which had been bestowed upon him, in the conclusion on the foregoing chapter, (ver. 1, 2.) and the *bride* again declares her high admiration of him, and satisfaction in him and his love; as infinitely surpassing all other enjoyments, and deserving greater love to him, than could be expressed, (ver. 3, 4, &c.) With which ecstacy of love he declaring himself to be highly pleased, (ver. 7.) then follows the second part, wherein she sets forth the wonderful power of Divine love to enlighten their mind, and to obtain the favour of illuminations from above. For now she speaks (ver. 8, 9, &c.) as if she saw him, and heard his voice, inviting her to partake of the blessings, which his appearing brought to mankind. The secure possession of which she also hears him promising to her, (ver. 14, 15.) and thereupon promises him most faithful obedience, (ver. 16, 17.)

Bridegroom.

Ver. 1. *I AM the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.*] I am, indeed, the fountain of all true delight and pleasure: the rose of Sharon being not more grateful to the smell, nor the lily of the valleys to the sight, than the knowledge of me is to the mind of those who are acquainted with me. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *As the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters.*] Whereby thou, my dearly beloved, art become not unlike to me; appearing in such lustre and beauty among the nations of the world, as the lily doth among the thorns that grow in desert places. See Annot. [*b*]

Spouse.

Ver. 3. *As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*] And thou appearest far greater and more lovely in my eyes, than the greatest princes of this world; who are no more to be compared with thee, than the wild trees that bring forth nothing but leaves, or only harsh or insipid trash, with the goodly apple-tree, when it is laden with its beautiful and pleasant fruit. Who can express the satisfaction which his protection affords! Under which I have constantly enjoyed a sweet repose; pleasing myself in the delightful thoughts of the blessed fruits of his coming among us, and of what he hath purchased for us. See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love.*] Which administers the highest joys to those who taste of them; and hath entertained, or rather feasted me, with such delicious hopes, that I cannot but glory in this, that I am listed under his banner whose motto is love: whereby he hath overcome, shall I say, or overpowered my heart, to submit myself wholly unto his wonderful love. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love.*] Under the weight of which, who can support himself, when it sensibly touches his heart? I faint, I languish, I die, when I am deeply affected with that love: which overwhelms my spirit; and makes me call for a greater power than my own to enable me to bear the thoughts of his mighty love. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *His left hand under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.*] And whence should I have that power but from himself? who then communicates most of the grace of his Holy Spirit to us (which is the greatest token

of his love), when he sees our hearts fullest of love to him. See Annot. [*f*]

Bridegroom.

Ver. 7. *I charge ye, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.*] In which he would have us take an uninterrupted pleasure, saying, I beseech, I charge you (all you that are her companions), I conjure you by all that is dear to you, not to discompose, or give the least disturbance to that love; but let it enjoy its satisfaction to the height of its desires. See Annot. [*g*]

Spouse.

Ver. 8. *The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.*] Which words of grace can come from none but him, who is worthy of all our love: whom, behold, I see, though he be afar off: I see with what delight he comes, surmounting all difficulties and discouragements, to do the will of God, (Psal. xl. 7. 18.) See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *My beloved is like a roe, or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the window, shewing himself through the lattice.*] The swift motion of the roes and wild goats is but a weak emblem of his readiness to come down to us. And, though he do not yet actually shew himself among us, I see notwithstanding something of him; and behold him approaching nearer and nearer to us: like one that, resolving to be our guest, doth not presently enter, but first stands behind the wall of our house, then looks in at the window, and through the lattices or grates, whereby he is still more fully discovered. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 10. *My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.*] And I hear his voice (who is worthy of all our love) calling unto us to meet him with our most forward desires, saying, Awake thou, who art most dear unto me, thou who art most beautiful in my eyes; arise and stay no longer, but come away from these dark representations of me.

Ver. 11. *For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.*] For now that dismal time is past, wherein ignorance, error, and wickedness, overflowed the world, as floods do the earth in the winter-season: those cloudy and uncomfortable days are over, wherein thou couldest see and enjoy but little of me. See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 12. *The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.*] All tokens of a new world appear, and invite thee to come and partake of those joys and pleasures which the nearer approaches of the Sun of righteousness produce: who makes all manner of blessings spring up in such abundance, that it causes the heavenly host to sing for joy; and therefore cannot but fill all mankind with joyful hymns unto him. See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 13. *The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.*] And for this especially, that their dead hopes are revived, and they receive the earnest and beginnings of that future bliss; the expectation of which is our greatest comfort in this life, and the consummation of it our highest happiness in the next: and therefore I say again, Awake, and stir up thy desires, thou who art most dear unto me, thou who art most lovely in my eyes; arise, and go, and take possession of those inestimable benefits. See Annot. [*m*]

Bridegroom.

Ver. 14. *O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.*] And be not afraid of those, who, seeking to destroy thee, force thee to flee, like an innocent dove, to hide thyself, and seek for safety in holes of the earth, in caves, and dens, and secret places; but from hence look up unto me, and call upon me, with praises and thanksgivings, and I will save and deliver thee: for I love thee inseparably, who art most amiable in my eyes, whose prayers and praises I delight to hear, and to behold my own image that is formed in thee. See Annot. [*n*]

Ver. 15. *Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.*] And therefore I require all those that act by authority from me, and to whom I have committed the care of my church, to use their early diligence also to discover and confute the sophistry of deceivers, who craftily insinuate their false doctrines into weak and incautious souls; and thereby seduce those who are newly converted, or but infirm in the faith. See Annot. [*o*]

Spouse.

Ver. 16. *My beloved is mine, and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies.*] Unto which I hear the church reply, I will preserve my fidelity to him, who is my only beloved, as I am his; I will have nothing to do with those seducing spirits, but adhere to him alone: whose dwelling is not among subtle and crafty, but with simple and candid souls. See Annot. [*p*]

Ver. 17. *Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved; and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of Bether.*] Only let him be pleased to vouchsafe his gracious presence with me, and to enlighten me more and more, till we have a full knowledge of him and of his will, (Rom. xiii. 11, 12.) and the light of it scatter all the shadows of the law: let my beloved also make haste to succour and relieve me in all difficulties and distresses; and shew the same readiness for my preservation that he did (ver. 9.) for my first salvation. See Annot. [*q*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. There is so little ground to apply the several parts of this Song to the several ages of the church, till the end of all things, that I cannot think fit to follow such interpretations. But shall pursue the method I have begun, and observe, that the Messiah is here introduced, as owning the praises which the church had bestowed upon him in the conclusion of the foregoing chapter. And that in such phrases as are becoming a pastoral, borrowed from flowers and trees (under which shepherds delight to sit and eat the fruit), and from such creatures as frequent the fields and woods, &c.

I am the rose.] And in this verse he first compares himself to a rose: which is still one of the goodliest things to which a great prince can be likened in those eastern countries. As appears from a letter, written by the Great Mogul in the Persian tongue, to king James, sent by Sir Tho. Roe: wherein he thus compliments his majesty of Great

Britain: *As upon a rose in a garden, so are my eyes fixed upon you: God maintain your estate, that your monarchy may prosper,* &c. But it was chiefly prized by shepherds and shepherdesses; and accounted by them ἔρωτος φυτὸν, as Philostratus speaks, *the plant of love.* Insomuch, saith he, that if the great king have the diadem on his head, the soldier his helmet, as the greatest ornament; beautiful youths should have chaplets of roses, καὶ διὰ συγγένειαν τῆς ἐνωδίας, καὶ διὰ τὸ οἰκεῖον τῆς χροίας, *as near of kin to them both in sweetness and in ruddiness.* And Achilles Tatius (lib. i. Ἐρωτ. &c.) thus commends this lovely flower: If Jupiter would set a king over the flowers, it would be the *rose* that should reign over them: *Being the ornament of the earth, the splendour of plants, the eye of flowers, the blushing beauty of the field, or refulgent brightness,* &c.

Of Sharon.] *i. e.* The most excellent rose: for such were the roses of Sharon; as may be gathered from hence: that the rose, according to Pliny's observation, delights in dry places; and will not thrive in fat and unctuous soils, in rich clays, or grounds well watered, but in those that are lean, full of rubbish, &c. Now such was the soil about Sharon, as we learn from the Mischna, in the title Sota, chap. 8. where they that *built a brick house in Sharon* are said to have been deprived of the benefit of the law.

Deut. xx. 5. Upon which passage R. Solomon glosses, that the earth thereabout was unfit for making bricks; being so dry and crumbling, that the houses that were built of them had need to be repaired twice in seven years. Insomuch, that the Jerusalem Talmud saith, *This high-priest prayed by name for the Sharonites, upon the day of expiation, that their houses might not be converted into their graves.*

Lily of the valleys.] By the *lily* we are not to understand such as we call *lilium convallium,* or *May-lily;* but some more noble and fragrant flower; being joined here with roses: as it is in several poetical fragments (quoted by Athenæus, lib. xv. cap. 8, 9.) with violets, marjoram, and divers other sweet flowers. Insomuch, that he saith the Corinthians called the *lily* by the name of *ambrosia:* and he tells us out of Nicander, that it was esteemed χάρμ' Ἀφροδίτης, *the joy and delight of Venus,* because of its beautiful colour; and smell, also, I suppose: for in the twelfth chapter of the same book, he quotes a passage out of Theophrastus, who, treating of sweet ointments made of flowers, mentions τὸ ἐκ τῶν κρίνων, *that of lilies,* as well as that of roses.

But notwithstanding all this, the lily being vulgarly celebrated only for its beautiful colour, I have taken notice of that alone in the Paraphrase.

[*b*] Ver. 2. *As the lily,* &c.] They that believe in Christ partaking of his excellences, he here compares the church to a *lily* (*i. e.* to himself), as much excelling all other people who were not believers (for *daughters* signify *people* in the Hebrew language), as the *lilies* do *thorns,* which grow in desolate places. For the word we translate *thorns,* is wont to be joined together with those which signify *nettles and brambles,* (Isa. xxxiv. 13. Hosea ix. 6.)

[*c*] Ver. 3. *As the apple-tree,* &c.] To this the church here replies; and expresses her reciprocal affection, in such words as may be applied to signify his pre-eminence over all other gods; whom they were wont to worship under trees, as we read in Deut. xii. 2. 1 Kings xiv. 23. Isa. lvii. 5. and many other places.

I sat down under, &c.] In the latter part of this verse, and in those that follow, she turns her speech to her companions and attendants; relating the satisfaction and joy she took in his love.

[*d*] Ver. 4. *He brought me,* &c.] Which is set forth by a banquet, whereby (it is well known) the Hebrews were wont to represent the joys, even of the other world. And what greater joy have we here than to think of the stupendous love of God our Saviour towards us? which cannot but subdue our hearts to love him entirely. So I have paraphrased the latter part of the verse *(his banner over me was love),* taking in two senses of which the words are capable. The most obvious is, that *love was the inscription in his banner:* the other that *he conquers only by love;* a banner displayed supposing an armed force marching under it. Delherrus, in his Electa, lib. iii. cap. 9. hath not unfitly glossed upon the words, thus: "The banner of our Lord is his love, which he hath publicly declared to us, that he might draw us to himself: by which, also, when we are come to him, he retains us with him; and strengthens us by the same when we fight with our spiritual enemies. And that we may always look upon it and never quail, he carries it over us; that is, renders his love most familiar to us. He that knows not this banner, can be none of his soldiers; and he that deserts it is undone, unless he presently return to it. So that as the Roman legions had their several names, (one of which was called the *pious,* another the *faithful,* another the *thundering,* another the *victorious,* &c.) in like manner the Christian band may be called *amoris legio,* the *legion of love.*"

[*e*] Ver. 5. *Stay me with flagons,* &c.] This verse is a description of one falling into a swoon, by the abundance of her love: in which case cordial spirits are wont to be called for, to revive such persons, and keep them from fainting quite away. Comfortable smells, also, are wont to be administered to the nose; which is the meaning of calling here for fragrant *apples, oranges, citrons,* &c. (as well as wine) which are all comprehended under the name of *tappuach* in the Hebrew: which is a word that in its very original imports an *exhalation,* or *odour-breathing,* from that which is so called. By which the church is represented to be so marvellously affected with the love of Christ, as to be even oppressed under the weight of Divine benefits: and at a perfect loss what to think of them; having little or nothing to return for such infinite obligations.

[*f*] Ver. 6. *His left hand,* &c.] This is a representation of the tenderest affection of a husband to his wife, when he sees her in danger to faint: and being applied to Christ and his church, sets forth his readiness to succour us, in all our needs, by the power of his Spirit. I go not about to divine what is distinctly meant by the *left hand,* and what by the *right* (which I look upon as too great a curiosity in interpreters), but take them both to express one and the same thing. And the *hand of the Lord,* signifying, oftimes in Scripture, the power of the Spirit, I have applied them to that.

[*g*] Ver. 7. *I charge you,* &c.] It is dubious whether this verse be the voice of Christ or of the church. I take it to be his; who is the good Shepherd, represented in this pastoral Song. Which, suitable to its nature, is still full of rural similitudes, taken from the *roes* and *hinds:* which are

most amiable creatures, (as hath been observed upon Prov. vi.) with which not only shepherds, but the greatest persons in the world, have delighted themselves. And that word which we well translate *I charge you*, I take to be only a solemn form of earnest beseeching and entreaty (which all persons are wont to make by those things that are dearest to them), not an adjuration, which is not lawful for any to make, but only by God. I have contented myself therefore with this simple paraphrase of that passage; and sought for no mystical interpretation, as the matter is, which may be found in most interpreters; who, among other things, by *roes* and *hinds* understand the *angelical powers:* to which the cabalists apply these words, and would have them to signify as much as, *I adjure you by the tribunal of justice, whence the wicked are punished.*

[*h*] Ver. 8. *He cometh leaping*, &c.] To the same sort of creatures, and to young wild kids, he alludes in this verse. For they are numbered among those creatures which are most nimble in running, jumping, and leaping, even to the tops of mountains, as Bochartus hath largely shewn: demonstrating that what we translate *young hart*, (ver. 9.) is the *young wild goat*. I seek, therefore, for no mystery here neither; but take the words to be a description only of the Lord's alacrity and cheerfulness, to come down from the heavens (which may be meant by *mountains*), to dwell among us, who dwell here below upon the earth. Yet I shall note, that they seem to be most ingenious, who hereby understand his passing by angels (for so some translate the words, *skipping over the mountains*), and leaping, as it were, over their heads, to take upon him the nature of man.

[*i*] Ver. 9. In like manner, it is a very ingenious conjecture, that his *standing behind the wall*, in this verse, may be applied to his shewing himself in those days only in the law of Moses (which was the wall of partition between the Jews and us), and his *looking through the window*, or *in at the window*, &c. to his shewing himself then in figures and prophecies, which they had of him; by which he was known but obscurely to them. But I have not meddled with this in the Paraphrase.

[*k*] Ver. 10, 11. *Lo the winter is past*, &c.] In these verses Solomon represents his voice speaking to them by the prophets (though he himself was not come), and calling them to him, as if he was just appearing. For by the *winter* and the *rain*, I understand with Theodoret, τὸν πρὸ τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ χρόνον, *the time before his coming:* when the gentile world was buried in dismal darkness; and the Jews themselves saw things only through clouds: and neither of them had much of the warmth of the Divine law.

[*l*] Ver. 12. *The flowers appear*, &c.] And then here follows a description of the spring: which is set forth by three things; the *appearing of the flowers*, which had lain as if they had been dead; the *singing of birds;* and the *voice of the turtle*. Which, as Aristotle observes, (Histor. Nat. lib. viii. cap. 3.) disappears in winter, and comes forth again when the spring is a little advanced: and therefore is here very properly mentioned in the last place, among the notes of the spring. Which being the time of all others most welcome to shepherds, for the feeding of their flocks, and for all manner of pleasures, represents, as the same Theodoret conceives, τὸν μετὰ τὴν παρουσίαν, *the joyful time after our Saviour's coming*. When a new world appeared, and there was a greater abundance of Divine blessings, especially of the Spirit, poured forth: which the Chaldee paraphrast takes to be meant by the *voice of a turtle*. Which is a kind of dove; in the form of which the Holy Ghost descended at our Saviour's baptism. And then the *singing of birds* may be applied to the songs of the heavenly host, at his birth. Others will have this *turtle* to have been the figure of John the Baptist: which is also pat enough: but I have only touched upon such things, and do not think fit here to enlarge upon them. But conclude this note with this observation, that Benjamin Tudelensis, in the conclusion of his Itinerarium, expressly applies these words to the coming of the Messiah: saying, that *they cannot be gathered to their own land, till that time of the singing of birds come, and the voice of the turtle; and till they come who preach glad tidings, saying always, The Lord be praised.* R. Alschech also applies the voice of the turtle to Elias, glossing thus, *The voice of the turtle also, hath it not been heard in our land, by the means of the prophet? according to that which is said, Behold, I will send to you Elias the prophet*, (Mal. iv. 5.)

[*m*] Ver. 13. *The fig-tree putteth forth*, &c.] After the spring-time, here follows a description of the entrance of summer: of which the putting forth green figs, and the blowing of the vines, nay, the knotting of the grapes, were a sign. In the end of which the *harvest* coming, hereby is denoted, saith the same father (Theodoret), τὸν προσδοκώμενον αἰῶνα, *the world which we expect hereafter:* unto which I have applied this verse. Where it may be observed, that *fig-tree* and *vines* are fitly joined, for they were wont to be planted together, (Luke xiii. 6, 7.)

[*n*] Ver. 14. *O my dove, that art in the clefts*, &c.] Some of the Hebrew writers, whose sense the Chaldee paraphrast expresses, refers this to the people of Israel flying from Pharaoh, like a dove before the hawk that is ready to seize her: but may be better referred to the church of Christ, in danger to be torn in pieces by her pagan persecutors, and by the Jews themselves; as it was in the beginning of our religion. Which forced Christians to hold their assemblies under ground, in obscure places (where they sung hymns to our blessed Lord before the break of day), and made the church perfectly like a dove, who, being in fear of ravenous birds, flies into clefts of rocks, and to secret holes in steep places, to preserve herself.

The church is so often compared by Christ to a *dove* in this book, that it is fit to give some account of it. And Bochartus (de Sacr. Animal. lib. i. cap. 4. p. 11.) takes this to be the principal, if not the only, reason of it; to signify her to be his only beloved: and that he alone also is most dear to her. For in *doves* there is a wonderful love (observed by many authors) between those that are once paired: who never part, but keep faithful the one to the other. And so are a fit emblem of the church, whom the apostle saith he had espoused to Christ as a chaste virgin, (2 Cor. xi. 2.)

Let me see thy countenance.] That word which we translate *countenance* or *aspect*, may be rendered *shape* or *fashion;* denoting all the comely proportions of the church, by her likeness to her Lord Christ.

[*o*] Ver. 15. *Take us the foxes.*] *Foxes* abound in Judea, and are observed, by abundance of authors, to love grapes, and to make great devastations in vineyards. Insomuch,

that Aristophanes, in his Equites, compares soldiers to foxes; spoiling whole countries, as they do vineyards. Now the prophet Ezekiel, comparing false prophets to foxes, (xiii. 4.) it hath led all interpreters (in a manner) to understand by foxes in this place, *heretics:* who appeared very early in the church, and therefore are compared to *young foxes;* in regard of their known craft and subtilty, windings and turnings, shifts and evasions; whereby the more simple sort especially, and such as were newly converted (compared here to *tender grapes,* as the church itself is to a *vine),* were in danger to be undone, unless a timely care was taken to prevent it. And therefore this verse seems to be an answer to the church's prayers, flying to her Lord for refuge. Who seeing her danger not to be greater from tyranny than from false teachers, calls upon his companions; that is, the apostles, bishops, and pastors of the church, to look after them, and to take them in their craftiness. And that whilst they were *young;* in the beginning, that is, their appearance in the world: because their "vain babblings were apt to increase to more ungodliness, and their words did eat as a gangrene," &c. (2 Tim. ii. 16, 17.) Especially when the church was but newly planted, and those seducers applied themselves chiefly to such as had but newly received the faith, or to weak and unsettled people, who were easily caught by them, unless great care were taken to discover their frauds, and to confute their sophistry.

Which was the taking of these *foxes,* as Theodoret expounds it: and St. Bernard also; who observes that he saith, *take to us* the foxes: that is, *Sibi et sponsæ, to himself, and to his spouse.* As much as to say, If it be possible, let them be reconciled to the Catholic church, and brought back to the true faith. If that could not be, then other methods succeeded; and the apostles *delivered up* such dangerous deceivers *unto Satan:* which was a punishment that included in it bodily affliction, that they might learn not to blaspheme, (1 Tim. i. *ult.*)

[*p*] Ver. 16. *My beloved is mine,* &c.] As the former verse was his answer to the church's prayers; so this is the church's acknowledgment to him for his care: together with a profession of such firm adherence to him, as suits with the name of a *dove,* which he had bestowed on her, (ver. 14.)

He feedeth.] To *feed, viz.* his flock, is to have his abode among them. (See vi. 2.)

[*q*] Ver. 17. *Until the day break,* &c.] All that she desires farther is only his gracious presence with her; which she begs in this verse he would vouchsafe her *upon the mountains;* that is, those steep places mentioned before, ver. 14. (where the church was fain to worship him in great secret, because of the present danger) especially while any disputes and controversies remained about the Jewish ceremonies, which were a great disturbance to the church, as well as the afflictions and persecutions she endured; which are compared to the *night* and *darkness,* as the other to *shadows.*

Turn my beloved.] The word *turn* doth not suppose him absent: but only that he did not immediately attend, or shew the regard he had to her prayers in distresses.

Like a roe.] See chap. viii. 14.

Mountains of Bether.] *Bether* is the same with *Bethel,* these two letters, *r* and *l,* being easily and often changed, as Bochartus hath observed, (in his Geograph. Sacra, par. ii. lib. i. cap. 33.) in many instances. As, for example, an island in the Persian Gulf is indifferently called *Tyrus* and *Tylus:* and *Tavila* in Spain is the same with *Tabira:* and *Caralis* in Sardinia the same with *Calaris,* &c. In another work, indeed, of his (De Sacris Animal.) he takes *mountains of Bether* for *mountains full of clefts.* Which would agree well with what went before, (ver. 14.) and might be handsomely applied to the state of the church, when there were many breaches and rents in it: but the other is plainer and more literal.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins the third of those interlocutory discourses, which compose this famous Song: part of which only is contained in this chapter. In which the *bride* and her companions speak all but one verse, which seems to be spoken by the *bridegroom.* For whose coming she still longs; and is introduced full of solicitude about it. Which proved not in vain, but was gratified with so much satisfaction in the hope of it, that, as he takes care it should not be disturbed, so all her companions rejoice exceedingly in it. For those are the two parts also of this chapter. In the first of which he testifies her earnest desire to find him; who filled her with joy, when she had got a sight of him (in the four first verses): in the second, they that attended on her after he had renewed his former charge, (ver. 5.) are transported with joy, to behold the multitude of his followers, and the greatness of his royal glory. Which is the sense of the rest of the chapter.

Spouse.

Ver. 1. *By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.*] Many have been my thoughts about him, who (by what the prophets have foretold of him) is become the beloved of my soul. But, though I have sought him in the greatest retirements, and when my mind was most composed, and that one night after another; though with a diligent search, I have sought him in all the holy books; yet I can find no more than predictions and shadows of him, which assure me he will come, but cannot bring me to the sight and clear knowledge of him. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *I will rise now, and go about the city; in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.*] Whereupon I resolved to leave these private studies, and to go abroad and consult with others: and there is no place which I have not frequented, where I thought I might learn any thing of him. For I have fetched a compass round the whole city of Jerusalem (which is the holy city, the joy of the whole earth), and there is not one street, not any place of public resort, but I have gone into it, and inquired after him, both in the lesser and greater assemblies; I inquired of all the holy men I could meet withal; but could meet with no more tidings of him, whom my soul longs to see; because I love him above all things. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?*] But in

the midst of these anxious thoughts there was some satisfaction presented to me, from some of those great ministers of God, who watch for the good of others; and employ themselves every where to direct his people: of whom I made the same inquiry, if they could tell me any thing of him, who had engaged my affections so much, that I could not often enough profess my love unto him. See Annot. [c]

Ver. 4. *It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.*] For I received such illuminations from them, that I had not long left their company, before I saw this beloved of my soul, as if he had been actually present with me; which transported me with such joy, that I could not think of parting with such a sight, but took fast hold of him; to keep him with me, till I had shewn unto all that wait for him, what I had been so happy as to find myself. See Annot. [d]

Bridegroom.

Ver. 5. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love.*] And here again I heard him graciously renew the charge he had given before (ii. 7.) to all my companions, saying, I conjure you, by all that is dear to you, not to discompose, or give the least disturbance to this love; but let it enjoy its satisfaction, to the height of its desires. See Annot. [e]

Companions.

Ver. 6. *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?*] And now, what is this that we see? who is this goodly person? or rather this crowd of people coming up out of desolate places in one body, to Mount Zion; and appearing like the pillars of smoke which arise from the altar of burnt-offering; and no less acceptable to God, than the sweet odours that ascend from the altar of incense, in the holy place? See Annot. [f]

Ver. 7. *Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel.*] Behold the love which the great King hath to her, having prepared all things for her reception into society with himself: of whose royal person and happiness Solomon himself, in all his glory, is but a figure. Who is magnificently attended, indeed, and strongly guarded in his palace, by a number of valiant persons that encompass him night and day, in his bed, and in his throne: but are not comparable to the power, and force, and multitude, of that heavenly host, which secure the church in her enjoyments, and take care of her continual safety. See Annot. [g]

Ver. 8. *They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night.*] Who are all unanimously bent, and in a constant readiness (like that guard of valiant men about Solomon, with their swords drawn in their hands), being not less skilful than able to succour and defend his people, from all the assaults of their invisible enemies; who seek to destroy them, by raising terrible persecutions against them. See Annot. [h]

Ver. 9. *King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.*] But all in vain: for, as king Solomon hath caused a chariot of the choicest cedar to be made for him, and for his royal spouse, to appear in publicly, when he makes his progress through the kingdom; so doth this far greater King ride on prosperously, (Psal. xlv. 4.) by the means of such instruments as he himself hath formed, and enlarges the borders of his church, by the preaching of his everlasting gospel. See Annot. [i]

Ver. 10. *He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple; the midst thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.*] Unto which the magnificence and riches of that chariot is not worthy to be compared; though the pillars of it being of silver, the back, the sides, and the seat being of cloth of gold, the curtains and covering of it being of the brightest purple, the carpet also under the feet being curiously wrought with the most lovely figures by the daughters of Jerusalem, they make it very inviting to all spectators: for what is this to the wonderful love of God, and to the riches of his grace, in his great and precious promises (far dearer to all good souls than thousands of gold and silver), which the gospel calls us not only to behold, but to enjoy? See Annot. [k]

Ver. 11. *Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.*] Make this then a festival day, and let no domestic cares hinder you from bearing a part in the public joy: but as all the daughters of Jerusalem went out to behold the glory wherein king Solomon shone when he appeared in state with that royal crown which his mother put upon his head on his marriage day, that day which completed all his joys; (Psal. xlv. 15.) so let all the people of God every where admire and extol the surpassing glory of that great King, who shall appear to be crowned with glory, honour, and joy, by God himself; on that happy day when he shall publicly own his church, and give her the highest testimony of his endless love, (Rev. xix. 6, 7. 12.) See Annot. [l]

ANNOTATIONS.

[a] Ver. 1. The beginning of this chapter might be connected with the foregoing, and applied to the state of the church under affliction; if the following words would suit with that exposition, which they do not, in my opinion; for he had desired to *hear her voice*, ver. 14. of the second chapter, and now she cannot find him. Therefore I incline to think, that the very same thing is again represented in other words (after the manner of the prophets; particularly of Isaiah, who over and over again, in several schemes of speech, foretells their restoration from the captivity of Babylon, and, under that shadow, their greater salvation by Christ); *viz.* the earnest desire of the church for the coming of Christ: which Solomon expresses by the passionate longings he found in himself to see the blessed day.

By night.] And so *by night*, may be understood that dark time which was before his appearing; when good men sought for him, and had many dreams and visions about him; but could meet only with the shadows and images of him; which signified him to come, but did not exhibit his very presence to them. Of which neither the temple, nor

the sacrifices, nor the sacred books, could discover any thing clearly: but was represented here to Solomon in a vision he had of him, and of the church which was espoused to him, after he had sought a long time, and groped every where after him, in that dark night wherein they lived. So, as I said, the *night* may be expounded: for such a dismal condition were they in just when he appeared, (Matt. iv. 16. Luke i. 79.)

On my bed.] This is expounded with strange variety by interpreters: some understanding hereby the *bed of affliction;* others, the *bed of ease and pleasure;* others, of *weakness and infirmity,* &c. But I have taken both *bed* and *night,* in the most simple sense, to signify the *time* and *place* for most composed thoughts: according to the meaning of Psal. iv. 4.

[*b*] Ver. 2. *I will rise now.*] To *rise up* signifies more active diligence than before had been used

Go about the city.] By the *city* may be understood Jerusalem; that is, the whole church of the Jews, whereof it was the head; and therefore the figure of the church of Christ in future times, (Isa. lxii. 5—7. Heb. xii. 22.)

In the streets, &c.] *Schevakim,* which we translate *streets,* are the lesser thoroughfares in the city, or the streets of lesser cities: as *rechoboth* are the greater, wider streets, or rather the *streets* of the royal, capital city: signifying here his search both in the lesser and the greater assemblies of God's people.

[*c*] Ver. 3. *The watchmen that go about,* &c.] By *watchmen* I understand the prophets, and such-like excellent persons who instructed the people, (Ezek. iii. 17. xxxiii. 6, 7.) of whom he asks, if they *saw* him whom he sought after. From which word I gather that he speaks of such as were anciently called *seers:* of whom he saith he was found; that is, they shewed him something of the Messiah.

[*d*] Ver. 4. For so it follows here in this verse, that not long after his discourse with them, he *found him whom his soul loved, i. e.* came to the knowledge, or had a sight and enjoyment of him. In which vision (looking upon him as actually come) he endeavours to retain him, and to bring him into the temple, there to shew him to all the pious worshippers of the Divine Majesty. For that is literally the *house of my mother:* as *cheder corathi (the chamber of her that conceived me)* I take to be the inward part of that house, or the *most holy place.*

[*e*] Ver. 5. And there he expresses his affection to him (that is, to the church, whose passionate desires Solomon here represents in the four foregoing verses), in the same words as he had done before in the foregoing chapter, (ver. 7.) where this verse is already explained.

[*f*] Ver. 6. *Who is this,* &c.] Here begins a new vision, which he had of multitudes of people gathering unto Christ like a cloud of smoke: which fills his *companions* with great admiration. For it is their voice which we read in this verse, where the word *zoth* may be translated either *what,* or *who:* and by the *wilderness,* may be understood the forlorn condition wherein men were before, not only in gentilism, but even in the Jewish estate. Which made it more wonderful that the church should come thus richly adorned (expressed here by the *perfumes* of her garments), to be brought in state and pomp to the king's palace; there to be espoused to him. But all that gave up themselves to him, becoming thereby a holy people, were highly esteemed by him: and therefore compared there to the *pillars of smoke* (as I take it) that went up every day from the altar of burnt-offering, at the temple, beforementioned; and ascended in a straight line, like a firm pillar, that was not in the least moved from its uprightness, though the wind blew never so boisterously. So the Jews report in Pirke Avoth, cap. 5. and in other books: where these are reckoned among the *ten miracles* which were seen in the temple: that *the greatest rain never put out the fire; and the most vehement winds never dispersed, or in the least bent, the smoke:* but it went steadfastly up to heaven. And how acceptable such persons were to Christ, is farther represented by the *sweet perfumes* which were burnt upon the altar of incense. For Solomon, I conceive, here alludes (in the last clause of this verse) to that composition which God ordered to be made of sweet spices for his own service at the tabernacle: which none might presume to imitate, or make use of in other places, (Exod. xxx. 34, 35, &c.)

[*g*] Ver. 7. *Behold his bed,* &c.] And here is farther represented in the same vision, the happy condition of the church (signified by the *bed of Solomon*) in society and fellowship with Christ: of whom Solomon was a type, both in his royal person, and state and marriage; (as appears from Psal. xlv.) whose *bed* or *throne* (for the *thrones* of the eastern kings were in the form of a *bed* or *couch,* wherein more persons than one might sit, Rev. iii. 21.) was secured by the most valiant men in the kingdom; who are said to be *threescore,* a determinate number being named (as the manner is) for an undeterminate. Though some conceive that Solomon doubled the number of that band of mighty men, which was in David's time, which consisted of *thirty,* 2 Sam. xxiii. 13. 23. In the end of which chapter, (ver. 39.) we read also of *thirty and seven* persons, who were of great note for their valour. To whom, if we add the *eleven* princes mentioned in 1 Kings iv. beginning; and the *twelve* great officers, which had the care of making provision for his household in the several provinces, (ver. 7.) they make just this number of *sixty.* And may be looked upon as a figure of that strong guard, which is about the prosperity and happiness of the church: which is defended by angels, who are mighty ones, indeed, and very numerous, (Psal. lxviii. 17.) and all ministering spirits for those that are heirs of salvation; (Heb. i. *ult.*) nay, the most mighty of the heavenly host, it may be easily proved (if this were a place proper for it), are the guardians and protectors of Christianity:

[*h*] Ver. 8. *Because of fear in the night.*] And do all of them unanimously oppose the *spiritual wickedness, i. e.* wicked spirits, *in high places;* who seek to destroy the church, (Ephes. vi. 12.) and may be meant by the *terror of the night,* as the Hebrews expounded Psal. xci. 5. and, being the rulers of the gentile world, stirred them up to persecute Christianity, as destructive to their kingdom of darkness.

[*i*] Ver. 9. *Made himself a chariot.*] But, in spite of all they could do, Christ is here represented under the type of Solomon, as carrying his church triumphantly through the world (for the word *appirjon,* which is never elsewhere used, seems to signify an *open chariot,* in which Solomon, and, perhaps, his queen, rode, to be exposed to the view of every one in the streets of Jerusalem); who beholding her, and the

love of Christ to her, were thereby invited to become members of his church.

Most lexicographers derive this word *appirjon* from a root which signifies to fructify; and therefore will have it to signify a *bed*. But Avenarius, I think, more probably hath derived it from two words, which give it the signification of something carried on wheels: and therefore must denote, at least, a *chariot having a bed or cushion in it*.

The wood of Lebanon] Is cedar; denoting the perpetuity of the gospel; the preaching of which is the *chariot* here mentioned. So Theodoret, by the φορεῖον (as the Greek translates it) ἁγίους Ἀποστόλους νοήσωμεν, &c. *Let us understand* (saith he) *the holy apostles, who carried the name of the Lord before the gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel*, &c. These were literally *made* and formed by Christ *himself:* whereas the chariot wherein Solomon rode, he could only command or direct others to make.

[*k*] Ver. 10. The description of the richness of this chariot of Solomon's follows in this verse: in which we are not to seek, I think, for something in the gospel answering to every part of it, but only to look upon it as setting forth the great splendour of it, and the riches of that grace which God vouchsafed to men therein.

The particular parts of the chariot I have described as well as I could in our language; and inserted in my Paraphrase another translation of the last word *mibbenoth;* which signifies as well *from* or *by*, as *for, the daughters of Jerusalem*. The most ingenious of which it is likely were employed in working that *foot-cloth*, which lay at the bottom of the chariot, with elegant figures, of shepherds and shepherdesses, perhaps, and all their innocent courtships. So that phrase may be interpreted, *paved with love:* but I have contented myself in the Paraphrase to say only, with *lovely figures*.

Some think they find in this chariot an imitation of that seat whereon God himself sat between the cherubims; with which they have compared it: but I cannot be persuaded that Solomon would be so audacious.

[*l*] Ver. 11. Nor do I see any foundation for the fancy of the Hebrew in Seder Olam Rabba, cap. 15. (which the Chaldee paraphrase touches upon) where they make the day of Solomon's espousals to be the next day after the feast which he held seven days, for the consecration of the temple, (1 Kings viii. 66.) Which was *the day of the gladness of his heart*, indeed; but cannot be called his *espousals*. Which was not the day of his coronation neither; for then he did not ride in a chariot, but upon his father's mule: and was not crowned by his mother, but anointed by Zadoc the priest and Nathan the prophet, (1 Kings i. 33, 34.)

The day of his espousals] Therefore was the day when he took Pharaoh's daughter to wife; at which time, it was the manner to crown married persons: and his father being dead, it was done by his mother. Of this custom mention is made by many authors; which the learned reader may find in Bochart's Geographia Sacra, par. ii. lib. i. cap. 25. where he applies that passage in Ezekiel unto this, (xvi. 8. 12.) *When I looked upon thee, behold thy time was the time of love (i. e.* thou wast fit for marriage), *I entered into a covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine; and I put a jewel in thy forehead*, &c. *and a beautiful crown upon thy head*. For the Mischna informs us, that this nuptial crown was in use among the Jews, as well as other nations.

All which I do not see how it is any other way applicable unto Christ, than I have expressed in the Paraphrase. The church, indeed, herself may be said to be his *crown* and joy, in that sense wherein St. Paul saith the Thessalonians were his, (1 Thess. ii. 19.) But this is not to put a *crown* upon him; and the church can in no sense be called his *mother*, especially since she is his *bride*. And therefore herein interpreters strain too much; who ought, I think, to have ascribed that to God the Father in the mystical sense, which is ascribed unto Bath-sheba in the literal.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The first seven verses of this chapter I take to belong to the foregoing: and are the words of the *bridegroom*, who, praising the incomparable beauty of his *spouse*, and assuring her she should still appear more lovely and illustrious, concludes the third scene, as some call it, of this dramatic poem. And then begins a new representation at the eighth verse; which continues to the second verse of this the fifth chapter, and composes the fourth part of this Song. Wherein the *bridegroom* expresses his love to his *spouse*, his esteem of her, and joy in her, in words of greater dearness, and higher kindness, than have been hitherto used. Which she prays may be continued; and he graciously grants, inviting all to partake in their joys.

Bridegroom.

Ver. 1. *BEHOLD, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from Mount Gilead.*] Great is thy beauty, O my beloved, admirable is thy beauty, worthy of men's contemplation. Whom I can liken to nothing better than to a pure and chaste virgin, (2 Cor. xi. 2.) whose modest eyes, fixed only upon him to whom she is espoused, sparkle within her locks, when she is unveiled: and who appears to want none of those comely ornaments, which are wont to set off the natural beauty of the face. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them.*] Part of whose grace lies in the sweetness of the mouth, full of white and even teeth; none of which stand out, or are longer than the rest, but all closely set both above and below in exact order and equality: being firm and sound also, without any breach, or want of so much as one of them. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.*] To which add fine and delicate lips, of a bright and lively crimson colour; with a sweet and charming voice; and cheeks that appear of as pure a white and red, when the veil is off, as the blossoms of pomegranates. See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.*] And all this upon a goodly body, of a proper and tall stature; whose round and well-formed neck resembles that lofty structure of the tower of David, which may be a pattern of other neat and elegant buildings; and is not more adorned with the shields and bucklers of

his worthies, which hang there in great abundance, than it is with pendants, and a necklace of pearl, and other jewels, which have been the treasure of mighty princes. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.*] Below which the two breasts rise up, purely white, exactly round, of a just size and equal bigness: which put me in mind of two young kids, that being formed together, and brought forth at the same time, are so perfectly like, that none can know the one from the other; the tops of whose heads I have seen, at a distance, appear like the teats of these breasts, as they fed in the same field among the lilies. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.*] Such as this is the beauty of my church, as will be seen more fully, when the night of persecution is gone, which hides it from the eyes of worldly men: though, in the mean time, she is most lovely in mine; and no less precious than the mountain and the hill from whence are fetched the most excellent perfumes and the richest spices. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 7. *Thou art fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.*] To say all in one word, thou, my love, art the perfection of beauty; there being a most admirable harmony between the several orders, estates, and degrees of men in the church; and not the least spot or blemish (Ephes. v. 27.) to be found in its constitution. See Annot. [*g*]

Bridegroom.

Ver. 8. *Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards.*] And now that all the world may see I have espoused, nay married, thee unto myself, (Rev. xxi. 2.) come from those horrid mountains whither thou hast fled for safety, (ii. 14. 17.) where, though I was present with thee, yet thou wast not free from danger, but exposed to the rage and cruelty of furious and troublesome men: come, I say, and dwell there no longer; but look down from thence, and behold the goodly heritage, and the pleasant state, that I have prepared for thee. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.*] Thou hast strongly engaged my affection; thou hast endeared thyself unto me, my tenderly-beloved spouse; thou hast entirely possessed thyself of my heart, by that lovely unity which I see between thy pastors, and between the people that live in holy obedience to them. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 10. *How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices.*] Thy love to me and my commandments, O how amiable is it! how doth it endear thee unto me, my beloved spouse! How much more delicious is that love, which thy members have one for another, and for all men, than the best entertainments the world can give! How much more grateful are the rest of thy virtues, than the odours of the richest spices, even of those that are burnt at the altar! See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 11. *Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honey-comb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.*] Nor are thy words less pleasing than thy deeds, the honey that drops of itself from the comb being not more sweet, sincere, and pure, than thy doctrine, O my beloved spouse: which is the delicious food of young and old, of weak and strong, and most powerfully recommended to their affections by the famed holiness of thy life; which, like the strong perfumes that come from the aromatic plants of Libanus, fill all places with the delightful scent thereof. See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 12. *A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.*] For, as a garden well planted, watered, and defended, abounds with all sort of flowers, and with variety of pleasant fruit, so doth my well-beloved spouse, by the singular care and special providence of God over her, with all the fruits of righteousness; admitting none to her mysteries, but those who are pure and holy, and washed from all their defilements. See Annot. [*m*]

Ver. 13. *Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard.*] Which makes the several orders and ranks of thy young novices (such is the exemplary purity of their lives) look like the young sets of pomegranates, and other odoriferous fruit; such as the cyprus and spikenards, which are growing up into a paradise. See Annot. [*n*]

Ver. 14. *Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices.*] Planted only with the like precious herbs, shrubs, and trees to those now mentioned; as saffron, sweet cane, cinnamon, with those that yield frankincense, myrrh, aloes, and the choicest spices: which are not more serviceable to our health or pleasure, than that rare composition of graces which is visible in the church, make her members acceptable unto God, and useful unto men. See Annot. [*o*]

Ver. 15. *A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.*] Whose virtues are preserved in life and vigour by that heavenly doctrine, which flows from me as plentifully and perpetually, as waters do from those springs that break out of the high mountain Libanus: which run continually in a large stream; and, supplying all the gardens in the neighbouring places, keep them fresh and flourishing. See Annot. [*p*]

Spouse.

Ver. 16. *Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.*] O let not then the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, and its manifold gifts, be wanting unto me: but breathe perpetually upon me, as the north and the south winds do upon this garden: and then shall I be a paradise indeed; and not only fill the world with the sweet odour of the knowledge of Christ; but take the boldness to invite him, the beloved of my soul, to come and reap the delightful fruits (ver. 13.) of his own care and labour. See Annot. [*q*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. *Behold, thou art fair.*] The Lord of the church is here introduced, describing the beautiful estate of it, under the person of a lovely virgin: whose elegant features are particularly represented to raise admiration

and love in others, and to give the church the comfort of being so amiable in his eyes, whom no beauty can please but that which is Divine. And they are represented, by comparisons borrowed from the country: which was most suitable to a *bucolic*, or *pastoral* poem: as I have already said this is.

Thou hast doves' eyes.] And, first, her eyes are compared to those of a *dove* (for such reasons as are suggested in the Paraphrase), *when they are unveiled*, as those words *mibbaath letsammatech* may be translated; (of which see ver. 3.) unto which I have had respect in my Paraphrase as well as to our translation, where this phrase is rendered, *within thy locks*.

Thy hair, &c.] Then the hair of this virgin's head is compared unto that of goats, as the next passage is to be translated, by repeating the word *hair* in this manner; *Thy hair is like the hair of a flock of goats*. Thus the people of Israel are said to have brought for the service of the tabernacle, *scarlet, and fine linen, and goats*, that is, *goats' hair*, as we truly translate it, Exod. xxxv. 23. And in the next chapter, (ver. 13.) he made *curtains of goats* (where we supply the word *hair*) for the tent over the tabernacle, according as he had been ordered, (xxv. 4. xxvi. 7.) Upon which passages Abarbinel observes, that Moses makes no mention of *wool*, either of lamb or sheep; because that was vile and contemptible in those countries, in comparison with the hair of goats, which was wont to be shorn, not only there, but in other places: for Aristotle observes the same of the goats of Cilicia. And some of them had a wool, as we may call it, so fine, that it was almost as soft as silk: which was that the women spun for the use of the tabernacle, (Exod. xxxv. 26.) To this sort of hair, perhaps, there may be an allusion in this place, in regard of its *softness*, as well as length and thickness; which is a great commendation of hair in men and women.

But there was also a *coarser* or *harder* sort, with which they made locks and ornaments for the head, when they were bald, or would appear very fine: as Braunius hath observed, in his book about the priests' garments, (lib. i. cap. 9.)

And, in general, it may be observed of hair, that it was always accounted a very great ornament: which made Philostratus, in a letter of his to a youth whom he loved, beseech him by no means to cut it off, ὡς χρυσὸς, ἀνάθημα, καὶ ἄργυρος, οὕτω καὶ τρίχες κομῶσαι, *there being no less beauty in a good head of hair, than in gold, in silver, in pendants, and such-like ornaments*. Which he illustrates by what it contributes to the greatness of several other creatures, as the *lion* and *horse*, &c. and was notably expressed by Lycurgus, when he gave this reason, why he ordered in his laws that his citizens should take care of the growth of their hair, because it made *beautiful persons more comely, and deformed more terrible*; as Plutarch relates in his Apophthegms.

That appear from Mount Gilead.] Gilead was a mountain fit for goats to browse on, as may be seen in Bochart: which shews these last words of this verse should be thus translated: *that ascend from Mount Gilead*, to the higher parts, that is, of that mountain, or of that country.

I should have adventured to compare the apostles and prophets to these two *eyes*; who, being illuminated by the Holy Ghost (represented by a dove), and having no other aim, but sincerely to make Christ and his religion known in the world, resembled the *eyes of doves*; (see ii. 14.) but I did not know to what the *locks* and the *hair* could be handsomely applied; and therefore, I have looked upon these, and the rest that follow, only as parts of those things that make up together a perfect beauty. Theodoret hath made the aptest application, that I can find, which is this: that *hair* signifying what is superfluous, the meaning may be (if there be any of every particular in this description), that *even in human things, and worldly affairs, wherewith we cannot but be sometime perplexed, the church behaves herself laudably and preserves a decorum*.

[*b*] Ver. 2. *Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep.*] Here follows a description of the *teeth*; which are a great part of the beauty of the mouth, as that is of the face. And their beauty consists in their whiteness; in their evenness and just proportion; and in their closeness and firmness: so that there be none wanting, nor any gap between them. Which are all here expressed, and said to be like a *flock of sheep come from the washing*, in respect of whiteness; and as equal as if they had been exactly polished and fitted for their places, in just proportion, by an artificer (so the word we translate *shorn* signifies); they that are below also answering to those above, as if they were *twins*: and none of them *miscarry* (so that which we translate *barren* should be rendered), *i. e.* drops out of the mouth; which is as much as to say, there is a perfect number, as well as order of them.

Now the *teeth* being the instruments whereby we chew our meat, they may be looked upon as an apt emblem of the inferior pastors in the church: who prepare Christian doctrine for the people. Which application, though I have not adventured to make in my Paraphrase (because I take these five first verses to mean no more, but only to set forth the loveliness of the church in general, by the figure of a virgin, of a most accomplished beauty), yet I shall here note, for the help of those whose thoughts lead them that way, that the virtues of such pastors are, *candour, purity, order, concord, exact agreement among themselves, one of them not seeking ambitiously to overtop the rest*.

[*c*] Ver. 3. *Thy lips*, &c.] In the beginning of this verse there is no great difficulty: it being certain that *schani* (the colour of the lips) signifies some very bright and resplendent colour, which strikes the eyes sharply (as it originally seems to import); *viz.* either *scarlet*, as we translate it, or *crimson*, or *purple*: such as the poets call *coral lips*. Whose fineness is here compared to a *thread*; and is another great part of beauty: as a sweet accent of the *voice* also is; nothing being more ungrateful than a tone that is coarse and clownish.

If any list to apply these particularly to something in the church, the *lips* may be thought to signify the teachers in the church, who delivered the doctrine they had learned from the higher ministers; who had prepared it for them, and, by them, for the people. And the *voice* signifies their excellent manner of preaching: insinuating into the hearts of those that heard them; being accompanied with great modesty and humility, though full of authority and power. Unto which only the last clause of this verse can be applied; which is this:

Thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.

Where two or three words puzzle interpreters. First,

that which we translate *temples;* which are not reckoned as a part of the beauty of the face, especially being covered by the *locks:* and why they should be likened to a *slice of a pomegranate,* is hard to tell. Grotius, therefore, by the *temples* understands the *cheeks* (as the Vulgar doth), which, in regard of their redness, are like to the grains of kernels within a pomegranate. So the Chaldee, indeed, interprets the other word, a *piece of a pomegranate:* when he thus glosses, *they are replenished* (*viz.* just and pious men, to whom he applies it) *with precepts, as a pomegranate: i.e.* as a pomegranate is with kernels or grains with which it abounds, and to which that interpreter, no doubt, hath respect.

But our learned Dr. Castell hath, out of the neighbouring languages, more clearly explained both these words, and the last also: and hath made them all easy and natural, by shewing that the whole clause is thus most exactly translated: As the *flower of the pomegranate, so are thy cheeks without a veil.* So he translates the last words, which we met with'al before, (ver. 1.) *mibbaath letsammatech,* not *within thy locks,* but *without a veil.* That is, When thy veil is laid aside, thy cheeks appear of a most lovely colour; for such is that of the pomegranate flower; the purest white and red, most exactly mixed. (Orat. 5. in Schola Theolog. p. 37.)

[*d*] Ver. 4. *Thy neck is like,* &c.] The *neck,* being compared to the tower of that goodly fortress, which David made upon Mount Zion, which overtopped all the rest of the buildings of the city of Jerusalem, denotes, among other things, the tallness of the whole body.

Built for an armoury.] This tower is said to be built *letalpijoth* (for *an armoury* we render it), which the LXX. knew not what to make of, and therefore retain the Hebrew word: and others do but guess at its meaning; having no certain rule, from whence to fetch its original. Aquila translates it *fortifications;* but Symmachus translates it *heights:* which last I have followed, adding another signification also derived from *alaph,* to *teach* or *instruct.*

Thousand bucklers.] This tower, it seems, was adorned with the *shields* and *bucklers* of those mighty men mentioned 1 Sam. xxiii. and such-like worthies: with which Grotius ingeniously compares those precious stones, which are wont to be the ornament of the neck. But what answers to this in the body of the church I know not; unless we admit the opinion of R. Solomon, and others of that nation, who will have this to be the place where the Sanhedrin had a room, called in their language *liskath haggazith, the chamber* or *parlour of square stones* (which some interpreters have thought to be the meaning of *built letalpijoth,* with square stones), where judgment was administered, and their discipline preserved; which was the strength and support of the nation, as the general council of the apostles and elders, mentioned Acts xv. was of the Christian church: who settled all doubts and controversies, as future councils were to do, and thereby maintained the church in order and peace. From which Theodoret doth not much differ, when he saith the church hath many shields, whereby it is defended. *For thou art armed with all the weapons of the Spirit* (saith he, paraphrasing upon these words), *whereby thou easily woundest thy enemies,* &c. *and sometimes doth refel them by the prophets, sometimes by the apostles; and layest open their weakness.*

[*e*] Ver. 5. *Thy two breasts,* &c.] The two *paps* rise upon the breast, like lilies from the ground: among which, if we conceive two red kids feeding, that were twins and perfectly alike, they appeared like the *nipples* or *teats* upon the paps, to those that beheld them afar off. Thus Bochart explains this comparison: which sets forth the exact proportion, and the pure complexion of the *breasts;* unto which, most think the two Testaments, the Old and the New, very aptly answer in the Christian church, just as R. Solomon hereby understands the two tables of stone in the Jewish. But they forgot that this is a description of the parts of the church (not of things belonging to it), and can be applied to nothing, that I can think of, but the two orders of preachers, that were, one among the Jewish Christians, and the other among the gentiles, as Gregory the Great expounds it: who think these are called *twins,* because of their perfect agreement and concord in the Christian doctrine: though one of them bent their endeavours most towards the conversion of the Jews, and the other of the gentiles. And, indeed, they that taught the first rudiments of Christian doctrine, went forth by pairs, as we read Luke x. where Christ is said to send them forth *by two and two;* to admonish them how necessary their concord was; and that they had need to be assistant, all they could, one to the other in such a difficult work.

[*f*] Ver. 6. *Mountain of myrrh,* &c.] Here now the description stops, and proceeds no farther to the lower members of the church: which are not particularly commended; but it is only intimated that, in conjunction with their guides and directors, they made up a beautiful body; though for the present obscured by the night of persecution, as the first words of this verse may be applied. Which body might be well compared to a *mountain of myrrh, and hill of frankincense;* that is, to Mount Moriah and Jerusalem, say the Hebrew (and so the church is called the *New Jerusalem* in the Revelation), where the sweet incense, made of these and other spices, (Exod. xxx. 34.) was continually burnt in the temple.

I know it is commonly thought, that other mountains (afterward mentioned, ver. 8.) are here meant: about which I shall not dispute. But only observe, that these two, *myrrh* and *frankincense,* were among the most precious spices of those countries (and therefore here mentioned), as appears by what we read in Athenæus, (lib. i. Deipnosoph. cap. 3.) who, speaking of the noble entertainments which were made by several persons that overcame in the Olympics, tells us, that Empedocles, being a Pythagorean, and eating no flesh, when he won the prize, caused an ox to be made of *myrrh* and *frankincense,* and other precious spices, which he divided among the spectators. And (cap. 8.) he puts these two among those things which were accounted τρυφὴ, *delicacy.* And Hermippus, relating what places were most famous for several things, saith, ἀπὸ δ' οὖν Συρίας λιβανωτὸν, *that frankincense came out of Syria,* (cap. 21.) The verses also of Archestratus (lib. iii. p. 101.) make mention of Syria, and say these were used for perfumes at feasts. The same I observe in other places of that author; and therefore have made the allusion here only to the preciousness of these things; which were no where so excellent as in those countries. And I have taken this verse to be still in praise of the before described beauty: for it is evident, from the following verse, he had not yet done with that matter.

[*g*] Ver. 7. *Thou art all fair,* &c.] And here, to comprehend all that could be said, he enlarges the commendation which he began withal, (ver. 1.) and concludes in these words, that there was no defect in any part: but altogether they made up a complete beauty without the least speck of deformity. Which is not to be applied to every particular person in the church: but, as I have taken it in the Paraphrase, to the admirable constitution of the whole, in which there was no imperfection.

[*h*] Ver. 8. *Come with me from Lebanon,* &c.] Here now begins a new representation; as appears by this, that the style wherein the *bridegroom* speaks is altered; she who hitherto hath been called his *love* or *friend,* being now called his *spouse,* and never before: though very frequently in the following part of the Song. Which hath moved interpreters, I suppose, to use this name throughout, rather than the other: as the higher and most excellent title.

Theodoret, therefore, here begins his third book very judiciously: and we may look upon this as a description of the church, coming out of the state of persecution: and receiving greater testimonies of her Saviour's love than ever. For coming from the top of high *mountains,* where there were *lions' dens,* and where *leopards* inhabited, cannot well signify any thing else, than coming from places where they were in danger to be devoured by their persecutors, who are compared to *lions* in many places of Scripture.

As for the mountains themselves, they are well known where they were. Only *Amana* some have fancied to be that mountain in Cilicia called *Amanus:* which is reckoned among the highest; and joined by Ælian with Libanus and Carmel. We read also that there were tigers and panthers, &c. in this mountain; which hath been brought to countenance this opinion. But Judea and the neighbouring places being the scene of this poem, we are not to go so far off as Cilicia to seek for Amana: for, as Shenir and Hermon were but parts of the same mountains; so Amana was a part of Libanus, as Bochartus hath observed in his Canaan, (lib. i. cap. 5.) And though the lower parts of this mountain Libanus was very pleasant, yet the top of it, which is here spoken of, was horrid, and inhabited with wild beasts. From whence the *spouse* is invited to come into more delightful and secure places: for she is compared presently after to a *garden* or *paradise,* (ver. 12, 13, &c.) And it is no wonder Solomon should have the state of the Christian church in trouble thus represented to him; it being very suitable to the state of the church of the Jews, when it was first formed; being then pressed by Pharaoh, and many other enemies afterward, before they came to Canaan.

[*i*] Ver. 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart,* &c.] The first word of this verse, *libbavtini* (which is not to be found any where else), signifies some extraordinary motion in the heart. And is translated by some, *Thou hast wounded my heart;* by the LXX. (which we follow) *Thou hast taken away my heart:* but may as well be translated, *Thou hast taken possession of my heart;* and deeply engaged my affection. Which is expressed by the addition of another name for her whom he called *spouse* in the foregoing verse, and here also calls *sister.* Which is only a word of tenderness and endearment, used by husbands to their wives; as appears by the book of Tobit; where Raguel calls his wife Edna his sister, (vii. 16.) and Tobias calls Sara by the same name, after he had married her, (vii. 4. 7.)

One of thine eyes, &c.] All the difficulty here is, what may be thought to be meant by *one of her eyes, and one chain of her neck.* Some take *eyes* to signify faith and charity; others, the church of the Jews and gentiles; and then *one eye* must signify one glance, one look, of the eyes: but nothing pleases me better than the old interpretation of Alcuinus, who by the word *one* understands *oneness,* or *unity:* and by the *eyes,* (as ver. 1.) the pastors and guides of the church: and by the one *wreath of hair about the neck,* the pious unity of the people subject unto them.

It may be interpreted also, *the least glance I have of thee and of thy beauty, mightily engages my love to thee;* for the eyes are the very *seat of love,* as abundance of authors express it.

[*k*] Ver. 10. *How fair is thy love.*] The *love,* or rather *loves* (as it is in the Hebrew), which is here extolled, may signify our love to God, and unto one another. And *ointments* be applied to all the graces which flow from thence.

[*l*] Ver. 11. *Thy lips distil,* &c.] That which distils from the lips, as honey from the comb, can be nothing but pure and most delicious doctrine; delivered in such a manner, as to invite all to taste of it. For this by all sorts of authors is compared to honey; and made Xenophon be called the *Attic,* and Sappho the *Pierian bee:* because of the sweetness of his orations, and of her poems. When the rare eloquence of Plato is said to have been predicted by *bees,* which came and sat in his mouth when he was an infant: which is reported also, by no mean authors, of Pindar, Lucan, and St. Ambrose.

Honey and milk are under thy tongue.] This signifies the same thing; for these were anciently the food of infants; and may denote that the church hath instruction for all sorts. So wide from the truth is the exposition of the doctors in Maimonides, (Porta Mosis, p. 83.) that this milk and honey being said to lie under the tongue, signifies the concealment of such truths as are very sweet, till men be fit to receive them.

The smell of thy garments.] *Garments,* wherewith we are clothed, signify, in the New Testament, our whole conversation: and their *perfume* therefore denotes not only the excellency of the Christian life; but its being known also every where.

Like the smell of Lebanon.] From the trees in the forest of Lebanon came many sweet spices; particularly frankincense; from which some think it took its name of *Lebanon;* though others think rather from *laban,* white, because of the snow that lay perpetually upon the top of this mountain.

[*m*] Ver. 12. *A garden enclosed.*] In the forest about this mountain Lebanon, Solomon built himself a house; which we find described, 1 Kings vii. 2, &c. unto which, no doubt, there belonged a garden, with springs, and fountains, or receptacles of water; and all sorts of trees, and plants, and flowers, that might make it delightful. Unto which, I conceive, he hath respect in this and in the following verses.

I know that very good authors think he here describes a perfect virgin, *like a garden newly enclosed, in which no seed hath been sown:* as the doctors speak in Pirke Eliezer: (cap. 21.) which hath made some Christian writers apply this to the care of the church, to preserve herself pure and undefiled, &c. But it is more agreeable to what goes before,

and follows after, to expound it as Theodoret doth of the church bringing forth not only the fruits of godliness and virtue, but all sorts and variety of fruit; like an excellent garden: and therefore guarded by the singular care and providence of her Lord and owner, from tyrants and heretics; who, like wild beasts or thieves, would destroy or deflower her.

A spring shut up, &c.] The same meaning hath *a spring shut up*, and *a fountain sealed;* that the waters may be preserved from dirt and filth: which cannot be thrown or fall into them, to trouble them, and make them muddy, when they are so secured; but they flow purely. And, indeed, in the prophetical language, the flourishing condition of the church, after it hath been in affliction, is set forth by the planting of a wilderness, with all sorts of the best trees; and by making fountains break forth, and waters flow therein, (Isa. xli. 18, 19. li. 2.)

The LXX. (according to the Vatican copy, and that which Theodoret follows) and the Vulgar Latin, take the second comparison here to be the same with the first; reading it thus, *A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a garden enclosed*, &c. (just like ver. 9. 11.) reading, it seems, in the Hebrew, *gan, a garden*, where we now read *gal, a spring*. But this doth not at all alter the sense, and therefore need not trouble the reader.

It is possible that in the last words of the verse, a *fountain sealed*, there may be a description of the Christian *font*, or baptism: to which none were admitted, but such as sincerely renounced all wickedness; resolving and promising to lead a holy life. Which sense Theodoret may be thought to have expressed, when he saith, the church is compared to a *fountain sealed*, ὡς μὴ πᾶσιν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀξίοις προκειμένην, *as not lying exposed to all comers, but only to those who are worthy*. Though his next words seem to confine this passage to the mysteries, in the other sacrament of Christ's body and blood; which they only that are already initiated in the Christian church can partake of; and not after their initiation wallow again in filthiness; but live accurately, or purify themselves by repentance, if they fall into any sin.

St. Cyprian makes use of this verse, to prove the *unity of the church*, not only in this book upon that subject, but in several of his Epistles; saying, *If the church be a garden enclosed, and a fountain sealed; how can any man enter into that garden, or drink of that fountain*, who is not in the church? &c. (Epist. 69. 74, 75. edit. Oxon.)

Cotovicus, in his Itinerary, says, that there is a fountain three miles from Beth-lehem southward, called by this name of *fountain sealed:* to which he went, and was told, that water still runs from thence in pipes to the place where Solomon's temple stood. But he himself intimates, that herein he follows an uncertain report.

[*n*] Ver. 13. *Thy plants*, &c.] By these *schelachim*, *young plants*, or *shoots* and *scions* (as the word signifies), we may well understand those whom the apostle calls νεόφυτοι, who had newly received Christianity; and are here represented as a goodly *nursery of pomegranates*. A fruit in that country very delicious, and no less useful many ways: for it was of a grateful smell, and had a winy juice, very refreshing; and therefore much desired in those hot places. Theodoret also thinks that hereby is set forth, the great variety of Christians in the church; or, as his words are, *the many orders of Christians that shall be saved*. For there is one order of *virgins;* another of *widows;* another of *married people;* as there are also, *rich* and *poor, masters* and *servants*, &c. who all have their several places and stations in one and the same church; as the grains of the pomegranates lie in their several *cells*, and distinct *closets* (as they may be called), and yet are all contained in the same shell, and all compose one body.

Camphire] Of *Copher*, which we translate *camphire;* see chap. i. 14. where it is joined with *nard*, as it is here. Of which *(i. e.* of *nard)* there were several kinds; and therefore a word of the *plural* number is here used; as a word of the *singular* in the beginning of the next verse; which we in English express by the same word *spikenard* in both places.

[*o*] Ver. 14. *Saffron, calamus*, &c.] Most of the names of these fragrant shrubs or trees which we read in the Hebrew text, are the very same with those now in use in our and most other languages. The first of them, *carcom (saffron)* being not much different from *crocus*, from whence that mountain in Cilicia called Corycus had its name; where the best crocus in the world then grew. The next *canna* (which we translate *calamus*) is a sweet cane or reed. *Cinnamon* also retains the same name: as do *myrrh* (which grew only in the midst of Arabia among the Sabeans) and *aloes*, which dropped from a shrub in those countries; and was reckoned among the *prime spices*, as the last words of this verse are very well translated.

Chief spice.] In the Hebrew the words are, *the top* (or *the head) of aromatics:* which signifies the most excellent spices. Just as the *top of myrrh*, Exod. xxx. 23. signifies the best and purest myrrh; and the *top* (or *head) of oil*, Psal. cxli. 5. the most excellent oil. I shall only note farther, that *frankincense, myrrh, calamus, cinnamon* (called there κίνδος), are thus joined together by an ancient poet in Athenæus, lib. ix. cap. 15. Where Mnesimachus, in a poem of his called Hippotrophos, making a description of a great supper, which was a marriage feast, saith at the end of it,

Ὀσμὴ σεμνὴ μυκτῆρα δονεῖ
Λιβάνου, μάκρου (it should be κρόκου, I suppose) σμύρνης, &c.

Where σεμνὴ (the attribute of smell) which we commonly translate *venerable;* and is so rendered in the ancient Glossary, signifies *most excellent*. For by that word the LXX. translate the Hebrew *negidim*, Prov. viii. 6. *excellent* (or *princely) things*. And so noble was the smell which the spices gave, that the poet saith it *shaked the nostrils; i. e.* strongly affected them, and stirred up in the brain a brisk sense of pleasure.

I do not think fit to seek for any thing in the church, particularly answering to every one of these excellent spices, as interpreters do: but look upon them only as representing in general the incomparable virtues of the church, and its acceptableness unto God. Or, that there are in the church all things necessary to salvation: for rare unguents, and other compositions, were made of the blossoms, fruit, or seeds of these shrubs: conducing much to health and long life.

[*p*] Ver. 15. *A fountain of gardens*, &c.] This verse Theodoret judiciously connects with the foregoing; after this manner: ἔχει δὲ καὶ πηγήν, *and it (i. e.* this *paradise* or *orchard*, as we translate it) *hath also a fountain*.

A fountain of gardens, and wall of living waters] Are the same thing; as Bochartus hath observed in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 18. Where he shews that *beer*, which we translate *pit* or *well*, signifies a fountain, as much as *maajan*. Libanus abounds with such springs (as all great mountains do), and particularly there is at the foot of it an excellent spring, which grows presently into a river, that waters the whole plain between that and Tripolis, with a good stream, whereby the vineyards, olive-yards, fig-yards, and gardens, which there were very numerous, were all supplied. Unto which Theodoret compares the evangelical doctrine, (according to that of our blessed Saviour's, John iv. 10. 14.) only he adds also the law; making *fountain* and *well* in this verse two distinct things; and by the latter imagining the law to be denoted, because things lay there deep and secret, as in a pit.

[*q*] Ver. 16. *Awake, O north wind,* &c.] The same great person thinks the *north wind* is here commanded to arise, merely that it might be gone (as being pernicious to fruit) and give place to the *south wind*, which is only invited to *come* and *blow upon the garden*, with its soft, gentle, and benign breath. But most interpreters take it otherways; and some imagine that these two, being the most vehement winds in those countries, are called upon to *blow;* that by their strong shaking of the aromatic plants, they might make them send forth their odours the more plentifully. But it seems more reasonable to think, that these two winds were most profitable in their turns, for these two purposes. First, the *north wind* was useful to close the pores of the trees, and shut up their effluviums; that they might not spend themselves too much, and be exhausted by perpetual evaporation: and then the *south wind* coming in due season, opened and relaxed them again: making the aromatic gums drop freely; and the sweet odours fly more actively abroad.

And if this garden to which Solomon here alludes, had the same situation which the maps and charts give to that at Jerusalem (which they place on the east side of the city, having the wall on the west), these two winds here mentioned were those which alone were desirable. The east being biting and blasting, not only in Egypt, (Gen. xli. 6.) but in Judea also, (Ezek. xix. 12.) and in Assyria; (Jonah iv. 8.) and therefore they defended their fruits against it, that they might not be exposed to it.

Let my beloved come, &c.] There is no doubt but this conclusion of the chapter is the voice of the *spouse*, praying her beloved to favour and prosper his own plantation, for his sake as well as for hers, that he might not lose what he himself had designed, and so happily begun and settled in such beautiful order; but take the pleasure of seeing it grow to perfection.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

The first verse belonging (as was said before in the Argument of the fourth chapter) to the foregoing representation; a new one begins ver. 2. which, continuing to the end of this chapter, makes the fifth part of this pastoral. Wherein is represented how soon our spirits flag, and grow weary of the most heavenly delights; nay, how drowsy the best minds sometimes are, and how insensible of God's love. For the *spouse* is introduced (ver. 2, 3.) as in a slumber; and not so ready, as formerly, to comply with his gracious motions. At which the *bridegroom* takes not such distaste, as to leave her in that dulness; but awakes her out of it, to such a lively sense of her negligence, that she applies herself to seek his favour with greater earnestness than ever, (ver. 4—6.) The sense of which, though she could not presently recover, (ver. 6—8.) yet she expresseth the greatest passion for him, and the highest admiration of him: in a rare description which she makes (ver. 10. to the end of the chapter) of his beauteous excellences and perfections.

Bridegroom.

Ver. 1. *I AM come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.*] I am well pleased to see the fruitfulness of my garden, and therefore have not denied thy request, my tenderly beloved spouse; but am present in it, and have brought it to such perfection, that it hath produced many excellent persons more precious than myrrh, and all the spices beforenamed: with whose service I am not only well pleased, but rejoice in the purity of their doctrine, and of their lives; inviting all that bear any love to me, both in heaven and in earth, to rejoice and to be exceeding glad together with me. See Annot. [*a*]

Spouse.

Ver. 2. *I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.*] I heard these gracious words, though I was not perfectly awake, and knew it was his voice, and not the voice of a stranger, (John x. 5.) which called upon me, and that with importunity, (Rev. iii. 20.) saying, Give me free admission into thy best affections; why dost thou delay, who art so very dear to me, so entirely beloved by me, who hast consented to love me above all things, and to keep thyself holy and undefiled by loving me alone: which I have long desired; and taken much pains, and endured great hardships, to win thy love. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?*] But so stupidly dull and drowsy was I at this time, that I did not answer his kindness, as it deserved: but made unmannerly excuses, and desired I might not be disturbed, now that I was taking my repose, and could not without difficulty leave my bed, and my beloved rest; the sweetness of which I had begun to taste. See Annot. [c]

Ver. 4. *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.*] And yet such is the kindness of him who is worthy of all love, he did not presently leave me to myself, but first raised me out of my slumber, by letting me know he was not well pleased with me; and making me sensible of the danger of such delays: which put me in such a commotion, that I was in great anguish of mind, and even quivered and shaked with fear, and grief, and sorrow. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *I rose up to open to my beloved, and my hands*

dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.] Whereby I was not quite dejected; but only excited to shake off my sloth, and to make the more haste to acknowledge his goodness, and embrace his gracious motions to me: unto which I applied myself with zealous endeavours, resolving to entertain him with the most ardent love, and with the highest expressions of my esteem of him and of his favour. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.*] But, though I thus repented of my negligence; yet, see the lamentable effects thereof; for when I had thus disposed my heart, and set it wide open to receive his commands, my beloved had withdrawn his gracious presence, and was gone quite away out of my sight: which made me even sink down and die with fear, that I should not recover him again; especially when I called to mind those many words of grace, wherewith he made his addresses to me; calling me (ver. 2.) his sister, his love, his dove, his undefiled: with which I was now affected too late; for I sought him diligently, but could not find him; I beseeched and entreated him to return, but received no answer from him. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 7. *The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.*] This, though it was very bitter to me, yet did not utterly discourage me, but still I continued to seek him every where, as I had done heretofore; (iii. 3.) but they who formerly instructed me, and directed me unto him, now fell upon me with grievous reproofs, nay, reproaches for my fault; which cut me to the very heart: nay, they whose office it was to preserve the city of God in peace and safety, exposed me to open shame, and the foulest disgrace. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 8. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.*] So I turned myself to those of my neighbours and familiar acquaintance, who were awakened by my cries to come and see what the matter was; and conjured them, as they would answer it to God, that if they met with my beloved, they would let him know—what shall I say? what shall I desire you to tell him? but that I do not enjoy myself, now that I want his company: nor can be well, till I recover his love again. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?*] And some of them had so much compassion upon me, as to interest themselves so far in my sorrows, as to inquire into the cause of them: and how they might be assistant unto me in their cure: for they asked me, Wherein doth thy beloved excel other excellent persons? he is very lovely, no doubt, because beloved of thee, who art the most amiable of all other women; but what is his pre-eminence, wherein do those, who are worthy of the greatest love, fall short of him? that thou art thus solicitous about him, and layest such a severe charge upon us, to assist thee in thy search of him? See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 10. *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.*] To whom I replied, My beloved is that great Son of David, of whom you have heard: who is of a princely form, having admirable beauty and sweetness, mixed with equal majesty and brightness; dazzling the eyes of those that behold him; chose by God to do the greatest things; and bring all nations into his obedience. See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 11. *His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven.*] And therefore wears a crown of pure gold upon his head; from whence his curled locks hang down upon his brow; which are of such a shining black that they add an excellent grace and greatness to his royal beauty. See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 12. *His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set.*] His eyes are sparkling, and yet mild; like those of milk-white doves, when they are highly delighted, as they sit by the river's side, or other places where there is abundance of water. See Annot. [*m*]

Ver. 13. *His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh.*] The lovely down also upon his cheeks is no less grateful; rising there like spices when they first appear out of their beds; or like the young buds of aromatic flowers in the paradise before described: where the purple lilies are not more beautiful than his lips; from whence flow words more precious and more pleasant than the richest and most fragrant myrrh. See Annot. [*n*]

Ver. 14. *His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.*] And as he hath the majesty of a prince, so he hath the compassion of a priest: and therefore clothed with such a vest as the high-priest wears when he ministers before God, and is adorned with the ephod unto which the breast-plate with all its precious gems is constantly annexed. See Annot. [*o*]

Ver. 15. *His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.*] His thighs also are covered with fine linen, which makes them look like pillars of the whitest marble; over which the holy robe is thrown, with golden bells at the bottom of them: all which are so contrived for beauty and glory, that his aspect, when he appears in these flowered vestments, is no less stately and great than the forest of Lebanon; whose goodly cedars do not more excel all other trees, than he doth all other men. See Annot. [*p*]

Ver. 16. *His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*] So you would say, as well as I, if you did but hear him speak, or if he did but breathe upon you; and, to say all in one word, there is nothing wanting to make him the desire of all nations; nor any thing in him but what is desirable: and therefore do not wonder, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, that I am thus concerned about him, and restless till I find him; for this is the true portraiture of my beloved, this is the character of him who, by owning me for such, gives me leave to call him, *my friend.* See Annot. [*q*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. Unto that invitation which is made by the spouse in the latter end of the foregoing chapter, the bridegroom here gives an answer: and testifies his acceptance,

by coming to taste the fruit of his garden, nay, to make a feast in it; of which he calls his friends and companions, after the manner of those countries, to be partakers. His receiving fruit from his garden is expressed in these words, *I have gathered my myrrh*, with the rest of the spices mentioned in the former chapter. Then follows the feast (which they always made when they gathered the fruits of the earth), in these words, *I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey*, &c. Which is put instead of all other things, because it was one of the greatest entertainments of those countries. As appears from hence, that it was among the presents sent to Joseph when viceroy of Egypt, (Gen. xliii. 11.) and brought to David by the great men of the country, as part of his provision, while he dwelt among them in his banishment, (2 Sam. xvii. 29.) and is mentioned also by Homer as the entertainment which Hecamede gave Nestor and Patroclus; before whom she set *green*, or *fresh*, *honey*.

And as that comprehends all royal dainties that were to be eaten, so *wine* and *milk* all the liquors at the feast: whereby is represented the joy he took in the fruit of his garden. In which joy he would have all good men, and angels themselves, (Luke xv. 7. 10.) to participate in the highest measure; that their joy, as our Lord speaks, might be full. For that is the meaning of *Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.*

I have not adventured to be very particular in specifying the things to which these expressions may be applied; but have only mentioned the evangelical doctrine, and the good works of Christians. If by *myrrh and spices*, any special thing be designed, I should think it is the *martyrs;* who offered up themselves most acceptable sacrifices unto Christ, and made greater joy in heaven than the mere repentance of a sinner could do. And the joy that Christ took in such victorious souls as laid down their lives for him, nay, did but heartily entertain his doctrine; is expressed by their feasting with him, Rev. iii. 20.

The last words, *eat, O friends, drink*, &c. may soberly be applied to the eucharist: where we feast with Christ on his sacrifice, and he feasts with us, beholding our love to him and one to another.

[*b*] Ver. 2. Here now begins a new *scene* or part of this pastoral Song; wherein Solomon represents himself as having lost that clear sight of the Messiah, which he had in the foregoing vision, chap. iii. 4. (for they could not always keep up their minds to such a pitch of contemplation.) But falling into a trance, thought he heard his voice (though he saw not his person) speaking to his spouse. Whom Solomon conceives to be in the same condition, wherein he then was himself; and to hear those words spoken, (ver. 1.) between sleeping and waking. So the first words of this verse signify, *I sleep, but my heart waketh:* the same with those of Balaam, Numb. xxiv. 4. *falling* (asleep) *but having my eyes open.* In which condition the Greeks describe their Saturn; of whom they say, κομώμενος ἔβλεπε καὶ ἐγρηγορὼς ἐκοιμᾶτο, *sleeping he saw, and waking he slept.*

She having therefore but an imperfect sense of his kindness to her, and presence with her, he awakens her to attend more livelily to his love; which he was desirous more fully to discover; and therefore calls upon her by more names of endearment than ever. For here are *four* put together, the following rising still higher than the foregoing. And he represents (after the manner of lovers) what he had suffered to gain her affection: which seems to me to be the meaning of the last words, *My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* Wherein he is represented as a beautiful Nazarite, having bushy hair, and many locks (as Samson had), who having travelled all night to visit her, was thereby very wet. For there were two sorts of dew; the *morning dew*, which was soon gone, (Hosea xiii. 3.) and that *dew which fell in the night*, and lay long, and wet those who were in it very much: whereby it signified in Scripture, hardships and great afflictions, (Dan. iv. 25.)

There are those indeed who, by *dew*, understand the evangelical doctrine, by which innumerable souls were begotten unto Christ, as David prophesied, (Psal. cx. 3.) But this is not agreeable to what follows; and their reason for this exposition is not true, that *dew* is always taken in a good sense: for I have shewn the contrary: and *the dropping* of the prophets (a metaphor taken from *dew*) is their prophesying *against a place*, and threatening judgments to come upon it, (Ezek. xxi. 2. Amos vi. 16.) which makes me think that Solomon here rather alludes to the last verse of the hundred and tenth Psalm (if he had that Psalm in his eye), which predicts the troubles and afflictions of the Messiah, *by drinking of the brook in the way.*

If this exposition of this difficult verse be not allowed, it may be supposed that the Messiah is here represented as coming in the person and condition of a poor man, to beg entertainment, and having not any where to lay his head (as our Lord speaks), was thereby exposed to the cold air, &c. Which will make this a commendation of charity to the church; shewing also the danger of neglecting it.

[*c*] Ver. 3. And then this verse agrees perfectly with what we read in the parable, Luke xi. 7. Where the good man of the house was unwilling to be troubled, even by his friend, that came to beg his assistance, when he was going to compose himself to rest. But I take it to be a description of the dulness, which is sometimes apt to creep upon the most excellent minds; who in some tempers are so listless, as not to be much affected with the best motions that are made to them. Of which infirmity Solomon, having had many examples in the history of his own nation, might well conceive the spouse herself to be backward to entertain that grace which was offered to her.

There are no difficulties in the words; which signify plainly, that she, having composed herself to rest, and being half asleep, was unwilling to be disturbed. For going into bed, she had put off her clothes, and washed her feet, as the manner was, that no filth, which they had contracted in the day-time (they wearing sandals only, not shoes as we do), might foul the sheets: and it would have been a trouble to do all this over again; which is the meaning of the last words, *How shall I defile them? i. e.* I cannot easily persuade myself to it.

I shall only, therefore, set down the pious note of Theodoret upon these words: "Let us learn from hence, what mischief sloth and laziness do, and in what troubles and pains they engage us. For the spouse here excusing herself, and not being willing presently to rise to the bridegroom, is compelled a little while after, not only to rise and run down to the door, but to run through the city, and wander about the streets, and fall among the watchmen, and by

them to be wounded; and after all could scarce find her beloved: to whom, if she had presently hearkened, and obeyed his heavenly call, she had avoided all these inconveniences."

There are those, not only among us, but also in the Romish church, who apply all this laziness to the state of the church after the time of the great Constantine. For which I see no warrant; but think we may rather apply it to those churches, who, presently after our Saviour's departure to heaven, left their first love, and grew cold, as we read in the second and third chapters of the Revelation. For it seems probable, by the sixth chapter of the book in the beginning of it, that here he speaks of particular societies, not of the whole body of the church.

[*d*] Ver. 4. Yet, such is the infinite goodness of the Divine Nature, he immediately represents the Messiah, as not provoked by this neglect, wholly to cast off his spouse; but rather stretching forth his hand to awaken her out of this security. For so it follows, *He put in his hand by the hole; i. e.* at the *window*, or *casement;* as if he would draw her out of her bed: or, as it may be interpreted, in a threatening manner, to punish her for her sloth. For so *putting forth the hand* signifies, to do some execution, 1 Sam. xxvi. 9. 11. 23. Which agrees with what follows, that presently she was mightily moved thereby, and more than awakened, being full of solicitude, and fear, and grief, and trouble. Which shews, indeed, that she did not intend to deny, but only to delay him: and yet he took this so ill, as to put her in great fear of some danger from it, (as our Saviour doth in his letters to the churches, Rev. ii. 5. 16. 22, 23, &c.) For the word *bowels* signifies the affections and passions; and the Hebrew word *hanu*, which we translate *was moved*, signifies *made a noise*, or *was tumultuous:* and therefore denotes the passion of trouble and grief, and of fear also; nay, of great fear and perplexity. For so St. Jerome here renders it, *My belly trembled;* as he doth in Ezek. vii. 16. where it is applied to doves, (to whom the spouse was here compared, ver. 2.) and we translate it *mourning;* but it should be rather *trembling like doves.* For that is their nature, (Hos. xi. 11.) all authors observing them to be exceeding timorous: and therefore so it may be translated here, *I was so full of trouble, that I quivered like a dove.*

Others by *putting forth the hand*, understand the touches he gives by his Holy Spirit: which doth not contradict what I have said; threatenings being employed by him for that purpose.

[*e*] Ver. 5. And having had this glance of him, (whose voice only she heard before, ver. 2.) she starts up immediately, and endeavours to correct her error. And is here represented as making such haste to open the door, that she broke the vessel of myrrh, which she snatched up, when she rose; intending therewith to anoint, and refresh his head, which was wet with dew. Or rather her hands shaked in that panic fear wherein she was: and so she spilt some of the myrrh, and it ran about her fingers. By which is denoted the great speed she made to shake off her sloth, now she saw her danger; and the fear that came upon her, lest she should lose her beloved: to whom she now resolved to express the greatest affection imaginable. For it was not barely *myrrh*, (which was one of the most excellent spices, John xix. 39.) but the most *precious myrrh*, which she took up to carry to him. So *mur ober* signifies; which we well translate *sweet-smelling myrrh:* but, word for word is *current myrrh.* Either in that sense wherein money is called current, (Gen. xxiii. 16.) as some fancy; or, as Rasi thinks, because the spirit, that is, the odour of it, diffused itself round about the place where it was; that is, was exceeding fragrant: or, as Bochart will have it, was that which *wept* (as they speak), and dropped from the tree of itself; which as it was the most unctuous, so was the richest and best for all manner of uses. See his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 22. And besides this, Theophrastus observes, that out of myrrh, being beaten, there flowed an oil, called στακτή, which was very precious: as I find in Athenæus, lib. xv. cap. 11. And accordingly the Chaldee and Aquila translate *ober* in this place, *choice* myrrh; Symmachus πρωτεῖαι, the *prime*, from whom the Vulgar, the *most approved myrrh.*

[*f*] Ver. 6. But notwithstanding her repentance, she was thus far punished for her sloth, that her beloved absented himself from her, for a time: and she could not hear the least tidings from him, or notice of him. Which cast her into such an excess of grief and fear, that she swooned away, and was like a dead body, (so that phrase, *my soul went forth*, signifies to die, Gen. xxxv. 18. xlii. 28. and other places.) And recovering herself again was extremely troubled, by the reflections she made upon his kindness, and her insensibleness of it. For which she asked his pardon, and sought his favour; but could receive no tokens of it.

[*g*] Ver. 7. I take *watchmen* here in a good sense, as before, iii. 3. unto which I refer the reader. And only observe, that *to find* a person, signifies sometimes in Scripture phrase, as much as to fall upon him, as we speak; and that on a sudden, Judg. i. 5. Psal. xxi. 8. cxix. 143. Isai. x. 10. And so I have expounded it here; and referred the smiting and wounding her, to the reproaches they cast upon her. For there is a smiting with the tongue, as well as with the hand; and that not only by enemies unjustly, (Jer. xviii. 18.) but by friends out of love and charity, (Psal. cxli. 5.) For there is not a greater kindness, than sometimes even to upbraid us with our faults. Which is farther expressed by *taking away her veil* from her; as much as to say, exposing her to shame: a veil being thrown over women's faces for modesty's sake, as well as in token of subjection, (Gen. xx. 16.) And so St. Jerome in his epistle to Læta, takes this *veil* or *pallium*, as he calls it, to be *pudicitiæ signum, a sign of chastity*: and therefore, to take it away, was to represent her as an impudent, whorish woman. Greg. Nyssen adds that it was περιβόλαιον νυμφικὸν, (Hom. xii. upon this book) *the nuptial veil*; which, together with the face, covered the whole body: and therefore to be disrobed of it was the greater reproach; because it was to disown her to be his spouse, as she professed herself.

[*h*] Ver. 8. This verse is very plain, expressing the admirable temper of a true penitent: who leaves nothing unattempted to recover the favour of her Lord (for finding no comfort from the watchmen, she implores the help of all good people), and yet doth not complain of what she suffered, nor of the harshness of those, who should have helped to restore her; and not dealt so severely with her; (according to that of the apostle, Gal. vi. 1.) but only bewails

the loss of his presence, and represents that, notwithstanding, she had not lost her love to him; but rather that it was so great, she could not live without him.

It must be confessed, that there is no necessity of reading those words which we translate, *that ye tell him*, by an interrogation, *What will you tell him?* as the Hebrew seems to import (for the particle *mah* doth not always denote that); but it adds much to the life of the speech, and represents her passion to the height, if we so translate it; as I have taken it in the Paraphrase.

[*i*] Ver. 9. In this verse the daughters of Jerusalem reply to her; and being touched with a pitiful concern for her (whose admirable beauty discovered itself to them, in this wretched condition wherein they saw her), they desire to have a character of her beloved; that they might be the better able to know him if they met him, and be the more excited to help her to seek for him, when they understood his deserts.

[*k*] Ver. 10. In this part of the character, which now follows of him, Solomon seems to me to have had his eye upon the person of his father David, (1 Sam. xvi. 12.) whose very aspect promised much, and shewed that he was born to rule. And whether we translate the first words, *white and ruddy*, as in our Bible; or as Bochartus, *white and shining*, or *glistering* (making *adom* not to signify *ruber*, but *rutilus*, and the whole to be as much as *summe candidus*, exceeding fair and of a pure complexion), it matters not. For it only signifies, in my opinion, the majestic beauty of his aspect: which David himself had also described in those famous words, (Psal. xlv. 2.) *Thou art fairer than the children of men.*

And then, in the latter part of this verse, he hath respect, as I take it, both to what they sang of his father David, after he came from his victory over Goliath, (1 Sam. xviii. 7.) and to what David himself sang of this great Prince in Psal. xlv. 3, 4, &c. and more largely, Psal. cx. 2, 3. 5, 6. which all relate to the conquest of the world unto him: and is signified in his expression of his being *chief* (or *lifting up the standard*) *over ten thousands:* that is, over great multitudes, or armies, (Psal. iii. 6.) The LXX. translate it, *Chosen out of ten chosen:* unto which I have had respect also in the Paraphrase. As for mystical significations, some think by *white and ruddy*, is meant his Divine and human nature; others, only his humanity, &c. (as may be found in interpreters), but I have not dared to meddle with them. And shall but just mention the fancy of the cabalists, who understand hereby the effects he works in us. For sometimes he dispenseth himself in mercy and kindness; and then, say they, he is *white:* sometimes in the zeal of justice, and with anger; and then he is *red.*

[*l*] Ver. 11. Now being thus represented as a king, he is next described as having a crown upon his head. So I understand *cethem* (which we translate *gold*), as Rasi doth; who takes it for a *diadem:* and, indeed, in other places of Scripture it signifies some precious ornament, as Prov. xxv. 12. Now this crown upon the head is said to be such a one as David had mentioned before, (Psal. xxi. 3.) of *pure gold.* In the Hebrew *of Paz;* which Bochartus (both in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 27. and in his Canaan, lib. i. cap. 46.) shews was the island anciently called Taprobana; in which the footsteps of this word *Paz* remained in Ptolemy's time. Who mentions in that island the river Phasis, and the creek or bay Pasis.

The same excellent person, in his book of Sacred Animals, (par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 10.) shews that, in the latter part of this verse, we are to understand by *kevjzoth (locks)* the foretop, or the hair coming down the forehead; which is expressed in the next word, *tultalim, hanging down.* And this foretop is only mentioned, because little else appeared, when the head had the crown on it.

This hair is said to be as *black as a raven;* because such shining black hair was accounted majestic, and much affected in those countries: insomuch, that they endeavoured by art to make their hair of this colour; and, as Pliny informs us, employed the eggs, the blood, and the brain, of ravens for that purpose. They looked upon this coloured hair also as a token of courage and fortitude; and, with a pure clear complexion, it was very lovely.

There are several mystical applications made of this: which I had rather the reader, who hath a mind to them, should seek in others, than find here.

[*m*] Ver. 12. The plainest meaning of this verse, is that of the LXX. and Vulgar Latin: which is to the same effect with that I have set down in the Paraphrase. For *washed* and *sitting* do not refer to the *eyes*, but unto *doves:* who love to *sit*, nay, to *tarry* (as the word imports), by rivers' sides, and other places which abound with water; and are then so pleased, that their eyes appear very quick and lively. And such piercing eyes, adding much to majesty, they are here made a part of this glorious person's character.

Washed with milk] Signifies *doves as white as milk:* which are most lovely; and when they have washed themselves, look as if they had been in milk.

As for the common sense which the Hebrews give of this verse, and which most modern interpreters follow; Bochartus, in the beginning of his second part of Sacred Animals, seems to me to have evinced, that the Hebrew words will not bear it. But it is fit to mention it, and it amounts to this; that his eyes were *clear and white, and full set* (or set in perfection, as Aben Ezra here interprets the word *milleth*), like a diamond or precious stone in a ring: neither too much depressed, nor too prominent; but handsomely filling the sockets. And if this were the natural interpretation of the last phrase, *Joscheboth al milleth, sitting or dwelling by fulness or fillings;* I should think there might be an allusion to the precious stones in the pectoral of the high-priest, which are said to be *set in their fillings*, Exod. xxviii. 17. 20. But this phrase doth not refer, as I said, to *eyes*, but to *doves*, that sit by places abounding with water; or, as Avenarius will have it, "ad vas plenum lacte," *by a vessel full of milk.*

The mystical application of these *eyes* to the doctors of the church, seems impertinent; because they are described before in the eyes of the spouse, (iv. 1.) Rather, therefore, his exact care and providence over the church, which nothing can escape, may be hereby represented: for he sees into the very heart and reins, as he himself affirms, Rev. ii. 18. 23.

[*n*] Ver. 13. This verse is so difficult, that it is a hard matter to give an account of it. The plainest seems to be this; that by *cheeks* we are not to understand those that are smooth, but wherein the hair begins to grow: which added

much, in those days, to the goodliness of any man, and was looked upon as a token of vigour, strength, and courage. And it may aptly be compared to the *flowers*, or the *sproutings* and *buddings* of plants and trees. So I understand *migdaloth* (which we translate *flowers*) to signify *buds*, putting forth like little *towers*.

The *lips* may seem unfitly compared to *lilies:* because white lips are not beautiful. But Almonazir hath observed out of Dioscorides, Theophrastus, and Pliny, that there were lilies of a purple colour. And besides, I find in Pliny (lib. xxi. cap. 5.) mention made of a lily (which he calls *rubens lilium*), which was much esteemed, he saith, in Syria. He shews there also a way how to make purple lilies.

There are those who think Solomon compares the lips to lilies, only in regard of their fineness and delicate softness: thick, blubber lips, being very unhandsome, and a sign also, they say, of dulness and making the speech less graceful. And, indeed, eloquence is sometimes described by lilies; and may be here meant.

Concerning *sweet-smelling myrrh*, see ver. 5.

And thus far we have only the description of an amiable, gracious majesty; which is much advanced by a sweet voice and eloquent speech. The mention of which may well put us in mind of what is said of our Saviour, Luke iv. 22. compared with Psal. xlv. 2.

[o] Ver. 14. If we understand the first part of this verse to be meant of the hands, it is thus to be interpreted, *He hath golden rings on his fingers* (as before he is said, ver. 11. to have a golden head, *i. e. a crown of gold* upon it), *set with the chrysolite;* as *tarsis* (which the LXX. here do not translate), it is most probable, signifies. And then the latter part of the verse sounds thus, word for word; *his belly is of polished ivory, covered with sapphire: i. e.* is purely white, streaked with blue veins. But who sees not, that though this be ingenious, yet it is not true? For the body is no where *covered* (as the word here is) with veins: which must needs signify more than *streaked* here and there. And, besides, it is not only against the rules of decency, but against the very scope of this discourse, to fancy that any of those naked parts of the body are here described, which are not commonly exposed to every body's view. For the spouse is desired to tell by what marks this person might be discovered, (ver. 9.) Now he could not be known by any of those parts which lie concealed and hidden from all men's eyes, being industriously covered. And therefore no such hidden parts are here represented; because he could not thereby be known and distinguished.

I conclude, therefore, that now she proceeds to describe the habit of this great person. And Solomon having in his mind the *idea* which his father had given him of the Messiah, in the hundred and tenth Psalm (where he is said to be a Priest as well as a Prince), represents him in the habit of the high-priest. Who, among other noble vestments, had an *embroidered coat;* the *sleeves* of which, the Hebrews tell us, came down to his very wrists; nay, as Maimonides saith, as far as to the hollow of his hand. Which I take to be here meant by *his hands* (which comprehend the *arms* and *shoulders*), that is, the clothing of those parts. And these *sleeves*, as well as the whole coat, were *embroidered*, (as you read, Exod. xxviii. 4.) to make the high-priest appear the more glorious. And if you ask what this *embroidery* was, the Hebrews tell us, that part of it consisted in a kind of *eyelet holes*, finely wrought. And R. Solomon Jarchi expressly saith upon that text, that *they were holes made in gold rings, in which were fixed precious stones*, &c. (as is afterward said of the stones of the ephod, ver. 11.) Which so fully explains these words, *his hands are as gold rings, set with the beryl*, that I need seek no farther. Though I have sometimes thought that the *ephod* itself might be here intended: which being fastened upon the *shoulders* (which, in order, after the head, eyes, cheeks, and lips, come to be here described, and are comprehended, as I said before, under the name of *his hand*), hung down before and behind to the bottom of the back: and had *two gold rings*, unto which the breast-plate was fastened, as we read Exod. xxviii. 27, 28. Maimonides saith it had *four* rings, two above, at the jewel-buttons; and two below, about the girdle of the *ephod*. Which was one of the principal ornaments of the high-priest when he ministered; the other, and the greatest of all, was the *breast-plate* hereunto annexed; and, as they say, was to be inseparable from the ephod.

Now this *breast-plate* is meant, as I take it, in the latter part of this verse. Where under that word which we translate *belly*, and properly signifies *bowels*, is comprehended the *breast*, and all: which this *coschen*, as the Hebrews call it, covered: and, as it covered those parts, so it was itself covered, or *overlaid* with *twelve* precious stones. The *sapphire*, which was the *tenth*, is only here mentioned; but it is usual in Scripture, to touch only upon one thing in a history, when the whole is intended. And besides, it is evident, from the foregoing part of this verse, that more must be understood, when one alone is mentioned: for *rings* are spoken of in the plural number, and said to be filled with *tarsis;* which must therefore denote more stones than one; as *sapphire* doth all the rest of the *twelve* which could not be mentioned in so short a description. Or *sepphirim* here, in the plural number, may signify stones as precious as the *sapphire*. Certain it is the Chaldee paraphrast thought there was some respect here to the high-priest's *breast-plate;* for he mentions all the stones therein, one by one. Which may make this interpretation of mine to seem less strange. And I conceive the *sapphire* to be here mentioned rather than any other; because it is of the colour of the heavens, and fittest to represent the sublime dignity in which he is now described. For the pavement under the feet of the God of Israel, when he appeared unto their nobles at Mount Sinai, was of this colour, (Exod. xxiv. 10.) and so was the throne of God in the firmament, which Ezekiel saw, (Ezek. i. 26.)

Nor need it seem strange that the *belly*, upon which this covering was, is said to be of *polished ivory* (when there is no mention of any such thing in the law), for it only denotes that it was as shining and bright as that: and may possibly relate to the tunic or coat of fine linen, wherein the high-priest was to minister, (Exod. xxxvii. 39. xxxix. 27.) especially upon the great day of expiation, when he was not to put on his robe, nor his fine linen coat, with any embroidery, but of fine linen alone, (Lev. xvi. 4.)

The LXX. seem to think it was the breast-plate itself (which indeed was very shining), for they translate it πύξιον: which shews they meant some covering of the belly, which was hollow, as the breast-plate was. Which I doubt not is the *covering of sapphires* here mentioned: it being set, as you read, with twelve large precious stones, wherein were

engraven the names of the twelve children of Israel. And was the most precious part of all the high-priest's habit; and therefore more commonly called by the Jews an *ornament*, than a *garment*, or any part of his vesture: the whole of which was contrived *for glory and for beauty*, (Exod. xxviii. 40.) *i. e.* that God might be served most magnificently.

[*p*] Ver. 15. Next in order follows the description of the *thighs;* that is, of the garments upon the thighs: which were the very first that the high-priest put on, when he went about to clothe himself for his ministry. And are here said to be made of *schesch:* which is a word common to *fine linen*, and to *pure white marble*, (so the LXX. twice translate it *Parian marble*, Esth. i. 6. 2 Chron. xxix. 2.) which the *breeches* of the priest resembled, being made of *byssus*, or pure fine linen; a thing of great price in those countries, as appears both by Pliny and Pausanias. The latter of which authors, in his Eliaca, mentions this among the rare things (which were worthy of admiration) in that country, and saith, *It was not inferior to the byssus of the Hebrews.* Who were ordered to make this part of the priest's garments of *twined fine linen*, (Exod. xxxi. 28.) which rendered them the more substantial; and made them sit the fuller and stiffer, like *pillars.* For the Hebrews say they were made of *six-thread byssus:* and that they came down to the knees, where they were not gathered at the bottom, but sat open.

Below which *breeches* came down the holy *meil*, or robe, upon the skirts whereof hung round about bells made of pure gold, (Exod. xxviii. 34.) Which may possibly be the basis of fine gold, here mentioned, to which the *femoralia*, or garments on the thighs, reached. Some refer all this only to his stately gait and princely motion; others to his strength and firmness (which lie much in the thighs), and his ability to march against his enemies, and pursue them. And then the sockets of fine gold are his *sandals;* bound upon his feet with golden ribands, or something of that nature. The reader may choose which he thinks most probable, for the explication of the first part of this verse: *His legs* (or *thighs* rather) *are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold.*

Now if my conjecture be allowed, then the latter part of the verse will not be hard to explain. For this and all the rest of his habit being contrived for *beauty and glory*, as was said before from Exod. xxviii. 40. it made the high-priest appear with unusual majesty: the riches of these vestments being not easily to be valued. And so his *countenance*, or rather his *aspect*, his *whole appearance* (as the Hebrew word may signify), *was as stately as Lebanon:* Which was one of the goodliest sites in those countries, both for cedars and many other things; especially after Solomon had made his garden there, of which we read in the foregoing chapter, ver. 15, 16.

Unto which lovely forest and garden, the appearance of the high-priest may be the better compared; because there were flowers, as well as pomegranates, if we may believe Philo (in his third book of the Life of Moses), wrought in the bottom of the holy robe. Which the LXX. also affirm in express words; that there was ἀνθινὸν, a *flowery work*, as well as pomegranates and bells in the hem of the *meil*, (Exod. xxviii. 34.) And, indeed, the pomegranates being made of wool of divers colours, they themselves might look like divers sorts of flowers. And, besides this, it is to be observed, that several other parts of the high-priest's habit are peculiarly commended to be made of a work called *chescheb*, which we translate *cunning work.* Thus the *ephod* is ordered to be wrought, (Exod. xxviii. 6.) and the *girdle* of it, (ver. 8.) and the *breast-plate*, (ver. 15.) Which some translate *artificial*, others *ingenious work:* and all agree to have consisted in certain beautiful figures of flowers and animals; and in variety of colours. The *girdle*, moreover, is ordered to be made of a work called *rokem*, which we translate *needlework*, (ver. 39.) because it is thought not to have differed from the former, save only in this; that the other things were only woven curiously, but this also curiously wrought with the needle. The Jews give another difference; that this was wrought so that the figures appeared on both sides, the other only on one. About which I shall not trouble myself; but only take notice that Josephus (in his third book of Antiquities, chap. 8.) explains this verse thus, *Flowers were woven in this girdle, with scarlet, purple, blue*, &c.

And if *flowers* (as others say, *animals*), then, in all probability, *trees* also were wrought in these priestly vestures: which made the fuller representation of a forest. Among which that of Lebanon was the principal, and, indeed, the most beautiful place in all those countries; which made the prophet express the glory of the church in these words, *The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it*, (Isa. xxxv. 2. see also Hos. xiv. 5—7.)

Some think that hereby only the tallness of his stature is denoted; which was always looked upon as a princely thing, as it was in Saul.

As for mystical applications of these two verses, there are none to be sought for, if I have given the true sense of them, but such as relate to the excellency of Christ's everlasting priesthood; and its pre-eminence above the other, as much as the cedar excels all the trees of the forest.

[*q*] Ver. 16. There is little difficulty here. For *mouth* (Hebrew *palate*, which is within the *mouth*) can signify nothing but either his *words* which come from thence, or his *breath.* And words being mentioned before, ver. 13. the latter is probably here intended. Which is said to be *sweetness*, nay, *sweetnesses:* denoting the perfect soundness of the internal parts; as the foregoing description sets forth the excellent shape, and stately vesture of the outward: it is applied by interpreters, to the purity of Christ's affections and passions: but may be, as well, to his breathing upon his apostles, when he bade them receive the Holy Ghost. Which included, in a manner, what he did upon earth, as it doth his description in this place. For she, finding his praises to exceed all her thoughts, sums up all in a breath; and comprehends his whole character in this: That he is all over lovely; attracting all men's affections; not only those that saw him, but those that heard of him too.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

In the foregoing description, the spouse expressed such an unfeigned affection to him, (which she again confidently asserts in this sixth part of the Song, ver. 3.) that it not only mightily moved her companions to join with her in the search of him, but invited the return of the bride-

groom again. Who graciously declares the like affection unto her (from ver. 4. to 11.) in such words as shewed that his kindness remained unalterable; and that he delighted in none but her: as incomparably more amiable, even by their own confession, than all those beauties whom the world most admires. With which kindness she is so ravished, that it snatches her away from the dearest friends she had, though very desirous of her company, (ver. 12, 13.)

Companions (or Daughters) of Jerusalem.

Ver. 1. *WHITHER is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with thee?*] These are high commendations indeed, which thou givest to thy beloved, which make us in love with him, as before we were, (iv. 9.) and still are, with thee, O thou most lovely of all other women: whither dost thou think he hath betaken himself? He is not quite gone away, sure, but only diverted into some retirement: which way did he go? And where dost thou guess he hath hidden himself, that we may go along, and inquire him out, with thee? See Annot. [*a*]

Spouse.

Ver. 2. *My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.*] I heard my beloved say, that he was gone down into that garden, which he himself hath planted; (v. 1.) there he delights to be, among those pious persons, whose virtues make them like to the garden-beds, that are full of spices: he is always present in every part of this happy company; and hath fellowship with them; and is daily adding more and more pure and sincere souls, who are without all guile, unto their society. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.*] Of which I, being a member, hope I may still say, that he hath not cast me out of his favour; but still retains a kindness for me: because I am steadfast and faithful in my love to him; who takes a constant care of such as study to resemble him. See Annot. [c]

Bridegroom.

Ver. 4. *Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah; comely as Jerusalem; terrible as an army with banners.*] It is true, O my beloved friend, who art still dear unto me, and most amiable in my eyes: I have not lost my esteem of thee; for I see thou hast not lost thy affection to me: nor that lovely, that decent, and comely order, which makes thee not only beautiful, but venerable; nay, amazes all beholders, or, at least, strikes them with great admiration of thee. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me; thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.*] Thou needest not look so earnestly, and with such care and solicitude, upon me, as if I had forgotten thee: for I see the same sparkling beauty in thy eyes, which I did before, (iv. 1.) and it no less affects my heart; (iv. 9.) thou wantest none of those ornaments which I formerly commended, but retainest them all, notwithstanding the discomposure in which thou hast been. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them.*] The same I say also of thy teeth, which are still white and clean; even set both above and below; firm and sound also; without any breach, or want of so much as one of them. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 7. *As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks.*] And, to be short (and not to repeat every thing again), I see the same fresh colour in thy cheeks; which makes thee look as lovely now thy veil is off, (v. 7.) as thou didst in the first blooming of thy beauty. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 8. *There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.*] Wherefore, though other kings and princes of these countries have a great many queens, and more wives, of an inferior rank, and virgins that attend them, without numbers: whose beauty they highly admire: See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her: the daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.*] I have one only, and none other, whom I entirely love; and that is thyself alone: who preservest an inviolable faith and affection to me, and therefore art dearer to me than an only daughter (and she the most accomplished person and perfect beauty) is to her mother: whom all other persons at last shall admire; the queens themselves beforenamed call thee blessed, and wishing all prosperity to thee; and they of the next degree shall praise thy excellences, and confess their own imperfections. See Annot. [*i*]

Ver. 10. *Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?*] Saying, What an astonishing beauty is this, that appears like a clear morning after a dark night, and increaseth in lustre more and more; looking as bright as the moon when it is at full; nay, as splendid as the sun when it shineth in its strength: and no less dazzles our eyes, and amazes our thoughts, than a glorious host of heaven; or an army here on earth, when it stands in battalias, with all their colours displayed! See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 11. *I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded.*] Only this I expect from thee, that thou bring forth fruit proportionable to my care of thee, and kindness to thee: for to that end I went down before, (v. 1. vi. 2.) and now go again into my garden (which I have not neglected to dress, and prune, and water), to take a view in what condition it is; and in what forwardness the several sorts of fruit are, which I justly look to receive in their due seasons. See Annot. [*l*]

Spouse.

Ver. 12. *Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Ammi-nadib.*] Alas! what am I, that I should receive such praises, who am not worthy of thy care! But have put such motions into my soul, as to make me aim at the highest perfections; and make all the haste I can likewise to attain them: and therefore I must, for the present, take leave of you, O my friends, who have kindly assisted me in the search of my beloved. See Annot. [*m*]

Companions.

Ver. 13. *Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.*] Let us have thy company again, O thou fairest and most accomplished of all the daughters of Jerusalem. Come back again,

come back, that we may behold thy wondrous perfections. And if any ask, What is that you would see? What would you enjoy in her happy society? Our answer is, Such a Divine presence as appeared to Jacob, when he saw the angelical choirs; which made him cry out, *This is God's host*, and call the name of that place Mahanaim. See Annot. [*n*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. The daughters of Jerusalem (mentioned v. 8.) here justify what the spouse had said in the conclusion of the former chapter: and declaring themselves in love with him whom she had described, are desirous to join themselves to her company, and go in quest of him. In order to which, they would know whither she thought he was gone when he went from her.

[*b*] Ver. 2. Unto which she replies in this verse, and seems to tell them, in his own words, what she had heard him say about that matter, (v. 1.) And it signifies that he was still in his church, and in every part of it; though sometimes they were not sensible of it. For so Theodoret well observes, here is a distinct mention made of a *garden*, and of *gardens*, *i. e.* of the catholic church, which is but one, and of the several parts thereof. For sometimes St. Paul mentions only the *church* in the singular number, and sometimes the several churches even in the same nation, (as in the Epistle to the Galatians, i. 1.) and in the same province, or city, (1 Cor. xiv. 34.)

He is said here to *go down* into his garden, with respect to the mountains, mentioned iv. 8. And to *feed*, in the Hebrew, is either to do the office of a shepherd to his flock; or relates to his communion with his people, mentioned iv. 16. v. 1. Which may be the meaning also of *gathering lilies:* or, as Theodoret will have it, by this last clause is to be understood, his gathering holy and pure souls that are like to him, and joining them unto his church. And so the Arabic translation is, *to gather together the lilies;* following the Septuagint, who translate it, συλλέγειν. And, indeed, I find the Hebrew word *lakat*, signifies to collect things into a heap or bundle; as stones, (Gen. xxxi. 46.) manna, (Exod. xvi. 27.) fruit, (Lev. xix. 9.) silver, (Gen. xlvii. 14.)

The whole denotes, that communion with him is only to be sought in his church: especially in that part of it which preserves the order, wherein he hath disposed all things (like the walls and beds in a garden), and kept themselves also in the purity of his religion.

[*c*] Ver. 3. Now she seems to have so perfectly recovered herself out of the slumber wherein she had been, as to have regained her former sense of him, and of her interest in him: repeating those words which we met withal before, (ii. 16.) Of the latter part of which [*he feedeth among the lilies*] I think fit here farther to note, that *to feed* may relate either unto himself, or unto others; for there are examples of both. Of the former, Gen. xli. 2. Job i. 14. Of the latter, Gen. xxix. 7. 9. xxxvii. 12. I take it here rather in this latter sense, and suppose it signifies his doing the office of a shepherd: and that he is said *to feed among the lilies*, as in the Revelation, *to walk in the midst of the seven candlesticks; i. e.* there to have his conversation, to take up his abode with them, &c. as he often says in the gospel of St. John, (xiv. 23.) that he would with those who love him and keep his commandments.

And such persons are here compared to *lilies;* which being a name given by Christ to himself, Greg. Nyssen and Theodoret hereby, not unfitly, understand, such as are conformed to Christ their head, and have his image wrought in their souls, in righteousness and true holiness. For, saith the former of them, ὅσα ἀληθῆ, &c. *whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just,* &c. (Philip. iv. 8.) ταῦτά ἐστι τὰ κρίνα, *these are the lilies in which Christ delights.*

[*d*] Ver. 4. And now we must conceive, either that they went to the garden together, and there found him; or that he hearing this hearty profession of unmoveable love to him, meets them: and, to revive her drooping spirits, falls again into a new commendation of the spouse; in the very same terms as before, and in some higher.

And, first, he compares her to Tirzah, which was a beautiful situation in the country of Ephraim; and therefore made choice of after this time, by Jeroboam, for the seat of his kingdom: and so continued till the building of Samaria, as we read 1 Kings xiv. 17. xv. 21. 23. and several other places: to which add, Josh. xii. 24. The very original of the word signifies as much as *urbs amabilis*, or *a city that pleaseth one:* and therefore chosen by one of the ancient kings of Canaan for the place of his residence.

And lest this should not be high enough, he next compares her to Jerusalem, which was the most lovely place in the territories of Judah, and indeed of the whole country. For which cause, as it had been the seat of one of the kings of Canaan, so the royal palace of David, nay the house of God himself, was afterward there built: and is called by Jeremiah in his Lamentations, *the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth,* (ii. 15.) It is mentioned by Pliny, likewise, (lib. v. cap. 14.) as the most famous city in the east.

And as she had commended him before, not only for his beauty, but majesty; so he doth here, in the last place, call her *terrible as an army standing in battalias;* striking an awe, that is, into beholders. So I think it is to be expounded, as referring still to the goodliness of her aspect, and not to her being invincible, inexpugnable, and striking terror into her enemies; as some interpret the whole verse. Every part of which seems to me to be a new proof, that Solomon speaks not in this book of one single person (whom some fancy the Shulamite, others Pharaoh's daughter; whom others take for one and the same) under the name of the spouse; but of a body or society of men: for none else can be fitly compared to cities, nay, to great armies drawn up under their banners. Which last part of this verse may be applied to the comely order which Christ appointed in his church; which, while it was preserved, made the church very venerable in the world. So Theodoret, ἐκπλήττονται γὰρ, &c. *For they are astonished who behold thy order, there being nothing disorderly, nothing uncertain or undetermined, nothing confused and indistinct: but all* τεταγμένα καὶ κεκριμένα, *orderly appointed, and judiciously determined.*

Some refer this *terribleness*, as we translate it, to the *gravity*, or rather *severity*, of her countenance, which forbade all wanton approaches to so great a beauty.

[*e*] Ver. 5. In this and the following verses he seems to

descend to a particular description of the several parts of her beauty: as he had done before, (iv. 1, 2, &c.) And he doth it in the very same words, for the most part, to assure her, that he had still the same esteem of her, and kindness for her: and that, notwithstanding what had happened, it had not altered her so much as to abate any thing of his affection; or to make her appear otherwise in his eyes than she had done. This seems to me to be the true reason of this repetition: others are given by Theodoret and other authors.

And first he begins with the commendation of her *eyes*, as he had done iv. 1. (though in other words.) For so the first clause of this verse may be translated, *turn thine eyes towards me:* the Hebrew phrase signifying, not only to turn one's self from another, but sometimes to turn towards them; as 1 Chron. xii. 23. And then we are to conceive that he speaks to her, as one ashamed to look upon him; whom she had so much disobliged: and bade her take more confidence, for he was still in love with her.

If we follow the common translation, I take the sense still to be the same: that she need not trouble herself any farther; for she had prevailed in her suit to be restored to his favour. The looking of the eyes towards one, is as much as entreating and petitioning: which he tells her she might cease, by bidding her turn her eyes away from him.

It is most ordinarily taken for an amorous expression: as if he had said, her eyes were so bright and dazzling, he could not bear the passion they excited.

Of the latter part of the verse see an account upon chap. iv. 1.

[*f*] Ver. 6. There is no difference between this verse and that in iv. 2. but only in one word; which alters not the sense. And as *harechelim, sheep,* was to be fetched from hence to supply the sense there; so another word, *hakketzuboth, even shorn,* is to be fetched from thence to supply it here.

[*g*] Ver. 7. This is also exactly the same with the latter end of the third verse of the fourth chapter. The LXX. have also the first part: but they might as well have added all that there follows: which is here omitted.

[*h*] Ver. 8. Here, most think, Solomon alludes to the number of his own wives; who were fewer, they suppose, in the beginning of his reign: (as Bochartus himself gathers from these words, in his epistle to the now Bishop of Winchester, p. 126.) and that then he composed this Song, before he let the reins of his lust so prodigiously loose, as afterward we read he did, (1 Kings xi. 1, &c.) But it is not at all likely that he had so many as are there mentioned, while his mind was filled with such Divine raptures as these: and therefore I suppose he alludes to the custom of other princes in the east, who, besides their principal wives that were solemnly espoused and endowed, had also another sort who were neither; and yet were wives, called by the Hebrews *philagshim, concubines.* And such a difference the Romans anciently made between her whom they called *matrona,* who was only taken in marriage, and her whom they called *materfamilias,* who was taken also to order and govern the family, and whose children inherited. As may be seen in Aulus Gellius, lib. xviii. cap. 8. wherein he confutes Ælius Melissus, a conceited grammarian, who had started other ungrounded notions of these words.

And then *threescore* and *fourscore* are only a certain number for an uncertain; not the precise number of these wives and concubines. Theodoret thinks by these are mystically intended several ranks of Christians in the church: some more, some less perfect: but they discourse better, in my opinion, who rather accommodate those to the several sorts of heretical and schismatical churches: some of which gloried in the multitude of their followers, and in their wealth and splendour: but Christ hath only one catholic church, more glorious than them all put together; as it follows here in the next verses. And that, in effect, R. Solomon Jarchi, and some other Hebrew expositors, understand these words with application to themselves. Abraham and his posterity, say they, till the descendants from Israel, were threescore in number (compared here to queens). The sons of Noah and their descendants unto Abraham, were fourscore (compared to concubines). The rest who came from Cham, Ishmael, and Esau, could not be comprehended under a certain number. And so the meaning is, whatsoever kindness God had for the rest of Abraham's posterity, or of Noah's (not to mention Cham, Ishmael, and Esau), yet I have chosen, saith God, my people Israel, whom I have espoused to myself, by circumcision, and by the law, and by sacrifices, &c.

[*i*] Ver. 9. This verse needs not much explication: wherein the spouse is opposed to all the forenamed beauties: who are constrained to confess her pre-eminence. The Hebrew word for *one,* signifies also *only:* and an *only* child is as much as a beloved child: as appears by this, that μονογενὴς, *only begotten,* and ἀγαπητὸς, *well-beloved,* are words of the same import in the New Testament. And if such an only daughter be also *barah (choice* we translate it, or) *pure,* as the word originally imports; free from all blemish (that is, a perfect beauty), it makes her still more dearly beloved.

It is in vain to inquire here, who is the *mother* intended in this place: for his love is only compared to the *love* of a mother towards such an only daughter; who hath engrossed, as we speak, all the excellent qualities that are in any other person. Which forced the daughters to admire her (so *saw her* signifies, they looked upon her with admiration), and the queens to bless her, and the concubines to proclaim her praises. Thus, it is most likely, the latter part of this verse should be interpreted, *The daughters saw her, and the queens blessed her, and the concubines they praised her.* For though the Jews now have otherwise distinguished the words by their accents, yet Maimonides, I observe, distinguishes them, as I have done, in his preface to Seder Zeraim.

St. Cyprian, from this and such-like places of this book, (iv. 8. 12. v. 1.) proves there is but one only holy catholic church; making this observation, (Epist. 73. edit. Oxon.) *We see one person every where mentioned,* and no more; *because the spouse also is one,* &c.

[*k*] Ver. 10. This some take to be the beginning of a new part of this Song: and Theodoret, in particular, here begins his fourth book of commentaries upon it: but I look upon these words as the praises and commendations which the queens and concubines, beforementioned, bestow upon the spouse, with admiration and astonishment at her transcendent beauty.

They need no explication, being of known signification; only it is fit to note, that to make the elogy more magnificent, the speech grows and increases. For though the *morning* be very beautiful and agreeable to every eye; yet the *moon* is still more bright, and the sun far brighter than that: but *all the host of heaven* (which I take to be meant in the last words) still more wonderful and amazing. For there being a gradation in this place, and all the other expressions relating to the heavens, it is reasonable to think that this doth so too: and that we are to understand by it the *armies or host of heaven* (as the Scripture calls the stars), rather than armies upon earth. However, I have put both into the Paraphrase, but have not meddled with mystical applications: they that desire them may look into the commentaries of three fathers, where this verse is applied to the four degrees of Christians that are in the church. Others, with more reason, apply it to the progress which the church herself made in splendour and greatness: being, at first, like the *morning* when the day breaks, after a long night of ignorance: and then the light of Christian knowledge advanced, till the church appeared like the *moon* (whose paleness may serve for an emblem of the terrors which persecution struck into their hearts), till, in the issue, it dispersed all mists, and, conquering all opposition, shone like the *sun:* and then was settled in Constantine's time, like a well-ordered army, which beat down all idolatry.

They that would see more of these applications may look into Commenius's book de Bono Unitatis; in the beginning whereof there are applications of these things, both unto the church in general, and unto particular churches.

[*l*] Ver. 11. This seems to be the voice of the bridegroom declaring what returns he expected to his love. The word *agoz*, which we translate *nuts* (of which there were several kinds, some very rich, as the *pistick*), is found only here: and by some is translated *shorn* or *cut;* which I have not omitted in my Paraphrase. And *beibe hannachal (fruits of the valley)* the LXX. translate *shoots by the brook*, or river, where plants are apt to grow best: which is very agreeable to the original. The rest of the words are common: and the whole verse signifies, that he went to look after the fruits of all sorts. The mystical applications may be found in all interpreters.

[*m*] Ver. 12. The meaning of this verse seems to be, that the spouse, hearing such high commendations of herself, both from him, and from the persons mentioned ver. 10. with great humility, saith, that she was not conscious to herself of such perfections (for so the first words sound in the Hebrew, *I did not know it*, or *I did not think so*), but is excited thereby to make the greatest speed to endeavour to preserve this character he had given her; and to go along with him into his garden, (which she had neglected before, v. 2.) there to give a good account of her proficiency. For which end she seems on a sudden to take leave of her friends (who had been so charitable as to go along with her to seek him), that she might for some time enjoy his company alone: which is the ground of their calling upon her to return, in the next verse. This is the best account I can give of these two last verses.

It is supposed Ammi-nadib was some great captain, who pursued his victories or advantages very industriously with very swift chariots.

[*n*] Ver. 13. This verse is the voice of her companions, or friends; some of which wish for her coming back, that they might enjoy her company again, and see how she was improved: and the rest asked what they expected to see in her? to which the other reply in the last words, *as it were the company*, &c.

The repetition of the word *return*, four times over, expresseth their vehement affection to her, and their desire to have her company again; whom they call Sulamith: as much as say, Jerusalamith: for the name of that place formerly was Salem, which carries peace in its signification; or, as others will have it, *perfection:* for *Shalam*, in the second conjugation, signifies to *finish*, or *perfect*. And is a fit name here for the church, the *New Jerusalem*, built by Christ himself. This seems to me a great deal more probable than the conjecture of Menochius, (lib. iii. de Repub. Hebr. cap. 21. n. 14.) who, because wives, when they were married, took the name of their husbands, thinks the spouse from Solomon had the name of Sulamith, which Aquila translates εἰρηνεύουσαν, *pacific*, i. e. *Solomonidem*. The reader may follow which he likes best. Solomon seems to me not to have had respect to his own spouse in this Song.

To *see*, or *look upon her*, signifies to enjoy her happy society; and the benefit of her excellent virtues and perfections. Whom, in the two last words, he seems to me to compare unto the choirs of the heavenly hosts. For the word *mechola* doth not signify any kind of *company;* but of such as dance or sing: as may be seen in Exod. xv. 20. xxxii. 19. Judg. xi. 34. Jer. xxxi. 4. Lament. v. 15. and many other places. Which shew that it signifies both *chorea*, a dance, and *chorus*, the company that dances: and so the LXX. here translate it, χοροὶ, *choirs*. And *Mahanaim* (which we translate *two armies*) may as well be a proper name as Ammi-nadib in the verse foregoing: and relates to the appearance of angels to Jacob, (Gen. xxxii. 2.) as a token of God's special presence with him; and most livelily sets forth the far more glorious presence of God now in the Christian church. Or if we interpret it *armies*, or hosts, as we do, still it may signify the armies above in the heavens; either the stars or the *angels*, called *the armies in heaven*, Rev. xix. 14. and *army of heaven*, Dan. iv. 35.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins, as I take it, a new part (which is the seventh) of this Song; and reaches to the eleventh verse. In which the spouse is represented returning again, as they desired in the end of the foregoing chapter: and, appearing in greater lustre than before, the company of friends who attended her praise her beautiful perfections; in such a description as was made of them in chap. iv. though varying from it in several things (which is the sum of the first nine verses). Of which perfections she modestly acknowledging her Lord to be the author, and assuming nothing to herself, (ver. 10) is excited thereby only to do the more good, and to labour to extend his empire over more hearts; who were not yet subject to him, ver. 11, &c. where the eighth part of this Song begins, and continues to the fifth verse of the next chapter.

*Companions (*or *Daughters) of Jerusalem.*

Ver. 1. *HOW beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.*] And now that she appears again, like the daughter of the great King, in all royal apparel, (Psal. xlv. 13.) who can choose but admire the beauty of the meanest thing belonging to her! The very shoes of thy feet are most lovely; and so are all the ornaments of thy thighs, which were made by no common or careless artist, but by one that hath herein shewn the best of his skill. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor; thy belly is like a heap of wheat, set about with lilies.*] Which other excellent artists have equalled in that part of thy vesture, which covers the middle of thy body: in the very centre of which is a fountain; within a curious work, rising up like a heap of wheat, encompassed round about with lilies. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins.*] Above which, thy two breasts rise up so purely white and exactly round, and every where of such just proportions, that two young kids which were formed together and brought forth at the same time, are not more like one another, or more lovely than they. See Annot. [*c*]

Ver. 4. *Thy neck is as a tower of ivory; thine eyes like the fish-pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim; thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon, which looked towards Damascus.*] Thy neck also lifts up itself, with the same or greater beauty, wherein we before beheld it, (iv. 4.) being no less smooth and purely white, than it is straight and well-shaped. And the same famous pools at the great gate of Heshbon, also, are not more quiet and clear than thy eyes: which are as pure and free from all perturbation, as they are fair and large: between which thy well-proportioned nose rising up, adds as much beauty and majesty to thy face, as the tower of Lebanon (whose top shews itself above the trees) doth to that noble forest. See Annot. [*d*]

Ver. 5. *Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple: the King is held in the galleries.*] And now that we take a view of thy head, we seem to be come to the top of Mount Carmel; which is not more richly adorned by nature than its excellent form is by art: which hath contrived the most royal ornaments for it, and made thee an object fit for the king's affection; who, beholding thee from his palace, is fixed in contemplation of thy beauty. See Annot. [*e*]

Ver. 6. *How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!*] Which cannot be described, but only admired; and constrains all to say, O how happy art thou! and how happy are they who are acquainted with thee! for what beauty is like to that, or what pleasure comparable to those which thou impartest to them that are in love with thy delights! See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 7. *This thy stature is like to a palm-tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.*] Whose tall and upright stature adds much to all this beauty; and makes thee resemble the goodly palm-tree: within whose boughs those clusters hang, to which we may compare thy breasts between thy arms. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 8. *I said, I will go up to the palm-tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples.*] Which seem to be stretched out to receive us into thy embraces, and invite me and all my company, with a joint resolution to say, We will take hold of the boughs of this tree: we will get up into it and taste of its fruit: and now shall be happy indeed; and enjoy those sweet delights which flow from thy breasts, and from the breath of thy mouth; far more refreshing and comfortable than the choicest fruit that this good land affords. See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.*] For the richest and most generous wine, which, when we have tasted, we say, Let it be sent to the best of friends, is not more comfortable to the bodily spirits, though it be so powerful as to make old men brisk, nay, to enliven those that are at the point of death, than thy words are to raise and restore the souls of those who imbibe the sense of them into their minds. See Annot. [*i*]

Spouse.

Ver. 10. *I am my beloved's, and his desire is towards me.*] If there be any thing in me that is pleasing to you, and deserves such praises, ascribe it all to him from whom I received it; for, as I have often said, I am his entirely, and he is pleased to be entirely mine, having espoused himself unto me with great desire, (Psal. xlv. 11.) See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 11. *Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.*] And O that he (without whom I can do nothing) would accompany me in the charitable design I have, to go and visit other people, besides you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem! Let us go, my beloved, unto those poor despised people that live in the fields and country villages: let us not only go to them, but dwell among them. See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 12. *Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.*] Let us diligently visit the vineyards that have been newly planted there, and bestow our utmost care upon them: let us see if they give any hope of good fruit; in promoting which, I will give thee a proof of my extraordinary love. See Annot. [*m*]

Ver. 13. *The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.*] And behold the happy success of such care and diligence! the most excellent fruit is already ripe, and meets us with its refreshing smell; there is nothing so choice and so pleasant, but it grows every where; and is at the very gates; and that in great plenty and variety, both of this year's fruit and of the last: which shall all be reserved for thy uses, and employed for thy honour, O my beloved, from whom it all comes; and for the good and profit of those that belong to thee. See Annot. [*n*]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. They who earnestly solicited the return of the spouse, in the conclusion of the former chapter, seem now to have a view of her again, and praise her perfections in a new method; beginning at the feet, and so upward (whereas before, chap. iv. her description was from the

head, and so downward), because they saw her in motion; when she went away, and now at her return to them. Whom they call the *prince's daughter*, alluding, I take it, to Psal. xlv. 13, 14. and conceiving her as that royal bride, whose clothing is there represented as very glorious. And accordingly they admire her very *shoes* or *sandals* (by whose shape the beauty of the feet was discerned), which were wont to be set with *gems*, as we learn from many authors; I shall name none but the book of Judith (because what Greek or Roman writers say about their own shoes is not material), where *sandals* are mentioned as a part of the bravery wherein she set forth herself to deceive Holofernes, (x. 4.) And with these, she is said, in her song, to *have ravished his eyes*, xvi. 9. (See also Isa. iii. 18.)

Now the feet not being here considered as naked, in all reason we ought not to expound the next words of the naked *thighs* (the discovery of which had been immodest), but of the clothing of them round about. For so that word we translate *joints*, is expounded by others the *circuit*; or, as the LXX. *their whole proportion*, or *model*: which was as fine as the ornaments that adorned them. So *chelaim* signifies; which R. Solomon here observes is an Arabic word, denoting not *jewels* (as we translate it), but the *fine attire and trimming*, wherewith women deck themselves to set off their beauty.

Which agrees with what follows, *the work of the hands of a cunning workman*. Where *workman* also signifies, not any artificer, but a *goldsmith*, who (as Bochart hath observed) made wires, laces, wreaths, rings, and such-like little ornaments of gold and silver, as women used.

The Chaldee paraphrase applies all this to the people's going up three times a-year to the public feasts: as R. Solomon beforenamed expounds also that place in Isa. lii. 7. *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet*, &c. Which, with more reason, others apply to their return into their own country out of captivity; and the Christian writers apply to the apostles going through the world to preach the gospel, whose steadfastness herein may be also here represented; though I see not why it may not as well be applied to Christians going cheerfully to worship God in their public assemblies.

[*b*] Ver. 2. The garments, I doubt not, of these parts are still described in this verse. For what resemblance hath the *belly* itself of any person (which it had not been seemly neither to describe) unto *a heap of wheat set with lilies?* And they seem to me to have had in their eyes that *apparel of wrought gold*, mentioned Psal. xlv. 13. and represent that part of it which covered the *belly* to be of *raised* or *embossed* work, resembling a *heap of wheat*. By which it is possible may be meant *many sheaves of wheat*, embroidered round about (as the king's daughter's raiment was, ver. 14.) with flowers, especially with *lilies*. And then this was a figure wherein *harvest* was represented; which is no unlikely conjecture: for anciently nothing was more honourable than to follow tillage or pasturage. From whence it is, that we find, in the latter end of Homer's eighteenth Iliad, that the device contrived by Vulcan in Achilles's shield, were reapers, cutting down ripe corn; and the king himself standing in a furrow, and providing a dinner for them.

Now, in the very midst of this work, I conceive there was a *fountain*: which I take to be the meaning of the first words of the verse, *Thy navel is a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor*; that is, *a great bowl or basin was wrought in the centre of the embroidery; full of water, which ran continually from above into it*. Or, *a conduit, running with several sorts of liquors into a great bowl*. Unto which the word *hammazog* (importing a *mixture*) seems to incline the sense.

The word *agan*, which properly signifies κρατῆρ, as the LXX. translate it, a *great bowl*, or *basin*; is used by the Chaldee paraphrast for a receptacle of water, in fountains or in ditches. As in Judg. iv. 11. where the *valley* or plain of *Agannaja*, of bowls, which was in Kedesh, is interpreted, by Kimchi, the *field*, in which were many pits or trenches, like two full bowls of water. This seems to be a plainer interpretation than that of Zanchez; who fancies this to have been some jewel that hung down from her girdle upon the navel; which was of this form, round like the moon. And the Chaldee paraphrast understood it to be of this figure, when he applies it *to the head of their school, who stood in the knowledge of the law, like the circle of the moon; and seventy wise men round about him, like a heap of wheat*.

What is the mystical meaning of this *hieroglyphic vesture* (as it may be called), is very hard to say. It may be applied to the two sacraments, which the church administers to her children: the font in baptism being represented by the former; and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper by the other part of this figure.

[*c*] Ver. 3. This verse hath been explained before, iv. 5. I only observe, that the Chaldee paraphrast applies these two breasts to the *two Messiahs*, whom they foolishly expect; the *Son of David*, and the *Son of Ephraim*: who shall be like Moses and Aaron, &c. Which I mention, because it shews that the Jews have an opinion, that the Messiah is discoursed of in this book; and that these words are to be applied to the leaders of the church, such as Moses and Aaron. Of which see in the place beforenamed.

[*d*] Ver. 4. The *tower*, to which the neck is here compared, in all probability is the same with that, iv. 4. where it is called *the tower of David*; and here *the tower of ivory*; because of its smoothness and whiteness. And the phrase is varied, perhaps, to express an increase of beauty: for, ἐλεφάντινος τράχηλος we meet withal in Anacreon, in a description of extraordinary handsomeness.

In like manner the eyes are here compared to *pools*; for ὀμμάτων ὑγρότης, *the shining moisture of the eyes*, is commended as very beautiful by many authors: particularly by Plutarch, who commends this in Pompey, and in Alexander; and by Philostratus, in his epistles, very frequently: *Thou seemest to me* (saith he, Epist. γυν. καπηλίδι) *to carry water, as it were, from the fountain of thy eyes*, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο εἶναι νυμφῶν μία, *and therefore to be one of the nymphs*.

Among *pools*, those fair ones at Heshbon were much celebrated; which were in the very entrance of the city, hard by the gate called Bath-rabbim; because it opened towards the way that led to Rabbah, the metropolis of the children of Ammon: which made the more people pass in and out at it. For Heshbon, we find in Numb. xxi. 24, 25, &c. was the principal city of Sihon, whose country bordered upon the Ammonites: and it fell to the share of the Gadites, who desired this country, because it abounded with pasturage, and was excellently watered; there being many rivulets and brooks in its neighbourhood, from whence the

pools of Heshbon were supplied. Which were remarkable for their *purity* and *serenity*, or *quietness*; and therefore fitter to represent the composed, settled eyes of a modest virgin.

Whose gravity and majesty, I suppose, are also set forth in the next words, by comparing her *nose* to the *tower which was in Lebanon*; and appeared at a distance among the trees (especially on that side which looks towards Damascus), as the nose in the face doth among the locks of hair that fall upon the cheeks.

A large, but well-proportioned nose, was always accounted a considerable part of beauty; and an indication, it was generally thought, of greatness of mind and height of spirit. Some add, that it is a token of sagacity and prudence: and the nose being the instrument of smelling, they apply it to the great judgment and foresight of the doctors of the church, who, they think, may be hereby intended. For as the Chaldee paraphrast applies this whole verse to the Sanhedrin, who governed the affairs of that people (who were as full of wisdom, saith he, as a pool is of water), so Christians generally by *eyes* understand the guides and governors of the church. Who may the better be compared to the *pools of Heshbon*; because it was, after the conquest of Canaan, one of the cities of the Levites, (Josh. xxi. 39.) whose office it was to instruct the people. And such being called by the Jews *Rabbim*, and in the singular number *Rabbi*, and *Rabbuni*, some have fancied that they are also denoted in the name *of the gate of Bath-rabbim*. For *Bath (daughter)* signifies people, or inhabitants; who were taught by those great men (as *Rabbim* signifies) what was law and judgment, in the gates of their cities. Damascus also being a great enemy to Israel, and noted for idolatry, they suppose, the nose being turned towards the *watch-tower* looking that way, is an emblem of the care that Christian doctors should take that their people be not seduced to idolatrous worship. We do not read any where in Scripture of this tower: but that it was a *watch-tower*, the word *zophe* here intimates; which we translate *looketh*, but signifies *looking like a watchman*.

[*e*] Ver. 5. It appears from the very phrase, *Thine head upon thee*, that they mean the covering of the head. And this being a description of her utmost perfections, it denotes, I conceive, the crown or garland which she wore (as ready for her nuptials), resembling the top of Carmel. Which was another beautiful mountain in that country, whose head was covered with great variety of flowers and trees. Certain it is, that as it was a rich and fruitful, so a very pleasant and lofty place, (Isa. xxxv. 2. Jer. ii. 7.) and therefore fitly chosen to set forth the dignity and majesty of the spouse.

But there is no necessity, it must be confessed, to interpret this of the mountain Carmel: but the words may be translated, *Thy head is like a pleasant fruitful field*. For so the word *Carmel* (from the goodliness, perhaps, of that mountain) signifies in many places, Isa. xvi. 10. xxxii. 15. Jer. xlviii. 33. where *joy and gladness is* said to be *taken micarmel*, from *Carmel*: which we truly translate *from the plentiful* (or pleasant) *field*. For there the prophet speaks of Moab, in which country Carmel itself was not. And this is an illustration of beauty in other authors: who compare the head of a delicate woman unto a fair meadow, or field. As Philostratus writes to his wife, ἡ δὲ σὴ κεφαλὴ λειμὼν πολὺ; ἄνθη φέρων, &c. *Thy head is a large meadow full of flowers; which are never wanting in the summer, and disappear not in the midst of winter.* And in the same manner Achilles Tatius, lib. i. saith of his Clitophon and Leucippe, ἐπὶ τῶν προσώπων ὁ λειμ῵ν, &c.

The next word *dallath* is never used any where for hair; but should rather be translated the *hair-lace*: that therewith the hair, and all the ornaments belonging to it, were tied up. This *hair-lace* is said here to be of a *purple colour; i. e.* it was rich and noble. For this was the royal colour, and therefore called here the *purple of the king* (as the Vulgar Latin takes it, joining the latter part of the verse with this), *tied up in folds, hanging down like canals*; that is, hanging loose upon the shoulders (as some expound it), it waved up and down: imitating the frizzles and curls of the water in canals. Others refer the two last words of *purple*, lying in canals, to receive a deeper tincture, by being double died.

But the LXX. make the last words a distinct sentence, as we do, in this manner; *The king is tied or bound in his walks.* That is, when he walks in his palace-royal, and beholds her beauty, he stands still, and cannot take his eyes off from her; being captivated with it, and tied as fast to her, as the hair of her head is to the lace that binds it.

The former part of this verse is applied by the Chaldee paraphrast to the *king* (the head of the people), *who shall be just like Elias; who was zealous for the Lord of hosts, and slew the false prophets upon Mount Carmel:* and the latter part of it to the *poor, who shall be clothed by him in purple; as Daniel was in Babylon, and Mordecai in Shushan.*

[*f*] Ver. 6. This verse may be either taken for a commendation of *love*, which had thus adorned her and raised her to this pitch of happiness: or of *her*, who is called *love*, in the abstract: to express more vehemently how lovely she was, and what pleasure they took in beholding her beauty.

The first word *fair* may relate to the rare composition of the whole body: and the next word *pleasant*, or *sweet*, or *comely* (as some translate it), to her graceful motion, gesture, and sweet conversation. And the sense, in short, is this: *O how desirable do the pleasures which thou impartest make thee.*

Theodoret's note here is very pious; that we become thus beautiful and lovely (though deformed before) by delighting in charity; and making doing good, our highest pleasure.

[*g*] Ver. 7. This verse is a reflection upon the whole foregoing description; as appears by the first word *zoth, this*: as if they had said, *to all this thy stature is proportionable.* Which is compared to the *palm-tree*; because it shoots up straight as well as high: and therefore sets forth that part of loveliness, which consists in tallness. Which was always thought a great addition to beauty; and was one reason why women wore ornaments upon the very top of their heads, as well as high shoes, to make them appear the taller. The noblest palm-trees of all other were in Judea (especially about Jericho), as Pliny writes, lib. xiii. cap. 4. From whence it was, that, in future times, it became an emblem of that country: as we find in that medal of the emperor Titus, with a captive woman sitting under a *palm-tree*, and the inscription of *Judea Capta.*

Our learned countryman, Sir Tho. Brown, (in his Miscellan. Tracts, p. 78.) hath ingeniously observed, that they speak emphatically, when they say they will *go up to take hold of the boughs* of this tree. For it must be ascended, before one can come at the boughs, which it bears only at the top and upper parts. But the trunk, or body of it, is naturally contrived, "densis, gradatisque corticum pollicibus, ut orbibus" (as Pliny there speaks), *with rings in the bark, orderly disposed, like steps,* whereby it may be very easily climbed.

And the *clusters,* to which the breasts are here compared, some think, are nothing but the fruit of this tree, viz. *dates:* for it is not expressed in the Hebrew what *clusters* these were; the word *grapes* being added by our translators of the Bible.

Who supposed, as others do, that vines ran up the palm-tree in those countries: which agrees well with what follows in the next verse, where the *clusters of the vine* are mentioned, as a fit emblem of her breasts. Which were described before, (v. 4.) but now mentioned again; to shew that they looked not merely at the beauty, but the usefulness of that which is meant thereby. And Theodoret makes this pious observation upon it: That *though the church be described as sublime, and reaching up to heaven* (as his words are), *yet she accommodates herself to the weakest and lowest souls: stretching out the breasts of her doctrine to all that need it. For the bunches of the palm-tree* (saith he) *hang down very low.* Which must be understood, not of their hanging down near the earth, but below the bough: which are all at the top, and very high. For which reason Menochius (lib. vii. de Repub. Hebr. cap. 8. n. 10.) thinks it not to be true, which Aben Ezra here notes; that the vines in Palestine were joined unto palm-trees; because the palm-tree hath not boughs fit to support the branches of the vine.

[*h*] Ver. 8. I take this verse to be still the voice of the same persons, though in the singular number (as appears from the mention of the *beloved,* ver. 9. which shews it is not he that speaks here, but some other person), for one spake in the name of the rest; (as Daniel did in the name of his other three brethren, ii. 30. 36.) or the whole *choir* is considered but as one person: who desire to have fellowship and communion with the church in her benefits. Of which having tasted, they say, *Now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine;* that is, Now we shall enjoy those delicious pleasures beforementioned, (ver. 6.)

That which we translate *nose,* in the last clause of the verse, the Vulgar translates *countenance* (or *mouth,* rather), agreeable enough to the Hebrew; and most agreeable to the rest of the words. For that which is *smelt,* is the breath, coming out of the mouth: compared to the fragrancy of *citrons, oranges, peaches,* or other sorts of *tappuach;* which is a name (I observed above, ii. 5.) common to all such fruits, as well as those we peculiarly call *apples:* and indeed signifies any fruit that hath a fragrant odour breathing from it.

And this may be thus mystically expounded, *And now shall we delight to hang upon the breasts of the church, and the breath or spirit of the apostles; sweeter than grapes, or the smell of any other fruit.*

[*i*] Ver. 9. Which is farther explained in this verse. Where the *roof of the mouth,* i. e. the words which come from thence, is compared to the most excellent wine: which was so choice, that it was fit only to be presented to him, to whose love they owed all they had (or so delicious, as our translation hath it, that it went down glibly), and so generous, that it put spirits into those who were quite spent with age; nay, raised those who were, in a manner, dead. So this character of the *best wine* runs, word for word, in the Hebrew: *It goeth straight to my beloved, and causeth to speak the lips of old people, or of those that sleep:* that is, are dead. For this word *jescheuim,* our translators thought, may either signify, *old men,* or *men asleep:* though exact grammarians will not allow it; but make a great difference between *jescheuim* and *jeschanim.* The first of which (which is the word here), they say, never signifies old men, but only *sleepers.*

But if we wave this nice distinction, the words may also be thus translated—*which makes men speak with the lips of the ancient;* i. e. sentences, or most excellent sayings. I omit other glosses, which may be found every where.

[*k*] Ver. 10. Here now the spouse, after long silence, puts an end to their *encomium:* modestly acknowledging there was nothing in her that could deserve it; but only as she was his, who could not be praised enough.

The words, in effect, we have met withal twice before, (ii. 16. vi. 3.) For the meaning of the latter part, *his desire is towards me,* is no more than this, (as Mr. Mede hath observed upon Dan. xi. 37.) *He is my husband.* Only there seems to me, to be an allusion here to Psal. xlv. 11. *(the king shall greatly desire thy beauty,* &c.) unto which Solomon, as I take it, hath a respect all along in this poem.

[*l*] Ver. 11. And now she turns herself from them to him (beginning a new part of this Song), and being augmented with those new companions, who had joined themselves unto her, she desires him (without whom nothing could be effected) to go along with her into the fields and villages; that is, to those places, which were not yet become his garden, of which they had been speaking hitherto. Or they were but preparing for it, by the culture he had begun to bestow upon them: which, from the following verse, seems to be the meaning.

Cepharim, villages, are opposed in Scripture to *cities,* (1 Sam. vi. 18.) and signify small towns and hamlets, as we speak, 1 Chron. xxvii. 25. Nehem. vi. 2. And the word *nalinah, let us lodge,* signifies to *tarry,* and to make one's *dwelling* or *abode* in a place; (Psal. xci. 1.) and may be applied to the settling of the gospel in those regions, where it was but newly planted. So Theodoret glosses: *Let us now take care of the meanest and most abject souls, that have lain long neglected; which are tropically called the fields and villages.* Most apply, to the gentile world, in this manner, *We have stayed long enough in the city of Jerusalem, and in Judea; let us go now to the heathen,* &c. I pass by other applications, which may be found in interpreters; and only add this note of my own, That the gospel was first preached in *cities* mostly, and from thence spread itself in time into the neighbouring *villages:* in which idolatry lasted so much longer than in cities, that they gave the name of *paganism* to it.

[*m*] Ver. 12. This verse supposes those fields (ver. 11.) not to have been quite uncultivated; but that there were *vineyards* (that is, *churches,* in the mystical sense) planted in them. And her desire is, that he would accompany her, in visiting them *early;* that is, *very diligently,* as the word

signifies in many places. Thus in Ecclus. xxxix. 5. it is said of a just man, that he will give his heart *to resort early to the Lord that made him.* Which is suitable to what the Psalmist saith, Psal. v. 1. and Jeremiah, xxi. 12. xxv. 2, 3. Thus Theodoret here expounds it, *It behoveth us to use all fitting diligence, in visiting those that have already received the preaching: whether they bring forth more than leaves; and especially, whether any beginning of charity appear among them.* For so he expounds, *if the pomegranates bud forth.* And this, saith he, is the greatest expression of love to him: which he makes the meaning of the last words, *there will I give thee my loves.* For what care we bestow upon them, he accounts as done to himself: according to his own words, *in as much as you have done it to one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me.*

The *vines* may signify the lesser sort of people; and the *pomegranates* the greater.

[*n*] Ver. 13. The word *dudaim* is found only here, and in Gen. xxx. 14. where we read, how Jacob's wives contended for them, as a most precious, that is, a rare and delicious fruit. For none can imagine they strove about that now called by us *mandrakes;* which are of a stinking smell, and very offensive; or about any ordinary flower, such as *violets* or *jessamine* (by which some expound this word), which they might have sent out their maids to gather easily every where. Ludolphus, therefore, in his late Ethiopic History, (lib. i. cap. 9. n. 23.) hath happily conjectured that it signifies the fruit which the Arabians call *mauz*, or *muza* (called by some the *Indian fig*), which in the Abyssine country is as big as a *cucumber;* and of the same form and shape, fifty of which grow upon one and the same stalk; and are of a very sweet taste and smell: from which cognation (as he calls it) of a great many upon the same stalk, he thinks it took the name of *judaim.* Which some derive from *dod*, either as it signifies *love*, or a *breast;* with which they fancy this fruit to have had resemblance.

So the sense of this verse is, that they found more there than they expected: or, that by her care the most excellent fruit was produced from people of the best rank (who may be understood by this most rare sort of fruit), and that every where: so that they needed not to be at the trouble to go far to gather it. For at their very gates there were *megadim*, all precious spices, (mentioned before, iv. 13. v. 1.) and those both *new and old* (a phrase for plenty and variety), which, as a faithful steward, she saith, she had laid up for him, with the same care that we do the most precious treasure; so the word *zephantis (I have laid up)* is used, Psal. xvii. 13. cxix. 11.

At the gates] May also signify as much as just ready to be gathered; or to be brought home.

Some apply *new and old* to the knowledge of the Old and New Testament, by which idolatry was vanquished, and true religion planted in the world: and they think our Lord himself alludes to this place, in those words, Matt. xiii. 52. which he speaks of a wise scribe that *bringeth forth out of his treasures things new and old.* Others apply *new and old*, unto those virtues that flow only from faith, hope, and charity; and those that are planted in us by nature. But I think, it may most aptly be accommodated to the spiritual gifts, which were newly bestowed upon the church by the Holy Ghost, after our Lord went to heaven; and the temporal blessings, which they enjoyed before: which were now all reserved for him, to be employed in his service. And so these words seem to me to have a respect unto Psal. cx. 3. where it is said, "In the day of his power, they should be a people of free-will-offerings." For when men give up themselves to God sincerely, they readily devote all they have to his uses; when he hath occasion for it. And thus the first Christians at Jerusalem did; who brought all their goods into his treasury: and other nations afterward made plentiful oblations as need required; thereby fulfilling another prophecy, Psal. lxxii. 10. 15. Unto which *megadim* may have respect: for such precious things as silver and gold, as well as the excellent fruits of trees, are called by this name; as may be seen, Deut. xxxiii. 13—16.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The first four verses belong to the end of the foregoing chapter; wherein the spouse continuing her ardent desire to see his kingdom enlarged, he agrees to it. And then begins (ver. 5.) the ninth and last part of this Song; in which all the persons speak in their turns. Her friends admiring her new advancement; and the spouse declaring the mighty power of love, whereby she had attained it, and hoped to keep it, and was made desirous to propagate it unto those that wanted it, (ver. 6—8.) Which the bridegroom favours; (ver. 9.) and they all promising greater industry in his service, he testifies his acceptance of it, and she her longing to see all this accomplished, (ver. 10, 11, &c.)

Spouse.

Ver. 1. **O** *THAT thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised.*] And now, having finished this blessed work, I hope to enjoy more intimate fellowship with thee. I cannot but wish, at least, to be made so happy as to have thy gracious presence always with me: and, by familiar acquaintance and conversation, to be so united with thee, that I may not be ashamed openly to own my love; but look upon it as an honour to make a public profession of my relation to thee. See Annot. [*a*]

Ver. 2. *I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mother's house, who would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.*] Whereby I would carry the knowledge of thee from place to place, till I had introduced thee into the acquaintance of my nearest kindred: which would enlarge my knowledge, and make new discoveries to me; and cause no less joy unto thee, and unto all the world, to see them give entertainment to thee. See Annot. [*b*]

Ver. 3. *His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.*] And thanks be to his goodness, I feel him communicating the power of his Spirit to me: which is the greatest token of his love; and then works most strongly in our hearts, when he sees them fullest of love to him. See Annot. [*c*]

Bridegroom.

Ver. 4. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye*

stir not up, nor awake my love, until he please.] Who, with his wonted care, or rather with a more earnest concern than ever, repeats his charge to my companions; saying, I conjure you to take heed, lest you discompose, or give the least disturbance to this love: but let it enjoy its satisfaction to the height of its desires. See Annot. [*d*]

Daughters of Jerusalem.

Ver. 5. *(Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?) I raised thee up under the apple-tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth that bare thee.*] And who can choose but admire at the power of love! which hath advanced her to such a degree of greatness, that it astonisheth those that behold it, and makes them say, Who is this that, out of a low condition, is raised to such familiarity with her beloved, that she leans upon his arm; being made one with him, and enjoying all manner of happiness in his love? Which I have excited towards me, saith she, by the pains I took in thy service, when I laboured in the country plantations; (vii. 11, 12.) such pains as thy mother felt, when she travailed with thee, and brought thee forth out of her womb. See Annot. [*e*]

Spouse.

Ver. 6. *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.*] Place me, therefore, hereafter so near unto thy heart, that I may never slip out of thy mind; but constantly receive fresh marks and tokens of thy love and favour: deny not this suit, which proceeds from most fervent love; which can no more be resisted than death, and is as inexorable as the grave; especially when it flames to the degree of jealousy, and is afraid of losing what it loves: then it incessantly torments the soul, if it be not satisfied; it wounds incurably; it burns and rages with such a violent and unextinguishable heat, as I feel in my breast, now that it is mightily moved by the Lord. See Annot. [*f*]

Ver. 7. *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.*] Though fire may be quenched, yet love cannot; no, not by the greatest difficulties, nay, troubles and sufferings: which, though they come pouring in continually, are so far from being able to suppress it, that they cannot abate it; no, nor translate it to any other, from the person it loves: for, as it is inestimable in itself, so it cannot be purchased by money; nor will they whom it possesses part with it for the greatest estate that they might enjoy without it; but perfectly scorn and reject such proffers. See Annot. [*g*]

Ver. 8. *We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?*] And as for those that want it, or in whom it is but just kindled, it makes us very solicitous what we shall do for them: particularly for one that is as dear to us as a sister; but of a small growth in this most desirable quality; and therefore not capable of that happiness which we enjoy: what shall we do for her, when it shall be said, The time is come that she should be disposed of in marriage; and yet it shall be said withal, that she is not fit for it? See Annot. [*h*]

Ver. 9. *If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.*] We will not despair of her; nor cast her off; but be both patient with her, and do our utmost to make her such as we desire: let her but be faithful and constant, and we will do for her as we do for a wall that is low: which we pull not down, but build up higher, and adorn also with fair and goodly turrets; or as we do with the door of a noble house; which, if it be too weak or too mean, we spare no cost to mend it, but enclose in a case of cedar. See Annot. [*i*]

Little Sister.

Ver. 10. *I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.*] And our labour, I foresee, will not be lost; for I hear her say, I am such a wall; and my breasts rise and grow big like such turrets: I am no longer of a low and despicable stature, nor unmeet for his love; but from this time forth I shall be acceptable unto him, and find such favour with him, as to enjoy all the happiness which he imparts to those that are most dear unto him. See Annot. [*k*]

Ver. 11. *Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver.*] Which I will endeavour to answer by my best diligence in his service; and from thence still promise myself a greater increase of happiness: for though great persons let out their lands to others, as king Solomon doth the vineyard he hath in Baal-hamon unto several tenants, from every one of which he receives a vast revenue, besides the gain which they have to themselves as a reward of their labour: (ver. 12.) See Annot. [*l*]

Ver. 12. *My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.*] Yet I will not commit the vineyard which I am entrusted withal, to the care and management of other persons; but cultivate it myself, with my utmost industry: my own eye shall be ever upon it, and I will let nothing be wanting for its improvement; and therefore, if he receive so much profit, beside the benefit that accrues to others, what fruit may not I expect from a far better soil than his, and from far greater pains and providence that I will use about it? See Annot. [*m*]

Bridegroom.

Ver. 13. *Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it.*] Which coming to the ears of her beloved, he said to her in the presence of all that waited on her, Thou hast taken up a worthy resolution; nothing can be more acceptable to me than that thou fix thy habitation in thy vineyard; nor canst thou possibly be better employed, to thy own as well as my content, than about the gardens, (vi. 2.) committed to thy charge: and therefore ask what thou wilt of me, and I tell thee before all thy companions, who are witnesses of what I say, I will do it for thee. See Annot. [*n*]

Spouse.

Ver. 14. *Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart, upon the mountains of spices.*] I have nothing to desire but this, that thou, who art my only beloved, wouldest come and accomplish all these things: make all the speed, that is possible, to come and save us, and perfect thy loving-kindness to us; such speed as the swiftest creatures make to save themselves from danger: let nothing hinder this; but by thy love, which makes all

things sweet and easy, overcome the greatest difficulties in thy way to us. See Annot. [o]

ANNOTATIONS.

[*a*] Ver. 1. This verse, at first sight, looks like a repetition of the same desire wherewith he began this book; that they might be so happy as to see the Messiah appear, though it were but in his infancy; which would transport them with joy, &c. And thus the Chaldee paraphrast interprets it, of the time when the Messiah shall be revealed to the congregation of Israel.

But if we consider what follows, it will be more reasonable to connect it with what went before: and to take it for a most ardent expression of love to the person before spoken of, with a desire to have more intimate familiarity with him; such as a sister hath with a brother when he is a sucking child; whom, if she met in the street she would not be ashamed to take out of the nurse's arms into her own, and openly kiss; and not imagine she should thereby incur any reproach or contempt.

This seems to be the most literal sense of the words; which may be applied to the open profession of Christianity, with the greatest confidence and security; nothing being more innocent and harmless than the love and service wherein it engages its disciples to their Lord and Master, Christ. Who the more obedient any person is to God's commands, holds that man or woman the nearer to him; even as dear as a *brother, sister, or mother,* (Matt. xii. 50.) Which (saith Grotius upon that place) is the mystical sense of the Song of songs. (See more in my Preface.)

[*b*] Ver. 2. This dear Lord (*i. e.* the knowledge of him) she desires here to carry still farther; till she had brought him into the *house,* that is, into the family of her mother. Which may be applied unto the design of God to awaken the Jews to believe on Christ, by bringing in the *fulness,* that is, a vast number, *of the gentiles,* (Rom. xi. 25.) Which the apostle saith there, (ver. 15.) would be *life from the dead:* unto which the last words of this verse may be accommodated.

For after she had said she *would lead him,* or *bring him down;* and then *bring him into the house* of her mother; she adds, *thou shalt teach,* or *instruct me.* Which agrees with what the apostle there writes, (ver. 12.) that if the fall of the Jews was *the riches of the gentiles;* that is, enriched them with the treasures of Divine wisdom and knowledge, how much more would their fulness enrich them? If we refer this clause (as we do) to *mother* beforenamed, the best sense I can make of it is this, *By whom I was educated and instructed.* And then follows her making him *drink of spiced wine* (that is, making a great feast for him, Prov. ix. 2. where the most excellent wine made the chiefest part of the entertainment), such wine as makes those who are asleep to speak, (vii. 9.) Which effect, the receiving of the Jews again will produce; as the apostle tells us, when he saith, *it shall be life from the dead: i. e.* a most powerful argument to enliven the most stupid souls, and move them to believe in Christ.

Certain it is that *herakach, spiced* or *aromatic wine,* denotes its fragrancy or delicious odour; whereby the best wines are discerned, as much as by their taste: and the word we translate *juice* signifies every where *musty,* or *new wine:* whereby the prophets set forth something that works with greater power and efficacy than ordinary, (Zech. ix. 17.) And here, I doubt not, relates to something new and unusual: and, in the mystical application, may signify a greater fulness and power of the Spirit, than had been in former days; working like new wine in the hearts of those that received the gospel.

And this is said to be done to *him,* because, as Theodoret noted before, what is done to his members, he takes as done to himself.

[*c*] Ver. 3. Who is here represented as immediately condescending to her desires, and fulfilling her wishes: vouchsafing a new supply of the power of the Spirit, to support and comfort her in those labours of love for his name's sake. Which were so great, that she is represented here as spent and fainting away. So she had done before, ii. 6. where see the meaning of these words.

[*d*] Ver. 4. This verse hath also been twice used before; with no difference from what we read here, but that now the mention of *hinds* and *roes* is left out; and yet he charges them with greater vehemence than ever. For the Hebrew phrase here signifies, as much as *what do you do, why do you stir,* &c. that is, by no means; take heed how you disturb her. (See ii. 7. iii. 5.)

[*e*] Ver. 5. This seems to be the voice of her companions, or *daughters of Jerusalem,* mentioned in the verse before (and begins the last part of this Song), admiring the new change they saw in her. For she was represented before as *coming out of the wilderness,* (iii. 6.) but not *leaning upon her beloved;* as she is here. Which signifies her advancement unto a state of greater dearness to him, and familiarity with him.

The word *mithrappeketh* is not found elsewhere, and therefore variously translated by interpreters. But most agree that it signifies, either closely *adhering,* or *leaning, relying,* and *recumbing,* as they speak: which L. de Dieu hath shewn is the use of the word in the neighbouring languages. But there are those who think it imports something of pleasure (and therefore the Vulgar takes in that sense with the other, as I have in the Paraphrase), and translate it, *flowing with the delights.* For she having been in the fields and villages, visiting the vineyards, and other places, (vii. 11—13.) is now introduced as coming back from thence, into the royal city. Which being seated on high, in comparison with the plains out of which she came, she is said to *ascend,* or *come up:* but, that she might not be tired with the journey, is represented as *leaning upon the arm of her beloved* (or, as some will have it, *lying in his bosom,* as St. John did in our Saviour's), and laden with the delicious fruit beforementioned, (vii. 13.) Which excited the admiration of all that knew her, when they beheld the grace of her Lord towards her; together with her own beauty, riches, ornaments, and happiness.

The latter part of the verse, all the Greek fathers take to be the bridegroom; and so do many of the Latins. But some of them, and all the Hebrew writers, take them to be the words of the spouse; because *thee* is of the masculine gender. Whichsoever way we take them, the sense is very hard to find. If we go the first way, the most natural sense seems to be, that he puts her in mind of the poor and mean condition, out of which he had taken her; into a state of the greatest friendship with him: that she might not be

vainly puffed up, with the acclamations which were made to her.

But I have followed the Hebrew points in my Paraphrase, and understood the words of *stirring up his love towards her*, when they were looking after the plantations mentioned vii. 11, 12. Which was excited by the care and pains she took in that business; like the pains of a woman in travail: unto which St. Paul compares the solicitude and care he had about the Galatians, that *Christ might be formed in them*, (iv. 19.)

Certain it is that *chibbelah* is a word which relates to the pangs of travailing women, and therefore the LXX. translate it ὠδίνησε: so that if I have not conjectured amiss about the rest, my interpretation of the last words is natural enough. For *caph similitudinis* (as they call it) is frequently omitted in the Scripture, and to be supplied in the sense. Twice in this very book it is wanting, i. 15. vii. 4. *thy eyes are doves'*, that is, as doves'. And in Prov. xvii. 21. and in his father David's Psalms, very often, Psal. xi. 1. *How say you to my soul, Flee a bird (i. e.* as a bird) *to your hill?* And to omit other places, cxix. 119. *Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth dross;* i. e. *as* or *like* dross.

In like manner I take the last words of this verse, *there (viz.* I stirred thee up) *as thy mother travailed in birth with thee*, there, *I say, like her that brought thee forth: i. e.* by such pains as these I raised up thy love to me.

As for what is said by many interpreters, concerning Eve's eating the apple in Paradise, and thereby ruining all mankind; there is no reason to think, either that she is the *mother* here meant, or that *tappuach* denotes an *apple*, rather than *orange, citron*, or such-like fruit.

[*f*] Ver. 6. The words, also, according to the Hebrew points, are the words of the spouse; beseeching her beloved to keep her always in his mind, as one very dear to him. For that was the end of having the name, or the picture, of a beloved person, engraven on a *seal*, or *jewel*, and wearing it next the heart, or upon the arm; that it might testify their great esteem of such persons, and the constancy of their affection towards them, and that they desired they might never slip out of their memory. (See Jer. xxii. 24.)

Some think here is an allusion to the high-priest; who carried the names of the children of Israel engraven in precious stones, not only upon his breast, but upon his shoulders also; as may be seen, Exod. xxviii. 11, 12. 21. and this, *for a memorial before the Lord continually*, ver. 29. (Which interpretation may be confirmed by the words of the son of Sirach, Ecclus. xlv. 11. who saith, *Aaron was adorned with precious stones, graven like seals.)* And they think withal, that *seal upon the heart* relates to the inward affection; and *seal on the arm*, to the outward expressions of love and esteem.

And then follows the reason of this prayer; which proceeded from the vehemence of her love, which was grown to the height of jealousy (which is nothing but the highest degree of love), lest she should lose him, as she had been in danger before, (v. 6, &c.)

This love is said to be *as strong as death:* which is admirably expressed by Maximus Tyrius, dissert. 10. *Wild beasts are not terrible to it, nor fire, nor precipices, nor the sea, nor the sword, nor the halter,* ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἄπορα αὐτῷ εὐπορώτατα, &c. *but even the most unpassable difficulties are got over by it; the hardest things are presently mastered; the most frightful easily surmounted*, &c. it is every where *confident, overlooks all things, overpowers all things*, &c. But none express this like St. Paul, Rom. viii. 35—37, &c.

There is no difficulty but in the last clause of the verse (for as *strong as death*, signifies to be insuperable; so *cruel as the grave*, denotes it not to be moved by prayers and entreaties, or any thing else): where the word *reschapeha* should not be translated *the coals thereof*, but the *arrows thereof are arrows of fire*. That is, it shoots into the heart, wounds it, and burns there; nay, inflames it vehemently by the wounds it gives: as the reverend and learned Dr. Hammond hath observed upon Psal. lxxvi. 3. And so the LXX. seem here to understand it, when they translate it περίπτερα αὐτῆς, *its feathers, or wings, wherewith it flies*, are *wings of fire*. Which wings or arrows of fire, are said, in the last words of all, to be a *most vehement flame;* or rather it should be thus translated, *which are the flames of the fire of the Lord*. So the Hebrew word seems to signify, being compounded of three words, *fire, flame*, and *the Lord:* denoting mighty and exceeding scorching flames. Such compositions are not only to be found in other parts of the Bible, (Jer. ii. 31.) but in the Punic language also, as Bochartus shews in his Canaan, lib. ii. cap. 15.

Some translate it, *Such flames are kindled only by the Lord*. And then, if there be an allusion to the breast-plate of the high-priest, in the beginning of the verse, I fancy the conclusion may allude to the *fire, that went out from before the Lord*, (Lev. ix. 24.) and devoured the sacrifices, as love doth all manner of difficulties. This fire was to burn perpetually upon the altar, and never be suffered to go out, (Lev. vi. 12.) and therefore the best emblem of love that could be found.

[*g*] Ver. 7. For it is unextinguishable, as it here follows, *Many waters cannot quench love*. Which is a metaphor whereby profane authors also have set forth the mighty, unconquerable power of love. —— τίς ὁ καινὸς ἐμπρησμὸς, &c. *What new kind of conflagration is this?* (saith Philostratus in one of his epistles) *I am ready to call for water, and there is none to bring it,* ὅτι τὸ σβεστήριον εἰς ταύτην τὴν φλόγα ἀπορώτατον, *for a quencher of this fire is the most impossible to be found. If one bring it from the fountain, or if he take it out of the river, it is all one; for the water itself is burnt up by love.*

By *many waters* are sometimes meant, in Scripture, *many afflictions* (as is very well known), which they that love, frequently endure, before they can accomplish their desire. But though there should be an *inundation* of them, we are here told they cannot *overwhelm*, or *overflow* it; as the word we translate *drowned* signifies: but it will still live and be uppermost, and prevail.

And such is its constancy, and satisfaction also, which it hath in its own pleasures, it regards not riches at all; but will rather be poor with one whom it affects, than enjoy great possessions with another person. Nay, it despises, and that with disdain, the offers of a man's whole estate; if that condition be imposed, of forsaking its love. Others may laugh, perhaps, at such persons; but, it is all one, they smile at them again. So Theodoret and the LXX. understand the latter part of this verse, *if a man give away all his substance in charity, they will extremely despise him.* That is, saith he, they that spend all they have, and their

very lives, for the love of God, are set at nought by those that want such love. Other interpretations of these words I have expressed in the Paraphrase.

[*h*] Ver. 8. Here is another property of Divine love, which makes us solicitous for those that want it; or have but the beginnings of it, and may be in danger to lose them. And this seems to be the speech of the spouse to her companions, who were all troubled for a *sister* (that is, some church), which was of a small growth, and had *no breasts;* that is, was not ripe for marriage. For all have breasts; but they do not rise and swell, till they are of such an age that they may be called *women*, (Ezek. xvi. 7.) They inquire there what they should do for her, *in the day when she shall be spoken for?* that is, demanded in marriage. Or, *when there shall be speech concerning her;* that is, concerning this defect of hers.

[*i*] Ver. 9. Here he returns an answer to that question: which is, that he and they will take the greater care for her; to raise her stature, and to bring her to perfection. For where there are good beginnings, we are not wont to forsake them: but rather to add to them and improve them. As, for example, the wall of a building which we esteem, we do not suffer to fall to the ground, but strengthen and raise it: nay, adorn it sometimes, and beautify it with towers and pinnacles; which we stick not to gild, that they may appear more gloriously. Or, if it be a door of a house, which we value, we let it not decay; but rather ease it with boards of *cedar*, to make it more durable, as well as neat and handsome: for *cedar* is not apt to putrefy.

This seems to me the most simple exposition of these words; and I do not think fit to trouble the reader with that vast variety, which may be found in interpreters. But only add, that they may very naturally be applied unto a soul, or a church in a state of imperfection; but built upon Christ the foundation: in this manner, *Let her but be firm and constant, like a wall, in her love to me, and I will not abandon the care of her; let her but exclude all other, and open to me alone, and she shall never want any thing necessary to her perfection: for I will richly adorn her, and make her like the house of God himself; which is lined with cedar.*

[*k*] Ver. 10. And then this verse may be thus applied (being her answer): *I am resolved to do what thou requirest (to be steadfast and faithful), and already perceive the reward of my fidelity*, &c. For these words plainly relate to the foregoing, as I have expressed in the Paraphrase: unto which I shall add nothing; for if that be admitted, there is no difficulty in them. It being known to every body, that *shalom, peace,* signifies all manner of happiness in the Hebrew language: which is included also in our English word *favour*, whereby we here translate it. For it signifies all the good things, that may be expected from the favour he bears to any person.

[*l*] Ver. 11. And being thus *favoured* by him, she now promises her diligence (in this and the next verse) to do him the best service, and to make the greatest improvements she could, of the talents committed to her. For though Solomon (she here saith) let out his vineyard, which he had in Baal-hamon, a place near Jerusalem, as Aben Ezra tells us (which is followed by most interpreters, few thinking it to be near En-gedi), where abundance of people had vineyards, and he a very large one: for it being let to several farmers, every one paid him a *thousand pieces of silver, i. e.* shekels (as much as to say, it brought him in a vast revenue yearly; for a *thousand* is a sum of perfection, Psal. cxliv. 13. Micah v. 2. and other places, and the number of farmers or tenants, though not expressed, some think, to be *ten*); yet she takes up another resolution, which she expresses in the next verse.

[*m*] Ver. 12. Where she saith she will herself look after the vineyard committed to her trust, and not leave it to the care of others. Which seems to be the meaning of the first phrase in this verse: *My vineyard which I have is before me; i. e.* under my eye (as we speak) and special care. Thus God's judgments are said to be before David; (Psal. xviii. 22.) that is, he took great care never to swerve from them.

It amounts also to the same sense, if we take this phrase to signify as much as, *it is in my power*, (Gen. xlvii. 5. Jer. xl. 4.) For then the meaning is, she kept it in her own hand, or occupation, and did not farm it out to others.

And then the last part of the verse signifies, that if Solomon made such a profit of his vineyard as that beforenamed (besides *two hundred* shekels, which each of the farmers got over and above for their pains), though he did not dress it himself, what would be the increase that she was likely to make by her own care and diligence in the business? That is, it was incredible what fruit she would reap by her pains: according to that of the son of Sirach, (Ecclus. xxiv. 31, &c.) *I said I will water my best garden, and I will water abundantly my garden-bed; and lo, my brook became a river, and my river became sea*, &c.

This seems to me the most natural sense of these two difficult verses, which Almonazir suggested to my thoughts. And that Solomon, not any other person, is here intended, Maimonides himself agrees; who, in his treatise of the Foundation of the Law, chap. 7. hath these words: *Wheresoever you meet with the name of Solomon, in the book of Canticles, it is holy; as the rest of the names there are: save only in that place, A thousand are to thee, O Solomon*, &c. Others also add that place, (Cant. iii. 7.) *Behold his bed, which is Solomon's*, &c. Where the masters say, it is a common name, as well as here.

These two verses are ingeniously applied by some, to the far greater increase of knowledge and goodness in the *church* than in the *synagogue:* that is, by Christianity than by Judaism.

[*n*] Ver. 13. This verse, according to the Hebrew points, is the voice of the *bridegroom:* who seems to commend the resolution she made, in the foregoing verse. And he calling her *the inhabitant of the gardens* (which are the same with the *vineyard* beforementioned), it signifies her perpetual care about their prosperity. In recompence of which, he bids her, before they finish this interview, to ask what she will of him, and it shall be done for her. Which, in short, is the sum of what the same Almonazir hath long ago conjectured to be the sense of this place.

[*o*] Ver. 14. Unto which she returns her answer in these words, and so shuts up this Song. Which seems to me to conclude as it began; with a desire that the Messiah would come, and make good all those things that had been represented in these raptures.

The word *berach*, which we translate *make haste*, is twice translated by the LXX. διαυλέομαι, to *go*, or *run through*, to the very end. (Exod. xxvi. 28. xxxvi. 33.) And, no

doubt, denotes here most vehement and restless endeavours in a speedy course: like that of a *roe, buck,* or *wild goat,* rather; whose agility, both in running and jumping, is celebrated by all authors, and said to be such as is scarce credible.

The *young hart* (called here *opher*) is still more swift and nimble than the old; the exceeding great fear wherein it is adding wings (as we speak) to its feet. Whence Xenophon saith, there is nothing comparable to their swiftness when the old ones are absent, and they are pursued by dogs: τότε τάχος οὐδὲν εἰκὸς, &c. *then there is no speed like* to that of such young harts, as his words are quoted by Bochartus.

Who well observes, (lib. iii. cap. 17. par. i. de Animal.) that the sense of the last words *(upon the mountains,* &c.) is to be made out by adding one word, in this manner: *Be thou like the young harts running (*or *when they run) upon the mountains of spices; i. e.* the mountains where spices grow; such as those mentioned iv. 6. Such, perhaps, was Bether, (ii. 17. where we meet with these words before), and I have sometimes thought, that they should be so translated here, *the mountains of Besamin;* as there *the mountains of Bether.*

But what these mountains were we are now ignorant, though this is certain, that the creatures here mentioned were bred in the highest mountains of the country; as Ælian testifies in the latter end of his fifth book: "The harts in Syria are bred in their highest mountains, Amanus, Libanus, and Carmel." For there they were safest and most secure from danger; there it was difficult to pursue them, especially when they climbed up the steepest places. And therefore the Psalmist and the prophet Habakkuk, when they would represent themselves as in a state of perfect security, say, God had *made their feet like hinds' feet, and made them to walk upon their (bamoth) high places,* (Psal. xviii. 33. Hab. iii. *ult.)* Which words allude to the inaccessible mountains, which those creatures frequented; especially the females, that they might there secure their young ones. Besides, as there they could feed and bring forth their young most securely; so there was the sweetest feeding.

In short, Solomon here seems to long for the first coming of the Messiah, as St. John doth for his last: who concludes his book of the Revelation in the same manner as Solomon doth this: saying, *Come, Lord Jesus,* (Rev. xxii. 20.)

There are those who fancy, that in the foregoing verse the bridegroom asks her consent, for the perfecting their love in marriage; and desires her, in the audience of her companions, to lift up her voice, and sing the nuptial hymn: which she now, say they, in this verse, professes herself to be ready to do, if he would but be present with her, and assist and direct her to do it aright. And then it is thus applied and paraphrased by the forenamed Almonazir:—

Thou commandest me that I should with morning and evening hymns and songs celebrate thy omnipotent wisdom and goodness, &c. *vouchsafe then speedily to adjoin the eternal force and flame of thy Holy Spirit unto my voice; that, in spirit, and truth, and sanctity of heart, I may sing thy praises: and, not only with my mouth and sound, but in my mind and heart especially, worthily worship thy incomprehensible majesty.*

Whence it is, that the church, being moved by a Divine inspiration, saith thus in all her prayers:

"O Lord, open thou our lips:
And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.
O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us."

Amen.

END OF BISHOP PATRICK'S COMMENTARY, &c.

A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

LARGER AND LESSER PROPHETS:

BEING

A CONTINUATION OF BISHOP PATRICK.

By WILLIAM LOWTH, B. D.

PREBENDARY OF WINCHESTER.

"THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IS THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY."—REV. XIX. 10.

A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

PROPHECY OF ISAIAH.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE,

AND

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

JONATHAN,

LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER, AND PRELATE OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

My Lord,

THE chief design of the following work, which I humbly offer to your Lordship, is to assert the ancient and catholic sense of several texts of the Prophet, whom I undertake to explain, and vindicate them from some novel expositions, which tend to deprive the Christian religion of the benefit of so considerable a testimony: and I humbly beg leave to present to your Lordship this small acknowledgment of my duty and observance, as a member of your cathedral, and minister of a parish-church of your diocess and patronage, and to which your Lordship hath been pleased to be a benefactor, when it lately suffered under a great calamity.

How mean soever the performance may be, I hope the design of it may in some measure recommend it to your Lordship's patronage, which is to illustrate this *evangelical Prophet*, who, by the general consent of former ages, hath been placed at the head of that noble order: a person, whose supernatural gift of prophecy added a new lustre to the greatness of his birth, and whose liberal education furnished him with a noble eloquence, and suitable to the dignity of his argument.

The same Holy Spirit, who sometimes spake to the world by *shepherds* and *fishermen, that the excellency* of the truths delivered by them *might appear to be of God, and not of themselves*, at other times made choice of the pen of a David, a Solomon, and an Isaiah, to instruct us that the outward accomplishments of birth and fortune may be sanctified to higher purposes, and made instrumental in advancing the glory of God, and the interests of religion.

That your Lordship may continue to employ the advantages of your great station and quality to God's honour, and the service of his church, is the hearty prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most dutiful and obedient servant,

WILLIAM LOWTH.

PREFACE.

THERE is no part of the Holy Scriptures that more deserves the thoughts of inquisitive men, than the writings of the prophets. God, in his word, hath offered suitable matter for the several capacities of men. The historical books instruct us in the methods of providence, and afford an agreeable entertainment to inquisitive minds, as they contain the most ancient records that are in the world, and relate the most remarkable occurrences that ever happened in it. Persons of ordinary understandings, may find all necessary truths plainly delivered, and often repeated, in the New Testament writings, and in the *practical* books of the Old: those of higher endowments, may find sufficient employment in unfolding the types and figures of the *Jewish economy*, and in searching into the depths of the *prophetical* predictions. We may, indeed, find some prophecies plainly delivered with great exactness of time, and particularity in circumstances (those especially which relate to the coming of the Messias), that, when the events came to pass, they might appear to be the effects of God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge. But the far greater part of the prophetical predictions are couched in *symbols* and sacred *hieroglyphics* (a way of conveying the abstruser parts of knowledge, much used in the eastern countries): as it were on purpose to excite the curiosity of the ingenious, and reward the diligence of the industrious searchers after Divine truth. To which, we may add, that the *metaphorical* style of the prophets, is very proper to inspire the minds of attentive readers, with noble ideas of God's wisdom and providence, and to affect us, with the most lively image of the glorious kingdom of God and Christ, the happiness of those that shall have a share in the tri-

umphs of it, and the terribleness of those punishments which are denounced against such as will not have him to reign over them. And to encourage men in the searches of this kind, they will find such a harmony and correspondence between the figures and emblems, whereby the prophets point out things to come, that the careful comparing of them with each other, will afford the best clue to guide the attentive reader through the most difficult parts of their writings, and is likewise a surprising proof that they all wrote by the direction of one and the self-same *Spirit*.

This hath been in some measure attempted in the ensuing work, where the author hath used his utmost diligence, to compare the text with such parallel places, both of the Old and New Testament, which might any way conduce to the clearing up its sense: and he is willing to believe, that if he hath given any new light to the obscure and difficult passages of this Prophet, it is chiefly by comparing the phrase and idiom of the text with other parallel places more exactly than hath been hitherto done by any commentator upon this Prophet, that he hath seen: and he desires the reader, that when he finds a more than ordinary difficulty, he would carefully consider the parallel texts there referred to, which, to have set down at length, would have enlarged this work beyond its due bounds.

The writings of the prophets unfold the methods of Providence in many remarkable instances: such as are God's disposal of kingdoms and governments, and making use of wicked princes and nations to be the instruments of his justice in punishing others as bad or worse: the gradual discovery of the coming of the Messias, and the several steps and advancements, by which God introduced his kingdom into the world, and will still carry it on till the consummation of all things. These speculations must needs afford great entertainment to men of curious and inquisitive tempers, and be matter of delight as well as instruction.

These reasons, as they should encourage those to the study of the prophetical writings, who have any talents for such an employment, especially those whose profession engages them to *search the Scriptures:* so they should recommend any attempt that is made towards the farther explaining of so considerable a part of the Holy Scriptures. For after all the pains that hath been taken in clearing up the sense of these sacred books, by persons excellently qualified for such an undertaking, still there is room left for farther endeavours in that kind. For there is a treasure of heavenly wisdom contained in them, that can never be exhausted: and as it is highly reasonable to believe, that some parts of the Old Testament prophecies reach to the end of the world; so it is as reasonable to expect, that, in every age, Providence should open some new scene, which will give farther insight into the meaning of those sacred writings.

I confess, I can by no means approve of the opinion of some learned men, who are for cramping the sense of the prophets, and confining it within as narrow a compass as they can, and will needs maintain that the prophets scarce foresaw any thing but what was to come to pass in or near their own time. I must own myself puzzled, to assign a reason why God should appoint a succession of prophets to foretell what should come to pass within the compass of about three hundred years (for within that time most of those prophets lived, whose writings make up that part of the Scripture canon, which is called by that name), and take no notice of any other occurrences which should happen in succeeding times; whereas to extend the prophetic views to the end of the world, seems much more agreeable to that description of God's prescience which the holy writers give us, that "He declares the end from the beginning," (Isa. xlvi. 10.) and "His wisdom reaches from one end [*of the world*] to the other mightily, and sweetly does it order all things." (Wisd. viii. 1.) So that even when the whole *mystery of God's dispensations shall be finished,* it will appear that nothing is contained in them, but what God hath formerly "declared to his servants the prophets," as it is expressly affirmed, Rev. x. 7.

For a farther proof of this assertion, I desire it may be considered, that the prophecies, which foretell the visibility and universality of Christ's church, accompanied with perfect peace, prosperity, and holiness, cannot, with any probability, be said to have as yet received their accomplishment, as neither have those predictions which foretell the flourishing state of the Jewish church and nation in the latter times. And to suppose these prophecies to have already received their utmost completion, is, in my judgment, to give too great an advantage to the Jews, and in effect to acknowledge that they never were, nor will be, fulfilled in their natural and obvious sense. Whereas, on the other side, to assert that many prophecies relating to the Messias are already fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ, a truth that can be made out beyond all contradiction; and withal to maintain that several others concerning the same subject, relate to his *second coming,* and their accomplishment shall usher in or accompany that his glorious appearance: I say, the observing this distinction between the different times, wherein the several prophecies relating to the coming of Christ shall be fulfilled, effectually answers all the arguments which the Jews make use of to support themselves in their incredulity; it discovers a perfect harmony and correspondence between the prophecies of the Old and New Testament, and it gives us an agreeable view of a more flourishing state of the church, than the world hath yet been blessed with; and thereby engages us to use our best endeavours to restore the church to its primitive purity, wherever we find it defective.

These considerations at first engaged me to attempt a Commentary upon the Prophet Isaiah; who, as he is the first and principal of the prophets in order; so he hath had the honour of being styled the *evangelical Prophet* by the Christian church, because he foretold the coming and kingdom of the Messias with greater clearness than any of the rest. But he will have but little pretence to that title, if we follow some men's notions, which have been lately renewed, and zealously maintained, by Mr. Samuel White, in his Commentary upon this Prophet; where he all along supposes, that the far greatest part of this prophecy, relates only to the times in which the Prophet lived, and those that succeeded till the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity. Indeed, he is willing to allow the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah to have been fulfilled only in our Saviour: but according to his hypothesis, that prophecy must come in very abruptly, without any connexion upon what went before, or what follows. To do him all the justice I can, I must own, that, in his preface, he asserts a double meaning of many prophecies: one more immediately relating to the present circumstances of things in or near

the Prophet's own time; the others having more distant views upon the state of the gospel-times. But his general design in his arguments to the chapters, and in his notes, whenever an occasion is offered, is to run down and ridicule the *spiritual* and *mystical* sense of particular texts or prophecies, and to accuse the commentators who have asserted it, as *making a nose of wax* of the Scriptures, and forcing the words to an unnatural and improper signification. (See his argument on chap. lxvi. as also on xi. xxxv. lv. lx. lxii. and his notes upon xxx. 25. xli. 2. xlix. 9. lx. 7.) Now these assertions are a direct contradiction to the manner of interpreting the Old Testament prophecies, made use of by Christ and his apostles in the New; where we find our Saviour applies several of the ancient prophecies to himself; and the apostles frequently assert, that *all things happened to the Jews in figures*, that their ordinances were *parables* (Παραβολὴ, Heb. ix. 11.) or allegories with respect to the times of the gospel; that the Christian church is the true *Israel of God*, and all the privileges appropriated to the Jewish nation in the Old Testament as God's *segullah*, or *peculiar people*, do in a more eminent manner appertain to the church of Christ, which is that true kingdom of God, the *Jerusalem coming down from heaven*, of which the earthly Jerusalem, and the temple there, was only a type and figure.

These rules for interpreting the ancient prophecies laid down by the apostles, ought to be a standard for all Christians to square their interpretations by, as being delivered by those who had the Γνῶσις, or that especial *gift of the Spirit*, which enabled them to explain the prophecies of the Old Testament, and apply them to the times of the New. This is that *public* or authentic *interpretation* of the Scripture prophecies, which St. Peter opposes to a *private interpretation*, 2 Pet. i. 20. (Ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως. The word Ἐπίλυσις properly signifies *interpretation*, being derived from Ἐπιλύω, which signifies to *expound*, Mark iv. 34. So Gen. xli. 12. "To each man according to his dream he did interpret." It is in the Greek, Ἀνδρὶ κατὰ τὸ ἐνύπνιον αὐτῦ ἐπέλυσε); that is, to such an interpretation as is wholly owing to human wit or invention, or relates to private persons and transactions. Whereas, this public interpretation is taken from the *common analogy of faith*, (Rom. xii. 6.) and arises from *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*; (1 Cor. ii. 13.) *i. e.* the spiritual sense of the Old Testament writings with that of the New, and with one another. In which particular, I cannot but look upon Mr. White's exposition as very deficient, in that he scarce ever compares the phraseology of Isaiah with that of the other prophets, or with parallel texts of the New Testament; which one would think every Christian commentator should have a particular regard to, in explaining the sense of the ancient prophecies.

The ancient Jews never contested this point with the Christians, but always acknowledged that the chief design of the prophets was to foretell the times of the Messias. And when Christ and his apostles explained the prophecies in a *spiritual* or *mystical* sense, they interpreted them according to the received notions of the synagogue, and are never taxed, that we can find, for misapplying the particular texts they alleged, as if they did not belong to the times of the Messias. The words of St. Peter do in some measure inform us, from whence the Jews might receive these notions, 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. where he tells us, That the prophets who "searched diligently what, and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should follow, had it revealed unto them, that not unto themselves, but to us they did minister the things" which the apostles preached. No doubt, but they studied their own prophecies, and the Spirit of God so far assisted them; and enlightened their minds, as to enable them to leave this key for the interpreting their own writings, and letting succeeding ages into the true meaning of them. And thus a traditionary explication of the Old Testament prophecies, was carried down from the very time of the prophets to after-ages.

Several arguments may be alleged to prove, that these notions were generally received among the Jews long *before* Christ's time: in the first place, we may argue from their admitting the Song of Solomon into their canon, which could have no pretence for being placed among the sacred writings, but only as it was supposed figuratively to set forth the *spiritual marriage of Christ and his church*. The same point may farther be proved from their ancient Targums and Paraphrases upon the Scripture, from the Mischna, and those *mystical* expositions of several texts, which we read in the epistle of Barnabas, and which it is probable were taken out of some Midrasch, or authentic exposition of the Scripture texts, as hath been observed by Bishop Fell, and other learned commentators upon that epistle. And though it should be granted, that some of those writings are not so old as the time of Christ and his apostles; yet this doth not invalidate the force of the argument, because those writings consist of traditionary explications of Scripture, which the compilers took from the writings of former ages, just as, in aftertimes, the Greek Catenæ upon the Scriptures were compiled out of the writings of the ancient fathers by authors of a later day.

It does not appear, that this mystical way of applying the Scripture prophecies to the times of the Messias, was ever called in question, till the Jews came to engage in disputes with the Christians; and then, to avoid the force of their arguments, they found it necessary to reject the opinions of their ancestors. It was this consideration made Aquila and Theodotion, apostates from Christianity to Judaism, to undertake a new translation of the Old Testament into Greek, because they thought the interpretation of the Septuagint too favourable to the Christians, having been framed according to the traditionary explication of the sense of the prophets, which had been received among the Jews time out of mind. (See Bishop Pearson's notes upon his Exposition of the second, third, and fourth Articles of the Creed: and Justin Martyr's Dialogue against Trypho the Jew.)

This Christian interpretation about the prophecies is called the *mystical sense*, because it helps to unfold the mysteries of the gospel, not as if it were always opposed to a literal sense. For in many cases what we call the *mystical sense*, more exactly answers the natural and genuine import of the words, than any other interpretation that can be given of them. To instance in that famous prophecy, (Isa. vii. 14.) "Behold, a virgin shall conceive," &c. Supposing, but not granting, that this prophecy can be applied in a lower sense to Isaiah's son, or any other person but Christ; yet

it is plain, at first sight, that the historical sense, which is commonly given of the words, to denote *one that is now a virgin, but should afterward marry and bear a son,* comes infinitely short of the true force and meaning of them, and contains nothing in it that can deserve to be called a *sign* or *wonder*. This seems to have been a maxim in interpreting prophecies, received among the Jews before Christ's time, that wherever they observed an imperfect completion of a prophecy in the historical event, which no way answered the lofty expressions, and extensive promises, which the natural sense of the text imported, there they supposed the times of the Messias to be ultimately intended, "in whom all the promises of God are yea, and amen." (Scriptores Θεόπνευστοι de Typo disserentes, divinius quiddam ex inopinato pati solent, et ad Antitypum vehementiori Spiritus afflatu rapi et elevari." Spencer de Legib. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 8. n. 2.)

To prevent any misunderstanding, it may be proper likewise to take notice, that this *mystical sense* of the prophecies, is now and then, but not so fitly, called a *secondary sense;* not as if it were less principally intended by the prophets, but rather with respect to the time, because it is the last or ultimate completion of their predictions.

That many of the prophecies are not limited to one single event, but may have different views, and be capable of being fulfilled by several steps and degrees, is what I have all along supposed in the following Commentary, and therefore here it will be proper to assign the reasons of such a supposition. This subject hath been handled by several learned men, and of late by Dr. Nich. Clagett. [My Lord Bacon has made an observation upon this subject, which deserves to be taken notice of; in his Advancement of Learning, book ii. chap. 11. "In the interpretation of prophecies, that latitude must be allowed, which is proper and familiar to Divine prophecies, that their accomplishments may be both perpetual and punctual. For they resemble the nature of their Author, *To whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* And though the fulness and height of their complement be many times assigned to some certain age or point of time, yet they have nevertheless certain stairs or scales of accomplishment throughout divers ages of the world."] I shall not repeat what hath been said already upon this argument, but only lay down some general reasons of this assertion.

I have already observed, that this opinion is agreeable to the sentiments of the Jews: the only point in which they differ from us is, whether the Messias, to whom the prophecies relate, be already come, or be yet to come. Therefore I shall not any longer insist upon that argument, but proceed to observe, that under the Old Testament, all the most considerable persons and transactions there mentioned were *typical,* and prefigured the state of things under the Messias. Thus the New Testament informs us, that by Sarah and Hagar were allegorically represented the *two covenants:* by the preferring of Jacob before Esau, the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the gentiles: by the deliverance from the Egyptian bondage, the redemption of mankind by Christ, the *true passover sacrificed for us:* that the Israelites passing through the Red Sea, did typify the sacrament of baptism; and their sojourning in the wilderness, in their way to the promised land, was designed to signify that we are but *strangers and pilgrims in* this world, and must look upon heaven as the only true place of *rest which remains for the people of God.* In the characters the Scriptures give us of Adam and Melchisedec, of Isaac and Joseph, of Moses and Joshua, of David and Solomon, of Eliakim and Jonah, of Cyrus and Zerubbabel, they plainly describe them as figures of Christ: that several circumstances of their lives did foreshew the most remarkable passages of his, and the deliverances some of them wrought for God's people, were earnests of a greater redemption to be accomplished by the Messias. Several of the Psalms, particularly the eighteenth and the hundred and eighteenth, were writ upon particular occasions, relating to some remarkable circumstances of David's life, as appears both by their *titles* (which, to be sure, are as ancient as the compiling the Old Testament *canon*), and by the general subject handled in them: and yet several passages out of these Psalms are applied in the New Testament to Christ and the gospel, as more eminently fulfilled in them. From these principles we may conclude, that there is a resemblance, or *correspondence,* between many of the transactions mentioned in the Old Testament, and those which should come to pass under the New: and consequently, that the prophets, when they spake of some events near their own times, probably had more distant views, which might reach even to the latter ages of the world.

This assertion, as it shews that *fulness of sense* contained in the Scriptures, which Tertullian saith, (advers. Hermog. cap. 22.) *he did so much reverence and adore,* ("adoro Scripturæ plenitudinem,") so it introduces Christ into the world, with a great deal of pomp and solemnity; whilst it makes the whole contrivance of the Jewish dispensation, and all the eminent persons of former times, as so many harbingers to prepare the way for his coming, and thereby raises in our minds a just veneration for the gospel-state, as the masterpiece of Divine Providence, that point wherein all the lines of God's *manifold wisdom* do meet as in their centre; from whence it is evidently demonstrated, that "Christ was ordained by God, before the foundation of the world," though in his wise disposal he did not appear till the latter times of it. These *providential congruities* between the times of the Old and New Testament, do very much confirm the authority of both Testaments; for they plainly shew, that they were written by the direction of one and the same Spirit, who hath therein discovered to us one entire scene of providence, which reaches from one end of the world to the other.

The apostles justify this way of interpreting Scripture prophecies, by the interpretations they give us, both of the ancient prophecies, and of our Saviour's own predictions; of each of these I shall give a remarkable instance. That prophecy of Isaiah, (liii. 4.) "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," without question is principally to be understood, of Christ's undergoing the punishment due to our sins; but yet St. Matthew applies it to the pains which he took in healing men of their bodily infirmities, and his rendering his own life uneasy by the care and trouble he underwent to give ease to others, (Matt. viii. 18.) In like manner, that expression of our Saviour, (John xvii. 12.) "Those whom thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost," was chiefly meant of Christ's care to preserve his disciples in a firm belief of, and adherence to, those truths which he taught them; yet we find St. John

applies the words to the care that Christ took of their safety, when he yielded himself up to those that came to apprehend him, (xviii. 9.) From hence it appears, that the holy writers themselves suppose, that the expressions of inspired persons may have several senses couched under the words.

The same may be affirmed of that prophecy of Christ, concerning the *destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world,* (Matt. xxiv.) in which it is hard to determine, where our Saviour makes a transition from one subject to the other; this makes it probable, that he had both these events in his eye together, and that several of his expressions were partly verified at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, but were more fully to be accomplished at the *general judgment,* of which that particular judgment was an earnest and forerunner.

The Prophet Isaiah is certainly one of the most difficult of all the prophets, though, perhaps, few are sensible of it, but they that try to explain him: besides the want of ancient records to clear up some historical passages of his prophecy, a difficulty common to him with the rest of the prophets; there are some difficulties, which do in a particular manner attend his writings. The profoundness of his thoughts, the loftiness of his expressions, and the extent of his prophecy, have made the commentaries hitherto written upon him fall short of a full explication of his book; and he that will undertake to fathom the depths of this prophecy, is in great danger of going out of his own. This Prophet seems to have been favoured with an entire view of the gospel-state, from the very birth of the Messias, to that glorious period, when the "kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ." Upon these accounts, as he deservedly holds the first rank in that noble order of prophets; so it may be hoped, the candid reader will favourably receive any attempt that is made, to give some farther light to this prophecy, how imperfect soever. And particularly, I would make one request to him, with which I shall conclude this preface; *viz.* that, in those parts of this exposition, where there is any mention made of the Jews being to be *restored to their own land* upon their conversion, and some other particulars relating to that glorious state of the church, which we may from prophetical grounds of Scripture expect to come to pass in the *latter times* of the world, there he would not judge of what is said upon these obscure subjects as so many positive assertions, but only as probable conjectures, and such as the words of the text may fairly be supposed to favour. For in these and such-like abstruse matters, which at present lie hid in their causes, and in the abyss of Providence, a modest man should not pretend to be *wise above that which is* plainly and expressly *written.*

N. B. The additions inserted in the third edition, (fol. 1730.) *are distinguished by this mark* [ ].

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

Isaiah prophesied above sixty years, computing from the year in which Uzziah died, when he was solemnly called to the prophetical office, (Isa. vi. 1.) to the end of Hezekiah's reign; whom he is said to have outlived, and to have been put to death by Manasses, his body being sawn in the middle, at the command of that wicked king, as the Jewish tradition informs us; to which cruel death the apostle to the Hebrews is thought to allude, (xi. 37.)

St. Jerome, in his preface to Isaiah, tells us, that he was of noble birth, and he is said to have lived at court, and that his daughter was married to king Manasses. His style answers his birth and education, and is lofty and elegant: his metaphors and illustrations are noble, and suitable to the dignity of the subjects he treats of; and he hath this pre-eminence above all the prophets, that he foretells the coming and times of the Messias more clearly and frequently than any of them. Accordingly, he is often cited in the writings of the New Testament, and hath obtained the character of the *evangelical Prophet* in succeeding ages. To this sense the ancient Jews expounded his prophecy, as appears from the character which the son of Sirach gives of him, (Ecclus. xlviii. 24, 25.) *He saw by an excellent spirit what should come to pass at the last* (τὰ ἔσχατα, the *last,* or *latter times,* an expression signifying the days of the Messias in the Old Testament), and *he comforted those that mourn in Zion; he shewed what should come to pass for ever.*

Besides his prophecy, Isaiah wrote the history of Uzziah's reign, mentioned 2 Chron. xxvi. 22.

We may distinguish this prophecy into several parts or sections; the first of which reaches from the beginning of the book to the end of the fifth chapter; the second, from thence to the end of the twelfth; the third is continued to the end of the twenty-seventh; the fourth to the end of the thirty-fifth. Then follows an account of Sennacherib's invasion, and Hezekiah's sickness, which happened at the same time, xxxvi. xxxvii. xxxviii. (that history being a key to explain several passages in the foregoing prophecies), with a brief prediction of the Jewish captivity, (xxxix.) From whence the prophet proceeds to foretell the return from captivity, and from thence takes occasion to set forth the several advances of Christ's kingdom in aftertimes. This seems to be the only subject of a great part of the following prophecies, especially from the sixteenth verse of the fifty-ninth chapter to the end of the book.

Ver. 1. *THE vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz.*] The two usual ways whereby God communicated his will to the prophets, were visions and dreams, (Numb. xii. 6.) In vision the inspired person was awake, but his external senses were bound up, and as it were laid asleep in a trance. Thus Balaam describes it as to himself, *Who saw the visions of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open,* (Numb. xxiv. 16.) It is called vision, not from any use made of corporeal sight, or that it is entertained with external objects; but because of the clearness and evidence of the things revealed, and the conformity this kind of inspiration bears to the information which the mind receives by corporeal sense. Though sometimes vision is accompanied with external representations; as when Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord *sitting in his temple,* (vi. 1.) and Ezekiel had the description and dimensions of the temple revealed to him in a vision, (Ezek. xl. 2.) and St. John

had a sight of the *New Jerusalem coming down from heaven,* (Rev. xxi. 10.)

Which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.] His prophecy does chiefly relate to the kingdom of Judah, though he does accidentally speak of the ten tribes, as he does also of the Moabites, Egyptians, &c. the kingdom of Judah itself being concerned in the good or ill which befel their neighbours.

This probably was not the first vision which Isaiah had, (see note on vi. 1.) but is placed at the beginning of his book; because this and the four following chapters, contain a general description of the state and condition of the Jews, under the several judgments which God had brought unto them, and are a fit preface or introduction to the rest of his prophecy.

Ver. 2. *Hear, O heavens; and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken.*] An expression bespeaking men's attention. (Compare xxxiv. 1. Deut. xxxii. 1. Micah i. 2. vi. 1, 2.) It farther signifies an appeal to the world, to angels, and to men. (Compare Deut. iv. 26. xxx. 19. Psal. l. 4.) The holy writers sometimes appeal to inanimate things, to signify the evidence and undeniableness of the truth which they assert: so Joshua tells the Jews, *This stone shall be a witness to us,* (Josh. xxiv. 27.)

I have nourished and brought up children.] God's protection over his people is compared to the care that parents take in nursing and breeding up their children. (See Deut. i. 31. Isa. xlvi. 3, 4. lxiii. 9.)

Ver. 3. *The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel hath not known,* &c.] The holy writers send men to brute creatures for instruction, thereby to upbraid their stupidity. (See Prov. vi. 6. Jer. viii. 7.)

Ver. 5. *Why should you be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more.*] The end of God's judgments in this world is men's reformation; and since this people appears to be incorrigible, there is no reason to expect that he should try any farther methods of discipline with them, but consume them all at once. (See Nahum i. 9.) The verse may be thus translated; *To what purpose are ye stricken? ye shall still multiply transgression:* and then the words will be parallel to Jer. ii. 30. *In vain have I smitten your children; they receive no correction.*

Ver. 6. *From the sole of the foot to the crown of the head there is no soundness in it.*] The whole frame of the Jewish church and state is corrupted, and their misery is as universal as their sin which caused it; this makes the nation look like a body overrun with a cancer.

Ver. 7. *Your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire.*] This relates to the desolations made in king Ahaz's time, by the depredations of the Israelites, the Syrians, the Edomites, the Philistines, and Assyrians; an account of which you may see, 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, &c. compare xxix. 8, 9. of the same book.

Your land, strangers devour it.] A farther description of the same calamities; or else the words may belong to the confederacy of Rezin and Pekah against Judah, mentioned more at large chap. vii.

Ver. 8. *And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard,* &c.] The daughter of Zion is the same with Sion. (Compare lxii. 11. Zech. ix. 9.) Or it may more properly be taken for the inhabitants of Zion, a city being often represented as a mother, and the people as her children. The prophet describes Jerusalem as the only remnant that is left of that once flourishing kingdom; (see ver. 9.) the cities round about it being desolate, and that very place daily threatened to be besieged by its enemies.

Ver. 9. *Except the Lord of hosts had left us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom.*] God always preserves a remnant in the heaviest judgments which he brings upon his people. (Compare iv. 2, 3. x. 20. 22. xvii. 6. xxiv. 13. xxxvii. 32.) A type of those few converts among the Jews, who, embracing the gospel, should escape both the temporal and eternal judgments, which came upon the rest of that nation, for their rejecting Christ and his messengers. This remnant are called the Σωζόμενοι, in the New Testament, (Luke xiii. 23. Acts ii. 47.) the word being applied to that sense, from the use of it in the Septuagint. (See that translation upon Isa. xlv. 20. lx. 19. Joel ii. 32. see the note upon x. 22.)

Ver. 10. *Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom.*] Sodom is called the sister to Jerusalem, (Ezek. xvi. 46. 48.) because of their resemblance in wickedness.

Ver. 11. *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to me? saith the Lord.*] The prophets often speak of the rituals of Moses's law, as of no benefit, without that inward purity which was signified by them. This was a very proper method to prepare men's minds for the reception of the gospel, by shewing them a more excellent way of serving God than the ceremonial law directly prescribes. So that Christ's abolishing the legal rites, which gave the Jews so great offence, was very agreeable to the doctrine of their own prophets, and even foretold by some of them. (See Jer. xxxi. 31, &c.)

Ver. 12. *When you come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands?*] When God required the Jews to appear before him three times a year, (Exod. xxiii. 17.) the command was to be understood of their coming with hearts full of religious duty towards him, which was signified by that precept, which forbade those that were not cleansed and purified, to come near the temple, (Lev. xv. 31.) or to attend upon any of their solemn feasts, (Numb. ix. 13.) So the performing of their religious services in a careless and indevout manner, was what God had never required of them, and did not answer the intent of his law. The sense of the words is the same with that of Prov. xv. 8. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord:" God is said not to require or command that which he hates and abhors. (See Jer. vii. 31. compare here the following verses.)

To tread my courts.] There were two partitions in the tabernacle, and afterward in the temple; the holy place where the altar of incense, the shew-bread, and the lamp were placed; and the holiest of all, into which only the high-priest entered once a year. Besides these, there were several outward courts or apartments, one for the men, another for the women, another, in aftertimes, where the gentiles worshipped, and another where the altar of burnt-offerings stood, allotted to the priests. From these several apartments are taken those expressions of *coming into the courts of the Lord,* and *treading his courts.* Of these courts we are to understand that place of St. Luke, i. 10. where it is said, that *the whole multitude was praying without at the time of incense; i. e.* while that offering was performed in the inner temple by the priest.

Ver. 17. *Relieve the oppressed.*] Bochart seems to have hit upon the true sense of the original here, *Rectify what is amiss*, or *reform what is corrupt;* or, in St. Paul's phrase, *Purge out the old leaven;* (1 Cor. v. 7.) which literally answers the sense of the Hebrew *hamûts.*

Ver. 18. *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.*] The word which is translated, *reason together*, signifies properly for two contending parties to argue the case together; but here it seems to import the effect or issue of such a debate; *viz.* the accommodating their differences. So God, upon the repentance or reformation of the people, engages to pardon all that is past, and look upon them with the same grace and favour, as if they had never offended; for by their *sins being made white as snow*, is meant, by a usual metonymy, the sinners themselves being thoroughly purged from guilt. (Compare Psal. li. 7.)

Ver. 21. *How is the faithful city become a harlot!*] Cities are often represented under the resemblance of women; (see Jer. vi. 2.) as being mothers of their inhabitants: sometimes they are called virgins; (see note on xxiii. 12.) But when they turn lewd and vicious, they are styled harlots. This name is given to the heathen cities of Tyre, (Isa. xxiii. 16.) and Nineveh; (Nahum iii. 4.) but it is applied to Jerusalem chiefly with respect to that solemn covenant made between God and the Jews, often expressed in Scripture by his being married to them; (see Jer. iii. 14. xxxi. 32.) and by idolatry they were guilty of the same falseness against God, as a woman is guilty of by adultery; the sin of idolatry being commonly styled, *Going a whoring after other gods.* (See Bishop Patrick's preface to his Comment upon the Canticles.)

It was full of judgment.] This relates to the first and best times of the Jewish government, under the reigns of David and Solomon.

Ver. 22. *Thy silver is become dross.*] A proverbial phrase, signifying that there is nothing sincere or pure left among them; but the very best things, such as government and the administration of justice, have a great alloy of corruption mixed with them. (Compare ver. 25. Jer. vi. 28. 30. Ezek. xxii. 18, 19.)

Thy wine mixed with water.] Another proverbial speech of the same importance; the LXX. render it more at large, οἱ Κάπηλοί σου μίσγουσιν τὸν οἶνον ὕδατι, *Thy vintners mix thy wine with water*, whence Καπηλεύω signifies to embase by a foreign mixture. (See 2 Cor. ii. 17.)

Ver. 23. *Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves.*] Thy rulers and magistrates are in a state of rebellion against God, and live upon injustice and rapine. (See Hos. iv. 18. Micah iii. 11. vii. 3.)

Ver. 24. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.*] An expression borrowed from men's passions, who find some sort of ease and rest in their minds upon venting their anger on just occasions, or in bringing offenders to condign punishment: in like manner, God is described as feeling ease and satisfaction in executing his justice upon obstinate and incorrigible offenders. (Compare Ezek. v. 13. xvi. 42. xxi. 17.) We may farther observe, that God is never said to take pleasure in the punishment of any, but those who have filled up the measure of their iniquities: (see Prov. i. 25, 26. Deut. xxviii. 63.) those whom he corrects *in anger*, as Jeremy expresses it. As to others, the rule of the same prophet holds, that *He doth not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men*, (Lam. iii. 33.) but even sympathizes with their calamities. (See Judg. x. 16. Isa. lxiii. 3.)

Ver. 25. *I will turn my hand upon thee.*] The phrase signifies to fall upon or punish those whom we had spared or connived at before; see Psal. lxxxi. 14. Zech. xiii. 7. 2 Sam. viii. 3. where the phrase is the same in the original, but otherwise understood by our interpreters, who translate it, *To recover his brother.*

And purely purge away thy dross, &c.] See ver. 22. This place foretells some great reformation, (compare Mal. iii. 3.) which shall be brought to pass by separating the bad from the good, and destroying those that are incorrigible. (See Ezek. xx. 38. and notes upon iv. 3.)

Ver. 26. *And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning.*] These promises relate, at least in their primary sense, to the restoration of the Jews after the seventy years of captivity, when they had the face of a government restored to them; and their governors, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, and others, were remarkable for their integrity. The expression seems to allude to those judges, whom God raised up to the Jews at their first settlement in the land of Canaan, to whom the prophet resembles these rulers, both because they were men of great piety and virtue; and because these latter did not affect the state and title of kings, till the latter times of the Jewish commonwealth. [Compare Jer. xxx. 20, 21.]

After that thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, The faithful city.] This promise taken in its full extent, relates to more flourishing times of the church than the world hath yet seen. (Compare Zech. viii. 3. compared with ver. 20. of the same chapter: see likewise Isa. iv. 3. xxxv. 8. lii. 1. lx. 21. Zech. iii. 11—13.)

Ver. 27. *Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.*] When God shall redeem Zion, and restore those that truly turn to him, he will make a remarkable discrimination between the righteous and the wicked; God's judgments will be visible in punishing the latter, and his mercy in saving the former. (See note on v. 16.)

Ver. 29. *For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired.*] The sacrificing in groves and shady places was an ancient rite of idolatry. Learned men observe, by comparing Judg. ii. 13. with iii. 7. that *Baal* and *Ashtaroth* are the same with *Baalim* and *Asheroth*, or the *gods worshipped in groves.* This kind of worship was expressly forbidden in the law; (see Deut. xii. 3. xvi. 21.) and yet prevailed so much in the times of the idolatrous kings, that the practice was not quite laid aside under religious princes. (See 1 Kings xv. 24. xxii. 43.) But the captivity of the Jews had that good effect, that they scarce ever afterward relapsed into idolatry.

If we suppose the words relate to some farther reformation of the church in the latter times, we may observe, that when the prophets speak of an entire reformation of the state of the church, they mention the utter extirpation of idolatry out of it, as if that were one of the last enemies of God and his truth that was to be destroyed. (Compare with this place, Isa. ii. 18. xxvii. 9. xxx. 22. xxxi. 7. xlv. 16. lxv. 16. Hos. ii. 17. Micah v. 13. Zech. xiii. 2. Tobit xiv. 6.)

And ye shall be confounded for the gardens which ye have chosen.] See note on lxv. 3.

Ver. 31. *The strong shall be as tow.*] Those that valued themselves for their strength and power, *the mighty ones, who caused terror in the land of the living*, as Ezekiel speaks, (xxxii. 21. 23.) they shall grow feeble.

And the maker thereof as a spark.] The margin reads, *And his work*, which expresses the sense better; *viz.* That both the framers of idolatry and their devices shall perish together, however supported by secular power, or recommended by worldly grandeur.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The former part of this chapter describes the promulgation and success of the gospel upon the first coming of Christ; the latter part represents his second coming to judgment: the first and second coming of Christ are often joined together by the prophets: one reason of which may be, because the destruction of the Jewish state quickly followed after the promulgation of the gospel, which is represented in words that denote the general dissolution of all things. See Joel ii. 31. Matt. xxiv. 29. as indeed all God's remarkable judgments are types and forerunners of the last and general one. (See note on xiii. 10.)

Ver. 1. *THE word that Isaiah saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.*] *The word*, that is, the vision which concerns the state of the church and people of God in aftertimes, (ver. 2.) Judah and Jerusalem, including the Christian church, who are the true Israel of God. (See note on lx. 14.)

Ver. 2. *And it shall come to pass in the last days.*] The *last days* signify in the prophets the times of the Messias. The Jews commonly divided the times or successions of the world into *three ages*, or periods: The first, *before the law;* the second, *under the law;* the third, *under the Messias.* This being the last dispensation, which God designed should continue till the consummation of all things, it is denoted by the prophets under the title of the last times or latter days. (See Joel ii. 28. compared with Acts ii. 17. Micah iv. 1. compared with Heb. i. 1. 1 Pet. i. 20. 1 John ii. 18.) Accordingly St. Paul tells us, that Christ *appeared* ἐπὶ συντελείᾳ τῶν αἰώνων, *at the consummation of the ages*, or several periods of the world; (Heb. ix. 26.) and speaking of his own times, saith, that *the ends of the world were come*, (1 Cor. x. 11.) τέλη τῶν αἰώνων, *the conclusion of the ages of it.*

The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established upon the top of the mountains.] That is, shall be eminently conspicuous, so as to be the light of the world, and draw all nations to embrace the truths therein professed. (Compare Matt. v. 14.) The Jewish temple stood upon Mount Moriah, (2 Chron. iii. 1.) It is here metaphorically taken for the church, (compare xi. 9. xxiv. 23. xxv. 6, 7. 10. xxvii. 13. lxv. 11. lxvi. 20. Ezek. xvii. 23. xx. 40. xl. 2.) which Daniel prophesies should *become a great mountain, and fill the earth*, (Dan. ii. 35.) This prophecy will not receive its utmost completion, till the destruction of the *four monarchies* there mentioned, and the fulness of the Jews and gentiles are come into the church. (Compare Micah iv. 1. 6, 7. 13.) But yet both these prophecies may be partly fulfilled, in the several advances which Christ's kingdom makes in the world, who is described as *going forth conquering, and to conquer*, (Rev. vi. 2.)

Ver. 3. *And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord*, &c.] *i. e.* Let us join ourselves to the Christian church; the phrase alludes to the Jews going up in companies to Jerusalem at the three solemn feasts of the year. (Compare lx. 4. 7. 9. lxvi. 23. Zech. viii. 21, 22. xiv. 16. Jer. xxxi. 6. l. 5.)

For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.] See this fulfilled, Luke xxiv. 47. Acts i. 8.

Ver. 4. *And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people.*] Both by the power of his word, which is compared to a two-edged sword in Scripture; and by the remarkable judgments he will exercise upon those who are incorrigible. (See Psal. cx. 6. Luke xix. 27. Rev. xix. 15.)

They shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks.] The state of war is described by Virgil under the same metaphor:

> "Et curvæ rigidum falces conflantur in ensem."
> *Their pruning-hooks are turned into swords.*
> Georgic. 1. *ad fin.*

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.] Peace is mentioned as the distinguishing character of Christ's kingdom: (see xi. 6. lxv. 25. Psal. lxxii. 7. Zech. ix. 10. Luke ii. 14.) and he himself is called the *Prince of Peace*, (Isa. ix. 6.) The spiritual sense of this prophecy implies our Saviour's being the great peace-maker, who should reconcile the Jews and gentiles to God, and to each other, Ephes. ii. 14. (See more in the notes upon xi. 9.) But if we look upon this and the like prophecies, as foretelling the outward peacefulness of Christ's church or kingdom, which the natural sense of the words imports, they seem to relate to some more flourishing state of the church than hath yet been seen upon earth, when Christ, after having subdued all his enemies, shall grant rest unto his faithful servants, (2 Thess. i. 7.) And thus much is implied in the former part of the verse, and will farther appear by comparing Zech. ix. 10. Hagg. ii. 21—23.

Ver. 5. *O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord!*] The prophet addresses himself to those Jews of later times, that should live when the glad tidings of the gospel were published, and exhorts them to make use of those means of grace which God would so plentifully afford them, and not continue stubborn and refractory as their forefathers had done, which disobedience of theirs had provoked him to forsake them: as it follows.

Ver. 6. *Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people.*] This is not an inference from what goes before, as Mr. White pretends, in order to confine the preceding prophecy to Isaiah's own time, but is rather an inference from what follows, and should be translated, *For this reason thou hast forsaken thy people, because they be replenished*, &c. (See a like instance, v. 13.)

Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people—because they be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Phi-

listines.] The prophet assigns the reason of God's withdrawing his kindness from the Jews of the present age (as there would be a more remarkable rejection of them under the gospel), because of their following the corrupt manners of the idolatrous nations round about them, in seeking to soothsayers and wizards, which God had so expressly forbidden them, (Deut. xviii. 14.) Both the eastern parts that border upon Judea, *i. e.* Syria and Chaldea, were famous for pretenders to this sort of science: (see Numb. xxiii. 7. Isa. xlvii. 13.) and likewise the Philistines, who lay westward of it. (See 1 Sam. vi. 2. 2 Kings i. 2.)

They please themselves in the children of strangers.] They invited or encouraged pretenders to such knowledge from foreign parts: or, they took pleasure in learning the idolatrous practices of the strangers round about them; a thing often forbidden in their law. (See Deut. xii. 30. Exod. xxxiv. 16. 1 Kings xii. 1, 2.)

Ver. 7. *Their land also is full of silver and gold.*] The prophet reproves those who, in the midst of the public calamities, made no conscience of enriching themselves by oppression and injustice. (Compare i. 23. v. 7, 8. see likewise 2 Kings v. 26.)

Their land also is full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots.] The king was forbidden to *fetch horses out of Egypt*, (Deut. xvii. 16.) which was a country that abounded in horses, of which there was great scarcity in Judea: (see 1 Kings x. 29. Isa. xxxi. 1. xxxvi. 9.) One reason of that prohibition was, that the Jews might not have any alliance with Egypt, which the prophets often reprove them for. Indeed, if they had continued firm in their obedience, they need not have sought the alliance of any of their neighbours. (See Deut. xxviii. 10.)

Ver. 9. *And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself.*] The words denote a universal corruption, that both high and low are given to idolatry: (see Psal. xlix. 2.)

Therefore forgive them not.] *i. e.* Thou wilt not forgive them: the imperative is here taken for the future. (See the like instances, vi. 10. xxiii. 16. Zech. xiii. 7.) God's judgments are sometimes foretold by way of imprecation: (see 2 Tim. iv. 16.) and many of the imprecations of the Psalms may be understood as so many predictions. (See likewise Gen. ix. 25.)

[*Therefore forgive them not.*] If we understand the words in the sense of an imprecation, they are supposed to be uttered against incorrigible sinners; and it is for the glory of God's justice, that such persons should receive the due rewards of their deeds. Compare Nehem. iv. 5. Psal. xxviii. 4. lix. 5. lxix. 27. Jer. xviii. 23.]

Ver. 10. *Enter into the rock.*] The remaining part of the chapter is a prediction of some general judgment that should end in the utter destruction of the Jewish land and government: such was that of the captivity. But many of the expressions are such as relate to the last judgment: (see the note at the beginning of the chapter.) The prophets often take occasion to represent the terrors of the last day, from the particular judgments which should befal some one nation. (See note on xiii. 10. xxiv. 1.)

Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord.] The words express the great consternation of wicked men, especially at the day of judgment, whose guilt shall prompt them to cast about where to hide themselves. (See ver. 19. 21. of this chapter, Luke xxii. 30. Rev. vi. 15.)

Ver. 11. *The lofty looks of man shall be humbled.*] *Pride being the beginning of sin*, as the wise man speaks, (Ecclus. x. 13.) God's judgments are more especially levelled against it: and one end of the destructions he brings upon particular countries, and will bring upon the whole world, is to *stain the pride of all worldly glory*, as our prophet speaks, (xxiii. 9.) and to convince men that there is nothing in this world worth men's setting their hearts upon. (Compare xxvi. 5.)

Ver. 13. *And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan.*] *i. e.* The great and principal persons of any city or nation. (See the same metaphor, x. 33, 34. xiv. 8. xxxvii. 24.)

Ver. 14. *And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up.*] The words may signify greater or lesser magistrates. (Compare Psal. lxxii. 3.)

Ver. 15. *And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall.*] Upon all the cities and towns of strength.

Ver. 16. *And upon all the ships of Tarshish.*] Bochart does probably guess, that Tarshish, in its primary signification, was a port in Spain, called afterward Tartessus. But it likewise appears, by comparing 1 Kings xxii. 48. with 2 Chron. xx. 36. that there was a place of the same name near Ophir, famous for its gold; which Ophir the same learned person places in India; (see his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 27. iii. 7.) and Huetius, in the eastern coast of Africa, (lib. de Navigat. Solomonis, cap. 2.) Wherever this Tarshish stood (and it is not unlikely that in process of time this name might be given to more places than one), it was famous in former times for the traffic of the Phœnicians, who were the first merchant adventurers. From thence, *ships of Tarshish* signify in Scripture any trading or merchant ships. Accordingly here the Septuagint render the words, *ships of the sea*, as our old English translation does, Psal. xlviii. 6. The words here, joined with what follows, *and upon all pleasant pictures*, denote the destruction of all fine and elegant furniture, and those rarities which are brought by sea from foreign parts, in which men are apt to pride themselves. (Compare Rev. xviii. 17—19.)

Ver. 18. *And the idols he shall utterly abolish.*] See note on i. 29.

Ver. 19. *And they shall go into the holes of the rocks.*] See note on ver. 10.

Ver. 20. *In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold—to the moles and to the bats.*] They shall bury their idols under ground, or hide them in some dark corner, as what they are perfectly ashamed of.

Ver. 22. *Cease ye from man.*] *i. e.* From valuing man. (See note on ver. 11.) See the like phrase, Prov. xxiii. 4. *Cease from thine own wisdom; i. e.* from esteeming it.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains a description of the calamities which should befal the Jews in the declining part of their government, and should at last conclude in a total captivity, (ver. 26.)

Ver. 1. *FOR, behold, the Lord doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water.*] Bread is commonly called the staff of life: (see Lev. xxvi. 26. Ezek. xiv. 13.) This judgment seems to relate to the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, when bread and water were both very scarce. (See Jer. xxxvii. 2. Ezek. iv. 16.)

Ver. 2, 3. *The mighty man and the man of war, the judge,* &c.] This likewise relates to the same times, particularly to Jehoiachin's captivity, when all the men of note were carried away captive with him. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 14.)

And the prophet.] The same judgment threatened in the times of the captivity, (Ezek. vii. 26.) and actually fulfilled then, as appears by Jeremiah's complaint, (Lament. ii. 9.) *Her prophets find no vision from the Lord.* (See likewise Psal. lxxiv. 9.) Ezekiel was the only prophet that was carried away to Babylon, and we do not find that he had any vision relating to the Jews after the twelfth year of his captivity, which was a year or two after the destruction of Jerusalem, except it was the vision of the temple, (chap. xl. &c.) which related to a scene of things many ages to come.

Ver. 4. *I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.*] When all the eminent persons mentioned ver. 2, 3. are removed, the necessary consequence of that must be, that persons of no understanding or qualifications for government must succeed in their places.

Ver. 5. *And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another—the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.*] The usual effects of a weak and unsettled government, where faction grows too hard for justice, and seditious men dare openly to insult those that are in authority.

Ver. 6. *When a man shall take hold of his brother—saying, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler.*] Thou hast all manner of necessaries, (see ver. 7.) fit to support the dignity of a ruler.

To take hold of another, is a gesture of entreating his friendly assistance. (See iv. 1. Zech. viii. 23.)

And let this ruin be under thine hand.] Let thy hand, thy power, and interest, support this ruinous state of the government: so some understand the phrase, as if it were spoken by the figure *hypallage;* others thus, *Let this ruinous and tottering government be under thy care and protection.*

Ver. 7. *Make me not a ruler of the people.*] I have not ability to undertake such an office; and the times are so bad, that I will not expose myself to the envy and danger of a high station.

Ver. 8. *Their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory.*] To provoke the glorious and all-seeing eyes of God, who is said to be *of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,* but with abhorrence, (Habak. i. 13.)

Ver. 9. *The show of their countenance doth witness against them.*] It is very uncertain what the word *hacarath* signifies, being never found elsewhere in the Bible: our translators render it, *the show, i. e.* the impudence of their countenance; whereby they put a bold face upon the worst of crimes, and glory in their shame, after the example of Sodom, as it follows. (See i. 10.)

Ver. 10, 11. *Say ye to the righteous, It shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings: Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him.*] See a parallel place to this, Eccles. viii. 12, 13. Both these texts plainly intimate that God hath appointed a time wherein he will put a difference between the righteous and the wicked: times of great calamity and confusion are proper seasons to put men in mind that God will one day rectify these disorders.

Ver. 12. *As for my people, children are their oppressors.*] See ver. 4. The words may be rendered, *Their oppressors glean them; i.e.* take from them that poor remainder of their substance, which the former calamities had left: the word is used for gleaning grapes, after the main vintage is already gathered, Deut. xxiv. 22. (See here, ver. 14.)

And women rule over them.] *Women* signify here, metaphorically, the weakest and most contemptible part of the people, who take upon them to govern their betters. (See ver. 4, 5.) In this sense the word is taken, xxvii. 11. like that of Virgil:

"O vere Phrygiæ, neque enim Phryges."——

O my people, they that lead thee cause thee to err.] The margin reads, *They that call thee blessed, i. e.* the false prophets who soothe thee up in thy sins, and foretell nothing but peace and prosperity. (Compare ix. 15, 16.)

Ver. 14. *The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof.*] He will avenge the cause of the poor and oppressed, by those judgments which he is bringing upon the great and honourable. (See ver. 1—3.)

Ver. 15. *What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor?*] You squeeze them by your oppression: this is expressed by *flaying their skin, and pulling their flesh from their bones,* Micah iii. 2, 3.

Ver. 16. *Making a tinkling with their feet.*] Some interpret this of chains like a sort of trammels put about their feet, which hindered these nice ladies from making too large strides. (See Dr. Alix's Reflect. upon the Scrip. par. i. chap. 20.) But the words which describe the women's ornaments in this and the following verses are of a very doubtful signification; the modes of every age and country varying so often, that the succeeding fashion makes the former to be quickly forgotten, and the words that express it to be out-dated.

Ver. 17. *And the Lord will discover their secret parts.*] When they shall be carried captive, stripped and bare, without any covering for their nakedness; for such were the barbarous customs of conquerors towards their captives. (See xx. 4. xlvii. 3. Jer. xiii. 22. Micah i. 11. Nahum iii. 5.)

[Ver. 21. *Nose-jewels.*] The word may be translated *jewels for the face* or *forehead,* as it is rendered, Gen. xxiv. 47. Ezek. xvi. 12. But the same phrase is used Prov. xi. 22. where it certainly signifies a *nose-jewel;* and our interpreters translate it to that sense, *As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout.* St. Austin, in his Questions upon Genesis, tells us, it was the custom of the women in Mauritania to hang jewels in their noses; and the same custom is still observed in Persia, Arabia, and other countries, as those who have

travelled thither inform us. See Harris's Collect. of Travels, par. i. p. 207.]

Ver. 24. *And burning instead of beauty.*] The old English translation reads, *sun-burning*, by way of explication: their faces shall be exposed to the heat of the sun, either by their being made slaves, and forced to toil in the open air, or else in their transportation into foreign parts.

Ver. 26. *Her gates shall lament and mourn.*] As being solitary, and none passing through them, and the courts of judicature, that used to be kept there, being shut up.

And she, being desolate, shall sit upon the ground.] Sitting upon the ground is a sign of the deepest mourning and lamentation: (see Job ii. 13. Lament. ii. 10. Isa. xlvii. 1.) so Jerusalem is here described as a woman bereaved of her children, and lamenting over them in this melancholy posture. And thus she was represented in a medal coined by Vespasian's order, after the destruction of that city by the Romans. (See Mr. Gregory's Observat. chap. 5.)

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

From the second verse the prophet describes the glorious state of the church, which should follow upon its restoration from those calamities described in the former chapter: and the words plainly point at the *conversion* of the Jews in the *latter times* of the world, and the flourishing state of the church, which should follow upon it. This subject is more largely handled in the latter part of this prophecy, particularly chap. liv. lv. and so on to the end of the book.

Ver. 1. *AND in that day shall seven women take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel.*] This verse should have been continued to the former chapter; for it contains another melancholy instance of the calamitous circumstances which should attend the Jewish nation. *Their young men* are said to *fall by the sword;* (iii. 25.) so that there should be *seven women to one man:* who *should take hold of him; i. e.* use importunity to be married, contrary to the natural modesty of their sex, and that upon hard and unusual conditions of maintaining themselves.

Only let us be called by thy name.] It is the custom of all nations for the wife to be called or distinguished by her husband's name. Thus we read of Mary the wife of Cleophas, John xix. 25. So among the Greeks and Romans, Hectoris Andromache, Marcia Catonis.

To take away our reproach.] Barrenness was thought a great reproach among the Jewish women, (see Luke i. 25.) and is threatened as a curse to them; (Hos. ix. 14.) as fruitfulness is promised for a blessing: (Deut. xxviii. 4. Psal. cxxvii. 3.) Upon this account the Hebrew women generally married young, (see Selden's Uxor. Hebraica, lib. ii. cap. 8.) and were very desirous of children. (See Gen. xxx. 1. 1 Sam. i. 8.)

Ver. 2. *In that day.*] This phrase often denotes in Isaiah, not the same time with that which was last mentioned, but an extraordinary season, remarkable for some signal events of Providence; called elsewhere, by way of excellence, *the day of the Lord.* (Compare ii. 11, 12. x. 20. xvii. 7. xix. 18.) Just as *that day* denotes the day of judgment in the New Testament, as a time of all others the most remarkable. (See 2 Thess. i. 10. 2 Tim. i. 12. 18. iv. 8.)

Mr. White is forced to own that the expression here cannot be meant of the same time mentioned ver. 1. though elsewhere he is willing to take advantage of the phrase, that he may the better confine the sense of the prophet to some particular juncture, in, or near, his own time: particularly in his notes upon xi. 11. xix. 18. But here even Grotius his leader differs from him, and acknowledges in his notes upon xiv. 21. "That it is usual for the prophets to pass from the threatenings that relate to their own times, to the promises which belong to the times of the gospel."

We may farther observe, that the Scriptures speak of the extraordinary appearances of Christ's kingdom, as ushered in by great tribulations foregoing. (See xxiv. 15. xxvi. 20, 21. Jer. xxx. 7. Dan. xii. 1. Matt. xxiv. 21.) Thus the saints are said to come out of *great tribulation,* Rev. vii. 14. and are here called the *escaped,* and sometimes Σωζόμενοι, as it is expressed in the Greek; (see note on i. 9.) those that are escaped, as it were, out of the fire.

Shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious.] The Messias is often called *the Branch.* See Jer. xxiii. 5. Zech. iii. 8. vi. 12. in all which places the Hebrew reads *Tsemah,* as it does here. But the Septuagint, in the three last places, render it Ἀνατολή, the *east* or *morning light,* and translate it to the same purpose in this place: concerning which sense of the word, see the note on xli. 2.

The church is likewise called the *branch of God's planting,* lx. 21.

And the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely.] The spiritual blessings of the gospel are sometimes described under the emblems of fruitfulness and plenty. (See xxvii. 6. xxx. 23. xxxii. 20. xlv. 8. Psal. lxvii. 6. Joel iii. 18. Hos. ii. 22.)

For them that are escaped of Israel.] Those Jews who are converted, and escape that destruction which shall overtake the incredulous and disobedient. This may be partly understood of those that were converted by the preaching of Christ and the apostles; and thereby escaped that vengeance which involved the rest of the nation. (See Acts ii. 40. 1 Thess. ii. 16.) But I conceive it is chiefly meant of those Jews who shall be converted at the end of the world, when the obstinate and incorrigible shall be destroyed, and shall return home from their several dispersions. (Compare xxvii. 12, 13. xlv. 20. lxvi. 19. Ezek. xx. 34—43.)

Ver. 3. *And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem.*] Those that escape the common destruction of those countrymen. (See ver. 2.)

Shall be called holy.] This may relate to the great purity and holiness of the first professors of Christianity, which the apostles often bear witness to, and glory of, in their writings. (See Acts iv. 33. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Philip. ii. 16. Colos. i. 6. ii. 5. 1 Thess. i. 3. 11. 13. 19, 20. 2 Thess i. 4.) But the words look farther, to the conversion of the Jews in the latter times, and that abundant degree of grace and sanctification which shall be conferred upon them, after that the *transgressors and rebels are purged out of them,*

Ezek. xx. 38. (Compare Isa. i. 27. liii. 1. lx. 21. Zeph. iii. 11. Zech. xiv. 20.)

Even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem.] Whose names are written in the book of life among God's elect, to whom the promises made to God's people peculiarly belong. (See Psal. lxix. 28. Ezek. xiii. 9. Philip. iv. 3. Rev. iii. 5. xxi. 27.) The phrase alludes to the registers which were kept of the Jewish tribes and families: (see Ezra ii. 59.) and those that could not prove their pedigree from thence were not admitted to the same rights and privileges which others enjoyed. (See ibid. ver. 62.)

Ver. 4. *When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion.*] Whose sins are mentioned, iii. 16, &c. The Septuagint express the sense more fully, and read by way of supplement, *The sons and the daughters of Zion.*

And shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof.] The sins of cruelty and oppression, (see v. 7.) or of murder and bloodshed, (i. 15.) particularly in killing the prophets, and persecuting God's servants. (See Matt. xxiii. 37. Acts vii. 52.) Or it may signify pollution in general, as the word sometimes is taken. (See Ezek. xvi. 6. Joel iii. 21.)

By the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.] By making them pass through the *furnace of affliction*, as it is expressed xlviii. 10. The phrase denotes that severe discrimination which God shall make between the good and the bad, the pure silver and the dross; the better being purified, the worse being consumed in the fire. (Compare Ezek. xxii. 21. Mal. iii. 2, 3.) These expressions may probably allude to that severe trial which all shall undergo at the general conflagration, which is designed for the *perdition of ungodly men;* (2 Pet. iii. 7.) when many of the righteous shall escape with great difficulty, and *be saved as through fire,* 1 Cor. iii. 15. that place being understood of the general judgment by many interpreters, both ancient and modern.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place upon Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night.*] A plain allusion to the cloud by day, and pillar of fire by night, that conducted and protected the Israelites in the wilderness; (Exod. xiii. 21.) and afterward rested upon the tabernacle, (xl. 38.) In like manner, God promises here to give visible tokens of his presence in, and protection over, the church, and each particular member thereof. Smoke and thick darkness was an emblem of God's presence, as well as a cloud. (See vi. 4. Psal. xviii. 8.)

For upon all the glory shall be a defence.] The saints or living members of the church are called God's glory, because God is glorified in them; (see xlvi. 13. xlix. 3. lxi. 3.) and because the grace and glory of God is in some measure communicated to them: (see John xvii. 22. 2 Cor. viii. 23.) and they are designed to be made partakers of farther degrees of it in the world to come: (see 2 Cor. iii. 18. 2 Thess. ii. 14.) and here God promises, in an especial manner, to protect and defend them. The Septuagint render the words to a plainer sense, and such as the Hebrew will bear, Πάσῃ τῇ δόξῃ σκεπασθήσεται, *It* (*i. e.* Zion) *shall be defended with all the glory* (of God): *i. e.* God's glory, or the Divine Schechinah, shall be both a light and a defence to his people. (Compare Zech. ii. 5.)

Ver. 6. *And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.*] God's placing his tabernacle among the Jews, was a token of his dwelling among them, and admitting them under his immediate protection: (see Lev. xxvi. 11, 12.) accordingly, dwelling in God's tabernacle is, in Scripture phrase, equivalent to abiding under his shadow or protection. (Compare Psal. xci. 1. with xxvii. 5. xxxi. 20.) So here it is said, that God's visible presence in his church will be its defence and security from all sorts of calamities and persecutions. The expressions in the latter part of the verse, allude to the moveable tents which travellers carry along with them in hot countries, for a defence against the scorching heat of the sun, and the fierceness of storms and rain. (Compare xxv. 4. xxxii. 2. Rev. vii. 15.)

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains a general reproof of the Jews, for their ingratitude, impiety, excess, and covetousness, for which sins the prophet denounces God's judgments against them by the hands of the Assyrians or Babylonians.

Ver. 1. *NOW will I sing to my Well-beloved a song of my Beloved touching his vineyard.*] As David inscribes his Psalms *to his chief musician;* so the prophet here, speaking in the person of God, directs this hymn or parable, poetically expressed, to his Well-beloved, *i. e.* Christ: the *Beloved* is the *Messias,* called often by that title in the Canticles, by his spouse the church.

[*Now will I sing to my Well-beloved a song of my Beloved.*] The words translated *Well-beloved* and *Beloved,* are in the Hebrew *Jedidi* and *Dodi,* agreeing both in sound and signification, and spoken here of the same person, the *Messias,* who is called *Well-beloved,* in respect of his father being the son of his love, (Matt. iii. 17. Colos. i. 13.) and *Beloved,* in respect to his spouse the church, and known by that title in the Canticles, to which book it is probable the prophet here alludes.]

My Well-beloved hath a vineyard.] The church is often represented under this figure, as appears by the texts quoted here in the margin of our Bibles.

In a very fruitful hill.] See note on vii. 25.

Ver. 3. *And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray ye, between me and my vineyard.*] The case is so plain, that God might venture to refer it to themselves, although they were parties concerned. Here the style of the parable is altered from the third person (see ver. 2.) to the first; a variation very common in Scripture; and the sense is the same, whether the words be spoken by God, or by Christ, who is *one with the Father.*

Ver. 4. *What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?*] From this, among many other texts of Scripture, we may conclude, that those may have sufficient means of grace afforded them, who nevertheless are not actually or effectually converted.

Ver. 5. *I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up,* &c.] I will take no farther care of it, but leave

it to be destroyed and laid waste by the heathens and infidels. (Compare Psal. lxxxi. 12, &c.)

Ver. 7. *And the men of Judah his pleasant plant.*] The living members of the church are called the *branch of God's planting,* lxi. 3. (See likewise Matt. xv. 13. John xv. 2.) The Jews should have been such, and had sufficient means of grace to make them so.

He looked for righteousness, and behold a cry.] Of those that are oppressed.

Ver. 8. *Woe to them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place,* &c.] Woe to them that have such an insatiable desire after increasing their possessions, that they stick at no injustice whereby they may defraud others of their right, (see Micah ii. 2.) So they join one to purchase another, until there is no place left for any neighbours to dwell near them.

Ver. 10. *Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of a homer shall yield an ephah.*] A *bath* and an *ephah* are the same measure, and they contain but the tenth part of a *homer;* (see Ezek. xlv. 11.) By this computation, the harvest should produce but the tenth part of the seed: we are to distinguish between an *omer* and a *homer;* the first letter of the former word in the Hebrew is *aijn,* the first letter of the latter is *cheth:* an *omer* is the tenth part of an *ephah,* (Exod. xvi. 36.) whereas an *ephah* is but the tenth part of a *homer.*

Ver. 12. *They regard not the works of the Lord, neither consider the operations of his hands.*] They consider not the works of his providence, nor lay to heart either his mercies or his judgments.

Ver. 13. *Therefore my people is gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge.*] This may probably relate to the captivity threatened more expressly ver. 26, &c. and spoken of here as if it were already come to pass; a figure frequent in the prophetical writings: (see note on i. 7.) which judgment the prophet says was a punishment of their stupidity and insensibleness of their duty. (Compare i. 3.)

And their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.] Famine and drought are threatened as punishments of idolatry, Deut. xi. 17. (Compare ver. 6. 10. of this chapter.)

Ver. 14. *Hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure.*] The word *scheol* signifies the grave or state of the dead; (see note on xiv. 9.) In this sense it is elsewhere joined with destruction. (See Job xxvi. 6. Prov. xv. 11.)

And their glory and their multitude, &c.] These two words are joined together, xvi. 14. in speaking of the destruction of Moab; for the multitude of people is the glory and strength of any state.

Ver. 15. *And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled.*] As men of both ranks joined in the same sin; (see ii. 9.) so they shall share alike in the punishment.

Ver. 16. *But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God, that is holy, shall be sanctified in righteousness.*] *Judgment* and *righteousness* are often equivalent terms; (see Eccles. iii. 16.) and then righteousness signifies strict justice, and so the word is used, Isa. x. 22. lix. 17. If we understand the words so here, the sense will be, that God's power and holiness shall be magnified in the judgments he executeth upon the wicked. But we may understand *righteousness* here as opposed to *judgment,* and signifying the same with mercy; (see i. 27. and note on xxxii. 16.) and then the meaning of the latter part of the verse will be, that God's holiness shall be rendered illustrious in his shewing mercy to the righteous (see the following verse); God is said to be *sanctified in those,* in whose preservation or destruction he exerts his power after a remarkable manner. (See Numb. xx. 13. Ezek. xx. 41. xxviii. 22. 25. xxxvi. 23. xxxviii. 16. 23. xxxix. 27.)

Ver. 17. *Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.*] While strangers devour the possessions of those who have grown rich by oppression; (compare i. 7.) the *lambs, i. e.* good men shall be under the peculiar care of Providence, and shall want nothing that is necessary for their support. God is often represented as a shepherd, and his care of the righteous described by their feeding securely in rich pastures. (See Psal. xxiii. 1. Isa. lxv. 10.)

Ver. 18. *Woe to them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope.*] Who are industrious in finding out pretences to confirm themselves and others in their evil practices, and still add one sin to another.

Ver. 19. *Who say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it,* &c.] This is an objection often in the mouths of libertines, that God doth not hasten the fulfilling of his promises or threatenings, so as to give them ocular demonstration of their certainty. (See Amos v. 18. 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.)

Ver. 20. *Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil.*] That endeavour to confound both the names and the natures of virtue and vice, commend and applaud what is evil, and disparage and discountenance what is good.

That put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.] This reproof of the prophet supposes, that the difference between good and evil, is as self-evident as the most contrary qualities which we are informed of by the report of our senses: and that the advantage which light hath above darkness doth not shine out with a brighter evidence, than the pre-eminence which virtue hath above vice.

Ver. 21. *Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes.*] Who think themselves too wise to need any instruction, and therefore despise the admonitions of God's prophets.

Ver. 23. *And take away the righteousness of the righteous from him.*] By condemning and punishing him, make him look as if he were guilty.

Ver. 24. *Their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust.*] They shall be consumed both root and branch. The prophet alludes to the metaphor insisted on at the beginning of the chapter, where he calls the Jews God's *vineyard,* and *his pleasant plant.*

Ver. 25. *And the hills did tremble.*] The mountains and the earth itself are often said to tremble at God's judgments: (see Psal. lxxvii. 18. cxiv. 7. Jer. iv. 24. Micah i. 4. Nahum i. 5. Habak. iii. 10.) which expressions allude to the trembling of Mount Sinai, when God came down upon it, (Exod. xix. 18.) as also to the thunder which accompanies God's extraordinary judgments, and makes the earth tremble. (See Psal. xviii. 7. 13.) And because

these particular judgments are an earnest of the general judgment, when the whole frame of the world shall be dissolved.

And their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets.] The preterperfect tense is here used for the future: (see ver. 13.) for the words relate to Sennacherib's invasion, or rather to the Babylonian captivity; (see the following verses.) He compares those enemies to lions; (ver. 29.) and by the same metaphor he says that they shall tear the Jews to pieces, and leave their carcasses torn in the midst of the public ways or streets. (Compare 1 Kings xiii. 24.)

Ver. 26. *And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far.*] Setting up a standard is a signal for armies to assemble together. (See xviii. 3. Jer. li. 27.) Thus God will gather together the nations that live afar off, and assemble them to fight against Judea. The nations here specified are the Babylonians, who are, in like manner, described as *coming from a far country,* (xxxix. 3. Jer. v. 15.) It is true, Babylon stood upon the river Euphrates; which was once the border of the Jewish kingdom. (See Gen. xv. 19. 1 Kings iv. 21.) From whence it may be argued, that the Babylonians or Assyrians cannot be meant here. But to this it may be replied, that many of their confederates, who made up great part of their army, lived at a farther distance. Indeed, all foreigners were looked upon by the Jews as living a great way off, because they maintained but little commerce with their neighbours. So the queen of Sheba is said to have come *from the uttermost parts of the earth,* (Matt. xii. 42.) whereas she came but from Arabia Felix. This threatening may also be extended to the desolation of Judea by the Romans. (Compare Deut. xxviii. 49. and see the note on vi. 11.)

And will hiss unto them from the ends of the earth.] Will call them by a certain signal. (Compare vii. 18.) *From far,* and *from the ends of the earth,* are equivalent expressions. (See xliii. 6.) The meaning of the phrase is, That the least whisper of God's voice shall be heard from one end of the earth to the other, and shall summon the nations to the place appointed.

Ver. 27, 28, 29. *None shall be weary, or stumble amongst them,* &c.] See a parallel description of a hostile army, Joel ii. 2. 7—10. Where God girds men with strength, their courage and success is irresistible. (See xlv. 1—3.)

Ver. 27. *Neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed.*] A girdle was a necessary part of a soldier's habit: (see 1 Kings ii. 5. xx. 11. 2 Kings iii. 21.) for it fastened his armour upon him, and made him more nimble and fit for action. From thence it is taken to signify strength and courage; (Job xxxviii. 3. Isa. xlv. 5.) and to unloose the loins, is to enfeeble and dispirit, (Dan. v. 6. Isa. xlv. 1.)

Nor the latchet of their shoes be broken.] They shall be all well-appointed; and as their courage shall not fail them, so neither shall any defect in their habit or armour retard them, or render them unfit for action.

Ver. 28. *And their wheels like a whirlwind.*] That nothing can stop nor resist. Chariots were a principal instrument of war, and are always mentioned in the ancient accounts of battles, as well in Scripture as in profane authors.

Ver. 30. *And if one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow; and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.*] Every thing looks black and dismal. The Scripture expresses great calamities by the heavens being darkened, and the sun, moon, and stars, withdrawing their light. (Compare viii. 22. xiii. 10. Jer. iv. 23. Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8. Joel ii. 10. Amos viii. 9.)

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter, though not the first in order, gives an account of Isaiah's call to the prophetic office (at least, of a new commission to him), together with a prediction of the unsuccessfulness of his ministry, by reason of the hardness of the people's hearts. The like account we have of Jeremiah's call, Jer. i.

Ver. 1. *I SAW the Lord.*] *i. e.* The Divine Schechinah, or the *glory of the Lord,* as St. John explains it; (John xii. 41.) who also assures us, that it was the Logos, or second person of the blessed Trinity who now appeared, this vision having a particular relation to the times of the gospel: (see ver. 9, 10.) It was the unanimous sense of the ancient church, that all the Divine appearances in the Old Testament were made by the Son of God, by whom all the affairs of the church were ordered from the beginning: see this proved both from the New Testament and the fathers, by Bishop Bull, Defens. Fid. Nicen. cap. 1. sect. 1. Dr. Alix hath shewed that the ancient Jews were of the same opinion, in his Judgment of the Jewish Church against the Unitarians, especially chap. 13—15.

I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne.] A description of what the Jews call the Divine Schechinah, or a glorious representation of the Divine Majesty, which was exhibited in a mighty lustre, or flame of light, together with a visible appearance of angels as its attendants. (Compare Exod. xxiv. 10. Ezek. i. 26. Dan. vii. 9, 10. Rev. iv. 2.) The Divine presence is usually represented in Scripture as a bright light, or flaming fire, breaking out of a cloud, or thick darkness. (See Psal. xviii. 12. l. 3. Ezek. i. 5. Dan. vii. 10.) A lively image of both was that pillar of cloud and of fire, which accompanied the Israelites in their journey, (Exod. xiii. 21.) then settled upon the tabernacle, (xl. 38.) and afterward filled the temple, (1 Kings viii. 10.) This argument is handled with great accuracy, by his Grace of Canterbury, in his learned treatise of Idolatry, (chap. 14.)

Ibid. and Ver. 2. *And his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims.*] God is always represented as attended with a numerous train of angels. (See Psal. lxviii. 17. Deut. xxxiii. 2. Dan. vii. 10.) For this reason the cherubims were placed in the temple, as overshadowing the mercy-seat, to which posture the next words here allude, *Above it stood the seraphims;* which might better be translated *above him,* (*i. e.* the Lord) *stood the seraphims.* We read in Ezekiel, (x. 20. xi. 22.) that *the cherubims were under the God of Israel, and his glory was over them above;* but there God is represented as carried by them in a triumphal chariot, which the modern Jews call the *mercavah,* and the Psalmist expresses by God's *riding upon the heavens,* (Psal. lxviii. 33.) and *flying upon the wings of the wind,* (xviii. 10.) The seraphims are called so from their bright colour, like that of flaming fire. (See Ezek. i. 3. Psal. civ. 4.) There seem to be only two

seraphims represented in this vision, in imitation of the two cherubims over the ark.

[Ver. 2. *Above it stood the cherubims.*] The words might be better translated, *Besides it (i. e. the throne) stood the cherubims,* as attending upon him. So the LXX. understood it, and render it, *The cherubims stood round about him.* The Hebrew word *mimmanal* signifies the same here with *menal,* which is rendered *beside,* Jer. xxxvi. 21.]

With twain he covered his face.] Out of reverence towards God, as being unable to bear the glory of his majesty. (See Exod. iii. 6. 1 Kings xix. 13.)

With twain he covered his feet.] Or lower parts: the Hebrew expresses the nakedness or secret parts by the feet. (See Gen. xlix. 10. Deut. xxviii. 57. Judg. iii. 24. Isa. vii. 20.) The expression applied to angels imports those imperfections, to which even the angelical nature is liable, when compared with the infinite purity of the Divine Majesty; see Job iv. 18. the *stars themselves not being pure in his sight,* as the same holy writer speaks, xxv. 5.

With twain he did fly.] This denotes his readiness to execute God's commands.

Ver. 3. *And one cried to another, and said.*] From hence came the custom of singing psalms and hymns alternately, which was used in the Jewish church; (see Ezra iii. 11.) and from thence derived unto the Christian. Thus many interpreters understand St. Paul's words, (Eph. v. 19.) *speaking to one another in psalms and hymns.* The same custom is mentioned by Pliny, in his famous epistle to Trajan, (lib. x. ep. 97.) where he gives an account of the Christians, and, describing their manner of worship, saith, that they do "Carmen Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem;" *They sing by turns an hymn to Christ as God.*

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.] God's holiness, or the superlative purity of his nature, implies in it all the rest of his attributes, especially his justice and mercy, which are dispensed by the most exact rules of rectitude. The Christian church hath always thought that the doctrine of the blessed Trinity was implied in this repetition; which is intimated in several other places of the Old Testament, particularly in that form of blessing which God commanded the priests to use in blessing the people, (Numb. vi. 24—26.) "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Where the word Jehovah is thrice repeated, to denote some great mystery, as the Jews themselves acknowledge. The same doctrine is plainly intimated in this prophecy, (xlviii. 16.) as shall be shewed in the notes upon that place. (See the note upon the eighth verse of this chapter.)

The whole earth is full of his glory.] Not only this temple, where there are at present such manifest indications of a Divine presence; but the whole world carries evident impressions of God's majesty. (Compare Rev. iv. 8. 11.)

[*The whole earth is full of his glory.*] The Son of God being the person here represented, (see vi. 1.) this may be understood of the times of the gospel, when *the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,* xi. 9. (Compare Psal. lxxii. 19.) The following part of this chapter relates to the promulgation of the gospel, and foretells the Jews rejecting it.]

Ver. 4. *And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried.*] The doors shook: the very motion of the wheels of God's triumphal chariot, described by Ezekiel, (see note upon ver. 1.) being compared to *the voice of the Almighty, for its greatness* and terribleness, (Ezek. i. 24. x. 5.)

And the house was filled with smoke.] Or a thick cloud; the sign of God's presence, which filled the temple upon extraordinary occasions. (See 1 Kings viii. 10. Rev. xv. 8.)

Ver. 5. *Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone.*] God himself says, that *no man can see his face and live;* (Exod. xxxiii. 20.) *i. e.* unless his life be preserved by a peculiar favour. This made men afraid of approaching the Divine presence; (see Deut. v. 24. Judg. xiii. 22.) especially when they reflected upon their sins, which made them unworthy to appear in the presence of God. (See Luke v. 8.)

For I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.] Isaiah was terrified at this vision, and withal sensible that God appeared to him, in order to send him upon some message to the people, to which end he had formerly appeared to Moses, (Exod. iii. 2.) as he did afterward to Ezekiel, (i. 4.) In these words, therefore, he deprecates the undertaking of the prophetical office, as one who had no extraordinary talent in speaking, especially to a people that were not at all disposed to hearken to God's commands. (Compare this place with Exod. vi. 12.) What the prophet here calls *unclean* or unsanctified, Moses there styles *uncircumcised lips;* where he excuses himself from the like employment, both from his own incapacity, and from the cold reception he was like to meet with among the Israelites.

Ver. 6. *Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand.*] Signifying thereby the gift of utterance, represented by fiery tongues, Acts ii. 3. and the efficacy of God's word uttered by the prophets, compared elsewhere to fire, (Jer. v. 14. xxiii. 29.) The use of fire, likewise, is to cleanse and purify. (See the following verse.)

Which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar.] The altar of burnt-offerings placed near the porch of the temple, where the vision appeared.

Ver. 7. *And he laid it upon my mouth.*] To signify that all the gifts and graces that purify the mind, and enable us for the discharge of any particular function, come from God. (Compare Jer. i. 9.)

Ver. 8. *Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send?*] God asks this question, not as if he were not resolved whom to send, but that Isaiah might voluntarily offer his own service. So God is elsewhere introduced as asking questions, not to inform himself, but to condemn, or justify men out of their own mouths. (See Gen. iii. 9, 10.)

Who will go for us?] So God speaks in the plural number, Gen. i. 26. which is justly thought to imply a plurality of Divine persons: for it cannot be said with any probability, that God is described in Genesis as advising with, or communicating his purposes to, the angels, which is the fancy of the rabbins; because the history of the creation takes no notice of angels, and, consequently, there is no ground for interpreting any text in the first chapter of Genesis with relation to them.

Then said I, Here am I, send me.] Since the Divine assist-

ance communicated to the prophet, ver. 6. he expresses a willingness to undertake that office, which before he was averse to. (Compare Acts xxvi. 19.)

Ver. 9. *Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not.*] The imperative is put for the future: (see note on ii. 9.) and so the Septuagint here understand it. This threatening is denounced for their former contempt of God's messages. (Compare Matt. xiii. 12, &c.)

Ver. 10. *Make the heart of this people fat,* &c.] The prophets are said to do things when they declare God's purpose of doing them. In this sense, Jeremiah was appointed by God *to root out and destroy, to build and to plant;* (Jer. i. 10.) *i. e.* to declare God's purpose in these matters. In like manner, Ezekiel says, *He was sent to destroy the city;* (xliii. 3.) *i. e.* to prophesy the destruction of it: so here Isaiah is said to *harden the people's hearts, and to blind their eyes, i. e.* to declare this to be the event of his preaching; which prophecy should be more signally accomplished, when the Jews should reject the preaching both of Christ and his apostles.

Make the heart of this people fat.] This St. John expresses by *hardening their heart;* (John xii. 40.) so that it becomes insensible. (Compare Psal. cxix. 70.) God is said to harden men's hearts by those very means of grace, which are in themselves proper to produce a quite contrary effect; but withal he foresees, that meeting with a perverse and refractory temper, they will in the event make them more obdurate; and he is resolved, for great and wise reasons, not to hinder it.

And be healed.] That is, *and their sins be forgiven them,* as St. Mark explains it, Mark iv. 12. So the word *heal* is taken, 2 Chron. xxx. 20. Isa. lvii. 19.

Ver. 11. *Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant.*] The prophet asks, how long shall this blindness, or obstinacy, and the punishments which it will bring upon this people, continue? To which question God returns an answer to this effect, there is no hope of reformation; the people will be irreclaimable, and God will continue his judgments, till at last they end in a final desolation; their country will be laid waste, and the inhabitants carried away captive to Babylon: and the same incredulity under the gospel will have the same or worse effects; *for the Romans shall take away both their place and nation.*

We may reasonably suppose, that this, and many other prophecies, have a double aspect; that they immediately regard the age wherein the prophet lived, but have a farther prospect to the times of the Messias. For the circumstances of one age may be exactly parallel to those of another; and God, that comprehends all things at one single view, can adapt the same prophecy to answer the event in both cases. This subject is more largely handled in the Preface.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.*] The inhabitants of the land, by God's just judgment, shall be carried captive into a far country: (see note on v. 26.) so that the cities and populous places shall become desolate, and the palaces of great men forsaken. (Compare xxxii. 14.)

Ver. 13. *But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and be eaten,* &c.] The Hebrew may be translated thus, which makes the sense run plainer; *But yet in it shall be* left *a tenth, after it is* [or although it is] *again eaten,* or devoured: the verb *shub,* which is translated here *return,* is often used adverbially, and is translated to that sense by our interpreters, Psal. lxxi. 20. *Thou shalt quicken me again;* where our old translation reads more to the letter of the Hebrew, *Thou didst turn and refresh me.* Thus the word is used, Eccles. iv. 1. ix. 11. *I returned and considered; i. e.* I considered again: and so, I conceive, it should be translated here; for the sense of the verse is plainly this, that although God suffers the Jews to be devoured by repeated judgments; first carried captive by the Babylonians, and afterward destroyed by the Romans; (see note on ver. 11.) yet still he will preserve a remnant: (see i. 9.) called here a *tenth part,* which holy seed shall be a seminary to preserve the nation to aftertimes: just as when a tree is stripped of its leaves, and looks as if it were dead, in winter, yet the root and sap of it remain, from whence arises a new succession of branches and leaves in the spring. According to this interpretation, the words contain in them a promise that God will never utterly reject the whole nation of the Jews, how severely soever he deals with them: which promise is more explicitly mentioned, Jer. xxxi. 36, 37. compared with Rom. xi. 1, 2. 16. 29. The *holy seed* is called here a *tenth,* perhaps in allusion to the tithe under the law, which was set apart from the rest, and consecrated to God's service.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

The royal family of Judah were under great apprehensions, that the invasion of Rezin and Pekah might put an end to that kingdom: to comfort them, the prophet assures them that their family should not be extinct, but the Messias in due time should arise out of it: and that those two kings and their kingdoms should in a short time be destroyed. But afterward he foretells other grievous calamities that should befal Judea by the invasion of Sennacherib.

Ver. 1. *REZIN king of Syria—went up towards Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it.*] But yet he carried away many captives out of Judea, slew many of the people, and restored Elah to his own dominions. (See 2 Kings xvi. 5, 6. 2 Chron. xxviii. 5.)

Ver. 2. *It was told the house of David, saying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim.*] The whole royal family was much concerned at this news, because it threatened the destruction of their government: and therefore the promise mentioned ver. 13. is made to them. Ephraim is commonly taken in the prophets for the whole kingdom of Israel, that being the chief of the ten tribes. (See ver. 17. of this chapter, and ix. 9. xi. 13. xvii. 3. xxviii. 1. and many instances in the prophet Hosea, particularly v. 3. 5, &c.)

His heart was moved—as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.] The relative [*his*] in the original relates to the word *house,* the whole royal family of Judah being spoken of as one person.

Ver. 3. *Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shear-jashub thy son.*] This son, and Maher-shalal-hash-baz, mentioned

viii. 3. are the *children whom God gave Isaiah for signs*, ver. 18. (See more of this matter in the notes upon viii. 3.)

[The prophet takes Shear-jashub along with him, because he points to him as a sign of the deliverance of Judea from the invasion of the two kings of Israel and Syria, which now threatened Ahaz and his kingdom. (See the note upon ver. 16.) The word Shear-jashub signifies *a remnant shall return*.] The name probably alludes to the promise made by the prophet, of the people's return from the captivity, (vi. 13.) and imports that God will never wholly cut off his people, but will still leave a remnant, to whom he will make good the promises he gave to their fathers. (See i. 9. vi. 13. x. 21. Rom. xi. 29.) Names are often imposed as signs or tokens of things future. (See Hos. i. 4. 6. 9. John i. 42.)

At the end of the conduit of the upper pool.] There were two pools or lakes which supplied Jerusalem with water; the upper pool, mentioned here and xxxvi. 2. and called Gihon, 2 Chron. xxxii. 30. and the lower pool, concerning which, see xxii. 9.

In the highway of the fuller's field.] Where the fullers laid out their clothes a drying, after they had washed them.

Ver. 4. *Take heed, and be quiet.*] An exhortation like that of Moses to the Israelites, (Exod. xiv. 13, 14.) "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," &c.

Fear not, neither be faint-hearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands.] Which are so far from being able to consume any thing else, that they are almost consumed themselves.

Ver. 6. *Let us make a breach therein for us*, &c.] Let us divide the kingdom, and tear it in pieces by making a party there for ourselves, and setting up a king or viceroy that shall act by our authority.

Ver. 8. *The head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin.*] *i. e.* The kingdom of Syria shall not extend itself beyond its ancient bounds. Damascus shall be the metropolis only of Syria, and Rezin shall have no other royal city under his government besides Damascus.

And within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people.] Archbishop Usher hath given the clearest explication of this difficult verse, in his Annals of the Old Testament, ad A. M. 3327. where he explains it, not of the first captivity of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser, but of their final deportation by Esar-haddon, who totally dispeopled the land, and brought new inhabitants from Babylon, Cuthah, and other cities of the Assyrians, to inhabit the cities of Israel. (See Ezra iv. 2. compared with 2 Kings xvii. 24.) And then Ephraim or Israel wholly ceased from being a people. This last captivity that learned prelate places in the twenty-second year of Manasses's reign, which is just sixty-five years from the beginning of Ahaz's reign.

Capellus and Grotius correct the text here, and put *shesh* instead of *shissim*, *six* for *sixty*, and so make the two numbers amount but to eleven years, which they suppose to be the space between the date of this prophecy and the captivity of the ten tribes. I had not thought this criticism worth taking notice of, but that Mr. White mentions it with approbation. But I believe he can hardly find a like instance of any number bigger than a decimal, broke into such an unusual partition. Besides, all the present copies of the Hebrew text, and the ancient versions, justify the received reading: and to alter the original, without either authority or necessity, is a presumption not to be allowed in criticising upon profane authors, much less upon sacred ones. It may be farther observed, that this criticism, if it were allowed, doth not solve the difficulty; for it is two-and-twenty years from the date of this prophecy, to the captivity of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser. Inasmuch as Rezin and Pekah invaded Judea at the beginning of Ahaz's reign, as appears by comparing 2 Kings xv. 37. with xvi. 5. Now Ahaz reigned sixteen years, and after him Hezekiah six years, before that captivity. The occasion of Grotius's mistake appears in his notes upon this place; *viz.* that he did not allow for the interregnum, which all judicious chronologers place between the end of Pekah's reign and the beginning of Hoshea's, which is plainly inferred by comparing the times of the kings of Israel and Judah together.

Ver. 9. *And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son.*] The same sort of expression with that of ver. 8. Or else it may be thus translated, *The head of Ephraim which is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son* [shall be broken]; the verb being supplied from the foregoing verse.

Ver. 11. *Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God.*] A sign is a miracle wrought for the confirmation of some message or promise delivered from God: (see Exod. iv. 8. Judg. vi. 17. Isa. xxxviii. 22.) this was usually wrought presently; but sometimes a thing future, where the event is remarkable, is proposed for a sign, as here. (See, likewise, Exod. iii. 12. 1 Sam. ii. 34. Jer. xliii. 9, 10.)

Ask it either in the depth, or the height above.] Either in the heaven or in earth. The Jews were very fond of signs from heaven, as if they were more convincing than any other sort of miracle. (See Matt. xvi. 1.)

Ver. 12. *But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord.*] To tempt the Lord is to mistrust his providence, or expect he should give some extraordinary instance of it to confirm our belief: (see Deut. vi. 16. Matt. iv. 7.) but these words of Ahaz, although they have a show of piety, do yet really proceed from despair and unbelief, as appears by the prophet's answer, ver. 13.

Ver. 13. *Hear ye now, O house of David.*] The prophet does not apply himself any farther to Ahaz, as a person who would not regard what he said, but directs his discourse to the house of David, or the royal family, to comfort them under desponding apprehensions: (see ver. 2.) and assures them that God's promises to the family of David should never fail; but have their eminent completion in the Messias, whose birth he foretells in the following words.

Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?] You may reckon it a slight and inconsiderable fault to despise God's prophets, but surely you must needs think it a heinous offence to treat God Almighty after this fashion. Men are elsewhere said to *weary God with their sins*, (Isa. xliii. 24. Mal. ii. 17.) when they tire out his patience; just as they are said to *vex and grieve his Holy Spirit*, (lxiii. 10. Eph. iv. 30.) when they turn a deaf ear to all his admonitions.

Ver. 14. *Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign.*] He shall give it unasked, and such a sign as could not enter into your thoughts to desire. This shews that

the promised sign was an extraordinary miracle, the immediate work of God, such as a son of a virgin is, which therefore must be the genuine sense of the following words.

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son.] Christ is called *the seed of the woman*, by way of distinction, (Gen. iii. 15.) as not to be born in the ordinary way of generation. The Hebrew word *almah*, most properly signifies a *virgin*, and so it is translated here by all the ancient interpreters; and is never once used in the Scripture in any other sense, as several learned men have proved against the pretensions of the modern Jews. (See particularly Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messias, par. ii. chap. 5.) The primary signification of the word *almah* is *hid*, or *concealed;* from whence it is taken to signify a virgin, because of the custom in the eastern countries to keep their virgins concealed from the view of men, never suffering them to stir out of the woman's apartment.

And shall call his name Immanuel.] This is spoken of the mother, who usually gave the name to the child. (See Gen. iv. 1. xvi. 11. xxix. 32. xxx. 6. 8.) To be *called* is the same in Scripture-phrase as to be; *name* being often put for *thing* in the Hebrew dialect. To this sense the word *dabar* is often used in the Old Testament; and Luke i. 38. the original reads *with God no word shall be impossible; i. e.* no thing: so it is said of Christ, (ix. 6.) *his name shall be called Wonderful, i. e.* he shall be a wonderful person; and (i. 26.) *Jerusalem shall be called a city of righteousness; i. e.* her manners shall answer that title: thus we are to understand the Messiah's being called Immanuel, *i. e.* being really what that name imports; *i. e. God with us;* being both truly and properly God, and called so, ix. 6. and also living or dwelling *with us*, men. In the same sense we are to understand that prophecy of Christ, (Jer. xxiii. 6.) *This is his name whereby he shall be called,* THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Several other texts of the Old Testament speak of the Messias as God. (See xxxv. 4. xlviii. 16. Isa. xl. 9, 10. Hos. i. 7. Zech. ii. 10, 11. Mal. iii. 1.)

Ver. 15, 16. *Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know how to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.*] According to the judgment of several interpreters, these two verses are a plain proof, that this prophecy, though in its true and natural sense it can be fulfilled in none but the Messiah, yet had an immediate aspect upon some particular event that should quickly happen; *viz.* that within the time that one who is now a virgin could marry, and bring forth a son, and that son come to years of discretion, the two kings of Samaria and Damascus should be destroyed. Huetius embraces this sense, Dem. Evang. prob. ix. cap. 9.

It may, indeed, justly be wondered, that any part of this illustrious prophecy concerning Christ should be supposed applicable to any other person or event. But to this it may be answered, that as all the mercies promised to the Jews, were figures or earnests of the times of the Messias, in whom all the promises of God were verified: (see 2 Cor. i. 20.) so the prophets, in foretelling temporal mercies, are sometimes carried beyond themselves and their subject, if I may so express it, to foretell the blessings of the gospel; and after this extraordinary rapture, they return to the subject which was the immediate occasion of their prophecy. (See the note upon x. 20.)

But other learned men, particularly Archbishop Usher, in his Annals, ad A. M. 3262. suppose this prophecy to be applicable to none but Christ; accordingly that learned prelate explains the fifteenth and sixteenth verses to this sense, *Butter and honey shall he eat; i. e.* Christ shall take upon him the infirmities of childhood, and shall be fed with the common nourishment given to children in those countries, which was milk, or butter and honey. Then he supposes the prophet to point to his son Shear-jashub, whom he took along with him: (see ver. 3.) and to tell Ahaz for his present comfort, that before that child should come to discern good from evil, the land of Israel, and its two confederate kings, should be destroyed by the king of Assyria. To confirm this exposition, it may be observed, that Isaiah mentions but two of his own children, Shear-jashub, here, (ver. 3.) and Maher-shalal-hash-baz, viii. 3. and never calls Immanuel his son; from whence we may justly conclude, that he was a distinct person from them both: [and, indeed, the eldest son, or heir of the house of David, and king of Judea: see viii. 8.]

Ver. 15. *Butter and honey shall he eat.*] If we suppose these words applicable to any person that was to be born quickly after the uttering this prophecy, the sense of them will be, that although the invasion of the land, and the siege of Jerusalem, did threaten them with famine, and although, under such public calamities, there might be no encouragement to plough and sow; yet there should not want plenty of other provisions, particularly of butter and honey: (see ver. 22.) such as were the common nourishment of children, by the custom of those countries. (See that custom more at large explained in Cotelerius, and Vossius's note upon the epistle of Barnabas, No. 6.)

That he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.] The sense is better expressed, if we translate it, *Till he know to refuse the evil, and choose the good:* so the particle *le* is used, Lev. xxiv. 12. where our English reads thus: *They put him in ward, that the mind of the Lord might be shewed to them;* but the sense is plainly thus: *Till the mind of the Lord was,* or *might be shewed to them.* To the same sense it should be translated, Job xxxviii. 13. *Till it take hold of the ends of the earth.*

[Ver. 16. *Before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.*] Vitringa thus explains it, Within that space of time allotted for this child (whose birth is foretold, ver. 14.) to grow up out of the state of childhood, *the land shall be forsaken of both her kings.*]

The land which thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.] The two confederate kings of Samaria and Damascus, who now join their forces together in the land of Israel, (ver. 1.) shall be cut off by the king of Assyria. (See viii. 4. 2 Kings xv. 29. xvi. 9.) Some render the words thus: *The land shall be desolate,* or *forsaken, of whose two kings thou art afraid,* or *whose two kings thou abhorrest:* the verb *katz* signifies first to *dread,* and then to *hate* and *abhor.* (See Exod. i. 12. Numb. xxii. 3.)

Ver. 17. *The Lord shall bring upon thee, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria.*] Though God promised Ahaz and his people a deliverance from the practices of Rezin and Pekah, yet their sins would provoke him to send a more

terrible enemy against them, *viz.* Sennacherib king of Assyria, who should "come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and take them," (2 Kings xviii. 13.) and threaten Jerusalem itself. This would be such a terrible judgment, as had not been felt since the division of the two kingdoms, Israel and Judah; and is the subject of several succeeding prophecies in this book.

Ver. 18. *The Lord shall hiss.*] See note on v. 36.

For the fly that is in the uttermost parts of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.] Armies are often compared to flies, bees, and other insects; (see Deut. i. 44. Judg. vi. 5. Joel ii. 4. 20. 25. Psal. cxviii. 12. Nahum iii. 17. Rev. ix. 7.) both for their numbers, and for the destruction which they make: (see Exod. viii. 24. and Huetius Quæst. Alnetan. lib. ii. cap. 12.) Assyria and Egypt are often joined together as the two great oppressors of God's people. (See xix. 23. xxvii. 13. Zech. x. 10.) Archbishop Usher, ad A. M. 3294. supposes that the conquest of Egypt by the king of Assyria, foretold in the twentieth chapter of this prophecy, happened before the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib, and that a great many Egyptians were his auxiliaries in that expedition.

Ver. 19. *And they shall come, and rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks.*] He pursues the same metaphor, and represents this foreign army as so many flies that lie in shoals in lower grounds; and as bees, whose custom it is to get into rocks: (see Deut. xxxii. 13. Psal. lxxxi. 17.) implying that no place should be free from them, and even the strongest and best fortified cities (compared sometimes to rocks: see Numb. xxiv. 21.) should be no security against them.

Ver. 20. *In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria.*] Because shaving the head was used in mourning, (see Lev. xxi. 5.) from thence it is metaphorically used for a great calamity. (See Ezek. v. 1.) And the invasion of an army is particularly resembled by it here, because that leaves a country bare, and strips off all its ornaments, among which the hair hath a principal place. The Assyrian is called a *hired razor*, because God often rewards those whom he makes instruments of his vengeance upon sinners, which is expressed by giving them their hire. (See Ezek. xxix. 18, 19. 2 Kings x. 30.) And as Ahaz hired the king of Assyria to assist him: (see 2 Kings xvi. 7, 8. 2 Chron. xxviii. 21.) so the prophet says, God will hire the king of the same country to destroy Judea, as Tiglath-pilneser did, whom Ahaz had hired. (See ver. 20.) By the *river* is meant Euphrates. (See note on xi. 16.)

The head, and the hair of the feet: it shall also consume the beard.] *i. e.* All ranks and conditions, both high and low. In what sense the *feet* are here understood, see note on vi. 2.

Ver. 21, 22. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow and two sheep: and it shall come to pass, that for the abundance of milk that they shall give, he shall eat butter.*] The enemies should make such a destruction both of man and beast, that there should want hands and cattle to till the ground, so that the whole land should of itself turn to pasture. And those few inhabitants that should be left, should have neither flocks nor herds to feed in those waste places, the utmost of their stock should be a cow and two sheep, which should give abundance of milk by reason of the plenty of grass, and want of cattle to eat it: whereupon milk and butter should be the chief part of the people's sustenance: compare xxxvii. 30. where it is said, *Ye shall eat this year*, meaning the year of Sennacherib's invasion, *such as groweth of itself*, without ploughing or sowing, as appears by the following words there.

For butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land.] He means wild honey, which is found in the woods. (See Matt. iii. 4.)

Ver. 23. *Every place, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, shall be for briers and thorns.*] The choicest vineyards, which in times of peace would let for a thousand shekels a year, shall be left uncultivated, to be overrun with briers and thorns, there being no encouragement for any improvements, which men expected every day should be destroyed by the enemy.

Ver. 24. *With arrows and with bows shall men come thither.*] For hunting wild beasts; (see Gen. xxvii. 3.) or else to defend themselves against them.

Ver. 25. *And on all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.*] The Hebrew may be thus translated, which makes the sense run easy: *And all the hills that are* (or used to be) *digged with a mattock, that the fear of briers and thorns may not come there,* [*i. e.* to clear them from briers and thorns: see the note on xxvii. 9.] *shall be for the sending forth of oxen,* &c. All those hills that used to be carefully manured and turned to vineyards, which were usually planted upon hills, (see v. 1. Psal. lxxx. 11.) shall now lie waste, and be only fit for cattle to graze in: ground untilled naturally turns to pasture; therefore these and the like expressions signify great desolations and destructions both of man and beast. (Compare xvii. 2. xxvii. 10. xxxii. 14.)

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet renews the promises made to Ahaz in the former chapter, which are to receive their utmost completion in the Messias; and he foretells the rejecting of the Jews for not believing on him.

Ver. 1. *MOREOVER, the Lord said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen.*] When the prophets are commanded to write any thing, it signifies first the certainty of the thing spoken of, and then the importance of it, that the memory of it ought to be transmitted to posterity. (See xxx. 8. Dan. x. 21. Habak. ii. 2.) The prophet is commanded to take a *great roll*, either because the words were to be writ in capital letters, *that he that runs may read them;* or else because it was to contain all that part of Isaiah's prophecy which concerns this subject, comprehending the foregoing chapter and the following one. By a *man's pen*, is meant such a pen, and such characters, as are in ordinary use among men. So the *measure of a man*, (Rev. xxi. 17.) is such as is commonly used among men.

[*Take thee a great roll.*] Compare Zech. v. 1. and then see the note there.]

Concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz.] The word signifies to *run swiftly to the spoil, and make haste to the prey;* and denotes the speedy destruction of the confederate kings of Samaria and Damascus. (See ver. 4.)

Ver. 2. *And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record.*] There were always witnesses to the matrimonial contract: (see Selden's Uxor. Hebraica, lib. i. cap. 2.) the same custom is mentioned, Tobit vii. 14. (or the sixteenth verse, as it is reckoned in some editions) according to the Hebrew copy published by Fagius, which reads the verse thus, *Then he called witnesses, and gave her in marriage in their presence, who signed and sealed the deed which contained the particulars of the dowry which she was to have.*

This circumstance signifies the prophet's contracting himself to a woman, called the prophetess, ver. 3. For there is no necessity that the child here mentioned should be born of the same woman that was mother to Shear-jashub, spoken of vii. 3. the contrary is rather here intimated; nor was it against the law of Moses for a man to take another wife, though the former were supposed to be still living. Accordingly, Hosea is commanded to marry two different women, for a sign to the Jews; Hos. i. 2. iii. 2. a place which very much resembles this. (See the note upon the following verse.)

Ver. 3. *I went unto the prophetess.*] Or, *I approached unto her,* as the word is translated, Lev. xviii. 6. She might, perhaps, have the gift of prophecy, as several other women had: (see Judg. iv. 4. 2 Kings xxii. 14.) or she might be called so, as being the wife of a prophet.

And she conceived, and bare a son.] This was Isaiah's second son, that was given him for a *sign* of the times. (See ver. 18.) The prophets foretold things by actions as well as by words: so Hosea was commanded to *take a wife of whoredoms,* and have children by her, (Hos. i. 2.) to signify the Jews going a whoring after other gods, and being thereupon rejected by the true God. But whether these and such-like figurative representations were really performed, or not, is a great dispute among learned men; for the resolution of which question I shall refer the reader to the learned Dr. Pocock's commentary upon the forementioned place of Hosea, where this question is largely handled.

Ver. 4. *For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus, and the spoil of Samaria, shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.*] In the seventh chapter it was prophesied that the destruction of Samaria and Damascus should come to pass before the child there spoken of should come to years of discretion; (ver. 16.) which words were there explained of the elder son Shear-jashub: now the time drew nearer, and it is here said that the event should be fulfilled before this younger child should be able to speak plain. (See the completion of this prophecy recorded, 2 Kings xv. 29. xvi. 9.)

Ver. 6. *Forasmuch as this people refuse the waters of Shiloah which run softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son.*] It is probable many of the Jews might be secret friends to the two confederate kings, as thinking them an overmatch for the kingdom of Judah, and so were resolved to be of the strongest side. Shiloah was a small river that ran through Jerusalem: (see Nehem. iii. 15. John ix. 7.) and denotes the small strength and forces of the king of Judah, that did bear no greater a proportion to the power of the Assyrian monarch, than a small brook does to the mighty river Euphrates.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory.*] It is usual to resemble multitudes to great waters. (See Psal. cxliv. 7. Rev. xvii. 1. 15.) Especially an army is fitly represented by the inundation of a rapid river, which carries all before it, and leaves the ground waste and desolate: compare xvii. 12, 13. Dan. ix. 26. xi. 10. 22. where the same expressions are to be found which are used in this and the next verse.

Ver. 8. *He shall reach even to the neck.*] The prophet persists in the same metaphor, the words importing the danger which threatened the Jews by reason of this invasion, as a person is in great danger of being drowned when the water comes up to his neck. (See xxx. 28.)

And the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.] *i. e.* His army or his camp shall fill thy land, as the Septuagint very well express the sense. So the *wing of abominations,* as some render the original, Dan. ix. 27. is by many interpreters translated *the abominable army;* which translation is confirmed by the authority of St. Luke, xxi. 20. compared with Matt. xxiv. 15. I observed before, that the prophet never calls Immanuel his son; and here he speaks of him as a distinct person from both the children abovementioned, and in such a style as befits none but him that was to be in an eminent manner the son of David, and king of Israel.

Ver. 9. *Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces.*] The prophet returns to the subject spoken of, ver. 6. and insults over the confederacy of Syria and Israel against Judah, foretelling them that all their united endeavours shall prove abortive, because, saith he, God is with us, the import of the word Immanuel. (See Matt. i. 23.) He will certainly make good his promises to the family of David, which will be eminently fulfilled in raising up Christ to sit on his throne, whose *kingdom shall have no end.*

Give ear, all ye of far countries.] This expression seems to favour that interpretation which expounds the foregoing words of the Assyrians and their associates: (see the note upon v. 26.) but the most distant times and countries may be fitly said to be concerned in the admonition here given; the import of which is, that God will preserve his church, and advance the kingdom of the Messias by such measures as he in his infinite wisdom shall think most proper, in spite of all the united endeavours of men to the contrary. This is a truth often insisted upon in the Scriptures, and is the subject of the second Psalm in particular.

Gird yourselves.] See note on v. 27.

And ye shall be broken in pieces.] Ye shall be discomfited, and all your designs blasted. (Compare Dan. viii. 25.)

Ver. 10. *Speak the word, and it shall not stand.*] Whatever decrees you resolve upon, whatever commands ye give out, in order to their being put in execution, shall come to nought.

Ver. 11. *For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand.*] The spirit of prophecy is expressed by *the hand of*

the Lord being upon the prophet. (See 2 Kings iii. 15. Ezek. iii. 14. viii. 1.) Accordingly here the words imply that the prophet felt an extraordinary impulse to deliver this message, as from God, containing a doctrine of great importance: (see ver. 13.) who likewise inspired him with courage and presence of mind to discharge his duty in this particular.

Ver. 12. *Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy.*] Or rather, *In all things wherein this people shall say,* &c. Many of the Jews were secret friends to Rezin and Pekah; and this circumstance much increased the fears of that invasion, because it was given out that they had a strong party among the people of Judea: so that it seemed impossible to contend against such an enemy. The prophet is commanded to arm those that heard him against these fears, and exhorts them not to join with the popular cry in this matter.

Ver. 13. *Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.*] *Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts,* as St. Peter expresseth the sense, 1 Pet. iii. 15. God is the proper object of our fear: (see Psal. lxxvi. 7. Luke xii. 4, 5.) men ought therefore to possess their minds with an awful sense of his power, justice, and faithfulness, and this will preserve them steady in their trust and dependance upon him under the worst circumstances: this is a lesson of great importance, and necessary for our conduct at all times.

Ver. 14. *And he shall be for a sanctuary.*] *i. e.* A refuge and protection. (See Ezek. vi. 16.) The same thing is elsewhere expressed, by *dwelling in the secret place of the Most High,* (Psal. xci. 1.) and *in his pavilion,* or *tabernacle,* (Psal. xxvii. 5. xxxi. 20.)

But for a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.] God and his promises, which shall be men's refuge and security, become the occasion of hurt and mischief to unbelievers. Their sins are aggravated thereby, and their punishments increased. (See Matt. xxi. 44.) But this text hath a plain aspect upon Christ: (see Rom. ix. 33. 1 Pet. ii. 8.) the Immanuel, mentioned ver. 8. in whom all God's promises are verified: (2 Cor. i. 20.) but yet the prophets have foretold concerning him, that he should be matter of offence to the Jews, and this their incredulity should in the end be the occasion of their ruin, and the *taking away both their place and nation.* The prophet expressly mentions *both the houses of Israel,* to shew the general rejection of the Jews under the gospel. This very expression is a demonstration that the prophet here enlarges his views beyond the subject of Rezin and Pekah's association, which was the immediate occasion of this prophecy: for, under those circumstances, Israel and Judah were in two different interests, and the prophet exhorts the king and people of Judah to trust in God, who would be their defence against the designs of their brethren of the ten tribes; whereas, this verse speaks of them both as involved in the same sin and punishment.

We may farther observe, that this text is directly spoken of God by the prophet; but applied to Christ and the apostles, in the abovementioned places: (see the like instances in vi. 1. compared with John xii. 41. and xlv. 23. compared with Rom. xiv. 11.) a plain proof that Christ is God, and is described as such by the prophets.

Ver. 16. *Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.*] To *seal,* signifies sometimes to secure or keep safe; in this sense it is joined with *sewing up,* John xiv. 17. the same with *binding up* here. But when the word is applied to a book, it signifies to conceal, or hide from common understandings. (See Isa. xxix. 11. Dan. xii. 4.) God here commands the prophet to deliver his promises, and the several declarations of his will, especially those concerning the Messias, to his faithful servants, to be kept safely by them, and laid up in their memories; and although at present they were as a book sealed up, and not easily understood; yet when the event answered the prediction, they would be a justification of God's truth, and of those who depended upon his word; of which number the prophet professes himself to be one, in the following verse.

The *law* and the *testimony* may signify, in general, any declaration of God's will, so as to comprehend his promises as well as his precepts: thus the Hebrew word *kôk* (equivalent to *torah,* the word used here), which commonly signifies a *law* or *statute,* denotes God's promise and decree, Psal. ii. 6. cxi. 7. and cxix. 151. where David saith, *All thy commandments are true,* the context shews, that the word *commandments* is equivalent to promises: the word *testimony* is used in the same sense, Psal. xciii. 5.

Ver. 17. *And I will wait upon the Lord, that hides his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.*] The prophet still persists in his resolution to depend upon God; though at present, saith he, he doth not give any visible tokens of his presence among us, yet I doubt not but in his due time he will remember his promises, and not suffer any part of them to fail. God is said to *hide his face,* when he does not answer our prayers, or give any marks of his favour and assistance. (See Deut. xxxi. 27. Job xiii. 24. Psal. xliv. 24.)

Ver. 18. *Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts.*] These are the words of the prophet, as well as the verse foregoing, though speaking in the person of Christ, whom he here represents; (see Heb. ii. 13.) and the meaning of them is, that he and his children mentioned vii. 3. viii. 3. were remarkable for being visible pledges of God's promises, and remembrancers of his veracity and the people's duty. For which reason as they were admired and respected by well-disposed persons; so they were made objects of scorn and derision to hypocrites and unbelievers. (Compare Deut. xxviii. 46. Psal. lxxi. 7. Zech. iii. 8. Ezek. xiv. 8. Luke ii. 34.)

[The word *mophthim,* translated *wonders,* signifies more properly here *types* or *figures: Shear-jashub* being a sign of a remnant's returning from captivity, (vi. 13.) and *Maher-shalal-hash-baz,* a type or figure of the destruction of the kingdoms of Israel and Syria; (viii. 1—4.) as a learned prelate hath observed in his Defence of Christianity from the ancient Prophecies, chap. iv. 12.]

Ver. 19. *And when they say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter.*] To *peep* signifies the same with the Latin *pipire;* (see x. 14.) *i. e.* to chirp or to whisper, and so it is translated, xxix. 4. By *peeping* and *muttering* are meant the answers of those who, pretending to familiar spirits, muttered or spoke imperfectly, as if their voice proceeded out of the caverns of the earth: (see xlv.

19.) or spoke inwardly, so that their words seemed to come out of their belly, from whence they were called Ἐγγαστρίμυθοι, in Greek.

Should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?] i. e. *Should they seek for the living to the dead?* By the dead may be meant idols, which are dead insensible things, (see Psal. cxv. 5, &c.) and for that reason opposed to the *living God*, 1 Thess. i. 9. A great part, likewise, of the heathen idolatry consisted in worshipping dead men; (see Psal. cvi. 28.) and inquiring after oracles which were placed in the temples, and monuments dedicated to their deified heroes. (See lxv. 4.) Upon this account, several mournful and funeral rites were used in their worship; such as cutting their flesh, (1 Kings xviii. 28.) and shaving their heads; (Baruch vi. 31.) which usages were for this reason forbidden to the Jewish priests in particular, (Lev. xxi. 5.) and to the people in general, (Lev. xix. 27, 28.)

Ver. 20. *To the law and to the testimony.*] Have recourse to the oracles of God. (See ver. 16.)

If they speak not after this word, it is because they have no light in them.] Compare Micah iii. 6. Some render the latter part of this verse, *There shall be no prosperity to them;* according to the usual acceptation of *light* for happiness, as *darkness* is put for misery. (See particularly ver. 22.)

Ver. 21. *And they shall pass through it hardly bested and hungry.*] They shall pass through the land, or the earth, mentioned ver. 22. The prophet describes the condition of unbelievers under the public calamities; that they shall wander here and there, be impatient under their pressures, and, in the rage of their despair, curse first God and providence, (compare Rev. xvi. 10, 11.) and then their king, to whose ill conduct they impute a great part of their miseries.

Ibid. and Ver. 22. *And look upward. And they shall look to the earth.*] These two sentences should be joined together, as the Septuagint, and our Old English translation understand the place to this sense, Whether they look upwards to heaven, or downwards to the earth, they see nothing but trouble and distress. (Compare v. 30.)

And they shall be driven to darkness.] Or, *Darkness shall fall upon them, and they shall not be able to fly away from the distress of that* [land], *or that* [time]. For the six first words in the Hebrew text of the ninth chapter ought in all reason to be joined to this; which division of the words is confirmed by the Chaldee paraphrast and the Vulgar Latin, and is indeed necessary for the explaining the prophecy contained in the two first verses of the following chapter. (See more there.)

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet continues to foretell the times of the Messias; the sixth and the seventh verses being an illustrious prophecy of his birth and kingdom. Afterward he returns to describe the calamitous state of the ten tribes, and the provoking sins they were guilty of in the midst of those judgments; which subject is continued to x. 5. The writings of the prophets are very much obscured by the unskilful division of the chapters, which very often break off in the middle of a subject; as, at other times, discourses are joined together, that have no affinity with each other.

Ver. 1. *NEVERTHELESS, the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation,* &c.] If we follow the division of the text just now mentioned, and begin this chapter in the original with the words *Kaëth harishôn,* the verse may be thus translated according to Mr. Mede: (see book i. disc. 25. p. 101. of the fol. edit.) *As the first* (or former) *time made vile* (or debased) *the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali;* (when the king of Assyria, Tiglath-pileser, carried great part of that country captive: see 2 Kings xv. 29.) *so the latter time shall make them glorious, the way of the sea by Jordan, Galilee of the nations, the people that walked in darkness,* &c. This translation exactly agrees with the sense of the text, as it is applied by St. Matthew to our Saviour's preaching in Galilee, by *the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim,* (Matt. iv. 13, 14.) So that to make the Hebrew text correspond with the sense of it given by the evangelist, we must understand it as containing a comfortable promise to those parts of Judea; whereas the contrary is rather suggested in the usual translation of the words. This translation is likewise agreeable to the stops or accents which are placed under the Hebrew text, where we find a full stop put at the word *hicbid,* which is not taken notice of in the common versions.

But if we follow that sense, which the English and most other translations give of the place, we must understand the people spoken of in the second verse to be the same with those mentioned in the first.

By the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations.] By the *sea* is meant the sea of Galilee, or the sea of Tiberias: (see John vi. 1.) great lakes being called by the name of *seas* in the Hebrew. This country of Galilee bordered likewise upon the river Jordan; *reneber, Hejarden,* it is in the Hebrew, which might better be rendered, *by the side of Jordan:* the word *reneber* indifferently signifying the *hither* or *farther* side of the river, as Huetius hath proved, Dem. Evang. prop. iv. cap. 14. p. 2. (See likewise Isa. xviii. 1.) Galilee was divided into the *upper* and *lower:* the lower was called, by way of distinction, *Galilee of the nations,* or *gentiles;* because it was first peopled by a mixed multitude that came from several countries, or nations; and therefore are called by the name of *nations,* Gen. xiv. 1. and the *nations of Gilgal,* mentioned Josh. xiii. 23. are supposed by learned men to mean the same with the nations of Galilee, Gilgal being sometimes put for Galilee, as appears by comparing Josh. xv. 7. with xviii. 17. (See likewise 1 Maccab. ix. 2. compared with Josephus, Antiq. lib. xi. cap. 18.)

[*Galilee of the nations.*] Or, the *country of the nations.* So the word *Gelilah* signifies, Josh. xiii. 2. Ezek. xlvii. 8. Joel iii. 4.]

Ver. 2. *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light,* &c.] Compare lx. 1. Luke i. 79. Acts xxvi. 18. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Ver. 3. *Thou hast multiplied the nation.*] By enlarging the church, and adding daily to the number of believers. (See ii. 2. xxvi. 15.)

And not increased the joy.] There is a different reading in the Hebrew margin from that of the text; the text reads

lo with an *aleph*, which signifies *not;* the margin *lo* with a *vau*, which signifies *him*. If we follow the marginal reading, the sense will be, *Thou hast increased the joy to him*, or *to it*, which seems most agreeable to the context. If we keep the reading of the text, it may be translated by way of interrogation, *Wilt thou not increase the joy?* Then follows the answer, *They joy before thee*, &c. in the following words.

They joy before thee according to the joy of harvest.] A proverbial expression taken from the great rejoicing always shewed at the gathering in the fruits of the earth. (See xvi. 10. Psal. iv. 8.) The prophet denotes it to be a religious joy, because it is said to be *before God; i. e.* in his presence, and with a grateful acknowledgment of his benefits. So the religious feasts which were made of the holy things are expressed *rejoicing before the Lord*, Deut. xii. 12.

And as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.] Victory is always accompanied with joy and triumph. (See 1 Sam. xxx. 16.) Our Saviour's conquest over sin and Satan is often expressed by his *dividing their spoils*. (See note on liii. 12.) The phrase is taken from the custom of conquerors to divide the spoil among their officers and soldiers, who assisted them in obtaining the victory. (See Judg. v. 30.)

Ver. 4. *For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden* (i. e. *his burdensome yoke*), *and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor.*] A staff or rod being an emblem of authority, it comes to signify a stroke or blow inflicted by a superior, and from thence it is applied to the oppressions of a tyrannical power; or of such conquerors as God makes instruments of his vengeance. (See x. 5. 24. xxx. 31.) So the *staff of his shoulder* means those oppressive burdens which the enemies of God's people laid upon their shoulders: (compare xiv. 25.) and breaking this staff is destroying the power and authority of the oppressor. (See xiv. 5.)

As in the day of Midian.] By the immediate hand of God, without any human aid, as the victory of Gideon over the Midianites was obtained. (See Judg. vii. 22. Isa. x. 26.)

Ver. 5. *For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.*] This discomfiture of God's enemies shall not be effected by the noise and tumult of fighting and bloodshed, but by a sudden destruction, like that of fire from heaven, which consumes in a moment. The first and second coming of Christ are often joined together in the prophets; (as hath been observed in the Argument upon chap. ii.) and what is here said, will receive its ultimate completion at the last day, when Christ shall come in *flaming fire, taking vengeance* on his adversaries. (See 2 Thess. i. 7.) God's vengeance is often described by the metaphor of fire. (See xxx. 33. lxvi. 15.) Some render the verse thus: *For the whole battle of the warrior shall be with confused noise, and with garments rolled in blood, which must be burned and consumed by the fire; i. e.* the *spots* of which cannot be cleansed with washing, and therefore are given up to be burnt, the final punishment of Christ's enemies, after they are overcome in battle by him. (See Rev. xx. 9, 10.)

Ver. 6. *For unto us a child is born.*] Part of the prophecy contained in this and the following verse, is applied by the angel to Christ, Luke i. 31, 32. so that no Christian ought to doubt but that the words must be meant of him, the same son prophesied of before, (vii. 14.) and the titles which are here given to this child or son, cannot in any tolerable sense be applied to any other person. Grotius's application of the words to Hezekiah is so unnatural and trifling, that it is a disparagement to any man's judgment to fall in with it, as Mr. White does; and he might with as much probability have followed him implicitly in expounding away the fifty-third chapter of this prophecy, as the place before us.

[The Chaldee paraphrase understands the text in this sense, and thus interprets the latter part of this verse: *Christ the man that endures for ever, whose peace shall be multiplied upon us in our days;* and introduces this prophecy with this preface, *The prophet saith to the house of David.* Compare vii. 13.]

Unto us a son is given.] God's *sending his Son into the world*, especially his *giving him to die for our sins*, is spoken of in Scripture as the greatest gift that God could bestow upon mankind. (See John iii. 16. Rom. viii. 32.)

And the government shall be upon his shoulder.] The weight or burden of the government shall lie upon him; (compare xxii. 22.) the whole management of it shall be committed to him: this properly belongs to Christ, the head of the church, (see Coloss. i. 18.) to whom *all power is given both in heaven and in earth*, Matt. xxviii. 18. (Compare Dan. vii. 14.)

And his name shall be called.] *i. e.* He shall really be what the following titles import. (See note on vii. 14.)

Wonderful.] So the angel that appeared to Manoah, who was the Logos, (see note on vi. 1.) saith, that *his name is wonderful*, (Judg. xiii. 18.) His name *Immanuel* seems denoted in the text, as that which implies in it the wonderful mystery of God *incarnate;* in which respect Christ is said to have *a name that none knows but himself*, (Rev. xix. 12.) Some translate it *wonderful Counsellor;* joining the words together in construction, as all the nouns which follow have an epithet joined to them. *Wonderful Counsellor*, may mean the same with *wonderful in counsel*, a title ascribed to God, (xxviii. 29. Jer. xxxii. 19.) and may fitly be applied to the mystery of our redemption, which the Scripture speaks of as the great masterpiece of the Divine wisdom. (See Eph. iii. 10.)

Counsellor.] *i. e.* Intimate to all his Father's counsels and decrees, *those eternal purposes which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord*, as St. Paul speaks, Eph. iii. 10. To the same sense we are to understand those words of St. John, that *the only-begotten Son was in the bosom of the Father*, (John i. 18.) and those of Christ, *None knows the Father, save the Son*, (Matt. xi. 27.)

The mighty God.] The same expression is used x. 21. concerning the God of Israel: Christ is likewise styled *the Almighty*, Rev. i. 8.

The everlasting Father.] *The author of eternal salvation*, as Christ is styled by St. Paul, Heb. v. 9. The Septuagint render the words, Πατὴρ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος, *The Father of the world to come;* and the Vulgar Latin follows this translation; which, since the Hebrew words will admit of, I cannot but have a particular regard for it, because I am persuaded it is from the authority of this text, that the state of the gospel, or the kingdom of the Messias, is called in the

New Testament by the title of μέλλων αἰών, *The age*, or *world to come*. (See Matt. xii. 32. Heb. ii. 5. vi. 5.)

[*The everlasting Father.*] If we follow the common translation, the words are very applicable to Christ. Masters and teachers have a title of fathers commonly given to them. (See 2 Kings ii. 12. vi. 21. xiii. 14. 1 Cor. iv. 15.) So our Lord calls his disciples his *children*, (John xiii. 33. xxi. 5.) And St. Paul applies that text of Isaiah, (viii. 18.) "Behold I, and the children whom God hath given me," to Christ and his followers.]

The Prince of Peace.] This title in an eminent manner belongs to Christ. (Compare ii. 4. xi. 6, &c. lvii. 19. Psal. lxxii. 7. Micah v. 5. Luke ii. 14. Eph. ii. 14. 17. Heb. vii. 2.)

Ver. 7. *Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.*] The Jews write the Hebrew word *lemarbeh* with a *mem clausum*, as they call it, wherein they think some great mystery is implied: this conceit of theirs shews, that there hath been an ancient tradition among them for interpreting this place of the Messias.

Upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with justice and judgment, &c.] The Messias is said to sit upon the throne of David, because all the promises concerning the perpetuity of his family and kingdom did chiefly relate to Christ, and were fulfilled in him; (see Gen. xlix. 10.) whose kingdom was truly and properly to be an everlasting kingdom. (Dan. ii. 44. vii. 14.) For the same reason Christ is called by the name of David, (Ezek. xxxiv. 23. Jer. xxx. 9. Hos. iii. 5.) Justice and righteousness are elsewhere spoken of as the characteristics of Christ's kingdom. (See xi. 4. Psal. xlv. 4. 6. lxxii. 1, 2.)

The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this.] God shall do this, not out of regard to a man's deserts, but to his own honour, and that there may be always a society of people in the world called by his name, and heirs of the promises which he made to their fathers. (Compare xxxvii. 32.) The redemption of the world is always spoken of as an act of God's free grace and mercy. (See Rom. iii. 24. Eph. ii. 8. 2 Tim. i. 9.)

Ver. 8. The remainder of this chapter contains a prophecy against Israel; (see ver. 9.) and was uttered before the carrying away of the ten tribes into captivity.

The Lord hath sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel.] He speaks here of the miseries that were antecedent to their captivity; (see ver. 11, 12.) and saith, God hath brought to pass those threatenings which he had before denounced against them by his prophets. The place is parallel to that of Daniel, (ix. 12.) "He hath confirmed his words which he spake against us." Jacob and Israel are synonymous terms here, and so they are used, viii. 17, 18. x. 20. xvii. 3, 4.

Ver. 9. *And all the people shall know, even Ephraim*, &c.] God's hand shall visibly appear in his judgments. But Abraham à Shultens, in his Critical Observations upon Job, notes, that the Hebrew verb *jadang*, which commonly signifies *to know*, is sometimes used for suffering punishment, and in this sense he understands the word here, as also Job xxi. 19. and Judg. viii. 16. where it is said, that with "briers and thorns Gideon taught the men of Succoth;" or as the margin reads, *made them know what they had deserved.*

Ver. 10. *The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones; the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars.*] The words import the people's slighting God's judgments, as if the damage suffered by them might easily be repaired, and therefore they were not worth minding, or laying to heart; and men, instead of humbling themselves under his mighty hand, took occasion from thence to indulge their pride and luxury: cedars were proper for stately buildings, such as the temple and the king's palace. (See 2 Sam. vii. 2. 1 Kings vii. 15. compare this verse with 1 Kings x. 27.)

Ver. 11. *Therefore the Lord shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and join his enemies together.*] *Against him*, probably means against Ephraim or Israel, mentioned ver. 9. Rezin the king of Syria was a great ally and support of the king of Israel; (see vii. 1.) so his being subdued and slain by Tiglath-pilneser king of Assyria, (2 Kings xvi. 9.) was a great blow to Pekah and his subjects: for when Tiglath-pilneser had subdued the Syrians, he made them join with his army in invading Israel. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 12. *The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth.*] *i. e.* The Syrians from the east, and the Philistines from the west; so the Septuagint understand it. (Compare Joel ii. 20.) The Philistines were ancient enemies to Israel, and took all occasions to give them disturbance.

Ver. 14. *Therefore the Lord shall cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day.*] *i. e.* Both great and small. (See the following verse, and xix. 16.)

Ver. 16. *The leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.*] When the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch. The margin reads, *They that call this people blessed:* the expression is the same with that of iii. 12. (See the note there.)

Ver. 17. *Therefore the Lord will have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows.*] When the people were in his favour, God is said to "rejoice over them to do them good," (Deut. xxviii. 63.) The quite contrary is said here, that whereas in former times God did, like an indulgent father, take pleasure in seeing their young men grow up and flourish; now he would have no regard for the strength of their nation, nor have compassion upon the weak and helpless part of it, but deliver them up alike into the power of their enemies.

For every one is a hypocrite.] The Hebrew word. *haneph* signifies *a lewd*, or *profane person;* and so it is used, Job viii. 13. xiii. 16. xv. 34. and the noun *hanephah* is translated *profaneness*, by our interpreters, Jer. xxiii. 15.

Ver. 18. *For wickedness burneth as a fire.*] Wickedness causeth utter ruin and destruction; it makes men fit fuel for God's vengeance to take hold of. (Compare ver. 19. and Job xxxi. 12.)

It shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest.] It shall make a general destruction of the tall cedars as well as of the lower shrubs. (Compare x. 17, 18. 34.) The Chaldee paraphrast renders the former part of the sentence thus, *It shall consume the sinners and the wicked:* in which sense, *briers* and *thorns* are often used in Scripture, upon the account of their unfruitfulness, and because as thorns presently catch the fire, so destruction lays hold on sinners. Compare xxvii. 4. xxxiii. 12. Micah vii. 4. Psal. lviii. 9. where the words

may best be rendered, *He shall take them away* (the thorns mentioned just before) *both green and dry.* (See the like expression, Ezek. xx. 47.)

Ver. 19. *Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts is the land darkened.*] Compare v. 30. viii. 22.

Ver. 20. *And he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied.*] They shall plunder and devour one another without ever being satisfied or giving over.

They shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm.] *i. e.* Those of his own country, and even those of his own blood. (Compare xlix. 26.) This was literally fulfilled, when they were reduced to that extremity, as to *eat the flesh of their own children:* (see 2 Kings vi. 28. Jer. xix. 8.) a judgment denounced for their sins by Moses, (Deut. xxviii. 53.)

Ver. 21. *Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: and they together shall be against Judah.*] When those of the ten tribes had preyed upon one another as long as they could, they should turn their rage upon Judah, whom they looked upon as their common enemy, upon the account of their own separation from God's public worship established there. (See vii. 6.)

CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT

The four first verses of this chapter should have been joined to the foregoing, as has been already observed in the Argument of the ninth chapter. The remaining part of the chapter is a denunciation of God's judgments upon Sennacherib, whom God had made the instrument of his vengeance upon others: but when that end of Providence was served, he himself should suffer a more remarkable punishment than that which he had executed upon his neighbours.

Ver. 1. *WOE unto them that decree unrighteous decrees.*] A continuation of the subject treated of in the foregoing chapter, wherein the prophet reproves the sins of the ten tribes, particularly their injustice and oppression, and denounces the judgments they should suffer for the same.

Ver. 3. *And what will you do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far?*] God is said to visit when he punishes, (Jer. v. 9.) and the time of punishment is called the *day of visitation,* (Jer. x. 15. xi. 23.) The punishment here threatened is said to come from far, *viz.* from Assyria. (See note on v. 26. compared with viii. 4.) The prophets elsewhere mention this as an aggravation of God's judgments upon his people, that he would suffer them to be subdued by foreigners, with whose language they were unacquainted, so that it would be in vain to try to soften them by arguments or entreaties. (See Deut. xxviii. 49. Jer. v. 15.)

And where will you leave your glory?] Where will you deposit your honours and possessions? To whose keeping or protection will you entrust them, that they be not exposed as a prey to your enemies?

Ver. 4. *Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain.*] The Septuagint and Vulgar Latin join these words with the foregoing verse, to this sense, *Whither will this people fly for refuge to preserve themselves, that they may not bow down, or be subdued among the captives, or destroyed among the slain?* This seems the easiest and most natural sense of the words, taking the particle *bilti* for *lebilti;* which word is used in this sense, Jer. xxiii. 14.

If we follow our own translation, the words import that it is in vain for the Israelites to trust in their own strength, or in the assistance of their allies, such as the Syrians were, since it is from God alone that they must expect deliverance from the impendent evils, who for their sins is justly displeased.

Ver. 5. *O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger.*] Here begins a new prophecy which reaches to the end of the chapter, and instructs us in this great and important truth, That God often prospers wicked and tyrannical governments to be his scourge, and the instruments of his vengeance upon others; and when they have done the work which God allotted them, he then punishes them for those very oppressions which they have exercised towards their neighbours, and to which they were carried on purely by their own ambition and covetousness, although Providence made them serviceable to better ends and purposes. The prophet directs this discourse to Sennacherib, king of Assyria. (See ver. 9, 10.)

And the staff in their hand is mine indignation.] Or, *The staff of mine indignation is in their hand.* So the wicked are called *a sword of God,* Psal. xvii. 13. and his *weapons of war,* Jer. li. 20.

Ver. 6. *I will send him against a hypocritical nation.*] Or, *a profane nation,* as the word *haneph* signifies. (See note on ix. 17.) The like commission God gives to Cyrus, (xli. 26. xlv. 1.) and to Nebuchadnezzar, (Jer. xxv. 9.)

Ver. 7. *Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few.*] The Assyrian's design was purely to extend his conquests, and thereby gratify his own ambition: although God, that can bring good out of evil, made him instrumental in carrying on the designs of his providence. For which reason God justly punishes those very princes for the cruelties they commit, notwithstanding that they are the instruments of his vengeance in committing them; because that is beside their own intention, the wickedness of the facts being altogether their own, and the good ends served by them to be wholly ascribed unto God. Thus God punished Jehu for his cruelty towards the house of Ahab, although he himself gave him a commission (see 2 Kings ix. 7.) to put those very judgments denounced against Ahab's family in execution. (See Hosea i. 4. and the note on Isa. xlvii. 7.)

Ver. 8. *For he saith, Are not my princes altogether kings?*] He makes his boast that kings are his tributaries, and obey his commands. Upon this account Nebuchadnezzar is styled a *king of kings,* (Dan. ii. 37. Ezek. xxvii. 7.) The same title is given to Artaxerxes, (Ezra vii. 12.) And this very king of Assyria, Sennacherib, is called a *great king* in this prophecy, (xxxvi. 4.)

Ver. 9. *Is not Calno as Carchemish? is not Hamath as Arpad? is not Samaria as Damascus?*] Have I not been equally successful against all these cities? some of which lay at a greater distance from Judea, upon the river Euphrates, as Calno, called Calneh, Amos vi. 2. and Char-

chemish, 2 Chron. xxxv. 20. Others, as Hamath, were upon the confines of the Jewish territories, towards Syria, and therefore called the *entrance of Hamath*, Amos vi. 14. (Compare this place with 2 Kings xviii. 33—35. which fully explains the sense of this and the following verses.)

Ver. 10. *As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols.*] My power hath subdued them, they have not been able to escape out of my hand. (Compare ver. 14. and Psal. xxi. 8.)

Ver. 11. *Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and to her idols?*] The prophet speaks in the person of the king of Assyria, who looked upon the God of the Jews, to be no better than the other gods of the countries round about: (see 2 Kings xviii. 35.) which deities, as he thought, sufficiently discovered their weakness in not being able to deliver their own countries and votaries.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore it shall come to pass, that, when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion, and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria.*] Thus Jeremy foretells the destruction of the king of Babylon, as soon as ever the seventy years of the Jewish captivity are ended, (Jer. xxv. 12—14.) And here, in like manner, God saith, he will *punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria; i. e.* those deeds and achievements which were the effects of his pride and ambition. The word *fruit* is equivalent to *work*. (See Prov. xxxi. 16. 31.) So the *fruits of the Spirit* are the effects of the Spirit, (Gal. v. 22.)

Ver. 13. *For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people.*] He ascribeth all his success to his own prowess and wisdom, according to the usual pride of such haughty tyrants. (Compare Ezek. xxviii. 3—6.) This success of his appeared in the new modelling the governments of his new conquests, and destroying many of those cities which were formerly frontier towns, and transplanting the people from one country to another, a common practice of conquerors. (See 2 Kings xvii. 6. 24.)

Ver. 14. *And my hand hath found, as a nest, the riches of the people,* &c.] I have made myself master of their substance and treasures, as easily as one takes away a nest of young birds, neither the dam nor the young ones daring to complain.

Or peeped.] It means the same as chirped. (See viii. 19.)

Ver. 15. *Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith?* &c.] Men are only second causes and instruments in the hands of Providence: (see note on ver. 5.) therefore the glory ought to be ascribed to God alone.

Ver. 16. *Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness.*] Shall consume his principal men for strength and courage. (Compare Psal. lxxviii. 31.)

And under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.] A sudden destruction is often compared to fire. (See ix. 5.) The expression here denotes that sudden stroke which destroyed the whole Assyrian army, 2 Kings xix. 35. (Compare Isa. xxx. 33.)

Ver. 17. *And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame.*] God is called the light of Israel, perhaps in allusion to the pillar of fire which conducted them in the wilderness, and he will now be a consuming fire to devour their adversaries.

Ibid. and Ver. 18. *And it shall burn and devour his thorns and briers in one day, and shall consume the glory of his forest,* &c.] It shall destroy both small and great. (See note on ix. 18.)

Ver. 18. *And they shall be as when a standard-bearer fainteth.*] Losing the colours is both a dishonour and discouragement, and causeth great confusion in an army.

Ver. 19. *And the rest of the trees of this forest shall be few,* &c.] Few men of strength or note in his army shall escape that general destruction: so that a child may be able to keep the muster-roll.

Ver. 20. *And it shall come to pass in that day.*] The expression, *in that day*, is not always confined to the time last spoken of, but often signifies some time that shall be very remarkable for God's mercy towards his people. (See note on iv. 2.) And here it seems to point at that signal time, when there shall be a general conversion of the Jews to God. It is usual with the prophets, when they foretell some extraordinary event in or near their own times, to carry their views on farther, and point at some greater deliverance which God shall vouchsafe to his people in the latter ages of the world. (See the notes upon xxiv. 14. xxx. 19.)

The remnant of Israel.] The same remnant mentioned xxxvii. 32. Concerning the general notion of a remnant, see note on i. 9. vii. 3.

And such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more stay upon him that smote them.] As Ahaz did on the king of Assyria: (see 2 Kings xvi. 7. compared with 2 Chron. xxviii. 20.) who afterward proved the worst enemy the Jews had. They are often blamed for trusting in *an arm of flesh*, and making alliances with idolatrous nations. (See note on ii. 7.)

Ver. 21. *The remnant shall return.*] The explication of the name Shear-jashub, given as a token of the perpetuity of God's promises to one of Isaiah's sons. (See vii. 3. and the notes there.)

Ver. 22. *For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant shall return.*] The remnant so miraculously preserved in Jerusalem from Sennacherib's invasion, (see xxxvii. 31, 32.) were a type or figure of that small number of converts under the gospel, styled σωζόμενοι, Acts ii. 47. (an equivalent expression to that which is used ver. 20. and xxxvii. 31.) *viz.* such as should escape the vengeance which fell upon the main body of the Jewish nation, for their sin in rejecting Christ. (See Rom. ix. 27.) And there will be another remnant of them that shall be saved in the latter times of the world; as we shall have occasion often to take notice of in explaining the succeeding parts of this prophecy. (See the notes upon xxvii. 12, 13. xlv. 20. lxvi. 19.) Concerning the gradual fulfilling of several prophecies, see the Preface, and the notes on ii. 2. vi. 11.

Mr. White, according to his usual manner, inveighs very freely against those who refer the words to some future conversion of the Jews; but I leave it to him to explain how the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who, according to his own interpretation, *were cooped up by their enemies within that city,* can be said *to return home* upon raising the siege.

The consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.] God's judgments are said to *overflow*, when they spread universally; the metaphor being taken from an inundation that sweeps all before it. (Compare viii. 8. xxviii. 15. Dan. ix. 26. xi. 10. 22. 26.) The word *righteousness* signifies here the severity of justice. (See note on v. 16.)

Ver. 23. *For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.*] *Determined* is the same with decreed; or pronounced by the sentence of God, the supreme judge: the word likewise implies that this destruction shall be but for a limited time, not to endure for ever. (Compare xxviii. 22. Dan. ix. 27. xi. 36.) This consumption relates immediately to that desolation which Sennacherib should make over the whole land of Judea: (see 2 Kings xviii. 13.) none but Jerusalem escaping that judgment; but it hath a farther aspect upon that universal desolation which should overspread that country and people after their rejecting the Messias.

Ver. 24. *O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian.*] The promises of deliverance from Sennacherib's invasion are made only to the inhabitants of Zion and Jerusalem: (see xxxvii. 32, 33.) a type of the elect among the Jews, in whom God will fulfil the promises made to their fathers. (See Rom. xi. 7. 28.)

He shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt.] He shall come against Jerusalem with all his force, to make an entire conquest over the Jews, as the Egyptians endeavoured to do, Exod. xiv. 9. The use of the word *staff* is explained before, (ix. 4.)

Ver. 25. *For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger, in their destruction.*] It shall appear by their destruction that mine anger is turned away from thee.

Ver. 26. *And the Lord of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him.*] *And shall lift up his rod*, as it follows, in opposition to the *rod of the Assyrian*, mentioned ver. 24.

According to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb.] See ix. 4.

And as his rod was upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.] God shall give as evident tokens of his power interposing for the deliverance of his people, as Moses did when he lifted up his rod for a signal of the Egyptians' overthrow, (Exod. xiv. 26.)

Ver. 27. *His burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck.*] Compare ix. 4. xiv. 25.

And the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.] For the sake of God's chosen people, (especially the remnant mentioned ver. 20, 21.) called *his anointed*, Psal. cv. 15. and likewise for the preservation of the kingdom and priesthood, both which offices were conferred by the ceremony of anointing. But without question the Messias, the *Anointed* in an eminent sense, (as the word signifies) and described as such, Psal. xlv. 7. is principally intended here, who was to rise from the stock of Judah, and whose coming is directly foretold in the following chapter. God preserved the kingdom of Judah from utter destruction, because the Messias was to come from that tribe. (See note on vii. 13.)

Ver. 28—31. *He is come o Aiath, he is passed to Migron; &c.*] In these verses the prophet describes the march of Sennacherib's army, and the consternation which is raised in all the towns and countries through which it passed in its way towards Jerusalem.

Ver. 32. *As yet he shall remain at Nob that day, &c.*] Or, to-day: the prophet describes the army as coming within sight of Jerusalem, so that after one day's march they might sit down before it. Thus the king of Assyria did literally *shake his hand against it*, as it follows, and stood in a threatening posture, as just ready to assault it.

Ver. 33. *The Lord of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror; and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down.*] The prophet here, as before, (ver. 18.) describes the destruction of the Assyrian army by the metaphor of cutting down a forest. Princes and great ones are commonly represented by the tallest trees, as the mean people are by the lower shrubs, or the *thickets*, (ver. 34.) Compare xiv. 8. xxxvii. 24. Ezek. xxxi. where the same metaphor is pursued throughout the whole chapter, Dan. iv. 10. Jer. xxii. 6.

Ver. 34. *And Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one.*] The flower of the Assyrian army shall fall by the stroke of a mighty angel, (2 Kings xix. 35.) Might is often ascribed to angels, (Psal. ciii. 20. 2 Pet. ii. 11. Rev. xviii. 21.) Lebanon was famous for its tall cedars, to which the captains and principal commanders of the Assyrian army are here compared. (See xxxvii. 24.)

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains an illustrious prophecy of the coming of Christ, and of the advancement which his kingdom should make in the world: but as this advancement is made by several steps and degrees; so the latter part of the chapter, from the tenth verse, relates to the latter times, when the fulness of the Jews and gentiles should come into the church. This prophecy cannot with any probability be understood of Hezekiah, as some would explain it; because Hezekiah was born before Ahaz began his reign, within which time it is certain this prophecy was uttered; and he was actually king long before Sennacherib's invasion, with respect to which juncture of time they are willing to explain this prophecy: beside that, the characters of the person here described can belong to none but Christ.

Ver. 1. *AND there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his root.*] The prophet persists in the metaphor which he had used in the two last verses of the foregoing chapter: he there represented the Assyrian king and the principal officers of his army, by the resemblance of the tallest trees in the forest; and here he describes the Messias as a small twig or sucker coming out of the family of David, as out of a stock or stem that hath been sorely lopped and impaired, and hath but just life enough left to propagate its kind. (See the like expression, liii. 2.)

[*A rod out of the stem of Jesse.*] The prophet expresses the family of David by *the stem of Jesse*, who was a private man, to imply that the royal-house should then be reduced to a private condition. The Chaldee paraphrase expounds

this text of the Messias: *There shall come a king out from the sons of Jesse, and Christ shall arise from his sons' sons.*] It is usual for the prophets to take occasion from some great temporal deliverance, to foretell the blessings of the gospel.

Ver. 2. *And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.*] The Messias, being the great Prophet foretold b Moses, (Deut. xviii. 15.) is described as more plentifully endued with the gifts of God's Spirit, than any other prophet ever was. (See Psal. xlv. 7. Isa. xlii. 1. lxi. 1. John iii. 34. Acts x. 38.) The gift of sanctification is peculiarly attributed to the Holy Ghost. And since the union of the Logos, or *Word*, with the human nature of Christ, is ascribed by the sacred writers to the operation of the Holy Ghost, all the extraordinary graces consequent to that union, may upon that account be justly attributed to the same principle.

The spirit of wisdom and understanding.] The former may be understood of Divine things, the latter of natural.

The spirit of counsel and of might.] Of *counsel* to form good designs, and of *might*, or courage, to execute them. The word *geburah*, which our translation renders *might*, signifies courage. (Compare xxviii. 6.) This word is often translated Δύναμις by the Septuagint, to the same sense; in which sense it is likewise used by St. Paul, 2 Tim. i. 7. where he saith, *God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power*, or rather of *courage*.

Mr. White is pleased to say, in his argument to this chapter, that this part of the character does not belong to *the meek, humble, and peaceful Jesus*. But surely Christ's bearing witness to the truth of his mission, and laying down his life in the confirmation of what he had preached, were as great instances of constancy and courage, as his sufferings themselves were of meekness and patience. Accordingly he is called *the faithful witness* or martyr by St. John, (Rev. i. 5.) and St. Paul speaks of *the good confession which he witnessed before Pontius Pilate*, as a pattern to his followers, of adhering constantly to the truth, even to death, (1 Tim. vi. 13.)

The spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord.] The *knowledge* of the law or will of God, and a disposition to obey it: *the fear* of God may not improperly be ascribed to Christ, who in all things gave God the glory, and professed that he had received all things from him; (see Matt. xi. 26.) and was himself the most perfect pattern of an entire submission and resignation to the will of God; and therefore is said by St. Paul to have been *in that he feared*, or upon the account of his piety, (Heb. v. 7.)

The Septuagint reckon up here seven gifts of the Spirit, answerable to the *seven Spirits of God*, mentioned Zech. iii. 9. Rev. i. 4.

Ver. 3. *He shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.*] In things pertaining unto godliness: he shall lay hold of all opportunities of advancing God's honour, and promoting true piety: this exactly answers that character our Saviour gives of himself; that he made it *his meat and drink to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work*, (John iv. 34.)

And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.] *He will not judge according to outward appearance, but will judge righteous judgment*, as our Saviour speaks, John vii. 24.

Ver. 4. *But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.*] It is a great sign of the impartial administration of justice, when the poor are equally regarded with the rich, and protected from the oppressions of the great ones. Accordingly this is a constant character of Christ's kingdom (see Psal. lxxii. 2. 12. Isa. xxvi. 6. with the note there): as the blessings of the gospel are peculiarly promised to the poor, (Matt. v. 3. James ii. 5.) that is, to those who have the true spirit of poverty, which consists in a contempt of this world, and an humble submission to the dispensations of Providence.

And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.] A rod is an emblem of power. (See note on ix. 4.) So the power of Christ in his kingdom is often compared to a rod, (Psal. cx. 2.) and to a *rod of iron*, (Psal. ii. 9.) because it will, in the end, break to pieces all its adversaries. (See Dan. ii. 44. Rev. ii. 27.) This rod is said here to proceed out of the *mouth* of Christ, as it signifies the word of God, containing his threatenings and judgments denounced against sinners. This same word is said by St. Paul to be *sharper than any two-edged sword*, (Heb. iv. 12.) because it will utterly consume and destroy those that continue disobedient, in allusion to the words here: this sword is described as proceeding *out of the mouth of Christ*, (Rev. i. 16.) because it is like a sentence of condemnation pronounced upon the rebellious by him as the Judge of the world. (See John xii. 48.)

The latter part of this verse will eminently be fulfilled in the destruction of antichrist, to whom St. Paul applies it, 2 Thess. ii. 8. (Compare Rev. xix. 21.) Who is by way of eminence called *the wicked one, the man of sin*, and ὁ ἀντικείμενος, the *adversary to God's truth and people*, 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. 8.

The *earth* here signifies the ungodly, who are elsewhere called the *world*. (See John vii. 7. xii. 32. xv. 18. xvii. 9. 14.)

Ver. 5. *And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.*] A girdle was a mark of honour; (see xxii. 21.) and was used both for strength and expedition. (See v. 27. Psal. lxv. 6. Luke xii. 35.) The expression implies here, that a strict regard to truth, integrity, and justice, will be the honour and stability of Christ's kingdom. (Compare Ephes. vi. 14.) On the contrary, antichrist is described as coming *with all deceivableness of unrighteousness*, or all the arts of *unrighteous deceit*, (2 Thess. ii. 9.) And, without question, nothing hath tended more to the corrupting the truth of the gospel, or weakening the power of it, than the giving encouragement to *pious frauds and forgeries*.

Ver. 6—8. *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb*, &c.] These metaphorical expressions note, that every thing shall contribute towards a firm and lasting peace, both inward and outward occasions of disturbances being removed: the great and powerful, that use to oppress their inferiors, being disposed to come to terms of accommodation. This may be meant by the *wolf and the lamb's dwelling together*, and the like expressions that follow. (Compare Ecclus. xiii. 17—19.) But they farther imply that God will protect his people against all persecution and outward violence, which is elsewhere expressed by his *making a covenant*

for them with the beasts of the field, (Hos. ii. 18. compared with Lev. xxvi. 6. John v. 23. Ezek. xxxiv. 25. see likewise the note upon xxxv. 9.)

Ver. 9. *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.*] See note on ii. 2.

For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord.] These words are a proof that the expressions used in the foregoing verses are metaphorical, and denote that the great change in the outward face of things, under the flourishing state of Christ's kingdom, shall be chiefly owing to the increase of their knowledge in the duties of religion, which, when it is made the governing principle of men's lives, does tame the roughest tempers, and subdue the most boisterous passions; from whence it follows, that such a state of outward peace and tranquillity is not to be expected, but upon greater advancements of holiness than are at present to be seen among the generality of Christians. Some remarkable instances of this kind appeared in that regeneration or renovation of mind and manners of several converts in the primitive church, upon their baptism: for the truth of which facts St. Cyprian and Lactantius appeal to their own and other men's experience who lived in the same times; the former in his Epistle ad Donatum, the latter in his Divine Institutions, lib. iii. cap. 25. the same thing having been before attested by St. Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 11.

As the waters cover the sea.] *i. e.* The channel of the sea: the means of grace and Divine knowledge are often compared to large streams or rivers of water. (See xii. 3. xliv. 4. lv. 1. John vii. 38, 39.)

Ver. 10. *And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse.*] The Hebrew word *shoresh* signifies both a *root* and a *branch* growing out of a root: compare the first verse of this chapter with liii. 3. where it is said of Christ, that *he shall grow up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground:* where the sense directs us to explain it rather of a branch, called a *tender plant* just before, since a root does not properly grow *out of,* but *in* the ground: in the same sense Christ is called the *root and offspring of David,* (Rev. xxii. 16.) which words are an allusion to this very place: so the Latin word *stirps* signifies both the stock and the branches springing out of it.

Which shall stand for an ensign of the people.] See the same metaphor, xlix. 22. lxii. 10. The design of setting up a standard is to assemble people together. Thus the first preachers of the gospel, as so many heralds, sent abroad into the several parts of the world, gathered a numerous assembly of the gentiles into the church: hither the gentiles are said *to seek,* or repair, in allusion to the custom among the Jews of repairing to their temple at the solemn festivals. (Compare Deut. xii. 5. and see note on lx. 7.)

And his rest shall be glorious.] The ark is styled *God's resting place,* (Psal. cxxxii. 8. 13. 1 Chron. xxviii. 2.) By the same analogy the church is here called *Christ's rest,* which is said to be *glorious* and flourishing, in allusion to the Schechinah, or cloud of glory, the symbol of God's presence, which covered the tabernacle, (Exod. xl. 34.) and afterward filled the temple, (1 Kings viii. 10.) and then settled itself over the cherubims: (see the note on xxxvii. 16.) The words import, that in the times here spoken of, the church shall be in such a glorious settled state, as shall be visible in the eyes of the world; not in a mean persecuted condition, or forced to remove from place to place to avoid the fury of its persecutors, as the church is described *flying into the wilderness* in the Revelation.

Ver. 11. *The Lord shall set his hand the second time to recover the remnant of his people.*] This chapter contains a general prophecy of the advancement Christ's kingdom should make in the world. But, as this advancement is made by different steps and degrees, so the several parts of this prophecy may be supposed to point at different ages or periods of time. (See note on ii. 2.) And I take this part of the chapter from the tenth verse onward, to foretell those glorious times of the church which shall be ushered in by the restoration of the Jewish nation; when they shall embrace the gospel, and be restored to their own country from the several dispersions where they are scattered: this remarkable scene of providence is plainly foretold by most of the prophets of the Old Testament, and by St. Paul in the New. (See Deut. xxx. 3—5. xxxii. 43. Isa. xxvii. 12, 13. xlv. 17, &c. xlix. 6, &c. liv. lix. 20. lx.—lxii. lxv. lxvi. Jer. xxiii. 8. xxx. 8—10. xxxi. 36. 40. l. 4. Ezek. xi. 17, &c. xx. 34. &c. xxxiv. 13. xxxvi. 24, &c. xxxvii. 21. Hos. i. 11. iii. 5. Joel iii. 1, &c. Amos ix. 14, 15. Obad. ver. 17, &c. Micah vii. 14, 15. Zech. viii. 7. 13. x. 6, &c. xii. 10. xiv. 8, &c. Rom. xi. 25, 26. 2 Cor. iii. 16.)

The Lord shall set his hand a second time, &c.] The words imply that this shall be as great a deliverance as that out of Egypt. (Compare Psal. lxviii. 23. Micah vii. 15.)

From Assyria and from Egypt.] See note on ver. 16.

And from Pathros.] A country in Egypt. (See Jer. xliv. 1. Ezek. xxix. 14.)

And from Cush.] See note on xviii. 1.

And from Elam.] *i. e.* Persia.

And from Shinar.] *i. e.* Babylon. (See Gen. xi. 2.)

And from Hamath.] See note on x. 9.

And from the islands of the sea.] The Jews call all those places islands that lie upon the sea-coast, especially the countries upon the Mediterranean Sea, the coast whereof they were best acquainted with. Thus the posterity of Japheth is said to have peopled the *islands of the gentiles;* (Gen. x. 5.) that is, the sea-coasts of Asia and Greece. (See Mr. Mede, book i. discourse 49.) So that the expression of the text may very well comprehend even the European nations, and confutes that cavil of Mr. White's, in his argument of this chapter, against understanding this part of the chapter of the restoration of the Jews in the latter times, because there is no mention made of England, Holland, Germany, &c. where their number is greatest. And it is observable, that generally where the prophet Isaiah foretells the calling of the gentiles, he makes particular mention of the islands: (see xli. 1. xlii. 10. 12. xlix. 1. li. 5. lx. 9.) which many interpreters have looked upon as a plain intimation, that the Christian religion should take deepest root in those parts of the world, which were separated from the Jews by the sea, and peopled by the posterity of Japheth, who settled themselves in *the island of the gentiles.* So that the *islands,* in the prophetic style, seem particularly to denote the western parts of the world, or the European nations: the west being often called *the sea* in the Scripture language. In like manner, some explain the *isles afar off,* mentioned lxvi. 19. of the western parts of the world, and suppose them, with the

other countries there named, to denote the four quarters of the earth.

Ver. 12. *And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel.*] See ver. 10. The gentiles shall not only come into the church themselves, but shall likewise with one accord, as by a signal, restore all the Jews to their own country, and assemble them from the several dispersions whither they have been scattered. (Compare xliii. 6. xlix. 22. lx. 4. lxii. 10.)

Ver. 13. *The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off,* &c.] When the ten tribes made a separation from Judah, Ephraim was looked upon as the principal tribe of that separation, and is often put for Israel, as that was a distinct kingdom from Judah. (See note on vii. 2.) Thus the word is taken here, and the verse imports, that the quarrels and dissensions that used to be between those two rival kingdoms shall be quite at an end, and they shall both be governed by one king, the Messias. (See Ezek. xxxvii. 16. 22. Jer. iii. 18. Hos. i. 11.) We may farther observe, that in most of the abovementioned prophecies, where the general restoration of the Jews is foretold, Israel and Judah are joined together, as equally sharers in the blessing.

Ver. 14. *But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon shall obey them.*] These people were all borderers upon Palestine, and took all occasions to shew their spite and ill-will against the Jews. Upon which account, in the prophetical dialect, they are often used, in a general sense, for the enemies of God's truth and people. (Compare xxv. 10. xxxiv. 5, 6. Joel iii. 19. Amos ix. 12.) To the same sense, the names of Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon are used in other places. (See particularly xix. 23. Rev. xi. 8.) The meaning therefore of the place is, that God's people should have a complete victory over their enemies, whether they be the associates of antichrist, or of whatsoever other denomination.

They shall spoil them of the east together.] The Hebrews read, *The children of the east:* by which are meant the Arabians in general, and the several sorts of them, as the Midianites, Amalekites, &c. (Compare Judg. vi. 3. vii. 12. viii. 10.) Arabia is commonly called the *east* country in Scripture: (see Gen. x. 30. xxv. 6. Job i. 3. Jer. xlix. 28.) though Mr. Mede is of opinion, that it was called so in respect of Egypt, and that the Jews learned that form of speech during their sojourning there; Arabia lying rather southward of Palestine. (See his works, p. 467.)

Ver. 15. *And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian Sea,* &c.] The word *tongue,* when applied to the sea, signifies a *bay,* and so it is translated, Josh. xv. 2. 5. So that by the *tongue of the Egyptian Sea,* must be meant the bay of the Mediterranean Sea, where the river Nile empties itself into the Mediterranean. By *the river* here is certainly meant the Nile: (compare xix. 5. xxiii. 3.) famous for its seven mouths. So the verse imports the deliverance of the Jews, in the latter times, from their several captivities, which shall be as miraculous as that which was vouchsafed to them by Moses, when, by lifting up his rod, the Red Sea was divided, and gave them a passage out of Egypt, Exod. xiv. 16. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 16. *And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria.*] Compare xix. 23. where the same expression is used: it here denotes the Jews' deliverance from their oppressors, and their very enemies coming into the church, and being made partakers of the same promises with the Jews. Assyria and Egypt were the two flourishing kingdoms which bordered upon Judea, and by turns were the great oppressors of God's people. (See lii. 4. Hos. ix. 3.) Whereupon, in many of the prophecies which mention the restoration of the Jews, and their return from their several dispersions, Assyria and Egypt are joined together, as the two most remarkable places from whence their captivity should return. (Compare xix. 23—25. xxvii. 13. Zech. x. 10, 11.) And whether we understand by *the river,* (ver. 15.) the river Nile, according to the note there, or the river Euphrates, (called *the river* by way of eminence, xxvii. 12. Jer. ii. 18.) as many interpreters do; the sense comes all to one, and imports the same with the phrase of *drying up the waters of Euphrates,* Rev. xvi. 12. which signifies there the removing all impediments that might hinder the return of God's people. The expressions in both these places may be an allusion to Cyrus's draining the river Euphrates when he took Babylon. (Compare xliv. 27. Jer. l. 38. li. 36.)

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter is a hymn of praise, proper to be used in that triumphant state of the church, described in the foregoing chapter. Of the same use are the hymns recorded xxv. xxvi. and Rev. xxv. 3. Many of the Psalms relate to the same glorious time, particularly Psal. xcii. xcvi. xcvii. cxlix.

Ver. 3. *THEREFORE with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.*] From God's mercy and bounty, who *is the fountain of life,* and of all blessings, both spiritual and temporal, (Psal. xxxvi. 9. Jer. ii. 13.) The Jews did use to repeat this verse, when, with a great deal of joy and ceremony, they drew water out of the river of Shiloah upon the last day of the feast of tabernacles; to which custom our Saviour is supposed to allude, John vii. 37.

CHAP. XIII.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins the third part of this prophecy, which reacheth unto the end of the twenty-seventh chapter. After the description of those glorious times which should come to pass in the latter days, the prophet foretells the destruction of God's enemies, and begins with Babylon, whither God's people were to be carried captive, and therefore was a type or figure of antichrist, the great oppressor of God's church in aftertimes. (See Rev. xvii. 5.) And whoever carefully considers several particulars in this and the next chapter, and compares them with the former part of the twenty-first chapter with chap. xlvii. and the fiftieth and fifty-first chapters of Jeremiah, which treat of the same subject, will easily find that these prophecies have an aspect beyond the taking of Babylon by Cyrus; inasmuch as the prophets describe this judgment as a decisive stroke, that should thoroughly vindicate the cause of oppressed truth and innocence, and put a final

period to idolatry, and to all the miseries and oppressions of God's people; several of which particulars shall be taken notice of as the text offers occasion.

Ver. 1. *THE burden of Babylon.*] A *burden*, in the language of the prophets, is a burdensome prophecy, threatening ruin and destruction. This word came, in aftertimes, to be used by way of derision of God's threatenings among the profane Jews, upon which account he forbade the use of it. (See Jer. xxiii. 33, 34, &c.)

Ver. 2. *Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand.*] The use of setting up a banner is for assembling men of arms together; (compare v. 26.) which was for that reason set upon a high hill, that it might be the more taken notice of: (see xviii. 3. xxx. 17.) shaking or lifting up the hand was a token that served to the same purpose. (Compare xlix. 22.)

That they may go into the gates of the nobles.] To list themselves under the service of the several great officers and commanders.

Ver. 3. *I have commanded my sanctified ones.*] That is, those whom I have appointed and set apart for this purpose. To *sanctify war*, in the Hebrew language, is the same as to prepare war. (See Jer. vi. 4. xxii. 7. Joel iii. 9.) To the same purpose, God calls Nebuchadnezzar *his servant*, (Jer. xxv. 9.) and Cyrus *his anointed*, (Isa. xlv. 1.) because they were ordained and set apart by God to be the executioners of his judgments upon those nations whom he had marked out for destruction.

I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger.] Those whom I have endued with strength for the executing my vengeance upon a sinful people. (Compare v. 27. xlv. 1—3. Joel ii. 11.)

Even them that rejoice in my highness.] That take pleasure in executing those commands of mine, which will illustrate my honour and greatness.

Ver. 4. *The noise of a multitude in the mountains.*] Gathering round the banner which was set up there, (ver. 2.) Or else the prophet represents them as described afar off upon the mountains, and coming down from thence to besiege Babylon. The expressions are noble, and contain a lively description of that terror which the appearance of a hostile army strikes into the beholders.

A tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together.] Cyrus's army was made up out of many different nations and kingdoms. (See Jer. l. 41. li. 27, 28.)

Ver. 5. *They come from a far country, from the end of heaven.*] Many of Cyrus's auxiliaries came from very distant countries. (See the places of Jeremiah just now cited.) The prophet adds this as an aggravation of the judgment. (See note on x. 3.)

Ver. 6. *It shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.*] Whose power and purposes none is able to resist.

Ver. 7. *Therefore all hands shall be faint, and every man's heart shall melt.*] God often strikes a terror into those whom he designs for destruction. (See xxx. 17. Deut. xxviii. 7. 25. Ezek. vii. 17. xxi. 7.)

Ver. 8. *They shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth.*] Any sudden unavoidable calamity is fitly represented by the pains of a woman's travail. (Compare xxvi. 17. Jer. xxx. 6. 1 Thess. v. 3.)

They shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames.] They shall gaze one at another, like men under an amazement, that do not know which way to turn themselves; and their visages shall be black and ghastly. (Compare Joel ii. 6. Nahum ii. 10.)

Ver. 10. *For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light*, &c.] These, and such-like expressions in the Scripture-phrase, denote great calamities, when every thing looks dark and dismal. (Compare v. 30. viii. 22. Jer. xv. 9. Joel ii. 10. Amos viii. 9, 10.) These metaphors do more particularly signify the downfall of states and governments: (compare xxxiv. 4. Ezek. xxxii. 7. Joel ii. 31. Rev. vi. 12—14. viii. 12.) princes and rulers being sometimes figuratively expressed by the sun, moon, and stars, or the host of heaven. (See xiv. 12. xxiv. 21.) Lastly, it may be observed, that all God's particular judgments being earnests and forerunners of the last and general judgment, the same expressions are common to both. (Compare Joel iii. 15. Matt. xxiv. 29. 2 Pet. iii. 10.)

Ver. 11. *I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.*] See xiv. 4—6. 13, 14. and the note upon ii. 11.

Ver. 12. *I will make a man more precious than fine gold.*] This expression denotes the havoc that should be made of such men as were fit to bear arms, which should make them become as scarce as gold, and as valuable: (see the like calamity described iv. 1.) or else the words may import, that the Medes shall spare no man's life, though he would purchase it with gold. (Compare ver. 17.)

Even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.] Ophir was a place noted for the best gold, whither Solomon trafficked for it, (1 Kings ix. 28.) though the place was famous for it long before, as appears by the book of Job, xxviii. 16. Some place Ophir in the East Indies, particularly Relandus, in his dissertation upon this subject. Bochart thinks that there was an Ophir in Arabia Felix, which is the place probably meant in Job, though he supposes the Ophir that Solomon traded with to be in India. (See his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 27.) Huetius places Ophir in the eastern coast of Africa, where there is a place still named Sophala, which retains some affinity with Ophir, called *Sophir* by the Septuagint, 1 Kings ix. 28. (See his treatise de Navigat. Solomonis, cap. 2.)

Ver. 13. *Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall move out of his place.*] These expressions denote great alterations. (See note on v. 25. and compare Hag. ii. 6. Heb. xii. 27.)

Ver. 14. *And it shall be like a chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up.*] The inhabitants of the country about Babylon, shall fly from place to place like a roe, one of the most timorous creatures that is pursued; and, having lost their leaders, shall wander up and down like sheep that have lost their shepherd. (Compare 1 Kings xxii. 17.)

They shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.] All the auxiliary forces which came to assist the Babylonians, shall make what haste they can to get home again, as people do in a general overthrow. (Compare Jer. l. 16. 1 Kings xxii. 26.)

Ver. 15. *Every one that is joined to them, shall fall by the sword.*] All the associates of the Babylonians, though they be foreigners, shall partake of their fate.

Ver. 16. *Their children shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes.*] By way of retaliation for the cruelty of the Ba-

bylonians against the Jews. (See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17. Psal. cxxxvii. 9.)

Their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished.] All manner of liberty shall be given to the rapine and lust of the soldiers. (Compare Zech. xiv. 2.)

Ver. 17. *Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them.*] A nation of no account when Isaiah uttered this prophecy: their country being a province under the king of Assyria; (see 2 Kings xvii. 6.) and not erected into a distinct kingdom till Deioces, their first king, took the administration of the government, about the seventeenth year of king Hezekiah. But afterward they grew to be a very considerable people, and made up the principal part of the army which was brought against Babylon by Cyrus (who himself was a Median by the mother's side); which army is upon that account described as coming from the north, (Jer. l. 9. 41.) for so Media lay with respect to Babylon. (See likewise Isa. xli. 25.) The Medians afterward, by Cyrus's means, came to have the chief share in that empire, which he erected upon the ruins of the Babylonian monarchy, which is therefore called the kingdom of the Medes and Persians in Daniel, (v. 28. vi. 8.) though afterward the Persians had the precedence. (See Esth. i. 3. 9.)

Ver. 18. *They shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children.*] If these two sentences are not equivalent, the former may be explained, of their ripping up women with child; a piece of barbarity sometimes used by conquerors. (See Hos. xiii. 16. Amos i. 13.)

Ver. 19. *And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency.*] The heathen writers give almost an incredible account of the greatness of this city. The most moderate accounts suppose its walls to have been five-and-forty miles in compass. That passage in Jeremy (li. 31.) shews it to be of a vast extent, "One host shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end." But Aristotle outdoes even this account, telling us, that "when one part of the city was taken, it was three days before the other part knew of it." (Politic. lib. iii. cap. 3.) The stateliness of the city was what Nebuchadnezzar gloried in, as the height of his greatness, (Dan. iv. 30.)

Shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.] See the same threatening denounced against Babylon, Jer. l. 40. 51. 64. Babylon never recovered its ancient splendour after it was taken by Cyrus: but upon the removal of the seat of the empire from thence, by the Persians, it, by degrees, decayed, till it was at last reduced to an utter solitude. (See Strabo, lib. xvi. and Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 26.) But this did not come to pass till a considerable time after the taking of the city by Cyrus. From whence we may conclude, that this prophecy looks farther, to another Babylon, mentioned in the Revelation, whose destruction is threatened in the forecited words of Jeremy, (Rev. xviii. 21.) This is a pregnant instance, among many others, that the mystical sense of several prophecies, that is, the sense which is more remotely intended, comes nearer to the letter of the prophecies, than that which some call the literal sense, and think to have been immediately designed by the prophet.

Ver. 20. *Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.*] The Arabians were wandering shepherds that had no certain habitation, but carried their flocks and tents from place to place, for the convenience of pasture: much like the Nomades of Africa. This expression denotes the utmost degree of solitude. It is a great degree of it, for the places where great cities stood to be turned into pasturage. (See xvii. 2. xxvii. 10.) But here it is said, that the ruins of Babylon shall be a place fit only for wild savage creatures to resort to.

Ver. 21. *But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.*] Compare xxxiv. 11. 15. Rev. xviii. 2. It is uncertain what creatures are meant by several Hebrew words in this and the following verse: particularly what the word *searim* signifies, which our English renders *satyrs*. The word originally signifies *goats:* and, it is supposed, that evil spirits of old time appeared in the shape of goats, as the learned Bochart hath proved: (Hierozoic. par. ii. lib. ii. cap. 7.) upon which account the word is sometimes taken for *devils*, and is so translated by our interpreters, Lev. xvii. 7. 2 Chron. xi. 15. But here and xxxiv. 14. it is rendered *satyrs*. The expression is taken from a vulgar opinion, that desolate and forlorn places are inhabited by evil spirits, who have their haunts there. (See xxxiv. 13, 14. Baruch iv. 35. Rev. xviii. 2.) Accordingly our Saviour, in his parable of an unclean spirit, saith, that *he walks through dry* or uninhabited *places*, (Matt. xii. 43.)

[*Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there.*] St. Jerome tells us, that, in his time, the ground upon which Babylon stood, was turned into a park for the hunting of wild beasts. See his commentaries upon the place.]

Ver. 22. *And dragons in their pleasant palaces.*] The Hebrew word *tannin* signifies any large creature of the creeping kind, whether upon sea or land. Here it is taken for a great serpent, such as are usually found in deserts and desolate places. (Compare Psal. xliv. 19. Jer. ix. 11. li. 37.) See more of this word in the note upon xxvii. 1.

[*And dragons (or serpents) in their pleasant palaces.*] Travellers relate, that it is dangerous approaching the ruins of that city, for fear of serpents and scorpions which lurk there. See their words in Dr. Prideaux's Connect. of Script. Hist. ad an. A. C. 293.]

And her time is near at hand, and her days shall not be prolonged.] What will certainly come to pass, the prophets commonly speak of as just at hand. (Compare xlvi. 13. Hab. ii. 3. Deut. xxxii. 35. Matt. xxiv. 29.)

CHAP. XIV.

ARGUMENT.

A continuation of the same subject, containing a prediction of the utter downfall of the Babylonian empire, and extirpation of the royal family there, under which description is figuratively represented the destruction of the powers of antichrist; the consequence of which would be the deliverance and restoration of the Jewish nation in particular, and of the church in general.

Ver. 1. *FOR the Lord will have mercy upon Jacob, and will yet choose Israel.*] This immediately relates to the restoration of the Jewish captivity by Cyrus, as appears by

comparing Zech. i. 17. ii. 12. Israel is sometimes put for Judah. (See 2 Chron. xxiii. 2. xxviii. 19. Ezek. xiii. 16. Mal. i. 1. ii. 11.) Israel being the name which God gave to Jacob as a mark of his favour, (Gen. xxxii. 28.) it is chiefly made use of by the prophets, when they deliver some gracious promises from the mouth of God, especially such a one as concerns the twelve tribes, who were all equally descended from Jacob, as I doubt not but this prophecy in its ultimate sense does. (Compare xxvii. 6. 12. xliii. 1. 1 Kings xviii. 31.)

And the strangers shall be joined unto them, and shall cleave unto the house of Jacob.] It is probable, that many strangers might be made proselytes to the Jews' religion during their captivity, who were willing to go along with them into Judea, there to enjoy the free exercise of their religion: as we find there was a *mixed multitude* of Egyptians, natives, that accompanied the Jews at their exit, (Exod. xii. 38.) It appears, too, that Cyrus himself acknowledged the God of the Jews to be the true God, (see Ezra i. 2.) and Darius gave orders that sacrifice should be offered daily in the temple for the prosperity of himself and his family, (Ezra iv. 10.) But these were but small beginnings of what should come to pass in the times of the gospel, to which this prophecy does certainly relate, as will appear by comparing it with lvi. 3. 6—8. and the notes there.

Ver. 2. *And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place.*] They shall provide them with all necessary accommodations for their journey. (See Ezra i. 4.) This will have a more signal completion in that restoration of the Jewish nation, which shall come to pass in the latter times. (See xlix. 22. lxvi. 20.)

And the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.] Those that left their own country for the sake of the true religion, would be content to live in an inferior condition among the Jews: and as they became strangers during their captivity, so some of these very people shall become their servants, or, as some understand it, shall become converts to the true religion. This may be the sense of the words, with relation to the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity: but, without question, they have a farther meaning in them, and point at those times under the gospel, when those worldly powers, which were great enemies to the truth, shall be converted, and pay a profound submission to the laws of Christianity and the pastors of the church: and having been made *partakers of their spiritual things, shall minister to them in carnal things,* as St. Paul speaks, Rom. xv. 27. (Compare xlix. 23. lxi. 5. and see the notes there.)

Ver. 4. *Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon.*] Compare Hab. ii. 6. The Hebrew word *mashal* signifies not only a proverbial speech, such as was in every body's mouth, but likewise a *parable,* or an acute and excellent saying, drawn up with art, and adorned with rhetorical figures: (see Job xxvii. 1. xxix. 1.) such as are the parables of Jotham and others in the Old Testament, and those of Christ in the New. Of the same kind is this which here follows, made up of *sarcasms* and bitter *ironies:* together with a poetical description of the infernal regions, where all the ghosts of the deceased tyrants are represented as rising out of their places, and coming to meet the king of Babylon, and congratulate his arrival among them: (ver. 9, &c.)

Ver. 5. *The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked.*] This was the Lord's doing, none but he could destroy a power so firmly established. (See the meaning of a *staff* explained in the note upon ix. 4.)

Ver. 7. *The whole earth is at rest, and quiet.*] The people of the earth are at peace, now the great oppressor of the world is gone.

Ver. 8. *Yea, the fir-trees rejoice together at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon.*] Kings and princes are figuratively denoted by these expressions. (See note upon x. 33.) Kings and princes of lesser note were oppressed and ruined by this great tyrant, as well as the common people.

Ver. 9. *Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming.*] See note on ver. 4. The Hebrew word *sheol,* which our translation renders *hell,* or the *grave,* signifies the state of the dead in general, (see Job iii. 14, &c.) and is indifferently applied to the good and bad. Here it is taken in the worst sense, and denotes the infernal mansions of deceased tyrants. So likewise Ezek. xxxiii. 21, &c. a place exactly parallel to this. Sometimes it signifies the regions allotted to the souls of good men, as particularly when Jacob saith, (Gen. xxxvii. 35.) *I will go down to the grave* [*scheolah* in the Hebrew] *to my son mourning.* Where the word cannot be understood of the grave properly so called, because Jacob thought his son was devoured by some wild beast; but must be meant of the place where he supposed Joseph's soul to be lodged. The Greek word Ἅδης, which answers to *sheol,* is rendered *the place of the dead* by our own interpreters, Eccles. xlviii. 5. See this subject largely and learnedly handled by Archbishop Usher, in his Answer to the Jesuit's Challenge, chap. 8. and by Bishop Pearson, upon the article Christ's descent into hell.

Ver. 11. *Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols.*] All thy state and glory, thy mirth and jollity. Thus the destruction of Tyre is threatened, (Ezek. xxvi. 13.) *I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease:* that is, all that joy and mirth which attend prosperity. (See likewise xxii. 2. xxiii. 7. of this prophecy.)

Ver. 12. *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!*] Kings and princes are sometimes represented by the heavenly host. (See note on xiii. 10.) So by Lucifer, we are to understand the king of Babylon, who outshined other kings and princes, as much as the morning star does the other constellations. But the expression does likewise allude to the fall of Satan, the prince of the apostate angels, who is described as *falling from heaven like lightning,* (Luke x. 18.) And the title of *son of the morning,* is common both to the morning star and to an angel; the angels being styled, *morning stars,* Job xxxviii. 7. The fall of the apostate angels, is not directly recorded in the Old Testament; but it is implied in the distinction the holy writers make between good and evil spirits, and is sometimes alluded to by the prophets, when they threaten destruction to proud and insolent tyrants, who, in imitation of the pride of the devil, exalt themselves against God and his truth, and are the instruments of Satan in promoting idolatry and wickedness in the world. (See Ezek. xxviii. 2. 13, 14.)

Ver. 13. *For thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into*

heaven.] Some tyrants have been so extravagant as to affect Divine honours; (see Ezek. xxviii. 2. Acts xii. 23.) and the pretences of Caligula, and other Roman emperors, in this kind are sufficiently known. It is too common among those, whose will is a law, to forget their dependance upon God, and fancy themselves to be all-sufficient, which is in effect to ascribe that honour to themselves which is due to God alone. It was for this crime that Nebuchadnezzar was degraded into a beast, (Dan. iv. 30.)

I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.] Above the angels: (see ver. 12.) stars, in the prophetical dialect, signify rulers; (see note on xiii. 10.) and, according to the subject matter, denote governors either in church or state. (See Dan. viii. 10. Rev. i. 20. vi. 13. viii. 12. ix. 1.)

I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.] I will sit in the temple of God, which was situate upon Mount Moriah, and on the north side of Jerusalem. (See Psal. xlviii. 2. Ezek. xl. 2.) These expressions, as they allude to the rebellion of Satan, who affected to be equal with God; so they contain in them an exact description of antichrist, who is represented, by St. Paul, as *exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, as sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God,* 2 Thess. ii. 4. (See likewise Dan. xi. 36.)

Ver. 15. *Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell.*] To the lowest degree of misery and destruction. (Compare Matt. xi. 23.)

Ver. 16. *They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee.*] As not knowing thee at first sight, by reason of the great alteration of thy condition.

Ver. 17. *That opened not the house of his prisoners.*] The margiaal reading expresses the sense better, *That did not let his prisoners loose homewards:* that is, did not restore them to their own country, as Cyrus did afterward to the Jews, but kept them in perpetual slavery. (See Jer. l. 33.)

Ver. 18. *Every one in his own house.*] In his own sepulchre: so the grave is called the *house of eternity,* or the *long home,* as our translation very well expresses it, Eccles. xii. 5.

Ver. 19. *But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain.*] Thou art not allowed the honour of decent burial. (See the following verse, and Jer. xxxvi. 30.) Thou art reputed no better than a dead *branch,* that is fit for nothing but to rot upon the ground: or like the *raiment* of those that are *slain,* which is so filthy, that nobody cares to touch it. The touching the clothes of any person slain, did contract uncleanness by the law, (Numb. xix. 6.) This verse may fitly be applied to Belshazzar, the last king of the Babylonian race, who being slain in a sudden revolution, his body might probably be neglected for some time, and suffered to lie above ground, and afterward be buried without any solemnity, but thrown into a pit in the very clothes in which he was slain, as common soldiers are buried in the field after an engagement.

Ver. 21. *Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers.*] Belshazzar being slain, and the monarchy translated to the Medes and Persians, (Dan. v. 30, 31.) it is not likely that any related to the family of the former monarchs were suffered to survive.

That they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities.] It was the ambition of the great monarchs of those times to build new cities, and call them by their own names, thereby to perpetuate their memory. Hence the cities took their rise, which were called by the names of Seleucia, Ptolemais, Alexandria, &c. Some render the latter part of the verse, *Nor fill the face of the world with enemies,* such as should continue a succession of war and bloodshed, and disturb the peace and quiet of mankind.

Ver. 22. *I will cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew.*] See the note on ver. 21.

[*And son and nephew.*] Or rather *son and grandson:* the word *neked* is translated *son's son,* or *grandson,* Gen. xxi. 23. so it should be translated here, and Job xviii. 19. as Dr. Prideaux observes, ad an. A. C. 539. This prophecy was fulfilled in the death of Belshazzar, who was grandson to Nebuchadnezzar, and the last of that family. See the note upon Jer. xxvii. 7.]

Ver. 23. *I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water.*] Compare xiii. 21, 22. xxxiv. 11. Babylon stood in a low, marshy ground, and the prophet threatens that it shall be as entirely destroyed, as if it were sunk into the bottom of a great lake or pool. (See Jer. li. 64.) This agrees with what is said xiii. 19. that it shall be *as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,* which were swallowed up in a lake of fire and brimstone. Several learned men are of opinion that the same sort of punishment is threatened to mystical Babylon, Rev. xviii. 21. which the prophet hath here all along in his eye.

And I will sweep it with the besom of destruction.] I will make a clear riddance of all its wealth and substance. (See the like expressions, 2 Kings xxi. 13.)

Ver. 25. *That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot.*] Some interpreters understand this verse of Sennacherib, whose army was destroyed in its march towards Jerusalem upon the mountains of Judea; (see the note upon lxv. 9.) and they think that the prophet mentions this as an earnest of that vengeance which is here denounced against the Babylonian monarchy, which was all one with the Assyrian, and is called by that name, even after the seat of that empire was removed to Babylon. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 29. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.) But to make this part of the verse agree better with what follows, *Then shall the yoke depart from thy neck,* &c. which words imply the final deliverance of God's people; I am apt to think that by the Assyrian, may be meant some remarkable enemies of God's church, (see note on xi. 14. xxxii. 16.) and particularly those which are expressed by Gog and Magog, Ezek. xxxviii. who, as the prophet there tells us, (ver. 17.) were under several names *spoken of by the prophets of Israel:* and it is particularly said of them, that they shall *fall upon the mountains of Israel;* (Ezek. xxxix. 4.) the same expression that is used here. And if we understand the words thus, it properly follows, as a conclusion from the premises, in the next verse.

Ver. 26. *This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth,* &c.] But they who interpret this verse of the Babylonian empire, suppose the prophet speaks of it as if it were a universal monarchy, and comprehended in a manner all the known world: as the Roman empire was,

in aftertimes, styled by the name of *the world.* (See Luke ii. 1.)

Ver. 28. *In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden.*] Here begins a new prophecy against the Philistines, called a *burden,* as that against Babylon, (xiii. 1.) They rejoiced upon the death of Ahaz, which gave occasion to this prophecy against them.

Ver. 29. *Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina.*] All the tribes or clans of the Philistines, who had five lords or heads over them. (See Josh. xiii. 3. 1 Sam. vi. 6.)

Because the rod of him that smote thee is broken.] Because Ahaz is dead, the son of Uzziah thy deadly enemy. (See 2 Chron. xxvi. 6.) Children are commonly represented by rods or shoots, that grow out of the root of a tree. (See xi. 1.)

For out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent.] As much as a cockatrice, or a fiery flying serpent, is more to be dreaded than a common viper; so much more reason have you to fear Hezekiah, than his grandfather Uzziah, because the grandson will make an entire conquest of your country. (See 2 Kings xviii. 8.) A *flying serpent* is what the Latins call *serpens jaculus,* who darts himself against any creature he meets: and they are called *fiery,* because they cause an inflammation where they sting. (See xxx. 6.)

Ver. 30. *And the first-born of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety.*] The same Hezekiah shall be a mild and gracious governor to his own subjects; he shall take care of them as a shepherd does of his flock, and relieve those who were oppressed by the Philistines in his father's time. (See 2 Chron. xxviii. 18.) The *first-born of the poor* denotes those who are remarkably such, as the *first-born of death* (Job xviii. 13.) signifies some unusual disease, and such as is distinguished from the common ways of dying.

Ver. 31. *For there shall come from the north a smoke.*] Judea lay northward of the Philistines, from whence this judgment is threatened. Smoke and fire are emblems of God's wrath, and of great calamities. (See Gen. xv. 17. Psal. xviii. 8.)

And none shall be alone in his appointed time.] The Jews shall all go out as one man against the Philistines, at the time appointed by their leaders.

Ver. 32. *What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it.*] It was usual for neighbouring nations, who were friends and allies, to send ambassadors, and congratulate each other's success. (See 2 Sam. viii. 10. 2 Kings xx. 12.) And when this good success against the Philistines shall be known abroad, it will be a proper answer to give to such ambassadors, that God is the founder of the Jewish kingdom, and Zion, the place of his residence, is under his peculiar protection, where all humble and devout persons shall find a safe retreat: and this promise will be more fully verified in the Christian church. (See the notes upon xi. 4. xxvi. 6.)

CHAP. XV.

ARGUMENT.

It is not certain when this prophecy, contained in this and the following chapter, was fulfilled; only thus far, that it was brought to pass three years after the publishing of it. (See xvi. 14.) Archbishop Usher, in his Annals of the Old Testament, ad A. M. 3280. supposes it fulfilled by Shalmaneser, two years before the captivity of the ten tribes; but the fourth and fifth verses of the sixteenth chapter, speak of the people of Judea as lately delivered from some very grievous calamity, wherein the Moabites afforded them no assistance; which makes it probable, that this judgment fell upon them some time after Sennacherib's invasion. Without question, this prophecy relates to a different time from that of Jeremiah, chap. xlviii.

Ver. 1. *BECAUSE in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence* [*or cut off,* as the margin reads]; *because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste,* &c.] Ar and Kir are originally appellatives, and signify a city or a fortified place: there are two cities called by the name of Kir in Scripture; this here mentioned belonging to Moab, the other a city in Media, spoken of 2 Kings xvi. 9. and Amos i. 5.

Ver. 2. *He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep.*] *He,* that is, the people of Moab, are gone up to Bajith; which word may be taken for an appellative, and signify the house or temple of an idol, which the Moabites worshipped: or it may signify the place where that temple stood, called Beth-baal-meon, Josh. xiii. 17.

On all heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off.] These were tokens of great mourning, and frequently used in the funeral obsequies of the gentiles, and upon that account forbidden by the Jewish law: (see Lev. xix. 27, 28. xxi. 5. Deut. xiv. 1.) but seem to have been lawfully practised upon other sorrowful occasions. (See Ezra ix. 3. Job i. 20. Isa. xxii. 12. Jer. vii. 29. Micah i. 16.)

Ver. 3. *On the tops of their houses every one shall howl.*] It was the custom of those countries to build their houses with flat roofs; (see Deut. xxii. 8.) thither they retired to pay their idolatrous worship, and for that purpose dedicated altars on the tops of their houses to the host of heaven. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 12. Jer. xix. 13. Zeph. i. 5.) Or they might go up to their house-tops to discover the motions of the enemy, or to look out for assistance. (Compare xxii. 1.)

Ver. 4. *Their voice shall be heard even unto Jahaz.*] A frontier-town of Moab. (See Numb. xxi. 23.)

The armed soldiers of Moab shall cry out.] Even the soldiers shall lose their courage, and cry out like women.

Ver. 5. *My heart shall cry out for Moab.*] This seems to be spoken in the person of the Moabites, (compare xvi. 7. xxi. 3. Jer. xlviii. 31. 36.) or in order to excite them to bewail their own misfortunes, according to that rule of the critic, *si vis me flere, dolendum est Primum ipsi tibi.* (Horat. in Art. Poet.) If we understand the prophet as speaking in his own person, it implies that the calamities of Moab are so great, as to extort pity even from an enemy. It may be farther observed, that God's judgments, as they were represented to the prophets, did sometimes raise such ideas of terror in them, as to affect them in an extraordinary manner. (See Jer. xxiii. 9. Dan. vii. 28. Habak. iii. 16.)

His fugitives shall flee unto Zoar, and an heifer of three years old.] The sense would run clearer, if, instead of

adding the words *shall flee*, as our translation does, the text were supplied from the former part of the verse thus, *His fugitives* shall cry out *unto Zoar*, as *an heifer*, &c. (Compare Jer. xlviii. 34.) An heifer is observed to be more noisy than a bullock. The particle [*as*] is frequently understood. (See the note upon xxi. 8.)

Ver. 6. *For the waters of Nimrim shall be desolate: for the hay is withered away*, &c.] Nimrim was noted for good pasture, and meadows well watered; (see Numb. xxxii. 3. 36.) which shall now be quite trod down and destroyed, as if it had been burnt up in a dry season.

Ver. 7. *That which they have laid up, shall they carry away to the brook of the willows.*] Or, *to the valley of the Arabians*, as our margin reads it, whither the Assyrians, their enemies, carried all the booty they took from the Moabites, it being the direct way from Moab to Assyria, as St. Jerome upon the place informs us.

Ver. 8. *The howling thereof unto Beer-Elim.*] Grotius guessed this place to be the same which is called *Beer*, Numb. xxi. 16. and that it had the title of *Elim* added to it, from the prince's digging a well there, (ver. 18.)

Ver. 9. *For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood.*] *Dimon* is the same with *Dibon*, ver. 2. It hath its etymology from the Hebrew *dam*, which signifies *blood*, and to which the prophet here alludes.

For I will bring more upon Dimon, lions upon him that escapeth, &c.] I will bring more and more calamities; and they that flee to escape the present evils shall fall into worse disasters, as if a man that fled from his enemy should meet with a lion to devour him. (Compare Jer. xlviii. 44. Amos v. 19.)

CHAP. XVI.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter is a continuation of God's judgments against Moab.

Ver. 1. *SEND ye the lamb to the ruler of the land from Sela to the wilderness.*] The Moabites were subdued by David, and became his tributaries; (2 Sam. viii. 5.) and part of the tribute which they paid was a hundred thousand lambs, (2 Kings iii. 5.) which it is likely had been discontinued for some time: this the prophet exhorts them to renew, as a just acknowledgment to the king of Judah, the heir of David's family: the latter part of the words might be better translated, *from Sela in the wilderness*, (see 2 Kings xiv. 7.) The wilderness of Moab is mentioned again at the eighth verse of this chapter.

Ver. 2. *For it shall be, that as a wandering bird cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon.*] Some render it thus: *Or else it shall be*, &c. If ye do not comply with the advice I have given you, (ver. 1.) ye shall be turned out of your habitations, and your daughters shall wander about in a helpless condition, as young birds drove out of their nest, and unable to shift for themselves.

Ver. 3. *Take counsel, execute judgment.*] The prophet speaks by way of advice, and exhorts the Moabites to shew that kindness to their brethren the Jews in the time of their distress, as in reason and justice they ought to do; but withal doth covertly upbraid them with the neglect of it: Moab and Edom, though they were a people nearly related to the Jews, yet laid hold of all opportunities to aggravate their miseries, and rejoiced at their calamities, for which they are severely threatened with judgments by the prophets. (See Jer. xlviii. 27. Obad. ver. 10, &c. Amos i. 11. Zeph. ii. 8.)

Make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; bewray not him that wandereth.] The prophet compares the calamities of the Jews, which they had lately endured, probably under Sennacherib's invasion, to the scorching heat of the sun, and puts the Moabites in mind, that they ought to have been a refuge to them during this distress. (See the like expressions, iv. 6. xxv. 4.)

Ver. 4. *For the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land.*] This shews the foregoing expressions to be ironical, as if the prophet had said, To have shewed such kindness to us in the time of our distress, would have been thankfully accepted, as a seasonable instance of humanity and brotherly love; but now, thanks be to God, we have no farther need of your assistance, for that storm is quickly blown over, and it comes to your turn to feel God's afflicting hand.

Ver. 5. *And in mercy shall the throne be established; and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David*, &c.] Now Hezekiah's throne and kingdom are established, who shall govern his people with an equal mixture of justice and mercy; and therein prefigure the Messias, in whom all the promises made to the house of David shall be finally accomplished. The *tabernacle of David* may allude to his having been a shepherd, and dwelling in tents, before he was advanced to a kingdom; but both here and Amos ix. 11. (the only places where the phrase is used) it mystically denotes the church, which is elsewhere called *God's tabernacle*, as being the place of his especial presence, as the tabernacle of old was in the wilderness. (Compare Lev. xxvi. 11. with Rev. xxi. 3.)

Ver. 6. *But his lies shall not be so.*] Or rather, *His strength is not so*: "Indignatio ejus plus quam fortitudo ejus," saith the Vulgar Latin, joining the words to the former part of the verse, *His wrath is greater than his strength*; or his power does not answer his vain boasts; which translation agrees very well with the Hebrew, and makes the sense run plain and easy.

Ver. 7. *Therefore shall Moab howl for Moab.*] Or, *to Moab:* they shall lament over one another, in this general calamity.

For the foundations of Kir-hareseth shall ye mourn.] Kir-hareseth was one of the strongest cities of Moab; (see 2 Kings iii. 25.) whose foundations or mighty men, as some understand it, were ruined and destroyed. The same place is called Kir-haresh, at the eleventh verse.

Ver. 8. *For the fields of Heshbon languish, and the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof; they are come even to Jazer, they wandered through the wilderness*, &c.] The prophet describes the destruction of a fruitful country of Moab: (see Josh. xiii. 17—19.) that was noted for plenty of vineyards: and pursuing the metaphor, he saith, That the *lords of the nations*, that is, the Assyrians, have *broken down the principal plants; i. e.* have ruined the principal inhabitants, and have carried them away, or forced them to leave their

own country; and *pass over the sea, i. e.* the river of Jazer, (a stream of the river Arnon, which is the border of Moab, Numb. xxi. 13.) and made them *wander through the wilderness of Moab;* concerning which, see Deut. ii. 8. This sense of the verse agrees best with Jer. xlviii. 32. a place which alludes to this, and borrows some expressions from it. At the latter end of the verse, instead of *her branches are stretched out,* the margin reads, *her branches are plucked up,* which is a better translation.

Ver. 9. *Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer, the vine of Sibmah.*] Or, *With weeping I will bewail Jazer* [and] *the vine of Sibmah. I will bewail Jazer,* that is, those that are carried away to Jazer, or forced to fly thither.

Ver. 10. *And gladness shall be taken away out of the plentiful field,* &c.] See note on ix. 3.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore my bowels shall sound like a harp for Moab.*] See note on xv. 5.

Ver. 12. *And it shall come to pass, that when it is seen that Moab is weary of the high place, that he shall come to his sanctuary to pray,* &c.] We read Numb. xxiii. 13. 27. that Balak king of Moab went from one place to another to offer sacrifice with Balaam, thinking his devotions might be more prevalent at one place than another. The same thing is spoken of here, that when the Moabites find their prayers upon the high places ineffectual, (see xv. 2.) they will then try what success they may have when offered in the sanctuary or temple of their god Chemosh, who was the tutelar idol of their nation. The word *sanctuary* is applied to idolatrous temples, Amos vii. 9. 13.

Ver. 13. *This is the word the Lord hath spoken concerning Moab since that time.*] Or rather, *A good while ago,* for so the Hebrew *meaz* signifies. (See note on xliv. 8.) This judgment, saith the prophet, was denounced against Moab in former times, particularly by Amos, (ii. 1, &c.) and is now confirmed by this vision, and the particular time specified when it should be accomplished in the next verse.

Ver. 14. *Within three years, as the years of a hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned.*] Within that certain and determinate time precisely fixed; see the like expression xxi. 16. and the note upon that place: and compare Job vii. 1. Some servants were bond-slaves during their lives; but hired servants were discharged precisely at the time agreed between them and their master, and they were usually hired for three years. (See Deut. xv. 18.)

CHAP. XVII.

ARGUMENT.

In this chapter to the twelfth verse, the prophet renews his threatenings against Syria and Israel, whose destruction he had foretold in the seventh and eighth chapters. The three last verses are a distinct prophecy, which seems to relate to the formidable invasion of the Assyrians upon Judea, and their sudden overthrow.

Ver. 1. *DAMASCUS is taken away from being a city.*] See notes on vii. 16. viii. 4. This city was rebuilt afterward, and prophesied against by Jeremiah, xlix. 23. and Zechariah, ix. 1.

Ver. 2. *The cities of Aroer are forsaken.*] Grotius supposes this Aroer to have been a tract of ground in Syria, not that Aroer mentioned Deut. ii. 26. which was in the confines of Moab and Ammon, and part of the possession of the Reubenites and Gadites. Others suppose this very country to have been taken away from those tribes by the Syrians, and annexed to their own dominions.

They shall be for flocks to lie down in, and none shall make them afraid.] Where they may lie securely, and nobody disturb them. It is a proverbial expression for utter destruction to say, *That grass grows where such a town stood.* (See note on vii. 25.)

Ver. 3. *The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus.*] As the two kingdoms of Syria and Israel were confederates against Judah, so they were threatened with one common destruction. (See vii. 1. 16. viii. 4.) Of the use of the word Ephraim, see note on vii. 2.

They shall be as the glory of the children of Israel.] Who were in a declining condition for several years before. (See 2 Kings xv. 29.)

Ver. 4. *The glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean.*] Jacob is the same with Israel in the foregoing verse, and both denote the ten tribes, as ix. 8. God's judgments are sometimes expressed by *leanness,* because, like a consumption, they waste the strength. (See x. 16. xxiv. 16. Psal. cvi. 16.)

Ver. 5. *And it shall be as when the harvest-man gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm.*] The word *harvest* is sometimes metaphorically used to signify an entire destruction, because the harvest makes a clear riddance, and leaves the fields empty and bare. (See Jer. li. 33. Hos. vi. 11.)

In the valley of Rephaim.] The same words are translated *the valley of giants,* Josh. xv. 8. xviii. 6. It was a fruitful valley that lay near Jerusalem.

Ver. 6. *Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive-tree,* &c.] The former verse was an illustration of Israel's destruction from the ridding of fields in the corn-harvest: in this the metaphor is taken from the vintage, and the gathering in of the summer-fruits, and implies that the desolation shall not be so entire but that a few should be left, like the gleanings of a vine or an olive-tree after the main crop is gathered. (Compare xxiv. 13.) Accordingly we find that some of the ancient inhabitants of the ten tribes were left after Shalmaneser's captivity, (see 2 Chron. xxx. 10, 11.) and even after the second captivity of that people in the time of Esar-haddon. (See 2 Chron. xxxv. 18.)

Ver. 7. *In that day shall a man look to his Maker,* &c.] God's judgments upon the kingdom of Israel shall have that effect, as to turn many of those that remain from their idolatrous worship to serve the true God. (See 2 Chron. xxx. 11. 18.)

Ver. 8. *Neither shall respect that which his fingers have made, either the groves or the images.*] The groves being here called the work of men's hands, the word seems to be taken for an idol placed in a grove, as it is used 2 Kings xxi. 7. compared with xxiii. 6. The images here mentioned are translated *sun-images* in the margin, and are supposed to be such as were erected in honour of the sun. (See Ezek. vi. 4. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4.)

Ver. 9. *In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch.*] The cities belonging

to the ten tribes shall stand solitary and destitute of inhabitants, all the country about them being destroyed.

Which they left because of the children of Israel.] The sense is here imperfect: most expositors understand the words of the Assyrians, that they left some cities with a few inhabitants in the kingdom of Israel, that a remnant of that people might be preserved. (See ver. 6.) But the copy which the Septuagint followed, instead of the Hebrew words *hachoresh vehaamir*, i. e. *bough and uppermost branch*, read *Hachivi Vehaemori*, i. e. *the Hivites and Amorites:* for they translate the verse thus, *The cities shall be forsaken, as when the Hivites and the Amorites forsook them, because of the children of Israel.* Which reading gives a plain and full sense to the text. We justly esteem the present Hebrew text as a very correct copy; but we need not ascribe such a degree of infallibility to it, as to reject a better reading, when it is suggested by the ancient versions. For such a concession does no more weaken the authority of the Old Testament, than the various readings of the Greek copies invalidate that of the New.

Ver. 10. *Therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips.*] Or rather *with foreign slips*, such as for their rarity are fetched from foreign parts.

Ver. 11. *In the day shalt thou make thy plants to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish*, &c.] The sense depends upon the former verse, and both together import thus much; Because thou hast forsaken the true God, to follow idols, nothing shall thrive with thee: although, like an industrious gardener, thou procurest the choicest plants, and takest the greatest care to make them grow, watering and trimming at all seasons of the day, yet when thou expectest to reap the fruit of thy labours (so our margin very fitly translates *jom nachalah*, the *day of inheritance*, or of enjoying what we have taken pains for), thou shalt find nothing but loss and disappointment. The Hebrew language wants the potential mood, which is often supplied by the future tense, as it seems to be here: so the words might be rendered more plainly, thus, *Thou mayest plant pleasant plants, and mayest set it with foreign slips, in the day thou mayest make thy plant to grow, and in the morning thou mayest make thy seed to flourish; but*, &c. When the Hebrews would signify doing a thing speedily with care and diligence, they often express it by doing it *in the morning*. See l. 4. Psal. xlvi. 5. where our translation reads, *God shall help her*, and that *right early:* but it is in the Hebrew, *when the morning appeareth.*

Ver. 12. *Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas.*] As multitudes are compared to waters, (see Rev. xvii. 15.) so great armies are resembled to inundations, because they overrun all that comes in their way, and carry every thing before them. (See note on viii. 7.)

Ver. 13. *As the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.*] The Jews used to thrash their corn upon hills, and places exposed to the wind, (see xli. 14. 2 Chron. iii. 1.) which dispersed the chaff, and blew it away. The word *galgal*, which our text translates *rolling thing*, is better rendered *thistle-down* in the margin; the word signifies any straws or motes, which are driven about with the wind. Compare Psal. lxxxiii. 13. where our English reads, *make them like a wheel;* but it should be translated, *make them like thistle-down:* for the word both there and here is joined with *stubble*, as an equivalent expression.

Ver. 14. *Behold at even-tide trouble; and in the morning he is not.*] This fitly represents the condition of Sennacherib's army, which caused great consternation over night, but were all destroyed before next morning. (See 2 Kings xix. 35.)

CHAP. XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

Ethiopia and Egypt were the Jews' confederates when they were invaded by Sennacherib. (See xx. 5. 2 Kings xviii. 21. compared with 2 Kings xix. 9.) But it is a great question among learned men, whether by Ethiopia, called *Chush* in the Hebrew, be meant Arabia, lying eastward of Egypt, and therefore joined with Seba, xliii. 3. or Ethiopia, properly so called, lying westward of it: if we understand it of the latter, as Huetius does, (Comment. in Origen. p. 43. 50.) we must then understand the forementioned text, (2 Kings xix. 9.) of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, (called *Tarkon*, in Strabo, lib. i. xv.) coming to fight against Sennacherib, and sending forces to assist the Egyptians and the Jews: and this sense Archbishop Usher follows in his Annals of the Old Testament, ad A. M. 3294. But in which sense soever we take the word *Chush*, this prophecy relates to Egypt, in conjunction with Ethiopia, or Arabia; and the prophet shews, that although the designs of the Jews' allies in their favour should prove abortive, yet God will defend his own dwelling-place without their assistance. [Ethiopia and Egypt were united into one kingdom, by Sabacon, the king of Ethiopia, called So, 2 Kings xvii. 4. who slew Bocchoris, and conquered Egypt in the last year of king Ahaz. See Usher's Annals, ad A. M. 3277.]

Ver. 1. *WOE to the land shadowing with wings.*] It is generally agreed that this is a description of Egypt: some understand the words of their ships, with spreading sails like wings; others of the protection she boasted that she could give to her allies: but the Hebrew, *tsiltsel*, which our English renders *shadowing*, does properly signify a sort of timbrel, called in Latin *sistrum*, which was an instrument of music peculiar to the Egyptians in their sacrifices to Isis; and the words, *tsiltsel kenaphim*, are interpreted *a winged cymbal* by Huetius, (Demonstr. Evang. prop. iv. cap. 4. n. 10.) which he tells us is an exact description of the *sistrum*, and supposes the expression to be a periphrasis of Egypt, called here *the land* famous *for its winged cymbals.* The ingenious Mr. Reeves, in his notes upon Minucius Felix, cap. 21. expounds the phrase, *shadowing with wings*, of a swallow that used to be pictured over the statue of Isis with expanded wings. Le Moyne, in his Varia Sacra, (par. ii. p. 4.) thinks, that by the word *kenaphim*, *wings*, the prophet denotes the idol which the Egyptians called *Kneph*, who was represented with wings, and an egg coming out of his mouth, to signify the creation of the world, by the word and decree of God; the world itself being represented by Isis: this *Kneph* is mentioned by Plutarch, in his book de Iside et Osride, and is called Κνῦφις, by Strabo, lib. xvii.

Which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia.] Or rather, *Which borders upon the rivers of Ethiopia;* the Hebrew signifies indifferently either *cis* or *trans*, the hither, or farther side of a river.

Ver. 2. *That sendeth ambassadors by sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters.*] To encourage their confederates with promises of assistance. But the Hebrew *tsirim*, which our English renders *ambassadors*, does likewise signify *idols*, and so it is translated xlv. 16. Following this sense, Bochart and Le Moyne understand the words of the image of Isis, which the Egyptians used to carry from place to place by water, in a sort of paper vessel or ship: Lucan, speaking of their little boats, saith, *Conseritur bibula Memphitis cymba papyro*, (lib. iv.)

Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled, &c.] These words may be understood of the ambassadors, which the Ethiopians, in conjunction with the Egyptians, sent to the Assyrians, by way of bidding them defiance; and then by a land *scattered and peeled*, must be understood Assyria, which, though formerly *terrible* to all its neighbours, yet now was distracted with foreign wars, and exhausted of its soldiers: if we follow this sense, the latter part of the verse may most properly be rendered as our margin reads it, *whose land the rivers despise;* that is, the Ethiopians, and those that dwell among the rivers thereabout, are not afraid of the Assyrian power. This sense our translators prefer, and understand *tsirim, ambassadors*, and *melachim, messengers*, as meant of the same persons, and likewise supply the word, *saying*, to make the following sentence the substance of what the ambassadors were supposed to speak.

But others think that the words are a message from God, to denounce judgment against the Ethiopians, who are called *a people terrible from their beginning*, because they had invaded Judea several times with formidable armies: (see 2 Chron. xii. 3. xiv. 9.) and that the purport of the words is to acquaint them, that they should be *scattered and peeled, meted out and trodden down:* that the forces of the Assyrian, compared to an overflowing river, (see xvii. 12.) should overrun and destroy them; which was fulfilled, as appears from xx. 4. This sense I prefer, because it agrees better with the seventh verse, where the same words are repeated; and with Ezek. xxx. 9. where God saith, *Messengers shall go from me in ships, to make the careless Ethiopians afraid;* which place plainly alludes to these words of Isaiah.

Ver. 3. *All ye inhabitants of the world, see ye, when he lifted up an ensign upon the mountains,* &c.] To set up a banner, and to blow a trumpet, are usual signals of war: the prophet saith here, that God himself will remarkably espouse the cause of his people, and exhorts all people to take notice of his proceedings.

Ver. 4. *I will take my rest, and consider in my dwelling-place.*] Or, *I will have a regard for my set dwelling* (as the margin reads), and defend it, though without using any visible means, or the outward assistance of any of my people's confederates, such as the Ethiopians were, which is meant by God's *taking his rest; i. e.* not going out with their armies, according to the former interpretation of the words.

Like a clear heat upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.] Or, *Like a clear heat after rain*, as the margin reads; the vicissitude of rain and sunshine is very agreeable, and contributes that warmth and moisture which make all vegetables grow and flourish: (see 2 Sam. xxiii. 4.) such refreshment will God afford his people in their calamities, and not unlike that which a dripping cloud gives when it falls in a soft dew, and abates the burning heat of the harvest-time. (See xxv. 5. xxxii. 2.)

Ver. 5. *For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect* [or while the bud is growing to maturity], *and the sour grape is ripening in the flower.*] Before the designs of the Ethiopians, and their confederates the Egyptians, could come to maturity, they should prove abortive, just as if one should cut off the bearing branches of a vine, before the grapes are fit to be gathered. The word *harvest* is applied to the time of gathering in of the summer-fruits, as well as of corn. (See xvi. 9. xvii. 11.)

Ver. 6. *They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth,* &c.] Their armies shall become a prey unto the wild beasts and the birds of prey: (compare Ezek. xxxix. 17.) as if a garden or vineyard should be destroyed, and laid open to all the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field, to come and feed there all the year round. (Compare Ezek. xxxi. 13.)

Ver. 7. *In that time.*] There is no necessity of supposing this to be meant of the same time specified in the foregoing part of the chapter, as hath been shewed in the note upon iv. 2.

Shall the present [or a present] *be brought to the Lord of hosts,* &c.] Bringing of presents was a solemn expression of that homage which is due from subjects or tributaries to their princes. (See 2 Sam. viii. 2. Psal. lxxii. 10.) So here it implies, that the Ethiopians shall make their due acknowledgments to God as their sovereign, which is consonant to other prophecies concerning them. (See Psal. lxviii. 31. Zeph. iii. 10.) This we may suppose to have been partly verified at the destruction of Sennacherib, the common enemy to them and the Jews, upon which remarkable turn of affairs, many of the neighbouring nations congratulated Hezekiah's victory, and magnified the power of God which so evidently interposed for his deliverance. (See 2 Chron. xxxii. 23.) But the words are chiefly to be understood of the calling of those nations to the gospel. The conversion of the gentiles is elsewhere expressed, by their bringing offerings to God's temple or altar, because that was the most solemn part of religious worship that was practised among the Jews. (See lx. 6. 9. Psal. lxvii. 29. Micah iv. 13.) We may observe, that several other prophecies which threaten destruction to nations or cities, conclude with a gracious promise, that God will remember them in due time, and acknowledge them for his people. (See xix. 18, &c. xxiii. 18. Jer. xlviii. 47. xlix. 39.)

CHAP. XIX.

ARGUMENT.

The Egyptians were the Jews' principal confederates, at the time of Sennacherib's invasion: (see 2 Kings xviii. 21, &c.) who are often reproved by this prophet for their vain confidence in Egypt, as that which would fail and disappoint them. (See xx. 5, 6. xxx. 2, &c. xxxi. 1, &c.) Accordingly, as the prophet foretells the conquest of Egypt by Sennacherib, (chap. xx.) who overran Egypt

and Ethiopia, the Jews' confederates, before he besieged Jerusalem; so this chapter seems to be a general prophecy against Egypt, denouncing the several calamities it should suffer from the time of Sennacherib's invasion, till the entire change of affairs it should undergo under the government of the twelve tyrants, which at last ended in the sole government of Psammitichus. Scaliger understands this prophecy of Sabacon, who slew Bocchoris, and made himself king of Egypt, in the last year of Ahaz's reign. (Can. Isagog. p. 318.) This opinion seems to me not to agree very well with ver. 17. Some explain the chapter of Sennacherib's, Tirhaka's, or Tarachus's conquest of Egypt.

Ver. 1. *BEHOLD the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud.*] God's visible appearance is described by his *riding upon the wings of the wind,* (Psal. xviii. 10. civ. 3.) and *his riding upon the heavens,* (Deut. xxxiii. 16. Psal. lxviii. 4.) which expressions allude to the cloud of glory in which the Schechinah used to appear.

And the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence.] To be *moved,* either signifies that the evil spirits which are worshipped in their idols, shall be under a great consternation, when God brings his judgments upon them and their worshippers: or else it may be meant of their being removed and carried captive, as Jeremy afterward foretold, (xliii. 12.) When God executes his judgments upon a heathen nation, he is said to punish the idols of that people: so particularly it is said of Egypt, Exod. xii. 12. and of Babylon, Isa. xxi. 9. xlvi. 1. Jer. l. 2. li. 44.

Ver. 2. *They shall fight every one against his brother—city against city, and kingdom against kingdom.*] One province against another; so the Septuagint very properly render it, Νομὸς ἐπὶ νομόν: the several divisions of that country being called *nomi;* and *tribes* here, (ver. 13.) This was fulfilled after their king Sethon's death, when the country was divided into twelve petty governments, and Psammitichus, ruler of one of these, at last subdued all the rest. (See note on ver. 4.)

Ver. 3. *And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the council thereof.*] Both the courage and the wisdom of the Egyptians shall fail them in the time of their greatest need. (See ver. 11, 12, &c.) The wisdom of Egypt was famous in those times all the world over: (see 1 Kings iv. 40. Acts vii. 22.) and from thence the Greeks, in aftertimes, derived their knowledge.

And they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, &c.] As it was usual for idolaters to do in their distress; (see xlvii. 12.) and the Jews themselves sometimes did in imitation of the ill customs of their neighbours. (See viii. 19.)

Ver. 4. *And the Egyptians will I give into the hand of a cruel lord,* &c.] This most interpreters understand of Psammitichus. (See note on ver. 2.)

Ver. 5. *And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up.*] Tremellius shews out of Herodotus that this was literally fulfilled under the government of the twelve petty tyrants who ruled Egypt after Sethon. But the expression may the more probably be metaphorical, and denote the decay of the Egyptian strength, by metaphors taken from the decrease of the river Nile; upon the overflowing of which river all the plenty and prosperity of Egypt depended. Thus the king of Egypt is described, Ezek. xxix. 3. as *a dragon (i. e.* a whale, or crocodile) *lying in the midst of many waters,* and boasting of his strength, by saying, *My river is my own,* &c. Scaliger understands it of a great drought which occasioned a dearth, by the failing of the inundation of the Nile. (Can. Isagog. p. 318.)

Ver. 6. *And the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up.*] *Jesré Matzor,* in the Hebrew: the same expression we meet with again, xxxvii. 25. which is there translated, the *rivers of besieged places:* such as were of use to defend cities against a siege. But Bochart (Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 24.) translates it the *rivers of Egypt,* and shews that the word *Matzor* denotes Egypt sometimes, and may be fitly translated so in both these places of Isaiah, and likewise in Micah vii. 12. which place our translation renders very obscurely, thus, *In that day he shall come unto thee from Assyria, and from the fortified cities, and from the fortress even unto the river:* but supposing *Matzor* to signify *Egypt,* the word runs plainly thus, *They shall come unto thee from Assyria to the cities of Egypt, and from Egypt even to the river* [Euphrates], which was the boundary of Assyria: and the sense is, that the Jews shall return from their several dispersions whither they were scattered; which is often expressed in the prophets by their return from Assyria and Egypt, as hath been observed in the notes upon xi. 15, 16.

Ver. 7. *And the paper-reeds—by the mouth of the brook—shall wither.*] Paper was an invention of the Egyptians, and was first made of a reed that grew upon the banks of the Nile, which is therefore thus described by Ovid, (Metamorph. i.)

"——— Papyriferi septemflua flumina Nili."

Accordingly the paper-reeds are said here to grow by the mouth of the brooks, that is, by the shore, or side of the brooks; expressed elsewhere by the *lip of the river,* (Gen. xli. 3. Exod. ii. 3.) speaking of the Nile.

Ver. 8. *The fishers also shall mourn,* &c.] The same metaphor is still continued, to signify, that all sort of trade and business shall cease, by reason of the great commotions which distract the kingdom.

Ver. 9. *Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave net-work, shall be confounded.*] Fine flax, and linen made out of it, was a principal commodity of Egypt: (see 1 Kings x. 28. Prov. vii. 16. Ezek. xxvii. 7.) and was the habit of their priests and other great men, both in Egypt and in other countries. (See Gen. xli. 42. Esth. viii. 15. Dan. x. 5. Luke xvi. 19.) The *net-works* which follow, or *white-works* as the margin reads, seem to have been fine weaved works made of the same materials.

Ver. 11. *Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish.*] See the following verses. Zoan or Tanis was one of the ancientest cities in Egypt; (see Numb. xiii. 22.) and the metropolis of the kingdom in Moses's time. (See Psal. lxxviii. 43.) Pharaoh was a name common to all the Egyptian kings.

How say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?] It was in vain that the court-flatterers extolled their king for his extraordinary abilities, which were derived to him by a succession of many generations; which yet should not fail in Sethon or Sevecus,

who should be the last king of his family: Egypt was one of the ancientest kingdoms in the world, and pretended that the Chaldeans themselves were derived from thence, as Diodorus Siculus affirms, (lib. ii.) though these vied antiquity with the former: but the Egyptians were not content with such a pretence to antiquity, as might be made good by substantial proofs, but would needs have it, that the first men in the world arose out of the mud and slime of the river Nile; as may be seen in the same author. (Hist. lib. ii. cap. 2.)

[*The son of ancient kings.*] The kings of Egypt derived their royal dignity from Misraim, the son of Ham; upon which account Egypt is called *the land of Ham*, Psal. lxxviii. 51. cv. 23. cvi. 22.]

Ver. 12. *Where are thy wise men? And let them tell thee now*, &c.] The wise men of Egypt and the magicians are joined together, Gen. xli. 8. and the prophet tells them here, that with all their skill in the arts of divination they could not foresee the evils impending over their country, nor tell how to prevent them. (Compare xlvii. 13.)

Ver. 13. *The princes of Noph are deceived.*] Noph is better known by the name of Memphis; it is called Moph, Hos. ix. 16. which comes very near that name.

They that are the stay of the tribes thereof.] The governors of the several provinces, or *nomi*. (See before on ver. 2.)

Ver. 14. *They have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggers in his vomit.*] God's judgments are often called the *cup of his wrath:* (see particularly Jer. xxv. 16, 17.) because they deprive men not only of their strength, but even of that common prudence and presence of mind, which is requisite for the due management of their affairs; according to that observation, *Quos Jupiter perdere vult, dementat.*

Ver. 15. *Neither shall there be any work for Egypt, which the head or tail, branch or rush, may do.*] All orders and degrees of men shall fail in the discharge of their duty, from the highest to the lowest. (Compare ix. 14.)

Ver. 16. *In that day shall Egypt be like women*, &c.] When God intends the destruction of any people, he commonly takes from them their strength and courage, so that a *thousand of them shall flee at the rebuke of one*, as our prophet speaks, xxx. 17. (Compare Deut. xxviii. 25. Jer. l. 37. Nahum iii. 13.) This is what the heathens expressed by a *panic terror;* but Isaiah more properly calls it here, *the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts*, God's holding his rod over a people, and still threatening them with severer judgments. (Compare x. 32. xi. 15.)

Ver. 17. *And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt.*] Egypt was subdued by Sennacherib before he besieged Jerusalem, as may be gathered from xx. 5, 6. But before that, we read of Sennacherib's invading Judea, and taking all its fenced cities, (2 Kings xviii. 13.) which is placed by Archbishop Usher three years before his besieging Jerusalem. It is this first invasion the prophet here probably alludes to, and saith, that the report of it caused great terror in Egypt, being neighbours and allies to the Jews.

Ver. 18. *In that day.*] There is no necessity this should be understood of the same time spoken of in the foregoing part of the chapter, as hath been already observed in several instances. (See note on iv. 2.)

Shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan.] It is a way of speaking in Scripture, to use a definite common number for an indefinite. (See particularly Amos i. 3. 6. 9, &c.) So here *five cities* denote several cities: and of these it is prophesied that they *shall speak the language of Canaan*, that they shall worship God with the *true Israelites*, and with one heart and one mouth glorify the true God together with them. (Compare Zeph. iii. 9.) Or, as some explain it, they shall be of one mind with the true servants of God: so the phrase is used, Josh. ix. 2. where it is said that the kings *gathered themselves to fight with Joshua with one consent*. It is in the Hebrew *with one mouth*. As the Christians are the true seed of Abraham, to whom all the promises belong, so they are sometimes even in the New Testament styled by the name of Jews: (see Rom. ii. 29. Gal. vi. 16. Rev. ii. 9.) but all along in the Old Testament they are described by the titles, the privileges, and the rites of worship, which belong to the Jews. (See notes on ver. 19. lvi. 7. lxvi. 23.)

This place cannot be understood with Grotius, of the Jews going down into Egypt for fear of Sennacherib; for this is what they are severely reproved for, and judgments threatened to both nations upon that account (chap. xxx. xxxi. of this prophecy); whereas what is here said, is spoken as a promise of mercy and comfort. (See note on xviii. 7.)

Learned men observe from this place, where the Jews' language is called the language of Canaan, that the Hebrew is the same with the old Phœnician language, as appears from many instances. (See Bishop Walton's Prolegom. iii. 11—13, &c. ad Biblia Polyglott.)

And swear to the Lord of hosts.] Swear allegiance and fidelity to him: (see Nehem. x. 29. Isa. xlv. 23.) some render the words, *Swear by the Lord of hosts*, in opposition to the false gods the heathens used to swear by. Swearing being a religious invocation of the name of God; it is particularly recommended among other religious duties. (See Deut. vi. 13. x. 20. Jer. iv. 2. Psal. lxiii. 11.)

One shall be called, The city of destruction.] Or, *The city of the sun*, as our margin reads: for our interpreters and several others suppose, that the Hebrew word *Heres* may stand for *Cheres;* so the expression will denote that city which was called by the Greeks *Heriopolis*, or the *city of the sun:* as several other cities had their names from the sun's having an image or temple there: such was Kir-haresh among the Moabites, (xvi. 7. 11.) and Beth-shemesh among the Canaanites, (Josh. xvi. 10.) [There was a city in Egypt, called Beth-shemesh, mentioned Jer. xliii. 13.] But still it may be inquired for what reason the prophet should disguise the name of this city, and not speak it out plain? To which question we may return this satisfactory answer, that the prophet would not call the city by its proper name Nir Cheres, as detesting the name of the idol to which it was dedicated, but chose rather to call it, by way of reproach, Nir Heres, implying that the idol there worshipped should be utterly destroyed. The Jews were forbidden to make mention of the names of the heathen idols, if they could avoid it. (See Exod. xxiii. 13. Josh. xxiii. 7. Psal. xvi. 4.) So they either changed the names of the places dedicated to idol-worship, or else they gave nicknames to them and their idols, and substituted such a word as had some affinity with the true name, but withal expressed their abhorrence and detestation of it. Thus they called Baal *Bosheth*,

that is, *Shame;* (Jer. xi. 23. Hos. ix. 10.) and when the Mount of Olives was defiled with idolatry they called it the Mount of Corruption, (2 Kings xxiii. 13.) changing the Hebrew name, *Har Mischah*, into *Har Mischith*. In like manner Beth-el, which signifies the house of God, when it came to be the seat of idolatry, was called Beth-aven, *i. e.* the house of vanity, (Hos. iv. 15. x. 5.) So here I suppose the prophet calleth the city of Cheres, by way of irony, the city of Heres. The Chaldee paraphrase joins both the readings together, thus: *One of the cities shall be called Beth-shemesh, which shall be destroyed.*

Ver. 19. *In that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt.*] It is a judicious observation of Calvin upon lvi. 7. *Loquitur propheta figuris, quæ suæ ætati conveniunt.* The prophets when they speak of the gentiles coming into the church, express their serving the true God by such acts of devotion as were most in use in their own time, and therefore could be best understood by those to whom they directed their discourses; such were offering sacrifices, and keeping the solemn feasts at Jerusalem, to which the gentiles from all parts should resort, as several prophecies express their conversion. (See ii. 3. xxvii. 13. lvi. 7. lxvi. 23. Zech. xiv. 16. Mal. i. 11.) And to this sense I understand the *altar* and the *sacrifice, oblation* and *vows,* mentioned here, and ver. 21. as taken metonymically, for the worship and service of God in general. Onias, indeed, in aftertimes built an altar and temple in Egypt for the use of the Jews, thinking to fulfil this prophecy literally; but it was against the general sense of his own nation, who thought, that, according to their laws, no temple ought to be built but in Jerusalem. (See Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 30.) From whence it appears that they thought this prophecy was to have a mystical, and not a literal completion.

And a pillar in the border thereof to the Lord.] These and the following words at the beginning of the next verse, allude to Jacob's pillar which he set up in Beth-el, (Gen. xxviii. 18.) and to the altar which the Reubenites and their brethren built upon the borders of Jordan, (Josh. xxii. 10.) *to be a witness between us and you, and the generations after us,* as it there follows.

Ver. 20. *For they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.*] Egypt was conquered by Sennacherib (see the following chapter); and some understand the *saviour* and *great one* here mentioned, of the angel that cut off his forces, which was a general deliverance of all the neighbouring countries from his tyranny: the words may fitly be applied to that tyranny which the devil exercises over the heathen world, *who are led captive by him at his will,* from whence they can be redeemed only by the great Saviour of the world, Christ Jesus. Many of the gentiles were sensible of the ignorance they lay under, with respect to the things of God, and had some general hopes and desires of being delivered from the *bondage of corruption:* in which respect Christ is called by the prophet Haggai, *the desire of all nations,* (Hag. ii. 7.) *i. e.* he who alone can answer all their wants and desires.

Ver. 21. *And shall do sacrifice and oblation.*] See note on ver. 19.

Yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it.] Making vows, and dedicating free-will-offerings unto God, was a considerable part of religious worship among the Jews. (See Lev. xxvii. 1, &c. Numb. vi. 1, &c. xxx. 1. Deut. xxiii. 21, 22.) The sense of this expression hath been likewise explained on ver. 19. Some explain this of the devout acknowledgments which the Egyptians, the Jews' confederates, made at the temple, upon Sennacherib's defeat. (See note on xviii. 7.)

Ver. 22. *And the Lord shall smite Egypt; he shall smite and heal it.*] That is, he shall heal it of those plagues wherewith he had smote it.

Ver. 23. *In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria.*] The expression denotes the intercourse and correspondence that shall be between the Jews, Assyrians, and Egyptians; (see ver. 24.) which implies, first, the restoration of the Jews from their several dispersions, which is often expressed by their return out of Assyria and Egypt; (see note on xi. 16.) and then that their oppressors themselves should be made members of the same church with them.

And the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.] Shall serve the same God of Israel, who shall be the third in conjunction *with them,* joined together in the holy bond of church society, as it follows.

Ver. 24. *Even a blessing in the midst of the land.*] Or, *In the midst of the earth:* to be *a blessing* is to be a remarkable instance of God's favour, so that it should become a form of blessing for others, to wish their friends the same happiness that these favourites of heaven enjoy. (See Gen. xii. 2. xlviii. 20. Zech. viii. 13.)

Ver. 25. *Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance.*] *My people, the work of my hands,* and *my inheritance,* are equivalent expressions; and imply, that Egypt and Assyria, that is, those who before were enemies to God's truth and people, (see note on xi. 14.) should be *fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the promises,* which were made to the Jews, *by the gospel,* as St. Paul speaks, Ephes. iii. 6.

The work of mine hands.] The expression is always used in this prophet, of those who are in covenant with God, and members of his church. (See xxix. 23. xlv. 11. lx. 21.)

CHAP. XX.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter foretells the conquest of the Egyptians and Ethiopians, the Jews' confederates, by Sennacherib. (See the Argument of chap. xviii.)

Ver. 1. *IN the year that Tartan came to Ashdod,* &c.] It appears from ver. 5, 6. that this expedition was made while the Jews were under the apprehension of Sennacherib's invasion; and thereupon, to strengthen themselves, they entered into a confederacy with Egypt and Ethiopia. Tartan is mentioned (2 Kings xviii. 17.) as one of the generals of Sennacherib's army, who is probably meant by Sargon here, and when his armies invaded Judea for a considerable time, and *took all the fenced cities of it,* (2 Kings xviii. 13.) he might then send a detachment, and besiege Ashdod.

Ver. 2. *Loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot.*] As it was a principal part of the prophetic office to denounce God's judgments; so the pro-

phets commonly wore sackcloth, the habit of mourners, as a dress suitable to their employment. (See Rev. xi. 3.) Of this kind was that *hairy garment* by which Elias and John Baptist are described, 2 Kings i. 8. Matt. iii. 4. and such a garment is spoken of as the usual habit of the prophets, Zech. xiii. 3. Going *barefoot* was likewise a sign of mourning. (See 2 Sam. xv. 30.)

And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.] Those are said to be *naked*, in the Scripture-phrase, who go without their upper garments, (see John xxi. 7. Acts xix. 16.) or have put off the habit proper to their quality. (See 1 Sam. xix. 24. 2 Sam. vi. 20.)

Ver. 3. *Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and wonder,* &c.] Egypt was subdued by Sennacherib before he besieged Jerusalem, as hath been observed upon the first verse of this chapter: to this sense Bochart explains that expression, (xxxvii. 25.) "With the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of Egypt." The Hebrew reads *Metzor*, which is often taken for *Egypt*. (See note on xix. 6.)

Archbishop Usher supposes this war against Egypt, and the rest of the Jews' confederates, to have lasted three years, and to have concluded in the desolation of those countries. (See his Annales V. Test. ad A. M. 3294.) The prophets foreshewed things by actions as well as by words, which sometimes appeared strange and uncouth in the eyes of the people. (See viii. 3. 18. and the notes there, and Ezek. xxiv. 18, 19.)

Ver. 4. *Even with their buttocks uncovered.*] See note on iii. 17.

Ver. 5. *They shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.*] The inhabitants of Judea, or Jerusalem, mentioned in the following verse, shall be ashamed of such weak and insignificant allies. The Jews are often upbraided with placing their confidence in an arm of flesh, and particularly for trusting in the shadow of Egypt. (See the Argument to chap. xix.)

Ver. 6. *And the inhabitant of this isle shall say in that day.*] Some understand *this isle* of Ashdod, mentioned ver. 1. and the sea-coast of the Philistines, called the *isle of Caphthor*, Jer. xlvii. 4. But the word may more fitly be expounded of *Judea* or *Jerusalem;* for an *isle* sometimes is taken in a general sense for any country or place. (See xl. 15. lix. 18. Joh xxii. 30.).

CHAP. XXI.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet renews his threatenings against Babylon, as he does afterward, (chap. xlvii.) to convince the Jews, by this repetition, of the certainty of the event; (see Gen. xli. 32.) and thereby support them under their captivity, when that should come. To this are added two short prophecies against Idumea and Arabia.

Ver. 1. *THE burden of the desert of the sea.*] The ninth verse explains this of Babylon, which is here described by the name of the *desert of the sea*, because although it were at present very populous, yet it should be made desolate, and *turned into pools of water.* (See xiv. 23.) Or the words may be rendered, *The burden of the plain of the sea:* for Babylon stood in a plain, (Gen. xi. 2.) and among many waters. (See Jer. li. 13.) The Hebrew expresses all great collections of waters by the name of *seas.*

As whirlwinds in the south pass through.] The *south* is described by all writers as a stormy wind. (Compare Zech. ix. 14.) God's anger and the overbearing force of a victorious army are elsewhere compared to a whirlwind, or tempest. (See Job xxvii. 20. Psal. lviii. 9. lxxxii. 15. Isa. v. 28. xxix. 6. lxvi. 15. Jer. iv. 13.)

So it cometh from the desert.] From the desert which lieth between Media, or Persia, and Babylon.

Ver. 2. *A grievous vision is declared unto me; The treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth.*] The words may be thus translated more agreeably both to grammar and sense: *A grievous vision: There is made known* (or declared) *to me an oppressor of* (or for) *the oppressor, and spoiler for the spoiler:* that is, it is now come to the king of Babylon's turn to feel that oppression and ravage himself, which he before had brought upon others. (Compare xxxiii. 1.)

Go up, O Elam [*or Persia*]*; besiege, O Media.*] The Babylonian monarchy was to be divided between the Medes and Persians. (See Dan. v. 28.)

All the sighing thereof I have made to cease.] Or, *I have made all sorrow* (or sighing) *to cease: i. e.* the sighing of those who have been oppressed by the Babylonian tyranny. (Compare xiv. 3.) For the termination of the word *anchatah, sighing,* seems to be only emphatical, as the grammarians speak, not relative to any person beforementioned.

Ver. 3. *Therefore my loins are filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me,* &c.] This is spoken as in the person of the Chaldeans. (See note on xv. 5.)

I was bowed down at the hearing of it.] As persons that are under great pain or trouble. (See Psal. xxxv. 15. xxxviii. 5.)

Ver. 4. *The night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me.*] When I thought to be at ease, and to have some respite from trouble and anxiety, then the fearful apprehensions of God's judgments seized me. (Compare Job vii. 13.) This is still spoken by the prophet, as representing the Chaldeans: some understand the words of that festival night, wherein Belshazzar was slain; (Dan. v. 1. 30.) The following verse favours this sense.

Ver. 5. *Prepare a table, watch in the watch-tower,* &c.] The verse may be thus translated: *While they prepare a table, while they watch in the watch-tower, while they eat and drink, arise ye princes,* &c. While the Babylonians make some faint provisions for war, but are more intent upon feasting and luxury, arise ye princes and leaders of the Persian army, and prepare for war in earnest: it appears by Dan. v. 1. 30, 31. and Jer. li. 30. that Babylon was surprised and taken the night after a great festival. (See likewise Herodot. lib. i. cap. 190, 191.)

Anoint the shield.] To make it more beautiful, and more serviceable for war.

Ver. 6. *For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman,* &c.] The prophets are often compared to watchmen, because they foresee evils at a distance, and warn others to avoid them: (see lii. 8. lxii. 6. Ezek. iii. 17. xxxiii. 7. Habak. ii. 1.) so here God orders the prophet, or somebody for him, to act the part of a watchman, and give notice what enemy is marching towards Babylon, as it

was usual for watchmen to do in times of danger. (See 2 Sam. xviii. 24, 25. 2 Kings ix. 17.)

Ver. 7. *And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen.*] The two horsemen may denote Cyrus and Darius, the principal leaders of the army against Babylon. As chariots were much used in war among the ancients, so we often read in Homer, of two heroes sitting in the same chariot: thus Æneas and Pandarus are described, Iliad v. ver. 220. So Diomedes and Sthenelus, ib. ver. 835. one of them to guide the horses, the other to fight the enemy: the same way of fighting was used among the Germans, as Diodor. Siculus testifies, lib. v.

A chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels.] To denote two different nations, the Medes and Persians, who were to besiege Babylon: as Cyrus was called a *mule* by the oracle, because his father was a Persian, and his mother a Mede. (See Herodot. lib. i. cap. 55. 91.) The foregoing part of the verse may thus be rendered, *He saw a chariot with a couple of horses, a chariot of asses,* &c. and then the first part of the verse will denote the main body of the Persian and Median army, and the following sentences will signify their baggage and provisions.

Ver. 8. *And he cried, A lion.*] Some understand the place, as if by a lion were meant Cyrus: but the marginal reading, *he cried as a lion,* makes an easier sense; the particle *as* being frequently understood. (See xv. 5. Psal. xi. 1. 1 Sam. xxv. 37. Job xi. 12. Nahum iii. 12.)

My lord, I stand continually upon the watch-tower in the day-time, and I am set in my ward whole nights.] This is said to express his great care and attentiveness. (See ver. 7.) And thereby to confirm the truth of the prediction which follows, (ver. 9.) as that which would as certainly come to pass, as if a watchman had described the approach of the enemy from afar. (Compare Habak. ii. 1.)

Ver. 9. *And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen.*] He confirms the vision related ver. 7. The Hebrew word *parashim* signifies *horses* as well as *horsemen:* (see note on xxii. 6.) and the sense would run easier, if the words were translated, *Here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horses.*

And he answered and said.] Some suppose this to be the answer of the prophet, by which he explains the foregoing vision to be meant of Babylon: but there is no necessity of admitting this interpretation, for the word *answer* is often used in Scripture for the continuation of a discourse. (See particularly Matt. xi. 25. and elsewhere in the gospels.)

Babylon is fallen, is fallen.] The expression is doubled, to denote the certainty of the event. (See Gen. xli. 32.) It is usual, likewise, for the prophets to represent a thing future, as if it were already accomplished, to signify that it will certainly come to pass. (See Jer. l. 2.) To the same sense we are to understand those words of Christ, (John iii. 18.) *He that believeth not, is condemned already; i. e.* will infallibly be condemned, if he persists in his infidelity. (See like instances, xli. 3. xlviii. 21.)

All the graven images of her gods he hath broken to the ground.] See note on xix. 1. Other prophecies speak of the destruction of Babylon, as a decisive stroke, which should give a fatal blow to idolatry: (see xlv. 16. xlvi. 1. Jer. l. 2. li. 17, 18. 47.) which prophecies will be fully completed in the fall of mystical Babylon.

Ver. 10. *O my thrashing, and the corn of my floor.*] The prophet addresses himself to the Jews, who were nearly concerned in the destruction of the Babylonish empire: (though the admonition extends to remote ages. See notes on the beginning of chap. xiii. xiv.) These he applies himself to, as groaning under the oppressions of that heathen government; whereupon he calls them *God's thrashing,* and *the corn of his floor,* because they had been so severely bruised by their oppressors, although these calamities were intended by God to purge the pure corn from the chaff. To be *thrashed* signifies to undergo great calamities, or be subdued by a potent enemy. (See xli. 15. Jer. li. 33. Micah iv. 13.) [The way of thrashing, in the eastern countries, was by leading oxen over the corn lying on the floor, who drew after them a pair of dented iron wheels, or else heavy planks stuck full of sharp flints; so that the corn was trodden out by the feet of the oxen, and the straw cast into small parcels by the wheels or flints. (See xxviii. 27, 28.) The same way of treading out the corn was practised by the Romans, as appears by Varro, (lib. i. de Re Rust. cap. 52.) "Excuti grassa jumentis, junctis, ac tribulo; id fit e tabula lapidibus aut ferro asperata, quæ imposito auriga, aut pondere grandi, trahitur jumentis junctis; aut ex asseribus dentatis, cum orbiculis."] This way of bruising the corn doth fitly resemble the weak being crushed by the mighty.

Ver. 11. *The burden of Dumah.*] Or *Idumea,* as appears by the mention of Mount Seir, which follows.

He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night?] One or other of the Idumeans is inquisitive every night what tidings the watchman brings of the approach of the enemies. (See ver. 6.)

Ver. 12. *The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night.*] This verse hath puzzled all the commentators. Without repeating their several conjectures, one may conceive the sense to be this: *You inquire every night what tidings that brings, but the morning may be as dangerous as the night.* (See Ezek. vii. 7. 10.)

If ye will inquire, inquire ye; return, come.] Or, *return, and come again,* as the old translation reads, which was published under king Henry VIII. (Compare Job xvii. 10.) If you will inquire indeed, and ask questions in earnest, inquire of God first, ask his mercy, and afterward come again, and ye shall have a more favourable answer.

Ver. 13. *In the forest of Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim.*] This prophecy threateneth one clan of the Arabians, those who were the posterity of Dedan, the grandson of Abraham, (Gen. xxv. 3.) and tells them they shall be driven from their tents or habitations, and forced to seek for shelter in the woods and thickets. They are called *travelling companies,* because most of the Arabians lived in moveable tents, and were therefore called *Scenitæ,* and removed with their cattle from place to place, for the convenience of pasture, like the Nomades in Africa.

Ver. 14. *The inhabitants of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty.*] The words describe the straits the Dedanites were reduced to, being forced to fly from the enemy without any provisions for their present sustenance; whereupon their neighbours, the Temanites, (the posterity of Tema, Ishmael's son, Gen. xx. 15.) took pity upon their forlorn condition. To relieve travellers with necessaries, was an instance of hospitality received among all nations. (See Deut. xxiii. 4.)

Ver. 16. *Within a year, according to the years of a hireling.*] Within that precise time. (See xvi. 14.) This description of a year is used to distinguish it from a *prophetical year*, which consists of three hundred and sixty-five years, reckoning every day for a year: (see Numb. xiv. 34. Ezek. iv. 6.) or from some remarkable time in general; in which sense we read of the *acceptable year of the Lord*, (Isa. lxi. 2.) and the *year of recompence*, (xxxiv. 8.)

Ver. 17. *And the residue of the number of archers, of the mighty men of Kedar, shall be diminished.*] The prophet extends this judgment to another division of the Arabians, which descended from Kedar, Ishmael's son, (Gen. xxv. 13.) who were famous for the use of the bow, at which weapon their ancestor Ishmael was very expert. (See Gen. xxi. 20.) The same people are said to dwell in *the tents of Kedar*, (Psal. cxx. 5. Cant. i. 5.) and were remarkable for their swarthiness (the word *Kedar* signifying black or tawny), according to that description the church gives of herself in that place of the Canticles, *I am as black as the tents of Kedar, but comely as the curtains of Solomon:* for that is the true order of the words.

CHAP. XXII.

ARGUMENT.

Our English interpreters have very much mistook the design of the following prophecy, telling us, in the contents, that the former part of the chapter relates to the invasion of Jewry by the Persians: an occurrence mentioned neither in sacred nor profane history, and not at all probable, whether we consider the distance of Persia from Jewry, or that the Persians were at this time subject to the king of Assyria, and upon that account are mentioned (ver. 6.) as part of Sennacherib's army, with which he invaded Judea, and besieged Jerusalem; to which juncture of time the former part of the chapter relates, as will appear upon the notes of the ninth and tenth verses. The latter part of it is a denunciation against Shebna, a man of authority in Hezekiah's court.

Ver. 1. *THE burden of the valley of vision.*] By the *valley of vision* is meant Jerusalem, which was surrounded with hills, (Psal. cxxv. 2.) and is called by that name, because this and many other prophecies are directed to it.

What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the house-tops?] To discover the motions of the enemy, or to look out for assistance. (Compare xv. 3.)

Ver. 2. *Thou art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city.*] This may be better understood of the time past, as if the prophet had said, Thou hast been full of noise and multitudes, mirth, and jollity: (compare xxiii. 7. xxxii. 13.) but now a deep and melancholy silence hath seized thee.

Thy slain men are not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle.] But are dead with fear.

Ver. 3. *They are bound by the archers: all that are found in thee are bound together, which have fled from far.*] This part of the verse may be rendered more clearly thus, *All that are found in thee have conspired together, for fear of the archers, they have conspired together,* [and] *have fled a great way off.* The adverb *merachok* doth not only signify *from far*, but likewise *to a place a great way off.* (See xvii. 13. xxiii. 7. lvii. 9.)

Ver. 4. *Therefore said I, Look away from me; I will weep bitterly,* &c.] The Hebrew verb *shangah* is rendered by our interpreters *depart*, or *turn away* from me, Job vii. 19. xiv. 6. *i. e.* let me alone to myself, that I may indulge my grief. The prophet here sympathizes with the afflictions of his people. (Compare Jer. iv. 19. ix. 1.)

Ver. 5. *For it is a day of trouble.*] Compare xxxvii. 3.

Breaking down the walls, and of crying to the mountains.] Some are breaking down the walls of the houses in the suburbs; (see ver. 10.) whilst others are giving continual alarms to those that guard the passes of the mountains, and calling to them stoutly to maintain their posts: (see Psal. cxxi. 1. Jer. iii. 23.) the latter part of the verse may be understood of those who encourage one another to flee to the mountains for refuge. (Compare Jer. xiii. 16. xvi. 16.)

Ver. 6. *And Elam bare the quiver.*] The Persians were famous archers: (see Jer. xlix. 35.) and were at this time subjects to the king of Assyria, and made up part of the army wherewith Sennacherib besieged Jerusalem, that army consisting of several sorts of nations. (See xxix. 7.)

With chariots of men and horsemen.] Or horses; for so the word *parashim* often signifies. (See xxi. 7. 9. xxviii. 28. 1 Sam. viii. 11.)

And Kir uncovered the shield.] This Kir is a city in Media: (see 2 Kings xvi. 9. Amos i. 5.) the Medes were at that time subjects to the king of Assyria. (See 2 Kings xvii. 6.) There was another city of the same name in Moab. (See xv. 1.)

Ver. 8. *And he discovered the covering of Judah, and thou didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest.*] Mr. White hath given the best sense of this verse, translating it thus, *And he (i. e.* the enemy) *shall dismantle the fortified cities of Judah, and in that day shalt thou look to the armour of the house of the forest; i. e.* when you see the army of the enemy approach, you will think it high time to provide for your defence: or else, retaining the common translation, we may explain the words to this sense: When the enemy hath discovered the weakness of those fortresses in which you placed your trust, then you will bethink yourselves of providing arms for your defence. *The house of the forest* was an armoury within the city of Jerusalem, as appears from hence; because the golden shields, which were carried before Solomon when he went to the temple, were laid up in this place. (See 1 Kings x. 17. compared with 2 Chron. xii. 9—11.) It was called the *house of the forest*, or the *house of the forest of Lebanon*, (1 Kings viii. 2.) as some think, because of its stately groves and walks, which resembled the forest of Lebanon.

Ver. 9. *Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many.*] At the same time you will view the walls of Jerusalem, and repair the breaches of it. (See 2 Chron. xxxii. 5.) The *city of David* was that part of Jerusalem, which was properly called Zion, which David won from the Jebusites, and called it by his own name. (See 2 Sam. v. 7. 9. 1 Kings viii. 1.)

And ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool.] There were two pools or lakes which supplied Jerusalem with water; the upper pool, (see vii. 9. xxxvi. 2.) called Gihon, 2 Chron. xxxii. 30. called likewise the old pool, ver. 11. of this chapter: and the lower pool, mentioned in

this verse. Hezekiah made a conveyance to bring down the waters from the upper pool into this lower. (2 Chron. xxxii. 30.)

Ver. 10. *And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem,* &c.] Or marked out what houses should be pulled down for the better fortifying the walls of the city.

Ver. 11. *Ye also made a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool.*] The ditch was a channel to carry off the waters from the upper to the lower pool. (See ver. 9.) The outer wall of these two seems to have been built now, to fortify the city against the siege which they expected. (See 2 Chron. xxxii. 5. Jer. xxxix. 4.)

[*Ye gathered together the waters of the lower pools.*] Gihon and Siloam were both one fountain, which had two streams issuing out of it, called the *upper* and *lower pool.* These two streams run in two contrary courses, one eastward, the other westward. See Dr. Lightfoot, vol. i. p. 667. and his Chorographical Table, at the end of the second volume.]

But ye have not looked unto the Maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.] In your adversity you have not looked up to God, by whose blessing upon David this city was built, where he promised to place his name, and to continue his especial protection over it. God is said to make and to build cities, as well as to destroy them. (See xxxvii. 26. Jer. xxxi. 4. 28.)

And in that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, &c.] God's judgments did loudly call upon men to humble themselves before him, and try to avert his anger by fasting, and other acts of humiliation.

And to baldness.] See note on xv. 2.

Ver. 13. *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die.*] The words of desperate persons, expecting nothing but death, who thought it in vain to call upon God, because they looked upon their case as incapable of relief, and therefore resolved to spend that little time they had to live as merrily as they could: such a story is told by Livy, of the senators of Capua; who having revolted from the Romans to Hannibal, and despairing of mercy when the city was retaken, made a feast together, and poisoned themselves at the end of the entertainment, (lib. xxvi. cap. 14.)

Ver. 14. *Surely this iniquity shall not be purged away from you till you die.*] This your despair of God's mercy, and hardening your hearts against his judgments, shall never be forgiven you: (compare 1 Sam. xv. 35. 2 Sam. vi. 23. Job xxvii. 5.) but whatever respite you may have at present, you shall at length die in your iniquity.

Ver. 15. *Go, get thee to this treasurer, to Shebna, who is over the house.*] Shebna had the chief management of the king's household and family; he was removed afterward to be scribe, or secretary, a place of less honour and dignity, and Eliakim was put into his place, (xxxvi. 4. 22.)

Ver. 16. *What hast thou here?*] Or, *What hast thou to do here?* Compare the expression here with Jer. ii. 18. This Shebna seems to have been a foreigner, and not well-affected to the Jewish religion.

Or whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre?] What relations or family hast thou here, that thou art ambitious of raising thee a stately sepulchre, or burial-place, for thyself and thine heirs?

And that graveth a habitation for himself in a rock.] A monument that should preserve his memory to all succeeding times; the expression denotes security: (see Numb. xxiv. 21.) sepulchres were commonly hewn out in rocks. (See Matt. xxvii. 60.)

Ver. 17. *The Lord will carry thee away with a mighty captivity.*] See the following verse.

And will surely cover thee.] Persons under disgrace or condemnation had their heads covered. (See 2 Sam. xv. 30. Esth. vii. 8. Jer. xiv. 3.)

But if we follow our marginal reading, that refers both the sentences of this verse to that robe of state which belonged to Shebna, as ruler of the king's household. (Compare ver. 21.)

Ver. 18. *He will surely violently turn thee and toss thee like a ball into a large country.*] Some interpret the words thus; *He will wrap thee up close like a ball or bundle, and carry thee captive into a large or wide country:* but I am apt to think the Septuagint, with whom the Chaldee paraphrase agrees, have given the best sense of this place, who join the latter part of the foregoing verse with this, and translate both verses to this purpose: *Behold, the Lord shall carry thee away with a mighty captivity, and shall divest thee of thy robe; he shall strip thee of thy glorious coronet, and shall cast thee out like a ball into a wide country.* The grammarians observe, that many verbs in Hebrew have two contrary significations: so *sheresh* signifies to *take root,* and to *pluck up by the roots; chata* to *sin,* and to *make an atonement for sin; berek* to *bless,* and to *curse; nephesh* a *soul* or *living creature,* and a *dead carcass:* (see Dr. Pocock's Not. Miscellan. cap. 2.) and by the same reason the words used here, *natah* and *tsanaph,* may signify both to *adorn* and to *disrobe:* we may farther observe, that the verb *tsanaph,* and the noun derived from it, are in all other places used only for adorning the head with a mitre.

Like a ball.] According to the interpretation just now given, the expression here is elliptical, and runs thus in the Hebrew, *He shall strip thee of thy coronet, like a ball into a large country;* which ellipsis is to be supplied thus; *and shall cast thee like a ball,* &c. See a like instance, Psal. lxxxix. 39. "Thou hast profaned the crown of thy servant, by casting it to the ground;" so our interpreters do rightly supply the sense. (See likewise Pool's Synopsis upon Isa. vii. 6.)

Into a large country: there shalt thou die.] Where thou shalt live and die in obscurity.

And there the chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's house.] The honours thou didst arrive to, shall turn to the reproach of thy lord who preferred thee.

Ver. 19. *And from thy state shall he pull thee down.*] That is, thou shalt be pulled down, the active being put for the impersonal, by a usual Hebraism. Thus Exod. vii. 13. our translation reads, *He hardened Pharaoh's heart;* but ix. 35. the same words are better translated, *The heart of Pharaoh was hardened.* (See xliv. 18.)

Ver. 21. *And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle.*] A girdle was a mark of dignity, and therefore worn both by priests, (Exod. xxviii. 40.) and princes, (1 Sam. xviii. 4.) and designed for both strength and honour. (See notes on v. 27. xi. 5.)

He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.] This denotes his tender care of those who were under his government. Princes themselves sometimes style their chief ministers by the name of parents:

frequent instances of which may be seen in the rescripts of Constantine and his successors to their *Præfecti Prætorio*, in the Theodosian and Justinian codes.

Ver. 22. *The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder.*] A key is an emblem of trust; and the expression alludes to the fashion of keys in old time, which were long, and made like a hook, and then laid upon the shoulder, and worn there as the badge of an office: concerning which custom, see Huetius Demonstr. Evang. prop. ix. cap. 105.

So he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.] Herein Eliakim was an eminent type of Christ, who, *as a son over his own house*, hath an unlimited authority in the church. (See Rev. iii. 7. compared with Matt. xvi. 19.) The latter part of the expression is applied to God, Job xii. 14. Indeed, the words imply such a sovereign and absolute power, as cannot belong to any person, but such a one as is God as well as man.

Ver. 23. *And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place.*] Not to be moved as his predecessor was. (Compare Ezra ix. 8.)

Ibid. and Ver. 24. *And he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house*, &c.] He shall be an honour to his family; they shall all depend upon him for promotion, from the highest to the lowest, from those who are advanced to the more honourable offices, to those who are designed for the meaner services, as the like metaphor, 2 Tim. ii. 20.

Ver. 25. *In that day shall the nail that was fastened in the sure place be removed.*] Shebna, that thought himself so secure in his station, shall be displaced. (See ver. 23.)

And the burden that was upon it shall be cut off.] All his dependants shall fall with him, and be removed from those posts which they obtained by his interest and favour.

CHAP. XXIII.

ARGUMENT.

This prophecy may best be understood of Nebuchadnezzar's laying siege to Tyre, and taking it; which is likewise particularly foretold by Ezekiel, xxvi. 7, &c. with the two following chapters. This siege lasted thirteen years, as Josephus shews out of Philostratus, and the Phœnician annals, (Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11. *ad fin.* and lib. i. contr. Appion. p. 1046.) Upon which account, God promises Nebuchadnezzar the kingdom of Egypt, as a reward for the great pains and service he undertook in the siege of Tyre, (Ezek. xxix. 18.)

Ver. 1. *HOWL, ye ships of Tarshish.*] The phrase signifies any merchant-ships, particularly those that trade into Spain. (See note on ii. 16.) As Tyre was one of the most famous marts in the world in those times; so the destruction of it must be a great loss to all merchant-adventurers.

So that there is no house, no entering in.] Every house, or warehouse in Tyre, is shut up, and all trade ceased. (Compare xxiv. 10.)

From the land of Chittim it is revealed unto them.] Chittim, in Scripture, signifies all the countries lying upon the Mediterranean Sea, called *the isles of Chittim*, Ezek. xxvii. 6. The words import, that the news of the siege of Tyre should be dispersed into all the trafficking parts upon the Egean and Ionian seas, and so reach the ears of those that trade in the most western coasts. The sense which the Septuagint give of the latter part of the verse, is easy, and reconcileable with the Hebrew: thus they render it, *It is laid waste, so that none come* [to wit] *out of the land of Chittim; it is carried away captive.* Bochart understands the word *Chittim* here, and at the twelfth verse, of the Cutheans, or Babylonians; and then taking the verb *niglah*, for *being carried captive*, as the Septuagint and Vulgar Latin explain it, the sense runs very easy thus, *From the land of the Cutheans doth their captivity come.*

Ver. 2. *Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle.*] Tyre was placed in an island: (see Ezek. xxvii. 3. xxviii. 2.) and it is here commanded to be *still*, or silent, to signify that all that noise which is heard in populous cities should cease, and the place be reduced to solitude. (Compare xiv. 11. xv. 1. xxii. 2. Jer. xxv. 10, 11.)

[*Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle.*] This expression is rather a description of the New Tyre than of the Old; the new city being built upon an island (see Ezek. xxvii. 3. and the Argument to the notes upon chap. xxvi. of that prophecy): but it is certain, Nebuchadnezzar only destroyed the old city. So the word *isle* seems to be used here improperly, as it is in many other texts, for a maritime place or town. See the note on xi. 11.]

Thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished.] Tyre and Zidon were famous for merchandise and navigation, and helped to enrich each other.

Ver. 3. *And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, is her revenue.*] The English translation, published under queen Elizabeth, gives us a clearer sense of this verse thus, *The seed of Nilus growing by the abundance of waters, and the harvest of the river was her revenues.* Tyre made herself rich by transporting corn out of Egypt into foreign countries. The overflowing of the Nile (called *Sihor* here, and Jer. ii. 18.) made Egypt so fruitful, that it was looked upon as one of the great granaries of the world, and afterward supplied Rome with a great part of the corn which was spent in that mighty city, as it did Constantinople in following times. Whereupon the government of Egypt was looked upon as an extraordinary trust, and always reserved to the disposal of the emperor. (See Tacitus, Annal. ii. and Histor. lib. i. statim ab initio.) By *the river* is meant the Nile, by way of excellence. (See note on xi. 15.)

Ver. 4. *Be ashamed, O Zidon.*] Zidon was a partaker both in the prosperity and adversity of Tyre. (See ver. 2. 12.)

For the sea hath spoken, even the strength of the sea, saying, &c.] Tyre is called the *sea*, because its inhabitants looked upon the sea as their proper element; and the *strength of the sea*, because it was strong at sea, both by its situation and the strength of its naval forces; and the city is introduced here as bemoaning her desolate condition, that she is become as though she had never had any children or inhabitants, because they are now quite gone or destroyed.

Ver. 5. *As at the report concerning Egypt, so shall they be sorely pained at the report of Tyre.*] The words as they stand in our translation imply, that the Zidonians, (spoken of ver. 4.) or, in general, other neighbouring places, shall

be as much concerned at the ill news of the destruction of Tyre, as they were at the calamity of Egypt, mentioned chap. xix. But there is a difficulty, admitting this sense, because the destruction of Tyre, here spoken of, was before that of Egypt; if we mean that calamity of Egypt which is usually joined with the destruction of Tyre in the prophets. (See Jer. xxv. 19. 22. Ezek. xxix. 18, 19.) Therefore others read this verse thus, *As soon as the report of Tyre shall come to, or be heard in, Egypt, they shall be in great pain for it; viz.* because they exported their corn to Tyre, and made a gainful trade by it. (See ver. 3.) And this sense the Septuagint follow.

Ver. 6. *Pass ye over to Tarshish.*] Leave the place of your nativity, and betake yourselves for refuge to some of the ports which lie upon the Mediterranean Sea, (see ver. 1.) where the Tyrians used to traffic, and where they might hope to settle themselves. (See ver. 7. 12.) The Septuagint understand the place of Carthage, which was a colony transplanted from Tyre.

Howl, ye inhabitants of the isle.] See ver. 2.

Ver. 7. *Is this your joyous city.*] Great cities, being the centres of trade and wealth, are usually the seats of all kinds of gaiety and luxury. (See note on xxii. 2.)

Whose antiquity is of ancient days?] Tyre is spoken of as a strong city in the time of Joshua, (Josh. xix. 29.) Μετὰ Σιδόνα μεγίστη τῶν Φοινίκων καὶ ἀρχαιοτάτη πόλις Τύρος ἐστί, (Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 756.) *Next to Zidon, Tyre is the greatest and most ancient of all the Phœnician cities.*

Her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn.] The prophet speaks of Tyre as of a tender and delicate woman not used to hardships, who yet should be forced to travel on foot tedious journeys into foreign countries, being driven from her own habitation. (Compare xlvii. 2.)

Ver. 8, 9. *Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city?* &c.] Who but God, whose decrees none can frustrate? Whose purpose it is to bring down the pride of that topping city, who does vaunt itself as the queen of cities. (See Ezek. xxvii. 3. xxviii. 2. and compare Rev. xviii. 7.)

Ver. 9. *The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory.*] See ii. 11.

Ver. 10. *Pass through the land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish.*] According to this translation Tyre is called the daughter of Tarshish, because it was enriched by the sea-trade, especially the traffic which came from the Spanish or African coasts, as Huetius interprets the place, (lib. de Navigat. Solomon. cap. 3. numb. 9.) So the prophet here exhorts her inhabitants to make all possible speed, and with the swiftness of a river to get out of their own country, and from the reach of the enemy. But others translate the words, *Pass into thy land, O daughter of Tarshish,* and understand them of the city Tarshish, or the merchants of that place, as if it were an exhortation to them to return home. Their merchandise had formerly flowed in like a river into the ports of Tyre, but now that gainful traffic, their strength and support, would entirely cease. (Compare ver. 14.)

Ver. 11. *He stretched out his hand over the sea; he shook the kingdoms.*] The Lord, mentioned in the latter part of the verse, stretched out his hand over Tyre, called the *sea,* ver. 4. and the neighbouring kingdoms were frightened at the news of such a terrible judgment.

Ver. 12. *Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon.*] Tyre was probably a colony of Zidonians, and therefore called here the daughter of Zidon: colonies commonly retained the name of the mother-city: thus Rome was called New Troy, and Carthage the Tyrian city. (See Spanheim de Numismat. dissert. iv. p. 436, 437.) It is certain, that of the two cities Zidon was much the ancientest, being mentioned by Moses at the peopling of the world after the flood, (Gen. x. 19. and again, xlix. 13.) Afterward it is called by Joshua Great Zidon, (Josh. xi. 8.) Homer, likewise, takes notice of Zidon, but not of Tyre. The authority of Strabo is express to the same purpose: (See note upon ver. 7.) The prophet calls Tyre an *oppressed virgin,* because she was conquered, and, as it were, ravished by her enemies: whereas those cities which never came into a conqueror's hands are styled virgins, as having preserved their integrity. (See xxxvii. 22.)

Pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest.] See notes on ver. 1. 6. Bochart understands the Cutheans by Chittim (which word is here written Chittijm), as he does Chittim in the first verse: so the sense of the verse will be, Thou shalt be carried captive to Cutha, or Susiana: (see 2 Kings xvii. 24.) a province lying upon the east of Euphrates; but *there also shalt thou have no rest:* but God's judgments shall still pursue thee.

Ver. 13. *Behold the land of the Chaldeans.*] Even the Chaldeans themselves, who are your conquerors, their prosperity will not be perpetual: as their beginning was small, so their destruction will come to pass in due time.

This people was not, till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness.] Within the memory of man, Baladan, or Nabonassor, (see xxxix. 1.) founded Babylon, to be the metropolis of the Scenites, that dwelt in tents before, dispersed through Arabia Deserta: (see xiii. 20.) and it came by degrees to be raised to that strength and magnificence in which now we see it. This is Sir John Marsham's interpretation of this difficult text. (Chron. Can. p. 478. edit. fol.)

Though Babylon was as old as Nimrod, (Gen. x. 10. xi. 9.) yet it might undergo several turns of fortune, as most other cities have done, and after it was gone to decay, be restored by Baladan, as it was afterward rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar, (Dan. iv. 30.) Thus Rehoboam is said to have built Hebron, (2 Chron. xi. 10.) which yet was one of the oldest cities in the world. (See Numb. xiii. 22.)

He brought it to ruin.] *The Lord of hosts.* (See ver. 9.) Some translate the words thus, *It is brought to ruin:* the active being put for the impersonal. (See note on xxii. 19.) The prophet foresees the destruction of Babylon, mentioned chap. xiii. and speaks of it here as already come to pass: a way of speaking usual in the prophets to denote the certainty of the event. (See xxi. 9.)

[*He brought it to ruin.*] The people of the Chaldeans, an upstart nation, have brought Tyre to ruin. So Vitringa upon the place. (See the note upon ver. 1. and Ezek. xxvi. 7.) By the Assyrian, in the former part of the verse, the same commentator understands Ninus.]

Ver. 14. *Howl, ye ships of Tarshish.*] See ver. 1. 10.

Ver. 15. *Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king.*] The word *king* is put here for kingdom, as the same word is used, Dan. vii. 17. viii. 21. Thus, Rev. xvii. 10. *seven kings* are seven governments

succeeding one another. So this expression denotes the duration of the Babylonish monarchy, whose dominion over all the neighbouring countries should last seventy years; and when that time was expired, the Tyrians, with other people, oppressed by the Babylonian government, should recover their ancient liberty. (Compare Jer. xxv. 9—12. 22. xxvii. 3. 6, 7.)

[*Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years.*] The destruction of Tyre was some years after that of Jerusalem. (See Dr. Prideaux, ad an. A. C. 573.) But the prophet Jeremy seems to confine the devastations of all those countries which Nebuchadnezzar conquered, to the space of seventy years, at which time an end should be put to the Babylonish empire. (See Jer. xxv. 9. 11, 12.) But there are several ways of computing those seventy years. See the note upon Zech. i. 12.]

Ver. 16. *Take a harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten,* &c.] The imperative is here put for the future. (See note on ii. 9.) Cities are often compared to women, (see ver. 12. Jer. vi. 2.) and sometimes to harlots, by reason of those vices which too much prevail in great and rich cities, and infect those that resort to them. Lewd women are commonly described in ancient authors as skilful in music, which is one of the arts that they used to inveigle men into their company. The expressions in this verse, as well as those which follow, of *Tyre's committing fornication with all the kingdoms of the world,* signify the several arts which she had to entice merchants to trade with her, the frauds she made use of in managing her trade, and the luxury which her traffic promoted. Compare Rev. xviii. 3, 9. where the same expressions are applied in a spiritual sense to mystical Babylon.

Ver. 18. *And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness unto the Lord.*] The sense of this verse may be, that several of the Tyrians in aftertimes shall become proselytes to the Jewish religion, and shall devote part of their substance to the service of the temple at Jerusalem. (See the note upon xlv. 14.) But there is no necessity of supposing that this part of the prophecy should be fulfilled just upon the restoration of Tyre; for it is usual for the prophets to join together things relating to the same place or people, though the fulfilling the several parts of the prophecy may belong to several different ages. (See iv. 2.) And this I take to be the case here. The prophets commonly express heathens and idolaters in general by some remarkable name, as that of Egypt, Babylon, and the like. (See the note on xi. 14.) In this sense I suppose the name of Tyre to be used in this verse, and in the same sense the *daughter of Tyre* is understood by most interpreters upon Psalm xlv. 12. not so as to exclude that particular city, but withal to signify that both that place and many others which were strangers to the true religion, should at length be converted, and consecrate a great part of their wealth and substance to the service of God. (See notes on xviii. 7.)

Her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord.] Her riches shall be set apart for the maintenance of those that attend upon God's service: an allusion to the office of the priests and Levites, who by turns gave constant attendance at the temple.

To eat sufficiently.] The expression alludes to those feasts which the Jews made at Jerusalem of their first-fruits and other holy things: and of which the priests and Levites had a particular share. (See Deut. xii. 18, 19. xiv. 23. 27.)

CHAP. XXIV.

ARGUMENT.

After the several denunciations of God's judgments upon the Jews, and all the neighbouring countries, contained in the foregoing chapters, from the thirteenth onward; in this the prophet gives a general description of the state of that part of the world, especially of the ten tribes, whose country was ruined, and themselves carried captive, by Shalmaneser, under these calamities: but withal he uses such expressions as plainly denote the general destruction of the world at the last day: as indeed all God's particular judgments are earnests and forerunners of the general judgment. (See note on xiii. 10.)

Ver. 1. *BEHOLD, the Lord maketh the earth empty.*] The Hebrew word *haärets,* is promiscuously rendered in this chapter by our interpreters, either *earth* or *land:* and may be taken in a larger or narrower sense, as the context inclines us to understand it.

Ver. 2. *And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest.*] Or, *the prince,* as the word does likewise signify. This and the following expressions denote, that all orders and conditions shall be equally involved in the same common calamity.

Ver. 3. *The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled.*] Shall be deprived both of its riches and inhabitants.

Ver. 4. *The haughty people of the earth do languish.*] These suffer most under such calamities, as having most to lose, and not being used to hardships. (See ii. 12.)

Ver. 5. *The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof.*] The contagion of sin infecteth the very ground, and bringeth a curse upon it, (see ver. 6.) making it obnoxious to God's judgments. (See Gen. iii. 17. Numb. xxxv. 33. Psal. cvii. 34.)

Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.] So the wicked *horn* in Daniel is said to *change times and laws; i. e.* to abrogate God's laws and the ordinances of his service, and substitute new ones, (Dan. vii. 25.) By the *everlasting covenant,* is meant that covenant which God made with the Jews at Mount Sinai; (see Exod. xxiv. 7, 8.) and the expression alludes to Gen. xvii. 7. where God calls the covenant between him and Abraham, *an everlasting covenant, berith olam,* in the Hebrew: because it was to endure for a long succession of years, called *olam* in that language, and to last till the new *olam,* or the age of the Messias: (see note on ii. 2.) and then was to be more eminently completed in the spiritual seed of Abraham.

Ver. 6. *Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned.*] Are destroyed by fire and sword, and entirely consumed. (Compare xlii. 25.)

Ver. 7. *The new wine mourneth; the vine languisheth.*] There is a destruction of the vineyards, and the fruits of the earth are consumed by hostile invasions. (Compare xvi. 8, 9. Joel i. 10. 12.)

Ver. 8. *The mirth of tabrets ceaseth.*] There is no place for mirth or the expressions of it when men are under great calamities. (Compare Jer. vii. 34. xv. 9. xxv. 10. Ezek. xxvi. 13. Hos. ii. 11.)

Ver. 9. *They shall not drink wine with a song.*] Those that can command wine under this scarcity will have no heart to drink it; nor will it be able to cheer their spirits under such afflictions.

Ver. 10. *The city of confusion is broken down.*] The word *tohu*, which our English translation renders *confusion*, signifies likewise desolation; (see xxxiv. 11.) and this sense of the word is most proper here: as if it had been said, Every city is the image of desolation. (Compare ver. 12. and xxv. 2.) Some understand by *the city*, Samaria; the head of the kingdom of Israel, which was now ruined by Shalmaneser.

Ver. 13. *When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive-tree,* &c.] Compare xvii. 5, 6. When the prophets denounce God's judgments upon his people, they commonly conclude with a promise of still reserving *a remnant;* though they were to be but few in comparison of those who are involved in the general destruction. (See notes on i. 9. iv. 2.)

Ver. 14. *They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord.*] They shall magnify the power of God, which appeared so signally in their deliverance.

They shall cry aloud from the sea.] Or, *from the isles of the sea,* as it is expressed in the following verse; *i. e.* from the isles of the western or Mediterranean Sea, whither many of the Jews were scattered, and from whence they should return into their own country in the latter days. (See note on xi. 11.) The Hebrew word *Ijam* signifies the *West* as well as the sea, because the Mediterranean Sea lay westward of Judea; (see Josh. xxiii. 4.) and so the word is rendered by some interpreters here. (Compare Hos. xi. 10. where the word is translated the *west*.) This verse is to be understood of the final restoration of the Jews, as some other parts of the chapter plainly relate to the consummation of all things. (See ver. 19, 20. 23.) The prophets take hints from the state of things in or near their own time, to describe what shall come to pass in the latter times; as hath been before observed upon x. 20. (See likewise the note upon xxx. 19.)

Ver. 15. *Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires.*] In the fiery trials of affliction, out of which the just shall be delivered as out of the midst of the fire. (Compare xliii. 2. and see the note on iv. 2.)

In the isles of the sea.] See the note upon ver. 14.

Ver. 16. *From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous.*] *From the uttermost part of the earth* means the same as *from the isles of the sea,* in the foregoing verses; from these utmost regions have we heard the joyful acknowledgment of the righteous, praising God for their deliverance, and for all the glorious things he hath done for them; making them thereby remarkable in the eyes of the world, as his favourites. Some understand the word *righteous* of God, as if it were *glory to the righteous God:* but we may observe, that the word *Tsebi* is often taken for *Judea,* as being *the glory of all lands,* as Ezekiel speaks, xx. 6. where he uses this very word. (Compare Dan. viii. 9. xi. 16. 41. Jer. iii. 19.) And if we take the word in this sense, the meaning of the place will be, that the substance of their hymns were, that now the promised land should be restored to the righteous seed of Abraham: which confirms the interpretation given of ver. 14. that the context relates to the final restoration of the Jews.

But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!] *Leanness* sometimes signifies God's plagues or judgments, which are like a consumption of the vitals. (See x. 16. xvii. 4. Psal. cvi. 16.) Or the word may signify the sins and defects of God's people, the thoughts of which caused inward grief and consumption of heart to the prophet: and it very much abated the joy which he had conceived upon the miraculous deliverance of the righteous, when he considered how many were involved in the calamities of the wicked.

The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously.] The word *bogedhim* often signifies the transgressors of, or apostates from, God's law; so it is used xlviii. 8. Jer. v. 11. and elsewhere: and in this sense the Septuagint understand it here; which agrees best with the scope of the place, and implies, that iniquity should very much abound, even among the professors of the true religion, and should bring down God's judgments in a terrible manner upon great numbers of them.

Ver. 17. *Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth!*] It seems to be a proverbial expression, denoting divers sorts of calamities, some of which if men happen to escape, they should fall into others as bad. (See Jer. xlviii. 43.) As if a man, flying from his enemy out of fear, should fall into a pit; and escaping from thence should be taken in a snare. (Compare Amos v. 15.) The three Hebrew words, *pachad, pachath,* and *pach,* are a paronomasia, or have an affinity in sound with each other, which cannot be translated into another language. Such allusions are sometimes used by the sacred writers, (see Bishop Sanderson's Sermon on Eccles. vii. 1. No. 3.) and are not disdained by the greatest masters of wit and elegance: witness that noted passage between Julian the apostate and St. Basil; they were acquainted, as having studied together at Athens; and the former, having read over a certain treatise recommended by St. Basil to his perusal, gave this magisterial censure of it, Ἀνέγνων, Ἔγνων, Κατέγνων. To which that eloquent father returned this smart repartee, Ἀνέγνως, οὐκ ἔγνως· εἰ γὰρ ἔγνως, οὐ κατέγνως. (St. Basil's Epist. 207, 208.) The beauty of these sentences cannot be translated into another language.

Ver. 18. *For the windows from on high are opened, the foundations of the earth do shake.*] A plain allusion to the description of the deluge, Gen. vii. 11. The prophet describes the destruction of the present world at the last day by expressions taken from the destruction of the old world; for, to use St. Peter's words, "As the world which then was, perished by water, so the heavens and the earth which are now, are reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," 2 Pet. iii. 6, 7. (See the notes upon the following verses.)

This one text does sufficiently confute an extravagant notion of one of the great libertines in opinion of the present age, who would fain persuade the world that the Pentateuch was writ a considerable time after the captivity of the ten tribes; a fancy which hath not one probable argument to maintain it, and may be confuted almost out of

every writer of the Old Testament from Moses downward.

Ver. 19. *The earth is utterly broken down; the earth is clean dissolved; the earth is moved exceedingly.*] A farther allusion to the deluge, especially if we admit of a late ingenious hypothesis, which maintains that the destruction of the earth at the deluge, was chiefly caused by the breaking down of its arch, and its falling into the abyss.

This, and the foregoing verse, may be thought an hyperbolical description of the desolations which wars and other plagues made in Judea, and the neighbouring countries; as if God had rained down vengeance upon sinners from above, and heaven and earth had conspired to punish the wicked: and we may observe, that the prophet Jeremy describes the like calamities in much the same expressions, (Jer. iv. 23, &c.) But the words do in their full import evidently point at the judgment of the last day, as in the following verses more plainly appears.

Ver. 20. *The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard.*] This may be understood of its inhabitants, who shall be at their wits' end for fear. (Compare xix. 14. Psal. cvii. 27.)

And shall be removed like a cottage.] It is the world to come alone that hath foundations that cannot be shaken. (Heb. xii. 27.)

And the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it.] See the note on ver. 5.

Ver. 21. *The Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.*] As the two foregoing verses plainly respect the dissolution of all things, so this and those that follow, do evidently look the same way. The words here import the overthrow of all worldly states and governments: kings and princes being expressed in the prophetical style, by the name of sun, moon, and stars; (see note on xiii. 10.) and then by analogy, tributary princes, and other inferior rulers, will be meant by the *kings of the earth upon the earth*, as placed in a station below the former, and subject to their influence, as the lower world is to that of the heavenly constellations. (Compare x. 8.) Some commentators understand by the *host of the high ones which are on high*, the devil and his angels, who are described by St. Paul by the names of *principalities and powers*, dwelling *in high* or *heavenly places*, and having *power in the air*, or lower region of the world: (Ephes. ii. 2. vi. 12.) and then by the *kings of the earth* must be meant those earthly princes who are influenced by them, and are their instruments in abetting idolatry, or persecuting God's truth. The evil spirits are sometimes represented as part of the heavenly host, both with respect to their original dignity, and because they are the instruments of Providence, and have a command over the inferior world, as far as God thinks fit to permit. (See 1 Kings xxii. 19, &c. Job i. 6. Rev. xii. 7.) And in this sense some understand that contest between the angels, mentioned Dan. x. 13. as if it were between the good and bad angels.

Ver. 22. *And they shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered together in the pit*, (or dungeon: see li. 14, &c.)] The verse alludes to the custom of kings, who used to confine the chief commanders of their enemies whom they take prisoners, and reserve them to some extraordinary day of triumph, and then bring them out to public punishment. The word *visiting* is used for punishing, as well as for remembering with grace and favour. Thus this very phrase, *After many days thou shalt be visited*, is used, Ezek. xxxviii. 8. (See likewise Prov. xix. 23.) I cannot find any explication of this verse so agreeable to the natural sense of the words, as that of a late learned writer upon the Revelation; (xix. 6.) who explains it of the kings of the earth, who made war with Christ and his saints at Armageddon, (Rev. xvi. 16. xix. 19.) and being there discomfited, lay languishing under the sentence of condemnation till after the battle of Gog and Magog, (xx. 8—10.) when they were, together with Satan their leader, punished with everlasting destruction.

Ver. 23. *Then shall the moon be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion.*] If the expressions of the *moon's being confounded, and the sun ashamed*, be understood literally, the sense must be, that the sun and moon should be darkened and give no light; a circumstance that will certainly attend the last day. (See Joel iii. 15. Matt. xxiv. 29.) But I rather think the place to be parallel with lx. 19. and Rev. xxi. 23. where it is said, that when the kingdom of God shall come, his glory shall shine out so illustriously, that there shall be no need of the light of the sun and moon; upon which account they are represented here as *ashamed* and *confounded* to see their light eclipsed by a greater.

When the Lord shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.] We need not understand this and such-like expressions in a literal sense with the Jews, but are sufficiently warranted, by the authority of the New Testament, to explain them of the triumphant state of the church, when the saints shall reign with God and Christ in glory. (See Gal. iv. 26. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xxi. 2, 3. and the note upon ii. 2.)

And before his ancients.] Or, *in the presence of his ancients:* an allusion to the elders of Israel, and Moses, and their succeeding kings at the head of them, who were the governors and representatives of the whole nation. In like manner heaven is represented as the general assembly of the saints, with God and Christ at the head of them. (See Psal. lxxxix. 7. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. iv. 5. and vii. 9—11.) Part of this heavenly company are called by the name of *elders* or *ancients*, Rev. iv. 4. and elsewhere, particularly xix. 4. 6. where there is a plain allusion to this place.

CHAP. XXV.

ARGUMENT.

Some parts of the last chapter having a relation to the end of the world, we may, without breaking in upon the connexion of the prophecy, suppose the triumphant hymns, in this and the next chapter, principally to regard the same time, and to be of the same nature, with those recorded Rev. xi. 17. xv. 3. xix. 6.

Ver. 1. *THY counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.*] What thou hast formerly decreed, thou dost in due time punctually fulfil.

Ver. 2. *For thou hast made of a city a heap.*] That is, of several cities, such as Babylon, Tyre, Samaria, and others, mentioned in the foregoing chapters. (Compare xxiv. 10. 12. and see the note on xxvi. 5. xxvii. 10.)

A palace of strangers.] By *strangers* are meant *heathens, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*, as St. Paul calls

them, and enemies to it: (see ver. 4, 5.) or, as a learned friend hath suggested to me, this appellation very properly belongs to Babylon, which was built for the strangers and sojourners, who before dwelt in tents, as wanderers in Arabia Deserta. (See the notes upon xxiii. 13.)

Ver. 3. *Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee.*] The word *naz*, which is translated *strong*, does likewise signify *fierce*, and so it is rendered by our interpreters, xix. 4. and so it should be translated in Samson's riddle, Judg. xiv. 14. *Out of the fierce came forth sweetness.* I take this verse to be parallel to that of Psal. lxxvi. 10. *The fierceness of man shall turn to thy praise:* the humbling of these potent cities and terrible nations, or *terrible ones*, as they are called ver. 4, 5. will be a means of bringing them to give glory to God, and to acknowledge that the *Most High rules over the children of men.*

Ver. 4. *For thou hast been—a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat,* &c.] Compare iv. 6. xxxii. 2. This verse may be applied to the deliverance which God vouchsafed to the Jews from their formidable enemy Sennacherib: but I presume it may more fitly be expounded of the church's deliverance from the tyranny of mystical Babylon, (see xiv. 3, &c.) and the insults of all her enemies; when the saints shall sing the song of Moses, as those who are delivered out of a state of bondage and slavery. (See Rev. xv. 3.)

Ver. 5. *Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place, even the heat with the shadow of a cloud.*] Lud. de Dieu hath translated the words more clearly thus, *The noise* [or tumult] *of strangers is as the heat in a dry place, thou shalt bring down* (or abate) *the heat with the shadow of a cloud:* the prophet compares the oppressions of those strangers and infidels to an excessive drought, which parcheth up every thing, ver. 4. and here he says, that God will overshadow his people, and protect them till this tyranny be overpast: our English translation adheres more strictly to that distinction of the sentences, which the Hebrew accents point out; but we do not find, that the ancient versions took any notice of those distinctions; and our own translation in some places neglects them, where the sense is clearer if we divide the sentences otherwise: indeed, the rabbins are not agreed what is the use of those accents, and therefore it seems a needless curiosity to lay any stress upon them.

The branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.] Some render *zemir*, the *rejoicing* of the terrible ones, &c.

Ver. 6. *And in this mountain.*] Called Mount Zion, xxiv. 23. (See the note there, and upon ii. 2.)

Shall the Lord of hosts make a feast of fat things, &c.] God's calling men by his grace, is often expressed in Scripture by the metaphor of inviting them to a feast: (see Prov. ix. 2. Matt. xxii. 4.) and the joys of heaven are described by the same metaphor, Luke xxii. 29. Rev. xix. 9. The same representation is used here, and implies that God will bestow his grace in a plentiful manner upon his people, and fill them with spiritual delights, when the Jews shall be converted, and the fulness of the gentiles shall come into the church. The words may likewise allude to those religious feasts which were kept at Jerusalem, when the Jews were commanded to *rejoice before the Lord.* (Deut. xii. 18. xiv. 26.)

Of fat things full of marrow.] An expression denoting the richest taste. (See Psal. lxiii. 5. Job xxxvi. 16.)

Of wines on the lees well refined.] Of wines that had been settled on the lees, and thereby enriched, and afterward drawn off for use.

Ver. 7. *And he will destroy—the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.*] *The face of the covering* is put for the *covering of the face*, by an hypallage usual in Scripture: the phrase may signify all tokens of mourning and sorrow, which were expressed by covering the face, or putting a veil upon it. (See note on xxii. 17.) If we take the words in this sense, they are equivalent to *wiping away the tears from off all faces*, in the following verse; or they may denote the taking away all ignorance and prejudice from men's minds, which St. Paul compares to a *veil*, (2 Cor. iii. 13, 14.) and the word *covering* is used in the same sense in this prophecy, (xxix. 10.) Mr. White is pleased to slight this interpretation, but I think it is every whit as proper a one as that which he produces out of Grotius, and he hath not thought fit to explain how *all people*, and *all the earth*, could be concerned in the terror which Sennacherib brought upon Jerusalem.

Ver. 8. *He will swallow up death in victory.*] Or, *for ever*, as the word *lanetsach* often signifies: St. Paul expounds this text of the general resurrection, and tells us it will not be *brought to pass* till then; (1 Cor. xv. 54.) whose authority, I think, ought to oblige every Christian to acquiesce in this interpretation: and they that strain their wits to find out some other meaning of the place, can offer nothing but what is forced and trifling.

And the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.] This too is applied by St. John to the heavenly state, Rev. vii. 17. xxi. 4. and will never be made good till then.

And the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth.] Or, *the reproach of his people*, as the phrase is translated, Micah vi. 16. That is, those reproaches which they endured under their several distresses and persecutions in divers parts of the world, which made their enemies scorn them, as persons despised and rejected by God himself. (Compare Psal. xlii. 10. Joel ii. 17.)

Ver. 10. *For in this mountain* [see ver. 6.] *shall the hand of the Lord rest.*] The church is called the place of God's rest, xi. 10. (see the note there); where his power in protecting his people shall visibly exert itself, as the words here import.

And Moab shall be trodden down under him, as straw is trodden down for the dunghill.] Or *in Madmenah*, as the margin reads, which was a city of Moab, (Jer. xlviii. 2.) Moab is put here for the enemies of the church in general. (See note on xi. 14.)

Ver. 11. *And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim.*] Some understand these words of Moab, and render them thus, *Although he spread forth his hands*, &c. that is, though he do all he can to save himself, as swimmers use their utmost skill when they are in danger of drowning, yet God *shall bring down his pride.* Others interpret the whole verse of God; that he should stretch forth his hands, and reach his enemies wherever they are. The expression, *in the midst of them*, or, *in the midst thereof*, as the Hebrew word signifies, favours the latter exposition.

Together with the spoils of their hands.] With the goods

which they have unjustly taken from others to enrich themselves. Some render the words, *together with the strength of their hands.*

Ver. 12. *And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down.*] See xxvi. 5.

CHAP. XXVI.

See the Argument of the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 1. *IN that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah.*] In the church, in which sense Mount Zion and Jerusalem are often used. (See note on xxiv. 23.)

We have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.] The church is called the *city of God:* (see Psal. xlviii. 1. lxxxvii. 3. Heb. xii. 22.) and its strength consists in God's protection. (See Zech. ii. 5.) His salvation will supply the place of the strongest fortifications. (Compare lx. 18.)

Ver. 2. *Open ye the gates.*] The expression denotes the enlarging the number of believers, and bringing into the church *daily such as should be saved.* (Compare lx. 11. Rev. xxi. 25.) The prophet addresses himself to different persons in this song, and speaks sometimes in the singular and sometimes in the plural number, which is a grateful variety in poetry. (See the note upon lxiii. 1.)

That the righteous nation, which keepeth the truth, may enter in.] The Jews are styled *a holy nation,* Exod. xix. 6. which title more properly belongs to the Christian church, (2 Pet. ii. 9.) especially when it comes to be purged from its dross, and all the members of it to be righteous. (See lx. 21.)

Ver. 5. *He bringeth down them that dwell on high.*] God will subdue those that pride themselves in their worldly power and greatness, (see the note on ii. 11.) or trust in their castles and fortifications. (Compare xxv. 12.)

The lofty city, he layeth it low.] As the church is styled the city of God, so the society of infidels, or enemies to God's truth, is represented by the like similitude of a city, and typified under the figures of Sodom, Babylon, and that Jerusalem, which killed the prophets. (See Rev. xi. 8.) And this sense I think best agrees with the scope of the place, and with the parallel texts, xxxv. 2. 12. in neither of which places can the expression be understood of any one particular city.

Ver. 6. *The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy.*] The planting of the gospel was a remarkable triumph over the power and wisdom of men, when "God chose the foolish things of the world, to confound the things which were wise; and the weak things of the world, to confound the things which were mighty:" accordingly, under every advancement of Christ's kingdom, the poor and humble, those who have despised the world, and have been despised by it, are to have a particular share in the glory and success thereof. (See xi. 4. and the notes there: xxix. 19. lxi. 1. Zeph. iii. 12.) If we understand the words of that last and great triumph of the church over antichrist and all its enemies (as many of the expressions in this and the former chapter look that way), we may fitly explain the *poor and needy* here, to be those who shall escape out of the great tribulation which shall precede those times, mentioned Dan. xii. 1. Rev. vii. 14.

Ver. 7. *Thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.*] Or, *make plain the path of the just.* Thou, O God, who art the author of all goodness, dost direct his steps, and keep him from falling. (See Psal. xxxvii. 23, 24.) To this sense the verb *pilles* is used, Prov. iv. 26.

Ver. 8. *Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee.*] We have possessed our souls in patience under thy chastisements, (so *judgments* signify, ver. 9.) and have waited thy good time for our deliverance.

The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.] We desire and endeavour to stir up devout affections in our souls towards thee, to possess our minds with due apprehensions of the greatness of thy majesty, and the dependance we ought to have upon thy promises.

Ver. 9. *With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.*] And these devout affections we stir up within us, both late at night and early in the morning, when others give themselves up to sleep and drowsiness. (Compare Psal. v. 3. lxiii. 6. cxix. 55. 62. 147. cxxx. 6.)

For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.] The afflictions thou sendest have this good effect upon all but hardened sinners (see the following verse), that they engage men to seek God, and turn to him whom they have offended.

Ver. 10. *In the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.*] Though he lives among those who are remarkable for the regularity of their behaviour, among the people of God, or the *righteous nation,* mentioned ver. 2. yet will he not be prevailed upon by their example, or the many demonstrations God hath given of his power and providence. (See ver. 11.)

Ver. 11. *But they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people.*] They shall at last be forced to give God the glory, and take shame upon themselves for the envy and hatred they have shewed towards God's people. Some render the words thus, *They shall see thy zeal for the people, and be ashamed:* they shall be seized with confusion, when they see what a care and concern God hath for his people, and how visibly he exerts his power in protecting them, and punishing their adversaries. In this sense the Hebrew word *kinah* is used in other places. (See lxiii. 15. Zech. i. 14. viii. 2.)

Yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.] The Divine vengeance, which shall consume God's enemies like fire. (See Deut. iv. 24. xxxii. 22. Heb. x. 27.)

Ver. 12. *Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.*] All the mercies and deliverances we have hitherto enjoyed, proceed only from thee; which encourageth us to trust in thee for a happy issue out of all our troubles.

Ver. 13. *O Lord our God, other lords have had dominion over us,* &c.] Meaning the Assyrians, Babylonians, and all the oppressors of God's church in aftertimes: (compare 2 Chron. xii. 8.) but it is by thee only that we have been delivered out of their hands, and therefore upon thee alone will we call as our God and Saviour.

Ver. 14. *They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise.*] These oppressors of God's people shall never rise again, but *to shame and everlasting contempt,* as it is said, Dan. xii. 2. whereas thy *dead shall*

live and rise again: see ver. 19. of this chapter. The prophet sees the destruction of the wicked by faith, and speaks of it as a thing already done, (see note on xxi. 9.) though it be not yet brought to pass. (Compare ver. 19. 21.)

Therefore thou hast visited and destroyed them.] Or rather, *because thou hast visited*, &c. So the particle *lahen* is used, Numb. x. 31. xiv. 43.

Ver. 15. *Thou hast increased the nation, O Lord,—— thou hast removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.*] Thou hast spread or enlarged the church, called the *righteous nation*, ver. 2. (Compare ix. 3.) Here too the expressions are in the preter-perfect tense, as in the foregoing verse; but the words will be signally verified, when all God's *enemies shall be made his footstool, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of God and of his Christ*, (Rev. xi. 15.)

Ver. 16. *Lord, in trouble have they visited thee.*] Or, *remembered thee:* this and the two following verses represent the sense of God's people under their afflictions.

Ver. 17. *Like as a woman with child that draweth near the time of her travail is in pain*, &c.] A comparison often used to express men's consternation under public calamities. (See xiii. 8. Psal. xlviii. 6. Jer. iv. 31. vi. 24. xxx. 6. Hos. xiii. 13.)

Ver. 18. *We have as it were brought forth wind, we have not brought any deliverance in the earth.*] The latter part of the sentence explains the former: We have had no good issue, saith the prophet, of all our pangs and throes; they did not produce ease and deliverance, as in the case of travailing women, but all our own labours proved abortive; in vain we struggled with our enemies, who are still too mighty for us, and it is from God alone we must expect our deliverance. *To bring forth wind*, is much the same phrase with *feeding upon wind*, and *reaping wind*, (Hos. viii. 7. xii. 1.) and signifies to take a great deal of pains to no purpose.

Neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.] By our means: the *inhabitants of the world* mean the same as the *men of the world*, Psal. xvii. 14. The *world* is often taken for the wicked, who make the greatest part of the world, and have the greatest share in it. See John vii. 7. xii. 31. xv. 18. xvi. 8. xvii. 14. 16. 25.

Ver. 19. *Thy dead men shall live.*] This and the following verses contain God's answer to the former complaints of his people: wherein he promiseth them a revival, or new life, after all their miseries, which had brought them to death's door. The restoration of the Jews, whether after the Babylonish captivity, or after their dispersions in following times, is represented as a rising again from the dead by Ezekiel, xxxvii. 1, &c. And perhaps this verse may in its primary sense mean no more; especially if the last sentence of it, which our English renders, *and the earth shall cast out the dead*, be thus translated, *but thou wilt cast down the land of the oppressors;* which sense is followed by the Septuagint: the word *rephaim*, which is translated *the dead* in our English version, both here and in the fourteenth verse, signifies originally *giants*, and from thence is applied to wicked men or oppressors. But I doubt not but this verse was one of those texts upon which the ancient Jews grounded their belief of the resurrection, the hope of which was founded upon the writings of *the law and the prophets*, as St. Paul tells them, Acts xxiv. 14. And the Jews from ancient times have used the words of a text parallel to this, lxvi. 14. as a form over a person interred, at the same time throwing grass into the grave, as in some places with us they do rosemary, to testify their belief of a resurrection: and this is what the true and genuine sense of the words plainly imports.

Together with my dead body shall they arise.] The Hebrew runs thus, *my dead body* [or bodies] *shall arise:* the noun is in the singular number, and the verb in the plural; so the singular is taken distributively for every dead body; just as it is Psal. xii. 7. "Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve him from this generation for ever:" where the word *him* is taken for *every one of them*, as the sense is explained in the margin. These two sentences, *thy dead men shall live*, and *my dead bodies shall arise*, are equivalent; they are called the *church's dead* in the former sentence, as being members of that mystical body, and *God's* or *Christ's dead* in the latter sentence, from the interest he hath in them, and because he hath promised to raise them up at the last day. (See John vi. 39.)

Ver. 20. *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee.*] The words are an allusion to that command given to the Israelites in Egypt, *not to go out of the doors of their houses till morning*, when the destroying angel was to pass through the land of Egypt, (Exod. xii. 22, 23.) So God here promises to be a hiding-place to his people in the midst of those terrible judgments which should destroy his adversaries: this probably may be meant of those days of extraordinary trouble at the end of the world, spoken of Dan. xii. 1. Matt. xxiv. 21. in which many of the righteous should be saved, *but so as by fire; i.e.* by passing through a fiery trial; but the wicked should be finally destroyed; (2 Pet. iii. 7.) Whereupon the righteous are described as *coming out of great tribulation*, Rev. vii. 14. (See notes on ver. 6. of this chapter, and iv. 2. 4. and compare xxiv. 13, 14.)

Ver. 21. *For behold the Lord cometh out of his place.*] God is elsewhere described as coming down from heaven to judgment, because of the visible effects of his power and presence upon earth. (See Micah i. 3.)

To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.] These are called *the inhabitants of the world*, ver. 18. (See the note there.) These expressions, especially when compared with the context, must be of a larger extent, than barely to signify the Assyrian army destroyed before Jerusalem, (xxxvii. 36.) as Grotius and some others would confine the sense of the words.

The earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.] The number of the slain shall be so great, that the earth can neither give them burial, nor soak up their blood. (Compare xxxiv. 3. lxvi. 16. Rev. xiv. 20.)

CHAP. XXVII.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter treats of the same subject with the two former, and describes that happy state of the church, when Satan and his agents shall be subdued, the church shall be enlarged and purged from idolatry, and the Jews shall be restored: all which are circumstances attending those glorious days, which the prophets often foretell shall come to pass at or near the end of the world.

Ver. 1. *IN that day the Lord, with his sore, and great, and strong sword, shall punish leviathan.*] Tyrants and oppressors are often resembled to whales and other sea monsters, which devour the lesser fry: thus Pharaoh is called the *leviathan*, and the *dragon* or whale *in the waters;* (Psal. lxxiv. 13, 14. Isa. li. 9. Ezek. xxix. 3.) and so the expressions of this verse denote in general those worldly potentates, who have been the noted oppressors of God's people, and are, indeed, the instruments and types of Satan, so often called the *serpent* in Scripture, to whom some interpreters apply the expressions here. (See the following note.)

The piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.] The Hebrew word *beriah*, which our English translates *piercing*, is rendered in the margin *crossing; i. e.* having his mouth run out in length *like a bar:* it signifies likewise *running away*, and so it is rendered here by the Septuagint. But in Job xxvi. 13. where the same phrase occurs, they render it Δράκοντα τὸν Ἀποστάτην, *the apostate dragon*, as if they understood it of the devil. The word serpent is sometimes taken for a water animal: (see Amos ix. 13.) in which sense it is used here, and ranked with *leviathan*, and the *dragon* or whale *that is in the sea.* The word *tannin* signifies any great fish, such as a whale, and so is plainly taken Gen. i. 21. and Psal. cxlviii. 7. *Praise the Lord ye whales* (not dragons) *and all deeps.* Bochart thinks it sometimes signifies a *crocodile*, particularly Ezek. xxix. 3. xxxii. 2. The word is very fitly rendered *sea-monsters*, by our translators, Lam. iv. 3.

Ver. 2, 3. *In that day, sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I, the Lord, do keep it,* &c.] The church is often compared to a vineyard; (see v. 1. Jer. ii. 21. Matt. xxi. 33.) and red wine was esteemed the best and most generous sort of wine. (See Prov. xxiii. 31.) The import of these two verses is, That when the enemies of God's people are destroyed, among other songs and thanksgivings to God, this acknowledgment shall be made to the praise of God, and of the church which he protects, that as she is fruitful in all good works, so God continually watches over her and defends her from danger. (Compare Psal. lxxx. 8. 13.)

Ver. 4. *Fury is not in me: who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle,* &c.] These are still the words of God, who speaks to this purpose; Though fury doth not belong to me, and vengeance be called my *strange work:* (xxviii. 21.) yet if the briers and thorns, *i. e.* the wicked and incorrigible, bid defiance to me, they will find I shall soon destroy and consume them like fire; an instance of which I have given in the judgments mentioned xxvi. 21. xxvii. 1. By *briers* and *thorns* are meant *sinners.* (See note on ix. 18.)

Ver. 5. *Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me,* &c.] Or rather, let such a one return to me, and make his peace with me, who am a sure refuge and strength to all that fly to me for succour. (See xxv. 4.)

Ver. 6. *He shall cause them that come of Jacob, to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud.*] Compare xxxvii. 31. Hos. xiv. 5, 6. The words may be rendered, *In times to come he shall cause Jacob to take root.*

And fill the face of the world with fruit.] Compare iv. 2. These, and the foregoing words, are a description of the flourishing state of the Jews after their conversion, which shall be as new *life from the dead*, as St. Paul expresses it, (Rom. xi. 15.) and shall occasion the fulness of the gentiles coming into the church. All that Mr. White will have to be meant by these expressions is, *that the Jews, after Sennacherib's overthrow, shall flourish again, and grow populous.* The sense, he owns, must make the expressions very hyperbolical, or else his interpretation will hardly pass for a literal one.

Ver. 7. *Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him?*] *Him*, that is, Israel: God never makes an utter destruction of his people, but always preserveth a remnant: (see note on i. 9.) whereas his enemies he threatens with utter destruction, and oftentimes puts the sentence in execution, as in the case of Amalek, (Exod. xvii. 14. Numb. xxiv. 20. 1 Sam. xv. 3.)

Ver. 8. *In measure, when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it.*] The execution of God's judgments is expressed by God's *having a controversy with his people*, (Hos. iv. 1. Micah vi. 2.) which yet will be *in measure*, or with moderation, as the prophet here speaks. Some expositors think that the word *beshallekah*, which our English renders, *when it shooteth forth*, is a metaphor taken from the art of pruning, as if the prophet had said, God will cut off the superfluous branches, but spare the main body of the tree. Grotius renders the word, *when thou sendest* [the people] *into captivity;* and explains it, That God would not utterly destroy them in a foreign land, but preserve a remnant to return, and repossess their native country.

He stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind.] That is, in the midst of judgment he remembers mercy. The *east wind* may allude to the *shooting forth* of the branches, mentioned in the foregoing words; that wind being very prejudicial to tender shoots. The east wind being a dry blasting wind, elsewhere signifies the calamities of war, and such-like wasting judgments. (See Jer. iv. 11. Ezek. xvii. 10. xix. 12. Hos. xiii. 15.)

Ver. 9. *By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin* [or, of taking away his sin]; *when he makes all the stones of the altar as chalk-stones that are beaten asunder.*] This shall be the most remarkable effect of that reformation, which God's chastisements shall produce; *viz.* the abolishing of all the monuments of idolatry, such as altars, groves, and images. (See xvii. 8.) The word *altar*, in the singular number, is taken distributively, for any altar, concerning which phrase, see the note on xxvi. 19. These altar-stones, the prophet saith, shall be beaten to dust like chalk-stones, in order to the abolishing the very memory of idolatrous worship. So Moses ground the golden calf to powder, (see Exod. xxxii. 20. Deut. ix. 21.) and Asa stamped his mother's idol to pieces, (2 Chron. xv. 16.) It hath been already observed, that when the prophets speak of an entire reformation, they always mention the utter abolishing of idolatry, especially out of the church, as if that were one of the last enemies of God's truth that should be destroyed. (See the note on i. 29.)

The groves and images shall not stand up.] Or, *so that the groves and images may not rise again.* The Hebrew language wants the potential or subjunctive mood, which is often supplied by the future tense. (See a like instance, vii. 25.

Ver. 10. *Yet the defenced city shall be forsaken,* &c.] The

prophet mixes threatenings with the promises, as is usual elsewhere, and tells the Jews, that before these happy days come, great calamities should befal them: Jerusalem and the rest of their fortified cities should be desolate. *City* is here taken for cities in general. (See the verse foregoing, and the notes upon xxv. 2.)

There shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down.] Desolate places naturally turn to pasturage: so these and the like expressions are used to signify an entire desolation. (Compare vii. 25. xvii. 2. xxxii. 14.)

Ver. 11. *When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come and set them on fire.*] The prophet continues to describe the places where cities stood, as turned into fields, where the fences are broke down, and the withered branches of the trees gathered by women to make a fire: so should the whole country of Judea be exposed to the ravage and spoil of the weakest and most contemptible enemy. (Compare iii. 12.) Thus the fall of the Assyrian is represented by the lopping of a great tree, and breaking off its boughs, Ezek. xxxi. 12, 13. and the destruction of sinners is often compared to the burning of the dead branches. (See Matt. iii. 10. John xv. 6.)

For it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, &c.] These calamities are owing to their own stupidity and wilful blindness. (See i. 3. vi. 10. Deut. xxxii. 28.)

Ver. 12. *And it shall come to pass in that day.*] At the time mentioned ver. 2. The prophet returns to his former subject, the two last verses being in the nature of a parenthesis.

That the Lord shall beat off.] The metaphor is taken from thrashing, or separating the pure grain from the chaff: so shall God sever his saints from the hypocrites, in order to the restoring the righteous from their several dispersions, and destroying the wicked. This relates to the restoration of the Jews in the latter times. (Consider and compare Ezek. xx. 34. 38. 40. Amos ix. 8, 9.)

From the channel of the river to the stream of Egypt.] From the river Euphrates, which is upon the border of Assyria, to the river Nile, which is the boundary of Egypt. (See the following verse.) This expression denotes the several dispersions of the Jews, these two countries being the places into which the greatest part of them were dispersed. (See the note on xi. 16.)

[*To the stream of Egypt.*] The river of Egypt is to be distinguished from the Nile; it riseth out of Mount Paran, and takes it course *towards Rhinocorura* (so the LXX. translate it here, ἕως ῥινοκορουρῶν); and from thence falls into the Mediterranean Sea. See Gen. xv. 18. Josh. xv. 47. 1 Kings viii. 65.]

And ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.] Each man of you, none of you shall be left behind, or neglected. (See the note on liv. 7.)

Ver. 13. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown.*] A general alarm or summons shall be given: compare Matt. xxiv. 31. which place some understand of this very restoration of the Jews the prophet here speaks of. The expression is taken from the use of trumpets under the law, which was to assemble the congregation together: (see Numb. x. 22. Jer. iv. 5. Joel ii. 15.) or it may allude to the *loud voice* of the trumpet which summoned all Israel at Mount Sinai, (Exod. xix. 19.)

And shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.] They shall be joined to the true worshippers of God, and serve him in his church. (Compare ii. 3. xi. 9. xxiv. 23. xxv. 6, 7. 10. and see the note on xix. 19.)

CHAP. XXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

According to the division I proposed at the beginning of the book, here begins the fourth part or section of this prophecy, which chiefly relates to Sennacherib's invasion, and is concluded with a history of that affair, in the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh chapters, which is placed there as a key to explain several of the foregoing prophecies. I observed upon i. 1. That the prophecies are not always recorded in that order of time in which they were published; so the beginning of this chapter denounces God's judgments against the ten tribes, who were carried away captive some years before several of the foregoing prophecies were delivered. In the seventh and following verses, the prophet severely reproves the two other tribes for their excess, their ignorance, and their contempt of those threatenings he had denounced against their sins, and which they fondly presumed that they could by their cunning and management evade and escape: but he tells them they would find themselves very much mistaken.

Ver. 1. *WOE to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim.*] Woe to that proud kingdom of Israel, (compare Jer. xiii. 18. Lam. v. 16.) of which Ephraim is the head; Samaria the royal seat of that kingdom being situate in that tribe. (See note on vii. 2.)

[*The drunkards of Ephraim.*] From whence Sichem, situate in that tribe, was called, by way of reproach, Sychar; *i. e.* the city of *drunkards.* See John iv. 5.]

Whose glorious beauty is as a fading flower.] Whose state and pride should be of a very short continuance; like the beauty of a flower, which soon fades and withers. (See ver. 4.)

Which are in the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine.] Samaria was built on a hill: (see 1 Kings xvi. 24.) having a very rich valley under it.

Ver. 2. *The Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which, as a tempest of hail, and a destroying storm.*] Under these resemblances the prophet represents Shalmaneser the king of Assyria, who should carry the ten tribes away captive, and make an utter destruction of that kingdom: God's severe judgments are often set forth under the emblems of storms and tempests, which are the artillery of heaven. (See xxix. 6. xxx. 30. Ezek. xiii. 11. Rev. xvi. 21.)

Shall cast down to the earth with the hand.] That is, with great force, as when an earthen vessel is dashed to pieces against the ground.

Ver. 4. *As the hasty fruit before the summer; which, when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.*] Or, *As the first ripe fruit* [which comes] *before the other summer-fruits;* for so the word *kaits* often signifies, and is translated so by our interpreters, xvi. 9. of this prophecy, Jer. xl. 10. 12. xlviii. 32. Amos viii. 1, 2. The Hebrew *biccurah* properly signifies the first ripe fruits, and is here translated by the Septuagint, in

conjunction with *kaits*, Πρόδρομος σύκου, the *first ripe fig*, the Greek word Πρόδρομος being a term used by those who write about trees and fruit, for the first ripe figs, as Athenæus shews out of Dioscorides, Deipnosophist, lib. iii. and Pliny Nat. Hist. lib. xvi. cap. 26. and Hesychius explains Πρόδρομα, by Προακμάζοντα σῦκα, where the printed copies corruptly read Πρόδρομα. Most people are very fond of early ripe fruit, and devour it greedily. (See Hos. ix. 10.) So shall the Assyrians serve the Israelites.

Ver. 5. *In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, to the residue of his people.*] God will then be the glory and protection of the two remaining tribes of Judah and Benjamin; he will raise up king Hezekiah for their defence, and signally protect him against his enemies.

Ver. 6. *And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment.*] The same God will direct the king, when he sits upon the judgment-seat, to administer justice impartially to all his subjects. (Compare Prov. xx. 8.)

And for strength to them that turn the battle from the gate.] Or, *That return the battle to the gate;* that turn it back upon their enemies, and pursue them to the gates of their own cities. (See 1 Sam. xvii. 52.)

Ver. 7. *But they also have erred through wine—the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink,* &c.] The sins of excess are as notorious among the remaining two tribes, as they were in those that are carried away captive: and even among the priests and prophets, persons more immediately dedicated to God's service; although the priests were forbidden so much as to drink wine, during the time of their ministration, that they might more exactly determine *between* what is *holy and unholy*, and *between clean and unclean*, (Lev. x. 9.)

Ver. 9. *Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.*] The prophet here, as elsewhere, upbraids the people's profound ignorance and careless neglect of instructions. (See vi. 9, 10. xxix. 10, 11.) If the teachers, saith he, were never so well qualified to instruct, there are none that will learn: they that are grown to years of discretion, are but children in respect of religious knowledge, and it is to as little purpose to undertake the instructing of this people, as it would be to teach infants that are but just weaned.

Ver. 10. *For precept must be upon precept—line upon line—here a little, and there a little.*] You must frame your instructions, as if you were to deal with children, repeat the same thing over and over again, and instil good principles into them by easy and gentle degrees, as they are able to bear it.

Ver. 11. *For with stammering lips, and another tongue, will he speak to this people.*] The first word, or particle, *ki*, were better rendered *therefore*, which interpretation gives the words this turn: God hath dealt with this people as with children; and as nurses teach them to speak by lisping and stammering like them; so he hath condescended to the lowest rudiments of instruction, and hath *fed them with milk, and not with strong meat.* But since all this is to no purpose, *therefore* now he will take a new course with them; he will send other sorts of stammerers among them, *viz.* the Assyrians and Chaldeans, whose language they understand not, and they shall instruct them by blows and corrections. This is a great aggravation of the miseries that attend a foreign conquest, that there is no parleying or treating with such a conqueror, nor any moving him to compassion, because they understand not each other's language: accordingly this is threatened as one of the sorest judgments God can send upon a people, (Deut. xxviii. 49. Jer. v. 15.) That this is the true meaning of this verse, appears by St. Paul's applying of it to the speaking in an unknown tongue, (1 Cor. xiv. 21, 22.) and by the use of the Hebrew *lanag*, translated *stammering*, which is applied to a foreign language, xxxiii. 19. (See the note upon that place.)

Ver. 12. *To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.*] God often admonished this people by his prophets, that his word, and the promises of it, were the only thing that could give true comfort to those that were under any pressure or trouble: (see l. 4. Matt. xi. 28.) but they would not hearken to his advice.

Ver. 13. *But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept,* &c.] This should be joined to the foregoing sentence, and the beginning of the verse rendered, *Although the word of the Lord,* &c. They would not hearken, though God spake never so plainly, and often renewed the same message by his prophets.

That they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.] That is, that in their goings they might fall backwards, &c. This refractoriness of theirs will, in the event, prove their utter ruin: it will be the cause of those calamities, which will end in their being carried captive to Babylon, and it will occasion their utter rejection under the times of the gospel. (Compare vi. 11, 12. viii. 14.) St. Peter, alluding to this place, saith, that God's word is a *stone of stumbling to the disobedient*, (1 Pet. ii. 8.) and it is *appointed* or decreed by God, that they, who will not accept of the offers of grace, should be ruined by rejecting them. (See Matt. xxi. 44. and the notes on viii. 14.)

Ver. 14. *Ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem.*] The rulers and chief magistrates are here reproved as men that despised God's words and threatenings, and trusted wholly to the art of worldly policy. (See ver. 22. and compare i. 10.)

Ver. 15. *Because ye say, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell we are at agreement.*] We have made peace, say they, with those that threaten to destroy us, (meaning, probably, Sennacherib and his forces: see note on viii. 12.) So that we need not fear any of those evils from them, with which you threaten us. The phrase of *making a covenant with death*, is best explained from Hos. ii. 18. where God's *making a covenant for the Jews with the beasts of the field*, is the same with giving them assurance that the beasts shall not hurt them. *Hell*, or the *grave*, and *death*, are often joined together as equivalent. (See Psal. lv. 15. and the notes on xiv. 9.)

When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come to us.] Though a general calamity should go through the land, yet we shall escape; the expression is metaphorical, and taken from storms or inundations, that carry all before them. (See viii. 8. Dan. xi. 22.)

For we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves.] Our arts of cunning and falsehood will secure us in the most difficult times. They are not

supposed to have said thus much in express terms, but this was their true meaning. (See the note on xxx. 10.)

Ver. 16. *Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone,* &c.] This prophecy cannot belong to any but Christ, to whom it is often applied in the New Testament. But it may import thus much, with respect to the time wherein Isaiah lived, that he should never be disappointed, who believes in God, whose dwelling is in Zion, and hath made peculiar promises to the Jewish church and kingdom seated there, which shall eminently be fulfilled at the coming of the Messias, in whom all God's promises made to his people shall receive their final accomplishment.

He that believeth shall not make haste.] He that believes God's promises made to his faithful servants, will patiently depend upon God, and not out of distrust of his mercy betake himself to any unlawful means of securing himself, as many did, (ver. 15.) The Septuagint, instead of *shall not make haste,* read, *shall not be ashamed,* which makes some think that they read *jabish,* in the Hebrew, instead of *jackhish,* which is the reading of the present Hebrew copies. But our learned Dr. Pocock has shewed, that the verb *chush* still signifies to be *ashamed* in the Arabic tongue; which makes it probable, that it was formerly used in the same sense in the Hebrew. (See his Miscellaneous Notes in Portam Mosis, cap. 1. p. 10.) In the same sense the verb *chush* is probably taken, Job xx. 2. where our English renders the place, *For this I make haste;* but the sense would run much better if it were translated, *For this I am troubled or confounded.* Capellus, who would fain suspect the present reading of the Hebrew copy, did not consider that the copies in the son of Sirach's time, read as ours do now, as appears from those words of his, (Ecclus. ii. 2.) *Make not haste in the time of trouble;* which sentence certainly alludes to this text, taking the Hebrew *chush* in its usual signification.

Ver. 17. *Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet.*] The prophet carries on the metaphor of building, and tells those scorners, that God would square his actions by the severest rules of justice, as they should find to their cost.

And the hail shall sweep away the refuge and lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place.] God's judgments, like a storm of rain and hail, (see ver. 2. 15.) shall destroy all that security in which you place your confidence.

Ver. 18. *And your covenant with death shall be disannulled,* &c.] See ver. 15.

Ver. 19. *From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you,* &c.] The prophet still persists in the metaphor of an inundation, which seizes immediately without giving any warning, and carries all before it without intermission.

And it shall be a vexation only to understand the report.] The words may be better translated thus, *And nothing but vexation can make you understand* (or lay to heart) *this instruction.* You will not believe what I say till the event verifies my words. The Hebrew word *shemunah,* which our English renders *report,* signifies *instruction,* in the ninth verse of this chapter. And the verb *bûn,* signifies not only to *understand,* but likewise to *consider* and lay to heart, in which sense it is used, xl. 21. (See the note there.) So likewise, Psal. cxix. 95. where our translation renders it, *I will consider thy testimonies;* again, Psal. cvi. 7. where our last translation reads, *Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt,* the old translation expresses the sense better by *Our fathers regarded not thy wonders,* &c. In like manner, the verb *ijadang,* to *know,* signifies to *consider,* xliii. 25. of this prophecy. The Greek word, Συνίημι, is taken in the same sense, Matt. xiii. 19. *When any one hears the word of the kingdom, and considers it not,* or layeth it not to heart; for so it should be translated.

Ver. 20. *For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.*] Two proverbial expressions, importing that all worldly comforts are insufficient to cure the maladies they are applied to, and that human devices are too short to secure us against the hand of Providence, whenever that will find us out to punish us. And therefore we ought not to rely too much on outward means, much less betake ourselves to evil arts for our security, but commit ourselves to God in well-doing, as the surest refuge in the time of trouble.

And the covering narrower.] An allusion to the *covering of falsehood,* mentioned ver. 15. 17.

Ver. 21. *For the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim.*] See 2 Sam. v. 20. The destruction of the Philistines is there compared to a *breach of waters:* the same resemblance which is here used, ver. 19.

That he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.] Those extraordinary manifestations of God's power at Perazim and Gibeon were for the deliverance of his people, and the destruction of their enemies: but now God will act contrary to his usual proceedings of grace and mercy, and employ his power in destroying his own people.

Ver. 22. *Now therefore be not mockers, lest your bands be made strong.*] Do not despise God's threatenings: (see ver. 14.) or else this incorrigible temper will be a means of bringing you under a foreign yoke. (Compare lii. 2. Jer. xxvii. 2.)

For I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.] Or rather, the *whole land.* (See x. 23.) The prophet had, in the beginning of the chapter, foretold the destruction of the ten tribes; and here he denounceth the like judgment upon the two tribes remaining.

Ver. 23. *Give ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech.*] The design of the ensuing parable is to show, that as a husbandman hath his set times and methods of manuring the ground, and ordering his grain when it is brought into the barn: so God hath his seasons of mercy and judgment; and even in inflicting judgments he deals in different measures with the righteous and the wicked: he chastiseth the former in order to his amendment, and punishes the latter to his utter destruction.

Ver. 24. *Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow?*] Or, as the words may better be rendered, *Doth the ploughman plough every day to sow? Doth he* [every day] *open and break the clods of his ground?* Is there not a time for harrowing and sowing too? which are described in the following verse.

Ver. 26. *For his God doth instruct him,* &c.] The art of husbandry is so necessary for the support of human life, that all men have ascribed its original to God, as the in-

ventor or ordainer of it. *The Most High hath created husbandry,* saith the son of Sirach, Ecclus. vii. 15. In like manner, Virgil, Georg. lib. i.

——"Pater ipse colendi
Haud facilem esse viam voluit, primusque per artem
Movit agros"——

By other heathens, the invention of agriculture is ascribed to the goddess Ceres.

Ver. 27. *Neither is there a cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin.*] See note on xxi. 10.

Ver. 28. *Bread-corn is bruised; because he will not ever be thrashing it,* &c.] Bread-corn is bruised in a mortar, or ground in a mill, and so made flour, because the thrashing instruments are not proper for that purpose. The Hebrew reads, *Bread is bruised;* but bread is sometimes taken in that language for the corn that makes it. (See xxx. 23.)

[*Bread-corn is bruised.*] Gataker, in his Cinnus, p. 183. translates the words thus; Neither *is bread-corn bruised;* supplying the negative particle from the foregoing verse, *i. e.* it is not bruised into meal by thrashing, but beat in a mortar, or ground in a mill, for that purpose.]

Nor bruise it with his horsemen.] Or rather, *with his horses.* (See note on xxi. 9.) In the eastern countries they beat their wheat out of the husk, by drawing drays or heavy planks with iron wheels over it, as hath been observed on xxi. 10. To draw these they used horses, and sometimes oxen, as appears by that law of Moses, which forbids the *muzzling of the ox when he treads out the corn,* (Deut. xxv. 4.) Some explain the word *parashim,* which is here translated *horsemen,* of the spokes or teeth of those iron wheels.

Ver. 29. *This also cometh from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.*] This judgment, or *consumption,* threatened *upon the whole land,* (ver. 22.) cometh from God, whose decrees are the results of infinite wisdom, and who brings them to pass in such a manner, as doth best promote his own glory.

CHAP. XXIX.

ARGUMENT.

This and the four following chapters have an immediate aspect upon Sennacherib's invasion. In the beginning of this chapter the prophet describes the terribleness of that siege, and withal how suddenly it should be raised, and the enemy's hopes disappointed. He then proceeds to upbraid the Jews for their hypocrisy and stupidity in *not discerning the signs of the times,* as our Saviour speaks, (Matt. xvi. 3.) nor observing the hand of Providence, evidently shewing itself both in mercies and judgments, which circumstances are very applicable to the time of our Saviour's preaching among them. He then foretells better times, with respect to those who are piously disposed, and concludes with such promises of grace and favour to the *meek* and *humble,* as plainly relate to the times of the gospel.

Ver. 1. *WOE to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt!*] *Ariel* signifies the lion of God, and was the name of the altar, because it devoured the sacrifices which were offered upon it. (See Ezek. xliii. 15.) Here it is, by a synecdoche, put for the city of Jerusalem, which David made the seat of the kingdom, and where God, for David's sake, promised to place his name. (See 1 Kings xv. 4.) And yet, for the people's sins, God was now resolved to expose it to the assaults of Sennacherib and his army. Some render the latter part of the sentence thus, *The city which David besieged,* (in which sense of the verb *chanah* is taken ver. 3.) implying, that the enemy should distress it in the same manner.

Add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices.] The former part of the sentence may be better translated to this sense, *Add ye one year to another:* as if the prophet had said, For two years you may have liberty to come and offer your sacrifices at the temple, but afterward the city will be so closely besieged, that there will be no admittance for any that live in the country to attend upon the public worship of God at the solemn festivals. Then another sort of sacrifices will be offered; concerning which see the following note.

Ver. 2. *Yet I will distress Ariel—and it shall be unto me as Ariel.*] When the city is closely besieged and distressed, it shall resemble the altar of burnt-offerings, being every way surrounded with carcasses, not of beasts, but of men. The slaughter of men is sometimes called a sacrifice, because it makes some kind of satisfaction and atonement to the justice of God. (See xxxiv. 6. Ezek. xxxix. 17. Zeph. i. 7.)

Ver. 3. *And I will encamp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee,* &c.] Mr. White very well observes, that this verse must be understood of the army under Tartan, Rabsaris, and Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria *sent with a great host against Jerusalem,* (2 Kings xviii. 17. xix. 8, 9.) intending himself to follow in person, and have the honour of taking the city: but, upon the defeat of that army by a stroke from heaven, he returned homeward without ever making any approach to the city by way of assault. (See xxxvii. 33, 34. 37.)

Ver. 4. *And thou shalt be brought down, and thou shalt speak out of the ground,* &c.] Thou shalt be very humble, and thy king Hezekiah shall send ambassadors to bespeak the favour of the king of Assyria in very submissive terms. (See 2 Kings xviii. 14.)

And thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit.] See note on viii. 19.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff,* &c.] *Strangers* and *terrible ones* are joined here together, as they are xxv. 4. Here they signify the Assyrian army, which, though they made such a dreadful appearance, the prophet foretells they shall be defeated by a sudden stroke from heaven, and vanish in an instant; one hundred and eighty-five thousand being destroyed in one night, xxxvii. 36. (Compare xvii. 13.)

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder and with earthquake.*] The prophet, applying himself to Jerusalem, calls the army which besieged it, *Thy army,* ver. 5. and by the same figure we may understand the words here, *Thou shalt be visited,* of the same army, to which he threatens utter destruction in this and the following verses, and that from the immediate hand of God. (See the notes on xxviii. 2. and compare xxx. 30. Psal. xviii. 13, 14.) Some render the beginning of the sentence thus, *It*

shall be visited; and explain the words of the *multitude of strangers,* mentioned ver. 5. but the rules of syntax will hardly allow that construction, because the verb taken in the third person will be of the feminine gender, and that noun is of the masculine.

Ver. 7. *And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel—shall be as a dream of a night vision.*] Shall vanish away as a dream doth when one awaketh, (Psal. lxxiii. 20. John xx. 8.)

Ver. 8. *It shall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty,* &c.] The Assyrians had swallowed up Jerusalem in their imagination, but God should suddenly disappoint all their hopes, and send them away empty and confounded.

Ver. 9. *Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine,* &c.] The prophet often upbraids the Jews with their carelessness and stupidity, never minding the indications of Providence, nor laying to heart the instructions of the prophets. (See note on xxviii. 9.) In this verse he applies himself to his auditors, and bids them reflect a little, and wonders to see how unconcerned the generality of people are at what is spoken to them from the mouth of God. You will, saith he, be forced to cry out; these men have lost their sense and reason, like those who are overcome with intoxicating liquors. The words which our English translates, *Cry ye out, and cry,* may perhaps be better rendered, *Consider ye, and cry out;* so some interpreters render that word in another form, xli. 23.

Ver. 10. *For the Lord hath poured upon you the spirit of deep sleep.*] The word *spirit* is often taken for temper and disposition; in which sense we find the *spirit of heaviness,* lxi. 3. and the *spirit of meekness,* 1 Cor. iv. 21. and here the *spirit of sleepiness,* or drowsiness, is the same with a careless unthinking temper or disposition. In what sense God may be said to infuse such a temper into men, or how far he may contribute to the blinding of their eyes, or hardening their hearts, and how this and such-like prophecies were eminently accomplished at the first preaching of the gospel, hath been explained in the notes upon vi. 10, 11.

The prophets and your rulers, the seers, hath he covered.] That is, covered the eyes of their understanding, brought *night upon them, and made the sun go down over the prophets,* as we read Micah iii. 6. The prophets had great authority over the people by virtue of their office, which made so many pretenders to that sacred function: *seers* and *prophets* are equivalent expressions. (See xxx. 9. 1 Sam. ix. 9.)

Ver. 11. *And the vision of all* [or every vision] *is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed.*] One use of *sealing,* especially when applied to a book, is to close it up, or keep it from common view. To this purpose we read, (Dan. xii. 4.) *Shut up the words, and seal the book.* So the book mentioned Rev. v. 1. is described as *sealed with seven seals, which none but the Lamb could open;* that is, unfold or explain, (ver. 5.) See likewise viii. 16. of this prophecy.

Which men deliver to one that is learned, &c.] Prejudice doth as much hinder the learned from understanding God's word, as ignorance doth the unlearned.

Ver. 13. *Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth—but have removed their heart far from me,* &c.] One fatal mistake of the Jews, and that which led them into many others, was, that they confined the whole business of religion to the external worship of God, such as sacrifice and other outward ceremonies. (See i. 11, &c.) And these religious performances they looked upon as so acceptable to God, that these alone would secure his favour to them, and so long as they were punctual in these observances, they thought they needed not to fear any threatenings denounced against their sins. This opinion, together with their relying upon an external obedience to the letter of the law, and over-valuing the traditions of their rabbies and elders, was a principal cause of their rejecting the gospel, and being themselves rejected by God upon that account.

Ver. 14. *Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people.*] A thing that will scarce be believed. (Compare Habak. i. 5.)

For the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.] The most refined arts of their deep politicians shall not avail their authors, nor be able to preserve them from God's judgments; and their learnedest men shall lose their judgment and discretion. This threatening was remarkably verified under the gospel, when their crucifying Christ out of fear of the Roman power, brought the Romans upon them: and their learned rabbies ever since have minded little else but fabulous stories, and their cabalists have vented trifles for profound mysteries.

Ver. 15. *Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord.*] Who think they can carry on their projects without the knowledge or interposal of Providence.

Ver. 16. *Surely your turning things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay,* &c.] Your giving things unexpected turns, or false appearances, to hide your true designs, shall signify no more towards the producing the intended effects, than the clay does without the artificer. We and all our works are in the hands of God, as clay is in the hand of the potter, to give what form and fashion to them he pleases. (See xlv. 9. Jer. xviii. 6.) He is as wise as the wisest politician: (see xxxi. 2.) and when the finest schemes are laid, can work things to a quite contrary end.

Ver. 17. *Is it not yet a very little while.*] The following promises relate to the times of the gospel. (See the note on ver. 18. 23.) Nor is this expression any objection against such an interpretation, for the very same is used concerning Christ's coming to judgment, as if it were just at hand, Heb. x. 37.

And Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?] A proverbial form of speech, to signify the great changes that shall happen; the high ones shall be abased, and the meek shall be exalted: (compare xxxii. 15.) as visible an alteration, as if the mountain Lebanon, famous for its cedars, should be turned into a corn-field or pasture; and the richest meadow-ground should be turned into a forest.

Ver. 18. *And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity.*] That blindness and insensibility, which the prophet complained of at the tenth and eleventh verses, shall be quite removed, and the word of God, which before was a book *sealed up,* shall become intelligible to ordinary capacities.

This relates to the times of the gospel, (compare xxxv. 5.) when a plentiful effusion of God's Holy Spirit is promised. (See the note on xliv. 3. liv. 13.)

Ver. 19. *The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord,* &c.] This is another character of those flourishing times under the gospel; which the prophets often mention, in the glories of which the meek and humble shall have a particular share. (See the notes on xi. 4. xxvi. 6.)

Ver. 20. *For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed.*] By the *terrible one* we are to understand the foreign enemies of God's people: (see ver. 5. and xxv. 4, 5.) and by the *scorner,* those sceptics and infidels that lived among them, and made a mock of God's messengers, and what they said. (Compare xxviii. 14. 22.)

And all that watch for iniquity are cut off.] Who are continually employed in devising evil, and very industrious in bringing it to pass: *Who devise iniquity upon their beds! when the morning is light they practise it,* as the prophet Micah speaks, (Micah ii. 1.)

Ver. 21. *That make a man an offender for a word.*] Who condemn men for speaking the truth, as they often served the prophets, or for so slight a matter as an unwary expression.

And lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.] Who plot mischief against the judges that sit at the city gates to distribute justice; that so they may without control oppress the righteous, and deprive him of his right. (Compare Amos v. 10. 12. Mal. iii. 5.) And this they will do upon the meanest considerations, to gain *a piece of bread,* as Solomon speaks, (Prov. xxviii. 21.) It was the custom for the judges to execute their office at the gates of the city. (See Deut. xxi. 19. xxii. 15. Ruth iv. 1. 11.)

Ver. 22. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed,* &c.] Abraham and Jacob, as fathers of the family, are taken here for the whole stock of true Israelites: and as God had often been their deliverer, so when he should free them from enemies without, and evil-doers amongst themselves, (see ver. 20.) then the faithful will begin to lift up their heads, and not be ashamed to shew themselves.

Ver. 23. *But when he seeth his children, the work of my hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name.*] The words may be thus rendered, *For in his sight, his children, the work of my hands, in the midst of him, shall sanctify my name.* The prophet speaks of a new generation of the faithful, which shall be added to the church, called elsewhere the *work of God's hands.* (See xlv. 11. lx. 21. and compare Ephes. ii. 10.) When these shall be called or regenerate by that extraordinary measure of grace which is promised, ver. 18. they shall with one mind and one mouth sanctify my name, and give me all honour and reverence.

Ver. 24. *They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding.*] See xxviii. 7. and the tenth, eleventh, and eighteenth verses of this chapter.

And they that murmured shall learn doctrine.] They that murmured at, and found fault with, God's dispensations, shall now submit their own judgment to the will and wisdom of God.

CHAP. XXX.

ARGUMENT.

The Egyptians were the Jews' confederates at the time of Sennacherib's invasion: (see 2 Kings xviii. 21.) and are often reproved for that confederacy, and placing their chief trust in an arm of flesh. (See xx. 5. xxxi. 1.) This is the subject of the former part of this chapter. Then follow some gracious promises, which have a plain aspect upon the gospel-times: and from the twenty-seventh verse to the end of the chapter, there is a lively description of God's vengeance devouring the Assyrian army like fire, and consuming them all at once.

Ver. 1. *AND that cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit.*] This *covering* may either signify their seeking for refuge and protection from Egypt without any directions from God: (see ver. 2.) or else it may mean their forming schemes to secure themselves against the calamities that threatened them, by ungodly methods, which are called a *covering,* or *hiding-place of falsehood,* xxviii. 15. 17. (See likewise xxix. 15.)

That they may add sin to sin.] Thereby adding this iniquity to their former transgressions.

Ver. 2. *That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth.*] It was usual in affairs of great consequence, especially in matters of war, to ask counsel from God by his prophets. (See Josh. ix. 4. 1 Kings xxii. 7. Jer. xxi. 2.) This the Jews neglected now, because they apprehended that the prophets would not give them such an answer as they liked. (See ver. 10. and the Argument of the chapter.)

Ver. 3. *Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame.*] See xx. 5. xxxi. 3.

Ver. 4. *For his princes were at Zoan, his ambassadors came to Hanes.*] King Hezekiah's ambassadors came to apply themselves to the king of Egypt and his great men, for succour and assistance; to which purpose, they arrived at the two principal cities of Egypt, Zoan, or Tanis, (concerning which, see the note on xix. 11.) and Hanes, called Tahapanes, Jer. ii. 16. xliii. 7. Ezek. xxx. 18.

Ver. 5. *They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them.*] The Egyptians, in conjunction with the Ethiopians, did assist the Jews, by giving a diversion to Sennacherib's forces (see the Arguments of the seventeenth and nineteenth chapters); but were both entirely routed: (see xx. 4.) so that, in effect, the Egyptians were rather a burden than a help to them, and are therefore compared to a *broken reed,* (xxxvi. 6.) which not only fails the hand that leans upon it, but pierces and wounds it.

Ver. 6. *The burden of the beasts of the south.*] The word *burden* hath an ambiguous sense; for, besides its usual signification, it denotes likewise a threatening prophecy: so the words imply, that the burdens of presents, which the Jews sent upon the backs of asses and camels, to make friends with all in Egypt (a country lying southward of Judea), should meet with but ill success.

From whence come—the viper and fiery flying serpent.] The wilderness that lies between Egypt and Judea, is described after the same manner by Moses, (Deut. viii. 15.) The fiery serpent is called, in the Hebrew, *saraph,* and hath

its name from its bright and flaming colour: for the same reason the angels are called *seraphims*, because when they attended upon the Divine Schechinah, they appeared like flames of fire. (See Psal. civ. 4. and the note upon vi. 1.) It is called a flying serpent, because it springs up like a dart against those it strikes. Some authors, indeed, relate that there are winged serpents: but that does not seem so well consistent with the curse inflicted upon the serpent, (Gen. iii. 14.)

Ver. 7. *Therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still.*] Or, *I have cried to her, i. e.* to Jerusalem, that their best security will be to be quiet, and see the salvation which God will work for them. (See ver. 15.) The word which our English renders *strength*, is *Rahab* in the Hebrew, which is likewise a name by which Egypt is called. (See li. 9. Psal. lxxxvii. 4. lxxxix. 10.) So the prophet intimates, that trust in God will be their best refuge, and supply the place of their Egyptian allies.

Ver. 8. *Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book,* &c.] A command of God to the prophet, to deliver those words which follow (ver. 9.) in writing, as an instruction not only to the present age, but also to after-times. When God commands a thing to be written, it signifies, that such a truth is of great importance, and such as deserves to be recorded, that the knowledge of it may be preserved. (Compare xxxiv. 39. lxv. 6. Psal. lvi. 8. Jer. xxii. 30. Dan. x. 21. Habak. ii. 2. Mal. iii. 16. Rev. xiv. 13.)

Ver. 10. *Prophesy not to us right things; speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits.*] This was the true meaning of what they said, though not the very words. (See a like instance, xxviii. 15.) They did not care the prophets should say any severe truths which they did not love to hear. Insomuch that they often punished them, when they were exact in delivering their commission, as movers of sedition. So they served Jeremiah. (See Jer. xx. 1. xxxviii. 4. 6.) In like manner they used Amos. (See Amos vii. 10.) The same usage Micaiah met with before, (1 Kings xxii. 8. 27.)

Ver. 11. *Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path.*] Be not so nicely scrupulous, say they, or so servilely addicted to the truth, but comply a little with our humour, though it be by departing from what God had commanded you to deliver. The prophet still represents the true sense and meaning of these infidels.

Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.] Do not often repeat, *Thus saith the Lord;* or, *Thus saith the Holy One of Israel:* we are quite weary of hearing him mentioned so often. (Compare Amos vi. 10.)

Ver. 12. *Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel,* &c.] The prophet is resolved to usher in his reproofs with his preface, *Thus saith the Holy One of Israel,* what distaste soever it might give to men of reprobate minds: (see likewise ver. 15.) and he utters a farther threatening to those that despise what he now speaks from God.

Ver. 13. *Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall,* &c.] This vain confidence in your own conduct, or in the strength of Egypt, shall end in a sudden and final ruin: like the breach in a high wall, which, when once it begins to bulge, falls down without giving any warning, and the higher it is, the greater the downfall.

Ver. 14. *And he shall break it as the breaking of a potter's vessel; he shall not spare,* &c.] An earthen vessel, when it is once broke, can never be mended, or put to any use. (See Jer. xix. 11.) So it shall be in this case, there shall be nothing left or saved, that can be put to any farther use.

Ver. 15. *In returning and rest shall ye be saved.*] In returning from your evil purposes, and resting or relying upon God's promises, you shall be saved from your enemies. (See ver. 7.)

Ver. 16. *But ye said, No; but we will flee upon horses,* &c.] Egypt was famous for their breed of horses: (see note on li. 7.) from whence the Jews were desirous to furnish themselves with horses, the better to engage the enemy. (See xxxvi. 9.) But the prophet tells them, that the chief use they should make of them would be to secure to themselves a retreat.

Ver. 17. *One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one.*] As God had promised them, that if they continued obedient to him, *one of them should chase a thousand* of their enemies: (Deut. xxxii. 30.) so here he threatens the quite contrary upon their disobedience. (See Deut. xxviii. 25.)

Till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain.] Till ye be scattered one by one upon the mountains, as beacons stand solitary there.

Ver. 18. *And therefore will the Lord wait.*] The sense would run clearer, if the place were translated thus, *Nevertheless the Lord will wait;* or, *yet surely the Lord will wait,* &c. So the particle *laken* is rendered by our interpreters, Jer. v. 2. and so it should be translated in several other places where the prophets alter their style, and yet usher in the transition with this particle: so particularly it should be translated Hos. ii. 14. and Micah v. 3. (See Dr. Pocock upon that place.) The seeming incoherence of the prophetic style would be avoided in many places, by regarding the various sense of the Hebrew particles more carefully than interpreters have generally done: a subject that hath been treated of with great exactness by Noldius, in his Concordantia Particularum Hebræarum.

The Lord will wait that he may be gracious unto you.] God will wait till the judgments he hath threatened (ver. 15, 16.) have had their due effect for the reforming your lives, and rendering you fit objects of his mercy.

And therefore [or yet] *will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you.*] He will shew his power in those judgments he brings upon you, (compare v. 16.) in order to your reformation, and the receiving you again into favour. The words may be explained of God's magnifying his mercy towards an undeserving people, that where *men's sins did abound, his grace might much more abound.* But I conceive that sense not so agreeable to the scope of the place.

For the Lord is a God of judgment.] Who wisely mixes and tempers justice with mercy. In this sense the word *judgment* is used, Jer. x. 24. xxx. 11. In the latter text our translators render the Hebrew *mishpat, in measure.*

Ver. 19. *For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem.*] The Hebrew runs thus, *The people in Zion shall dwell at Jerusalem:* the *people in Zion* is the same with the *people of Zion,* as the *mountains in Gilboa* are equivalent to the *mountains of Gilboa,* and the words are so translated by our interpreters, 2 Sam. i. 21. Or the sentence may be translated, *The people shall dwell in Zion* [and] *at Jerusalem;*

the copulative particle being often understood. Notwithstanding the destruction of Jerusalem threatened by Sennacherib, the city shall still be inhabited as in former times, and shall be comforted after her sorrow; which is the import of the following words, *Thou shalt weep no more;* being spoken by way of apostrophe to Jerusalem.

From this verse to the twenty-seventh, follow many gracious promises of mercy, several of which cannot, with any propriety, be applied to the succeeding times of king Hezekiah's reign. Therefore we may reasonably suppose, that the prophet, taking a hint from those prosperous times which succeeded this great deliverance, was carried on to a view of better days, which might be expected under the flourishing state of the gospel. (See the notes upon x. 20. xxiv. 14.)

Ver. 20. *And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more,* &c.] Though provisions should be scarce, during the time of the siege, yet you shall not want spiritual food for your souls, you shall not need to fear that *famine of the word of the Lord* threatened Amos viii. 11.

Ver. 21. *And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way,* &c.] As God will afford you teachers, so he will give you grace to hearken to their instructions. His grace will supply the place of a tutor or monitor, it will be at your elbow, as it were, giving you directions, and correcting you when you do amiss. This may fitly be applied to that plentiful effusion of God's Spirit which is promised under the gospel. (See the notes upon xliv. 3. liv. 13.)

When ye turn to the right hand, or when ye turn to the left.] When ye are never so little out of the way. (Compare Deut. v. 32. Josh. i. 7. Prov. iv. 27.)

Ver. 22. *Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold,* &c.] Hezekiah's zeal for God's worship, incited his subjects to destroy all the monuments of idolatry in the land. (See 2 Chron. xxxi. 1.) The *coverings* here mentioned may be understood of silver or gold plates, with which their images were overlaid; though they adorned them likewise with costly robes and rich attire. (See Jer. x. 9. Baruch vi. 57, 58.) The destruction of idolatry is another mark of the flourishing state of the gospel. (See the notes on i. 29.)

Ver. 23. *Then shall he give the rain of* [or for] *thy seed that thou shalt sow the ground withal,* &c.] *i. e.* Rain after the seed is sown, to moisten the ground, and make it take root; this is called the *former rain,* Joel ii. 23. This, and the next verse, promise plenty of all manner of food, both for man and beast, in opposition to the *bread of adversity* mentioned ver. 20. We may farther observe, that the blessings of the gospel are sometimes represented under the emblems of fruitfulness and plenty. (See notes on iv. 2. xxxii. 20.)

Ver. 25. *And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters.*] God's blessings are often represented under the metaphor of a well-watered ground, which is the most fruitful. (See lviii. 11.) And here the prophet promises such fertility, that the barren and mountainous land shall yield as plentiful a harvest, as if it were watered with streams and rivers. But if we compare this verse with what follows, we shall discover a more mystical sense couched in the words, and find that they imply in them a promise of the large supplies of grace under the gospel, which should water the most dry and barren places, just as if streams of water were to take their course upon the tops of the highest mountains. This place I take to be parallel to that text, (xliv. 3.) *I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed,* &c. (Compare likewise xxxv. 6, 7. xli. 18. xliii. 19. lv. 1. Joel iii. 18. Zech. xiv. 8.) Mr. White is pleased to call this a *strange sort of interpretation;* but I must put him in mind, that it is the interpretation of Christ himself: (see John iv. 10. 14. vii. 38, 39.) and of St. Paul, who interprets the *waters flowing from the rock* in the wilderness, as mystically denoting Christ, and the benefits of the gospel, (1 Cor. x. 4.) And that plentiful communication of grace and glory, wherein the happiness of heaven consists, is described by the same metaphor, Rev. vii. 17. xxi. 6. xxii. 17.

In the day of the great slaughter when the towers fall.] This shall be remarkably fulfilled at the time when there shall be a terrible destruction of God's enemies: (see Rev. xiv. 20. xix. 21.) when the great ones of the earth shall fall, denoted here by high *towers;* (compare ii. 15.) or, by *towers,* we may understand the fortifications of the city, which is the mystical Babylon. (See the notes on xxvi. 5.)

Ver. 26. *Moreover, the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun,* &c.] Light is the emblem of joy and happiness; accordingly, happy times are expressed by bright and pleasant days, when *God's candle shines upon our heads,* as Job expresseth it, xxix. 3. But the words seem to describe that glorious state of the church, when there shall be no night; (see Zech. xiv. 6, 7. compared with Rev. xxii. 5.) nor any resemblance of it, no degree either of sorrow or ignorance.

In the day that the Lord bindeth up the stroke of his people, &c.] When he shall fully pardon their sins, and remove the punishments of them. (Compare i. 6.)

Ver. 27. *Behold, the name of the Lord comes from far.*] The name of God is the same with God himself, and it is said to come from *afar off,* as coming unexpectedly. So Christ is described as coming *from a far country* at the day of judgment, because of the unexpectedness of his coming, Luke xix. 13. 15.

Burning with his anger.] When anger or any other passion is ascribed to God in Scripture, it is a very good rule which the schoolmen give for the explaining such expressions, "affectus in Deo denotant effectus;" *passions in God denote that the effect is answerable to the highest emotion of passion which we can conceive.* Thus, when God is described as full of anger and fury, and his indignation as flaming out into revenge, we are to conceive the expressions as implying, that the effects of his displeasure will be as terrible, as we could suppose them to be if they proceeded from the most passionate resentment. But I think we may carry our notions a little farther in this matter, and venture to affirm, That since God's love and hatred do necessarily result from his wisdom, which approves or dislikes things according as they agree or disagree with his own infinite perfections, it must follow from hence, that although God be not subject to that turbulency and inconstancy which attend human passions; yet his favour and aversion must be as strong and vigorous, as lasting and permanent, as the

highest expressions in Scripture concerning this matter can be supposed to import.

His lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire.] So Christ is described as consuming sinners with the *breath of his lips,* (xi. 4.) because, whenever he pronounces sentence upon them, it is immediately put in execution: all things obeying his word and decree. (See the note there.)

Ver. 28. *And his breath as an overflowing stream.*] God's anger is often called the breath of his nostrils. (See Job iv. 19. Psal. xviii. 15.) The expression is taken from one of the symptoms of anger, which is breathing quick and short.

Shall reach to the midst of the neck.] See the note on viii. 8.

To sift the nations with a sieve of vanity.] *Vanity* sometimes signifies *destruction:* so, lvii. 13. *vanity shall take them, i. e.* they shall be destroyed. And here the *sieve of vanity* is such a one as doth not separate the chaff in order to save the corn, but makes an entire riddance, as when chaff is scattered before the wind. (Compare xxix. 4. Hos. xiii. 3. Psal. i. 4.) By the *nations* are chiefly meant the Assyrians and their confederates.

And there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err.] See the same phrase xxxvii. 29. In both places the expression imports, that God would stop these people in the midst of their career, and make all their designs prove abortive, like those that miss their aim, or lose their way.

Ver. 29. *Ye shall have a song, as in the night, when a holy solemnity is kept.*] The Jewish festivals were always kept from even to even; so the sabbath began on the Friday evening; (see Lev. xxiii. 32.) and the eve before any festival was part of the festival: (see Judith viii. 6.) from whence the same observation was derived into the Christian church. But the feast of the Passover is chiefly alluded to here, which was always kept in the evening, and the supper concluded with hymns. (See Matt. xxvi. 30.)

As when one goeth with a pipe to come unto the mountain of the Lord.] The solemn festivals, when the people came from all parts of Judea to worship at the temple, were observed with the greatest expressions of joy. (See Deut. xvi. 11. 14. Psal. xlii. 4.) Such joy will there be, saith the text, at Jerusalem, for their deliverance from Sennacherib's army.

Ver. 30. *And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard,* &c.] This destruction shall be from the immediate hand of God, in which he shall as visibly appear as if he had discomfited the army by a tempest of thunder, and lightning, and hailstones, as he formerly destroyed the Canaanites and Philistines. (See Josh. x. 10. 1 Sam. vii. 10. compare likewise Psal. xviii. 14. xxix. 6. of this prophecy, and see the note on that place.)

Ver. 31. *Shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod.*] Compare x. 5. 24.

Ver. 32. *And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the Lord shall lay upon him, it shall be with tabrets and harps.*] This is a very obscure translation of the words; the old translation published under king Henry VIII. renders them much plainer, thus, *Whithersoever he goes, the rod shall cleave unto him, which the Lord shall lay upon him.* Or the place may be thus translated more exactly to the Hebrew, *And every place where the terrible stroke shall pass which the Lord shall lay upon him, shall be* [filled] (or shall sound) *with tabrets and harps:* the words in the original, which our English renders *the grounded staff,* signify such a rod or stroke as sinks deep, and makes lasting prints or marks in the flesh: and the expression alludes to the *rod* with which the Assyrian *smote* or corrected God's people; (ver. 31.) as if the prophet had said, God hath prepared a rod to chastise him, that was before a scourge to all his neighbours. The import of the whole sentence is this, that every place where God shall inflict this heavy judgment upon the Assyrian, shall be full of joy and gladness. The Hebrew *tuppim, tabrets,* alludes to *Tophet,* a word of the same signification, by which name the prophet calls the Assyrian camp, ver. 33. (See the note there.) It was usual, likewise, to celebrate victories with tabrets and other instruments of music. (See Exod. xv. 20. 1 Sam. xviii. 6.)

And in battles of shaking shall ye fight with it.] God's severe judgments are expressed by his *shaking his hand over* a people or a place. (See xi. 15. xix. 16.)

Ver. 33. *For Tophet is ordained of old, yea, for the king it is prepared,* &c.] Tophet, otherwise called the Valley of Hinnom, was the place where the children were sacrificed to Moloch. (See Jer. vii. 31.) It had its name from the tabrets which sounded there to drown the cries of the children thus inhumanly murdered. Being a place set apart for that terrible execution, it was looked upon as the picture of hell itself, the word Gehenna being from thence derived. The prophet here applies the name to the camp where all the Assyrian army was to be destroyed. And as in Tophet great heaps of wood were piled together to burn the human sacrifices there offered, so God, saith the text, will find sufficient materials prepared like fuel for the fire, which his anger, like a train of brimstone, will kindle.

The only difficulty is, how Tophet can be said to be *prepared for the king of Assyria,* since Sennacherib himself did not die in the common destruction. To which it may be answered, that all his strength and glory perished there. But withal I conceive that this expression points at a more hidden sense couched under this description, which is the final destruction of sinners in that Tophet or Gehenna, of which the valley of Hinnom was only a faint resemblance, together with Satan their prince at the head of them.

CHAP. XXXI.

ARGUMENT.

A continuation of the same subject treated of in the former chapter: the prophet again reproves the Jews for seeking to Egypt for succour, and assures them of God's assistance, if they will tarry a little, and wait for his salvation.

Ver. 1. *WOE unto them that go down to Egypt for help,* &c.] See xxx. 1. 16.

Ver. 2. *Yet ye also is wise and will bring evil, and will not call back his words,* &c.] God is as wise as the ablest politician, and knows how to bring to pass his purposes as effectually; and will certainly make good his threatenings against the despisers of his commands. (See xxx. 13, 14.)

But will arise against the house of the evil-doers, and

against the help of them that work iniquity.] He will bring his judgments as well upon those who have had the chief hand in forming this confederacy, as upon the Egyptians themselves, in whom they place their confidence. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 3. *Now the Egyptians are men, and not God.*] In whom alone we ought to put our trust.

And their horses flesh, and not spirit.] Spirit sometimes is equivalent with angel, and the angelical powers are described as *excelling in strength* far beyond any corporeal being. (See Psal. ciii. 20.) In other places, *spirit* signifies the same as the *soul,* and is opposed to flesh, as the more noble part of human nature. Taking the word in either sense, the meaning of the text is, that nothing extraordinary is to be expected from the Egyptian auxiliaries.

Both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down.] Both the Egyptians and they that rely upon their aid. (Compare xx. 4—6. 2 Kings xviii. 13.)

Ver. 4. *Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice,* &c.] An elegant similitude; representing God's almighty power, which no human strength is able to withstand; and exactly parallel to those verses in Homer, where Sarpedon is described as going against the Greeks, (Iliad μ. ver. 299, &c.)

Βῆ ῥ' ἴμεν, ὥστε λέων ὀρεσίτροφος, ὅστ' ἐπιδευὴς
Δηρὸν ἔῃ κρειῶν, κέλεται δέ ἑ Θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ,
Μήλων πειρήσοντα, καὶ ἐς πυκινὸν δόμον ἐλθεῖν·
Εἴπερ γάρ χ' εὕρῃσι παρ' αὐτόφι βώτορας ἀνδρὰς
Σὺν κυσὶ καὶ δούρεσσι, φυλάσσοντας περὶ μῆλα,
Οὔ ῥά τ' ἀπείρητος μέμονε σταθμοῖο δίεσθαι.

Which verses are thus rendered in the late English translation copied from the French:

As some fierce lion on the mountains bred,
Stung with keen hunger, searches for his prey,
Springs o'er the fences, and o'erleaps the fold:
For though the shepherds and the watchful dogs
On every side defend the woolly flock;
Yet his undaunted soul disdains to fly,
Till he hath seized his prey.

Ver. 5. *As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem.*] God's protection of his servants is commonly expressed by *covering them under his wings,* in allusion to the wings of the cherubims which covered the mercy-seat. (Compare Deut. xxxii. 11.)

Passing over it, he will preserve it.] As he did when he passed over the Israelites' houses in Egypt, (Exod. xii. 23.)

Ver. 7. *For in that day shall every man cast away his idols of silver,* &c.] See the note on xxx. 22.

Ver. 8. *Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword not of a mean man shall devour him,* &c.] He shall not fall by any mortal power, but by the hand of an angel. (See xxxvii. 36.) If we follow the common opinion, that the Assyrian army was destroyed by a pestilential disease, which was the immediate stroke of heaven; the expressions here exactly agree with the description of the angel, who smote the Jews with a pestilence, 1 Chron. xxi. who is there represented as standing with a *sword drawn in his hand,* (ver. 16.)

And his young men shall be discomfited.] Or, *his choice men,* as the word likewise signifies, the very flower of his army.

Ver. 9. *And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear.*] He shall betake himself to the fortified places within his own dominions, as those do who are afraid that an enemy is pursuing them. (See xxxvii. 37.)

And his princes shall be afraid of the ensign.] His chief commanders shall be afraid of those visible tokens of God's presence in, and protection over, Jerusalem, which were like so many standards lifted up in defence of his people. (Compare lix. 19.)

Saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.] Who hath placed his altar and his sanctuary there: and from thence will issue forth like fire, and consume all those who shall presume to violate that place of his especial presence. (Compare Obad. ver. 18. Zech. ii. 5. xii. 6.)

CHAP. XXXII.

ARGUMENT.

Whosoever carefully considers the ninth, tenth, and following verses of this chapter, will find that they relate to the calamities which the Assyrian invasion brought upon Judea; under those afflictions the wisdom and piety of king Hezekiah was one of the chief supports and comforts to his subjects, and consequently we may suppose that the beginning of the chapter doth contain a character of that excellent prince. But yet there are several expressions, particularly those in the third and fourth verses, that relate to happier times than Hezekiah ever lived to enjoy: and therefore upon the whole matter we may justly say, that the reformation which Hezekiah made was but a shadow or image of those greater improvements in grace and holiness which properly belong to the gospel-times, under the government of Christ, and the assistance of his Spirit. Mr. White objects against this interpretation, that none of the writers of the New Testament have applied any part of this chapter to our Saviour; but we are not to expect a particular application of all the prophecies of the Old Testament in the writings of the New. And we may observe, that many important prophecies, such as are particularly Daniel's weeks, are never distinctly mentioned there. Jacob's prophecy concerning Shiloh, (Gen. xlix. 10.) may be added as another remarkable instance of a prophecy concerning Christ, not mentioned in the New Testament. It is sufficient to justify such an interpretation, if the full import of the words look that way, and such an application be agreeable to those methods of interpreting prophecies which are observed in the New Testament; for those are to be looked upon as a public rule or standard for interpreting the Scripture prophecies.

Ver. 1. *BEHOLD, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.*] Under the government and example of so good a king as Hezekiah, inferior princes and magistrates shall execute their office with integrity and faithfulness. (Compare Psal. lxxii. 2, 3.)

Ver. 2. *And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind,* &c.] And this prince shall be a refuge to us, when the storms of calamities overtake us, or the oppressions of our enemies, like excessive heat, do scorch and consume us. (Compare iv. 6. xxv. 4.)

Ver. 3. *And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim; and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.*] God shall plentifully afford men the light of his truth, and give them grace to make a good use of the instructions he vouchsafes unto them. When men are stupid and careless, they are said, by a contrary way of speaking, *to have eyes and see not, and to have ears and hear not,* (vi. 9. Jer. v. 21.) That this promise chiefly relates to the times of the gospel, will appear by comparing it with xxix. 18. xxxv. 5. If it be objected, that other prophecies foretell the blinding of the Jews under the gospel; we may answer with St. Paul, that *the children of the promise are accounted* for the true *seed* of Israel, in whom the promises are to be fulfilled; (Rom. ix. 8.) and farther, the same Divine Author assures us, the time will come when *all Israel shall be saved,* (Rom. xi. 26.)

Ver. 4. *The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge.*] The word *nimharim, rash,* translated *fearful* xxxv. 4. may signify, that those that are weak in faith shall come to more perfect degrees of knowledge.

And the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly.] The most rude and illiterate, such as could not speak so as to be understood, shall discourse clearly and intelligibly of God and of their duty. The verb *nalag* is near akin in sound and signification to *lanag,* which signifies speaking in a barbarous and unknown language, xxviii. 11. So the text here may be fitly expounded of the conversion of barbarous nations, and their giving praises to God in their several languages.

Ver. 5. *The vile person shall no more be called liberal.*] Or, *shall not have the style and title of prince bestowed upon him;* for so the words in the original import. Under a prince that loves and honours virtue, unworthy persons shall not be advanced to degrees of honour and dignity.

Ver. 6—8. *For the vile person will speak villany,* &c.] The words shew the different temper and method of the base and narrow-souled man, and of him that is truly generous and public-spirited. The former hath no true sense, either of honour or conscience, but makes it his business, under specious pretences, to pervert judgment and justice: whereas the designs of the latter are truly great and worthy of his character, and it is by these only that he seeks to support his dignity.

Ver. 9. *Rise up, ye women that are at ease,* &c.] The prophet returns to the description of those calamities which should follow upon Sennacherib's invasion: and he addresses himself to the nice and delicate women, who would feel the greatest share in these hardships, not being used to any such before.

Ver. 10. *Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women.*] Some render the words, *days above a year shall ye be troubled,* &c. and understand them of Sennacherib's invasion; who came up against Judea in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, (2 Kings xviii. 13.) and in the year following God promised the king a recovery from his sickness, and that he would deliver him out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and prolong his life fifteen years, (2 Kings xx. 6.) Now Hezekiah reigned but nine-and-twenty years in all, so this promise of deliverance must have been made in the fifteenth year of his reign. But Archbishop Usher supposes that there were two invasions by Sennacherib; the first mentioned 2 Kings xviii. 13. the other spoken of in the seventeenth verse of the same chapter, and xix. 9. and thinks that Hezekiah's sickness happened between these two invasions, about three years before the total defeat of the Assyrian army. (See Annal. V. Testam. ad A. M. 3291. and 3294.)

Ver. 12. *They shall lament for the teats,* &c.] The sense would run easier and more agreeable to the original, if we alter the stops, and join the first sentence of this verse with what goes before, and the latter part of it with what follows, translating it thus, *Gird sackcloth upon your loins, and upon your mourning breasts. Upon the pleasant fields, upon the fruitful vine, upon the land of my people, shall come up briers and thorns.* The word *sophedim,* which our English translates *they shall lament,* is in the *masculine* gender, and therefore cannot be understood of the *women* mentioned ver. 11.

Ver. 13. *In the joyous city.*] See the notes on xxii. 2. xxiii. 7.

Ver. 14. *Because the palaces shall be forsaken.*] See v. 9.

The multitude of the city shall be left.] Or, *The city shall be forsaken of its multitude:* this may relate to Jerusalem; or else the word *city* may be taken collectively for cities in general. (See xxiv. 10. 12. xxv. 2. xxvii. 10.)

The forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks.] Expressions denoting utter desolation. (See xiii. 21. xvii. 2. xxvii. 10.) *For ever* is as much as for a long time; and it may be extended to the present condition of Judea and its cities, which have now lain desolate for many ages. (See the notes upon the following verses, and upon xxvii. 10.)

Ver. 15. *Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high.*] Until God gives us new life, and recovers us out of this forlorn condition, which may fitly be compared to the shadow of death. (Compare Psal. civ. 30.) *Pouring out of God's Spirit* does likewise signify the plentiful effusion of his grace. (See Joel ii. 28. Zech. xii. 10.) And if we take the phrase in this sense, the prophecy will belong to that restoration of the Jews, which we are to expect in the latter ages of the world.

And the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be accounted for a forest.] A proverbial expression denoting great alterations, that the places which were desolate before (see ver. 13.) shall again become fruitful; and those which were fruitful shall turn barren. It may mean, that the Israelites shall flourish again, and the Assyrians and other enemies of the church (see note on xi. 14.) shall be humbled: see an expression parallel to this, xxix. 17. only there the word *Lebanon* is used, as equivalent to the *wilderness* here; both words being opposed to grounds cultivated and manured by art and care.

Ver. 16. *Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.*] Judgment and righteousness are often equivalent terms. (See the first verse of this chapter, xxxiii. 5. Eccles. iii. 16.) Taking the words so, the sense will be, that all manner of peace and happiness shall flourish in that place which was lately a *wilderness,* but *is now* become *a fruitful field,* or *Carmel.* But sometimes they are opposed to each other, judgment

being put for severity, and righteousness for mercy. So these words are plainly taken, Psal. xciv. 15. *judgment shall return unto righteousness; i. e.* God will change his severe proceedings into merciful dealings: and thus, perhaps, they are to be understood, i. 27. v. 16. of this prophecy. And this sense, I think, best explains this verse. The prophet had said, (ver. 15.) that the *wilderness should be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field into a forest,* or wilderness: then it follows in this verse, God's judgments shall be visible upon the wilderness (meaning the Assyrians, or, in general, the enemies of God's church), and his righteousness or mercy shall display itself upon the fruitful field, *i. e.* Judea. With this explication the eighteenth and nineteenth verses very well agree.

Ver. 17. *And the work of righteousness shall be peace,* &c.] The effects of God's goodness and men's reformation shall be peace within, and freedom from a hostile invasion without.

Ver. 18, 19. *And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation—when it shall rain, coming down on the forest.*] God's people shall enjoy all manner of rest and security, at which time his judgments shall come down in a very severe manner upon their enemies, expressed by the *forest,* or wilderness, (ver. 15, 16.) The word *forest* is likewise taken metaphorically in the prophetical writings for a city, because its stately buildings, or its great and principal inhabitants, resemble tall cedars standing in their several ranks. (See x. 33, 34. xxxvii. 24. Ezek. xx. 46. Zech. xi. 1.) And if we take the word in this sense, the two sentences of the nineteenth verse are equivalent. By *hail* is meant God's judgment. (See note on xxviii. 2.)

And the city shall be low in a low place.] By *the city* may be meant Nineveh, or Babylon, which was built in a plain: (see note on xxi. 1.) or it may in general signify the society of infidels, as that is opposed to the *city of God.* (See the note on xxvi. 5.) The scope of the place is to signify in general, that, by the same degrees that God's people are relieved their adversaries shall be abased.

Ver. 20. *Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.*] When these calamities befal their enemies, happy will God's people be who may sow their land in peace, which before was desolate by reason of hostile invasions: and though formerly overrun with briers and thorns, (see ver. 13.) yet will now become a *fruitful field,* (ver. 15.) and yield as plentiful a crop, as is seen in moist and well-watered grounds. It was the custom of the Jews to plough with asses, as well as with oxen, as appears from xxx. 24. Deut. xxii. 10. Spiritual blessings may here be implied under the promise of fruitfulness and plenty. (See the note upon iv. 2. xxx. 23.)

CHAP. XXXIII.

ARGUMENT.

We may call this chapter an *epinikion,* or a triumphant ode upon the destruction of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem. The prophet sets forth the several scenes of that transaction with all the beauties of a poetical description. At the beginning of the chapter he foresees the overthrow of the common enemy and oppressor. At the second verse he represents the humble addresses of God's people for deliverance: together with his gracious promises of protection by way of answer to their prayers, at the fifth and sixth verses. Then he describes the disappointment of Hezekiah's ambassadors, who humbly sued for peace, the damp that struck upon the spirits of the whole nation, (ver. 9.) and God's immediate interposition, when matters seemed to be desperate. Afterward the prophet severely reproves the hypocrites, and sets forth the security of those that put their trust in God, and hold fast their integrity, in such expressions as are a just pattern of the true sublime. From the seventeenth verse he describes how the drooping spirits both of king and people revived upon the raising of the siege, and congratulates Jerusalem as being under the immediate protection of the Almighty, and thereby secured from receiving the least damage in the midst of so many dangers. I have given so particular an account of the contents of this chapter, because I am persuaded, that if a translation could be made of it that should come up to the original, it would appear to be as noble a piece of poetry as is to be found among the most admired writings of the ancients.

Ver. 1. *WOE to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled.*] It is the practice of the great oppressors of the world to make war upon their neighbours without any just provocation, or having received any real injury from them; this is very fitly expressed in the known fable of the Lion and the Lamb, and it is against such practices that this woe is denounced.

And dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee!] We read, indeed, (2 Kings xviii. 7.) that Hezekiah *rebelled against the king of Assyria:* but the meaning of that text is no more but that he would not stand to those dishonourable terms of slavery to which his father Ahaz had submitted, when he professed himself the servant of the king of Assyria, (2 Kings xvi. 7.)

When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled.] See xxi. 2.

Ver. 2. *Be thou their arm every morning.*] *Their arm, i. e.* our arm: it is usual in the prophets to change their style from the first to the second or third person, in speaking upon the same subject. (See ver. 6. of this chapter, and the note upon lxiii. 1.) *Every morning,* or, *in the morning, i. e.* speedily; see the like expression, Psal. xlvi. 5. *God shall help her, and that right early;* the Hebrew reads, *At the appearing of the morning:* (so Psal. xc. 14. and cxliii. 8.) Some suppose that the phrase alludes to God's overthrowing the Egyptians when the *morning appeared,* Exod. xiv. 27.

Ver. 3. *At the noise of the tumult the people fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered.*] At the confusion and outcry which was in the Assyrian army upon that sudden stroke, whereby a hundred and eighty-five thousand men were struck dead upon the place, the remaining part of those forces got away as fast as they could; this execution is called *God's lifting up himself,* or exerting his power. (Compare ver. 10.)

Ver. 4. *Your spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpillar.*] The Jews shall plunder the Assyrians' camp, till they leave it as bare as the locusts or caterpillars leave the trees, when they have eat up the leaves. (Compare Nahum iii. 15.) Some explain the verse thus; Ye shall be as easily overcome, as the husbandman de-

stroys the locusts and caterpillars; but I do not think that sense so proper, because locusts and caterpillars are elsewhere described like a formidable army, which nothing can withstand. (See Joel ii. 2, 3, &c.)

Ver. 6. *And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of the times, and the strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure.*] The prophet applies himself to Hezekiah, of whom he speaks, in the third person, at the end of the chapter: and tells him, that those Divine graces of wisdom, knowledge, and the fear of God, (see xi. 2, 3.) will be the support of his time and government, and stand him in more stead, than all the forces and treasure in which other princes place their confidence.

Ver. 7. *Behold, their valiant ones* [or messengers] *shall cry without,* &c.] Or, *shall cry in the streets.* The words describe the ambassadors, or messengers, which Hezekiah sent out to Rab-shakeh, (2 Kings xviii. 18.) returning sadly disappointed, with tears in their eyes, and *their clothes rent,* (ibid. ver. 37.)

Ver. 8. *The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth.*] There is no travelling the public roads for fear of the enemy. (Compare Judg. v. 6.)

He hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man.] Hezekiah bought peace of Sennacherib, (2 Kings xviii. 14—16.) but he would not stand to his agreement: such a haughty conqueror as he, will not be obliged by his treaties any longer than he pleases, and glories in the destruction that he makes both of men and cities. (See x. 10, 11.)

Ver. 9. *The earth* [or land] *mourneth and languisheth; Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down,* &c.] The whole land is under a consternation, and the most beautiful parts of the country seem to languish and wither at the approach of the enemy, and look upon themselves as already destroyed. Lebanon was beautiful for its cedars: Sharon for its flowers and gardens: (see Cant. ii. 1.) Bashan and Carmel, for their rich ground and fat pastures. (Compare xxxv. 2. Micah vii. 14.)

Ver. 10. *Now will I rise, saith the Lord; now will I be exalted.*] When things are come to this extremity, and the case seems desperate, then is the time for God to interpose, and make his strength more eminently conspicuous in the midst of man's weakness.

Ver. 11. *Ye shall conceive chaff; ye shall bring forth stubble.*] Your designs shall all prove abortive. (Compare lix. 4. Psal. vii. 14. xvii. 13. xxix. 5.)

Your breath, as fire, shall devour you.] Or rather, *your wrath,* or indignation against God's people, shall turn to your own destruction.

Ver. 12. *And the people shall be as the burnings of lime.*] They shall be perfectly consumed, as when chalk-stones are reduced to lime: calcining, or reducing to ashes, being one of the last effects of fire. (Compare Amos ii. 1.)

As thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire.] Sinners are often compared to thorns, which the fire catches presently; so do God's judgments lay hold on such who have made themselves *vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction.* (See note on ix. 18.)

Ver. 13. *Hear, ye afar off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might.*] So remarkable a judgment as this deserves to be known and laid to heart by all men, both far and nigh.

Ver. 14. *The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath seized the hypocrites: who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?*] This and the two following verses describe the different apprehensions of the good and bad under their present circumstances. They that did not rely upon God for help, were ready to cry out, Who can bear the approach of the Assyrian, who devours all things like fire? These words may, in a secondary sense, be applied to the terror of hell torments, which, when the consciences of sinners begin to be awakened, give them just cause for having dreadful apprehensions of the Divine vengeance. And they that could not bear the thoughts of a mortal enemy's falling upon them with all his force; how will they bear the weight of God's wrath, when he shall declare himself their enemy, and set his *terror in array against them?*

Ver. 15. *That stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood.*] That will not give ear to any bloody designs formed against the life of the innocent. To *stop the ears* at the mention of a thing, is to shew the utmost detestation of it. (See Acts vii. 57.)

That shutteth his eyes from seeing of evil.] As persons turn away their face from any sight they loathe, and have an aversion for. So God is described as of *purer eyes than to behold iniquity,* (Habak. i. 13.)

Ver. 16. *He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks.*] God shall place him out of the reach of danger, and shall be unto him a rock and a fortress. (Compare Psal. lxi. 2.)

Bread shall be given unto him, his waters shall be sure.] He shall not want any of the necessaries of life, even in the midst of a siege.

Ver. 17. *Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty.*] The king will appear in public, dressed in his royal robes, and with his usual state and splendour, after the defeat of the Assyrian; not covered with sackcloth, as when he went to the temple in the time of his distress, (xxxvii. 1.)

They shall behold the land that is very far off.] The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall no longer be confined by their enemies within the city, but shall have liberty to look abroad, and visit the distant parts of the country.

Ver. 18. *Thy heart shall meditate terror. Where is the scribe? Where is the receiver? Where is he that counted the towers?*] Every one shall with pleasure reflect upon the dangers they have escaped, and shall ask, in a triumphant manner, *Where is the scribe,* or muster-master? Where is the collector of the taxes? Where is the master of the artillery or ammunition? How are they of a sudden vanished, and disappear?

Ver. 19. *Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive,* &c.] The very looks and habit of a foreign and insulting enemy carry something of terror in them. (Compare Deut. xxviii. 49.) Their language is perfect gibberish, and unintelligible, and this makes it a vain thing to try to soften them with good words. (See the notes on xxviii. 11.) The Hebrew expresses a foreign language by a *deep lip,* or *speech:* our translators render it *a strange speech,* Ezek. iii. 5, 6.

Ver. 20. *Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities,* &c.] You may now view Zion in perfect peace, and freed from all fears of hostile invasion. God hath chosen it to be the place set apart for his solemn worship, and the temple of his own residence, and not a *stake of it shall be removed,* or

a cord of it broken; i. e. no part of its walls or houses shall receive any damage from the enemy. (Compare xxxvii. 33. liv. 2.)

Ver. 21. *But there the glorious Lord will be to us a place of broad rivers and streams,* &c.] God will be as great a security to this city as any broad river or deep stream, which is both an ornament and a defence: (compare Psal. xlvi. 4, 5.) and none of our enemy's taller or lesser ships shall be able to annoy us. (See the following note.)

Ver. 23. *Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast,* &c.] Having compared the Assyrian army to a naval force, (ver. 21.) he persists in that metaphor, and describes them as in a shipwrecked condition; the spoil of which wreck shall be divided among the citizens of Jerusalem, and the weakest of them should have some share in it.

Ver. 24. *And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.*] The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not be sensible of those maladies under which they lately languished: but the removal of those evils shall give them comfortable assurance that God hath forgotten their former iniquities.

CHAP. XXXIV.

ARGUMENT.

We may distinguish this prophecy into several *parts*, or *sections*, as hath been observed at the beginning of this work. The foregoing section ended with a description of the general judgment, and some of the remarkable circumstances that do attend it; (chap. xxiv.) and then follow the songs and grateful acknowledgments of the church, (chap. xxv.—xxvii.) This chapter seems to treat much of the same subject with the twenty-fourth, and the following chapter entertains us with a new scene of the church's glories which should succeed.

Ver. 1. *COME near, ye nations, to hear,* &c.] A summons to all the world to this description of the general judgment, which concerns them all. (Compare Psal. l. 1.)

Ver. 2, 3. *For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies,* &c.] These two verses may very fitly be applied to the *battle of the great day of the Almighty,* mentioned Rev. xvi. 14. 16. compared with xvii. 14. xix. 19.

Ver. 3. *And the mountains shall be melted with their blood.*] The effusion of blood shall be so great, that it shall run down in streams from the sides of the mountains, as if the hills themselves were melted into blood.

Ver. 4. *And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved,* &c.] See note on xiii. 10.

Ver. 5. *For my sword shall be bathed in heaven.*] Princes and magistrates are denoted by the host of heaven: (see the forementioned place, and xxiv. 21.) and the words here import, that God's sword shall not spare the mightiest any more than the meanest.

It shall come down upon Idumea.] The enemies of God's church are often represented by the name of some country which was remarkable for its hatred and ill usage of the Jews: such as Egypt, Babylon, Edom, and Moab; (see note on xi. 14.) and thus Edom or Idumea may be taken here, that people always bearing a particular spite and hatred to the Jews, though they were nearly related to them: (see Psal. cxxxvii. 7. Obad. ver. 10, &c.) where they are likewise threatened with utter excision, which certainly came to pass. (See Mal. i. 3.) But the words here seem to describe a more general judgment, of which the destruction of Edom was an imperfect representation. To confirm which interpretation, it may be farther observed, that the words Edom and Bozrah may be taken *figuratively,* because in their original sense they may fitly be applied to any place of slaughter. *Edom* signifies *red,* as blood is; and *Bozrah,* a *vintage;* which, in the prophetical idiom, denotes God's vengeance upon the wicked; (see Joel iii. 13. Rev. xiv. 19.) and is otherwise expressed by the *wine-press of God's wrath,* (Isa. lxiii. 3. Rev. xix. 14.) To confirm this exposition, we may observe, that Edom and Bozrah are joined together again, lxiii. 1. a place parallel to this, where another scene of God's vengeance is represented. The prophets in their denunciations of God's judgments, sometimes allude to the *etymology* of the names by which places are called. (See Micah i. 10. 14.) And several parts of Jacob's prophecy allude to the names of each tribe. (See Gen. xlix. 8. 13. 15, 16.) The Jewish writers do generally suppose, that Edom in the writings of the prophets stands for Rome: and if we compare this chapter with Rev. xvii. and the context before and after (which place several popish commentators, as well as the protestants, explain of modern Rome), we shall find a great agreement and correspondence between several verses in each chapter, particularly between ver. 2. 6, 7. of this chapter, and Rev. xvii. 14. between ver. 8. and Rev. xviii. 5. 8. 20. between ver. 9, 10. and Rev. xviii. 9, 10. and xix. 3. between ver. 11. 13—15. and Rev. xviii. 2. 22, 23.

Ver. 6. *The sword of the Lord is filled with the blood of lambs and goats,* &c.] *Lambs, goats,* and *rams,* in this verse, and *unicorns, bullocks,* and *bulls,* in the next, mean all ranks and sorts of people, the strongest as well as the weakest, who shall all be brought down like beasts to the slaughter. (Compare Psal. lxviii. 31. Jer. l. 27. li. 40. Ezek. xxxix. 18.)

For the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.] A great slaughter is called a *sacrifice,* because it is offered up for the atonement of God's justice. (See note on xxix. 2.)

Ver. 8. *For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.*] A time which shall be remarkable for God's vindicating the cause of his oppressed truth and people. (Compare lxiii. 4. Jer. l. 28. li. 36.) *A day* and a *year* are equivalent here; and as the word *day* is often taken for some remarkable time, so a *year* is here used in that large and unlimited sense. In the like sense we read of the *acceptable year of the Lord,* lxi. 2.

Ver. 9. *And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch,* &c.] An allusion to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, which was an emblem of the everlasting destruction of the wicked at the last day. (See St. Jude, ver. 7.)

Ver. 10. *It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever.*] The same expressions are used to denote the final destruction of the wicked, Rev. xiv. 11. xix. 3. and import that the wicked shall feel the effects of God's wrath for ever.

Ver. 11. *But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess*

it, &c.] It is a great degree of desolation, when a place that was the resort for multitudes of men becomes a habitation of wild and savage creatures. Compare xiii. 21. xiv. 23. Rev. xviii. 2. where these expressions signify utter desolation.

And he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.] The word *eben*, which signifies a *stone*, is sometimes taken for a *plummet*: (see Zech. iv. 10.) and that sense agrees best with this place, and makes it exactly parallel with 2 Kings xxi. 13. *I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab*: in both which texts the instruments of building are applied to destroying.

Ver. 12. *They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there.*] The words might more clearly be translated thus, *They shall call* (or summon) *their nobles, but there shall be no kingdom there:* there shall be no sign of any government. This may relate to the final destruction of antichristian states and governments. (Compare the fourth and fifth verses of this chapter.)

Ver. 13. *And thorns shall come up in her palaces.*] Compare xxxii. 13.

Ibid. and Ver. 14. *It shall be a habitation for dragons and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island*, &c.] See the notes on xiii. 21, 22.

Ver. 16. *Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read.*] God's omniscience, whereby all events, past, present, and to come, are represented to him under one single view, is often described in Scripture, as if it were in the nature of a register-book, wherein every occurrence is exactly set down. (See xxx. 8. lxv. 6. Deut. xxxii. 34. Psal. lvi. 8. Dan. vii. 10. Mal. iii. 16.) In like manner, saith the text, this prophecy is a register of the fate of Idumea, (see ver. 6.) and whosoever, in aftertimes, will compare the event with this prophecy, will find every circumstance here foretold to be punctually fulfilled.

No one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate.] No one of the creatures mentioned in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth verses.

Ver. 17. *And he hath cast the lot for them, his hand hath divided it unto them by line.*] God hath appointed to each of these animals its particular share of the land, with the same exactness as he divided Judea by lot among the children of Israel. (Compare Psal. lxxviii. 55. Josh. xviii. 8.)

CHAP. XXXV.

ARGUMENT.

That there is no necessity of confining the judgments denounced in the last chapter to the single country of Idumea, but they may belong to later times and occurrences, hath been shewed in the Argument and notes upon that chapter. And by the same reason the new face of things here described, may be applied to the flourishing state of the church, or the golden age of the gospel, to commence from our Saviour's appearing, and to be more fully completed when all his enemies *shall be destroyed*. Indeed, Mr. White tells us, that *interpreters would never have dreamed of this sense, had they consulted the prophet's words*: but I must put him in mind, that both Christ and the apostles have applied several passages in this chapter to the gospel-times, as will appear in the following notes: nay, our Saviour appeals to this very prophecy to prove himself the Messias described by the prophets. (See Matt. xi. 3—5.) And if Mr. White does not think Christ's argument to be good, he himself ought to be reckoned among the *dreamers of the circumcision*, whom he so much despiseth.

Ver. 1. *THE wilderness, and the solitary place, shall be glad for them.*] That is, for the judgments inflicted upon God's enemies. When the prophets denounce God's judgments against incorrigible sinners, they often speak of them as matter of rejoicing to the righteous, that they take satisfaction in seeing the Divine justice made manifest. (See Psal. lviii. 9, 10. Jer. li. 10. 48. Rev. xviii. 20.) By the *wilderness* is meant the church which before was in a desolate and forlorn condition, but now shall spread and flourish. So the church is described as dwelling in the wilderness, Rev. xii. 14. thereby to denote its obscure and afflicted state. Both places, perhaps, allude to the Israelites sojourning in the wilderness, who are called the *church in the wilderness*, Acts vii. 37.

Ver. 2. *It shall blossom abundantly.*] Spiritual blessings are often set forth under the emblems of fruitfulness and plenty. (See note on iv. 2. and compare xxx. 23. xxxii. 15. xli. 19. lv. 12. lxv. 10.)

The glory of Lebanon, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.] See xxxiii. 9.

Ver. 3. *Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.*] The prophet exhorts those that are strong to *comfort the feeble-minded*, such as by reason of the continuance of their afflictions began to despair of God's mercy.

Ver. 4. *Behold, your God will come with vengeance—he will come and save you.*] The destruction he brings upon your enemies will be the means of your deliverance. (Compare 2 Thess. i. 6, 7.) This may be applied to Christ, who is God as well as man. (See the note on vii. 14. and compare lxi. 2.)

Ver. 5. *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened*, &c.] Our Saviour proved himself to be the Messias to John's disciples, by appealing to this prophecy, as literally fulfilled in the miracles which he wrought: (Matt. xi. 2—5.) so that they certainly relate to the times of the gospel. And yet this doth not hinder but that the words may be capable of a farther accomplishment: *viz.* that God will remove all that blindness and prejudice which hindered men from coming to the acknowledgment of the truth. (Compare xxix. 18. xxxii. 3. xlii. 7. Acts xxvi. 18.) The gospel-promises have different degrees and seasons of completion, as hath been observed upon ii. 2. and shall be farther observed in the Preface.

Ver. 6. *Then shall the lame man leap as a hart.*] If we understand this expression figuratively, it denotes that the church and its members shall renew their strength, as if a man should return to his youthful vigour after a decrepit old age. (Compare xl. 31.)

And the tongue of the dumb shall sing.] See the note on xxxii. 4.

For in the wilderness shall waters break out.] This signifies the plentiful effusion of God's grace. (See note on xxx. 24.)

Ver. 7. *In the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes.*] By *dragons*, are meant a kind of serpent that chooses to live in dry and barren places. (See note on xiii. 22. and compare Psal. xliv. 19.)

Ver. 8. *And a highway shall be there.*] The removing all obstacles to the restoration of God's people, is elsewhere expressed by *preparing the way of the Lord, and making straight a highway for our God*, xl. 3. (See likewise xlii. 16.) This and the foregoing verse, *the parched ground shall become a pool*, &c. seem to be exactly parallel with the tenth and eleventh verses of the forty-ninth chapter: *By the springs of water shall he guide them, and I will make all my mountains away, and my highways shall be exalted;* the prophet in both places alluding to the two great conveniences of travellers, which are good roads and plenty of waters. This place probably relates to the restoration of the Jews in the latter ages, as many parts of the succeeding prophecies do, though they may have an immediate aspect upon their return from Babylon.

And it shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it.] This way shall be appropriated to the use of God's people; for *holiness* signifies an entire separation, or setting a thing apart for some particular use. So Jerusalem is called *Holy*, because *no more strangers shall pass through it*, (Joel iii. 17.) *i. e.* no army of enemies shall subdue it. (Compare Obad. ver. 17. and Jer. xxxi. 40. and lii. 1. of this prophecy.)

But it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.] If we follow this translation, the word *those* must relate to *the ransomed of the Lord* in the next verse. But I think the words may be better translated thus, *But he (i. e.* God) *shall go along with them in the way, and the simple shall not err therein.*

Ver. 9. *No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon.*] God hath promised to *make a covenant with the beasts of the field*, that they shall not annoy or hurt his people, when they return to their obedience. (See xi. 8. Hos. ii. 18. Ezek. xxxiv. 25.) This denotes in general the protecting them against persecution, and all outward violence: the cruelty of men is sometimes compared to the rage of wild beasts. (See Psal. xxii. 12. 21. 2 Tim. iv. 17.)

Ver. 10. *And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs.*] An allusion to the expressions of joy which were used by the Jews, when they went up to Jerusalem at their solemn festivals. (See xxx. 29.)

And everlasting joy upon their heads.] The phrase alludes to the crowns, or garlands, which were put upon the heads of persons newly married; (see Cant. iii. 11.) and were used at other times of public rejoicing. (Compare 1 Thess. ii. 19.) The place may fitly be applied to the time of Christ's marriage with the church. (See Rev. xix. 7. xxi. 2. and the notes upon lxi. 10.)

Sorrow and sighing shall flee away.] Compare xxv. 8. lxv. 19. Rev. xxi. 4.

CHAP. XXXVI.

ARGUMENT.

This and the three following chapters, excepting part of the thirty-eighth, are almost word for word the same with the second book of Kings, from the thirteenth verse of the eighteenth chapter to the twentieth verse of the twentieth chapter. From whence we may probably conjecture that this was part of that history of Hezekiah's reign which Isaiah wrote, as we read 2 Chron. xxxii. 32. It is inserted here because it gives great light to several particulars of the foregoing prophecies, especially those passages which speak of Sennacherib's invasion; and the thirty-ninth chapter contains a prophecy of the captivity, and is an introduction to the remainder of Isaiah's prophecies, a great part of which relate to the restoration of the Jews, and their return into their own land. For the same reason, the history of the taking Jerusalem by the Babylonians is annexed to Jeremiah's prophecies, because it helps to explain and confirm several passages in them. (See Jer. lii.)

I shall be the shorter upon these chapters, because the greatest part of them is fully explained by Bishop Patrick in his Commentary upon the second book of Kings.

Ver. 2. *AND the king of Assyria sent Rab-shakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem with a great army.*] Archbishop Usher supposes this attempt upon Jerusalem to have been three years after the former expedition mentioned at the first verse. (See his Annales Vet. Test. ad A. M. 2191. and 2194.)

By the conduit of the upper pool.] See note on vii. 3.

Ver. 6. *Thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt.*] See xx. 5, 6. xxx. 2, &c. xxxi. 1. Ezek. xxix. 6, 7.

Ver. 8. *Now therefore give pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria.*] Or, *give hostages*, so a word from the same original signifies, 2 Kings xiv. 14. Rab-shakeh directs his discourse to king Hezekiah, as if he were present, and bids him offer any pledge, pawn, or wager, which he would be willing to forfeit, if he could not provide riders for two thousand horses, which the king of Assyria was to furnish him with. Horses were scarce in Judea, which was the cause that few of the natives were trained up to that sort of military discipline: but they relied upon Egypt for horsemen, as it follows. (See the note on ii. 7.)

Ver. 10. *The Lord said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.*] He interprets his former successes, as if they were an argument that Heaven was on his side: (see ver. 19, 20. x. 9, 10.) or he may mean that some oracle, or idol, in request among the Assyrians, had promised him success: and this pretended deity he impiously calls by the name of the true God.

Ver. 11. *Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language.*] The Syrian tongue is what we now call Chaldee. (See Dan. ii. 4. Ezra iv. 7.)

That they may eat their own dung, &c.] He threatens them with the utmost extremity of famine which a strait siege would produce, in case they refuse to comply with his master's proposals.

Ver. 16. *Make an agreement with me by a present.*] This was a token of homage which conquered nations paid to their conquerors. (See 2 Sam. viii. 3. 6.)

Ver. 22. *With their clothes rent.*] It was the custom of the Jews, when they heard the name of God blasphemed, to rend their clothes. (See 2 Kings v. 7. Matt. xxvii. 65.) This crime Rab-shakeh had been guilty of, in speaking of

the true God in as contemptible a manner as he did of idols, (ver. 7. 19, 20.)

CHAP. XXXVII.

See the Argument of the former chapter.

Ver. 3. *THE children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.*] A proverbial expression denoting present death, or the extremity of danger. (See Hos. xiii. 13.)

Ver. 7. *I will send a blast upon him.*] The blasting of God's displeasure. (See ver. 35.)

And he shall hear a rumour.] A *panic* fear shall fall upon him, and he shall be alarmed with an uncertain report, that some enemy designs to fall upon him, having heard that his army is weakened with so great a loss, as that of one hundred and eighty-five thousand men.

Ver. 9. *And he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia.*] The word is *Cush* in the Hebrew, which very often signifies *Arabia*, in which sense most commentators understand it here, though our translators always render it *Ethiopia;* and it may here be probably understood of Ethiopia properly so called. (See the note on xviii. 1.)

Ver. 12. *The children of Eden.*] The country of Eden where Paradise was situate was in Mesopotamia, as learned men are generally agreed; and one good proof of that opinion is taken from this text, and from Ezek. xxvii. 23. in both which places it is joined with *Haran*, a noted city in Mesopotamia, called *Charran* by the Septuagint, and *Charræ* in Latin; a place famous in Roman authors for the defeat of Crassus and his army.

Ver. 13. *Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim?*] We find this expressed, with some little variation, xxxvi. 19. *Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad; where are the gods of Sepharvaim?* From whence Dr. Spencer ingeniously conjectures, that the word *Melech, king*, was the name of an idol, called elsewhere *Moloch*, and worshipped by these people, (lib. ii. de Legib. Hebræor. cap. 10. sect. 1.)

Ver. 16. *O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims.*] Who hast declared thyself in a peculiar manner the God of Israel, by choosing this temple for the place of thy residence, where thou vouchsafest thy appearance from between the *cherubims*, and givest favourable answers to us, when we humbly beg thy assistance. (See Numb. vii. 89.) The two titles, the *Lord of hosts*, and *he that dwells upon*, or *inhabits the cherubims*, as some render the phrase, are usually joined together: (see 1 Sam. iv. 2. 2 Sam. vi. 2.) because God's sitting upon the cherubims in the temple, did signify his being attended with the host of heaven, as always in a readiness to obey his commands. (See 1 Kings xxii. 9.)

Thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth.] Hezekiah here asserts God's sovereignty, in opposition to the blasphemies of Rab-shakeh and his master, who esteemed the God of Israel but as Lord, or *tutelary genius* of the particular country of Judea, and thereby levelled him with the pretended gods of other nations. (See ver. 10—12. of this chapter, and xxxvi. 19, 20. Compare likewise 1 Kings xx. 28.)

Ver. 22. *The virgin, the daughter of Zion.*] See note on xxiii. 12.

Ver. 24. *By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof.*] Cities, in the prophetical writings, are sometimes metaphorically represented by woods or forests, and the several ranks of inhabitants by the taller and lesser trees which grow there. (See xxxii. 19. x. 34.) And this sense agrees best with the scope of this place; which is to set forth the proud brags of the Assyrian, in the figure of a pompous rhetoric, and to represent him as threatening to take Mount Zion, and the capital city of Jerusalem, and destroy their principal inhabitants.

And I will enter into the height of his border.] I will take possession of the principal parts of his dominions: such were Lebanon and Carmel esteemed. (See xxxiii. 9. xxxv. 2. Jer. xxii. 6.)

And the forest of his Carmel.] i. e. *The wood*, or forest (for the word is the same in both texts), which is *in the midst of Carmel*, Micah vii. 14. and is spoken of there as the choicest pastures of Carmel, and is probably the same place which is called the *forest of the vintage*, Zech. xi. 2. for some part of Carmel was planted with vineyards. (See Isa. xxxiii. 9.) The margin reads, *The forest and his fruitful field:* for the *forest* and *Carmel* are spoken of as two distinct sorts of grounds. (See x. 18. xxix. 17.) Carmel being a place noted for great fertility (see the last note); the word is sometimes taken appellatively for a fruitful field: and is so translated in those texts.

Ver. 25. *I have digged, and drunk water.*] Or, as the text in 2 Kings xix. 24. reads, *I have digged and drunk strange waters; i. e.* I have marched through deserts where it was expected my army should perish for thirst, and yet even there have I digged and found water. He brags that he had overcome difficulties seemingly insuperable, and never failed in executing any design he had undertaken.

With the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of besieged places.] I have made rivers fordable by turning their streams another way. Bochart thinks, that by the Hebrew *matsor, besieged places*, is to be understood *Egypt*. (See the note on xix. 5.) Sennacherib conquered Egypt before he besieged Jerusalem. (See xx. 5, 6. and the note on xix. 17.)

Ver. 26. *Hast thou not heard long ago, how that I have done it?* &c.] These are the words of God in answer to the boasts of the proud Assyrian; wherein he puts him in mind, that all his successes ought to be ascribed to God: that it was his providence predetermined these events, and brought them to pass in their appointed time, and made him the instrument of the Divine vengeance upon such cities as deserved utter destruction, and weakened the hands of their inhabitants, so that they were not able to defend themselves.

Ver. 28. *But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and coming in, and thy rage against me.*] God lets him know, that none of his designs were hid from his all-seeing eye, and that he perfectly knew how much ill-will he bore in mind against his city and sanctuary; and as the successes he had already gained were owing to him, so he could put a stop to them whenever he pleased. The phrase of *going out and coming in* is used for leading out armies to war, and bringing them home again. (See Numb. xxvii. 21. Deut. xxxi. 2. Josh. xiv. 11.)

Ver. 29. *Therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and*

my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.] I have thee as much in my power as the fisherman can manage the fish, when he hath put a hook into his jaws: (see Job xli. 2.) and as the rider can curb the horse, and turn him which way he pleases, when the bit is in his mouth. And now I will turn thee back unsuccessful, and thou shalt be glad to get home again with all speed. (See ver. 34.)

Ver. 30. *And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such as groweth of itself,* &c.] God directs these words to king Hezekiah, and tells him that this shall be a sign of God's favour and protection to him and his people, that although this year the enemy had destroyed all the crop that was sown; and the next year being the *sabbatical* year, the law forbade them either to sow or reap; yet they should want no provision for these two years: and in the third year they should sow in peace, and reap the fruits of their labour. Concerning the seventh year, which was the *sabbatical* year, or year of rest, see Lev. xxv. 4, &c.

Ver. 31. *And the remnant that is escaped out of the house of Judah.*] See note on x. 22.

Ver. 32. *The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this.*] See note on ix. 7.

Ver. 33. *He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there,* &c.] See note on xxix. 3.

Ver. 36. *Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand.*] Smote them with a pestilential disease, as Josephus and most expositors understand the words. (See note on xxxi. 8.)

Ver. 38. *And Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.*] Called Sarchedon, in Tobit, (i. 21.) and Asordan, in the Septuagint, a word near akin to Assaradinus, by which name he is called in Ptolemy's canon. Under his government, the Assyrian and Babylonian kingdoms were joined into one monarchy: he reigned thirteen years over the latter, as appears by the forementioned canon; though he reigned in all above forty years from his father's death.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains an account of Hezekiah's sickness, which happened at the time of Sennacherib's invasion, of his miraculous recovery, and the song of thanksgiving which he wrote upon that occasion.

Ver. 1. *IN those days was Hezekiah sick unto death.*] See the note on the sixth verse.

Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die.] Settle thy worldly concerns; for this disease, by the course of nature, will prove mortal.

Ver. 3. *And Hezekiah wept sore.*] One reason of his great concern is supposed to be, because he should leave his kingdom in great distraction, under the terrors of a foreign invasion, and without any heir to take the government upon him, for Manesseh was not born till three years after this. (Compare 2 Kings xx. 6. xxi. 1.)

Ver. 6. *And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria.*] From hence it appears, that Hezekiah's sickness was before the destruction of Sennacherib's army, though it be not mentioned till afterward, because the sacred writer would not interrupt the thread of that story. (See the note on xxxii. 10.)

Ver. 8. *So the sun returned ten degrees.*] It is the common opinion that the sun itself went back, but the heavenly bodies were restored again to their regular position, as much being deducted from the next night as was added to this day. But some think this a particular miracle wrought by the shadow's going back upon the sun-dial of Ahaz, and not taken notice of in other countries, which occasioned an embassage from Babylon to inquire about the truth of it, (2 Chron. xxxii. 31.)

By which degrees it was gone down.] These ten degrees are supposed to be marks of so many hours by which the shadow *went down,* as the text expresses it both here and 2 Kings xx. 11. But there is no need we should understand it of the declining part of the day, or the afternoon, for the word may be understood in general of a progressive motion; and Bishop Patrick tells us from Dr. Alix, this miracle was wrought about ten o'clock in the morning; nor can we be certain what portion of time is meant by these *degrees,* for the division of the day into hours seems not to have been so ancient an invention: that is commonly ascribed to Anaximander or Anaximenes, who flourished about two hundred years after, and probably learned it from the Chaldeans. To this purpose we may observe, that Daniel is the only writer of the Old Testament that mentions an hour as a division of time, and there is no Hebrew word that signifies such a portion of time.

Ver. 11. *I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living.*] The good men under the law had but imperfect notions of a future state, and thought it a great unhappiness to be deprived by death of the communion of saints here upon earth. Hezekiah might also be concerned to think, that the public worship of God might be less frequented, after it had lost so zealous a patron as himself.

Ver. 12. *Mine age* [or life] *is removed from me, like a shepherd's tent.*] Shepherds do not pitch their tents long in one place, but remove for the convenience of pasture. (See the note on xiii. 20.)

I have cut off like a weaver my life.] My sins are the cause that the thread of my life is cut off, like that of a weaver.

From day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.] I concluded I should die before night. (Compare Job iv. 20.)

Ver. 13. *I reckoned till morning, that as a lion so would he break all my bones.*] When night came, I reckoned I should die before the next morning, my pains were so great as if the whole frame of my body were just ready to be dissolved.

From day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.] The second day of my illness I had the same expectations of death, which I had the day before: upon the third day he recovered. (See 2 Kings xx. 8.)

Ver. 14. *Like a crane, or a swallow, so did I chatter; I did mourn as a dove.*] My pains sometimes made me cry out aloud; at other times my strength was so low, I could only inwardly groan and bemoan myself.

Mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.] I had scarce strength to lift up mine eyes to heaven, I even despaired of any help from thence, but yet I could not forbear crying out, O Lord, thou

seest that death is come like a cruel executioner to seize me, and it is thou only canst relieve me, and deliver me out of his hands.

Ver. 15. *What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it.*] The suddenness of my deliverance surprises me, so that I want words to express my thankfulness: all I can say is, that no sooner did God promise to restore my health, but I immediately found the effects of his goodness.

I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.] The sense is more intelligible in our old translation, which renders the words thus, *I will, so long as I live, remember this bitterness of my life:* that is, the remembrance of the misery I endured, shall continually excite me to renew my thankfulness for this thy mercy.

Ver. 16. *O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit.*] As all men's lives are thy gift; so I shall always acknowledge the preservation of mine to be owing to thy goodness in promising, and thy faithfulness in making good thy promise.

Ver. 17. *Behold, for peace I had great bitterness.*] The words may be translated, *Behold, my grievous anguish is turned into ease.*

Ver. 18. *For the grave cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee,* &c.] The dead cannot be instruments of promoting thy glory here, or making known thy goodness to others. (Compare Psal. xxx. 9. cxv. 17.)

Ver. 19. *The father to the children shall make known thy truth.*] Thy wonderful mercy towards me shall be recorded to after-ages, and fathers shall mention it to their children, as an instance of thy faithfulness.

Ver. 20. *Therefore will we sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.*] We will sing this and other hymns which Hezekiah had ordered to be used in the public worship. (See 2 Chron. xxix. 25. 30.)

Ver. 21. *Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the bile.*] There might be some natural virtue in such a plaster for ripening the sore, as physicians have observed; but the speediness of the cure must be ascribed to a supernatural cause.

Ver. 22. *Hezekiah also had said, What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?*] This relates to ver. 20. where Hezekiah promises to make his grateful returns for God's mercies in the most public and solemn manner, and thereby make good that part of the promise which Isaiah gave him, that in *three days he should be able to go up to the house of the Lord,* (2 Kings xx. 5.) To confirm the truth of which promise, Hezekiah demanded the sign mentioned in the following verses there, and in the seventh and eighth verses of this chapter.

CHAP. XXXIX.

ARGUMENT.

The king of Babylon sending ambassadors to congratulate Hezekiah's recovery, the king received them with great kindness, and with some degree of vanity shewed them all his treasures and rarities: to reprove this piece of pride, Isaiah by God's direction acquaints him, that the time will come when all these boasted riches shall be carried to Babylon, and even the heirs of the royal family should be treated as slaves and captives there. This history is inserted here as a proper introduction to the succeeding prophecies, many of which relate to the Babylonian captivity, and the return of the Jews from thence.

Ver. 1. *AT that time Merodach-Baladan, the son of Baladan.*] Merodach was the name of an idol worshipped by the Babylonians, and Baal or Bel was another. (See Jer. l. 2.) And these two idols, with the addition of Adan, or Adon, which signifies *lord,* gave a name to this king of Babylon. It was usual for the Babylonian kings to take their names from the idols they worshipped. Thus we find one of their kings was called Evil-Merodach, (2 Kings xxv. 27.) Nebo was another idol of the Babylonians (see xlvi. 1. of this prophecy): from whence Nabonassar, Nebuchadnezzar, and several other kings of Babylon, took their names. And Daniel had the name of Belteshazzar given him, *according to the name of my god,* saith Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 8. This king is here called the *son of Baladan;* which Baladan Archbishop Usher supposes to be the same person who is called in profane authors *Belesis,* or *Belesus,* and *Nabonassarus,* from whence the famous computation of time called *Æra Nabonassari* took its name. (See Annales Vet. Test. ad A. M. 3257.)

Sent letters and a present to Hezekiah.] As many other princes did. (See 2 Chron. xxxii. 23.) One reason of sending this embassy was, to satisfy himself about the prodigy of the sun's going backward upon the king's recovery. (Ibid. ver. 31.) The Babylonians were famous for the study of astronomy, which made their king the more inquisitive about so extraordinary a phenomenon.

Ver. 2. *The precious ointment.*] The balsam that grew near Jericho was reckoned the very best of that kind. (See Josephus, Antiq. lib. iv. cap. 6. and de Bello Judaic. lib. v. cap. 4.)

Ver. 3. *They are come from a far country to me, even from Babylon.*] See the note on v. 26.

Ver. 4. *There is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.*] This he did in *the pride of his heart,* as we read, 2 Chron. xxxii. 26. 31. which occasioned the prophet to denounce the following judgment.

Ver. 7. *And of thy sons that shall issue from thee—they shall take away,* &c.] Even some of thy posterity and of the royal family, shall they put into servile offices in the king of Babylon's court. (See this fulfilled in Daniel and his companions, Dan. i. 3, &c.)

Ver. 8. *Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken.*] The expression denotes the king's submitting to, and acquiescing in, God's decree. (Compare 1 Kings ii. 38.)

For there shall be peace and truth in my days.] The king thought it a great favour, that God would delay that punishment which he might have inflicted presently, and prolong the tranquillity of his kingdom for some time. (See 2 Chron. xxxii. 26.)

CHAP. XL.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins a new section of this prophecy, as was observed at the beginning of the book; wherein the prophet

raises his style, and describes the future glories of the church with a loftiness of expression suitable to the dignity of the subject. He had plainly foretold the Babylonish captivity in the foregoing chapter, and in this he revives the Jews with the comfortable promise of a return from thence. This is the ground-work of a great part of the following prophecy: but the many predictions we find in the succeeding chapters of this prophecy, relating to the life and death, the character and offices, of the Messias, and the flourishing state of the church under him, can never be supposed to receive their due accomplishment, unless we assert that the prophet was carried on from his first subject to a farther view of the enlargement of the church under the gospel, and the bringing the fulness of the gentiles into it. And these prophecies are so worded in many places, that the literal sense of the text does better agree with the gospel-times, than with those that were nearer the prophet's view: as may be particularly observed in some passages of this very chapter. I shall conclude this Argument with that judicious observation of our learned Mr. Thorndike, (de Jure finiendi Controvers. cap. 4. p. 60, 61.) "Equidem quæ Judæis post reditum a captivitate magna et gloriosa promissa sunt, cœpisse quidem impleri fateor sub Maccabæis, liberoque ex postliminio ejus populi statu. Et tamen quæ de idolis destruendis, et de proselytis aggregandis ibi prædicuntur, si sub Evangelio implenda non fuissent, non solum nihili facienda, sed ne vera quidem fuissent, cum pro magno id pollicentur, quod præ idololatriæ aut Mahumedismi fœcunditate nullius momenti sit."

Ver. 1. *COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.*] The prophet addresses himself to God's messengers, whose office it was to publish the glad tidings of peace and salvation. (See lii. 7.) The Septuagint understand the words of the priests, and read the beginning of the next verse thus, *O ye priests, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem.*

[*Comfort ye my people.*] Compare xlix. 13. lii. 9. The times of the Messias are called the *consolation of Israel*, (Luke ii. 25.) and one of the names of the Messias was to be *Menahem*, i. e. *the Comforter*, according to the rabbins. (See Lightfoot, vol. i. p. 209.) The prophet here speaks to those that were to *bring glad tidings to Zion*, ver. 9. as the words should be there translated.]

My people.] Mr. White, in his preface, p. 11. makes it a difficult question to resolve whom the prophet here means, if the words be applied to the gospel-times. Now I think it is very easy to give an answer to this question out of the gospel, *viz.* that the prophet speaks of those who "waited for the consolation of Israel, and looked for redemption in Jerusalem," (Luke ii. 25. 38.) Of which kind were all the pious and well-disposed persons who lived at the time of our Saviour's appearing. Mr. White, indeed, affirms, *that the greatest part of the people thought themselves to stand in no need of comfort:* but this is so far from being true, that we find by many passages of the gospels, that the main body of the Jewish nation were in great expectation of the Messias at that time, and much pleased with the thoughts of his being near at hand; though afterward many of them were disappointed at the meanness of his outward appearance, and thereupon took up an incurable prejudice against him.

Ver. 2. *Cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished.*] Any state of servitude or hardship is compared to a state of warfare in Scripture. (See 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4.) Thus the word is applied to the attendance of the Levites in the service of the sanctuary, Numb. iii. 23. viii. 24. The phrase here alludes likewise to the discharge given to soldiers after so many years' service. (Compare Job vii. 1.)

For she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.] That is, double in proportion to God's usual severity in punishing men's sins. (Compare Jer. xvi. 18. xvii. 18. Rev. xviii. 6.) *God punishes men less than their iniquities deserve;* (Ezra ix. 13.) yet he shewed greater severity against the sins of the Jews, than towards those of other nations. (See Dan. ix. 12. Amos iii. 2.) Some translate the words thus: *She shall receive from the Lord double for all her sins;* taking the word *sins* for the punishments due to sin, as it is often used; and then the sense will be, She shall be fully made amends for her sufferings, and receive twice as much as she had before, as Job did, Job xiii. 10. (Compare lxi. 7.)

Ver. 3. *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness.*] The prophet calls the way by which the Jews were to return from captivity into their own country, by the name of *the wilderness*, alluding to their passing through the wilderness in their way from Egypt to Canaan. In other places, the prophet compares God's care in conducting them home from their dispersions, to his miraculous leading them through the wilderness. (See xli. 18. xlix. 10.)

Ibid. and Ver. 4. *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted,* &c.] The first intention of the prophet in these two verses is to declare, that God will remove all impediments which might hinder the return of his people into their own country. (Compare lvii. 14. lxii. 10.) To the same purpose are several expressions we meet with in the following chapters, of *God's opening rivers in the wilderness, of conducting his people by the springs of waters, making his mountains a plain,* &c. (See xli. 18. xlix. 10, 11.) Which expressions allude to the custom of princes to send harbingers before them, to make the roads easy and commodious for their passage. The same metaphor is used by Homer, Iliad σ'. ver. 260. where Apollo, promising to assist Hector, saith,

Αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ προπάροιθε κιὼν, ἵπποισι κέλευθον
Πᾶσαν λειανέω————————

I will go before, and make smooth all the passages.

But to this exposition it must be added, that the very letter of the text does more exactly suit to the office of John Baptist, who *prepared the way of the Lord,* by preaching *in the wilderness.*

Ver. 5. *And all flesh shall see it together.*] The manifestation which God shall make of himself by the gospel, will be such a blessing as all nations shall have a share in.

Ver. 6. *The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass,* &c.] By the *voice* is meant the voice of God, who is introduced as commanding his messenger or prophet to proclaim this important truth; That all men are weak and impotent, and it is God alone and his

promises that can safely be relied on. The words in their first intent import, that the restoration of the Jewish nation, after a seventy years' captivity, was not to be brought to pass by any human force or wisdom, but merely by the power and goodness of God. (See Zech. iv. 6.) Which observation is still more remarkably verified in the revelation of the gospel, the great design of which is to exalt God, and to humble man; whose promises are the only foundation of a lasting happiness, and these are wholly owing to the mercy of God, and shall be effected without any human means or assistance, *that no flesh may glory in his presence.* (See 1 Cor. i. 29—31. 1 Pet. i. 25.)

Ver. 7. *The grass withereth,—because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it.*] Or, *because the wind of the Lord bloweth upon it.* (Compare Psal. ciii. 16.) As wind and storms deface the beauty of the grass and flowers; so the breath of God's displeasure blasts the counsels of men, and brings them and their designs to nought. (See ver. 24.)

Ver. 8. *But the word of our God shall stand for ever.*] See note upon ver. 6.

Ver. 9. *O Zion, that bringest good tidings!—O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings!*] The marginal reading gives a much better sense, *O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion! O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem!* and this reading agrees better with what follows, *Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God.* (Compare likewise xli. 27. lii. 7.) The Hebrew *mebasshereth,* though of the feminine gender, yet is masculine in sense, and so it is used Psal. lxviii. 11. Just as *Koheleth,* of the same gender, is used for Solomon the Preacher, Eccles. i. 1.

Get thee up into a high mountain.] They that were to publish any proclamation, used to get up to the top of some high hill, from whence their voice might be heard a great way off. (See lii. 7. Judg. ix. 7. 2 Chron. xiii. 4.) The same ceremony was used among the Jews in giving notice of their solemn festivals.

Lift it up, be not afraid.] For God will certainly make his words good.

Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God.] See the note on xlviii. 16.

Ver. 10. *And his arm shall rule for him.*] He will visibly exert his power, and establish the kingdom of the Messias, without calling in any human assistance. (Compare lix. 16. and see the note upon ver. 6.)

Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.] Or rather, according to the marginal reading, *His recompence before him.* (Compare xlix. 4. lxii. 11.) The gospel does in the clearest manner set forth the different rewards of the righteous and the wicked. (See Matt. xvi. 27. Rev. xxii. 12.)

Ver. 11. *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd.*] As the care which God took in providing for, and protecting, his people, is resembled to the office of a shepherd: (see Psal. xxiii. 1. lxxx. 1. xcv. 7. c. 2.) so the office of the Messias is often described by the prophets under the same metaphor. (See Ezek. xxxiv. 23. xxxvii. 24.) In allusion to which places our Saviour calls himself the *good shepherd,* (John x. 11.) and describes himself as *coming into the world to seek and save that which is lost, and bringing home the wandering sheep upon his shoulders rejoicing.*

He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, &c.] As a shepherd gathers his lambs together, that none of them be lost, carries those in his bosom that are not able to go, and gently drives the ewes that cannot bear the fatigue of travel: such gentleness shall Christ use towards the weak ones of his flock, giving them instruction according as they were able to bear it, and taking all possible care to reduce the stragglers into his fold. (See John x. 16. xxi. 15, 16. Mark iv. 33.) These expressions may have some relation to God's care in conducting his people into their own country from Babylon, (compare xlix. 10.) but do more eminently belong to Christ, as appears by the many allusions in the New Testament to this and such-like passages in the Old. (See Heb. xiii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 25. v. 4. Rev. vii. 17.)

Ver. 12. *Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand?* &c.] Here begins a lofty description of God's almighty power, shewing that he is great above all his works, and able to do beyond what we can think or conceive; and the design of it is to persuade the people to place their whole trust in him, and to rest assured that what he hath promised he is able to perform: (see ver. 27, 28.) and withal to arm them against idolatry. (See ver. 18, &c.)

Ver. 13, 14. *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him?* &c.] These two verses inform us, that God's wisdom is as great as his power, that he *works all things after the counsel of his own will,* without asking advice of any, or acquainting them with the measures of his proceedings.

Ver. 15. *He taketh up the isles as a very little thing.*] The Hebrew language calls all those countries *islands,* which we go to by sea. (See note on xi. 11.) From thence it comes to signify any place or country. (See xx. 6. lix. 18.)

Ver. 16. *And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof for a burnt-offering.*] If we were to make an oblation suitable to the greatness of the Divine Majesty, the forest of Lebanon would not suffice for wood, nor the beasts that live in it for an offering. (Compare Psal. l. 10—12.)

Ver. 18. *To whom then will ye liken God?*] The Jews, being to live among the idolatrous Babylonians during their captivity, were by all means to be cautioned against practising their idolatries. This makes the prophet so frequently enlarge upon the vanity and folly of idol-worship, in this latter part of his prophecy. Jeremiah gives the Jews the same caution, (x. 2, 3.) and especially in those remarkable words (ver. 11. of that chapter), "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens:" which are written in Chaldee, that the Jews might be able to answer the idolaters in their own language.

And what likeness will ye compare to him?] See note on xliv. 13.

Ver. 19. *And casteth silver chains.*] By which the idols are fastened to walls or pillars.

Ver. 20. *He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth him a tree that will not rot,* &c.] He that cannot be at the charge of a costly image overlaid with gold or silver, provides himself with a wooden one, and gets an artificer to make it for him, and fasten it with nails that it should not fall down. (See xli. 7. Jer. x. 4.)

Ver. 21. *Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath*

it not been told you from the beginning?] There was a general tradition of the creation of the world still conveyed from one age to another, even among the heathens, which, together with the arguments which natural reason suggested to them, that all things must derive their original from one principle, was sufficient to instruct them in the knowledge of the one true God, to preserve them from idolatry, and convince them that God could not be like the work of men's hands. (See Rom. i. 19, 20, &c.)

Have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?] The words run thus in the original: *Have ye not understood*, or *considered, the foundations of the earth? i. e.* by whom they were laid, even by *him that sitteth upon the circle of the earth*, &c. as it follows. The verb *bûn* signifies to *consider*. (See note on xxviii. 19.)

Ver. 22. *It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth.*] As supreme Lord and Governor of the world.

That stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain.] Like the curtain of a tent. (Compare Habak. iii. 7.) The heavens are described in Scripture as God's tabernacle, or the seat of his glorious presence. (See Psal. civ. 2. and lxvi. 1. of this prophecy.)

Ver. 23. *That bringeth the princes to nothing.*] He removeth one prince or monarchy, and setteth up another: (see Psal. lxxv. 7. Dan. ii. 21.) and will put an end to the Babylonish monarchy, and set up the Persian, in order to return the captivity of his people.

Ver. 24. *Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown—and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither*, &c.] Either he never suffers them to thrive, or, if they make a figure for some time, a sudden blast of his displeasure (see ver. 7.) makes them wither, and puts an end to their flourishing condition.

Ver. 26. *Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number.*] A man cannot lift up his eyes to heaven, and view the exact order and regular motions of the heavenly bodies, but he must be convinced that there is a wise Author of nature, who at first created, and still preserves this system of things. Thus Tully expresses the natural sense mankind hath of this matter: (Tuscul. Quæst. lib. i.) "Cum videmus speciem primum candoremque cæli, deinde conversionis celeritatem, tum vicissitudines dierum atque noctium, commutationesque temporum quadripartitas, eorumque omnium moderatorem solem, lunamque—et stellas eosdem cursus constantissime servantes——hæc cum cernimus, possumusne dubitare quin his præsit aliquis effector?" The heavenly bodies are called God's host or army, because he presides over them, and places them in their proper rank and order, and they exactly keep those stations that he hath appointed them, and fulfil those commands which he hath given them. (Compare Psal. cxlvii. 4.)

For that he is strong in power; not one faileth.] God's works have this remarkable pre-eminence above men's, that they never wear out or need repairing. (See Psal. cxix. 90, 91.) The words of Seneca are observable to this purpose: (Epist. lviii.) "Manent cuncta, non quia æterna sunt, sed quia defenduntur cura regentis: immortalia tutore non egent, hæc conservat artifex, fragilitatem materiæ vi sua vincens."

Ver. 27. *Why sayest thou, O Jacob—My way is hid from the Lord?*] These are the desponding words of the people detained under captivity, who were apt to think that God did not regard their condition.

Ver. 28. *Hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.*] We cannot fathom the depths of his providence, nor assign the reasons of all his proceedings; but this we may be sure of, that his delaying to deliver his people does not proceed from want either of ability or knowledge, since he *upholds all things by the word of his power*, and his wisdom extends itself to all the parts of the creation.

Ver. 30. *Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall.*] Those that make the greatest boast of their strength, as young men are apt to do, shall find it fail them, whenever God withdraws his support: he means the Chaldeans and the choice men of their armies; so the word *bachurim* signifies, xxxi. 8.

Ver. 31. *But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles.*] Eagles are observed to enjoy a vigorous old age, whence comes the proverb, *aquilæ senectus:* and this healthy constitution of theirs seems to have given rise to the vulgar opinion, as if they grew young again after they had been old. (See Psal. ciii. 5.)

CHAP. XLI.

ARGUMENT.

In this and the five following chapters, God is introduced as pleading his own cause against the false gods of the heathen, and challenging the idols to shew such instances of their power and goodness in protecting their votaries, as might be alleged in his behalf with respect to his care and providence over the Jews. These instructions were very proper to confirm that people in their religion, and preserve them from being drawn aside to comply with the Babylonish idolatry: and they likewise contain in them a plain prediction of the calling of the gentiles, and their turning from idols *to serve the true and living God.*

Ver. 1. *KEEP silence before me, O islands.*] God summons the heathen nations to plead their cause before him, and in order to it, commands silence to be kept, according to the form observed in solemn courts of justice. By *islands* are meant those heathen nations that were parted from Judea by the sea. (See the note on xi. 11.) In this sense, those that live upon the Mediterranean Sea are called the *islands of the gentiles*, Gen. x. 5. Accordingly the word is rendered ἔθνη, *gentiles*, by the LXX. in the fifth verse of this chapter, and xlii. 4.

And let the people renew their strength.] Let them muster up the whole strength of their cause, and make the best plea they can for themselves. (See ver. 21.)

Ver. 2. *Who hath raised up the righteous man from the east?*] Many expositors understand this of Abraham, whom God called from the other side of Euphrates, which lay eastward of Judea; but I think it is rather meant of Cyrus, as appears by comparing this place with the twenty-fifth verse of the chapter, and with xlv. 13. xlvi. 11 And

Cyrus is here described as typically representing Christ; (see the note on xlv. 1.) being first of all styled *Righteousness* (the *righteous man* our English renders it), which is one of the titles of Christ; (see Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.) and then is said to come from the east, by which name Christ is also described, Zech. iii. 8. where the word *Tsemah*, which our interpreters translate *Branch*, does properly signify the *east*, and is accordingly rendered Ἀνατολὴ by the LXX.: which very word is applied to Christ, in allusion to that prophecy of Zechary, by St. Luke, i. 78. where our English translate it the *day-spring*, but the margin reads the *sun-rising*.

Called him to his foot.] *i. e.* Called him to follow him, as the phrase is elsewhere rendered. (See Exod. xi. 8. Judg. iv. 10. viii. 5. 1 Kings xx. 10. 2 Kings iii. 9.)

Gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings, &c.] The same things are said of Cyrus, ver. 25. of this chapter, and xlv. 1, &c.

Ver. 3. *He pursued them, and passed safely; even by the way that he had not gone with his feet.*] He shall be a successful conqueror, even when he pursues his enemies through strange and unknown countries. The preter-perfect tense is here put for the future; a way of speaking common in the prophets. (See note on xxi. 9.)

Ver. 4. *Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning?*] By *calling the generations from the beginning*, is meant God's disposing and ordering the several successions of ages, and allotting the proper seasons for the bringing his own designs to pass. (Compare xliv. 7.) God is represented in Scripture as doing every thing by his bare word and command, the creatures immediately answering his call as dutiful servants. (See Job xxviii. 34, 35.)

Ver. 5—7. *The isles saw it and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came*, &c.] Remote countries were astonished at the sudden rise of the conqueror Cyrus, and joined in an alliance together to check his growing greatness; just as several artificers that are concerned in the trade of idol-making, assist one another in carrying on their common interest, and stir up the zeal of others in the defence of image-worship. (See Acts xix. 25.) This passage may fitly be applied to the heathen powers combining together to support their idolatry, and suppress the Christian religion.

Ver. 8. *But thou, Israel, art my servant*, &c.] The expressions are very endearing: it is honourable to be God's servant, still more so to be his *chosen* servant, and to be descended from one to whom he vouchsafed the title of *friend*, as God did to Abraham, (2 Chron. xx. 7.) the greatest honour that any man is capable of: which glorious privilege Christ was pleased to communicate to his disciples, (John xv. 13.)

Ver. 9. *Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof.*] As I have taken your forefathers out of Egypt, so will I take you out of Chaldea, as I did likewise your father Abraham, (Gen. xi. 31.) The preter-perfect tense may be taken here for the future as before, ver. 3. Assyria and Egypt are usually joined together, as the most remarkable countries from whence the Jewish captivity should return. (See the note on xi. 16.) In like manner, at the end of the world, *Christ will gather his elect from the four winds*, (Matt. xxiv. 31.) and of *them whom God hath given him, he will lose none*, (John vi. 38.)

Ver. 10. *I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*] I will support thee with my power, and thereby make my fidelity, in fulfilling my promises, appear to the world.

Ver. 11. *They shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish.*] God's truth shall at last prevail against all opposition, and the kingdom of Christ shall subdue and break in pieces all its adversaries. (See Dan. ii. 44. compare Isa. liv. 17. lx. 12.)

Ver. 12. *Thou shalt seek them, but shalt not find them.*] *i.e.* If thou shouldest go about to seek them, thou shouldest not be able to find them. The expression denotes utter destruction. (See Psal. x. 15. xxxvii. 36.)

Ver. 13. *For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand.*] The joining of right hands hath in all nations been looked upon as a token of friendship, or of entering into a mutual league and covenant.

" Heus ubi pacta fides, commissaque dextera dextræ ?"

Where is the plighted faith and right hands join'd?
Ovid. Epist.

So God saith here, that he will take Israel by his right hand, and support him with his own right hand, (ver. 10.)

Ver. 14. *Fear not, thou worm Jacob.*] Though thou art despicable and trampled upon by every body. (See Psal. xxii. 6.)

Ver. 15. *Behold, I will make thee a new sharp thrashing instrument, having teeth.*] Concerning the manner of thrashing or beating out their corn in Judea, see the note on xxi. 10. xxviii. 28. From thence the word is applied to the crushing or subduing an enemy. (See Jer. li. 33. Habak. iii. 12.)

Thou shalt thrash the mountains, and beat them small, and make the hills as chaff.] By the *mountains* and *hills*, are probably meant the greater and lesser kingdoms or countries which were enemies to God's truth and people: so the phrase signifies, ii. 14. Psal. lxxii. 3. The expressions in this and the following verse allude to the custom of the eastern countries, of having their thrashing-floors upon the tops of hills. (See xvii. 13.)

Ver. 17, 18. *When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none—I the Lord will hear them—I will open rivers in high places*, &c.] God promises his people that he will furnish them with all sorts of accommodations for their return home; that they should neither be afflicted with heat nor thirst, two calamities that are very incident to travellers in hot countries. (Compare xlix. 10. Jer. xxxi. 9.) And the latter of these was particularly grievous to the Israelites in their passage through the wilderness, to which this place alludes; as also to God's miraculous supplying them with water there out of the rock: (compare xlviii. 21.) which ran in a stream like a river, and followed them a great part of their journey: see Psal. cv. 41. 1 Cor. x. 4. and was, as the apostle there tells us, a mystical representation of Christ and the benefits of the gospel. (See note on xxx. 24.)

Ver. 19. *I will plant in the wilderness the cedar*, &c.] As it were on purpose to shelter my people in their return home from the scorching heat of the sun. (Compare

Baruch v. 8.) Nothing is more refreshing in hot countries, than a shade or covert from the scorching beams of the sun. (Compare xxv. 4, 5. xxxii. 2. Psal. cxxi. 6.)

The shittah-tree.] Called *Shittim-wood,* Exod. v. and elsewhere.

Ver. 20. *That they may see, and know—that the hand of the Lord hath done this.*] The many wonderful steps by which the restoration of the Jewish nation shall be brought about, will convince all considering persons that it is the work of God: and his power will still more undeniably discover itself in the propagation of the gospel, and the enlightening those that sit in darkness with the saving truth of it. (See the notes on xliv. 3.)

Ver. 21. *Produce your cause, saith the Lord,* &c.] He challenges the idolaters to plead the cause of their idols, and give convincing proofs of their divinity. (See ver. 1.)

Ver. 22. *Let them shew the former things, what they be,* &c.] Let the idols plead their own cause, or do you their worshippers do it for them, and prove they ever gave any true oracles or prophecies relating to former times, and that the event hath exactly answered the prediction, and this will give credit to any predictions they shall make relating to things future.

Ver. 23. *Shew the things that are to come, that we may know that ye are gods.*] God only can certainly foreknow future events, especially such as depend upon contingent causes, and the determinations of men's free-will. But this does not hinder, but that some of the predictions of the heathen idols or oracles might be true, or else they would hardly have been able to have kept up their credit. But the event answered their predictions in such cases chiefly, where prudent conjecture might go a great way; such might be the prediction of Saul's death by the evil spirit at Endor, (1 Sam. xxviii. 19.) Evil spirits, being very nimble and active, may likewise foretell in one place what they see in another. This account Athanasius gives of the oracle, which foretold the overflowing of the Nile; which he supposes the evil spirit might do, by having seen the rains which fall in Ethiopia some time before, and cause that inundation. (See Athanas. Life of Anthony the Hermit, p. 456. tom. ii. edit. Commel.) But there is no comparison between such predictions and the prophecies recorded in Scripture, where there is a series of remarkable events foretold, reaching from the beginning of the world to the end of it: together with a punctual prediction of names and other circumstances several ages before the event. (See xlvi. 10.)

Yea, do good, or do evil.] The heathens worshipped some of their gods, in hopes to receive good from them, and others for fear they should do them a mischief, who were, for that reason, called, by the Greeks and Romans, *Dii Averrunci,* and Ἀποτρόπαιοι. The prophet, alluding to this opinion, saith, that the evil spirits the heathens worshipped can neither do good nor hurt: they cannot do good, because they are naturally evil; neither can they do hurt any farther than God is pleased to permit them: beside that the images, to whom their exterior worship is paid, are dead and insensible things, that cannot help themselves, much less any body else. (See Jer. x. 5.) And, therefore, as it is God only that can *make peace and create evil,* (Isa. xlv. 7.) all worship is due to him alone.

Ver. 24. *Behold, ye are of nothing.*] Of no use or value: so the phrase is used Job xiii. 6. where we read *physicians of nothing* in the Hebrew; but our translation rightly renders the words, *physicians of no value.* Idols are often called in the Old Testament *ellilim,* i. e. *nothings,* and vanities and lies, to shew that they are not what they pretend to be, but are only senseless images, and the representations of dead men. (See 1 Cor. viii. 4.)

And your work of nought.] Whatever oracles or predictions you pretend to give out are cheats and lies. (See ver. 29.)

Ver. 25. *I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name.*] Cyrus is described as coming from the east, ver. 2. and here he is represented as coming from the north and the east too, because his father was a Persian, and his mother a Median. (See the note on xxi. 7.) Media lay northward of Babylon; accordingly the army which Cyrus led against Babylon is described as coming out of the north, (Jer. l. 9. 41.) because it chiefly consisted of Medes. (See note on xiii. 17.)

Shall he call upon my name.] Cyrus made public profession of his belief in the great *God of heaven and earth,* (Ezra i. 2.)

And he shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay.] The words may better be rendered, *He shall come and tread down princes like mortar,* and *as a potter treadeth clay.* (See ver. 2. xlv. 1, &c. compare Psal. xviii. 42.)

Ver. 26. *Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know?*] Upon such an evident prediction of an event that was not to be fulfilled till near two hundred years afterward, God, in a triumphant manner, demands which of the idols could shew any such token of his divinity.

And before time, that we may say, He is righteous?] *i. e.* His claim to divinity is just. (See xliii. 9.)

Yea, there is none that sheweth; yea, there is none that declareth; yea, there is none that heareth your words.] None of the idols can give you an answer, or seems to regard what you say: just as Baal gave no answer to the importunate clamours of his priests. (See 1 Kings xviii. 29.)

Ver. 27. *The first shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give unto Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings.*] The verse may better be translated thus, *I that am the first* [*i. e.* the Author and Disposer of all things: see ver. 4.] *will give unto Zion and unto Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings,* saying, *Behold, behold them: i. e.* Behold the wonderful works which God hath wrought for you: or, Behold thy people returning to their ancient habitations. (Compare xl. 9.)

Ver. 28. *For I beheld, and there was no man,* &c.] If one were to look about and make the strictest inquiry, there would not be found a man among the idol-priests or prophets, that was able to return an answer to any question that is asked him. Images are elsewhere called *dumb idols.* (See Habak. ii. 18. 1 Cor. xii. 2.)

Ver. 29. *Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing.*] See ver. 24. The Septuagint render the latter part of the sentence, *They that make you are vain:* for the true reading in the Greek is not Πλανῶντες, as the common editions have it; but Πλάσσοντες, as the learned Dr. Grabe hath observed in his dissertation, de Vitiis LXX. Interpr. p. 55.

CHAP. XLII.

ARGUMENT.

The chapter begins with a character of Christ, of his meekness and gentleness, and his success in calling the gentiles. Afterward the prophet upbraids the Jews for their blindness and incredulity, and foretells the judgments that they should bring upon them.

Ver. 1. *BEHOLD my servant, whom I uphold.*] The following prophecy is applied to Christ by St. Matthew, (xii. 18.) and cannot, with any show of probability, be expounded of any other person. The Septuagint understand it of Israel, or the Jewish nation, and read the text thus: *Jacob is my son or servant, I will uphold him; Israel is mine elect, my soul doth choose, or accept him.* They probably took this text to be parallel with xlix. 3. But the gloss of theirs is rejected by St. Matthew, though in most other places the evangelist follows that translation. If we should try to explain this prophecy of Cyrus, as Grotius doth, and his *echo*, Mr. White, allowing him to be a deliverer of the Jews; yet in what sense can he be styled the *light of the gentiles?* (ver. 6.) He is taxed with cruelty by several historians, and it is not likely that the people were much easier under his government, than when they were subjects to the Babylonian monarchy. Beside that, *a light to the gentiles* signifies one that should enlighten their minds, and instruct them in the truth; and in that sense Mr. White himself explains the phrase in the parallel text, xlix. 6. I conclude, then, that the natural import of the words, as well as the authority of the New Testament, do plainly determine this and many other texts here and in the following chapters to an evangelical sense: the Holy Spirit taking occasion, from the deliverance of the Jews out of their captivity, to give the prophet a view of a more glorious redemption, which should be accomplished by the Messias.

My servant, whom I uphold.] Christ is often called God's servant by Isaiah: (see xlix. 3. 5. l. 10. lii. 13. liii. 11.) as he is also by Zechariah, (iii. 8.) as being *sanctified and sent into the world* upon a message of the highest importance, that ever any person was employed about; and this title agrees very well with those many declarations our Saviour made of his *coming into the world to do the will of him that sent him:* (see John iv. 34. vi. 38. xiv. 31.) and it is, perhaps, in this respect that St. Paul saith, *Christ took upon him the form of a servant,* (Philip. ii. 7.) God is said to *uphold him* here, and *to hold his hand,* ver. 6. because his person was under the particular care and protection of Providence: (see John viii. 29. xvi. 32.) and, as the evangelist observes, none of the designs of his enemies against his life could take effect, till *his hour was come,* (John vii. 30. viii. 20.)

Mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth.] Christ is emphatically styled God's *beloved,* and the *son of his love,* (Matt. iii. 17. John iii. 35. Eph. i. 6. Colos. i. 13.)

I will put my Spirit upon him.] See the notes on xi. 2. lxi. 1.

He shall bring forth judgment unto the gentiles.] He shall make known God's laws and judgments to them. (See ver. 4.)

Ver. 2. *He shall not strive, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets.*] He shall instruct those that oppose themselves with all meekness and gentleness; he shall patiently *endure the contradictions of sinners against himself,* and not in an angry or clamorous manner vindicate himself against their calumnies.

Ver. 3. *A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench.*] He will have a tender regard for afflicted consciences, and such as are bowed down under the burden of their sins; and where the least spark of grace appears, he will not quench it, but take the utmost care to keep it alive and improve it. After this example, St. Paul exhorts the pastors of the church to *restore those who have been overtaken in a fault with the spirit of meekness,* (Gal. vi. 1.)

He shall bring forth judgment unto truth.] By this method he shall make the truth and justice of his cause appear against all gainsayers, and obtain a complete victory over his adversaries; to which sense St. Matthew reads the sentence, *till he send forth judgment unto victory;* expressing the sense rather than the words of the original.

Ver. 4. *He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he hath set judgment in the earth.*] We may reasonably suppose, that this prophecy relates to the propagating of the gospel in the world, as that work was carried on, not only by Christ, but also by his messengers. For Christ himself was *not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;* (Matt. xv. 24.) and, consequently, could be a *light to the gentiles* only as he commissioned others to preach the gospel to them. (See Ephes. ii. 17.) And taking the words in this comprehensive sense, they import, that our Saviour would not be discouraged at the difficulties he or his apostles were like to meet with in the discharge of their office, but would still continue unwearied in well-doing, till at last they should surmount all opposition, plant judgment and truth in the earth, and make the remotest parts of the world own their dependance upon him as their Lord, and submit to his laws.

And the isles shall wait for his law.] By the *isles* are meant the *gentiles.* (See the note on xi. 11.) In what sense they may be said to wait for Christ's law, see the note on lx. 9.

Ver. 6. *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee.*] I, who am God Almighty, have called thee to this high dignity, to fulfil my righteous purposes. (See xli. 2.) And in order to that end, I will sustain and defend thee: (see the note upon ver. 1.) and I am able to make my words good, because all things subsist by my word and decree, and all men owe their being and preservation to me, (ver. 5.)

And give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the gentiles.] This can in no tolerable sense be applied to any but Christ, who is called the *Angel of the covenant,* Mal. iii. 1. and was the *Mediator of the new covenant,* into which both Jews and gentiles were to be admitted. (See Jer. xxxi. 31.)

Ver. 7. *To open the blind eyes.*] Compare Acts xxvi. 18. which place seems to be a paraphrase upon this verse.

To bring out the prisoners from the prison, &c.] To free those from the chains of their sins who were the captives of Satan. (Compare lxi. 1. Rom. viii. 21. 2 Tim. ii. 26. 2 Pet. ii. 19.) To the same sense we may best explain that

difficult text in St. Peter, (1 Pet. iii. 19.) concerning the *spirits in prison, to whom Christ is said to have preached* by the ministry of Noah; understanding it of those wicked people of the old world who were under the bondage of sin and corruption, and whom the Spirit of Christ, who was in the prophets from the beginning of the world, (see 1 Pet. i. 11.) endeavoured to reclaim by the ministry of Noah; who was *a preacher of righteousness,* (2 Pet. ii. 5.) and for the space of a hundred and twenty years, (see Gen. vi. 3.) *while the ark was preparing,* exhorted the world to repentance, for fear the *flood should come and sweep them all away:* God's Spirit all that time *striving with men,* and trying to reclaim them.

Ver. 8. *I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.*] My name JEHOVAH denotes me to be the only true God, and I will assert my honour by vindicating the cause of my church and people, and not suffer my truth to be extinguished, nor false gods and false ways of worship to usurp that glory which is due to myself alone. (Compare xlviii. 11.) And this God did in an extraordinary manner, by the publishing of the gospel, which gave a fatal blow to the heathen idolatry. By *another* is meant a strange or false god, the word *god* being understood. (See Psal. xvi. 4. and compare Isa. xliii. 12.)

Ver. 9. *Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare.*] The punctual accomplishment of my former predictions, ought to give credit to what I foretell now, though it seem a new and a strange thing to you.

Ver. 10—12. *Sing unto the Lord a new song,* &c.] An exhortation to all the inhabitants of the earth both far and near, and even the most barbarous people, such as were the Arabians who dwelt in Kedar: (see Psal. cxx. 5.) all of them are exhorted to give glory to God, for his wonderful mercy in making himself known to the gentile world by the gospel. (Compare xliv. 23. xlix. 13. lv. 12. Psal. xcvi. 11, &c. xcviii. 4, &c.) The expressions here, and in the parallel texts, denote the joy to be so great and universal, that even the inanimate parts of the creation are said to be affected with it, and are exhorted to bear a part in this general chorus.

Ver. 13. *The Lord shall go forth like a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy* [or his *zeal*] *like a man of war,* &c.] God is described here as rousing up his indignation against his enemies, which had for some time lain asleep, and whetting his courage like a man of war, through a sense that his honour now lies at stake, (compare lix. 17.) and falling upon his adversaries with the utmost fury.

Ver. 14. *I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself,* &c.] God had been long silent, and not interposed in behalf of his own cause: (compare Psal. lxxxiii. 1.) and this his forbearance had increased the presumption of his enemies; he declares now that he could no longer contain himself, no more than a woman in the pangs of travail can forbear crying out; but he must give vent to his just resentments for the injuries offered to himself and his oppressed people, by bringing some exemplary punishment upon their oppressors. When men's provocations come to a great height, God is represented, in Scripture, as if his patience were quite tired out, and he could no longer forbear punishing them. (See Jer. xv. 6. xliv. 22.)

Ver. 15. *I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs,* &c.] As God's mercy is represented by *pouring water upon the thirsty ground:* (see xxxv. 6, 7. xliv. 3.) so his wrath is described as if it were a *consuming fire,* which parches up every thing, and reduces it to barrenness. (See ver. 25. of this chapter, and l. 2. and Zech. x. 11.) This was literally fulfilled in Cyrus's taking Babylon; when, in order to it, he drained the river Euphrates, by cutting several new channels to carry off the water, and marched his army through it into the city. (See the note on xliv. 27.)

Ver. 16. *I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not,* &c.] If we understand the words of the people's return from captivity, they import, that God would provide means for their restoration which they did not think of, and would remove all impediments that might lie in the way of their return. (Compare xl. 4. Jer. xxxi. 9.) In like manner God will enlighten the world by his gospel, and reduce men into the ways of truth, notwithstanding all the opposition that inveterate error and prejudice can make to the contrary.

Ver. 17. *They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images,* &c.] This must relate to that destruction of the heathen images and idolatrous worship, which followed upon the settlement of Christianity in the Roman empire; and may receive a farther accomplishment, as the truth of the gospel shall more and more prevail in the world. (See the note on i. 29.) The words cannot be said to receive their just completion in the destruction of the Babylonish monarchy by the Persians: for that turn of affairs gave no check to idolatry, the Persians being as much strangers to the true God as the Babylonians. Indeed, Strabo gives this testimony to the Persians, Πέρσαι ἀγάλματα καὶ βωμοὺς οὐκ ἱδρύονται, *the Persians set up neither images nor altars;* (lib. xv. Geograph.) but yet they represented the Divine Majesty by the external symbol of fire.

The phrase of being *turned back,* signifies any disappointment, being a metaphor taken from the discomfiture of forces in war. (See Psal. lxx. 3.)

Ver. 18. *Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind.*] The prophet, speaking still in the person of God, now turns his discourse to the Jews, and upbraids them with their blindness and incorrigibility under all the means of instruction which had been afforded them. To this evil temper they were to ascribe all those judgments God had already inflicted upon them, which should at last end in a total captivity; and should have still more astonishing effects upon their rejecting the Messias. (Compare vi. 10, 11. and see the notes upon that place.)

Ver. 19. *Who is blind, but my servant?*] The prophets often upbraid the Jews with blindness, in not considering and laying to heart what they said to them from the mouth of God. (See Jer. v. 21. Ezek. xiii. 2.)

Or deaf, as my messenger that I sent?] This may be understood of some of the prophets; (compare xliv. 16.) several of whom were unfaithful in their office, and irregular in their lives. (See xliii. 17. Jer. v. 31. xxiii. 14.) The expression may comprehend the priests too, who are called likewise the *messengers of the Lord,* (Mal. ii. 7.)

Who is blind as he that is perfect?] That should be so by his profession. The word is *meshullam* in the Hebrew;

from whence the Arabic *Mussulman* is derived, a title the Mahometans give to themselves.

Ver. 21. *The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake,* &c.] The verse might be translated plainer thus: *The Lord took delight in this people for his righteousness' sake; he hath given them an excellent law, and thereby made them honourable.* (Compare Deut. iv. 6—8.) Their law, if they would have kept close to it, would have been both their ornament and defence.

Ver. 22. *But this is a people robbed and spoiled,* &c.] A description of their miserable condition, when their city was taken, their country left desolate, themselves made captives and slaves, or else forced to hide themselves in dens and caves, and even there in danger of being laid wait for and catched by the enemy, without any body to plead for them, or assert their liberty.

Ver. 23. *Who among you will give ear to this? Who will hearken, and hear for the time to come?*] Who among you captives, will take warning by the judgments you feel already?

Ver. 24. *Who gave Jacob to the spoil, and Israel to the robbers?*] First to the Assyrians, and afterward to the Babylonians, who are called spoilers, xxi. 2. xxxiii. 1.

Ver. 25. *Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about.*] This was literally fulfilled when the Chaldean army took their city, and burnt both that and their temple, 2 Kings xxv. 9. (Compare likewise the 13th verse of this chapter.)

Yet he knew it not; and it burnt him, yet he laid it not to heart.] To *know* signifies sometimes the same as to consider. (See Hos. vii. 9. and the note upon xxviii. 19.)

CHAP. XLIII.

ARGUMENT.

After the threatenings mentioned at the latter end of the foregoing chapter, God here revives his people with comfortable promises, and assurances that he will never utterly forsake them, but will do such miracles for their deliverance, in aftertimes, as shall obscure the memory of those which he wrought for them heretofore. Towards the conclusion, he renews his expostulations with them for their ingratitude and neglect of his service, which will be justly punished with the destruction of their temple, and depriving them of the opportunities of public worship.

Ver. 1. *BUT now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not.*] *God created thee for his glory,* as it is explained ver. 7. 21. to be his peculiar people: so God's elect are called *the work of his hands,* xxix. 23. xlv. 11. lx. 21. And those God *will never utterly forsake,* (Psal. cxxxviii. 8.) By Jacob and Israel are meant the two remaining tribes of Judah and Benjamin in the first place, as below ver. 22. 28. and above xli. 8. though it is probable that many of the promises mentioned here and in the following chapters, relate to that general restoration of the Jews so often spoken of by the prophets.

I have redeemed thee,] Out of the house of bondage, to be my peculiar people; and have ever since exercised a very particular providence over you; and have abundantly testified my care of you.

I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.] I have made a particular choice of thee for my peculiar people, and singled thee out from the rest of the world; (see Exod. xxxi. 2.) and ever since have treated thee with uncommon instances of kindness and familiarity. When a person of great dignity calls an inferior by his name, it is a token of a particular intimacy, and doing him a great deal of honour. (Compare xlv. 4. xlix. 1. Exod. xxxiii. 12.)

Ver. 2. *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee—when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt.*] I will deliver thee when thou art in the greatest straits and difficulties. To *pass through fire and water,* is a proverbial expression, to signify being exposed to all kind of dangers. (See Psal. lxvi. 12.)

Ver. 3. *I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.*] This most interpreters understand of that diversion which the Egyptians, the Jews' allies, in conjunction with Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, gave to Sennacherib's forces, when they were just ready to fall upon the Jews. (See xxxvi. 9. and notes upon xviii. 1.) If we take the words in this sense, we must understand the Cush, or Ethiopia, mentioned in the thirty-seventh chapter, of Arabia, because it is joined here with Seba, which is part of that country. (See likewise xlv. 14.) It is certain that Cush sometimes signifies Arabia, though not always, as Bochart maintains. If we do not approve of this explication, this verse must relate to some historical passage not recorded elsewhere in Scripture. Some, indeed, would refer the place to the destruction of the Ethiopians under Asa: (2 Chron. xiv. 12.) but I take those not to have been Arabians (and such probably are meant here), but Ethiopians properly so called, because they are joined with Lubims, 2 Chron. xvi. 8. who certainly are Africans.

Ver. 4. *Therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.*] The Chaldeans and their forces. (See ver. 14.)

Ver. 5, 6. *I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west,* &c.] This may have partly been fulfilled in the return of the Jews from Babylon, and other countries under that monarchy; but withal they import some more general restoration of that nation: (see xi. 11, 12.) or else we may interpret the words of the gathering together of God's elect into one body. (See Eph. i. 10. and the following verse here, and the note upon liv. 7.)

Ver. 7. *Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory.*] Every one that is called by the name of God's servant. (See lxiii. 19. James ii. 7.) The expressions denote the bringing the gentiles into the church, and making them *fellow-heirs, and of the same body* with the Jews; for he *hath created them too for his glory,* and to *shew forth the praises of him that hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light,* (1 Pet. ii. 9. and compare xlix. 6. Amos ix. 12. John xi. 52.) The conversion of the Jews, and the bringing the fulness of the gentiles into the church, will be coincident in time, and each of these events will help to advance and carry on the other. (See the notes on lxvi. 12. 19.)

Ver. 8. *Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.*] The old translation, published under king Henry VIII. expresses the sense more plainly thus, *Bring forth the people which is blind, and yet hath*

eyes; which are deaf, although they have ears. By which are meant the heathen idolaters, who, like the images they worship, *have eyes and see not,* (Psal. cxv. 8.)

Ver. 9. *Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this?*] God makes the same challenge to the idolaters and their gods, which he did xli. 21, 22.

Or let them hear, and say, It is truth.] If they cannot make good their own pretensions, let them hear what proof I have to allege on my side, and acknowledge that what I say is truth.

Ver. 10. *Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen.*] God's people and his prophets will always bear witness to his truth, who have received such pregnant proofs of his Divinity. (See 1 John v. 10.) By *my servant* is eminently meant the Messias; (see xlii. 1.) who is expressly called *God's witness,* lv. 4. (Compare Rev. i. 5.) although all God's messengers are in an inferior degree his witnesses, being *set for the defence and confirmation* of his truth. (See John i. 7. Acts i. 8.)

Before me there was no god formed.] An ironical expression, alluding to the forming or making of idols. (See xliv. 10.)

Ver. 12. *I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you.*] The sense might be plainer expressed thus, *I have shewed* [these things] *and not any strange god among you.* The word *god* is here understood, as it is xlii. 8. and Psal. xvi. 4.

Ver. 13. *Yea, before the day was I am he.*] Before all time, I am still the same. (Compare Psal. xc. 2.)

Ver. 14. *For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans.*] The preter-perfect tense is here used for the future. (See xxi. 2. xli. 3.) For your sakes I will send Cyrus to conquer Babylon, and make captives both of their nobles and people; or else the prophet may be supposed to direct this and the following discourses to the Jews who were in captivity.

Whose cry is in their ships.] Who glory in the number of their ships, with which they carry on a great trade upon Tigris and Euphrates. So the Septuagint and the Vulgar Latin understand the place. Others explain it of the Chaldeans flying to their ships for refuge against the forces of the enemy, who had surprised their city; or of their being sent prisoners on ship-board by the conqueror.

Ver. 16, 17. *Thus saith the Lord, who maketh a way in the sea,* &c.] Who led his people safely through the Red Sea, and overthrew Pharaoh and his army that pursued them.

Ver. 18, 19. *Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing.*] The new wonders I will do for you shall obscure the memory of the old ones. (See Jer. xxiii. 7, 8.)

Ver. 19. *I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.*] As of old I conducted my people through the wilderness, so that they wanted no sort of accommodation, either for meat or drink: (see Deut. viii. 15, 16.) so now I will give as pregnant proofs of my presence with them, when I return their captivity. (See xli. 18, 19.)

Ver. 20. *The beasts of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness,* &c.] There shall be such plenty of water, that the beasts which dwell in the wilderness shall be refreshed by it, and shall join with my people in making their thankful acknowledgments for these miracles of my mercy. (See the note on xlii. 10, 11.) The *dragons* and *owls* are elsewhere joined together, as creatures which frequent solitary and desolate places. (See Job xxx. 29. Micah i. 8. and the notes upon xiii. 22. of this prophecy.) The verse alludes to God's miraculous supplying the Israelites with water in the wilderness. (See note on xli. 17, 18.)

Ver. 21. *This people have I formed for myself.*] See above, ver. 1. 7.

Ver. 22. *But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.*] The prophet, in this and the following verses, assigns the causes of the Jews' captivity, which were chiefly their forsaking the worship of the true God; not calling upon him in their trouble, but applying themselves to idols for help, and performing God's service in a careless manner, as if it were a tedious and unprofitable burden. (See Mal. i. 13.)

Ver. 23. *Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt-offerings, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices.*] The *burnt-offerings* were those which were all burnt or offered upon the altar, called here the *lambs* (our English reads the *small cattle*) of *thy burnt-offerings,* a lamb being always offered for the daily burnt-offering, (Exod. xxix. 38.) The *sacrifices,* properly so called, were those offerings, part of which belonged to the priest, or was eaten by those that offered the sacrifice, after the fat had been offered upon the altar. (See Lev. iii. 16. iv. 31. vii. 25. 33.) God complains here that he had not been honoured either of these ways: the meaning of which complaint is, that although the Jews were punctual in offering sacrifice (for, i. 11. he speaks of the multitude of their sacrifices as a burden to him), yet they did not perform this service with a devout mind; just as God saith, (Amos v. 25.) *Have ye offered to me sacrifices for forty years in the wilderness?* That is, did you do it out of a religious principle, or a sincere regard to my honour? No; because, as it follows, you were fond of the idolatry you brought with you out of Egypt. To the same sense are those words of Zechary, (vii. 5.) *Did ye at all fast to me, even to me?*

Or else the words of the text may relate to those idolatrous times, in the reigns of Ahaz and Manasseh, when the temple-service quite ceased, and the house of the Lord was shut up; (see 2 Chron. xxviii. 24.) or else profaned by having an idol set up in it, and idolatrous worship performed there, (2 Kings xxi. 7.)

I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense.] My service has not been burdensome or expensive to thee. The offering here spoken of is the *mincha,* or bread-offering, for so the word should rather be rendered than *meat-offering,* as our English translates it; for it answers to the Οὐλοχύται, and the *mola,* or *fartum,* of the Greeks and Romans. This offering always accompanied the other sacrifices, and had frankincense laid upon it. (See Lev. ii. 2. 15.) These expressions countenance the latter interpretation of the foregoing words, and seem to import the discontinuance of the public worship in the temple: for to the same purpose it follows;

Ver. 24. *Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money.*] To make the sweet incense, which was daily offered upon the altar, set apart for that purpose. (See Exod. xxx. 7, 8. 34. 36. xl. 27. Ecclus. xxiv. 15.)

But thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.] Instead of the service due to me from thee, thou hast made me undergo a sort of bondage by thy wicked practices, which have brought an ill report upon my name and religion; (see Ezek. xxxvi. 20.) and have quite tired out my patience. (Compare Amos ii. 13. Mal. ii. 17.)

Ver. 26. *Put me in remembrance; let us plead together,* &c.] Put me in remembrance of thy good deeds, if thou hast any thing to allege in thy own behalf: I should be glad if thou couldest acquit thyself of the crimes laid to thy charge.

Ver. 27. *Thy first fathers have sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me.*] Your ancestors, reckoning from Adam downward, have been sinners, and you have trod in their steps. (Compare Ezek. xvi. 3.) And your prophets and teachers, who ought to have been guides to the people, have led them into sin and error. (See the note upon xlii. 19.)

Ver. 28. *Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary.*] I have suffered the Babylonians to profane my sanctuary, to abuse the chief priests, and pollute whatsoever is sacred. (Compare xlvii. 6. Lament. ii. 6, 7. iv. 14.)

And have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.] Made them a proverb of execration and reproach to all the neighbouring nations. (Compare Psal. lxxix. 4. Jer. xxiv. 9. Dan. ix. 16. Zech. viii. 13.) The words are addressed to the Jews, as if they were already in captivity. (See ver. 14.)

CHAP. XLIV.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter begins with comfortable promises after the former threatenings, as the last did. The prophet then proceeds to arm them against idolatry, upon the same grounds and arguments as he did chap. xl. and exhorts them to put their whole trust in God, who would certainly deliver them by Cyrus, whom he foretells by name above a hundred years before he was born.

Ver. 2. *THUS saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb.*] He speaks of the Jewish people under the character of a single person: and as God hath sometimes designed certain persons for particular offices from their birth and conception, (see xlix. 5. Jer. i. 15.) so he set apart the posterity of Abraham to be his people from the very original of the family.

And thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.] Jesurun is a name given to the Jews by Moses, Deut. xxxii. 15. it signifies *upright,* because they were called to be a holy people to the Lord.

Ver. 3. *For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed,* &c.] God's blessings are often represented under the metaphor of rivers and streams, which water ground and render it fruitful. (See the note on xxx. 25.) And the latter part of the verse explains what blessings are here intended, *viz.* the plentiful effusion of God's Spirit, which is mentioned by the prophets as the peculiar character of the gospel-times. (See liv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 34. Ezek. xi. 19. xxxvi. 27. Joel ii. 28.) And the pouring out such abundant measures of grace and mercy, especially upon the ignorant and unbelievers, is usually set forth under the metaphor of watering barren land. (See xi. 9. xxv. 7. xxx. 25. xli. 18. and the notes upon these two last places.)

Ver. 4. *And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses.*] They shall flourish, as if they were planted in rich meadows, or by the banks of rivers. (Compare Psal. i. 3.)

Ver. 5. *One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob.*] This relates to the increase of the church by the accession of the gentiles. (See ver. 3.)

And another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord.] Some render it, *Another shall write upon his hand, I am the Lord's:* as if the expression alluded to the custom of soldiers receiving a mark upon their hands, to signify to what commander they belonged. See Dr. Spencer, de Legib. Hebr. lib. ii. cap. 14. sect. 1. where he observes, that idolaters often had a mark or character of the god they worshipped, imprinted upon their hand or shoulder; in allusion to which custom, it is said of the worshippers of antichrist, that they *receive his mark in their hand,* (Rev. xiii. 16. xiv. 9.)

Ver. 7. *And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people?* &c.] God, who is the *first and the last,* (ver. 6.) claims to himself the ordering and disposing of all the affairs of the world, from the time that he created man upon it; or from the time that he chose Abraham and his family to be his peculiar people: over whom he hath all along exercised a particular providence, and hath from time to time foreshewed what should befal them, which accordingly hath come to pass. An instance of prescience which none of the idols can pretend to. (Compare xli. 4. 22. xliii. 9. xlv. 21. xlviii. 3.)

Ver. 8. *Fear ye not, neither be afraid.*] Do not distrust my care and providence over you. (See ver. 21.)

Have I not told it thee from that time?] The Hebrew particle *meaz* should be translated *from the beginning,* or *of old,* as our translators themselves render it in this prophecy, xlviii. 3. 5. Psal. xciii. 2. Prov. viii. 22. and so it should be translated in other places of this prophecy, particularly xvi. 13. xlv. 21. xlviii. 8.

Ye are even my witnesses.] See note on xliii. 10.

Ver. 9. *And their delectable things shall not profit.*] Their *deleciable* or *pleasant things* (as the word *hamudim* is elsewhere rendered) are their images, upon which they laid out all the cost they could, to make them look rich and glorious. (Compare Dan. xi. 38.)

And they are their own witnesses: they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed.] The makers of images are sufficiently convinced that their idols are senseless things: which one would think should make them ashamed of their folly in worshipping them.

Ver. 11. *Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed; and the workmen, they are of men,* &c.] The time will come when all the craftsmen in the art of idol-making, and all the zealous assertors of this kind of worship, shall be ashamed and confounded at their own folly, to think that the work of men's hands could have any thing of divinity in it. (Compare xlii. 17. xlv. 16. Psal. xcvii. 7.)

Ver. 12. *The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers.*] To give an account of the original of images, is sufficient to expose men's

folly in worshipping them. (See before, xli. 6. Jer. x. 3.) This argument the ancient apologists often insist upon, to shew the absurdity of the heathen idolatry; but none of them more elegantly than Minutius Felix, in the following words: "Quando igitur hic [Deus] nascitur? ecce funditur, fabricatur, scalpitur: nondum Deus est. Ecce plumbatur, construitur, erigitur: nec adhuc Deus est. Ecce ornatur, consecratur, oratur: tunc postremo Deus est, cum homo illum voluit et dedicavit." Which runs thus in Mr. Reeve's excellent translation: *But when, pray, does it commence Divine? behold, it is cast, fashioned, and filed: well, it is no god yet. Behold, it is soldered, put together, and set upon its legs: well, it is no god yet. Behold, it is bedecked, consecrated, prayed to: then, then at last, behold a complete god, after man hath vouchsafed to make and dedicate him.*

Yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth, &c.] This shews this idol-maker to be but a man, (ver. 1.) subject to the same infirmities and necessities with other men, and that his god is not able to preserve his life. Some think the words express the eager zeal of the workman, who denies himself necessary refreshment, that he may finish the work he hath undertaken.

Ver. 13. *The carpenter stretcheth out his rule,* &c.] In this and the following verses, the prophet, with great smartness of argument, exposes the absurdity of image-worship: for what an absurdity is it for a man to dress his meat and make his god with the same stick of wood? or to think that a piece of timber hath any more Divinity in it than it had before, because it is fashioned and carved into the figure of a man?

This way of arguing does not suppose that the heathens took their images for gods, for that is a contradiction in terms, and as absurd as to think, that a man and his picture are the same thing: but the design of the prophet's argument is, to shew the absurdity of setting up images as the resemblances of God, and the representative objects of worship; or the supposing them to have some Divine power lodged within them: inasmuch as they have no qualities that answer such a character, being endued neither with power, life, nor understanding; and are indeed nothing, but what they appear to be, bare, senseless matter, wood, or stone. Besides that, nothing is a greater dishonour to God, than to suppose him like the image of a corruptible creature. For the same reason the author of the book of Wisdom makes the worship of images more inexcusable than the worship of the heavenly bodies, or of the elements, because these are worshipped for their own sakes, those upon the account of their representation, (Wisd. xiii. 2. 10.)

Ver. 14. *Which he strengthens for himself among the trees of the forest.*] Which he had picked out as fit for his purpose, and nourished up till it came to its due growth.

Ver. 15. *Yea, he maketh a god.*] Of the remaining part. (See ver. 17.)

Ver. 16. *With part thereof he eateth flesh.*] He dresseth flesh in order to eat it, (ver. 19.)

Ver. 18. *For he hath shut their eyes.*] The old translation expresseth the sense better, *their eyes are stopped:* for the verb transitive is often taken in an impersonal sense. (See xxii. 19.) So Exod. vii. 13. we read, *He hardened Pharaoh's heart;* which is explained in the next verse, by *Pharaoh's heart was hardened.* Thus, Isa. ix. 6. the Hebrew reads, *He shall call his name Wonderful,* &c. which our English translation rightly renders, *His name shall be called Wonderful,* &c. Again, Luke xii. 20. it is in the Greek, *They require thy soul of thee:* which our interpreters translate, *Thy soul shall be required of thee.*

Ver. 20. *He feedeth on ashes.*] As ashes have no nourishment, so his zeal and devotion shall not avail him.

A deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?] Vulgar errors and prejudice have perverted his understanding, that he cannot discern the most gross and palpable falsehood, nor free himself from the delusions of it. The old English translation does very well express the sense of this verse: *Thus doth he but lose his labour, and his heart which is deceived, doth turn him aside,* &c.

Ver. 21. *Remember these* [things] *O Jacob,* &c.] The prophet applies his discourse against idols to those of the captivity, and exhorts them seriously to reflect upon what he had said, when they should come to live among the idolaters.

Ver. 22. *I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions,* &c.] The preter-perfect tense may here stand for the future, as in many other places. (See xliii. 14.) God encourages them to trust in his mercy, by assuring them, that upon their repentance he will so fully forgive their sins, that no sign of his displeasure shall appear, and they shall never rise up in judgment against them any more, just as a cloud vanisheth when it is dispersed by the sun or the wind. The same metaphor is used by Demosthenes, in a sentence which Longinus does very much admire, περὶ ὕψους, cap. 34. Τοῦτο τὸ ψῆφος τὸν τότε τῇ πόλει παραστάντα κίνδυνον, παρελθεῖν ἐποίησεν ὥσπερ νέφος. *That vote made the danger which before hung over the city vanish like a cloud.* This general promulgation of pardon, is a *preaching of the gospel beforehand,* as St. Paul speaks, and is designed, as many of the promises in the prophets are, to prepare men's minds for the receiving it. (See Acts xiii. 38, 39. Luke xxiv. 47.)

Ver. 23. *Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth,* &c.] An apostrophe to the whole creation, to join in praising God for his wonderful mercies; which shews that they are such, as all the world are some way concerned in; and such are only the mercies of the gospel, for which the earth ought to rejoice, because the benefits of it are extended to all mankind, and the angels in heaven will sympathize with men below, because they joy in the conversion and salvation of mankind, and in their being reunited to that blessed society of which Christ is the head: see Coloss. i. 20. and compare with the text here, xlii. 10—12. Psal. xcvi. 11, &c. xcviii. 4, &c. which places are, by all Christian interpreters, expounded of the times of the gospel. But Mr. White puts in his exception to this exposition, because Jacob and Israel *are mentioned here, who have the least share in this redemption.* But I think St. Paul hath long ago answered this objection, when he tells us, that the *children of the promise are counted for the true seed of Israel,* (Rom. ix. 8.) We will allow Mr. White, that the redemption of the Jews from captivity may be primarily intended here as a type of a more general redemption to be accomplished by Christ; but to confine the words to the former sense, exclusive of the latter, is neither

agreeable to the genuine import of the words, nor to the general sense of the Christian church.

Ver. 25. *That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad,* &c.] God taketh pleasure in confounding the wisdom of the wise men of the world, and baffling the fine schemes of human policy, especially those forbidden arts of divination, which the Chaldeans so much valued. (See xlvii. 13. Jer. l. 36.)

Ver. 26. *That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers.*] But as he discovers the folly and madness of such false prophets, so he punctually fulfilleth the predictions of his own prophets. The title of God's *servant* does eminently belong to the Messias in this prophecy, who was *that Prophet that should come into the world:* (see note on xlii. 1.) but is in a lower sense ascribed to other prophets, and may here be understood of Isaiah himself: (compare xliii. 10. l. 10.) and God's *messengers* are as well those prophets that lived before Isaiah's time, such as are Hosea, Joel, and Amos; as those who followed, such as Jeremy, Micah, Ezekiel, &c. who all foretold the restoration of the Jews.

Ver. 27. *That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers.*] God opened a way for Cyrus to take Babylon, by suggesting to him a method for draining the river Euphrates, and making it passable for his army. (Compare Jer. l. 38. li. 36.)

Ver. 28. *That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd,* &c.] I will make him my instrument in gathering my people together, and leading them home as a shepherd does his flock. Kings and princes are often styled *shepherds* in Scripture. (See Jer. vi. 3. xlix. 19. l. 6. Zech. xi. 8. 16.) So in Homer Agamemnon is often called Ποιμὴν λαῶν; *the shepherd of the people.*

This is one of the most remarkable prophecies of Scripture, where Cyrus *is called by his name,* as the prophet expresseth it, xlv. 4. above a hundred years before he was born. In like manner Josiah is prophesied of by name, above three hundred and twenty years before his birth. (See 1 Kings xiii. 2.)

CHAP. XLV.

ARGUMENT.

The subject is much the same with that of the former chapter, concerning Cyrus's commission from God, and the successes he will bless him with: then follows an exhortation to the people, to wait God's time for their deliverance, who is not unmindful of them, and will magnify his own glory in their salvation. In the latter part of the chapter, the prophet seems to carry his views to another *restoration* of his people at the *latter times,* when they shall be converted to the *Christian faith,* and return from their several dispersions.

Ver. 1. *THUS saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus.*] God gives the title of *anointed* to Cyrus, the same which is usually given to David and other kings of the Jews, who were God's immediate deputies, to shew that he was raised up to be an immediate instrument of Providence, in restoring the Jews' captivity. Many of the ancient fathers understand this verse of Christ; which opinion was partly occasioned by some of the copies of the Septuagint, which read Κυρίῳ for Κύρῳ, which reading is followed by Barnabas in his epistle, (chap. 12.) as also by Tertullian, Cyprian, and others. But that the deliverance here foretold was a figure of the redemption to be accomplished by Christ, plainly appears from several passages in this chapter, and particularly from ver. 8. 17. 20, &c. And as our learned Mr. Thorndike hath observed, Cyrus may as well be a figure of Christ as Nebuchadnezzar. Antiochus Epiphanes, the prince of Tyre, and other idolatrous and persecuting tyrants, are spoken of in the prophets, as types and forerunners of antichrist. (See his book De Jure fiuiend. Controvers. cap. 4. p. 58.)

Whose right hand I have holden.] See xli. 10.

And I will loose the loins of kings.] As *girding,* or *girding the loins,* signifies enduing with strength; (see ver. 5.) so *loosing the loins* is taking away men's strength or courage, and leaving them no power to make resistance. (See Dan. v. 6. and the notes upon Isa. v. 27.)

To open before him the two-leaved gates.] To give him admittance into cities and palaces. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 2. *I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight.*] See the note on xl. 3.

[*I will break in pieces the gates of brass.*] To every side of the great wall which encompassed Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar made five-and-twenty gates of solid brass, amounting in all to a hundred. See Dr. Prideaux, ad ann. A. C. 570.]

Ver. 3. *And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places.*] Such as are laid up safe, and never see the light. Grotius hath observed out of Pliny, what immense riches Cyrus found in his conquests: the Babylonian empire being of ancient fame and greatness, and Asia that part of the world which was most remarkable, at that time, for its riches and luxury.

That thou mayest know that I the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.] That I, the Lord, who have so highly favoured thee, (see the note on xliii. 1.) and have mentioned thy name so long beforehand, as the peculiar instrument of my providence, am the only true God, and Israel is my people.

Ver. 4. *I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.*] Beside the name of Cyrus, I have given thee the surname of my *anointed,* and my *shepherd,* and I have taken this particular notice of thee, not for thine own sake, who art a stranger to the true God, but for the sake of my people Israel, that thou mayest be their deliverer.

Ver. 5. *I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.*] It is I that endued thee with strength for war, (see Psal. xviii. 39.) though thou art ignorant of me. Cyrus was bred among idolaters, but afterward was instructed by the Jews in the knowledge of the true God, as appears from Ezra i. 2.

Ver. 6. *That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me.*] My interposing so visibly in behalf of my own people, and returning their captivity by such unexpected means, will convince the heathen part of the world that I am the only true God. (See Psal. cii. 15, 16.)

Ver. 7. *I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil.*] The latter part of the sentence explains the former: *light* being often put for happiness, and *darkness* for adversity. The sense is, that all the vicissitudes of good or ill success are to be ascribed to Provi-

dence: God sets up one kingdom, that of Cyrus, and pulls down another, the Babylonian monarchy.

[*I form the light, and I create darkness.*] Dr. Prideaux hath given a clear account of this sentence: "These words (saith he) being directed to Cyrus king of Persia, must be understood as spoken to the Persian sect of the Magians, who held light and darkness, good and evil, to be the supreme beings, without acknowledging the great God who is superior to them both." (Script. Connect. par. i. p. 215. edit. 8vo.) In opposition to this opinion, the prophet instructs king Cyrus, that light and darkness, good and evil, are under the direction and disposal of Almighty God.]

Ver. 8. *Drop down, ye heavens, from above,* &c.] A passionate wish of the people to see those blessed times in which heaven and earth should conspire to illustrate God's righteousness (or faithfulness), and advance man's happiness. (Compare Psal. lxxxv. 11.) This was in some measure verified upon the return from captivity, when the laws and worship of God were re-established; but must certainly look farther than that deliverance, even to him that was to be the Lord *our righteousness,* and the *author of eternal salvation.* (See the note upon ver. 1.)

Ver. 9. *Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth,* &c.] In reference to that earnest wish, mentioned ver. 8. the prophet warns the people not to be too impatient, but to wait God's time for the accomplishing this redemption. Men may contend or argue with their equals, saith he, with those who are made of the same clay with themselves, but they must not presume to inquire of God the reasons of his proceedings, or find fault with his works of creation or providence, as if they were not wisely contrived or well-timed.

He hath no hands.] The expression either means, he had no hand in making it, or, he hath no contrivance, it is not well put together.

Ver. 10. *Woe to him that saith to his father, What begettest thou?*] The same question varied: he who findeth fault with second causes, does indirectly blame God Almighty, the original cause of all things; for the instruments of providence are all in God's hands, and they act according to those measures which he directs.

Ver. 11. *Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons; and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.*] Some read the latter part of the verse by way of interrogation, *Do you ask of me?* &c. and take it in the same sense with the two former verses, for a proof of their presumption, who were too inquisitive into the reasons of God's purposes. But I rather understand it with our English translation in a favourable sense; which is confirmed by the introduction, *Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel:* a preface which always ushers in some gracious promise. (Compare xliii. 1. 3. 14. xliv. 6. xlviii. 17.) So I take the words to import thus much: That although God be not obliged to render an account of his proceedings to his creatures; yet he is graciously pleased to comply with their curiosity, and to resolve any questions which are proposed concerning the final issue of his people's captivity. Nay, he represents himself as ready to serve them, and to do every thing that can be desired in favour of his elect, those whom he calls here his *sons, and the work of his hands.* (Compare xxix. 23. Jer. xxxi. 9.)

Ver. 12. *I have made the earth, and created man upon it,* &c.] The words assure us, that God is able to make good whatever he promises. (Compare xlii. 5. xliv. 24.)

Ver. 13. *I have raised him up in righteousness.*] This is to be immediately understood of Cyrus, whom God raised up to be the instrument of executing the Divine justice upon the Babylonians, and fulfilling God's mercy towards the Jews. In this particular he was a type of Christ, as hath been observed upon xli. 2.

He shall build my city.] He shall give orders for the building it, (Ezra i. 2.)

[*He shall build my city.*] Cyrus only gave order for the building of the temple; (Ezra i. 2.) but the consequence of that would be the rebuilding of the city, as being the metropolis of the kingdom, and the place to which the whole nation were to repair at their solemn feasts. Compare xliv. 28.]

And he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts.] Princes are commonly governed by politic considerations, and expect a reward for their labour. (See Ezek. xxix. 18.) There being nothing of that kind to move Cyrus to restore the Jewish captivity, that resolution could proceed only from a Divine impulse. The words may likewise be fitly applied to the freedom of that redemption which Christ hath obtained for us. (Compare lii. 3.)

Ver. 14. *The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia, and of the Sabeans,* &c.] This verse cannot be understood of Cyrus's conquests, as Grotius and some others do explain it; for the words *thee* and *thine* so often repeated in this verse, are all of the feminine gender in the Hebrew, and consequently must be understood of Jerusalem, the *city* mentioned ver. 13. Therefore I conceive the place is principally meant of the flourishing state of the church (often described under the figure of a city) when the gentile world should come into it, bring in their riches to the adorning and support of it, and submit themselves to its government, as being the only seat and temple of truth. (Compare xviii. 7. xxiii. 18. xlix. 23. lx. 9, 10. 14. 16. Psal. lxviii. 30, 31.)

The words may be supposed in some degree verified, in Cyrus's devoting the tribute coming out of those rich provinces of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba, to the building and service of God's temple. Some of the succeeding Persian monarchs settled revenues upon the temple for the offering sacrifices for themselves and their families. (See Ezra vi. 10.) The same was done in aftertimes by Alexander the Great, and several of the Syrian and Egyptian kings, (see 2 Maccab. iii. 2, 3. v. 16.) and some of the Roman emperors, as may be seen in Josephus, particularly lib. ii. de Bell. Jud. cap. 17. and Philo's Legatio ad Caium.

Ethiopia probably means here Arabia, being joined to Seba. (See the note on xliii. 3.)

Men of stature.] The Chaldee paraphrast explains it by *men of merchandise,* such as deal in weights and measures; which sense agrees very well with the Hebrew, and better with the scope of the place than the common interpretation.

In chains they shall come over.] They shall confess themselves to be conquered, and yield submission. The phrase alludes to the custom of carrying captives in triumph with chains about their necks: see Psal. cxlix. 8. which Psalm

both Jews and Christians interpret of the days of the Messias.

Ver. 15. *Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself*, &c.] This may be understood with respect to the unsearchableness of God's counsels, spoken of before, ver. 9, 10. in which sense our first translators at the Reformation understood it, and render the verse, *O how profound art thou, the God and Saviour of Israel!* Or else it may be spoken with regard to the times when God hid away his face, and seemed to neglect his people. (Compare lvii. 17. Psal. xliv. 24.) Whereas he doth now openly shew himself in their favour, to the shame and confusion of idolaters, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 16. *They shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols.*] See the note on ver. 6. This and many other passages, where the prophet foretells the confusion and destruction of idolatry, have a plain aspect upon the overthrow of the heathen idolatry, upon the planting of the gospel.

Ver. 17. *But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.*] This must relate to the times of the gospel. (See the notes upon ver. 18. 23.)

Ver. 18. *For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth—he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited.*] The words are commonly explained to this purpose, that if God did not create the world to lie empty and uninhabited, much less will he suffer the lot of his own inheritance, Judea, to lie desolate, but will certainly restore its captivity: the establishing a political government being sometimes expressed by creation: (see the note on li. 16.) but I think this sense hardly comes up to the full import of the words. Mr. Mede, p. 578. of his Works, hath observed, that at the eleventh verse God condescends to declare to his servants the *things that are to come:* and St. Paul hath applied the twenty-third verse to the day of judgment; (Rom. xiv. 11.) so that, in that learned person's judgment, the scope of the place directs us to explain it of that *new heaven* and *new earth wherein dwells righteousness*, which, St. Peter tells us, we are to expect at the end of the world, *according to God's promise;* (2 Pet. iii. 13.) which promise must relate to some of the prophecies of the Old Testament, which speak of that matter. This *earth*, the text saith, *God created not in vain;* that is, not to be *subject to vanity*, as the present earth is, (see Rom. viii. 20.) but to be inhabited by the *mystical Israel*, who shall be *saved with an everlasting salvation*, (ver. 17.) These are the same who are called the *escaped of the nations*, (ver. 20.) and those that are *saved out of all the ends of the earth*, (ver. 22.) What is said also in ver. 14. hath some relation to the latter times, as may be gathered by comparing it with some of the parallel texts referred to in the notes.

Ver. 19. *I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth.*] I have delivered my laws and will plainly and perspicuously, not in dark and dubious terms, such as the heathen oracles were delivered in, which were spoken out of caves and grottos.

I said not, Seek ye me in vain.] The worship of idols is often condemned as vanity and lost labour. (See the following verse, and chap. xliv. 20. Jer. x. 5.)

I the Lord speak righteousness.] My laws are all of them holy, just, and good: whereas the profoundest mysteries of the heathen gods consisted in impure and obscene rites.

Ver. 20. *Draw near together ye that are escaped of the nations.*] Ye Jews, that are returned home from the several parts of the world, whither ye have been dispersed, assemble yourselves together, and return solemn thanks to God for your deliverance; and consider what proofs he hath given of his power, in protecting his people, sufficient for ever to confound and silence the idols and their worshippers.

Mr. Mede, p. 915. of his Works, supposes those *that are escaped of the nations* here, to be the same with the *nations of them that are saved*, or escape, mentioned Rev. xxi. 24. and thinks this interpretation is confirmed by ver. 22. of this chapter; *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.* (See likewise ver. 18.)

Ver. 21. *Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time?*] A general challenge to the idols, to give such proofs of their divinity, by foreshewing things to come. (Compare xli. 1. 22. xliii. 9. xliv. 7.)

Who hath told it from that time?] Or rather, *from the beginning.* (See note on xliv. 8.)

Ver. 22. *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.*] This relates to the calling of the gentiles, and especially to the bringing in the fulness of the gentiles at the end of the world. (See Rom. xi. 25. Matt. xxiv. 14. and the following note.)

Ver. 23. *I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return*, &c.] That is, it shall be fully accomplished. (Compare lv. 11.) Here God confirms by an oath the truth of what was foretold, ver. 22. That the time should certainly come when all the world should give glory to him, by paying him solemn worship and adoration, and by swearing or professing allegiance to him. (See note on xix. 18.) And this shall be verified both in the gentiles, (ver. 22) and in the Jews, (ver. 25.) who, after the fulness of the gentiles is come in, shall all be saved, as St. Paul tells us, Rom. xi. 25. 26.

The same apostle applies this text to the day of judgment, (Rom. xiv. 11.) when it will receive its utmost accomplishment; not only wicked men, but even apostate spirits, being summoned to appear before the tribunal of God and Christ. (Compare Philip. ii. 10.)

We may farther observe, that what the prophet speaks here in the person of God, is applied by St. Paul to Christ, *i. e.* to the second person of the blessed Trinity. See like instances in vi. 1. compared with John xii. 41. in viii. 14. compared with Rom. ix. 33. and 1 Pet. ii. 8. in Psal. cii. 25. compared with Heb. i. 10. Many more such instances might be given, and all of them are plain proofs of the Divinity of Christ, and that the prophets of the Old Testament had all along an eye to the times of the New, and spoke of the Messias as God. (See more of that matter in the notes upon xlviii. 16.)

Ver. 24. *Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.*] This likewise is very applicable to Christ, who is called the Lord *our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 5. and *is made unto us righteousness*, 1 Cor. i. 30.

Ver. 25. *In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified.*] The sense is the same with the beginning of the former verse: to be *justified*, is a term taken from the forms of

law, and signifies to be acquitted, or pronounced innocent, and come off victorious in a cause. (See Psal. li. 4.) Here it is opposed to that *shame* denounced against the obstinate, ver. 24.

CHAP. XLVI.

ARGUMENT.

The chapter begins with foretelling the taking of Babylon by Cyrus, who is particularly described, ver. 11. From thence the prophet takes occasion to insult over the Babylonish idols, who could neither preserve themselves nor their worshippers: and he exhorts the Jews still to trust in God, who had, from the beginning of their nation, nourished them with the tenderness of a parent; and who, by foretelling things at the greatest distance, gave an undeniable proof that all events were at his disposal.

Ver. 1. *BEL boweth down, Nebo stoopeth.*] Two principal idols of the Babylonians: Bel is the same with Baal, as Selden conjectures, (de Diis Syris, Syntagm. i. cap. 2.) Nebo gave name to several of their kings, as Nabonassor, Nebuchadnezzar, &c. (See note on xxxix. 1.) The image of these deities were carried in triumph by the Persians, as part of the spoil, as it was usual for conquerors to do, in token of a complete victory. (See Grotius upon the place.) Livy records it as an instance of the moderation of Fabius Maximus, that, when he retook Tarentum, he would not suffer the statues of their gods to be carried with the rest of the plunder, but said, "Relinquamus Tarentinis Deos iratos." (Lib. xxvii. cap. 18.)

Ver. 2. *They stoop; they bow down, they could not deliver the burden.*] The deities, which were worshipped in the idols, could not deliver their own images, which became burdensome to those that carried them away, so that the gods themselves must own that they are conquered too. The expressions in this and the former verse allude to the custom of carrying idols in procession, which was a solemn piece of worship paid to them; whereas now they were carried about by their enemies, by way of contempt and derision.

Ver. 3. *Hearken to me, O Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel.*] The same which are called Jacob and Israel, xliii. 1. (see the note there) and xliv. 1.

Which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb.] The expressions allude to the carrying of idols, either in procession, (ver. 7.) or in triumph, (ver. 1.) Instead of being carried by his worshippers, as the helpless idols are, God carries and supports his people, as a father does his children in his arms. (See Deut. i. 31.)

Ver. 4. *And even to your old age I am he.*] Or, *I am the same God:* so the phrase is translated, Psal. cii. 27.

Ver. 6. *They lavish gold out of the bag,* &c.] The same argument against idolatry, which was made use of xl. 19. xli. 6. xliv. 12. It was very proper to repeat this argument often, for the sake of those that were to live among the Babylonians, where authority and custom would powerfully recommend idolatry. (Compare Jer. x. 1, &c. Baruch vi.)

Ver. 8. *Remember this, and shew yourselves men.*] By making use of your reason: whereas the idolaters are as senseless as the images which they worship. (See Psal. cxv. 8.)

Ver. 9. *Remember the former things of old.*] Remember what I have formerly done for you, both in Egypt and after your settlement in Canaan.

Ver. 10. *Declaring the end from the beginning,* &c.] The same argument of God's power and providence, which is insisted on xliv. 7. xlv. 21.

Saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.] God's foretelling the most distant and casual events, is a sensible proof of his overruling providence.

Ver. 11. *Calling a ravenous bird from the east.*] A description of Cyrus, whom God is said to have *raised up from the east,* (xli. 2. 25.) Conquerors that overrun and ravage whole countries, are elsewhere compared to birds of prey. (See Ezek. xvii. 3, 4. Esdr. xii. 11.)

The man that executeth my counsel.] See xliv. 28. xlv. 13.

From a far country.] Cyrus's army was made up of confederates of very distant nations. (See Jer. l. 41.)

Ver. 12. *Hearken to me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness.*] Or, *ye stubborn-hearted,* as it is better translated in the Bishops' Bible published under queen Elizabeth; such as do not think it reasonable to acquiesce in my promises, which whosoever believeth, it *shall be counted to him for righteousness,* (Gen. xv. 6.)

Ver. 13. *I bring near my righteousness, and my salvation shall not tarry.*] I will give visible instances of my mercy and fidelity, and place them before the eyes of those that are most insensible of them; and the salvation of my people shall not be delayed beyond the prefixed time appointed for the accomplishment of it. (Compare Habak. ii. 3. and see the note upon xiii. 22.)

And I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.] Or, *I will give salvation in* [or to] *Zion, and my glory to Israel:* as the translation just now mentioned renders the words.

CHAP. XLVII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet had intimated the destruction of the Babylonish monarchy in a few words, at the beginning of the last chapter; and here he foretells it more plainly, and denounces it as a just judgment upon that government for its cruelty and pride: the unexpectedness of such a calamity adding great weight to it, being such a surprising turn of affairs, as none of the Chaldean arts of divination could foresee, or be able to prevent.

Ver. 1. *COME down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground.*] Sit in a mournful and disconsolate posture. (See note on iii. 26.) The prophet calls her the *virgin daughter of Babylon,* as one that had never yet been conquered. (See note on xxiii. 12.)

There is no throne.] The pomp and state of thy empire is come to an end. (Compare Psal. lxxxix. 44.)

Ver. 2. *Take the millstones, and grind meal.*] From being mistress of kingdoms, thou shalt become a mean slave; thy captives shall be set to grind, which was reckoned the lowest degree of drudgery. (See Exod. xi. Judg. xvi. 21.) Such was the *pistrinum,* or turning the mill, among the Romans.

Uncover thy locks.] Thy hair shall hang about thy ears, without being dressed up, or adorned with a diadem: thou shalt lose all that finery and those ornaments in which thou didst pride thyself, as marks of thy state; and the persons of the greatest quality shall be despoiled of their gaiety, and carried captives in a mean and ragged condition.

Make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.] Those who are bred to the nicest degree of tenderness shall be stripped naked, and forced to go barefoot over rivers, when they are led captives by the Persians.

Ver. 3. *Thy nakedness shall be discovered.*] See note on iii. 17.

I will take vengeance; I will not meet thee as a man.] Thou shalt feel the most dreadful effects of my anger, and I will shew no humanity or pity towards thee. The latter part of the sentence sounds literally thus, *I will not meet a man*, which seems to be a hypallage, or an inverted sentence; for *a man shall not meet me; i. e.* no man shall put a stop to my fury, by endeavouring to succour thee: nor shall any intercession for thee prevail with me. (See Jer. vii. 16. xv. 1. Ezek. xiv. 14.) The verb *pagang* is sometimes used for making intercession. (See liii. 12.)

Ver. 4. *As for our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is his name.*] See Jer. l. 34.

Ver. 5. *Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness.*] Silence and darkness are opposed to that noise and gaiety which are seen in rich and populous cities, which being destroyed are reduced to a melancholy silence and solitude. The same thing is expressed in Jeremy, by *taking away the voice of mirth, and the light of the candle*, (Jer. xxv. 10.) Babylon hath been for many ages a heap of ruins; for the city Bagdad, commonly taken for the same place, is situate three days' journey from it. (See the note upon xiii. 19.)

Ver. 6. *I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thy hand.*] Whereas I formerly appropriated Judea to myself, and distinguished it from all other countries by peculiar marks of my favour and protection, now I laid it open to the insults of idolaters, and suffered them to profane the city and sanctuary which was called by my name.

Thou didst shew them no mercy.] God often punishes the persons, whom he makes instruments of his vengeance upon others, for those very things which they did by his appointment, because they exceeded their commission, and were more intent upon satisfying their own ambition and cruelty, than upon executing his commands. [So Isa. x. 7. the prophet speaking of the Assyrian, whom he calls *the rod of God's anger*, adds, *howbeit he meaneth not so;* his intent is not to execute God's will, *but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations;* he intends only to satisfy his revenge and ambition.] See Zech. i. 15. where God saith of the Babylonians, *I was but a little displeased* [with my people] *and they helped forward their affliction.* For the same reason God saith, Hos. i. 4. that *he will avenge the blood of Jezreel on the house of Jehu*, though Jehu was expressly commanded to smite the house of Ahab, (2 Kings ix. 7.) But he exceeded his commission, when he slew all Ahab's *great men*, or officers of state; and when he had destroyed the family of Ahaziah, (2 Kings x. 11. 14.)

Upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.] Thou hast shewed no pity upon old folks, whose age commands respect, and whose feebleness deserves compassion. (Compare Deut. xxviii. 50.)

Ver. 7. *And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever,* &c.] I shall always be the chief city and mistress of the world (see ver. 5.) and shall never know any change of fortune: whereas the consideration of the instability of all worldly greatness, should have induced thee to use thy success with moderation.

Ver. 8. *Thou sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else besides me.*] Words full of insolence and blasphemy, whereby she arrogated that self-sufficiency to herself, which belongs to none but God. (See xlv. 5.)

I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children.] Cities are commonly described as the mothers of their inhabitants, and their kings and princes as their husbands. And when they are bereaved of these, they are said to be widows and childless. (See iii. 26. xlix. 21.) As Babylon, in the pride of her heart, thought herself exempt from the calamities of fortune; so mystical Babylon is described as guilty of the same pride and carnal security, (Rev. xviii. 7.) And those arrogant pretences of the Roman church to infallibility, indefectibility, and supremacy, too nearly resemble the description of Babylon in this and the foregoing verse.

Ver. 9. *But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day.*] The great strokes of Providence are described as coming suddenly and unexpectedly, *as a thief in the night:* that *when men shall say, Peace, peace, then sudden destruction shall come upon them:* (see 1 Thess. v. 3. compare Luke xvii. 27—29.) thereby to deter men from indulging their carnal security, and to put them in mind of that continual dependance they ought to have upon God. (See Dan. iv. 30, 31. 35. 37.)

For the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the abundance of thine enchantments.] By *sorceries* may either be meant those forbidden arts of divination, mentioned more particularly ver. 13. or else the wicked schemes of worldly policy, whereby great and potent kingdoms oppress and undermine lesser states and principalities. (Compare Nahum iii. 4.)

Ver. 10. *For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness; thou hast said, None seeth me.*] Thou hast thought that thy cunning and policy would still support thee, and that God did not regard thee, and would never call thee to an account for all thine enormities.

Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee.] The words may mean, either thy skill in the arts of human policy; or else thy pretended foreknowledge of future events by the positions of the heavens; the Chaldeans being famous all the world over for their skill in astrology.

Ver. 11. *Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it ariseth.*] With all thy skill in fortune-telling, thou shalt not be able to foresee the evil that is coming upon thee, or to prevent it.

Ver. 13. *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels.*] The several projects thou hast tried to divert thy calamities, are all lost labour. (Compare lvii. 10.)

Ver. 14. *Behold, they shall be as stubble.*] They shall have no more power to withstand the calamities coming upon them, than stubble hath to resist the violence of the fire. (See xl. 24. xli. 2.)

There shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it.] They shall be utterly consumed, so as to be reduced to ashes, and not so much as a coal left that may give warmth or afford comfort. (Compare xxx. 14.)

Ver. 15. *Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, even thy merchants, from thy youth.*] The words may more plainly be rendered thus: *Thus shall thy merchants deal with thee, with whom thou hast laboured, even from thy youth.* By *merchants* are meant either the dealers in the deceitful wares of divination and astrology: (compare ver. 12.) or, in general, any of those cunning factors (so the word is used Hos. xii. 7.) who have contributed, by their counsels or their traffic, to maintain the grandeur of the Babylonish empire. (Compare Rev. xviii. 11, 12. 15. 23.)

CHAP. XLVIII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet applies himself to the Jews as under the state of captivity, and reproves them for their stubbornness and refractory temper, notwithstanding the many evidences God hath given of his providence over them: a pregnant instance of which was his raising up a succession of prophets among them, to give them notice of such events as none of the heathen idols could foretell. This obstinacy of theirs, the prophet tells them, was the occasion of their captivity, and exhorts them to be reformed by their afflictions, and fit themselves for that deliverance which God hath promised them.

Ver. 1. *HEAR ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel.*] Who value yourselves for being descended from Jacob, and called after his name, but do not shew yourselves to be true Israelites by your deeds.

And are come forth out of the waters of Judah.] The derivation of posterity from the head of a family, is often compared to the streams that issue forth from a spring or fountain. (See Numb. xxiv. 7. Psal. lxviii. 26. Prov. v. 16. 18.)

Which swear by the name of the Lord.] To swear by the name of God is a solemn part of Divine worship, and an appealing to him as the true God, and sovereign Judge of the world. (See xix. 18. xlv. 23. Deut. vi. 13. Psal. lxiii. 11.) In like manner, the swearing by idols was the owning them for true gods: (see Zeph. i. 5.) for which reason the Jews were forbidden to make mention of the names of the heathen gods. (Exod. xxiii. 13.)

Ver. 2. *For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel.*] This vain confidence of the Jews, and relying upon their external privileges, is elsewhere reproved. (See Jer. vii. 4. Micah iii. 11. Rom. ii. 17.) Jerusalem had the title of *holy city* given to it, as being the place of God's residence, where he had placed his name. (See lii. 1. Psal. xlviii. 1. lxxxvii. 3. 2 Kings xxi. 7.)

Ver. 3. *I have declared the former things from the beginning.*] See the note on xliv. 7. The *former things* are opposed to *new things*, ver. 6. (compare xlii. 9.) and so they may point at the former prophecies relating to the two *confederate kings*, (chap. vii.) and to Sennacherib, (chap. x.) as the *new things*,—and *things to come*, as they are called xli. 22. relate to the Babylonian captivity, and their return from thence, as they were figures of the gospel-times.

I did them suddenly, and they came to pass.] They punctually came to pass at the time foretold, even when there was no likelihood of such an effect being produced. So we read, (Mal. iii. 1.) *The Lord shall suddenly come to his temple; i. e.* precisely at the time appointed by God. (See the note on xlvi. 13.)

Ver. 4. *For I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew.*] The Jews are elsewhere reproved as a *stiff-necked people*. (See Exod. xxxii. 9. Acts vii. 51.) The metaphor is taken from oxen that draw back, and refuse to put their necks under the yoke. (Compare Nehem. ix. 29. Zech. vii. 11.)

Ver. 5. *I have, even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I shewed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, My idol hath done them.*] God ordained a succession of prophets to foretell the most remarkable events that should happen to the Jews, on purpose to prevent their ascribing them to idols: a suggestion which their infidelity and obstinacy might prompt them to allege. (See 2 Kings i. 3.)

Ver. 6. *Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it?*] The old translation, published under king Henry VIII. has given the sense of the words very perspicuously, thus, *Thou heardest it* [before], *and, behold, it is come to pass: and shall not ye yourselves confess the same?* Some render the words thus: *If thou hast heard, foretell all this: would you not have declared it? i. e.* would not your idols have given out prophecies concerning these things, if they had foreknown them?

I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.] I have lately discovered to thee some new works of Providence, such as thou never wast before acquainted with, relating to thy deliverance out of captivity by Cyrus. (Compare xlii. 9. xliii. 19.)

Ver. 7. *They are created now, and not from the beginning.*] They are called *new things* in opposition to God's wonders of old time. (See the texts last cited.)

Even before the day when thou heardest them not.] The words may better be rendered thus, in conjunction with the former sentence: *They are created now, and not from the beginning, nor before the day,* (the same with *from the beginning*, see xliii. 13.) *nor hast thou heard them,* till I revealed them. Or thus, *nor before this day hast thou heard them;* making the copulative in the Hebrew word *velo* to be redundant.

Ver. 8. *Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened.*] The latter part of the sentence should be thus translated, *Nor was thine ear opened of old, or from the beginning,* as the particle *méaz* is translated twice in this very chapter, ver. 3. 5. (See note on xliv. 8.) The prophet persists in repeating what he had said in the foregoing verses, that it was God alone that could make known these events so long beforehand, and that he did it because he knew their proneness to idolatry, and therefore would take away any pretence that could be made of ascribing this foreknowledge unto idols. *To open the ear* is a Hebrew phrase, signifying to make known: (see l. 5.) the same thing is otherwise expressed by *revealing the ear:* see xxii. 14. 1 Sam. ix. 15. Job xxxvi. 10. where that phrase is translated by *opening the ear.*

For I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously.] The sense seems imperfect before these words, which may thus be supplied: *I did foreshew thee these things, because*

I knew thou wouldest deal treacherously. The verb *bagad* does properly signify a wife being unfaithful to her husband: (see Jer. iii. 20.) and from thence it is applied to the sin of idolatry, which is often styled *spiritual whoredom*, as being a breach of that covenant which the Jews made with God as their king and husband. (See liv. 5. Jer. iii. 14. and Bishop Patrick's Preface to his Comment on the Canticles.)

And wast called a transgressor from the womb.] Thou wast addicted to idolatry from thy very infancy, from the very time thou livedst in Egypt. (See Ezek. xx. 8. xxiii. 3. 19. 27.)

Ver. 9. *For my name's sake will I defer my anger.*] See the note on ver. 11.

Ver. 10. *Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver.*] Not with such a furious heat, as is requisite to melt down silver, for then thou wouldest have been utterly consumed. (See Jer. xxx. 11. Ezek. xxii. 20.)

I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.] I have took this method to purge thee from thy dross, and render thee a chosen people to myself. The words may be rendered, *I have tried, or proved thee in the furnace of affliction:* for the verb *bahar* is sometimes equivalent to *bahan.* (See Prov. viii. 10. x. 20.)

Ver. 11. *For mine own sake will I do it: for how should my name be polluted?*] God puts the people in mind, that the mercies he vouchsafes to them in restoring their captivity, are not due to their merits, but are wholly to be ascribed to his own goodness, and the regard he hath to his honour, which would suffer in the opinion of the heathen, if those that valued themselves for being his peculiar people should be utterly forsaken by him. (Compare lii. 5. Psal. lxxix. 10. Ezek. xx. 9. xxxvi. 20—22.)

And I will not give my glory to another.] I will not give occasion to the heathen to think that their gods are too powerful for me, which would more and more confirm them in their idolatry, and sacrilegious robbing me of mine honour. (See note on xlii. 8.)

Ver. 12, 13. *Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he,* &c.] An exhortation to the Jews to hearken to the voice of that God who had called them from the rest of the world, and chosen them to be his peculiar people, and who alone is the Maker and sovereign Lord of all things. The word *called,* alludes to God's calling Abraham out of an idolatrous country and kindred to be his servant, (Gen. xii. 1.)

Ver. 13. *When I call them, they stand up together.*] As servants ready to execute my commands. (See xl. 26.)

Ver. 14. *All ye, assemble yourselves together; which among them hath declared these things?*] A general challenge to the idols and their worshippers, to bring proof that ever such a remarkable turn of providence, as that of the Jews' restoration, was foretold by any of the heathen oracles. (Compare xli. 22. xliii. 9. xliv. 7. xlv. 21.)

The Lord hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans.] The prophet speaks of Cyrus, whom God made the peculiar object of his favour, and the conqueror of the Chaldeans, and deliverer of his people; wherein he was a type of the Messias. (See the note on xlv. 1.)

Ver. 15. *I, even I have spoken; yea, I have called him,* &c.] Compare xlv. 1, 2, &c.

Ver. 16. *I have not spoken in secret from the beginning.*] See xlv. 19.

From the time that it was, there am I.] The two first words in the Hebrew, *meneth hejothah,* may be translated, *before the time that this was* [declared, or foretold]. So the same particle in *mejom* signifies, xliii. 13. where our translators rightly render it, *before the day was:* so xviii. 2. *min hú* signifies *aforetime:* or thus, *Before the time that it happened, then I* [foretold], or *then I* [had a being], as the same words *sham ani* may very fitly be rendered, Prov. viii. 27. for the scope of that place is to shew the eternity of the Divine wisdom. And *missham* signifies *from that time,* Isa. lxv. 20. This interpretation will make the sense run clearer, to this purpose: I have not delivered my predictions in ambiguous terms, because I am from all eternity, and being present to all the successions of time, can clearly foresee those distant events which my providence produces.

And now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me.] The foregoing part of the verse shews that the words are spoken by God; and since it is here affirmed that the *Lord God hath sent him,* we can understand the words of none other but the second person of the blessed Trinity, who was sent into the world by his Father, and was anointed to his prophetical office by the Holy Spirit. (See xi. 2. xlii. 1. lxi. 1. compare Zech. ii. 10, 11.) Here, indeed, only the Divine nature of the Son of God is directly spoken of; but it is usual, in Scripture, to apply that to one part of his nature which properly belongs to the other, because of the *communication of properties,* as the schoolmen term it. Thus St. Paul saith, that the *Jews tempted Christ in the wilderness;* (1 Cor. x. 9.) meaning the Logos, who afterward assumed human nature, and was called the Christ. It need not seem strange that Christ is introduced speaking these words: for we find many other texts which are spoken of God in the Old Testament, applied to Christ in the New; to shew us, that almost all the prophecies of the Old Testament relate to the times of the gospel, and are to receive their utmost completion then. (See the note on viii. 14. xlv. 23.) And this will still appear more probable, if we consider that several passages in this chapter, as well as the general strain of these prophecies concerning the restoration of Israel, have a plain aspect upon some farther restoration of the church in the latter times, and its deliverance from that *mystical* Babylon described in the Revelation. (See xlv. 20. 22, 23. and the notes upon ver. 20. and 22. of this chapter.)

Ver. 17. *I am the Lord thy God who teacheth thee to profit.*] Who giveth thee laws for thy good, to direct thee in the right way.

Ver. 18. *Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.*] Thou hadst then been as remarkable for virtue and holiness as for peace and prosperity: or *righteousness* may be taken as equivalent to happiness. (See note on lxii. 1.)

Ver. 19. *Thy seed also had been as the sand,* &c.] They had not been diminished by invasions, captivities, and other judgments.

Ver. 20. *Go ye forth of Babylon,* &c.] A Divine admonition to the Jewish exiles to depart out of Babylon with all speed, not to linger or make any delays out of kindness to the place, or fondness for the idolatries there practised:

just so Lot was commanded immediately to depart out of Sodom, and not so much as *look behind him*, or shew any token of affection for the place, (Gen. xix. 17.) This admonition is renewed, lii. 11. repeated by the prophet Jeremiah, l. 8. li. 6. 45. and applied by St. John to *mystical* Babylon, Rev. xviii. 4. And the prophet orders this message to be published *to the ends of the earth*, which implies that it is a matter of general concern.

Ver. 21. *They thirsted not when he led them through the deserts*, &c.] The preter-perfect tense is here used for the future, a common figure in the prophets. (See note on xxi. 10.) The words import, that God will take the same care of his people in their return home from captivity, as he did in their passage from Egypt through the wilderness. (See note on xli. 18.)

Ver. 22. *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.*] This conclusion of the chapter relates to the reproofs and exhortations given at ver. 4. 8. 10. 17, 18.; and it is an admonition to the Jews to make a good use of the blessings here promised, or else they could not hope for any lasting peace or prosperity. But as several passages of this, the foregoing, and succeeding prophecies, have a farther aspect upon the future deliverances of the church, as hath been observed upon ver. 16. so I am apt to think these words have an eye upon the general restoration of the Jews so often mentioned in the prophets, which none of them will have a share in, but such as repent and reform. (See Ezek. xx. 34. 38.) The same admonition is given to the church with respect to the deliverance out of *mystical* Babylon, Rev. xvi. 15.

CHAP. XLIX.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet returns to the same subject he had been discoursing upon, from chap. xli. to the end of the forty-sixth; and takes occasion from the return of the Jewish captivity, which he had clearly foretold, ver. 20. of the foregoing chapter, to foreshew the great enlargement of the church in aftertimes, by the conversion of the Jews, and the coming in of the fulness of the gentiles. Mr. White, indeed, is of opinion, that in this, as well as many other parts of this prophecy, Isaiah had only the restoration of his own nation in view; but I cannot but be surprised to find, that any person who sets up for a literal commentator, can think that all those glorious things, which are spoken here of the city of God, can be literally fulfilled in the return of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, when the condition of the nation was at best nothing near so flourishing as it had been in the days of David and Solomon.

Ver. 1. *LISTEN, O isles, unto me.*] See xli. 1.

The Lord hath called me from the womb.] Some persons have been designed by God for certain offices from their very birth, as Jeremiah was, (see Jer. i. 5.) and St. Paul, (Gal. i. 15.) and John Baptist, (Luke i. 15.) and Isaiah, if we understand these words as any way relating to himself: but it is in an eminent manner true of Christ, whom God hath in a peculiar manner *sanctified*, or set apart for his offices of king, priest, and prophet, and sent him into the world to execute the same. (See Luke i. 35. John x. 36.)

From the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.] See the note on xliii. 1.

Ver. 2. *He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword.*] The prophets are often described as the executioners of those judgments which they denounce against sinners: (see the notes on vi. 10. and compare Jer. v. 14. Hos. vi. 5.) and in this sense we may apply the expression to Isaiah, or any other prophet; but it is most remarkably true of Christ. (See the note on xi. 4.)

In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me.] The phrase signifies being under God's immediate protection. (See li. 16.) This likewise was in an eminent manner verified of Christ. (See Psal. xci. 11. John viii. 29.)

He hath made me a polished shaft.] Another metaphor representing the efficacy of God's word, as spoken by his prophets and messengers.

Ver. 3. *And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in thee I will be glorified.*] If we follow this translation, which seems to express the Hebrew best, the words can be applied to none but Christ, as the head and representative of the church, the Israel of God, who was to *raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel:* (ver. 5, 6.) as, on the contrary, the word Christ sometimes is taken for the church. (See 1 Cor. xii. 12.) But some render the words thus, *Thou art my servant, Israel is he in whom I will be glorified by thee.* Concerning the title of servant, see the note on xlii. 1.

Ver. 4. *Then I said, I have laboured in vain—yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.*] The words contain an objection to what was affirmed, ver. 3. that God should be glorified by his ministry, which he here complains is altogether unsuccessful: however, his comfort is, that God is his judge, who will reward him according to the sincerity of his endeavours.

As the Hebrew *avôn* signifies both *sin* and the *punishment of it*, so *penulah* signifies both the *work* and its *reward;* it is taken here in the latter sense. (Compare xl. 10. lxii. 11.)

Ver. 5, 6. *Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious*, &c.] There is a various reading in the Hebrew of this verse, which produces a different sense, according as the particle *lo* is read with an *aleph* or a *vau*. If we follow the first reading, which our translators prefer, the sense is, that although Christ's ministry be unsuccessful in gathering the Jews into the church, yet the preaching of his apostles should meet with better success among the gentiles, and should enlighten those that dwell in the remotest parts of the world. If we follow the other reading, the words will import, that God hath ordained *Christ to be a light to the gentiles, as well as the glory of his people Israel.* These words are applied by St. Paul to the preaching of Christ unto the gentiles, (Acts xiii. 47. xxvi. 23.) and cannot with any show of probability be understood of Isaiah, whatever Grotius or others pretend.

Ver. 7. *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth*, &c.] The words describe the wonderful progress of the gospel, from small beginnings; that the author of it, from being the contempt of all the great men of the world, should come to be the object of their adoration. (See ver. 23.) This may in a lower sense be understood of that regard which Cyrus and other succeeding monarchs had for the Jewish nation and

temple, (see the note on xlv. 14.) whereas during the captivity they had been the scorn of all their neighbours. (See Psal. lxxix. 4. Lament. ii. 15. Dan. ix. 16.)

Ver. 8. *Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee,* &c.] The first publishing of the gospel is that time which God pitched upon as a season of mercy, (see 2 Cor. vi. 2.) according to the decree which he had concerted with his Son from all eternity. Accordingly, when that fulness of time was come, God sent him into the world to be the Mediator of that new covenant, which he would make both with the Jew and gentile. (See xlii. 6.) If we suppose this verse to have any relation to the Jews' return from captivity, the sense will be, that the expiration of the seventy years was the time of grace, in which God determined to hear and answer the prayers of his devout servants, (see Psal. cii. 17.) and restore them to their native country, to repeople the land which lay desolate.

To establish the earth.] To order and settle it by good laws and government. (Compare Psal. xcvi. 10.)

To cause to inherit the desolate heritages.] If we expound the words in a spiritual sense, they imply the repairing what is decayed by ignorance and corruption, and making that fruitful which lay barren before. The gentiles are metaphorically described by the wilderness and ground that lies barren and uncultivated. (Compare xliii. 19, 20. xliv. 3. li. 3.)

Ver. 9. *That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth.*] See note on xlii. 7.

They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.] They shall not want any accommodation in their return home: they shall be as well provided for as a flock of sheep that want neither pasture nor water, though they should feed on the top of barren mountains. (See the following verse, and the notes on xxx. 25. xli. 18.)

Ver. 10. *They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them.*] The spiritual sense of this and the foregoing verse, imports a plentiful enjoyment of God's ordinances, (compare Amos viii. 11.) together with freedom from persecution. (See the notes on iv. 6. xxv. 4.) The words are applied by St. John to the heavenly state of the New Jerusalem; (Rev. vii. 16, 17.) it being usual with the prophets to describe the flourishing times of the church militant, by such expressions as properly belong to the church triumphant, because every advancement of God's kingdom in this world is a preludium, or earnest, of the kingdom of heaven.

Ver. 11. *And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.*] Or rather, *My causeways shall be exalted:* the Hebrew word *mesillah* signifies such ways as are raised with stone in low and marshy grounds. So the sense is exactly parallel with that of xl. 4. *Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain shall be brought low.* (See the note there.)

Ver. 12. *Behold, these shall come from far; and, lo, these from the north and the west.*] See the note on xliii. 5, 6.

And these from the land of Sinim.] *From the south country,* the Vulgar Latin renders it, to answer to the north and west mentioned before: it may either mean Pelusium in Egypt, called *Sin,* Ezek. xxx. 15. or the wilderness of *Sin,* mentioned Exod. xvi. 1. both which lay southward of Judea.

Ver. 13. *Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth,* &c.] See the note on xliv. 23.

Ver. 14. *But Zion saith, The Lord hath forsaken me,* &c.] The words of the Jews despairing under their captivity. (Compare Lam. v. 20. 22.)

Ver. 15. *Can a woman forget her sucking child?* &c.] God is often described as bearing a fatherly affection towards his people. (See Psal. ciii. 13. Mal. iii. 17.) But here the comparison is raised higher, and he speaks of himself as having the same tenderness for them as a mother towards the fruit of her womb. (Compare Jer. xxxi. 20. Hos. xi. 8.) God still retains that kindness for the posterity of Abraham, that he will never cast them off utterly. (See Rom. xi. 28, 29.)

Ver. 16. *Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.*] Thou art as dear to me, and as deeply imprinted in my memory, as if thy picture were drawn upon my hand, or engraven in a seal, and worn upon my arm, so as to be always in my sight. (Compare Exod. xiii. 9. Cant. viii. 6.) Some explain the phrase, as if it were a metaphor taken from an architect, who draws the model of a new building, so as to have it always lie before him: in like manner should the platform of their city be always before God's eyes, in order to the re-edifying of it.

Ver. 17. *Thy children shall make haste.*] To return homeward. Some render it, *Thy builders shall make haste,* in opposition to the *destroyers* mentioned in the following sentence. But the following verse favours the first interpretation.

Thy destroyers, and they that made thee waste, shall go forth of thee.] See the same sense a little varied in the expression, ver. 19.

Ver. 18. *As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament.*] The words allude to the affection that mothers have for their children, who pride themselves in them as their greatest ornament.

Ver. 19. *For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants.*] This must be understood either of the accession of the gentiles into the church, (see ver. 22, 23.) typified by Judea, repeopled after it had lain desolate: (see the note on ver. 8.) or else we may suppose the words point at some future restoration of the Jewish nation: for we do not find the catalogues of those who returned, recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah, to answer this prophecy: nor did the Jews repossess the whole extent of Palestine after the captivity, or make that figure in the world which they had done in former times, and especially before the separation of the ten tribes.

Ver. 20. *The children thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other.*] Those which thou shalt have after thou hast been for some time in a desolate condition. (See liv. 1.)

Shall say again in thy ears.] Or rather, *Shall yet say in thine ears; i. e.* the time is yet to come when they shall say thus.

Ver. 21, 22. *Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these?* &c. *Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up my hand to the gentiles,* &c.] In the former verse, Jerusalem is represented as in a surprise to find herself on a sudden replenished with inhabitants after an utter desolation: and in the latter, an account is given of this

miraculous change, *viz.* that God would put it in the hearts of the gentiles, whither the Jews were led captives, to send them home again with all necessary provisions for their journey. (See Ezra i. 4.) This may yet receive a farther accomplishment. (Compare xi. 12. lx. 4.)

Ver. 23. *And kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their queens thy nursing-mothers.*] Cyrus, Artaxerxes, and other Persian monarchs, shewed signal favour to the Jews; and Esther, Darius's queen, one of their own countrywomen, saved the nation from utter destruction. But this prophecy was more remarkably fulfilled in the favours which Constantine and his mother Helen, and other Christian princes and princesses, have shewed to the church, taking it into their care and protection, and sheltering it under their government. (Compare Numb. xi. 12.)

They shall bow down to thee with their face to the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet.] To lie prostrate at one's feet was the highest act of adoration amongst the eastern nations: (see Gen. xlii. 26. 2 Sam. xviii. 28. Luke xvii. 16.) and is applied here to denote the great honour and deference which the Christian emperors and kings should pay to the church, submitting themselves to its laws, and owning themselves its disciples; it being the custom of disciples to sit at their masters' feet, and receive instructions from them in that posture. To the same custom the phrase of *licking up the dust of thy feet* may allude. (Compare xlv. 14. lii. 15. lx. 14. Rev. iii. 9.) It may not be impertinent to observe farther, the great honour and respect paid by the first Christian emperors and empresses to the bishops of the church, who always bowed down their heads to them, when they desired their blessing. (See Valesius's notes upon Theodoret, lib. iv. cap. 6.)

Ver. 24. *Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?*] An objection urging the seeming impossibility of rescuing the Jews from such a powerful enemy as the Babylonish empire, who had made an entire conquest over them.

Ver. 25. *For I will contend with him that contendeth with thee,* &c.] God answers this difficulty, by telling them, that he will take this matter into his own hands, and plead their cause with their enemies.

Ver. 26. *And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh,* &c.] Those that are allied to us, by country or kindred, or any other relation, are called *our own flesh.* (See Judg. ix. 2. 2 Sam. v. 1. Nehem. v. 5.) So the phrase here imports, that God will set these enemies of his people one against the other, and make them kill and destroy each other. (See note on ix. 20.) Accordingly, Cyrus first conquered a great many of the allies of the Babylonians, and made them serviceable in reducing the capital city of that empire.

CHAP. L.

ARGUMENT.

God encourages his people still to depend upon him, by assuring them, that he hath not rejected them, but their sins have constrained him to deal severely with them. And the prophet shews both his Divine commission to publish to them the glad tidings of redemption, and his readiness to discharge that office, whatever discouragements or ill treatment he might meet with upon that account, wherein he was an exact type or figure of Christ.

Ver. 1. *WHERE is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I put away?*] The covenant which God made with his people is commonly represented under the notion of a marriage-contract. (See note on xlviii. 8.) In allusion to this notion, God demands of the captives, who despaired of his mercy, (see xlix. 14.) to produce the bill of divorce which he had given to their mother: whereas, on the contrary, he was ready to receive her, whenever she would return from her idolatries, and other iniquities. (See Jer. iii. 1.)

Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you?] Those that were poor used to sell their children, and sometimes themselves, to their creditors, for the discharge of their debts. (See Exod. xxi. 7. Nehem. v. 5. Lev. xxv. 39.) The same power masters had over their servants, (Matt. xviii. 25.) God tells them he had no occasion to exercise such a power over them, but it was owing to their own sins that they were made slaves to foreign nations. (Compare lii. 3. Psal. xliv. 12.)

Ver. 2. *Wherefore, when I came, was there no man?*] How comes it to pass, saith God, that, when I sent messages to you by my servants the prophets, there was no man would take any notice of them? (See Jer. xxxv. 15.) In the same sense Christ is said to *come and preach peace,* that is, by his apostles and ministers, Ephes. ii. 17.

When I called, was there none to answer?] Compare lxv. 12. lxvi. 4. Prov. i. 24.

Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, &c.] For a proof of his power, God appeals to the miracles he wrought in Egypt, (Exod. vii. 18.) at the Red Sea, and at Jordan, (Psal. lxxiv. 12—15.)

Ver. 3. *I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.*] The expressions allude to the Egyptian darkness; (Exod. x. 21.) sackcloth was the habit of mourners, and is put here for a dark or black colour. (Compare Rev. vi. 12.)

Ver. 4. *The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.*] The prophet saith, that God hath appointed him to perform the office of an instructor and comforter to those that were weary under the yoke of captivity: wherein he was an exact type of Christ, whose office it was to speak comfort to those who were wearied under the burden of their sins, (Matt. xi. 28.)

He wakeneth morning by morning; he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.] Every morning he putteth me in mind of the discharge of my office, as masters rouse up their scholars betimes to learn their lesson. The words may be rendered, *He wakeneth mine ear to hear, as scholars* [are awakened]: for the Hebrew *limmudim* signifies both teachers and disciples; and it is taken in the latter sense by our translators, viii. 16. If we take the word in this sense, the phrase which is translated *the tongue of the learned,* in the foregoing sentence, will signify *a docile or teachable tongue,* which obeys the dictates of its instructor. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 5. *The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious.*] He hath given me instructions for the discharge of mine office, and I immediately complied with his

commands, and set about the execution of it. The phrase of *opening the ears* is explained in the notes upon xlviii. 8. Herein too Isaiah was a type of Christ. (Compare Psal. xl. 6—8.)

Ver. 6. *I gave my back to the smiters.*] The prophets generally met with very ill treatment from the men of their own times. (See Acts vii. 52.) And though we have no particular account of Isaiah's sufferings, yet it appears from this verse, that his lot was no better than that of his brethren; and the Jews have a tradition, that he was at last sawn asunder by the command of king Manasseh. The expressions of this verse were literally fulfilled in Christ. (See Matt. xxvi. 67. xxvii. 26.)

And my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair.] By way of contempt and reproach. (See Lam. iii. 30.) The Septuagint render the words, Σιαγόνας μοῦ εἰς ῥαπίσματα, *I gave my cheeks to blows:* which was literally fulfilled in our Saviour, Mark xiv. 65. John xviii. 22. where the evangelists used the word ῥάπισμα, as if they alluded to this prophecy.

Ver. 7. *Therefore have I set my face as a flint.*] So as not to be brow-beaten, or put out of countenance, by my adversaries. (Compare Ezek. iii. 8, 9.) It requires an extraordinary degree of courage to reprove popular vices, when their abettors are numerous and powerful.

Ibid. and Ver. 8. *And I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me?* &c.] God will stand by me and pronounce me innocent, and then I need not fear or be dismayed at the worst accusations the malice of mine enemies can suggest against me. Here is a solemn process or trial supposed, such as our Saviour underwent, whom God would in a signal manner justify, or acquit from that unrighteous sentence which men had pronounced against him. (See the note on xlv. 25.)

Ver. 9. *Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.*] Compare li. 8. Job xiii. 28. They shall quickly die, and all their wicked designs shall perish with them. (Compare li. 12.) Thus Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the chief priests, are long since perished, but Christ lives and abides for ever.

Ver. 10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord,* &c.] Let those that fear God, and reverently obey all the indications of his will made known to them by his prophets, though their present circumstances look never so dismal, and they have no glimmering of hope or comfort; yet let them continue to rely upon God, who in due time will visit them with light and salvation. The meaning of God's *servant* hath been already explained upon xliv. 26.

Ver. 11. *Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks.*] Or, *that increase the flame,* as the Septuagint render the latter part of the sentence: for the Hebrew verb *azar,* whose original sense is to *bind,* signifies likewise to *increase* or *strengthen,* as Abraham à Schultens hath shewed in his Observat. Arab. in Genesin. cap. 2. The expression denotes those that seek for worldly comforts, and neglect those consolations which come from God: the prophet pursues the same metaphor which he had used in the foregoing verse.

Walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks which ye have kindled. This shall ye have of my hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow.] Make your best of these your comforts, but I will forewarn you that you shall find yourselves sadly disappointed; you shall sink under your calamities, as a beast that faints under his burden, without any hopes of recovery out of them. (Compare xliii. 17.) *Walk in the light of your fire* is an ironical expression, like that of Christ, *Sleep on now, and take your rest;* (Matt. xxvi. 45.) and that of Amos, *Come to Beth-el, and transgress,* (Amos iv. 4.)

CHAP. LI.

ARGUMENT.

The chapter begins with an exhortation to the pious persons of the captivity, still to rely upon the promises of God, which shall be eminently fulfilled in Christ, (ver. 4, 5.) The prophet puts them in mind, that God had given them abundant proofs of his power and goodness when he delivered them out of the bondage of Egypt. Afterward the prophet bewails the miseries of Jerusalem, and tells her that God will take pity of her sufferings.

Ver. 1. *HEARKEN to me, ye that follow after righteousness.*] Compare ver. 7.

Look unto the rock whence you are hewn, &c.] These metaphorical expressions are explained in the following verse. The expressions may allude to the springs which issue forth from between the rocks. (Compare xlviii. 1.)

Ver. 2. *Look unto Abraham your father, and to Sarah that bare you.*] As God gave an original to your nation, from Abraham and Sarah, two persons past age for having children; so he could multiply their posterity, though they should be reduced to a small number.

For I called him alone.] The Hebrew word is *echad, one, i. e.* when he was but one single person, without child or family. Abraham is elsewhere styled *one,* as being singled out from the rest of his kindred to be the original or head of the Jewish nation. (See Mal. ii. 10. 15. Heb. xi. 12.)

Ver. 3. *He will comfort all her waste places; he will make her wilderness like Eden.*] A proverbial expression. (See Joel ii. 3.) This promise primarily relates to the peopling of Judea after it had lain waste during the captivity; but mystically implies the restoring truth and righteousness, when ignorance and corruption had overspread the face of the world. (See the note on xlix. 8.) This latter sense the following words plainly point at.

Ver. 4. *For a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.*] The latter part of the sentence may more properly be rendered, *I will cause my judgment to break forth for a light to the people:* for the verb *ragang,* as many other Hebrew words, has two contrary significations, (see the note on xxii. 18.) and signifies both to *rest* and to *break forth.* To this sense it may most conveniently be expounded, Jer. xlix. 19. where our translation reads, quite contrary to the design of the place, *I will make him suddenly run away from her:* whereas the scope of the text requires the words to be thus rendered; *I will stir him up, and make him run* (or seize) *upon her.* But to return to the text before us: the prophet speaks of such a law as should break forth and enlighten the most

distant people, expressed by the *isles* in the next verse, which can be no other than the gospel, as will plainly appear by comparing this text with xlii. 4. 6. where it is said that Christ is ordained *to be a light to the gentiles, to set judgment in the earth,* and that *the isles should wait for his law.*

Ver. 5. *Mine arms shall judge the people.*] That power of God which shall accompany the preaching of the gospel. (Compare ver. 9. Psal. lxvii. 4. xcviii. 9. 1 Cor. i. 24.)

The isles shall wait upon me.] See the notes upon xi. 11. lx. 9.

Ver. 6. *For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment—but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.*] When heaven and earth shall be dissolved, then is the time for fulfilling that righteousness and salvation, which I promise to my servants. (See 2 Pet. iii. 12, 13. compare Matt. xxiv. 35.)

Ver. 7. *The people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men.*] They that have the law of God deeply imprinted upon their minds, with the obligations lying upon them to obey it, and the advantages they will receive by the practice of it, will never be moved or drawn aside from their duty by the flouts or reproaches of the ungodly. (See Psal. cxix. 51, 52.)

Ver. 8. *For the moth shall eat them up like a garment.*] See the note on l. 9.

Ver. 9. *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord.*] The prophet, by an elegant figure, addresses himself to God, to stir up his strength, and exert it in behalf of his oppressed people, as he did in former times, when he delivered them out of the Egyptian bondage.

Art not thou it that hast cut Rahab.] Egypt is sometimes called by the name of Rahab: (see Psal. lxxxvii. 4. lxxxix. 10.) the word signifies *strong* or *proud.* (See the note on xxx. 7.)

And wounded the dragon?] See the note on xxvii. 1.

Ver. 11. *Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return,* &c.] See the notes on xxxv. 10.

Ver. 12. *Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die?*] See the note on l. 9.

Ver. 13. *And where is the fury of the oppressor?*] It shall so suddenly vanish, that if you look after it there shall no footsteps of it remain. (Compare Job xx. 7.)

Ver. 14. *The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed,* &c.] The Hebrew runs plainly thus: *The captive exile shall be quickly delivered, he shall not die in the pit* [or prison], *neither shall his bread fail.*

And that he should not die in the pit.] The *pit* is that part of the prison called the dungeon. (See Jer. xxxvii. 16. xxxviii. 6. Lam. iii. Zech. ix. 11.)

Ver. 15. *But I am the Lord thy God, that divideth the sea,* &c.] The connexion of this verse with what goes before will better appear, if we render it, *For I am the Lord thy God,* &c. God's dividing the Red Sea is here alluded to: compare Psal. lxxiv. 13. Job xxvi. 12. which place may not improbably be expounded with relation to the same miracle; for the whole verse runs thus, *He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud:* where the Hebrew word rendered *proud* is *Rahab,* the name of Egypt, as hath been observed upon ver. 10. of this chapter.

Ver. 16. *And I have put my words in thy mouth.*] I have made thee my oracle, I have entrusted thee with the office of declaring my gracious promises to the godly, and my threatenings to the wicked. This may be understood in a lower sense of Isaiah, but is chiefly meant of Christ. (Compare xlix. 2. l. 5, 6. lix. 21.)

And have covered thee in the shadow of my hand.] See xlix. 2.)

That I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundation of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.] A political government in the prophetical idiom is often expressed by the several parts of the creation: according to which analogy, rulers and magistrates are denoted by the heavenly bodies, and inferior people by the earth: (see the note on xiii. 10.) if we take the words here in this metaphorical sense, they import, that God publishes these gracious promises by the ministry of Isaiah, in order to the restoring of the Jewish nation, and settling them in a political government again, subsisting by themselves and governed by their own laws. But the words do farther imply a promise of that new state of things, called afterward a *new heaven,* and a *new earth,* (lxv. 17. lxvi. 22.) wherein Christ will reward his saints and eminent servants, and where he himself will immediately preside over them. (Rev. xx. 4. see the note on xlv. 18.)

Ver. 17. *Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury: thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.*] The prophet speaks of Jerusalem, as one lying astonished under the stroke of God's judgments, which are commonly represented under the notion of a cup of intoxicating liquors, because they amaze men, and bereave them of their judgment and discretion. *Drinking the dregs* of this cup is the same with taking it off to the bottom, where the strongest and most nauseous part of the portion was settled; and implies that God did not in the least spare her, but poured out the full measure of his wrath upon her. (Compare Psal. lxxv. 8. Jer. xxv. 15, 16. Ezek. xxiii. 32—34. Rev. xiv. 10.) Some suppose the metaphor to be taken from that intoxicating liquor which was wont to be given to condemned persons, to stupify them before their execution; such as was offered to Christ, (Matt. xxvii. 34.)

Ver. 18. *There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought up,* &c.] Although she is in this helpless distracted condition, and hath most need of support and comfort, yet there are none of her own children that are able to give it her: (see ver. 20.) and therefore it is from God alone that she must expect relief, (ver. 22.)

Ver. 19. *These two things are come upon thee—desolation and destruction, and the famine and the sword.*] Abraham à Schultens, in his Observations upon Job, remarks, that the Hebrew word *shôd, desolation,* is properly used of famine. (See Job v. 22.) So that *desolation and famine, destruction and the sword,* are equivalent terms, and are the two evils here mentioned. To make the sense plainer, he thus translates the words, *These two things are come upon thee—desolation and destruction, even the famine and the sword:* the copulative particle being sometimes used by way of explanation: so 1 Sam. xxviii. 3. *They buried him in Ramah, even in his own city:* where it is in the Hebrew, *And in his own city.* (See likewise 1 Sam. xvii. 40.)

Who shall be sorry for thee?] Who is there left to take

pity on thee, since thy children are all in as miserable a condition as thyself? (See the eighteenth and the following verse.)

By whom shall I comfort thee?] What human means of comfort is there left for thee? (Compare Amos vii. 2.)

Ver. 20. *Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, like a wild bull in a net,* &c.] A description of the miserable condition of the city when it was just taken by the enemy, and the choicest men for youth and courage lay weltering in their own blood in every street, struggling for life like a wild bull taken in a toil, and sinking under the weight of God's wrath. When God delivered up Zedekiah into the hands of his enemies, he is said to *spread his net upon him,* (Ezek. xii. 13. xvii. 20.)

Ver. 21. *And drunken, but not with wine.*] See ver. 17.

Ver. 22. *Thou shalt no more drink it again.*] Some render the words, *Thou shalt no longer drink thereof.* (Compare Ezek. xxxix. 28.) If we follow the common translation, and understand this of Jerusalem, it must mean that such a judgment should not come upon it again in several ages; a long continuance being often styled *for ever,* in the Hebrew. But by comparing this verse with ver. 16. and with liv. 9. we may conclude, that this prophecy hath a farther prospect upon a new state or restoration of the Jews, which is still to be expected. (See likewise xxxv. 8. 9. lii. 1. lx. 15. lxii. 8.)

[*Thou shalt no more drink it again.*] The words should rather be translated, *Thou shalt no longer drink thereof.* So the particle *nôd* plainly signifies, Ezek. xii. 28. Hos. i. 6. see Noldius, p. 682.]

Ver. 23. *But I will put it into the hands of them that afflict thee.*] Compare xlix. 26. Jer. xxv. 29. Rev. xviii. 6.

Which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over.] The expression alludes to the custom of conquerors to tread upon the necks of the conquered. (See Josh. x. 24. Psal. lxvi. 12.) The phrase of *bowing down the soul,* signifies undergoing great oppression and misery. (See Psal. lvii. 6.)

CHAP. LII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet congratulates Jerusalem upon her restoration after the captivity, and tells her how every thing about her would put on a new face upon that joyful occasion. In which description he hath plainly an eye to the renovation of the church under the gospel. And in speaking upon this subject, he very naturally brings in a description of Christ in his state of humiliation and sufferings, together with the glory which would accrue to himself, and the advantages which all true believers would receive from thence. But, according to Mr. White's interpretation, this prophecy must come in very abruptly, without any connexion with what goes before, or what comes after.

Ver. 1. *AWAKE, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion.*] Thou hast for a long time been in a state of silence and obscurity, like one dead and buried; rouse up thyself, and resume thy former prowess and dignity. (Compare li. 17.)

Put on thy beautiful garments.] Jerusalem is described as lying in the dust, in a *disconsolate* condition, ver. 2. but here the prophet exhorts her to change her sackcloth or mournful dress for a festival one. (Compare lxi. 3.)

The holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.] No aliens or infidels, such as the Babylonians, shall invade thee. (Compare Nahum i. 15.) This mystically implies the church's being purified from all corruptions, and the contagion of the wicked. (See the note on xxxv. 8.)

Ver. 2. *Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem.*] The city before lay in the dust, and was buried in its own ruins. (Compare iii. 26. xlvii. 1.) But now she is exhorted to rise from the ground, where she had lain prostrate, (li. 23.) and sit upon her throne or seat of authority, as the mother-city of the Jewish nation.

Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.] Captivity and slavery are often expressed by the yoke of bondage. (See Deut. xxviii. 48. Jer. xxviii. 14.)

Ver. 3. *You have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.*] *For your iniquities you sold yourselves,* (l. 1.) So foolish a bargain you made, as to venture the parting with your liberty, only to enjoy your sins and idolatrous customs: you received no valuable consideration when you thus enslaved yourselves; and therefore, to make the sale and the redemption correspondent to each other, you shall be rescued out of this oppression gratis, which I will do by Cyrus. (See xlv. 13.) The words, in the mystical sense, may fitly be applied to the miserable captivity to which sinners enslave themselves, and the freedom of that redemption which Christ hath wrought for them. (Compare 1 Pet. i. 18. Rom. iii. 24.)

Ver. 4. *My people went down aforetime into Egypt; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.*] Compare Jer. l. 17. By the Assyrian, is meant the succession of Assyrian kings, Tiglath-pileser, Sennacherib, and the rest, down to Nebuchadnezzar; for the kings of Babylon are sometimes styled kings of Assyria. (See note on xiv. 25.) The Jews had given these princes no just cause for their ill usage of them; though God for just reasons made them his instruments in punishing a wicked people. Egypt and Assyria are often joined together as the two great oppressors of God's people. (See the note on xi. 16.)

Ver. 5. *Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord.*] Or, *what have I to do here?* (see note on xxii. 16.) that is, what have I to do with the Babylonians? when I gave my people into their hands, as the instruments of my vengeance, (see Jer. xxvii. 5, 6.) I never made over to them the right that I have in my people.

That my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl: and my name is continually blasphemed.] They had no valuable consideration given them for their liberty, (ver. 3.) nor did they injure the Babylonians first, that they should requite them in this manner, ver. 4. (to this sense the word *hinman* is often rendered *without cause:* see Psal. xxxv. 7. 19. lxix. 4. cix. 3. cxix. 161. Lament. iv. 52.) they met with ill usage, and I got no honour by it. On the contrary, *My name is continually blasphemed:* that is, the infidels take occasion from my delivering up my people into their hands, to reproach me as

if I were either forgetful of them, or unable to help them. (See the note upon xlviii. 11.)

Ver. 6. *Therefore my people shall know my name,* &c.] They shall know my power, that it is I have made this promise of restoring them, who am always ready at hand to make good what I say: so some render the latter part of the verse, *That I am he that doth speak, and I am ready at hand* [to perform it].

Ver. 7. *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,* &c.] A poetical description of the messenger who first brought the good news of Cyrus's decree for the people's return home; whom the *watchmen,* mentioned ver. 8. are supposed to descry afar off from the tops of the mountains, making all possible haste to publish this happy news; a signal instance of God's overruling providence, and of the peculiar care he hath for his church. This text is very fitly applied by St. Paul to the first preachers of the gospel, Rom. x. 15. the very word importing *good tidings* of peace and salvation, whereby the kingdom of God was erected among men. Accordingly we may observe, that those Psalms wherein we find that expression, *The Lord reigneth,* are by the generality of interpreters, both Jewish and Christian, expounded of the times of the Messias. (See Psal. xciii. xcvi. xcvii.)

Ver. 8. *Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice,* &c.] By *watchmen* are meant preachers or prophets. (See lvi. 10. Ezek. xxxiii. 7.) The words may be understood particularly of Haggai and Zechariah, with respect to the return from the captivity; and may be applied to the first preachers of the gospel in aftertimes.

They shall see eye to eye.] That is, clearly and evidently; the phrase means the same as *face to face.*

Ver. 9. *Sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem.*] See xlix. 8. li. 3.

Ver. 10. *The Lord hath made bare his holy arm.*] He hath given evident tokens of his power and holiness.

All the ends of the world shall see the salvation of our God.] The plain import of the words, and the parallel text, Psal. xcviii. 3. shew, that this must be understood of the revelation of the gospel.

Ver. 11. *Depart, depart ye, go ye out from thence.*] See the note on xlviii. 20.

Touch no unclean thing.] The expression is taken from the legal pollutions contracted by touching any thing that was unclean; (see Lev. xxii. 4—6.) and is a command to God's people, and the priests especially, to cleanse themselves from all those defilements they may have contracted by living among the wicked.

Be ye clean, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord.] The priests under the law had the charge of the holy vessels, and all the furniture of the temple, committed to them: (see Numb. iii. 8.) and they were particularly enjoined to keep themselves free from all manner of pollutions. (See Lev. xxi. xxii.) The mystical sense of which command extends to all Christians, (see 2 Cor. vi. 17.) who are called a *holy priesthood,* 1 Pet. ii. 5.

Ver. 12. *For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward.*] Your fathers *were thrust out of Egypt in haste,* (Exod. xii. 33.) but ye shall have sufficient notice of your departure out of Babylon, that ye may purify and prepare yourselves for it: and God himself shall be both in the head and rear of you, and, like the pillar of cloud in the wilderness, shall be both your guide and defence. (See Exod. xiv. 19, 20.)

Ver. 13. *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently.*] Or, *shall prosper,* as the margin reads, more agreeably to what follows. Here begins a new section, [the Chaldee paraphrase understands the person spoken of here, and to the end of the following chapter, to be the Messias,] which contains so clear a prophecy of the *sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow,* that all Christian interpreters forsake Grotius here, even those that too servilely copy after him in other places, and think that this prophecy can be applied to none but Christ, who is here called God's *servant* in an eminent sense. (See the note on xlii. 1.)

He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.] He shall be exalted to be the head of a numerous offspring, to *justify many,* and *to divide the spoil with the strong,* (liii. 10—12.) The glories of the Messias are elsewhere in the prophets set forth in the most magnificent terms. And the Jews have a remarkable saying recorded in some of their oldest writers, *That the Messias should be exalted above Abraham, be extolled above Moses, and be higher than the angels:* a sentence that seems to have been derived to them from a more ancient tradition; for we find St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, proves the supereminent dignity of Christ, by the same topics, by shewing him to be greater than Abraham: (Heb. vii. 6, 7.) worthy of more honour than Moses, (iii. 3. 5, 6.) and higher than the angels, (i. 4, &c.)

Ver. 14. *As many were astonished at thee.*] The prophet speaks of that surprise and astonishment men were seized with, by the unexpected change they observed in Christ's outward appearance, at the time of his sufferings, and the strange alteration between him that was so lately followed by multitudes, with acclamations and *hosannahs,* and reverenced as *the great Prophet that should come into the world,* and the same person suffering on the cross, and treated as *the scorn of men, and the outcast of the people.* (See Matt. xxvii. 39. 42.)

His visage was so marred more than any man, &c.] See liii. 2.

Ver. 15. *So shall ye sprinkle many nations.*] His sufferings, however they may render him despicable for the present, yet shall bring great benefit to others, and in the end redound to his own glory: he shall purify whole nations by his blood, and present them holy to God. The expression alludes to the legal aspersions, by which the people were sanctified. (Compare Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Heb. ix. 13, 14. 1 Pet. i. 2.)

The kings shall shut their mouths at him.] The greatest kings and princes shall submit themselves to him, laying their hands upon their mouths, and hearkening to his instructions with the profoundest reverence and attention. (Compare Job xxix. 9, 10. xl. 4. and see above, xlix. 13.)

For that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.] Those nations and their kings shall be instructed in such heavenly truths, as human reason could never be able to discover. The gospel is called a *mystery kept secret from ages and generations,* the knowledge of which could not be attained but by Divine revelation. (See Rom. xvi. 25. Eph. iii. 5. 9.)

CHAP. LIII.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter describes the circumstances of our Saviour's sufferings so exactly, that it seems rather a history of his passion, than a prophecy: and it is so undeniable a proof of the truth of Christianity, that the bare reading it, and comparing it with the gospel-history, hath converted some infidels.

Ver. 1. *WHO hath believed our report?* &c.] This is spoken in the person of Christ and his apostles: Who, say they, among our own countrymen, hath believed our preaching or doctrine? So the word *shemuah* signifies, xxviii. 9. And although God hath shewed such visible tokens of his power, (compare lii. 10.) in those miracles by which he hath given testimony to our mission, yet how few of our own nation are convinced by them? (Compare John xii. 37, 38. Rom. x. 16.)

Ver. 2. *For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.*] The prophet assigns the cause of the Jews rejecting Christ, *viz.* the meanness of his outward appearance. The Messias is elsewhere described under the resemblance of a *branch* or *scion* growing out of the stem or stock of David. (See xi. 1. Jer. xxiii. 5.) But here he is resembled to a little *sucker*, the literal interpretation of the word *ijonek*, and to a branch growing out of a *dry ground*, which looks withered, and does not promise either life or fruit. The word *shoresh, root*, should rather be translated *branch*, or shoot. (See the note on xi. 10.)

He shall grow up before him.] That is, before the Lord, mentioned ver. 1. under his immediate care and inspection; so the expression of *dwelling before God*, signifies abiding under his protection, Psal. lxi. 7. Or *before him* may signify here, according to God's determinate counsel and purpose, as the phrase denotes, Rom. iv. 17.

He hath no form nor comeliness, &c.] The meanness of his outward circumstances, especially when he came to be condemned as a malefactor, made his person appear despicable. (Compare lii. 14.) From this text Justin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, and others of the ancient fathers, concluded our Saviour's person to have been deformed; an opinion in my judgment not at all probable. In the fourth and following centuries, a quite contrary notion was advanced by St. Jerome, and others, *viz.* that Christ was a person of extraordinary comeliness, which they grounded chiefly upon that place of the forty-fifth Psalm, (ver. 3.) *Thou art fairer than the children of men*, &c. From these two contrary opinions we may conclude, that the making or setting up the *image* or the *picture of Christ*, was no part of religious worship in the early ages of Christianity, or else there would have remained some more certain tradition concerning his outward shape and person.

[*That we should desire him.*] He that is described as the *Desire of all nations*, Hag. ii. 6. (where the word is the same as in the Hebrew here) did not appear at all desirable to those of his own nation.]

Ver. 3. *A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.*] *Enduring the continual contradiction of sinners*, and all the ill treatment that the malice of men or devils could suggest. (See Luke xxii. 53.)

And we hid as it were our faces from him.] Out of aversion or contempt. (Compare i. 15. liv. 8. lix. 2.) So to *turn away our face from the needy*, (Ecclus. iv. 5.) is to disregard him, and take no pity on his sufferings.

Ver. 4. *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.*] He hath borne the evils and punishments which were due to our sins. The two Hebrew verbs, *nasa* and *sabal*, properly signify to bear the punishment due to sin. The former is taken so in that noted expression, when any person is said to *bear his iniquity; i. e.* the punishment of his iniquity: the latter signifies properly to have iniquity laid upon one as a burden, which is the same with undergoing the punishment due to it. So this word is used, Lam. v. 7. *Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities;* that is, we have been punished in their stead. It is used again in the same sense, at ver. 11. of this chapter.

Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.] His enemies looked upon him as forsaken of God, and derided him for his vain boasts that God was his Father. (See Matt. xxvii. 43.)

Ver. 5. *The chastisement of our peace was upon him.*] He suffered those chastisements or punishments by which our peace with God was wrought, and satisfaction was made to the Divine justice. (See Rom. v. 1. Ephes. ii. 14.)

Ver. 6. *All we like sheep are gone astray.*] A proverbial expression. (See Psal. cxix. 176. Zech. x. 2. Matt. xviii. 11, 12. Luke xv. 4.)

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.] The letter of the Hebrew runs thus: *The Lord hath made the iniquities of us all to meet on him*, or *to fall upon him*, as the verb *pagang* signifies, Judg. viii. 21. xv. 12. Amos v. 19.

Ver. 7. *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted.*] The words may better be rendered, *It was exacted* of him, *and he answered* the demand: that is, he gave that satisfaction which God's justice demanded for our sins.

Yet he opened not his mouth.] All the hard usage he met with did not prevail with him to utter any intemperate expression, or to make any return to the ill language which was given him. (See 1 Pet. ii. 22, 23.) Nay, he even abstained from making his just defence, any farther than it was necessary for him to plead his innocence. (See Matt. xxvi. 63. xxvii. 12.)

He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter.] Meekly submitting to the violence of his persecutors, and not offering to make the least resistance. (See Matt. xxvi. 52, 53.) *To go as an ox, or lamb, to the slaughter*, is another proverbial expression, which we meet with Prov. vii. 22. Jer. xi. 19. but of a different signification, denoting a false security, or insensibility of danger; to which sense it is explained by Jeremiah himself, in that place, *I know not*; saith he, *that they had devised devices against me.* And therefore that text is very impertinently alleged by Grotius here, to justify his applying this part of the prophecy to Jeremiah's case.

Ver. 8. *He was taken from prison and from judgment.*] We do not read that imprisonment was any part of Christ's sufferings: so I think the marginal reading is to be preferred, *He was taken away by distress and judgment:* or it may be rendered, *He was carried away to execution* (so the participle of *lukkak* is used, Prov. xxiv. 11.) *by tyrannical oppression, and a sentence of condemnation.* The word *notzer*,

which our translation renders *prison*, is rendered *oppression*, Psal. cvii. 39.

And who shall declare his generation?] Who can declare the wickedness of the men of that age or generation, who cut off this innocent person in so unjust a manner? The Hebrew word *dôr*, often signifies the men of such an age or place. (See Gen. vii. 1. Deut. xxxii. 5. 20. Psal. lxxviii. 8.) In the same sense is γενεὰ frequently used in the New Testament, particularly Matt. xii. 45. xxiii. 36. Some commentators understand this text of Christ's *eternal generation*, but then I conceive the word in the Hebrew should have been *toledoth*.

Ver. 9. *And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence*, &c.] Some render the words thus, *His grave was appointed with the wicked* (being crucified with malefactors), *but he was with the rich in his death*, being buried in the monument of Joseph of Arimathea; or, *his sepulchre was with the rich*: so Schindler renders the word *bemothau*, as if it were derived from *bamah*. Others to this purpose, *God delivered him, even to the grave and to death, into the hands of the wicked and powerful*. The word *rich* is sometimes taken, in an ill sense, for a tyrant or oppressor: (see Job xxvii. 19. compared with ver. 13.) and so they understand it here, and translate the latter part of the verse thus, *Not for any violence that he had done, or that any deceit was found in his mouth*. The very same Hebrew particles, *nal lo*, being thus translated, Job xvi. 17. Or else, taking those particles in that sense, we may very well join this sentence to the following verse, thus, *Although he had done no wickedness, neither was any deceit in his mouth, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him*.

Ver. 10. *When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed.*] Our Saviour's words, John xii. 24. are a commentary upon this place, where, speaking of the benefits that would follow from his death, he saith, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

[*He shall see his seed.*] This may be properly understood of our Lord's disciples, called Christians, after his name. Nothing is more usual than to call teachers by the name of *fathers*, (see 2 Kings ii. 12. xiii. 14.) and them that follow his instructions by the name of *children*. In this sense we read of the *children of Abraham*, the *children of God*, and the *children of wisdom*. The Chaldee, LXX. and Vulgar Latin, join the following words to this sentence, *He shall see a seed which shall prolong their days; i. e.* the church, which shall continue unto the end of the world.]

He shall prolong his days.] *Being raised up from the dead, he shall die no more*, (Rom. vi. 9.)

And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.] The redemption and salvation of mankind is often called God's *good pleasure;* as being both highly acceptable to him, and likewise proceeding purely from his good pleasure and free grace. (See Ephes. i. 5. 9. 2 Thess. i. 11. John vi. 39.)

Ver. 11. *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.*] He shall rejoice to find that his death and sufferings have not been in vain, but the means of saving so many: to this sense some understand that text of St. Paul, where he saith, that Christ, *for the joy which was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame*, (Heb. xii. 2.)

By his knowledge.] By such a knowledge of Christ, as produceth faith and obedience. (See John xvii. 3. Philip. iii. 8, 9. 2 Pet. i. 3.)

Shall my righteous servant.] St. John alludes to this place, when he calls our Saviour, *Jesus Christ the righteous*, 1 John ii. 1. (Concerning the title of *servant*, see the note on xlii. 1.)

Justify many.] The writers of the New Testament allude to this text, when they say, that *Christ gave his life a ransom for many;* (Matt. xx. 28.) *His blood was shed for many;* (Matt. xxvi. 28.) *Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;* (Heb. ix. 28.) and, *By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous*, (Rom. v. 19.) where the οἱ Πολλοὶ, *the many*, are equivalent to *all men*, as appears by the foregoing verse.

Ver. 12. *Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great.*] The words may be rendered more exactly to the Hebrew, thus, *I will bestow many upon him;* or, *I will give him his share or possession in many:* to this sense the Septuagint render it, Κληρονομήσει πολλούς. Thus the expression is equivalent to that of Psal. ii. 1. *I will give him the heathen to his inheritance*, &c. Any gift is expressed in the Hebrew by a share or lot in a division: the phrase alludes to the division of the land of Canaan among the twelve tribes by lot. (See Psal. xvi. 5, 6.)

And he shall divide the spoil with the strong.] The expression alludes to the custom of conquerors to divide the spoils of their victory with their officers and soldiers. (See ix. 3. Josh. xxii. 8. Judg. v. 30. Prov. xvi. 19. Zech. xiv. 1.) So Christ, after he had conquered the powers of darkness by his cross, (see Colos. ii. 15.) should ascend triumphantly into heaven, *leading captivity captive, and distributing gifts unto men*, (Ephes. iv. 8.) But I must observe, that the Septuagint and Chaldee paraphrase render the words, *He shall divide the spoils of the strong;* as if the Hebrew particle *eth* stood for *meeth*, as it does Gen. iv. 1. and elsewhere; and then the sense will be, that Christ shall turn Satan out of that kingdom, which he had usurped over mankind, and assert his own right to it. (See John xii. 31.) And this interpretation of the words, our Saviour himself may be thought to allude to, when, speaking of his conquest over Satan, he saith, *When a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.* (Luke xi. 22.)

Because he hath poured out his soul unto death.] He hath poured forth his blood, wherein the life or animal soul doth consist. (See Lev. xvii. 11.) The same reason of Christ's exaltation is assigned, Philip. ii. 9.

CHAP. LIV.

ARGUMENT.

In the foregoing chapter the prophet described the sufferings of Christ, and here he prophesies of the increase and glory of the church which should follow upon it; which, indeed, were to commence from the time of Christ's passion, but would not be completed till his second coming, and after the Jews were again restored to God's favour.

Ver. 1. *SING, O barren, thou that didst not bear.*] Or, *Thou that hast not borne* children a great while: the prophet

had described Jerusalem, during the captivity, as a desolate woman, forsaken of her husband, and bereaved of her children: (xlix. 21. compare lxii. 4.) here he bids her rejoice and comfort herself after her affliction, because her children should be much more numerous than they were in her most flourishing condition. This cannot be literally true of the Jewish nation, who never made such a figure after the captivity, as they did in the days of David and Solomon; and consequently can be only imperfectly understood of Jerusalem, as she was a type of the Christian church, according to St. Paul's exposition of the text, Gal. iv. 27. Expounding the words to this sense, they import, That the church, after her spouse, Jesus Christ, was taken from her by death, and she left in a disconsolate, forlorn condition, and her children orphans; (see John xiv. 18.) desponding and comfortless, (Luke xxiv. 21.) from such mean and contemptible beginnings, should spread herself over the world, and will still receive a farther enlargement, when the fulness of the Jews and gentiles is come in.

For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.] She that was desolate without inhabitant, shall have more children than ever she had formerly whilst she was married; *i. e.* while God owned his covenant relation to her; and the land, *of which she was metropolis*, was full of people. (See ver. 5. and lxii. 4.)

Ver. 2. *Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations.*] The prophet describes the city of Jerusalem, the figure of the Christian church, (God's tabernacle, Rev. xxi. 3.) under the metaphor of a tent, or tabernacle, the most ancient way of dwelling; and bids her enlarge her borders in proportion to the increase of her inhabitants. (Compare xlix. 19, 20. xxxiii. 20.)

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left.*] Thy people shall become so numerous, that thou shalt be forced to seek out new habitations for them.

And thy seed shall inherit the gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.] This may be understood, in a low sense, of the Jews enlarging their borders, by the conquests of Judas Maccabæus, over their neighbouring countries, (see 1 Maccab. v.) and their inhabiting those cities in Judea which had been left desolate, it may be, ever since the captivity of the ten tribes; but the words do plainly imply the enlargement of the church, by admitting the gentiles within her territories, and that the minds of rude and barbarous nations should be cultivated with the knowledge of the true God. (See the note on xlix. 8.)

Ver. 4. *For thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.*] The favour and affection God will shew towards thee now, will make thee forget all thy former disgraces and afflictions, both those thou sufferedst in Egypt, and afterward in the times of the judges, and those which thou endurest in the time of thy captivity, when God rejected thee, and left thee in a state of *widowhood*. (See ver. 6. l. 1.) This verse, and ver. 6. may have a particular regard to God's calling of the Jews, and restoring them to favour, after they had been rejected a great while. (See the note upon ver. 13. and compare lx. 15. lxi. 7. lxii. 4.)

Ver. 5. *For thy Maker is thy husband.*] Though God had cast thee off for some time, (ver. 1.) yet he still owns the relation of a *husband* towards thee, and will shew true marks of his conjugal affection to thee. (See the note on xlviii. 8.)

The God of the whole earth shall he be called.] And now the time is coming, when he shall not be called the God of the Jews only, but also of the gentiles, whom he shall admit into the same covenant relation to himself, with the Jews. (Compare Zech. xiv. 9. Rom. iii. 29.)

Ver. 6. *For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused.*] God is now reconciled to thee again, after having cast thee off, and left thee in a desolate and mournful condition. (See ver. 1. 4.) He will now cherish thee, as if he were newly married to thee. (See lxii. 4.) *A wife of youth*, signifies a wife that a man was married to in his youth, who was his first love, and therefore not easily to be parted with. (See Prov. v. 18. Mal. ii. 14.)

Ver. 7. *For a small moment have I forsaken thee.*] God's anger towards his servants is short, when compared with that everlasting kindness he will shew towards them. (See Psal. xxx. 5.) The same rule holds true of the church in general, whose *light afflictions are but for a moment*, in comparison of that eternal glory he hath promised them; an earnest of which will be that millenium of rest, which is to usher in the heavenly state, and seems to be described in the following part of the chapter.

But with great mercies will I gather thee.] This was to be understood, either of the gathering together of the Jews from their several dispersions; (compare xi. 12. xxvii. 12. xliii. 6.) or of the uniting the Jews and gentiles in one body, under Christ their head, which will be the effect or consequent of the former. (See lvi. 8. lx. 4. lxvi. 18. Gen. xlix. 10. Ephes. i. 10.) Or, lastly, it may be expounded of the gathering together of the saints at the last day, when there shall be an entire separation made between them and the wicked. (See Matt. xiii. 41. 49. xxiv. 31. xxv. 32. 1 Thess. iv. 17. 2 Thess. ii. 1.) This place may most probably be understood in the first sense.

Ver. 9. *As I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee.*] God's irrevocable promise is elsewhere called his oath, though the formality of swearing was not used. (See Psal. lxxxix. 3. cv. 11. cxxxii. 11.) This solemn promise which God here makes, must relate to such a time when God will not afflict his people any more: and as it would not have been true, if it were applied to the Jews returning from Babylon, for their whole nation and government was afterward utterly ruined by the Romans; so neither can it be made good, as long as the present state of the world continues.

Mr. White hath, with great sagacity, discovered the fulfilling of this prophecy, in the present dispersion of the Jews over the world; which most other writers speak of as a remarkable judgment of God upon that nation, that they should never incorporate with any other community, but continue as a separate people from the rest of the world, living every where, like strangers, only upon sufferance: and this sort of exile is threatened, as a punishment to be inflicted upon them for their heinous sins, by Moses, Deut. xxviii. 64—66. and by Hosea, iii. 4.

Ver. 10. *For the mountains shall depart*, &c.] Compare li. 6.

Ver. 11. *Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours.*] We read of *stones of divers colours*, 1 Chron. xxix. 2. where the word in the original is the same as it is here, and probably means a stone of a red or shining colour. This and the next verse may, in a qualified sense, be applied to the rebuilding the city and temple after the captivity; but must have some farther meaning in it, if we compare it with that old prophecy mentioned in Tobit, xiii. 16, 17. which Mr. Mede hath shewed must relate to the latter times (see his Dissertat. upon the last chapter of Tobit), and with Rev. xxi. 18, &c. The church of Christ, and the society of antichrist, are described as two cities; the latter called *mystical Babylon*, Rev. xvii. 5. the former, the *new and heavenly Jerusalem*, Rev. xxi. 2. 10. to distinguish it from the earthly city of that name, and is there described as *coming down from God*, and adorned with all those gifts and graces which can render it glorious and durable, which are metaphorically represented under the figure of a four-square solid and beautiful structure, consisting all of gold and precious stones.

Ver. 12. *And all thy borders of pleasant stones.*] The Hebrew word here, which is commonly rendered a *border*, the Septuagint translate a *wall*, which makes the words exactly parallel with Rev. xxi. 18.

Ver. 13. *And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord.*] This signifies that plentiful effusion of grace which the prophets mention as the peculiar character of the gospel-times. (See the note on xliv. 3.) The effects of it were very signal in the first times of the gospel. (See John vi. 45. compared with Jer. xxxi. 34. see likewise Acts iv. 33. 1 Cor. i. 4, 5.) And there shall be another remarkable effusion of it, when God shall *pour the spirit of grace and supplication* upon the Jews, in order to their conversion, according to the prophecy of Zechariah, xii. 10. confirmed by the assertion of St. Paul, 2 Cor. iii. 16. who expressly tells us, that the time will come when the heart of that people *shall turn to the Lord, and then the veil shall be taken away* from it: and then they shall be the instruments of bringing in the remainder of the unconverted gentiles. (See lxvi. 19, 20.) And therefore we are not to make the sense of the present Jews any objection against interpreting some of the ancient prophecies with relation to their conversion, as Mr. White seems to do (see his argument upon the fortieth chapter of this prophecy), the generality of them being a profligate race of people, abandoned of God and goodness: but even such wretches God is able to convert whenever he pleases, and, as John Baptist told their forefathers, can out of *these stones raise up children unto Abraham*, (Matt. iii. 9.)

Ver. 14. *In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression*, &c.] God's mercy and thy own integrity shall be thy defence and protection, so that thou needest not fear either any threatening or invasion from foreign enemies. (See lii. 1. lx. 18.)

Ver. 15. *Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me.*] I foresee your enemies will make attempts against you; but as they do it without my direction, so neither shall they be blessed with my assistance.

Whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.] Or, *shall fall to thee*, as the Hebrew literally imports: that is, shall come over to thy side; in which sense the phrase is used, Jer. xxxvii. 14. So the meaning of the sentence will be this, Whosoever comes against thee, instead of continuing thy enemy, will become thy convert, as St. Paul was at the beginning of Christianity.

Ver. 16. *Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals*, &c.] I have created the maker of offensive weapons, and them that use them; and both being under my government and direction, no design formed against thee shall be prospered by me.

Ver. 17. *Every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, shalt thou condemn.*] God will protect and maintain thy innocence against all the malicious suggestions of thine enemies, either men or devils. (Compare l. 8, 9. Rev. xii. 10.)

And their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.] I will acquit them, and pronounce them innocent or justified: this shall be the portion and privilege of my faithful servants. (See xlv. 24, 25.) Or *righteousness* may be equivalent to salvation. (See lxii. 1, 2.)

CHAP. LV.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet publishes the free offers of grace by the gospel, and exhorts men not to reject them, but to turn to God by a sincere repentance, who will graciously pardon and accept them.

Ver. 1. *HO, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.*] The Divine grace is often represented under the emblem of springs and streams of water. (See the notes upon xxx. 25. xliv. 3.) In like manner Divine knowledge, the food and support of the soul, is expressed by the metaphors of meat and drink, which sustain the body. (See John vi. 27. and so to the end of the chapter.) Under this metaphor the prophet here exhorts men to make use of those means of instruction which the gospel so freely offers. Christ himself expounds the words to this sense, John vii. 37.

Come ye, buy, and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.] *Buying* sometimes signifies in general gaining or procuring any thing. In this sense Solomon uses the word, when he bids us *buy the truth and sell it not; i. e.* spare no pains to learn it, (Prov. xxiii. 23. see likewise Rev. iii. 18.) It is added, *without money, and without price*, to shew that Divine knowledge is of far greater value than to be purchased with money, being the gift of God, and not to be obtained but by earnest prayer and sincere endeavours. (Compare Ecclus. li. 25, 26.)

Ver. 2. *Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?*] All the pretences to religious knowledge, but such as proceed from God himself, are vain and useless; they can neither instruct men in the truth, nor lead them to happiness.

And let your soul delight itself in fatness.] By *fatness* is meant all sorts of delicious food: (see xxv. 6.) and the expression here denotes the true knowledge of God and of happiness, as was observed upon the first verse. (Compare likewise the following verse.)

Ver. 3. *And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.*] The gospel is often

called an *everlasting covenant,* (see lxi. 8. Jer. xxxii. 40. l. 5.) in opposition to the law, which was designed but for a time, and was to give way to a better. And by the terms of this covenant, God will fulfil those promises which he made to David, of establishing his throne for ever: (see 2 Sam. vii. 16. Psal. lxxxix. 28.) which will not be fully verified, but in the Messias, of whose *kingdom there shall be no end.* (See Acts xiii. 34.)

Ver. 4. *Behold, I have given him to be a witness to the people.*] David is in the prophets often put for Christ, in whom all the promises made to David are to be fulfilled. (See Jer. xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. Hos. iii. 5.) And as all the prophets are God's witnesses, (see the note on xliii. 10.) so that title does in an eminent manner belong to the Messias, who was the *great Prophet that should come into the world:* accordingly he is styled *the faithful witness,* (Rev. i. 5.) and *for this cause came he into the world, that he should bear witness to the truth,* as he speaks himself, (John xviii. 37.)

A leader and commander of the people.] The word *nagid,* which is translated *leader,* signifies likewise a *prince,* or *ruler;* and so it is translated, Dan. ix. 26. where the same title is given to the Messias.

Ver. 5. *Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not.*] Christ is elsewhere styled the *light of the gentiles.* (See xlii. 6. xlix. 6.)

For he hath glorified thee.] See the note on lii. 13.

Ver. 6. *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found,* &c.] A general exhortation to men, to make use of the means and opportunities of grace which the gospel offers. To the same purpose are those exhortations we read in the New Testament, *not to receive the grace of God in vain,* (2 Cor. vi. 2.) and to *hearken to God's voice while it is called to-day,* (Heb. iii. 13.) Which places intimate, that men may outlive their day of grace, and either themselves be *hardened through the deceitfulness of sin;* or else God may *remove their candlestick,* and take away those means of instruction from them, which they made no better use of. (See Matt. xxi. 43.)

Ver. 7. *And let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him.*] A general promulgation of pardon, such as properly belongs to the gospel-state. (Compare Matt. xi. 28. Luke xxiv. 47. Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

Ver. 8, 9. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts,* &c.] My purposes in revealing the gospel carry in them such marks of goodness and condescension in forgiving sins, (see ver. 7.) and of truth and faithfulness in fulfilling my promises, (see ver. 10, 11.) that they as far exceed the measures of human proceedings, as heaven is high above the earth.

Ver. 10, 11. *For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven,* &c.] You find by experience that the rain and snow fulfil my pleasure, and answer the ends for which I send them down upon the earth: and you may be assured that my word and promise shall be much more effectual, and fulfil all my gracious purposes and designs, of *bringing men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.*

Ver. 12. *For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace.*] This may be particularly meant of the Jews' return from captivity, as the second verse in the next chapter is to be applied to them: but then we are to consider their call out of Babylon to be an emblem of a greater deliverance; when God will call men by the gospel *out of darkness into his marvellous light:* upon which account the Christians are called a *chosen generation,* and *a peculiar people,* whom God hath separated to himself from the rest of the world. (See 1 Pet. ii. 9. Gal. i. 4.) Compare the phrase, *go out,* with xlii. 7. xlix. 9. The words may be understood of the final restoration of the Jews, which shall be accompanied with bringing in the fulness of the gentiles. (Compare xxxv. 10.)

The mountains and hills shall break forth before you into singing, &c.] See note on xlii. 10.

Ver. 13. *Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree.*] Spiritual blessings are often represented under the emblems of fruitfulness and plenty. (Compare xxxv. 2.) So here we may take the words as importing that virtue and holiness shall spring up instead of vice and wickedness; good men being elsewhere compared to fruitful trees: (see Psal. i. 3. Luke vi. 44, 45.) as the wicked are resembled to briers and thorns. (See the note on ix. 18.) Or else the words may import a renovation of the world, and restoring it to a paradisiacal state, as some understand the promise of a *new heaven and new earth,* mentioned lxv. 17.

And it shall be unto the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign, &c.] It shall turn to God's praise, and be an everlasting monument or memorial of his goodness. Thus the expression, *for a name,* is used Jer. xiii. 11. where, *for a name, for a praise,* and *for a glory,* are used as equivalent terms. So Ezek. xxiii. 10. where our translation reads, *She became famous among women,* it is in the original, *She became a name among women.*

CHAP. LVI.

ARGUMENT.

The exhortations in this chapter, to the ninth verse, are particularly directed to the Jews under captivity, and to the proselytes who were joined to them; many strangers, by conversing with the Jews, who were dispersed in foreign countries, being persuaded to embrace their religion. The prophet encourages the latter to hope that God will accept them, though they cannot lay claim to all the privileges the natural Jews valued themselves so much upon. God tells them, (ver. 8.) that he will, in due time, add many other gentiles to his church, and make them one body with the Jews: which prediction plainly relates to the times of the gospel.

Ver. 1. *KEEP ye judgment and do justice, for my salvation is near to come,* &c.] Compare xlvi. 13. An exhortation resembling that of John Baptist, (Matt. iii. 2.) whereby men are required to prepare their minds, and render themselves fit objects of God's mercy.

Ver. 2. *That keepeth the sabbath from polluting it.*] The sabbath was ordained as a sign or token of God's covenant with his people; (see Exod. xxxi. 13. Ezek. xx. 12.) whereupon the observation of it was the distinguishing character of a Jew, by which he declared himself a worshipper of the true God, who created heaven and earth, and instituted the sabbath as a memorial of that creation. The *keeping the sabbath* is a precept here more particularly mentioned, be-

cause it might be observed under the captivity, when many other ceremonial laws, particularly those concerning sacrifice, could not.

Ver. 3. *Neither let the son of the stranger, who hath joined himself unto the Lord, speak, saying,* &c.] The strangers were those who joined themselves with the Jews in worshipping the true God, without being circumcised, or obliging themselves to observe the whole law of Moses. They are called *devout Greeks,* or *religious proselytes,* and the *worshippers of God,* in the Acts. (See xiii. 47. xvii. 4. xviii. 7.) God here declares his accepting of such, thereby preparing a way for the gospel institution, when the *partition-wall* between the Jews and gentiles should be broken down.

Neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree.] Fruitfulness was one of the principal blessings promised under the law. (See Gen. xlix. 25. Deut. xxviii. 4.) In like manner, barrenness was both a curse and a reproach. (See note on iv. 1.)

Ver. 5. *Even to them will I give in my house and within my walls a place and a name better than that of sons and of daughters,* &c.] Eunuchs were forbid *to enter into the congregation of the Lord,* or join themselves with the Jews in their public assemblies, (Deut. xxiii. 1.) Here God tells them the time is coming, when these restraints shall be taken off; the inward endowments of the soul shall be sufficient to give pious persons a title to the communion of saints, and their names shall be written in *the book of life,* a more lasting remembrance than posterity can entitle them to. (See Colos. iii. 11.)

Ver. 6. *Also the sons of the stranger,* [compare lx. 10.]—*every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it.*] The words of the fourth commandment do plainly include all *strangers that lived within the gates of the Jews,* expressed elsewhere by the *stranger that sojourneth with thee,* (Exod. xii. 48. see likewise Lev. xxv. 47.) So the Septuagint understood the words of the fourth commandment, and render them, ὁ προσήλυτος ὁ παροικῶν ἐν σοι: *the proselyte that sojourns with thee.* And yet the later rabbins maintain, that the precept of the sabbath only obliges such proselytes as are circumcised. (See Selden, de Jure Nat. et Gentium, lib. iii. cap. 12.)

And taketh hold of my covenant.] The sabbath was ordained as a sign or token of God's covenant with his people. (See the note upon ver. 2.) So that keeping the sabbath was one sort of initiation into that covenant.

Ver. 7. *Even them will I bring to my holy mountain,* &c.] This may be understood of those gentile worshippers, who paid their devotions in the *court of the gentiles,* a place within the precincts of the temple, set apart for that purpose. Many of these came from distant countries to Jerusalem, at the solemn festivals. (See John xii. 20. Acts viii. 27.) But we are likewise to understand the words, of the gentiles coming into the Christian church, and joining in the worship of it.

Their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.] We may understand the words partly of those sacrifices which the gentile converts did offer under the second temple: but the calling of the temple the *house of prayer,* doth make it probable that the sacrifices here mentioned are chiefly to be understood of those *spiritual sacrifices* of prayer and thanksgiving, which are proper to the Christian worship. (See Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5.) What Calvin saith upon the place, "Loquitur propheta figuris, quæ suæ conveniunt ætati," *The prophet uses such expressions,* with relation to the gospel-times, *as are taken from the usages of his own time,* is a good rule for explaining the idioms of the prophetical writings, where the state of the Christian church is often described by representations taken from the Jewish temple and government. (See the notes on xix. 19. lxvi. 23.)

Mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.] It was designed for other nations, as well as the Jews, to say their prayers in, at its first dedication by Solomon. (See 1 Kings viii. 41, 42.) Although the number of proselytes was not considerable till the times of the second temple.

Ver. 8. *The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him,* &c.] The gathering the dispersed Jews into one body and people again, is but an earnest of what I will do, when *at the fulness of time I shall gather together in one all things by Christ,* Ephes. i. 10. (See the note on liv. 7.)

Ver. 9. *All ye beasts of the field, come to devour; yea, all ye beasts of the forest.*] A new chapter should have been begun here; for this is a new prophecy, setting forth, in the remainder of this and in the following chapter, the sins and miseries which ushered in and ended in the captivity: when, first, Pharaoh-Nechoh made the land tributary; (2 Kings xxiii. 33.) then bands of the Chaldeans, Syrians, Ammonites, and Moabites, invaded it; (ibid. xxiv. 2.) and at last Nebuchadnezzar completed its destruction. (Compare the expressions here with Jer. xii. 9. Habak. ii. 17.)

Ver. 10. *His watchmen are blind: they are all dumb dogs,* &c.] The cause of these miseries is imputed here to the ignorance and carelessness of their governors, both in church and state (see the following verse), whom the prophet compares to *dumb dogs,* that give no warning of approaching thieves or enemies, but give themselves up to sleep and idleness.

Ver. 11. *Yea, they are greedy dogs.*] Or impudent, so the word *naz* elsewhere signifies. (See Prov. vii. 13. xxi. 29.) In like manner Homer describes impudence, by Κυνὸς ὄμματ' ἔχων, *having the eyes, or look, of a dog.*

They are shepherds that cannot understand.] The word *shepherd* signifies civil governors, as well as ecclesiastical guides. (See xliv. 28. Jer. xxv. 34. xlix. 19. Zech. xi. 3. 5. 8, &c. xiii. 7.)

They all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.] That is, every one from his quarter minds only his own advantage; they are all alike, from one end to the other: so the word *mikkatzeb* signifies *from every quarter,* Gen. xix. 4.

Ver. 12. *To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.*] This they said to deride the threatenings of destruction which the prophets denounced against them.

CHAP. LVII.

ARGUMENT.

The same subject is continued which was begun in the last chapter; and in this the prophet reproves the idolatries which were so publicly practised in the latter times of the kings of Judah, and which provoked God

to deliver up his people captives to the Babylonians, from whence nevertheless he promises to deliver them, at the latter end of the chapter.

Ver. 1. *THE righteous perisheth.*] This may be understood either of Hezekiah or of Josiah: Hezekiah had a promise made him that peace should continue during his days, (xxxix. 8.) Josiah had likewise a promise of dying in peace, and not seeing the evil which God would bring upon Jerusalem, (2 Kings xxii. 20.)

And no man layeth it to heart.] No man reflects with himself how sore a judgment it is to have good men, and especially pious princes, taken away in bad times, who might either by their prayers avert impending judgments, or, by their prudence and vigilance, apply proper remedies to the public calamities.

And merciful men are taken away.] The Hebrew word *asaph* signifies to be *gathered*, and is used of men's being laid in the sepulchres of their ancestors; which is elsewhere expressed, by being *gathered unto their people*. So Josiah is said to be *gathered to his grave*, (2 Kings xxii. 20.) In other places the word is joined with being buried. (See Jer. viii. 2. xxv. 33.) So we read, Job xxvii. 19. *The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered;* where the word were better translated *buried*.

Ver. 2. *They shall rest in their beds.*] As death is compared to sleep, so the grave is resembled to lying down in a bed. (See xiv. 18.) Particularly we read, 2 Chron. xvi. 14. of the *bed of spices* in which king Asa was laid: and if we understand the text before us, of the death of some of their good kings, the phrase may allude to the costly funerals with which they honoured the memory of their pious princes deceased.

Each one walking in his uprightness.] Or, *that hath walked in his uprightness*.

Ver. 3. *But draw hither, ye sons of the sorceress, ye seed of the adulterer,* &c.] The prophet summons those that practise the sorceries and idolatries of the heathen to come and hear their doom: these he calls the *sons of the sorceress*, and the *seed of the adulterer;* as our Saviour calls the wicked Jews, *an adulterous generation*, (Matt. xvi. 4.) Adultery being taken in a spiritual sense for departing from God, and breaking that faith and allegiance which is due to him, and especially for renouncing him, and worshipping idols. (See the note on xlviii. 8.) Men are called in Scripture the *children* of those whose practices they imitate. (See John viii. 39. 41. 44.)

Ver. 4. *Against whom do you make a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue?*] Gestures of scorn and contempt, by which this idolatrous crew declared their hatred and despite to God's true servants.

Ver. 5. *Inflaming yourselves with idols.*] Idolatry, being spiritual adultery, is sometimes compared to the rage of lust. (See Ezek. xvi. xxiii.) It is true, too, that those shady groves dedicated to idol-worship, were a shelter for all manner of impurities. (See Hos. iv. 13, 14.)

Under every green tree.] See i. 29. Ezek. vi. 13.

Slaying the children in the valleys, under the clefts of the rocks.] Offering them in sacrifice unto Moloch; a sin severely prohibited, (Lev. xx. 2, &c.) and yet much practised in the times of the idolatrous kings of Judah. (See 2 Chron. xxviii. 3. 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Ezek. xvi. 20.) And the *valley of Hinnom* was chiefly noted for this inhuman practice. (See Jer. vii. 31.)

Ver. 6. *Among the smooth stones of the stream* [or, of the valley] *is thy portion,* &c.] The words may be understood of the altars built there, or of stone pillars, erected for idolatrous worship, which they used to anoint with oil, or pour out their offerings upon them, such as the text here mentions: from whence came that proverbial speech concerning a superstitious man, Πάντα λίθον λιπαρὸν προσκυνῶν, *A worshipper of every shining stone;* mentioned by Clem. Alexandrinus, (Strom. lib. vii.) The same learned writer supposeth these to be the most ancient monuments of Divine worship, and older than the use of statues and images; for we find that Jacob, in compliance with the then received practice, as it is likely, *set up a pillar at Beth-el, and poured oil upon it*, Gen. xxviii. 18. (See Clem. Alexandr. Strom. lib. i. p. 348. D. and Protrept. p. 29. D.)

Even to them hast thou poured out a drink-offering, thou hast offered a meat-offering.] To the sacrifices of beasts were generally added an offering made of flour mixed with oil, which our translators render a *meat-offering*, (but might better be translated a *bread-offering*, see the note on xliii. 23.) and a certain quantity of wine for a drink-offering. (See Numb. xv. 4, 5. Joel i. 9.)

Ver. 7. *Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice.*] Sacrificing upon the high places was an idolatrous practice often taken notice of, and consequently the *bed* here mentioned may most fitly be understood of such a bed as was used at feasts, and was prepared for the entertainment which was made with part of the oblation. (Compare Ezek. xxiii. 41. Amos ii. 8.) It was the custom of the Jews, as well as of the Romans, to lie upon beds or couches at their meals: (see 1 Sam. xxviii. 23. Amos vi. 4.) the same custom is mentioned Mark vii. 4. and in other places of the gospel, where the English reads, *he sat down* to meat, it is in the Greek, *he lay down*.

Ver. 8. *Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy memorial.*] Thou hast set up monuments of thy idolatry in every corner. The Hebrew verb *zakar*, with its derivatives, is used for any object, monument, or place of Divine worship, as Dr. Spencer hath observed, (de Legib. Hebr. lib. ii. cap. 5.)

[*Behind the doors and the posts.*] They that did not care their idolatry should be discovered, set up their idols in secret places. See Deut. xxvii. 15.]

For thou hast discovered thyself to another than me, and art gone up: thou hast enlarged thy bed, and made thee a covenant with them.] The prophet describes their idolatry under the metaphors of a harlot's being false to her husband's bed. (See ver. 3.) So he tells them, that they had committed spiritual adultery when they *went up* to the high places to sacrifice; (see ver. 7.) that they had multiplied their idolatries, as an unchaste woman does her lovers; that they had broken their covenant with God, whom they had acknowledged to be their Lord and husband, and made a new contract with idols to serve them. (See the note on xlviii. 8.) The word *bed* is of an ambiguous sense, and besides its proper signification, is taken for the furnishing out of a religious feast. (See the note upon ver. 7.)

Ver. 9. *And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes.*] The Jews are often upbraided

for making leagues with idolatrous princes, and courting their favour by presents: (see xxx. 6. Hos. vii. 11. xii. 1.) sometimes they courted the king of Assyria, at other times the king of Egypt, as it best served their interest.

And didst send thy messengers afar off, and didst debase thyself even to hell.] Thou didst court the favour of these foreign princes by thy ambassadors, in the most abject and submissive terms.

Ver. 10. *Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; yet saidst thou not, There is no hope.*] Thou hast tried all ways to save thyself from the evils that threaten thee: thou hast sought the friendship of foreign princes, and of their gods. (See 2 Chron. xxviii. 21. 23.) And though thou hast found thyself disappointed in all these projects; yet still thou conceivest hopes of receiving benefit from their friendship and alliance.

Thou hast found the life of thy hand; therefore thou wast not grieved.] Thou hast made a shift by these methods to support thyself for the present, therefore thou dost not feel any remorse for thy evil practices.

Ver. 11. *And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me?*] The fear of God's displeasure ought, in all reason, to outweigh all other fears and apprehensions, (see li. 12, 13.) and deter thee from breaking that faith and covenant whereby thou art engaged to him. (See ver. 3. 8.) Departing from God is called, in other places, *dealing treacherously with him*, (Jer. iii. 20. v. 11.)

Have I not held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?] The Bishops' Bible, published under queen Elizabeth, translates the place thus: *Is it not because I held my peace, and that of a long time, therefore thou fearest me not?* Sinners take encouragement to continue in sin, from God's patience and long-suffering. (See Psal. l. 21. Eccles. viii. 11.)

Ver. 12. *I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.*] I will shew thee thy deserts, and give thee a view of thy deeds, which then will appear quite of another sort, than what thy own self-conceit makes thee believe them to be; and see whether thou canst ground any hope or comfort in them.

Ver. 13. *When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee*, &c.] Let thy allies or associates help thee, whose assistance thou hast taken such pains to procure. (See ver. 9.) But they will not be able to deliver themselves. (Compare Jer. xxii. 22.)

But he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain.] Those that still depend upon me, and make use of none of these indirect means to preserve themselves, shall return from captivity, and enjoy their native country, and the opportunities of attending upon my service, either by themselves, or in their posterity. The prophets, after they have denounced God's threatenings against the Jews, do usually conclude with promises of receiving them again into favour upon their amendment; to shew that that nation have still a title to the promises made by God unto their fathers, whenever they will render themselves worthy to receive them. (See Rom. xi. 29.)

Ver. 14. *And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way*, &c.] Or, *It shall be said*, or, *orders shall be given:* for the verb active is here used impersonally, as is frequent in other places. (See the note on xliv. 18.) The words imply, that God will take care of facilitating the return of the faithful out of captivity, and will remove all impediments that may hinder their passage home, just as if harbingers were to go before them, and plane the roads for them. (See xl. 3. lxii. 10.)

Ver. 15. *I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit*, &c.] Though my throne be in heaven, yet I do not disdain to converse with the lowly and meek, and such as humble themselves under my hand, whom I will relieve, and comfort in their afflictions. (Compare lxvi. 2. John xiv. 23.)

Ver. 16. *For I will not contend for ever—for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.*] God hath compassion upon the work of his hands, and does not deal with men according to the rigour of justice, else they would quickly be brought to nothing. (See Psal. lxxviii. 39. ciii. 13, 14. Jer. x. 24.)

Ver. 17. *For the iniquity of his covetousness.*] See lvi. 11. lix. 4, &c.

I hid me, and was wroth.] God's withdrawing his mercy or protection, is expressed by *hiding his face*. (See viii. 17. Deut. xxxii. 20. Job xiii. 24. Lam. iii. 44.)

Ver. 18. *I have seen his ways, and will heal him.*] I have seen a reformation of his manners, and will remove my heavy judgments. (Compare lviii. 8. lix. 20. Jer. xxxi. 19, 20.)

I will restore comforts to him, and to his mourners.] To those that mourn over the desolations of God's church and people, and lament for the sins which brought down these sad calamities. (Compare lxi. 2. lxvi. 10. Jer. xiii. 17. Ezek. ix. 4.)

Ver. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips.*] I give new occasion for praise and thanksgiving, by the mercies I confer upon my people. (Compare Heb. xiii. 15.)

Peace, peace, to him that is far off, and to him that is near.] As God's promises of favour upon repentance, mentioned in the foregoing verses, have a great deal of the gospel-spirit in them: so the peace here proclaimed cannot be properly understood but of those terms of pardon which Christ hath offered both to Jew and gentile, as St. Paul expounds the text, Ephes. ii. 17.

Ver. 20, 21. *But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest*, &c.] The wicked cannot hope to enjoy either peace of mind, or outward prosperity; their inward guilt gives them perpetual disquiet, makes them restless and unsettled, and God will not vouchsafe them those outward blessings which he promises to such as are sincere converts. (See ver. 15. 18. and the note upon xlviii. 22.)

CHAP. LVIII.

ARGUMENT.

God having promised mercy to those that repent, and threatened judgments to the obstinate, in the fifteenth and following verses of the last chapter, the prophet here instructs them how they ought to perform the duties of repentance and humiliation upon the solemn times set apart for that purpose: such was the great day of expiation, (Lev. xvi. 29.) and other fasts appointed upon extraordinary occasions.

Ver. 1. *SHEW my people their transgressions.*] Especially the iniquities of their holy things, and the hypocrisy of their religious services. (See the following verses.)

Ver. 2. *Yet they seek me daily.*] To *seek* God is the same as to *draw nigh* unto him in his ordinances, such as are prayer, repentance, reading or hearing his word, or any other religious exercise, which may inform us of his will, and procure us his favour.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore have we afflicted our soul?*] By fasting and humiliation: a phrase used particularly of the great day of expiation, (Lev. xvi. 29. xxiii. 27.)

Behold, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, and you exact all your labours.] Or, as the words may more significantly be rendered, *You find wherewithal to please yourselves, and you are rigorous in grieving, or burdening others.* You gratify your own passions, especially your covetousness, and you oppress the poor, and so are defective in the duties both of justice and charity, as it follows.

Ver. 4. *Ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness.*] Your fasts have the appearance of devotion, but their true design is only to promote parties and contention, and to oppress the innocent: such was that fast we read of 1 Kings xxi. 10.

Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.] The prophet seems to have made this discourse upon some extraordinary day of humiliation, when it was usual for the prophets to make public exhortations to the people: (see Jer. xxxvi. 6.) and he tells them in this verse, that their fasts ought not to be like this which they now kept, which consisted only in being noisy in the worship of God, as if their outward vehemency would make their prayers reach to heaven; whereas it was sincere and inward piety alone which gave access to the throne of grace. Solemn humiliations are elsewhere expressed by *crying unto the Lord,* (Joel i. 14.) and *crying mightily unto God,* (Jonah iii. 8.)

Ver. 5. *Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?*] These were ceremonies which accompanied fasting. (See Matt. vi. 16. Jonah iii. 6.)

Ver. 6. *Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness,* &c.] It is a common phraseology of Scripture, to express the preference that is due to one thing before another, by terms which express the rejecting of that which is less worthy: so when God saith, *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice,* (Hos. vi. 6.) the meaning is, that mercy is to be preferred before sacrifice. Just thus the prophet speaks of fasting here, as a thing in itself of little or no use: (though elsewhere God expressly enjoins it, both in the Old and New Testament: see Lev. xxiii. 29. Matt. ix. 15.) to shew how much mercy is to be preferred, without which fasting will not avail any thing.

To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, &c.] These several expressions signify the forbearing severe exactions upon insolvent debtors, griping usury, (see Nehem. v.) and especially keeping servants in slavery, without allowing them the benefit of release at the end of seven years, which the law expressly required, (Exod. xxi. 2.) but the hard-hearted Jews would by no means comply with. (See Jer. xxxiv. 8, &c.)

Ver. 7. *And that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh.*] From those of thine own kindred, thy brethren, or countrymen. (See the notes on ix. 20. xlix. 26.)

Ver. 8. *Then shall thy light break forth as the morning.*] As the light breaks forth out of the darkness; so thy low and afflicted condition shall be suddenly changed into a happy and glorious one. (Compare ix. 1, 2. Job xi. 17. and here, ver. 10.)

And thine health shall spring forth speedily.] As calamities are often expressed by wounds or sickness: (see i. 7. Jer. xv. 18.) so the restoring any person or nation to their former prosperity, is expressed by healing them. (See xix. 22. lvii. 19. Jer. ix. 22.)

And thy righteousness shall go before thee: the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward.] God's favour protecting thine innocence, shall both guide and defend thee. (See the note on lii. 12.)

Ver. 9. *If thou take from the midst of thee the yoke.*] See ver. 6.

The putting forth of the finger.] The expression probably alludes to some gesture they used in their conversation, whether of mocking or threatening others: or it may signify any the least attempt towards the invading the right of others. (Compare lix. 3. see Psal. cxxv. 3.) *To put forth the hand unto iniquity,* is to offer at something which is not consistent with righteousness or justice.

And speaking vanity.] Vanity here means falsehood and deceit, which is too often used in men's dealings with each other: so the word is taken, lix. 4. where our translation renders it *iniquity.*

Ver. 10. *And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry.*] If thou extend thy compassions to him that is in need. A charitable temper is commonly expressed by a *large* soul, as a niggardly person is called a *narrow-souled* man, whose thoughts and affections are confined wholly to himself and his own concerns.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought,* &c.] *Drought* is put for any sort of want, because dry ground is barren, and destitute of all conveniences for the support of life. And therefore God's grace and blessing is often represented by the metaphor of watering dry ground with streams and rivers, as it follows here, *Thou shalt be like a watered garden,* &c. (Compare xxx. 24. xxxv. 6. xli. 18. xliv. 3.)

And make fat thy bones.] The phrase denotes a good habit of body: (compare Job xxi. 24. Prov. iii. 8.) as dry bones signify the state of death. (Ezek. xxxvii. 4.)

Ver. 12. *And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places.*] Shall rebuild those houses and cities which have of a long time laid ruinous (compare lxi. 4. and see the note there), and have been razed from the very foundations. (See Psal. cxxxvii. 7.)

The Restorer of paths to dwell in.] When the cities which have lain desolate are reinhabited, the roads that lead to them will be again frequented. (Compare Judg. v. 6. Psal. cvii. 7.)

Ver. 13. *If thou turn away thy foot from my sabbath,* &c.] If thou abstain from following thy own ways and pleasure on the sabbath, the day dedicated to my service. From hence it appears, that the precept of *keeping the sabbath-day holy,* did not enjoin merely a bodily rest; but implied likewise setting the day apart for the services of religion. Why the prophet lays such stress upon keeping the sabbath-day, see the note on lvi. 2. (Compare likewise Jer. xvii. 21, 22, &c.)

Ver. 14. *Then shall thou delight thyself in the Lord.*]

Thou shalt be such a proficient in godliness, that God's service shall become delightful unto thee; (see Psal. xxxiv. 8.) not burdensome, as it was to those Jews whom the prophet Amos reproves, (viii. 5.)

And I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth.] I will exalt thee above thy neighbouring nations, and give thee possession of their mountains, whither they use to betake themselves, as to an impregnable fortress. (Compare Deut. xxxii. 13. xxxiii. 29. Ezek. xxxvi. 2.)

And feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father.] Thou shalt enjoy the land I gave to him, and all those blessings which I promised to him and his posterity.

CHAP. LIX.

ARGUMENT.

The Jews seem to call God's power into question, because he did not deliver them from their enemies, as he had formerly done. In answer to which cavil, the prophet tells them, it is not defect of power in God, but their own sins which hinder him from shewing his former favours towards them. However, he promises that God will at length visit and redeem them, not out of any regard to their merits, but purely for the sake of his own honour, and to make good his former promises.

Ver. 1, 2. *BEHOLD, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor his ear heavy, that he cannot hear,* &c.] The reason of the continuance of your calamities is not want, either of power in God to deliver you, or of goodness to hear your prayers: but your own iniquities make him a stranger to you, interrupt the correspondence that used to be between God and his people, and stop the course of his blessings.

Ver. 4. *None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth,* &c.] There is no consideration had for justice, either in the public judicatories, or in men's private dealings. The arguments taken from right and wrong have no place in resolutions.

They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.] They form mischievous designs in their minds, which they afterward put in execution. (Compare Job xv. 35. Psal. vii. 14.)

Ver. 5. *They hatch cockatrice's eggs, and weave the spider's web,* &c.] The same sense couched in metaphorical terms; their villanous contrivances being compared, first to a cockatrice's eggs, which are rank poison in themselves, and when they are hatched produce a venomous serpent: and then to a spider's web, both for the artificial fineness of them, and because they are as so many nets to entrap others.

Ver. 6. *Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works.*] Though their contrivances are finely wrought, yet they are too thin and weak to be of any real advantage: (see Job viii. 14.) and their works can neither cover nor defend the actors.

Ver. 8. *They have made them crooked paths.*] They have turned aside out of the way of God's commandments, which are a plain and straight way. (Compare Psal. cxxv. 5. Prov. ii. 15. iv. 27.)

Ver. 9. *Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us.*] Because we have no regard to justice nor honesty, God will not plead our cause against our oppressors.

We wait for light, but behold obscurity.] We still hope for better times, but are under a cloud, in a dismal condition. Compare lviii. 8. where happiness is expressed by the *breaking forth of light.*

Ver. 10. *We grope for the wall like the blind.*] We are surrounded with darkness, and have no glimmering of light or comfort; so that we know not which way to turn ourselves. (Compare Deut. xxviii. 29.)

We are in desolate places as dead men.] We are banished from the world, as the dead that have no longer any portion in it: the same sense is thus expressed, Psal. xliv. 19. *Thou hast smitten us into the place of dragons,* (or serpents, that frequent solitary places: see the note upon xiii. 19.) *and covered us with the shadow of death.*

Ver. 11. *We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves.*] Sometimes we cry aloud; at other times we bemoan ourselves after a more silent manner. (Compare xxxviii. 14.)

Ver. 12. *For our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities we know them.*] Our sins are so public and notorious, that they fly in our faces, as it were, and our conscience gives full evidence against us.

Ver. 13. *In transgressing and lying against the Lord.*] See lvii. 11.

Ver. 14. *And justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter.*] Justice is described as if it were afraid to venture itself among such a crew of miscreants, where truth and integrity can find no admittance, or else are trampled under foot, and treated with the utmost contempt and insolence.

Ver. 16. *And he saw that there was no man, and he wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation to him.*] The words are parallel with those of Ezek. xxii. 30. "I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land—but I found none." To the same purpose God saith here, That it was just matter of wonder, that scarce a righteous man should be found that might intercede with him by his prayers for the averting the Divine judgments. (Compare lxiv. 7.) When things were come to this pass, he wrought for his own name's sake, and was resolved to exert his power for the delivering of his people, not out of any regard to their merits, but purely for his own honour, and to make good his former promises. (Compare lxiii. 5.)

And his righteousness, it sustained him.] His justice in protecting the innocent, and punishing the wicked, made him go through with the undertaking in spite of all opposition.

Ver. 17. *For he put on righteousness as a breast-plate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head.*] The prophet describes God as a warrior completely armed: the two most considerable pieces of armour are those which defend the vital parts, the head and breast. To these he compares God's faithfulness in performing his promises, and that salvation, or deliverance, which he will work for his people.

And he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.] His indignation against his enemies, and his zeal for his own honour, (see the note on ix. 7.) supplied the place of other accoutrements which belong to a soldier.

Ver. 18. *To the islands he will pay recompence.*] He will

severely punish the foreign nations which have been the oppressors of God's people; (see ver. 10, 11.) and make them feel the same miseries they have inflicted upon others. (See the note upon xxi. 2.) The Jews call all countries *islands* which they go to by sea. (See note on xi. 11.)

Ver. 19. *So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun.*] God's thus appearing in behalf of his people, shall make his name and power known far and near.

When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.] When nothing seems able to withstand the enemy, but he carries all before him, as the flood overturns a country, then God himself will give him a remarkable check, and visibly interpose in behalf of his oppressed people. (Compare xxxi. 9.)

Ver. 20. *And the Redeemer shall come to Zion.*] This and the following verse are expounded by St. Paul of that general restoration of the Jewish nation, which he assures us shall come to pass in the latter times. (See Rom. xi. 26, 27. compare Obad. ver. 17. 21.) And the words of the foregoing verse, which speak of God's name being feared from one end of the world to the other, do plainly look that way, as also the following chapter.

And unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob.] God's promises are only made to the penitent. (Compare lvii. 15. 18. lviii. 8. and see the notes upon xxvii. 12. xlviii. 22. liv. 13.)

Ver. 21. *My Spirit which is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth,* &c.] This must be understood of Christ, the great prophet and oracle of the church, who came from heaven to declare unto us the whole counsel of God, and whom we are to hear and obey in all things. (Compare li. 16. lxi. 1.) The words contain a promise to the church, his spiritual children, (compare viii. 18.) of being *guided by God's Spirit into all truth,* and that this Spirit shall *continue with them for ever.* Which promise shall receive its utmost completion, when God's *people shall be all righteous,* and *shall be taught of him.* (See liv. 13. lx. 21.)

CHAP. LX.

ARGUMENT.

We may suppose the ground-work of the prophecies, contained in this and the two following chapters, to be the Jews' restoration from captivity; but any discerning reader may easily be satisfied, that the prophet takes occasion from thence to describe the glories of Christ's kingdom, which began upon the first publication of the gospel, but will not be completed till the fulness of the Jews and gentiles are come into the church; which is the general subject of the prophecies which follow to the end of the book. The reasons Mr. White hath advanced against this interpretation, shall be considered under each verse of this chapter, from whence he takes them.

Ver. 1. *ARISE, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.*] It is a usual metaphor to describe happiness by light, and affliction by darkness. So here Jerusalem is bid to *arise* from the ground or the dust, where her afflictions had laid her low, and like the morning star, or sun, to give light to all about her, and communicate to others part of that honour and lustre which she hath received from God, the true *Sun of righteousness.* (Compare Mal. iv. 2.)

Ver. 2, 3. *For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth —but the Lord shall arise upon thee. And the gentiles shall come to thy light.*] When ignorance, like a thick darkness, overspreads the world, then shall the light of God's truth, like the *day-spring from on high,* diffuse itself over the earth, and excite the gentiles to seek instruction from the church as from an oracle. (Compare ii. 3.)

Ver. 3. *And kings to the brightness of thy rising.*] The graces and glories of the church shall attract the eyes of kings, and make them willing to become her proselytes. (Compare xlix. 23.)

Ver. 4. *All they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.*] The prophet describes the fulness of the church by the gentiles coming into it, and bringing the dispersed remainder of the Jews along with them, (see the note on xi. 12.) whom they are said to take the same care of in their journey as a nurse does of a sucking child. For to that sense, I think, the last words of the verse should be rendered, *And thy daughters shall be nursed at their side.* (Compare xlix. 22. Deut. i. 31.)

Ver. 5. *Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thy heart shall fear, and be enlarged.*] Thy joy shall break out upon thee like an overflowing river; and the sudden transports of it shall produce an astonishment like that which ariseth from the impressions of fear; for which reason the effects of one passion are ascribed to the other: the prophet Jeremiah useth the same metaphor, (xxxiii. 9.) "They shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and all the prosperity that I procure unto it." The same figure occurs in Lucretius, lib. ii. init.

——"Ita me quædam divina voluptas
Inficit, atque horror."——

Because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee.] A multitude of people is compared to many waters, xvii. 12. Rev. xvii. 15. Or the words may be understood of the multitude of those that came from the sea, as if the sea had transported all its passengers hither. (See ver. 9.) Others explain it of the riches which are brought by sea, and dedicated to God's service; (see ver. 6.) in which sense the word *hamon* is used, Eccles. v. 10. and so the Septuagint here understand it. The following words explain this of the fulness of the gentiles coming into the church.

The forces of the gentiles shall come unto thee.] Others render it, *The riches of the gentiles.* (See ver. 6. 16. and lxi. 6.)

Ver. 6. *The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come.*] The Arabians had great stocks of camels, and such-like beasts of burden. (See Judg. vi. 5. vii. 12.) Ephah was a son of Midian; (see Gen. xxv. 4.) from whom part of that country had its name.

They shall bring gold and incense.] The conversion of heathen nations is elsewhere expressed by their bringing offerings to God, and dedicating part of their wealth to his service. (See xviii. 7. xxiii. 18.) This may be farther verified in that glorious state of the church, described Rev. xxi. 24. 26.

Ver. 7. *All the flocks of Kedar shall come unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee.*] Kedar and Nebaioth were two sons of Ishmael, who settled themselves in Arabia. (See Gen. xxv. 13.) Their substance did chiefly consist in their cattle, with which they travelled from one place to another, according as they could find pasture. (See Judg. vi. 5. and the note upon xxi. 13.)

They shall come up with acceptance on mine altar.] This may in some measure be understood of the offerings brought out of the neighbouring countries to the second temple. (See the note on xlv. 14.) But the whole scope of the chapter plainly regards the coming of the gentiles into the church, and dedicating part of their substance to the service of God: nor is this expression *a demonstration to the contrary*, as Mr. White too confidently pronounces, in as much as nothing is more usual than for the prophets to describe the state of the Christian church, by representations taken from the Jewish temple and service. (See the notes on xix. 19. lvi. 8. lxvi. 23.)

Ver. 8. *Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows?*] A flock of birds resembles a dark cloud: so the prophet here compares the multitudes of people that flock to the church, to a flock of pigeons that fly to their dove-houses.

Ver. 9. *Surely the isles shall wait for me.*] Compare xlii. 4. li. 5. The expression denotes their readiness to embrace the gospel whenever the means of grace are offered to them. So Christ is said to be *the Desire of all nations*, Hag. ii. 7. as he that alone could answer all their wishes and expectations.

And the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them.] Ships of Tarshish mean any ships of trade or commerce. (See the note on ii. 16.) These, the text saith, shall be principally subservient to God's design in bringing the sons of Zion (which, taken in a mystical sense, is the mother of all believers, Gal. iv. 26.) from distant countries, who will bring their free-will-offerings and religious acknowledgments along with them. (See ver. 6.) The words are an allusion to the law which enjoined that *none should appear empty before the Lord*, at the times of the solemn festivals, (Deut. xvi. 16.) To which custom of going up to Jerusalem at those solemn times, the expressions, so often found in the prophets, allude, of the *gentiles seeking after the Lord*, of their *going up to Jerusalem*, and the like. (See the note on ii. 3.) So that it is a great mistake in Mr. White, to conclude from such-like expressions in this chapter, that the prophet's words cannot be expounded of the gentiles coming into the church.

Unto the name of the Lord thy God.] God chose the temple in Jerusalem *to place his name there;* (1 Kings viii. 29.) and this temple was a type of the Christian church. (See Ezek. xlviii. 35. 2 Cor. vi. 16. 2 Thess. ii. 4.)

Ver. 10. *And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister to thee.*] This may be, in some measure, fulfilled in the assistance which Cyrus and his successors gave to the restoring and re-edifying of the city and temple. (See note on xlv. 14.) But the words received a farther accomplishment in the honours which the gentiles (commonly called *strangers* by the Jews, see lvi. 3.) and their kings paid to the church of Christ, (compare xlix. 23. Zech. vi. 15.) and may yet receive a farther accomplishment. (See Rev. xxi. 24.)

For in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.] I will abundantly recompense thee for the afflictions which I have brought upon thee. (Compare liv. 7, 8.)

Ver. 11. *Therefore thy gates shall be open continually,* &c.] It is a sign of a settled peace, and that there is no fear of an enemy, when the gates of a city stand always open. (Compare Ezek. xxxviii. 11.) So the poet describes a profound peace, by *apertis otia portis.* The phrase signifies withal, that there shall be such a confluence of people to the church, and even of the highest rank and dignity, that the gates must continually stand open to give them admittance.

Ver. 12. *For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish.*] This must relate to the *latter days*, as the Scripture calls them, when the church shall become *a great mountain, and break in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth*, according to Daniel's prophecy, (Dan. ii. 35. 44.) and then the faithful shall *have power over the nations, and rule* the refractory *with a rod of iron*, as it is foretold Rev. ii. 26, 27.

Ver. 13. *The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee,* &c.] Lebanon was reckoned one of the pleasantest parts of Judea: (see xxxiii. 9. xxxv. 2.) and was particularly beautiful for its tall cedars. (See xxxvii. 24.) So the expression denotes, that the cedars, and whatever other trees grow in Lebanon, shall contribute to the re-edifying and beautifying God's temple, which is called here the *place of God's feet*, as the ark is elsewhere called his *footstool*, because the Divine Schechinah, or glory, sat between the two cherubims, which were placed over the ark. (See Psal. cxxxii. 7.) This implies, in the spiritual sense, every thing that tends to the adorning and perfecting the church, which is called the *house* and *building* of God. (See 1 Tim. iii. 15. 1 Cor. iii. 9. Ephes. ii. 20. and compare Zech. vi. 12, 13.)

Ver. 14. *The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee.*] They shall acknowledge the errors of their fathers, and instead of being persecutors, shall become proselytes.

And they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet.] See the note on xlix. 23. and compare Rev. iii. 9.

And they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.] Mr. White is pleased to say, in his argument upon this chapter, that the *church cannot, with any propriety of speech, be called the city of the Lord*, or *the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.* This must seem a strange assertion to any one that hath read the New Testament, where the church, as consisting of all its members both militant and triumphant, and united together under God and Christ, is expressly called *Mount Zion, the city of the living God, and the heavenly Jerusalem;* of which the city on earth called by that name was a figure, Heb. xii. 22. *The Lamb, i. e.* Christ, is said to *stand upon Mount Zion*, Rev. xiv. 1. Christ is called the *corner-stone placed in Zion*, whereon the church is built and supported, 1 Pet. ii. 6. and he is called the *Deliverer*, or Redeemer, *that shall come out of Zion*, Rom. xi. 26.

Ver. 15. *Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency,* &c.] This may in the first sense be fitly applied to Jerusalem, which, during the captivity, lay desolate, and

was the subject of scorn and reproach to all her neighbours: (see Lam. ii. 15.) but afterward recovered some degree of her ancient glory. And may be applied to the church and nation of the Jews, whenever God shall please to restore them, after their having been so long rejected by him. (Compare lxi. 4. 7.) But some of the expressions used in this verse, as well as the context, do plainly look further; and import, that although the true professors of Christianity, in several ages and places, have been the subject of men's scorn and contempt; (see Matt. x. 22. Luke vi. 22.) and the church itself is to continue for some ages in a mournful and *sackcloth* condition: (see Rev. xi. 3.) yet it shall at last surmount all these difficulties, and be placed out of the reach of the malice of its enemies.

Ver. 16. *Thou shalt also suck the milk of the gentiles, and shalt suck the breasts of kings.*] Ye shall be nourished with their riches, as a child is with the breast. (See ver. 6. xlix. 23. lxi. 6. lxvi. 12.)

Ver. 17. *For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver.*] A description of *golden days*, as we commonly call them: and as it is said of Solomon's times, that gold and silver were so plenty, there was no use made of inferior metals; (1 Kings x. 21. 27.) in pursuance of the same metaphor, the New Jerusalem is described as made of *pure gold*, (Rev. xxi. 18.)

I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.] *Peace* here is put for *men of peace*, as the word is used Psal. cxx. 7. and *righteousness*, for *righteous men*, as our translators render the word, xli. 2. The prophet says, that, in those happy days he hath been describing, the very officers of the public revenues, and collectors of the taxes, shall be lovers of peace, and observers of justice: a sort of men generally blamed for being guilty of exaction and oppression: (see Luke iii. 13.) the same sense is more plainly expressed in the following words.

Ver. 18. *Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders.*] Thou shalt be secure from violence and injustice at home, and from invasion or war from abroad.

But thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.] Or, as the sense might more plainly be expressed, *Thou shalt call Salvation thy walls, and Praise thy gates:* God's protection and salvation shall be unto thee instead of walls and bulwarks, and the praises which thou continually offerest up to him for his mercies, shall supply the room of gates and bars. (Compare xxvi. 1. Psal. xxxii. 7.)

Ver. 19. *The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee,* &c.] God's favour and the light of his countenance shall give thee greater comfort and lustre, than the light of the sun and moon doth to the world: which promise will be fully verified in the state of the New Jerusalem, where there will be no vicissitude of day and night, for *the glory of God, and of the Lamb, are the light thereof,* (Rev. xxi. 23. xxii. 6.)

Ver. 20. *Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself.*] Thou shalt see no more sorrow nor affliction, which are often expressed by darkness, and the sun and moon's withdrawing themselves. (See the notes upon xiii. 10.)

Ver. 21. *Thy people also shall be all righteous.*] Compare i. 26. This character can belong only to the New Jerusalem. (See Rev. xxi. 27.) For in the present state of the church, the chaff and tares will always be mixed with the wheat, till Christ come to part them. (See Matt. iii. 10. xiii. 30.)

They shall inherit the land for ever.] This must be meant of the blessed millenium, when Christ and his saints shall reign upon earth. (See Matt. v. 5. Rev. v. 10. xx. 4. xxi. 3, 4. 7.)

The branch of my planting, the work of my hands.] God's elect, those whom he hath called by an extraordinary measure of grace, and appointed to be *heirs of salvation*, are styled *his own plantation*, and *the work of his hands:* regeneration being frequently called a new creation, because men's justification and salvation is wholly owing to God's grace and goodness. (See xxix. 23. xlv. 11. Matt. xv. 13. John xv. 2. Ephes. ii. 10.)

Ver. 22. *A little one shall become a thousand,* &c.] This glorious kingdom of Christ shall take its rise from small beginnings: so Daniel describes Christ's kingdom as a *stone*, which in process of time became *a great mountain; and filled the whole earth,* (Dan. ii. 35.) which will be verified in God's due time.

CHAP. LXI.

ARGUMENT.

The same subject is still prosecuted, and Christ is introduced declaring his commission, full of grace and comfort to his church, with particular promises of grace to the Jewish church, whom he promises to receive into favour again, after she had been a long time rejected and forsaken; who thereupon is represented as in a transport of joy and thankfulness.

Ver. 1. *THE Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me.*] *Anointing* denotes some extraordinary gift or grace bestowed upon men by God, because the three great offices of *king*, *priest*, and *prophet*, were conferred by this ceremony. The descent of the Holy Ghost upon the human nature of our Saviour, supplied this external unction, (see Acts x. 38.) and qualified him for the office of a prophet beyond all others that were before him, because he had the Spirit given to him *without measure*, (John iii. 34.) and in this respect was *anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows.* (See the note upon xi. 2.)

We have Christ's own authority for applying this text to himself, (Luke iv. 18.)

To preach good tidings to the meek.] Or, *To preach the gospel to the poor*, as the words are rendered by the Septuagint, whom the evangelists follow, (Luke iv. 18. Matt. xi. 5.) The humble and poor in spirit have a peculiar title to the privileges of the gospel. (See the notes on xi. 4. xxvi. 6.) And persons of a mean condition, such whose affections were not too much set upon the glories of the world, were those who most readily embraced it, when it was first preached. (See 1 Cor. i. 26. 27. Jam. ii. 5.)

He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted.] To give ease to those that are grieved and wearied with the burden of their sins: a metaphor taken from surgeons binding up wounds. (See i. 6.)

To proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of

the prison to them that are bound.] See the notes upon xlii. 7. The Septuagint render the latter part of the sentence, *recovering of sight to the blind,* and so St. Luke reads; which interpretation several learned men have shewed to be very agreeable to the original.

Ver. 2. *To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*] In allusion to the proclaiming the year of jubilee, which was done by sound of trumpet, (Lev. xxv. 9.) when there was a general release of all manner of servitude, debts, and obligations; (Jer. xxxiv. 8.) a type of that freedom which Christ hath purchased for us.

And the day of vengeance of our God.] Mr. White observes, that our Saviour takes no notice of this passage in his recital of this prophecy, (Luke iv. 18.) from whence he concludes, that *he is no way concerned in it:* it was not, indeed, the business of Christ's first coming, to take vengeance of his enemies, and for that reason he might not mention it at his first entrance into his office; though we find, in several of his discourses, he threatened the Jews with destruction for their rejecting him; (see Matt. xxi. 43, 44. xxii. 7. xxiii. 36.) and he calls the destruction of Jerusalem *the days of vengeance,* (Luke xxi. 22.) the very expression of the text; which does most properly relate to his second coming, when he will not only reward his servants, but justify their innocence, by the terrible judgments he will inflict upon his and their enemies. (Compare xxxiv. 8. lxiii. 4. lxvi. 14. Deut. xxxii. 36. 43. Jer. li. 9, 10. Mal. iv. 3. Luke xix. 27. 2 Thess. i. 6, 7.)

To comfort those that mourn in Zion.] That mourn for their own iniquities, and for the public sins and calamities. (See the notes on lvii. 18.) In like manner, our Saviour's sermon upon the mount begins with promising *comfort* to those that *mourn,* (Matt. v. 4.)

Ver. 3. *To appoint* [comfort] *to them that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.*] A description of the change that should be in their outward habit and appearance, in proportion to the change of their circumstances. Whereas, whilst they were mourners, they used to put ashes on their heads; (see 2 Sam. xiii. 19. Lam. ii. 10.) now they should wear a crown or diadem (for the word *pear* signifies an ornament proper for the head, Ezek. xxiv. 17.) in token of their joy. (See the note on xxxv. 10.) They should likewise anoint themselves, which they abstained from in times of mourning; (see Dan. x. 3. Matt. vi. 17.) and change their mourning garments for festival ones. (See Zech. iii. 3—5. Luke xv. 22.)

That they might be called Trees of righteousness.] The righteous are elsewhere resembled to fruitful and flourishing trees. (See Psal. i. 3. xcii. 12.)

The planting of the Lord.] See lx. 21.

Ver. 4. *And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations,* &c.] We may interpret this to a spiritual sense, of repairing what is decayed by ignorance and corruption: (see the notes upon xlix. 8.) but if we suppose the Jews, after their conversion, to return into their own land, an opinion countenanced by several prophecies of the Old Testament, (see the notes upon xi. 11.) we may fitly explain this text of their re-edifying their ancient habitations. (Compare Ezek. xxxvi. 33—36.) And this interpretation agrees very well with the following words, *the desolations of many generations.*

Ver. 5. *And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your ploughmen, and your vine-dressers.*] By strangers and aliens may be meant those gentiles who are *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,* and *strangers from the covenants of promise,* as St. Paul calls them, Eph. ii. 12. (Compare lxii. 8.) And the promise of *having power over the nations,* is not only made to Christ, but likewise to his faithful servants. (See Rev. ii. 26, 27. and the note upon xiv. 2.)

Ver. 6. *But ye shall be named Priests of the Lord,* &c.] If we suppose these words contain a peculiar promise to the Jews, after their conversion, they import, that God will restore to them that honourable title of being *a kingdom of priests,* formerly given to them, (Exod. xix. 6.) and admit them to a near attendance upon himself: accordingly some learned men suppose the Jewish church represented in the Revelation, by the *four-and-twenty elders* (alluding to the *four-and-twenty courses* of the priests), *clothed in white raiment* (as priests), *and having on their heads crowns of gold,* as advanced to a regal dignity: (Rev. iv. 8.) but this privilege of being *priests to God,* does in some degree belong to all Christians; (see 1 Pet. ii. 5.) especially when they shall come to be wholly freed from the bondage of sin, and continually employed in God's service. (See Rev. v. 10. xx. 6.)

And in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.] All that cost and riches, which the gentile converts shall dedicate to the service of God, shall redound to your honour, and the glory of that religion which you teach and profess. (Compare lx. 5, 6. 16. lxvi. 12. Rev. xxi. 24.)

But I must not conceal an ingenious exposition of these two verses, communicated to me by a learned friend, to this purpose. First of all (so he interprets *And* in the beginning of the fifth verse), the gentiles shall minister, and feed the flock, *i. e.* the church; whose office is likewise expressed here, by their being *ploughmen* and *vine-dressers;* as the church is called God's *vineyard,* (v. 7.) and believers, *his husbandry,* or *tillage,* (1 Cor. iii. 9.) Afterward, (so he explains the copulative particle *vau* at the beginning of the sixth verse; in which sense it is sometimes taken; see 2 Kings iv. 35. Psal. xci. 16.) you Jews shall be converted and become ministers of the church, and the gentiles shall make a plentiful provision for you, as the priests under the law were maintained by the sacrifices and offerings which were brought to the temple: and yourselves having been made partakers of that grace and knowledge, for which the gentiles so much value themselves, you shall become the glorious instruments of converting the remainder of them, who as yet continue in unbelief. (See lxvi. 19, 20.)

Ver. 7. *For your shame ye shall have double.*] An allusion to God's blessing Job after his afflictions, when *he gave him double to what he had before,* (Job xlii. 10. compare Zech. ix. 12.) Hereby ye shall have abundant recompence for the shame and reproach ye underwent during your long rejection. (See liv. 4.)

Therefore in their land shall they possess the double.] This double honour and reward mentioned in the foregoing sentence. As the first-born had a double share in his father's estate, (Deut. xxi. 17.) so the Jews, when converted to the Christian faith, shall recover their birthright which they had forfeited by their infidelity, as Esau did, and be esteemed the *first-born,* or elder brethren, in the church of

God. Accordingly some learned men, who expound the *elders* in the Revelation of the Jewish believers, (see the note upon ver. 6.) observe, that in those visions of the church which relate to the times antecedent to the general conversion of the Jews, the *elders* are placed after the *four living creatures*, as having lost their dignity and precedency. (See Rev. v. 8. 11. xiv. 3.)

Some translate the whole verse thus, *Instead of your double* (or reiterated) *shame and confusion, they shall rejoice in their portion; therefore they shall possess their land a second time* (so the Septuagint render the words), *everlasting joy shall be unto them; i. e.* they shall no more be driven out of it. (Compare lx. 15.)

Ver. 8. *For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt-offering.*] God saith at the end of the verse, that he *will make an everlasting covenant with them*, which must be understood of the gospel. (See lv. 3.) To the tenor of that covenant, consisting of inward righteousness, (see Jer. xxxi. 33.) he opposes that outward ceremonial service prescribed by the former covenant, which very often had no inward devotion accompanying it. Nay, some were so presumptuous, as to think they could propitiate God Almighty, by offering to him part of what they had got by deceit and violence.

And I will direct their work in truth.] I will give them grace to serve me in spirit and in truth; or, as the words may be translated, *I will give them their reward faithfully.* The Hebrew word *penulah* signifying both *work* and *reward.* (See xl. 10. lxii. 11.)

Ver. 9. *And their seed shall be known among the gentiles.*] They shall be illustrious or remarkable among the gentile Christians; (so the word *known* is used, Psal. lxxvii. 1. Prov. xxxi. 23.) they shall be acknowledged for God's ancient people, to whom all the promises of the gospel were made, and to whom they principally belong; (see Acts iii. 26. xiii. 46.) they shall be esteemed as the first-born, or the elder brethren in the church; and this shall make them amends for the *shame* they underwent before. (See ver. 7. and the note there.)

Ver. 10. *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord—for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments,* &c.] The Jewish church is here introduced as speaking (see note upon lxiii. 1.) and returning her thanks to God for these great favours, that he hath advanced her and her children to such honour after their dispersion, and thereby hath made her glorious in the eyes of the world, (ver. 9. compare xlix. 18.) and hath given her occasion of perpetual joy and triumph, which useth to be expressed by putting on the richest and costliest garments. (See ver. 3.) This seems to relate to the times of the marriage of the Messiah with the Jewish synagogue, of which their cabalistical writers speak so much (see Bishop Patrick's Preface to his exposition on the Canticles): or rather, to his marriage with the whole church, both of Jews and gentiles. (See Rev. xix. 7.) *The garments of salvation*, and the *robe of righteousness*, allude to the high-priest's robes, which were made for *glory and beauty*, Exod. xxviii. 2. (Compare Psal. cxxxii. 9. 16.) *The robe of righteousness* is an allusion to the *linen ephod*, an emblem of righteousness and holiness; (see Rev. xix. 8.) as also of joy and gladness: (see Eccles. ix. 8.) which is likewise denoted by the *garments of salvation*, i. e. such festival attire as should testify their joy in God's salvation. This habit very fitly belongs to those who are named to be *priests of the Lord*, (ver. 6.) and the word which our translation renders *decked himself*, properly signifies a priest's habiting himself with the ornaments proper to his office.

And as a bride adorneth herself with jewels.] So the New Jerusalem is described as *a bride adorned for her husband*, Rev. xxi. 2. (Compare lxii. 4, 5.)

Ver. 11. *For as the earth bringeth forth her bud—so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations.*] As surely as the earth in due time brings forth its plants, and a garden its seeds, so surely will God make the salvation of the Jewish church and people remarkable before all the world, and make it matter of *praise in the earth*, (lxii. 7.) *Righteousness* is sometimes equivalent to happiness, or salvation: (see note on lxii. 1.) or if we take it in the common sense of the word, to which the *robe of righteousness*, mentioned in the foregoing verse, does very well agree, then the sense is, that when holiness and goodness flourish, this redounds to the praise and honour of God, who will then be glorified by all men.

CHAP. LXII.

ARGUMENT.

The same subject is still continued, and the former promises of restoring the Jewish church and nation are again confirmed by a solemn oath of God's, (ver. 8.) which to me is an evident proof, that this prophecy relates to a scene of affairs that is still future.

Ver. 1. *FOR Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest.*] The prophet speaks here in the person of the Messias, as he did at the beginning of the last chapter, and saith that he will never cease interceding with God, till the redemption of Israel be brought to pass. (Compare ver. 6, 7. of this chapter.)

Ibid. and Ver. 2. *Until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the gentiles shall see thy righteousness,* &c.] Till the glory and salvation, with which God will honour it, be illustrious in the eyes of all the world. (Compare lx. 1—3.) *Righteousness* is elsewhere joined with *salvation*, as equivalent to it: (see xlvi. 13. lxi. 10.) as it is joined with *glory*, in the following verse, to the same sense. (See likewise xlviii. 18. liv. 17.)

And thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.] That of *Hephzi-bah*, mentioned ver. 4. (Compare likewise lxv. 15.) Giving new names to persons, denotes the altering their state and condition. (See Gen. xxxii. 28. Hos. i. 6. 9. ii. 1.)

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord,* &c.] Or rather, *By the hand* (or power) *of the Lord.* A crown being the most glorious part of royal attire, whatever is most precious, honourable, or ornamental, is signified by that name. (See Job xxxi. 36. Zech. ix. 16. 1 Thess. ii. 19.) Or the phrase may mean, that God will make Jerusalem his bride. (See the following verse, and lxi. 10.) For it was the custom to put a crown upon the head of the bride and bridegroom at the time of their marriage. (See Cantic. iii. 11. Ezek. xvi. 8. 12.)

Ver. 4. *Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah,* &c.] The covenant-relation between God and his people, is represented by his being their husband. (See liv. 5. Jer. iii. 15.) This title includes both love and protection: but when God forsook them, and delivered them up for a prey to their enemies, this was a sort of divorcing himself from them, which is implied in the word *Azubah, Forsaken.* (See xlix. 14. liv. 6.) And when the land lay desolate, it was in a state of widowhood. (See liv. 1.) But now God saith, he will renew his former love towards them, and *take delight in them, as a bridegroom doth in his bride,* (ver. 5.) *Their land shall be married* to him again, and no longer in a state of widowhood and desolation, but inhabited and replenished with people; for so the Septuagint translate the word *tibbael.* (See the following verse.)

Ver. 5. *For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee.*] The word *marry* is not to be taken strictly, for it would be improper to say, that children married their mother; but as it implies living with their mother, now she is owned by her husband: her former desolations implying both loss of children and widowhood. (See xlvii. 9. xlix. 21.)

Ver. 6. *I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night.*] The word *shomerim* doth properly signify those priests and Levites who kept watch day and night about the temple; and some of them at certain hours sung psalms of prayer and praise. (See 1 Chron. ix. 27. 33. xxiii. 32. 2 Chron. viii. 14. xiii. 11. Psal. cxxxiv. 2.) This their office or charge is called *mishmereth* in the Hebrew, a word derived from the same root with *shomerim.* To these the prophet compares those pious persons, who will in all ages be importunate with God for completing this blessing.

Ibid. and Ver. 7. *Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence,* &c.] The marginal reading is better, *Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence:* the expression alludes to the same office of the priests and Levites, who by their daily prayers and intercessions put God in mind of the state of the church, and continually importuned him for the welfare thereof. The Scripture elsewhere speaks of God after the manner of men, as one that might be overcome by importunity. (See Luke xi. 8, 9. xviii. 5—7.)

Ver. 8. *The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies,* &c.] Lifting up the hand was a ceremony used in swearing. (See Deut. xxxii. 40. Ezek. xx. 5. 15.) And here God swears by that very hand which uses to be held up at the taking of an oath, *i. e.* by his power and might, as it follows, that the enemies of his people should never interrupt that peace and plenty which he gives them, but they should quietly enjoy his blessings with hearts full of thankfulness for them. This must relate to some happier condition than the Jews enjoyed after their return from captivity, when their enemies frequently invaded them, and at last the Romans destroyed both their temple and nation. And the oath which ushers in this promise, proves that it will be exactly and punctually performed.

Ver. 9. *But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.*] The expressions allude to the ordinances of the law, which required the people to spend their first-fruits, and other hallowed things, at the temple, in a thankful acknowledgment to God for his blessings. (See Deut. xii. 11, 12. xiv. 23. 26.)

Ver. 10. *Go through the gates; prepare you the way of the people,* &c.] The prophet relying upon God's oath, (ver. 8.) speaks of the general restoration of the Jews, as if it were actually a doing; and exhorts those nations, through whose territories they were to pass in their return homeward, to go out of their cities and repair the roads, raising causeways in the lower grounds, and levelling the rough and stony places. (Compare xl. 3. lvii. 14.) By this figure the prophet signifies a removal of all obstacles which might hinder their return.

Lift up a standard for the people.] To gather the dispersed. (See xi. 12.)

Ver. 11. *Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world.*] He hath caused the great trumpet to sound, as a signal, to gather the dispersed Jews together; (see the notes upon xxvii. 13.) or he hath sent preachers of the gospel to all parts of the world, in order to the conversion of the Jews.

Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh, &c.] Thy Saviour cometh. (Compare xl. 9, 10. Zech. ix. 9. Rev. xxii. 12.)

Ver. 12. *And they shall call them, The holy people.*] As being taken into covenant again. (See the note upon ver. 4.)

And thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.] Or rather, *Sought to,* a city had in great request. (Compare ver. 4. and Jer. xxx. 17.)

CHAP. LXIII.

ARGUMENT.

The three last chapters contained a description of the glorious state of the church in the latter days, when it should be enlarged by the conversion of the Jews, and the fulness of the gentiles. Now the prophet comes to describe the *day of vengeance,* mentioned lxi. 2. The beginning of the chapter is by way of dialogue between the *prophet,* or *the church,* and *Christ;* where the latter is described as returning in triumph from the slaughter of his enemies; which seems to be much the same scene which was represented chap. xxxiv. (See likewise Joel iii. 12—14.) Then follow, from the seventh verse of this chapter to the end of the sixty-fourth, devout meditations upon God's former mercies to his people, mixed with expostulations for his forsaking them, and casting them off, and humble acknowledgments of their sins, which deserved such treatment.

Ver. 1. *WHO is this that cometh from Edom, with died garments from Bozrah?*] The Idumeans joined with the enemies of the Jews, in bringing on the destruction of Jerusalem at the time of the captivity; for which they are severely reproved by the prophets, and threatened with utter excision: (see Psal. cxxxvii. 7. Obad. ver. 10, &c. Ezek. xxv. 12.) which accordingly came to pass. (See Mal. i. 3.) But I have already observed, in the note upon xi. 14. that it is usual for the prophets to denote the enemies of the church, in general, by the name of some country, which was remarkable for its hatred towards the Jewish nation, as the Idumeans were.

And the prophet seems to take a hint from some remarkable calamity that befel the Edomites, to describe some more general judgment that should be inflicted upon the enemies of God's church and truth. Compare chap. xxxiv. where I observed upon the fifth and sixth verses, that the words *Edom* and *Bozrah* may be taken in an appellative sense, so as to denote, in general, a field of blood, or place of slaughter. The word *Edom* signifies originally *red as blood*, and *Bozrah* denotes *a vintage*, which, in the prophetical idiom, imports God's vengeance upon the wicked. (See Lam. i. 15. Joel iii. 13. Rev. xiv. 19. xix. 15.) The prophets often apply the names of places to the subject-matter they are treating of: so, Joel iii. 15. the nations are summoned to the *valley of Jehoshaphat*, because the word *Jehoshaphat* signifies *God's judgment*. Again, Hos. i. 5. 11. *the valley of Jezreel*, and *the day of Jezreel*, are an allusion to the etymology of the word *Jezreel*, which signifies *the arm of God*, or *the seed of God*. (See likewise Micah i. 10. 14. and lxv. 11, 12. of this prophecy.)

This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?] Like a general marching in triumph at the head of his army, and carrying tokens of victory upon his raiment. Some explain the word *tzoeh*, in an active sense, as implying the driving his enemies before him, and bearing down all opposition.

I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.] Christ's answer to the foregoing question: I am come now to fulfil all my promises, and deliver you from your enemies. Several parts of the prophetic books are written in the form of a dramatic poem, where several persons are introduced, speaking by turns, and answering one another: so, for example, chap. lxi. Christ is introduced at the beginning of the chapter, making gracious promises to the church, to which the church answers with suitable returns of joy and thankfulness, (ver. 10.) So the Song of Solomon is a Divine dialogue between the *bridegroom*, the *spouse*, and a *chorus of virgins;* and in the Revelation, Christ is often introduced as speaking in that sacred drama. This observation will sometimes account for the altering of the prophet's style from the first to the second or third person.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel?*] The dialogue is still continued, and this question is proposed by the church, or the prophet in her name. Christ, in like manner, is described *as clothed in a garment dipped in blood*, (Rev. xix. 13.)

Ver. 3. *I have trodden the wine-press alone.*] This answer of Christ's exactly agrees with what is said of him in the same chapter of the Revelation, ver. 15. that *he treads the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.* (See the note upon ver. 1.)

And of the people there was none with me.] See the note upon ver. 5.

Ver. 4. *For the day of vengeance is in my heart.*] See the notes upon xxxiv. 8. lxi. 2.

Ver. 5. *And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold.*] Things were come to that extremity, that there was no appearance of succour by any human means. Those who, by their office and character, ought to have stood up in defence of oppressed truth and innocence, even they, contrary to what might have been justly expected, betrayed so good a cause, or had not the courage to defend it. So that it was time for God to interpose, and to appear in defence of his own honour and people. (Compare lix. 16.)

Therefore my own arm brought salvation to me; and my fury, it upheld me.] I was resolved to vindicate my own honour, and my zeal and concern for my people made me go through with the undertaking, in spite of all opposition. Compare Zech. viii. 2. where God saith, *I was jealous for Zion with great fury.*

Ver. 6. *And I will tread down the people in mine anger.*] Both the Septuagint and Vulgar Latin translate this, and the following sentences of this verse, in the preter-perfect tense, *I have trodden down*, &c. which agrees better with the context; where Christ is described as having his garments already stained with blood.

And make them drunk in my fury.] God's judgments are often represented by a cup of intoxicating liquor, because they astonish men, and bereave them of their usual discretion. (See the note on li. 17.)

Ver. 7. *I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord*, &c.] Here the prophet, or the church, speaks, and breaks out into a grateful acknowledgment of God's former mercies to his people, which are so many earnests of his goodness for the time to come.

Ver. 8. *For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour.*] They are the people with whose ancestors I made an everlasting covenant, and they have a title to my favour, as well as their forefathers. (See Rom. xi. 28, 29.) And now their afflictions have so far corrected them, that they will not prevaricate, or apostatize, any more. So he became their Saviour, as he had been in former times.

[*Children that will not lie.*] God is introduced as speaking after the manner of men, and expecting what effect his gracious dealings might in all reason have produced. Compare Zeph. iii. 7. and see the note there.]

Ver. 9. *In all their affliction he was afflicted.*] When there was a necessity of punishing them in order to their amendment, he had a compassionate sense of the evils which they suffered. (See Deut. xxxii. 36. Judg. x. 16. Psal. cvi. 44, 45.) The Hebrew copies have a different reading here; the text reads *lo*, with an *aleph*, which signifies *not*, and the margin reads *lo*, with a *vau*, which signifies *him;* our translation follows the marginal reading, the Septuagint that of the text; and joining the latter part of the eighth verse with the ninth, they translate the whole period very agreeably to the present Hebrew text, thus, *He was their Saviour out of all their trouble: it was not a messenger, nor an angel, but himself delivered them:* which translation agrees very well with the sense of the original, as will appear by the following note.

And the angel of his presence saved them.] The angel, who conducted them by the pillar of cloud and of fire, was no other than the Logos, or second person of the blessed Trinity, according to the sense of the ancient Jews, as Dr. Alix hath proved at large, in his Judgment of the Jewish Church against the Unitarians, chap. 13—15. This Divine person is sometimes, indeed, called an angel, as Exod. xiv. 19. but, at other times, the incommunicable name of Jehovah is given to him. So Exod. xiii. 21. it is said expressly, that the *Lord went before the people in a pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night.* (Compare Exod. xiv. 24.) In the same book God saith of him, that

his name is in him, i. e. his godhead, (xxiii. 21.) Again, he is called *God's presence,* Exod. xxxiii. 14. an expression parallel to that of the text. So Deut. iv. 37. we read, *God chose their seed after them, and brought thee out by his presence;* for so the Hebrew *bepanau* plainly signifies: but our translators have made no sense at all of the place, by rendering it, *and brought thee out in his sight.* God, to shew his anger for the sin of the golden calf, threatens the people, that he would not lead them himself, but only send his angel with them, (Exod. xxxiii. 2, 3.) At this the people were much disheartened; (ver. 4.) and Moses earnestly intercedes with God, that the Divine presence might still accompany them; (ver. 15.) *i. e.* that God would continue to go before them in the pillar of cloud and of fire. According to this interpretation, St. Paul saith, that the *Jews tempted Christ in the wilderness,* (1 Cor. x. 9.) meaning the Logos, who, after his assuming human nature, was Christ. When the tabernacle was set up, this Schechinah, or token of God's presence, took up his residence over the ark, (Numb. vii. 89.) and the cloud covered the top of the tabernacle, (Exod. xl. 34. 38.) And then the Lord is said *to come down in the pillar of cloud,* (Numb. xii. 5.) and solemn adoration is paid to him, when this symbol of the Divine presence appeared, (Exod. xxxiii. 10. Numb. xvi. 19. 22.) All these circumstances laid together, prove that the person, who led the people through the wilderness, could be no created being, though he is sometimes called an *angel,* because he took upon him the office and ministry of angels, as he afterward took upon him the *form of a servant.* But in the text he is styled, in a distinguished manner, the *angel of God's presence,* and in Malachi, the *angel of the covenant;* (Mal. iii. 1.) for so the words should be translated.

And he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.] See the note on xlvi. 3.

Ver. 10. *But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit.*] God's Spirit *strove with* the men that lived before the flood; (Gen. vi. 3. 1 Pet. iii. 19.) the same good Spirit directed Moses and the elders that had the government of the Jews in the wilderness. (See the following verse here, Numb. xi. 17. and Nehem. ix. 20.) Therefore, the people's frequent murmurings and rebellions were not so much against them, *as against the Lord,* as Moses truly upbraids them, Exod. xvi. 8.

Ver. 11. *Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people,* &c.] God is represented by an elegant figure, as recollecting with himself what he had done for his people, and using that as a motive why he should still own and defend them. The same argument is urged by Moses, Exod. xxxii. 11, 12. Numb. xiv. 13, 14, &c. or the word *he* may be understood of Israel, as remembering God's peculiar providence to their fathers, and then expostulating with him under their long captivity, in the following words, (ver. 15, &c.)

With the shepherd of his flock.] Or, *With the shepherds of his flock,* as the margin reads, *i. e.* Moses and Aaron. (See Psal. lxxvii. 5. 20.)

Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him?] That gave his Spirit to Moses and the seventy elders, to direct them in the government of his people: (see Numb. xi. 17. Nehem. ix. 20.) and afterward sent them prophets to lead and instruct them. (Compare Hag. ii. 5.)

Ver. 13. *That led them through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble?*] As a horse goes or carries a man upon plain ground without tripping. The *wilderness* sometimes signifies the plain, or champaigne country, and is opposed to the mountains. (See Jer. ix. 10. Lam. iv. 19. Joel i. 19.)

Ver. 14. *As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest.*] As a beast goest down to his pasture; or as a camel or such-like beast of burden travels through a champaigne country; so the Spirit of the Lord conducted the people of Israel into the promised land of rest and security. (See Deut. xii. 9.) The verb *ijarad* signifies simply *to go,* or *go forward,* as well as to *go down.* (See Gen. xliii. 5. 1 Sam. xxix. 4. xxx. 15, 16. 2 Kings ii. 2.)

Ver. 15. *Where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and thy mercies towards me?*] Where is thy love and thy concern for thy people, (see ver. 5.) and the power thou usedst to exert for their deliverance? Where is the yearning of thy bowels, *i. e.* thy tender compassions and mercies which thou formerly shewedst towards me, and which the holy writers compare to the affection a mother bears to her children? (See xlix. 15. Jer. xxxi. 20. Hos. xi. 8.)

Ver. 16. *Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not.*] Our only hope is in the relation we have to thee, that thou hast vouchsafed to call thyself our father. (See Deut. xxxii. 6. 1 Chron. xxix. 10. Mal. i. 6. ii. 10. John viii. 39. 41.) For it is in vain to boast ourselves that we are children of Abraham or Jacob; they neither know our condition, nor, if they did, can they afford us any relief.

Thy name is from everlasting.] See the note upon ver. 19.

Ver. 17. *O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways.*] The words might better have been rendered, *Why hast thou suffered us to err from thy ways?* For the form called *hiphil,* in Hebrew, often denotes only permission, and is rendered elsewhere to that sense by our translators: so Psal. cxix. 10. *O let me not wander* [or go wrong] *from thy commandments:* where the verb is in *hiphil;* and again, Prov. x. 3. *The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish;* where the verb is in the same form. Thus we are to understand the same kind of expression, Psal. cxli. 4. *Incline not my heart to any evil thing:* so our new translation renders the verb; but the old one translates it much better: *O let not my heart be inclined to any evil thing.* In the same sense that expression of Jeremiah is to be understood, (iv. 10.) *Thou hast greatly deceived this people, i. e.* suffered them to be deceived by false prophets. To the same sense many interpreters understand those words of Ezekiel, (xiv. 9.) *I the Lord have deceived that prophet.* And in general we may observe, that the Scripture commonly speaks of what is permitted by Providence, as if it were directed by it. To give but one instance out of many: God is said to *move David to number the people:* (2 Sam. xxiv. 1.) whereas it appears, by comparing the text with 1 Chron. xxi. he only permitted Satan to move him to it.

And hardened our heart from thy fear?] See vi. 10.

Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.] As God is said to absent himself, when he disregards the prayers of his people; (see Psal. lxxiv. 1.) so he is said to return to them, when he answers their requests with seasonable relief. (See Zech. i. 3. Mal. iii. 7.) Or

the words may be thus translated, *Turn, for thy servants, the tribes of thine inheritance: i. e.* turn their captivity for the sake of thy servants Abraham and Israel, (ver. 16.) to whom thou madest the promises.

Ver. 18. *The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.*] *i. e.* Have possessed *thine inheritance,* mentioned ver. 17. The prophet calls it *a little while,* in comparison of God's promise, which, as the Jews commonly understood it, gave them the possession of Canaan for ever. (See Gen. xvii. 8.) But some translate the whole verse thus, *Our adversaries have possessed thy holy people as a thing of nought, they have trodden down thy sanctuary.* If we understand this of the devastations made by the Romans, under Titus, and by the Mahometans since, the phrase is exactly parallel to the words of Christ, (Luke xxi. 24.) *Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the gentiles.*

Ver. 19. *We are thine; thou never barest rule over them:* &c.] The words might better be rendered, *We are thine of old, thou hast not ruled over them,* &c. *Menolam, of old,* is used in the same sense, ver. 16. where our English reads, *Thy name is from everlasting;* the sense is, Thy name is called upon us, so the Septuagint understand it; or, Thou art called the God of Abraham, or of Israel, from ancient times; and therefore we humbly beg thee not to cast us off utterly, whilst thou makest thyself known to the gentiles, who, till of late never were thy people, nor in covenant with thee. (See lxvi. 1.) The word *thine* is not in the Hebrew; so some render the verse thus, *We have been for a great while* [as] *those over whom thou didst not bear rule, nor were we called by thy name.* Thou hast rejected us altogether, and dost disregard us, as if we had never had any relation to thee, nor ever were called thy people: which sense agrees very well with the present condition of the Jewish nation, which hath continued for many ages without king, or prince, or sacrifice, as the prophet Hosea foretold, iii. 4.

CHAP. LXIV.

See the Argument of the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 1. *OH that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down.*] The prayer, begun lxiii. 15. is continued throughout this chapter, in the name of the church and people of the Jews, as languishing and disconsolate under the long rejection they at present suffer; and the chapter begins with an earnest wish that God would shew himself as visibly in favour of his ancient people, as he did when he came down upon Mount Sinai, when thunder, and lightning, and tempests, that shook heaven and earth, did testify his presence. (See Exod. xix. 16. 18.)

That the mountains might flow down at thy presence.] A poetical description of the thunder and lightning which shook Mount Sinai, and the violent rains which accompanied this tempest, and made the mountains look as if they were melted down. (Compare Judg. v. 5. Psal. lxviii. 8. Micah i. 4.) God's appearance is commonly represented in Scripture, as accompanied with thunders and tempests, in allusion to his descent upon Mount Sinai. (See Psal. xviii. 7, 8, &c. Micah i. 3, 4. Habak. iv. 5, 6. 10.)

Ver. 2. *As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil.*] The sense would be plainer if a supplement were made between the two parts of this sentence, thus, *As when the melting fire* [or, the fire of the founder] *burneth,* [and as] *the fire causeth the waters to boil:* the prophet compares this *flowing down of the mountains* to the melting of metals by the force of a vehement fire, and to the boiling over of water when it is heated.

Ver. 3. *When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down,* &c.] Such terrible instances of thy power thou shewedst to our forefathers: (see Exod. xxxiv. 10.) who are here spoken of in the first person, as being of one blood with their posterity. But I think the words will bear another interpretation, which agrees better with what follows, *When thou shalt do terrible and unexpected things; when thou shalt come down* (and visibly interpose for the deliverance of thy people), *the mountains shall melt at thy presence.* And then follows very appositely in the next verse,

Ver. 4. *For since the beginning of the world men have not heard,* &c.] The methods of thy dispensations, whereby thou wilt fulfil thy promises made to thy people, are beyond any thing we can think or conceive.

Ver. 5. *Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness; those that remember thee in thy ways.*] Thou preventest with the blessings of thy goodness, those that take pleasure in the ways of thy commandments, and live under a continual sense of thy providence.

Behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.] We have been guilty of great offences, whereby we have provoked thine anger, but thy mercies endure for ever, and thy gracious promises are still the same; and this encourages us still to trust in thy goodness. (Compare Mal. iii. 6.) The pronoun [*those*] refers to God's *ways,* by which we may understand, not only his laws, but likewise the dispensations of his providence. (Compare lv. 9. Exod. xxxiii. 13. Psal. ciii. 7.) But the latter part of the verse may thus be translated, *Behold, thou art wroth; because we have sinned continually against those* (ways), *and shall we be saved?*

Ver. 6. *All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*] The best actions of the best men have a great alloy of imperfection. When the Hebrew language would express the most excellent in its kind, it makes use of the plural number: thus *wisdoms* signifies the most excellent, or Divine wisdom, Prov. i. 20. ix. 1. So here *righteousnesses* is the most perfect righteousness men can attain to.

And our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.] Like a wind that blasts and withers both leaves and fruit. (Compare Jer. iv. 11. Hos. xiii. 15.)

Ver. 7. *And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.*] There is nobody layeth our calamities to heart, so as to raise his mind into a devout posture, and to make God his refuge in his adversity. (Compare xxvii. 5.) Or, there is none that try to avert God's judgments by their intercessions, which is compared here to the laying hold of a man's hand when he is just going to strike.

For thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.] The particle *ki* should be translated *therefore,* as it is Psal. cxvi. 10. where the English translation rightly renders the sense, *I believed, and therefore have I spoken.* And thus the Greek particle ὅτι may

most fitly be translated, Luke vii. 47. *Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; therefore she loved much:* which sense agrees best with the design of the foregoing parable.

Ver. 10. *Thy holy cities are a wilderness.*] By *holy cities*, in the plural number, may be meant Zion, (which was properly called the *city of David:* see 2 Sam. v. 9.) and Jerusalem, as they are sometimes divided into the upper and lower city. And grammarians observe, that the word Jerusalem is in the *dual* number in the Hebrew, because it was divided into the upper and lower city.

Ver. 11. *Our holy and our beautiful house, wherein our fathers praised thee, is burnt with fire.*] This relates to the burning of the temple by the Romans, who made an entire destruction of it, according to our Saviour's prediction, (Matt. xxiv. 2.)

And all our pleasant things are laid waste.] Judea is called the *pleasant land*, Dan. viii. 9. and the *glory of all lands*, Ezek. xx. 6. but the Romans utterly laid it waste, partly in Vespasian's time, and partly in Adrian's; but the words chiefly relate to the temple, whose glory and beauty was laid waste, and which the Jews valued themselves upon above all things. (See Ezek. xxiv. 21. 25.)

Ver. 12. *Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O Lord? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?*] Wilt thou neither shew thy compassion towards thy servants, nor thy resentments to thine enemies? (Compare xlii. 14. lxv. 6.)

CHAP. LXV.

ARGUMENT.

In the beginning of this chapter, God answers the foregoing complaints of the Jews concerning their derelict ion, and tells them that they rejected the preaching both of Christ and his apostles, whereas the gentiles readily complied with it. He then rebukes them for their incredulity, idolatry, and hypocrisy; but promises mercy to those that repent, and gives a description of that new Jerusalem state, which should commence from their restoration.

Ver. 1. *I AM sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not.*] There is a manifest impropriety in the expression of the first part of the sentence; so the words should rather be rendered, *I am found of them that asked not for me:* the verb, which commonly signifies to *seek*, being by a metonymy put for *finding*. (Compare Eccles. iii. 6.) Or the words may be translated thus, *I am preached to them that asked not for me:* for the verb *darash* signifies to *teach* or *instruct:* in which sense it is used Psal. cxi. 2. where our translation reads, *sought out of all them that have pleasure therein;* but the sense is, *known*, or *learned by those that have pleasure therein.* And the word *midrasch*, derived from this verb, signifies a *commentary* or *exposition.*

I said, Behold me, behold me, to a nation that was not called by my name.] I made myself manifest (compare xli. 27.) to those that were not in covenant with me, *i. e.* to the gentiles. (See lxiii. 19.)

Ver. 2. *I have spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people.*] But I did not make myself known to the gentiles, till you Jews had rejected me, after I had used all the arts of persuasion and entreaty to you, in order to your conversion. *To spread out the hand*, is a gesture of begging or importunity. (See i. 15. Jer. iv. 31. Lam. i. 17.) St. Paul expounds these two verses of the calling of the gentiles, after that the Jews had rejected the gracious counsel of God against themselves, (Rom. x. 20, 21.)

Ver. 3. *A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face.*] The reigning sins of the Jews are reckoned up in this and the two following verses: and those are of two sorts, 1. Their ancient idolatry, the *iniquities of their fathers*, (ver. 7.) which the prophet describes as it was practised in his days. 2. Their spiritual pride and hypocrisy, (ver. 5.) which exactly answers the temper of the Jewish nation in the time of our Saviour.

That sacrificeth in gardens.] In groves or shady places. (See the note on i. 29.) Dr. Spencer understands the words of those sacrifices which were offered in gardens and orchards, in order to procure plenty of fruit. (See the notes upon the last sentence of the following verse.)

And burneth incense upon altars of brick.] God commanded that his altar should be built of whole stones, neither hewn, nor polished; (Exod. xx. 25. Deut. xxvii. 5.) in opposition, as it is probable, to the heathen altars, which were more artificially contrived.

Ver. 4. *Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments.*] As those did who practised necromancy, and consulted with infernal spirits. (See Deut. xviii. 11.) It was a common custom too among the heathens, for persons to lodge all night in the temples of their idols, particularly in that of Æsculapius, which were no better than monuments of the dead, in order to obtain such dreams as might be beneficial to them. [See the Answer to Fontanelle's Hist. of Oracles, p. 140.] By the word *netzarim*, which our translation renders *monuments*, Dr. Spencer (lib. iii. de Legib. Hebr. dissert. viii. cap. 3.) understands solitary places, in which sense some take the word, xlix. 6. Such places being haunted by evil spirits, according to the opinion of the vulgar. (See the note on xiii. 21.)

Which eat swine's flesh.] This was expressly forbidden in the law, (Lev. xi. 7.) and the eating of it was a sort of religious ceremony, whereby apostates made a solemn renunciation of the Jewish religion. (See 2 Maccab. vi. 18. vii. 1.) One reason why the religious Jews so much abhorred the eating swine's flesh probably was, because the eating it was a solemn rite of lustration among the Egyptian priests, who, at the full moon, offered part of it in sacrifice, and eat part of it themselves, though at other times they abhorred to touch it. (See Herodot. lib. ii. cap. 47.) Plato likewise acquaints us, that the sacrifice of a hog was a usual rite of initiation at the heathen mysteries, (de Repub. lib. ii.) This passage is quoted by Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. xiii. where Vigerius in his notes shews, that the sacrificing swine's flesh was used in the mysteries of Bacchus and Ceres: and Varro (lib. ii. de Re Rust.) derives *ὗς* from *θύειν*, because it was one of the principal of the heathen sacrifices.

And broth of abominable things is in their vessels.] This denotes the superstitious practice of *seething a kid in its mother's milk*, with which they sprinkled the trees in their fields and gardens (see ver. 3.) to make them more fruitful; upon which account it is more than once forbidden in the

law. (See Exod. xxiii. 19. xxxiv. 26. Deut. xiv. 21.) The Romans learned this superstition from the Egyptians probably, and worshipped Pales, or Ceres, with milk. So Ovid. Fastor. lib. iv.

"Sylvicolam tepido lacte precare Palem."

Mr. White makes an objection against applying these passages to the modern Jews, because since Christ's time they have not been guilty of any of these kinds of idolatry, and consequently these sins cannot be assigned as a cause of their rejection. To which it may be answered, 1. That the prophet here objects to them the sins of their forefathers, as well as their own: see ver. 7. and Deut. xxxii. 21. where their rejection is ascribed to their idolatries; according to the tenor of God's covenant, whereby he hath threatened to *visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children.* 2. The prophet, indeed, mentions only such idolatries as were practised in and about his own time; but yet may comprehend under those heads all other kinds of that sin; just as the idolatries practised by some Christians, are called the doctrines of Balaam and Jezebel, Rev. ii. 14. 20. and the church where they were practised, is described by the name of Sodom and Egypt, xi. 8. And the Jews at this day acknowledge the compliances of several of their nation with the idolatries practised in those popish countries where the inquisition is set up, as one of their national sins. (See Limborch's Amica Collatio cum Judæo.)

Ver. 5. *Which say, Stand by thyself—for I am holier than thou.*] Or, *I esteem thee as unclean:* so some render the verb *kedashtika;* which hath two contrary significations, both to *make holy,* and to *pollute,* a thing usual in that language. (See the note upon xxii. 17, 18.) This description of a proud hypocrite, exactly agrees with the temper of the scribes and pharisees in Christ's time. (See Matt. ix. 11. Mark vii. 4. John xviii. 28.)

These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.] These are as offensive to me as smoke is to the nose, they are a perpetual provocation to me, and kindle my anger continually against them.

Ver. 6. *Behold, it is written before me.*] God's irrevocable purposes are often expressed as so many decrees entered into a register. (See the note upon xxxiv. 16.)

I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom.] I will not restrain my anger any longer, (see xlii. 14.) but recompense their sins double upon them. (See Jer. xvi. 18. and the notes upon xl. 2.)

Ver. 7. *Which have burnt incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills.*] See lvii. 7. Ezek. xviii. 6. xx. 27, 28.

Therefore I will measure their former work into their bosom.] The iniquities of their forefathers, aggravated by the addition of their own. (Compare Matt. xxiii. 32. 35, 36. and see the note upon ver. 4.)

Ver. 8. *As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not,* &c.] As a few good grapes are found among a cluster of bad ones, and one speaks to another that would pluck it from the tree to spare it, because some of the grapes may come to good: so I will not destroy the whole nation, for the sake of the few good persons which spring out from among the rest. Those are called the *remnant* by St. Paul, Rom. ix. 27. xi. 5. where he alludes to i. 9. vi. 13. vii. 3. x. 21. of this prophecy.

Ver. 9. *And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains.*] Out of this stock shall arise a better generation, who shall repossess the inheritance of their ancestors. Judea being a hilly country, is elsewhere expressed by the *mountains* of Israel. (See xiv. 25. Ezek. xxxvi. 1.)

And mine elect shall inherit it.] These are called the *election* by St. Paul, Rom. xi. 7.

Ver. 10. *And Sharon shall be a fold for flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in.*] The blessings of the gospel are sometimes represented under the emblems of temporal happiness. (See the note upon iv. 2.) But if we take the words in their literal sense, they denote the great plenty and security these elect should enjoy. (Compare xxx. 23.) Sharon was one of the richest parts of Judea: (see xxxiii. 9. xxxv. 2.) and so was the valley of Achor, which was remarkable for being the first tract of ground the Israelites took possession of, after their entrance into the promised land: and therefore is called a *door of hope* by Hosea, (ii. 15.) because it gave them first footing in that country, and encouraged them to hope that they should become masters of the whole.

Ver. 11. *But ye are they that forget the Lord, that forget my holy mountain.*] The prophet now directs his discourse to the sinners and idolaters, whom he had reproved and threatened, ver. 2, 3, &c. By *my holy mountain* is meant God's temple and worship, a figure of the Christian church. (See the note on ii. 2.)

That prepare a table for that troop.] It was customary both among the Jews and gentiles, after some part of the sacrifice had been offered upon the altar, to make a feast of the remainder. (See lvii. 7. Ezek. xxiii. 41.) This is called the *table of devils,* to whom the gentiles sacrificed, 1 Cor. x. 21. It is a great dispute among the critics what idol *Gad* was, which several interpreters here translate *Troop,* as if it were some heavenly constellation. But the word likewise signifies *Fortune,* or good luck, and so it is translated by the Septuagint, Gen. xxx. 11. and in this place too; for it appears from St. Jerome's commentary upon this verse, that the Greek copies in his times read, Ἑτοιμάζοντες τῇ τύχῃ τράπεζαν, καὶ πληροῦντες, τῷ Δαιμονίῳ κέρασμα.

And that furnish a drink-offering to that number.] Or, *to Meni,* which is the word in the Hebrew: by which some understand the sun. (See Huetius in Comment. on Origen, p. 109, 110. and Menagius upon Laertius, lib. viii. n. 34.) Bochart, and Dr. Spencer (de Legib. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 2.) take it to signify a *hero,* worshipped by the Egyptians: Dr. Pocock (Not. ad Specim. Histor. Arab. p. 92.) understands by it an idol of the Arabians, and others an idol of the Armenians; Minni being a province in Armenia. (See Jer. li. 27.)

[By *Gad* and *Meni,* Huetius understands the moon and the sun: *fortune* being under the influence of the former, and the *genius* which the heathens allotted to every man under the direction of the sun. See Huetiana, n. 120. and his second epistle to Bochart, published by Tilladot.]

Ver. 12. *Therefore will I number you to the sword.*] An allusion to the etymology of the word *Meni,* which is derived from the verb *manah,* which signifies to *number;* such paronomasias are frequent in the prophets. (See the note upon lxiii. 1.) If we understand this place of the

final restoration of the Jews, as the series of the prophecy directs, then this and the following verses are to be explained of that discrimination which God will make between the obedient and disobedient among that people, bringing back the former into their own country, and punishing the latter with utter destruction, as he did the rebels in the wilderness. (Compare xxvii. 12. Ezek. xi. 17. 21. xx. 34. 38. Amos ix. 8, 9.)

When I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear.] I have given frequent calls to you by my servants the prophets, and the apostles, and even by my Son, and yet ye refused to hearken. (Compare Matt. xxi. 34. 43.)

And did choose the thing wherein I delighted not.] *i. e.* Which I extremely abhorred: we meet with the same kind of expression, Jer. vii. 31. where God, reproving them for sacrificing their children to Moloch, saith, *I commanded it not, i. e.* I expressly forbade it. This figure is called *Meiôsis* by the rhetoricians, where a great deal more is understood than is expressed.

Ver. 13, 14. *Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry,* &c.] God will make a great difference between his faithful servants and such unbelievers as you are. They shall have their losses and wants plentifully made up to them; whereas you that have so long abused the means of grace, shall be wholly deprived of it. This is expressed in Christ's parables, by being *shut out of the kingdom of heaven,* excluded from the *marriage feast,* and *cast into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.* (See Matt. viii. 11, 12. Luke xiii. 24, 25, &c. xiv. 23, 24.)

Ver. 15. *And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen.*] Mine elect (see ver. 9. 22.) shall look upon you as a standing monument of God's indignation, and shall use this as a common form of imprecation, *God do so to me as he has done to the wicked Jews:* (compare Jer. xxix. 22.) *Of them shall they take up a curse,* saith the prophet there, *saying, God make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab.* (See likewise Zech. viii. 12.)

For the Lord God shall slay thee.] See ver. 12. and lxvi. 16.

And call his servants by another name.] See the note on lxii. 2. This may mean changing the name of Jew into that of Christian.

Ver. 16. *That he who blesseth himself in the earth, shall bless himself by the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by the God of truth.*] Or, *He who blesseth himself,* &c. For this may be reckoned a new sentence, that hath no dependance upon what went before, and it implies the utter abolishing of idolatry, that all religious invocation, whether of prayer, swearing, or the like, should be performed in the name of God, and of him alone. The total extirpation of idolatry is a blessing reserved for the last times. (See the note on i. 29.) By the *earth* we may mean here the gentiles, who are often styled κόσμος, *the world,* in the New Testament.

[*The God of truth.*] The Hebrew reads *Amen;* so the expression may properly be understood of Christ, who is the *true God,* (1 John v. 20.) and called *Amen,* or the truth, Rev. iii. 14. probably in allusion to this place: (compare 2 Cor. i. 20.) and the words import, that all spiritual blessings shall be derived from him.]

For the former troubles are forgotten.] Or, *When the former troubles,* &c. The *new heavens,* and *new earth,* mentioned in the following verse, are not subject to any of those errors and miseries, to which the present state of the world is obnoxious. (See ver. 19. and Rev. xxi. 3, 4. &c.)

Ver. 17. *For, behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth.*] The conversion of the Jews will be in the last times of this world: (see Hos. iii. 5.) and then will follow the *new heavens and earth,* which are to commence after the dissolution of this world. (See 2 Pet. iii. 13. Rev. xxi. 1.) Such a new state of things, St. Peter tells us, we are to expect *according to God's promise,* which must relate to some prophecies of the Old Testament, and particularly to this and the following chapter, both the apostles using the very same expressions which are found here.

And the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.] The glory of the *new heavens and earth,* shall so far surpass the happiest days that ever were seen in former times, that they shall not deserve to be mentioned, there being no comparison between them. (Compare Jer. iii. 16.)

Ver. 18. *For, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.*] This may be best expounded of the New Jerusalem, which shall *come down from God,* when the new heavens and new earth are created; see Rev. xxi. 1, 2. and compare lxvi. 22. where *there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain,* (ibid. ver. 4. and the following verse here.) Though some learned men suppose, that upon the restoration of the Jews there may be some particular privileges belonging to the earthly Jerusalem, as the metropolis of that nation. (See the note upon lxvi. 20.) But we must not be too positive as to any particular description of these distant events.

[*Rejoice for ever in that which I create.*] The learned Bishop of Coventry and Litchfield, in his Defence of Christianity, chap. 2. sect. 2. translates the words, *Rejoice for the age to come, which I create.* The *age to come* was a known expression among the Jews for the times of the Messias. See the note upon ix. 6. in which text the same learned writer understands the phrase *Ab Ed,* to the same sense, translated in our English, *everlasting Father.*]

Ver. 20. *There shall be no more thence an infant of days, or an old man that hath not filled up his days.*] *From thence,* or *from that time,* (see note on xlviii. 16.) there shall be no untimely deaths, either of infants who are abortive, or never grow up to man's estate; or of old men who do not live out the full term of life.

For the child should die a hundred years old; but the sinner, being a hundred years old, shall be accursed.] The sense would be plainer, if the words were translated thus: *For he that dies a hundred years old, shall die a child:* and the *sinner that dies a hundred years old, shall be accursed.* The prophet describes this renovation of the world as a paradisiacal state, and such as the patriarchs enjoyed before the flood, when men commonly lived near a thousand years. So he that died at a hundred years of age would have been looked upon as dying in the age of childhood, and be judged to have been cut off in the beginning of his years, as a punishment for some great sins he had committed. Hesiod describes what he calls the *silver age* of the world, in much the same expressions, Ἔργ. καὶ Ἡμ. lib. i. ver. 129.—

Ἀλλ' ἑκατὸν μὲν παῖς ἔτεα παρὰ μητέρι κεδνῇ
Ἐτρέφετ' ἀτάλλων, μέγα νήπιος———

A boy of a hundred years old played about with his mother, an overgrown child.

The words of the text seem to imply, that the millenian state shall not be free from all manner of sin, though there shall be no place there for idolatry and apostacy. Accordingly some learned men suppose, that the *lukewarm* Laodicean state of the church, which is described, and reproved, Rev. iii. 14, &c. is to be contemporary with some part of the millenium.

Ver. 21. *They shall build houses, and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.*] A blessing promised to the Jews upon their conversion, in contradiction to that curse which Moses denounced against them for their disobedience; (Deut. xxviii. 30.) and it implies both security from the invasion of enemies, and from untimely death. (Compare lxvi. 8.)

Ver. 22. *For as the days of a tree are the days of my people.*] Not like the fading of a leaf, to which our present mortal state is often compared. The Septuagint translate it, *As the days of the tree of life, shall be the days of my people*, expressing the sense and import of the words.

Ver. 23. *They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble.*] As those do who enjoy not the fruits of their labour. (See ver. 21, 22.)

Ver. 24. *And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer.*] God will prevent them with his blessings, and gratify their desires before they ask: a sure token of his favour and love towards them, as his rejecting men, and casting them off, is expressed by his *hiding away his face from them*, and refusing to hear their prayers. (See Prov. i. 28. Isa. i. 15. Jer. xiv. 12. Lam. iii. 8. 44.)

Ver. 25. *The wolf and the lamb shall feed together*, &c.] Concerning the metaphorical sense of these expressions, see the notes upon xi. 6. xxxv. 9. But since the renovation here spoken of extends to the whole creation, (see Rom. viii. 21.) they may imply the correcting the noxious qualities of fierce or venomous creatures.

[*And dust shall be the serpent's meat.*] The curse pronounced upon the serpent, Gen. iii. 14. shall then be fully accomplished: Christ having *put all enemies under his feet*, and especially the devil, who is the head of them. See Micah vii. 17. Rom. xvi. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 27.]

CHAP. LXVI.

ARGUMENT.

In the beginning of the chapter God answers the complaints of the Jews concerning the destruction of the temple, which they so passionately bewail, lxiii. 18. lxiv. 11. and instructs them in the evangelical way of worshipping God *in spirit and in truth*, and not by sacrifices, or a carnal worship. He then assigns the causes of his rejecting the Jews, and calling the gentiles, but promises in due time to unite them into one glorious and flourishing church.

Ver. 1. *THE heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?*] A temple in the Jewish notion was God's place of residence, or his habitation, where he resided as a king in a palace: accordingly the *cherubims* were his throne, the *ark* was his footstool, the *priests* were his immediate attendants, and the *shew-bread and sacrifices* were the provision for his table. Such a notion of a temple was common both to Jews and gentiles; [only with this difference, that the gentiles thought the setting up an image a necessary part of the dedication of a temple, to secure, as they imagined, the presence of the deity to whom it was dedicated. *Templi nulla ratio, quod non coronat simulacrum*, saith Isidore.] Such a notion seems to confine God's presence to a certain place, and therefore was not so suitable to the greatness of the Divine majesty. It is under this acceptation of the word, that God reproves the Jews for laying such stress upon their temple-worship, and comforts them under the loss of it, which they speak of with so much concern, lxiv. 11. And it is under the same notion that the Christian apologists join temples with images, and profess that their religion allows of neither.

Ver. 2. *For all those things hath my hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord.*] I fill heaven and earth, which are the works of my hands, and are still sustained and supported by me. *All those things are mine*; so the Septuagint translate the latter part of the sentence.

But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, &c.] Such a one is a living temple of God. (See lvii. 15.)

Ver. 3. *He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man.*] Without this devout temper of mind, killing an ox for a burnt-offering is no more acceptable to God, than if a man offered his son in sacrifice to Moloch.

He that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck.] The price of a dog was forbid to be brought into the house of the Lord, by way of vow, or free-will-offering. (See Deut. xxiii. 18.)

He that offereth an oblation, is as if he offered swine's blood.] Which being one of the principal sacrifices among the gentiles, was in a particular manner abominable to God. (See the notes upon lxv. 4.)

He that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol.] Or, *maketh a memorial with incense*, as the margin reads. The verb *zachar, to commemorate*, signifies any act of Divine worship. (See the note upon lvii. 8.)

Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.] Compare lxv. 12. This may relate to their idolatrous practices, mentioned lxv. 3, 4. 11. and ver. 17. of this chapter. Or their very ceremonious worship may be reproved in these terms, because, since the revelation of the gospel, God had rejected it, and declared it to be a plain contradiction to his will, and an affront to his authority.

Ver. 4. *I will also choose their delusions.*] I will punish them in their own way, and set over them the scribes and pharisees, who shall govern them by their traditions instead of the word of God; or I will suffer *false Christs* and *false prophets* to deceive them. (See Matt. xxiv. 24. John v. 43.)

And I will bring their fears upon them.] This was exactly fulfilled, when they crucified Christ for fear of the Romans, (John xi, 48.) which very sin was punished by an utter destruction from that very people.

Because when I called, none did answer, &c.] See lxv. 12.

Ver. 5. *Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake,* &c.] Hearken to this, you Jews, that embraced the gospel upon the preaching of Christ and the apostles: Your brethren have hated you for my sake, and cast you out of their synagogues, (compare Luke vi. 22.) and in derision called upon God to do some extraordinary thing in your behalf: but God's providence at the destruction of Jerusalem shall interpose visibly for your deliverance, and leave them to perish in their city. This was remarkably verified when the Christians had a Divine warning to leave the city, and thereupon retired to Pella, and escaped the common destruction. (See Eusеb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. cap. 5. Epiph. Hæres. xxx.)

Ver. 6. *A voice from the city, a voice from the temple,* &c.] The prophet seems to hear the noise of the ruin of the city and temple sounding in his ears: *The voice from the city* may fitly be expounded of that story which Josephus relates, (de Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 12.) concerning one Jesus the son of Anani, who, for a considerable time before the war began, or the city was besieged, went about the streets, crying, *Woe, woe, unto Jerusalem!* and neither threatenings nor stripes could prevail with him to be silent. And the *voice from the temple* was verified in that voice, which, Josephus tells us in the same chapter, was heard in the temple a little before the final destruction of it, saying, *Let us depart hence.*

Ver. 7. *Before she travailed, she brought forth.*] Here begins a new paragraph, containing a description of the sudden increase of the Christian church, upon God's rejecting the Jews, and destroying their temple and worship. The very destruction of the Jewish polity making way for the growth of the gospel, inasmuch as it abated that opposition which the Jewish zealots all along gave to the spreading of it; and the abolishing the Jewish worship contributed very much to the abrogating the law of Moses, and burying it with silence and decency. (See Rom. xi. 11.) The church is described here as a travailing woman, the mother of all true believers. (See liv. 1. Gal. iv. 26.)

Before her pain came, she was delivered of a man-child.] The expressions import how suddenly and quickly Christianity was spread and propagated over the world. And this latter sentence alludes to the Hebrew women being delivered of their male children, before the midwives could come to them, (Exod. i. 19.) The propagating the kingdom of Christ, is, in like manner, described by a woman's travailing, and bringing forth a man-child, Rev. xii. 1, 2. 5. which place plainly alludes to the words here.

Ver. 8. *Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once?*] The suddenness of this event is as surprising, as if the fruits of the earth, which are brought to perfection by slow degrees, should blossom and ripen all in one day. And the fruitfulness of this spiritual increase is as wonderful, as if a whole nation were born at once, or by one woman. We may understand the former part of this sentence of the speedy propagation of the gospel through the world, and the latter part of it of the sudden conversion of the Jews, and their union with the gentiles into one church, when God *will remove the iniquity of the land in one day,* as it is foretold, Zech. iii. 9. (Compare Micah v. 3.) These two events, though distant in time, yet will agree very much in the swiftness of their progress.

For as soon as Zion travailed, she was delivered of her children.] Without pain or difficulty, no ill accident interposing to hinder their birth: as it follows,

Ver. 9. *Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth?* &c.] Shall I disappoint a work, of which I myself was the author, when every thing is ripe for execution, and the effect just ready to be produced? (Compare xxxvii. 3.) The prophet still carries on the comparison between the natural and spiritual birth. (Compare Gal. iv. 19.)

Ver. 10. *Rejoice ye with Jerusalem—all ye that love her.*] Let all that wish her well congratulate her for the favours God hath shewed to her, and particularly let the gentiles rejoice with the Jewish church; (see Deut. xxxii. 43.) for her advancement shall redound to their benefit. (See ver. 12.)

Rejoice with her, all ye that mourn for her.] See the note on lvii. 18.

Ver. 11. *That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations.*] Or, *Because ye shall suck,* &c. She will nourish the faithful with her doctrine, as a tender mother does her children with her breasts. The prophet persists in comparing the church to a child-bearing woman.

And be delighted with the abundance of her glory.] You shall share in the glory God hath conferred upon the Jewish church, and shall be edified by the gifts and graces that God will plentifully bestow upon her. (See below, ver. 19. and Rom. xi. 12.)

Ver. 12. *For I will extend peace to her like a river.*] All manner of prosperity. (Compare xlviii. 18. lx. 5.)

And the glory of the gentiles like a flowing stream.] The riches of the gentiles shall flow in upon you, by their liberality and charity: (see lxi. 6.) or, I will impart to her all that grace and knowledge, for which the church of the gentiles value themselves: St. Paul says, (Rom. xi. 11.) that the *Jews will be provoked to emulation* by the gentile believers, by their coming into the church in great numbers, and the Jews seeing them favoured with all the privileges of God's people and themselves utterly rejected; and that this will be a principal means of working their conversion. And when they are converted, they will be extraordinary instruments in God's hands, for the converting the remainder of the heathen world. (See ver. 19. compared with lx. 4, 5. and Rom. xi. 12. 15. 25. 31.)

Ye shall be borne upon her sides, &c.] Compare lx. 4. and see the note on ver. 11. of this chapter.

Ver. 14. *And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb.*] You Jews shall recover your ancient strength and beauty, and be renewed in as wonderful a manner, as if dry withered bones should recover their youth and moisture: or, as if the dead bones in a charnel-house should have life and vigour infused into them: (compare Ecclus. xlvi. 12. xlix. 10.) then will be fulfilled that *resurrection of the dry bones,* spoken of by Ezekiel, xxxvii. 1, &c. for that vision relates to the restoration of the Jewish nation, after it had lain for many ages in a dead, hopeless condition. In like manner, St. Paul calls the receiving the Jews into the church, *Life from the dead,* Rom. xi. 15.

And the hand of the Lord shall be known towards his servants, and his indignation towards his enemies.] Then shall

the kingdom or power of the Messias be manifested in a distinguishing protection of his people, and destruction of his and their enemies.

Ver. 15. *For, behold, the Lord will come with fire.*] God is called a *consuming fire*, Deut. iv. 24. and his vengeance often resembled to fire, which consumes every thing in an instant. (See ix. 5. xxx. 30. see the following verse.)

And with his chariots like a whirlwind.] An allusion to the old way of fighting with chariots. (Compare v. 28. xxi. 7. 9.) God is elsewhere described, as *making the clouds his chariot*, (Psal. civ. 3. Habak. iii. 8.) and as compassed about with tempests and darkness, (Psal. xviii. 10.)

Ver. 16. *For by fire, and by his sword, will the Lord plead with all flesh*, &c.] This seems to denote the discomfiture of Gog and Magog, who are to be destroyed by fire. See Ezek. xxxix. 6. 9. They are described in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of that prophecy, as coming in a great body against the land of Israel after the restoration of the Jews, and their return into their own land, and their receiving an utter overthrow. Or, this may be understood of the battle of Armageddon, (Rev. xvi. 14. xix. 19.) where the armies of Satan and antichrist are to be vanquished by the Lamb and his followers: or of the discomfiture of Satan's army, mentioned Rev. xx. 8, 9. which shall be destroyed by fire from heaven. The Scriptures do in general declare there shall be a great destruction of Christ's enemies here upon earth, before the general judgment, or consummation of all things: compare with the context here, chap. xxxiv. lxiii. 1. 6. Psal. cx. 5, 6. Jer. l. li. a great part of which chapters certainly relate to the latter times, Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix. Joel iii. 11. 14. Micah v. 8, &c. Zech. xii. 2, &c. xiv. 1. 13. Rev. xiv. 20. xvi. 14. xix. 19. But we must not be too positive in assigning the particular place, time, or manner, how these prophecies shall be fulfilled, because the events are secrets, whose causes lie hid as yet in the depths of Providence. And the very great obscurity of the prophecies, which are supposed to relate to these matters, is to me a convincing argument that they are not yet fulfilled.

Ver. 17. *They that sanctify, and purify themselves in gardens.*] Concerning *sacrificing in gardens*, see the note upon lxv. 3. But there were several sorts of lustrations or purifications used among the heathens, from whence the Jews learned their idolatrous customs: some of which were performed by washings, for which purpose they had fountains in their sacred groves and gardens.

Behind one tree in the midst.] Several critics agree, that by the Hebrew word *achad* is meant the *sun*, which, Macrobius saith, (Saturnal, lib. i. cap. 23.) was called by the Assyrians *adad*, a word which he tells us there signifies *one*, and therefore is probably derived from the Hebrew, *achad*. If we follow this interpretation, the words may be best translated thus: *Behind* [*the chapel*] (or shrine) *of the sun, in the midst* [of the garden].

Eating swine's flesh.] See the note upon lxv. 4.

And the abomination.] The same which is called *broth of abominable things*, lxv. 4. (See the note there.)

And the mouse.] The heathens used some sort of meats by way of purification, or lustration, and chiefly such as were not used in common food; such were several of those meats forbidden by the law, and called *abominable* by Moses: (Deut. xiv. 3.) of this kind probably was the *mouse*, which was expressly forbidden to be eaten, Lev. xi. 29. Jamblichus Syrus, in Photius, cod. 94. reckons mice among the several sorts of animals, by which the heathens practised magic or divination, and saith, that some derived the word Μυστήριον from Μῦς.

Concerning the reasons for applying these ancient idolatries to later times, see the notes upon lxv. 4. Maimonides observes, (More Nevochim, lib. iii. cap. 29. p. 424.) from the books of the Zabians, who were ancient idolaters, that they used *to offer to the sun*, the idol mentioned in this very verse, *seven bats* and *seven mice*, which he thinks was the reason why these creatures were reckoned *abominable* in the law of Moses, and forbidden to be eaten.

Ver. 18. *For I know their works, and their thoughts.*] The word *know* is not in the Hebrew: some supply the ellipsis thus, should *I* bear *their works?* &c. Such a kind of deficiency is supplied in that manner by our translators, Numb. xiv. 27.

I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall see my glory.] This may most probably be understood of the gathering of the Jews and gentiles into one church. (See the note upon liv. 7. and compare Rev. xiv. 6.)

Ver. 19. *And I will set a sign among them.*] A signal to gather the believing Jews together from their several dispersions. (See xi. 12. lxii. 10.) A *sign* (*ôth* in the Hebrew) is the same with an ensign, or standard, and so it is used, Psal. lxxiv. 4.

And I will send those that are escaped of them unto the nations.] The *escaped of Israel* are mentioned before: (iv. 2.) and mean those *that are escaped of the nations;* (xlv. 20.) *i. e.* who are returned home out of their several dispersions. Some of these, God saith he will send to be preachers and apostles to the unconverted gentiles, as St. Paul, when he was converted, was ordained to be an apostle of the gentiles; whose conversion, according to Mr. Mede, carries in it an earnest, and an emblem of the general conversion of that nation. (See his Works, p. 891.) Without question their conversion will be a signal instance of the power of God's grace, and a convincing argument to others of the truth of the gospel, as hath been observed upon ver. 12.

To Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, &c.] They shall go out and make conversions in all the parts of the world: *Tarshish* denotes the eastern parts; (see note upon xi. 16.) *Pul* and *Lud* the south; *Tubal* and *Javan* the north; and the *islands* the west.

Pul and Lud that draw the bow.] Some suppose *Pul* to be the same people who are elsewhere called by the name of *Phut*, which is usually joined with *Lud;* and is rendered *Lybia*, or the *Lybians*, by most interpreters. (See Jer. xlvi. 9. Ezek. xxvii. 10. xxx. 5.) But Bochart thinks *Pul* to be the same with *Phil*, or *Philis*, a city upon the river Nile; and then these two names will denote the Egyptians and Ethiopians.

To Tubal and Javan.] *Tubal* is elsewhere joined with *Meshech:* (see Gen. x. 2. Ezek. xxxviii. 2.) and they are generally thought to denote the Tartars, Scythians, and those who live in the most northern parts of the world. By *Javan* are meant the Ionians, Grecians, and the neighbouring nations, who live on the north side of the Mediterranean Sea.

To the isles afar off.] This expression denotes the west-

erly parts of the world; for the *islands of the sea*, a phrase elsewhere used, mean the same with the islands of the Western Sea. (See the notes upon xi. 11. xxiv. 14.) And the prophet Hosea, speaking of the return of the Jews from their dispersions in several parts of the world, saith, *When the Lord shall roar like a lion* (which denotes some efficacious call of Providence, or powerful preaching of the gospel), *then the children shall tremble* (or come flying, as the following verse explains it) *from the west*. (Hosea xi. 10.) So that by the *isles afar off, which have not heard God's fame*, may be meant even the West Indies themselves.

Ver. 20. *And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations.*] The words may be understood, either of the Jews, *that are escaped*, converting the gentiles, and *bringing* them for *an offering to God*, the very phrase which St. Paul uses, speaking of this subject: (Rom. xv. 16.) or else, that they shall convert their own brethren that still remain scattered in the remote countries of the gentiles. Or the place may be understood, in general, of the *mystical Israel*, which *shall be saved from all the ends of the earth*. (See xlv. 17. 22. 25.)

Upon horses, and in chariots—to my holy mountain Jerusalem.] God's *holy mountain* commonly signifies the church in the prophetical writings. (See the note upon ii. 2.) So the expressions of going up to God's holy mountain, in the several conveniences of carriage here mentioned, are an allusion to the Jews going up with their gifts and offerings to Jerusalem at the solemn festivals. (Compare lx. 9.) Or we may understand it, in a more literal sense, of the Jews returning to their own country, from their several dispersions, and hastening to Jerusalem, with joy and *singing psalms*, as the Septuagint express the sense. But this interpretation does not agree so well with the *new heavens* and *new earth* mentioned in the twenty-second verse, of which state these things are spoken.

Ver. 21. *And also I will take of them for priests, and for Levites.*] All that have a share in this blessed state (called the *new heavens* and *new earth*, in the following verse) shall be *priests unto God*, and attend upon his service without distraction. (Compare Rev. xx. 6.) Or the words may import the restoring the Jews to their ancient privilege of being *a kingdom of priests* to God, and continually attending his service. (See lxi. 6.)

Ver. 22. *For as the new heavens, and the new earth, which I make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.*] This new state of things, already described lxv. 17, &c. is created to be inhabited by the mystical Israel, *who shall be saved from all the parts of the earth with an everlasting salvation*, (xlv. 17, 18. 22. 25.)

Ver. 23. *And it shall come to pass, from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, all flesh shall come and worship before me.*] These saints shall not have set times for God's worship, but shall be perpetually employed in serving and praising him. (See Rev. iv. 8. vii. 15.) The worship of the New Jerusalem is represented by the practice of the Jewish temple, as if the prophet had said, that state shall be one continued festival. It is usual with the prophets to describe the gospel dispensations by the usages of their own times. (See the notes upon xix. 19. lvi. 7. and compare Zech. xiv. 16.) These metaphors are continued even in the writings of the New Testament, where the church is represented by the *twelve tribes of Israel*, (Luke xxii. 30. Rev. vii. 4.) The Christians are called Jews, Rom. ii. 28, 29. Rev. ii. 9. and the heavenly sanctuary is described by the model of the Jewish tabernacle, Rev. iv. 5, 6, xi. 1, 2. 19. xv. 5, 6.

Mr. White, in his argument upon this chapter, and elsewhere, insists upon these and such-like expressions, as irrefragable arguments, that the sense of this prophet is to be confined to occurrences in or near his own time. But this way of arguing shews him not to have thoroughly considered the genius of the prophetical writings, which as they are always full of metaphors, and love to give but dark hints of things, wrapped up in symbols and figures, so the very life and spirit of them consist in pointing out the times of the Messias, and the state of God's kingdom under his administration: according to that maxim delivered by the angel, Rev. xix. 10. that *the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*, without which it is but a kind of dead letter.

Ver. 24. *And they shall go forth.*] Without the circuit of the *new Jerusalem*, (Rev. xxi. 12.) or the *camp of the saints*, (Rev. xx. 9.) The expression alludes to the custom of the Jews, of executing offenders without the camp or city, and excluding all unclean persons out of it. (See Numb. v. 1. 4. Heb. xiii. 11—13.)

And look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me.] Those enemies of God that were slain in the battle, mentioned ver. 16.

Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched.] They shall be like so many putrefying carcasses, lying slain in the field of battle, and overrun with worms and stench; they shall be a lasting monument of God's justice, like Sodom, set forth for an example of the Divine vengeance, of that eternal fire which is prepared for the ungodly in hell. (Compare Judith xvi. 17. Ecclus. vii. 17. Mark ix. 44.)

And they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.] Their reproach shall be perpetual; men shall abhor them as they do the stench of a camp of dead bodies, or the filth of the valley of Hinnom, the figure and picture of hell. (See the notes upon xxx. 33. and compare Ezek. xxxix. 11. 16.)

A

COMMENTARY

UPON

THE PROPHECY AND LAMENTATIONS

OF

JEREMIAH.

TO THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

WILLIAM,

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE, LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY;

PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND, AND METROPOLITAN;

AND ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY-COUNCIL.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

THE following papers, writ in pursuance of a Commentary formerly published upon the prophet Isaiah, I humbly beg leave to offer to your Grace; entreating your favourable acceptance of my sincere endeavours to give some farther light to the writings of the Prophet that succeeds next in order.

Who was a *burning* as well as a *shining light* in the church of God; and whose fervent piety and zeal discover themselves, in his many affectionate strains of an ardent devotion, and in the warmth and vigour of a moving eloquence, so justly admired by all attentive readers: a talent that all men must acknowledge your Grace to be a perfect master of: you having, in an inferior station, given abundant proofs of your great abilities, both in exhorting, and convincing gainsayers.

One great use of the writings of the prophets, is to instruct us in the *signs of the times;* and though the warnings they give had a particular aspect upon their own age, yet they were likewise *written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.* This rule, if we should apply to our own case, and compare some circumstances of the present times, with the representation this Prophet gives of his own, when through a general corruption, both of principles and practice, men were so far from being *ashamed of their abominations,* (Jer. vi. 15.) that they openly avowed and justified them: the parallel will give us just cause to apprehend, that as we have equalled the Jews in sin, we may be made like them in punishment. But we are willing to hope better things, and cannot but look upon it as an earnest of God's favourable intention towards this church, that his providence hath advanced a person to preside over it, so excellently qualified as your Grace is, with piety, learning, and prudence, and all other accomplishments, requisite to support and adorn that high station.

Which that your Grace may long and prosperously enjoy to the glory of God, and the service of his church, and that your wise and steady conduct may be a blessing to the present age, and endear your memory to posterity, shall always be the earnest prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient and dutiful Servant,

WILLIAM LOWTH.

CONCERNING THE

AUTHOR AND THE SUBJECT

OF THE ENSUING

PROPHECY.

THE Prophet Jeremy is called the son of Hilkiah, (i. 1.) whom Clemens Alexandrinus (Strom. lib. i. p. 390. edit. Oxon.) supposes to be the same Hilkiah, who was high-priest in the reign of Josiah. (See 2 Kings xxii. 4. 8.)

But this opinion seems not so probable, because then the prophet would not have been described as living with the inferior priests at Anathoth, inasmuch as the high-priest and his family always kept their residence at Jerusalem. He was very young when he was called by God to the prophetical office; (i. 6.) in the exercise of which he continued

above forty years, and is said by St. Jerome, in his argument to this prophecy, to have been stoned to death at Tahapanes in Egypt, whither he and the remains of the Jews, after the destruction of Jerusalem, were carried by Johanan and the rest of their leaders, xliii. 7. (See the note upon that place.)

There were several collections of Jeremy's prophecies: one made by God's command in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, (xxxvi. 2.) This contained all the prophecies he had published to that time, as well against the other nations, as against the Jews. The former of these in our present collection, are put by themselves at the end of the book, from chap. xlvi. to the end of the list: but, in the present copies of the Septuagint, they follow immediately after the thirteenth verse of the twenty-fifth chapter.

Another collection of these prophecies is mentioned, i. 3. comprehending all that Jeremy had uttered to the time of the captivity. These may probably be supposed to have been collected by Baruch's amanuensis: and were put together without any regard to the order of time, just as we find the collection of Psalms was made.

To this was added another collection of Jeremy's prophecies, published about the time of his going down into Egypt, contained in chap. xlii.—xliv. at the end of which, Esdras, or some others, after the captivity, who undertook the completing the Scripture-canon, added those prophecies which Jeremy had spake against the gentiles, thinking it most proper to put them by themselves, because they treat of a different subject from the rest of the book: and one of them, *viz.* that against Elam, (xlix. 34.) bears date after the first collection made by Jeremy himself, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign.

The reason why the fifty-second chapter was added at the end of the book, shall be assigned in the Argument of that chapter.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

The first chapter contains the general commission which God gave to Jeremiah to execute the prophetical office; as well to the Jews in particular, as to the heathen countries round about them: and a promise of the Divine assistance in the discharge of his duty.

Ver. 1. *THE words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin.*] Anathoth was one of the cities allotted to the priests: (see Josh. xxi. 13. 18.) that town was but three miles from Jerusalem, as St. Jerome tells us in his preface to this prophecy, but yet was in the land of Benjamin, as, indeed, was part of Jerusalem itself. (See Josh. xviii. 28.) Judah and Benjamin lying so near together, makes them sometimes reckoned but as one tribe. (See 1 Kings xi. 32.)

Ver. 2, 3. *To whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah—unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah.*] Jeremiah prophesied by the space of forty-one years and upward, if we take in the prophecies he uttered in Egypt after the captivity, (chap. xliii. xliv.) which are not included within this period. We may observe from the sixth verse of this chapter, that Jeremy was very young when he was called by God to the prophetic office.

Unto the carrying away Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.] The Jews underwent several captivities before their final desolation. The first was when Jehoiakim was carried away captive, in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 12.) There was another captivity in the eighteenth year of his reign. (See below, lii. 29.) Then followed, in the next year, that captivity which accompanied the destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem, in the fifth month. (See ibid. ver. 21.) In memory of which calamity, the *fast of the fifth month* was observed during the seventy years of captivity; and continued down to aftertimes. (See Zech. vii. 5. viii. 19.)

Ver. 4. *Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] This seems to have been a visible appearance of the Divine Majesty, performed by the Son of God, or the second person of the blessed Trinity, (see the notes on Isa. vi. 1.) who appeared in a human shape, as a preludium to the incarnation; first to Adam, (Gen. iii. 8.) then to Abraham, (Gen. xviii. 2.) afterward to Joshua, (Josh. v. 13.) as, also, to Ezekiel, (Ezek. i. 26.) and to Daniel, (Dan. viii. 15. 18. x. 6. 10.) Of the same kind was this vision represented to Jeremiah. (Compare the ninth verse of this chapter with the forementioned texts of Daniel.) It is out of this glory, or Schechinah, the following words were uttered.

Ver. 5. *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee.*] Some persons have been designed for certain offices, by a particular decree of God, from or before their coming into the world. So was John Baptist, (Luke i. 15.) and St. Paul, (Gal. i. 15.) and the prophet Jeremy here in the text. This favour is expressed by *knowing him*, or taking especial notice of him; as if a prince should single one particular person out of a multitude, and call him by name, and appoint him to some honourable office, or trust. So God expresses the peculiar favour he had for Moses, by saying, *I know thee by name*, (Exod. xxxiii. 12. 17.) The same thing is likewise expressed by God's *sanctifying him*, or setting him apart for the prophetical office: the same phrase being applied to our Saviour himself, whom God, in an eminent manner, *sanctified*, or set apart for the offices of king, priest, and prophet, and, in due time, *sent him into the world* to execute the same; (John x. 36.) who, therefore, is called, by way of eminence, Τὸ Ἅγιον, (Luke i. 35.) *that holy person*; for so the neuter is sometimes taken. (See John iii. 6. 1 John v. 4.)

And ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.] To other nations as well as the Jews. (See xxv. 15. 18—20. and the latter part of this prophecy, from the forty-sixth chapter.)

Ver. 6. *Then said I, Ah, Lord God! I cannot speak; for I am a child.*] He excuses himself from taking the prophetical office, by reason of his youth, which made him unable to speak with that authority which is requisite for the discharge of so weighty a function. (See below, ver. 8. 17, 18. and compare Exod. iv. 10. vi. 12.) We cannot infer from hence, that Jeremy was at this time within the years of childhood: for he may call himself a child by way of extenuating his abilities; so Solomon calls himself a *little child*, 1 Kings iii. 7. who at that time was married, as appears by the first verse of that chapter, and must have been at least twenty years old. And the word *child*, or youth, is

elsewhere used of those who are arrived at the first years of manhood. So Isaac is called a *lad*, or *youth*, Gen. xxii. 3. when he must have been between twenty and thirty years old. Accordingly, the Romans extended the word *adolescentia*, or *youth*, to thirty years of age. (See Casaub. in Polyb. p. 29. et Exercit. in Baron. n. 99.)

Ver. 7. *But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child.*] God refuses to accept of his excuse, and renews his commission to him to execute the prophetical office. So God refused to accept of the excuse Moses made upon a like occasion. (See Exod. vi. 30. vii. 1, 2.)

Ver. 8. *Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee.*] The style of God's commission to his prophets and messengers commonly runs in these words, *I am with thee:* (see Exod. iii. 12. Deut. xxxi. 8. Josh. i. 5.) importing that God, who sent them, will enable them to discharge the office he has committed to them, and will give them strength proportionable to the business they undertake. To reprove the faults of all persons, the great men of the world, as well as those of lower degree, with that plainness and impartiality which the prophets used, requires a more than ordinary degree of courage; for which cause the promise of God's assistance was particularly necessary to encourage them in the discharge of that unthankful office; and in confidence of that assistance, they are exhorted to *be strong and of a good courage: not to fear nor be dismayed.* (See Deut. xxxi. 8. Josh. i. 9. Ezek. ii. 6. iii. 9.)

Ver. 9. *Then the Lord put forth his hand,* [see the note on ver. 4.] *and touched my mouth: and the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.*] Whereas the prophet complained, (ver. 6.) that he could not speak; God, by this visible sign, assures him, that he had conferred upon him the gift of utterance, and imparted his will and purposes in such a measure to him, that his words ought to be esteemed the oracles of God. (Compare Isa. vi. 7. li. 16.)

Ver. 10. *See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out,* &c.] The prophets are said to do things, when they declare God's purpose of doing them. So Ezekiel saith he was *sent to destroy the city;* (xliii. 3.) that is, to prophesy concerning its destruction. And Isaiah is commanded to *make the heart of the Jews fat; i. e.* to foretell their obduration and incredulity, (vi. 10.) In the same sense we are to understand the text here, that God had appointed Jeremiah to declare his purposes concerning the overthrow or restoration of kingdoms and nations, according as they either repented of their sins, or persisted in their evil doings. (Compare xviii. 7.) In pursuance of these directions, some of the following prophecies foretell the destruction of the Jewish nation, and several of the neighbouring countries: (see xxv. 15, &c.) others of them contain predictions of the restoration of the Jews, (as chap. xxx. xxxi.) and also of several other nations against which he had prophesied. (See xlviii. 47. xlix. 6. 39.)

Ver. 11, 12. *Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond-tree. Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it.*] The almond is one of the first trees that buds and blossoms in the spring; so a branch of that which buds and blossoms upon it, is a proper emblem to denote God's hastening the execution of the predictions he made by his prophet, who lived to see most of his prophecies fulfilled. The Hebrew words *shaked*, an *almond-tree*, and *shoked*, *hastening*, have an affinity in their sound: (such paronomasias being frequent in Scripture; see the note upon Isa. xxiv. 17.) so that not only the nature of the almond-tree, but the very sound of the Hebrew word that signifies it, denotes God's hastening to fulfil the prophecies which Jeremiah uttered by his directions.

Ver. 13. *And the word of the Lord came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see a seething-pot, and the face thereof was towards the north.*] The steam of a seething-pot doth fitly represent God's judgments, which are often compared to a fire, as the afflictions of the Israelites are to a *smoking furnace*, (Gen. xv. 17.) This steam was represented to the prophet as raised by a fire, or driven by a wind coming from the north; for the latter part of the verse may be better rendered thus: *And the appearance of it was as coming from the north.* So that the pot or caldron itself may denote Judea or Jerusalem in particular, (expressed in the same figure, Ezek. xi. 3. 7. xxiv. 3.) set on fire and consumed by an army of Chaldeans, who lay northward of Judea. (See iv. 6. vi. 1.)

Ver. 15. *For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north.*] There were lesser kings and princes, who were either allies or tributaries to the Babylonian empire. (Compare xxxiv. 1. l. 41. li. 27.) God saith, all these shall join their forces with the Chaldean army in order to the conquest of Judea. The word *family* is equivalent to people here, and viii. 3. x. 25. where these words, *The families that call not upon thy name*, are equivalent to *the kingdoms that call not upon thy name*, in Psal. lxxix. 6: *And they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem.*] Each prince shall pitch his royal pavilion, with all the marks of sovereignty belonging to it, in token of having obtained a complete victory, and taken entire possession of the city. (See xliii. 10.)

Ver. 16. *And I will utter all my judgments against them touching their wickedness.*] Then I will no longer speak unto them by my prophets, whose threatenings they have not regarded, but the judgments I bring upon them shall declare their wickedness, and the vengeance due unto them for their idolatries. (Compare iv. 12. where the words are the same in the original.)

Ver. 17. *Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee.*] It being the custom of the eastern countries to wear long garments, which they girded up about their loins, when any business required nimbleness or expedition: the phrase signifies dispatching any message with all possible vigour and intention of mind as well as of body. (See Job xxxviii. 3. 1 Pet. i. 13.) We may apply both senses to the text here; for God commands the prophet instantly to undertake the office he designed him for, and to discharge it with courage and presence of mind, as it follows.

Be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.] The Hebrew verb is the same in both parts of the sentence, which may literally be rendered thus: *Be not confounded at their faces* (when thou appearest in their presence), *lest I confound thee before them.* God exhorts him not to be dismayed at the scoffs and ill treatment he should meet with from hardened sinners, especially from such who

think their power and authority set them above reproof, and will bear them out in whatsoever they do. (See Ezek. xi. 6.) He tells him it is better to bear the reproaches of men, than the reproofs of God, who will call him to a strict account how he hath discharged his duty. (See 1 Cor. ix. 16, 17.)

Ver. 18. *For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city,* &c.] God promises to defend him against all the open assaults and secret contrivances of his enemies, the kings, princes, and priests, as well as those of an inferior rank. (See xv. 10. xx. 2. xxiii. 18, &c. xxvi. 10. xxxv. 15. xxxviii. 6.)

Ver. 19. *And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee.*] They shall no more be able to prevail against thee, than they could against an impregnable wall or fortress, (ver. 8.)

For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.] I will shew my power in delivering thee out of all thy troubles, when thy adversaries shall become a prey to their enemies. (See xxxix. 11, 12. and ver. 8. of this chapter.)

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

God expostulates with his people, for their ungrateful returns to his former benefits: and upbraids them with their fondness for the idolatries of the neighbouring countries.

Ver. 2. *GO and cry in the ears of Jerusalem.*] In the most public parts of the city, that every one may hear.

I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals.] I remember my first kindness to thee, when I delivered thee out of Egypt: (compare Hos. ii. 15.) and espoused thee to myself to be my own peculiar people. The covenant which God made with the Jews at Mount Sinai, is commonly represented under the metaphor of a *marriage-contract.* (See iii. 15. Ezek. xvi. 8. 60.) Upon this account, idolatry is called *going a whoring after other gods;* because it is the same degree of unfaithfulness to God, which an adulteress is guilty of in respect of her husband.

When thou wentest after me in a land that was not sown.] When I conducted thee through the wilderness, and there fed thee miraculously. (See ver. 6.)

Ver. 3. *Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the first-fruits of his increase.*] The Jews were then consecrated to me as a holy nation: (see Exod. xix. 5, 6.) as a people particularly dedicated to me, as the first-fruits of the increase of the ground are, by their law, consecrated to God, (Exod. xxiii. 19.)

All that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord.] The words were better rendered in the preter-perfect tense, as the future is often taken: *all they that devour him were trespassers, evil came upon them; i. e.* they that went about to destroy God's people were reputed by him as sacrilegious persons, as if they had devoured holy things, and accordingly met with remarkable punishments. Such were the Egyptians, Amalekites, &c. From the verb here rendered to *offend* comes *asham, a trespass-offering,* which was particularly appointed to be offered by those, who had ignorantly taken of the holy things set apart to God's service. (See Lev. v. 15. xxii. 14. 16.)

Ver. 4. *Hear ye the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel.*] Compare xxxi. 1. The prophet directs his discourse to the twelve tribes, as he does afterward, iii. 14, &c. Nor was the captivity of the ten tribes so total, but that there were some Israelites still remaining among the Assyrian colonies. (See 2 Chron. xxxiv. 9. 33. xxxv. 18.)

Ver. 5. *What iniquity have your fathers found in me.*] The same expostulation God makes by his prophet Micah, vi. 3.

That they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?] That they have forsaken me, and followed the idolatrous worship of the heathens. (Compare 2 Kings xvii. 15.) Idols are commonly styled *vanities* (see particularly in this prophecy, x. 15. xiv. 22. xvi. 19.) and *things of nought,* (xiv. 14.) because *an idol is nothing in the world,* as St. Paul speaks, 1 Cor. viii. 4. Not being what it pretends to be, nor can it bring any profit to them that worship it. (See below, ver. 8.)

Ver. 6. *Neither said they, Where is the Lord—that led us through the wilderness,* &c.] God's sustaining such a vast multitude in a barren desert, was an amazing instance of his almighty power, and his goodness and care over his people. (See Deut. viii. 15, 16. xxxii. 10.)

Through a land of deserts and of pits.] The Hebrew word *shacha,* a *pit,* sometimes is put for destruction, as Psal. xxx. 3. and is near akin to the word *shachath,* which signifies death and corruption. The Chaldee paraphrase upon Job xxx. 14. explains *shoah, desolation,* by *shaka.* Thus we may expound it here, a place where there were no comforts or conveniences of life: to the same sense it is called in the following words, *a land of the shadow of death.*

Ver. 7. *And I brought you into a plentiful country,* &c.] The Hebrew reads, *into the land of Carmel:* which was so plentiful a part of Judea, that the word from thence came to signify a fruitful place, in general. (See Isa. x. 18. xxix. 17. xxxii. 15.) Judea is commonly called by Moses, *a land that flows with milk and honey.*

But when ye entered, ye defiled my land.] By your sins, (Lev. xviii. 25. Numb. xxxv. 34.) chiefly by your idolatries; (Psal. cvi. 38.) that sin receiving great aggravation from hence, that the people should thereby renounce God's authority in that very land, whose propriety he had reserved to himself, (Lev. xxv. 23.) though he had graciously bestowed upon them the use of it.

Ver. 8. *The priests said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the law knew me not.*] The priests, whose office it was to instruct others in their duty, (see Mal. ii. 6, 7.) were ignorant or regardless of it themselves: and this was the principal reason of that degeneracy of manners which prevailed among the people. (See Hos. iv. 6.)

The pastors also transgressed against me.] A pastor or shepherd is taken in the prophets for a civil magistrate, as well as an ecclesiastical governor, as has been observed upon Isa. lvi. 11. In the former sense it is used in several places of this prophecy. (See vi. 3. xxv. 34. xlix. 19.) Which sense agrees best with the scope of the text here, which is to shew, that all orders and degrees of men in authority had contributed to that corruption of manners

which had overspread the nation. (Compare ver. 26. of this chapter.)

The prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit.] See xxii. 13. and the notes upon ver. 5. of this chapter, and vii. 31.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore I will plead with you, saith the Lord.*] The expression is taken from the pleas of plaintiff and defendant used in the courts of judicature. (See Isa. xliii. 26.) It imports God's laying before them their demerits, how defective they have been in their duty, and what ungrateful returns they have made to him for all his favours. (See ver. 35. of this chapter.) And this he doth sometimes by word of mouth, and by the messages of his prophets. (See Hos. ii. 2. Micah vi. 2.) And sometimes he does it by his judgments, the manifest tokens of God's vengeance due to men's sins. (See Isa. lxvi. 16. Jer. xxv. 31. Ezek. xx. 36. xxxviii. 22.)

And with your children's children will I plead.] According to the tenor of the law, whereby God threatens to *visit the sins*, particularly the idolatry, of *the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.*

Ver. 10. *For pass over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing.*] The isles of Chittim are the countries lying upon the Mediterranean Sea, (see the notes on Isa. xxiii. 1.) which lay west of Judea. Kedar, being part of Arabia, was eastward from thence: for Arabia is commonly called the *east country* in Scripture; (see Gen. x. 30. xxv. 6. Job i. 3.) and particularly the inhabitants of Kedar are called the *men of the east*, xlix. 28. of this prophecy. So the sense of the verse is, If you search from *east* to *west*, from one end of the world to the other, you will find no instance like this of the Jews' apostacy, mentioned in the following verse.

Ver. 11. *Hath a nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods? but my people hath changed their glory,* &c.] Men are very tenacious of the religion of their forefathers, and hardly prevailed upon to part with it, though the change be never so reasonable: whereas the Jews have changed the worship of the true God, who was their strength and their glory, for idols and vanities that cannot save nor protect them, (ver. 5.) God is called the *glory* of the Jews, because he chose the ark for the place where his glory should reside; for the same reason the temple is called the *throne of his glory*, xiv. 21. and they are said to have *changed their glory into the similitude of an ox*, Psal. cvi. 20. (a text exactly parallel with this place) when they made the golden calf; and instead of the Divine Schechinah, which should go before them, they chose that senseless idol to be their conductor. God may be called their *glory* for another reason, *viz.* because he chose them to be his peculiar people, and took them into his immediate care and protection: a privilege which no other nation could boast of. (See Deut. iv. 7.)

Ver. 12. *Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this,* &c.] This is such a horrible wickedness, that the heavens themselves should be affrighted to behold it, and the celestial bodies withdraw their light and influences from that part of the world where such enormities are practised. Such rhetorical apostrophes to heaven and earth, import the unusualness, and likewise the indignity, of the things spoken of; implying them to be such, that if men take no notice of them, the elements themselves will testify against such practices. (Compare Isa. i. 1. Micah i. 2. vi. 2. Job xx. 27.)

Ver. 13. *They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters,* &c.] God is the author and giver of all blessings, both spiritual and temporal, from whom all good gifts are derived, as from an inexhaustible spring or fountain. (See Psal. xxxvi. 9.) And wherever else men place their happiness, whether in false religions, or in the uncertain comforts of worldly blessings, they will find themselves disappointed, just as they that expect to find water at broken cisterns or conduits. This particularly reflects upon the Jews renouncing the worship of the true God, and their dependance upon him, and betaking themselves to the alliance and protection of idolaters. (See ver. 18. 25. 36.)

Ver. 14. *Is Israel a servant? is he a home-born slave? why is he spoiled?*] God redeemed Israel from the bondage of Egypt, and adopted him to be his *son*, (Exod. iv. 22.) So that the servitude he now undergoes, and his being made a prey to so many foreign enemies, cannot be owing to his birth or primitive condition, but must be imputed to his sins, of which his slavery is the consequent. (Compare Isa. l. 1. lii. 3.)

Ver. 15. *The young lions roared upon him,* &c.] *i. e.* The kings of Syria, Assyria, and other neighbouring countries. (See Isa. i. 7.) Tyrants and oppressors are commonly compared to lions. (See below, li. 17. Job iv. 10, 11. Psal. xxxiv. 10. lviii. 6. Ezek. xix. 3. 6. Nahum ii. 11, 12.)

Ver. 16. *Also the children of Noph and Tahapanes have broken the crown of thy head.*] Or, *feed upon thy crown:* so the margin reads; *i. e.* destroy and devour the principal, or best parts of the country. So the best spices are called *the head of spices*, Exod. xxx. 23. Cant. iv. 14. If we follow the reading of the text, the prophet pursues the metaphor of the lions, mentioned ver. 15. whose custom it is to *tear the arm with the crown of the head*, Deut. xxxiii. 20. Concerning Noph and Tahapanes, see xliii. 7. xliv. 1. By their children or inhabitants are meant the Egyptians in general. The verse may relate to the conquest that Pharaoh-Nechoh made of Judea, (2 Kings xxiii. 33.) which, though it happened after the time that this prophecy was uttered, may be spoken of here as already past; a way of speaking usual in the prophets. (See the note upon Isa. xxi. 9.)

Ver. 17. *When he led thee by the way.*] Who would have been thy guide and conductor, thy strength and support, (see Deut. xxxii. 10.) if thou hadst hearkened to his voice.

Ver. 18. *And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river?*] The kings of Egypt and Assyria were the two most potent monarchs in the neighbourhood of Judea; and, according as either of those prevailed over the other, the Jews made their court to him who was the stronger, and desired his assistance. This is expressed by *drinking the water of Sihor*, or *Nile*, called so for its blackness or muddiness; (see Isa. xxiii. 3.) and of Euphrates, called here *the river* by way of eminence. (Compare Isa. xxvii. 12.) The expressions allude to ver. 13. where human assistances are called *broken cisterns*, and opposed to God, who, by reason of his all-sufficiency, is styled the *fountain of living waters*. The Septuagint render *Sihor*, Γηὼν, as if it were the same with the river *Gihon*, mentioned Gen. ii. 13. It is certain

many of the ancients understood *Gihon* to be the *Nile*, particularly the author of Ecclus. xxiv. 27. And Ludolphus observes, that the *Nile* is now called by that name in the Ethiopic language. (See the Commentary upon his Ethiopic Hist. lib. i. n. 56.)

The waters of Sihor.] Some suppose *Sihor* to be the same with *the river of Egypt.* (See the note upon Ezek. xlvii. 19. and upon Amos vi. 14.)

Ver. 19. *Thy own wickedness shall correct thee,* &c.] The miseries that your own sins have brought upon you, are a sufficient instruction to you to break off your evil courses, and to return to God by a sincere repentance.

Ver. 20. *For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bonds; and thou saidst, I will not transgress.*] Upon several deliverances I gave thee, that out of Egypt, and in the times of the judges, thou didst promise to serve me faithfully. (See Exod. xix. 8. Josh. xxiv. 18. Judg. x. 16. 1 Sam. xii. 10.)

When upon every high hill, and under every green tree, thou wanderest, playing the harlot.] The sense would run easier, if we read, *Yet upon every high hill,* &c. and so the particle *ki* is translated, xxii. 24. of this prophecy. God upbraids them with the breach of promise, that after all their resolutions of amendment, they still relapsed to the former sin of worshipping idols upon high places, and in shady groves, which the law expressly forbade, (Deut. xii. 2. Ezek. xvi. 24.) The idolatrous kings built temples for their idols upon high mountains and high places. (See 1 Kings xii. 31. xiii. 32.) These were still frequented after the religious kings had destroyed all other monuments of idolatry. (See 1 Kings xv. 24. xxii. 43.)

Ver. 21. *Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed,* &c.] The laws which I gave thee, and the means of grace which I afforded thee, were sufficient to have made thee fruitful in every good work, though now thou art strangely degenerate. The church is often represented under the metaphor of a vine (see Isa. v. 1. and the parallel texts referred to there in the margin), and the means of grace under the notion of planting. (See Isa. lx. 21. lxi. 3. Matt. xv. 13. 1 Cor. iii. 6.)

Ver. 22. *For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take unto thee much soap,* &c.] Though thou usest ever so many methods of washing away thy sins, such as are the rites of expiation prescribed by the law, or practised by idolaters: though thou insistest never so much upon thy own innocence and justification, (see ver. 23.) yet the marks or stains of thy sins will always appear in the sight of God, till they are done away by a sincere repentance and reformation. Expositors are divided about the sense of the word *niktam,* which our translators render *marked;* and in which sense the word is taken for a *spot* or *mark,* in the Chaldee and Syriac tongues. But Bochart thinks the word *catham* with *caph,* equivalent to *catham* with *cheth,* and expounds it *hidden,* or *laid up;* as men's sins are said to be, when God, perhaps, bears with them for the present, but intends to call them to account in due time. (See Deut. xxxii. 34. Job xiv. 17. Hos. xiii. 12.)

Ver. 23. *How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim?*] The Jews, it seems, have found out distinctions, whereby to reconcile the worship of the true God with those religious rites, which they paid to the deities of the heathen, called here *Baalim.* These they pretended were only inferior demons or spirits, or the souls of men departed, and might be worshipped in subordination to the supreme God. The word *Baalim* answers in the Hebrew to κύριοι πολλοὶ, (1 Cor. viii. 5.) whom St. Paul mentions as the inferior deities of the heathen.

See thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done.] That horrible practice of the Jewish idolaters in burning their sons and daughters in the fire, in the valley of Hinnom, (see vii. 32.) is an effectual confutation of those pretences whereby they justified their innocence, since this was a way of worship expressly forbidden by God: (Lev. xx. 2, &c.) and such an impious one, as none but the devil could invent.

Ibid. and Ver. 24. *Thou art a swift dromedary traversing her ways; a wild ass used to the wilderness,* &c.] The particle *as,* is to be supplied in both these sentences, as it is frequently understood. (See note on Isa. xxi. 8.) The prophet persists in comparing their fondness for variety of idols to the rage of lust, (which metaphor is pursued at large by Ezekiel, chap. xvi. xxiii.) and upon that account he resembles them to these wild beasts, which have their constant seasons of breeding, and are then violently set upon satisfying their lust, and not to be caught or tamed. The comparisons withal set forth the indefatigable pains the Jews took in applying themselves to foreign princes for their succour and alliance, (compare ver. 36.) instead of relying upon God, and a strict observance of his laws. These practices of theirs are often reproved in the prophets. (See Isa. xxx. 1, &c. lvii. 9, 10. Hos. v. 13. xii. 1.).

All they that seek her, will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her.] The hunters know the seasons of catching these wild creatures, and never try to take them but in a proper time. And it is as much in vain to offer any arguments to this people, to reclaim them from their eager pursuit after idolatry. The time of affliction is the only season when they will hearken to God's voice. (See ver. 27. Hos. v. 15.)

Ver. 25. *Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst.*] Do not wear out thy shoes, or sandals, and expose thyself to thirst and weariness, in undertaking long journeys, to make new alliances with idolaters. Some think in these expressions, their persisting in idolatry is compared to the lewdness of common harlots, and the sottishness of an habitual drunkard. (Compare Ezek. xvi. 25. Deut. xxix. 19.)

But thou saidst, There is no hope.] The words of desperate sinners, who are resolved to continue in their wickedness, in spite of all the reason that can be offered to the contrary. (Compare xviii. 12.)

For I have loved strangers.] Or strange gods. (Compare iii. 13. Deut. xxxii. 16.) They were resolved to be like the heathen round about them; to court their friendship, and to partake of their idolatries.

Ver. 26. *As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed,* &c.] As a thief hath nothing to say for himself, but is perfectly confounded when he is taken in the very act; so the house of Israel have no manner of plea wherewith to excuse their idolatry, but only an impudent denial of the fact itself. (See ver. 23.)

Ver. 27. *Saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth.*] Giving the title of father due to God, as the sovereign author and preserver

of all things, (see iii. 19.) to senseless images, which are indeed no better than what they appear to be, wood and stone. (See the note on Isa. xliv. 13.)

For they have turned their back unto me, and not their face.] A token of contempt and aversion. (See xviii. 17. xxxii. 33.) The word *noreph*, properly signifies the hinder part of the neck, but is used for the back parts, particularly xlviii. 39. we read, *how Moab turned the back with shame!*

But in the time of trouble they will say, Arise, and save us.] As they did formerly. (See 1 Sam. xii. 13. Psal. lxxviii. 34.)

Ver. 28. *But where are thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of thy trouble.*] God returns the same answer he formerly did, when their distresses made them seek him by a forced submission. (See Judg. x. 14.)

For according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah.] Every county and city hath its peculiar deity, according to the custom of the heathen. (See 2 Kings xvii. 30, 31. Hos. viii. 11. x. 1.)

Ver. 29. *Wherefore will ye plead with me?*] Why do you insist upon your innocency? (See ver. 35.) Why do you lay claim to my former promises, as if you had not forfeited your title to them by your sins?

Ver. 30. *In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction.*] The design of God's judgments is men's reformation; and where they do not attain this end, it shews that such a people are incorrigible. The words are directed to the land of Judea, whose inhabitants are called its children, v. 7. (Compare Isa. i. 5.)

Your own sword hath devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion.] You are so far from receiving correction, that you take away the lives of those prophets who reprove you, and exhort you to amend your ways. (See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. Nehem. ix. 26. Acts vii. 52.)

Ver. 31. *O generation, see ye the word of the Lord: Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?*] Consider what I say to you from the mouth of God: Have ye not been plentifully provided for by him? has he been backward in bestowing his kindness upon you? To this sense some render the latter part of the sentence a *backward land*, a land of snow, clouds, and dark vapours, where the fruits spring or ripen late, for want of the kindly warmth of the sun; a character that did by no means belong to Judea.

Wherefore say my people, We are lords; we will no more come at thee?] Words that imply casting off God's authority, and rejecting him from being their Lord and sovereign. (Compare Psal. xii. 4.)

Ver. 32. *Can a maid forget her ornaments, and a bride her attire?* &c.] God was the glory and ornament of the Jewish nation, upon whose favour and protection they so justly valued themselves, and were thereby distinguished from other nations. (See Deut. iv. 7, 8. 2 Sam. vii. 23, 24.) So that it is a just matter of astonishment, that this people, called by his name, should now for so many years renounce their relation to him, who is their truest glory. (See ver. 11.)

Ver. 33. *Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love?*] The prophet alludes (as before, ver. 20.) to the practices of a common harlot, who decks herself, and uses all the inveigling arts that may recommend her to her gallants: in like manner have the Jews tried all methods to gain the friendship and assistance of foreign idolaters, who are called her *lovers*. (See iii. 1. iv. 13. xxii. 22.) Noldius expounds it, Why dost thou justify thy ways, or insist upon thy innocence? (compare ver. 35.) and translates the particle *laken* [therefore] *whereas*. (See his Concordance, p. 507.)

Therefore hast thou also taught the wicked one thy ways.] Thou hast by this means, not only confirmed those nations in their idolatrous practices, but hast also taught them to practise new idolatries which they were not accustomed to.

Ver. 34. *Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls* (or lives) *of the poor innocents.*] Of the children offered in sacrifice to Moloch. (See ver. 23. xix. 4. Psal. cvi. 38.) The guilt of that innocent blood was as evident upon them as if they had murdered them with their own hands, and the stains of their blood had been found upon their clothes.

I have not found it by secret search, but upon all these.] It is become a national sin. (See vii. 31. xix. 4, 5.) Some render the former part of the sentence thus; *Thou didst not find them breaking up* [a house, like *thieves*], who might be killed immediately upon the spot, according to the law; (Exod. xxii. 2.) *i. e.* thou didst not find them guilty of any such notorious wickedness as to deserve present death.

Ver. 35. *Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me,* &c.] The people insisting still upon their own innocence, God tells them he will debate the case with them, and prove the contrary. (See before, ver. 9. 23. 29.)

Ver. 36. *Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?*] He reproves them for their various methods of courting the alliance of foreign idolaters, which implied a distrust of God's protection. (See before, ver. 13. 18. 23. 25.)

Thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria.] Ahaz made himself tributary to the king of Assyria, but it turned to his disgrace and ruin. (See 2 Chron. xxviii. 21.) In like manner shall ye be disappointed in your expectations of succour from Egypt. (See xxxvii. 5. 7. Lam. iv. 17. 2 Kings xxiv. 7.)

Ver. 37. *Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thy hands upon thy head.*] The ambassadors thou sendest to Egypt shall return with disappointment and confusion. (See 2 Sam. xiii. 19.) For God will not prosper these unlawful means thou makest use of for thy preservation. (See ver. 36.)

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Under the metaphor of a woman's being false to her husband, God sets forth the idolatry both of Israel and Judah: he earnestly exhorts them to repentance, and promises, upon their repentance, in due time to receive them into favour.

Ver. 1. *SHALL not the land be greatly polluted?*] The words allude to Deut. xxiv. 4. where it is said, that if a man take her to wife again, who had been divorced from him, it is *such an abomination as causeth the land to sin.* Such a practice would give encouragement to a *community of wives*, which must produce all manner of uncleanness and confusion.

But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers.] Thou hast entered into a confederacy with many foreigners; (see

the note on ii. 33.) and learned their idolatries: (compare ii. 20.) a thing expressly forbidden in the law of Moses. (See Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. xii. 30. 1 Kings xi. 1, 2.)

Ver. 2. *Lift up thine eyes to the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with.*] Idolatry is usually expressed by *going a whoring after other gods;* (see the note on ii. 2.) who were worshipped in the high places. (See ii. 20.)

In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness.] Their fondness for idolatry is compared to the lewdness of a common strumpet, who *lies in wait for men as for a prey,* (Prov. xxiii. 28.) or *as a robber* (so the margin reads), the same comparison which is here used; the Arabians being remarkable for living upon robberies, and lying in wait for travellers.

Ver. 3. *Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain.*] Compare ix. 12. xiv. 4. God threatens, as a punishment of the people's sins, to make the *heavens iron,* (Deut. xxviii. 22.) The climate of Judea wanted rain at two seasons; the first was just after seed-time, (see Isa. xxx. 23.) called the *former rain;* the other not long before harvest, called the *latter rain,* (Joel ii. 23. compared with Amos iv. 7.)

And [yet] *thou hast a whore's forehead,* &c.] All my judgments have made no impression upon thee, nor hast thou any remorse for thy wickedness. (Compare vi. 15. viii. 12.)

Ver. 4. *Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art the guide of my youth?*] Notwithstanding their former obstinacy, God calls them still to repentance, to acknowledge the duty they owe to God, both as their father, (see ver. 19.) and their husband: for under both these ties God was related to them. (See ii. 27. and ver. 14. of this chapter.) God calls himself the guide of their youth, (compare Prov. ii. 17.) as having espoused them in the days of their youth before their manners were corrupted by idolatry. (See ii. 2. Hos. ii. 15.)

Ver. 5. *Will he reserve his anger for ever? or will he keep it to the end?*] God puts words into the people's mouths in this and the foregoing verse, whereby they might express their humiliation, and hope in his mercy, which they might still expect to find upon their true repentance, though upon account of their long provocations they had reason to despair of it.

Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest.] Thy behaviour hath been in direct opposition to these kind admonitions; thou dost still persist in malicious wickedness, and by thy actions shewest the utmost hatred and despite against God and goodness.

Ver. 6. *The Lord also said unto me in the days of Josiah the king.*] This relates to the time when Josiah made a great reformation, and purged the land from the idols which had been set up in every part of it; (see 2 Kings xxiii.) wherein the people did outwardly comply with him, but still retained a kindness for their former idolatries. (Compare ver. 10. of this chapter with Zeph. i. 5. and 2 Kings xxiii. 26, 27.)

Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done?] See the note on vii. 24.

Ver. 7. *And I said unto her, after she had done all these things, Turn thou unto me.*] I sent to her frequent messages by my prophets, exhorting her to repentance. (See 2 Kings xvii. 13.)

And her treacherous sister Judah saw it.] The two kingdoms of Israel and Judah are described as sisters in iniquity. The same metaphor is applied to Samaria and Jerusalem, the two metropolises of those kingdoms, (Ezek. xxiii. 4, &c.) The word *treacherous,* properly denotes a wife's being unfaithful to her husband; (see ver. 20.) and from thence it is applied to the sin of idolatry, which is spiritual whoredom, as hath been already observed.

Ver. 8. *And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce.*] Or, *When for the sake of the adultery which backsliding Israel had committed, I had put her away.* The same metaphor is still pursued; God's casting off the ten tribes is expressed by giving them a *bill of divorce;* but such a one as differed from the common bills of divorce in this particular, that God was ready to receive them again, whenever they would return from their idolatries. (See ver. 1. of this chapter.) Upon which account, God denies that he had given his people a bill of divorce, Isa. l. 1. meaning such a one as was irreversible.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass, through the lightness* [or fame] *of her whoredom, that she defiled the land,* &c.] See ii. 7. 27.

Ver. 10. *And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned to me with her whole heart.*] See the note on ver. 6. That the generality of the people did not join sincerely in Josiah's reformation appears from hence, that immediately upon his death, they relapsed into the grossest idolatry. (See below, vii. 18. xix. 4, &c. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 33.)

Ver. 11. *The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.*] Because Judah hath sinned against greater convictions, and would not take warning by that desolation which God brought upon the whole kingdom of Israel for their idolatries. (Compare Ezek. xvi. 51.)

Ver. 12. *Go, proclaim these words towards the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel,* &c.] The sin of the ten tribes being attended with more favourable circumstances than that of Judah, the prophet is commanded to call them to repentance, with promises of pardon. In order to this end, he is bid to direct his speech northward, *i. e.* towards Assyria and Media, whither the ten tribes were carried away captive, which countries lay north of Judea. (See ver. 18. l. 9. 41. compared with li. 11. 27.) The restoration of Israel as distinct from Judah, is the subject of several other prophecies. (See the note upon ver. 18.)

Ver. 13. *Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God.*] Repentance is a condition necessarily required in order to their being restored to God's favour. (See Deut. xxx. 1—3.)

And hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree.] Hast gone a whoring after the gods of the neighbouring nations; for the word translated *strangers,* signifies strange gods. (Compare ii. 25.) The phrase *Thou hast scattered thy ways,* is taken from the lewdness of common harlots, who promiscuously prostitute themselves to all comers. (Compare Prov. xxx. 20.)

Ver. 14. *Turn you, O backsliding children.*] The prophet directed his speech, ver. 12. to the ten tribes: and now he addresses himself to Judah as well as to Israel,

as being equally concerned in the mercies here promised. (See ver. 17, 18. and iv. 1—3.)

For I am married to you.] See ii. 2. and compare xxxi. 32. The phrase here and in the text last mentioned is the same, *baâlti bakem*, which Dr. Pocock is inclined to interpret to the sense of disregarding, or disdaining, and quotes some rabbies who expound the words to this sense, *I have of late disregarded you, but now I will take or choose you, one of a city*, &c. (See his miscellany notes upon Porta Mosis, p. 146.)

And I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and bring you to Zion.] The word *family* here is equivalent to a country or kingdom. (Compare i. 15. Zech. xiv. 17, 18.) Some expound the words to this sense: Although there be but one of you in a city, or two in a country, I will not leave those behind, but will give them a share in the general restoration of their brethren. (Compare Isa. xxvii. 12.) Others suppose that the words relate to their return from Babylon, when the whole congregation was but *forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, beside their servants*, (Ezra ii. 64.) a small number in comparison of those that stayed behind. But I conceive that this verse as well as the context, relates to the general restoration of the Jews, yet to come; and they import, that there shall be but a few of the Jews in comparison, to whom this promise shall belong, *viz.* those who are elsewhere called the *remnant*. (See the notes on Isa. i. 9. iv. 2. x. 22. and compare Ezek. xx. 38. Zech. xiii. 8, 9.)

Ver. 15. *And I will give you pastors according to mine heart*, &c.] This is likewise an evangelical promise. (Compare xxiii. 4.) Implying, that under the happy times here foretold, all governors both civil and ecclesiastical should faithfully discharge their trust, in duly governing and instructing the people committed to their charge; and all that are in authority shall answer that character God gives of David, that he was *a man after his own heart;* (1 Sam. xiii. 14.) whereas, at that time when Jeremiah lived, the princes, the priests, and prophets, were the ringleaders in seducing the people, and enticing them to idolatry. (See ii. 8.)

Ver. 16. *And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land.*] The words imply, that the Jews shall be gathered together from their several dispersions, and restored to their own country. (See the notes on Isa. xi. 11. lxi. 4.)

In those days—they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither shall it come to mind, &c.] In those times the Mosaical covenant shall be utterly forgotten, and passed over in silence as not worthy to be mentioned; (compare Isa. lxv. 17.) and all the external marks and ceremonies thereto belonging shall be laid aside. Such as were the ark, where the tables of the covenant were laid up, and the temple, which was the repository of the ark itself; (compare xliv. 22.) where, by the law of Moses, the Jews were bound to pay their yearly attendance, and offer up their solemn worship to God.

Neither shall that be done any more.] The margin reads, *Neither shall it be magnified any more;* to which sense the verb *nasah* is rendered by our translators, 1 Sam. xii. 6. But the original will bear this sense, which agrees better with the scope of the place: *Neither shall any more sacrifice be offered there.* In which sense the same verb is elsewhere taken. (See Exod. xxix. 38. Psal. lxvi. 15.)

Ver. 17. *At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered to it.*] Jerusalem is often called the *city of God:* (see Psal. xlviii. 1. lxxxvii. 3.) whereupon it is a fit type or figure of the church of God: (see Isa. lxvi. 20. Zech. viii. 3.) which the text tells us shall be called the *throne of the Lord; i. e.* God shall give evident proofs of his peculiar residence there, as the king and protector of his people, and in a more eminent manner than ever he did at the temple in Jerusalem. (Compare xiv. 21.) To this church *all the nations shall be gathered*, as it follows; *i. e.* the Jews and gentiles shall then be joined in one religious body or society, and worship God with *one mind and one mouth.*

The expression alludes to the Jews going up to Jerusalem at their solemn festivals. (See the notes upon Isa. ii. 3. lx. 9. lxvi. 20.)

To the name of the Lord.] To the church where God hath placed his name, as he promised to do in Solomon's temple, (1 Kings viii. 29.) and where he will give evident tokens of his power and presence.

Neither shall they walk any more after the imaginations of their evil heart.] God's restoring his ancient people the Jews, shall be attended with the bringing in of the *fulness of the gentiles* into the church, and the utter abolishing of all false and idolatrous ways of worship. (Compare Rom. xi. 25, 26. and see the notes on Isa. i. 29. lxvi. 12. 19.)

Ver. 18. *In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel.*] Most of the prophecies which mention the restoration of the Jews join Judah and Israel together, as equal sharers in that blessing. (See xxx. 3. xxxi. 1. 1. 4. 20. Isa. xi. 13. Ezek. xxxvii. 16. 22. Hos. i. 11. Zech. x. 6.)

They shall come together out of the land of the north.] See before ver. 12. i. 15. and compare xxxi. 8.

Ver. 19. *But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land?*] How can it be consistent with the Divine justice, for God to receive such a rebellious people into favour, to own them for his children, and restore them to the possession of that goodly inheritance which he gave to their fathers? Judea is elsewhere called a *pleasant land*, the *glory of all lands*, and the *land which God had espied out* for his chosen people. (See Ezek. xx. 6. Dan. viii. 9. xi. 16. 41. 45.)

A goodly heritage of the hosts of nations.] The words may be rendered, *a goodly heritage of the desire of nations*, taking *tsebaoth* [host] as the same in sense with *tsebi*, the foregoing word, and as a derivative from the Chaldee verb *tseba*, which signifies to desire, (Dan. v. 19. vii. 19.) This sense the Chaldee paraphrast follows. If we take *tsebaoth* in the usual sense which our translators follow, the phrase will import that land which the armies of the gentiles are to possess in the latter times, to which this prophecy relates; (see Ezek. xxxviii. 8.) when, according to our Saviour's prediction, *Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the gentiles*, (Luke xxi. 24.) But after all, I am apt to think, that the Septuagint have hit upon the true sense of this place, who render it, *The inheritance of the Almighty God of the nations;* taking the word *tsebi* for a title belonging to God, denoting his superlative excellence. The word is used in a sense near akin to this, 2 Sam. i. 19. where it denotes the regal dignity of Saul. A great regard is to be paid to the authority of that version, because the com-

pilers of it had better opportunities of knowing the extent of the Hebrew language, than we can have at this distance, and might have very good reasons for rendering some words in a singular and unusual signification, and such a one as the later rabbins and lexicographers have not observed. Upon these grounds, Bishop Pearson, Dr. Pocock, and other learned men, justify several passages in that translation, which are cited in the New Testament, and shew that the sense of the original is truly expressed by it.

And I said, Thou shalt call me, Father; and shalt not turn away from me.] Upon this condition I will restore thee into grace and favour, that thou acknowledge those benefits, which thou hast from time to time received at my hands, and vow faithful obedience to me. (Compare Deut. xxxii. 6. 1 Chron. xxix. 10.)

When the Jews called upon God as their Father in their prayers, they did it chiefly by way of confession, when they would acknowledge his former favours, together with the ungrateful returns they had made to him, and withal desired to express their trust in his mercies. (Compare ver. 4. of this chapter, Isa. lxiii. 16. lxiv. 8.) To address ourselves with an humble confidence and assurance to God as our Father, is the peculiar prerogative of us Christians, who have *received the adoption of sons*, whereupon *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father*, (Gal. iv. 5, 6.)

Ver. 20. *Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have you dealt treacherously with me.*] The Hebrew reads, *From her friend*, in which sense the word is taken, Hos. iii. 1. Idolatry being the breach of that covenant which God made with the Jews as their Lord and husband, is properly compared to the sin of whoredom, or a woman's being unfaithful to her husband's bed, as hath already been observed in several passages of this and the foregoing chapter. (Compare v. 11, 12. Isa. xlviii. 8.) The word *reang*, translated *husband*, properly signifies a *friend*, as our margin observes; but it is elsewhere used for a *husband*. (See Cant. v. 16.)

O house of Israel.] An expression denoting all the families or tribes of the Jews: (compare ii. 4.) called the *children of Israel* in the following verse.

Ver. 21. *A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel.*] The prophet foreseeing that the Jews will at length be touched with a hearty repentance for all their misdoings, represents them as bewailing themselves upon the high places, the scenes of their former idolatries. (Compare xxxi. 9. l. 4. Zech. xii. 10.)

Ver. 22. *Return, ye backsliding children*, &c.] This verse contains a dialogue between God and his people, wherein he offers gracious terms of pardon to them, and they make sincere professions of obedience to him.

Ver. 23. *Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, from the multitudes of mountains*, &c.] A continuation of that form of confession, begun ver. 22. drawn up with reference to the present state of the idolatrous Israelites; wherein they express their abhorrence of those idols they worshipped upon the hills and mountains; (see ver. 6.) and declare their firm adherence to, and dependance upon, the Lord their God. Idolatry was the great and crying sin of the Jews, in which case God particularly declared, that he would *visit the sins of the fathers upon the children.* (See Exod. xx. 5. Isa. lxv. 7.) Accordingly the Jews have a proverbial saying among them, *That there is no judgment inflicted upon Israel, wherein there is not an ounce of the golden calf.*

Ver. 24. *For shame hath devoured the labours of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters.*] All the miseries of our captivity, implying the loss of our goods and substance, and the dispersion of our families and nearest relations: all these calamities which we and our forefathers have felt are the effects of our idolatry, of which we are now heartily ashamed, and which hath brought shame and confusion upon us. (Compare Ezek. xvi. 61. 63.) The idol Baal was by way of reproach called *Bosheth*, that is, *shame.* (See xi. 13. Hos. ix. 10.)

Ver. 25. *We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us.*] The expressions are taken from those who cast themselves down upon the ground, and cover themselves with dust or ashes, out of grief and anguish of mind. (Compare vi. 26. Isa. l. 11.)

By way of conclusion to the notes upon this chapter, I shall consider an objection which the Jews advance from the twenty-first and following verses of it; where the dispersion of that nation is charged upon their idolatry, and their conversion expressed by their deserting and renouncing that sin. From these passages, and others of a like nature, particularly Isa. lxv. 7. they conclude, that their present forlorn condition is not to be ascribed to their rejecting the true Messias, as we Christians believe.

To this objection an answer may be returned in these two particulars:

1. That the prophecies belonging to this matter, which were uttered near the times of the Babylonish captivity, or before the people's return from it, do so intermix the promises relating to their first or second restoration, that it is no easy matter to discern the transition from one to the other: the like ambiguity may be observed in many prophecies, relating to the first and second coming of the Messias. And we may assign a sufficient reason, why the prophecies that treat of the first and second dispersion of the Jews, should be delivered in such doubtful expressions, *viz.* because it would have discouraged the Jews from returning out of Babylon into their own country, if any ancienter prophecies had given them a distinct account of a second dispersion of their nation, and of the cause of so dreadful a calamity.

But, secondly, We may observe that some prophecies in the Old Testament do plainly ascribe the destruction of the Jewish church and nation to their rejecting and putting to death the Messias. To this purpose those words of Moses are very remarkable, (Deut. xviii. 19.) *It shall come to pass, that every soul that will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people*, as St. Peter explains the sense of that prophecy, Acts iii. 23. Daniel expressly assigns their sin of *cutting off the Messias*, as the cause of the destruction of their city and temple, (Dan. ix. 26.) And Zechary, who lived after the people's return from their first captivity, describes the mourning of the whole nation for their sin of piercing or crucifying Christ, as a preparative to their general restoration, (Zech. xii. 10. xiii. 1.) which repentance of theirs is only expressed in general terms by

our prophet at the twenty-first verse of this chapter, and xxxi. 9.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The four first verses contain an earnest exhortation to repentance, which should have been joined to the former chapter, as being a continuation of the same subject. Afterward the prophet gives a very pathetical description of the miseries of his country, when it should be made the seat of war.

Ver. 1. *IF thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, then return unto me,* &c.] By Israel may be here meant the whole body of the Jewish nation. (See ii. 4. iii. 20.) Or else the prophet addresses himself to Israel in this verse, and to Judah in the third. The words here exhort the people not to satisfy themselves with an outward profession of repentance, but to make proof of their sincerity, by quitting their evil practices, and particularly their idolatry: for so the word *shikkutsim, abominations,* commonly signifies. If thou dost this, saith God, thou shalt never more be removed out of thy land, or carried away captive.

Ver. 2. *And thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness.*] Swearing by the name of God, is mentioned elsewhere as a solemn part of religious worship, and opposed to the custom of swearing by false gods, which was practised among idolaters. (See Isa. xlv. 23. xlviii. 1. lxv. 16. Amos viii. 14. Zeph. i. 5.) But this religious invocation of the name of God, as the just judge of the world, must be used only for the manifestation of the truth, and the maintenance of right and justice.

And the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.] A prediction of the gospel-times, when the heathens should join with the true Israelites, in paying all solemn acts of worship and devotion to the true God alone; (see Isa. lxv. 16.) and in ascribing all honour and glory to him and to his only Son, the Messias, in whom *all nations* were to be *blessed.* (See Gen. xxii. 18. Gal. iii. 8. and compare Isa. xlv. 25.)

Ver. 3. *For* [or surely] *thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns.*] In this verse the prophet addresses himself to the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, and exhorts them to repentance and reformation, under the metaphor of ploughing up their fallow ground, which had lain a long while uncultivated, and clearing it from thorns, that it might be capable of receiving good seed. (Compare Hos. x. 12. Matt. xiii. 5.)

Ver. 4. *Circumcise yourselves unto the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts.*] Compare ix. 26. a metaphor taken from Moses, Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6. From whence it appears, that this ceremony, as well as other rites of Moses's law, had a spiritual signification implied in them. Accordingly the apostles make moral applications of several branches of the ceremonial law. (See Acts x. 14. 28. Rom. ii. 28, 29. 1 Cor. ix. 9. 2 Cor. vi. 14. Colos. ii. 11.) The same reasons the Jewish writers assign for several parts of the Mosaical institutions, particularly Philo, and Josephus, Antiq. lib. iv. cap. 8. and lib. ii. contra Appion.

Ver. 5, 6. *Blow ye the trumpet in the land,* &c.] The prophet here begins a new discourse, and describes the dreadful preparations for war, such as *blowing a trumpet,* and *setting up a standard,* for the assembling men together, in order to their leaving the open country, and retiring with their families and goods into the defended cities, both for their own safety, and that they might maintain those garrisons against the power of the enemy.

Ver. 7. *A lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the gentiles is on his way.*] Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, (compare v. 6.) whose monarchy is represented by a lion, Dan. vii. 4. He is called here the *destroyer of the gentiles,* or rather *nations;* Judea and all the neighbouring countries being given up into his hands by God's decree. (See xxv. 9. xxvii. 6.)

Ver. 9. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the heart of the king shall perish, and the heart of the prince.*] Great calamities often deprive men of their wonted courage, and that presence of mind which is necessary for the due management of their affairs; and sometimes a Divine infatuation accompanies God's other judgments. (See Isa. xix. 11, 12.) The verb *abad* which is translated *perish,* does likewise signify to grow *foolish* or *stupid;* so it is taken, Deut. xxxii. 28. And the word still retains that signification in the Ethiopic language, as Ludolphus observes, in his Commentary in Historiam Ethiop. lib. i. n. 106.

The priests shall be astonished, and the prophets shall wonder.] Who have both agreed to make the people believe that none of these calamities should come upon them. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 10. *Surely thou hast greatly deceived this people.*] *i. e.* Thou hast suffered them to be greatly deceived by their false prophets. (See the note on Isa. lxiii. 17.) These pretenders to prophecy studied only to speak pleasing things to the people, and soothe them up in their impenitency and carnal security; and thou hast in thy just judgment given them up to follow these delusions. (Compare 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.)

Ver. 11. *A dry wind.*] The same with a *destroying wind,* li. 1. a hot pestilential wind, as the Arabic translates it in that place, which destroys great multitudes in a moment, as travellers relate. (See Dr. Prideaux, ad an. A. C. 710.) The prophet describes the Chaldean armies invading Judea, under the metaphor of a dry parching wind, which blasts the fruits of the earth, withers the leaves upon the trees, and makes every thing look naked and bare.

Of the high places in the wilderness.] The word *sephajim,* here translated *high places,* sometimes signifies valleys or plains. (See the note on vii. 29.) In which sense it is fitly joined with the *wilderness,* which word is sometimes used for a plain or champaigne country. (See the note on ix. 10. xii. 12.)

Ver. 12. *Even a full wind from those places.*] A strong wind, such as the drying east, or north winds, which come over large plains or deserts, commonly are. (See the same metaphor applied to enemies and destroyers, xlix. 36. li. 1. Isa. xxvii. 8. Ezek. xvii. 10. xix. 12. Hos. xiii. 15.)

Shall come unto me.] At my commandment. (Compare Matt. viii. 9.) The winds, storms, and other meteors, are said to fulfil God's word, and attend upon his commands. (See Psal. cxlviii. 8. Job xxxviii. 35.)

Now also will I give sentence against them.] Or, *utter my*

judgments against them, as the phrase is translated, i. 16. (See the note there.)

Ver. 13. *Behold, he shall come up as clouds.*] As clouds of a sudden overspread the face of the sky.

And his chariots shall be as a whirlwind.] For their swiftness, and the destruction they make. (Compare Isa. v. 28.)

His horses are swifter than eagles.] Moses threatened the Jews, that for their disobedience God would bring an enemy against them *as swift as the eagle flieth,* Deut. xxviii. 49. (Compare Lam. iv. 19. Hos. viii. 1. Habak. i. 8.)

Ver. 15. *For a voice declareth from Dan, and publisheth affliction from Mount Ephraim.*] The rumour of the enemy's approach is heard first from Dan, which, being the most northern part of Judea, was first of all invaded. (See viii. 16.) And the evil tidings still increase, as the army marcheth forward towards Jerusalem, by the way of Mount Ephraim.

Ver. 16. *Make ye mention among the nations.*] Publish it far and near.

That watchers come from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah.] The use of scouts or watchers is to warn men of the approach of the enemy. (See vi. 17.) But here the prophet by way of irony calls the Chaldean army by that name, whose business it would be to beleaguer the cities of Judah, and take care that nobody should escape out of their hands. And as the watchmen use to lift up their voice, to give notice of approaching danger; so these should make a great noise, but it should be to encourage one another to fall on their adversaries, and subdue whatever opposes them.

From a far country.] See v. 15.

Ver. 18. *This is thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart.*] These are the bitter effects of thine obstinacy in wickedness, which, like a deadly wound, or disease, toucheth the very heart and seat of life.

Ver. 19. 20. *My bowels, my bowels,* &c.] The prophet in very moving expressions sympathizes with the afflictions of his country, which he foresees will be the seat of war, and utterly ruined by a hostile invasion. (Compare Lam. i. 20. Isa. xxii. 4.)

Ver. 20. *Suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment.*] That is, their cities and houses, in allusion to the ancient way of dwelling in tents. (Compare x. 20. Isa. xxxiii. 20. liv. 2.) The expressions may withal imply, that fortified towns can no more resist the progress of the enemy, than if they were so many shepherds' huts. (Compare Isa. xxxviii. 12.)

Ver. 21. *How long shall I see the standard, and hear the sound of the trumpet?*] See ver. 5, 6.

Ver. 22. *They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.*] They have studied all the arts of sin and wickedness, but are perfect strangers to the obligations of religion and virtue; and they never shew any quickness of thought, but when they are contriving to bring about some ill design.

Ver. 23—26. *I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form and void,* &c.] The whole face of nature looks dismal; the inhabitants of the land and their houses, together with the fruits of the earth, are destroyed by the war; the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field, are consumed by the famine: (compare vii. 20. ix. 10. xii. 4. xiv. 2, &c. Hos. iv. 3.) so that the country looks as if it were reduced to its primitive chaos. (Compare Gen. i. 2.) The heavens are covered with darkness, and the mountains tremble at the wrath of the Almighty. The prophets often describe God's judgments upon a land or nation, as if the whole frame of nature were in a state of dissolution, because these particular judgments are an earnest of the general judgment. (See Isa. v. 25. 30. xiii. 10. with the notes upon those places.)

Ver. 27. *Yet will I not make a full end.*] In the severest judgments God brings upon his people, he still reserves a remnant, to whom he will make good his promises: (see xxx. 11. xlvi. 28.) or the words may be understood to this sense: Though I make the whole land desolate by sword and famine, yet still I have severer judgments in reserve: (compare v. 10. 18.) *viz.* the destruction of the city and temple, and the captivity of the people that outlive the former calamities. The former sense of the words may be confirmed, by comparing them with that passage, 1 Sam. iii. 12. *When I begin, I will also make an end; i. e.* I will make a thorough destruction, and pursue Eli's family with judgments, till I have utterly consumed it.

Ver. 28. *For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens be black.*] See ver. 23, 24.

Because I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and will not repent, &c.] God's purpose of delivering up the Jews into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar was irreversible, upon the supposition that the greatest part of them would continue impenitent, which he likewise foresaw. (See ver. 22. of this chapter, and vii. 16. 27, 28. xiii. 14. xiv. 11, 12. xxv. 9—11.) Though elsewhere, upon their repentance, to which God frequently exhorted them by his prophets, (see xxv. 4, 5.) he promises the removal of his judgments. (See ver. 14. of this chapter, and vii. 3. xvii. 25. xviii. 11. xxii. 4. xxvi. 3. xxxvi. 3.) Herein Jeremy's preaching was very different from that of the false prophets, who preached peace and safety to the people, without interposing the condition of repentance and reformation. (See ver. 10. of this chapter, and xiv. 13. xxviii. 3, 4.)

Ver. 29. *They shall go into thickets, and climb up upon the rocks.*] To save their lives. (Compare Isa. ii. 10. 19. 1 Sam. xiii. 6.)

Ver. 30. *Though thou rendest thy face with painting.*] The Hebrew reads, *Though thou rendest thine eyes with painting.* The use of their paint was to contract the eyelids, and make the eyes appear more large and full, which they thought a great beauty. (See Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxxiii. cap. 6.)

In vain shalt thou make thyself fair; thy lovers shall despise thee, they shall seek thy life.] The verse represents the people of the Jews, under the metaphor of a woman that sought, by the finery of her dress, and other allurements, to procure men's kindness, but all in vain. So should it be with them; all the arts they had made use of to engage the Egyptians, or other foreigners, to assist them against the Chaldeans, should stand them in no stead; nay, those very allies of theirs would join with their enemies. (Compare ii. 13. 18. 25. 36. xvii. 5. xxii. 20. 22. Lam. i. 2. 19. iv. 17.)

Ver. 31. *For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguish, as of her that bringeth forth her first*

child, &c.] Here Jerusalem is very pathetically described by the character of a woman under the pangs of her first child-birth, when her pains as well as her fears are greatest: such, saith the prophet, is the anguish of Jerusalem, bewailing the loss of her children, by the devouring sword of the Chaldeans, and in vain imploring comfort and assistance. *To spread out the hands,* is a gesture of begging or importuning. (See Isa. i. 15. lxv. 2. Lam. i. 17.)

The voice of the daughter of Zion.] *The daughter of Zion,* or of *Jerusalem,* is the same with *Zion* or *Jerusalem.* (See vi. 2. 23. Lam. i. 6. ii. 1.) So the *daughter of my people* is to be understood, ver. 11. of this chapter, and the *daughter of Babylon,* Psal. cxxxvii. 8. Cities and countries are commonly represented as mothers, and their inhabitants as their children.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains a vehement expostulation with the Jews, for the manifold corruption of their manners, and the disorders both of their civil and ecclesiastical government. And as a punishment for all these enormities, God threatens the invasion of the Chaldeans.

Ver. 1. *RUN ye to and fro in the streets of Jerusalem—and seek in the broad places thereof* [the streets of the greatest concourse], *if ye can find a man,* &c.] The prophet describes a general corruption of manners in much the same terms with those of the Psalmist, *There is none that doeth good, no not one,* (Psal. xiv. 3.) And yet the same Psalm afterward mentions *the generation of the righteous,* and those *who made the Lord their refuge,* ver. 5, 6. So that we may reasonably in both places understand the expressions, as only denoting the great scarcity of good men. (Compare viii. 6.)

And I will pardon it.] I will pardon the wicked for the sake of the righteous, if there be any number of the latter. (See Gen. xviii. 26, &c.)

Ver. 2. *And though they say, The Lord liveth; yet surely they swear falsely.*] Even those that do not swear by false gods, (as many among them do; see ver. 7.) yet will venture to call the true God to bear witness to what is not true. A sign that even the professors of the true religion have no inward sense of it.

Ver. 3. *O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth?*] Thou searchest the hearts, and clearly discernest men's real dispositions from their hypocritical pretences, and therefore art perfectly acquainted with the obstinacy and stubborn temper of this people.

Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved, &c.] All those heavy judgments thou hast brought upon them, have not wrought in them any true remorse for their sins, nor engaged them to amend their evil ways. (See ii. 30.)

Ver. 4. *Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish,* &c.] I thought at first, saith the prophet, that such an unconcernedness for the duties of religion could be only charged upon the rude and ignorant vulgar, who have neither leisure nor opportunity of learning their duty.

Ver. 5. *I will get me to the great men, and speak unto them,* &c.] One might expect from men of better education a truer sense of religion. But, alas! the great men of the world bid open defiance to God's laws, and cast off all obligations of duty and conscience; like headstrong oxen, that will not be brought under the yoke, but break through any bonds whereby you would restrain them, or bring them under discipline. (Compare vii. 24. 26.)

Ver. 6. *Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them,* &c.] He compares their enemies to beasts of prey. (See ii. 15. iv. 7. Isa. xv. 9. Nahum ii. 11—13. Habak. i. 8.)

Ver. 7. *How shall I pardon thee for this?*] God appeals to themselves, whether they can think it consistent with his justice, to let such enormous offences as these go unpunished?

Thy children [see ii. 30.] *have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods.*] Compare Deut. xxxii. 21. Swearing is a solemn act of religion, and an appeal to God's power, justice, and truth. (See iv. 2.) So that to give such an honour to idols, is to rob God of his essential attributes. For this reason the Jews were strictly enjoined, *not to make mention of the names of false gods,* that they might not be tempted to swear by them. (See Exod. xxiii. 13. Josh. xxiii. 7. Psal. xvi. 4.)

Ver. 7, 8. *When I fed them to the full, they then committed adultery—they were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife.*] They abused the plenty which God gave them, thereby *making provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.* Expositors are very much divided in explaining two words of the Hebrew text here, *mejuzzanim* or *muzanim* (for the word is differently read), translated *fed;* and *mashkim,* rendered by our translators, *in the morning:* but the sense they give of the whole verse is much the same. I shall therefore refer the curious reader to the critical remarks upon those two words, which may be found in Pool's Synopsis.

Ver. 9. *Shall I not visit for these things?* &c.] Do not such crimes as these deserve some remarkable judgments as their punishment? (See ver. 7.)

Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?] God's anger and vengeance signify in Scripture the execution of his justice; the effects of which are as terrible against obstinate sinners, as if they proceeded from the highest resentment. (Compare xliv. 22. Ezek. v. 13. vi. 9. and see the note upon Isa. xxx. 27.)

Ver. 10. *Go ye up upon her walls,* &c.] God gives a commission to the Chaldeans to besiege and take Jerusalem. The sins it hath been guilty of make him disown the relation he formerly did bear to it, and he now declares, that he hath put it out of his protection, and delivered it up to the will of its enemies.

But make not a full end.] See ver. 18.

Ver. 11. *For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me.*] See the note on iii. 20.

Ver. 12. *They have belied the Lord, and said, It is not he; neither shall evil come upon us,* &c.] They have spoken unjustly and dishonourably of God, denying his government over human affairs; ascribing his judgments to chance or fortune, and disbelieving all threatenings of sword and famine, which the prophets have denounced in his name, which is in effect to give him the lie. (See xiv. 13.)

Ver. 13. *And the prophets shall become wind,* &c.] They encourage the people to despise God's messages by his prophets, telling them that the prophets and their words

are no better than wind and vanity, and that their prophecies, being nothing but their own imaginations, shall return upon their own heads, and they shall feel the judgments themselves which they threaten to others.

Ver. 14. *Behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.*] The effect of those threatenings which are denounced by thy mouth, shall be as speedy and certain as that of fire is when put to dry wood. To the same sense are those words of Hosea, (vi. 5.) *I have hewed them by my prophets.* Thus Christ is described as having *a sharp sword proceeding out of his mouth,* (Rev. i. 16.) because the judgments he denounces against the wicked are like the sentence of a judge, which is certainly followed with execution.

Ver. 15. *I bring upon you a nation from far.*] Babylon is called *a far country,* Isa. xxxix. 3. Perhaps it is called a far country here, in comparison of the Philistines, Moabites, Amorites, and other borderers, who before were the Jews' oppressors.

The words *house of Israel* are, after the captivity of the ten tribes, applied to the two tribes remaining. (See vi. 9. ix. 26. x. 1. Ezek. xiii. 5. xviii. 31.)

It is an ancient nation.] Babylon was built about a hundred years after the flood: and in a little time after Nimrod erected a kingdom there: whereupon that country is called *the land of Nimrod,* Micah v. 6.

A nation whose language thou knowest not, &c.] Another part of that judgment denounced Deut. xxviii. 49. This is a great aggravation of the miseries of a foreign conquest, that there is no parleying or treating with such a conqueror, nor moving him to compassion, because they understand not each other's language. The common people among the Jews before the captivity did not understand the Chaldee tongue, called by them the *Syrian language.* (See 2 Kings xviii. 26.)

Ver. 16. *Their quiver is an open sepulchre.*] All their arrows shall do execution, so that their quiver may be looked upon as a common grave to their enemies.

Ver. 17. *And they shall eat up thy harvest, and thy bread.*] *Bread* is here put for bread-corn; and so it is used, Isa. xxviii. 28. xxx. 23.

Ver. 18. *Nevertheless, in those days, I will not make a full end with you.*] Or, *yet even in those days,* &c. *i. e.* I have still some judgments in reserve, *viz.* the destruction of your city and temple, and the carrying away the remainder of the nation captive to Babylon. (See iv. 27.)

Ver. 19. *And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, Wherefore doth the Lord our God all those things unto us?*] Those that fall under the severity of God's judgments are apt to think so favourably of themselves, as to wonder why they should be singled out for examples of the Divine vengeance, and of terror to others. And particularly the Jews thought this severe proceeding scarce consistent with those many gracious promises God had made unto their nation.

Then thou shalt answer them, &c.] As much as to say, All God's promises were made upon condition of your obedience, and if you forsake God, you are not to expect that the promise of dwelling in this land should be made good to you any longer.

Ver. 21. *Which have eyes and see not; which have ears and hear not.*] Who make no use of the senses and understanding which God hath given them. (See Isa. vi. 9.)

Ver. 22. *Which have placed the sand for a bound to the sea by a perpetual decree,* &c.] The keeping the waters within bounds, so that they cannot overflow the earth, is often mentioned in Scripture, as an immediate effect of God's overruling power and providence. (See Job xxxviii. 10, 11. Psal. xxxiii. 7. civ. 9. Prov. viii. 29.) For water being *specifically* lighter than earth, by the common laws of gravitation, it should rise above it and overflow it. And then the adjusting the proportion of the tides, that they rise no higher to the prejudice of the lower grounds, is another remarkable instance of God's especial providence.

Ver. 24. *Let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth rain.*] The vicissitude of seasons, of cold and heat, of drought and moisture, so wisely fitted for the growth of the fruits of the earth, and other uses of human life, is such a proof of a God and providence, as is obvious to the meanest capacity: upon which account it is frequently insisted on by the holy writers. (See Psal. cxlvii. 8. Matt. v. 45. Acts xiv. 17.)

Both the former and the latter rain in its season.] The former rain came just after sowing time, to make the seed take root: the latter rain was just before harvest, to plump and fill the ears, called the *latter rain in the first month,* Joel ii. 23. at which time the harvest began. (See Deut. xvi. 9.)

Ver. 25. *Your iniquities have turned away these things,* &c.] See iii. 3.

Ver. 26. *They lay wait as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men.*] They use all the arts of fraud and cozenage, whereby they may overreach others, and make a prey of them and their substance. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 28. *They overpass the deeds of the wicked.*] They exceed the common instances of injustice and oppression, and make no conscience of enriching themselves with the spoils of the fatherless, and those who have most need of their charity and kindness.

Ver. 29. *Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord.*] The sins of oppression are commonly called crying sins; such as cry to heaven for vengeance against those that are guilty of them. (See Mal. iii. 5. James v. 4.)

Ver. 31. *The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means,* &c.] Both priests and prophets agree to speak pleasing things to the people, thereby to keep up their interest and authority with them; and what can this end in, but a total corruption of manners? the consequence of which must be utter ruin and destruction.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet encourageth the Chaldeans to come up and besiege Jerusalem, as a place abandoned by God for its incorrigibleness, and given up to the will of its enemies.

Ver. 1. *O YE children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of Jerusalem.*] That you may avoid the miseries of a siege. Part of Jerusalem stood in the tribe of Benjamin. (See the note on i. 1.) The prophet here applies himself to the Benjamites, as living himself in that tribe.

Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Beth-haccerem.] The design of those signals of war is to assemble men together, in order to their mutual defence; but it is in vain to attempt any such matter, and therefore the only use that can be made of them, is to give notice to the people, that they should disperse themselves, and fly from the approaching enemy. Beth-haccerem was a village between Jerusalem and Tekoa, as St. Jerome informs us in his commentary upon this place. The name of this village is mentioned Nehem. iii. 14.

For evil appeareth out of the north.] See i. 14.

Ver. 2. *I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman.*] Some render the verse thus: *I have likened the daughter of Zion to a pasture* [so the word *navah* is rendered, Joel i. 19. ii. 22.] *and a pleasant habitation.* And the words that follow (ver. 3.) favour this interpretation.

Ver. 3. *The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her.*] The prophet having likened Zion to a rich pasture in the foregoing verse, saith, that the shepherds and their flocks shall take possession of her, meaning the Chaldean generals, (for in that sense *shepherds* are sometimes understood; see xxv. 34.) and their armies, who should feed upon her, till they had quite devoured her. So the Chaldee paraphrase explains *shepherds with their flocks*, by *kings with their armies.*

Ver. 4. *Prepare ye war against her.*] God, by his prophet, gives a commission to the Chaldeans to fight against Jerusalem. (Compare li. 27. Joel iii. 9.) The Hebrew reads, *sanctify war;* concerning which expression, see the note on Isa. xiii. 3.

Arise, and let us go up at noon.] The expressions denote the alacrity of the soldiers, and how ready they were to assault her openly at noon-day: (compare xv. 8.) or even in the heat of the day, which was a time of rest and intermission of labour in those hot countries. (See 2 Sam. iv. 5.)

Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out.

Ver. 5. *Arise, and let us go by night, and let us destroy her palaces.*] The soldiers are described as so eagerly bent upon taking the city, that they express their regret for the loss of one day, that they could not arrive soon enough the first day of their approach to besiege it. Whereupon they resolve to lose no farther time, but march immediately, and take the advantage of the night to surprise its fortresses.

Ver. 6. *For thus hath the Lord of hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem,* &c.] This siege is carried on by God's decree and command, as a just punishment for the oppressions and other crying sins the inhabitants are guilty of.

Ver. 7. *Violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually is grief and wounds.*] I hear the continual complaints of those that groan under the oppression that they suffer, and are put to death unjustly and cruelly. (Compare Psal. lv. 9—11.)

Ver. 8. *Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee,* &c.] Take warning by the many threatenings and judgments I have denounced against thee; amend thy ways and doings, lest, if thou persist in thy wickedness, my mind and affection be utterly alienated from thee, (see Ezek. xxiii. 17, 18. Hos. ix. 12.) and I cast of all bowels of compassion towards thee, and give thee up to ruin and desolation. This threatening God fulfilled afterward, when he suffered the city and nation to be utterly ruined and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; but it still received a farther completion, in that final desolation brought upon them by the Romans, under Titus Vespasian.

Ver. 9. *They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine,* &c.] A comparison elsewhere used, to express the entire riddance that is made in a city or country by hostile depredations. (See Isa. xvii. 6. xxiv. 13.) And as a grape-gatherer, when he thought he had done his work, afterward spies more bunches, and gathers them into his basket; so they that come after shall make an entire riddance of what was left by the former invaders, till at last there shall be nothing at all remaining. (Compare xlix. 9.)

Ver. 10. *Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken.*] As the ear, when it is stopped up with filth, cannot hear; so their minds are so prepossessed by their lusts, that the word of God can find no admittance. Men's hearts, their lips, and their ears, are said to be *uncircumcised,* when they are not duly disposed for hearing the truth. (Compare iv. 4. ix. 26.) And while men continue in this condition, they cannot give due attention to what God speaks to them. In the same sense Christ saith to the Jews, *How can ye believe, who receive honour one of another?* (John v. 44.) meaning, that such a temper was an obstacle to their believing on him, and hindered them from *receiving the truth in the love of it.*

Behold, the word of the Lord is to them a reproach.] The subject of their scorn and derision. (See xx. 8.)

Ver. 11. *Therefore I am full of the fury of the Lord; I am weary with holding in.*] This mocking of God's messengers, and despising his word, is a great aggravation of their sins, and withal a sign that they are now grown incorrigible; so that I now feel myself *pressed in spirit,* and under a constraint of denouncing God's judgments against all orders and ranks of men, both young and old, women and children.

Therefore I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the young men together.] The prophets are said to do things, when they declare God's purpose of doing them, as hath been observed upon i. 10. In the same sense the prophet is here said to *pour out* the Divine *fury upon* the *children abroad,* who take delight in playing in the streets: (see Zech. viii. 5.) and the *young men who assemble* in meetings for diversion or conversation. (Compare ix. 21.)

The aged with him that is full of days.] *Full of days* denotes one that hath lived to the full term and period of human life. (Compare Isa. lxv. 20.)

Ver. 12. *And their houses shall be turned to others, with their fields and wives together.*] According to that threatening denounced by Moses, Deut. xxviii. 30.

Ver. 13. *From the prophet to the priest, every one dealeth falsely.*] Or, *both prophet and priest.* (Compare ix. 10.) So in other places, where the Hebrew reads, *from small to great;* our translation renders it, *both small and great.* (See 1 Sam. v. 9. xxx. 2.)

Ver. 14. *They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly,* &c.] Instead of making a deep search into the corruptions of the people, the true cause of all their maladies, [compare Isa. i. 6.] and applying corrosive me-

dicines, *i. e.* sharp reproofs, which might give them a true sense of the danger of their condition, they have used only lenitives; as if a surgeon should slightly skin over a sore that festers underneath, by preaching such doctrines as might soothe them up in their sins, and their carnal security. (See iv. 10. v. 12. 31. xiv. 13. xxiii. 14. 17. xxviii. 2, 3. Lam. ii. 14.)

Ver. 15. *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination?* &c.] Nothing is a greater sign of an incorrigible temper than being past shame. (Compare iii. 3. viii. 12.)

Ver. 16. *Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths,* &c.] Do like travellers, when they are at a loss which way they must go: in like manner do ye inquire what way the patriarchs of old, the judges, the kings, and prophets, of former times walked in: imitate their practices, wherein you will find true comfort and satisfaction, and not the late devices of your princes and prophets, whereby you have been seduced into error, and betrayed into many mischiefs. (Compare xviii. 15.)

Ver. 17. *Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken unto the voice of the trumpet.*] You had not fell into these dangers if you had hearkened to the prophets I sent to you, (see xxv. 4.) as so many watchmen, to warn you of the evils that threatened you. (Compare Ezek. xxxiii. 7.) They faithfully discharged their duty, and gave you loud warnings of your sins, and the judgments they would bring upon you. (See Isa. lviii. 1.)

Ver. 18. *Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation,* &c.] God appeals to all men and summons them to assemble themselves, (compare Psal. vii. 11.) and hear what he hath to lay to the charge of his people. (See Isa. i. 2.)

Ver. 20. *To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba.*] Sheba was a part of Arabia Felix, and famous for its spices and perfumes. (See Isa. lx. 6.) The prophet reproves the hypocrisy of the Jews, whereby they sought to cover their inward corruption by the external shows of religion; which the prophets often declare to be of no value, when they do not proceed from a devout mind. (See vii. 21, 22. Isa. i. 11.)

We may apply to the same purpose a story which Plato relates in his second Alcibiades, where he treats of prayer, or the worship of God: "The Athenians (he tells us), in their wars with the Lacedemonians, having received many defeats, sent a messenger to the oracle of Jupiter Hammon, to ask the reason, why they, who had erected so many temples to the gods, and honoured them with so many oblations and sacrifices, should be less successful than the Lacedemonians, who fell much short of them in these particulars? The oracle returned this answer: *I am better pleased with the prayer of the Lacedemonians than with all the oblations of the Greeks.* Now the prayer they made use of was a short petition, in which they begged the gods to give them all good things so long as they continued virtuous."

And the sweet cane from a far country?] See the note upon Isa. xliii. 24. *A far country* seems equivalent with Sheba beforementioned, whose queen is said to have *come from the uttermost parts of the earth,* Matt. xii. 42. (See the note upon Isa. v. 26.)

Ver. 21. *I will lay stumbling-blocks before this people.*] Whatever attempts they make to deliver themselves from the evils which threaten them, I will cause their designs to miscarry, and they shall fall into those very snares which they sought to avoid.

Ver. 22. *A people cometh from the north country.*] See i. 14, 15.

And a great nation shall be raised from the sides of the earth.] Or, *from the coasts of the earth,* as the phrase is translated, l. 41. To the same sense the Chaldeans are said to come *from a far country,* v. 15.

Ver. 23. *Their voice roareth like the sea.*] Compare Isa. v. 30. Hostile invasions are fitly compared to great inundations, that carry all before them, and lay a country waste. (See Isa. xvii. 12. Dan. ix. 26.)

And they ride upon horses.] Of which there was a great scarcity in Judea; which made the Jews enter into alliances with Egypt, that they might be furnished with horses from thence. (See Isa. xxx. 16. xxxi. 1.)

Ver. 26. *Gird thee with sackcloth, and wallow thyself in ashes.*] See iii. 25. iv. 8. Micah i. 10.

Ver. 27. *I have set thee for a tower and a fortress among my people.*] The sense would be plainer, if the words were translated thus, *I have set thee* (in) *a watch-tower, and* (in) *a fortress,* &c. (See Noldius's Concordance, p. 171.) God tells the prophet that he hath placed him as a watchman in a high tower or fortress, (see ver. 17.) to take an account of the people's behaviour, and to warn them accordingly.

Ver. 28. *They are all grievous revolters, walking with slanders.*] See ix. 3, &c.

They are brass and iron, &c.] They are no better than dross in comparison of purer metals. (See Ezek. xxii. 18.) Their impudence resembles brass, and their obstinacy may be compared to iron: (compare Isa. xlviii. 4.) and being hardened in wickedness themselves, they make it their business to corrupt others.

Ver. 29. *The bellows are burnt,* &c.] All the means that can be used to purge this people of their dross prove ineffectual; the wicked are not separated from the righteous. Therefore your city shall be as one common furnace, wherein you shall be melted down all together. (See Ezek. xxii. 19, &c.)

The lead is consumed in the fire.] Before the use of quicksilver was known, they made use of lead for the refining their metals.

Ver. 30. *Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them.*] As base money is refused by every one, because it cannot bear the touchstone, so shall these hypocrites and evil-doers be rejected both by God and man; for none of their actions will bear the test of God's laws, or abide his severe trial. The word ἀδόκιμος, signifies a *reprobate* in the New Testament, in allusion to this place; and in pursuance of the same metaphor, God's laws and judgments are often compared to a refiner's fire. (See Prov. xvii. 3. Isa. i. 25. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 7.)

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet reproves the Jews' vain confidence in their temple, and the external observances of religion, when, at the same time, they rejected God's messages by the

prophets, and defiled themselves with the worst sorts of idolatry.

Ver. 2. *STAND in the gate of the Lord's house.*] This most commentators understand of the east gate of the temple, which led directly up to it. (See xix. 2.)

Ver. 4. *The temple of the Lord, are these.*] As much as to say, God hath placed his name here, (ver. 10.) and chose these stately buildings as the place of his peculiar residence, and what reason is there to believe that he will ever forsake it, and give it up to be destroyed by strangers and idolaters? (Compare xviii. 18. Micah iii. 11.)

Ver. 8. *Behold, ye trust in lying words.*] Uttered by your false prophets, who foretell peace, and soothe you up in your impenitency. (See iv. 10. xiv. 13, 14.)

Ver. 9. *Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery,* &c.] The prophet does not charge them with the transgression of the ritual ordinances of Moses, but with the breach of the weightier matters of the law. Thus the prophets shewed men a more excellent way of serving God, than by relying upon external performances, and thereby prepared their minds for the reception of the gospel.

Ver. 10. *And come and stand before me in this house.*] That is, in the courts before this house. (See the note on xxvi. 7.) Their making no scruple to come into God's immediate presence, with the defilements of their sins upon them, implied, that they thought the greatest sins, and even the worship of idols, consistent with the worship and service of the true God. (Compare Ezek. xxiii. 37—39.)

And say, We are delivered to do all these abominations.] Will ye interpret the deliverances God hath formerly vouchsafed to you, as so many licences to commit new abominations? or, do you think when you offer your propitiatory sacrifices, that they will wipe away the guilt of all your past offences, and ye may securely renew your former ill practices, having such a certain and easy method of obtaining pardon?

Ver. 11. *Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?*] Thus you make my house a place of sanctuary and protection to malefactors, who perform an outward service to me there, that they may continue the more securely in their sins.

Ver. 12. *But go ye now to Shiloh, where I set my name at the first,* &c.] God's ark and tabernacle were placed in Shiloh, as soon as ever the Israelites had taken possession of the promised land, (Josh. xviii. 1.) and yet I suffered the ark itself to fall into the hands of the Philistines, and quite forsook that place of my residence. (Psal. lxxviii. 60.)

Ver. 13. *I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking.*] The phrase *rising up early,* signifies diligence and assiduity. (See Isa. l. 4.) The same sense is elsewhere expressed in the Hebrew, by doing any thing *in the morning,* which our translators render *early,* Psal. xlvi. 5. xc. 14. (See likewise Psal. cxliii. 8. Isa. xxxiv. 2.)

Ver. 15. *And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole house of Ephraim.*] That is, all the ten tribes, who are often called by the name of Ephraim, that being the principal tribe among them: their first king Jeroboam being of that tribe. (See the note upon Isa. vii. 2.)

Ver. 16. *Therefore pray not thou for this people,* &c.] Nothing but a universal reformation, which God foresaw would not be effected, could deliver the Jews from that captivity and desolation which he had threatened to bring upon them. In some cases the intercessions of good men have been so far prevalent as to rescue sinners from the punishments they deserved: but here God declares nothing but a general amendment shall avert the judgments threatened. The Divine decree being without repentance irrevocable, (see iv. 28. xiv. 11, 12.) he forbids Jeremiah to interpose by his prayers for the reversing of it. But still the prophet might pray to God not to proceed to an utter destruction of his people; and accordingly we find he did pray to that effect. (See xiv. 7—9. and the notes on xvii. 25.)

Ver. 18. *To make cakes to the queen of heaven.*] As the gentiles offered to the moon, at the first appearance of the new moon, which custom Dr. Spencer proves out of Herodotus and Lucian, de Legib. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 3. The word *melecheth* may signify all the host of heaven. (Compare xix. 13.)

And to pour out drink-offerings to other gods.] They offered their meat-offerings and drink-offerings to other gods, in imitation of those which were offered to the true God. (See Numb. xxviii. 5. 7.)

Ver. 19. *Do they provoke me to anger? saith the Lord: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?*] Do they think to shew their spite against me, as if they could hurt me by their wickedness? Will not their sins turn at last to their own utter confusion?

Ver. 20. *Behold, my anger—shall be poured out—upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field,* &c.] (See iv. 25, 26. ix. 10. xii. 4.)

And it shall burn, and not be quenched.] It shall make a total destruction. (Compare xv. 14. Lam. ii. 3. iv. 11. Deut. xxxii. 22. Isa. xlii. 25. Psal. lxxviii. 63. lxxxix. 46.)

Ver. 21. *Put your burnt-offerings to your sacrifices, and eat flesh.*] The burnt-offerings after they were flayed were to be consumed wholly upon the altar; (Lev. i. 9.) whereas in the sacrifices of the peace-offerings, only the fat was burnt upon the altar, the remainder belonged partly to the priest, and the rest was spent in a religious entertainment. (See Lev. ii. 29. 34. Deut. xii. 11, 12.) Here the prophet tells the Jews, they may if they please eat the flesh of their burnt-offerings, as well as of their peace-offerings, for God will accept neither of them from their hands, (see vi. 20.) and looks upon them only as common meats. (Compare Hos. viii. 13.)

Ver. 22, 23. *For I spake not to your fathers—concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices: but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice,* &c.] It is a way of speaking usual in Scripture, to express the preference that is due to one thing above another, in terms which express the rejecting of that which is less worthy; and thus I conceive we are to understand the text here, in correspondence with the parallel place of Hosea, (vi. 6.) *I will have mercy and not sacrifice.* The words in both places implying, that God always laid a greater stress upon sincere obedience, than on external observances, and designed the latter, as so many mounds and fences, to guard and preserve the former. And thus much Maimonides himself grants, More Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 32. But several of the fathers infer from this text, that God never gave any command to the Jews about sacrifices, till after they had defiled themselves with idolatry, by offering sacrifices to the golden calf. (See

Justin Martyr, Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 237. and Iren. lib. iv. cap. 29.)

Ver. 24. *And went backward, and not forward.*] The expression is taken from headstrong oxen, that draw back, and refuse to put their necks under the yoke. (See here, ver. 26. Nehem. ix. 29. Hos. iv. 16.) In the same sense the word backsliding is often applied to the Jews in this prophecy. (See iii. 6. 10. 14. 22. viii. 5.)

Ver. 26. *They did worse than their fathers.*] By setting up idols in the temple itself. (See ver. 30. 2 Kings xxi. 7. and the notes upon iii. 11.)

Ver. 29. *Cut off thy hair, O Jerusalem.*] This was commonly practised in the time of great sorrow and mourning. (See xlvii. 5. xlviii. 37. and the notes upon Isa. xv. 2.)

Take up a lamentation in high places.] See iii. 21. Lud. de Dieu observes, that the word *sephajim* sometimes signifies plains, or open places; which sense agrees very well with other texts where the word is used. (See iv. 11. xii. 12.) So the sense will be, Make the most public and solemn lamentation.

For the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath.] This sinful generation, who have so highly provoked his anger. As God is said to reject or cast off his people, when he gives them up into the hands of their enemies, so he is said to choose them again at the restoration of their captivity. (See Isa. xiv. 1. Zech. i. 17. ii. 12.)

Ver. 30. *They have set up their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it.*] Meaning the image and altars for idolatrous worship, which Manasseh had set up in the temple and the courts near it. (See xxiii. 11. xxxii. 34. 2 Kings xxi. 4. 7. xxiii. 4.) Which gave occasion to other profanations of the temple in after-times. (See Ezek. viii. 5, 6, &c.)

Ver. 31. *And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire.*] This unnatural custom of burning their children by way of sacrifice to Moloch, was derived from the Canaanites. (See Psal. cvi. 38.) The place where they performed this inhuman rite was called *Tophet*, from the tabrets which sounded there, to drown the cries of the children thus cruelly murdered; it is called here the *high place of Tophet*, because probably there was a temple or an altar built there to Moloch. (See the note on ii. 20.) And *the valley of the son of Hinnom*, or *the valley of Hinnom*, in the Hebrew, *Gee Hinnom*, from whence the word *Gehenna* is derived, to signify hell. The sacrifice here offered being a lively picture of hell-torments.

Which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.] On the contrary, I expressed the greatest detestation against this practice, and forbade it under the severest penalties. (Compare xxxii. 35. and Lev. xx. 1—5.) The words are spoken by the figure, called *Meiôsis*, by which a great deal more is implied than is expressed; a way of speaking frequent in Scripture. See Deut. xvii. 3. where the text, speaking of the worship of the host of heaven, adds, *which I have not commanded;* the meaning is, I expressly forbade it. So God, reproving the idolatry of the Jews, saith, *They chose things wherein I delighted not;* that is, which I utterly abhorred, (Isa. lxv. 12.) and Jeremiah (ii. 8.) calls idols *things that do not profit;* that is, whose worship is not only insignificant, but likewise extremely hurtful and dangerous. By the same figure we are to expound these expressions; *a false balance is not good,* (Prov. xx. 23.) and *to have respect of persons is not good,* (xxviii. 21.) that is, is very wicked. St. Paul expresses the vilest sins, by calling them *things which are not convenient:* (Rom. i. 28.) therefore they put a very false gloss upon this text, that would infer from it, that nothing is to be used in God's worship, but what is expressly commanded in his word.

Ver. 32. *It shall no more be called Tophet—but, the valley of slaughter: for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place.*] King Josiah first of all *defiled* this place, as the text speaks, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. that is, polluted it, or unconsecrated it, by burying dead bodies in it, (compare ver. 16. of that chapter.) And afterward, when great numbers died in the siege of Jerusalem, and the famine that followed upon it, it became a common burying-place of the Jews: (see xix. 6.) whereby was fulfilled that prophecy of Ezekiel, (vi. 5.) *I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols.* (Compare Lev. xxvi. 30. Ezek. vi. 4, 5. 13.)

Ver. 34. *I will cause to cease the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness.*] See the note on xvi. 9.

The voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride.] Men will have no encouragement to marry, when they see nothing but ruin and desolation before their eyes. (See xvi. 1—4.)

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet upbraids the obstinacy and incorrigibleness of the people, and bewaileth the grievous judgments which God hath pronounced against them in general, against those of a high degree, as well as such as are of a meaner condition.

Ver. 1. *AT that time, they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah,* &c.] When the city shall be taken, and exposed to the rage of the Chaldean army, they shall break open the monuments of kings, princes, and great men, hoping to find some treasure there; as Josephus tells us, that immense riches were deposited in David's sepulchre by his son Solomon, which were never taken away till Hircanus's time. (See Antiq. lib. vii. cap. *ult.*)

Ver. 2. *They shall not be gathered nor buried,* &c.] The bones which shall be thus scattered about, shall not be gathered or laid up in their sepulchres. The word *asaph* is commonly used of men's being laid in the sepulchres of their ancestors, which is elsewhere expressed, by *being gathered unto their people.* In this sense it is joined with being buried here, and xxv. 33. see likewise Job xxvii. 19. Not to enjoy the common rights of burial, is spoken of as an aggravation of men's calamities. (See xxii. 19. xxxvi. 30. Eccles. vi. 3. Isa. xiv. 19, 20.)

Ver. 3. *And death shall be chosen rather than life.*] This denotes the extremity of misery: when men have no comfort left wherewith to alleviate their misfortunes, or make their life tolerable. (See Rev. ix. 6.)

Of this evil family.] See i. 15.

Ver. 4, 5. *Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away,* (compare iii. 19.) *and not return? why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding?* &c.] An expostulation implying that men are seldom so

far gone in wickedness, as not to be touched with some remorse for their evil doings, and make some general resolutions of amendment. Whereas this people are guilty of one perpetual apostacy, as if they could deceive God by their hypocritical pretences, without making any steps towards a reformation. Some explain the fourth verse to this sense: Are they so far plunged in sins and the miseries consequent thereto, that there is no hopes of their recovery out of their present ill state? If they will turn to God, will not he immediately be pacified, and return to them? According to which exposition, the verb *shûb*, which is repeated, is taken in the same sense in both parts of the latter sentence: otherwise it must be taken in two contrary senses. Taking the words in this sense, God's answer follows in the next verse, *But why then is this people*, &c. and so the particle *maduang* is to be rendered, ver. 19.

Ver. 5. *By a perpetual backsliding.*] See the note upon vii. 24.

Ver. 6. *I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright.*] God is represented as *waiting that he may be gracious* to his people, (Isa. xxx. 18.) and by his *long-suffering* giving men time and space for repentance. (2 Pet. iii. 9.)

Every one turned to his course, as a horse rusheth into the battle.] Without any consideration or fear of approaching danger.

Ver. 7. *Yea, the stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane*, &c.] These birds know, by natural instinct, the seasons when to return to places of their former abode: whereas this people never think of returning to God. The holy writers send men to brute creatures for instruction, thereby to upbraid their stupidity. (See Isa. i. 3. Prov. vi. 6.)

Ver. 8. *How say ye, We are wise, and the law of God is with us?* &c.] It is to no purpose to boast of your wisdom and skill in the knowledge of God's law, if you do not govern your lives by its directions; otherwise it was written and delivered to you in vain. (Compare Rom. ii. 17, &c.)

The pen of the scribe is in vain.] The title of scribe, as applied to the skill of transcribing or interpreting the law, is first given to Ezra, (Ezra vi. 6.) who was not merely a copier of the law, but likewise an explainer of the difficulties of it. (See Nehem. viii. 9. 13.) As it is likely none made it their business to write copies of the law, but those who were well versed in the study of it, which would best secure them from committing mistakes in their copies; from hence the word signifies, in the New Testament, those who were learned in explaining the law, and answering the difficulties arising, concerning the sense of it. The Greek word Γραμματεὺς, signifies a *learned man*, Ecclus. x. 5. xxxviii. 24. and is so translated by our interpreters in the latter of these two places. And the Chaldee paraphrase often interprets the Hebrew word *nabi, prophet*, by the Chaldee *saphar*, a *scribe*.

The expression in the text may relate to the answers which those who were skilful in expounding the law gave in writing, when they were consulted in any difficult case. (Compare xviii. 18.)

Ver. 9. *The wise men are dismayed, they are ashamed and taken.*] The politicians are disappointed in every enterprise they undertake; and their ill success is an evident proof, that the fear of God, and governing ourselves by his word, is the truest wisdom.

Ver. 10—12.] See vi. 12—15.

Ver. 10. *And their fields to them that shall inherit them.*] Or, *possess them;* for the word *inherit* is sometimes taken for any sort of possession. (See Psal. lxxxii. 8.) So Israel is called the Lord's *inheritance*, x. 16. and elsewhere.

Ver. 13. *There shall be no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig-tree, and the leaf shall fade.*] As both leaves and fruit wither and fade, when a tree is blasted or killed; so I will utterly deprive this people of all the blessings I had given them, those which are for use as well as those which are for ornament.

Ver. 14. *Let us enter into the defenced cities; and let us be silent there*, &c.] This seems to be spoken in the person of the people, who lived in open towns and villages, exhorting one another to repair to Jerusalem, and other fortified places, to seek for quiet and refuge there. Whereas the prophet had before (vi. 1.) exhorted the inhabitants of Jerusalem to flee even from thence. To this the prophet replies, in the following part of the verse, That God had, indeed, *put them to silence* in another sense than they meant; that is, he had taken away all their strength, and left them to be destroyed by their enemies; for so to *put to silence* often signifies: see xlvii. 5. li. 6. Isa. xv. 1. Hos. x. 7. Obad. ver. 5. where the word is rendered *cut off*, in our Bibles.

And hath given us water of gall to drink.] A bitter cup means a severe judgment; which is often expressed by the *cup of God's wrath*, or *displeasure*. (See xxv. 15. 17. ix. 15. xxiii. 15.)

Ver. 15. *We looked for peace.*] We were willing to believe the false prophets, who foretold prosperous times. (See iv. 10. xiv. 13.)

Ver. 16. *The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan.*] The Chaldean army marched into Judea through the tribe of Dan. (See iv. 25.)

The whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones.] *Abbirau*, which is here translated *strong ones*, signifies *horses* in several places: (see xlvii. 3. Judg. v. 22.) and so it is understood here by the LXX.

Ver. 17. *For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed.*] Such enemies as you shall not be able to soften by any entreaties you can use. It is a received opinion, and that attested by many travellers, and other writers, that there are methods of charming venomous creatures, that they shall not bite nor hurt those that come near them. The expression here alludes to that tradition, as the words of the Psalmist do, Psal. lviii. 5.

Ver. 18. *When I would comfort myself against sorrow*, &c.] When I would apply comfort to myself, my heart misgives me, I find great reason for my fears, and none for my hopes.

Ver. 19. *The voice of the cry of the daughter of my people, because of them that dwell in a far country.*] If we follow this translation, the words must be understood of the Jews lamenting their condition, because of the Chaldeans that were coming from a far country, to invade and destroy them. But I think the words may be rendered more agreeably to the Hebrew thus, *The voice of the cry of the daughter of my people from a land afar off.* [Compare Isa. xxxiii. 17. where the phrase in the original is the same.] So that the prophet represents the doleful complaints of the Jews, under a state of captivity, as if God had quite forsaken and

disowned them. To which he makes this reply, in the following words, *Why then*, or *But why, have ye provoked me*, &c. (Compare ver. 5. of this chapter.)

Ver. 20. *The harvest is past; the summer is ended; and we are not saved.*] Another complaint of the people, that the summer, the season for marching an army, is past, and yet there is no prospect of assistance from Egypt, or any other of our allies.

Ver. 21. *For the hurt of the daughter of my people, I am hurt.*] See iv. 19. ix. 1. The words in the original run thus, *For the breach of the daughter of my people, I am broken.* (See xiv. 17.)

I am black.] I look ghastly, as those who are dying. (Compare xiv. 2. Joel ii. 6. Nahum ii. 10.)

Ver. 22. *Is there no balm in Gilead?* &c.] Gilead was famous for balm or turpentine [for that is the proper meaning of the Hebrew *tsori*], and such-like healing gums. (See xlvi. 11. Gen. xxxvii. 25.) This made a great many physicians and surgeons to resort thither. The prophet applies this metaphorically to the state of the Jews, which was all over corrupted: (compare Isa. i. 6.) and asks, whether there have been no methods used to heal these mortal wounds and distempers; or, if there have, how comes it to pass they should have so little success? implying, that God had sent his prophets, as so many spiritual physicians, and they had given the best advice: but the fault lay wholly in the patients themselves, who refused to submit to their prescriptions; so we may apply the words spoken concerning Babylon (li. 9.) to the present case: *We would have healed Babylon, but she is not*, or rather, *she would not be healed.* The words may likewise be understood of temporal deliverance, to this purpose: Is this people forsaken both of God and men, that there is no remedy left for their deliverance? (Compare xxx. 12—14.)

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet bewails the manifold sins of the Jews, especially their falsehood and deceit, and threatens God's judgments, both against them and their neighbouring countries. He exhorts them to glory in God alone, and not in any worldly acquisitions, which they would find by sad experience to be altogether vain and unprofitable.

Ver. 1. *O THAT my head were waters,* &c.] The prophet sympathizes with the calamities of his people, as before iv. 19. viii. 21. and thereby excites them to a sense of their own misfortunes, that they may humble themselves under the mighty hand of God: according to that rule of the critic, "Si vis me flere, dolendum est Primum ipsi tibi."

Ver. 2. *For they be all adulterers.*] The expression seems here metaphorical, implying, that they were apostates from God, to whose service they were engaged by the most solemn bond and covenant. (See the notes on ii. 2. and compare Hos. vii. 4. Matt. xvi. 4. James iv. 4.)

Ver. 3. *They bend their tongue like their bow, for lies.*] So the Psalmist compares the tongue to a *bow*, and words of calumny and falsehood to arrows, Psal. lxiv. 3, 4. (See below, ver. 8. of this chapter.)

For they proceed from evil to evil.] From one degree of wickedness to a greater. (See Psal. lxix. 7.)

Ver. 5. *And weary themselves to commit iniquity.*] They take more pains to carry on their ill designs, than the practice of truth and integrity would cost them.

Ver. 6. *Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit.*] The words of God to the prophet.

Ver. 7. *Behold I will melt and try them.*] I will cast them into the furnace of affliction, that I may purify them from their dross. (See vi. 29, 30. Isa. i. 25.)

For how shall I do for the daughter of my people?] What can I do else for my people, but by all means try to save some out of the common destruction?

Ver. 9. *Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the Lord.*] See v. 9. 29.

Ver. 10. *For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation,* &c.] The prophet laments that general desolation which he sees coming upon the whole land, which will involve all the parts of it, both high and low, in one common destruction. (Compare iv. 24—26.) The words which are translated, *The habitations of the wilderness*, the margin more properly renders, *The pastures of the wilderness.* (Compare Joel i. 19. ii. 22.) The *wilderness* sometimes signifies the plain or champaigne country, and is opposed to the mountains. (See Isa. lxiii. 13. Lam. iv. 19. Joel i. 19.)

Because they are burnt up.] Destroyed with fire and sword. (Compare Isa. xlii. 25.) Or we may understand the place of the great drought mentioned in this prophecy, xiv. 1.

Ver. 11. *I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons.*] The word *tannin*, translated here *dragons*, among several other significations, is taken for a serpent, such as are usually found in ruins and desolate places. (Compare li. 37. Psal. xliv. 19. Isa. xiii. 22. xxxiv. 13.)

Ver. 12. *Who is the wise man that may understand this?* &c.] Is there none of you so well acquainted with the will of God, and the methods of his providence, as to be able to declare the reasons, why he has given such severe instances of his anger against this land? namely, for the sins of those who inhabit it. (Compare ver. 10. and the following verses.)

Ver. 13, 14. *And the Lord saith, Because they have forsaken my law,* &c.] God himself declares the reasons of his judgments by the mouth of his prophet, *viz.* because they have forsaken his law, and followed the devices of their own hearts, and the idolatrous customs which they learned from their fathers.

Ver. 14. *After Baalim.*] See the note on ii. 23.

Ver. 15. *I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.*] I will turn their plenty into scarcity of all things. Compare this expression with that of Psal. lxxx. 5. *Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and givest them plenteousness of tears to drink;* and 1 Kings xxii. 27. *Feed him with the bread of affliction, and with water of affliction;* that is, use him with the most severe and rigorous treatment. The Hebrew word which we here translate *gall*, properly signifies an herb, growing among corn, which is as bitter as gall; it is translated *hemlock*, Hos. x. 4. and both here and elsewhere joined with wormwood. (See Deut. xxix. 18. Lam. iii. 19. Amos vi. 12.) In this last text, the word *laanah*, commonly rendered wormwood, is translated *hemlock.*

Ver. 16. *And I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them.*] A judgment mentioned by Moses, (Lev. xxvi. 33.) and fulfilled upon several of the Jewish captives in Egypt, and elsewhere. (See xliv. 27. Ezek. v. 2. 12.)

Ver. 17, 18. *Consider ye, and call for the mourning women,* &c.] Consider the evil circumstances you are in, which call for mourning and lamentation: and since you yourselves are not sufficiently affected with the dangers that threaten you, send for those women whose profession it is to make public lamentations at funerals, and upon other sorrowful occasions, and let their mournful ditties excite and stir up true sorrow in you. The prophets elsewhere allude to this practice. (See xlviii. 17. Ezek. xxviii. 31.) Particularly the custom of hiring public mourners to attend the funerals of their friends, is mentioned xxii. 18. 2 Sam. i. 24. 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. Eccles. xii. 5. Matt. ix. 23. compared with Mark v. 28. Such were the *Præficæ* among the Romans.

Ver. 18. *And send for cunning women.*] Such as were *skilful in lamentation,* as Amos calls the common mourners, that were hired upon solemn occasions, (Amos v. 16.)

Ver. 19. *For a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion,* &c.] The prophet instructs them to bewail their state of captivity, in these and such-like expressions.

Because we have forsaken the land; because our dwellings have cast us out.] We are forced to leave our native country: our land hath *spewed us out,* according to the expression of Moses, (Lev. xviii. 28.) and would no longer bear with our abominations.

Ver. 20. *Ye hear the word of the Lord, O ye women.*] God now speaks to the women in general, as being of more tender hearts than men, and calls them all seriously to mourning, and bids them instruct their *daughters* to join with them in a general lamentation; not only to act a part, as those who are mourners by profession.

Ver. 21. *For death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces.*] Neither our houses, nor our palaces, or fortifications can defend us against our enemies: but though we barricado our doors, the soldiers, or their murdering instruments, will find a way to enter by our windows, and assault us. (Compare Joel ii. 9.)

To cut off the children from without.] See note on vi. 11. The expression is elliptical, and may be thus supplied [it proceeds] *to cut off the children,* &c.

Ver. 22. *As the handful after the harvest-man, and none shall gather them.*] We read Deut. xxiv. 19. that if a sheaf was forgot and left behind in the field, the owner should not go back to fetch it, but leave it to be taken up by the poor: this law made the harvest-men not so exact in gathering up the sheaves which they happened to drop, that they might give occasion for this sort of charity. The prophet makes use of this comparison to illustrate the number of slain that should lie about the fields, only with this difference; that whereas the poor used to gather up the sheaves left behind in the fields, these human bodies should rot upon the ground, without any one to take care of their burial. (See the note on viii. 2.)

Ver. 23, 24. *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me,* &c.] Let not men value themselves for their wisdom, strength, or riches, which are things in themselves of a very uncertain continuance, and such calamities are coming (see ver. 25, 26.) in which they will stand the owners of them in very little stead. The only true valuable endowment is the knowledge of God, not as he is in himself, which is too high an attainment for poor mortals to pretend to, but with respect to his dealings with men; to have a serious sense of his mercies to the penitent, of his judgments to the obstinate, and of his truth and integrity, in making good his promises and threatenings to both. It is in the exercise of these attributes God chiefly delights; and it is by these he desires to make himself known to the world; and he that forms an apprehension of God, chiefly with regard to these his perfections, will always demean himself suitable towards him. Judgment and righteousness are often equivalent terms; but if we distinguish them here, judgment denotes God's severity against the wicked, and righteousness his truth or holiness.

Ver. 25. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will punish the circumcised with the uncircumcised.*] Or, *with the uncircumcision,* as it is in the Hebrew: so the Greek Ἀκροβυστία is used by St. Paul for the persons who are uncircumcised. (See Rom. ii. 26, 27. iii. 30. Gal. ii. 7. Col. iii. 11.) Because the Jews valued themselves so much upon their circumcision; God tells them, when he sends his judgments abroad in the world, they shall find no more favour than those who are not circumcised.

Ver. 26. *Egypt, and Judah, and Edom,* &c.] See these judgments denounced more at large, xxv. 18, &c. The prophet places Judah among the heathen nations, because they were in effect uncircumcised as well as they; contenting themselves with the outward sign of circumcision, without endeavouring after the inward purity signified by it.

And all that are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness.] The marginal reading is to be preferred before that of the text, *They that have the corners of their hair polled.* (Compare xxv. 23, 24. xlix. 32.) The expression denotes those Arabians who cut their hair upon the forepart of the head round, and let the hair behind grow long; which custom of theirs, Herodotus mentions in his Thalia, chap. 8. and tells us they did it in imitation of Bacchus. Others take notice that the Saracens used the same fashion in wearing their hair, dedicating it to Saturn. Plutarch saith, in the life of Theseus, that he cut his hair after the same manner, when he consecrated it to Apollo. In allusion to the same custom, the Solymæi, a colony of Phœnicians, are called Τροχοκούραδες, roundheads, in Chœrilius, ap. Joseph. lib. i. contr. App. and the Abantes in Homer, Iliad. β. ὄπιθεν κομόωντες, *wearing their hair growing behind.* And it is probable, that that precept in Lev. xix. 27. *Ye shall not round the corners of your heads,* hath reference to this custom, which was a rite in several countries near Judea, whereby they devoted themselves to the worship of some false god.

For all these nations are uncircumcised, and the house of Israel is uncircumcised in their heart.] The Israelites, by breaking God's law, have made their *circumcision become uncircumcision,* as St. Paul speaks, (Rom. ii. 25.) while they retain only the outward sign, and neglect the inward purity signified by it. (Rom. ii. 29. see iv. 4. of this prophecy.)

CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet arms the Jews against the idolatry of the Chaldeans, among whom they were to live during the captivity, by setting forth the vast disparity between the true God and idols: then he bewails the calamities which were coming upon them, and beseeches God not to deal with them according to the utmost rigour of his justice.

Ver. 1. *O HOUSE of Israel.*] See the note on v. 15.

Ver. 2. *Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not afraid at the signs of heaven.*] Do not follow the fond opinions of the heathen, amongst whom ye are to sojourn during the time of your captivity. Both the Chaldeans and Egyptians were famous for their skill in astrology. The prophet therefore warns the Jews, that when they were to live among those people, they should not regard the predictions which they made from the appearances of the heavenly bodies, from whose different aspects they pretend to foretell wars, the death of great men, and other calamities; whereby they terrified the people with the apprehension of impending evils.

Ver. 3, 4. *One cutteth the tree out of the forest,* &c.] He exposeth the folly of men's worshipping the works of their own hands, by the same arguments which are made use of by Isaiah, xliv. 10, 11. and have been explained in the notes upon that place.

Ver. 5. *They are upright as the palm-tree, but speak not.*] The Hebrew may more properly be rendered thus, *They are made with due proportion, like a pillar;* the word *tomar* is rendered *pillar* by our translators, Cant. iii. 6. Joel ii. 30. They make a pretty figure, when they are set up, as being put together by the rules of art, but cannot speak, or shew any signs of sense. Images are elsewhere called *dumb idols.* (See Habak. ii. 19. 1 Cor. xii. 2.)

They cannot do evil, neither is it in them to do good.] See the note upon Isa. xli. 23.

Ver. 7. *Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain.*] Or, *to thee doth honour belong.* The Hebrew word *yaatha,* is rather a noun than a verb, and signifies honour and excellency. To the same sense the Chaldee translates the words, *For thine is the kingdom.* Some critics suppose the word *Jah,* the name of God, not to be a contradiction of Jehovah; but to be derived from the same root *Yaah,* and to import the superlative excellency of the Divine Majesty.

Forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee.] The princes and great men among the heathens, who were remarkable for their wisdom, and understanding the arts of government, were commonly deified after their death, and had Divine honours paid to them, as heroes, or Baalim; (see note on ii. 23.) but none of these can be compared with the supreme God. (See Psal. lxxxix. 6.)

Ver. 8. *But they are altogether brutish and foolish; the stock is a doctrine of vanities.*] *They that make images are like unto them,* saith the Psalmist, (Psal. cxv. 8.) equally stupid and insensible. The use and worship of them is grounded upon a false and foolish opinion, and tends to confirm the ignorant in that absurd fancy, that God is like the work of men's hands, and that images have some Divine power lodged within them. For the same reason an image is called *a teacher of lies,* Habak. ii. 18.

Ver. 9. *Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish.*] Ships of Tarshish sometimes signify any trading or merchant ships. But Tarshish may probably here denote some port in Spain, whither the merchants of Tyre and Zidon trafficked. (See the note on Isa. ii. 16. xxiii. 1.)

And gold from Uphaz.] Bochart supposes Uphaz to be the same with Ophir in India, near Zeilan; a place famous for gold. (See the note on Isa. xiii. 12.) Uphaz is probably the same place which is called *Paz* in Job xxviii. 17. where our translation reads, *Jewels of fine gold,* but it is in the Hebrew, *Jewels of Paz.*

Blue and purple are their clothing.] See Baruch vi. 12. 72.

Ver. 10. *He is the living God.*] Images are dead and senseless things. (See ver. 14.) Whereas God is the author and fountain of life and understanding, and we all live in and by him. The present copies of the Septuagint are defective here; but the learned Dr. Grabe conjectures, that the Septuagint anciently read here, Θεὸς ζώντων, *the God of the living,* which is still read in Theodotion's translation, and followed by the Syriac and Arabic versions; and that our Saviour alludes to this place, when he saith, (Matt. xxii. 32.) *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.* (See his Dissert. de vitiis LXX. Interpretum, p. 44.)

Ver. 11. *Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens.*] This verse is writ in Chaldee, as if the prophet designed to put these words in the mouths of the Jews, wherewith they might make a public profession of their own faith in the true God, and be able to answer the heathens that would entice them to idolatry.

Even they shall perish from the earth, &c.] The prophet foretells, that there shall be a final period put to idolatry. (See ver. 15. Isa. ii. 18. xlv. 16. Zech. xiii. 2.) God hath already blotted out the names of many of the heathen idols, as an earnest of the utter destruction of the remainders of idolatry in his due time.

Ver. 12, 13. *He hath made the earth by his power,* &c.] Here follows a noble and lofty description of God's power and providence, whereby he sets forth his pre-eminence above dead and senseless idols.

Ver. 13. *When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens,* &c.] When God giveth the word of command, and signifies his will and pleasure: (compare Job xxxviii. 34.) or when he sends his thunder, called in Scripture the *voice of God,* the clouds immediately fall down in abundance of rain, and that moisture coming upon the ground that was scorched with heat before, does not only cool and refresh it, but makes all vegetables grow and flourish in it: and as God causes the vapours to ascend up in clouds from every quarter of the earth, so he joins two contrary things together, ordaining great flashes of lightning to break forth with the rain: the moisture of the rain preventing the ill effects that might otherwise proceed from the scorching heat of the lightning.

And bringeth the winds out of his treasures.] He causeth great and mighty winds to come from unknown places and causes, as if he brought them out of a hidden treasure or

repository, where they had been laid up till he had occasion for them.

Ver. 14. *Every man is brutish in his knowledge; every founder is confounded by the graven image.*] The founders or makers of idols may be convinced of their sottishness, by their own art or skill, who must needs know, what material idols are made of, and that they are perfectly without life or sense. (Compare Isa. xliv. 9. 11. 18—20.) The former part of the verse may be thus rendered, *Every man is brutish for want of knowledge:* thus the particle *min* is taken, xlviii. 45. Psal. cix. 24. Lam. iv. 9. where our old translation rightly renders the words, *My strength is dried up for want of fatness.*

For the molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them.] They pretend to life and understanding, when they have none. (See ver. 8.)

Ver. 15. *They are vanity.*] See Isa. xli. 24. 29. [*and the work of errors.*] The making of them is owing to men's wrong notions concerning the nature of God. (See ver. 8.)

In the time of their visitation they shall perish.] The time will come when God shall execute his vengeance upon them, and destroy them utterly. (See ver. 11.)

Ver. 16. *The Portion of Jacob is not like them: for he is the former of all things; and Israel is the rod of his inheritance.*] There is no comparison between senseless idols and the great Creator of all things, who has chosen the posterity of Jacob for his peculiar people; [compare Deut. xxxii. 9. Psal. lxxiv. 2.] and has promised to be their God: [see xi. 4.] and that they should always have an interest in his favour, if they continued steadfast in their obedience to him. (See Psal. xvi. 5. lxxiii. 26. cxix. 57. Lam. iii. 24.) *The rod of his inheritance,* is an expression taken from the first division of the land of Canaan, when the inheritance of each tribe and family was meted out with a line or a rod.

Ver. 17. *Gather up thy wares out of the land, O inhabitant of the fortress.*] The prophet here returns to his former denunciations against Jerusalem, and warns her to move her effects, and prepare for her going into captivity; (compare Ezek. xii. 3.) for though she thought herself secure, as dwelling in a place of great strength, and well fortified, yet her enemies should prevail and take it.

Ver. 18. *Behold, I will sling out the inhabitants of this land at this once.*] I will at one stroke remove the whole body of this people out of their native country. (Compare 1 Sam. xxv. 29.)

And I will distress them, that they may find it so.] Or, That they may find my threatenings to be true.

Ver. 19. *Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous.*] The prophet sympathizes with the calamities of his people; as iv. 19. viii. 24. ix. 1.

But I said, Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it.] But then I endeavoured to compose myself, and patiently submit to God's afflicting hand.

Ver. 20. *My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken.*] The prophet personates his country, as bewailing herself in the following words. My cities and houses are rifled and destroyed, as if they were so many shepherds' tents. (See the note on iv. 20.)

My children are gone forth of me, and are not, &c.] My inhabitants are gone into captivity, and will never return hither any more; so that they are the same to me as if they were dead: nor will they ever be able to contribute to the restoration of my former state.

Ver. 21. *For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord,* &c.] The prophet pursues the foregoing metaphor, and saith, that the reason why the tents are destroyed is, because the shepherds, meaning the governors, both civil and ecclesiastical, [see the note on ii. 8.] have, like so many brute beasts, forgotten God, and their duty to him; [compare Psal. xciv. 8.] and thereby engaged the people committed to their charge in idolatry, and all manner of wickedness, which hath ended in ruin to themselves and their flocks.

Ver. 22. *Behold, the noise of the bruit is come,* &c.] See vi. 22. ix. 11.

Ver. 23. *I know, O Lord, that the way of a man is not in himself,* &c.] Success does not depend upon human endeavours, but upon God's good pleasure: [compare Psal. xxxvii. 23. Prov. xx. 24.] and therefore thou canst easily disappoint all the designs of our enemies.

Ver. 24. *O Lord, correct me, but with judgment,* &c.] If thou art determined to punish us, let it be with moderation: (see xxx. 11.) not with such a degree of severity, as utterly to destroy and consume us. (See Psal. vi. 1. xxxviii. 1.)

Ver. 25. *Pour out thine indignation upon the heathen that have not known thee,* &c.] Let thy justice be made known, by bringing an exemplary punishment upon the Chaldeans and their allies, (see i. 15.) who do not acknowledge thy providence, but ascribe all their successes to their idols.

For they have eaten up Jacob, &c.] See vi. 3.

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet proclaims the tenor of God's covenant with the Jews, and then denounceth a curse against those who break it: at the end of the chapter, he threatens evil to his neighbours at Anathoth, who had conspired his destruction.

Ver. 2. *HEAR ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men of Judah,* &c.] That is, Hear, ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, the words of the covenant I made with your fathers: and do thou, Jeremiah, lay the tenor of it before them. (Compare ver. 6.) Dr. Lightfoot, in his Harmony of the Old Testament, is of opinion, that the prophet puts the people in mind of the renewal of this covenant lately made in the time of Josiah, (2 Kings xxiii. 3.)

Ver. 3. *Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant.*] It is a way of speaking usual in Scripture, to denounce God's judgments in the form of imprecation: so the apostle pronounces an excommunication, by saying, *Let him be accursed,* or *anathema,* (Gal. i. 8. 1 Cor. xvi. 22.) To the same sense, St. Paul saith of Alexander the coppersmith, *The Lord reward him according to his works,* (2 Tim. iv. 14.) Thus the imprecations we meet with in several Psalms, are to be understood as so many predictions, or denunciations, of God's judgments. Accordingly, St. Peter, speaking of the hundred and ninth Psalm, saith, That in it the Holy Ghost *spake before* [or prophesied] *by the mouth of David concerning Judas,* (Acts i. 16.)

Ver. 4. *Out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace.*] The use of an iron furnace is to melt and purify metals, and is a proper representation of any sore affliction, wherein God tries his servants, in order to purge them of their dross. (See Gen. xv. 17. Psal. lxvi. 10. Isa. xlviii. 10. and ix. 7. of this prophecy.)

Saying, Obey my voice.] See vii. 23.

Ver. 5. *Then answered I, and said, So be it, O Lord.*] The prophet confirms the words of this curse, according to the form prescribed, Deut. xxvii. 25, &c. and thereby approves the justice of it.

Ver. 9, 10. *A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah—they are turned back to the iniquity of their forefathers.*] They made some steps towards a reformation in the time of Josiah, but now they have agreed or conspired together to return back to their former idolatries. (Compare Ezek. xxii. 25. Hos. vi. 9.)

Ver. 11. *Though they should cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.*] Their destruction was irreversible, upon supposition of their continuance in their evil ways, which God foresaw they would do. (See the notes upon iv. 28. vii. 16.)

Ver. 12. *Then shall the cities of Judah—go and cry unto the gods to whom they offer incense,* &c.] When great calamities threaten men, their fears suggest all possible ways of seeking for succour: and when they find themselves forsaken of God, they betake themselves to idols: but will find all applications vain, and to no purpose. (See 2 Chron. xxviii. 23.)

Ver. 13. *For according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah.*] See ii. 28.

Have ye set up altars to that shameful thing—unto Baal?] *Bosheth, shame,* was a nickname for *Baal.* (See Hos. ix. 10.) So, *Jerubbaal* is called *Jerubbesheth,* 2 Sam. xi. 21. (See the note on Isa. xix. 18.)

Ver. 14. *Therefore pray thou not for this people,* &c.] See vii. 16. xiv. 11, 12.

Ver. 15. *What hath my beloved to do in my house, seeing she hath committed lewdness with many.*] Why doth this my chosen and peculiar people, as they love to call themselves, make their appearance before me in my house, since they have gone a whoring after several idols of the nations round about them, and thereby have disowned me, and broken the marriage-contract, or covenant, that was between us? (See the note on ii. 2. and compare xiii. 27.) God calls the Jews his beloved people, because they called themselves so, and because they were still *beloved for their fathers' sakes,* (Rom. xi. 28.) and he would not cast them off utterly, for the sake of the covenant he had made with their progenitors. (See xii. 7. Hos. iii. 1.)

The holy flesh is passed from thee? when thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest.] The flesh of thy sacrifices which thou offerest up to me, as an atonement for thy sins, doth not at all profit thee, being polluted and rendered unacceptable to me, through those many and great sins, in which thou continuest without remorse, and even takest a pride in committing them. (See above, vi. 20. and compare Hag. ii. 12—14.)

The LXX. and Vulgar Latin give a more easy sense of this verse, *Why hath my beloved committed lewdness in my house? can vows or the holy flesh take away thine iniquities from thee?* It is probable that the Hebrew copy they made use of, instead of *harabbim* [*with many*] read *hanedubim,* or *haneddarim; free-will-offerings,* or *vows.*

Ver. 16. *The Lord hath called thy name, A green olive-tree, fair, and of goodly fruit.*] St. Paul plainly alludes to this verse, Rom. xi. 17. where, speaking of the gentiles being made members of the church in the room of the Jews, who were rejected, he saith, *If some of the branches are broken off, and thou* [gentile], *being a wild olive-tree, art grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree.* The Jewish nation, in its flourishing state, is sometimes compared to a vine, sometimes to an olive-tree, chiefly because of the fruits of good works which God might justly expect from them, after all the care and pains he had bestowed upon them, to make them thrive and fructify. (See Psal. lii. 8.)

With the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches thereof are broken.] In pursuance of the same metaphor, the words express the desolation which the Chaldeans should bring upon Judea by fire and sword. (Ezek. xix. 14. Isa. xvi. 8.)

Ver. 17. *For the Lord of hosts, that planted thee.*] See the note on ii. 21.

Ver. 18. *And the Lord hath given me knowledge of it,* &c.] This relates to the ill designs the men of Anathoth had contrived against the prophet, which he saith God had revealed to him. (See the following verses.)

Ver. 19. *But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter.*] A proverbial speech, expressing a false security or insensibility of danger. (See Prov. vii. 22.) So Agamemnon's ghost in Homer describes his own death treacherously contrived by Egisthus at a feast.

——ὣς τίς τε κατέκτανε βοῦν ἐπὶ φάτνῃ·
Ὡς ἄνον οἰκτίστῳ θανάτῳ.——

He died as an ox at the stall.
Odyss. λ. ver. 410.

That phrase, *He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter,* Isa. liii. 7. is of a different importance. (See the note there.) Bochart supposes the word *alluph* to be an adjective, and renders the former part of the sentence thus, *I was brought as a tame sheep to the slaughter.* But we may very well admit of the common translation; the disjunctive particle being elsewhere understood, as Psal. lxix. 31. *Better than an ox* [or] *bullock,* (Isa. xxxviii. 14.) *Like a crane* [or] *swallow.*

Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof.] The letter of the Hebrew runs thus, *Let us destroy the tree* (or the stalk) *with the bread thereof:* (bread is sometimes used for the corn, of which it is made, v. 17.) *i. e.* Let us destroy the prophet and his doctrine. (See ver. 21.) Lud. de Dieu renders it, *Let us destroy the wood in his flesh; i. e.* Let us scourge him with rods, till they are broke, and the ends of them stick in his flesh. I take this to be a forced interpretation: for the Hebrew *lehem, bread,* is never put for flesh, but when it is spoken of the sacrifices offered up to God. The Septuagint render the words, *Let us put wood into his bread, i. e.* Let us give him wood instead of bread; which the fathers generally apply to the crucifixion of Christ, whose sufferings were typified in the afflictions of all the saints and prophets of former times.

Ver. 20. *But, O Lord—that judgest righteously, that*

triest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them; for unto thee have I revealed my cause.] I have laid my cause before thee, and recommended myself to thy protection, who knowest the sincerity and intentions of my thoughts. (See xii. 2, 3.) When men continue implacable in their malice, we may lawfully expect and desire that God will plead our cause, and judge us according to our righteousness. For the bringing wicked men to condign punishment, tends both to the manifestation of God's glory, and the good government of the world. To pray against our enemies in this sense, *viz.* not for the satisfying our private resentments, but the setting forth of God's justice, is not disagreeable to the spirit of Christianity. So St. Paul prays against Alexander, *The Lord reward him according to his works,* (2 Tim. iv. 14.)

Ver. 21. *Prophesy not in the name of the Lord, that thou die not by our hands.*] This was the usage the prophets commonly met with from those who *became their enemies; because they told them those truths* they had no mind to hear. (See xx. 1. xxxviii. 4. 6. Amos vii. 10.) And this treatment they found at the hands of their neighbours, their friends, and relations: (see xii. 6. xx. 10.) as our Saviour Christ did afterward. (See Matt. xiii. 57. John vii. 15.)

Ver. 22. *The young men shall die by the sword,* &c.] I will make good Jeremiah's prophecies, and bring those evils upon them which he hath foretold.

Ver. 23. *The year of their visitation.*] When I will visit their sins upon them. (See xxiii. 12. xlvi. 21. xlviii. 44. l. 27.) The words *year* and *day* often signify a set or determined time. (See Isa. lxi. 2.)

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

The six first verses relate to the subject spoken of in the latter part of the eleventh chapter, and should not have been divided from it. In the remaining part of this chapter God declares, *That although he had forsaken his people for* a season, and given them up into the hands of their enemies, yet he would in due time remember them, and execute vengeance upon their oppressors.

Ver. 1. *RIGHTEOUS art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee; yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments.*] Though I doubt not of thy justice and holiness, yet suffer me to argue with thee concerning the prosperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of the righteous: a dispensation which hath in all ages been made an objection against Providence, and upon that account been a stumbling-block even to good men. (See Job xii. 6. xxi. 7, &c. Psal. xxxvii. lxxiii.)

Ver. 2. *Thou art near to their mouth, and far from their reins.*] The true character of hypocrites, who, according to the prophet Isaiah's description of them, *Honour God with their mouth, but their heart is far from him,* (Isa. xxix. 13. Mark vii. 6.) The *reins* in Scripture signify the thoughts and inward dispositions. (See Prov. xxiii. 16. Psal. xvi. 7. lxxiii. 21.) In which sense God is said to *try the reins and the heart,* xi. 20. of this prophecy.

Ver. 3. *Pull them out as sheep for the slaughter.*] As sheep are taken out of the flock, in order to be slain. (See the note on xi. 20.) The Vulgar Latin reads, *Gather them as sheep;* it is probable that the verb *natak* might be used in this sense, though the lexicons take no notice of it; for *attik,* a noun derived from thence, signifies a *chamber,* (Ezek. xli. 15.) and *netek* a *spot* of leprosy, (Lev. xiii. 30.) from the gathering of the humours.

Prepare them for the day of slaughter.] The Hebrew reads, *Sanctify them; i. e.* set them apart for destruction. (See xxii. 7.)

Ver. 4. *How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither?* &c.] The famine hath already consumed the fruits of the earth, together with the birds and beasts of the field, for the infidelity and atheism of these wretches, who thus prosper in their wickedness. (Compare xiv. 2. xxiii. 10. ix. 10.)

Because they said, He shall not see our last end.] The words of those who made a mock of Jeremiah and his prophecies, as if he should never see those evils come to pass which he had threatened against them, (xi. 23.) Some understand the words to this sense, God will never bring that destruction upon us, with which Jeremiah threatens us.

Ver. 5. *If thou hast run with footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?*] Here God answers the complaints of the prophet, and applies a proverbial expression to his case; the import of which is, that if men find themselves unable to contend with a less power, it is in vain for them to strive with a greater. This sentence being applied to the prophet's case, implies, that if he could not bear with the ill usage of his acquaintance and neighbours at Anathoth, how would he be able to undergo the hardships he must expect to meet with from the great men at Jerusalem, who would unanimously set themselves against him? (See xxvi. 8, &c. xxxvi. 26. xxxviii. 4. 6.)

And if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?] The same sense differently expressed; *q. d.* If thou enduredst such hardships in thy own country, and among thy own kindred and acquaintance, what must thou expect when those in power shall combine against thee? whose rage shall be like that of the lions who are driven out of their coverts, when Jordan overflows the neighbouring fields, and set upon every one that travels the public road. (See the note on xlix. 19.)

Ver. 6. *They have called a multitude after thee.*] Or, *against thee,* as Noldius observes the particle *ahareé* sometimes signifies. (See xlix. 37. Isa. xxxvii. 22.) They have not been content to vent their own malice against thee, but have also raised the multitude upon thee, and endeavoured to bring thee under a popular odium: the words may perhaps be more properly translated, *They pursue thee with a great* [cry], as a common malefactor.

Ver. 7. *I have forsaken my house.*] The place of my especial residence, where I have placed my name. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 27.) The words are spoken of the desolation of the temple by the Chaldeans, as if it were already brought to pass; a way of speaking usual in the prophets. (See the note upon Isa. xxi. 9.)

I have given the dearly-beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies.] See xi. 15.

Ver. 8. *Mine heritage is to me as a lion in the forest; it crieth out against me: therefore I have hated it.*] My people have used me and my prophets with despite and con-

tempt. They have blasphemed me and my laws, just like a wild beast, that opens his mouth against every one that withstands it. These are just causes of my hatred to them.

Ver. 9. *Mine heritage is to me as a speckled bird; all the birds round about her are against her,* &c.] My people are become wild and savage, (see ver. 8.) and not to be taught better manners, and, like a speckled or taloned bird, are only fit for prey and deeds of violence. And as all the rest of the birds flock about such a one, and are ready to pull it to pieces; so I have stirred up all the enemies of my people, to annoy them on every side; compared here to so many beasts of prey. (See ii. 15. Isa. lvi. 9. Habak. ii. 17.) The word *tsabûang,* rendered here *speckled,* is of an uncertain signification, being found but in this one place of the Bible, unless perhaps 1 Sam. xiii. 18. where some look upon it as a proper name. The Septuagint understand it of the *hyena,* which sense is followed by Bochart. But if we take it in either signification, the sense is much the same.

Ver. 10. *Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard.*] By *many pastors* are meant the generals of the Chaldean army, so the Chaldean paraphrase rightly explains it. (See ver. 12. and compare vi. 3.) God calls Judea his *vineyard* and *pleasant portion,* because of the care he took to cultivate and improve it, and the fruit he might justly have expected from it. (See the note on xi. 16.)

Ver. 11. *Being desolate it mourneth unto me.*] It lies in a neglected and doleful condition; (see ver. 4. and xxiii. 10.) and makes a sort of a silent complaint, and begs to be restored to its former prosperity.

The whole land is desolate, because no man layeth it to heart.] No man acknowledgeth God's hand in the calamities he feels, or humbles himself under it. (See viii. 6. Isa. xlii. 25.)

Ver. 12. *The spoilers are come upon all high places through* [or in] *the wilderness.*] The Chaldean army, described by the metaphor of a *full wind of the high places in the wilderness,* iv. 11. (See the note there.)

For the sword of the Lord shall devour from one end of the land to the other end of the land.] When God delivers up a people to be slain by their enemies, he is said to give commission to a sword to pass through a land. (See xlvii. 6, 7. Ezek. xiv. 17.)

Ver. 13. *They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns.*] A proverbial expression, signifying men's loss of time and labour. It is here applied to the Jews' fruitless endeavours to save themselves from the evils that threatened them, by courting the assistance and alliance of idolaters.

And they shall be ashamed of your revenues, because of the fierce anger of the Lord.] Or, *Be ye ashamed of your increase,* &c. God's displeasure shall make all your designs abortive; they shall not bring forth their expected fruit, and you shall be seized with shame and confusion to see yourselves disappointed. (Compare ii. 36, 37.) The word *revenues,* or *increase,* alludes to the *reaping of thorns,* mentioned in the foregoing part of the verse.

Ver. 14. *Thus saith the Lord against all mine evil neighbours, that touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit; Behold, I will pluck them out of their land.*] This prophecy threatens chiefly the Idumeans, Moabites, Ammonites, and Philistines, against whom Jeremiah prophesies, chap. xlvii.—xlix. and Ezekiel, chap. xxv. These the text calls *evil neighbours,* because of the spite and ill-will which they shewed towards the Jews upon all occasions, at this time especially, when most of them joined with the Chaldeans and Syrians, in oppressing them. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 2.) This sin is particularly laid to their charge by the prophets, and they are threatened with captivity chiefly upon that account. (See xlix. 1, 2. Ezek. xxv. 3. 6. 8. 12. 15. Amos i. 11. Obad. ver 10. Zeph. ii. 8.)

And pluck the house of Judah from among them.] Several Jews were carried captive, or turned voluntary exiles, into these neighbouring countries, before the general captivity by the Chaldeans. (See xv. 4. xl. 11.) Of these Jews some were translated together with the natives of those countries by the Chaldeans afterward: others went down into Egypt. (See chap. xliii. xliv.) Here is foretold the restoration of the Jews from their several dispersions. (Compare xxxii. 37. Ezek. xxviii. 25, 26.) This promise was partly made good in the times succeeding the Babylonish captivity: (see Psal. cxlvii. 2.) but will more fully be accomplished at the final restoration of that nation, concerning which see xxx. 3, &c. when the fulness of the gentiles will likewise be brought into the church, which the words of the next verse point at.

Ver. 15. *And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out, I will return, and have compassion on them,* &c.] Or, *I will again have compassion on them:* the verb *shûb* being often taken adverbially. (See the note on Isa. vi. 13.) The captivity threatened to the Jews and their neighbours seems to be confined to the space of seventy years. (See xxv. 11. xxvii. 7. Isa. xxiii. 15.) We may observe likewise, that after Jeremiah hath threatened severe judgments upon several countries, he concludes with a general promise of returning from their captivity *in the latter days:* (see xlviii. 47. xlix. 6. 39.) which promise probably relates to their conversion under the gospel, called in Scripture *the latter days.*

Ver. 16. *If they will diligently learn the ways of my people.*] If they will learn of my people, who lived among them, to be worshippers of the true God.

To swear by my name.] See the note on iv. 2.

As they taught my people to swear by Baal.] See Zeph. i. 5. As all vice is contagious, it is no wonder to find the Jews particularly fond of the idolatrous practices of their neighbours. For which cause they are often cautioned not to follow their customs; and it is probable several of the ceremonial laws were made in opposition to the usages received among those nations.

Then they shall be built in the midst of my people.] They shall be joined to them as one church, which is called God's *house,* or *building.* (See Numb. xii. 7. 1 Cor. iii. 9. 1 Tim. iii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5.)

Ver. 17. *But if they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation.*] Those that will not have God and Christ to reign over them, shall in the end be punished with everlasting destruction. (See Isa. lx. 12. Luke xix. 27. compared with Rev. xix. 21.)

CHAP. XIII.

ARGUMENT.

Under the figures of a linen girdle, and bottles filled with wine, is set forth God's rejection of the Jews, and the

severe judgments he would execute upon them for their manifold sins.

Ver. 1. *GET thee a linen girdle, and put it on thy loins.*] See this figure explained, ver. 11.

And put it not in water.] To represent the Jews in their corrupt state of nature, when they had nothing to recommend them to God's grace and favour. (Compare Ezek. xvi. 4.)

Ver. 4. *Arise, go to Euphrates, and hide it there in a hole of the rock.*] God commanded the prophet to hide the girdle by the bank of Euphrates, to signify the Jews being carried captive over that river, called the *water of Babylon*, Psal. cxxxvii. 1. Most commentators are of opinion, that this was performed by the prophet only in a vision: it not being probable that God should send him two such long journeys as are mentioned here and ver. 6. merely upon this errand. (See a like instance, xxv. 17.) Several things are related in Scripture as actually done, which yet were only transacted in a vision; a remarkable instance of which we read, Gen. xv. 5. where the text saith, that God brought *Abraham forth abroad*, and bid him *tell the stars;* and yet it appears by ver. 12. that the sun was not gone down. See this question at large discussed by the learned Dr. Pocock, in his Commentary upon the beginning of Hosea.

Ver. 9. *After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah.*] I will bring down their pride and stubbornness, (see ver. 15. 17.) by making them slaves and vassals to strangers. (See Lam. v. 5. 8. 13.)

Ver. 11. *For as a girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah.*] The covenant between God and his people is elsewhere represented by a marriage-contract; (see the note on ii. 2.) whereby the man is said to *cleave to his wife*, (Gen. ii. 24.)

That they might be to me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise.] That they might have the honour of being called by my name, and I might be glorified by their shewing forth my truth and praises to the world. (See xxxiii. 9.)

Ver. 12. *Every bottle shall be filled with wine.*] God's judgments are often represented under the figure of a cup full of intoxicating liquor. (See this metaphor at large pursued, xxv. 15, &c.) To the same purpose God tells them here, that as they have all sinned, so shall every one have his share in the punishment.

And they shall say unto thee, Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine?] God, that knew the profaneness of their hearts, foretells the reply they will make to this threatening, that, taking it in a literal sense, they will make a jest of it, as if the words were intended to encourage intemperance; either they did not, or would not, understand the drift of them. (See vi. 10.)

Ver. 13. *Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land —with drunkenness.*] See the note on xxv. 15, 16.

Ver. 14. *And I will dash them one against another.*] I will confound and destroy them all, as earthen vessels are broken to pieces, when they are dashed one against another. The words allude to the earthen bottles which were to be filled with wine, ver. 12. (Compare xix. 10, 11. xlviii. 12.)

I will not pity nor spare.] See iv. 28.

Ver. 15. *Be not proud.*] See ver. 9. 17. Humble yourselves before God, and give glory to him; as it follows:

Ver. 16. *Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness.*] Confess your faults, (compare Josh. vii. 19.) and humble yourselves under his mighty hand, before he bring upon you the night of affliction: light is the emblem of joy, and happy times are expressed by bright and pleasant days; as, on the contrary, troubles and calamities are represented by the night and darkness, when every thing looks melancholy and dismal. (See iv. 23. xv. 9. Isa. v. 30. viii. 22. Joel ii. 10. Amos viii. 9, 10.)

And before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains.] Before the time come, when ye shall be forced to fly by night unto the mountains, for fear of your enemies. (See xvi. 16. Psal. xi. 1. Ezek. vii. 16. Matt. xxiv. 16.)

Ver. 17. *But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride.*] If ye resolve to harden yourselves against those messages I deliver to you from the mouth of God, I will then lay aside my public character, and have nothing to do, but secretly to bewail your obstinacy and contempt of God's word and threatenings. (See ver. 10. 15.)

Because the Lord's flock is carried away captive.] See ver. 20.

Ver. 18. *Say unto the king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down,* &c.] By the king and queen may probably be meant Jehoiachin and his mother, who was carried captive with him. (See xxii. 26. 2 Kings xxiv. 12.) The prophet tells them they must both come down from their high estate, and sit down upon the ground, or in the dust; *i. e.* in a posture of mourning and lamentation. (See Lam. ii. 20. Isa. iii. 26. xlvii. 1.)

Ver. 19. *The cities of the south shall be shut up, and none shall open them.*] *Shutting up* signifies a state of bondage, and *opening* a state of liberty. (See Psal. xxxi. 8. Job xii. 14.) The verb *sagar*, here rendered *shut up*, is sometimes taken for delivering or giving up into the power of another; and is rendered in the Septuagint, by Παραδίδωμι. (See Deut. xxiii. 15. xxxii. 30. 1 Sam. xxiii. 12. Job xvi. 11. Psal. lxxviii. 48.) Taking the words in either sense, they denote that the cities of Judah shall be given up into the enemies' hand, and none shall be able to rescue them. Judah is called the *south*, in opposition to Chaldea, expressed by the *north* in the next verse. (See i. 14.)

Ver. 20. *Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?*] The verbs and pronouns in the Hebrew here, and in the following verse, are of the feminine gender; which supposes the words to be directed to the Jewish state or government, represented under the figure of a woman. (See iv. 31. vi. 2.) The prophet demands, in a sarcastical manner, into what a miserable condition she hath brought the people committed to her charge; called the *Lord's flock*, ver. 17. which were formerly in a prosperous and flourishing condition. (Compare x. 21.)

Ver. 21. *What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?*] What wilt thou plead for thyself, either for the excusing or mitigating thy punishment?

For thou hast taught them to be captains, and as chief over thee.] When Ahaz called in the assistance of Tiglath-pileser against Rezin king of Syria, and made himself tributary to the king of Assyria, he taught the Assyrians how they might become masters and conquerors over his own

country, whenever they pleased. (See 2 Kings xvi. 7. 2 Chron. xxviii. 20.)

Ver. 22. *And if thou say in thy heart, Wherefore come these things upon me?*] See v. 19.

For the greatness of thine iniquity are thy skirts discovered, and thy heels made bare.] Thine enormous crimes deserve no less a punishment than that of captivity: when thou shalt be carried away into a strange country, stripped and bare, without any covering to thy nakedness; for such was the barbarous cruelty of conquerors towards their captives. (See Isa. iii. 17. xx. 4. xlvii. 3. Lam. i. 8. iv. 21. Nahum iii. 3.) The words likewise allude to the punishment that used to be inflicted upon common harlots and adulteresses, which was to strip them naked and expose them to the eyes of the world: and thus God threateneth he will deal with Jerusalem, upon account of her spiritual fornication. (See Ezek. xvi. 37—39. Hos. ii. 10.)

Ver. 23. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin?*] The Hebrew word *Cush*, which our translators render by *Ethiopia*, does often signify Arabia in Scripture: Ethiopia being by the ancient writers distinguished into the eastern, the same with Arabia, and western Ethiopia. (See Ludolphus's Comment. in lib. i. Histor. Æthiop. n. 19.) Bochart, indeed, maintains, that the word is never used for Ethiopia, properly so called. (See his Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 2. n. 238.) But this text is a good proof to the contrary, which may most probably be understood of the Africans, or Blackmoors, as they are commonly called. The word *Cush* is likewise joined with the Lubims or Lybians, in other places, as 2 Chron. xii. 3. xvi. 8. Dan. xi. 43. and with *Phut*, another people of Africa. (See Jer. xlvi. 9. Ezek. xxx. 5. xxxviii. 5. Nahum iii. 9.) In the same sense *Cush* must be understood, Esther i. 1. where Ahasuerus is said to *reign from India to Cush*, or Ethiopia; because the words relate to the conquests of Egypt and Ethiopia by Cambyses; by whose victories, and the successful arms of Darius Hystaspes, the Persian empire was enlarged from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and twenty-seven provinces. (Compare that text with Dan. vi. 1.).

Then may ye also do good, who are accustomed to do evil.] The words import, how extreme difficult it is to overcome ill habits, custom being a second nature. For we are not to explain the words in a strict literal sense (because then it would have been to no purpose for the prophet to have exhorted the people to amendment), but only extend their meaning so far as to denote that a moral change in habitual sinners is almost as impossible as a natural one. Thus our Saviour compares the difficulty of a rich man's entering into the kingdom of God, to a natural impossibility, *viz. to a camel's passing through the eye of a needle:* (Matt. xix. 24.) but yet qualifies the comparison, by adding, *What is impossible with men, is possible with God; i. e.* God's grace can surmount such difficulties as are impossible for nature to overcome; and thus we are to understand the text before us.

Ver. 25. *This is thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me.*] Or, *of thine inheritance*, as the Chaldee paraphrase explains it; the expression is taken from the division of the land of Canaan, by line or measure.

Because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood.] In false gods, who cannot help men in their troubles. (See x. 14.)

Ver. 26. *Therefore I will discover thy skirts*, &c.] See ver. 22.

Ver. 27. *I have seen thine adulteries, and thy neighings,* [compare v. 8.] *the lewdness of thy whoredom, and thine abominations on the hills in the fields.*] He resembles their violent inclination to idolatry to the rage of lust. (Compare ii. 20. 23, 24. iii. 2. 6.)

CHAP. XIV.

ARGUMENT.

Besides the invasion threatened, God visited the land of Judea with a terrible famine, which Jeremiah earnestly prays God to avert: and withal shews how the false prophets have deceived the people, who foretold nothing but peace and prosperity.

Ver. 1. *THE word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah concerning the dearth.*] Or, the *drought;* so the LXX. render the word here, as also the Chaldee and Syriac versions: and thus our translators understand the word, xvii. 8. The Hebrew *batsaroth*, signifies restraint, *i. e. When the heaven is shut up that there is no rain*, as the Scriptures express it, Deut. xi. 17. 1 Kings viii. 35. This dearth was the effect of a great drought, like the famine in the time of Elijah. (See the third, fourth, and following verses.)

Ver. 2. *Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish, they are black unto the ground.*] By the *gates* of Judah are meant the cities thereof: (see xv. 7. Deut. xxviii. 52.) together with their inhabitants, who have left their cities desolate, to seek out for sustenance. The people look black and ghastly, and cast themselves down upon the ground, out of grief and despair. (Compare viii. 21. xiii. 18.)

And the cry of Jerusalem is gone up.] Is gone up to heaven. (See 1 Sam. v. 12.)

Ver. 3. *The nobles have sent their little ones to the waters, they came to the pits.*] Or, *to the cisterns:* Jerusalem was supplied with water by two lakes or pools, called the *upper pool*, and the *lower pool;* (see Isa. vii. 3. xxii. 9.) from whence the water was conveyed in cisterns for the use of the city.

They were ashamed and confounded.] At the disappointment. So we are to understand the same expression in Psal. xl. 14. lxx. 3. *Let them be ashamed and confounded; i. e.* Let them meet with that confusion which follows a disappointment. (Compare xx. 11. xlviii. 13. of this prophecy.)

They covered their heads.] An expression of great affliction and mourning. (See 2 Sam. xv. 30. xix. 4.)

Ver. 5. *Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook it.*] To seek for sustenance somewhere else.

Ver. 6. *The wild asses did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind as dragons.*] They gaped after the cool air upon the tops of the mountains, and drew it in greedily with their mouths, as naturalists observe of dragons and great serpents in hot and dry seasons. But the word *tannin* likewise signifies any great fish: (see the note on Isa. xxvii. 1.) and particularly a crocodile, as it is plainly taken Ezek. xxix. 3. xxxii. 2. in which sense Ludolphus understands the word here, and tells us, that the crocodiles put their heads above water, to refresh themselves by breathing in the cool air. (See his Commentary in Histor. Æth. lib. i. n. 87.)

Ver. 7. *O Lord, though our enemies testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake.*] Our sins bear witness against us, and condemn us to the severest judgments thy wrath can inflict: but we beseech thee to consider, that we are thy people, and have that regard for thine own honour, as not to cast us off utterly. (See ver. 9.)

For our backslidings are many.] Or, *Although our backslidings are many.* (See Noldius's Concordance, p. 399.)

Ver. 8. *O the Hope of Israel.*] Thou who hast given us so many gracious promises, to encourage us to put our trust in thee. (See Psal. xxii. 4.)

Why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land? &c.] Thou hast promised to dwell among us, (see ver. 9. Lev. xxvi. 12.) why then shouldest thou behave thyself towards us, as if thou wert a mere stranger to us? and as one no more concerned for our welfare, than a traveller is for the place where he lodges but one night, and never expects to see it again?

Ver. 9. *Why shouldest thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save?*] Thou canst not want power to save us; but by thy disregard of us, seemest like a mighty man, that through fear or surprise, is not able to make use of his strength.

Ver. 10. *Thus saith the Lord unto his people, They have loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet.*] God returns an answer to the complaints and expostulations of the prophet, and tells the people, that their miseries are owing to themselves, who took pleasure in going astray from the true God, and following the idolatries and corrupt customs of the heathens about them: (see ii. 23—26.) which sins he now visits so severely upon them.

Therefore the Lord doth not accept them, &c.] He will not accept their own prayers or humiliations, nor thine intercessions in their behalf, but will punish them according to their deserts. (See ver. 11, 12.)

Ver. 11. *Therefore pray not for this people,* &c.] See vii. 16.

Ver. 12. *When they fast, I will not hear their cry.*] It is likely there was a public fast appointed upon occasion of this dearth, as there was, in a like case, in the prophet Joel's time. (See Joel ii. 15.) And at such times they used to make their prayers with great noise and vehemence. (Isa. lviii. 4. Joel i. 14.)

And when they offer burnt-offerings and an oblation, I will not accept them.] See vii. 20. The word *mincha,* rendered *oblation,* was the offering of fine flour, mentioned Lev. ii. 1, &c. which always accompanied their sacrifices; and is not so properly translated *meat-offering* by our interpreters; whereas it should rather be rendered a *bread-offering;* for it answers to the οὐλοχύτης, and the *mola* or *fartum* of the Greeks and Romans.

But I will consume them by the sword, &c.] See ver. 18. and xv. 2.

Ver. 13. *Behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall see the sword,* &c.] See note on iv. 10.

Ver. 14. *The prophets prophesy lies in my name,* &c.] See xxiii. 21.

Ver. 16. *And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out into the streets of Jerusalem,* &c.] The people contributed to their own delusions, and readily hearkened to such false prophets as confirmed them in their evil ways: so God justly threatens to punish them, because they had not a love for the truth. (See 2 Thess. ii. 10—12. and iv. 10. of this prophecy.)

Ver. 17. *Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them, Let mine eyes run down with tears,* &c.] However insensible you are of your own condition, yet God commands me to bewail those calamities which I foresee are coming upon you.

For the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach.] Those cities are called virgins which never came into a conqueror's hands, as hath been observed upon Isa. xxiii. 12. In the same sense the prophet here calls Jerusalem a virgin, because she had been hitherto under God's immediate protection, and preserved by him from all the attempts of her enemies. (Compare Amos v. 2. see another sense of this phrase in the notes upon xviii. 13. xxxi. 4.)

The dissolution of a government or body politic is called a *breach,* by way of allusion to the breaking or disjointing the limbs of a human body. (See viii. 21. Lam. ii. 13.)

Ver. 18. *Both the prophet and the priest go about* [or wander] *into a land that they know not.*] The priests and prophets confirmed the people in their corruptions and impenitence, thereby seeking to advance their own interest and authority. (See ii. 8. v. 31.) To which sense the marginal reading renders the former part of the sentence thus, *The prophet and the priest make merchandise against the land.* And now they receive the due reward of their prevarications, by going into captivity with those whom they have misled. (See ver. 15.)

Ver. 19. *Hath thy soul loathed Zion?*] Which was formerly thy delight, and the place thou didst choose for thine especial residence. (See Psal. lxxvii. 68. lxxxvii. 2. cxxxii. 14.)

Ver. 20. *We acknowledge our wickedness, and the iniquities of our fathers.*] Which thou mayest justly visit upon us, as thou hast threatened, (Exod. xx. 5.) especially since we have not only imitated, but also exceeded them in wickedness. (See vii. 26. xvi. 12.)

Ver. 21. *Do not disgrace the throne of thy glory.*] Jerusalem is called the *city of God,* Psal. xlviii. 1. lxxxvii. 3. as he was in a peculiar manner king of the Jews, and this was his royal city, or chief seat of his kingdom. (See iii. 17.) But the words are chiefly to be understood of the temple, and the prophet beseeches God not to give that up to be profaned by infidels, the place which he had chosen for his peculiar residence, where he sat between the cherubims as upon a throne. (See the notes upon Isa. lxvi. 1.)

Remember [and] *break not thy covenant with us.*] Thou hast promised *to be our God,* and that *we should be thy people;* (xi. 4.) *i. e.* that thou wouldest take us under thy protection. We have indeed forfeited all our title to thy promises by our sins; yet we beseech thee still to remember the relation we bear to thee. (Compare Psal. lxxiv. 20.)

Ver. 22. *Are there any among the vanities of the gentiles that can cause rain?*] Idols are often styled *vanities.* (See x. 15. xvi. 19. Deut. xxxii. 21. Acts xiv. 15.) The giving rain in its season, is an argument for God's providence, often insisted upon in the Scriptures. (See the note on v. 24.)

Or can the heavens give showers?] Are they purely owing to natural causes? on the contrary, God directs them where and when they should fall. (See the note on x. 13.)

Art not thou he, O Lord our God [that givest them]?

therefore we will wait upon thee.] For rain, and the supply of all other our wants. The Hebrew word *hû, he,* is often equivalent to the true or eternal God: see Deut. xxxii. 39. Isa. xliii. 10. 13. xlviii. 12. and especially Psal. cii. 27. where the expression is the same with that of the text, *atta hû, thou art he:* our English reads *thou art the same.* The words express the eternal and unchangeable nature of God. There is another text where the word is plainly taken in this sense, 2 Kings ii. 14. *Where is the Lord God of Elijah,* aph hû, *even he?* for so the words should be translated. Those translations which join that expression of the following sentence, as our English does, put a manifest force upon the syntax.

CHAP. XV.

ARGUMENT.

God declares his irrevocable purpose of bringing desolations and captivity upon the Jewish nation: and comforts Jeremiah under those discouragements, which he met with in the discharge of his prophetical office.

Ver. 1. *THOUGH Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people.*] As God had forbid Jeremiah before to intercede for them, because it would be to no purpose: (see the note on xvii. 16.) so here he declares, that he would not admit the prayers of any others, though eminent favourites of God, in their behalf. Moses obtained pardon for the people after their sin in making the golden calf; (Exod. xxxii. 34.) and again, after their despising the promised land: (Numb. xiv. 20.) Samuel's intercession prevailed for their deliverance out of the hands of the Philistines, (1 Sam. vii. 9.) And these two persons are mentioned together, as remarkably prevalent by their prayers, Psal. xcix. 8. *Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, even when thou wast just taking vengeance upon their inventions:* for so the words should be translated. But here God saith, that if these very persons were alive, and in that near attendance to him which they formerly enjoyed, (for that is the import of the phrase, *To stand before him:* see ver. 19. xviii. 20. Deut. x. 8. 1 Kings xvii. 1.) *yet* even their prayers should not avert his judgments from this people. (Compare Ezek. xiv. 14.)

Ver. 2. *Such as are for death, to death.*] Death here signifies the pestilence, which, together with the sword and the famine, should consume the greatest part of the people. (Compare xiv. 12. Ezek. v. 12. xiv. 21.)

Ver. 3. *And I will appoint over them four kinds—the sword to slay,* &c.] These four judgments shall be the executioners of my vengeance upon this people. (Compare Lev. xxvi. 16.) Those whom the sword destroys shall not enjoy the common rites of burial, but their carcasses shall be left a prey to the dogs, the birds, and the beasts. This is mentioned as an aggravation of the Divine judgments. (Compare viii. 2.)

Ver. 4. *And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth.*] Several Jews were carried captive into other countries, besides Chaldea: (see the note on xii. 14.) others turned voluntary exiles, to avoid the miseries they saw coming upon their country. (See xl. 11.) The words here are taken out of Deut. xxviii. 25. where Moses threatens them with a general dispersion over the world, which received its utmost completion after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

Because of Manasseh, &c.] His idolatry and other abominations, exceeded the wickedness of all the kings that went before him. (See 2 Kings xxi. 7. 9. 11.) In his time the public worship of God was wholly suppressed, and idolatry introduced into the very temple; the law of God was likewise quite laid aside, and in a manner forgotten, as appears by the surprise Hilkiah was in, when he found the original of the law in the house of the Lord, (2 Kings xxii. 8.) So it was Manasseh's sins that filled up the measure of the Jews' iniquities. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 26. xxiv. 3, 4.)

Ver. 5. *For who shall* [or rather, who will] *have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem?*] Thy sins render thee unworthy of pity, and every body that sees the calamities brought upon thee will own them to be just. (See xxii. 8, 9.)

Or, who will turn aside to ask how thou dost?] Who will be so much concerned for thee, as to step a little out of his way to inquire after thee, a common instance of respect between persons never so little acquainted. Rather they that pass by will insult over thy calamities. (See Lam. ii. 15.)

Ver. 6. *Thou art gone backward.*] See vii. 24.

I am weary with repenting.] When God suspends the execution of his judgments, he is said to *repent* of the evil he had threatened. (See xviii. 8.) This he had done so often, that he is represented like a man whose patience is at last quite tired out, it being to no purpose to withhold his hand any longer from striking. (Compare Isa. xliii. 24. Hos. xiii. 14. Mal. ii. 17.)

Ver. 7. *I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land.*] *I will scatter them to all the winds,* as Ezekiel expresses it, Ezek. v. 12. (See likewise li. 2. of this prophecy, Isa. xli. 16.) By the *gates of the land* are meant the cities. (See xiv. 2.)

Ver. 8. *I have brought upon them, against the mother of the young men, a spoiler at noon.*] Compare vi. 4. By the *mother of young men,* is meant Jerusalem. (See Isa. l. 1. Hos. ii. 2.)

And terrors upon the city.] The Hebrew word *nir* is of a double signification: the Septuagint render the words, *tumult and terrors.* This translation of the word *nir,* Abr. à Schultens defends from the sense it still retains in the Arabic. (See his Animadver. in Job, p. 53.) Some suppose that word to signify a *watchman* here, from the Chaldee sense of it, and translate the latter part of the verse thus, *I have caused* (or will cause) *a watchman and terrors to fall upon it suddenly.*

Ver. 9. *She that hath borne seven, languisheth.*] The prophet pursueth the metaphor of the former verse, and describeth the mother-city under the figure of a fruitful woman, (compare 1 Sam. ii. 5.) but fainting away, and ready to die with grief for the loss of her children.

Her sun is gone down while it is yet day.] She is as a young man that dies in the midst of his strength: of a sudden she is overwhelmed with misery, when she might have expected a long continuance of happiness. (Compare Amos viii. 9. and see the note upon iv. 23.)

And the residue of them will I deliver to the sword.] *i. e.* Those that escape out of the city. (See ver. 8. Ezek. v. 12.)

Ver. 10. *Woe is me, my mother, thou hast born me a man*

of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth.] Or, *land.* I am an object of the common hatred, every body takes occasion to quarrel with me, because I speak such truths as they do not care to hear. (See xi. 19, &c. xx. 7, 8.)

I have neither lent upon usury, nor men have lent to me upon usury; yet every one of them doth curse me.] The Jews were forbid to take usury of their brethren, (Deut. xxiii. 19.) especially of the poor, (Exod. xxii. 25.) which was thought so great an oppression, that it made the man who was guilty of it hated and cursed by every one. The prophet saith, this was just his own case, every body was his enemy for delivering those messages he had received from God.

Ver. 11. *The Lord saith, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant,* &c.] If we follow this translation, the sense is, that the prophet himself, his family, and relations, should escape the evils coming upon the Jewish nation, when the remnant or *residue* of them should be delivered to the sword, (ver. 9.) But others translate the sentence thus, *I will give thee a happy deliverance* [from these evils]: or, *thy habitation shall be happy,* or secure; and thine enemies shall use thee well, when they exercise all manner of cruelty towards the rest of the Jews. (See xxxix. 11, 12. xl. 4.)

Ver. 12. *Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel?*] The northern iron was the hardest in its kind of any, *viz.* such as the people called *Chalybes,* living near the Euxine Sea, prepared. The words, if they are applied to Jeremy, import thus much, That as common iron cannot contend for hardness with the northern iron, or with steel: so the opposition which the Jews make against thee, shall easily be vanquished and disappointed, because *I am with thee to save thee,* (ver. 20.) If the words relate to the Jews, as the following verses plainly do; the sense is, that the Chaldeans coming from the north, (i. 15.) will be as much too hard for the Jews to engage with, as the northern iron is superior in strength to the common metal of that kind.

Ver. 13. *Thy substance and thy treasure will I give to the spoil without price.*] Compare xvii. 3. God threatens the Jews, that he will give up all their wealth and substance for a prey unto their enemies, without receiving any valuable consideration for it, without any regard to his own honour, which will be so far from being increased by it, that it will be thought to suffer in the eyes of the world, by delivering up his own people into the hands of idolaters; he will deal with them as men do with the refuse of their stock or goods, which they are glad to be rid of upon any terms. (Compare Psal. xliv. 13.)

Ver. 14. *And I will make thee to pass with thine enemies into a land which thou knowest not.*] Compare xiv. 18. The words may be rendered thus, *I will bring thine enemies* [who live] *in a land which thou knowest not.* The Septuagint and some other interpreters, instead of the present Hebrew reading, *heeberti,* read *heebadhti,* to this sense, *I will cause thee to serve thine enemies,* &c. as the sentence is repeated, xvii. 4.

For a fire is kindled in mine anger, &c.] See vii. 20.

Ver. 15. *O Lord, thou knowest.*] Mine innocency. (See xii. 3.)

Visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors.] See xi. 20. and the note there.

Take me not away in thy long-suffering.] Suffer not mine enemies to take away my life, while thou forbearest to vindicate and defend me. Verbs active in the Hebrew language, do often signify only *permission.* (See iv. 10. and the note upon Isa. lxiii. 17.)

Know [or consider] *that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.*] See ver. 10. xi. 21. xx. 8. Herein the prophet was a type of Christ, and his sufferings. (See Psal. lxix. 7. and the note upon xi. 19.)

Ver. 16. *Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me joy and rejoicing of my heart,* &c.] As soon as I received or understood thy word, and the messages thou didst deliver to me, I treasured them up in my memory; I meditated upon them, and did inwardly digest them. It was a pleasure to me to think I should be an instrument of conveying thy commands to my brethren, and that I should have the honour of being called thy prophet, or messenger. The receiving God's word, by which the soul is nourished, is elsewhere compared to corporal food. (See Isa. lv. 1, 2. Ezek. iii. 1. 3. Amos viii. 11. John vi. 27. Rev. x. 9.)

Ver. 17. *I sat not in the assembly of mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone.*] The word *meshahakim,* here translated *mockers,* is elsewhere rendered, *Those that make merry;* (see xxx. 19. xxxi. 4.) which signification the Chaldee paraphrase follows, and, as I conceive, better suits this place; the sense of which is, That Jeremy quickly found the joy which he had conceived from the honour of being a prophet, was turned into heaviness; all his prophecies containing nothing but terrible denunciations of God's indignation against a sinful people. This makes me, saith he, sit alone, renounce all cheerful conversation, and give myself to solitariness and pensive thoughts. (Compare Lam. iii. 28.) God's judgments, as they were represented to the prophets, often raised such dreadful ideas in their mind, as to affect them in an extraordinary manner, especially if their threatenings concerned their own country, or the church of God. (See xxiii. 9. Ezek. iii. 4. Dan. vii. 28. Habak. iii. 2. 16.)

Because of thine hand.] God's *hand* may either be understood of his judgments, which, being denounced by the prophet, might be resembled to a hand stretched out, and just ready to strike: or else of the prophetical impulse, which was strong upon Jeremiah, and in a manner forced him to be the messenger of evil tidings. (Compare 2 Kings iii. 15. Isa. viii. 11. Ezek. i. 4. iii. 14.)

Ver. 18. *Wilt thou be altogether to me as a liar, and as waters that fail?*] Thou hast promised to be my defence and safeguard against mine enemies; (see i. 18, 19.) and wilt thou altogether disappoint and deceive me? like little brooks which are dried up in summer, when they are most wanted, and so disappoint the thirsty traveller. (Compare Job vi. 15.) The prophet here sets down the perplexities he laboured under, by reason of the opposition he continually met with from ungodly men, in the execution of his office: just as the Psalmist relates the misgivings of his mind, when he was under great troubles and temptations. (See Psal. xxxi. 22. lxxiii. 13, 14. lxxvii. 7. 10.) But then presently he checks such thoughts, calls to mind God's gracious promises, and encourages himself to rely upon him. And the like encouragements are recorded in the following verses of this chapter.

Ver. 19. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, If thou wilt return, I will bring thee again* [or restore thee], *and thou shalt stand before me.*] To these complaints of the prophet, God returns an answer, the import of which is as followeth: These misgivings of mind are a sort of renouncing the prophetical office: if thou wilt therefore return to thy duty, saith God, I will restore thee to that station thou hast in a manner deserted, and thou shalt still attend upon me, as my servant and messenger. (See the note upon ver. 1.)

And if thou wilt take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth.] If thou encourage the good, and reprove the wicked, thou wilt answer the character of a true prophet, whose office it is to utter the words that God puts into his mouth, without adding thereto, or diminishing from them. (See Exod. iv. 16.) Whereas the false prophets made the wicked more presumptuous, and discouraged the righteous. (See Ezek. xiii. 22. xxii. 26.) The expression alludes to that charge given to the priests, to distinguish carefully *between holy and unholy*, and *between clean and unclean*, (Lev. x. 10.)

Let them return to thee; but return not thou to them.] Do not thou comply with their humour, or study to soothe them up in their wickedness: but rather endeavour, by wholesome reproofs, to turn them from the error of their ways.

Ver. 20, 21. *And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall,* &c.] If thou wilt faithfully discharge thy duty according to these directions, I will certainly fulfil the promise I made to thee, when I first called thee to the prophetical office, (i. 18, 19.)

CHAP. XVI.

ARGUMENT.

God forbids the prophet the use of such rejoicings as were customary at marriage-festivals, and likewise the solemnities practised at funerals: intimating, that in times of the utmost distraction, such as were coming upon the Jews, all the solemn rites both of joy and mourning should cease. Yet, withal, he adds a promise to them of such a restoration, as shall be more wonderful than their deliverance out of Egypt.

Ver. 2. *THOU shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons nor daughters in this place.*] Fruitfulness was promised as a blessing under the law, (Deut. xxviii. 4.) but ceased to be so in such difficult times as were coming upon the Jewish nation: for parents could not promise to themselves any comfort in their children, who must be exposed to the many miseries that attend a hostile invasion, and a conquering army.

Ver. 4. *They shall die of grievous deaths,* &c.] By sword and by famine, as it follows. (Compare viii. 2. xv. 2, 3.)

Ver. 5. *For thus saith the Lord, Enter not into the house of mourning,* &c.] Or, *of a mourning-feast*, as the margin reads; such as were the περίδειπνα among the Greeks, and *parentalia* among the Romans. (See ver. 7.)

For I have taken away peace from this people, &c.] As they are not the object of my compassions; so neither ought they to be of the pity of others. They are to be esteemed as so many criminals or malefactors, at whose funerals men do not use to pay the common respects which are due to the deceased.

Ver. 6. *Neither shall men lament for them.*] Men's thoughts shall be wholly taken up with bewailing themselves: their own calamities shall be so great, it shall make them not concerned for the misfortunes of others.

Nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them.] See the note upon xli. 5. The law did expressly forbid making any *cuttings in the flesh* at funeral obsequies. (See Lev. xix. 28. Deut. xiv. 1.) Notwithstanding which prohibition, this practice seems to have been taken up by the Jews, among other heathenish customs. Shaving of the head was a usual expression of mourning. (See vii. 29.)

Ver. 7. *Neither shall men tear themselves for them in mourning,* &c.] According to this translation, the phrase alludes to another expression of immoderate grief, which consisted in tearing the flesh with their nails:

"Unguibus ora soror fœdans,"

as Virgil describes it. But, according to the marginal reading, the sense is, *Neither shall men break* [bread] *for them;* alluding to the mourning-feast mentioned ver. 5. (See likewise Ezek. xxiv. 17. Hos. ix. 4. Tobit iv. 17.)

Ver. 9. *For I will cause to cease out of this place—the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride.*] In the time of a general desolation all the solemn seasons of mirth and gladness shall cease, as well public as private. The solemn feasts, which were always observed with great expressions of joy, (see Deut. xvi. 11. 14. Isa. xxx. 29.) as well as nuptial solemnities, and other private occasions of rejoicing. (Compare vii. 34. xxv. 10. Hos. ii. 11.)

Ver. 10. *Wherefore hath the Lord pronounced all this great evil against us?*] See v. 19.

Ver. 11. *And ye have done worse than your fathers.*] See the note on vii. 26.

Ver. 12. *And there ye shall serve other gods, day and night.*] The opportunities of frequenting the public worship of the true God shall be taken from you, as a just judgment upon you for your neglect of his service in your own country; and you shall be exposed to the peril of committing idolatry; and being seduced by the Chaldeans to the worship of their idols. (Compare Deut. iv. 28. xxviii. 36. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19.)

Mr. Mede expounds the words of their *serving other gods,* in a political sense; *i. e.* serving those nations who worshipped other gods. (See his Apostacy of the latter Times, par. i. b. iii. chap. 16.) The Chaldee paraphrase explains the phrase to the same purpose, *Ye shall serve those people that worship idols day and night.*

Ver. 14. *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord,* &c.] The particle *laken,* translated *therefore,* sometimes signifies *nevertheless,* or *yet surely;* see the note on Isa. xxx. 18. and so it is translated v. 2. of this prophecy; which sense agrees best with the scope of this place, and connects this verse with the words foregoing. So it should be rendered likewise, xxx. 16. xxxii. 36.

Concerning the import of the promise made here and in the following verse, see the notes upon xxiii. 7, 8.

Ver. 16. *Behold, I will send for many fishers, and they shall fish them; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them.*] Enemies and oppressors are

elsewhere represented under the metaphors of fishers and hunters; (see Gen. x. 9. Amos iv. 2. Habak. i. 14, 15.) because they use all the methods of open force and secret wiles (frequently compared to nets) in order to make men their prey. (See Ezek. xii. 13. Hos. v. 1.) These two similitudes imply, that the Chaldeans shall make an entire conquest and booty of the whole land, of its inhabitants and their riches; and what shall escape one party, shall fall into the hands of another.

From every mountain, &c.] They shall find them out in all the places whither they flee for refuge, be they never so secret or inaccessible. (See xiii. 16.)

Ver. 18. *And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double.*] *i. e.* Double in proportion to God's usual severity in punishing men's sins. (Compare xvii. 18. Isa. xl. 2. with the note upon that place.)

Because they have defiled my land.] See ii. 7.

They have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things.] With their idols, which are elsewhere called *carcasses,* not only because they are without life, but also because of their filthiness and hatefulness in the sight of God. (See Lev. xxvi. 30. Ezek. xliii. 7. 9.) Some explain the words of the human sacrifices which were offered to idols. (See xix. 5.)

Ver. 19. *O Lord, my strength and my fortress—the gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth,* &c.] The more emphatically to demonstrate the absurdity of forsaking the true God, and apostatizing to idolatry; the prophet foretells, that the time will come when the gentiles shall be ashamed of the idolatry they and their forefathers have been so long guilty of; shall humbly confess this their sin, and address themselves to the true God in all their wants, as their only refuge and protection.

Ver. 20. *Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no gods?*] The absurdity of supposing that the work of men's hands can resemble or represent the infinite majesty of God, is often insisted upon by the holy writers. (See x. 3, &c. Isa. xliv. 10, 11, &c.)

Ver. 21. *Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know—my hand and my might,* &c.] The phrase which our English renders *this once,* may be translated, *at this time,* as it is 2 Sam. xvii. 7. If we understand the verse of the gentiles, mentioned in the foregoing verse, the sense is, that God will at the time foretold (ver. 19.) exert his power in an extraordinary manner for their conversion. (Compare Isa. lii. 10.) If we apply the words to the Jews, they import, that he will manifest his power in bringing upon them all the evils already threatened against them, and they should know that he is the Lord, a fulfiller of his threatenings, as well as a performer of his promises. (Compare Ezek. vi. 7. xii. 20. xxiv. 24. 27.) This sense the Chaldee paraphrase expresses.

CHAP. XVII.

ARGUMENT.

After having renewed his threatenings against the Jews for their sins, the prophet encourages himself, and other well-disposed persons, to put their trust in God alone. The latter part of the chapter contains a charge to the king and people for the strict observance of the sabbath.

Ver. 1. *THE sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond,* &c.] It is written in indelible characters, as when things are engraved in tables of stone, to preserve the memory of them to posterity. (Compare Job xix. 24.) In like manner the Jewish altars and other monuments of their idolatry, are undeniable tokens of the corrupt inclinations of their hearts, which are altogether estranged from God and his true worship.

Ver. 2. *Whilst their children remember their altars, and their groves,* &c.] They train up their children in the same idolatrous practices. (Compare vii. 18. ii. 20.)

Ver. 3. *O my mountain in the field.*] A periphrasis of the temple, called elsewhere the *mountain of the Lord's house,* and the *holy mountain.* (See Isa. ii. 2.) This being the principal part of Jerusalem, is put by way of synecdoche for the whole city. (Compare xxi. 13.)

I will give thy substance, &c.] See xv. 13.

Ver. 4. *And thou, even thyself, shalt discontinue from thine heritage.*] The Hebrew verb *shamattah, discontinue,* alludes to the seventh year of *release* enjoined by Moses, (Deut. xv. 1.) which law the Jews had a long time neglected out of covetousness, and refused to observe, even after a solemn engagement to the contrary. (See below, xxxiv. 8, &c.) So here the words imply, that since they would not release their land, nor their servants in the sabbatical years, as God had enjoined them, he would release them from the possessions he had given them; and then *the land should enjoy her sabbaths,* according to the prescription of the law. (See Lev. xxvi. 34.)

For ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, which shall burn for ever.] *i. e.* Till you be consumed. (Compare vii. 20. xv. 14. xxi. 2.)

Ver. 5. *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man.*] The prophet denounces this curse chiefly with respect to the Jews placing their trust in the assistance the Egyptians, or other their allies, would afford them against the arms of the Babylonians, which he tells them will deceive their expectation, and make them forfeit the Divine protection. (See the notes on iv. 30. xxii. 20. 22.)

And maketh flesh his arm.] By *flesh* is meant a frail mortal man. (See Isa. xxxi. 3.)

Ver. 6. *For he shall be like the heath in the desert.*] Whereas the righteous, and he that trusteth in God, shall be like a fair flourishing tree. (See ver. 8.)

In a salt land, and not inhabited.] *Saltness* in Hebrew expresses barren ground. (See Deut. xxix. 23. Psal cvii. 34. Zeph. ii. 9.)

Ver. 8. *And shall not see when heat cometh.*] Or, *shall not fear when heat cometh:* so the Septuagint render the words, following the reading of the Hebrew text, which is to be preferred before that of the margin.

And shall not be careful in the time of drought.] Shall not be solicitous for fear it should lack moisture. (See xiv. 1.)

Ver. 9. *The heart is deceitful above all things,* &c.] An entire confidence in God is one of the chief trials of men's sincerity; and they that pretend to depend wholly upon him, yet in cases of apparent danger, are too apt to mistrust his promises, and have recourse to human succours. Or else the prophet here assigns a reason why we ought to put our trust in God, and not in man, whose heart we can-

not look into, and who very often, under great pretences of sincerity, cover over mischievous designs.

Ver. 10. *I, the Lord, search the heart,* &c.] Since there are so many corrupt inclinations that lurk in the heart, it is very hard for men, without examining themselves very narrowly, to know the sincerity of their own hearts; it being the property of God alone, perfectly to discover the whole bent and frame of men's dispositions. (See Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24.)

Ver. 11. *As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, but not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days.*] It is very uncertain what kind of bird the Hebrew word *kore* denotes. Bochart thinks the description given of it in the Arabic writers, doth by no means agree to a partridge: so that it is needless to inquire whether the quality here mentioned belong to that bird. The sentence may best be rendered thus, *As the bird kore hatcheth eggs which she did not lay: so he that getteth riches,* &c. As when eggs are hatched by a bird of a different species, when once the young ones are fledged, they never stay with the dam that hatched and nourished them: so he that increases an estate which he did not come honestly by at first, shall never prosper long with it. Critics observe, that the Hebrew verb *yalad,* translated here *hatcheth,* properly signifies *laying the eggs;* the hatching them being expressed by the verbs *bakang* and *dagar,* the word used in the text, which our translators render *sitteth on eggs,* but doth properly signify *hatching* them.

And at his end shall be a fool.] So God calls the rich man, Luke xii. 20. who was cut off in the midst of his life, when he promised himself the enjoyment of many years.

Ver. 12. *A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary.*] God's kingdom is from everlasting: his throne is in heaven, the place of his peculiar residence, of which his temple at Jerusalem is but an imperfect resemblance; heaven is sometimes called God's temple, or sanctuary. (See Psal. xi. 4. xviii. 6. cii. 19. Isa. lvii. 15. Jonah ii. 7.) The words instruct the Jews to look up to God in the heavens, and not fancy the temple the only place from whence they may address themselves to him, which made them think he would never forsake that seat of his residence, nor the city where he had placed his name. (See vii. 4.)

Ver. 13. *O Lord, the hope of Israel, all they that forsake thee shall be ashamed.*] Thou hast given many gracious promises to thy people, to encourage them to trust in thee; and they that forsake their interest in thy goodness, will find all other expectations fail and disappoint them.

And they that depart from me, shall be written in the earth.] They that forsake my laws, saith God, and their reliance upon me, shall not be registered among my people, nor shall their names be written in heaven, or in the book of life. (Compare Ezek. xiii. 9. Psal. lxix. 28. Luke x. 20. Philip. iv. 3.) The expression alludes to the registers that are kept of the members of every city or corporation, the privileges of which society none can pretend to, but they that have their names entered in such registers. (See Ezra ii. 59.)

Because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters.] See ii. 13.

Ver. 14. *Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise.*] It is from thee only that I expect comfort and relief in all my troubles and afflictions. (See ver. 15—17.) And as I acknowledge that all the blessings I enjoy come from thee, so it is to thee I return all thanks and praise. (Compare Psal. cix. 1. cxlviii. 14. Deut. x. 21.) The expression, *Save me, and I shall be saved,* is much the same with that we read, xxxi. 18. *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned:* and both of them import, that it is the Divine assistance and blessing only that can crown human endeavours with success. (See the note there.)

Ver. 15. *Behold, they say, Where is the word of the Lord? Let it come now.*] This is an objection common in the mouths of infidels and libertines, that God doth not speedily fulfil his promises or threatenings, so as to give them ocular demonstration of their certainty. (See Isa. v. 19. Amos v. 18. 2 Pet. iii. 4.) This was objected against the truth of Jeremy's prophecies by the loose persons of that age.

Ver. 16. *As for me, I have not hastened from being a pastor to follow thee: neither have I desired the woful day, thou knowest.*] The Geneva translation renders the sense better thus, *I have not thrust in myself for a pastor after thee.* The prophet solemnly appeals to God, that he did not intrude himself into this office; nor was he desirous of an employment that foreboded so much evil to others, and brought a great deal of trouble upon himself. The words in the original run literally as our translation expresses them, but the construction is the same with that expression we read, xl. 9. where the words in the Hebrew run, *Fear not from serving the Chaldeans;* but our translation rightly expresses the sense, *Fear not to serve the Chaldeans.* (See Noldius's Concordance, p. 567.)

Ver. 17. *Be not a terror to me.*] Amidst all the terrors with which mine adversaries threaten me, (see xi. 19. xv. 10.) let me still find comfort in thee; and let not any apprehension of being forsaken by thee add a new terror to the rest of my fears.

Ver. 18. *Let them be confounded,* &c.] See the note on xi. 20.

And destroy them with a double destruction.] See xvi. 18.

Ver. 19. *Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people, whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by which they go out,* &c.] In the most public gates of the city, and the common passages for king and people.

Ver. 20. *Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye kings of Judah.*] Compare xix. 3. The words are directed both to the king himself, and likewise to the princes, or those of the royal blood. (See ver. 25.) The word *king* in the Hebrew language signifies any person in authority. (See xxv. 20, &c. l. 41. li. 28. and the notes upon those texts.)

Ver. 21. *Bear no burden on the sabbath-day.*] See Nehem. xiii. 19. Servile work was forbidden upon their solemn festivals; (see Lev. xxiii. 8. 35.) much more upon the sabbath-day.

Ver. 22. *But hallow ye the sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers.*] The sabbath was instituted as a sign or token of God's covenant with his people; (see Exod. xxxi. 13. Ezek. xx. 12.) the observance of it was the distinguishing character of a Jew, whereby he declared himself a worshipper of the true God, who made heaven and earth, and ordained the sabbath-day as a memorial of the creation. So that the Jews profaning the sabbath, was in effect a renouncing their share in God's covenant. (See Ezek. xx. 13. 21.)

Ver. 23. *But they made their neck stiff.*] A metaphor taken from oxen that draw back, and refuse to put their neck under the yoke. (See vii. 26. xix. 15.)

Ver. 25. *Then shall there enter into the gate of this city, kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David.*] Compare xxii. 4. From hence it appears, that the judgments denounced against Jerusalem, at least as far as they threatened the city with utter destruction, were not irreversible. And from Jeremy's advice to Zedekiah, (xxxviii. 17.) it may be concluded, that if the king had hearkened to that counsel, the city would not have been destroyed, and he himself might have continued a tributary king under Nebuchadnezzar. It is true, that in several other chapters of this prophecy, God, upon foresight of the Jews' impenitence, pronounces a peremptory sentence upon them. (See the note on iv. 28.)

Ver. 26. *From the land of Benjamin.*] See the note on i. 1. vi. 1.

And from the plain, and from the mountains.] The country of Judea, properly so called, *i. e.* the country allotted to the tribe of Judah, was divided into the hill country, (see Josh. xxi. 21. Luke i. 39.) and the plain or champaigne country; the same word is rendered *valley*, xxxii. 44. This lower part reached down to the lake Asphaltites, called the *sea of the plain*, or *the Salt Sea*, Deut. iii. 17.

And from the south.] That part of Judah which is called the *wilderness of Judea*, Matt. iii. 1. Josh. xv. 61. By reason of this situation of the wilderness, the word itself sometimes is put for the south. (See Psal. lxxv. 6.)

Bringing burnt-offerings and sacrifices, and meat-offerings, and incense.] See the notes upon vii. 21. xiv. 12. Incense was always laid upon the meat-offerings. (See Lev. ii. 1, 2.)

And bringing sacrifices of praise unto the house of the Lord.] The peace-offerings were of three sorts; either vows, voluntary or free-will-offerings, and offerings of praise or thanksgiving. (See Lev. vii. 15, 16.) These were offered as grateful acknowledgments for deliverances in time of danger, or for other mercies received. (See Psal. cvii. 22. cxvi. 17.)

Ver. 27. *Then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof,* &c.] Compare Lam. iv. 11.

CHAP. XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

Under the figure of a potter, the prophet shews God's absolute power in disposing of kingdoms, and thereupon exhorts the Jews to repentance: he then bewails their obstinacy, and threateneth destruction to those that devised evil against him.

Ver. 6. *AS the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand.*] God's absolute power over his creatures, both by virtue of his creating them, and having dominion over them, is justly represented by this metaphor. (See Isa. xlv. 8. Rom. ix. 20.)

Ver. 8. *I will repent of the evil I thought to do unto them.*] If we take repentance in a strict and proper sense, for a change of the inward purposes and resolutions, it cannot be applied to God, according to that saying of Balaam's, *God is not a man that he should repent*, (Numb. xxiii. 19.) Therefore, whenever repentance is ascribed to God, it must be meant only of a change with respect to the outward administrations of his providence, and his dealing with men otherwise than he did before: and this doth not imply a change in God, but only in ourselves: he still acts by the same rules, but we, according to our different behaviour, become the objects either of his favour or his displeasure.

Ver. 10. *I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them.*] From this and the foregoing verse we may infer, That God's promises in Scripture, however uttered in general terms, are yet, for the most part, to be understood conditionally, according as men behave themselves, especially when applied to particular persons. (See Numb. xiv. 34.) And as God did justly reject those Jews, who refused to embrace the gospel, notwithstanding the general promises he had made to that people: so neither can particular Christians nor churches lay any claim to God's general promise of preserving his church, any farther than they keep close to that rule of faith and manners, which he hath prescribed to them in the New Testament.

Ver. 11. *Return ye now every one from his evil way,* &c.] See the note on xvii. 25. This and the parallel texts shew, that God's threatenings are not to be understood as absolute predictions, but such as may be reversed upon men's repentance, as appears in the famous instance of Nineveh, Jonah iii. 4. 10. (See the note on iv. 28.)

Ver. 12. *And they said, There is no hope,* &c.] See ii. 25.

Ver. 13. *Ask ye now among the heathen who hath heard such things.*] Such an apostacy as the Jews are guilty of (see ver. 15.) is not to be paralleled among the heathen. (Compare ii. 10.)

The virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing.] Israel being the name that God gave Jacob, as a peculiar mark of his favour, when he blessed him and told him, that as *a prince he had power with God*, Gen. xxxii. 28. (compare 1 Kings xviii. 31.) denotes here God's peculiar people, which at that time was confined to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, God having utterly cast off the ten tribes, to whom the name of Israel was commonly given, after the division of the kingdom. In this sense we find the word Israel used, xlviii. 27. Mal. i. 1. ii. 11. *The virgin of Israel* implies that people which was dedicated to God as *a chaste virgin*, (see 2 Cor. xi. 2.) but hath since corrupted herself and gone a whoring after idols. (Compare xxxi. 4. Lam. i. 15. ii. 13. see another sense of that phrase in the notes on xiv. 17.)

Ver. 14. *Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which comes from the rock of the field?*] Lebanon derives its name from the whiteness of the snow that covers the top of it, even in summer-time, as travellers assure us. (See Maundrell's Travels, p. 138.) "Præcipuum montium Lebanum erigit—tantos inter ardores opacum fidumque nivibus." (Tac. Hist. lib. v.) If we follow the translation in the text, the sense is, It is as strange and incredible for men to forsake the true God for idols, as it would be for a thirsty traveller to forego the cold refreshing streams that come in his way. (See Prov. xxv. 25.) But the word *mitsor*, which our English renders *from the rock*, may, probably, signify *dew*, or *moisture;* from whence *Matsor*, or *Mitsraim*, the name of Egypt, is derived, because of its being watered by the river Nile. And then the words may be translated thus, as a learned friend hath suggested to me: *Shall one leave the moisture of the field* [for] *the snow-water of Lebanon, or*

shall the running waters be forsaken for the muddy waters? (See the following note.)

Or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?] Following the translation set down in the former note; the words *majim zarim* signify *muddy waters*, such as are brought down by a flood, deriving *zarim* from *zerim*, an *inundation*, in which sense Schindler supposes the word to be used, Isa. i. 7. Translating the verse thus, it is exactly parallel with ii. 13. 18. *Thou hast forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, to drink the muddy turbid waters of Sihor.* The sense is much the same, if we understand *majim zarim*, in its usual signification, for *strange waters*, or *waters that come from another place;* that is, waters conveyed in pipes or conduits for common use.

Ver. 15. *Because my people hath forgotten me, and burnt incense to vanity.*] Idols are often called *vanity*, (see x. 15. xiv. 22. xvi. 19.) as being the product of men's vain imaginations, and serving to no good end and purpose.

And have caused them to stumble in their ways, from the ancient paths, &c.] The worship of idols hath perverted them from following the old beaten track, plainly set forth in the law of Moses, and in the examples and practice of former ages; (see vi. 16.) and hath engaged them in such new and untried ways of worship, as will end in their utter ruin, (ver. 16.)

Ver. 16. *To make their land desolate, and a perpetual hissing.*] A gesture by which the enemies of the Jews and their religion insulted over them, and expressed the satisfaction they took in their calamities. (See Lam. ii. 15, 16. 1 Kings ix. 8.)

Ver. 17. *I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy.*] The calamities of war, and such-like wasting judgments, are elsewhere compared to an east wind, which is dry and blasting. (See Isa. xxvii. 8. Ezek. xvii. 10. xix. 12. Hos. xiii. 15.)

I will shew them the back, and not the face.] I will shew the same aversion to them that they have expressed towards me. (See ii. 27.)

Ver. 18. *Let us devise devices against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet.*] Let us accuse him for a false prophet; for his threatenings plainly contradict God's promises to his people, whereby we are assured that there shall always be a succession of priests to explain the law; of scribes or learned men to unfold the difficulties that may arise concerning the more obscure parts of it; and of prophets to instruct the people in the knowledge of what is to come. (Compare viii. 8. Matt. xxiii. 34.)

They probably grounded their confidence of a succession of priests, to explain the law, and guide men's consciences, upon that passage of Moses, Deut. xvii. 9. where they are commanded to *consult the priests upon any emergent difficulty*, and follow their determinations. (Compare vii. 4.) Basnage, in his History of the Jews, book iii. chap. 29. by *wise men*, understands those who were appointed judges of controversies in their synagogues, whose business it was to give *counsel* or determination in such cases as were brought before them; in which sense he understands the *wise man* mentioned by St. Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 5.

Come let us smite him with the tongue (or *for the tongue*, that is, for his bold speeches against the government), *and let us not give heed to any of his words.*] Let us accuse him of crimes against the state, and by that means take away his life, and then all his prophecies will die with him. This expression is parallel to that of Joseph's brethren, (Gen. xxxvii. 20.) *Come now, and let us slay him—and we shall see what will become of his dreams.*

Ver. 20. *For they have digged a pit for my soul.*] They have laid a design against my life, ver. 18. (Compare Psal. xxxv. 7. lvii. 6.)

Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them.] In the execution of my prophetical office, I always interposed with my prayers in their behalf, to avert those judgments which by thy command I denounced against them. (See the note on xv. 1.)

Ver. 21. *Therefore deliver up their children to the famine,* &c.] Since they are thus incorrigible, I shall not any more intercede for them, but let those calamities of famine and sword, with which thou hast threatened them, overtake them. (See xvi. 4. and the note upon xi. 20.)

Ver. 22. *Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou bringest a troop suddenly upon them.*] When they are unexpectedly assaulted by a troop of their enemies, that come to plunder and destroy them. (See xx. 6.)

Ver. 23. *Yet, Lord, thou knowest,* &c.] Or rather, *For, Lord, thou knowest,* &c.

Forgive not their iniquity.] Compare xi. 20. xv. 15. Psal. lix. 5. It redounds to the glory of God's justice, that incorrigible sinners should meet with exemplary punishment.

CHAP. XIX.

ARGUMENT.

Under the type of breaking a potter's vessel, is foreshewed the desolation of the Jews for their sins.

Ver. 1. *GO, get thee a potter's earthen bottle.*] An earthen pitcher with a narrow neck made to drink out of; in the Hebrew *bakbuk*, called so from the noise that the draught of liquor made; so the Greek word βομβύλιος, and the old Latin verb *bilbire*, are derived from the like sound. (See Casaubon's Comment on Athenæus's sixth Book, chap. 8.) By this emblem the prophet signified, that the city and people might as easily be destroyed, if God so pleased, as an earthen vessel could be broken. (See xviii. 5.)

And take of the ancients of the people.] Some of the members of the great Sanhedrin. (Compare xxvi. 17. Ezek. viii. 11.)

And of the ancients of the priests.] The heads of the four-and-twenty courses. (See 1 Chron. xxiv. 4.)

Ver. 2. *And go forth into the valley of the son of Hinnom.*] See vii. 31.

Which is by the entry of the east gate.] By which men entered into the temple, from whence they have a prospect of the valley of Hinnom, which lay south-east of the temple. (See Josh. xv. 8. and Dr. Lightfoot's Description of the Temple.) The Hebrew reads, *the gate Harsith*, which some interpret the *dung gate*, mentioned Nehem. ii. 13. Others the *potter's gate;* the potter's field being near the temple. (See Zech. xi. 13. Matt. xxvii. 10.)

Ver. 3. *O kings of Judah.*] See xvii. 20.

The which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle.] The

very report of it shall astonish the hearers. (See 1 Sam. iii. 11. 2 Kings xxi. 12.)

Ver. 4. *Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place.*] Jerusalem was the *city of God,* (Psal. xlviii. 1, 2.) and the place of his peculiar residence; therefore called the *holy city,* Matt. xxvii. 53. but the Jews in a sacrilegious manner have defiled it, by the practice of the worst and most inhuman idolatry.

Nor the kings of Judah.] The good kings of former times, such as David, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah.

And have filled this place with the blood of innocents.] Of the children sacrificed there to Moloch. (Compare ii. 34.)

Ver. 5. *They have built also the high places of Baal,* &c.] The words were better translated, *They have even built the high places,* &c. for the same sin is here expressed which was mentioned in the latter part of the foregoing verse, and the copulative particle *vau* is sometimes used by way of explication. (See the note on Isa. li. 19.)

To burn their sons with fire for burnt-offerings to Baal.] The idol to whom these inhuman sacrifices were offered, is elsewhere called Moloch. (See Lev. xviii. 21. 2 Kings xxiii. 10.) Baal and Moloch were two names promiscuously given to one and the same idol, as appears from xxxii. 35. of this prophecy: *They have built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Moloch.*

Baal and Moloch are equivalent words, both signifying *lord,* or *king;* and seem to have been promiscuously given by each idolatrous nation, to that idol they chiefly worshipped. And as the worship of Baal, or Belus, prevailed in several countries, so Moloch was esteemed a principal idol in other nations, as appears by the names of Malcom, Melicerta, Adrammelech, Anammelech, and the like, all derived from the word Moloch. (See Dr. Spencer, de Legibus Hebr. lib. ii. cap. 10. n. 1, 2.)

Which I commanded not, &c.] See the note on vii. 31.

Ver. 6. *This place shall no more be called Tophet,* &c.] See vii. 32. and the following verse.

Ver. 7. *And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place,* &c.] They shed innocent blood in this place, (ver. 4.) and God will discomfit them here, and will cause their blood to be shed by the hand of the Chaldeans, who shall lay siege to the city.

Ver. 8. *And I will make this city desolate, and a hissing,* &c.] See xviii. 16.

Ver. 9. *And they shall eat the flesh of their sons and of their daughters,* &c.] A terrible judgment threatened by Moses, Deut. xxviii. 53. to which place the text plainly alludes; and actually fulfilled in the siege of Jerusalem. (See Lam. iv. 10.)

Ver. 10. *Then thou shalt break the bottle in the sight of the men.*] To give them a sensible representation of the ruin threatened against them. (See li. 63, 64.)

Ver. 11. *Even so will I break this people, and this city,* &c.] The breaking of an earthen vessel is a proper emblem of utter ruin; for such a one, when it is broken, can never be mended or put to any farther use. (See Isa. xxx. 14.)

And they shall bury in Tophet.] See vii. 32.

Ver. 12. *And even make this city as Tophet.*] A place of slaughter. (See ver. 6. and the following verse.)

Ver. 13. *And the houses of Jerusalem shall be defiled as Tophet.*] Polluted with dead bodies. (See the note on vii. 32.)

Because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burnt incense to all the host of heaven.] The Jews built their houses with flat roofs; (see Deut. xxii. 8.) and there they dedicated altars to the host of heaven, where they could have the fullest view of them. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 12. Zeph. iii. 5.)

Ver. 14. *He stood in the court of the Lord's house.*] The great court, which is called the *outer court,* Ezek. xlvi. 21. supposed to be the same with the *new court,* mentioned 2 Chron. xx. 5. as having been built since Solomon's time. (See xxvi. 2. and Dr. Lightfoot, of the Temple, chap. 18.)

Ver. 15. *Because they have hardened their necks,* &c.] See the note on xviii. 23.

CHAP. XX.

ARGUMENT.

Upon Pashur's ill treatment of Jeremy, he falls into a grievous complaint of the hardships that attended the discharge of his prophetical office, which made him weary of his life.

Ver. 1. *NOW Pashur the son of Immer the priest, who was also chief governor in the house of the Lord.*] The family of Immer was the sixteenth in order of the four-and-twenty courses of the priests. (See 1 Chron. xxiv. 14.) And this Pashur, by being head of his family, had a principal authority in ordering matters relating to the temple, and keeping good orders there: and therefore is called *chief governor,* or *a chief governor in the house of the Lord.* (See there, ver. 5.) So Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, are called *chief rulers of the house of God,* 2 Chron. xxxv. 8. because the first of them was chief priest, and the two other probably heads of their courses. To the same sense we may understand the *priests of the second order,* mentioned 2 Kings xxiii. 4. If we suppose Pashur to have been, in a strict sense, *chief* or supreme *governor in the house of God,* he seems to be the same officer that is called *captain of the temple,* Acts iv. 1. he that was set over the several watches or guards of the priests and Levites: for they kept watch and ward in the temple, both day and night. (See Psal. cxxxiv. 2. and Lightfoot upon Luke xxii. 4.)

Ver. 2. *And put him in the stocks that was in the high gate of Benjamin,* &c.] The Septuagint understand the word translated *the stocks,* of a dungeon, or house of correction, which was in one of the outer courts of the temple. This, the text says, was placed in the *high gate of Benjamin,* which Dr. Lightfoot explains of the upper gate in the tribe of Benjamin, that led to the temple; the mountain upon which the temple stood, being partly in the tribe of Benjamin, and partly in that of Judah. (See his Description of the Temple, chap. 27.)

Ver. 3. *The Lord hath not called thy name Pashur, but Magor-missabib.*] The name which I give thee signifies *fear,* or *terror round about;* and thou thyself shalt be a dreadful example of those calamities which are coming upon

thy friends, and all the inhabitants of this city. (Compare vi. 25. xlvi. 5. xlix. 29. Lam. ii. 22.)

Ver. 5. *Moreover I will deliver the strength of this city, and all the labours of it,* &c.] All its wealth, and all that the inhabitants have gotten by their industry, shall be a prey to their enemies. (Compare iii. 24. Ezek. xxiii. 29.) The word which we render *strength,* is elsewhere translated *treasures.* (See Prov. xv. 6. Ezek. xxii. 25.)

Ver. 6. *To whom thou hast prophesied lies.*] False prophecies of peace and deliverance. (See xiv. 14. xxviii. 15. xxix. 21.)

Ver. 7. *O Lord, thou hast deceived me,* &c.] The following verses are Jeremy's doleful reflections upon the ill success of his prophecies, which had little good effect upon others, and brought a great deal of harm to himself. The sense is, Thou hast promised to be my safeguard against mine enemies; but yet I find myself disappointed, and left exposed to their malice. (Compare xv. 18.) Some render the words, *Thou hast persuaded me, and I was persuaded;* that is, I was over-persuaded to undertake the office of a prophet. The following words favour this sense.

Thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed, &c.] It was sore against my will, that I undertook the prophetical office, which I would gladly have declined: (i. 6.) but thy commands and inspirations did, in a manner, constrain me to it. I could have no temptation to run upon this errand without being sent, since it procures me nothing but ill usage.

Ver. 8. *For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me.*] Or, *I cried out of violence, and complained aloud of spoil.* Since I began to prophesy, I have reason to complain of the hardships I have undergone upon that account. (See xi. 19, &c. xv. 15. xviii. 18.) This verse may likewise be thus explained: Since I began to prophesy as God commanded me, I have freely expostulated with my countrymen, of the violence and oppression they have been guilty of: (see vi. 7.) and therefore (so the particle *ki* often signifies) all the requital I have had for the faithful discharge of my office, has been contempt and ill usage.

Ver. 9. *Then said I, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name: but his word was in my heart as burning fire.*] This made me resolve not to prophesy any more, but I found myself *pressed in spirit,* (see Acts xviii. 5.) and unable to resist the impulses of God's Spirit, urging me to execute his commands. (Compare Job xxxii. 19. Psal. xxxix. 3.)

Ver. 10. *For I have heard the defaming of many, fear on every side.*] Or *Magor-missabib.* Many upbraided me with the ill usage I received from Pashur, and with my prophecy against him, by the name of *Magor-missabib.* If we follow the received translation, as the expression is the same with Psal. xxxi. 13. so the sense seems to be much the same in both places; *viz.* From the slanderous reports raised upon me, I had reason to apprehend some evil design against my life, as well from treacherous friends as from open enemies.

Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, &c.] My pretended friends encourage one another in spreading false reports of me; or desire to hear from my mouth more prophecies, in hopes to find some matter of accusation against me, whereby they might take away my life, and so fulfil their revenge on me.

Ver. 11. *But the Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one; therefore my persecutors shall stumble.*] After having given free vent to his melancholy reflections, (see the note on xv. 18.) he begins to recollect himself, and cheer up his spirits by the comfortable remembrance of God's promises to him, by which he was assured that his enemies should be disappointed in all their ill designs they had contrived against him. (See xi. 22, 23. xv. 20. xviii. 18.)

Ver. 12. *But, O Lord of hosts, that triest the righteous.*] Who makest trial of his faith and patience by afflictions. (See Psal. xi. 5.)

Let me see thy vengeance on them.] See the note on xi. 20.

Ver. 13. *Praise ye the Lord; for he hath delivered the soul of the poor,* &c.] In confidence of his deliverance, the prophet gives thanks beforehand, as we may observe many of the Psalms that beg deliverance end in thanksgiving, as if it were already obtained. (See Psal. liv. 16. lviii. 1. 5, &c.)

Ver. 14. *Cursed be the day wherein I was born,* &c.] This, and the following verses, represent the melancholy thoughts which oppressed the mind of the prophet, while he was struggling with the reproach and malice of his enemies; and they are written in a poetical strain, as Job's lamentation is, chap. iii. like a *lessus,* or *mournful ditty;* such as the *præficæ,* or *mourning women,* used to sing. See ix. 17. wherein he expresses his wishes that he had never been born. (Compare xv. 10.)

Let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed.] Let it not be celebrated with those good wishes and expressions of joy, which are wont to be used on birth-days. The heathens in like manner had their *bona verba,* good wishes, proper for their birth-days: so Tibullus, (lib. ii. eleg. 2.) *Dicamus bona verba, venit natalis:* and which they abstained from using, when they were under great calamities, as Ovid speaks, Trist. lib. iii. eleg. 13. *In tantis subeunt nec bona verba malis.*

Ver. 15. *Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father,* &c.] I observed that this lamentation is written in poetical figures, like the ancient *næniæ,* or funeral songs, wherein all the circumstances are brought in, that are proper to raise the passions; and therefore are not to be looked upon as so many expressions of indignation or malice, but rather of mourning and sorrow. Just such are those figures we read in David's funeral song upon Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. i. 21. "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you," &c. And as in the forms of rejoicing upon a birth-day, they blessed every one concerned in the birth, and said, *Blessed be the womb that bare thee,* and the like: and he that brought the joyful news was always rewarded: so, in the forms of sorrow for the miserable, they used the quite contrary expressions. I must acknowledge myself indebted to the right reverend and learned Dr. Chandler, now deservedly promoted to the see of Coventry and Litchfield, for the explaining this and the foregoing verse; as likewise for his other judicious remarks upon several difficult texts in this prophecy, and that of Isaiah.

Ver. 16. *And let that man be as the cities which the Lord overthrew, and repented not.*] O that he had been looked upon with aversion, as a token of ill luck, or a sad spectacle, such as Sodom and Gomorrah are: and let him be esteemed as unfortunate, as he would have been thought, if he had brought tidings of my death instead of my birth.

Let him hear a cry in the morning.] Such a cry as is made when an enemy comes to plunder the house, or murder the family. (Compare xviii. 22. xlviii. 3, 4.)

And the shouting at noon-tide.] The alarm of war, as the word is rendered, iv. 19. or such a rejoicing as the enemies make over the vanquished. To *hear the cry* in the morning, and *shouting at noon-day*, signifies being perpetually alarmed with the terrors of a hostile invasion. (Compare vi. 4.) The same learned person understands this verse of the lamentations made at funerals, which were performed not only with mournful voices, but likewise with instruments of music, implied in the word *terunah, shouting.* (See Matt. ix. 23.) It was the custom of the Jews, upon a funeral-day, to begin their lamentations early in the morning, and continue them till the afternoon, when the body was carried out to be buried. (See Buxtorf Synagog. p. 49.) So the sense of the verse will be, *Let this man have every day an occasion of lamentation.*

Ver. 17. *Because he slew me not from the womb,* &c.] Or, *Because I was not slain from the womb.* For the verb transitive is often taken impersonally. (See the note on Isa. xliv. 18.) I utter these wishes in the bitterness of my soul, when I consider how much better it had been that I had never been born, or given up the ghost immediately, than led a life of continual sorrow and misery. (Compare Job iii. 10, 11.)

CHAP. XXI.

ARGUMENT.

The occasion of Zedekiah's message, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, seems to be the Chaldeans raising the siege of Jerusalem, in order to meet the Egyptian army that was come to its relief: (see xxxvii. 5.) which gave Zedekiah hopes of deliverance from the Chaldeans, which were very much quashed by the return of that army, and renewing of the siege: hereupon Zedekiah inquires by messengers concerning the event of the war. (Compare ver. 9. of this chapter with xxxviii. 2.) The latter part of the chapter, from ver. 11. belongs to the same subject with the twenty-second chapter, and relates to the time of Jehoiakim.

Ver. 1. *WHEN king Zedekiah sent Pashur the son of Melchiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest.*] This Pashur was a different person from him mentioned xx. 1. (See xxxviii. 1.) Zephaniah is called the *second priest*, lii. 24. and 2 Kings xxv. 18. that is, he was the high-priest's sagan, or deputy. (Compare Jer. xxix. 25.)

Ver. 2. *Inquire, I pray thee, of the Lord for us.*] Compare xxxvii. 7.

If so be the Lord will deal with us according to all his wondrous works.] If he will shew his wonderful power, in giving us a total deliverance from the hands of our enemies the Chaldeans. (See the Argument of the chapter.)

Ver. 4. *Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands,* &c.] Compare xxxvii. 10. Instead of doing execution upon your enemies, they shall hurt yourselves, and be the occasion of your own destruction. God will as visibly appear against you, as if a miraculous wind were to drive back your own artillery, and turn it upon yourselves; as the story is told of the discomfiture of the tyrant Eugenius's army, that came against the forces of the emperor Theodosius. (See Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. cap. 25.)

Ver. 5. *And I myself will fight against you.*] By the executioners of my wrath, the sword, the famine, and the pestilence. I will plainly appear on your enemies' side, by the success I will give to their arms.

Ver. 6. *They shall die of a great pestilence.*] A great part of those that continue in the city during the siege shall die of the pestilence; though the sword and the famine shall likewise consume many. (See ver. 9.)

Ver. 7. *He shall smite them with the edge of the sword.*] Zedekiah himself was not put to death, but carried to Babylon, where he died. (See xxiv. 5.) But his sons and his great men were slain by the command of Nebuchadnezzar. (See 2 Kings xxv. 7, 8.) It is common in all writers to express that indefinitely, which is true of the greater part of the persons concerned.

Ver. 9. *But he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans—shall live.*] God had declared his purpose of giving up the Jews and the neighbouring countries to the dominion of the Chaldeans: (xxv. 9. xxvii. 6.) so they who would comply with his declared will should have their lives, the rest should be destroyed as fighting against God.

And his life shall be unto him as a prey, &c.] He ought to think himself a considerable gainer by escaping with his life, in so general a destruction. (See xxxviii. 2. xxxix. 18. xlv. 5.) For in such a universal calamity, the best men shall *save but their own souls by their righteousness*, as Ezekiel speaks, xiv. 20.

Ver. 10. *I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good.*] Compare xliv. 11. Amos ix. 4. God's *face* is sometimes used for his anger, as it is in this and in the parallel texts.

Ver. 11. *And touching the house of the king of Judah, Hear ye the word of the Lord.*] This belongs to the same subject with the twenty-second chapter, and should not have been parted from it. Compare this and the following verse with the first, second, and third verses of that chapter.

Ver. 12. *Execute judgment in the morning.*] The king was supreme judge in all causes and controversies; (see 2 Sam. viii. 15.) what some rabbins affirm, as if the king were subject to the judgment of the Sanhedrin, and might be punished by them, is said without any precedent in Holy Scripture, and is confuted by Casaub. Exercit. xiii. in Baronium, Numb. 5. and Salmasius, in his Defensio Regia, cap. 2. (See likewise Selden, de Synedr. lib. iii. cap. 9.) The courts of judicature usually sat in the morning. See Psal. ci. 8. where the Hebrew reads, *In the morning*, or, *every morning, I will destroy all the wicked of the land.* (Compare Job xxxviii. 13, 14.)

Lest my fury go out like fire, &c.] These words are an argument, that this prophecy was antecedent to that at the beginning of the chapter, and before that peremptory de-

cree was published against the king's house, mentioned ver. 7. of this chapter. (See the note on iv. 28.)

Ver. 13. *Behold, I am against thee, O inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain.*] A description of Jerusalem: the former expression denoting the lower part of the city, which was surrounded with hills: (see Psal. cxxv. 2.) the latter describing Mount Zion. (Compare xvii. 3.)

Who say, Who shall come down against us?] They confided in the strength of their situation, as the Jebusites, the ancient inhabitants of the place, had formerly done. (See 2 Sam. v. 6, 7.)

Ver. 14. *I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof.*] The word *forest* is often metaphorically taken for a city, in the prophetical writings; because its stately buildings, or its principal inhabitants, resemble tall cedars standing in their several ranks. (See xxii. 7. Isa. xxvii. 24. Ezek. xx. 46. Zech. xi. 1.)

CHAP. XXII.

ARGUMENT.

This discourse, or section, which begins from the eleventh verse of the twenty-first chapter, is a collection of prophecies, wherein Jeremiah foretold the fate of several kings of Judah. The words to the twentieth verse are directed to king Jehoiakim, and from thence to the end of the chapter to Jeconiah.

Ver. 2. *HEAR the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, that sittest on the throne of David.*] The prophet directs his discourse to Jehoiakim; (see ver. 18.) and puts him in mind of the promises God had made to David's family, if they lived in obedience to his will. (See 1 Kings viii. 25.)

Thou, and thy servants, and thy people, that enter in by those gates.] Thy courtiers and other officers who attend continually on thee; (see ver. 4.) comprehending likewise all the people of the city. (See the note on ver. 4.)

Ver. 3. *And do no wrong, do no violence,* &c.] Compare ver. 17. where we find Jehoiakim taxed with those sins.

Ver. 4. *For if ye do this thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house,* &c.] See the note on xvii. 25. Instead of the *gates of this house,* the text reads there, *the gates of this city:* and the context here shews, that the prophecy is directed not only to the king's court in particular, but likewise to the whole city of Jerusalem, one part of which was called the city of David; and the whole looked upon as a royal city, and the place of their king's residence. (Compare ver. 2. 8.)

Ver. 5. *I swear by myself, saith the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation.*] God's confirming his threatenings by an oath, is a sign that the sentence was immutable, and that nothing could reverse it but the people's sincere repentance: which condition is expressed in the foregoing part of the verse. (See Heb. vi. 17.)

Ver. 6. *For thus saith the Lord unto the king's house of Judah, Thou art Gilead unto me, and the head of Lebanon,* &c.] Though thou wert never so precious in my sight, wert as valuable for riches and plenty as the fat pastures of Gilead, and thy buildings as beautiful for their stateliness, as the tall cedars of Lebanon; (see the notes on xxi. 14.) yet, unless thy princes and people reform, thou shalt become nothing but ruin and desolation.

Ver. 7. *And I will prepare destroyers against thee.*] The Hebrew reads, *I will sanctify destroyers:* so xii. 3. where our translation reads, *Prepare them for the day of slaughter;* it is in the Hebrew, *Sanctify them.* (See the note on Isa. xiii. 3.)

And they shall cut down thy choice cedars, and cast them into the fire.] The prophet compared the king's palace, or the city of Jerusalem, to Lebanon, ver. 6. and here, pursuing the metaphor, he threatens to destroy both houses and inhabitants by the Chaldean army. (See the note on xxi. 14.)

Ver. 8. *And many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every one to his neighbour,* &c.] They that had heard that this city had been called the city of God, and the place of his especial residence, would be astonished to find it a scene of his judgments and vengeance. Thus was fulfilled that threatening of Moses, (Deut. xxviii. 37.) That God would make the Jews an *astonishment* to other nations. (See likewise 1 Kings ix. 8.)

Ver. 10. *Weep not for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep sore for him that goeth away,* &c.] Weep not for Josiah, for he is buried in peace, and *taken away from the evils to come;* (see 2 Kings xxii. 20.) but rather lament Jehoahaz his successor, whom Pharaoh-Nechoh hath carried captive into Egypt, from thence never to return. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 34.)

Ver. 11. *For thus saith the Lord touching Shallum the son of Josiah king of Judah, who reigned instead of Josiah his father,* &c.] It is a great dispute among commentators and chronologers who this Shallum was, there being no person of that name mentioned in the succession of the Jewish kings in sacred history; and the Shallum mentioned as Josiah's son, 1 Chron. iii. 15. is expressly called his *fourth son,* who could not probably succeed his father immediately, as it is said expressly of Shallum here in the text. Without entering far into this dispute, I shall lay this down as most probable, that the Shallum, mentioned in the text, is the same with Jehoahaz: for the characters here set down can agree to none else. It was he that *reigned instead of his father Josiah;* he likewise went out of Jerusalem, or was carried away captive, and never returned any more. (See ver. 11.) The same may be proved from the order of the prophecies set down in this chapter: the eleventh and twelfth verses are concerning Jehoahaz: from the thirteenth to the twentieth relate to Jehoiakim, and the remaining part of the chapter regards the reign of Jeconiah. Why he is called Shallum, is not easy at this distance to conjecture; some suppose that name given him by way of reproach, because of the shortness of his reign, in which he resembled that king Shallum mentioned 2 Kings xv. 13. So Jeconiah is called Coniah, by way of contempt, ver. 24. It is farther certain, that this Shallum cannot be the same with him mentioned 1 Chron. iii. 15. (as Archbishop Usher supposed; see his Annal. V. T. ad An. M. 3371.) because that person is spoken of as younger than Zedekiah, whereas this Shallum being the same with Jehoahaz, was without question older. (Compare 2 Kings xxiii. 13. with xxiv. 18.)

Ver. 13. *Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness,* &c.] The prophet proceeds to denounce God's judgments against Jehoiakim; (see ver. 18.) who it seems built himself a stately palace in those calamitous times,

and took no care to defray the wages of his workmen; but maintained his own luxury by the oppression of those who were tolive by their labour: a crying sin, and too common among the great men of the world, severely prohibited both in the Old and New Testament. (See Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. James v. 4.)

Ver. 14. *And cutteth him out windows.*] The word *hallonai* signifies literally *my windows;* and so our margin reads, but the *affix* is elsewhere redundant. (See Zech. xiv. 5.) Mr. Gregory, in his Observations upon the Scripture, (chap. 13.) allows the marginal reading, and understands the word of a private oratory, or chapel, which Jehoiakim ordered to be made in his palace; and that God reproves him for a vain ostentation of piety, when at the same time he had no regard to common justice, in making an offering to God out of other men's labours.

Ver. 15. *Shalt thou reign because thou closest thyself in cedar?*] Will a house, finely adorned and furnished, be a fortress and defence to thee against thy enemies, that come to deprive thee of thy kingdom? This is the sense of the words, if we follow the English translation; but the verb *tichareh* properly signifies to *vie,* or contend with; and so it is translated, Jer. xii. 5. and then the sense will be, Is this a proper method to secure thy kingdom, only to vie with other princes, who shall have the most stately palace?

Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then [or therefore, see Noldius's Concordance, p. 7.] *it was well with him?*] Thy father Josiah lived in sufficient plenty, and in a state suitable to his character, and yet was a strict observer of justice, both in his public and private capacity, and did not betake himself to such sordid methods of injustice and oppression for the support of his grandeur: the reason was, because the blessing of God was upon him, as a reward of his justice and integrity.

Ver. 16. *Was not this to know me, saith the Lord?*] Such a strict regard to justice was the genuine effect of his piety and true knowledge of God.

Ver. 17. *But thine eyes and thy heart are not but for thy covetousness,* &c.] For this cause Jehoiakim is compared to a lion by the prophet Ezekiel, xix. 6.

Ver. 18. *They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister!* &c.] The prophet repeats part of the *lessus,* or funeral ditty, which the public mourners used to sing at funerals; (see the note on ix. 17. xx. 14. and compare 1 Kings xiii. 30.) signifying that Jehoiakim should not be buried with those solemn lamentations, with which the memory of his predecessors, particularly that of his father, had been honoured. (See 2 Chron. xxxv. 25.)

They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah Lord! or, Ah his glory!] That is, how is his glory departed and vanished! Another burden, or *chorus,* of the funeral song.

Ver. 19. *He shall be buried with the burial of an ass,* &c.] Compare xxxvi. 30. Jehoiakim was advanced to the kingdom by Pharaoh-Nechoh king of Egypt, (2 Kings xxxiii. 34.) He followed the fortune of the king that set him up, and upon the conquest of Egypt by the Chaldeans, (see Jer. xlvi. 2.) after three years' reign, he was taken prisoner by Nebuchadnezzar, and put into irons: (see Dan. i. 2. 2 Kings xxiv. 1. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6.) but afterward he released him, and made him a tributary king. After three years' obedience, Jehoiakim rebelled in confidence of assistance from Egypt: in the tenth year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar's army overran Judea; (see 2 Kings xxiv. 2.) and in the following year they besieged Jerusalem, and probably took Jehoiakim prisoner in some sally that he made upon them; whereupon they killed him, and then cast out his dead body into the highway, like the carcass of an ass, denying him the common rites of burial. (See Joseph. Antiq. lib. x. cap. 7, 8.) Accordingly, he is said to have *slept with his fathers,* (2 Kings xxiv. 6.) but not to have been buried with his fathers.

[Ver. 19. *Drawn and cast forth.*] The expression is taken from the custom of dogs to draw about a carcass before they tear and devour it. Compare xv. 3. where it is in the Hebrew, *The dogs to draw;* our English reads, *to tear;* but the Hebrew word is the same in both places. See likewise xlix. 20.]

Ver. 20. *Go up to Lebanon; and cry, and lift up thy voice in Bashan.*] An ironical expression, directed either to the land of Judea, or the city Jerusalem; as if he had said, You may go up to the tops of the highest mountains, and make what outcries or signals you can to implore foreign aid and assistance, but all to no purpose.

And cry from the passages.] From the borders, or rivers, which are the bounds of your country: some interpreters suppose the word *Abarim* to be a proper name, and understand it of Mount Abarim. (See Numb. xxvii. 12.)

For all thy lovers are destroyed.] All thy foreign allies, whose friendship and assistance thou didst seek, and whom thou didst court by complying with their idolatries. (Compare iv. 30. Lam. i. 19. Ezek. xvi. 33. 37. Hos. viii. 9.) The prophet means more particularly the Egyptians, upon whose assistance they chiefly depended, but whose power was very much weakened by the king of Babylon. (See xxxvii. 5—7. 2 Kings xxiv. 7. Lam. iv. 17.)

Ver. 21. *I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear.*] The common infirmity of mankind, who, being puffed up with prosperity, think themselves too wise to stand in need of good advice, and therefore put off the hearkening to it till they are in extremities, when it will do them little or no benefit.

This hath been thy manner from thy youth, &c.] See ii. 7. iii. 25. vii. 23, &c. xxii. 30.

Ver. 22. *The wind shall eat up all thy pastors.*] God's judgments, like a blasting wind, (see iv. 11.) shall destroy all thy governors, both ecclesiastical and civil: (see the note on ii. 8.) their honour and authority shall cease, and the whole frame of government shall be dissolved.

Thy lovers shall go into captivity.] Thy allies (see ver. 20.) shall themselves be made captives by the Chaldeans, and shall not be able to preserve themselves, much less to give any assistance to thee. (See xxv. 9.)

Ver. 23. *O inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars.*] A metaphorical description of Jerusalem, whose stately buildings are elsewhere compared to the tall cedars of a forest. (See the note on xxi. 14.)

How gracious wilt thou be, when pangs come upon thee? &c.] Or rather, *How humble,* or *suppliant, wilt thou be* in those pangs of affliction that shall suddenly come upon thee; (see vi. 24. xxx. 6.) whereas before thou wast too proud to hearken to any advice that was offered. (See ver. 21.)

The verb *hanan* doth commonly signify to implore mercy or favour, and the noun *tahanunim* is used in the same

sense, iii. 21. xxxi. 9. Some render the words, *What grace or favour wilt thou find, when pangs,* &c.

Ver. 24. *Though Coniah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence.*] Though he were never so near and dear to me, such a one as was always under my eye and care, (compare Cant. viii. 6. Hag. ii. 23.) yet his wickedness would make him forfeit all my favour towards him. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 9.) *Jehoiachin,* or *Jeconiah,* as his name is writ, 1 Chron. iii. 16. is called *Coniah* here, and ver. 28. by way of contempt.

Ver. 26. *And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee,* &c.] See 2 Kings xxiv. 15. This implies that he had no children when he was carried away captive. (See ver. 28.)

Ver. 27. *But unto the land whither they desire to return.*] See xliv. 14.

Ver. 28. *Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol?*] An interrogation by way of admiration; *q. d.* Would any one have thought that this man, that was invested with royal dignity, should come to be no better than a broken image of royalty, divested of all power and authority, and an object of scorn and reproach? Nothing can be more contemptible than a broken idol, which can be put to no farther use, and is no longer an object of worship, but of derision.

Wherefore are they cast out; he and his seed, &c.] The children which he probably had after he was carried to Babylon, where he lived many years a captive: (see 2 Kings xxv. 27.) though none of them lived to succeed in the royal authority. (See the note on ver. 30.)

Ver. 29. *O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord.*] The prophets often bespeak men's attention, by appealing to heaven and earth; that is, to all creatures, and particularly to the inhabitants of this world, to hearken to God's words. (See Deut. xxxiii. 1. Isa. i. 2. xxxiv. 1. Micah i. 2. vi. 1, 2.) The word *eretz* may be rendered *land,* as it often is, and applied to Judea.

Ver. 30. *Write ye this man childless.*] Or, *Let this man be written childless:* the personal being used for the impersonal. (See xx. 17.) When God commands a thing to be written, it signifies that such a truth is of great importance, and deserves to be recorded. (See the note on xxx. 2. and on Isa. xxx. 9.) "Quæ scribuntur, certa sunt;" *The committing things to writing denotes their certainty;* as Castalio observes upon the place. So God would have it taken notice of as a remarkable judgment upon Jeconiah, that in him the direct line of the Jewish kings, derived from Solomon downward, should fail; and the next heir to the crown should be of a collateral branch; *viz.* Salathiel, who was the son of Neri, and derived his pedigree from Nathan the son of David, (Luke iii. 27. 31.) Salathiel is indeed called the son of Jeconiah, 1 Chron. iii. 17. and Matt. i. 12. but in both these places he is called so, not with respect to his natural extraction, but to his political succession, as being next heir to the crown; just as, at the sixteenth verse of the same chapter of the Chronicles, Zedekiah is called the *son of Jeconiah,* though he was really his uncle, because he succeeded him in the kingdom. And it is plain that St. Matthew did not intend to set down an exact genealogy from father to son, but only to prove, in general, that Christ was the son, both of David and Abraham, as he tells us, ver. 1. In order to which end, he divides the whole series of time, from Abraham to David, into three parts, and then subdivides each portion of time into fourteen generations; to comply with which method, he omits three kings, Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, (ver. 8.)

CHAP. XXIII.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet having foretold in the former chapter the utter destruction of the Jewish kingdom and government: in this he foretells the restoration of both under the Messias, and then proceeds to reprove at large the evil arts of the false prophets, and other pretenders, to inspiration.

Ver. 1. *WOE to the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture.*] Pastors comprehend both civil and ecclesiastical governors. (See the note on ii. 8.) This acceptation of the word agrees with the prophet's complaint elsewhere; that their rulers, as well as their priests and prophets, were rather corrupters than reformers of the people's manners. (See ii. 26. xxxii. 32.) And the Messias himself, whose coming is foretold, ver. 5. for the rectifying these disorders, was both a king and a priest.

Ver. 2. *Therefore thus saith the Lord—against the pastors that feed my flock.*] That undertake the care of my people, though they do not faithfully execute their trust.

Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them.] Instead of looking after them, you have suffered them to be dispersed; through your ill example they have gone astray to idolatry; and that with your other sins hath brought captivity, and a general dispersion upon them.

Behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings.] See xxii. 22.

Ver. 3. *And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries,* &c.] See ver. 8.

Ver. 4. *And they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed.*] They shall live secure from enemies: (see ver. 6.) nor shall they be consumed by those dreadful judgments of sword, famine, and pestilence, which have of late destroyed so many of them. (See xvi. 4. xxxii. 37. and the note there.)

Ver. 5. *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch.*] The Messias is often called the *Branch,* to denote his descent from the stock of David. (See Isa. iv. 2. Zech. iii. 8. vi. 12. compare likewise Isa. xi. 1.)

And shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.] This character is elsewhere given of the kingdom of Christ. (See Psal. lxxii. 2. Isa. xi. 5. xxxii. 1.) His laws being the most perfect rule of righteousness, and he himself the most impartial rewarder of every man according to his works, (Rev. xxii. 12.)

Ver. 6. *In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely.*] This prophecy is in part fulfilled in all true believers, the *mystical Israel,* but will receive its utmost completion when the Jewish nation shall be restored; a blessing foretold by most of the ancient prophets, (see the note on Isa. xi. 11.) who generally join Judah and Israel together, as equally sharers in the blessing, and no more two, but one kingdom. (See the note on iii. 18.)

Judah shall dwell safely.] This denotes outward peace and freedom from the annoyance of enemies, in opposition

to the militant state of the church, when it is always under apprehensions from the designs of its adversaries. (Compare xxxii. 37. xlvi. 28. Ezek. xxxiv. 28. Micah iv. 4. Zeph. iii. 13.

[The words may be properly explained to a spiritual sense; importing, that the Messias shall subdue all our spiritual enemies, and remove those impediments which hindered men from going on in a steady course of obedience. And to this sense of the words, Zacharias seems to allude in his hymn: (Luke i. 74, 75.) *That we being safely,* or securely, *delivered from the hands of our enemies* (for so the sense of the original runs), *might serve him in holiness and righteousness.*]

And this is his name, whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.] He shall really be what the title imports: (see the note on Isa. vii. 14.) he shall be JEHOVAH, or the true God, and *our righteousness,* or *the means of our justification.* (Compare Isa. xlv. 24, 25. 1 Cor. i. 30.) The title of *Jehovah* is elsewhere given to the Messias by the prophets. (See Isa. xl. 10. xlviii. 17. Hos. i. 7. Zech. ii. 10, 11. Mal. iii. 1.)

Ver. 7, 8. *Therefore behold the days come, saith the Lord,* &c.] This wonderful work of God's in restoring the Jewish nation after their dispersions all the world over, (together with the bringing in the fulness of the gentiles, which will be likewise brought to pass by this means, see the note on Isa. lxvi. 12.) will so far exceed the miracles which he wrought in their deliverance out of Egypt, that this latter will not deserve to be compared or mentioned with the former. St. Paul calls this restoration of the Jews, *Life from the dead,* (Rom. xi. 15.) that is, as surprising a wonder, as if a dead body were restored to life again.

Ver. 9. *Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets,* &c.] The prophet describes the terror and concern which was upon him, when he considered the horrible sin of the false prophets, in counterfeiting a Divine mission, and the dreadful consequences of such a practice, which increases the sins of the people, and aggravates their punishments. The prophets were sometimes struck with a terrible apprehension of those judgments which they denounced against others. (See the note on xv. 18. Isa. xv. 5. Habak. iii. 16.) The Vulgar Latin interprets the first word of this verse, "Lanebyim, ad prophetas," *to the prophets:* as if it were the title of the following prophecy.

Ver. 10. *For the land is full of adulterers, and because of swearing the land mourneth.*] By swearing is chiefly here meant perjury. (Compare this verse with Hos. iv. 2.) The Hebrew word signifies indifferently *swearing* or *cursing:* the Jewish forms of adjuration used in their courts of justice for the discovery of the truth, had usually an imprecation joined to them. So the words import, that men ventured to forswear themselves, and incur the imprecation implied in an oath, rather than discover the truth in the case of theft, and such-like crimes, wherein they were called upon to be witnesses. (Compare Prov. xxix. 24.) This the prophet saith is one of those crying sins for which God hath visited the nation with severe judgments. And the sins here mentioned, which did abound so much among the people, were in a great measure owing to the ill example of the priests and prophets. (See ver. 11. 14, 15.)

The pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up.] See the note on xii. 4.

And their course is evil, and their force is not right.] Or, *And their violence is evil,* as the margin reads, and so the word is translated xxii. 17. Men abuse their power, to the wronging and oppressing their brethren, and add violence to the power they are possessed of, for the compassing their wicked designs. If this be understood of the prophets and priests, to whom this discourse is chiefly directed, (see ver. 9. 11.) it implies, that they make use of ill arts to establish the authority they have gained over the people, which they do not employ for the bettering, but rather for the corrupting their manners. (Compare v. 13.)

Ver. 11. *Yea, in my house have I found their wickedness.*] See the note on vii. 30.

Ver. 12. *Therefore their way shall be to them as slippery ways in the darkness,* &c.] They shall fail and miscarry in all their designs, like men that stumble and fall in dark and slippery ways. (See Psal. xxxv. 6.)

For I will bring evil upon them, &c.] See xi. 23.

Ver. 13, 14. *I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria —I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem a horrible thing,* &c.] He compares the sins of the prophets of Samaria and Jerusalem together, and pronounces those of the latter to be more enormous: because they pronounced their false prophecies in the name of the true God, and entitled him to all their impostures; the wickedness of their lives also reflected a dishonour upon his name and religion. (Compare iii. 11.)

They commit adultery.] See xxix. 23.

And walk in lies.] Utter their own imaginations, and call them Divine visions. (See ver. 16.)

They strengthen also the hands of the evil-doers, &c.] They confirm men in their evil doings, both by their own ill example, and by promising them peace and security. (See ver. 17. Ezek. xiii. 22.)

They are all of them to me as Sodom, &c.] See Deut. xxxii. 32. Isa. i. 10. Ezek. xvi. 46. 48.

Ver. 15. *Behold, I will feed them with wormwood,* &c.] See the notes on viii. 14. ix. 15.

For from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land.] The word *hanupah* is properly rendered *profaneness;* for the word *haneph* signifies a wicked or profane person, Job viii. 13. xiii. 16. xv. 24. Isa. ix. 17. Though our English translates the word a *hypocrite* in all those texts.

Ver. 16. *They make you vain.*] Or rather, *They deceive you;* so Psal. lxii. 10. Our translation renders the word, *Become not vain in robbery or oppression;* but the sense is, *Deceive not yourselves in robbery,* or oppression, as if that would be any real advantage to you.

They speak a vision of their own heart, &c.] See ver. 21.

Ver. 17. *They say to them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace.*] See the note on vi. 14.

Ver. 18. *Who hath stood in the council of the Lord?*] The word *sôd* signifies both a secret, and the assembly to which the secret is committed, or where it is debated: the expression here alludes to the privy-counsellors of princes, as if the prophet had said, Who among these false prophets can pretend to have the secret counsels of the Almighty communicated to him? So when the apostle, alluding to Isa. xl. 13. saith, *Who hath known the mind of the Lord?* (1 Cor. ii. 16.) the context shews, that he designs by that question to exclude only the carnal or natural man from being en-

lightened from above, or being a competent judge of Divine truths.

Ver. 19, 20. *Behold, a whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth in fury,* &c.] If these prophets had really known God's purposes and intentions, they would not have said, *Peace, peace,* to the wicked, (ver. 17.) but have prophesied a grievous destruction just coming upon them; for that is what will certainly come to pass, and the event will convince you of the truth of what I say. The sudden strokes of God's vengeance are often compared to a whirlwind. (See xxv. 32. Psal. lviii. 9. Isa. xxi. 1. Amos i. 4. Zech. vii. 14. ix. 14.)

Ver. 20. *The anger of the Lord shall not return,* &c.] *It shall not return to me void,* as we read, Isa. lv. 11. The expression is taken from a messenger that comes back without doing his business.

In the latter days ye shall consider [or understand] *it perfectly.*] When this judgment hath overtaken you, and ye have felt the evils threatened come upon you in your several captivities, then ye shall more fully understand the meaning of this prophecy. These two verses are repeated, xxx. 23, 24. (See the note upon that place.)

Ver. 21. *I have not sent those prophets, yet they ran.*] See xiv. 14. xxvii. 15. xxix. 9.

Ver. 22. *But if they had stood in my counsel.*] See ver. 18.

Then they should have turned them from their evil way.] This was the design of all God's messages by his prophets; (see xxv. 5.) and therefore all true prophets would make this their principal aim. And the giving encouragement to men's carnal security, is often mentioned as a mark of a false prophet. (See vi. 14. Ezek. xiii. 10. 18. 22.)

Ver. 23, 24. *Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?* &c.] Can these false prophets think to impose upon me, or vent their own dreams in my name, and I not discover them? as if either distance or secrecy could place any thing out of the reach of my power and knowledge.

Ver. 25, 26. *I have heard what the prophets said,* &c.] I know very well the falsehood of their pretences, though they think I take no notice of it, and so continue to act the same counterfeit part over again.

Ver. 27. *Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams—as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.*] Their giving heed to these false prophets, is as effectual a method of making my people forget me and my laws, as the setting up an idolatrous way of worship, which hath been too successfully practised by their fathers.

Ver. 28. *The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream—What is the chaff to the wheat?*] Let not these false pretences to dreams or visions discourage the true prophets from the faithful discharge of their office; for the difference between true prophecies and counterfeits, is as evident as that between the chaff and the wheat.

Ver. 29. *Is not my word like fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the rocks in pieces?*] These are the properties of my word, by which it may be distinguished from all counterfeits, that it is *quick and powerful,* resembled by fiery tongues, Acts ii. 3. (compare Isa. vi. 6.) Like fire, it makes its way through all opposition, and the threatenings it denounces will as certainly take hold of the ungodly, as fire does of stubble or dry wood. (Compare v. 14.) And as a hammer breaks to pieces the hardest rock, so is my word, when skilfully applied, able to beat down the confidence of the most hardened sinner.

Ver. 30. *Behold, I am against the prophets—that steal my words every man from his neighbour.*] That imitate, or rather mimic, the true prophets, speaking in my name as they do, and saying, *Thus saith the Lord,* (ver. 31.) and using their words, but applying them to their own purpose, or it may be adding their own inventions to them.

Ver. 31. *I am against the prophets—that use their tongues.*] Like those that said, *Our lips are our own,* Psal. xii. 4. and we may use them as we please. Some suppose the Hebrew *lokechim* to signify the same as *cholekim,* the letters being only transposed; and then the phrase denotes speaking *smooth things.* (See Isa. xxx. 10.)

Ver. 32. *And cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness.*] By their folly, their rashness, and inconsistence, with themselves. (Compare Zeph. iii. 4. Judg. ix. 4.) Schultens explains the word *pahazuth* to signify vain boasting, that is, a pretence to Divine inspiration, which they had not. (See his Anim. in Job, p. 144.)

Ver. 33. *What is the burden of the Lord?*] The word *massa,* or *burden,* signifies a burdensome prophecy, big with ruin and destruction. (See Isa. xiii. 1. xvi. 1. and elsewhere.) The false prophets said, *Peace, peace,* (see ver. 17.) derided the true ones whose predictions were full of threatenings, as if God's messages were a burden they were weary of bearing; and made a jest of these words, *the burden of the Lord,* with which they prefaced their prophecies. Upon this account God forbade the use of that expression; see the following verses.

Ver. 36. *For every man's word shall be his burden: for ye have perverted the words of the living God.*] You shall be severely accountable for your loose and profane speeches, wherewith you deride and pervert the words and messages of God himself.

Ver. 39. *Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you.*] *Tollam vos portans,* as St. Jerome renders it; and the Septuagint to the same purpose, *I will carry you away,* or *remove you* [as a burden]. Taking the verb *nashah* in the sense of the verb *nasa,* as words of a like sound are often of a promiscuous signification. This makes the sense more acute, and pertinent to the foregoing verses.

And I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence.] The Hebrew reads thus, *I will cast you and the city which I gave you and your fathers out of my presence.* For the verb *natash* writ with a *teth,* is equivalent to the verb *natash* with a *tau;* according to the observation made just now, concerning words of a like sound.

CHAP. XXIV.

ARGUMENT.

Under the emblem of two baskets of figs, the prophet shews the different fates of those Jews who were carried captive with Jeconiah, and those that remained still in their own country with Zedekiah.

Ver. 1. *BEHOLD, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the Lord.*] The vision represented two such

baskets of figs, as used to be offered up for first-fruits at the temple. (See Deut. xxvi. 2.)

After that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive Jeconiah, &c.] See an account of Jeconiah's captivity, 2 Kings xxiv. 12—14. This captivity was in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, (ibid. ver. 12.)

Ver. 2. *One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe.*] Such as were offered for the first-fruits; these were most valued for their goodness and rarity. (See Hos. ix. 10.)

Ver. 5. *Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah.*] The Jews who were left in their own country thought themselves better beloved of God, than their brethren who were carried away captive: to check this vain confidence, God promises to shew the latter particular signs of his favour in a strange land, and to shew distinguishing marks of his displeasure upon the former.

Ver. 6. *I will bring them again to this land.*] See xxix. 2. 10.

And I will build them, and not pull them down.] This may be understood both of the prosperous estate God would give them in the land of their captivity, where they should both build houses and propagate their families, (see xxix. 5, 6.) and likewise contains a promise of restoring them and their posterity to their own country. (Ibid. ver. 10.)

Ver. 7. *And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord,* &c.] Compare xxix. 12, 13. To these first captives chiefly those blessings belong, which are promised to the Jews upon their return from captivity; such as were the knowledge and fear of God, and grace to live in obedience to his commandments. (Compare xxx. 22. xxxi. 33. xxxii. 38, 39.) These were in some degree accomplished, in the times after the captivity, when the Jews adhered constantly to their religion, and were very careful of falling into idolatry: but I conceive the eminent completion of this prophecy will be at the time of the general restoration of that nation, so often mentioned in the prophets. (See the notes upon xxx. 3.)

Ver. 8. *And them that dwell in the land of Egypt.*] See chap. xliii. xliv.

Ver. 9. *And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth,* &c.] All those judgments denounced against the obstinate and incorrigible shall be fulfilled in them. (See Deut. xxviii. 25. 37. 1 Kings ix. 7.)

A reproach.] See Dan. ix. 6.

And a curse.] Men shall use this phrase as a form of execration, *God make thee like Zedekiah.* (Compare xxix. 22.) On the contrary, to make a man a blessing implies, that his name should be mentioned as a signal instance of God's favour. (See Gen. xlviii. 20. Zech. viii. 13.)

Ver. 10. *Till they be consumed from off the land that I gave to them and their fathers.*] My judgments shall follow them so close, both here and when they are carried into captivity, that neither they nor any of their posterity shall ever enjoy any share of their own country. (Compare Ezek. v. 12.)

CHAP. XXV.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains a summary of Jeremiah's commission to prophesy the destruction of Judea, and all the neighbouring countries, which should be reduced under the power of the kings of Babylon for seventy years: and then an end should be put to that monarchy by Cyrus, who set up the Persian monarchy. This age is called by Sir John Marsham the *age of the destruction of cities,* by reason of the devastations made by the Babylonian conquests. (See his Chron. Canon. Sæculum. 18.)

Ver. 1. *THE word that came to Jeremiah—in the fourth year of Jehoiakim—that is the first year of Nebuchadnezzar,* &c.] The first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, according to the Scripture account, is coincident with the end of the third, and the beginning of the fourth year of Jehoiakim. (Compare Dan. i. 1.) This reckoning anticipates the computation of Ptolemy's canon by two years, which two years Nebuchadnezzar reigned with his father. According to this account, the Scripture reckons his reign to continue five-and-forty years: (see the notes on lii. 31.) which, according to the common computation, lasted but forty-three. But Daniel, ii. 1. writing in Chaldee, follows the computation in use among the Chaldeans.

Ver. 3. *From the thirteenth year of Josiah—unto this day, that is the three-and-twentieth year.*] For Jeremiah prophesied nineteen years under Josiah, who reigned thirty-one years, and this was the beginning of Jehoiakim's fourth year.

Ver. 4. *And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets.*] There were several prophets contemporary with Jeremiah, two of which are mentioned in Scripture; the prophet Zephaniah, and Urijah the son of Shemaiah, concerning whom see xxvi. 20. From the time of Samuel, when God's answers by *Urim* began to cease, there were appointed *schools* or seminaries for training men up, and fitting them for the prophetical office. (See 1 Sam. x. 5. xix. 20. compared with Acts iii. 24.) And God usually made choice of such persons of this education to exercise this function, as appears by the words of Amos, (vii. 14.) *I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son,* and consequently not qualified for that office by my education: but I was a herdman, and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel. From the time of the schools of the prophets being thus settled, there was a succession of prophets continued till the captivity; and then the office began by degrees to fail, which is the reason of that complaint, *That the prophets see no visions;* which we find mentioned Lam. ii. 9. Ezek. vii. 26. Psal. lxxiv. 9.

Rising early and sending them.] See the note on vii. 13.

Ver. 6. *And go not after other gods.*] Though the Jews were guilty of many other sins, yet their crying sin was idolatry, as being a plain renouncing God's authority, who had by so many miracles of mercy set them apart to himself and his own service.

Ver. 9. *Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north.*] See the note on i. 15.

And Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon my servant.] Kings and princes are the great instruments of Providence with respect to human affairs. Some of them God raises up to be executioners of his judgments upon sinful people; such was he of whom God saith, (Hos. xiii. 11.) *I gave thee a king in mine anger.* Such was Nebuchadnezzar here

spoken of, whom God calls his *servant*, because he *wrought for him*, as God speaks concerning him, Ezek. xix. 20. that is, he executed God's judgments upon Tyre; God making use of his ambition and desire of conquest, and prospering his arms, in order to the punishment of the neighbouring countries for their sins: see a like instance in the king of Assyria, whom God calls the *rod of his anger*, Isa. x. 5, &c. And in later times, Attila the Hun called himself *Flagellum Dei*, the *scourge of God*, ordained by him to punish that corruption of manners which had overrun the Christians in the western part of the Roman empire.

And against all these nations round about.] See ver. 19, &c. Some of these, particularly Egypt, were the Jews' confederates, upon whose assistance they relied; and the subduing them made way for the easier conquest of Judea. (See xxxvii. 5. 8.)

Perpetual desolation.] It is a common observation, that the Hebrew word *olam* doth not always signify *eternity*, or perpetuity in a strict sense, but is sometimes taken for such a duration as had a remarkable period to conclude it: so it is said of a servant, that *he shall serve his master for ever*, Exod. xxi. 6. which the Jews expound till the next jubilee. So here the sense of the word is to be restrained to the period of seventy years, mentioned ver. 11. (See the note on xxxii. 40.)

Ver. 10. *Moreover, I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom,* &c.] See the notes on vii. 34. xvi. 9.

The sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.] There shall be no marks of trade for the carrying on the common necessaries of life; such as is the grinding of bread-corn: there will be no use of candl ewhere the inhabitants are dispersed and destroyed, nor will there be occasion for such illuminations as are usual upon festival solemnities, in the time of general desolation, (ver. 11.) Compare Rev. xviii. 22, 23. where we may observe, that St. John exactly follows the Hebrew text, whereas the LXX. in this place, instead of *the sound of the millstones*, read ὀσμὴν μύρου, *the smell of ointment*. From which, and several other places of the New Testament, it appears that the apostles and evangelists did not implicitly follow the Greek translation, but only when they thought it agreeable to the original text. (See St. Jerome's preface to the 15th book of his Commentaries upon Isaiah, and his commentary upon Jer. xxxi. 31. and Zech. xii. 10.)

Ver. 11. *And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon.*] That is, Nebuchadnezzar and his successors. The word *king* is elsewhere used collectively, for a succession of kings in the same family or kingdom. (See the note on Isa. xxiii. 13.)

Seventy years.] This computation of seventy years' captivity, is to be reckoned from the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, which is coincident with the third ending, and the fourth beginning of Jehoiakim; (see ver. 1.) when the king of Babylon made his first attempt upon Judea. (See Dan. i. 1. 3.) From which time to the first year of Cyrus's reign over the Assyrian monarchy is just seventy years. Whereas the prophet Zechary, who reckons the seventy years' captivity completed in the second year of Darius, (see Zech. i. 12.) commences his computation from the besieging the city; and when he prolongs his computation to the fourth year of Darius, (vii. 1. 5.) he dates it from the destruction of the city and temple.

Ver. 12. *And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Bàbylon and that nation,* &c.] God often punishes the persons, whom he makes instruments of his vengeance upon others, for those very things which they did by his appointment; because their intent was purely to carry on their own ambitious and cruel purposes, and not at all to fulfil God's will, or advance his glory. So that the evil they did was altogether their own, and the good that was produced out of it was to be ascribed to God. See a remarkable passage to this purpose, relating to Sennacherib, Isa. x. 5. 16.

And will make it perpetual desolations.] See the note on l. 40.

Ver. 13. *Even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all nations.*] Particularly in the fiftieth and fifty-first chapters. The book here mentioned, is that collection of prophecies against the countries round about Judea, which in the Greek copies follows immediately after this verse; but in the Hebrew copies are placed by themselves at the latter end of the book, from the forty-sixth chapter to the end of the fifty-first. This verse seems to justify the order in which the Septuagint have placed these prophecies.

Ver. 14. *For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also.*] He means those kings and nations who were Cyrus's confederates. (See l. 9. 41. li. 27.)

Ver. 15. *Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations to whom I send thee to drink it.*] God's judgments are metaphorically represented by a cup of intoxicating liquors; because they fill men with astonishment, and bereave them of their common judgment and discretion. See the note on Isa. li. 17. and compare Psal. lxxv. 8. Jer. xlviii. 26. xlix. 12. li. 31. Habak. ii. 16. Rev. xiv. 10. xvi. 19. In both which places, St. John plainly alludes to this place, and expresses the sense of the original more fully and exactly than the Septuagint do. (See the note upon ver. 10.)

Ver. 16. *And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad,* &c.] That astonishment, and those unsettled counsels and resolutions, which are here the effects of God's judgments, are elsewhere compared to drunkenness. (See li. 57. Lam. iv. 21. Isa. xix. 14. Nahum iii. 11. Habak. ii. 16.)

Ver. 17. *Then I took the cup at the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to drink,* &c.] The words, in pursuance of the same metaphor, import the prophet's obeying God's command, and denouncing his judgments upon all the several nations hereafter mentioned. (Compare ver. 28.) The prophets are said to do that which they declare it is God's purpose to do. (See the note on i. 10.) If we explain the words more strictly to the letter, we may suppose the cup of God's wrath represented to the prophet in a vision, (as mystical Babylon was represented to St. John, with a *golden cup* in her hand, Rev. xvii. 4.) which he was commanded to hand round to the nations here specified.

Ver. 18. *To wit, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof,* &c.] The Jews are mentioned first, because Jeremiah, as well as the rest of the prophets, was in the first place sent to them; (see ver. 3, 4.) and they were to have the greatest share in the judgments denounced. (See Dan. ix. 12. Amos iii. 2.)

As it is this day.] This relates to the desolation of Judea and Jerusalem, when all that Jeremy had foretold against them was fulfilled; and therefore must have been added, either by Baruch's amanuensis, or else by Ezra; or whoever it was that collected Jeremy's prophecies into one volume, who, it is likely, added the fifty-second chapter.

Ver. 19. *Pharaoh king of Egypt.*] See chap. xlvi.

Ver. 20. *And all the mingled people.*] The word is *Ereb* in the Hebrew, which occurs again in the twenty-fourth verse. Some understand it of the Arabians, the name of that people being written *Ereb*, as well as *Arab;* (see 1 Kings x. 15.) but Arabia being mentioned (ver. 24.) as distinct from these people, that sense of the word doth not seem probable. So I rather take the word in the sense our translators understood it, for a mixture of several nations, who dwelt either upon the coasts of the Mediterranean, or of the Red Sea.

And all the kings of the land of Uz.] There are three persons called by the name of Uz in Scripture, who gave this appellation to three several countries, as Bochart observes in his Phaleg. lib. ii. cap. 8. First, the son of Aram, (Gen. x. 23.) whom he supposes to have settled in Syria, near Damascus. Second, the son of Nahor, (Gen. xxi. 21.) who settled in Arabia Deserta; from whom Job descended. Third, the son of Esau, (Gen. xxxvi. 28.) from whom Idumea was so called, which is here meant; and mentioned again by our prophet, and its destruction foretold, Lam. iv. 21.

The kings mentioned here and in the following verses, were petty princes of several clans or colonies. The title of *king* is given in Scripture to any ruler or governor. (See l. 41. li. 28. Deut. xxxiii. 5. Judg. xvii. 6. Dan. vii. 17.)

And the kings of the land of the Philistines, &c.] The Philistines had five lords over their several divisions (see Josh. xiii. 3. 1 Sam. vi. 6. and the foregoing note): each division having their particular prince or governor; (see Numb. xxxi. 8.) a custom still observed in the more rude and barbarous parts of the world.

Azzah.] A noted city of the Philistines, commonly rendered *Gaza*, according to the Greek pronunciation, which usually expresses the Hebrew letter *ain* by a *gamma*.

And the remnant of Ashdod.] Ashdod, or Azotus, was first besieged and taken by Tartan, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, xx. 1. afterward by Psammitichus, according to Herodotus, (lib. ii. cap. 157.) who so far ruined it, and impaired its ancient greatness, that it is here called *the remnant*, or poor remains, *of Ashdod.* (Compare xlvii. 4.)

Ver. 21, 22. *Edom and Moab.*] See chap. xlvii.—xlix.

Ver. 22. *And the kings of the isles which are beyond the sea.*] Or rather, *the region by the sea-side,* as the words are translated in the margin of our Bibles. For so the word *beneber* signifies, as hath been observed in the notes upon Isa. ix. 1. The phrase denotes the people living upon the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The word *island* in the Hebrew signifies any region or country. (See the note on Isa. xx. 6.)

Ver. 23. *Dedan, Tema, and Buz.*] These were Arabians, who descended from Abraham and his brother Nahor; (see Gen. xxii. 21. xxv. 3. 15.) whose destruction is foretold, Jer. xlix. 8. 28.

And all that are in the utmost corners.] See the notes on ix. 26.

Ver. 24. *And all the kings of the mingled people that dwell in the desert.*] A mixture of people in that part of Arabia, properly called the *Desert,* consisting of the Nabatheans, Amalekites, Midianites, and other nations, called in Scripture by the general name of the *children of the east.* (See Judg. vi. 3. vii. 12. viii. 10.) So Diodor. Sic. lib. de Arabiâ Nabatæâ, αὐτὴ κεῖται μεταξὺ Συρίας τῆς Αἰγύπτου πολλοῖς δὲ καὶ παντοδαποῖς ἔθνεσι διείλεπται. *That part of Arabia is divided among several nations.* The learned Dr. Pocock is of opinion, that the word *Arabia* is derived from the Hebrew *Arab,* signifying *mixture:* because the country was inhabited by a medley of several nations. (See his notes upon Specim. Histor. Arab. p. 33.)

Ver. 25. *And all the kings of Zimri.*] A people of Arabia, descended from Zimram, Abraham's son by Keturah, (Gen. xxv. 2.)

And all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes.] See the note on xlix. 34. The Medes and Persians were commonly confederates, and partakers of the same good or ill fortune.

Ver. 26. *And all the kings of the north, far and near.*] The kings of Syria, and the neighbouring parts. (See xlix. 27.)

[*All the kingdoms of the world which are upon the face of the earth.*] This may only denote the kingdoms within the extent of the Babylonish empire; which called itself empress of the world. So Οἰκουμένη, in the New Testament, is put for the Roman empires. See Luke ii. 1.]

And the king of Sheshak shall drink after them.] By *Sheshak* is meant Babylon, as appears by comparing li. 41. Some think *Sac* was the name of an idol worshipped there, from whence the Hebrew name *Misael* was changed by the Chaldeans into *Meshak.* This idol gave the name of *Sacchæa* to a public festival celebrated at Babylon, and mentioned by Athenæus, lib. xiv. cap. 10. St. Jerome mentions upon the place a sort of cipher commonly used, which consisted in putting the last letter of the alphabet first, and so writing on; by which inverted order of the Hebrew letters *Sheshack* is equivalent to *Babel.* The prophets sometimes express the places they prophesy against by dark circumlocutions: so Babylon is called the *desert of the sea,* Isa. xxi. 1. Jerusalem, *the valley of vision,* Isa. xxi. 1. the Roman empire is expressed by *that which withholdeth,* 2 Thess. ii. 6. And some commentators suppose the names mentioned Micah i. 10, &c. to be names of noted places in Judea, disguised and altered from their true sound. Mr. Basnage, in his History of the Jews, b. iii. chap. 25. thinks that *Sheshack,* the victorious king of Egypt (the same who is called *Sesostris* by Herodotus), was afterward worshipped as a god over all the eastern countries which he subdued; and that Babylon is here represented by the name of this idol that was worshipped there. But it is not at all probable, that the Chaldeans should call their city or country by the name of a foreign conqueror, whose yoke they had long ago shook off.

Ver. 27. *Drink ye, and be drunken,* &c.] See ver. 16. The imperative is here put for the future. (See the like figure, Isa. ii. 9. vi. 9. xxiii. 16.)

Ver. 28. *And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand,* &c.] If they either do not believe thy threatenings, or else disregard them, as thinking themselves sufficiently provided against any hostile invasion, you shall

let them know, that the judgments denounced against them are God's irreversible decree.

Ver. 29. *For, lo, I begin to bring evil upon the city that is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished?*] *Judgment* often *begins at the house of God,* for the correction of God's people, and to be a warning to others; but the heaviest strokes of it are reserved for the ungodly. (Compare xlix. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. Luke xxiii. 31.)

And should ye be utterly unpunished?] Concerning the import of the Hebrew phrase in this place, see the note on xxx. 11.

Ver. 30. *The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation.*] God speaks by his judgments; and those, when they are very terrible, may be fitly compared to the roaring of a lion, which strikes a consternation into those that hear it. (Compare Amos i. 2. iii. 8. Joel ii. 11. iii. 16.)

He shall mightily roar upon his habitation.] He shall pronounce and execute a terrible judgment upon his temple, the place on earth which he hath chose for his residence. (See 1 Kings viii. 29.) Upon which account, the same expressions are indifferently applied to heaven and the temple, as in this verse; and heaven itself is called God's temple or sanctuary. (See xvii. 12. Psal. xi. 4. cl. 1.) Some translate the latter part of this sentence to the same sense with the former: *from his habitation,* the preposition *nal* being sometimes the same with *menal, from.* (See Psal. lxxxi. 5. Dan. ii. 1. vi. 18.)

He shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes.] *He shall utter his voice before his army,* as Joel expresses it, ii. 11. that is, like a leader or general, he shall encourage them to give the onset upon their enemies, which is usually performed with a shout, as great as that which the treaders of grapes use at the time of the vintage. (See xlviii. 33. Isa. xvi. 9.)

Ver. 31. *A noise* [of God's voice or judgment] *shall come unto the ends of the earth: for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations.*] God enters into judgment with men for their impieties, as being so many injuries to his honour, and for which he demands satisfaction by his judgments. (Compare Hos. iv. 1. Micah vi. 2.)

He will plead with all flesh.] He will plead with them *with fire and sword,* as Isaiah expresses it, lxvi. 16.

Ver. 32. *And a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the ends of the earth.*] God's vengeance is often compared to a whirlwind. (See the note on xxiii. 19.) This the text says shall come from a far-distant country, as Chaldea was esteemed. (See v. 15.)

Ver. 33. *And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth, even to the other end of the earth.*] See the note on ver. 26. Or the words may be rendered, *from one end of the land to the other end of the land,* meaning Judea, the following words chiefly regarding that country.

They shall not be lamented.] See the note on xvi. 6.

Neither gathered, nor buried.] See the note on viii. 2.

Ver. 34. *Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, ye principal of the flock.*] The imperative is put for the future. (See ver. 27.) Shepherds are here the same with princes or generals. (See the note on ii. 8. vi. 3.) In pursuance of the same metaphor, by the *principal of the flock,* are meant the great and rich men of each nation, which is here prophesied against. Of them it is foretold, that they *shall wallow themselves in the ashes,* as a token of their great mourning and lamenting over their misfortunes. (See vi. 26.)

For the days of your slaughter and of your dispersion are accomplished.] The time is come when you shall be either slaughtered or dispersed, and carried captive into foreign countries.

And ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel.] Ye shall be utterly destroyed as a crystal glass, when it is dashed against the ground.

Ver. 36. *For the Lord hath spoiled their pasture.*] See the notes on vi. 2, 3.

Ver. 37. *And the peaceable habitations are cut down.*] Or, *destroyed:* in the Hebrew it is, *Neoth Shalem,* alluding to Salem, the same with Jerusalem.

Ver. 38. *He hath forsaken his covert as a lion,* &c.] As a lion forsakes his covert to go in quest of his prey, so God hath forsaken Jerusalem his habitation, from whence he used formerly to utter his voice like a lion, and exert his power for the defence of his people; (see Isa. xxxi. 4.) but now he hath made both city and country the object of his anger and judgments.

[*Because of the fierceness of the oppressor.*] The word *jonah,* rendered *oppressor,* signifies likewise a *dove:* so some understand the word as denoting the Assyrians or Chaldeans, who succeeded in that monarchy, who had that bird for a symbol of their nation given to them by Semiramis. (Compare xlvi. 16. see Selden, de Diis Syris, lib. ii. cap. 3.) Though it must be granted, the word is used where it cannot be understood of the Chaldeans. See l. 16. Zeph. iii. 1.]

CHAP. XXVI.

ARGUMENT.

Jeremiah denouncing destruction to the city and temple, unless the people repented, is apprehended and arraigned before the great council, or Sanhedrin: upon which he makes his apology, and, after the debating the case by the judges of that court, he is acquitted.

Ver. 1. *IN the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim.*] See the note on ver. 3.

Ver. 2. *Stand in the court of the Lord's house.*] See the note on xix. 4.

The great court was the place where both men and women did ordinarily worship, when they brought no sacrifice, saith Dr. Lightfoot, in his Description of the Temple, chap. 18. for when they offered a sacrifice, they were to bring it into the inner court, otherwise called the *court of Israel,* or of the priests, as the same learned author hath observed in his treatise concerning the Temple Service, chap. 8. sect. 1.

And speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the Lord's house.] Archbishop Usher, in his Annals ad A. M. 3395. conjectures, that this was at the feast of tabernacles, when all the males were obliged to appear before the Lord, (Deut. xvi. 16.)

Diminish not a word.] Either out of fear, favour, or flattery.

Ver. 3. *If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way,* &c.] See the note on xxxvi. 3.

Ver. 5. *To hearken to the words of my servants the prophets.*] See xxv. 4.

Ibid. and Ver. 6. *Rising up early and sending them—then will I make this house like Shiloh.*] See the notes on vii. 12, 13.

Ver. 6. *And I will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.*] See the note on xxiv. 9.

Ver. 7. *So the priests and the prophets.*] The Septuagint rightly understand the word of the false prophets, such as was Hananiah, mentioned chap. xxvii. (Compare xxix. 1. xxxvii. 19.) So the word prophet is taken, Hos. ix. 8.

In the house of the Lord.] That is, in the court before the house of the Lord, ver. 2. (Compare vii. 10.) The outer courts being holy ground, and dedicated to God's worship, are called by the name of the temple. So the treasury, where Christ preached, is called the temple, John viii. 20. though it stood in the outer court of it. St. Paul is said to have entered *into the temple*, that is, into the court before the temple, and the Jews to have laid hold on him there, Acts xxi. 26, 27.

Ver. 8. *Thou shalt surely die.*] As a disturber of the government, and a discourager of the people, from defending their country against the enemy. (Compare xxxviii. 4. and see the note on ver. 14. of this chapter.)

Ver. 10. *When the princes of Judah heard these things.*] These are the same who are called the *princes of the land*, ver. 17. The king's counsellors, or chief officers of state, who were likewise members of the great Sanhedrin. It is uncertain when the great council, called the Sanhedrin, was instituted. Selden, and most other writers from the Jewish authors, date the rise of it from Moses's appointing the seventy elders, Numb. xi. 16. (See Selden, lib. ii. de Synedriis, cap. 4. 16. Grotius in Matt. v. 22.) After several intermissions of this authority, which was sometimes laid aside by the calamities or corruptions of the times, or else superseded by that sovereign power which was invested in the judges and kings, Jehoshaphat, when he set about a general reformation, restored this ancient tribunal. (See 2 Chron. xix. 8.) This being the supreme court of the nation, the persons that sat in it are called here the *princes of Judah:* (compare xxix. 2. xxxiv. 19.) and the *elders of the land*, ver. 17. of this chapter; and the *elders of the people*, xix. 1. and in the evangelists, (see Matt. xxvii. 1. Luke xxii. 66.) and the *senate of the children of Israel*, Acts v. 21. (Compare 1 Mac. xii. 6. Judith xi. 14.) The same are probably meant by the *seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel*, mentioned Ezek. viii. 11. The word Sanhedrin is, without doubt, of Greek original, derived from Συνέδριον, which often signifies this great council in the New Testament; and from thence is adopted into the Jewish language by the rabbinical writers, as many other Greek words are; but the council may still have been of much ancienter date, and expressed in the Old Testament by *rulers, princes,* or *elders,* or *senate of the people.*

The new gate of the Lord's house.] The Chaldee calls it the *east gate of the sanctuary of the Lord.* It was called the *new gate,* because it was repaired by Jotham. (See 2 Kings xv. 35.)

Ver. 14. *As for me, behold, I am in your hand,* &c.] Compare xxxviii. 5. It was the proper business of the Sanhedrin to pass sentence upon prophets. And if they found them guilty of making false pretences to prophecy, to put them to death, the punishment which the law had provided in that case, (Deut. xviii. 20.) To this sense those words of Christ are to be understood, Luke xiii. 33. *It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem,* where the Sanhedrin sat, whose office it was first to try, and to condemn him.

Ver. 16. *Then said the princes.*] The Sanhedrin; (see ver. 17.) or at least some considerable men among them. (Compare ver. 21. xxxvi. 12. xxxvii. 15. xxxviii. 4.)

And all the people.] They who before were forward to condemn him, (ver. 8.) now, upon hearing his apology, were as ready to acquit him.

Ver. 17. *Then rose up certain of the elders of the land.*] See ver. 10. 16. From ver. 17. to the end of the chapter, are rehearsed the debates that passed in the Sanhedrin upon this subject, and the arguments offered on both sides; as St. Luke gives an account of a like conference with relation to the apostles, Acts v. 33, 34.

Ver. 18. *Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah,* &c.] They allege this precedent, taken from the practice of a good king, in favour of Jeremiah.

Zion shall be ploughed like a field.] The Jews suppose this prophecy to be fulfilled in the utter destruction of the second temple by Titus; when Terentius, or, as some of the modern Jews call him, Turnus Rufus, razed the very foundations of the city and temple, and so fulfilled the prediction of our Saviour, *that there should not be left one stone upon another.* (See Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 7.) When conquerors would signify their purpose, that a city should never be rebuilt, they used to break up the ground where it stood. (See Judg. ix. 45.) Horace alludes to this custom,

——" Imprimeretque muris
Hostile aratrum exercitus insolens."—Lib. i. Od. 16.

And the mountain of the house.] The temple stood upon Mount Moriah. (See 2 Chron. iv. 1. and xvii. 3. of this prophecy.)

Ver. 19. *Did Hezekiah and all Judah put him to death?*] Did the people come together in a body to accuse Micah, and demand sentence against him, as they had now done in the case of Jeremiah?

Did he not fear the Lord, &c.] See 2 Chron. xxxii. 25.

Ver. 20. *And there was also a man that prophesied in the name of the Lord, Urijah,* &c.] This seems to be an instance alleged by others of the Sanhedrin, in favour of the priests and prophets, who were for condemning Jeremiah.

Ver. 22. *And Jehoiakim sent men into Egypt,* &c.] There was a strict alliance between him and Pharaoh-Necho king of Egypt. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 24.)

Ver. 23. *And cast his dead body into the graves of the common people.*] Thereby to put a mark of infamy upon him after his death, by burying him among the common people; for persons of quality and character had sepulchres belonging to their own families. (See 2 Sam. xvii. 23. 1 Kings ii. 24.)

Ver. 24. *Nevertheless the hand of Ahikim, the son of Shaphan, was with Jeremiah.*] Both he and his father Shaphan were chief ministers under Josiah, (2 Kings xxii. 12. 14.)

And the brothers of Ahikam, Gemariah, Elasah, and Jaazaniah, were considerable men in those days with Ahikam, and members of the great council: (see Jer. xxix. 3. Ezek. viii. 11.) so Ahikam made use of his interest with them, to deliver Jeremiah from the danger that threatened him.

That they should not give him into the hand of the people.] The common people are inconstant in their opinions: they joined at first with Jeremiah's accusers; (ver. 10.) after hearing his apology, they took his part; (ver. 16.) but afterward, upon hearing the instance of Urijah alleged on the other side, they were incensed against him, and were zealous for putting him to death.

CHAP. XXVII.

ARGUMENT.

This prophecy seems to have been uttered at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign (see the following note), and foreshews the conquest of Judea, and the neighbouring countries, by the king of Babylon, as was more largely set forth in the twenty-fifth chapter.

Ver. 1. *IN the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim.*] There is a difficulty in the date of this prophecy, because it plainly relates to the times of Zedekiah. (See ver. 3. 12. 16.) Some suppose that Jeremiah might have it in charge to declare this decree of God's in the reign of king Jehoiakim, which yet he was not to execute, till the time of Zedekiah. Others think that the prophet did presently execute some part of his orders, *viz.* that of putting on bonds and yokes upon his neck, which he wore, during the reigns of Jehoiakim and Jeconiah, till the fourth year of Zedekiah. There are other ways of solving this difficulty, which are less probable: but the answer which seems to me the least forced, is to say, that Jehoiakim is crept into the text, by the negligence of the scribes (who might have their eyes upon the beginning of the last chapter or section), instead of Zedekiah. This emendation is confirmed, by comparing this verse with the third, twelfth, and twentieth verses of this chapter, and with the beginning of the next. Such little verbal mistakes must be allowed by all impartial readers, to have sometimes happened in transcribing the Holy Scriptures, as well as in other books, and may easily be corrected, by comparing the suspected reading with other parts of the sacred text, which admit of no difficulty or uncertainty.

Ver. 2. *Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck.*] The prophets foreshewed things by actions as well as words. So Isaiah went *naked and barefoot,* (Isa. xx. 3.) Ezekiel prophesied in like manner by signs, (Ezek. iv. 1, &c. xii. 3. xxiv. 17. 19.)

Ver. 3. *And send them to the king of Edom,* &c.] These were some of those countries which God had given into the hand of the king of Babylon. (See xxv. 21, 22. and chap. xlviii. xlix.)

By the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah.] Their business was either to congratulate Zedekiah upon his accession to the throne; or else to engage him in a league against the king of Babylon.

Ver. 6. *And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.*] God is the sole lord and proprietor of the world, and, by virtue of his absolute sovereignty and dominion, has a right to give the kingdoms of the earth to whomsoever he pleases, (Dan. iv. 17.) and he exercises this authority, by *changing times and seasons,* by *removing kings, and setting up kings,* (ibid. ii. 21.) It is the business of human laws, to establish every government in that method wherein it is already settled: but as this is no bar to Providence, which still has a right to alter governments, and, for great and wise reasons, often changes the scene of worldly affairs; so neither ought it to be an objection against submitting to any persons, whom God's providence hath placed over us, and put into their hands the full power of exercising all those acts of government in which sovereignty consists. But although the people are bound in such cases to obey, yet this does not lessen the guilt of usurpers themselves. (See the note on xxv. 12.)

The king of Babylon my servant.] See the note on xxv. 9.

And the beasts of the field have I given also to him to serve him.] Compare Dan. ii. 38. An instance of that absolute sovereignty which God hath given to the king of Babylon, whereby men, and all their goods and fortunes, which chiefly consisted in cattle in those days, were entirely at his disposal.

Ver. 7. *And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son.*] Belshazzar, the last king of the Babylonian monarchy, (Dan. v. 30, 31.) was grandchild to Nebuchadnezzar, who is called his father, Dan. v. 2. that is, his grandfather, by a usual Hebraism. (See 1 Kings xv. 3. compared with ver. 10. and 2 Kings viii. 26. compared with ver. 18.) For the two kings mentioned in Ptolemy's Canon, between Evil-Merodach and Belshazzar (called there Nabonedus); *viz.* Neriglissarus and Laborosoarchodus, had no right by lineal descent: for Neriglissarus was only husband to Evil-Merodach's daughter, and Laborosoarchodus was son to Neriglissarus. Compare Isa. xiv. 22. where God saith, *I will cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, son and nephew,* or rather, *son and grandson;* that is, all that should lineally succeed king Nebuchadnezzar. (Compare Job xviii. 19.)

Until the very time of his land come.] The Vulgar Latin translates the words thus, *Until the time of his land, and of himself come; i. e.* The time of their punishment or visitation, as it is elsewhere expressed; that is, at the end of seventy years. (See xxv. 12.) The word *time* is used in the same sense, Ezek. vii. 7. xxx. 3.

And then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.] See xxvi. 14.

Ver. 8. *That will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon.*] Will not submit to that servitude represented by the yokes mentioned ver. 2, 3.

That nation will I punish—with the sword, &c.] Those punishments are elsewhere denounced against Zedekiah, and all the Jews who joined with him in resisting the king of Babylon's forces. (See xxiv. 9. xxxviii. 8. Ezek. xii. 13, 14. xvii. 20, 21.)

Ver. 9. *Therefore hearken ye not to your prophets, nor to your diviners,* &c.] The Jews, together with the idolatrous rites of their neighbours, learned their arts of divination, and foretelling future events, the use of which was expressly forbidden, Deut. xviii. 11, &c. and for which practices they are severely reproved, Isa. ii. 6. The word *nonen,* which is here translated *enchanter,* is rendered there

soothsayer, and is supposed to be the same with a stargazer, or astrologer.

Ver. 10. *They prophesy a lie unto you.*] See xiv. 14. xxiii. 21. xxix. 8.

Ver. 11. *But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon—those will I let remain still in their own land*, &c.] They that make no opposition against the king of Babylon's forces, but willingly submit themselves to him, shall continue in their own country and possessions, being only tributaries to the king of Babylon. (See xxxviii. 17. xlii. 10, 11.)

Ver. 12. *I spake also to Zedekiah, king of Judah, according to all these words*, &c.] See the note on ver. 1. What the prophet saith here to Zedekiah, hath a particular weight in it, because he was made king of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar, and took an oath of being faithful to him, and never resisting his authority. (See xxxviii. 1. 2 Kings xxiv. 17. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. Ezek. xvii. 15. 18.)

Ver. 16. *Behold, the vessels of the Lord's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon.*] Several of the vessels belonging to the temple were carried away by the Chaldeans, in the reigns of Jehoiakim and Jeconiah. (See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7. 10. Dan. i. 2.)

Ver. 19. *For thus saith the Lord concerning the pillars*, &c.] See lii. 17. 20, 21.

Ver. 20. *Which Nebuchadnezzar took not when he carried away captive Jeconiah*, &c.] See 2 Kings xxiv. 13, 14.

They shall be carried to Babylon.] See 2 Kings xxv. 13. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18.

And there shall they be, until the day that I shall visit them.] Till the prefixed time of seventy years be expired, when I shall visit the iniquity of the Chaldeans upon them, and restore the Jews from their captivity. (See xxv. 11, 12. Ezra i. 7.)

CHAP. XXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains an account of Hananiah's false prophecy, and the judgment Jeremiah denounced against him upon it; which accordingly came to pass.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass in the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah.*] This plainly refers to the time specified at the beginning of the last chapter, and confirms the conjecture there made, that Jehoiakim is put there by a mistake of the copies for Zedekiah.

In the fourth year.] There is a difficulty in the expression, how the prophet should call that the beginning of Zedekiah's reign, which was really the *fourth year* of it. Therefore Scaliger understands it of the fourth year in course, reckoning from the last sabbatical year, which we know was to be every seventh year, from Lev. xxv. 3, 4. (see his Canones Isagog. p. 294, 295.) and Kimchi speaks of it as a tradition received among the rabbins, that the temple was destroyed in a sabbatical year; which falling in with the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the first year of his reign must be the fourth in course from the last sabbatical. (See the notes on xxxiv. 1. 17.)

It is probable, that the observation of these sabbatical years had been intermitted for a great while before the captivity; but the king and people, warned by the prophet Jeremiah of their great neglect in this matter, had entered into a solemn covenant for the observing this part of the law. (See xxxiv. 8, &c.)

But after all, there is no ground for this solution of Scaliger's; for it is plain, that if they had any regard for this computation of time, the ninth year of Zedekiah was the sabbatical year. (See the forementioned place.)

To avoid this difficulty, Noldius translates the words to this sense, *When it had been so* [that is, when I had continued prophesying with a yoke about my neck from that year] *in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, until the fourth year.* (See his Concordance, p. 143. 164.)

The LXX. read this part of the verse thus, *In the fourth year of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fifth month.*

Ver. 2. *I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.*] That tyrannical power which Nebuchadnezzar exercises, of which the bonds and yokes which Jeremiah wore, are the figures. (See xxxvi. 1. 12.)

Ver. 3. *Within two full years.*] See the note on ver. 16.

I will bring again into this place all the vessels of the Lord's house.] See xxvii. 16. 20.

Ver. 4. *And I will bring again Jeconiah*, &c.] This was grateful news to the people, who looked upon Zedekiah only as Nebuchadnezzar's deputy, or viceroy. (See the note on xxvi. 12.)

Ver. 6. *Even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen*, &c.] Thereby expressing his hearty concern for the good of his nation, and wishing that God would repent him of the evil wherewith he had threatened them by his ministry.

Ver. 8, 9. *The prophets that have been before me, and before thee of old, prophesied both against many countries*, &c.] Jeremiah offers two several reasons in defence of his own prophecies, and against the truth of Hananiah's. First, that many other prophets agreed with himself in prophesying evil against the Jews, and other neighbouring countries, such as Hosea, Joel, Amos, Isaiah, Micah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, &c. Whereas Hananiah, being single in his prophecy, nothing but the punctual answering the event could give him the authority of a true prophet. Secondly, that considering the general corruption of the people's manners, it was so much the more likely God should inflict severe punishments upon them, their iniquities being now ripe for judgment. To this the Jews add a third explication of the words, *viz.* that when a true prophet foretells peace, his prophecy must certainly be fulfilled, and the event would prove him to be a true prophet; whereas when a prophet foretold evil, which was Jeremiah's case, the event might be suspended by the repentance of the persons concerned. (See Bishop Kidder's Dem. of the Messias, par. i. p. 377.)

Ver. 10. *Then Hananiah took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck.*] See xxvii. 2.

Ver. 11. *From the neck of all nations.*] See ibid. ver. 7.

Ver. 13. *But thou shalt make for them yokes of iron.*] Such as no human strength can break: to signify that no human force shall be able to cope with the king of Babylon.

Ver. 14. *I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations*, &c.] He renews in stronger terms the prophecy that he delivered before, xxvii. 6, 7.

Ver. 16. *This year thou shalt die.*] As Hananiah limited

the accomplishment of his prophecy to the space of *two years*, (ver. 3.) to gain credit with the people, by such a punctual prediction; so Jeremiah confines the trial of his veracity to a much shorter time: and the event exactly answering, evidently shewed the falsehood of the other's pretences.

Because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord.] Thou hast taught the people to disbelieve his word, and to act contrary to his decrees.

Ver. 17. *In the seventh month.*] Two months after he had uttered his false prophecy. (See ver. 1.)

CHAP. XXIX.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains a message sent by Jeremiah, at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign, to the captives in Babylon, who were carried away with Jeconiah, exhorting them to live quietly there, and not hearken to the prophets among them, who deluded them with vain hopes of a speedy return home: against two of which prophecies he denounces God's judgments; as he did afterward against Shemaiah, who sent a threatening letter against Jeremiah, at the return of those very messengers who carried this letter to Babylon.

Ver. 1. *THESE are the words of the letter that Jeremiah sent unto the residue of the elders that were carried away captives.*] These were probably those that survived of the Sanhedrin, that were carried away captive in the third year of Jehoiakim's reign, (Dan. i. 3.) or else who remained of Jeconiah's captivity; (see 2 Kings xxiv. 14.) many of whom might die by the hardships they suffered in their transportation. These being persons of authority, were more likely to influence the rest of the people, and induce them to hearken to the prophet's advice.

And to the prophets.] We do not read of any true prophet that was carried away captive with Jeconiah, beside Ezekiel. So the Septuagint rightly understand the word here of false prophets, who flattered the people with hopes of a speedy restoration. (See xxvi. 7. xxxviii. 19.) So Hananiah is often called the *prophet*, in the foregoing chapter; and compare ver. 8. of this chapter.

Ver. 2. *After that Jeconiah, the queen,* &c.] By the *queen* is meant Jeconiah's mother. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 12, 14, 15. where an account is given of this captivity; and compare xxii. 26. xxvii. 10. xxviii. 4. of this prophecy.)

And the eunuchs.] See xxxiv. 19.

The princes of Judah and Jerusalem.] If these be persons of a distinct rank, we may understand the princes of Judah to be the same with the elders, or Sanhedrin, ver. 1. (Compare xxvi. 10. 16, 17. xxxiv. 19.) By the *princes of Jerusalem* are meant the rulers of that city, called the lesser Sanhedrin, consisting of twenty-three.

Ver. 3. *By the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan.*] See the note on xxvi. 24.

And Gemariah the son of Hilkiah.] A distinct person from Gemariah, mentioned xxxvi. 10.

Whom Zedekiah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar.] To renew his promises of fidelity to him. (See the note on xxvii. 3. 12.)

Ver. 5, 6. *Build ye houses, and dwell in them,* &c.] The prophet gives them this advice to check their hopes of a speedy return from Babylon, with which the false prophets flattered them. (See ver. 8. 28.)

Ver. 7. *And seek the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captives: and pray unto the Lord for it.*] It is the duty of all private persons to submit to the government that protects them, and to pray for the prosperity of it. (See Ezra vi. 10. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.) And if they are persecutors or enemies to the truth, they are to leave it to God to execute upon them the judgments he has denounced against tyrants and oppressors: which threatenings the Jews expected God would execute upon Babylon in due time. (See Psal. cxxxvii. 8, 9.)

Ver. 8. *Neither hearken to the dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.*] Which you encourage your false prophets to pretend to.

Ver. 10. *After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you.*] These seventy years of the captivity are to be computed from the fourth year of Jehoiakim, which, in the Scripture account, is the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. (See the notes on xxv. 1. 11.)

I will visit you.] There were but few in comparison of those captives, that returned in person into their own country. (See Ezra iii. 12.) So this promise was chiefly fulfilled in their posterity; and it is common in Scripture to speak of blessings bestowed upon the children, as if they had been actually made good to their progenitors. (See xxxii. 5. and compare Exod. vi. 4. Micah vii. 20.)

Ver. 12. *Then shall ye call upon me—and I will hearken unto you.*] A sure token of God's favour, (see xxxiii. 3.) as his rejecting men, and casting them off, is expressed by his *hiding his face from them*, and refusing to hear their prayers. (See xiv. 12. Lam. iii. 8. 44.)

Ver. 13. *And ye shall seek me and find me,* &c.] According to the promises made, Lev. xxvi. 39, 40. Deut. xxx. 1. Psal. xxxii. 6.

Ver. 14. *And I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you,* &c.] These words are directly spoken to those that were carried captives with Jeconiah, and were fulfilled in their restoration under Cyrus: yet the expressions being so large and general, may be supposed ro relate to that general restoration of the whole nation, which is often foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament. (See xxiii. 3. 8. xxxii. 37. and the notes there.)

Ver. 15. *Because ye say, The Lord hath raised us up prophets in Babylon.*] This is meant of the false prophets, who foretold nothing but peace and prosperity. (See ver. 8. 21.)

Ver. 16—18. *Know ye, that thus saith the Lord of the king—and all the people,* &c.] See xxiv. 8. 10.

Ver. 19. *Because they have not hearkened to my words, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets.*] When at the same time they readily gave ear to the false prophets, that flattered them with promises of peace and safety. (See xiv. 14. xxvii. 15. xxviii. 2.)

Ver. 21. *And he shall slay them before your eyes.*] As persons that disturbed the minds of the Jews, his subjects, and made them unwilling to submit to his government, by giving them hopes of a speedy deliverance from under it. (See ver. 7, 8.)

Ver. 22. *And of them shall be taken up a curse.*] See the note on xxiv. 9.

Whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire.] Casting into the fire was a punishment used in that country, as appears from the history of the three children, Dan. iii. There was likewise a way of roasting by a gentle fire, to make men die by a more lingering death, such as Antiochus practised upon the seven brethren; (2 Mac. vii. 5.) and was often used in the Dioclesian persecution, as Lactantius describes it, de Mortib. Persecutorum, cap. 21. The word here properly denotes this sort of punishment.

Ver. 23. *Because they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives.*] Compare xxiii. 14. The Jewish writers will needs have these to have been the two elders that attempted Susannah's chastity. For they have a traditional account of that story; though they do not look upon the history of it, that is still extant in the Greek, to be authentic.

Ver. 24. *Thou shalt also speak unto Shamaiah the Nehelamite.*] Or, *the dreamer*, as the word is rendered in the margin. (See ver. 8.) This was done after the messengers who delivered the former message to the captives at Babylon were returned home, who brought along with them the letter of Shemaiah mentioned in the following verse. (See ver. 27.)

Ver. 25. *And to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest.*] See the note on xxi. 1.

Ver. 26. *The Lord hath made thee priest instead of Jehoiada the priest.*] Shemaiah directs the words of his letter to Zephaniah, in the first place, as being next in order to the high-priest, and therefore called the *second priest*, lii. 24. and tells him, that God has appointed him to supply the place of the high-priest, being probably absent at that time, who was either Azariah, or Seraiah his son; but might be called by the name of Jehoiada, a person so remarkable for his zeal and courage, 2 Chron. xxxiii. xxxiv.

It is certain, some of the high-priests had several names, as is taken for granted frequently by Selden, Lightfoot, and other learned men, who have endeavoured to give us an account of their succession, out of the histories of the Kings and Chronicles. (See Selden, de Success. in Pontificat. lib. i. cap. 5. Lightfoot's Temple Service, chap. 4.)

That ye should be officers in the house of the Lord, for every man that is mad, and maketh himself a prophet.] See xx. 1, 2. and the note there. The prophets and inspired persons, were often accused of madness, or being possessed with an evil spirit, by their enemies. (See 2 Kings ix. 11. Hos. ix. 7. John x. 20. Acts xxvi. 24.)

Ver. 27. *For therefore* [or *because*, see Noldius, p. 728.] *he sent unto us in Babylon.*] See ver. 5.

Ver. 32. *He shall not have a man to dwell among his people, neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people.*] None of his posterity shall remain to see my people restored to their own land again. (Compare ver. 11.)

Because he hath taught rebellion against the Lord.] See xxviii. 16.

CHAP. XXX.

ARGUMENT.

This and the following chapter contain general promises of God's mercy to the Jews, and assurances that he will never forget the covenant that he made with their fathers: those were partly fulfilled in their restoration under Cyrus, but more fully to be accomplished in the times of the Messias; and by the gracious terms of that new covenant, which he will establish with the spiritual Israel. At, or before, whose second appearing, we may expect a general conversion and restoration of God's ancient people: a blessing implied in those prophecies of the Old Testament, where the joint restoration of Israel and Judah is foretold: as has been observed upon Isa. xi. 11. 13.

Ver. 2. *WRITE thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book.*] The words that follow contain a promise of the Jews' restoration from their captivity. (Compare ver. 4.) These God commands should be committed to writing for the use of posterity, to be a support to the Jews, and an encouragement for them to trust in God, and a proof of God's prescience and overruling providence, when the event shall be brought to pass. (See the note on xxii. 30.)

Ver. 3. *I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah.*] Israel and Judah having been carried away by two distinct captives, into different parts of the world, several prophecies of the Old Testament not only foretell the restoration of each of them, but likewise their reunion after their restoration. (See above, iii. 18. Ezek. xxxvii. 6. 21, 22. Hos. i. 11.) Now, though it be granted that some of every tribe did return to their own country under Cyrus and Artaxerxes, and are therefore called by the name of *all Israel*, (Ezra ii. 73. vi. 17. vii. 13. x. 5. Nehem. xii. 47.) yet the far greatest part of these were of Judah and Benjamin, together with the Levites. (See Ezra i. 5.) So that it is a great question what is become of the main body of the ten tribes, which Shalmaneser carried away into Assyria, and the neighbouring countries: from all which we may infer, that this and the like prophecies of the Old Testament refer to a farther restoration of the Jews that is yet to come.

Ver. 5. *We have heard the voice of trembling.*] Such a one as discovers great fear, and apprehensions of impending evils.

Ver. 6. *Ask ye now, and see, whether a man doth travail with child,* &c.] All men seem to carry that concern in their looks, and discover such an uneasiness in their behaviour, under their apprehension of approaching evils, as women do when the time of their travail draws near. (Compare vi. 24. Nahum ii. 10.)

Ver. 7. *Alas! for that day, for it is great, so that there is none like it,* &c.] The word *day* often comprehends a succession of time, in which a whole series of events is transacted: so it here contains the whole time of the siege and taking of Jerusalem, the destruction of the city and temple, and the carrying away the people captive. This is described as a time of great tribulation, in which it was an earnest of the day of judgment, called the *great and terrible day of the Lord*, Joel ii. 31.

Ver. 8. *For it shall come to pass, saith the Lord, that in that day I will break his yoke from off thy neck.*] In the day when Jacob shall be saved out of all his troubles, (ver. 7.) The phrase *that day* often denotes an extraordinary or remarkable time, for some signal events of Providence. (See the note on Isa. iv. 2.)

And strangers shall no more serve themselves of him.] This promise has not yet received its accomplishment: since, after the return of the Jews under Cyrus, they were

reduced into servitude by the Greeks and Romans; and at present there is no place in the world where they can be said to be their own masters.

Ver. 9. *But they shall serve the Lord their God.*] They shall steadily adhere to the true religion and service of God, expressed elsewhere thus, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* (See ver. 22.)

And David their king.] That is, the Messias, who is often called by the name of David in the prophets, as the person in whom all the promises made to David were to be fulfilled. (See Isa. lv. 3, 4. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. xxxvii. 24. Hos. iii. 5.)

Whom I will raise up unto them.] An expression elsewhere used by the holy writers, when they speak of the coming of Christ. (See Luke i. 69. Acts ii. 30. xiii. 23.)

Ver. 10. *Therefore fear not, O my servant Jacob,* &c.] As if God had utterly forsaken thee, or cast thee off. (Compare Isa. xli. 15. xliv. 2.)

For, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity.] I will deliver thee from thy captivity, though thou shouldest be dispersed into the most distant countries: and this, though it be not accomplished in the Jews of the present age, shall be made good to their posterity, who *are beloved for their fathers' sake,* as St. Paul speaks, Rom. xi. 28. National blessings are promised in common to parents and children, who, as they are called promiscuously by the same name, as Jacob here denotes his posterity: so they are looked upon in such cases as one aggregate body, or race of people. (See the note on xxix. 10.)

And Israel shall be in rest and quiet, and none shall make him afraid.] These expressions denote external peace and freedom from the annoyance of enemies, as hath been observed upon xxiii. 6.

Ver. 11. *Though I make an end of all nations, whither I have scattered thee.*] Such as the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, &c. yet I will not make a full end of thee. (See the note on xxxi. 36.)

But I will correct thee in measure, [see x. 24.] *and not leave thee altogether unpunished.*] This latter part of the verse some render, *and not utterly destroy thee:* which sense, as it suits very well with this place, so it agrees much better with the scope of those two texts in the Pentateuch, where we first meet with it, Exod. xxxiv. 7. and Numb. xiv. 18. than the common translation, which renders the words there, *and will by no means acquit* the guilty.

The sense which our translation gives here of this phrase, *I will not leave thee altogether unpunished,* agrees very well with the context of some other places, where this phrase is used, as particularly xxv. 29. xlix. 12. of this prophecy; as also Nahum i. 3.

Ver. 12. *For thus saith the Lord, Thy bruise is incurable,* &c.] In all human appearance, and therefore it is none but God can heal thee, and recover thee out of this desperate condition.

Ver. 13. *There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up.*] There is none that, by the reformation of their lives, or their intercessions with God, endeavour to avert his displeasure. (See Ezek. xxii. 30.) Or else the words may be rendered, *There is none to judge thy cause.* (See vi. 28. xxii. 6.) None knows the true nature of thy malady, or what medicines are fit to be applied to thy case. Their calamitous state is compared to a distempered body; (see ver. 17. viii. 22. Isa. i. 5, 6.) and the false prophets, instead of applying proper remedies, *have healed the wounds of my people slightly;* as we read, vi. 14.

Ver. 14. *All thy lovers have forgotten thee.*] See xxii. 20. 22.

For I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, &c.] Thy iniquities have provoked me to punish thee with that severity, as looks like cruelty, and as if I had declared myself an utter enemy to thee.

Ver. 15. *Why criest thou for thine affliction,* &c.] Yet why shouldest thou expostulate with me, as if I had dealt unjustly with thee? Whereas, if thy condition seems desperate, it is owing to thine own iniquities, which have still been increased with new aggravations of guilt.

Ver. 16. *Therefore* [or *yet surely,* see the note on xvi. 14.] *all they that devour thee shall be devoured,* &c.] See ver. 11. Isa. xxxiii. 1.

Ver. 17. *For I will restore health unto thee,* &c.] See ver. 12, 13.

Ver. 18. *I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents.*] The expression alludes to the ancient custom of dwelling in tents, or tabernacles. (Compare Isa. xxxiii. 20. liv. 2.) This was in some degree fulfilled under Zerubbabel.

And the city shall be built upon her own heap.] Or *hill,* as it is in the margin, as that part of Jerusalem particularly was, which was called Mount Zion. And generally there was a castle or citadel in the middle of the ancient cities, upon a rising ground, for the greater strength and security of the place. (See Josh. xi. 13.)

And the palace shall remain [or *be placed*] *after the manner thereof.*] By the palace may be understood, either the temple or the king's house; which the prophet foretells shall be built upon its former foundation and dimensions.

Ver. 19. *And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving,* &c.] See xxxi. 4. 13. 18. xxxiii. 11. Zech. x. 8.

Ver. 20. *Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me.*] Their church and commonwealth shall be restored to their former state. (Compare xxxiii. 7. 11. Isa. i. 27.)

Ver. 21. *And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governors shall proceed from the midst of them.*] The Hebrew word *addiro* is in the singular number, and literally signifies their *mighty one,* a title given to God himself, Psal. xciii. 4. and to a mighty angel, Isa. x. 34. probably the Λόγος, or Son of God. The sense is, they shall be no more governed by strangers, but shall have a ruler of their own nation; such as was Zerubbabel, a figure of Christ.

And I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach to me.] He shall have a near attendance upon me: for I will make him a priest to me as well as a king, according to that prophecy concerning the Messiah, Psal. cx. 4. *Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.* This phrase of *coming,* or *drawing near,* to God, is particularly applied to the office of the priests and Levites, Numb. xvi. 5.

For who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord.] For who is there but the Messias, that is so entirely devoted to my service? (See Psal. xl. 8.

John iv. 34. xiv. 31.) The words *mihû zé, who is this,* have an emphasis in the original, that cannot be expressed in another language, and are spoken by way of admiration: the very same phrase is used Psal. xxiv. 10. where the altering the phrase from that which was used in the eighth verse is designed to denote some extraordinary person, and is generally expounded of the Messias.

Ver. 22. *And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.*] You shall continually adhere to my religion and worship, and I will take you into my favour and protection. (See Ezek. xi. 24. xxxvi. 26. xxxvii. 27. Hos. ii. 23. Zech. xiii. 9. Rev. xxi. 3.)

Ver. 23, 24. *Behold, the whirlwind of the Lord goeth forth with fury,* &c.] We find the same judgment denounced xxiii. 19, 20. And with respect to the context here, and the *latter days,* to which it does particularly relate, it may best be explained with regard to the general conversion of the Jews, when God will make a remarkable discrimination among them; will bring back those that repent and believe into their own country, and punish the refractory with utter destruction, as he did the rebels in the wilderness. (See Ezek. xi. 17. 21. xx. 34. 38. and the notes upon Isa. iv. 11. lxv. 12.)

Ver. 24. *The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return.*] See the note on xxiii. 20.

In the latter days ye shall consider [or *understand*] *it.*] The *latter days,* or *last days,* as the phrase is sometimes translated, may signify, in general, the time to come; and so perhaps it is to be understood Gen. xlix. 1. Deut. iv. 30. xxxi. 29. but it commonly signifies the times under the gospel, as being the last dispensation, and such as should continue to the end of the world. (See the note on Isa. ii. 2.) And taking the phrase in this sense, the words import, that when all these evils are come upon you, which God has threatened against your disobedience, and particularly for that heinous sin of yours in rejecting the Messias: and you have found the denunciations of the prophets verified in the several captivities you have undergone; then you will understand the import of this and several other prophecies, and the event will perfectly instruct you in their meaning. (See xxiii. 20.)

CHAP. XXXI.

ARGUMENT.

See the Argument of the foregoing chapter, the same subject being continued in this: together with a more explicit declaration of the nature and terms of that new covenant which God will reveal by Christ.

Ver. 1. *AT the same time.*] In the *latter days,* mentioned xxx. 24.

I will be the God of all the families of Israel, &c.] See xxx. 22.

Ver. 2. *The people that were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness,* &c.] I saved the Israelites from that terrible destruction designed against them by their persecutors, Pharaoh, the Amalekites, and Amorites: I led them in the wilderness, and took care for them that they wanted for nothing, in a place destitute of all conveniences of life: I went before them in a pillar of cloud, to mark out a place for them where they should pitch their tents: (compare Numb. x. 33. Deut. i. 33.) I conducted them to the land that I had provided for them: (see Deut. xii. 9. Psal. xcv. 11.) and after such evidences of my kindness to them, how can they doubt of the continuance of my favours?

Ver. 3. *The Lord hath appeared of old unto me.*] These words are spoken in the person of the Jewish nation, the people spoken of in the foregoing verse.

Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love.] The mercies I promised you when I made the covenant with your fathers shall never fail; *for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance,* (Rom. xi. 29.)

Therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.] I have took all opportunities of bringing thee to myself by preventing acts of grace and mercy. The word *draw* is used in Scripture of God's preventing grace. (See Cant. i. 4. Hos. xi. 4. John vi. 44.)

Ver. 4. *Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel.*] Thy inhabitants shall be again restored to thee, who shall rebuild their cities and habitations, that lay desolate during the time of their captivity. (See xxxiii. 7.) The Jews have the title of *virgin of Israel* bestowed upon them, to imply that, by their repentance and reformation, they have washed away the stains of their former idolatries, so often compared to whoredom in the Scriptures. (See the note on xviii. 13.)

The *virgin of Israel* is of the same extent with *all the families of Israel,* (ver. 1.) For the blessings here promised shall receive their utmost completion, when Israel and Judah shall again be united into one people. (See ver. 31. and the notes upon xxx. 3.)

Thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and go forth in the dances of them that make merry.] All the signs both of religious and civil joy shall be restored to thee. (See Exod. xv. 20. Psal. cxlix. 3. Judg. xi. 34.)

Ver. 5. *Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria.*] Building and planting are commonly joined together. (See Isa. lxv. 21. Amos ix. 14.) Samaria, being the metropolis of the ten tribes, seems to be put for the kingdom of Israel, as it was distinct from that of Judah, expressed often by Samaria in the books of Kings. According to which interpretation, the *mountains of Samaria* are equivalent to the *mountains of Israel,* (Ezek. xxxvi. 8. xxxvii. 22.) Taking Samaria in this sense, it implies, that the deliverance here spoken of shall extend to Israel as well as Judah. (See ver. 6. and the Argument on chap. xxx.)

The planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things.] After they have planted them, they shall eat the fruits thereof, according to the promise contained in the parallel texts, Isa. lxv. 21. Amos ix. 14. Whereas God had threatened them as a curse, that when they had *planted their vines, another should eat the fruit,* Deut. xxviii. 30. The verb *hillelu,* translated *eat them as common things,* alludes to that law that forbade the fruit of any young trees to be eaten, till the fifth year of their bearing, when the fruit was lawful, or *common,* for every one to eat. (See the margin of our Bibles upon Deut. xx. 6. xxviii. 30.)

Ver. 6. *For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon Mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye,* &c.] They that were to publish any proclamation used to get to the top of some high hill, from whence their voice might be heard a great way off. (See Judg. ix. 7. 2 Chron. xiii. 4. Isa. xl. 9.) Watchmen gave the same kind of warning if they saw an

enemy approach, which is now done more commonly by beacons. The Jews took much the same method in proclaiming their festivals: (see Dr. Lightfoot's Temple Service, chap. 11.) in allusion to which customs the prophet here saith, that the time shall come when there shall be a general summons throughout all the ten tribes (Ephraim being often put for the whole kingdom of Israel; see the note on Isa. vii. 2.) to repair to the temple at Jerusalem, and join themselves to the true church, from which they had made so long a separation.

When the prophets foretell the general conversion of the Jews, they often speak of Judah and Israel as no longer in a state of separation, but united together under one king, the Messias. (See above, iii. 18. xxx. 3. Isa. xi. 13. Ezek. xxxvi. 6. 22. Hos. ii. 11.) The expressions *arise ye*, &c. allude to the Jews going in companies to Jerusalem, at the three solemn feasts of the year. (See Isa. ii. 3. and the notes there.) The prophets being styled *watchmen*, (see vi. 17.) the word may be applied to those evangelical preachers, who should be instruments in converting the Jews, and bringing them into the church. And the word *Notzerim* may allude, as Grotius observes, to the title of *Nazarene*, given to Christ and his disciples at the first preaching of Christianity. (See Matt. ii. 23. Acts xxiv. 5.) We find that names often carry some mystical allusion in them, by several instances of Scripture, and particularly Jacob's blessings to his sons do, for the most part, allude to their proper names, (Gen. xlix.)

Ver. 7. *Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chiefs of the nations.*] When you see some dawning of these blessed times, express your joy for the restoration of Jacob's posterity in the most public manner that can be, in the sight of the chiefest of those potent nations from whence you are to be delivered. (See ver. 11.) The phrase which we translate, *among the chief of the nations*, may otherwise be rendered, *in the sight of the nations.*

Publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.] Publish those good tidings with the highest expressions of praise and glory to God; and likewise pray that God, who hath begun so glorious a work, would go on to complete and perfect it. (Compare Psal. cxviii. 25.)

Ver. 8. *Behold, I will bring them from the north country*, &c.] This promise relates to the ten tribes, as well as to the other two who were carried captive to Babylon; for Assyria and Media, whither they were removed, lay north of Judea, as well as Babylon. (Compare iii. 12. 18.) And the following words speak of a general restoration of the Jews from their several dispersions. (See xxiii. 8.)

And with them the blind and the lame, and the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together, &c.] God will conduct them with all imaginable care and tenderness, and furnish the most feeble and indigent with suitable accommodations. The words allude to God's conducting his people of all ages and conditions through the wilderness, compared to the care with which a parent or a nurse carries a tender child, Deut. i. 31. (Compare Isa. xl. 11. xli. 18. xlix. 10.)

Ver. 9. *They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them.*] The Septuagint render the words thus, *They went forth with weeping, but with comfort will I bring them back:* which sense exactly agrees with the words of the hundred and twenty-sixth Psalm, which was composed upon the return from captivity: (ver. 5, 6.) *He that sows in tears, shall reap in joy: he that goeth forth weeping, shall come again with rejoicing.* But I conceive the sense which our translators give of the words more agreeable to the original: and it is withal confirmed, by comparing this verse with iii. 21. where we read, *A voice was heard, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel:* the prophet speaking upon the same subject, and in the same words which are here made use of. Compare likewise l. 4. where it is said, that *the children of Israel and Judah shall come together, going and weeping—and seek the Lord their God:* implying that the Jews, at the time of their general restoration, shall have their joy tempered with tears of repentance for their former miscarriages. The same thing is more fully expressed Zech. xiii. 10. where God promises to *pour upon them the spirit of grace and supplications:* the Hebrew word is *tahanunim*, the same which is used here in the text.

I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters.] So that they shall not be afflicted with thirst, or want of any accommodation in their journey. The words allude to God's miraculously supplying the Israelites with water in the wilderness. (Compare Isa. xxxv. 6, 7. xli. 17, 18. xlix. 10.)

In a straight way wherein they shall not stumble.] This phrase is an allusion to God's leading the Israelites through the Red Sea, and afterward in the wilderness. (Compare Isa. xxxv. 8. xlii. 16. xlix. 11. lxiii. 13.)

For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born.] Ephraim is often equivalent to Israel; especially when Israel denotes the ten tribes, as distinct from Judah. (See ver. 6.) God calls himself Israel's father here; (see iii. 4. 19. Deut. xxxii. 6. 1 Chron. xxix. 10. Isa. lxiii. 16.) and Ephraim the first-born among the tribes of Israel: because the birth-right which Reuben had forfeited, was conferred upon the two sons of Joseph, of whom Ephraim had the precedence. (See Gen. xlviii. 20. 1 Chron. v. 1.) This implies that God will restore the nation of the Jews to their primitive state, as it stood before their separation into two kingdoms. (See the note upon ver. 6.)

Ver. 10. *Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it to the isles afar off.*] The Jews call all countries islands, which they go to by sea: so the isles are the same with the gentiles, or heathen nations. (See Isa. xli. 1. xliv. 5. 10. 12. xlix. 1. li. 5. lx. 9. lxvi. 19.)

He that scattered Israel will gather him.] He that hath dispersed the Jewish nation over all parts of the earth, will again gather them into one body or people. (Isa. xi. 12. xxvii. 12. liv. 7.)

And keep him as a shepherd does his flock.] As God's care over his people is often resembled to that of the shepherd: (see Psal. xxiii. 1. lxxx. 1.) so the office of the Messias is described under the same character, (Isa. xl. 11.) and particularly with respect to the Jews after their conversion and restoration. (See Ezek. xxxiv. 23. xxxvii. 24.)

Ver. 11. *And ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.*] From those who had by force and power conquered him, and detained him captive. (See Isa. xlix. 24, 25.) An emblem of that redemption which Christ will obtain for us by vanquishing the devil, called the *strong one* in Scripture. (See Matt. xii. 29. Luke xi. 21, 22.)

Ver. 12. *Therefore they shall come and sing in the height*

of Zion.] Or, *They shall come singing to the height of Zion.* (See the note on ver. 6.) By the *height of Zion*, is meant the temple built upon a hill, adjoining to Mount Zion: (compare Ezek. xvii. 23. xx. 40.) and it is here taken metaphorically, as it is frequently in the prophetical writings, for the church, which is compared by Christ to a *city set on a hill*, (Matt. v. 14.) as being remarkable for the excellency of its laws and institutions. (See the note on Isa. ii. 2.)

And shall flow to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat and for wine, &c.] Spiritual blessings are elsewhere described under the emblems of fruitfulness and plenty. (See the note on Isa. iv. 2.)

And their soul shall be as a watered garden.] God's grace and blessing are often compared to waters that refresh and enrich dry ground. (See Isa. xliv. 3. lviii. 11.)

And they shall not sorrow any more at all.] Compare Isa. xxxv. 11. lxv. 19. Rev. xxi. 4. Taking this promise in its full extent, it implies a happiness too great to be expected, while the present state of things continues.

Ver. 13. *Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together.*] There shall be signs of a universal joy, which all ages shall unanimously join in. (See ver. 4.)

Ver. 14. *And I will satiate the soul of the priest with fatness.*] The expression alludes to that plentiful provision that was made for the priests under the law, who were maintained by the sacrifices and offerings brought to the temple. (See 1 Sam. ii. 28.) And the whole verse implies, that both the priests and people shall rejoice in the abundance of God's blessings. (Compare Psal. cxxxii. 16.)

Ver. 15. *A voice was heard in Ramah—Rachel weeping for her children.*] The prophet describes the lamentations in and about Jerusalem, at the time of the several captivities mentioned lii. 15. 28—30. under the resemblance of a mother lamenting over her dead children. The mournful scene is laid in Ramah, in the land of Benjamin, not far from Jerusalem: (see Judg. xix. 10. 13.) part of that city itself being in the tribe of Benjamin. (See vi. 1.) And Rachel, the mother of Benjamin, is introduced as chief mourner upon so sad an occasion.

This figurative representation was, in a great measure, literally true, when Herod slew the infants at Beth-lehem, not far from Ramah (see the forementioned place in Judges); and therefore St. Matthew tells us, that this prophecy was fulfilled in that event, ii. 17, 18. Several other instances may be alleged, where the mystical sense of the prophecies, or that which relates to the times of the gospel, is the interpretation that most exactly answers the natural and genuine import of the words. This particularly appears in those prophecies concerning Christ's sufferings, contained in the twenty-second and sixty-ninth Psalms. If David's afflictions were the occasion of penning those Psalms, yet it is plain that the literal sense of several passages of those Psalms was never fulfilled in him.

Because they were not.] An expression denoting those who were dead, as being cut off from the land of the living, and excluded from any farther concern in the things of this world. (See Gen. xlii. 13. Lam. v. 7.) This was literally true, according to St. Matthew's interpretation of the text, but only metaphorically so in the sense that was first intended; being spoken of those who were removed into a foreign country, and for ever deprived of the conversation of their relations, as if they had been naturally dead.

Ver. 16. *For thy work shall be rewarded.*] God will have a regard for the tender affection which the mothers bear to their children. Their prayers and tears shall be heard and accepted by him.

Ver. 17. *And there is hope in thine end*, &c.] Or, *to thy posterity*, as the word in the original may be rendered: though these of the present age do not see a return from captivity, yet their posterity shall enjoy that blessing. This was particularly fulfilled with respect to the tribe of Benjamin in their return under Cyrus. (See Ezra i. 5.)

Ver. 18. *I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus.*] Or, *When he was led into captivity, saying thus:* so the word *mithnoded* signifies, xlviii. 27. and in this sense the Vulgar Latin understands it here.

Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke.] Or, I was instructed by thy discipline: whereas, before, I was as an untamed bullock or heifer, that is not to be managed but by stripes and corrections.

Turn thou me, and I shall be turned.] Do thou turn my heart by thy preventing grace, and then I shall be effectually reformed. (Compare Lam. v. 21.) Sometimes the Scripture ascribes the whole work of man's conversion to God, because his grace is the first and principal cause of it. But yet to make it effectual, man's concurrence is necessary, as appears particularly from those words, l. 9. of this prophecy; where God saith, *We have healed Babylon, but she is not healed:* that is, God did what was requisite on his part for her conversion, but she refused to comply with his call. To the same purpose he speaks to Jerusalem, Ezek. xxiv. 13. *I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged.*

Ver. 19. *Surely after I was turned I repented*, &c.] As soon as God's grace touched my heart, and gave me a due sense of my duty, and the many deviations from it I had been guilty of, I straightway became a true penitent, and expressed my repentance, by all the outward and inward signs of an unfeigned sorrow.

Because I did bear the reproach of my youth.] The burden of my former sins lay heavy upon my mind, and I became sensible, that all the calamities and reproaches I have undergone, were the due deserts of my offences. The prophet, representing a whole nation as a single person, speaks of their former sins, as if they were the extravagances of their younger years.

Ver. 20. *Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child?*] The interrogative particle *he*, is in sense the same with *halo:* and so it is plainly taken, 1 Sam. iii. 27. which place should be translated, *Did not I plainly appear to thy father's house*, &c. and 2 Sam. xxiii. 17. where our English translators render it to the same sense, *Is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?* Taking that particle in this sense, the text here should be rendered, *Is not Ephraim my dear son? is he not a pleasant child?* that is, Is he not one that I have set my affections upon, as a parent does upon a child in whom he delights?

For since I spake against him [or *of him*, see xlviii. 27.] *I do earnestly remember him still.*] Ever since I have so se-

verely reproved and chastised him, I have still retained a fatherly kindness and affection for him.

Therefore my bowels are troubled for him.] Or, *yearn upon him;* I am moved with pity and compassion towards him, just as parents sympathize with the calamities of their children: (compare Isa. lxiii. 15. Hos. xi. 8.) and will in due time pardon and receive him into favour. (Compare Isa. lviii. 18.)

Ver. 21. *Set thee up way-marks, make thee high heaps,* &c.] He bids them think of preparing for their return to their own country, and in order to that end, to set up way-marks to direct travellers in the right road. (See Isa. lvii. 14. lxii. 10.) The word *tamrurim, high heaps,* is used here in a different sense from that in which it is taken, ver. 15. and signifies such pillars or obelisks as used to be set up on the road-side, for the direction of travellers: in which sense Schindler understands it, Hos. xii. 14. and renders that place thus, *Israel provoked him to anger by his heaps;* that is, his altars, which stood as *heaps in the field,* as it is said there, ver. 11.

Turn again, O virgin of Israel.] See the note on ver. 14.

Ver. 22. *How long wilt thou go about?*] Or go out of the right way, or follow thine own imagination? (Compare ii. 18, 19. 26.)

O thou backsliding daughter.] Compare vii. 24. Thou that wast formerly backward in obeying God's laws, and now seemest to linger and loiter when God calls thee to return homeward out of a strange country. This expression is often used of Israel, or the ten tribes; (see iii. 6. 8. 11, 12.) and of Judah and Israel together, (ibid. ver. 14. 22.) both being comprehended under the title of *The virgin of Israel,* in the foregoing verse. In which sense it may most properly be understood here.

For the Lord hath created [or *doth create*] *a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man.*] As it is a new thing, and unheard of, that a woman should court a man, so God will bring as strange a thing to pass, that the Jewish nation shall return to God their husband. (See iii. 14.) So most of the modern Jews, and some Christian expositors, understand the words; but several ancient Jews expounded the text of the Messias: (see Bishop Pearson on the third article of the Creed, Dr. Pocock's Miscellany Notes on Maimon. p. 345. and Dr. Jackson's Discourse upon the place.) and most Christian interpreters understand it of the miraculous conception of the Virgin Mary, without the operation of man. The Hebrew *Sabab* is used in a sense near akin to this, Deut. xxxii. 10. where it signifies carrying in the arms, and cherishing as a mother does a child: to the same sense it is said, *Thou shalt embrace a son,* 2 Kings iv. 16. *Habebis in utero,* as the Vulgar Latin renders it; though the word in the original is not the same as it is here. Taking the words in this sense, they properly import a *new creation,* and such as is the immediate work of God. That such a prophecy concerning the conception of Christ may not be thought to come in here abruptly, it is to be observed, that as the coming of the Messias is the foundation of all the promises, both of the first and second covenant; (see 2 Cor. i. 20.) so it contains the most powerful arguments to persuade men to obedience. And that covenant of which Christ was to be the Mediator, is plainly foretold and described at the thirty-first and following verses of this chapter. A learned friend thinks the phrase, *a woman shall compass a man,* to be a proverbial speech; as much as to say, A woman, *i. e.* the most feeble, despicable persons, compared elsewhere to women, (see Isa. iii. 12. xix. 6. xxvii. 11. Jer. l. 37. Nahum iii. 11.) even such a one shall turn back or discomfit a mighty warrior, as the word *geber* properly signifies. He supposes the expression to be equivalent to those promises, that *one should chase a thousand,* and the like; which promises should again be fulfilled at the general restoration of the Jewish nation: (see ver. 8. of this chapter, Joel iii. 10. Zech. xii. 8.) he farther supposes, that the word *woman* alludes to the virgin of Israel, ver. 21. called also a *backsliding daughter,* ver. 22. and compared to Rachel, ver. 15.

Ver. 23. *The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness.*] The giving up of the city and temple into the hands of the heathen, was a profanation of the peculiar place of God's residence. (See Lam. ii. 7.) But when the captivity should be restored, and the temple rebuilt, Jerusalem shall enjoy its former privileges, and be called the seat of justice, because there the supreme courts of justice should be re-established; (compare Psal. cxxii. 5.) and the temple shall be styled the *holy mountain,* or place dedicated to God's service. (See the note on ver. 12. and compare Isa. i. 26. Zech. viii. 3.)

Ver. 24. *And there shall dwell in Judah and in all the cities thereof, husbandmen,* &c.] The country shall be reinhabited as well as the city. (See xxxiii. 12. Isa. lxv. 10.)

Ver. 25. *For I have satiated* [or *I will satiate*] *the weary soul,* &c.] I will comfort them after their sorrows and afflictions.

Ver. 26. *After this I awaked, and beheld, and my sleep was sweet unto me.*] The words of the prophet, when he reflected upon the vision which he had seen, which was so agreeable to him, that it gave him as great comfort and satisfaction as men feel when they have been refreshed with a sweet sleep and undisturbed rest.

Ver. 27. *Behold, the days come—that I will sow the house of Israel, and the house of Judah, with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast.*] Under the captivity the land lay desolate *without man and beast,* (xxxiii. 12.) but now it shall be inhabited and replenished with both. Israel and Judah are here joined together, as in many places before. (See the notes on xxx. 2.)

Ver. 28. *And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them to pluck them up,* &c.] I will shew the same care and vigilance (see xliv. 27.) in restoring them, as I have formerly done in destroying them: according to the promise that I made to them upon their repentance and reformation. (See xviii. 7, 8. compare xxxii. 22.)

Ver. 29. *In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge.*] God hath often declared, that he will *visit the sins of the fathers upon the children:* and particularly threatened to execute judgment upon the present generation, for the idolatries and other sins of their forefathers. (See xv. 4.) This gave occasion to the proverb mentioned in this verse, which they that were in captivity applied to their own case; as if the miseries they endured were chiefly owing to their fathers' sins. (See Lam. v. 7. Ezek. xviii. 2.) But when this judgment should be removed, then there would be no farther occasion to use this proverb, as Ezekiel speaks in the forementioned place.

Ver. 30. *But every one shall die for his own iniquity*, &c.] These national judgments ceasing, every one should suffer only for his own faults. This promise will be remarkably verified, when God shall cease to visit upon the Jewish nation that imprecation which they laid upon themselves for the death of Christ: *His blood be upon us, and upon our children*, (Matt. xxvii. 25.)

Ver. 31. *I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel*, &c.] This must be meant of the evangelical covenant, as the text is expounded by St. Paul, (Heb. viii. 8. x. 16.) The benefits of this covenant were first offered to the Jews, as being the completion of that covenant God made with their fathers. (See Acts iii. 26. xiii. 46.)

Ver. 32. *Not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers*, &c.] The old covenant, as it is opposed to the new, signifies that system of laws and ordinances, which were the condition of that covenant made with the Jews upon Mount Sinai: and in this sense the word *law* is usually taken in the New Testament, when it is opposed to the gospel. (See Acts xv. 5. Rom. iii. 19. Gal. iii. 17.)

When I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt.] God's care over his people in bringing them out from thence, and conducting them through the wilderness, is compared to a parent's leading a tender child. (See Deut. i. 31. Hos. xi. 3.)

Which covenant of mine they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord.] See the note on ii. 2. The LXX. render the latter part of the sentence, *And I regarded them not:* which interpretation St. Paul follows, Heb. viii. 9. and the learned Dr. Pocock, in his Miscellany Notes upon Porta Mosis, chap. 1. confirms this sense of the verb *baalti*, from the use of the word in Arabic.

Ver. 33. *I will put my law in their inward parts, and I will write it in their heart.*] This may be meant of God's renewing their minds by his grace, which is called *giving them a new heart, and a new spirit, that they may walk in his statutes.* (See Ezek. xi. 19. xxvi. 26, 27.) Or else the words denote the difference between this and the former covenant, *viz.* that it should require inward purity, instead of external obedience, and a reasonable service in the place of the ceremonial ordinances; which is one reason why the gospel is called, in the New Testament, *the law of the Spirit*, (Rom. viii. 2.) in opposition to the *law of a carnal commandment*, (Heb. vii. 16.)

And I will be their God, &c.] See the note on xxx. 22.

Ver. 34. *And they shall teach no more, every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord.*] The laws of the new covenant shall be so plain and agreeable to the dictates of reason, that there shall be no need still to be putting men in mind of their duty, as was the case of the former covenant, where a great part of its ordinances were purely positive and ceremonial. And God will now give a greater measure of his grace, both to instruct men in the knowledge of his will, and engage them to practise accordingly, as the following words import.

For they shall all know me, &c.] *They shall be all taught of God*, as Isaiah speaks, lvi. 13. There shall be an extraordinary effusion of God's Spirit, both in the ordinary and extraordinary effects of it, at the time when the gospel is published. (See the notes upon that place of Isaiah, and compare Joel ii. 28. with John vii. 39.)

For I will forgive their iniquity, &c.] God will deal with them with that grace and favour, as if they had never offended him; (see Rom. iii. 25.) and will set forth Christ to be a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice and propitiation, for the sins of all that truly repent and turn to him. (Compare xxxii. 18. and see Acts x. 43. xiii. 39. Rom. xi. 27.)

Ver. 35. *Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day*, &c.] See xxxiii. 20. Psal. lxxxix. 36, 37.

Ver. 36. *If these ordinances depart from before me—then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before me.*] God will preserve a remnant of them where they are led captive, and restore them to their own country and government, as is foretold in several verses of this chapter. He will likewise preserve another remnant at the beginning of the gospel, called the Σωζόμενοι, Luke xiii. 23. Acts ii. 47. who, by embracing the faith of Christ, should escape those terrible judgments that should be inflicted upon the main body of that nation: and Providence doth still continue them in a distinct body from all other people in the world, in order to their conversion in God's due time. To this place St. Paul, speaking of the conversion of the Jews in the latter times, seems to refer, when he saith, *The gifts and calling of God* [to the Jews] *are without repentance*, (Rom. xi. 29.)

Ver. 37. *I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done.*] Though their sins have deserved that God should utterly reject them, yet, out of a regard to the promises made to their fathers, he will, in due time, receive them to mercy. (See Rom. xi. 25. 28.)

Ver. 38. *Behold, the days come—that the city shall be built to the Lord.*] The following prophecy might, in some sense, be fulfilled, in the rebuilding the city after the captivity: but I conceive the mystical sense of the words relate to a more perfect state of the church, which is elsewhere called *the city of God*, and the *New Jerusalem:* and whose dimensions are figuratively described, Ezek. xlviii. 30, &c. Rev. xxi. 10, &c.

From the tower of Hananeel, unto the gate of the corner.] The ancient limits of the city, from the south-east part to the south-west. (See Neh. iii. 1. Zech. xiv. 10. and Dr. Lightfoot's Description of Judea, chap. 26.)

Ver. 39. *And the measuring line shall go forth over against it.*] Or, *just before it; viz.* before the corner gate, going on to the west part of the city.

Upon the hill Gareb.] By which Dr. Lightfoot understands Mount Calvary, situate on the west side of Jerusalem.

Ver. 40. *And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and of the fields, unto the brook Kidron*, &c.] The valley of Tophet, which was made a common burying-place, (see vii. 32.) and the receptacle of the filth of the city, even this place shall be cleansed, and set apart as holy unto the Lord. This may be mystically understood of the holiness of the New Jerusalem, when the church shall be thoroughly purged from all corruption. (Compare Zech. xiv. 20, 21. Joel iii. 17. Isa. lii. 1. lx. 21. Rev. xxi. 27.)

It shall not be plucked up [see ver. 28.] *nor thrown down any more for ever.*] This probably denotes such a settled and unmoveable state of the church, as is not to be expected in this world. (Compare Isa. xxxv. 8. li. 16. lii. 1. lx. 15. lxii. 8.)

CHAP. XXXII.

ARGUMENT.

Jeremiah being put in prison, for foretelling the taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, doth there, by God's direction, purchase a field from his uncle's son, to foreshew that God will restore again the Jews to their country, where they shall enjoy their former possessions.

Ver. 1. *IN the tenth year of Zedekiah—which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.*] Compare lii. 12.

Ver. 2. *For the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem.*] The siege lasted from the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign to the fourth month of the eleventh year. (See xxxix. 1, 2.)

And Jeremiah was shut up in the court of the prison.] He was afterward put in the dungeon: (see xxxvii. 16. xxxviii. 6.) but now was not under so severe a restraint. (Compare ver. 26. 28. of that chapter.)

Ver. 3, 4. *For Zedekiah—had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say,* &c.] This refers to the prophecy set down xxxiv. 2, &c. The particulars there mentioned being in order of time, before the passages related in this chapter. Jeremiah's prophecies are put together without any regard to the order of time, as hath been observed at the beginning of this Commentary.

Ver. 5. *And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon; and there shall he be till I visit him.*] In his posterity, whom I will restore to their own country. So God tells Jacob, *I will go down with thee into Egypt, and will also surely bring thee up again,* (Gen. xlvi. 4.) which promise was made good only to his posterity. So God is said to *deal mercifully with our fathers,* for so the sense runs in the original, Ποιῆσαι ἔλεος μετὰ τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν, (Luke i. 72.) by performing his promises to their children. (See the note on xxix. 10. of this prophecy.)

Though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper.] See xxi. 4. 9. xxxvii. 7. 10.

Ver. 8. *Buy my field that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin.*] Near Jerusalem; (see ver. 44.) and consequently at this time actually in the possession of the Chaldean army.

For the right of inheritance is thine, and the possession is thine.] As being next of kin, (see Lev. xxv. 25.) the fields in the suburbs of the Levites being unalienable (see ver. 34. of that chapter); this seems to have been a field that came into the family either by purchase, (see Deut. xviii. 8.) or by their marrying a wife of another tribe: for their rabbins agree, that the ordinance mentioned Numb. xxxvi. 7. which forbids the possession of lands *being removed from one tribe to another,* did only take place at their first settlement in the land of Canaan. (See Selden, de Synedriis, lib. iii. cap. 4. n. 1. et de successione in bona, cap. 18.)

[On the other side, several good reasons may be alleged to prove those ordinances perpetual. For this was the chief design of instituting the year of jubilee, *viz.* to restore the lands to their ancient owners. Out of regard to this law Naboth refused to alienate his field to Ahab, at the peril of his life: (1 Kings xxi. 3.) the same law is renewed Ezek. xlvi. 17. See Dr. Alix. Reflect. upon the books of Moses, par. ii. chap. 19.]

Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord.] I knew that this offer was made to me by God's especial direction, thereby to give a sensible assurance that the nation should return from their captivity, and be restored to their ancient possessions. (See ver. 15. 44.)

Ver. 9. *And I weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver.*] Which in our money is not much above forty shillings: a small price for a field or piece of ground. The reason of the lowness of the price might be, because it was only buying the reversion of the ground, the purchaser or his heirs not coming into possession till the seventy years of captivity were expired. And the purchase itself, like other prophetical signs, was rather a declaration of what should come to pass, than the conveyance of a present benefit: but our margin reads, *Seven shekels, and ten pieces of silver:* and the ten pieces may stand for a larger sum than a shekel, as the *seventy pieces* mentioned Judg. ix. 4. certainly do. The Chaldee paraphrase renders it, *Seven minas, and ten shekels of silver:* each *mina,* according to Ezekiel's computation, (xlv. 12.) amounting to sixty common shekels, which is nine pounds sterling, according to Dr. Prideaux's computation; by which reckoning the whole sum amounts to above sixty-four pounds of our money.

Ver. 10. *And weighed him the money in the balances.*] In ancient times all money went by weight; (see Gen. xxiii. 16. Zech. xi. 12.) a custom still used in several countries.

Ver. 11. *So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed, according to the law and custom, and that which was open.*] The open or unsealed writing, was either a copy of the sealed deed, or else a certificate of the witnesses in whose presence the deed of purchase was signed and sealed.

Ver. 12. *In the sight of Hanameel my uncle's son.*] The word *son* is not in the Hebrew, but is to be understood by a usual ellipsis. (See Matt. x. 2, 3.) But the Hebrew word *dod,* signifies any relation or near kinsman; see Amos vi. 10. where the Septuagint very properly render it, Οἰκεῖος.

Ver. 14. *And put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days.*] When hid under ground for greater security, to be produced when the land is reinhabited.

Ver. 17. *Ah, Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth,* &c.] This prayer begins with an acknowledgment of God's infinite power, which is made manifest, both in the works of creation and providence, whereby he shews himself wonderful in his mercies, and terrible in his judgments.

And there is nothing too hard for thee.] Or, *hidden from thee,* as the Hebrew word literally imports; *i. e.* out of the reach of thy wisdom to compass, or bring to pass. (See the same phrase, Gen. xviii. 14.)

Ver. 19. *Great in counsel, and mighty in works.*] Who art infinitely wise in ordering all events, and as powerful in putting thy decrees in execution.

Ver. 20. *Who hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, even unto this day.*] The remembrance of which is preserved unto this day.

And amongst other men.] The word *other* is in like manner understood, 2 Chron. xxxii. 22. Isa. xxvi. 13.

And hast made thee a name.] Compare 1 Chron. xvii. Dan. ix. 15. where the margin reads, *Hast made thee a name,* as it is here in the text.

Ver. 23. *Therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them.*] Compare xi. 4. 8.

Ver. 24. *Behold the mounts.*] The ramparts which are raised against the walls, for placing *engines of shot,* as the margin interprets the word *mesolleloth,* in order to the making a general assault, and taking the city. (Compare xxxiii. 4.)

Because of the sword, the famine, and the pestilence.] See ver. 36. xiv. 12.

Ver. 25. *And thou hast said unto me—Buy thee the field for money.*] In this posture of affairs, when the city and the country round about it is in the hands of the enemy, thou commandest me to make this purchase, which I have no prospect of ever enjoying.

For the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.] Or rather, *Although the city be given,* &c. (See Noldius's Concordance, p. 292.)

Ver. 27. *Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is any thing too hard for me?*] The difficulties which thou thinkest are not to be surmounted, are not so to me, who can do all things, and have the lives and actions of men wholly at my disposal. *All flesh* is the same with *all men.* (See Psal. lxv. 2. Isa. xl. 5.)

Ver. 29. *Upon whose roof they have burnt incense unto Baal.*] See the note on xix. 13.

Ver. 30. *For the children of Israel, and the children of Judah.*] The title of Israel and Judah is sometimes given to the Jews, after the captivity of the ten tribes; (see ver. 32. xxxvi. 2.) because there were still some remains of those tribes left, who joined themselves to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. (See 2 Chron. xxix. 24. xxx. 1. 11. 18. xxxiv. 33. Ezra vi. 17.)

Have only done evil before me from their youth.] See ii. 7. 25. vii. 23. 28. xxii. 21.)

Ver. 31. *From the time that they built it.*] Or, *that it was built,* the personal being often used for the impersonal. (See the note upon Isa. xliv. 18.) David was the builder of that part of Jerusalem that is called Zion, therefore styled the *city of David.* (See 2 Sam. v. 9.) He likewise enlarged the whole city of Jerusalem, making it the seat of the kingdom: for which reason Jerusalem is sometimes called the *city of David.* (See Isa. xxix. 1.) But we do not read that idolatry, the sin here spoken of, was committed there in David's time: so that the expression seems to be hyperbolical, like that of Isa. xlviii. 8. where God, speaking of the Jews' proneness to idolatry, saith, *Thou wast called a transgressor from the womb:* meaning from the very time of their living in Egypt. (Compare Ezek. xx. 8. xxiii. 3. 19. 27.) If we take the words in a stricter sense, they must be understood of the times of Solomon, who beautified the city with the temple, and other stately buildings, but afterward defiled it by idolatry. (See 1 Kings xi. 7. compared with 2 Kings xxiii. 13.)

That I should remove it from before my face.] I should withdraw my protection from it. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 27. xxiv. 3.)

Ver. 32. *Their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets.*] See ii. 8. 26.

Ver. 33. *And they have turned to me the back, and not the face.*] See ii. 27.

Though I taught them, rising up early, &c.] See vii. 13.

Ver. 34. *But they set their abominations in the house which is called by my name.*] See the note on vii. 30, 31.

Ver. 35. *And they built the high places of Baal—to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Moloch.*] See the note on xix. 5.

To cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire.] The words *through the fire* are not in the Hebrew; but in other places which speak of the same thing, the words are expressed at full length. (See Deut. xviii. 10. 2 Kings xxiii. 10.) Elsewhere, the same thing is expressed by *burning their sons and their daughters in the fire,* and *offering them for burnt-offerings:* see vii. 31. xix. 5. of this prophecy, Deut. xii. 38. The idolatrous Jews are often upbraided with the practice of this inhuman rite. (See Psal. cvi. 37. Isa. lvii. 5.) And the phrase of *making children pass* through the fire, is certainly taken in this sense, Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. xxiii. 37. where it is explained by *slaying them, sacrificing them, and giving them to be devoured.*

But some critics are of opinion, that the exposition is taken in a milder sense in other texts, particularly 2 Kings xvi. 3. and denotes only holding children over the fire, or making them pass through the flame, by way of lustration or dedication to some idol. To confirm this interpretation, they observe, that the verb *henebir,* used in the text, signifies to *dedicate* or *consecrate.* (See Exod. xiii. 12.) See the reasons on which this interpretation is grounded, at large explained in Dr. Spencer, de Legib. Hebræor. lib. ii. cap. 10. sect. 2.

Which I commanded them not, &c.] See the note on vii. 31.

Ver. 36. *And now therefore thus saith the Lord.*] In this and the following verses, God gives an answer to the doubt proposed by the prophet, ver. 25. Or the words may be thus translated, *But now, notwithstanding* [all this], *thus saith the Lord.* So the particle *laken* is often taken. (See note on xvi. 14.)

Ver. 37. *Behold, I will gather them out of all countries,* &c.] See the notes on xxiii. 3. 8. xxix. 14.

And I will cause them to dwell safely.] Compare xxiii. 4. St. Jerome observes in his notes upon the place, that this promise, taken in its full extent, was not made good to those that returned from captivity, because they were frequently infested with wars, as well by the kings of Syria and Egypt, as by the rest of their neighbours, as appears from the history of the Maccabees, and were finally subdued and destroyed by the Romans.

Ver. 38. *And they shall be my people,* &c.] See xxx. 22.

Ver. 39. *And I will give them one heart, one way, that they fear me for ever.*] This must be understood, at least as to its ultimate completion, of the reunion of Judah and Israel after the general restoration. (See the note on iii. 18. xxx. 3.) When the ten tribes set up a distinct kingdom from that of Judah, they stood divided, not only in their civil interests, but also with respect to their religious worship. These distinctions, God saith, he will entirely abolish at the time of their conversion. (Compare xxiv. 7. Ezek. xi. 19.) The same blessing is more fully expressed in these words, (Ezek. xxxvii. 22.) *I will make them one nation, and one king shall be king over them.* At the same time we may expect the fulness of the gentiles to come in, and then *all nations shall serve the Lord with one consent,* (Zeph. iii. 9.) and *there shall be one Lord, and his name one,* (Zech. xiv. 9.)

Ver. 40. *And I will make an everlasting covenant with them.*] The Jewish covenant, with respect to the ceremo-

nial ordinances contained in it, is sometimes called an *everlasting* covenant; (see Gen. xvii. 13. Lev. xxiv. 8. Isa. xxiv. 5.) *Berith olam* in the Hebrew; because those ordinances were to continue for a long succession of time, called *olam* in that language, (see the note upon xxv. 9.) and to last till the new *olam*, or *age of the Messias*, called *αἰὼν μέλλων, the age*, or *world to come*, Heb. ii. 5. vi. 5. But when this expression is applied to the gospel-covenant, there is a peculiar emphasis contained in it, implying that it should never be abolished, or give way to any other dispensation. (See Jer. l. 5. Isa. lv. 3. compared with Psal. lxxxix. 34, 35.)

And I will put my fear into their hearts.] *They shall all know me*, xxxi. 34. and *shall be all taught of the Lord*, Isa. liv. 13. (See the notes upon those places.)

Ver. 41. *And I will rejoice over them to do them good.*] I will take pleasure in doing them good, according to my promise, Deut. xxx. 9. whereas before, the *Lord rejoiced over them to destroy them*, Deut. xxviii. 63. which God is never said to do, but when men have filled up the measure of their iniquities. (See the note upon Isa. i. 24.)

And I will plant them in this land assuredly, with my whole heart, and with my whole soul.] With a true and lasting affection. (Compare xxiv. 6. xxxi. 28. Amos ix. 15.)

Ver. 42. *Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people*, &c.] Compare xxxi. 28.

Ver. 43. *And fields shall be bought in this land.*] So that it was not without good reason that I sent Hanameel unto thee, ver. 8.

Whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast, &c.] Words spoken by the Jews, by way of despair, as if they had no hopes that their land should ever be inhabited again.

Ver. 44. *In the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem*, &c.] See the notes on xvii. 26.

For I will cause their captivity to return, saith the Lord.] The return of their captivity under Cyrus shall be an earnest of those greater blessings I will bestow upon them at their general restoration. (Compare ver. 37. 41. xxxiii. 7. 26.)

CHAP. XXXIII.

ARGUMENT.

God renews his promises of restoring the Jewish nation, and repeats the same gracious assurances thereof, which he gives them in the two foregoing chapters; the completion of which is to be expected under the kingdom of the Messias: whose coming is plainly foretold at the fifteenth and sixteenth verses of this chapter.

Ver. 1. *WHILST he was yet shut up in the court of the prison.*] See xxxii. 2.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord, the maker thereof.*] *i. e.* Of the city Jerusalem, a figure of that church, spoken of before. (See xxxii. 36. 44. compared with the fourth, sixth, and ninth verses of this chapter.)

Ver. 3. *Call unto me, and I will answer thee.*] An expression betokening God's favour and loving-kindness: that he is ready to comply with the first intimations of his servant's desires. (Compare xxix. 12. Psal. xci. 15. Isa. lxv. 24.) As, on the contrary, God's rejecting men is expressed by his refusing to answer when they call, (Prov. i. 24.) God's thus directing his discourse to Jeremiah, doth not only denote his kindness towards the prophet, but likewise implies the affection he still bore to his people, for whom the prophet did so earnestly intercede, and whose welfare he had so much at heart.

And shew thee great things which thou knowest not.] Not only what relates to the return of thy people from the Babylonish captivity, but likewise the blessings to be conferred upon them in the times of the Messias.

Ver. 4. *Which are thrown down by the mounts.*] By the battering engines placed upon the mounts, that are raised against the walls of the city. (See xxii. 24.)

And by the sword.] By the violence of war. But the Hebrew word is sometimes taken for such instruments as are used in demolishing any building. Accordingly, it is rendered a *mattock* by our translators, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6. See likewise Ezek. xxvi. 9. where it is translated *axes*.

Ver. 5. *They come to fight with the Chaldeans, but it is to fill them with the dead bodies*, &c.] To fill them, *i. e.* the houses mentioned ver. 4. This verse comes in by way of parenthesis, between the fourth and sixth, to shew, that at present God will not prosper any efforts which are made for the defence of the city, though he will restore it hereafter to its former splendour. Lud. de Dieu renders the words thus, The *Chaldeans come to fight, and to fill*, &c. and he proves, by several instances, that the Hebrew particle *eth* sometimes goes before a nominative case: a plain instance of which syntax is to be seen, xxxvi. 22. (See likewise Noldius's Concordance, p. 121.)

Ver. 6. *Behold, I will bring it health and cure.*] I will restore this place to its former prosperity, and deliver it out of that calamitous state, into which the sins of the inhabitants have brought it. (Compare xxx. 12, 13. 17.)

Ver. 7. *And I will cause the captivity of Judah, and the captivity of Israel, to return.*] See the note on xxx. 3.

And I will build them as at the first.] Compare xxiv. 6. xxxi. 4. 28. xlii. 10.

Ver. 8. *And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity*, &c.] I will not impute their sins any longer to them, but remit the punishments I have inflicted upon them for their iniquities. The word *cleanse* may be here taken in a legal sense for acquitting or *pronouncing clean*, as the word is translated, Lev. xiii. 28. In the same sense, the Greek verbs Ἁγιάζω and Καθαρίζω (which answer to the Hebrew *tahar* in the text) are used by St. Paul and St. John, for taking away the guilt of sin. (See Heb. ix. 13, 14. x. 14. 29. xiii. 12. 1 John i. 7. 9.) The whole verse implies that general promise of pardon of sins, which is elsewhere spoken of, as the peculiar blessing of the gospel. (Compare xxxi. 34. Ezek. xxxvi. 25.)

Ver. 9. *And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth.*] God's especial providence over the Jews, in restoring their city and temple, shall be taken notice of by the heathen world, and make them give glory to that God whom they worship. (See Ezra i. 2. vi. 12.) To the same sense God is said to make *Jerusalem a praise in the earth*, (Isa. lxii. 7.) *i. e.* the subject of men's praise and admiration, the glory of which redounds to God, who is her protector. This promise is more signally fulfilled in the Christian church, which the heathens resorted to, as the seat and temple of truth. (See Isa. ii. 3. Zech. viii. 21. 23.)

And they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness—

that I do unto it.] These surprising effects of my goodness shall produce an astonishment like that which arises from fear. (Compare Psal. cxxxix. 14. Isa. lx. 5.)

Ver. 10. *Which ye say shall be desolate,* &c.] See the note on xxxii. 43.

Ver. 11. *The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness,* &c.] The contrary to which is threatened in the times of captivity and desolation. (See xvi. 9.)

The voice of them that shall say, Praise ye the Lord—for the Lord is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.] We read that those who returned from captivity used this very hymn, Ezra iii. 11.

And of them that bring the sacrifice of praise unto the house of the Lord.] Such as was offered upon any great deliverance. (See Lev. vii. 12. Psal. cvii. 22. cxvi. 17.) The word here used signifies praise and thanksgiving in general; and is used for those choirs or companies who made a solemn thanksgiving procession upon the dedication of the new wall at Jerusalem, (Nehem. xii. 31. 38. 40.) This is called by St. Paul the *sacrifice of praise, even the fruit of our lips,* Heb. xiii. 15. to distinguish it from the oblations commanded by the law, which consisted of the fruits of the ground, or of the flock and herd. [Kimchi observes upon the place, that none but eucharistical sacrifices shall be in use in the times of the Messias.]

For I will cause their captivity to return, as at the first.] See xxx. 20, 21.

Ver. 12. *Again in this place—shall be a habitation for shepherds, causing their flocks to lie down.*] Compare l. 19. Isa. lxv. 10.

Ver. 13. *In the cities of the mountains,* &c.] See the note on xvii. 26.

Shall the flocks pass again under the hand of him that telleth them?] That is, of their shepherds, who number their cattle by striking every one with their rod, as it comes out of the fold. (See Lev. xxvii. 32.)

Ver. 14. *Behold, the day is come—that I will perform that good thing which I have promised.*] Or, *good word,* as it is in the original; (compare xxix. 10. Zech. i. 13.) *i. e.* those gracious promises which relate to the gospel-state, and are called *the good word of God,* Heb. vi. 5.

Ver. 15. *In those days—will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow unto David,* &c.] See the notes upon xxiii. 5, 6.

Ver. 16. *And this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness.*] The name which properly belongs to the Messias (see xxiii. 6.) shall be given to Jerusalem, that is, to the church; to betoken that it is in a peculiar manner dedicated to him, he having chosen it for the place of his residence; (compare Ezek. xlviii. 35.) and that all the righteousness of the faithful, both their justification and sanctification, is derived from him. This seems to be the genuine sense of the words, as may appear to any that will compare the original phrase here, *Yikkarè lah,* with Isa. lxii. 4. 12. where it is said of Zion, the person only being changed, *Thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah,* and *Sought out.* Nor is there any greater impropriety in giving the name of Jehovah to a city, than in calling an altar *Jehovah-nissi,* (Exod. xvii. 15.) and *Jehovah-shalom,* (Judg. vi. 24.) in token that the Lord was author of those mercies, of which the said altars were designed to be monument. So the servants of God are described in the Revelation, as having his name written upon their forehead, (Rev. iii. 12. xiv. 1.) But several interpreters, particularly Huetius, (Demonstr. Evang. prop. vii. cap. 16.) and our learned Bishop Pearson, in the notes upon his Exposition of the Creed, p. 165. render the words thus, *He that shall call her* [to be his peculiar people] *is the Lord our righteousness.*

Ver. 17. *David shall never want a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel.*] The promise of perpetuity made to David's kingdom shall be fulfilled in Christ, *whose kingdom shall have no end.* (See 2 Sam. vii. 16. Psal. lxxxix. 29. 36. Luke i. 32, 33.)

Ver. 18. *Neither shall the priests, the Levites, want a man to stand before me, to offer burnt-offerings,* &c.] This, as it may be applied to the Christian church, imports that there shall never want a succession of men set apart to God's service, to perform the public offices of religion. As the prophets often describe the Christian worship, by representations taken from the temple-service, and speak of the one as succeeding the other; (see the notes on Isa. xix. 19. lvi. 7. lxvi. 23.) so the apostles prove the rights and privileges belonging to the ministers of the gospel, from the prerogatives given to the Jewish priesthood. (See Rom. xv. 16. 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.) The phrase *to stand before me,* is explained in the note upon xv. 1.

Ver. 20. *If you can break my covenant of the day, and—of the night,* &c.] Called the *ordinances* of the day and night, xxxi. 35, 36.

Ver. 21. *Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant—and with the Levites, the priests, my ministers.*] The words contain a promise, that the kingdom and priesthood shall always continue in the church. For as Christ's *kingdom shall have no end,* so the saints that shall reign with Christ in glory shall be *priests unto God.* (Compare Isa. lxvi. 22. Rev. xx. 6.)

Ver. 22. *As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David,* &c.] This relates to the promise made to Abraham, of *multiplying his seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore:* (Gen. xxii. 17.) which promise was fulfilled in his posterity, (Deut. x. 22. 1 Kings iv. 20.) And the text here affirms, that the same promise shall again be made good in aftertimes, and especially in the true Israelites, the spiritual seed of Abraham. (See Rom. iv. 16, 17.)

If we consider the literal sense of this promise, as it was fulfilled, when the Jews first peopled the land of Canaan; it is matter of wonder to reflect upon the vast numbers of inhabitants who dwelt in Judea, a country not above a hundred and sixty miles in length, and about a hundred and twenty in breadth, if we take in all the country on the other side of Jordan, to the borders of Arabia; and yet, in David's time, there were reckoned above fifteen hundred thousand fighting men, (1 Chron. xxi. 3.) And afterward, in Jehoshaphat's time, it appears from the muster-roll, that the soldiers in the kingdom of Judah only amounted to eleven hundred thousand. (See 2 Chron. xvii. 14, &c.)

Ver. 24. *The two families which the Lord hath chosen, he hath even cast them off.*] By the *two families* are meant the tribes or families of Judah and Levi, mentioned ver. 22. (Compare Zech. xii. 12, 13.) The words are spoken by those who thought the Jews would never be restored to their former condition, or again enjoy their ancient government in church and state. [The expression may more probably

denote the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah. (See ver. 26. and compare Ezek. xxxvii. 16, &c.) The word *family* is equivalent to *kingdom:* (see the note upon i. 15.) so it is used, Micah ii. 3.]

Ver. 25, 26. *If I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth,* &c.] *i. e.* The vicissitude of day and night, and of summer and winter, upon which the seasons of the year, and fruitfulness of the earth, depend. (See xxxi. 36.)

Ver. 26. *For I will cause their captivity to return,* &c.] See xxxii. 44.

CHAP. XXXIV.

ARGUMENT.

The king of Babylon and his army threatening to besiege Jerusalem (which gave occasion to the prophecy related at the beginning of the chapter); the Jews, being terrified under these apprehensions, entered into a solemn covenant of serving God, and obeying his laws: particularly that which enjoined them to let their servants go free after six years' service, (Exod. xxi. 2. Deut. xv. 12.) But the king of Egypt coming with an army to the relief of Zedekiah, and thereupon Nebuchadnezzar raising the siege of Jerusalem to march against him: (see ver. 21. and xxxvii. 5.) their present fears being over, the people repented of their reformation, and made their servants, whom they had set at liberty, return into bondage again, contrary to the law of God, and the covenant they themselves had lately agreed to. For which inhuman and unjust act, Jeremiah proclaims liberty to the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, to execute God's vengeance upon them.

Ver. 1. *WHEN Nebuchadnezzar—and all his army, and all the kingdoms of his dominions.*] See i. 15.

Fought against Jerusalem.] The siege was begun in the ninth year of Zedekiah, and the tenth month, and tenth day of the month, which answers to the latter end of our December. (See lii. 4.) A learned friend supposes, that what is here recorded, did not happen till some time after the siege was begun, and concludes from xxviii. 1. and the seventeenth verse of this chapter, that the sabbatical year was coincident with the last year of the siege, which was the eleventh year of Zedekiah. (See the notes upon those two places.)

And against all the cities thereof.] See ver. 7. The lesser cities of Judea, which were subject to Jerusalem as their metropolis, called elsewhere the *daughters of Judah,* by way of distinction from the mother-city. (Compare xlix. 2. li. 43.)

Ver. 2, 3. *Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon—and thou shalt not escape his hand,* &c.] This prophecy, which threatened the king in particular, as well as the city and nation in general, so much displeased Zedekiah, that he shut up Jeremiah in prison. (See xxxii. 2, 3.)

Ver. 5. *But thou shalt die in peace.*] By a natural death.

And with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings—so shall they burn odours for thee.] It was customary among the Jews, at the funeral of their kings, especially of those whose memory they honoured, to prepare a *bed of spices,* as it is called, 2 Chron. xvi. 14. which they made a perfume of by burning them, and therein to deposit the body of the deceased prince. (Compare the forementioned place with 2 Chron. xxi. 19.)

And they will lament over thee, saying, Ah lord!] In these and the foregoing words, God promises Zedekiah an honourable interment, and suitable to his quality: a favour he did not vouchsafe to Jehoiakim. (See xxii. 18.)

Ver. 7. *When the king of Babylon fought against Lachish, and against Azekah.*] Compare 2 Kings xviii. 13. xix. 8. Those two cities were not far from Jerusalem, and had been fortified by Rehoboam for the defence of his kingdom. (See 1 Chron. xi. 9.)

Ver. 8. *After that Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which were at Jerusalem.*] See the Argument of the chapter. Archbishop Usher supposes, that this covenant was entered into at the beginning of the year, which he computes to be a sabbatical year, upon the first news of the king of Babylon's intended invasion: whereas the Chaldean army did not actually besiege Jerusalem, till the latter end of the year, as hath been observed upon ver. 1. (See Annales V. T. ad A. M. 3414.)

To proclaim liberty unto them.] That they should grant liberty to all their servants, who had served them six years. The seventh is called *the year of release,* Deut. xv. 9. the same was also the sabbatical year, Lev. xxv. 4. This week or circle of years the Jews call *shemittah,* and seven times seven years, *i. e.* forty-nine years, make the jubilee, when a general liberty was proclaimed throughout the land. (Lev. xxv. 8. 10.)

Ver. 9. *That every man should let his man-servant—go free.*] See ver. 14.

Ver. 10. *Now, when all the princes—heard,* &c.] The verse may be thus translated, *And all the princes—consented that every one should let his man-servant—go free: they consented,* I say, *and let them go.* Concerning the *princes,* see the notes on xxvi. 10. xxxvi. 12. xxxviii. 4.

Ver. 11. *But afterward they turned—and brought them into subjection for servants, and for handmaids.*] Upon the king of Egypt's advancing with an army, and raising the siege of Jerusalem. (See ver. 21. and xxxvii. 5.)

Ver. 14. *At the end of every seven years.*] The seventh year was the year of release, (Deut. xv. 9.) consequently servants were to continue in service but six years, and at the beginning of the seventh were to be let go free. (See ibid. ver. 12.) For this reason some critics render the phrase here, *Within the term of seven years.* And the words mean no more, as appears by a like form of speech, Deut. xiv. 28. where it is said, *At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thy increase that year:* which is to be explained by what is said, xxvi. 12. where every third year is called *the year of tithing.* So Christ is said to rise again *after three days,* Mark viii. 31. which is elsewhere explained by his rising the *third day.*

But your fathers hearkened not unto me.] It appears from hence, and other passages of Scripture, that the sabbatical years were wholly neglected for several ages before the captivity. The author of the second book of Chronicles assigns this reason of the captivity, *That the land might enjoy her sabbaths,* (xxxvi. 21.) *i. e.* those years of rest of which it had been wrongfully deprived, by the neglect of the law of God in this particular. And if we reckon the

whole seventy years' captivity as a punishment of this neglect, it will prove that the observation of those sabbatical years had been disused for four hundred and ninety years before. Wherefore, after the return from captivity, this was one branch of God's law, which Ezra and Nehemiah engaged the people to observe by a solemn vow and covenant, (Nehem. x. 31.)

Ver. 15. *And ye had made a covenant with me in the house that is called by my name.*] This was probably such a covenant, as Josiah and all the people had made formerly: (see 2 Kings xxiii. 2, 3.) whereby they obliged themselves to serve God, and obey his laws in general, and this concerning giving freedom to their servants in particular.

Ver. 17. *Ye have not hearkened to me, in proclaiming liberty,* &c.] Though you made proclamation of such a liberty, yet you have not performed it.

Behold, I proclaim a liberty to you for the sword, &c.] I will now make public proclamation, or declare that I give free commission and liberty for the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, to invade and make havoc among you. (See xxxii. 24. 26.) These judgments shall lay the land desolate, whereby it *shall enjoy its sabbaths,* which you would not suffer it to do, as long as you dwelt upon it. (See Lev. xxvi. 34, 35.) The expressions here used do farther import, that these calamities come upon men, by direction and commission from God, as the executioners of his justice. (Compare Ezek. xiv. 17.)

And I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.] See xxiv. 9.

Ver. 18—20. *When they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof.*] Implying, by that ceremony, that they wished themselves might be cut in sunder, in like manner, if they broke their solemn vow and promise. The same rite was used in ancient times, as appears from Gen. xv. 10. and conveyed down to after-ages, as may be seen in those forms recorded by Livy: "Tu Jupiter populum Rom. sic ferito, ut ego hunc agnum," lib. i. cap. 24. and lib. xxi. cap. 45. "Si falleret, Jovem cæterosque precatus Deos, ita se mactarent, quemadmodum ipse agnum mactasset." So the Greeks in Homer, when they had entered into a solemn league or agreement with the Trojans, to put an end to the war, by the single combat of Paris and Menelaus, at the pouring out the wine upon their sacrifice, make the like imprecation upon those who did not observe their part of the treaty, in that remarkable passage, Iliad. Γ'. ver. 298.

Ζεῦ κύδιστε, μέγιστε, καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι,
Ὁππότεροι πρότεροι ὑπὲρ ὅρκια πημήνειαν,
Ὧδέ σφ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέοι, ὡς ὅδε οἶνος.

The sense of which a late English translation thus expresses,

Almighty Jove, and all ye other powers,
Whoever first shall dare to break this treaty,
May their warm blood be poured upon the earth,
As is this wine.——

Ver. 19. *The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem.*] See xxix. 2.

The eunuchs.] The officers belonging to the court. (See xxix. 2. xxxviii. 7. 2 Kings xxiv. 12.)

Ver. 22. *Behold, I will command—and cause them to return to this city.*] See the notes on xxxvii. 5. 8.

CHAP. XXXV.

ARGUMENT.

By the obedience of the Rechabites to their fathers' commands, the Jews' disobedience to God's commands is condemned.

Ver. 1. *THE word which came to Jeremiah—in the days of Jehoiakim.*] This may most probably be referred to the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, when Nebuchadnezzar, having beaten the king of Egypt's army at Euphrates, (see xlvi. 2.) marched towards Syria and Palestine, to recover those provinces again which the king of Egypt had conquered: (see 2 Kings xxiii. 33, 34. compared with xxiv. 7.) in which expedition he laid siege to Jerusalem. (See Dan. i. 1. and ver. 11. of this chapter.)

Ver. 2. *Go unto the house of the Rechabites.*] The Rechabites were descended from the Kenites: (1 Chron. ii. 55.) they never were incorporated with the Jewish nation; (see below, ver. 7.) but yet were looked upon as their friends and allies: (see 1 Sam. xv. 6.) and a respect was paid to them for the sake of Hobab, Moses's father-in-law, who was of that nation. (Judg. iv. 11.) They were worshippers of the true God, though they were not circumcised. (See the following verse, and 2 Kings x. 15, 16.)

And bring them into the house of the Lord.] Into one of the chambers which join to the temple. (See ver. 4.) By this it appears that the Rechabites were not idolaters, for it was not lawful for such persons to come within the precincts of the temple.

Ver. 4. *I brought them into the house of the Lord, into the chamber of Hanan,* &c.] There were several chambers adjoining to the temple, for the use of the priests and Levites, during the time of their ministration; and as repositories for laying up the holy vestments and vessels, and whatever stores were necessary for the daily sacrifices, and the other parts of the temple-service. (Compare xxxvi. 10. 1 Kings vi. 5. 1 Chron. ix. 27. 30.)

Which was by the chamber of the princes.] Where the Sanhedrin, or great council, used to assemble. (See xxvi. 10.) The Sanhedrin always sat in some great room adjoining to the temple. (See Dr. Lightfoot's Description of the Temple, chap. 9. 22.)

Above the chamber of Maaseiah—keeper of the door.] *i. e.* One of the keepers: for there were several Levites appointed for that office, both to open and shut the gates of the temple in due time, and likewise to attend at them all day, for preventing any thing that might happen to the prejudice of the purity or safety of that holy place. (See 1 Chron. ix. 18, 19. xxvi. 12, 13, &c. 2 Chron. viii. 14. 2 Kings xii. 9. xxv. 18.) Some of these officers had likewise the custody of the holy vessels. (See lii. 24. 1 Chron. ix. 26.)

Ver. 6. *For Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine,* &c.] Jonadab was a considerable man of this family: (see 2 Kings x. 15.) and his design was to reduce his family to the primitive manner of life, which was that of shepherds, living in tents, having no certain habitation, and taking care only

for a supply of what was barely necessary to support nature. These rules he might probably give them, to put them in mind that they were strangers in Judea, and had no original right of inheritance there. (See the following verse.) Such voluntary austerities, in aftertimes, came into great repute among several sects of the Jews, particularly the pharisees and Essenes. (See Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 7.)

Ver. 8. *Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father.*] We have conformed ourselves to his injunctions, and governed our lives by them, during the space of near three hundred years.

Ver. 11. *But it came to pass, when Nebuchadnezzar came into the land.*] If the words be understood of his coming with an army in person, then they must refer to his invading Judea, in the fourth year of his reign. (See the notes on ver. 1.)

For fear of the army of the Syrians.] Berosus mentions Nebuchadnezzar's conquest over Syria and Phœnice, as he is quoted by Josephus, (lib. i. contra Appion. p. 1045. B.) Out of these conquests he probably recruited his army.

Ver. 13. *So we dwell at Jerusalem.*] Upon the Chaldean invasion we retired to Jerusalem, where, during the siege of the place, we are forced to continue. In such a case, they did not think themselves obliged to a strict observance of the injunctions of Jonadab; because all human laws admit of an equitable construction, and may be superseded in cases of necessity; or when the observance of them is attended with such great inconveniences, as the law-maker himself, if he could have foreseen, would probably have excepted.

Ver. 14. *Rising early, and speaking.*] See vii. 13.

Ver. 15. *I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets,* &c.] See xxv. 4.

Ver. 19. *Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me.*] When the main body of the Jewish nation are dispersed in their several captivities, some of that family shall remain to attend upon my service, and enjoy the privileges of worshipping in my temple at Jerusalem. (Compare vii. 10.) Some branches of this family returned from the captivity, as appears from 1 Chron. ii. 55. Benjamin Tudelensis, who lived in the twelfth century, pretends, in his Itinerary, that he found a city inhabited by the Rechabites: but he is too fabulous a writer to be relied upon.

For ever.] This expression is not always to be taken in a strict sense, but often means only a long continuance, and is used comparatively with respect to a shorter duration. (See the notes on xxv. 9. xxxii. 40.)

CHAP. XXXVI.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet, by God's command, orders his amanuensis, Baruch, to write all the prophecies which he denounced against Israel and Judah, in one volume: which Baruch first read to the people on two solemn fast-days, and afterward to the chief ministers of the state. They inform the king of the matter, who orders Jehudi to read it before him; but before he had read far, out of indignation, commands it to be cut in pieces, and burnt. Whereupon, God directs Jeremiah to indite it over again.

Ver. 1. *IN the fourth year of Jehoiakim.*] See xxv. 1.

Ver. 2. *Take thee a roll of a book.*] Compare Isa. viii. 1. Ezek. ii. 9. Zech. v. 1. The ancient manner of writing was upon long scrolls of parchment, which they afterward rolled upon sticks.

And write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah.] Jeremiah prophesied against Israel, as well as against Judah. (See ii. 4. iii. 12. 14, &c. ix. 26. xxiii. 13. xxxii. 30. 32.) The kingdom of Israel was indeed destroyed by Shalmaneser before the time of Jeremiah; but yet the prophet was ordered to reprove their sins, both to make the justice of God appear in punishing them so severely, and withal to warn the rest of the Jews by their example. Besides, there were some remains of these tribes still left, who joined themselves to the tribe of Judah. (See the note on xxxii. 30.)

And against all the nations.] See xxv. 15, 16, &c.

From the days of Josiah.] From the thirteenth year of his reign. (See i. 2. xxv. 3.)

Ver. 3. *It may be the house of Judah will hear,* &c.] See the like expression, ver. 7. xxvi. 3. Ezek. xii. 3. Amos v. 15. Zeph. ii. 3. In which places God is introduced, as speaking after the manner of men, and using such methods, as in human probability may be most likely to prevail. (Compare viii. 6.) These and such-like expressions do likewise import, that God's foreknowledge of future events doth not put any force upon men's will, nor take away the liberty of human actions, as Origen hath acutely observed, in his Philocalia, cap. 23.

Ver. 5. *I am shut up; I cannot go into the house of the Lord.*] He was under confinement, probably for having given offence to the king, or the great men, by his prophecies. A calamity which often befel him. (See xx. 2. xxxii. 2. xxxvii. 15. xxxviii. 6.)

Ver. 6. *Go thou and read—the words of the Lord in the ears of the people,* &c.] The prophets usually published their sermons in the audience of the people: (see vii. 2. xi. 6. xvii. 20.) which were afterward delivered in writing for common use: as the law itself was written for that purpose, as God tells the Israelites by his prophet Hosea, viii. 12.

Upon the fasting-day.] The great day of expiation, which was kept upon the tenth day of the seventh month, (Lev. xxiii. 27. 29.) called by way of eminence the *fast,* Acts xxvii. 9.

And also shall read them in the ears of all Judah, that come out of their cities.] Who came to the feast of tabernacles, which followed five days afterward, (Lev. xxiii. 34.)

Ver. 7. *It may be they will present their supplication,* &c.] See ver. 3.

Ver. 9. *In the fifth year of Jehoiakim, in the ninth month, they proclaimed a fast.*] It was customary among the Jews to proclaim anniversary fasts upon certain days, in memory of some great calamities which had befallen them at that time. Of this kind were the fasts of the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth months, mentioned Zech. vii. 5. viii. 19. The first instituted in remembrance of the city's being taken by Nebuchadnezzar: the second in memory of the temple's being burnt in that month: the third for the murder of Gedaliah: the fourth in memory of the siege

then begun. The fast mentioned in the text, was occasioned by the taking of the city by Nebuchadnezzar at that time, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, as Archbishop Usher conjectures, ad A. M. 3398, 3399. (See the note on xxxv. 1.)

Ver. 10. *Then read Baruch, in the book, the words of Jeremiah.*] This was the second time of Baruch's reading this book, almost a year after the first reading of it, (ver. 6.)

In the house of the Lord, in the chamber of Gemariah the scribe.] Compare xxxv. 4. That chamber opened into the higher court, so that Baruch might read there in the audience of all the people, (ver. 13.) The scribe is the same with the secretary of state. (See 2 Kings xviii. 37.) Some understand the scribe to be the same that is called the *principal scribe of the host*, lii. 25. or, in the modern language, the *secretary of war*.

In the higher courts.] There were two courts before the temple: (see 2 Kings xxi. 5.) the higher court was that of the priests; between which and the court of the Israelites there was only a partition: but this whole platform was parted from the court of the *women*, by a wall, and an ascent of fifteen steps. From whence some derive the title of a *Song of Degrees*, which is given to the hundred and twentieth Psalm, and those that follow to the hundred and thirty-second. (See Dr. Lightfoot's Description of the Temple, chap. 20.)

At the entry of the new gate.] See xxvi. 10.

Ver. 11. *When Micah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book,* &c.] Shaphan's family were all great men at court. (See the note on xxvi. 24.)

Ver. 12. *And, lo, all the princes sat there.*] The chief officers of state, who were probably members also of the great Sanhedrin. (See xxvi. 10. xxxviii. 4.)

Ver. 16. *Now it came to pass, when they heard all these words, they were afraid.*] The judgments denounced were so terrible, as to make the *ears of them that heard them to tingle*. (See xix. 3.)

Ver. 19. *Then said the princes to Baruch, Go hide thee, thou and Jeremiah.*] They thought it their duty to acquaint the king with the matter, (ver. 16.) but yet were unwilling that Jeremiah and Baruch should feel the effects of his displeasure. [Jeremiah was a prisoner when he commanded Baruch to read this roll to the people; (ver. 5.) but what is here said relates to the year following. Compare ver. 1. with ver. 9.]

Ver. 22. *Now the king sat in the winter-house.*] The great men had distinct houses or apartments, fitted for the several seasons of the year. (See Amos iii. 15.)

In the ninth month.] Which answers partly to our November, partly to December.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves.*] Their books were made in form of a roll, (see ver. 2.) and therefore were not divided into leaves or pages, as ours are: so that by leaves we are to understand the columns, or several partitions, into which the breadth of the parchment was divided. This sense the Septuagint have expressed by the word σελίδες, which is used for the columns in Origen's edition of the Hexapla, by Epiphanius, lib. de Ponderib. et Mensuris, cap. 19.

Ver. 24. *Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments.*] A custom observed among the Jews at the hearing any dreadful news. (See 2 Sam. i. 11. 2 Kings xxii. 11.) The fear they were seized with at their first hearing these threatenings (ver. 16.) quickly wore off, or else they durst not discover it in the king's presence, who did not shew any concern himself.

Ver. 26. *But the Lord hid them.*] By the direction of Providence, they were concealed in such a place where they were not discovered.

Ver. 29. *And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim.*] Or, *of* Jehoiakim, so the same expression is translated, ver. 30. For this command seems to have been given to Jeremiah during the time of his concealment.

Saying, Why hast thou written therein.] This probably was part of the message which was to have been delivered to Jeremiah by the king's command, if he could have been found.

Ver. 30. *He shall have none to sit on his throne.*] *None of his seed shall prosper, sitting on the throne of David,* as God threatens his son Jehoiachin, (xxii. 30.) who reigned but three months, and left none to succeed him in a direct line. (See the note upon that place.)

And his dead body shall be cast out, &c.] See the note on xxii. 19.

Ver. 32. *And there were added besides unto them many like words.*] From hence we may infer, that God's Spirit did not always indite the very form of words which the holy writers have set down, but directing them in general to express his sense in proper words, left the manner of expression to themselves. From whence proceeds that variety of style which we may observe in the Scriptures, suitable to the different genius and education of the writers.

CHAP. XXXVII.

ARGUMENT.

The king of Egypt coming with an army to the relief of Zedekiah, obliged Nebuchadnezzar to raise the siege of Jerusalem. Upon which, Zedekiah and his people conceived hopes of a deliverance from the Chaldeans. But the prophet foretelling that they would certainly return, and take the city, he is accused of siding with the enemy, and put in prison: but afterward released by Zedekiah.

Ver. 1. *ZEDEKIAH—whom Nebuchadnezzar made king in the land of Judah.*] Made him a tributary king, he having taken an oath of homage to the king of Babylon. (See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. Ezek. xvii. 13.)

Ver. 3. *The king sent—Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest.*] See xxi. 1.

Ver. 4. *For they had not put him in prison.*] As they did afterward. (See ver. 15. and xxxii. 2.)

Ver. 5. *Then Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt,* &c.] Zedekiah, contrary to the oath that he had given to Nebuchadnezzar, made an alliance with the king of Egypt, and contracted with him for assistance against the king of Babylon: whereupon the king of Egypt sent an army to his relief: (see Ezek. xvii. 15.) which obliged the Chaldeans to raise the siege of Jerusalem, that they might go and fight this army.

Ver. 7. *Pharaoh's army, that is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their land.*] They shall be discomfited by the Chaldeans, and forced to retreat without

giving any assistance to Zedekiah. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 7. Ezek. xvii. 17.)

Ver. 8. *And the Chaldeans shall come again.*] See xxxiv. 22.

Ver. 10. *For though he had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans,* &c.] God himself will fight against you, so that there will be no need of any opposition from your enemies. (Compare xxi. 4, 5.)

Ver. 12. *Then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem into the land of Benjamin.*] To Anathoth. (See i. 1.)

To separate himself thence in the midst of his people.] Or rather, *from the midst of his people,* or, *from among his people:* for the preposition *min* is to be taken as belonging in common to the latter part of the sentence. And so the French translation, published for the use of the reformed churches, understands it to this sense, that Jeremiah purposed to leave the city, and retire into his own country.

Ver. 13. *And when he was in the gate of Benjamin.*] The gate that leads towards the country of Benjamin.

Irijah—the son of Hananiah.] Probably of that Hananiah whose death Jeremiah foretold, xxvii. 17. So this nephew of his thought to revenge his grandfather's quarrel.

Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans.] Compare xxxviii. 4. The ground of this accusation was, because the prophet had foretold that they should take the city, and had exhorted the Jews to submit to them. (See ver. 10. of this chapter, xxvii. 6, &c. xxviii. 14. xxxiv. 2, 3.)

Ver. 14. *Then said Jeremiah, It is false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans.*] His foretelling the calamity that should come upon the nation, by the means of the Chaldeans, did not prove him to take their part, because at the same time he gave advice both to king and people, how they, in some measure, might escape the judgments he had denounced against them: (xxii. 2, 3. xxxviii. 17. xviii. 11. xxxvi. 3. and the note upon iv. 28.)

So Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes.] To the chief officers of state. (See xxxvi. 12.)

Ver. 16. *When Jeremiah was entered into the dungeon.*] See xxxviii. 6.

And Jeremiah had remained there many days.] Till the Chaldean army had renewed the siege. (See ver. 19.)

Ver. 19. *Where are now your prophets,* &c.] *i. e.* Your false prophets. (Compare xxvi. 7. xxix. 1.) The event hath now convinced you how much they have deceived you: for you see the siege renewed, and the city in imminent danger of being taken.

Ver. 21. *Then Zedekiah commanded that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison.*] A more favourable restraint. (See xxxii. 2.)

Till all the bread of the city was spent.] Till the famine forced the city to surrender. (See lii. 6.) This was the king's first order, but afterward it was reversed, by the importunity of the princes and great men, (xxxviii. 6.) when Jeremiah was again thrown into the dungeon: though after that he was released from that place, and returned to his former confinement, (ibid. ver. 28.)

CHAP. XXXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

Upon the princes' informing the king against Jeremiah, he is again thrown into the dungeon: but afterward released, upon Ebed-melech's supplication to the king, whom he advises to submit to the Chaldeans.

Ver. 1. *JUCAL the son of Shelemiah, and Pashur the son of Melkiah,* &c.] Some of those who were sent by Zedekiah to Jeremiah, to inquire of the Lord concerning the event of the siege. (See xxxvii. 3. xxi. 1. 9.) The answer which Jeremiah returned by them to the king, he afterward published to all the people, which was the occasion of the new troubles he fell into, recorded in this chapter.

Ver. 4. *Therefore the princes said unto the king.*] See xxxvi. 12. 21.

For thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war.] By making them despair of success.

Ver. 5. *Behold, he is in your hand: for the king is not he that can do any thing against you*] The king speaks as one who in such difficult times durst not contradict the great men about him: or else his answer implies, that it was properly the business of the Sanhedrin to take cognizance of the prophets. (See Luke xiii. 33. and Selden, de Synedriis, lib. iii. cap. 9. n. 1.)

Ver. 6. *Then they took Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Melchiah, that was in the court of the prison.*] Near the place where he was before, under a more gentle restraint. (See xxxii. 2. xxxvii. 21.)

So Jeremiah sunk in the mire.] Some think that when he was in this dismal place, he made those mournful meditations which are set down in the third chapter of the Lamentations. (See the fifty-third and fifty-fifth verses of that chapter.)

Ver. 7. *Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian.*] Huetius, in his treatise De Navigatione Solomonis, cap. 7. n. 7. observes out of Josephus, that Solomon, in his voyage to Tarshish, mentioned 1 Kings x. 22. amongst other merchandise, brought slaves from Ethiopia; which was likewise the practice of the Greeks and Romans in after-times, as he there proves by several testimonies: such a slave he supposes this Ebed-melech to have been, called here an eunuch, or officer of the king's house. (Compare xxix. 2. xxxiv. 19.) In the Hebrew he is called the *Chusite,* which may likewise signify the Arabian. (See the note on xiii. 23.)

The king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin.] Princes and magistrates usually heard causes in the gates of the city. (See Deut. xxi. 19. xxii. 15. Ruth iv. 1. 11. Psal. lxix. 12. Amos v. 10. 12. 15.) Concerning the gate of Benjamin, see xxxvii. 13.

Ver. 9. *My lord the king, these men have done evil,* &c.] This person, though only a proselyte, had a greater regard for God's word, and the messenger that published it, than any of the great men of his own nation. (See xxxix. 18.)

[*Whom they have cast into the dungeon, and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is.*] They needed not to have put him into the dungeon, he would have died of hunger, without adding the cruelty of that punishment.]

For there is no more bread in the city.] See xxxvii. 21. lii. 6.

Ver. 14. *Then Zedekiah—sent, and took Jeremiah unto him into the third entry, that is in* [or *by*] *the house of the Lord.*] Dr. Lightfoot explains this of the third passage or gate which lay between the king's palace, where the prison

was, and the temple, whither the king now retreated for fear of the Chaldean army. (See his Description of the Temple, chap. 33.)

Ver. 15. *Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, If I declare it unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death?*] The prophet had so much experience of the unsteadiness of the king's temper, of his backwardness in following good counsel, and want of courage to stand by those that durst adviso him well, that he might with good reason resolve not to venture his life to serve a man that was in a manner incapable of being directed. And although God had shewed him what would be the effect of his advice, if it were followed, (ver. 17.) yet it doth not appear that he had commanded him to make this known to Zedekiah.

And if I give thee counsel, wilt thou not hearken unto me?] The latter part of the sentence may be translated without an interrogation, *thou wilt not hearken unto me.* So the prophet might well conclude from his former behaviour. (See xxxvii. 2.) If we follow our English translation, the sense is the same as if the words were rendered, *Wilt thou hearken unto me?* Noldius observes, in his Concordance, p. 256. that the negative interrogation *halo,* is sometimes equivalent to an affirmative: of which he gives this example, (1 Kings i. 11.) "Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba, saying—Hast thou not heard that Adonijah doth reign?" Where the sense is the same as if he had said, *Hast thou heard?* See a like instance, Zech. iv. 13. This observation will help to explain that difficult place in Job, (iv. 6.) "Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?" So interpreters generally render the words: but the sense would be much plainer, if we translate them, *Is this thy fear?* &c. *i. e.* Are thy great pretences to piety, and thy assurance of God's favour, of so little force, that they cannot afford thee any support in thy troubles? To this sense the Vulgar Latin translates the verse, *Ubi est timor tuus, fortitudo tua,* &c.

Ver. 16. *As the Lord liveth, who made us this soul.*] *i. e.* The Author of our life and being, and may he preserve it or take it away as I speak truth or falsehood. For such-like oaths had always some good or ill wish understood to go along with them; like that form of asseveration, 2 Kings ii. 2. "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth;" or, As I wish thy soul may live: for so the expression may be translated.

Ver. 17. *If thou wilt assuredly go forth to the king of Babylon's princes.*] Those mentioned xxxix. 3. and submit thyself to them.

[*Then shall thy soul live, and this city shall not be burnt with fire.*] It has been before observed, that the judgments denounced against Jerusalem were not irreversible. See the note upon iv. 28. xvii. 25.]

Ver. 18. *And thou shalt not escape out of their hand.*] See xxxix. 5.

Ver. 19. *And they mock me.*] When I am in the power of the Chaldeans, I fear that they will treat me with scorn and contempt, without any regard to my royal character. This he said as conscious to himself, that he had broken that oath of homage and fidelity he had before given to the king of Babylon, so that he might justly be treated as a man of no faith or honour. (See the note on xxxvii. 5.)

Ver. 20. *But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord.*] God foresees all possible events, and what will be the different success of the several counsels men propose to themselves.

Ver. 21. *This is the word that the Lord hath shewed me.*] Namely, that both the king and city shall be delivered into the hand of the Chaldeans. (See ver. 18.)

Ver. 22. *All the women that are left in the king of Judah's house shall be brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes.*] The king's wives, his daughters, and the other women that belong to the king's court and family, shall become a prey to the chief officers of the king of Babylon's army. (See xli. 10. xliii. 6.)

And those women shall say, Thy friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee; thy feet are sunk in the mire.] These very women shall then reproach thee for having suffered thyself to be ensnared by the ill advice of thy friends, and brought under insuperable difficulties.

And they are turned away back.] Even thy friends, who advised thee not to submit to the Chaldeans, will forsake thee in thy distress, and take the first opportunity of going over to them.

Ver. 24. *Let no man know of these words, and thou shalt not die.*] Keep what hath passed between us secret, and I will keep my promise to thee of preserving thy life. (See ver. 16.)

Ver. 26. *I presented my supplication to the king, that he would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house, to die there.*] Jeremiah had been formerly kept prisoner there, (xxxvii. 15.) But the last time he was imprisoned, was in the dungeon of Hammelech (ver. 6. of this chapter); a place which at this time might, perhaps, be put to some other use.

Ver. 27. *And he told them according to all the words that the king had commanded.*] He told them part of the truth, but not all, concealing from them the advice he had given the king, with relation to the questions he had proposed to him.

Ver. 28. *So Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison.*] See xxxix. 21.

CHAP. XXXIX.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains an account of the taking and burning Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, who also took Zedekiah, and carried him to Babylon: but had particular orders from their king to use Jeremiah well, who a little before had, by God's direction, made a promise to Ebed-melech of the Divine favour and protection, as a reward of the kindness he had shewed to the prophet.

Ver. 1. *IN the ninth year of Zedekiah,* &c.] See lii. 4. 2 Kings xxv. 1, 2.

Ver. 2. *The city was broken up.*] Such breaches were made in the walls, that the army of the Chaldeans, with their commanders, entered, and took possession of the city. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 3. *Then all the princes of the king of Babylon came, and sat in the middle gate.*] The gate between the wall that encompassed the city, and that which enclosed the temple.

Even Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo.] It was customary among the Chaldeans to give the names of their idols, as an

additional title, or mark of honour, to persons of distinction. (See the note on Isa. xxxix. 1.) Nergal was the name of an idol among the Cuthites, (2 Kings xvii. 30.) Nebo was a considerable deity among the Chaldeans. (Isa. xlvi. 1.)

[Ver. 4. *When Zedekiah saw them, and all the men of war.*] When the king, and the armed men that were with him, saw that the Chaldeans were entered into the city, and had made themselves masters of it; instead of submitting himself to them as Jeremiah advised him, (xxxviii. 17, 18.) he endeavoured to make his escape.]

They fled—by the gate betwixt the two walls.] Betwixt the wall and the outworks: or betwixt the old wall of the city, and that new one which Hezekiah built. (See 2 Chron. xxxii. 5.)

Ver. 5. *But the Chaldeans—overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho.*] Compare Josh. v. 10. This is called the *way of the plain*, or *wilderness*, Josh. viii. 15. and the *plain of the wilderness*, 2 Sam. xv. 28. xvii. 16. and elsewhere the *wilderness of Judea*. (See Matt. iii. 1.)

To Riblah, in the land of Hamath.] See the note on xlix. 23. Most interpreters suppose this city to be the same which was called Antioch, in aftertimes, when it was re-edified by Seleucus. In this sense the Jerusalem Targum, upon Numb. xxxiv. 11. understands the word.

Where he gave judgment upon him.] Pronounced sentence upon him, as one who had broke his oath of fidelity to the king of Babylon, which he took when he made him king of Judea. (See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10. 13. 2 Kings xxiv. 20. Ezek. xvii. 15. 18.)

Ver. 7. *He put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon.*] See lii. 11. where the text adds, that he *put him in prison till the day of his death.* And thus were fulfilled two prophecies that seemed at first hearing to contradict one another; the first that of Jeremiah, that *Zedekiah's eyes should behold the eyes of the king of Babylon*, Jer. xxxii. 4. and the other that of Ezekiel, that *he should not see Babylon, though he should die there*, Ezek. xii. 14.

Ver. 9. *Then Nebuzar-adan—carried away captive—the remnant of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away.*] Compare 2 Kings xxv. 11. He carried away the fugitives, or deserters, that fell away to the Chaldeans during the siege, as well as those whom he took that were shut up in the city.

Ver. 11, 12. *Now Nebuchadnezzar gave charge concerning Jeremiah*, &c.] He was informed that the prophet had exhorted both king and people to submit themselves to his authority; (see xxviii. 11. xxxviii. 17, 18.) whose advice, if it had been hearkened to, would have prevented the charge and labour of so long a siege, and the bloodshed which attended it.

Ver. 14. *Even they sent and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison.*] Where he was when the city was taken, (xxxviii. 28.)

And committed him to Gedaliah.] After he had first been carried out of Jerusalem, with the rest of the captives, as far as Ramah. (See xl. 1. 5.)

Ver. 15. *While he was shut up in the court of the prison.*] Before the taking of the city. (See the foregoing verse.)

Ver. 18. *But thy life shall be for a prey unto thee.*] See the note on xxi. 9.

Because thou hast put thy trust in me.] See the note on xxxviii. 9.

CHAP. XL.

ARGUMENT.

Jeremiah is directed by Nebuzar-adan to repair to Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon had made governor of the land, and to whom the dispersed Jews from all parts repair. Johanan informs the governor of Ishmael's conspiracy, but is not believed.

Ver. 1. *THE word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord.*] This relates to the prophecy set down xlii. 7. which was occasioned by the story that here follows, concerning Ishmael's conspiracy against Gedaliah.

After that Nebuzar-adan—had let him go from Ramah, &c.] He was taken out of the court of the prison, (see xxxix. 14.) and carried with the other captives as far as Ramah, a town not far from Jerusalem. (See Judg. xix. 10. 13.)

[Ver. 5. *Now, while he was not yet gone back, he said.*] The words in the Hebrew are very perplexed, and by the different translations of the ancient interpreters, one might guess that some Hebrew copies had a different reading from the present. The Vulgar Latin reads, *And come not along with me;* as if he read, in the Hebrew, *imance* for *odenu*. Some of the ancient Greek copies read, *Before I go away, go back thou to Gedaliah.* The Chaldee seems to interpret it to the plainest sense, *If thou wilt not abide* [here], *go back to Gedaliah:* understanding the verb, *yashûb*, as if it were derived from *yashab*, to *abide*. Words of a like sound having often a promiscuous signification. See the note on xxiii. 39.]

Go back also to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam.] This Gedaliah was a person of a considerable family, for interest and authority. (See the note on xxvi. 24.)

So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go.] This kind usage was shewed to the prophet, by the particular order of Nebuchadnezzar. (See xxxix. 11, 12.)

Ver. 6. *Then went Jeremiah to Gedaliah—to Mizpah.*] A town in the confines of Judah and Benjamin, (see Josh. xv. 38. xviii. 26.) where Gedaliah kept his residence, being a place of note in the times of the judges, (see Judg. xx. 1. 1 Sam. vii. 5, 6.) and afterward rebuilt by king Asa, (1 Kings xv. 22.)

Ver. 7. *Now, when all the captains of the forces which were in the fields, even they and their men heard*, &c.] By the taking of Jerusalem, the Chaldeans made a complete conquest of Judea: whereupon the Jewish army with its commanders fled, (see xxxix. 4.) and dispersed themselves into several parts of the country: but upon the news of Gedaliah's being appointed governor of the land, they repaired all to him.

Ver. 8. *The Netophathite.*] Of Netophah, a town mentioned Ezra ii. 22.

Jezaniah the son of a Maachathite.] Descended from Maachah, Caleb's concubine, (1 Chron. ii. 48.) The same person is called Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, xlii. 1.

Ver. 9. *Fear not to serve the Chaldeans.*] The same advice Jeremiah had formerly given the Jews. (See xxvii. 11. xxix. 7.)

Ver. 10. *As for me, behold, I dwell at Mizpah, to serve the Chaldeans which will come unto us.*] I keep my residence here to be ready to obey any orders that the king of Babylon sends me by his servants. (See xli. 3.)

But gather ye wine, and summer-fruits, and oil.] Wine and oil are put by a metonymy for grapes and olives. It was now about the month of August, (compare xli. 1.) the proper season for gathering in the summer-fruits in that country. (See Deut. xvi. 13.)

Ver. 11. *Likewise, when all the Jews that were in Moab,* &c.] See the notes upon xii. 14. xv. 4.

Ver. 14. *Dost thou certainly know that Baalis the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael to slay thee?*] The king of the Ammonites had concerted this matter with Ishmael, with a design to make the Jews, who still remained in their own country, his vassals. (See xli. 10.)

CHAP. XLI.

ARGUMENT.

Ishmael treacherously killeth Gedaliah and his companions, with an intent to carry away the Jews that were with him captives into the country of the Ammonites. But Johanan recovers the captives, and purposeth to fly into Egypt.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass in the seventh month.*] Answering partly to our September, and partly to October. The murder of Gedaliah gave occasion for the fast of the seventh month, which the Jews observed after their return from captivity. (See Zech. vii. 5. viii. 19.)

Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, of the seed-royal.] He valued himself upon his extraction, and bare a grudge against Gedaliah, because he was set above him.

And the princes of the king, even ten men with him.] Some of the chief officers of state belonging to Zedekiah; (see xxxvi. 12. 21. xxxviii. 4.) these brought a great number of others with them as their retinue, or else they could not have made such a destruction as they did, (ver. 3.)

Ver. 3. *Ishmael also slew all the Jews that were with him —and the Chaldeans that were found there, and the men of war.*] That is, all those that joined in opposing Ishmael, and assisting Gedaliah: for several of the commanders, as well as the greatest part of the people, were still left alive, as appears by the sequel of the story. (See ver. 10, 11.)

Ver. 5. *Fourscore men having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves.*] These were tokens of great mourning, by which these persons expressed their grief for the destruction of the city and temple. Such expressions of sorrow were forbidden to be used at funeral obsequies, (see Lev. xix. 27, 28.) but might be lawfully used upon other mournful occasions; as hath been observed upon Isa. xv. 2.

With offerings and incense in their hand, to bring them to the house of the Lord.] Some understand this as if devout persons brought their oblations to the place where the altar formerly stood, which they looked upon as consecrated ground: and this custom they think countenanced by the words of Baruch, i. 10. where the exiles at Babylon are supposed to *send money to buy offerings for the altar of the Lord,* after that Jerusalem *was taken and burnt:* (compare ver. 2.) others understand the *house of the Lord,* of an altar, or place of worship, erected by Gedaliah at Mizpah, in imitation of that which was formerly set up there by Samuel, (1 Sam. vii. 7. 9.) which place continued to be a proseucha, or place of worship, in aftertimes, as appears from 1 Maccab. iii. 46. There were many such sanctuaries, or places of worship, both in Judea and elsewhere, among the Jewish dispersions, as Dr. Prideaux hath shewed at large, in his Connect. of Scripture History, p. 387, &c.

Ver. 6. *Weeping all along as he went.*] As if he had sympathized with them.

Ver. 7. *Ishmael slew them, and cast them into the midst of the pit.*] The Hebrew reads, *slew them into the midst of a pit.* We find the very same expression, 1 Maccab. vii. 19. a book translated out of Hebrew, as St. Jerome tells us, in Prologo Galeato. Of the same kind are the following expressions, (Psal. lxxiv. 7.) *They have defiled the dwelling-place of thy name unto the ground,* as our old translation reads out of the Hebrew. So Psal. lxxxix. 39. *Thou hast profaned his crown* by casting it *to the ground,* as the new translation supplies the sense.

Ver. 8. *Slay us not, for we have treasures in the field.*] Or, *in the country,* as the word is elsewhere used, by way of distinction, from a town or city. (See xl. 7. 13.) They promised to make him master of what they were worth, if he would spare their lives.

Ver. 9. *Now the pit wherein Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies—was it which Asa king of Israel made,* &c.] This pit was the ditch which Asa cast up against the walls of Mizpah, when he rebuilt and fortified it against the attempts of Baasha. (See 1 Kings xv. 22.)

Ver. 10. *And departed to go unto the Ammonites.*] See xl. 14.

Ver. 12. *By the great waters that are in Gibeon.*] Called the *pool of Gibeon,* 2 Sam. ii. 13.

Ver. 16. *The eunuchs.*] See xxxiv. 19. xxxviii. 7.

Ver. 17. *And they departed, and dwelt in the habitation of Chimham.*] A parcel of ground which David had settled upon Chimham the son of Barzillai. (See 2 Sam. xix. 38. 40.)

Ver. 18. *Because of the Chaldeans,* &c.] They were afraid, lest they should impute this insurrection to the whole body of the Jews that were left in the land, as if they were desirous of restoring the government to the royal family.

CHAP. XLII.

ARGUMENT.

Johanan and the other captains desire Jeremiah to inquire of God what they should do, promising obedience to his will. The prophet assures them of safety in Judea, and destruction in Egypt, and reproves their hypocrisy in promising what they meant not to perform.

Ver. 1. *JEZANIAH the son of Hoshaiah.*] See xl. 8.

Ver. 2, 3. *Pray for us—that the Lord may shew us the way wherein we may walk.*] It is the constant method of hypocrites to pretend a profound submission to the will of God till that comes to cross their inclinations or interest.

Ver. 10. *I will build you up, and not pull you down.*] See xxiv. 6. xxxi. 28. xxxiii. 7.

For I repent me of the evil which I have done to you.]

God is said in Scripture to repent, when he alters the outward methods of his providence, as hath been observed upon xviii. 11. So the expression here implies a declaration from God, that the punishments the Jews have already undergone have made satisfaction to his justice, as far as concerns this world, and that he will not continue the same severity towards them, unless they give him a new provocation.

Ver. 12. *And I will shew mercies to you, that he may cause you to return to your land.*] I will incline the heart of the king of Babylon to take pity on you: (see Psal. cvi. 46.) and so settle you in your own country, from whence you were driven during the late wars and distractions. (See xl. 11.)

Ver. 15. *If you wholly set your faces to go into Egypt.*] If you are fully resolved to go thither. (Compare Luke ix. 51.)

Ver. 16. *Then it shall come to pass, that the sword, which you feared, shall overtake you there,* &c.] See xliv. 14. 18.

Ver. 18. *And ye shall be an execration, and a curse,* &c.] See the note on xxiv. 9.

Ver. 19. *The Lord hath said concerning you, O ye remnant of Judah, go ye not into Egypt.*] God commanded the Jews, by Moses, not to have any commerce with Egypt: (see Deut. xvii. 16.) that they may not practise the idolatrous customs of that country; (see Lev. xviii. 3.) with whose idolatries they had been defiled during their sojourning there: (see Josh. xxiv. 14. Ezek. xx. 8.) afterward he often reproved them by his prophets, for making alliances with Egypt. (See Isa. xxx. 2, &c. Ezek. xvii. 15.) There were particular reasons at this time for so severe a prohibition, as the words here and in the context import, *viz.* because the Jews either learned several of their idolatrous practices from the Egyptians, or at least were confirmed in those evil customs by their example. (See xliv. 8. 15. Ezek. xxix. 16.) Besides, it was the rival kingdom that contended for empire with the Babylonians. (See xxxvii. 5. xlvi. 2.) So the Jews going into Egypt for protection, was in effect refusing to submit themselves to the king of Babylon, to whom God had decreed the government of Judea, and all the neighbouring countries, (xxvii. 6.)

CHAP. XLIII.

ARGUMENT.

The leading men discrediting Jeremiah's prophecy, carry the people into Egypt, contrary to his advice: whereupon he foretells the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 2. *THEN spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah.*] Called Jezaniah, xlii. 1. We may observe many like instances in the books of Kings and Chronicles, of the same persons being called by two different names.

And all the proud men.] Who refused to obey Almighty God, when his commands crossed their own inclinations.

Saying to Jeremiah, The Lord hath not spoken by thee.] The constant method of hypocrites and infidels, who pretend they are not satisfied of the truth of Divine revelation, when the true cause of their unbelief is, that God's commands contradict their own lusts and appetites.

Ver. 3. *But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us.*] They would not directly accuse Jeremiah of partiality towards, or confederacy with, the Chaldeans, as his enemies had done formerly, (xxxvii. 13.) but they lay the blame upon Baruch, whom they knew to be an intimate companion of Jeremiah's, and to have been kindly used by the Chaldeans upon Jeremiah's account.

Ver. 5, 6. *But Johanan took the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations,* &c.] Chap. xl. 11. xli. 10.

Ver. 7. *Thus they came even to Tahapanes.*] See ii. 16. one of the principal cities of Egypt, and a place of residence for their kings. (See ver. 9.) The word is contracted to *hanes*, Isa. xxx. 4. and joined with Zoan, the chief city of the kingdom. Tahapanes gave a name to a queen of Egypt, (1 Kings xi. 19.) and is supposed by many to be the same city which was afterward called Daphnæ Pelusiacæ. St. Jerome tells us from an ancient tradition, that in this place the prophet Jeremiah was stoned to death by the Jews.

This tradition may receive some confirmation from that passage in the gospels, (Matt. xvi. 14. Luke ix. 19.) where, among other opinions concerning Christ, it is said, some thought him to be the prophet Jeremiah *risen from the dead.* Dr. Lightfoot observes, that the Jews thought the kingdom of the Messias should begin with the resurrection of the dead; and particularly, that some of the ancient prophets should rise again, and appear as harbingers to the Messias. (See his Horæ Hebr. on Matt. xvi. 13. xxvii. 52. and on Luke ix. 8.) And then, who could better pretend to that privilege than the prophet Jeremiah? who, beside his remarkable zeal and piety, sealed the truth with his blood. And the Jews were persuaded that the martyrs had a title to the resurrection above all others, as appears from 2 Maccab. vii. 9. 18. An opinion countenanced by St. John, Rev. xx. 4, 5. and afterward universally received in the Christian church.

Ver. 9. *Hide them in the clay, in the brick-kiln, that is by Pharaoh's house.*] Bricks were the chief materials which the Babylonians used in most stately buildings. (See Gen. xi. 3. and Prideaux's Script. Hist. ad an. A. C. 570.) So there was constant occasion for such a brick-kiln near Pharaoh's palace, yet this might be a great way from the palace itself: the courts of great kings being almost equal to a city for extent in ancient times: particularly the palace in Babylon was four miles in compass, according to Diodorus Siculus, lib. ii.

Ver. 10. *I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar, my servant, and set his throne upon these stones.*] See the note on i. 15. xxv. 10.

Ver. 11. *And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt.*] See xlvi. 13.

And deliver such as are for death, to death.] See xv. 2. *Death* signifies here the pestilence, which the prophet foretells will overspread the country of Egypt, by reason of the famine, occasioned by sieges and other desolations of war.

Ver. 12. *And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt,* &c.] When God punisheth a heathen nation; as idolatry is one of the principal sins for which he visits, so he in a remarkable manner executes his vengeance upon their idols, who can neither save themselves, nor their worshippers. (See xlvi. 25. xlviii. 7. l. 2. li. 44. Exod. xii. 12. Isa. xix. 1. xxi. 9. xlvi. 1.)

And he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a

shepherd putteth on his garment.] He shall invest the land of Egypt, and take entire possession of it, just as a shepherd's garment covers his body all over. So calamities, when they surround men on every side, are compared to a garment, Psal. cix. 19. And this destruction shall come upon Egypt suddenly, and as it were in a moment; in which sense the verb *nûṭ* or *naṭah* is taken, 1 Sam. xiv. 32. xv. 19.

A learned friend gives the text another turn: he supposes Nebuchadnezzar's army to have endured hard service before they invaded Egypt: this conjecture he grounds upon the words of Ezekiel, xxix. 18—20. So the prophet here promises, that Egypt should furnish them with all manner of necessaries, and defend them from the hardships they had been exposed to, just as a shepherd is secured from the injuries of the weather by a thick garment.

Ver. 13. *He shall break also the images of Beth-shemesh.*] The same place that is called by Isaiah, (xix. 18.) *Nir heres*, which our margin rightly translates, *The city of the sun.* (See the note upon that place.)

And the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire.] See Ezek. xxx. 13.

CHAP. XLIV.

ARGUMENT.

Jeremiah reproves the Jews in Egypt, for their continuance in idolatry, notwithstanding the exemplary judgments of God upon their own country and nation for that sin. Upon their obstinate refusal to reform their evil practices, he denounces utter destruction to them, and the king of Egypt, to whose protection they had betook themselves.

Ver. 1. *CONCERNING all the Jews—which dwell at Migdol.*] A place near the Red Sea. (See Exod. xiv. 2.)

And at Noph.] Commonly called Memphis, a royal seat formerly: near this place stands one of the pyramids, which is yet remaining.

And in the country of Pathros.] That is, the country of Thebais, as Bochart proves by several arguments, (Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 27.)

Ver. 3. *To serve other gods, whom they knew not, neither they, you, nor your fathers.*] Compare Deut. xiii. 6. xxxii. 17. These idols are opposed to the true God, called elsewhere *the God of their fathers; i. e.* He that had made himself known to them by so many miracles of mercy, and had promised to shew the same favour to their posterity, if they continued steadfast in their obedience.

Ver. 4. *Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets.*] See vii. 13. xxv. 4.

Ver. 5. *To burn no incense to other gods.*] See ver. 17. 21. xix. 13.

Ver. 7. *To cut off man and woman, infant and suckling, out of Judah.*] God designed that this remnant should have kept possession in Judea, when the rest of their brethren were carried away captive. (See xlii. 10.) But by their going into Egypt, and defiling themselves with the idolatries of that nation, they have provoked God to make an utter destruction of them. (See ver. 11, 12, 14. 27.)

Ver. 11. *Behold, I will set my face against you for evil.*] See xxi. 10. Lev. xvii. 10. xx. 5. Psal. xxxiv. 16.

Ver. 12, 13.] See xlii. 15—18.

[Ver. 14. *None of the remnant—shall escape—that they should return into the land of Judah.*] Scaliger observes out of Eusebius, that Artaxerxes Ochus, making an expedition into Egypt, removed a considerable colony of Jews out of that country, and carried them away as far as the Caspian Sea, and there settled them. These he thinks were the remainder of those Jews that went down into Egypt at this time. They were called by the other Jews, the Median captivity. See his notes on Euseb. numb. 1658.]

For none shall return, but such as shall escape.] See the note on iv. 27. None shall return but the remnant mentioned ver. 28. to whom I will grant that peculiar favour of being saved, or escaping out of the common destruction. (Compare l. 20.) This is the import of the word *peliti*, commonly rendered by the Septuagint, σωζόμενοι and ἀνασεσωσμένοι: (see li. 50. Isa. x. 20. xxxvii. 32. xlv. 20. lxvi. 20.) from whence the word Σωζόμενοι is applied in the New Testament, to signify those who embrace the gospel, and thereby are rescued from that destruction which is threatened to unbelievers. (See Acts ii. 47. 1 Cor. i. 18. 2 Cor. ii. 15.)

Ver. 17. *But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth.*] That which we have solemnly vowed to perform. (See ver. 25.) So the phrase is used, Numb. xxx. 12. Deut. xxiii. 23. Judg. xi. 36.

To burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings to her, &c.] To the moon and the rest of the host of heaven. (See the notes on vii. 18. xix. 13.)

For then we had plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.] They compare their former condition before the invasion of Judea, and the siege of Jerusalem, with their present state: and argue, from the fallacious topic of worldly prosperity, that then they must needs have been in the right.

Ver. 19. *And when we burnt incense to the queen of heaven.*] These are the words of the women, who were the most zealous promoters of this idolatry. (See ver. 15.)

Did we make her cakes to worship her?] See the note on vii. 18.

Ver. 22. *So that the Lord could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings.*] God's patience is elsewhere said to be wearied out by men's continued provocations. (See Isa. vii. 13. xliii. 24. Mal. ii. 17.)

Ver. 25. *We will surely perform our vows which we have vowed.*] They insist upon their unlawful vow as an obligation in conscience, which could not be dispensed with; just as Herod did upon his unlawful oath, Matt. xiv. 9.

Ver. 26. *I have sworn by my great name, saith the Lord.*] I also have made a solemn vow, in opposition to that wicked one of yours, ver. 25.

That my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in the land of Egypt.] These Jews seem to have joined the worship of the true God with that of idols, as the Samaritans did before them, (2 Kings xvii. 33.) thereupon God declares he will not receive any such polluted worship at their hands, (compare Ezek. xx. 39.) nor suffer his name to be any longer profaned by such hypocrites, but will consume them by a sudden and general destruction; or will deliver them up to impenitence and utter apostacy.

Ver. 27. *Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good.*] See xxxi. 28.

Ver. 28. *Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return.*] See ver. 14.

And all the remnant of Judah—that are gone into the land of Egypt, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs.] Since they are so peremptory in abiding by their own vows and resolutions, (see ver. 16, 17. 25.) they shall see whose words shall stand good, or take effect, mine or theirs.

Ver. 30. *I will give Pharaoh-Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and of them that seek his life.*] Pharaoh was a common name to all the kings of Egypt. As the predecessor of this king was called Pharaoh-Nechoh by way of distinction, (2 Kings xxiii. 29.) so this king was called Pharaoh-Hophra, or Apries, as Herodotus calls him: he engaged in a battle with Amasis, by whom he was overcome and strangled. (See Archbishop Usher's Annals, ad A. M. 3435.)

CHAP. XLV.

ARGUMENT.

This prophecy was occasioned by the danger Baruch had incurred, by copying out a collection of all Jeremiah's prophecies, by his direction. (See xxxvi. 4. 26.) The design of it is to comfort Baruch against the apprehensions his fears suggested to him, by letting him know, that in these general calamities which should involve his own nation, together with the neighbouring countries, God would take him into his especial protection. The Septuagint, according to the Vatican copy, place this prophecy at the conclusion of the book, immediately before the fifty-second chapter.

Ver. 1. *WHEN he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah.*] See xxxvi. 1. 4. 32.

Ver. 3. *The Lord hath added grief to my sorrow.*] The sorrow which I felt for the threatenings denounced against my country and religion, are increased by my own troubles, being sought after by the king's command, in order to be put to death. (See xxxvi. 26.)

Ver. 4. *That which I have built will I break down,* &c.] The land and people which have so long flourished under the peculiar care of my providence, I resolve now to give up to utter destruction. (Compare xxxi. 28.)

Ver. 5. *And seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not.*] Dost thou aspire to honour and dignity in a time of common calamity? (Compare 2 Kings v. 26.)

Behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh.] See the note on xxv. 26.

But thy life will I give unto thee for a prey.] See the note on xxi. 9.

CHAP. XLVI.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter contains two prophecies against Egypt: the first fulfilled immediately after the publication: the other foretelling the entire conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, which was fulfilled six-and-thirty years afterward.

Ver. 1. *THE word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the gentiles.*] This title belongs to this and the five following chapters: and refers to that general denunciation of God's judgments upon the countries round about Judea, contained in the twenty-fifth chapter of this prophecy, from the thirteenth verse to the end of the chapter. For which reason, in the Vatican and Alexandrian copies of the Septuagint, these six chapters follow immediately after xxv. 13. where express mention is made of the book which Jeremiah had prophesied against the nations: which book is contained in this and the following chapters of this prophecy.

Ver. 2. *Against the army of Pharaoh-Nechoh king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish.*] This was the second battle which the king of Babylon (called the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xxiii. 29.) fought with Pharaoh-Nechoh near this city. In the former of those expeditions was Josiah killed. (See 2 Chron. xxxv. 20.)

Which Nebuchadnezzar smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim king of Judah.] This is coincident with the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, according to the Scripture account, which begins his reign two years before his father's death. (See the note on xxv. 1.) For Nebuchadnezzar went upon this expedition by his father's command: and upon this victory, Jehoiakim, who had been made king of Judea by Pharaoh-Nechoh, (2 Kings xxiii. 34.) became tributary to Nebuchadnezzar. (See 2 Kings xxiv. 1. 7. and the notes upon Jer. xxii. 19.)

Ver. 2, 3. *Order ye the buckler and shield,* &c.] The prophet ironically encourages the Egyptians to make ready all warlike preparations, which yet he foresees will in the end signify nothing. (See the following verse, and ver 14. and compare li. 12. Nahum ii. 1. iii. 14.)

Ver. 5. *For fear was round about, saith the Lord.*] A panic fear seized the whole army. (Compare xlix. 29. l. 37. li. 30. Isa. xix. 16.)

Ver. 6. *Let not the swift flee away,* &c.] The words imply, that it was God's command that none of the Egyptian army should escape. Or else the imperative may be taken for the future, by a usual enallage. (See the note on xxv. 27.)

They shall stumble and fall towards the north, by the river Euphrates.] The river Euphrates was northward from Judea. So Babylon is described as lying northward, being situate upon that river. (See i. 14. iv. 6. vi. 1.)

Ver. 7, 8. *Who is this that cometh up as a flood?* &c.] In order to raise an expectation of some mighty enterprise, the prophet describes, by way of vision, the march of the Egyptian army, coming on like a flood, and carrying all before it: which expressions allude to the overflowing of the river Nile. (Compare likewise xlvii. 2. Isa. viii. 7, 8. Dan. xi. 26. xi. 22. Amos viii. 8.)

Ver. 9. *Let the mighty men come forth; the Ethiopians, the Lybians—and the Lydians, that handle and bend the bow.*] These names in Hebrew are *Cush,* and *Phut,* and *Lud,* who were the Egyptians' allies, and are mentioned together as such, Ezek. xxx. 5. which makes it probable that they are all Africans. *Cush,* though it often signifies Arabia, yet sometimes denotes Ethiopia, as hath been shewed upon xiii. 23. *Phut* is rendered Lybia, by our interpreters here, and Ezek. xxx. 5. But Phut and Lubim

are spoken of as a distinct people, Nahum iii. 9. Phut may probably signify Mauritania, and Lud, or Ludim; the people of Meroe. These were famous for the use of the bow, as it is expressed both here and Isa. lxvi. 19.

Ver. 10. *For this is the day of the Lord God of hosts.*] The *day of the Lord* often signifies the day of his vengeance. (See Isa. xiii. 6. Joel i. 15. ii. 1. Amos v. 18. Zeph. i. 14, 15.) From thence it comes to signify the day of judgment in the New Testament, of which all other days of vengeance are the earnests and forerunners.

A day of vengeance, that he may revenge himself of his adversaries.] Of the idols of Egypt, and their worshippers. (See ver. 25. xliii. 12, 13.)

And the sword shall devour, &c.] See Isa. xxxiv. 6.

For the Lord God hath a sacrifice in the north country, &c.] The slaughter of men is called a sacrifice, because it makes some kind of satisfaction and atonement to God's justice. (Isa. xxxiv. 6. Ezek. xxxix. 17. Zeph. i. 7.)

Ver. 11. *Go up into Gilead, and take balm.*] Gilead was famous for producing balm, and such-like healing gums. (See the note on viii. 22.) The prophet, alluding to the custom of men's going thither for relief in dangerous infirmities, ironically advises the Egyptians to try all the methods they can think of, to prevent that destruction that threatens them: but all their endeavours will be in vain. (Compare li. 8.)

O virgin, the daughter of Egypt.] Those cities or countries are called *virgins* which never were conquered. (See the note on xiv. 17. and compare Isa. xlvii. 1.) Egypt was grown great by its conquests, particularly by the former battle at Carchemish; (see ver. 2.) and did not apprehend itself in any danger of being conquered. *The daughter of Egypt,* is the same with Egypt. (See ver. 19. and the notes on iv. 11.)

Ver. 12. *The nations have heard of thy shame.*] Of thine armies being shamefully beaten, and running away.

For the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty.] When an army is once broken and disordered, multitudes are a hinderance one to another, and one part helps to destroy another. (See ver. 16. 21.)

Ver. 13. *The word of the Lord—how Nebuchadnezzar should come to smite the land of Egypt.*] Compare xliii. 10. This is a distinct prophecy from the former, as was observed in the Argument to that chapter. The same destruction of Egypt is at large foretold and described by Ezekiel, chap. xxix.—xxxii.

Ver. 14. *Publish in Migdol.*] See xliv. 1.

Stand fast, and prepare thee.] Prepare for war, and resolve to keep your ground, and not to yield to the enemy. (Compare ver. 2, 3.)

Ver. 15. *Why are the valiant men swept away?*] The Hebrew word *abbir,* rendered *valiant,* is sometimes spoken of God, as Gen. xlix. 24. sometimes is a title given to angels, Psal. lxxviii. 25. and here the Septuagint understand it of Apis, the idol of Egypt, (compare ver. 20. 25.) who may properly be said to be conquered, when the nation that put themselves under his protection was subdued. (See xliii. 12.)

Ver. 16. *Arise, and let us go again to our own people, and to the land of our nativity.*] The words of the Egyptian allies. (See ver. 9. 21.)

Ver. 17. *They did cry there, Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise; he hath passed the time appointed.*] He brags what great things he will do, but he does not bring his forces together till the season of the year for action is over. (Compare viii. 20.)

Ver. 18. *Surely as Tabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, so shall he come.*] Some think the expression compares Nebuchadnezzar, a lofty and aspiring conqueror, to Tabor and Carmel, two of the highest mountains in Judea. Others understand it thus: He will as surely come, as that part of Judea which is joined to Tabor is enclosed with mountains, and as Carmel is encompassed with the sea. (See 1 Kings xviii. 42, 43.) Or lastly, the verse may be expounded thus: Though Egypt were as inaccessible as the top of Mount Tabor, and begirt with the sea like Carmel, yet the enemy should come upon her, and make an entire conquest of her.

Ver. 19. *O thou daughter dwelling in Egypt.*] Compare xlviii. 18. Countries and cities are usually compared to women (such representations being very common, particularly on medals), and sometimes to young women, when their wealth makes them soft and effeminate. (See Isa. xlvii. 1.)

Furnish thyself to go into captivity.] The expression is ironical, implying, that instead of the rich and goodly furniture wherein she did pride herself, she should be carried away captive, naked and bare, and wanting all manner of conveniences. (See Isa. xx. 4. xlvii. 2, 3.)

Ver. 20. *Egypt is like a very fair heifer.*] In the foregoing verse, the prophet compared Egypt to a delicate young woman: here he resembles her to a fat and well-favoured heifer. (Compare l. 11.) In which comparison, as Grotius not improbably conjectures, there is an allusion to their god Apis, who was a bull remarkable for his beauty, and the fine spots or marks he had about him.

It cometh out of the north.] See ver. 6. 10.

Ver. 21. *Also her hired men are in the midst of her like fatted bullocks.*] The auxiliary troops which the king of Egypt hath hired, (see ver. 9. 16.) are like bullocks fatted up, and fit for the slaughter. (See l. 27. Isa. xxxiv. 7. Ezek. xxxix. 18.)

They did not stand, [in the fight, see ver. 15.] *because the day of their calamity was upon them.*] Their *day was come, even the time of their visitation,* as it is expressed, l. 27.

Ver. 22. *The voice thereof shall go like a serpent.*] They shall not shout like conquerors, but make a feeble noise, like the hissing of a serpent when it is pursued: and shall speak in a very submissive and humble tone. (See Isa. xxix. 4. Micah vii. 16, 17.)

For they shall march with an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood.] The destruction of Egypt is described by the metaphor of cutting down the trees of a forest. (Compare Isa. x. 33, 34. xiv. 8. xxxvii. 24.)

Ver. 23. *They shall cut down her forest, though it cannot be searched; because they are more than the grasshoppers.*] Cities, and their stately buildings, are elsewhere compared to the trees of a forest: (see the note on xxi. 14.) so here the text imports, that though the cities of Egypt were never so numerous and large, yet the Chaldean army should plunder and destroy them, because their number is proportionable to such an enterprise. Armies are often compared to grasshoppers, and such-like insects, both for their multi-

tudes, and because they make a general consumption. (See Judg. vi. 5. vii. 12. Joel ii. 4, 5.)

Ver. 25. *I will punish the multitude of No.*] The Hebrew reads, *Ammon Minnó*, which may be literally rendered, *Ammon of No:* the same place is expressed in Ezekiel by *Haman No*, (xxx. 15.) and in Nahum it is called *No Amon*, (iii. 8.) The name is generally thought to be derived from Jupiter Hammon, whose temple was there; and is supposed to be the same city which is called Thebes by the heathen writers, famous for its hundred gates in Homer's time. It is rendered Διόσπολις by the Septuagint, which is the Greek name for Thebes. Which city was famous for the worship of Jupiter Hammon, as appears by a passage in Plato's Phædrus. (See Dr. Cudworth's Intellectual System, p. 339.) [Plutarch informs us, that *Hammon*, in the Egyptian language, signifies the same with Ζεὺς, or Jupiter, lib. de Isid. et Osir. p. 354. edit. Francofurt.] The Vulgar Latin interprets it Alexandria; but that was a city of later date, and a place of no note in the times the prophets speak of.

And Egypt, with their gods.] As the judgment threatened upon No was an instance of the Divine vengeance upon the idol Hammon, and his worshippers: so the same vengeance shall reach the rest of Egypt with their respective idols. (See xliii. 12, 13.)

And their kings.] The governors of the several *nomi*, or provinces, called *kingdoms* by Isaiah, xix. 2.

Ver. 26. *And afterward it shall be inhabited.*] After the space of forty years. (See Ezek. xxix. 13.)

Ver. 27, 28. *But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob*, &c.] See xxx. 10, 11. from whence these two verses are taken, containing a comfortable promise to the Jews, that God will not make an utter destruction of them, as he hath done of several other nations, against whom the prophets have denounced his judgments: but will still preserve a remnant of them, to whom he will perform the promises made to their fathers.

CHAP. XLVII.

ARGUMENT.

Jeremiah had foretold that the Philistines should be conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, together with the rest of their neighbours. (See xxv. 20.) This probably came to pass during the time of the siege of Tyre, which lasted thirteen years, as Josephus shews out of Philostratus, and the Phœnician Annals, Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11. and lib. contra App. p. 1046. Accordingly we find Tyre and Zidon here mentioned, (ver. 4.) as sharers in the common calamity.

Ver. 1. *BEFORE that Pharaoh smote Gaza.*] When the Philistines' country was in seeming quiet and security. The destruction of Gaza might probably happen, after Pharaoh's victories at Megiddo and Carchemish, when Judea became tributary to him. (See 2 Chron. xxxv. 20. xxxvi. 3.) Amos foretells the destruction of Gaza, i. 6. but it is not certain, that the same event is foretold by both prophets.

Ver. 2. *Waters shall rise up out of the north, and there shall be an overflowing flood.*] The usual metaphor to describe the march of an army that overruns a country. (See xlvi. 8.) By the *north* is meant in this prophecy the land of the Chaldeans. (See i. 13, 14.)

Ver. 3. *At the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong horses*, &c.] Compare Nahum iii. 2. *Abbirauh* properly signifies horses, and should be so translated, viii. 16. (See the note there.)

The fathers shall not look back to their children, &c.] Shall not regard them; so the phrase is taken, Numb. xvi. 15. Our translation renders the word there, *respect not*, or shew any concern for their safety. They shall be so dismayed and dispirited, that they shall scarce be able to save themselves.

Ver. 4. *To cut off from Tyrus and Zidon every helper that remaineth.*] The siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar was an action famous in the histories of that age, which lasted thirteen years. (See the Argument to the chapter, and compare Ezek. chap. xxvii. xxviii.) Zidon was partaker of the same fate with Tyre, both in prosperity and adversity: (see Isa. xxiii. 2. 4.) and her destruction is joined with that of Tyre by Ezekiel, chap. xxviii.

The remnant of the country of Caphtor.] Or, *the isle of Caphtor;* see ver. 7. and the note on Isa. xx. 6. called the *remnant of the Philistines*, Amos. i. 8. and the *remnant of the sea-coast*, Ezek. xxv. 16. The expression denotes either a colony transplanted from Caphtor, or else that small remainder of the Philistines, after they had been in a manner all destroyed in former times, according to the judgments denounced against them by Amos, i. 8. and Isaiah, xiv. 19, &c. and we may perhaps add those in Zephaniah, ii. 5, &c. (Compare xxv. 20.) Caphtor, or the Caphtorim, were the ancient inhabitants of Palestine. (See Deut. ii. 23.) The Caphtorim and Caslubim were two neighbouring nations, and nearly related to each other, being both descended from Mizraim the father of the Egyptians: (see Gen. x. 13, 14.) which may be the reason why Moses there derives the pedigree of the Philistines from the latter of these two. The ancients generally suppose Caphtor to be the same with Cappadocia. These two nations might go out of Egypt, their native soil, and settle themselves in Cappadocia, where they passed under the general appellation of Caphtorim, and afterward return back towards their own native country, and settle in Palestine. (See Amos ix. 7.) But others think it more probable, that Caphtor is the same with Crete, which we know is an island properly so called. The chief ground of this opinion is, that the Cherethims or Cherethites are the same with the Philistines, as appears from Ezek. xxv. 16. Zeph. ii. 5. 1 Sam. xxx. 14. compared with ver. 16. Now the Cherethims are generally supposed to be the Cretians, and the sound of the word confirms the conjecture. (See Vitringa's commentary on Isa. xiv. 29.)

Ver. 5. *Baldness is come upon Gaza—how long wilt thou cut thyself?*] Under great calamities, it was usual for men to express their grief by shaving their heads, and cutting their flesh. (See xli. 5. xlviii. 37.)

Ver. 6. *O sword of the Lord.*] When God devotes a nation to be destroyed, he is said to give commission to a sword to pass through the land. (See Ezek. xiv. 17. xxi. 3.)

How long will it be ere thou be quiet?] The prophet speaks in the words or complaints the Philistines made, who saw themselves devoted to destruction; or else as sympathizing with their calamities. (See xlviii. 31, 32.)

Ver. 7. *How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given*

it a charge against Ashkelon, &c.] The prophet returns an answer to the foregoing verse, importing that the havoc made by the sword amongst the Philistines, was the effect of God's irreversible purpose and decree.

CHAP. XLVIII.

ARGUMENT.

The following prophecies against Moab, Ammon, Edom, and the neighbouring countries, seem to have been fulfilled, during the long siege of Tyre, mentioned in the Argument of the foregoing chapter. (Compare Ezek. xxv. 1, &c.) See Archbishop Usher's Annals of the Old Testament, ad A. M. 3419. and Joseph. Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11. who places these events five years after the destruction of Jerusalem. The prophet Jeremiah in his prophecy against Moab, borrows several expressions out of Isaiah's prophecy against the same people, though that was probably fulfilled several years before.

Ver. 1. *WOE to Nebo! for it is spoiled; Kiriathaim is confounded.*] Two cities of Moab. (See Numb. xxxii. 37. xxxiii. 47. Isa. xv. 2.) The latter of these was given by Moses to the Reubenites, as appears by Josh. xiii. 10. but the Moabites afterward recovered the possession of it, as they did Dibon, Sibmah, and other places. (Compare those texts in Numbers and Joshua, with Isa. xv. 2. xvi. 8, 9. and the twenty-first and the following verses of this chapter.)

Ver. 2. *There shall be no praise of Moab.*] The *glory of Moab* shall be *contemned,* as the prophet Isaiah speaks, xvi. 14. every thing for which it was commendable shall be destroyed.

In Heshbon they have devised evil against it, &c.] Heshbon was the capital city of the Moabites. (See Numb. xxi. 26.) When the Chaldeans made themselves masters of Heshbon, a place of that importance, they consulted how to carry on their conquests over the rest of the country: the word *Heshbon* signifies, in Chaldee, a *device,* or consultation. So the prophet here alludes to the name of the city. (See the like allusions, l. 21. Micah i. 10. 14. 25.)

Also thou shalt be cut down, [or *brought to silence,* compare Isa. xv. 1.] *O Madmen.*] A city in Moab. (Isa. xxv. 10.)

Ver. 3. *A voice of weeping shall be from Horonaim.*] See Isa. xv. 5.

Ver. 4. *Her little ones have caused a cry to be heard.*] Both small and great were involved in this calamity. But the word *tseir,* signifies *great* as well as *little:* and so the Chaldee paraphrast renders it here, *lords:* which sense of the words is at large asserted and proved by our learned Dr. Pocock, in his Miscellaneous Notes upon Porta Mosis, p. 19, &c.

Ver. 5. *For in the going up of Luith,* &c.] See Isa. xv. 5.

Ver. 6. *And be like the heath in the wilderness.*] Resort to the most solitary places you can think of, where nothing grows but barren shrubs: (see xvii. 6.) and where no enemy can find you out.

Ver. 7. *Because thou hast trusted in thy works.*] Or, *In thy possession:* for so the word is translated, 1 Sam. xxv. 2.

And Chemosh shall go into captivity.] The idol of the Moabites, Numb. xxi. 29. (See the note on xliii. 12.)

Ver. 8. *The valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed.*] Those that live in the country, with their flocks and pastures, shall be involved in the same calamity with the inhabitants of the cities.

Ver. 9. *Give wings to Moab, that it may flee and get away.*] It is not a common speed that can deliver him from that imminent danger which threatens him. (See ver. 28. and compare Psal. lv. 6.)

Ver. 10. *Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully,* &c.] God executes his judgments upon sinners, by the ministry of men, and those oftentimes as great sinners, as those that suffer by them. He had declared by Jeremiah his purpose of making the Chaldeans his instruments in punishing the Jews, and the neighbouring countries. (See xxv. 9.) Their success answered the prediction, and Nebuchadnezzar seems to have looked upon Jeremiah as a prophet, and had a particular regard to his character. (See xxxix. 11.) Being thus assured that he had a commission from God, he might confidently proceed in his conquests, and it would have been a fault to have shewed mercy to those whom he had good reason to believe, that God had marked out for destruction. Such an unseasonable act of mercy is highly blamed in Saul, 1 Sam. xv. 11. and in Ahab, 1 Kings xx. 42. God's judgments are often denounced in form of imprecation. (See Deut. xxvii. 15, &c. Judg. v. 23. Gal. i. 8. 1 Cor. xvi. 22. 2 Tim. iv. 16.)

Ver. 11. *Moab hath been at ease from his youth.*] He hath never felt any calamity, since that judgment foretold by Isaiah, and inflicted by Shalmaneser. So that there were forty years between that captivity and this here spoken of. (See Archbishop Usher's Annals, ad An. M. 3280. and 3419.)

And he hath settled on his lees.] He hath flourished in peace, and grown rich, as wine that feeds on its lees; (compare Zech. i. 12.) when the Jews during that time have suffered several captivities.

Therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed.] As generous wines retain their strength as long as they continue in the lees; so he retained his wonted pride and luxury, and doth not depart from any of those vices which a long prosperity has occasioned. (See Isa. xvi. 6.)

Ver. 12. *I will send unto him wanderers,* &c.] The Chaldean soldiers that came out of a foreign country: these shall make a prey of him, and shall carry off as much of his wealth as they can, and spoil the rest. (Compare xiii. 14.)

Ver. 13. *And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh,* &c.] They shall be disappointed in their expectations of succours from their tutelary idol; (see Judg. xi. 24. 1 Kings xi. 7.) as the ten tribes have been in the trust they reposed in the calf they worshipped at Beth-el. (See Hos. viii. 5. x. 6.)

Ver. 15. *Moab is spoiled, and gone up out of her cities.*] Or, [the spoiler] *is gone up against her cities.* (Compare ver. 18.)

His chosen young men are gone down to the slaughter.] Compare l. 27. The same thing is otherwise expressed, by bringing down to the grave, or the pit.

Ver. 17. *All ye that are about him bemoan him, and all ye that knew his name.*] His calamities are so great, as must needs make all that see him, or have heard of his former fame and glory, bewail his misfortunes.

How is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod!] Compare Isa. xiv. 5. A staff or rod is an emblem of authority, and thence comes to signify a kingdom, or government, especially such a one as oppresses its subjects, or neighbours. (See Isa. ix. 4. x. 5.)

Ver. 18. *Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon.*] Thou that art softened with luxury and effeminacy. (See xlvi. 18.) Dibon was one of the chief cities of Moab. (See Numb. xxi. 30. Isa. xv. 2.)

Come down from thy glory, and sit in thirst.] Submit to a mean condition, wherein thou shalt feel the want of all conveniences of life. The Hebrew language expresses a barren land, which yields no food or sustenance, by a thirsty ground. (See Psal. lxiii. 2. Isa. xxxv. 7. Ezek. xix. 13.)

Ver. 19. *O inhabitants of Arcer* [a town in the borders of Moab; see Deut. ii. 36.] *stand by the way, and espy,* &c.] The prophet describes the great concern and fear that was upon them, which made them hearken to every little report that was stirring.

Ver. 20. *Howl and cry.*] There will be just occasion for a general lamentation.

Tell ye in Arnon.] A country which took its name from the river Arnon, which was upon the border of Moab. (See Numb. xx. 28.)

Ver. 21. *And judgment is come upon the plain country.*] See ver. 8.

Ver. 24. *And upon Kerioth.*] See ver. 41. Amos ii. 2.

And upon Bozrah.] The same town that is called Bezer, Dent. iv. 43. Josh. xxi. 36. A different place from Bozrah, which belonged to the land of Edom, (xlix. 13.)

Ver. 25. *The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm broken.*] Strength is often expressed by the horn, wherein the strength of bulls, and such-like creatures, consists; and by the arm, wherein human strength doth chiefly discover itself.

Ver. 26. *Make ye him drunken,* &c.] God's judgments are represented under the metaphor of a cup of intoxicating liquors. (See the note on xxv. 15.)

Moab also shall wallow in his vomit, and shall be in derision.] The judgments which God sends upon him shall expose him to the scorn of his enemies: just as a drunken man is the object of men's laughter and derision. (Compare Habak. ii. 16.)

Ver. 27. *For was not Israel a derision unto thee?*] Didst not thou insult over the calamities of the Jews, when they were carried away captive? (See the note on xii. 14. and compare Ezek. xxv. 8. Zeph. ii. 8.) Israel is here put for Judah. (See the note on xviii. 13.)

Was he found among thieves? for since thou spakest of him, thou skippest for joy.] Though the sins of Israel were great in the sight of God, yet he had done no injury to the Moabites; so there was no reason they should use him with the same despite and contempt as if he had been a common thief taken in the very fact, whom every one thinks they have a right to abuse. (Compare ii. 26.) The latter part of the verse may be thus rendered, *For the words thou hast spoken against him, thou shalt be carried captive.* This interpretation of the words the Vulgar Latin follows, and the verb *thithnoded* may very well be rendered to this sense. (See the note on xxxi. 18.)

Ver. 28. *O inhabitants of Moab, leave the cities, and dwell in the rock,* &c.] Flee away, and hide yourselves, if you can, from these calamities which are coming upon you. (See ver. 9. and compare Psal. lv. 6, 7.)

Ver. 29. *We have heard the pride of Moab,* &c.] Whereby he hath *magnified himself against the Lord,* (ver. 26.) and *against the people of the Lord,* (Zech. ii. 10.)

Ver. 30. *I know his wrath—but it shall not be so; his lies shall not so effect it.*] Or, *his strength shall not avail* answerably to his wrath; his power shall not be answerable to his malice. (See the note on Isa. xvi. 6.) The latter part of the sentence may be thus rendered, *But it is not right, his liars do not that which is right.* The word *baddim,* sometimes signifies those that pretend to the arts of divination, or foretelling what is to come. (See l. 36.) If we take the word in this sense, the meaning of the sentence is, That although the soothsayers and magicians, upon whose skill Moab relies, promise him good success, and thereby encourage his pride and arrogance; yet, in the event, it will appear that there was nothing of truth in what they said.

Ver. 31. *Therefore I will howl for Moab.*] See the note on Isa. xv. 5.

And I will cry out for all Moab.] The whole country of Moab: the phrase is the same with that of *whole Palestina,* Isa. xiv. 31.

My heart shall mourn for the men of Kir-heres.] See Isa. xvi. 7. 11.

Ver. 32. *O vine of Sibmah, I will bewail thee with the weeping of Jazer.*] The expressions denote the destruction of the fruitful vineyards of Sibmah. The loss of which the neighbouring places of Jazer would have reason to lament. (Compare Isa. xvi. 9.)

Thy plants are gone over the sea, they reach even to the sea of Jazer.] The words, pursuing the metaphor of a vineyard, imply that the principal inhabitants (compare Nahum ii. 2.) are carried away, or forced to fly their country, and pass over the sea, that is, the river of Jazer; a stream that runs into the river Arnon, the border of Moab. (Numb. xxi. 13.) All lakes and rivers are called *seas* in the Hebrew language.

Ver. 33. *And joy and gladness is taken out of the plentiful field,* &c.] The gathering in the harvest, and other fruits of the earth, is usually accompanied with great expressions of joy; (see Isa. ix. 3. Joel i. 12.) for which there will be no occasion, when the enemy has spoiled or carried away their crop and vintage. (Compare Isa. xvi. 10.)

Ver. 34. *From the cry of Heshbon even unto Elealeh, and even unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice,* &c.] When Heshbon was taken by the enemy, (see ver. 2. 15.) the cry of the inhabitants reached as far as Elealeh and Jahaz: the same was likewise heard from Zoar to Horonaim. (See Isa. xv. 4, 5.)

As an heifer of three years old.] See the note on Isa. xv. 5. Dr. Lightfoot, in his Chorographical Inquiries before his Horæ Hebraicæ upon St. John, chap. 3. n. 8. proposes another rendering of these words, *Eglah Shelishiah,* and interprets the sentence thus, *From Zoar unto Horonaim, even to the third Eglah.* He supposes several places might be called by the name of Eglah, particularly there is one of them mentioned, Ezek. xlvii. 10. and this in the text might be called the *third Eglah,* by way of distinction.

For the waters of Nimrim shall be desolate.] See the note on Isa. xv. 9.

Ver. 35. *Moreover, I will cause him to cease in Moab that offereth in the high places.*] See ver. 7. and Isa. xvi. 12.

Ver. 36. *Therefore my heart shall sound for Moab like pipes,* &c.] My bowels are moved within me, I groan inwardly for trouble and anguish. (Compare iv. 19. Job xxx. 27. see Isa. xvi. 11. Lam. i. 20. and the notes upon xv. 15.) The music of pipes was used at funerals. (See Sir Norton Knatchbull's notes on Matt. ix. 23.)

Ver. 37. *For every head shall be bald, and every beard clipped,* &c.] See the note upon xli. 5. and compare xlvii. 5. Isa. xv. 2.

Ver. 38. *There shall be lamentation generally upon all the housetops of Moab.*] See the notes upon Isa. xv. 3.

For I have broken Moab as a vessel wherein there is no pleasure.] As earthen vessels, if they are not fit for the use to which they were designed, are broken to pieces, without any concern or regret, (compare xix. 11.) so as never to be repaired: thus God will deal with Moab.

Ver. 39. *They shall howl, saying, How is it broken down?*] Or, *Broken to pieces,* as the word is rendered l. 2. The prophet persists in the allusion to the breaking of an earthen vessel.

Ver. 40. *Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and spread his wings over Moab.*] Conquerors are often compared to eagles, and other birds of prey; (see xlix. 22. Deut. xxviii. 49. Dan. vii. 4.) and the encamping their armies is represented by spreading their wings. (See Isa. viii. 8. and the note there.)

Ver. 41. *And the mighty men's hearts in Moab at that day, shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.*] They shall be dismayed at the apprehension of the evils that are coming upon them, and shall lose their wonted courage and resolution. (Compare vi. 24. xxx. 6. xlix. 22. 24. l. 37. 43. li. 30. Isa. xiii. 8. Lam. i. 6. Nahum iii. 33.)

Ver. 43, 44. *Fear, and the pit, and the snare, shall be upon thee,* &c.] The words are taken out of Isa. xxiv. 17, 18. (See the notes there.)

I will bring upon it, even upon Moab, the year of their visitation.] See xi. 23.

Ver. 45. *They that fled, stood under the shadow of Heshbon because of the force.*] They that fled for fear of the enemy's forces, thought to find a shelter and safeguard in Heshbon, a strong fenced city. (See ver. 2.) But the Hebrew *miccoah, because of the force,* may be rendered *for want of force or strength.* (Compare x. 14.) And so the preposition *min* is translated by our interpreters, Psal. cx. 24. Lam. iv. 9. according to the old translation; and Micah iii. 6. where we read in the Hebrew, *Therefore night shall be unto you from a vision,* or, *because of a vision:* which our translators rightly render, *That ye shall not have a vision.*

But a fire shall come out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon.] That is, of the city of Sihon, meaning Heshbon. (See Numb. xxi. 28.) When the enemies once possessed themselves of Heshbon, the principal city of Moab, they quickly spread like fire over the rest of the country. So that the prophet fitly applies to the present case the words of an ancient poem, or *epinikion,* made upon Sihon's conquests over Moab, and recited by Moses, Numb. xxi. 27, 28, &c.

And shall devour the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the tumultuous ones.] By the *corner* may be meant the borders, or extreme parts of the country. So the Hebrew word signifies, Numb. xxxiv. 3. Nehem. xi. 22. or it may mean the *nobility,* who are the stay and support of the government, expressed likewise by the *crown of the head,* in the following sentence: or else both expressions may allude to the custom practised in those countries, of polling and cutting round the corners or forepart of their hair, concerning which see the note on xxv. 26. By the *tumultuous* are meant those that through pride indulge themselves in their state and plenty, and insult over their inferiors.

Ver. 46. *Woe be unto thee, O Moab!*] This verse is likewise taken out of Numb. xxi. 19.

The people of Chemosh perisheth.] People are sometime denominated from the god they worship. So the Jews are called the people of the Lord, or Jehovah.

Ver. 47. *Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days.*] The Moabites were afterward restored to their country, as appears from Josephus, Antiq. lib. xiii. cap. 17. *versus finem.* But these and such-like promises of mercy after judgment, are chiefly to be understood of the conversion of the gentiles under the gospel, called the *latter days* in the prophets. (Compare xii. 15—17. xlix. 6. 39. Isa. xviii. 7. xix. 18, &c. xxiii. 18.) The conversion of idolaters is expressed by *returning from their captivity,* Ezek. xvi. 53.

CHAP. XLIX.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter is a collection of prophecies against several of those nations, against which Jeremiah had a general commission to declare God's judgments, xxv. 3. Concerning the time when they were fulfilled, see the Argument of the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 1. *HATH Israel no sons?—why then doth their kings inherit Gad?* &c.] The Septuagint read Gilead, which agrees with the words of Amos in his prophecy against the Ammonites, (Amos i. 13.) But the sense is all one; for in Amos we are to understand that part of Gilead which belonged to the tribe of Gad. God sorely afflicted those parts of the kingdom of Israel that lay eastward of Jordan, first by Hazael, (2 Kings x. 33.) afterward by Tiglath-Pileser, (xv. 29.) and then delivered up the whole kingdom to be carried captive by Shalmaneser: (chap. xvii.) after which time, it is probable, the Ammonites took occasion to possess themselves of Gilead, that lay near their territories: but God's dispossessing the Israelites gave them no right to invade their inheritance; (see Zeph. ii. 8.) especially when they had been so tender of the Ammonites' right, as not to invade their possession in their march towards the land of Canaan. (See Deut. iv. 19. 2 Chron. xx. 10.)

Ver. 2. *I will cause the noise of war to be heard in Rabbah of the Ammonites.*] The principal city of that country. (See Amos i. 14. Ezek. xxv. 5.)

Her daughters shall be burnt with fire.] That is, the lesser cities which are reckoned as so many daughters to the mother-city. To the same sense the *daughters of Judah* are joined with Zion, as the metropolis, Psal. xlviii. 11. xcvii. 8. and see the following verse.

Then shall Israel be heir to them that were his heirs.]

The Jews made themselves masters of the Ammonites, and the neighbouring countries under the Maccabees. (See Maccab. v. 6, 7. and compare Ezek. xxv. 14.)

The words *heir* and *inheritance*, in the Hebrew, signify any real and lasting possession: (see Psal. lxxxii. 8.) the expression being taken from the usual manner of conveying land among them, which was by inheritance.

Ver. 3. *Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled.*] When Ai (not the place mentioned Josh. viii. but) a city of the Ammonites is destroyed: then it is time for Heshbon, the chief city of Moab, to lament her danger, for her turn comes next. (See xlviii. 2.)

Cry, ye daughters of Rabbah, gird ye with sackcloth.] Ye tender women, inhabitants of Rabbah, that are not used to hardships, bemoan yourselves with the deepest expressions of mourning and sorrow. (Compare Isa. xxxii. 11. Jer. iv. 8. vi. 26.)

Lament, and run to and fro by the hedges.] Try to hide yourselves in the thickets, and remove from one place to another for fear of being discovered: or the words may be expounded thus: Lament, ye inhabitants of the lesser towns, and run to and fro in your villages, as uncertain reports shall prompt you to flee from the enemy. So Schindler expounds the word *gederoth*, Psal. lxxxix. 40. (See iv. 29.)

For their king shall go into captivity.] Or, *Milcom shall go into captivity:* so the word may likewise be rendered in the first verse. Milcom was the idol of the Ammonites. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 13.) The idols always shared in the prosperity or calamities that befel their worshippers. (Compare xlviii. 7. and see the note on xliii. 12.)

Ver. 4. *Wherefore gloriest thou in thy valleys, thou flowing valley?*] That is, in the riches of thy fat and plentiful valleys, which overflow with abundance of all things. (Compare Isa. xxviii. 1. 4.)

O backsliding daughter.] See the note on vii. 24.

That trusted in her treasures, &c.] Thought she had money enough to furnish herself with all things necessary for her defence. Such a confidence and carnal security as this, is elsewhere severely threatened. (See xxi. 13. Isa. xlvii. 7, 8.)

Ver. 5. *Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee.*] When God gives up a people to destruction, he commonly takes from them their usual courage, so that a *thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one.* (Compare ver. 29. xlviii. 43.) This the heathens expressed by a *panic terror.* Or the word *fear* may denote a hostile army, the cause of fear and terror. (Compare xv. 8.)

And ye shall be driven out every one right forth.] So as not to dare look back, but fly for their lives that way which lies next. (See xlvi. 5. Amos iv. 3.)

And none shall gather up him that wandereth.] None shall bring him that flies from the enemy to his house, or afford him any shelter or accommodation. (Compare Isa. xvi. 3.)

Ver. 6. *And afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon.*] See 1 Maccab. v. 5. and the note upon xlviii. 47.

Ver. 7. *Is wisdom no more in Teman?*] The eastern part of the world (by which is chiefly meant Arabia, and the adjacent countries, see the note on Isa. xi. 14.) was famous for the study of wisdom, or philosophy as it was called in later times. (See 1 Kings iv. 30.) The Edomites put in their claim to this prerogative, as appears from the text, and the parallel place of Obadiah, (ver. 8.) as also from the book of Job, where Eliphaz, one of the disputants, is called the Temanite, as being descended from Teman, Esau's grandson, who gave name to the city or country of Teman, elsewhere mentioned. (See Amos i. 12. Obad. ver. 9. Habak. iii. 3.) Unless we suppose it the same Tema, mentioned xxv. 23. Isa. xxi. 14. which took its name from Tema, Ishmael's son, Gen. xxv. 15.

Is counsel perished from the prudent?] When God designs a people for destruction, he deprives them of that common prudence and foresight which is requisite for the due management of their affairs. (See Isa. xix. 11, &c.)

Ver. 8. *Flee, turn back, dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan.*] The Dedanites were Arabians of the posterity of Dedan, the grandson of Abraham, (Gen. xxv. 3.) They seem by this place to have been in latter times subdued by the Idumeans, and incorporated with them: the prophet exhorts them to flee, and turn their backs from an enemy they are not able to encounter; and hide themselves in the deepest caves and dens they could find. (Compare ver. 10. and Judg. vi. 2.)

Ver. 9. *If grape-gatherers came to thee, would not they leave some grapes?* &c.] The vintage can hardly be gathered in so clean, but that there will be a gleaning left. (Compare Isa. xvii. 6.) Nay, the house-breakers commonly leave something behind them. But the desolation that is coming upon thee will be so entire, that scarce a remnant shall be preserved. (Compare Obad. ver. 5.)

Ver. 10. *For I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret parts.*] Or *treasures,* as the word signifies, Isa. xlv. 3. I have taken from him every thing that might be a refuge or defence to him in the time of a general calamity.

His seed is spoiled, his brethren, and his neighbours.] The Divine judgments extend not only to his children, but even to his brethren and neighbours: such as the Ammonites, Moabites, and all about him, from whom he might expect some succour and assistance.

And he is not.] He is utterly ruined and destroyed. (Compare Isa. xvii. 14.) Some join this word *enenna* to the following verse, and render it, *And there is none left* [that may say] *leave* [to me] *thy father's children,* &c. that is, there is none left to take care of the fatherless and widow.

Ver. 11. *Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive,* &c.] The Chaldee paraphrase understands this of the Jews, to whom the following words do certainly belong; as if it contained God's promise to take care of their families, under that distressed and forlorn state, to which the captivity had reduced them. If we understand the words of the Edomites, the sentence seems to be ironical; (see a like instance, Isa. xvi. 4.) as if the prophet had said, Thou needest not to be concerned for thy helpless children, and thy widows thou must leave to the mercy of the enemy, for none of them shall survive or escape. This sense agrees very well with that expression of ver. 10. *His seed is spoiled,* and with ver. 13. 17.

Ver. 12. *Behold, they whose judgment was not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken.*] The Jews, who in all human appearance might have expected mercy at God's hands in regard to the gracious promises made to them,

and to their fathers. (See xxv. 29.) Concerning the phrase of *drinking God's cup*, see the note on xxv. 15.

And art thou he that shalt altogether go unpunished?] Concerning the Hebrew phrase used in this place, see the note on xxx. 11.

Ver. 13. *That Bozrah shall become—a curse.*] See the note on xxiii. 9. Bozrah was one of the chief cities of Idumea. (See Isa. xxxiv. 6. lxiii. 1.)

It is usual in the prophets to describe the destruction of a whole nation, by the ruin of some one or more of its principal cities. (See ver. 23. Amos i. 8. 12. 14. ii. 3. 5.)

Ver. 14. *I have heard a rumour from the Lord, and an ambassador is sent unto the heathen,* &c.] The prophets often represent God as summoning armies, and setting them in array of battle against those people whom he has decreed to destroy. (See l. 9. 21. li. 11. Isa. xiii. 2, 3. xviii. 3.) God's stirring up men's spirits to invade such countries, is described here, as if he had sent an ambassador to the Chaldeans and their confederates, to engage them in a war against the Idumeans: according to the methods which earthly princes use to engage their allies. (Compare li. 27, 28.)

Ver. 16. *Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thy heart.*] Thou hast been formerly terrible to all about thee: the confidence thou hast in this thy strength hath made thee careless and secure, and thereby given thine enemies an advantage against thee.

O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, that holdest the height of the hill.] Compare Obad. ver. 4. Numb. xxxiv. 3, 4. St. Jerome, who lived in the neighbourhood, tells us, in his Commentary upon Obadiah, that Idumea was a rocky mountainous country, and that the inhabitants dwelt in caves dug out of the rocks and hills.

Though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down.] The greatest height or strength cannot place thee out of the reach of Divine vengeance. (Compare li. 53. Amos ix. 2.) The eagle is remarkable for its flying high. (See Job xxxix. 27.)

Ver. 17. *Every one that goeth by it—shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.*] See the note on xviii. 16.

Ver. 18. *As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah,* &c.] A proverbial expression, denoting an utter desolation. (See l. 40. Isa. xiii. 19.)

Ver. 19. *Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan against the habitation of the strong.*] A description of Nebuchadnezzar marching with his army against Idumea, whom the prophet compares to a lion coming out of his den, near the river Jordan. When that swells in the time of harvest (see Josh. iii. 15. 1 Chron. xii. 15.) the lions that lie in the thickets on the river-side, are raised out of their coverts, and infest the country. (See Maundrell's Travels, p. 81. and compare Zech. xi. 3.)

But I will make him suddenly run away from her.] I have observed in my notes on Isa. li. 4. that the words should be rendered *I will rouse him up, and make him run,* or *seize upon her.* The preposition *menal,* here translated *from,* doth likewise signify *upon,* and is so rendered by our interpreters, 1 Kings ix. 5. (See Noldius's Concordance, p. 635.)

And who is a chosen man [or *warrior*] *that I may appoint over her?*] That is, I will single out a man remarkable for his prowess, *viz.* Nebuchadnezzar, and place him at the head of the army, that shall execute my vengeance upon Edom.

Who will appoint me the time? or who is that shepherd that will meet me?] Who will challenge me to meet him in the field, as if we were upon equal terms? or what leader or general can enter into the lists with me? The word *shepherd* often signifies a prince or commander. (See vi. 3. xxv. 34.) But here it is used in opposition to the lion mentioned before; as if he had said, A shepherd may as well encounter a lion, as the best appointed warrior contend with God Almighty, or those whom he makes the instruments of his vengeance.

Ver. 20. *Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out.*] The prophet having given the name of *shepherd* to the generals of the army, in pursuance of that metaphor, he expresses the common soldiers by *the least of the flock,* as the commanders are called *the principal of the flock,* xxv. 34. These he saith shall have strength and courage enough to draw out or devour the Idumean forces. The verb *sahab, to draw out,* alludes to the custom of dogs, who draw about a carcass before they devour it. So it is used xv. 3. where our interpreters read, *and the dogs to tear.*

Ver. 21. *The earth is moved at the noise of their fall.*] The neighbouring countries are astonished at it. The prophet compares the destruction of a nation to the fall of a great building, the noise of which frights those that are near it. (See Ezek. xxvi. 15. xxxi. 16.) Horace uses the same metaphor, Ode i. lib. ii.

——"auditumque Medis
Hesperiæ sonitum ruinæ."——

At the cry, the noise thereof was heard in the Red Sea.] Or, *the noise of their cry was heard in the Red Sea:* which was a considerable distance from the land of Edom.

Ver. 22. *He shall come up as an eagle,* &c.] See xlviii. 40, 41.

Ver. 23. *Concerning Damascus.*] The judgment denounced against Damascus, the principal city of Syria, is to be supposed to extend to the whole country. (See the note on ver. 13.) Nebuchadnezzar had subdued Syria at the beginning of his reign: (see the notes on xxxv. 1.) but he might upon some new provocations overrun that country afterward, during the siege of Tyre, which lasted thirteen years. (See the Argument to the chapter, and the notes upon xxv. 26.)

Hamath is confounded, and Arphad.] Hamath and Arphad are elsewhere joined together. (See 2 Kings xviii. 34.) Hamath is supposed to be the same with Riblah *in the land of Hamath,* xxxix. 5. called *Hamath the great,* Amos vi. 2. It is a frontier town, lying upon the borders of Judea towards Syria, thence called the *entrance of Hamath,* 1 Kings viii. 65. Isa. x. 9. Amos vi. 14. Arphad is otherwise called Arvad, the habitation of the Arvadites, Gen. x. 18. called the Aradites by the Septuagint, that is, the inhabitants of the isle of Aradus.

There is sorrow on the sea.] Or, As *on the sea,* as the margin reads: the particle *as* is frequently understood. (See xlviii. 34. and the note on Isa. xxi. 8.) *They are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest,* as the prophet Isaiah speaks, lvii. 20. If we follow the reading of the text, we may interpret the words of the Aradians, who lay upon the sea-coast. (Compare xxv. 22.)

Ver. 24. *Anguish and sorrows have taken her,* &c.] See xlviii. 41.

Ver. 25. *How is the city of praise not left,* &c.] A city of praise, is a city of fame and renown. (Compare xxxiii. 9. li. 41. Isa. lxii. 7.) This is spoken in the person of the king, or some other inhabitant of Damascus, bewailing the lot of so famous and pleasant a city, that it should not be spared or left untouched by the enemy.

Ver. 26. *Therefore her young men.*] Or, *Surely her young men,* &c. So the particle *laken* is rendered, v. 2.

Ver. 27. *It shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.*] The name of several kings of Syria. (See 1 Kings xv. 28. 2 Kings xiii. 3.)

Ver. 28. *Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor.*] The kingdoms whose metropolis is Hazor, or Petra; so called, because it is κύκλῳ πέτρα φρουρουμένη, Strabo, lib. xvi. So Vitringa explains it upon Isa. xxi. 13. Kedar was that part of Arabia, which was inhabited by the posterity of Kedar, Ishmael's son; (Gen. xxv. 13.) called likewise the kingdoms or provinces of Hazor: each division having anciently a petty prince or king over it. (See the note on xxv. 20.)

Spoil the men of the east.] The Arabians are called, in the Scripture dialect, *the men,* or *children, of the east.* (See the note on Isa. xi. 14.)

Ver. 29. *Their tents and their flocks shall they take away,* &c.] Their substance consisted in their cattle and their tents, from whence the country itself is called the *tents of Kedar,* Psal. cxx. 5. With these they removed from place to place for the convenience of pasture. (See Isa. xiii. 20.)

And they shall cry unto them, Fear is on every side.] The very noise of the enemies shall fright them, and bring a panic fear upon them. (See xlvi. 5.)

Ver. 30. *Flee, get you far, dwell deep,* &c.] See ver. 8.

Ver. 31. *Arise, get you up into the wealthy nation.*] The prophet gives the Chaldeans a commission from God to undertake this expedition, and seize upon the wealth of the inhabitants of Kedar.

Which have neither bars nor gates.] A description of those that live securely, without walls or ramparts for their defence. (See Ezek. xxxviii. 11.)

Which dwell alone.] That do not combine into cities or communities for their mutual defence: but live scattered about the country, where they have room enough for their flocks, without any apprehension of danger. (Compare Numb. xxiii. 9. Deut. xxxiii. 28. Micah vii. 14.)

Ver. 32. *And their camels shall be a booty,* &c.] See ver. 29.

And I will scatter them that dwell in the utmost corners.] See the note upon ix. 26.

Ver. 33. *And I will make Hazor a dwelling for dragons.*] See the note on ix. 11.

Ver. 34. *The word—that came to Jeremiah against Elam.*] The province of Elymais, which, together with Susiana, Nebuchadnezzar subdued, and took from Astyages king of Media, as Archbishop Usher gathers, by comparing Jer. xxv. 25. with Dan. viii. 1, 2. where, in the reign of Belshazzar, Daniel speaks of himself, as residing in *Shushan the palace, in the province of Elam:* which therefore at that time must be a province belonging to the king of Babylon. (See his Annals, ad An. M. 3405. and 3451.) Xenophon gives this account of the matter, how Elam came afterward under the power of Cyrus: "That Abradates being viceroy of Susa, under the king of Babylon, his wife Panthea, a very beautiful woman, was taken prisoner in the first war against the Babylonians: Cyrus having used her kindly, and kept her chastely for her husband; the sense of this generosity drew this prince over to Cyrus's party: whereupon Elam was joined to the empire of the Medes and Persians." (Vid. Cyri Pæd. lib. v.) Accordingly, we find the Elamites come with them to the siege of Babylon. (See Isa. xxi. 2.)

Ver. 35. *I will break the bow of Elam.*] The Elamites were famous archers. (See Isa. xxii. 6.)

Ver. 36. *And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven.*] I will bring enemies upon them from every quarter: wars and commotions are metaphorically denoted by winds. (See iv. 11, 12. li. 1. Dan. vii. 2.)

Ver. 37. *And I will send the sword after them,* &c.] Even after they are driven out of their own country, my vengeance shall pursue them. (Compare x. 16.)

Ver. 38. *And I will set my throne in Elam.*] Nebuchadnezzar shall place his throne, or his royal pavilion, in Elam, in token of his entire conquest over that country. (See i. 15. xliii. 10.) This is called God's throne, as Nebuchadnezzar is called his servant: one that had an especial commission from God, to conquer this and the neighbouring countries. (See xxvii. 6, 7.)

Ver. 39. *But it shall come to pass, that I will bring again the captivity of Elam.*] The Elamites joined with Cyrus to subdue the Babylonians: (see the note upon ver. 34.) upon which Shushan, the chief city of Elymais, was made the metropolis of the Persian empire.

CHAP. L.

ARGUMENT.

This and the following chapter contain a large description of the downfal of Babylon, and of that empire of which that city was the seat: it follows the rest of the prophecies of Jeremiah against the neighbouring countries, according to the method of God's judgments laid down before, xxv. 12, 13. where the prophet declares, that after Nebuchadnezzar and his successors had fulfilled God's purposes, in being executioners of his vengeance upon other countries, they themselves should drink of the same cup.

This prophecy has a farther aspect upon the mystical Babylon, mentioned in the Revelation, and many expressions of it are applied by St. John to the downfal of antichrist, as shall be more particularly observed under the several verses there referred to.

Ver. 2. *DECLARE ye amongst the nations and publish.*] The downfal of Babylon was an event in which many nations were concerned, that empire having been a common oppressor.

Set up a standard.] To call people together, and impart to them these good tidings. The destruction of Babylon would be likewise a sort of signal to the Jews, to assemble together in order to their return home: the time of their captivity being then to expire.

Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces, &c.] When God punisheth an idolatrous nation, he asserts his own authority, to the confusion of all idols and their worshippers. (See the note on xliii. 12.) *Bel* is the same with Baal, a name common to the idols of the eastern countries, and at first probably given to some of the heavenly bodies. Afterward, when the worship of the deified men came into practice, Bel, or Belus, the idol of the Assyrians, is supposed to be the same with Nimrod: and when Daniel saith that Nebuchadnezzar carried the vessels of the temple of Jerusalem *into the house of his god,* (Dan. i. 2.) he is generally supposed to mean the idol Bel; who was worshipped as the tutelar deity of that country. Merodach might be the name of one of their kings, that was afterward deified by his subjects. (See Isa. xxxix. 1.)

Ver. 3. *For out of the north there cometh a nation against her.*] The Medes, who lay north of Babylon. (See ver. 9. 41.

Which shall make her land desolate.] See the note upon ver. 40.

Ver. 4. *In those days—the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping,* &c.] This may, in some sense, be meant of the Jews' return from the captivity, upon the destruction of the Babylonish monarchy. But I conceive this verse, among many others, is a proof that this prophecy has a farther aspect upon that general restoration of the Jews, which should be the consequent of the downfal of antichrist. For, first, here Israel and Judah are spoken of as partakers of the same restoration of the Jews, and reunited in the worship of the true God: a blessing not yet brought to pass, but reserved for aftertimes: (compare ver. 10. see the Argument upon chap. xxx. and the note upon iii. 18.) and, in the second place, they are described as weeping, and troubled with a true compunction for their former sins: another circumstance to be hereafter fulfilled. (See the note on xxxi. 9.)

Ver. 5. *They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward,* &c.] The words allude to the custom of the Jews going in companies up to Jerusalem at the solemn festivals. (Compare chap. xxxi. Isa. ii. 3.)

Let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant.] The gospel is styled an *everlasting covenant,* xxxii. 40. The Hebrew phrase is the same in both places. The words may allude to that solemn covenant Josiah and the people entered into after the general corruption of religion and morality, which had overspread the nation under the reign of Manasseh. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 3.)

Ver. 6. *My people have been lost sheep, their shepherds have caused them to go astray.*] The rulers of my people, both civil and ecclesiastical, have been the occasion of their idolatry and other sins, by which they have gone astray from God's commandments. (See the notes on ii. 8. and compare Ezek. xxxiv. 4—6.)

They have turned them away on the mountains, &c.] They have turned them aside from the right worship of God performed at Jerusalem, to sacrifice to idols upon the mountains and high places. (See ii. 20. iii. 23.)

Ver. 7. *Their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord.*] The heathen took advantage against the Jews from those remarkable judgments God had brought upon his people; and concluded from thence, that he cast them off utterly for their sins, and, being out of his protection, they might use them as they pleased. (Compare Isa. xlvii. 6. Zech. i. 15.)

The habitation of justice.] A refuge and protection for those that are good and just: and, consequently, one that would not have cast off the Jews, if they had not first forsook him. (Compare Psal. xci. 1.)

Ver. 8. *Remove out of the midst of Babylon.*] An exhortation often used by the prophets upon this subject; (see li. 6. 45. Isa. xlviii. 20. see the notes there, lii. 11.) and renewed by St. John, Rev. xviii. 4.

This exhortation Dr. Prideaux supposes to relate to the siege of Babylon, carried on by Darius Hystaspes, in the fifth and sixth years of his reign. Before which time God had warned the Jews, by their prophet Zechariah, (ii. 6, 7.) to *flee out of Babylon,* and to deliver themselves from the miseries that should befal that city during the siege. (See his Connex. of Script. Hist. p. 188.)

And be as the he-goats before the flocks.] Let every one strive to lead the way to others, and give them an example of speedily obeying God's call, without shewing any fondness to the place, or the idolatries there practised.

Ver. 9. *For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon, an assembly of great nations from the north country.*] See ver. 41. li. 27.

Their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man, &c.] See ver. 14. 29. Isa. xiii. 18.

Ver. 10. *All that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord.*] They shall revenge themselves upon her, and shall have as much spoil and plunder as they can desire.

Ver. 11. *Because ye were glad—O ye destroyers of the heritage.*] Ye insulted over the miseries of my people, after you had destroyed them. Though the Chaldeans were the executors of God's judgments upon the Jews; yet he punished them for what they did by his appointment, because they were carried on purely by their own ambition and covetousness, though Providence directed their cruelties and oppressions to the fulfilling its own ends and purposes. In like manner, God threatens to punish the king of Assyria, after he had been the executioner of his judgments upon Jerusalem, Isa. x. 12. (Compare Isa. xlvii. 6.)

Because ye are grown fat as the heifer at grass, &c.] The insolence and rudeness of oppressors is often compared to the wantonness of full-fed cattle. (See Psal. xxii. 12. lxviii. 31. Amos iv. 1.) For *dasha,* which our translation renders *at grass,* some read *dosha,* and understand it of an heifer that treads out the corn, and by being fed all that time, grows fat and wanton. (See Hos. x. 11.)

Ver. 12. *Your mother shall be sore confounded.*] Babylon, the metropolis, or mother-city of the empire. (Compare xlix. 2.)

Behold, the hindermost of the nations shall be a wilderness, &c.] The Vulgar Latin renders the words to this sense, *Behold, she shall be the hindermost of the nations, a wilderness,* &c. (See ver. 40.)

Ver. 13. *Every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished,* &c.] See the note on xviii. 16.

Ver. 14. *All ye that bend the bow, shoot at her.*] The Elamites were famous for their skill in archery: which people were part of Cyrus's army. (See the note on xlix. 34, 35. see ver. 9. 29. 42.)

For she hath sinned against the Lord.] She hath been in a remarkable manner an enemy to God's truth and people.

This may be especially applied to mystical Babylon. (See ver. 29. 31.)

Ver. 15. *Shout against her round about.*] As conquerors do when a city is taken.

She hath given her hand.] She has submitted herself, and promised obedience to the conqueror. *Giving the hand* is a token of consenting to any conditions offered; (see 2 Kings x. 15. 1 Chron. xxix. 24. 2 Chron. xxx. 8. Ezra x. 10.) and was sometimes a ceremony used in taking an oath, to fulfil what is required by a superior. (Compare Gen. xxiv. 2. Lam. v. 6. Ezek. xvii. 18.)

Her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down.] See li. 58.

As she hath done, do unto her.] See ver. 29.

Ver. 16. *Cut off the sower from Babylon,* &c.] Babylon was more like a country walled in than a city: her walls being sixty miles in compass, as Herodotus testifies: forty-eight miles according to Strabo, (lib. xvi. p. 738.) Within this large circuit, a great deal of ground was taken up in corn-fields. So that they had corn sufficient growing within the walls to maintain a siege, as Q. Curtius affirms, (lib. v. cap. 1.) Whereupon the husbandmen suffered as well as others, in a general destruction of the inhabitants: which our learned Dr. Prideaux refers to the taking of Babylon by Darius Hystaspes, after a siege of twenty months. (See his Connex. of Script. Hist. p. 187, &c.) Where he applies several parts of this prophecy, relating to the utter overthrow of Babylon, to this reduction of it: for there is no necessity of supposing the destruction of Babylon here foretold should come to pass all together. The prophet only foretelling what should be the conclusion of God's judgments upon that place.

The same learned writer observes, that the punishment of Babylon kept pace with the restauration of the Jews. And as there are two ways of computing the seventy years of the Jewish captivity, one used by Jeremiah, the other by Zechariah: (see the note on xxv. 11.) so, if we reckon these seventy years ended in the fourth year of Darius, as Zechariah does, the desolation of Babylon was in a great measure completed about the same time.

For fear of the oppressing sword, they shall turn every one to his people, &c.] This is spoken of the Babylonish allies. (Compare xlvi. 15. Isa. xiii. 14.)

Ver. 17. *Israel is a scattered sheep, the lions have driven him away.*] Compare ver. 6. As a lion coming among a flock of sheep scatters them one from another; so have these foreign invaders, elsewhere compared to lions, (see ii. 15. v. 6.) served my people: first Shalmaneser carried away the ten tribes, and then the king of Babylon made a final destruction of the whole nation.

Ver. 18. *I have punished the king of Assyria.*] This may most probably be understood of the destruction of Nineveh, the chief seat of the Assyrian empire, by Nebuchadnezzar and Ahasuerus, or Astyages, as it is related in Tobit, xiv. 5. At the taking of this great city, foretold by Jonah, Nahum, and Zephaniah, Chynaladanus, the last king of the Assyrian race, was killed: and the seat and title of the empire removed to Babylon, which was no longer called the Assyrian, but the Babylonian monarchy. (See Dr. Prideaux, p. 47, 48.)

Ver. 19. *And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan,* &c.] I will take care of them as a shepherd does of his flock, and restore them to their ancient habitations, and their former peace and plenty. As several parts of this prophecy relate to that mystical Babylon, whose destruction is foretold Rev. xviii. so these promises of grace and favour to the Jewish nation, are chiefly to be understood of the general restoration of the Jewish nation, which we may expect after the downfal of the antichristian empire. (Compare xxxiii. 12. Isa. lxv. 13. Ezek. xxxiv. 13, 14.)

Ver. 20. *In those days—the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none: and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found.*] I will be perfectly reconciled to them, as if they had never offended. The Hebrew language expresses the utter ceasing of any thing, by *seeking and not finding it.* (See Psal. x. 15. xxxviii. 36. Isa. xli. 12.) Israel and Judah are here joined together, as ver. 4. (See the note there.)

I will pardon them whom I reserve.] In all the judgments God brings upon his people, he still promises to reserve a *remnant.* (See the note on xliv. 14. and on Isa. i. 9.) St. Paul calls it a *remnant according to the election of grace,* Rom. xi. 5. This place is chiefly to be understood of that *remnant* of the Jews, which should be converted in the latter times of the world, when the unbelievers and incorrigible shall be destroyed. (Compare li. 50. Isa. xlv. 20. Amos ix. 9, 10. see the notes upon Isa. iv. 2.)

Ver. 21. *Go up against the land of Merathaim.*] Or, of *rebels,* as the margin expounds the word. Others understand by it that part of the Babylonian dominions called *Mardi* by the heathen writers. This command is directed to Cyrus and his confederates.

And against the inhabitants of Pekod.] This was a country belonging to the Babylonian empire: (see Ezek. xxiii. 23.) it is mentioned here, because the word signifies *visitation.* This being the time when God will visit Babylon. (See ver. 27. 31. and the note upon xlviii. 2.)

Waste and utterly destroy them.] Or, *Destroy their posterity.* Cut off from Babylon *the name and remnant,* as God threatens in the parallel prophecy, Isa. xiv. 22. The word *ahar* signifies the same with *aharith,* which commonly denotes posterity. (See Dan. xi. 4.)

Do according to all that I have commanded thee.] Those persons whom God raises up to fulfil the decrees of his providence are said to perform his commands; (see xxxiv. 22. Isa. x. 6.) and therefore are called his *servants.* (See xxv. 9. xxvii. 6.) Such a commission was, in a particular manner, given to Cyrus by the prophet Isaiah, xliv. 28. xlv. 11. xlviii. 14.

Ver. 23. *How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken!*] That oppressive empire which *smote the nations with a continual stroke,* as it is described, Isa. xiv. 6.

Ver. 24. *I have laid a snare for thee; and thou art also taken, O Babylon.*] Cyrus took the city by surprise, and unexpected, by draining the river Euphrates. (See ver. 38. compare li. 8.)

Ver. 25. *The Lord hath opened his armoury,* &c.] He hath raised up enemies to subdue the Chaldeans, Cyrus and his confederates: and hath furnished them with all necessary provisions for such an undertaking.

Ver. 26. *Come against her from the utmost border.*] From distant parts, *from the ends of the earth,* as it is expressed

ver. 40. Some render it, *from all parts*, or from every quarter, as the word *miktse* is rendered, Gen. xix. 4.

Cast her up as heaps.] The word *naremim* properly signifies *heaps of corn;* taking it in this sense, the marginal reading is to be preferred, *Tread her as heaps;* that is, as the corn is trodden down when it is thrashed. The phrase alludes to the way of thrashing used in the eastern parts of the world, which was to beat the wheat out of the husk, by drawing heavy drays or planks over it. (See the note upon Isa. xxviii. 28.)

Destroy her utterly, &c.] See ver 40.

Ver. 27. *The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon*, &c.] Some of those that were more than ordinary zealous for the welfare of God's church and people, were ready upon the first news of the taking of Babylon to bring the glad tidings thereof into Judea, how God had avenged the cause of his people, and executed his judgments on those who destroyed his temple, and profaned the holy vessels of it that were dedicated to his service. (See Dan v. 1—3. 5. 30. and compare li. 51.)

[Ver. 29. *Call together the archers against Babylon.*] This is chiefly meant of the Elamites, who were famous archers, and were part of Cyrus's army which he brought against Babylon. See xlix. 3, 4. 35. and the note there, compared with Isa. xxi. 2.]

Recompense her according to her works.] Which will be *a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God*, as St. Paul speaks, 2 Thess. i. 5. at which all good men ought to rejoice, to express their approbation of it, and give glory to God when they see it done. (Compare Rev. xviii. 6. Psal. xxviii. 4. lviii. 9, 10.)

For she hath been proud against the Lord.] See ver. 14. 31.

Ver. 30. *Therefore shall her young men be cut off in the streets.*] Xenophon relates, (lib. vii.) that Gadatas and Gobryas, with their soldiers, when they were got into the town, marched directly towards the palace, and killing all they met, became masters of the place, and slew the king himself.

Ver. 31. *Behold, I am against thee, O thou most proud.*] Who hast been *proud against the Lord*, (ver. 29.) and exalted thyself against God, saying, *I am; and there is none besides me.* (See Isa. xlvii. 7, 8. and the notes upon that place.)

[Ver. 32. *I will kindle a fire in his cities.*] This may be meant of the destructions made in the Babylonian territories in the several expeditions Cyrus undertook against that monarchy, during the space of twenty years before the taking of Babylon. See Dr. Prideaux, from the year before Christ 559, to the year 539.]

Ver. 33. *The children of Israel, and the children of Judah were oppressed together.*] It was the same government that oppressed them both, though under different denominations: sometimes called the kingdom of Assyria, and afterward the kingdom of Babylon: the latter succeeded the former in its oppression, as well as in its empire.

Ver. 34. *Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is his name.*] God will thoroughly plead the cause of his injured truth and people. (See the note on ver. 11.) This will be more remarkably fulfilled in the destruction of mystical Babylon. (Compare Isa. xlvii. 4. Rev. xviii. 8.)

Ver. 35. *A sword is upon her princes.*] Who were slain, together with their king Belshazzar, at a feast. (See li. 39. Dan. v. 2. 30.)

A sword is upon her wise men.] The Chaldeans were famous for their skill in astrology and other arts of divination: and yet the learned in these sciences were not able to foresee or prevent the dangers coming upon themselves in the common calamity. (See Isa. xlvii. 13, 14.)

Ver. 36. *A sword is upon the liars, and they shall dote.*] The false pretenders to the knowledge of what is to come. Compare xlviii. 30. Isa. xliv. 25. where the prophet, speaking of the Chaldeans, saith, *He frustrateth the tokens of the liars* [*baddim* in the Hebrew is the same word that is used here], *and maketh diviners mad.*

Ibid. and Ver. 37. *A sword is upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed. A sword is upon her horses*, &c.] See the notes on li. 30.

Ver. 37. *A sword is upon her mingled people, that are in the midst of her.*] Her auxiliaries, made up of several nations. (See Ezek. xxx. 5.)

And they shall be as women.] See the note on xlviii. 41.

A sword is upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed.] They shall be a prey to such as come with sword in hand to rifle them: as Solon said to Crœsus, who by way of ostentation shewed him his treasures, "Sir, if any one come that has better iron than you, he will be master of all your gold." (Compare Isa. xlv. 3. and see the note there.)

Ver. 38. *A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up.*] God opened a way for Cyrus to take Babylon, by suggesting to him a method of draining the river Euphrates, and making it passable for his army. (Compare li. 36. Isa. xliv. 27.)

For it is the land of graven images, &c.] This vengeance comes upon them, because they have been the great encouragers and supporters of idolatry. (See ver. 2. li. 44. 47. 52.) And the executioners of the Divine judgments were the Persians, who, in opposition to the Sabeans, whose notions the Chaldeans embraced, followed the ancient discipline of the magi, or wise men among them, and had neither altars nor images: as Strabo testifies, lib. xv. The same thing is affirmed by Herodotus also, whose words are quoted in Origen's seventh book against Celsus, p. 373. (See likewise Dr. Prideaux's Connex. of Script. Hist. p. 177, &c.)

And they are mad upon their idols.] It looks as if men had lost the use of their reason, that they should place the whole of their religion in image-worship, and put an extraordinary value upon one image more than another. So as to deck them with the most costly ornaments, and make long pilgrimages and processions to them. For which reason idolatry is called in Scripture by the name of *sorcery* and *witchcraft.*

Ver. 39. *Therefore the wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the islands, shall dwell there*, &c.] The desolation of Babylon is expressed in much the same words, Isa. xiii. 21. compare xxxiv. 11. 15. of the same prophecy, and Rev. xviii. 2.

St. Jerome assures us, in his commentary upon the parallel text of Isaiah, that, in his time, the place where Babylon stood was turned into a park, where the king of Persia used to hunt.

Ver. 40. *As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah*, &c.] See Isa. xiii. 19. xlvii. 5. and the notes there. Upon the

Persians removing the seat of empire from Babylon, the glory of it was much diminished. And when Alexander proposed to restore it to its ancient greatness, he was prevented by death, before he could make any progress in that work. Under his successors it still decayed more and more, first by the neighbourhood of Seleucia, built upon the Tigris, by Seleucus Nicator: afterward by the building of Ctesiphon, on the other side of that river: so that at last it was reduced to utter solitude, and continued so in Strabo (lib. xvi.) and Pliny's time. (See his Nat. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 26.)

Ver. 41. *Behold, a people shall come from the north.*] See ver. 9.

And many kings shall be raised from the coasts of the earth.] See ver. 26. i. 15. li. 27.

Ver. 42. *They shall lay hold on bow and spear.*] See vi. 23. (Compare ver. 9. 14. of this chapter.)

They are cruel and will shew no mercy.] See Isa. xiii. 17, 18.

It is a common observation, that in those extraordinary commendations Xenophon gives of Cyrus's clemency and other virtues, he rather wrote an exact character of a perfect prince, than a narrative of matter of fact. However, in the taking of cities, several outrages are usually committed contrary to the will and intent of the chief commanders.

Their voice shall roar like the sea.] The noise of an army is fitly compared to the roaring of the sea, when it rages and is tempestuous. (See Isa. v. 30.)

Ver. 43. *The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands are waxed feeble.*] Belshazzar was of himself a weak and dissolute prince, and dismayed upon the first apprehension of danger, (see Dan. v. 6.) when he understood that Cyrus's army laid siege to the city.

Ver. 44—46. *Behold, he shall come up like a lion.*] See xlix. 19—21.

And the cry is heard among the nations.] Who shall be astonished at the unexpected downfal of so great a city and potent an empire. (Compare Rev. xviii. 9.)

CHAP. LI.

See the Argument of the foregoing chapter.

Ver. 1. *I WILL raise up against them that dwell in the midst of them that rise up against me.*] Or, *them that dwell in the midst of mine enemies;* that is, them that dwell in the metropolis or chief city of the Chaldeans.

A destroying wind.] See iv. 11.

Ver. 2. *And I will send unto Babylon fanners that shall fan her.*] He persists in the metaphor of the foregoing verse: as the wind drives and scatters chaff in a thrashing-floor, so shall the Persian armies make a perfect riddance of every thing that is valuable. (Compare xv. 7.)

Ver. 3. *Against him that bendeth, let the archer bend his bow,* &c.] See l. 14.

Ver. 5. *For Israel has not been* [or shall not be] *forsaken, nor Judah of his God.*] Though God was justly displeased with his people, yet he will not cast them off utterly, or deprive them of his protection.

Ver. 6. *Flee out of the midst of Babylon, deliver every man his soul,* &c.] God's people are exhorted to flee out of Babylon with all haste, as Lot did out of Sodom, lest they be consumed in the iniquity of that place. (See l. 8.)

Ver. 7. *Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that hath made all the earth drunken.*] She has recommended her idolatries to the world by several specious pretences, as well as by her authority and example. So that they have been like poison set off by a golden cup, which hath enticed men to drink without being aware of the danger; and all this by God's permission, in order to the accomplishing some great ends of his providence. The expressions allude to the practice of harlots, in giving love-potions to their gallants, which were made up of such ingredients as disturbed their brains, and made them run mad. The sense of this verse is plainly applied by St. John to *spiritual* Babylon, which has used the most plausible methods to disguise her idolatrous practices. (See Rev. xiv. 8. xvii. 4.)

Ver. 8. *Babylon is suddenly fallen.*] It is one aggravation of the punishment of Babylon, that her destruction should come upon her suddenly and unexpectedly; (compare l. 24.) *in one day,* as the prophet Isaiah expresses it, xlvii. 9. (See the note upon that place, and compare Rev. xviii. 8. 10. 17. 19.)

Howl for her.] Compare xlviii. 20. So the kings, the merchants, and other factors, are described as lamenting the destruction of Babylon, Rev. xviii. 9. 11. 17.

Take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed, &c.] This is spoken ironically, implying that her ruin is irrecoverable. (See the note on xlvii. 11.)

Ver. 9. *We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed,* &c.] This is spoken in the name of God's prophets, and the other witnesses of his truth, importing that they had sufficiently testified against her errors and idolatries, but she was irreclaimable: and therefore it was time for all the lovers of truth to depart out of her, lest they be involved in her punishments. (See ver. 6.)

[*Her judgment reacheth unto heaven.*] As sin is sometimes used for the punishment due to sin, by a metonymy of the cause for the effect: so here judgment is taken for sin which brings down God's judgments, by a metonymy of the effect for the cause.]

Ver. 10. *The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness,* &c.] He hath declared our cause to be just, (compare Psal. xxxvii. 6.) by bringing such remarkable judgments upon our enemies: and therefore we ought to give glory to him in the assemblies of his church, and in the most public manner imaginable.

Ver. 11. *Make bright the arrows, gather the shields.*] Prepare the instruments of war. (See xlvi. 6.)

The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the king of the Medes.] [Neriglissorus king of Babylon having formed an alliance against the Medes, Cambyses sent his son Cyrus with an army of thirty thousand Persians to join the Medes commanded by Cyaxares. See Xenophon Cyropæd. lib. i.] This Cyaxares king of Media, called *Darius the Mede* in Scripture, was Cyrus's uncle; and it was properly his army that made the expedition against the Babylonians, he employing Cyrus as his general. Persia was then a small part of the empire of Media, and was of little account till Cyrus made a figure in the world: and even then it was called the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, the Medes having still the preference. And, in aftertimes, the Greek

historians style those wars in which their country encountered with Xerxes, by the name of the Median wars, Τὰ Μηδικὰ, because the Medes were the founders of that empire.

Because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple.] See l. 28.

Ver. 12. *Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon,* &c.] Give a signal to the inhabitants of Babylon, to come together speedily for the defence of their walls and ramparts. To this sense some understood those words of Isaiah, (xiii. 2.) *Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountains,* meaning Babylon, called so in the twenty-fifth verse of this chapter. (See the note there.) In these and the following words, the prophet ironically encourages the Babylonians to use their best skill and courage for the defence of their city: which yet he foresees will be to no purpose. (See the like figure, ver. 8. and xlvi. 4.)

For the Lord hath devised, and done that which he spake, &c.] Or, *For as the Lord hath devised, so hath he done:* and thus the particle *gam,* being repeated, is translated ver. 29. of this chapter.

Ver. 13. *O thou that dwellest upon many waters.*] Upon the river Euphrates, which encompassed Babylon, and ran through it, and by means of which it thought itself secure and impregnable. *Many waters* do likewise mystically signify the many people over which this was the reigning city. (See Rev. xvii. 15.)

And the measure of thy covetousness.] God has put a bound to thy covetousness, which it shall not go beyond.

Ver. 14. *I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillars.*] Or, *locusts,* as Bochart saith the word properly signifies. Armies are often compared to caterpillars, locusts, and such-like devouring insects. (See Nahum iii. 15, 16. Joel ii. 2, 3, &c.)

Ver. 17—19. *He hath made the earth by his power,* &c.] An elegant and lofty description of God Almighty's power and wisdom, in opposition to the weakness and unprofitableness of idols: the same which we had before, x. 12. where see the notes. This is a powerful argument to encourage our trust in God, and to assure us, that he will in due time assert his own authority against all the encroachments of idol-worship and false religions.

Ver. 20. *Thou art my battle-axe and weapons of war,* &c.] God speaks here to Cyrus, and tells him, that he will make use of him as an instrument of Providence, for the destroying of the whole power of the Babylonian empire, and of all orders and degrees of men in it; as he had formerly made that empire the executioner of his judgments upon other countries: (see l. 23.) or else the words may be understood of the church, and imply, that God will destroy all those earthly powers and kingdoms, which are adversaries to God's truth and people, in order to establish and advance his church. This will be fulfilled at the fall of mystical Babylon, when God's kingdom shall *break in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth,* in the destruction of that remnant of the fourth monarchy, according to Daniel's prophecy, ii. 44. (Compare Obad. ver. 18. Micah v. 10, &c. Hag. ii. 21—23. Zech. xii. 3. 6. and see below the note on ver. 24.)

Ver. 24. *And I will render unto Babylon—all the evil that I have done to Zion.*] See ver. 11. and l. 28.

In your sight.] This expression confirms the latter interpretation given of ver. 20. the same persons being spoken of here in the plural number, which are there mentioned in the singular, that is, God's church or faithful servants. The enallage or change of numbers is frequent in Scripture, (see Psal. xii. 7.) and indeed in all writers when they speak of collective bodies.

Ver. 25. *Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain—that destroyest the whole earth.*] Or, as the words may be more fitly rendered, *O corrupting mountain, that corruptest the whole earth.* Babylon was situate in a plain, (see ver. 13. and Gen. xi. 2.) but is called a mountain here, by reason of its lofty edifices, walls, and towers. (Compare Isa. xiii. 2. Zech. iv. 7.) It is called here the *mountain of corruption,* a name given by way of reproach to the Mount of Olives, after it was defiled by idolatry, (2 Kings xxiii. 13.) by a slight changing of the Hebrew name, *Har Miscah,* into *Har Maschith.* The same appellation is here given to Babylon, because it was the seat of idolatry; from whence it was derived into other countries under its government and jurisdiction. Which is remarkably true of mystical Babylon. (See Rev. xvii. 5.)

I will—roll thee down from the rocks, and make thee a burnt mountain.] I will dismantle all thy walls and forts, and then destroy thee with fire; (compare ver. 58, 59.) that thou shalt appear like a great mountain covered with fire and smoke. (Compare Rev. viii. 8.) We do not find that Babylon itself was ever destroyed by fire, but that mystical Babylon shall be so destroyed is plain from Rev. xvii. 16. xviii. 8, 9.

Ver. 26. *And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner,* &c.] There shall not be left an entire stone fit to use. (See l. 40.)

Ver. 27. *Set ye up a standard in the land, blow ye the trumpet among the nations.*] These were common signals for assembling armies together. (See Isa. xiii. 2. xviii. 3.)

Call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz.] These were countries under the dominion of the Medes. The two former are probably the same with the greater and lesser Armenia. Cyrus's first expedition in this war, was for reducing the Armenians, who had revolted from the government of the Medes, who upon this conquest were obliged to send their usual quota of auxiliaries to the carrying on the war against the Babylonians. (See Xenophon, Cyropæd. lib. iii.) Ararat is a place noted for the resting of the ark after the deluge, which is commonly supposed to be the same with the Gordiæan mountains: Minni is the country called Mynias, by Nic. Damascenus, in Josephus, (lib. i. cap. 4.) and Mylias by Strabo and Pliny: and is described by Damascenus as situate under the mountain Baris: that word signifies a ship in the Persian language, and was a name given to Mount Ararat, from the ark's resting there. (See Huetius's Demonstr. Evangel. prop. iv. cap. 2. n. 40.) By Ashchenaz, Bochart understands Phrygia and Troas, where there were footsteps of the name remaining in aftertimes; part of that country being called Ascania by Homer, and a lake and haven of the same name is mentioned by Strabo and Pliny. And since Cyrus had conquered Crœsus, and subdued several nations, from the Ægean Sea to Euphrates, before he marched against Babylon, as both Herodotus (lib. i.) and Xenophon (Cyropæd. lib. vii.) testify, it is very probable that a great part of his army might consist of such troops

as followed him out of Asia. [Xenophon informs us, that there were both Phrygians and Cappadocians in Cyrus's army. Cyropæd. lib. 7. p. 188, 189. edit. Leunclav.]

Appoint a captain against her.] Compare l. 44. The word *tiphsar*, captain, is supposed by Grotius to be derived from the Persian word *satrapas;* the letters being transposed.

Cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars.] Or, *the rough locust*, as Bochart renders it, who observes that there are some insects of that kind rough and hairy, (Hierozoicon, p. 456.) Locusts represent horses, not only in their swiftness, but likewise in the shape of their heads: the figure of which may be seen in Ludolphus's note on his Ethiopic History, p. 177. (Compare Rev. ix. 7, 8.) [The war-horse may be compared to caterpillars, because their backs were bristled with sheaves of arrows.]

Ver. 28. *Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the Medes.*] The several princes or viceroys of the provinces belonging to the Median empire with their people. (Compare l. 41.) All princes and governors are called kings in the Hebrew language. (See Isa. x. 8. and the note on xxv. 10.)

Ver. 29. *The land shall tremble and sorrow.*] An expression commonly used to denote the confusion of the inhabitants under some great calamity. (See viii. 16. x. 10. Joel ii. 10. Amos viii. 8.)

For every purpose of the Lord shall be performed—to make the land of Babylon a desolation, &c.] See the notes on l. 16. 39, 40.

Ver. 30. *The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight, they have remained in their holds, their might hath failed.*] The year before the siege of Babylon, Cyrus overthrew Belshazzar in battle, whereupon his army retreated within the walls, where they were shut up by him and besieged. Afterward, when Cyrus entered the city, he ordered public proclamation to be made, that all persons should keep within their houses, and whoever was found abroad should be put to death: and threatened to set their houses on fire, if any offered to hurt the soldiers from the tops of their houses. (See Xenophon Cyropæd. lib. vii. p. 171. 192.)

They became as women.] See the note on xlviii. 41.

They have burnt her dwelling-places.] See ver. 25.

Her bars are broken.] All her fortresses, and what she confided in as her chief defence against the enemy. (Compare Lam. ii. 9. Amos i. 5. Nahum iii. 13.)

Ver. 31. *One post shall run to meet another*, &c.] Babylon was taken by surprise, by unexpectedly draining the river Euphrates, and entering through the channel into the city, as Herodotus, (lib. i.) and Xenophon, (lib. vii. Cyropæd.) relate.

For the carrying on this stratagem, Cyrus took the opportunity of a public festival, when the whole night was usually spent in revellings, and all manner of disorders. (See ver. 39.) In this time of riot, the gates leading down to the river, that used to be shut every night, were left open, and gave a passage to Cyrus and his army into the city: which he became master of, while they thought themselves in the utmost security, both from the height and strength of their walls, and depth of the river: Cyrus having as yet made little progress in the siege, though he had invested the city with his army two years before. This surprise caused so many messengers to run one after the other, to acquaint the king with this unexpected news. The vast compass of this city has been observed in the notes on l. 16.

Herodotus takes notice, that the extreme parts of the city were taken before they who dwelt in the middle of it were sensible of the danger. (Lib. i. n. 191.)

Aristotle mentions it as a common report, that one part of the city had been taken three days before the other end knew it, (Politic. lib. iii. cap. 3.) which may probably be understood of this surprise by Cyrus.

Ver. 32. *And that the passages are stopped.*] Or rather *surprised.* (See ver. 41. of this chapter.) Cyrus's forces made themselves masters of the gates and passages that led from the river to the city.

The reeds they have burnt with fire.] The word *agammim*, translated *reeds*, properly signifies marshes or lakes: and the phrase here imports, that the enemies have burnt up all the outworks belonging to the marshy grounds about the river Euphrates.

Ver. 33. *The daughter of Babylon is like a thrashing-floor.*] God's people have been sorely bruised by the Babylonians, and trodden under foot by them as corn in a floor. (See the notes on Isa. xxi. 9.)

It is time to thrash her.] It is time for her to feel the same miseries she has made others suffer. (See l. 15. 29.) The word *thrash* often signifies to subdue by force and power. (See Isa. xli. 15. Hos. i. 3. Micah iv. 13. Habak. iii. 12.)

Yet a little while, and the times of her harvest shall come.] There shall be a clear riddance made of her inhabitants and their treasures, as the harvest clears the fields, and leaves them empty and bare. (See Isa. xvii. 5. Hos. vi. 11.)

Ver. 34. *Nebuchadnezzar—hath devoured me*, &c.] A pathetical description of the calamities brought upon the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar and his forces, who, after they had devoured the wealth, and laid waste the beauty of their country, then turned them out of it, and led them captives into a strange land.

Ver. 35. *The violence done to me and my flesh, be upon Babylon*, &c.] Let God return upon herself the violence she has done to me and to my children. (See the note on l. 29.) Our nearest relations are called *our flesh* in Scripture. (See Judg. ix. 5. 2 Sam. v. 1. Nehem. v. 5.) To this sense the Hebrew word *shear*, which signifies remainder, or posterity, is used, Lev. xviii. 12. 17. xxi. 2. xxv. 49.

Ver. 36. *Behold, I will plead my cause.*] See the note on l. 11. 34.

And I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.] I will exhaust her multitudes and their wealth. (See ver. 13. compare Isa. xix. 5.) This was likewise literally fulfilled in Cyrus's draining the river, and thereby gaining an entrance into the city. All great waters are called *seas* in the Hebrew language.

Ver. 37. *And Babylon shall become heaps*, &c.] See i. 39, 40.

Ver. 38. *They shall roar together like lions.*] Either for grief and anguish of mind; (compare Isa. lix. 11. Zech. xi. 3.) or else the prophet describes the revels and riotous noise that they made upon the night of that public festival, on which the city was taken. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 39. *In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken.*] While they are feasting themselves, I will provide them another cup to drink; *viz.* that of my fury and indignation. (See the note on xxv. 15.) Babylon was taken upon a night of a public festival, as hath been observed upon ver. 31.

That they may rejoice and sleep a perpetual sleep, &c.] That in the midst of their jollity and security they may sleep the sleep of death: not such a sleep as proceeds from wine, which refresheth and enliveneth.

Ver. 40. *I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter,* &c.] I will cut off both great and small. (See the note on l. 27. and compare Isa. xxxiv. 6.)

Ver. 41. *How is Sheshach taken?*] Some commentators suppose Babylon called here by the name of *Sheshach*, because the city was taken at the time of the festival called *Sacchæa*. (See the note on xxv. 26.)

How is the praise of the whole earth surprised!] Compare xlix. 25. Isa. xiii. 19. Dan. iv. 30. Babylon was esteemed the wonder of the world, for the height, breadth, and compass of her walls, and the palace and hanging gardens belonging to it, for the temple of Belus, for the banks and facing of the river, and the artificial lakes and canals made for the draining of it.

Ver. 42. *The sea is come up upon Babylon,* &c.] Multitudes are resembled to waters (see ver. 13. of this chapter), especially an army is fitly represented by an inundation which carries all before it. (See Psal. xviii. 16. cxliv. 7. Isa. viii. 7. Dan. ix. 26.) There is likewise an opposition elegantly implied in the words between the inundation of Cyrus's army, and the draining the river Euphrates, which was one of the chief defences of the city. The words may be taken in a more literal sense. (See the note on ver. 64.)

Ver. 43. *Her cities are a desolation,* &c.] When the seat of the empire was removed from Babylon to Shushan, the consequence of that translation was the decay of Babylon itself, and all the lesser cities within its territories: (see likewise the notes upon l. 39, 40.) or else the words may be understood of the cities belonging to the Babylonish empire, which Cyrus took in his expedition from Asia to Babylon.

Ver. 44. *And I will punish Bel and Babylon.*] See ver. 47. and the note on l. 2.

I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up.] The heathens ascribed the honour of all their successes to their idols, and upon any great victory offered the best part of the spoils to their gods, and deposited them in their temples, as a grateful acknowledgment that the success was owing to their assistance. So Nebuchadnezzar, upon every victory over the Jews, carried away part of the furniture of the sanctuary, and put it in the temple of his idol. (See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7. Dan. i. 3. 2 Kings xxv. 13, &c.) The restoring of the holy vessels to their right owner, and their former use, is what is here particularly foretold; which was done by Cyrus upon his proclamation for rebuilding the temple, Ezra i. 7. (Compare ver. 11. 31. of this chapter, and l. 28.)

The farther accomplishment of this prophecy, Dr. Prideaux places in Xerxes's demolishing the temple of Belus, and plundering it of its vast wealth; which, from Diodorus Siculus's account of it, he computes to amount to twenty-one millions of our money. (See his Connect. of Script. Hist. p. 100, 101.)

[The words may be explained from the apocryphal history of Bel and the Dragon, where the idol is supposed to have been daily fed with the choicest provisions, which his priests pretended were devoured by him: ver. 6. 11, &c. Here the prophet saith, there shall be no more such provisions made for him, and the idol itself shall be broken in pieces, to make him restore, if it were possible, what he has consumed.]

And the nations shall not any more flow unto him.] There shall be no more costly presents brought by foreign nations unto the temple of Bel, as a compliment to that monarchy: just as, under the Roman empire, people that were conquered by them, sent golden crowns to Jupiter Capitolinus.

Yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall.] See ver. 58.

Ver. 45. *My people, go ye out of the midst of her,* &c.] See the note on l. 8.

Ver. 46. *And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumour that shall be in the land.*] Lest the rumours of new forces ready to join themselves to the Babylonians, dishearten you, and make you despair of seeing so great an empire subdued by any human power.

A rumour shall both come one year, and after that a rumour shall come another year.] The prophet gives these tokens, whereby they may know the time of the dissolution of that empire drawing near; *viz.* that the first rumour of war denounced against the head of that empire shall be the year before the siege, when Cyrus and Nabonnidus (or Belshazzar) shall engage in a battle; and the latter shall be overcome, upon which defeat the conqueror should in the following year lay siege to the city itself. (See Archbishop Usher, ad An. M. 3464.)

Violence in the land, ruler against ruler.] This should be a time of hostile depredations and invasions: Cyrus and the king of Babylon should now appear at the head of two contending armies.

Ver. 47. *I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon.*] See l. 2.

Dr. Prideaux supposes this prophecy fulfilled, when Xerxes pillaged and destroyed the Babylonish temples. (See his Connect. of Script. Hist. p. 242.) Taking this prophecy in its full extent, it comprises the fall of mystical Babylon, which is represented here, and in the parallel places of Isaiah and the Revelation, as a decisive stroke, which should thoroughly vindicate the cause of oppressed truth and innocence, and put a final period to idolatry, and to all the oppressions of God's people.

And all her slain shall fall in the midst of her.] See l. 35, 36.

Ver. 48. *Then the heavens and the earth and all that are therein shall sing for Babylon.*] God's mercy to his church, and his judgments upon idolaters, shall be matter of joy and thankfulness to all God's faithful servants. (Compare ver. 10. and l. 28, 29. Isa. xliv. 23. xlviii. 20. Rev. xviii. 20.)

For the spoilers shall come to her from the north.] See l. 3. 40.

Ver. 49. *As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall,* &c.] God will reward her according to her works. (See l. 29.)

Ver. 50. *Ye that are escaped the sword.*] The verse may,

in the first place, relate to those Jews who had undergone all the hardships and dangers that attended a long captivity in an enemy's country: but I conceive it is to be understood of those who are elsewhere called *the remnant.* (See the note on l. 20.) These are exhorted to flee as fast as they can to Babylon, and join themselves in heart and mind with God's church and people.

Ver. 51. *We are confounded, because we have heard reproaches,* &c.] The prophet represents the words of these pious exiles, when they reflected upon the desolation of God's people and sanctuary, whereby they were not only exposed themselves to the scorn and reproach of their enemies, but God's name and truth were blasphemed by strangers and heathens, who profaned his sanctuary, as if he were not able to protect his temple and worshippers. (Compare Psal. xliv. 15, 16. lxxix. 4. Lam. ii. 15, 16.)

Into the sanctuaries of the Lord.] The word *sanctuaries,* in the plural, is likewise used Psal. lxxiii. 17. though our English reads there *sanctuary;* and the word is either an allusion to the several courts of the temple, or else it may comprehend those private oratories, which religious persons built for performing their devotions, who lived at a distance from the temple. (See Psal. lxxiv. 8. and the notes upon xli. 5.)

Ver. 52. *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord,* &c.] See ver. 47.

Ver. 53. *Though Babylon should mount up to heaven,* &c.] Though she prides herself in the glory of her empire, placed above the common height of human greatness; (compare Isa. xlvii. 7, 8.) though she thinks herself never so secure in her high gates, (ver. 58.) and strength of her walls, which were three hundred and fifty feet high, according to Herodotus; (lib. i. cap. 178.) yet this shall not place her out of the reach of my vengeance. (Compare xlix. 16.)

Ver. 55. *Because the Lord—hath destroyed out of her, the great voice when the waves do roar,* &c.] As multitudes are compared to waters, (see ver. 13.) so the noise and stirs that are heard in populous cities are resembled to the waves of the sea; (compare Isa. xxii. 2.) and when they are depopulated, they are reduced to silence. (See Isa. xv. 1. lvii. 5.) The same is expressed, xxv. 10. by *taking away the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness,* &c. A judgment threatened to mystical Babylon, Rev. xviii. 23. Some render the latter part of the verse thus, *When their waves roar,* &c. and explain it of the Medes and Persians coming up like a flood against Babylon. (See ver. 42.)

Ver. 56. *Her mighty men are taken,* &c.] See the notes upon ver. 30.

For the Lord God of recompences shall surely requite.] See l. 29.

Ver. 57. *And I will make drunk her princes and her wise men,* &c.] See ver. 39. and l. 35.

Ver. 58. *The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burnt with fire.*] The walls were eighty-seven feet in breadth, according to Herodotus, (lib. i. cap. 178.) Ctesias saith, they were so wide, that six chariots might meet upon them; (apud Diodor. Sicul. lib. ii.) their height was three hundred and fifty feet, as was observed before: on each square of the walls were twenty-five gates of brass, mentioned Isa. xlv. 2. These were taken away by Darius, when he took the city, (see the notes upon l. 16.) who likewise brought down their walls to the height of fifty cubits only. Berosus affirms, that Cyrus ordered the outward walls of the city to be pulled down: (see his words in Josephus, lib. i. contra App. p. 1045.) though Herodotus and Xenophon take no notice of this circumstance.

And the people shall labour in vain, and the folks in the fire, and they shall be weary.] If the Chaldeans take never so much pains to quench the fire, it shall be to no purpose. (Compare ver. 64.) And all their efforts to preserve their empire and city shall be as insignificant, as if men wrought in the fire, which immediately destroys all the fruits of their labours. The words may be better translated, *And the people shall labour for a thing of nought, and the folks shall weary themselves for that which shall be fuel for the fire:* that is, the works which have been erected with such incredible labour and expense shall at last fall to ruin, and be a prey to the flames. (Compare ver. 25. Habak. ii. 13. and see Noldius's Concordance, p. 185.)

Ver. 59. *When he went with Zedekiah king of Judah.*] Or rather, *from Zedekiah,* or, *on the behalf of Zedekiah,* as our margin reads. (See Noldius's Concordance, p. 114.)

And this Seraiah was a quiet prince.] *The chief chamberlain,* as the margin reads, with a better sense: the chief of those that waited upon the king in his bedchamber.

Ver. 60. *So Jeremiah wrote in a book,* &c.] Compare xxx. 2. He might perhaps make use of Baruch as his amanuensis. (See xxxvi. 2. 4.)

Ver. 61. *And shalt see, and shalt read all these words.*] He was enjoined to read this prophecy to the Jews that were carried away to Babylon in Jehoiakim's captivity: (see xxix. 1, 2.) to comfort them under their exile.

Ver. 63. *Thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the river Euphrates,* &c.] The prophets sometimes gave sensible representations of the judgments they foretold. (See xix. 10.) This was a significant emblem of Babylon's sinking irrecoverably under the judgments here denounced against her. (Compare Rev. xviii. 21.) This threatening was in a literal sense fulfilled, by Cyrus's breaking down the head or dam of the great lake, that was on the west side of the city, in order to turn the course of the river that way: for no care being afterward taken to repair that breach, the whole country about it was overflown and drowned: and that prophecy of Isaiah, (xiv. 23.) of making the country of Babylon *a possession for the bittern and pools of water,* was literally fulfilled. (See Dr. Prideaux, p. 104. 123, 124.)

Ver. 64. *And they shall be weary.*] They shall be like men that strive against an enemy that is too hard for them, where all their labour is but in vain. (See ver. 58.)

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.] This is added, to shew, that the next chapter was added by Ezra or Baruch, or whoever collected this prophecy into one volume.

CHAP. LII.

ARGUMENT.

Grotius judiciously observes, that this chapter could not be added by Jeremiah, because a great part of it is a repetition of what he himself had related in the thirty-ninth and fortieth chapters of his prophecy. Therefore it is much more probable, that this chapter was added by

Ezra, who is commonly supposed to have collected the holy writings into one body after the captivity. Who designed this brief history of the desolations of the Jewish nation, as an introduction to the book of Lamentations that follows, and was anciently joined to the prophecy of Jeremiah, as appears from St. Jerome's epistle to Paulinus. This chapter is chiefly taken out of the latter part of the second book of Kings, with some few additions, which Ezra might supply out of the public records, from whence the books of Kings were compiled: which books were written either in or after the captivity, as may be collected from the Chaldee names, which are given to the months in those books, which were never used by the Jews till after the captivity.

Ver. 1—3. THIS is word for word the same with 2 Kings xxiv. 18—20.

Ver. 4—11. *And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign,* &c.] See xxxix. 1, &c.

Ver. 11. *And put him in prison till the day of his death.*] See the note on xxxix. 7.

Ver. 12. *Now in the fifth month.*] This gave occasion to that solemn fast of the fifth month, observed in the times of the captivity. (See Zech. vii. 3. 5. viii. 19.)

On the tenth day of the month.] It is said 2 Kings xxv. 7. that Nebuzar-adan came to Jerusalem on the seventh day of the month, but did not set the city and temple on fire till the tenth. Josephus, de Bello Jud. lib. viii. cap. 27. relates this remarkable circumstance that attended the burning of the temple, both under Nebuchadnezzar and Vespasian, that it happened both times on the same day of the year.

Ver. 13. *And burnt the house of the Lord.*] After it had stood, saith Josephus, four hundred and seventy years, (Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11.) Archbishop Usher reckons it four hundred and twenty-four years from the laying the first foundation, by Solomon.

Ver. 15. See the note on xxxix. 9.

Ver. 17, 18. *Also the pillars of brass,* &c.] See 2 Kings xxv. 14, &c. The temple was rifled of its riches and furniture at several times: the first was when Nebuchadnezzar came up against Jehoiakim, Dan. i. 2. the second time was at the captivity of Jeconiah; (see xxvii. 19. and 2 Kings xxiv. 13.) and now, at the final destruction of the city and temple, they made a clear riddance of all its ornaments.

Ver. 20. *Twelve brazen bulls which were under the bases.*] Or rather, *which were instead of bases,* to support the brazen sea. (See 1 Kings vii. 25.) So the Septuagint understand it. The Hebrew word *tachath,* elsewhere signifies *instead,* or *in the place of* another. (See Lev. xvi. 32. Esth. ii. 17. 2 Chron. vi. 10.)

Ver. 21. *The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits,* &c.] The same account is given of the height of these pillars, 1 Kings vii. 15. but in 2 Chron. iii. 15. it is said, that both the pillars made thirty-five cubits; which two texts may easily be reconciled, by allowing one cubit for the basis.

And a fillet of twelve cubits did compass it.] So that the diameter was almost four cubits.

And the thickness thereof was four fingers.] The pillar being hollow, the thickness of the work that encompassed the hollow space was four fingers over.

Ver. 22. *The height of one chapiter was five cubits.*] With this account agrees the text in 1 Kings vii. 16. and 2 Chron. iii. 15. but in 2 Kings xxv. 17. it is said, *the height of the chapiter was three cubits:* which difference commentators reconcile, by saying, that the chapiter with the net-work and pomegranates here mentioned, was five cubits high, but without them it was but three.

Ver. 23. *And there were ninety-six pomegranates on a side, and all the pomegranates were a hundred round about.*] That is, there were four-and-twenty on each side, or quarter, and one in each angle. (Compare 2 Chron. iii. 16.) We read 1 Kings vii. 20. that there were two hundred pomegranates to each chapiter, and the text in 2 Chron. iv. 13. agrees with that account: which texts are reconciled, by supposing that there were two rows of pomegranates one above another, and each row consisted of a hundred, and the words in 1 Kings vii. 20. intimate as much. Dr. Lightfoot understands the words in Jeremiah in this sense: When the pillars were set to the wall, only ninety-six pomegranates could be seen; the other four being hid behind the pillar, as it stood up close to the wall: so he translates the former part of the verse thus, *And there were ninety-six pomegranates on the open sides,* or *towards the open air:* which sense he conceives the word *ruchah* to import. (See his Description of the Temple, chap. 13. sect. 2.)

Ver. 24. *And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest.*] See 1 Chron. vi. 14. He was the father of Ezra. (See Ezra vii. 1.)

And Zephaniah the second priest.] The high-priest's substitute, in his absence, to oversee the affairs of the temple. (See xxix. 25.) This person is called the sagan by the Chaldee paraphrast here, and in the parallel place, 2 Kings xxv. The latter Jews tell us, it was an especial part of his office to supply the place of the high-priest, on the great day of expiation, if any accident should render him unqualified for officiating himself: of which Josephus gives an instance, Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 8.

And the three keepers of the door.] There were a great many porters belonging to the temple, as has been observed upon xxxv. 4. but these probably had the custody of the holy vessels, or of the treasury. (See 1 Chron. ix. 26. and Dr. Lightfoot's Description of the Temple, chap. 5. sect. 3.)

Ver. 25. *He took also out of the city an eunuch.*] The word is better rendered an *officer,* 2 Kings xxv. 19. (See Jer. xxxiv. 19.)

And seven men of them that were near the king's person.] *Who saw the king's face;* as it is in the Hebrew: the same character which is given to the seven princes of Persia, Esth. i. 14. In 2 Kings xxvi. 19. there is mention made but of five.

And the principal scribe of the host.] The muster-master-general, as we style him; or the secretary of war.

And therefore men—that were found in the midst of the city.] These were eminent persons who had concealed themselves, but were afterward discovered.

Ver. 28. *This is the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive.*] Archbishop Usher, in his Chronolog. S. p. 36. supposes, that this and the two following verses give an account of the lesser captivities which the Jews suffered under Nebuchadnezzar; whereas, there were three others, in which many more persons were carried away, *viz.* in the

first year of his reign, (Dan. i. 3.) in the eighth year mentioned 2 Kings xxiv. 12. and in the nineteenth, when the city was destroyed, an entire riddance was made of the inhabitants which were left after the former captivities.

In the seventh year three thousand Jews, and three-and-twenty.] Upon Jehoiakim's rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar, he ordered the governors of the neighbouring provinces to make war upon him, who invaded his kingdom from every quarter. The Ammonites, Moabites, and other subjects to the Babylonish empire, infesting Judea with frequent incursions: (see 2 Kings xxiv. 2, 3.) and in the last year of Jehoiakim's reign, which is coincident with the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, (see Jer. xxv. 1.) the captivity here mentioned happened.

Ver. 29. *In the eighteenth of Nebuchadnezzar,* &c.] This was when Nebuchadnezzar raised the siege of Jerusalem, to march against the king of Egypt, who came with a great army to the relief of the place. (See xxxvii. 5.) At which time he sent all the captive Jews which were in his camp to Babylon. (See Archbishop Usher's Chronolog. S. p. 38.)

Ver. 30. *In the three-and-twentieth year of Nebuchadnezzar,* &c.] When Nebuchadnezzar had laid siege to Tyre, which was in the borders of Judea, Nebuzar-adan made this expedition into the country, and carried with him the captives here mentioned; who seem to be no others than the poor people, that he himself had left to manure the ground, (ver. 1.) And this he probably did by way of revenge for the murder of Gedaliah.

Ver. 31. *In the seven-and-thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin,* &c.] This note of time confirms the observation already made upon xxv. 1. *viz.* That the Scripture computation of the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, anticipates that of Ptolemy's canon by two years, which two years he reigned with his father. For if we add the thirty-seven years of his reign here mentioned, to the eight years of it which preceded Jehoiachin's captivity, (see 2 Kings xxiv. 12.) that sum will amount to five-and-forty years: whereas, according to the common account, he reigned but three-and-forty.

In the five-and-twentieth day of the month.] It is the twenty-seventh day, in 2 Kings xxv. 27. This advancement might be resolved upon the twenty-fifth day, but not brought to pass till the twenty-seventh.

Evil-Merodach.] His name was Merodach, a name common among the kings of Babylon. (See Isa. xxxix. 1.) But he had this mark of distinction given him by way of reproach, for the word implies as much as *foolish Merodach,* because he was a profligate and vicious prince.

In the first year of his reign.] The words are better rendered in 2 Kings xxv. 28. *In the year when he began to reign.*

Lifted up the head of Jehoiachin, and brought him out of prison.] St. Jerome, in his commentaries upon Isa. xiv. reports, from an ancient tradition of the Jews, that Evil-Merodach having had the government of the Babylonish empire during his father's distraction, used his power so ill, that as soon as the old king came to himself, he put him in prison for it, where he contracted a particular acquaintance with Jehoiachin, who was his fellow-prisoner, and that this was the cause of the great kindness he expressed towards him.

Ver. 32. *Above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon.*] Who had the title of kings reserved to them after their captivity, as Porus had after he was vanquished by Alexander.

Ver. 33. *He did continually eat bread before him.*] Sat with him at his own table. (Compare 2 Sam. ix. 7. 11.)

Ver. 34. *For his diet, there was a continual diet given him,* &c.] This allowance was for his attendants and family. (See ibid. ver. 10.)

A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

I observed in the Argument to the fifty-second of Jeremiah, that that chapter was added, at the end of his prophecy, as a prologue or introduction to his book of Lamentations: which was originally joined to the former, but is now divided from it in the modern Jews' copies, which place this book, among other smaller tracts, such as the Canticles, Ruth, &c. at the end of the Pentateuch. This is a plain proof, that the order of the books of the Old Testament, in which the Jewish copies at present place them, is but of later date, and differs from that order in which Ezra placed the holy writings, when he collected them into one body. In which collection, Daniel had a place among the prophets: though the Jews, since the time of Christ, have thrust him down among the Hagiographa, contrary to the character their forefathers gave of him, as appears from Josephus, who calls him a prophet, *nay, one of the greatest of the prophets,* (Antiq. lib. x. cap. 12.) in agreement with which opinion our Saviour gives him the same title, Matt. xxiv. 25.

Instead of that ancient preface to the Lamentations, the Greek and Latin copies have a short introduction, briefly setting forth the subject of the book, which may be thus translated: *It came to pass, that after Israel was carried captive, and Jerusalem desolate, the prophet Jeremiah sat weeping, and bewailed Jerusalem with this Lamentation, and bitterly weeping and mourning, said, as follows.* This Argument was occasioned, as Huetius probably conjectures, (Demonstrat. Evang. prop. iv. cap. 14.) by removing the fifty-second chapter from the place where it first stood, and placing it as a conclusion to the prophecy of Jeremiah.

Archbishop Usher, in his Annals, ad A. M. 3394. and some other learned men, following the opinion of Josephus, and St. Jerome, have supposed the Lamentations to have been written on occasion of Josiah's death: (see Lam. iv. 20.) which was an introduction to the fatal catastrophe of their church and nation. But whoever carefully reads this pathetical description of the miseries of Judah and Jerusalem, may be easily convinced, that this is not so much a prediction of evils to come, as a lively representation of a present calamity.

In which kind of writing the prophet Jeremiah was a great master, according to the character Grotius gives of him, "Mirus in affectibus concitandis Jeremias;" *that he had a wonderful talent in exciting the passions.*

Ver. 1. *HOW doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! how is she become a widow!*] Cities are commonly described as the mothers of their inhabitants, and their kings and princes as their husbands. So, when they are bereaved of these, they are said to be widows and childless. (Compare Isa. ii. 26. xlvii. 8.) Jerusalem, under these circumstances, is described as sitting alone (the multitude of her inhabitants being dispersed and destroyed), and in a pensive condition. (Compare iii. 28.)

She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces.] The kings of Judah, in their flourishing state, made conquests over the Philistines, Edomites, and other neighbouring countries: and by thus enlarging their dominions, advanced the power of the metropolis of their kingdom. (See 2 Sam. viii. 2 Chron. xxvi. 6—8. 2 Kings xviii. 8.)

Ver. 2. *She weepeth sore in the night.*] The darkness or solitude of the night doth naturally promote melancholy reflections. (See Psal. vi. 6. xvi. 7. lxxvii. 6.)

Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her, &c.] All her allies, whose friendship she courted by sinful compliances, (see Jer. iv. 30. xxii. 20. 22.) have forsaken her in her affliction, and join with her enemies in insulting over her.

Ver. 3. *Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude,* &c.] Her miseries have received their finishing stroke, in a total captivity and bondage to a foreign power of infidels and idolaters.

All her persecutors overtook her between the straits.] A metaphor from those that hunt a prey, which they commonly drive into some strait and narrow passage, from whence there is no making an escape.

Ver. 4. *The ways of Zion do mourn, because none cometh to her solemn feasts.*] The highways that lead to Jerusalem

are unfrequented, because there are none that come up thither at the solemn feasts of the year, the temple and altar being destroyed.

Her virgins are afflicted.] Her calamities afflict the young as well as the old, and spoil all their mirth and gaiety. (See ver. 18. ii. 21. v. 14.)

Ver. 5. *Her adversaries are the chief.*] They have got the advantage over her, and she is become their vassal: and thus the judgment that Moses threatened the Jews upon their disobedience is fulfilled, (Deut. xxviii. 43, 44.) *That their enemies should be the head, and they should be the tail.*

Her children are gone into captivity before the enemy.] Her inhabitants (see the note upon ver. 1.) are forced into captivity by the enemies, as cattle are driven in herds by them that sell them.

Ver. 6. *And from the daughter of Zion all beauty is departed.*] All the glory of God's sanctuary, and comely order of his worship, called the *beauty of holiness*, Exod. xxviii. 2. Psal. vi. 9. cx. 3.

The princes are become like harts that find no pasture, &c.] They are become dispirited, they have lost their courage, and tamely submitted to the conqueror. (See the note on Jer. xiv. 5.)

Ver. 7. *Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and misery all her pleasant things which she had in the days of old.*] The benefits she enjoyed from God's favour and protection, the honour of his peculiar presence in the temple, and the manifestation he gave of his will by the prophets. (Compare ver. 10.) The Hebrew word *merudim*, translated *misery*, signifies banishment and captivity: to which sense the LXX. translate it.

The adversaries saw her, and did mock at her sabbaths.] The heathen writers commonly ridicule the Jewish sabbaths, as a mark of their sloth and idleness; without considering the excellent uses that day was designed for, *viz.* to give men leisure to attend upon the service of God, and learn the duties of religion.

Ver. 8. *Because they have seen her nakedness.*] She is stripped of all her ornaments, and carried naked and bare into captivity. As she has defiled herself with idolatry (called spiritual adultery in Scripture), so God has ordered her to be exposed to shame, like a common harlot. (See the note upon Jer. xiii. 22.)

Ver. 9. *Her filthiness is in her skirts.*] She carries the marks of her sins in the greatness of her punishments. The phrase alludes to a woman in the state of her separation. (Compare ver. 17.)

She remembereth not her last end.] Or rather, *She hath not remembered her latter end;* that is, what would be the effect and consequence of her sins. (Compare Isa. xlvii. 7.)

Ver. 10. *The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things.*] See ver. 7.

Ver. 11. *All her people sigh, they seek bread.*] See ii. 12. iv. 4. 10. Jer. lii. 6.

Ver. 12. *Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?*] The words may be rendered, *O all ye that pass by*, or, *Oh*, I appeal *to all ye that pass by.* The word *lo*, or *lu*, is sometimes used for entreating or conjuring: as if the prophet had said, Let any indifferent person judge, whether any calamity is like to mine.

Ver. 13. *From above he hath sent fire into my bones,* &c.] He hath consumed my habitations by fire, as if he struck me with a blast of lightning, which immediately pierces into the vitals; and he has prevented my making any escape from my enemies, as if he had spread a net under my feet to hinder my flight.

Ver. 14. *The yoke of my transgression is bound by his hand,* &c.] He has laid upon me the burden of my iniquities, and inflicted such heavy punishments on me, that I must sink under them. The Septuagint and the Vulgar Latin, with very little variation, read, *He watcheth over my transgressions.* To the same sense Daniel saith, *the Lord hath watched over the evil,* Dan. ix. 14. and Job, xiv. 16. *Thou watchest over my sin:* that is, thou diligently markest every sin I commit, that thou mayest in due time requite it with a proper punishment.

Ver. 15. *The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midst of me.*] The destruction that is made by war is elsewhere expressed by treading under foot. (See the note on Jer. i. 26.)

He hath called an assembly against me, &c.] The army of the Chaldeans.

The Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a wine-press.] That people that was formerly betrothed to him as a chaste spouse, and secured from all violent attempts by his immediate protection, (see the notes on Jer. xiv. 13. xviii. 17.) God has now given up to the fury of their enemies, who have made such an effusion of their blood, as may be fitly represented by the squeezing out of the red juice of grapes by a wine-press: to which God's vengeance is often compared in the prophetical writings. (See Isa. lxiii. 3. Rev. xiv. 19, 20. xix. 15.)

Ver. 16. *Because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me.*] See ver. 2. 9.

Ver. 17. *Zion spreadeth forth her hands.*] A gesture of entreating and importunity. (See Jer. iv. 31.)

The Lord hath commanded concerning Jacob, &c.] It is the Divine decree and pleasure.

Jerusalem is a menstruous woman among them.] Whom every body loathes or disdains: she is looked upon as abominable in the sight of God, and therefore men think they have a right to use her with despite and scorn. (See Jer. l. 7.)

Ver. 18. *Hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow.*] See ver. 12.

Ver. 19. *I called for my lovers, but they deceived me.*] See ver. 2.

My priests and my elders gave up the ghost in the city, &c.] The famine hath consumed the most honourable, as well as the meaner part, of the people. (See ver. 11.)

My bowels are troubled, my heart is turned within me.] Compare Jer. iv. 19. xlviii. 36. Job xxx. 27.

Ver. 20. *Abroad the sword bereaveth, at home there is as death.*] Compare Deut. xxxii. 25. The latter part of the sentence may better be rendered, *At home there is certain death;* for the particle of similitude doth sometimes strongly affirm, as commentators have observed upon those words of St. John, i. 14. "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father:" such a glory as could belong to none but the Son of God.

Ver. 21. *They have heard that I sigh.*] That is, mine enemies, as it follows.

They are glad that thou hast done it.] They please themselves with the thought, that our God, of whose favour and protection we used to boast, should forsake us, and give us up as a prey to our enemies. (See ii. 15, 16.)

Thou wilt bring the day that thou hast called, &c.] The day when thou wilt execute thy judgments upon the Babylonians, will certainly come at the time thou hast determined for that purpose.

Ver. 22. *Let all their wickedness come before thee.*] Let it appear, that *though thou chastenest us, thou punishest our enemies a thousand times more:* as the author of the book of Wisdom speaks, Wisd. xii. 22. (Compare Jer. x. 25.)

Do unto them as thou hast done unto me.] Some render the words, *Glean them as thou hast gleaned me;* that is, make an entire riddance or destruction of them. (Compare Jer. vi. 9.)

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND hath cast down from heaven to earth the beauty of Israel.*] The temple, and all its glory. (See i. 6.)

And remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger.] And even spared not the ark itself, the footstool to the Shechinah, or Divine glory, which sat between or upon the cherubims, as in a throne. (See 1 Chron. xxviii. 2. Psal. xcix. 5. cxxxiii. 7.)

Ver. 2. *The Lord hath swallowed up the habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied.*] Without shewing any pity or concern for them. (See ver. 17. and iii. 43.)

He hath polluted the kingdom and the princes thereof.] He hath shewed no regard to the kingdom, which himself hath settled upon the family of David, but involved the royal family in one common destruction with the rest of the people. The expression is much the same with that of Psal. lxxxix. 39. "Thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground."

Ver. 3. *He hath cut off in his anger all the horn of Israel.*] By the *horn of Israel,* is meant his strength and glory, Job xvi. 15. Psal. lxxv. 5. especially his kingly dignity. (See Psal. lxxxix. 24. xcii. 10. cxxxii. 18.)

He hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy.] He hath withdrawn his wonted assistance, and given us up into the hands of our enemies. (Compare Psal. lxxiv. 11.)

Ver. 4. *And slew all that was pleasant to the eye.*] The chiefest in worth and dignity: those who were in the flower of their age, the joy and delight of their parents. (See i. 15. Ezek. xxiv. 25.)

Ver. 5. *He hath swallowed up Israel.*] As a lion devoureth his prey. The verb rendered to *swallow up,* signifies in a general sense, to destroy. (See Isa. iii. 12.)

Ver. 6. *He hath violently taken away his tabernacle, as if it were of a garden,* &c.] He hath destroyed the temple, the place of his residence, and of our religious assemblies, as if it had been no better than a tabernacle or cottage, set up in a garden or vineyard, just while the fruit is gathering, and then to be taken down again. (Compare Isa. i. 8.) The margin reads, *He hath taken away his hedge, as of a garden;* that is, he hath withdrawn his protection, and left us exposed to the fury of our enemies. (Compare Isa. v. 5.)

The Lord hath caused the solemn feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion.] See i. 1.

And hath despised in the indignation of his anger the king and the priest.] And shewed no regard for either of those honourable offices, but hath suffered the kingdom to be destroyed, and the temple laid waste.

Ver. 7. *They have made a noise in the house of the Lord, as in the day of a solemn feast.*] Instead of the joyful sound of praises and thanksgivings to God, such as used to be solemnly performed in the temple at the public festivals; there was nothing to be heard there but the noise of soldiers, and rudeness of infidels, profaning that sacred place, and insulting over the God that was worshipped there. (Compare Psal. lxxiv. 4.)

[Ver. 8. *The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion.*] Dr. Lightfoot explains this of the wall which encompassed the temple and its outward courts. See his Description of the Temple, chap. 17.]

He hath stretched out a line.] The instruments designed for building, are in some places applied to destroying, because sometimes men mark out those buildings they intend to pull down. So 2 Kings xxi. 13. God saith, *I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria;* and *the line of confusion,* is mentioned Isa. xxxiv. 11. (See likewise Amos vii. 7, 8.)

[Ver. 9. *Her king and her princes are among the gentiles.*] The king of Babylon's officers carried away captive all the royal family, and likewise all the men of note for valour or quality, and left none behind but the poorest people of the land. See 2 Kings xxiv. 14—16. xxv. 7. 11, 12.]

[*The law is no more.*] The priests and Levites, whose office it is to instruct the people in the law, are dispersed among the heathen: and that part of the law which regards the public worship of God, is rendered impracticable by the temple's being destroyed.]

The prophets also find no vision from the Lord.] The prophets are either dead, or those that are alive in captivity, as Ezekiel, Daniel, and Jeremiah himself; these are not favoured with Divine revelations as they were wont to be, and so cannot resolve the doubts of those that come to them for advice. (Compare Ezek. vii. 26.)

Ver. 10. *The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, and keep silence: they have cast dust upon their heads.*] Expressions of the deepest mourning and sorrow. (See iii. 28. Job ii. 12, 13. Isa. iii. 26. xlvii. 15.)

Ver. 11. *Mine eyes do fail with tears.*] I have lost my sight with weeping. (Compare v. 17. Psal. vi. 7. xxxi. 2.)

My liver is poured upon the earth.] My vitals seem to be dissolved, and have lost all their strength. (Compare Job xvi. 13. Psal. xxii. 14.)

Because the children and sucklings swoon in the streets of the city.] For want of sustenance. (See ver. 19. and iv. 4.)

Ver. 12. *When they swooned as the wounded.*] Who are not presently despatched, but die of a lingering death. (See iv. 9.)

Ver. 13. *What thing shall I take to witness for thee?* &c.] What instance can I bring of any calamity like thine, that such an example may be some mitigation of thy complaints?

For thy breach is as great as the sea, &c.] It is like the breaking in of the sea, that overflows a whole country, where no stop can be put to the inundation.

Ver. 14. *The prophets have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity.*] They have not given the

people a just sense of their iniquities, in order to avert God's judgments: but rather flatter them in their sins, and in hopes of impunity. (See Jer. v. 31. xiv. 14.)

[*False burdens.*] The Hebrew word *massa* is usually translated *burden*, and generally signifies a burdensome prophecy. (See the note on Jer. xxiii. 33.) But it likewise imports prophecy, in general, (see Prov. xxx. 1. xxxi. 1.) and so it is used here; for Jeremy complains of those impostors who prophesied peace, and soothed men up in their sins, to their final destruction.]

Ver. 15. *All that pass by clap their hands at thee; they hiss and wag their heads.*] Gestures of derision, whereby the enemies of the Jews expressed a satisfaction in their calamities. (See Jer. xviii. 6. 1 Kings ix. 8. Ezek. xxv. 6.)

Is this the city that men call The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?] Or, *the whole land?* (See Psal. xlviii. 2.) Jerusalem was the metropolis of the Jewish nation, and highly valued by them for the magnificence of their temple, and the presence of the true God there: whither the whole nation resorted to celebrate their solemn festivals, which were observed with all the magnificence of a religious joy. Their being deprived of those ornaments, gave occasion to their enemies to insult over them. (See Psal. lxxix. 4.)

Ver. 16. *All thine enemies have opened their mouths against thee.*] As if they were ready to swallow thee up. (Compare iii. 46. Job xvi. 9, 10. Psal. xxii. 13.)

Ver. 17. *He hath fulfilled his word which he had commanded in the days of old.*] He hath fulfilled those threatenings which he denounced against our disobedience to the law of Moses. (See Lev. xxvi. 31, &c. Deut. xxvii. 25, 26. 49, &c.) The word *command* is sometimes used for any part of the covenant, which God had engaged himself to perform. (See Psal. cv. 8. cxi. 9.)

He hath set up the horn of thine adversaries.] Advanced their power and glory. (See ver. 3.)

Ver. 18. *Their heart cried unto the Lord, O wall of the daughter of Zion,* &c.] As the wall and rampart are said to lament, (ver. 8.) because their ruins are objects of lamentation: so here devout persons, upon the destruction of the city, direct their prayers to God, as if the ruins themselves did entreat him to take compassion on the miseries of that place which he had chosen for his peculiar residence. (See the like prosopopœia, Habak. ii. 11.) To this purpose the Vulgar Latin expresses the sense, "Clamavit cor meum super muris filiæ Zion;" *My heart cried unto the Lord concerning the walls of the daughter of Zion.*

Ver. 19. *Arise, cry out in the night; in the beginning of the watches,* &c.] Devout persons shewed their earnestness in prayer, by attending upon it late at night, and early in the morning, when others give themselves up to sloth and drowsiness. (See Psal. lxiii. 6. cxix. 55. 147, 148. Isa. xxvi. 9. 1 Pet. iv. 7.) The Jews divided the night into three watches; (see Judg. vii. 19.) and in aftertimes into four. (See Matt. xiv. 25. Mark xiii. 35. Luke xii. 38.) The first watch was reckoned from the time of going to bed.

Pour out thine heart like water.] Offer up thy earnest prayers with tears to the throne of grace: and send up thy very soul, and thy devoutest affections, along with them. (Compare 1 Sam. vii. 6. Psal. lxii. 8.)

Lift up thy hands unto him for the life of thy young children, &c.] See ver. 11.

At the top of every street.] See the same phrase, iv. 1. Isa. li. 20. Nahum iii. 10. Noldius thinks the expression means the same, as *in every street.* (See his Concordance, p. 214.)

Ver. 20. *Behold, O Lord, and consider to whom thou hast done this.*] To thy people, for whom thou hast formerly expressed so much tenderness and affection.

Shall the women eat their fruit, and children of a span long?] The margin reads, *Swaddled with their hands:* in which sense the word is used, ver. 22. We find, by comparing this verse with iv. 10. that God brought upon them that terrible judgment which he had denounced against them, if they continued to provoke him; *viz.* That they should *eat the flesh of their own sons and daughters,* (Lev. xxvi. 29. Deut. xxviii. 53. Jer. xix. 13.)

Ver. 21. *The young and the old lie on the ground in the streets.*] Either they lie slain without any regard to age or condition: or else they lie prostrate there, in a desponding manner, and just ready to give up the ghost. (See ver. 10.)

Ver. 22. *Thou hast called, as in a solemn day, my terrors round about.*] Terrors come upon me on every side by thy appointment; just as multitudes use to flock to Jerusalem at the times of the solemn feasts. The phrase *magor missabib, fear or terror on every side,* is elsewhere used, by Jeremiah, to express great desolation and misery. (See Jer. vi. 25. xx. 3. xlvi. 5. xlix. 19.)

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

This chapter is writ in a different metre from the two former, and that which follows, as St. Jerome hath observed in his preface to the Lamentations: and whereas in those the first letter of every verse follows the order of the alphabet, here the same initial letter is continued for three verses together.

The subject of the chapter is penitential meditations upon the prophet's own calamities, as well as those of the public: together with pious reflections upon the end which God proposes in sending afflictions, and the good use men ought to make of such chastisements.

Ver. 1. *I AM the man that have seen afflictions.*] The prophet speaks with a particular regard to the ill treatment he met with in the discharge of his prophetical office. (Compare Jer. xv. 10. 17, 18. xx. 8, &c. xxvi. 8, &c. xxxvi. 26. xxxvii. 15. xxxviii. 6.)

Ver. 2. *He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light.*] Light is often used in Scripture for happiness or comfort, and darkness for affliction and misery. (See Isa. lix. 9. Jer. xiii. 16. Amos v. 20.) The words probably allude to the prophet's being cast into the dungeon. (See ver. 53. 55.)

Ver. 3. *He turneth his hand against me all the day.*] God, that was formerly kind and gracious, now exercises continual acts of severity. *He turneth his hand against me,* is a phrase equivalent to that we read, Isa. i. 25. *I will turn my hand upon thee.* (See the note there.)

Ver. 4. *My flesh and my skin hath he made old.*] Compare Job xvi. 8. Psal. xxxi. 10. xxxii. 3.

He hath broken my bones.] The anguish I feel in my

mind is as painful to me as if all my bones were broken. (Compare Psal. li. 8. Isa. xxxviii. 13.)

Ver. 5. *He hath builded against me on every side.*] He hath enclosed me on every side, that there is no escaping the miseries that surround me. (Compare ver. 7. 9.)

He hath compassed me with gall and travail.] See ver. 19.

Ver. 6. *He hath set me in dark places,* &c.] He hath confined me to a dungeon, where no light enters; and I am sequestered from human society, as if I were out of the world. (Compare ver. 53, 54. Psal. lxxxviii. 5, 6.)

Ver. 7. *He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out.*] See ver. 5. and compare Job iii. 23. xix. 8. The words may allude to the siege of Jerusalem.

He hath made my chain heavy.] He hath made my bondage, or my imprisonment, grievous.

Ver. 8. *Also when I cry and shout* [or call aloud], *he shutteth out my prayer.*] Refuseth to hearken to it, or give me any ease or relief. God's answering men's requests, is commonly expressed by hearkening to their prayers. (Compare Job xxx. 20.)

Ver. 9. *He hath enclosed my way with hewn stone.*] See ver. 5. 7.

He hath made my paths crooked.] So that I know not which way to turn myself. (See ver. 11.)

Ver. 10. *He was to me as a bear lying in wait,* &c.] He falls upon me with the fierceness of his anger, as a bear or lion seizes upon his prey. (Compare Job x. 16. Hos. v. 14. xiii. 7, 8.)

Ver. 11. *He hath turned aside my ways,* &c.] He disappoints all my undertakings, he layeth my country desolate, and makes it to cease from being a nation, or body politic.

Ver. 12, 13. *He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow,* &c.] He hath made me the mark and object of his indignation. (Compare Job xvi. 12, 13. Psal. xxxviii. 2.)

Ver. 13. *The arrows of his quiver.*] Called here in the Hebrew, the *sons of his quiver,* by an elegant metaphor, as they are called *the sons of the bow,* Job xli. 28. By the same metaphor, sparks are called the *sons of coal,* Job v. 7.

Ver. 14. *I was a derision of all my people.*] This may be understood of Jeremiah himself; (see Jer. xx. 7.) but some critics suppose the word *ammi,* rendered *my people,* to stand for *ammin, the people,* as the word is used in some places; (see 2 Sam. xxii. 44. Micah vi. 26. compared with Psal. xviii. 44.) and then this sentence is to be understood of the Jewish nation, and imports, that their miseries exposed them to the scorn and reproach of all the neighbouring countries. (See ii. 15.)

And their song all the day.] See ver. 63. Job xxx. 9. Psal. lxix. 2.

Ver. 15. *He hath made me drunk with wormwood.*] See ver. 19.

Ver. 16. *He hath broken my teeth with gravel stones, he hath covered me with ashes.*] In this and the foregoing verse, the prophet aggravates the calamities of his people by such expressions as imply, that instead of any support or comfort, they find nothing but miseries and afflictions. (See the note on Jer. ix. 15.) The Septuagint render the latter part of the verse, *He hath fed me with ashes; i. e.* We fare as hard as those who feed upon bread baked in ashes, whose teeth are in danger of being broke with grits and stones. (Compare Job vi. 7. Psal. cii. 9.) This translation Noldius defends in his Concordance, p. 168.

Ver. 17. *I forgat prosperity.*] I have been a stranger to prosperity long enough to wear the remembrance of it out of my mind: so Joseph, speaking of the seven years of famine, saith, That *plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt,* (Gen. xli. 30.) By the same figure, the prophet Isaiah describing happy times, saith, *The former troubles are forgotten,* (lxv. 16.)

Ver. 18. *And I said, my strength and my hope is perished from the Lord.*] I began to despair of God's mercy. (See Psal. xxxi. 22.)

Ver. 19. *Remembering my affliction and my misery,* [or banishment, see i. 7.] *the wormwood and the gall.*] Wormwood and gall are put for the most severe and rigorous treatment. (See the notes on Jer. ix. 15.)

Ver. 20. *My soul hath them still in remembrance.*] I have still new occasions to remember them.

Ver. 21. *This I recall to mind.*] The reflections set down in the following verses, are a sufficient ground for our trust in God under the severest trials.

Ver. 22. *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.*] The Septuagint and Chaldee paraphrase render the sentence, *Because the Lord's mercies are not at an end.*

Ver. 23. *They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*] Thy mercies are renewed to us every day; and thy faithfulness in performing them is as great as thy goodness in promising them. God's mercy and truth, or fidelity, are usually joined together. (See Gen. xxxii. 10. Psal. lvii. 10. c. 4.)

Ver. 24. *The Lord is my portion.*] An interest in the favour and promises of God is the best inheritance. (See Jer. x. 16.)

Ver. 25. *The Lord is good to them that wait for him,* &c.] To them that patiently wait his time, when he thinks it a proper season to afford them comfort and deliverance: and in the meanwhile apply themselves to him by prayers and humiliation. (See the following verse.)

Ver. 27. *It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.*] It is good to be inured betimes, to bear those useful restraints which arise from a sense of the duty we owe to God, and the obedience we ought to pay to his laws.

Ver. 28. *He sitteth alone, and keepeth silence.*] The discipline of afflictions makes a man serious and thoughtful, it disposes him to reflect upon himself and his ways, and instructs him to acquiesce in the disposals of Providence.

Ver. 29. *He putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope.*] He prostrates himself even to the ground before Almighty God, in token of the deepest humiliation of his soul, (see Psal. cxix. 25.) if by that means he may recover the Divine favour.

Ver. 30. *He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him.*] He not only humbles himself in the sight of God; but likewise patiently bears the ill treatment of men. (Compare Isa. l. 6.)

Ver. 33. *For he doth not afflict willingly,* &c.] God doth not take pleasure in the misery of men, or in exercising his authority over them, but designs all his chastisements for our good. (See Heb. xii. 9, 10.)

Ver. 34—36. *To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth,* &c.—*the Lord approveth not.*] As God takes no pleasure in oppressing the poor and helpless, so neither

will he suffer any men to escape unpunished that are guilty of such acts of injustice and cruelty, who never consider that all the wrongs they do are committed in the sight of the supreme Judge of the world; and although at present he thinks fit to prosper such oppressors, the Chaldeans in particular, yet in due time he will call them to a severe account for their wickedness.

Ver. 37. *Who is he that saith, and it comes to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?*] The king of Babylon, and such haughty tyrants, may boast of their power, as if it were equal to omnipotence itself: but still it is God's prerogative to bring to pass whatever he pleases, without any let or impediment, only by speaking or declaring his purpose, that the thing should be done, as he did at the beginning of the creation: (see Psal. xxxiii. 7.) and ever since nothing is brought to pass, but according to his *determinate counsel and foreknowledge:* who, as he makes men the instrument of his vengeance, so he can restrain their cruelty whenever he thinks fit.

Ver. 38. *Out of the mouth of the Most High proceeds not evil and good?*] Do not calamities come from God's will and disposal, as well as prosperity? (See Isa. xlv. 7. Amos iii. 6.)

Ver. 39. *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?*] If we consider God's afflictions as a just reward of our evil deeds, this will prevent all murmuring and repining against Providence: especially as long as men are on this side of the grave, they ought to be thankful for having an opportunity given them of repentance.

Ver. 43. *Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us.*] See ii. 1. Or the words may be rendered, *Thou hast covered thy face in anger,* &c. (See the next verse.)

Ver. 44. *Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud.*] The same sense is elsewhere expressed by God's *hiding his face.*

Ver. 45. *Thou hast made us as the offscouring and refuse in the midst of the people.*] That is, of the heathen nations, whither thou hast driven us; (see ver. 14. ii. 15.) St. Paul plainly alludes to this text, 1 Cor. iv. 13. and translates the Hebrew word *maus, refuse,* by the Greek Περίψημα. I have observed in the notes upon Jer. xxv. 10. that the apostles, in quoting the Scriptures, do not always follow the Septuagint, but now and then make a new translation of the words out of the Hebrew.

Ver. 46. *All our enemies have opened their mouths against us.*] See the note on ii. 16. Or else the words may be understood of the reproaches they utter against us, and the God whom we worship. (Compare Rev. xiii. 6.)

Ver. 47. *Fear and the snare is come upon us.*] See Jer. xlviii. 43.

Desolation and destruction.] The expression is much the same in the original with that we meet with Isa. li. 19. (See the note there.)

Ver. 51. *Mine eye affecteth mine heart.*] Or, preys upon my heart: my grief wears out my health and strength. Abraham à Schultens, in his Animadvers. on Job, p. 47. observes, that *nalal* signifies, in Arabic, to weaken, grieve, or make sick.

Ver. 52. *Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird, without cause.*] The prophet in this and the following verses describes his own sufferings, when his enemies seized him and put him into the dungeon, (Jer. xxxvii. 16. xxxviii. 6.) He compares them to a fowler that is in pursuit of a bird; so, saith he, they sought all opportunities to take an advantage against me, and to deprive me of life or liberty: and this they did without any provocation given on his part. So the word *hinnam, without cause,* signifies. (Compare Psal. xxxv. 7. 19. lxix. 4. cix. 3.)

Ver. 53. *They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me.*] I was not only sequestered from all human society, like a dead man, (see ver. 6.) but in apparent danger of losing my life in the dungeon. (See Jer. xxxvii. 24. xxxviii. 9, 10.) And their laying a stone upon the entrance of that dark cavern, resembled the burying me alive. (Compare Dan. vi. 17. Matt. xxvii. 60.)

Ver. 54. *Waters flowed over my head; then I said, I am cut off.*] When I sunk down into the mire in the dungeon, I despaired of my life, just as if I had been sinking over head and ears in a river. (Compare Psal. lxix. 2.) And I said, I am cut off from the land of the living. (See Psal. xxxi. 2. Isa. xxxviii. 10, 11.)

Ver. 56. *Hide not thine ear at my breathing.*] Or, *sighing:* God's answering our prayers is commonly expressed by *opening his ears:* hiding them denotes the contrary.

Ver. 60. *Thou hast seen all their vengeance,* &c.] See Jer. xi. 19.

Ver. 63. *Behold their sitting down, and their uprising; I am their music.*] In every part of their life (compare Psal. cxxxix. 2.) I am the object of their scorn and derision. (See ver. 14.)

Ver. 64. *Render to them a recompence,* &c.] See the note upon Jer. xi. 20.

Ver. 66. *Destroy them—from under the heavens of the Lord.*] Let them be destroyed from off the face of the earth. (Compare Jer. x. 11.)

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The prophet returns to the same metre he used in the two first chapters, and treats of the same subject.

Ver. 1. ***HOW** is the gold become dim!* &c.] How is the glory of the temple obscured! The sanctuary which was overlaid with gold (see 2 Chron. iii. 8.) now lies in ruins: and the stones of it are not distinguished from common rubbish! In like manner, the priests and Levites, who attended upon God's service, and the elders of the people, the members of the great Sanhedrin, who kept their court within the precincts of the temple; (see the note on Jer. xxxv. 4.) these persons, that might be resembled to the pillars or corner-stones of that sacred building, are now involved in the same common destruction with the meanest of the people. (See ver. 16. ii. 20.)

At the top of every street.] See the note on ii. 19.

Ver. 2. *The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers!*] Those that in honour and worth exceed the meanest, as much as gold doth earthenware, now lie undistinguished in their death. The words are an explication of what is said in more general terms in the verse before.

Ver. 3. *Even the sea-monsters draw out the breast,* &c.]

[Dr. Pocock translates the word *tannin, jackals,* sea-monsters having no breasts. See the notes upon Micah i. 8.] The word *tannin* signifies any great fish, as a whale or a crocodile: (see the note on Isa. xxvii. 1.) and is here very fitly rendered *sea-monsters.* These the prophet saith are not so unnatural, as to neglect the care of their young ones: whereas the women of Jerusalem have been reduced to that miserable necessity, as not only to disregard their children, not having wherewithal to provide for themselves, but likewise to feed upon them, (ver. 4. 10.)

Like the ostriches in the wilderness.] See Job xxxix. 14. 16.

Ver. 5. *They that were bred up in scarlet, embrace dunghills.*] Are content to lie down upon a dunghill, or to seek for food there. (Compare Job xxiv. 8.)

Ver. 6. *That was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her.*] Sodom was not given up into the hands of an enemy that laid siege to it, nor condemned to the lingering destruction of famine. (See ver. 9.)

[Ver. 7. *Her Nazarites.*] A *Nazarite* signifies a person dedicated to God. Their vow did often include an attendance upon the worship of God in the temple. (See the note upon Amos ii. 11.) It is of such Nazarites the word seems here to be meant.]

They were more ruddy in body than rubies.] Or, *Their skin was clearer than rubies,* or pearls, as Bochart translates the words, (Hierozoic. lib. ii. cap. 6.) The word *adam* signifies clear, or transparent, and is so to be understood, Cant. v. 10. where our translation renders it *ruddy,* as it does here. Thus the Latin word *purpureus* is used by Virgil, when he saith, "Lumenque juventæ purpureum." Ludolphus renders the words, *They were more beautiful than pearls;* from the sense which the word *adam* still retains in the Ethiopic language, where it signifies *beautiful:* from which signification he supposes the first man had the name of Adam. (See his Commentary in Histor. Æthiop. lib. i. n. 107.)

Ver. 8. *Their visage is blacker than a coal.*] The famine and other hardships they have endured have spoiled their complexion, and made them look dry and withered. (Compare v. 10.)

Ver. 9. *Stricken through for want of the fruits of the earth.*] Their vitals are pierced through as if they had been pierced with a sword, but with this difference, that it is by famine, the most cruel, because the most lingering death. The preposition *mîn* is rightly translated *for want of;* so it is taken, Jer. xlviii. 45. (See the note there.)

Ver. 10. *The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children.*] The affection of a mother towards her child is the strongest of all natural affections, (compare Isa. xlix. 15.) and yet the famine hath forced that tender sex to divest themselves of it. (See ii. 20.)

Ver. 11. *He hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof.*] It hath made an entire destruction, so as not to leave *one stone upon another.* (See Jer. vii. 20.)

Ver. 12. *The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed,* &c.] The city was so well fortified, and had been so often miraculously preserved by God from the attempts of its enemies, that it seemed incredible that it should at last fall into their hands.

Ver. 13. *For the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests.*] See Jer. v. 31. vi 13. xxiii. 11. Ezek. xxii. 26. 28. Zeph. iii. 4.

Ver. 14. *They have wandered as blind men in the streets, they have polluted themselves with blood.*] When they fled for their lives they were like blind men, not knowing which way to go, because of the many carcasses which lay in their way: whereby they became stained with blood, and so legally polluted. (See Numb. xix. 16.) Thus they carried the marks of their sin in their punishment.

So that men could not touch their garments.] The syntax, in the original, is very obscure, which causes different interpretations of the sentence. Some render it, *They touched* [the blood] *with their garments,* which they might not lawfully do: in which sense the verb *yacal* is used, Deut. xii. 17. Others translate the words, *So that they could not but touch it with their garments:* which made others cry, *Depart,* &c. as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 15. *They cried, Depart, depart, it is unclean;* [or, ye polluted] *depart,* &c.] When they fled to save their lives, they could find no safe retreat, but every body shunned and avoided them: and used the same words to express their abhorrence of this defilement of such persons, whose office it was to cleanse and purify others, as the lepers were by the law obliged to pronounce upon themselves, and cry, *Unclean, unclean.* (See Lev. xiii. 45.) The filthy garments of the priest were an emblem of their filthy minds: (see Zech. iii. 4, 5.) and called to remembrance the innocent blood which had been shed by their means; (see ver. 13.) when people saw their sin thus retaliated upon them.

They said among the heathen, They shall no more sojourn there.] When those priests were driven out into heathen countries, every one looked upon their banishment as a just judgment upon their wickedness, and accounted them unworthy to attend any longer upon God's worship in his temple.

Ver. 16. *The anger of the Lord hath divided them,* &c.] God, in his just displeasure, hath scattered and dispersed them into foreign courts, where no respect will be given to their characters.

Ver. 17. *In watching we have watched for a nation that could not save us.*] We have long waited for, and have at last been disappointed in, the succours we expecte dfrom the Egyptians. (See Jer. xxxvii. 7. and the note upon xxii. 20.)

Ver. 18. *They hunt our steps, that we cannot go in our streets.*] Our enemies pursue us as wild beasts hunt their prey, and lay wait for us in every turning and corner of the streets. (See 2 Kings xxv. 3, 4.)

Our end is come.] Compare Ezek. vii, 6. Amos viii. 2.

Ver. 19. *Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heavens.*] God has brought upon us that judgment which he threatened by Moses, of *bringing a nation against us as swift as the eagle flieth,* (Deut. xxviii. 49.) Such were the horsemen of the Chaldean army. (See Jer. iv. 13. lii. 8.)

They pursued us upon the mountains; they laid wait for us in the wilderness.] We could no where escape them, neither by flying to the mountains, nor by hiding ourselves in the valleys. The wilderness is elsewhere taken for the lower or pasture grounds. (See Isa. lxiii. 13, 14. Joel i. 19.)

Ver. 20. *The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits,* &c.] This verse some expo-

sitors understand of king Josiah, and thereupon ground their opinion that the Lamentations were written upon occasion of his death. (See the Argument to chap. i.) But I rather conceive that Zedekiah is here meant, of whom the prophet saith, that he was taken in those toils his enemies had laid to catch him. (See Jer. lii. 8. Ezek. xii. 13.) As long as he was safe, we had hopes of preserving some face of government, although we were carried away into a foreign country.

[*Under his shadow we shall live among the heathens.*] The protection a king affords his subjects, is compared to the shelter of a great tree, which is a covert against storms and tempests. (See Ezek. xvii. 23. xxxi. 6. Dan. iv. 12.) And we might then have hoped to preserve some face of religion and government.]

Ver. 21. *Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom.*] An ironical expression, like that of Solomon, Eccles. xi. 9. *Rejoice, O young man,* &c. As if the prophet had said, Rejoice while thou mayest, O Edom, over the calamities of the Jews. (See Psal. cxxxvii. 7. Obad. ver. 10.) But thy joy will not last long, for, in a little time, it shall come to thy turn to feel God's afflicting hand. (See Jer. xlix. 7, &c.)

That dwellest in the land of Uz.] See the note on Jer. xxv. 20.

The cup also shall pass through unto thee.] See the note on Jer. xxv. 15, 16.

And shall make thyself naked.] God's astonishing judgments, often compared to drunkenness, shall have the usual effect of drunkenness upon thee; *viz.* that thy nakedness shall thereby be discovered. (See the note on Jer. xiii. 22.) The word may be translated, *Thou shalt be made naked:* for the conjugation *hith-pael,* is sometimes taken in a passive sense: as Glassius hath observed, in his Philologia Sacra, p. 840. Some render the word, *And shall empty thyself* [by vomiting]. To this effect of drunkenness God's judgments are compared, Isa. xix. 14. Habak. ii. 16. especially, as that resembles men's disgorging their wealth and treasures when an enemy overpowers them, and leaves them empty and exhausted.

Ver. 22. *The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion.*] It is usual for the prophets, when they have denounced God's judgments against any heathen nation, at the same time to give gracious promises to Israel: thereby importing, that God will never cast off his people utterly, as he doth strangers, but will, in due time, extend his mercy towards them. (Compare Jer. xlvi. 27, 28, l. 18—20. Ezek. xxviii. 24—26. Obad. ver. 17, &c.)

We will no more carry thee into captivity.] Several such-like promises we find in the prophets; (see Jer. xxxi. 40.) such as these of Isaiah, lii. 1. *There shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised, and the unclean:* and, liv. 9. *I have sworn I would not be wroth with thee.* (Compare li. 22.) These and such-like expressions, if they be understood in a strict literal sense, must relate to the final restoration of the Jews. (See the notes on Isa. li. 22. liv. 9. and compare Ezek. xxix. 28.)

He will discover thy sins.] He will discover how great thine iniquities are, by the remarkable judgments wherewith he punisheth thee. (Compare Job xx. 27.) The margin reads, *He will carry thee captive for thy sins:* in which sense the verb *galah* is used in the same verse.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

The title of this chapter in the Vulgar Latin is, *Oratio Jeremiæ, The Prayer of Jeremiah:* it is not writ in metre, as the foregoing chapters, but contains, like them, a pathetical complaint to God of the miserable condition of the Jews, with respect both to their spiritual and temporal state.

Ver. 1. *CONSIDER, and behold our reproach.*] Which we suffer from the heathen. (Compare ii. 15. iii. 61. Psal. lxxxix. 50, 51.)

Ver. 4. *We have drunken our water for money; our wood is sold unto us.*] When our country was in our own possession, we had free use of water and wood, which now we are forced to buy.

Ver. 5. *Our necks are under persecution.*] We are become slaves to our enemies, who *put an iron yoke upon our necks,* according to the threatening denounced by Moses, Deut. xxviii. 48.

Ver. 6. *We have given the hand to the Egyptians, and to the Assyrians,* &c.] We have made ourselves slaves or tributaries to those people: which was done by the ceremony of *giving the hand,* a form used when an oath or covenant was entered into. (See Ezek. xvii. 18. Gen. xxiv. 2.) The Jews are often upbraided for the alliances they made with Egypt and Assyria, for which they are threatened with being forced to live there as exiles. (See Hos. vii. 11. ix. 3. xii. 1.) These two countries being the places whither many Jews fled for refuge from the calamities which threatened them at home; the prophecies that mention their return from their several dispersions, speak of Assyria and Egypt, as the principal places from whence they should return: as hath been observed in the notes upon Isa. xi. 16.

Ver. 7. *Our fathers have sinned, and are not,* &c.] See the note on Jer. xxxi. 29. The expression *is not,* or *are not,* is used of those who are departed out of this world. (See Gen. xlii. 13.)

Ver. 8. *Servants have ruled over us.*] Servants to the great men among the Chaldeans, and other strangers, are become our masters. (See Nehem. v. 15.)

Ver. 9. *We got our bread at the peril of our lives, because of the sword of the wilderness.*] If we fly to the most solitary places, in hopes to get a livelihood there, yet thither the enemy pursues us.

Ver. 10. *Our skin was black like an oven,* &c.] See iv. 8.

Ver. 11. *They ravished the women in Zion.*] See Isa. xiii. 6. Zech. xiv. 2.

Ver. 12. *Princes are hanged up by their hand.*] By the hand of their enemies.

The faces of elders were not honoured.] See iv. 16.

Ver. 13. *They took the young men to grind.*] To grind at the mill, was the common employment of slaves. (See Exod. xi. 5.) Such was the *pistrinum* among the Romans.

The children fell under the wood.] They made children turn the handle of the mill, till they fell down for weariness: so some explain it, with relation to the former part of the verse. But it may be understood of making them

carry such heavy burdens of wood, that they fainted under the load.

Ver. 16. *The crown is fallen from our head.*] All our glory is at an end, together with the advantages of being thy people, and enjoying thy presence amongst us, by which we were distinguished from the rest of the world. (Compare Job xix. 9.) The word *crown* may signify both the kingdom and the priesthood: the *mitre* being sometimes called the *crown.* (See Zech. vi. 11.)

Ver. 17. *For these things our eyes are dim.*] See ii. 11.

Ver. 19. *Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever,* &c.] Our only hope is in the eternity and unchangeableness of thy nature; and that thou still governest the world, and orderest all the events of it; whereby thou art always able to help us, and art never forgetful of the promises which thou hast made to thy people. (Compare Psal. cii. 28. Habak. i. 12.)

Ver. 21. *Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned,* &c.] Do thou give us the grace of conversion and amendment, and then thou wilt remove thy heavy judgments, and restore us to that happiness and prosperity which we formerly enjoyed.

Ver. 22. *But thou hast utterly rejected us.*] Thou art resolved to cast off the Jews of this generation, and wilt not shew us any favour, till the seventy years of our captivity are expired.

END OF VOL. III.

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